

June 2007

# spatial Economic Transition

A PLAN FOR **GROWTH.**

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# **Introduction and Background**

## ***Why prepare a Spatial Plan for Elliston?***

The District of Elliston has, until recently, been experiencing a prolonged period of general economic stagnation. During this time a number of the District's towns have suffered the closure of businesses and population loss. This is now no longer the case and the District is enjoying a period of relative stability, new business growth and an increasing demand for residential development. This is bringing the prospects of real growth, economic expansion, and increased demand for land and services.

The District Council of Elliston is now seeking to take advantage of any new investments and developments anticipated to occur as a result of these changes. While Council is supportive of well presented and complying development in all of its towns, the town of Elliston has emerged as the natural centre for the district and it has been chosen as the focus of Councils attention.

This Spatial Plan has therefore been developed to provide Council with a clear vision for the future growth of Elliston. The Plan will enable development to occur in a way that will ensure opportunities are exploited and pressure on Council's limited financial resources is minimised. In particular the Plan seeks to identify locations within Elliston where growth can occur, while at the same time protecting the sensitive coastal features and environment that make the town such an attractive place to live and visit.

This Plan fits within the Planning Strategy for Regional South Australia (January 2003) and the draft Eyre Peninsula Coastal Development Strategy (soon to be released for public consultation).

## ***How will the Spatial Plan be used?***

The Plan will provide guidance to Council, investors and the community about Elliston's long-term development directions.

In particular the Plan will be used to inform Council's investment decisions and to guide planning policy for the town.

For the Plan to be successful it is vital that the Council's Elected Members and the community are closely involved in its refinement and implementation.

# Analysis

## ***The study area***

The town of Elliston is located within the District Council of Elliston on the shores of Waterloo Bay. It is known for its fishing and cliff top views and beaches. Elliston is also the main service centre for the region.

Elliston has a range of businesses including two caravan parks, an IGA store, a WCT rural store, a bakery, a hotel, café, bulk handling and agricultural support businesses. Of particular significance is a developing aquaculture industry that has considerable potential for expansion.

There is also a range of community services at Elliston, including a hospital, police station, area school and CFS complex.

Elliston is surrounded by a variety of landforms and vegetation—wetlands, water protection areas, significant stands of native vegetation and coastal dunes. While this natural setting is a very attractive asset for the town, it also restricts development and town growth to particular directions, namely to the north and to the south-east, beyond the golf course.

The Council has a very small ratepayer base, high infrastructure costs and scattered developments, which make it difficult to provide the required services and infrastructure.

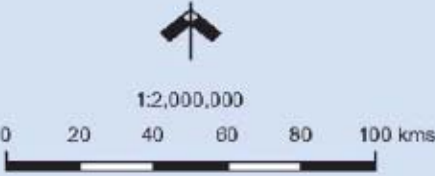
Elliston is however most fortunate in that it does have a reliable water supply which has the capacity to support growth. (The town currently uses about 80 megalitres of water per year with the Bramfield & Kappawanta basins having an unallocated volume of 180 and 59.4 megalitres respectively\*)

Power and water infrastructure will require upgrade and augmentation with increased development to ensure the system can maintain the required service levels to new and existing customers during periods of peak demand.



*\*Source Data - Water Allocation Plan for Musgrave Wells, 1997*

Map 1: Location



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Map 1: Location



## ***Elliston's natural setting and environmental features***

One of the greatest assets of Elliston is its natural setting. It is located on the shores of Waterloo Bay, which has an extensive dune system making a very attractive backdrop to the town. The dune system has significant conservation value, providing important habitat for invertebrates and birds. These dunes also give protection from the action of waves, tides and wind, and are a source of sand for beach replenishment during periods of erosion.

Elliston's topography provides opportunities for spectacular coastal views as well as views of the town and its natural surroundings. Within a short drive from the town are extensive limestone cliffs that are a significant attraction for tourists. Protection of these natural features is of paramount importance in creating an identity for the town that attracts visitors and new residents.

There are also significant coastal lakes or wetlands located around the airport and to the north of the town. This land is periodically under water or water-logged and provides important habitat for communities of salt-tolerant vegetation (halophytes including grasses, reeds, sedges and shrubs) and associated animals. Protection of these areas is important for environmental reasons.

Within the town there are also significant stands of native vegetation that contribute to the town's character. Improved signage and pedestrian networks could promote these sites as attractions to visit and enjoy.



## ***A place to live***

The core residential area within Elliston is relatively compact (average block size of 800-1000m<sup>2</sup>) and located around the town centre. Other residential development, in the form of rural living (block sizes range from 2000-10 000m<sup>2</sup>), has also developed to the north and south of the town. These areas are relatively isolated from the town centre and the other residential areas, with the housing development in the south 'leap-frogging' the golf course and expanding beyond the town's original boundary.

Rural living caters for a specific segment of the housing market. It is however an inefficient use of land and is more costly to service than traditional sized blocks. Rural living can also limit future growth opportunities as it breaks up large pieces of land under a number of owners making it difficult to consolidate this land in the future. Thus, there needs to be a balance in providing some rural living opportunity to meet market demand, while also allowing for future growth and enabling efficiencies in the provision of infrastructure.

Given its attractive coastal location, housing demand has the potential to grow significantly as the town is increasingly recognised as a sea change destination. In addition, growth in the aquaculture industry (particularly in abalone farming) has the potential to increase employment opportunities thereby further increasing the demand for housing. As yet the potential impact of mining activity in the region is unknown, however, if this is significant, it too will increase demand for permanent or semi-permanent accommodation.

The population of Elliston, as for most of South Australia, is aging. With its hospital and aged care services, Elliston is well placed to become an aged care service centre for the region. In fact the hospital is currently considering options to expand its aged care housing facilities, adjoining its current site.

In summary, it is likely that there will be four types of future housing demand in Elliston:

- rural retreat (rural living): to accommodate people retiring from the land who want a larger than average house block
- coastal escape: to accommodate sea changers looking for a high quality and compact form of housing
- standard residential: to accommodate families moving to the region for employment
- retiree or aged care: to accommodate the regional demand.



## ***A place for economic activity***

The major growth industry in Elliston is abalone farming, specifically the development of hatchery and grow-out facilities currently being proposed.

These facilities need to be located along the coast and preferably close to 3 phase power as the cost of the system required to pump seawater into the farms increases with the height and distance that the water is pumped. Suitable sites for these developments are therefore limited to those located very close to the sea and on low terrain. The most appropriate location is Anxious Bay where land has already been zoned for this purpose, however, the lack of an appropriate power supply is a major hurdle.

Smaller service industries required to support the industry could require land within the town. The industrial land currently within the town is located to the north and is zoned Commercial Industry. The Airport Zone, located to the north-east, also allows for light industry and service industry development. Much of the land located within the airport is low-lying and is likely to be at risk from flooding, particularly in light of anticipated sea level rise. Some land has already been divided within the Airport Zone, although only limited development activity has occurred so far.

Opportunities for conducting home businesses in Elliston, which may require a shed and outdoor area for operating should also be considered. These could be undertaken in a manner that does not affect residents. They would also need to be located on allotments that are large enough to accommodate them.

In a general sense, the quality of the power supply to commercial premises has become inadequate.



## ***A vibrant town centre***

Elliston's main street or town centre is located on Beach Terrace, which has two spurs. The southern spur is the original main entrance to the town, while the northern spur is the current access road from the freeway and accommodates the majority of services.

The centre includes the hotel, bakery, council offices, Country Women's Association building, an IGA store, a WCT rural store, a child care centre, a Community Information Centre and a Hall. These are somewhat dispersed however and the centre is fragmented. To overcome this, vacant or underused sites within the town could be built on thereby consolidating the area into a vibrant community space.

Improving the main street 'feel' and providing a sense of arrival to visitors would create an awareness of Elliston as a destination to visit and enjoy. This could be achieved through the development of a continuous spine of activities that links key places of interest, such as tourism accommodation, recreation facilities, shops and dining areas. This would encourage visitors and local residents to stroll and browse, thus enriching their experience of the town and boosting economic activity.

Other opportunities to improve the town centre include upgrading the landscaping, perhaps with a designated theme; reducing the open areas and car parking on the street along Beach Terrace and develop off street parking; and providing better outlooks to the recreational areas and public spaces. In addition, the long-term development of outdoor dining areas could increase the activity within the street, making it more vibrant and attractive.

The town currently has two caravan parks, a motel and a hotel. However, this is not sufficient to cater for busloads of people so additional accommodation facilities may need to be considered in the longer term.

Elliston does have some significant buildings, including the CWA building, which was the first of its kind to be developed in South Australia and is a designated State Heritage Item. The CWA has been successful in obtaining funds to assist with upgrading the building. The former council administrative building is also considered significant and could be developed as more of a landmark for the town. The Elliston Town Hall has one of the largest murals in the Southern Hemisphere painted on the outside walls. Elliston's jetty is also a heritage listed structure.

## ***A place to visit and enjoy***

The town has a range of opportunities for formal and informal recreation and sport. The main recreation precinct is located within the centre of town and includes netball courts, a football oval and a club house.

The recreation precinct contributes to the open space character of the town, which is an important attribute, however the layout of the area—particularly the extensive gravel parking space—contributes to the lack of cohesion of the main street.

Links exist between the recreation oval, commercial areas and the area school, which are all located within walking distance of each other. A pedestrian crossing adjoining the school and recreation oval enhances these links. A path located alongside the low-lying parkland area is also a positive attribute that could be further developed and promoted to increase its use by the local community and visitors.

The town has extensive areas of parklands, which, while contributing to the character and amenity of the area, also make links between areas even more important. More active spaces could be created and enhanced at key locations as gathering points for the community and visitors. The Council has recently constructed a skate park in the recreation reserve along Memorial Drive.

The golf course is a major feature and attraction within the town and has spectacular coastal views. Opportunities exist to use wastewater from the hospital and in the future, town businesses, for irrigation of the course. In addition, there is potential to include more tourism and recreational uses associated with the golf course club house in a way that takes advantage of the coastal views.

The coastal reserve provides both an attractive setting for the town, and a range of recreational activities such as walking, swimming, fishing and boating. The town has a jetty and boating facilities, which are shared by recreational and commercial users.

For visitors the barbecue area at the south-west end of the beach is relatively hidden from view. The siting of this area is likely to be due to the natural shelter provided by the topography. However, the area needs to be made more visible through signs or clear pedestrian paths. Links from the main street to this location would also be most effective in creating connections between it and local businesses where visitors could stop to buy food.



## ***Movement systems***

The Flinders Highway passes through the town of Elliston exposing the town to through traffic. The sealed Birdseye Highway links Elliston with Lock and provides added tourism opportunity to the area, especially given the recent Lucky Bay/Wallaroo ferry. This road could also be particularly valuable should mining activities boom in the area.

The two highways provide an opportunity for Elliston to encourage traffic to flow through to the town centre. This could be achieved through attractive signage and entry statements such as artwork, an eye catching structure or quality landscaping.

Access to the town centre from the highway is via Yandra Drive to the north or Beach Terrace to the east. While there is an attractive sign to Elliston when entering from Yandra Drive, the sense of arrival into the town centre could be further enhanced. Another entry statement could also be provided on Beach Terrace.

The town centre is currently characterised by wide streets that provide on-street parking. The main off-street parking is located at the recreation reserve and child care centre.

There are several key centres of activity in the town, including the school, the recreation area, the town centre and the coast that would benefit from better developed walking paths to ensure the comfort and safety of pedestrian movement between them.

To cope with increasing traffic flow and service probable future developments in the Rural Living area near the golf course, a future ring route may be developed from the current end of Little Bay Road/ Cliff Top Drive, back in a North Easterly direction down an unmade road corridor. This would enhance the tourist capacity of the town and reduce congestion in the main section of town.

## **Current Zones Overview**

The current planning zones of Elliston are:

- **A...Airport Zone**

This zone accommodates the Elliston airstrip and its associated facilities. The zone allows for a range of commercial, light industry and other uses that are compatible with the airport.

- **CIn Commercial Industry Zone**

This zone primarily accommodates a number of commercial activities, including warehousing and storage, together with light, service and general industries.

- **C(BH) Commercial (Bulk Handling) Zone**

In this zone farm commodities are received, stored and dispatched in bulk.

- **RuF Rural Fringe Zone**

This zone has a minimum allotment size of 40 hectares and is essentially a holding area for future residential development.

- **RuL Rural Living Zone**

This zone primarily accommodates detached dwellings in association with small scale farming, biodiversity conservation and related rural activities of a minor nature on various sized allotments. The minimum allotment size is 5000 square metres.

- **R Residential Zone**

This zone allows for a range of dwelling types on a minimum allotment size of 800 square metres.

- **TCe Town Centre Zone**

This zone accommodates a range of retail, office, business, entertainment, civic and community development and tourist accommodation catering for the townships of Elliston and Lock, the surrounding rural district and travelling public.

- **Cst Coastal Zone**

This zone incorporates land adjacent to the Elliston district coastline and is predominantly characterised by rugged cliffs and long sandy beaches. The scenic beauty of these coastal areas is an important tourist asset to the district.

- **CstMU Coastal Mixed Use Zone**

This zone allows for a mix of commercial, business (mainly fishing and aquaculture) and tourism activities to occur in association with public recreation.

- **P Parklands Zone**

Land within this zone is used for a range of active and passive recreational activities.

- **Pln Primary Industry**

This zone is primarily for primary industry, including primary production, on-farm activities related to the harvest and storage of that production and, in appropriate locations, land-based aquaculture and processing of raw products.

- **TA Tourism Accommodation**

This zone provides for a variety of tourist, recreational and service facilities and accommodation in an integrated coastal environment.



	Local Government boundary		Zoning boundary
<b>A</b>	Airport		
<b>P</b>	Parklands		
<b>Cln</b>	Commercial Industry		
<b>C(BH)</b>	Commercial (Bulk Handling)		
<b>RuF</b>	Rural Fringe		
<b>RuL</b>	Rural Living		
<b>R</b>	Residential		
<b>TCe</b>	Town Centre		
<b>C(MU)</b>	Coastal (Mixed Use)		
<b>Cst</b>	Coastal		
<b>TA</b>	Tourism Accommodation		
<b>Pln</b>	Primary Industry		



Map 2: Elliston's current planning zones



# Looking forward: the Spatial Plan

## *The Vision*

**Elliston forms the central hub and key service centre to attract people and economic opportunity to the whole district.**

Under this Vision, Elliston will:

- retain its rural and coastal living qualities; promote new growth that is sympathetic to the style and pattern of existing development; while at the same time minimising the impact on the surrounding agricultural land and the natural environment
- offer a range of employment opportunities through primary industry, value adding and other support industries, with a range of small businesses operating from home
- be a vibrant centre offering a broad range of services and facilities for local residents with a growing reputation as a key tourist destination and arts and crafts centre. The town centre will be reinforced with a mix of uses that support tourism and local activities to ensure the long-term viability of the main street
- maintain its passion for sport and recreation as an important part of township life, and encourage greater participation with new walking trails that link active spaces
- encourage people to visit, stay and walk the streets, enjoying a range of features and destinations, including outdoor dining areas
- reinforce its scenic and tourist values by maintaining and improving the distinctive way in which the settlement sits within the landscape
- ensure its open spaces enable: the separation of activities; the reinforcement of the town's essential village 'feel'; the conservation of its natural environment; access to recreation; and effective water management.

## *The Guiding Principles*

To achieve the Vision, the following Guiding Principles will need to be put in place:

### **Consolidate the town**

- Encourage the development of vacant sites within the town before expanding the town into primary production areas.
- Identify new areas of growth that minimise the infrastructure requirements and create more vibrant and active spaces.
- Design the town to enhance its walkability.

### **Protect the town's lifestyle and rural character**

- Protect the open areas that surround the town.
- Protect the character of the existing residential areas.
- Develop criteria for the form and siting of new residential development.

### **Capitalise on the town's existing assets**

- Capitalise on the town's coastal location and community infrastructure.
- Maximise the potential of the town's environmental assets and parklands to reinforce the town's character.

**Provide for a range of housing choices**

- Provide for a range of housing forms to meet diverse market needs.

**Create a vibrant destination**

- Create a main street feel and sense of place for the town centre as a hub for commercial activity, recreation and community interaction.
- Provide for a carefully planned sense of arrival, exploration and discovery to the visitor, particularly through thoughtful planning of viewscales and landscaping.

**Promote business opportunities**

- Allow for a range of business and industry opportunities in strategic locations throughout the town.

## ***The Spatial Plan***

The Spatial Plan (Map 3) illustrates a suggested arrangement of land uses that could:

- maximise efficiency in infrastructure provision
- enhance Elliston as a place to live
- make it easy for visitors to find their way to places of interest
- stimulate investment and business growth.

The Plan is a guide only and will need to be refined before actual zones can be determined and included in local area Development Plans.

The key elements of the Plan include:

### **Housing**



#### **— for Older People**

- Provide housing for older and less mobile people in areas close to services and facilities, particularly around the medical centre.
- Investigate opportunities for medium-density development around the oval, possibly with a frontage to a new road separating the low-lying wetland area from the recreation reserve.



#### **— for Rural Living**

- Provide both rural living and home business opportunities on allotments in the order of 1-2ha on land currently zoned Rural Fringe to the south of the town.
- Allow smaller rural living allotments within the Rural Living Zone located to the north of the town, in the order of 0.5 ha.
- Review siting requirements for dwellings on rural living allotments to assist in the economic provision of infrastructure and to protect the open character of the area.



#### **— for Coastal Escape**

- Provide opportunities for high quality and compact housing around the golf course, taking into account the layout of the golf course, native vegetation, flood potential, the slope of the land and any other issues that need to be considered when undertaking development.
- Investigate opportunities to extend residential allotments facing Esplanade Terrace through to Little Bay Road.



#### **— for Families**

- Promote infill development within the existing residential areas near the town centre.
- Provide additional housing for families by rezoning the current Commercial Industry Zone to Residential, thereby giving these homes close access to education facilities, recreation facilities, child care services and the town centre.
- Ensure appropriate separation buffers are provided between proposed residential areas and the Council's waste management facility (a minimum of 250-500 metres).
- Provide for future urban expansion to the north of the town by designating land north of Silo Road as a Deferred Urban Zone. This land should not generally be developed until areas already allocated for housing are developed.



## — Deferred Urban

- Provide for future urban expansion to the north of the town by designating land north of Silo Road as a Deferred Urban Zone. This land should not generally be developed until areas already allocated for housing/ industry are developed.
- Deferred Urban refers to land that is intended to be used for urban development in the future, but is not ready for release at this time. This may be residential or industry development, depending on the needs of the future. Council may have a sequencing plan that indicates the intended order of land development within its area to assist in planning for infrastructure and social services. As such, Council may designate land as deferred urban where it would prefer other areas to be developed first (i.e. closer to town) or where there are unresolved issues associated with the land (eg where the land is low-lying, contaminated or in need of physical infrastructure).



## — Land for Industry

- Locate the abalone farming at Anxious Bay to minimise land use conflicts and maximise efficiencies.
- Continue to allow industrial development in the area to the west of, and adjacent to, the airport.
- Ensure that access to industrial areas creates the lowest possible impacts on residential development and pedestrian movement by creating buffer distances (through the Plan Amendment Report process).
- Management strategies and design controls and specifications will be developed to ensure that industries located in low-lying industry areas are protected from surface water and groundwater.
- Support low cost tourism accommodation opposite the jetty



## —A Linked Open Space System

Enhance the linked system of open spaces around the town to:

- provide a visual and scenic contrast to the built environment
- buffer urban activities from rural activities
- accommodate a range of passive and unstructured recreation and leisure areas
- assist in the conservation of natural and semi-natural habitats
- provide green corridors for the movement of wildlife.

### — for Protection of the coast

- Continue protection of the dunes behind the beach to provide an attractive visual backdrop to the town.

### — for Recreation and Sport

- Focus formal sport and active recreation around the existing recreation precinct and golf course.
- Reduce the visual prominence and extent of car parking around the oval as viewed from the street.
- Focus passive recreational activity around the jetty and in the park located at the end of Beach Terrace on the coast.

- Locate the proposed skate park in the area adjacent to the oval.
- Improve the recreational and aesthetic value of the area adjacent to the jetty through improved facilities such as toilets, a grassed picnic area and seating.
- Consider, in the long term, the replacement of the community hall with activities that create a more active frontage to the main street.

### — for Conservation

- Protect environmentally sensitive land, such as the estuarine lakes and low-lying areas that are prone to flooding thereby providing important habitats for native fauna.
- Enhance the wetlands in the centre of town for stormwater management and recreational activity, while protecting environmental values.

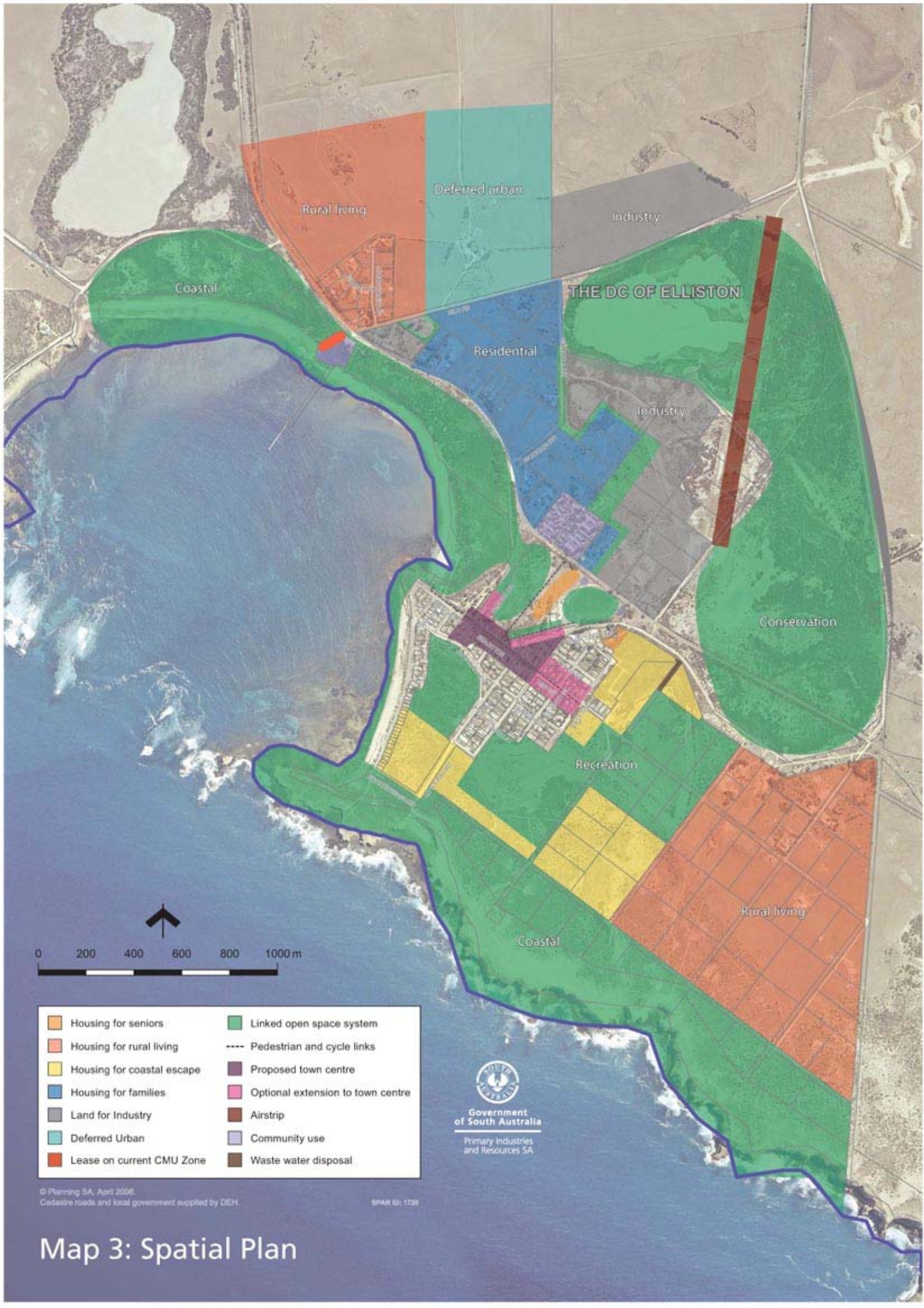
## — Pedestrian and Cycle Links

- Minimise the need for traffic control and parking facilities by promoting walking and cycling within the town.
- Encourage tourists to walk between sites of interest by providing walking paths with attractive signs and visual cues.
- Create a boulevard of trees along the main street to create a stronger edge to the street and an attractive pedestrian walkway.
- Enhance walking connections between the oval, the parklands and along the foreshore.

## A Vibrant Town Centre

- Consolidate the town centre by either:
  - a. focusing activity around the northern spur of Beach Terrace
 OR
  - b. focusing activity around High Street and consider a new road link to help redirect traffic into this end of the road.
- Provide a range of business opportunities (including retail and community services) within the town centre.
- Promote a mixed use main street, which is the key economic and social street linking important places in the town.
- Fill in vacant sites for commercial and retail use before extending the town centre boundary.
- Include some sort of artistic element in the main street that reflects the cultural attributes of the town.





Rural living

Deferred urban

Industry

Coastal

THE DC OF ELLISTON

Residential

Industry

Conservation

Recreation

Rural living

Coastal

0 200 400 600 800 1000m

- |                            |                                   |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Housing for seniors        | Linked open space system          |
| Housing for rural living   | Pedestrian and cycle links        |
| Housing for coastal escape | Proposed town centre              |
| Housing for families       | Optional extension to town centre |
| Land for Industry          | Airstrip                          |
| Deferred Urban             | Community use                     |
| Lease on current CMU Zone  | Waste water disposal              |

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Cadastral roads and local government supplied by DEH.

SPAR ID: 1729

Map 3: Spatial Plan

# Completion and Implementation

This Plan will need to be refined and then implemented through a range of processes.

These include:

- community consultation and acceptance
- support by State Government agencies
- links to the Council budget and its Strategic Management Plan
- improvements to the Council's Development Plan (i.e. through the Plan Amendment Report process)
- private sector investment and decision making.

\*There are large parcels of state- and local government-owned land with the potential to be developed for housing. The sale and development of this land has the potential to fund activities such as improvements to the town centre.