

# TALBOT TOWNSHIP

## FUNCTION & IDENTITY STUDY



MAY  
2023



# Talbot Futures.

May 2023

Prepared by Hello City for Central Goldfields Council

[www.hellocity.com.au](http://www.hellocity.com.au)



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A photograph of a brick wall. The left side shows a section of the wall with peeling green and white paint, revealing the underlying brickwork. The right side shows a section of the wall with intact, light green paint. The word "CONTEXT" is overlaid in large, white, sans-serif capital letters across the center of the image.

# CONTEXT

*"PEOPLE IN SMALL TOWNS,  
MUCH MORE THAN IN CITIES,  
SHARE A DESTINY."*

/ RICHARD RUSSO



## THE PROJECT & OUR ROLE

The Talbot Futures project is a structure planning process being led by Central Goldfields Shire Council and delivered by Hansen Partnership, economists SGS and urban strategists and place-based consultants Hello City. The project was launched in October 2022.

Hello City's role is to:

- investigate and define the key aspects of the current identity and function of the town centre and how these might be affected by physical and structural and strategic changes
- understand the community's ambitions for the future
- capture a vision to guide the structure plan and serve as a touchstone for decision making

An early draft version of this document was circulated with the project team before the engagement was complete. This staggered approach was taken to mitigate the delays caused by floods and bad weather.

## HOW TO USE THIS DOCUMENT

This document captures the findings of our research into the current identity and function of the town centre. These are the elements which need to be retained in order for Talbot to remain Talbot, even as the place changes and evolves.

We have defined the **3 key jobs**, **4 archetypes** and **5 strengths** of Talbot township which together make up the key components of Talbot's tangible and intangible function and identity.

We have then identified which key tangible touchpoints or elements need to be kept or preserved, which should evolve and which elements or aspects should be eliminated or avoided in future.

### ***Change & My Grandfather's Axe***

*"This.. is my family's axe. We have owned it for almost nine hundred years, see. Of course, sometimes it needed a new blade. And sometimes it has required a new handle, new designs on the metalwork, a little refreshing of the ornamentation . . . but is this not the nine hundred-year-old axe of my family? And because it has changed gently over time, it is still a pretty good axe, y'know. Pretty good."*

Terry Pratchett, The Fifth Elephant

The paradox of the Grandfather's Axe gets to the heart of how to manage change in relation to the ongoing function and identity of a place. Like the axe, places can and should change over time to suit the changing needs and resources of the community.

Cities and towns are constantly evolving and changing. Buildings are torn down and replaced, streets are re-purposed, and entire neighbourhoods can undergo transformation. However, despite these changes, the essential aspects of a city remain. Its culture, history, and unique character remain fundamentally intact. Like the grandfather's axe, a town may not physically be the same, but it remains familiar and recognizable, representing the shared experiences and memories of those who call it home.





HELLO CITY PRESS

ISSUE 001



# Talbot Futures News

CAPTURING THE STORIES, CHALLENGES, IDEAS & VISIONS FOR TALBOT & EXPLORING POSSIBLE FUTURES

01 // 19.10.22

## What is Talbot Futures?

WELCOME, SEVENTH READERS OF TALBOT, TO THE VERY FIRST ISSUE OF THE TALBOT FUTURES NEWS. THIS IS A PLACE TO SHARE STORIES OF TALBOT, PAST AND PRESENT, EXPLORE KEY ISSUES RELATING TO GROWTH AND CHANGE, AND FIND ALL THE LATEST INFORMATION AND NEWS AROUND THE PROJECT IN ONE PLACE.

## What is a Structure Plan?

WE HAD A CHAT WITH CENTRAL GOLDFIELDS SHIRE COUNCIL'S FRIENDLY STRATEGIC PLANNER SUMAYA TONNY ABOUT THE INS AND OUTS OF STRUCTURE PLANNING.

## "WHY DID THE CHICKEN CROSS SCANDINAVIAN CRESCENT?"

Scratchings and crows from the streets of Talbot by the local rooster at-large

## Talbot, the Tiniest Train Town

These days it's not uncommon to hear about the tiny town of Talbot. It's a small town with a big heart, and it's got a lot to offer. From its rich history to its beautiful scenery, Talbot is a town that's truly special.

## Smells like Teen Spirit

It's not just the smell of teenage rebellion that's in the air in Talbot. It's the spirit of innovation and creativity that's driving the town forward.



It's Lavinia and Margaret time so the flowers are blooming, the bees are buzzing and the boys are far and jolly. As always, the community garden next to London House is the best place to enjoy the flowers and worms.

The recent rain and flooding have been scary for a lot of roosters. I've had to take cover several times under the heritage awnings outside of shops and private residences on Scandinavian Crescent.

Sadly the markets weren't on this month because of the flooding so I had no veggie scraps from the market or the odd stray BBQ sausage to keep me going. Let's hope next month we have clear skies and plenty of sunny crumbles.

In answer to the question everyone keeps asking me why did the chicken cross the road? Because it was too rained!

Please send me your best Chicken jokes by scanning the QR code below

## The Wildly Incomplete, Disjointed & Probably Inaccurate History of the Talbot Leader

The Talbot Leader has a long and interesting history. It's a newspaper that has been around for over 100 years, and it's got a lot of stories to tell.

## On your marks, get set, go!



Walk & Talk: A community initiative to promote walking and talking in the area.



## THE TALBOT QUIZ

- Trivia buffs test your knowledge with the Talbot Quiz. 1. How many children were there in Talbot in 1850? 2. Talbot's first school was The Friends' Free School, which opened in 1850.





## ABOUT TALBOT

Talbot is located on the traditional lands of the Djaara or Dja Dja Wurrung people. 2 hours by car North West of Melbourne.

Once a gold rush boomtown with 70 pubs and multiple banks, Talbot now maintains a small population, with 452 residents recorded at the 2021 census with a population that skews older.

Its history is evident in its remaining heritage buildings, however many of these remain closed to the public, with some key historic retail now private residential property.

Residents tend to put down deep roots in the township and many have owned their homes for decades. Some residents only live in the township on weekends as a second home.

Talbot has a small retail/food and beverage offer which includes a cafe with limited opening hours, the pub, an antique store, a gift store, a few boutique second hand book stores and the long running monthly Markets. The Talbot Post Office fills some of the retail gaps providing multiple services to the community including operating as a convenience store, newsagent and visitor information centre. Other community spaces include the volunteer-led Talbot Library and Talbot Museum.

Internet and phone connectivity is poor but is compensated for by the effective bush telegraph.

It's a short trip to Maryborough or Clunes by car or train, with public transport options to both Melbourne and Ballarat.

Neighbouring towns include Maryborough, Clunes, Amherst, Majorca, Carisbrook, Lexton and Avoca. The township also serves as a centre for a district of smaller locations including Daisy Hill, Red Lion, Mt. Glasgow, Craigie and Caralulup.

## UNDERSTANDING THE IDENTITY & FUNCTION OF PLACES

Defining the identity of a person or place can be difficult as identities and functions are perceived differently according to individual perspectives, are ever-changing and often multiple.

Identity is an essential part of what it means to be human. Identity is the framework we use to create and make sense of meaning and value in all aspects of our lives. In turn the identity and meaning of a place is given purpose and legitimacy by the users of the place, the people who live, work, visit or engage with a place.

Because of this, the identity of people and of places is intimately connected, including the personal, the economic and the political aspects of a place. Attempts to change the identity or function one or the other will almost always be challenged. Who brings about the change is as important as the nature and extent of change. The consequences for places can be extreme if people reject the new identity and function and what it means or how it operates.

We have based this study on the following principles of identity:

- **Identity is a cocktail.** Talbot is best understood as providing an interconnected mix of social, emotional, economic, psychological and political outcomes for individuals and the community.
- **Identity builds up, is erased, hacked and is rebuilt over time.** The identity of the town is the accumulated meaning given to it by multiple generations of visitors, residents and workers, while constantly changing and contested.
- **Identity exists in the space between people and place.** The identity of the town is inseparable from the identity of individuals, groups and the community. One shapes the other.
- **To measure the value of a place's identity, look at what they give to our own personal identity. Talbot's value should** be measured in terms of the social, cultural, historical, economic and political contributions to individual, family and community identities.



# KEY SOCIOECONOMIC FACTORS

## NATURALLY OCCURRING RETIREMENT COMMUNITY (NORC)

A Naturally Occurring Retirement Community or "NORC" was coined in the 1980s and defined as neighbourhoods and housing developments, originally built for young families, in which 50 percent of the residents are 50 years or older and have aged in place.

The region could be considered a Rural NORC also known as a Naturally Occurring Retirement Region (NORR), while Talbot is a Naturally Occurring Retirement Neighbourhood (NORN) with over 60% of its residents aged over 50 in the 2022 Census.

In response to the NORC demographic phenomenon, many communities have developed NORC programs to serve their senior residents by providing social and health care services tailored to their specific needs (NORC-SSPs). The community-based programs are often partnerships between housing/ neighbourhood organisations, residents, health and social service providers. The goal of these programs is maximising the health and well-being of resident seniors so they can maintain their independence and comfortably remain in their homes as they age in place.

Talbot already offers some of these services and fills these gaps within the community both formally through volunteer programs such as the community medical car and community exercise programs for older residents and informally through neighbourly support around household tasks and meal prep etc.

### Case Study: Oasis Senior Supportive Living Inc

Residents of an existing NORC, a midsize apartment building in Kingston Ontario worked in partnership with the landlord, the local Council on Aging and regional health partners to develop programs and services and create Oasis Senior Supportive Living Inc - an innovative NORC-SSP



Oasis Senior Supportive Living Inc



Main street revitalisation project - Makers & Collector's Market

*"I've been here 18 years ... when Oasis started it was a wonderful thing because before you never knew anybody, now you know everyone"*

- Kingston resident



## UNCONVENTIONAL TRADERS

Talbot has very few retail/hospitality businesses, most of meet the criteria of Unconventional Traders.\*

This class of trader contributes much to the social capital and character of a place and are likely to demonstrate one or more of the following characteristics:

- **Not profit-oriented, may not need to earn a living wage from the business**
- **Non-monetary returns are prioritised, such as social connection, building and sharing a collection, contributing to the community and quality of experience**
- **Quality of life, family, social and other personal or professional commitments are prioritised over consistent/optimal opening hours and other aspects of operation**
- **Customer-base is narrow, there is often no desire to promote their retail activities to a broader base**
- **Typically single-operator businesses, or staffed by volunteers, friends and family.**

### ***Case Study: Preston Market Neighbourhood***

The traders of the Preston Market streets are Unconventional Traders whose needs and role in the economy, social & place-brand contribution are poorly understood within standard planning frameworks. Hello City coined the term Unconventional Traders to capture this often misunderstood and underserved segment of local economies and communities and to develop strategy, tools and programs to support them.

*“People come to the market to support family businesses and contribute to something that is different from mainstream shopping centres.”*

- Sue, Rhubarb Rhubarb Organics

## MAIN STREETS

Main streets have evolved over hundreds, if not thousands, of years into many different forms but with the same goal; to provide a place for people to get from A to B and trade and exchange goods, services, money, to meet their essential needs and then their wants and desires.

We argue that it is not useful or possible to understand main streets from a purely economic position but as inseparably intertwined with social, political and other cultural behaviours, rituals, institutions and beliefs.

## BOOMTOWNS, GHOST TOWNS & GOLD RUSH TOWNS

Most towns evolve gradually over time according to social and economic forces, towns like Talbot spring up overnight in response to an overwhelming economic driver while the social, cultural and practical elements of play catch up.

In some cases, like in Talbot, before the town is fully established the economic driver evaporates, leading to a sharp decline in population and abrupt shift in the function and identity of the town.

This shift leaves the new, smaller community in a situation where the layout, amenities, infrastructure, policies and assets of the township may not be fit for purpose or may be in excess of needs or capacity to manage.





### CASE STUDY: JAPAN'S CHIIKI OKOSHI KYŌRYOKUTAI

Faced with declining populations in regional areas, Japan has been running successful programs such as Chiiki Okoshi Kyōryokutai (Local Vitalization Cooperator) to encourage thousands of motivated and talented people to move from Japan's biggest cities to areas experiencing population decline. Today over 1000 communities across the country welcome new residents who bring new blood, new ideas, and new energy to the communities they live and work in.

*"I want to raise my children in this town where I can live with a sense of the seasons"*

- New resident of Omori Town



### ZOOMTOWNS & REMOTE WORK

The movement of residents from the cities to smaller regional communities has increased since the rise of remote and hybrid work during COVID, particularly to regional towns with great amenities or accessible property prices.

New residents may put pressure on infrastructure, cause rapid changes to local dynamics, and lead to increases in property prices making housing less accessible for locals. On the other hand, an increase in population may create new economic opportunities and an increase in demand leading to better provision of goods and services.

Talbot, with its train station, relative proximity to Melbourne, considerable local charms, and upcoming communication upgrades, could be an attractive option for remote and hybrid workers.

### CASE STUDY: CHOOSE TOPEKA

Topeka (the capital city of Kansas) works with employers to offer a US\$15,000 grant to employees who choose Topeka as their new home. To make it as easy as possible for potential talent to choose Topeka, the application is a simple online form and acquittal is equally straightforward.

*"Communities, such as ours, that invest in talent ultimately reap the benefits of a robust and specialized workforce as well as a stronger, more intentional community."*

- Dan Foltz, board chairman of GO Topeka



*Former  
Goodman's Phoenix Ho  
c1870*

The background of the slide is a photograph of a beach with waves crashing onto the shore. In the bottom left corner, there is a fragment of a map with a yellow background and orange lines, showing the word 'tel' in a dark font. A small metal fastener is visible on the map fragment.

# RESEARCH & ANALYSIS

*"THERE IS NO POWER FOR CHANGE  
GREATER THAN A COMMUNITY  
DISCOVERING WHAT IT CARES ABOUT."*

/ MARGARET WHEATLEY ED.D



## LITERATURE REVIEW

We reviewed a range of literature to understand what others have said about similar places, how they work and roles they perform in communities. We looked at research on the anthropology of small towns, urban design, cultural and urban theory, place branding and place economics.

Our goal was to define the ways in which meaning is created by the people and the activity and the role of spaces and buildings. We used these contemporary understanding of identity and social significance to identify and define tangible and intangible qualities of Talbot's identity and function.

## DESKTOP RESEARCH

We reviewed existing reports provided by Council, historical archival material, social media posts and other publicly available information including:

- **Recent reports and studies including the Talbot District Community Plan 2030, Central Goldfields Community Vision 2031, Economic Development Strategy 2020-25, Tourism and Events Strategy 2020-25, Central Goldfields Shire Walking and Cycling Strategy 2017-2026 and the Population, Housing and Residential Settlement Strategy 2020**
- **Local blogs, tourism websites and social media pages and accounts**
- **Google maps, ABS, Homely, etc**
- **State and local libraries heritage section**
- **Museum archives and collections**
- **Local papers including the Maryborough Advertiser**

## PRIMARY RESEARCH & ENGAGEMENT

To understand the identity of the town, how it functions and community attitudes we carried out in person face-to-face research. When we used existing texts, images and online sources, these were tested and ground-truthed with targeted engagement and site visits.

We carried out site visits on different days to observe the types of activities and document the built form and other spatial, visual and relational elements that represent the human aspects of the town centre. We built on this with an in-depth engagement program.

In order to engage with the following challenges and conditions our engagement program was designed to:

- **work effectively both online and offline as only 70% of homes in Talbot have internet, and many locals don't spend time online**
- **be highly accessible for both in person as remote participants as many residents in Talbot are aged over 70 and are especially vulnerable to COVID and may experience vision or mobility issues**
- **provide high levels of flexibility in response to emerging issues such as floods**
- **provide multiple meaningfully ways to connect and participant while minimising COVID risks during a period where there was an increasing divide between those still concerned or vulnerable and those keen to relax restrictions**

Local Prue Bagley joined the Hello City project team, and was the local face of the Talbot Futures Conversation. This ensured that her local knowledge and insights shaped the project from day one, and we were better able to be responsive to the changing needs of the community.

## Contrasts & Commons

Holding conversations with communities around forging a shared vision is as much about engaging with differences and tensions as it is about finding shared values and ambitions.

We use a number of engagement tools and approaches to dig beyond superficial or perceived differences and find commonalities and understand any significant gaps.

These tools challenge participants to think through difficult trade-offs or generate original ideas and solutions. This way our insights, visions and strategies\* are able to move beyond buzzwords and wish lists.

This process has allowed us to get to the heart of what makes Talbot, Talbot.

Each community has its own set of contrasts, in Talbot these can be summarised as:

- residents who live in Talbot full time <> 'weekenders' who have a second home in Talbot
- residents who have been in town for multiple generations <> newer residents
- those who want to position Talbot as a tourism destination <> those who are more inwardly focused on building a town for locals to enjoy
- those who want Talbot to grow and expand rapidly <> those who want little to change beyond a sewerage upgrade

\*This primary research and engagement has also been used to define a shared vision for Talbot which can be found in the Talbot Futures Vision Report





# THE TALBOT FUTURES CONVERSATION

More than 12% of the population of Talbot have taken part in the Talbot Futures Conversation program to share their thoughts for the future of Talbot, with 100+ conversations and engagements, and 50+ individual participants to date. The program includes 4 publications, 2 in-person working sessions on site, 2 creative challenges and 3 surveys/written activities which could be engaged with both in person.

Participants live primarily in the Talbot township with a few from the broader district who worked, shopped or had partners in town. They were aged between 8 and over 80 and a combination of newer residents who have lived locally for less than 2 years and people who grew up in Talbot. A mix of retirees, workers and business owners and people with a range of mobility and physical ability took part.

The engagement process for Talbot Futures began in Oct 2022 and has so far included the following elements, outputs of which have been summarised in this section of the report:

- **Talbot Futures News** is a multi issue limited run publication in both poster and newsletter formats designed to inform, connect and spark conversations with and between locals around the sewerage upgrades and structure planning process. Issues were published in October, November 2022 and March 2023. Each issue included interesting articles, infographics and creative challenges to inform residents about the structure planning process and implications of sewerage upgrades, along with elicitation exercises such as surveys and questionnaires. A combination of interviews, articles, family histories and photos by and with locals ensured strong interest in and engagement by Talbot residents.

We partnered with well-loved local newsletter Talbot Today, Tomorrow (TTT) to distribute the Talbot Futures News to their 650+ readers both locally and across the district. The publication was also stocked in local businesses, the library, the bowls club and the pub.

Each issue of the Talbot Futures News featured a copy of, or QR link to, key engagement activities.

- **Walk & Talk.** On November 23rd Talbot locals, the project team, key Council staff and stakeholders gathered for a place audit and creative conversation. Invites were issued via email, posters, in Issue #1 of the Talbot Futures News and via Council social media channels.

The walking place audit asked locals to buddy up in small groups and travel a commonly walked route in town together. Using Hello City's Place Audit Toolkit they assessed key aspects of Talbot and gave each element a score. This toolkit has been provided to Council, and is designed to be carried out every 6 to 12 months to map progress and change and can be completed by community members or Council offices in about 1 hour.

- **Talbot Futures Community Design Lab.** In collaboration with CGSC and Hansen, Hello City hosted a community design lab on March 25th 2023. We invited the community to help explore the details of Talbot's possible futures. Participants gathered in small groups to test the draft vision, discuss trade-offs, do scenario planning and get down to the brass tacks of action planning.

Invites to the Design Lab were issued via email, in Issue #3 of the Talbot Futures News and via Council social media channels.

- **Activities and surveys** which were shared in issues of Talbot Futures News, via email, on local community social media pages and promoted online by Council using their website and social media pages and included:
  - **My Talbot Is...** a short vox pop survey intended to capture key elements of Talbot's identity and what locals value most
  - **Talbot Futures Postcard & Capture Challenges.** Creative competitions where participants defined a vision for the future and won local prizes
  - **Talbot Futures Generator.** A robust exercise where participants were challenged to work through key decisions and tough trade offs around the future of housing, culture, transport, identity and future investment in health, culture and education
  - **Digging Into The Details.** 3 key questions about lot sizes, managing Gold Rush era legacy, and how to deal with sewerage

MY TALBOT IS...

safe heritage buildings  
community peaceful

fighting to survive learning to thrive

getting older

"a town I grew up in"

# HOME

interesting family farm

historic

unique "my landing place"

bigoted

very quiet

spacious

"where I choose to live"

kind

potential

fantastic

"my father & my grandfather"

charming

# friendly

comfortable

sanctuary

ISSUE 003 HELLO CITY PRESS

## Talbot Futures News

03 // 18.03.23

MY TALBOT IS...

community peaceful  
fighting to survive  
"a town I grew up in"  
historic  
unique "my landing place"  
bigoted  
kind  
potential  
"my father & my grandfather"  
very quiet  
charming  
friendly  
sanctuary

### The project so far...

Testing the Vision  
Our Future Talbot is ...

### Join the Talbot Futures Design Lab!

### Postcard Competition Winner

### 7 Fast Facts about Talbot

- 3 possible growth projections for Talbot have been defined.
- 39 lots are vacant in Talbot
- 70% of locals are aged over 50.
- Most of the former shops on Scandinavian Crescent have been converted to private homes.

And the day came when the risk to remain tight in a boat was more painful than the risk to break it.

Talbot Futures News is a community project... [talbot.com.au](http://talbot.com.au)





# LOVE/LOSE/BAN/ BRING

## WHAT LOCALS LOVE

The list of things people love about Talbot is long, at the top of the list are; the people, sense of history & heritage buildings, peace & quiet, small country town feel and the fact that the streets were for people before cars

People also said they loved the strong sense of community, volunteering culture, willingness to embrace diversity, relaxed atmosphere and friendliness

They love having space, bird life, fresh air, getting out to play sports or exercise with the community and the night sky.

The pub, London House café, the Markets, Post Office, the CFA, train station and the proximity to Melbourne were all mentioned.

## WHAT LOCALS WOULD LOSE

Many wouldn't change a thing about Talbot, others would like less gossiping and to lose clogged drains & septic tanks.

Locals would also like less small mindedness, less resistance to engaging with climate change, less racism, ocker mentality and overall less negativity.

Annoyances such as mosquitos, discarded cars, poorly maintained sidewalks and rubbish were mentioned.

## WHAT LOCALS WOULD BAN

Items people would ban are gambling & pokies, incompatible modern development in the old town centre, fast food franchises or chain stores and large renovations or high-rise buildings.

Some would like to ban modern housing, others don't want to see copycat historic home reproductions while others want to stop old shops/businesses being sold as residential. Some don't want to ban anything, and express the importance of being open and flexible.

Other items mentioned include trucks driving through town unnecessarily, anything that creates excess noise and/or pollution, parking metres and traffic lights.

## WHAT LOCALS WOULD BRING

Overwhelmingly locals would like to see more young people and families in Talbot. This is closely followed by a desire for sewerage infrastructure and good internet and internet and phone coverage.

Locals want stronger retail including fruit and veg shops, a bakery, more cafes and businesses that are open all week. Some want to bring more industry and jobs, so that there is enough population to support the shops.

Others want more art, more music, comedy, culture and events. They would like to bring film-makers and creatives to town to make creative works.

A community space, pop up food vans, speedway and/or motorbike MX track were mentioned, along with a wish to bring more humanity, patience, understanding to Talbot

# WALK & TALK PLACE AUDIT

## OVERALL EXPERIENCE OF PLACE SCORE ----- ●●●●

Visual attractiveness ----- ●●●●

Comfortable/ pleasant ----- ●●●●

Interesting ----- ●●●●○

Personality ----- ●●●●○

*"Scandinavian Lane is one of Talbot's charming laneways that needs to be preserved"*

- Talbot local

## OVERALL STREETScape SCORE ----- ●●●

Condition of commercial/private buildings ----- ●●●○

Condition of houses/ paddocks/ front yards ----- ●●●

Diversity of housing types ----- ●●●○

Condition of public buildings ----- ●●●○

Condition of the pavement ----- ●●●

Quality & condition of public amenities (lights, seating, bins etc) ----- ●●●○

Quality & condition of public art ----- ○

How well cared for the streetscape feels ----- ●●●●

Perception of safety ----- ●●●●○

*"Bluestone gutters should be restored"*

- Local

*"The footpaths that exist are good, but plenty of streets don't have them"*

- Talbot Local

## OVERALL URBAN FUNCTION SCORE ----- ●●●●

Layout & connections ----- ●●●●

Walkability ----- ●●●●

Accessibility ----- ●●●

Parking ----- ●●●●

Pedestrian safety ----- ●●●●

*"You need local knowledge to appreciate the walk around"*

*"We need to do a better job of telling our story"*

- Local residents

## PLACE BRAND ----- ●●●○



# TALBOT FUTURES GENERATOR OUTPUTS

Participants were asked to make a series of decisions and trade-offs around both strategic and day-to-day aspects of life in Talbot.

**Community Talbot:** a town with strong social networks and a community feel

**Township Talbot:** a Talbot town centre with denser built form, strong township identity & increased activity

**Sustainable Talbot:** a town which grows at a steady pace and minimises negative impacts on the environment and resources

**Expanded Talbot:** a town that relies on resources outside the town boundary, and is car dependent

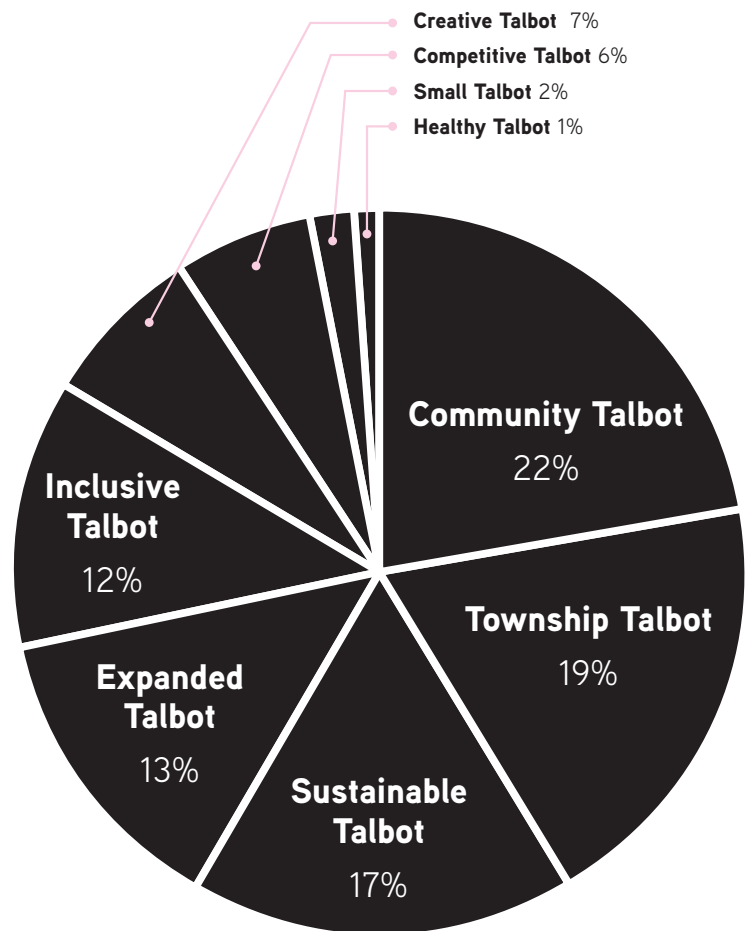
**Inclusive Talbot:** a town which prioritises fairness, equality & social cohesion

**Creative Talbot:** a place that embraces and supports innovation, learning, creativity & personal expression

**Competitive Talbot:** a fast growing town and economy where businesses have a strong voice

**Small Talbot:** a quiet, small town with slow growth & a strong focus on history

**Healthy Talbot:** a town where there are exceptional levels of health & wellbeing



## KEY RESEARCH INSIGHTS

- Key community priorities include;
  - maintaining strong social networks
  - slow growth
  - increased demographics of families and young people
  - improved mobile and internet service
  - ensuring new development matches the look and feel of the heritage buildings
  - a town centre with denser built form, strong township identity & increased activity including food and beverage choices, pharmacy, GP and an independent supermarket
- Key community assets include;
  - strong culture of volunteerism, positive balance of doers and gatekeepers
  - community led spaces/organisations including the library and the museum
  - heritage buildings, attractive built form
  - commuter train
  - mix of productive land, housing and natural landscapes
  - positive brand in comparison to other small townships in the region
- There are not currently many indoor community gathering or third spaces, during the week most businesses closed, the library is only open two days a week
- A perception of too many unused lots and poorly maintained front yards
- Big gaps in retail offer, no supermarket/ pharmacy/ bakery/ produce, people leave town to shop and spend money
- Talbot sits close to the Hepburn Shire boundary which was redrawn in 1994 and maintains a stronger connection with Cresswick and Clunes than some other Central Goldfields towns such as Dunolly, Bealiba

## TALKING SEWERAGE

The majority of respondents we heard from told us that Talbot needed a sewerage upgrade, we have only heard from 2 respondents who are opposed to it.

Those in favour objected to the current smell of blocked drains and septic smells, and wanted to see increased environmental sustainability and development and growth.

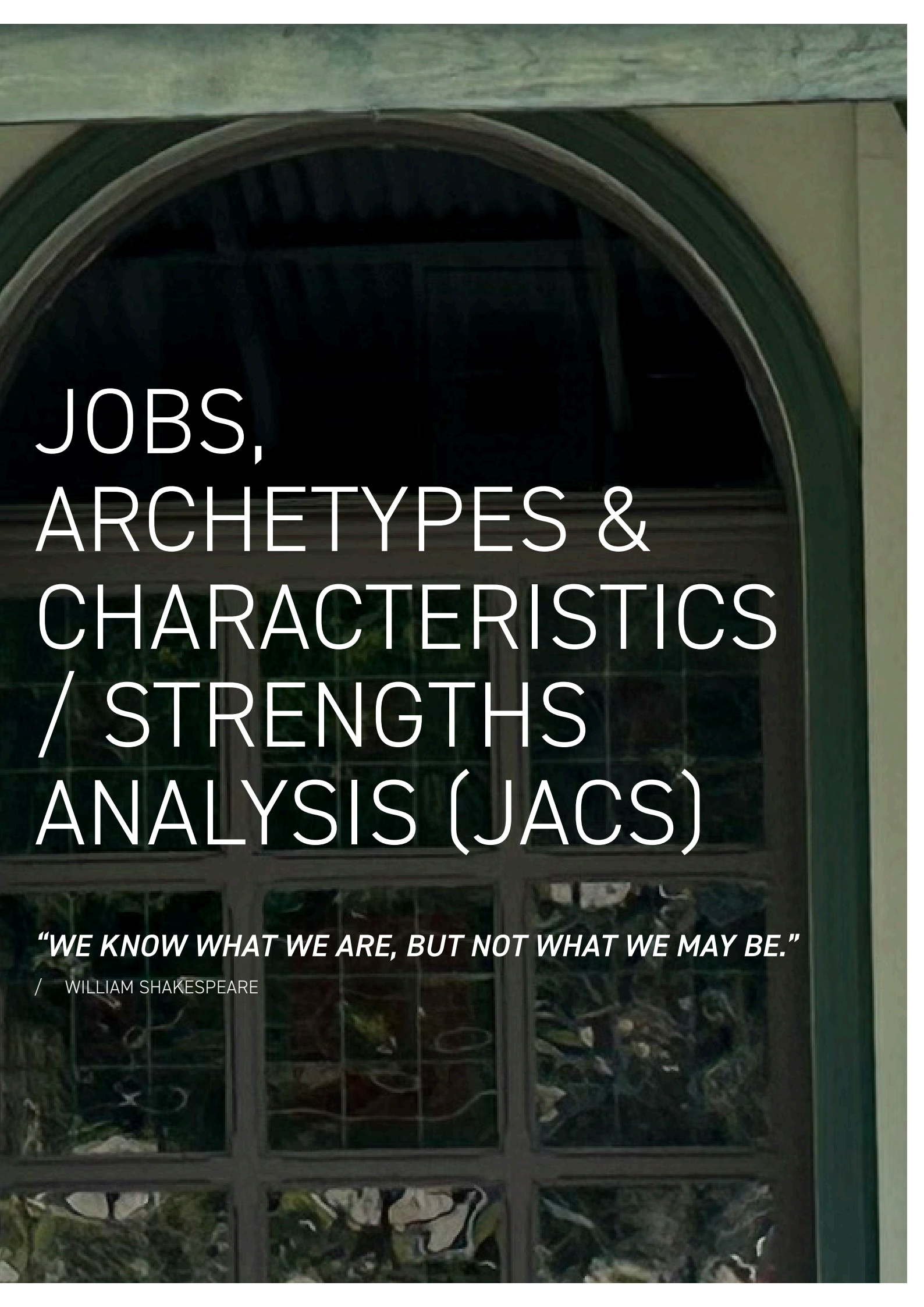
While the vast majority of participants firmly support sewerage upgrades, it is possible that objections will emerge once specific sewerage design options and more information on the implications of these are available.

The following concerns and questions were raised by residents who were both for and against a sewerage upgrade;

- cost of initial connection
- damage to gardens during installation
- ongoing cost of being connected particularly for residents on a fixed income
- increase in rates
- locations of settling ponds and tanks
- general disruption during installation







# JOB, ARCHETYPES & CHARACTERISTICS / STRENGTHS ANALYSIS (JACS)

*"WE KNOW WHAT WE ARE, BUT NOT WHAT WE MAY BE."*

/ WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE



# FUNCTION & IDENTITY SNAPSHOT

Talbot township's identity and its significance cannot be easily separated into neat compartments or a list of things to keep or discard without reverting to inaccurate stereotypes. As stated above, identity is a cocktail, constantly changing in the space between people and place.

Talbot township is significant because of what it is and for what it does for people. To change the township is to change the identity of the people and the community. However, this also works in reverse; economic success and vibrancy is tied to economic, social and cultural usefulness.

To describe the identity and function of the Talbot township, and to deal with its complexity, we have captured a snapshot of the identity of the town as it is today. This snapshot attempts to capture the core qualities of the complex and fluid identity of the town by defining 3 jobs, 4 archetypes and 5 characteristics.

## 3 KEY JOBS

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Social and Economic Inclusion of  
Older People

Support for Personal Expression

Cultural & Historical  
Reproduction & Continuity

## 4 MAIN ARCHETYPES

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Salt of Earth

The Story Tellers

The Protectors

The Passionate Amateurs

## 5 CORE STRENGTHS

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Refuge

Community Heart

Custodians

Beauty to Share

In Nature, Under  
Stars





# HOW TO USE THE JACS ANALYSIS

Consider the full range of **jobs** the township does for the community both tangible and intangible and primary and secondary. Use these jobs to assess how changes to these might affect how local communities and vendors use and value the township.

Use the **archetypes** to think through and evaluate planning and decisions and how each of the archetypes might respond to the ideas and concepts. Use the archetypes as a way to consider your key users in the decision-making process when they can't be there in person. They will help keep a focus on people and their core needs, wants and desires.

Use the **core strengths** as a touchstone to guide decisions about what changes might enhance or erode the identity of Talbot township.

## 3 KEY JOBS

It is useful to think of the township as having jobs to do. If these jobs are not done or done well people will stop 'hiring' Talbot, and choose to live, work, invest and shop elsewhere. *The Jobs to Be Done* (JTBD) model is a simple way to think about how decisions will affect Talbot in the future..

If we think of the township as a service, the consumer (resident/business owner) hires the township to achieve definable outcomes. Often the outcomes the township is hired to deliver for the user are hidden or intangible.

The JTBD approach can help make clear the tangible and intangible jobs of the township. We suggest using this metaphor as a way to think about the people who hire the Talbot township and what they need it to do over 4 time frames; now, over the next 5 years, over the lifetime of current residents of the region, for future residents not yet born.

### How do possible sewerage upgrades fit into the Jobs to Be Done model (JTBD)?

One way to think about proposed sewerage upgrades is that any funding provided by the state is a way for the community of Victoria to pay Talbot to take on a new job; providing new housing to accommodate a share of the increasing state-wide demand

A core aspect of this study and the overall Talbot Futures project is to understand if and how Talbot can take on this new job without damaging the core existing function and identity of the township.

### Unreconciled History

Trauma, untold, unreconciled, negative or disruptive aspects of history are inevitably a part of the job of cultural & historical reproduction and continuity in most parts of this continent.

Negative aspects of history and culture that perpetuates and reinforces systemic injustice, violence and trauma are often knitted into more positive aspects of a historical legacy.

When these negative elements have the power to influence current residents, visitors and investors then they may erode or corrupt the ability of the town to effectively provide cultural & historical reproduction and continuity. This may take the form of damaging the brand or reputation of a place, harming members of the community or impacting a sense of cultural connection and pride in place.

If these negative elements are not addressed and are allowed to have significant impact on community members or gain visibility then the town may no longer be able to do the job, and may be 'fired' by potential investors, visitors and new or existing residents?

If these tensions are not addressed and become visible they can lead to people 'firing' a place as it fails to do the job expected. Typically communities take one of 2 approaches, erasing and suppressing the negative elements of history or finding ways to actively engage with, process and reconcile the corrupting or counter-productive elements.

In Talbot negative elements include the relationship of the township to the larger intergenerational poverty of the region and the way that township deals with Aboriginal history, Country and Culture.

## TALBOT TOWNSHIP HAS 3 PRIMARY JOBS TO DO:

<b>1. Social &amp; Economic Inclusion of Older People</b>	<b>2. Civic Engagement &amp; Personal Expression</b>	<b>3. Cultural &amp; Historical Reproduction &amp; Continuity</b>
<p>Talbot township provides resources, structures, relationships and systems which allow local residents to age in place with a good quality of life.</p> <p>While Talbot doesn't offer some important tangible resources for older people that are available in nearby towns such as hospitals, comprehensive health services and regular local public transport options, the specific form and dynamic of local amenities, economy and society are highly valued by older residents.</p>	<p>Talbot is a place of artists, crafters, passionate amateurs, wood carvers, potters, gardeners, makers, car lovers and avid collectors.</p> <p>Large lots, detached houses and sheds allow this activity to thrive along with affordable shopfronts, studios and market stalls which provide opportunities to publish or sell works.</p> <p>The small population and affordability means there is little competition for or barriers to access spaces and resources, quite the opposite, community members are actively recruited and invited to take part in creative and cultural activities and to share the fruit of their endeavours.</p>	<p>Talbot provides locals with the opportunity to actively participate in the rich living history and culture of the place. This takes its most obvious form in Gold Rush history and Dja Dja Wurrung history and living Culture, but it is also present in family history, farming, intergenerational businesses.</p> <p>Locals take part in the expression of their history and culture in practical and personal ways including working bees to maintain community assets, historically sensitive restoration of historical properties, opening their homes and gardens to neighbours and the public, creating and volunteering around museums, artworks and historical projects.</p>
<b>Primary job to be done:</b>	<b>Related job to be done:</b>	<b>Related job to be done:</b>
<b>Functional:</b> provides pleasant walkable streets, public transport, affordable housing and spaces to come together	<b>Functional:</b> provides multiple, affordable, accessible and connected/networked spaces and opportunities to showcase passions and creations in low-stakes and supported way	<b>Functional:</b> provides historical environment and structures to allow people to come together to preserve and celebrate history and cultural traditions and expression
<b>Emotional:</b> sense of safety, stability, peacefulness and human connection	<b>Emotional:</b> satisfaction in creative expression, connection around ideas and values	<b>Emotional:</b> helps people connect with their culture and community through social interactions, collaboration and historically complex environments.
<b>Personal:</b> financial security, comfort and convenience, opportunities to take meaningful volunteer & leadership roles	<b>Personal:</b> opportunity to express individuality, and explore creative practice or personal interests with the community	<b>Personal:</b> helps locals continue traditions across generations and put down deep roots
<b>Social:</b> secure social and civic networks, high social capital and rates of volunteering, significant time, resources and skill available for community use	<b>Social:</b> community values are clearly expressed throughout the township, including retail focused on art and ideas, community gardens, flowerpots and chalk drawings on the footpath.	<b>Social:</b> reinforces group identities and value within the community



## 4 CORE ARCHETYPES

Who are the people of Talbot? This is a primary question to ask as it is the activity and values of people that make spaces into meaningful places.

A diverse range of people live, work and visit Talbot. In order to make sense of these groups and what they want and need in the future we have examined the community from a behavioural and environmental perspective. We looked at what people think and do as well as key demographic drivers.

The usefulness of this approach is that it gives us a more human-centred understanding of the practical and emotional connections people have with Talbot, and how possible changes to place may be experienced differently.

Each of the archetypes includes a map of how that type typically fits key demographic characteristics and values. These archetypes should be used as a way to test decisions and play out scenario planning.

These archetypes are broad categories that help to define and capture the different characteristics and perspectives of people who make up the community of Talbot. They should not be used to reduce any given person to a specific type, most people will be a mix of 2 or more types, and will identify with one or more aspects of each archetype.

How the following archetypes are expressed vary depending on the values and demographic characteristics of groups and individuals. Each of the following archetypes has two faces that reflect the demographic characteristics and values listed below:

Grew up in Talbot ← → Newcomer

Inward looking ← → Outward looking

Tight budget ← → Surplus funds

Under 65 ← → Over 65

Conservative ← → Progressive

### 1. SALT OF EARTH

*Practical, hands-on, problem solver, the person you go to when you need practical help setting up an event, or fixing something that's broken. Connected to landscape and physical place, gardener, farmer, renovator, collector, repairer.*

**Loves:** open fire in the backyard, the peace and quiet, walk with the dog in the landscape, growing veggies, building things in the shed/workshop, volunteering.

**Change they are most sensitive to:** Decreased lot/land sizes, gentrification, inflation, the effects of climate change (i.e increased bushfire/flooding events)

### 2. STORY TELLERS

*Love to share ideas, stories and connect with others. Often creative, make art or host events that bring people together. They are the hosts, connectors and the mavens, they know everyone and love to organise gatherings both big and small, formal and informal.*

**Loves:** Stopping for a yak in the middle of street, an impromptu gathering in the garden on a warm evening, a community event, inviting visitors and locals alike into their home/garden for a tour

**Change they are most sensitive to:** Changes in population, traffic or housing types that reduce social bonds, increases in formal tourism opportunities, an increase in commercial and third spaces

### 3. PROTECTORS

*These are the gatekeepers, they know the town's history and gossip. They might come from a long line of Talbot locals or have chosen to live in Talbot recently, but either way they have a deep interest in knowing, sharing and maintaining the history of the town and are willing to give their time, energy and funds to preserve it. Because of this investment, they are particularly sensitive to change, tend to regard it with suspicion and may want a higher degree of control over it. They are attuned to the challenges faced by some and are fierce protectors when they feel their community is under threat*

**Loves:** The historic built form and urban fabric, sharing stories about people and place, being a local leader, advocating for preservation, advocating against measures they see threaten the key qualities of the town, producing community newsletters, supporting initiatives, businesses and institutions that they believe benefit the community.

**Change they are most sensitive to:** Any kind of changes to built form or landscape that existed pre-1950, rises in the cost of living that may disadvantage people on low/fixed incomes, population growth, gentrification

### 4. PASSIONATE AMATEURS

*The collectors, traders, makers, gardeners, cooks, bush walkers, animal breeders, sports enthusiasts and artists. The word amateur here doesn't reflect on the level of skill or accomplishment, but just the fact that the people in this group take these activities very seriously and are not primarily motivated by money. Happiest when active, these people always have a project on the go and while they may not see their activities as their occupation and it may or may not generate income, it's a significant part of their lifestyle and identity.*

**Loves:** Creating or organising community events, community gardens, murals, skill sharing, local collaboration, new ideas

**Change they are most sensitive to:** Loss of cheap rent and affordable spaces, changes to the population so that they no longer have access to their audience, change in community values in relation to non-commercial arts and curation practice



# 5 CORE STRENGTHS OF TALBOT TOWNSHIP

*The rich and dynamic identity of Talbot township can be experienced in many ways.*

*We have simplified these complex intangible and tangible qualities into the following 5 core characteristics/ strengths.*

## **1. REFUGE**

A place to slow down, age in place, find peace and quiet and meaningful face to face connections. A place for gardening, reading and reflection. A place where you can stand in the middle of a street and have a chat with a neighbour. A place to enjoy retirement/semi-retirement and the third age.

## **2. COMMUNITY HEART**

Busy and generous locals who pitch in and invest time in their community and each other, seeing the local footy team, belonging to a club/ committee, participating in outdoor exercise. Cuppas at each other's houses, evening walks, giving your neighbour a lift to a medical appointment, taking initiative and pride in place.

## **3. CUSTODIANS**

A town that has embraced the legacy of the Gold Rush and taken on the role of caretakers in its complexity and fullness. Locals volunteering to run museums, restore antique machinery, sweep out bluestone drains, and maintain, restore and register heritage buildings. Despite the challenges of declining infrastructure and insufficient preservation mechanisms, locals remain steady in their mission to keep history alive. Multi generations of families growing up in Talbot with deep connections to its past and wishing to pass on the stories and legacies to a new generation.

## **4. BEAUTY TO SHARE**

Home to potters, artists, curators, crafters, artisans and ornamental gardeners. A place of collaboration, creativity, community gardens at the centre of town, open garden events, Christmas lights festivals, free book racks and planter boxes on the street.

## **5. IN NATURE, UNDER STARS**

Cradled by bushland reserves , under big skies, a perfect spot for stargazing, plenty of space, uninterrupted sightlines, views of the Pyrenees, bushwalking, Back Creek.









A lush garden scene featuring a large, dense green bush with small red flowers in the background. In the foreground, there are several pink and purple flowers on green stems. To the right, a colorful birdhouse with a yellow roof and blue and red sides is visible. The overall scene is vibrant and natural.

# FINDINGS

***"WE FACE A CHOICE ... WE MUST CHANGE OR BE CHANGED. IF WE FAIL TO CHANGE FOR THE BETTER, THEN WE WILL BE CHANGED FOR THE WORSE."***

*/ WENDELL BERRY*



# HOW ACTIONS AND DECISIONS WOULD AFFECT THE CORE CHARACTERISTICS OF TALBOT TOWNSHIP

Throughout our analysis we asked 2 key questions:

1. In what ways is the Talbot different to other nearby regional towns? In what ways is it unique?
2. As Talbot township changes, what elements do you need to preserve, keep, evolve, lose and avoid to retain the critical meaning and significance of Talbot township and improve its place region?

There are 2 essential principles or characteristics that Talbot township needs to meet in order to maintain positive aspects of its current function and identity. In addition, there are 2 opposing principles and characteristics that Talbot needs to avoid. The findings in the rest of this section reflect these principles.

# HOW TO USE THE FINDINGS

Elements critical to the identity and function of Talbot town centre have been organised into the following 5 categories representing the action most likely to support the current identity:

**Keep** - the essential characteristics and functions of any item in this category should be kept however it may be moved, rebuilt, reinterpreted or be altered in minor ways without impacting the identity and function of the town centre. It must continue to be available to visitors and users.

**Preserve** - the element or quality identified must be completely preserved and retained in its current form. Its function, and entire look and feel must not be diminished by other design decisions that might lessen its value. Ideally, the location should also be preserved or the location of the element in relation to the overall built form and/or program of the space.

**Evolve** - items in this category should continue to exist but could be improved by taking on a new form, process etc. They remain important to the identity of the town centre but may, and possibly should be updated.

**Lose** - anything in this category may be removed without any significant loss to the meaning or identity of the town centre. In some cases it may improve the amenity and appeal of the area.

**Avoid** - items in this category should be considered major risks. To adopt any quality or element in this category may result in significant damage to the identity of Talbot town centre or may adversely affect the way businesses, mainstreet traders, visitors and/or residents find value and meaning in the Talbot



<b>Refuge</b>	
Keep	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Significant areas of affordable housing in the township, this may be achieved by supporting development of small lots</li> <li>• Low traffic areas outside main shopping strip and station area</li> <li>• Majority of new housing should be within walking distance of the railway station and within the existing township boundary</li> <li>• Factors that support older residents to age in place, such as affordable housing, high levels of social capital etc</li> </ul>
Preserve	None
Evolve	None
Lose	None
Avoid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overly fast growth, getting too big or having large areas under construction at once</li> <li>• New housing that is not suitable for ageing in place in terms of access, aging-in-place or cost of heating, cooling and maintenance</li> <li>• Construction causing extended disruption to existing residents</li> <li>• Hosting too many major events; locals should outnumber visitors on more than 50% of weekends</li> </ul>
<b>Community Heart</b>	
Keep	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At least 30% of the population retired or semi-retired to maintain current high levels of volunteerism</li> <li>• Slow moving traffic and pedestrian dominance along Scandinavia Crescent and adjacent area of Camp Street to maintain existing high levels of social connection</li> <li>• Support and resources for community sports and outdoor activities</li> <li>• Dense housing on small land parcels in township core</li> <li>• Cheap rent and spaces and programs with a low bar of entry that celebrate eccentricity and non-conformity</li> <li>• Slow growth, affordable housing and cost-of-living, strong social capital to preserve sense of stability and safety</li> </ul>
Preserve	None
Evolve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At least one venue that is open and serving food from 8am-8pm weekdays and 9am-9pm Saturday. This could be a restaurant, cafe, pub, food truck etc</li> </ul>
Lose	None
Avoid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Getting too big. A population of between 1,000-3,000 strikes the balance between service provision and social connection</li> </ul>
<b>Custodians</b>	
Keep	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Historical social and brand relationship with Clunes</li> <li>• The existing independently managed approach to care of privately-owned heritage buildings, although this may be formalised or subsidised</li> <li>• 100% of existing Gold Rush era buildings. although these may be modified if new additions are sympathetic to the existing streetscape</li> <li>• Scandinavian Crescent and Camp Street as the historic core of town</li> <li>• 80% of original subdivision plan including preserving small lot sizes in the historic core</li> </ul>
Preserve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 100% of built form/facades that predate the motor car</li> </ul>
Evolve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Return retail use/ public access where possible to front rooms of shop houses on Scandinavian Crescent</li> </ul>

Lose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Culturally inappropriate approach to conservation of existing Djara sacred sites</li> </ul>
Avoid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Treating the town as a museum; balance contemporary needs against impacts on historical fabric</li> <li>• Further decline in population</li> <li>• Large-format Grade A retail developments</li> <li>• 90% of new shops should mimic the grain size and main-street address of the existing retail</li> <li>• Avoid consolidating any future large format retail into shopping centres or business parks, incorporate into main street (e.g for example, Bunnings on Sydney Road, Brunswick)</li> <li>• Ad hoc look-and-feel of new built form, strict controls on built form should be applied such as Maldon Heritage Guidelines</li> <li>• Fake heritage, instead favour historically sensitive contemporary design, form, proportions, materials and colour palettes</li> </ul>
<b>Beauty to Share</b>	
Keep	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connection to local food as expressed through the farmers market and historical London House cafe site</li> <li>• Markets as a key part of the place brand, cultural and retail activity</li> <li>• Speciality and boutique retail offers worthy of visitation i.e galleries, vintage, second hand books etc.</li> <li>• Affordable rent and community spaces for makers and artists</li> <li>• Regular events such as the existing monthly markets, which allow locals to showcase their passions and creations in a low stakes and supported way</li> <li>• Culture of tolerance and celebration of both professional and amateur creative practice</li> <li>• Retail focused on art, makers, potters and rare and second-hand books and goods</li> </ul>
Preserve	None
Evolve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New and expanded fresh food and dry goods markets, consider a permanent wet and dry market rather than a standard supermarket</li> </ul>
Lose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unmaintained private properties</li> <li>• Empty, unused lots</li> </ul>
Avoid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chain stores or retail that doesn't align with a place-brand of creators, makers, antiques and old world crafts</li> </ul>
<b>In Nature, Under Stars</b>	
Keep	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Generous private gardens and green spaces in the township</li> <li>• Prominantly located cottage-style community gardens in the centre of town</li> <li>• Small houses set in big yards outside the historic core</li> <li>• Residents on Scandenavia Crescent displaying potted plants on the footpath</li> <li>• Views, sightlines and physical connection to farmland and forest from houses and streets on the outskirts of the township</li> <li>• Low levels of traffic and cars outside the main streets</li> </ul>
Preserve	None
Evolve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A stronger connection to Back Creek</li> <li>• Buildings that are resilient to fire and flood</li> </ul>
Lose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overflow from sewerage into natural waterways to preserve the health of the creeks etc</li> </ul>
Avoid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any new development that blocks sightlines, big sky views</li> </ul>





A photograph of a street sign for 'LONDON HOUSE'. The sign is black with white, sans-serif capital letters. It is mounted on a black pole and is tilted upwards. The background is a bright blue sky filled with fluffy white clouds. The sign is positioned in the lower-left corner of the frame, extending towards the center-right.

LONDON HOUSE





# APPENDICES

*“AND THE DAY CAME WHEN THE RISK TO  
REMAIN TIGHT IN A BUD WAS MORE PAINFUL  
THAN THE RISK IT TOOK TO BLOSSOM.”*

/ ANAIS NIN

# APPENDIX 1: NOTES FOR PROJECT TEAM

## **MORE DETAILS OF ENGAGEMENT PARTICIPATION**

We've had over 116 submissions to the project to date, with 55 separate individual participants over the life of the project.

Note that some participants have taken part in more than one engagement activity.

<b>Engagement Activity</b>	<b>Responses</b>
Walk & Talk	19
Design Lab	13
My Talbot Is Survey	19
Possible Futures Generator	16
Digging Into The Details Survey	23
Face to face - informal conversations	8
In depth interviews	2
Photo challenge submissions	10
Postcard Activity submissions	8
Submitted articles and materials	2
Individual submission - letter	1







