

4 PRECINCT A: THE RIVER

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The River Precinct borders the town to the north and east and includes the Arrow River, Bush Creek and their environs. (See Plan 2, page A-2). This area is integral to the history of gold mining, which led to the development of Arrowtown and is, therefore, of great importance to the historic interpretation and understanding of the town's evolution, context and setting.

The Chinese settlement is a tangible reminder of the goldmining era and is represented today by a combination of historic buildings and plantings and re-created miner's huts.

The River Precinct is a major natural and recreational asset for the town. It offers opportunities for walking, river play, gold panning and passive enjoyment of the river environment.

4.2 GUIDELINES: PRECINCT A: THE RIVER

A 1 DEVELOPMENT OF THE RIVER ENVIRONMENT

This Precinct has a semi-wild, natural riverbed character that is appropriate to this historic context for Arrowtown. This character is reinforced by the informality and overgrown nature of the vegetation. For example, in places, long grass and woodland flank narrow paths. Such areas give rise to the sense of timelessness and naturalness that are important to the context for Arrowtown and are part of the river experience.

It is important not to blur the edge between the town and the river environs. In recent years activities such as parking, mini golf and the skateboard park have encroached into the river environment adjacent to the town centre. This has detracted from the historic context and integrity of Arrowtown and reduced the important values of naturalness and semi-wildness. Urban type activities or a 'manicured', neat and tidy regime must not be allowed to dominate this area. There may be a need for urban park type recreation activities as a consequence of the increase in



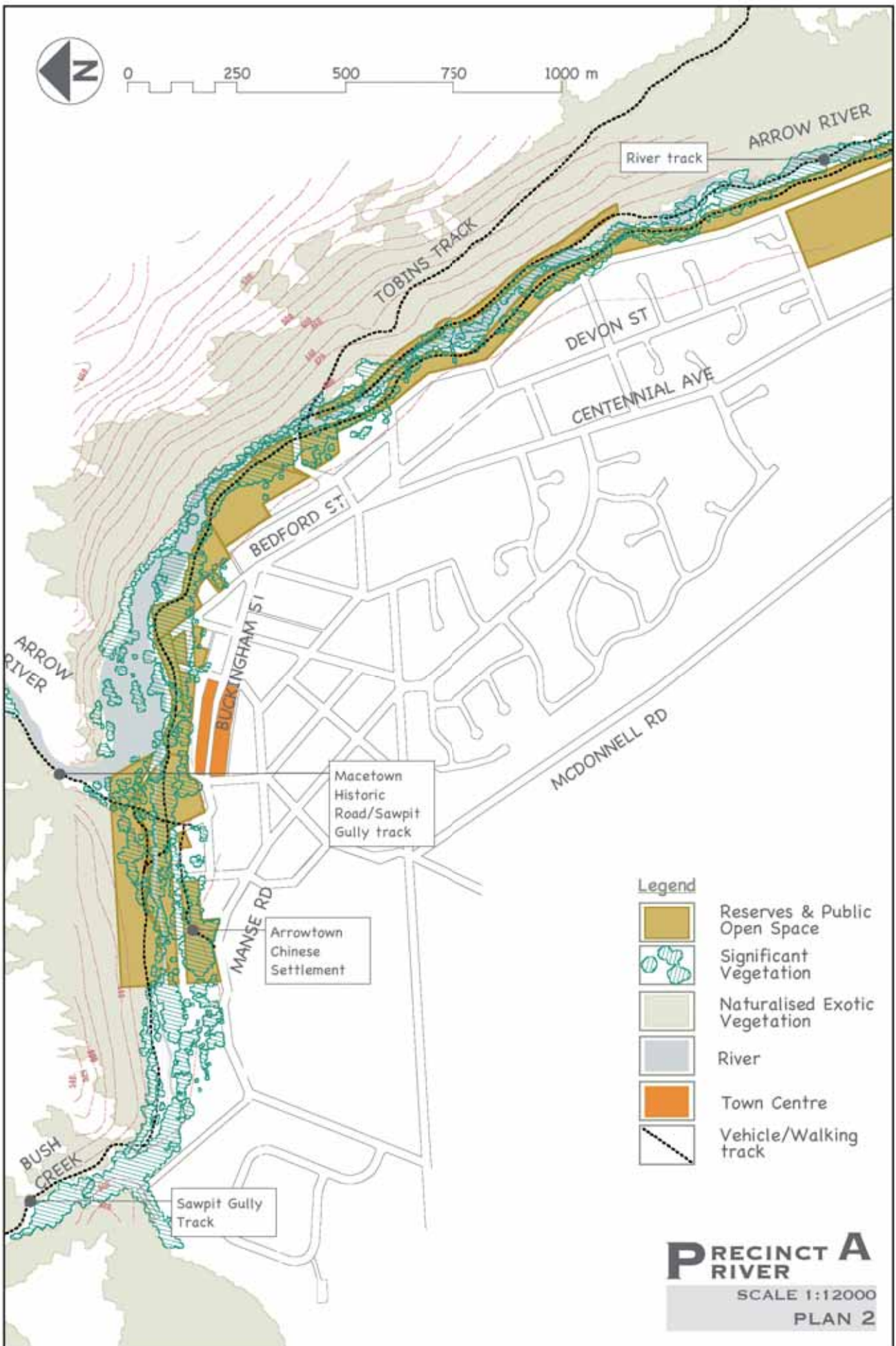
Mining in the Arrow River adjacent to the town 1875. Lakes District Museum.



River-town interface c. 1890. Lakes District Museum.



People enjoying the river environs.



the permanent population of Arrowtown, however their location needs to be addressed in a comprehensive way. The further placement of such activities in this sensitive river environs needs careful consideration. An urban park type environment is not appropriate.

It is important to retain the visual separation of the river environs from the Town Centre. While visual connections from the Town Centre to the river area are appropriate and important the 'veil of willows' (and other trees) between the urban areas and the river environment greatly enhances the character of Arrowtown. The way to achieve and retain this character is by selected framed glimpses or views as opposed to the clear felling that has occurred above the skateboard park. This has had the effect of opening up the river environs too much and adversely affecting both the river environs and Ramshaw Lane experience. Over clearing also serves to remove the backdrop to vehicles parked on the north of Ramshaw Lane, increasing their domination. Some replanting is required.

GUIDELINES: DEVELOPMENT OF THE RIVER ENVIRONS

G The semi-wild character and historic context provided by the river environment must not be further compromised.

- 1 Protect the semi-wild character of the river environment. Do not create an urban park type environment.
- 2 Retain the visual connection between the Town Centre and River Environs. Frame glimpses and views to the river with trees rather than clear felling to retain a level of separation between the Town Centre and the River Environs. Reinstate trees in areas where too many trees have been removed i.e between the bus park and the river.
- 3 The use of the river environs for urban uses/activities needs careful consideration. The issue of where these types of activities can be located needs to be addressed on an Arrowtown wide basis.
- 4 Limit the spread/impact of parking and vehicle use within the river environs (See A3 Vehicles and Parking, page A-6).

- 5 A landscape management/development plan is required for the River Precinct with public consultation being part of the process.
- 6 Any development or modification to the river environs should be part of this landscape management/development plan.

A 2 RIVER VEGETATION

The dominant trees within the River Precinct are crack willow and to a lesser extent poplar, sycamore and rowan. All these species date from early times and contribute significantly to the wooded character and amenity of the river environs. Even though some of the species are classified as wildings, their historic and/or amenity values are important and an outcome from the Arrowtown Community Workshops was that this deciduous treed character was a distinctive attribute of Arrowtown and should be retained and contained. Wilding conifers however were identified for removal.

The willows were originally planted to protect the town from flooding, and have historic significance; similarly the species such as poplar often indicate a cultural site. The retention and dominance of the willows (and other existing species) is important for heritage and visual character.

Within this dominant framework of existing species the diversity of vegetation within the river environs can be increased by the addition of native plants found naturally along the Arrow River eg olearia, coprosma, hebe and carex species. Other plants brought in by the miners and which have spread naturally i.e. fruiting trees, shrubs (plum, almond, raspberry, herbs eg marjoram) would be appropriate. Noxious weeds detract from areas and require management.



Wilcox Green



Willows planted to protect town c1900
Lakes District Museum

GUIDELINES: RIVER VEGETATION

G Protect and respect vegetation within the River environment.

G Retain the dominance of existing tree species in new plantings.

- 1 Retain and protect willows as the dominant species, together with vegetation with historic association, within the river environs.
- 2 No further removal of vegetation should occur other than to retain glimpses to the river. Replanting needs to take place in some areas. (See A1 Development of the River Environment, page A-1, and A5 River Reserves Adjacent to Residential Arrowtown, page A-7).
- 3 In areas with high public use some tree management/maintenance will be necessary for public safety and use. Limited judicious pruning and removal of lower branches are appropriate in these areas.
- 4 Replace diseased and old trees with same species, (or species of similar form), and plan for renewal in accordance with a replanting programme.
- 5 Tree removal and maintenance must be in accordance with a landscape management plan.
- 6 The plants, planting style and type of maintenance need to be appropriate to the existing character of the river environs. (For species refer those listed in explanation).
- 7 Control noxious weeds within the river environs.



Historic poplars.

A 3 VEHICLES AND PARKING

Vehicle use and parking areas are adversely affecting the character and quality of the river environment adjacent to the Town Centre (and elsewhere). Cars (movement and parking) dominate on busy days and expanses of gravel on non-busy days. In the summer high recreational use gives rise to user conflicts and safety issues, in particular in the vicinity of the main vehicle river crossings. Any development plan should investigate options to reduce this conflict.

4WD vehicle and trail bike use have also increased in the river environs reducing the enjoyment for more passive types of recreation. Such use is noisy and disruptive and needs to be prevented.

GUIDELINES: VEHICLES AND PARKING

G Restrict parking and vehicles to designated areas.

- 1 Parking for the Town Centre should not impact further on the semi-wildness and naturalness of the river environs.
- 2 There must be no adhoc extensions of parking areas.
- 3 Informal overflow parking for peak periods (Christmas, Easter, Autumn Festival) could occur in the larger river flat areas.
- 3 At other times limit vehicles to clearly designated and defined areas. Create small pockets of discrete informal parking partially screened from each other and the town by vegetation. No large expanses of parked vehicles. Gravel or occasionally mown grass are surfaces appropriate surfaces. No chipseal or sealed surfaces.
- 4 Minimize the conflict (and safety issue) between recreational users and vehicles in particular where vehicles cross the river.
- 5 Parking and vehicle movement should be in accordance with a landscape development/ management plan.
- 6 Trail bike and 4 WD use needs to be addressed.



Large areas of hard surface can detract from the qualities of the river.



Car parking in the river environs adjacent to Town Centre.

A 4 WALKWAYS

Walking tracks allow for passive use and enjoyment of the river area. Their design, construction and maintenance should be appropriate to the natural, semi-wild nature of the river environment. Arrowtown walkways are well used and new tracks would be welcomed.

GUIDELINES: WALKWAYS

G Walkway maintenance should retain the natural, semi-wild river environs.

G Add to the walkway network.

- 1 Tracks to be low key and rural.
- 2 Avoid excessive cuts and fills (use small machinery).
- 3 Keep the use of spray to a minimum along walkways.



Path and stairway to Ramshaw Lane

A 5 RIVER RESERVES ADJACENT TO RESIDENTIAL ARROWTOWN.

The recent clearing of broom adjacent to new subdivision, while commendable, has resulted in the river environs and walkway losing their value as semi-wild, rural and secluded places close to town.

In some other locations expanses of grass have over time replaced trees adjacent to more established residential areas. This can threaten and erode the values of the walkway environs.

A plan needs to be prepared to facilitate reinstatement of these lost qualities.



Northern entrance to Arrow River track.

GUIDELINES: RIVER RESERVES ADJACENT TO RESIDENTIAL AREAS

G Retain the visual separation between the River Environs and residential areas.

- 1 Replant trees and vegetation to screen walkway users from residential development and to reinstate the semi-wild character where it has been lost. Use species that fit the character of the river environs.
- 2 Prepare landscape plans for the reserve areas adjacent to new subdivisions and integrate planting with the river environs. (See A2 River Vegetation, page A-4).
- 3 See NT 4 Private Sections and Reserve Boundaries, page NT-29, for the treatment of private sections adjacent to the river reserve.



Residential Arrowtown fully exposed from the walkway.

A 6 UTILITIES, SIGNS AND STRUCTURES

Public utilities, signs and structures can have significant adverse effects on the environment. Signs and structures should be planned to relate to their particular context. Utilities should be sited and designed for minimum impact on character and use. Only essential utilities and structures should be located within the river environs.

GUIDELINES: UTILITIES, SIGNS AND STRUCTURES

G Locate and design buildings and signs to complement the context and site.

G Locate and design utilities for minimum adverse effects on the river environs.

- 1 Screen existing utilities, such as the sewerage pump stations, with the use of planting appropriate to the character of the river environs.
- 2 Keep structures to the minimum in the river environs.



Screen structures with planting