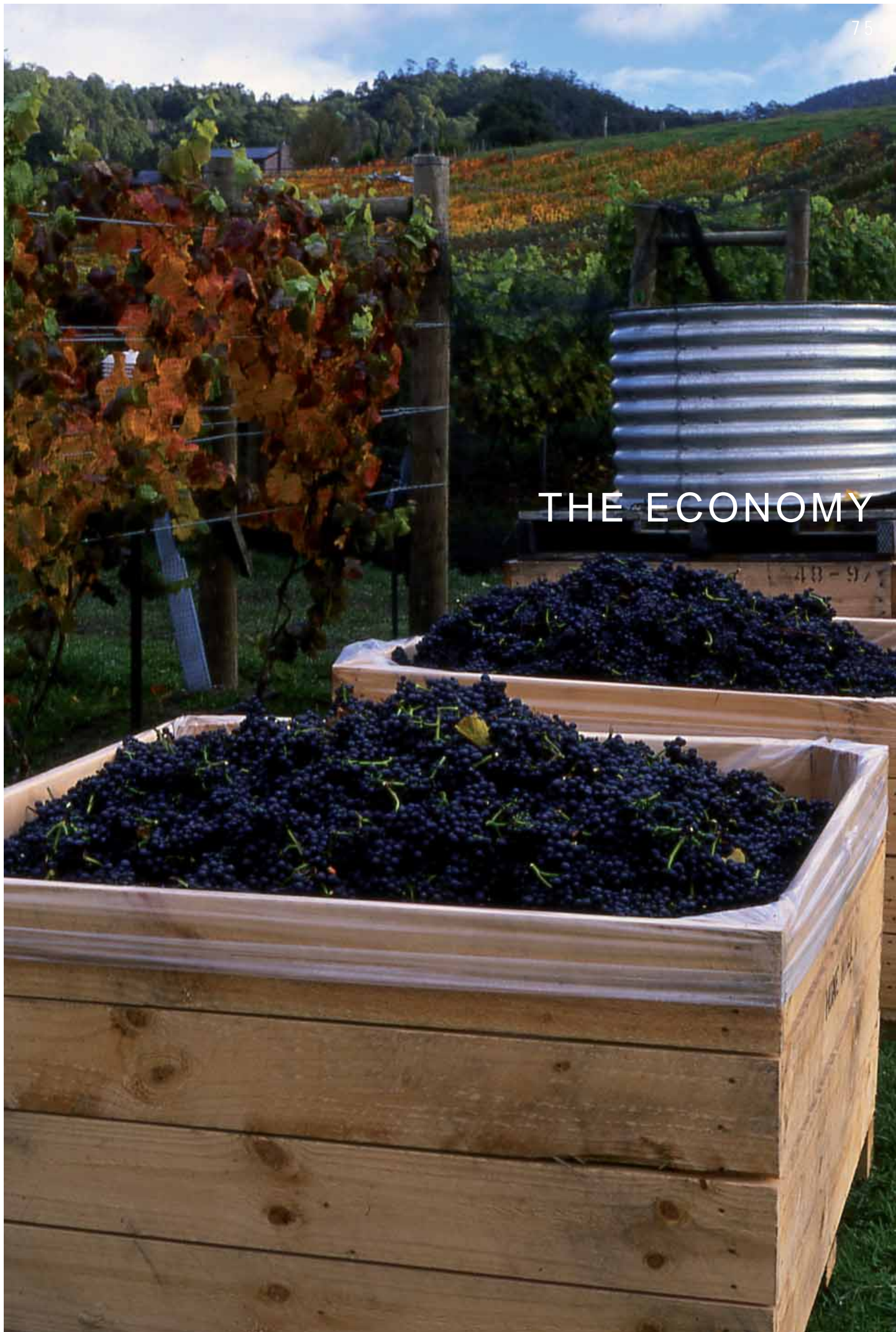


THE ECONOMY



Development within the municipal area has been closely related to the natural resource base of the area. Vibrant agricultural, forestry and fishing industries in the area have developed as result of favourable climatic conditions, large areas of productive land and coastline, reliable water supplies and abundant fish and other marine life.

Natural resource based industries in their various guises continue to provide the economic lifeblood of the municipal area as well as contributing to the economic well being of the State.

Agriculture, forestry and fishing (including aquaculture) are the largest employment sector in the Huon Valley, accounting for 17.3% of the area's workforce (ABS 2006). This sector has however seen a proportionate decrease since 2001 when it was 21.3% of the total workforce. Other sectors include retail (10.7% - down 1.6% since 2001) and manufacturing (9.0% - down 3.9% since 2001). Some of the largest increases in employment since 2001 are in industries largely based outside of the municipal area such as Public Administration & Safety (7.2% - up 1.2% since 2001).

In more recent years, the growth in visitors to the Huon Valley has made tourism related development increasingly important for the economy of the region. The main economic sectors that will be effected by, or impact upon, the planning scheme are therefore forestry, agriculture, aquaculture, tourism and light industrial (e.g. manufacturing). These will each be dealt with in more detail in the following sections.

The viability of agricultural, forestry and fishing industries are dependent on the sustainable management of natural resources. Maintaining the condition of the local natural resources is essential for sustaining such industries as well as the broader economic, environmental and social values of the Huon Valley. A major challenge for the Council will be the strategic development of all industries in the municipal area, while maintaining or enhancing all these values. Key issues relating to the Strategy include:

- Protection of agricultural land;
- Off-site impacts of forestry activities;
- Aquaculture.

The extent of agricultural and forestry practices is roughly indicated by the land tenure. The following table summarises the extent of each land tenure in the Huon Valley.

Land Tenure	Approximate Area (ha)
Private Land	77,335
State Forest	122,512
Reserved Land	346,126
Total	545,973

Appendix E shows the extent of each land tenure in the Huon Valley municipal area.

Most private land is utilised for agriculture, although small areas have been recently converted to tree plantations. Private land is administered under the land-use planning jurisdiction of the Huon Valley Council, except where land is a declared Private Timber Reserve. Forestry Tasmania is the authorised agency responsible for managing State Forests while the Forest Practices Board is responsible for private timber reserves.

Parks and Wildlife Service manages the South West World Heritage Area, national parks, coastal reserves and other State reserves. Land under the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1970* is also controlled by the *Land Use Planning and Approvals Act 1993* and hence development

of this land is relevant to this strategy and the new planning scheme. It is recommended that a schedule covering Reserved Lands under the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1970* and Public Reserves under the *Crown Lands Act 1976* is incorporated in the planning scheme.

Agriculture

Background

The first permanent settlement in the Huon was in 1835. The early development of the timber industry assisted the agricultural development of the area as farmers acquired cleared land or sold timber cleared from their land. Agricultural industries based on apples, berry fruits, stone fruits and hops were soon established. The first orchards were planted in about 1838 at Garden Island Creek and grew steadily until by 1936 apple and pear orchards stretched almost continuously from Grove to Geeveston and from Huonville to Cygnet.

The apple industry was affected by exposure to the world economy in the 1970's as competition and international policy changes saw a loss of traditional markets. Apple processing factories operated at Geeveston, Franklin and Cygnet. Only the Franklin and Cygnet facilities remain and are two of only a handful of examples of downstream processing of agricultural products undertaken in the municipal area.

The decline in the industry has only recently been arrested through the development of new markets, new varieties and a move toward larger orchards and more efficient production. Over the past 20 years, the minimum viable farm size for an orchard has increased from 10 hectares or so to about 30 hectares - a trend which is likely to continue in the future (HCHRP 1997). While the value of apple production has decreased the Huon Valley still accounts for 90% of total apple production in Tasmania (45,000 tonnes in 2005 or 15% of the nation crops) (Apple & Pear Association 2004). Tasmania however remains the largest apple exporting State with a total of 55% of overseas exports. Large cherry orchards are increasingly being established where apples were once grown.

Where orcharding does not occur, gentle to moderate sloping land is used primarily for beef and sheep production. During summer and autumn months, occasional cultivation is undertaken for the purpose of pasture establishment/renovation or occasional fodder crops of lucerne and oats. Coastal sandy areas tend to support grazing enterprises.

There is a continuing diversification of agricultural enterprises in the municipal area. In some areas, traditional agricultural enterprises (such as grazing, cropping and orcharding) are gradually being replaced with non-traditional farming enterprises such as viticulture, cherries, hazelnut and olives. These occur on a smaller scale where suitable soil types and microclimates exist and are often undertaken using organic farming practices.

The Importance of Agricultural Land

Like many agricultural areas within Tasmania, the Huon Valley supports a range of agricultural activities that include traditional cropping and grazing enterprises and increasingly lucrative industries relating to viticulture and orcharding enterprises. These current and potential industries are some of the most valuable assets that drive the economy. In the municipal area, agriculture remains the major economic driver and is subsequently the biggest employer.

Wedged between spectacular mountains and coastal scenery, the municipal area offers some

tourism potential in the local area, as well as contributing to a sense of place among the local population.

Owing to its most southerly latitude and surrounding topography, the agricultural areas within the municipal area are likely to experience relatively high rainfall levels in the long term. This is in contrast to other areas of Australia that are predicted to suffer ongoing adverse conditions. This places the municipal area in a potentially lucrative and enviable position in the future, as agricultural produce throughout the nation increasingly becomes a premium commodity.

The attractive landscape and recent economic declines in the apple industry, has also lead to a proliferation of non-resource development (i.e residential development and particularly rural residential developments) within rural areas. Unfortunately the 'bleeding' of non-resource development into rural areas constitute a gradual but significant threat to the potential for a wide range of agricultural activities that occur in the local area. The *State Policy for the Protection of Agricultural Land 2000* (PAL Policy) is a direct response to the threatening process of unchecked non-resource development in rural areas throughout Tasmania.

State Policy on the Protection of Agricultural Land

The *State Policies and Projects Act 1993* provides for the making of State Policies and requires that all existing and new planning scheme be consistent with these policies. Therefore the PAL Policy is an important consideration for this Strategy.

The PAL Policy came into effect in October 2000. In essence this policy seeks to protect land as a resource related to agricultural production. However, in the 6 years that the policy has been in operation there has been a varied response across Tasmanian Councils as to how the policy should be interpreted. As a result the PAL Policy is currently under review.

The draft of the PAL Policy review is intended to make clear that Prime Agricultural Land (Class 1, 2 & 3) must be protected (the municipal area has only a small parcel of Class 3 land and no Class 1 or 2). However in addition, it identifies the concept of 'Significant' agricultural land. This term has not been defined. Moreover, the PAL Policy review identifies that 'significant' agricultural land must be identified at the local level. In the context of the Huon Valley, given the long term importance to the economy and community, it has been determined that the extent of existing farm land would generally be consistent with the concept of 'significant' agricultural land (this particularly relates to the Class 4 & 5 land), except where the has already been fettered to a high degree by residential type development.

The State Government through the PAL Policy review is also emphasising that the PAL Policy is only one factor in the determination of appropriate land use directions for rural areas and ultimately the strategic directions should be supported by the analysis of other land use considerations including any settlement strategies, the provision of infrastructure, protection of natural values and the concept of sustainable development.

Land Capability

The productive capability of land is described according to the Tasmanian Land Capability Classification System, which categorises land units according to agricultural potential and versatility. There are 7 land capability classes with increasing degree of limitation to agricultural land. Class 1 is the best land and Class 7 the poorest. Class 4 is marginal for cropping.

Class 3 or better land represents prime agricultural land, and only occurs to a very limited extent (approximately 45 hectares) just south of Grove. Class 5 and 6 land is suitable for pastoral activities only, while Class 7 land is unsuitable for agricultural use.

The former Department of Primary Industries, Water and Environment conducted land capability surveys for the following:

- ▶ D'Entrecasteuax map sheet, which includes the majority of agricultural areas in the Huon Valley. The map and accompanying report were produced by DeRose (2001).
- ▶ Derwent Valley map sheet, which includes the north-eastern agricultural areas of the Huon Valley. The map and accompanying report were produced by Musk and DeRose (2000).
- ▶ Tyenna map sheet, which includes the valley above Judbury. The map was produced by Lynch (2002).

For the D'Entrecasteuax and Derwent Valley map sheets, the surveys were produced through a combination of fieldwork, aerial photo interpretation and computer modelling. Computer modelling was the basis of the survey for the Tyenna map sheet, with very limited fieldwork. Therefore, the Tyenna map sheet lacks a degree of accuracy, compared to the other maps sheets.

A major constraint of these surveys is that the information is not intended to be used at a scale less than 1:100 000. Errors in interpretation will occur if the map is enlarged. In the absence of intensive soil testing, a level of inaccuracy remains with the land capability mapping. Limitations to the maps include:

- ▶ Land capability assessment is based on rain fed agriculture and does not consider the potential for irrigated agriculture;
- ▶ Map units are not pure and may contain up to 40% of another class. However, in most cases the area of inclusion will be much smaller than 40%.
- ▶ Land capability is assessed for broad acre cropping and grazing activities. Horticultural activities, notably orcharding and viticulture, are not considered in the evaluation.

From the land capability data, the extent of each land capability class on private land in the Huon Valley is shown in the table below.

Land Capability	Approximate Area (ha)
Class 1	0
Class 2	0
Class 3	45
Class 4	2,115
Class 5	28,822*
Class 6&7	46,373**
Total assessed area	77,355

* Approximately 870ha is a mixture of Class 4 and Class 5 land

** Approximately 830ha is a mixture of Class 5 and Class 6 land

Appendix F shows the land capability on all private land in the municipal area. The remainder of this section is based on information from De Rose (2001).

While most areas receive ample rainfall for agricultural activities, the length of the growing season is often restricted by the seasonal distribution in rainfall. For example, wet winter months may restrict access to paddocks while dry summer months lead to soil moisture deficits which can impose a significant risk to crop failure. Agricultural areas in the municipal area are generally restricted to a short cropping season during late spring and early summer due to a combination of wet and frosty early spring months and relatively dry mid to late summer months. Hence, the majority of agricultural land in the Huon Valley has been classified as Class 5 or Class 6, with

Class 3 land restricted to a 45 ha patch near Grove. This small amount of Class 3 land is the full extent of prime agricultural land in the municipal area. The Class 3 land consists of a well-structured brown dermosol that is ideally suited to careful tillage and cropping. The average annual rainfall is 765 mm and this should permit a broad range of crops to be grown than elsewhere in the municipal area. However, this area is not utilised at Class 3 level owing to its very limited occurrence and small extent. Areas too small to be mapped separately may occur pocketed through Class 4 and Class 5 land.

The Class 4 land is generally situated on the deeper better soils of valley floors and includes most floodplain areas. The majority of Class 4 land has been used primarily for apple production or higher yielding pastures for grazing purposes.

Class 5 land makes up the bulk of currently utilised agricultural land in the Huon Valley. Broad acre agricultural enterprises are limited on Class 5 land by virtue of a combination of adverse climate and poor soil conditions. Other limitations include soil drainage, wetness, stoniness and erosion risk on steeper slopes. Common agricultural uses include grazing and perennial horticultural crops such as apple orchards. Most Class 5 land is located on valley flats and slopes of hills less than 200m in elevation. To a lesser extent, Class 5 land can be found on some mid to upper slopes and ridge crests

Class 6 land is the most extensive capability class and covers relatively large parts of the municipal area. Class 6 land identifies all marginal agricultural land, the dominant physical limitations being excessive stoniness, soil wetness, extremely poor soil conditions and steep slopes with high erosion risk. In many places remnant natural vegetation is an indication of Class 6 land, although some areas of Class 6 land have been cleared and now support unproductive pasture, compared to pasture on Class 5 land.

The Class 5 and 6 land on the lower slopes are often underlain by silicious Permian and Triassic rocks which produce nutrient poor and erodible soils.

Class 7 land occurs on rocky mountain lands at higher elevation, areas with very steep slopes, coastal cliffs, sand dunes, coastal and inland swamps where any form of agriculture is deemed unsuitable.

Protecting the agricultural potential in the Huon Valley

There are a number of key issues that the Strategy addresses to ensure that the State Protection of Agricultural Land Policy (PAL) is implemented. Such issues include:

- ▶ Maintaining the economic viability of landholdings;
- ▶ Minimising conflict of different land uses;
- ▶ Maintaining rural land for agricultural purposes;
- ▶ Maintaining flexibility;
- ▶ Encouraging downstream processing;

These issues are discussed in detail below.

Maintaining the economic viability of landholdings:

The shift away from the traditional agricultural enterprises is likely to be related to a progressive increase in the minimum size of economically viable agricultural landholdings for such enterprises. In some cases, the land required to maintain viability of some traditional enterprises is simply not available. Therefore, more intensive enterprises are adopted.

Continued agricultural production in the Huon Valley will depend on retaining economically productive units of land. Current trends would suggest that the minimum size of economically viable agricultural landholdings for agriculture will continue to increase. It is likely that traditional agricultural uses such as grazing and orcharding will require the assembly of existing land parcels to remain economically viable in the longer term.

Another factor that has contributed to a reduced viability of traditional agricultural enterprises has been a gradual fettering – since settlement in 1835 - of agricultural potential as a result of non-agricultural development, such as low density residential development. The smaller and more fragmented areas of agricultural land have demanded an intensification and diversification of enterprises to remain viable. The land that has been developed for non-agricultural purposes is completely and permanently lost to primary production.

The consequences of further fettering will be a continued reduction of agricultural potential, possibly to a point where no significant agricultural enterprises will remain viable on the more productive areas of agricultural land.

Subdivision of agricultural land should not result in the loss of land to agricultural production. Agricultural land should be protected from encroachment by residential use and development. In this respect, agricultural activities should be afforded priority in these areas. A precautionary approach should be adopted to ensure the agricultural land is protected, yet land that is already lot to agriculture should also be recognised (land that is highly fettered and small in area - less than 4 hectares - is considered to be lost to viable agricultural production).

Minimising conflict of different land uses:

Non-resource based activities such as low density residential development often conflict with agricultural activities. Such conflict can arise as a result of contamination of water supplies, vandalism, theft and spread of pests, diseases and weeds. Often the occupants of a new dwelling have no direct connection with the surrounding agricultural activities. The significance of the resource base to the local economy will mean that priority of access to resources should be afforded to those activities that are reliant on the resource. Residential use and development in non-urban areas must not conflict with normal agricultural activities having cross-boundary impacts such as spray drift, noise, dust and odour.

Note that new agricultural uses and developments are not necessarily exempted from the need to obtain planning permits. In the past, an intensification of agricultural use or a change in use has either been exempted from the need to obtain planning permits or, when it is required, most changes of use have occurred unnoticed by Council. This is despite the fact that environmental harm can often be attributed to agriculture – such as chemical spray drift, water quality (stock access, fertilizer runoff), soil erosion, dumping of waste vegetation, weeds etc. Most of these problems are ‘diffuse’ forms of pollution that are difficult to control. Other issues of concern relate to the potentially adverse impacts on organic agriculture (particularly when chemicals are used) or if genetically modified agriculture has the potential to infiltrate ‘pure’ crop or animal strains.

Maintaining Class 3, 4 and 5 land for agricultural purposes:

The majority of agricultural activity such as orcharding, grazing and other forms of horticulture is conducted on Class 4 and Class 5 land. Maintaining access by the agriculture industry to the better classes of land is essential to the growth and diversification of agriculture. The planning scheme needs to take into account the detailed capability of the land which can vary locally and not necessarily be picked up by zone boundaries.

Maintaining flexibility:

The market will dictate which forms of agricultural production are undertaken by landowners. The ability of resource based industries to respond to market signals in a flexible manner should not be restricted provided sustainable outcomes can be achieved. Even properties that are currently unviable should not be so easily condemned for conversion to non-agricultural purposes; as such property might support an alternative agricultural activity that was never anticipated.

Encouraging downstream processing:

Diversification of agricultural production may provide opportunities for further downstream processing in the Huon Valley. Such downstream processing should be encouraged as a source of employment and wealth generation. In some cases it also offers tourism and promotional opportunities.

An issue of concern for the local agricultural industry is the ability to find and accommodate transient fruit pickers. The capacity to provide temporary accommodation for such purposes needs to be considered.

The Strategy therefore provides a critical mechanism for ensuring that the productive capacity of agricultural land is considered for all development applications and thereby ensuring that farmers are able to undertake agricultural activities without being unreasonably constrained by conflicts with adjoining non-agricultural land users. The table below (81) outlines the strategic directions and guiding principles for the protection of agricultural land in the municipal area.

Assessing the Potential of Agricultural Land

The assessment of the potential of agricultural land is related to the degree of potential fettering. The degree is based on proportion of a subject title that occurs within a 200m radius of dwellings on adjoining titles¹. The rating process identified for the municipal area is summarised below.

DEGREE OF POTENTIAL FETTERING	ASSESSMENT OF SUBJECT TITLE*
Moderate to High	More than 2/3 of its area within 200m of dwellings on neighbouring titles.
Low	Between 1/3 and 2/3 of its area within 200m of dwellings on neighbouring titles.
Negligible	Less than 1/3 of its area within 200m of dwellings on neighbouring titles.

*Dwellings on a subject title are not considered to 'self-fetter' that title.

- 1 *Reasons for selecting the 200m fettering distance:*
 - ▶ *The potential fettering distance of 200m allows for the realistic scenario in regards to potential land use conflict resulting from non-resource development in a rural zone. The fettering distance also illustrates the potential impact of surrounding non-resource development on the connectivity of the subject site to adjoining agricultural land.*
 - ▶ *Supporting literature*
2. *Minimum effective separation distance for spray irrigation is 200m (Tasmanian Department of Environment and Land Management, 1996); and*
3. *Minimum effective separation distance on open ground range from 300m for agricultural chemical sprays to 150m for dust generation activities (Queensland Department of Natural Resources Mines and Water, 2006).*

Importantly, interpretation of the data requires an appreciation of the limitations of the assessment. A key limitation is that the assessment is a simplification of the distribution of agricultural constraint. Topography, vegetative screening, land management practices and perceptions of neighbouring landowners can influence the type and extent of agricultural constraint.

Further, fettering assessment is only one of many layers of information to consider during the process of setting the boundaries of the rural resource zone and non resource zones. Other factors to consider include:

- ▶ Existing patterns of development;
- ▶ Land capability;
- ▶ Extent of existing infrastructure;
- ▶ Soil related hazards;
- ▶ Bushfire hazard;
- ▶ Proximity of threatened species; and
- ▶ Ongoing Council and community consultation.

An approach to identifying appropriate non-resource zones (particularly rural living zones) that minimises any impact on agricultural land, particularly conversion to non-conforming uses and development has been discussed in Chapter 11: Providing for Housing Needs.

Such a process will ensure that the planning scheme complies with relevant legislation, and in particular the State Policy on the Protection of Agricultural Land.

Mapping of the extent of fettering has been undertaken as part of this strategy (see separate document).

AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT	
Strategic Directions	Guiding Principles
<p><i>Recognises the importance of maintaining productive and viable agricultural areas and ensure that the State Protection of Agricultural Land Policy (PAL) is implemented.</i></p> <p><i>To do this, Council will ensure that</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ <i>Subdivision of agricultural land will not result in the loss of land to agricultural production.</i> ▶ <i>Agricultural land is protected from encroachment by residential use and development.</i> ▶ <i>A precautionary approach is adopted</i> <p><i>The planning scheme will identify land allocated to 'Rural Living' and 'Low Density Residential' zones, such that subdivision should not be necessary in the Rural Resource Zone.</i></p>	<p><i>Council will prevent further incompatible development within identified rural resource zones.</i></p> <p><i>Maintain or increase the productive capacity of agricultural land and allow farmers to undertake agricultural activities without being unreasonably constrained by conflicts with adjoining non-agricultural land users.</i></p> <p><i>Minimise scope for conflict by developing a defined boundary and buffer area between agricultural and residential areas.</i></p> <p><i>Buffer areas are to be maintained where residential areas adjoin the rural resource zone.</i></p> <p><i>Buffer areas are to be suitably designed, maintained and protected and that natural features on residential edges are retained.</i></p> <p><i>Provided agricultural activities are best practice, ensure that new adjacent uses do not have an expectation of modification to these practices to an extent which threatens efficient agricultural operations.</i></p>

Forestry

Background

The earliest industry in the municipal area was the timber industry and significant quantities of timber were shipped to Hobart and overseas between 1800-1840. By the mid 1800's, a number of isolated settlements such as Southport had developed into busy centres focused on the timber trade. Many of these settlements declined once the timber was cleared.

Today, the majority of forestry activity is undertaken by Forestry Tasmania within the Huon Forest District. State Forest in the municipal area comprises approximately 122,512 ha, of which 37% is managed primarily for protection and the remainder is managed primarily for production. The Huon Forest District produced approximately 430,000 tonnes of pulpwood in 2003-2004 (14% of total sawlog produced on State Forest. Wood harvested from the Huon Forest District on State forest was valued (prior to processing) at approximately \$32 million in 2003-2004.

There has also been an increase in plantations to support the current rate of timber extraction. The private sector has also actively expanded the plantation estate as part of company business strategies to establish a competitive scale resource base.

Under the National Forest Policy, plantation development in Australia is driven by the Commonwealth Government's 2020 Plantations Vision, which has been endorsed by all States. This Vision seeks to expand Australia's 1996 plantation area threefold by the year 2020 so that plantation forestry will be sustainable and profitable with significant private sector investment.

Both Commonwealth and State Governments are strong supporters of expanded plantation development as a means of effectively implementing the Regional Forest Agreement between the State and the Commonwealth. In Tasmania, the State Government has set targets of 10,000ha per year for the next ten years for plantation establishment as well as thinning of native forest.

The harvesting of native timber and/or conducting plantation forestry activities on private land within the municipal area has expanded in recent years. Large areas are already set aside as Private Timber Reserves (mainly in the Judbury, Glen Huon, Geeveston and Dover areas). Notwithstanding this, the overall contribution of private plantations to the economy remains low. 2006 statistics from Private Forests Tasmania² show that only 4,608 hectares within the municipal area are utilised for private plantations (0.8% as a proportion of the municipal area) that contributes to 3.1% of private plantation activity in Tasmania.

Within the municipal area, plantation establishment peaked during the 1999-2001 period. In this regard, Forest Enterprises Australia was the most active company and have acquired (or leased) a number of properties in the Glen Huon and Cygnet areas for plantation purposes. The land is a combination of cleared agricultural land and remnant native vegetation. Over 2,500 ha was planted out for plantation.

Forestry Tasmania has also acquired some private land adjoining the State Forest for plantation purposes. This is as a result of increased reserves being established within the State Forest, as well as a planned reduction in the intensity of logging operations adjacent to the World Heritage Area.

² *"Private Property Plantations in the Landscape in Tasmania as at 31 December 2006". Private Forests Tasmania Information Paper No. 1 June 2007, Private Forests Tasmania.*

Due to minimum requirements in relation to rainfall, soil and roading, suitable sites for plantation forestry are scattered throughout the municipal area. A minimum lot size of 20ha is considered necessary for economic viability, however this may be achieved through a number of adjoining properties in separate ownership.

Other forestry operations undertaken in the Huon Valley include the harvesting of timber from remnant and regenerated forests on private land. Approximately 100,000 tonnes of pulpwood is sourced from private properties in the Huon Valley each year. Evidently the minimum viable area for harvesting operations of this type is approximately 30–40 ha and this may involve a number of separate landowners.

On completion of harvesting, landowners may choose to have the area regenerated, converted to plantation forestry if suitable for this purpose (given slope, rainfall and other constraints) or converted to agricultural use. Given that much remnant or regenerated native forest on private land demarcates the boundary of marginal land for agricultural purposes, plantation forestry often proves to be the most productive land use from an economic viewpoint.

The major industry initiative for the Huon Valley is the Southwood development located to the south west of Judbury within the State Forest. This large plant processes all the timber generated from the State Forests, plus suitable timber from the Derwent Valley that is transported via the Plenty Link road to Lonnvale. The components have and will consist of a merchandising yard, regrowth sawmill rotary veneer mill, wood fibre mill and wood fired power station, development approval has been provided for all these components and the sawmill has been constructed and is in operation. It is anticipated that over 200 jobs will be created at the fully constructed plant.

The milling of raw timber within the municipal area is also undertaken at a number of small sawmills and these provide timber for construction and other purposes. There are about 10 of these located at Dover, Geeveston, Nichols Rivulet, Huonville and Lonnvale.

Planning Issues

Forestry activities are generally outside the planning controls of the Council, with all forestry operations on State Forest and Private Timber Reserves being exempt from the provisions of the *Land Use Planning and Approvals Act 1993*. Forestry operations on State Forest and Private Timber Reserves that are exempt from the planning legislation include forest establishment, growing of timber, harvesting, all associated clearing, burning off, roading and quarries. Other development of this land is subject to the normal planning approval processes of Council.

Any forestry practices on private land not within a Private Timber Reserve will need a planning permit - unless excluded by the planning scheme. Such land also requires a Forest Practices Plan. Council approval is required to ensure that forest practices are in accordance with the planning scheme. The certified Forest Practices Plan is required to ensure that the forest practices are in accordance with the standards set by the State government in the Forest Practices Code.

There are a number of key issues that require consideration in regards to the development of the forestry industry in the municipal area, including:

- ▶ Conflict of different land uses;
- ▶ Traffic on public roads;
- ▶ Condition and extent of biodiversity;
- ▶ Landscape values;

- ▶ Water quality;
- ▶ Fire risk management;
- ▶ Weed management.

Some of these issues are discussed below:

Conflict of different land uses:

Increased plantation forestry activity or native forest harvesting has the potential to conflict with the expectations of local residents and other forms of agriculture on adjoining lands. It could also displace traditional agricultural activities. Further low-density residential development within rural areas is likely to increase the likelihood of conflict with the forest industry. The proposed development of downstream processing facilities near Judbury has potential to attract other industries to the municipal area which serve or are complementary to the mill.

Traffic on public roads:

The issue of transportation associated with forestry activities is one of the major concerns expressed by the community. This particularly relates to the potential conflict between large trucks (carrying logs or processed timber products) and local traffic on public roads (often of an inadequate standard of construction).

Condition and extent of biodiversity:

The harvesting and subsequent clearance of remnant native vegetation on private land will reduce the diversity of vegetation species and habitat for endemic species in those areas. This is particularly relevant to those areas containing communities of conservation significance. This is due in part to the practice of encouraging single species for regrowth or plantations.

Landscape values:

Forestry activities can impact on aesthetic values associated with the traditional landscape pattern of the Huon Valley. This includes the appearance after harvesting (particularly on upper slopes and ridgelines) and sharp edges to plantations. In particular, the harvesting and subsequent conversion of remnant vegetation to forest plantations has the potential to alter the familiar rural landscape and impact on its associated visual values.

Water quality:

Harvesting of timber and establishment of plantation forestry on steeper and more erodible landforms has the potential to increase sediment loads to watercourses. This has particular implications for those watercourses used for domestic water supplies.

The table below outlines the strategic directions and guiding principles for forestry practices on private land not within a PTR.

FORESTRY PRACTICES ON PRIVATE LAND NOT WITHIN APTR

Strategic Directions	Guiding Principles
<p><i>Provide for the minimising of external impacts while still providing for ongoing sustainable forest industry within the Huon Valley.</i></p>	<p><i>Minimise impact on agricultural and residential areas.</i></p> <p><i>Minimise any negative visual impact.</i></p> <p><i>Minimise impact on public roads.</i></p> <p><i>Maintain biodiversity of remnant native vegetation on private land. This is particularly relevant to those areas containing communities of conservation significance.</i></p> <p><i>Maintain water quality.</i></p> <p><i>Minimise the risk of bushfires.</i></p>

Aquaculture

Since the establishment of salmon farms in the Huon River in the 1980's, aquaculture in both the Huon River and D'Entrecasteaux Channel has undergone considerable growth. The area has become a significant part of the Tasmanian marine farming industry, with the municipal area having the second largest value of fish exports in Tasmania. Around 60% of salmon produced from farms in Tasmania is sourced from the Huon Valley, with an annual farm gate value exceeding \$50 million.

The Huon Valley municipal area now contains 25 marine farms occupying approximately 333 ha of coastal waters. The key products are Atlantic Salmon, Pacific Oysters and Mussels. These marine farms, and the associated downstream processing of the marine farm products, directly employ some 400 permanent and casual employees.

The former Department of Primary Industries, Water and Environment (DPIWE) has reviewed the Huon River and Port Esperance Marine Farm Development Plan (MFDP) and the D'Entrecasteaux Channel Marine Farming Development Plan (both dated February 2002). The Minister approved both Plans on 5 September 2003.

Marine farming in the Huon Valley is centred around two companies currently growing salmonids and five operators concentrating on shellfish culture. Tassal and Huon Aquaculture hold the majority of marine farming leases in the Huon River and Port Esperance.

The Huon River Plan provides for a total Zone Area of 956 ha and a maximum leasable area of 488ha. This represents an increase of about 28% from the maximum leasable area prescribed in the 1996 Marine Farm Development Plan. Marine Farms are located on the southern side of Port Esperance, south and east of Roaring Bay, west of Garden Island, Hideaway Bay, Police Point, Deep Bay, Gardners Bay, Wheatleys Bay, Surges Bay, Brabazon Point, and Pillings Bay. The only Huon Valley areas covered by the D'Entrecasteaux Plan include marine farms at Tower Bay, Hastings Bay and Recherche Bay – a total Zone Area of 330 ha and a maximum leasable area of 193 ha.

DPIW expect that the majority of the marine farm areas will be farmed by existing companies and should therefore be capable of being essentially serviced from existing land based facilities. It is however inevitable that, over time, there will be proposals for improved foreshore facilities.

Downstream processing of aquaculture products occurs at Dover, Port Huon and Huonville, with the Tassal plant at Huonville employing about 150 people. This plant is likely to be expanded by utilising an additional daily shift. Tassal is the main downstream processor of salmon, although Huon Valley Seafoods also have a substantial processing facility at Port Huon. Osprey undertake a limited abalone processing operation at Huonville. One factor that has hampered downstream processing has been the lack of suitably zoned and serviced land that is not constrained by housing development.

The following key issues need to be addressed in managing the future development of the aquaculture related industries in the municipal area:

Conflict with other uses:

Any increase in the area of coastal water dedicated to marine farm use has the potential to conflict with the values associated with residential, recreational and tourism uses. The location of existing fish pens on the water has been particularly influenced by visual amenity considerations arising from the presence of residential development in coastal areas. Further coastal residential development outside of existing settlements has the potential to increase conflict with existing and future aquaculture operations.

Impacts on coastline:

Marine farm leases have the potential to detract from the scenic amenity of areas of high public use. This includes tourist roads and beaches/foreshores. An increase in marine farm leases has implications for the area's coastline should additional shore based facilities be required. Potential impacts from shore based facilities include removal of coastal vegetation, reclamation of the coast, reduction in scenic quality, erosion, degradation of Aboriginal heritage, reduced local water quality and degraded plant communities and habitat.

Downstream processing:

Consideration needs to be given to the need to provide appropriately serviced land for downstream processing facilities associated with the aquaculture industry.

Water quality:

Aquaculture is dependent on high quality water. Activities within water catchments must be controlled so as not to impact on the quality of water within waterways and the coast. This includes sewage disposal, point source discharges and works on steep slopes likely to generate sediment and nutrient inputs.

The table below outlines the strategic directions and guiding principles for the aquaculture industry.

AQUACULTURE

Strategic Directions	Guiding Principles
<p><i>Maintain or increase the productive capacity of aquaculture industries, while protecting freshwater, estuarine and marine water quality values as a requirement of a development application.</i></p> <p><i>Provide for the minimisation of external impacts while still providing for ongoing sustainable aquaculture industry within the Huon Valley.</i></p>	<p><i>Integration of marine farm planning and land based development should be promoted at a strategic level. This can help reduce conflicts between marine farms and the demands for associated land based facilities in environmentally/visually sensitive areas.</i></p> <p><i>Any redevelopment of existing shore based facilities should be able to demonstrate a high level of environmental performance in respect of scenic values, water quality, coastal processes and heritage.</i></p>

Downstream processing

The forestry, agriculture and aquaculture industries within the municipal area provide significant opportunities for downstream processing to heighten the local economy.

Downstream processing adds value to products and increases their value to the local economy and creates jobs. Such processing often requires large investment in infrastructure and accordingly for the municipal area to attract such investment the Strategy is responsive to the needs of industries and provide the certainty and flexibility required for industries to locate and develop in the area.

Further, with increasing difficulties in achieving prices for primary products that assist in maintaining economic viability for farmers, the ability to process raw materials on a small scale close to the primary rural source and diversification of farming activities can be very important in terms of overall economic development and employment generations. Such activities can also contribute to the tourism industry in value adding to local produce and crafts. The planning scheme needs to recognise and facilitate such opportunities wherever appropriate.

DOWNSTREAM PROCESSING

Strategic Directions	Guiding Principles
<p><i>Provide for the development of industries that add value to the key export sectors of forest and food industry and flexibility for development close to raw materials in rural areas, subject to acceptable environmental and amenity impacts.</i></p>	<p><i>Ensure that there is flexibility to provide for farm diversification including manufacturing, processing and sale of primary produce within the rural resource zone subject to satisfactory traffic safety and amenity standards.</i></p>

Light Industrial Development

Manufacturing or light industrial activity is a significant employer (12.9% of the workforce) in the municipal area. Industrial sites are scattered around the municipal area and have been created in a relatively ad-hoc manner. The current provision of zoned industrial land is not satisfactory. There is insufficient industrial land in Huonville where the demand is greatest. There is no specific industrial 'estate' set aside for future industrial needs. It may be necessary to back-zone some existing areas that are not suitable and to zone some new industrial areas – particularly for manufacturing, mechanical repairs etc.

An expansion of the municipal area's manufacturing base and, in particular, those enterprises which produce goods for external markets, is required to provide the municipal area with a broader

and stronger economic and employment base. Due to the highly productive agricultural, forestry and aquaculture sectors there is a significant opportunity to establish a vertically integrated production, processing, packaging, servicing and transport chain within the municipal area.

There is a general feeling within the municipal area that heavy or noxious industry should be discouraged in order to maintain the natural environment and the 'clean, green' image of the area. Value adding of existing products is well supported within the community.

The capacity and extent of the available infrastructure is critical. If services need to be extended then there should be a 'developer pays' policy.

The greatest demand will be for rural industry. This includes the handling and processing of rural products generated within the area. To this could also be added the associated repairs and servicing of machinery associated with these products. Rather than zoning industrial land within restricted locations, it is Council's strategy to allow such uses within rural zones but under strict environmental and community conditions.

Despite this, there still will be a need to provide for some specific light industrial zoned lands to accommodate the more significant industrial enterprises that might occur. It is proposed that such an industrial 'estate' would be best located in the vicinity of Huonville where water and sewerage services are available. Other industrial areas would be retained where existing industrial sites are well established.

LIGHT INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT	
Strategic Directions	Guiding Principles
<p><i>Identify a particular site for a light industrial 'estate' that would be available for future demands and which would be suitable for the larger industrial enterprises within the Huonville area.</i></p> <p><i>Identify areas for industrial uses in proximity to the other major towns.</i></p> <p><i>Minimise the distance between rural industry and its associated resource base.</i></p>	<p><i>Identify land suitable for a light industrial estate close to Huonville that can connect to reticulated services.</i></p> <p><i>Identify land appropriate for light industrial zoning where visual, landscape and natural values have already been compromised.</i></p> <p><i>Ensure flexibility for consideration of rural industry uses within the rural resource zone.</i></p>

Principles for the Planning Scheme-Commercial/Industrial Development

Commercial/Industrial Development

Objective – To ensure:

- ▶ A high standard of urban design is applied in commercial areas to improve the streetscape; and
- ▶ Industrial development operating in or adjacent to residential areas does not adversely impact on the amenity of nearby residents.

Parameter	Threshold at which use or development is likely to be acceptable – minimal impact on amenity
Delivery of commercial goods	Provision of dedicated delivery area
Facade of commercial premises	Face onto and be directly accessible to pedestrians from the road

Pedestrian movement	Free flow of pedestrians along public walkways not obstructed
Residential amenity	Can meet specified setback/attenuation distance to surrounding residences
Noise and other emissions	Meets limits set for noise or other emissions that protect health and amenity
Landscaping	Areas not used for buildings, carparking, storage or access are landscaped
Number of car spaces	Can provide number of on site car spaces adequate to meet user requirements
Car space dimensions	Can meet Australian Standard
Driveway dimensions	Can meet dimensions adequate to accommodate standard vehicle
On site turning	Can provide on site turning for carparking areas
Crossover dimensions	Can meet dimensions specified as being adequate to provide for safe access and egress
Size and siting of signs	Can meet specified size and siting requirements for signage i.e. maximum height, maximum area, maximum projection etc
Number of signs per site	Can meet specified maximum number
Illumination of signs	Can meet specified requirements concerning illumination
Storage	Storage areas not visible from road

Small Business

Small businesses underpin the economy in many rural and regional areas. With the increasing trend towards home based employment and many of the small cottage type industries within the Huon Valley, this sector of the economy has potential to generate important employment and wealth. Employment from home can reduce the cost of the business and increase its viability. It can also result in the employment of people who otherwise would find it difficult to enter the traditional workforce.

Because of the nature of these business they often operate from non-traditional premises and as a result are, in many instances not presently allowable under the relevant planning scheme. As many small businesses can be carried out in residential properties or in other non-urban areas without any loss of amenity for adjoining properties or desired character it is important that the Strategy provides a framework for appropriate flexibility.

SMALL BUSINESS	
Strategic Directions	Guiding Principles
<i>Encourage and support small business in appropriate locations.</i>	<i>Provide flexibility for home occupations and small businesses across the planning area subject to assessment of the impact of the amenity of the area, the transport network and the environment.</i>

Reuse of Buildings

The Huon Valley has a significant stock of underutilised buildings particularly those related to previous rural uses. Many of these buildings are suitable for conversion into small businesses or downstream processing/retailing activities, particularly those within tourist areas where it can assist in value adding to local produce. Overall it is preferred to productively use existing buildings, ensuring their upkeep than create unnecessary new building stock. Reuse of buildings can assist in preserving the heritage significance of buildings or established townscapes and streetscapes.

Council will be flexible in considering proposals to reuse buildings for employment generating purposes, applying the normal assessments of impact on amenity and environment, as well as the suitability of the building for conversion.

REUSE OF BUILDINGS	
Strategic Directions	Guiding Principles
<i>Recognise and encourage the need for adaptive reuse of buildings in the Huon Valley.</i>	<i>Consider the reuse of redundant buildings for employment generating uses, subject to consideration of the effects on the amenity of the area, traffic generation, impact on any heritage values and the capacity of the conversion to meet building regulations.</i>