



Case Study 45

Streetscape Redevelopments

Nhill & Dimboola VIC

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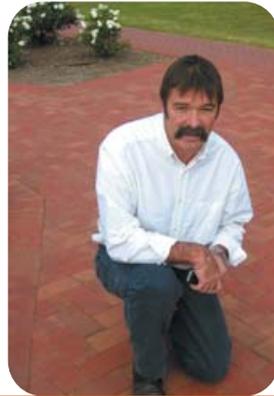
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Client: Hindmarsh Shire Council

Landscape architecture & urban design:
Mike Smith and Associates

Pavement construction: JC Contracting



Streetscape redevelopment **Nhill and Dimboola VIC**



(Top) "We are very happy with the result," says Peter Dawson, Hindmarsh Shire Council.

(From left) Paving around the Nhill tourist information centre complements the town's handsome architecture. The town's war memorial, at the far end of the redevelopment, is flanked by a clay paved apron.

Clay paved bus lanes are showing no signs of creep or shunting despite the heavy loads.



They may be small towns nestled in Victoria's wheatbelt, but Nhill and Dimboola are stars in their own right. One was the subject of a quirky 1997 film "The Road to Nhill" and the other the inspiration for the famous wedding reception play (later filmed in the town).

Just 40 kilometres apart on the Western Highway and roughly equidistant from



Melbourne and Adelaide, both towns are struggling to retain populations, and to attract and keep higher-qualified staff. Hindmarsh Shire Council brought in landscape architects and urban designers Mike Smith and Associates as part of an urban design framework to make the townships more tourist and resident friendly. "They looked at everything that could be improved, to make these more feasible townships for people to want to stay instead of driving straight through," explains Peter Dawson, the shire's properties, purchasing and contracts manager.

The Nhill (the "h" is silent) plan capitalises on the main street's broad median strip. Every day, coaches on the Melbourne-Adelaide run pull into the clay-paved parking lanes at the strip's western end. Underpinning the lanes are 200 mm concrete slabs, topped with 300 mm of cement-stabilised crushed rock. The pavers are bedded in sand and have slurried joints of about 5 mm thickness.

The pavement shows no sign of distress despite high wheel loads and braking and

“sympathetic streetscape redevelopment will help these towns retain their place in the sun”

turning stresses. “It hasn’t moved,” says Peter Dawson, “so we are very happy with the result.” The other paving in this precinct is laid on crushed rock and sand. The narrow paver joints are sand filled. “We are not having a problem with them; no movement at all,” reports Peter Dawson.

The same laying techniques were used in Dimboola where the old 600 mm square concrete slabs were replaced in the business and shopping street footpaths. Stormwater drainage was also renewed and new kerb and channel replaced the deep gutters typical of country towns. The paving was staged over three-and-a-half weeks to minimise trade disruption.

Dimboola’s main street now presents an especially welcome face to visitors and locals alike, complementing historic buildings such as the court house and old shire hall.

Let’s hope that sympathetic streetscape redevelopment will help these towns retain their place in the sun.



(This page) Paving has revitalised Dimboola’s shopping and business precinct, complementing the handsome civic buildings and encouraging residents and visitors to linger.

Photography by Mike Scully

