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Pyrenees Shire Council

COUNCIL PLAN 2025-29 PROGRESS REPORT – October 2025

This Progress Report provides an update on progress against the Council Plan 2025-29 and the Initiatives designed to deliver the Council Plan that are scheduled for delivery in the 2025/26 financial year.

PILLAR 1: Support and grow Liveable Places, Connected Communities				
Strategic Priority	Initiative		Accountability	Progress Update
A. Promote inclusivity and accessibility for all life stages by creating welcoming spaces and supporting diverse social, cultural and recreational activities.	1A.1	Develop and deliver Community Programs, inclusive of: • Age friendly • Library • Youth • Creative	Community Development	• Library Services: First quarter activities included programs – Creative Writing (AIC), story time (AIC and BCRC), Craft (Age friendly (AIC) Lego Club (Youth focus BCRC) in addition to hosting school holiday activities and Seniors Week Activities. • Positive Ageing: Delivered the Victorian Seniors Festival across the Shire, support PCH to deliver the Movie Club and Chat & Chew programs, support BSHS Women's Health Week initiative. • Youth programming: delivered during the period included two School

PILLAR 1: Support and grow Liveable Places, Connected Communities				
Strategic Priority	Initiative		Accountability	Progress Update
				Holiday Programs, four facilitated Dungeons & Dragons sessions, the Early Years and Youth Activation Program in Moonambel (August), and the Wear it Purple Day Youth Activation Program (August). Additional initiatives included one EPIC Youth Program session focused on leadership, an AUSLAN partnership initiative with Beaufort Secondary College, Supported delivery and activities at Women's Health Week and Landsborough Movie Club engagement and a social media campaign promoting awareness of minimum legal age requirements.
	1A.3	Review, develop and implement the Reconciliation Plan, partnering with key stakeholders.	CEO Office	PSC Executive Leadership team attended DJAARA showcase event in October 2025 to continue to build the relationship.
B. Improve community safety and wellbeing	1B.1	Review, conduct and develop an updated Recreation Strategy inclusive of:	Community Development	Pre-planning activities for the forthcoming Leisure Needs Assessment are underway,

PILLAR 1: Support and grow Liveable Places, Connected Communities				
Strategic Priority	Initiative		Accountability	Progress Update
through accessible health services, active lifestyles, mental health support and effective local laws that ensure a high standard of safety and amenity.		• Leisure needs community engagement • Utilisation, inclusivity and accessibility of recreational facilities that ensure safe spaces and environments inclusive of Aquatic facilities. • Transport networks which support activation (walkability, etc)		including the development of project scope, timelines, and engagement strategies to guide the assessment process.
	1B.2	Review and implement Council's Local Law.	Community Safety	Local Law activity reported quarterly to Council a part of the Planning and development reporting.
	1B.3	Deliver and implement Council's Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan.	Community Development	Finalised the Plan after engagement with community stakeholders; plan adopted by Council at its 15 September meeting.
C. Enable responsible development and population growth through strategic planning, affordable housing and community-	1C.1	Conduct settlement planning to inform township plans and future housing development / housing needs (inclusive of all demographics) for five townships which inform Community Action Plans.	Planning and Development	Municipal Bushfire plan completed. Brief drafted for housing needs assessment (to be funded by the Regional Planning Hub). Township plan review (Avoca, Snake Valley, Waubra and Lexton) has commenced.

PILLAR 1: Support and grow Liveable Places, Connected Communities				
Strategic Priority	Initiative		Accountability	Progress Update
driven township planning that reflects local identity.	1C.2	Deliver a range of development initiatives that enable additional housing / accommodation which is supported by existing and planned services.	Planning and Development	Recent planning survey completed. The team will continue to implement initiatives in response to feedback provided to ensure that the service is delivered efficiently and effectively.
D. Strengthen community outcomes by fostering partnerships, supporting volunteers and encouraging civic engagement to build capacity and deliver improved services.	1D.1	Develop and implement: • Community Strengthening Policy Framework to inform development of Community Action Plans aligned with township plans.	Community Development	Drafting of framework and initial policy has commenced.

PILLAR 2: Promote a Diversified, Thriving Economy				
Strategic Priority	Initiative		Accountability	Progress Update
A. Support the growth and diversification of new and existing businesses, with a key focus on key	2A.1	Participate, design and deliver initiatives to support our business community, including: • Local Business Support program • “Small Business Friendly Program”	Economic Development	The training component of the Business Friendly Council Program and development of Councils individual BFC plan concluded on Thursday 16 October. Implementation of the plan will

PILLAR 2: Promote a Diversified, Thriving Economy				
Strategic Priority	Initiative		Accountability	Progress Update
sectors, innovation and attracting investment.		• Business Friendly Charter in partnership with Victoria Small Business Commission • Business concierge program		commence over the December 2026 quarter.
	2A.2	Develop and increase availability of serviced industrial land to actively attract business and industry investment.	Economic Development	To be considered as part of the development of the ED&IA Strategy
B. Deliver coordinated and facilitated planning and economic development outcomes to support community aspirations and foster business and tourism growth.	2B.1	Develop and Implement Economic Development Strategy that considers: • Business activity to support key employers • Economic Taskforce • Investment attraction • Employment attraction	Economic Development	Consultants have been engaged in the September quarter to complete the plan. The final strategy is anticipated towards the end of April 2026.
	2B.2	Facilitate and develop Resilient Agricultural Report with partners (Adapt to climate change and identify opportunities for value-add and diversification).	Economic Development	Desktop research completed by end of September 2025. Consultation phase due over Oct – Nov 2025 with final report due in March 2026.
C. Promote and support community events and	2C.1	Implement Pyrenees Local Area Action Plan (Tourism Strategy) in partnership	Economic Development	Implementation supported through membership of Tourism Midwest Victoria

PILLAR 2: Promote a Diversified, Thriving Economy				
Strategic Priority	Initiative		Accountability	Progress Update
the visitor economy to celebrate local culture, promote tourism and stimulate the local economy.		with Tourism MidWest Victoria and local organisations.		promotion, marketing and business support. 31 PSC businesses are also members of TMV and registered on Aust Tourism Warehouse Database. (ATWD) Visitor information services supported through Council resource centres -AIC hosted element of regional tourism event as part of Ballarat International Foto Biennale. Development of new cycle trails at Moonambel and Beaufort are in progress in partnership with DEECA.
D. Advocate for improved transport infrastructure, support job creation and invest in workforce development to enhance connectivity and economic opportunities.	2D.1	Deliver and advocate for improved heavy-vehicle accessibility and other transport related improvements across the Pyrenees road networks.	Engineering	Number of elements currently underway including: - NHVR have commissioned a consultant to collect data on all of Councils larger bridges & major culverts for integration into DTP's bridge assessment software to assist with heavy vehicle permit approvals. - Current minor updates to the current B-double approved/Gazetted network

PILLAR 2: Promote a Diversified, Thriving Economy				
Strategic Priority	Initiative		Accountability	Progress Update
				include the industrial estates of Beaufort & Avoca. - Currently sourcing quotes for external engineering assessments for AB-Double access to Mt William Rd & a section of Carngham-Streatham Rd to assist with a SLRIP application for upgrades to the Federal Government for Funding.

PILLAR 3: Preserve, promote and enjoy the natural environment				
Strategic Priority	Initiative		Accountability	Progress Update
A. Preserve and manage biodiversity and natural assets for long-term community benefit and environmental sustainability	3A.2	Partner with regional bodies and agencies to develop and implement Water Management and Drought resilience projects and natural waterway health.	Economic Development	SWNP Pipeline project feasibility and business case progressing, including commencement of TO component. Expression of interest for potential funding of Phase 1 of Beaufort Linear has been lodged with DEECA.
B. Mitigate risks, build community resilience and enhance responsiveness	3B.1	Work with partner agencies to review and implement Municipal Emergency Management Plan (MEMP), inclusive of:	Emergency Management	The separate sections of the MEMP have been issued to the responsible agencies for review.

PILLAR 3: Preserve, promote and enjoy the natural environment				
Strategic Priority	Initiative		Accountability	Progress Update
to natural disasters through proactive planning and collaboration.		• Support and administration of the Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee (MEMPC). • Emergency recovery and resilience activities. • Consideration of resilient communities framework.		The MEMPC met in August and will meet again in November. The Safer Together project to build community resilience is in progress to develop information regarding bushfire resilient plantings in rural areas. Bayindeen Fire Roadside rehabilitation works underway .
	3B.2	Deliver flood planning scheme amendment and support future flood studies.	Planning and Development	The flood planning scheme amendment is being considered by the Minister for planning. Awaiting advice on the pathway approval. Early flood modelling work is underway for an update of the Beaufort Flood Study and the Upper Mt Emu Creek.
	3B.3	Continue advocacy for fairer emergency recovery reimbursement process for regional and rural councils.	Executive Leadership	Ongoing
D. Promote responsible waste practices by reducing landfill, improving resource	3D.1	Review and implement Waste and Recycling Strategy, inclusive of:	Engineering	RFQ prep for an external review and update of the 2021-2025 Waste & Recycling Strategy underway.

PILLAR 3: Preserve, promote and enjoy the natural environment				
Strategic Priority	Initiative		Accountability	Progress Update
recovery and advocating for accessible, efficient and rural-appropriate waste services.		• Food and Organics waste (FOGO) kerbside collection and management service • Community education on recycling and diversion from landfill		- Council passed a motion at the October 2025 Council meeting to defer its decision on the implementation of a FOGO collection service until further information on the service standards have been received from the Victorian Government. Additional follow up with the Victorian Government required to determine impacts and to revisit FOGO options to implementing before the July 2027 deadline. - Small education reminders on recycling will be undertaken through current methods (social media/paper noticeboards) with additional funding for larger education programs to be applied for when opportunities are available.

PILLAR 4: Planning and Building Infrastructure for current and future needs				
Strategic Priority	Initiative		Accountability	Progress Update
A. Plan, build and maintain essential infrastructure – including water, waste, sewerage, roads, bridges and community assets – to support liveability, resilience and growth.	4A.1	Investigate and advocate for improved access to water during drought and periods of high fire risk that are accessible.	Assets	Council has 19 emergency water supply points. These are all fitted with CFA standard connectors. The tanks and bores are actively maintained. Use of these water supplies are available through a Council managed permit system. Officers participate In Grampians Drought Coordination Committee to progress support measures and action in response to drought.
	4A.2	Develop, review and implement Asset Management Plan, inclusive of: • Annual Capital Works Program	Assets	Ten Year Asset Plan presented and adopted by Council.
	4A.3	Advocate for investment in essential infrastructure in partnership with Greater Ballarat Alliance of Councils (GBAC) inclusive of: • Water and sewer	Economic Development / Executive Leadership	Advocacy under way for SWNP Water supply. Submission lodged to Mobile Black Spot Program for telecommunications towers at Lexton, Moonambel Gap and Yalla Y Poora.

PILLAR 4: Planning and Building Infrastructure for current and future needs				
Strategic Priority	Initiative		Accountability	Progress Update
				New NBN towers commissioned at Lexton and Skipton. NBN towers under construction at Waterloo and Navarre. Mayor and CEO participate in GBAC forums and active advocacy to relevant Ministers (including Minister Kilkenny, Staikos, Spence)
C. Support the local communities by facilitating appropriate land use planning outcomes.	4C.1	Develop and implement Facilitated Planning Concierge Service.	Economic Development / Planning and Development	Key component of Pyrenees plan for becoming a Business Friendly Council. Pending consideration of staff structure.
D. Advocate for fair renewable energy development, access to critical water supplies and effective maintenance of natural and built assets to reduce impacts on communities and the environment.	4D.1	Continue advocacy for energy projects which achieve best outcomes for our communities.	Planning and Development	The Team continues to participate in Environment Effects Statement (EES) Technical Reference Groups and consultation forums for major state-led renewable energy projects, including the Western Renewables Link, the Victorian Transmission Plan, and several wind farm and battery projects. Through these processes, the team continues to

PILLAR 4: Planning and Building Infrastructure for current and future needs				
Strategic Priority	Initiative		Accountability	Progress Update
				advocate strongly on behalf of local communities. The Western Renewables Link Inquiry and Advisory Committee commenced on Monday, 27 October 2025, and is expected to continue until March 2026. Planning Officers will attend various sessions throughout the hearing schedule. The presentation of Pyrenees Shire Council's submission is scheduled to be heard on 11 December 2025.

PILLAR 5: Community-Centric Leadership and Proactive Service Delivery				
Strategic Priority	Initiative		Accountability	Progress Update
A. Foster a values-driven, inclusive culture where residents and community needs are central to all decision-making.	5A.1	Develop and implement Customer Service Charter.	Governance and Performance	In progress. Customer Framework drafted and Customer Service Charter in finalisation for presentation to Senior Leadership Team and then formal adoption by Council.

PILLAR 5: Community-Centric Leadership and Proactive Service Delivery				
Strategic Priority	Initiative		Accountability	Progress Update
Empower leadership at all levels to be responsive, accountable and aligned with Council and community priorities.	5A.2	Review and implement Community Asset Committee Governance Framework.	Governance and Performance	Governance framework redrafting is complete and will be implemented with the committees in the near future.
B. Work constructively and in partnership with individuals and communities to anticipate needs, solve issues early and deliver outcomes that build trust and resilience.	4B.1	Review, develop and implement Project Management Framework inclusive of: • Good governance • Accountability • Transparency • Reporting of outcomes to community	Governance and Performance	Not yet started.
	5B.2	Review and implement updated Community Engagement and Communication Framework, inclusive of: • Survey of community preferred communication channels • Age friendly • Youth, and • Annual Plan	Community Development	A draft youth engagement framework has been finalised; Draft of older adult framework underway.
C. Ensure timely, clear and consistent	5C.1	Review, maintain and continuously improve digital website and engagement	Communications	Communication across all channels has become a major focus.

PILLAR 5: Community-Centric Leadership and Proactive Service Delivery				
Strategic Priority	Initiative		Accountability	Progress Update
communication and build strong community relationships, underpinned by transparency and meaningful engagement.		options. (Engagement, surveys, forms, information)		Facebook reach has increased to 4000 followers. Engagement has moved to the website, rather than Engagement Hub, which is easier to use for both internal and external stakeholders and provides better engagement outcomes. The website is being updated and made more accessible. Media presence has increased considerably.
D. Deliver high quality services and maintain public spaces efficiently, applying a strategic lens to all projects and continuously improving systems and resource allocation.	4D.1	Develop and deliver an annual service review program to identify opportunities for improvement, inclusive of: • Utilising internal audit program outcomes	Governance and Performance	As part of developing the program, a SLT workshop was held to identify risk-based service candidates for inclusion in the service review program. Scoping of the reviews is in progress and a report will seek Council approval of the program before the end of 2025.
	4D.2	Prepare and deliver a Workforce Plan including planned investment in staff	People and Culture	The Workforce Plan for 2025-2029 has been updated and submitted to ELT. It was also presented to Council on Monday, 6th October 2025. Further work to

PILLAR 5: Community-Centric Leadership and Proactive Service Delivery				
Strategic Priority	Initiative		Accountability	Progress Update
		upskilling to facilitate effective and innovative service delivery.		be conducted with SLT members over coming months.

Pyrenees
Shire Council

For the Period

1 July 2025 to 30 September 2025

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Comprehensive Income Statement

For the period ending 30 September 2025

30 June 2025			Full Year				Year to Date		
			Adopted Budget	Amended Budget	Forecast	Var	Budget	Actual	Var
($'000's)		Notes	($'000's)	($'000's)	($'000's)	($'000's)	($'000's)	($'000's)	($'000's)
	Income								
12,844	Rates and charges		14,544	**14,544**	14,542	**(2)**	**13,392**	13,411	**19**
59	Statutory fees and fines		296	**296**	296	**0**	**(99)**	57	**156**
145	User Fees		903	**903**	903	**0**	**153**	158	**5**
6,635	Grants Operating		8,080	**4,372**	4,372	**0**	**1,179**	1,237	**58**
99	Grants Capital		7,983	**7,983**	10,403	**2,420**	**1,378**	256	**(1,122)**
8	Contributions Monetary		34	**34**	34	**0**	**0**	178	**178**
276	Net Gain/(Loss) on disposal of property,infrastructure, plant and equipment		0	**0**	0	**0**	**0**	77	**77**
131	Other Income		569	**569**	569	**0**	**142**	178	**36**
20,197	**Total income**		**32,409**	**28,701**	**31,119**	**2,418**	**16,145**	**15,552**	**(593)**
	Expenses								
2,461	Employee Costs		10,356	**10,356**	10,356	**0**	**2,563**	2,717	**(154)**
2,633	Materials and services		9,826	**11,346**	11,346	**0**	**3,330**	2,721	**609**
-	Bad and doubtful debts		10	**10**	11	**(1)**	**0**	0	**0**
1,551	Depreciation		6,357	**6,357**	6,357	**0**	**1,589**	1,589	**0**
-	Amoritisation - right of use assets		9	**9**	9	**0**	**2**	0	**2**
15	Finance Costs - Borrowings		122	**122**	122	**0**	**31**	28	**3**
4	Finance Costs - leases		9	**9**	9	**0**	**2**	3	**(1)**
94	Other expenses		302	**302**	302	**0**	**64**	64	**0**
6,758	**Total expenses**		**26,991**	**28,511**	**28,512**	**(1)**	**7,581**	**7,122**	**459**
13,439	**Total Comprehensive result**		**5,418**	**190**	**2,607**	**2,417**	**8,564**	**8,430**	**(134)**

Balance Sheet

As at 30 September 2025

30 June 2025 ($'000's)		Full Year Adopted Budget ($'000's)	Full Year Amended Budget ($'000's)	Full Year Forecast ($'000's)	Full Year Var ($'000's)	Year to Date Budget ($'000's)	Year to Date Actual ($'000's)	Year to Date Var ($'000's)
	Assets							
	Current assets							
23,877	Cash and cash equivalents	8,072	**8,122**	**10,539**	2,417	**20,951**	22,019	1,068
2,517	Trade and other receivables	2,580	**2,662**	2,662	0	**13,195**	10,959	(2,236)
13	Inventories	14	**13**	13	0	**13**	11	(2)
148	Prepayments	207	**148**	148	0	**148**	15	(133)
1,185	Other assets	43	**1,185**	1,185	0	**1,185**	1,139	(46)
27,740	**Total current assets**	**10,916**	**12,130**	**14,547**	**2,417**	**35,492**	**34,143**	**(1,349)**
	Non-current assets							
2	Trade and other receivables	8	**2**	2	0	**2**	1	(1)
369,047	Property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	297,403	**377,475**	**377,475**	0	**369,747**	368,841	(906)
369,049	**Total non-current assets**	**297,411**	**377,477**	**377,477**	**0**	**369,749**	**368,842**	**(907)**
396,789	**Total assets**	**308,327**	**389,607**	**392,024**	**2,417**	**405,240**	**402,985**	**(2,255)**
	Liabilities							
	Current liabilities							
3,414	Trade and other payables	2,435	**2,438**	2,438	0	**3,414**	1,320	2,094
7,446	Trust funds and deposits	1,171	**504**	504	0	**7,446**	7,459	(13)
11	Lease Laibilities	9	**9**	9	0	**11**	0	
458	Interest-bearing liabilities	404	**458**	458	0	**345**	346	(1)
2,346	Provisions	2,393	**2,346**	2,346	0	**2,346**	2,346	0
13,675	**Total current liabilities**	**6,412**	**5,755**	**5,755**	0	**13,562**	**11,471**	**2,080**

Balance Sheet

As at 30 September 2025

30 June 2025 ($'000's)		Adopted Budget ($'000's)	Full Year Amended Budget ($'000's)	Full Year Forecast ($'000's)	Full Year Var ($'000's)	Year to Date Budget ($'000's)	Year to Date Actual ($'000's)	Year to Date Var ($'000's)
	Non-current liabilities							
108	Provisions	206	**114**	**114**	0	**108**	108	0
21	Lease Laibilities	12	**21**	**21**	0	**21**	0	
2,077	Interest-bearing liabilities	2,818	**2,619**	**2,619**	0	**2,077**	2,077	0
2,206	**Total non-current liabilities**	**3,036**	**2,754**	**2,754**	**0**	**2,206**	**2,185**	**0**
15,881	**Total liabilities**	**9,448**	**8,509**	**8,509**	**0**	**15,768**	**13,656**	**2,080**
380,908	**Net Assets**	**298,879**	**381,098**	**383,515**	**2,417**	**389,472**	**389,329**	**(175)**
	Equity							
125,589	Accumulated surplus	107,602	**125,779**	128,196	2,417	**134,153**	134,019	(134)
255,319	Reserves	191,277	**255,319**	255,319	0	**255,319**	255,310	(9)
380,908	**Total Equity**	**298,879**	**381,098**	**383,515**	**2,417**	**389,472**	**389,329**	**(143)**

Cash Flow Statement

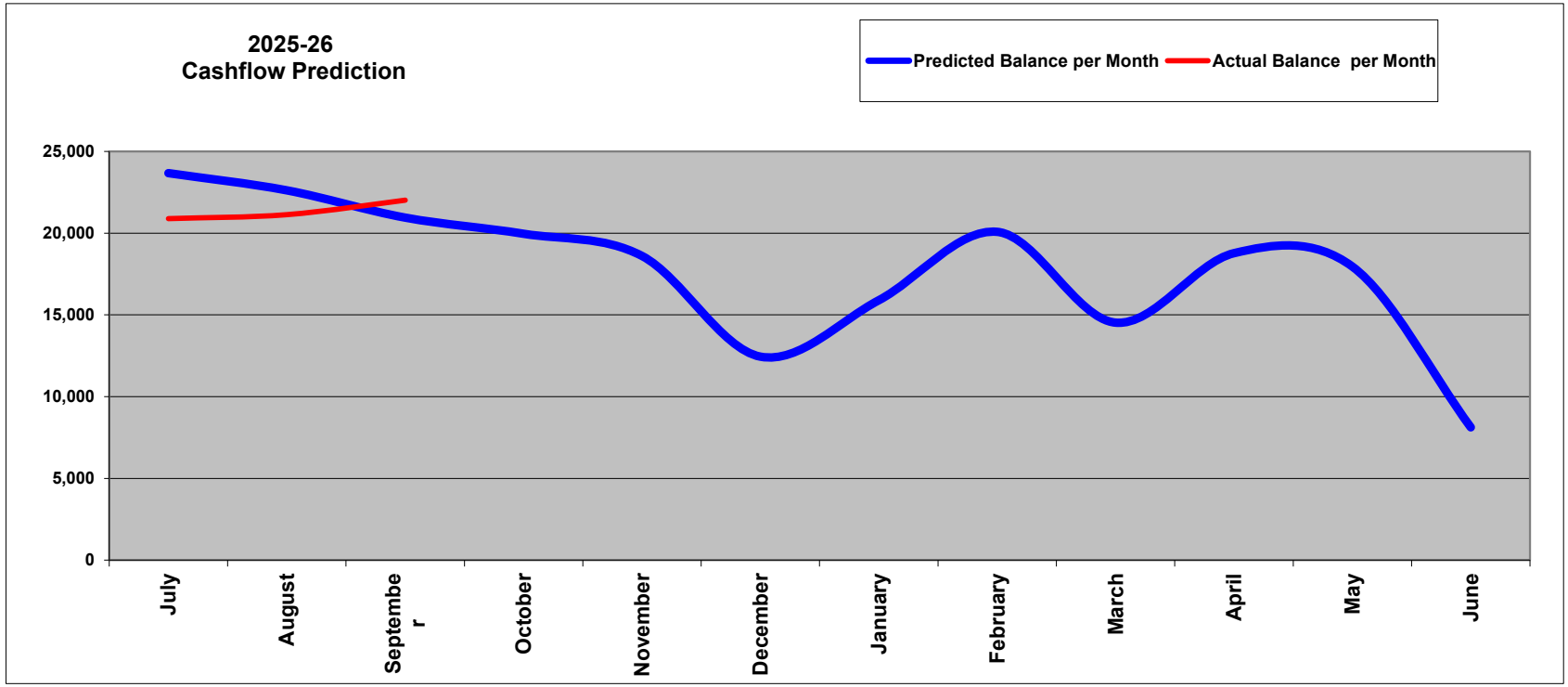
For the period ending 30 September 2025

30 June 2025 ($'000's)		Adopted Budget ($'000's)	Full Year Inflows/(Outflows Amended Budget ($'000's)	Forecast ($'000's)	Var ($'000's)	Year to Date Inflows/(Outflows Budget ($'000's)	Actual ($'000's)	Var ($'000's)
	Cash flows from operating activities							
13,805	Rates and charges	14,396	**14,399**	**14,397**	**(2)**	**2,714**	4,928	**2,214**
236	Statutory fees and fines	296	**286**	**285**	**(1)**	**(99)**	57	**156**
901	User Charges	893	**903**	**903**	**0**	**153**	159	**6**
18,948	Grants Operating	8,080	**4,372**	**4,372**	**0**	**1,179**	1,237	**58**
6,137	Grants Capital	7,983	**7,983**	**10,403**	**2,420**	**1,378**	256	**(1,122)**
162	Contributions Monetary	34	**34**	**34**	**0**	**0**	178	**178**
458	Interest received	400	**450**	**450**	**0**	**100**	**71**	**(29)**
185	Trust Funds	0	**0**	**1**	**1**	**0**	13	**13**
486	Other receipts	69	**119**	**119**	**0**	**42**	107	**65**
1,079	Net GST	0	**0**	**1**		**0**	0	**0**
(9,552)	Employee costs	(10,286)	**(10,350)**	**(10,350)**	**0**	**(2,563)**	(2,717)	**(154)**
(10,143)	Materials and services	(9,725)	**(19,266)**	**(19,268)**	**(2)**	**(3,368)**	(4,634)	**(1,266)**
(337)	Other payments	(302)	**(302)**	**(302)**	**0**	**(64)**	(64)	**64**
22,365	**Net cash provided by (used in) operating acti**	**11,838**	**(1,372)**	**1,045**	**2,416**	**(528)**	**(409)**	**183**
	Cash flows from investing activities							
(9,231)	Payments for property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	(12,636)	**(15,103)**	**(15,103)**	**0**	**(2,253)**	**(1,383)**	**870**
525	Proceeds from sale of property, infrastructure, plant and equipment	319	**318**	**318**	**0**	**0**	**77**	**77**
(8,706)	**Net cash provided by (used in) investing acti**	**(12,317)**	**(14,785)**	**(14,785)**	**0**	**(2,253)**	**(1,306)**	**947**

Cash Flow Statement

For the period ending 30 September 2025

30 June 2025 ($'000's)		Adopted Budget ($'000's)	Full Year Inflows/(Outflows Amended Budget ($'000's)	Forecast ($'000's)	Var ($'000's)	Year to Date Inflows/(Outflows Budget ($'000's)	Actual ($'000's)	Var ($'000's)
	Cash flows from financing activities							
(66)	Finance costs	(122)	**(122)**	**(122)**	**0**	**(31)**	**(28)**	**3**
1,300	Proceeds from borrowings	1,000	**1,000**	**1,000**	**0**	**0**	**1,300**	**1,300**
(207)	Repayment of borrowings	(314)	**(458)**	**(458)**	**0**	**(113)**	**(1,412)**	**(1,299)**
(3)	Interest paid - lease liability	(9)	**(9)**	**(9)**	**0**	**(2)**	**(3)**	**(1)**
(9)	Repayment of lease liability	(9)	**(9)**	**(9)**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**
1,015	**Net cash provided by (used in) financing acti**	**546**	**402**	**402**	**0**	**(146)**	**(143)**	**3**
14,675	Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents	**66**	**(15,755)**	(13,338)	**2,417**	**(2,927)**	(1,858)	**1,133**
9,202	Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the financial year	8,005	**23,877**	23,877	**0**	**23,877**	23,877	**0**
23,877	**Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the financial year**	**8,071**	**8,122**	**10,539**	**2,417**	**20,950**	**22,019**	**1,069**


2025-26
Cashflow Prediction
Predicted Balance per Month
Actual Balance per Month
25,000
20,000
15,000
10,000
5,000
0
July
August
Septembe
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October
November
December
January
February
March
April
May
June

Statement of Capital Works

For the period ending 30 September 2025

	Full Year				Year to Date		
	Adopted Budget ($'000's)	**Amended Budget ($'000's)**	**Forecast ($'000's)**	**Var ($'000's)**	**Budget ($'000's)**	**Actual ($'000's)**	**Var ($'000's)**
Property							
Land	1,000	1,000	1,000	0	0	0	0
Land Improvements	16	781	781	0	199	91	108
Total land	**1,016**	**1,781**	**1,781**	**0**	**199**	**91**	**108**
Buildings							
Buildings	53	53	53	0	13	46	(33)
Building improvements	5,595	5,662	5,482	180	457	23	434
Total buildings	**5,648**	**5,715**	**5,535**	**180**	**470**	**69**	**401**
Total property	**6,664**	**7,496**	**7,316**	**180**	**669**	**160**	**509**
Plant and equipment							
Plant, machinery and equipment	787	1,750	1,750	0	437	70	367
Fixtures, fittings and furniture	21	21	201	(180)	4	4	0
Computers and telecommunications	164	585	585	0	146	0	146
Library books	26	26	26	0	10	0	10
Total plant and equipment	**998**	**2,382**	**2,562**	(180)	**597**	**74**	523
Infrastructure							
Roads	4,134	4,136	6,343	(2,207)	913	702	211
Bridges	433	682	965	(283)	0	288	(288)
Footpaths and cycleways	31	31	31	0	6	1	5
Drainage	162	162	412	(250)	40	200	(160)
Waste Management	90	90	90	0	20	14	6
Recreational, leisure and community facilities	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other infrastructure	124	124	124	0	8	0	8
Total infrastructure	**4,974**	**5,225**	**7,965**	**(2,740)**	**987**	**1,205**	**(218)**
Total capital works expenditure	**12,636**	**15,103**	**17,843**	**(2,740)**	**2,253**	**1,439**	**922**
Represented by:							
New asset expenditure	1,389	5,031	6,861	(1,830)	994	93	901
Asset renewal expenditure	5,567	4,392	5,304	(912)	806	1,270	(464)
Asset expansion expenditure	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Asset upgrade expenditure	5,680	5,680	5,680	0	453	76	377
Total capital works expenditure	**12,636**	**15,103**	**17,845**	**(2,742)**	**2,253**	**1,439**	**814**

Capital Report
For the period ending 30 September 2025

			Expenditure			
Project	**YTD Budgets**	**YTD Actuals**	**YTD Var**	**Amended Budget**	**Forecast**	**Forecast Variance**
General Works	**21,200**	55,403	(34,203)	**111,000**	111,000	0
General Operations	**530,228**	72,594	457,634	**2,114,110**	2,114,110	0
Footpaths	**6,400**	588	5,812	**30,700**	30,700	0
Kerb & Channel	**0**	0	0	**27,500**	27,500	0
Bridge Works	**0**	105,334	(105,334)	**682,107**	762,107	(80,000)
Drainage Works	**40,000**	25,394	14,606	**161,500**	161,500	0
Major Patch Program	**25,000**	0	25,000	**103,000**	103,000	0
Gravel Resheets	**200,000**	4,400	195,600	**646,100**	646,100	0
Reseals	**40,000**	50,662	(10,662)	**740,300**	740,300	0
Road Construction	**25,000**	0	25,000	**100,000**	95,000	5,000
Building Renewal Program	**40,000**	27,391	12,609	**195,300**	195,300	0
Roads to Recovery	**613,767**	151,204	462,563	**2,455,068**	2,962,900	(507,832)
TAC (SLRSP, Blackspot)	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**1,875,000**	**(1,875,000)**
Flood Event	**0**	850,501	(850,501)	**0**	285,000	(285,000)
Recreation Projects	**19,800**	2,000	17,800	**79,200**	79,200	0
Major Projects	**691,154**	93,484	597,670	**7,656,620**	7,656,620	0
Total	**2,252,549**	**1,438,955**	**813,594**	**15,102,505**	**17,845,337**	**(2,742,832)**

Capital Report
For the period ending 30 September 2025

	Expense					
Project	Amended Budget	Forecast	Forecast Variance	YTD Budgets	YTD Actuals	YTD Var
Council Infrastructure Program						
General Works						
728000 - Dust Suppression GAT Seals	**31,700**	31,700	0	**0**	0	0
734000 - Playgrounds & Public Open Space Furniture	**10,600**	10,600	0	**0**	9,060	(9,060)
739000 - Waterways; Dams & Bores	**15,900**	15,900	0	**8,000**	0	8,000
740000 - Transfer Station Improvements	**52,800**	52,800	0	**13,200**	46,343	(33,143)
	111,000	**111,000**	**0**	**21,200**	**55,403**	**(34,203)**
General Operations						
720000 - Furniture & Fittings Purchases	**21,100**	21,100	0	**4,000**	0	4,000
722000 - Forward Survey & Design Works	**31,700**	31,700	0	**7,500**	2,250	5,250
723000 - Motor Vehicle Purchases	**318,128**	318,128	0	**79,532**	61,256	18,276
724000 - Library Collection Purchases	**26,400**	26,400	0	**10,000**	0	10,000
732000 - Heavy Plant Purchases	**1,431,551**	1,431,551	0	**357,888**	9,088	348,800
743000 - Information Technology	**285,231**	285,231	0	**71,308**	0	71,308
	2,114,110	**2,114,110**	**0**	**530,228**	**72,594**	**457,634**
Footpaths						
729000 - Footpath Rehabilitation	**24,300**	24,300	0	**0**	588	(588)
730000 - Footpaths	**6,400**	6,400	0	**6,400**	0	6,400
	30,700	**30,700**	**0**	**6,400**	**588**	**5,812**

Capital Report
For the period ending 30 September 2025

	Expense					
Project	Amended Budget	Forecast	Forecast Variance	YTD Budgets	YTD Actuals	YTD Var
Kerb & Channel						
733000 - Kerb & Channel	**27,500**	**27,500**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**
Bridge Works						
701322 - Bridge 139 Raglan Elmhurst Rd (BRP)	**0**	71,000	(71,000)	**0**	4,450	(4,450)
721000 - Bridges; floodways; & Major Culverts	**432,900**	96,900	336,000	**0**	0	0
721010 - Bridge Reconstruction - Eurambeen-Streatham Rd - Bridges 58 & 60	**0**	0	0	**0**	0	0
721030 - Bridge Repair & Various Upgrade Works	**0**	0	0	**0**	5,158	(5,158)
721050 - Vincoa Road culvert extension	**0**	85,000	(85,000)	**0**	85,257	(85,257)
721070 - Bridge 190 (BL Jetty)	**0**	6,000	(6,000)	**0**	5,743	(5,743)
721080 - Bridge 185 (Amphitheatre Rd)	**249,207**	178,207	71,000	**0**	0	0
721090 - Bridge 192 (Caravan Pk foot-bridge)	**0**	1,000	(1,000)	**0**	840	(840)
721110 - Bridge 80 High Street Renewal	**0**	35,000	(35,000)	**0**	306	(306)
721130 - Snake Island Bridge Renewal B191	**0**	160,000	(160,000)	**0**	2,500	(2,500)
721140 - B191 - Beaufort Caravan Park No. 2 (Snake Island) Footbridge Reconstruction	**0**	100,000	(100,000)	**0**	0	0
721150 - B63 - Eurambeen-Streatham Rd - Guardrail repair	**0**	15,000	(15,000)	**0**	0	0
721160 - B47 - Dooleys Rd - Guardrail repair	**0**	13,000	(13,000)	**0**	0	0
745010 - LRCIP Phase 4 - Bridge Rail Renewal 107	**0**	1,000	(1,000)	**0**	1,080	(1,080)
	682,107	**762,107**	**(80,000)**	**0**	**105,334**	**(105,334)**
Drainage Works						
727000 - Drainage Projects	**161,500**	161,500	0	**40,000**	25,394	14,606
	161,500	**161,500**	**0**	**40,000**	**25,394**	**14,606**
Major Patch Program						
701025 - Major Patch Program	**103,000**	103,000	0	**25,000**	0	25,000

Capital Report
For the period ending 30 September 2025

	Expense					
Project	Amended Budget	Forecast	Forecast Variance	YTD Budgets	YTD Actuals	YTD Var
	103,000	**103,000**	**0**	**25,000**	**0**	**25,000**
Gravel Resheets						
731000 - Gravel Resheets	**646,100**	13,500	632,600	**200,000**	0	200,000
731371 - Resheet - Lobbs Road	**0**	30,200	(30,200)	**0**	4,400	(4,400)
731372 - Resheet - Moonambel-Warrenmang Rd	**0**	33,700	(33,700)	**0**	0	0
731373 - Resheet - Glenlofty-Warrenmang Rd	**0**	33,700	(33,700)	**0**	0	0
731374 - Resheet - Redbank-Barkly Rd	**0**	26,500	(26,500)	**0**	0	0
731375 - Resheet - East Mt Mitchell Rd	**0**	40,000	(40,000)	**0**	0	0
731376 - Resheet - Avoca-Greenhill Creek Rd	**0**	24,500	(24,500)	**0**	0	0
731377 - Resheet - Jones Rd	**0**	17,500	(17,500)	**0**	0	0
731378 - Resheet - Gordons Rd	**0**	22,200	(22,200)	**0**	0	0
731379 - Resheet - Pittong Snake Valley Rd	**0**	60,800	(60,800)	**0**	0	0
731380 - Resheet - Smiths Rd	**0**	58,000	(58,000)	**0**	0	0
731381 - Resheet - Waldrons Rd	**0**	57,000	(57,000)	**0**	0	0
731382 - Resheet - Back Raglan Rd	**0**	47,300	(47,300)	**0**	0	0
731383 - Resheet - Musical Gully Rd	**0**	42,000	(42,000)	**0**	0	0
731384 - Resheet - Wilkinsons Rd	**0**	55,000	(55,000)	**0**	0	0
731385 - Resheet - Carngham Lake Goldsmith Rd	**0**	41,800	(41,800)	**0**	0	0
731386 - Resheet - Ferntree Gully Rd	**0**	42,400	(42,400)	**0**	0	0
	646,100	**646,100**	**0**	**200,000**	**4,400**	**195,600**

Capital Report
For the period ending 30 September 2025

	Expense					
Project	Amended Budget	Forecast	Forecast Variance	YTD Budgets	YTD Actuals	YTD Var
Reseals						
735000 - Reseals	**740,300**	740,300	0	**40,000**	0	40,000
735460 - Black Bottom RdSegment Change²	**0**	0	0	**0**	7,630	(7,630)
735470 - Black Bottom Rd10.67 Hobby horse La²	**0**	0	0	**0**	2,267	(2,267)
735480 - Boyce StPyrenees Hwy Eos²	**0**	0	0	**0**	3,443	(3,443)
735490 - Camerons LaSunraysia Hwy²	**0**	0	0	**0**	723	(723)
735520 - Chute Waterloo RdSheisa Tk²	**0**	0	0	**0**	12,846	(12,846)
735530 - Duke StSeal Change²k	**0**	0	0	**0**	1,572	(1,572)
735550 - Homebush Rd13.31 Scotts Rd²	**0**	0	0	**0**	2,570	(2,570)
735570 - Lexton Ararat RdAmphitheatre Rd²	**0**	0	0	**0**	10,871	(10,871)
735580 - North StBeavis La²	**0**	0	0	**0**	2,508	(2,508)
735590 - Richards RdPyrenees Hwy²	**0**	0	0	**0**	4,797	(4,797)
735610 - Taltarni RdSeal Change	**0**	0	0	**0**	1,434	(1,434)
735610 - Taltarni RdSeal Change²	**0**	0	0	**0**	0	0
	740,300	**740,300**	**0**	**40,000**	**50,662**	**(10,662)**

Capital Report
For the period ending 30 September 2025

	Expense					
Project	Amended Budget	Forecast	Forecast Variance	YTD Budgets	YTD Actuals	YTD Var
Road Construction						
737140 - Waubra Talbot Rd Construction (RTR)	**0**	0	0	**0**	0	0
738000 - Road Construction	**100,000**	95,000	5,000	**25,000**	0	25,000
	100,000	**95,000**	**5,000**	**25,000**	**0**	**25,000**
Building Renewal Program						
742110 - Caravan Park Ensuite Renewal	**0**	50,000	(50,000)	**0**	3,900	(3,900)
742120 - Landsborough Caravan Park/Pool Ablutions Renewal	**0**	40,000	(40,000)	**0**	0	0
742130 - Council Chambers Renewal	**0**	30,000	(30,000)	**0**	0	0
742140 - Snake Valley Hall Toilets Renewal	**0**	60,000	(60,000)	**0**	0	0
744000 - Building Renewal Program	**195,300**	15,300	180,000	**40,000**	0	40,000
744050 - Building Renewal -Lawrence Street Council Chambers	**0**	0	0	**0**	20,830	(20,830)
744050 - Building Renewal -Lawrence Street Council Chambers ceiling	**0**	0	0	**0**	0	0
744070 - Building Renewal -Weighbridge renovation	**0**	0	0	**0**	2,661	(2,661)
	195,300	**195,300**	**0**	**40,000**	**27,391**	**12,609**

Capital Report
For the period ending 30 September 2025

	Expense					
Project	Amended Budget	Forecast	Forecast Variance	YTD Budgets	YTD Actuals	YTD Var
Roads to Recovery						
701330 - Bridge 139 Raglan Elmhurst Rd (BRP)	**0**	82,900	(82,900)	**0**	0	0
737000 - Road Construction - Roads to Recovery	**2,455,068**	0	2,455,068	**613,767**	0	613,767
737120 - Stockyard Hill Rd / Beaufort Carranballac Rd Intersection Construction (RTR)	**0**	150,000	(150,000)	**0**	0	0
737180 - Racecourse Rd; Beaufort - Road Construction - Ch.630m to Ch.2;000m - (RTR Funded)	**0**	720,000	(720,000)	**0**	0	0
737190 - Langi Kal Kal Rd - Road Construction - Ch.0m to Ch.300m - (RTR Funded)	**0**	180,000	(180,000)	**0**	0	0
737200 - Trawalla Waterloo Rd - Road Construction - Ch.0m to Ch. 400m - (RTR Funded)	**0**	210,000	(210,000)	**0**	0	0
737210 - Crowlands Eversley Rd - Road Construction - Ch.2;020m to Ch.2;735m - (RTR Funded)	**0**	240,000	(240,000)	**0**	0	0
737220 - Havelock St; Beaufort - Drainage/Parking Upgrade	**0**	50,000	(50,000)	**0**	0	0
737230 - Hopes Ln - Road Reconstruction - Ch.2;540m to Ch.3;380m (Flood Repair & RTR Funded)	**0**	215,000	(215,000)	**0**	0	0
737310 - Waubra Talbot Rd; Evansford - Road Construction & Speed Limit Improvements & Ass. Works - C	**0**	645,000	(645,000)	**0**	0	0
738010 - Willoby St Reconstruction - Lawrene St to Livingstone St	**0**	100,000	(100,000)	**0**	0	0
745011 - LRCIP Phase 4 - Bridge Rail Renewal 22	**0**	120,000	(120,000)	**0**	0	0
745120 - LRCIP Phase 4 - Streetscape and drainage works - Redbank	**0**	250,000	(250,000)	**0**	151,204	(151,204)
	2,455,068	**2,962,900**	**(507,832)**	**613,767**	**151,204**	**462,563**
TAC (SLRSP, Blackspot)						
737170 - Willoby St; Beaufort (Livingstone St to Electric charging Carpark driveway	**0**	150,000	(150,000)	**0**	0	0
737240 - King St; Beaufort - Speed Limit Improvements & Ass. Works - (Project 1A - SLRSP Funded)	**0**	25,000	(25,000)	**0**	0	0
737250 - Raglan Township - Speed Limit Improvements & Ass. Works - (Project 1B - SLRSP Funded)	**0**	93,000	(93,000)	**0**	0	0
737260 - Waubra Township - Speed Limit Improvements & Ass. Works - (Project 1C - SLRSP Funded)	**0**	7,000	(7,000)	**0**	0	0
737270 - Snake Valley Township - Speed Limit Improvements & Ass. Works - (Project 1D - SLRSP Funded)	**0**	15,000	(15,000)	**0**	0	0
737280 - Old Shirley Rd; Beaufort - Speed Limit Improvements & Ass. Works - (Project 1E - SLRSP Funded)	**0**	16,000	(16,000)	**0**	0	0
737290 - Amphitheatre Township - Speed Limit Improvements & Ass. Works - (Project 1F - SLRSP Funded)	**0**	8,000	(8,000)	**0**	0	0
737300 - Trawalla Township - Speed Limit Improvements & Ass. Works - (Project 1G - SLRSP Funded)	**0**	8,000	(8,000)	**0**	0	0
737315 - Waubra Talbot Rd; Evansford - Road Construction & Speed Limit Improvements & Ass. Works - C	**0**	260,000	(260,000)	**0**	0	0
737320 - Burke St; Beaufort - LATM Works - (Project 2A - SLRSP Funded)	**0**	200,000	(200,000)	**0**	0	0
737330 - Homebush Rd; Avoca - LATM Works - (Project 2B - SLRSP Funded)	**0**	37,000	(37,000)	**0**	0	0
737340 - South St; Beaufort - LATM Works - (Project 2C - SLRSP Funded)	**0**	94,000	(94,000)	**0**	0	0

Capital Report
For the period ending 30 September 2025

	Expense					
Project	Amended Budget	Forecast	Forecast Variance	YTD Budgets	YTD Actuals	YTD Var
737350 - Gregory St; Beaufort - LATM Works - (Project 2D - SLRSP Funded)	**0**	168,000	(168,000)	**0**	0	0
737360 - Smythesdale Snake Valley Rd; Snake Valley - LATM Works - (Project 2E - SLRSP Funded)	**0**	74,000	(74,000)	**0**	0	0
737370 - Duke St; Avoca - LATM Works - (Project 2F - SLRSP Funded)	**0**	170,000	(170,000)	**0**	0	0
737380 - Mt William Rd & Carngham Streatham Rd Intersection Realignment - (Project 3 - SLRSP Funded)	**0**	550,000	(550,000)	**0**	0	0
	0	**1,875,000**	**(1,875,000)**	**0**	**0**	**0**

Capital Report
For the period ending 30 September 2025

	Expense					
Project	Amended Budget	Forecast	Forecast Variance	YTD Budgets	YTD Actuals	YTD Var
Flood Event						
108571 - CERTIFIED CLAIM PSC-1037- 0002 - PACKAGE 9 AMPHI BRIDGES	**0**	0	0	**0**	0	0
108572 - CERTIFIED CLAIM PSC-1037- 0003 - PACKAGE 13 ELMHURST BRIDGES	**0**	0	0	**0**	141,195	(141,195)
108575 - CERTIFIED CLAIM PSC-1037- 0006 -PACKAGE 7 - HOPES LANE	**0**	285,000	(285,000)	**0**	0	0
108577 - CERTIFIED CLAIM PSC-1037- 0008 - PACKAGE 1 - LEXTON AND GLEN BRAE	**0**	0	0	**0**	163,227	(163,227)
108578 - CERTIFIED CLAIM PSC-1037- 0009 - PACKAGE 2 - HOMEBUSH AND AVOCA	**0**	0	0	**0**	184,410	(184,410)
108579 - CERTIFIED CLAIM PSC-1037- 0010 -PACKAGE 4 - WATERLOO AND RAGLAN	**0**	0	0	**0**	161,270	(161,270)
108580 - CERTIFIED CLAIM PSC-1037- 0011 - PACKAGE 5 - LANDSBOROUGH AND OTHERS	**0**	0	0	**0**	38,120	(38,120)
108581 - CERTIFIED CLAIM PSC-1037- 0012 - PACKAGE 6 - MT LONARCH; GLENLOGIE	**0**	0	0	**0**	20,740	(20,740)
108583 - CERTIFIED CLAIM PSC-1037- 0015 - PACKAGE 15 & 16 - SNAKE VALLEY CULVERTS -BEAUFORT BRI	**0**	0	0	**0**	41,819	(41,819)
108584 - CERTIFIED CLAIM PSC-1037- 0017 - PACKAGE 17 - LEXTONS CULVERTS AND FLOODWAYS	**0**	0	0	**0**	23,861	(23,861)
108586 - CERTIFIED CLAIM PSC-1037- 0019 - PACKAGE 19 - NO PRE-EXISTING PHOTOS	**0**	0	0	**0**	75,860	(75,860)
	0	**285,000**	**(285,000)**	**0**	**850,501**	**(850,501)**
Recreation Projects						
726000 - Recreation Projects	**79,200**	**79,200**	**0**	**19,800**	**2,000**	**17,800**
Major Projects						
702095 - front counter renovations in Council offices - Frontline Service Review	**58,144**	58,144	0	**14,536**	0	14,536
703019 - Avoca Depot Upgrade Exp	**8,993**	8,993	0	**2,247**	0	2,247
705245 - Strategic Capital Projects	**1,000,000**	1,000,000	0	**0**	0	0
705251 - Burke Street Workers Accommodation Exp	**765,483**	765,483	0	**191,371**	89,906	101,465
705252 - Community Participation & Support; Old Beaufort Primary School Exp	**0**	0	0	**0**	0	0
705258 - Tiny Towns Fund Rd2 - Avoca Entrance Sculpture Project Inc	**0**	0	0	**0**	0	0
741000 - Beaufort Caravan Park Redevelopment	**0**	0	0	**0**	2,620	(2,620)
742000 - End user computing strategy implementation stage 2	**300,000**	300,000	0	**75,000**	0	75,000
745140 - Beggs Street Dog Park Beaufort Exp	**124,000**	124,000	0	**8,000**	14	7,986
745150 - Waubra Playground Development Project Exp	**0**	0	0	**0**	0	0
750000 - Regional Workers Accommodation	**5,400,000**	5,400,000	0	**400,000**	0	400,000
705253 - Burke Street Infrastructure Exp	**0**	0	0	**0**	945	(945)

Capital Report
For the period ending 30 September 2025

	Expense					
Project	Amended Budget	Forecast	Forecast Variance	YTD Budgets	YTD Actuals	YTD Var
	7,656,620	7,656,620	0	691,154	93,484	597,670
Grand Total	15,102,505	17,845,337	(2,742,832)	2,252,549	1,438,955	813,594

Performance Indicators

For the period ending 30 September 2025

		Full Year				Year to Date		
		Adopted Budget	Amended Budget	Forecast	Var	Budget	Actual	Var
Operating position:								
Adjusted underlying result	Adjusted underlying surplus (deficit) / Adjusted underlying revenue	**-10.5%**	**-37.6%**	-37.6%	**(0.0%)**	**48.7%**	53.4%	**4.8%**
Liquidity								
Working Capital	Current assets / current liabilities	**170.2%**	**210.8%**	252.8%	**42.0%**	**261.7%**	297.6%	**35.9%**
Unrestricted cash	Unrestricted cash ($'000)	**4,466**	**5,180**	7,597	**2,417**	**10,091**	13,240	**3,149**
Obligations								
Loans and borrowings	Interest bearing loans and borrowings / rate & charges	**22.2%**	**21.2%**	**21.2%**	**0.0%**	18.1%	18.1%	**0.0%**
Loans and borrowings	Interest and principal repayments on interest bearing loans and borrowings / rate revenue	**3.1%**	**4.1%**	4.1%	**0.0%**	**1.1%**	10.8%	**9.7%**
Indebtedness	Non-current liabilities / own source revenue	**18.6%**	**16.9%**	16.9%	**0.0%**	**16.2%**	15.7%	**-0.5%**
Asset renewal	Asset renewal and upgrade expense / Asset depreciation	**176.9%**	**158.4%**	172.8%	**14.3%**	**79.2%**	84.7%	**5.5%**

Creditor Listing
Payments greater than $300k
For period 1 July 2024 to 30 September 2025

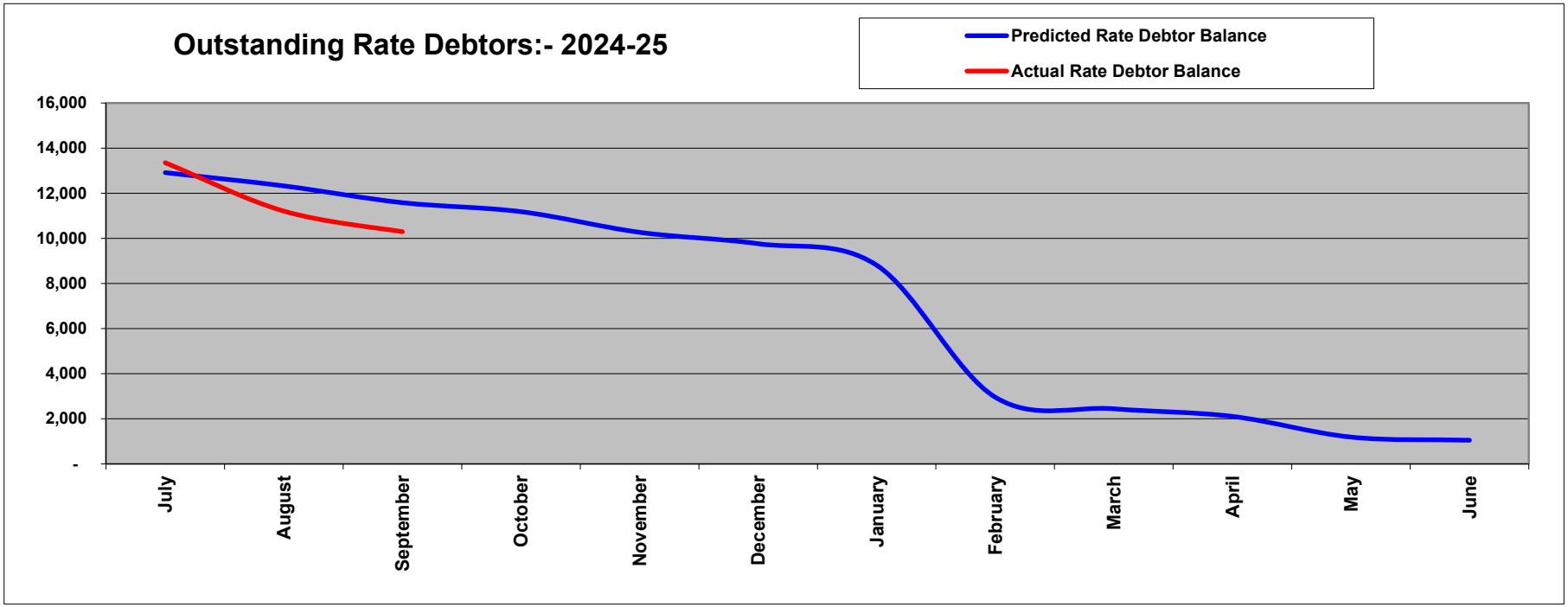
Creditor Code	Creditor Name	No. Invoices	Invoice Paid Amount (Inc GST)
777	AUSTRALIAN TAXATION OFFICE	36	2,329,185
3026	STATE REVENUE OFFICE - VICTORIA	4	2,002,695
147	VISION SUPER	744	1,419,713
128	HOWELL CONTRACTORS PTY. LTD.	268	1,344,057
2731	PRIMAL SURFACING PTY LTD	41	1,260,304
236	VEOLIA	132	981,024
549	DAVID ELDRIDGE PTY LTD (TRADING AS DE QUARRY SOLUTIONS)	121	955,191
138	JLT RISK SOLUTIONS PTY LTD	29	849,894
805	FOUR SEASONS WASTE PTY. LTD.	15	720,526
797	UNDER CONSTRUCTION	29	617,014
929	CLEANAWAY PTY LTD (66835 - Waste Collection)	24	589,907
4793	BERNE FLEMING CIVIL PTY LTD	61	513,034
2326	GALLAGHER BASSETT SERVICES	5	505,789
2264	MAV INSURANCE - LIABILITY MUTUAL INSURANCE (826088862)	2	485,594
2641	LMK EARTHWORKS	37	476,403
5279	RMG (AUS) PTY LTD	31	460,799
4889	BELGRAVIA HEALTH & LEISURE GROUP PTY LTD	13	451,390
5642	TODD DEVINE HOMES PTY LTD	12	444,667
39	PEARCE EARTHMOVING	62	442,244
5684	ASIC OFFICIAL ADMINISTERED RECEIPTS TRUST CO	1	388,303
5572	HOTONDO HOMES (HUNTER DELL PTY LTD)	12	420,132
4990	BRG DRAINAGE AND CIVIL EARTHWORKS	12	359,525
5638	FEDERATION LUXURY TRANSPORTABLES PTY LTD	8	350,115
5294	A & N DURANT EARTH MOVING P/L	43	344,872
64	BROADBENT MACHINERY	114	300,912
			19,013,288

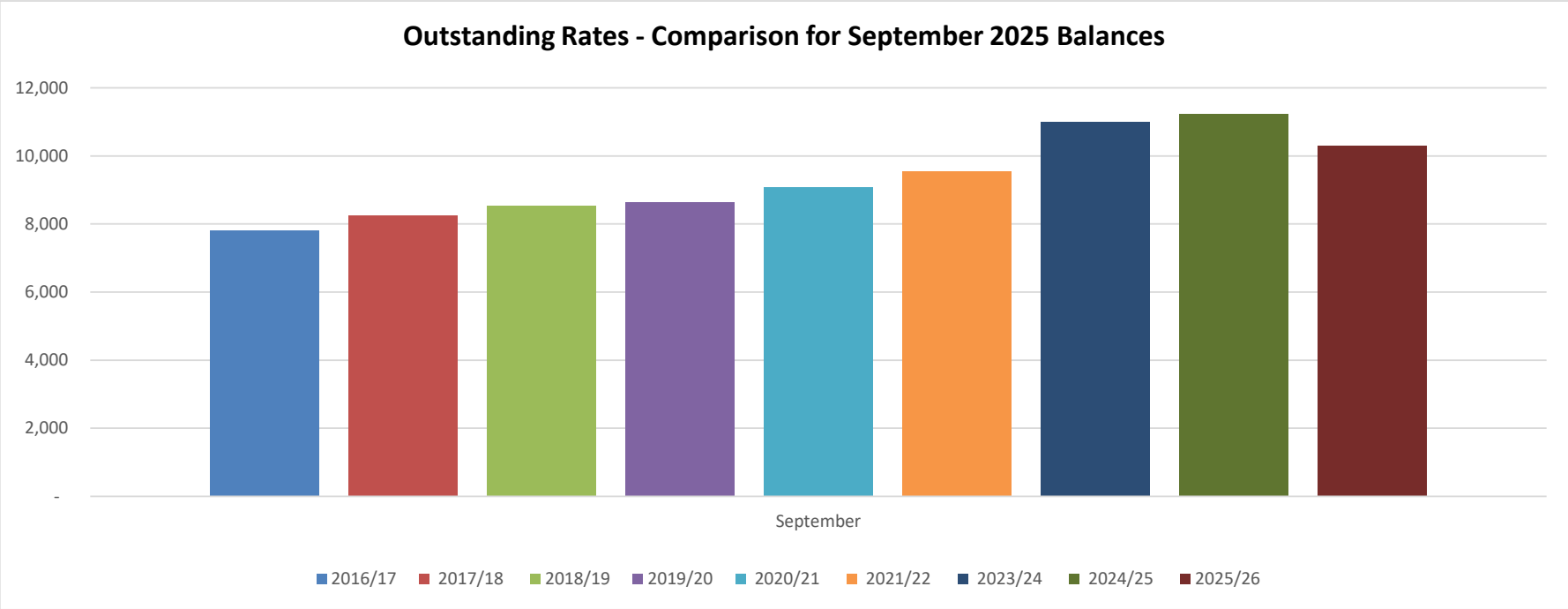
Trust Deposits
As at 30 September 2025

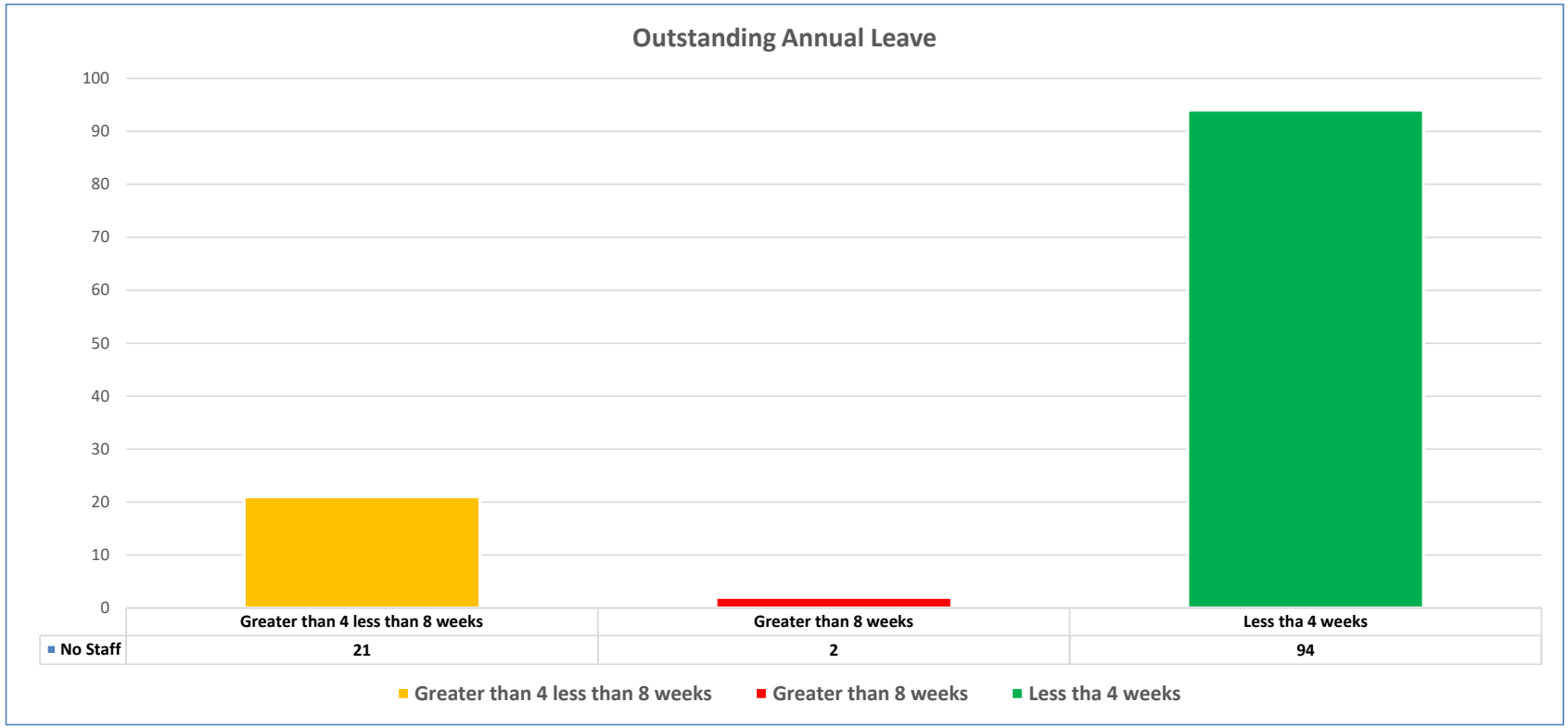
Acc No	Acc Description	YTD Balance
950028	Melbourne Cup Sweep Fund	(1,122)
950036	Hall Hire Security Deposits	(1,760)
950038	Security Deposits	(103,231)
950052	Contract Deposits	(3,374)
950058	Camphill Trust Fund	(9,353)
950066	Landsborough Swimming Pool/Caravan Park Trust	(152,162)
950098	Avoca Youth Council Trust	(2,612)
950106	Sale of Land Trust	(8,941)
950107	Stockyard Hill Wind Farm - Fire Recovery Fund	(50,000)
950109	Flood Study Implementation Support for Pyrenees Shire Council - Extra Holding	(245,710)
950217	HACC-PYP Minor Capital Holding	(10,000)
950263	Kindergarten Infrastructure and Service Plan Grant	(42,000)
950269	Pyrenees Municipal Bushfire Hazard Assessment 2023-24 Holding	(6,730)
950271	Glenlofty Unknown Funds - Holding	(6,254)
950274	CERTIFIED CLAIM PSC-1037- 0009 - PACKAGE 2 - HOMEBUSH AND AVOCA HOLDING	(241,760)
950276	CERTIFIED CLAIM PSC-1037- 0006 -PACKAGE 7 - HOPES LANE HOLDING	(481,317)
950278	CERTIFIED CLAIM PSC-1037- 0015 - PACKAGE 15 & 16 - SNAKE VALLEY CULVERTS -BEAUFORT BRIDGES AND CULVERTS HOLDING	(132,747)
950280	Increase the visibility;awareness;accessibility of our Libraries Holding	(200,000)
950281	CERTIFIED CLAIM PSC-1037- 0012 - PACKAGE 6 - MT LONARCH; GLENLOGIE HOLDING	(130,009)
950282	CERTIFIED CLAIM PSC-1037- 0002 - PACKAGE 9 - AMPHITHEATRE BRIDGES HOLDING	(400,149)
950285	Disaster Recovery Heritage Program - Belmont (H0644) 2023-25 - Holding	(3,890)
950286	Men's Shed Funding Holding	(100,000)
950287	Beggs Street Dog Park Beaufort Holding	(27,750)
950288	Burke Street Infrastructure RWAF Holding	(4,920,832)
950290	Ausnet Fundng	(176,849)
		(7,458,552)

Outstanding Rate Debtors

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26		
	Actual									Revised Budget	Actual	Var
Opening Balance		344	383	280	305	316	336	405	1,102	**903**		
July	359	283	9,764	209	10,588	11,137	11,584	12,388	12,525	**12,913**	13,351	(438)
August	8,673	9,082	9,192	9,759	10,300	10,679	10,653	11,516	11,954	**12,325**	11,206	1,119
September	7,822	8,263	8,536	8,648	9,093	9,543	9,603	10,989	11,233	**11,581**	10,293	1,288
October	7,451	7,890	8,065	8,290	8,678	9,167	9,407	10,309	10,845	**11,181**		11,181
November	6,704	7,136	7,287	7,522	7,880	8,334	8,492	9,552	9,959	**10,268**		10,268
December	6,346	6,811	7,025	7,113	7,465	7,975	8,094	9,184	9,468	**9,762**		9,762
January	5,989	6,196	6,345	6,557	7,061	7,436	7,525	8,452	8,544	**8,809**		8,809
February	1,746	2,068	1,954	1,848	2,048	2,711	2,648	2,626	2,867	**2,956**		2,956
March	1,258	1,432	1,395	1,010	1,410	2,305	2,306	2,160	2,369	**2,442**		2,442
April	1,189	1,267	1,076	1,243	1,137	1,919	1,512	1,979	2,042	**2,105**		2,105
May	561	652	452	573	460	727	780	1,222	1,152	**1,188**		1,188
June	344	383	280	305	316	336	405	1,102	903	**1,048**		1,048

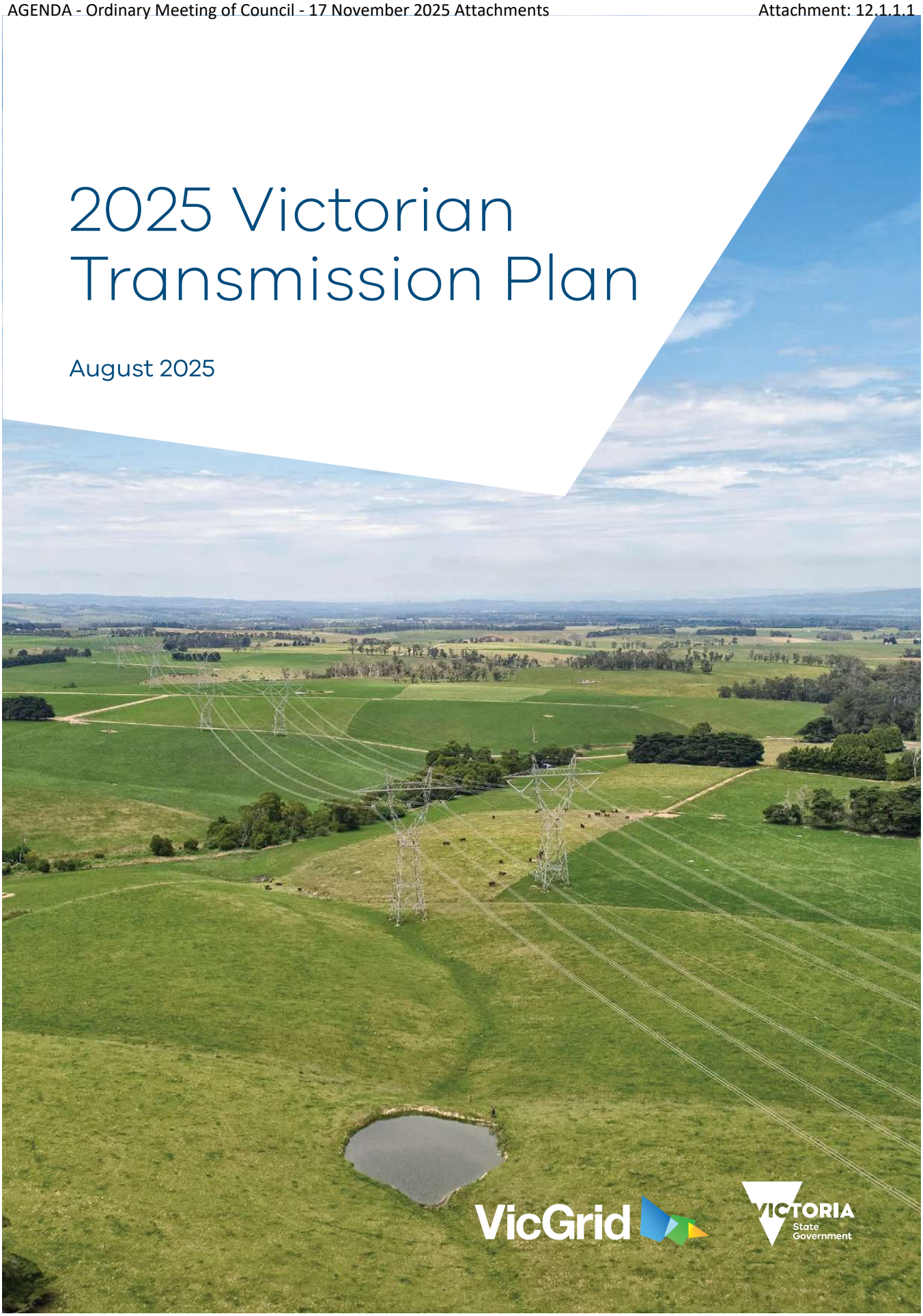

Outstanding Rate Debtors:- 2024-25
Predicted Rate Debtor Balance
Actual Rate Debtor Balance
16,000
14,000
12,000
10,000
8,000
6,000
4,000
2,000
-
July
August
September
October
November
December
January
February
March
April
May
June


Outstanding Rates - Comparison for September 2025 Balances
12,000
10,000
8,000
6,000
4,000
2,000
-
September
2016/17
2017/18
2018/19
2019/20
2020/21
2021/22
2023/24
2024/25
2025/26


Outstanding Annual Leave
100
90
80
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
0
Greater than 4 less than 8 weeks
Greater than 8 weeks
Less tha 4 weeks
No Staff
21
2
94
Greater than 4 less than 8 weeks
Greater than 8 weeks
Less tha 4 weeks

2025 Victorian Transmission Plan

August 2025



Acknowledgment of Traditional Owners

We acknowledge and respect Victoria's Traditional Owners as the original custodians of Victoria's land and waters, their unique ability to care for Country and deep spiritual connection to it. We honour Elders past and present whose knowledge and wisdom has ensured the continuation of culture and traditional practices.

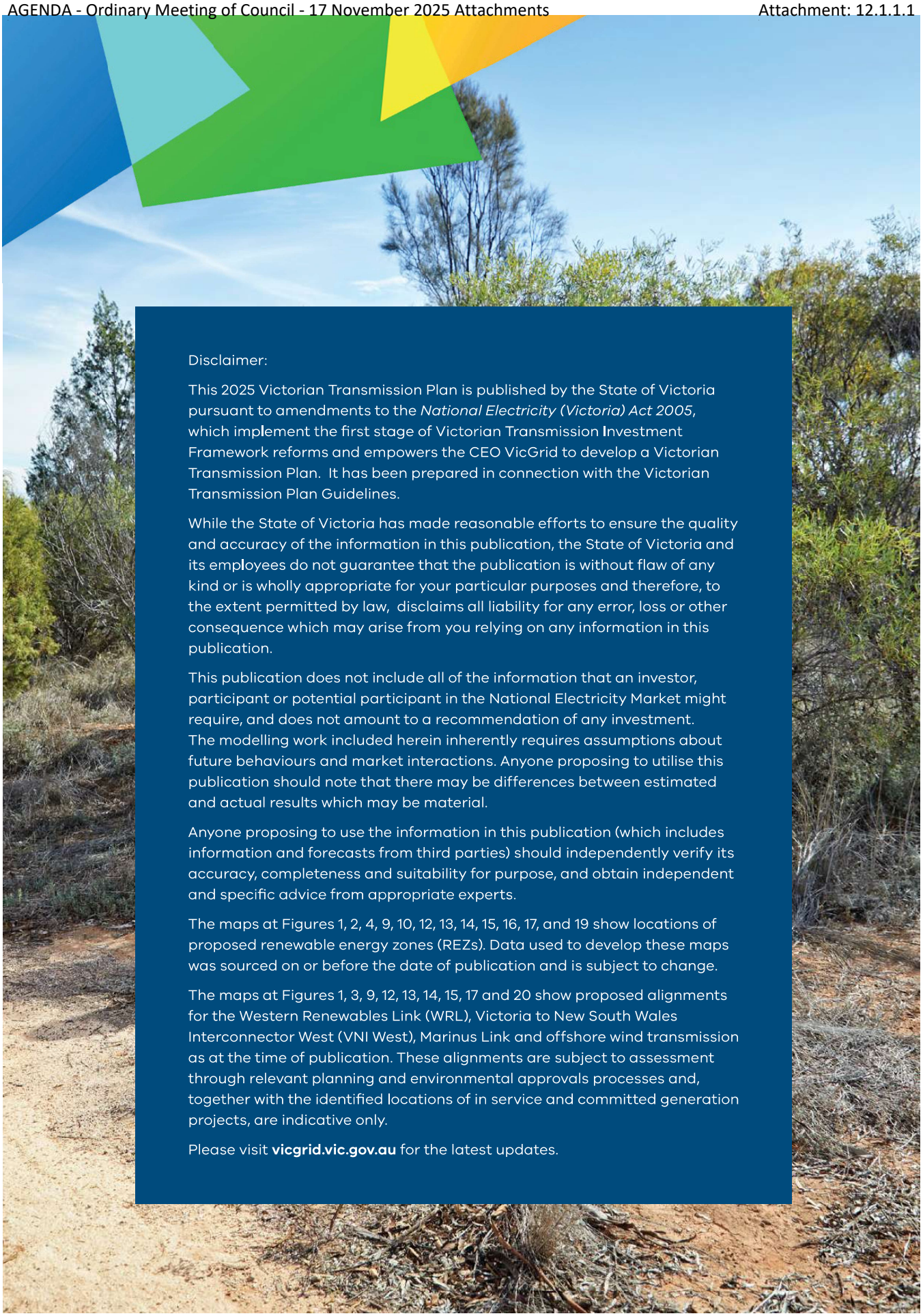
We are committed to genuinely partnering and meaningfully engaging with Victoria's Traditional Owners and First Peoples to support the protection of Country, the maintenance of spiritual and cultural practices and their broader aspirations in the 21st century and beyond.

Our commitment to Victoria's Traditional Owners and First Peoples

We acknowledge we have more work to do to support meaningful participation of Traditional Owners and First Peoples in the development of future Victorian Transmission Plans and renewable energy zones.

The first phase of the Victorian Transmission Plan strategic land use assessment included only publicly available datasets for Aboriginal and Historical cultural heritage. As such, the data relating to Aboriginal cultural heritage is limited and does not capture all known heritage values.

We will continue ongoing conversations with formally recognised Traditional Owners and impacted non-formally recognised Traditional Owners to design an appropriate process for incorporating further cultural heritage information into renewable energy zone development and subsequent Victorian Transmission Plans, in alignment with principles of data sovereignty. We have heard how critical cultural heritage mapping is, and we are committed to making sure this process is Traditional Owner-led.



Disclaimer:

This 2025 Victorian Transmission Plan is published by the State of Victoria pursuant to amendments to the *National Electricity (Victoria) Act 2005*, which implement the first stage of Victorian Transmission Investment Framework reforms and empowers the CEO VicGrid to develop a Victorian Transmission Plan. It has been prepared in connection with the Victorian Transmission Plan Guidelines.

While the State of Victoria has made reasonable efforts to ensure the quality and accuracy of the information in this publication, the State of Victoria and its employees do not guarantee that the publication is without flaw of any kind or is wholly appropriate for your particular purposes and therefore, to the extent permitted by law, disclaims all liability for any error, loss or other consequence which may arise from you relying on any information in this publication.

This publication does not include all of the information that an investor, participant or potential participant in the National Electricity Market might require, and does not amount to a recommendation of any investment. The modelling work included herein inherently requires assumptions about future behaviours and market interactions. Anyone proposing to utilise this publication should note that there may be differences between estimated and actual results which may be material.

Anyone proposing to use the information in this publication (which includes information and forecasts from third parties) should independently verify its accuracy, completeness and suitability for purpose, and obtain independent and specific advice from appropriate experts.

The maps at Figures 1, 2, 4, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, and 19 show locations of proposed renewable energy zones (REZs). Data used to develop these maps was sourced on or before the date of publication and is subject to change.

The maps at Figures 1, 3, 9, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17 and 20 show proposed alignments for the Western Renewables Link (WRL), Victoria to New South Wales Interconnector West (VNI West), Marinus Link and offshore wind transmission as at the time of publication. These alignments are subject to assessment through relevant planning and environmental approvals processes and, together with the identified locations of in service and committed generation projects, are indicative only.

Please visit **vicgrid.vic.gov.au** for the latest updates.

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Acronyms

Term	Definition
AEMO	Australian Energy Market Operator
CDP	Candidate development pathway
CER	Consumer energy resources
CIS	Capacity Investment Scheme
DEECA	Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action
DNSP	Distribution Network Service Provider
DSN	Declared shared network
EIRR	Economic Internal Rate of Return
ESOO	Electricity Statement of Opportunities
EV	Electric vehicle
EES	Environment Effects Statement
GIA	Grid Impact Assessment
GSOO	Gas Statement of Opportunities
GW	Gigawatt (one million kilowatts)

Term	Definition
GWh	Gigawatt hour (one million kilowatt hours)
IAP2	International Association of Public Participation
ISP	Integrated System Plan
MCA	Multi-criteria analysis
ML	Marinus Link
MW	Megawatt (one thousand kilowatts)
MWh	Megawatt hour (one thousand kilowatt hours)
NEM	National Electricity Market
NEVA	*National Electricity (Victoria) Act 2025*
NPV	Net Present Value
OSW	Offshore wind
PSS/E	Power system simulation for engineering
RAP	Registered Aboriginal Party
RAAF	Royal Australian Air Force

Term	Definition
REZ	Renewable energy zone
RFP	Request for proposal
SBC	State Business Corporation
SLUA	Strategic land use assessment
TW	Terawatt (one billion kilowatts)
TWh	Terawatt hour (one billion kilowatt hours)
VAPR	Victorian Annual Planning Report
VGPR	Victorian Gas Planning Report
VNI WEST	Victoria to New South Wales Interconnector West
VRET	Victorian Renewable Energy Targets
VTIF	Victorian Transmission Investment Framework
VTP	Victorian Transmission Plan
WRL	Western Renewables Link

How to read this document

Part A

A new approach to planning Victoria's energy grid

Part A introduces the context for the 2025 Victorian Transmission Plan (VTP). It provides an overview of VicGrid's methodology for developing the VTP and describes how VicGrid is working with Traditional Owners and First Peoples, communities and industry as part of the process. Part A also summarises key themes from feedback that VicGrid has received and how these have helped to shape the 2025 VTP.

Part B

Our plan for renewable energy zones and transmission projects

Part B presents the outputs of the 2025 VTP. This includes details on each of the proposed renewable energy zones (REZs) for Victoria, the priority programs of transmission upgrades needed over the next 15 years, and the proposed shoreline REZ to enable the development of offshore wind in Gippsland.

Part C

Delivering the VTP

Part C provides information about the next steps for delivering the VTP. This includes information on what to expect as renewable energy zones are formally declared and developed, as well as next steps for planning transmission projects identified in the 2025 VTP.

Part D

What comes next after publication of this 2025 Victorian Transmission Plan?

Part D provides an overview of what comes after the publication of the 2025 VTP.

Supporting technical information can be found in the Appendices, available on the VicGrid website at **vicgrid.vic.gov.au**

Message from the Minister

The Hon. Lily D'Ambrosio MP
Minister for Energy and Resources

The release of the 2025 Victorian Transmission Plan (VTP) represents a major milestone in Victoria's energy transition.

As coal-fired power stations close and we move further toward a future powered by renewables, we need to support this transformational change with a plan that balances the long-term interests of all Victorians.

The VTP is the cornerstone of a new approach – one that reflects not just engineering and economics, but also the values and voices of communities who host our energy infrastructure.

I want to thank every individual, representative group, local government authority and business who provided feedback through the development of this plan, from the release of draft VTP Guidelines in 2024 to the release of the draft VTP earlier this year.

The input of community, formally recognised Traditional Owners, the agriculture industry and renewable project developers and investors has been critical in shaping the final plan.

We recognise the strength of feeling in some sections of the community who remain concerned about the development of renewable energy projects and transmission infrastructure, and we are committed to understanding and addressing impacts on host communities and ensuring the benefits and opportunities of the energy transition are shared more fairly.

The plan attempts to minimise the area of Victoria required for renewable energy zones and the new transmission infrastructure needed, while also providing project developers and investors with sufficient opportunity to generate the energy we need to power homes, farms, schools, businesses, hospitals and other essential services.

Without the plan, we couldn't connect new renewables to the grid, pushing up energy bills, leaving our industry, businesses and homes without secure power, and ultimately costing our economy $9.6 billion.

We have already taken significant strides in the transition to renewable energy and with this plan now in place, we can ensure we build the right infrastructure in the right place at the right time to provide all Victorians with reliable and affordable power.

Executive summary

VicGrid is developing a new strategic plan for renewable energy infrastructure to deliver better outcomes for Victorian consumers and communities.

This is our first Victorian Transmission Plan (VTP) – a long-term plan for renewable energy zones (REZs) and transmission to ensure we have the right infrastructure in the right place at the right time to support the transition to renewables.

The VTP is a big change to how energy infrastructure has been planned in the past.

Victoria needs a significant amount of new renewable energy generation and storage capacity – supported by upgrades to Victoria's transmission network – to replace coal-fired power stations as they reach end of life and close and ensure Victoria's electricity system is affordable, reliable, safe and sustainable.

Planning for this new energy infrastructure needs to balance a range of factors, including the impacts on local communities, landholders, Traditional Owners and First Peoples, agriculture and industry, while ensuring we protect the natural environment, biodiversity and cultural heritage.

We also need to avoid under or over-investing, so we can maintain energy security and control costs to avoid unnecessary bill increases for all Victorians.

The VTP is a new approach to planning that considers important factors, including land use, environmental impacts, and community views, much earlier in the process. This aims to minimise negative impacts to regional communities, landholders and rights holders, keep costs low for consumers and give industry the certainty it needs to invest in the renewable energy Victoria requires for the future.

Our plan aims to deliver the best overall outcome for all Victorians

We have developed, refined and now plan to deliver the VTP in a way that creates benefits for Victorians and encourages the critical investment we need to maintain reliable and affordable energy. Early and meaningful engagement is at the heart of our approach. We are committed to partnering with Traditional Owners, and engaging early and often with landholders, communities and industry.

The VTP sets out the plan for Victoria's renewable energy zones and the transmission infrastructure required to enable an orderly energy transition. The 2025 VTP is a long-term plan based on a future energy mix that responds to changing needs as coal-fired power stations close, meets growing demand from new sources such as data centres, clean fuel production and electric vehicles and meets Victoria's targets for renewable generation, storage and offshore wind. Our plan is based on scenarios identified in the VTP Guidelines published in 2024 and is designed to be flexible as the energy needs of Victorian homes and businesses change in the future.

We will publish an updated VTP in 2027, and every 4 years after that, or more often if required, to ensure the plan remains up-to-date with new technology developments and changes in energy demand.

Summary of key changes from the draft 2025 VTP

We have made changes to the VTP to reflect feedback received on the draft 2025 VTP. An overview of the key changes is set out below. Since the draft 2025 VTP, we have:

- modified renewable energy zone footprints in response to community and Traditional Owner feedback and expanded some renewable energy zones to allow for greater participation by renewable energy generators and to reflect the need for larger areas to develop technically and commercially viable projects
- consolidated the Wimmera Southern Mallee and Grampians Wimmera renewable energy zones into a single renewable energy zones (now called the Western renewable energy zone) that is comprised of 2 separate parts. This decision means there are now 6 proposed renewable energy zones and the proposed Gippsland Shoreline renewable energy zone
- after consistent feedback from both community and industry, we have clarified that the modelled generation amounts for each renewable energy zone are not caps on the generation in that renewable energy zone, but are estimates that are used to inform how much transmission infrastructure is needed
- made minor changes to the transmission projects included in the candidate development pathways to reflect updated power systems engineering studies and feedback from industry stakeholders
- revised the cost estimates for transmission projects to reflect updated information and benchmarked these costs against the Australian Energy Market Operator's (AEMO's) recently released Transmission Cost Database
- finalised the cost-benefit analysis which highlights the benefits to Victorian energy consumers that come from investing in the transmission projects on the optimal development pathway
- estimated a range of energy we need across different technology types. VicGrid has considered different scenarios for future energy use, including where demand for energy increases at anticipated levels in line with AEMO's national step change trends (scenario 1), and also a future where energy-intensive industries, such as data centres, hydrogen production or green aluminium, are developed in Victoria and demand is significantly higher (scenario 2).

The draft VTP presented modelled estimates aligned to scenario 1. The actual generation in each renewable energy zone determined by an allocation process could be different to the modelled generation in scenario 1. Therefore, we have provided a range from scenario 1 and scenario 2 in the final VTP to reflect that there are many plausible and different possible futures for Victoria's energy landscape.

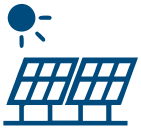
For more information, see Part B of this plan, the What We Heard Engagement Summary Report and the VTP Changes Summary Report **vicgrid.vic.gov.au**

Additional renewable generation capacity in our plan

By 2040, we are planning for:

5.7 - 9.6 GW
of new onshore wind

9 GW
of new offshore wind



2.3 - 8.9 GW
of new utility-scale solar

4.8 - 7.7 GW
of new short and long duration (utility) storage capacity

Notes: These figures include new capacity from already committed projects across Victoria and the additional new generation capacity that we are planning for by 2040. The ranges shown represent the differences between the generation modelled under different planning scenarios. These modelled figures are not caps on the generation that will actually be built. VicGrid's proposed new access regime will set caps for generation in each renewable energy zone.

What's included in the VTP?

The 2025 VTP sets out what renewable energy technologies and transmission should be built, when, where, and in what capacity to meet Victoria's future energy needs over the next 15 years.

The VTP sets out:

Proposed renewable energy zones, which are areas identified as most suitable to host new onshore renewable generation and storage.

Establishing renewable energy zones will deliver new benefits for local communities and provide a signal to industry on where to focus when developing new projects. By coordinating development in renewable energy zones, we can streamline grid connections and plan transmission upgrades to make the best use of Victoria's existing network. It will also help minimise environmental and community impacts.

The draft proposed renewable energy zones from the draft VTP have been updated based on feedback received during consultation. The design process for the proposed renewable energy zones considered economic costs, land use, community preferences, regional development opportunities, generator interest, existing levels of development, wind and solar resource potential and community and industry feedback.

Read more about how community and industry engagement has shaped the proposed renewable energy zones in Section 6.

Proposed new transmission investments required in the next 15 years to support renewable energy zone development and deliver network security and reliability.

The plan recognises that significant new investment in transmission will be required to strengthen and modernise Victoria's grid. These transmission upgrades will unlock new network capacity in the right places to support investment in renewable generation and storage, and ensure Victorians continue to have access to secure and reliable energy.

In this VTP, we are proposing 7 transmission programs, which include 4 new transmission projects: a second radial line and tie in loop in Gippsland to facilitate offshore wind, a new line between Sydenham and Tarrone, a new line between Truganina and Deer Park, and an additional short line between Hazelwood and Yallourn. The remaining projects across the programs range from augmentations within existing terminal stations to significant reconstruction of existing transmission infrastructure.

The scope, schedule and costing of the proposed transmission projects from the draft VTP have been updated based on feedback and further analysis. Read more about the proposed programs of transmission investments in Section 8.

A **proposed renewable energy zone** on Gippsland's shoreline, which is needed to support offshore wind connection assets.

A shoreline renewable energy zone supporting offshore wind is different to an onshore renewable energy zone and is not designed to host onshore wind and solar projects. The proposed Gippsland Shoreline Renewable Energy Zone signals to offshore wind developers where to locate their onshore connection infrastructure (for example onshore cables), while their wind turbines will be located offshore.

The shoreline renewable energy zone will facilitate coordination, help deliver benefits for the local community, provide a clear signal to project developers, and minimise the impact on areas outside of the zone.

There have been minor updates to the shape of the Gippsland Shoreline Renewable Energy Zone from the draft VTP. Read more about the proposed Gippsland Shoreline Renewable Energy Zone in Section 7.

Our plan for renewable energy zones

Where are the proposed renewable energy zones?

We have identified 6 proposed renewable energy zones for Victoria: Central Highlands, Central North, Gippsland, the North West, the South West and the Western.

In total, the proposed renewable energy zones cover 7.9% of Victoria's land area. There is a trade-off between smaller zones with more concentrated infrastructure development, and larger zones that affect a wider area but result in less concentrated development within each zone. Based on feedback received and our assessment of different land use considerations, we have kept the area covered by the proposed renewable energy zones as small as possible (noting that some of the proposed zones have increased in size from those presented in the draft VTP).

Feedback we have received from regional communities so far has helped shape the size and location of the proposed renewable energy zones. Community feedback continued to stress the importance of minimising impacts on biodiversity and water systems, protecting farmland, and minimising cumulative impacts on regional communities. We also received feedback about infrastructure development in regions prone to natural hazards, including bushfires and flooding. At the same time, we consulted with industry and the Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO) to understand where current projects are in development.

We are prioritising early engagement and involvement of Traditional Owners and First Peoples in planning for renewable energy and transmission infrastructure. This engagement and involvement has started and we are committed to working together with Traditional Owners and First Peoples over the years ahead.

The location of proposed renewable energy zones also takes into account access to transmission infrastructure, including the new transmission capacity that will be unlocked by the proposed programs of transmission upgrades set out in this plan.

The location of proposed renewable energy zones also considers the resource potential of wind and solar energy. Both onshore and offshore wind are a critical component of the future generation mix to ensure energy can be supplied at the lowest cost to consumers.

The proposed onshore renewable energy zone in Gippsland is separate to the proposed Gippsland Shoreline Renewable Energy Zone, which is designed to host onshore connection infrastructure linking offshore wind generation with Victoria's transmission network. For more information on the proposed shoreline renewable energy zone, see page 22 and Section 7.

What is the generation plan for proposed renewable energy zones?

The draft VTP described the additional wind and solar generation capacity we are planning for in each of the 6 draft proposed renewable energy zones by 2040.

VicGrid received consistent feedback from communities that the modelled new generation does not represent the total picture. Table 1 below shows a breakdown of in service generation, generation projects that are planned and already committed as well as the additional generation that VicGrid is modelling to be required by 2040 under 3 different future scenarios. See Section 2.3 for further information about the 3 scenarios which we have used to help determine how much transmission infrastructure is required.

Table 1: Total renewable energy including in service and planned modelled to be in the system by 2040

Generation location	In service wind and solar	Committed wind and solar	2040 new wind and solar modelled for scenario 1	2040 new wind and solar modelled for scenario 2	2040 new wind and solar modelled for scenario 3
Proposed Renewable Energy Zones					
Central Highlands	0.5 GW	1.4 GW	0.6 GW	2.2 GW	0.6 GW
South West	0.3 GW	0.0 GW	1.3 GW	2.0 GW	1.7 GW
Western	0.4 GW	0.0 GW	0.8 GW	4.5 GW	0.8 GW
North West	0.1 GW	0.0 GW	0.4 GW	1.9 GW	0.7 GW
Central North	0.2 GW	0.9 GW	0.0 GW	2.4 GW	0.1 GW
Gippsland	0.0 GW	0.2 GW	0.4 GW	1.1 GW	0.4 GW
Renewable Energy Zone total**	**1.5 GW**	**2.5 GW**	**3.5 GW**	**14.2 GW**	**4.4 GW**
Outside Renewable Energy Zones (onshore)*	3.3 GW	1.9 GW	0.0 GW	0.0 GW	0.0 GW
Offshore	0.0 GW	0.0 GW	9.0 GW	9.0 GW	8.0 GW
Total**	**4.8 GW**	**4.4 GW**	**12.5 GW**	**23.2 GW**	**12.4 GW**

* As a modelling simplification, no new generation has been modelled outside renewable energy zones, however it is expected that some projects will still proceed in these areas.

** Totals may not add due to rounding.

Long and short duration storage is also a key part of Victoria's energy future and the VTP has planned for 5.1 GW under scenario 1, 4.8 GW under scenario 2 and 7.7 GW under scenario 3, comprising in service, committed and new entrant capacity. Rooftop solar, consumer energy resources and gas powered generation will continue to play important roles under all scenarios.

VicGrid also heard feedback from industry that the modelled generation capacities included in the draft VTP for scenario 1 were too low to encourage investment in onshore generation, particularly if these figures were used as 'caps' on the levels of generation within renewable energy zones.

Recognising this feedback, VicGrid notes the following:

- The modelled generation figures in the VTP are not intended to represent caps on generation in renewable energy zones. Rather they represent what a modelled optimal mix of generation would be if the assumptions[1] in scenario 1 became reality and the optimal development pathway of transmission projects was built.
- While modelled outcomes and scenario analysis are an important part of long-term strategic planning, the actual amount of generation built in each renewable energy zone will likely differ from the modelled values.
- VicGrid will allocate generation in each renewable energy zone by technology type (wind or solar), which will be capped by an access limit.
- The access limit is proposed to be a maximum cap in megawatts (MW) on generation that can connect in a renewable energy zone – without violating technical constraints or surpassing efficient levels of network curtailment forecast for the zone.
- Setting access limits and allocating access rights in an interconnected transmission network is complex. Developments in one part of the network can impact other parts. Work to define the caps and allocate capacity for each renewable energy zone is ongoing.

[1] These include assumptions about electricity demand, the timing and sizing of future transmission projects, the quality of wind and solar resources, the locations of renewable energy zones, the timing of in service generation closures (including coal, gas and renewables), the achievement of government policies and the development of future generation projects.

Proposed renewable energy zones

Figure 1: We have identified 6 proposed renewable energy zones across Victoria for onshore renewable energy and a shoreline renewable energy zone to coordinate offshore wind connections

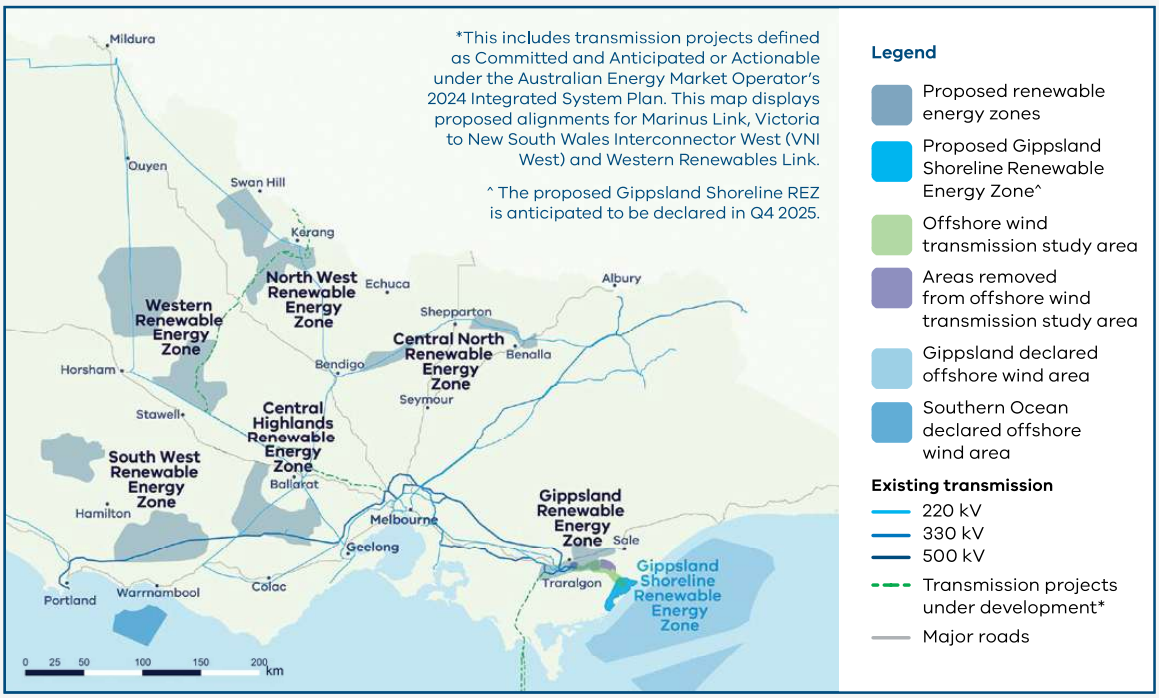
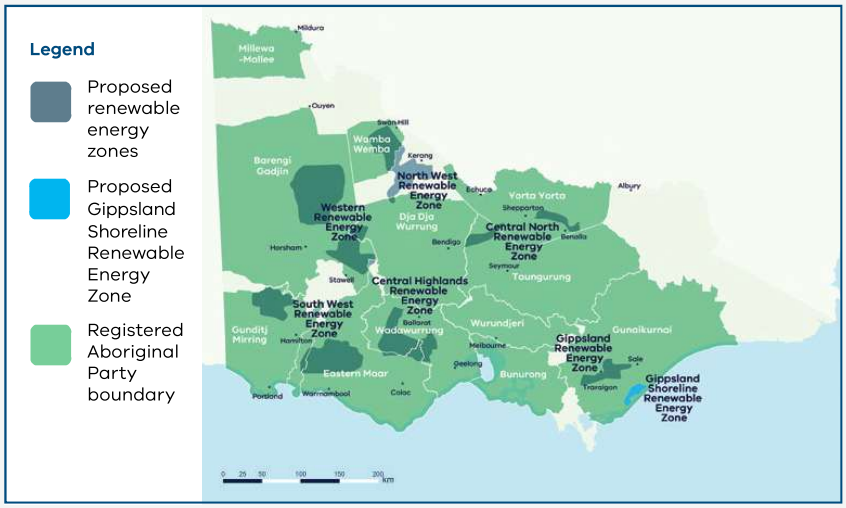


Figure 2: Proposed renewable energy zones and Registered Aboriginal Party boundaries

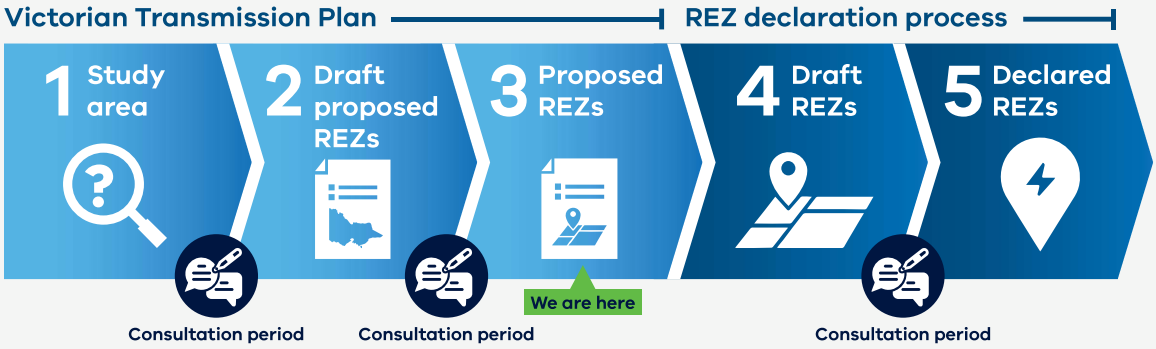


Disclaimer: The Registered Aboriginal Party boundaries shown in Figure 2 are a computer representation. The boundaries show the general vicinity of land and waters subject to the *Native Title Act 1993* (Cth) and *Traditional Settlement Act 2010* (Vic) as at the time of publication and could conceivably change. For more details, please see full disclaimer on Page 4.

How will the final renewable energy zones be decided?

Following the publication of this VTP, there will be a statutory process for each renewable energy zone to be declared. This process provides a further opportunity for consultation prior to any renewable energy zone being declared.

The process to refine and finalise renewable energy zones



What will the renewable energy zones mean for me?

Introducing renewable energy zones will shape how renewable energy development occurs in Victoria. This will have different impacts for regional communities and landholders, Traditional Owners and First Peoples and industry.

Regional communities, landholders and Traditional Owners

Communities in declared renewable energy zones will see increased investment in renewable generation and storage infrastructure over time.

Project proponents will need to negotiate with landholders for rights to develop projects on their land and a landholder has a right to say no to having new renewable generation on their property. Landholders who do agree to new renewable development will receive financial compensation that is negotiated with the developer.

VicGrid is implementing new benefits for communities that host renewable energy zones. New Renewable Energy Zone Community Energy Funds are proposed to support projects that improve energy supply, reliability, efficiency and affordability for businesses, communities and households. They will also support initiatives that create economic development opportunities from the energy transition, for example projects that build renewable energy supply chains, create jobs in the energy sector, promote renewable energy research and innovation, or help attract renewable energy investment. For more information, see **engage.vic.gov.au/vtif-rez-community-benefits**

Traditional Owners are distinct rights holders to Country and Sea Country and these rights must be upheld. We are committed to working together with Traditional Owners and First Peoples in a way that is grounded in respect and enables self-determination and shared benefits.

We are working in partnership with Traditional Owners to consider models for dedicated benefits for Traditional Owners affected by renewable energy zones and transmission projects. This process aims to go beyond inclusion, to give control over how funds are spent to ensure they deliver economic empowerment and support self-determination.

The development of renewable energy zones will require an ongoing dialogue with Traditional Owners to ensure we minimise impacts to Country. We will continue to work with Traditional Owners to develop a process for incorporating cultural heritage into renewable energy zone planning.

Industry, generation and storage project developers

Responsible project developers will be critical to the success of the renewable energy zones. VicGrid is introducing reforms that will give generators within renewable energy zones greater certainty over their ability to get their energy to market.

Once renewable energy zones are declared, projects within the zones will benefit from network access arrangements that will help protect against excessive network curtailment – when generators need to limit the energy they supply due to constraints on the transmission network.

Projects located inside declared renewable energy zones will have the opportunity to participate in a competitive application process for allocating access to the grid.

We propose projects located outside of declared renewable energy zones will be subject to a Grid Impact Assessment and will need to demonstrate that their project would not result in generators located within renewable energy zones being 'excessively curtailed'.

The new access arrangements will also set clear expectations and requirements for how project developers inside and outside of renewable energy zones should engage with communities, Traditional Owners and landholders as well as provide meaningful benefits.

Our plan for transmission infrastructure investments

What transmission infrastructure investments are needed?

The VTP sets out 7 programs of transmission infrastructure investments to be implemented by 2040 to enable the development of renewable energy zones and offshore wind.

The proposed transmission investments will support renewable generation and help to ensure a smooth transition as coal-fired power plants close and Victoria's electricity demands grow.

Our proposed plan for transmission has been carefully chosen to deliver a path forward that keeps costs as low as possible for Victorians while providing flexibility to adapt to changing energy needs in the future. Transmission programs may be altered, added or removed as the energy transition and demand evolves over time.

We have prioritised rebuilding and upgrading existing transmission lines where possible, while recognising the impact that these rebuilds have on local communities. In this VTP, we are proposing 4 new transmission projects across 3 programs: a second radial line and tie in loop in Gippsland to facilitate offshore wind, a new line between Sydenham and Tarrone, a new line between Truganina and Deer Park, and an additional short line between Hazelwood and Yallourn. The remaining projects across the 7 programs range from augmentations within existing terminal stations to significant reconstruction of existing transmission lines.

A number of the proposed programs are needed urgently to prepare for coal-fired power stations to close and avoid bottlenecks in delivering new generation and storage infrastructure, including new renewables projects supported by the Australian Government's Capacity Investment Scheme. Of the 7 programs, 2 are needed by 2030, 3 by 2035 and 2 by 2040.

Table 2 describes each of the transmission programs, their proposed implementation timing, and why they are needed. Figure 3 illustrates the locations of these programs across Victoria.

The 7 priority programs below describe what is needed over and above existing transmission projects that are already under development across Victoria. Marinus Link Stage 1, Victoria to New South Wales Interconnector West, Western Renewables Link, and the transmission infrastructure required for the first 2 GW of offshore wind in Gippsland have all been factored in as inputs to the 2025 VTP.

Table 2: The 7 priority programs of transmission upgrades to unlock renewable generation

Program	Why it is needed	Proposed year needed by
1 Western Victoria reinforcement program A collection of network augmentations and upgrades of existing infrastructure.	To support connection of onshore wind and solar generation in the proposed Western, Central Highlands and South West renewable energy zones and reinforce the network supply to metropolitan Melbourne.	**2028 – 2030**
2 Eastern Victoria reinforcement program A suite of network augmentations and upgrades of existing infrastructure, as well as an additional line between Hazelwood and Yallourn.	To meet increased demand in eastern metropolitan Melbourne, respond to shifting supply from the east of Victoria to the west of Victoria and ensure connection and security of supply from the proposed Gippsland and Central North renewable energy zones and the Gippsland offshore wind area.	**2028 – 2030**
3 North West strengthening program Replacement of sections of the existing single circuit transmission with a new high capacity double circuit line.	To support additional generation in the proposed Western and North West renewable energy zones and facilitate its transfer to areas of high energy demand.	**2035**
4 South West expansion program A new double circuit 500 kV line and associated works in South West Victoria.	To meet significant demand for high-quality wind generation in Victoria's west, including additional generation in the proposed South West and Central Highlands renewable energy zones.	**2033**
5 Gippsland offshore wind transmission stage 2 program A new transmission loop to support offshore wind.	Building on the first Gippsland offshore wind transmission project, this new program is required to connect additional offshore wind generation in the Gippsland offshore wind area to meet Victoria's 2035 and 2040 offshore wind targets.	**2033 – 2038**
6 Latrobe Valley strengthening program New power flow controllers and dynamic load rating devices in the Latrobe Valley.	To allow for easier integration of wind and solar into the grid, manage significant power flows and address network congestion. It supports connection and transfer of generation from the proposed Gippsland Renewable Energy Zone and Gippsland offshore wind area.	**2034 – 2035**
7 Offshore wind upgrade Uprating of existing lines from Heywood to Portland.	To connect offshore generation from the Southern Ocean offshore wind area to Portland.	**2038,** or earlier*

*2038, or earlier to align with the timing of offshore development in the Southern Ocean offshore wind area.

Figure 3: Map of the 7 VTP priority transmission programs

Legend

New infrastructure

- New transmission connection point (specific location to be determined through consultation with communities, landholders and First Peoples)
- New transmission line and substation (specific location to be determined through consultation with communities, landholders and First Peoples)

Upgrades to existing infrastructure

- Works occurring within an existing substation
- Existing substation
- Town location
- Upgrade to existing transmission network
- Existing transmission network
- Transmission projects under development*
- Study area for Gippsland offshore wind transmission stage 1

Victorian Transmission Plan program number**

1 Western Victoria reinforcement program

2 Eastern Victoria reinforcement program

3 North West strengthening program

4 South West expansion program

5 Gippsland offshore wind transmission stage 2 program

6 Latrobe Valley strengthening program

7 Offshore wind upgrade

*This includes transmission projects defined as Committed and Anticipated or Actionable under the Australian Energy Market Operator's 2024 Integrated System Plan. This map displays proposed alignments for Marinus Link, Victoria to New South Wales Interconnector West (VNI West), Western Renewables Link and the Gippsland offshore wind transmission stage 1. The Renewable Energy Zone Development Plan stage 1 project includes several network augmentations that are not included in this map.

** Each program includes multiple transmission projects. See Appendix A for further details about the proposed works included in each program.

Benefits of the VTP

Delivery of the 7 priority transmission programs will require investment in new infrastructure. This will mean spending money on the materials, equipment and workers that are needed to keep Victoria's lights on. This investment in new transmission infrastructure comes at a cost to Victorian electricity consumers and it is important that we invest in the right projects at the right times to unlock the benefits that justify the investment in new infrastructure.

Our analysis has considered what would happen if the 7 programs are delivered and compared this to a future they are not delivered. By investing in the transmission infrastructure projects prioritised in the VTP, Victorians will benefit through:

- needing less new generation and storage infrastructure to meet rising electricity demand
- needing fewer 'connection asset' powerlines between new generation projects and the transmission network
- using lower cost and cleaner generation sources more efficiently
- having more electricity sourced from renewable electricity and less from emissions-intensive sources
- having an energy system that is more reliable, secure and able to withstand change and uncertainty.

The economic analysis of the programs identified in the VTP is summarised in Section 8, with more detail included in Appendix D. This analysis shows that the economic benefits of delivering the priority transmission programs exceed the costs by a considerable margin.

Replacing Victoria's ageing, emissions-intensive power stations is complex and requires significant investment. Delivering the VTP's priority transmission projects provides Victorian communities, landholders, industry and infrastructure investors with a clear pathway that delivers more affordable, reliable, secure and sustainable outcomes for all Victorians.

Next steps for VTP transmission projects

With the release of the 2025 VTP, VicGrid will begin detailed planning for the transmission projects under each priority program. There will be further opportunities for consultation as these transmission projects are planned and developed.

Under proposed reforms, VicGrid will be responsible for coordinating the procurement of VTP transmission projects.

We are currently proposing changes to procurement of major transmission projects in Victoria. This is to ensure that the procurement approach is flexible enough to support the pace required to meet the State's emissions reduction commitments, deliver value for money for Victorian energy consumers and minimise impacts on power bills. The changes will allow VicGrid to plan and procure transmission augmentations effectively in anticipation of new renewable generation connecting to the grid and without the need for further regulatory investment tests. The proposed procurement reforms are subject to the passage of the National Electricity (Victoria) Amendment (VicGrid – Stage 2 Reform) Bill 2025 in the Victorian Parliament, establishing necessary regulations and the transfer of declared network functions for Victoria from AEMO to VicGrid. This is expected to occur on 1 November 2025.

The proposed projects include new transmission as well as upgrades to existing transmission lines. VicGrid is introducing new benefits arrangements for landholders, neighbours, communities and Traditional Owners significantly affected by new transmission.

These new benefits will be in addition to existing compensation arrangements under the *Land Acquisition and Compensation Act 1986, Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010* and the *Native Title Act 1993* (Cth), as well as any discretionary payments made by transmission project developers. For more information, see **engage.vic.gov.au/vtif-rez-community-benefits**

Planning for offshore wind connections

The 2025 VTP process takes into account the planning that is already under way to develop offshore wind in Victoria.

The Australian Government has declared 2 offshore wind areas in Victoria, off the coast of Gippsland and in the Southern Ocean off the coast of South West Victoria. Planning is most advanced in Gippsland, and the next step is to set out suitable shoreline locations for offshore wind developers to connect their infrastructure to the grid.

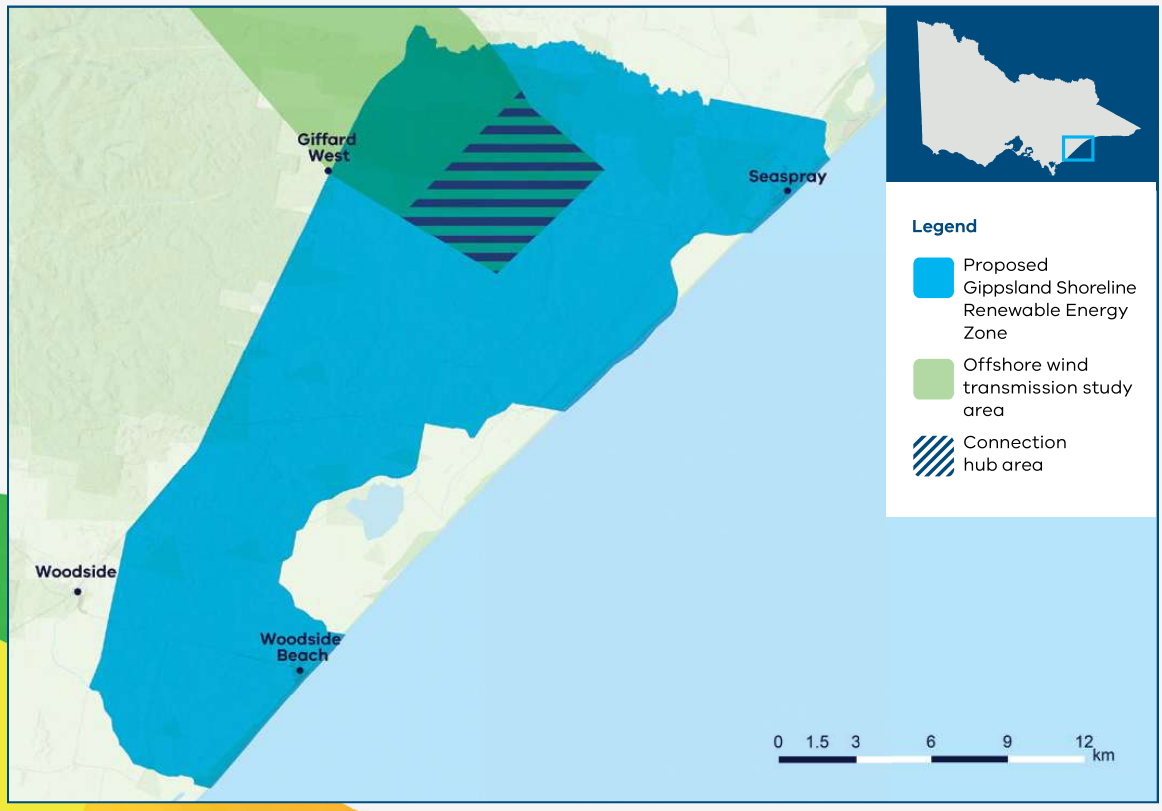
As part of the draft 2025 VTP, we sought feedback on a draft proposed renewable energy zone near the shoreline in the south of Gippsland. For more information about the zone, see Section 7.

The proposed Gippsland Shoreline Renewable Energy Zone is shown below. This shoreline renewable energy zone for offshore wind is different to the 6 proposed renewable energy zones we have identified to host onshore wind and solar generation. It sets out a designated area for offshore wind developers to site their onshore connection infrastructure. It is not designed to host new onshore generation such as wind turbines and solar farms. The offshore wind turbines themselves will be hosted in Commonwealth waters off the coast of Victoria.

The boundaries of the proposed shoreline renewable energy zone reflect a range of factors. This includes technical considerations around shore crossings for offshore wind cables to support the first 2 GW of offshore wind energy, underground cable routes to the Giffard connection hub, as well as the exclusion of towns, environmentally and culturally sensitive areas such as waterways and wetlands, and minimising crossings of major roads such as the South Gippsland Highway.

There will be designated areas within the proposed Gippsland Shoreline Renewable Energy Zone where offshore wind export cables are allowed to cross the shore. VicGrid is coordinating further work to narrow down suitable shore crossing locations to ensure environmentally and culturally sensitive areas along the coast are protected.

Figure 4: Proposed Gippsland Shoreline Renewable Energy Zone



Next steps for the proposed Gippsland Shoreline Renewable Energy Zone

After the release of this 2025 VTP, the Victorian Minister for Energy and Resources can proceed with the renewable energy zone declaration process, culminating in a formal declaration of the proposed Gippsland Shoreline Renewable Energy Zone. The declaration process will include opportunity for further consultation.

VicGrid will soon consult on a draft renewable energy zone access scheme for offshore wind developers. It is important to note that – unlike for other renewable energy zones – this access scheme will apply only to offshore generation, and new onshore generation projects located within the boundaries of the shoreline renewable energy zone will be subject to the Grid Impact Assessment that applies elsewhere in Victoria.

Communities impacted by the renewable energy zone on Gippsland's shoreline will receive new dedicated benefits, similar to our approach for onshore renewable energy zones. These benefits will be in addition to any discretionary benefits paid by offshore wind developers.

Next steps for community, industry and Traditional Owners

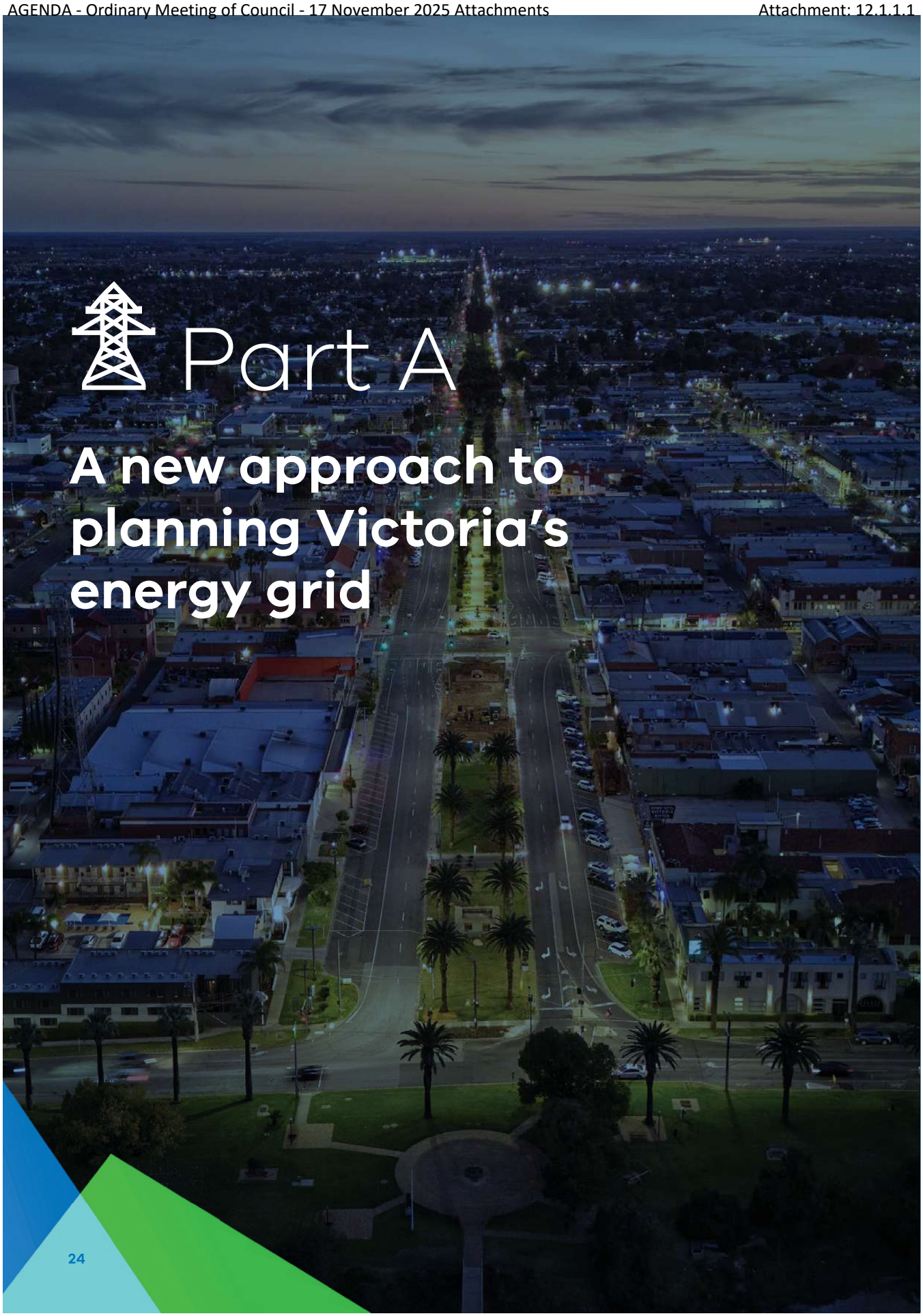
VicGrid is committed to ongoing engagement with communities, industry and Traditional Owners throughout the implementation of the 2025 VTP. Draft Renewable Energy Zone Orders outlining proposed zone boundaries and transmission hosting capacities will soon be placed on public notice for a minimum of 6 weeks, allowing further input from community, industry and Traditional Owners to inform final Renewable Energy Zone Orders, expected to be released in late 2025. VicGrid will also seek feedback during the rollout of Renewable Energy Zone Community Energy Funds and network access schemes, and will engage directly with Traditional Owners, landholders, neighbours, and affected communities throughout the planning process for VTP transmission projects. We will continue to seek to partner with Traditional Owners and First Peoples, and work closely with communities and industry in future design phases and VTPs.

We will consult on detailed design of the new Victorian Access Regime by inviting feedback on an Access and Connections Consultation Paper and draft Grid Impact Assessment Guidelines. The consultation documents will provide more detailed information about how project developers will gain access and connect to the transmission network inside and outside of renewable energy zones once the new regime comes into effect.

It is anticipated that later in 2025 we will also release for consultation a draft updated guide to community engagement and sharing economic and social benefits, setting out the government's expectations for how developers engage with and create value for communities, Traditional Owners, landholders and neighbours. For more details, see Section 9.1.1. This will set the benchmark for our assessment of access applications by project developers.

VicGrid will lead the delivery of transmission projects prioritised in the Victorian Transmission Plan, ensuring projects are strategically planned and built to support Victoria's energy transition. This coordinated approach provides greater certainty for industry and helps unlock investment in renewable energy zones.

The VTP outlines a new set of provisions and benefits for communities, landholders and Traditional Owners. Projects located within renewable energy zones will benefit from streamlined access arrangements and policy support. In return, projects are expected to meet government expectations for community and Traditional Owner engagement, which will be defined in the draft updated guide to community engagement and sharing economic and social benefits. Renewable energy zone development will also bring investment in regional infrastructure, creating job opportunities and other local economic benefits.



Part A

A new approach to planning Victoria's energy grid

PART A

1. Victoria's renewable energy future

Victoria's energy system is changing rapidly. As ageing and increasingly unreliable coal-fired power stations close and our electricity demand increases, our electricity system must evolve. The Victorian Government has recognised that significant large-scale renewable energy generation and storage investment is needed to provide reliable and affordable electricity.

To enable renewable energy generation in the most suitable areas, we need the timely coordination of investment in transmission, generation and storage.

1.1 Planning for the energy transition

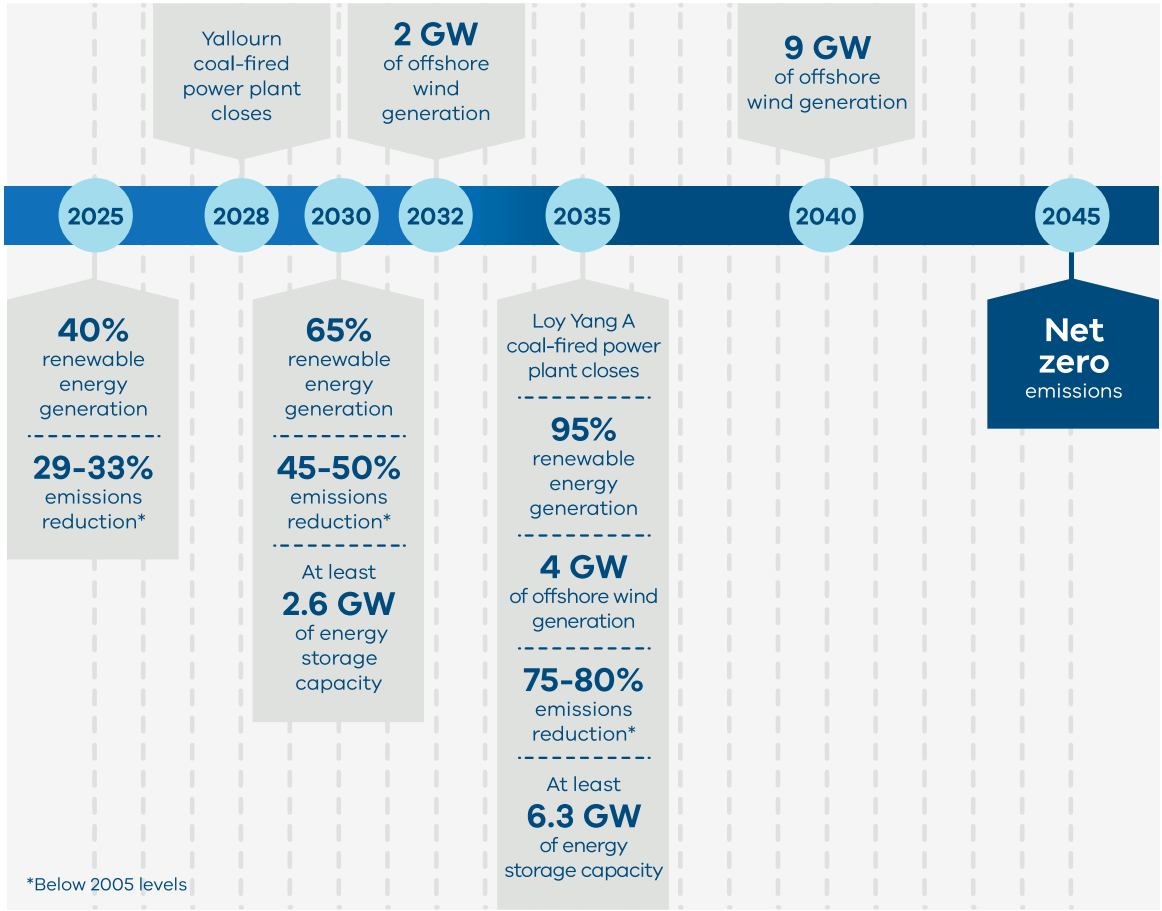
As our ageing coal-fired power stations close, they are being replaced by new renewable energy such as wind and solar as well as batteries and other energy storage. At the same time, consumer demand for electricity is changing, as households move away from gas appliances, electric vehicles become more common, and new sources of demand such as data centres emerge.

The Victorian Government has set ambitious targets for renewable energy generation to achieve the world-leading climate target of net zero emissions by 2045. To reach this target, we are planning for 65% of the state's electricity to come from renewable sources by 2030 and 95% by 2035.

The transition to renewables is already under way. Renewable energy generation in Victoria has tripled in the past decade, and the state has exceeded its 2020 target of 25% renewable electricity. Victoria is on track to meet the next 40% renewable electricity target in 2025. The government must continue supporting an orderly transition to deliver affordable, reliable energy for communities, businesses and industry.

The government's vision for Victoria's future electricity system is laid out in Cheaper, Cleaner, Renewable: Our Plan for Victoria's Electricity Future. It provides a whole-system view of the Victorian Government's actions and the private sector's investment opportunities through to 2035.

Figure 5: Victoria's energy transition timeline



1.2 Why we need a new approach to planning energy infrastructure

As Victoria's energy system changes, the way we plan and develop energy transmission and generation also needs to change to adapt to this new landscape.

The previous transmission planning framework was not designed to meet Victoria's long-term energy needs in a system transitioning to renewable energy. The planning process was not designed to anticipate the significant changes to the energy system and network that we are now seeing. It also did not involve First Peoples, communities, landholders and regional stakeholders early enough to minimise impacts.

We need to take a long-term, statewide view to make sure we build the right amount of energy infrastructure in the right places, at the right time, to keep the lights on and deliver power to Victorian homes and businesses.

We also need to ensure we do not build more infrastructure than Victoria needs – so we can minimise impacts on communities, industries and the environment, and keep down costs to reduce impacts on power bills.

VicGrid is putting in place a new approach to planning renewable energy zones (REZs) and transmission infrastructure through the delivery of the Victorian Transmission Investment Framework (VTIF). This new approach features a long-term strategic plan (this Victorian Transmission Plan), early and meaningful engagement with landholders and local communities, partnerships with Traditional Owners and First Peoples, fairer community benefit arrangements and certainty for investors.

Our approach is designed to give communities and stakeholders a real voice in the process so we can minimise impacts on landholders, the environment, cultural heritage and important regional industries such as agriculture.

At the same time, the new approach supports a strong investment environment for renewable energy in Victoria. The Victorian Transmission Plan (VTP) is designed to improve certainty for investors in renewable energy by providing clear signals on where to invest, and how we will unlock new generation capacity through investing in Victoria's transmission system.

The energy transition will have different impacts for Victorians

Planning for new energy infrastructure needs to balance the range of different impacts on regional communities, landholders, Traditional Owners, First Peoples, agriculture and industry, while ensuring we protect our environmental and cultural heritage. We also need to avoid under or over-investing, so we can maintain energy security and affordability for all Victorians as coal-fired power stations close.

The energy transition will have different impacts for Victorians, including:

- Landholders hosting transmission infrastructure
- First Peoples
- Energy consumers
- Local industry
- Neighbours
- Regional communities
- Farmers
- Energy workers

1.3 The role of transmission in supporting the energy transition

We urgently need to change our power grid to carry energy from new renewable sources and storage across the state to Victorian homes, businesses, hospitals, schools and other vital services.

Victoria's current transmission network was designed to deliver power from coal-fired power stations in the Latrobe Valley to homes and businesses.

New sources of renewable generation, such as wind and solar, are spread across Victoria and are not always located close to the existing transmission network.

We need to deliver new transmission and network upgrades to modernise the grid in areas where sun and wind are abundant so more renewable energy can flow to where it's needed across Victoria.

1.4 The role of renewable energy zones

Renewable energy zones (REZs) will be areas of the state with abundant renewable energy resources, such as wind or solar, that have the potential to host new electricity generation infrastructure while minimising the impact on communities and the environment. REZs will provide important locational signals to project developers and have a critical role to play in supporting Victoria's energy transition and delivering economic benefits for regional communities. REZs will help coordinate investment in renewable energy generation with transmission network upgrades, provide greater certainty to communities and industry, and ensure projects align with Victoria's infrastructure and environmental planning objectives.

Importantly, coordinating generation and storage investments through REZs will allow Victoria to reduce the total amount of transmission infrastructure required to connect new sources of energy supply, reducing the infrastructure costs that are ultimately passed on to consumers and minimising impacts on communities and the environment.

REZs will also allow for appropriate consultation, community benefits and compensation arrangements for landholders, communities and First Peoples, while providing greater certainty for project developers to encourage investment.

PART A

2. The Victorian Transmission Plan: our new approach to planning transmission infrastructure

VicGrid is developing a new integrated approach to planning and developing transmission infrastructure in our state. The Victorian Transmission Plan (VTP) sits at the heart of this new approach, setting out the strategic plan for renewable energy infrastructure and transmission investments over the next 15 years.

2.1 Introducing the VTP

As part of Victoria's new approach to transmission planning, VicGrid is required to prepare and publish a VTP at regular intervals. This 2025 VTP is the first.

The 2025 VTP sets out:

Proposed renewable energy zones (REZs): The geographic areas we will prioritise to meet Victoria's needs for future renewable generation and storage development in the coming 15 years. The REZs will enable us to coordinate the right amount of transmission development in the right places.

A proposed shoreline REZ in Gippsland: This shoreline REZ is needed to host onshore connection infrastructure linking offshore wind generation with Victoria's onshore transmission network.

The optimal development pathway: The transmission projects that we will need to connect REZs and offshore wind to the grid over the next 15 years, and proposed sequencing for these projects. Transmission projects can include new transmission lines or upgrades, and will be chosen to ensure Victoria's future renewable energy needs are met while maintaining reliability and minimising costs for consumers.

Through the 2025 VTP, we aim to:

- Provide greater certainty for communities and industry about when and where new renewable generation and transmission infrastructure will be developed.
- Give Traditional Owners and First Peoples, landholders, communities and industry a voice throughout the planning process and incorporate a range of perspectives into REZ and transmission planning.
- Provide transparency about the methodology we have used to prepare the plan.

2.2 The VTP will be updated over time

The 2025 VTP is a first step along the path of long-term transmission planning in Victoria, covering the period from now until 2040. We have taken an accelerated approach to developing the 2025 VTP, to provide certainty as we prepare for coal-fired power stations to close over the coming years.

The 2025 VTP takes a 15-year view of Victoria's transmission and renewable energy generation needs, to enable a timely and smooth transition from coal-fired power. The second plan, to be published in 2027, will take a 25-year view, as will subsequent plans published every 4 years.

Legislative requirements for the 2025 VTP

The *National Electricity (Victoria) Act 2005* (NEVA) sets out certain requirements that the VTP must meet (see Sections 59 and 60). These are summarised below.

The Victorian transmission planning objective

VicGrid must have regard to the Victorian transmission planning objective, which is defined in the NEVA as follows:

a. to promote efficient investment in, and efficient operation and use of, electricity services for the long-term interests of consumers of electricity with respect to
   i. price, quality, safety and reliability and security of supply of electricity and
   ii. the reliability, safety and security of the national electricity system and
b. the delivery of transmission services consistent with a least-regrets development pathway and
c. the achievement of targets set by Victorian legislation
   i. for reducing Victoria's greenhouse gas emissions or
   ii. that are likely to contribute to reducing Victoria's greenhouse gas emissions.

Analysis

VicGrid must carry out the following types of analysis and have regard to the results of these assessments:

- Strategic land use assessment
- Multi-criteria analysis
- Robustness analysis
- Cost-benefit analysis.

Consultation

VicGrid must undertake any consultation required by the Victorian transmission plan guidelines and consider the results of that consultation.

Other requirements for future VTPs

The first VTP must be a 15-year plan and subsequent VTPs must plan over a 25-year period. Subsequent VTPs must meet certain additional requirements set out in section 59 (2) of the NEVA. Although these are not mandatory for the 2025 VTP, we have adopted a number of these requirements, including:

- identification of areas for renewable energy development
- use of scenarios and sensitivities
- development of a viable plan for each scenario that integrates economic, social and environmental factors including least-cost system design, technical system requirements, strategic land use assessment and wider factors
- inclusion of the specified projects for that plan.

2.3 Scenarios: how we determine how much energy is needed and when

There are many plausible and different possible futures for Victoria's energy landscape. Factors such as the adoption of consumer energy resources (such as solar panels, batteries and electric vehicles) and changes in industry and technology will impact our demand for renewable energy.

We have developed 3 hypothetical scenarios to help us determine how much new renewable energy we need and when. Planning for a range of potential futures helps us consider the risks of under-investment and over-investment. It ensures the combination of projects we identify can respond to future uncertainties. Table 3 summarises the scenarios that have been used to develop the 2025 VTP.

All 3 of the scenarios are aligned with the Australian Energy Market Operator's (AEMO's) 2024 Integrated System Plan (ISP) scenarios, adapted to meet Victoria's needs in line with the Victorian Transmission Investment Framework (VTIF).

The scenarios are not forecasts and do not represent our view on how the energy transition will occur, nor does the VTP endorse one scenario over another. There are many plausible and different possible futures. Recognising this, VicGrid has also undertaken sensitivity analysis to test what would happen if we made different assumptions to those considered in the scenarios. Scenarios and sensitivity analysis are important tools for planning and managing future risks and uncertainties.

The 2024 VTP Guidelines provide further details on the inputs and assumptions of each scenario.

These scenarios will be updated for future VTPs to reflect new technology developments and the latest information on consumer energy demand. As these scenarios evolve, so will the VTP modelling and outputs, ensuring the pathway of future transmission projects accounts for changing circumstances.

The 3 hypothetical scenarios used in the 2025 VTP

Scenario 1

Considers a potential future where the Victorian energy sector evolves in line with AEMO's national step change trends. The 2024 ISP describes this scenario as representing a transition pace that enables Australia's efforts to limit global temperature rise below 2°C, with consumer energy resources modelled to be a key contributor to the transition. Victoria's renewable energy targets, offshore wind targets and storage targets are met.

Scenario 2

Considers a potential future where new energy-intensive industries are established in regional and central Victoria at scale, such as data centres, hydrogen production and green aluminium. Demand in this scenario is based on AEMO's national green energy export trends forecast, which models a rapid decarbonisation pathway and the development of low emission energy exports.

Scenario 3

Considers a potential future where there may be delays of up to one year in delivering new energy infrastructure. There is reduced growth in coordinated consumer energy resources and to reflect broad challenges across the National Electricity Market (NEM), other NEM-Government policies and targets are generally delayed as well.

Table 3: Summary of key factors considered in each scenario

Parameters	Scenario 1	Scenario 2	Scenario 3
Demand			
AEMO demand scenario	AEMO's step-change	AEMO's green exports with revisions to treatment in other states	AEMO's step-change
2050 operational demand (TWh)	73.7	110.3	73.7
Other key factors			
Victorian Renewable Energy Targets (2025, 2030 and 2035)	Achieved		
Storage targets (2030 and 2035)	Achieved		
Offshore wind targets	Achieved	Achieved	Achieved but delayed up to one year
Gas constraints	As per AEMO's 2024 ISP		
Interconnection	As per announcements / AEMO's ISP	Marinus Link (ML) Stage 2 – July 2037	WRL, VNI-West and Marinus Link (ML) Stage 1 delayed up to one year, no ML Stage 2
NEM coal closure	As per announcements / Victorian Renewable Energy Target		
Non-VIC government policies	Aligned with announcements		Generally delayed due to various challenges associated with the energy transition. For example, Snowy Hydro is delayed by one year.

2.4 Our approach to developing the VTP

The process we have used to develop the VTP is set out in the VTP Guidelines. VicGrid released the final guidelines for this VTP in September 2024, following public consultation.

The guidelines include 5 key steps to develop the 2025 VTP, outlined in Table 4 and Figure 6. Developing the VTP has been an iterative process that considered which areas are most suitable to host REZs, how much new generation is required in each REZ, and the transmission upgrades needed to connect these REZs to the grid.

The VTP development process considers 3 different scenarios of future energy requirements across Victoria, to ensure the VTP is robust across a range of possible futures. These scenarios are described in detail in the guidelines and summarised in Section 2.3.

The VTP Guidelines will be updated over time as we prepare future VTPs. You can view the 2024 VTP Guidelines and learn more about how we developed them at **vicgrid.vic.gov.au**

Table 4: The 5 steps to develop the 2025 VTP[2] (continued on next page)

Key analytical steps	Description
Step 1 **Identifying areas for investigation** **Key outputs:** • REZ study area • REZ areas for investigation	The first step to develop the VTP involved assessing the broad geographic areas that may be suitable to host renewable generation and narrowing this down to areas for investigation for hosting REZs. This was a 2-part process: **1.** A broad study area was identified using a strategic land use assessment. The assessment took into account existing land uses and landscape features across the state from several, and sometimes competing, perspectives, including environment, cultural heritage, social, land use and engineering. The assessment identified areas that we should avoid considering due to land use and landscape constraints, areas that we should investigate further for renewable energy development, and features that provide investment opportunities. **2.** The study area was then narrowed to areas for investigation. To do this, we undertook energy market modelling to identify smaller areas within the study area that are most suitable to host generation from an economic standpoint (referred to as a least-cost generation mix). This identified the generation types and locations to meet Victoria's energy requirements at the lowest cost to consumers. Unlike traditional planning processes, this least-cost analysis took broader land use factors into account. Areas that had been deprioritised due to land-use constraints during the strategic land use assessment were excluded from the least-cost analysis.

[2] Note that this table includes some updates compared with the version presented in the 2024 VTP Guidelines. A second phase of strategic land use assessment to identify draft areas of interest for transmission projects is no longer undertaken under Step 4, given that the majority of candidate development projects consist of network augmentations and may not require new transmission easements. We have also added additional detail and clarified the process to refine REZ candidate areas into draft proposed REZs.

Table 4: The 5 steps to develop the 2025 VTP (continued from previous page)

Key analytical steps	Description
Step 2 **Developing draft proposed REZs** **Key outputs:** • REZ candidate areas • Preliminary generation resource plans for each scenario • Draft proposed REZs	Our next step was to refine the REZ areas of interest into potential REZ candidate areas, and then narrow these down further into draft proposed REZs. To do this, we took an iterative approach that considered how much generation would be needed across different scenarios of future demand, as well as a range of local factors related to land use, community preferences, generator interest and regional economic development. Refining the areas of interest into draft proposed REZs was a 4-part process: **1. Spatial multi-criteria analysis** Using the areas for investigation as an input, we first completed a spatial multi-criteria analysis to further consider broader qualitative factors in addition to the least-cost generation outcome. This provided valuable information on whether certain areas should be reprioritised based on factors such as: **a.** Community preferences relating to the development of renewable energy generation and transmission infrastructure across Victoria **b.** Land use, through detailed land-use information from the strategic land use assessment **c.** Generator/developer interest, including information obtained from a survey for developers of generation and storage projects, and **d.** Regional development indicators to assess the comparative strengths of Victoria's regions in relation to REZ development, and how hosting a REZ could support other regional development opportunities. **2. Calibration checks** Next we completed calibration checks on the results of the multi-criteria analysis. This considered 2 key factors: **a.** The size and location of in-service and committed generation projects. This allowed us to consider cumulative impacts from the overall level of development concentrated in a given region when determining the most appropriate locations for siting future generation across the state. **b.** A network planning review to evaluate transmission corridor feasibility. Certain areas were infeasible for generation and storage development, for reasons such as they would require transmission lines to traverse a national park, or the required length of new transmission was considered prohibitive.

Table 4: The 5 steps to develop the 2025 VTP (continued from previous page)

Key analytical steps	Description
Step 2 continued from previous page **Step 2** **Developing draft proposed REZs** **Key outputs:** • REZ candidate areas • Preliminary generation resource plans for each scenario • Draft proposed REZs	**3. Preliminary generation resource plans** We completed further energy market modelling to develop the preliminary generation resource plans for each of the 3 VTP scenarios, building on the results of the multi-criteria analysis and calibration checks. These plans included: **a.** which technologies to build (including storage) **b.** how much capacity to build **c.** when this capacity should be built the location of the new generation build. The preliminary generation resource plans provided a more refined picture of the suitable areas for REZ development, taking into account a range of land-use factors and generator interest in addition to cost and technical constraints. Alongside feedback we received on the study area from communities, Traditional Owners and First Peoples and industry, these detailed plans helped us to narrow the REZ areas for investigation into a set of REZ candidate areas. **4. Refinement into draft proposed REZs** The final sub-step was to further refine the boundaries of the REZ candidate areas to develop the draft proposed REZs for consultation. This involved a carefully considered assessment of regional and local factors for each candidate area, which aimed to balance a range of perspectives and trade-offs. In addition to detailed energy market modelling, we considered: **a.** stakeholder views collated from engagement with formally recognised Traditional Owner groups; local communities through drop-in sessions, feedback form responses and submissions; and local councils and industry bodies through briefings and submissions **b.** alignment with regional and local economic development strategies **c.** in service and committed generation projects, and potential for cumulative economic, social and environmental impacts due to the concentration of projects in a region **d.** transmission network design and utilisation, including feasibility of network augmentation, community acceptance and overall deliverability of the plan **e.** environmental, cultural heritage and other land-use constraints (based on available data) **f.** level of developer interest and support in a region.

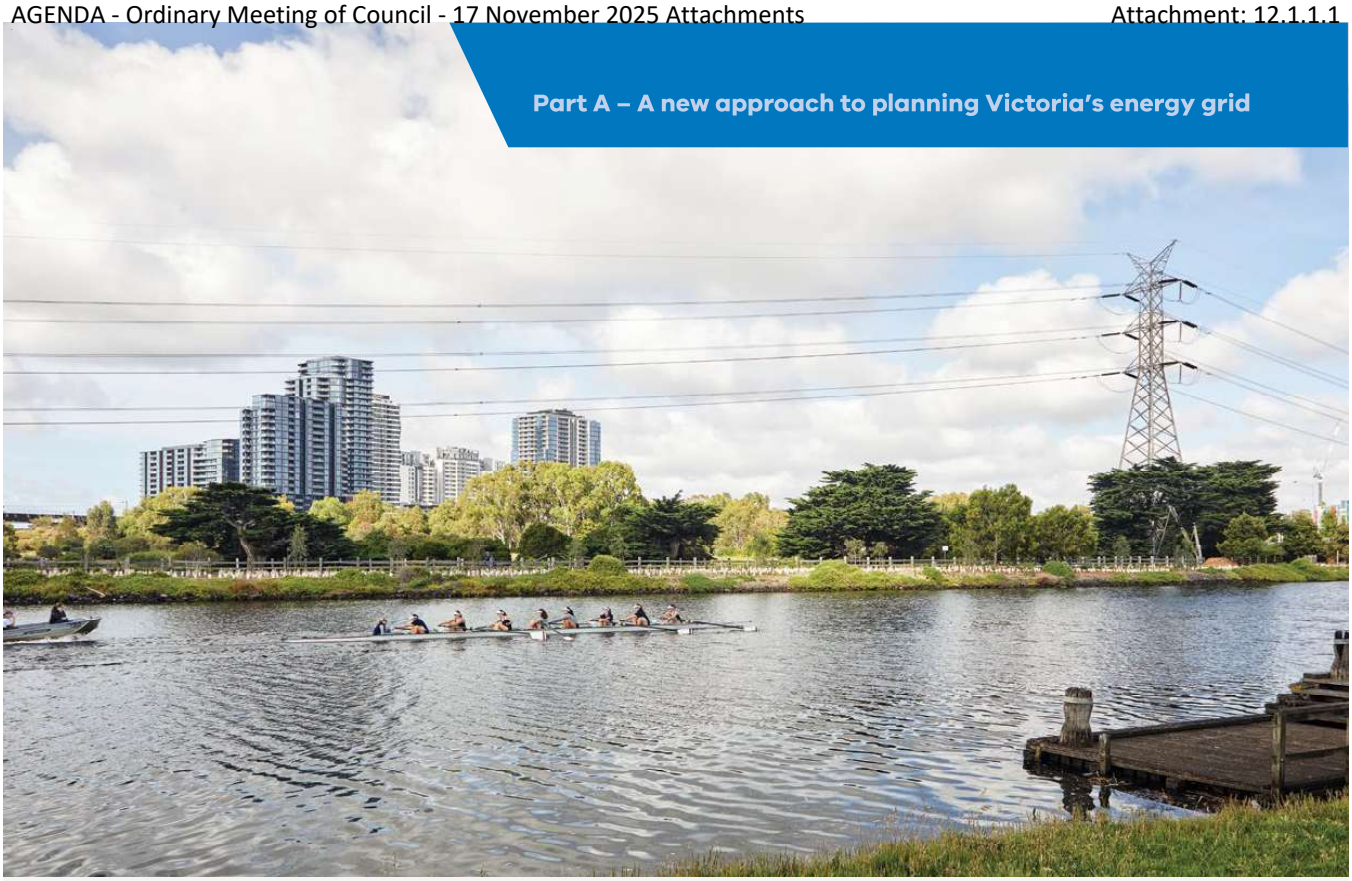
Table 4: The 5 steps to develop the 2025 VTP (continued from previous page)

Key analytical steps	Description
Step 3 **Identifying candidate development pathways** **Key outputs:** • Candidate development pathways for each scenario	In Step 3, we considered what transmission upgrades would be needed to enable the generation amounts and locations identified in the preliminary generation resource plans and draft proposed REZs from Step 2. We did this for each of the VTP scenarios, creating a 'candidate development pathway' for each scenario. These pathways identify the potential transmission projects needed and by when, to maintain secure operation of the power system, meet supply requirements and deliver reliable power to Victorian homes and businesses. To achieve this, we assessed the capacity of the existing transmission network against the maximum additional generation identified in Step 2. Where we identified constraints, we completed transmission network planning to identify feasible project options. The technical feasibility of these transmission project options was then assessed through power systems analysis. Where necessary, the results of this network planning and feasibility analysis were then used to further refine the generation resource plans and draft proposed REZs from Step 2. This in turn fed into finalising the 3 candidate development pathways. This iterative approach across Steps 2 and 3 helped us select draft proposed REZ locations, generation resource plans and transmission pathways that would deliver the best overall outcome.

Table 4: The 5 steps to develop the 2025 VTP (continued from previous page)

Key analytical steps	Description
Step 4 **Assessing candidate development pathways** **Key outputs:** • Draft optimal development pathway	In this step, we evaluated the 3 candidate development pathways to select the draft 'optimal development pathway': the pathway that performs best when considering the Victorian transmission planning objective, including technical feasibility, benefits for Victorians, costs to energy consumers and robustness across a range of future scenarios. We used 4 different tools to assess the candidate development pathways: • Further energy market modelling across all scenarios. • Cost-benefit analysis to compare the costs and benefits of the candidate development pathways, taking into account capital and operating costs for both generation and transmission, as well as benefits from reduced carbon emissions and improved system reliability. • Robustness analysis – also known as a least-regret analysis – to identify the pathway that minimises the net cost across all scenarios and is least sensitive to future uncertainties. A preliminary robustness analysis was undertaken to determine the draft optimal pathway. • Power systems analysis.
Step 5 **Developing the final proposed REZs and optimal development pathway** **Key outputs:** • Final proposed REZs • Final optimal development pathway	In Step 5, we refined the draft proposed REZs which were included in the draft VTP to develop the final proposed REZs described in this 2025 VTP. In doing so, we considered various factors (as applicable) including: • Feedback received from communities, landholders, formally recognised Traditional Owners and industry on the draft 2025 VTP and the draft proposed REZs • Land use considerations • Generation projects in planning and developer interest and • Transmission network considerations. For more information about the factors considered in the development of each of the proposed REZs, engagement feedback received and how we have developed the final proposed REZs see Section 6. The candidate development pathways were further refined, through additional power systems analysis, as well as feedback and collaboration with industry. This resulted in some scope and timing changes to the transmission projects required under the 3 scenarios. The impact of these changes on the optimal development pathway was assessed. For more detail on this process, see Section 8 and Appendix A.

Figure 6: The 5 steps of 2025 VTP development



What is energy market modelling?

Energy market modelling is a method used to simulate and forecast how energy markets will behave in response to future changes. We have used energy market modelling software called PLEXOS that is widely used in industry. It helps to analyse how different factors such as energy demand, consumer energy resource uptake, government policies and generator capital and operating costs can influence the supply and demand of energy, and consequently the types and capacity of energy generation development in the future. This type of modelling is crucial for understanding the future dynamics of the energy market and provides insights that assist stakeholders including policymakers, energy companies, and investors in strategic decision-making. These models enable us to forecast the impact different transmission options have on future developer investment and operational decisions. We use energy market modelling to produce the generation sector costs used in the cost-benefit analysis.

What is power system modelling?

Power system modelling is a specialised approach used to represent the intricate workings of electrical power systems through computer simulation of generation, transmission lines, substations, and end-users of electricity.

By employing these simulations, we can predict how the system will behave under different conditions, assess reliability, plan upgrades, and integrate renewable energy sources. This process is crucial for ensuring that the power grid remains stable and efficient, minimising outages, and adapting to the evolving energy demands of Victoria. To do this, we have used a power system simulation for engineering (PSS/E) software, which is an advanced tool widely used within the industry for this purpose.

Strategic land use assessment: Our new approach to identifying land use and landscape values to support the 2025 VTP

The strategic land use assessment is a new planning tool VicGrid is introducing to help identify areas to protect and avoid and areas that are more suitable to host renewable energy and transmission infrastructure.

It recognises important values many Victorians place on our land and landscape, including culture and heritage, livelihoods, ecosystems and biodiversity, food and fibre, recreation, strategic minerals and many others.

How the strategic land use assessment helped to shape the 2025 VTP

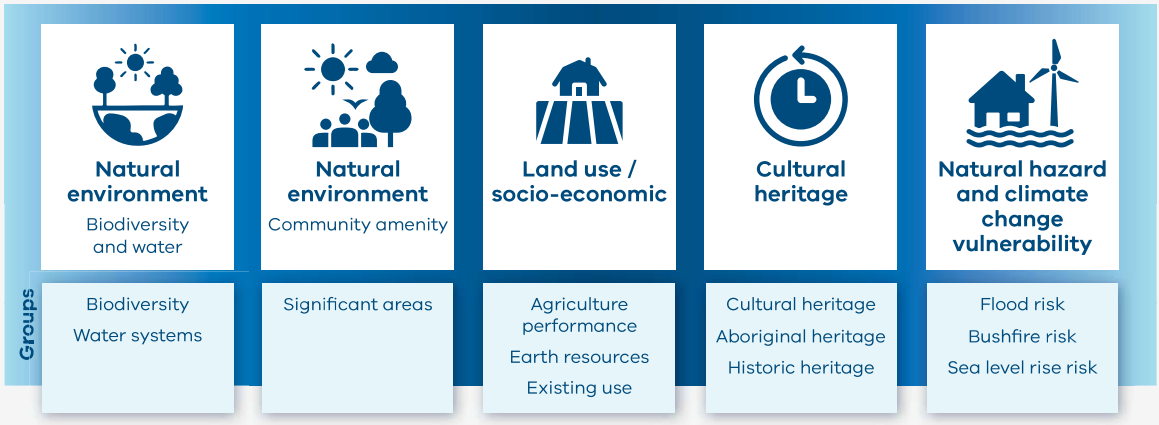
A statewide strategic land use assessment was used to identify the REZ study area published in the 2024 VTP Guidelines. This included a high-level, statewide mapping of land use constraints and opportunities for renewable energy development, using spatial datasets across a range of environmental, cultural heritage, social, land use (including agriculture) and engineering themes. The methodology and outputs are published in Appendix A of the 2024 VTP Guidelines.

The strategic land use assessment was also used to support investigations at a regional level, as we narrowed the study area to draft proposed REZs. At this stage, the assessment was expanded to include some additional considerations based on feedback we received during consultation on the VTP Guidelines. These additional considerations included:

- **Distinctive area landscapes:** the following distinctive landscapes in the Victorian Planning Provisions were added as avoidance areas: Bass Coast, Bellarine Peninsula, Surf Coast, and Macedon Ranges.
- **Major (named) rivers and inland lakes:** these existing criteria were reclassified as avoidance areas.
- **Significant landforms:** extended to include additional areas of known high significance from publicly available data.
- **Residential growth areas:** additional residential growth areas identified during engagement with local governments.
- **Agricultural compatibility:** the relative compatibility (i.e., impact) of different farming practices with different renewable energy technologies, identified through engagement with agricultural groups and stakeholders. For more information about how farmland and agriculture has been considered, see Section 5.
- **Aggregated housing density:** indirect representation of dwelling density based on census housing count statistics.

It is important to note that this is a strategic assessment using available, authoritative data, mostly from public sources, and does not consider the full breadth of issues related to siting individual renewable energy projects, including property-level constraints. Further inputs or updates to the strategic land use assessment may be included in future plans or mapping exercises.

Figure 7: Strategic land use assessment themes



PART A

3. The policy context for the Victorian Transmission Plan

The Victorian Transmission Plan (VTP) is designed to align with and complement other existing state and national policy processes.

3.1 Relationship with other statutory planning and environmental frameworks

The 2025 VTP sets out the proposed high-level plan for renewable energy zones (REZs) and future transmission investments. It does not replace statutory planning and environmental approval processes, including approvals and engagement requirements under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and *Environment Effects Act 1978*.

The VTP process is intended to support these approval processes by incorporating community consultation and environmental, land use and social factors early in identifying the most suitable locations for transmission and generation infrastructure.

The Victorian Government is working to maximise the benefits of siting generation and storage projects within REZs. For project proponents, this means policy support and new network access arrangements that provide greater certainty about grid connection and reduce the risk of excessive curtailment. The new access arrangements in REZs will also set clear expectations about community engagement and benefits requirements, improving outcomes for local communities, stakeholders and project developers. For further details, see Section 9.

Speeding up planning and environmental approval processes

The Development Facilitation Program is an accelerated planning assessment pathway for eligible projects to inject investment into the Victorian economy. Renewable energy is one of the priority sectors under the program. For more information, see **planning.vic.gov.au/planning-approvals/planning-enquiries-and-requests/development-facilitation-program**

The Victorian Government is also speeding up assessment review times for Environment Effects Statements (EESs), targeting a review time of no longer than 18 months. Making the EES system faster, cheaper and more predictable will encourage investment and shorten development time for renewable energy infrastructure and other projects important to the Victorian economy, while continuing to protect Victoria's environment. For more information **vic.gov.au/action-two-cut-red-tape**

3.2 Integration with other planning processes, programs and projects

The 2025 VTP has factored in how existing Victorian and Commonwealth policies and programs will contribute to Victoria's energy mix over the coming decade, along with other state and national electricity transmission and generation planning frameworks. Table 5 summarises how we consider these energy policy initiatives in the VTP.

In addition, we considered a range of broader Victorian Government strategies and initiatives when deciding the location of proposed REZs (for example, impacts on agriculture and irrigation, tourism and mineral resources, and delivering local benefits in line with the Victorian Energy Jobs Plan). For more detail, see Section 5.

Table 5: How the VTP considers other planning processes, programs and projects

Processes, program or project	Description	How we've considered it in the VTP
Australian Energy Market Operator's (AEMO) Integrated System Plan (ISP)	The overarching plan for required investments in generation, storage and network infrastructure across the National Electricity Market. The ISP takes a 20-year development outlook and is published every 2 years.	We have broadly aligned our inputs, assumptions and scenarios with the 2024 ISP. This avoids duplication and allows the VTP to build on the extensive existing analysis and stakeholder consultation that has informed the ISP. The sequencing of future ISPs and future VTPs will allow them to inform one another. This will help ensure consistency between national and Victorian transmission development, which remains critical for planning transmission developments across the National Electricity Market, including transmission interconnectors with other states. Future ISPs will also consider REZs that have been identified through the VTP and declared in Victoria.
AEMO's Victorian Annual Planning Report (VAPR)	Published annually in October, the VAPR assesses the adequacy of the existing Victorian transmission network to meet reliability and security requirements. It identifies limitations over the next 10 years that need to be addressed through network upgrades.	VAPR reports have informed the longlist of transmission projects we considered when creating the VTP candidate development pathways. For details, see Appendix A. Roles and responsibilities for the VAPR are likely to change in the future to support alignment with the VTP. National Electricity (Victoria) Amendment (VicGrid Stage 2 Reform) Bill 2025 (the Bill) was introduced to Parliament in June 2025. The Bill proposes to transfer the existing transmission network planning functions, including the VAPR, from AEMO to VicGrid. Subject to passage, these reforms are expected to come into effect in late 2025.
Other AEMO planning documents	AEMO publishes several planning documents for East Coast electricity and gas markets, including the Electricity Statement of Opportunities (ESOO), Gas Statement of Opportunities (GSOO) and the Victorian Gas Planning Report.	As set out under the *National Electricity (Victoria) Act 2005*, VicGrid has had regard to these planning documents when performing REZ planning functions, including the preparation of the VTP.

Table 5: How the VTP considers other planning processes, programs and projects (continued from previous page)

Processes, program or project	Description	How we've considered it in the VTP
Victorian Renewable Energy Targets (VRET)	Victoria has legislated targets to increase the share of electricity generated from renewables (see Section 1). To support achieving these targets, the Victorian Government has implemented the VRET2 auction scheme. The VRET2 is designed to provide long-term contracts that create investment certainty for new energy generation projects. Six projects have been successful under VRET2.	The VTP scenarios and modelling are designed to be consistent with the achievement of Victoria's renewable energy targets. The VTP also factors in the in service (Glenrowan Solar Farm) and anticipated capacity from the VRET2 projects (totalling more than 500 MW of additional generation capacity and 600 MWh of battery storage).
Offshore wind targets	The Victorian Government is working closely with the Australian Government to coordinate development of Victoria's offshore wind industry. To date, the Australian Government has declared 2 offshore wind areas off the coast of Victoria, which are separate to the onshore REZs that are proposed in the VTP. VicGrid is coordinating transmission infrastructure development for these areas.	All VTP scenarios factor in meeting Victoria's offshore wind targets, and transmission requirements to connect the Australian Government's declared offshore wind zones in the Southern Ocean and Gippsland have been incorporated. This 2025 VTP includes a proposed shoreline REZ in Gippsland, which is needed to host onshore connection infrastructure linking offshore wind generation with Victoria's onshore transmission network. For more information, see Section 7.
Capacity Investment Scheme (CIS)	To support its target to reach 82% renewable generation nationally by 2030, the Australian Government has committed to provide revenue underwriting for 32 GW of new renewable generation and storage capacity under the Capacity Investment Scheme (CIS). Project proponents in Victoria can bid for Australian Government revenue underwriting support in a series of competitive tenders from 2024 to 2027.	The Victorian and Australian Governments have agreed that at least 5.0 GW / 11 TWh of generation capacity and 1.7 GW / 6.8 GWh of storage capacity will be tendered under the CIS from 2024 to 2026, for delivery in Victoria by 2030. A maximum of 1.5 GW worth of solar projects will be awarded to ensure an overall mix of generation types that supports energy system reliability in Victoria. The CIS target capacities have been factored in as an input to the VTP development process, helping to shape the sequencing of priority transmission projects over the next 5 years.

What is different between the 2024 ISP and the VTP?

One important distinction between the 2024 ISP and the VTP is how each refers to REZs. As part of the ISP process, AEMO has identified potential REZs across the National Electricity Market, including 6 in Victoria. These areas have been based largely on desktop studies considering a mix of resource potential, technical, and other engineering considerations. These are different to the Victorian REZs discussed in this document, which have a particular meaning under Victorian legislation.

The REZs discussed in the Victorian transmission planning process will ultimately be formally declared by the Victorian Minister for Energy following the 2025 VTP. The declared REZs will reflect more precise geographical areas refined through a process that includes partnering with Traditional Owners and First Peoples and engaging with landholders, communities and industry through several stages of consultation. Special community benefits arrangements will apply to declared REZs, as well as network access arrangements that increase certainty for investors. For more information, see Section 9.

Relationship with distribution network planning

The VTP and VAPR focus on planning for the high-voltage transmission network that is needed to transport electricity over long distances. The proposed REZs identified in this VTP are designed around connecting generators to this high-voltage transmission network.

Generators may also connect to the distribution network – the poles and wires that carry lower-voltage electricity to homes and businesses. However, planning for the distribution network is the responsibility of individual distribution network service providers (DNSPs) and is not part of the VTP process.

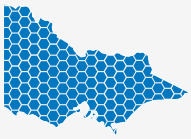
In Victoria there are 5 DNSPs that each cover different geographic areas: Ausnet, Citipower, Jemena, Powercor and United Energy. Planning information for distribution networks can be found in DNSPs' Distribution Annual Planning Reports.

The relationship between electricity network planning documents in Victoria is summarised in Table 6.

The Victorian Transmission Investment Framework (VTIF) reforms propose that the responsibility for planning Victoria's declared shared network, and all of AEMO's associated declared network functions will be transferred to VicGrid from AEMO. Once implemented, this will end AEMO's role as Victoria's transmission network service provider. Legislation to enable this transfer was introduced to the Victorian Parliament in June 2025.

Relationship between electricity planning documents in Victoria

Table 6: Showing the relationship between electricity planning documents and who is responsible for what

Entity	AEMO	VicGrid	AEMO	AusNet, Citipower, Jemena, Powercor, United Energy
Document	Integrated System Plan	Victorian Transmission Plan	Victorian Annual Planning Report	Distribution Annual Planning Reports
Coverage				
Scope	National Electricity Market	REZ identification and associated transmission	Existing transmission network and other projects	Existing distribution network and other projects
Time horizon	20 years and beyond	15/25 years	10+ years	5+ years

PART A

4. VicGrid is working with Traditional Owners and First Peoples

VicGrid is committed to recognising and respecting the rights of Traditional Owners and strengthening our relationships with First Peoples through planning renewable energy and transmission infrastructure.

Working together with Traditional Owners and First Peoples is critical to the successful delivery of the 2025 Victorian Transmission Plan (VTP) and future VTPs. Meaningful engagement will help us plan renewable energy generation and transmission in a way that minimises impacts to Country, protects cultural heritage and delivers tangible benefits.

We have received strong feedback through our engagement with Traditional Owners and First Peoples that has helped inform the 2025 VTP and will also inform our engagement approach moving forward.

Our work with Traditional Owners and First Peoples is only beginning with this first VTP. We will continue to build on the conversations started with the first VTP and embed processes through which Traditional Owners and First Peoples can shape decisions about subsequent VTPs and renewable energy zone (REZ) development.

4.1 Principles for working together

Our vision is to work together with Traditional Owners as respected partners in development and delivery of policy and projects. We are committed to doing this in a way that upholds transparency, mutual respect and shared benefits.

Traditional Owners are distinct rights holders to Country and Sea Country and their rights must be upheld as laid out under the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*, the *Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010*, *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006* and *Native Title Act 1993* (Cth). VicGrid's activities will be underpinned by respectful, long-term relationships with Traditional Owners that support the realisation of their goals and objectives for Country, Sea Country, and Culture. This is our unwavering commitment. VicGrid is also committed to respecting the outcomes of Treaty negotiations in Victoria.

VicGrid's engagement with Traditional Owners is guided by the following:

- self-determination
- respectful and meaningful engagement
- transparency and accountability
- cultural respect and safety.

VicGrid is also committed to the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action's Pupangarli Marnmarnepu 'Owning Our Future' Aboriginal Self-Determination Reform Strategy. With the support and leadership of Traditional Owners, we will together identify key considerations, concerns, benefits and opportunities to enable Traditional Owners to play an active role in Victoria's energy transition. This includes through the development of this and future VTPs.

4.2 The role of Traditional Owners and First Peoples in shaping the VTP

Engagement with Traditional Owners and First Peoples has helped to shape the first VTP, REZ design and will be crucial to shape future VTPs.

We have heard about the need to better understand and protect cultural heritage across Victoria, the importance of sharing tangible economic benefits of renewable energy infrastructure projects, and the need for more meaningful and longer-term support for Traditional Owners to engage with future VTPs and REZ development. We have also heard about the ongoing impact to Country and Traditional Owners from existing development and the need to set clearer expectations for how developers engage with Traditional Owners.

We acknowledge we have more work to do to support meaningful participation of Traditional Owners and First Peoples in the development of future VTPs and REZs. It is our commitment to work closely with Traditional Owner groups to understand their priorities and aspirations, so that we can deliver on our vision to walk together.

Protecting cultural heritage as REZs are developed will continue to be a key focus for this work. The first phase of the VTP strategic land use assessment included only publicly available datasets for Aboriginal and historical cultural heritage. As such, the data relating to Aboriginal cultural heritage is limited and does not capture all known heritage values.

VicGrid has worked to establish relationships with formally recognised Traditional Owner corporations as well as the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Council to supplement the publicly available data. To support this, we held 6 individual and group briefing sessions with formally recognised Traditional Owner corporations as part of consultation on the draft VTP Guidelines and study area during 2024. We held another 10 briefing sessions with formally recognised Traditional Owner groups as part of engagement on the draft 2025 VTP.

We will maintain ongoing conversations with both formally recognised and non-formally recognised Traditional Owner groups to design an appropriate process for incorporating further cultural heritage information into REZ development and subsequent VTPs. This work will align with principles of indigenous data sovereignty. We have heard how critical cultural heritage mapping is, and we are committed to making sure this process is Traditional Owner-led.

Integrating a self-determined approach to cultural heritage will be an ongoing process that we will continue to build on collaboratively throughout the lifecycle of the 2025 VTP, subsequent VTPs and through the process for declaring REZs. The development of REZs will require an ongoing dialogue with Traditional Owners to ensure we minimise impacts to Country and deliver real value.

As part of the Victorian Transmission Investment Framework (VTIF) reforms, VicGrid is working with Traditional Owners and the First Peoples Assembly of Victoria to deliver dedicated benefits for Traditional Owners affected by REZs and new transmission corridors. This process aims to give Traditional Owners control over how funds are spent to ensure they deliver economic empowerment and support self-determination. These dedicated benefits will be funded by mandatory contributions from transmission, generation and storage companies, and will be in addition to any discretionary payments by energy companies to Traditional Owners.

An important milestone in our engagement with Traditional Owner groups was a Traditional Owner Forum, held in September 2024. This was an opportunity to bring together Traditional Owners and representatives from VicGrid, the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action and other agencies, to openly discuss the renewable energy transition in Victoria and the impact on Victoria's Traditional Owner communities. The conversations at this forum were integral in shaping VicGrid's thinking about the impacts of renewable energy and transmission, the opportunities for the future and the real harms that must not be repeated.

Since the forum, we have continued conversations with formally recognised Traditional Owner groups, and this has informed our approach to developing the 2025 VTP and will continue to shape work to protect cultural values and develop a dedicated model for benefits for Traditional Owners.

This work does not end with the first VTP, and we are committed to building on this foundation to establish more meaningful partnerships with formally recognised Traditional Owners and First Peoples.

PART A

5. Engaging with communities and industry

Engaging with landholders, communities and industry, and seeking to partner with Traditional Owners and First Peoples, is critical to the successful delivery of the 2025 Victorian Transmission Plan (VTP) and future VTPs.

Our new approach to planning has at its core a commitment to give Traditional Owners, First Peoples, landholders, communities and regional stakeholders a real voice in the process. Meaningful engagement and incorporating community views earlier will help us plan renewable energy generation and transmission in a way that minimises impacts and delivers tangible benefits.

We have received extensive feedback through ongoing engagement as we have been developing the VTP.

Feedback has provided valuable insights to inform the 2025 VTP and proposed renewable energy zones (REZs). It will also continue to shape decisions about subsequent VTPs, REZ development and the development of the transmission projects identified in the VTP.

5.1 Our engagement model

We know that the process used to plan transmission under the previous framework has not adequately considered community, cultural, land use and environmental values early in the process.

Under the Victorian Transmission Investment Framework (VTIF), we seek to partner with Traditional Owners and First Peoples and to engage early and often with landholders and local communities. We are committed to listening to and considering all feedback, balanced against technical and financial requirements of planning future renewable energy infrastructure projects.

Our approach is guided by the Victorian Government's Public Engagement Framework 2021-2025. The Public Engagement Framework focuses on meaningful, principled and inclusive public engagement, and aligns with the best practice approaches set out by the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2). The framework embodies 6 principles that guide our engagement with First Peoples, communities and industry:

- **Meaningful:** The process of public engagement is genuine and informs the final decisions.
- **Inclusive:** The engagement is respectful, inclusive and accessible.
- **Transparent:** The engagement is clear and open about what the public can and cannot influence.
- **Informed:** The engagement provides relevant and timely information to the public.
- **Accountable:** The engagement is high quality and responsive to the public.
- **Valuable:** The engagement creates value for the community and government. This can include social, economic and environmental values.

5.2 Engaging with local communities to develop the Victorian Transmission Plan

We are using a place-based approach to incorporate early, deeper and ongoing community engagement in the planning process. Our goal is to ensure regions and communities have the agency and opportunity to meaningfully participate in shaping the VTP, REZs and transmission projects, and share in the benefits of the energy transition. To achieve this, VicGrid's community engagement model has 6 objectives:

- To raise community awareness and understanding of REZs and why large-scale transmission is critical to the energy transition.
- To facilitate community input into key stages of the planning and investment lifecycle for transmission projects, including through the strategic land use assessment and consultation on the 2025 VTP.
- To enable First Peoples to be resourced with the capacity and capability to participate in REZ discussions and make decisions.
- To support the delivery of community benefits to ensure impacted host communities and First Peoples directly benefit.
- To foster government-industry-community partnerships to unlock regional development opportunities in line with local aspirations and build local adaptive capacities.
- To facilitate a cross-sectoral and multi-level governance response to issues and provide an escalation point for resolving issues throughout the end-to-end planning and development process.
- To work towards these objectives, we are engaging with regional and rural communities and stakeholders using many channels.

VicGrid started engagement on Victoria's transmission planning in November 2023 with the Renewable Energy Planning Survey, which was designed to explore community values and concerns related to areas considered more or less appropriate for REZ development. The survey was open from 17 November to 16 February 2024. Over 2,015 survey responses and 2,465 pindrops on the map highlighted the significance communities place on protecting Victoria's natural environment, parks, water systems (rivers and lakes), agricultural land and biodiversity. The feedback informed the process to identify the REZ study area which formed the basis for the next round of consultation.

On 22 July 2024, VicGrid released the draft VTP Guidelines and REZ study area map for formal consultation to collect feedback to help narrow the study area to draft proposed REZs. Between 22 July and 30 September 2024, we received over 1,300 feedback forms, more than 170 submissions, and held conversations with more than 450 community members. Community feedback emphasised the importance of minimising land use, cultural, and environmental impacts, and avoiding overdevelopment to minimise cumulative impacts.

We released the draft VTP on 19 May 2025, commencing a 6-week community and industry consultation period between 19 May and 24 June 2025. The purpose of this engagement was to collect feedback on the draft VTP and the draft proposed REZs. We received more than 260 feedback forms and 460 submissions. We also conducted more than 100 community briefings and held conversations with more than 400 community members during engagement events across regional Victoria.

We invited Victorians to provide feedback on the draft proposed REZs, draft proposed Gippsland Shoreline REZ, and proposed transmission projects. Community feedback emphasised the importance of minimising impacts on regions during the transition, exploring alternatives to overhead high-voltage transmission lines, ensuring that engagement is transparent and genuine, and protecting farmland. People shared their feedback on REZ boundaries to accommodate or avoid particular areas due to concerns around land use impacts and features or areas of local importance.

Engagement results overview: Community and local government

Responses to the feedback forms, submissions, meetings, emails, contact centre enquiries and feedback from community drop-in sessions revealed key themes. These themes generally align with what we heard during the engagement for the draft VTP Guidelines, with some emphasised more heavily than previous engagements.

Impact on the regions: We heard concerns about the impost on regional areas to service metropolitan energy demands, community division linked to developer behaviour, and concerns about industrialisation of regions. There was also feedback about compounding stresses on communities from multiple projects and plans across renewable energy and beyond.

Transmission planning: We heard feedback on experiences with current transmission projects, such as Western Renewables Link (WRL) and Victorian to New South Wales Interconnector West (VNI West) including frustration about unclear route planning, inadequate consultation and the perceived cost prioritisation over long-term community and environmental wellbeing. This included concerns about visual impact and disruption of farming activities, with many advocating for underground transmission.

Engagement feedback: We heard feedback about the accessibility of the VTP, the choice of engagement channels, awareness of engagement and concerns about the impact feedback would have on the VTP.

Agriculture and land use: Respondents stressed the need to protect farmland and raised concerns about impacts to farming activities, biosecurity risks and productivity. There was an underlying sentiment that farms are for food and fibre production, not for the production of energy. Efforts to avoid farmland in the design of the draft proposed REZs were also acknowledged.

Refinement of study area: Feedback was received suggesting specific changes to REZs including requests to extend or shift REZ boundaries. These requests were often related to geographical features or areas of local importance. There was also feedback requesting boundaries be increased to allow for greater participation.

Energy source: Feedback was received about different types of energy sources and generation technologies.

VTP feedback: Respondents provided feedback on the VTP, expressing both support for and rejection of the plan as a whole.

Biodiversity and natural environment: We heard concerns about impacts on biodiversity and water systems including endangered species' habitats.

Regional economic development: There was both optimism for community benefits and regional development opportunities such as job creation and infrastructure investment, and concerns about uneven benefit distribution and the impact on local infrastructure such as roads, housing and local services.

Natural hazard vulnerability: Feedback highlighted concerns about infrastructure development in flood and bushfire-prone areas. This included concerns about the impact on firefighting and the impact of infrastructure on flood waters.

This feedback provided valuable insights into regional concerns, values and priorities as well as location-specific risks and factors related to topography, wildlife and infrastructure. For more information about engagement with communities and local governments, read the Draft 2025 Victorian Transmission Plan Final Engagement Report – What We Heard at **engage.vic.gov.au/victransmissionplan**

This information was considered, alongside other modelling inputs, to finalise the proposed REZs and proposed transmission projects included in the 2025 VTP. Communities will have further opportunities to participate in place-based engagement during the REZ declaration process, REZ design, transmission project development and future VTPs. For more details, see Section 6.3.

5.3 Energy industry engagement

The energy industry continues to play a crucial role in the transmission planning process. VicGrid is committed to ensuring industry perspectives, expertise and knowledge are considered. Industry stakeholders include developers of generation and storage projects, transmission owners and operators, in service generators and retailers, market and regulatory bodies, construction companies, investors and all businesses involved in the supply chain for new transmission infrastructure.

During previous engagement on the VTIF, industry stakeholders expressed support for Victoria's new approach to transmission planning and its aim to deliver better engagement and benefits for Traditional Owners and communities. Feedback also emphasised the importance of energy affordability and alignment with national and other state planning processes.

Engagement on the VTP Guidelines included briefings with peak bodies, key stakeholders, and an industry webinar. VicGrid also engaged renewable energy developers through a survey to understand their plans for proposed new projects in Victoria. Feedback highlighted the need for holistic engagement on related policy development, robust scenario planning, a flexible VTP process and modelling suggestions.

For the draft VTP, VicGrid expanded industry engagement efforts to include briefings and individual meetings with renewable energy developers to discuss the potential impact of the draft VTP on pipeline projects. This was in addition to a project status survey and an industry webinar. We received 79 submissions from industry on the draft VTP and 70 responses to the project status survey.

Industry feedback highlighted a need for greater clarity and alignment on access and connections policies, underlying inputs and assumptions and transmission planning delivery timelines and coordination.

Engagement results overview: Energy industry

Industry generally supported the strategic intent of the VTP and was supportive of the collaborative approach to engagement. However, there were several suggestions for improvement.

The analysis of feedback forms, submissions, and industry briefings and meetings revealed several interrelated themes. These themes are summarised below.

Greater clarity is needed on access and connections: There was considerable feedback requesting clarity on access and connections policies, particularly on how these policies relate to pipeline projects and transitional arrangements. This feedback emphasised the impact on developer confidence.

Inputs and assumptions: A large body of feedback focused on the underlying inputs and assumptions of the draft VTP. Concerns were raised that modelled generation for onshore renewable energy was too low and did not sufficiently allow for uncertainty, storage needs, gas price projections, the uptake of distributed energy resources and electricity demand forecasts, especially concerning data centres. There was also feedback regarding underlying cost assumptions.

Transmission project costs: There was feedback regarding underlying cost estimates for the projects that VicGrid was proposing. Stakeholders were concerned that the cost estimates in the draft VTP underestimated the cost of projects.

Timely delivery of transmission infrastructure: Feedback on the optimal development pathway and transmission projects included concerns about the timely delivery and coordination of the transmission infrastructure. Participants shared specific feedback about program prioritisation, as well as taking distribution networks into account.

Storage strategy and system strength: We heard concerns that the VTP underestimates the need for storage and lacks clarity on long-duration storage, grid-forming batteries and system strength improvements.

REZ design, capacity, boundaries and flexibility: Feedback highlighted concerns about the REZ boundaries and hosting capacities being too restrictive. There was also concern that modelled generation was too low if used as caps, which may deter investment and hinder advanced developments. In response to these concerns, there were calls for changes to REZ designs.

Engagement feedback: We heard concerns that the timelines for engagement on the draft VTP and related policies were too tight, fearing that this could affect the quality of the final outcomes.

Regulatory complexity: We heard many suggestions to streamline planning and environmental approvals for projects within REZs to enhance the value proposition of REZ development.

Industry feedback provided valuable insights that have shaped the development of the 2025 VTP and supporting access and connections arrangements.

For more details about industry feedback that has shaped the VTP, read the Draft 2025 Victorian Transmission Plan Final Engagement Report – What We Heard at **engage.vic.gov.au/victransmissionplan**

5.4 Agriculture and other industry engagement

VicGrid continues to recognise the crucial contribution the agriculture sector makes to Victoria's economy, regional and rural communities, food security and way of life. We are committed to engaging closely with landholders and agriculture industry groups to make sure they have a voice in the planning of energy infrastructure.

In developing the VTP Guidelines and 2025 VTP, we have engaged with agriculture industry stakeholders to understand the potential impacts of development on farming systems and agricultural operations. Engagement included briefings with peak bodies and meetings with landholder groups, as well as submissions from individuals and organisations focusing on the value and importance of farmland. We have also engaged with groups and peak bodies representing other industries, including minerals, forestry, manufacturing and education.

Feedback from these stakeholders on the draft VTP focused on minimising the social, economic, environmental impacts of transmission and renewable energy development on agricultural land and rural communities. There was also a call for greater investment in an integrated, agriculture-sensitive engagement approach, to ensure that local voices continue to shape the transmission planning process.

For more detail about agriculture sector feedback that has shaped the VTP, read the Draft 2025 Victorian Transmission Plan Final Engagement Report – What We Heard at **engage.vic.gov.au/victransmissionplan**

To support VicGrid's work developing the VTP and identifying suitable areas for potential renewable energy zones, VicGrid commissioned agricultural consultancy RMCG to determine a consistent, evidence-based method to identify relative compatibility of different agriculture land uses with co-located renewable energy infrastructure. In undertaking this work, RMCG interviewed representatives from Victorian and national agricultural groups representing grains, livestock grazing, cropping, dairy, forestry, nursery and horticulture industries. You can view a copy of the Agriculture – Renewable Energy Compatibility Study prepared by RMCG at **engage.vic.gov.au/project/victransmissionplan/page/document-library**

Part B

Our plan for renewable energy zones and transmission projects

PART B

6. Areas we are proposing for future renewable energy generation development

The 2025 Victorian Transmission Plan (VTP) sets out proposed renewable energy zones (REZs), areas we have identified as most suitable to host new renewable generation project development over the next 15 years.

We have identified 6 proposed REZs in Victoria to support onshore renewable projects, such as wind and solar projects.

Their size and location are designed to accommodate Victoria's requirements for renewable energy generation as part of our state's overall energy mix from 2025 to 2040.

In total, the proposed REZs cover approximately 7.9% of Victoria's land area (see Figure 9). On average statewide, we need about 9.1% of the land area of REZs to host wind and solar projects to meet the expected renewable energy capacity modelled for scenario 1 in 2040. However, only a fraction of the land within project sites will be needed for infrastructure. For example, on a typical wind farm, the turbines themselves along with access roads and other infrastructure occupy only about 2% of the project site. Figures will vary by individual REZs and projects.

To identify locations for the proposed REZs, we investigated parts of Victoria to understand and balance factors including existing land uses, the environment, publicly available cultural heritage information, generator interest, renewable energy resource potential such as wind and sun, technical requirements for transmission infrastructure, regional development opportunities, and costs to energy consumers. We also considered feedback received from communities and industry during consultation on the REZ study area in 2024 and the draft VTP (including the draft proposed REZs) over May and June 2025.

The overall size of REZs is an important consideration. There is a trade-off between smaller zones with more concentrated infrastructure development, and larger zones that affect a wider area but result in less concentrated development within each zone. Based on feedback received and our assessment of different land use considerations, we have kept the area covered by the proposed renewable energy zones as small as possible (noting that some of the proposed REZs have increased in size from those presented in the draft VTP).

What will the REZs mean for me?

Communities in REZs will see increased development of renewable generation and storage infrastructure over time. Importantly, only some of the land within a REZ will be needed for new renewable projects.

Landholders can choose whether or not to host new wind, solar or battery projects on their land. Developers of generation projects like wind and solar farms, and batteries, will need to negotiate with landholders for the ability to build projects on their property.

REZs will deliver benefits for landholders, Traditional Owners, neighbours and communities, through channels such as job creation, infrastructure investment, and regional development. New REZ Community Energy Funds will invest in the region, through projects and initiatives that create economic benefits and regional development opportunities. More information can be found in Section 9. Traditional Owners can expect ongoing dialogue with VicGrid to ensure impacts to Country are minimised and expectations set for project proponents to engage with and share benefits with Traditional Owners. We will also continue to work with Traditional Owners to ensure further cultural heritage information is incorporated into development of REZs, transmission projects and future VTPs.

The REZ locations harness the state's strong winds and solar energy while minimising environmental and social impacts to help build community understanding and support for development. Together with new access arrangements, REZs are designed to provide confidence that developers can supply energy to the market.

6.1 Victoria's future energy mix informed our REZs

An important step in identifying the proposed REZs was to consider how much additional renewable generation will be needed to meet Victoria's future energy needs, and by when. To do this, we analysed the mix of technologies that would best meet future energy demand and Victorian policy targets from 2025 to 2040. We considered factors such as:

- capital and operating costs and their impact on consumer energy bills
- land use constraints
- community preferences and cumulative impacts of development
- generator and developer interest
- regional economic development opportunities
- technical feasibility
- energy reliability.

For more details on the methodology, see Section 2.

The resulting generation mix is presented in Figure 8. Under our plan, onshore wind and solar generation will have a key role in Victoria's overall generation mix over the next 15 years, delivering approximately 12.8 GW or 40% of total grid-supplied generation capacity by 2040 and 32.7 TWh or 48% of total grid generation output. Percentages are calculated based on the share of grid-scale generation capacity or output in the 2040 financial year. This includes wind (onshore and offshore), utility-scale solar, gas and hydro projects that service operational demand. This means we are planning for 5.7 GW of new onshore wind and 2.3 GW of new utility-scale solar to connect to the grid. Offshore wind will also be important, contributing 9 GW or 28% of grid-supplied generation capacity by 2040 and 29.2 TWh or 43% of grid-supplied generation output.

This generation mix is designed for scenario 1 (see Section 2 for more information on how we used scenarios to develop the VTP). We also considered generation needs for scenario 2 and 3, which are presented in Appendix B. In scenario 2, Victoria's energy needs are greater, requiring larger future investments in onshore wind, solar and storage infrastructure.

The outcomes of generation modelling are inherently uncertain, reflecting the variety of possible economic futures that could eventuate and would alter electricity demand and supply. The generation mix that ultimately will be built will have some differences compared with the mix that has been modelled. The actual generation and storage build will be influenced by several factors, including electricity demand (such as from new data centres) and supply (including the development or non-development of interstate generation), transmission project timing, wind and solar resource quality, the economics of particular generation and storage technologies, and permitting, approvals and land use constraints. VicGrid's plans are intentionally developed to accommodate a range of futures.

While renewable generation in REZs will have a leading role, offshore wind, storage and backup generation technologies, and energy imported from other states will all help to maintain a reliable and affordable electricity supply in the coming years. The growth of consumer energy resources such as rooftop solar and batteries may also help to limit the amount of energy that needs to be supplied from the transmission system.

Additional renewable generation capacity in our plan

By 2040, we are planning for:

5.7 - 9.6 GW
of new onshore wind

9 GW
of new offshore wind

2.3 - 8.9 GW
of new utility-scale solar

4.8 - 7.7 GW
of new short and long duration (utility) storage capacity

Notes: These figures include new capacity from already committed projects across Victoria and the additional new generation capacity that we are planning for by 2040. The ranges shown represent the differences between the generation modelled under different planning scenarios. These modelled figures are not caps on the generation that will actually be built. VicGrid's proposed new access regime will set caps for generation in each REZ. For more information about the proposed new access regime, see Section 9.2.

The role of other technologies in supporting wind and solar generation

Several other technologies will be needed over the next 15 years to complement renewables and ensure we maintain a reliable and secure energy mix:

Energy firming technologies

Batteries and long-duration storage such as pumped hydro will have an important role in helping balance variable renewable output from wind and solar to meet demand – known as firming. By 2035, our projected energy mix under scenario 1 includes a total of 7.5 GW of storage capacity, including 5.0 GW of utility short and long-duration storage and 2.5 GW of distributed storage. By 2040, storage capacity increases to 9.8 GW, including 5.1 GW of utility short and long-duration storage and 4.7 GW of distributed storage, supported by 3.1 GW of gas-fired power generation to meet periods of peak demand or low renewables output.

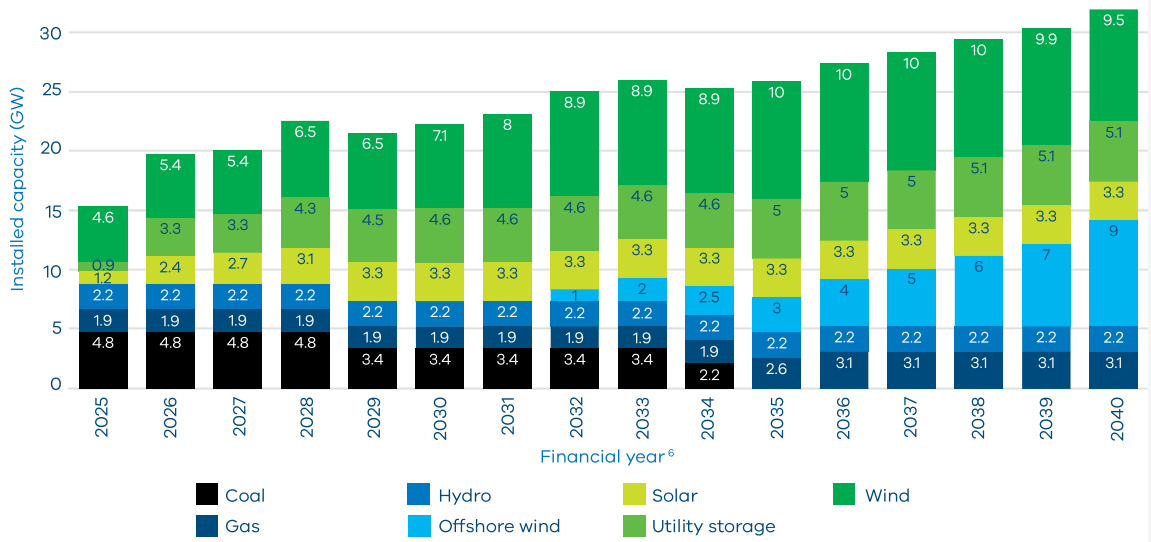
Interconnectors

Under our plan, interconnectors such as Victoria to New South Wales Interconnector West (VNI West) and Marinus Link will provide Victoria access to additional diverse renewables and firming capacity from other National Electricity Market (NEM) regions.

Consumer energy resources

Household uptake of technologies such as rooftop solar and batteries will help limit the amount of new grid-scale generation and storage that's needed. Our projected generation mix for Victoria's grid factors in growth in consumer energy resources in line with the Australian Energy Market Operator's scenarios, which sees up to 16 GW in distributed solar by 2040.

Figure 8: Victoria's future energy grid under scenario 1



[6] Years shown are for financial years ending in June. For example, the values for 2040 indicate modelled capacities as at June 2040.

Managing periods of low renewable generation

Wind and solar generation are inherently variable, and it is not uncommon to experience periods when there is little wind and sunshine. This is most likely in winter, when energy demand is also high to provide heating during cold weather.

The risk of limited periods of low renewable generation is an important planning consideration for modern electricity networks. In Victoria, this risk will become more pronounced in the late 2030s, following the closure of coal-fired power plants. There are well-documented examples of periods such as these in Australia, Europe and the United States. VicGrid will seek to learn from these examples as we plan for the future.

The VTP considers the risks of periods of low renewable generation in its approach to energy market modelling. As noted above, our modelled energy mixes for the 3 VTP scenarios include a significant share of batteries and new long-duration storage technologies that will help to address seasonal variability in renewable generation. Interconnectors providing energy from other states will also help smooth Victoria's energy supply, along with a small but important role for gas-fired power generation to provide critical power supply when it is needed, and to meet periods of peak demand.

Transmission upgrades within the Victorian network also provide an important solution, helping ensure energy generated in different regions can be transferred to other locations across the state to meet demand when weather conditions vary.

Renewable energy zones and critical minerals deposits

The Victorian Government supports energy infrastructure development in key regional areas. Some of these areas are also identified as having high potential for critical mineral deposits, particularly in north-west and central Victoria. In developing the VTP, VicGrid has created proposed REZ boundaries that aim to avoid areas known to have the most potential for critical minerals extraction. To ensure adaptability to future project opportunities, the VTP also provides for review of REZ boundaries that will reduce the likelihood of overlaps with critical minerals deposits identified from Victoria's geoscience knowledge and data. There are multiple known occurrences of critical and strategic minerals and metals in the proposed Western, Central Highlands, North West and Central North REZs, along with potentially undiscovered deposits. Victoria is highly likely to hold other significant, yet underexplored critical minerals.

Where a proposed or future REZ overlaps with an area of critical mineral deposits, authorised exploration, extraction, and production derived from that area are not excluded or limited by the existence of the REZ, noting that critical mineral deposits occur in fixed locations that formed over extended geological periods. The type and nature of mineral deposits, and implications for limiting or preventing access, should be considered during the approval of above-ground land uses.

Released in December 2024, the Resources Victoria Critical Minerals Roadmap (Roadmap) outlines actions to establish a responsible and sustainable critical minerals industry in Victoria. It highlights the strategic importance of minerals, especially in the northwest of the State. As part of the Roadmap, a land use coexistence framework will be developed to balance energy, agriculture, and resource priorities and to support coordinated and transparent decision making. For more information, see **resources.vic.gov.au/critical-minerals**

Declared Irrigation Districts

There has been over $2 billion in investment in modernising the irrigation infrastructure in Victorian declared irrigation districts. This supports the ongoing productivity and viability of irrigation districts and it is important to maximise these districts for agricultural production. The Victorian government has released the Solar Energy Facilities Design and Development Guideline which outlines a process to facilitate the appropriate siting of solar energy facilities in declared irrigation districts. For more information see **planning.vic.gov.au/guides-and-resources/guides/all-guides/renewable-energy-facilities/solar-energy-facilities**

6.2 Where are the proposed REZs?

The 6 proposed REZs are areas we have identified as being most suitable to host the new onshore wind and solar generation Victoria will need over the next 15 years.

They are the Central Highlands, Central North, Gippsland, North West, South West, and Western proposed REZs. See Figure 9. Details of each are presented in the following pages. The South West REZ, Western REZ and Central North REZ are each comprised of 2 separate sections.

Details about the proposed Gippsland Shoreline REZ are presented in Section 7. It is designed to coordinate the onshore connection infrastructure of offshore wind generators and is separate from the 6 proposed REZs for onshore generation discussed in this section.

A wide range of factors were considered in determining the proposed size and location of each of the 6 proposed REZs. We conducted energy market modelling to understand the suitability of different locations from an economic and technical perspective. We considered sensitive land uses and landscape values including biodiversity and environmental constraints, cultural heritage, agriculture, natural hazards and community values.

We also sought to balance engagement feedback and regional economic development priorities with inputs on the location of current and future generation projects and transmission infrastructure.

We acknowledge that we have considered only publicly available datasets for Aboriginal and historical cultural heritage supplemented by early feedback from formally recognised Traditional Owners. We know we have more work to do to support meaningful participation of Traditional Owners and First Peoples in the development of REZs. Protecting cultural heritage as REZs are developed will continue to be a key focus for this work.

We also acknowledge the potential for renewable energy facilities such as wind turbines, wind monitoring towers, solar farms and associated transmission infrastructure to interact with a wide range of aviation activities that may be conducted in their vicinity. VicGrid will work with stakeholders on ways to manage these as REZs are developed. This could include setting expectations that developers consider potential aviation impacts and consult with relevant stakeholders in the planning stage of generation projects.

Table 7 summarises the different factors we considered in identifying the proposed REZs, and Section 2 provides further detail on our methodology.

Table 7: Factors we considered in determining the location of proposed REZs

Processes, program or project	Description
Agricultural land use	We considered farmland at a statewide and regional level, taking into account data including farmgate output, soil quality, rainfall, access to irrigation water and farm infrastructure investment. We also considered the compatibility of different types of farming with the co-location of renewable energy infrastructure. For more information, see Section 5.
Land use and landscape values	Where possible, we avoided areas such as national parks, world heritage sites, Ramsar wetlands, residential areas and other areas of significance. We sought to minimise impacts to areas of high biodiversity value, and prioritised areas with relatively fewer land use constraints.
Generation potential	We considered areas that have strong potential for renewable energy investment, based on factors like wind and solar resource quality, proximity to transmission, sensitive land values, terrain type and market interest demonstrated by projects already in development.
Modelled generation build	We considered the results of energy market modelling that identifies which technologies are needed (including storage), how much capacity to build, and when and where this capacity should be built.
Transmission network requirements	We preferenced areas that are close to the existing transmission network and assessed what additional or upgraded transmission infrastructure would be needed to accommodate additional renewable energy generation in different areas.
Engagement feedback	We considered feedback from communities, industry and local governments. This includes feedback received in connection with the draft proposed REZs presented in the draft VTP. For more information, see Sections 5 and 6.
Partnering with Traditional Owners and First Peoples	Where possible, we sought to avoid known areas of high cultural significance or sensitivity based on publicly available Aboriginal cultural heritage information and prioritise areas with fewer known constraints. We acknowledge that consideration of Aboriginal cultural values can only occur through engagement with the relevant Aboriginal cultural knowledge holders. Whilst we have had some conversations with Traditional Owner representative bodies, we have not yet consulted with Traditional Owners in this process. VicGrid is seeking to partner with Traditional Owners and First Peoples to supplement limited public datasets on Aboriginal cultural heritage and integrate a self-determined approach to protecting cultural heritage during REZ design and development. For more information, see Section 4.
Regional development considerations	We considered the readiness of different regional economies to host REZs, taking into account existing housing, social and transport infrastructure in each area as well as local workforce profiles. We sought to prioritise areas where there was strong alignment with regional economic development strategies.

Figure 9: We have identified 6 proposed renewable energy zones across Victoria for onshore renewable energy and a shoreline REZ to coordinate offshore wind connections

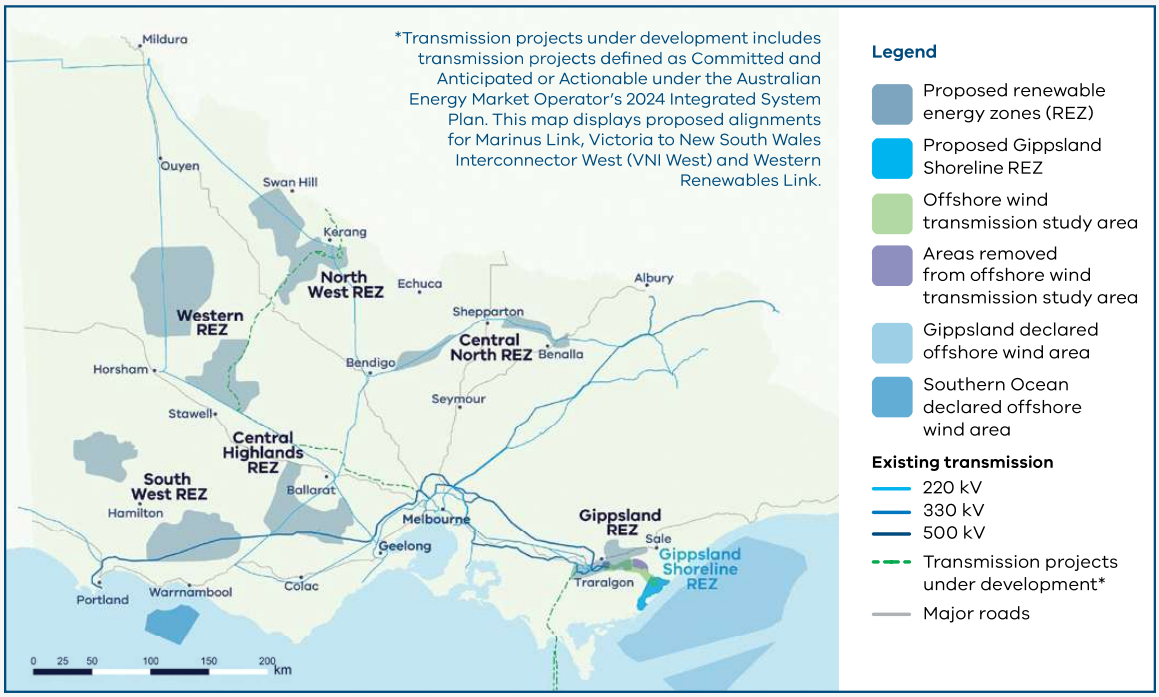
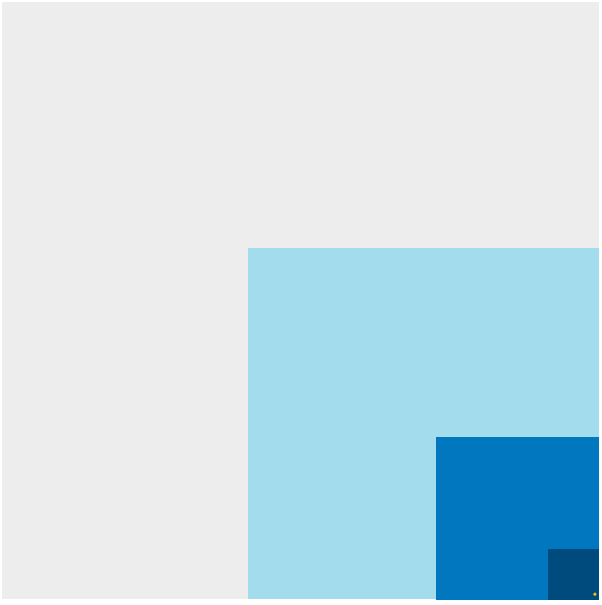


Figure 10: Proposed renewable energy zones and Registered Aboriginal Party boundaries

Disclaimer: The Registered Aboriginal Party boundaries shown in the Figure 10 are a computer representation. The boundaries show the general vicinity of land and waters subject to the *Native Title Act 1993* (Cth) and *Traditional Settlement Act 2010* as at the time of publication and could conceivably change. For more details, please see full disclaimer on page 4.

Figure 11: How much land is needed for renewable generation?



Approximate land area to host total wind and solar generation required in 2040 (scenario 1)

Approximate land area (not to scale) for physical infrastructure such as wind turbines

Victoria's total land area

AEMO 2024 ISP potential REZs

Proposed REZs

Notes: The total land area for in service and committed onshore wind and solar projects is derived from data provided by the Department of Transport and Planning. Note that: (i) only projects that service operational demand have been included in this calculation and (ii) any in service projects that are expected to be decommissioned by FY41 have not been included in this figure.

The total land area for new entrant projects has been approximated using capacity density values of 0.05 MW/ha and 0.5 MW/ha for onshore wind and solar respectively. This is an estimate only, and the actual size of new projects may differ for a range of reasons, including site-specific considerations and the development of technology over time. Data on Victoria's total land area is sourced from VicGov Region.

The 6 proposed REZs cover approximately 1.8 million hectares, which equates to 7.9% of Victoria's total land area of 22.8 million hectares. In comparison, the potential REZs identified in the Australian Energy Market Operator's 2024 Integrated System Plan (AEMO ISP) would cover approximately 8.5 million hectares, or 37% of Victoria's total land area.

Under scenario 1, about 9.1% of the combined area of the 6 proposed REZs would host wind and solar generation in 2040. Those land parcels will not be fully occupied. In fact, approximately 0.04% of Victoria's total land area is required for the physical infrastructure such as wind turbines, solar panels, access roads and others. The land area required for physical infrastructure is an estimate based on 2% for an onshore wind farm and 75% for a solar farm. The figures are consistent with a review of studies on land impacts of renewable energy generation in Australia and overseas. VicGrid acknowledges that these estimates are evolving as technology and construction techniques change over time. The estimated area of the land parcels in which onshore renewables will be hosted by 2040 (both inside and outside a REZ) is approximately 230,000 hectares, or about 1% of Victoria's total land area.

Indicative generation allocations across the proposed REZs

Table 8 shows the modelled generation we will need in each of the 6 proposed REZs by 2040 to meet energy demand most efficiently. This includes the existing pipeline of committed generation projects, as well as the additional capacity that we are planning for beyond the committed project pipeline. The ranges indicate the likely scale of new generation within each REZ based on our modelling, noting that that the final figures may sit outside this range.

The figures are not caps or limits. These are quantities of generation that could be supported in each REZ, having regard to the land area, transmission network transfer capacity and the renewable resource. A cap on the new generation that can connect within each REZ – called an access limit – will be released in the REZ declaration and access scheme associated with each REZ. For more information, see Section 9.

Table 8: Total renewable energy including in service and planned modelled to be in the system by 2040

Generation location	In service wind and solar	Committed wind and solar	2040 new wind and solar modelled for scenario 1	2040 new wind and solar modelled for scenario 2	2040 new wind and solar modelled for scenario 3
Proposed REZs					
Central Highlands	0.5 GW	1.4 GW	0.6 GW	2.2 GW	0.6 GW
South West	0.3 GW	0.0 GW	1.3 GW	2.0 GW	1.7 GW
Western	0.4 GW	0.0 GW	0.8 GW	4.5 GW	0.8 GW
North West	0.1 GW	0.0 GW	0.4 GW	1.9 GW	0.7 GW
Central North	0.2 GW	0.9 GW	0.0 GW	2.4 GW	0.1 GW
Gippsland	0.0 GW	0.2 GW	0.4 GW	1.1 GW	0.4 GW
REZ total**	**1.5 GW**	**2.5 GW**	**3.5 GW**	**14.2 GW**	**4.4 GW**
Outside REZs (onshore)*	3.3 GW	1.9 GW	0.0 GW	0.0 GW	0.0 GW
Offshore	0.0 GW	0.0 GW	9.0 GW	9.0 GW	8.0 GW
Total**	**4.8 GW**	**4.4 GW**	**12.5 GW**	**23.2 GW**	**12.4 GW**

* As a modelling simplification, no new generation has been modelled outside REZs, however it is expected that some projects will still proceed in these areas.

** Totals may not add due to rounding.

Feedback across Victoria

We have considered feedback from communities and industry received throughout the entire process of developing the 2025 VTP. This began with the Renewable Energy Planning Survey in 2023, which highlighted key community values and concerns related to areas considered more and less appropriate for REZ development. This helped to inform the REZ study area which was then consulted on in 2024 during engagement on the draft VTP Guidelines and study area. This enabled feedback from community and industry to be considered as the study area was narrowed to the draft proposed REZs presented in the draft VTP. Feedback on the draft VTP in 2025 provided further insight and has resulted in some changes to the draft proposed REZs which are presented in this 2025 VTP.

Feedback from the latest round of consultation has resulted in the following key changes to the draft proposed REZs:

- The total footprint of the REZs has increased in size following feedback from industry regarding the need for larger areas to develop technically and commercially viable renewable projects and to respond to calls from some sections of the community to increase the opportunity for landholder and community participation.
- Some of the proposed REZs have changed shape in response to feedback about sensitive areas within the original draft proposed REZs and to align with generator interest.
- Two zones, the Grampians Wimmera and the Wimmera Southern Mallee REZs, have now been combined to allow more flexibility in how and where projects are delivered and to make better use of transmission infrastructure.

What we heard during consultation on the study area

Agricultural land-use feedback helped inform all the proposed REZs, including feedback from both communities and the Victorian Farmers Federation about areas to be considered for avoidance across the state. Protecting biodiversity and environmental values was also a common concern across all regions, and biodiversity feedback and data has informed the proposed REZs.

We heard a body of feedback concerning natural hazard vulnerability, specifically fire and floods. This ranged from region-specific insights to concerns about firefighting and renewable energy infrastructure broadly. Natural hazards and climate vulnerability were considered in our assessments, and this feedback was considered when refining the study area.

We also considered current and planned energy generation and transmission projects across all of Victoria, with the dual aims of preventing any region from being overburdened by energy infrastructure and maintaining momentum in Victoria's energy transition. All regions provided feedback about cumulative impacts and the need to take in service and planned energy projects into account.

Much of the feedback from communities highlighted factors that could influence and support the planning of renewable generation, storage and transmission infrastructure within REZs over time. This feedback will continue to support decisions as the REZs are developed and is discussed below.

What we heard during consultation on the draft VTP

Community

During consultation on the draft proposed REZs, community themes remained broadly the same as seen in consultation on the study area, but the emphasis on areas of concern shifted. We received less feedback on the impact to agriculture and biodiversity during this round of engagement. This may be, in part, due to efforts made to avoid agricultural land and areas of high biodiversity value where possible in developing the draft proposed REZs.

Community feedback focused heavily on the impact of renewable energy development on specific regions. This included feedback about regions shouldering the burden to provide energy to the city with repeated requests for the city to 'do their part'. It also included concerns about the industrialisation of rural landscapes and the impact of development on local infrastructure. There was also feedback about community division caused by prior experiences with development, both generation and transmission. Across the state, communities expressed that they were unclear about the benefits of hosting renewable energy infrastructure, with much of the feedback focused on fears that development might cause falling land prices, damage income from farming and force families to move. Impact was expressed differently across regions, strongly linked to prior experiences with transmission and generation projects. This sentiment that the regions are shouldering the burden of the transition was fairly consistent across the state, and reflects the idea that the city is not doing its fair share.

There was also some feedback from community and local governments to expand certain REZs to allow for more participation and to benefit from centralised planning, adherence to developer standards and access to shared community benefits.

Industry

Feedback from industry noted the reliance of the VTP scenarios on achieving offshore wind targets. There were calls for more flexible REZ shapes, sizes and capacities with the current REZ configurations considered to be too narrow in geographic scope, and too conservative in expected generation, to accommodate the scale and diversity of renewable energy projects already in development. Industry feedback also highlighted the need for the 2025 VTP to support investment so Victoria can remain competitive in the global transition to renewables. There were also multiple requests to increase the capacity of each REZ and ensure any capacity limits weren't too restrictive to accommodate pipeline projects.

Other feedback from industry focused on calls to clarify new access arrangements. Information about changes to the proposed Victorian Access Regime and further detail about proposed access limits will be provided in the Access and Connections Consultation Paper and draft Grid Impact Assessment (GIA) Guidelines. This will include details about access limits for each type of renewable generation, access fees, access conditions and the process for allocating access. For more information about the Access and Connections Consultation Paper and draft GIA Guidelines, see Section 9.

What has changed

Proposed REZ footprint expansion

Some REZs have now increased in size to provide project developers and investors an opportunity to identify technically and commercially viable sites and allow for greater landholder and generator participation. Due to land use constraints, biodiversity concerns and efforts to avoid agricultural land least suitable to co-locating with renewable energy infrastructure, expanding the footprint of some of the draft proposed REZs was challenging. Some modest expansions have been made across proposed REZs. The former Wimmera Southern Mallee REZ (see below) has seen the largest expansion as the surrounding area has comparatively fewer known land-use and biodiversity constraints. It is acknowledged that the expanded proposed Southwest and Northwest REZ does include broadacre cropping and grazing land. This land has been included as our research identified these farming practices are more compatible with co-location with renewable energy infrastructure.

Proposed REZ footprint redesign

The draft proposed Grampians Wimmera REZ and Wimmera Southern Mallee REZ have been re-named and are being considered as 2 separate sections of a single Western REZ.

This is to increase the flexibility of connection and access arrangements across this region. Project developers will have more opportunity to investigate potential sites where landholder and developer interests are aligned, and the potential to deliver tangible benefits for communities. Having 2 separate sections also allows for more connection options to make better use of transmission infrastructure.

Other changes have been made to the some of the proposed REZs in response to feedback about biodiversity and land-use concerns and generator interest.

Part of the draft proposed South West REZ has been removed in response to community and industry feedback, and a new standalone section has been added.

The draft proposed Central North REZ has been substantially redesigned and split into 2 sections, in response to feedback on areas of high biodiversity value and to align with generator interest elsewhere in the region.

Details of these changes are summarised below.

For more information about the community and industry feedback that has helped shape the proposed REZs, read the Draft 2025 Victorian Transmission Plan Final Engagement Report – What We Heard at **engage.vic.gov.au/victransmissionplan**

The proposed REZs presented in the following section, are not yet finalised. The Minister for Energy and Resources can now consider whether to proceed with formal declaration of a proposed REZ. The REZ declaration process requires that the Minister make a declaration in a formal order (Order). This involves the proposed REZ being placed on public notice for a minimum of 6 weeks, enabling the community and industry to provide any comments and submissions. The Minister must consider any submissions when determining whether the REZ should be declared under an Order. More information about the REZ declaration process can be found in Sections 6.3 and 9.

During the REZ declaration process, there will be a further opportunity to refine the REZ boundaries including with further feedback from communities, Traditional Owners, industry and local stakeholders.

Central Highlands

The proposed Central Highlands REZ is in an area with high-quality wind resources and offers access to existing transmission network capacity. The local region has a diverse mix of land uses and landscapes, including productive farmland, national and state parks, wetlands, plains and river valleys, which have been taken into account in defining its shape and location.

It sits within the Registered Aboriginal Party (RAP) boundaries of the Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation and Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation.

The proposed REZ is situated west and south of Ballarat, in an area where known land use constraints are lower, relative to surrounding areas. It includes parts of the Golden Plains, Corangamite and Pyrenees local government areas. Small sections of the REZ also sit within the Moorabool and Colac Otway local government areas. The southern boundary runs close to the existing 500 kV transmission line from Moorabool towards Haunted Gully and takes in a section of the 220 kV line from Ballarat to Terang.

Agriculture production in the area includes cropping and grazing. There are nearby areas of cultural and historical significance. Scattered wetlands in the surrounding area provide habitat for important species including the brolga. As highlighted in feedback on the draft VTP, across the region there are known nesting sites and habitat areas for wedge-tailed eagles and other birds. Managing risk to these species is an important consideration for wind developments.

We considered many factors when identifying and refining the shape of the proposed REZ

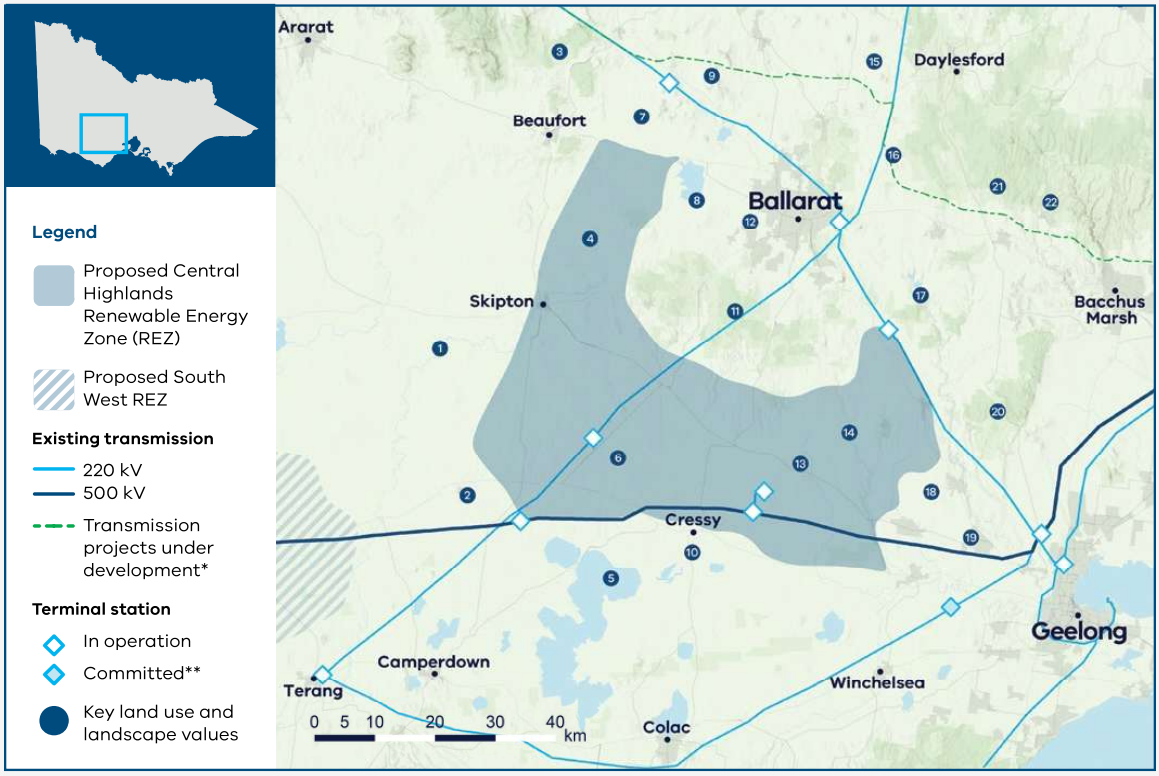
In addition to the overarching factors outlined in Table 7, we considered regional and local factors and engagement feedback to help identify and refine the REZ shape. These factors included but were not limited to:

- the area's high-quality wind resources
- productive farmland and compatibility of farming practices with renewable energy infrastructure
- wetlands, national and state parks and forests
- areas with significant biodiversity, cultural and social values
- residential growth areas and dwelling density
- publicly available cultural sites and areas of cultural heritage sensitivity identified on the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Register and Information System
- projects in planning
- transmission network capacity
- cumulative impacts of energy infrastructure development.

We are committed to having ongoing conversations with Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation and Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation to incorporate further cultural heritage information into REZ development and subsequent VTPs, in alignment with the principle of self-determination.

Figure 12 shows a map of the proposed Central Highlands REZ, including some of the significant land use and landscape values that influenced its location, size and shape. The identified land use and landscape values in the region are a sub-set only and are not exhaustive of the values present.

Figure 12: Proposed Central Highlands REZ



Key land use and landscape values

1 **Biodiversity:** Wetlands scattered across region with high biodiversity value, home to native flora and fauna including brolgas

2 **Biodiversity/cultural:** Wetlands and volcanic landscape around Mount Elephant

3 **Biodiversity:** State forests and park forming the Lower Pyrenees environs, home to native flora and fauna

4 **Community/cultural:** Mount Emu and surrounding areas of sensitivity

5 **Biodiversity/cultural:** Western District Lakes Ramsar-listed wetlands, home to native flora and fauna including brolgas

6 **Agriculture:** Area with a high proportion of cropping in the southwest of the REZ, with increased livestock grazing the north and east of the REZ

7 **Agriculture:** Horticulture farming

8 **Biodiversity/cultural:** Lake Burrumbeet and surrounding areas of sensitivity

9 **Community/cultural:** Mount Bolton, Mount Beckworth and Mount Ercildoune, part of the Island Uplands volcanic landscape

10 **Biodiversity:** Brolga flocking area^

11 **Biodiversity:** State parks and forests across the region, home to native flora and fauna

12 **Community:** Area with higher aggregated dwelling density

13 **Biodiversity/cultural:** Scattered wetlands and other areas of high biodiversity value

14 **Biodiversity:** Area with high biodiversity values including protected biodiversity area

15 **Heritage:** Victorian Goldfields

16 **Agriculture:** Horticulture farming

17 **Cultural:** Lal Lal Falls

18 **Biodiversity/cultural:** Wetlands including protected biodiversity area, home to native flora and fauna

19 **Community:** Proposed residential growth areas around Bannockburn

20 **Biodiversity/cultural/community:** Brisbane Ranges National Park

21 **Biodiversity/ cultural/community:** Wombat State Forest and surrounding bushland, home to native flora and fauna

22 **Bushfire risk:** Higher bushfire risk within densely vegetated state forests and parks

*The map shows transmission projects under development including transmission projects defined as Committed and Anticipated or Actionable under the Australian Energy Market Operator's 2024 Integrated System Plan. This map displays the proposed alignment for Western Renewables Link.

** Committed terminal station' includes new terminal stations on the Victorian Declared Shared Network that are proposed to be operational in the coming years, as identified by AEMO Victorian Planning in its Terminal Stations in Victoria report dated 2 September 2024.

^The Brolga is listed as endangered under the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1998* (Vic) and is at high risk of extinction in Victoria. Brolga flocking areas are areas mapped by DEECA which provide important Brolga habitat for Brolgas to drink, roost and feed during drier months until breeding. DEECA's Handbook for the Development of Renewable Energy Facilities includes specific guidance for wind facilities and the Victorian Brolga including avoiding Brolga flocking areas.

What we heard

Feedback in this region focused on the importance of minimising impacts on productive farmland and agriculture and protecting biodiversity and the natural environment.

Biodiversity concerns related to the wedge-tailed eagle, the brolga and the Wombat State Forest. There was feedback about natural hazard vulnerability, in particular bushfires. We also heard about the impact increased renewable infrastructure could have on the region and the impacts that the Western Renewables Link (WRL) project is having on local communities.

Feedback from the agriculture sector raised concerns about potential impacts on local horticulture production, particularly potato farming near Ballarat, and the compatibility of farming practices with energy infrastructure.

Feedback from local shires focused on the strategic importance of preserving high-quality soils for food production and asked for residential and industrial growth areas highlighted in council strategies to be considered.

During engagement on the draft VTP, we heard more feedback about horticulture within the draft proposed REZ. We also heard feedback about sensitive areas around Mount Bolton and Mount Beckworth. There was also concern about cumulative impact particularly in the Pyrenees Shire. There were multiple calls from developers to increase both the size and expected capacity of this REZ to account for planned capacity and location of pipeline projects.

What we did

When originally designing the proposed Central Highlands REZ, we considered agricultural land across the region and aimed to include areas with fewer land use and environmental constraints. To the north, we have taken into account high productivity farmland, including important horticulture production around Ballarat and Ballan, which has been identified as less compatible with renewable energy infrastructure. We also aimed to protect wetlands, lakes, parks and reserves to the south of the proposed REZ, as well as areas of high environmental, cultural and biodiversity value. We considered areas of high habitat value for biodiversity, such as the brolga.

The eastern border near Geelong and outer Melbourne has been shaped by areas of higher dwelling density and future residential growth.

In service and planned generation projects across the region were considered as we designed the proposed REZ. It includes several in service and planned large-scale wind farms and seeks to coordinate new development south and west of Ballarat to streamline future connections at several possible points on the existing network.

In response to feedback on the draft VTP, the northern area of the draft proposed REZ has been reduced. This reflects multiple considerations, including likely preference of generators to connect to the 500kV network to the south, land use sensitivities and limited land availability. In the south, a small area has been added to allow additional space close to the 500kV transmission line, while still avoiding wetlands and lakes in the area.

During the REZ declaration process, there will be a further opportunity to refine the REZ boundaries including with further feedback from communities, Traditional Owners, industry and local stakeholders.

South West

The proposed South West REZ has some of the strongest wind resources in the state. It is in an area characterised by farmland, lakes and volcanic plains.

This zone has been split into 2 sections in response to community feedback on the draft VTP. While the areas are separate, they are both considered to be part of the proposed South West REZ.

One section is north-west of Hamilton, located between Casterton and Balmoral. It covers parts of the Southern Grampians, Glenelg and West Wimmera local government areas. This section sits within the RAP boundaries of Gunditj Mirring Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation.

The other section is south-east of Hamilton, located between Macarthur and Darlington. The existing 500 kV line that runs from Mortlake to Tarrone terminal stations runs through the southern part of this section. It covers parts of the Moyne, Southern Grampians and Corangamite local government areas. It sits within the RAP boundaries of Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation and Gunditj Mirring Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation.

South West Victoria has seen wind project development over the past several decades. In service wind projects in the region contribute about 12% of Victoria's current energy generation capacity (calculated based on the generation capacity of onshore wind, solar, gas, coal and hydro projects that service operational demand), and 23% of the renewable generation capacity (calculated based on the generation capacity of onshore wind, solar and hydro projects that service operational demand).

The Southern Ocean offshore wind declared area is located off the coast of the proposed REZ, and one project has been awarded an offshore wind feasibility licence in this area by the Australian Government.

The broader areas surrounding the proposed REZ includes national parks, state forests, rivers and surrounding areas of sensitivity, Ramsar wetlands, tourist attractions and agricultural land, with one of the state's leading dairy-farming areas in southern Corangamite and Moyne shires.

We considered many factors when identifying and refining the shape of the proposed REZ

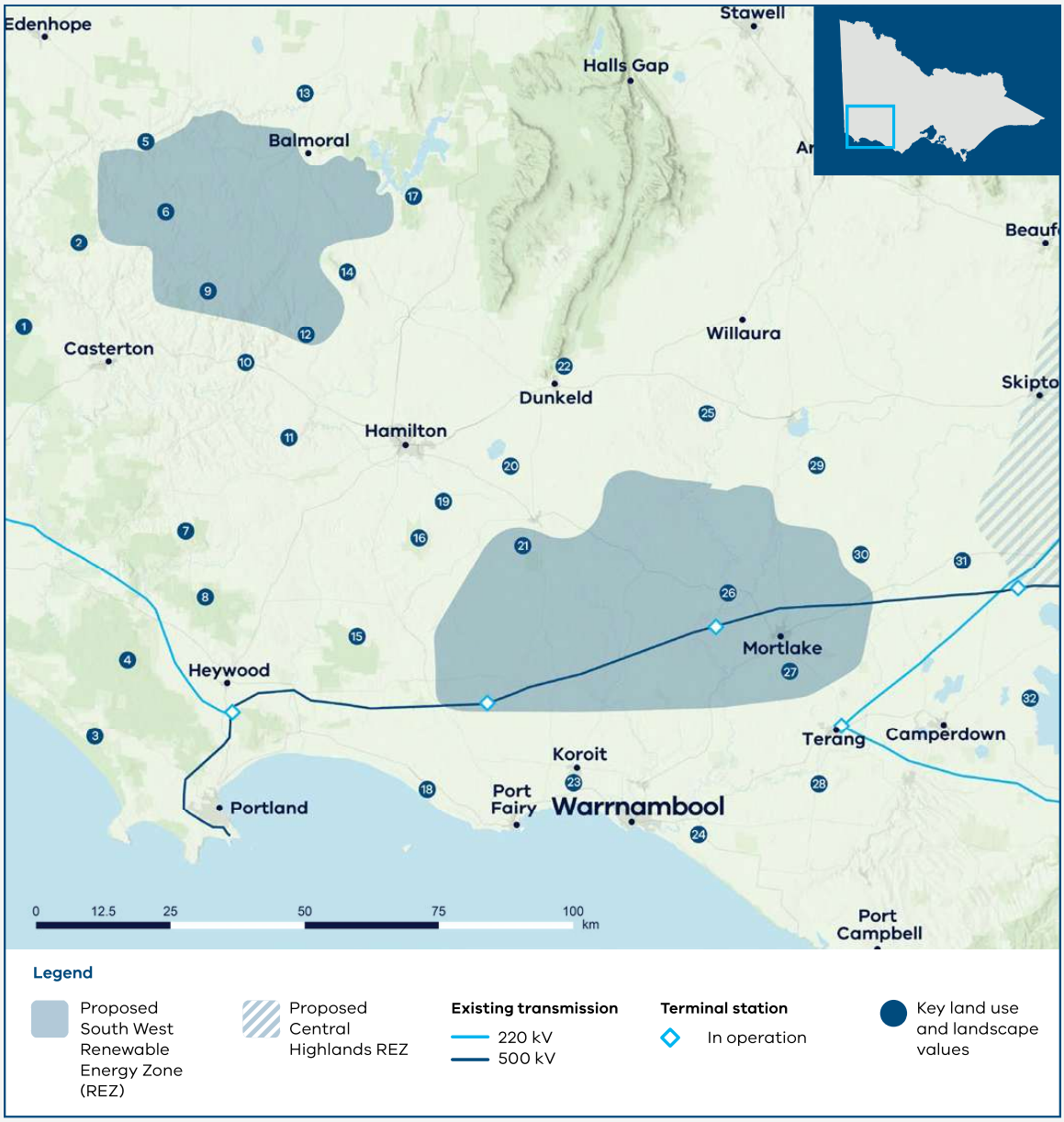
In addition to the overarching factors outlined in Table 7, we considered regional and local factors and engagement feedback to help identify and refine the REZ shape. These factors included but were not limited to:

- the area's very high-quality wind resources
- cumulative impacts of existing projects and infrastructure
- farmland, particularly local dairy production, and compatibility of farming practices with renewable energy infrastructure
- areas of high biodiversity value
- publicly available cultural sites and areas of cultural heritage sensitivity identified on the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Register and Information System
- transmission network capacity.

We are committed to having ongoing conversations with Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation and Gunditj Mirring Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation to incorporate cultural heritage information into REZ development and subsequent VTPs, in alignment with the principle of self-determination.

Figure 13 shows a map of the proposed South West REZ, including some of the significant land use and landscape values that influenced its location, size and shape. The identified land use and landscape values in the region are a sub-set only and are not exhaustive of the values present.

Figure 13: Proposed South West REZ



Key land use and landscape values

1 **Biodiversity/cultural:** Roseneath, Nangeela and Drajurk state forests, home to native flora and fauna

2 **Biodiversity/cultural:** Brimboal State Forest, home to native flora and fauna

3 **Biodiversity/community/cultural:** Discovery Bay Coastal Park

4 **Biodiversity/cultural/community:** Cobboboonee and Lower Glenelg National Parks

5 **Biodiversity/cultural:** Glenelg river and surrounding areas of sensitivity

6 **Biodiversity/cultural:** Chetwynd River and Wando River and surrounding areas of sensitivity

7 **Biodiversity:** State parks and forests, home to native flora and fauna

8 **Bushfire risk:** Higher bushfire risk across parks and forested areas

9 **Agriculture:** Area of higher timber production across the centre of the REZ, surrounded predominantly by livestock grazing across the REZ to the south east and north

10 **Community/agriculture:** Area of higher aggregated dwelling density around Coleraine, with a high proportion of cropping surrounding the south of Coleraine

11 **Biodiversity/cultural:** Wannon River and surrounding areas of sensitivity, including scattered protected biodiversity areas

12 **Biodiversity/cultural:** Higher value biodiversity and cultural values associated with waterways (creeks)

13 **Mining:** Mining licence and minerals retention licence, including heavy mineral sands deposits

14 **Biodiversity/cultural/community:** Dundas Range Scenic Reserve, including protected biodiversity area for native flora and fauna

15 **Cultural heritage:** Budj Bim World Heritage Cultural Landscape

16 **Biodiversity/cultural:** Mount Napier State Park, including protected biodiversity area

17 **Biodiversity/cultural:** Multiple State Forests, home to native flora and fauna

18 **Community/biodiversity/cultural:** Coastal parks, reserves and tourism sites

19 **Biodiversity:** Public Conservation and Resource Zone Area

20 **Biodiversity/cultural:** Lake Linlithgow and surrounding lakes, home to native flora and fauna including brolga flocking area

21 **Cultural:** Western volcanic cones and lava flows from Mount Rouse

22 **Cultural/biodiversity/community:** The Grampians (Gariwerd Cultural Landscape) – significant landform and landscape with high cultural, community and biodiversity values, including significant viewpoints of the region

23 **Biodiversity/cultural:** Tower Hill Wildlife Reserve, home to native flora and fauna

24 **Land use:** Wind farm prohibition area within 5 km of the coast east of Warrnambool (Victorian Planning Provisions)

25 **Mining:** Retention licence

26 **Biodiversity/cultural:** Hopkins River and surrounding areas of sensitivity

27 **Agriculture:** High agricultural productivity dairy farming area with relatively lower compatibility with renewables

28 **Agriculture:** High productivity dairy farming area with relatively lower compatibility with renewables

29 **Biodiversity/cultural:** Lake Bolac and surrounding wetlands and reserves, home to native flora and fauna including brolgas

30 **Biodiversity:** Brolga flocking area^

31 **Biodiversity/cultural:** Wetlands and volcanic landscape around Mount Elephant

32 **Biodiversity/cultural:** Western District Lakes Ramsar-listed wetlands, home to native flora and fauna including brolgas

^The Brolga is listed as endangered under the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1998* (Vic) and is at high risk of extinction in Victoria. Brolga flocking areas are areas mapped by DEECA which provide important Brolga habitat for Brolgas to drink, roost and feed during drier months until breeding. DEECA's Handbook for the Development of Renewable Energy Facilities includes specific guidance for wind facilities and the Victorian Brolga, including avoiding Brolga flocking areas.

What we heard

Feedback from this region focused on the significant role this region has played in Victoria's energy transition so far, noting the large number of in service and proposed local renewable projects. Concerns were raised about the cumulative impacts of wind projects, particularly on visual amenity, and how potential overdevelopment might affect peoples' sense of place and way of life.

Feedback also stressed the importance of minimising impacts on agriculture, including the region's dairy farmland, recognising the sector's contribution to the local economy and to food security. Community members also raised concerns about biodiversity, including the brolga and Southern Bent-Wing Bat.

Local governments mirrored community feedback, stressing the importance of protecting dairy farmland south of the Princes Highway and minimising cumulative impacts of renewable development.

During consultation on the draft VTP we received feedback focused on the area of the draft proposed REZ around Hamilton and Penshurst. Notably, feedback focused on ground water access and associated agricultural productivity in this area, areas of environmental and cultural significance, lower wind resource quality and lack of developer interest. We also heard concerns and received additional data on brolga flocking grounds on the edge of the draft proposed REZ.

There was also some feedback from community and industry calling for land near Coleraine to be considered for inclusion.

What we did

When originally developing the shape and size of this proposed REZ, we aimed to balance the need to harness the strongest winds in the state while managing the amount of new development to reduce cumulative impacts for the region.

To address concerns about agricultural land, the size and location of the proposed REZ takes into account areas of concentrated dairy farming in southern Corangamite Shire, and east of Warrnambool in southern Moyne Shire.

In response to feedback, we considered a range of significant landscapes and landforms, including Budj Bim World Heritage Cultural Landscape, the Grampians (Gariwerd) National Park, Lake Corangamite and the Great Otway National Park. We also considered coastal areas and their cultural, biodiversity and social (tourism) values for communities. Areas with important biodiversity values, including known brolga habitat and areas with a high concentration of wetlands to the east and north-east of the proposed REZ, have also been considered.

As a result of feedback on the draft VTP, the section of the draft proposed REZ around Hamilton and Penshurst has been removed. With access to additional data, some sections have been removed to avoid brolga flocking grounds that provide restrictions on the planning of new wind facilities.

To replace the removed sections, a new stand-alone section of the proposed REZ has been identified north of Coleraine. This area has a higher quality wind resource than the area removed. Situated between the Glenelg and Wannon rivers, the area has predominantly grazing agriculture, with some cropping and plantation areas. The southern section of the REZ includes steeper terrain and rolling hills which may require more careful review for suitability while areas further north are flatter with less terrain complexities.

We acknowledge that the stand-alone section of the REZ is new and was not consulted on during the draft 2025 VTP process. We will seek feedback on this area during the REZ declaration process, when there will be a further opportunity to refine the REZ boundaries.

A consideration of Traditional Owner values, such as tangible and intangible cultural heritage, biocultural species and sensitive sites associated with first contact, has not yet been incorporated into the design of the South West REZ.

We will maintain ongoing conversations with both formally recognised and non-formally recognised Traditional Owner groups to design an appropriate process for incorporating cultural heritage information into REZ development and subsequent VTPs.

Western REZ

Formerly the **draft proposed Grampians Wimmera** and **Wimmera Southern Mallee** REZs

This zone has changed from being 2 separate draft proposed REZs (the Grampians Wimmera and Wimmera Southern Mallee) to being considered as a single Western REZ with 2 sections.

While the sections are separate, they are both considered to be part of the proposed Western REZ.

By combining the REZs, access to the electricity grid will be allocated across both sections combined. This will provide more flexibility in where renewable energy projects such as wind farms are developed. For communities, this will mean developers can more easily avoid sensitive areas, reduce pressure on any one town or region, and look for sites that offer the best local benefits, including new jobs, community partnerships, or improved infrastructure.

The eastern section (the former draft proposed Grampians Wimmera REZ) is located between Stawell and Donald, with its southern boundary following an existing 220 kV transmission line and its eastern boundary following the VNI West corridor. It is mainly located within the Northern Grampians Shire and also intersects with Yarriambiack and Pyrenees local government areas.

The western section (the former draft proposed Wimmera Southern Mallee REZ) is located north of Horsham, between Dooen and Hopetoun. It is located within the Yarriambiack, Hindmarsh, Buloke and Horsham Rural City local government areas.

The proposed REZ sits within the RAP boundaries of the Barengi Gadjin Land Council and Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation.

The western section is along the 220 kV transmission line from Horsham to Ouyen, allowing for connections into the network at Murra Warra, while the eastern section provides opportunity for connections to the 500 kV network at Bulgana terminal station.

The proposed REZ offers access to strong wind and maximises access to existing and planned transmission capacity. It is in an area that is characterised by diverse farmland, with broadacre cropping and grazing.

The south of the region is characterised by significant landscapes including The Grampians (Gariwerd Cultural Landscape) and Mount Arapiles (Dyurrite Cultural Landscape), which were highlighted in feedback for their national and state significance and connect to several important parks, reserves and conservation areas. Given their significant cultural, biodiversity and community (tourism) values, VicGrid will continue to assess and seek feedback on these significant landscapes and areas in refining the REZs.

The region also includes areas of mining and substantial critical minerals resources.

We considered many factors when identifying and refining the shape of the proposed REZ

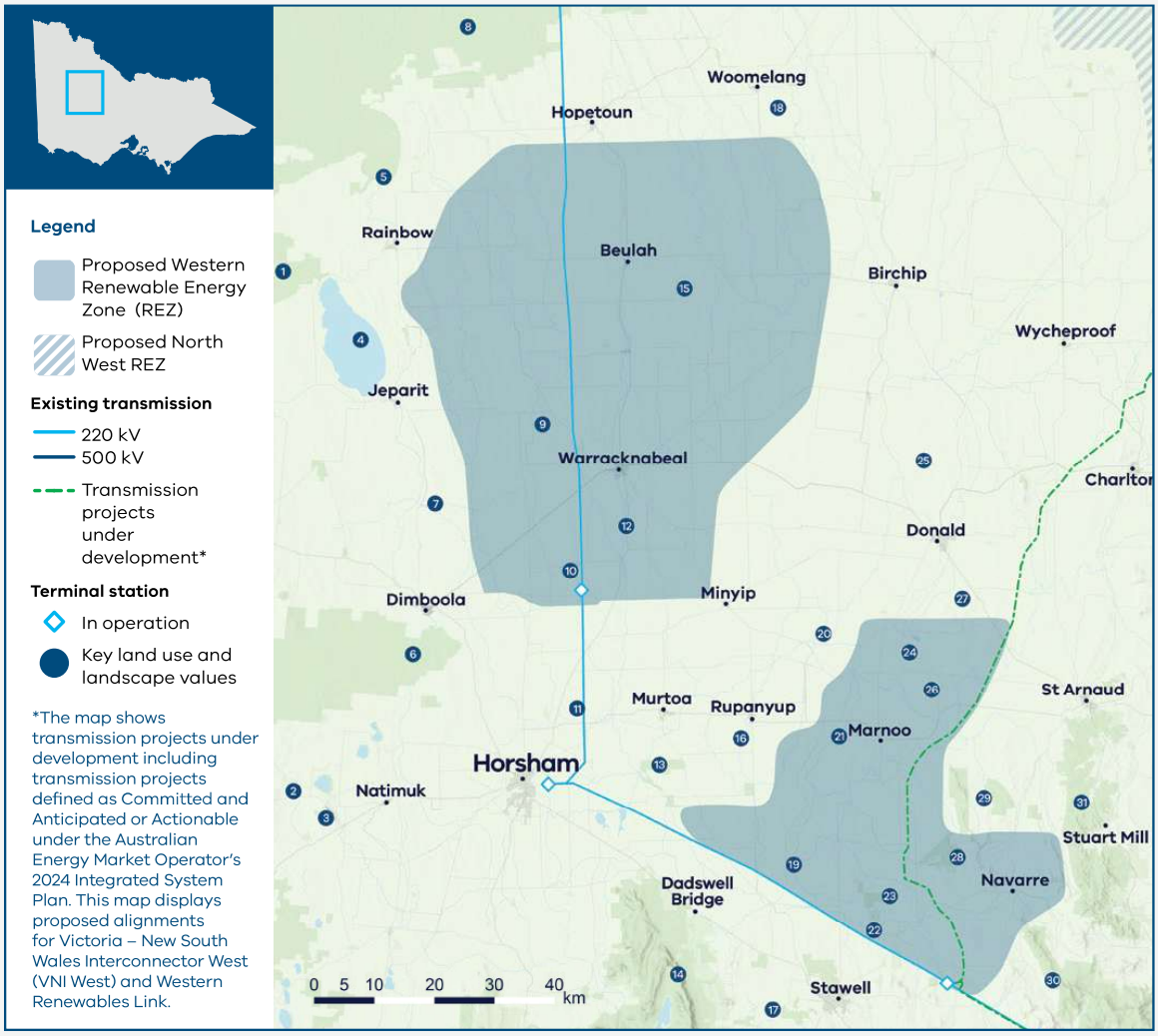
In addition to the overarching factors outlined in Table 7, we considered regional and local factors and engagement feedback to help identify and refine the REZ shape. These factors included but were not limited to:

- significant cultural and environmental landscapes such as The Grampians (Gariwerd Cultural Landscape) and Mount Arapiles (Dyurrite Cultural Landscape)
- potential impacts on biodiversity, conservation areas and wetlands
- publicly available cultural sites and areas of cultural heritage sensitivity identified on the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Register and Information System
- compatibility of farming practices with renewable energy infrastructure
- feedback from communities impacted by generation development
- feedback from communities already impacted by development of VNI West
- in service generation and developer interest in the area
- areas of lower constraint and higher compatibility with renewables in the northwest of the region
- transmission network capacity
- other land uses and natural resources
- regional development opportunities.

We are committed to having ongoing conversations with Barengi Gadjin Land Council and Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation to incorporate further cultural heritage information into REZ development and subsequent VTPs, in alignment with the principle of self-determination.

Figure 14 shows a map of the proposed Western REZ, including some of the significant land use and landscape values that influenced its location, size and shape. The identified land use and landscape values in the region are a sub-set only and are not exhaustive of the values present.

Figure 14: Proposed Western REZ



Key land use and landscape values

1. **Biodiversity/community:** Big Desert State Forest
2. **Biodiversity/cultural:** Multiple parks, reserves and wetlands, including protected biodiversity areas, home to native flora and fauna
3. **Cultural/biodiversity/community:** Mount Arapiles (Dyurrite Cultural Landscape) – significant landscape with high cultural, biodiversity and tourism values for the region
4. **Biodiversity/cultural:** Lake Hindmarsh and surrounding areas of sensitivity
5. **Biodiversity:** Lake Albacutya Ramsar-listed wetland
6. **Biodiversity/community:** Little Desert National Park
7. **Biodiversity/cultural:** Wimmera River and surrounding areas of sensitivity
8. **Biodiversity/cultural/community:** Wyperfeld National Park
9. **Mining:** Heavy mineral sands deposits
10. **Biodiversity:** Protected biodiversity area
11. **Mining:** Mining tenement and mineral sands deposits
12. **Biodiversity/cultural:** Yarriambiack Creek and surrounding areas of sensitivity
13. **Biodiversity:** Barrabool Flora and Fauna Reserve and Marma State Forest, including protected biodiversity area, home to native flora and fauna
14. **Biodiversity/cultural/community:** The Grampians (Gariwerd Cultural Landscape) National Park – significant landform and landscape with high cultural, community and biodiversity values, including significant viewpoints of the region
15. **Agriculture:** Significant broadacre cropping across this region potential to be compatible with co-locating renewable energy infrastructure in appropriate locations
16. **Mining:** Minerals retention licence
17. **Biodiversity:** Conservation reserves and wetlands, home to native flora and fauna
18. **Mining:** Heavy minerals sands deposits
19. **Mining:** Minerals retention licence
20. **Mining:** Mining licence application and retention licence
21. **Biodiversity/cultural:** Richardson River and surrounding areas of sensitivity
22. **Biodiversity/cultural:** Wimmera River and surrounding areas of sensitivity
23. **Biodiversity/cultural:** Glynwylln State Forest and surrounding remnant bushland and reserves connecting areas to the northeast, west and southwest towards The Grampians (Gariwerd Cultural Landscape) and home to native flora and fauna
24. **Biodiversity/cultural:** Wetlands including Lake Batyo Catyo and surrounding lakes
25. **Biodiversity/cultural:** Lake Buloke and surrounding areas of sensitivity
26. **Flooding risk:** Floodway and land subject to inundation
27. **Biodiversity/cultural:** Wetlands including Lake Cope Cope and Waltons Lakes
28. **Biodiversity/cultural:** Morrl Morrl Nature Conservation Reserve, protected biodiversity area for native flora and fauna
29. **Biodiversity/cultural:** Mount Bolangum and Big Tottington Nature Conservation Reserves, home to native flora and fauna
30. **Biodiversity/cultural:** Pyrenees State Forest and Landsborough Nature Conservation Reserve, home to native flora and fauna
31. **Biodiversity/cultural/community:** Kara Kara National Park

What we heard

Eastern section (formerly the draft proposed Grampians Wimmera REZ)

Feedback from the region focused on the impact of energy infrastructure on agriculture production as well as concerns around key landscapes for cultural, biodiversity and community values. VicGrid heard concerns surrounding the southern portion of the Grampians Wimmera REZ including cumulative impacts of projects seeking to connect into the proposed Bulgana terminal station and the proximity of the REZ to the iconic Grampians National Park (Gariwerd Cultural Landscape).

The community highlighted the biodiversity values of the area, including bird species such as the wedge-tailed eagle. There was feedback about protecting bio-links between nature conservation reserves, national and regional parks and other areas of high conservation value in the region, including the lakes system in Buloke Shire from both a biodiversity and tourism perspective. Local councils raised concerns about flood risk and impact on surface water flows.

The community also raised concerns about competing land use due to additional industrial projects in the area. Community engagement, particularly from Stawell, St Arnaud and Donald, reflects strong concerns about infrastructure development. We recognise the impact of VNI West development and related community opposition. During consultation on the draft VTP, feedback reiterated the community's unwillingness to host renewable energy infrastructure in this eastern section, including concerns around negative experiences with previous development. Community concerns and objections to the REZ were echoed by local councils.

Western section (formerly the draft proposed Wimmera Southern Mallee REZ)

Feedback from the region highlighted the need to minimise the impact of renewable energy development on agricultural land, noting the area includes highly productive soils. There were suggestions that areas in the north-west with more marginal soils would be better suited to infrastructure development and that farmers in the area increasingly used advanced technology giving them the ability to boost productivity with less rain. Concerns were raised about the impact of renewable energy infrastructure on use of these technologies. Negative experiences with previous and planned generation and transmission development were often raised. There was also some interest in better understanding how renewable energy and transmission development could bring economic and social benefits to the region.

Local councils raised concerns about potential impacts on Horsham Airport's expansion plans, and the importance of protecting the surrounding flight descending zone. Local councils also echoed community concerns about protecting agricultural land and potential impacts on precision farming technology.

Feedback on the draft VTP provided further context. Concerns were raised about the cumulative impact of overdevelopment and further calls to avoid impacts to agricultural land. There was also feedback about the community divisions caused by renewable energy development.

There were some calls from both community and renewable energy developers to increase both the size and capacity of this section of the REZ. In particular, feedback highlighted the desire to locate renewable energy development further north to move away from areas and landscapes with significant environmental, cultural and community values further south, aligned to areas with strong generator interest.

For community members this was framed as a chance for more landholders to benefit from hosting infrastructure. While developers were calling for an increase to better reflect capacity and current pipeline projects. There was significant feedback from industry that the modelled renewable generation capacity published in the draft VTP, was insufficient to meet future energy demand and that more flexibility is required to allow for a variety of contingencies.

What we did

Eastern section (formerly the draft proposed Grampians Wimmera REZ)

When the proposed eastern section of the Western REZ was designed, considerations included sensitive landscapes and landforms with high cultural, biodiversity and community significance including The Grampians (Gariwerd Cultural Landscape), national and state parks including Kara Kara National Park and natural conservation reserves around Stawell, Avoca and St Arnaud (east of VNI West), and Lake Buloke. The proposed REZ also considers sensitive land uses and landscapes around the Bulgana terminal station, including areas along the Wimmera River and to the south-east. While this south-east area of the REZ focuses on including the connection point of VNI West and WRL, it is an area with sensitive land use and landscape values and existing development, which will require further consideration during REZ and project design to minimise impacts. The north-west edge of the proposed REZ is shaped to limit impacts to strategic mineral sands resource areas.

The proposed REZ runs north along the proposed VNI West route with optionality for future generation projects utilising the planned network capacity on this line. The northern end of the REZ seeks to avoid major wetlands to the north, and sensitive parks and reserves to the east. The north-west boundary is shaped to limit impacts and land use conflicts with strategic mineral sands resource areas.

At the northern end of this section, there are some sensitive wetlands recognised for their biodiversity value. These areas will need to be carefully managed in planning for generation. Further flood studies and mapping will also be required and additional planning approvals at a project level will also help to address these issues.

There were no changes to the footprint of this eastern section of the REZ as a result of the consultation on the draft VTP. While this section is designed to capitalise on strong wind resource, access to planned transmission capacity at the Bulgana terminal station and generator interest, we have heard, and continue to hear, the depth of community feedback and concerns about the suitability of renewable energy development in this region. In particular, VicGrid expects further changes will be needed to this REZ shape to address concerns about proximity to the iconic Grampians National Park (Gariwerd Cultural Landscape) and will continue to assess this area and seek further feedback in relation to its suitability for hosting renewable energy development.

VicGrid will continue to work with local communities, Traditional Owners and industry to explore these issues further, including refining the design of the REZ and managing ongoing development to minimise impacts and support local communities.

What we did

Western section (formerly the draft proposed Wimmera Southern Mallee REZ)

When the western section of the proposed Western REZ was originally designed, efforts were made to balance many factors including community feedback, opportunity to harness the area's strong wind resource, developer interest, opportunity to co-locate infrastructure with existing farming practices and proximity to the 220 kV line. The western section of this proposed REZ predominantly contains broadacre agricultural land. Engagement with agricultural groups and peak bodies so far has suggested broadacre dryland cropping operations have more potential to be compatible with co-locating renewable energy infrastructure. However, further work through project planning stages will be required to understand issues related to precision farming technology.

Proximity to Horsham Airport and other aviation activities means wind projects will need to consider and propose mitigations to potential aviation impacts in the planning stage. VicGrid will continue to work with stakeholders on development of the proposed REZ.

Industry feedback on the draft VTP called for the size of REZs to increase to enable more participation from project developers while continuing to support investment in Victoria. As a result, there has been an overall increase in REZ footprints. Other REZs saw modest expansions, however, this western section of the proposed Western REZ has seen the largest increase in size because further land use assessments identified relatively few constraints when compared to other areas of the state and strong developer interest. As a result of feedback, the REZ was expanded and shifted further northeast, enabling more projects to harness the strong wind resource in the area and proximity to transmission and allowing more flexibility within the proposed REZ to host renewable energy generation projects. However, although the expansion of this section of the proposed REZ has largely avoided areas of high biodiversity, cultural and community values, more farmland is now included which we know will be of concern to some community members and landholders. Research has shown that dryland broadacre cropping and grazing show the highest compatibility with renewable energy infrastructure. It should also be noted, individual landholders can choose whether or not to host renewable energy generation projects such as wind turbines or solar panels.

We acknowledge that the expanded area of the western section of the REZ is new and was not consulted on during the draft 2025 VTP process. We will seek feedback on this area during the REZ declaration process, when there will be a further opportunity to refine the REZ boundaries.

Why the REZs were combined

The Grampians Wimmera and Wimmera Southern Mallee REZ have been brought together in one combined area to allow more choice about where projects can be located. This helps to avoid putting too much pressure on any one place and allows sharing of access arrangements to the grid. This provides all participants more flexibility in where they connect and makes better use of transmission infrastructure. For communities this means a more balanced and strategic approach to how and where projects are delivered.

During the REZ declaration process, there will be a further opportunity to refine the REZ boundaries including with further feedback from communities, Traditional Owners, industry and local stakeholders.

North West

The proposed North West REZ has wind and solar resources and provides access to existing and planned transmission network capacity. It is in an area with rivers, floodplains and dry landscapes, with broadacre dryland agriculture in its north-west section and irrigated farming in the east. It sits within the RAP boundaries of Wamba Wemba Aboriginal Corporation, Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation and across areas of Country to the east that do not have a formally recognised Traditional Owner group. Wetlands, rivers, lakes and national parks provide habitat for important species and have cultural and social value for Traditional Owners and local communities.

The proposed REZ is located south of Swan Hill and Kerang, following the natural shape of Victoria's border. It includes parts of the Swan Hill, Gannawarra, Loddon and Buloke local government areas and is transversed by the Loddon and Avoca Rivers. It also includes part of the corridor for the new VNI West transmission line and part of the existing 220 kV Kerang to Wemen line. These transmission lines, the existing terminal station at Kerang and the proposed VNI West terminal station at Tragowel provide an opportunity to coordinate project connections into the grid.

As a result of feedback on the draft VTP, a minor extension of the proposed REZ has been made running south along VNI West, providing additional area and optionality for future renewable energy projects with access to the planned 500 kV network.

We considered many factors when identifying and developing the shape of the proposed REZ

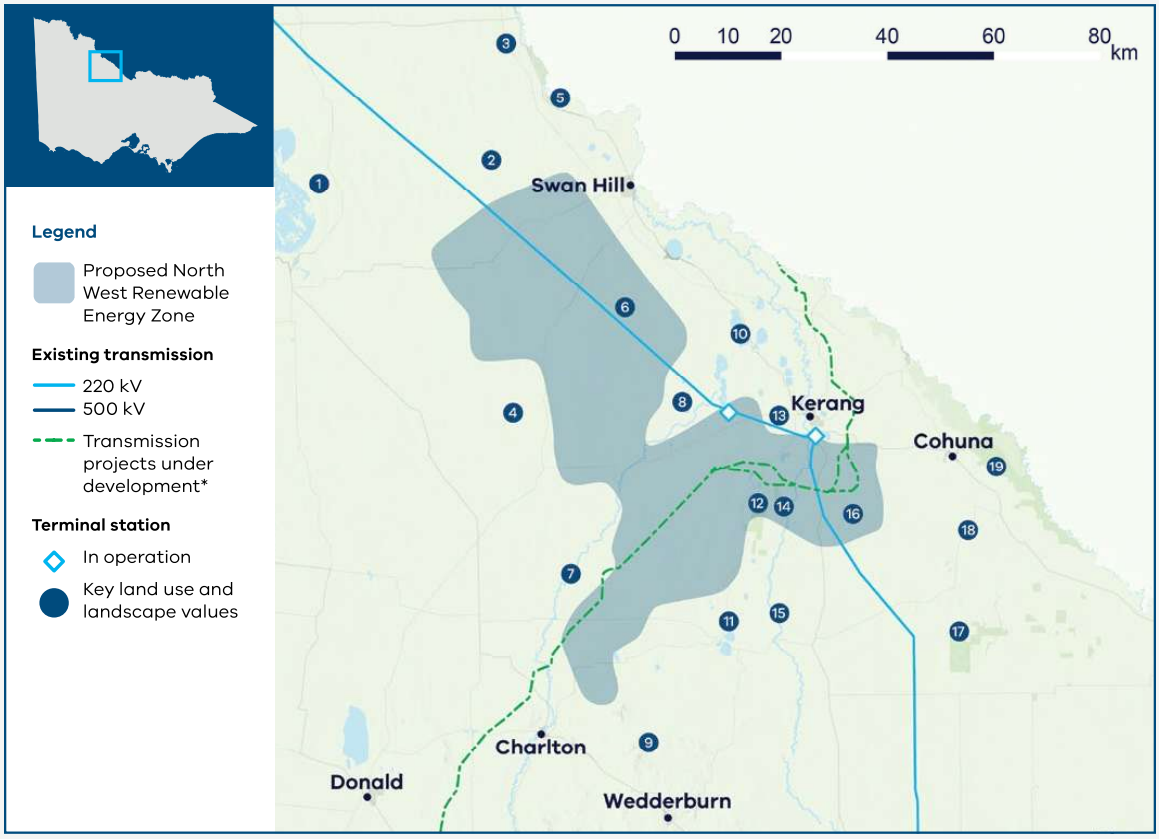
In addition to the overarching factors outlined in Table 7, we considered regional and local factors and engagement feedback to help identify and develop the REZ shape. These factors included but were not limited to:

- the environment and biodiversity
- publicly available cultural sites and areas of cultural heritage sensitivity identified on the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Register and Information System
- transmission network capacity
- the region's solar and wind resources
- in service renewables projects close to the existing terminal stations at Kerang and Tragowel
- the compatibility of different farming practices with renewable energy infrastructure
- other land uses and natural resources
- regional development opportunities.

We are committed to having ongoing conversations with Wamba Wemba Aboriginal Corporation, DJAARA and affected Traditional Owners to incorporate further cultural heritage information into REZ development and subsequent VTPs, in alignment with the principle of self-determination.

Figure 15 shows a map of the proposed North West REZ, including some of the significant land use and landscape values that influenced its location, size and shape. The identified land use and landscape values in the region are a sub-set only and are not exhaustive of the values present.

Figure 15: Proposed North West REZ



Key land use and landscape values

1 **Biodiversity/cultural/community:** Lake Tyrrell and surrounding sensitive landscape

2 **Mining:** Minerals retention licence

3 **Agriculture:** High agricultural productivity area with irrigated horticulture, dairy and cropping along the Murray River

4 **Biodiversity/cultural:** Lalbert Lake, Lalbert Creek and surrounding areas of sensitivity

5 **Biodiversity/cultural/community:** Murray River and surrounding sensitive landscapes

6 **Biodiversity/cultural:** Avoca River and surrounding areas of sensitivity

7 **Mining:** Mining licence applications and retention licence

8 **Biodiversity:** Protected biodiversity area for native flora and fauna

9 **Biodiversity/cultural:** Wychitella Nature Conservation Reserve, home to native flora and fauna

10 **Biodiversity:** Kerang Lakes Ramsar-listed wetlands

11 **Biodiversity/cultural:** Wetlands and parks surrounding Boort

12 **Biodiversity/cultural:** Leaghur State Park and Meran Lakes Complex, protected biodiversity area for native flora and fauna

13 **Biodiversity:** Protected biodiversity area for native flora and fauna

14 **Flooding risk:** Floodplains across the Loddon River catchment area

15 **Biodiversity/cultural:** Loddon River and surrounding areas of sensitivity

16 **Agriculture:** High agricultural productivity area with irrigated horticulture, dairy and cropping within the Goulburn Murray Irrigation District

17 **Biodiversity/cultural/community:** Terrick Terrick National Park

18 **Biodiversity/cultural:** Wetlands and waterways with surrounding areas of sensitivity, including protected biodiversity areas

19 **Biodiversity/cultural/community:** Gunbower National Park and surrounding sensitive parks and wetlands (swamps)

* The map shows transmission projects under development including transmission projects defined as Committed and Anticipated or Actionable under the Australian Energy Market Operator's 2024 Integrated System Plan. This map displays the proposed alignment for Victoria – New South Wales Interconnector West (VNI West).

What we heard

Feedback in this region focused on the importance of protecting agricultural land and other land uses, and concern over the local impacts associated with hosting infrastructure to supply power to urban areas. Community members raised concerns about potential impacts of widespread uncoordinated development and called for more transparency and consultation in planning processes. Community members also focused on the development of the VNI West project and its contribution to cumulative impacts for local communities. Feedback from the area near Birchip expressed strong opposition to hosting renewable energy infrastructure.

Feedback about biodiversity focused on protecting significant wetlands across the region including habitat for migratory species and the wedge-tailed eagle.

Local governments voiced some support for the regional development opportunities associated with the energy transition but stressed the importance of recognising the value of irrigated agricultural land.

During feedback on the draft VTP, we heard concerns about Lake Meran and Leaghur State Forest. Some residents outside the REZ advocated to be included due to regional economic benefits. There was some support to extend the REZ north of Kerang and calls from developers, landholders and LGAs to increase the capacity of the REZ to accommodate pipeline projects. This included a request from Mildura Rural City Council to be included in a REZ.

What we did

We considered agricultural land uses when shaping the draft proposed REZ, including areas of irrigated farmland along the Murray River and near Tragowel and Kerang terminal stations. Engagement with agriculture industry stakeholders identified some areas of irrigated farmland as less compatible with renewable energy infrastructure, and these were taken into account.

We also considered rivers, lakes, wetland systems, parks and reserves, particularly near the Murray River, aiming to protect sites such as Koorangie Wildlife Reserve and Korrak Korrak Nature Conservation Reserve. These areas include high cultural and biodiversity values and support regional and local tourism. Some wetlands and parks near Kerang fall within the proposed REZ, and will need to be carefully considered during REZ and project design.

Community feedback about the importance of consultation and calls for a more coordinated approach to development are informing our approach to new network access arrangements, and will continue to shape decisions throughout REZ declaration and design.

South of Swan Hill, a limited area of mineral sands deposits is also within the proposed REZ, with a number of mining projects currently under development.

While there is strong developer interest and resource potential outside of the proposed REZ, this was considered against community feedback, land use and biodiversity concerns to limit the overall footprint of the REZ for the 2025 VTP. The proposed REZ seeks to balance these factors and is designed to accommodate new renewable generation near existing transmission infrastructure and allow coordinated connections into the network at Tragowel through the 500 kV line. Several planned projects fall within the draft proposed REZ boundary.

In response to feedback on the draft VTP that greater flexibility is required in REZ design and capacity, further assessment was undertaken to consider options to adjust the REZ boundaries to accommodate constraints and identify potential areas for expansion for future investment. Given the various land use constraints surrounding the North West REZ and the need for further investigations to understand the suitability of those areas, changes to the REZ were limited to a small expansion south-west along the VNI West corridor, providing greater optionality for future generation projects to connect into VNI West. Areas of the REZ have not been removed at this stage of the process, given the small size and intricate shape of the proposed REZ and the need to ensure sufficient space for proposed projects in the REZ.

Moreover, it is acknowledged that there are still several rivers, lakes, wetland systems, parks and reserves within this REZ all of which will require careful consideration when considering project location and design.

Requests from Mildura City Council will continue to be considered in the 2027 VTP including available options to upgrade the transmission network to make scalable investment in this area feasible.

During the REZ declaration process, there will be a further opportunity to refine the REZ boundaries including with further feedback from communities, Traditional Owners, industry and local stakeholders.

Central North

The proposed Central North REZ is in a location with diverse solar and wind resource that can provide flexibility in supporting Victoria's overall energy mix. The area includes several major rivers, waterways, regionally important wetlands and lakes, and farmland. The solar resource is strong across the north of the region while wind resource tends to be higher further north-west.

The proposed REZ has been split into 2 sections in response to feedback about potential impacts on biodiversity and farmland and generator interest elsewhere in the region.

While the sections are separate, they are both considered to be part of the proposed Central North REZ.

The western section is located between Bendigo and Shepparton, while the eastern section is between Shepparton and Glenrowan.

The western section sits within the RAP boundaries of Yorta Yorta Nation Aboriginal Corporation and Taungurung Land and Waters Council. The eastern section sits within the RAP boundaries of Yorta Yorta Nation Aboriginal Corporation.

The western section of the proposed REZ is narrow and runs along the 220kV transmission line from Fosterville to Waranga Shores, including areas near Colbinabbin. It includes parts of the Campaspe local government area and small sections of the REZ also sit within the Shepparton and Bendigo local government areas.

The eastern section of the proposed REZ is also narrow, running along the 220kV transmission line from Pine Lodge east of Shepparton (avoiding irrigated farmland in the Goulburn Muray Irrigation District) to Benalla. It includes parts of the Shepparton and Benalla local government areas.

The existing 220 kV transmission line from Fosterville to Glenrowan provides potential for coordinated connections for future generation.

Agricultural production sustains the regional economy and communities, and the proposed REZ includes some dairy and cropping farmland, and vineyards.

The proposed REZ minimises overlap with the Goulburn Muray Irrigation District and avoids the most highly productive areas of the irrigation district. There are a number of sensitive wetlands, waterways and parks nearby or inside the Central North REZ that will require further consideration by individual project proponents.

We considered many factors when identifying and refining the shape of the proposed REZ

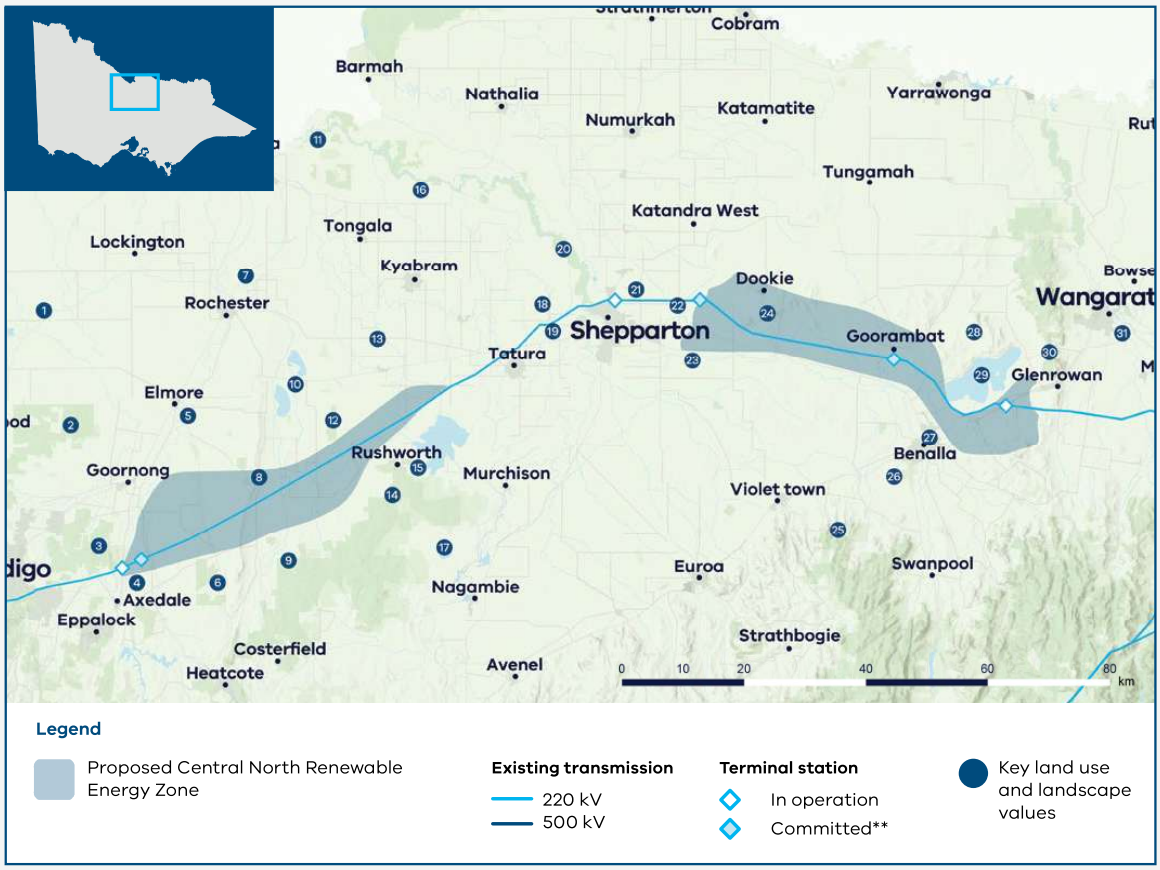
In addition to the overarching factors outlined in Table 7, we considered regional and local factors and engagement feedback to help identify and refine the REZ shape. These factors included but were not limited to:

- the importance of irrigated farmland and compatibility of farming practices with renewable energy infrastructure
- national and state parks and conservation reserves south west towards Bendigo and south east towards Heathcote/Rushworth
- significant cultural and biodiversity values in the Corop Wetlands Cultural Waterscape, as well as identified brolga flocking areas around the Corop Wetlands complex
- areas of high cultural, ecological and community significance near major rivers
- in service generation and developer interest in the area, particularly along the existing transmission network
- regional economic development opportunities
- publicly available cultural sites and areas of cultural heritage sensitivity identified on the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Register and Information System
- the potential of local wind resources to allow for diversity within Victoria's generation mix.

We are committed to having ongoing conversations with Yorta Yorta Nation Aboriginal Corporation and Taungurung Land and Waters Council to incorporate further cultural heritage information into REZ development and subsequent VTPs, in alignment with the principle of self-determination.

Figure 16 shows a map of the proposed Central North REZ, including some of the significant land use and landscape values that influenced its location, size and shape. The identified land use and landscape values in the region are a sub-set only and are not exhaustive of the values present.

Figure 16: Proposed Central North REZ



** The map shows committed terminal stations including new terminal stations on the Victorian Declared Shared Network that are proposed to be operational in the coming years, as identified by AEMO Victorian Planning in its Terminal Stations in Victoria report dated 2 September 2024.

Key land use and landscape values

1 **Flooding risk:** Floodplain and land subject to inundation

2 **Biodiversity/cultural/community:** Greater Bendigo National Park and protected biodiversity areas

3 **Biodiversity:** Mount Sugarloaf Nature Conservation Reserve and surrounding parks and reserves, home to native flora and fauna

4 **Mining:** Active mine sites and Extractive Industry Interest Areas

5 **Biodiversity/cultural:** Campaspe River and surrounding areas of sensitivity

6 **Biodiversity:** Parks, reserves and state forests, home to native flora and fauna

7 **Flooding risk:** Floodplain and land subject to inundation

8 **Biodiversity/cultural/community:** Corop Wetlands Cultural Waterscape, connecting significant waterways, wetlands and landscapes including the Corop wetlands complex in the north, extending south east to Reedy Lake and the forested hills around Rushworth and Whroo, and including the entire Mount Camel Range to the west

9 **Biodiversity/cultural/community:** Heathcote Graytown National Park and surrounding parks, reserves and state forests, including protected biodiversity areas for native flora and fauna

10 **Biodiversity/cultural:** Corop wetlands complex including Lake Cooper, Greens Lake, Gaynor Swamp, Wallenjoe Swamp, Mansfield Swamp and surrounding parks and reserves

11 **Biodiversity/cultural:** Murray River and surrounding sensitive landscapes

12 **Biodiversity:** One Tree Swamp and Two Tree Swamp Nature Conservation Reserves, including biodiversity protected areas

13 **Agriculture:** Agricultural productivity area within the Goulburn Murray Irrigation District, particularly irrigated dairy and cropping

14 **Biodiversity/cultural/community:** Corop Wetlands Cultural Waterscape, see value 8 for full description of this waterscape

15 **Biodiversity/cultural/community:** Waranga Basin and parks, reserves and state forests around Rushworth and Whroo

16 **Biodiversity/cultural:** Goulburn River and surrounding areas of sensitivity

17 **Biodiversity/cultural/community:** Reedy Lake Nagambie Wildlife Reserve

18 **Community:** Area of higher aggregated dwelling density around Shepparton

19 **Agriculture:** Agricultural productivity area within the Goulburn Murray Irrigation District, particularly irrigated dairy and cropping

20 **Biodiversity/cultural/community:** Lower Goulburn National Park and surrounding landscapes, including biodiversity protected areas

21 **Agriculture:** Irrigated agriculture within the Goulburn Murray Irrigation District

22 **Flooding risk:** Floodplain and land subject to inundation

23 **Biodiversity/cultural:** Broken River and surrounding areas of sensitivity

24 **Biodiversity/cultural/community:** Mount Major

25 **Biodiversity/cultural:** Strathbogie State Forest, home to native flora and fauna

26 **Biodiversity/cultural/community:** Reef Hills State Park including protected biodiversity area for native flora and fauna

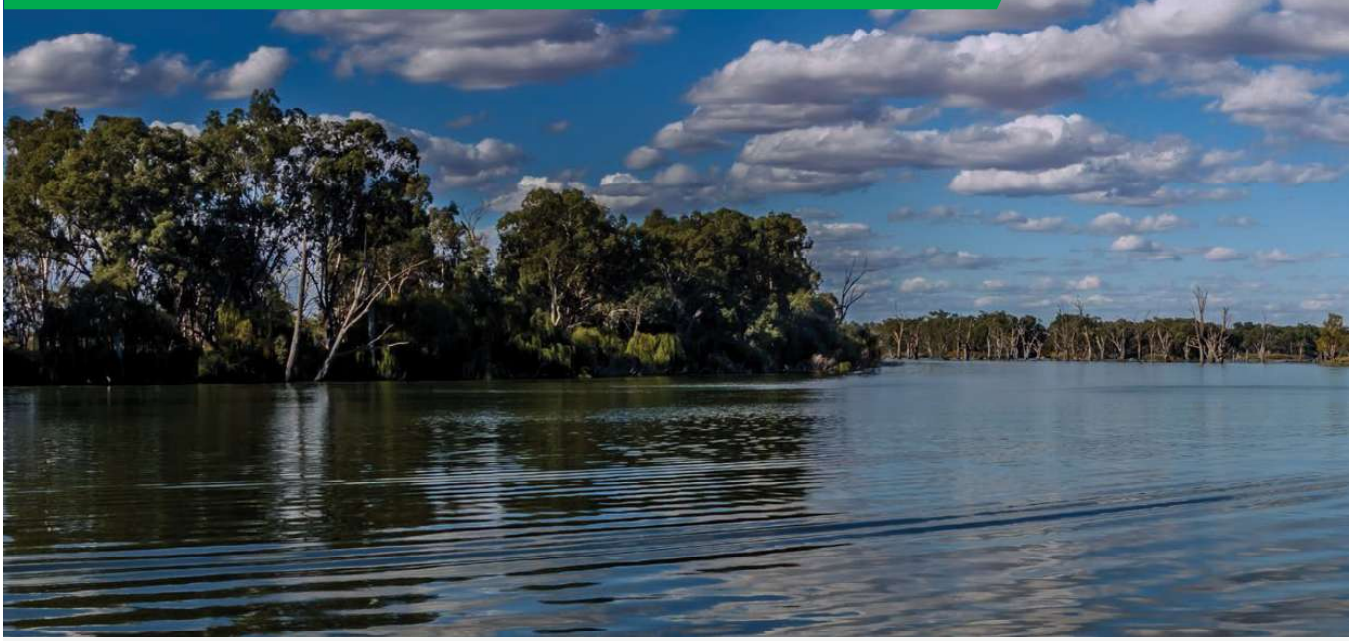
27 **Community:** Area of higher aggregated dwelling density around Benalla

28 **Biodiversity:** Mount Meg Nature Conservation Reserve, home to native flora and fauna

29 **Biodiversity/Cultural:** Winton Wetlands and surrounding areas of sensitivity, protected area and home to native flora and fauna

30 **Biodiversity/cultural/community:** Warby-Ovens National Park

31 **Biodiversity/cultural:** Ovens River and King River, and surrounding areas of sensitivity



What we heard

Feedback from this region focused heavily on minimising impacts on agriculture and land use, as well as protecting the natural environment and biodiversity, with many significant wetlands, waterways and parks across the region. Concerns were also raised about flooding, and the impact new infrastructure might have during future flood events.

Local government feedback stressed that the major concern in the region is protecting the irrigation district and water security. Engagement with agriculture sector stakeholders found that farmland across irrigation districts had less opportunity to co-locate wind and solar infrastructure due to the complexity and intensity of operations. However, it was suggested that potential projects in these areas could be considered on a case by case basis. Feedback was also received about areas of high rural dwelling density and projected growth areas. There was support from councils for the regional economic benefits that increased investment in renewable energy infrastructure could bring.

We also considered the positive regional development opportunities for the region when designing the proposed REZ location. In particular, we considered irrigated farmland in the Goulburn Murray Irrigation District. The district contains an extensive network of irrigation channels that supply water to farmers. We sought to avoid overlap with this irrigation district where possible.

During engagement on the draft VTP we heard further concerns about the impact to agriculture and flood risk of new renewable energy projects. We heard about biodiversity concerns, particularly around Lake Cooper, the Mount Camel Range, Gaynor Swamp and One/Two Tree Swamp as part of the Corop wetlands, which include areas of brolga habitat and other species. Additional data identified significant brolga flocking grounds within the draft proposed REZ, which provide restrictions on the planning of new renewable energy infrastructure.

There were also calls to expand or relocate the REZ towards Benalla and Glenrowan, an area with multiple solar projects in development and access to the existing transmission network.

What we did

Due to the complex land use constraints inside the original draft proposed REZ, coupled with limited developer interest, there have been some substantial changes to the Central North REZ.

A large portion of the draft proposed REZ to the north and northwest has been removed, consolidating the proposed REZ to the area along the 220kV line, minimising the overlap with areas of high biodiversity and cultural values as well as the overlap of the REZ with irrigated agriculture and areas of higher flooding risk. These changes to the north sections of the proposed Central North REZ recognise the uncertainties of development in this area, particularly for wind, and the need for further investigation and engagement through the implementation of the 2025 VTP and future planning in subsequent VTPs.

To replace the section removed, an eastern section of the REZ has been added, running from the east of Shepparton towards Benalla and Glenrowan, picking up Dookie and Goorambat. This new section responds to calls from industry and community to consider the high solar interest in the area towards Glenrowan, with many projects well progressed, and access to existing transmission infrastructure.

We acknowledge that the eastern section of the REZ is new and was not consulted on during the draft 2025 VTP process. We will seek feedback on this area during the REZ declaration process, when there will be a further opportunity to refine the REZ boundaries.

Gippsland

The proposed Gippsland REZ is in an area of the Latrobe Valley with significant transmission network capacity and good wind resources. Its footprint includes agricultural land and forestry. It sits within the RAP boundaries of the Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation. The existing transmission network capacity was built to connect coal-fired power in the valley. Growing interest has been seen in wind and solar projects in Latrobe and Wellington Shires.

The proposed Gippsland REZ for onshore renewable generation stretches from Morwell in the west towards Sale in the east. It will cover parts of the the Wellington, LaTrobe, Baw Baw and South Gippsland local government areas. The proposed location provides potential for coordinated connections into the 500 kV transmission network around Loy Yang. It is designed to use existing capacity in the transmission network to support new onshore generation.

The wider surrounding region includes farmland, high biodiversity values, areas of natural beauty and significance, and key tourism destinations. The region has one of the state's most valuable dairy-farming areas with dairy farms across the Latrobe Valley and the Macalister Irrigation District around Maffra. Horticulture is also an important land use.

Australia's first declared offshore wind area is located off the coast of Gippsland and VicGrid is coordinating development of the transmission that will bring offshore wind energy from the coast to the Latrobe Valley. Part of the proposed Gippsland REZ overlaps with the proposed offshore wind transmission infrastructure. The detailed design of the access scheme and Grid Impact Assessment frameworks is being developed and will be released in our Access and Connections Consultation Paper and draft Grid Impact Assessment (GIA) Guidelines for consultation (see Section 9.2 for more details). However, it is currently anticipated that new onshore generation in the REZ will connect to existing connection hubs in the Latrobe Valley rather than connecting to the new offshore wind transmission line. For more information on REZ access and connection arrangements, see Section 9.2.

We considered many factors when identifying the proposed REZ

In addition to the overarching factors outlined in Table 7, we carefully considered regional and local factors and engagement feedback to help identify and refine the REZ shape. These factors included but were not limited to:

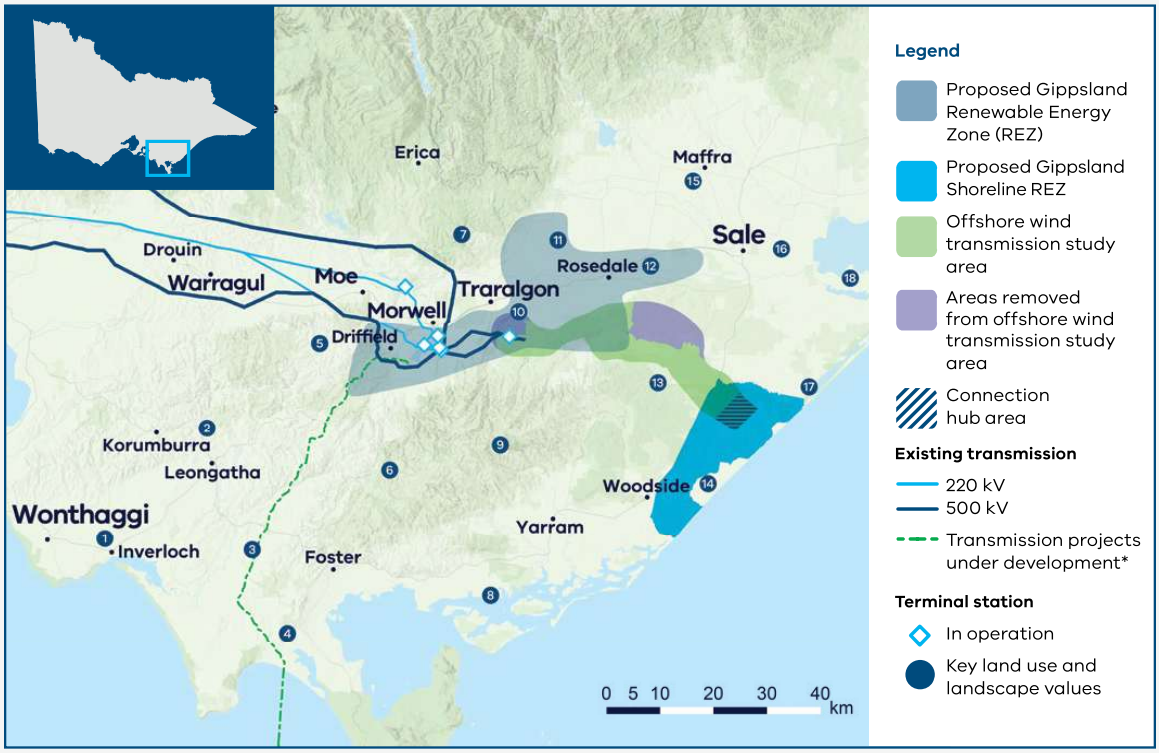
- biodiversity and the natural environment
- farmland, particularly local dairy production, and compatibility of farming practices with renewable energy infrastructure
- the Macalister Irrigation District
- national and state parks
- habitat for important species
- areas of high cultural, ecological and community significance nearer the coast
- wind and solar generation projects currently proposed in Gippsland
- publicly available cultural sites and areas of cultural heritage sensitivity identified on the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Register and Information System
- offshore wind development
- transmission network capacity
- supporting the region's workforce as coal-fired power closes.

We are committed to having ongoing conversations with Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation to incorporate further cultural heritage information into REZ development and subsequent VTPs, in alignment with the principle of self-determination.

A separate Gippsland Shoreline REZ is being proposed to facilitate connection of offshore wind generation to Victoria's transmission network. Onshore generation is not intended to be hosted in this area. More information on the proposed Gippsland Shoreline REZ is in Section 7.

Figure 17 shows a map of the proposed Gippsland REZ, including some of the significant land use and landscape values that influenced its location, size and shape. The identified land use and landscape values in the region are a sub-set only and are not exhaustive of the values present.

Figure 17: Proposed Gippsland REZ



Key land use and landscape values

1 **Community:** Bass Coast Distinctive Area Landscape and wind farm prohibition area (Victorian Planning Provisions)

2 **Community:** Area of higher aggregated dwelling density in west and southwest Gippsland

3 **Agriculture:** Medium to high productivity agriculture across southwest Gippsland, particularly dairy farming

4 **Biodiversity/cultural/community:** Wilsons Promontory and surrounding significant and sensitive landscape

5 **Agriculture**: High agricultural productivity area and lower compatibility with renewables around Thorpdale, particularly horticulture farming

6 **Land use:** Restricted** and non-restricted use plantation land across the Strzelecki ranges and broader region

7 **Biodiversity:** State parks and forests, home to native flora and fauna

8 **Biodiversity:** Corner Inlet Ramsar-listed wetlands

9 **Biodiversity/cultural/community:** Strzelecki Ranges including Tarra-Bulga National Park and surrounding parks and forests, home to native flora and fauna

10 **Mining:** Active mine site

11 **Agriculture:** Medium to high agricultural productivity area adjacent to the Macalister Irrigation District

12 **Biodiversity/cultural:** Latrobe River and surrounding areas of sensitivity

13 **Biodiversity/cultural:** Mullungdung State Forest and Stradbroke Flora and Fauna Reserve, home to native flora and fauna

14 **Biodiversity/cultural:** Coastal wetlands and protected biodiversity area for native flora and fauna

15 **Agriculture:** High agricultural productivity area within the Macalister Irrigation District, including dairy farming

16 **Land use:** Height restrictions associated with the Royal Australian Air Force base

17 **Biodiversity/cultural:** Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park and Ramsar-listed wetlands

18 **Biodiversity/cultural:** Lake Wellington and surrounding sensitive areas

* The map shows transmission projects under development including transmission projects defined as Committed and Anticipated or Actionable under the Australian Energy Market Operator's 2024 Integrated System Plan. This map displays the proposed alignment for Marinus Link.

**Restricted plantation land refers to plantations subject to the *Victorian Plantations Corporation Act 1993* (Vic) represent areas of existing productive land use for growing large-scale crops with existing legislative restrictions around co-location with other land uses such as renewable energy generation.

What we heard

Feedback focused on the importance of protecting biodiversity and the natural environment, followed by minimising impacts on agriculture and land use. Feedback reflected strong regional pride in the natural beauty of the area and the rich farming tradition. Concerns included protecting the habitat of the giant Gippsland earthworm, Wilsons Promontory, and important agricultural areas including dairy farms in South and West Gippsland, along the coast and in the Macalister Irrigation District south of the Great Dividing Range.

Community members and local governments asked us to consider South Gippsland's high dwelling density, which adds complexity to developing wind projects. Some feedback focused on personal experiences of stress related to the energy transition, reflecting local impacts of the impending closure of coal-fired power stations, offshore wind development and significant in service and proposed local renewable projects.

Other considerations included using existing transmission infrastructure in the Latrobe Valley to support new renewable generation. Local governments also expressed support for regional development opportunities that renewable energy infrastructure could bring, provided regional concerns were addressed.

There was also feedback from the forestry industry about potential co-location opportunities for wind farms in certain circumstances. In addition, considerations were raised about airspace used by the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) base in East Sale. During engagement on the draft VTP there was far less feedback about impacts on agriculture and land use and biodiversity concerns due to the siting of the proposed REZ. We did again hear about co-location opportunities with plantation land. We also heard a strong preference for underground transmission and concerns about the impact to current infrastructure.

What we did

When originally designing this proposed Gippsland REZ, we considered important agricultural areas, in particular dairy farming areas in the south west and the Macalister Irrigation District when shaping the proposed REZ. Through engagement with agriculture industry stakeholders, we identified dairy as a farming practice that is less compatible with wind and solar infrastructure. Some freehold plantation land is included in the proposed REZ, following feedback.

The size and location of the proposed Gippsland REZ takes into account South Gippsland's high dwelling density and the habitat of the giant earthworm. It has been shaped by significant landscapes including along the Bass Coast, Wilsons Promontory, the Strzelecki ranges and coastal reserves and wetlands.

The proposed REZ's proximity to the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) Base East Sale and other aviation activities means that wind projects will need to consider and propose mitigations to potential aviation impacts in the planning stage. VicGrid will continue to work with the Department of Defence and other stakeholders on development of the draft proposed REZ.

Gippsland has several areas with planning scheme restrictions designed to maintain access to brown coal reserves. A portion of these areas overlap with the proposed REZ and the restrictions will need to be worked through as part of declaring and eventually developing the REZ.

Areas further to the east were also considered due to the potential for regional economic development, but distance from required transmission capacity meant the draft proposed REZ needed to be located closer to existing transmission.

The proposed REZ balances complex land use issues across the region, while also providing coordination with planned transmission capacity and connection points to unlock Victoria's offshore wind potential.

As a result of feedback on the draft proposed Gippsland REZ no changes were made to the proposed zone. Considering the small size of the proposed REZ and existing land use constraints, we considered options to expand the REZ further east and south east, including further use of plantation land. However, these options were not progressed due to complexities with the proximity to the nearby RAAF base and low flying aircraft, as well as biodiversity and cultural heritage constraints with nearby parks. We consider the proposed REZ appropriate given the overall level of offshore and onshore development proposed in Gippsland, with further opportunities to assess onshore generation in future VTPs.

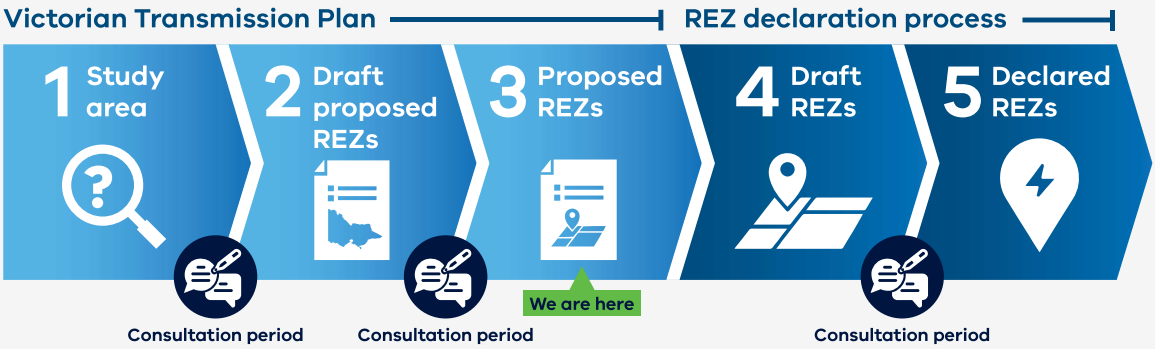
During the REZ declaration process, there will be a further opportunity to refine the REZ boundaries including with further feedback from communities, Traditional Owners, industry and local stakeholders.

6.3 Next steps for finalising the renewable energy zones

The next step after the release of the 2025 VTP is to begin the formal REZ declaration process, which will provide further opportunity for engagement with communities and industry.

The REZ declaration process

Now that the 2025 VTP has been published, the Minister for Energy and Resources can consider whether to proceed with formal declaration of a proposed REZ. The REZ declaration process requires that the Minister make a declaration in a formal order (Order). The Order will set out key information on the REZ to be declared, including a map of the REZ boundaries and the intended transmission hosting capacity within the REZ. As part of this process, a draft of the Order showing the proposed REZ will be placed on public notice for a minimum of 6 weeks, enabling the community and industry to provide any comments and submissions. The Minister must consider any submissions when determining whether the REZ should be declared under an Order.



PART B

7. Planning for offshore wind connections

The 2025 Victorian Transmission Plan (VTP) process takes into account Victoria's targets for offshore wind generation and the planning that is already under way to develop offshore wind in Victoria.

The Australian Government has declared 2 offshore wind areas in Victoria, off the coast of Gippsland and in the Southern Ocean off the coast of Western Victoria. Planning is most advanced in Gippsland and the next step is to set out suitable shoreline locations for offshore wind developers to connect their infrastructure to the grid.

This 2025 VTP includes a proposed Gippsland Shoreline Renewable Energy Zone (REZ) for offshore wind in the South of Gippsland, which is different to the 6 proposed REZs we have identified to host onshore wind and solar generation. It sets out a designated area for offshore wind developers to site their onshore connection infrastructure, rather than for hosting new onshore generation. The wind turbines themselves will be hosted in Commonwealth waters off the coast of Victoria.

7.1 Planning is well under way towards Victoria's offshore wind targets

The Victorian Government has set ambitious offshore wind generation targets of at least 2 GW of generation capacity by 2032, 4 GW by 2035 and 9 GW by 2040.

Work is well under way towards these targets. In July 2024 the Australian Government granted feasibility licences for 12 potential projects in the Gippsland offshore wind declared area, and in February 2025 a feasibility licence was awarded in the Southern Ocean declared area.

VicGrid is responsible for planning the shared transmission infrastructure needed to connect these future projects to the grid. Preparation for a new Gippsland shared transmission line is already under way to support the first 2 GW of offshore wind. This will avoid the 'spaghetti effect' of multiple private transmission lines crossing the landscape, reducing the infrastructure costs that are passed on in consumers' power bills and helping to minimise impacts on the environment.

The shared transmission infrastructure that VicGrid is planning will connect from the Latrobe Valley to a new connection hub near Giffard. Offshore wind generators are responsible for planning the connection of their offshore infrastructure to the connection hub that VicGrid is developing. For more information, see Section 7.2.

Additional transmission infrastructure will be required to accommodate offshore wind generation beyond the first 2 GW of offshore wind capacity in Gippsland. The need for this has been identified as part of the 2025 VTP (see Section 8). Further work will be done to identify the appropriate route for this infrastructure to ensure it is in place to enable achievement of Victoria's offshore wind targets. The VTP also proposes upgrades to transmission lines in the Portland area to be carried out in the 2030s to accommodate offshore wind in the Southern Ocean.

Offshore wind transmission in Gippsland

We are now planning the new transmission infrastructure needed to connect the first 2 GW of offshore wind in Gippsland. Our work to-date has included:

Strategic options assessment

In 2023, we carried out a strategic options assessment to identify and refine the longlist of feasible transmission project options for both Gippsland and the Southern Ocean. The assessment method was informed by consultation feedback and the principles of the Victorian Transmission Investment Framework (VTIF). It considered social, cultural, economic, environmental and technical factors to evaluate project options.

Gippsland transmission study area and refinement

In March 2024, VicGrid published the Offshore Wind Energy Transmission Gippsland Options Assessment Report, which identified the preferred study area and preferred transmission technology for connecting offshore wind energy generated off the coast of Gippsland into Victoria's electricity network.

The Gippsland transmission study area starts approximately 6 km from the coast near Giffard and travels north-west past Stradbroke West to Willung, across to Flynns Creek and then to the Loy Yang Power Station. The study area is about 3 km wide at its narrowest point and up to 12 km at its widest point. The proposed transmission technology is a double circuit 500 kV overhead transmission line.

In December 2024, VicGrid completed preliminary desktop investigations to narrow the study area to areas suitable for further investigations. Areas deemed not suitable to host transmission were ruled out due to a range of factors including the presence of highly sensitive protected species, technical constructability or feasibility challenges.

VicGrid is now working closely with landholders to understand unique features and values of their properties to further refine the study area.

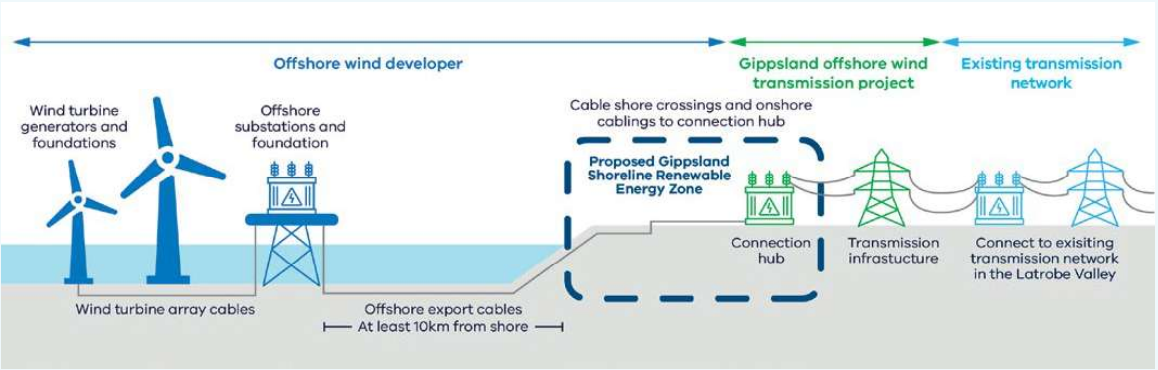
Environmental assessments

In September 2024, the Minister for Planning declared the Gippsland offshore wind transmission project as public works requiring the preparation of an Environment Effects Statement (EES). This process is currently under way and will involve community consultation and an independent panel review to inform the Minister's assessment of the project's environmental effects. The Minister's assessment will then inform decision-making required under other legislation, including the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Cth).

Procurement

We are now seeking a development partner to work alongside VicGrid to design, build and operate the new transmission line. In December 2024, VicGrid released an invitation for Expressions of Interest (EOI) from leading transmission design and delivery providers with a track record of working with host communities. We expect to complete procurement and appoint a development partner in 2026, in time to support the project's design and environmental assessments.

Figure 18: Offshore wind infrastructure in Gippsland



7.2 The proposed Gippsland Shoreline REZ is the next critical step

Offshore wind developers in Gippsland will be required to connect to VicGrid's Giffard connection hub via underground cables to access the shared transmission infrastructure.

While offshore wind developers are responsible for planning of their individual projects, VicGrid is committed to taking a coordination role in the area between the coast and the Giffard connection hub to minimise impacts on coastal communities and landholders. A proposed new Gippsland Shoreline REZ will set out a designated area that enables offshore wind developers to determine suitable routes to the transmission connection hub, while minimising impacts on nearby towns and landscapes.

Establishing the Gippsland Shoreline REZ is also a key step to provide certainty to offshore wind developers on their ability to connect to the transmission network. VicGrid will soon consult on a proposed access scheme for the Gippsland Shoreline REZ. This draft access scheme will set out the intended 2 GW hosting capacity for offshore wind in the Gippsland Shoreline REZ and the process for allocating access to this capacity, along with other requirements. Only offshore wind projects will be eligible to participate in the shoreline REZ.

For more information on REZ access schemes, see Section 9.

7.3 Where is the proposed Gippsland Shoreline REZ?

The proposed Gippsland Shoreline REZ is located in the region's south, near the towns of Woodside and Giffard, and between the coastline and the South Gippsland Highway.

The proposed location of the Gippsland Shoreline REZ has been developed as part of our work to identify a transmission study area and in consultation with prospective offshore wind developers. It takes account of a range of factors, including:

- potential shore crossing locations where offshore wind project export cables will cross the shore
- providing sufficient space for offshore wind developers to plan suitable cable routes to the Giffard connection hub
- avoiding residential areas
- avoiding environmentally and culturally sensitive areas including waterways and waterbodies, areas of high biodiversity value and protected biodiversity value
- minimising major arterial road crossings such as the South Gippsland Highway.

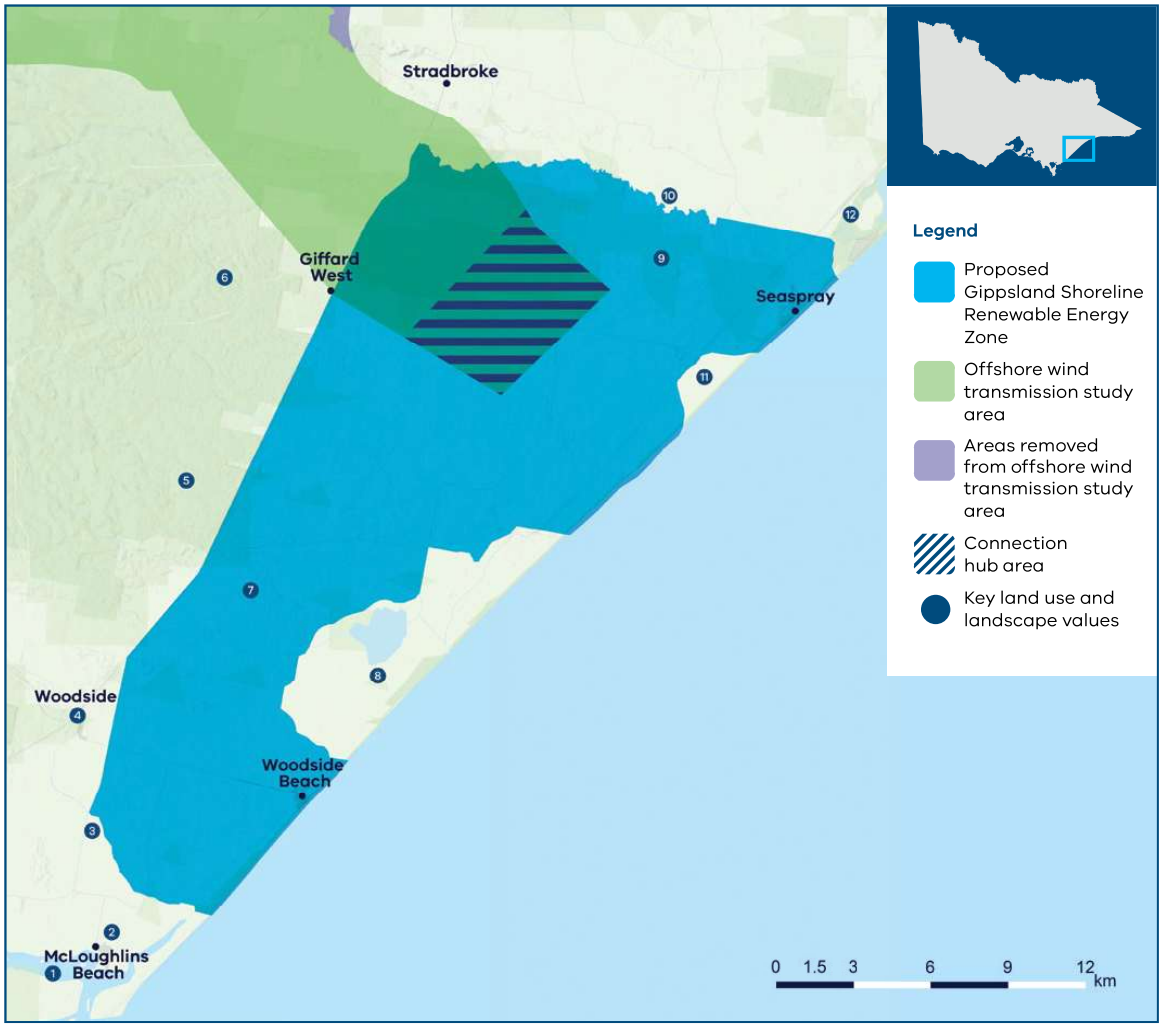
There will be designated areas within the proposed Gippsland Shoreline REZ where offshore wind export cables are allowed to cross the shore.

VicGrid is coordinating further work to identify suitable shore crossing locations for offshore wind projects, which will facilitate greater protection of environmentally and culturally sensitive areas along the coast.

The proposed Gippsland Shoreline REZ sits within the boundaries of the Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation and the Wellington Shire local government area.

The location of the proposed Gippsland Shoreline REZ is illustrated in the map (figure 19).

Figure 19: Proposed Gippsland Shoreline REZ



Key land use and landscape values including REZ boundary considerations

1. **Biodiversity:** Corner Inlet Ramsar-listed wetlands
2. **Community:** McLoughlins Beach residential area
3. **Biodiversity/cultural:** Bruthen Creek
4. **Community:** Woodside town and residential area
5. **Biodiversity/cultural:** Mullungdung Flora and Fauna Reserve, home to native flora and fauna
6. **Biodiversity/cultural:** Mullungdung State Forest and Stradbroke Flora and Fauna Reserve, home to native flora and fauna
7. **Biodiversity:** Protected biodiversity area
8. **Biodiversity/cultural:** Coastal wetlands and protected biodiversity area
9. **Biodiversity:** Area containing high biodiversity values
10. **Biodiversity/cultural:** Merriman creek
11. **Biodiversity/cultural:** Lake Denison wetlands
12. **Biodiversity/cultural:** Gippsland Lakes Coastal Park and Ramsar-listed wetlands

What we heard

During engagement on the draft VTP, the feedback received in relation to the Gippsland Shoreline REZ included:

- Mixed feedback from different stakeholder groups on the size of the Gippsland Shoreline REZ, with some calling for a reduction in the size of the REZ to minimise impacts on community and landholders and others calling for an increase to the REZ to allow greater flexibility for determining onshore cable routes for offshore wind development.
- Requests to ensure the Gippsland Shoreline REZ captured the full extent of feasible shore crossing areas.
- Concerns raised over the management of overlapping onshore cable corridors within the Gippsland Shoreline REZ.
- Concerns over the proximity of the Gippsland Shoreline REZ to key ecological and culturally sensitive sites such as Ramsar wetlands and other coastal reserves.
- Requests to expand the Gippsland Shoreline REZ to include viable onshore wind areas in the Giffard and Darriman areas.

For more detail about feedback in relation to the Gippsland Shoreline REZ, read the Draft 2025 Victorian Transmission Plan Final Engagement Report - What We Heard at **engage.vic.gov.au/victransmissionplan**

What we did

Minor amendments to the boundaries of the Gippsland Shoreline REZ have been made, particularly along the coastline, to ensure all feasible shore crossing areas are contained within the boundaries of the REZ. This provides offshore wind developers with the opportunity to fully explore the range of appropriate potential shore crossing sites.

PART B

8. The optimal development pathway for Victoria

VicGrid has identified the transmission network upgrades that will be needed to support Victoria's energy transition over the next 15 years. We've grouped these investments into work programs and identified when each will be needed to support renewable energy zone (REZ) development and maintain energy security and reliability.

Together, the programs and their timings make up the optimal development pathway.

We developed 3 candidate development pathways, each designed to meet a different scenario of future energy needs. The one that was most robust to future uncertainty and provided greatest net benefit for Victorians was selected as the optimal development pathway. This decision took into account network reliability, keeping costs as low as possible for consumers, and minimising social and environmental impacts. For more information about the 3 scenarios we considered, see Section 2.

8.1 The optimal development pathway

The optimal development pathway sets out 7 programs of transmission investments to be delivered by 2040. These programs are designed to support development of the proposed REZs, taking into account the expected types and locations of new generation and storage projects over the next 15 years.

The proposed programs will increase capacity in important parts of Victoria's transmission network and maintain network security and reliability. They are designed to ensure a smooth transition as coal-fired power stations close and Victoria's electricity demands grow.

The optimal development pathway builds on projects that are already under development or in construction. This includes Western Renewables Link (WRL), Victoria to New South Wales Interconnector West (VNI West), Marinus Link Stage 1 and the transmission infrastructure required for the first 2 GW of offshore wind in Gippsland.

Some of the proposed transmission programs in the VTP are needed urgently to prepare for coal-fired power stations to close and avoid bottlenecks in delivering new generation and storage infrastructure, including new renewable projects supported by the Australian Government's Capacity Investment Scheme. Of the 7 programs, 2 are needed by 2030, 3 are needed by 2035 and 2 are needed by 2040.

The optimal development pathway supports the achievement of the Victorian Government's targets for renewable energy, offshore wind and storage. Two of the transmission programs have been designed to unlock offshore wind in the Southern Ocean and Gippsland declared areas.

Where possible, we prioritised upgrades along existing transmission lines. This minimises impacts on landholders, regional communities and the environment and limits cost impacts on consumer power bills. At the same time, we recognise rebuilding existing transmission infrastructure can have significant impacts on local communities.

The VTP includes 4 new transmission projects across 3 programs: a second radial line and tie in loop in Gippsland to facilitate offshore wind, a new line between Sydenham and Tarrone, a new line between Truganina and Deer Park, and an additional short line between Hazelwood and Yallourn. The remaining projects across the 7 programs range from augmentations within existing terminal stations to significant reconstruction of existing transmission lines. The optimal pathway includes upgrading about 430 km of existing lines and about 380 km of new lines.

Australia's interconnected energy system is undergoing a significant transition. Multiple large, complex and expensive transmission, generation and storage projects are in different stages of development, and timing for completion of these projects may change.

VicGrid recognises that long term plans involve a level of uncertainty, with potential changes in project scope and timeframes. The VTP includes assumptions that proposed projects will proceed as planned but is also flexible to allow for future changes to these projects.

The *National Electricity (Victoria) Act 2025* (NEVA) allows VicGrid to update the VTP if there are significant changes in project delivery and timeframes.

The optimal pathway is designed to meet the energy needs that would occur in scenario 1. It is also robust to the other possible futures considered in scenarios 2 and 3, should future energy needs change. In this regard, the pathway is flexible to changes in future energy demand and transmission programs can be brought forward if the need arises, or deferred. If energy demand increases rapidly, as in scenario 2, we can add 3 additional programs to the optimal pathway to address the need for more generation in the proposed REZs. For more information on how robustness analysis can be used for different scenarios, see Appendix D.

Table 9 describes each of the transmission programs, their timing, and why they are needed. For a full description of the proposed projects in each of the 7 programs, see Appendix A.

Investments to support system strength

System strength is a characteristic of an electric power system that ensures stable voltage and operation during faults or disturbances, to keep generators online and protect the system from events such as lightning strikes.

System strength will be critical in the future as Victoria transitions to more renewable generation. Without coal-fired generation, system strength can be provided by other technologies such as synchronous condensers – large rotating machines – to regulate voltage and network stability.

High-level assessments undertaken by VicGrid indicate there may be need for additional investments into system strength statewide and in the Latrobe Valley. There are different regulatory mechanisms to support the delivery of system strength and further analysis will be undertaken to further understand the need and determine the most appropriate regulatory mechanism for their delivery. Additional details on potential investments to support system strength are included in Appendix A.

The 7 priority programs below describe what is needed over and above existing transmission projects that are already under development across Victoria.

Projects already under development

The following projects have been factored in as inputs to the 2025 VTP and are being progressed:

- Marinus Link stage 1
- Victoria to New South Wales Interconnector West (VNI West)
- Western Renewables Link
- Gippsland offshore wind transmission stage 1
- Renewable Energy Zone Development Plan stage 1

Table 9: The 7 priority programs of transmission upgrades

Program	Why it is needed	Proposed year needed by
1 Western Victoria reinforcement program A collection of network augmentations and upgrades of existing infrastructure.	To support connection of onshore wind and solar generation in the proposed Western, Central Highlands and South West REZs and reinforce the network supply to metropolitan Melbourne.	**2028 – 2030**
2 Eastern Victoria reinforcement program A suite of network augmentations and upgrades of existing infrastructure, as well as an additional line between Hazelwood and Yallourn.	To meet increased demand in eastern metropolitan Melbourne, respond to shifting supply from the east of Victoria to the west of Victoria and ensure connection and security of supply from the proposed Gippsland and Central North REZs and the Gippsland offshore wind area.	**2028 – 2030**
3 North West strengthening program Replacement of sections of the existing single circuit transmission with a new high capacity double circuit line.	To support additional generation in the proposed Western and North West REZs and facilitate its transfer to areas of high energy demand.	**2035**
4 South West expansion program A new double circuit 500 kV line and associated works in South West Victoria.	To meet significant demand for high-quality wind generation in Victoria's west, including additional generation in the proposed South West and Central Highlands REZs.	**2033**
5 Gippsland offshore wind transmission stage 2 program A new transmission loop to support offshore wind.	Building on the first Gippsland offshore wind transmission project, this new program is required to connect additional offshore wind generation in the Gippsland offshore wind area to meet Victoria's 2035 and 2040 offshore wind targets.	**2033 – 2038**
6 Latrobe Valley strengthening program New power flow controllers and dynamic load rating devices in the Latrobe Valley.	To allow for easier integration of wind and solar into the grid, manage significant power flows and address network congestion. It supports connection and transfer of generation from the proposed Gippsland REZ and Gippsland offshore wind area.	**2034 – 2035**
7 Offshore wind upgrade Uprating of existing lines from Heywood to Portland.	To connect offshore generation from the Southern Ocean offshore wind area to Portland.	**2038,** or earlier*

*2038, or earlier to align with the timing of offshore development in the Southern Ocean offshore wind area

Why Victoria's transmission network needs to change

The demands on Victoria's transmission network are changing rapidly. We urgently need to modernise our grid to connect new sources of energy supply and keep up with changing patterns of energy consumption across the state. These changing demands are influenced by:

- new supply locations as the energy mix shifts from coal to renewables, including offshore wind
- increasing development of variable renewable energy such as wind and solar, which alters system security and strength requirements
- growth of consumer energy resources (CER) such as rooftop solar, batteries and electric vehicles (EVs), which is contributing to increasing two-way energy flows as well as lower levels of minimum demand
- increasing electricity consumption and peak electricity demand during the energy transition.

What we heard

During engagement on the draft VTP, feedback about transmission planning and the optimal development pathway as a whole included concerns about the impacts of transmission delivery, supply chain constraints, alternative solutions, the delivery timelines and cost estimates. We also received feedback about specific priority programs and the consideration of connection infrastructure and distribution networks.

Industry called for clarity on transmission delivery timelines, especially for projects nearing commercial readiness with delays potentially jeopardising investment certainty and potentially causing supply chain disruption. There were calls to consider alternative plans and potential routes. The view from industry on the cost estimates was that they were too optimistic and there was a desire for greater transparency on costing assumptions. There was some criticism from industry about WRL and VNI West being considered as committed projects. In addition, there was feedback that the draft VTP focused too narrowly on transmission-based REZs, overlooking viable and cost-effective alternatives such as distribution-based REZs, which are framed as delivering faster, lower-cost and more community-aligned outcomes for regional and rural areas.

For more information, read the Draft 2025 Victorian Transmission Plan Final Engagement Report - What We Heard at **engage.vic.gov.au/victransmissionplan**

What we did

VicGrid has refined the transmission programs through further power systems analysis and collaboration with our network partners. We have also undertaken a re-costing and delivery schedule review with input from industry to revise the transmission projects' cost estimates and delivery dates. Section 8.4 contains more detail on revised project cost estimates. The delivery review noted that the supply chain for transmission infrastructure is challenging, resulting from increasing electrification and the energy transition globally. Collaboration with key suppliers will form part of our overall delivery strategy.

Feedback about specific programs will be considered as we undertake detailed project assessments, development and delivery planning. There will be further opportunities for consultation at each stage of this planning process. For more detail, see Section 10.

WRL has a key role to play in securing Victoria's energy future and supporting the transition from coal to renewables. The project is currently going through an Environment Effects Statement (EES) process. VicGrid is working closely with AEMO to support the early delivery of VNI West and the Victorian and Commonwealth Governments have jointly committed to deliver VNI West 2 years ahead of its originally scheduled date. As such, both projects remain as baseline inputs into the 2025 VTP and will continue to be subject to a thorough planning process.

VicGrid has examined feedback about greater integration with the distribution networks and plans to undertake joint planning with the Victorian distribution network in the development of the 2027 VTP. VicGrid is designing a proposed approach to improve coordination of connection infrastructure. Details will be released for feedback in the Access and Connections Consultation Paper. For more information, visit **engage.vic.gov.au/vicgrid**

8.2 Where are the proposed transmission programs?

The proposed transmission programs are located across Victoria, linking proposed REZs and offshore wind areas to demand centres and the greater Melbourne area.

Two of the programs are located primarily in greater Melbourne and the remaining 5 are located primarily in Victoria's regions, with connecting infrastructure in greater Melbourne. For a map of project locations, see Figure 20.

While most programs involve upgrading and rebuilding existing infrastructure, 3 of the programs need new infrastructure that is likely to require new transmission easements to be developed. For new developments, the VTP has identified a need for these projects but has not yet identified a preferred route. VicGrid will consult publicly to determine a study area for these projects before identifying preferred corridors.

Figure 20: The optimal development pathway program map

Legend

- New infrastructure
- New transmission connection point (specific location to be determined through consultation with communities, landholders and First Peoples)
- New transmission line and substation (specific location to be determined through consultation with communities, landholders and First Peoples)
- Upgrades to existing infrastructure
- Works occurring within an existing substation
- Existing substation
- Town location
- Upgrade to existing transmission network
- Existing transmission network
- Transmission projects under development*
- Study area for Gippsland offshore wind transmission stage 1

Victorian Transmission Plan program number**

1 Western Victoria reinforcement program

2 Eastern Victoria reinforcement program

3 North West strengthening program

4 South West expansion program

5 Gippsland offshore wind transmission stage 2 program

6 Latrobe Valley strengthening program

7 Offshore wind upgrade

*This includes transmission projects defined as Committed and Anticipated or Actionable under the Australian Energy Market Operator's 2024 Integrated System Plan. This map displays proposed alignments for Marinus Link, Victoria to New South Wales Interconnector West (VNI West), Western Renewables Link and the Gippsland offshore wind transmission stage 1. The Renewable Energy Zone Development Plan stage 1 project includes several network augmentations that are not included in this map.

** Each program includes multiple transmission projects. See Appendix A for further details about the proposed works included in each program.

8.3 What other options did we consider?

Three candidate development pathways were developed to meet the energy system needs in each of the 3 scenarios. For more information about the 3 scenarios, see Section 7.3 and Appendix B.

This section outlines the candidate pathways designed for scenarios 2 and 3. Where multiple options were available, we evaluated these to ensure the best project was included to address the identified needs. We used the transmission planning considerations outlined below to assess the alternatives and select the project that would be tested as part of the candidate pathway. For more details about projects and their alternatives, see Appendix A.

The 5 factors we used to assess potential transmission projects

There were 5 key considerations when prioritising potential transmission projects for inclusion in the candidate development pathways. For details, see Appendix A.

- **Network performance** (including reliability, security, thermal capacity, curtailment)
- **Indicative delivery cost**
- **Land use, community acceptance and Traditional Owner perspectives**
- **Delivery timing and constructability**
- **Long-term future network requirements**

We also completed an initial assessment of non-network solutions in the development of the candidate development pathways. Non-network solutions may reduce, defer or replace the need for network investment, reducing system costs and the impact on consumers.

Non-network solutions

The Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO) defines a non-network option as a "solution or service that provides an alternative to investment in transmission system apparatus, such as transmission lines or substations."

Battery storage is an important type of non-network solution that we have assessed in developing the candidate development pathways. The VTP energy market modelling optimises the location of generation across Victoria and the National Electricity Market (NEM) by considering the quality of renewable resources against the cost of transmission needed to support that generation. Battery storage is included in this optimisation. Battery storage is also employed in several system integrity protection systems which allow better use of important transmission assets.

More detailed assessment in the project design phase could highlight additional potential for non-network solutions to replace, defer or supplement network solutions currently in the candidate development pathways and thereby reduce costs for consumers. Projects may also be delivered through a technology-neutral procurement process where interested parties may propose alternative non-network solutions.

All the candidate development pathways represent an ambitious program of transmission investment and it is important to ensure that the proposed timeframes are achievable. We developed the proposed timings based on power systems modelling of network needs as well as a project deliverability assessment.

For more information about detailed planning and delivery of projects under the optimal development pathway, see Section 10.

8.3.1 Candidate development pathway 2

Candidate development pathway 2 has been developed to meet the significantly higher future energy demand of scenario 2. This scenario considers a potential future where new energy-intensive industries are established in regional and central Victoria at scale, such as data centres, hydrogen production and green aluminium.

The industry development and scale of energy demand in scenario 2 exceeds the levels seen in scenarios 1 and 3, resulting in a need for nearly double the amount of onshore generation by 2040 compared to scenario 1. Candidate pathway 2 therefore also outlines the largest need for transmission. In particular, it includes 3 additional programs of investments:

- **Program 8:** Sydenham to Keilor link – a new circuit between Sydenham and Keilor to support the distribution of power from the proposed REZs to Melbourne.
- **Program 9:** Central North Victoria strengthening program – a program of works to facilitate the transfer of increased power from the Central North proposed REZ to areas of high energy demand.
- **Program 10:** Inner South West strengthening program – a program of works to add increased capacity and resilience to the inner southwest area of Victoria and support the transfer of power from the proposed South West, Western and North West REZs.

This candidate pathway also includes an extension of the South West expansion program from Tarrone to Heywood, and an additional project as part of the North West strengthening program between Kerang and Red Cliffs. For more details about the projects in candidate development pathway 2, see Appendix A.

8.3.2 Candidate development pathway 3

Candidate development pathway 3 has been developed to meet the future generation and energy demand needs in scenario 3. Scenario 3 considers a potential future where there may be delays of up to one year in delivering new energy infrastructure. There may also be reduced growth in coordinated consumer energy resources reflecting broad challenges across the NEM, and other NEM-Government policies and targets may be delayed as well. The scenario also considers a potential future in which Marinus Link Stage 2 is not built.

Candidate pathway 3 includes the same 7 programs as the optimal development pathway.

This candidate pathway also sees some programs deferred by one year to coincide with the infrastructure delays broadly considered in scenario 3.

For more details about the programs and projects in candidate development pathway 3, see Appendix A.

Table 10 summarises the proposed transmission programs for all 3 candidate development pathways, and the differences between each pathway and delivery date.

Table 10: Differences between the 3 candidate development pathways

Program	Delivery date		
	Delivery date for candidate development pathway 1 (the optimal pathway)	Delivery date for candidate development pathway 2	Delivery date for candidate development pathway 3
Differences in program timing across the 3 candidate development pathways Blue shading denotes deferred timing relative to candidate development pathway 1. Yellow shading denotes accelerated timing relative to candidate development pathway 1.			
1. Western Victoria reinforcement program	2028 – 2030	2028 – 2030	2028 – 2030
2. Eastern Victoria reinforcement program	2028 – 2030	2028 – 2030	2028 – 2030
3. North West strengthening program	2035	2034	2035
4. South West expansion program	2033	2032 – 2038	2034
5. Gippsland offshore wind transmission stage 2 program	2033 – 2038	2033 – 2038	2034 – 2039
6. Latrobe Valley strengthening program	2034 – 2035	2034 – 2035	2035
7. Offshore wind upgrade	2038	2038	2039
Additional programs for candidate development pathways 2 and 3			
8. New Sydenham to Keilor link	Not applicable	2035	Not applicable
9. Central North strengthening program	Not applicable	2033 – 2035	Not applicable
10. Inner South West strengthening program	Not applicable	2031 – 2038	Not applicable

8.4 Benefits of the optimal development pathway

The proposed investments set out in the optimal development pathway will provide a foundation for Victoria's transition to renewable energy.

By unlocking critical capacity constraints along parts of the transmission network, the work programs will support investment in new renewable generation to meet Victoria's needs as coal-fired power stations close. The programs will also improve reliability and system strength as energy demand continues to grow.

The optimal development pathway is a key foundation for achieving the Victorian Government's legislated renewable energy targets, including for generation, storage, and offshore wind.

Transmission project costs

The transmission infrastructure market is dynamic and has experienced sharp increases in costs in recent times. Key drivers of change have been increasing global demand from energy transition and electrification, rising raw materials, labour and contracting costs, supply chain constraints and market capacity pressures. Suppliers and construction companies are also facing substantial rises in overheads, including insurance for larger contracts, logistics of increasingly globalised operations and environmental offset costs. Transmission projects are also undertaking more extensive community and stakeholder engagement activities, which also contributes to increased delivery costs.

Since the draft VTP was released, VicGrid has reviewed its cost estimates for projects across the candidate development pathways using industry benchmarks and data sources. This review has resulted in an increase in the estimated project costs. AEMO published an updated transmission cost database in late May and the cost increases estimated by VicGrid largely align with the increases in this database.

The costs have been estimated based on Class 5 estimates (+100%/-50%), as per the Association for the Advancement of Cost Engineering International Cost Estimate classification system. This is typical of cost estimates at this stage of project definition. Cost estimates will be refined further and increase in accuracy as projects are designed in detail in subsequent stages and engineered into fully costed solutions.

The transmission costs reflect capital expenditure of the projects and do not include operating and maintenance expenditure, although allowances for operations and maintenance costs are included in the cost-benefit analysis. The costs also exclude allowances for land acquisition, VicGrid and development/delivery partner, financing, and risk and escalation costs. These exclusions are consistent with the Class 5 estimate level, however VicGrid has undertaken sensitivity analysis to consider the impact of increased costs on the cost-benefit analysis.

Economic cost estimates are produced for the purpose of the VTP's economic analysis and are not equivalent to financial costs. For example, economic costs exclude financing costs (interest payments) and are based on real rather than nominal values. The total, unescalated economic cost of the optimal development pathway is $7.9 billion. Some of this cost must be incurred even if the optimal development pathway is not delivered, for example, because they relate to the end-of-life replacement of critical assets or relate to offshore wind transmission infrastructure required to meet the legislated offshore wind targets. Because these projects must go ahead, our economic analysis adjusts for this. After these adjustments, and others that reflect expected escalation above inflation, the total net economic cost of the projects in the optimal development pathway is $6.6 billion, or $4.2 billion in present value terms. All values are expressed in real terms in financial year 2025 dollars. The present value cost is calculated assuming a 7 per cent discount rate (real). For more detail on how we have calculated economic costs, see Appendix D.

This cost will enable delivery of the 7 programs of transmission investments by 2040 that deliver the benefits of the VTP and support future development of the proposed REZs described in Section 6.

Economic appraisal results

The optimal development pathway will deliver significant benefits to Victorians and consumers across the NEM, by making it possible to build new renewable generation capacity in the right places and at the right time to meet demand. The transmission upgrades will reduce the total amount of new generation that Victoria needs to build, compared with an alternative future where Victoria doesn't continue to invest in the transmission network beyond committed projects. This will minimise the costs that are ultimately passed on to consumers in power bills.

The transmission investments will also allow renewable generation to be built sooner, meaning Victoria will need to use coal-fired generation less intensively in the coming years before coal plants close. This brings additional benefits to Victoria by avoiding fossil fuel emissions.

The economic and environmental benefits described above are separate to the new benefits arrangements that VicGrid is implementing for landholders, Traditional Owners, neighbours and communities near new transmission infrastructure. For more information about these benefits, see **engage.vic.gov.au/vtif-rez-community-benefits**

The costs and benefits of the optimal development pathway were evaluated through an economic appraisal, which includes 3 key components:

- cost benefit analysis (CBA)
- consumer bill impact analysis
- macroeconomic modelling.

The approach to, and results of, the economic appraisal are detailed in Appendix D.

8.4.1 Cost benefit analysis

The CBA compares the system-wide costs and benefits of each candidate development pathway. Costs include capital and operating expenditures, while benefits fall into 3 broad categories:

- **Market impacts** – changes in the variable operating costs incurred to generate electricity, as well as reliability benefits, avoided voluntary load curtailment and avoided gas constraint violation costs.
- **Social impacts –** benefits to society that result from decreased greenhouse gas emissions, a reduction in health expenditure and changes to embodied emissions.
- **Commercial impacts** – avoided generation capital and operating costs and net residual value of infrastructure at the end of the appraisal period.

Table 11: Cost benefit analysis results, optimal development pathway (present value, $FY25)

Benefits	
Item	Value
Market impacts	
Avoided generation variable costs	$5,300m
Improved reliability	$400m
Avoided demand side participation costs	-
Avoided gas constraint violation costs	$600m
Social impacts	
Avoided emissions	$6,050m
Avoided health costs	-
Net embodied emissions	-$300m
Commercial impacts	
Avoided generation capital expenditure	$1,450m
Avoided generation operating and maintenance expenditure	$300m
Net residual asset value	$450m
Total benefits	**$14,250m**

Cost	
Item	Value
Capital expenditure	$4,200m
Operating expenditure	$450m
Total costs	**$4,650m**
Economic indicators	
Net Present Value	$9,600m
Economic Internal Rate of Return	19%

The CBA assesses the core candidate development pathways against the following economic indicators:

- **Net Present Value (NPV)** – gives an indication of the magnitude of the net benefit to society, calculated by taking the difference between the present value of the total incremental benefits and the present value of the total incremental costs. A positive NPV indicates that an investment is desirable to society as a whole.
- **Economic Internal Rate of Return (EIRR)** – the discount rate that makes the NPV of a pathway equal to zero by equating the present value of benefits to the present value of costs. The EIRR is used to determine whether a project should proceed through comparison to an appropriate discount rate.

The NPV of the optimal development pathway is $9.6 billion. This is driven by a significant reduction in gas generation which decreases generation variable costs and reduces emissions (when compared against a future without the optimal development pathway). The pathway also provides substantial uplift to transfer capacities across the transmission network, reducing the need for new generation and storage capacities. This drives significant savings in generation capital expenditure and operating and maintenance expenditure.

Potential cost of not delivering the VTP

This plan will deliver cheaper and reliable power for homes and businesses, lowering annual Victorian energy bills by $20 for households and $50 for businesses compared to not implementing the plan.

Not implementing the plan will prevent new, cheap renewables from being connected, risking energy security, pushing up energy bills and ultimately costing the economy $9.6 billion over the next three decades.

Consumer bill impact analysis

Delivering the optimal development pathway and facilitating generation in the renewable energy zones is expected to result in lower electricity bills for Victorians compared to an alternative future without the optimal development plan.

Energy bills comprise several components, including transmission charges and wholesale electricity charges. Delivering the transmission projects on the optimal development pathway is expected to increase the transmission component of energy bills by $14 per household and $34 per small business annually (real $2025).

However, this is offset by a reduction in wholesale electricity costs as a result of the generation and storage unlocked by the optimal development plan. Overall VicGrid's modelling suggests that Victorian energy bills could be $20 lower per household and $50 lower per small business each year (real $2025). Further details are provided in Appendix D.

Part C

Delivering the VTP

PART C

9. Developing renewable energy zones

Introducing renewable energy zones (REZs) will shape how renewable development occurs in Victoria. This will have different impacts for regional communities and landholders, First Peoples and industry.

The development of REZs will provide certainty for investors and enable private investment in generation, storage and supply chains across Victoria's regions. This investment in regional infrastructure will bring job opportunities and other local economic benefits for host communities.

Following the publication of this 2025 Victorian Transmission Plan (VTP) and the formal declaration of REZs, VicGrid will work together with communities and industry to develop these REZs over the coming years. This will involve engaging with communities located within REZs, prioritising jobs and other economic benefits for local communities, Traditional Owners and First Peoples, and working with investors and developers to strengthen coordination of generation and storage investments.

9.1 What to expect as REZs are developed

9.1.1 For communities and landholders

Communities in declared REZs will see increased investment in renewable generation and storage infrastructure over time. VicGrid is committed to ensuring that new development is coordinated to minimise impacts on landscapes and the environment, while delivering economic benefits to rural and regional communities.

As it was prior to the release of this plan, generation and storage project developers will be able to identify specific locations of interest within a REZ. Renewable development companies will need to negotiate with landholders for rights to develop projects on their land and a landholder has a right to say no to having new renewable generation on their property. Landholders who agree to new renewable development will receive financial compensation that is negotiated with the developer.

All proposed projects will continue to be subject to the planning and environmental approval processes under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and *Environment Effects Act 1978*.

The establishment of REZs creates an opportunity for rural and regional communities to harness the economic development opportunities associated with renewable energy projects. VicGrid is committed to working together with REZ communities to realise these opportunities and build long-term, community-wide benefits from the renewable energy transition.

REZ Community Benefits

As part of establishing REZs, VicGrid is introducing new benefits arrangements for communities that host them. New community energy funds will be created for each region hosting a REZ to support projects aimed at improving energy supply, reliability, efficiency and affordability for businesses, communities and households (REZ Community Energy Fund). These funds will also support initiatives that drive economic development through the energy transition. For example, the funds may support projects that build renewable energy supply chains, create jobs in the energy sector, promote renewable energy research and innovation, or help attract renewable energy investment. For more information, see **engage.vic.gov.au/vtif-rez-community-benefits**

We are introducing new benefits for:

Landholders

Landholders who host new electricity transmission infrastructure will receive payments of $8,000 per kilometre of typical easement area per year for 25 years. These payments are over and above existing compensation arrangements.

Regional communities

REZ Community Energy Funds will fund projects that improve energy outcomes, or create benefits from the energy transition, for communities in regions hosting REZs and new transmission infrastructure.

Traditional Owners

The Victorian Government is working in partnership with First Peoples to design benefits for Traditional Owners of REZ areas and related transmission corridors.

Significantly impacted neighbours

Transmission companies will make benefits available to Victorians whose land is near and significantly impacted by new transmission infrastructure.

For more information, see **engage.vic.gov.au/vtif-rez-community-benefits**

REZ Areas of Benefit

REZ area of benefit refers to a defined area in and around a REZ in which eligibility for funding through the REZ Community Energy Funds and membership of REZ community reference groups will be assessed (REZ Area of Benefit). This area will also guide REZ readiness activities and development initiatives.

REZ Areas of Benefit will ensure that REZ development, community benefit and other benefit outcomes arising in relation to REZs are delivered for communities within a geography in and around the REZ and not unreasonably diminished by being distributed over larger areas or populations that may not be directly impacted by REZs.

As part of the formal REZ declaration process and mandatory public consultation process for draft REZ Orders, a proposed REZ Area of Benefit geography for each proposed REZ will be set out in the draft Order. As part of the public consultation on draft REZ Orders, VicGrid will also consult with local governments, other regional stakeholders and Traditional Owners regarding approaches to defining REZ Areas of Benefit.

Community Engagement and Benefit Sharing Guide

The Community Engagement and Benefit Sharing in Renewable Energy Development in Victoria Guide for renewable energy developers was last updated in 2021. This guide outlines the Victorian Government's expectations of leading practice in community engagement and benefit sharing and provides practical advice on how to meet these expectations. Together with DEECA, VicGrid is updating expectations through a revised guide to community engagement and sharing economic and social benefits.

The introduction of a new Victorian Access Regime means renewable energy projects both inside and outside of REZs will now require formal access authorities. With this change comes an opportunity to set consistent updated expectations for community engagement and the creation of social value in both renewable energy and transmission projects.

The new guide will support developers of renewable energy generation and transmission projects by informing the community engagement they must undertake when applying for access to Victoria's declared shared network (DSN) or when tendering for transmission projects. The guide also provides the minimum expectations for how project developers engage with communities, landholders, Traditional Owners and local industries when designing community and economic benefits initiatives. It provides clarity on what these groups may expect from project developers.

As part of its evaluation of transmission tenders, VicGrid will apply social performance criteria, requiring transmission developers to demonstrate how they will meet the specific criteria of each project.

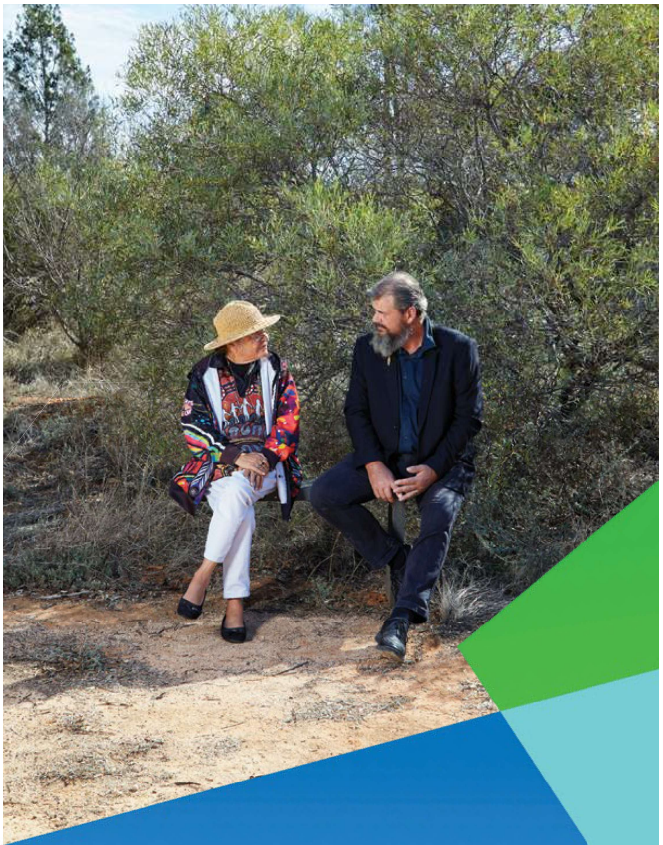
It is anticipated that the updated guide to community engagement and sharing economic and social benefits will be published later in 2025.

9.1.2 For Traditional Owners

VicGrid is working in partnership with Traditional Owners to implement a model for dedicated benefits where their Country is affected by REZs and transmission projects. This aims to give Traditional Owners control over how funds are spent to ensure they deliver economic empowerment and support self-determination. Dedicated benefits are expected to be funded through mandatory contributions from generation and storage developers operating within REZs along with contributions from transmission companies. They will be provided in addition to any voluntary payments made by energy companies to Traditional Owners as well as existing legislated compensation.

Integrating a self-determined approach to cultural heritage will be an ongoing process as our collaboration with Traditional Owners continues. VicGrid will work to strengthen Traditional Owners' roles in shaping future transmission plans and REZ development to minimise impacts to Country.

Importantly, the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006,* the *Heritage Act 2017,* and other relevant state and Commonwealth legislation continue to apply to any future projects.



9.1.3 For industry

REZs are designed to support investment in renewable energy in Victoria, providing a clear signal to project developers on the locations most suitable for siting renewable generation projects. Projects developed within REZs will benefit from a new network access regime that will provide more certainty and reduce the risk of excessive curtailment – when a generator has to restrict the amount of energy they supply due to constraints on the transmission network. Together, the VTP and access regime will improve the coordination of generation and transmission investment. For more information, see Section 9.2.

We are also exploring other ways we can enable timely generation development and connection in REZs while ensuring a coordinated approach that avoids, where possible, multiple developers building individual transmission connections that could create a 'spaghetti effect' across the REZ landscape.

We recognise there are developers that have generation and storage projects in various stages of the planning and development process. We are developing an integrated REZ access and connection approach that provides a clear process for all developers inside and outside the proposed REZs identified in this 2025 VTP.

We will develop our approach in consultation with industry, communities, landholders, Traditional Owners and other stakeholders.

What to expect for Capacity Investment Scheme participants

The Australian Government's Capacity Investment Scheme (CIS) provides underwriting to encourage investment in renewable energy generation and storage to connect to the grid by 2030. The Australian Government is holding competitive tenders for CIS contracts every 6 months, with the first held in May 2024.

In preparing the VTP, we have planned for transmission infrastructure that will support the targeted amount of Victorian CIS investment to be delivered by 2030, including 5.0 GW / 11 TWh of new generation capacity. The optimal development pathway includes 2 programs of upgrades to be delivered by 2030. This is anticipated to unlock required network capacity for these important CIS generation projects.

We will consult on the new access regime (see Section 9.2), and this includes information about our proposed approach for successful tenderers from select CIS tender(s) to be eligible for transitional arrangements. We propose successful tenderers from the May and November 2024 CIS tenders will be eligible for transitional arrangements.

Transmission connections within REZs

It is the responsibility of individual project developers to establish their own connections to the transmission network. However, we are proposing to work with developers to promote, where possible, a coordinated approach to connection infrastructure within REZs that limits community and environmental impacts and keeps costs low.

The need for additional shared transmission infrastructure to support generator and storage connections within REZs will depend on the REZ's proximity to the existing network and the locations that developers choose for their projects.

To best promote the development of efficient and coordinated network infrastructure within REZs, we are proposing to develop a REZ Infrastructure Plan for each REZ, which will set out a preferred strategy for coordinating connection infrastructure in the REZ. More information will be released for feedback in the Access and Connections Consultation Paper. For more information, visit **engage.vic.gov.au/vicgrid**

9.2 Increasing investor certainty with new access arrangements

The Victorian Access Regime will be an important foundation for attracting investment and improving coordination in Victoria's REZs. Introduced by VicGrid, the regime is designed to better support the development of renewable energy generation and storage projects by:

- providing a clear pathway to grid access
- reducing the risk of excessive network curtailment
- supporting efficient and coordinated investment
- setting clear expectations for engagement and benefits sharing with landholders, communities, and Traditional Owners.

In determining which projects to allocate access to in each REZ, VicGrid will ensure key factors are considered, including:

- applications received and the amount of electricity Victoria needs to generate to meet expected demand
- access limits within each REZ
- the access allocation assessment criteria, including meeting Government expectations for landholder, community and Traditional Owner engagement and benefits
- the Victorian Access Regime objectives, including promoting coordinated project development within REZs.

Also, generation projects are typically built by private sector developers and each project will proceed or not proceed in response to various factors, including access to land, access to transmission infrastructure, the attainment of permits and approvals, developers' views on the wind or solar resource quality, costs to build and operate, developers' energy market price projections and appetite for investment risk.

We recognise the new access regime is a significant shift from how access and connections have previously operated in Victoria. With many projects already at different stages of development, we understand the need for transitional arrangements that minimise impacts of the change for projects in advanced stages of development.

We also acknowledge the importance of progressing these reforms to support the energy transition and improve outcomes for consumers, landholders, Traditional Owners and communities, particularly through the planned development of REZs.

The Victorian Access Regime was presented to the Victorian Parliament in June 2025 through proposed amendments to the *National Electricity (Victoria) Act 2005*. It remains subject to the passage of legislation later in 2025.

We will release an Access and Connections Consultation Paper and draft Grid Impact Assessment (GIA) Guidelines for consultation. We will invite feedback from investors, landholders, communities, Traditional Owners and other stakeholders on the issues identified in these documents, as well as on the implementation of the Victorian Access Regime to ensure the new regime builds both investor and community confidence and effectively supports a thriving local renewable energy industry. For more information about these consultation documents, visit **engage.vic.gov.au/vicgrid**

There are 2 key features of the proposed Victorian Access Regime:

1. REZ access schemes
These govern access for eligible renewable energy generation, energy storage systems and hybrid projects within REZs, tailored to the specific requirements of each REZ.

2. Grid Impact Assessments (GIAs)
These apply to proposed generation, storage and hybrid projects outside REZs, as well as to technologies that are not covered by REZ access schemes inside REZs.

Both of these features are described further below.

9.2.1 REZ access schemes

Once a REZ is declared, VicGrid will publish a draft REZ access scheme for consultation. It is expected that the scheme will set out:

Access limits – Access limits cap the maximum capacity of different types of renewable generation that can be connected within the REZ. Access limits give investors visibility of the REZ's hosting capacity and assurance that a REZ's capacity will not be oversubscribed. We propose to set access limits at the maximum amount of generation capacity that can be connected within the REZ without violating technical constraints or surpassing efficient levels of network curtailment forecast for the REZ.

REZ scheme fees – REZ scheme fees are to be paid by approved projects. Operators will pay an annual REZ scheme fee to access the transmission network in the REZ. The REZ scheme fees may be used to contribute to the REZ Community Energy Funds and Traditional Owners Fund.

Access conditions – A REZ scheme authority will be issued to successful projects, which will include a list of enforceable conditions. For example, this could include requirements relating to an applicant's community engagement performance, dates when the project must be operational, or other technical performance requirements.

The access allocation process – The REZ access scheme will set out a description of the process to allocate and issue REZ scheme authorities to projects, up to the access limit. We propose a competitive application process for access within each REZ. The process will include assessment against a set of merit criteria, which will include but not be limited to meeting government expectations for community and Traditional Owner engagement and providing meaningful benefits.

9.2.2 Grid Impact Assessment

Generator and storage developers seeking to connect, or amend a connection, outside of REZs or planning projects inside REZs using technologies that are not specified in REZ access schemes, will be subject to a Grid Impact Assessment. This assessment is designed to provide greater assurance that proposed renewable energy generation within REZs will not be excessively network curtailed as capacity within the network is taken up by new generation.

As noted above, we consulted earlier this year with industry on the proposed approach to the Grid Impact Assessment. The feedback has been reviewed and informed the development of draft Grid Impact Assessment Guidelines, which we will release for consultation.

Applicants will need to demonstrate that their proposed project meets both the following criteria:

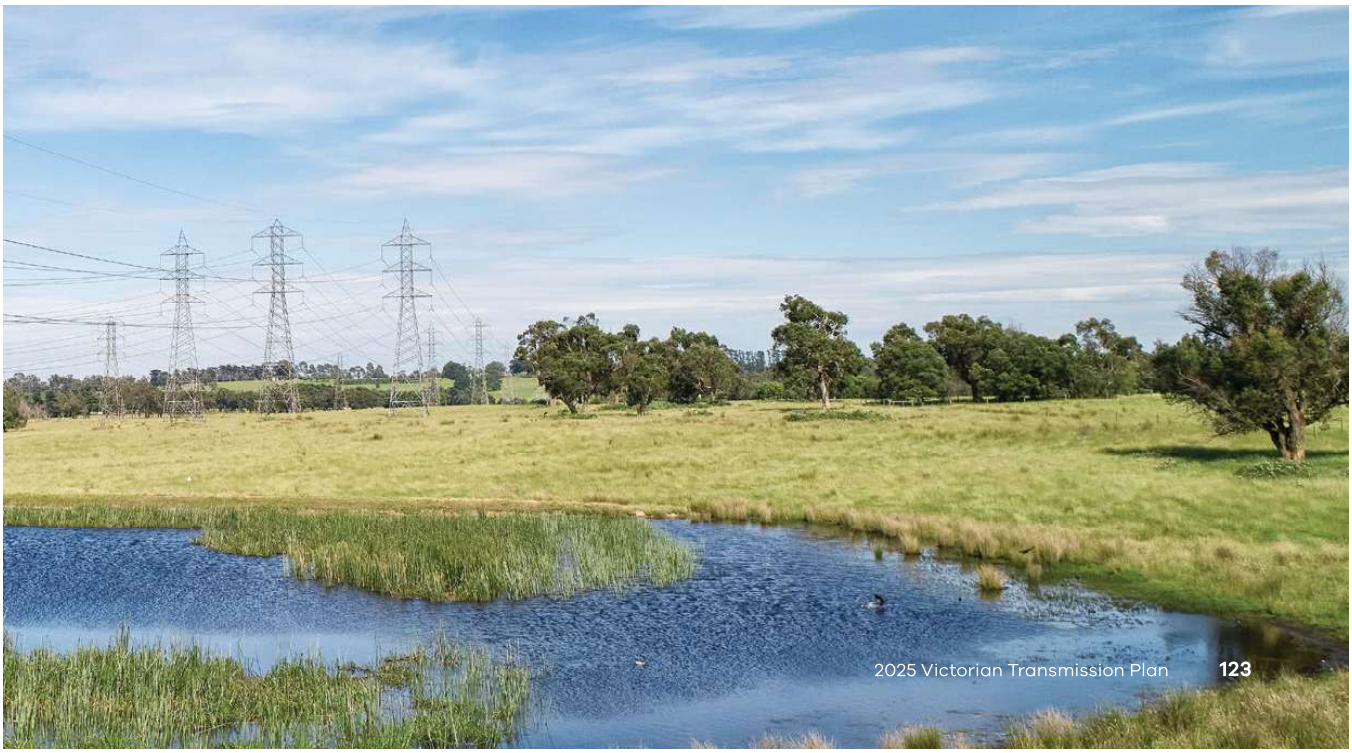
- **Criterion 1:** The proposed connection is unlikely to result in excessive network curtailment of in existing and planned REZ scheme generators in Victoria; and
- **Criterion 2:** The GIA applicant meets government expectations for community, landholder and Traditional Owner engagement and provides meaningful benefits.

For more information, see **engage.vic.gov.au/grid-impact-assessment**

The proposed Gippsland Shoreline REZ is different to onshore REZs

The proposed Gippsland Shoreline REZ is intended to host onshore connection infrastructure for offshore wind generators to reach the transmission network. Onshore generation projects located within the boundaries of the shoreline REZ will not be eligible to participate in the access scheme for priority access to the network. These projects will be subject to the same Grid Impact Assessment process that will apply elsewhere in Victoria for projects located outside of REZ boundaries.

Communities impacted by the Gippsland Shoreline REZ will receive new dedicated benefits, similar to our approach for onshore renewable energy zones. These benefits will be in addition to any discretionary benefits paid by offshore wind developers.



PART C

10. Delivering projects in the optimal development pathway

With the publication of the 2025 Victorian Transmission Plan (VTP), VicGrid will begin detailed planning for delivery of the optimal development pathway – the priority programs of transmission projects we have identified for the next 15 years.

There will be further opportunities for consultation as these transmission projects are planned and developed. VicGrid will also oversee the implementation of dedicated benefits arrangements for those impacted by new transmission projects.

Under proposed reforms, VicGrid will be responsible for coordinating the procurement of VTP transmission projects.

We are currently proposing changes to the procurement of major transmission projects in Victoria. These changes aim to ensure that the procurement approach is flexible enough to support the pace required to meet the state emissions reduction commitments, deliver value for money for Victorian energy consumers and minimise impacts on power bills. The reforms will enable VicGrid to plan and procure transmission augmentations effectively, in anticipation of new renewable generation connecting to the grid and without the need for further regulatory investment tests.

The proposed procurement reforms are subject to the passage of the National Electricity (Victoria) Amendment (VicGrid Stage 2 Reform) Bill 2025 in the Victorian Parliament, the making of necessary regulations and the transfer of declared network functions from AEMO to VicGrid. This transfer of functions is anticipated to occur on 1 November 2025 and is discussed further in Section 3.

10.1 Consultation on proposed VTP transmission projects

All proposed transmission projects in the optimal development pathway will continue to be subject to relevant planning and environmental approvals in Victoria, with consultation building on the broad and early engagement undertaken during development of the VTP.

At each stage of the planning process, consultation with landholders, communities, industries and First Peoples will provide important feedback and help shape decisions. As planning progresses, VicGrid will carry out targeted engagement with directly impacted Traditional Owners, landholders, neighbours and communities.

10.2 Benefits arrangements

In this VTP we are proposing 4 new transmission projects across 3 programs. The remaining projects range from augmentations within existing terminal stations to significant reconstruction of existing transmission lines. Some proposed projects will require new transmission easements. VicGrid is introducing new benefits arrangements for landholders, neighbours, communities and Traditional Owners in regions hosting renewable energy zones and impacted by new transmission developments. For more information, see **engage.vic.gov.au/vtif-rez-community-benefits**

These new benefits will be in addition to existing compensation arrangements under the *Land Acquisition and Compensation Act 1986*, *Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010* and the *Native Title Act 1993* (Cth), as well as any discretionary payments made by transmission project developers.

10.3 VicGrid's role in planning and delivering transmission projects

VicGrid will be responsible for coordinating the planning, procurement and development of transmission infrastructure prioritised in the optimal development pathway. For details on the proposed projects included in the optimal development pathway, see Appendix A.

The next step will be to develop detailed solutions for priority projects identified in the VTP. This will include further optioneering and consideration of alternative solutions. Joint planning with distribution networks will also provide opportunities for optioneering. Projects will be subject to a delivery case, which may identify a preferred solution or recommend a technology-neutral procurement process that is open to different types of solutions (for example, batteries that could provide an alternative to investing in additional transmission).

Once developed, project solutions will proceed to a procurement process subject to independent oversight. A separate economic assessment will not be required, given that projects identified in the optimal development pathway will have already been considered in the cost-benefit and robustness analysis completed in the VTP process.

As part of project planning, VicGrid will determine whether the project will follow a contestable or non-contestable procurement process. A competitive procurement for every transmission project identified in the VTP may not always be possible or appropriate. For example, we will consider factors such as the value of the project, if the project can be separated from in service assets, if there is capacity and capability in the market, and the costs and benefits associated with a competitive process.

VicGrid's approach to determining contestability is part of the proposed procurement reforms, which will come into effect after necessary regulations are made following the passage of the National Electricity (Victoria) Amendment (VicGrid – Stage 2 Reform) Bill. This is anticipated by 1 November 2025.

Procurement models adopted will seek to best achieve project objectives while ensuring projects are delivered as efficiently as possible, represent value for money and ensure an appropriate level of rigour and protection for consumers.

We are currently proposing changes to procurement of major transmission projects in Victoria. This is to ensure that the procurement approach is flexible enough to support the pace required to meet the State's emissions reduction commitments, deliver value for money for Victorian energy consumers and minimise impacts on power bills. The changes will allow VicGrid to plan and procure transmission augmentations effectively in anticipation of new renewable generation connecting to the grid and without the need for further regulatory investment tests. The proposed procurement reforms are subject to the passage of the National Electricity (Victoria) Amendment (VicGrid – Stage 2 Reform) Bill 2025 in the Victorian Parliament, the making of necessary regulations and the transfer of declared network functions for Victoria from AEMO to VicGrid. This transfer of functions is expected to occur on 1 November 2025.

The specific delivery, operations and maintenance approach will vary project by project based on the project requirements and other determining factors. VicGrid will play an active role throughout delivery, operations, and maintenance phases to ensure projects meet their objectives on time and within budget, delivering value to consumers and stakeholders.

The delivery dates of projects are subject to change from what has been proposed in this VTP, which has been driven by the modelling assumptions set out in Appendix C. Some projects may be delivered earlier to enable accelerated generation builds, while some projects may be delivered later if not required as early as modelled or due to deliverability timeframes.

VicGrid will continue to work with AEMO on alignment with the ISP 2026 and other strategic transmission planning exercises. AEMO will consider the programs and comprising projects identified in the optimal development pathway as part of its ISP planning processes.

Part D

What comes next after publication of this 2025 Victorian Transmission Plan

PART D

11. What comes next after publication of this 2025 Victorian Transmission Plan

11.1 Continued engagement with communities and industry

VicGrid will continue to engage with communities and industry as we implement the 2025 Victorian Transmission Plan (VTP). This will include opportunities to provide input and feedback about Renewable Energy Zone (REZ) declarations, detailed REZ design, implementation of REZ Community Energy Funds and network access schemes. VicGrid will also carry out targeted engagement with directly impacted Traditional Owners, landholders, neighbours and communities throughout the planning process for VTP transmission projects.

11.2 REZ declarations

Once the 2025 VTP has been published, the Minister for Energy and Resources can consider whether to proceed with formal declaration of a proposed REZ. The REZ declaration process requires that the Minister make a declaration in a formal order (Order). The Order will set out key information on the REZ to be declared, including a map of the REZ boundaries and the intended transmission hosting capacity within the REZ.

As part of this REZ declaration process, a draft of the Order showing the draft REZ will be placed on public notice for a minimum of 6 weeks, enabling the community and industry to provide any comments and submissions. The Minister must consider any submissions when determining whether the REZ should be declared under an Order.

11.3 Access arrangements

We will consult on detailed design of the new Victorian Access Regime, inviting feedback on an Access and Connections Consultation Paper and draft Grid Impact Assessment (GIA) Guidelines. The consultation documents will provide detailed information on how project developers can access and connect to the transmission network inside and outside of REZs once the new regime comes into effect. The documents will also include information about proposed transitional arrangements. For more information, visit **engage.vic.gov.au/vicgrid**

We will also release a draft updated guide to community engagement and sharing economic and social benefits, setting out the government's expectations for how developers engage with and create value for communities, Traditional Owners, landholders and neighbours. This will set the benchmark for our assessment of access applications by project developers. We want to hear feedback from industry, landholders, Traditional Owners and communities, so we can design the access regime to meet its objectives.

We will incorporate feedback into the development of an Access and Connections Handbook, final GIA Guidelines and updated guide to community engagement and sharing economic and social benefits, anticipated to be released later in 2025.

11.4 Transmission projects

We will develop detailed project solutions for the priority projects identified in this 2025 VTP. This will include further optioneering and consideration of alternative solutions. Projects will be subject to a delivery case which may identify a preferred solution or recommend a technology-neutral procurement process that is open to different types of solutions. Once developed, project solutions will proceed to a procurement process subject to independent oversight.

11.5 2027 VTP

We will publish an updated VTP in 2027, and every 4 years after that or more often if required to ensure the plan remains up-to-date with new technology developments and changes in energy demand. Following publication of this 2025 VTP, we will commence detailed planning for the publication of the 2027 VTP. This will include the review and update to the VTP Guidelines in 2026.

11.6 Integrated System Plan and Victorian Annual Planning Report interactions

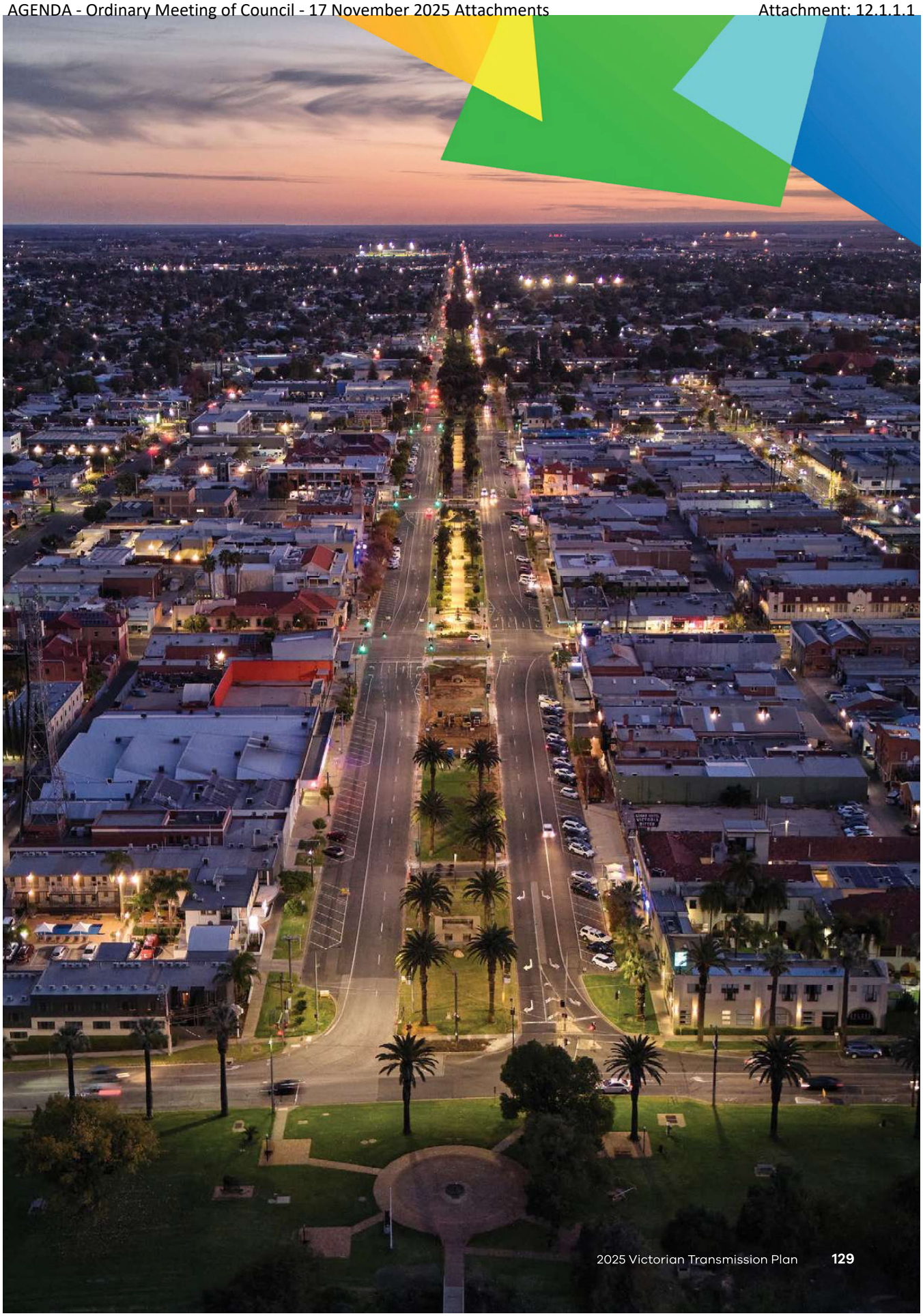
The Australian Energy Market Operator's Integrated System Plan (AEMO's ISP) is the overarching plan for required investments in generation, storage and network infrastructure across the National Electricity Market (NEM). The ISP takes a 20-year development outlook and is published every 2 years. The sequencing of future ISPs and future VTPs will allow them to inform one another. This will help ensure consistency between national and Victorian transmission development. Future ISPs will also consider REZs that have been identified through the VTP and declared in Victoria.

Published annually in October, the VAPR assesses the adequacy of the existing Victorian transmission network to meet reliability and security requirements. It identifies limitations over the next 10 years that need to be addressed through network upgrades. The VAPR has informed the longlist of transmission projects we considered when creating the VTP candidate development pathways (for details, see Appendix A). Likewise, future VAPRs and future VTPs will be able to inform one another.

Under the Victorian Transmission Investment Framework (VTIF) reforms, the responsibility for planning Victoria's declared shared network and associated declared network function, will be transferred to VicGrid from AEMO. This transfer of functions includes responsibility to develop the VAPR. The Bill to enact these reforms was introduced to Parliament in June 2025 and the legislation is expected to come into effect in late 2025. The transfer is intended to be enacted in a staged and carefully considered approach in close consultation with AEMO to enable an orderly transfer of responsibilities.

11.7 VicGrid's transition

VicGrid is undergoing a transition to become a State Business Corporation. In April 2025, VicGrid was established as a body corporate under the *State Owned Enterprise Act 1992*. Subject to the passage of the National Electricity (Victoria) Amendment (VicGrid Stage 2 Reform) Bill 2025, VicGrid will transition to a State Business Corporation (SBC) and take over from AEMO the declared network functions in Victoria and will plan and deliver the transmission augmentations needed for Victoria.



Glossary

This glossary has been prepared as a quick guide to help readers understand terms used in this document. Words and phrases defined in the *National Electricity (Victoria) Act 2005* and other Victorian legislation have the meaning given to them in legislation.

Term	Definition
Augmentations	These are improvements or additions made to the existing electricity transmission network to increase its capacity, efficiency, or reliability. This can involve upgrading current infrastructure or building new components to handle increased demand or integrate new generation sources.
Avoidance area	Avoidance areas are areas to avoid for renewable generation development where there are areas protected in legislation (e.g., defence sites, national parks), or areas with no acceptable trade-offs. They are shown as areas to avoid in the strategic land use assessment constraints analysis. These avoidance areas are outputs of a strategic assessment based on high-level publicly available data only, as a guide for decision makers. They are non-exhaustive and may change over time.
Candidate development pathway	A set of possible transmission projects and proposed timings to upgrade the declared shared network, needed to accommodate the development of new generation and storage capacity in renewable energy zones (REZs).
Committed	Generation and storage projects are considered committed if they have reached a sufficiently advanced stage of planning and development. Projects have been considered committed for the purposes of energy market modelling in the Victorian Transmission Plan (VTP) if they meet any of the following criteria: • it was classified as Committed or In Commissioning by AEMO as at April 2025, or • it is completed or in the construction phase as identified in AEMO Victorian Planning's Connections Portfolio list as at May 2025, or • it was successful in CIS auction results released in or before December 2024, or • it was successful in the VRET2 auction results.
Curtailment	A situation where energy generators are required to limit their energy supply into the market due to capacity limitations on the grid and corresponding market signals.
Declared REZ	A declared REZ, in the context of the VTP, is a designated geographical area that has been declared by Order of the Minister for Energy and Resources, having been identified by VicGrid as having high potential for renewable energy generation.
Declared Shared Network	The Victorian interconnected high-voltage power lines and shared terminal stations that transport large amounts of electricity from where it is generated to where it is needed across the state. It allows multiple electricity providers to share the infrastructure for transporting electricity. Sometimes wind and solar developments need to build their own private lines to connect their project to the shared network.
Draft REZ	A geographical area proposed for REZ declaration by the Minister for Energy and Resources, that is published for consultation in a draft Order.
Draft proposed REZ	The draft areas proposed to be considered for REZ declaration that will be finalised following industry and community consultation. These were presented in the draft 2025 VTP.

Glossary

Term	Definition
Easement	This is a legal right allowing someone to use another person's land for a specified purpose. For transmission lines, easements typically include the land parcels where both overhead and underground lines are situated, along with an adjacent buffer zone to ensure safe operation. Common uses of easements also include routes for drainage, sewage, and roadways.
Firming	Firming infrastructure includes facilities that can supply electricity during times when the network experiences a shortfall of surplus generation. Battery storage, gas-fired generation and long duration energy storage schemes can provide the desired firming.
Generation resource plan	A spatial plan that identifies indicative locations for the new generation capacity needed to meet Victoria's energy needs under different future scenarios. The plan is developed based on a multicriteria analysis and, alongside the results of a strategic land use assessment, is used to inform potential REZ candidate areas. The generation resource plan includes possible amounts, types and timing of new generation build across different locations in Victoria.
Grid Impact Assessment	An assessment carried out as part of the grid connection application process for proposed connections to the Declared Shared Network outside a REZ or within a renewable energy zone but not of a technology listed in the associated renewable energy zone scheme. It requires that new connections do not impose excessive curtailment on in service and planned REZ generators.
Integrated System Plan	An integrated 20-year plan for the efficient development of the National Electricity Market (NEM), prepared every 2 years by the Australian Energy Market Operator.
Landholder	An individual or organisation eligible to receive landholder benefits under the *National Electricity (Victoria) Act 2005*, for the siting of transmission infrastructure on land where they are the freehold landholder or, in relation to Crown Land, where they are a Traditional Owner, or long-term lease or licence holder who is materially impacted.
Least-regrets development pathway	A process of selecting transmission development pathways, having regard to the risks associated with underinvestment or overinvestment in light of the uncertainties reflected across a range of scenarios.
Multi-criteria analysis	A methodology for evaluating qualitative economic, social, cultural and environmental factors as part of a process for determining where, when and how Victoria's electricity transmission network should develop.
The optimal development pathway	The optimal mix of transmission projects needed to connect REZs with Victoria's Declared Shared Network over the next 15 years, taking into account economic cost-benefit and robustness analysis across different scenarios, as well as power system security and reliability. For the 2025 VTP, the optimal development pathway sets out proposed projects and sequencing over the next 15 years. Future VTPs will take a 25-year timeframe.

Glossary

Term	Definition
Proposed REZs	The areas proposed to be considered for REZ declaration. These are presented in the 2025 VTP (this document) and, over time, may be declared by the Minister for Energy as REZs.
Ramsar	Ramsar wetlands are rare or unique wetlands that are important for preserving biodiversity. They are designated to be of international importance under the Ramsar Convention.
Registered Aboriginal Party	A body registered by the Aboriginal Heritage Council which performs the functions set out in the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*.
Renewable energy zone (REZ)	An area declared in a renewable energy zone Order where a REZ access scheme and special benefits arrangements will apply.
REZ access scheme	A scheme, under the proposed Victorian Access Regime, declared by the Minister for Energy and Resources which sets out arrangements governing network connections for new renewable generation and storage projects located in a REZ. These arrangements include access limits for each type of renewable generation, access fees, access conditions, and the process for allocating access.
REZ candidate areas	More refined areas within the study area that are assessed as being most suitable for renewable energy generation through energy market modelling and community and industry consultation.
REZ study area	A broad geographic area suitable for further investigation in planning for future renewable energy zones, based on the results of a strategic land use assessment and consultation feedback.
Robustness analysis	Robustness analysis is undertaken on all candidate development pathways to select the one that performs best (i.e., can adapt with minimal cost) across all scenarios. This approach, often called 'least worst regrets', is used to determine the optimal development pathway and seeks to minimise the risks of over- and under-investment.
Scenarios	Scenarios are a collection of assumptions that describe how the future may unfold. Scenarios-based planning is useful in highly uncertain environments, and can help assess future risks, opportunities, and development needs in the energy industry.
Shoreline renewable energy zone	A shoreline renewable energy zone sets out a designated area for offshore wind developers to site their onshore connection infrastructure (for example, onshore cables), rather than for hosting new onshore generation.
Strategic land use assessment	An assessment that identifies suitable areas for siting infrastructure based on a range of social, cultural, technical, environmental, and economic factors.
Synchronous condensers	These are machines connected to the electricity grid that help maintain the stability and reliability of the power system. They do not generate electricity but provide essential services to the transmission network by supporting voltage levels, increasing system strength and enhancing the grid's ability to respond to changes in operating conditions.

Glossary

Term	Definition
System strength	This describes the ability of the power system to maintain and control the voltage waveform at a given location, both during steady state operation and following a disturbance. System strength is often approximated by the amount of electrical current available during a network fault (fault level), however the concept also encompasses a collection of broader electrical characteristics and power system interactions.
Traditional Owner	A member of a Traditional Owner group, having the meaning set out in the *Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010*. Traditional Owners have rights that must be upheld as laid out under the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*, the *Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010*, *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006* and *Native Title Act 1993* (Cth).
Uprating of existing lines	This refers to enhancing the capacity of existing transmission lines to carry more electricity. This can be achieved through various methods, such as using higher current rating conductors, increasing clearance for the conductors, upgrading transformers or improving the structure of the lines to support increased capacity, without necessarily building entirely new lines.
Victorian Access Regime	The proposed set of new rules, to be defined under the *National Electricity (Victoria) Act 2005*, for how new generation projects can connect to the Declared Shared Network, both within and outside of REZs. Under the Victorian Access Regime, the Minister will declare REZ access schemes, and all new generation projects outside of REZs will be subject to a Grid Impact Assessment to reduce the risk of curtailment for REZ generators.
Victorian Transmission Investment Framework	A set of reforms being implemented to transmission planning in Victoria, including: a new transmission planning objective; a new planning process through the Victorian Transmission Plan; the Victorian Access Regime; new community and Traditional Owner benefit arrangements; and new approaches to procuring transmission infrastructure.
Victorian transmission plan	A document setting out an optimal set of transmission projects that address the planning and development needs over the following periods related to new major electricity transmission infrastructure to facilitate connection of renewable energy zones to the declared shared network: (a) 15 years for the first Victorian transmission plan; (b) 25 years for each subsequent Victorian transmission plan.

Appendix information and links

Appendix A: Candidate development pathways
Appendix B: Energy market modelling
Appendix C: Power system modelling
Appendix D: Economic appraisal

To read the appendices, visit
energy.vic.gov.au/renewable-energy/vicgrid/the-victorian-transmission-plan

Contact us

Phone: 1800 418 341
Email: vicgrid@deeca.vic.gov.au
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Please visit **vicgrid.vic.gov.au** for the latest updates.

Making it easier to build a small second home

It's now so much easier for Victorians to build small second homes. Our communities can now stay closer to the ones they love, in the suburbs, towns, and regional places across our great state.

We all know that finding the right type of housing in the right location is getting harder and more expensive. That's why the Victorian Government's *Housing Statement – The decade ahead 2024-2034* sets out a plan to deliver significantly more housing that better meets the needs of our wonderfully diverse community. Making it easier to build a small second home is an important part of this plan.

Until now, it's been too hard to build a modestly sized second home. Small second homes had to go through the same planning process as large second homes and other multi-dwelling developments.

We've changed all that. Now, a small second home up to 60 square metres can be built through a quick and easy process without a planning permit. Better still - anyone can live there – family, friends or it can even be rented out to provide extra income to help with the increasing cost of living.

These changes mean families and communities can stay together and connected. More people will have access to affordable housing choices in the areas they want to live, close to jobs, services, public transport, education, and healthcare. It also means we're better equipped to adapt to the changing way we live, with smaller families and single person households becoming more common.

Keeping our neighbourhoods liveable is as important as ever – that's why siting, design and amenity requirements will apply to small second homes. You won't need a planning permit in a heritage or neighbourhood character area either, opening up the opportunity for even more Victorians to benefit from this reform. But to make sure we're keeping everyone safe, a planning permit will be required in areas where there are potential bushfire or flooding hazards.

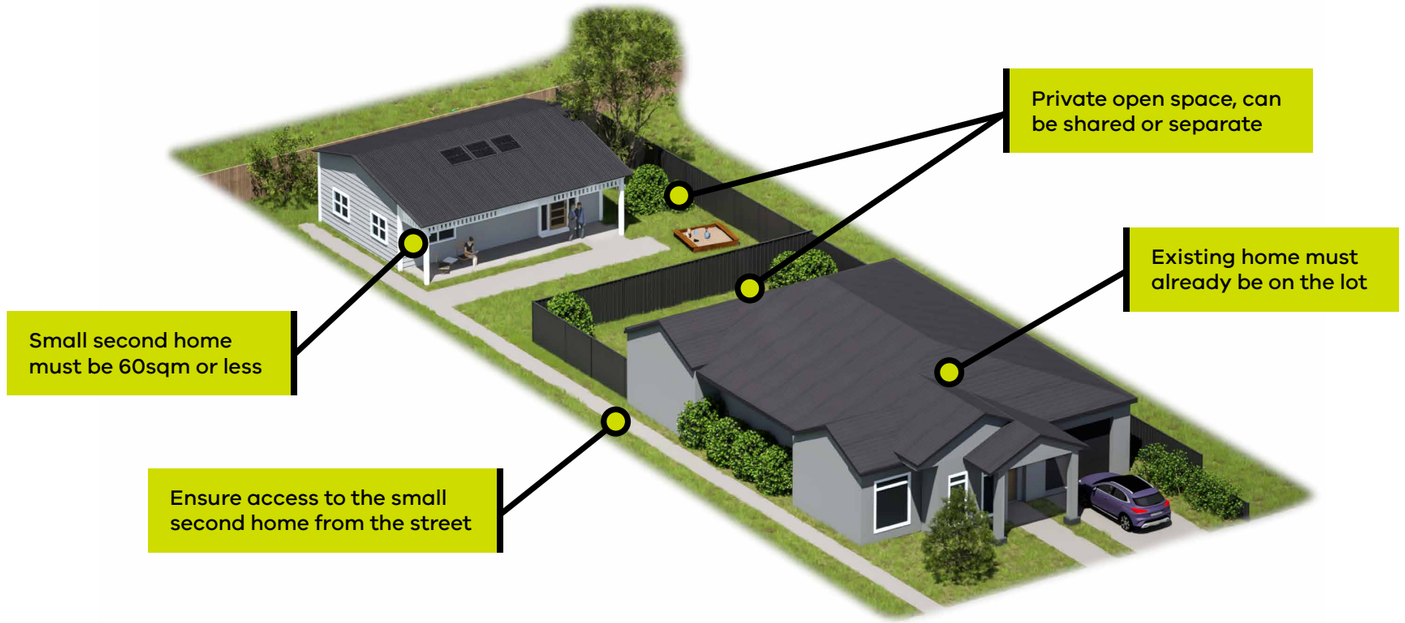
Small second homes will provide even more housing choices for Victorians, making our state an even better place to live.

VICTORIA State Government | Department of Transport and Planning

Making it easier to build a small second home

Small second dwellings – key characteristics

- Floor area must be 60sqm or less
- Must be on the same lot as an existing home
- Must be only one small second home on a lot
- Must have a kitchen, bathroom and toilet
- No car parking spaces required
- Anyone can live in it or rent it out
- Must not be subdivided from the main home
- Must not be connected to a reticulated natural gas supply
- Siting, design and amenity requirements apply, including minimum garden area



Small second homes can be built anywhere in Victoria

Residential zones

Rural zones

When is a planning permit required in a zone?

- **Not required** in a residential zone if the lot is 300sqm or more
- **Not required** in the Farming Zone, Rural Activity Zone and Rural Living Zone if specified requirements are met
- Planning permit may be required in other zones

When is a planning permit required in a overlay?

- **Not required** in a Heritage Overlay, Design and Development Overlay or Neighbourhood Character Overlay if specified requirements are met, including building height less than 5m and finished in muted colours
- Planning permit may be required in other overlays

When is a building permit required?

- **Always required** for a small second home

Making it easier to build a small second home

More information

Making it easier to build a small second dwelling: Applicant's guide	Guide to developing a small second dwelling
Making it easier to build a small second dwelling: Planning framework	Technical guide to small second dwellings in the planning and building systems
Planning website	Information about small second dwellings
Guide to Victoria's Planning System	A guide to interpretation and administrative procedures about the planning act and planning schemes
Planning property report	Summary of planning information for an address in Victoria
Find your planning scheme	Check the planning scheme for your local area
PPN16: Making an application for one or more dwellings in a Residential Zone	Guide for applicants about what to look for in a planning scheme, and information to provide with an application under the residential development provisions.
PPN27: Understanding the residential development provisions	Information about the interpretation and applications of the residential standards in clause 54 and 55
PPN84: Applying the minimum garden area requirement	Guide to the minimum garden area requirement in the Neighbourhood Residential Zone and General Residential Zone.
VicSmart Permits	More information about VicSmart planning applications
Victorian Building Authority (VBA)	Information and resources about building in Victoria
Minister's Guideline MG-12 Siting and design of single dwellings	Guide to the considerations to be applied to the design and siting of single dwellings and small second dwellings under the building regulations
BP01: When is a building permit required?	For more information about when a building permit is required

Acknowledgement of Country

The Department of Transport and Planning proudly acknowledges Victoria's Aboriginal communities and their ongoing strength in practicing the world's oldest living cultures.

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Telephone (03) 9655 6666.

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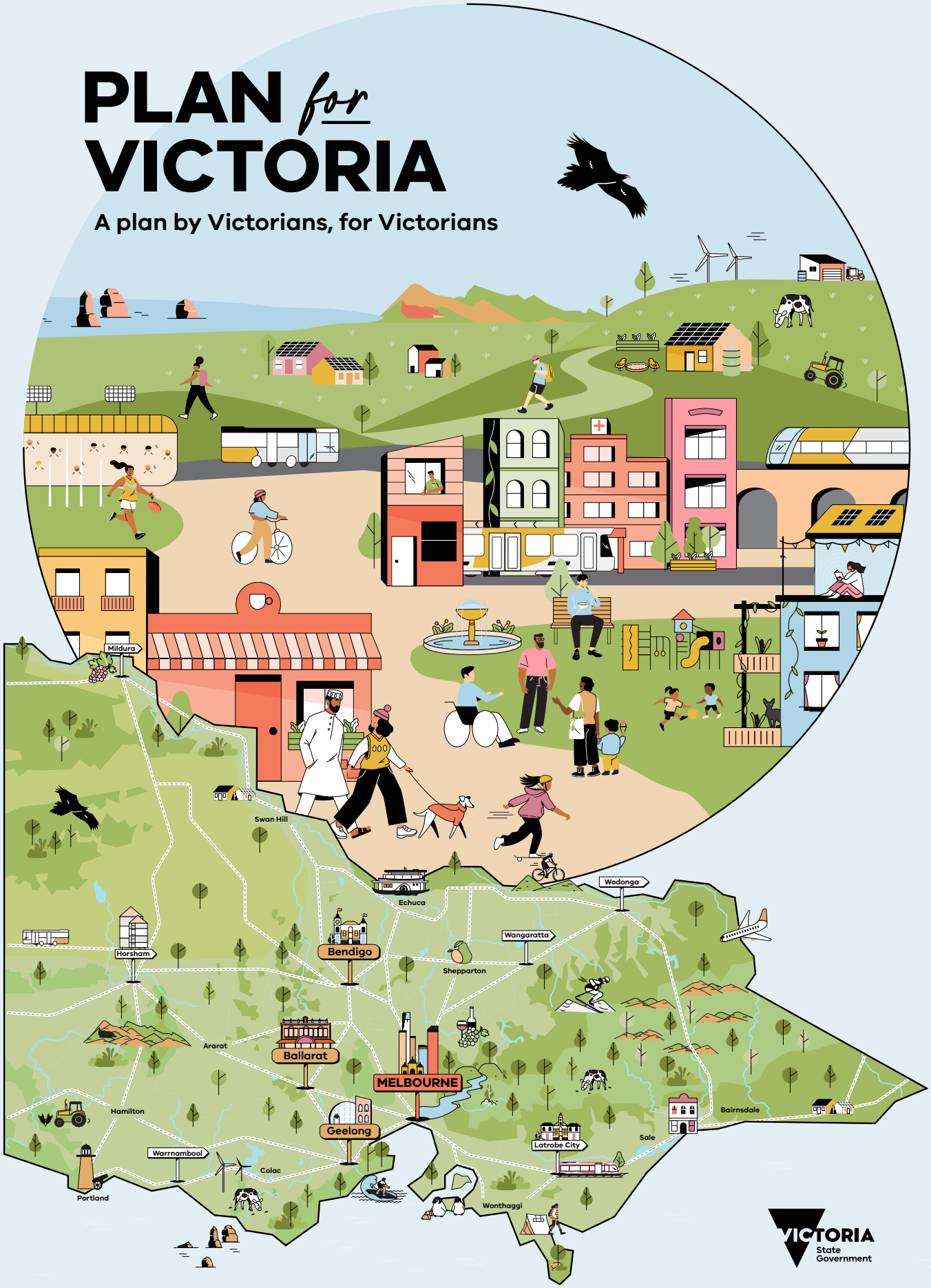
DTP0604/23

PLAN *for* VICTORIA

A plan by Victorians, for Victorians



VICTORIA State Government

Authorised by the Victorian Government, Melbourne

Department of Transport and Planning

1 Spring Street Melbourne

Victoria 3000

Telephone (03) 9655 6666

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Language statement

Language is important and can change over time, and words can have different meanings for different people. We recognise the diversity of First Peoples, their communities and cultures throughout Victoria. We have used the term 'First Peoples' to refer to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who live in Victoria.

Disclaimer

This publication may be of assistance to you, but the State of Victoria and its employees do not guarantee that the publication is without flaw of any kind or is wholly appropriate for your particular purposes and, therefore, disclaims all liability for any error, loss or other consequence which may arise from you relying on any information in this publication.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF COUNTRY

The Victorian Government acknowledges Traditional Owners in Victoria as the custodians of Country. We acknowledge their extraordinary strength and resilience in the face of historical and ongoing social, economic and legal injustices, maintaining their connection to Country.

We pay our respects to Elders past and present, whose knowledge and wisdom have ensured the continuation of spiritual and cultural practices. We also acknowledge the diversity of First Peoples' communities in Victoria.

We acknowledge that the long-lasting, far-reaching and intergenerational consequences of colonisation and dispossession continue to exist today and continue to cause harm. Colonisation has left entrenched systemic and structural racism and suffering, including through the laws and policies of the Colony of Victoria, which specifically excluded First Peoples and their laws, lores, customs, languages and cultures. The Victorian Government has a responsibility to transform its systems and service delivery so First Peoples have decision-making power over matters that directly affect them.

We recognise *Plan for Victoria's* actions will directly impact Country, and we acknowledge Traditional Owners' inherent rights to speak and make decisions for Country. Historically, Victoria's land use planning and development laws and regulations have not been written with input by or with regard to the interests of First Peoples. Planning processes have not considered, recognised or respected their rights and perspectives.

Through this plan, we seek to build partnerships with Traditional Owners and First Peoples across Victoria to change systems to enable self-determination and deliver better outcomes for First Peoples. As we work to achieve *Plan for Victoria's* vision, we recognise the contributions of Traditional Owners and First Peoples to Victorian life and how it enriches us all.

We also acknowledge First Peoples' self-determination is a human right enshrined in the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*. We recognise the hard work of many generations of First Peoples who have fought for these rights to be recognised.

PREMIER'S FOREWORD

We have a vision for Victoria – more homes, more jobs, great communities.

This is our long-term plan to achieve just that.

It's shaped by your views and it's backed by a big to-do list of actions in the short term, which we're ticking off one by one.

The housing crisis has made the dream of homeownership impossible for so many young people, workers and families.

We have one chance to fix it.

Let's give it everything we've got – and let's make our communities even better places while we're at it.

Hon Jacinta Allan MP
Premier of Victoria

MINISTER'S FOREWORD

Plan for Victoria is a plan written by Victorians. Throughout 2024, we asked you, the people of Victoria, to tell us what you value about our state and to set a vision for it. This plan is our commitment to deliver that vision.

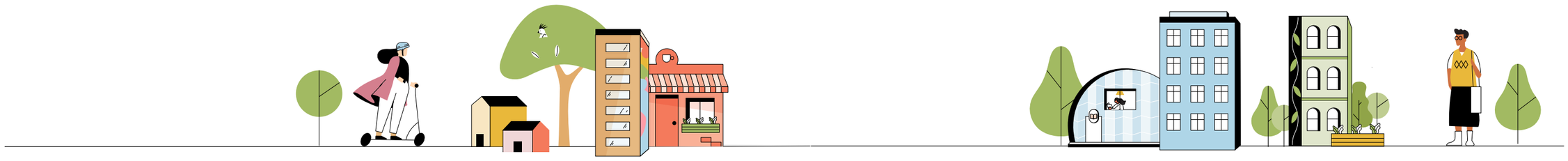
We are committed to carefully planning and investing in open space, shared community places, transport, streets and the many diverse places Victorians call home.

You told us that housing is a priority and that we must plan for and build homes in the right places, to provide more choice and more affordable housing options. You want homes built to last and designed to modern standards: environmentally sustainable, resilient to climate change and embracing modern methods of construction.

This plan's vision and pillars for action will reshape how we plan for regional Victoria and Melbourne.

Together, we'll shape a future Victoria that is socially inclusive, environmentally resilient, economically prosperous and connected to a global ecosystem of opportunity for all Victorians.

Hon Sonya Kilkenny MP
Attorney-General
Minister for Planning



Clyde Street Mews, Thornbury VIC – Six Degrees Architects

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MAP 1: A PLAN FOR ALL OF VICTORIA

This plan is for all of Victoria: for Melbourne, our regional cities and the many towns and small communities across regional and rural Victoria.

Victoria is made up of unique locations and landscapes, from our temperate coastal towns to across the Great Dividing Range and to our semi-arid north-west. Each has its own identity, history and opportunities.

Plan for Victoria respects the diverse, distinctive, local characteristics of where people live across our wonderful state.

A LONG-TERM PLAN FOR ALL OF VICTORIA

Victoria's success and prosperity rely on ensuring we have a long-term plan for all of Victoria that addresses the needs of our diverse and growing population while safeguarding what we love about where we live, work, play and raise our families.

This is a plan for now and for the generations to come.

Why we plan

We plan for more homes and jobs to create inclusive, connected communities with diverse housing options where Victorians want to live.

We plan to preserve and protect land for farming, agriculture and open space: parks, reserves and other green public areas.

We plan to protect the natural values and resources we need for the future: things like energy, water, extractive resources and coastal and marine environments.

We plan so that as communities grow, residents will have the services and the infrastructure they need to live well.

We plan to give certainty and transparency to councils, businesses and communities.

We plan to provide a clear, stable and competitive environment to attract business investment and jobs.

We plan to protect and preserve the things Victorians love and value.

We plan to maximise opportunities for Victorians, improve health and wellbeing, and support cultural expression and social cohesion.

We plan to make the places Victorians live, work and visit functional, sustainable, inclusive, welcoming, empowering and enriching.

We plan to position Victoria as a global leader in liveability, equity and sustainability, ensuring a prosperous future for all Victorians.

It's time for a refreshed plan

It's been more than 30 years since we had a plan for all of Victoria, and we need a plan that addresses our current and future issues and opportunities. We need a plan for all of Victoria: for Melbourne, our bigger and smaller regional cities and centres, and the many towns and small communities across regional and rural Victoria.

And we believe that the best plan for Victoria is a plan written by Victorians.

Throughout 2024, we asked Victorians to tell us what they love and value about where they live, and we asked Victorians to tell us their vision for what Victoria should look like through to 2050.

And they told us: our engagement activities reached more than 110,000 Victorians, and we received more than 15,000 items of feedback.

This is your *Plan for Victoria*.

Thank you to every single Victorian who contributed to this plan.

Shaping our future

Victoria is a very popular place to live and invest in Australia. This is not due to chance but to the opportunities created and choices made by the Victorian Government, councils, businesses and communities.

We continue to make major investments in public transport, facilities and services, including schools and kinders, TAFEs, emergency services, health care, active transport and open space. Victoria has world-class cultural and sporting offerings, beautiful waterways, pristine environments and bountiful natural resources.

To meet Victorians' current and future housing needs, about 2.24 million more homes will be needed across Melbourne and our regional cities and towns over the next 30 years. And it matters where those new homes will be.

Activity centres close to stations and trams are great locations for more homes to give you more choices of the location, affordability and type of your home. They are also places to work, interact with others, shop and access daily needs. Building more homes in these places makes sense.

With updated planning controls, activity centres and priority precincts are key places to deliver more homes in the right locations and improve housing affordability and choice.

Major projects like the Suburban Rail Loop are essential for housing affordability and choice. This transformative project is not just a landmark transport infrastructure project that will greatly expand our transport network, increase connectivity, boost productivity, conserve energy and limit greenhouse gas emissions. Suburban Rail Loop is also Australia's largest housing project to date. It will support the delivery of 70,000 additional homes and more housing choices in the Suburban Rail Loop East neighbourhoods, where Victorians want to live.

Victoria's growth will produce greater demand for quarry materials, which are necessary for our construction needs. These must be sourced close to where they are needed to minimise transport costs and emissions and make what's built more affordable and sustainable.

We must identify and protect land for jobs to ensure a prosperous future for Victoria. By 2050, land for about 1.7 million extra jobs will be needed. To provide the jobs needed, businesses must have the certainty to invest in the right places: close to skilled and talented people, freight networks and supply chains. This means we must protect a pipeline of well-located land in the years ahead.

We'll ensure all Victorians benefit from changes in the global economy. We'll support regional and rural Victoria to lead the way in Victoria's energy transition - benefiting from sustainable jobs - and prioritising access to affordable, reliable energy supply that underpins local businesses and communities. We will protect and enhance Victoria's agribusiness, food and fibre, advanced manufacturing and critical mineral resources sectors. Melbourne will continue to be a diverse economic powerhouse for the state, building on its nation-leading strengths in professional services, health care, biomedical research, manufacturing and food and fibre manufacturing and services.

Continuing to build on Victoria's global reputation for liveability will be key for all sectors to grow.

DEVELOPING THE PLAN

Throughout 2024, we embarked on the most extensive community-led consultation ever undertaken for a strategic plan in Victoria.

This engagement set a clear direction for our steps of understand, imagine, act and learn.

Understanding what you want for Victoria

We visited every part of the state to meet with Victorians: in the places they live, work, go to school, play sport, shop, volunteer, relax and just go about their daily lives.

We also undertook hundreds of hours of modelling to identify well-connected, well-serviced locations to support large numbers of new homes, including considering access to jobs, environmental constraints and development feasibility.

Setting a vision

We believe the best people to set the vision for Victoria are Victorians themselves. So, we put together a People's Panel and asked them to write a vision statement for the future of Victoria.

The panel's final report, reflecting its consensus, said it expected current and future governments to use the vision to build Victoria towards 2050, in line with community needs.

Actions

This is a plan to guide the Victorian Government's actions to deliver the future Victorians have said they want.

But it's not simply a plan for what the government will do. We'll need to all work together: the Victorian Government, councils, businesses and communities.

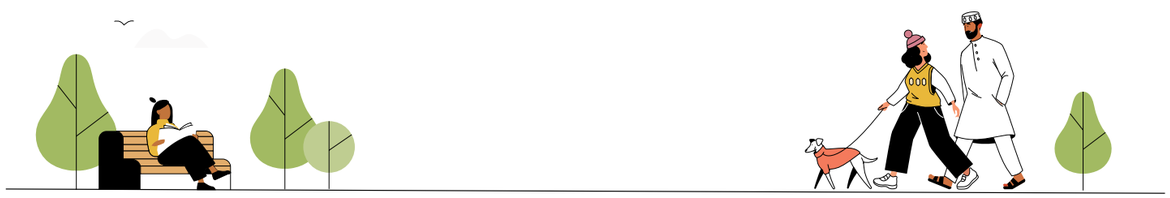
Together, we can shape a future Victoria that is socially and economically strong, environmentally resilient and sustainable, with great places to live.

This is a plan, a plan of actions, that will deliver for all Victorians.

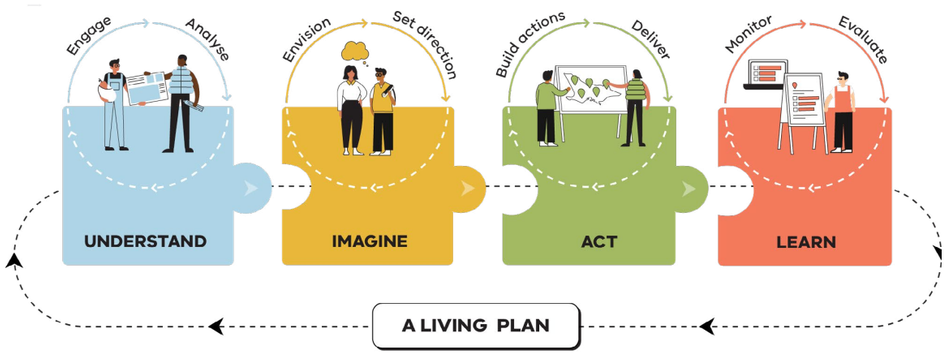
Implementation and monitoring

This is a living plan that will continue to address emerging issues and respond to meet the needs of future generations of Victorians. It includes actions we can take now while creating opportunities to jump in and add actions as needed.

To stay focused on achieving our vision for Victoria, we'll find out what's working and what's not, adjust our actions, deliver new actions, and report back to you.



Understand, imagine, act, learn



How *Plan for Victoria* was developed

Glen Iris Residential, Glen Iris VIC - Mecwacare and Modscape

ENGAGEMENT FOR THE PLAN

The most extensive community-led consultation ever for a Victorian strategic plan

120+
community events held

45
events held in regional and rural Victoria

2,500+
online surveys submitted

15,000+
items of feedback gathered

247
written submissions received

1,300+ young people engaged

29+ multicultural groups engaged

260+ industry stakeholder representatives engaged

55 survey respondents identifying as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander

All metropolitan councils engaged in one-on-one sessions and regional and rural councils in group sessions

Find out more about the engagement program and what Victorians told us here.

How we listened

Between November 2023 and June 2024, we had more than 850 hours of conversation with industry stakeholders, communities and councils. Four themes guided our community conversations:

- affordable housing and choice
- equity and jobs
- thriving and liveable suburbs and towns
- sustainable environments and climate action.

We identified eight broad strategies from the information we gathered, called 'big ideas'. They were:

- more homes in locations with great public transport access
- more housing options for all Victorians, including social and affordable homes
- more jobs and opportunities closer to where you live
- more options for how we move from place to place
- more certainty and guidance on how places will change over time
- more trees and urban greening in our parks and community spaces
- more protections from flooding, bushfires and climate hazards
- greater protection of our agricultural land.

We took these big ideas back to communities across the state through July and August 2024 for feedback and submissions. The more than 15,000 feedback items and 247 formal submissions guided the development of *Plan for Victoria*.

What you told us

Affordable housing and choice

You told us you want affordable, diverse housing near public transport, schools, parks and essential services. You supported more social and affordable housing, especially in areas with greater need and various types of housing to meet different ways of living.

You told us new homes must be high-quality: well-designed and well-built for comfort, quality of life, health, wellbeing and sustainability.

University and TAFE students want more affordable, better-quality and secure housing options. School students want different types of housing to suit different people and families.

Many of you said affordability is the most important factor when choosing a place to live. For First Peoples, being close to family and friends is the second most important factor, highlighting the importance of inter-generational connection.

Regional Victorians wanted more homes to be built to ease local housing pressures, attract more people to the regions and improve the economy outside of Melbourne.

While it's clear that Victoria needs more homes, you told us it's vital that local areas maintain their local characters, including the heritage and environmental features you value.

Equity and jobs

You told us you want accessible jobs and services and better public transport, roads and active transport paths to improve how you get about.

You want public transport to be more frequent and better connected, especially in places with limited access to it. People in rural areas rely more on private vehicles as there is little or no public transport. They want more investment in roads to make it easier to get about.

Older people in Victoria want less road congestion to make it easier to get about. Those under 70 want more and better public transport.

You want to ensure there is enough industrial and commercial land available in your local area, to help have more jobs closer to where you live. You strongly supported mixed-use developments, combining commercial, residential and recreational land uses.

You said that community connection is essential for everyone, especially young people. Local services, affordable community facilities, events and activities encourage social connections.

Thriving and liveable suburbs and towns

You told us you want greener suburbs with more tree canopy, open space and walking and bike paths. These all contribute to healthier, more sustainable communities.

You want more support for local businesses, but they must be well-located so you can access them easily.

School students across Victoria told us it's important to have safe, friendly neighbourhoods with lots of open space, sporting facilities and activities for children and young people.

You told us public spaces must be inclusive, safe and environmentally friendly. You suggested having design standards for new public spaces, including universal design (to make all buildings accessible), environmentally sustainable design and gender-inclusive design.

You said that more accessible public transport and more active transport options (like connected bike paths and better links to stations) will make your area more sustainable and inclusive.

Sustainable environments and climate action

You told us you want the environment protected and sustainable principles applied to planning and building, including making new homes more sustainable with solar panels, heat pumps, cooling systems and clean, renewable energy. One suggestion was for residential planning to consider environmental impact during design and development.

Overall, you supported renewable energy, but regional and rural communities were concerned about the impact of renewables on the environment and agricultural productivity in their areas.

You want greater protection of Country, agricultural land, lakes, beaches and natural resources. With housing density increasing, you said it's important to consider environmental hazards (such as flood and bushfire risks) when building new homes.

Having more effective recycling programs was one of the main ways you said you can contribute to a more sustainable environment.

Engaging with Traditional Owners and First Peoples

We began engaging with Traditional Owners to develop this plan in late 2023. Our engagement approach is built on the principles of self-determination and free, prior and informed consent, which reflects Traditional Owners' human rights as stated in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Traditional Owners have their own governance structures and decision-making processes, so how we engage with them needs to allow time for those processes to occur. Meaningful engagement takes time. It also demonstrates respect for established governance structures within Registered Aboriginal Parties and shows respect for the knowledge Traditional Owners have to offer. In other words, respect for self-determination.

The Registered Aboriginal Parties with which we met provided valuable advice about how we can ensure the success of ongoing engagement, including being clear about opportunities for future change and about how their input and feedback will influence outcomes.

Beginning in early 2024, we engaged with peak bodies and organisations within the wider First Peoples community. This included engagement, which is ongoing, with five First Peoples community organisations and First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria representatives.

We developed a page on the Engage Victoria website with an online survey only open to First Peoples and the wider First Peoples community.

Of the online community survey respondents, 55 identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.

As part of our engagement with young people, a 'youth ambassador' held a creative workshop on their home Country, Multnomah (Portland). All 10 workshop participants identified as First Peoples.

The needs First Peoples spoke of included:

- better access to housing
- more local empowerment, giving Traditional Owners more power over the future
- more creative spaces to explore ideas and interests, which will also help reduce the unsocial behaviour of some young people
- better roads to help get to and from work or study
- the protection of rural land for farming and food production.

We have heard the call for First Peoples-led environmental practices and reconciliation and more programs to care for Country.

Before: Limited home choices in an unwelcoming environment.

After: More home choices provided in green public areas with access to jobs, shops, public transport, facilities and services.

THE PLAN'S VISION FOR VICTORIA, BY VICTORIANS

To guide this plan, we asked a People's Panel to write a vision statement reflecting the aspirations of today's and future generations of Victorians, drawing on the findings of the community-led consultation.

The panel comprised 49 Victorians selected from 20,000 people with different life experiences from Melbourne and cities, towns and communities across regional and rural Victoria.

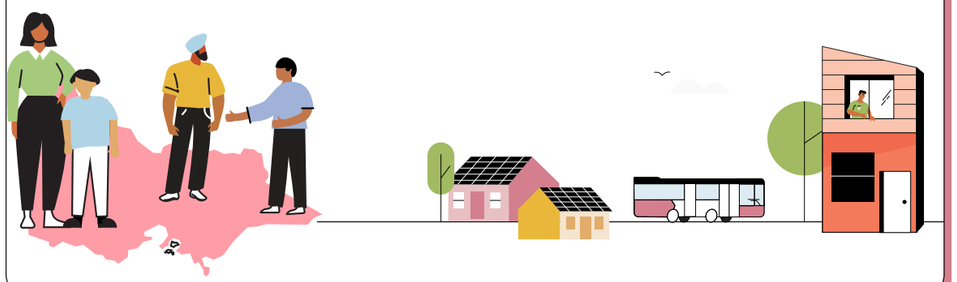
Over two weekends and guided by expert facilitators, this diverse group of Victorians reviewed over 15,000 items of feedback from the community-led consultation. They also questioned government and private sector representatives and discussed matters in detail.

The People's Panel vision for Victoria

By 2050, Victoria will be a vibrant, accessible and connected community, valued for its diverse cultures, sustainable environmental practices and respect for the First Peoples of Victoria.

Building a state that provides choices and opportunities for current and future generations of Victorians in quality housing, transport, employment, environment and connectivity will require input from the community, government, local businesses and industry alike.

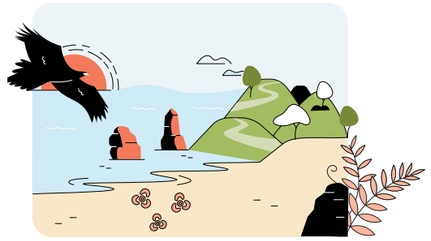
We will create a society that caters to the unique needs of all Victorians, nurturing individual health through physical and cultural recreation.



THE PLAN'S FIVE PILLARS FOR ACTION

***Plan for Victoria* is structured around five pillars.**

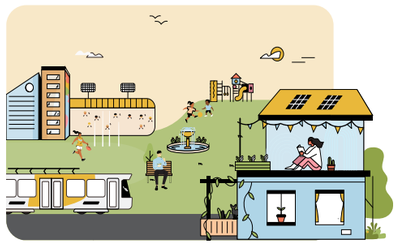
They are:



Self-determination and caring for Country: underpinning and informing the other pillars.

Housing for all Victorians: delivering sufficient affordable homes for all Victorians

Accessible jobs and services: making sure you have good access to facilities and good jobs



Great places, suburbs and towns: creating thriving places that are attractive, safe and welcoming for everyone

Sustainable environments: preserving the natural values of Victoria and addressing climate change

PILLAR 1:

HOUSING FOR ALL VICTORIANS

Providing all Victorians with a choice of a well-designed home at an affordable price and close to daily needs.

Ensuring housing is affordable, diverse and accessible is central to creating inclusive, prosperous, liveable communities.

The People's Panel's vision

Our housing will be consistently functional, inclusive, accessible, fair and sustainable. Victorians will live in diverse forms of housing that meet the needs of the public and contribute to our multi-faceted and vibrant community, providing accessible services, lively centres and open space.

We will increase medium-density housing and limit urban sprawl to preserve our natural landscapes and biodiversity.

The Victorian government will proactively align their policies with other levels of government to facilitate ample and affordable private and social housing.

As part of our living plan, we will track delivery of inclusive communities:

- opportunities for all
- diverse communities
- strong communities
- good governance.

Enabling...

More homes: We'll aim to build 2.24 million homes across Melbourne and our regional cities and towns over the next 30 years. Local government housing targets will show us where these new homes will go.

Greater diversity: We'll have a greater diversity of homes, so you have more choices and more opportunities to live where you want to live: close to your family, jobs, shops, public transport and community facilities and services at all stages of your life. These homes will be suitable for a variety of households, including families, singles and seniors.

Affordable and fair housing: You'll be able to find a home that's right for you, including modern social and affordable housing.

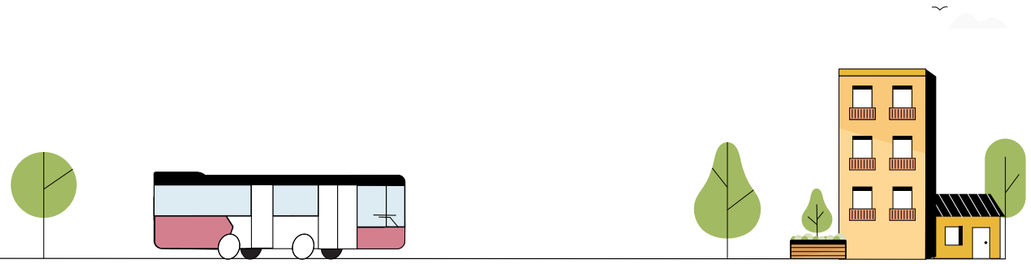
More housing and choice across regional Victoria: There will be more homes in regional cities in locations well-serviced with jobs, shops, public transport and community facilities and services. We'll look for opportunities to build more homes to support big projects in regional Victoria, like energy projects. We'll also protect the unique values and distinctive attributes of towns and landscapes across regional and rural Victoria against overuse, overdevelopment and climate change impacts.

Innovative building solutions: We'll reduce the costs and construction times of new homes while promoting environmentally sustainable developments by supporting and prioritising better-designed apartments and sustainable and modern methods of construction.

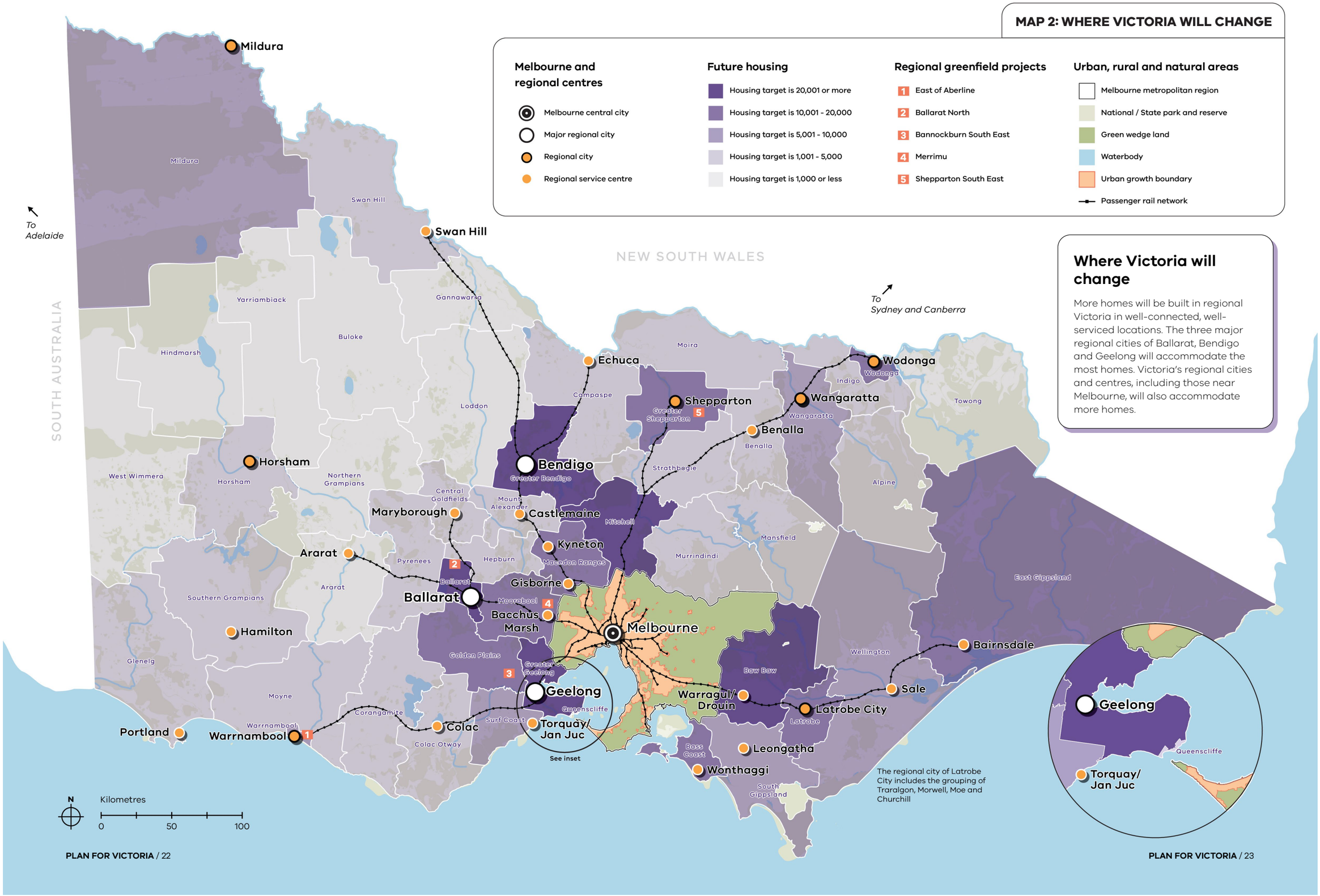
Victoria's Housing Statement

We're delivering on the September 2023 Victoria's Housing Statement to boost housing supply across the state, including social and affordable homes, by reforming our planning system. This is part of a suite of actions that include encouraging great design standards, strengthening renters' rights, safeguarding essential quarry resources and slashing stamp duty on off-the-plan apartments, units and townhouses to cut upfront costs, speed-up building and make buying off-the-plan more affordable. We want Victoria to stay number one in Australia for approving and building homes.

Find out more about Victoria's Housing Statement here.

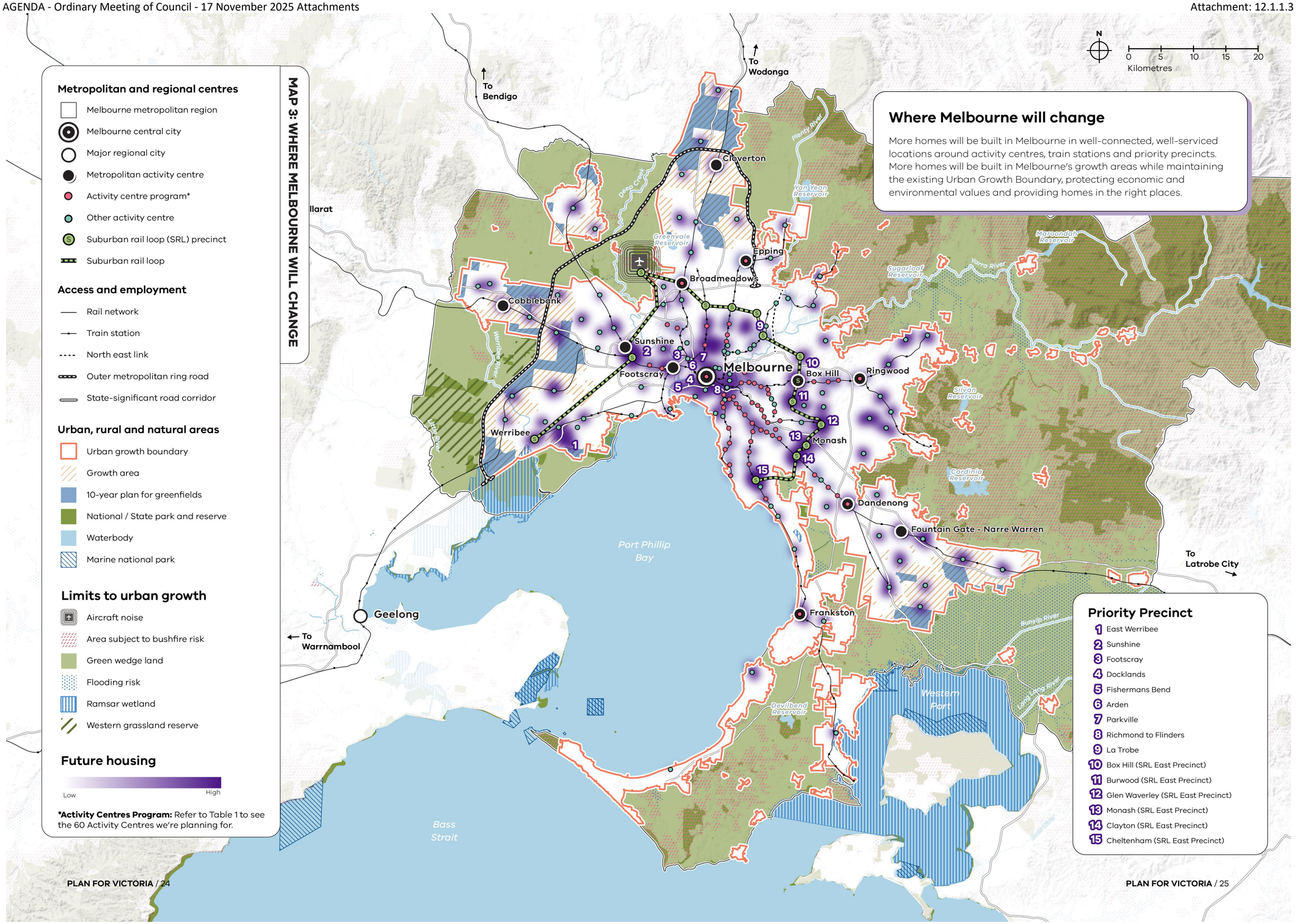


MAP 2: WHERE VICTORIA WILL CHANGE



Where Victoria will change

More homes will be built in regional Victoria in well-connected, well-serviced locations. The three major regional cities of Ballarat, Bendigo and Geelong will accommodate the most homes. Victoria's regional cities and centres, including those near Melbourne, will also accommodate more homes.


MAP 3: WHERE MELBOURNE WILL CHANGE
Metropolitan and regional centres
Melbourne metropolitan region
Melbourne central city
Major regional city
Metropolitan activity centre
Activity centre program*
Other activity centre
Suburban rail loop (SRL) precinct
Suburban rail loop
Access and employment
Rail network
Train station
North east link
Outer metropolitan ring road
State-significant road corridor
Urban, rural and natural areas
Urban growth boundary
Growth area
10-year plan for greenfields
National / State park and reserve
Waterbody
Marine national park
Limits to urban growth
Aircraft noise
Area subject to bushfire risk
Green wedge land
Flooding risk
Ramsar wetland
Western grassland reserve
Future housing
Low
High
*Activity Centres Program: Refer to Table 1 to see the 60 Activity Centres we're planning for.
Where Melbourne will change
More homes will be built in Melbourne in well-connected, well-serviced locations around activity centres, train stations and priority precincts. More homes will be built in Melbourne's growth areas while maintaining the existing Urban Growth Boundary, protecting economic and environmental values and providing homes in the right places.
N
0 5 10 15 20
Kilometres
To Bendigo
To Wodonga
To Warrnambool
To Latrobe City
Ballarat
Geelong
Cobblebank
Werribee
Sunshine
Footscray
Melbourne
Box Hill
Ringwood
Monash
Dandenong
Fountain Gate - Narre Warren
Frankston
Broadmeadows
Epping
Cloverton
Port Phillip Bay
Bass Strait
Western Port
Priority Precinct
1 East Werribee
2 Sunshine
3 Footscray
4 Docklands
5 Fishermans Bend
6 Arden
7 Parkville
8 Richmond to Flinders
9 La Trobe
10 Box Hill (SRL East Precinct)
11 Burwood (SRL East Precinct)
12 Glen Waverley (SRL East Precinct)
13 Monash (SRL East Precinct)
14 Clayton (SRL East Precinct)
15 Cheltenham (SRL East Precinct)
PLAN FOR VICTORIA / 24
PLAN FOR VICTORIA / 25

ACTIVITY CENTRE PROGRAM

We're planning for more homes in and around Activity Centres: well-connected places, particularly around train stations and tram stops in Melbourne's inner and middle suburbs, with good access to diverse jobs, shops and public transport, facilities and services.

We will lead the delivery of new planning controls for 60 Activity Centres across greater Melbourne. The 60 centres are identified on **Map 3** and listed in **Table 1.** The new planning controls will include centre-specific provisions for taller buildings at the centre's core and low-rise apartments and townhouses within walking distance of the core.

We have prioritised locations that can accommodate additional housing taking into consideration market readiness, transport capacity, access to jobs and services, and environmental constraints.

The program includes a cluster of inner-city suburbs where, in collaboration with local government, we will identify specific opportunities for strategic redevelopment sites.

There is an important role for local government to play in planning for the future of our places and neighbourhoods. This program will introduce new planning controls to streamline the process for planning applications, making it faster and easier to build more quality homes in activity centres which can be applied in other locations outside the Activity Centre Program.

Find out more about the Activity Centres Program **here.**

Table 1: The 60 Activity centres we're planning for

#	Activity centre	Local government
1	Broadmeadows	Hume
2	Camberwell Junction	Boroondara
3	Chadstone	Stonnington / Monash / Glen Eira
4	Epping	Whittlesea
5	Frankston	Frankston
6	Moorabbin	Bayside / Kingston / Glen Eira
7	Niddrie (Keilor Road – tram)*	Moonee Valley
8	North Essendon (tram)*	Moonee Valley
9	Preston	Darebin
10	Ringwood	Maroondah
11	Hawthorn Station	Boroondara
12	Glenferrie Station	Boroondara
13	Auburn Station	Boroondara
14	Kew Junction (tram)	Boroondara
15	Riversdale/Willison Stations*	Boroondara
16	Carnegie Station	Glen Eira
17	Murrumbeena Station	Glen Eira
18	Hughesdale Station	Glen Eira / Monash
19	Oakleigh Station	Monash
20	Toorak Station	Stonnington
21	Toorak Village (tram)*	Stonnington
22	Hawksburn Station	Stonnington
23	Armadale Station	Stonnington
24	Malvern Station	Stonnington
25	Tooronga Station	Stonnington
26	Gardiner/Glen Iris Station	Stonnington
27	Darling Station	Stonnington
28	Middle Footscray Station*	Maribyrnong
29	West Footscray Station	Maribyrnong
30	Tottenham Station	Maribyrnong
31	North Brighton Station	Bayside
32	Middle Brighton Station	Bayside
33	Hampton Station	Bayside
34	Sandringham Station	Bayside
35	Blackburn Station	Whitehorse
36	Nunawading Station	Whitehorse
37	Mitcham Station	Whitehorse
38	High Street (Thornbury)	Darebin
39	St Georges Road (Thornbury)	Darebin
40	Heidelberg Station	Banyule
41	Springvale Station	Greater Dandenong
42	Noble Park Station	Greater Dandenong
43	Yarraman Station	Greater Dandenong
44	Dandenong Station	Greater Dandenong
45	Ashburton Station*	Boroondara
46	East Malvern Station	Stonnington
47	Holmesglen Station	Stonnington / Monash
48	South Yarra Station	Stonnington
49	Prahran Station	Stonnington
50	Windsor Station	Stonnington
51	Elsternwick Station	Glen Eira
52	Glen Huntly Station	Glen Eira
53	Ormond Station	Glen Eira
54	Bentleigh Station*	Glen Eira
55	Caulfield Station	Glen Eira / Stonnington
56	Mentone Station	Kingston
57	Brunswick Station	Merri-bek
58	Coburg Station	Merri-bek
59	Inner Melbourne†	Melbourne
60	Inner Melbourne†	Yarra

* Neighbourhood centre

† In collaboration with local government, we will identify specific opportunities for strategic redevelopment sites

HOUSING TARGETS FOR A LIVEABLE VICTORIA

Why we're setting housing targets

Housing targets are crucial for housing affordability and choice. They ensure we can build enough homes to meet your needs. Targets help:

- improve housing affordability for you by delivering different types of homes at a range of prices, particularly in areas where you want to live
- with strategic planning for infrastructure and services that stimulate local economies and provide greater planning certainty for business investment and more local jobs.

About the targets

This plan sets out housing targets for every local government area across Victoria, specifying their share of the extra 2.24 million homes we need.

The targets will ensure that every planning scheme identifies enough realistic opportunities for new development to deliver the targeted number of homes.

We'll assess each planning scheme to ensure it can deliver its target. We'll work with councils to make the necessary changes to planning schemes, particularly to zones and overlays and how they are applied, so the targets are met.

Setting the housing targets

The fairest, most sensible way to work out where new homes should be located is to:

- prioritise locations well-provided with jobs, shops, public transport and community facilities and services
- channel some growth away from Melbourne to provide the benefits of growth to communities in regional cities and towns
- protect natural values and Traditional Owners' culture and values
- understand and manage environmental risks (such as flooding, rising sea levels and bushfires)
- maintain our agricultural areas.

Map 4 and **Map 5** show each local government area's housing target for 2051, bringing to life our commitment for at least 70 per cent of homes to be built in established areas (noting the adjusted approach for Greater Geelong and Ballarat), reflecting the criteria above. The targets might be met by building more townhouses and small and medium-sized apartment buildings or some larger apartment buildings in areas with great public transport. The targets will also enable the short-term imperative to deliver affordable housing in our growth areas.

We've included sub-targets for greenfield land for metropolitan Melbourne's growth area councils. These sub-targets recognise the different planning processes required to realise development on greenfield land compared to non-greenfield land. The regional councils of Greater Geelong, Greater Bendigo and Ballarat also have sub-targets for greenfield land that moves them closer to building 70 per cent of homes in their existing urban areas. The greenfield land sub-targets for the Greater Geelong and Ballarat regional councils represent a 40 per cent share of total new dwellings to 2051 due to local circumstances.

Implementing the housing targets

At the state level, we'll amend all planning schemes so planning authorities – councils and other bodies writing planning rules – and responsible authorities – councils and other bodies deciding on planning applications – must implement the local government area housing targets and all other relevant actions in all future decisions.

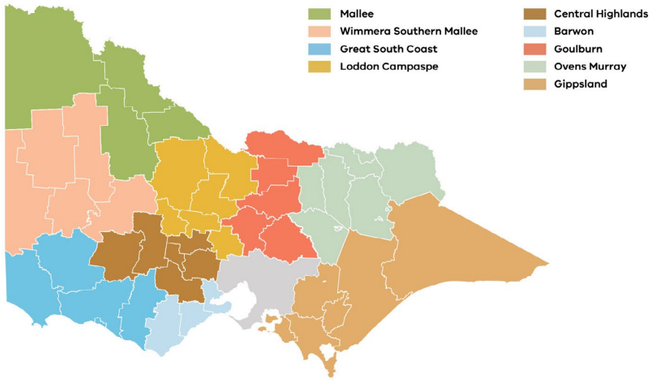
The Victorian Government and other planners will also ensure consistency with this plan when they consider options and develop business cases for new infrastructure and services.

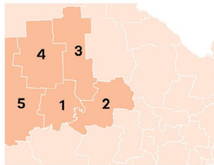
We acknowledge that councils work hard to plan for their municipalities and update their planning schemes within reasonable timeframes. But we'll hold councils accountable with explicit directions to change planning schemes if they are not providing enough housing capacity, and, if required, we'll step in to update schemes and work with councils to ensure they're on track to achieve their target.

Before: Underutilised land limits opportunities for more homes, green spaces and vibrant communities.

After: More homes within commercial sites creates opportunities for a greater diversity of homes and support for local businesses.

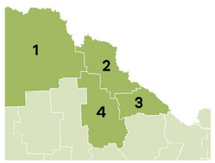
MAP 4: REGIONAL LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA HOUSING TARGETS





Wimmera Southern Mallee

1.	Horsham	3,300
2.	Northern Grampians	750
3.	Yarriambiack	300
4.	Hindmarsh	250
5.	West Wimmera	200



Mallee

1.	Mildura	8,500
2.	Swan Hill	2,100
3.	Gannawarra	850
4.	Buloke	150

Great South Coast

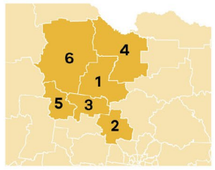
1.	Warrnambool	7,200
2.	Moyne	2,900
3.	Glenelg	1,400
4.	Corangamite	1,400
5.	Southern Grampians	1,250

Gippsland

1.	Baw Baw	25,700
2.	Bass Coast	19,250
3.	Latrobe	13,000
4.	East Gippsland	11,000
5.	Wellington	8,000
6.	South Gippsland	8,000

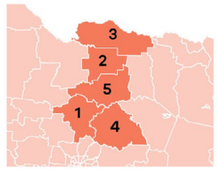
Barwon

1.	Greater Geelong	128,600
	Non-Greenfield Target	*77,500*
	Greenfield Target	*51,100*
2.	Surf Coast	8,000
3.	Colac Otway	3,700
4.	Borough of Queenscliffe	400



Loddon Campaspe

1.	Greater Bendigo	37,000
	Non-Greenfield Target	*26,000*
	Greenfield Target	*11,000*
2.	Macedon Ranges	13,200
3.	Mount Alexander	4,500
4.	Campaspe	4,500
5.	Central Goldfields	1,700
6.	Loddon	550



Goulburn

1.	Mitchell*	66,000
	Non-Greenfield Target	*10,000*
	Greenfield Target	*56,000*
2.	Greater Shepparton	15,250
3.	Moira	4,500
4.	Murrindindi	3,350
5.	Strathbogie	2,400

Ovens Murray

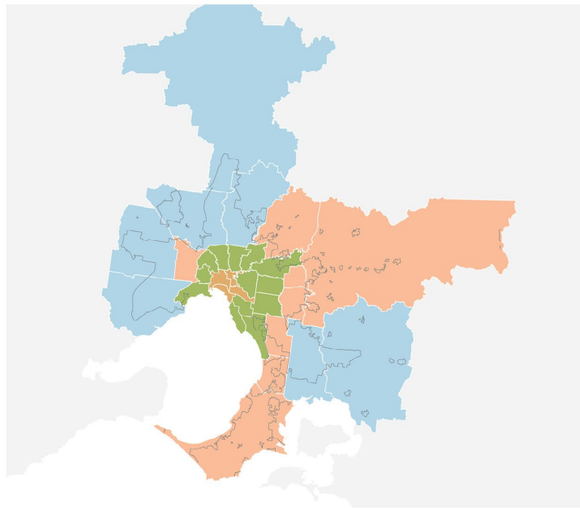
1.	Wodonga	15,200
2.	Wangaratta	6,000
3.	Mansfield	3,900
4.	Indigo	3,100
5.	Alpine	1,250
6.	Benalla	1,700
7.	Towong	550

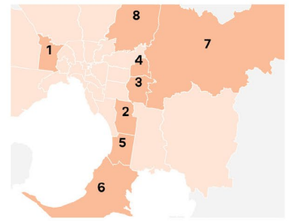
Central Highlands

1.	Ballarat	46,900
	Non-Greenfield Target	*28,000*
	Greenfield Target	*18,900*
2.	Moorabool	20,000
3.	Golden Plains	12,500
4.	Hepburn	3,150
5.	Pyrenees	1,300
6.	Ararat	1,000

*Note: Mitchell Shire Council's greenfield target sits within metropolitan Melbourne's urban growth boundary. Their non-greenfield target is categorised as regional Victoria.

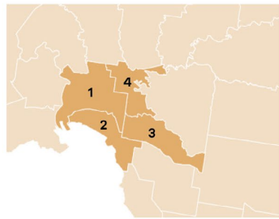
MAP 5: MELBOURNE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA HOUSING TARGETS





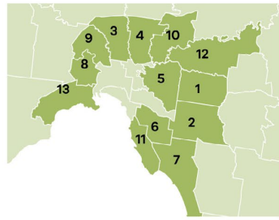
Outer Melbourne

1.	Brimbank	59,500
2.	Greater Dandenong	52,500
3.	Knox	43,000
4.	Maroondah	39,500
5.	Frankston	33,000
6.	Mornington Peninsula	24,000
7.	Yarra Ranges	25,000
8.	Nillumbik	6,500



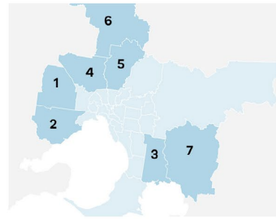
Inner Melbourne

1.	Melbourne	119,500
2.	Port Phillip	55,000
3.	Stonnington	50,000
4.	Yarra	44,000



Middle Melbourne

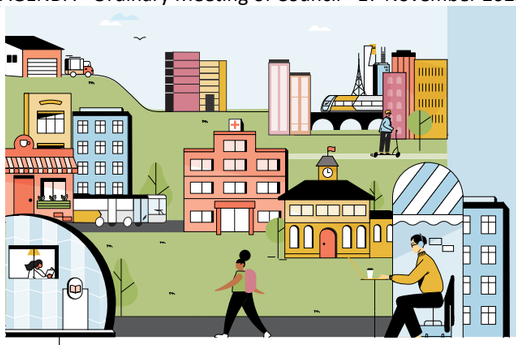
1.	Whitehorse	76,500
2.	Monash	69,500
3.	Merri-Bek	69,000
4.	Darebin	69,000
5.	Boroondara	65,500
6.	Glen Eira	63,500
7.	Kingston	51,500
8.	Maribyrnong	48,000
9.	Moonee Valley	47,500
10.	Banyule	45,500
11.	Bayside	30,000
12.	Manningham	28,500
13.	Hobsons Bay	22,500



Growth

1.	Melton	109,000
	Non-Greenfield Target	*5,000*
	Greenfield Target	*104,000*
2.	Wyndham	99,000
	Non-Greenfield Target	*25,000*
	Greenfield Target	*74,000*
3.	Casey	87,000
	Non-Greenfield Target	*28,500*
	Greenfield Target	*58,500*
4.	Hume	79,000
	Non-Greenfield Target	*25,500*
	Greenfield Target	*53,500*
5.	Whittlesea	72,000
	Non-Greenfield Target	*29,000*
	Greenfield Target	*43,000*
6.	Mitchell*	66,000
	Non-Greenfield Target	*10,000*
	Greenfield Target	*56,000*
7.	Cardinia	30,000
	Non-Greenfield Target	*9,000*
	Greenfield Target	*21,000*

*Note: Mitchell Shire Council's greenfield target sits within metropolitan Melbourne's urban growth boundary. Their non-greenfield target is categorised as regional Victoria.



PILLAR 2:

ACCESSIBLE JOBS AND SERVICES

Enabling you to connect to jobs, education, healthcare, shops and the services you need to live a productive and prosperous life.

A good and strong economy depends on equitable and fair access to employment opportunities, education and other services.

The People's Panel's vision

We envisage that in 2050 we will be a well-connected society where everyone has equitable access to essential services, as well as fair and inclusive living/working standards.

There will be fair access to housing, jobs, education, infrastructure and services; commerce and the environment will be supported across the state. Victorians want a healthy work-life balance that produces wellbeing in safe working environments.

We envisage a Victoria where people have more choice about where to live and work within a connected community. Efficient transport infrastructure will link Melbourne and regional cities, and places of cultural and recreational importance.

There will be an emphasis on rural cities and towns and the decentralisation of employment opportunities and essential services while facilitating the digital and physical infrastructure needed to support contemporary jobs in our regions.

Victoria will encourage workspaces that are healthy and enjoyable and provide flexible working options (e.g. remote work and study). In addition, Victoria will provide sustainable and equitable work in Melbourne, developing the already existing population hubs of the state.

As part of our living plan, we will track delivery of a prosperous economy:

- ease of getting about
- facilities close by
- timely development
- competitive industries
- a vibrant economy.

Enabling...

Transport infrastructure: We'll reduce commute times and congestion while improving your wellbeing and quality of life by expanding and modernising public transport networks, including trains, trams and buses and supporting active transport with walking and cycling paths.

The Metro Tunnel and Suburban Rail Loop: These transformative investments in public transport will open up new job and housing opportunities for Victorians whilst enhancing Melbourne's productivity and liveability.

More jobs close to homes: We'll deliver more jobs near homes by planning for, protecting and readying commercial and industrial land for development in locations well-serviced with jobs, shops, public transport and community facilities and services.

Services and community facilities: We'll make sure that communities have the public transport, facilities and services they need to lead healthy, productive lives, including schools and kinders, TAFEs, emergency services, health care, active transport and open space.

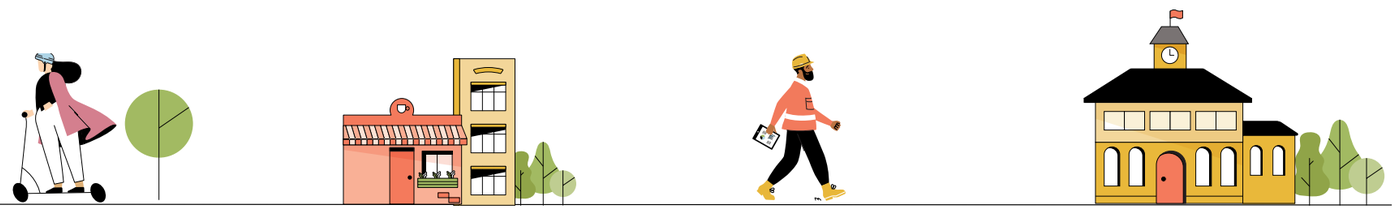
Transition to renewable energy: We'll enable the supporting infrastructure that businesses need to thrive, including access to affordable and reliable energy, to maximise local and state-wide benefits of the renewable energy transition.

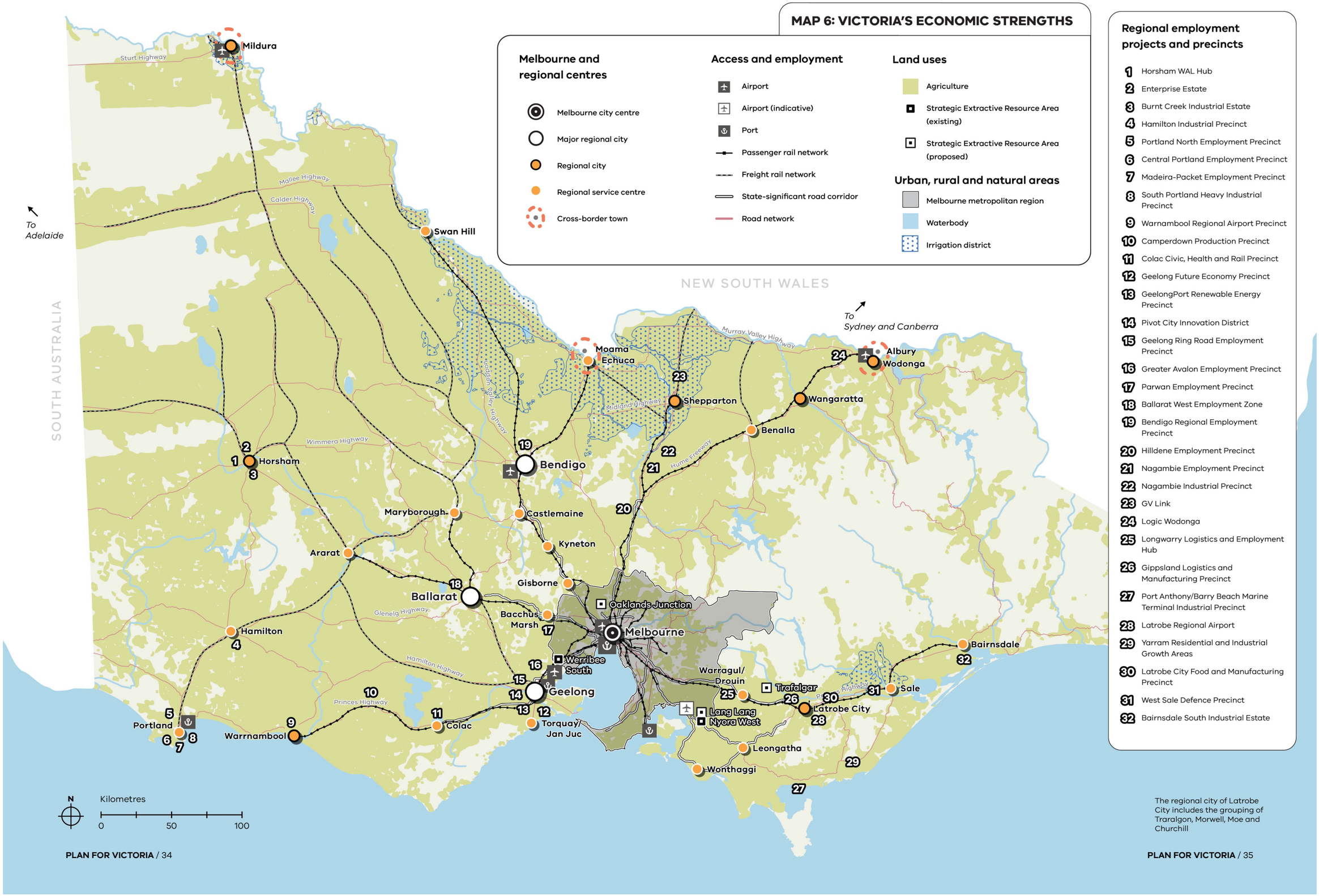
Critical mineral resources: We'll safeguard the supply of Victoria's critical mineral resources which is essential for building our state, providing materials for clean energy technology and recycling opportunities for local and export markets.

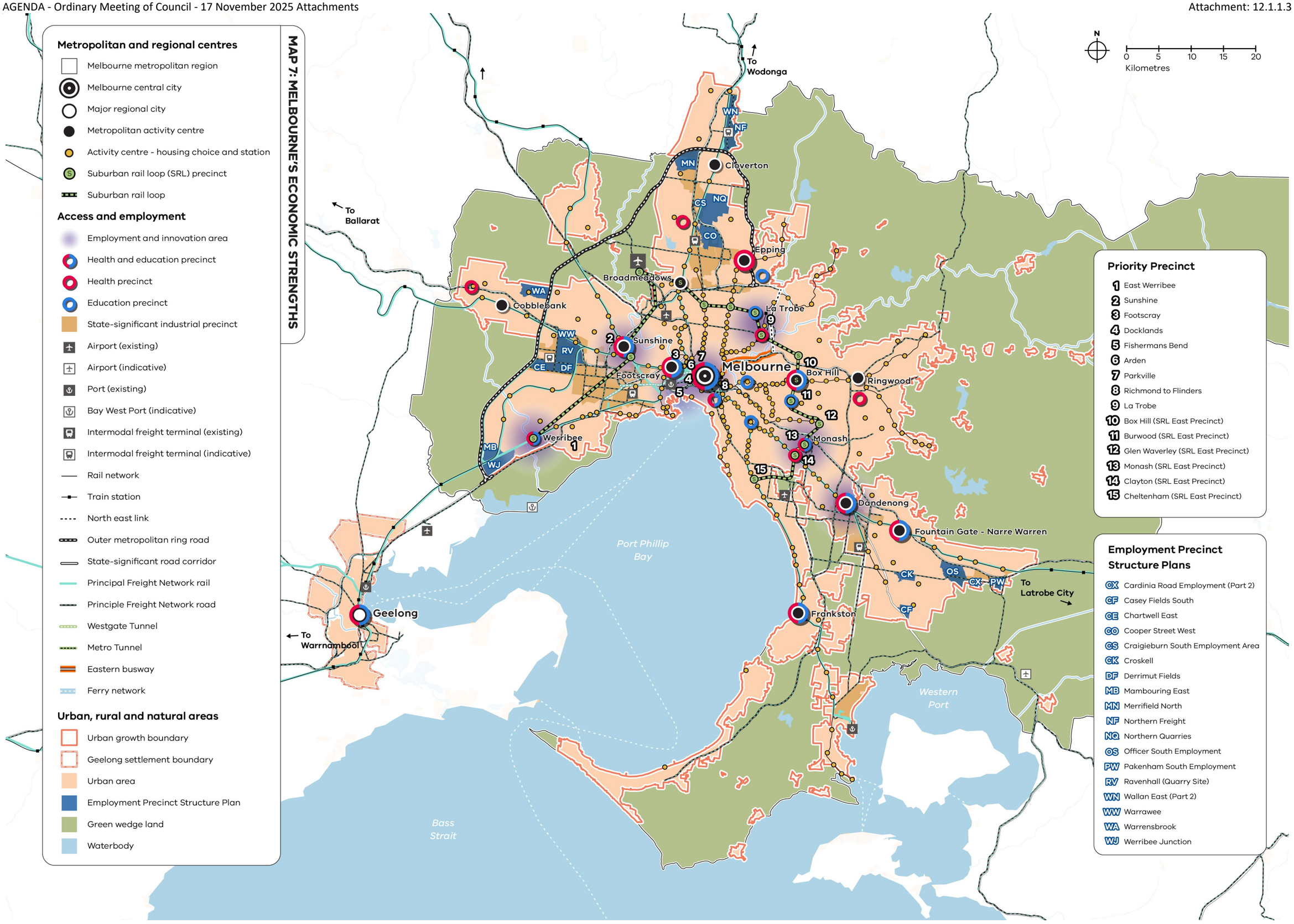
Economic Growth Statement

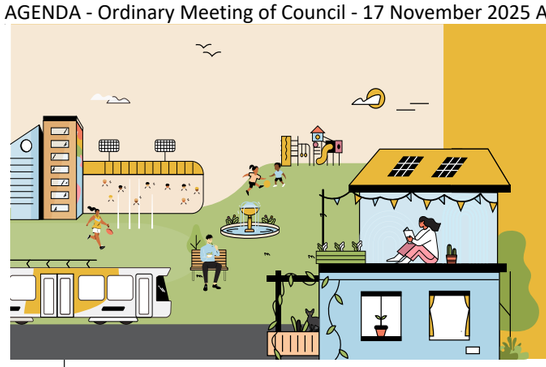
We've established Economic Growth Victoria, a new agency to identify opportunities to boost economic growth across the state. It has developed the *Economic Growth Statement* that includes ways to increase the supply of commercial and industrial land, reduce regulations while also protecting people and the environment, more strongly support businesses to invest in Victoria and grow Victoria's priority sectors: advanced manufacturing and defence, health technologies and medical research, circular economy, digital technologies and agribusiness.

Find out more about Economic Growth Victoria here.




MAP 6: VICTORIA'S ECONOMIC STRENGTHS
Melbourne and regional centres
Melbourne city centre
Major regional city
Regional city
Regional service centre
Cross-border town
Access and employment
Airport
Airport (indicative)
Port
Passenger rail network
Freight rail network
State-significant road corridor
Road network
Land uses
Agriculture
Strategic Extractive Resource Area (existing)
Strategic Extractive Resource Area (proposed)
Urban, rural and natural areas
Melbourne metropolitan region
Waterbody
Irrigation district
Regional employment projects and precincts
1 Horsham WAL Hub
2 Enterprise Estate
3 Burnt Creek Industrial Estate
4 Hamilton Industrial Precinct
5 Portland North Employment Precinct
6 Central Portland Employment Precinct
7 Madeira-Packet Employment Precinct
8 South Portland Heavy Industrial Precinct
9 Warnambool Regional Airport Precinct
10 Camperdown Production Precinct
11 Colac Civic, Health and Rail Precinct
12 Geelong Future Economy Precinct
13 GeelongPort Renewable Energy Precinct
14 Pivot City Innovation District
15 Geelong Ring Road Employment Precinct
16 Greater Avalon Employment Precinct
17 Parwan Employment Precinct
18 Ballarat West Employment Zone
19 Bendigo Regional Employment Precinct
20 Hilldene Employment Precinct
21 Nagambie Employment Precinct
22 Nagambie Industrial Precinct
23 GV Link
24 Logic Wodonga
25 Longwarry Logistics and Employment Hub
26 Gippsland Logistics and Manufacturing Precinct
27 Port Anthony/Barry Beach Marine Terminal Industrial Precinct
28 Latrobe Regional Airport
29 Yarram Residential and Industrial Growth Areas
30 Latrobe City Food and Manufacturing Precinct
31 West Sale Defence Precinct
32 Bairnsdale South Industrial Estate
To Adelaide
To Sydney and Canberra
SOUTH AUSTRALIA
NEW SOUTH WALES
Mildura
Swan Hill
Horsham
Bendigo
Maryborough
Castlemaine
Kyneton
Ararat
Ballarat
Gisborne
Bacchus Marsh
Melbourne
Oaklands Junction
Werribee South
Geelong
Hamilton
Portland
Warrnambool
Colac
Torquay/ Jan Juc
Moama
Echuca
Shepparton
Benalla
Wangaratta
Albury Wodonga
Warragul/ Drouin
Trafalgar
Lang Lang
Nyora West
Latrobe City
Leongatha
Wonthaggi
Sale
Bairnsdale
Sturt Highway
Mallee Highway
Calder Highway
Wimmera Highway
Glenelg Highway
Hamilton Highway
Princes Highway
Goulburn Valley Highway
Midland Highway
Murray Valley Highway
Hume Freeway
Princes Highway
N
Kilometres
0
50
100
The regional city of Latrobe City includes the grouping of Traralgon, Morwell, Moe and Churchill
PLAN FOR VICTORIA / 34
PLAN FOR VICTORIA / 35


MAP 7: MELBOURNE'S ECONOMIC STRENGTHS
Metropolitan and regional centres
Melbourne metropolitan region
Melbourne central city
Major regional city
Metropolitan activity centre
Activity centre - housing choice and station
Suburban rail loop (SRL) precinct
Suburban rail loop
Access and employment
Employment and innovation area
Health and education precinct
Health precinct
Education precinct
State-significant industrial precinct
Airport (existing)
Airport (indicative)
Port (existing)
Bay West Port (indicative)
Intermodal freight terminal (existing)
Intermodal freight terminal (indicative)
Rail network
Train station
North east link
Outer metropolitan ring road
State-significant road corridor
Principal Freight Network rail
Principle Freight Network road
Westgate Tunnel
Metro Tunnel
Eastern busway
Ferry network
Urban, rural and natural areas
Urban growth boundary
Geelong settlement boundary
Urban area
Employment Precinct Structure Plan
Green wedge land
Waterbody
N
0 5 10 15 20
Kilometres
To Wodonga
To Ballarat
To Warrnambool
To Latrobe City
Cloverton
Epping
Broadmeadows
Cobblebank
Sunshine
Footscray
Melbourne
La Trobe
Box Hill
Ringwood
Werribee
Monash
Dandenong
Fountain Gate - Narre Warren
Frankston
Geelong
Port Phillip Bay
Western Port
Bass Strait
WN
NF
MN
GS
NQ
CO
WA
WW
RV
CE
DF
MB
WJ
CK
OS
CX
PW
CF
Priority Precinct
1 East Werribee
2 Sunshine
3 Footscray
4 Docklands
5 Fishermans Bend
6 Arden
7 Parkville
8 Richmond to Flinders
9 La Trobe
10 Box Hill (SRL East Precinct)
11 Burwood (SRL East Precinct)
12 Glen Waverley (SRL East Precinct)
13 Monash (SRL East Precinct)
14 Clayton (SRL East Precinct)
15 Cheltenham (SRL East Precinct)
Employment Precinct Structure Plans
CX Cardinia Road Employment (Part 2)
CF Casey Fields South
CE Chartwell East
CO Cooper Street West
GS Craigieburn South Employment Area
CK Croskell
DF Derrimut Fields
MB Mambouring East
MN Merrifield North
NF Northern Freight
NQ Northern Quarries
OS Officer South Employment
PW Pakenham South Employment
RV Ravenhall (Quarry Site)
WN Wallan East (Part 2)
WW Warrawee
WA Warrensbrook
WJ Werribee Junction



PILLAR 3:

GREAT PLACES, SUBURBS AND TOWNS

Ensuring Victoria's suburbs, towns and neighbourhoods are vibrant, resilient and inclusive to support strong communities.

The quality of the places we live affects all aspects of our lives, from our health and wellbeing to our impact on nature.

The People's Panel's vision

The community and governments will maintain safe public spaces for all, with an emphasis on useable and affordable recreational and green spaces. This will support cultural expression and community connection.

Healthy communities will have high-quality services and utilities and access to green spaces.

We will invest in a variety of sustainable modes of transport for all Victorians.

We envisage equitable access to green spaces to improve the health and wellbeing of communities.

As part of our living plan, we will track delivery of liveable places:

- great streets, parks and squares
- well-designed buildings
- healthy lives
- a rich culture
- a strong heritage
- timely, eco-friendly infrastructure.

Enabling...

Community-centred design: You'll have good access to local public facilities and services (such as parks, libraries, community centres and cultural facilities) where you can meet your daily needs close to home. We'll prioritise designs that encourage social interaction and active lifestyles and put you at the centre.

Safety and wellbeing: We'll enhance public safety by designing streets and public places that encourage you to stroll, gather, be social and spend time with family, friends and neighbours.

Inclusive places: We'll make sure our places are safe, inclusive and accessible for people of all ages, races, cultures, genders and abilities.

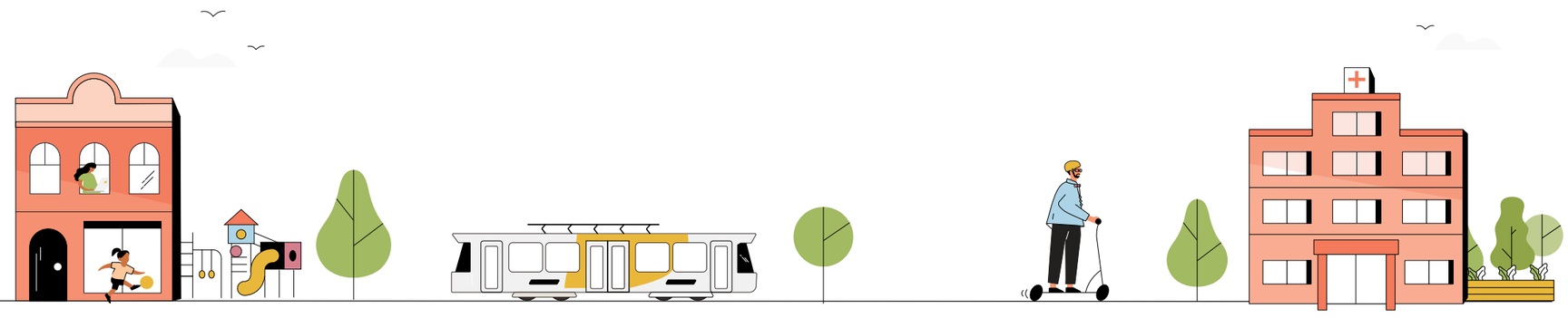
Green spaces are great spaces: Our parks, streets, homes and public places will be greener and cooler with more canopy trees and street trees.

Great open space: To make sure you can enjoy great parks, reserves and other green public areas, we'll make sure they are suitable for all Victorians and close to homes.

Local business support: We'll encourage small and medium-sized businesses in local neighbourhoods by creating certainty for business investment.

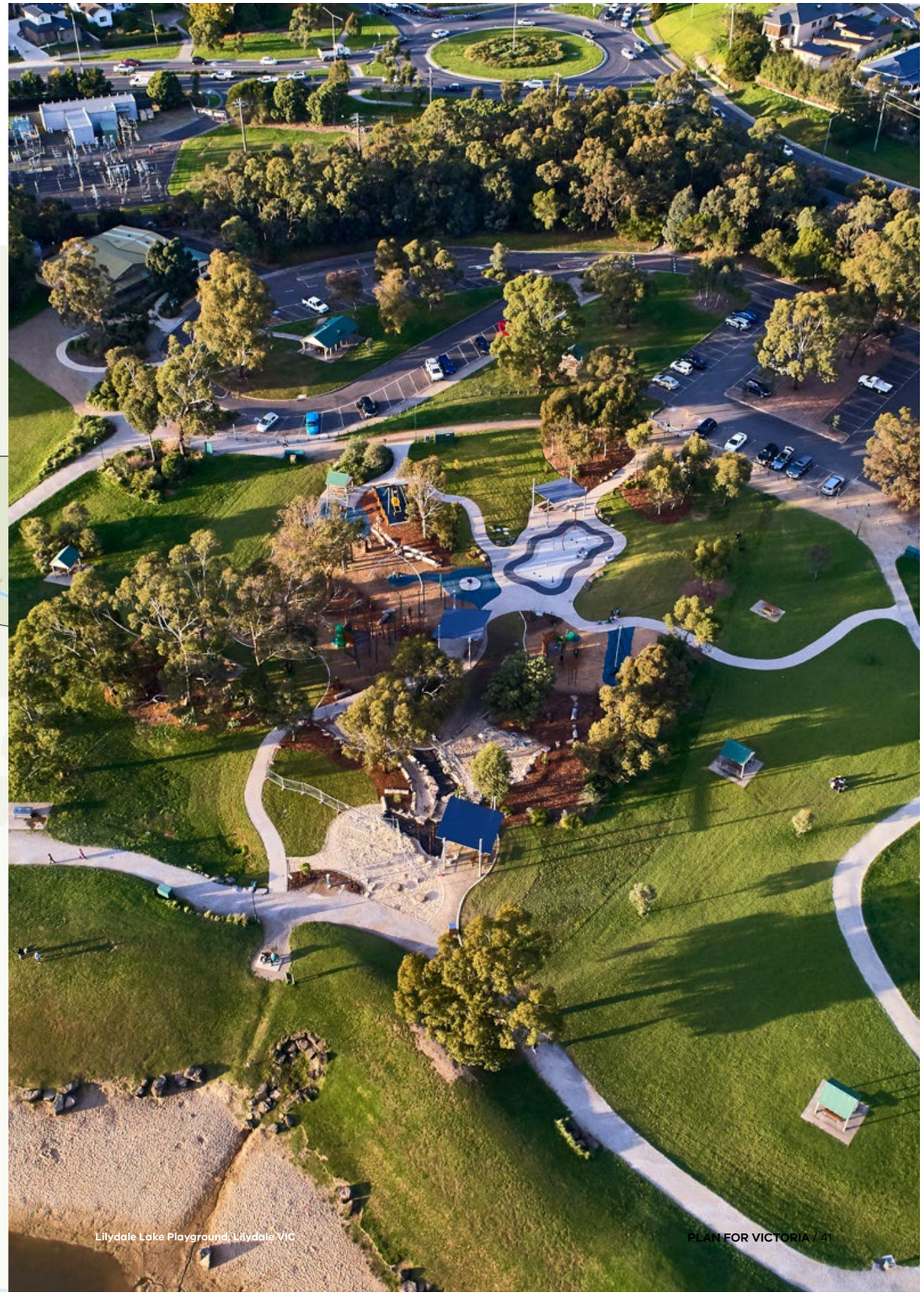
Heritage protection: We'll preserve Victoria's rich and diverse cultural heritage by protecting significant sites and precincts.

Active transport: We'll prioritise active transport, including cycling and pedestrian pathways, so you have more environmentally friendly and healthy commuting options and safer, better connections to public transport.



MAP 8: MAJOR OPEN SPACE

- Melbourne metropolitan region
- Melbourne central city
- Metropolitan activity centre
- Public open space
- Green wedge land
- Western grasslands reserve
- Waterbody



Lilydale Lake Playground, Lilydale VIC

PILLAR 4:

SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENTS

Protecting our environment, agricultural land and natural resources for a sustainable and healthy future.

Our cities and towns are resilient to climate change impacts. We have natural resources to benefit future generations. Our homes and workplaces are more liveable and resilient because buildings and developments are designed and built in environmentally sustainable ways. We're transitioning to renewables and electrifying the built environment.

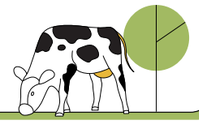
The People's Panel's vision

Victoria is a beautiful state rich in natural landscape, resources and diverse communities.

We envisage communities that are deeply connected, and foster mutual respect, accountability and shared responsibility for our environment.

We actively seek out First Peoples' perspectives and address climate issues with urgency and innovation, ensuring environmental education and a sustainability-focused culture across all generations.

Decision-making will be driven by community needs, sustainability and population density, whilst respecting the land and its history.



As part of our living plan, we will track delivery of a sustainable environment:

- valued landscapes
- productive rural areas
- healthy natural systems
- resilience to environmental risks
- a well-cared-for environment.

Enabling...

Climate-resilient urban planning: You'll live more sustainably and with a reduced carbon footprint as more homes are built closer to public transport, there are more pedestrian and cycling options, more trees are planted, urban sprawl is limited and natural habitats are protected. Homes and buildings are designed and built to be more energy-efficient and environmentally sustainable, making them more comfortable to live and work in and cheaper to run.

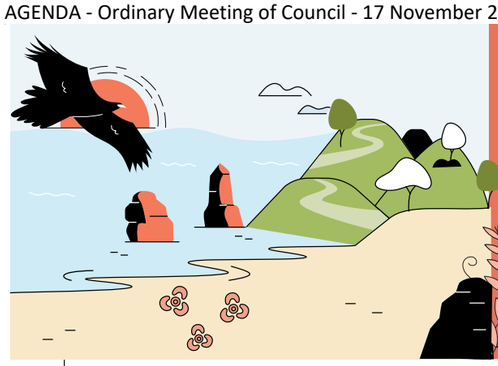
Renewable energy transition: Regional Victorian communities will attract and benefit from investment in renewable energy – wind, solar and battery storage – projects.

Conservation of natural values: We'll conserve the natural values of our regional and rural areas by setting clear directions for the careful use of our renewable energy and natural resources.

Sustainable agriculture: We'll prioritise food security and the agricultural sector by protecting our agricultural land.

Waste reduction and recycling: We'll minimise our waste and pollution by supporting businesses to invest in Victoria's circular economy.

MAP 9: KEY REGIONAL VALUES
Melbourne and regional centres
Melbourne central city
Major regional city
Regional city
Regional service centre
Access and employment
Passenger rail network
Land uses
Agriculture
Plantations
Offshore wind declared area
Strategic Extractive Resource Area (existing)
Strategic Extractive Resource Area (proposed)
Power transmission line
Urban, rural and natural areas
Melbourne metropolitan region
Urban growth boundary
Melbourne metropolitan urban area
Distinctive area and landscape
National / State park and reserve
Green wedge land
Waterbody
Marine national park
Ramsar wetland
Great Ocean Road region
Irrigation district
SOUTH AUSTRALIA
NEW SOUTH WALES
Mildura
Swan Hill
Echuca
Shepparton
Wangaratta
Wodonga
Benalla
Bendigo
Horsham
Maryborough
Castlemaine
Kyneton
Ararat
Gisborne
Ballarat
Bacchus Marsh
Oaklands Junction
Melbourne
Hamilton
Werribee South
Geelong
Warragul/ Drouin
Trafalgar
Latrobe City
Sale
Bairnsdale
Lang Lang
Nyora West
Portland
Warrnambool
Colac
Torquay/ Jan Juc
Leongatha
Wonthaggi
N
Kilometres
0
50
100
The regional city of Latrobe City includes the grouping of Traralgon, Morwell, Moe and Churchill
PLAN FOR VICTORIA / 44
PLAN FOR VICTORIA / 45



PILLAR 5:

SELF-DETERMINATION AND CARING FOR COUNTRY

All our actions have implications for self-determination and caring for Country.

Victorians have been on the path to Treaty for more than eight years, including Parliament passing two Acts and all levels of government developing policies and making commitments.

Wherever you are in Victoria, you are on the Country of Traditional Owners. And Country is directly affected by how we plan our cities and regions.

Plan for Victoria recognises the rights and obligations Traditional Owners have to speak and make decisions for their Country. It also recognises First Peoples' right to self-determination: to make decisions about matters that affect them and their communities.

To reflect these rights, the self-determination and caring for Country pillar remains open to ongoing engagement with Traditional Owners and First Peoples.

We commit to partner with Traditional Owners across Victoria to deliver and review *Plan for Victoria*. This includes:

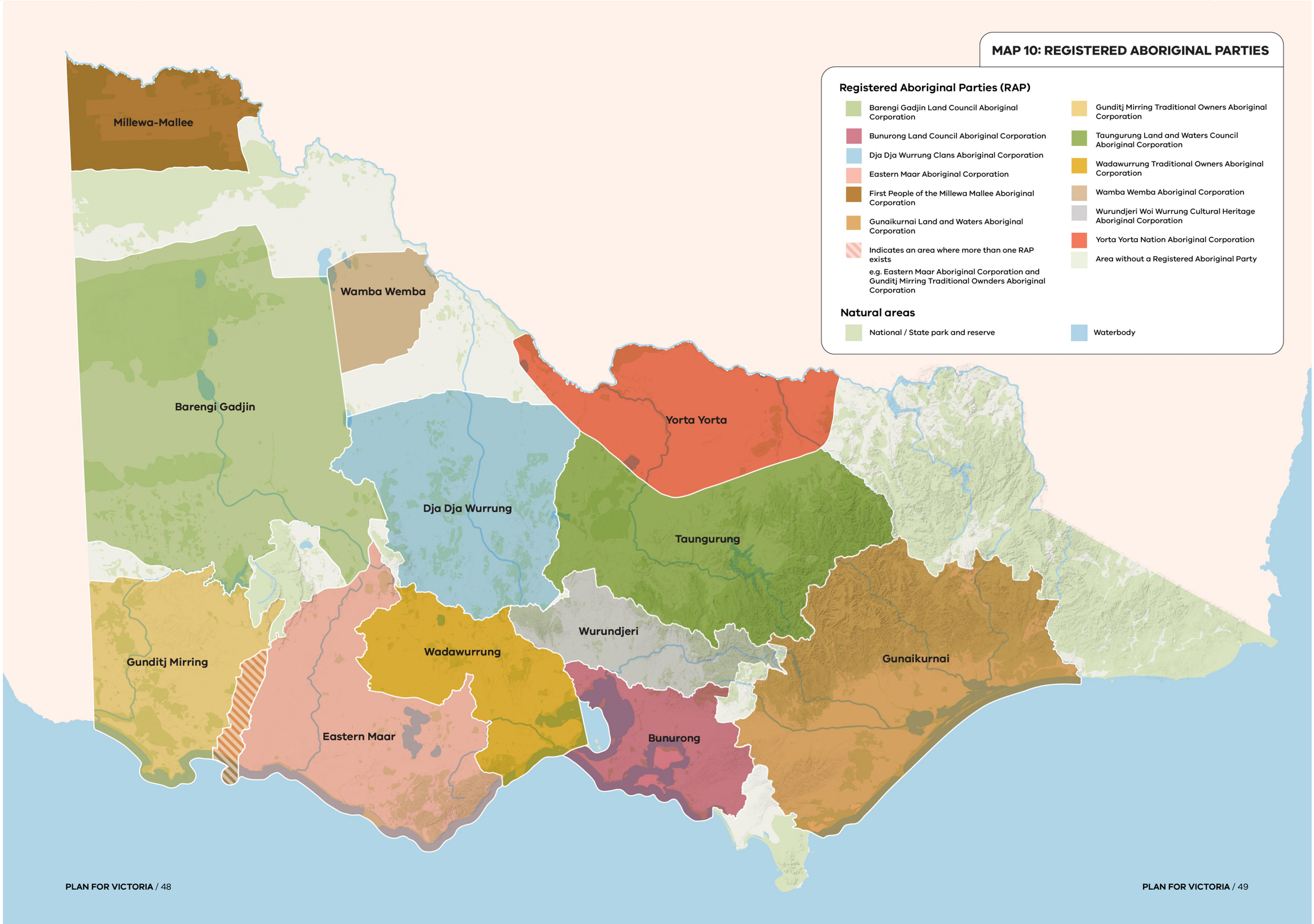
- recognising, prioritising and using in the plan the unique knowledge and wisdom of Traditional Owners, including the rights to care for and speak for Country
- establishing a renewed relationship so Traditional Owners can share in the plan's benefits
- empowering Traditional Owners to identify evolving aspirations for and determine relationships with the Victorian planning system
- embedding governance principles, policies and processes to ensure the collective support and decision-making of Traditional Owners
- ensuring the plan restores and strengthens the rights of Traditional Owners and doesn't diminish rights already secured under the Victorian *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006* and the *Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010* or the Commonwealth *Native Title Act 1997*.

Victoria's Treaty process is about making sure First Peoples have a say in policies and decisions that affect them. Self-determination is key to better outcomes for First Peoples and is an acknowledgement that they have the knowledge and expertise about what is best for themselves, their families and their communities.

To ensure we live up to our commitments to self-determination, the implementation of *Plan for Victoria* will be guided by the Victorian Government's 11 guiding principles of self-determination. They are:

- human rights
- cultural integrity
- commitment
- Aboriginal expertise
- partnership
- decision-making
- empowerment
- cultural safety
- investment
- equity
- accountability.

Map 10 shows Registered Aboriginal Parties – Traditional Owner groups – recognised under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*. Traditional Owner groups are the original custodians of Victoria who share a deep cultural, spiritual and social connection with Country. They have unique rights and responsibilities in caring for Country. Each Traditional Owner group has their own unique culture, history, language, customs and laws.


MAP 10: REGISTERED ABORIGINAL PARTIES
Registered Aboriginal Parties (RAP)
Barengi Gadjin Land Council Aboriginal Corporation
Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation
Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation
Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation
First People of the Millewa Mallee Aboriginal Corporation
Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation
Indicates an area where more than one RAP exists
e.g. Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation and Gunditj Mirring Traditional Ownders Aboriginal Corporation
Gunditj Mirring Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation
Taungurung Land and Waters Council Aboriginal Corporation
Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation
Wamba Wemba Aboriginal Corporation
Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation
Yorta Yorta Nation Aboriginal Corporation
Area without a Registered Aboriginal Party
Natural areas
National / State park and reserve
Waterbody
Millewa-Mallee
Wamba Wemba
Barengi Gadjin
Yorta Yorta
Dja Dja Wurrung
Taungurung
Wurundjeri
Wadawurrung
Gunditj Mirring
Gunaikurnai
Eastern Maar
Bunurong
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PLAN FOR VICTORIA / 49

Yoorrook Justice Commission

The Yoorrook Justice Commission is the first formal truth-telling process into historical and ongoing injustices affecting First Peoples across Victoria. In 2024 the Yoorrook Justice Commission investigated the systemic injustices faced by First Peoples in land, sky and waters, education, health, and housing. The Commission will conclude its inquiry and deliver its final interim report and final report by 30 June 2025. The Commission's final report will include an official public record of First Peoples' experiences of systemic injustice since the start of colonisation, helping all Victorians understand the impact of colonisation and the diversity, strength and resilience of First Peoples.

Find out more about the Yoorrook Justice Commission here.

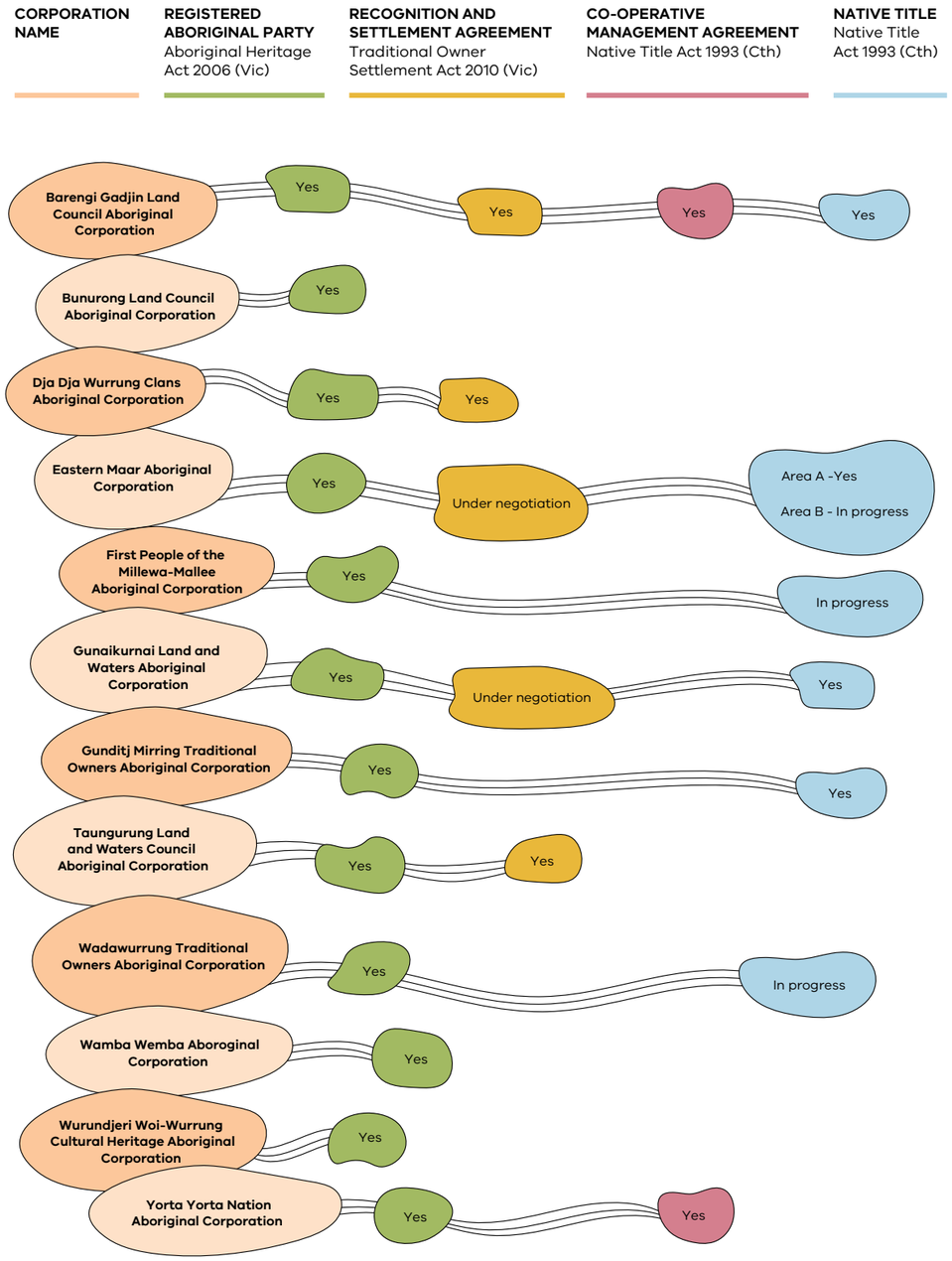
There are three ways we formally recognise Traditional Owners of particular Country:

- by the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Council appointing a Traditional Owner corporation as a Registered Aboriginal Party under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*
- by a Recognition and Settlement Agreement under the *Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010*
- by a consent determination by the Federal court under the *Native Title Act 1993* and accompanying Indigenous Land Use Agreements.

Some Traditional Owners also have a cooperative management agreement – a partnership between Traditional Owners and the Victorian Government providing a means for Traditional Owners to participate in the management of parks and reserves on their Country.

Registered Aboriginal Parties are decision-makers for approvals for Cultural Heritage Management Plans that can be required for high impact activities – including some subdivisions and housing and infrastructure construction approvals.

Registered Aboriginal Parties and Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Council have authority under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006* to advise the Minister for Planning on proposed amendments to planning schemes that may affect places of Aboriginal heritage significance.



The information provided in this document is accurate as of January 2025 and is subject to change.

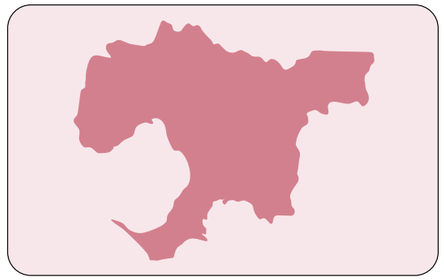
High Street, Maryborough VIC

THE PLAN ON MAPS

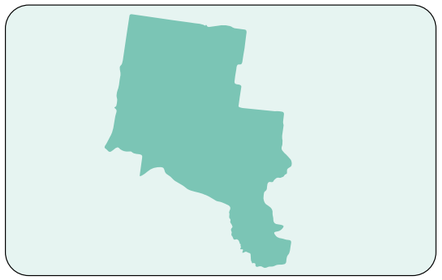
Map 11 to Map 15 show pictorially and at the highest level what we plan for Victoria, Melbourne, Geelong, Ballarat and Bendigo.

The About the legend symbols table gives more detail about the things you see on the maps.

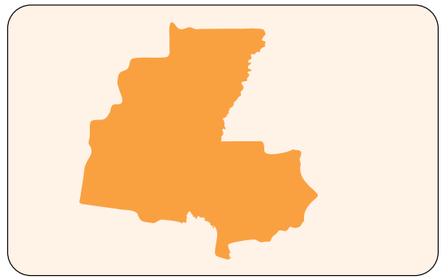
Map 11: Victoria in the future at a glance



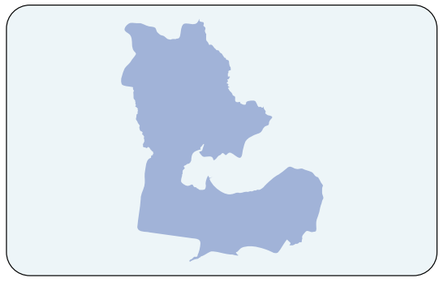
Map 12: Melbourne and Geelong in the future



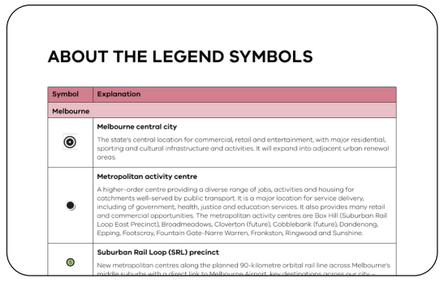
Map 13: Ballarat in the future



Map 14: Bendigo in the future



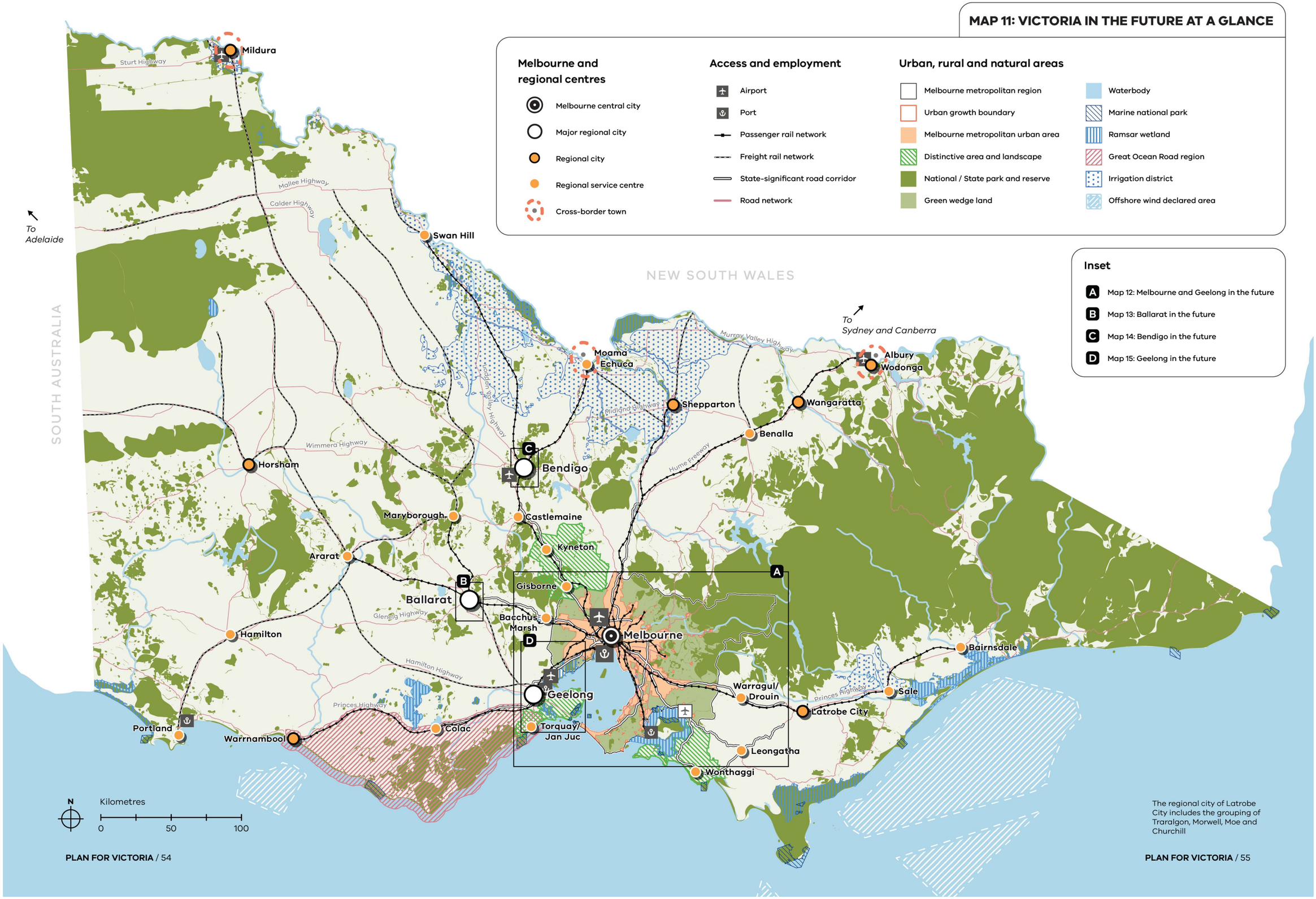
Map 15: Geelong in the future

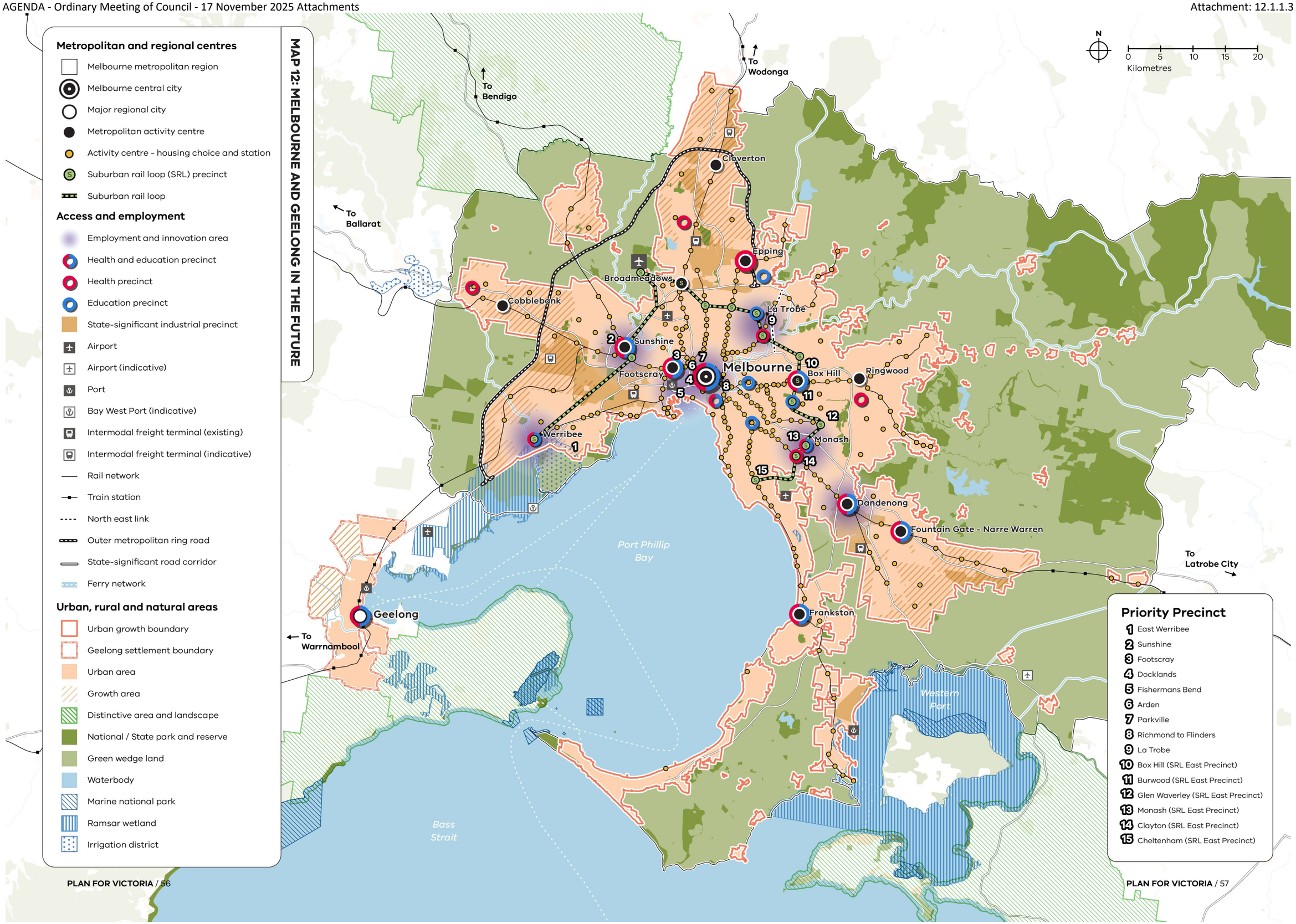


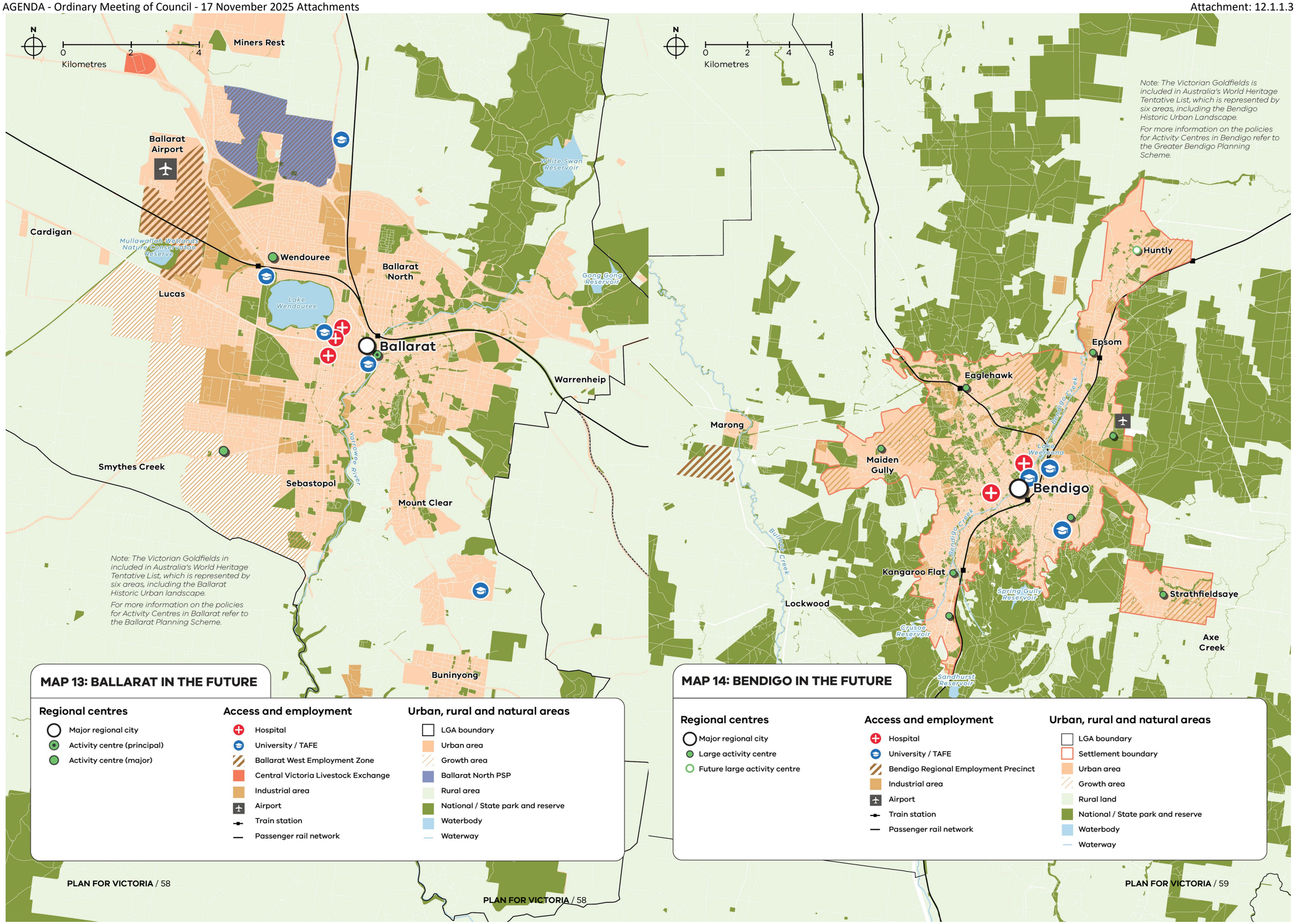
ABOUT THE LEGEND SYMBOLS

Symbol	Explanation
Melbourne	
	Melbourne central city The state's central location for commercial, retail and entertainment, with major residential, sporting and cultural infrastructure and activities. It will expand into adjacent urban renewal areas.
	Metropolitan activity centre A higher-order centre providing a diverse range of jobs, activities and housing for catchments well-served by public transport. It is a major location for service delivery, including of government, health, justice and education services. It also provides many retail and commercial opportunities. The metropolitan activity centres are Box Hill (Suburban Rail Loop East Precinct), Broadmeadows, Cloverton (future), Cobblebank (future), Dandenong, Epping, Footscray, Fountain Gate-Narre Warren, Frankston, Ringwood and Sunshine.
	Suburban Rail Loop (SRL) precinct New metropolitan centres along the planned 90-kilometre orbital rail line across Melbourne's middle suburbs with a direct link to Melbourne Airport. Key destinations across our city

About the legend symbols table


MAP 11: VICTORIA IN THE FUTURE AT A GLANCE
Melbourne and regional centres
Melbourne central city
Major regional city
Regional city
Regional service centre
Cross-border town
Access and employment
Airport
Port
Passenger rail network
Freight rail network
State-significant road corridor
Road network
Urban, rural and natural areas
Melbourne metropolitan region
Urban growth boundary
Melbourne metropolitan urban area
Distinctive area and landscape
National / State park and reserve
Green wedge land
Waterbody
Marine national park
Ramsar wetland
Great Ocean Road region
Irrigation district
Offshore wind declared area
Inset
A Map 12: Melbourne and Geelong in the future
B Map 13: Ballarat in the future
C Map 14: Bendigo in the future
D Map 15: Geelong in the future
NEW SOUTH WALES
SOUTH AUSTRALIA
To Adelaide
To Sydney and Canberra
Mildura
Swan Hill
Moama
Echuca
Shepparton
Wangaratta
Albury
Wodonga
Benalla
Bendigo
Horsham
Maryborough
Castlemaine
Kyneton
Ararat
Ballarat
Gisborne
Bacchus Marsh
Melbourne
Hamilton
Geelong
Torquay/ Jan Juc
Colac
Portland
Warrnambool
Warragul/ Drouin
Latrobe City
Sale
Bairnsdale
Leongatha
Wonthaggi
Sturt Highway
Mallee Highway
Calder Highway
Murray Valley Highway
Wimmera Highway
Midland Highway
Hume Freeway
Glenelg Highway
Hamilton Highway
Princes Highway
N
Kilometres
0
50
100
The regional city of Latrobe City includes the grouping of Traralgon, Morwell, Moe and Churchill
PLAN FOR VICTORIA / 54
PLAN FOR VICTORIA / 55


MAP 12: MELBOURNE AND GEELONG IN THE FUTURE
Metropolitan and regional centres
Melbourne metropolitan region
Melbourne central city
Major regional city
Metropolitan activity centre
Activity centre - housing choice and station
Suburban rail loop (SRL) precinct
Suburban rail loop
Access and employment
Employment and innovation area
Health and education precinct
Health precinct
Education precinct
State-significant industrial precinct
Airport
Airport (indicative)
Port
Bay West Port (indicative)
Intermodal freight terminal (existing)
Intermodal freight terminal (indicative)
Rail network
Train station
North east link
Outer metropolitan ring road
State-significant road corridor
Ferry network
Urban, rural and natural areas
Urban growth boundary
Geelong settlement boundary
Urban area
Growth area
Distinctive area and landscape
National / State park and reserve
Green wedge land
Waterbody
Marine national park
Ramsar wetland
Irrigation district
N
0 5 10 15 20
Kilometres
To Bendigo
To Wodonga
To Ballarat
To Warrnambool
To Latrobe City
Cloverton
Epping
Broadmeadows
Cobblebank
La Trobe
Sunshine
Footscray
Melbourne
Box Hill
Ringwood
Werribee
Monash
Dandenong
Fountain Gate - Narre Warren
Geelong
Frankston
Port Phillip Bay
Western Port
Bass Strait
Priority Precinct
1 East Werribee
2 Sunshine
3 Footscray
4 Docklands
5 Fishermans Bend
6 Arden
7 Parkville
8 Richmond to Flinders
9 La Trobe
10 Box Hill (SRL East Precinct)
11 Burwood (SRL East Precinct)
12 Glen Waverley (SRL East Precinct)
13 Monash (SRL East Precinct)
14 Clayton (SRL East Precinct)
15 Cheltenham (SRL East Precinct)
PLAN FOR VICTORIA / 56
PLAN FOR VICTORIA / 57


N
0 2 4
Kilometres
Miners Rest
Ballarat Airport
Cardigan
Mullawallah Wetlands Nature Conservation Reserve
Wendouree
Lucas
Lake Wendouree
Ballarat North
White Swan Reservoir
Gong Gong Reservoir
Ballarat
Warrenheip
Yarrowee River
Smythes Creek
Sebastopol
Mount Clear
Buninyong
Note: The Victorian Goldfields in included in Australia's World Heritage Tentative List, which is represented by six areas, including the Ballarat Historic Urban landscape.
For more information on the policies for Activity Centres in Ballarat refer to the Ballarat Planning Scheme.
MAP 13: BALLARAT IN THE FUTURE
Regional centres
Major regional city
Activity centre (principal)
Activity centre (major)
Access and employment
Hospital
University / TAFE
Ballarat West Employment Zone
Central Victoria Livestock Exchange
Industrial area
Airport
Train station
Passenger rail network
Urban, rural and natural areas
LGA boundary
Urban area
Growth area
Ballarat North PSP
Rural area
National / State park and reserve
Waterbody
Waterway
PLAN FOR VICTORIA / 58
N
0 2 4 8
Kilometres
Note: The Victorian Goldfields is included in Australia's World Heritage Tentative List, which is represented by six areas, including the Bendigo Historic Urban Landscape.
For more information on the policies for Activity Centres in Bendigo refer to the Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme.
Huntly
Epsom
Eaglehawk
Marong
Maiden Gully
Bendigo
Kangaroo Flat
Lockwood
Strathfieldsaye
Axe Creek
Spring Gully Reservoir
Crusoe Reservoir
Sandhurst Reservoir
Bendigo Creek
Bullock Creek
MAP 14: BENDIGO IN THE FUTURE
Regional centres
Major regional city
Large activity centre
Future large activity centre
Access and employment
Hospital
University / TAFE
Bendigo Regional Employment Precinct
Industrial area
Airport
Train station
Passenger rail network
Urban, rural and natural areas
LGA boundary
Settlement boundary
Urban area
Growth area
Rural land
National / State park and reserve
Waterbody
Waterway
PLAN FOR VICTORIA / 59

Bright Street, Torquay VIC

Eastern Beach Sea Baths, Geelong VIC

ABOUT THE LEGEND SYMBOLS

Symbol	Explanation
Melbourne	
	Melbourne central city The state's central location for commercial, retail and entertainment, with major residential, sporting and cultural infrastructure and activities. It will expand into adjacent urban renewal areas.
	Metropolitan activity centre A higher-order centre providing a diverse range of jobs, activities and housing for catchments well-served by public transport. It is a major location for service delivery, including of government, health, justice and education services. It also provides many retail and commercial opportunities. The metropolitan activity centres are Box Hill (Suburban Rail Loop East Precinct), Broadmeadows, Cloverton (future), Cobblebank (future), Dandenong, Epping, Footscray, Fountain Gate-Narre Warren, Frankston, Ringwood and Sunshine.
S	**Suburban Rail Loop (SRL) precinct** New metropolitan centres along the planned 90-kilometre orbital rail line across Melbourne's middle suburbs with a direct link to Melbourne Airport, key destinations across our city – major job centres, health services and education institutions.
1 to 15	**Priority precinct** This plan identifies 15 priority precincts, including the first six Suburban Rail Loop precincts, where we're planning transformational change to deliver new jobs and homes. They are: 1 East Werribee 2 Sunshine 3 Footscray 4 Docklands 5 Fishermans Bend 6 Arden 7 Parkville 8 Richmond to Flinders 9 La Trobe 10 Box Hill (SRL East precinct) 10 Box Hill (SRL East precinct) 11 Burwood (SRL East precinct) 12 Glen Waverley (SRL East precinct) 13 Monash (SRL East precinct) 14 Clayton (SRL East precinct) 15 Cheltenham–Southland (SRL East precinct)
	Activity Centre – Housing Choice and Station A new designation in this plan for an activity centre with sufficient public transport, facilities and services to be the location for large numbers of new homes. We're leading the planning in 60 of these centres. Other designated activity centres, which are not shown on the maps, will continue, as they do currently, to support thriving, productive and sustainable communities, environments and industries. If an activity centre is not currently or in the future designated as an Activity Centre – Housing Choice and Stations, it's not considered to be sufficiently well-connected or well-serviced to support large numbers of new homes.

Symbol	Explanation
Regions	
	Major regional city A new designation in this plan for a regional city with more than 100,000 people. A major regional city has sufficient public transport, facilities and services to be the location for large numbers of new homes. Victoria has three major regional cities – Ballarat, Bendigo and Geelong – and they will accommodate most new homes built outside Melbourne.
	Regional city A city other than a major regional city outside Melbourne that serves as a hub for its region. Regional cities will continue to be locations for homes, employment, economic activity and investment in their regions, delivering public transport, facilities and services to residents of the city and surrounding areas. Victoria's regional cities other than major regional cities are Horsham, Latrobe City, Mildura, Shepparton, Wangaratta, Warrnambool and Wodonga.
	Regional service centre A pivotal town in Victoria's regional development, fostering economic activity and providing a key network of service hubs. Victoria's regional service centres are Ararat, Bacchus Marsh, Bairnsdale, Benalla, Castlemaine, Colac, Echuca, Gisborne, Hamilton, Kyneton, Leongatha, Maryborough, Portland, Sale, Swan Hill, Torquay/Jan Juc, Warragul/Drouin and Wonthaggi.
	Cross-border city / town A city or town on the Victorian border with another state, which has interconnected public transport, services and facilities as well as cultural and economic ties with the city or town on the other side of the border. These include Mildura (a city that spans the border), Wodonga (a city interconnected with Albury) and Echuca (a town interconnected with Moama).
Access and employment	
	Employment and innovation area Areas of employment and business activity centred around medical, research and tertiary institutions across Melbourne. These areas will foster economic growth, innovation, and the development of emerging industries, particularly in research, education, and knowledge-driven sectors. Diverse employment will be delivered by supporting the development of business clusters, enterprise precincts, and high-amenity environments that encourage collaboration and creativity.
	Education precinct A precinct with one or more of a university, childcare facility, kindergarten or school that is well-served by public and active transport infrastructure.
	Health precinct A precinct with a range of co-located health services and that is well-serviced by public transport, facilities and services.
	Health and education precinct A precinct well-serviced by public transport in which the co-location of health and education services will be promoted to maximise the use of existing infrastructure and to support the establishment and growth of related public and private enterprises.

Symbol	Explanation
	State-significant industrial precinct Strategically located land for major industrial development linked to the Principal Freight Network and transport gateways that will be protected from encroachment by sensitive or incompatible land uses to allow continual growth in investment in manufacturing, storage, freight and other logistics, logistics and investment.
	Intermodal freight terminal A strategically located facility supporting the efficient movement of goods between regional and interstate markets, linking production and manufacturing areas with national and international gateways.
	Principal Freight Network Part of the larger transport network over which the movement of heavy freight will be concentrated.
	State-significant road corridor A road most important for Victoria's growth and transportation needs.
	North East Link A major road linking the M80 Ring Road to the Eastern Freeway, completing the missing link in Melbourne's middle-ring freeway network.
	Outer Metropolitan Ring / E6 reservation A 100-kilometre-long high-speed transport reservation for people and freight in Melbourne's north and west.
Greenfield development	
	Urban growth boundary The boundary set by Parliament to mark the long-term limit of Melbourne's urban development. There is no proposal to change the boundary. Any change to the boundary requires a planning scheme amendment ratified by a majority vote in both houses of the Victorian Parliament.
	Protected settlement boundary A settlement boundary in a declared area that is protected under a Statement of Planning Policy.
	Greenfield area An area on the fringe of Melbourne designated for substantial urban expansion, including more homes and employment areas.

Symbol	Explanation
Rural areas	
	Green wedge land An area in Melbourne designated for protection of the natural environment, agricultural land and significant resources from inappropriate development. This aims to preserve their environmental, economic and social values, including agricultural productivity, biodiversity and scenic landscapes.
	Distinctive area and landscape An area in Victoria designated for protection of its unique values and distinctive features, which might include environmental, landscape, geological, water, cultural heritage, natural resource, agricultural or strategic infrastructure attributes.
	Great Ocean Road region An iconic region along Victoria's coast, renowned for its sheer limestone cliffs, pockets of rainforest, shipwreck history, world class-surfing breaks and tourism appeal. The Strategic Framework Plan being prepared by the Victorian Government will provide direction to facilitate appropriate development and protect the characteristics that are the attraction.
	Irrigation district A legal entity declared under the *Water Act 1989*, which gives a rural water corporation rights and responsibilities to supply water by channels and pipelines mainly for irrigation purposes.
	Offshore wind declared area Offshore wind declared areas are specific zones located in Commonwealth waters and designated by the Australian Government as suitable for offshore wind development. These are formally declared under legislation after a public consultation process and environmental assessments.
	Strategic Extractive Resource Area An area with existing and potential quarries close to where raw materials are needed for construction and infrastructure projects. These areas need to be safeguarded to supply material to build Victoria's future, taking into account the surrounding natural, cultural, and existing land uses, and support transport networks.
	National / State park Public land managed under the *National Parks Act 1975* to protect the natural environment and other valued attributes, including water supply. **Reserve** Public land set aside for conservation, recreation or public utilities.

IMPLEMENTING THE PLAN

***Plan for Victoria* is a whole-of-government, whole-of-community plan.**

Achieving Victorians' long-term vision for 2050 will rely on state and local governments, businesses and communities working together.

What the People's Panel said about implementing *Plan for Victoria*

We envisage a plan that will proactively roll out development in an innovative and forward-thinking way.

Our community will be engaged throughout, ensuring the planning and building process is transparent and open to consultation. The plan will be delivered with clear accountability to ensure policy promotes thoughtful and complete realisation of our housing vision.

A whole-of-government plan

Plan for Victoria will guide the actions of all Victorian Government departments and councils. By setting the strategic planning direction for Victoria, it supports councils to plan at a local level.

As *Plan for Victoria* is implemented, more homes will be built in established areas close to jobs, public transport, facilities and services. These locations are well-serviced by existing infrastructure, reducing the need to build some types of new infrastructure. However, we will continue to deliver infrastructure to meet emerging needs. For example, more Victorians will mean more school children that need more classrooms, which might mean building new schools or upgrading existing facilities depending on the location.

A whole-of-community plan

While governments deliver major infrastructure, social housing and key public services, most homes, jobs and services are delivered by businesses responding to community needs. Community organisations (such as sporting clubs, religious organisations, schools and 'friends of' parks and waterways groups) also deliver the places and community facilities and services you value.

Plan for Victoria is not just a plan for what we'll do in government. It's equally a plan for governments, businesses and communities to work together to achieve a shared vision.

MEASURING THE PLAN'S SUCCESS

***Plan for Victoria* is an action plan, setting out key actions from day one to set Victoria on the right path to achieving the plan's vision for Victoria.**

This plan will also include short-term actions that will be measured, reviewed and updated, with new actions to be developed over time that will drive delivery of the pillars and long-term outcomes.

It's not enough to just track that actions have been completed. We must also check that actions are improving the places where you live, work and play: that actions and combinations of actions are achieving their intended outcomes. This includes checking that we are addressing the wide range of topics your submissions covered, and measuring long-term outcomes for the plan's pillars.

Assessing progress against long term outcomes over time, will assist us to understand what further initiatives and actions are required to ensure Victoria is optimally placed for the future and to meet the people's Vision.

This plan complements other whole-of-government plans and current initiatives can also be tracked against these outcomes.

Self-determination and caring for Country is an important consideration across all outcomes.

APPENDIX 1: ACTIONS AND OUTCOMES

Plan for Victoria is a living plan that sets short-term actions and monitors short- and long-term outcomes to track our progress towards our vision. Along with a number of Government plans and frameworks it will contribute to long-term outcomes that will benefit Victorians, setting us on the right path to achieving the plan's vision for Victoria.

The following pages set out the first tranche of actions for delivery by State Government.

The plan will be reviewed and updated, with new actions developed over time to drive delivery of the pillars and long-term outcomes.

***PLAN FOR VICTORIA* PILLAR**

Housing for all Victorians · Great places, suburbs and towns · Sustainable environments · Self-determination and caring for Country · Accessible jobs and services

ACTIONS AND PRIORITY

■ Focus of Action
□ Supported by Action

	Actions *What we will do*	**Short-term milestone** *How we will do it*	**Pillars**					**Outcome** *What this will mean on the ground*	**Responsibility** *Delivered by*	**Short-term outcome measures (Data source)** *How we will measure it's working.*
1	Implement housing targets for every local government area	Amend PPF Clause 11 (Settlement) New Planning Practice Note Planning schemes updated	■	□	□	□	□	The zones and overlays in planning schemes will be adjusted to ensure there are enough realisable development opportunities for 2.24 million homes in well-serviced locations, freeing up the development industry to deliver the homes we need.	DTP, Councils	Number of homes constructed (ABS) Percentage of homes with good access to opportunities and services (ABS, ATOS) Additional dwelling capacity (DTP)
2	Implement new planning controls to streamline planning in activity centres	Am Amendment to Victorian Planning Provisions and all relevant Planning Schemes – First 10 centres – Remaining 50 centres	■	□	□	□	□	The introduction of new planning controls in and around the 60 identified Activity Centres will unlock supply for 360,000 new homes in well-located areas close to services and jobs, along train and tram lines across Melbourne.	DTP	Additional dwelling capacity (DTP).
3	Carefully manage the outward sprawl of regional cities and towns	Amend PPF Clause 11 (Settlement), New Planning Practice Note Boundaries as VicPlan layer	■	□	□	□	□	Planning decision makers will know which areas outside existing towns are 'off limits,' protecting regional landscapes, understanding and managing environment risks and giving certainty for infrastructure planning.	DTP, Councils	Number of boundaries established in planning schemes (DTP)
4	Increase the number of social and affordable homes	Consider setting policy targets for percentage of new homes that are social or affordable Review the legislative framework that supports the delivery of social and affordable homes	■		□		□	The affordability of homes in new development and the amount of dedicated social housing will become explicit matters considered in the planning system when changing planning schemes or considering development application.	DTP, DFFH	Percentage social housing by region (ABS) Percentage affordable housing by region (ABS)
5	Match car and bike parking requirements and bike facilities with demand	Amend PPF Clause 18 (Transport) and Clause 52.06 (Car parking)	■	□	□	□	□	Housing will be less expensive because it doesn't include the need to provide costly basement car parking in areas where we want to see apartment style development and traffic congestion in these areas will be reduced because there will be fewer cars coming and going.	DTP	Percentage vacant car spaces (DTP survey) Car spaces per home (ABS)
6	Update the Better Apartments Design Standards and the Apartment Design Guidelines for Victoria	Implement the Victorian Government's response to the Inquiry into Apartments Design Standards	■		□	□	□	The quality of apartments will be improved and the viability of the apartment sector will be supported.	DTP	Quality of new apartment design (DTP survey, CSIRO, NatHERS)
7	Improve transport network planning policy	Amend PPF Clause 18 (Transport)	□	■	□	□	□	Planning decision makers and developers will have clarity about where improved bus networks, and other public transport improvements are proposed so these can be protected in planning schemes and progressively delivered in structure planning processes.	DTP	Percentage of long-term public transport network serviced (DTP survey)
8	Ensure new industrial and commercial land is ready for development	Deliver a 10-year plan for unlocking industrial land		■	□		□	There will be sufficient land supply for new industry.	DTP, DJSIR Councils	Supply of industrial land (DTP)
9	Streamline community infrastructure developer contributions	Review the model for infrastructure contributions Recommend amending the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*		■	□	□	□	Infrastructure for growing communities in established areas can be delivered in a fair and timely manner.	DTP, DTF	Money collected for community infrastructure (Councils)
10	Make the planning system fairer for Traditional Owners and First Peoples	Victoria planning provisions amended		■	□		■	Where the government has returned land to Traditional Owners for a specific purpose, but that purpose is prohibited by planning schemes, will be avoided.	DTP	Planning scheme amendments no longer required for Traditional Owner uses (DTP review)
11	Coordinate public infrastructure and service delivery to support more homes	New Planning Practice Note Coordinating infrastructure delivery in greenfield areas	□	■	□	□	□	Infrastructure for growing communities in growth areas will be delivered in a timely manner.	DTP	Level of access to opportunities and services in growth areas (ATOS)
12	Protect and enhance our canopy trees	Amend PPF Clause 12 (Environmental and Landscape Values) Introduce new Particular Provisions for tree removal			■	□	□	Infrastructure designers and managers and planning decision makers will need to consider how to include more canopy trees in urban areas so that these areas increase canopy cover to 30 per cent to deliver significant health and well-being benefits.	DTP, Support: DEECA, Councils	Percentage of tree canopy coverage (Commissioned survey)
13	Introduce minimum standards and guidance for open space in established urban areas	Amend Victoria Planning Provisions	□		■	□	□	There will be better more appropriate local open space provision for growing communities in established areas.	DTP, Support: DEECA	Open space accessibility (ATOS)
14	Make the best use of land at train stations	Update the Movement and Place Framework	□	□	■	□	□	The areas around stations will have a better quality public realm and more people will use busses or walk or cycle to get to the station.	DTP	Mode used for station access trip (VISTA)
15	Update design guidance to deliver better public places	Update the Urban Design Guidelines for Victoria Update Movement and Place Framework			■	□	□	The quality of what we build will improve and places will be more welcoming of everyone in the community.	DTP	Place level of service under Movement and Place Framework (DTP and Council surveys)
16	Embed Traditional Owners' knowledge in the built environment and introduce more Traditional Owner place names in partnership with Traditional Owners	Update the Urban Design Guidelines for Victoria.			■	□	■	There will be greater recognition and celebration of Country in our built environment.	DTP	Percentage of guidelines having Traditional Owner input Number of places renamed (DTP, Councils)
17	Encourage walking and cycling	Targeted strategy released Amend PPF Clause 18 (Transport)	□	□	■	□	□	More local trips will be made by walking, cycling and scooting delivering healthier populations, vibrant urban areas and avoiding congestions as existing areas densify.	DTP, Councils	Percentage trips by active transport (VISTA)
18	Improve the environmental sustainability of development	Amend PPF Clause 15 (Built Environment and Heritage) and Particular Provisions	□		□	■	□	Apartments will be more comfortable with reduced environment footprints.	DTP	Average star rating of new dwellings (planning/ building permit data)
19	Better communicate and manage flood, bushfire and climate hazard risks	Data and guidance published			□	■	□	Fewer home will be built in high risk areas without being designed to be resilient to the risk, and people will better understand the risks they face.	DTP, DEECA	Percentage of catchments with up-to-date flood studies that have been reflected into the planning scheme (DTP survey)
20	Reflect Country in planning schemes where supported by and following ongoing engagement with Traditional Owners	Reference to Country Plans in PPF			□	■	■	Planning decision makers will be able to understand whether a proposal respects and responds to the cultural values of Country.	DTP	Percentage of Country Plans in planning schemes (DTP)
21	Protect our Birrarung (Yarra River)	Amend Victoria Planning Provisions			□	■	■	Birrarung will be respected and protected as a living entity.	DTP, DEECA	River health by reach of Birrarung
22	Protect and carefully use regional resources	Amend Victoria Planning Provisions		□	□	■	□	Planning decision makes and the community will have clarity on use of rural areas and the location of new transmission lines.	DTP, DEECA	Value of food production (ABS, AgVic) Value of resource production (ABS, AgVic)

ABS: Australian Bureau of Statistics

AgVic: Agriculture Victoria

ATOS: A new planning tool that combines a detailed analysis of transport services and the location of jobs and services to give a quantitative measure of Access To Opportunities and Services

CSIRO: Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation

DEECA: Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action

DFFH: Department of Families, Fairness and Housing

DJSIR: Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions

DTF: Department of Treasury and Finance

DTP: Department of Transport and Planning

NatHERS: Nationwide House Energy Rating Scheme

VISTA: Victorian Integrated Survey of Travel and Activity

Actions in this plan referring to Traditional Owners is a reference to formally recognised Traditional Owner Corporations with Registered Aboriginal Party status under *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006 (Vic)*, a Recognition and Settlement Agreement under the *Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010 (Vic)*, or a consent determination by the Federal court under the *Native Title Act 1993 (Cth)*.

APPENDIX 2: WHAT'S ALREADY HAPPENING THAT SUPPORTS THE PLAN

Housing for all Victorians

Victoria's Housing Statement

We're delivering on the September 2023 Victoria's Housing Statement to boost housing supply across the state.

Find out more about Victoria's Housing Statement here.

Big Housing Build

We're giving more Victorians better access to social and affordable housing with a $6.3 billion investment to the Big Housing Build and Regional Housing Fund. Ten percent of all dwellings will support Aboriginal housing needs

Find out more about the Big Housing Build here.

Cutting planning red tape

We've introduced new deemed-to-comply standards for developments in residential areas and Activity Centres and streamlined the planning system so you can add a second home to your block, build two new homes on it or subdivide it into two lots.

Find out more about cutting planning red tape initiatives here.

Future Homes and Better Apartments

We're providing four innovative Future Homes designs and a testing ground for future improvements to the Better Apartments Design Standards.

Find out more Future Homes here and the Better Apartments Design Standards here.

Accessible jobs and services

Economic Growth Statement

We've established Economic Growth Victoria, a new agency to identify opportunities to boost economic growth across the state.

Find out more about Economic Growth Victoria here.

Victorian Industry Policy

We're establishing a clear plan for Victorian industry to undertake business for the next three years to drive economic growth in the state.

Find more about the Victorian Industry Policy here.

Melbourne Commercial and Industrial Land Use Plan

We've developed the Melbourne Industrial and Commercial Land Use Plan to identify the capital's current and future needs for industrial and commercial land.

Find out more about the Melbourne Commercial and Industrial Land Use Plan here.

Regional Economic Development Strategies

We've developed Regional Economic Development Strategies for each of Victoria's nine Regional Partnership regions.

Find out more about the Regional Economic Development Strategies here.

Regional Tourism Investment Fund

The Regional Tourism Investment Fund 2024 supports new and innovative tourism infrastructure projects in regional and rural Victoria that will increase year-round visitation, improve the quality of experiences and increase visitors' length of stay.

Find out more about the Regional tourism investment fund here.

The Victorian Freight Plan

We're updating the 2018 Victorian Freight Plan: Delivering the goods, to be released in 2025 to support businesses to get things delivered to you quickly and economically.

Find out more about the Victorian Freight Plan update here.

The Victorian Commercial Ports Strategy: Navigating our Port Futures

We're delivering the 2022 Victorian Commercial Ports Strategy for the port system to handle the state's rapidly growing freight task.

Find out more about the Victorian Commercial Ports Strategy here.

Level Crossing Removal Project

We're removing 110 dangerous and congested level crossings across Melbourne by 2030.

Find out more about the Level Crossing Removal Project here.

Victoria's Bus Network Reform

We're planning a higher-frequency, more connected bus network to give you more freedom and choices for where you want to go.

Find out more about Victoria's Bus Network Reform here.

Transport Accessibility Strategic Framework

The Transport Accessibility Strategic Framework outlines a coordinated approach to improving accessibility by prioritising universal design, community engagement and continuous improvement to the transport system.

Find out more about the Transport Accessibility Strategic Framework here.

Transport sector emissions reduction pledge

We're planning to cut transport emissions by encouraging you to use a zero- emissions vehicle and investing to accelerate the rollout of public and fleet electric vehicle charging infrastructure across Victoria.

Find out more about the Transport sector emissions reduction pledge here.

Great places, suburbs and towns

Suburban parks, nature next door

We're creating over 6,500 hectares of new and upgraded parks and trails across Greater Melbourne.

Find out more about the Suburban Parks Program here and the Melbourne Strategic Assessment program here.

Building for education

We're designing, building and modernising education facilities on a scale not seen since Victoria first had free education in the 1870s.

Find out more about the Victorian School Building Authority here.

Building for health

We're investing billions of dollars in public hospitals, emergency care facilities, community health services, ambulance branches and residential aged care and mental health facilities.

Find out more about the Victorian Health Building Authority here.

Sustainable Environments

Victoria's energy transition and Victorian Transmission Plan

We're planning the electricity grid we need to deliver reliable, lower-cost, low-emissions electricity to you through the Cheaper, Cleaner, Renewable: A *Plan for Victoria*'s Electricity Future and the Victorian Transmission Plan.

Find out more about the Victorian Transmission Plan here and Cheaper, Cleaner, Renewable: our *Plan for Victoria's* Electricity Future here.

Electrifying the built environment

The Gas Substitution Roadmap is helping us navigate the path to net zero emissions. It will support you to embrace alternatives to fossil gas.

Find out more about Victoria's Gas Substitution Roadmap here.

Victorian Recycling Infrastructure Plan

The Victorian Recycling Infrastructure Plan looks at how we can provide waste and recycling services for our growing population while protecting the environment and your wellbeing and encouraging innovation and investment.

Find out more about the Victorian Recycling Infrastructure Plan here.

Green Wedge Action Plan

We're delivering on 20 actions to protect Victoria's green wedges and agricultural land, including strengthening planning controls and improving guidance for better decision-making.

Find out more about the Green Wedge Action Plan here.

Strategic Extractive Resource Areas

We're safeguarding the supply of quarry resources (such as rock, sand and gravel) which is essential for building our state by expanding the Strategic Extractive Resource Areas network to include areas near Lang Lang, Oaklands Junction and Trafalgar. We are consulting with Traditional Owners as part of this work.

Find out more about Strategic Extractive Resource Areas here.

Extractive industries planning

Planning controls are being strengthened to better identify quarry boundaries and buffers to better protect neighbours from quarrying impacts. Extractive Industry Interest Areas are also being updated and mapped in the planning system to ensure locations are visible to the community.

Find out more about Extractive industries planning here.

Central and Gippsland Region Sustainable Water Strategy

The Central Gippsland Region Sustainable Water Strategy (CGRSWS) covers around 80% of Victoria's population (from Barwon to East Gippsland) and will ensure safe, secure water supplies for the region.

Find out more about the Central Gippsland Region Sustainable Water Strategy here.

APPENDIX 3: THE PLAN'S ACTIONS

Action 1 Implement housing targets for every local government area

You have more choices about the type and affordability of your housing in locations well-serviced with jobs, shops, public transport and community facilities and services.

What we'll do

In partnership with councils, we'll implement the local government area housing targets in this plan. This will include translating the targets for each area into planning schemes so it's clear where more homes will be built and where there will be less change over time.

This plan includes housing targets for every local government area in Victoria, specifying their share of the target of 2.24 million homes. Councils are perfectly placed to implement the housing targets, as they know their local context in so much detail. But where more support is needed, we'll step in to ensure efficient achievement of the targets.

Each council will review its planning scheme to ensure it is creating enough housing capacity in the right locations to help deliver the housing targets. Planning schemes that do not deliver enough capacity will require timely review and update.

We'll provide councils with updated policy guidance and supporting tools to help identify locations well-serviced with jobs, shops, public transport and community facilities and services so their planning schemes reflect the plan's pillars and housing targets.

Why this action is important

We must make sure all Victorians have the choice of an affordable home that suits them.

The fairest, most sensible way to work out where new homes should be located is to prioritise locations well-serviced with jobs, shops, public transport and community facilities and services (along with other considerations listed earlier in this plan).

Until a few decades ago, very few people lived in Melbourne central city. It wasn't a lively, vibrant city after business hours. Planning initiatives in the 1990s changed this by encouraging apartments and improving streetscapes, creating the lively central city we have today with its tens of thousands of apartments and many ways of enjoying life.

We can create equivalent change for the better around Melbourne's train stations and in regional city centres, particularly in activity centres and precincts, including Suburban Rail Loop East. While the extent of change will vary depending on the location, these are great locations to build more homes to give you more choices of the location, affordability and type of your home.

Locations with the biggest range of homes, including social and affordable homes, allow for the most diverse and inclusive communities.

Quantifying access to opportunities and services: ATOS

Plan for Victoria is about how we get more homes in locations well-serviced with jobs, shops, public transport and community facilities and services. But how do we know where these locations are?

To answer this question, we use a planning tool that combines a detailed analysis of transport services and the location of jobs and services (such as supermarkets, medical services and open space) into a measure called ATOS: access to opportunities and services. We used this tool to select the prioritised locations in this plan. We'll continue to work with councils to improve ATOS, so we know how your neighbourhood is progressing towards equal access to jobs, shops, public transport and community facilities and services.

Balfe Park Lane, Brunswick East VIC – Kerstin Thompson Architects

Action 2 Implement new planning controls to streamline planning in activity centres

You'll have more housing choice in locations with great access to public transport.

What we'll do

We'll deliver more opportunities for homes working closely with councils and communities to:

- create clearer rules about the types of new development and urban design outcomes we need
- guide investment in the things a growing community needs like improved streets, parks and community infrastructure
- provide increased certainty to the community about what kind of infrastructure and new development to expect
- develop models for clearer and simpler planning rules which can be replicated in other centres.

Why this action is important

Activity centres are great locations for more housing. But they are so much more. Activity centres are places to work, they are places for social interaction, and they are ideal places to shop and access your essential daily needs. The program will seek to enliven activity centres and make sure they live up to their potential.

That's why they are an important part of our plan to build 800,000 homes over the next decade. Making sure they contribute to this goal is a matter of state importance.

Action 3 Carefully manage the outward sprawl of regional cities and towns

It's clear how the boundaries of your city or town will be changed if needed to accommodate more homes.

What we'll do

We'll apply new guidelines for setting and amending regional city and town boundaries. Boundaries will only expand outward if this is consistent with the vision for these places and if and when councils and other authorities can provide the necessary infrastructure (such as water and sewerage) for more people. This means many small places won't expand.

Why this action is important

Most new homes in regional Victoria will be built in Ballarat, Bendigo and Geelong and the largest cities and towns of the other regional local government areas, as indicated on **Map 4**. The regional targets can be achieved without threatening the great lifestyles regional Victoria now offers.

In recent years, we've planned to protect the things people most value about Bass Coast, Surf Coast, Bellarine Peninsula and Macedon Ranges, which now have (or will soon have) protected settlement boundaries. These boundaries protect the unique values and distinctive features of these areas – their Aboriginal cultural and historic heritage, biodiversity, landscapes, natural resources including quarries, productive land, strategic infrastructure and built form – against overuse, overdevelopment and climate change impacts.

Melbourne also has a defined boundary, the Urban Growth Boundary, to limit its outward expansion. No changes are proposed to Melbourne's boundary or any protected settlement boundary.

Boundaries for regional cities and towns can limit their outward expansion, so they have compact urban forms and we protect values beyond their boundaries, including our natural resources, biodiversity, landscapes and agricultural land.

Doncaster VIC

Aintree VIC

Action 4 Increase the number of social and affordable homes

If you need social or affordable housing, you have more choices of the location, affordability and type of your home.

What we'll do

As councils embed housing targets into planning schemes, we'll consider developing locally specific targets for social and affordable housing for inclusion in planning schemes.

We'll explore simpler rules for affordable housing as part of the review of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* so the Minister for Planning and councils can obtain a fair and equitable affordable housing contribution as part of a new development.

Why this action is important

As elsewhere in the world, rising home prices and rents have resulted in fewer affordable homes in Victoria. If yours is a low-to-moderate income household, your best prospect for a home could be in a place and of a type that doesn't suit you. If yours is a very low-income household, finding an affordable home can be almost impossible. Worse still, many Victorians don't have a home.

An increasing number of Victorians need social or affordable housing, and some wait many years for it. In September 2024, there were 53,554 households waiting for a home on the Victorian Housing Register. Also, 292,041 Victorian households (mostly very low- and low-income households) were experiencing rental stress.

We need to set ambitious targets to ensure there is enough social and affordable housing in the coming decades. These targets will guide future investment and make clear to communities and the housing sector what social and affordable housing is needed and where it should be built.

Some planning schemes in Victoria incentivise affordable housing by allowing more development on a site if affordable housing is provided on it. Some cities around the world set a required percentage of affordable housing in new developments: some submissions said that Victoria should also do this. The idea raises issues that need changes to legislation, which the review of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* will explore.

Action 5 Match car and bike parking requirements and bike facilities with demand

You don't pay for car parking you don't need when you buy an apartment.

What we'll do

We'll reduce the number of car parks required for development in locations well-serviced by public transport. It's a commonsense way to reduce traffic congestion and the cost of housing. We're also increasing the minimum required bicycle parking and end-of-trip facilities in new developments to support riding and scooting.

Why this action is important

A car park can increase the cost of a townhouse or apartment by more than 10 per cent and add more than 15 per cent to the rent. New apartment buildings in locations well-serviced by public transport and where it's easy to walk and cycle generally don't need as many car parking spaces: up to 40 per cent of private car parks in Melbourne central city are always empty.

Action 6 Update the Better Apartments Design Standards and the Apartment Design Guidelines for Victoria

There are more and better-designed apartments for you to choose from.

What we'll do

We'll update Victoria's Better Apartments Design Standards and the *Apartment Design Guidelines for Victoria*.

We'll involve communities and industry in developing new standards so new apartments are deliverable, contribute to vibrant local areas and create genuine housing choice and affordability.

Why this action is important

Better design can strengthen climate-resilience, manage the impacts of greater densities and support targets for net-zero emissions while better managing air pollution, waste and recycling.

Action 7 Improve transport network planning policy

Getting to where you want to go is quicker and more convenient with a clear network of high-capacity public transport routes.

What we'll do

We'll identify key transport corridors and identify a network of these corridors in planning schemes. We can then deliver the road space and connectivity needed to provide services as the shape of our cities changes and redevelopment happens.

Why this action is important

Many bus passengers use routes that weave through the suburbs on slow, circuitous trips. Our aim is for most people in Melbourne and the regional cities to live within a 10-minute walk (800 metres) of public transport.

Action 8 Ensure new industrial and commercial land is ready for development

Businesses provide more jobs closer to where you live.

What we'll do

We'll remove barriers to industrially-zoned land being used for its intended purpose with a 'concierge' service to resolve issues preventing development, including connections to services and utilities, drainage and environmental constraints that make it difficult to unlock industrial-zoned land.

Why this action is important

Ensuring land is available for industry and commerce is essential for increasing job opportunities where people live. Historically, Victoria has had a strong competitive advantage in the supply of well-located, reasonably priced industrial land, but supply is dwindling, and prices are rising.

Nightingale 1.0, Brunswick VIC – Breathe Architecture

Action 9 Streamline community infrastructure developer contributions

Your community facilities are delivered quicker.

What we'll do

We'll:

- Investigate opportunities to create a fairer system for industry to contribute to funding for local infrastructure parks and services
- Implement a new pilot developer contributions system in Activity Centres across Melbourne where more homes will be delivered near transport, jobs and services over coming years.
- Recommend amending the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*.

Why this action is important

We want to ensure new and growing suburbs that build more homes get more funding for the facilities and services they need, including roads, parks, paths, neighbourhood houses, public libraries and other community spaces.

In some parts of the state, particularly greenfield areas, people wait too long for community facilities in their local area because of funding constraints.

Action 10 Make the planning system fairer for Traditional Owners and First Peoples

Victoria's planning system will better recognise Traditional Owners' rights.

What we'll do

Subject to Traditional Owners' agreeing, we'll remove unnecessary restrictions in planning schemes that are barriers to self-determination.

We'll also use existing mechanisms to streamline the approval of proposals by formally recognised Traditional Owners and Aboriginal community-controlled organisations.

In the longer term, we'll continue to partner with Traditional Owners to understand, recognise and embed Traditional Owners' rights, interests and aspirations in Victoria's planning system, including through the review of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*.

Why this action is important

Traditional Owners should have autonomy and lead decision-making over their Country. In the immediate term, these changes will empower Traditional Owners to use, develop and manage their Country in a self-determined manner.

In partnership with Traditional Owners, we're exploring opportunities to enhance the planning system to increase the participation and influence of formally recognised Traditional Owners in planning decisions on Country.

Action 11 Coordinate public infrastructure and service delivery to support more homes

You won't wait so long for public infrastructure and services in new suburbs and greenfield areas.

What we'll do

We'll:

- work with regional councils and water authorities to align planning and investment for water infrastructure with ongoing housing development to ensure essential water and sewerage services are available as new homes are built and businesses are established
- spell out our approach to prioritising the provision of public infrastructure in greenfield areas
- check that current Precinct Structure Plans are still delivering public infrastructure as planned
- update the *Precinct Structure Planning Guidelines* to include staging plans
- prepare staging plans for all future Precinct Structure Plans to align the delivery of public infrastructure and services with housing and employment.

Why this action is important

Growing communities need public transport, facilities and services, including schools and kinders, TAFEs, emergency services, health care, active transport and open space. Development doesn't stop if these things aren't provided, leaving some communities without the necessary facilities. They also need easy access to jobs.

Communities also need power, water, sewerage, drainage and flood protection infrastructure. In established areas where more homes are planned, it might be necessary to upgrade existing infrastructure (such as power, water and sewerage). There needs to be better liaison between planners and the water sector in areas where more homes are needed. In both metropolitan and regional Victoria, the water sector is a key enabler of development: insufficient water infrastructure can stop the development of homes and jobs in their tracks. This applies to both the infrastructure connecting to local communities and the region wide infrastructure required to treat and transfer water to and from those communities.

While we can identify and prioritise locations to build more homes, we can't be certain far enough in advance about when they will be built so we can deliver public facilities and services in advance. But we plan to improve the coordination of development and public facilities and services so we can get them in place ASAP and make your community safe, liveable, prosperous, inclusive and sustainable.

Action 12 Protect and enhance our canopy trees

Your local area has more canopy trees.

What we'll do

We'll increase the tree canopy cover of urban areas by setting a target of 30 per cent tree canopy cover while ensuring that safety and power reliability is maintained. To do this, we'll make the planting of canopy trees a consideration in all planning permits for new residential, commercial and industrial development. Also, if you intend to remove a canopy tree over 5m tall, in many cases you'll need a planning permit, which is a practical, reasonable way to protect existing canopy trees.

In growth areas, we'll maximise opportunities to plant street trees: trees on nature strips and public rights-of-way and ensure they get the water they need to grow.

We'll increase the tree canopy cover of open space by continuing programs, including the More Trees for a Cooler, Greener West Program, a program to plant trees in areas of Melbourne with the lowest tree canopy cover.

Why this action is important

To increase tree canopy cover, we must protect existing trees and plant new ones. Many canopy trees in established areas are approaching the end of their lives, and we must start today to give new trees time to establish and deliver benefits, including absorbing heat and carbon dioxide and providing shade for people outdoors.

Trees and greenery need water, which makes our management of water and drainage in urban areas important. Old engineering approaches to drainage (such as concreting waterways) focused on 'getting water away' at the expense of the environment. A more integrated approach to water management can deliver environmental, cost and amenity benefits.

Housing Choices Preston, Preston VIC - Six Degrees Architects for Housing Choice

Action 13 Introduce minimum standards and guidance for open space in established urban areas

New homes in your suburbs have great parks and squares.

What we'll do

We'll introduce minimum standards into planning schemes that specify the types of open space there should be close to homes in established urban areas. We'll also implement planning controls for activity centres and precincts to make it easier to set an open space requirement. And we'll support initiatives for the shared use of open space at schools.

Why this action is important

To deliver more open space in established areas, we need to think creatively about how we can better use road reserves, remove excessive hardstands – concrete, paving and compacted areas for parking, loading, unloading and staging – and reduce car parking space. We can also make better use of school grounds after hours.

Pick My Park

Starting in 2025, the Pick My Park grants program will create and upgrade green and open spaces in growing and established suburbs and give the community the opportunity to have their say on where to spend the funding. Pick My Park will target areas building more homes across Victoria, particularly those areas with less access to open space. Communities will be able to tell us about how they want to upgrade or better utilise existing parks, as well as identify where under-utilised urban spaces can be transformed.

Action 14 Make the best use of land at train stations

Train station surrounds are more attractive, activated and better for travel and leisure.

What we'll do

We'll investigate how we can make areas around train stations, including car parking areas, more attractive and vibrant to encourage more people to use public transport.

Why this action is important

Many older train stations are boxed in by car parking areas and poorly used land, whereas the surrounds of new Level Crossing Removal Project stations are great shared spaces for cyclists, pedestrians, public transport users and others out enjoying themselves. They are safer and less congested and have great landscaping, artwork and sport and recreation facilities.

We can deliver accessibility upgrades for passengers, while respecting the heritage as we are doing for Ballarat Station, or it might also be possible to integrate shops and offices with stations (like at Box Hill Station) or re-purpose car parking areas for homes (like around Jewel Station in Brunswick).

Action 15 Update design guidance to deliver better public places

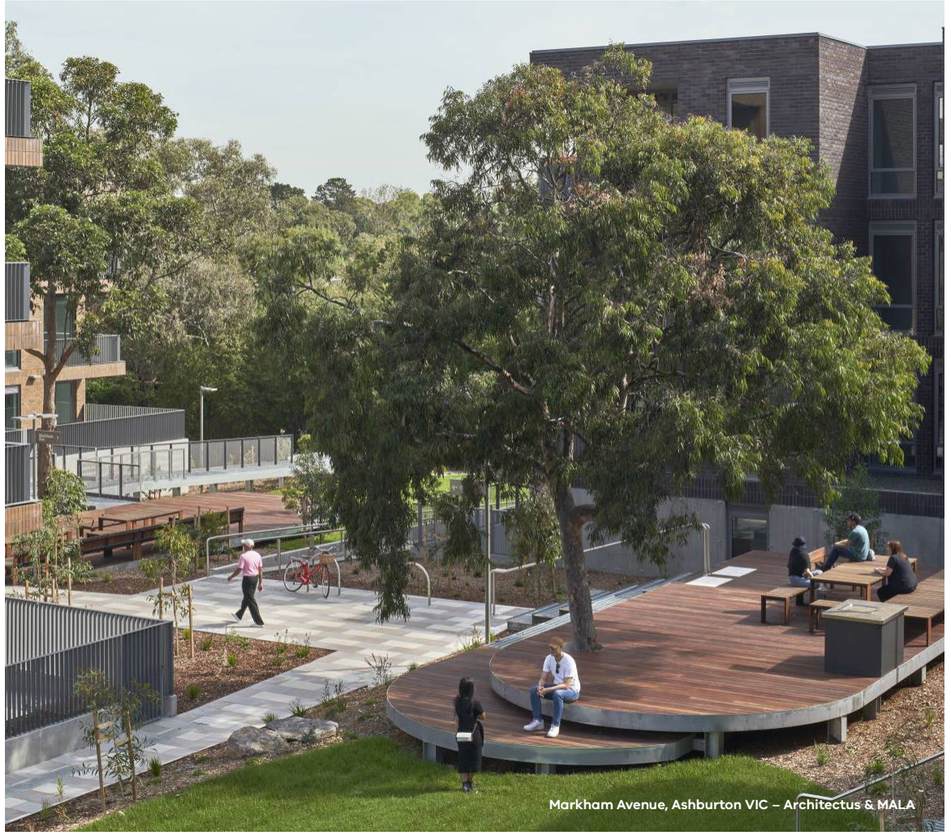
Streets and open space are safer, welcoming and attractive.

What we'll do

We'll put you at the centre of design decisions about public places by developing new design guidance – *Places for People* – to bring together the best bits of our current guidelines and frameworks, fill gaps in them and set clear, inspiring directions. The guidance will relate to planning for local areas and making planning decisions.

Why this action is important

The best test for whether we're getting our public spaces right is if the whole community, particularly children, older people, people with accessibility needs and people from different cultures, enjoy using them and feel safe. We can strengthen the current design standards to make clear the types of places you want and continue helping planning professionals do their best for you.



Markham Avenue, Ashburton VIC – Architectus & MALA

Action 16 Embed Traditional Owners' knowledge in the built environment and introduce more Traditional Owner place names in partnership with Traditional Owners

Traditional Owners' knowledge and voices help craft better built environments.

What we'll do

We'll embed statewide caring for Country principles in updated design guidance to deliver better public places and support Country-specific guidance.

We'll work with Traditional Owners to give greater recognition to their languages in place-naming.

Why this action is important

Words have power, and this is especially true of the names we give to places. We can show respect and better celebrate the culture of places and our communities by using Traditional Owner names for places.

It's important to extend the power of Traditional Owners' knowledge to guide the care of places. Traditional Owners' voices are central to this.

Wadawurrung Urban Design Guidelines

A project initiated and lead by Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation is translating Wadawurrung Cultural Knowledge and Values into the Wadawurrung Urban Design Guidelines. Wadawurrung Dja (Country) is under considerable pressure with significant development occurring in Djilang (Geelong), Ballaarat (Ballarat), Bellawyn (Bellarine Peninsula) and areas west of the Werribee River. This project aims to enable Traditional Owners to continue their cultural obligations to care for Country that is urbanised while supporting urban design professionals to engage respectfully with Wadawurrung People, Culture and Country to create design outcomes and places are culturally relevant and enriching.

The Corporation's work includes a framework for how the government, developers and designers engage and partner with it and support it to have greater authority over cultural and economic development initiatives. The project is part of the Geelong City Deal, a collaborative plan by the Commonwealth and Victorian governments to transform Greater Geelong and the Great Ocean Road through the *Revitalising Central Geelong Action Plan*.

Action 17 Encourage walking and cycling

It's better to walk, cycle and scoot in your suburb.

What we'll do

We'll develop an active transport strategy to encourage and support more Victorians to walk, cycle and scoot more often. This is particularly important, given that building more homes within the walkable catchments of activity centres, train stations and priority precincts will boost opportunities to walk, cycle and scoot.

We'll continue to improve infrastructure to walk to stations, as the Level Crossing Removal Project is doing. In growth areas, we'll deliver active transport infrastructure as communities are developing.

Why this action is important

Only about half of Victorian adults and one-third of children do the minimum daily recommended physical activity. More people enjoying regular physical activity means a healthier Victoria as we reduce the incidence of chronic diseases and obesity risk and improve cardiovascular health. Regular physical activity also helps with mental health. But we struggle to do it: we're busy, cars are quick and convenient and public transport can be infrequent, too far away or not connected to where you need to go. We need active transport infrastructure that people want to use and that connects where they live and the places they want to go.

Active transport web

An active transport web is a safe, accessible, high-quality network enabling walking, cycling and micromobility as essential parts of the broader transport system. As we create a network of active transport webs, the number of places people can reach grows, making active transport more attractive.

Action 18 Improve the environmental sustainability of development

You know new developments are more environmentally sustainable and climate-resilient.

What we'll do

We'll adopt a statewide approach to making residential, commercial and industrial development better designed and more environmentally sustainable and climate-resilient by:

- updating residential planning standards to improve energy efficiency, thermal comfort and onsite renewable energy use
- introducing new standards for better waste management and recycling for new developments and precincts to support our circular economy plan, *Recycling Victoria: A new economy*
- introducing design standards to minimise noise and air pollution impacts on residential developments and other sensitive uses near transport routes
- improving stormwater management standards for small, non-residential developments
- making the consideration of sustainable water management part of the planning process for new and redeveloping precincts.

Why this action is important

We must preserve our environment for future generations. That means using less of the earth's resources. Increasing sustainability makes our buildings more comfortable and reduces energy costs.

Better access to recycled water, stormwater and rainwater in developments reduces demand for drinking water, supports greener spaces and protects our waterways. This water-smart approach helps Victoria build sustainable, resilient communities that are better prepared for future climate challenges.

To deliver *Recycling Victoria: A new economy,* we need to provide waste, recycling and resource recovery infrastructure to service future populations and transition to a circular economy.

We also need new design standards to minimise noise and air pollution impacts on residential developments and other sensitive uses near transport routes to support our air quality strategy, *Clean air for all Victorians: Victoria's air quality strategy.*

The Nursery on Brunswick, Fitzroy VIC – Clare Cousins Architects

Action 19 Better communicate and manage flood, bushfire and climate hazard risks

You'll know areas at risk from floods and bushfires.

What we'll do

We'll provide you with the best available information, mapping and data about flooding, coastal hazards and bushfires through VicPlan, our statewide digital map.

To ensure development decisions account for new information about flood risk, we'll include new modelling data in planning schemes through a streamlined planning scheme amendment process.

We'll also prepare new guidelines to guide the design of flood-resilient buildings.

Why this action is important

The parliamentary inquiry into the 2022 Victorian floods found we need to identify flooding risks and communicate them to the community. Good flood management needs good flood modelling, but planning schemes aren't keeping up with the latest flood models.

Some locations simply aren't suitable for more homes. The increasing impacts of climate change and risks associated with rising sea levels, intense rainfall and flooding, droughts, heatwaves and bushfires mean it's not safe or appropriate to build homes in some areas. We need to clearly identify which areas so these impacts and risks can be considered in decision-making. We also need better guidance about the design of buildings in areas with a flood risk but where there can be some development.

As we update modelling for Melbourne and regional Victoria, some areas we now see as low risk of flooding will be identified as being at high risk, which means that the risk will be greater than a one per cent chance of flooding each year, the benchmark we use to decide if the flood risk is too high.

It's not just regional towns that are at risk – some of Melbourne's major urban renewal areas, including Fishermans Bend and Arden, are at risk of flooding. In these locations, buildings must be resilient to flooding.

Action 20 Reflect Country in planning schemes where supported by and following ongoing engagement with Traditional Owners

Traditional Owners can communicate priorities, expectations and aspirations for Country to all those in the planning system.

What we'll do

We'll provide the opportunity to recognise Traditional Owners' Country in planning schemes and provide Country-specific guidance.

Why this action is important

Traditional Owners' priorities, expectations and aspirations for Country should inform decision-making so planning outcomes are more inclusive, respectful and sustainable. Work is underway to identify opportunities to better reflect Traditional Owners' rights and interests in Victoria's planning system. These could be informed by Strategic Aboriginal Heritage Assessments. Some Registered Aboriginal Parties are undertaking Strategic Aboriginal Heritage Assessments across their Country that will provide early guidance in planning processes about priorities for the protection and management of places of cultural heritage significance.

Action 21 Protect our Birrarung (Yarra River)

You'll continue to be enriched by Birrarung as a living entity.

What we'll do

We'll implement *Burndap Birrarung Burndap Umarkoo (Yarra Strategic Plan)* into the planning scheme to continue to protect it as a living entity. We'll improve decision-making about protecting all waterways and responding to the concept of a connected, living, natural entity.

Why this action is important

For the greatest benefit of communities along our waterways, planning decision-makers must meet the needs of future populations and the need to protect and enhance our open space, biodiversity corridors and green linear connections. We've already recognised Birrarung as a connected, living natural entity with cultural and spiritual importance to the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung and Bunurong people and we will recognise other waterways and support their collaborative management with Traditional Owners.

The *Burndap Birrarung Burndap Umarkoo (Yarra Strategic Plan)* reflects the Birrarung's significance to the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung and Bunurong people and other cultural, environmental and recreational values of the river. The caring for the Birrarung envisioned by Burndap Birrarung burndap umarkoo, continues to be led by the Yarra Collaboration Committee under the guidance of the Birrarung Council as the independent 'voice' of the river.

The Barre Warre Yulluk (Rivers of the Barwon) Action Plan and the *Waterways of the West Action Plan* also give holistic guidance about protecting these valued waterways.

Birrarung (Yarra River) VIC

Action 22 Protect and carefully use regional resources

Your children will continue to enjoy locally grown food and have access to natural resources they need.

What we'll do

We'll formalise boundaries for regional cities and towns to stop unchecked expansion into agricultural areas.

In line with the *Victorian Transmission Plan 2025*, we'll recognise the land preferred for renewable energy transmission infrastructure in planning schemes. Doing so will make it easier for everyone to know where new energy infrastructure is best located, while ensuring that we have enough energy to keep the lights on and power bills low.

We'll also make the planning changes needed to provide a more certain path for the development of critical minerals in line with the *Victorian Critical Minerals Roadmap*.

We'll explore supplying recycled water to increase agricultural production in peri-urban agricultural areas where feasible.

Why this action is important

Regional and rural Victoria are important parts of our economy, especially food and fibre, tourism, manufacturing and natural resources industries.

Agricultural production contributes greatly to Victoria's economic prosperity and long-term food security, and irrigation infrastructure and irrigation districts are vital for agriculture. We must prevent the loss of high-quality, productive agricultural land so the agriculture industry can continue to grow, provide jobs and feed our communities. Urban expansion often increases land-use conflicts between urbanites and agricultural producers and diminishes their productivity.

Regional and rural Victoria will also continue to be central to Victoria's renewable energy transition. Likewise, the production of critical minerals is an essential step in the transition to a net-zero economy.

We must carefully manage regional values for the benefit of future generations, but we can't manage these values if we don't identify and protect them.

DEFINITIONS

Words	What they mean
Active transport	Walking and micromobility: moving on small, lightweight, powered and unpowered vehicles, including bicycles, scooters and skateboards.
Affordable housing	Housing, including social housing, appropriate for the needs of very low-income, low-income or moderate-income households. In practice, this means households can pay their essential living costs after making mortgage or rent payments, meaning these payments are usually 30% or less of their income.
Community facilities and services	Infrastructure and the paid and volunteer labour required to maintain and provide services from it, including relating to community centres, community safety, education, emergency services, health care, libraries, open space, sports and recreation and other infrastructure that make your suburb more liveable and engages you with your community.
Density	The number of homes or jobs in a given area.
First Peoples	All Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who live in Victoria or visit Victoria.
First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria	The First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria is the independent and democratically elected body to represent Traditional Owners of Country and First Peoples in Victoria.
First Peoples community	The wider Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community, including Traditional Owners. The community's voice can be conveyed individually or through First Peoples' organisations and peak bodies, including Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations, Local Aboriginal Networks and Gathering Places.
Greenfield areas	Undeveloped land identified for residential or industrial/commercial development, generally on the fringe of metropolitan Melbourne.
Open space	Land that provides outdoor recreation, leisure and/or environmental benefits and/or visual amenity, including parks, gardens, recreation reserves, nature reserves, town squares, land along rail lines and around stations and green areas at schools.
Planning system	The Acts, regulations and municipal planning schemes that set out objectives, policies and controls for the use, development and protection of land and the planning professionals (such as planners, councils and referral authorities) implementing them.
Precinct structure plan	A high-level strategic plan for a defined area setting out the preferred location of land uses and infrastructure to guide development, subdivision and building permits, which is incorporated into a local government planning scheme through a planning scheme amendment.
Public transport	Trains, trams and buses.
Registered Aboriginal Parties	Traditional Owner groups recognised under the Victorian *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006* with responsibilities for managing and protecting Aboriginal cultural heritage on Country. Registered Aboriginal Parties are recognised as the primary guardians, keepers and knowledge-holders of Aboriginal cultural heritage, including culturally significant places and objects.
Social housing	Housing other than under a Victorian Affordable Housing Program that is public housing (housing the government manages) or community housing (housing a not-for-profit organisation owns, controls or manages).
Traditional Owners	The original custodians of Victoria, who share a deep cultural, spiritual and social connection with Country. They have unique rights and responsibilities in caring for Country. Each Traditional Owner group has its unique culture, history, language, customs and laws. The actions in this plan referring to Traditional Owners is a reference to formally recognised Traditional Owner Corporations with Registered Aboriginal Party status under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006 (Vic), a Recognition and Settlement Agreement under the Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010 (Vic),* or a consent determined by the Federal court under the *Native Title Act 1993 (Cth).*
We	The Victorian Government and its officers.
You	The reader.

PHOTO CREDITS

Clyde Street Mews, Thornbury VIC – Six Degrees Architects. Photography: Alice Hutchison

Glen Iris Residential, Glen Iris VIC – Mecwacare and Modscape Photography: N/A

Balfe Park Lane, Brunswick East VIC – Kerstin Thompson Architects. Photography: Leo Showell

Doncaster VIC. Photography: Chris Kapa

Nightingale 1.0, Brunswick VIC – Breathe Architecture. Photography: Chris Kapa

Housing Choices Preston, Preston VIC – Six Degrees Architects. Photography: Charle Kinross

Markham Avenue, Ashburton VIC – Architectus and MALA Photography: Peter Clarke

The Nursery on Brunswick, Fitzroy VIC – Clare Cousins Architects Photography: Tom Ross

State design book

Chapter 1: Design Principles

VICTORIA State Government | Department of Transport and Planning

Great Design Fast Track

Design Principles

VICTORIA State Government | Department of Transport and Planning

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Acknowledgement of Country

The Victorian Government acknowledges Victoria's First Peoples for their ongoing strength, resilience and practice of the world's oldest living cultures.

We acknowledge them as the Traditional Owners of the lands, waters and skies in Victoria and acknowledge their obligations to care for Country and maintain their deep spiritual connection to it.

We pay our respects to Elders past and present, whose knowledge and wisdom have ensured the continuation of spiritual and cultural practices.

Version	Date	Summary of Changes
1	16/09/2025	Correction to the attribution and credits

▲ Front cover image: Markham Avenue, Ashburton by Architectus and MALA Photography: Peter Clarke

Great Design Fast Track

The Great Design Fast Track design principles (the design principles) are intended to guide those involved in the planning and design of proposals under the Great Design Fast Track planning pathway.

The design principles describe attributes of great design that support affordable, well-designed townhouses and apartments in Victoria. The principles are interconnected and should be considered holistically. Proposals committed to great design will demonstrate these principles.

Each design principle is accompanied by suggested outcomes. The suggested outcomes are not prescriptive, but provide guidance and examples of the application of the principles in practice. There are many ways to respond to the design principles, and sometimes a single aspect of a proposal may relate to multiple design principles.

An application must specify how the proposal responds to each of the design principles.

If a proposal seeks to vary a requirement of an applicable clause of the planning scheme, the application must specify how this is acceptable using the principles.

Under the Great Design Fast Track planning pathway, the responsible authority may waive or reduce a height or setback requirement. Proposals that demonstrate a high-quality and integrated design response to the principles may apply to vary these requirements.

Waiving or varying a requirement should be determined through the zone, the proposal's response to the design principles and the surrounding amenity, urban context and strategic context.

Table 1 may be used as a guide for waiving or varying the state standard height requirement in the head clause of each zone.

Table 1 Waiving or varying the state standard height requirement

Zone	Height (Storeys)
Neighbourhood Residential Zone	Up to 3 storeys
General Residential Zone	Up to 5 storeys
Residential Growth Zone	Up to 6 storeys
Mixed Use Zone, Commercial 1 Zone or any Special Purpose Zone where Dwelling is specified as a section 1 or 2 use	Up to 8 storeys

Design Principles

01 Neighbourly homes
Enhancing local identity by embracing change and generating lasting social value.

02 Welcoming homes
Creating welcoming and safe homes that promote a sense of family and community.

03 Landscaped homes
Enhancing local biodiversity, natural systems and connections to nature.

04 Sustainable homes
Enduring and high-performing, embedding climate resilience and minimising environmental impacts.

05 Healthy homes
Enhancing health and wellbeing through integrating the natural and built environment.

06 Adaptable homes
Housing that meets the diverse and changing needs of households and families.

07 Good value homes
Supporting more affordable housing through innovative housing development and delivery models that respond to changing housing markets.

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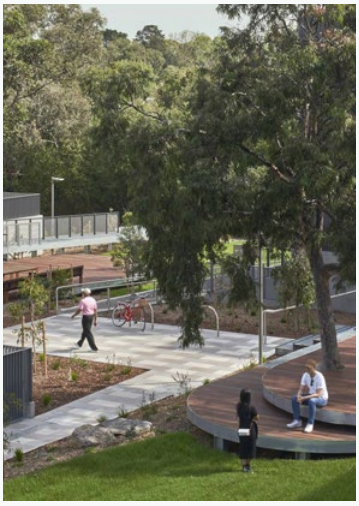
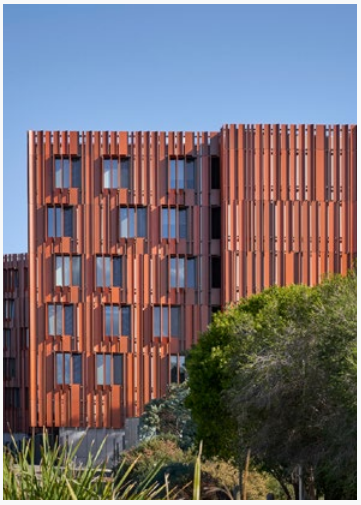
02 Welcoming homes page 15



03 Landscaped homes page 23



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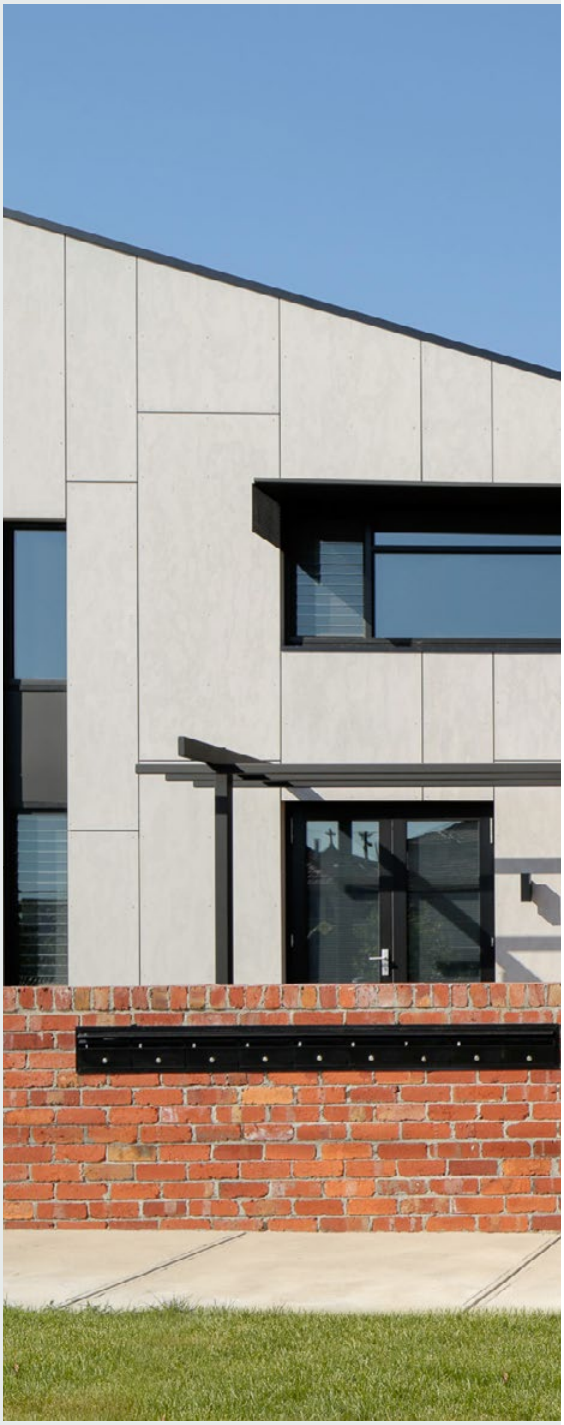
Principle 01: Neighbourly homes

Enhancing local identity by embracing change and generating lasting social value.



Suggested outcomes:

- A range of households have affordable access to homes in locations with good transport, jobs and services
- High-quality street interfaces contribute to the public realm and provide a clear sense of address
- Any increased height and decreased setbacks are sensitively designed to support housing supply while enhancing local identity
- New or improved through-site links enhance local connectivity
- Siting, layout and modulation of form manages surrounding amenity and solar access
- A beautiful addition to the neighbourhood, positively contributing to local identity.

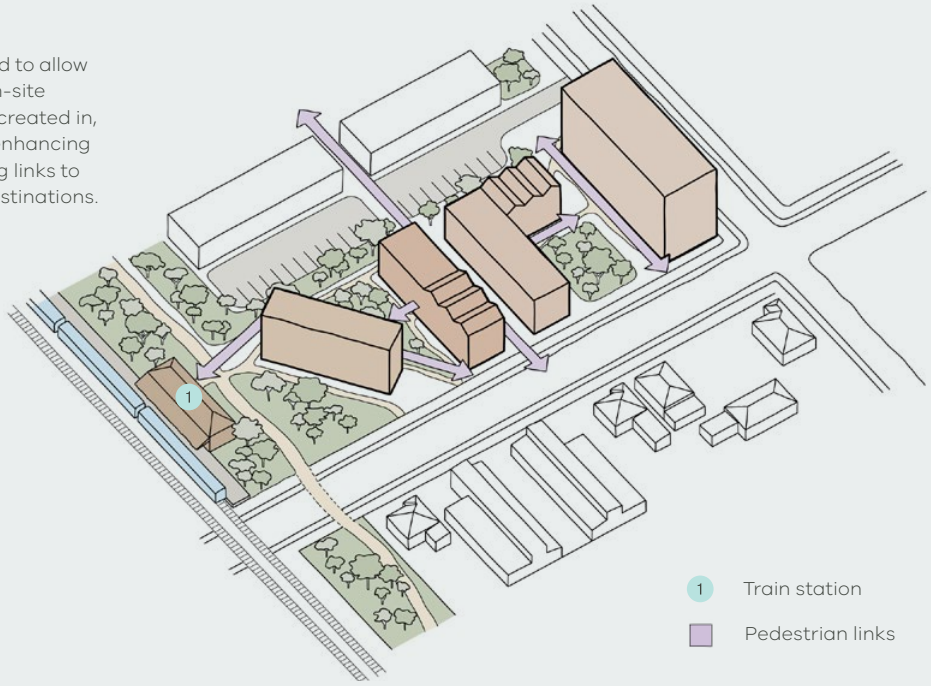
01 Neighbourly home

1.01 Clyde Street Mews, Thornbury VIC - Six Degrees Architects

A friendly interface between private open space and the public realm fosters a sense of community. Clyde Street Mews by Six Degrees Architects uses a variety of durable materials and landscape treatments to provide a clear boundary between public and private, while allowing visual connection and a sense of inclusion through the development.

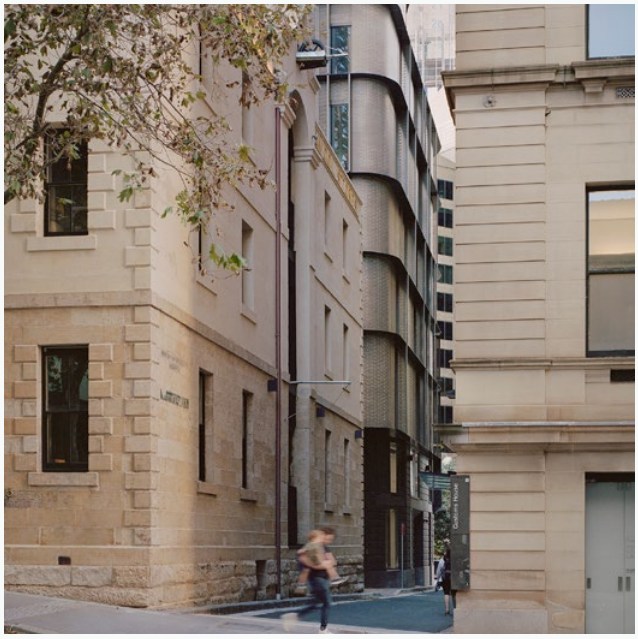
01 Neighbourly homes

Figure 1.1 Buildings are designed to allow for pedestrian links and through-site connectivity. New networks are created in, around and through buildings, enhancing existing desire lines and creating links to neighbourhood features and destinations.



1.02 Nightingale Village, Brunswick VIC - Breathe and Kennedy Nolan

High-quality, pedestrian-focused street interfaces positively contribute to the public realm and provide a clear sense of address. Skye House by Breathe and Leftfield by Kennedy Nolan are both part of Nightingale Village, Brunswick - a collection of six neighbouring buildings each designed by a different architect. Every building carefully curates the interface between ground floor uses and the footpath. Seating nooks, canopies, and operable glazing provide connectivity, encourage interactions and provide cues for wayfinding.



1.03 Quay Quarter Lanes (8 Loftus Street), Sydney NSW - Studio Bright

A sophisticated approach to materiality can reference its context and make a positive contribution to the local identity. Quay Quarter Lanes (8 Loftus Street) by Studio Bright presents a simple, modern form and façade within a sandstone heritage context. The carefully considered façade consisting of solid and hit-and-miss brick, steel detailing and perforated metal screens creates visual delight, while interpreting its context in a progressive way.

1.04 Mundingburra Housing, Townsville QLD - Counterpoint

Considered modulation of form can break down building mass to address the human scale, define entries and create an engaging street interface. Responding directly to its context, Mundingburra Housing reflects its post-war suburban location through its built form and use of materials. Splashes of colour add vibrancy to the streetscape and reinforce each home's identity. Landscaped pockets with deep soil planting further enhance the streetscape and allow for a canopy tree to each dwelling.

01 Neighbourly homes

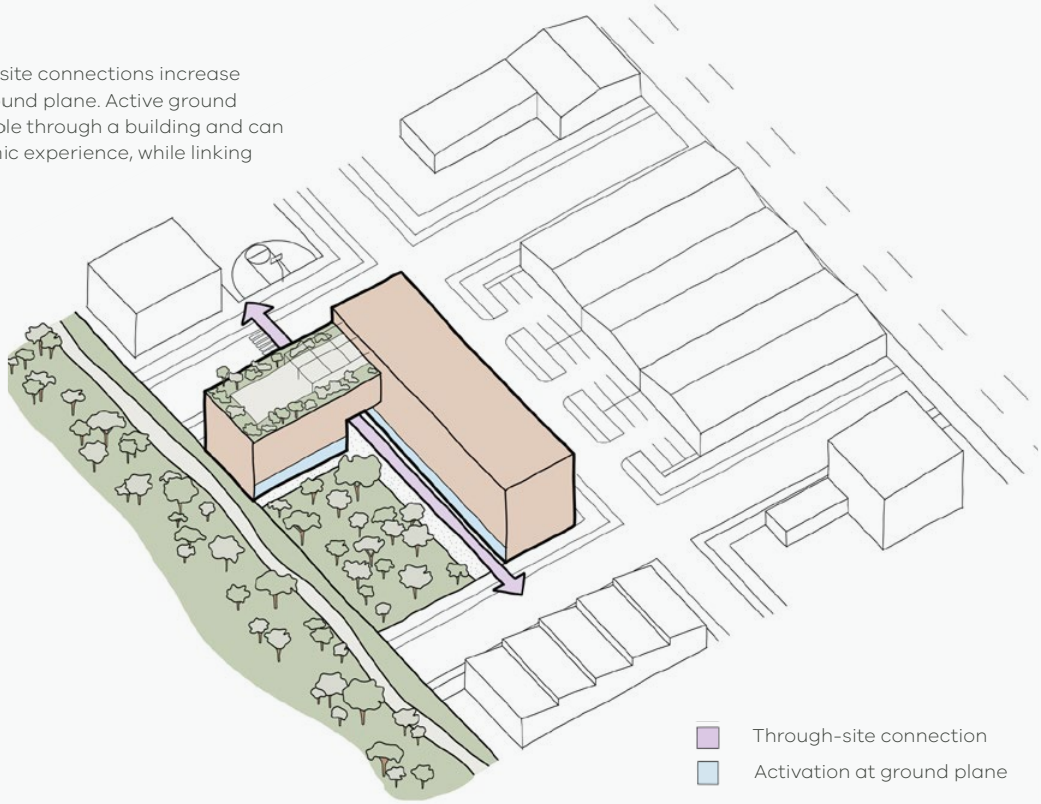
Pedestrian-oriented laneways allow connectivity of public spaces, as well as passive surveillance. One Central Bedford provides a mix of apartments and townhouses. People-focused open space is provided through careful siting of the built form, and is connected by laneways, residence entries, and landscape. A consolidated car park allows for a mix of communal courtyards and laneways that promote social encounters between residents, with all dwellings enjoying dual aspects and views, and views over the open spaces.

1.05 One Central Bedford Apartment, Christchurch, NZ - Architectus

Considered site massing and contextual, high-quality materials positively contribute to local identity. Balfe Park Lane (below) is composed of four buildings surrounding an elevated central courtyard, with a pedestrian path linking Nicholson Street to the park. A robust red brick and concrete palette honours the local context and strengthens the buildings' identity. Townhouse entries and upper-level balconies activate the park edge. Diverse dwelling types, generously sized apartments, and dual-aspect layouts elevate the internal living experience.

1.06 Balfe Park Lane, Brunswick East VIC - Kerstin Thompson Architects

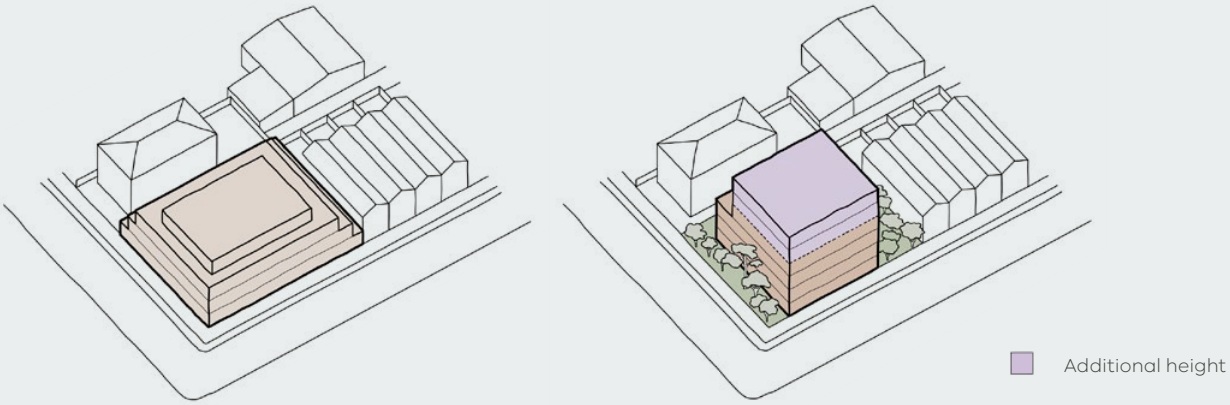
Figure 1.2 Through-site connections increase activation at the ground plane. Active ground floor uses draw people through a building and can create a rich, dynamic experience, while linking destinations.



1.07 Westhof Housing, Zürich, Switzerland - Conen Sigl

Shared circulation spaces and links through buildings connect the public to existing pathways and transport. This encourages larger developments to remain integrated and connected to their surroundings. Westhof Housing by Conen Sigl uses bold colours to guide wayfinding in its through-site links, while glazing enhances light, visual connections, and mirrors views of the courtyard beyond.

01 Neighbourly homes



1 Building form with multiple setbacks

2 Simplified form with additional height and public offering (landscape)

Figure 1.3 A nuanced approach to context analysis informs a building's massing. A proposal that includes multiple setbacks in its form can be questioned. If appropriate, prioritise quality shared landscape for the public realm, and simplified building form. If a proposal demonstrates a high-quality realisation of all principles in this document, additional height can be contemplated in line with Table 1 on page 3.

Addressing and enhancing local identity can generate lasting social value. The Mari-Mari-Ba housing development, built on a site with rich cultural and community history, offers support services and communal spaces for residents and visitors. First Nations voices were integrated and culturally appropriate designs achieved. A community hub at the front of the site includes support services, amenities and utility spaces, while the more private and culturally sensitive spaces are located deeper within the site.

1.08 Mari-Mari-Ba Affordable Housing, Brisbane QLD - Deicke Richards for the Queensland Department of Housing with the Office of the Queensland Government Architect

1.09 The Nursery on Brunswick, Fitzroy VIC - Clare Cousins Architects

Careful consideration of scale and materiality can craft friendly and enduring buildings. Formerly home to the Fitzroy Nursery, The Nursery on Brunswick by Clare Cousins Architects is a mixed-use building that honours its past with a central garden. Unlike typical yield-focused developments, the central nursery garden prioritises amenity over density, offering light, greenery and garden views for both residents and passers-by. The proportions and datum of the openings in the facade align with those of the immediate neighbouring buildings.

1.10 Hope Street Housing, White Gum Valley WA - Officer Woods Architects and MDC Architects

Considering a building's street interface holistically as part of a project improves the experience for the broader community. Hope Street Housing by Officer Woods Architects and MDC Architects offers a layered approach to public and private landscape, creating a humble yet beautiful addition to its neighbourhood.

Principle 02: Welcoming homes

Creating welcoming and safe homes that promote a sense of family and community.

Suggested outcomes:

- Communal spaces are well-connected, comfortable and easily accessible
- Communal spaces encourage incidental social interactions and support child, family and community-friendly outcomes
- Spaces connecting the street to the home are safe, inviting and attractive
- Dwelling entries and thresholds create a welcoming sense of arrival
- Pedestrian and bicycle site access is prioritised through safe and direct paths with clear entry points
- Bicycles and micromobility devices have convenient access to secure and accessible storage
- Car parking reductions are offset by the increased provision of bicycle parking and facilities.

02 Welcoming homes

2.01 Kings Crescent Phases 1 & 2, London, UK - Henley Halebrown

Multi-use, shared outdoor spaces encourage activation. Kings Crescent Phases 1 & 2 is a regeneration project that combines adaptive reuse of existing structures with the construction of new dwellings. It features revitalised shared public spaces for multiple uses and a new pedestrian network, reintegrating the estate into the city.

02 Welcoming homes

Figure 2.1 Bike storage is prioritised and well-located. It can be visually connected to the building's communal spaces, for example its circulation and/or lobby area, as well as the public realm, and incorporate higher than statutory bike parking numbers.

2.02 ParkLife, Brunswick VIC - Austin Maynard Architects

2.03 38 Albermarle Street, Kensington VIC - Fieldwork

Celebrating bike storage promotes its use as a mode of transport. At Parklife by Austin Maynard Architects, the provision of secure and easily accessible bike storage encourages the use of active transport. Access to natural light, ventilation and greenery elevates this space.

Well-located communal uses foster incidental social interactions between neighbours, supporting a diverse range of households. 38 Abermarle Street (right) includes a dogwashing bay which creates a pet and family friendly environment.

2.04 A House for Artists, London, UK - Apparata Architects

2.05 Ecoquartier Des Noes, Val-de-Reuil, France - Philippe Madec Atelier

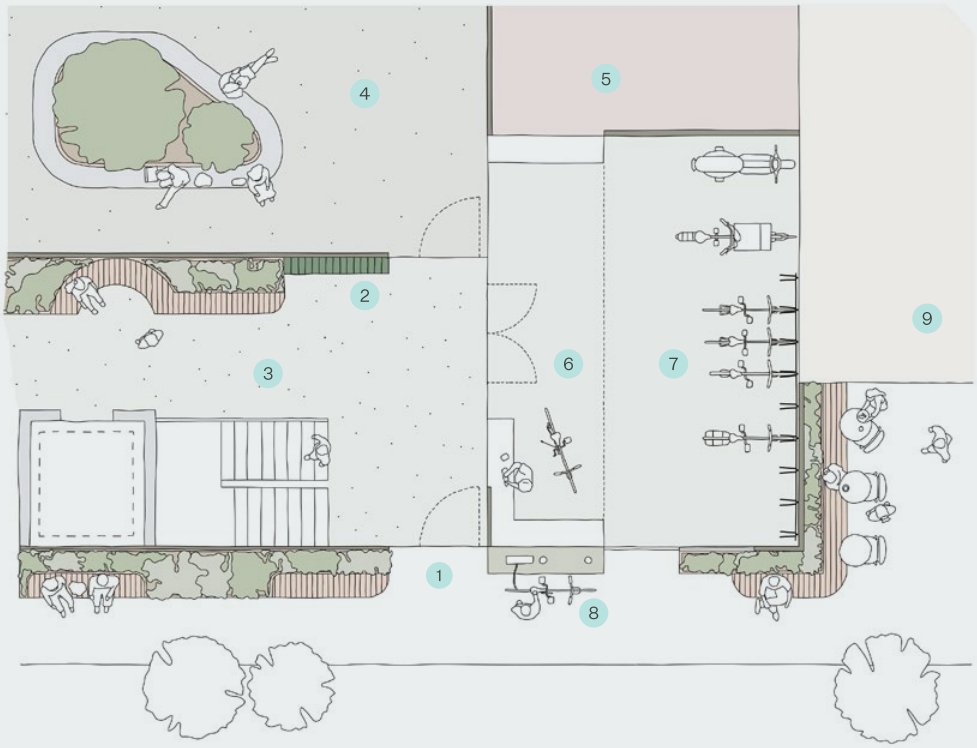
Shared spaces provide amenity to complement denser living while also fostering a sense of community. In A House for Artists by Apparata Architects, a well-located tenancy on the ground floor is used by residents and provides space for a public art program.

Ecoquartier Des Noes by Philippe Madec Atelier provides a community program which includes space to accommodate childcare.

Figure 2.2 Consolidate car parking where possible, either in a basement or a separate location, accessed by a single crossover. If central accessways with multiple crossovers are unavoidable, these spaces should be designed as shared zones that prioritise pedestrians through the inclusion of landscape and permeable surface materials.

02 Welcoming homes

Figure 2.3 Activated communal spaces create opportunities for incidental interactions. These include circulation spaces such as lobbies, stairs and corridors, with connections to residents' amenity spaces. Building a dynamic relationship between the lobby, external residents' spaces and shared uses is encouraged.



1 Entry
2 Mailboxes
3 Lobby & circulation
4 Atrium
5 Communal room
6 Workshop
7 Bike storage
8 Bike pump
9 Cafe

2.06 Aboriginal Housing Victoria, Reservoir VIC - Breathe

2.07 38 Albermarle Street, Kensington VIC - Fieldwork

The design of dwelling entries can create a welcoming sense of arrival. The thoughtful use of artwork, colour, seating and/or glazing to identify individual dwelling entries elevates the arrival experience and encourages a sense of ownership.

2.08 Marmalade Lane, Cambridge, UK - Mole Architects

The building's connection to the street is designed to be attractive and offer a safe and inviting experience. Marmalade Lane by Mole Architects creates an accessible, family-friendly interface that includes front garden area, public seating and paving treatment.

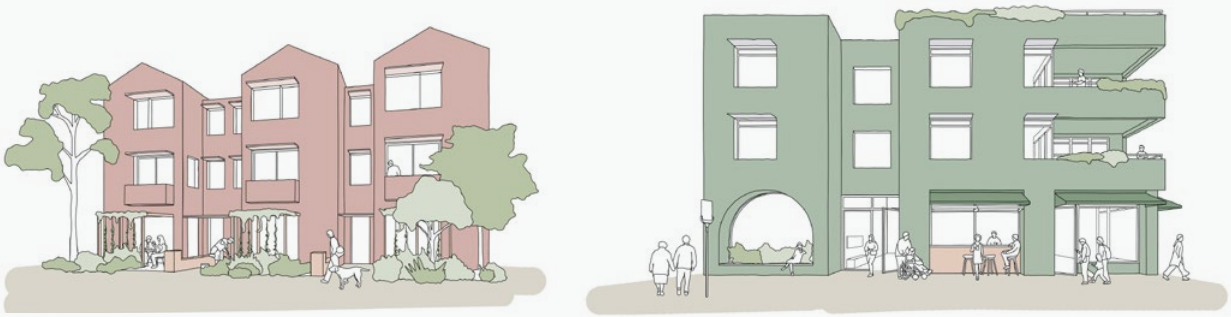


Figure 2.4 The ground plane of a new building is an important opportunity to activate and positively contribute to the streetscape. Design ground floor program such as retail and commercial space, resident amenities (for example, a workshop) as well as ground floor dwellings, with considerations to weather protection, landscape and the human scale.

02 Welcoming homes

A thoughtfully designed journey from the street to home features safe and inviting circulation spaces. At Wohnregal Apartments & Ateliers in Berlin, an open stair on the building's façade offers an engaging and active experience. The view as a resident while circulating the stair is of the nearby tree canopy and city beyond; meanwhile the passerby can see at a glance the active lives of the residents within.

2.09 Wohnregal Apartments & Ateliers, Berlin, Germany - FAR frohn&rojas

2.10 Westhof Housing, Zürich, Switzerland - Conen Sigl

When shared indoor and outdoor spaces are designed to the highest quality, these foster a sense of belonging and encourage active use. Westhof Housing affordable apartments by Conen Sigl offers a diverse range of communal outdoor spaces. An elevated central courtyard and a pergola-covered rooftop terrace are connected by an open stair, and create opportunities for various forms of communal use.

Figure 2.5 Privacy control for residents can be user-driven. Blinds, curtains and operable screens can be considered as privacy measures that allow residents to make independent decisions about their priority between natural light, ventilation and privacy. Building separation is enabled using meaningful landscape and communal open space.

Figure 2.6 Vertical circulation is an opportunity to create moments of interaction between residents. It can be a tool to animate a façade, alluding to the lives of the building within. An open or glazed stair also provides an inherent break in building form which can assist with modulation and articulation of form.

2.11 122 Roseneath Street, Clifton Hill VIC - Fieldwork

A considered journey from street to home includes attractive and enjoyable circulation spaces. At 122 Roseneath Street by Fieldwork, the site layout and consolidation of parking at ground level enables the creation of two linear gardens elevated at the first-floor level. The primary circulation paths carve through the centre of these gardens, and make use of the two buildings' separation.

Principle 03: Landscaped homes

Enhancing local biodiversity, natural systems and connections to nature.

Suggested outcomes:

- High-quality, integrated gardens create a safe, healthy and invigorating environment
- Green spaces are located on street frontages or public interfaces to enhance the public realm
- Landscaping contributes to tree canopy cover, facilitates deep soil planting and improves public and private amenity
- Where the ground plane is unavailable, landscaping is embedded across the building.

03 Landscaped hom

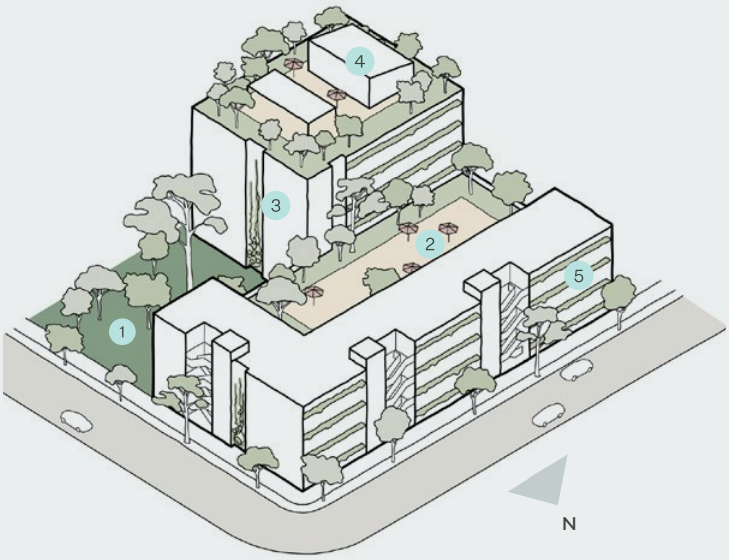
3.01 Markham Avenue , Ashburton VIC - Architectus

Integrated communal gardens with multiple connection points to the broader neighbourhood provide a connected and healthy place for users to pass through. Markham Avenue by Architectus is connected to its wider context with a through-link from the street to the creek, inviting people to move through the site. Multiple access points and extensive pathways allow residents to connect to their immediate landscape, and to the wider neighbourhood. Retaining significant existing trees on the site, the development was planned around a central garden. The established trees bring significant value and have become the heart of the development, with dwellings planned to have an outlook to either the central green space, or the adjacent creek and parklands.

03 Landscaped homes

Figure 3.1 Early integration of landscape is a key design driver, to inform a building's siting and layout. Large green spaces can be used as building separation and resident amenity. All planting should be connected to an irrigation system for maintenance.

1. Design around existing landscape that is of retention value
2. Provide central landscaped amenity so that all dwellings have a view to green
3. Landscape can be considered on the vertical plane
4. Landscaped rooftop amenity
5. Balcony planters designed with adequate soil depth to accommodate meaningful planting



3.02 Markham Avenue, Ashburton VIC - Architect: Architectus, Landscape: MALA

A direct view to landscape from a dwelling is positive for mental health. Markham Avenue by Architectus orients dwellings to either a central garden designed into the development, or to neighbouring parklands.

3.03 Hope Street, White Gum Valley WA - Architects: Officer Woods Architects and MDC Architects, Landscape: Aspect Studios

Integrating native, deep soil planting in the public realm improves amenity and creates habitat for native wildlife. Hope Street by Officer Woods Architects and MDC Architects includes a meaningful setback for deep soil planting and gardens with high permeability. By providing low-height solid fences, partially obscured views to private gardens contribute to the streetscape.

3.04 South Gardens, London, UK - Architect: Maccreanor Lavington, Landscape: Gillespie's

Planting can be integrated with a layered horizontal and vertical approach to provide a view to landscape from each dwelling. South Gardens by Maccreanor Lavington includes vertical surfaces as green walls, landscaped terraces, green roofs and a central residents' garden. These landscapes are maintained via dripline irrigation systems which are fed by rainwater harvesting. Plant selection, to create priority habitats, has been incorporated on the rooftops to attract and encourage insects and rare birds.

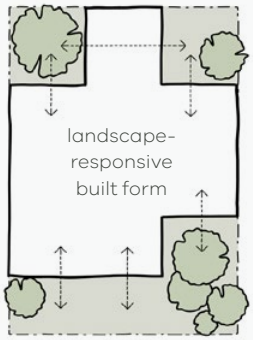


Figure 3.2 Consider landscape as an integral part of the building design, prioritising direct and usable connection with internal spaces. It should not be the product of narrow building offsets that create low-amenity and unviable garden areas.

Planting in common areas provides equitable access to landscape. Nightingale Ballarat by Breathe includes raised planters and seating that populate the ground plane, and link to external circulation.

3.05 Nightingale Ballarat, Ballarat VIC - Architect: Breathe, Landscape: Openwork

03 Landscaped homes

Figure 3.3 Consider habitat and refuge for local species in the design and layout of developments. Canopy cover can be provided to encourage habitat pathways and connection to ecology within and beyond a site's boundaries.

New canopy trees

Existing trees on site

Established surrounding greenery

Habitat pathway

3.06 Easy Street Living, Byron Bay NSW - Architect and Landscape: DJF Architects

Locating landscaping as a buffer to the public realm not only softens a building's edges, but can also contribute to a neighbourhood's canopy cover, if significant trees are accommodated. Easy Street by DJF Architects thoughtfully incorporates green spaces into the public realm, including creepers to external circulation and between building forms. Affordable, durable building materials become recessive to landscape, creating a healthy and invigorating environment.

3.07 Arkadia, Sydney NSW - Architects: Breathe and DKO, Landscape: Oculus

Rooftop gardens with interactive spaces allow for open outdoor space traditionally lost in higher density living. Arkadia by Breathe and DKO contains productive garden allotments available to each resident and a communal edible garden, barbecue facilities, a chook pen and sheltered pavilion areas.

3.08 GROW Housing, Calgary, Canada - Architect and Landscape: Modern Office of Design and Architecture

Productive rooftop planting reduces the heat island effect. GROW Housing by Modern Office of Design and Architecture uses a ramping roofline to create a sprawling urban farm. Residents come together to care for the garden, helping to build resilient communities, while also reducing the heat island effect.

Principle 04: Sustainable homes

Enduring and high-performing, embedding climate resilience and minimising environmental impacts.

Suggested outcomes:

- Upfront embodied carbon is minimised
- Attractive and durable materials reduce future maintenance and building defects
- Energy efficient design reduces future operating costs
- Resilient and responsive to current and future climate and weather events
- Fully powered by renewables, maximising on-site generation and grid-responsiveness
- Highly water efficient with embedded sustainable water management infrastructure
- Embedded low waste strategies and infrastructure supports sustainable living
- Construction impacts minimised through modern methods and innovative solutions, ensuring high-quality homes with a long-term legacy.

04 Sustainable home

4.01 Monash University Gillies Hall, Frankston VIC - Jackson Clements Burrows

Implementing a cross-laminated timber (CLT) approach decarbonises a building's structure by reducing greenhouse gas emissions and storing carbon dioxide. Gillies Hall by Jackson Clements Burrows employs a CLT structure and achieves Passive House Certification. It is an industry-leading project in sustainable multi-residential accommodation.

es

04 Sustainable homes

GUIDING PRINCIPLES IN SUSTAINABLE DESIGN

- LIFECYCLE DE-CARBONISATION
- MATERIAL CIRCULARITY
- NET-POSITIVE ENERGY
- HIGH-PERFORMING THERMAL ENVELOPE
- WATER RESILIENCE
- NO WASTE TO LANDFILL (DEMO. & CONSTRUCT.)

4.02 Ferrars & York, South Melbourne VIC - Six Degrees Architects and Hip v. Hype

Ferrars & York by Six Degrees Architects and Hip v Hype is powered by 100% renewable energy and achieves an average 8.6 star NatHERS rating for dwellings. This NatHERS rating results in consistent air temperatures, better acoustic performance, lower energy bills and a lower carbon footprint. It was constructed with low impact, responsibly sourced products and materials and includes open walkways and a communal rooftop terrace.

CARBON EMISSIONS

Reducing carbon emissions is critical and should be demonstrated and incentivised at every level. Immediate, ambitious action is required within the built environment considering that construction and operation of buildings accounts for 37% of global carbon emissions.*

The Victorian Government's Climate Change Strategy sets an objective to hit net-zero by 2045. This aligns with the Australian Institute of Architects 'Climate Action Now' report** which outlines the need for a 40% reduction in carbon by 2030, and provides a pathway to achieve this. These reductions are compared to emission levels in 2005.

* 'Building Materials and the Climate Constructing a New Future' UN Environment Programme, Report September 2023
** 'Architecture Industry Decarbonisation Plan 2025-2030' For a pathway to net-zero emissions for a sustainable future - Interim Report November 2024

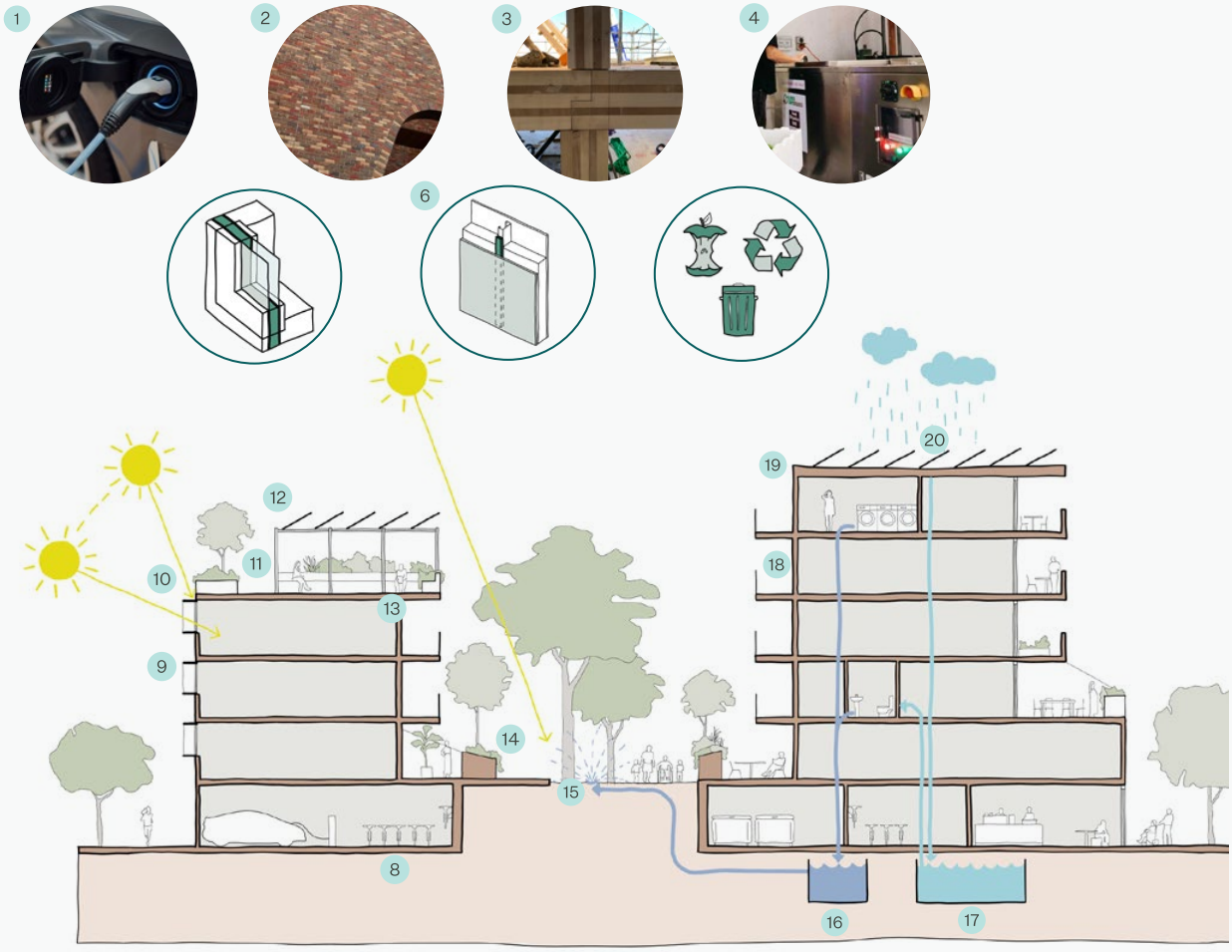
4.03 Wilam Ngarrang Retrofit, Fitzroy VIC - Kennedy Nolan

Wilam Ngarrang Retrofit by Kennedy Nolan is a refurbishment that has extended the life of the 70's apartment building, improving building performance and amenity for residents. It includes net-positive energy output and minimised carbon output.

VENTILATION

Each proposed dwelling must be provided with an effective ventilation strategy that is low-energy, energy efficient and supports a healthy indoor environment.

Aim to naturally ventilate dwellings in the first instance. Where this is not possible, single-sided ventilation with mechanical assistance must be adopted, preferably by incorporation of a heat-recovery-ventilation (HRV) system as a low-energy, high-efficiency measure to maintain a healthy indoor environment. External conditions mean that it is not always possible to rely solely on natural cross-flow ventilation.



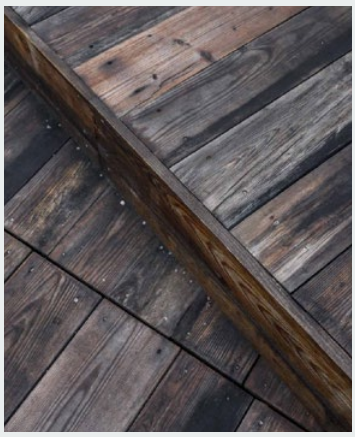
1 Electric vehicle-to-grid
2 Durable, recycled materials
3 De-carbonised structure
4 Composter
5 Thermally broken windows
6 Eliminate thermal bridging
7 Considered waste recovery room
8 Secure and activate bicycle parking (not in basement)
9 Shading - north, east and west
10 Parapet edge planting
11 Weather-protected rooftop amenity
12 Maximised rooftop solar photovoltaics (PV)
13 External residents' circulation - cross flow ventilation
14 Significant planters facilitating privacy
15 Deep soil planting and habitat recovery
16 Grey water collection for irrigation
17 Rainwater collection
18 Increase air tightness and heat-recovery ventilation system
19 Considered building orientation, prioritising northern aspect
20 Rain collection

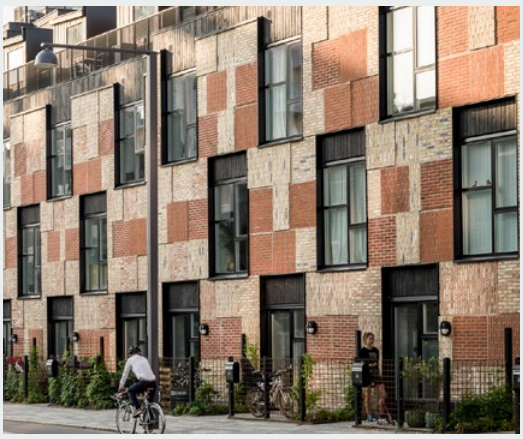
Figure 4.1 Building orientation and passive design first-principles planning have the greatest impact on the quality of habitable spaces. Simple building form allows for a rational structural grid, and improves buildability, which gives a greater chance for designed performance to be achieved. A simple, stacked building form also eliminates external spaces, like balconies, being built over habitable space. In turn, this reduces a building's heat loss, and the opportunity for waterproofing issues. Sustainability infrastructure should be prioritised, with consideration to the above design inclusions.

04 Sustainable homes

Durable materials minimise ongoing maintenance requirements. Gen Y Housing by Cast Studio combines durable metal cladding and brickwork. It achieves 'Gold Medal' lifecycle analysis by eTool, and meets the principles of Bioregional's 'One Planet Living' sustainability framework. It demonstrates that smaller footprint living can provide private and communal outdoor space at an affordable pricepoint.

4.04 Gen Y Housing, Perth WA - Cast Studio





4.05 Resource Rows, Copenhagen, Denmark - Lendager

Recycled materials should be considered in the early design phases of a project. Resource Rows by Lendager uses up-cycled bricks, waste wood and windows from abandoned structures, saving 29% of carbon dioxide emissions.

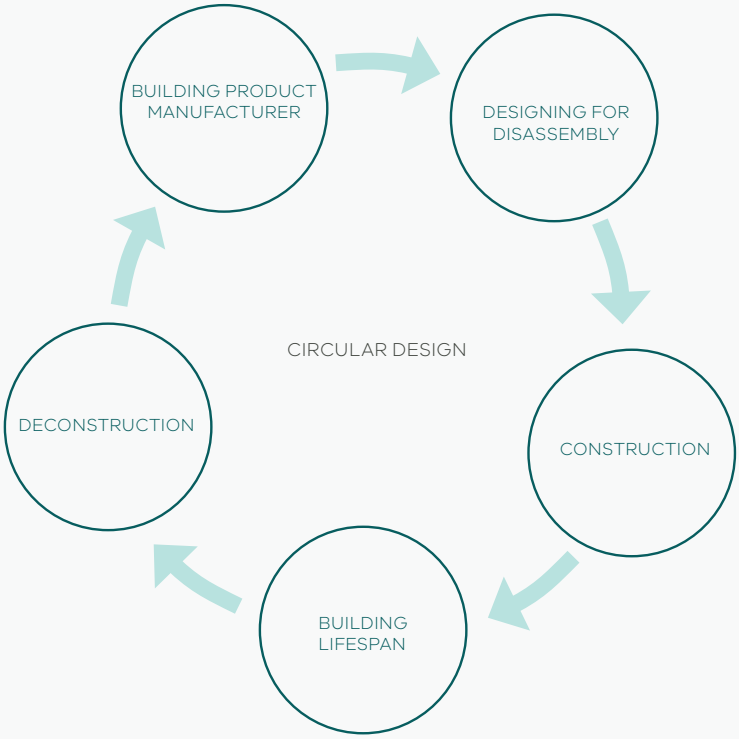


Figure 4.2 Building design should consider the circular economy of construction from the initial design phase through to deconstruction.

What considerations are within the circular economy steps?

BUILDING PRODUCT MANUFACTURE
- Material passport
- Sustainable natural resources
- Recycled materials

DESIGNING FOR DISASSEMBLY
- Consider time, tools and effort required for disassembly
- Simplify systems and building elements, avoiding irreversible build-ups

CONSTRUCTION
- Reduce construction waste
- Consider modern methods of construction

BUILDING LIFESPAN
- Durable, recyclable materials
- Regular maintenance
- Extension of construction services life
- Provide community shared infrastructure and tools

DECONSTRUCTION
- Decrease emissions, disruptions and waste by:
  - Selective demolition
  - Adaptive re-use

4.06 High Street Apartments, Thornbury VIC - Gardiner Architects

Cross-laminated timber (CLT) can sequester carbon, has a high thermal performance and can increase the speed of construction. Replacing one cubic metre of concrete with timber saves 1 tonne of carbon. High Street Apartments by Gardiner Architects employs CLT and achieves an 8.4 star NatHERS rating on average. CLT is prefabricated in a factory and represents a reduction in construction waste.

Principle 05: Healthy homes

Enhancing health and wellbeing through integrating the natural and built environment.

Suggested outcomes:

- Indoor spaces support occupant health and provide natural light, good air quality, thermal and acoustic comfort, and outlook
- Accessible and inviting outdoor spaces enable daily activities and interactions for all residents
- Solar access is maximised and southern orientations minimised across living areas and bedrooms of all dwellings
- Well-ventilated homes maximising cross-ventilation and dual-aspect dwellings.

05 Healthy homes

5.01 wij_land, Amsterdam, Netherlands - Space & Matter

External circulation allows for dual aspect dwellings and natural cross flow ventilation. Wij_land by Space & Matter is a self-build collective made up of a community of diverse residents wanting to live more sustainably - both materially and socially. Single-loaded apartment types are accessed via external circulation, adjacent to each dwellings' balcony. This balcony circulation arrangement encourages informal encounters while also allowing more daylight to apartments through dual-aspect orientation.

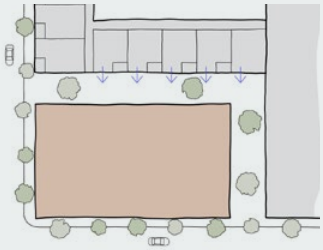
05 Healthy homes

5.02 Nightingale Evergreen, Brunswick VIC - Clare Cousins Architects

Flush balcony transitions, direct sunlight, and views to green contribute to a healthy dwelling. Nightingale Evergreen orients dwellings north, towards a community park. Its dwellings average 8.1 stars NatHERS rating, and include flush balcony transitions.

5.03 38 Albermarle Street, Kensington VIC - Fieldwork

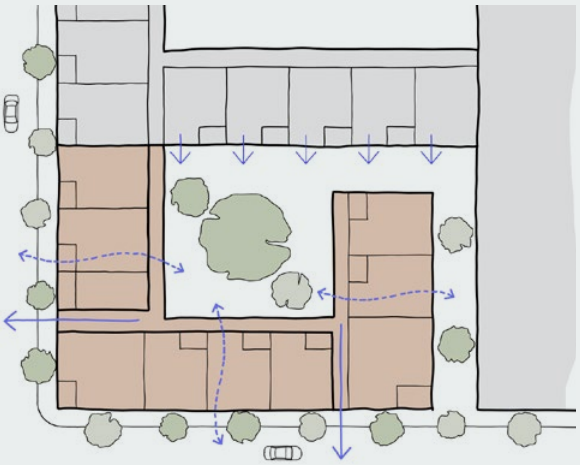
38 Abermarle Street by Fieldwork employs open breezeway circulation with circular voids between levels to facilitate dual-aspect apartments. It also creates the opportunity for planting in communal corridors. Visual connection between levels encourages neighbourly interaction and creates a sense of openness.



1 Building mass results in unusable narrow areas around site boundary, with a harsh interface toward existing neighbours

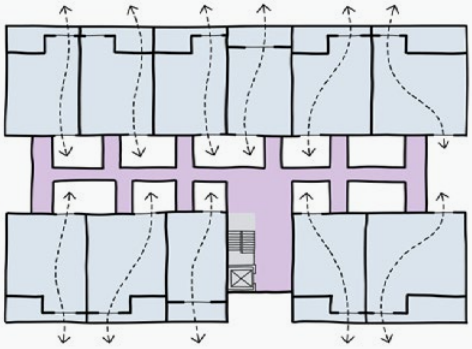
Neighbouring building
Development opportunity

Figure 5.1 Consider building massing to avoid leaving small and unusable areas around the site boundary. By shifting a building's massing to the perimeter of its block and creating a central courtyard, there may be the opportunity to increase views to green space for residents and their neighbours, as well as cross-flow ventilation.

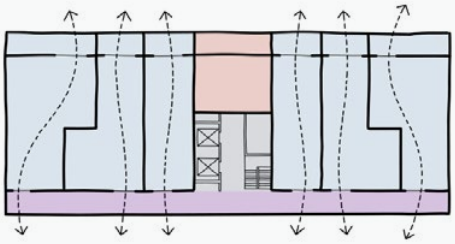


2 U-shaped massing creates usable central greenspace, with more desirable views for existing neighbours and new residents. Cross-flow ventilation is available to all new dwellings.

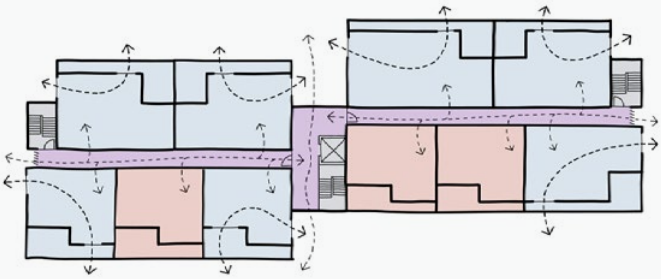
APARTMENT TYPOLOGIES SUPPORTING NATURAL VENTILATION



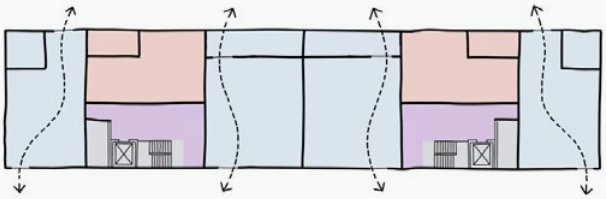
1 Open corridor
'breezeway' typology



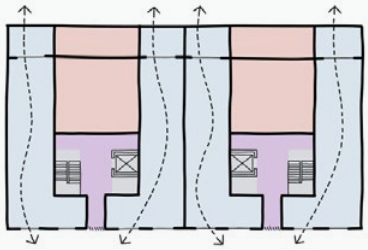
2 Dual aspect apartments
'single-loaded' typology



3 Ventilated corridor
'semi-open' typology



4 Short corridor, small community
'mansion' typology (shallow)



5 Short corridor, small community
'mansion' typology (deep)

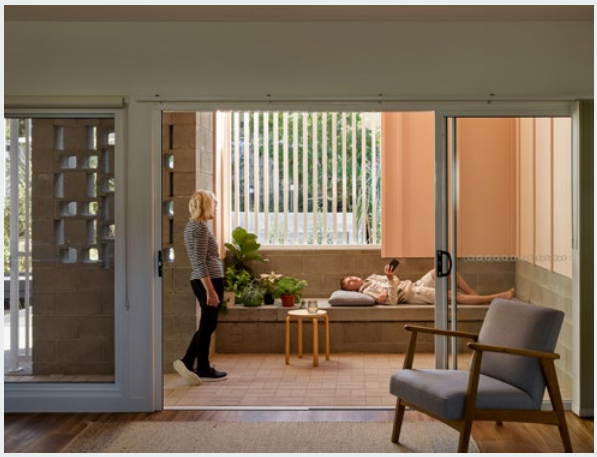
Figure 5.2 Planning of building orientation and circulation has a significant impact on a dwelling's ability for cross-flow ventilation. Air-flow through a dwelling is dictated by its orientation, internal planning, and the number of external building walls it accesses. Where single-orientation south-facing glazing cannot be avoided, a dwelling's proportions should be shallower and wider, so as to have greater access to natural light. North-facing dwellings can be designed to gain adequate natural light by applying a deeper typology.

- Circulation
- Dwelling that could achieve cross-flow ventilation
- Dwelling that would not achieve cross-flow ventilation

05 Healthy homes

5.04 Toiora Co-housing, Dunedin, South Island, NZ - Architype

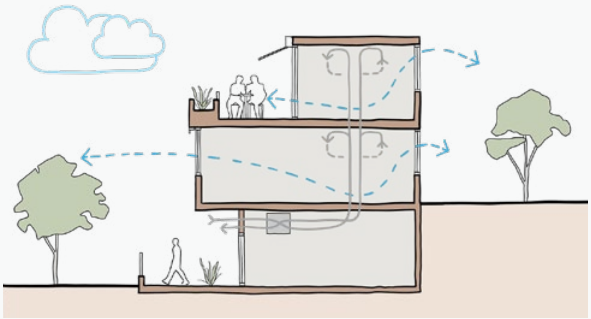
Activated communal outdoor spaces encourage neighbour interaction and play. Toiora Co-Housing by Architype includes modular designed townhouses and a children's play area, vegetable gardens, bike sheds and a large communal garden. The dwellings include passive indoor air control through natural ventilation, as well as mechanical ventilation with heat recovery.



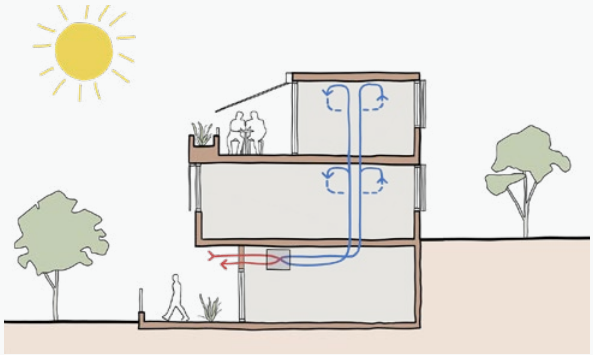
Shaded and sheltered exterior spaces allow for spending time outdoors, regardless of the weather. Anne Street Garden Villas by Anna O'Gorman Architects incorporates accessible and inviting outdoor spaces through a considered series of public and private thresholds. The dwellings are passively designed to respond to the climate with multiple orientations to each townhouse, and varied operable glazing.

5.05 Anne Street Garden Villas. Gold Coast QLD - Anna O'Gorman Architects

USER-CONTROLLED TOWNHOUSE VENTILATION



1 Mild external conditions - A townhouse where natural cross flow ventilation is able to act as the predominant method for ventilation. The need for heat-recovery ventilation is significantly reduced



2 Harsh external conditions - A townhouse that closes its windows and draws its external shading. Heat-recovery ventilation is used as the sole method for ventilation.

Figure 5.3 Design dwellings for low-energy, user-controlled operation. As air-tightness construction requirements increase, adequate ventilation to dwellings is critical to avoid moisture build-up and control air quality. It is not always viable to naturally ventilate, and in this event, a heat-recovery ventilation system provides a low-energy solution. When paired with external shading, a home can be passively heated or cooled without relying on the energy needed for traditional mechanical ventilation.

5.06 wij_land, Amsterdam, Netherlands - Space & Matter

Thoughtful balconies designed to maximise solar access encourage time spent outdoors. At wij_land by Space & Matter, balconies are flipped to the side of external circulation. In addition, generous communal green zones allows space for the residential community to meet and tend to productive planting.

Principle 06: Adaptable homes

Housing that meets the diverse and changing needs of households and families.

Suggested Outcomes:

- Diverse dwelling sizes and types cater to different household needs at all life stages, including families with children and ageing in place
- Adaptable and comfortable layouts make good use of space and accommodate various patterns of occupation and use
- Flexible layouts can be adapted to changing households needs over time, and support future dwelling consolidation opportunities
- Effective zoning, and sequencing of internal spaces to enhance functionality, circulation and manage noise.

06 Adaptable homes

6.01 WPI Older Women's Housing Project, Beaconsfield VIC - Studio Bright

Operable walls allow rooms and spaces to be used flexibly. Older Women's Housing Project by Studio Bright includes bi-fold walls that allow residents to re-configure space as their needs change. A second living room/study is provided, and able to be closed off as needed. The units are designed to achieve LHA Gold Standard through Livable Housing Australia.

06 Adaptable homes

Figure 6.1 A regular grid arrangement can allow for a modular approach to apartment planning. This supports greater flexibility in apartment sizes, with the addition or subtraction of modules, and allows the market and user needs to drive dwelling sizes. Using a regular grid arrangement, apartment configurations can become flexible, with internal walls able to move and adapt with different stages of life. It supports the merging of future spaces to create larger dwellings from multiple smaller ones, and vice-versa to allow for right-sizing over a resident's lifetime.

6.02 wij_land, Amsterdam, Netherlands - Space & Matter

Built-in bench seat joinery maximises space by allowing for an efficient dining room arrangement. Built-in overhead storage saves on space and offers personalisation opportunities for different stages of life.

Flush transitions between indoor and outdoor spaces encourage private balconies to be used as an extension of the living room, like in Short Lane by Woods Bagot (left).

In small dwellings, curtains can be used as room dividers to create spatial flexibility, like in The Picador by Architecture Architecture (right).

6.03 Short Lane, Sydney NSW - Woods Bagot

6.04 The Picador, Kew VIC - Architecture Architecture

6.05 Marmalade Lane Co-Housing Development, Cambridge, UK - Mole Architects

Flexible communal rooms encourage community use. Marmalade Lane Co-Housing by Mole Architects provides community use through multi-purpose spaces. The development's townhouses employ a selection of standard floorplans, interior schemes and exterior schemes to allow residents to tailor and personalise their own homes without the cost or risk of a self-build.

06 Adaptable homes

6.06 St Albans Housing, St Albans VIC - NMBW, MADA and Housing Choices

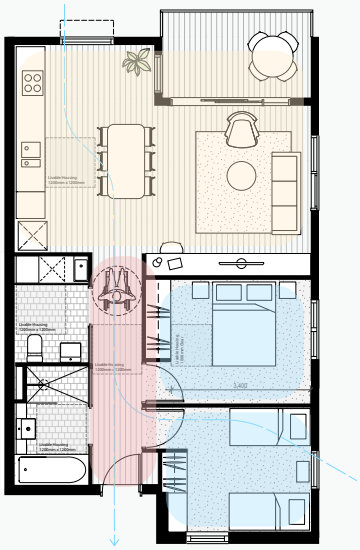
NMBW, Monash Art, Design and Architecture and Housing Choices designed St Albans housing through a co-design process with residents, which resulted in room sizes and arrangements being customised to each user. It is a 'build-to-rent development', providing accessible and affordable accommodation, with dwellings arranged around a central wet-area core and non-load bearing internal walls. These walls can be reconfigured with their changing needs, or as a new resident takes the lease.

6.08 Hope Street, White Gum Valley WA - Officer Woods Architects and MDC Architects

6.07 Fitzroy III, Fitzroy VIC - Agius Scorpo Architects

Operable joinery can be used to increase the flexibility of dwellings. Agius Scorpo Architects' Fitzroy III uses inventive joinery pieces that serve multiple functions. Operable kitchen joinery closes down to resemble a wall for when the kitchen space becomes an entertaining space.

Variation in the volume of dwellings allows for a sense of openness and generosity. Hope Street by Officer Woods Architects and MDC Architects provide variation in dwelling typology by designing in double height spaces.



Clear zoning separating the shared and private areas of the plan alongside careful sequencing of internal spaces, create welcoming and comfortable homes. The Future Homes exemplar designs provide efficient layouts that maximise flexible use of the rooms and opportunity for outlook, while incorporating distinct entry thresholds and considered circulation paths.

▲ 6.09 Future Homes, Melbourne VIC - MWA

1. Nursery or study
2. Twin room
3. Large bathroom with bath
4. 2 x standard sized bathrooms
5. Bedroom with ensuite
6. Flexible living / dining space
7. Living room with curtain divider
8. Kitchen with moveable island

Figure 6.2 Considered internal apartment configuration and non-load bearing internal walls allow flexibility for residents to alter their apartment as their needs change. The use of operable walls allows for rooms to combine, or be divided into smaller spaces. Bi-fold, sliding, cavity, or large pivot doors are tools that allow for occupant control and flexible planning.

Principle 07: Good value homes

Supporting more affordable housing through innovative housing development delivery models that respond to changing housing markets.

Suggested outcomes:

- A diverse range of housing meets the needs of different income levels, household types, and life stages, including families with children and ageing in place
- Housing incorporates efficient design and construction methods to reduce costs while maintaining quality and durability
- Housing minimises operational costs for residents and addresses long-term affordability
- Innovative development and delivery models support affordability
- Alternative ownership, tenure and finance models support access to more affordable housing .

07 Good value home

7.01 Low Impact Living Affordable Community, Leeds, UK - LILAC MHOS ltd

Affordable housing can be achieved through innovative development and delivery models. LILAC by White Design was delivered through the Mutual Home Ownership Scheme which is a co-operative, whereby residents pay a monthly fee to the co-operative to build up equity in the community. The urban infill development was carbon neutral through construction and is carbon negative in its running costs. It includes car-sharing, pooling of resources, tools and equipment, and productive planting.

07 Good value homes

7.02 BIGyard, Berlin, Germany - Architect: Zanderroth Architekten, Specialist Coordinator: SmartHoming

BAUGRUPPEN MODEL

'Baugruppen' is an innovative model of residential development that is initiated and funded by its residents. It procures housing that is tailored to their needs at a wholesale price, which excludes the developer's profit margin.
The residents at BIGyard by Zanderroth Architekten were able to control the density of their built form to reflect the desired combination of community, privacy and landscape.
The residents at Collective #9 by Zen Architects and Property Collectives focused their efforts on achieving an intentional multi-generational community with an average 8.7 star NatHERS rating.

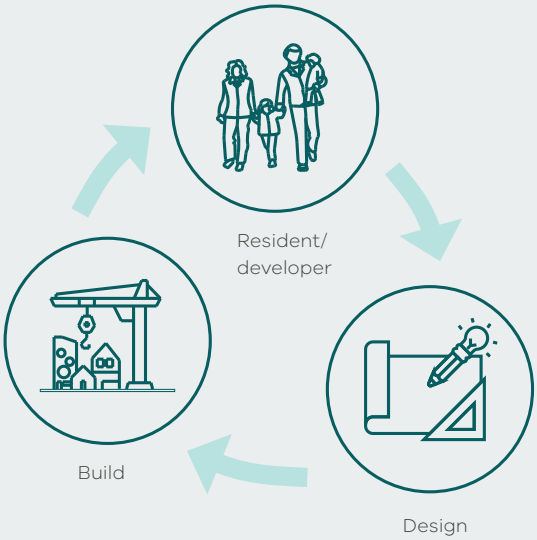


Figure 7.1 Baugruppen model diagram

7.03 Collective #9 Victoria Street, West Brunswick VIC - Architect: Zen Architects, Developer: Property Collectives

GROUND LEASE MODEL

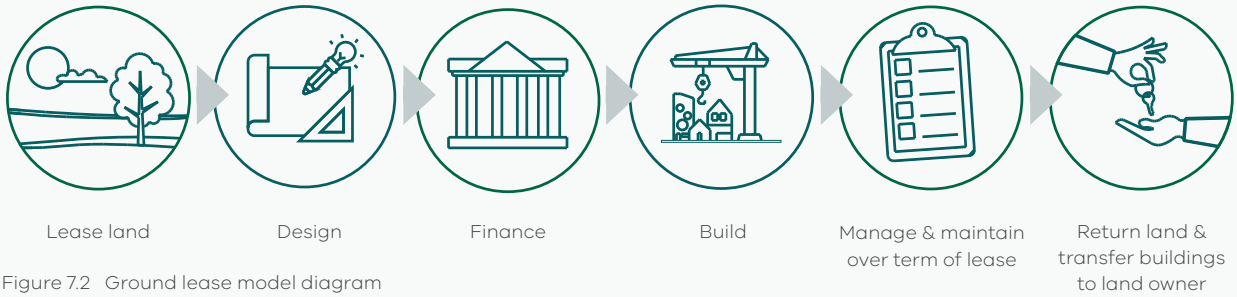


Figure 7.2 Ground lease model diagram

7.04 Victoria St, Flemington VIC - Architect: Six Degrees Architects, Project Owner: Homes Victoria

Under a Ground Lease Model, public or private land is leased to a consortium to finance, build, manage and maintain residential buildings. At the end of the lease term (for example 40 years), the ownership of the buildings is transferred to the owner of the land. Ground Lease Models can be suitable for government, council and not-for-profit land owners that own surplus land and require the skills and/or the capital of the private sector to deliver the project. Projects delivered under a Ground Lease Model often include social and/or affordable housing components. They also involve higher transaction and structuring costs than a typical sale of land. Victoria Street, Flemington was delivered through a Ground Lease Model, where Homes Victoria leased land to project partner Building Communities to finance, build, manage and maintain 119 affordable homes and 240 social homes for a 40 year lease period. The project delivered a 21% uplift in social housing.

RENTAL LEASE TERMS

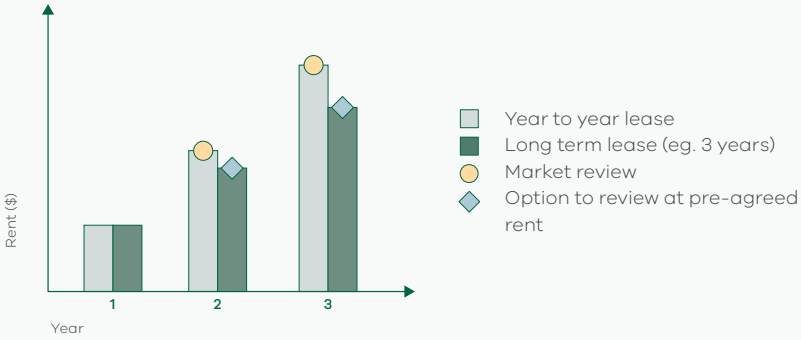


Figure 7.3 Rental lease comparison graph

All else being equal, development models which offer longer term leases provide residents with greater housing stability, which supports wellbeing and other aspects of their lives (for example job, school, community associations). 38 Abermarle Street by Fieldwork offers residents a 1 year lease with four one-year options to renew at the resident's discretion and at a pre-agreed rent. At the end of the lease term, the resident has the option, but not the obligation, to buy the apartment at a price that is agreed at the commencement of the lease.

7.05 38 Abermarle Street, Kensington VIC - Architect: Fieldwork, Developer: Assemble

07 Good value homes

7.06 Habitat on Juers, Logan QLD - Architect: REFRESH

Habitat on Juers, a collaboration with the Queensland Government, offers adaptable social housing in Logan City. Designed with a focus on accessibility and energy efficiency, Habitat on Juers provides affordable, sustainable living with a focus on fostering community connection. All 16 units perform exceptionally well both in terms of energy consumption and occupant comfort. The use of a cross laminated timber structure allowed for exposed double-brickwork and lightweight cladding. Prioritising orientation, passive heating, cooling and connection to landscape all contribute to an average 8.5 NatHERS rating across the units.

7.07 Snabba Hus Västberga, Stockholm, Sweden - Architect: Andreas Martin-Löf Arkitekter, Developer: New Living

Modern methods of construction (MMC) can lower building costs as manufacture and assembly happen off-site, installation is fast-tracked, and material wastage minimised. Snabba Hus Västberga provides affordable rental apartments for young people in Sweden. It is a high-quality architectural outcome that prioritises shared facilities like communal laundries, and uses prefabricated concrete panels to support 280 apartments which have been assembled off-site.

7.08 Glen Iris Residential, Glen Iris VIC - Designer: Modscape, Developer: Mecaware

Automation within the manufacture of building elements increases efficiency and precision. Robotics are used at Modscape for the construction of off-site building elements. Pre-fabrication was employed at Glen Iris Residential by Modscape to bring costs down by 30%, shorten delivery times by 50%, and reduce waste by up to 70%.

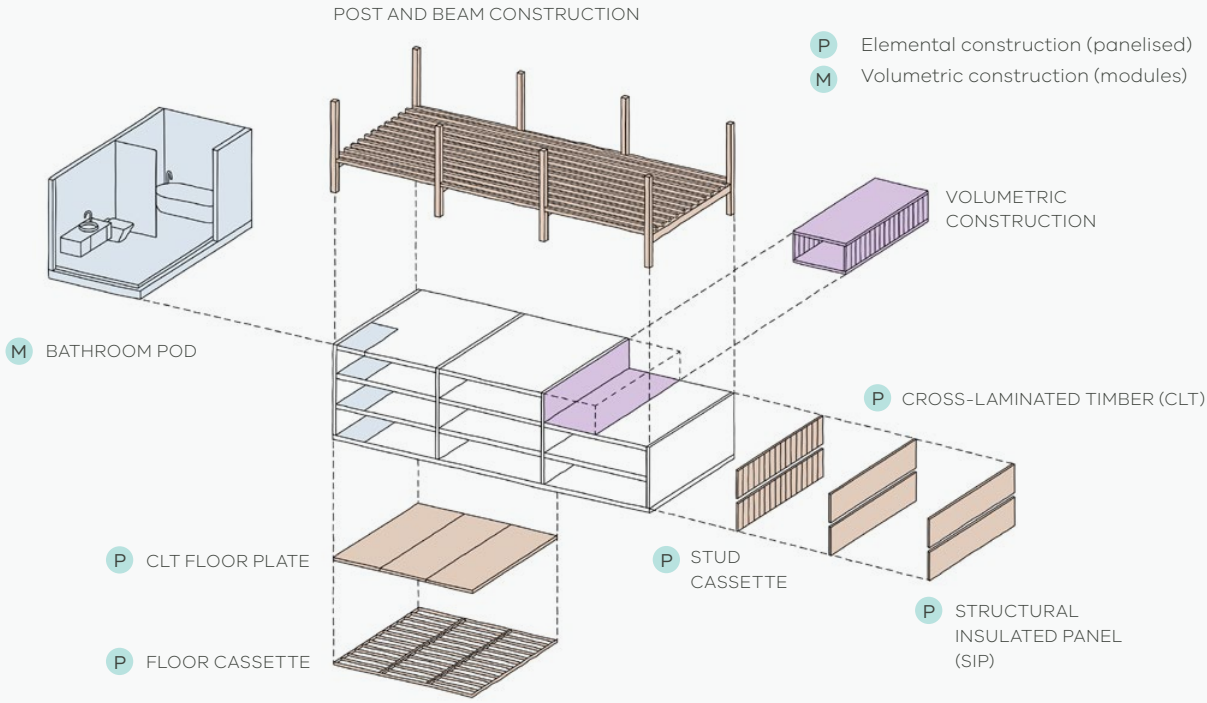


Figure 7.4 Modern methods of construction (MMC) are increasingly important systems that should be considered for their positive impacts on sustainability, quality, construction time and cost outcomes. MMC includes elemental construction (panelised), volumetric construction (modules), and hybrid strategies (kits of parts). The above demonstrates examples of MMC that fit within these three catagories.

1.01	Clyde Street Mews, Thornbury VIC - Six Degrees Architects	Photography: Alice Hutchison
1.02	Nightingale Village, Brunswick VIC - Breathe and Kennedy Nolan	Photography: Tom Ross
1.03	Quay Quarter Lanes (8 Loftus Street), Sydney NSW - Studio Bright	Photography: Rory Gardiner
1.04	Mundingburra Housing, Townsville QLD - Counterpoint	Photography: Andrew Rankin
1.05	One Central Bedford Apartment, Christchurch, NZ - Architectus	Photography: Sarah Rowlands
1.06	Balfe Park Lane, Brunswick East VIC - Kerstin Thompson Architects	Photography: Leo Showell
1.07	Westhof Housing, Zürich, Switzerland - Conen Sigl	Photography: Roman Keller
1.08	Mari-Mari-Ba Affordable Housing, Brisbane QLD - Deicke Richards	Photography: Christopher Fredrick Jones
1.09	The Nursery on Brunswick, Fitzroy VIC - Clare Cousins Architects	Photography: Tom Ross
1.10	Hope Street Housing, White Gum Valley WA - Officer Woods Architects and MDC Architects	Photography: Robert Frith
2.01	Kings Crescent Phases 1 & 2, London, UK - Henley Halebrown	Photography: John Sturrock
2.02	ParkLife, Brunswick VIC - Austin Maynard Architects	Photography: Tom Ross
2.03	38 Albermarle Street, Kensington VIC - Fieldwork	Photography: Tom Ross
2.04	A House for Artists, London, UK - Apparata Architects	Photography: Julia Forsman
2.05	Ecoquartier Des Noes, Val-de-Reuil, France - Philippe Madec Atelier	Photography: Pierre-Yves Brunaud
2.06	Aboriginal Housing Victoria, Reservoir VIC - Breathe	Photography: Andrew Wuttke
2.07	38 Albermarle Street, Kensington VIC - Fieldwork	Photography: Tom Ross
2.08	Marmalade Lane, Cambridge, UK - Mole Architects	Photography: David Butler
2.09	Wohnregal Apartments & Ateliers, Berlin, Germany - FAR frohn&rojas	Photography: David von Becker
2.10	Westhof Housing, Zürich, Switzerland - Conen Sigl	Photography: Roman Keller
2.11	122 Roseneath Street, Clifton Hill VIC- Fieldwork	Photography: Tom Ross
3.01	Markham Avenue, Ashburton VIC - Architectus and MALA	Photography: Peter Clarke
3.02	Markham Avenue, Ashburton VIC - Architectus and MALA	Photography: Peter Clarke
3.03	Hope Street Housing, White Gum Valley WA - Officer Woods Architects and MDC Architects and Aspect Studios	Photography: Robert Frith
3.04	South Gardens, London, UK - Maccreanor Lavington and Gillespie's	Photography: Tim Crocker and Will Wiesner
3.05	Nightingale Ballarat, Ballarat VIC - Breathe and Openwork	Photography: Rory Gardiner
3.06	Easy Street Living, Byron Bay NSW - DJF Architects	Photography: Christopher Frederick Jones
3.07	Arkadia, Sydney NSW - Breathe, DKO and Oculus	Photography: Tom Ross
3.08	GROW Housing, Calgary, Canada - Modern Office of Design and Architecture	Photography: Ema Peter
4.01	Monash University Gillies Hall, Frankston VIC - Jackson Clements Burrows	Photography: Peter Clarke
4.02	Ferrars & York, South Melbourne VIC - Six Degrees Architects and Hip v. Hype	Photography: Dan Preston
4.03	Wilam Ngarrang Retrofit, Fitzroy VIC - Kennedy Nolan	Photography: Eve Wilson
4.04	Gen Y Housing, Perth WA - Cast Studio	Photography: Robert Frith
4.05	Resource Rows, Copenhagen, Denmark - Lendager	Photography: Rasmus Hjortshøj

Credits

4.06	High Street Apartments, Thornbury VIC - Gardiner Architects	Photography: Rory Gardiner
5.01	wij_land, Amsterdam, Netherlands - Space & Matter	Photography: Marcel van der Burg
5.02	Nightingale Evergreen, Brunswick VIC - Clare Cousins Architects	Photography: Tom Ross
5.03	38 Albermarle Street, Kensington VIC - Fieldwork	Photography: Tom Ross
5.04	Toiora Co-housing Development, Dunedin, NZ - Architype	Photography: Andy Spain
5.05	Anne Street Garden Villas, Gold Coast QLD - Anna O'Gorman Architects	Photography: Christopher Frederick Jones
5.06	wij_land, Amsterdam, Netherlands - Space & Matter	Photography: Marcel van der Burg
6.01	WPI Older Women's Housing Project, Beaconsfield VIC - Studio Bright	Photography: Rory Gardiner
6.02	wij_land, Amsterdam, Netherlands - Space & Matter	Photography: Marcel van der Burg
6.03	Short Lane, Sydney NSW - Woods Bagot	Photography: Luke Zeme
6.04	The Picador, Kew VIC - Architecture Architecture	Photography: Tom Ross
6.05	Marmalade Lane, Cambridge, UK - Mole Architects	Photography: David Butler
6.06	St Albans Housing, St Albans VIC - NMBW, MADA and Housing Choices	Photography: Peter Bennetts
6.07	Fitzroy III, Fitzroy VIC - Agius Scorpo Architects	Photography: Tom Ross
6.08	Hope Street Housing, White Gum Valley WA - Officer Woods Architects and MDC Architects	Photography: Tom Ross
6.09	Twelve Houses, Malmö, Sweden - Förstberg Ling	Photography: Markus Linderoth
7.01	Low Impact Living Affordable Community, Leeds, UK - LILAC	Photography: Andrew Lord
7.02	BIGyard, Berlin, Germany - Zanderroth Architekten and SmartHoming	Photography: Michael Feser
7.03	Collective #9 Victoria St, West Brunswick VIC - Zen Architects and Property Collectives	Photography: Tom Ross
7.04	Victoria St, Flemington VIC - Six Degrees Architects and Homes Victoria	Photography: Rory Gardiner
7.05	38 Albermarle Street, Kensington VIC - Architect: Fieldwork, Developer: Assemble	Photography: Tom Ross
7.06	Habitat on Juers, Logan QLD - Architect: REFRESH	Photography: Scott Burrows
7.07	Snabba Hus Västberga, Stockholm, Sweden Architect: Andreas Martin-Löf Arkitekter, Developer: New Living	Photography: AML Studios / Åke E:son Lindman and AML Studios / Johan Fowelin
7.08	Glen Iris Residential, Glen Iris VIC - Mecwacare and Modscape	Photography: N/A

Within the preceding book, the lead architect is credited for each project. In the Landscaped homes and Adaptable homes chapters, additional parties have been credited.

VICTORIA State Government | Department of Transport and Planning

vic.gov.au/department-of-transport-and-planning

Protecting and enhancing our tree canopy for a greener Victoria

Planning rules for canopy trees in residential areas

Status

Guide

CURRENT

Published: September 2025

Last updated: 15 September 2025

On this page:

Introduction of Clause 52.37 Canopy trees

What is a canopy tree?

Permit required to remove, destroy or lop a canopy tree in residential zones

Assessment of the removal, destruction or lopping of a canopy tree

Replacement canopy tree requirements to enhance canopy trees

Introduction of Clause 52.37 Canopy trees

On 15 September 2025, Amendment VC289 introduced clause 52.37 (Canopy trees) to all planning schemes. The clause requires a planning permit to remove, destroy or lop a canopy tree in specific circumstances. The requirement applies to all residential zones (except for the Low Density Residential Zone).

The new clause supports Action 12 of Plan for Victoria and state planning policies which seek to protect and enhance canopy tree cover in urban areas to reduce the impacts of urban heat on human health and wellbeing.

The rules to protect and enhance canopy trees on residential land are designed to balance canopy tree protection and minimise impacts on housing yield, recognising government policy including Victoria's Housing Statement.

Clause 52.37 does not change or duplicate the deemed-to-comply standards for canopy trees under residential provisions such as clause 55 Townhouse and Low-Rise Code. The responsible authority is required to make a proportionate and fair decision under clause

52.37 by balancing the retention of existing canopy trees and residential development.

What is a canopy tree?

Clause 52.37 requires a permit to remove, destroy or lop a canopy tree. A canopy tree means a tree that has:

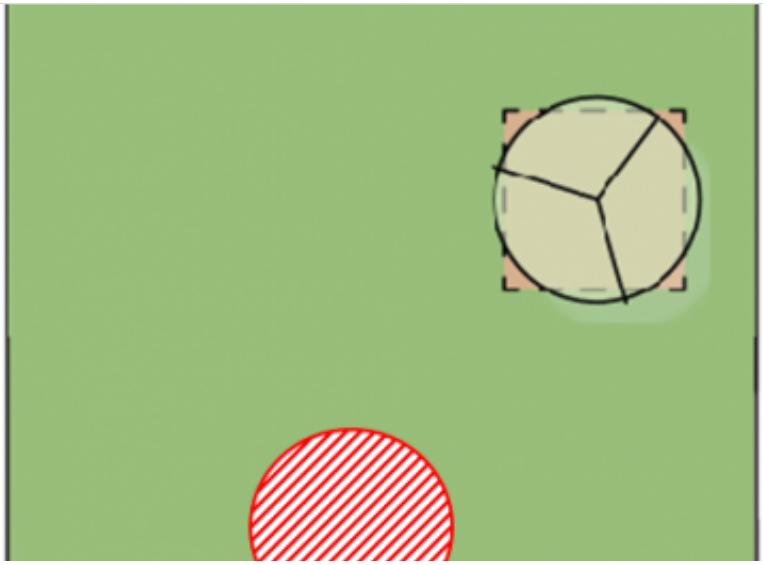
- a height of more than 5 metres above ground level; and
- a trunk circumference of more than 0.5 metres, measured at 1.4 metres above ground level; and
- a canopy diameter of at least 4 metres.

Permit required to remove, destroy or lop a canopy tree in residential zones

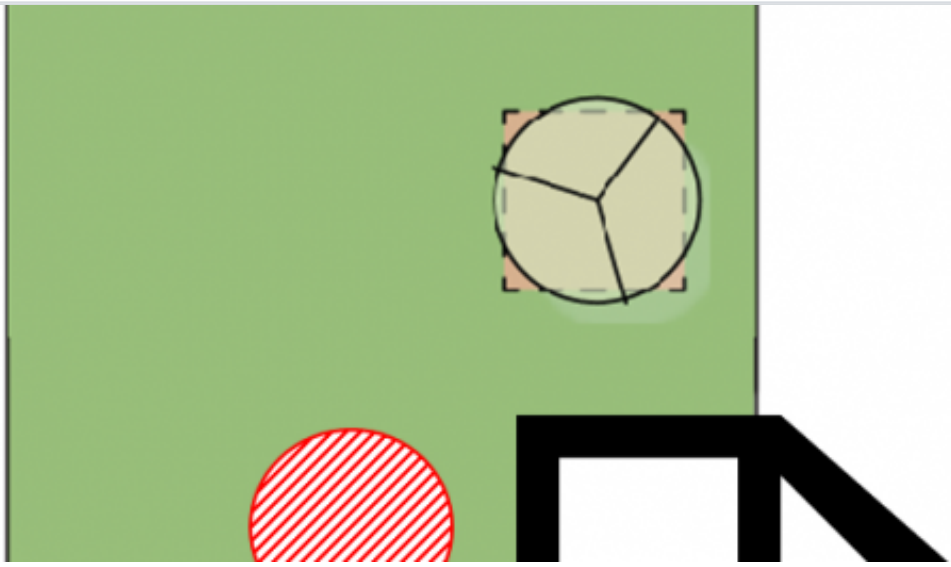
A permit is only required in the Mixed Use Zone, Township Zone, Residential Growth Zone, General Residential Zone, Neighbourhood Residential Zone, and Housing Choice and Transport Zone in specific circumstances.

A permit is required to remove, destroy or lop a canopy tree anywhere on the lot where:

- The land is vacant.
- The land is vacant and a new single dwelling is proposed (and only a building permit is required)



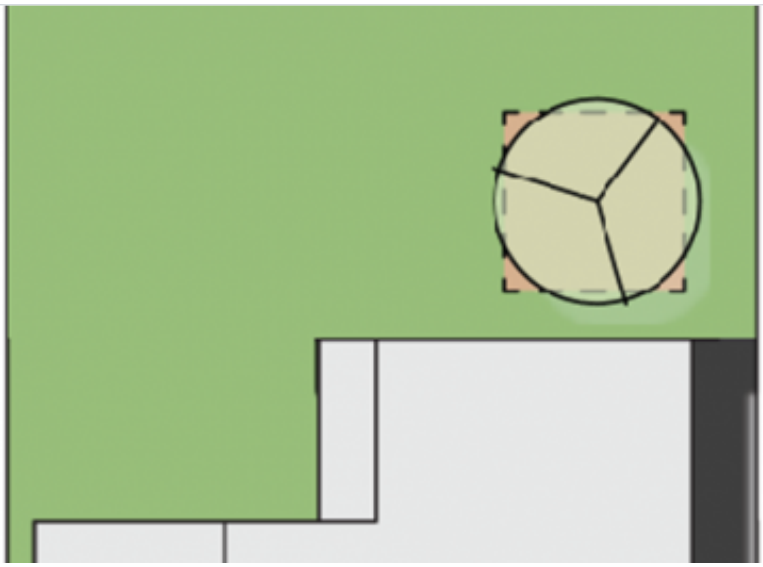
1 / 2 - Vacant lot



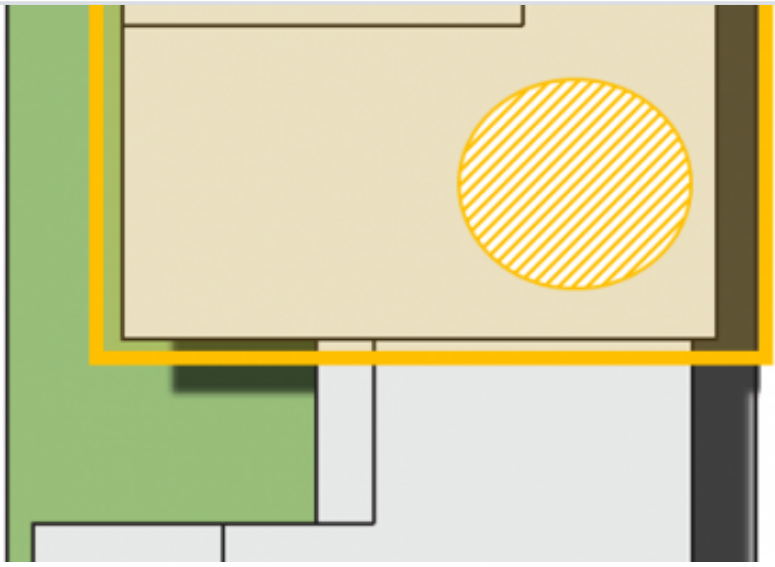
2 / 2 - Vacant lot and only a building permit is required

A permit is required to remove, destroy or lop a canopy tree within 6 metres of the narrowest street frontage and 4.5 metres of the rear boundary where:

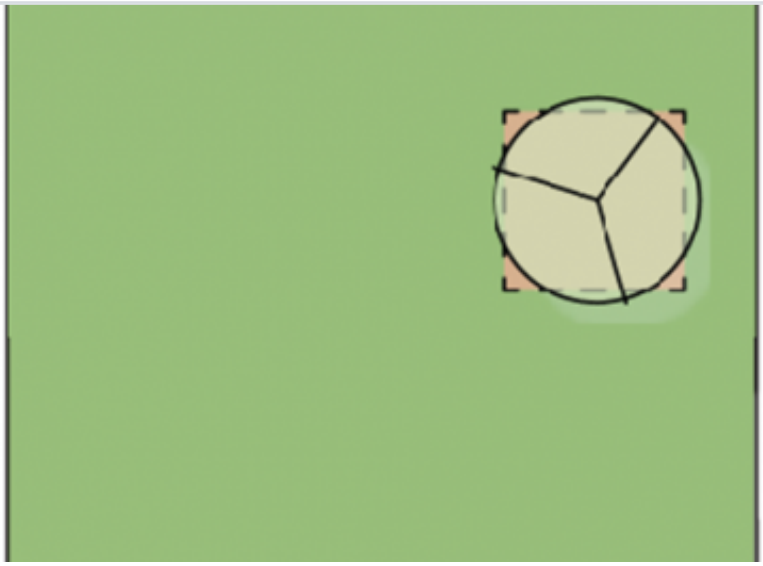
- The land contains an existing dwelling where no development is proposed.
- The land contains an existing dwelling and is proposed to be extended.
- The land is vacant and a planning permit application is being assessed for one or more dwellings.
- The land contains an existing dwelling(s) and a planning permit application is being assessed for a one or more dwellings.



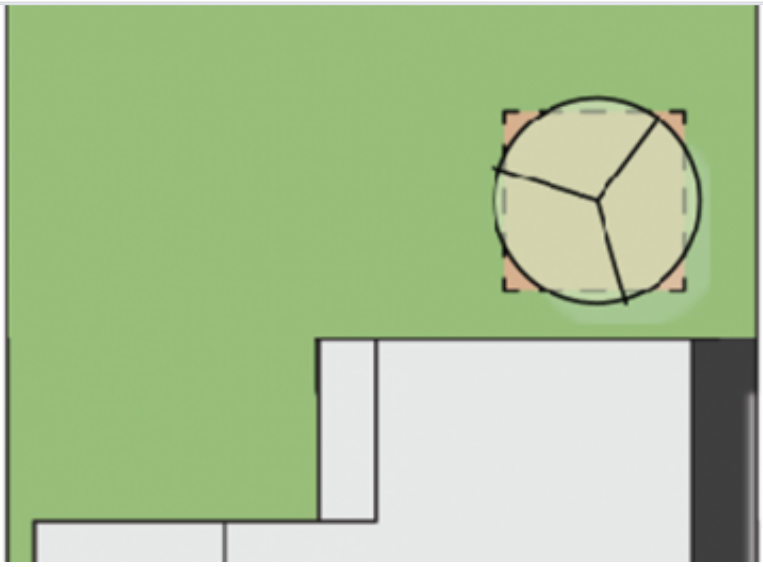
1 / 5 - Existing dwelling



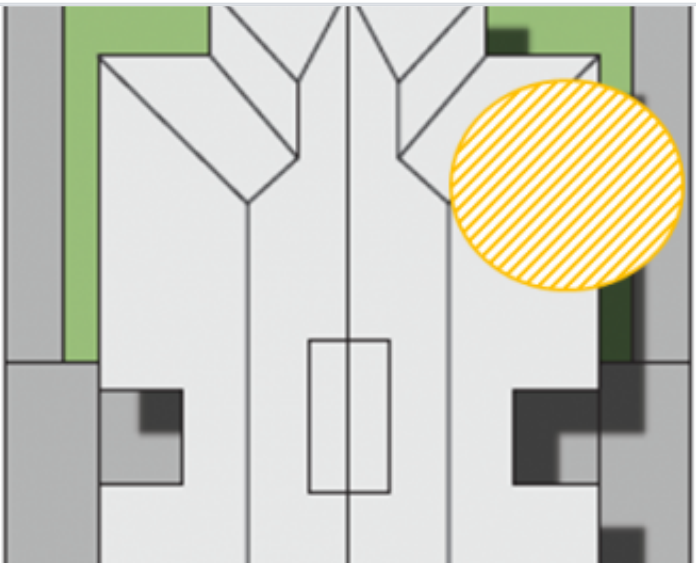
2 / 5 - Existing dwelling and proposed extension



3 / 5 - Vacant lot where a dwelling is being assessed under a planning permit application



4 / 5 - Existing dwelling where one or more dwellings are being assessed under a planning permit application



5 / 5 - Vacant lot where two or more dwellings are being assessed under a planning permit application

The assessment of a permit is a fast-tracked process

Some applications will be eligible for a VicSmart assessment process which should be decided in 10 business days.

Where an application is not eligible for the VicSmart assessment process, notice of the application is not required and council's decision cannot be reviewed by the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal.

An applicant for a permit may apply to the Tribunal for review of a decision by a responsible authority to refuse to grant the permit.

Information to be provided with the application

An application will be required to provide information to the responsible authority as specified in clause 52.37.

Assessment of the removal, destruction or lopping of a canopy tree

The responsible authority is required to balance the merits of the proposal, the impact on canopy cover and how any proposed development supports housing targets.

Whether it is appropriate for a tree to be removed from the land will be determined on the merits of the proposal based on the information provided in the application.

The responsible authority's decision will be guided by the purpose of the provision and matters outlined in the decision guidelines of clause 52.37.

This decision guidelines do not extend to the broader decision requirements in Clause 65 of the planning scheme and section 60 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*. The responsible authority must only consider the decision guidelines contained in clause 52.37 and cannot consider other matters such as state policies, Municipal Planning Strategy and local planning policies.

Replacement canopy tree requirements to enhance canopy trees

For many applications there will be a requirement to plant replacement canopy trees to protect or enhance canopy tree cover.

Clause 52.37-3 sets a minimum canopy cover requirement of approximately 10 per cent on land up to 1,000 square metres and 20 per cent on land greater than 1,000 square metres. This will mean that for many applications there will be requirements to enhance canopy cover.

For example, for a site area of 700 square metres the canopy tree requirement is four. The canopy tree requirement may be met by retaining existing canopy trees, by planting new canopy trees, or a combination of both.

A replacement canopy tree (new canopy tree) to be planted, must be a species and type that will, at maturity, have:

- an expected height of at least 6 metres above ground level; and
- an expected canopy diameter of at least 4 metres.

Note the new canopy tree expected height and diameter is a minimum. A council can consider new canopy trees that are larger and may consider a reduced number of required trees.

Other planning rules will still apply

Clause 52.37 does not override or limit the operation of other relevant planning provisions such as overlays and the bushfire requirements. Land may be affected by other overlays including vegetation protection or environmental significance overlays.

Local laws and clause 52.37

A number of councils regulate vegetation removal including canopy trees via local law permits. Clause 52.37 may override a local law regarding tree removal only when it duplicates the considerations of the local law. The local law may continue to operate for any matters that are beyond the scope of clause 52.37.

Page last updated: 15/09/25

More information

Clause 52.37 in the Victoria Planning Provisions

Information about Amendment VC289

Plan for Victoria

Guidance for applying for a planning permit

Contact Us

planning.systems@transport.vic.gov.au

Stronger standards and faster approvals for single homes and small second homes

We are updating residential planning rules to make it faster and easier to build your home.

11 August 2025

We are improving the planning system to allow quicker and more efficient approvals for homes and small second homes on lots under 300 square metres.

The changes follow the introduction of the Townhouse and Low-Rise Code earlier this year, allowing faster permits and greater certainty for townhouses and apartment buildings up to three storeys.

Clause 54, which is part of all planning schemes, has been updated with improved standards focusing on liveability, external amenity and sustainability. Standards include requirements for street setbacks, tree canopies, daylight to existing windows, and more.

There are also new sustainability standards for overshadowing domestic solar energy and rooftop solar energy generation areas to support the energy efficiency of homes.

If the strong new standards are met, the application is 'deemed to comply' and no further assessment is required. The existing fast tracked 10-day VicSmart permit process for single dwellings and small second dwellings has been updated to work with the new requirements.

The changes are the next step in delivering housing and planning reforms that make it easier for builders, buyers and renovators to get permits while strengthening the things that make homes and neighbourhoods livable.

What is changing?

The new planning provisions can be viewed at Amendment VC282.

Under these changes, if a homeowner proposes to build or extend a single dwelling or small second dwelling on a lot less than 300 square metres in a residential zone (except for the Low Density Residential Zone), the new standards and deemed to comply process under clause 54 will apply.

We have updated the VicSmart process for eligible clause 54 applications. Following the changes, an application will need to meet an updated list of 'deemed to comply' standards to be eligible for VicSmart and will be assessed according to the new provisions rather than separate information requirements and decision guidelines.

Local variations to some state standards have also changed. Local variations for permeability, side and rear setbacks, and walls on boundaries have been removed. For street setback, private open space and site coverage, local variations will only apply if they are more permissive than the state standards.

Here is a summary of the changes to clause 54 standards.

New Standard	Changes
Neighbourhood character	
A2-1 Street setback	• Reduced front set back from 9m to 6m • No longer the average of the two adjorning. The standard takes the lesser setback of a dwelling on an abutting allotment.
A2-2 Building height	No change.
A2-3 Side and rear setbacks	No change.
A2-4 Walls on boundaries	No change.
A2-5 Site coverage	Change from 60% in all residential zones to: • 60% - Neighbourhood Residential Zone and Township Zone • 65% - General Residential Zone • 70% - Residential Growth Zone, Mixed Use Zone and Housing Choice and Transport Zone.
A2-6 Tree canopy	New tree requirement of 1 tree per 100 m^2 of site area.
A2-7 Front fences	No change.
A2-8 Building setback for small second dwellings	No changes.
Liveability	

New Standard	Changes
A3-1 Street integration	Standard simplified and passive surveillance must be provided.
A3-2 Private open space	Reduced from 80m^2 of private open space to 20% of the area of the lot but not less than 25 m2, must be private open space. Retains 25 m^2 minimum secluded private open space. Alternative compliance through balcony or rooftop area. Retains 8sqm private open space requirement for SSDs.
A3-3 Solar access to open space	No change.
A3-4 Daylight to new windows	No change.
A3-5 Safety and accessibility for small second dwellings	No change.
External amenity	
A4-1 Daylight to existing windows	No change.
A4-2 Existing north-facing windows	No change.
A4-3 Overshadowing secluded private open space	Increases allowable overshadowing to 50 per cent.
A4-4 Overlooking	Standard to no longer apply to bedrooms.

New Standard	Changes
Sustainability	
A5-1 Permeability	No change.
A5-2 Overshadowing domestic solar energy systems	NEW Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD) standard to protect existing rooftop solar from overshadowing.
A5-3 Rooftop solar energy generation area	New ESD standard to provide area for rooftop solar energy generation.
A5-4 Solar protection to new north facing windows	NEW ESD standard to provide shading to north facing windows for summer heat.

The following standards have been deleted or amalgamated:

- 54.02-1 Neighbourhood character (Deleted)
- 54.03-5 Energy efficiency protection (Amalgamated with new ESD standards)
- 54.06-1 Design detail (Deleted).

When does this change take place?

Amendment VC282 was published in the Victoria Government Gazette on 11 August 2025.

The changes will come into effect on 8 September 2025.

In most cases, applications for planning permits or amendments to planning permits lodged before the changes commenced will be subject to the provisions that applied before the amendment.

Building Regulations 2018

In Victoria, the *Building Act 1993*, Building Regulations 2018 (Building Regulations), and Plumbing Regulations 2018 provide the framework for the regulation of building and plumbing work in Victoria. This framework is the responsibility of the Minister for Housing and Building.

Following the introduction of these new planning standards for lots under 300 square metres, we will update Victoria's building regulations and relevant Minister's guidelines to align with new planning requirements.

Information about the application of Building Regulations 2018 can be found on understanding standards and regulations.

More information

You can find out more about Victoria's residential development provisions on Residential Development.

Page last updated: 29/08/25

Townhouse and Low-Rise Code

Explains the Townhouse and Low-Rise Code and how it will be applied

On this page:

Clause 55 Two or more dwellings on a lot and residential buildings (one to three storeys)

When will the deemed to comply standards come into operation?

How does a deemed to comply assessment work under clause 55?

New exemption for third party review (VCAT appeal)

Neighbourhood character

What happens if my applications is lodged before 6 March 2025?

What if I have an existing planning permit and wish to amend it?

VicSmart process for two dwellings on a lot

In Victoria's Housing Statement, The Decade Ahead 2024-2034, the Victorian Government committed to delivering housing and planning reforms that benefit Victorians and make it easier for builders, buyers and renovators to get permits.

The new code introduces a deemed to comply assessment pathway to support faster decisions and greater certainty for townhouses and apartment buildings up to three storeys at clause 55 of all planning schemes.

Links to:

- VC267 Amendment

Clause 55 Two or more dwellings on a lot and residential buildings (one to three storeys)

Clause 55 of all planning schemes applies to the development of two or more dwellings on a lot and residential buildings up to and including three storeys.

A planning permit is always required for these developments in the residential zones.

Clause 55 does not apply to a development of four or more storeys. Clause 57 applies to residential development of four storeys.

When land is within the Residential Growth Zone, General Residential Zone, Neighbourhood Residential Zone, Housing Choice and Transport Zone, Mixed Use Zone or Township Zone, clause 55 must be used by a responsible authority (usually a council) to assess the:

- construction of a second dwelling if there is at least one dwelling existing on the lot
- construction of two or more dwellings on a lot
- extension of a dwelling if there are two or more dwellings on the lot
- construction or extension of a dwelling on common property
- construction or extension of a residential building.

When will the deemed to comply standards come into operation?

The deemed to comply standards will be approved on 6 March 2025 and commence operation on 31 March 2025.

How does a deemed to comply assessment work under clause 55?

- A development must meet all of the applicable objectives contained in clause 55.
- If a development meets a standard:
    - The corresponding objective is deemed to be met;
    - The responsible authority is not required to consider the corresponding decision guidelines.
- If a development does not meet a standard, the responsible authority must consider the applicable decision guidelines in determining whether the corresponding objective is met.

If an application meets certain requirements, the planning application cannot be refused on the basis of that requirement.

When a standard is met, the council is not required to consider any other policy or decision guideline in the planning scheme and specified matters under section 60 of the P&E Act.

New exemption for third party review (VCAT appeal)

A council must decide whether to advertise a development proposal to neighbours and the community (notice is required for most permit applications). People may make an objection or submission to the council.

Where all the applicable standards are met, there will be no third party right of appeal (objector appeal).

Applicable standards:

- 55.02 – All Neighbourhood character standards (street setback, building height, side and rear setback, walls on boundaries, site coverage, access, tree canopy, front fence)
- 55.04-1 - Daylight to existing windows
- 55.04-2 - Existing north-facing windows
- 55.04-3 - Overshadowing secluded open space
- 55.04-4 - Overlooking
- 55.05-2 - Overshadowing domestic solar energy systems

Neighbourhood character

Clause 55 sets out key neighbourhood character standards for:

- street setback
- building height
- side and rear setbacks
- walls on boundaries
- site coverage
- access
- tree canopy
- front fences

If the standard is met it meets the objective.

If the standard is not met, council is able to assess the alternative design solution against any relevant neighbourhood character objective, policy or statement set out in the scheme.

What happens if my applications is lodged before 6 March 2025?

Applications lodged before 6 March 2025 will continue to be assessed by the council using clause 55, as it existed before 6 March 2025.

People who objected and applicants who applied under these rules will continue to have the council assess the application using these rules, including rights to object and appeal to the proposed development. VCAT will also be required to assess the proposed development under the old rules.

What if I have an existing planning permit and wish to amend it?

If the original permit application was lodged before VC267 came into operation, any application for an amendment of a permit under section 72 of the Act, must be assessed under the clause 55 provisions as they existed before 6 March 2025.

VicSmart process for two dwellings on a lot

The Minister for Planning has approved and gazetted changes to make it easier to add a second dwelling, build two new dwellings or subdivide a residential block into two lots.

The changes came into effect on 16 October.

Link to:

- Amendment VC288

Guidance:

Townhouse and Low-Rise Code Guidelines.

Townhouse and Low-Rise Code Guidelines (accessible)
DOCX | 7.5 MB

Townhouse and Low-Rise Code Guidelines
PDF | 6.0 MB

Designing Better Medium Density Housing provides best practice guidance on the applying the deemed to comply standards.

Designing Better Medium Density Housing in Victoria [accessible]
PDF | 22.3 MB

Further FAQs are available:

FAQs Townhouse and Low-Rise Code (accessible)
DOCX | 146.8 KB

FAQs Townhouse and Low-Rise Code
PDF | 196.1 KB

A template for providing a written statement with your application is available:

Written statement checklist (accessible)
DOCX | 130.5 KB

Written statement checklist
PDF | 87.7 KB

Page last updated: 16/10/25

Related links

Single home code

Residential subdivision provisions

4 Storey Apartment Standards

Apartment developments

Neighbourhood Character Overlay

Frequently asked questions – Two dwellings on a lot and two lot subdivision

September 2025

VICTORIA State Government | Department of Transport and Planning

Planning requirements

How do I find out which zones and overlays apply to my land?

You can enter the address and receive a planning property report at **planning.vic.gov.au** or speak to your council.

What if an overlay applies to my property?

If an overlay applies to your property, find out whether a planning permit is required under that overlay for your proposal.

A proposal may have more than one requirement for a permit (for example, a permit requirement under the zone and separate permit requirements of any overlay that applies).

If your proposal is a class of VicSmart application under the zone and a permit is also required under an overlay, then it also needs to be specified as a class of VicSmart application in that overlay in order for the application to proceed under the VicSmart process.

A council planning officer can advise you what permit requirements apply to your proposal, and whether they are all classed as VicSmart.

The VicSmart operational provision is contained in **clause 71.06** of each planning scheme.

What is the difference between the VicSmart process and the regular process?

Key features of VicSmart include:

- a 10-business days assessment period
- notice of the application is not given to neighbours
- information to be submitted with an application and the matters that can be considered are pre-set
- the Chief Executive Officer of the council or their delegate decides the application.

The regular process usually involves:

- a 60 day assessment period
- notice of the application is given to neighbours who can object to a permit being granted
- council or a delegate of the council decides the application
- an objector can apply to VCAT for a review of council's decision to grant a permit.

Does clause 55 apply to a VicSmart application for two dwellings on a lot?

Yes. Clause 55 applies to a VicSmart application for two dwellings on a lot in the same way it applies to an application that is subject to the regular process.

Does the garden area requirement in the General Residential Zone or Neighbourhood Residential Zone apply?

Yes. The garden area requirement applies to a VicSmart application for two dwellings on a lot and to an application to subdivide land into two lots.

More information about minimum garden area is available in ***Planning Practice Note 84 – Applying the minimum garden area requirement***.

Does a maximum building height requirement apply to the construction of two dwellings on a lot?

Yes. A maximum building height requirement in a residential zone or a schedule to a residential zone applies to a VicSmart application assessed under clause 55.

Does a public open space requirement apply to a two lot subdivision?

A public open space requirement in clause 53.01 or clause 43.06-8 or a schedule to those clauses or the *Subdivision Act 1988* does not apply if the subdivision subdivides land into two lots and the council considers it unlikely that each lot will be further subdivided. If the council does consider it likely that each lot will be further subdivided, the applicable public open space requirement will apply.

Applications

How do I make an application?

Before preparing and making an application, discuss your proposal with a council planning officer.

A council planning officer can advise on:

- whether you need a planning permit and why
- whether your proposal is a class of VicSmart application
- what information you need to submit with your application
- the relevant planning controls
- whether the consent of a referral authority will be required.

Your council may have other information and checklists that will help you prepare the application. A discussion will help you to include all the right information with your application and reduce delays.

To enable a council planning officer to decide an application in 10 business days you must submit all required information when lodging the application. Information that should be submitted with a VicSmart application is specified in the planning scheme.

If I have an existing application with council, will it automatically become a VicSmart application?

An existing application does not automatically become a VicSmart application. Instead, you will need to lodge a new VicSmart application with council.

Can I apply for a VicSmart permit to build two dwellings on a lot and a VicSmart permit to subdivide the land into two lots at the same time?

Yes.

Can I apply for a VicSmart permit if the land is subject to a registered restrictive covenant that limits the number of dwellings on a lot?

No. If the grant of a permit would result in a breach of a registered restrictive covenant it is not a VicSmart application and can only be assessed through the regular permit process.

A restrictive covenant is a private treaty or written agreement between landowners that limits the way land can be used and developed. If a registered restrictive covenant applies to your land, you will need to check if the proposed development would result in breach of a restrictive covenant.

State and local governments do not create or enforce restrictive covenants. This is done by owners of the land who benefit from the covenant.

More information about restrictive covenants is available at **planning.vic.gov.au**.

Two dwellings on a lot

Does the new Townhouse and Low-Rise Code apply?

Yes. Amendment VC267 introduced a deemed to comply assessment pathway (the 'Townhouse and Low-Rise Code') in clause 55 of each planning scheme to support faster decisions and greater certainty for townhouses and apartment developments up to three storeys.

Clause 55, including its operation and requirements, applies to the construction of two dwellings on a lot, including VicSmart applications.

Where can I find out how to meet the standards to be eligible for the VicSmart process?

The standards are set out in clause 55 of the relevant planning scheme. Find your planning scheme at **Browse Planning Schemes**.

What happens if I can't meet one of more of the standards that would make me eligible for VicSmart?

All of the eligibility criteria must be met for an application to be assessed through the VicSmart process. If your application is unable to meet one or more of the standards that would make it eligible for VicSmart, then the regular permit process must be followed. Council will not be able to accept a VicSmart application that does not meet all of the eligibility criteria.

Do I have to meet the clause 55 standards that aren't listed as VicSmart eligibility criteria?

An application does not have to meet the clause 55 standards that are not listed as VicSmart eligibility criteria. However, the corresponding objectives in clause 55 must still be met. The application requirements in clause 55 state that an application must be accompanied by a written statement that explains how the development meets the corresponding objective.

Do these changes apply to small second dwellings?

Small second dwellings are classified differently to normal dwellings, and separate planning requirements apply. A small second dwelling doesn't usually require a planning permit. A permit cannot be granted to subdivide a small second dwelling.

Is there a limit to the size of my building?

There is no maximum building size specified in the planning scheme, however proponents should be aware that there are a number of planning requirements which will collectively limit the size of one or two new dwellings on a lot. These requirements include building height, minimum garden area, site coverage, siting, setbacks and amenity requirements.

Two lot subdivision

Can I subdivide my backyard into a second lot?

A planning permit is always required to subdivide land in a residential zone, and is often required under overlay controls (for example, the Heritage Overlay).

There are two new VicSmart classes of application for subdivision.

The first class applies if a planning permit has already issued to construct up two dwellings on the lot. The eligibility criteria for this class are:

- the application must be to subdivide land into two lots
- a planning permit must have already been issued for the construction of up to two dwellings
- the planning permit must be valid
- each proposed lot must contain an existing dwelling, or one dwelling permitted to be constructed in accordance with the planning permit.

This class of VicSmart application:

- will be required to be accompanied by the information specified in existing clause 59.02 of the planning scheme and will be assessed against the decision guidelines in that clause
- applies to permit requirements in residential zones and some overlays.

The other new class applies if the subdivision creates at least one vacant lot. That is, there will not be an existing or approved dwelling on at least one of the proposed lots. The eligibility criteria for this class are:

- the application must be to subdivide land into two lots for residential development
- the subdivision must create at least one vacant lot
- the land must not contain native vegetation if it has an area of 0.4 hectares or more
- the land must not be located in a bushfire prone area, Environmental Audit Overlay or Neighbourhood Character Overlay
- The land must be connected to reticulated sewerage if it is in the Township Zone.

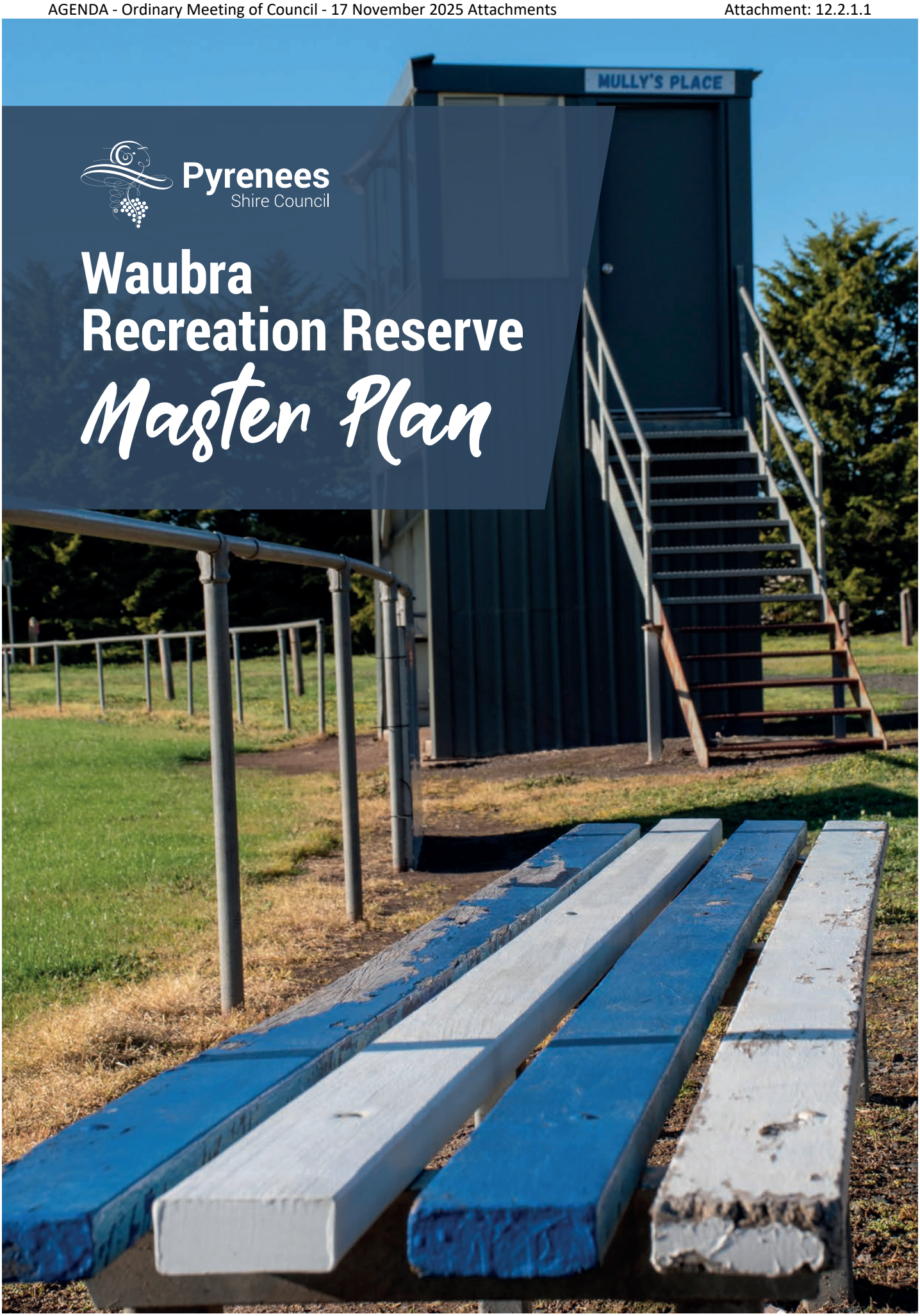
This class of application will be required to be accompanied by the information specified in new clause 59.11 and will be assessed against the decision guidelines in that clause.

If you do not meet the eligibility criteria for these VicSmart classes, your application will go through the regular permit process.

Is there a minimum lot size?

The new VicSmart class of subdivision does not specify a minimum lot size that must be achieved. Lot sizes will be an outcome of the site layout and design response that is required to be undertaken in seeking a separate planning permit for the development of the land.

You should always check the planning scheme for the current requirements and always confirm what requirements apply by speaking to your council.



Pyrenees Shire Council

Waubra Recreation Reserve *Master Plan*

Acknowledgement of Country

Pyrenees Shire acknowledge the people past and present of the Wadawurrung, Dja Dja Wurrung, Eastern Maar, Wotjobaluk, Jaadwa, Jadawadja, Wergaia and Jupagulk Nations, whose land and waters the Pyrenees Shire operates on. We pay our respects to their Ancestors and Elders, recognise and respect their customs, stewardship and continuing connection to Country.

Intersectionality and Gender Equality

Council is committed to working within an intersectional approach, particularly through understanding characteristics that may result in a form of discrimination. We acknowledge that individuals often experience multiple forms of discrimination simultaneously, for example due to their gender, sexual orientation, age, disability status or ethnicity. Council will continuously be focussed on how people experience any form of discrimination, through listening to communities that may be facing marginalisation.

We will deliver our programs and activities to be inclusive, which address discriminatory practices. This includes embedding not only gender equity, but other intersectionality impacts into our strategies and planning processes.

Pyrenees Shire Council commitment to child safety

Pyrenees Shire Council is committed to being a Child Safe Organisation and has a zero-tolerance position to abuse or harm to children, young people, or any other person.

Council is committed to creating culturally safe environments where children feel safe, are empowered, valued, and protected – where all children have a voice and are listened to, their views respected, and provided with opportunities to contribute to the planning, design, and development of our services and activities that might impact them.

Acknowledgements

The development of the Waubra Recreation Reserve Master Plan has been a collaborative effort, made possible by the valuable input and contributions of the local community, key stakeholders, and industry professionals. We extend our sincere gratitude to all those who shared their insights, experiences, and aspirations for the future of the Reserve. Their feedback has been instrumental in shaping this plan to reflect the needs and priorities of the Waubra and district community.

We particularly acknowledge and thank:

- The Waubra Community Asset Committee
- Waubra Football Netball Club
- Waubra Bowls Club
- Eureka Community Kindergarten Association (ECKA), both the staff and children
- Students and teachers at Waubra Primary School
- Waubra residents who participated in engagement processes

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Working together to encourage broader use of the Waubra Recreation Reserve, through a welcoming and well-governed community destination that supports the health and wellbeing of our community.

PROJECT INTRODUCTION

The Waubra Recreation Reserve is a central hub for Waubra and a broader district, hosting sports, community events, and social inclusion activities. As the only community asset in Waubra, the reserve plays a vital role as a gathering point for our community.

The Reserve Master Plan has been developed to support a collaborative approach in the future development of the Reserve for Council, the Community Asset Committee (CAC), tenant users and the broader community.

This master plan is supported and aligned to a framework of other governing directions and strategic plans established by Pyrenees Shire Council. These include, but are not limited to:

- 2025 – 2029 Council Plan
- 2025 – 2029 Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan
- 2017 – 2027 Recreation Strategy
- 2023 – 2032 Asset Management Plan

The Master Plan serves as a strategic guide for the future use, development, and investment in the Waubra Recreation Reserve, responding to the evolving needs of the surrounding community and existing user groups. It outlines a long-term vision supported by a series of staged actions.

Individual projects identified within the plan are indicative and will be subject to further detailed feasibility assessments, operational planning, design development, and procurement processes as appropriate.

COMMUNITY PROFILE

Pyrenees Shire is located in the Central West of Victoria, approximately 130 kilometres Northwest of Melbourne. There are over 50 unique localities across the 3,435 square kilometres. While we have a small population, the Shire is custodian of an extensive range of recreational spaces and community assets.

Note the following key statistics of relevance to reserve master planning:

Our people

- Our total population is 7,671 (2021), increasing by 6% (431 persons) from 2016 to 2021. Our median age is 50 years, compared to a younger Victoria median of 38.
- We are ageing, with the largest growth in the 70-74 age group, increasing by 22% since 2016.
- Babies, children, and young people make up nearly a quarter of our total population.
- 28.6% of our residents live with some form disability.

Our households

- 66% (1,964) of households contain families.
- Single lone households make up 32% (938) of all households.

Our wellbeing

- Over half of our population is connected outside of their household, with 58% involved in an organised group.
- 16% of our population participated in organised sport.

Our Health

- 36% of the population reported having one or more long-term health conditions.
- 22% of adults reported high or very high psychological distress (2020).
- 40% of adults are identified as being sufficiently physically active.
- 67% of adult residents reporting overweight or obese.

Waubra and District Profile

The Reserve services a broader region than just the immediacy of the Waubra township. A broader district that includes places such as Glenbrae, Ercildoune, Langi Kal Kal, Trawalla, Brewster and Nerring, draw participants. The below provides some context of the District:

- A population of 965 total persons (2021) that accounts for 12.6% of the Pyrenees population.
- 22 First nations people call the District home.
- 17% of the population were born overseas; with top countries of birth being England, Fiji, South Africa, Greece and Malaysia.
- 58% of the population has a long-term health condition, with the top 5 health conditions being:

Arthritis	6.3%
Mental health condition (including depression or anxiety)	4.7%
Asthma	4.5%
Heart disease (including heart attack or angina)	2.9%
Diabetes (excluding gestational diabetes)	2.8%

- 17.4% of population lived at a different address 5 years ago, moving from other parts of Victoria and other states, with 3 people moving from overseas.
- There is a high dependence on vehicles, with 78% of dwellings having 2 or more vehicles and 42% maintaining 3 or more vehicles.

- At the 2021 Census, there were 345 residents actively employed and 446 not in the labour force (i.e. in education, retired, domestic care). Of those active in the labour force:

Employed, work full-time	61%
Employed, work part-time	30%
Employed, away from work	6%
Unemployed	3%
Total labour force	100%

Waubra Township profile

Within this broader district, Waubra township maintains the largest population of 308 residents (2021).

Household composition on Waubra consists of 73% family (2 or more people per household), 23% lone households and 4% group households.

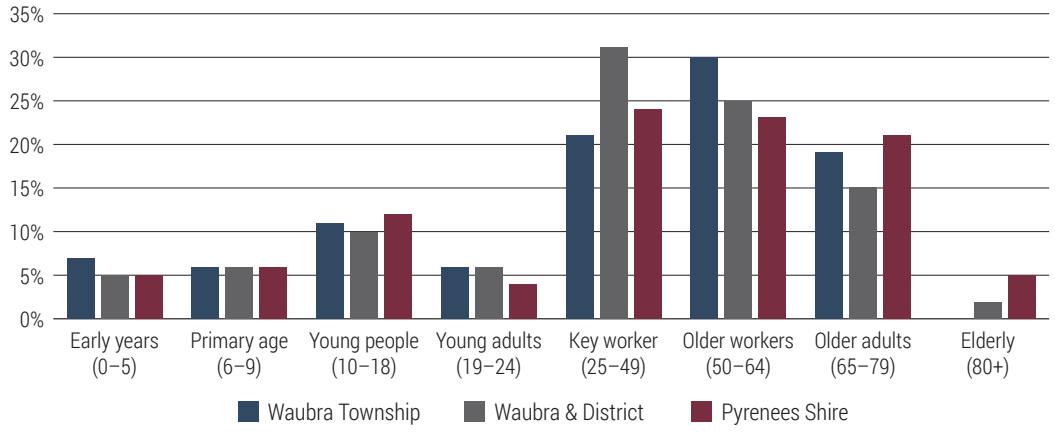
There is limited cultural diversity in the community diminishing demand on Language Other Than English (LOTE) materials and 61% of population is active in the labour force, higher than 48% across the Shire.

16% of the population provided unpaid assistance to a person with a disability, health condition or due to old age, and 15% (or 37 people) provided voluntary work through a group in the 12 months of the 2021 Census.

The age profile of the catchment is consistent between the District and Waubra township (see Chart One), with a notable difference of 10% more Key Workers in the District compared to the Waubra township.

Of note, the ageing profile of Waubra township is closer aligned with that of the Shire (49% people aged 50+), yet is balanced with a larger percentage of babies (0-5) and young people (10 to 18). This indicates opportunity for a focus on children and young programming / activities and those for older residents.

Chart One – Age Profile Comparison



About the Reserve

The reserve is owned by the Pyrenees Shire Council, and it is managed by a Community Asset Committee (CAC) under an Instrument of Delegation.

The site is a total of 5.94 hectares of public open space and surrounded by a mixture of urban and rural living opportunities, with a core of well-established housing surrounding the site. The reserve is presently the township's sole community facility.

The reserve is home to key user groups, including the Waubra Football Netball Club and the Waubra Bowls Club, as well as serving as a venue for community events.

As exhibited over page, the site includes the provision of one sports oval, a series of sports hard courts and a bowling club.

Participation

Active participation data has been collected through the State Sporting Associations to provide an indicative view of the reserve's use for organised sport. While data availability varies by sport, these figures offer a useful snapshot of membership, competition participation, and usage patterns in recent years.

Netball – Data provided for the 2024 season shows total registered players across senior and junior teams to be on a positive trajectory, following several years of consistent levels of participation. Both training and match days are hosted at the reserve, with home games drawing significant attendance from the Waubra community and visiting clubs. In addition, extra-curricular competitions such as Lightning Premierships have been hosted at the reserve several times in recent years, attracting large crowds for these multi-day events.

AFL Football – Five years of participation data indicate the club sits comfortably within the middle of the league in terms of membership numbers. Participation has remained stable over this period, reflecting the club's sustained presence in the district's sporting calendar. Like netball, both training and games are held at the reserve multiple times per week, from early April through to September.

Lawn Bowls – Membership over the past five years has remained steady at approximately 45–50 members, with regular seasonal competition, training, and social play from early September through to the end of February. The Waubra Bowls Club is notable for having the youngest average player age within its district and is among the youngest clubs within the state.

School Use – Waubra Primary School regularly uses the reserve for athletics carnivals, cross-country events, and informal activities, reinforcing the reserve's role as an important community sport and education venue.

While accessibility to participation data was limited, it clearly demonstrates the reserve's ongoing importance for formal sporting competition, training, and broader community use. Future participation monitoring, particularly across all sports and activities, will strengthen planning for facility upgrades and programming by providing clearer evidence of growth trends, seasonal variations, and demographic shifts.

Usage

The reserve facilities experience seasonal variation in use, with demand shifting throughout the year in line with sporting seasons and community needs. In addition to formal sporting activities, the Community Hub is regularly hired by local groups for meetings, programs, and events. The reserve also hosts a variety of private functions, such as wakes, celebrations, and personal gatherings, highlighting its role as both a sporting and social focal point for Waubra and the wider district.

While the Waubra Preschool/Kindergarten is a vital part of the Community Hub, the master plan has primarily focused on the leisure-oriented aspects of the community. Any future changes or expansions to childcare and early learning facilities, driven by increased demand, will be addressed through separate, detailed planning and design processes.

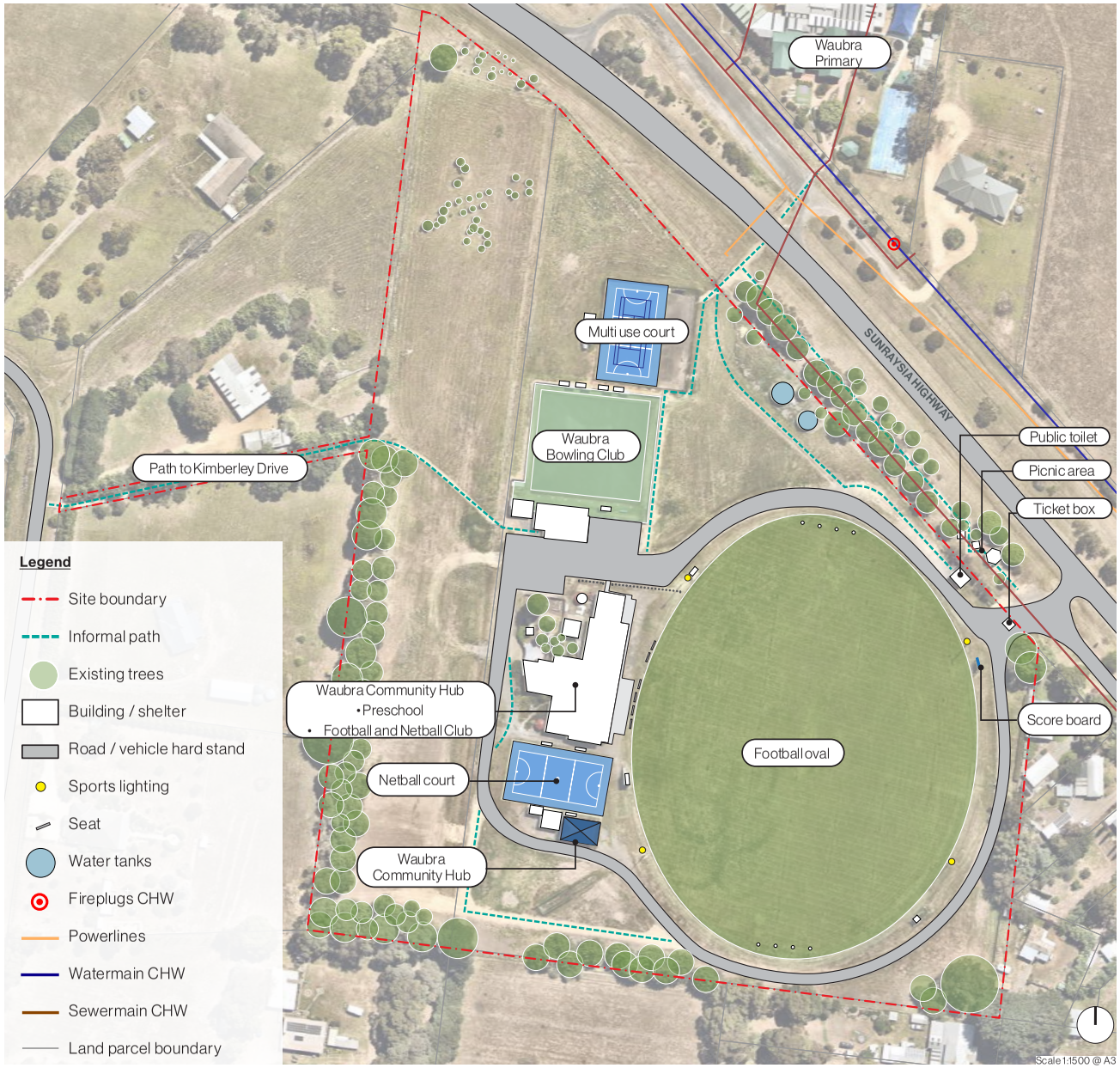
EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN

Facilities and amenities

- Football oval
- Netball court
- Multi use court - netball and tennis court
- Waubra Bowling Club
- Waubra Football Netball Club Clubroom
- Waubra Preschool
- Sports lighting
- Playground
- Picnic facilities
- Public toilet

Stakeholders and users

- Waubra Committee of Management
- Waubra Football Netball Club
- Waubra Preschool
- Waubra Bowling Club
- Waubra Residents (community)
- Waubra Primary School
- Other Waubra and District Community Groups
- Pyrenees Shire Councilors
- Pyrenees Shire Council Officers
- Sport and Recreation Victoria
- State and Local Sporting Bodies
- Rural Roads Victoria



OPPORTUNITIES

Prior to developing the master plan the following were identified as operational challenges:

1. Need for a shared vision for future growth

There has been no clear direction on how to expand or diversify the use of the reserve. Questions have remained about its potential to host new user groups, accommodate more diverse community programs, or attract new sports and leisure activities.

2. Ambiguity in Stakeholder Responsibilities

Existing licenses, Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs), and agreements lack clarity, leading to confusion over the roles and responsibilities of stakeholders, including the CAC, tenants, and the Council.

3. Governance and Operational Challenges

The current governance structure requires review to ensure sustainable, efficient and transparent operations, with adequate resources and clear accountability to lead and affect future decision-making.

4. Financial obligations of the CAC

The CAC faces increasing financial obligations in managing the reserve. Reliance on a succession of dedicated and supported volunteers who have varying capability and capacity, which creates challenges in supporting tenant needs and expectations, maintaining safe, inclusive facilities, and budget planning for future upgrades.

5. Changing user needs

There is an opportunity to upgrade reserve facilities to better meet the evolving needs of primary tenants and community.

6. Functionality for Diverse Users

The reserve needs to cater to both organised sports and passive recreation, social and other community events and programs. Enhancing functionality for multiple user types will help balance the needs of tenant clubs with broader community aspirations.

7. Maintaining contemporary Sporting Infrastructure

Guidance and directions set by peak bodies and associations, provide risk of infrastructure not keeping pace with new and emerging standards including;

- Gender neutral and Female-friendly change facilities to ensure gender equity.
- Suitable umpire change rooms.
- Medical and first aid spaces.
- Inclusive facilities that meet all-abilities standards and better practice guidelines.
- Access and inclusion requirements, including measures to promote diversity, and participation of culturally diverse communities.
- Insurance and risk assessment provisions to support safety and emergency management of participants, spectators, and property.

8. Strategic Planning for Capital Upgrades

Tenants have submitted conflicting individual and or uncoordinated requests for capital improvements, creating challenges in prioritisation and alignment with broader community needs and strategic goals.

Developing a master plan for the Waubra Recreation Reserve offers a valuable opportunity to address these challenges. The plan will:

- Highlight the needs of both the broader Waubra district and specific reserve user groups.
- Provide a strategic framework to guide future investments by tenants, the CAC and Pyrenees Shire Council.
- Ensure the reserve continues to strategically develop into a safe, accessible, and inclusive space that meets required standards and appreciating community expectations.

By addressing these needs, the master plan aims to support the continued development of Waubra Recreation Reserve as a welcoming, dynamic, and well-governed community facility.

PROJECT METHODOLOGY

The development of the master plan was undertaken in four key stages:

Stage One Project Establishment	• Review of available evidence base data • Demographic analysis • Site inspections and the development of a site survey • Established a current condition map
Stage Two Stakeholder Engagement & Background Review & Analysis	• See Engagement methodology
Stage Three Development of Draft Master Plan	• Key directions established • Master Plan options developed • Draft Master Plan concept developed • Cost estimate report commissioned • Public four-week exhibition of Draft concept plan • Multiple CAC workshops
Stage Four Final Report & Master Plan	• Community Draft Master Plan drop in session • Final Master Plan adopted

Engagement Methodology

The engagement methodology for the Waubra Recreation Reserve Master Plan adopted a consultative, and inclusive approach to ensure the community's needs, aspirations, and priorities were well captured.

Key Phases	Summary
1. Preparation & Planning	• Initiated a council staff engagement team. • Defined project scope, expectations, and engagement tools. • Identified key audiences, ensuring inclusivity.
2. Engagement Objectives	• To raise awareness, trust, and excitement in the opportunity. • Gathered insights for infrastructure, activation, and safety needs. • Aim to manage expectations around timelines, budgets, and scope. • Ensured all community groups have a voice.

3. Engagement Tools & Platforms	• Community Surveys: 30 completed (27 online, 3 written).
	• Drop-in Sessions: 3 sessions, 3 total attendees.
	• Direct Engagement:
	  • Initial CAC facilitated engagement session (8 attendees).
	  • Waubra Kindergarten: 14 Children, 2 Teachers.
	  • Waubra Primary School: 27 Children.
	  • 2 CAC development workshops.

4. Engagement Focus Areas	• Local Knowledge & Use: To identify connections, concerns, and opportunities. • Infrastructure & Access: Assess movement, parking, and accessibility. • Prioritisation & Success Measures: Define priorities and community expectations. • Activation: Gather ideas for events and activities.
5. Analysis & Reporting	• Collected, analysed, and summarised engagement data. • Identified common themes, priorities, and areas requiring further investigation.

ENGAGEMENT FINDINGS

The community engagement approach for the project provided a wealth of community knowledge and directions to guide this plan. Detailed information is available at a separate Waubra Master Plan Community Engagement Report that has been documented as an evidence base to this master plan.

Several common themes and consistent messages were received from stakeholders throughout the engagement phase, with the following documenting the most prevalent opportunities for improvement:

Community Connection and Use of the Reserve

The engagement process revealed a strong sense of connection to the site, particularly from those involved in its formal use, such as sporting clubs, volunteers, and active participants. However, it also highlighted that while the reserve serves as the only designated park in Waubra, its appeal is somewhat limited to those engaged in structured activities like football and netball. This sense of exclusivity was a source of frustration for some community members who felt little motivation to use the space unless they were connected to these sports.

Nevertheless, the Reserve's role as a gathering place for the broader community was clear, with nearly 70% of survey respondents having attended social events at the Hub. This highlights its value as a community centre where residents come to connect and strengthen relationships. The reserve is also vital for the surrounding district, drawing people from a wide area who typically travel by car, many within a 60-minute radius.

Traffic and Safety Concerns

Traffic management was raised as a key concern from two perspectives. Firstly, the reserve functions as a hub for school bus collections, where vehicle movements during pick-up and drop-off times present a potential risk. Secondly, on busy sport competition days, high traffic volumes within the reserve lead to congestion that overflows onto the highway, presenting a potential hazard for both vehicles and pedestrians.

Need for improved accessibility for pedestrians was a high need, with many seeking improvements to the pathways both within and leading to the reserve. Creating compliant, all abilities access paths was seen as a critical step toward improving mobility for older adults and people with disabilities.

Other safety concerns such as inadequate lighting, user behaviour and unleashed dogs, resulted in 31% of respondents feeling unsafe.

Expanding Activities and Community Programs

There was also strong interest in expanding the range of services and programs offered at the reserve to better reflect the needs of the broader community. Suggestions ranged from children's and junior sporting activities, to programs that foster social connection, such as craft nights, gentle exercise groups, and communal dinners.

Respondents emphasised the importance of creating opportunities that cater to children and young people, particularly to encourage greater female participation, while also recognising the needs of older adults and those with disabilities.

Events and activities that bring the community together, such as car boot sales, art groups, and events promoting mental health and well-being, were among the most common ideas. Encouragingly, many of these programs could be implemented within the existing infrastructure, except for a need to create informal play spaces and youth-focused zones.

Enhancing Reserve Infrastructure and Amenities

When it came to asset development, participants expressed a clear desire to see the reserve evolve into a more inviting and functional space. Suggestions included creating engaging play spaces for all age groups, from themed playgrounds and water play areas to obstacle courses and pump tracks for children and young people. Passive leisure spaces were also highlighted as priorities, with calls for improved landscaping, walking and bike tracks, garden beds, and picnic areas to encourage a broader range of users to enjoy the reserve.

Safety and accessibility were recurring priorities for asset improvements. Participants stressed the need for better traffic management within the reserve, including designated parking areas, improved signage, and safer entry and exit points from the highway. Insufficient lighting at key locations, such as the rear of the Hub, key access path networks, and parking areas, was another expressed concern.

Respondents also identified a spatial disconnect between the reserve's key facilities, such as the Hub, Bowling Club, and hard courts, suggesting that improved physical connectivity could enhance overall functionality and the experience of the reserve.

In terms of existing assets, upgrades to playgrounds, sports surfaces, female-friendly change facilities, and amenities to support netball courts were identified as priorities. Additionally, there were requests to upgrade the reserve's power supply capacity, which currently does not have the capacity to accommodate a current use or any expansion of assets that require additional power draw.

Building Community Pride and Beautification Efforts

A desire to build improved pride of place was also evident throughout the engagement. Participants felt that the reserve could benefit from beautification works, such as tree planting and landscaping, alongside improved signage to enhance branding, wayfinding and to promote the reserve both internally and externally.

Communication and Engagement

Communication was another key theme, with the community seeking clearer, more consistent updates about activities and plans for the reserve, delivered through direct mail and social media from local community groups.

In reference to reserve management, respondents urged Council and the Community Asset Committee to improve accountability and commitment to asset maintenance, ensuring that the reserve remains a well-kept and functional community space.

Many participants noted that trust is built not only through presence, but through the committed action and closing the loop on requests that cannot be delivered in a prompt manner. This feedback presents a valuable opportunity to embed a culture of transparency and responsiveness that strengthens relationships and builds long-term trust across the Waubra and district community.

Broader Community Aspirations and Challenges

Through the engagement process, residents reflected on the great qualities of living in Waubra, celebrating the town's friendly and welcoming people, strong community spirit, and quiet rural atmosphere with beautiful views. Some challenges were highlighted, including power supply limitations, road safety associated with the Sunraysia Highway, social isolation, and the rising cost of living.

Waubra is a community that deeply values its Recreation Reserve and sees opportunities for improvement. Addressing accessibility and the functionality of the reserve will not only meet the needs of its current users but to also attract a broader segment of the community. By creating more inclusive spaces, expanding program offerings, and fostering pride of place, the Reserve can fulfill its potential as a hub for connection, activity, and well-being for the Waubra community and surrounding district.

DEVELOPMENT PLAN

01 Investigate opportunities to improve all forms of access to and from the reserve.

02 Design and redevelop all netball facilities and supporting infrastructure.

03 Development of Youth and Community Gathering and Activity Space:

- 3a Design and development of a new community play space and supporting amenities.
- 3b Future development to support passive community engagement with recreation and leisure

04 Design and development of a multi-age and all abilities activity / fitness space.

05 Investigate and design sporting oval upgrade.

06 Investigate safe pedestrian crossing opportunity across the highway.

07 Design and develop an upgrade to internal road and parking configuration.

08 Design and implement accessible interconnecting pathways throughout the reserve's features.

09 Investigate utilities and sustainable services upgrade.

10 Implement minor capital projects to improve reserves visual appeal, including seating and landscaping.

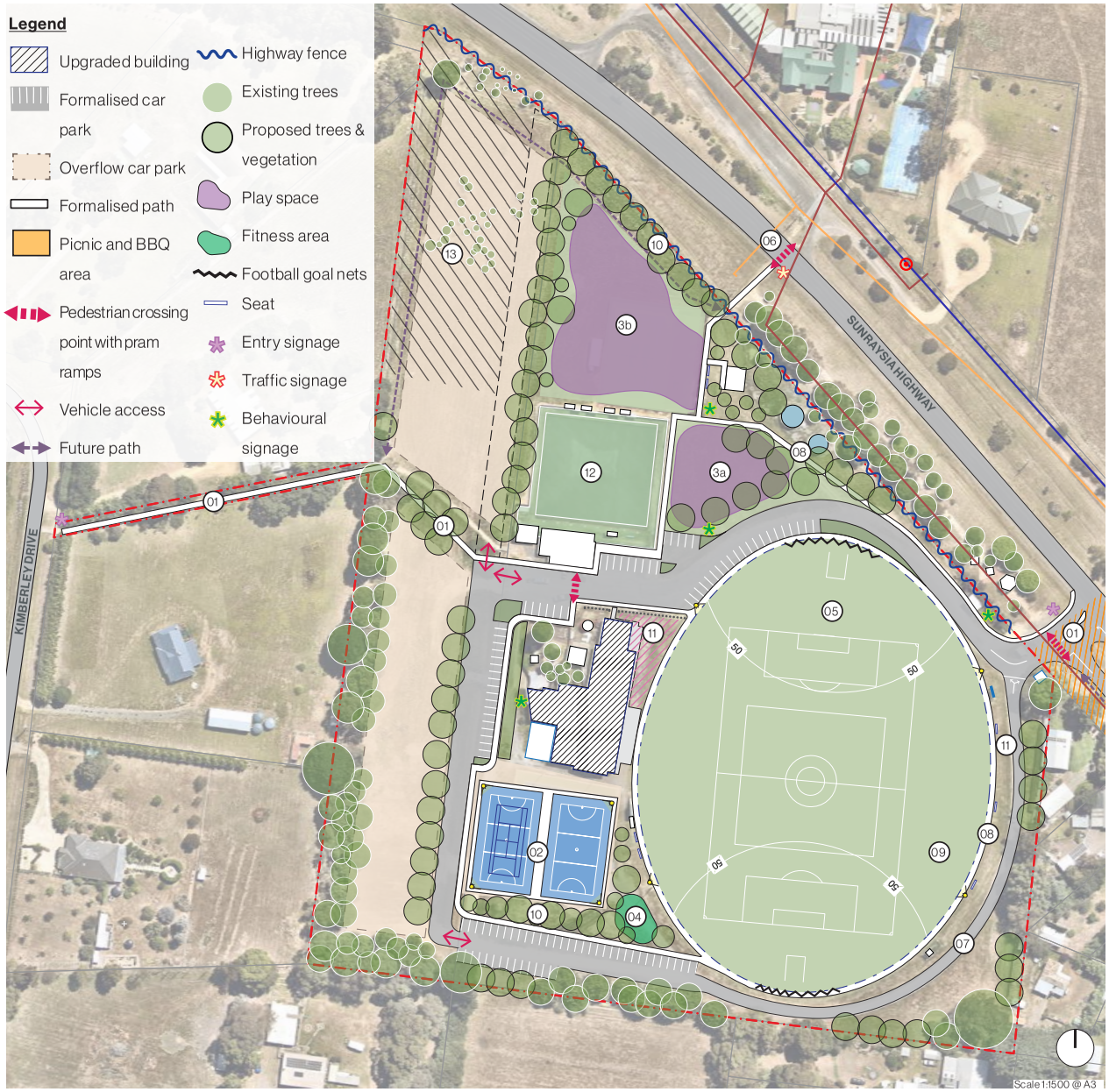
11 Implement minor capital projects to improve safety throughout the reserve, including lighting and boundary fence upgrades.

12 Undertake design and feasibility study for future Waubra Bowls club upgrades

13 Potential future economic development zone

General Upgrades

General provision for signage upgrades, to include overflow car parking, Local Law off leash dog rules, branding for community hub and tenants, on site direction and safety signage.



TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT PLAN

Car Parking Requirements

Proposed car parking spaces

The development plan proposes formalised car parking spaces around the Reserve. Currently it is proposed to provide approximately 104 car parking spaces, not including DDA spaces and the overflow parking area. The number of DDA spaces to be provided as outlined in the National Construction Code and designed to AS2890.6.

The number of spaces will be subject to change as the design develops for the Reserve.

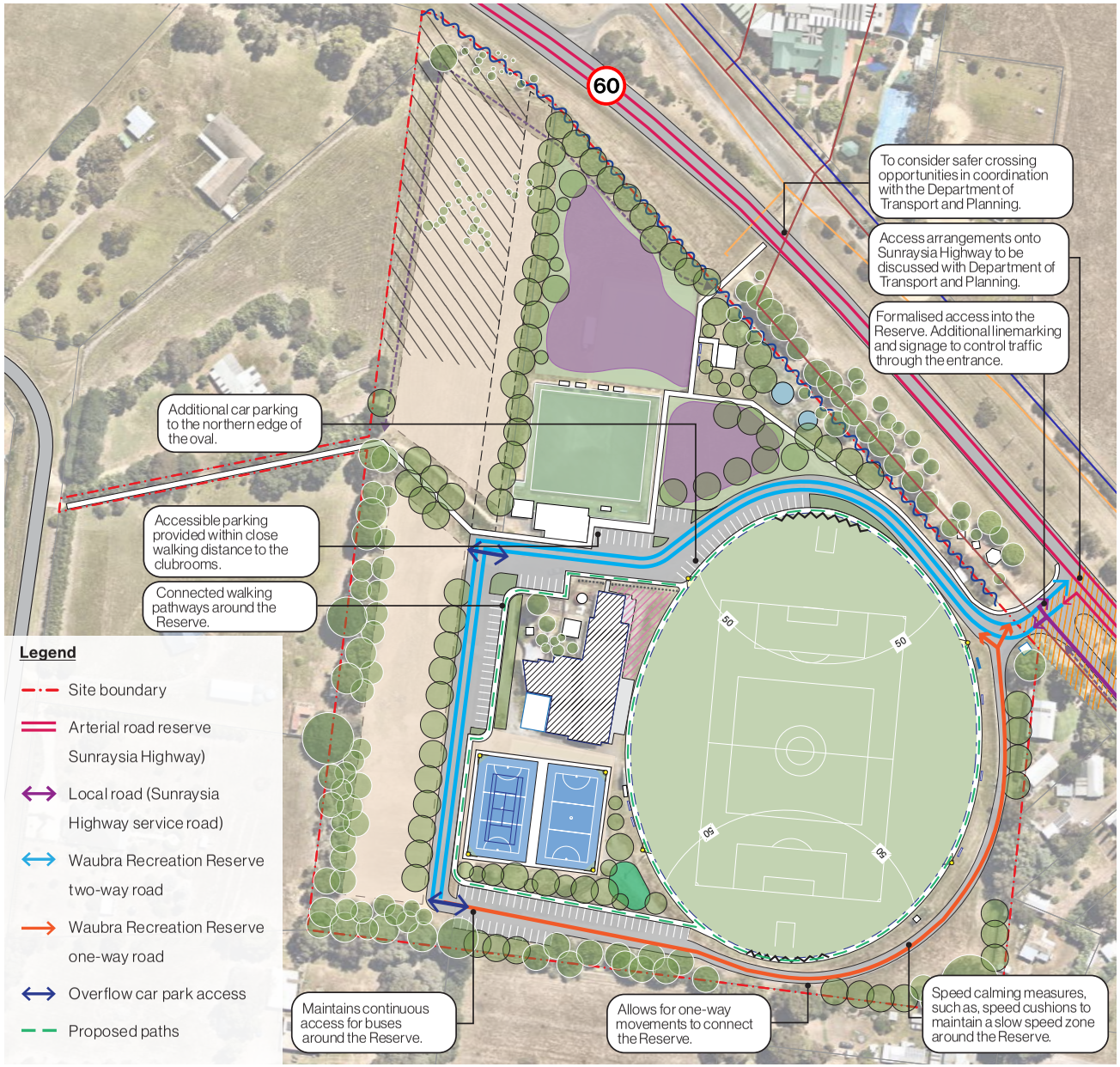
Pyrenees Planning Scheme Requirements Clause 52.06 – Car Parking Spaces

As outlined in the Pyrenees Planning Scheme Clause 52.06, the total number of spaces required at the Waubra Recreation Reserve is 13 car spaces. This has been based on the bowling green and the childcare centre; the two land uses identified under Clause 52.06-5 Table 1.

The proposed number of car parking spaces is approximately 95 spaces which satisfies the Planning Scheme requirements of 13 car spaces. It is noted this does not take into account the play area, fitness area, the netball and football club, and other community spaces. It would be assumed the play area, fitness area, and other community spaces would have modest car parking demand and would be able to be accommodated with the proposed car parking spaces.

Land use	No.	Rate	Required no. of car spaces
Bowling green	1	6 spaces per rink plus 50% of the relevant requirement of any ancillary use.	6*
Child care center	30	0.22 to each child	7
		TOTAL	13

*Assumed the bowling club room does not have any ancillary use.



RECOMMENDATIONS / ACTION PLAN

The recommendations are structured under four key areas of **People, Participation, Place, and Partnership**. These categories are used to ensure a holistic approach to support community strengthening through the Reserve's development and using the assets unique spaces to deliver improved social, health and wellbeing outcomes:

- **People** recognise and builds the capability and resilience of the individuals and groups who use and benefit from the space.
- **Participation** focuses on the programs, activities, and opportunities that drive use, engagement and community connection.
- **Place** considers pride in the physical environment, including infrastructure, accessibility, and overall functionality.
- **Partnership** addresses governance, collaboration, and the strategic relationships required to support and sustain the Reserve.

This framework ensures that all actions and recommendations align with both the needs of the community and the long-term vision for the Reserve.

Priority of Recommendations

The Action Plan outlines a clear pathway for delivering the Master Plan's vision. It has been developed to support Council, the Community Asset Committee (CAC), other tiers of government, and local stakeholders in identifying, prioritising, and implementing key improvements to the Waubra Recreation Reserve.

Each action item includes details regarding its indicative timeframe, estimated cost, and assigned responsibility.

The term Accountability refers to the organisation or stakeholder considered best placed to lead or oversee the delivery of the action. In some cases, this may involve collaboration between multiple parties, with Council often acting as a partner or facilitator. Where the Community Asset Committee is listed, the action may be community-led or require the CAC to play a coordinating role with users or external providers. Importantly, being listed as the responsible party does not always imply sole financial responsibility but rather denotes who should take the lead in initiating and progressing the item.

To support detailed planning, actions have also been grouped into project clusters, enabling opportunities for efficiency through economies of scale. However, individual actions or smaller components within a cluster may be implemented independently as capacity and / or funding allow – particularly in cases where a community group is empowered to lead delivery.

Timeframes for Implementation

Timeframes for implementation are identified as follows:

- **Ongoing:** Actions that require continuous implementation, support, or oversight across the life of the Master Plan.
- **Short Term (0–3 years):** Actions that are high priority or have minimal barriers to delivery.
- **Medium Term (4–8 years):** Actions requiring further planning, funding, or collaboration to progress.
- **Long Term (9+ years):** Aspirational or large-scale projects likely to be delivered in later stages or as opportunities arise.

Capital Works Implementation Process

To support the future delivery of projects identified in this master plan, the following steps outline a typical project planning process, required to move from concept to construction. These steps are led by Council, and may require dedicated resources or external expertise depending on the scale and complexity of the project:

1. Establishment of a Project Working Group

Bringing together key stakeholders which may include CAC members, tenant clubs, community representatives, State bodies (Sport and Recreation Victoria) and state sporting associations. This provides the necessary expertise to guide project development, partnership, and maintain alignment with strategic priorities.

2. Development of a Project Concept

Including initial scoping, high-level site planning, and, where required, preparation of concept designs beyond those provided in this master plan to determine feasibility.

3. Site Investigations

Assessing site conditions, constraints, and opportunities, including geotechnical, environmental, or service-related investigations where necessary.

4. Business Case and / or Operational Planning

Preparing a business case and / or operational plan (which may require external funding or advice) to demonstrate the viability, operating costs, governance structure, and resource requirements for the ongoing management of the proposed infrastructure.

5. Stakeholder and Community Engagement

Ensuring further input is gathered from user groups, residents, and other relevant parties to confirm support and refine design needs and priorities.

6. Preparation of Detailed Designs

Engaging qualified professionals to prepare full detailed designs suitable for construction, inclusive of access, services, DDA requirements, sustainability measures, and integration with existing infrastructure.

7. Quantity Surveyor (QS) Cost Estimate

Commissioning a detailed QS report based on final designs to provide accurate capital cost estimates, which inform Council budgeting, grant applications, and project staging. Allowances should be made for project management (5%–15% depending on scale) and project contingency (10% of capital cost).

8. Funding Strategy and Grant Applications

Identifying appropriate funding streams (including external grants, Council contributions, and community fundraising) and preparing submissions based on shovel-ready documentation.

9. Project Approvals and Procurement

Ensuring appropriate planning or building approvals are obtained and undertaking a compliant procurement process as directed by the Local Government Act 2020.

10. Construction and Project Management

Overseeing construction through to completion, with ongoing communication to stakeholders, risk management, and milestone reporting.

Post construction there are additional reporting and administrational requirements including but not limited to funding acquittals, outcome reports, operational handover, maintenance plans, updating insurance registers and cover.

Understanding Funding Pathways

The successful delivery of actions outlined in the Master Plan will rely on a variety of funding mechanisms. The implementation of each recommendation may be supported through one or more of the following routes:

- **Council Budget Allocations:** Integration into Council's long-term financial plan and annual capital works programs.
- **External Grant Funding:** State or federal government grants, philanthropic programs, sponsorship, or sport and recreation funding schemes.
- **Community-Led Initiatives:** Programs and small capital initiative may be driven in partnership with Council by local groups or the CAC through grant seeking, fundraising and in-kind support.
- **Officer Time:** Where actions can be achieved through existing staff capacity, technical assistance, or service-based support from Council or partners, this also applies to volunteers.

Understanding the appropriate funding route for each action is critical to its progression and should be reviewed and adjusted over time based on availability, community readiness, and emerging opportunities.

Understanding Cost Estimates

To guide early-stage planning and support stakeholder understanding, preliminary cost estimates have been provided for each recommendation within this master plan. These preliminary estimates have been prepared by an independent Quantity Surveyor (QS), based on available information as of March 2025, and are intended for indicative planning purposes only.

It is important to note that these figures are not intended to represent final implementation costs. They are based on generic assumptions and exclude a range of variables such as project preliminaries, site establishment, cost escalation, project management, utility connections, and site-specific complexities (further detail is available in the Notes/ Exclusions section of the QS report).

More accurate and detailed costings will be developed through future stages of project planning, including detailed design, site investigation, and consultation with stakeholders and technical experts. These refined estimates will better reflect actual delivery conditions and will inform future funding applications, Council's capital works planning, and long-term investment decisions.

It is also acknowledged that priorities, timing, and available funding may evolve over time in response to new opportunities, emerging community needs, or changes in usage patterns.

Stakeholder accountability

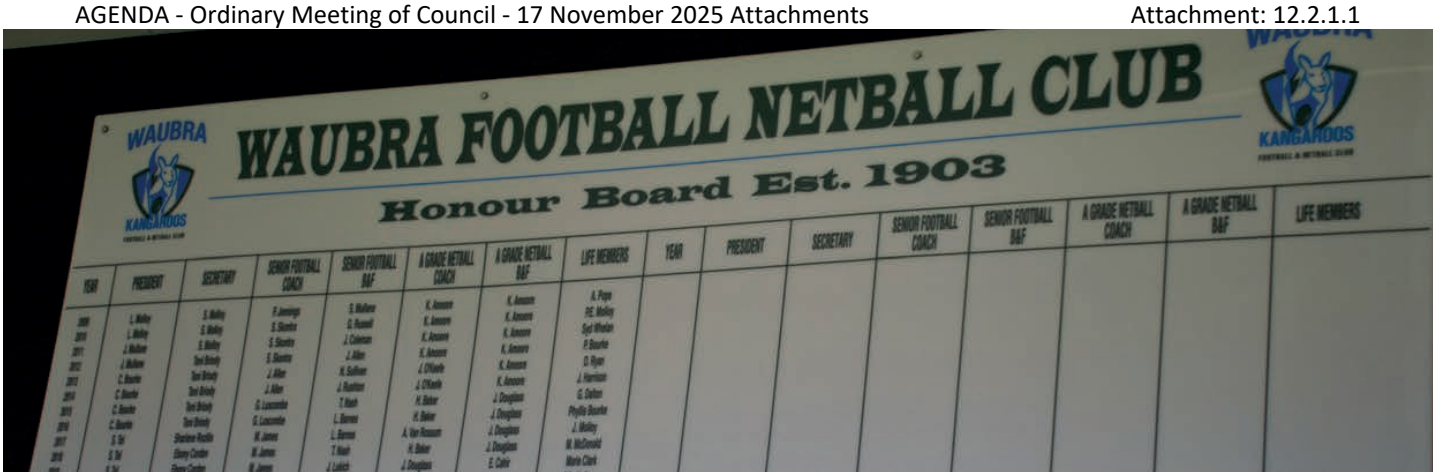
Ongoing ownership, oversight, and implementation of the Reserve Master Plan recommendations will require a coordinated approach, led by Council with support from the Community Asset Committee (CAC).

Each recommendation identifies suggested stakeholders responsible for leading or supporting its delivery. This allocation of roles aims to clarify leadership, guide planning, and ensure the appropriate resources are applied to achieve meaningful outcomes. These responsibilities are indicative only and may evolve over time as priorities shift or new opportunities arise.

PEOPLE

Ensure the ongoing, meaningful engagement with the community that collaborates and empowers individuals and groups to initiate, lead, and sustain activities and services that benefit Waubra and the district catchment.

Ref	Action	Priority	Funding	Cost	Accountability
1	**Community Asset Committee Capacity Building** – Support the Committee to engage with the wider community and facility users, to increase usage of reserve with improved services, fostering a stronger, more connected community.	On Going	Officer and Volunteer Time	Within existing staff resources	Manager Community Wellbeing and Partnerships + Community Asset Committee Support: Manager Governance and Performance, Community Development
2	**Community Group Capacity Building** – Support the development of active and sustainable community groups by providing training, mentoring and support in key areas such as governance, planning, and operations, with additional support delivered in collaboration with local service providers.	On Going	Officer Time	Within existing staff resources	Manager Community Wellbeing and Partnerships Support: Community Development, Pyrenees Community House, Other Local Service Providers
3	**Community-Led Events, Programs, and Initiatives** – Support the delivery of diverse, community-led events, programs, and initiatives by supporting activities to empower activation of the reserve, through community service providers and activation grants.	On Going	Volunteer and Officer Time	Within existing staff resources	Community Asset Committee Support: Community Development Team, Economic Development and Tourism Team, Pyrenees Community House
4	**Commitment to Engagement** – Establish an ongoing engagement program that fosters open communication and trust between the Community Asset Committee, tenants, and the broader Waubra and district community.	On Going	Volunteer and Officer Time	Within existing staff resources	Community Asset Committee Support: Community Development Team



PARTICIPATION

Enhance access to a broad range of activities by equipping residents with the tools, skills, and connections necessary to initiate and sustain participation opportunities for themselves and others.

Ref	Action	Priority	Funding	Cost	Accountability
1	**Community Activity Scheduling and Promotion** – Grow activation of the Community Hub through facilitating an accessible Community Activity Calendar where groups and individuals can contribute to an annual publicised schedule of programs and events at the reserve.	Short	Volunteer Time	Within CAC volunteer resources	Community Asset Committee Support: Community Development Team
2	**Youth Participation Opportunities** – Increase youth social and sporting participation opportunities through the (continued) delivery of introductory programs such as Woolworths Cricket Blast, Hot Shots Tennis, Woolworths Net-Set-GO, and NAB AFL Auskick, to encourage early participation, attract new members, and build long-term club sustainability.	On Going	Volunteer Time	Within CAC volunteer resources	Community Sporting Clubs and State Sporting Associations Support: Community Asset Committee, Youth Engagement Officer, Recreation Development Coordinator, Pyrenees Community House
3	**Participation Opportunities** – Increase social participation activities by developing and delivering regular social and recreational activities, including card and game nights, dance classes, knitting and sewing groups, chair aerobics, and indoor bowls, to promote connection, wellbeing, and active ageing.	On Going	Officer and Volunteer Time + External Funding	Within existing staff resources	Community Asset Committee + Community Development Team Support: Pyrenees Community House, Local Social and Leisure Clubs
4	**Promote Inclusive Participation** – The Community Asset Committee and reserve user groups will work to apply Council's Fair Access Policy by promoting inclusive programs that engage women, girls, and underrepresented groups.	On Going	Volunteer Time	Within CAC volunteer resources	Community Asset Committee and Reserve User Groups Support: Recreation Development Coordinator, Community Development Team

PLACE

Provide and maintain infrastructure and spaces that respond to community needs and foster a sense of local ownership and pride.

Ref	Action	Priority	Funding	Cost (AUD $)	Accountability
1	Continue investigation into proposed utilities and service upgrade, to include site power upgraded to three phase, isolation of meters for different services / community groups (Water, Power, and Gas) and installation of sustainable energy systems (solar) and batteries.	Short	External Funding	100,000	Manager Assets Support: Manager Community Wellbeing and Partnerships, Community Development Team, Community Asset Committee
2	Design and redevelop netball facilities to include female-friendly change and amenities, two (2) game standard courts with lighting, and dedicated spectator viewing areas.	Short	Council Budget and / or External Funding	1,208,500	Recreation Development Coordinator Support: Manager Community Wellbeing and Partnerships
3	Execute a staged delivery of the youth and community gathering and activity space, constructed in alignment with community needs and best-practice design.	Short-Medium	External Funding	1,235,510	Manager Assets Support: Recreation Development Coordinator
4	Identify and source funding partners for the development of the youth and community gathering and activity space Design.	Medium	External Funding	1,235,510	Recreation Development Coordinator Support: Community Wellbeing and Grants Coordinator, Community Asset Committee
5	Develop a detailed design plan for a youth and community gathering and activity space, incorporating multi-age and accessible play infrastructure, nature-based play, walking and cycling paths, picnic area and amenities block.	Medium	Officer Time + Council Budget	123,551	Recreation Development Coordinator Support: Manager Community Wellbeing and Partnerships, Manager Assets, Manager Works, Community Development Team, Community Asset Committee
6	Investigate opportunities to improve vehicle and pedestrian access to and from reserve, including main entrance and alternative forms and locations of access.	Medium	Officer Time + Council Budget and External Funding	220,440	Manager Engineering Support: Assets Manager, Community Development Team
7	Investigate and engage with VicRoads to review and implement a safe pedestrian crossing opportunity across the Sunraysia Highway, to connect the Waubra Primary School and the Waubra Recreation Reserve.	Medium	Officer Time + Council Budget and External Funding	54,000	Manager Engineering Support: Community Development Team, Community Asset Committee

Ref	Action	Priority	Funding	Cost (AUD $)	Accountability
8	Reconfigure internal roads to allow for new layout of the reserve, resurface roads and formalise car parking (Bus and caravan movement through the reserve to be considered).	Medium	External Funding	1,050,395	Manager Engineering + Manager Works Support: Community Development Team
9	Install additional seating throughout the reserve to enhance spectator experience at sports and events while also creating inviting spaces for youth to gather and socialize.	Medium	External Funding (incl. Fundraising)	27,000	Community Asset Committee Support: Manager Assets, Community Development Team
10	Provide safety and security lighting around the reserve for improved pedestrian movement.	Medium	External Funding	120,000	Manager Assets Support: Community Development Team, Community Asset Committee
11	Upgrade reserve boundary fence along Sunraysia Highway to accommodate safer community gathering and improved appearance of the reserve frontage.	Medium	External Funding (incl. Fundraising)	92,100	Community Asset Committee Support: Manager Assets, Community Development Team
12	Undertake feasibility study for future Waubra Bowls Club Upgrade.	Medium	Officer Time + Council Budget and External Funding	Within existing staff resources	Recreation Development Coordinator Support: Community Asset Committee, Manager Assets, Manger Community Wellbeing and Partnerships
13	Investigate opportunity for multi-age and all ability fitness equipment.	Long	External Funding	93,650	Recreation Development Coordinator Support: Manager Community Wellbeing and Partnerships, Team Leader Community Development, Community Asset Committee
14	Design and implement an oval fence upgrade, to align with sporting standards, including setbacks, behind goal netting, player interchange benches and to reduce unwanted external access (e.g. Rabbits).	Long	External Funding	232,550	Recreation Development Coordinator Support: Manager Community Wellbeing and Partnerships, Team Leader Community Development, Community Asset Committee

Ref	Action	Priority	Funding	Cost (AUD $)	Accountability
15	Implement new access paths throughout the reserve to enhance accessibility for all users.	Long	External Funding	223,680	Manager Assets Support: Manager Engineering, Community Development Team, Community Asset Committee
16	Plan for future upgrade to sports oval surface, include potential for multi-sport usage and upgrade of lighting to sports standards.	Long	External Funding	997,869	Recreation Development Coordinator Support: Gardens Team, Community Development Team, Community Asset Committee
17	Enhance the reserve's natural appeal by planting additional trees and landscaping to create a more inviting and enjoyable environment for visitors.	Long	External Funding (incl. Fundraising)	448,350	Community Asset Committee Support: Gardens Team, Environment and Sustainability Coordinator, Manager Assets, Community Development Team
18	Provision for signage upgrades, to direct and control overflow car parking, awareness or relevant Local Law (i.e. off leash dog rules), reserve frontage identification, branding for community hub and tenants, onsite direction and safety signage.	On Going	Council Budget	15,000	Community Asset Committee + Manager Community Wellbeing and Partnerships Support: Community Development Team, Manager Assets, Team Leader Community Safety and Amenity
19	Work collaboratively with the community to develop a funding strategy that explores a combination of Council investment, state and federal funding streams, philanthropic contributions (e.g., wind farms), and local fundraising efforts to secure long-term financial resources for infrastructure improvements.	On Going	Officer Time	Within existing staff resources	Manager Community Wellbeing and Partnerships Support: Community Development Team, Community Asset Committee

PARTNERSHIP

Strengthen governance structures, financial sustainability, and the capacity of local leaders to drive initiatives, ensuring the long-term success of the reserve as a thriving community hub.

Ref	Action	Priority	Funding	Cost	Accountability
1	**Governance Review** – Undertake a comprehensive review of the Community Asset Committee's Instrument of Delegation and Governance and Operations Manual to ensure clear, up-to-date guidance on roles, responsibilities, committee composition, and engagement of service providers.	Short	Officer Time	Within existing staff resources	Manager Governance and Performance Support: Manager Community Wellbeing and Partnerships, Community Development Team, Manager Assets, Manager Engineering, Manager Works, Manager Finance, Business Support and Events Officer, Community Asset Committee
2	**Training of Committee** – Provide regular training and onboarding for all Community Asset Committee members to build knowledge in governance, financial management, risk and contract management, operational planning, and compliance, ensuring the committee functions confidently and effectively.	On Going	Officer Time	Within existing staff resources	Manager Governance and Performance Support: Manager Community Wellbeing and Partnerships, Manager Finance, Manager Assets, Community Development Team
3	**Volunteer Succession** – The Community Asset Committee will recruit and support skilled volunteers, develop practical resources, and implement succession planning to ensure strong leadership and knowledge retention.	On Going	Volunteer Time	Within CAC volunteer resources	Community Asset Committee Support: Manager Governance and Performance, Manager Community Wellbeing and Partnerships
4	**Financial Planning** – Develop a long-term operational financial plan aligned with reserve priorities, including budgeting, funding opportunities, and the development of operational and business plans to guide sustainable decision-making.	On Going	Volunteer and Officer Time	Within existing staff resources	Community Asset Committee (with council officer or external specialist advice) Support: Manager Governance and Performance, Manager Finance, Manger Community Wellbeing and Partnerships

Ref	Action	Priority	Funding	Cost	Accountability
5	**Accountability and Reporting –** Improve 2-way communication and close all feedback loops that improve accountability and builds trust, through: • establishing a reporting and communications framework to improve transparency • support regular engagement track progress of actions, including maintenance requests, and • community use of the reserve.	On Going	Volunteer and Officer Time	Within existing staff resources	Community Asset Committee Support: Manager Governance, Manager Community Wellbeing and Partnership, Community Development Team
6	**Community Asset Committee Partnership Opportunities –** Encourage connection with other Council and DEECA appointed committees to share knowledge, collaborate on common challenges, and strengthen governance through peer support and learning.	On Going	Officer and Volunteer Time	Within existing staff resources	Manager Community Wellbeing and Partnerships Support: Community Development Team, DEECA, Community Asset Committee
7	**Partnering with Local Service Groups –** Support the Community Asset Committee to engage with local service organisations such as Lions, Rotary, and Apex Clubs, and Country Women Associations to collaborate on shared goals, pool resources, and address community needs through joint initiatives.	On Going	Volunteer Time	Within CAC volunteer resources	Community Asset Committee Support: Manager Community Wellbeing and Partnerships, Community Development Team
8	**Recreation and Sporting Association Advocacy –** Participate in annual meetings with relevant state recreation and sporting associations to advocate for the Community Asset Committee and their tenant needs, including support for program delivery, project planning, and implementation of facility improvements.	On Going	Officer Time	Within existing staff resources	Manager Community Wellbeing and Partnerships Support: Recreation Development Coordinator, Team Leader Community Development

RESPONSIBILITY

Delivering the outcomes of this Master Plan requires a collaborative, whole-of-community approach. Implementation will be coordinated by the Community Asset Committee in partnership with Council, alongside community organisations, service providers, and other levels of government.

IMPLEMENTATION COSTS

The cost to implement the Master Plan has been estimated through a Quantity Surveyor Report, representative of the current market (March 2025). Projects will be dependent on the progression of detailed design processes, alternate project delivery models and associated quotations and tender processes to determine final costs. Some project elements may change through a review process, and some aspects may not progress based on needs and demands and/or absence of priority of project capital.

The Action Plan outlines an indicative total implementation cost of $6,119,044, divided across priority periods (S,M,L) to support long-term financial planning. This includes approximately $1,308,500 in short-term priorities, $2,799,445 for medium-term actions, and $2,011,099 allocated to long-term needs. These staged estimates aim to assist with future budget forecasting, funding submissions, and resource planning aligned to council and community priorities.

The totals presented in the action plan are drawn directly from the Quantity Surveyor (QS) Report. While the action plan outlines an indicative cost, the QS Report provides a preliminary project cost estimate of up to $13,651,721, accounting for broader considerations such as escalation, design, and project delivery.

REVIEW

It is recognised that community needs, priorities, and circumstances evolve over time. As such, the Master Plan is intended to be a guiding document, adaptable to funding availability and responsive to change.

A structured evaluation program will support the Plan's delivery, enabling:

- Assessment of its effectiveness in meeting intended goals and addressing emerging issues;
- Evidence-based adjustments in response to changes in population needs or local priorities; and
- Ongoing monitoring and alignment with related Council strategies (e.g. Recreation or Environmental Sustainability Strategies).

Review processes will be undertaken in a transparent and collaborative manner, led by Council through the Community Asset Committee (CAC), with meeting minutes and updates shared publicly via Council's website.

REFERENCES

The development of the master plan was enabled with the reference to the following key data sources:

- 2021 Census – Pyrenees All persons, Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021).
- VicHealth – Sport Participation in Victoria 2021 Research Summary.
- Victorian Population Health Survey 2017 and 2020, Department of Health, Victorian Public Health & Wellbeing Outcomes Framework Dashboard.
- Pyrenees Shire Council Plan (Council Plan 2021 – 2025)
- Pyrenees Shire Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan (Municipal-Health-Wellbeing-Plan)
- Recreation Strategy (Recreation Strategy 2017-2027)
- Gender Equity Action Plan (Gender Equity Action Plan 2021-2025)
- Community Engagement Policy – Community Engagement Communications Policy (2022).

TRAFFIC SURVEY

GroupGSA engaged Beveridge Williams to provide their technical traffic engineering service for the Waubra Recreation Reserve master plan, to support Council in the decision making process.

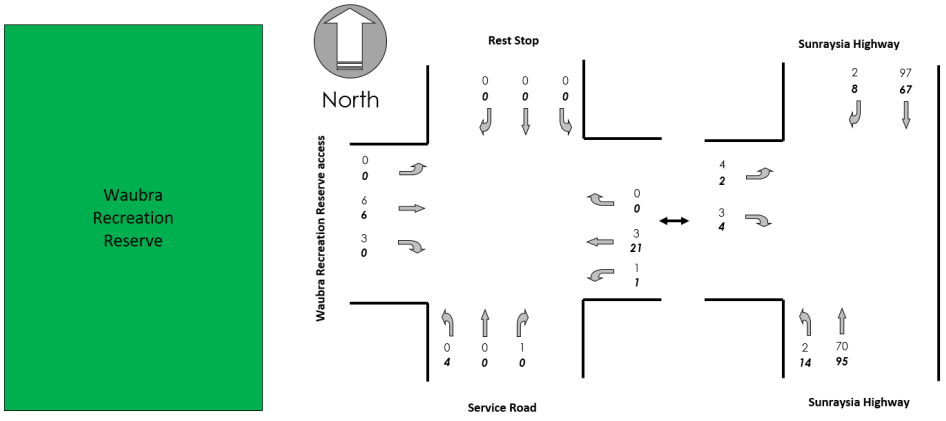
Traffic surveys were completed at Waubra Recreation Reserve to understand the traffic patterns, the following outlines the surveys completed:

- Turning movement count surveys were completed on Saturday 14th and Sunday 15th December 2024 from 7am to 7pm. Undertaken at the intersections:
  - Waubra Recreation Reserve Access / Service Road / Rest Stop
  - Sunraysia Highway / Service Road
- Automatic tube counts were completed on Sunraysia Highway from Monday 9th to Sunday 15th December 2024.

The following images show the turning movement volumes during the peak periods on the weekends and the daily traffic profile.

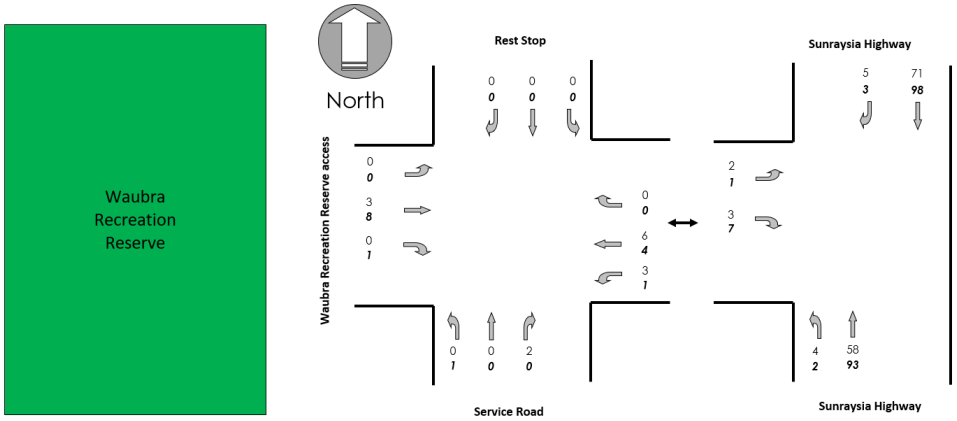
- The weekend peak periods were identified as:
  - Saturday: AM 9.15 – 10.15am and PM 12.00 – 1.00pm
  - Sunday: AM 9.30 – 10.30am and PM 3.30 – 4.30pm
- The Saturday peak potentially coincided with a sports game, noting increased traffic volumes inbound to the Reserve in the afternoon.
- The weekday and 7-day average profiles shows a typical daily profile for a rural environment. Saturday suggests increased activity in the morning before slowly dropping to the afternoon. Sunday showing fairly consistent activity from the morning to afternoon.

Waubra Recreation Reserve (Saturday) - Existing Peak Hour Vehicle Movements

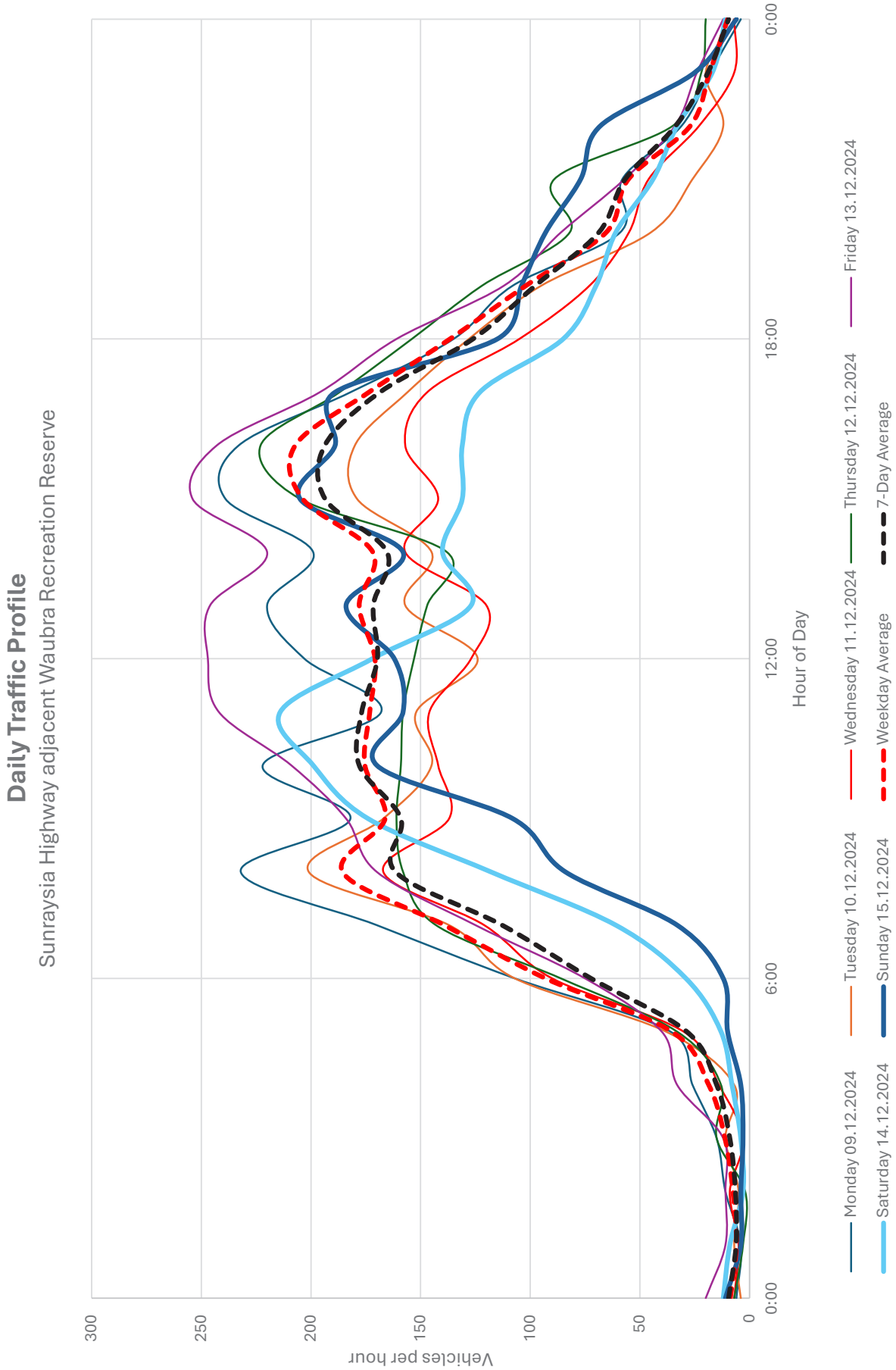


AM Peak: 9:15am - 10:15am **PM Peak: 12:00pm-1:00pm**

Waubra Recreation Reserve (Sunday) - Existing Peak Hour Vehicle Movements



AM Peak: 9:30am - 10:30am **PM Peak: 3:30pm-4:30pm**


Daily Traffic Profile
Sunraysia Highway adjacent Waubra Recreation Reserve
Vehicles per hour
300
250
200
150
100
50
0
0:00
6:00
12:00
18:00
0:00
Hour of Day
Monday 09.12.2024
Tuesday 10.12.2024
Wednesday 11.12.2024
Thursday 12.12.2024
Friday 13.12.2024
Saturday 14.12.2024
Sunday 15.12.2024
Weekday Average
7-Day Average

TRAFFIC GENERATION SUMMARY

Traffic Generation assessments were undertaken, based on information provided by Council, to develop two scenarios to understand the traffic flow.

- Scenario 1 - Football game day
- Scenario 2 - Typical Saturday

The peak periods are as below.

- AM Peak: 9:15am to 10:15am
- PM Peak: 12:00pm to 1:00pm

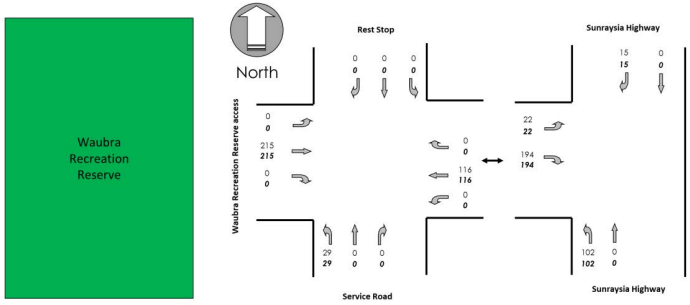
The following images provide turning movement diagrams with the traffic generation from the Reserve and a summary of the background information and assumptions used in the traffic generation assessment.

Scenario 1 - Football game day:

Council noted there are up to 9 game days annually that can attract around 480 vehicles per day over the course from 8am to 10pm. This scenario assesses the traffic generated from a game day during the peak times as identified from the traffic surveys.

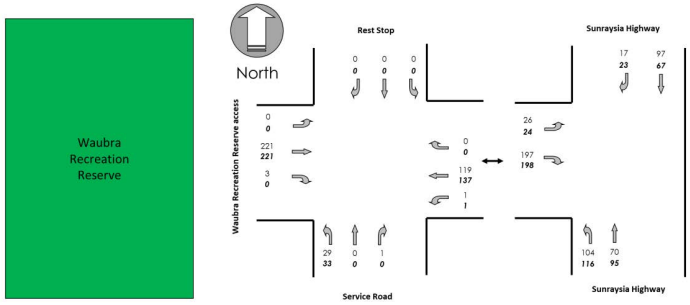
- Football club traffic - 150 trips (75 in / 75 out)
- Netball club traffic - 210 trips (70 in / 140 out)

Scenario 1: Site Generated Peak Hour Vehicle Movements



AM Peak: 9:15am to 10:15am **PM Peak: 12:00pm-1:00pm**

Scenario 1: Post-Development Peak Hour Vehicle Movements



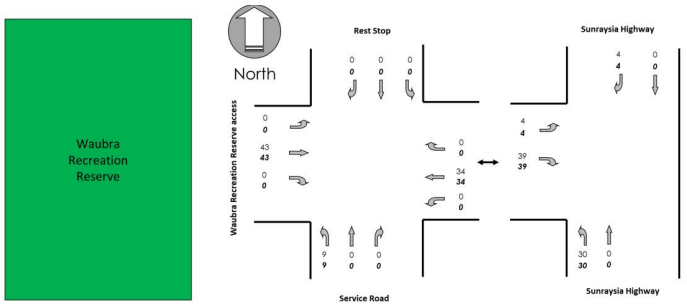
AM Peak: 9:15am to 10:15am **PM Peak: 12:00pm-1:00pm**

Scenario 2 - Typical Saturday:

This scenario assessed a typical Saturday at the Reserve that would be used by the Bowling Club as well as other community programs and the playground. This was also assessed during the peak times.

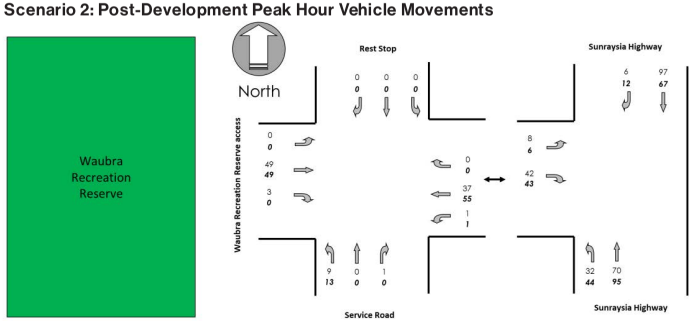
- Bowls club traffic (20 vehicle trips in / 20 vehicle trips out)
- Community Use traffic (20 vehicle trips in / 20 vehicle trips out)
- Playground traffic (3 vehicle trips in / 3 vehicle trips out)

Scenario 2: Site Generated Peak Hour Vehicle Movements



AM Peak: 10:30am - 11:30am **PM Peak: 12:00pm-1:00pm**

Scenario 2: Post-Development Peak Hour Vehicle Movements



AM Peak: 9:15am to 10:15am **PM Peak: 12:00pm-1:00pm**

SWEPT PATHS

Swept path checks

Swept path checks for the following vehicles and areas:

- B99 vehicle – Access/egress, car park, and circulation
- 8.8m service vehicle – Access, egress via ring road, and circulation
- 12.5m rigid bus - Access, egress via ring road, and circulation

Note: Figure only shows 12.5m rigid bus swept paths

PROJECT VISION BOARD

Figure 1: www.mildura.vic.gov.au/Latest-News/Kenny-Park-change-room-complex-completed

Figure 2: www.mansfield.vic.gov.au/Community/Community-Spaces/Mansfield-Recreation-Reserve-Netball-Change-Rooms

Figure 3: www.moira.vic.gov.au/Community/Works-and-Projects/Completed-Works-and-Projects/Completed-Recreation-Leisure-and-Community-Facilities/Katamatite-Netball-Court-Upgrade

Figure 4: www.yourkingstonyoursay.com.au/roy-dore-reserve-netball-facilities-upgrade

Figure 5: www.kompan.com/en/au/inspiration/customer-cases/log-cabin-hotel-penrith

Figure 6: www.kompan.com/en/au/inspiration/customer-cases/log-cabin-hotel-penrith

Figure 7: adventureplus.net.au/project/cloverlea-estate-stage-4

Figure 8: adventureplus.net.au/project/cloverlea-estate-stage-4

Figure 9: www.kompan.com/en/au/inspiration/customer-cases/buccaneer-bay

Figure 10: www.kompan.com/en/au/inspiration/customer-cases/buccaneer-bay

Figure 11: www.greaterdandenong.vic.gov.au/contact-us/news-and-media/active-areas-encourage-healthy-habits

Figure 12: outdoors.cardinia.vic.gov.au/places/ray-canobie-reserve-pakenham

Figure 13: www.bendigo.vic.gov.au/things-do/pools-playgrounds-and-parks/fitness-stations/browning-street-fitness-station

Figure 14: www.alpinehealth.org.au/whats-happening/news/news-2024/come-and-try-day-to-launch-outdoor-fitness-equipment

Figure 15: www.netting.com.au/sports-netting/afl-nets-behind-the-goals/

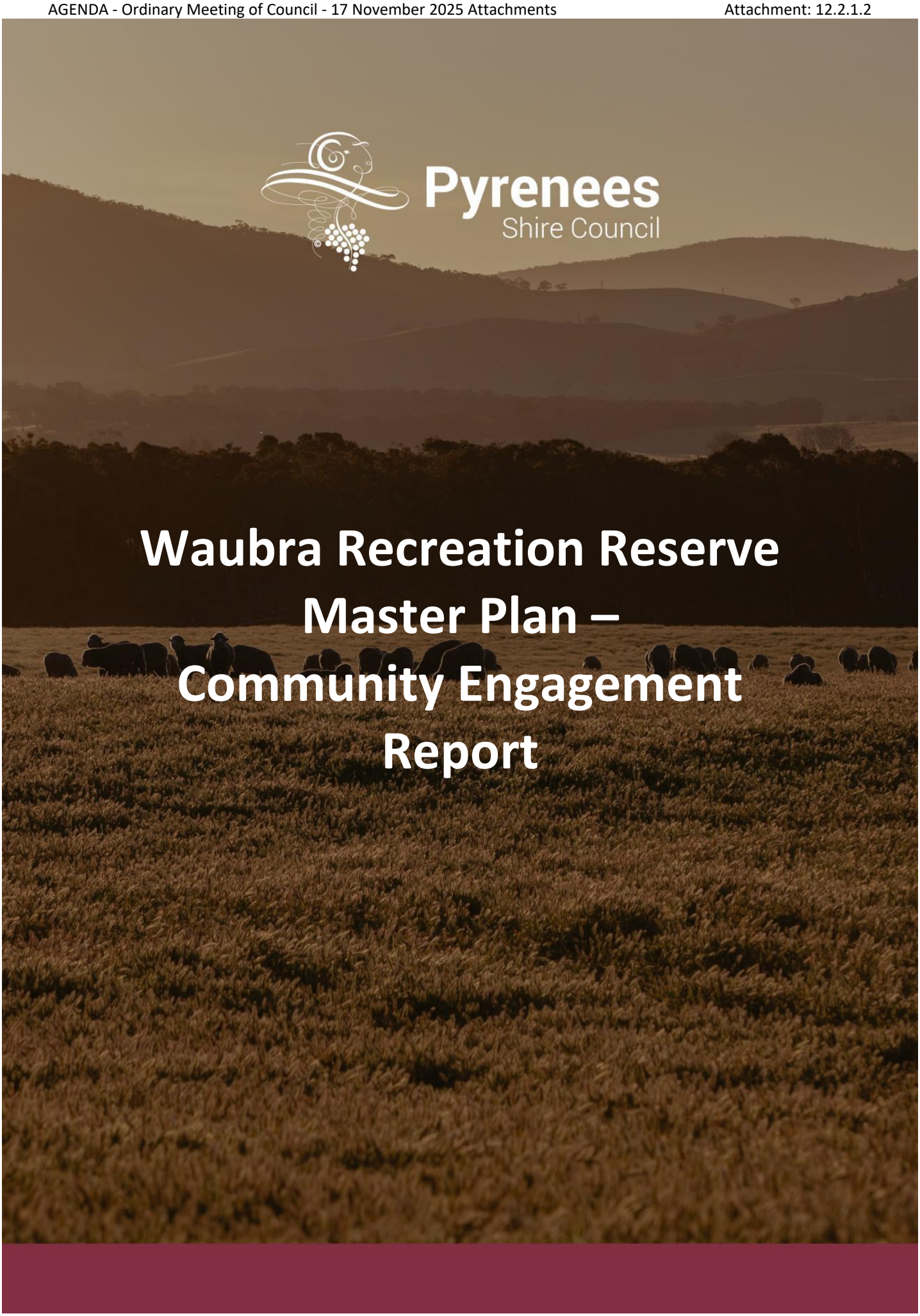
Pyrenees
Shire Council

Beaufort Office
5 Lawrence Street,
Beaufort VIC 3373
T 1300 797 363

Avoca Office
122 High Street,
Avoca VIC 3467
T 03 5465 1000

E pyrenees@pyrenees.vic.gov.au

pyrenees.vic.gov.au



Pyrenees Shire Council

Waubra Recreation Reserve Master Plan – Community Engagement Report

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1. About the project

The Waubra Recreation Reserve is a central hub for Waubra and a broader district, hosting sports, community events, and social inclusion activities. As the only community asset in Waubra, the reserve plays a vital role as a gathering point for our community.

Both Councils' Recreation Strategy and Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan, commit to planning processes to ensure Council managed reserves are planned for short to longer term community needs and aspirations. This process is to support these assets to be well governed in a better practise perspective, that build community participation and achievable asset works programs aligned to appropriate need.

Council has recognised the need for an asset masterplan for the subject site, to provide a guiding document that improves operations and plan for long term investments. To ensure an evidence base of community want and need, an engagement program was initiated to ensure an equitable and transparent methodology to capture the needs of both the general community of Waubra and District as well as the user groups of the reserve.

This Engagement Project, to inform the masterplan's development, was comprised of 5 key phases:

- Development and planning of the project in the form of an engagement brief;
- An in-depth engagement process to allow the community to provide an understanding of their needs;
- A data analysis and initial design phase;
- Community feedback on the initial design; and
- Evaluation of feedback to finalise the design and prepare for Council adoption.

The master plan is being delivered through several collaborative engagement and strategic planning sessions with all stakeholders and community members. An output included a needs assessment for the community, highlighting recommendations for strategic investment into infrastructure and programming at the reserve.

Below are summaries of some of known issues users are facing that lead to the prioritisation of this project:

- Unclear vision for future growth.
- Governance and operational challenges, including ambiguity in some stakeholder responsibilities.
- Evolving asset and operational needs of current users.
- Unknown community demands for alternate uses of spaces for both passive and active recreation and leisure.
- Gaps in strategic and financial planning for future Capital Upgrades.

A master plan will highlight the needs of both the general community as well as the user groups and visitors of the reserve, and act as a guide for all partners future investment into the reserve.

2. Engagement Overview

This project was guided via an Engagement Plan that was inclusive of the completion of a Gender (Intersectionality) Impact Assessment, Stakeholder Analysis and an Engagement Methodology Plan. This enabled the identification of the following:

2.1. Target Audiences

- Waubra and district residents.
- Community Asset Committee.
- Reserve tenants / users.
- Local groups and organisations.
- Waubra Primary School.
- Sport and Recreation Victoria.
- District sporting associations.
- Adjacent landowners.

2.2. Engagement Objectives

- To build community awareness of the project, building trust in council of responding to proactive management of short to longer term options.
- To generate community excitement / positivity for the project outcome/s.
- For community to share local knowledge – strengthen councils understanding of issues with the current infrastructure – i.e. reserve ingress and egress, safe play spaces for young children, playing surfaces not meeting sporting guidelines / club ambitions / growth.
- To facilitate design concept – i.e. Upgraded netball facilities, more gender inclusive facilities, allocated car parking.

2.3. Overarching messages

- Anticipated timing of the Master Plan – July 2024 to March 2025.
- The Plan is a joint vision between the community and council – 'your chance to have say'.
- Priority project outcomes don't need to be infrastructure based but may include activation and increased passive and active utilisation of the site.
- Why the Master Plan is needed – Number of competing priorities by tenants / user groups; no current guide to future development or activation of the site; need to improve local community health outcomes.
- Final scope of works and design – Council is committed to hearing community views, need and priority suggestions that will influence the final plan outcomes.

3. Engagement Methods Employed

Both communication and engagement types (inform, consult, involve, and collaboration) were varied based on audience needs, including the timing of sessions, length of submission periods and mixed processes using on-line technology, paper-based submission processes and personal (face to face) engagement.

Methods employed included:

- Stakeholder meetings
- Open community engagement session
- School workshops
- Children's activity sessions
- Project Steering Committee planning sessions
- Social media update/s
- Community noticeboard update/s- Physical on-site community noticeboard
- Community drop-in session
- Direct mail invites to participate
- Council Engagement Hub surveys and polls

The Engagement Program was designed with 3 key approaches.

- Direct stakeholder engagement meetings – held with the Community Asset Committee (CAC), Preschool, Primary School, and request for tenants of reserve to provide a written response.
- Community drop-in sessions – held on 31 July, 21 August, 4 and 11 September 2024.
- Community survey – (Open for over a month that closed 17 September 2024)
    - Online through Council's Engagement Hub.
    - Physical copies available at all drop-in session.

The above was supplemented with ongoing communications, highlighting that interested community members could contact officers to discuss thoughts, ideas, or the project at any stage – also accessible via a promoted QR code.

Communication for the above events was facilitated by Council officers through our standard communications channels, accompanied by direct mailout prior to community drop-in sessions.

4. Level of engagement

Participation outcomes across the 3 main approaches:

4.1. Community Survey

The community survey was open to the public online for 5.5 weeks from 12 August 2024, closing on 17 September 2024.

During this period there were a total of 30 response to the survey (27 online and 3 written responses), with another 15 surveys started but not complete.

4.2. Community Drop-ins

There was a total of 4 'open' community drop-in session conducted over a 6-week period.

Half were facilitated engagement sessions with council officers, while the other half were opportunities for sit down discussions with a council officer and the opportunity to take a hard copy of the community survey.

There was a total of 11 attendees cross the 4 sessions, 8 participants to the facilitated sessions, with 3 at the intimate engagement opportunities.

4.3. Direct Engagement

Part of the engagement process was direct engagement with the reserve stakeholders, this consisted of several in person meetings and requests for written response.

The groups engaged in this phase included, the Community Asset Committee, Kindergarten and Primary School, with requests for formal written feedback / input sent to Waubra Football Netball Club and Waubra Bowls Club, to no response.

5. Engagement Outcomes

The following provides summary of engagement findings, whilst Section 6 of this Report provides greater detail on specific responses.

5.1. Role and connection

- The process revealed a strong sense of connection to the site, particularly from those involved in its formal use, such as sporting clubs, volunteers and active participants.
- Whilst the reserve serves as the only designated park in Waubra, its appeal is somewhat limited to those engaged in structured activities like football and netball.

  This sense of exclusivity was a source of frustration for some community members who felt little motivation to use the space unless they were connected to these sports.
- The Reserve's role as a gathering place for the broader community was clear, with nearly 70% of survey respondents having attended social events at the Hub.

  This reinforces its informal value as a community centre where residents come together to connect and strengthen relationships.
- The reserve is also vital for the surrounding district, drawing people from a wide area who typically travel by car, many within a 60-minute radius.

  Additionally, the reserve acts as a collection and meeting hub for school bus pick-ups and drop-offs, which highlighted safety concerns around vehicle traffic.
- On football and netball game days, traffic volumes backing up onto the highway were identified as a significant issue requiring urgent attention.

5.2. Safety

- Safety emerged as a recurring theme throughout the engagement. 31% of respondents expressed feeling unsafe when using the reserve, citing factors such as inadequate lighting, challenging traffic conditions, and concerns about user behaviour, such as unleashed dogs.

  Participants stressed the need for better traffic management within the reserve, including designated parking areas, improved signage, and safer entry and exit points from the highway.

  Poor lighting at key locations, such as the rear of the Hub, pathways, and parking areas, was another concern that needed to be addressed.

  Internal connection
- Respondents also pointed to a spatial disconnect between the reserve's key facilities, such as the Hub, bowling club, and hard courts, suggesting that greater physical connectivity could significantly improve the overall functionality and experience of the reserve.
- Accessibility for pedestrians also drew attention, with many calling for improvements to the pathways within and leading to the reserve. Creating DDA-compliant access paths was seen as a critical step toward improving mobility for older adults and people with disabilities.

5.3. Services and activities

- There was also strong interest in expanding the range of services and programs offered at the reserve to better reflect the needs of the broader community. Suggestions ranged from children's and junior sporting activities to programs that foster social connection, such as craft nights, gentle exercise groups, and communal dinners.

  Respondents emphasized the importance of creating opportunities that cater to children and young people, particularly to encourage greater female participation, while also recognizing the needs of older adults and those with disabilities.

  Activities that bring the community together, such as car boot sales, art groups, and events promoting mental health and wellbeing, were among the most common ideas.

  Encouragingly, many of these programs could be implemented within the existing infrastructure, except for a need to design play spaces and youth-focused zones.

5.4. Asset provision

- Participants expressed a clear desire to see the reserve transformed into a more inviting and functional space. Suggestions included creating engaging play spaces for all age groups, from themed playgrounds and water play areas to obstacle courses and pump tracks for older children and teenagers.
- Passive leisure spaces were also highlighted as priorities, with calls for landscaping, walking and bike tracks, garden beds, and picnic areas to encourage a broader range of users to enjoy the reserve.
- Requests to upgrade sports surfaces, provide female-friendly change facilities, and associated amenities to support netball courts were identified as essential priorities.
- There were requests to improve the power supply capacity to better support activities and events at the reserve.

5.5. Management and communication

- Better communication was another key theme, with the community calling for clearer, more consistent updates about activities and plans for the reserve, delivered through direct mail and social media via local community groups.
- Respondents urged Council and the Community Asset Committee to improve accountability and commitment to asset maintenance, ensuring that the reserve remains a well-kept and functional community space.

5.6. Pride of place

- A desire to build pride of place was also evident throughout the engagement. Participants felt that the reserve could benefit from beautification works, such as tree planting and landscaping, along with improved branding signage to enhance wayfinding and promote the reserve both internally and externally.
- Through the engagement process, residents reflected on the great qualities of life in Waubra, celebrating the town's friendly and welcoming people, strong community spirit, and quiet rural atmosphere with beautiful views.

  Engagement also highlighted key challenges, including power supply limitations, the safety of the highway running through town, social isolation, access to basic amenities, and the rising cost of living.

  Notably, some respondents expressed a sense of disconnection from Council, citing a lack of visible commitment to ongoing improvements in their community.

Overall, the engagement findings provided for a community that deeply values the Waubra Recreation Reserve but sees significant opportunities for improvement.

Addressing safety, accessibility, and the functionality of the reserve will not only meet the needs of its current users but also open it up to a broader segment of the community.

By creating more inclusive spaces, expanding program offerings, and fostering pride of place, the Reserve can fulfill its potential as a hub for connection, activity, and wellbeing for the Waubra community and surrounding district.

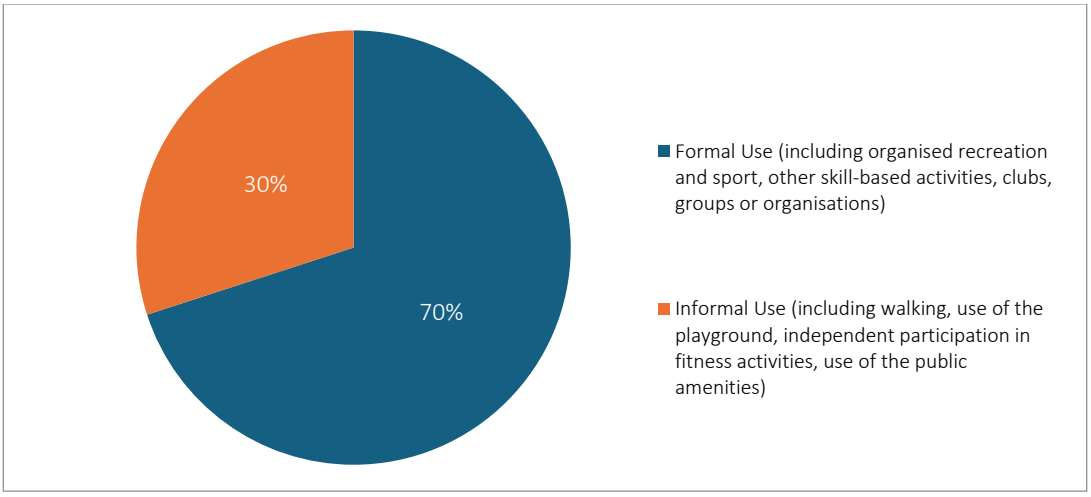
6. Engagement Results

The following Sections provide verbatim results of the following 3 engagement methods:

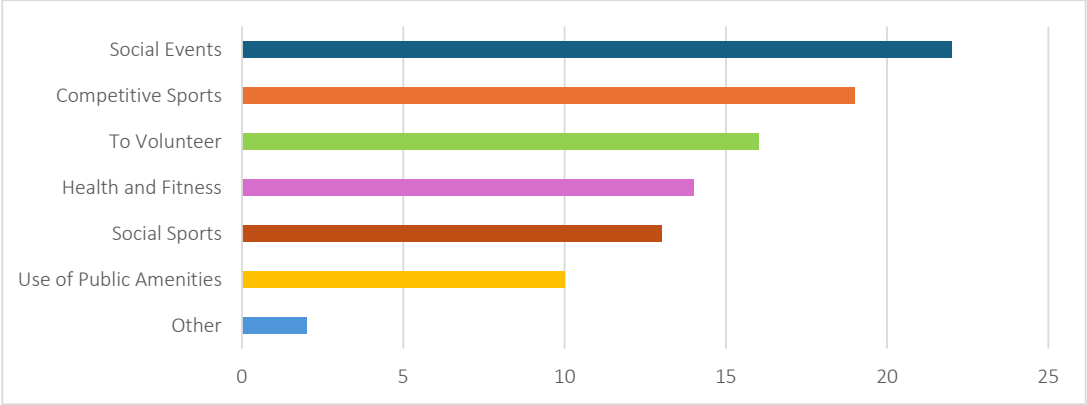
- Community Survey
- Community Drop In Sessions
- Stakeholder Engagement Sessions

6.1. Community Survey

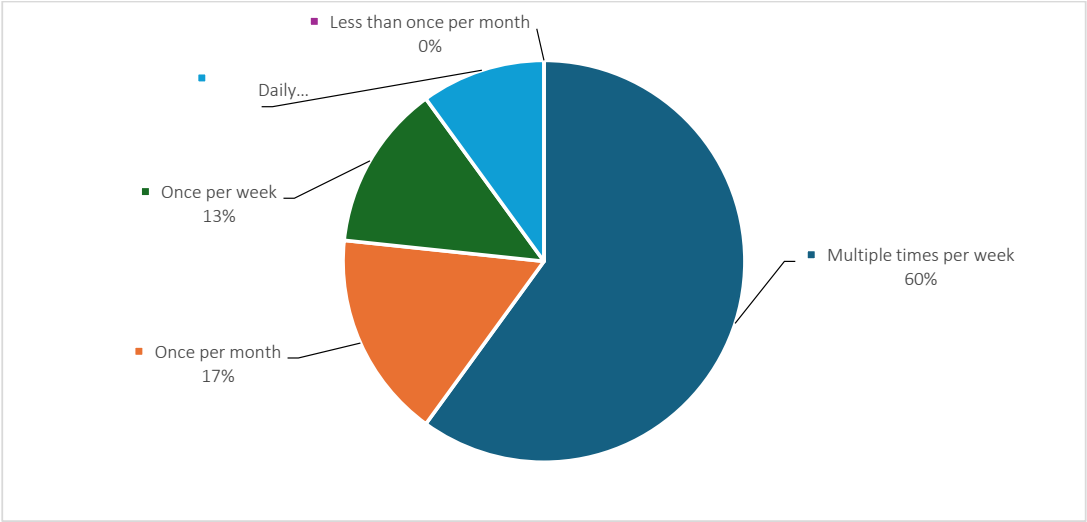
How do you use the reserve?



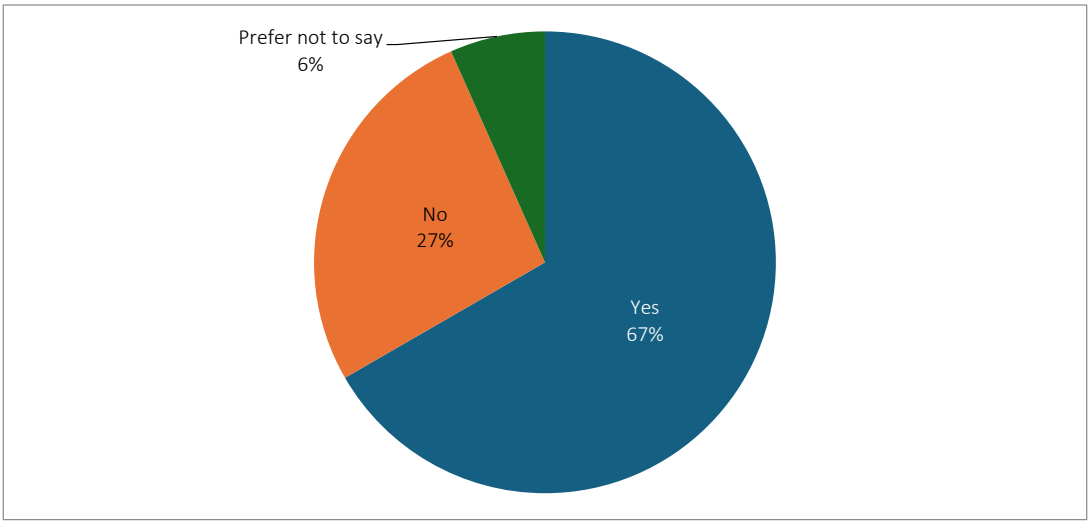
Why do you use the reserve?



How often are you at the reserve?



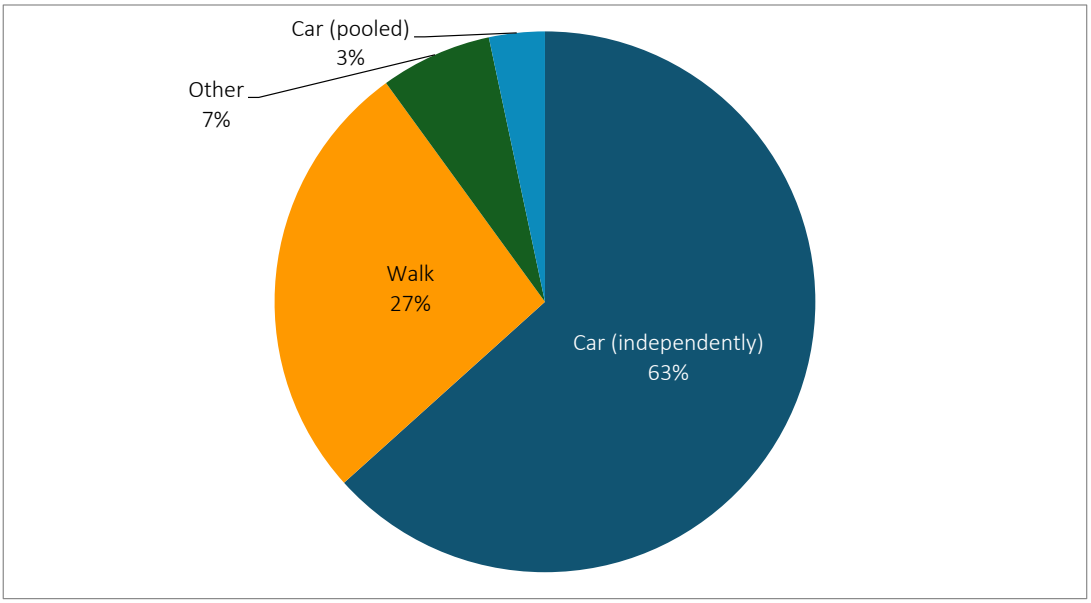
Do you volunteer for any group or activity at the reserve?



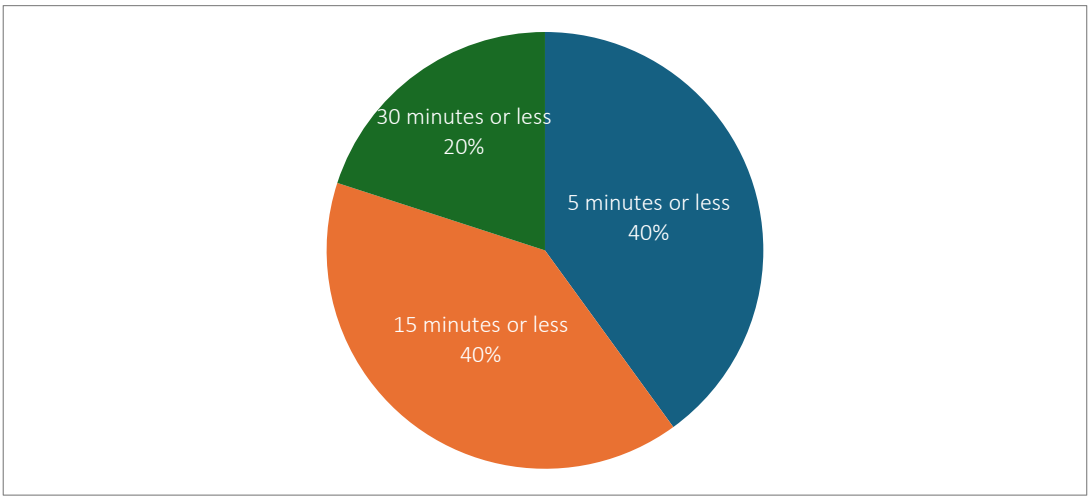
Do you have any other feedback that might affect how you use the reserve?

- Assets – 15 responses
  - Dog park would be nice
  - Parking, Quality and safety of bowls club clubrooms
  - If the reserve could be updated that would greatly help with the use of the facility.
  - Shire asset that has been left unfunded by shire, direct some money to Waubra instead of Beaufort.
  - An improved playground would be beneficial including outdoor exercise equipment.
  - Would love a new play area for kids. The entry to the reserve is unsafe and dysfunctional.
  - There needs to be two netball change rooms it is unfair and unsafe having to share
  - A better playground for kids of all ages
  - Better lighting
  - Council needs to do more maintenance so it's not left to volunteers
  - It would be great to have some of those exercise machines around the place. I'd use them.
  - Better netball facilities. Not enough change rooms for females. Netball court faces the wrong way.
  - Solar lighting around the oval for night time walking would be great
  - Need easy access amenities
  - Female change rooms as part of the football area. Second netball court next to the main court.
- Services – 3 responses
  - The bowling club is the worst in the association and is an embarrassment when visiting teams play
  - Would it be possible to hire out the Waubra hub registered kitchen for commercial use i.e. beef jerky
  - Not very family friendly currently so not our first option to use unless something organised there
- Activities – 2 activities
  - I would use the facility more if it had more infrastructure, services, activities.
  - It's good for the community
- No Response – 8

How do you travel to the reserve?



How long did it take to you to get to the reserve?

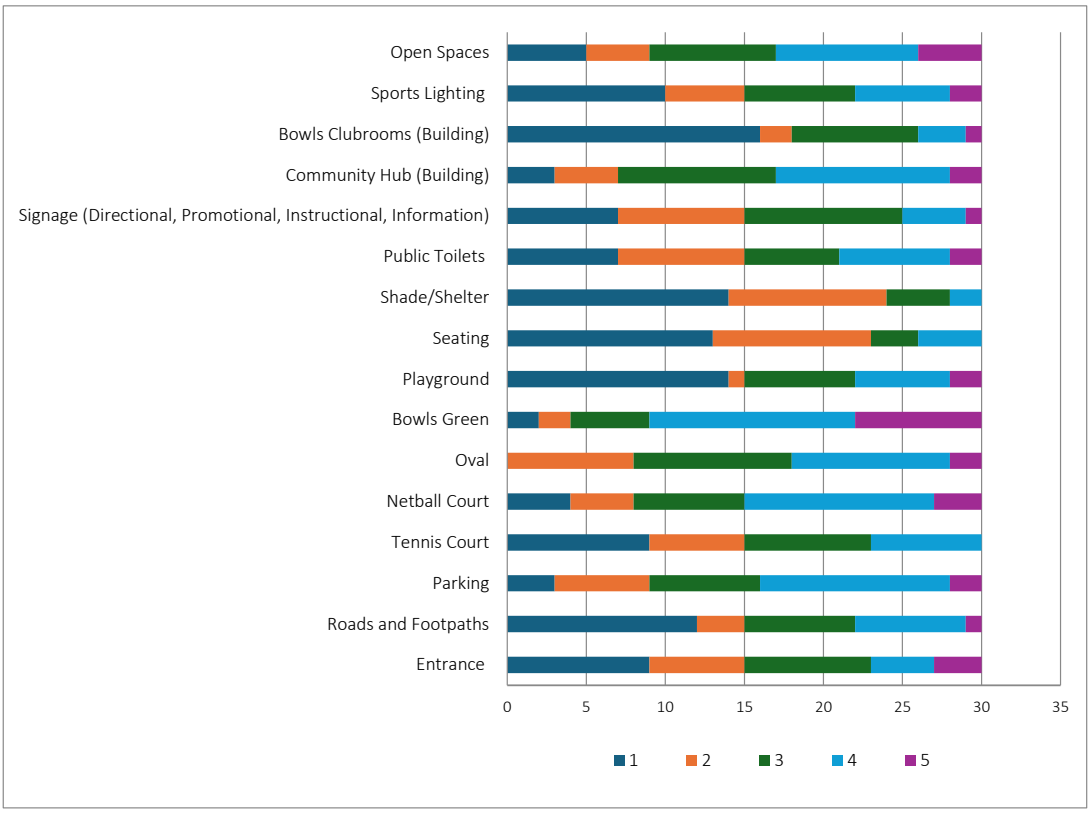


Do you have any other feedback that might improve the way you access the reserve?

- No, path is adequate.
- Improve parking, improved umpires rooms for footy, better parking for bowls
- There should be a turning lane into the reserve as there will be an accident one day
- Traffic can cause some issues as, it has been changed to make events safer but then that's not always followed.
- Better lighting
- New entry to reserve. On weekends traffic ques onto the highway. There has been several near miss car accidents there. Entry and exit could move to be further off the highway.
- Better roads less potholes
- A better playground
- The entrance needs to be moved past the primary school
- Better signed entryway
- The turn into the reserve gets hairy especially when trucks or other traffic are behind. Exit out can be difficult on a busy day as well
- Would be interested in Hiring the kitchen for commercial food prep plus excess meals donated to families in need
- Gate entry not safe. Pot holes surrounding the oval.
- Clearer path to walk thru from Kimberley Drv would be great.
- A concreted road around the path would make it easier for smaller vehicles like mine to get around the oval ti the reserve without hitting potholes
- Entry is OK, but will soon need an upgrade at the entry with more off highway access. Multiple cars on Highway is dangerous when football crowds entering.
- Better facilities for children to encourage more families.
- Bigger playground. And reduced speed on the highway
- A new, safer entry into the reserve is a priority.

Rate the following infrastructure/features of the reserve on a scale of 1-5

1 lowest (poor) to 5 highest (excellent) value :

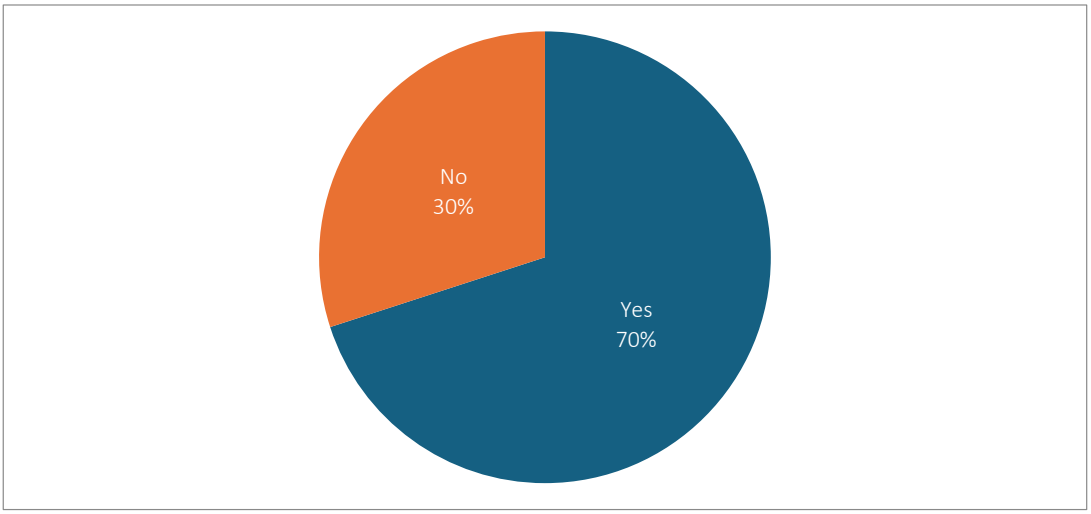


Feedback provided:

- Dog park and shelter would be nice
- The clubrooms for the bowls club are an absolute disgrace and are beyond any modification or repairs to bring it up to standard. They are a safety risk, fire risk, disability compliance risk
- The bowling club is a disgrace
- Needs an update as, a lot is outdated.
- The bowling club rooms need to be updated there needs to be a new playground that can be used by smaller kids the netball court needs to be updated and a second court needs to be put in next to the other court so every senior team can train at once and more shelter around the netball court so people can watch
- Better lighting
- The general landscaping should be improved including tree and garden bed planting to create shade, improve aesthetics and promote diversity.
- Oval is too small compared to other CHFL grounds. Playground is small, not very accessible for young kids and unsafe. Bowls club is deplorable. It is the only club that doesn't offer supper after bowls due to holes in the floor, no proper cooling or heating, to small, outdated etc.
  Would be great to have more shelter for the rainy days during football season. More seating around the netball and football grounds. Better lighting around the footy oval is required. Needs upgraded power.
- The netball court is ok until you get to the edge of it and slip and hurt yourself in the gutter or the grass/stones in the wet
- The only letdown with with hub for me personally is the lack of playground
- Council needs to invest $$ more into the community assets that they own

- Limited recent knowledge of bowling facilities. Tennis courts are probably good for what they are used for, being an occasional social hit by community members, and is unlikely to ever be more than that. I feel like the shade/shelter for the most common use (during football/netball season) is limited and could be improved. I feel as though overall the facilities are good, but very skewed towards football/netball wants and needs, sometimes at the expense of the rest of the community.
- Playground is very minimal. It would be good to have a better playground more suitable to young families.
- Lighting and power upgrades are desperately needed
  Directional arrows required for the road
  Undercover shelter needed for football
- Nearly everything needs upgrading or repairing to make it more user friendly and modern
- More uncover seating for viewing on footy during winter
  General seating is average at best
  More footpaths around ground would be ideal instead of people waking on road especially on far side (opposite to the hub)
- Bowling club seems closed so I can't score it high.
  The roads and paths seem a bit rough.
  The playground is good but could be bigger.
  The tennis court seems to be needing a bit of attention.
- Great community facility for football and netball. Great space for young families.
- Better road in and around the ground. More bench type seating around the ground for families to watch the games from
- The playground is exceptionally dangerous for young children like mine who want to join in with the big kids but struggle to climb onto the landings and play equipment with a large drop to fall.
- Sports lighting is terrible, and power to facility is horrible. Its below par and for a large football community to not have appropriate lighting, especially when Waubra is in a Wind tower zone and the Shire recieve significant funding from this, at minimum Waubra deserves a decent power source and sports lighting up to 150 Lux. Bowling clubrooms are derelict and asbestos filled and not touched since I can remember and i am 49 years old.
- The whole facility is not up to modern standards and is not in line with other facilities in the area.

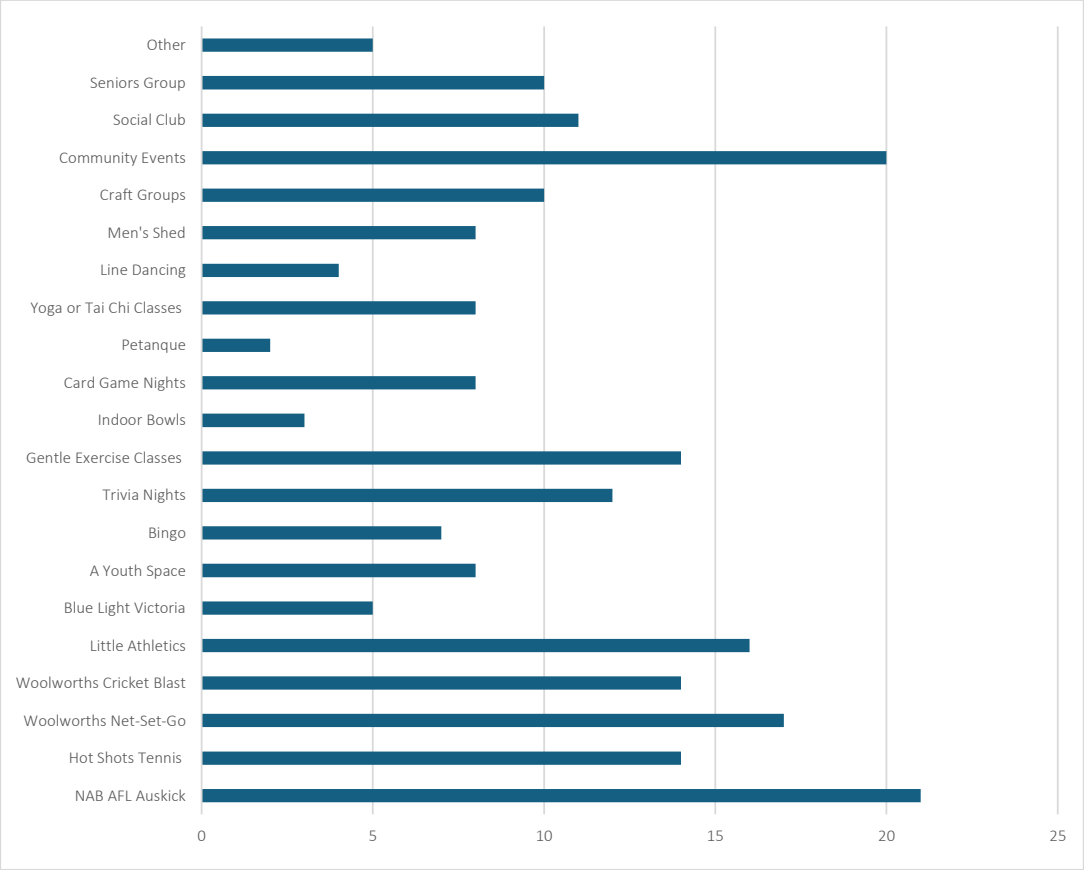
Do you feel safe using the Reserve?



Is there something the reserve does not have that would make you access it more or improve your use?

- Dog park would be nice
- access for trucks
- Water in summer
- Playground, tennis court, bubbler, pushbike track, cricket pitch, exercise equipment, dog park and more for kids to do.
- Better playground, Better netball facilities
- Better lighting. Enclosed dog area
- Improved playground, pump track, skate park, Outdoor exercise equipment, Market spaces, looped recreational footpath to ensure safe bike riding for children.
- A better playground with a picnic BBQ area with shelter!! Bigger function area. Tennis nets not there. fitness equipment.
- Footy nets behind the goals
- Better oval with less holes
- A better playground, All ages playground
- Outdoor exercise equipment
- Not that I can think of.
- A public barbecue area and improved playground.
- Gym would benefit the community
- New playground, Picnic tables/seating, Night time lighting
- The exercise machines would be great.
- Opportunity to hire kitchen
- Better lighting at night
- More consistent power supply would be beneficial to all parties who use the reserve, especially as it is an evacuation point for the wider community
- Appropriate power source, A gymnasium, Improved sound system, better light towers to promote training and possibly some night matches.
- Better parking. A power supply that is sufficient to run the facility.
- Bigger playground
- Outdoor fitness stations, A SUPER playground!, Organised public activities, social or formal

What programs or activities would you like to see at the reserve?



Do you have any suggestions that may improve accessibility to both reserve assets and programs (considering people with and without disability)?

- No access is good as is
- improved compliance for disability access plus changerooms/showers for bowls club
- Highway access terrible
- Update facilities.
- Better lighting.
- Connections should be clear to all assets and DDA complaint where applicable.
- Ramp access into hub building and bowls club. Entry and exit move to other side of tennis courts. Have entry further off the road to reduce issues with cueing and bus accessibility. Upgrade to 3 phase power and facilities regularly short out
- The stones around the ground make it very inaccessible for elderly people to move around the building
- An all abilities and ages playground
- Better lighting on outside of building
- Site is likely not easy to navigate for those with a disability, but am not qualified to speak on their behalf.
- More ability inclusive play equipment
  Better pathways for wheelchairs etc
- Better paths around the whole reserve
- The playground isn't too accessible for children with disabilities.
- Perhaps a designated bus area for elderly/disabled people visiting
- Better road and lighting
- Even foot paths around the reserve
- Needs more shade/shelter on the verandah, this coverage needs to be at least doubled.
- Disability access.
- Surfaces need to be even and stable; Better lighting; Promotion of reserve activities; Better communication with locals to inform them of activities; Encourage engagement.

Do you have any other feedback on how the reserve could be used in the future?

- Dog park would be nice
- improved access to the reserve to allow for it to be utilised as a staging area for major fires in the region
- Football,bowls and athletics for the primary school.The biggest problem is water in summer
- Motor vehicle meet ups, markets, car boot sales, kids discos, community classes.
- More animal orientated activities. Car & machinery shows.
- Improve the soft and hard landscaping and in the entire area to improve amenity and aesthetics.
- Encourage outdoor play. Run sports clinics for local and surrounding schools.
- It needs a massive upgrade
- 2 functional netball courts side by side with decent netball change rooms ; Maintenance shed; Improved shelter & seating; BBQ area
- I think there is an opportunity for wider community use (if the demand exists) outside of the existing demographic of the football/netball club (the list above is a good starting point). While the football/netball is a key user, that use comes with significant degradation of the facilities in terms of wear and tear.
- Just needs to become more community focused and be a gathering place for lots of groups to utilize. Currently really only caters to the football club.
- More social events to have as a community
- Would it be possible to hire the commercial kitchen
- Men's shed would ge a great idea to help promote mental health
- The reserve needs to be the heart of Waubra and needs to stay compliant with all necessary government obligations. We need appropriate power sources, need council help with maintenance both around ground roads and on grass surface. There was way too many rolled ankles in football due to poor surface.
- Festivals. Drive in theatre. Concerts. Holiday programs, sports camps, junior CWA.

What's something you know about the reserve that council might not?

- Dumping areas around the court. Rabbit infestation
- It’s being a part of the community for a long time
- Great volunteers
- Access areas are not well lit at night
- the playground is basically never used due to how poor it is. Families go to Learmonth, Miner Rest and other nearby towns to access play facilities.
- The netball is severely underfunded and is due for major upgrades to improve safety
- Who built certain assets
- I'm pretty sure the council is getting plenty of feedback, but I suspect that comes from a narrow user group, rather than more broadly across the community.
- Probably nothing
- The poor attitude towards council when it comes to allocating funds to Waubra Rec reserve vs other shire areas
- A crew of people Saturday morning before games fill in rabbit holes before games to ensure people safety
- I can’t think of anything
- The community take pride in looking after the Waubra Recreation Reserve. It really is a centre of community team spirit.
- Doors don’t properly lock
- The bulk usage is the football and Netball club, it needs to feel like this and keep all the history and not change this facitlity to boring monotone hub.
- It’s is the heartbeat of the community
- Not sure
- The massive effort by locals to look after the reserve and run the various activities.

What's great about living in Waubra?

- The quiet and ease of access from the Sunraysia. And the hill views
- the community spirit
- Friendly people who stick together
- So far still finding out.
- It's a great community town
- Community
- Quiet, friendly, old school values.
- The community
- The community. Waubra is a tightknit community that loves to socialise. The community has an innate ability to band together during tough times.
- The community and the way everyone comes together
- The community
- The community ; Family & friends
- The Waubra community is very tight in a crisis or when needed to come together for a purpose (eg. Off-road racing earlier this year). School community is very strong.
- The people and community
- Community spirit and friendly
- Country living ; Community minded people ; Kindergarten and Primary School available
- Th community
- It's peaceful. Not many people. Nice community spirit. The countryside is so pretty and I like the windmills.
- The lovely supporting community, the magnificent views, and not to be missed sunsets. We are truly grateful to have a Waubra Hub for our community, plus a local post office shop and The Springs Hotel
- People. Community. Atmosphere.
- The fresh air. Room to move. The Town and people
- Close knit and supportive community
- Waubra is friendly, caring community. It has people who are hard working, prepared to volunteer and support each other.
- The beautiful views and great welcoming community
- There is all the basics close by, school, pre school, shop, pub. Room to breathe.
- The beauty of the district. The sense of community.

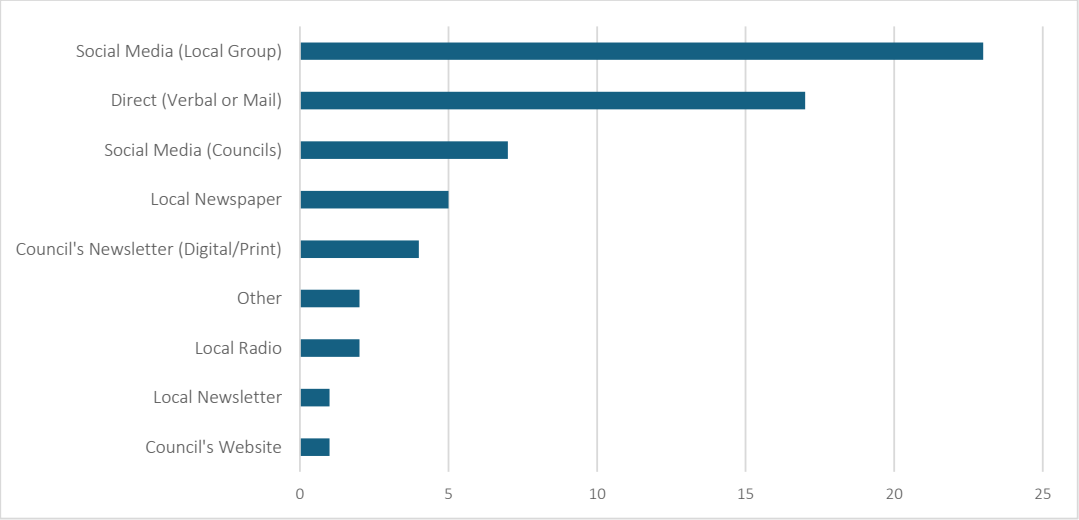
What are the top issues you discuss with your friends and family about living in Waubra?

- Top three issues:
  - Power supply in town
  - Safety of highway running through town
  - Travel to access basic amenities
- Three interesting issues raised:
  - Social Isolation
  - Struggling with cost of living
  - Lack of commitment from council to community improvement

Verbatim responses:

- The rabbit plague. There are probably 3 times as many rabbits here, than there are people.
- pedestrian and cycling routes within the township to the pub/general store/oval
- Community, history and sporting ability
- How waubra seems to get overlooked.
- The power line infrastructure planned for the area
- The roads
- Constant power outages at events, poor play facilities and the shell of a building they call the bowls club.
- The lack of safety at the primary school and the fact there isn't a school speed zone at a school!
- The lack of playground
- The hub being run down by com & the shire & the football club having to do all the work
- Social isolation- finding purpose to come together as a community.
- Most issues relate to travel, weather or agriculture
- Community improvements
- Playground issues
  Road safety issues- speed limits
  Lots of electrical issues- poor power supply which is ironic given the wind towers
- 2 phase power at the waubra hub
- How pretty it is. How peaceful it is. The hills.
- The football, the weather, the beautiful views and amazing sunsets.
- Not much
- Some families struggling with the cost of living and how best to support them.
  Lack of safety outside the primary school given it's close to the Sunraysia highway.
- We need better roads and amenities, We see all the wasted money in the inner city victoria and the facilites, roads they have, so the Pyrenees council needs to fight to get us that funding and that level of facility.
- The transmission lines that are set to be installed.
- How painful petrol prices are to get into Ballarat and how dangerous the highway road is to cross for school kids
- Concern about the visual pollution associated with the power lines planned to go through the district.
  Poor roads. The weather

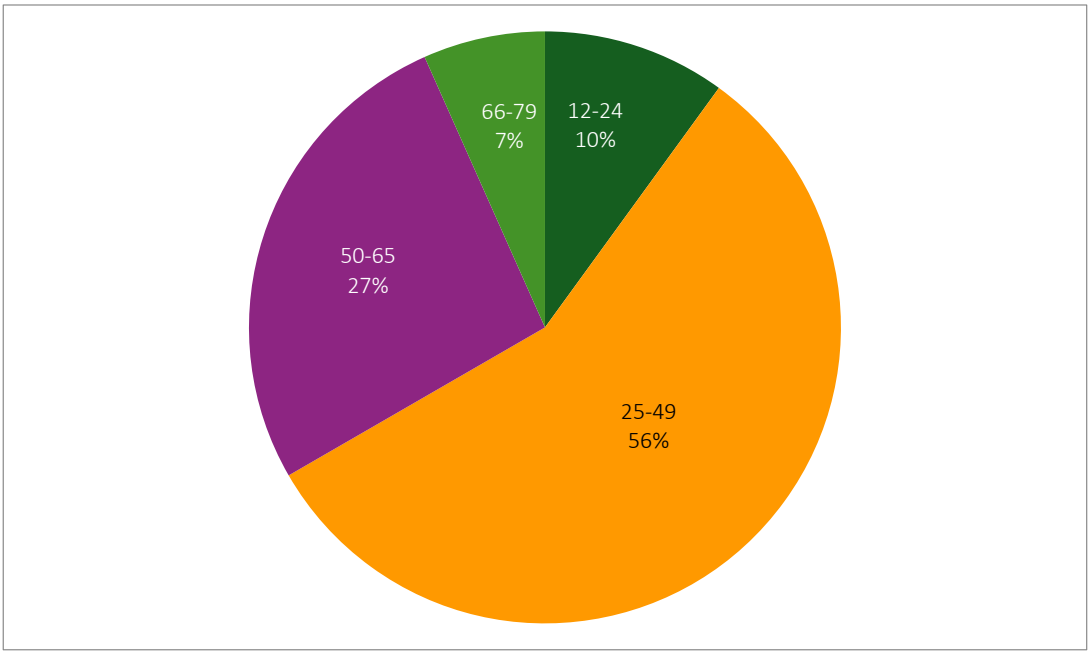
How do you hear and communicate information and activities in your community?



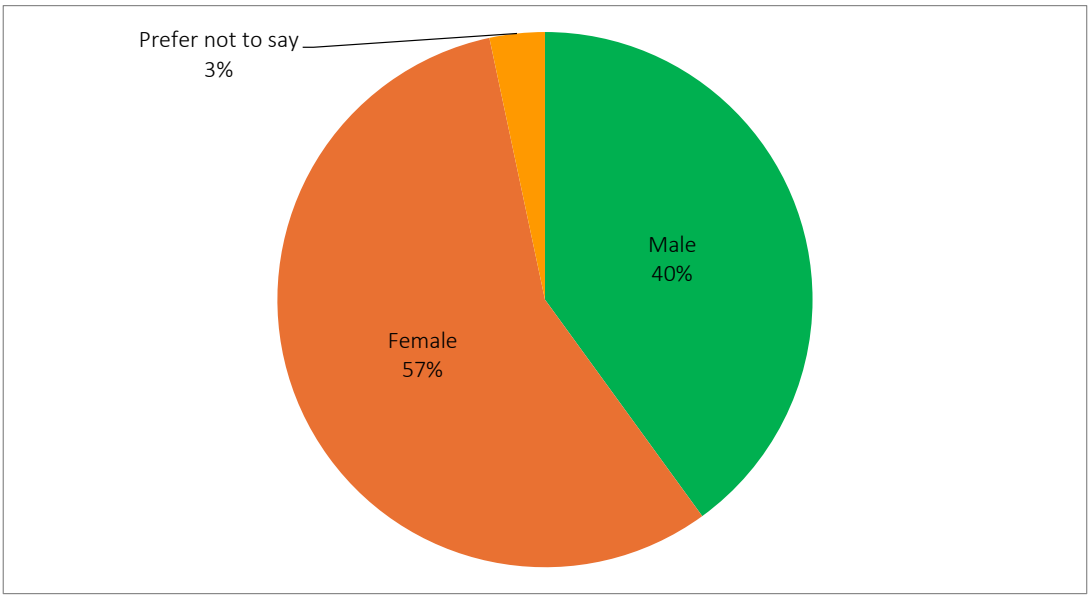
Do you have any other feedback on recreation and leisure needs within Waubra?

- Dog park
- Council needs to work with local cycling clubs to improve cycling within the region. The bowls club clubrooms need to be replaced asap
- More outdoor & community orientated activities to attract locals & visitors to interact with each other
- It would be good to have organised exercise classes at the hub. Pilates, aerobics etc
- Better accessibility for the primary school to utilise the space safely without the risks of crossing a 100km speed zone on the highway
- Play equipment & gym equipment
- More lighting required for winter sports
- We are more than one club and the facilities could be used for wider community use. Not clear whether that's because there is no-one to drive that for the community or there is not the interest.
- Diverse age groups which we need to consider but in order to appeal longterm we need to work from the ground up and make it young family friendly to entice more people to the area and keep town alive
- I think it is fabulous the local CWA encourages use of the hub
- Something to cater for young mothers, an informal play group etc. the challenge is that there is a playground that isn't very safe for the very young.
- This facility is the heart of the town!
  The football/netball club is like a modern day religion- uniting community, patriotism, positivity, support, friendships. Physical and mental health promotion

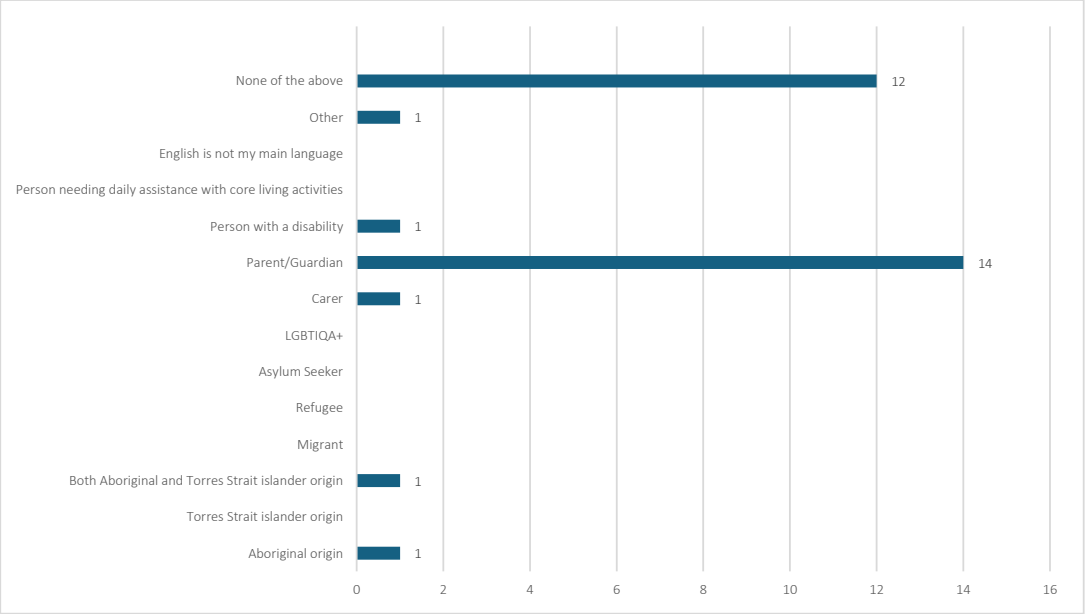
Age profile of survey participants:



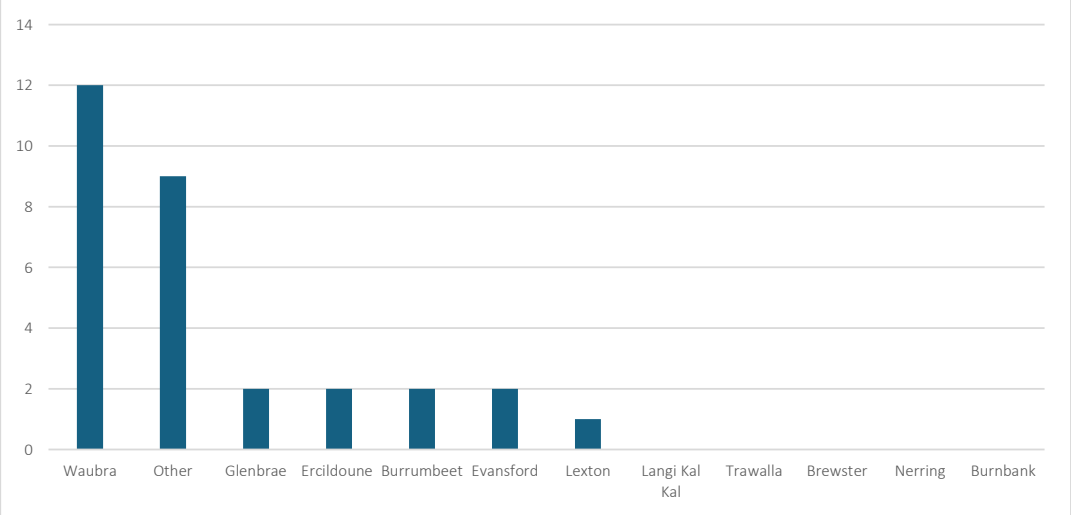
Gender identity of survey participants:



Do you identify as any of the following?



Household location of survey participants?



6.2. Community Drop In Sessions

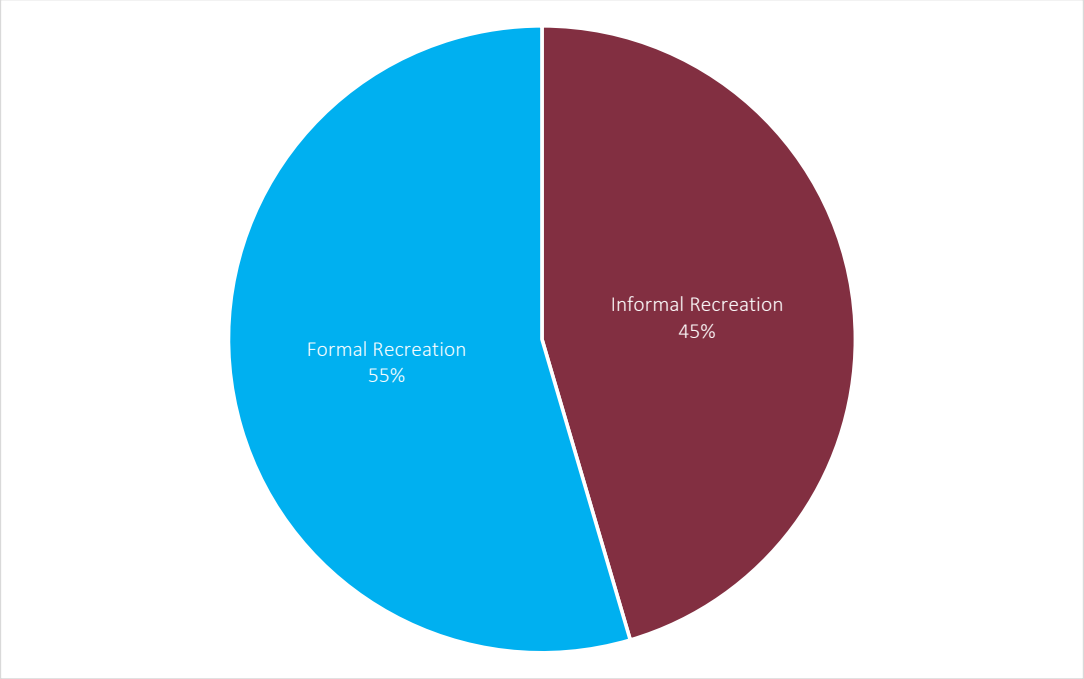
Why do you use the reserve?

- Quiet and safe place to walk the dog and ride a bike
- Participate / volunteer in sport
- Attend CWA meetings
- Attend private functions or events
- Drop children off at Kindergarten

Why don't you use the reserve?

- Lack of activates outside football and netball
- Poor play equipment for children and young people

What sort of activities do you see as the highest priority for the reserve?

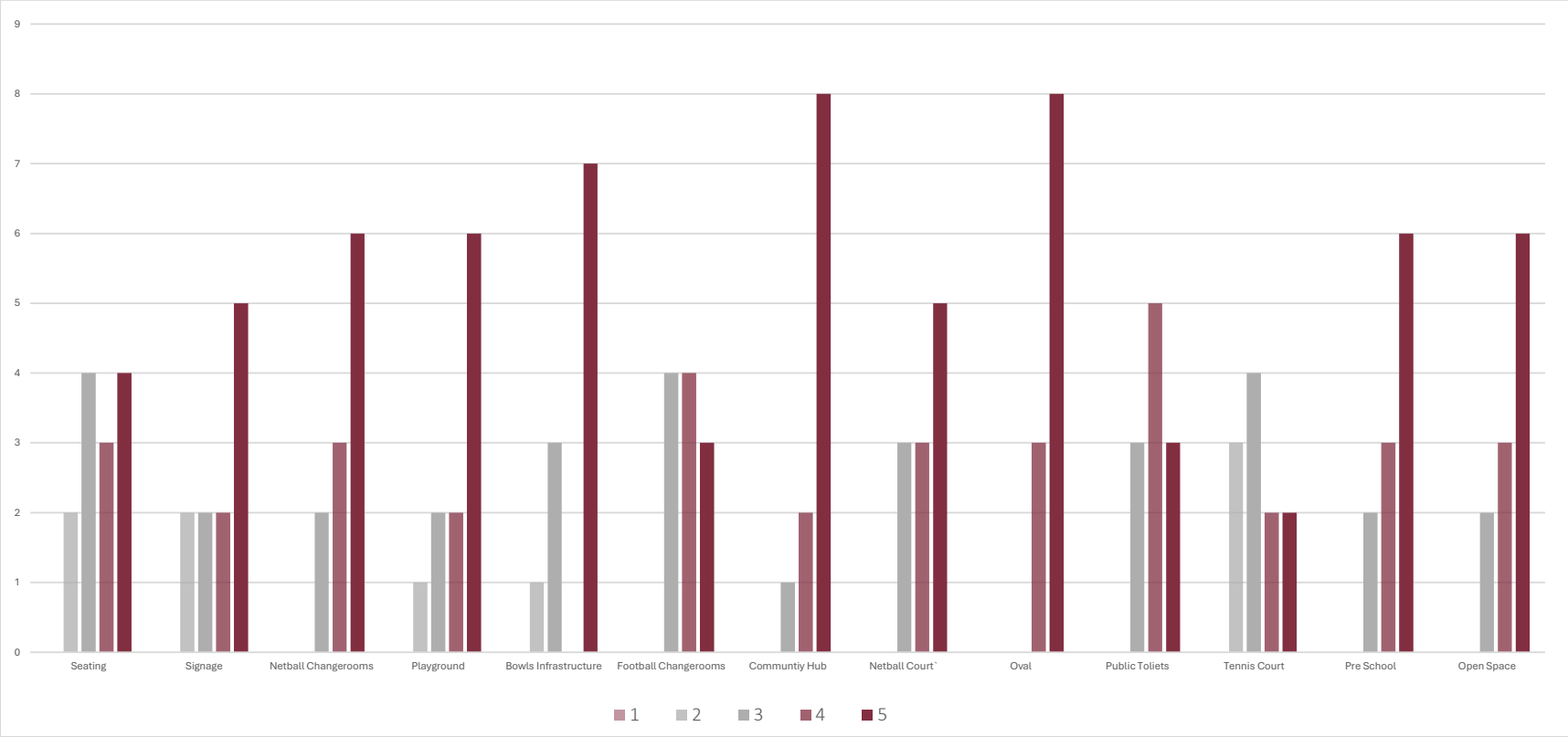


What programs or activities would make you use the reserve more?

- Playground / Exercise equipment (x9)
  - Themed playground, obstacle course, water play area, teenager equipment, adult exercise equipment, nature play, pump track.
- Passive recreation / Open spaces (x8)
  - Garden beds, landscaping, tree planting, walking and bike tracks, BBQ / picnic area.
- Social Activities (x6)
  - Indoor seasonal gatherings, Sports camps, holiday programs, community dinners, social exercise classes.

Rate these features of the reserve on their importance to your needs

1 lowest (poor) to 5 highest (excellent) value :



What additional features or amenities would make the reserve more usable and accessible?

Common proposals include:

- Updated or new entrance location
- School crossing and speed zone along highway
- Picnic and BBQ areas
- Increased and upgraded active play space and equipment
- Better internal roadways
- Formalised parking sports
- Speed and traffic signage
- Upgraded sporting surfaces
- Upgraded change facilities (specifically Netball / Female Friendly)
- Establish tree planting along boundary to decrease noise to adjoining neighbours.

What could be added to the reserve to increase the perception of safety?

- Signage (x8)
  - Traffic management (e.g. Speed, Parking, Directional), Promotional (e.g. Kindergarten, Sports teams).
- Highway (x6)
  - Crossing to school, slip lane to reserve, speed.
- Entrance (x5)
  - Gate, Direction, Exit capacity.
- Lighting (x4)
  - Parking space, Rear of building, pathway lighting.
- Parking (x3)
  - Delineated, Designated areas.
- Facility improvements (x3)
  - BBQ areas, fencing.
- Power (X1)
  - Upgrade for facility.

Are there enough activates in Waubra for the following groups?

	Yes	No
Older Adults	0	11
Children and Young People	0	11
Women	0	11
Persons with a disability	0	11

What activities could be implemented for the following groups?

Older Adults	Children and Young People	Women	Persons with a disability
Card nights	Little Athletics	Book Club	Social Sports
Exercise Classes	Summer Sports	Exercise Groups	Indoor Activities
Social activities		Cooking Classes	Outdoor Activities
Cooking classes		Art Classes	Art Classes
		Upskill training	Social Groups

What do you like about living in or visiting Waubra?

- Community (x6)
- Lifestyle (x5)
- Location (x1)

6.3. Stakeholder Engagement Sessions

Waubra Preschool:

- The teachers and children at Waubra Kindergarten provided some fantastic input on what they'd like to see added to the reserve. As part of the process, the preschool teachers facilitated a discussion with the children, encouraging them to share their ideas through drawing. The resulting annotated drawings reflect the children's imaginative and thoughtful suggestions, this can be viewed in appendix 1.

Waubra Primary School:

- What activities do you do at the reserve?
    - Walk dog, Netball, Football, Social gatherings and events, use of playground, School sport (sport carnival, cross county)
- What do you like about Waubra?
    - Friends and Family, country, animals, school, quiet, farms.
- What new things do you want to see at the reserve?
    - Bike track, playground, BBQ / Picnic area, dog park, alternate sports infrastructure, sandpit.
- Students were also asked to draw a picture of their favourite thing about the reserve / Waubra, below are some of the responses.
    - Some of these responses can be seen in appendix 2.

Community Asset Committee and Reserve Tenants:

Each sporting club at the reserve was sent direct, sport-specific questions with a request to table them at a meeting and provide a formal response. However, no responses were received. The Community Asset Committee (CAC) was also invited to participate in a community drop-in session, during which representatives from both sporting clubs attended in their capacity as CAC members, providing an opportunity for club-related perspectives to be shared through this engagement format. The input provided during this session is reflected in Section 6.2 – Drop-in Sessions.

"I would like some rocks and ramps to ride on. I love and my family rides the ramps."

Lesley (educator)

No plastic. Play equipment. Please. Nature with learning. Play areas, to engage all ages and abilities

"I want Soccer Pitches to Play Soccer with lots of friends."

"This is me Kicking the Soccer ball."

Jasmyn

"I Would love to have an outdoor trampoline Park"

Evie

"I Would like to Play in a digger/ Construction Park. Big excavators in lots of dirt. Diggers moving dirt and Rocks." Eli

Aiya

Aiya's slide has a ship and a tube to ride on. Aiya's slide. You can go down the slide. You can be up.

"I want a giant-normal Park slide that goes very fast" | that wiggles down down down.

Cooper

"I Would like a red bridge over some water. There should be ropes so we can hang on. One wire so we can climb up the bridge. Some wiggly holders that we can climb on."

Santiago

"I want a giant rope that swings that we can hold and can go out of the bridge."

"two flying foxes so I can race my friends on a very long wire. I think 1000 million meters." Cooper

NEW:

"An outdoor stage to perform shows or singing or concerts so all the people can come and watch."

Brady

"I love fish and turtles. Could we have an aquarium with tanks of fish or maybe just a fish pond."

James: "I sheep [illegible] with."

Soccer ball."
Jaznyn

Catalog

BCBC - Wednesday 3rd September 2025 AGM Minutes 1
Scan BCBC Presidents Report for 2025 3

BEAUFORT COMMUNITY BANK COMPLEX

Beaufort
Community Bank® Branch
Bendigo Bank

Meeting of Beaufort Community Bank Complex Community Asset Committee
held at Beaufort Community Bank Complex
on Wednesday 3rd September , 2025 at 7.00 PM

AGM Meeting

In Attendance	Brad Foster	Beaufort Football & Netball Club	President
	Maurice Trainer	Beaufort Agricultural Society	Vice President
	Lynelle Day	Beaufort Football & Netball Club	Secretary
	Andrew Oddie	Beaufort Cricket Club	Treasurer
	Simone Hutchings	Community Representative	
	Leighanne Murphy	Community Representative	
	Luke Calder	Beaufort Financial Services	
		Community Representative	
		Community Representative	
		Beaufort Secondary College	

Representatives
Damien Ferrari Pyrenees Shire Council Observer/Rep for Council
Brad welcomed Damien to our AGM meeting

Apologies **Nil**

Chairman's Report: President Brad Foster read his report for 2024/25 to the members of the meeting. Thanked all those who were elected to Executive positions on BCBC Community Asset Committee. He also thanked his executive Committee members for their commitment and for working around his shifts so he could attend meetings. Thank you Brad for all you have done for the BCBC Assets Committee. We have appreciated what you have achieved.

Confirmation of Minutes
The previous AGM Minutes were and true and correct report.

Moved: Leighanne Murphy Seconded: Simone Hutchings

Matters Arising from Minutes - Nil

Treasurer's Report

Cheque Acc	$	19,700.30
Term Deposit	$	10,808.82

Report for 30th June 2025

Moved: Andrew Oddie Seconded: Simone Hutchings

Inward Correspondence: Nil

Outward Correspondence: Nil

Election of Office Bearers
All positions were declared Vacant. Damien Ferrari was asked to chair the election
Of the Beaufort Community Bank Complex Assets Committee

President: Simone Hutchings
Nominated by Lynelle Day Seconded by Leighanne Murphy
Maurice accepted the position and was duly elected.

Vice President: Maurice Trainor
Nominated by Lynelle Day Seconded by Leighanne Murphy
Maurice accepted the position and was duly elected.

Secretary: Lynelle Day
Nominated by Maurice Trainor Seconded by Leighanne Murphy
Lynelle accepted the position and was duly elected.

Treasurer: Andrew Oddie
Nominated by Leighanne Murphy Seconded by Lynelle Day
Andrew accepted the position and was duly elected.

Risk Manager Officer: Lynelle Day
Nominated by Brad Foster Seconded by Leighanne Murphy .
accepted the position and was duly elected.

Committee Members:

Simone Hutchings	Community Represenative
Maurice Trainer	Beaufort Agricultural Society
Lynelle Day	Beaufort Football & Netball Club
Andrew Oddie	Beaufort Cricket Club
Leighanne Murphy	Community Representative
Luke Calder	Bendigo Community Bank Representative +Beaufort Football & Netball Club Representative Community Representative Beaufort Secondary College

Representatives
Damien Ferrari (Pyrenees Shire Council) (Observer/ rep for Council)

Meeting Closed – 7 .28 .p.m.

2025/26 Meeting Schedule -
Wednesday 5th November 2025
Wednesday 4th February 2026
Wednesday 6th May 2026
Wednesday 2nd September 2026 (AGM)
Wednesday 4th November 2026

BEAUFORT COMMUNITY BANK COMPLEX

COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT

PRESIDENTS REPORT 2025

Thanks to Committee Members for making themselves available for meetings and fitting in around my work schedule.

We are in a good financial position which is important as the complex gets to the age of needing to be refurbished and freshened up.

Thanks to Lynelle for looking after the bookings and Andrew for his work as Treasurer, as well as the other committee members that helped out during the year.

Moving forward, it is important that we keep on top of any maintenance issues or break downs that arise and strive to keep presenting the facility in the best possible way for the community and all users. I think with the age of the facility, it has stood up pretty well and with just a fresh coat of paint and some small repairs we can continue to present a quality venue as we have in the past.

As I step away from the president's position, I want to thank all committee members, past and present, for the time they have given to the community and wish all the best to the people taking positions on in the future.

Brad Foster

Catalog

Attachment 3 Landsborough Community Hub 24-25 Report 1

Landsborough Hub Report_0001 2
Attachment 3 Landsborough Community Hub 24-25 Expenditure Report 3

Landsborough Caraven Park Swimming Pool Statement_0001 6

Catalog

Landsborough Hub Report_0001 1
Attachment 3 Landsborough Community Hub 24-25 Expenditure Report 2

LANDSBOROUGH COMMUNITY HUB
REPORT 1 JULY 2024 to 30 JUNE 2025
GRAEME SANDLANT VOLUNTEER

Swimming Pool
Council operated and maintained safety compliances swimming pool facilities.
General operation costs Power, Water, Rates, Cleaning amenities block etc were paid out of Councils Hub Grant thereby offering value for Council investment to support swimming pool operations.

Caravan Park
4 very basic quality powered sites presently available however will be increased to 8 powered sites after proposed hub upgrade as access will then be available to the 4 extra existing powered sites.
The caravan park environment is extremely popular because of its natural park creek setting.

Community Resource Centre
Provides locals their swap library, Council supplies computers – photo copiers etc which are accessed by residents making an appointment.
Saturday morning coffee sessions are now operated by locals and attract some 20 – 30 people each Saturday
Pyrenees Shire Council hold community meetings at the resource center as and when required.

Cabins
Hiring of cabins previously was focused predominantly to Tradies, Shearers and extended period hirers.
2025 / 26 year will see a reduction in hirings and therefor loss of income as cabins are now prioritized to locals and visitors and therefor are not hired out for extended periods which will reduce income revenue.

Hub Public Toilet
Is providing valuable services to both local and passing traffic and is a great support to the new shop – post office operator.

Thank you
Graeme Sandlant

LANDSBOROUGH SWIMMING POOL / CARAVAN PARK

P.O Box 42

LANDSBOROUGH, VIC.. 3384

26 June 2025.

To Whom it may concern

c/o Ray Davies

Economic Development Officer

Pyrenees Shire Council

BEAUFORT, Vic.. 3373.

Good Morning

Please find attached a copy of the section 86 Committee claim for reimbursement including copys of tax invoice receipts from Council Grant for operating expenses which have been paid by Landsborough Caravan Park / Swimming Pool Committee of Management for the period 1 July 2024 to 26 June 2025.

We look forward to receiving reimbursement from Councils Landsborough Caravan Park / Swimming Pool Grant.

Yours Faithfully

Graeme Sandlant,

President

092501

PYRENEES SHIRE COUNCIL
FILE No: 16/16/26
DOC No:.....
27 JUN 2025
ACTION: RAY DAVIES
INFORMATION:

COPIES OF ACCOUNTS TO FINANCE DEPT.

LANDSBOROUGH CARAVAN PARK – ASSETS COMMITTEE

STATEMENT OF EXPENSES 1ST July 2024 to 30 June 2025

(PAID TAX INVOICES ATTACHED)

CLAIM FOR REIMBURSEMENT FROM PYRENEES SHIRE COUNCIL

2024-2025 GRANT FROM COUNCIL BUDGET ALLOCATION

Date	Cheque No	
8/7/2024	Telstra Phone Account	$ 50-00
29/7/2024	Odd Job Squad Repairs to washing machine	$ 550-00
3/8/2024	Telstra Phone Account	$ 50-00
7/8/2024	Firewatch Wimmera Service fire equipment	$ 169-40
18/8/2024	Origin Electricty Account	$ 633-03
18/8/2024	Origin Electricty Account $	$ 196-54
5/9/2024	Telstra Phone Account	$ 50-00
14/9/2024	M G Plumbing and gas Repairs Swimming Pool Toilet	$ 515-27
4/10/2024	Telstra Phone Account	$ 50-00
23/10/2024	Central Highlands Water Water used	$ 218-80
4/11/2024	Telstra Phone Account	$ 50-00
17/11/2024	Pyrenees Shre Council Rates waste levey	$ 1614-17
18/11/2024	Origin Electricty Account	$ 181-66
18/11/2024	Origin Eletcricty Account	$ 123-78
21/11/2024	Central Highlanes Water Water used	$ 218-80
4/12/2024	Telstra Phone Account	$ 50-00
5/1/2025	Telstra Phone Account	$ 50-00
9/1/2025	Central Highlands Water Water used	$ 703-61
4/2/20245	Telstra Phone Account	$ 50-00
11/2/2025	Origin Electricty used	$ 351-20
11/2/2025	Origin Electricty used	$ 1046-42
13/2/2025	Firewatch Wimmera Service fire equipment	$ 143-00
6/3/2025	Telstra Phone Account	$ 50-00
27/3/2025	Buyright Vacuum Cleaner	$ 249-00

3/4/2025	Telstra	Phone Account	$ 50-00
3/4/2025	Central Highlands Water	Water used	$ 579-85
13/4/2025	Landsborough Community News Paper	Advertising	$ 120-00
28/4/2025	Middys	Light Fittings	$ 28-89
6/5/2025	Telstra	Phone Account	$ 50-00
21/5/2025	Origin	Electricity	$ 432-47
21/5/2025	Origin	Electricity	$ 411-77
4/6/2025	Telstra	Phobe Account	$ 50-00
12/6/2025	Talbot Gas	Gas Bottle	$ 150-00
26/6/2025	M G Plumbing and Gas	Repairs leaking taps And Damaged Cisterns	$ 1716.37

TOTAL EXPENSES $10954-03

LANDSBOROUGH CARAVAN PARK & SWIMMING POOL
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE STATEMENT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2025

	$	$
INCOME		
Caravan Park & Cabin Fees	12,067.20	
Showers	49.00	
Washing Machine & Dryer	1,040.00	13,156.20
EXPENDITURE		
Cleaning	1,101.80	
Advertising	120.00	
Cleaning Supplies & Linen	281.40	
Electricity	3,376.69	
Gas	584.86	
Laundry	517.12	
Rates	1,614.17	
Water	1,864.38	
Fire Watch	404.80	
Repairs & Maintenance	2,810.53	
Telephone	600.00	13,275.75
NET DEFICIT		**-119.55**

	$
Opening Balance 30/6/2024	1,957.39
LESS Deficit	-119.55
Closing Balance 30/6/2025	1,837.84

	$
Bank Statement 30/6/2025	1,837.84
LESS UNPRESENTED CHEQUES	
	0.00
	1,837.84

Catalog

Hub Presidents Report 2025 1
Hub Committee AGM 2025 5

Community Hub Annual Report.

Introduction

First, I'd like to extend a warm welcome to the committee and guests and a special welcome representing the Pyrenees Council and our local councillor. Councillor Simon Toll, welcome Simon.

I have the pleasure of presenting the first annual report (2024/2025) on behalf of the Lexton Community Hub Committee. The first year has been a challenge and great achievement. The Hub Committee was formed to manage one of the Pyrenees Councils new major assets, despite the teething problems associated with a new building we have managed to provide the local community with a facility to be proud of. But after a short period of time the Hub Committee was presented with the challenge to provide a social facility with the unfortunate closure of the Lexton Pyrenees Hotel.

This was not what the small committee had signed up for but I'm proud to say the Hub Committee has worked tirelessly to ensure the local community still had a meeting place to gather at. The committee with the help and support of a few local people has transitioned the Hub into a facility for sporting, social and business gatherings.

The hub has enabled the increased participation of local sports, football, netball, cricket and golf. The hub has also hosted a range of events, meetings and social activities.

As Chairman of the Hub, I would like to sincerely thank the hard working and dedicated committee for the significant amount of time and effort they have devoted to making sure we delivered for the community. As I said, it was not exactly what we signed up for but have taken on the responsibility to provide the local community with a great meeting place facility.

I don't want to get involved with naming to many individuals, but I would like to single out Kerrie Lee for her tireless work in the kitchen providing meals and training a dedicated group of volunteers, thanks Kerrie.

1.Achievements.

-Purchase and installed furniture, fixtures and fittings. I think you would agree we have a hub that has excellent facilities. Special note of thanks to ex council employee Martin Walmsley who was of great assistance.

-Transition from just sporting clubs to a full on social and meeting facility.

-Communication facilitates via Telstra, Optus and NBM

-Introduction to RV (recreational vehicles) capability

2. Future Vision.

Additional multi purpose court.

Upgrades to Golf Course.

Hub Pub future direction

Storage Facility

Playground Upgrade

3. Conflict of interest.

Nil to report

4. Financial Reports.

FINANCIAL REPORTS:

INCOME (Financial Year):

Source	Amount ($)
a. Fees (Pub Hub and Community Facilities)	270,955
d. Grants received	5,142
h. GST / Tax refunds	0
Total Income	**276,097**

EXPENDITURE (Financial Year):

Expense	Amount ($)
i. Utilities	17,898
j. Administration expenses	305
k. Building maintenance	6,568
l. Alcohol and Food Purchases	181,234
m. Insurance costs	3,105
n. Salaries & wages	16,884
o. Banking costs	17
p. GST / Tax Payments	2,257
. Other (please specify: e.g., equipment, supplies)	42,502
Total Expenditure	**270,770**

SURPLUS / NON-SURPLUS:

Surplus: $5,327

This surplus will be reinvested into future improvement projects, including accessibility upgrades.

Lexton Community Hub Asset Committee

7pm, Tues 2/09/2025 – Lexton Community Hub

AGM

1. **Welcome and Acknowledgement of Country**
   We acknowledge the people past and present of the Wadawuurrung, Dja Dja Wurrung, Eastern Maar and Wotjobaluk tribes, whose land forms the Pyrenees Shire. We pay our respect to the customs, traditions and stewardship of the land by the elders of those tribes, on whose land we meet today.

2. **In Attemdance**
   Greg Fisher – Chairperson; Rob Hopcroft – Secretary, Fiona Fisher – Treasurer, Ash McErvale, Kylie Noonan, Paul Karslake, Bryce Karslake, Hugh Briody, Brad Sandlant, Ed Bradley, Johan Debast, Alex Briody and Cr Simon Tol.

3. **Apologies**
   Adrian Smith

4. **Declaration of Conflict of Interest**
   Nil

5. **Minutes of Previous Meeting**
   No minutes of the previous meeting reported as this being our AGM

6. **Presidents Report**
   Greg, as outgoing President, thanked everyone and read his prepared statement as was sent to everyone including the financial report.
   Financial report was moved by Hugh and seconded by Brad.
   Annual report was moved by Ed and seconded by Rob

7. **Treasurers Report**
   Fiona and Kylie to discuss with council on what the financial audit process is to entail.

8. Elections

President instructs that all elected positions be dissolved.

Cr Simon Tol takes the chairpersons role and invites nominations –

Hugh Briody nominated President

Brad Sandlant nominated Vice President

Ash McErvale nominated Secretary

Fiona Fisher re-nominated Treasurer

Paul Karslake re-nominated Risk management Officer

Hugh thanked Simon and took over the chair, thanked Greg for his role as president.

Hugh added some new roles –

Kylie Noonan as Assistant Treasurer

Johan Debast as Hub Pub subcommittee Manager

Sporting clubs to be contacted to identify who they want to represent them on the committee to ensure the Hub committee gets better feedback on the needs of each individual club and greater communication on major issues.

Once again Hugh thanked Greg on his efforts and achievements.

Thank you from your outgoing Secretary also.

Meeting finished – 7.45pm

Next meeting – TBA

Waubra Community Hub Committee

2025 AGM & 1st General Meeting Minutes

Meeting Details

Date:	Tuesday 26th August, 2025
Time:	6:15pm
Venue:	Waubra Community Hub
Chairperson:	D. Clark
Minute Taker:	L. Gallagher

1. Attendance

Members Present:	D. Clark, R.Martin, D.Woodhouse, P.Clark, J.Troy, T.Clark, S.Tol, S.Gallagher, L.Gallagher, M.Mason, B.Edmonston, K.Gallagher, K.Hinchliffe, M.Loader
Members Apologies:	J.Hall, A.Gallagher, K.Molloy, K.Tol
Guests/Observers:	J.Erdody – Pyrneees Shire Council

2. Conflicts of Interest

Nil

3. Confirmation of Previous Meeting Minutes

Minutes from the previous meetings held on Tuesday 3rd June & Tuesday 17th July, 2025 and circulated via email to members on 23rd July, 2025 were:

☐ Accepted as a true record

Moved: D. Clark Seconded: M.Mason & J.Troy Carried : Yes/No

☐ Amended as follows: _____

4. Chairperson's & Treasurer's Report

Chairperson's Report:	(D.Clark – Departing Acting Chairperson) New playground most exciting project currently underway Power upgrades have commenced on site Council funds confirmed and allocated for this financial year total = $30,000, have used some already New hot water system has been installed in kitchen Few extra events at facility past year, mainly still wakes
Treasurer's Report:	(K. Hinchliffe – Treasurer) Statement of receipts and expenditure breakdown made available to committee members Opening bank balance = $1,687.20 / Closing balance = $13,882.96 Better financial position than last year, noting however some overlap between financial years Catering and hire of facility main sources of income

5. Nominations & Appointment of Committee Members

2025/2026 nominated and elected members are as follows;

Office Bearers:

President – Jo Hall

Vice President – Shaun Gallagher

Secretary – Lucy Gallagher / Vice Secretary – Molly Mason

Treasurer – Karen Hinchliffe / Vice Treasurer – David Clark

Events Coordinator & Bookings Officer – Marie Loader / Assistant Events Coordinator & Bookings Officer – Brianna Edmonston

Community Working Groups Members:

Waubra Football/Netball Club – Tim Clark & David Clark

Waubra Bowls Club – Pat Clark

Cemetery Trust – Jimmy Troy

Waubra Primary School – Molly Mason & Brianna Edmonston

Waubra Preschool – Lucy Gallagher & Shaun Gallagher

Waubra CFA – Arvin Gallagher & Jo Hall

Waubra CWA – Kate Tol

Waubra Community Members – David Woodhouse, Karen Hinchliffe, Marie Loader, Karen Molloy &Rebekkah Martin

Mt Bolton Lions Club – Kerryn Gallagher

Acciona – TBA (Emailed Leigh Russell to confirm committee representative details)

6. Business Arising from Previous Minutes

Community landline phone at Hub – still connected and paying approx. $50 p/mth despite not being used. Need to confirm if this utility can be disconnected or needs to stay for safety reasons – currently no progress on this business, L.Gallagher as new secretary will address

Master plan general comments and key points emailed to council by D.Clark after previous meetings – circulated to members via email 23rd July, 2025. Master plan to be addressed in tonight's agenda again by council representative J.Erdody

7. Committee Working Groups Reports

Waubra Football/Netball Club (T.Clark)

- Final held at Waubra last Saturday 23rd August, record crowds, huge canteen turn over
- Next final on Sunday 31st August at Waubra (Waubra Juniors playing)
- Traffic management still a major safety issue; management plan to be sent to league again before Sunday highlighting car spaces available in grounds rather than out on service road or highway
- Drone footage of traffic on day TBA if possible from 11am Sunday 31st August to be shared with league, Vic Roads, Pyrenees Council for consideration

Bowling Club (P.Clark)

- 5 ½ weeks until start of season
- Currently finishing some updates to club rooms in preparation for season start

Waubra Preschool Kindergarten (L.Gallagher, S.Gallagher)

- Kinder requesting to use full storage shed for outdoor kids play area. Currently using one portion of said shed, other part used by football club to store lawn mower and equipment
- Other option discussed involved extending current verandah to provide more protection from weather - limitations to this idea include budget and also natural light restrictions
- T. Clark will measure and get quotes for new football club storage shed to allow kinder to use capacity of full shed
- Committee members (B.Edmonston, M.Mason, L.Gallagher) will look into grants and funding options for new storage shed once quote becomes available

Mt Bolton Lions Club (K.Gallagher)

- Lions continue to provide incredible ongoing community support
- Invaluable, proactive club members currently apart of the organization
- Recently purchased specialized walking frame for former local Waubra community member who is unwell

Cemetery Trust (J.Troy)

- New fence complete at front of cemetery
- Will post photos on social media when appropriate
-

8. Agenda Items

Item 1: *Playground Update (Playground PWG - B.Edmonston, M.Mason, L.Gallagher)*

Discussion:

- Next meeting with council project managers (A.Boyle & A.Smith) Wednesday 27th August, 2025
- Hoping to have design concept and budget finalized this week to start signing off on contractors and ordering equipment. Wait time for equipment estimated 8 weeks
- Still on track for project completion by end of year
- Need a landscape designer to draw nature play space to regulation as per council request for concept design finalization

Decision:

- Playground PWG to clarify dimension of nature play space with council project managers
- T.Clark will reach out to known contact about nature play design once area dimensions confirmed
- Playground PWG to have finalized playground concept design and budget available at next meeting

Action:

(☐ Pending / ☐ Completed)

Item 2: *Pyrenees Shire Masterplan (Pyrenees Council – J.Erdody)*

Discussion:

- Designer applying changes made at last week's committee meeting
- Masterplan will come back for endorsement at next council meeting
- Aiming for end of September for masterplan to be made available to the public for 28 days of community consultation and discussion, date TBA
- B.Lang at council still looking to liase with Bowls Club members regarding masterplan considerations

Decision:

- Date for community consultation TBA by council
- P. Clark to liase with B.Lang regarding Bowls Club and masterplan considerations
- Noted B.Lang has bowls contact details but no correspondence recently, need to confirm contact details correct council end

Action:

(☐ Pending / ☐ Completed)

Item 3: *Power Upgrades*

Discussion:

- Currently further works are on hold waiting for next stages and materials to become available
- Plan for a day in late September (date TBA by council) where power will be unavailable on site while PowerCore undertake their works
- Completion date of upgrade TBC by council
- Query raised whether there will be separate usage meter for Kinder and Hub
- T. Clark raised issue that bore, scoreboard, gate keepers' box, pump will not be connected as part of current scope of works and three phase power will be available to the Hub building however building currently not compatible with this and requires upgrade of sub boards and wiring. Query raised that no funding allowance made in current scope of works for this. Upgrade effectively appears useless until later date unless these works can be done to finalize the upgrade in entirety
- AusNet funding of $500,000 was given to be used between Waubra and Lexton. There were funds of $130,000 supposedly allocated to council offices at Lawrence St, Beaufort. No transmission lines near council offices so why have funds being absorbed there when upgrade not going to be complete to building/site

Decision:

- D.Clark will draft letter to council regarding power upgrade issues for further clarification and resolution, noting AusNet contract constraints (if any) of how funds were to be used/allocated and requesting unallocated community funds from AusNet be redistributed to Waubra to allow finalization of the electrical upgrades
- Council will provide 7 days' notice to Hub Committee regarding date of planned power outage once advised by PowerCore
- Kinder to be informed as priority of outage date (no Kinder Monday and Friday, there on site all other days of the week)

Action:

(☐ Pending / ☐ Completed)

Item 4: 2025/2026 Project Budget Submission

Discussion:

- $30,000 allocated to Waubra Hub from council to be spent on maintaining and upgrading facility and grounds ($3,000 already spent on crushed rock around site for season 2025 football/netball finals being currently hosted)
- Operating and capital budget drafted by D.Clark and hardcopy circulated to members at meeting
- Operating Income = $43,400 / Operating Expenditure = $38,700
- Draft project prioritized list as below;
    1. Highway Boundary Fence $4000
    2. Tennis/Bowls Retaining Wall $8000
    3. Insulated Vertical Internal Wall $800
    4. New split systems $6000
    5. Repair Timekeepers Box $12,000
    6. Replace lights to LED $3600
    7. Crossing for Playground $3000
    8. Oval/Reserve Seating $12,000 TOTAL = $49,400
- Other potential projects drafted totaled a further $108,800
- Discrepancy with grounds/oval maintenance budget immediately highlighted by T.Clark as being well under actual cost
- Current quote sourced by football club for $9,000 of oval center circle repairs needed as holding water and unsafe. Repair currently not listed in budget
- Community Asset Manual 2021 has responsibilities concerning costs outlined clearly but is currently not being upheld by council
- Beaufort (and ?Avoca) have their ovals maintained by council, why not Waubra?

Decision:

- Capital budget and project priority list requires further clarification and finalization before committee approval and formal submission to council
- New split systems (budget priority number 4) to be removed from priorities list until clarification of who's responsibility they are is determined as per Community Asset Manual framework
- Committee members seek clarification concerning center circle repairs to oval, as council contracted the redress of the oval at beginning of 2025 season and drainage job over old cricket pitch site potentially not done adequately at this time which is now causing the issues to be rectified
- Bowls Committee members to take closer look at Tennis/Bowls retaining wall and get formal quotes for required project works (P.Clark)
- Hub Committee President (J.Hall) to table a letter to council outlining constraints and issues with current Governance and Operations Manual and request timely feedback and suggested solutions to grievances and inadequacies with current structure of allocating, submitting and approving expenses
- Query need for a Hub committee member to be nominated as councils liaison contact - to be further discussed and determined at next meeting. Requested clarification from J.Erdody on best contact at council when it comes to issues as no direct point of contact evident

Action:

(☐ Pending / ☐ Completed)

9. New Business

Activities for remainder of 2025

- Community events calendar TBA (B.Edmonston)
- Facility hire fees to be revised (M.Loaderl, B.Edmonston)
- Social media platforms and online booking system options and costs to be investigated
- Hope to reengage more consistent community use of Hub facilities moving forward

10. Other Business

New email system TBA for better communication between committee members – L.Gallagher will setup

Aim to draft 12-month calendar of meetings to be held every 2 months – next meeting date decided at close of meeting, further dates TBA at next meeting – L.Gallagher, M.Mason & J.Hall will draft calendar

R.Martin seeking grant to upgrade and repair war memorial – update TBA at next meeting

Next Meeting

Date:	Tuesday 21st October, 2025
Time:	6:30pm
Venue:	Waubra Community Hub

Meeting Closed at: 8:23pm

Minutes Prepared By: L.Gallagher

Date: 26th August, 2025

Attachment One – 2025- 2026 Community Funding Program – Annual Grant and Sponsorship Category

Officer Evaluation Panel Recommendation Summary

Community Programs				
Applicant	**Project Name**	**Project Description / Officer Comment**	**Total Project Cost**	**Funding Recommended**
1. Advance Avoca	Avoca Street Christmas Decorations	• A project to revitalise the town's ageing Christmas decorations and build a holiday atmosphere. • Project aims to restore festive spirit, boost local pride, attract visitors and create a vibrant main street, and business district.	$2,500.00	$2,000.00
2. Avoca & District Seniors Citizens Club	Community Engagement and Recruitment Program	• Growth in membership and seniors programming have stalled. This project will rebuild community connections by hosting four inclusive 2026 social events for adults aged 50 and over. • The program supports healthy ageing, addresses growth in loneliness, and encourages older adults to stay active and involved in community life.	$2,000.00	$2,000.00
3. Avoca Friends of the Pool	Let's Swim 2025 (Season Pass Subsidy)	• The 'Lets Swim' project provides free season passes to local families, boosting attendance, and promoting water safety by removing cost as a barrier to families. • The program builds on an initiative in 2024/25 that funded free season pool passes. • Project not recommended - While this project demonstrates strong benefit, it is not recommended for funding in this round due to the high level of demand, noting Program Guidelines, prioritise projects not previously funded through the Program.	$9,443.00	$0.00
4. Beaufort CWA	100 hours of celebrating 100 years of CWA in Beaufort	• CWA will mark its 100th year with "100 hours for 100 years," featuring workshops, crafts, a cookbook, community events, a commemorative tree, banners, and a video celebrating local women's contributions. • The program promotes social connection, strengthens community pride, and honours local history and volunteerism.	$13,160.00	$2,000.00

5. Beaufort Golf/Bowls Club	Female Golf Participation Program	• The Program aims to boosts female golf involvement through clinics, social events, mentorship, and subsidies. • The project reduces barriers, promoting inclusivity and health, and advancing gender equity in sport.	$3,000.00	$2,000.00
6. The Weight of Men Project (Auspice - Business for Beaufort)	The Weight of Men Project	• The project captures Beaufort men's untold stories through a book of portraits and storytelling and other local promotions/events. • It preserves history, fostering pride, strengthening connections, and creating an inclusive legacy for future generations.	$10,313.00	$2,000.00
7. Pyrenees Beaufort Food pantry	Healthy Eating - 2025/26 Holiday season	• During the holidays, rising costs and limited supplies reduce access to healthy food for vulnerable clients, making it harder to provide suitable fresh and healthy foods. • This project provides essential support to individuals and families facing food insecurity alleviating financial stress.	$2,000.00	$1,800.00
8. Pyrenees Community House	Chat and Chew Program	• The Chat and Chew Community Lunch is becoming a valued event for many residents, offering social connection, support for vulnerable community members. • Funding will support food supplies for attendees and playgroups, boosting participation and providing vital social and nutritional support.	$5,000.00	$1,000.00

Minor Capital Works or Equipment Grants				
Applicant	**Project Name**	**Project Description / Officer Comment**	**Total Project Cost**	**Funding Recommended**
9. Amphitheatre Mechanics Institute Committee	Hall Functionality Upgrade	• Ageing volunteers struggle with setting up and moving current heavy not fit for purpose tables at the hall. • The purchase of new lightweight tables and adjustable chairs will improve safety, accessibility for those with mobility issues, and comfort.	$6,000.00	$3,000.00
10. Avoca Community Arts & Gardens	Avoca Silo Art - Signage	• The project involves updating an existing branding/signage unit onsite, to enhance place-making and identity of the site and other local art and heritage assets in the precinct. • Recommend not to fund – While this project demonstrates clear community benefit, it is not recommended in this round due to the high level of demand; and the Program prioritises applicants not previously supported - this applicant recommended for funding at Event Grant - Reference #35).	$1,250.00	$0.00
11. Beaufort Agricultural Society	Mini golf course Trailer	• Purchase of a purpose-built trailer is needed to safely transport and store the community's portable 9-hole mini golf course, ensuring easier setup, durability, and wider community use at events and programs.	$1,930.00	$1,286.00
12. Beaufort and District Historical Society	Society Internet Terminal	• The Society preserves local history and assists public research. A new computer will improve access, preservation, and online availability of historical records.	$1,199.00	$1,199.00
13. Beaufort Blue Light Motorcycle Club	Safety & Risk Improvement Project	• A rider, volunteer and emergency management project on the track, with new communication equipment to enhance safety at events. • Improving emergency response and ensuring safer coordination during events is critical in a high-risk sport like motocross.	$1,297.00	$1,297.00
14. Beaufort Community Bank Complex	Beaufort Community Bank	• The installation of energy-efficient hand dryers to replace paper towels in the bathrooms.	$3,205.00	$2,137.00

	Complex Hand Dryers	• Project aims to reduce waste and costs, improving hygiene, and supporting the community's environmental commitment.		
15. Beaufort Croquet Club Inc.	Asset Protection Fence	• The project will remove a current trip hazard with a protection fence, preventing ball damage to pavilion windows, improving safety, accessibility, and enjoyment with a durable solution.	$4,500.00	$4,420.00
16. Beaufort Progress Association	Servo@23 upgrade	• Repainting the former petrol station, to enhance the building's colours to reflect a Vegemite-inspired appearance to support its tourism appeal and visitor attraction. • Recommend not to fund – While the project has merit, it is not recommended for funding in this round due to the high level of demand and program oversubscription. In line with assessment priorities, projects involving community-owned assets were given higher consideration.	$5,460.00	$0.00
17. Beaufort RSL	RSL BBQ Enclosure	• Upgrade the outdoor BBQ area with a new unit, covered veranda, gas connection, extraction fan, and safety features, enhancing facilities for community use and events.	$13,999.00	$7,000.00
18. Carranballac Cricket Club	Carranballac Playground upgrade	• The Reserve's playground is unsafe and deteriorating. • Urgent repairs, soft fall replenishment, and treated pine borders will restore safety and usability for the district's only play area.	$6,800.00	$5,000.00
19. Cyril Callister Foundation	Summer 2026 museum expansion program	• The museum seeks to expand its food offerings with a freezer for Vegemite ice cream and add two security cameras to enhance visitor experience and protect collections. • Recommend not to fund – While the project has merit, it is not recommended this round due to high demand. As addressed in Program Guidelines, priority is recommended to projects promoting inclusion, active participation, and environmental sustainability.	$707.00	$0.00
20. Lake Goldsmith Steam Preservation Association	Goods Shed activation (hard stand project)	• Upgrade of the goods shed driveway and hard stand to improve safety, appearance, and access. • The group plan to leverage off these renewed works to attract events (i.e. show and shine events), that will boost attendance to the museum and strengthen volunteer and community engagement.	$4,823.60	$3,823.60

21. Landsborough Public Hall	Community Engagement Program	• The purchase of reconditioned espresso machine for the Resource Centre to support and continue the popular weekly community coffee gatherings. • The project has need to continue and grow social connections in the town, following the cessation of the café / larder in 2024 .	$1,362.39	$1,362.39
22. Lexton Football Netball Club	Netball court light pole replacement and relocation	• A deteriorating netball court security lighting pole will be replaced and relocated behind the viewing area to meet netball court run off distance standards • The project will address club / league concerns, to improve safety.	$11,623.00	$7,000.00
23. Lexton Public Hall	Lexton Public Hall Blind Replacement	• The hall's blinds, date back to 1975, and are brittle and outdated. • This project will replace 17 blinds, to improve safety, comfort, blackout capability, and natural lighting.	$4,132.70	$3,000.00
24. Lexton Rural Fire Brigade	Forcible Entry equipment	• The brigade is enhancing Tanker 1 with extra equipment (Halligan bar, grinder, and impact driver) to improve early response to accidents and bushfires. • The panel acknowledged brigades face funding challenges and limited government support for equipment, but noted council funding may set a precedent, increasing future requests from other brigades.	$1,436.00	$1,436.00
25. Moonambel Cemetery Trust	Front fence upgrade	• To replace approximately 100 metres of fencing to improve the appearance of the cemetery. • The project seeks to preserve, protect, and celebrate heritage assets, including local storytelling, particularly given the site's rich history.	$23,217.00	$7,000.00
26. Pyrenees Community House	Market Equipment Storage	• Shelving and storage tubs for Beaufort Community Market equipment, at the Vegemite Museum, improving safety, organisation, and equipment longevity • Recommend not to fund – While the project demonstrates need, it is not recommended due to high demand, and Program Conditions prioritising applicants not previously supported (this applicant recommended for funding at Program Grant, Reference #8).	$600.00	$0.00

27. Pyrenees Pétanque Club	Marquees for Shade and Weather Protection	• Portable shade structures at the Pétanque Club will provide sun and weather protection, boost participation and supporting health and safety for players and volunteers.	$2,225.00	$2,000.00
28. Raglan Hall & Recreation Reserve Committee	Amenities Upgrade	• The project will replace outdated shower units and a urinal cistern with modern, water-saving fixtures, improving reliability, efficiency, and usability for patrons.	$4,221.80	$4,221.80
29. Snake Valley and District Historical Society	Branding Sign Renewal	• Refurbish the currently dated branding / entry sign to improve visibility, accuracy, and professionalism, guiding visitors and reflecting community pride in local heritage.	$330.00	$330.00
30. Waterloo Community Group	Storage Shed	• Seeking support for a 3x3m metal shed beside the Fire Shed to securely store equipment, supporting ongoing community events and gatherings.	$1,200.00	$1,200.00
31. Waubra Bowls Club	Waubra Bowling Club - social room improvement	• The club seeks new chairs for redeveloped rooms to replace uncomfortable, unsafe seating, improving comfort, safety, and participation.	$2,000.00	$2,000.00
32. Waubra Community Hub	Smarter Blinds for a Greener Hub	• The Hub lacks internal blinds, causing temperature extremes, glare, and privacy issues. • Installing blinds will improve climate control, lower energy costs, enhance comfort and privacy, and create a more functional, professional, and inclusive space for community use.	$6,238.00	$6,238.00
33. Waubra Community Hub	Welcome to the Hub of Waubra	• Installing entry signage will improve visibility and access to the Reserve and the Waubra Community Hub, increasing awareness among locals and visitors. • Recommend not to fund – While the project demonstrates need, it is not recommended due to high demand and Program Conditions prioritising applicants not previously supported (this applicant recommended for funding at Equipment Grant, Reference #32).	$1,980.00	$0.00
34. Waubra Community Hub	Cooler Summers, Warmer Winters	• The Hub's non-operational split system units need full replacement. Replacing the Hub's split systems is essential to restore reliable heating and cooling, ensuring year-round comfort.	$18,085.00	$0.00

		• Project withdrawn by Officers – Independent assessment confirmed these assets have reached 'end-of-life', and Council's Asset Replacement Budget will fund the replacement outside the Grant Program.		

Tourism Event Sponsorship				
Applicant	**Project Name**	**Project Description / Officer Comment**	**Total Project Cost**	**Funding Recommended**
35. Avoca Community Arts & Gardens	Avoca Art Show (2026, 2027, 2028)	• An annual art exhibition showcasing local and regional talent, supporting artists at all stages through curated and open entries, prizes, and cultural exchange that enriches the community and strengthens regional arts. • Project is further supported by Council resolution to provide annual contribution of $750 to an acquisitive prize.	$12,950.00	$1,000.00 (2026) $1,000.00 (2027) $1,000.00 (2028) + Hall hire fee waiver
36. Avoca Riverside Market	Avoca Riverside Market (2026, 2027, 2028)	• This project aims to strengthen community connections through a local event showcasing organisations, while also attracting external visitors to the area to explore attractions and support local businesses.	$19,700.00	$4,000.00 (2025) $4,000.00 (2026) $4,000.00 (2027)

Community Event Support				
Applicant	**Project Name**	**Project Description / Officer Comment**	**Total Project Cost**	**Funding Recommended**
37. Advance Avoca	Avoca Christmas Street Party	• A free, inclusive community event aimed at reducing isolation and promoting well-being. • Held alongside the Twilight Market, it fosters connection through entertainment and family-friendly activities. The event strengthens community bonds, and to create shared experiences that extend beyond the holiday season.	$3,250.00	$2,000.00
38. Beaufort Walkfest	Beaufort Walkfest	• Beaufort Walkfest encourage people to get outdoors, socialize, and enjoy nature and local attractions. • Funding will specifically engage more children, young people, and participants with mobility challenges (in the Wheelie Walk), fostering inclusion and connection.	$4,200.00	$500
39. Business for Beaufort	Beaufort Twilight Night - Lighting Project	• As a popular annual event attracting locals and visitors, it features festive decorations and lighting. • Funding will replace aging Rotunda lights and add more walkway lighting, enhancing safety and appeal to create a brighter, more inviting community space.	$2,064.00	$2,000.00
40. Pace the Pyrenees (L & A Martin Family Trust)	Pace the Pyrenees	• This new running event promotes community fitness with courses ranging from 2km kids' laps to 50km Trawalla Trails races. • It is proposed to occur in June in a lower visitor season, which will support the local visitor economy during winter. • It welcomes all abilities and boosts local tourism by attracting participants from Melbourne and interstate, benefiting local businesses through increased visitation.	$17,000.00	$4,000.00

VICTORIA State Government | Government Services

Ministerial Guidelines for Councils relating to payment of Rates and Charges

November 2025 – DRAFT

OFFICIAL

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9.3 Section 181: Council may sell land to recover unpaid rates or charges

10. Transparency and Disclosure

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1. Introduction

Every year, Councils collect rates and charges from ratepayers in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1989* (the LG Act 1989). Rates are an important source of revenue for Councils that contribute significantly to delivering local community infrastructure and services.

Timely payment of rates and charges allow Councils to be more financially sustainable and provide continuity for Councils to effectively plan for the delivery of services throughout the year.

Most ratepayers across the State pay their rates and charges in a timely manner. However, ratepayers may need assistance to manage the payment of rates and charges. This could be due to prolonged hardship or unforeseen circumstances including but not limited to, loss of employment, illness, and change of family circumstances. Most Councils have policies in place around debt management and collection.

Ratepayers experiencing hardship and financial hardship should be treated fairly, compassionately and proportionately.[1]

1.1 Objectives of guidelines

These Guidelines provide direction to Councils to review and update (as necessary) their existing hardship and debt management policies in relation to the payment of rates and charges.

The objectives of these Guidelines are to:

- encourage a more consistent approach across local government policies relating to debt management for the payment of rates and charges;
- provide guidance and support to Councils and ratepayers in relation to hardship and financial hardship; and
- empower Councils to recover debt from unpaid rates and charges in a fair and equitable way, consistent with Victorian Government, community and stakeholder expectations.

The Guidelines contain matters that must be considered in a Council's policy formation, whilst not being prescriptive about models for implementing council policies.

By proactively working with ratepayers who may be in hardship or financial hardship, Councils may ultimately minimise additional organisational costs, in addition to costs to ratepayers, associated with debt management. This may enable Councils to continue to be financially sustainable.

[1] 1 Second Reading Speech for the *Local Government Legislation Amendment (Rating and Other Matters) Bill 2022*, Legislative Assembly, 8 June 2022.

1.2 Legal Framework

The Minister for Local Government has issued these Guidelines under section 181AA of the LG Act 1989. Councils are required to comply with these Guidelines under section 181AA(3).

Where the Minister has been advised by particular bodies and is satisfied that a Council's governance processes and policies require improvement, the Minister may direct a Council to amend or replace its governance processes and policies.[2]

Subject to the requirements of the LG Act 1989 and the *Local Government Act 2020*, Councils must develop policies, practices and processes associated with the payment of rates and charges in accordance with these Guidelines[3].

Councils should attempt to recover rates and charges from ratepayers in an effective and fair way, prior to undertaking any debt collection action, which can be costly to the Council and ratepayer.

1.3 Scope of guidelines

Under section 181AA(1), the Minister may issue guidelines in relation to:

(a) the meaning of hardship for the purposes of section 170 (*deferred payment*); and

(b) the meaning of financial hardship for the purposes of sections 171 (*waiver*), 171A (*waiver by application*) and 172A (*maximum rate of interest*); and

(c) the content of hardship policies and financial hardship policies; and

(d) the circumstances in which a Council may apply the hardship policies and financial hardship policies; and

(e) the process for applying for a payment plan; and

(f) the waiver of interest on unpaid rates or charges under sections 171, 171A and 172 (*interest on unpaid rates*); and

(g) any other matters covered by sections 170, 171, 171A, 171B (*payment plans*), 172, 180 (recovery of *unpaid rates or charges*) and 181 (*Council may sell land*).

Consistent with section 181AA of the LG Act 1989, these Guidelines outline the meaning of hardship and financial hardship, together with the circumstances, processes and relevant considerations Councils must take into account when developing their policies for ratepayers experiencing hardship or financial hardship.

[2] Section 175, *Local Government Act 2020*.

[3] Section 181AA(3), LG Act 1989.

Many Councils already have multiple payment options and processes in place for payment of rates and charges. As every local community has different needs and requirements, Councils **may implement flexible payment options and processes which align with their local community needs and within Council capability and resources**.

These Guidelines support Councils to proactively work with ratepayers, to explore the arrangement most suitable in a person's situation. This approach is consistent with the Second Reading Speech for the amendments inserting section 181AA into the LG Act 1989. The Second Reading Speech states that:

> *The Ministerial Guidelines will require councils to proactively work with ratepayers experiencing financial hardship to explore different arrangements and solutions, and more punitive actions such as legal actions and the application of penalty interest will be only available when ratepayers refuse to engage and all other approaches are exhausted…*[4]

It is intended that these Guidelines will discourage Councils from charging interest for those who are under hardship arrangements. These Guidelines reflect that legal action and the application of penalty interest should only be pursued when ratepayers do not engage, and all other approaches are exhausted.

These Guidelines commence on publication and Councils are required to update their policies for ratepayers experiencing hardship or financial hardship within a reasonable timeframe.

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[4] Second Reading Speech for the *Local Government Legislation Amendment (Rating and Other Matters) Bill 2022*, Legislative Assembly, 8 June 2022.

2. Mandatory Principles

Councils must review their policies for ratepayers experiencing hardship or financial hardship. In doing so, Councils must reflect the following principles within their own hardship and debt management policies and procedures.

Flexible, place-based approach: Councils must have modern and flexible payment options and methods for payment of rates and charges that align with local community expectations, needs and hardship circumstances.

Clear and accessible communication: Councils must provide easy to understand and multiple methods of communication about payment of rates and charges that align with local community expectations, needs and hardship circumstances.

Fair, equitable, and compassionate treatment: Councils must treat all ratepayers equitably, compassionately and proportionately in relation to payment of rates and charges, including any applications relating to hardship or financial hardship.

Protect privacy and confidentiality: Councils must treat all information provided by applicants in accordance with relevant privacy legislation.

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3. Principles Councils are strongly encouraged to consider

Councils are strongly encouraged to reflect the following principles within their own hardship and debt management policies and procedures.

Reduce costs associated with debt collection: Councils should consider options for proactive management of payment of rates and charges that can minimise costs to Council and ratepayers in relation to debt management.

Continuous improvement: Councils should consider measuring the impact of debt management and hardship policies and should commit to regular review and improvement of policies to continually adapt and align to community needs and expectation.

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4. Proactive management for the payment of rates and charges

4.1 Current rates and charges notices

Section 158(4) of the LG Act 1989, requires that a notice:

(a) contain the prescribed information; and

(b) state—

(i) in the case of general rates, municipal charges, service rates and service charges, the dates when the instalments of the rates or charges are due, and, if those rates and charges may be paid in a lump sum, the date when that lump sum is due; or

(ii) in any other case, when the rates or charges are due; and

(c) specify any other options for payment determined by the Council; and

(d) be issued at least 14 days before the date on which the first payment of the rates or charges is due.

In addition, regulation 10 of the *Local Government (General) Regulations 2015* prescribes a range of technical and financial information that must be included on a rates and charges notice, which may be summarised as:

- the name and address of the person who is liable to pay, but if that person is not the oner of the land, the name of the owner
- a description of the land in respect of which the rate or charge is levied
- the amount for which the person is liable:
  - If the rate is based on the value of the land— the system of valuation the Council used, the value of the land and the current level of value date
  - if the rate is raised by the application of a differential rate— the type or class of the person's land, and where information in relation to the differential rate is available, and various details about the class and type of land in the municipal district.
- the method of calculating the rate or charge
- the penalties for failing to pay
- the manner in which the rate or charge may be paid
- a statement that the person may apply to the Council for a payment plan
- the manner, in order of priority, in which the Council intends to allocate money received
- the rights of the person to apply for a review in relation to a differential rating, or a rate or charge, or a special rate or charge.
- the rights of a person to object in relation to a valuation under the *Valuation of Land Act 1960*

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- a statement regarding whether Council has made a rate cap application, the outcome of the application and the impact on a person's property.

Some ratepayers struggle to understand the complex and detailed information required on rates notices. In addition to providing this information, Councils are encouraged to use easy to understand language and accessible communication methods.

Councils are encouraged to include additional information on:

- flexible payment options
- any concessions that are available
- where to go for further information (including Council's hardship policy); and
- how to contact Council by phone, email or in person.

Councils are also encouraged to consider the demographic and socioeconomic environment of their communities and whether additional aids to assist with understanding notices are required, including translation services and, alternative formatting of notices.

4.2 Flexible payment options

Consistent with the LG Act 1989, Councils determine the schedule of payment for rates and charges in 4 instalments. Some Councils provide the option to pay in a lump sum.

Use of technology has created an environment where ratepayers expect modern and flexible payment options for all types of payments and charges.

Many Councils already offer multiple ways to pay rates and notices and are encouraged to continually review and revise payment methods that keep up with advances in technology.

Flexible ways to pay include, but are not limited to:

- in person at Council offices (cheques, money orders, EFTPOS, credit/debit cards and cash),
- direct debit for periodic payments/bill smoothing (on instalment due dates, monthly or fortnightly)
- Centrepay
- BPAY
- Australia Post (over the counter, over the phone by credit card and on the internet)
- by mail (cheques and money orders only).

4.3 Current discounts and subsidies

In the development of hardship and financial hardship policies, as well as debt management policies, Councils should consider current discounts and subsidies applied to rates and charges notices. Often, those receiving a subsidy or discount may be more vulnerable to hardship and financial hardship. A ratepayer receiving a discount or concession should remain eligible to access Council's hardship or financial hardship policies.

Pensioner and Veteran Affairs

Holders of an eligible Centrelink or Veteran Affairs Pension Concession Card (PCC) or a Veteran Affairs Gold card which stipulates 'TPI' or 'War Widow' may claim a rebate on their sole or principal place of residence.

Following an initial application for a PCC, ongoing eligibility is maintained, unless rejected by Centrelink or the Department of Veteran Affairs during the annual verification procedure. After being granted a PCC, pensioners can then apply for the rebate at any time throughout the rating year.

Retrospective claims up to a maximum of one previous financial year can be approved by Council on verification of eligibility criteria.

Incentives for prompt payment

Under section 168 of the LG Act 1989, the Council may declare that incentives are to be given by it for the payment of those rates and charges before the due date and must include in the declaration details of the circumstances in which an incentive will be given. This information must be included on the rates and charges notice.

4.4 Measuring Council performance

Performance reporting is a key program promoting Council transparency, accountability and performance.

The Local Government Performance Reporting Framework is a mandatory system of performance reporting for all Victorian Councils. It ensures that Councils are measuring and reporting on their performance in a consistent way to promote transparency and accountability in the local government sector.

The framework is made up of 59 measures from a range of service areas, including roads, planning, animal management and waste. It is complemented by a Governance and Management checklist of 27 items, which shows the policies, plans and procedures in place at each Council. Together, they build a comprehensive picture of Council performance.

You can find these reports on the local government (www.localgovernment.vic.gov.au) or Know Your Council websites (www.vic.gov.au/know-your-Council).

Currently the State Government does not mandate reporting in relation to outstanding rates and charges. However, Councils are encouraged to record and report this information to demonstrate transparency and improvement.

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5. Hardship and financial hardship in the Local Government Act 1989

Hardship and financial hardship are identified as 2 separate terms under the LG Act 1989 (section 170 and sections 171 to 171A respectively). The Guidelines explain these terms and how Councils can apply deferrals, payment plans and waivers to rates and charges when hardship or financial hardship is experienced by a ratepayer.

While situations of hardship may cause financial hardship, the 2 situations are not always present together. Under the legislation, a ratepayer does not need to demonstrate financial hardship to be applicable for support when applying for deferral of rates and charges, or when applying for a payment plan. Rather, the ratepayer must show that payment would cause hardship to them in their circumstances, at the time the rates and charges are payable.

By contrast, when applying for waiver of rates and charges, the ratepayer will need to demonstrate that payment would likely result in financial hardship.

Determination of whether a ratepayer is in 'hardship' or 'financial hardship', will always be dependent on an individual's circumstances.

A non-exhaustive definition:

Hardship (including financial hardship) can arise from a variety of causes which may include but are not limited to:

- employment difficulties, loss of employment or unemployment of the ratepayer or family member
- reduced, insufficient or lack of income
- medical issues, injury, illness or mental illness of the ratepayer or family member
- alcohol, drug or substance use
- death of a family member or loved one
- family circumstances
- family violence or economic abuse
- elder abuse
- gambling
- scams or fraud
- incarceration
- natural disaster
- barriers to accessing essential services including event-based circumstances and systemic and market-based factors, which result in economic and/or social exclusion or harm.

5.1 The concept of hardship in the Local Government Act 1989

When is hardship applicable?

The concept of 'hardship' is referenced in section 170 of the LG Act 1989. Hardship will depend on a person's particular circumstances. Hardship may include financial

or economic hardship but also includes a diverse range of other personal circumstances and events which may be detrimental to a person's quality of life.

What does section 170 require?

Section 170 of the LG Act 1989 empowers a Council to defer, either in full or in part, any rate or charge which is payable, for a specific period and subject to any conditions determined by the Council, if an application by a ratepayer shows that payment would cause hardship to the person.

Deferrals under section 170

Rates and charges can be deferred in full or in part by the Council.

A deferral will enable payment to be made at a future agreed date, giving the ratepayer a grace period where no payments are made. A deferral in this way can assist a rate payer in a wide range of circumstances where hardship may be immediate, unexpected, and/or shorter-term in nature and will ease an immediate obligation or financial pressure.

Charging interest on deferrals

Section 170 makes clear that a deferral can include particular conditions determined by the Council.[5] When a Council approves an application for deferred payment, it must not charge interest on the unpaid rate or charge. A ratepayer approved for a deferred payment is no longer liable for payment[6] and therefore cannot be charged interest[7] until the ratepayer is sent a notice by Council making them liable and requiring payment.[8]

At the time of sending a notice, the Council may elect to calculate any interest on the deferred payment in accordance with the conditions of the deferment, however Councils are discouraged from applying interest in circumstances of hardship or financial hardship.

Deferrals with a payment plan under section 170

Councils may also elect to apply deferred payments under the condition that a payment plan is subsequently put in place.

Where a Council chooses to apply a payment plan following a deferral of payment interest must not be charged on any amount of the unpaid rates and charges. This is because the due date for payment had been deferred and there is no 'late payment' as such.

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[5] Section 170(1), LG Act1989.

[6] Section 170(2), LG Act 1989.

[7] Otherwise required to be paid under section 172(1)(a), LG Act 1989.

[8] Section 170(3)(b), LG Act 1989.

5.2 The concept of financial hardship in the Local Government Act 1989

When is financial hardship applicable?

The concept of 'financial hardship' is referenced in sections 171 and 171A of the LG Act 1989, which allow a Council to waive the whole or part of a payment of any rate, charge or interest, where it considers that the person is suffering financial hardship, or payment would cause financial hardship to the person.

As with hardship, financial hardship can arise from a variety of causes, which may include:

- employment difficulties, loss of employment or unemployment of the ratepayer or family member
- reduced, insufficient or lack of income
- medical issues, injury, illness or mental illness of the ratepayer or family member
- alcohol, drug or substance use
- death of a family member or loved one
- family circumstances
- family violence or economic abuse
- elder abuse
- gambling
- scams or fraud
- incarceration
- natural disaster
- barriers to accessing essential services including event-based circumstances and systemic and market-based factors, which result in economic and/or social exclusion or harm.

For the purposes of sections 171 and 171A of the LG Act 1989, if a ratepayer is experiencing any of the circumstances above and the payment of rates and charges means that they would not be able to afford the necessities of life for themselves or their dependants, they will be in financial hardship.

Examples of necessities of life may include (but are not limited to):

- essential medical treatments or supplies
- essential utility services (including water, energy, internet)
- access to basic living needs, including:
    - food
    - accommodation
    - clothing
    - childcare and education
    - transport
    - insurance.

Councils are encouraged to consider innovative approaches to supporting ratepayers in financial hardship. *What does section 171 require?*

Section 171 provides that a Council may waive the whole or part of any rates, charges or interest to:

- an eligible recipient within the meaning of the *State Concessions Act 2004*; or
- any other class of persons determined by the Council for the purpose of waiving rates or charges on the grounds of financial hardship.

What does section 171A require?

Section 171A provides that when a ratepayer applies for a waiver of unpaid rates and charges due to financial hardship.[9]

The Council may grant a waiver application if the Council is satisfied that ratepayer is suffering, or will suffer, financial hardship if that person paid the full amount of the rate or charge for which they are liable.

Where a Council requires an applicant to provide (or verify) further details as a part of their waiver application,[10] the Council must clearly state:

- what further particulars are required; and
- how an applicant can verify these particulars.

Many Councils currently waive interest where a ratepayer is in hardship or financial hardship. Other Councils have reported waiver policies based on a capped amount or up to 50% of rates. Councils should consider a range of options in line with community needs.

For more information on assessing hardship or financial hardship applications, see section 7.

Charging interest on waivers

A ratepayer approved for a waiver is no longer liable for payment and therefore cannot be charged interest.[11]

Penalties for false or misleading information

Rates are an important part of Council revenue to fund vital local services and facilities. By granting a waiver on the grounds of financial hardship, ratepayers will no longer be legally liable for the full payment, or the amount agreed to by the Council. To ensure appropriate safeguards are in place, section 171A provides penalties for providing false and misleading information and failure to provide notice of any change in circumstances.[12]

[9] Section 171A, LG Act 1989.

[10] Section 171A(2), LG Act 1989.

[11] Otherwise required to be paid under section 172(1)(a), LG Act 1989.

[12] Sections 171(6) & 171A(4), LG Act 1989.

6. Applying for a payment plan in section 171B of the LG Act 1989

Section 171B of the LG Act 1989 allows payment plans to be made in relation to unpaid rates and charges. This applies to rates and charges:

- that are being paid in instalments
- for which payment was deferred under section 170
- that were waived in part under sections 171 or 171A

Payment plans should be available for any ratepayer regardless of whether they are experiencing hardship or financial hardship. Councils should provide easy and efficient processes for payment plans as ratepayers expect Councils to provide flexible options that consider different needs and circumstances.

Early engagement with ratepayers by enabling payment plans will support continuity of contact with that ratepayer over the longer term.

6.1 Application forms

An application form for a payment plan must be available on a Council's website, as well as a physical copy at customer service points, and provide details of how a customer can contact the Council. The application form should clearly state (but is not limited to):

- what a ratepayer may be required to submit (including information or particulars)
- that Council may request further information or particulars if relevant
- in what timeframe the Council will notify if an application has been accepted or rejected

Where ratepayers who have previously applied for deferral of payment or partial waiver, the ratepayer's previous information may be used to support a payment plan application, to streamline the application process. The ratepayer in this instance may only be required to provide information in relation to any change in their circumstances, if relevant.

Councils should also offer the ability for ratepayers to apply for a payment plan verbally instead of by a written application. Information requested in a verbal application should be identical to what is requested in a written application, as only information relevant to consideration of an application should be collected by a Council.

6.2 Approval process for payment plans

When approving a payment plan, a Council must determine:

- the duration of the payment plan
- the amount of each payment plan instalment
- any other terms

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When a payment plan is being arranged, the Council should work with the applicant to ensure the plan is realistic in terms of the applicant's capacity to pay. Consistent with financial hardship policies in other sectors, many Councils approve payment plans for nominal amounts as an early, compassionate response which prevents costly escalation later.

Councils may also consider incentives and options including forgiveness of debt where a ratepayer has entered into a payment plan and has met all obligations for a certain period, for example, 12 months or more.

In most cases, payment plans for ratepayers should be approved however, in the rare instance where a ratepayer has failed to pay multiple debts or has previously not been able to comply with a payment plan, Council may reject an application. Councils should clearly communicate the reasons for the decision and how to access the Council's internal review process or other dispute resolution services.

6.3 Reminder notices and payment schedules

Without limiting section 171B of the LG Act 1989, a payment plan must clearly state the schedule of payments, including amount and length of time. Council should also clearly communicate the process for which a payment plan will be cancelled, and how a ratepayer will be informed of the cancellation.

A payment plan may be cancelled if:

- the ratepayer fails to comply with their plan and reasonable attempts to contact the ratepayer have failed
- the ratepayer no longer owns the land.

If the ratepayer fails to comply with their payment plan, or does not contact Council about failure to pay, Council should send a reminder notice to make payment or contact the Council to discuss alternative arrangements.

Council should provide a timeframe for the ratepayer to respond and inform the ratepayer that their payment plan may be cancelled if they do not respond. If Council determines that the payment plan is cancelled, a cancellation notice should be sent to the ratepayer formally notifying them in writing that the payment plan has been cancelled and the debt will be subject to Council's regular debt recovery process.

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7. Assessing applications of hardship or financial hardship

7.1 How applications should be assessed

Information on how Councils assess hardship applications, how decisions are made, how to contact Council, and resources, such as hardship factsheets and application forms, should be easily accessible on the Council website and in person to allow ratepayers to apply.

Applications should be able to be submitted online, over the phone, or in person, by the ratepayer or by another person on their behalf.

Each application should be assessed on a case-by-case basis, and/or on the information provided by the ratepayer.

Factors to be considered may include, but are not limited to, whether the ratepayer:

- has provided appropriate evidence including but not limited to:
    - circumstances of hardship (whether short term or prolonged) from the list provided in the introduction of this section, and
    - an indication that paying rates and charges means that they would be unable to afford necessities of life for themselves and/or dependants
- receives Centrelink or other benefits
- is on a low or fixed income such as pension or superannuation payment
- has been referred by an accredited financial counsellor, welfare agency or legal assistance service, or
- has a payment history that indicates they have difficulty in meeting payments in the past.

Councils should only request and collect information directly relevant and necessary in order to make a decision on financial hardship. All information should be collected and held in line with privacy legislation and Council's privacy policies.

Examples of what may be considered relevant includes (but is not limited to) the below:

- **Government agency documentation:** Centrelink, ATO, NDIA, Victoria Police, Victorian Courts
- **Certified documentation:** medical certificates, referral from financial counsellors, legal documentation, statutory declarations
- **Personal information:** payslips, evidence of job loss or reduced hours, unpaid bills or repayment notices, bank statements (only where necessary, not mandatory).

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7.2 Engaging a third party to assist in assessing hardship and financial hardship

Applicant ratepayers may benefit from a referral by a Council to a financial counsellor, or a community lawyer, a government-funded assistance program or specialist family violence support service. Councils should provide details to applicants that request these services.

Financial counsellors can offer a range of support, depending on someone's eligibility for the service. Ratepayers may be eligible for in-depth financial counselling if they:

- are on a Centrelink benefit
- have no income
- are vulnerable due to personal circumstances
- are exposed to family violence.

If a ratepayer is in financial difficulty, they may receive free, confidential and independent advice from a financial counsellor by:

- calling the National Debt Helpline (Victoria) on 1800 007 007, Monday to Friday, 9:30 am – 5:00 pm
- visiting the National Debt Helpline's Financial Counselling page
- calling a community agency that provides financial counselling in the area where the ratepayer lives or works. To find the nearest agency, go to Financial counselling providers.

A Council or ratepayer may choose to engage a financial counsellor to assist in providing a professional opinion regarding an application for hardship or financial hardship.

However, Councils must not require an applicant to engage a professional to support the preparation or verification of an application if it will be at cost to the ratepayer who is experiencing hardship and/or financial hardship.

7.3 Hardship application decisions and reviews

The applicant should be informed of the Council's decision in writing within a reasonable timeframe after making the application and should be given reasons for the decision.

Councils must specify the timeframes required to make a decision on hardship applications and state this information on its website, hardship factsheets and application forms.

Councils are encouraged to adopt a best practice approach to providing timeframes for processing a decision. For example, a Council may specify that a hardship application will be processed within 14 days of receipt of a complete application. A Council may also specify timeframes for responding to a query in relation to a hardship application that is on foot and timeframes for reviewing a decision on an application.

A Council must not take recovery or enforcement action for unpaid rates, charges or interest whilst an application is being assessed.

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If not satisfied with the outcome, an applicant should be able to request the Council to review the decision. Councils should proactively provide applicants on their internal review processes at the time of the decision outcome. Information on the review process and timeframes for review should also be available online and in person.

Councils should ensure that a review of a decision is undertaken by a person not involved in the original decision and the person has authority to:

- review the decision-making process to ensure it was fair and transparent
- assess whether the decision was based on relevant evidence and considerations
- evaluate the decision's compliance with relevant laws
- determine whether the decision was reasonable and justifiable in the circumstances.

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8. Council Hardship and Financial Hardship policies

Council hardship policies and financial hardship policies regarding the payment of rates and charges must be easily accessible to all ratepayers and be available:

- on a Council's website;
- as a physical copy at customer service points;
- to be posted as a physical copy to ratepayers on request; and
- to be emailed as an electronic copy to ratepayers on request.

This must include information on how Councils assess hardship applications, how decisions are made, how to contact Council.

Resources, such as hardship factsheets and application forms, should also be easily accessible on the Council website and in person to allow ratepayers to apply.

Council policies must state that ratepayers can request that a Council or their representatives use an interpreter and/or translator to communicate with them and such a request must not be denied.

8.1 Consideration of family violence or economic abuse

In circumstances where a ratepayer has identified circumstances of family violence or economic abuse (including in relation to other joint owners of the property), Councils should implement measures to prevent each owner from accessing confidential information regarding the other's personal details and detail these measures in their policies.

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9. Any other matters covered by sections 172, 180 and 181 of the Local Government Act 1989

9.1 Section 172: Council may charge interest on unpaid rates and charges

A Council may choose to charge interest on any amount of unpaid rates and charges up to the maximum rate fixed by the Minister for Local Government.[13]

However, Councils are encouraged to consider an applicant's circumstances and whether they are in hardship before imposing interest on unpaid rates and charges.

Councils must specify in relevant policies and plans what interest rates they are setting on unpaid rates and charges, and detail under what situations they will apply either a lesser rate or, apply no interest. Councils must ensure that ratepayers are able to reasonably access this information and are informed of, how and when interest is applied.

Ratepayers that have successfully applied for deferred payments on their unpaid rates and charges cannot not be charged any amount of interest by Councils during the period of deferment.

If a Council had determined that the ratepayer has provided false or misleading information in regard to an application for a waiver of interest,[14] a Council cannot reinstate any interest that was waived but may choose to enforce the relevant penalty units set out in the LG Act 1989.

9.2 Section 180: Unpaid rates or charges

Where a Council has informed a ratepayer of unpaid rates and charges and the payment options available, and a payment option is not agreed, the Council may recover the amount owing in the Magistrates' Court or by taking action to recover the debt, subject to the requirements of section 180A of the LG Act 1989. Without limiting Part 8 of the LG Act 1989, is it encouraged that Councils exhaust all other options before seeking recovery from the Magistrates' Court.

A Council's policies must clearly state under which circumstances recovery of unpaid rates and charges will occur. A Council must not take recovery or enforcement action for unpaid rates, charges or interest whilst an application is being assessed.

If a Council intends to recover an unpaid rate or charge a Council must:

[13] Section 172, LG Act 1989.

[14] Sections 171A(4) & 171(6), LG Act 1989.

- contact the ratepayer in writing, notifying them of the outstanding debt and the intention to recover the unpaid rates, charges and any interest; and
- make reasonable attempts to contact the ratepayer with details they have provided to Council, regarding the unpaid rates, charges and any interest.

Councils must specify on their websites any costs of debt recovery that may be added to ratepayer's unpaid rates and charges. These charges must only be added after a Court Order is obtained.[15]

9.3 Section 181: Council may sell land or recover unpaid rates or charges

Once a Court Order has been obtained requiring payment of unpaid rates and charges, and any unpaid amount is more than 3 years overdue, a Council may determine to sell or cause the land to be transferred into Council ownership.

A Council must prepare policies which:

- outline what a Council considers to be a "current arrangement"[16] for the payment of an amount due for or in respect of rates or charges (the Act stipulates that a "current arrangement" includes a payment plan); and
- state:
    - the process for which land is evaluated every financial year for sale or transfer by Council;
    - where a sale or transfer is approved, the Council's process to complete the transaction;
    - how the Council's decisions regarding the sale or transfer of the land will be recorded and made public.

If the Council intends to use land transferred to itself for public purposes, then relevant policies must clearly explain how this type of land will be utilised for the benefit of the community.

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[15] Section 156(6), LG Act 1989.

[16] Section 181(1)(b), LG Act 1989.

10. Transparency and Disclosure

Where Councils make decisions regarding the payment of rates and charges, this process must be transparent except when dealing with information that is confidential by virtue of the LG Act 1989 or any other Act.

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