

Murrindindi Planning Scheme Review 2026

FINAL REPORT

18 August 2026

Planning and Environment Act 1987

Planning Scheme Review pursuant to Section 12B of the Act

Murrindindi Planning Scheme

Version	Author	Issue date
1.0	AS, CR	17 July 2026
2.0 – officer and DTP feedback on Version 1	CR	5 August 2026
3.0 – Final post Council briefing	CR	18 August 2026

Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Meaning
ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ALE	Activating Lake Eildon
BAL	Bushfire Attack Level
BAO	Buffer Area Overlay
BFO	Built Form Overlay
BMO	Bushfire Management Overlay
BPA	Bushfire Prone Area (defined under the <i>Building Act 1997</i>)
CFA	Country Fire Authority
CHMP	Cultural Heritage Management Plan
CMA	Catchment Management Authority
CP	Murrindindi Council Plan
DEECA	Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action
DFP	Development Facilitation Program
DG	Decision Guidelines
DPO	Development Plan Overlay
DPU	Dependant Persons Unit
DTP	Department of Transport and Planning
EDRS	Effluent Dispersal and Recycling Systems
EDS	Murrindindi Economic Development Strategy
EMO	Erosion Management Overlay
EPA	Environment Protection Authority Victoria
ESO	Environment Significance Overlay
FO	Flood Overlay
FSW	Further Strategic Work
FZ	Farming Zone
GAIC	Growth Areas Infrastructure Contribution
GBCMA	Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority
GC	Group of Councils
GIS	Geographic Information System
GMW	Goulburn Murray Water
GOWM	Guidelines for Onsite Wastewater Management
HCTZ	Housing Choice and Transport Zone
HSS	Housing and Settlement Strategy
IBAC	Independent Broad-based Anti-Corruption Commission
IDM	Infrastructure Design Manual
LSIO	Land Subject to Inundation Overlay

Abbreviation	Meaning
LXRP	Level Crossing Removal Project
MDFC	Ministerial Direction on the form and content of Planning Schemes
MPHWP	Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan
MPS	Municipal Planning Strategy
MRPV	Major Road Projects Victoria
NOD	Notice of Decision to Grant a Permit
PfV	Plan for Victoria
PG	Practitioner's Guide to Victoria's Planning Schemes
PPF	Planning Policy Framework
PPN	Planning Practice Note
PRZ	Public Park and Recreation Zone
PSR	Planning Scheme Review
RAP	Registered Aboriginal Party
RCZ	Rural Conservation Zone
RFI	Request for Information
RO	Restructure Overlay
SLO	Significant Landscape Overlay
SPP	Statement of Planning Policy
SUZ	Special Use Zone
TIA	Traffic Impact Assessment
VC	Victoria Planning Provisions Combined
VCAT	Victorian Civil Appeals Tribunal
VHR	Victorian Heritage Register
VIDA	Victorian Infrastructure Delivery Authority
VIF	Victoria in Future
VPO	Vegetation Protection Overlay
VPP	Victoria Planning Provisions

Contents

1	Executive summary	7
1.1	Why is the Planning Scheme being reviewed?	7
1.2	Health check and findings	7
1.3	Response to Planning Scheme Reviews Advisory Note	7
1.4	Top priorities for Council	9
1.5	Consolidated recommendations	10
2	Introduction	17
2.1	Purpose	17
2.2	Methodology	17
3	What's driving change	20
3.1	Population, growth, and economy	20
3.2	Climate change and other environmental risks	21
3.3	Plan for Victoria	22
3.4	State and Federal policy	25
3.5	Other Victorian government amendments (VC and GC)	27
3.6	Findings and recommendations	29
4	Previous Planning Scheme Review	31
4.1	Previous Planning Scheme Review	31
4.2	Progress since last review	31
4.3	Outstanding work since last review	31
4.4	Findings and recommendations	33
5	Audit and assessment of current scheme	35
5.1	Methodology	35
5.2	Municipal Planning Strategy	35
5.3	Planning Policy Framework	36
5.4	Zones	37
5.5	Overlays	39
5.6	Particular provisions	41
5.7	General provisions	42
5.8	Operational provisions	42
5.9	Summary of findings and recommendations	44
6	Planning Scheme performance	47
6.1	Planning permit activity	47
6.2	Planning Panels Victoria	55
6.3	VCAT	55
6.4	Summary of findings and recommendations	57

7 Stakeholder engagement	59
7.1 Planners' feedback	59
7.2 Councillors and executive team	61
7.3 Referral and notice agencies	63
7.4 Summary of issues raised in engagement	63
7.5 Summary of findings and recommendations	66
8 New strategic work	69
8.1 Council projects and documents	69
8.2 State Government and Statutory Agency projects and documents	71
8.3 Federal Government projects and documents	72
8.4 Summary of findings and recommendations	72
9 Work underway	74
9.1 Planning scheme amendments	74
9.2 Projects	74
9.3 Summary of findings and recommendations	74
10 Key issues	75
10.1 Bushfire	75
10.2 Housing and settlement	76
10.3 Rural planning	79
10.4 Design and character issues	83
10.5 Erosion management	86
10.6 Open space strategy and contributions	87
10.7 VicSmart related	87
10.8 Application of the Development Plan Overlay schedules	88
11 Further strategic work	95
11.1 Prioritisation process	95
11.2 Discussion	95
11.3 Findings and recommendations	97
Appendix One	99
Track changes to the Murrindindi Planning Scheme recommended by this review.	99
Appendix Two	100
State and regional Planning Scheme amendments since last Planning Scheme Review	100
Appendix Three	109
Comprehensive list of further strategic work	109

1 Executive summary

1.1 Why is the Planning Scheme being reviewed?

The Murrindindi Shire Council as the planning authority for the Murrindindi Planning Scheme is required to review its Planning Scheme every four years under Section 12(B) of the Planning and Environment Act 1987.

The Murrindindi Shire Council last undertook a comprehensive review of the Planning Scheme in 2023. The policy neutral findings of this review were translated into the Planning Scheme via amendment C73muri which was gazetted on 14 November 2025.

This review will be forwarded to the Minister for Planning as required under section 12(B) of the act once complete. A Planning Scheme amendment to implement the findings of the review has been prepared and is attached in the form of marked up ordinance as Appendix One to this report.

1.2 Health check and findings

The Murrindindi Scheme is generally operating well. Many minor drafting errors have been identified through the review, and fixing these will align the scheme with correct formatting of planning schemes (set out in the Ministerial Direction on the Form and Content of Planning Schemes) and overall make the scheme easier to interpret.

Statutory planning function generally performing better than similar councils including the number of days to process applications, and the cost to process applications.

There has been a significant amount of planning reform since 2022, and refinements are required to the scheme to respond to the new bushfire provisions that were gazetted in May 2026 (by Amendment VC248), Plan for Victoria and reform to the residential codes. These issues will take time to resolve and require working with the State Government collaboratively.

This review has identified a suite of work required to address rural issues comprehensively, including residential uses in the agricultural zones. With Farming Zone reform on the State Government agenda, it is important that small lots sizes in the Farming Zone are considered and resolved strategically. This work will address the most significant gaps in the planning scheme identified in this review.

Council is part way through a Structure Planning program for the three largest settlements – Yea, Alexandra and Marysville, and this work will set Murrindindi up well to accommodate most of the growth.

1.3 Response to Planning Scheme Reviews Advisory Note

DTP issued an advisory note in March 2026 that set out several items that it recommended Councils 2026 Planning Scheme Review address.

Matter		How this has been addressed in this PSR	Location in this report
Local policy and planning tool			
1	Identify any inconsistencies between local policies and state and regional policies in the Planning Policy Framework (PPF) resulting from	No action required.	Chapter 5 (A1 Audit)

Matter	How this has been addressed in this PSR	Location in this report
	changes made by Amendment VC283 (<i>Plan for Victoria</i>) and other amendments to the PPF since the last planning scheme review.	No inconsistencies found in the audit.
2	Identify any conflicts between local policies and schedules, and changed state standard provisions, including: – clause 52.06 (Car parking) – amended ▪ clause 52.27 (Licensed premises) – deleted ▪ clause 52.37 (Canopy trees) – new ▪ clause 54 (One dwelling on a lot or a small second dwelling on a lot) – amended ▪ clause 55 (Two or more dwellings on a lot and residential buildings) – amended ▪ clause 57 (Two or more dwellings on a lot and residential buildings of four storeys) – amended	No action required. No inconsistencies found in the audit. Chapter 5 (A1 Audit)
Housing and residential development		
3	Where DTP has advised that the planning scheme does not currently have capacity to meet its housing target, review residential zones and overlays in consultation with DTP to identify appropriate strategic responses to ensure the planning scheme has sufficient capacity as assessed by DTP's Housing Capacity Assessment Platform.	Action not required. DTP has advised Council it considers it is able to meet its housing capacity target based on current planning settings. This table
4	Where DTP has advised that the scheme is likely to have capacity to meet its housing target, review policy, zones and overlays to ensure increased housing is enabled in appropriate locations, particularly where access to opportunities and services is highest.	Action required. Identified as a key issue, addressed by implementing the Housing and Settlement Strategy 2022 and structure planning for Yea and Alexandra. Chapter 10 (Key Issues)
5	Consider the distribution of housing capacity to meet the greenfield and established area housing targets for growth municipalities and major regional cities (Ballarat, Greater Bendigo and Greater Geelong).	Not relevant. Murrindindi is not a growth municipality or major regional city. Not applicable
6	Review the application of residential zones considering Planning Practice Note 90 <i>Planning for Housing</i> and Planning Practice Note 91 <i>Using the residential zones</i> .	Action required. To be considered through structure planning. Low priority. Appendix Three (Further Strategic Work)
7	Review any neighbourhood character policy in the context of the reforms to the residential development provisions.	Action required. The scheme contains no neighbourhood character policies or schedules. However, residential and commercial character was raised as a concern by Councillors during consultation and is identified for follow-up as further strategic work. This table

Matter		How this has been addressed in this PSR	Location in this report
Settlement boundaries			
8	In rural and regional areas, identify settlement boundaries or identify issues to be resolved to establish a settlement boundary.	Action required. Identified as a key issue, addressed by settlement boundaries being established through structure planning for Alexandra and Yea. The need for boundaries around smaller settlements to be discussed with DTP.	Chapter 10 (Key Issues)
Green wedges			
9	For councils required under Part 3AA of the Act to prepare, adopt and review green wedge management plans (that is, councils with green wedge land), consider the requirements of the <i>Ministerial Direction on the preparation and content of Green Wedge Management Plans</i> to ensure plans are in place for all green wedges and existing plans are reviewed and up to date in planning schemes.	Not relevant. Murrindindi does not contain any green wedge land.	Not applicable
Form and content			
10	Resolve any inconsistencies in terminology with Plan for Victoria activity centres hierarchy and regional settlement hierarchy.	No action required. Identified and addressed through the audit.	Chapter 5 (A1 Audit)
11	Ensure all schedules align with their relevant schedule template.	No action required. Identified and addressed through the audit.	Chapter 5 (A1 Audit)
12	Review special purpose zones to ensure land use terms are up to date.	No action required. Identified and addressed through the audit.	Chapter 5 (A1 Audit)
Removing roadblocks to improvement			
13	Assess whether new <i>Victoria Planning Provisions</i> tools would be more appropriate to implement planning objectives. For example, the Built Form Overlay in place of existing overlays or the Precinct Zone in place of the Activity Centre Zone or Special Use Zone.	Not relevant. The tools are not considered appropriate for Murrindindi.	Not applicable
Environmental risks			
14	Identify where mapping of environmental risks should be updated.	Action required. Identified as further strategic work in Appendix Three, addressed through updating flood, landscape bushfire and erosion assessments and implementation.	Appendix Three (Further Strategic Work)

1.4 Top priorities for Council

The review has identified the following priorities for Council over the next four years.

Bushfire

With the introduction of Amendment VC248, most of Murrindindi is now subject to bushfire planning controls via the application of Clause 53.02. Any strategic planning work that contemplates rezoning residential land or land used for residential purposes, now needs to be supported by a landscape scale bushfire assessment.

Landscape scale bushfire assessments have been prepared for Yea and Alexandra East but given the work program recommended in this Planning Scheme Review, which includes review of zoning of land use for residential purposes across the shire (that is, the Alexandra Structure Plan and the rural suite of work set out below), a landscape scale bushfire assessment is Council's highest priority project.

Settlement planning

Council prepared a comprehensive *Murrindindi Housing and Settlement Strategy* in 2022. Unfortunately, it wasn't implemented into the planning scheme through the 2023 Planning Scheme Review (which was implemented as a policy neutral amendment). The Strategy reviewed existing zoned land and land previously identified for residential growth and identified capacity for an additional 1,174 dwellings by 2041. Since the preparation of the Strategy, Plan for Victoria has been published. Plan for Victoria includes a housing capacity target of 3,350 dwellings by 2050, and the State Government has recently advised Council that it considers there is sufficient land to accommodate the 3,350. Council officers agree that there are opportunities for growth, particularly around Alexandra and Yea, to meet the target, but recognises that this will be subject to managing bushfire risks and significant investment in infrastructure, including reticulated services, to unlock additional residential land. Council offices have also identified that increasing the density of planned infill development identified in the Strategy could provide additional housing over and above that identified. Work will need to be undertaken with DTP to discuss the issue, and if necessary update or prepare an addendum for the Strategy as the methodologies used by Council and DTP are different.

Planning Scheme Amendment C79muri for Yea Structure Plan is in progress; the preparation of a structure plan for Alexandra once the Alexandra East Development Plan is complete another settlement priority. The Marysville Structure Plan was prepared immediately after the 2009 bushfires, and should be reviewed to bring it in line with contemporary planning policy.

Rural planning

Many interrelated issues in urban areas were identified in the planning scheme review, and a program of rural work to address these issues has been developed.

Building design and township character

Council identified residential design guidelines as a priority project in the Council Plan; these have been completed and were adopted in October 2025. There is still work to do to incorporate them into the planning scheme (if possible). In addition, this planning scheme review recommends that guidelines for commercial development in town centres and at township gateways be developed, using the Alexandra Structure Plan as first cab off the rank.

1.5 Consolidated recommendations

This section of the report outlines the recommendations and next steps for this Planning Scheme Review. Recommendations are grouped as follows:

- Planning Scheme recommendations

- Further strategic work recommendations
- Process improvement recommendations
- Advocacy and further consultation recommendations
- Minister for Planning recommendation

1.5.1 Planning Scheme amendment recommendations

These recommendations cover amendments required to implement the findings of this review. They include:

- Policy-neutral changes that should be made to the Planning Scheme to align it with the Ministerial Direction on the Form and Content of Planning Schemes. These are administrative matters and do not change the policy intent of the scheme.
- **Factual changes** that should be made to the Municipal Planning Strategy to update it with the most recent ABS and economic data, and the Council Plan.
- Changes that have been identified through planning permit audit and consultation with referral authorities and Council staff.
- Changes arising from an audit of local and regional strategies and policies implemented since last review. Working documents used in the review have been shared with Council officers. A record of engagement with officers, referral authorities and Council is included in Appendix One.

All recommended changes are included in the marked up Ordinance in Appendix One, along with a rationale for the change,

Recommendation:

It is recommended that Council:

- PSA 1** Prepare a Planning Scheme amendment or amendments using the marked-up ordinance at Appendix One to incorporate the policy neutral changes identified in Chapter 5 to align the ordinance with the Ministerial Direction on the Form and Content of Planning Schemes and the Planning Scheme Review Advisory note, March 2026.
- PSA 2.** Prepare a Planning Scheme amendment or amendments using the marked-up ordinance at Appendix One to include new policy to implement the:
- Murrindindi Shire Council Plan 2025-2029 and Murrindindi Shire 2035 Community Vision
 - Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029
 - Activating Lake Eildon: Skyline Road Tourist Precinct Business Case (2020)
 - Murrindindi Shire Economic Development Strategy 2024-2029
 - Goulburn Broken Regional Catchment Strategy 2021-2027 (background document title correction)
 - Plan for Victoria (housing target update at Clause 02.03-6)
- PSA 3.** Prepare a Planning Scheme amendment or amendments using the marked-up ordinance at Appendix One to include new policy to implement the high-level

findings of the Murrindindi Housing and Settlement Strategy 2022 including replacing the Murrindindi Shire Framework Plan at Clause 02.04 with the updated plan at page 55 of the Strategy.

1.5.2 Further strategic work

Appendix Three lists the strategic planning work identified through this review.

The highest priority tasks for Council to undertake over the next four years are included in the recommendations below. These represent the strategic work that report authors expect to have greatest benefit for the shire community and the efficiency of the planning service.

Lower priority tasks are included in Appendix Three.

A recommended Clause 74.02 is in the marked-up ordinance at Appendix One for Council's consideration and set out in recommendations below. Council should review the drafted Clause 74.02 to confirm the proposed work is achievable and confirm which priority projects should be included. Only work that can be completed within four years (until next review) should be included in Clause 74.02 of the Planning Scheme.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that Council prioritise the following further strategic work over the next four years (in priority order):

- FSW 1. Implement the Yea Structure Plan**
- FSW 2. Prepare a landscape scale bushfire assessment for the Shire (except for Yea and Alexandra East which have already been completed) prior to undertaking further strategic work related to housing and settlement, and rural areas.**
- FSW 3. Prepare an amendment or addendum to the Murrindindi Housing and Settlement Strategy 2022 to:**
 - **Address the directions in Plan for Victoria including the housing capacity target, application of residential zones and settlement boundaries once discussions with the Department of Transport and Planning are held.**
 - **Respond to any recommendations from the landscape scale bushfire assessment when it has been completed.**
 - **Resolve whether places which don't have any residential zoning should be removed from the settlement hierarchy (these settlements are Highlands, Limestone, Molesworth and Glenburn (all Farming Zone) and Flowerdale (RLZ)).**
- FSW 4. Prepare and implement a structure plan for the Alexandra township including:**
 - **Refining the settlement boundary for Alexandra when preparing the Alexandra Structure Plan, balancing bushfire risk and housing growth needs in a safe manner. (3.6, PfV)**
 - **Reviewing the application of residential zones when preparing the Alexandra Structure Plan to ensure that zone selection supports the level of growth that is proposed to be directed to different areas of the settlement. (3.6 PfV)**

- Reviewing the application of DPO1, 2 and 4 as part of the Alexandra Structure Plan to determine whether this continues to be the best tool to guide development, and to remove the control where subdivision is complete.
- Developing built form controls that address building design, township character and gateway treatments for Alexandra as part of the Alexandra Structure Plan, with a view to applying these controls in other settlements where appropriate.
- Identifying both community and development infrastructure requirements to support growth.

FSW 5. Prepare a Rural Land Strategy (potentially in parts) that:

- Identifies areas of high quality and significant horticultural and agricultural land across the shire, and how high-quality areas should be identified in the planning scheme.
- Responds to risks associated with bushfire, flooding and erosion, especially in areas where residential development is permitted in the rural zones.
- Progresses the application of environmental overlays across the Shire, based on the report *Management of Significant Landscapes in Murrindindi and Baw Baw* (Planisphere, 2005), and updating work if required in the context of the rural strategy work.
- Identifies areas where renewable energy can be supported at a local level, considering rural land quality and landscape values.
- Identifies preferred locations for agritourism and places of assembly in the rural zones, and sets out guidelines for development of these enterprises and facilities.
- Resolves the appropriate zoning or minimum lot size for the enclaves of small lots in the Farming Zone (such as those around Kinglake), and develops an appropriate zoning and policy response.
- Determines how rural worker accommodation (Amendment VC202) should be provided for in the rural zones in Murrindindi Shire, including its interaction with the small second dwelling pathway, and prepare local guidance if required.

FSW 6. Incorporate the Murrindindi Shire Residential Design Guidelines into the planning scheme through the Alexandra East Development Plan Overlay, and the Municipal Planning Strategy, and consider translating them into schedules to the residential zones (objectives), a Clause 15.01 local policy and the Neighbourhood Character Overlay if warranted.

FSW 7. Implement the planning recommendations of the municipal Industrial and Commercial Land Strategy (including the Yea Sale Yards) once complete.

FSW 8. Allocate existing strategic planning resources to deliver the list of administrative and minor resource changes required to the planning scheme included in Appendix Three.

1.5.3 Process improvements

These recommendations are drawn from analysing the Planning Scheme and consulting with Council staff and referral authorities.

They focus on improving processes associated with data collection and analysis (such as planning permits), application processing and referrals, and communication. Process improvements may involve Council, the Victorian government or referral agencies.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that Council:

- Imp 1.** Prepare Greenlight for changes that will be required to process planning permits, referrals and planning scheme amendments because of the Planning Amendment (Better Decisions Made Faster) Act 2026 as they are rolled out over the next eighteen months.
- Imp 2.** Partner with Goulburn Murray Water to streamline the referral process for applications in the declared water supply catchment north of Eildon.
- Imp 3.** Prepare a mapped layer of water authorities and CMAs (using VicPlan data) to clarify what applies where in Murrindindi to assist with identifying relevant referral authorities.
- Imp 4.** Work with the development engineers to establish a protocol for seeking funding for local road improvements where it can be linked to a development, to ensure planners can provide consistent advice to applicants and neighbours and enter into Section 173 agreements to assist with road funding where justified.
- Imp 5.** Consider whether there is value in developing standard Operational Management Plan conditions for tourist establishment permits, depending on the number of applications received for this use.
- Imp 6.** Review Council's permit data collection procedure and develop a standard data recording protocol that requires planners to record statutory days alongside elapsed days, tag each application to a standard permit subcategory at lodgement using an adopted list, and record the decision maker consistently for every permit.
- Imp 7.** Provide pre-application guidance to applicants on good design, including safety by design, walkability, connectivity and public realm quality, so expectations are understood before an application is lodged.
- Imp 8.** Use the Murrindindi Shire Residential Design Guidelines to provide advice to applicants, guide the application of zones and overlays, and aid in decision making where they can be considered.

1.5.4 Advocacy and further consultation

These recommendations mostly fall outside Council's authority under the current Victoria Planning Provisions and the Planning and Environment Act 1987. Council may wish to raise these issues with the Victorian government to advocate for change.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that Council:

- Adv 1.** Advocate to and support the Catchment Management Authorities to update and implement flood mapping, ensuring climate change impacts have been considered and clearing the backlog of unimplemented studies including studies for Parrot Creek and Flowerdale and Yea River.
- Adv 2.** Continue to work with councils in the north east region to advocate that the State Government prepare and implement a significance landscape assessment for the alpine region.
- Adv 3.** Consult with the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung and Taungurung Registered Aboriginal Parties on the findings from the review and seek their input on the next steps for further strategic work.
- Adv 4.** Prior to commencing a planning scheme amendment to implement the planning scheme review, seek comments from the following referral authorities, notifying them of proposed changes to the planning scheme: Country Fire Authority, Goulburn Murray Water, National Trust of Australia (Victoria), Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action, Head, Transport for Victoria
- Adv 5.** Work with the Department of Transport and Planning to determine the additional work required to finalise the Murrindindi Housing and Settlement Strategy considering the variance in capacity between the Strategy (1,174 dwellings) and Plan for Victoria housing capacity target (3,350 dwellings) to enable the incorporation of detailed actions in the Strategy into the Murrindindi Planning Scheme
- Adv 6.** Consult with the Department of Transport and Planning to determine whether the Erosion Management Overlay should be applied on slopes over 20% where not already applied and, if supported, seek financial assistance to prepare the geotechnical assessment and apply the control.

1.5.5 Minister for Planning

Council, with funding from DTP and assistance from Schemology has prepared a Planning Scheme Review as required by section 12B(1) of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* (the Act).

In accordance with section 12B(3) of the Act, this review identifies opportunities to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the Planning Scheme in achieving the objectives of planning in Victoria and the objectives of the planning framework established in the Act.

In accordance with section 12B(4) of the Act, the review evaluates the Planning Scheme to ensure it:

- Aligns with Ministerial Direction on the Form and Content of Planning Schemes.
- Addresses the Planning Scheme Reviews Advisory note, March 2026.
- Sets out the policy objectives for the use and development of land.

- Makes effective use of state and local provisions to achieve state and local planning policy objectives.

Recommendation:

That Murrindindi Shire Council accept this Planning Scheme Review and forward it to the Minister for Planning as evidence Murrindindi Shire Council, as the planning authority for Murrindindi Planning Scheme, has met its obligations in accordance with Section 12B of the Planning and Environment Act 1987 to review the Planning Scheme every four years, and addressed the recommendations of the Planning Scheme Review Planning Advisory Note (DTP, March 2026).

2 Introduction

2.1 Purpose

As the planning authority for the Murrindindi Planning Scheme, Council is required to review its Planning Scheme every four years under Section 12(B) of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* (The Act).

The scope of a Planning Scheme Review is established under Section 12(B) and includes:

- Reviewing the effectiveness and efficiency of the Planning Scheme in achieving the objectives of planning and the planning framework in Victoria.
- Aligning the Planning Scheme with the Ministerial Direction on the Form and Content of Planning Schemes.
- Ensuring the Planning Scheme contains a clear narrative about how land use and development will be managed to achieve the area's planning vision and objectives.

Planning Scheme Reviews also provide the opportunity to:

- Align Council's policy position with the Planning Scheme.
- Update redundant information.
- Educate and inform stakeholders about the Planning Scheme and the process for improving it.

DTP issued the Planning Scheme Review Advisory Note, March 2026, which provides recommendations on what councils should address in the 2026 Planning Scheme Review. The relevant matters for the Murrindindi Planning Scheme have been addressed in this review.

Council last undertook a comprehensive review of the Planning Scheme in 2023. The findings of this review were translated into the Planning Scheme via amendment C73muri which was gazetted on 14 November 2025. This amendment made policy-neutral updates to align the scheme with the Ministerial Direction on Form and Content and A Practitioner's Guide to Victoria's Planning Schemes, refreshing the Municipal Planning Strategy, zone and overlay schedules, operational provisions and outdated references. Notably it did not implement the findings of the Housing Strategy 2022 (because the changes proposed weren't policy neutral). This review incorporates the high-level findings of the *Housing and Settlement Strategy 2022*.

This review will be forwarded to the Minister for Planning as required under section 12(B) of the Act once complete. A draft Planning Scheme amendment to implement the findings of the review is attached as marked up ordinance in Appendix One.

2.2 Methodology

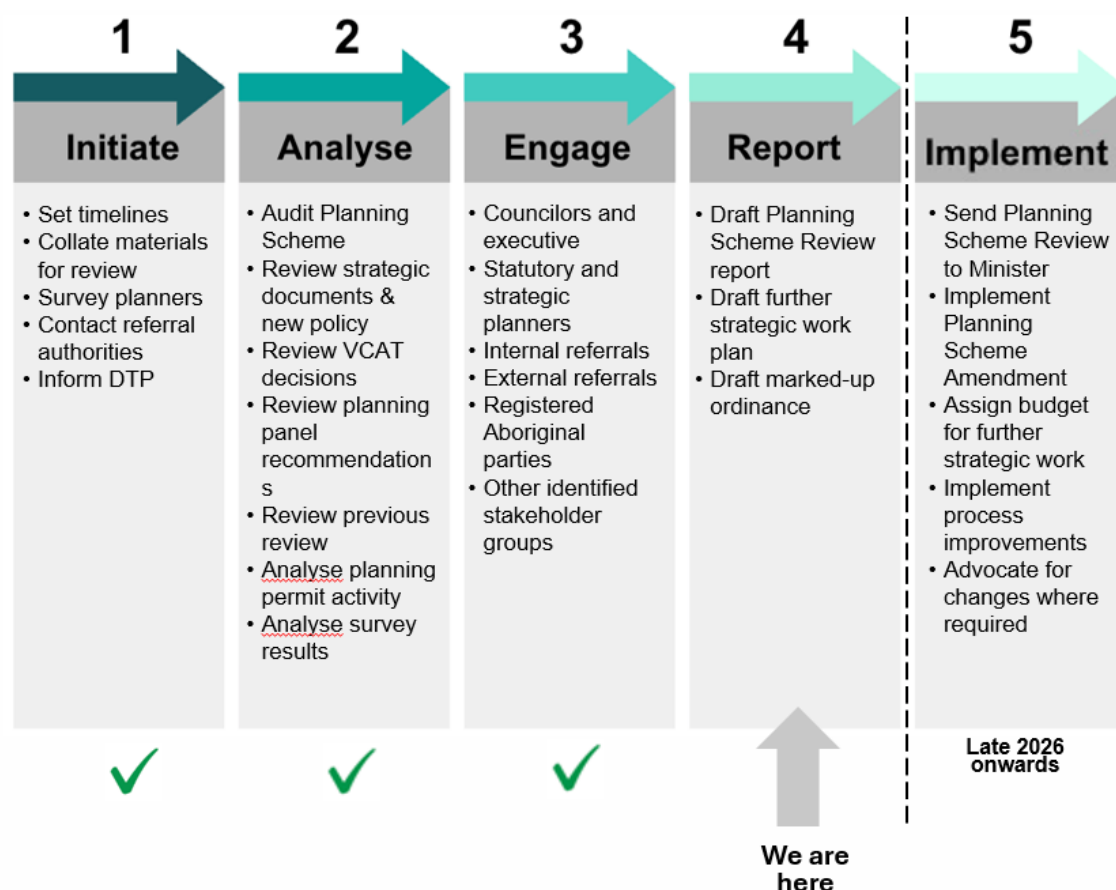
A six-stage methodology was developed by DTP to undertake Planning Scheme Reviews (Figure 1), supported at each stage by commentary and templates in the 'Good Practice Guide to Planning Scheme Reviews'.

Schemology was engaged by DTP to conduct Stages One to Four for the Murrindindi Shire Council.

Stage Five and Six (Consult and Implement) will require a Planning Scheme amendment to put the review's recommendations into effect. The amendment will be advertised, and community

members will be invited to make submissions under the Planning and Environment Act 1987. If submissions cannot be resolved, Council must request the Minister for Planning to appoint an independent Planning Panel to consider submissions and make recommendations to the Minister. (Note that this may change with the reform to the *Planning and Environment Act* currently underway which proposes three streams of planning scheme amendments).

Figure 1: Planning Scheme Review methodology



The timing for the project is:

Stage	Timing
Commence	Mar 2026 - April 2026
Analyse	April 2026 - May 2026
Engage	May 2026 - June 2026
Report	June 2026 - July 2026
Consult	Second half of 2026
Implement	Second half of 2026

This Planning Scheme Review has been prepared in line with the following DTP directions and guidance.

Ministerial directions:

- Ministerial Direction on the Form and Content of Planning Schemes.
- Ministerial Direction No. 11 Strategic Assessment of Amendments.

Planning practice notes and advice:

- A Practitioner's Guide to Victoria's Planning Schemes.
- PPN – 46 Strategic Assessment Guidelines.
- PPN32 – Review of Planning Schemes.
- Planning Scheme Review Advisory note, March 2026.
- Other topic-based Ministerial Directions and Practice Notes were considered for specific matters raised through the review, as noted in this report.

3 What's driving change

3.1 Population, growth, and economy

Murrindindi Shire is northeast of metropolitan Melbourne and forms part of Melbourne's peri-urban interface. The Taungurung and Wurundjeri people are the Traditional Owners of the land. The Shire covers 3,873 square kilometres, of which 48 per cent is public land. The main serviced towns are Alexandra, Yea, Eildon and Marysville, supported by Kinglake, Kinglake West - Pheasant Creek and a network of smaller townships and rural settlements which generally aren't serviced.

The estimated resident population was 15,648 at June 2025 (ABS, 2026), up from 15,139 in 2021, and projected to reach 17,455 persons by 2036 (Victoria in Future, 2023) at a growth rate of about 1% per year. Dwellings are projected to grow from 8,349 in 2021 to 9,905 in 2036 (Victoria in Future, 2023), an additional 1,556 dwellings at a rate of 1.2% per year.

Measure	2021	2025	2036	% annual growth 2025-2036
Population	15,139	15,648	17,455	1.0%
Dwellings	8,349	8,856	9,905	1.1%
Households	6,754	7,246	8,119	1.1%

Growth is concentrated in and around Yea and Alexandra, which the Municipal Planning Strategy identifies as having significant expansion potential.

Economy

The Shire's economy is valued at \$1.8 billion annually, with major contributions from construction, agriculture and the visitor economy. It provides around 5,000 local jobs, almost three quarters of employed residents work within the municipality, and around 1.2 million visitors come each year. Tourism accounts for 9.9 per cent of employment, well above the Victorian average of 3.9 per cent, over 98 per cent of local businesses are small to medium enterprises, and 64 per cent are non-employing small traders. The Council Plan 2025-2029 commits to supporting economic transition in forestry-affected communities following the end of native timber harvesting, and the Municipal Planning Strategy identifies the ageing population and loss of young people as a workforce issue to be addressed.

A peri-urban and rural-residential growth pattern

Proximity to Melbourne's outer metropolitan area creates growth and lifestyle opportunities for the Shire. The Municipal Planning Strategy notes increasing numbers of residents commuting between the municipality and Melbourne, with many living flexibly with a city base. Growth is concentrated in the serviced towns, with Yea and Alexandra identified as having potential for significant growth. The Housing and Settlement Strategy 2022 records an occupancy rate of around 78 per cent, reflecting the prevalence of holiday houses and short-term rental accommodation. The Municipal Planning Strategy also identifies an ageing population and loss of young people as issues to be addressed to maintain the skilled workforce, which increases demand for accessible housing, aged care and services in the serviced towns.

Housing supply and demand

Housing supply is a central issue. The Municipal Planning Strategy notes that the established townships offer significant opportunity to expand and directs housing diversity in serviced

towns including affordable housing, public housing and aged care accommodation. The Housing and Settlement Strategy identified capacity within zoned land for around 1,174 additional lots, short of the housing capacity target of 3,350 set by Plan for Victoria (2025). However, State Government modelling using the Housing Capacity Assessment Program indicates that there is sufficient capacity in the existing zoned land to accommodate the housing capacity target. The Council Plan 2025-2029 identifies housing that meets local needs as a community priority, particularly for key workers, young people and older residents.

3.2 Climate change and other environmental risks

Murrindindi Shire's natural environment defines its character and underpins its economy, with forested ranges, national and state parks, Lake Eildon and the Goulburn, Yea and Acheron Rivers. Almost half the municipality is public land. The same landscapes that drive the Shire's appeal carry significant natural hazard risk, and managing that risk relating to fire, flood, drought, erosion and landslip is the central environmental challenge for land use planning.

Natural disasters have repeatedly affected the municipality, including the 2009 bushfires, the 2022 floods, and most recently the January 2026 Longwood fire, which affected almost one third of the Shire, and destroyed 216 homes, more than 520 outbuildings and caused widespread destruction of livestock, farming infrastructure and fencing. One person died in the Longwood fire.

The Municipal Planning Strategy identifies resilience to climate change and extreme weather as a critical issue, and the Council Plan 2025-2029 reflects the community's call for planning that addresses floods and storms as well as fire. Murrindindi Shire Council adopted its *Climate Change Action Plan: Towards 2035* in October 2023 and has committed to net zero emissions by 2035, recognising that climate change poses serious risks to the community's health, landscapes and way of life.

Bushfire is the dominant landscape-scale hazard, arising from dense vegetation, steep terrain, dispersed development with limited access and the potential for extreme fire behaviour under drought and a changing climate.

Flooding is a significant constraint on development along the Goulburn, Yea and Acheron Rivers and their tributaries. Flood mapping is not up to date in the planning scheme. A backlog of completed flood studies has not yet been implemented.

The Municipal Planning Strategy gives effect to the bushfire and flood risks at Clause 02.03-3, directing growth within townships or settlement boundaries, requiring bushfire risk to be reduced to an acceptable level and protecting the flood-carrying capacity of floodplains. The Bushfire Management Overlay applies to Buxton, Kinglake, Eildon and Marysville areas. Apart from central Yea and Alexandra, the whole of the shire is within the Bushfire Prone Area. Recent changes to the bushfire planning provisions at Clause 13.02-1S (Amendment VC278) indicate that landscape scale bushfire assessment should be done for the municipality to inform structure planning for townships and provide landscape scale bushfire advice to decision makers.

The strategic directions at Clause 02.03-3 do not identify erosion and landslip, despite the steep, erosion-prone terrain in parts of the Shire. The Erosion Management Overlay has been applied to steep areas of privately owned (farming) land to the west of the Black Forest Range, but it hasn't been applied to the east of the Shire, or public land. The Schedules to the Erosion Management Overlay and Land Subject to Inundation Overlay contain no objectives or requirements and give little direction to applicants or decision makers.

3.3 Plan for Victoria

Plan for Victoria was launched in February 2026 and sets out the strategic plan for Victoria over the next 25 years. It was introduced into planning schemes through VC283 (Plan for Victoria). The Planning Scheme Review Advisory Note (DTP, March 2026) recommended that Councils address several Plan for Victoria matters in their 2026 Planning Scheme Reviews.

This section addresses the recommendations in the advisory note where they are relevant to Murrindindi, and how the Planning Scheme should respond locally.

3.3.1 Local policy and planning tools

DTP recommendations

- 1 Identify any inconsistencies between local policies and state and regional policies in the Planning Policy Framework (PPF) resulting from changes made by Amendment VC283 (*Plan for Victoria*) and other amendments to the PPF since the last planning scheme review.
- 2 Identify any conflicts between local policies and schedules, and changed state standard provisions, including:
 - clause 52.06 (Car parking) – amended
 - clause 52.27 (Licensed premises) – deleted
 - clause 52.37 (Canopy trees) – new
 - clause 54 (One dwelling on a lot or a small second dwelling on a lot) – amended
 - clause 55 (Two or more dwellings on a lot and residential buildings) – amended
 - clause 57 (Two or more dwellings on a lot and residential buildings of four storeys) – amended

Council response

A comprehensive audit of the planning scheme has been prepared and is included in Chapter 6. The audit found no inconsistencies between local policies and the updated Planning Policy Framework, and no conflicts between local provisions and the changed state standard provisions.

3.3.2 Housing and residential development

DTP recommendations

- 3 Where DTP has advised that the planning scheme does not currently have capacity to meet its housing target, review residential zones and overlays in consultation with DTP to identify appropriate strategic responses to ensure the planning scheme has sufficient capacity as assessed by DTP's Housing Capacity Assessment Platform.
- 4 Where DTP has advised that the scheme is likely to have capacity to meet its housing target, review policy, zones and overlays to ensure increased housing is enabled in appropriate locations, particularly where access to opportunities and services is highest.

- 6 Review the application of residential zones considering Planning Practice Note 90 *Planning for Housing* and Planning Practice Note 91 *Using the residential zones*.
- 7 Review any neighbourhood character policy in the context of the reforms to the residential development provisions.

Council response

The Plan for Victoria housing capacity target for Murrindindi is 3,350 dwellings by 2051. The State Government Housing Capacity Assessment Program has indicated that the Shire can accommodate this figure.

The *Housing and Settlement Strategy 2022* identified capacity for 1,174 lots on existing zoned land. This is below the State target, and the gap is identified as a key issue to be resolved. The strategy has not yet been implemented in the planning scheme. The Planning Scheme Review 2023 identified the changes needed to implement the strategy, but these were not included in Amendment C73muri, which was limited to policy neutral changes.

This issue is discussed in detail in Chapter 10.

Recommendation 6 is a low priority. It will be considered through structure planning and is listed as further strategic work in Appendix Three.

Recommendation 7 does not apply directly, as the Murrindindi Planning Scheme does not contain any neighbourhood character policies or schedules. However, residential and commercial character was raised as a concern by Councillors during consultation. This is identified as a key issue in Chapter 10.

3.3.3 Settlement boundaries

DTP recommendation

- 8 In rural and regional areas, identify settlement boundaries or identify issues to be resolved to establish a settlement boundary.

Council response

Settlement boundaries are a key issue for Murrindindi. Boundaries for the larger settlements of Alexandra and Yea will be established through structure planning. The need for boundaries around smaller settlements will be discussed with DTP. This is addressed in Chapter 10 (Key Issues) and in further strategic work in Appendix Three.

3.3.4 Form and content

DTP recommendations

- 10 Resolve any inconsistencies in terminology with Plan for Victoria activity centres hierarchy and regional settlement hierarchy.
- 11 Ensure all schedules align with their relevant schedule template.
- 12 Review special purpose zones to ensure land use terms are up to date.

Council response

A comprehensive audit of the planning scheme has been prepared and is included in Chapter 6. Any consequential changes are shown in the marked up ordinance at Appendix 2 and will form the basis of a planning scheme amendment to implement the planning scheme review.

The audit included updating terms that have been changed, deleted or introduced since September 2018.

3.3.5 Removing roadblocks to improvement

DTP recommendation

Recommendation 13 is to assess whether new *Victoria Planning Provisions* tools would be more appropriate to implement planning objectives. For example, the Built Form Overlay in place of existing overlays or the Precinct Zone in place of the Activity Centre Zone or Special Use Zone.

Council response

New VPP tools are directed primarily at housing growth in and around activity centres in Metropolitan Melbourne and are not considered appropriate or necessary for Murrindindi.

3.3.6 Mapping of environmental risks

DTP recommendation:

Recommendation 14 is to identify where mapping of environmental risks should be updated.

Council response:

Murrindindi's key environmental risks are riverine flooding, bushfire (landscape and lot level) and erosion. Major hazard facilities are not relevant to the Shire.

Flooding

- There is a backlog of flood studies that have been completed but not yet implemented in the planning scheme. Most of the Shire is within the Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority area, with a small southern portion within the Melbourne Water catchment.
- The Acheron River study is being implemented by DTP through a standing advisory committee, expected to be complete by the end of July 2026.
- The King Parrot Creek and Flowerdale study is complete but stalled at the amendment stage some years ago due to community opposition. It is still to be implemented. Council, DTP and the CMA will discuss a way forward.
- Work was undertaken on the Yea River and requires follow-up to determine whether planning scheme changes are required.

Bushfire

- Landscape scale bushfire assessment is required to inform settlement planning. An assessment has been completed for Yea.
- A shire wide assessment is preferred, subject to funding. Otherwise, assessments will be progressed through township-based projects such as the Alexandra structure plan.

Erosion

- Erosion assessment is required. Neighbouring alpine councils have mapped slopes and soil types for erosion on private land, identifying lots where a geotechnical standard would apply to new dwellings. A similar assessment is proposed for Murrindindi.

Action is required to update flood mapping, landscape bushfire assessment and erosion assessment, and to implement them.

3.4 State and Federal policy

Since the last review there has been significant reform that has affected planning.

3.4.1 Housing and associated planning reforms

The National Housing Accord sets an aspiration of delivery one million new homes across Australia over five years starting from 2024. It also includes supporting the delivery of 20,000 affordable homes at a federal level, and the same number by state and territory government. Funding and delivering mechanism that have been established to deliver this housing include the Housing Australia Future Fund Facility and the National Housing Accord Facility.

The Victorian Government released Victoria's Housing Statement in September 2023. This sets out a target of delivering an additional 2.24 million houses in Victoria by 2051 and outlines a range of planning, taxation, funding and regulatory levers that will be used to facilitate delivery.

Numerous changes have been made to the planning system, with more proposed, to facilitate the delivery of housing in line with Victoria's Housing Statement. These include:

- As-of-right small second dwellings.
- Codification of planning rules for housing.
- De-emphasising neighbourhood character as the starting point for housing decision making.
- Removal of the planning permit requirement for single dwellings on small lots and two lot subdivisions.
- Establishing housing capacity targets for each municipality.
- Nomination of high-density locations based on proximity to public transport throughout Victoria (this doesn't affect Murrindindi).

3.4.2 Treaty for Victoria

The Statewide Treaty was signed and the Statewide Treaty Act 2025 received Royal Assent on 13 November 2025, with the treaty formally commencing on 12 December 2025. For planning practice, the implications relate to process changes that will need to be made to both strategic planning and development assessment.

The Act establishes Gellung Warl as a permanent statutory authority that advises government during development of policy and legislation. This will impact the way planning scheme amendments, and their underlying strategic reports, are prepared. First Peoples will increasingly need to be involved in early, formalised engagement rather than late-stage referral.

Existing mechanisms (CHMPs under the Aboriginal Heritage Act, RAP advisory roles on scheme amendments affecting Aboriginal heritage) will continue as is for the time being.

The reforms to the Planning and Environment Act 1987 insert a new objective to recognise, protect and promote the rights, interests and value of Traditional Owners, and respect their ongoing cultural, spiritual and custodial relationship to country, including land, sky and water. Specific consultation with Traditional Owners during the planning scheme amendment process will now be required as part of the strategic assessment process, and included in the explanatory report.

Once the relevant provisions of the Planning Amendment (Better Decisions Made Faster) Act 2026 commence, Registered Aboriginal Parties will receive early notification of proposed development on land prescribed as culturally sensitive. This will operate in addition to, not in substitution for, existing requirements under the Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006, including mandatory Cultural Heritage Management Plans.

The new Traditional Owner objective in the Act becomes a relevant consideration for planning permit decision making under s60, which gives RAP submissions statutory weight decision making.

There is likely to be some increase in workload associated with introduction of Treaty, and there may be additional costs incurred by Council in consulting with Registered Aboriginal Parties who generally charge a fee for service.

3.4.3 Planning Amendment (Better Decisions Made Faster) Act 2026

The *Planning Amendment (Better Decisions Made Faster) Act 2026* is the most significant overhaul of Victoria's planning legislation in decades, extensively amending the PE Act across multiple stages of the planning process. It's driven by the Housing Statement and Plan for Victoria (the 2.24 million homes target) and also responds to IBAC's Operation Sandon recommendations on transparency and accountability. The main reforms introduced by the Act are:

New objectives in the Planning and Environment Act

These include increasing housing supply, diversity and affordability, and facilitating efficient infrastructure provision, plus recognising and protecting the rights and interests of Traditional Owners, with new consultation requirements in both amendment and permit processes.

Tiered planning permit pathways

Three application types (Type 1, 2 and 3) in order of complexity, each with different notice, referral, review and decision requirements, supported by deemed approvals and a significantly curtailed objection system are introduced by the Act. Notice moves away from the "material detriment" test, which is replaced with classes of notified parties defined by schemes or Ministerial guidelines.

Tiered planning scheme amendment pathways

Three categories of planning scheme amendments will be introduced— low, medium and high impact categories. Each pathway has different requirements in relation to exhibition and planning panels. Amendment authorisation gets clearer decision-making criteria and defined timeframes.

Proponent led amendments

Requests to council for an amendment are formalised: councils must advise the requester and the Minister of their decision and give reasons for not progressing, and the Minister can pick up and continue an abandoned amendment as planning authority.

Affordable housing

A new head of power to require affordable housing contributions from development, with cash-in-lieu to be spent on affordable housing in the same municipality.

Restrictive covenants

Permits can now be granted even if they breach a covenant, with the responsible authority not liable for resulting loss, and financial loss to beneficiaries excluded from the mandatory considerations.

Other changes

- The Minister must give councils at least 30 days' notice before approving VC amendments.
- Changes to Distinctive Area Landscape and GAIC administration have been introduced.
- Compensation provisions have been refined and strengthened.
- New compliance and enforcement powers have been introduced.

Commencement is staged with all changes being made by 29 October 2027.

Conclusion

The changes to the legislation will involve considerable changes to statutory processes internally.

In particular, Greenlight will have to be updated to deal with the tiered planning permit pathways.

The reporting requirements associated with changes to planning scheme amendment processes will mean that Council will need to develop a system to record statutory days associated with amendments, and requests for proponent led amendments.

3.5 Other Victorian government amendments (VC and GC)

3.5.1 Overview of amendments

Since the previous planning scheme review, there has been significant planning reform, and numerous amendments to the Murrindindi Planning Scheme. There have been:

- 72 VC amendments
- Two GC amendments
- Six C amendments, of which five were gazetted and one lapsed.

Appendix Four contains a complete list of the amendments that have occurred since August 2024.

3.5.2 C (Council) amendments

Six C amendments have been prepared since the last Planning Scheme Review. C71muri was exhibited in late 2023 but lapsed. It proposed to rezone the Toolangi Forest Discovery Centre from Public Conservation and Resource Zone to Public Park and Recreation Zone and insert an incorporated document. Of the five gazetted amendments, four were site specific and one was administrative.

The four site specific amendments were:

- C78muri, gazetted 17 February 2026, which rezones part of 37 Extons Road, Kinglake Central from Public Use Zone 2 (Education) to Farming Zone (Schedule 1) and applies the Environmental Significance Overlay (Schedule 1).
- C77muri, gazetted 24 March 2025, which rezones part of 10 Eighth Street, Eildon from Public Park and Recreation Zone to General Residential Zone (Schedule 1) and amends Clause 5202 to enable key worker accommodation.
- C76muri, gazetted 1 March 2024, which rezones surplus Goulburn Valley Water land and adjoining private land at Buxton from Public Conservation and Resource Zone to Farming Zone.
- C75muri, gazetted 25 January 2024, which rezones land at 124 Dyes Lane, Buxton from Public Conservation and Resource Zone to Farming Zone

The administrative amendment was C73muri, gazetted 14 November 2025, which implemented the recommendations of the 2023 Planning Scheme Review by making policy-neutral changes to align the scheme with the Ministerial Direction on the Form and Content of Planning Schemes and A Practitioner's Guide to Victoria's Planning Schemes. It refreshed the Municipal Planning Strategy, zone and overlay schedules, operational provisions, and outdated references.

3.5.3 VC (Victoria Planning Provision and Council) and GC (Group of Council) amendments

Most of the VC and GC amendments since the last review have had no impact or minimal impact on the way Council as the Responsible Authority will make decisions, or on planning outcomes, as shown in the table at Appendix Four.

The VC and GC amendments that have had a moderate or significant impact to the Murrindindi Planning Scheme are:

- A housing capacity target of 3,350 dwellings for Murrindindi has been included in the planning scheme (VC283)..
- Bushfire planning provisions at Clause 13.02-1S and Clause 53.02 have been updated (VC248). This significantly affects the way settlement planning is undertaken and the assessment of planning permit applications, particularly at the edges of settlements. Almost the whole Shire is within the Bushfire Prone Area (as determined under Section 192A of the *Building Act 1993*). Development in Bushfire Prone Areas must now meet the bushfire standards set out in Clause 53.02 Bushfire Planning.
- Existing canopy trees on private land have greater protection, and minimum canopy tree requirements apply to new dwellings (VC289). This will be addressed in planning permit applications as they come in.
- A small second dwelling can be built on most land without a planning permit, provided the total floor area is less than 60 square metres and the height less than 5 metres (VC253). It is likely many landowners will take up this opportunity, especially in the Farming Zone, as it is a pathway to an additional dwelling without demonstrating a nexus between the small second dwelling and the agricultural use of the land.
- There is now a deemed to comply pathway for dwellings that require a planning permit, which removes third party appeal rights to VCAT (VC282 and VC267). Most applicants are expected to aim to meet the deemed to comply provisions to avoid appeals by neighbours.

This provides more certainty for applicants and should speed up approvals, but may cause some discontent in the community.

- There is now a 10-day fast track pathway for two dwellings on a lot, and for subdivision of residential land into two lots (VC288). This is an efficiency improvement and should speed up approvals.
- Emergency recovery provisions have changed to increase the time a planning permit must be acted on from five years to seven years (VC272). This provides additional time for post bushfire recovery, including from the most recent fires.
- Use of land for extractive industry has greater support in the planning system, and amenity controls to protect nearby landowners have been strengthened (VC219). Extractive industry applications are often controversial. The community may feel they have reduced grounds on which to object, which may cause some discontent.

Conclusion

These amendments change the nature of the statutory planning team's workload more than its volume. Routine applications, including dwellings, small second dwellings and two lot subdivision of residential land, should move faster through the fast track and deemed to comply pathways. The bushfire changes at Clause 53.02 add assessment requirements across the Bushfire Prone Area, which covers almost the whole Shire, will increase the complexity of that part of the caseload.

3.6 Findings and recommendations

3.6.1 Key issues to resolve

Several findings from this chapter are explored in more detail in the key issues chapter (Chapter 10) and a path forward set out. These findings are:

Housing and settlement related

- Refreshing the Housing and Settlement Strategy to identify how the Plan for Victoria housing capacity target of 3,350 dwellings can be accommodated.
- Review the application of the residential zones, having regard to PPN90 and PPN91.
- Establish settlement boundaries for Alexandra and Yea.

Bushfire related

- Consider preparing a landscape scale bushfire assessment for the Shire to inform Structure Planning and other settlement planning decisions.

Erosion related

- Investigate erosion and land slip risk through technical risk assessment and hazard mapping, and update Clause 02.03-3 (Environmental Risks and Amenity) and determine if an Erosion Management Overlay is required for steep slopes.

3.6.2 Findings and further strategy work

Appendix One (planning ordinance) has been marked up to:

- Update the population and dwelling data in Clause 02.01 (Context) to VIF 2023 and ABS 2025 data, and to reflect the data in the Housing Strategy 2022.

- Update terminology, schedule templates and special purpose zone land use terms through the amendment.

3.6.3 Recommendations

The following advocacy is recommended:

- Adv 1. Advocate to and support the Catchment Management Authorities to update and implement flood mapping, ensuring climate change impacts have been considered and clearing the backlog of unimplemented studies including studies for Parrot Creek and Flowerdale and Yea River.**

The following process improvements are recommended:

- Imp 1. Prepare Greenlight for changes that will be require to process planning permits, referrals and planning scheme amendments because of the *Planning Amendment (Better Decisions Made Faster) Act 2026* as they are rolled out ver the next eighteen months.**

4 Previous Planning Scheme Review

4.1 Previous Planning Scheme Review

The Murrindindi Planning Scheme was last reviewed by Plan2Place Consulting and Wayfarer Consulting in 2023. Its policy neutral recommendations were implemented via Amendment C73muri in November 2025.

The review found:

- The MPS needed administrative and population updates, a clearer settlement hierarchy and an improved Strategic Framework Plan.
- PPF policies could be better targeted to settlement directions and town framework plans.
- Low density residential and rural zone schedules and mapping should use single schedules for clarity.
- The Special Use Zone, ESO, VPO and SLO should be redrafted for consistency with the MDFC.
- There was scope for greater use of local VicSmart provisions.
- The scheme was administered well, with a low number of appeals and refusals.
- The strategic planning function was under resourced, with one strategic planner for more than 15 concurrent projects.

The review made 32 recommendations, grouped as planning scheme amendment, further strategic work, process improvement, advocacy and Minister for Planning.

4.2 Progress since last review

4.2.1 Completed projects

Council has implemented two recommendations from the last review, including:

- Amendment C73muri (gazetted 14 November 2025), which implemented the administrative, policy neutral recommendations.
- Yea Structure Plan 2025, adopted on 22 October 2025
- Implement the review of the Restructure Overlay and update the Bayview Estate restructure plan. This is abandoned due to yielding only one additional lot.

4.2.2 Projects underway

Council is currently progressing Amendment C79 (Yea Structure Plan), with authorisation requested but not yet granted.

4.3 Outstanding work since last review

Most further strategic work from the 2023 review remains unprogressed, and many issues identified in the 2019 review persist. This section sets out the plan of attack for the unprogressed items.

4.3.1 Planning projects still required.

- Prepare a structure plan for Alexandra¹.
- Implement significant landscape protection through updated mapping, policy and provisions, as the Planisphere 2005 study is out of date and needs replacing.
- ²Undertake a municipal industrial and commercial land strategy, with emphasis on the Yea Saleyards Precinct. This merges two Clause 74.02 recommendations.
- Implement the Housing and Settlement Strategy, 2022, including how rural living and low density residential land relate to housing supply and affordability
- Insert Heritage Overlay (Clause 43.01) statements of significance for sites not in the Victorian Heritage Register³.

4.3.2 Rural related projects

A number of projects could be combined and dealt with in a rural strategy. These are listed below and then discussed further in Chapter 10.

- Review and updating environmental overlays in Marysville, including replacing the VPO with the SLO
- Partner with Agriculture Victoria on high quality agricultural land and biosecurity

4.3.3 Process improvement projects

- Partner with Goulburn Murray Water on controls for the declared water supply catchment north of Eildon.
- The purpose of this project is to introduce efficiencies into the referral process for applications in the declared water catchment area north of Eildon. Progressing this has the potential to reduce referrals and speed up the processing time for applications.
- Add local classes of minor VicSmart applications to Clause 59.16 Schedule 1.
- This recommendation remains valid, but it requires further work to identify suitable classes of application. Once that is done, VicSmart schedules can be prepared to fast track items. The discussion about planning permits activity in Chapter 6 provides an insight on what may be suitable classes of application to fast track and the recommendation for this item is included there.

4.3.4 Advocacy projects

One of tasks on the uncompleted list are not Council's responsibility. Council's responsibility is to advocate and support the relevant statutory authority to action the recommendation. A

¹ Note, this is recommended in the Housing and Settlement Strategy (adopted 14 December 2022) and will be informed by the Alexandra East Development Plan currently underway.

² It is noted that Council is also working with other councils in the region to advocate to the state government to do a region wide landscape assessment as it has for other parts of the state (Grampians, Bass Coast, Great Ocean Road, Macedon Ranges). This is included as an ongoing advocacy action in this section.

³ Council to confirm whether the statement of significance have been prepared or still need to be done.

recommendation in relation to this was included in Chapter 3 so it is not repeated in this section.

- Implement the Acheron Valley Flood Study (GBCMA, 2019) and update LSIO and FO mapping. This was added to Clause 74.02 at the Catchment Management Authority's request through C73muri, and is to be implemented by DTP to address statewide backlog.

4.3.5 Low priority / unrealistic projects

A number of projects identified in the last review are aspirational for a municipality the size of Murrundindi, and would require considerable budget and resources to deliver. At this stage, the gains that would be made are considered to be limited. This includes:

- Introduce the 5% public open space contribution at Clause 53.01

This project is also recommended in the Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan, but planning officers have questioned the value to be gained against the costs associated with the task. It is discussed further in Chapter 10.

- Audit social infrastructure assets, provision and future population needs

Again, this is a project that would be good to do, but is resource intensive and should only be undertaken if there is a clear need and the benefit of the project will outweigh the costs. It has not emerged as an issue through this review. It has been included in Appendix 3 (Further strategic work) as a low priority project, but would benefit from further discussion internally.

- Implement the Eildon Structure Plan, 2016

This project is no longer a planning project as it is more focused on infrastructure coordination and delivery. There is no planning scheme action required to implement this project, so it has been deleted from the further strategic work program.

4.4 Findings and recommendations

4.4.1 Key issues to resolve:

The following findings identified in this Chapter are key issues and require further discussion. They are expanded on in Chapter 10, as they are broad issues that require an integrated response.

Housing and settlement related

- Implementing the Housing and Settlement Strategy including how rural living and low density residential land relate to housing supply and affordability.

Rural strategy related

- Rural strategy including high quality agricultural land and biosecurity and reviewing and updating environmental overlays in Marysville, including replacing the VPO with the SLO.
- Implement significant landscape protection through updated mapping, policy and provisions, as the Planisphere 2005 study is out of date and needs replacing

Open space related

- Introduce the 5% public open space contribution at Clause 53.01

4.4.2 Findings and further strategic work

Appendix Three has been updated to include the following item of further strategic work:

- Prepare a structure plan for Alexandra.
- Undertake a municipal industrial and commercial land strategy, with emphasis on the Yea Saleyards Precinct.
- Audit social infrastructure assets, provision and future population needs.

4.4.3 Recommendations:

Process improvement recommendations are:

Imp 2. Partner with Goulburn Murray Water to streamline the referral process for applications in the declared water supply catchment north of Eildon.

Advocacy recommendations are:

Adv 2. Continue to work with councils in the north east region to advocate that the State Government prepare and implement a significance landscape assessment for the alpine region.

5 Audit and assessment of current scheme

5.1 Methodology

An audit of each local provision (policies and schedules) in the Planning Scheme has been completed, comparing their drafting and application against the Ministerial Direction on the Form and Content of Planning Schemes, the Practitioner's Guide to Victoria's Planning Schemes (Version 8, August 2025) and relevant planning practice notes

In addition, the audit addresses the following points of the Planning Scheme Review Advisory note, March 2026 issued by DTP which asks Council to:

- 1 Identify any inconsistencies between local policies and state and regional policies in the Planning Policy Framework (PPF) resulting from changes made by Amendment VC283 (*Plan for Victoria*) and other amendments to the PPF since the last planning scheme review.
- 2 Identify any conflicts between local policies and schedules, and changed state standard provisions including:
 - clause 52.06 (Car parking) – amended
 - clause 52.27 (Licensed premises) – deleted
 - clause 52.37 (Canopy trees) – new
 - clause 54 (One dwelling on a lot or a small second dwelling on a lot) – amended
 - clause 55 (Two or more dwellings on a lot and residential buildings) – amended
 - clause 57 (Two or more dwellings on a lot and residential buildings of four storeys) – amended
- 10 Resolve any inconsistencies in terminology with Plan for Victoria activity centres hierarchy and regional settlement hierarchy.
- 11 Ensure all schedules align with their relevant schedule template.
- 12 Review special purpose zones to ensure land use terms are up to date.

Each provision was also assessed for its contribution to achieving the strategic objectives set out in the State, regional and local planning provisions.

Detailed audit outcomes have been provided to Council officers, and changes that can be made without further strategic work are reflected in the ordinance in Appendix Two.

Findings on potential improvements are listed below. Some can be implemented as part of a Planning Scheme Review (and provided as marked-up ordinance) while others require further strategic work to justify the change (and are listed as findings).

5.2 Municipal Planning Strategy

The MPS was also cross referenced against all the other local provisions in the scheme to ensure links to all local policies. Changes may be required to align the Planning Scheme Review Advisory note.

Clause no. and name	Change	Findings and action
02.01 Context	Spell out 'ABS' as 'Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS)' and 'VIF' as 'Victoria in Future (VIF)' on first use.	Amendment
02.02 Vision		Complies
02.03-1 Settlement		Complies
02.03-2 Environmental and landscape values	Correct verb forms: 'Locate and designing' -> 'Locate and design'; 'Protect and enhancing' (x2) -> 'Protect and enhance'. In 02.03-5: change 'colourful' to 'interesting'.	Amendment
02.03-3 Environmental risks and amenity		Complies
02.03-4 Natural resource management		Complies
02.03-5 Built environment and heritage	Change 'colourful' to 'interesting'.	Amendment
02.03-6 Housing		Complies
02.03-7 Economic development		Complies
02.03-8 Transport	Change 'Improve transport/connectivity in Kinglake Ranges' to 'Improve transport connectivity between settlements in the Kinglake Ranges and nearby service settlements'. Change 'east/west link' to 'east/west transport link'.	Amendment
02.03-9 Infrastructure		Complies
02.04 Strategic Framework Plans - Murrindindi Shire Framework Plan	Update the framework plan to show future change and growth directions	Further strategic work

5.3 Planning Policy Framework

The table below lists all local PPF policies in the Planning Scheme, noting whether they comply or require changes following this review. Changes may be required to align with the Ministerial Direction on the Form and Content of Planning Schemes and the Planning Scheme Review Advisory note, or to clarify policies, as identified through the analysis and engage stages of this review.

Clause no. and name	Change	Findings and action
11.01-1L Settlement - Murrindindi townships and settlements		Complies
13.02-1L BUSHFIRE PLANNING	Change heading level to Head C. Spell out 'CFA' as 'Country Fire Authority (CFA)' on first use.	Amendment

Clause no. and name	Change	Findings and action
13.02-1L BUSHFIRE PLANNING	Delete paragraph beginning with "Facilitate expansion of"	Further strategic work
13.07-1L ALEXANDRA INDUSTRIAL PRECINCT	Change heading level to Head C.	Amendment
14.01-1L Dwelling excisions in rural areas	Reword the 'Maintain an adequate distance' strategy to: 'Maintain enough distance around dwellings to minimise the impacts of the use on surrounding agricultural activity, considering:' with dot points covering the nature of the surrounding agricultural use, the potential for agricultural use to be impacted by the dwelling use, and mitigation measures that could manage or reduce any impacts. Delete the 'Demonstrate sustainable use of the land' strategy and transpose it into a new policy guideline reading 'Whether the use and development demonstrates:' with dot points for sustainable use of the land, how environmental constraints have been addressed, and measures taken to protect and enhance the natural environment. 'Providing the following dimensions when permitting excision of an existing dwelling:'. Change 'Limit' to 'Limiting' and 'Discourage' to 'Discouraging' throughout policy guideline dot points. Change 'existing house' to 'existing dwelling'.	Amendment
15.03-1L Heritage conservation		Complies
16.01-2L Residential development in serviced and non-serviced towns	Remove cross-reference to Clause 2.03 (verify all settlements are listed directly). Change 'Enforce' to 'Establish'.	Amendment
16.01-2L Residential development in serviced and non-serviced towns	Establish the settlement boundaries to take into consideration local character, bushfire risk and the impacts on other land uses, particularly agriculture.	Further strategic work
19.03-2L Infrastructure design and provision	Add specific edition date to 'Infrastructure Design Manual' citation. Align all IDM references throughout the scheme to the same edition.	Amendment

5.4 Zones

The table below lists all zone schedules in the Planning Scheme, noting whether they comply or require changes following this review. Changes may be required to align with the Ministerial Direction on the Form and Content of Planning Schemes and the Planning Scheme Review Advisory note, or to clarify the schedule as identified through the analysis and engage stages of this review.

Clause no. and name	Change	Findings and action
Schedule 1 to Clause 32.03 Low Density Residential Zone		Complies

Clause no. and name	Change	Findings and action
Schedule 2 to Clause 32.03 Low Density Residential Zone		Complies
Schedule 3 to Clause 32.03 Low Density Residential Zone		Complies
Schedule 4 to Clause 32.03 Low Density Residential Zone		Complies
Schedule 1 to Clause 32.04 Mixed Use Zone - MURRINDINDI MIXED USE AREAS		Complies
Schedule 1 to Clause 32.05 Township Zone - MURRINDINDI TOWNSHIPS		Complies
Schedule 1 to Clause 32.08 General Residential Zone - MURRINDINDI GENERAL RESIDENTIAL AREA		Complies
Schedule to Clause 33.01 Industrial 1 Zone		Complies
Schedule to Clause 33.02 Industrial 2 Zone		Complies
Schedule to Clause 34.01 Commercial 1 Zone		Complies
Schedule 1 to Clause 35.03 Rural Living Zone		Complies
Schedule 2 to Clause 35.03 Rural Living Zone		Complies
Schedule 3 to Clause 35.03 Rural Living Zone		Complies
Schedule 4 to Clause 35.03 Rural Living Zone		Complies
Schedule 1 to Clause 35.06 Rural Conservation Zone - CONSERVATION VALUES	Rephrase as values (currently read as objectives)	Amendment
Schedule 1 to Clause 35.07 Farming Zone		Complies
Schedule 1 to Clause 35.08 Rural Activity Zone	Include a purpose statement (not mandatory but recommended)	Further strategic work
Schedule to Clause 36.01 Public Use Zone		Complies
Schedule to Clause 36.02 Public Park and Recreation Zone		Complies
Schedule to Clause 36.03 Public Conservation and Resource Zone		Complies
Schedule 1 to Clause 37.01 Special Use Zone - EILDON SWITCHYARD		Complies
Schedule 2 to Clause 37.01 Special Use Zone - MAJOR TOURISM FACILITY, MARYSVILLE	Schedule 2 to Clause 37.01 Section 6.0 is non compliant with MDFC schedule structure. Review and find appropriate location.	Further strategic work

5.5 Overlays

The table below lists all overlay schedules in the Planning Scheme, noting whether they comply or require changes following this review. Changes may be required to align with the Ministerial Direction on the Form and Content of Planning Schemes and the Planning Scheme Review Advisory note, or to clarify the schedules as identified through the analysis and engage stages of this review.

Clause no. and name	Change	Findings and action
Schedule 1 to Clause 42.01 Environmental Significance Overlay - HIGH QUALITY AGRICULTURAL LAND	Formalise the DEECA referral in Clause 66.04	Amendment
Schedule 1 to Clause 42.01 Environmental Significance Overlay - HIGH QUALITY AGRICULTURAL LAND	Schedule 1 to Clause 42.01 Section 2.0 only permits one objective. Revise objective.	Further strategic work
Schedule 2 to Clause 42.01 Environmental Significance Overlay - PHEASANT CREEK ROAD BUFFER AREA	Schedule 2 to Clause 42.01 Section 2.0 only permits one objective. Revise objective. Full review of schedule is warranted including ensuring address info for heritage places is up to date	Further strategic work
Schedule 1 to Clause 42.02 Vegetation Protection Overlay - MARYSVILLE VEGETATION PROTECTION AREA	Update document name and date for Advisory list of environmental weeds	Amendment
Schedule 1 to Clause 42.03 Significant Landscape Overlay - CATHEDRAL RANGE	Correct 'instrusion' to 'intrusion'.	Amendment
Schedule 1 to Clause 42.03 Significant Landscape Overlay - CATHEDRAL RANGE	Replace all slashes with 'or' throughout schedule.	Amendment
Schedule 1 to Clause 42.03 Significant Landscape Overlay - CATHEDRAL RANGE	Move National Trust referral from DGs to Clause 66.06 (notice only).	Amendment
Schedule 1 to Clause 42.03 Significant Landscape Overlay - CATHEDRAL RANGE	Expand the statement of nature and key elements.	Further strategic work
Schedule 2 to Clause 42.03 Significant Landscape Overlay - LAKE EILDON AND SURROUNDS	Replace slash with 'or'	Amendment
Schedule 2 to Clause 42.03 Significant Landscape Overlay - LAKE EILDON AND SURROUNDS	Move National Trust referral from DGs to Clause 66.06 (notice only).	Amendment
Schedule to Clause 43.01 Heritage Overlay	Develop statements of significance for non-VHR heritage places	Further strategic work
Schedule 1 to Clause 43.02 Design and Development Overlay - KING PARROT CREEK ENVIRONS	Change Objective 5 from 'Achieve the vision...' to 'To achieve the vision...'.	Amendment
Schedule 1 to Clause 43.02 Design and Development Overlay - KING PARROT CREEK ENVIRONS	Revise Objectives in Section 1 to remove references to documents Consider translating into a ESO instead of a DDO. Update references.	Further strategic work

Clause no. and name	Change	Findings and action
Schedule 1 to Clause 43.02 Design and Development Overlay - KING PARROT CREEK ENVIRONS	Move Goulburn Murray Water referral to Clause 66.06 (notice only). Keep 'Goulburn Murray Water' named - place-specific, GMW is the relevant authority for King Parrot Creek.	Amendment
Schedule 2 to Clause 43.02 Design and Development Overlay - MARYSVILLE TOWN CENTRE	Revise decision guidelines to remove reference to the documents and report, and replace with decision guidelines extracted from the reports	Further strategic work
Schedule 2 to Clause 43.02 Design and Development Overlay - MARYSVILLE TOWN CENTRE	Incorporate the viewlines, corridors and landmarks into a map that forms part of the schedule	Further strategic work
Schedule 1 to Clause 43.04 Development Plan Overlay - GENERAL RESIDENTIAL ZONE	Change 'requirements' to 'requirement' (singular - MDfC). Move TIA Report item to a new standalone paragraph (not a dot point). Add full citation with edition date to IDM reference. Remove provisions that duplicate parent Clause 43.04.	Amendment
Schedule 1 to Clause 43.04 Development Plan Overlay - GENERAL RESIDENTIAL ZONE	Change and/or to or	Amendment
Schedules 1-5 to Clause 43.04 Development Plan Overlay - GENERAL RESIDENTIAL ZONE	Remove parent provision duplicates	Amendment
Schedule 2 to Clause 43.04 Development Plan Overlay - LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL ZONE	Move TIA Report item to a new standalone paragraph.	Amendment
Schedules 1-5 to Clause 43.04 Development Plan Overlay - GENERAL RESIDENTIAL ZONE	Add full citation to Infrastructure Design manual	Amendment
Schedule 4 to Clause 43.04 Development Plan Overlay - INDUSTRIAL 1 AND 2 ZONES	Change 'requirements' to 'requirement'.	Amendment
Schedule 4 to Clause 43.04 Development Plan Overlay - INDUSTRIAL 1 AND 2 ZONES	Work with CFA to formalise CFA as a referral authority under Clause 66.04	Further strategic work
Schedule 1 to Clause 44.01 Erosion Management Overlay	Consider adding a Statement of Risk.	Further strategic work
Schedule 1 to Clause 44.03 Floodway Overlay and Clause 44.04 Land Subject to Inundation Overlay		Complies
Schedule 1 to Clause 44.04 Land Subject to Inundation Overlay	Change clause cross-reference in Section 5 from 44.03 to 44.04 (drafting error). Change 'Residential 1 Zone' to 'General Residential Zone Schedule 1 (GRZ1)', Change business zones to commercial zones.	Amendment
Schedule 1 to Clause 44.06 Bushfire Management Overlay - BUXTON, EILDON, KINGLAKE BAL-12.5 AREAS		Complies
Schedule 2 to Clause 44.06 Bushfire Management Overlay - KINGLAKE, MARYSVILLE BAL-29 AREAS		Complies

Clause no. and name	Change	Findings and action
Schedule to Clause 45.05 Restructure Overlay	Move all informal referrals to Clause 66.06 (notice only).	Amendment
Schedule to Clause 45.05 Restructure Overlay	Update: DELWP -> DEECA (environment) or DTP (transport/planning context); VicRoads -> 'Head, Transport for Victoria'.	Amendment
Schedule to Clause 45.05 Restructure Overlay	Change "dependent person's unit" to "small second dwelling" as per VC253	Amendment
Schedule to Clause 45.12 Specific Controls Overlay		Complies

An advocacy recommendation from this section is to work with the CMA to incorporate the Murrindindi Floodplain Development Plan into the LSIO decision guidelines rather than relying on a separate document.

5.6 Particular provisions

The table below lists all particular provision schedules that are available to be applied in the Planning Scheme, noting whether they comply or require changes following this review. Changes may be required to align with the Ministerial Direction on the Form and Content of Planning Schemes and the Planning Scheme Review Advisory note, or to clarify the provision as identified through the analysis and engage stages of the review.

Clause no. and name	Change	Findings and action
Schedule to Clause 51.01 Specific Sites and Exclusions		Complies
Schedule to Clause 52.02 Easements, Restrictions and Reserves		Complies
Schedule to Clause 52.05 Signs		Complies
Schedule to Clause 52.16 Native Vegetation Precinct		Complies
Schedule to Clause 52.17 Native Vegetation		Complies
Schedule to Clause 52.28 Gaming	Change 'Department of Human Resources' to 'State of Victoria'.	Amendment
Schedule to Clause 52.32 Wind Energy Facility		Complies
Schedule to Clause 52.33 Post Boxes and Dry Stone Walls		Complies
Schedule to Clause 53.01 Public Open Space Contribution and Subdivision		Complies
Schedule to Clause 53.06 Live Music Entertainment Venues		Complies
Schedule to Clause 53.15 Statement of Underlying Provisions		Complies

Clause no. and name	Change	Findings and action
Schedule to Clause 59.15 Local VicSmart Applications		Complies
Schedule 1 to Clause 59.16 Information Requirements and Decision Guidelines for Local VicSmart Applications		Complies

5.7 General provisions

The table below lists the general provisions that have a schedule available, notating whether they comply or require changes following this review. Changes may be required to align with the Ministerial Direction on the Form and Content of Planning Schemes and the Planning Scheme Review Advisory note, or to clarify the policy as identified through the analysis and engage stages of the review.

Clause no. and name	Change	Findings and action
Schedule to Clause 66.04 Referral of Permit Applications under Local Provisions	Change 'Goulburn Murray Water' to 'relevant water authority' in local entry.	Amendment
Schedule to Clause 66.04 Referral of Permit Applications under Local Provisions	Commission a mapped layer of water authorities and CMAs to clarify what applies where in Murrindindi.	Further strategic work
Schedule to Clause 66.06 Notice of Permit Applications under Local Provisions	Update "Kind" to "King"	Amendment

5.8 Operational provisions

The table below lists all the operational provision schedules that are available to be applied in the Planning Scheme, noting whether they comply or require changes following this review. Changes may be required to align with the Ministerial Direction on the Form and Content of Planning Schemes and the Planning Scheme Review Advisory note, or to clarify the policy as identified through the analysis and engage stages of the review.

Clause no. and name	Change	Findings and action
Schedule to Clause 72.01 Responsible Authority for this Planning Scheme		Complies
Schedule to Clause 72.02 What Area is Covered by this Planning Scheme?		Complies
Schedule to Clause 72.03 What Does this Planning Scheme Consist of?		Complies
Schedule to Clause 72.04 Incorporated Documents	Update document name and date for Advisory list of environmental weeds. Removed as amended	Amendment
Schedule to Clause 72.05 When Did this Planning Scheme Begin?		Complies
Schedule to Clause 72.08 Background Documents	Update document versions and dates	Amendment

Clause no. and name	Change	Findings and action
Schedule to Clause 74.01 Application of Zones, Overlays and Provisions		Complies
Schedule to Clause 74.02 Further Strategic Work		See below and refer to Chapter 11 for revised 74.02.

Clause 74.02 Further strategic work

Council officers have provided advice about the status of the current Clause 74.02. An action for each current project is included in column 3 of the table.

Project listed in 74.02 Further strategic work	Status	PSR action
Prepare and implement a structure plan for the Alexandra township.	Still relevant	Moved to Appendix 3 – Further Strategic Work list and prioritised in Chapter 11
Partner with Agriculture Victoria to identify and review high quality agricultural land, the significance of horticultural and agricultural land and how to best manage bio-security issues.	Still relevant	Has been bundled with Rural Strategy related issues in Chapter 10 and resolved there.
Support and partner with Goulburn Murray Water to undertake a review of planning requirements and controls for the declared water supply catchment area north of Eildon.	Still relevant	Identified as an advocacy action in this Planning Scheme Review.
Implement the report Management of Significant Landscapes in Murrindindi and Baw Baw (Planisphere, 2005) and introduce new SLO mapping, policy and provisions.	Still relevant	Moved to Appendix 3 – Further Strategic Work list and prioritised in Chapter 11.
Implement the review of the Restructure Overlay through revisions to the Restructure Overlay schedule and update and review the Bayview Estate restructure plan.	Completed. Project did not result in any changes due to low value (only one lot would be impacted).	Delete from work program.
Undertake a municipal Industrial and Commercial Land (Employment) Strategy.	Still relevant	Moved to Appendix 3 – Further Strategic Work list and prioritised in Chapter 11
Implement the review of environmental overlays with changes to maps and controls for the Significant Landscape Overlay (SLO), Environmental Significance Overlay (ESO) and Erosion Management Overlay (EMO), with the replacement of the Vegetation Protection Overlay (VPO) in the Maryville township area with the SLO.	Still relevant	Has been bundled with Rural Strategy related issues in Chapter 10 and resolved there.
Implement the Eildon Structure Plan, 2016.	Complete	Delete from work program. Competed from a planning perspective. Remaining tasks are infrastructure related.
Implement the Housing and Settlement Strategy, 2022 and provide a better understanding of the relationship of rural living and low density residential zoned land to housing	Still relevant	Has been bundled with Housing and Settlement

Project listed in 74.02 Further strategic work	Status	PSR action
provision and housing affordability (including the review of Rural Residential Study and Key Worker Accommodation).		related issues in Chapter 10 and resolved there.
Undertake a review of the Yea Saleyards Precinct and consider the appropriate planning response, such as applying the SUZ and BAO to the area.	Still relevant	Moved to Appendix 3 – Further Strategic Work list and prioritised in Chapter 11
Review the schedule to Clause 43.01 - Heritage Overlay to insert statements of significance for all sites not included in the Victorian Heritage Register.	Still relevant	Moved to Appendix 3 – Further Strategic Work list and prioritised in Chapter 11
Undertake an audit of social infrastructure assets and provision and the future needs of the municipality's population.	Still relevant	Moved to Appendix 3 – Further Strategic Work list and prioritised in Chapter 11
Review Schedule 1 to Clause 59.16 - information requirements and decision guidelines for local VicSmart applications to incorporate additional local classes of minor applications.	Still relevant	Has been bundled with VicSmart related issues in Chapter 10 and resolved there.
Implement the Acheron Valley Flood Study (GBCMA, 2019) and update mapping of the Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO) and the Flood Overlay (FO).	Still relevant	Identified as an advocacy action in this Planning Scheme Review.

5.9 Summary of findings and recommendations

5.9.1 Key issues to resolve

The following findings identified in this Chapter are key issues and require further discussion. They are expanded on in Chapter 10, as they are broad issues that require an integrated response.

Housing and settlement related

- Implement the Housing and Settlement Strategy, 2022 and provide a better understanding of the relationship of rural living and low density residential zoned land to housing provision and housing affordability (including the review of Rural Residential Study and Key Worker Accommodation).

Rural strategy related

- Partner with Agriculture Victoria to identify and review high quality agricultural land, the significance of horticultural and agricultural land and how to best manage bio-security issues.
- Implement the review of environmental overlays (Management of Significant Landscapes in Murrindindi and Baw Baw (Planisphere, 2005)) with changes to maps and controls for the Significant Landscape Overlay (SLO), Environmental Significance Overlay (ESO) and Erosion Management Overlay (EMO), with the replacement of the Vegetation Protection Overlay (VPO) in the Maryville township area with the SLO.

VicSmart related

- Review Schedule 1 to Clause 59.16 - information requirements and decision guidelines for local VicSmart applications to incorporate additional local classes of minor applications.

5.9.2 Findings and further strategic work

The following findings are resolved further strategic work and they have been moved to Chapter 11 and Appendix 3 for prioritisation.

- Update 02.04 Strategic Framework Plans - Murrindindi Shire Framework Plan: Update the framework plan to show future change and growth directions
- Update Schedule 1 to Clause 35.08 Rural Activity Zone: Include a purpose statement (not mandatory but recommended)
- Update Schedules 1 and 2 to Clause 42.01 Environmental Significance Overlay to reduce the number of objectives in Section 2.0 to one.
- Update Schedule 1 to Clause 42.03 Significant Landscape Overlay - Cathedral Range: Expand the statement of nature and key elements.
- Update Schedule to Clause 43.01 Heritage Overlay: Develop statements of significance for non-VHR heritage places
- Update Schedule 1 to Clause 43.02 Design and Development Overlay - King Parrot Creek Environs: Revise Objectives in Section 1 to remove references to documents
- Update Schedule 2 to Clause 43.02 Design and Development Overlay - Marysville Town Centre: Revise decision guidelines to remove reference to the documents and report, and replace with decision guidelines extracted from the reports
- Update Schedule 2 to Clause 43.02 Design and Development Overlay - Marysville Town Centre: Incorporate the viewlines, corridors and landmarks into a map that forms part of the schedule
- Prepare and implement a structure plan for the Alexandra township.
- Undertake a municipal Industrial and Commercial Land (Employment) Strategy.
- Undertake a review of the Yea Saleyards Precinct and consider the appropriate planning response, such as applying the SUZ and BAO to the area.
- Review the schedule to Clause 43.01 - Heritage Overlay to insert statements of significance for all sites not included in the Victorian Heritage Register.
- Undertake an audit of social infrastructure assets and provision and the future needs of the municipality's population.

The following projects have already been identified and dealt with elsewhere in this report:

- Implement the Acheron Valley Flood Study (GBCMA, 2019) and update mapping of the Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO) and the Flood Overlay (FO).

5.9.3 Recommendations:

The recommendations because of the findings in this chapter are:

PSA 1. Prepare a Planning Scheme amendment or amendments using the marked-up ordinance at Appendix One to incorporate the policy neutral changes identified in Chapter 5 to align the ordinance with the Ministerial Direction on the Form and Content of Planning Schemes and the Planning Scheme Review Advisory note, March 2026.

- Imp 3. Prepare a mapped layer of water authorities and CMAs (using VicPlan data) to clarify what applies where in Murrindindi to assist with identifying relevant referral authorities.**

6 Planning Scheme performance

This section contains planning permit activity analysis from the last four years. It draws on both publicly available Planning Permit Activity and Reporting System (PPARs) data and data provided by Council.

6.1 Planning permit activity

6.1.1 Data collection and quality

Council data were provided as a permit register covering 1 July 2022 to 30 April 2026. Four steps were taken to clean the data for analysis.

Categorisation of permits

Each permit was assigned to a standard subcategory based on the application description. This categorisation allows volume, decision time and approval rate to be compared across like-with-like application types. The subcategories used were:

- Commercial
- Educational and place of assembly
- Multi dwelling
- Multi lot subdivision
- Native vegetation removal
- Outbuildings normal to a dwelling
- Replacement dwelling
- Rural industry
- Sheds and extensions to sheds
- Single dwelling including extensions and alterations
- Small second dwelling
- Two lot subdivision
- Utilities and community infrastructure

In many cases the description was incomplete and assumptions were made to assign the permit.

Estimation of statutory days

The data recorded elapsed (calendar) days only, not statutory days. To approximate statutory days, a working-day factor was applied to the elapsed medians:

- × 0.70 for fast categories including sheds and extensions to sheds, outbuildings normal to a dwelling, replacement dwelling to remove weekend and public holiday days.
- × 0.65 for normal categories including single dwelling including extensions and alterations, two-lot subdivision, multi-dwelling, small second dwelling, native vegetation removal, utilities and community infrastructure to remove weekend and public holiday days plus 7% pause time for RFIs.

- × 0.63 for complex categories including multi lot subdivision, rural industry, educational and place of assembly, commercial to remove weekend and public holiday days plus 10% pause time for RFIs and referrals.

Council's data collection system should be updated to report on statutory days to enable proper analysis of performance to be made.

Use of median values

The dataset includes a small number of records with negative elapsed days, and a 2022/23 period of unusually high elapsed days consistent with a change of software or change in data entry practice during that year. To limit the influence of these outliers, median values are used throughout this analysis rather than averages.

Decision maker

The decision maker (officer under delegation, Council, or VCAT) was not recorded consistently. Delegation rates have therefore been inferred from available fields rather than reported directly.

Findings

The cleaned dataset is sufficient to identify the main patterns in volume, approval and decision time, but the manual categorisation and factoring of statutory days reduces the precision of year-on-year comparisons. There is an opportunity to tighten up data capture at lodgement so that Council can:

- Monitor performance against statutory benchmarks in real time.
- Identify slow categories quickly and target resources where decision times or contest rates are rising.
- Identify opportunities for streamlining or moving to VicSmart.

Data points to focus on are recording statutory days, tagging each application to a standard permit subcategory at lodgement (using a standard list adopted by Council), and recording the decision maker consistently for every permit.

6.1.2 Permits assessed

Evidence

Table 1 shows the number of permit applications received between the 2022/23 financial year and the 2023/24 financial year.

Table 1: Permits received and assessed between 1 Jul 2022 and 30 April 2026.

Permits (including refusals)	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26 (10 months)
Received	235	239	210	145 (172*)
Approved with no conditions	196	200	170	131 (157*)
Refused	6	0	0	1
NOD	18	11	14	2
Withdrawn	11	24	19	7
Permit not required	2	3	5	3
VCAT Decision - Approved	2	0	0	0

Permits (including refusals)	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26 (10 months)
VCAT Decision - Refused	0	1	2	0
Statutory days for decision making	No data			
Elapsed days for decision making	336	150	113	33

Source: Murrindindi Shire Council data.

*2025/26 data available to April 2026 only, data marked with * is projected to June 2026.

Discussion

Permit activity has been steady over the 4-year period, ranging between 210 and 239 applications received per year. The 2025/6 figure (projected pro rata to 172) suggests a modest decline. This may be explained by the planning reform changes that have removed the permit requirement dwellings on lots between 300 and 500 square metres. The impact of the fires over the summer period may also have slowed development slightly.

About 3% of decisions are refusals each year. Cases going to VCAT represent less than 2% in any year. 11 – 24% of applications are withdrawn each year. Notice of decisions (NODs) have reduced in the last year. This is almost certainly a result of the changes to Clause 54 which have removed the need for a planning permit for a single dwelling on a lot larger than 300sqm and Clause 55 which removes the need for notice if the proposal is deemed to comply.

The elapsed days to decision have dropped sharply, from 336 days in 2022/23 to 33 days in 2025/26. This may be a data error as there appears to be data collection system migration in 2023.

6.1.3 Service performance

Evidence

Table 2 shows the estimated median statutory days to process permits.

Table 2: Median estimated statutory days to decision for permit subcategories, July 2023 to Apr 2026.

Median estimated statutory days to final decision	Permit Subcategory
106	Educational and place of assembly
86	Multi lot subdivision
81	Rural industry
80	Two lot subdivision
66	Single dwelling including extensions and alterations
64	Multi dwelling
56	Commercial
48	Small second dwelling
42	Native vegetation removal
36	Utilities and community infrastructure
36	Replacement dwelling
25	Outbuildings normal to a dwelling
22	Sheds and extensions to sheds

Source: Murrindindi Shire Council data.

Discussion

The slowest categories to decision are educational and place of assembly (106 days), multi lot subdivision (86 days), and rural industry (81 days). Most other major categories take between 22 and 66 elapsed days.

The slowest categories share common features: complex referrals and multiple iterations for subdivisions and multi dwellings and limited local policy for rural industry and places of assembly. This may be causing lack of understanding in requirements among applicants, longer communication and decision times. Outbuildings and sheds are taking under 25 days, reflecting their typical VicSmart pathway and simple issues to be resolved.

Median estimated statutory days have improved steadily across the period.

Evidence

Table 3 compares the recent service performance of Murrindindi against comparable small councils.

Table 3: Time taken to decide planning applications (median statutory days).

Council	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Time taken to decide (median statutory days)			
Murrindindi Shire	47.3	42.2	56.3
Mansfield Shire	97.0	83.5	79.0
Alpine Shire	145.0	178.0	117.0
Similar council average	75.0	73.4	57.8
All council average	87.0	80.6	72.5
Planning applications decided within required timeframes			
Murrindindi Shire	77.9%	91.8%	69.5%
Mansfield Shire	66.0%	80.2%	59.0%
Alpine Shire	19.4%	22.8%	27.4%
Similar council average	64.9%	67.8%	69.2%
All council average	63.3%	67.7%	69.7%
Cost of statutory planning service per application			
Murrindindi Shire	\$1,404.36	\$1,982.88	\$1,788.25
Mansfield Shire	\$1,664.95	\$2,874.77	\$2,679.53
Alpine Shire	\$2,846.73	\$5,366.05	\$4,869.48
Similar council average	\$3,076.61	\$3,999.87	\$4,646.52
All council average	\$3,010.64	\$3,554.68	\$3,895.49

Source: Know Your Council, Local Government Victoria.

Discussion

Murrindindi performs strongly against comparable councils on all three measures.

On decision times, Murrindindi has consistently decided applications faster than the similar council average and the all-council average across the four years. The median rose to 56.3 statutory days in 24/25 but remains under the 60-day statutory benchmark and well below the all-council average of 72.5 days.

On cost, Murrindindi delivers the statutory planning service at \$1,788 per application in 24/25, less than half the similar council average of \$4,647. Costs have remained flat across the period while the similar council average has risen, indicating a lean and efficient function.

On meeting statutory timeframes, Murrindindi reached 91.8% in 23/24, its strongest result and the best among the comparator councils. Performance dropped to 69.5% in 24/25, which should be monitored, noting that it follows several years of above-average performance.

6.1.4 Most common permit triggers

Evidence

Table 4 shows the most common application types from July 2022 to April 2026.

Table 4: Most common types of applications, July 2022 to Apr 2026.

Number of Applications	Permit Subcategory
258	Single dwelling including extensions and alterations
129	Sheds and extensions to sheds
100	Outbuildings normal to a dwelling
85	Commercial
82	Multi lot subdivision
34	Two lot subdivision
28	Multi dwelling
25	Educational and place of assembly
24	Rural industry

Source: Murrindindi Shire Council data.

Discussion

Five categories make up around 80% of permit activity. Single dwellings (including alterations and additions) are the largest at 258, followed by sheds and outbuildings in the farming zone combined at 229. The trends within the categories over the four years suggest that:

- Single dwellings are declining (91 to 39 over 3 years). This is explained by the permit trigger change which previously required applications on lots less than 500sqm to 300sqm. In a context like Murrindindi, this would rule out a lot of applications, especially in townships.
- Sheds and extensions are increasing (20 to 40)
- Multi-lot subdivision has reduced (37 to 1), reflecting completion of major estates
- Two-lot subdivisions have grown (1 to 19), suggesting a shift toward smaller-scale lot creation and infill development, in line with state policy settings that encourage this form of development.

6.1.5 Decision making

Evidence

Table 5 shows the decisions made by each group between the 2022/23 financial year and the 2023/24 financial year.

Table 5: Decision making on permits between date and date.

Permits (including refusals)	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26 (10 months)
Delegated decision	233	238	208	144 (173*)
Council decision	0	0	0	0
VCAT decision	2	1	2	1

Source: Murrindindi Shire Council data.

*2025/26 data available to April 2026 only, data marked with * is projected to June 2026.

Discussion

All planning decisions at Murrindindi over the 4-year period were made by Council officers under delegation. No applications were determined by Councillors at Council meetings. This is consistent with practice at other small rural councils and indicates that officers have a high level of delegation operating effectively. Councils remains able to call in an application for its determination if it wishes.

Six VCAT decisions have been finalised since the last Planning Scheme Review (June 2023), with Council's decision affirmed in four cases and varied with minor changes in two (see Template A4 for the detailed analysis). This is less than 1% of applications going to VCAT. This is a very low number and should not be of concern to Council.

Evidence

Table 6 shows the number of applications, approval rate and median estimated statutory days by permit type from 2023/24, 2024/25 to 2025/26.

Table 6: Permit subcategory approval rates and time to decision, July 2023 to Apr 2026.

Permit subcategory	Number of applications	Approval rate	Median estimated statutory days
Single dwelling including extensions and alterations	167	95%	66
Sheds and extensions to sheds	109	95%	22
Outbuildings normal to a dwelling	80	95%	25
Commercial	57	86%	56
Multi lot subdivision	45	82%	86
Two lot subdivision	33	85%	80
Educational and place of assembly	25	88%	106
Rural industry	19	79%	81
Multi dwelling	18	94%	64
Native vegetation removal	8	100%	42
Small second dwelling	8	75%	48

Permit subcategory	Number of applications	Approval rate	Median estimated statutory days
Replacement dwelling	6	100%	36

Source: Murrindindi Shire Council data, grouped by locality.

Discussion

Sheds and outbuildings combine high volume (189 applications) with very high approval rates (95%) and short decision times (22-25 days), confirming these are routine, low-risk applications well suited to streamlined triggers or exemptions.

Single dwellings stand out as high volume (167), high approval (95%) but slower (66 days), reinforcing that the trigger generates significant work without filtering many proposals.

Replacement dwellings are processed relatively quickly (median 36 days, 100% approved), with the fastest decisions linked to bushfire and flood recovery applications. This suggests Council is appropriately prioritising recovery work and indicates a possible pathway for streamlining similar like-for-like replacement applications.

The slowest categories (educational and place of assembly 106 days, multi lot subdivision 86 and rural industry 81, two lot subdivision 80) are lower volume and reflect genuine complexity rather than a case for trigger reform. Across all categories, approval rates are consistently high (around 80%), indicating Council rarely refuses applications outright.

Evidence

Table 7 shows estimated statutory time to decisions for VicSmart and normal planning pathways.

Table 7: Estimated statutory time to decision for VicSmart and normal planning pathways, July 2023 to Apr 2026.

Permit subcategory	VicSmart median days	VicSmart proportion	Planning Permit median days	Planning Permit proportion
Sheds and extensions to sheds	17	68%	56	32%
Outbuildings normal to a dwelling	19	54%	44	46%
Single dwelling including extensions and alterations	22	18%	80	82%

Source: Murrindindi Shire Council data, grouped by locality.

Discussion

The same building types are decided two to four times faster through VicSmart than through the standard Planning Permit pathway.

For sheds and outbuildings the split between pathways is even. Single dwellings are mostly decided through the standard pathway (136 of 167), as few qualify for VicSmart.

There is an opportunity to increase the proportion of permits through VicSmart for applications with low impact by reducing triggers or raising thresholds.

6.1.6 Geographic spread of applications

Evidence

Table 8 shows the number of applications across the shire.

Table 8: Geographic spread of applications, July 2022 to Apr 2026.

Location	Number of applications	Percentage of applications
Maysville-Buxton Corridor	151	18%
Kinglake Ranges	149	18%
Alexandra & surrounds	122	15%
Yea & surrounds	118	14%
Eildon & Lake Eildon	93	11%
Flowerdale & Strath Creek	55	7%

Source: Murrindindi Shire Council data, grouped by locality.

Discussion

Permit activity is spread relatively evenly across the shire, with no single centre dominating. This even spread reflects Murrindindi's dispersed settlement pattern. The Marysville-Buxton Corridor and Eildon stand out for generating a high number of applications relative to their small resident populations. This may be driven by tourism development, bushfire rebuilding and the landscape, environmental and bushfire overlays that trigger permits.

6.1.7 Findings

Murrindindi's statutory planning function performs well. Internally, statutory decision times have improved over the four years. Decisions are made efficiently under delegation, and Council's position was upheld in all six VCAT matters since the last review. Low-impact applications such as sheds, outbuildings and farm buildings are processed quickly, with 64% going through the VicSmart pathway. Contested outcomes are low across the board, with approval rates of 82% or higher in every subcategory.

Murrindindi outperforms its comparator councils and the all-council average on decision times and cost of service.

The areas for improvement are concentrated in a small number of recurring themes rather than systemic problems:

- Single dwellings are the highest-volume application type (29% of all activity) and take longer to decide than other high-volume categories, yet are approved at 95%, suggesting the permit trigger generates work without filtering many proposals.
- Sheds and outbuildings together account for a further 33% of activity and are almost always approved (95%), indicating their permit triggers could be streamlined without losing meaningful oversight.
- VicSmart applications are decided three to four times faster than the same building types through the standard permit pathway, so reducing triggers or raising thresholds to allow more low-impact applications to use VicSmart would speed up decisions and reduce workload.

These high-volume, low-risk categories present an opportunity for reducing workload on planners.

A second set of issues relates to policy gaps in tourism, agritourism and places of assembly. These are low-volume categories but consistently generate longer assessments and higher

contest rates where they occur. Policy development in these areas could improve decision times and contest rates.

6.1.8 Findings and recommendation

6.2 Planning Panels Victoria

6.2.1 Summary of Planning Scheme amendments

Since the last planning scheme review, Council has not undertaken any 'C' Planning Scheme amendments that require a planning panel process.

6.3 VCAT

6.3.1 VCAT cases reviewed

Six VCAT cases were held since last review, including:

- Sedona Estate Pty Ltd v Murrindindi SC [2025] VCAT 905 (13 October 2025)
- Tilley v Murrindindi SC [2024] VCAT 390 (6 June 2024)
- Grewal v Murrindindi SC [2024] VCAT 885 (19 September 2024)
- Watson v Murrindindi SC [2024] VCAT 675 (19 July 2024)
- Harris v Murrindindi SC [2023] VCAT 570 (23 May 2023)
- Zed's Projects Pty Ltd v Murrindindi SC [2023] VCAT 1422 (22 December 2023)

6.3.2 Policy issues raised at VCAT

The issues raised with policy implications at VCAT over the past four years related to:

- Dwelling excisions in rural areas, and the effectiveness of local policy 14.01-1L.
- Absence of local policy on tourist establishments and agritourism in rural areas.
- Outdated references to wastewater management guidelines in state-level clauses.
- Development on steep slopes and protection of landscape values along major rivers.

6.3.3 Dwelling excisions in rural areas

Summary

Two cases dealt with dwelling excisions in the Farming Zone.

In *Grewal v Murrindindi SC* [2024] VCAT 885, the Tribunal refused an application for a two-lot subdivision at Kinglake West that would have excised a small 1.95 hectare lot containing the existing dwelling from a 44 hectare property used for blueberry and blackberry production. The Tribunal found the subdivision would create a rural lifestyle lot incompatible with surrounding agriculture and outside the settlement boundary in the Kinglake West-Pheasant Creek Framework Plan.

In *Harris v Murrindindi SC* [2023] VCAT 570, the Tribunal approved an application for a two-lot subdivision at Taggerty that excised a 2.57 hectare lot containing the existing dwelling from a

42.72 hectare agroforestry property. The Tribunal accepted the proposal complied with the policy guidelines in Clause 14.01-1L (max 2 hectare dwelling lot, 40+ hectare balance lot, 30 metre setback).

Discussion

The contrasting outcomes show local policy 14.01-1L (Dwelling excisions in rural areas) is working as intended. Grewal was refused because the proposal did not align with the policy guidelines and was outside settlement boundaries. Harris was approved because the proposal met the policy guidelines and the balance lot use (forestry) would not be undermined by a dwelling next door.

The 14.01-1L policy gave the Tribunal a clear basis to weigh competing factors in both cases.

Findings

No further strategic work required. Council's local policy 14.01-1L (Dwelling excisions in rural areas) assisted the Tribunal's decision making in both cases.

6.3.4 Tourist establishments and agritourism

Summary

In *Tilley v Murrindindi SC* [2024] VCAT 390, the Tribunal varied Council's decision and granted an amended permit for the expansion of an existing tourist establishment in the Farming Zone at Strath Creek. The expansion included a swimming pool, gym, sports courts, golf nets, accommodation lodge, covered shelter and solar panels. The site has been progressively expanded through multiple permits over decades.

Discussion

The Murrindindi scheme has no local policy on tourist establishments or agritourism. The Tribunal relied on state policy at Clause 17.04-1S (Facilitating tourism). The site has been expanded through multiple permits over decades and there is no local guidance on how to assess cumulative effect.

The case also raised the question of road infrastructure burden where commercial activity in rural areas intensifies. The scheme does not have a contributions plan or policy that addresses who is responsible for road upgrades in these circumstances.

Operational Management Plans were used as permit conditions to manage hours, staffing, emergency management and complaints. This is a useful practice that could be standardised by planners, depending on the quantity of applications of this nature that Council receives. It would be a project that would require a cost benefit analysis before proceeding given the limited resources of Council.

Summary

In *Watson v Murrindindi SC* [2024] VCAT 675, the Tribunal affirmed Council's decision to refuse a permit for a single dwelling on a small steeply-sloping lot on the edge of Lake Eildon. The lot would have required an on-site wastewater system 51 metres from the lake. Council refused on advice from Goulburn Murray Water that wastewater management was not in accordance with the EPA Code of Practice.

Discussion

The Tribunal noted that during the case, two state-level documents referenced in the planning scheme had been superseded:

- The Planning Permit Applications in Open, Potable Water Supply Catchment Areas (2012), referenced as a policy document in Clause 14.02-2S, was replaced by the Planning Permit Applications in Special Water Supply Catchment Areas (2024).
- The EPA Code of Practice, Onsite Wastewater Management (2016) was replaced by the Guideline for onsite wastewater management (GOWM) and the Guideline for onsite wastewater effluent dispersal and recycling systems (EDRS Guideline), both issued in May 2024.

It is noted that the first document is has now been updated in Clause 14.02-1S and 14.02-2S. The second reference has been removed from the state policy and has not been replaced with the guidelines noted by the Tribunal member.

6.3.5 Steep slope development and landscape values

Summary

In *Zed's Projects Pty Ltd v Murrindindi SC* [2023] VCAT 1422, the Tribunal affirmed Council's decision to refuse an amendment to an existing permit. The amendment proposed to change the siting and design of an approved dwelling at Acheron to a steep slope at the northern end of the property, overlooking the junction of the Goulburn and Acheron rivers. Significant cut and fill, retaining walls and rock benching would have been required.

Discussion

The Tribunal found the proposal was not acceptable due to the visual impact of the fill on the landscape. There is limited local guidance for development on steep slopes. A recommendation about this was made in Chapter 3.2.

The case also touched on landscape values at the junction of two major rivers. Council is currently advocating, along with other Councils, for a Significant Landscape Overlay to protect landscape values around major rivers as has been discussed in Chapter 4.

6.4 Summary of findings and recommendations

6.4.1 Key issues to address:

The following findings identified in this Chapter are key issues and require further discussion. They are expanded on in Chapter 10, as they are broad issues that require an integrated response.

Rural strategy related

- Develop an agritourism policy as part of the next update to strategic work on rural areas, addressing preferred locations for agritourism and how impacts of cumulative growth on agricultural land and surrounding uses will be considered.
- Develop local policy for tourism, agritourism and places of assembly in rural areas.

VicSmart related

- Investigate whether a local VicSmart process could speed up the processing of single dwellings that are triggered under overlay controls.

- Identify the appropriate thresholds for low-impact applications to move into the VicSmart pathway, and prepare local VicSmart schedules for sheds, outbuildings and minor works. This will enable more low-impact applications to use the faster pathway.

6.4.2 Findings and further strategic work

Appendix Three has been updated to include the following item of further strategic work:

- Investigate appropriate floor area thresholds and setback exemptions for sheds and outbuildings in the Farming Zone, with a view to amending the schedule to Clause 35.07. Analysis of recent permit data will be required to determine the appropriate minimum floor area threshold and setback distances from frontages and dwellings.
- Identify circumstances where funding for local road improvements can be linked to a development, to ensure planners can provide consistent advice to applicants and neighbours.

6.4.3 Recommendations

Process improvement recommendations are:

- Imp 4. Work with the development engineers to establish a protocol for seeking funding for local road improvements where it can be linked to a development, to ensure planners can provide consistent advice to applicants and neighbours and enter into Section 173 agreements to assist with road funding where justified.**
- Imp 5. Consider whether there is value in develop standard Operational Management Plan conditions for tourist establishment permits, depending on the number of applications received for this use.**
- Imp 6. Review Council's permit data collection procedure and develop a standard data recording protocol that requires planners to record statutory days alongside elapsed days, tag each application to a standard permit subcategory at lodgement using an adopted list, and record the decision maker consistently for every permit.**

7 Stakeholder engagement

This section provides an overview and analysis of stakeholder engagement undertaken to inform the Planning Scheme Review. It draws on data collected through a Council planner survey, feedback from referral agencies and external stakeholders as well as input from planning staff, internal staff, and Councillors via a series of workshops.

The purpose of this engagement is to capture insights from those who most frequently use the Planning Scheme, along with Councillors in their role as community representatives. The findings have been used to refine the key issues for Council to address and to help prioritise the scope of further strategic work over the next four years.

7.1 Planners' feedback

Council officers were invited to complete a survey about the Murrindindi Planning Scheme, prior to the circulation of analysis documents or findings. The survey sought officer perspectives on how well the Scheme is performing, which controls need refining or removal, the types of applications taking longer than expected to process and policy gaps. Table 9 shows these issues:

Table 9: Planners survey feedback.

Issue	Feedback from planners	Commentary	Has this been raised elsewhere	Action to take
Dwellings and excisions in the Farming Zone	Dwellings on lots under 40ha are among the slowest to determine, due to reporting and occasional objections. One planner says most appeals relate to FZ dwellings; the other attributes VCAT activity to non-agricultural uses and house lot excisions in the FZ.	Recurring driver of delay and appeal/VCAT activity.	Yes - VCAT analysis Yes - Permit data analysis Yes - A1 audit	Further Strategic Work
Sheds / outbuildings in rural zones	Sheds and outbuildings are among the most common applications received, usually triggered by Clause 35.07-4 setbacks. Planners consider these have limited planning consequence and are among the easiest to process. Exceptions are the largest sheds, those with an additional trigger (e.g. 52.17), or those in highly visible areas.	Low-consequence applications generated by the setback trigger.	Yes - Permit data analysis	Further Strategic Work
Places of assembly in rural zones	Use permits such as places of assembly in rural zones are among the slowest to determine, as they frequently attract objections and require several reports and referrals.	Recurring source of delay.	Yes - VCAT analysis Yes - Permit data analysis	Further Strategic Work
Triggers better suited to VicSmart	One planner notes many applications where "if not for the cost of works, this would be a VicSmart application".	Cost-of-works threshold pushing minor works out of VicSmart.	Yes - Permit data analysis	Further Strategic Work

Issue	Feedback from planners	Commentary	Has this been raised elsewhere	Action to take
Marysville Structure Plan	Marysville Structure Plan was prepared after the 2009 bushfires and implemented into the planning scheme. The document is dated with most of the recommendations delivered. A new structure plan should be prepared that considers the ongoing management of Marysville considering recent changes to the bushfire provisions.	Marysville Structure Plan should be placed on the further strategic work program.	No	Further strategic work.
SLO schedules lack vegetation protection	SLO schedules do not feature vegetation protections, counterintuitive to their landscape objective, especially around Lake Eildon. Also described as old provisions.	Internal inconsistency between schedule content and objective.	Yes - A1 audit	Further Strategic Work
LSIO1 schedule shed exemption inconsistency	LSIO1 exempts agricultural buildings under 130sqm but exempts all domestic sheds. A 131sqm agricultural shed needs a permit while a 300sqm domestic shed does not, which one planner considers counterintuitive to the overlay's purpose.	Drafting anomaly raised by one planner.	No	Further Strategic Work
RCZ underapplied / FZ overapplied	One planner believes the RCZ is underapplied and FZ overapplied (Castella, Toolangi, parts of Kinglake), so vegetation losses are not offset when defensible space is implemented.	Zone application / mapping issue.	No	Further Strategic Work
Special water supply catchment area referrals	Applications in special water supply catchment areas are among the slowest to determine, due to long referral delays.	Referral timeframe issue.	Yes - VCAT analysis	Advocacy
Restructure Overlay notice requirements	One planner considers notice requirements in the Restructure Overlay and Schedule to Clause 66.06 unnecessary, and says the authorities the RO requires notice to should be formally listed.	Possible over-prescription plus a notice schedule gap.	Yes - A1 audit	Further Strategic Work
Land management overlay-only applications (easiest)	Applications triggered only by a land management overlay (LSIO, FO, BMO) are among the easiest: no advertising, and a quick decision once referred.	Noted as an efficient pathway.	No	Further Strategic Work
Common public queries	Coordinator: building a house, subdividing, removing trees. Officer: dwellings in the FZ/BMO and removal of native vegetation.	Indicates demand for clearer public guidance.	No	Process Improvement
Suggested new local policy / schedules	One planner suggests policy on small dwellings in the FZ, and FZ schedules identifying the character of essentially residential	Suggested additions to support decision making.	Yes - VCAT analysis	Further Strategic Work

Issue	Feedback from planners	Commentary	Has this been raised elsewhere	Action to take
	FZ areas (e.g. around Edward Staff Drive, Kinglake).			
Informal referral to Agriculture Victoria	One planner consults Agriculture Victoria informally on significant agricultural developments on agricultural land.	Candidate for formal listing in Clause 66 schedules.	No	List in Clause 66.06

Source: Planners Survey collected via Microsoft Forms, April 2026.

The issues raised fall into three groups:

- Further strategic work. Most of the issues are matters for further strategic work, carried into the program at Appendix Three.
- Planning scheme amendment now. Two can be addressed through the current amendment: formally listing the authorities to which the Restructure Overlay requires notice, and listing Agriculture Victoria as a referral authority for significant agricultural development.
- No change to the Scheme. Three do not warrant a scheme change: the special water supply catchment referral delays relate to the referral process rather than the Scheme, the efficiency of overlay-only applications is a positive observation, and the common public queries point to a need for clearer guidance for applicants rather than a new control.
- Refer to Chapter 10 for further discussion of the rural and Farming Zone issues, and to Appendix Three for the further strategic work program.

7.2 Councillors and executive team

Schemology presented the Planning Scheme Review to the Murrindindi Councillors and Executive team on Wednesday 10 June 2026. The presentation outlined the objectives of planning in Victoria and the analysis findings to date, including planning permit performance, the response to the Planning Scheme Review Advisory note, and the proposed priorities for the next four years. Feedback was invited.

The Councillors and Executive team raised the following matters:

- Councillors supported incorporating residential design guidelines into the Planning Scheme so that they carry greater weight in decision making.
- Councillors raised concern about the visual impact of commercial buildings, signage and lighting on township approaches, and asked that a muted township character be retained while still supporting growth.
- Councillors supported good design, including safety by design, walkability, connectivity and public realm quality, being addressed before an application is lodged rather than negotiated afterwards.
- Councillors were concerned that residential areas zoned Farming Zone, including parts of Kinglake, Killingworth and Marysville, create rebuilding, finance and insurance difficulties on lots under 40 hectares, and noted that some poor quality ridgetop farming land may be better suited to rural living.

- This included discussion that low-density growth at the rural-residential interface in a high-hazard landscape needs an integrated rural and settlement strategy including settlement boundaries for Alexandra and Yea.
- There were differing views on an Erosion Management Overlay. Some Councillors supported it as a way to manage risk on steep ridgetop sites, while others doubted the scale of erosion risk in the Shire.
- Councillors asked to better understand the purpose of settlement boundaries and how they would apply in Murrindindi.
- Councillors asked to understand the implications of the bushfire planning changes gazetted on 5 May 2026.

Each of these issues is discussed further below.

Residential design guidelines

These are already identified for preparation through this review (Chapter 8). Advice from Mesh does not support a Design and Development Overlay, as the extra permit triggers would outweigh the benefit given the housing growth task. The guidelines are proposed to apply Shire-wide, with weight added through agreements at the permit stage. Consideration

Visual amenity and township character

Recent State reform has reduced the weight given to neighbourhood character for new residential development. Built form matters such as colours, heights, streetscape and commercial centre appearance can instead be addressed through structure planning. Signage and lighting, including lux levels, may be addressed through a local policy and the existing signage strategy. This links to the rural areas and significant landscapes work discussed further in Chapter 10.

Good design

Safety by design, walkability, connectivity and public realm quality are now largely addressed and recently strengthened at the State level. There is an opportunity to inform applicants of these expectations before they lodge, rather than introduce new controls.

Farming Zone and rural living

This forms part of the rural areas key issue discussed further in Chapter 10. Resolving inappropriately zoned residential areas in the Farming Zone is largely a matter for advocacy with the State Government and the Country Fire Authority, through either restructuring lots or rezoning land to a more suitable zone. A landscape scale bushfire assessment would help map relative risk.

Erosion management

Council could commission a geotechnical report on slopes over 20%, and formalise the findings through an Erosion Management Overlay. This would flag the risk to applicants, and support Council in decision making. Neighbouring councils including East Gippsland, Towong and Alpine have prepared overlays for slopes over 20 per cent. It is considered lower priority than landscape scale bushfire assessment and flood mapping, which are the more significant risks for the Shire, and is carried as lower priority further strategic work in Appendix Three.

Settlement boundaries

These are a growth control under Plan for Victoria. Once set, growth outside a boundary requires a high level of justification. For Murrindindi, boundaries would follow the growth corridors being defined for Yea and Alexandra through structure planning, reinforced by an infill first policy. This is a key issue discussed further in Chapter 10. The terms township boundary and settlement boundary are used inconsistently across Clause 11.01-1L, the Yea Structure Plan and Amendment C79, and the review will consider aligning local usage with the State term.

Bushfire reform

Amendment VC248, gazetted on 5 May 2026, improves bushfire planning by updating terminology, measures and permit exemptions, revising the Bushfire Management Overlay decision guidelines, and inserting decision guidelines for specified development in the bushfire prone area at Clause 53.02 (Bushfire Planning). This raises the bar for bushfire planning across the Shire, with bushfire considerations now reaching development in the bushfire prone area rather than only Bushfire Management Overlay land. There may be implications for settlement boundary work, including that some settlements may not achieve a BAL-12.5 rating at their boundaries. These implications are addressed in the discussion at Chapter 3.3 Plan for Victoria.

7.3 Referral and notice agencies

All relevant referral and notice agencies and Registered Aboriginal Parties were invited in April, 2026 to provide their written comments and feedback on the performance of the Murrindindi Planning Scheme, in relation to their respective areas of responsibility.

The Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation and the Taungurung Land & Waters Council both expressed interest in being involved in the review of the Murrindindi Planning Scheme and will be consulted to develop the next steps regarding further strategic work.

The following agencies did not reply with feedback:

- Country Fire Authority
- Goulburn Murray Water
- National Trust of Australia (Victoria)
- Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action
- Head, Transport for Victoria
- Several of these agencies are listed informally in the scheme, but not in Clause 66.04s or 66.06s as required by the Ministerial Direction on the Form and Content of Planning Schemes.
- Referrals to these agencies have been moved to Clause 66.04s or 66.06s as part of this review and included in the marked-up ordinance. Agencies will have the opportunity to address this if required as part of the planning scheme amendment.

7.4 Summary of issues raised in engagement

The following table consolidates the matters raised during stakeholder engagement, and assigns recommended actions. Every matter is routed to a key issue (Chapter 10), further strategic work (Appendix Three), a change to the scheme now, advocacy or process improvement.

Issue	Planners	Councillors & Exec	Referrals	Commentary	Recommended action
Farming Zone dwellings, excisions and rural living (residential-in-FZ areas, lot sizes, ridgetop rural living, Section 173)	✓	✓		These applications are a recurring driver of assessment time and appeal activity. Resolving the inappropriately zoned areas is largely a matter for advocacy. The two officers differ slightly on the source of appeals.	Chapter 10 key issue (rural areas) Advocacy (State, CFA)
Tourism, agritourism and places of assembly	✓			These uses are low in volume but slow to determine and often contested. There is a clear gap in local policy.	Chapter 10 key issue FSW (local policy)
Settlement boundaries and terminology		✓		Settlement boundaries are a growth control under Plan for Victoria and would be drawn around the Yea and Alexandra corridors. The terms township boundary and settlement boundary are used inconsistently across Clause 11.01-1L, the Yea Structure Plan and Amendment C79.	Chapter 10 key issue Amend now (align Clause 11.01-1L terminology)
Bushfire reform (Amendment VC248, gazetted 5 May 2026)		✓		The Bushfire Prone Area now covers the whole municipality. Several settlements may not meet BAL-12.5 at their boundaries.	Chapter 10 key issue
Environmental risk mapping (flood, landscape bushfire)		✓		Flood mapping is a responsibility of the catchment management authority and the State. A landscape scale bushfire assessment is needed for Alexandra before structure planning.	FSW (Appendix 3) Advocacy (CMA, State on flood)
Erosion Management Overlay		✓		Councillors held differing views. One supported an overlay for ridgetop homes and landslide liability, while another doubted the level of erosion risk in the Shire. It is considered a lower priority than bushfire and flood. Whether	Chapter 10 key issue

Issue	Planners	Councillors & Exec	Referrals	Commentary	Recommended action
				planners already request a geotechnical report above a 20 per cent slope is to be confirmed.	
Significant landscapes (rivers, Lake Eildon)	✓	✓		A high community priority that would require Ministerial support. It also relates to the siting of renewable energy.	Chapter 10 key issue Advocacy (Ministerial support for SLO around major rivers)
Residential design guidelines		✓		A Design and Development Overlay is not supported, on advice from Mesh. The guidelines would apply Shire-wide, with weight added through agreements at the permit stage.	Chapter 10 key issue
Visual amenity, township character, signage and lighting		✓		State reform has reduced the weight given to neighbourhood character. Build form is best addressed through structure planning.	Chapter 10 key issue
Good design and pre-application guidance		✓		These matters are largely covered and were recently strengthened at the State level. The gap is informing applicants before they lodge.	Process improvement
Sheds, outbuildings and VicSmart streamlining (Clause 35.07; VicSmart thresholds)	✓	✓		These applications are high in volume but low in consequence. The setback and cost-of-works triggers push minor works out of the VicSmart pathway.	Chapter 10 key issue
Overlay schedule and zone anomalies (LSIO1 shed exemption; SLO schedule drafting; RCZ and FZ application; DPO application)	✓	✓		Officers raised a number of drafting and zone application anomalies. The application of the Development Plan Overlay was also noted as unconventional.	Chapter 10 key issue (for FZ and RCZ, and DPO) FSW
Referral and notice listings (Clause 66.04s and 66.06s; Restructure	✓		✓	Several agencies are listed informally rather than in Clause 66.04s and 66.06s, as required by the Ministerial	Amend now (policy neutral)

Issue	Planners	Councillors & Exec	Referrals	Commentary	Recommended action
Overlay authorities; Agriculture Victoria)				Direction. These have been moved in the marked-up ordinance. Agriculture Victoria would be formally listed, subject to agreement.	
Goulburn Murray Water referral load	✓	✓		There are long referral delays in special water supply catchment areas. An agreement could remove the need to refer every application.	Process improvement (pursue referral agreement)
Registered Aboriginal Parties involvement			✓	Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung and Taungurung both expressed interest in being involved.	FSW (consult on next steps) Links to Chapter 8 (Clause 02.03-5)
Efficient pathways (overlay-only applications)	✓			This is a positive observation. These applications require no advertising and are decided quickly once referred.	No change

The only matter with materially differing views is the Erosion Management Overlay, addressed in the commentary above.

7.5 Summary of findings and recommendations

7.5.1 Key issues to resolve

The following findings are key issues that require an integrated response and are explored further in Chapter 10:

Rural strategy related

- Managing dwellings, excisions and rural living pressures in the Farming Zone, including the inappropriately zoned residential areas at Kinglake, Killingworth and Marysville
- Addressing the policy gap for tourism, agritourism and places of assembly in rural zones
- Protecting significant landscapes, including the major rivers and Lake Eildon, and guiding where renewable energy infrastructure should and should not be located
- Review the application of the Rural Conservation Zone and Farming Zone
- Advocate to the State Government and the Country Fire Authority to resolve the inappropriately zoned residential areas in the Farming Zone, through restructuring or rezoning, and to progress State Farming Zone reform.

- Address low-density growth at the rural-residential interface in a high-hazard landscape needs an integrated rural and settlement strategy including settlement boundaries for Alexandra and Yea.

Housing and settlement related

- Setting settlement boundaries for Yea and Alexandra and resolving the inconsistent township and settlement boundary terminology.

Bushfire related

- Assess the implications of the bushfire reform under Amendment VC248 for the Shire, including the municipality-wide application of bushfire controls and the effect on rebuilding, new development and settlement boundary setting where settlements may not meet BAL-12.5.
- Complete a landscape scale bushfire assessment for Alexandra ahead of structure planning, building on the assessment already prepared for Yea.

Design and character related

- Implement residential design guidelines for Shire-wide application, applied as guidelines rather than a Design and Development Overlay, with weight added through agreements at the permit stage.
- Develop built form controls for commercial centres and streetscapes through structure planning, and scope a local policy on signage and lighting levels, drawing on another council's approach and the existing signage strategy.
- Provide pre-application guidance to applicants on good design, including safety by design, walkability, connectivity and public realm quality, so expectations are understood before lodgement.

VicSmart related

- Review the Clause 35.07 shed and outbuilding setback trigger and the VicSmart cost-of-works thresholds to funnel more high volume, low consequence applications through VicSmart.

Development Plan Overlay related

- Resolve the unconventional Development Plan Overlay application.

7.5.2 Findings

The following findings are resolved further strategic work, and they have been moved to Chapter 11 and Appendix 3 for prioritisation:

- Prepare a new Structure Plan for Marysville.
- Resolve the exemption for sheds in the Land Subject to Inundation Overlay Schedule 1 with the CMA.
- Resolve the absence of vegetation protection in the Significant Landscape Overlay schedules.

The following changes are recommended to the Planning Scheme and are shown as track changes in Appendix One:

- Amend Clause 11.01-1L to align the township boundary and settlement boundary terminology and adopt the State term, consistent with the Yea Structure Plan and Amendment C79.
- List the required referral and notice authorities in the schedules to Clause 66.04 and Clause 66.06, including the authorities to which the Restructure Overlay requires notice and Agriculture Victoria, subject to agreement.

The following projects have already been identified and dealt with earlier in this report:

- Re-assess and map natural hazard risk across the Shire, covering flood, landscape bushfire and erosion, and prepare an integrated response to update and implement the mapping.
- Determine whether a geotechnical study of slopes over 20% is required, and formalise via an Erosion Management Overlay. This is a lower priority than landscape scale bushfire and flood mapping.
- Pursue a referral memorandum of understanding with Goulburn Murray Water to remove the need to refer every application in special water supply catchment areas.
- Advocate to the catchment management authority and the State to complete and implement flood mapping for the Shire.
- Work with the Alpine Shire and other councils to seek Ministerial support for significant landscape protection.

7.5.3 Further consultation

The following further consultation is recommended:

- Adv 3. Consult with the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung and Taungurung Registered Aboriginal Parties on the findings from the review and seek their input on the next steps for further strategic work.**
- Adv 4. Prior to commencing a planning scheme amendment to implement the planning scheme review, seek comments from the following referral authorities, notifying them of proposed changes to the planning scheme: Country Fire Authority, Goulburn Murray Water, National Trust of Australia (Victoria), Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action, Head, Transport for Victoria**

8 New strategic work

New strategic work adopted by Council and prepared for Murrindindi Shire was reviewed to identify whether any policy should be incorporated into the Planning Scheme.

The purpose of this stage of the review is to incorporate policies developed by other parts of the Council (for example, Economic Development, Sustainability, Community Planning etc.) that are unlikely to be incorporated into the Planning Scheme as a stand-alone amendment.

This review does not cover significant strategic land use planning projects such as Structure Plans for Activity Centres, or Housing Strategies, which should be addressed through a separate, dedicated Planning Scheme Review process.

Regional documents, such as Catchment Management Plans, were also reviewed to identify any Council-specific proposals that should be reflected in the Planning Scheme. For example, the construction of a new wetland.

8.1 Council projects and documents

8.1.1 Documents reviewed

- Murrindindi Shire Council Plan 2025-2029, incorporating the revised Murrindindi Shire 2035 Community Vision (Murrindindi Shire Council, 2025)
- Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 (Murrindindi Shire Council, 2025)
- Activating Lake Eildon: Skyline Road Tourist Precinct Business Case (Urban Enterprise Pty Ltd, 2020)
- Murrindindi Shire Economic Development Strategy 2024-2029 (Murrindindi Shire Council, 2024)

8.1.2 Documents with policy implications

Murrindindi Shire Council Plan 2025-2029 (Murrindindi Shire Council, 2025)

The Council Plan 2025-2029, adopted on 23 July 2025, sets Council's strategic directions and goals for the term, incorporates the revised Murrindindi Shire 2035 Community Vision, and is delivered through an Annual Priority Action Plan.

The Planning Scheme's vision at Clause 02.02 predates the revised Community Vision, partnership with Traditional Owners in protecting Aboriginal cultural heritage is not reflected in the strategic directions, and the economic context needs updating.

The following changes should be made, as detailed in Appendix Two:

- 02.02 (Vision): Replace the vision statement with the revised Murrindindi Shire 2035 Community Vision.
- 02.03-5 (Built environment and heritage): Support the recognition and protection of Aboriginal cultural heritage and cultural landscapes in partnership with the Taungurung and Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung peoples.
- 02.03-7 (Economic development): Update the description to state that the economy is valued at \$1.8 billion annually, attracts around 1.2 million visitors each year and provides

around 5,000 local jobs, with almost three quarters of employed residents working within the municipality.

Further strategic work identified in the plan relevant to the planning scheme is:

- Implement the Yea Structure Plan.
- Prepare residential design guidelines reflecting township character and implement them into the Planning Scheme.
- Implement the Regional Flood Study findings through updates to the Land Subject to Inundation Overlay mapping.

Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 (Murrindindi Shire Council, 2025)

The Plan, adopted on 22 October 2025, frames community health and wellbeing around three priority domains (mental, physical and social wellbeing) and two priority populations (children and young people, and older people). It is delivered through a Rolling Action Plan, built on the Demographic Profile 2025.

Its objectives for active transport and for safe, inclusive public spaces are not reflected in the Planning Scheme. The following changes should be made, as detailed in Appendix Two:

- 02.03-8 (Transport): Encourage walking and cycling as everyday transport by improving pedestrian and cycle connections within and between townships.
- 02.03-5 (Built environment and heritage): Encourage the design of public spaces, streetscapes and civic areas to improve safety, inclusion and access for people of all ages, genders and abilities.
- Schedule to Clause 72.08 (Background documents): List the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029 (Murrindindi Shire Council, 2025).

Further strategic work identified in the plan relevant to the planning scheme is:

- Update the Murrindindi Shire Council Recreation and Open Space Strategy 2018-2028, including formalising open space contributions in the Planning Scheme.

Murrindindi Shire Economic Development Strategy 2024-2029 (Murrindindi Shire Council, 2024)

The Strategy, adopted on 22 May 2024, is a five-year plan with a rolling two-year action plan, structured around five priority areas: visitor economy; agriculture, aquaculture and food production; business support; sustainable future; and prosperous communities. It frames Council's role as provider, facilitator and advocate.

Its focus on agritourism, renewable energy and the circular economy, and Traditional Owner cultural and economic uses of forests is not reflected in the Planning Scheme, and the economic context is out of date. The following changes should be made, as detailed in Appendix Two:

- 02.03-7 (Economic development): Add agritourism to the existing tourism strategy.
- 02.03-7 (Economic development): Support renewable energy generation and circular economy initiatives that recover waste as a resource.
- 02.03-7 (Economic development): Support Traditional Owner cultural and economic uses of forests and public land.
- 02.03-7 (Economic development): Update the description to state that tourism accounts for 9.9% of employment (Victorian average 3.9%), the Shire attracts over 1.2 million visitors

annually, and 98% of local businesses are small to medium enterprises employing fewer than 20 people.

- Schedule to Clause 72.08 (Background documents): List the Murrindindi Shire Economic Development Strategy 2024-2029 (Murrindindi Shire Council, 2024).

Further strategic work identified in the plan relevant to the planning scheme is:

- Complete the Local Development Strategy – Context analysis & Entrepreneurial development and implement the relevant outcomes into the Planning Scheme.

Activating Lake Eildon: Skyline Road Tourist Precinct Business Case (Urban Enterprise Pty Ltd, 2020)

Owned by Tourism North East and adopted by Council on 24 June 2020, this is one of four business cases implementing the Lake Eildon Masterplan across Murrindindi and Mansfield Shires. It makes the investment case for a Skyline Road Tourist Precinct: sealing 18 kilometres of road between Eildon and Bonnie Doon, a Great Lake Touring Route with architectural lookouts, rezoning Farming Zone land for tourism development, and a privately delivered boutique distillery with accommodation.

The following changes should be made, as detailed in Appendix Two:

- 02.03-8 (Transport): Support the sealing and upgrade of Skyline Road between Eildon and Bonnie Doon to improve safety, strengthen connectivity between the two towns and facilitate touring around Lake Eildon.
- Schedule to Clause 72.08 (Background documents): List the Activating Lake Eildon: Skyline Road Tourist Precinct Business Case (Urban Enterprise Pty Ltd, 2020) and the Lake Eildon Masterplan (Urban Enterprise Pty Ltd, 2020).

Further strategic work identified in the plan relevant to the planning scheme is:

- Review the Lake Eildon Masterplan to determine whether revision is required and what implementation actions are needed, including the Skyline Road precinct rezoning investigation.

8.2 State Government and Statutory Agency projects and documents

The following State Government and statutory agency documents were reviewed:

- Goulburn Broken Regional Catchment Strategy 2021-2027 (Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority, 2021)

Plan for Victoria (Victorian Government, 2025) and Victoria's Housing Statement: The decade ahead 2024-2034 (Victorian Government, 2023) and Treaty for Victoria have already been addressed in Chapter 2 and aren't repeated here.

Goulburn Broken Regional Catchment Strategy 2021-2027 (Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority, 2021)

The Strategy, released in April 2022, covers integrated natural resource management across the Goulburn Broken Catchment to 2027, structured around four themes and six local areas. Murrindindi Shire spans three: the Upland Slopes, Commuting Hills and Southern Forests.

Most of its content is operational natural resource management or public land management, and its tourism, habitat corridor and flood mapping directions are already supported by the Planning Scheme. The following changes should be made, as detailed in Appendix Two:

- Schedule to Clause 72.08 (Background documents): Correct the listed title to Goulburn Broken Regional Catchment Strategy 2021-2027 (Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority, 2021). The current listing incorrectly includes the word “Management” in the document title.

8.3 Federal Government projects and documents

No Federal Government projects or documents with implications for the Murrindindi Planning Scheme were identified during this review.

8.4 Summary of findings and recommendations

8.4.1 Key issues to resolve

The following key issues are expanded on in Chapter 10, as they are broad issues that require an integrated response:

Housing and settlement related

- Housing capacity, including a refresh of the Housing and Settlement Strategy to identify how the Murrindindi housing capacity target can be accommodated (Plan for Victoria, 2025).
- Settlement boundaries, defined as part of structure plan preparation and implementation (Plan for Victoria, 2025).

Design and character related

- Prepare residential design guidelines to reflect township character and implement in the scheme. (CP, 2025)

Open space strategy related

- Update the Murrindindi Shire Council Recreation and Open Space Strategy 2018-2028 including formalising open space contributions in the planning scheme. (MPHWP)

8.4.2 Findings and further strategic work

The following findings are resolved further strategic work and have been moved to Chapter 11 and Appendix 3 for prioritisation.

- Complete the Local Development Strategy – Context analysis & Entrepreneurial development and implement the relevant outcomes into the planning scheme (EDS 2024, p11)
- Review the Lake Eildon Masterplan to determine whether revision is required and what implementation actions are needed, including the Skyline Road precinct rezoning investigation (ALE 2020, Actions 1.5 and 1.6, p32)
- Implement the Yea Structure Plan (Council Plan 2025-2029).
- Findings that have already been dealt with earlier in this report include:
- Implement the findings of the Regional Flood Study via updates to the LSIO mapping. (CP, 2025)

8.4.3 Recommendations

The recommendation for amending the planning scheme is:

PSA 2. Prepare a Planning Scheme amendment or amendments using the marked-up ordinance at Appendix One to include new policy to implement the:

- **Murrindindi Shire Council Plan 2025-2029 and Murrindindi Shire 2035 Community Vision**
- **Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025-2029**
- **Activating Lake Eildon: Skyline Road Tourist Precinct Business Case (2020)**
- **Murrindindi Shire Economic Development Strategy 2024-2029**
- **Goulburn Broken Regional Catchment Strategy 2021-2027 (background document title correction)**
- **Plan for Victoria (housing target update at Clause 02.03-6)**

9 Work underway

9.1 Planning scheme amendments

The following Planning Scheme amendments are underway.

- Amendment C79muri (Yea Structure Plan). Authorisation granted and exhibition is complete. Submissions are currently being reviewed. It proposes to intruce an updated Framework Plan for Year and policy for growth of the township, as well as adding to the list of further strategic work: review the Yea Saleyards Precinct and apply an appropriate planning response (such as the Special Use Zone and Buffer Area Overlay), investigate rezoning undeveloped industrial land in Yea east of Boundary Creek for housing, establish a Yea Saleyards Industrial Precinct co-located with the saleyards, rezone industrial land from Industrial 1 to Industrial 3, and review the Yea Development Plan Overlays for alignment.

9.2 Projects

Council has adopted the Alexandra East Development Plan and is currently implementing it through designing and seeking funding for enabling infrastructure.

Council has commenced preparation of an Industrial and Commercial Land Strategy, including review of the Yea Sale Yards. While this is primarily an economic development project, it is likely that changes will need to be made to the planning scheme to support its implementation.

Council is currently scoping the following planning projects

- Alexandra Structure Plan. Not commenced, recommended in the Housing and Settlement Strategy (adopted 14 December 2022), to be informed by the Alexandra East Development Plan.
- Amendments that will need to be made to the 2022 Housing and Settlement strategy because of Plan for Victoria and Amendment VC248 (Bushfire) .
- Identifying any changes that should be made to the planning scheme from the Activating Eildon project, recognising that the document is nine years old.

9.3 Summary of findings and recommendations

The following findings are resolved further strategic work and have been moved to Chapter 11 and Appendix 3 for prioritisation.

- Implement the planning recommendations of the municipal Industrial and Commercial Land Strategy (including the Yea Sale Yards) once complete.

10 Key issues

The key issues in this chapter have been structured generally in sequential order and in order of priority. The first six issues are significant strategic projects and will require significant resources to effect. These are:

- Bushfire.
- Housing and settlement.
- Rural issues.
- Design and character issues.
- Erosion.
- Open space contributions.

The final two issues should be able to be completed as ‘business as usual’ for the strategic planning team, as opportunity arises.

- VicSmart schedules.
- Application of the Development Plan Overlays.

10.1 Bushfire

10.1.1 What is the issue?

There has been significant reform to the statewide bushfire planning controls, and updated advice provided to assist councils planning for settlement and growth in bushfire constrained areas.

Bushfire controls continue to apply to areas covered by the Bushfire Management Overlay (which applies to a significant part of the Shire, and since the reform, now also apply to areas within the Bushfire Prone Area (as defined under the *Building Act 1993*) (BPA). The BPA applies to the entirety of the municipality apart from the central urban areas in Yea and Alexandra.

The issue is what action should Council take to be best placed to respond to the bushfire planning reform.

10.1.2 Discussion

In the first instance, it is recommended that Council commission a landscape scale bushfire assessment for the entire municipality.

Experience from other councils severely affected by bushfire (including Towong, Indigo and Alpine) indicates it is difficult to progress strategic planning work related to housing and settlement in the absence of a landscape scale bushfire assessment.

Council is still to implement its *Housing and Settlement Strategy 2022* through the planning scheme, and it is unlikely that – considering the reforms – the CFA and DTP would be able to approve new planning policies or controls identified in the Strategy in the absence of a landscape scale bushfire assessment.

It is understood that landscape scale bushfire assessments have been prepared for the Alexandra East development area, and Yea (as part of the preparation of the Structure Plan) so these areas could be excluded from further assessment.

A landscape scale bushfire assessment will assist with understanding the implications of rebuilding after the Longwood fire, assessment of new development across the shire and establishment of settlement boundaries where existing settlements may meet the required safety standards set out in the State bushfire planning controls.

A budget of \$60,000 to \$80,000 should be allowed for this work. Council may be able to seek funding from the State Government to assist with the preparation of this important piece of work.

10.1.3 Findings and recommendations

The following finding is identified as further strategic work, and is included and prioritised in Chapter 11 and Appendix 3.

- Prepare a landscape scale bushfire assessment for the Shire (except for Yea and Alexandra East which have already been completed) prior to undertaking further strategic work related to housing and settlement, and rural areas.

10.2 Housing and settlement

10.2.1 What are the issues?

Council prepared the *Murrindindi Shire Housing and Settlement Strategy* (Navy Blue Planning, 2022). Even though it was finalised and considered in the last planning scheme review for implementation into the planning scheme, unfortunately only an initial ‘policy neutral’ planning scheme amendment has been completed with support from the State Government’s Regional Partnerships program to implement that review. As a result, none of the policy established in the Strategy has been translated into the scheme.

Since then, Plan for Victoria has been released, and this sets out a range of directions for Murrindindi related to housing and settlement.

These are:

- A housing capacity target of 3,350 by 2051 has been set for Murrindindi by the State Government.
- Review the application of the residential zones, having regard to PPN90 and PPN91.
- Establish settlement boundaries for settlements in regional areas.

A further issue was identified as a priority which is a:

- Review of the relationship of rural living and low density residential zoned land to housing provision and housing affordability.

10.2.2 Discussion

Implementing the Murrindindi Housing and Settlement Strategy 2022

Council has adopted the *Murrindindi Shire Housing & Settlement Strategy* (Navy Blue Planning, December 2022) (HSS). It has not yet been implemented into the planning scheme. The high level findings of the HSS included:

- Murrindindi Shire has estimated capacity within existing zoned land to deliver an additional 1,174 lots.
- The expected population growth rate of 1.1% to 1.3% per annum over the medium – long term is significantly higher than the historic rate of 0.8% per annum.
- Based on these figures, there is sufficient capacity to accommodate the projected growth over the next 15 years (as required by the planning scheme at the time).
- However there are some barriers to releasing the available (zoned) land which need to be address through working better with and improving planning pathways.
- There is also a low occupancy rate of existing housing stock (78%) which places additional pressure on supply and capacity.
- The HSS identified many opportunities for infill development within the larger settlements of Yea and Alexandra, and also identified investigation areas for growth (settlement expansion) in each settlement.

The *Murrindindi Planning Scheme Review 2023* (Plan to Place, October 2023) (PSR2023) identified the changes that should be made to the Murrindindi Planning Scheme to implement the HSS, however these were not included in Amendment C73muri which was limited to implementing the policy neutral elements of the PSR2023. Amendment C73muri was gazetted 14 November 2025.

Since the preparation of the HSS and the 2023 PSR, there has been considerable planning reform, including the State Government identifying housing capacity targets for each municipality. The target for Murrindindi is 3,350 dwellings. This is considerably higher than the capacity on zoned land identified in the HSS which was 1,174 lots.

Housing capacity target

The State Government, after applying its Housing Capacity Assessment Platform (HCAP), has advised it considers there is adequate capacity in the shire to accommodate the housing capacity target of 3,350 that was set in Plan for Victoria. However, the Housing and Settlement Strategy 2022 only identified capacity for an additional 1,174 by 2041.

The analysis in the Strategy was a detailed assessment of opportunity sites across the Shire and review of the land supply and opportunities in each settlement. The HCAP assessment was more high level looking at how zones have been applied and other strategic criteria.

Council officers agree that there are opportunities for growth, particularly around Alexandra and Yea, to meet the target, but recognises that this will be subject to managing bushfire risks and significant investment in infrastructure, including reticulated services, to unlock additional residential land. Council offices have also identified that increasing the density of planned infill development identified in the Strategy could provide additional housing over and above that identified.

The discrepancy between the capacity numbers identified in the Strategy and the HCAP assessment should be further explored with the Department of Transport and Planning to identify any amendments or addendums that may be required to enable the detailed directions in the strategy to be implemented into the planning scheme. Recent assessments for the Yea Structure Plan and Alexandra East Development Plan can help inform this process.

Settlement boundaries and application of residential zones

Settlement boundaries define the allowable extent of urban use and development for a settlement.

The Housing and Settlement Strategy sets out that many of Murrindindi's towns and settlements have Framework Plans or earlier Urban Design Frameworks prepared which indicate either a settlement boundary or township boundary. These are included in Clause 11.01-1L Settlement – Murrindindi townships and settlements for the following settlements:

- Alexandra.
- Eildon.
- Kinglake.
- Kinglake West – Pheasant Creek.
- Marysville.
- Yea.

Township or settlement boundaries are not in place for the smaller settlements, all of which are unserviced, however each is defined by a residential zoning (Township Zone, General Residential Zone or Low Density Residential Zone) which will automatically act as a settlement boundary. These settlements are Yarck, Thornton, Taggerty, Buxton, Narbethong, Toolangi and Strath Creek.

The Strategy established a principle that changes to settlement boundaries will not be supported unless foreshadowed within the relevant town framework plan or structure plan for the investigation areas that have been identified in the Strategy, and set out criteria for assessment of rezonings at settlement boundaries. This direction is supported, however should be supplemented to take into consideration the outcomes of the landscape scale bushfire assessment that is recommended to be undertaken, as some settlement boundaries may need to be reassessed if there are unacceptable levels of bushfire risk.

As part of the amendment or addendum to the Housing Strategy, the 'township boundaries' of the larger towns should be changed to 'protected settlement boundaries' to align with the wording in Plan for Victoria. Consideration should be given whether the smaller settlements with residential zoning should have a settlement boundary applied. This decision will be a matter of weighing up the safety of settlements (a settlement boundary can assist in managing growth in high risk areas) and the likelihood of future rezonings.

It is noted that several settlements that are identified in the current Clause 02.04 Murrindindi Framework Plan do not have any residentially zoned land, or are zoned for Rural Living Zone which is not a zone that is permitted to be included within settlement boundaries (under Planning Practice Note 99: Settlement boundaries). These settlements are Highlands, Limestone, Molesworth and Glenburn (all Farming Zone) and Flowerdale (RLZ).

The Planning Scheme Review Advisory Note recommended that application of residential zones be reviewed. This recommendation seems more directed at metropolitan councils to ensure zone settings match the level of growth that is sought across urban areas. The residential zone application for Alexandra should be considered when the Alexandra Structure Plan is prepared, to ensure that the zone settings support the level of growth that is proposed to be directed to different areas of the settlement.

Housing provision and affordability in the rural living zone and low density residential zone (including key worker accommodation).

This issue is addressed in more detail in 10.3.

10.2.3 Findings and recommendations

The following finding is identified as further strategic work, and is included and prioritised in Chapter 11 and Appendix 3.

- Prepare an amendment or addendum to the Murrindindi Housing and Settlement Strategy 2022 to:
 - Address the directions in Plan for Victoria including the housing capacity target, application of residential zones and settlement boundaries once discussions with the Department of Transport and Planning are held.
 - Respond to any recommendations from the landscape scale bushfire assessment once this has been completed.
 - Resolve whether places which don't have any residential zoning should be removed from the settlement hierarchy (these settlements are Highlands, Limestone, Molesworth and Glenburn (all Farming Zone) and Flowerdale (RLZ)).
- Refine the settlement boundary for Alexandra when preparing the Alexandra Structure Plan, balancing bushfire risk and housing growth needs in a safe manner.
- Review the application of residential zones when preparing the Alexandra Structure Plan to ensure that zone selection supports the level of growth that is proposed to be directed to different areas of the settlement.

The recommendation for amending the planning scheme is:

- PSA 3. Prepare a Planning Scheme amendment or amendments using the marked-up ordinance at Appendix One to include new policy to implement the high-level findings of the Murrindindi Housing and Settlement Strategy 2022 including replacing the Murrindindi Shire Framework Plan at Clause 02.04 with the updated plan at page 55 of the Strategy.**
- PSA 4. Work with the Department of Transport and Planning to determine the additional work required to finalise the Murrindindi Housing and Settlement Strategy considering the variance in capacity between the Strategy (1,174 dwellings) and Plan for Victoria housing capacity target (3,350 dwellings) to enable the incorporation of detailed actions in the Strategy into the Murrindindi Planning Scheme**

10.3 Rural planning

10.3.1 What are the issues?

Numerous issues were raised that relate to planning for rural land in Murrindindi in the preparation of this report. The issues can be summarised as:

- The Murrindindi Planning Scheme does not currently identify high quality / significant horticultural and agricultural land across the municipality. Defining this in the planning

scheme would assist with the application of the State Planning Policy at Clause 14.01S which requires that high quality agricultural land be preserved.

- General review of the application of the Rural Conservation Zone and Farming Zone, including lot sizes.
- Resolving inappropriately zoned residential areas in the Farming Zone (particularly around Kinglake, Killingworth and Marysville) through restructuring or rezoning
- Managing dwellings, excisions and rural living pressures in the Farming Zone, particularly around Kinglake, Killingworth and Marysville
- Supporting the development and management of agritourism and places of assembly in the rural zones.
- Progress the application of the appropriate environmental overlays across the Shire (based on *Management of Significant Landscapes in Murrindindi and Baw Baw* (Planisphere, 2005)).
- Preferred locations for renewable energy.

Management of bushfire risks is a related issue which has been addressed in Chapter 10.1.

10.3.2 Discussion

A theme through the consultation held and research undertaken for this planning scheme review relates to interlinked issues in the rural zones across the municipality. Some of these issues have been addressed through discrete projects – for example criteria for renewables and significant landscapes – however this work is not reflected in the planning scheme.

Agricultural land and Farming Zone reform

The Farming Zone (Clause 35.07) protects productive agricultural land. For Murrindindi, in some areas there is tension between protecting agricultural land and enabling productive use of land not well suited to broadacre farming. Poorer quality ridge and hilltop land can carry limited agricultural value, and the 40-hectare minimum lot size does not always reflect how the land is used. The rural strategy should address lot sizes, Section 173 agreements, and whether restructure or rezoning is the better response. The strategy should be informed by Murrindindi's soil quality work. The strategy should also address the VC253 small second dwelling pathway, which allows a dwelling under 60 square metres in the Farming Zone with no agricultural nexus.

Significant landscapes, visual amenity and renewable energy

Protecting significant landscapes is a high community priority, but the work has not yet gained traction. The Planisphere (2005) study is out of date, and the Clause 42.03 Significant Landscape Overlay schedules give little direction. Murrindindi Shire, with other similar councils, sought Ministerial support for a Significant Landscape Overlay (SLO) over the major rivers and Lake Eildon. Such an overlay would require a permit for buildings, works and vegetation removal, protecting rural visual amenity. No response has been provided.

Murrindindi Shire wishes to support renewable energy and to steer infrastructure to suitable locations away from valued landscapes.

The Marysville overlays also need review, as the current Vegetation Protection Overlay only triggers a permit for lopping, not for tree removal when building.

The rural strategy should include an action plan for coordinated regional advocacy for the SLO, and an updated landscape assessment to identify both the landscapes to be protected and the areas suited to renewable energy.

Managing bushfire risk at the rural living interface

Bushfire is the defining hazard across the Shire. Amendment VC248 applies bushfire controls municipality wide and sets a BAL-12.5 expectation at settlement boundaries. This determines whether inappropriately zoned land can be rezoned and where rural living can occur (see Chapter 3.3 Plan for Victoria). The rural strategy should account for this bushfire constraint when considering rezoning and settlement boundaries.

Flooding

Up to date flooding data is available but has not yet been translated into the planning scheme. The rural strategy should incorporate the most up to date flood data.

Tourism, agritourism and places of assembly

The scheme has no local policy for tourist establishments, agritourism or places of assembly. The rural strategy should develop a local policy, addressing preferred locations, cumulative impact, infrastructure upgrade requirements and funding and standard operational management conditions. The rural strategy should also consider where these sort of uses are encouraged and consider whether an alternative zoning, such as Rural Activity Zone, may encourage the form of development Council wishes to encourage.

Declared water supply catchment

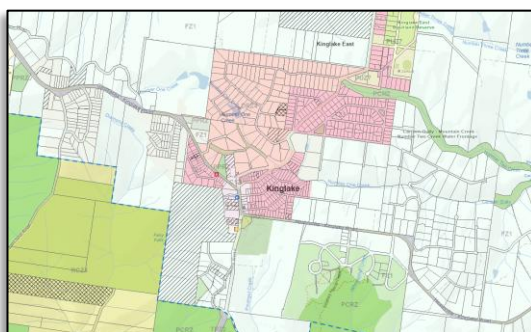
Land north of Eildon lies within a declared special water supply catchment. The rural strategy should include a review of controls with Goulburn Murray Water under Clause 14.02 (Water) to confirm they adequately protect water quality.

Rural worker accommodation

Amendment VC202 enables rural worker accommodation in the Farming Zone in conjunction with agriculture (exempt up to 10 persons, permit above 10). The rural strategy should set how it is provided for locally and its interaction with the small second dwelling pathway.

Rural living and inappropriately zoned residential land

There are large parts of the shire, where small lots in the Farming Zone are prevalent which are functioning as residential areas. Some screen shots from VicPlan demonstrate the issue.





Small lots in the Farming Zone cause problems for applicants and decision makers. They often function as rural residential areas as the lots are too small to farm, but the current minimum lot size for an as of right dwelling in the Farming Zone in Murrindindi is 40 hectares. Applications for dwellings on lots smaller than this must show a nexus between the agricultural use of the land, and the need for a dwelling. Finance, insurance and rebuilding is difficult on lots under 40 hectares, including after bushfire, and small lots in the Farming Zone cause constant conflict between the responsible authority and landowners who wish to develop their parcel which isn't suitable to support agricultural use due to its size.

PPPN37 (Rural residential development) and PPN42 (Applying the rural zones) confirm rural living belongs in the Rural Living Zone or Low Density Residential Zone. The rural strategy should set out a pathway to resolve these areas, through advocacy with the State and the Country Fire Authority to restructure or rezone. Council's local policy at Clause 14.01-1L on dwelling excisions is working as intended at VCAT and does not require change.

Small lots in the Farming Zone should be reviewed to determine whether the Farming Zone remains appropriate and whether any adjustments to the Farming Zone schedule or local policies are required to help manage development in these areas. It is noted that the *Housing and Settlement Strategy 2022* has determined there is an adequate supply of Rural Living Zone land and Low Density Residential Zone land in the shire, and these findings should be taken into consideration through this review. Restructuring of lots should form part of the consideration of this review (through the application of the Restructure Overlay) as well as Clause 13.02-1S Bushfire planning.

The need for policy positions on a range of issues was identified. A review of subdivision in the Farming Zone generally should also be undertaken, (noting Council already has a Dwelling excision in rural areas policy at Clause 14.01-1L). Policy areas that came up during the planning scheme review included preferred locations for renewable energy, guidance for agritourism and places of assembly in the farming zone, and a review of the existing dwelling excision policy.

The way forward

To address the range of rural issues that have been identified, it is suggested a program of rural planning be undertaken over the coming years that addresses the following:

- Document agricultural and landscape values. (quality of land, location of significant views etc).
- Document risks (particularly bushfire, but also flooding and sloped land).
- Nominate preferred uses of rural zone land (agriculture, renewable energy, housing, conservation). This may be place based or issues based.
- Review application of rural zones, including minimum lot sizes.

- Introduce overlays as required (to manage landscapes, to restructure inappropriate subdivisions).
- Develop and introduce policy to guide decision making on key issues including dwellings in the Farming Zone, renewable energy, agritourism and places of assembly.

10.3.3 Findings and recommendations

The following finding is identified as further strategic work, and is included and prioritised in Chapter 11 and Appendix 3.

- Prepare a Rural Land Strategy (potentially in parts) that:
 - Identifies areas of high quality and significant horticultural and agricultural land across the shire, and how high-quality areas should be identified in the planning scheme.
 - Responds to risks associated with bushfire, flooding and erosion, especially in areas where residential development is permitted in the rural zones.
 - Progresses the application of environmental overlays across the Shire, based on the report *Management of Significant Landscapes in Murrindindi and Baw Baw* (Planisphere, 2005), and updating work if required in the context of the rural strategy work.
 - Identifies areas where renewable energy can be supported at a local level, considering rural land quality and landscape values.
 - Identifies preferred locations for agritourism and places of assembly in the rural zones, and sets out guidelines for development of these enterprises and facilities.
 - Resolves the appropriate zoning or minimum lot size for the enclaves of small lots in the Farming and develops an appropriate zoning and policy response.
 - Determines how rural worker accommodation (Amendment VC202) should be provided for in the rural zones in Murrindindi Shire, including its interaction with the small second dwelling pathway, and prepare local guidance if required.

10.4 Design and character issues

10.4.1 The issue

Councillors and Executive asked that good design be supported more strongly through the Planning Scheme. The matters raised included:

- Giving the residential design guidelines greater weight.
- The visual impact of commercial buildings, and retaining a muted township character while still supporting growth.
- Signage and lighting on township approaches.
- Addressing safety by design and public realm quality before an application is lodged.

10.4.2 Discussion

Consideration of neighbourhood character

State reform to the residential provisions (Clause 54 and 55) has reduced the weight of local guidelines for the design of residential development. Many applications for residential

development are no longer required to consider local planning policies if they are ‘deemed to comply’.

The schedules to the residential zones no longer provide an opportunity to include design controls that are stricter than those contained in Clause 54 and 55. These changes have been introduced by the State Government to facilitate the delivery of housing more efficiently.

The changes have the effect of reducing the ability of Council to control residential design outcomes through the planning scheme. The State Government will consider application of neighbourhood character controls (through the application of a Neighbourhood Character Overlay or other suitable tool) only where there are exceptional character values. It has been indicated that the wholesale application across settlements or the Shire of controls of this nature will not be supported.

Council has prepared the *Murrindindi Shire Residential Design Guidelines* (MGS Architects, October 2025). Traditionally these would be translated into the planning scheme in the form of a Clause 15.01 local policy and applied to decision making for any residential development.

Recent changes to the operation of Clauses 54 mean that single dwellings that meet set standards are processed as VicSmart applications under Clause 59.04 and for Clause 55 and Clause 57 dwelling applications that meet set standards are ‘deemed to comply’. This switches off the consideration of local policy (and indeed State policy) which means it is likely that many residential developments won’t need to consider the local policy. .

Changes to the operation of Clause 55 and 57 mean that guidelines of this nature can not be applied to many residential developments if they are ‘deemed to comply’ with the Clause 55 and Clause 57 provisions. Before to this reform, councils would generally include guidelines of this nature in a Clause 15.01 local policy. In the first instance it is recommended that the guidelines be included as a Background Document at Clause 72.08 and that the planners continue using the guidelines as a pre application tools.

Further consideration should be given to including the residential design guidelines in the planning scheme. This may include:

- Alexandra East specific controls should be included in the Development Plan Overlay for the land.
- The Municipal Planning Strategy through preferred character statements in Clause 02.03 or a character map in Clause 02.04.
- A local policy at Clause 15.01.
- Application of the Neighbourhood Character Overlay to areas with outstanding characteristics.

In all cases, engaging directly with developers at the pre-application and permit stage, is a practical way to achieve several of these outcomes without new controls.

Design in commercial areas

The table below sets out Council’s options managing design issues in commercial areas, and the recommended approach.

Matter	Support by State controls	Options available	Recommended approach
Commercial buildings and	Yes, for commercial built form. Clause 02.03-5 directs that	Build on Clause 02.03-5 for township entrances and streetscapes.	Develop built form controls for commercial centres and streetscapes through

Matter	Support by State controls	Options available	Recommended approach
township character	township entrances and streetscapes respect existing character, and the Design and Development Overlay is also available.	Set built form controls for commercial centres through structure planning, then apply a Design and Development Overlay. Negotiate built form outcomes with developers at the permit stage.	structure planning, and implement them through a Design and Development Overlay or other appropriate planning tool.
Signage and lighting in main streets	Partial. There is no State overlay for lighting or illumination levels. Light spill is managed at the permit stage, and signage under Clause 52.05. A local policy is available.	Continue managing light spill at the permit stage, and signage under Clause 52.05 Scope a local policy on signage brightness and illumination, drawing on the existing signage strategy and other councils' policies Encourage muted shopfront and signage lighting through engagement with developers and businesses	Scope a local policy on signage and lighting levels in main streets, drawing on another council's approach and the existing signage strategy.
Safety by design and public realm	Yes. Safety by design, walkability, connectivity and public realm quality are addressed and recently strengthened at the State level.	Rely on State policy, which now covers these matters. Provide pre-application guidance so expectations are clear before lodgement.	Provide pre-application guidance to applicants on good design, including safety by design, walkability, connectivity and public realm quality, so expectations are understood before lodgement (process improvement).

Council is about to prepare the Alexandra Structure Plan, and this project could form a basis for a municipal wide approach to design in commercial areas.

10.4.3 Recommendations

The following finding is identified as further strategic work, and is included and prioritised in Chapter 11 and Appendix 3

- Use the Murrindindi Shire Residential Design Guidelines to provide advice to applicants, guide the application of zones and overlays, and aid in decision making where they can be considered.
- Incorporate the Murrindindi Shire Residential Design Guidelines into the planning scheme through the Alexandra East Development Plan Overlay, and the Municipal Planning Strategy, and give consideration to translating them into schedules to the residential zones (objectives), a Clause 15.01 local policy and the Neighbourhood Character Overlay if warranted.
- Develop built form controls that address building design, township character and gateway treatments for Alexandra as part of the Alexandra Structure Plan, with a view to applying these controls in other settlements where appropriate.

- Scope a local planning policy to manage the brightness and illumination of commercial signage and shopfronts in the main streets of Murrindindi townships, drawing on the existing signage strategy and the approach used by other councils.

The following change has been made to the planning scheme as shown in Appendix One:

- Include the *Murrindindi Shire Residential Design Guidelines* (MGS Architects, October 2025) in Clause 72.08 as a Background Document.

The recommendations because of this issue are

- Imp 7. Provide pre-application guidance to applicants on good design, including safety by design, walkability, connectivity and public realm quality, so expectations are understood before an application is lodged.**
- Imp 8. Use the Murrindindi Shire Residential Design Guidelines to provide advice to applicants, guide the application of zones and overlays, and aid in decision making where they can be considered.**

10.5 Erosion management

10.5.1 What are the issues?

The Planning Scheme Review advisory note (DTP 2026) recommended that Council's review whether there were unmapped risks across the shire.

10.5.2 Discussion

The Erosion Management Overlay has been applied to parts of the Shire, generally to the north west (around Flowerdale and Yea) to steeply sloping land (greater than twenty percent slope).

Erosion and land slip are not identified in Clause 02.03-3 and no objectives are listed in the relevant overlay schedules. A geotechnical assessment could inform whether an Erosion Management Overlay should be considered on slopes over 20% (as adopted by East Gippsland, Towong and Alpine). This is a lower priority than the landscape bushfire and flood mapping, but should be considered in the rural strategy.

There is significant sloped land that are proximate to settlements across the shire, and the application of the Erosion Management Overlay should be considered for these areas. For example, to the east and west of Buxton, west of Taggerty, south of Alexandra, around Maysville and Eildon. The State Government has recently assisted Towong, East Gippsland and Alpine in preparing Erosion Management Overlays in steeply sloped bushfire prone areas, and Council could consider making a similar request.

10.5.3 Findings and recommendations

The following changes are recommended to the Planning Scheme and are shown as track changes in Appendix One:

- Include reference to erosion and land slip as an issue in Clause 02.03-3 (Environmental Risks and Amenity).

The following recommendation is included based on this chapter.

- Adv 5. Consult with the Department of Transport and Planning to determine whether the Erosion Management Overlay should be applied on slopes over 20% where not already applied and, if supported, seek financial assistance to prepare the geotechnical assessment and apply the control.**

10.6 Open space strategy and contributions

10.6.1 What are the issues?

Clause 53.01 of the planning scheme allows councils to develop an open space contribution schedule. This can be used to collect money or in kind contributions for open space. Various Council documents propose formalising council's open space contribution in the planning scheme, including the Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan and the previous Planning Scheme Review.

The issue is whether pursuing an open space contribution is an efficient use of Council resources

10.6.2 Discussion

While it would be desirable to do this project, the planners already have the capacity under the Subdivision Act 1988 to see contributions of this amount when subdivision occurs. Up to five percent can be sought using this mechanism for subdivisions where there are more than two lots created. This is something the planners negotiate consistently with a high level of success.

Formalising an open space contribution in the planning scheme needs to be strategically justified, even if it is only the 5% that is able to be sought under the Subdivision Act in any case. Alpine Shire recently tried to include a 5% contribution on the basis that it was equalising Alpine with most other councils across the State and that it didn't have the resources to prepare the necessary strategic justification. This proposal was rejected by the State Government and the amendment was not permitted to proceed.

If resources were unlimited, introducing a mandatory open space contribution would be supported, but developing the strategic justification for the introduction of a mandatory subdivision levy requires preparation of an open space strategy by a suitably qualified consultant, and economic justification for the open space contribution against Council's capital works budget as it relates to open space planning.

It is difficult to see how this expense can be justified in the context of the resources Council has, and the relatively low amount of subdivision of more than two lots that occurs in Murrindindi.

The need for this project could be reviewed if this changes.

10.6.3 Findings and recommendations

The following finding is identified as further strategic work, and is included and prioritised in Chapter 11 and Appendix 3.

- Review whether the development of a schedule to Clause 53.01 should be pursued based on level of subdivision activity, and costs associated with justifying the control.

10.7 VicSmart related

10.7.1 What are the issues?

During the course of the review, the possibility of utilising local VicSmart schedules to provide for fast tracking of certain classes of development was raised several times.

Discussion

The classes of application that were identified as potentially being suitable for VicSmart schedules were:

- Single dwellings where the permit is triggered under an overlay control.
- Sheds, outbuildings and minor works.
- Shed and outbuilding setbacks.
- Cost of works trigger.

More work is required to narrow down the specifics of what could be included in a VicSmart schedule, and analysis of the cost / benefit of introducing schedules considered. (That is, considering the amount of time and energy required to bring in a new control against the volume of applications that are achieved for that class).

Findings and recommendations

- The following finding is identified as further strategic work, and is included and prioritised in Chapter 11 and Appendix 3. Quantify the benefits of preparing local VicSmart schedules for single dwellings where a permit is triggered by an overlay control, sheds outbuildings and minor works, cost of works trigger, and shed and outbuilding setbacks, and if viable, prepare and introduce these schedules into the planning scheme. (Chapter 5.9 / clause 74.02) (Clause 6.4) (Chapter 7.5)

10.8 Application of the Development Plan Overlay schedules

10.8.1 The issue

Several Development Plan Overlay schedules have been applied to land in Murrindindi in an unusual way that does not align with the Practitioner's Guide to Victoria's planning schemes or Practice Note PPN23 Applying the Incorporated Plan and Development Plan Overlays.

The Development Plan Schedules in question are:

- DPO1 – General Residential Zones
- DPO2 – Low Density Residential Zone
- DPO3 – Rural Living Zone
- DPO4 – Industrial 1 and 2 Zones
- DPO5 – Commercial 1 Zone

Chapter 7.5 identified that the unconventional Development Plan Overlay application should be resolved.

In addition a desk top analysis of the planning scheme maps indicates that some areas where the DPO has been applied are fully developed, and the DPO schedule should be removed.

10.8.2 Discussion

Purpose of the overlay

The Practitioners guide says:

This overlay is used where the form of development is appropriately controlled by a plan that satisfies the responsible authority as there is no public approval process for the plan. Practitioner's Guide to Victoria's Planning Schemes. A planning scheme amendment is not required to amend a plan established by a Development Plan Overlay.

Planning Practice Note 23 Applying the Incorporated Plan and Development Plan Overlays makes the following points about the overlay:

- Used to provide certainty about the nature of a use or development proposal for land.
- Require a plan to be prepared to coordinate proposed use or development, before a permit under the zone can be granted.
- Remove notice requirements and third-party review rights from planning permit applications for proposals that conform to a plan
- Ensure that permits granted are in general conformity with the plan

The overlays should be underpinned by a strategic framework that sets out the desired development outcomes and the overall layout of the land including, if relevant, the design principles for the development, major land uses, transport and open space networks.

The overlay provides for the possibility that the plan can be prepared and implemented in stages.

Review of Council's approach

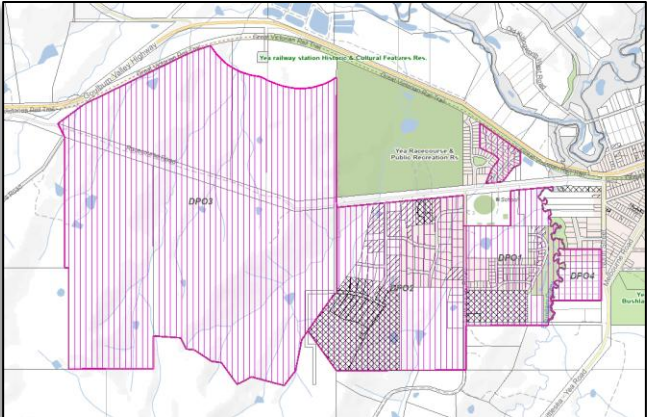
Council received advice from Mesh consultants about the appropriateness of the Development Plan Overlay application across the Shire. This was generally supportive of most of the overlay application as an appropriate tool to support comprehensive development of large sites. This advice is supported.

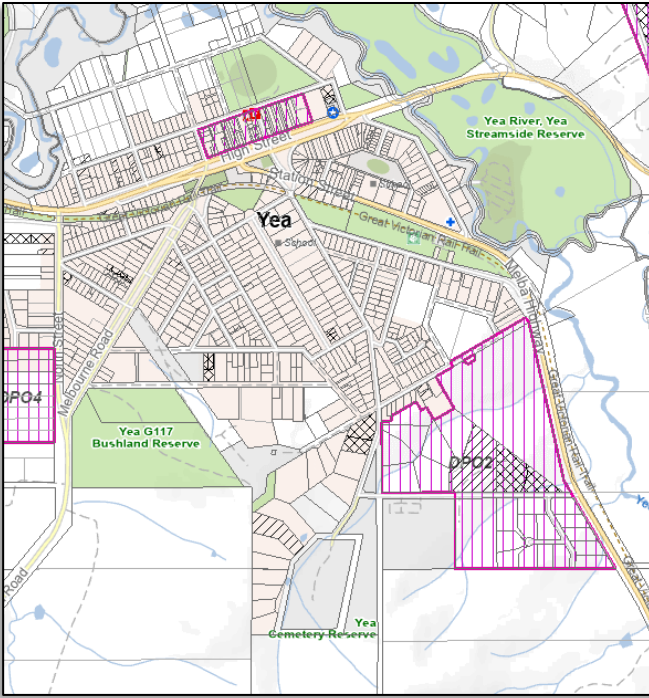
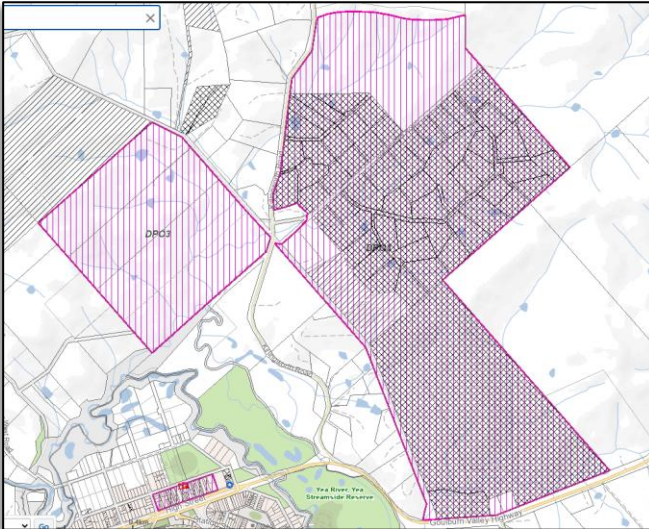
Generally Development Plan Overlays schedules have been applied in this manner across the Shire – that is on large parcels of land that are zoned for residential development (including Rural Living Zone) or industrial land where a comprehensive approach to the transport network, services, lot layout and so on is appropriate and necessary to achieve good outcomes.

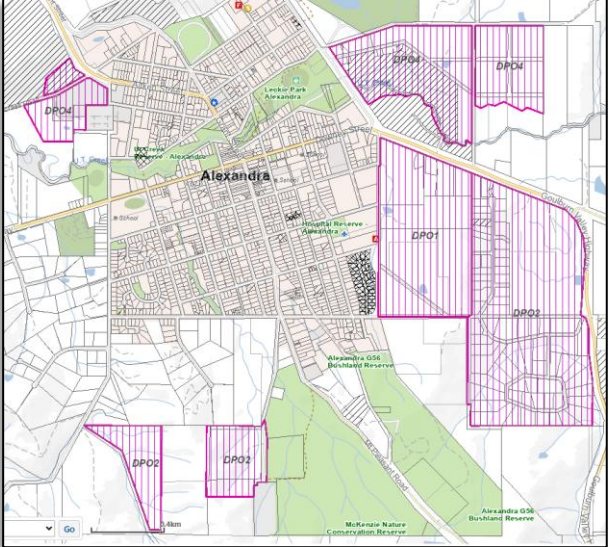
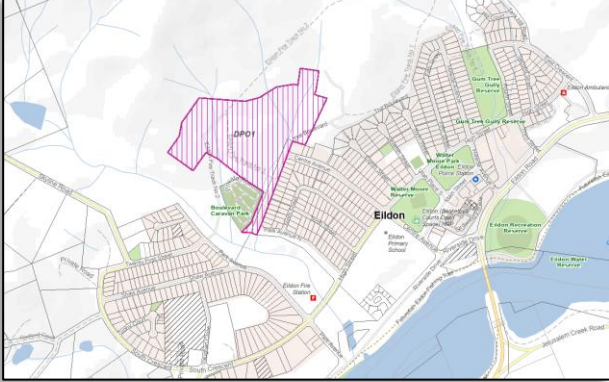
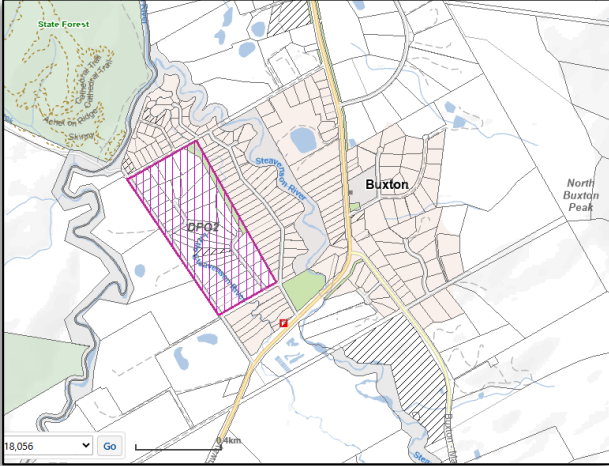
The application of Development Plan Overlay 5 on commercial land that has already been subdivided may impede development of individual parcels within the area which may not be Council's intention. If comprehensive development of land is anticipated, then they may remain appropriate, but if the land is in fragmented ownership and there is no incentive program to encourage consolidation and redevelopment, the DPO is probably impeding development. This applies to the Commercial 1 Zone land in Yea that is covered by DPO5. This issue was picked up in the Yea Structure Plan and a recommendation to review existing Development Plan Overlays in Yea to ensure alignment with policies and strategies of the Year Structure Plan is included in the exhibited amendment documentation Clause 74.02 Further Strategic Work.

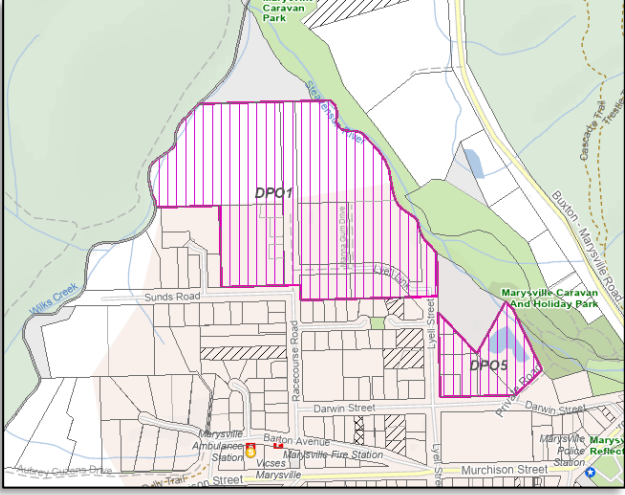
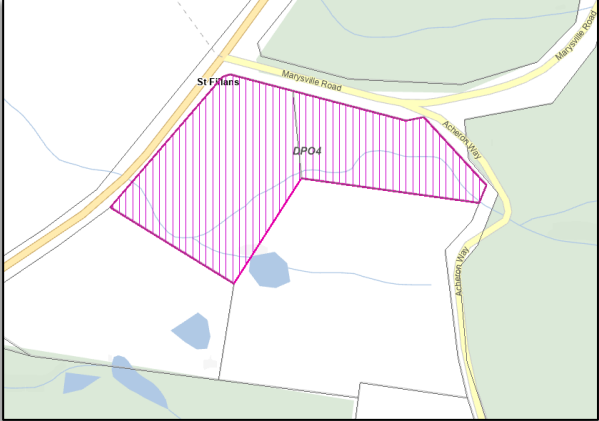
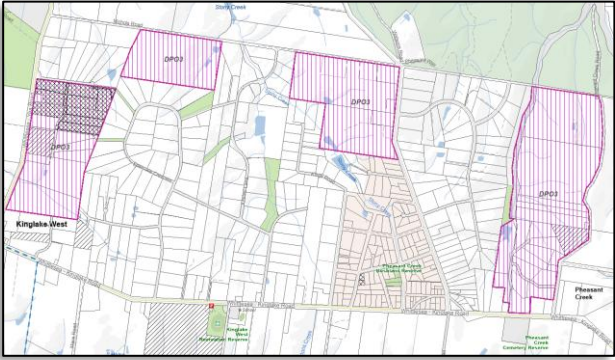
The Development Plan Overlay should be removed from several sites where development is complete, once checks have been made with planning records and property owners.

Observations

Location	Notes
Yea (West) 	Development of three areas covered by the DPO appears to be complete, and the DPO should be deleted from these areas. ▪ DPO1 from the General Residential Zone land in Yea (Yea Springs Drive and Buckland Court). ▪ DPO2 on the Low Density Zone Land in Yea (Redgum Drive and Morgan Drive where the subdivision is complete). The Yea Structure Plan (Mesh, 2025) has identified that the DPOs in Yea be reviewed to ensure alignment with the Plan, and this is propose to be included as Further Strategic Work in Clause 74.02 of the Murrindindi Planning Scheme via Amendment C79muri.

Location	Notes
Yea (central) 	The Yea Structure Plan (Mesh, 2025) has identified that the DPOs in Yea be reviewed to ensure alignment with the Plan, and this is propose to be included as Further Strategic Work in Clause 74.02 of the Murrindindi Planning Scheme via Amendment C79muri.
Yea (north) 	The Yea Structure Plan (Mesh, 2025) has identified that the DPOs in Yea be reviewed to ensure alignment with the Plan, and this is propose to be included as Further Strategic Work in Clause 74.02 of the Murrindindi Planning Scheme via Amendment C79muri.

Location	Notes
	Some of the land covered by the DPO is currently being developed, and the DPOs should be removed as development of these areas is complete. The Structure Plan for Alexandra provides an opportunity for Council to review the application of the remaining DPOs to consider whether they should remain or not.
	No recommendations – leave as is.
	It appears the subdivision of the Low Density Zone land covered by DPO2 in Buxton is complete. The DPO should be removed

Location	Notes
	The application of the DPO should remain in Marysville given the high risk in this location and the need for integrated planning to create a safe residential and commercial environment, should further development occur.
	This is undeveloped Industrial land and a comprehensive approach to its development is sensible. The DPO should remain.
	Delete DPO3 from two subdivisions in Kinglake West once they are complete. (Rowland Road and Olney Court / Denereaz Drive).

10.8.3 Findings and recommendations

Further strategic work that has been moved to Appendix 3:

- Review the application of DPO1, 2 and 4 as part of the Alexandra Structure Plan to determine whether this continues to be the best tool to guide development, and to remove the control where subdivision is complete.
- Delete DPOs across the shire as the subdivisions are completed, as part of 'housekeeping' amendments.

- Remove the Development Plan Overlay schedule 5 from the Commercial 1 Zone land to the north of High Street, Yea unless a comprehensive redevelopment of all properties is anticipated. (Chapter 10.8)
- Remove the following Development Plan Overlay schedules where development is complete:
 - DPO1 from the General Residential Zone land in Yea (Yea Springs Drive and Buckland Court).
 - DPO2 on the Low Density Zone Land in Buxton.
 - DPO2 on the Low Density Zone Land in Yea (Redgum Drive and Morgan Drive where the subdivision is complete.

11 Further strategic work

11.1 Prioritisation process

Appendix Three of this report outlines the strategic planning work identified through this Planning Scheme Review. There are many tasks and these have been prioritised taking into consideration:

- Council and community priorities (e.g. link with Council Plan).
- Victorian and Federal government priorities.
- Whether the project is within Council's remit.
- Whether the project has a planning component that requires implementation through the planning scheme.
- The risks and benefits associated with the work.
- The estimated costs (staff and budget) and timeframes associated with the work considering Council's capacity.
- How the project will be funded.
- Whether they can be completed as 'business as usual' without additional resources being required to deliver.

Before recommending if future strategic work included Clause 74.02, the following principles have been applied.

Principles for including further strategic work in Clause 74.02

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 | It will aid a reader in making a decision or recommendation. |
| 2 | It responds to a relevant local planning need. |
| 3 | It demonstrates a link to achieving the objectives of planning. |
| 4 | It has been clearly scoped and identifies the issue or issues to be addressed. |
| 5 | There is a capacity to secure resources to prepare the further strategic work in a timely manner. |

11.2 Discussion

The review process highlighted the highest priority tasks for Council to undertake over the next four years to improve the Planning Scheme.

These are included in the recommendations below. Numerous other recommendations for further strategic work have been identified and are included in Appendix Three. Appendix Three divides the further strategic work into two parts:

- Strategic projects that require budget and resources.
- Administrative tasks that should be able to be completed as 'business as usual' by officers.

Council should review Appendix Three and remove any projects that are no longer required and consider how it will resource projects through the annual budget cycle and grants.

The list below represents the further strategic work that is considered will have the most positive impact for the Murrindindi community, meet legislative requirements and Victorian government priorities, and support the efficient functioning of the planning service and has

been included in the marked up ordinance at Appendix 2 as the recommended Clause 72.04 to the planning scheme. Note that only work that can be reasonably completed in the next four years should be included in Clause 72.04 of the Planning Scheme.

The strategic projects identified, in order of priority, are:

High (next four years)

- Implement the Yea Structure Plan
- Prepare a landscape scale bushfire assessment for the Shire prior to undertaking further strategic work related to housing and settlement, and rural areas.
- Prepare an amendment or addendum to the Murrindindi Housing and Settlement Strategy 2022 to address Plan for Victoria and landscape scale bushfire assessment recommendations.
- Prepare and implement a structure plan for the Alexandra township.
- Prepare a Rural Land Strategy (potentially in parts).
- Incorporate the Murrindindi Shire Residential Design Guidelines into the planning scheme through the Alexandra East Development Plan Overlay, and the Municipal Planning Strategy, and consider translating them into schedules to the residential zones (objectives), a Clause 15.01 local policy and the Neighbourhood Character Overlay if warranted.
- Implement the planning recommendations of the municipal Industrial and Commercial Land Strategy (including the Yea Sale Yards) once complete.

Medium (four to ten years)

- Prepare a new Structure Plan for Marysville.
- Review the Lake Eildon Masterplan to determine whether revision is required and what implementation actions are needed, including the Skyline Road precinct rezoning investigation
- Identify circumstances where funding for local road improvements can be linked to a development, to ensure planners can provide consistent advice to applicants and neighbours.

Low (10 years onwards)

- Undertake an audit of social infrastructure assets and provision and the future needs of the municipality's population.
- Complete the Local Development Strategy – Context analysis & Entrepreneurial development and implement the relevant outcomes into the planning scheme
- Scope a local planning policy to manage the brightness and illumination of commercial signage and shopfronts in the main streets of Murrindindi townships, drawing on the existing signage strategy and the approach used by other councils.
- Review whether the development of a schedule to Clause 53.01 (open space contribution) should be pursued based on level of subdivision activity, and costs associated with justifying the control.

In addition to these high priority projects, Council should also complete the administrative work that has been identified in Appendix Three as part of the strategic planning teams 'business as usual' over the next four years.

11.3 Findings and recommendations

Prioritise the following further strategic work projects over the next four years, and include them FSW 1 – 6 in Clause 74.02 Further Strategic Work in the planning scheme.

FSW 1. Implement the Yea Structure Plan

FSW 2. Prepare a landscape scale bushfire assessment for the Shire (except for Yea and Alexandra North which have already been completed) prior to undertaking further strategic work related to housing and settlement, and rural areas.

FSW 3. Prepare an amendment or addendum to the Murrindindi Housing and Settlement Strategy 2022 to:

- Address the directions in Plan for Victoria including the housing capacity target, application of residential zones and settlement boundaries once discussions with the Department of Transport and Planning are held.
- Respond to any recommendations from the landscape scale bushfire assessment has been completed.
- Resolve whether places which don't have any residential zoning should be removed from the settlement hierarchy (these settlements are Highlands, Limestone, Molesworth and Glenburn (all Farming Zone) and Flowerdale (RLZ)).

FSW 4. Prepare and implement a structure plan for the Alexandra township including:

- Refining the settlement boundary for Alexandra when preparing the Alexandra Structure Plan, balancing bushfire risk and housing growth needs in a safe manner. (3.6, PfV)
- Reviewing the application of residential zones when preparing the Alexandra Structure Plan to ensure that zone selection supports the level of growth that is proposed to be directed to different areas of the settlement. (3.6 PfV)
- Reviewing the application of DPO1, 2 and 4 as part of the Alexandra Structure Plan to determine whether this continues to be the best tool to guide development, and to remove the control where subdivision is complete.
- Developing built form controls that address building design, township character and gateway treatments for Alexandra as part of the Alexandra Structure Plan, with a view to applying these controls in other settlements where appropriate.
- Identifying both community and development infrastructure requirements to support growth.

FSW 5. Prepare a Rural Land Strategy (potentially in parts) that:

- Identifies areas of high quality and significant horticultural and agricultural land across the shire, and how high-quality areas should be identified in the planning scheme.

- Responds to risks associated with bushfire, flooding and erosion, especially in areas where residential development is permitted in the rural zones.
- Progresses the application of environmental overlays across the Shire, based on the report *Management of Significant Landscapes in Murrindindi and Baw Baw* (Planisphere, 2005), and updating work if required in the context of the rural strategy work.
- Identifies areas where renewable energy can be supported at a local level, considering rural land quality and landscape values.
- Identifies preferred locations for agritourism and places of assembly in the rural zones, and sets out guidelines for development of these enterprises and facilities.
- Resolves the appropriate zoning or minimum lot size for the enclaves of small lots in the Farming Zone (such as those around Kinglake), and develops an appropriate zoning and policy response.
- Determines how rural worker accommodation (Amendment VC202) should be provided for in the rural zones in Murrindindi Shire, including its interaction with the small second dwelling pathway, and prepare local guidance if required.

- FSW 6.** Incorporate the Murrindindi Shire Residential Design Guidelines into the planning scheme through the Alexandra East Development Plan Overlay, and the Municipal Planning Strategy, and consider translating them into schedules to the residential zones (objectives), a Clause 15.01 local policy and the Neighbourhood Character Overlay if warranted.
- FSW 7.** Implement the planning recommendations of the municipal industrial and commercial land strategy (including the Yea Sale Yards) once complete.
- FSW 8.** Allocate existing strategic planning resources to deliver the list of administrative and minor resource changes required to the planning scheme included in Appendix Three.

Appendix One

Track changes to the Murrindindi Planning Scheme recommended by this review.

Separate document

Appendix Two

State and regional Planning Scheme amendments since last Planning Scheme Review

VC (Victorian) and GC (group of council) amendments.

Since the last Planning Scheme Review in 2023, VC and GC amendments have introduced new policy into the Murrindindi Planning Scheme. The table below shows the VC and GC amendments that have occurred, and the impact to the planning scheme and decision making at Murrindindi Shire.

Am No	Approval / gazettal date	Brief description	Implications for Murrindindi Shire
VC312	Tuesday 16 June 2026	Corrections and updates to the VPP and all planning schemes to keep them current and accurate.	No implications. Administrative amendment.
VC311	Tuesday 9 June 2026	Aligns Clause 45.09 (Parking Overlay) with the Clause 52.06 car parking reforms made by VC277.	No implications. Administrative amendment.
VC309	Tuesday 12 May 2026	Clarifies that hemp brick production is included as a rural industry and requires a planning permit to produce hemp bricks in rural zones.	Minimal implications.
VC248	Tuesday 5 May 2026	Improves bushfire planning by updating terminology and measures, increasing and clarifying permit exemptions, and updating Bushfire Management Overlay decision guidelines. Inserts decision guidelines for specified development within the bushfire prone area at Clause 53.02.	Significant implications. The whole Shire is within the Bushfire Prone Area. Areas outside the Bushfire Management Overlay must now meet the standards at Clause 53.02. This affects settlement planning and permit assessment, particularly at settlement edges.
VC232	Tuesday 28 April 2026	Corrects and updates references to government departments, statutory authorities and ministerial portfolios in local provisions following Machinery of Government changes.	No implications. Administrative amendment.
VC307	Monday 20 April 2026	Increases the estimated cost of development thresholds for classes of VicSmart application to account for increased construction costs.	Minimal implications.
VC308	Friday 17 April 2026	Updates all Mixed Use Zone, Township Zone and Residential Growth Zone schedules to align with the Mid-Rise Code and corrects technical errors associated with VC300.	Minimal implications. Mid-Rise development is unlikely in Murrindindi.
VC304	Monday 23 March 2026	Extends the expiry date of the Dependent Persons Unit temporary provisions.	Minimal implications. Provides until March 2027 for dependent persons units that have been issued a permit to be constructed.

Am No	Approval / gazettal date	Brief description	Implications for Murrindindi Shire
VC300	Thursday 19 March 2026	Amendment VC300 changes the VPP and all planning schemes in Victoria by implementing the Mid-Rise Code to introduce new deemed to comply assessment provisions for four to six storey residential development in residential zones.	No implications. It is highly unlikely Murrindindi will see applications for development of 4 – 6 storeys.
GC269	Tuesday 24 February 2026	GC269 corrects obvious or technical errors and makes consequential changes to local schedules to align with VC286.	No implications. Administrative amendment.
VC245	Friday 13 February 2026	Amendment VC245 makes changes to give effect to the Surf Coast Statement of Planning Policy (SPP) and Bellarine Peninsula SPP. The amendment improves the clarity of the VPP and Macedon Ranges Planning Scheme by removing the particular provision at Clause 51.07 (Macedon Ranges SPP). The amendment also makes administrative changes to the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme.	No implications. Does not apply to the Murrindindi municipality.
VC271	Friday 6 February 2026	The amendment supports the provision of energy-related infrastructure by facilitating the creation of new smaller lots for utility installations that transmit, distribute or store electricity in the Farming Zone and Rural Activity Zone.	Minimal implications. Unlikely that this form of development will occur in Murrindindi.
VC265	Wednesday 4 February 2026	Amendment VC265 makes corrections and updates to the Victoria Planning Provisions and all planning schemes to ensure they are current and accurate.	Minimal implications. Administrative amendment.
VC278	Tuesday 23 December 2025	Amendment VC278 applies Significant Landscape Overlays (SLOs) to 17 waterways within the Yarra (Burrarung) and Waterways of the West catchments. The controls preserve the unique landscape character, cultural values, amenity and ecological health of each waterway. The amendment also strengthens state policy for waterways and includes updates to existing SLOs within the Waterways of the West and Rivers of the Barwon catchments.	No implications. None of the waterways are within Murrindindi boundaries.
VC277	Thursday 18 December 2025	Amendment VC277 amends car parking requirements to align car parking rates with demand and reduce the number of car parks required in locations well-served by public transport.	No implications. There are no locations in Murrindindi where a reduction in carparking will be triggered by this provision.
VC298	Tuesday 25 November 2025	Amendment VC298 updates Clause 52.03 to reflect the Level Crossing Removal Project's (LXRP) name change to Victorian Infrastructure Delivery Authority (VIDA) Rail and expand the clause's application to projects carried	No implications. Administrative amendment.

Am No	Approval / gazettal date	Brief description	Implications for Murrindindi Shire
		out by or on behalf of VIDA Rail. The amendment also updates reference to the Guidelines for removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation (DEECA, 2025).	
VC301	Friday 21 November 2025	Amendment VC301 corrects Clause 52.37 table of permit exemptions to ensure public authorities and municipal councils do not require a permit to remove, destroy or lop a canopy tree to construct or maintain the transport system.	Minimal implications. Removes need for permit if Council is maintaining trees in a Transport 2 Zone.
VC297	Wednesday 19 November 2025	Amendment VC297 creates an efficient approvals pathway for permits to facilitate the assessment of minor projects to support the delivery of the broader Suburban Rail Loop Authority transport program, including Suburban Rail Loop East.	No implications. Does not affect the Murrindindi area.
VC295	Friday 7 November 2025	The amendment changes the VPP and all planning schemes to align the provisions with the new name for Major Road Projects Victoria (MRPV) to VIDA Roads.	No implications. Administrative amendment.
VC291	Thursday 30 October 2025	Amendment VC291 updates the Victoria Planning Provisions and all planning schemes to replace the Guidelines for the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation, 2017 with the version published in 2025 and amend clause 66.01 (Subdivision Referrals) to enable the direct referral of planning applications to Fire Rescue Victoria for the existing fire hydrant referral matter.	Minimal implications. Administrative amendment.
VC294	Monday 27 October 2025	Amendment VC294 reforms sign provisions to exempt specified signs from planning permit requirements and remove mandatory permit expiration dates for most signs.	Minimal implications. Removes the need for permit extensions for signs.
VC296	Friday 17 October 2025	Amendment VC296 reinstates the operation of the existing coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and recovery exemption planning provisions until 30 June 2027.	Minimal implications. Extends the period for exemptions for permits for footpath trading.
VC288	Thursday 18 September 2025	The amendment extends the streamlined VicSmart assessment process to include planning permit applications for the construction of two dwellings on a lot and the subdivision of land into two lots.	Moderate implications. Provides a 'fast track' (10 day approval) pathway for two dwellings on a lot and subdivision of land into two lots.
VC289	Monday 15 September 2025	Amendment VC289 introduces a planning permit requirement to remove, destroy or lop a canopy tree in residential areas at clause 52.37 (Canopy trees) into the Victoria Planning	Moderate implications. Canopy trees on private land have greater protection. New residential development will need

Am No	Approval / gazettal date	Brief description	Implications for Murrindindi Shire
		Provisions (VPP) and all planning schemes. Minimum canopy tree replacement requirements will apply to an application to remove a canopy tree. The amendment is required to implement Action 12 of Plan for Victoria to protect and enhance canopy trees.	to retain existing, or provide new mature canopy trees.
VC292	Thursday 11 September 2025	Amendment VC292 makes changes to the Victoria Planning Provisions (VPP) and all planning schemes to include reference to the Neighbourhood Character Overlay (NCO) in the 'Application' section of clause 54 that was inadvertently omitted by Amendment VC282.	No implications. Corrections amendment.
VC268	Friday 5 September 2025	Amendment VC268 is required to give effect to the Victorian Transmission Plan and update strategies to facilitate renewable energy development in declared renewable energy zones. Changes to references to the Climate Action Act 2017 are required to ensure that planning schemes are accurate.	No implications. No part of Murrindindi is a declared renewable energy zone.
VC283	Tuesday 2 September 2025	The Amendment changes the Victoria Planning Provisions and all planning schemes in Victoria to implement Plan for Victoria (Department of Transport and Planning, 2025), update and introduce policy, remove reference to Plan Melbourne 2017-2050: Metropolitan Planning Strategy and make general drafting improvements and clarifications.	Moderate implications. Includes a housing capacity target of 550 dwellings by 2050 for Murrindindi. Removes the Hume Regional Growth Plan from the scheme.
VC279	Thursday 21 August 2025	The amendment makes changes to the land use definition of Minor utility installation in the Victoria Planning Provisions and all planning schemes to ensure the appropriate planning assessment of large battery storage systems.	Minimal implications. Large scale battery storage is not expected to be located in Murrindindi.
VC290	Friday 15 August 2025	The Amendment changes the VPP and 63 planning schemes in Victoria by making Abattoir a section 1 use in the Table of Uses where specified siting, design and amenity conditions are met in clause 35.04 Green Wedge Zone, clause 35.07 Farming Zone and clause 35.08 Rural Activity Zone.	Minimal implications. Will impact on future abattoir proposals. If conditions are met, use permit won't be required.
VC282	Monday 11 August 2025	The amendment changes the Victoria Planning Provisions and all planning schemes in Victoria by introducing a new clause 54 (One dwelling on a lot or a small second dwelling on a lot), making consequential changes to give effect to the new residential development planning assessment provision and	Significant implications. Provides a 'deemed to comply' pathway for single dwellings on a lot and small second dwellings that require a planning permit in the residential zones (noting that many single dwellings on the lot don't require a permit under the

Am No	Approval / gazettal date	Brief description	Implications for Murrindindi Shire
		correcting technical errors made by Amendment VC267.	zone). If deemed to comply, removes third party appeal rights (VCAT).
VC258	Friday 4 July 2025	The amendment improves the operation of the existing Development Facilitation Program (DFP) planning provisions at clauses 53.22 and 53.23 and expands the program eligibility to include gas projects and saleyards.	Minimal implications. If application for saleyard is received it will be determined by DTP rather than Council.
VC286	Tuesday 1 July 2025	The Amendment changes the VPP and all planning schemes in Victoria by removing the requirement for a planning permit for licensed premises.	Minimal implications. Council is no longer responsible for issuing permits for licenced premises.
VC275	Friday 27 June 2025	The amendment introduces a planning exemption for outdoor dining on public land	Minimal implications.
VC280	Monday 7 April 2025	Amendment VC280 introduces the Great Design Fast Track into the Victoria Planning Provisions and all planning schemes in Victoria. The Great Design Fast Track implements a new planning assessment pathway to facilitate the delivery of high-quality townhouse and apartment developments.	No implications. It is not expected that Murrindindi will have any applications that fall into this category.
VC276	Wednesday 2 April 2025	Amendment VC276 makes changes to the Victoria Planning Provisions (VPP) and all planning schemes to amend all residential zone schedules and Neighbourhood Character Overlay schedules to implement the new residential development planning assessment provisions and correct technical errors resulting from Amendment VC267.	No implications. No schedules to the residential zones required amendment. No Neighbourhood character overlay applies.
VC267	Thursday 6 March 2025	Amendment VC267 implements new residential development planning assessment provisions to boost housing construction to meet the housing needs of Victorians.	Significant implications. Provides a 'deemed to comply' pathway for permits for two or more dwellings on a lot that require a planning permit in the residential zones. If deemed to comply, removes third party appeal rights (VCAT).
VC266	Monday 3 March 2025	The amendment extends the timeframe for the temporary planning provisions that allow for the use and development of land for a Dependent persons unit (DPU) by one year to 28 March 2026. The amendment also updates the permit requirements for DPU proposals affected by particular overlays.	Minimal implications. Provides until March 2026 for dependent persons units that have been issued a permit to be constructed.
VC274	Friday 28 February 2025	Amendment VC274 introduces the Precinct Zone (PRZ) at Clause 37.10 to support housing and economic growth in priority precincts across Victoria in line with Victorias Housing Statement,	No implications. There are no locations in Murrindindi suitable for the application of the Precinct Zone.

Am No	Approval / gazettal date	Brief description	Implications for Murrindindi Shire
		The Decade Ahead 2024-2034 and the Victorian Governments vision for priority precincts, including Suburban Rail Loop precincts.	
VC257	Tuesday 25 February 2025	Amendment VC257 makes changes to the Victoria Planning Provisions (VPP) and all planning schemes to introduce Clause 32.10 Housing Choice and Transport Zone (HCTZ) and Clause 43.06 Built Form Overlay (BFO) to support housing growth in and around activity centres and other well-serviced locations in line with Victorias Housing Statement, The Decade Ahead 2024-2034	No implications. These controls are not suitable for application in Murrindindi.
VC237	Tuesday 14 January 2025	The Amendment changes the VPP and all planning schemes in Victoria by introducing a permit exemption for a remote sellers packaged liquor licence under Clause 52.27, replacing references to EPAs Recommended Separation Distances for Industrial Residual Air Emissions document with the new Separation Distance Guideline and Landfill Buffer Guideline, replacing existing references to superseded state and regional waste and resource recovery plans with the new Victorian Recycling Infrastructure Plan, correcting typographical errors, updating formatting and ensuring language and references are accurate and up to date.	Limited implications. Administrative amendment.
VC273	Thursday 19 December 2024	Amendment VC273 makes changes to clause 52.20 to apply to housing development that are wholly or partly funded by the Victorian or Commonwealth governments.	Minimal implications. Administrative amendment. Limited, if any, of this form of development anticipated in Murrindindi Shire.
VC272	Wednesday 18 December 2024	The amendment modifies the timeframes at clause 52.10 (Reconstruction After an Emergency) from 5 to 7 years.	Significant implications. Provides additional time for post bushfire recovery related planning permits to be activated from 5 to 7 years.
VC269	Tuesday 3 December 2024	The amendment makes changes to the VPP and all planning schemes to improve the operation of clause 53.24 Future Homes.	Minimal implications. No locations for Future Homes have been identified in Murrindindi.
VC263	Friday 22 November 2024	The Amendment makes changes to state policy relating to special water supply catchments and water quality, as well as improving references to the Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994 and updating references to policy documents	Minimal implications. Administrative amendment that updates reference documents and referrals.
VC270	Friday 11 October 2024	Amendment VC270 extends the outdoor dining planning exemptions under clause 52.18 (Coronavirus (COVID 19)	Minimal implications. Extends the period for

Am No	Approval / gazettal date	Brief description	Implications for Murrindindi Shire
		pandemic and recovery exemptions) for a further 12 months.	exemptions for permits for footpath trading.
VC262	Friday 16 August 2024	Amendment VC262 exempts applications to remove, destroy or lop vegetation that comply if a fire prevention notice has been issued under the Fire Rescue Victoria Act 1958.	Moderate implications. Removes the need for a permit for Council to remove vegetation if authorised by FRV.
VC255	Friday 3 May 2024	Amendment VC255 changes the VPP and 52 planning schemes in Victoria by correcting obvious or technical errors and by making consequential changes to local schedules to align with Amendment VC243 and Amendment VC253.	No implications. Administrative amendment.
VC261	Thursday 4 April 2024	The amendment expands the operation of the existing Development Facilitation Program (DFP) planning provisions that fast-track the assessment of significant economic development by enabling an application for renewable energy facility, utility installation and associated subdivision to be assessed.	No implications. Unlikely this scale of development will occur in Murrindindi.
VC259	Thursday 28 March 2024	The amendment changes the VPP and all planning schemes in Victoria by extending the transitional arrangements for a dependent persons unit for a period of 12 months.	Minimal implications. Provides until August 2025 for dependent persons units that have been issued a permit to be constructed.
GC222	Wednesday 27 March 2024	Removes reference to the superseded Goulburn-Murray Water Native Vegetation Code of Practice (February 2011) from the Schedule to Clause 72.04.	No implications. Administrative amendment.
VC256	Friday 15 March 2024	General omnibus amendment.	No implications. Administrative omnibus amendment.
VC244	Friday 16 February 2024	Administrative corrections to Clause 72.04 and various schedules to Clause 72.04.	No implications. Administrative amendment.
VC254	Monday 12 February 2024	Changes related to the Birrarung-Bolin Framework Plan, proof of continuous use, signs in the Transport Zone and State projects.	Minimal implications. The Birrarung-Bolin Framework Plan does not apply to Murrindindi. The remaining changes are minor.
VC249	Monday 15 January 2024	Exempts development for a small second dwelling from Development Contributions Plan requirements and corrects typographical errors.	Minimal implications. Administrative amendment.
VC250	Monday 1 January 2024	The amendment supports Victoria's Gas Substitution Roadmap (Victorian Government, 2022) by prohibiting new gas connections for new dwellings, apartments and residential subdivisions where a planning permit is required.	Minimal implications. Alternatives to gas are now required for new dwellings.

Am No	Approval / gazettal date	Brief description	Implications for Murrindindi Shire
VC253	Thursday 14 December 2023	Amendment VC253 introduces a new land use term and siting, design and amenity requirements for a small second dwelling into the Victoria Planning Provisions (VPP) and all planning schemes to implement Victorias Housing Statement: The decade ahead 2024-2034 by making it easier to build a small second dwelling.	Significant implications. Allows the use of land for a small second dwelling without a planning permit provided it is less than 60sqm in area and 5m in height.
VC241	Tuesday 17 October 2023	Removes prohibitions for specified sign types for a Freeway service centre, Service station and Open sports ground where Category 4 sign controls apply.	Minimal implications. Relevant only where Category 4 sign controls apply.
VC247	Friday 6 October 2023	Amendment VC247 extends planning exemptions under clauses 52.07 (Emergency recovery) and 52.18 (Coronavirus (COVID 19) pandemic and recovery exemptions) and makes corrections to ordinance introduced in VC246 related to Container deposit scheme centres.	Minimal implications. Administrative amendment.
VC246	Tuesday 26 September 2023	Introduces a new land use term, Container deposit scheme centre, nested under Transfer station, and makes corrections to ordinance.	Minimal implications. Administrative amendment.
VC243	Friday 22 September 2023	Codifies residential development standards, implements the Future Homes project, removes permit requirements for single dwellings on lots of 300 square metres or more and introduces VicSmart permits for single dwellings on smaller lots.	Minimal to moderate implications. Most Murrindindi residential lots are large, so the removal of permits for single dwellings has limited effect.
VC242	Wednesday 20 September 2023	Introduces two new particular provisions to facilitate significant residential development and significant economic development.	No to minimal implications. Development of this scale is unlikely in Murrindindi.
VC236	Monday 14 August 2023	Supports renewable hydrogen gas production and distribution and makes the Minister for Planning the responsible authority for large-scale production.	No implications. Unlikely to occur in Murrindindi.
VC238	Thursday 3 August 2023	Amends Clause 52.13 (container deposit scheme) to enable an automated collection point to occupy five car spaces instead of four where the land contains 50 or more car spaces.	Minimal implications. Administrative amendment.
VC234	Tuesday 4 July 2023	Clarifies noise requirements for wind energy facilities and the responsible authority for enforcement matters.	Minimal implications. Relevant only if wind energy facilities are proposed.
VC231	Thursday 6 April 2023	Amends permit exemption thresholds for dwelling extensions, out-buildings and buildings used for agriculture in the Rural Living, Farming and Rural Activity Zones.	Moderate implications. Directly relevant to Murrindindi's rural zones. Changes permit triggers for dwelling extensions, outbuildings and agricultural buildings.

Am No	Approval / gazettal date	Brief description	Implications for Murrindindi Shire
VC219	Tuesday 22 March 2022	The Amendment changes the VPP and all planning schemes in Victoria to support the ongoing operation of extractive industry across Victoria and increase amenity protections for nearby accommodation.	Moderate implications. It's likely to that Murrindindi will receive applications of this nature. They are often controversial.
VC208	Tuesday 5 October 2021	Amends Clause 52.10 to apply the use, notice and review exemptions to other types of emergencies.	Minimal implications. Supports emergency and bushfire recovery responses.
VC187	Tuesday 1 December 2020	Introduces a new particular provision, Housing by or on behalf of the Director of Housing at clause 53.20 of the Victoria Planning Provisions and all planning schemes to streamline the planning permit process to construct or extend a dwelling, or to construct or extend a front fence if the application is made by or on behalf of the Director of Housing. It amends clause 72.01 to specify the Minister for Energy, Environment, and Climate Change to be the responsible authority for the development of 10 or more dwellings and any apartment development.	Limited implications. Unlikely this form of development will occur.

Appendix Three

Comprehensive list of further strategic work

The following list presents a comprehensive overview of all further strategic work identified through this Planning Scheme Review.

The highest priority projects have been identified and included in Chapter 11 of this report and inserted as a revised Clause 74.02 in Appendix Two. The remaining projects on this list need to be prioritised by Council.

Strategic projects

Project name	Project source	Priority
Prepare and implement a structure plan for the Alexandra township including: - Refining the settlement boundary for Alexandra when preparing the Alexandra Structure Plan, balancing bushfire risk and housing growth needs in a safe manner. (3.6, PfV) - Reviewing the application of residential zones when preparing the Alexandra Structure Plan to ensure that zone selection supports the level of growth that is proposed to be directed to different areas of the settlement. (3.6 PfV) - Reviewing the application of DPO1, 2 and 4 as part of the Alexandra Structure Plan to determine whether this continues to be the best tool to guide development, and to remove the control where subdivision is complete. - Developing built form controls that address building design, township character and gateway treatments for Alexandra as part of the Alexandra Structure Plan, with a view to applying these controls in other settlements where appropriate.	Chapter 3.6 Chapter 4.4 Chapter 5.9 Chapter 10.2 Chapter 10.4 Chapter 10.8 Previous PSR Plan for Victoria	High
Implement the Yea Structure Plan	Chapter 8.4 Council Plan 2025-2029.	High
Undertake a municipal industrial and commercial land strategy, which includes a review of the with emphasis on the Yea Saleyards Precinct and consider the appropriate planning response, such as applying the SUZ and BAO to the area.	Chapter 4.4 Chapter 5.9 Previous PSR	Medium
Undertake an audit of social infrastructure assets and provision and the future needs of the municipality's population.	Chapter 4.4 Chapter 5.9 Previous PSR	Low
Complete the Local Development Strategy – Context analysis & Entrepreneurial development and implement the relevant outcomes into the planning scheme	Chapter 8.4 EDS 2024, p11	Low
Review the Lake Eildon Masterplan to determine whether revision is required and what implementation actions are needed, including the Skyline Road precinct rezoning investigation	Chapter 8.4 ALE 2020, Actions 1.5 and 1.6, p32	Medium
Identify circumstances where funding for local road improvements can be linked to a development, to ensure planners can provide consistent advice to applicants and neighbours.	Chapter 6.4	Medium
Prepare a landscape scale bushfire assessment for the Shire (except for Yea and Alexandra North which have already been	Chapter 3.6	High

Project name	Project source	Priority
completed) prior to undertaking further strategic work related to housing and settlement, and rural areas.	Chapter 7.5 Chapter 10.1	
Prepare an amendment or addendum to the Murrindindi Housing and Settlement Strategy 2022 to: ▪ Address the directions in Plan for Victoria including the housing capacity target, application of residential zones and settlement boundaries once discussions with the Department of Transport and Planning are held. ▪ Respond to any recommendations from the landscape scale bushfire assessment has been completed. ▪ Resolve whether places which don't have any residential zoning should be removed from the settlement hierarchy (these settlements are Highlands, Limestone, Molesworth and Glenburn (all Farming Zone) and Flowerdale (RLZ)).	Chapter 3.6 Chapter 4.4 Previous PSR Chapter 7.5 Chapter 8.4 Chapter 10.2 Plan for Victoria	High
Prepare a Rural Land Strategy (potentially in parts) that: ▪ Identifies areas of high quality and significant horticultural and agricultural land across the shire, and how high-quality areas should be identified in the planning scheme. ▪ Responds to risks associated with bushfire, flooding and erosion, especially in areas where residential development is permitted in the rural zones. ▪ Progresses the application of environmental overlays across the Shire, based on the report <i>Management of Significant Landscapes in Murrindindi and Baw Baw</i> (Planisphere, 2005), and updating work if required in the context of the rural strategy work. ▪ Identifies areas where renewable energy can be supported at a local level, considering rural land quality and landscape values. ▪ Identifies preferred locations for agritourism and places of assembly in the rural zones, and sets out guidelines for development of these enterprises and facilities. ▪ Resolves the appropriate zoning or minimum lot size for the enclaves of small lots in the Farming Zone, and develops an appropriate zoning and policy response. ▪ Determines how rural worker accommodation (Amendment VC202) should be provided for in the rural zones in Murrindindi Shire, including its interaction with the small second dwelling pathway, and prepare local guidance if required.	Chapter 10.3	High
Incorporate the Murrindindi Shire Residential Design Guidelines into the planning scheme through the Alexandra East Development Plan Overlay, and the Municipal Planning Strategy, and give consideration to translating them into schedules to the residential zones (objectives), a Clause 15.01 local policy and the Neighbourhood Character Overlay if warranted.	Chapter 7.5 Chapter 10.4 Council Plan	High
Prepare a new Structure Plan for Marysville.		
Scope a local planning policy to manage the brightness and illumination of commercial signage and shopfronts in the main streets of Murrindindi townships, drawing on the existing signage strategy and the approach used by other councils.	Chapter 7.5 Chapter 10.4	Medium
Review whether the development of a schedule to Clause 53.01 Subdivision and public open space should be pursued based on	Chapter 10.6	Low

Project name	Project source	Priority
level of subdivision activity, and costs associated with justifying the control.		

Administrative changes

These items of work are small administrative changes and should largely be 'business as usual'. They don't require prioritisation in the Further Strategic Work program or inclusion in Clause 74.02 and should be able to be delivered using existing resources.

Project name	Project source	Priority
Review the schedule to Clause 43.01 - Heritage Overlay to insert statements of significance for all sites not included in the Victorian Heritage Register.	Chapter 5.9	
Quantify the benefits of preparing local VicSmart schedules for single dwellings where a permit is triggered by an overlay control, sheds outbuildings and minor works, cost of works trigger, and shed and outbuilding setbacks, and if viable, prepare and introduce these schedules into the planning scheme.	Chapter 5.9 Clause 6.4 Chapter 7.5 Clause 74.02	
Investigate appropriate floor area thresholds and setback exemptions for sheds and outbuildings in the Farming Zone, with a view to amending the schedule to Clause 35.07. Analysis of recent permit data will be required to determine the appropriate minimum floor area threshold and setback distances from frontages and dwellings.	Chapter 6.4	
Update 02.04 Strategic Framework Plans - Murrindindi Shire Framework Plan: Update the framework plan to show future change and growth directions. (Chapter 5.9)	Chapter 5.9	
Update Schedule 1 to Clause 35.08 Rural Activity Zone: Include a purpose statement (not mandatory but recommended) (Chapter 5.9)	Chapter 5.9	
Update Schedules 1 and 2 to Clause 42.01 Environmental Significance Overlay to reduce the number of objectives in Section 2.0 to one. (Chapter 5.9)	Chapter 5.9	
Update Schedule 1 to Clause 42.03 Significant Landscape Overlay - Cathedral Range: Expand the statement of nature and key elements. (Chapter 5.9)	Chapter 5.9	
Update Schedule 1 to Clause 43.02 Design and Development Overlay - King Parrot Creek Environs: Revise Objectives in Section 1 to remove references to documents (Chapter 5.9)	Chapter 5.9	
Update Schedule 2 to Clause 43.02 Design and Development Overlay - Marysville Town Centre: Revise decision guidelines to remove reference to the documents and report, and replace with decision guidelines extracted from the reports (Chapter 5.9)	Chapter 5.9	
Update Schedule 2 to Clause 43.02 Design and Development Overlay - Marysville Town Centre: Incorporate the viewlines, corridors and landmarks into a map that forms part of the schedule (Chapter 5.9)	Chapter 5.9	
Resolve the exemption for sheds in the Land Subject to Inundation Overlay Schedule 1 with the CMA. (Chapter 7.5)	Chapter 5.9	
Resolve the absence of vegetation protection in the Significant Landscape Overlay schedules. (Chapter 7.5)	Chapter 5.9	

Project name	Project source	Priority
Delete DPOs across the shire as the subdivisions are completed, as part of 'housekeeping' amendments.	Chapter 10.8	
Remove the Development Plan Overlay schedule 5 from the Commercial 1 Zone land to the north of High Street, Yea unless a comprehensive redevelopment all properties is anticipated. (Chapter 10.8)	Chapter 10.8	
Remove the following Development Plan Overlay schedules where development is complete: ▪ DPO1 from the General Residential Zone land in Yea (Yea Springs Drive and Buckland Court). ▪ DPO2 on the Low Density Zone Land in Buxton. ▪ DPO2 on the Low Density Zone Land in Yea (Redgum Drive and Morgan Drive where as the subdivision is complete.	Chapter 10.8	