

21.01 MUNICIPAL PROFILE

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21.01-1 Introduction

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Mansfield Shire is located approximately 150 kilometres north east of Melbourne and has an area of 3,891 square kilometres. In 2011 the population was 7,850 and is expected to grow to 10,040 by 2031.

Many areas within the Shire are of significant visual, cultural and environmental value and are under high demand and mounting pressure for recreation, lifestyle and development activity. The ageing community will result in an increasing demand for medium density housing.

The major urban centre is Mansfield Township with an estimated population of 3,120 (2011) and there are numerous smaller settlements throughout the Shire. Ongoing growth will need to be supported by an additional 900 dwellings to 2031. Council is committed to developing not only the major urban centre of Mansfield Township, but the Shire's small towns where infrastructure permits. These include Merrijig, Sawmill Settlement, Alpine Ridge and Bonnie Doon (all with reticulated sewer). Jamieson, Macs Cove, Howqua Inlet, Goughs Bay, Tolmie and Maindample have limited development potential due to lack of infrastructure. Mountain Bay will be developed in accordance with its own rural living development plan.

The population of some of these settlements is added to considerably during holiday periods both by visitors and by holiday home owners whose principal residence is not in the Shire. At other times they consist of a small number of permanent residents. Many of these areas have poor infrastructure and this needs to be addressed if the residents are to enjoy sustainable development for the future.

There are 4 major valleys in the Shire – Upper Goulburn, Howqua, Jamieson and Upper Delatite which contain large tracts of good agricultural land. Nearly 95% of the municipality is within a Special Water Supply Catchment which impacts development potential, however a significant part of this is public land.

The major water storages include Lake Eildon and Lake Nillahcootie. The main waterways include the Delatite, Howqua, Jamieson, Goulburn and Big Rivers and the Brankeet and Fords Creeks; all of which directly or indirectly flow into Lake Eildon. The Broken River is the other major waterway and it flows into Lake Nillahcootie.

The major mountain features include Mount Buller, Mount Stirling (both Alpine Resorts) and the Great Dividing Range. Mount Buller is Victoria's most popular ski resort with approximately 350,000 visitors annually. Mount Stirling is a very popular cross country skiing and bushwalking area. Mount Buller and Mount Stirling are surrounded by the Alpine National Park.

21.01-2 Key Issues

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The *Hume Regional Growth Plan 2014* lists the following issues that should be addressed:

- Adapt to the potential impacts of climate change.
- Support communities.
- Provide for residential, commercial and industrial expansion.
- Assist agricultural industries to remain competitive.
- Provide transport and other infrastructure to meet the needs of communities and industries.
- Protect and enhance environmental assets.

- Manage exposure to natural hazards.
- Diversify the economy, increase employment and fill skills gaps.

Many of these are relevant at the local level; some of which are new and should be addressed as part of the planning scheme (e.g. climate change impacts).

The **key issues** this planning scheme must address are:

Settlement and Housing

- Maintaining the role of Mansfield Township as the main town and in supplying the majority of housing, commercial/retail and industrial growth.
- Ensuring there is sufficient land supply to meet demand.
- Providing a diversity of housing choices including 'lifestyle' opportunities on rural living land and medium density housing.
- Balancing the need to provide for rural lifestyle opportunities and the pressure this creates for improved services and infrastructure in rural areas.
- Protecting productive agricultural land and addressing the pressure to use it for other purposes than farming.

Heritage and Character

- Protecting European and Aboriginal heritage.
- Protecting the Alpine approaches as major transport and tourism routes.

Environmental and Natural Resource Values

- Adapting to a changing climate.
- Protecting sensitive and environmentally valuable landscapes.
- Protecting and where possible improving water quality.
- Maintaining the natural resource base and amenity is critical to long term sustainability.

Environmental Risks

- Managing flooding and bushfire risks in areas subject to development.
- Managing development in Special Water Supply Catchments.
- Managing pest plants and animals on private and public land.

Economic Development

- Diversifying the economic base, particularly tourism to provide for year-round opportunities.
- Supporting traditional and emerging forms of agriculture.
- Supporting 'clean and green' industries as alternatives to the traditional forms of industry.
- Maximising eco-tourism opportunities.

Transport and infrastructure

- Identifying a heavy vehicle bypass for Mansfield Township.
- Planning and providing for full reticulated infrastructure to all urban areas.
- Addressing the lack of reticulated sewerage, and other infrastructure, in small towns.