

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK AND THE PENINSULA'S SETTLEMENT PATTERN**Overview**

The Mornington Peninsula presents a wide range of opportunities, but also faces substantial pressures and challenges. This combination emphasises the need for long-term strategic planning and stewardship of the Peninsula's resources. A strategic framework plan, which seeks to reconcile competing land use interests and achieve the best long term outcome in terms of the Peninsula's key values, has been outlined in section 21.04. It is critical that the Framework Plan is effectively implemented through this planning scheme, providing clear and positive directions for future land use and development in different parts of the Peninsula.

The distinctive settlement pattern of the Mornington Peninsula, based on a hierarchy of townships and villages, contributes to the diversity of residential, commercial, recreational and employment opportunities available not only to Peninsula residents, but to the wider Melbourne community. In addition, the directions of the State Planning Policy Framework emphasise that the planning priorities for the Peninsula are different from but complementary to those that apply to in other areas, particularly the designated urban growth corridors.

Accordingly, continuing demand for housing on the Peninsula needs to be managed and integrated with the achievement other major planning objectives, including conservation, recreation, agriculture, and port development.

In this context, a major element of the Framework Plan is the definition of the Peninsula's future settlement pattern, including the "green break" between the Peninsula and metropolitan Melbourne.

Pressures for further urban expansion are particularly evident on the metropolitan fringe and the need to define clear and coherent boundaries is important to:

- Avoid the expansion and coalescence of the townships into a defacto growth corridor (or corridors).
- Stabilise expectations regarding future residential or rural residential development of rural land and promote sustainable rural land use.
- Protect areas of environmental, landscape, agricultural or recreational significance.
- Maintain a separation between townships and areas designated for port related development.

In some areas there are limits on development imposed by infrastructure constraints, such as a lack of reticulated sewerage. These also need to be clearly recognised.

The major towns of the Peninsula, including Mornington, Somerville, Hastings, Dromana and Rosebud provide access to services, employment and recreational opportunities for the majority of the Shire's residents and visitors. It is important to strengthen these major centres by consolidating future population growth within their defined growth boundaries. This will provide increased population to support a wider range of services and facilities and provide a focus for economic activity, both in the short term through construction activity and in the longer term, based on the development of community services, commercial activity, retailing and service industry.

Adequate land has been provided within defined growth areas of these major townships to accommodate more than 20 years demand at current rates of housing growth, without consideration of the potential for higher density infill development or the conversion of existing holiday homes to permanent occupancy.

Rural residential development has also been a significant factor in planning for the Peninsula. While many people are attracted by the rural residential lifestyle, extensive rural residential development is incompatible with other values outlined in this statement and definite areas need to be designated for this form of development.

Key issues

- It is critical to recognise the importance of the Peninsula to Melbourne's metropolitan growth and consolidation strategies, and Victoria's environmental, recreational and economic goals.

- Recognising the key values of the Peninsula and managing pressures associated with proximity to metropolitan Melbourne, particularly pressures for urban expansion and rural residential development, depends on establishing a strong strategic planning framework. A major element of a strategic framework is the identification of a settlement pattern compatible with the Peninsula's planning priorities.
- It is necessary to distribute future population growth in support of major township development, rather than allowing ad hoc expansion or dispersed population growth throughout the Peninsula's rural area. This requires clear definition of growth areas and township boundaries, including the "green break" between the Peninsula and metropolitan Melbourne.
- An effective strategy must make provision for rural residential living, without the need for continuous expansion of the urban fringe. In some areas the restructure of old and inappropriate subdivision may contribute to the provision of low density lots.

Objectives - what we want to achieve

Objective 1:

To establish an integrated land use pattern that recognises the regional role and character of the Peninsula, and ensures that urban development does not prejudice the environmental, recreational and agricultural values of the Peninsula nor the potential for appropriate port related development

Strategies

Strategies to achieve this objective include:

- Establish a strategic framework plan, that recognises the key strengths and values of the Peninsula, including:
 - A hierarchy of towns and villages, capable of meeting the needs of residents and visitors.
 - Areas and sites of outstanding conservation and cultural value.
 - Outstanding natural landforms, rural landscapes, seascapes, coastlines and beaches, that are suitable for a wide range of recreational activities, particularly unstructured outdoor pursuits.
 - Areas capable of supporting diverse rural activities.
 - Access to deep-water channels in Western Port, with large areas of land separated from existing settlements and able to support port related development.
- Define clear and stable township boundaries which:
 - Maintain a clear separation or "green break" between metropolitan Melbourne and the Peninsula.
 - Reinforce the clear separation between Mt Eliza and Mornington.
 - Maintain the established boundaries of the Baxter township.
 - Recognise the character and 'sense of place' of individual towns, including the relationship between towns, coastal areas and the rural hinterland.
 - Ensure that the rural and natural landscapes which separate the Western Port coastal settlements are retained and conserved.
 - Provide for planned expansion of major towns, including Mornington, Hastings, Somerville, Dromana and Rosebud.
 - Avoid the extension of urban development into areas of high agricultural and landscape value.
 - Protect areas of conservation, environmental and recreational value.

- Recognise the constraints on development in areas that have limited infrastructure, that are remote from services and facilities or may be subject to environmental threats (such as flooding or bush fire risk).
- Maintain the existing transition area of lower density residential development in Mt Eliza and the inter-urban break with Mornington, having regard to its particular environmental, landscape, township character and heritage values.
- Give particular attention to the unique character and functions of the small coastal townships and rural villages, and to maintaining their compact form and amenity.
- Ensure that the elements that support the natural systems and cultural significance of the Peninsula are identified and given appropriate recognition in land use planning provisions. These include areas of remnant native vegetation, groundwater recharge areas, streamlines, swamp and wetland areas, areas subject to erosion, ridgelines, heritage sites, significant tree lines and landscapes that have been classified by the National Trust.
- Ensure that the intensity of subdivision and development in the Peninsula's rural areas is compatible with environmental values and land capability, the capacity of different landscapes to absorb further development without adverse impact and the maintenance of productive agricultural land use.
- Support the establishment of major open space networks and maintain the values of major open space and conservation reserves, including the Point Nepean National Park and Arthurs Seat State Park.
- Provide appropriate buffers / separation between residential areas and incompatible land uses, including extractive industries, airfields and land designated for port and port related development.
- Retain the existing pool of rural residential properties, particularly where they assist to define township boundaries, to meet the demand for this type of housing without the need for continuous expansion of the rural residential fringe.
- Maintain a range of different low density lot sizes, having regard to land capability and landscape values.

Implementation

These strategies will be implemented by:

Zones and overlays

- Utilising land use zoning to clearly reflect the intended strategic framework for the Peninsula.
- Applying the Low Density Residential Zone to appropriate areas to provide a permanent pool of low density and rural residential lots, supplemented by Design and Development Overlays to recognise landscape, environmental and infrastructure factors.
- Applying Environmental Significance, Vegetation Protection and Landscape Significance Overlays to identify areas of particular environmental and landscape value and to encourage land capability and landscape impact assessment as part of development proposals.
- Applying Design and Development Overlays to recognise areas where environmental, landscape and infrastructure factors require more detailed consideration, including areas appropriate for lower density residential development and rural residential development, and to put in place a framework for equitable development while maintaining local area character.
- Applying restructure overlays to areas of old and inappropriate subdivision, including the Wildcoast/ St Andrews area at Rye, Crib Point – Bittern, Arthurs Seat and Merricks, to reduce the environmental impacts of dwellings and other development.
- Applying Special Use Zones to:

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- Areas identified for Port Related Development.
 - Land adjacent to the Tyabb Airfield.
 - Site specific recreational developments that combine housing with the retention of large areas of recreational land.
 - To a small number of private recreational and institutional sites (including golf courses and the Mornington Racecourse) where no clear alternative zoning can be identified.
 - Planned open space areas and throughways that are privately owned within the Ranelagh Estate.
- Utilising the Public Conservation and Resource Zone to indicate coastal areas and other public land with high environmental value and limited capacity to absorb development.
 - Utilising the Public Park and Recreation Zone for the more intensively utilised areas of public land, including sections of the Port Phillip Bay foreshore.
 - Applying the Public Use Zone to sites containing public facilities and infrastructure to ensure that land use is consistent with the intended public purpose and to protect public investment in major infrastructure.
 - Including main roads within a Road Zone to provide control over new access arrangements and to protect public investment in major infrastructure.
 - Ensuring the route of the proposed Mornington Peninsula Freeway extension and other major road works, including proposed Access and Service Corridors to serve future port related development, are designated by Public Acquisition Overlays to facilitate future provision of major infrastructure.

Policy and the exercise of discretion

- Ensuring that planning decisions take into account long term environmental, social and economic impacts and achieve best practice environmental management by requiring impact assessment reports and management plans as part of development proposals where appropriate.
- Maintaining the township growth boundaries that are defined through the zoning provisions of this planning scheme and considering variations only as part of a comprehensive strategic review of the planning scheme that addresses both State and Local Planning Policy Frameworks.
- Containing rural residential development within existing designated areas and retaining the existing pool of rural residential lots, by preventing re-subdivision of established areas.
- Ensuring that linear development along major roads does not undermine township development strategies and landscape protection/ recreation objectives. (Clause 22.06- Development on highways, main roads and tourist routes).
- Ensuring that the development of dwellings in rural areas, rural excisions and realignments are limited in accordance with a sustainable policy in relation to the intensity of housing and subdivision in rural areas. (Clause 22.03- Dwelling density, excisions and realignments in rural areas).
- Requiring proposals for recreational development in rural and/or coastal areas to demonstrate that they will primarily provide tourist accommodation and recreation facilities, and will not take the form of new residential settlements. (Clause 22.08- Integrated recreational development in rural areas).

Further strategic work

- Developing complementary strategies and policies to maintain and support rural areas between and around townships and to:
 - Provide for their proper use and development.

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- Manage the potential land use conflicts between rural and residential areas.
- Manage township- rural boundary, including land at the edge of Baxter, Merricks/Balnarring Beaches, Somerville and Mt Eliza.
- Coordinating planning for the interface areas (including the townships of Mount Eliza and Baxter) with the relevant adjoining municipalities.
- Considering the role of major areas of public open space in maintaining stable township growth boundaries when developing management plans.
- Preparing a comprehensive conservation strategy for the Peninsula, including a review of existing Local Conservation Strategies, the Western Port Bay Strategy, the Regional Catchment and Land Protection Strategy, and the Mornington Peninsula Drainage and Stream Condition Due Diligence Report.
- Promoting catchment based land management, including the management of groundwater catchments and the integration of planning for the use and development of land with policies for the protection of the adjacent bays and marine environment.
- Progressively reviewing existing subdivision patterns in terms of compatibility with the environmental values and conditions of the land. This may include the restructuring of old and inappropriate subdivisions where necessary.
- Preparing a comprehensive recreation and tourism development policy that integrates elements of the Metropolitan Open Space Strategy, Council's Recreation, Culture and Open Space Strategy and the Bays and Peninsulas Regional Tourism Development Plan.
- Completing the preparation of an economic development strategy for the Shire that identifies, facilitates and promotes appropriate economic development opportunities.
- Developing a Main Roads Strategy to provide for the maintenance of existing road infrastructure and the identification of road network priorities

Other actions

- Coordinating the capital works program and liaising with other service and infrastructure providers to reinforce the settlement pattern strategy.
- Investigating rating strategies that reinforce the Peninsula's planning priorities.
- Commencing the preparation and introduction of appropriate environmental management standards for all works and services carried out by and on behalf of Council.
- Promoting public investment in major infrastructure, including reticulated sewerage, regional drainage, regional waste disposal and main road maintenance and upgrading which is consistent with the strategic framework plan, the Peninsula's regional role and the other provisions of this planning scheme.