

Mansfield Emergency Services Precinct

Building a more resilient Mansfield Shire Community

The Mansfield Emergency Services Precinct will fundamentally ensure the region's emergency services needs are met into the future, in a co-ordinated and sustainable way.

Preliminary Business Case

Final 13 July 2022

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Executive summary

This Preliminary Business Case has been prepared for Mansfield Shire Council as part of the Mansfield Emergency Services Precinct Feasibility Study. The Business Case focuses upon the concept of establishing an Emergency Services Precinct incorporating several emergency services agencies and a Resilience Centre. It is important to acknowledge the individual emergency services agencies have their own business case process for demonstrating the need for new infrastructure, prioritising projects, and securing capital funding.

This Business Case establishes the rationale for having an emergency services precinct, confirms strong support for the proposal from emergency services agencies, Council and community, identifies what services and facilities will form part of the precinct, the capital cost of establishing the precinct, the expected governance and operating arrangements, and the impacting of not investing in the precinct.

The problem

In partnership with key emergency services agencies and community, Mansfield Shire Council has identified the need to achieve a sustainable long-term solution for emergency services infrastructure in Mansfield. The problem the Mansfield Shire community and surrounding region faces is multifaceted.

1. The community and surrounding region are vulnerable to emergency situations because of the geographic setting.
2. The demand for emergency services is increasing because of population growth, increased visitations to the region, and the increasing frequency of natural disasters.
3. The poor condition and limitation of the existing emergency services infrastructure is significant, and if it remains unaddressed, will increase the vulnerability of the Mansfield Shire community and surrounds in emergency situations.
4. The critical need to strengthen the resilience of the Mansfield Shire community and wider region to prepare for, respond to and recover from emergency and disaster situations.

The Solution

The recommended solution is to develop **an Emergency Services Precinct** on Council owned land at 166 Maroondah Highway (the Saleyards site). The Emergency Services Precinct will incorporate:

- An Ambulance Victoria station to accommodate 24-hour operation.
- A new Victorian State Emergency Services facility.
- Facilities for Mansfield Community Radio as the emergency broadcaster for the region.
- A Resilience Centre comprising emergency training and support facilities to enable delivery of emergency management and community capacity building training programs, support

volunteer recognition and community recovery efforts, and strengthen the resilience of the community to prepare for, respond to and recover from emergency and disaster situations.

- Provision for a new Country Fire Authority station (proposed for development in stage 2).

Facilities will be designed to support a co-ordinated and integrated approach to delivering emergency services and building community resilience, with shared meeting spaces, shared internal and external training and incident response spaces, and where possible, shared support infrastructure.

The rationale

- **To address urgent service needs:** The Mansfield Ambulance station does not support current ambulance operating models and cannot support the recent implementation of a 24-hour staffed station. Mansfield SES is located in a dated building in poor condition that is not disability access compliant and has storage and security deficiencies. Both the Ambulance and SES facilities are identified as a top priority for redevelopment or replacement by the individual agencies.
- **Consistency with government policy:** A precinct approach is consistent with Federal, State, Local government policy particularly in relation to the commitment to partnering, shared and joined-up services and the need for a co-ordinated and co-operative effort to build resilience by enhancing capacity to prepare for, respond to and recover from emergencies and disasters.
- **Community and agency support:** There is strong interest and support from community members, Council, and local and head office agency representatives. Emergency services agencies have been actively involved in the Scoping and Feasibility Studies and are supportive of the precinct model.
- **To enable shared use of spaces, facilities and resources:** The Precinct will support and foster collaboration and closer relationships between the emergency services agencies. It also represents an efficient way to provide public infrastructure.
- **Available public land:** Mansfield Shire Council has committed to making the land available to establish an Emergency Service Precinct and will enter into long term lease agreements with Ambulance, VicSES, Mansfield Community Radio and CFA (at a later stage). It will also facilitate the use and activation of the Resilience Centre.
- **Promoting and encouraging volunteerism and building community resilience and capacity:** The Precinct will deliver a highly visible focus for emergency services which will support the promotion and engagement of volunteers from the local community. The Resilience Centre will be a key focus for building community resilience and capacity through community information and education about preparing for, responding to, and recovering from emergencies and disasters.
- **Contributing to liveability:** Strong and collaborative emergency services will build confidence in Mansfield as a safe and liveable community.

Staging and timing

- **Stage 1:** Development of the Ambulance, SES, and Mansfield Community Radio facilities and the Resilience Centre. This must occur in the short term due to the URGENT NEED for new Ambulance and SES facilities.
- **Stage 2:** Development of the CFA facilities. This is proposed to occur in the medium to longer term.

Cost to deliver the solution and funding sources

Precinct component	Indicative Cost
VicSES Building	\$7,061,505
Ambulance Victoria Building	\$4,241,604
Mansfield Resilience Centre – Incorporating Mansfield Community Radio	\$6,241,982
CFA Building	\$3,903,092
TOTAL	\$21,448,183

Funding Source	Amount sought/contribution
Stage 1	
Federal Government Disaster Ready Fund/Preparing Australian Communities Program (PACP)	\$3,120,991
Regional Infrastructure Fund – Victorian State Government	\$3,120,991
Mansfield Shire Council Land – 166-176 Maroondah Highway, Mansfield	
VicSES/Emergency Services Infrastructure Authority – New Mansfield SES Unit	\$7,061,505
Ambulance Victoria/Victorian health Building Authority - New Mansfield Ambulance Station	\$4,241,604
Total Stage 1.	\$17,545,091
Stage 2	
CFA – New Mansfield Fire Station	\$3,903,092
Total Stage 1 and 2	\$21,448,183
Value of land contributed by Mansfield Shire Council 166-176 Maroondah Highway, Mansfield	\$1,125,000
Proceeds sale of former Mansfield Ambulance Station – 3 Curia Street, Mansfield	\$590,000

Governance and operating model

- A memorandum of understanding will be developed with Council, and the agencies and organisations in the Precinct to document and establish the vision and purpose of the Emergency Services Precinct and the Resilience Centre and identify the role, contribution and commitment of the individual agencies and organisations to the Precinct.
- A co-ordinating body will be established including Council, all agencies and organisations to be based in the precinct, and community representatives.
- Council will retain ownership of the land.
- Council will lease agreed parcels of land within the precinct to the individual agencies and organisations including Ambulance Victoria, VicSES, Mansfield Community Radio and the CFA (at a later stage).
- Emergency service agencies and organisations will be responsible for their individual service operating costs and maintenance of the infrastructure on the land they lease from Council.
- Emergency service agencies and organisations will make a financial contribution towards the ongoing operation of the Resilience Centre.
- Council or its nominee manages the Resilience Centre, working closely with the emergency services agencies and organisations to facilitate their use of the Centre, and other community resilience activities.

Part 1: Problem

1.1 Background

Mansfield Shire Council is located in Victoria’s north-east and has many factors which make it more susceptible to emergency situations and presents significant challenges for emergency services agencies. Key factors include vast tracts of land referred to as the ‘High Country’, major water bodies, major transport routes and highways, dispersed settlements, significant distance from other regional centres, isolated and rugged terrain, and a large and growing resident and visitor population. These factors, combined with an increased frequency of natural disaster events such as bushfires, storms and floods mean the demand for emergency services and infrastructure is increasing.

All emergency services agencies have a presence in Mansfield. That is; Ambulance Victoria, VicSES, CFA, Victoria Police, and Forest Fire Management Victoria (DELWP). The agencies have facilities located across Mansfield township and in varying condition and with varying functionality. There has been minimal investment in emergency services infrastructure in recent years, the exception being improvements to the CFA fire station which have prolonged its operational life. Table 1 below describes the current location, condition and fitness for purpose of the facilities.

Agency	Address	Land tenure	Locational context	Condition and fitness for purpose of existing facilities
Ambulance Victoria	3 Curia Street, Mansfield	Crown Land	Located in the town centre in a residential street, close to the main street and adjacent to the Police Station, Courthouse and CFA station. Mansfield District Hospital is located a short distance to the south. It’s location in a residential area is problematic.	The station has recently moved to a 24-hour staffed operation and minor modifications have been made to the existing facilities. These represent only a limited improvement and will not support the future needs of the service. Fundamentally, the facilities are not fit for purpose and the site cannot accommodate the additional facilities required to support the expanded operating capacity of the service. Ambulance Victoria has identified the Mansfield Ambulance Station as being a top priority for replacement in Victoria.
VicSES	Maroondah Highway, Mansfield	Occupancy Agreement with Mansfield Shire Council	Located on the former Saleyards site. This is Council owned land at the western entrance to the Mansfield township. Well located in terms of easy access to main roads and the centre of town.	The facility is in poor condition, has significant accessibility constraints and fundamentally compromises the ability of the SES to respond to the needs of the community. VicSES has identified the Mansfield SES facilities as one of the top priorities for redevelopment or replacement in Victoria.
Agency	Address	Land tenure	Locational context	Condition and fitness for purpose of existing facilities

Country Fire Authority	29 Highett Street, Mansfield	Crown Land	<p>Located in the town centre and adjacent to the Courthouse, Police Station and Ambulance Station.</p> <p>Access to and from the CFA Station is difficult when there is high traffic volumes.</p>	<p>Modifications and extensions were undertaken to the existing facility in 2018.</p> <p>The CFA have advised the site will meet operational requirements for the next 15 years.</p>
Victoria Police	92 High Street, Mansfield	Crown Land	<p>Located in the town centre and adjacent to the Courthouse, ambulance station and CFA fire station.</p> <p>Access to and from the Police Station is difficult when there is high traffic volumes.</p>	<p>VicPol have advised the existing facilities meet the current and future operational needs of the service. Proximity to the courthouse is a key priority and VicPol also use the meeting space in the CFA fire station to support their activities.</p>
DELWP	128 Highett Street, Mansfield	Crown Land and lease over privately owned land	<p>DELWP operates from a large site located at the southeastern edge of the Mansfield township, in a residential area. Further south than Mansfield District Hospital and close to Mansfield Secondary College.</p> <p>The site is not large enough to support the current and future needs of DELWP.</p>	<p>The current facilities are not fit for purpose and DELWP have entered into an agreement with Mansfield Shire Council to develop a new facility on Council owned Land on Lakins Road to the north of Mansfield township.</p> <p>The total site footprint DELWP require is over 3 hectares which presents some challenges in co-locating with other emergency services.</p>
Mansfield Community Radio	10 Bank Place Mansfield	Occupancy Agreement with Mansfield Shire Council	<p>Located in the Mansfield town centre close to other community facilities e.g. Mansfield Mens Shed, Mansfield Youth Centre, Mansfield Community Cubby House Childcare Centre and Mansfield Bowling Club.</p>	<p>The building is not purpose built, has limited amenity and significant accessibility constraints.</p>

Table 1.1: Existing emergency services agencies and infrastructure in Mansfield, June 2022

1.2 Definition and evidence of the problem

The problem the Mansfield Shire community and surrounding region faces is multifaceted.

5. The community and surrounding region are vulnerable to emergency situations because of the geographic setting.
6. The demand for emergency services is increasing because of population growth, increased visitations to the region, and the increasing frequency of natural disasters.
7. The poor condition and limitation of the existing emergency services infrastructure is significant, and if it remains unaddressed, will increase the vulnerability of the Mansfield Shire community and surrounds in emergency situations.
8. The critical need to strengthen the resilience of the Mansfield Shire community and wider region to prepare for, respond to and recover from emergency and disaster situations.

The geographic setting

Mansfield Shire comprises vast tracts of land referred to as the 'High Country', major water bodies, major transport routes and highways, dispersed settlements, significant distance from other regional centres, isolated and rugged terrain.

Each of these factors increase the vulnerability of the community in emergency situations.

The High Country is a vast area comprising National Parks, Victoria's highest mountains, snow resorts and extensive outdoor recreational activity including bushwalking, skiing, 4-wheel driving, camping, fishing, and hunting. Much of the area is remote and isolated, with restricted and difficult access, and patchy and unreliable telecommunications. There are two major water bodies in the immediate vicinity, Lake Nillahcootie and Lake Eildon, which is located in a 28,000-hectare National Park. These features are popular for recreational activities including houseboating, boating, water sports and fishing.

Major transport corridors pass through Mansfield Shire including Maroondah and Midland Highways and Mt Buller Road. These are the major routes for transport of goods, public and vehicular transport.

Increasing frequency and impact of natural disasters¹

Climate change will increase the severity and rate of natural disasters in Australia including increased frequency and intensity of flood damage, an increase in the number of days with extreme fire weather and a greater frequency and intensity of droughts.

Mansfield Shire and the surrounding region is subject to significant climatic and more frequent natural disaster events because of its geographic setting. It has a high level of vulnerability to bushfires, storms, floods, and earthquakes. For example, in September 2021 an earthquake struck approximately 50km south of Mansfield, measuring 5.9 on the Richter scale.

¹ Australian Business Roundtable for Disaster Resilience and Safer Communities, Our Research. [Our Research - Reports \(australianbusinessroundtable.com.au\)](https://australianbusinessroundtable.com.au)

The complexity emergency services face in responding to disaster events are exacerbated by the region’s remoteness and the travel distances involved.

The high level of vulnerability to climatic and natural disaster events in Mansfield Shire and surrounds means investment in strengthening the community’s ability to prepare for, respond to and recover from emergency and disaster situations, is critical.

Population growth²

The Shire has experienced consistent population growth of around 2% each year since 2012. In 2020 this increased to 3.2% and in 2021 a further 2.83%. The permanent population has grown from 6,631 in 2001 to 8,674 in 2016 and 9,740 in 2021.

While the Victoria in Future Population Forecasts, estimate Mansfield Shire will have a permanent population of 10,500 by 2031 and nearly 11,000 by 2036. However, if growth continues as it has for the past decade, the population will reach this within the next 5 years.

Population growth will increase demand for emergency services at a much faster rate than the Victoria in Future projections suggest.

Catchment	2012	2016	2021	Change 2012 - 2016		Change 2016 - 2021	
				No.	%	No.	%
Mansfield Shire	8,097	8,674	9,740	577	7.1%	1,066	12.3%
Bonnie Doon and surrounds	1,087	1,172	1,319	85	7.8%	147	12.5%
Jamieson – Goughs Bay – Upper Goulburn	1,179	1,147	1,277	-32	-2.7%	130	11.3%
Mansfield Township	4,358	4,888	5,421	530	12.2%	533	10.9%
Merrijig – High Country -	1,461	1,467	1,714	6	0.4%	247	16.8%

Table 1.2: Mansfield Shire and small areas, population size 2012 - 2021

A significant and growing tourism and hospitality sector attracting visitors to the region³

The natural attractions in the region including the High Country and ski resorts, and the proximity to Melbourne and major transport routes, makes Mansfield Shire popular for recreation and lifestyle activities resulting in large numbers of people travelling the local highways and spending time in the region’s isolated and remote areas. It also makes up a significant portion of the regional economy.

² Profile.id, Mansfield Shire Council Community Profile. Accessed 23 June 2021: <http://profile.id.com.au/mansfield/>
Victorian State Government, 2019, Victoria in Future: Victoria’s future population projections. Available online: [Victoria in Future \(planning.vic.gov.au\)](http://victoria.infuture.vic.gov.au/)

³ Tourism North East, High Country Visitation Data. Available online: [High Country Visitation Data - Tourism North East](http://profile.id.com.au/mansfield/)
Profile.id, Mansfield Shire Council Economic Profile. Accessed 30 September 2021: <http://profile.id.com.au/mansfield/>

Pre COVID-19, visitations to the region were steadily increasing and the most recent data for visitations to the High Country, shows high and growing visitation levels are returning.

Like residential population growth, increasing visitation to Mansfield Shire, the High Country and surrounding region will increase demand for emergency services.

Key visitation data shows.

- The High Country (most of which is located in Mansfield Shire), attracted 1.857 million domestic overnight visitors and 1.794 million domestic day visitors in 2021. While this is lower than the pre-COVID-19 period, it is nearly twice the visitations from 2020 despite substantial periods of lockdown in Victoria during 2021
- Pre COVID-19, overnight visitations to the High Country rose consistently between 2017 and 2019. In addition, domestic overnight visitations in Mansfield Shire increased substantially between 2011/2012 and 2018/2019, increasing from 900,331 to 1,460,205 (62% increase). The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic upon domestic overnight visits can be seen in 2019/2020 when visitations declined to 1,275,069.
- In 2019/ 2020 total tourism and hospitality sales were \$74.7 million, the value add to the local economy was \$36.6 million, and the sector employed 384 full time equivalent direct and indirect roles.

Mansfield Shire Visitor nights	2011/2012	2015/2016	2018/2019	2019/2020
Domestic visitor nights	900,331	1,115,140	1,460,205	1,275,069
International visitor nights		45,045		

Table 1.4. Domestic overnight visits in Mansfield Shire 2011/2012 – 2019/2020

Visitation to the High Country	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Overnight visitors	2,083,000	2,150,000	2,403,000	978,000	1,857,000
Visitation nights	5,765,000	6,375,000	6,443,000	3,342,000	5,764,000
Domestic travel (daytrip)	2,430,000	2,887,000	2,835,000	1,523,000	1,794,000

Table 1.3. Domestic overnight visits to the High Country 2017 - 2021⁴

A large proportion of unoccupied housing stock

It is estimated that up to 40% of housing stock is not permanently occupied but rather used as holiday properties with absentee landowners, compared with 16 percent for wider regional Victoria. This means a significant proportion of the housing stock is unoccupied at various time, leaving these properties more vulnerable. Owners may also be infrequent visitors to the community meaning they potentially lack familiarity with road and climatic conditions and are more vulnerable to making decisions which lead to accidents or injury.

Unoccupied housing stock places greater demand upon emergency services.

⁴ Tourism North East, High Country Visitation Data. Available online: [High Country Visitation Data - Tourism North East](#)

Condition and limitations of current emergency services infrastructure

Emergency management infrastructure in Mansfield is characterised by a lack of investment, with Mansfield CFA station the only facility that has received investment in recent years, to address operational issues.

The facilities are spread across Mansfield with each service experiencing challenges in relation to infrastructure condition or location, leaving the community vulnerable during emergency situations.

Ambulance Victoria	Located in a building that does not support current ambulance operating models and cannot support the recent implementation of a 24-hour staffed station. The Mansfield service is identified as being amongst the lowest performing in the State in relation to response times. Ambulance Victoria has identified the Mansfield Ambulance Station as being a top priority for replacement in Victoria.
SES	Located on a Council owned site in a dated building in poor condition that is not disability access compliant and has storage and security deficiencies. Access to Maroondah Highway is poor and occurs via an unconstructed track. VicSES has identified the Mansfield SES facilities as one of the top priorities for redevelopment or replacement in Victoria.
CFA	Located on a constrained central township site with access challenges due to proximity to the roundabout on High Street. Limited onsite parking, outside training and other programs are conducted at SES facility due to space constraints. 2018 investment in the facilities will allow the CFA to meet its operational requirements for the medium term.
Victoria Police	Located on a land locked central township site with limited meeting spaces which means they are held in the neighbouring CFA building. Proximity to Mansfield Court House is seen as important and an advantage. VicPol have advised the existing facilities meet the current and future operational needs of the service
DELWP (Forest Fire Management Victoria)	Located in a residential area with insufficient space for current or future operations. Planning underway to relocate to a site in the industrial estate north of Mansfield township. Proposed new facility planned to include Incident Control Centre. The footprint required is substantial, making it incompatible with other emergency services agencies.
Mansfield Community Radio	Currently located in a Council owned building in the centre of Mansfield township and in close proximity to other community facilities. The building has limited amenity and significant accessibility constraints. The Community Radio Station's role as an emergency broadcaster means it's needs must be considered as a critical element of emergency services infrastructure.

1.3 Timing considerations

The poor condition of existing infrastructure, the move to a 24-hour staffed station for Ambulance Victoria in Mansfield, the increasing resident and visitor populations, and the increasing frequency of natural disasters, necessitate an urgent intervention to reduce vulnerability to emergency situations and increase the resilience of the Mansfield Shire community.

The replacement of the Ambulance Station is a top priority as current facilities do not effectively support the operation of a 24 staffed station. Key constraints are:

- Old and poorly located facilities
- A lack of secure car parking
- Inadequate medication management space and systems
- Inadequate storage facilities
- Ambulance vehicles unable to be garaged
- Inadequate rest and recline facilities

The replacement of the SES facilities is a key priority as current facilities, to not support he effective delivery of services. Key constraints are:

- Old facilities in poor condition
- The facility is over 2 levels and is not disability compliant
- Inadequate storage facilities
- Inadequate fencing and poor security infrastructure.

Neither Ambulance Victoria or VicSES have secured funding for replacement of these facilities, but for both agencies, the Mansfield facilities are one of their top priorities for investment. The implications of not securing funding in a timely manner are significant for both agencies.

- For Ambulance Victoria, the inadequate facilities are significantly compromising their ability to meet required service standards and in attracting and retaining staff to work from the station. As noted previously, the Mansfield service is identified as being amongst the lowest performing in the State in relation to response times.
- For VicSES, the poor condition of facilities significantly impacts their ability to meet required response times and to attract and retain volunteers.

Investment in facilities to support both Ambulance Victoria and VicSES is time critical.

Part 2: Recommended solution

2.1 The recommended solution

The recommended solution is to develop an **Emergency Services Precinct** on Council owned land at 166 Maroondah Highway (the Saleyards site). The Emergency Services Precinct will incorporate:

- An Ambulance Victoria station to accommodate 24-hour operation.
- A new Victorian State Emergency Services facility.
- Facilities for Mansfield Community Radio as the emergency broadcaster for the region.
- A Resilience Centre comprising emergency training and support facilities to enable delivery of emergency management and community capacity building training programs, support volunteer recognition and community recovery efforts, and strengthen the resilience of the community to prepare for, respond to and recover from emergency and disaster situations.
- Provision for a new Country Fire Authority station (proposed for development in stage 2).

The site comprises 10,000m² and can comfortably accommodate the four agencies (Ambulance, SES, CFA, Mansfield Community Radio) and the Resilience Centre. Facilities will be designed to support a co-ordinated and integrated approach to delivering emergency services and building community resilience, with shared meeting spaces, shared internal and external training and incident response spaces, and where possible, shared support infrastructure e.g. amenities, car parking, storage.

Key partners in the Emergency Services Precinct will be:

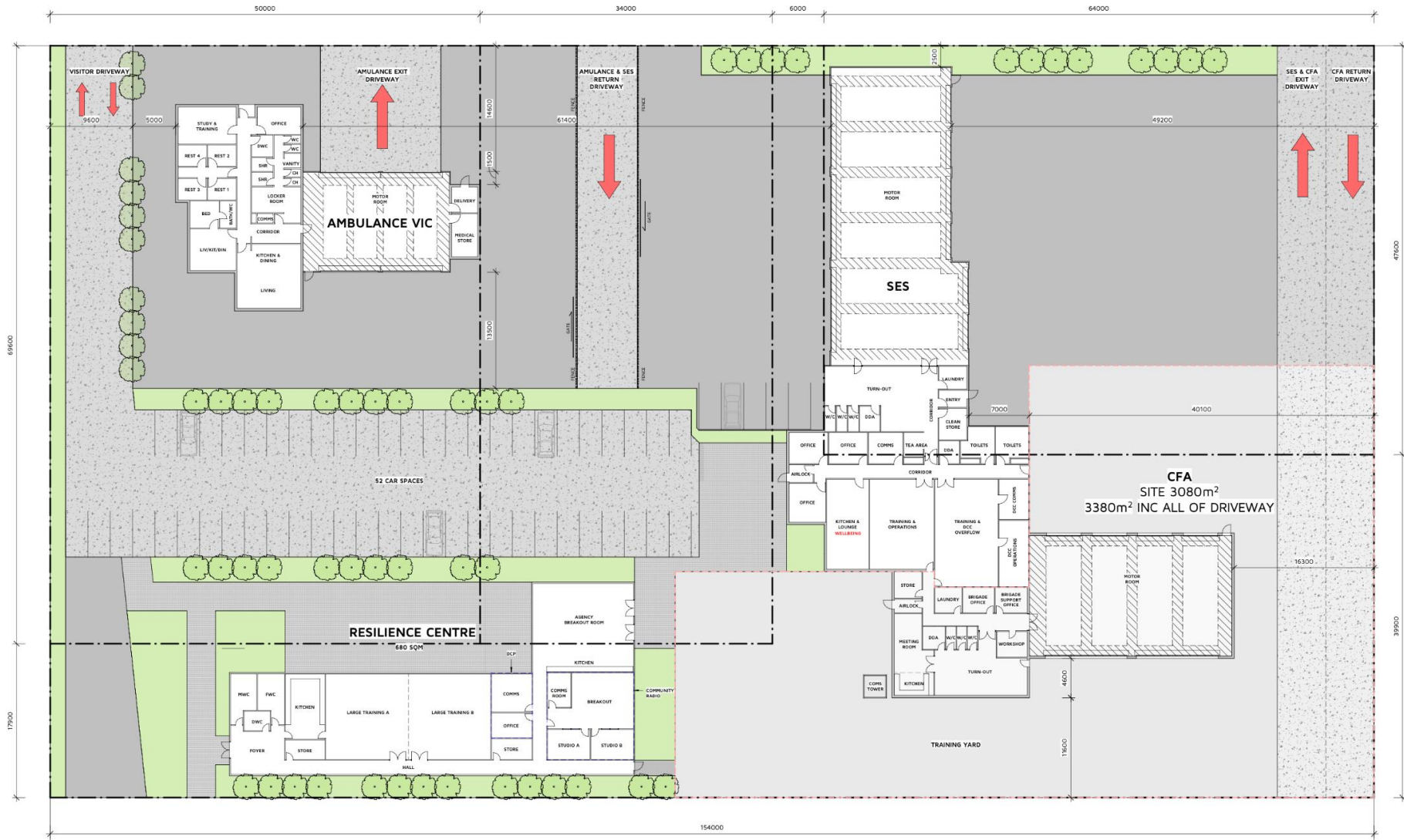
- Ambulance Victoria
- VicSES
- Mansfield Community Radio
- Mansfield Shire Council
- Country Fire Authority (although likely to be at a later stage).

Other partners particularly tied to the Resilience Centre include DELWP, Victoria Police and Mansfield Adult Continuing Education (MACE).

2.2 What will be delivered

The Emergency Services Precinct is expected to consist of the following. It is important to note this information is based upon the concept plan which will be updated and refined through the schematic and detailed design process.

Ambulance Station	<p>Motor Room with 5 'drive through' vehicle bays and 3 carports Locker rooms Amenities Training room Office Wellbeing space including kitchenette Rest and recline rooms Secure medical storage Delivery room</p>
Vic SES facility	<p>Motor Room with 4 - 6 'drive through' vehicle bays Turnout areas Amenities Laundry Office Communications room Breakout area with kitchenette Equipment store</p>
Mansfield Community Radio	<p>2 broadcast studios Breakout space Storage / communications room</p>
Resilience Centre	<p>Agency breakout room and kitchenette 2 large training rooms Kitchen Amenities Communications room Office Storage</p>
CFA station	<p>Motor Room with 4 'drive-through' vehicle bays for emergency appliances Operational support areas including workshop, store, drying room & laundry areas Turn-out areas for fire fighters Amenities Brigade office and Brigade support office Driveway to external training space at rear, on-site car parking and communications tower. Landscaping</p>
Outdoor space	<p>Parking for 52 cars Outdoor training space Vehicle entry and exit at the western and perimeter of the site, and the centre of the site.</p>



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REVISIONS

PROJECT
MANSFIELD ESP

TITLE
PROPOSED SITE - SCHEME 3

PROJECT NO.
2164

CLIENT

SCALE
1 : 200@A1

DRAWN BY
LM

SHEET NO
0200f

DATE
22/06/2022

REVISION

PRELIMINARY



2.3 Staging and timing

The delivery of the Emergency Services Precinct is expected to occur in 2 stages:

- **Stage 1** comprising development of the Ambulance, SES, and Mansfield Community Radio facilities and the Resilience Centre. This must occur in the **short term** due to the **URGENT NEED for new Ambulance and SES** facilities and the essential need to strengthen the resilience of the Mansfield community to prepare for, respond to and recover from emergencies and disasters.
- **Stage 2** comprising development of the CFA facilities. This is proposed to occur in the **medium to longer term**.

2.4 The rationale

The establishment of an emergency services precinct is proposed for the following reasons:

<p>To address urgent service needs</p>	<p>Emergency services agencies are located across Mansfield township in facilities in varying condition and with varying functionality. There has been minimal investment in emergency services infrastructure in recent years, despite aging infrastructure and growing demand due to population growth and natural assets and climatic conditions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Mansfield Ambulance station is in a building that does not support current ambulance operating models and cannot support the recent implementation of a 24-hour staffed station. The service is identified as being amongst the lowest performing in the State in relation to response times and the station is identified as being a top priority for replacement in Victoria. • Mansfield SES is located in a dated building in poor condition that is not disability access compliant and has storage and security deficiencies. Access to Maroondah Highway is poor and occurs via an unconstructed track. Mansfield SES facilities are identified as a top priority for redevelopment or replacement in Victoria.
<p>Consistency with government policy:</p>	<p>The proposal to develop an emergency services precinct in Mansfield is consistent with Federal, State, Local government policy. The policy framework:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides a clear basis for establishing an emergency services precinct in Mansfield with co-located services and infrastructure. There is a high level of consistency in sector / agency planning and policy development in relation to the commitment to partnering, shared and joined-up services. • Acknowledges the increasing severity and regularity of disasters and the need for a co-ordinated and co-operative effort to build resilience by enhancing capacity to prepare for, respond to and recover from emergencies and disasters.

<p>Community and agency support</p>	<p>There is strong and enduring interest and support from community members, Council, and local and head office agency representatives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mansfield Emergency Services Precinct Community Committee was established to give formal expression to the community’s aspiration for investment in emergency services infrastructure in Mansfield. The group is very active in promoting the proposal to the wider community and in advocating to key decision makers, and has been represented on the Project Control Group for the Scoping and 2 Feasibility Studies. • Council has taken a lead role in assessing the need for and establishing the feasibility of developing an Emergency Service Precinct. Council has funded the Scoping and a Feasibility Studies including the development of this Business Case. As noted above, Council has also committed to providing the land to accommodate the Emergency Services Precinct. • The emergency services agencies have been actively involved in the Scoping and Feasibility Studies through Technical Advisory Group established by Council to provide advice on agency technical and operational requirements. All agencies are supportive of the precinct model, with Ambulance and SES most supportive because of the poor condition and limitations of their current facilities.
<p>To enable shared use of spaces, facilities and resources</p>	<p>The Emergency Services Precinct will enable shared use of spaces and facilities, and support and foster collaboration and closer relationships between the emergency services agencies. Joint training and operational activities are just two examples of how collaboration can be strengthened.</p> <p>The precinct also represents an efficient way to provide public infrastructure.</p>
<p>Available public land:</p>	<p>Mansfield Shire Council has committed to making the land available to establish an Emergency Service Precinct and will enter into long term lease agreements with Ambulance, VicSES, Mansfield Community Radio. It will also manage the use and activation of the Resilience Centre.</p>
<p>Promoting and encouraging volunteerism</p>	<p>It will deliver a highly visible focus for emergency services which will support the promotion and engagement of volunteers from the local community.</p>
<p>Building community resilience</p>	<p>The precinct will be a focus for community resilience and capacity building, in recognition of the real and significant emergency and disaster risks and challenges the community faces. The Resilience Centre will be key to this, as a place for community information and education about preparing for, responding to, and recovering from emergencies and disasters.</p>
<p>Contributing to liveability</p>	<p>A key liveability attractor to encourage people to move to the area is the accessibility of services and supports including emergency services. Strong and collaborative emergency services will build confidence in Mansfield as a safe and liveable community.</p>

2.5 Understanding the Resilience Centre

Mansfield Shire is a proud and united community with a strong history of volunteerism (28.9% compared with regional Victoria 24.3%, 2016 ABS Census) and enduring interest and support for emergency services agencies. The region has experienced a large number of major natural disasters and emergency events in recent years including fires, floods, earthquakes, and land and water search and rescue activities. The momentum for the proposal to establish an emergency services precinct in Mansfield derives from and reflects this community context.

The Mansfield community understands that collaboration and coordination of effort across the emergency services sector in the planning for, response to and recovery from emergency events will contribute to safer, more resilient communities.

The Resilience Centre will be a focus for community resilience and capacity building in Mansfield Shire, in recognition of the real and significant emergency and disaster risks and challenges the community faces. The Centre will:

- stimulate, support, and sustain community involvement in the prevention, awareness of, response to and recovery from emergency events, and natural disasters
- facilitate the attraction and retention of volunteer involvement in emergency services response
- further enable partnerships and collaboration between agencies and community organisations
- embed in the local community, a confidence that communities are at their best when they are optimistic, act together and are future focused.

Key benefits and outcomes of the Resilience Centre

Outcome	Impact
Reduce vulnerability and enhanced preparedness:	Provision of integrated contemporary infrastructure where services are supported to work together, will enhance preparedness for emergency situations and strengthen the resilience of the community.
Support joint initiatives:	Will provide the capacity to deliver joint training, educational, community information and operational activities.
Nurture community interest and confidence:	Responds to and nurtures community interest, support and involvement in emergency management and volunteering locally It will strengthen confidence in the liveability of Mansfield, supporting continued growth in the residential population and visitors to the region.
Support community and economic recovery:	Investment will support both current and future community and economic recovery from natural disasters in the Mansfield area. It also

	provides an opportunity for the existing Ambulance site and perhaps in the future, the CFA site to be made available to support the continued revitalisation of the Mansfield town centre.
Demonstration project:	Investment represents a demonstration project to promote and ‘bring to life’ the state policy agenda for collaborative and joined-up services.
Stronger relationships:	Stronger relationships between community organisations and emergency services agencies will assist planning, response, and recovery efforts.

Anticipated level of use of the Resilience Centre

Agency/organisation	Activity	Proposed frequency	Attendance
General	International Volunteers Day - December	Annual	100
	National Volunteers Week - May	Annual	100
	National Road Safety Week - May	Annual	50
Mansfield Shire Council	MEMPC Meetings	Quarterly, 4 hours	20
	MEMPC Sub Committee mtgs	2 to 4 p.a.	8
	Community briefings – fire preparedness, road safety, etc	Ad hoc	100
VicSES	Training - Wednesday nights	Weekly, 2 hours	12-46
	Administration meeting - Wednesday nights	Quarterly	46
	Community/children/school education sessions	Weekly, during the day	25
	Adhoc meetings with other agencies	Adhoc, monthly	10
CFA	Mansfield brigade meeting	Monthly	30
	Brigade meeting with brigades from surrounding districts	Monthly, Tues or Thurs night	30-80
	Regional training programs	12 p.a.	10-30
	Training sessions – Mansfield Brigade	Weekly, Tues or Thurs night	15-40
	Adhoc meetings with other agencies	26 p.a.	10
	Adhoc meetings by other agencies	Monthly	10-30
	Community/children/school education sessions	10 p.a.	20-25
Ambulance Victoria	Adhoc Regional training programs	Adhoc	40
	Adhoc meetings with other agencies	6 p.a. 4 hours	10

	Training programs	10 p.a.	12
	Community/children/school education sessions	10 p.a.	25
DELWP	Adhoc meetings with other agencies	Adhoc	10
	Staff training, including first aid and authorised officer training	6 p.a.	25
Mansfield Community Radio	Broadcast	7 days per week	4
	AGM	Annually	30
	Student music scholarship program	3 sessions p.a.	5-30
	School program – Lauriston and Timbertop	Adhoc	
	Fundraising and social activities	6 p.a.	50-70
MACE	Training programs – First Aid, CPR, Wellness	Monthly	15

2.6 Benchmarking and testing the proposal

The proposal to invest in emergency services infrastructure in Mansfield and to configure the facilities in a precinct arrangement is in alignment with State Government policy. To determine the suitability and functionality of this approach it has been benchmarked against current practice across the state, with the following case study examples identified:

- Wangaratta
- Bannockburn
- Broadford
- Wendouree
- Echuca
- Kinglake.

Location	VicSES	CFA	AV	VicPol	DELWP	Other
Wangaratta	√	√		√		
Bannockburn	√	√				
Broadford		√	√			
Wendouree		√	√		√	VicRoads testing and vehicle inspection centre. Central Highlands Water.
Echuca	√	√	√			Echuca Moama Search and Rescue.
Kinglake	√	√				

Table 5: Emergency services co-location case studies

These locations were selected because of the following attributes:

- Locations with SES and Ambulance facilities co-located;
- Council involvement in provision of land, leadership and advocacy;
- Developments undertaken in recent years;
- Settings where facilities were shared or collaboration between agencies is evident; and
- Settings that provide a contrast or context for Mansfield.

Key learnings from benchmarking

A number of factors have influenced investment decisions by agencies, and provide important learnings for Mansfield:

- The impetus provided by the dilapidated, inadequate, or otherwise not fit for purpose condition of existing infrastructure.
- Local conditions that are putting pressure on local emergency response including population growth, significant visitation resulting from the visitor economy and land or infrastructure factors such as the presence of waterbodies, industrial development, inaccessible natural areas, and transport infrastructure such as highways or railway lines.
- The frequency of emergency events or natural disasters.
- Evidence of a history of extraordinary collaboration and advocacy by agencies at the local level (Kinglake and Echuca).
- Persistent and informed advocacy by Council and local elected Members (best examples being Bannockburn, Echuca and Wangaratta).
- Available public land, including land owned by Council.
- Investments in like or neighbouring communities which have created an expectation of investment in these communities.
- Development of contemporary CFA infrastructure to ‘anchor’ other agencies (eg. Broadford, Kinglake).

2.7 Scalability of the recommended solution

There is a clear and evidence-based preference to develop the Emergency Services Precinct in 2 stages:

- Stage 1 including facilities for Ambulance, SES, Mansfield Community Radio and the Resilience Centre.
- Stage 2 focusing upon facilities for the CFA.

There are, however, other possible staging options because of the nature of the proposed design and the space available on the site. In essence, each building can be developed as a separate and discrete project as follows.

- Project 1 (Priority 1): Develop Ambulance Victoria facility, car parking and relevant site entry, exit and landscaping infrastructure.
- Project 2 (Priority 2): Develop SES facility and relevant site entry, exit and landscaping infrastructure.
- Project 3 (Priority 3): Develop the Resilience Centre and relevant landscaping.
- Project 4 (Priority 4): Develop CFA facilities.

2.8 Alternatives considered

The Scoping Study completed in December 2021 clearly established a strong rationale for developing an Emergency Services Precinct incorporating Ambulance, SES, Mansfield Community Radio, the Resilience Centre and CFA (at a later date).

The Scoping Study explored the particular needs of each agency for facilities in Mansfield including Ambulance, SES, CFA, Police, DELWP, Mansfield Community Radio and from this identified the Precinct would focus upon accommodating Ambulance, SES, Mansfield Community Radio, the Resilience Centre and CFA (at a later date).

Outlined below are the specific needs and issues for each agency identified through the Scoping Study.

<p>Ambulance Victoria</p> <p>The poor condition and limitations of the current facilities in Mansfield and recent change to 24 hour staffed station required new and expanded facilities and mean Ambulance Victoria is very supportive being part of an Emergency Services Precinct.</p>	<p>VicSES</p> <p>The poor condition and limitations of the current facilities in Mansfield including accessibility issues and lack of adequate storage and security mean VicSES is very supportive being part of an Emergency Services Precinct.</p>
<p>Country Fire Authority</p> <p>CFA facilities in Mansfield received minor upgrade works in 2018 to improve functionality. The CFA is supportive of an Emergency Services Precinct but is confident the current site meets their short to medium term needs.</p>	<p>Vic Police</p> <p>VicPol are supportive of establishing an Emergency Services Precinct but favour their current location because of the close proximity to Court House. They have no plans to relocate.</p>
<p>DELWP</p> <p>The existing DELWP site does not meet current or future needs of the agency. While they are supportive of an Emergency Services Precinct, their spatial requirements are extensive (over 3 hectares) making it difficult to accommodate their needs in a township location. They have also commenced planning to develop new facility in industrial area north of Mansfield township.</p>	<p>Mansfield Community Radio</p> <p>Mansfield Community radio is very supportive of being part of an Emergency Services Precinct because its facilities are old, have limited amenity and poor accessibility. More importantly as the emergency broadcaster in the area they welcome the opportunity to deepen relationship with the emergency services agencies to support them and the community during emergency situations.</p>

Exploring alternate sites

With the rationale clearly established for developing for an Emergency Services Precinct incorporating Ambulance, SES, Mansfield Community Radio, the Resilience Centre, and CFA (at a later date), the focus of options and alternatives was the siting of the Precinct.

Three options were considered including:

1. The Lakins Road site (south side and west of Midland Highway)
2. The Saleyards site (166 Maroondah Highway)
3. The existing DELWP site (128 Highett Street).

The existing DELWP site is located in a residential area, opposite Mansfield Cemetery and in close proximity to Mansfield Secondary College, Bindaree Retirement Hostel and the Steiner School and Kindergarten. While the site is of sufficient size to successfully accommodate the proposed combined agencies and may be available when DELWP relocate to Lakins Road as planned, the urban context and setting, proximity to future residential development, extended emergency response times, and uncertainty about when the site will be available, mean it was quickly eliminated as a possible site. Consequently, the assessment focused on two options, the Lakins Road site and the Maroondah Highway site.

The assessment found:

- Both sites are in public ownership, available for development as an emergency services precinct and appropriately zoned. Adjacent land uses are also compatible.
- **The Maroondah Highway site is the preferred location for an emergency services precinct because** it allows the emergency services agencies to meet their response time targets, there are no major impediments for its development as an emergency services precinct, and it enjoys significant support in the community, as SES have operated from the site since 1996.

2.9 Why should government be involved

Investment in emergency services infrastructure in Mansfield and the development of an Emergency Services Precinct, including Mansfield Resilience Centre, will enhance the capability of agencies to plan for and respond to emergency events; is consistent with State and Federal Government policy; and will build resilience within the Mansfield community. It is very appropriate Government be involved in supporting and funding the establishment of the Emergency Services Precinct for several reasons:

- The Victorian State Government is the level of government responsible for providing and enabling emergency response in Victoria. The State Government has an established role in funding ambulance, fire and emergency response services and infrastructure. This is reflected in State legislation, the strategic planning and policy work of the State Government and its agencies and the history of State Government funding for the area.
- The proposal to develop an emergency services precinct in Mansfield **is consistent with Federal, State, Local government policy** to collaborate in the planning for, response to and recovery from natural disasters and emergency events. There is a high level of consistency in

sector / agency planning and policy development in relation to the commitment to partnering, shared and joined-up services.

- The increasing severity and frequency of natural disaster events and the need to respond to the current and forecast impacts of climate change are shaping Federal and State Government policy directions and funding programs. These responses call for a co-ordinated and co-operative effort to build resilience by enhancing capacity to prepare for, respond to and recover from emergencies and disasters.

Part 3: Benefits

3.1 Benefits of the recommended solution

The establishment of an emergency services precinct in Mansfield will deliver a range of benefits to the Mansfield Shire community, visitors to the region, Council, emergency services agencies, community organisations and the State Government.

Mansfield community

The Mansfield Shire community is supported by emergency services infrastructure that is predominantly outdated and not fit for purpose. Minor improvements undertaken to Mansfield Fire Station in 1998 are the only investment in the last 30 years. At the same time, Mansfield Shire is experiencing significant population growth and the community takes an active interest in emergency services support in the area. This can be attributed to the significant risks and challenges for emergency services planning and response in the Shire, and the high level of civic pride and community involvement. This is best demonstrated by the formation of a community organisation focused upon attracting investment in emergency services infrastructure to address the risks and challenges present, and to provide support for the large number of volunteers involved with the local agencies. The group is active in promoting awareness in the community of the need for new facilities and in advocating to key decision makers.

Development of the emergency services precinct will recognise and respond to the existing inadequate facilities and the strong community support for their improvement. Improving the facilities will increase confidence in the community that agencies are adequately resourced and is consistent with the long held aspiration to build community resilience.

Specifically, the community will benefit through:

- The development of **purpose-built facilities** reflecting contemporary emergency response.
- A **vote of confidence in the over 150 local volunteers** who are actively involved in the activities of the agencies.
- Development of new facilities in a **prominent location** which will increase community awareness of the presence and role of services to support and protect the local community, and **encourage future community involvement and volunteerism**.
- Supporting the **aspiration for increased community resilience** and giving confidence to the growing number of **tourists and visitors** to the region that appropriate support is available at the local level.
- Freeing up key sites in the Mansfield town centre which will **support local economic development and activation objectives**.

Mansfield Shire Council

Mansfield Shire Council prepared a Community Vision in 2021 which sets out the community's aspiration and objectives for the future. The community's vision is for a safer and more resilient community, working together and confident about the future. Key elements are:

- A vision for an **engaged and active community**.
- A desire for the community to be **collaborative** and work towards common goals.
- A vision for a **safe and secure community**.
- Local infrastructure and services to be **sustainable, robust and responsive**.
- Shire prosperity that is **resilient**.
- Local infrastructure and services that are holistic and **people-centred**.

The Mansfield Shire Council Plan 2021-2025 sets out Council and the community's aspiration and priorities for the next four years. The Council Plan responds to the themes in the Community Vision 2040. The Council Plan has three themes:

- Theme 1: Connected and Healthy Community.
- Theme 2: Vibrant Liveability.
- Theme 3: A trusted, Effective and Efficient Council.

The Plan has a focus on partnerships and collaboration, developing the capacity of the community and planning for the future.

This project will deliver the following benefits to Council that are consistent with Council's policy agenda:

- The delivery of **fit for purpose emergency services facilities** that enable timely emergency response and support volunteer effort.
- A significantly **enhanced emergency services capability** that responds to the risks and challenges in the region including the increased activity in the visitor economy and growing level of visitation.
- The **activation of former saleyards site** on Maroondah Highway which is a prime gateway to Mansfield township and the High Country.
- Development that is consistent with the intent and directions in Planning Scheme Amendment C48 Mansfield Township Approaches, which applies to four highway approaches around the Mansfield township and **seeks to encourage good design** that makes a positive impact on the amenity and environment of township approaches.
- **Improved capacity for integration and coordination** between emergency services agencies through co-location.

Community organisations

Mansfield Community Radio operates from a Council owned former early years facility in the centre of Mansfield. The organisation has an important role during times of emergencies and natural disasters and is an accredited emergency services broadcaster for Mansfield Shire and the surrounding region. Mansfield Community Radio will benefit from establishment of the emergency services precinct in the following ways:

- Occupancy of a purpose-built contemporary facility.
- Access to shared spaces in the 672m² Mansfield Resilience Centre to support planning, member and partner engagement, and fundraising activities.
- Opportunity for stronger relationships with emergency services agencies to assist planning, response, and recovery efforts.

Mansfield Adult and Continuing Education (MACE) is a provider of pre-accredited education and training, early years services and community development programs. MACE proposes to deliver first aid, CPR and other wellbeing programs from the Mansfield Resilience Centre. MACE will benefit from establishment of the emergency services precinct in the following ways:

- Access to shared spaces in the Mansfield Resilience centre to support training and student engagement activities.
- Proximity to emergency services agencies to facilitate development of stronger relationships and synergies.

Emergency Services agencies

The emergency services precinct is proposed to include facilities to support VicSES, Ambulance Victoria and CFA. The agencies will benefit from establishment of the emergency services precinct in the following ways:

- For **VicSES** the Mansfield emergency services precinct will deliver a purpose built 1,085m² contemporary facility that satisfies dispatch time requirements, is accessible, provides adequate storage for plant and equipment, has access to shared training and meeting facilities and facilitates co-location with other community organisations and emergency services agencies to enable improved integration and the development of stronger relationships.
- For **Ambulance Victoria** the Mansfield emergency services precinct will deliver a purpose built 510m² contemporary facility that satisfies dispatch time requirements, provides improved safety and wellbeing for ambulance staff including rest and recline facilities, improved medication management systems, access to shared training and meeting facilities and co-location with other community organisations and emergency services agencies to facilitate improved integration and coordination and the development of stronger relationships. The current facility does not support the move in late 2021 from a call-out station to a 24 hour staffed facility.
- For **CFA** the Mansfield emergency services precinct will deliver a purpose built contemporary 532m² facility that satisfies dispatch time requirements, provides excellent access and egress for vehicles, access to shared training and meeting facilities and co-location with other

community organisations and emergency services agencies to facilitate integration and the development of stronger relationships. A new Fire Station for Mansfield CFA is proposed as a future Stage 2 of the project.

State Government

The proposal is consistent with State Government policy, delivers a demonstration project to inform sector reform and will support continued community and economic recovery. The development of the Mansfield Emergency Services precinct will assist the Victorian State Government to deliver on a number of strategic priorities and policies including:

- Improving the health and wellbeing of Victorians and developing safer more resilient communities.
- Providing infrastructure to meet the challenges of population growth.
- Planning for multipurpose community infrastructure.
- Preparing for the effects of climate change.
- Improved service delivery and promotion of interoperability between first responders.

The Victorian Emergency Management Strategic Action Plan (SAP) Update #3 2018-21 provides guidance at the statewide level on strategic priorities and is the primary document guiding the State Government's vision of safer more resilient communities. Actions proposed include:

- Review of service delivery models and methods;
- Development of common practices, workflows and platforms;
- An investment plan that identifies shared procurement and co-infrastructure;
- Research, best practice models and promotion of interoperability;
- Improved communication between first responders, support services and the community to improve decision making; and
- Development of a seamless emergency services sector.

The proposal is consistent with these objectives as the precinct reflects a joined-up approach with co-located and partially integrated facilities, joint planning for future infrastructure needs and promotion of interoperability.

Victoria's Infrastructure Strategy 2021-2051 recommends strategies to help achieve Victoria's long-term objectives including enhancing productivity, building resilience, responding to climate change, and meeting the social and economic needs of Victorians.

The proposal aims to enable emergency services agencies in Mansfield to share new infrastructure that meets their future needs representing an efficient use of scarce financial resources. The project specifically responds to significant and ongoing population growth in Mansfield Shire, the need for investment in agencies to respond to the effects of climate change and the need to support and sustain nature based tourism which forms a major component of the regional economy.

The emergency services agencies all have strategic plans or other corporate planning documents that inform and guide activities. The *VicSES Strategic Plan 2018-2022* has a focus on strengthening relationships and partnerships in developing a resilient community. There is also a focus on developing best practice infrastructure and facility management. The proposal facilitates co-location and partial integration between agencies and the planning phase has identified and reflected on industry best practice which has been incorporated in the Feasibility Study and Concept Plan.

The *Ambulance Victoria Strategic Plan 2017-2022* also sets out an aspiration to collaborate with communities and to improve the integrated service model. The Feasibility Study has been prepared through a highly consultative process with agency representatives and community members working closely to identify and ensure that future needs are met. The proposal represents a shared vision which responds directly to Ambulance Victoria’s corporate direction and will support the objective of greater integration.

The Country Fire Authority Strategy and Outcomes Framework 2020-2030 has core objectives which are reflective of a desire for strategic partnerships and strengthening of delivery partner relationships. The proposal will deliver a precinct of integrated facilities which will enhance and sustain the operational performance of individual agencies and promote collaboration between agencies and relevant community organisations.

Other key agencies Victoria Police and DELWP have also been involved in the project and have complementary corporate objectives which will be supported by the proposal. *The Victoria Police Capability Plan 2016-2025* has a vision for a responsive and connected organisation, the DELWP Community Charter commits to a place-based community focus and working in partnership with local communities. The proposal is consistent with these objectives through development of a precinct that will act to focus emergency planning, response and recovery efforts in Mansfield Shire. The Mansfield Resilience Centre will support agency training programs, communication and coordination meetings and activities, support the activities of Mansfield Community Radio and sustain community activities aimed to increase community resilience.

3.2 Impact of not investing in the solution

The inadequacies and limitations of the current emergency services infrastructure in Mansfield and the dimension of the risks and challenges facing the northeast, in relation to natural disasters and emergency events, makes the need for investment in new fit for purpose infrastructure URGENT. The costs and implications of not investing in Mansfield’s emergency services infrastructure in a timely way are discussed below:

<p>Loss of community momentum, interest and support:</p>	<p>Recognition of the urgent need to invest in emergency services infrastructure in Mansfield is widely acknowledged in the community. So much so that at the community’s initiative, the Mansfield Emergency Services Precinct Community Committee was formed to give formal expression to the community’s aspiration. The group is very active in promoting the proposal to the wider community and in advocacy to key decision makers.</p>
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	<p>Failure to respond to this aspiration risks the loss of community interest and support for the activities of the emergency services agencies and the potential undermining of the current high levels of volunteerism for the agencies.</p>
<p>Impact on dispatch times</p>	<p>Current dispatch times for the agencies are compromised by inefficient and outdated facility designs and layout. Further to this, the location of the CFA Fire Station means that egress is significantly compromised at times of heavy traffic flow in the town centre and during community activities such as the monthly farmers market. The Maroondah Highway site is favoured by the agencies and modelling supports dispatch performance required, can be met by the proposed site.</p>
<p>Cost of maintaining/improving existing infrastructure</p>	<p>While the agencies have not been able to provide data about the cost of maintaining or improving existing infrastructure, it is understood to be significant for Ambulance and SES, because of the poor condition and constraints of their existing infrastructure.</p>
<p>No other suitable publicly owned land has been identified</p>	<p>The proposed site is ideally located to support an emergency services precinct. Council is keenly supportive of the project and is prepared to bring the land parcel to this project. No other suitable land has been identified to support the development of new emergency services infrastructure. The existing Ambulance Station and CFA Fire Station sites in Mansfield are heavily constrained, and further development and improvements not possible.</p>
<p>Potential for improved coordination in planning, response and recovery to emergencies and natural disasters</p>	<p>The agencies are currently located in dispersed locations across Mansfield township. Facilities are not available to efficiently conduct joint training activities in a coordinated way. The proposed precinct presents the opportunity for improved coordination of operational and training activities that will result in strengthened relationships that will benefit emergency response and recovery efforts</p>
<p>Strategic development potential of existing Ambulance Victoria and CFA sites offers potential to reinvigorate Mansfield town centre and enable improvements to Mansfield Police Station and Mansfield Court House</p>	<p>Mansfield Ambulance Station and the CFA Fire Station are located in constrained central township locations. Whilst both sites do not have the potential to sustain the future infrastructure needs of the agencies, they have significant potential to support the further reinvigoration of Mansfield town centre.</p> <p>The sites are located in high profile locations with adjacent landuses including Mansfield Court House, retail and services businesses. Given the proximity to Mansfield Police Station and Court House, the sites also offer the potential to support future improvements to this facilities which would not be possible if the Ambulance Station and CFA Fire Station were not relocated.</p>

Part 4: Funding

4.1 Cost to deliver the solution

Indicative cost estimates have been prepared by quantity surveyors, PlanCost Australia, and are based upon concept plans for the proposed emergency services precinct prepared by Baumgart Clark Architects as shown in section 2.2 above. The report from PlanCost Australia dated 30 June 2022 is provided as a separate attachment in Appendix A.

Precinct component	Estimated Cost
VicSES Building	\$7,061,505
Ambulance Victoria Building	\$4,241,604
Mansfield Resilience Centre – Incorporating Mansfield Community Radio	\$6,241,982
CFA Building	\$3,903,092
TOTAL	\$21,448,183

Table 4.1 Indicative order of cost, precinct components, Mansfield Emergency Services Precinct, 30 June 2022

4.2 Proposed funding sources

The funding strategy is multipronged and will require a high level of advocacy from Council and emergency service agencies to the State and Federal Government. Funding sources that are appropriate to support the development of the Mansfield Emergency Services Precinct are:

- The Victorian State Government has an ambitious program to upgrade and redevelop emergency services infrastructure across the State. A key strategy for this project will be to advocate and lobby for Mansfield to be identified and agreed as the next / top priority for funding for replacement of Ambulance and SES facilities.
- Capital works to support the provision of new Ambulance Victoria infrastructure are undertaken through the Victorian Health Building Authority. The Victorian State Government has allocated around \$249 million since 2015 to the Ambulance Victoria development program with a focus on providing modern workplaces and the latest equipment to specifically address conditions evident at Mansfield Ambulance Station.
- Capital works to support the provision of new and improved facilities for VicSES are undertaken through the Emergency Services Infrastructure Authority. A program to deliver high-quality purpose-built SES units is underway with \$43.9 million invested to date.
- The CFA is funded by the Victorian State Government to deliver strategic capital and other improvement projects to improve the operational capacity of the organisation. A funding package of \$126.0 million was announced in 2020-21 to support a broad program of initiatives including the Station Replacement Program which will support the replacement of 15 stations over four years.
- Support for projects that mitigate or reduce the disaster risk, impact and consequence associated with natural hazards and emergency events has been a feature of Federal Government funding programs for many years. The Federal Government Disaster Ready Fund/ Preparing Australian Communities Program (PACP) is a key program that can support the

development of the Mansfield Resilience Centre. The PACP supports eligible projects with grants ranging from \$20,000 to \$10 million. The newly announced Disaster Ready Fund aims to improve Australia’s disaster readiness by investing in disaster prevention and resilience.

- The Victorian State Government has implemented a range of funding programs to support projects and initiatives by local government to build rural Victoria’s prosperity, liveability and sustainability. The Regional Infrastructure Fund seeks to assist the growth of rural Victoria to stimulate economic and community activity, support recovery from Covid-19 and respond to economic challenges. Grants from \$20,000 and up to \$3.0 million are available for eligible projects with larger grants in certain circumstances.

The amounts to be sourced from the various funding programs and budgets is shown in table 4.2 below. It also highlights the financial contribution made by Council through provision of the land for the Emergency Services Precinct and highlights the opportunity for proceeds from the sale of the existing Mansfield Ambulance Station to be considered as part of the funding strategy. It is however acknowledged the Victorian State Government has particular processes associated with the sale of public land and may consider this to be part of the funding strategy for the project.

Funding Source	Amount sought/contribution
Stage 1	
Federal Government Disaster Ready Fund/Preparing Australian Communities Program (PACP)	\$3,120,991
Regional Infrastructure Fund – Victorian State Government	\$3,120,991
Mansfield Shire Council Land – 166-176 Maroondah Highway, Mansfield	
VicSES/Emergency Services Infrastructure Authority – New Mansfield SES Unit	\$7,061,505
Ambulance Victoria/Victorian health Building Authority - New Mansfield Ambulance Station	\$4,241,604
Total Stage 1.	\$17,545,091
Stage 2	
CFA – New Mansfield Fire Station	\$3,903,092
Total Stage 1 and 2	\$21,448,183
Value of land contributed by Mansfield Shire Council 166-176 Maroondah Highway, Mansfield	\$1,125,000
Proceeds sale of former Mansfield Ambulance Station – 3 Curia Street, Mansfield	\$590,000

Table 4.2: Proposed funding strategy, Mansfield Emergency Services Precinct, July 2022

Part 5: Deliverability

5.1 Risk assessment of the solution

The recommended solution is to develop an **Emergency Services Precinct** on Council owned land at 166 – 176 Maroondah Highway, Mansfield. Mansfield Shire Council has provided leadership and direction to the Feasibility Study and has maintained close consultation with the emergency services agencies and other relevant agencies and community organisations to ensure future facility needs are understood and provided for. This has ensured that the concept plan is supported by the agencies. There are several potential risks to the project however, and they have been considered in the Feasibility Study and Business Case.

Risk	Mitigation
Agency (ies) withdraw from precinct approach and partnership model.	Council has been working closely with the agencies at the local, regional and corporate level for over 12 months on the proposal. Ambulance Victoria and VicSES have formally advised of their intention to develop new facilities in the precinct at the earliest opportunity and the CFA expects to do so in the medium term. The current Mansfield ambulance station is in urgent need of replacement and cannot support operation as a 2 hour staffed station. The current SES facility on the site has been deemed not fit for purpose. This context indicates this risk is unlikely.
Governance arrangements cannot be reached with proposed partner organisations.	Council has been working co-operatively with the agencies and partner organisations on the proposal for over 12 months and has canvassed various models and approaches to co-ordinating activities in the precinct and management of the proposed Mansfield Resilience Centre. Future obligations of partners have not been seen as onerous. Council will continue to actively engage with the partner organisations throughout all stages of the project and will formalise the partnership through the development of a Memorandum of Understanding with Council, agencies and all partner organisations.
Funding not secured for all component elements of precinct.	The precinct is proposed to be delivered over two stages with new facilities for Ambulance and SES and the Resilience Centre forming Stage 2 and new CFA fire station a future Stage 2. The component elements are able to be delivered as separate packages, but this will involve cost penalties. The existing Ambulance and SES facilities have been deemed to not be fit for purpose. Broad support for the proposal exists in the agencies and the wider Mansfield Shire community. Council will undertake a program of advocacy and information to ensure that stakeholders and funding bodies are aware of the benefits and need for urgent investment in emergency services infrastructure in Mansfield.

Risk	Mitigation
Community does not support proposed development of site.	One of the primary drivers for the proposal has been a widely held community aspiration for the development of emergency services infrastructure on the Maroondah Highway Site. Mansfield SES unit have operated from the site since 1994, the agencies have confirmed that all requirements including dispatch times can be met on the site, and no other suitable publicly owned available land has been identified for the purpose. The concept plan is consistent with Planning Amendment C48 which has recently been exhibited following extensive community consultation.

5.2 Readiness

The recommended solution is to develop **an Emergency Services Precinct** on Council owned land at 166 – 176 Maroondah Highway, Mansfield. Subject to adequate funding being available, it is proposed to immediately proceed with:

- Providing appropriate information to community members about the proposed precinct development including purpose, timing and benefits to agency volunteers and service delivery.
- Formalising agreements with agencies and partner organisations.
- Reaching agreement with funding bodies and agencies on the procurement and project management model.
- Preparing documentation for tender for design and documentation.
- Confirming Town planning processes and approvals.

5.3 Timelines and milestones

The overall project timeframe and key milestones for the project are outlined in table 5.1 below. They are indicative and will be dependant on when funding is secured.

Key Milestone	Indicative Timelines	Time Required
Scoping study development	Completed Dec 2021	
Concept plan development	Completed June 2022	
Feasibility study development	Completed June 2022	
Business case development	Completed June 2022	
Partnership development	In progress	
Funding opportunities identified and advocacy implemented	In progress	
Funding sources confirmed	December 2022	
Tender for design and documentation	Jan – April 2023	4 months
Development of schematic design	May – July 2023	3 months
Development of detailed design	August – Nov 2023	4 months
Planning approvals	July – Dec 2023	6 months
Procurement/Tender for Construction	Jan – April 2024	4 months
Construction	May 2024 – Nov 2025	18 months
Facility opening	Dec 2025	

Table 5.1: Projected timelines and milestones for Mansfield Emergency Services Precinct, July 2022

A detailed procurement strategy will be developed for the project upon securing funding. Consultation with the agencies indicates flexibility in the approach to procurement. There is the potential to structure project delivery as one contract to deliver cost efficiencies, but this will be dependent on the timing of funding being secured, the agreement of funding bodies and the individual agencies.

Appendix A: Cost plan

Provided as a separate attachment