



Mansfield Shire



Mansfield Planning Scheme Review 2026

Version 1
August 2026
DRAFT

Planning and Environment Act 1987

Planning Scheme Review pursuant to Section 12B of the Act

Mansfield Planning Scheme

Version	Author	Issue date
1.0	Esther Perkins & Harry Retief	11 August 2026

Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Meaning
DTP	Department of Transport and Planning
C	Council amendment
ESO	Environment Significance Overlay
GC	Group of Councils amendment
GMW	Goulburn Murray Water
LSIO	Land Subject to Inundation Overlay
MDFC	Ministerial Direction on the form and content of Planning Schemes
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MPS	Municipal Planning Strategy
P&E Act	Planning and Environment Act 1987
PPF	Planning Policy Framework
PPN	Planning Practice Note
PSR	Planning Scheme Review
RFI	Request Further Information
VCAT	Victorian Civil Appeals Tribunal
VPP	Victoria Planning Provisions
VC	Victorian Councils amendment

Contents

1. Executive summary	5
1.1. Why is the Planning Scheme being reviewed?	5
1.2. Consolidated recommendations	5
2. Introduction	8
2.1. Methodology	8
3. What's driving change	10
3.1. Population, growth, and economy	10
3.2. Climate change and other environmental risks	10
3.3. State and Federal policy	10
3.4. Victorian government amendments and advice	11
4. Previous Planning Scheme Review	12
4.1. Previous Planning Scheme Review	12
4.2. Progress since last review	12
4.3. Outstanding work since last review	13
4.4. Obsolete recommendations	13
5. Audit and assessment of current scheme	14
5.1. Methodology	14
5.2. Municipal Planning Strategy	14
5.3. Planning Policy Framework	14
5.4. Zones	15
5.5. Overlays	15
5.6. Provisions	15
5.7. General provisions	15
5.8. Operational provisions	15
Update Clause 74.02 Further Strategic Work to remove completed or unneeded actions:	16
6. Planning Scheme performance	18
6.1. Planning permit activity	18
6.2. Planning permit audit	21
6.3. Planning Panels Victoria	21
6.4. VCAT	22
7. Stakeholder engagement	24
7.1. Planners' feedback	24
7.2. Referral and notice agencies	26
7.3. Summary of issues raised in engagement	26

8. New strategic work	28
8.1. Council projects and documents	28
8.2. State Government and Statutory Agency projects and documents	29
8.3. Federal Government projects and documents	30
9. Work underway	31
10. Key issues	32
10.1. Development in the Environmental Significance Overlay	32
10.2. Setbacks from waterways in Farming Zone and Rural Living Zones	33
10.3. Mountain Bay	33
10.4. Rural Land Use Strategy	34
10.5. Significant Landscapes	35
10.6. Flood Study	36
11. Further strategic work	37
11.1. Prioritisation process	37
11.2. Discussion	37
11.3. Recommendations	37
Appendix One	39
Summary of engagement outcomes	39
Appendix Two	40
Marked up ordinance with policy neutral and strategically justified changes to the Planning Scheme.	40
Appendix Three	41
Further strategic work	41
Appendix Four	43
State and regional Planning Scheme amendments and planning practice notes issued since last Planning Scheme Review	43
Appendix Five	44
Responses from referral authorities and other stakeholders	44

1. Executive summary

1.1. Why is the Planning Scheme being reviewed?

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

Council last undertook a comprehensive review of the Planning Scheme in 2022. The findings of this review were translated into the Planning Scheme via amendment C57mansPt2 which was gazetted on 28 November 2025.

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

1.2. Consolidated recommendations

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

- Planning Scheme recommendations
- Further strategic work recommendations
- Process improvement recommendations
- Advocacy recommendations
- Minister for Planning recommendation

1.2.1. Planning Scheme amendment recommendations

These recommendations cover amendments required to implement the findings of this review, including:

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

All recommended changes are included in the marked-up Ordinance in Appendix Two.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that Council:

- Incorporate the policy neutral changes identified in Chapter 5 to align the ordinance with the Ministerial Direction on the Form and Content of Planning Schemes.
- Include new and updated policy to implement;
 - The Mansfield Shire Council Plan 2025 - 2029

1.2.2. Further strategic work

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

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

A recommended Clause 74.02 is in the marked-up ordinance at Appendix Two for Council's consideration and set out in the recommendations below.

1.2.3. Process improvements

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

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

1.2.4. Minister for Planning

Council has prepared a Planning Scheme Review as required by section 12B(1) of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* (the Act).

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

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

Aligns with Ministerial Direction on the Form and Content of Planning Schemes.

Sets out the policy objectives for the use and development of land.

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

Recommendation:

That Mansfield Shire Council accept this Planning Scheme Review and provide it to the Minister for Planning as evidence Mansfield Shire Council, as the planning authority for Mansfield Planning Scheme, has met its obligations in accordance with Section 12B of the Planning and Environment Act 1987 to review the Planning Scheme every four years.

2. Introduction

2.1. Methodology

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

Mansfield Shire Councils Strategic Planning Team conducted Stages One to Five.

Stage Five involved detailed community engagement, including workshopping with planning consultants, and surveying community members and key stakeholders.

Stage Six (Implement) will require a Planning Scheme Amendment to put the review's recommendations into effect. The amendment will be advertised and community members will be invited to make submissions under the Planning and Environment Act 1987.

Figure 1: Planning Scheme Review methodology

Stage		
1	Initiate	Establish Timeframes Collate materials for review Survey planners Contact referral authorities Inform DTP
2	Analyse	Audit the planning scheme Review strategic documents and new policy Review VCAT decisions and planning panel recommendations Review Planning Permit Activity Reporting data Review previous planning scheme review Review Survey results
3	Engage	Councillors and executive Statutory and Strategic Planners Internal and External referrals Registered Aboriginal Parties
4	Report	Planning scheme review report Further strategic work plan Marked up ordinance
5	Consult	Test findings with community Test further strategic work with community
6	Implement	Planning scheme review to Minister for Planning Planning scheme amendment Budgeting for further strategic work Process improvements Advocacy

The timing for the project is:

Stage		Timing
1	Initiate	April 2026
2	Analyse	April – May 2026
3	Engage	May – August 2026
4	Report	July - August 2026

5	Consult	August – September 2026
6	Implement	September - October 2026

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

- Ministerial directions:
 - Ministerial Direction on the Form and Content of Planning Schemes.
 - Ministerial Direction No. 11 Strategic Assessment of Amendments.
- Planning practice notes and advice:
 - A Practitioner's Guide to Victoria's Planning Schemes.
 - PPN – 46 Strategic Assessment Guidelines.
 - Other topic-based Ministerial Directions and Practice Notes were considered for specific matters raised through the review.

3. What's driving change

3.1. Population, growth, and economy

The resident population in Mansfield Shire for 2021 was estimated at 10,178 (ABS Census 2021), and Victoria in Future data estimates that by 2031 the population in Mansfield Shire will increase to 11,829. However, it is noted that the estimated resident population for 2025 is 10,979 (Profile .id) and the Victoria in Future data is anticipated to be exceeded in by 2031. Based on the population projections in the Mansfield Planning Strategy, the population of Mansfield Shire Council is expected to be 13,440 by 2031 and 16,384 by 2041.

Agriculture and tourism are key economic drivers for the municipality. Most industrial land is located in and around Mansfield township, and land use conflicts between different sectors balances against increasing residential growth are a concern for planners.

3.2. Climate change and other environmental risks

Mansfield Planning Scheme does not have strong climate change policy and relies on State policy to guide planning decisions. Due to climate change and climate variability, natural disasters, and environmental hazards such as heatwaves, bushfires, floods, and storms are likely to be more frequent and severe. This will present many challenges and some opportunities.

Bushfire and flooding are the two key environmental risks identified in Mansfield Shire, with the Bushfire Management Overlay covering a significant proportion of the shire. The remainder of the area is designated as a Bushfire Prone Area, with the exception of the built-up locations within Mansfield Township. Mansfield Shire also sits at the upper end of the Goulburn Broken Catchment and is subject to both riverine and flash flooding.

3.3. State and Federal policy

Since the last review, there have been significant shifts in State and Federal policy in the following areas. These are covered at a high level there, and where they will have an impact on the Mansfield Planning Scheme, are discussed in more detail in Chapter 8.

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

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

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

- As of right small second dwellings.
- Codification of planning rules for housing.

- Deemphasising neighbourhood character in housing decision making.
- Removal of the planning permit requirement for single dwellings on small lots and two lot subdivisions.
- Establishing housing capacity targets for each municipality.

The housing capacity target for Mansfield Shire is an additional 3,900 dwellings by 2051. The recent HCAP results for Mansfield Shire indicate 150 dwellings have been constructed since the housing target was first announced in 2025. The remaining 3,750 represents an average delivery of 150 additional dwellings per year. Between 2022-2025 approximately 97 dwellings were built in Mansfield each year, indicating a rising growth rate.

A key focus on this PSR will be ensuring that the consequential impacts of these reforms are considered in the Mansfield Planning Scheme and adjustments made as necessary. This is covered further in Chapter 8.

3.4. Victorian government amendments and advice

The Victoria Planning Provisions (VPPs) are regularly reviewed and updated at the State level with numerous VC and GC amendments each year. The State also issues updates to the Practitioner's Guide and new planning practice notes. The full list of gazetted Victorian and regional amendments and practice notes released since the last review is provided in Appendix Four.

This review considers how the Mansfield Planning Scheme should respond locally to these changes to the VPPs and how they should be applied and includes:

4. Previous Planning Scheme Review

4.1. Previous Planning Scheme Review

The Mansfield Planning Scheme was last reviewed by Mansfield Shire Council and the Regional Planning Hub in 2022. This review was implemented into the Planning Scheme via Amendment C57mans Part 1 in November 2025.

The review found key issues relating to the protection of agricultural land and conflicts with tourism and residential uses, Native vegetation and biodiversity policy gap and the application and effectiveness of the Environmental Significance Overlay.

The review made the following recommendations:

- 1) Prepare a planning scheme amendment or amendments to:
 - a) Incorporate the policy neutral changes identified.
 - b) Incorporate elements from the Council Plan that were missed during the PPF translation and make other updates to factual data.
 - c) Amend the MPS at 02.01 Context to include appropriate reference to Traditional Owners and Country.
 - d) Include new policy to implement the:
 - Mansfield Shire Council Plan 2021 – 2025 , Mansfield Open Space Strategy 2021, Mansfield Planning Strategy 2022, Mansfield Commercial and Industrial Use Strategy 2021, Activating Lake Eildon: Lake Eildon Masterplan 2020.
 - e) Update Clause 74.02 Further strategic work that prioritises the strategic work program based on the findings of this review and prioritisation of the strategic planning work identified.
- 2) Prepare a planning scheme amendment to Implement the findings of the Mansfield Planning Strategy.

4.2. Progress since last review

4.2.1. Completed projects

Since the last review, Council has implemented the findings of the previous Planning Scheme Review with Amendment C57mans Part 1.

Council is currently undertaking projects to implement recommendations from the last review, including:

- Implementing the Township Approaches and Guidelines Study (2018) as they relate to the DDO1 areas through planning scheme amendment C56mans Part 2.
- Implementing the Mansfield Open Space Strategy and Contributions Plan (2023) through planning scheme amendment C57mans Part 2.
- Implementing the Mansfield Planning Strategy (2022) through planning scheme amendment C60mans.

- Undertaking a review of the Environmental Significance Overlay and making changes through planning scheme amendment C61mans.
- Undertaking a Flood Study for Mansfield Township in collaboration with the Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority.

4.3. Outstanding work since last review

The following recommendations from the last review are outstanding and Council officers consider they should still be progressed:

- Rural Land Use Study

Several issues identified in the last review did not re-emerge as issues in this review. Given the time elapsed, Council officers have undertaken a thorough reassessment of each to determine if it needs to progress. As a result, the following outstanding work is proposed to be deleted.

- Native Vegetation and Biodiversity policy has been addressed through the Local Laws review and Canopy Tree Policy implemented by the State Government.

4.4. Obsolete recommendations

Some recommendations from the last review are obsolete because of changes that have been implemented by the Victorian government. These include recommendations relating to:

- Native Vegetation and Biodiversity Policy.

5. Audit and assessment of current scheme

5.1. Methodology

An audit of each local provision (policies and schedules) in the Planning Scheme has been completed, comparing their drafting and application against the Ministerial Direction on the Form and Content of Planning Schemes, *a Practitioners' Guide to Victorian Planning Schemes* (Version 1.5, April 2022) and relevant planning practice notes.

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

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

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

5.2. Municipal Planning Strategy

The MPS was also cross referenced against all the other local provisions in the scheme to ensure links to all local policies.

Clause no. and name	Compliance or changes required	Action
02.01 Context	Make minor amendments to the Context (02.01) to update economic and population data.	Policy neutral amendment
02.02 Vision	Update to reflect Council Plan 2025-2029. 	Policy neutral amendment
02.03 Strategic directions	Add "[no content]" in line with point 7 of MDCF.	Policy neutral amendment
02.03-6 Housing	Include reference to Victorian Housing Targets or the findings of the Mansfield Planning Strategy. Currently it refers to <i>Rural Living Strategic Study 2003</i>	Policy neutral amendment
2.04 Strategic framework plans	Mansfield Strategic Framework Plan - Updated Map Required – Current Map is of poor quality and difficult to read.	C60mans

5.3. Planning Policy Framework

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

Clause no. and name	Changes required	Action
HOUSING		

16.01-1L - Housing supply in Mansfield Township	Add Policy Application e.g. This policy applies to all land within the Mansfield Township Framework Plan at Clause 11.01-1L-1.	Policy neutral amendment
INFRASTRUCTURE		
19.02-1L - Health facilities - Mansfield Township	Add Policy Application e.g. This policy applies the education/health precinct in the Mansfield Township Strategic Framework Plan to Clause 11.01-1L-1.	Policy neutral amendment
19.03-1L - Development and infrastructure contributions plans	Vague.	PSR further strategic work.

5.4. Zones

The 2026 Planning Scheme Review found no issues with the Zone schedules in the Mansfield Planning Scheme.

5.5. Overlays

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

Clause no. and name	Changes required (if relevant)	ACTION
ENVIRONMENTAL AND LANDSCAPE OVERLAYS		
42.01s1 Environmental Significance Overlay -Catchments at High Risk of Water Quality Impacts	Vague exemption: Some clarification needed. A permit is not required for: Other buildings and works on lots of 40 hectares or more.	PSR further strategic work.
42.01s2 Environmental Significance Overlay – Catchments at Medium Risk of Water Quality Impacts	Vague exemption: Some clarification needed. A permit is not required for: Other buildings and works on lots of 40 hectares or more.	PSR further strategic work.
HERITAGE AND BUILT FORM OVERLAYS		
43.02s1 Design and Development Overlay – Alpine Approaches and Township Gateways	Spelling error. “Be of natural or muted materials and colours that complement an.....” “Provide landscaping that creates an attractive environment that is consistent with and complements...”	Policy neutral amendment

5.6. Provisions

The 2026 Planning Scheme Review found no issues with the Particular Provision schedules in the Mansfield Planning Scheme.

5.7. General provisions

The 2026 Planning Scheme Review found no issues with the General Provision schedules in the Mansfield Planning Scheme.

5.8. Operational provisions

Update Clause 74.02 Further Strategic Work to remove completed or unneeded actions:

Settlement

- Implement the recommendations from the *Mansfield Planning Strategy*.
- ~~Undertake a housing strategy/neighbourhood character study and review of township structure plans to guide appropriate application of residential zones and built form guidelines.~~
- In Mansfield township:
 - Review the planning scheme provisions for the former sawmill site and its environs to facilitate appropriate redevelopment.
 - ~~Investigate the creation of an industrial/business park subdivision on the Lakins Road site.~~
 - ~~Prepare master plans for key open space areas including the co-location of facilities.~~
 - Investigate the application of the Parking Overlay and schedule to the town centre to meet future car parking demand generated by new retail, tourism and commercial development.
 - Develop a stormwater and drainage management plan to guide requirements for future development and new infrastructure.
 - Explore future alternative uses for the racecourse grounds, including as an active playing field location for Council.
 - Explore rezoning of industrially zoned land to a mixed use or residential zone subject to environmental constraints.
 - ~~Investigate planning controls for the Lakins Road Industrial Estate.~~
- In Jamieson, consider rezoning the pocket of General Residential Zone land located 500 metres south of Eildon-Jamieson Road.
- In Goughs Bay and Mountain Bay, consider rezoning the General Residential Zone land to Township Zone to reflect the lack of infrastructure to support more intensive development.
- ~~Deliver the Mansfield Station Precinct Activation Project.~~
- Implement the *Lake Eildon Masterplan*.

Environment and landscape values

- Provide statutory protection to significant ridgelines and Alpine approaches currently not protected by the planning scheme.
- Review the extent of SLO1 and SLO2 to ensure they are sufficient to achieve their landscape objectives.
- Plan for the protection of agricultural land, water and vegetation that contribute to the high landscape values of the Shire.

Environmental risks and amenity

- ~~• Undertake strategic work to identify areas where vegetation and key biodiversity areas should be retained and conserved and apply appropriate planning tools to protect them.~~
- ~~• Delineate those portions of the Broken, Goulburn, Delatite, Jamieson, Howqua and Big Rivers and Fords Creek which are inundated in a 1 per cent probability flood event.~~
- ~~• Review flood mapping to inform future planning scheme amendments, to the satisfaction of the floodplain management authority, following significant regional floods, implementation of approved flood mitigations schemes, or completion of new flood studies.~~
- ~~• Prepare development guidelines to manage interfaces with sensitive uses in Mansfield.~~
- ~~• Plan for growth and climate change impacts, including bushfire and flooding risks.~~

Natural resource management

- Prepare a new rural strategy that addresses use, development, subdivision of land, the outcomes of the *Domestic Wastewater Management Plan* (2014), other environmental constraints and landscape significance.

Built environment and heritage

- Prepare a signs policy for the Mansfield Shopping Centre.
- Prepare a heritage gaps study to identify, assess and protect place of cultural heritage significance across the municipality and a new local heritage policy at Clause 15.03-2L.
- Progress a planning scheme amendment to correct zoning errors and other minor anomalies.

6. Planning Scheme performance

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

6.1. Planning permit activity

6.1.1. Permits assessed

Evidence

Table 1. PPARs report for permits issued between the 2022-2023 financial year and the 2025/2026 financial year

Permits (including refusals)	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026
Received	253	188	165	138YTD
Approved with no conditions	0	0	0	0
Approved with conditions	197	212	148	182YTD
Refused	Nil	3	4	3
Statutory days for decision making	73.5	34.6	62.7	47.9

Source: MSC Internal reporting

Discussion

Over the past four years, the number of applications Council has received has been reducing between June 2022 and June 2026. Process changes implemented in 2023-24 have shown reduced decision-making timeframes, with the exception of 2024-25, where a new system was being implemented. The number of statutory days for decision making has consistently been under 60 days.

6.1.2. Service performance

Table 2. compares the recent service performance of the Mansfield Shire against comparable small councils.

Measure	Council	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	2024-2025	2025-2026
Time taken to decide planning applications (days)	Mansfield	61	106	85	76	59
	Murrindindi	55	58	69	76	61
	Strathbogie	72	95	90	57.5	49
	Benalla	35.5	36	51	37	48
	Alpine	116	140.5	158	209.5	118.5
	Small Council Average	68.7	78.5	75	66.7	59.8
Planning applications decided within time frames	Mansfield	90.53%	64.41%	80.90%	63.01%	62.98%
	Murrindindi	80.50%	81.05%	84.58%	69.81%	74.15%
	Strathbogie	78.65%	75.13%	88.13%	83.00%	77.27%
	Benalla	87.70%	73.94%	69.05%	68.87%	65.44%
	Alpine	41.50%	31.82%	27.27%		53.57%
	Small Council Average	73.21%	66.38%	66.47%	72.20%	75.11%
Cost of statutory services per	Mansfield	1965.27	1664.95	2874.76	2679.50	
	Murrindindi	1790.61	1404.36	1982.82	1788.25	

planning application to Council	Strathbogrie	2347.23	3833.01	4971.70	6537.45
	Benalla	1451.96	1747.96	2472.10	2009.08
	Alpine	1936.01	2846.79	5366.05	4869.47
	Small Council Average	2836.10	3012.90	3999.87	4646.52
Decisions Upheld at VCAT	Mansfield	100%	N/A	50%	80%
	Murrindindi	50%	50%	100%	100%
	Strathbogrie	66%	100%	100%	N/A
	Benalla	33%	N/A	N/A	100%
	Alpine	66%	N/A	50%	N/A
	Small Council Average	47%	23.16%	51.15%	34.04%

Source: PPARS

Over the past four years, the overall number of applications has been reducing; however, the complexity of applications has been increasing as shown by the number. Council's statutory timeframes have improved since the implementation of the Greenlight system for processing planning permit applications. Additionally, there is evidence of successful mediation of VCAT matters where most appeals are resolved by consent of the parties, rather than requiring determination by the Tribunal.

Overall Mansfield is performing well relative to neighboring small councils and the Victorian Small Councils Average in relation to time taken to decide planning applications, recovering from an increase in 2023-2024.

6.1.3. Most common permit triggers

The most common permit subcategories are one or more new buildings (238) 32.9%. This is typically how farm sheds and domestic outbuildings are categorised. A substantial number of proposals require a planning permit due to overlays such as the Environmental Significance Overlay, the Bushfire Management Overlay and the Significance Landscape Overlay. Single dwellings (159) 22.0%, subdivision of land (81) 11.2%, and change or extension of use (42) 5.8% make up the remaining most common application types.

Table 3. Most Common Application Types in the townships 2022-2026

Application Type	Number of Applications
One or more new building	238
Single Dwelling	158
Subdivision of land	81
Change or extension of use	42

Source: PPARS

Over the last 4 years the category of permits generating the highest activity has consistently been *One or more new buildings*. *Single dwellings* and *Subdivisions* also generate a significant portion of the permit activity along with *Change or Extension of Use* also featuring heavily. Single dwellings were the next highest generating category. This is an indication of the type of development happening in the municipality primarily being residential.

6.1.4. Decision making

Table 4. Types of Decisions made.

Permits (including refusals)	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026
Delegated decision	191	204	144	176YTD
Council decision	6	11	8	9YTD
VCAT decision	Nil	3	5	6YTD

Source: MSC Internal Reporting and Council reports

Over the past four years, the overall number of applications has been reducing, however the complexity of applications has been increasing as shown by the number.

6.1.5. Geographic spread of applications

Table 5 (see below) shows that, during the previous 4 years, 44.5% of all applications processed by Council are in Mansfield, followed by Bonnie Doon at 12.8%. Both Merrijig (7.9%) and Tolmie (6.3%) have attracted reasonable permit activity, and other permits are attributed to the smaller townships across the Shire.

This is expected, as Mansfield is the main township in the municipality and has the strongest planning controls and policy to support growth. Significant strategic work to support the growth of Mansfield has been recently undertaken by the planning team through the Mansfield Planning Strategy, which was almost at the exhibition stage.

Mansfield is identified in the Hume Regional Growth Plan 2014 as a sub-regional moderate growth centre in the Central Hume sub-region and has capacity and policy support within the existing township for both infill development and moderate residential and commercial expansion. Plan for Victoria set a housing target for Mansfield at 3,900 dwellings.

Table 5. Distribution of planning permit applications between 2022 and 2026

Location	Number of applications	Percentage of applications
Mansfield	520	44.5%
Bonnie Doon	150	12.8%
Merrijig + Merrijig (Mount Buller)	73	7.9%
Tolmie	74	6.3%
Jamieson	36	3.1%
Merton	34	2.9%
Sawmill Settlement	33	2.8%

Source: PPARS – data filtered by location.

Other towns such as Merrijig and Tolmie were the next most active towns, and then the smaller towns making up the remainder. Mansfield is unique in that many of its smaller towns have framework plans at Clause 11.01-1L-02 and are supported by a high-level policy.

The most recent Planning Scheme Review highlight that updates to residential zones to better reflect best practice (based on PPNs 90 and 91) could be beneficial, and a general review of the townships. However, recent community pushback has been overwhelming in the case of the Delatite Valley Plan, which sought to rezone some Farming Zone land in Merrijig, to Residential Zones, an aspect of the plan which has now been removed. Many of these smaller towns are likely have capacity to support this zoning, but further strategic work is required.

Another factor which impacts this geographic spread, is the limited number of areas with reticulated sewerage. These places include the township of Mansfield, Bonnie Doon and parts of Merrijig and Sawmill Settlement. The almost complete coverage of the Municipality by the Environmental Significance Overlay makes permit applications difficult in areas without reticulated sewerage.

6.1.6. Findings

Council has shown improvement in meeting statutory timeframes and reducing the total number of active applications by determining more applications than received.

6.2. Planning permit audit

Three (3) planning permit applications since the last review were audited to identify any policy gaps or areas for improvement in the planning scheme, and to determine how well the planning scheme was being applied in the consideration of permit applications.

Table 6. Range of Applications chosen between 2022 and 2026.

Permit	Description	Address
P103-24	Development of land for a domestic outbuilding	16 Village Way Macs Cove
P158-22	Development of outbuilding ancillary to a dwelling	152 Killarney Lane Boorolite
P115-25	Construct a single storey dwelling along with a detached colorbond shed., Construction of a single storey dwelling	257 Merton-Strathbogie Road Merton

Discussion

Overall, the processing and filing of applications has been well done across the three applications with Greenlight. The assessments against the MPS were considered to a minimal degree while the PPF, Zones, Overlays and other Provisions are generally assessed to a high standard. The officer reports consistently address the key issues relating to the application and labels them accordingly. Advertisement is generally done to an acceptable standard with material detriment being consistently considered. RFI's are generally done within the 28 days. Site inspections could be done more frequently with additional justification for their absence during the Initial Assessment stage.

Overall, given the randomized nature of this sample, the findings show that process including filling, delegation, consideration of material detriment, assessment of relevant policy and submissions, and councils statutory timelines are all being doing to an acceptable level.

6.2.1. Findings

1. More frequent site visits would add considerable value to assessment
2. Add more value through more consistent assessment of the MPS

Re-occurring issues included: Delays in referrals (internal or external) and insufficient site inspections or documentation.

6.3. Planning Panels Victoria

6.3.1. Summary of Planning Scheme amendments

Since the last planning scheme review in 2022, Council has undertaken 1 'C' Planning Scheme Amendment which went to Planning Panels Victoria. The amendment that proceeded to a Planning Panel is summarised below.

Matter	Response
Amendment No:	C51mans Part 2
Amendment common name	Mansfield Commercial and Industrial Land Use Strategy
In operation from:	9 May 2024 - Refused
Brief description of the amendment:	The Amendment proposed to implement the Mansfield Commercial and Industrial Land Use Strategy, 2021. Attempted to implement the Mansfield Commercial and Industrial Land Use Strategy, 2021. Issues relating to Development guidelines for the Dead Horse Lane Industrial Precinct should be prepared consistent with the recommendations of the Mansfield Township Strategic Framework Plan (Clause 11.01-1L-01). The Panel recommended abandonment of the Amendment which Council did.
Policy matters raised by the Panel that require further consideration or action by Council.	Development guidelines for the Dead Horse Lane Industrial Precinct should be prepared consistent with the recommendations of the Mansfield Township Strategic Framework Plan (Clause 11.01-1L-01).
Further strategic work required:	Further strategic work is required to properly anticipate and respond to future commercial and industrial needs of the Mansfield township, including justifying rezoning to mixed use zone on Dead Horse Lane and to General Residential Zone on Curia Street.

Discussion

The Panel observed that Council embarked on the preparation of the strategy in good faith and meaningfully engaged with the community through its development. The lack of the supply and demand analysis has consequential impacts for assessment of the issues raised in submissions. The Panel has provided a brief discussion and conclusion in relation to these issues to assist with future resolution.

Findings

Further strategic justification and work is required to properly anticipate and respond to future commercial and industrial needs of the Mansfield township.

6.4. VCAT

6.4.1. VCAT cases reviewed

Council officers provided the following list of VCAT cases to review.

Table 7. VCAT Applications reviewed

Permit Number	VCAT Citation	Address
P215/22	P543/2023 – Greco v Mansfield SC [2024] VCAT 91	160 Campagnolos Road Mansfield

P032A/21	P1094/2023 – Mansfield SC v Jurrjens [2024] VCAT 322	195 Mt Buller Road Mansfield
P100/23	P15/2024 – Carroll v Mansfield SC [2024] VCAT 923	32 Chenery Street Mansfield
P001/23	Jakovljevic v Mansfield SC [2025] VCAT 249	446 Monkey Gully Road Mansfield

6.4.2. Policy issues raised at VCAT

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

- Stone Extraction – whether a work order is required
- Public Open Space contributions
- Residential dwellings
- Rural Industry in the Rural Living Zone.
- Design and Development Overlay

6.4.3. Design and Development Overlay

Summary

In Mansfield SC v Jurrjens [2024] VCAT 322, issues arose pertaining to the application of the Design and Development Overlay and outdated reference material in the schedule.

A policy neutral amendment is needed under Schedule 1 to the Design and Development Overlay, to replace the application of the Mansfield Urban Design Framework 2005 with the current Township Approaches Planning Controls and Guidelines Study, Mansfield Design Guidelines (Mansfield Shire, June 2018). Changes are also needed to the Design Objectives and Decision Guidelines. This document is already a Background document recognised in the Mansfield Planning Scheme at Cl. 12.05-2L, DDO2 and DDO3.

Findings

Updates are needed to the DDO1 to reference the Mansfield Design Guidelines (Mansfield Shire, June 2018) and to the decision guidelines.

7. Stakeholder engagement

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

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

7.1. Planners' feedback

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

Table 8. Planners Survey Results

Issue	Feedback from Planners	Commentary	Raised Elsewhere?	Action to be taken.
Environmental Significance Overlay – relevance of triggers, efficiency issues, coverage gaps and policy usability and legibility.	Inconsistent and difficult to read. Confusing exemptions. Buildings and works, setbacks in the ESO second most common trigger, earthworks trigger is unnecessary and development with no additional wastewater shouldn't trigger in the ESO. GMW referrals cause delays especially on unsewered smaller lots (residential areas). Gaps in Tolmie and close to Mansfield.	Being addressed as part of C62mans. Council reviewing the Memorandum of Understanding with Goulburn Murray Water.	Chapter 10	PSA
Farming Zone and Rural Living Zone waterway setbacks.	100m waterway setback too frequently triggered, not useful in the RLZ and FZ and inconsistent with Clause 14.02 (50m).		Chapter 10	PSA
Design and Development Overlay.	Should be applied to Merrijig to control desired development. Should include VicSmart pathway for extensions and Alterations and other simple applications.		Chapter 6 and 10	PSA
Rural Development and Agricultural Land Protection	Clause 14.01-1L should be updated to better protect agricultural land and reflect development patterns. Dwellings in FZ are contentious – often ends in VCAT. The ESO should include a schedule for the protection of high value Agricultural Land			FSW
Framework Plans Needing Updates	Clause 11.01-1L-01 framework plans need updating to reflect recent plans in Bonnie Doon (Bonnie Doon Plan), Merrijig, Sawmill			FSW

	Settlement, Alpine Ridge and Pinnacle Valley (Delatite Valley Plan) Goughs Bay, Merton, Mountain Bay (Goughs Bay Plan).			
Significant Landscape Protection	Clause 12.05-2L should be strengthened to protect Delatite Valley and Lake Eildon.		Chapter 10	PSA
Developer Contributions (Open Space and Infrastructure)	Contentious – Developer pushback. Often ends in VCAT. A schedule to Public Open Space Contributions to ensure appropriate open space contributions are received in line with the Mansfield Open Space Strategy. Clause 19.03-1L Development and Infrastructure Contributions Plans updated to ensure appropriate infrastructure is developed to support future growth and to ensure connection of public services - footpaths, stormwater drainage, etc.			FSW
Stone Extraction	Slow to process, politically sensitive – often ends in VCAT. Policy is needed to restrict Stone Extraction – especially in the SLO.		Chapter 10	PSA
Referral Authority Delays and Consultation.	ESO Referrals to GMW are cause timeframe blowouts. Add Earth and Energy Regulator, Agriculture Victoria, Traffic engineering (informal consultation).		Chapter 6 and 10.	IMP
Dwellings in Commercial Zone.	Buildings and works triggers for dwellings and associated works (including sheds) for the Commercial Zone is not useful.			FSW
Development Plan Overlay for through road connections.	Apply a DPO to area around Malcolm Street, Highett Street, Stoneleigh Road and Kidston Parade, to facilitate infill development in an organised way and to provide for appropriate through-road connections and open spaces.			FSW
Heritage Study gaps	Heritage Study is incomplete for all local places of Heritage Significance			FSW
Add Vegetation Protection Overlay	Vegetation Protection Overlay is not used for significant vegetation that is valued by the Community			FSW
Special Use Zone and Special Controls Overlay in Mountain Bay	SUZ and SCO in Mountain Bay very confusing for land owners and potential buyers. The policies do not align with the current State Planning Controls. The exemptions mean that no consideration for bushfire risk or impact to water quality can be given, in a high-risk area.		Chapter 10	PSA

Source: Planners Survey collected via Microsoft Forms

Feedback from this initial survey provided the basis for a workshop with Council planners. The workshop expanded on the issues raised in the survey and provided an opportunity to analyse the Planning Scheme performance more broadly. Matters that were raised that had not already been identified in the survey were:

- Review the Environmental Significance Overlay
- Review Farming Zone and Rural Living Zone waterway setbacks.
- Rural Land Use Strategy
- Design and Development Overlay Review
- Strengthen the Significant Landscape Overlay
- Open Space Contributions
- Development Contribution
- Heritage Study
- Mountain Bay – Special Use Zone and Special Controls Overlay

7.2. Referral and notice agencies

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

Referral and notice agency responses are included in Appendix Five.

Insert responses following engagement and Stakeholder Workshop.

Agencies that did not respond:

Insert list.

7.3. Summary of issues raised in engagement

The following table prioritises the various matters raised during the Stakeholder Engagement phase of the review and recommends appropriate actions:

Issue	Planners	Internal staff	Referral Agencies	Other stakeholders
Environmental Significance Overlay	X			
Bushfire Management Overlay				
Heritage	X			
Significant Landscape Overlay	X			
Developer contribution requirements	X			

Design and Development Overlay	X
Flooding	X
Mountain Bay Special Use Zone	X

8. New strategic work

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

The purpose of this stage of the review is to incorporate policies developed by other parts of the Council that are unlikely to be incorporated into the Planning Scheme as a stand-alone amendment.

Regional documents, such as Catchment Management Plans, were also reviewed to identify any Council-specific proposals that should be reflected in the Planning Scheme.

8.1. Council projects and documents

8.1.1. Documents reviewed

- Mansfield Council Plan and Community Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025 – 2029 (Mansfield Shire Council, 2025)
- Climate Action Plan (Mansfield Shire Council, 2023)
- The Sustainable Tourism Plan 2024-28 (Mansfield Shire Council, 2024)
- On-site Wastewater Management Plan (Mansfield Shire Council 2022)

8.1.2. Documents with policy implications

Mansfield Council Plan and Community Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025 – 2029 (Mansfield Shire Council, 2025)

This Plan, adopted on 21 October 2025, is not only the key document that guides our allocation of resources and provision of services, it is also the document which articulates the role Council will play in leading, supporting and advocating for the best possible outcomes for the Mansfield Shire. The development of the Council Plan 2025-2029 commenced in early 2025. Ideas and priorities were discussed and gathered through various platforms including Councillor and community workshops and sessions with staff across Council. A deliberative panel process was undertaken with community members in line with Council's Community Engagement Policy.

Findings

- Clause 02.02 (Vision): The visions should be updated in line with the Mansfield Council Plan and Community Health and Wellbeing Plan 2025 – 2029

Climate Action Plan (Mansfield Shire Council, 2022)

The Climate Action Plan, adopted on the 21 February 2022, sets out Council's position on mitigating the impacts of climate change within corporate operations. It also provides scope to support the community in adjusting to climate change and achieving a reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. The plan was developed by contractor Ironbark Sustainability in collaboration with Councillors and Council officers, and several external groups including the Goulburn Murray Climate Alliance and the Climate Ready Hume program.

Findings

- Clause 02.03-3 (Environmental Risks and Amenity): By as soon as 2030, less frosts and a greater number of extreme heat days are predicted. Storms are forecast to be more intense and more frequent, placing additional pressure on stormwater infrastructure. The bushfire season will be longer with more high and extreme fire danger days.
- Clause 02.03-3 (Environmental Risks and Amenity): Ensure that decision making considers the impacts of climate change.
- Clause 02.03-3 (Environmental Risks and Amenity): Deliver low emissions transitions in a strategic manner, including the roll out of electric vehicle charging and active transport infrastructure.
- Clause 02.03-3 (Environmental Risks and Amenity): Encourage energy efficient buildings.

The Sustainable Tourism Plan (2024-28) (Mansfield Shire Council, 2024)

The Plan recognises the Council has an important role to play in the sustainable development of our region's tourism industry by focusing on the following key areas:

- Lead and support significant activation projects, individual town plans and opportunities to grow the visitor economy in our region, capitalising on our strengths and competitive advantages as identified in our tourism pillars.
- Support the industry in best-practice tourism, product development and sustainable growth through grant funding, education, resources and marketing.
- Deliver efficient, sustainable visitor servicing, positioning Mansfield as a sustainable tourism destination
- Clause 02.03-7 – (Tourism): Update the Clause to include the findings of the Sustainable Tourism Plan (2024-28) (Mansfield Shire Council, 2024).

On-site Wastewater Management Plan (Mansfield Shire Council 2022)

The Mansfield Shire Council Onsite Wastewater Management Plan (OWMP) was re-developed in partnership with Goulburn Murray Water, Goulburn Valley Water, Murrindindi Shire Council, the Environment Protection Authority and the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning.

The purpose of the OWMP is to scientifically identify areas where there is potentially a high, medium or low risk of domestic wastewater damaging public health, the environment and waterways. Armed with this information Council has been able to develop, along with its Project Partners, initiatives that will ensure potential risks to your health and the environment are actively managed. The plan has a five-year timespan. The Plan also outlines how unsewered areas across our Shire can continue to grow while managing any potential impacts of new unsewered development.

- Environmental Significance Overlay Review Amendment on hold until new MOU is signed. Further information and redrafted ordinance to be provided to DTP once new MOU is signed (CEO Monthly Report May 2026).

8.2. State Government and Statutory Agency projects and documents

Victoria's Housing Statement 2023 (Department of Premier and Cabinet, 2023).

The Victorian Housing Statement (September 2023) is Victoria's response to the National Housing Accord (October 2022) and National Cabinet Housing Plan (August 2023).

Developed and launched with input from property industry peak bodies, but without input from local government or planning peak bodies, the Housing Statement identified 34 actions that are primarily focused on planning system reform.

It introduced 'streamlined' pathways for housing related development assessments including a greater Ministerial role. The Housing Statement also includes a commitment to updating Plan Melbourne 2017-2050, with a new whole-of-Victoria focus, and further planning reform via a review of the Planning and Environment Act 1987.

- The Victoria's Housing Statement is being implemented by the State Government and is not contradicted by any policy within the Mansfield Planning Scheme

Plan for Victoria 2050 (Victorian Government DTP, 2025)

The Plan for Victoria 2050 handed down state-wide housing targets for all councils, mandating that Mansfield Shire must plan for an additional 3,900 new homes by 2051.

"By 2050, Victoria will be a vibrant, accessible and connected community, valued for its diverse cultures, sustainable environmental practices and respect for the First Peoples of Victoria.

Building a state that provides choices and opportunities for current and future generations of Victorians in quality housing, transport employment, environment and connectivity will require input from the community, government, local businesses and industry alike.

We will create a society that caters to the unique needs of all Victorians, nurturing individual health through physical and cultural recreation."

- The Plan for Victoria is being implemented by the State Government and is not contradicted by any policy within the Mansfield Planning Scheme.

Goulburn Broken Regional Catchment Strategy 2021-27 (GBCMA, 2021)

The Goulburn Broken Regional Catchment Strategy (the strategy) is a vision for the integrated management of natural resources in the catchment. It is a blueprint for improving catchment health and builds on achievements and lessons from the past. The strategy describes the current condition of the natural resources, principles to guide change, priority actions and what success looks like in 2040.

- Clause 02.03-4 – (Environmental risks and amenity): The Delatite River is of high economic value and supports the threatened Murray cod.
- Clause 02.03-4 – (Environmental risks and amenity): Mansfield Shire generates a considerable proportion of the catchment's total water yield through the upper Goulburn, Howqua, Jamieson and Delatite rivers, supplying water to Lake Eildon, which then delivers regulated water to downstream sections of the Goulburn River.
- Clause 02.03-4 – (Environmental risks and amenity): The Mansfield region is the upper catchment for the Broken River which leads into Lake Nillahcootie.

8.3. Federal Government projects and documents

No Federal Government projects and documents were reviewed as part of this Planning Scheme Review.

9. Work underway

The following Planning Scheme amendments are underway:

Amendment	Status	Description
C56mans Part 2	Post- Exhibition	Implements the Township Approaches Study DDO1 – Prominent Sites
C57mans Part 2	Post- Exhibition	Implements the Mansfield Open Space Strategy
C60mans	Authorised with conditions	Implements the Mansfield Planning Strategy into the Mansfield Planning Scheme
C61mans	On Hold	Creation of a planning scheme amendment to implement the Bonnie Doon and Merton Plans
C62mans	On Hold	Environmental Significance Overlay review. On hold while Council reviews the Memorandum of Understanding with Goulburn Murray Water.
C63mans	Draft – Council undertaking review	Proponent led amendment to rezone land at 73 - 115 Dead Horse Lane Mansfield to Industrial 3 Zone
GC268	Draft – Council provided support	GVW proponent-led amendment to introduce the Buffer Area Overlay to GVW Waste Management Facilities

Council is currently preparing the following strategic planning projects:

Project	Status	Description
Delatite Valley Plan	In Progress	Create a community, tourism and structure plan applying from Merrijig to Mirimbah.
Mansfield Flood Study	In Progress	Creation of new flood mapping and exploration of flood mitigation options.
Infrastructure Plan	In Progress	Preparation of Infrastructure Plan for Mansfield Township.
Goughs Bay Integrated Wastewater Management Plan	In Progress	Preparation of integrated wastewater feasibility study and plan for Goughs Bay.
Mansfield Parking Study	In Progress	Review of existing and required car parking in Mansfield township.

10. Key issues

This section expands on the key issues that emerged from the Planning Scheme Review, as well as other less significant matters that emerged and warrant discussion.

10.1. Development in the Environmental Significance Overlay

10.1.1. Issue

Environmental Significance Overlay

Results from the planners' survey and discussion with consultants has indicated the Environmental Significance Overlays are triggering permit requirements for minor development applications such as agricultural sheds, which are seen as superfluous.

10.1.2. Discussion

The most common permit subcategory over the past four years was "one or more new buildings", which is typically used to classify farm sheds and domestic outbuildings. These applications are frequently picked up through the Environmental Significance Overlay and are of considerably lower risk than other permit types. The assessment of these permits adds to the resourcing requirements of both Council, and Goulburn Murray Water who are a referral authority under the ESO schedules.

Additionally, the ESO1 applies to 'Catchments at high risk of water quality impacts', where the ESO2 applies to 'Catchments at medium risk of water quality impacts', however the ordinance is the same within both schedules. There is an opportunity to review the schedules and determine if permit triggers can be reduced in areas where there is a lower risk.

In the northern parts of the Shire around Tolmie, the ESO has not been applied, despite being in the Special Water Supply Catchment, specifically, the Ovens River and Fifteen-Mile Creek catchments. To the south, Woods Point and Matlock are also outside of the ESO.

It was also highlighted that the Environmental Significance Overlay should address the protection of agricultural land.

10.1.3. Recommendations

Further strategic work identified for this issue is:

- **Review of the Environmental Significance Overlay**

The recommendations as a result of this issue are:

- PSA 1. Undertake a Planning Scheme Amendment to review and update the Environmental Significance Overlay Schedules 1 & 2 and review the boundaries**
- PSA 2. Implement the Environmental Significance Overlay in the Tolmie region, which is within the Special Water Supply Catchment Area, but no ESO applies**

- Imp 1. Review and update the Memorandum of Understanding between Mansfield Shire Council and Goulburn Murray Water to identify areas where planning applications could be streamlined**

10.2. Setbacks from waterways in Farming Zone and Rural Living Zones

10.2.1. Issue

Setbacks from waterways in the Farming Zone and Rural Living Zone.

Results from the planner's survey indicate that Farming Zone and the Rural Living Zone waterway setbacks of 100m for buildings and works are the most common trigger and too frequently triggered. Respondents indicated that these triggers are excessive, not useful and inconsistent with Clause 14.02 which has been updated recently to 50m.

10.2.2. Discussion

The most common permit subcategory over the past four years was "one or more new buildings", which is typically used to classify farm sheds and domestic outbuildings. There was also complete consensus in the Planners Survey that 'buildings and works 100m from a waterway' was the most common trigger and that it "does not appear to serve a useful purpose". It is likely that many of these agricultural sheds and domestic outbuildings would not require a permit, or would be less frequently triggered, in the absence of the substantial waterway setback of 100m requirements that apply within the Farming Zone (FZ) and Rural Living Zone (RLZ).

10.2.3. Recommendations

Further strategic work identified for this issue is:

- **Review the schedules to the Farming Zone and Rural Living Zone**

The recommendations as a result of this issue are:

- PSA 3. Undertake a Planning Scheme Amendment to review and update the Farming Zone schedule and Rural Living Zone schedule 1 and 2 to reduce the waterway setbacks.**

10.3. Mountain Bay

10.3.1. Issue

Special Use Zone and Special Controls Overlay – Mountain Bay

Results from the planner's survey indicate that Special Use Zone and Special Controls Overlay Mountain Bay is no longer in keeping with the Mansfield Planning Scheme.

10.3.2. Discussion

Approval for subdivision of land without a permit at Mountain Bay was given by the Minister for Planning on 8 July 1993 when the Minister approved Amendment L15 to the Mansfield Planning Scheme, in regard to Clause 12A “Rural Development Zone - Mountain Bay”. The amendment took effect on the date gazetted, being 15 July 1993 and currently all development must be in keeping with the Mountain Bay Concept Plan 1993.

The Special Use Zone and Special Controls Overlay in Mountain Bay are very confusing for landowners and potential buyers with issues often arising as a result. The policies do not align with the current State Planning Controls or Local Planning Policy. The exemptions mean that no consideration for bushfire risk or impact to water quality can be given, in a high-risk area.

10.3.3. Recommendations

Further strategic work identified for this issue is:

- **Review and Rationalization of the Special Use Zone and Special Controls Overlay in Mountain Bay**

The recommendations as a result of this issue are:

- PSA 4. Undertake a Planning Scheme Amendment to review, rationalise and update the Special Use Zone and Special Controls Overlay in Mountain Bay.**

10.4. Rural Land Use Strategy

10.4.1. Issue

Application of Rural Zones

Proponent-led amendment enquiries indicate a perceived demand for more rural living land in Mansfield Shire. Currently there is no strategy document that addressed rural land use across Mansfield Shire and a Shire-wide body of work is beyond the scope of what individual proponents are willing to complete.

10.4.2. Discussion

The absence of a rural land use strategy is a policy gap in the Mansfield Planning Scheme and causes uncertainty for the future of rural zones in Mansfield Shire. A future strategy in this area would quantify the remaining rural living zone land left to be developed, and ascertain whether more is required. The strategy could also address the minimum lot size in the Rural Living Zone Schedule 1, which requires an average lot size of 4ha with a minimum of 2ha. This causes confusion among landowners and can be complex when dealing with super lots.

A rural land use strategy could also resolve legacy zoning issues, particularly in the far north and south of the Shire, where heavily vegetated Rural lots may have a high ecological value and be more suited to the Rural Conservation Zone.

10.4.3. Recommendations

Further strategic work identified for this issue is:

- **Undertake a Shire-wide rural land use strategy**

The recommendations as a result of this issue are:

- PSA 5. Undertake a Planning Scheme Amendment to implement the findings of the rural land use strategy**

10.5. Significant Landscapes

10.5.1. Issue

Significant Landscape Overlay – Protection of Significant landscapes, ridgelines and alpine approaches and productive agricultural land.

Results from the planner's survey indicate that the Significant Landscape Overlay needs strengthening to address threats from undesirable development, stone extraction and that it needs to apply to all four Mansfield Township entrances and to Lake Eildon to better protect significant landscapes.

10.5.2. Discussion

The results of the Planner Survey indicate a need to strengthen the Significant Landscape Overlay (SLO), with stone extraction identified as a key issue requiring greater policy consideration. Feedback also highlighted the need to strengthen Local Planning Policy at Clause 12.05-2L Significant Landscapes and Alpine Approaches to better protect the valued landscapes of the Delatite Valley and discourage inappropriate development on identified significant ridgelines and across prominent landscapes. Further policy consideration should also be given to protecting views from Lake Eildon, recognising the lake as a major tourism and recreational asset. In addition, Clause 14.01-1L Rural Development was identified as requiring review and strengthening to better reflect current development patterns and support the ongoing protection of high-quality agricultural land.

10.5.3. Recommendations

Further strategic work identified for this issue is:

- **Review of the Significant Landscape Overlay**
- **Review and Update Local Planning Policy**

The recommendations as a result of this issue are:

- PSA 6. Undertake a Planning Scheme Amendment to review and update the Significant Landscape Overlay to address stone extraction, to apply to all Mansfield Township entrances and to apply to Lake Eildon.**
- PSA 7. Update and Review Clause 12.05-2L Significant landscapes, ridgelines and alpine approaches**
- PSA 8. Update and Review Clause 14.01-1L Dwellings and subdivisions in rural areas - Mansfield Shire**

10.6. Flood Study

10.6.1. Issue

Flood Study Data and Planning Scheme Misalignment

Since 2025 Council has had access to updated flood study data from Goulburn Broken CMA and has engaged with the community as to the implications of the revised flood information and planned Planning Scheme Amendment. However, the Mansfield Planning Scheme UFZ, FO and LSIO planning controls have not yet been updated. Consequently, there is a misalignment between Council's knowledge of flood risk and the statutory planning framework, limiting the ability of the planning scheme to appropriately manage the flood risk.

10.6.2. Discussion

Council has been referring applications which sit in the newly identified flood risk areas to the Goulburn Broken CMA as a Section 52 to make sure that development can comply with the upcoming planning scheme Amendment to apply updated flood ordinance.

10.6.3. Recommendations

Further strategic work identified for this issue is:

- **Implementing the Flood Study as a priority**

The recommendations as a result of this issue are:

- PSA 9. Undertake a Planning Scheme Amendment to implement the findings of the Mansfield Flood Study.**

11. Further strategic work

11.1. Prioritisation process

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

- Council and community priorities (e.g. link with Council Plan).
- Victorian and Federal government priorities.
- Whether the project is within Council's remit.
- Whether the project has a planning component that requires implementation through the planning scheme.
- The risks and benefits associated with the work.
- The estimated costs (staff and budget) and timeframes associated with the work considering Council's capacity.
- How the project will be funded.

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

Principles for including further strategic work in Clause 74.02

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

11.2. Discussion

The level of complexity significantly varies for the further strategic work, it is recommended that the most straight forward task of completing a mapping anomalies amendment be completed as the first priority, as it is the most simple on the list and will reduce future complications. Secondly, progression of the already underway review of the Environmental Significance Overlay should be completed, following an update of the MOU with GMW.

Following, the review of the Significant Landscape Overlay should be commenced as this has some significant pressures from the community, has come out of previous VCAT matters and if not completed could significantly detract from the local character. This work is seen as a priority from the community.

11.3. Recommendations

The review process highlighted the highest priority tasks for Council to undertake over the next four years to improve the Planning Scheme. These are included in the recommendations below.

Numerous other recommendations for further strategic work have been identified and are included in Appendix Three.

The list below represents the further strategic work that is considered will have the most positive impact for the Mansfield community, meet legislative requirements and Victorian government priorities, and support the efficient functioning of the planning service and has been included in the marked-up ordinance at Appendix 2 as the recommended Clause 72.04 to the planning scheme.

- FSW 1. Prepare an anomalies amendment to fix identified mapping anomalies**
- FSW 2. Review the Environmental Significance Overlay to ensure efficacy**
- FSW 3. Commence a review and study of significant landscapes in the Shire, and where required update local planning policy to ensure appropriate levels of protection**
- FSW 4. Continue preparation of structure plans for outlying townships, reviewing opportunities and constraints and delineating strategic settlement boundaries.**

Appendix One

Summary of engagement outcomes

To be inserted following community engagement.

Appendix Two

Marked up ordinance with policy neutral and strategically justified changes to the Planning Scheme.

To be inserted following community engagement.

Appendix Three

Further strategic work

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

The highest priority projects have been identified and included in Chapter 11 of this report and inserted as a revised Clause 74.02 in Appendix Two.

Project Name	Project source:	Priority High (Clause 74.02) Medium Low
Prepare an anomalies amendment to fix identified mapping anomalies	Future Planning Scheme amendment	Medium
Review the Environmental Significance Overlay to ensure efficacy	Planning Scheme Amendment C62mans	High
Commence a review and study of significant landscapes in the Shire, and where required update local planning policy to ensure appropriate levels of protection	Future Planning Scheme amendment	High
Continue preparation of structure plans for outlying townships, reviewing opportunities and constraints and delineating strategic settlement boundaries	Future planning scheme amendments to implement the Structure Plans and future projects to undertake new Structure Plans	Low
Implement the Environmental Significance Overlay in areas within the Special Water Supply Catchment Area	Future Planning Scheme amendment	High
Undertake a Planning Scheme Amendment to review and update the Environmental Significance Overlay Schedules 1 & 2 and review the boundaries	Planning Scheme Amendment C62mans	High
Undertake a Planning Scheme Amendment to review and update the Farming Zone schedule and Rural Living Zone schedule 1 and 2 to reduce the waterway setbacks	Rural Land Use Strategy to be undertaken to determine suitable setback distance	Medium
Undertake a Planning Scheme Amendment to review, rationalise and update the Special Use Zone and Special Controls Overlay in Mountain Bay	Future Planning Scheme amendment	Low
Undertake a Planning Scheme Amendment to implement the findings of the rural land use strategy	Future Planning Scheme amendment	Medium

Project Name	Project source:	Priority High (Clause 74.02) Medium Low
Undertake a Planning Scheme Amendment to review and update the Significant Landscape Overlay to address stone extraction, to apply to all Mansfield Township entrances and to apply to Lake Eildon	Future Planning Scheme amendment	High
Update and Review Clause 12.05-2L Significant landscapes, ridgelines and alpine approaches	Future Planning Scheme amendment	High
Update and Review Clause 14.01-1L Dwellings and subdivisions in rural areas - Mansfield Shire	Future Planning Scheme amendment	High
Undertake a Planning Scheme Amendment to implement the findings of the Mansfield Flood Study	Future Planning Scheme amendment	Medium

Appendix Four

State and regional Planning Scheme amendments and planning practice notes issued since last Planning Scheme Review

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

Since the last Planning Scheme Review in 2022, several VC and GC amendments have introduced new policy into the Mansfield Planning Scheme and are directly relevant to this review:

- VC248 – improves bushfire planning
- GC255 – corrects mapping of the Environmental Significance Overlay (including within Mansfield Shire)
- VC283 – implements Plan for Victoria (DTP 2025)
- VC219 – support ongoing operation of extractive industry

Appendix Five

Responses from referral authorities and other stakeholders

To be inserted following engagement.