



CORANGAMITE
SHIRE

Agenda

Council Meeting

**Tuesday 25 March
2025**

To be held in the Killara Centre
At the Camperdown Community
Centre
Commencing at 3:00 pm



Vision

We strive for a connected and thriving community.

Mission

We will foster opportunities, celebrate our identity and lifestyle, and provide high quality and responsive services.

Values

Teamwork

Integrity

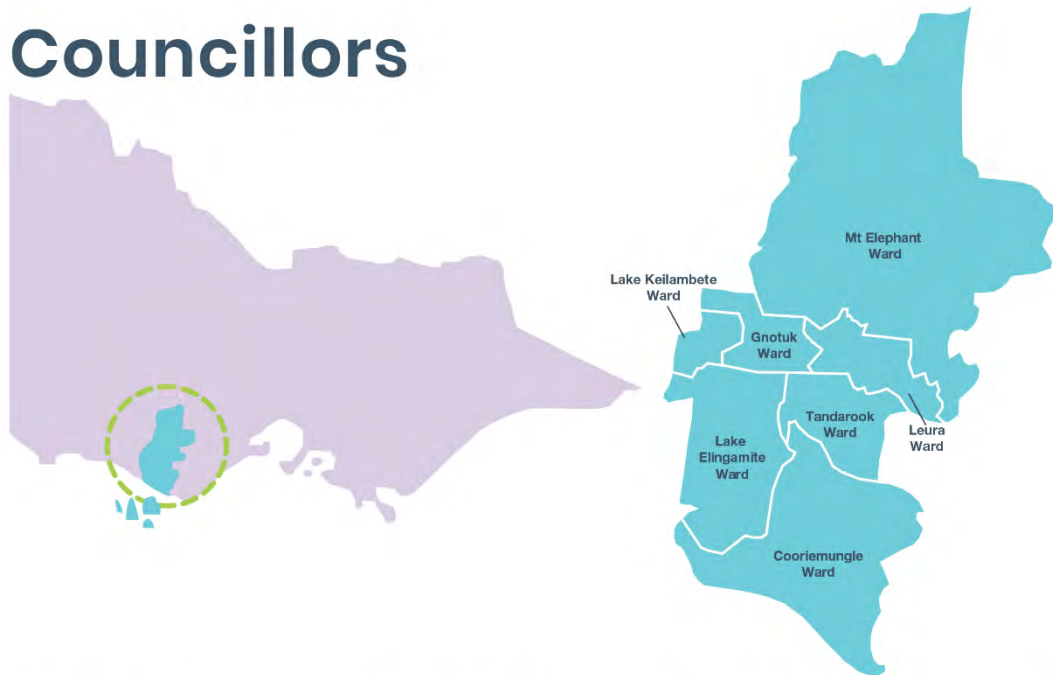
Respect

Disclaimer

The advice and information contained herein is given by the Council without liability or responsibility for its accuracy. Before placing any reliance on this advice or information, a written enquiry should be made to the Council giving the entire reason or reasons for seeking the advice or information and how it is proposed to be used.

Council meetings are livestreamed on the Internet to provide members of the community greater access to Council decisions and debate. A recording of the meeting will be available on Council's website after the meeting (usually within 48 hours). Visitors in the public gallery may be filmed and/or recorded during the meeting. By attending the meeting, it is assumed consent is given in the event that this occurs.

Councillors



Cr Jo Beard
Tandarook Ward



Cr Geraldine Conheady
Lake Keilambete Ward



Cr Nick Cole
Mount Elephant Ward



Cr Ruth Gstrein
Gnotuk Ward



Cr Laurie Hickey (Deputy Mayor)
Leura Ward



Cr Kate Makin (Mayor)
Lake Elingamite Ward



Cr Jamie Vogels
Cooriemungle Ward



Table of Contents

1 Prayer	6
2 Acknowledgment of Country	6
3 Apologies	6
4 Declarations of Conflict of Interest.....	6
5 Confirmation of Minutes	6
5.1 Corangamite Shire Council meeting held on 25 February 2025	6
6 Deputations and Presentations	7
7 Committee Reports	8
7.1 Audit and Risk Committee Biannual Report to Council - March 2025.....	8
8 Planning Reports	13
8.1 Amendment C67 Grow Corangamite	13
9 Officer's Reports	67
9.1 Borrowing Policy Review.....	67
9.2 Rating of Residential Properties used for Charitable Purposes Policy Review	74
9.3 Councillor Professional Development Policy Review.....	80
9.4 Chief Executive Officer Employment and Remuneration Policy Review.....	88
9.5 Councillor Candidates at Federal or State Elections Policy Review	100
9.6 Sexual Harassment - Prevention and Reporting Policy Review	107
9.7 Early Years Plan 2025-2035	123
9.8 Morris Street, Port Campbell Footpath Special Charge Scheme.....	171
9.9 Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation of Officers Planning and Environment Act 1987	175
9.10 Business Assistance Scheme - March 2025.....	180
10 Other Business.....	185
11 Open Forum.....	185



12 Close Meeting186

Order of Business

1 Prayer

We ask for guidance and blessing on this Council. May the true needs and wellbeing of our communities be our concern. Help us, who serve as leaders, to remember that all our decisions are made in the best interests of the people, culture and the environment of the Corangamite Shire.

Amen.

2 Acknowledgment of Country

Corangamite Shire Council acknowledges and pays our respects to the Eastern Maar and Wadawurrung peoples, as the Traditional Owners of the Lands that we work, live and play. We also acknowledge their Elders, past and present and recognise their ongoing cultural, spiritual and educational practices.

3 Apologies

4 Declarations of Conflict of Interest

In accordance with section 130 (1)(a) of the Local Government Act 2020 Councillors are required to disclose any “conflict of interest” in respect of a matter to be considered at a Council Meeting. Disclosure must occur immediately before the matter is considered or discussed.

5 Confirmation of Minutes

RECOMMENDATION

That the minutes of the Corangamite Shire Council meeting held on 25 February 2025 be confirmed as correct.

6 Deputations and Presentations

Members of the public may address Council under this section of the agenda during a meeting of Council if:

- 1) The person is addressing the Council in respect to a submission on an issue under Section 223 of the Local Government Act 1989; or
- 2) The person has requested that they address Council on an issue and the Mayor has agreed that they be heard.

Requests to address Council must be received by 12.00 pm on the day prior to the scheduled meeting of Council.

Presentations made to Council in this section of the agenda may not exceed five minutes in length, although Councillors may ask questions following each presentation. If a presentation exceeds five minutes in length, the Mayor may request that the presenter ceases to address Council immediately.

7 Committee Reports

7.1 Audit and Risk Committee Biannual Report to Council - March 2025

Directorate: Corporate and Community Services
Author: Phillippa Dee, Chairperson, Audit and Risk Committee
Previous Council Reference: Nil
Attachments: Nil

Declaration

Chief Executive Officer – David Rae

In providing this advice to Council as the Chief Executive Officer, I have no interests to disclose in this report.

Author – Phillippa Dee

In providing this advice to Council as the Audit and Risk Committee Chairperson, I have no interests to disclose in this report.

Summary

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with a summary of activities undertaken by the Audit and Risk Committee (the Committee) since September 2024. The report is also provided in accordance with the Committee's Charter and *Local Government Act 2020* which requires the Chairperson to report to Council every 6 months. The previous report to Council was in September 2024.

Introduction

Audit and Risk Committees play a critical role in the financial reporting framework of councils by overseeing and monitoring management and external auditors' participation in the financial reporting process. They also address issues such as the approach being adopted by a council and management to address business risks, corporate and financial governance responsibilities and legal compliance. A council may also refer issues of a strategic or risk nature to their Audit and Risk Committee for review. The principal functions and extent of authority for the Audit and Risk Committee are set out in the Committee's Charter and the *Local Government Act 2020*.

Issues

The Committee met twice during the review period (December 2024 and March 2025). The Committee membership did vary during the period with Cr Laurie Hickey replacing Cr Geraldine Conheady following the September 2024 meeting. A record of attendance is provided below.

Attendance Record

Attendee	Meeting	
	12/12/2024	13/03/2025
Ms. Phillippa Dee (C) ^	✓	✓
Ms. Lisa Young ^	✓	✓
Mr. Jim Gifford ^	✓	✓
Cr Geraldine Conheady *	✓	✓
Cr Kate Makin *	x	✓
Cr Laurie Hickey	x	x

Legend	
✓	In attendance
x	Apology
-	Attendance Not Required
*	Council Committee Member
^	Independent Committee Member

The Committee continues to meet its objectives and discharge its responsibilities under the Charter. The Committee's engagement with Council management remains positive, which ensures a continuing and strong commitment to corporate governance and improving internal controls.

The following individuals also attended Committee meetings during the review period:

- Council officers:
 - Mr. David Rae, Chief Executive Officer
 - Mr. David Harrington, Director Corporate and Community Services
 - Ms. Kathryn Anderson, Manager Governance and Civic Support
 - Ms. Jacqui Thomas, Coordinator Financial Services
 - Mr. Prabath Jayawardana, Manager Financial Services
 - Ms. Belinda Bennett, Manager Environment and Emergency
- RSD Audit, Audit Service Provider of the Victorian Auditor General's Office (External Auditor):
 - Mr. Nick Bell, Partner
- AFS & Associates (Internal Auditor):
 - Mr. Bradley Ead, Partner
 - Ms. Kater Scarce, Manager

Meetings

Matters considered by the Committee during the period included:

- Committee Meeting 1 December 2024:
 - Councillor reimbursements – 1 September 2024-30 November 2024
 - Mayor and CEO credit card use – 1 September 2024-30 November 2024
 - Landfill operations
 - Annual work plan
 - Internal audit – status update
 - Internal audit review - project management
 - Review of outstanding audit recommendations
 - Register of interactions with developers
 - Internal control environment monitoring plan
 - Review of rates and charges hardship policy
 - Review of fraud and corruption control policy
 - Appointment of audit and risk committee chairperson for 2025
 - Review of a warning for a breach of the Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006
 - Findings:
 - Nil
 - Recommendations made to Council:
 - The Committee endorses the rates and charges hardship policy for adoption by the Council.
 - The Committee endorses the fraud and corruption control policy for adoption by the Council.

Committee Meeting 13 March 2025

- Councillor Reimbursements - 1 December 2024-28 February 2025
- Mayor and CEO Credit Card Use - 1 December 2024-28 February 2025
- Review of the audit and risk committee charter
- Internal audit – status update
- Review of the external audit strategy (VAGO)
- Governance and management attestation
- Biannual strategic risk update
- Review of the borrowing policy
- Review of the rating of residential properties used for charitable purposes policy
- Finance report for December 2024
- Findings:
 - Nil
- Recommendations made to Council:
 - The Committee endorses the borrowing policy for adoption by the Council.

- The Committee endorses the rating of residential properties used for charitable purposes policy for adoption by the Council.

Discharging Responsibilities

As Chairperson, I am satisfied the Committee has discharged its responsibilities as set out in its Charter. These responsibilities, as described by section 54(2) of the Act, are to:

- Monitor the compliance of Council policies and procedures with:
 - the overarching governance principles, and
 - the Act and the regulations and any Ministerial directions,
- Monitor Council financial and performance reporting,
- Monitor and provide advice on risk management and fraud prevention systems and controls, and
- Oversee internal and external audit functions.

The matters considered at each meeting were in accordance with the Committee's Charter and annual work plan and demonstrates the Committee's commitment during the period to discharge its responsibilities.

Policy and Legislative Context

The Audit and Risk Committee Biannual Report to Council - March 2025 is meeting the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020* and also in keeping with the commitments in the Council Plan 2021-2025:

Theme Five - Community Leadership

Having strong governance practices

Ensuring that we maintain our strong financial position

Internal / External Consultation

The Chairperson of the Audit and Risk Committee has authored this report in consultation with Director Corporate and Community Services. The next biannual report will be provided in September 2025.

Financial and Resource Implications

There are no financial and resource implications as a consequence of this report.

Conclusions

During the review period Council's Audit and Risk Committee considered a broad range of issues as detailed in this report. Members of the Committee worked productively and harmoniously and have discharged their responsibilities set out in the Charter. The Committee continues to recognise the ongoing need for continuous improvement in enhancing the effectiveness of the Committee and internal audit. The Committee also continues to work professionally and effectively with management.

RECOMMENDATION - 7.1

That Council receives the Biannual Audit and Risk Committee Report for March 2025.

8 Planning Reports

8.1 Amendment C67 Grow Corangamite

Directorate: Sustainable Development
Author: Kristen Wilkes, Strategic Planner
Attachments: 1. Amendment C 67 for authorisation March 2025 [8.1.1 - 48 pages]

Declaration

Chief Executive Officer – David Rae

In providing this advice to Council as the Chief Executive Officer, I have no interests to disclose in this report.

Author – Kristen Wilkes

In providing this advice to Council as a Strategic Planning Contractor, I have no interests to disclose in this report.

Summary

The *Grow Corangamite Agricultural Strategy* was adopted by Council in June 2024. A planning scheme amendment (PSA) has now been prepared. The amendment implements the *Grow Corangamite Strategy* and the findings of the *Corangamite Shire Planning Scheme Review* into the Corangamite Planning Scheme.

The amendment updates the Municipal Planning Strategy and the local policy within the Planning Policy Framework of the Corangamite Planning Scheme to implement the *Grow Corangamite Strategy* and provide policy direction for rural areas, including for dwellings, subdivision, renewable energy facilities and agricultural activities.

The amendment applies a new Farming Zone schedule to land identified within the *Grow Corangamite Strategy* as being of state significance. The new Farming Zone schedule requires a planning permit for Timber production.

Three new Rural Living Zone schedules are applied to land within the Rural Living Zone to identify the existing minimum subdivision area with more clarity.

This report presents a recommendation to seek authorisation from the Minister for Planning and to proceed with public exhibition of Planning Scheme Amendment C64 in accordance with the Planning and Environment Act 1987.

Introduction

Preparing an Agricultural Strategy for Corangamite was essential to recognise the changing landscape and the important role that the agriculture sector plays in the local economy, as well as the Victorian food system. Council engaged SGS Economics and Planning and RMCG to prepare the Strategy, in the context of Council's planning and economic development frameworks.

The Strategy responded to the issues and opportunities identified through the Scoping Study undertaken in mid-2023 and the analysis undertaken as part of the Strategy development, including preparation of, and consultation on, the Background Report (April 2024). It provides the planning and economic development recommendations and actions needed for Council and the wider industry to;

- identify farmland of strategic significance and productivity (ensuring that land important for agriculture is protected to encourage ongoing operation and investment in industry growth),
- support adoption of new technology,
- adapt to forecast climate change, and
- respond to trends in the scale and structure of modern farm business.

A primary driver in preparing the Strategy was to inform change to strategic and policy direction, and planning controls, within the Corangamite Planning Scheme. A PSA has now been prepared which will implement the land use and policy recommendations of Grow Corangamite into the Corangamite Planning Scheme. Additionally, the amendment seeks to implement one of the recommendations of the Planning Scheme Review, undertaken by the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, in 2022, as it relates to agricultural land.

To proceed with the PSA, Council must seek authorisation from the Minister for Planning and undertake public exhibition in accordance with the Planning and Environment Act 1987.

Through public exhibition, the PSA process provides an opportunity for Council to review and consider submissions before it either adopts the amendment or refers any unresolved submissions to a Planning Panel.

Issues

A PSA is required to implement the key recommendations of the *Grow Corangamite Strategy*, and to give it statutory effect within the Corangamite Planning Scheme. Agriculture is a key economic strength in Corangamite Shire, which is critical for long term prosperity and growth locally and at a regional and State level. The industry is underpinned by the Shire's productive agricultural land, land capability, climate and proximity to key assets and infrastructure.

The Strategy is a long-term plan for the future use and development of agricultural land in Corangamite. It sets out the agricultural framework plan and planning policy recommendations to safeguard the Shire's agricultural industry and manage

competing land uses. It provides the direction for policy guidance to support and grow a strong agricultural economy.

The Strategy was developed with input from a broad range of stakeholders, including an industry-based Project Reference Group (PRG) and the broader community. It is informed by the Background Report which presents research into the key issues and opportunities facing agricultural land and the agricultural industry in the Shire, in relation to housing, the rural and agricultural economy and planning for agriculture and rural land uses.

The *Grow Corangamite* visions states that - *Corangamite Shire is home to a prosperous agricultural sector which underpins a thriving, connected and equitable community.*

The Strategy then details directions, strategies and actions, which together seek to implement the vision and provide the opportunity to ensure policy and planning scheme controls support, protect and enhance agriculture as a land use in the Corangamite Planning Scheme.

Additionally, non-planning related actions focus on other areas that Council has a role in or can work in partnership with stakeholders and the wider industry, to promote continued growth and positioning of agriculture and associated industries within the Shire.

To introduce the applicable planning scheme components of the Structure Plan into the Corangamite Planning Scheme, PSA C67 has been prepared. To progress the PSA, Council must resolve to seek Ministerial authorisation in accordance with Section 8A and undertake public exhibition in accordance with Section 19 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*.

The PSA documents have been prepared and are provided under separate cover in Attachment 1.

Specifically, the amendment makes the following changes to the Corangamite Planning Scheme:

- Amends Clause 02.03 Strategic Directions to include updated policy direction for agriculture and rural areas.
- Amends Clause 02.04 Strategic Framework Plan to introduce a new framework plan that shows agricultural land of state and regional significance.
- Amends Clause 14.01-1L 'Protection of agricultural land' to give effect to the recommendations of the Grow Corangamite Strategy.
- Amends Clause 14.01-1L 'Dwellings and rural workers accommodation in the Farming Zone' to give effect to the recommendations of the Grow Corangamite Strategy.
- Amends Clause 14.01-1L 'Subdivision in the Farming Zone' to give effect to the recommendations of the Grow Corangamite Strategy.

- Amends Clause 14.01-3L 'Forestry and timber production' to give effect to the recommendations of the Grow Corangamite Strategy.
- Amends Clause 19.01-2L 'Renewable energy' to give effect to the recommendations of the Grow Corangamite Strategy.
- Introduces new schedules to the Rural Living Zone to simplify the application of minimum subdivision controls.
- Amends Schedule 1 to the Farming Zone to apply to state significant agricultural land.
- Introduces a new Schedule 3 to the Farming Zone to apply to regional significant agricultural land

Policy and Legislative Context

This report is in keeping with the commitments in the Council Plan 2021-2025:

Theme One - A Connected Community

Infrastructure that enables industry and business growth

Theme Two - A Thriving Community

Facilitating and supporting economic development.

Recognising the vital role agriculture plays within the Shire.

Corangamite's townships are attractive, accessible and appealing to visitors and are presented in a way in which our residents can be proud.

Theme Four - Improving Our Environment

Protecting and improving our built and natural environment.

Capitalising on opportunities created by new energy, and minimising impacts on key industry sectors, landscape values and natural assets.

Helping our community plan and respond to climate change.

Theme Five - Community Leadership

We listen to and engage with our community.

Internal / External Consultation

The *Grow Corangamite Scoping Study* completed in 2023, was prepared in partnership with stakeholders of an industry-based PRG, chaired by two Councillors to discuss industry experiences, knowledge, issues and ideas for the future of agriculture in Corangamite.

The established PRG has since met four (4) times through the project, which began in late-2023. Consultation with the PRG has been used to further identify issues and opportunities for the strategy, test initial ideas and discuss the preliminary directions for the Report.

Consultation on the Background Report was undertaken in April/May 2024. It included a series of three (3) drop-in sessions in Skipton, Terang and Simpson, to further present the analysis to date and discuss community ideas, issues and desires for the future of agriculture. Surveys were also provided online to gain input from the community on the Background Report, and the Timber Plantation Discussion Paper. Feedback received was incorporated in the preparation of the Strategy, as appropriate.

A public exhibition phase of the draft Strategy was held in July/August 2024, to seek feedback on the Strategy and its actions. This included two (2) drop-in sessions in Simpson and Terang on 31st July. Consultation also included circulating draft reports and documents to the PRG for further review, website updates and social media and news articles. It was noted that the Timber Industry submitted a strong submission opposing the introduction of permits for timber plantations.

Further to this consultation program, the draft PSA C67 policy documents were circulated to the PRG, after discussions with Council at its briefing in January 2025. No further comments or changes were received to the draft policy from the PRG. As part of the PSA, draft Amendment C67 documents will also be placed on a full month public exhibition consistent with Section 20 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*. This presents an opportunity for submissions to be received and considered by Council. All submissions must be considered and any unresolved submissions which object to, or request changes, to the PSA, must be referred to Planning Panels Victoria for consideration.

Financial and Resource Implications

The *Grow Corangamite: Sustaining Our Agriculture Future* project had an overall budget allocation of \$200,000 for 2023-2024. The project implementation component was then allocated a budget of \$56,000 for 2024-2025.

SGS Planning and Economics, with RCMG, was engaged by the Council to help prepare the Strategy, while Glossop Town Planning was engaged by the Council to help prepare policy amendment documentation. The project budgets covered consultant fees and project management.

The implementation of the planning scheme amendment (PSA) will require additional funding. This is through statutory costs and for a Planning Panel, noting the PSA is highly likely to attract submissions contesting aspects.

Options

It is recommended that Council resolve to seek authorisation from the Minister for Planning and undertake public exhibition of PSA C67 in accordance with the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*.

Council may alternatively choose to defer or delay implementation of the Masterplan and not proceed with the PSA.

Conclusions

An Agricultural Strategy for the Shire provides an opportunity for Council to implement a refreshed set of planning objectives and direction for the agricultural sector, in a manner that seeks to achieve strategic objectives, and provide a long-term planning framework for change and protection. It serves to benefit the whole community and align with the Council's strategic priorities.

The Strategy addresses Council's overall objectives of engaging with the community, facilitating and supporting economic development, and improving our natural environment (including minimising impacts to the agriculture sector).

Advancement through the PSA under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* represents a significant milestone and shift towards statutory implementation in the Corangamite Planning Scheme. Further public exhibition will be undertaken enabling landowners, residents and the broader community to make submissions to Council for further consideration.

RECOMMENDATION - 8.1

That Council:

- 1. Seeks authorisation from the Minister for Planning for Planning Scheme Amendment C67 generally in accordance with Attachment 1 under Section 8A of the Planning and Environment Act 1987; and**
- 2. After receiving authorisation, proceeds to exhibit Planning Scheme Amendment C67 in accordance with Section 19 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987, subject to final ordinance and mapping changes.**

Corangamite Planning Scheme

Amendment C67cora

Explanatory Report

Where you may inspect this amendment

The amendment can be inspected free of charge at the Corangamite Shire Council website at <https://www.corangamite.vic.gov.au/>

And/or

The amendment is available for public inspection, free of charge, during office hours at the following places:

Corangamite Shire Council Offices - 181 Manifold Street, Camperdown

The amendment can also be inspected free of charge at the Department of Transport and Planning website at <http://www.planning.vic.gov.au/public-inspection> or by contacting the office on 1800 789 386 to arrange a time to view the amendment documentation.

Submissions

Include for exhibited amendments and remove at adoption.

Any person may make a submission to the planning authority about the amendment. Submissions about the amendment must be received by *[insert submissions due date]*.

A submission must be sent to: Corangamite Shire Council Offices - 181 Manifold Street, Camperdown

Panel hearing dates

Include for exhibited amendments and remove at adoption.

In accordance with clause 4(2) of Ministerial Direction No.15 the following panel hearing dates have been set for this amendment:

- Directions hearing: *[insert directions hearing date]*
- Panel hearing: *[insert panel hearing date]*

Details of the amendment

Who is the planning authority?

This amendment has been prepared by the [Corangamite Shire Council](#), which is the planning authority for this amendment.

Land affected by the amendment

The amendment applies to all rural and farming land within Corangamite Shire.

What the amendment does

The amendment implements the *Grow Corangamite* Strategy and the findings of the *Corangamite Shire Planning Scheme Review* into the Corangamite Planning Scheme.

The amendment updates the Municipal Planning Strategy and the local policy within the Planning Policy Framework of the Corangamite Planning Scheme to implement the *Grow Corangamite* Strategy and provide policy direction for rural areas, including for dwellings, subdivision, renewable energy facilities and agricultural activities.

The amendment applies a new Farming Zone schedule to land identified within Grow Corangamite as being of state significance. The new Farming Zone schedule requires a planning permit for Timber production.

Three new Rural Living Zone schedules are applied to land within the Rural Living Zone to identify the existing minimum subdivision area with more clarity.

The amendment makes the following changes to the Corangamite Planning Scheme:

- Amends Clause 02.03 Strategic Directions to include updated policy direction for agriculture and rural areas.
- Amends Clause 02.04 Strategic Framework Plan to introduce a new framework plan that shows agricultural land of state and regional significance.
- Amends Clause 14.01-1L 'Protection of agricultural land' to give effect to the recommendations of the Grow Corangamite Strategy.
- Introduces Clause 14.01-1L 'Dwellings and rural workers accommodation in the Farming Zone' to give effect to the recommendations of the Grow Corangamite Strategy.
- Amends Clause 14.01-1L 'Subdivision in the Farming Zone' to give effect to the recommendations of the Grow Corangamite Strategy.
- Amends Clause 14.01-3L 'Forestry and timber production' to give effect to the recommendations of the Grow Corangamite Strategy.
- Introduces Clause 19.01-2L 'Renewable energy' to give effect to the recommendations of the Grow Corangamite Strategy.
- Introduces new schedules to the Rural Living Zone to simplify the application of minimum subdivision controls.
- Amends Schedule 1 to the Farming Zone to apply to state significant agricultural land.
- Introduces a new Schedule 3 to the Farming Zone to apply to regional significant agricultural land.

- Amends Schedule to Clause 72.08 to include *Grow Corangamite: Sustaining Our Agricultural Future* Strategy, as a background document.

Strategic assessment of the amendment

Why is the amendment required?

Corangamite Shire Council adopted the *Grow Corangamite: Sustaining Our Agricultural Future* Strategy on 17 August 2024.

Grow Corangamite has an overarching vision to ensure that the Shire is home to a prosperous agricultural sector, which underpins a thriving, connected and equitable community.

The Strategy seeks to safeguard the Shire's agricultural base and manage competing land uses. Grow Corangamite identifies that the agricultural industry is the Shire's most significant employer and is important in the national, state and regional context. It recognises that competing land uses and development, such as dwellings, subdivisions, timber plantations and renewable energy facilities should be managed to avoid the potential to undermine the ongoing development and longevity of the agricultural sector.

Grow Corangamite recommend changes to the Corangamite Planning Scheme to provide updated policy directions to support the agricultural sector and manage competing land uses.

The amendment also recommends findings of the Corangamite Shire Council Planning Scheme Review to clarify the subdivision controls within the Rural Living Zone and to develop policy to manage land use conflicts around renewable energy facilities.

How does the amendment implement the objectives of planning in Victoria?

The amendment implements the objectives in section 4 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* (the Act).

It supports the following objectives:

- *To provide for the fair, orderly, economic and sustainable use, and development of land.*
- *To provide for the protection of natural and man-made resources and the maintenance of ecological processes and genetic diversity.*
- *To secure a pleasant, efficient and safe working, living and recreational environmental for all Victorians and visitors to Victoria.*
- *To facilitate development in accordance with the objectives set out above.*

The amendment implements these objectives by:

- Providing clear policy direction to support the fair, orderly, economic and sustainable use and development of land that is identified as being of strategic agricultural significance.
- Providing clear policy direction to support dwellings and rural workers accommodation.
- Clarifying and improving the operation of policy and zone provisions.

How does the amendment address any environmental, social and economic effects?

The amendment is expected to create generally positive environmental, social and economic effects for the community.

In terms of economic effects, the amendment will provide clarity and certainty to support investment decisions in agricultural land. The amendment will support the ongoing operation of the agricultural sector within the Shire, which is its most important economic generator.

In terms of environmental effects, the amendment supports sustainable land use and development, by providing clarity on the consideration of environmental impacts from timber production.

In terms of social effects, the amendment will support the provision of housing and rural workers accommodation in appropriate locations.

Does the amendment address relevant bushfire risk?

The amendment makes minor changes to the policy direction for agriculture, renewable energy and dwellings and subdivisions within rural and farming areas.

The amendment meets Clause 13.02 of the Corangamite Planning Scheme because it maintains the existing policy settings in the planning scheme that direct population growth and development to low risk locations.

The amendment will not increase the risk to life, property, community infrastructure and the natural environment as a result of bushfire.

Does the amendment comply with the requirements of any other Minister's Direction applicable to the amendment?

The amendment complies with relevant Ministerial Directions issued under section 12 of the Act.

The amendment complies with the requirements of the Ministerial Direction on the Form and Content of Planning Schemes issued under section 7(5) of the Act. The amendment makes corrections to zone schedules to improve compliance with the Ministerial Direction and new provisions have been drafted in accordance with the requirements of the Ministerial Direction.

The amendment complies with Ministerial Direction No. 11 (Strategic Assessment of

Amendments) under section 12 of the Act. The amendment is consistent with this direction, which ensures a comprehensive strategic evaluation of a planning scheme amendment and the outcomes it produces.

How does the amendment support or implement the Planning Policy Framework and any adopted State policy?

The amendment supports and gives effect to agricultural policy at Clause 14.01-1S 'Protection of agricultural land' within the Corangamite Planning Scheme.

Clause 14.01-1S includes strategies to identify areas of productive agricultural land and to protect farmland that is of strategic significance in the local or regional context. This is further supported by strategies that seek to avoid the fragmentation and permanent removal of agricultural land.

Grow Corangamite identifies land that is of state and regional agricultural significance and seeks to provide locally-specific policy direction to support decision making in a manner that is consistent with the policy directions at Clause 14.01-1S.

The amendment will support the continued protection of agricultural land that is of strategic significance and provide clarity about where competing land uses may be appropriate.

The amendment also clarifies how policies supporting timber production and renewable energy facilities are applied within the local context. The additional policy introduced by this amendment responds to a demonstrated need identified within the Grow Corangamite Strategy to manage these.

How does the amendment support or implement the Municipal Planning Strategy?

The amendment supports the policy direction within the Municipal Planning Strategy.

Clause 02.01 'Context' recognises that the Shire is a renowned farming region and that agricultural production and processing and ancillary services are the largest economic drivers for the municipality.

Clause 02.02 'Vision' states that productive agricultural forestry and mining activities are important for the future sustainable development of the Shire.

The Strategic Directions at Clause 02.03-4 'Natural resource management' highlight the significance of the agricultural industry to the Shire's economic base. It identifies that the preservation of agricultural activity is important and that managing competing demand for agricultural land and avoiding subdivision and dwellings on farming land is a key issue.

The amendment furthers these strategic directions by providing additional policy guidance and clarity to support decision-making consistent with these directions.

Does the amendment make proper use of the Victoria Planning

Provisions?

The amendment makes appropriate use of the Victoria Planning Provisions to achieve its implementation.

The amendment has selected the most appropriate tools for implementation. The use of local policy will provide consistent direction for decision-making.

How does the amendment address the views of any relevant agency?

The views of relevant agencies will be considered as part of the exhibition process.

Does the amendment address relevant requirements of the Transport Integration Act 2010?

Section 25 of the *Transport Integration Act 2010* requires a planning authority to have regard to specified transport system objectives and decision-making principles where a planning scheme amendment is likely to have a significant impact on the transport system, as defined in the *Transport Integration Act 2010*.

The amendment is unlikely to result in a significant impact on the transport system.

Resource and administrative costs

What impact will the new planning provisions have on the resource and administrative costs of the responsible authority?

The amendment is expected to result in a similar level of resource and administrative costs for the responsible authority to the current planning scheme.

Relevantly, only a limited number of additional permit applications are expected to be required as a result of the new requirements in Farming Zone – Schedule 1.

The resource and administrative costs are expected to be within the resource capacity of the responsible authority.

Corangamite Planning Scheme

Amendment C67cora

Instruction sheet

The planning authority for this amendment is the **Corangamite Shire Council**.

The **Corangamite** Planning Scheme is amended as follows:

Planning Scheme Maps

The Planning Scheme Maps are amended by a total 20 attached map sheets.

Zoning Maps

1. Amend Planning Scheme Map Nos. 01, 02, 03, 04, 05, 06, 07, 08, 09, 10, 11, 12, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 23, 24 and 26, in the manner shown on the 20 attached maps marked “**Corangamite Planning Scheme, Amendment C67cora**”.

Planning Scheme Ordinance

The Planning Scheme Ordinance is amended as follows:

2. In **Purpose and Vision** – amend Clause 02.03 in the form of the attached document.
3. In **Purpose and Vision** – amend Clause 02.04 in the form of the attached document.
4. In **Planning Policy Framework** – amend Clause 14.01-1L-01 – Protection of agricultural land in the form of the attached document.
5. In **Planning Policy Framework** – insert new Clause 14.01-1L-02 – Dwellings and Rural workers accommodation in the form of the attached document.
6. In **Planning Policy Framework** – delete Clause 14.01-1L – Subdivision in the Farming Zone.
7. In **Planning Policy Framework** – insert new Clause 14.01-1L-03 – Subdivision in the Farming Zone.
8. In **Planning Policy Framework** – amend Clause 14.01-3L – Forestry and timber production in the form of the attached document.

Unofficial

9. In **Planning Policy Framework** – amend Clause 19.01-2L – Renewable energy in the form of the attached document.
10. In **Zones** – Clause 35.03, replace Schedule 1 with a new Schedule 1 in the form of the attached document.
11. In **Zones** – Clause 35.03, insert a new Schedule 2 in the form of the attached document.
12. In **Zones** – Clause 35.03, insert a new Schedule 3 in the form of the attached document.
13. In **Zones** – Clause 35.03, insert a new Schedule 4 in the form of the attached document.
14. In **Zones** – Clause 35.07, replace Schedule 1 with a new Schedule 1 in the form of the attached document.
15. In **Zones** – Clause 35.07, insert a new Schedule 3 in the form of the attached document.

End of document

Unofficial

System Note: The following ordinance will be modified in Clause:02 Municipal Planning Strategy, Sub-Clause:02.03 Strategic Directions

02.03-4
C67cora

Natural resource management

Agriculture

Supported by the region's rich, highly fertile volcanic soil and favourable climatic conditions, agriculture is the Shire's largest and most important industry, making a significant contribution to agricultural and food production in Victoria. The industry generates approximately \$805 million worth of economic output and employs approximately one third of the Shire's workforce. Milk, wool, meat production, grain and cropping are the largest agricultural enterprises in the Shire. The Shire is Australia's largest dairy producer. Forestry and timber production are also contributing local industries in the Shire.

The protection and sustainable development of the agricultural industry is fundamental to the Shire's long-term prosperity and growth and wellbeing of the community. Unplanned urban growth into productive agricultural land may compromise the viability of the industry and must be avoided.

Subdivision, dwelling excisions and development of land for dwellings and other uses unrelated to agriculture can restrict the ability to use the land for farming activities and can impact the ability of neighbouring farms to carry out agricultural activities.

The economic benefits of timber production will need to be balanced with the need to preserve significant agricultural land and its associated infrastructure, for agricultural uses and to retain the rural population. The impacts of renewable energy generation and storage facilities and associated transmission infrastructure on agriculture also need to be managed carefully.

Council seeks to:

- Protect the Shire's strategically significant agricultural land.
- Manage competing demands for agricultural land, including limiting urban encroachment into highly productive agricultural areas.
- Avoid the fragmentation of agricultural land.
- Avoid subdivision and use and development that can impact on the 'right to farm' of existing rural properties or removes land from agricultural production.
- Avoid land use conflicts between agricultural and sensitive land uses.
- Support the diversification of agriculture, including the development of agroforestry, agri-tourism and the processing of agricultural products grown in the municipality.
- Increase access to housing and accommodation for rural workers to support agricultural production and processing industries.
- Ensure timber production and renewable energy projects integrate with the rural environment, respond to environmental challenges and does not prejudice the capacity of the land and associated infrastructure to maintain agricultural production on state significant agricultural land.

Intensive animal production

Many intensive animal production uses are located in the Corangamite Shire and represent an important local industry.

Council seeks to:

- Encourage intensive animal production uses to be sited and designed to protect the amenity and environmental quality of adjacent areas.
- Retain the long-term future of the use by avoiding sensitive uses in the immediate locality.

AMENDMENT C67CORA

Catchments

The Shire is located within two regional catchment areas, being the Corangamite Catchment Area and the Glenelg-Hopkins Catchment Area. The catchment management authorities of these catchments have identified important environmental issues that need to be resolved to ensure the future of the environment and economic wellbeing of the region is enhanced.

Council seeks to:

- Protect catchment and waterway health.
- Minimise the impact of development on the quality and quantity of water that is available for domestic and agricultural consumption.
- Avoid development in Special Water Supply Catchment Areas that increases the amount of nutrients reaching streams, surface water bodies and groundwater.

Stone and gas resources

Corangamite contains significant stone and gas resources that make a substantial contribution to the Shire's economy. Gas reservoirs exist both on and offshore in the southern part of the Shire. These have the potential to provide a significant proportion of south-eastern Australia's demand for energy resources. Access to these resources offers significant benefits to the region by increasing the potential for industrial development through connection to the main gas transmission network and providing improved security of supply.

The location of these resources encourages the establishment of local processing facilities. This enables the potential supply of natural gas to the Shire's towns and customers adjacent to the pipeline routes. This supply would stimulate business investment in Corangamite and provide localised benefits to the community.

Some parts of the Shire are rich in raw materials. Many of these areas are yet to be properly surveyed, identified and explored. It is important that planning identifies and protects land for future resource extraction.

Council seeks to:

- Identify and protect land for future resource extraction.
- Promote the sustainable extraction of natural resources.

System Note: The following ordinance will be modified in Clause:02 Municipal Planning Strategy

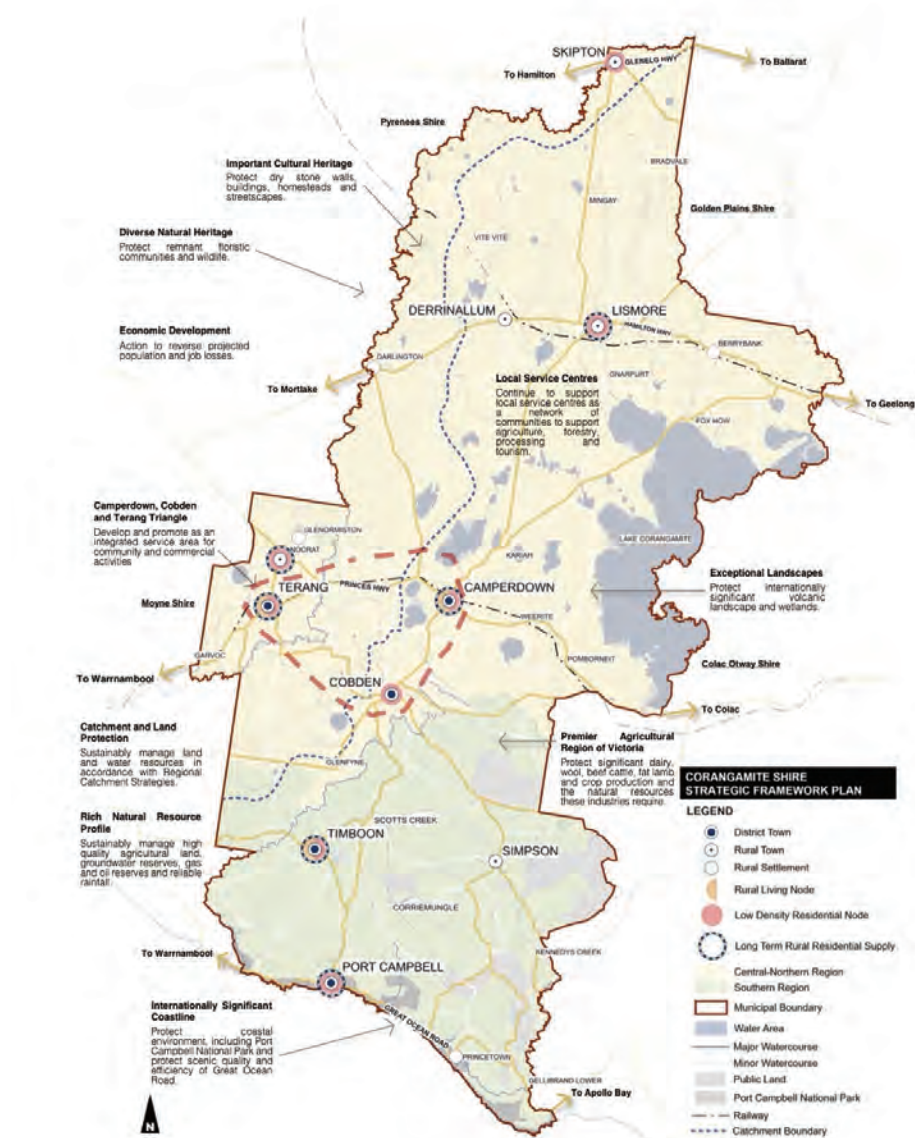
02.04

C67cora

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK PLANS

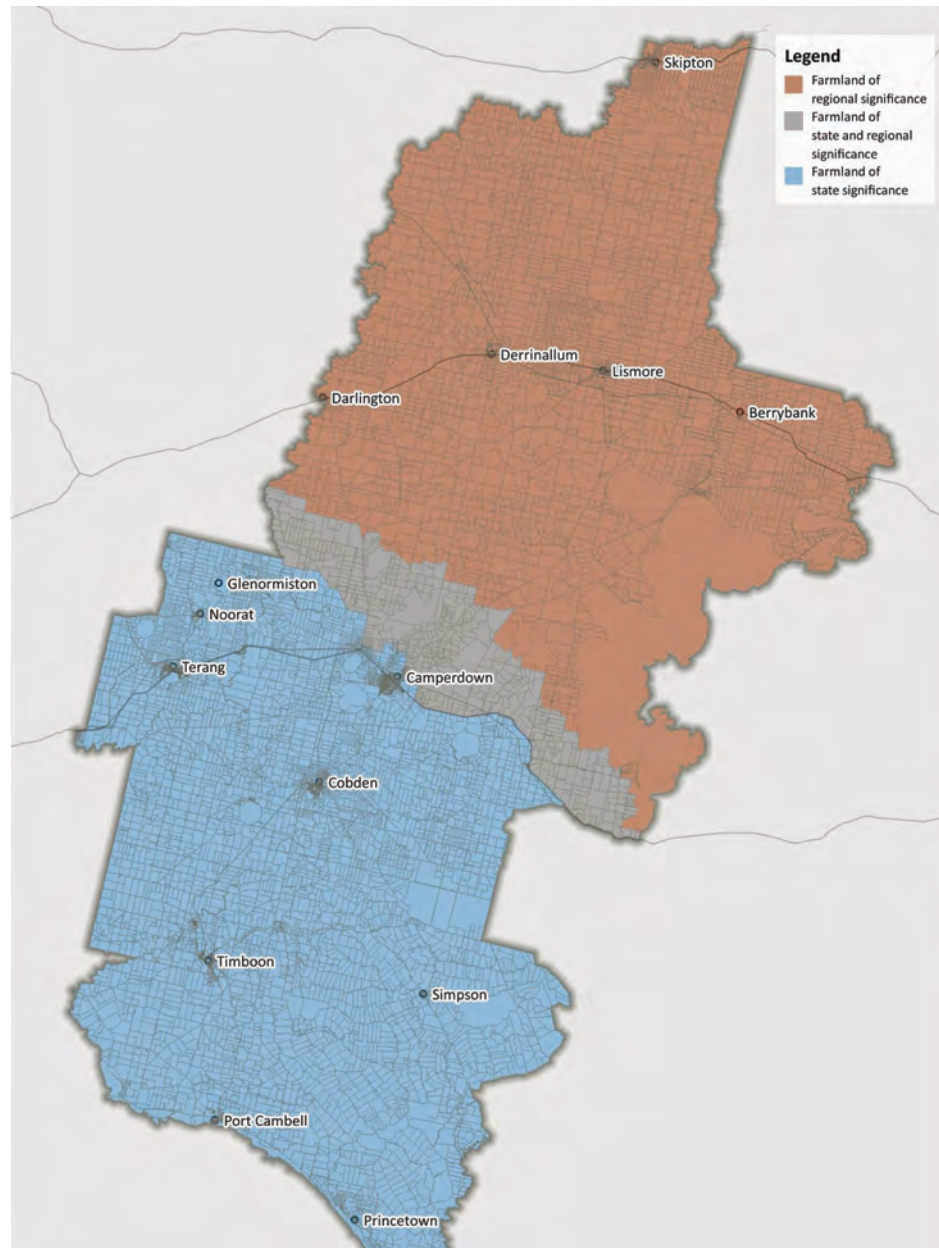
The plans contained in Clause 02.04 are to be read in conjunction with the strategic directions in Clause 02.03.

Corangamite Strategic Framework Plan



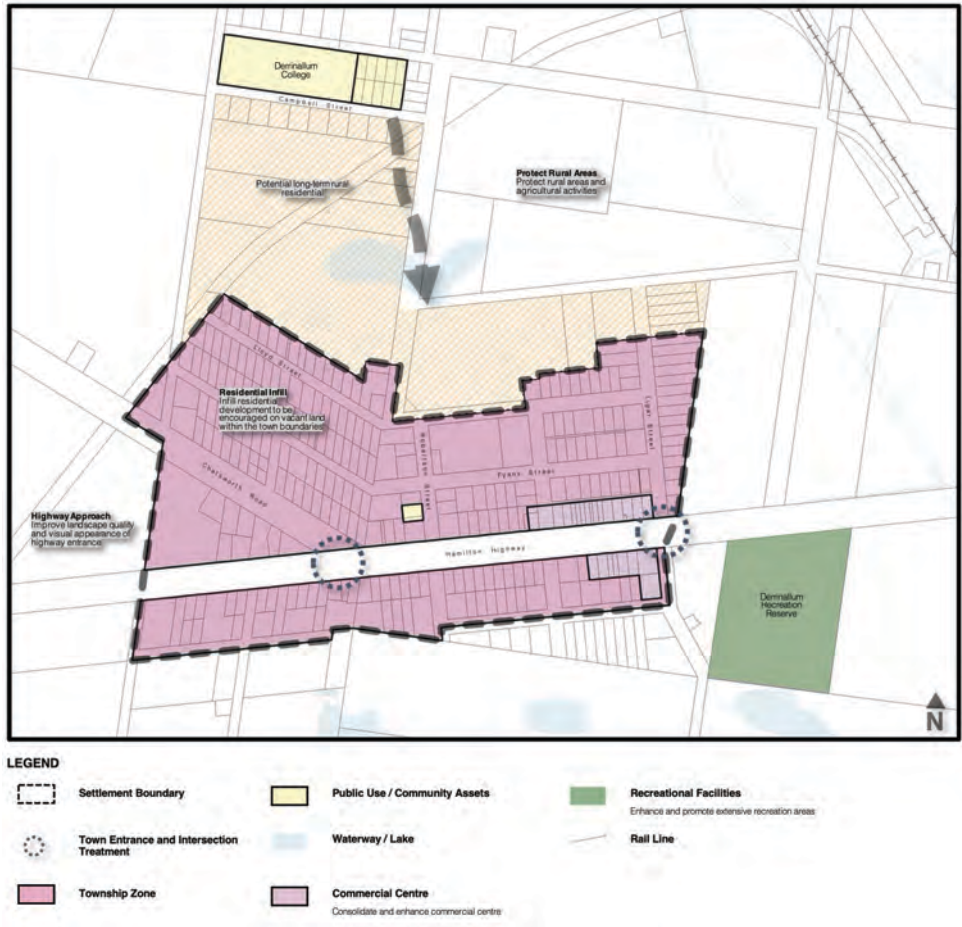
AMENDMENT C67CORA

State and Regionally Significant Agricultural Land Framework Plan



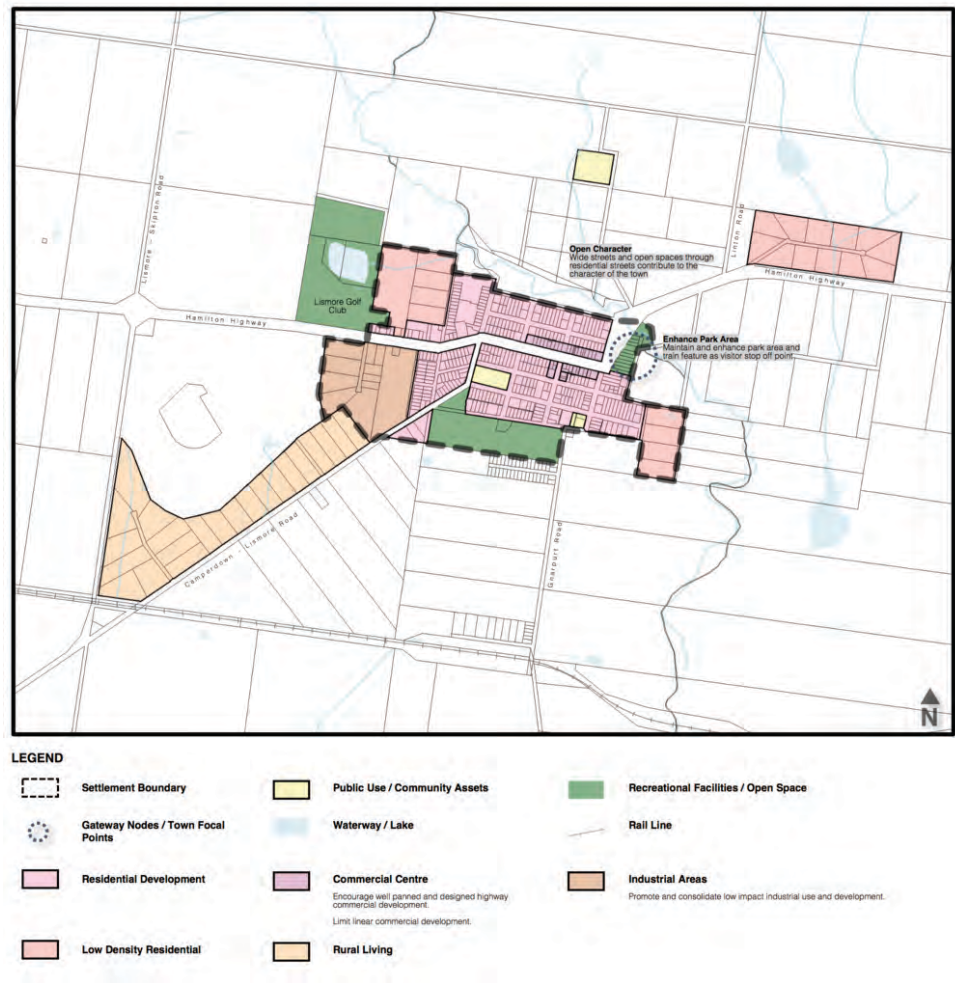
AMENDMENT C67CORA

Derrinallum Township Land Use Framework Plan



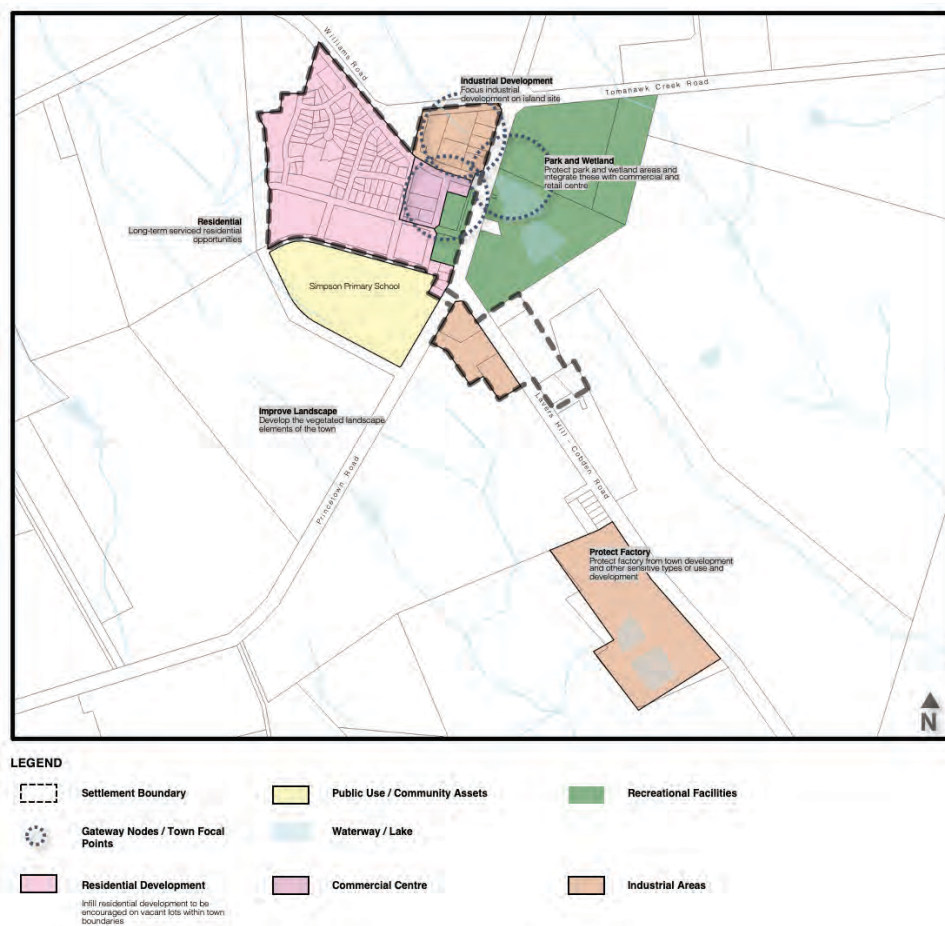
AMENDMENT C67CORA

Lismore Township Land Use Framework Plan



AMENDMENT C67CORA

Simpson Township Land Use Framework Plan



System Note: The following ordinance will be modified in Clause:14 NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT, Sub-Clause:14.01 AGRICULTURE

14.01-1L
C67cora

Protection of agricultural land

Strategies

Minimise conflict between agricultural and non-agricultural land uses in rural areas.

Avoid non-agricultural land use and development in rural areas that prejudices the productive use of agricultural land, particularly on state significant agricultural land as identified in the Framework Plan at Clause 02.04.

Discourage new dwellings not associated with or required for the agricultural use of land.

Avoid rural residential development and subdivision on productive agricultural land, unless it can be demonstrated that it is required to maintain the productive agricultural use of the land.

Avoid rural living and hobby farm land use and development in productive agricultural areas.

Support agricultural activities within the Heytesbury dairy settlement area.

System Note: The following ordinance will be modified in Clause:14 NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT, Sub-Clause:14.01 AGRICULTURE

14.01-1L
C67cora

Subdivision in the Farming Zone

Subdivision strategies

Discourage subdivision unless the subdivision:

- Enhances farm consolidation or trading of lots between farms.
- Does not adversely impact on the ability to use the land for agriculture.
- Maintains sufficient land to support a viable agricultural enterprise.

Discourage subdivision that increases the potential for future dwellings.

House lot excision strategies

Discourage excisions of dwellings unless it will result in an improvement to the agricultural productivity of the land.

Discourage excisions that create long narrow lots or battle axe lots.

Ensure that the excisions of dwellings and creation of lots smaller than that specified in the Schedule to the Farming Zone is consistent with the purposes of the zone.

Policy guidelines

Consider as relevant:

Ensuring subdivision to create a lot for an existing dwelling meets all of the following:

- It can be demonstrated that agricultural activity can be continued on the balance of the lot unhindered.
- The dwelling is not required for agricultural use of the property in the long term.
- The dwelling is in a habitable condition.
- The dwelling is at the front of the property.
- The dwelling is serviced by a road.
- The excised lot is designed in a manner that does not prejudice surrounding rural production activities.
- No other dwelling has been excised from the lot.
- The dwelling was constructed before 9 September 1999.
- The excised lot is a maximum of 2 hectares with the balance lot to be a minimum of 40 hectares.

System Note: The following ordinance will be modified in Clause:14 NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT, Sub-Clause:14.01 AGRICULTURE

14.01-3L
C67cora

Forestry and timber production

Strategies

Discourage timber production on state significant agricultural land identified in the Framework Plan at Clause 02.04.

Ensure that timber production does not prejudice existing and likely future agricultural uses.

Minimise the adverse impacts of timber production on biodiversity, landscape values and the surrounding road network.

AMENDMENT C67CORA

Policy guidelines

Consider as relevant:

- The level of significance of agricultural land.
- The impact of timber production on surrounding agricultural activity.
- The cumulative impact of timber production on the dairy farming industry.
- The impact of timber production on biodiversity and landscape values.
- The need for any pest and weed management measures.
- The ability of the road infrastructure to meet the demand generated by timber production.

System Note: The following ordinance will be added after 14.01-3L Forestry and timber production

14.01-1L
C67cora

Dwellings and rural workers accommodation in the Farming Zone

Policy application

This policy applies to an application to use or develop land for a Dwelling or Rural worker accommodation in the Farming Zone.

Strategies

Discourage new dwellings not associated with or required to support or enhance agricultural production on the land.

Avoid new dwellings and Rural worker accommodation that will have an adverse impact on the productive agricultural use of the land, adjoining land and the general area.

Support Rural worker accommodation where:

- The nature and intensity of the agricultural use of the land supports the provision of the accommodation.
- The remoteness of the locality supports the provision of the accommodation.
- There is no suitable accommodation located within nearby townships.

Ensure a new dwelling or Rural worker accommodation is located to minimise impacts on productive agricultural land by:

- Consolidating buildings to one part of the site.
- Siting buildings to minimise the impact on productive agricultural land.
- Siting buildings to minimise its potential to be adversely impacted by agricultural activities on nearby land, including potential future uses.
- Limiting the area associated with the dwelling and rural worker accommodation so that the area for agricultural or rural purposes is maximised.

Ensure that Rural worker accommodation is removed if no longer required to support agricultural production on the land.

Policy guideline

Consider as relevant:

- A business plan or farm management plan that clearly demonstrates that a dwelling or rural worker accommodation is required for a commercial farming purpose (including small scale agriculture).
- Requiring a decommissioning condition that requires that any rural workers accommodation be removed if no longer required to support agricultural production on the land.

AMENDMENT C67CORA

System Note: The following ordinance will be added after 19.01-3S Pipeline infrastructure

19.01-2L

C67cora

Renewable Energy

Strategies

Avoid locating renewable energy facilities and associated transmission infrastructure on state significant agricultural land identified in the Framework Plan at Clause 02.04.

System Note: The following ordinance will be modified in Clause:35 RURAL ZONES, Sub-Clause:35.03 RURAL LIVING ZONE

AMENDMENT C67CORA

C67cora

SCHEDULE 1 TO CLAUSE 35.03 RURAL LIVING ZONE

Shown on the planning scheme map as **RLZ1**

System Note: The following ordinance will be modified in Sub-Clause:35.03 RURAL LIVING ZONE, Schedule:SCHEDULE TO CLAUSE 35.03 RURAL LIVING ZONE

1.0

C67cora

Subdivision and other requirements

	Land	Area/Dimensions/Distance
Minimum subdivision area (hectares)	All land	4 ha
Minimum area for which no permit is required to use land for a Dwelling (hectares)	None specified	None specified
Maximum floor area for which no permit is required to alter or extend an existing dwelling (square metres)	None specified	None specified
Maximum floor area for which no permit is required to construct an out-building associated with an existing dwelling (square metres)	None specified	None specified
Maximum floor area for which no permit is required to alter or extend an existing building used for Agriculture (square metres)	None specified	None specified
Minimum setback from a road (metres)	None specified	None specified
Minimum setback from a boundary (metres)	None specified	None specified
Minimum setback from a dwelling not in the same ownership (metres)	None specified	None specified

Permit requirement for earthworks	Land
Earthworks which change the rate of flow or the discharge point of water across a property boundary	None specified
Earthworks which increase the discharge of saline groundwater	None specified

System Note: The following schedule will be inserted after Sub-Clause:35.03 RURAL LIVING ZONE, Schedule:SCHEDULE TO CLAUSE 35.03 RURAL LIVING ZONE

AMENDMENT C67CORA

C67cora

SCHEDULE 2 TO CLAUSE 35.03 RURAL LIVING ZONE

Shown on the planning scheme map as **RLZ2**

1.0

C67cora

Subdivision and other requirements

	Land	Area/Dimensions/Distance
Minimum subdivision area (hectares)	All land	2 ha
Minimum area for which no permit is required to use land for a Dwelling (hectares)	All land	0.7 ha
Maximum floor area for which no permit is required to alter or extend an existing dwelling (square metres)	None specified	None specified
Maximum floor area for which no permit is required to construct an out-building associated with an existing dwelling (square metres)	None specified	None specified
Maximum floor area for which no permit is required to alter or extend an existing building used for Agriculture (square metres)	None specified	None specified
Minimum setback from a road (metres)	None specified	None specified
Minimum setback from a boundary (metres)	None specified	None specified
Minimum setback from a dwelling not in the same ownership (metres)	None specified	None specified
Minimum setback from a waterway, wetlands or designated flood plain (metres)	None specified	None specified

Permit requirement for earthworks	Land
Earthworks which change the rate of flow or the discharge point of water across a property boundary	None specified
Earthworks which increase the discharge of saline groundwater	None specified

System Note: The following schedule will be inserted after SCHEDULE 2 TO CLAUSE 35.03 RURAL LIVING ZONE

AMENDMENT C67CORA

C67cora

SCHEDULE 3 TO CLAUSE 35.03 RURAL LIVING ZONE

Shown on the planning scheme map as **RLZ3**

1.0

C67cora

Subdivision and other requirements

	Land	Area/Dimensions/Distance
Minimum subdivision area (hectares)	All land	3 ha
Minimum area for which no permit is required to use land for a Dwelling (hectares)	None specified	None specified
Maximum floor area for which no permit is required to alter or extend an existing dwelling (square metres)	None specified	None specified
Maximum floor area for which no permit is required to construct an out-building associated with an existing dwelling (square metres)	None specified	None specified
Maximum floor area for which no permit is required to alter or extend an existing building used for Agriculture (square metres)	None specified	None specified
Minimum setback from a road (metres)	None specified	None specified
Minimum setback from a boundary (metres)	None specified	None specified
Minimum setback from a dwelling not in the same ownership (metres)	None specified	None specified
Minimum setback from a waterway, wetlands or designated flood plain (metres)	None specified	None specified

Permit requirement for earthworks	Land
Earthworks which change the rate of flow or the discharge point of water across a property boundary	None specified
Earthworks which increase the discharge of saline groundwater	None specified

System Note: The following schedule will be inserted after SCHEDULE [NUMBER] TO CLAUSE 35.03 RURAL LIVING ZONE

AMENDMENT C67CORA

C67cora

SCHEDULE 4 TO CLAUSE 35.03 RURAL LIVING ZONE

Shown on the planning scheme map as **RLZ4**.

1.0

C67cora

Subdivision and other requirements

	Land	Area/Dimensions/Distance
Minimum subdivision area (hectares)	All land	8 ha
Minimum area for which no permit is required to use land for a Dwelling (hectares)	All land	0.7 ha
Maximum floor area for which no permit is required to alter or extend an existing dwelling (square metres)	None specified	None specified
Maximum floor area for which no permit is required to construct an out-building associated with an existing dwelling (square metres)	None specified	None specified
Maximum floor area for which no permit is required to alter or extend an existing building used for Agriculture (square metres)	None specified	None specified
Minimum setback from a road (metres)	None specified	None specified
Minimum setback from a boundary (metres)	None specified	None specified
Minimum setback from a dwelling not in the same ownership (metres)	None specified	None specified
Minimum setback from a waterway, wetlands or designated flood plain (metres)	None specified	None specified

Permit requirement for earthworks	Land
Earthworks which change the rate of flow or the discharge point of water across a property boundary	None specified
Earthworks which increase the discharge of saline groundwater	None specified

System Note: The following ordinance will be modified in Sub-Clause:35.07 FARMING ZONE, Schedule: SCHEDULE 1 TO CLAUSE 35.07 FARMING ZONE

1.0

C67cora

Subdivision and other requirements

	Land	Area/Dimensions/Distance
Minimum subdivision area (hectares)	Land in Timboon described as Lot 9 LP64910, Lot 1 TP711332, Lot 2 PS444640	Minimum area necessary to create a balance lot in the Farming Zone.
	All other land	40 hectares
Minimum area for which no permit is required to use land for a dwelling (hectares)	All land	40 hectares
Maximum area for which no permit is required to use land for timber production (hectares)	All land	40 hectares
Maximum floor area for which no permit is required to alter or extend an existing dwelling (square metres)	None specified	None specified
Maximum floor area for which no permit is required to construct an out-building associated with a dwelling (square metres)	None specified	None specified

AMENDMENT C67CORA

	Land	Area/Dimensions/Distance
Maximum floor area for which no permit is required to alter or extend an existing building used for agriculture (square metres)	None specified	None specified
Minimum setback from a road (metres)	Transport Zone 3 Other road	40 metres 20 metres
Minimum setback from a boundary (metres)	All land	5 metres
Minimum setback from a dwelling not in the same ownership (metres)	All land	100 metres

Permit requirement for earthworks	Land
Earthworks which change the rate of flow or the discharge point of water across a property boundary	None specified
Earthworks which increase the discharge of saline groundwater	None specified

System Note: The following schedule will be inserted after Sub-Clause:35.07 FARMING ZONE, Schedule:SCHEDULE 2 TO CLAUSE 35.07 FARMING ZONE

AMENDMENT C67CORA

C67cora

SCHEDULE 3 TO CLAUSE 35.07 FARMING ZONE

Shown on the planning scheme map as **FZ3**

1.0

C67cora

Subdivision and other requirements

	Land	Area/Dimensions/Distance
Minimum subdivision area (hectares)	None specified	None specified
Minimum area for which no permit is required to use land for a dwelling (hectares)	All land	40 hectares
Maximum area for which no permit is required to use land for timber production (hectares)	None specified	None specified
Maximum floor area for which no permit is required to alter or extend an existing dwelling (square metres)	None specified	None specified
Maximum floor area for which no permit is required to construct an out-building associated with a dwelling (square metres)	None specified	None specified
Maximum floor area for which no permit is required to alter or extend an existing building used for agriculture (square metres)	None specified	None specified
Minimum setback from a road (metres)	Transport Zone 3 Other road	40 metres 20 metres
Minimum setback from a boundary (metres)	All land	5 metres
Minimum setback from a dwelling not in the same ownership (metres)	All land	100 metres
Minimum setback from a waterway, wetlands or designated flood plain (metres)	None specified	None specified

Permit requirement for earthworks	Land
Earthworks which change the rate of flow or the discharge point of water across a property boundary	None specified
Earthworks which increase the discharge of saline groundwater	None specified

System Note: The following ordinance will be modified in Sub-Clause:72.08 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS, Schedule:SCHEDULE TO CLAUSE 72.08 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

1.0

C67cora

Background documents

Name of background document	Amendment number - clause reference
<i>Camperdown Heritage Study - Assessment of Places of Cultural Significance in the Town of Camperdown, Study Findings and Final Report, Volumes 1 & 2 (A Willingham, 1995 & 1998)</i>	C3 Clauses 02 and 15
<i>Camperdown Strategic Development Plan 2001-2010 (Ochre Consulting, 2001)</i>	C16 (Parts 1 & 2) Clauses 02 and 11
<i>Cobden Structure Plan (Corangamite Shire Council, 2022)</i>	C59cora Clauses 02 and 11

AMENDMENT C67CORA

Name of background document	Amendment number - clause reference
<i>Corangamite Heritage Study Stage 2, Volumes 1, 2 & 3. Revised</i> (Corangamite Shire Council, R Tonkin, & S Westbrooke, 2014)	C16 (Parts 1 & 2) Clauses 02, 11 and 15
<i>Corangamite Rural Living Strategy</i> (Myers Planning Group, 2019)	C51 Clauses 02, 11 and 16
<i>Corangamite Shire Planning Framework on Electronic Gaming Machines</i> (Corangamite Shire Council, 2015)	C40 Clauses 02 and 52.28
<i>Corangamite Shire Tourism Opportunity Study</i> (Corangamite Shire Council, 2010)	C30 Clauses 02 and 17
<i>Domestic Wastewater Management Plan</i> (Corangamite Shire Council, 2014)	C45 Clauses 02 and 19
<i>Draft Guidelines for Assessment of Heritage Planning Applications</i> (Heritage Victoria, 2000)	C3 Clauses 02 and 15
<i>Economic Development Strategy</i> (Corangamite Shire, 2017)	C45 Clauses 02 and 17
<i>Gellibrand River Estuary and Wetland Management Plan</i> (Centre for Environmental Management University of Ballarat & Ecoscape, 2001)	C21 Clauses 02, 11 and 12
<i>Great Ocean Road Tourism Destination Management Plan</i> (Regional Development Victoria, 2012)	C45 Clauses 02, 11, 12, 13 and 17
<i>Great South Coast Regional Growth Plan</i> (Victorian Government, 2014)	VC106 Clauses 11 to 19
<i>Industrial Land Strategy</i> (Urban Enterprise, 2013)	C38 Clauses 02 and 19
<i>Infrastructure Design Manual</i> (Local Government Infrastructure Design Association, 2018)	C38 Clauses 02 and 19
<i>Port Campbell Urban Design Framework</i> (Chris Dance Land Design, 2002)	C13 Clauses 02 and 11
<i>Prinetown Strategic Development Plan 2000-2010</i> (Ochre Consultants, 2001)	C21 Clauses 02 and 11
<i>Prinetown Urban Design Framework</i> (Urban Future Consulting, 2004)	C21 Clauses 02 and 11
<i>Shipwreck Coast Master Plan</i> (Parks Victoria, 2015)	C45 Clauses 02, 11, 12 and 13
<i>Skipton Strategic Development Plan 2000-2010</i> (Ochre Consultants, 2001)	C28 Clauses 02 and 11
<i>Skipton Structure Plan</i> (EDAW-AECOM, 2009)	C28 Clauses 02 and 11
<i>Terang Strategic Development Plan 2001-2010</i> (Ochre Consulting, 2001)	C16 (Parts 1 & 2) Clauses 02 and 11
<i>Timboon Strategic Development Plan 2000-2010</i> (Ochre Consultants, 2001)	C13 Clauses 02 and 11

AMENDMENT C67CORA

Name of background document	Amendment number - clause reference
<i>Urban Design Framework for Cobden, Skipton and Timboon</i> (David Lock and Associates, 2002)	C13 Clauses 02 and 11
<i>Grow Corangamite: Sustaining Our Agricultural Future</i> (SGS and RMCG, 2024)	C67 Clauses 02, 14 and 19

PYRENEES
SHIRE

GOLDEN
PLAINS
SHIRE

FOR THIS
MAP PLEASE
SEE MAP2

LEGEND
FZ - Farming Zone

Municipal Boundary

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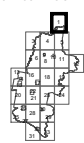
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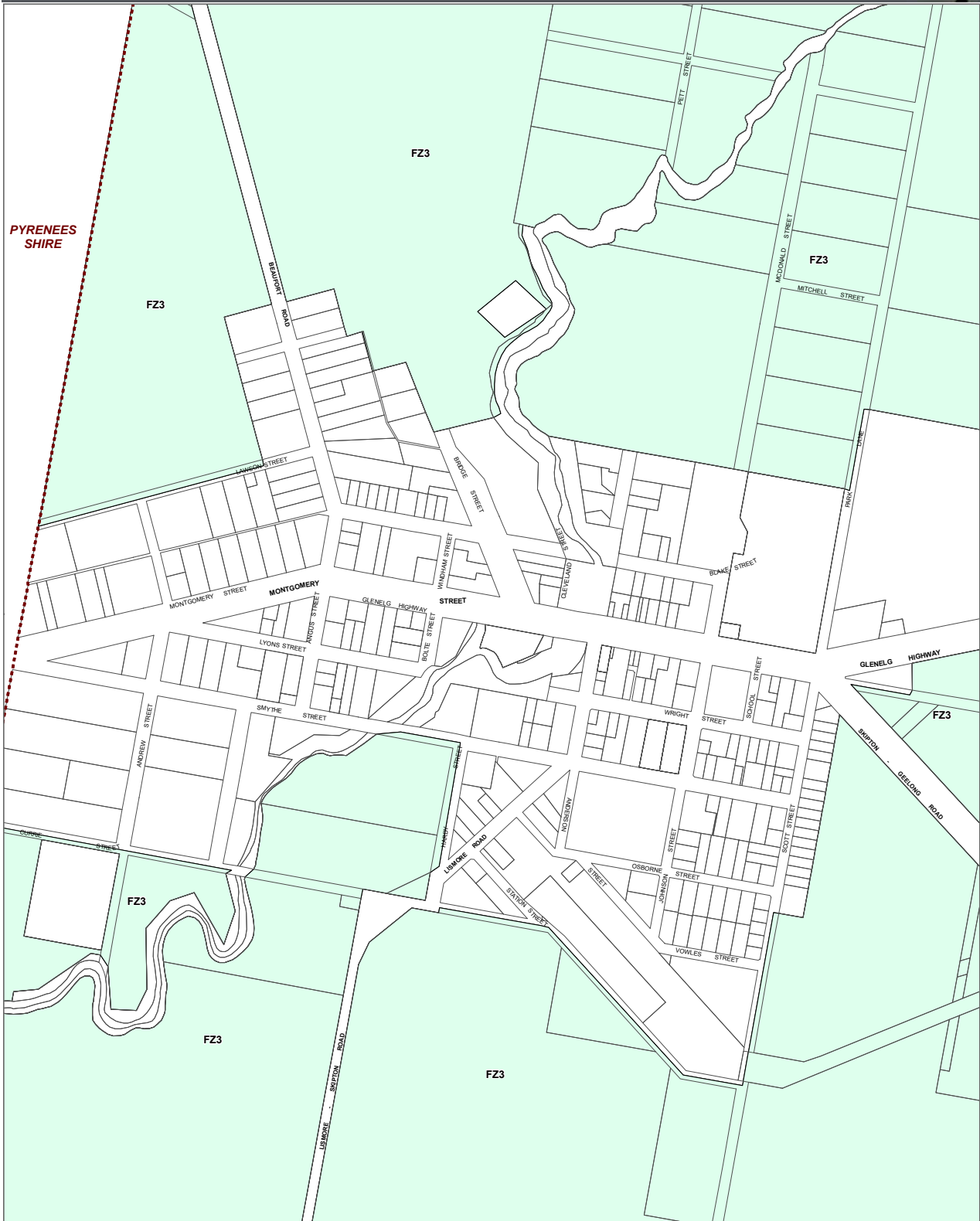
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Print Date: 05/03/2025
Amendment Version: 1

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INDEX TO ADJOINING SCHEME MAPS



CORANGAMITE PLANNING SCHEME - LOCAL PROVISION AMENDMENT C67cora



LEGEND
 FZ - Farming Zone

Municipal Boundary

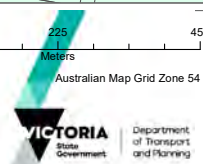
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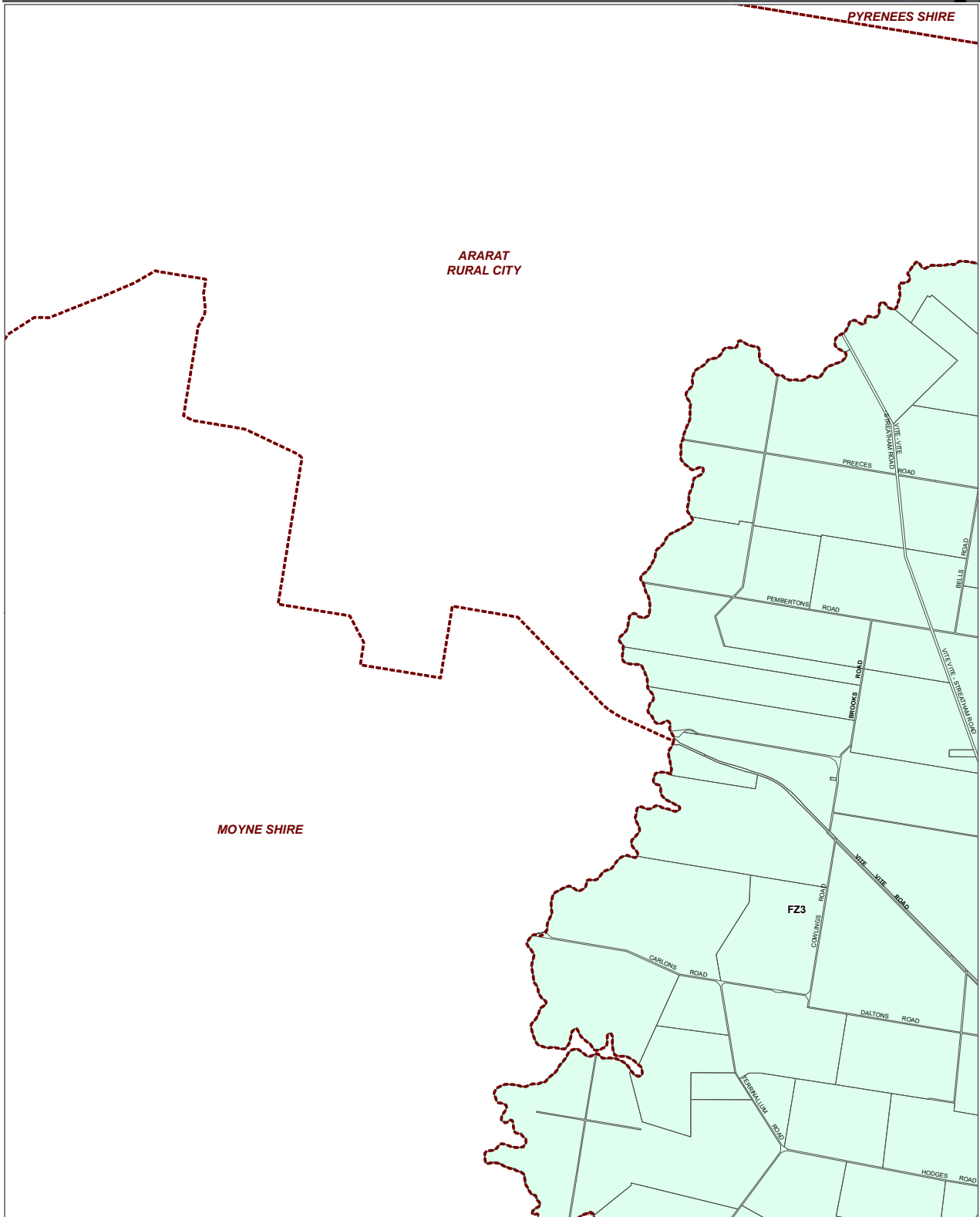
INDEX TO ADJOINING SCHEME MAPS



ZONES

MAP No 2

CORANGAMITE PLANNING SCHEME - LOCAL PROVISION
AMENDMENT C67cora



LEGEND
FZ - Farming Zone

Municipal Boundary

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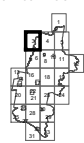


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Planning Group
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Amendment Version: 1

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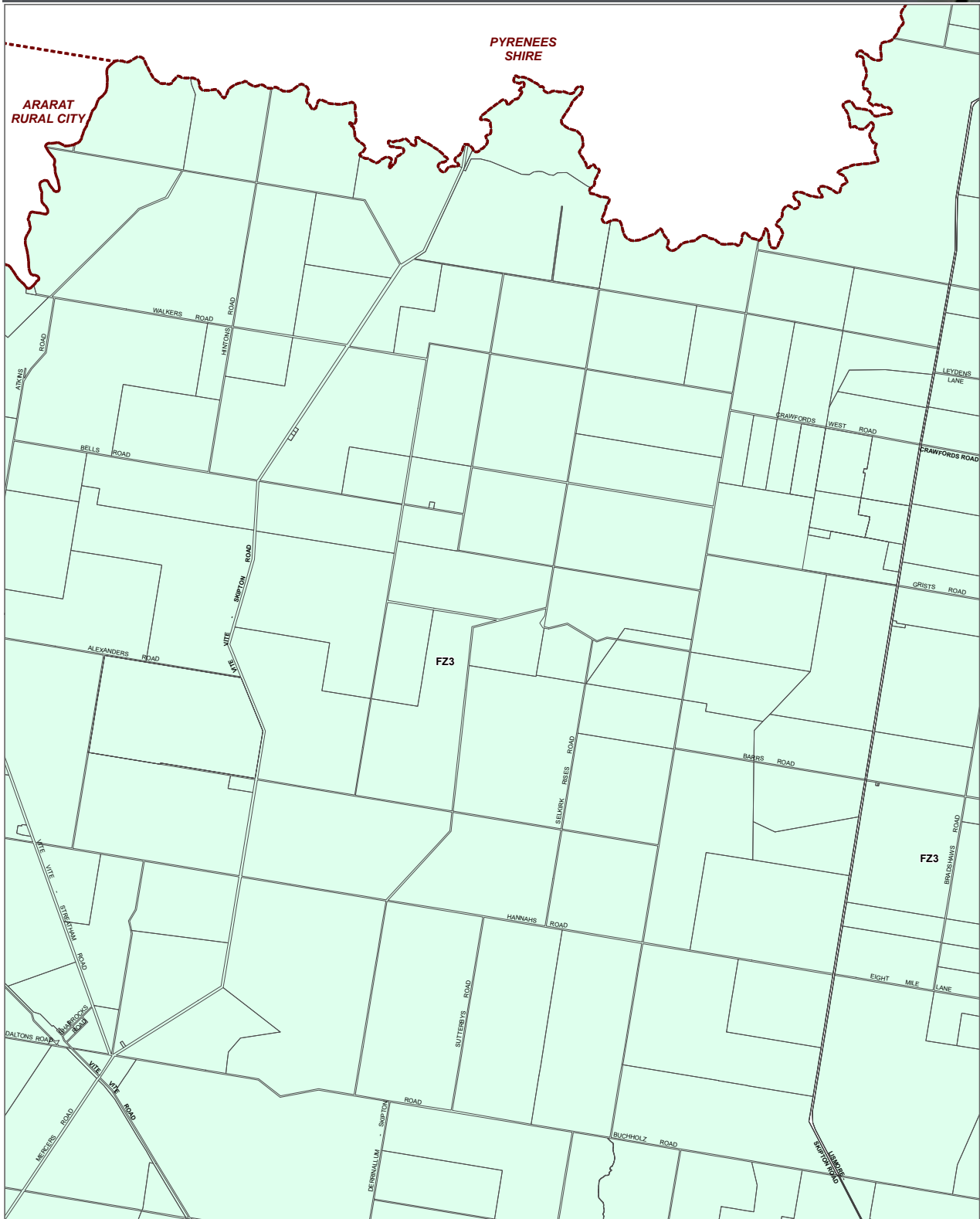
INDEX TO ADJOINING SCHEME MAPS



ZONES

MAP No 3

CORANGAMITE PLANNING SCHEME - LOCAL PROVISION AMENDMENT C67cora



LEGEND
FZ - Farming Zone

Municipal Boundary

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Australian Map Grid Zone 54

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Print Date: 05/03/2025
Amendment Version: 1

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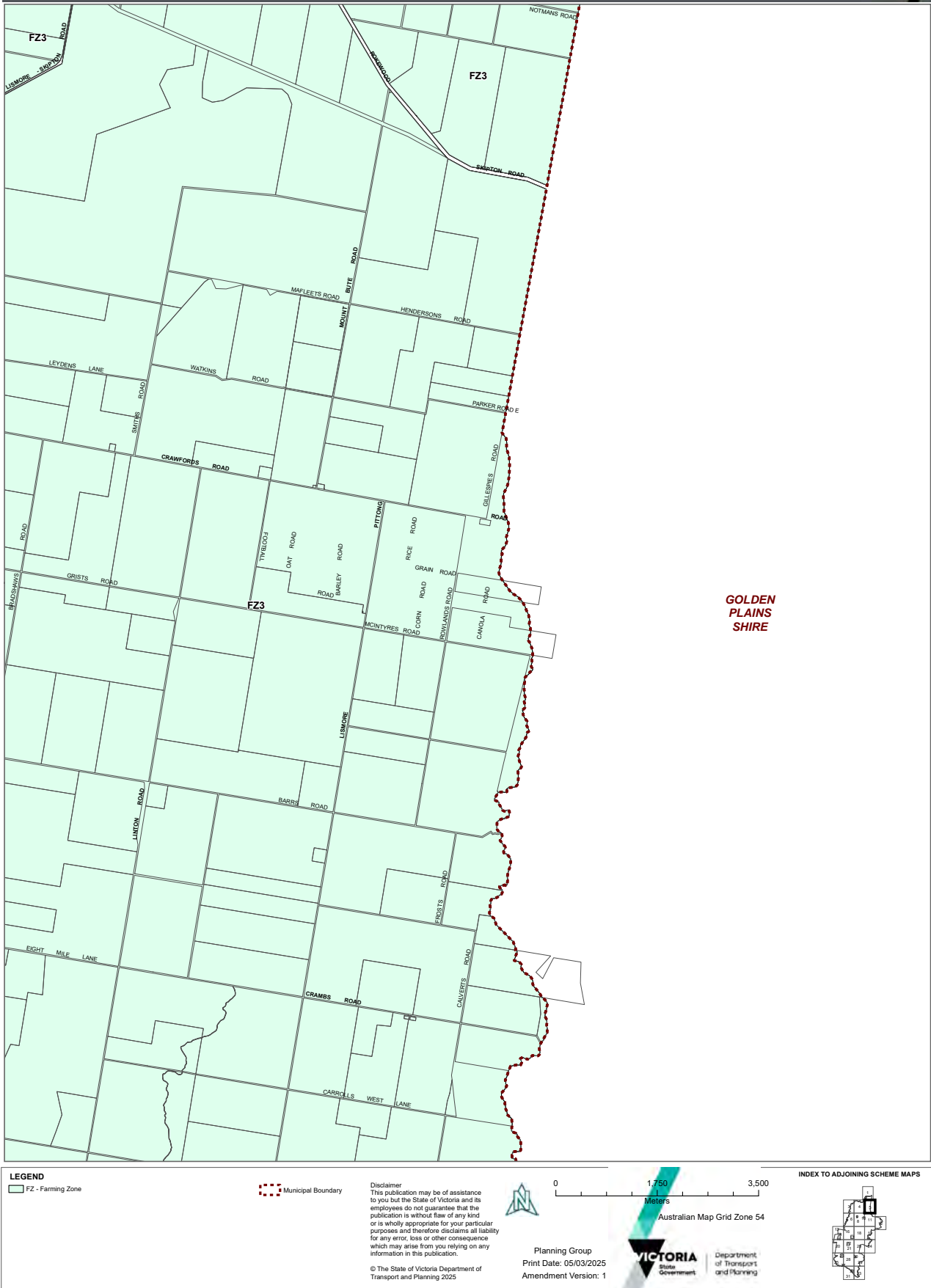
INDEX TO ADJOINING SCHEME MAPS



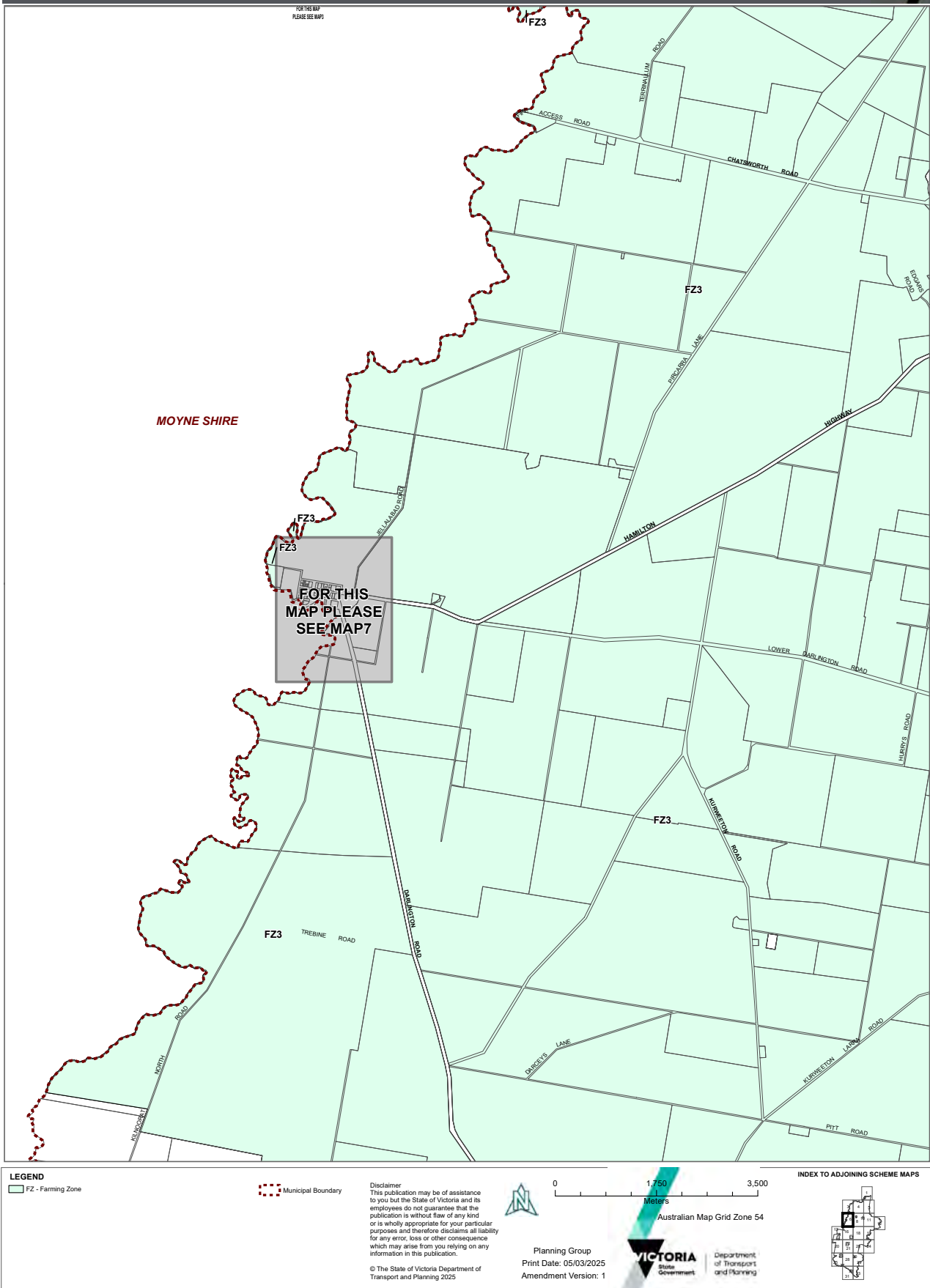
ZONES

MAP No 4

CORANGAMITE PLANNING SCHEME - LOCAL PROVISION AMENDMENT C67cora

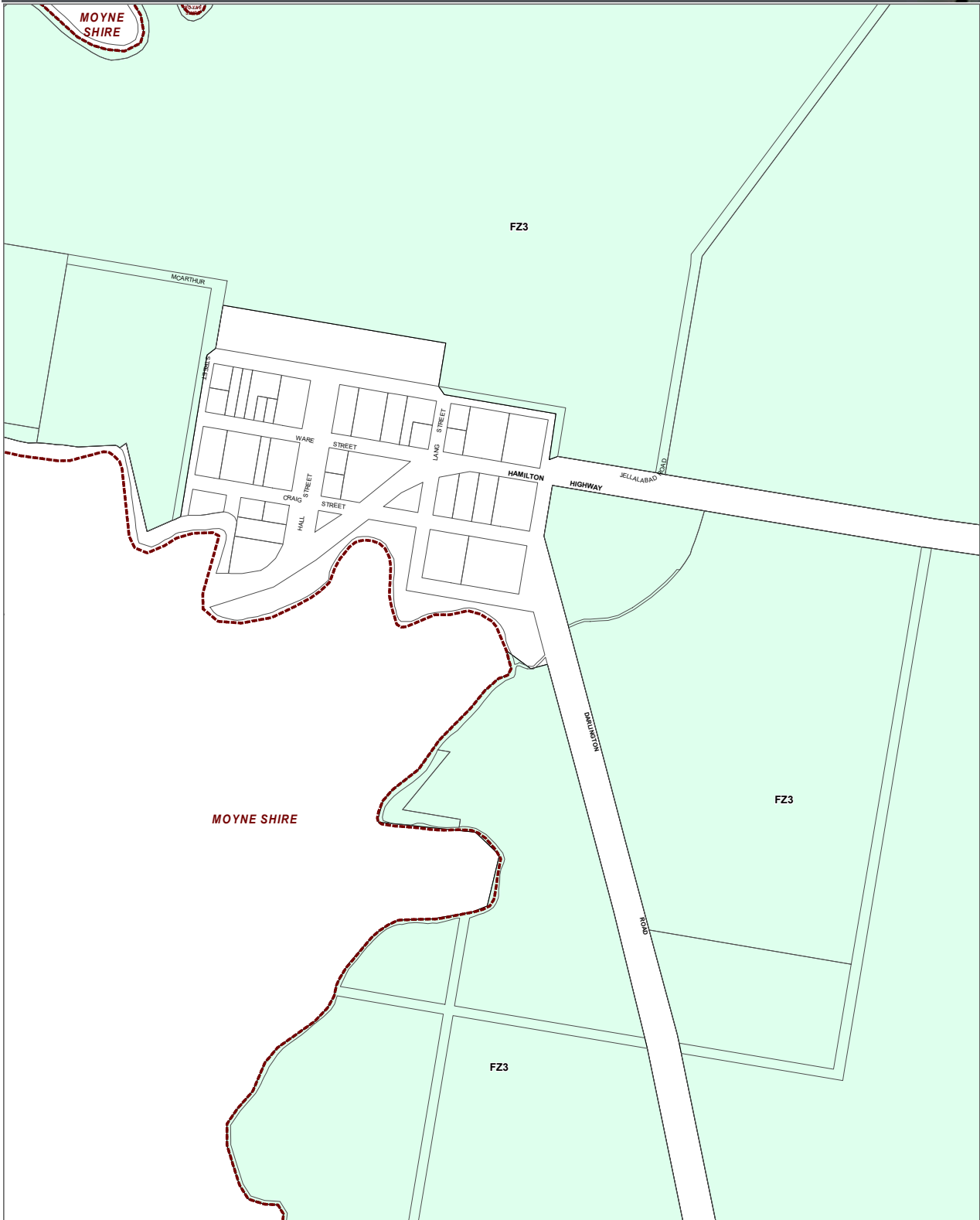


CORANGAMITE PLANNING SCHEME - LOCAL PROVISION AMENDMENT C67cora



ZONES

MAP No 6



LEGEND
FZ - Farming Zone

Municipal Boundary

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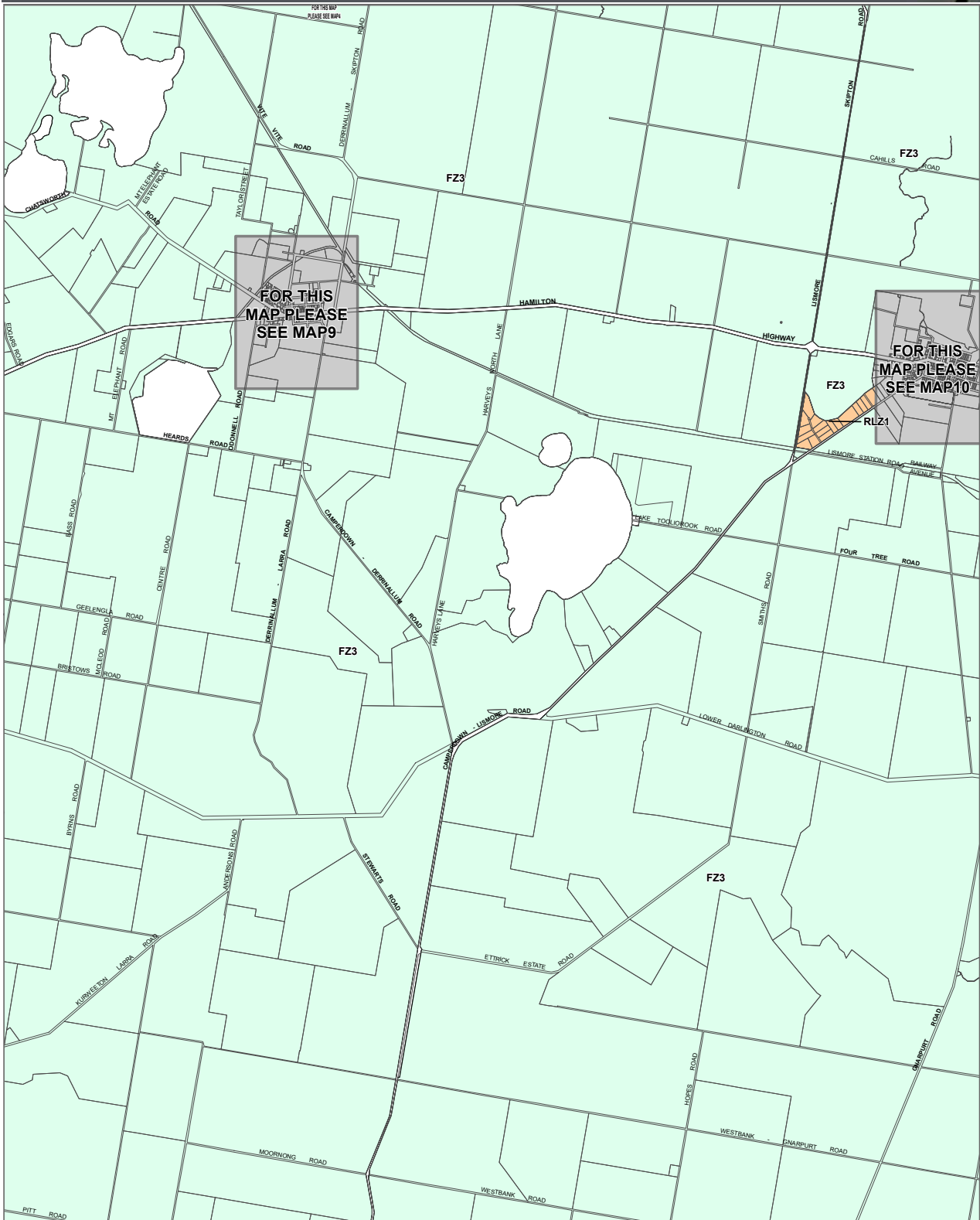
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Print Date: 05/03/2025
Amendment Version: 1

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INDEX TO ADJOINING SCHEME MAPS



CORANGAMITE PLANNING SCHEME - LOCAL PROVISION AMENDMENT C67cora



LEGEND
 FZ - Farming Zone
 RLZ - Rural Living Zone

Municipal Boundary

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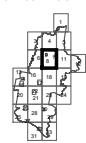
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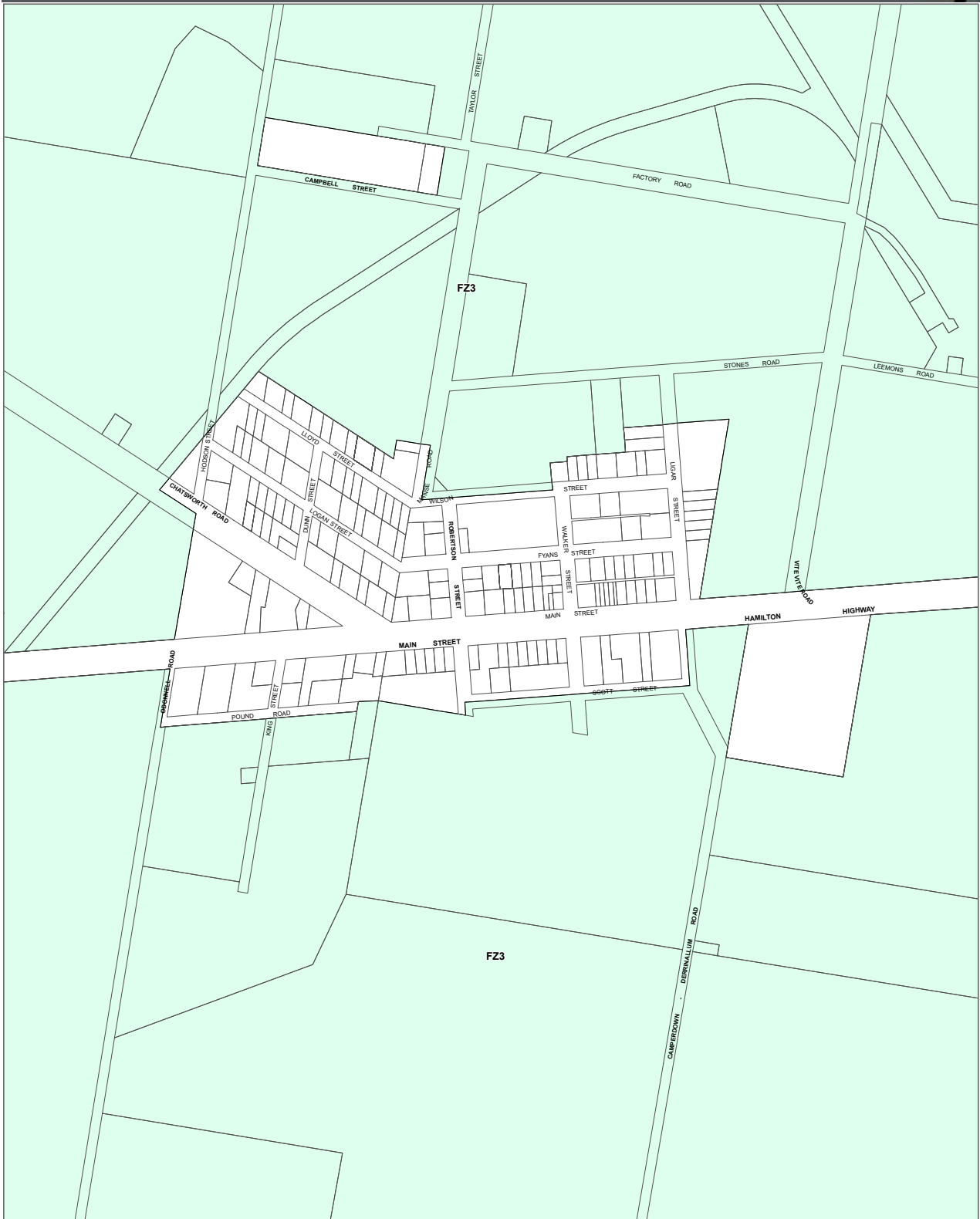
INDEX TO ADJOINING SCHEME MAPS



ZONES

MAP No 8

CORANGAMITE PLANNING SCHEME - LOCAL PROVISION AMENDMENT C67cora



LEGEND
FZ - Farming Zone

Municipal Boundary

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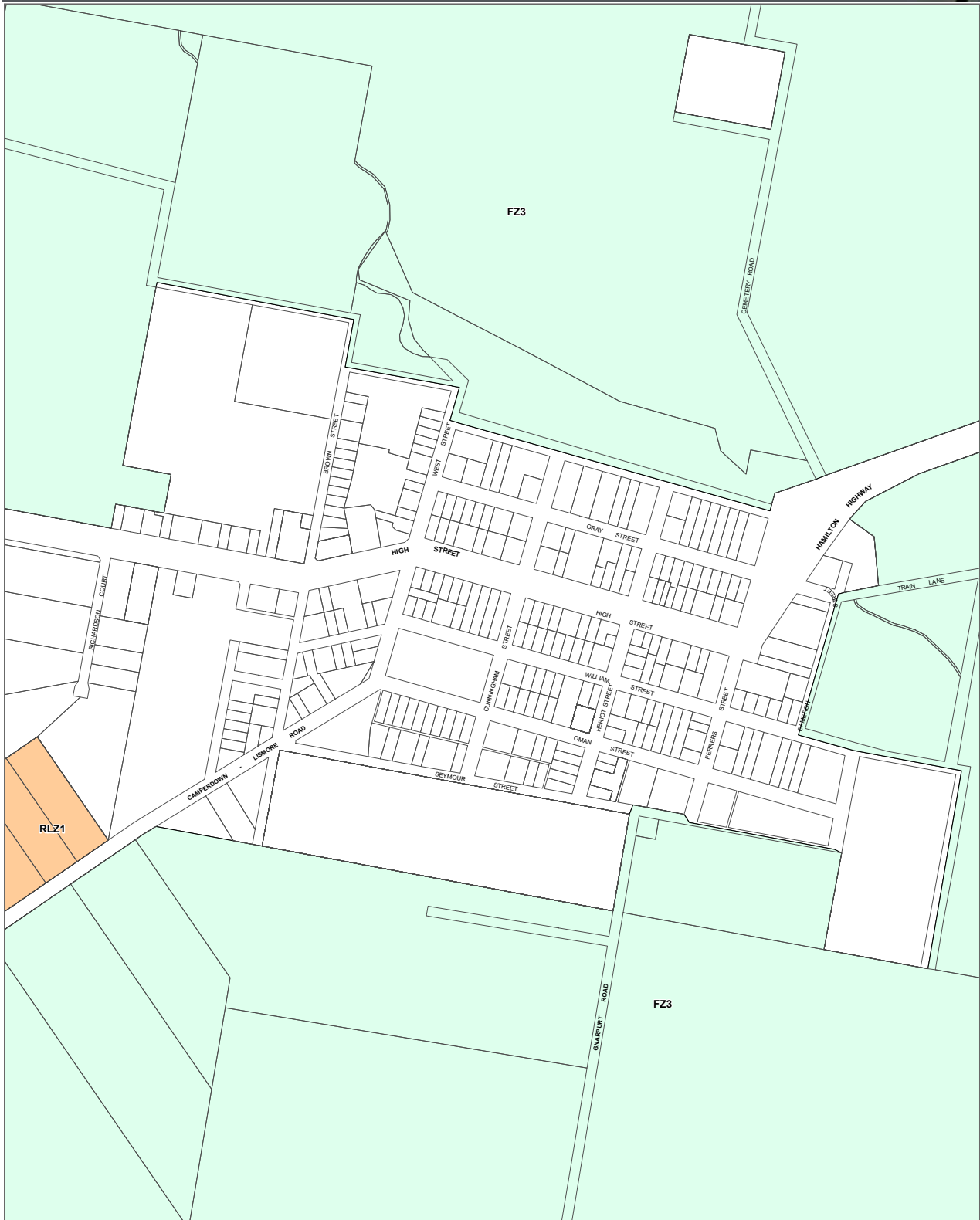
INDEX TO ADJOINING SCHEME MAPS



ZONES

MAP No 9

CORANGAMITE PLANNING SCHEME - LOCAL PROVISION
AMENDMENT C67cora



LEGEND
 FZ - Farming Zone
 RLZ - Rural Living Zone

Municipal Boundary

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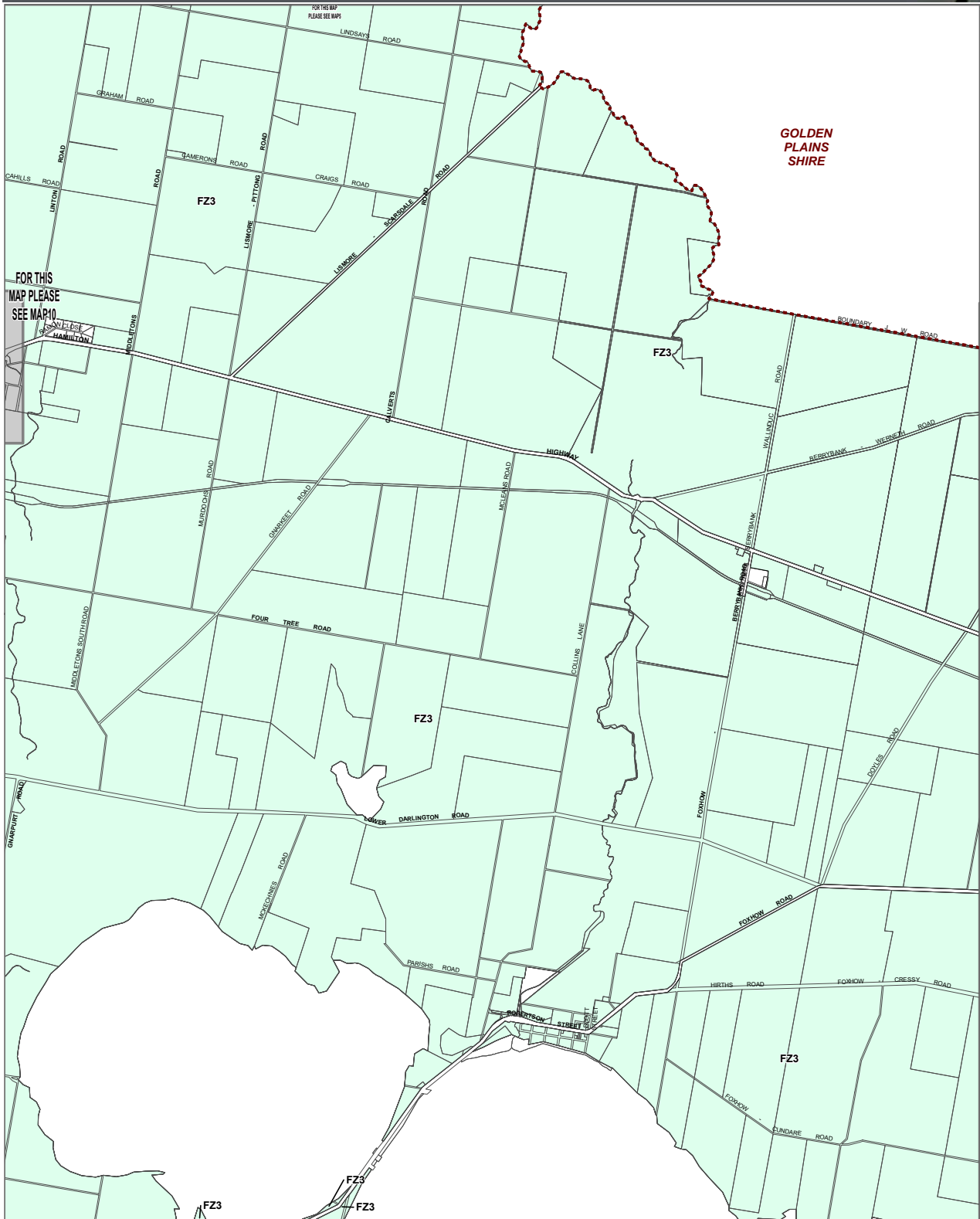
INDEX TO ADJOINING SCHEME MAPS



ZONES

MAP No 10

CORANGAMITE PLANNING SCHEME - LOCAL PROVISION AMENDMENT C67cora



LEGEND
FZ - Farming Zone

Municipal Boundary

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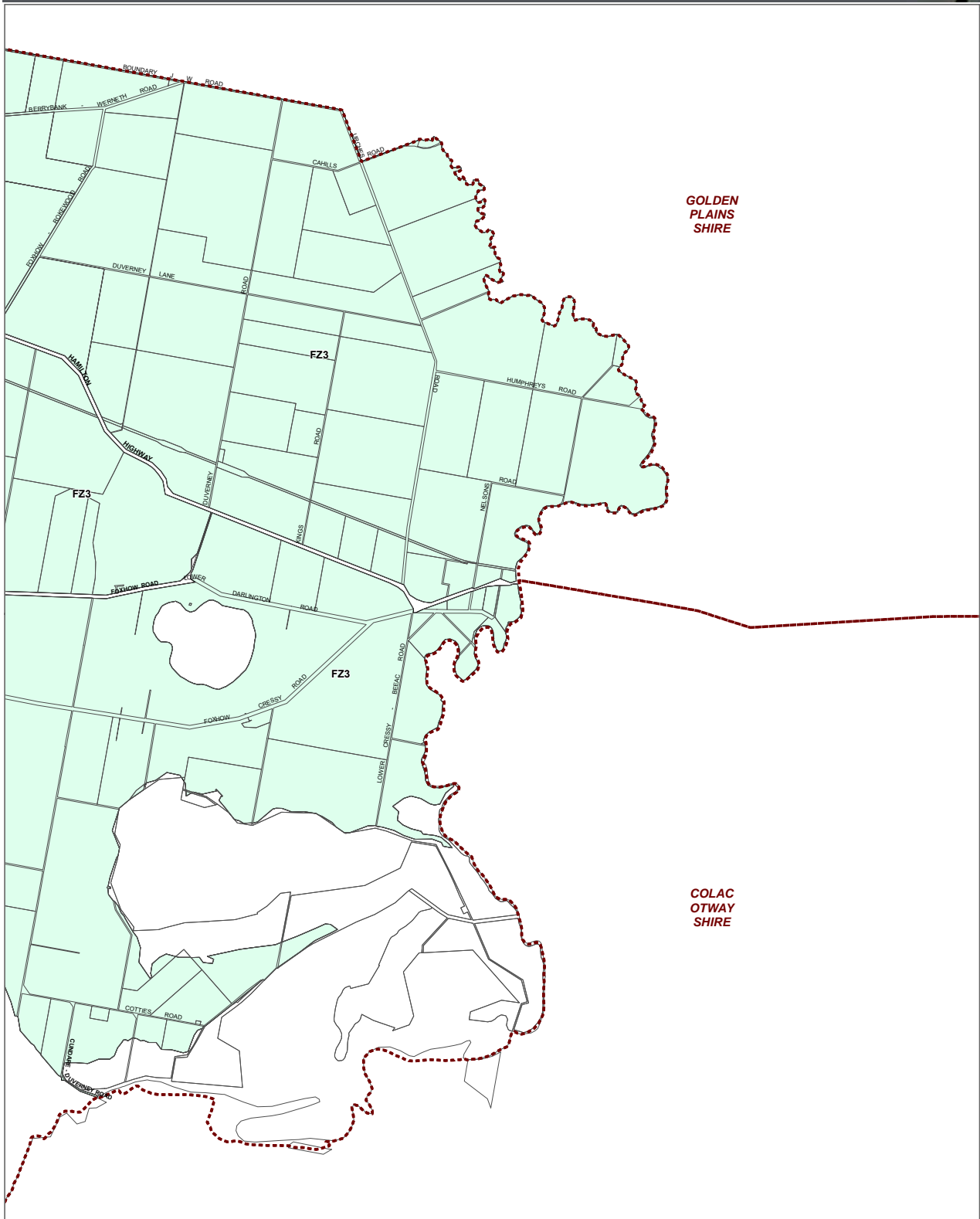
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INDEX TO ADJOINING SCHEME MAPS



ZONES

MAP No 11



LEGEND
FZ - Farming Zone

Municipal Boundary

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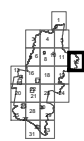


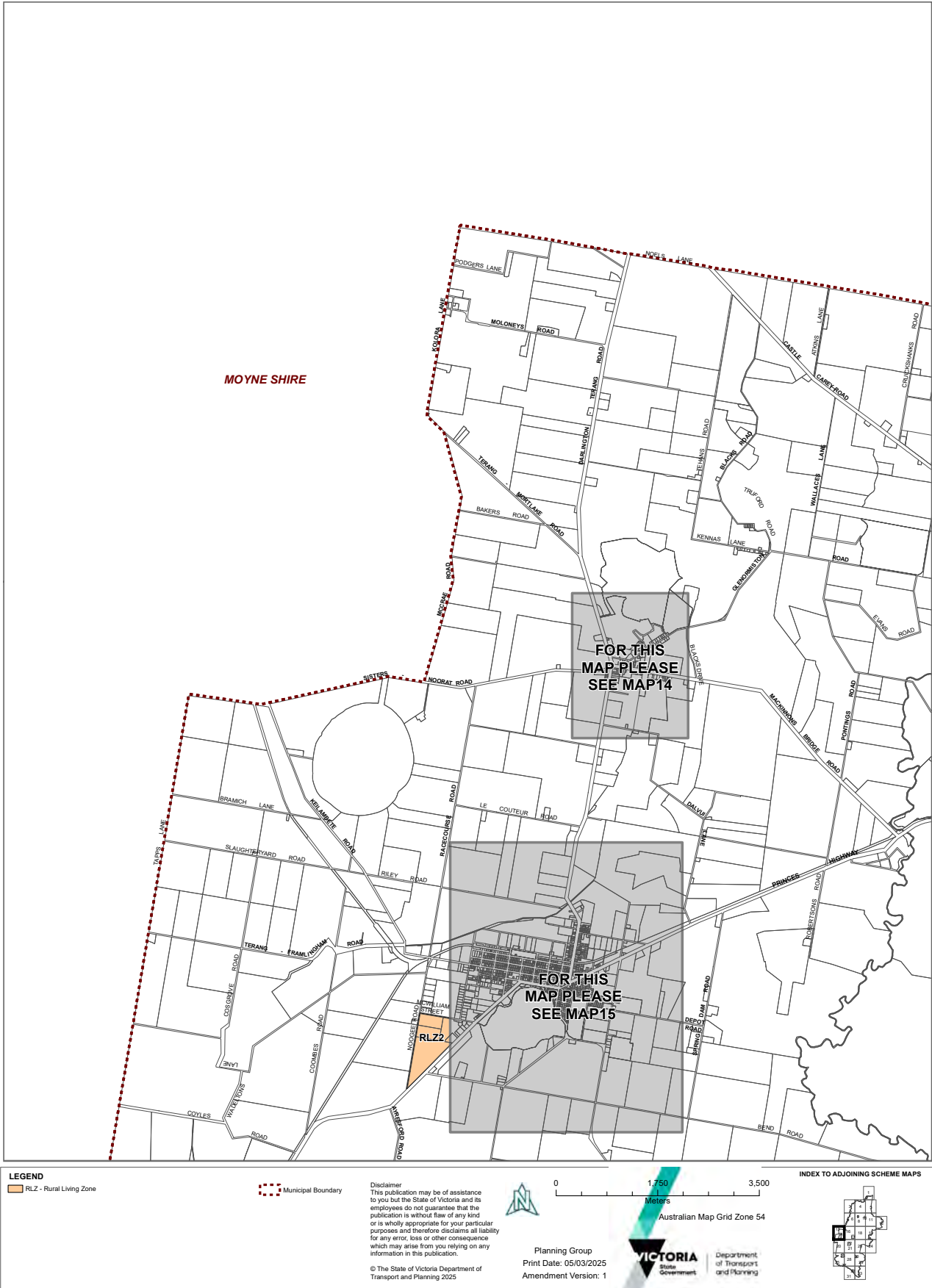
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Print Date: 05/03/2025
Amendment Version: 1

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State Government
Department of Transport and Planning

INDEX TO ADJOINING SCHEME MAPS







LEGEND
RLZ2 - Rural Living Zone

Municipal Boundary

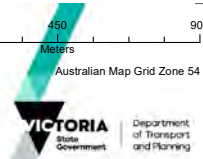
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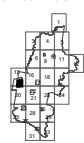


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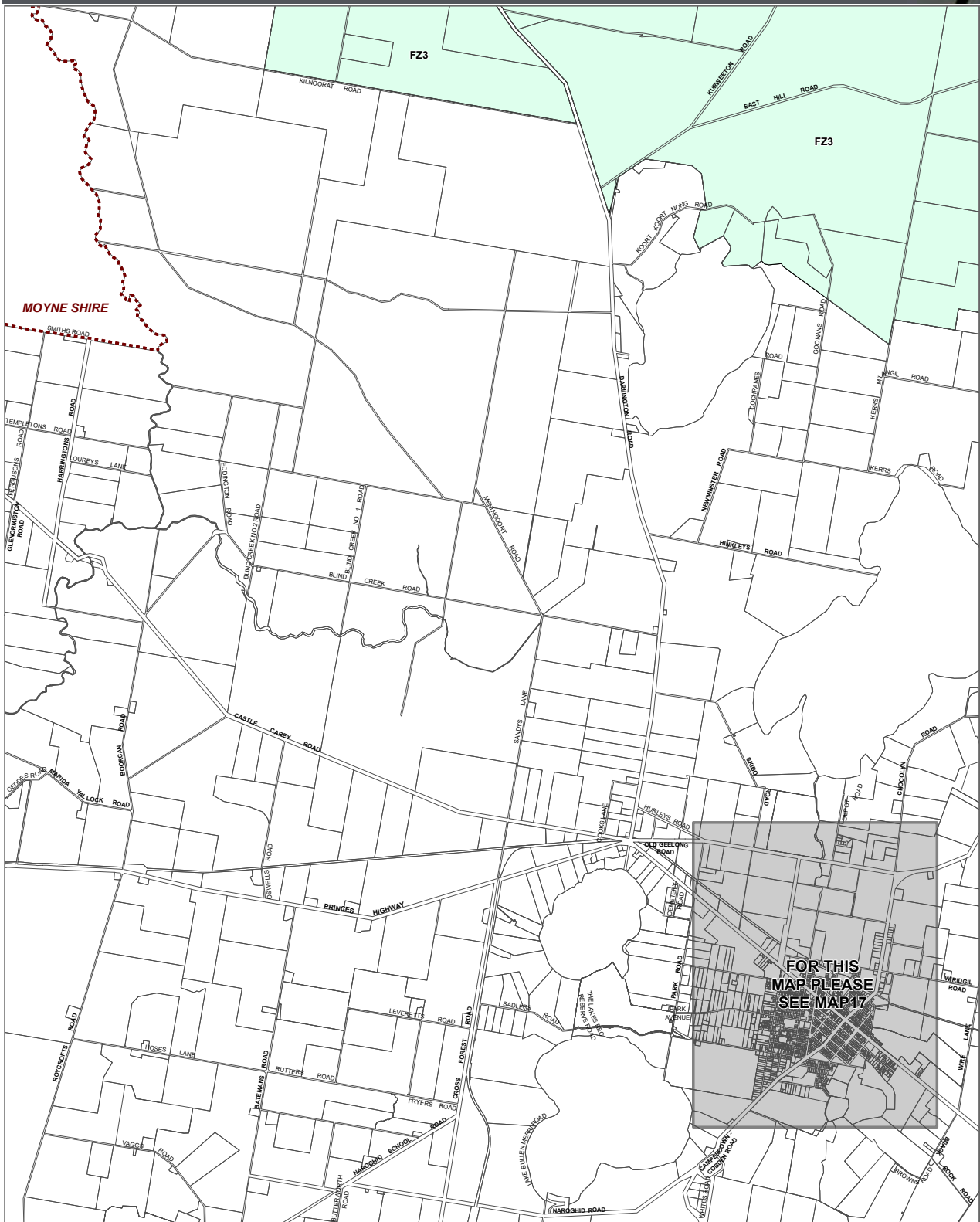
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INDEX TO ADJOINING SCHEME MAPS



CORANGAMITE PLANNING SCHEME - LOCAL PROVISION AMENDMENT C67cora



LEGEND
FZ - Farming Zone

Municipal Boundary

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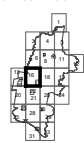
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Amendment Version: 1

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State Government
Department of Transport and Planning

INDEX TO ADJOINING SCHEME MAPS



ZONES

MAP No 16

CORANGAMITE PLANNING SCHEME - LOCAL PROVISION AMENDMENT C67cora



LEGEND
RLZ - Rural Living Zone

Municipal Boundary

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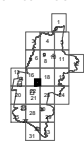


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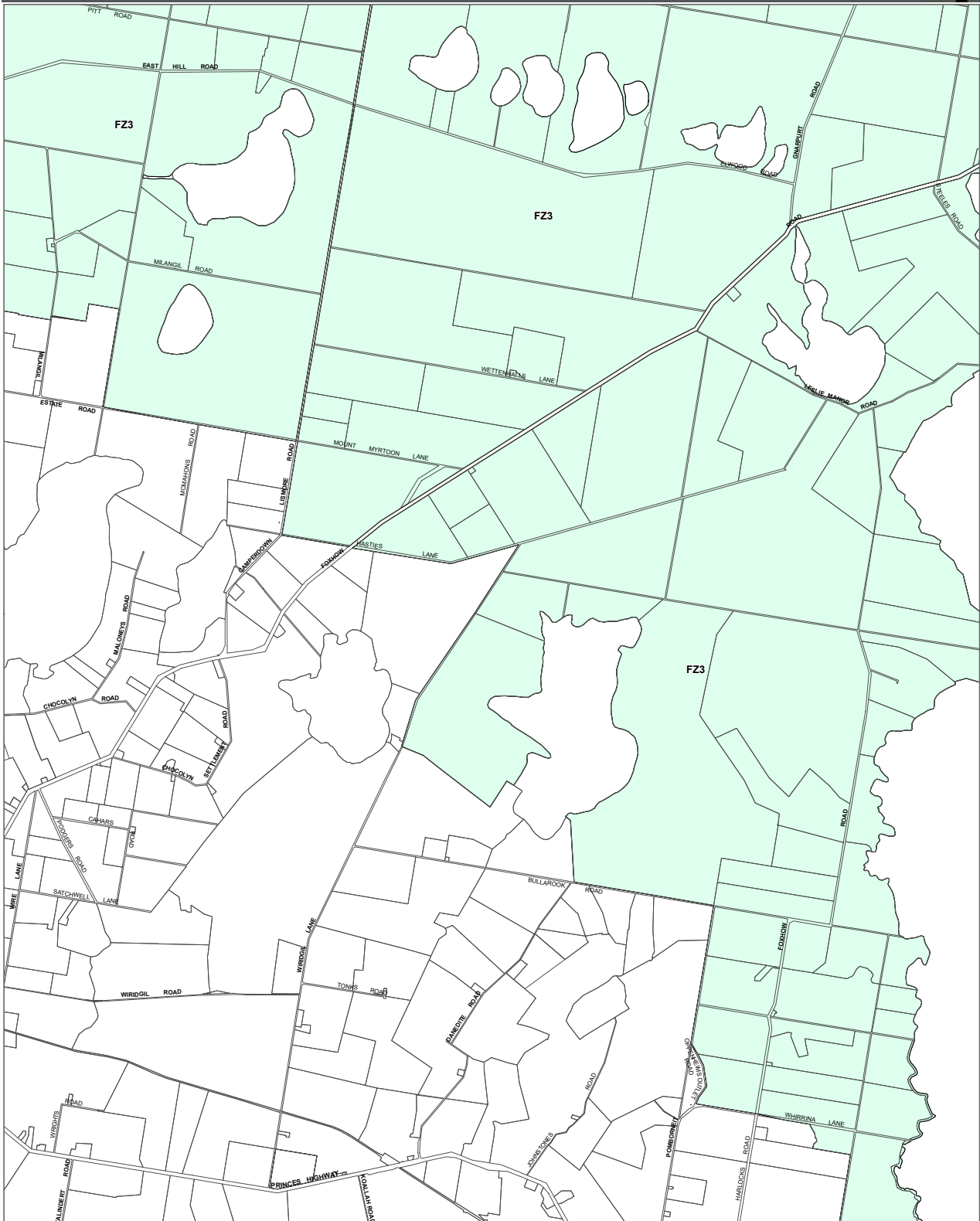
INDEX TO ADJOINING SCHEME MAPS



ZONES

MAP No 17

CORANGAMITE PLANNING SCHEME - LOCAL PROVISION AMENDMENT C67cora



LEGEND
FZ - Farming Zone

Municipal Boundary

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Amendment Version: 1

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INDEX TO ADJOINING SCHEME MAPS



ZONES

MAP No 18



CORANGAMITE PLANNING SCHEME - LOCAL PROVISION AMENDMENT C67cora



LEGEND
FZ - Farming Zone

Municipal Boundary

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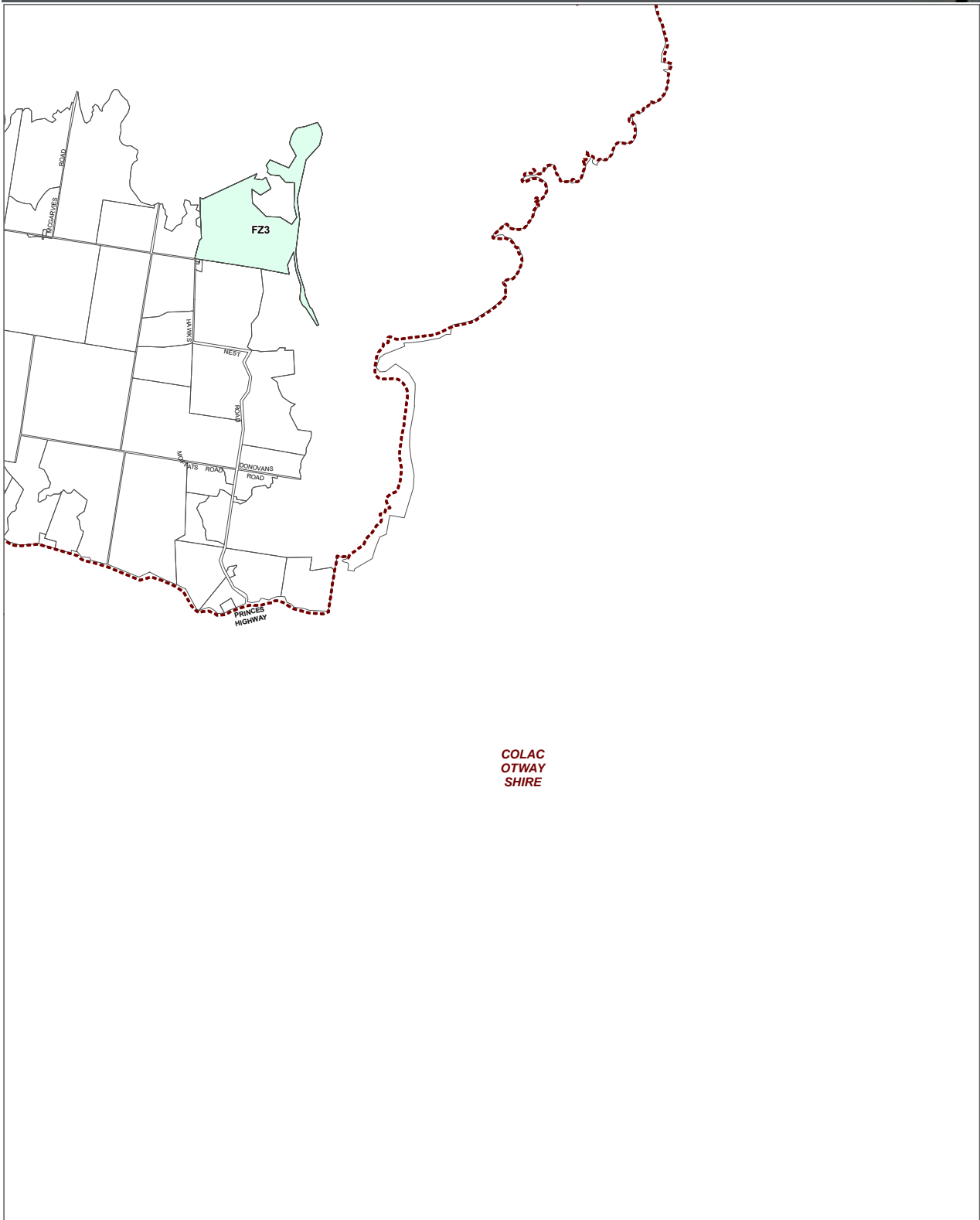
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INDEX TO ADJOINING SCHEME MAPS



ZONES

MAP No 23



COLAC
OTWAY
SHIRE

LEGEND

FZ - Farming Zone

Municipal Boundary

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Print Date: 05/03/2025
Amendment Version: 1

VICTORIA
State Government
Department of Transport and Planning

INDEX TO ADJOINING SCHEME MAPS



CORANGAMITE PLANNING SCHEME - LOCAL PROVISION AMENDMENT C67cora



LEGEND
RLZ - Rural Living Zone

Municipal Boundary

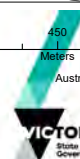
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Amendment Version: 1

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Australian Map Grid Zone 54

Department of Transport and Planning

INDEX TO ADJOINING SCHEME MAPS



ZONES

MAP No 26

9 Officer's Reports

9.1 Borrowing Policy Review

Directorate:	Corporate and Community Services
Author:	Prabath Jayawardana, Manager Finance
Attachments:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Borrowing Policy March 2025 [9.1.1 - 4 pages]2. Under Separate Cover - Borrowing Policy March 2025 - tracked changes [9.1.2 - 5 pages]

Declaration

Chief Executive Officer – David Rae

In providing this advice to Council as the Chief Executive Officer, I have no interests to disclose in this report.

Author – Prabath Jayawardana

In providing this advice to Council as the Manager Finance, I have no interests to disclose in this report.

Summary

This report recommends that Council adopt the Borrowing Policy (the Policy) dated March 2025 as attached.

Introduction

The Borrowing Policy is due for review. The Policy has been reviewed by management with only minor amendments proposed.

The Borrowing Policy establishes the objectives and principles that outline when it is appropriate for Council to undertake borrowings within a sound financial management framework which is compliant with the *Local Government Act 2020 (the Act)*.

Issues

The Policy provides for the effective and responsible utilisation of borrowings by Council within the legislative framework. Borrowing funds is a legitimate and responsible financial management tool. Policy emphasis is directed towards prudent borrowing decisions to limit unnecessary exposure to debt whilst ensuring sufficient liquidity to finance major projects over an appropriate term.

The Act provides councils with the power to borrow. A council cannot borrow money unless the proposed borrowings are included in the budget or a revised budget. Nor can a council delegate the power to borrow to a member of staff. The review of the Policy ensures it remains consistent with the Act.

The purpose of the Policy is to:

- Establish objectives and principles that outline when it is appropriate for Council to undertake borrowings within financial management framework consistent with the *Local Government Act 2020*; and
- To ensure borrowings:
 - Are sustainable and comply with legislative requirements.
 - Are considered on a case by case basis to optimise Council's loan portfolio.
 - Facilitate cash flow (liquidity) requirements, particularly where there are large scale projects.
 - Do not adversely impact Council's low-to-medium risk rating of indebtedness as defined by the Victorian Auditor-General's Office financial sustainability risk indicators and risk assessment criteria.

The only significant change is to explicitly allow Council to borrow through Treasury Corporation of Victoria (TCV). Access to TCV borrowings was introduced to councils after the adoption of the previous Policy.

Policy and Legislative Context

This report is in keeping with the commitments in the Council Plan 2021-2025:

Theme Five - Community Leadership

Having strong governance practices

Ensuring that we maintain our strong financial position

Council promotes best value and value for money for its ratepayers

The review of the Policy ensures that it remains consistent with the *Local Government Act 2020*.

Internal / External Consultation

The Borrowing Policy has been reviewed and developed internally. A Gender Impact Assessment has been completed to ensure the Policy does not adversely impact community members of different genders and has been developed in accordance with the *Gender Equality Act 2020*.

Council's Audit and Risk Committee considered the proposed amendments at the March 2025 meeting and recommends Council adopt the Policy.

Financial and Resource Implications

There are no financial impacts in the recommendation of this Policy. Council will go through a formal budget process to determine whether borrowing is appropriate in any given financial year.

Options

The Council has the following options:

1. To adopt the Policy as it is presented, or
2. To adopt the Policy with amendments, or
3. To not adopt the Policy

Conclusions

The Borrowing Policy provides guidance for Council's authorised officers when borrowing funds that have been approved in a Council budget. The Policy has been reviewed and attached to this report for adoption.

RECOMMENDATION - 9.1

That Council:

- 1. Revokes the Borrowing Policy dated April 2022.**
- 2. Adopts the Borrowing Policy dated March 2025.**

Borrowing Policy

Corangamite Shire

March 2025



Council Policy



Borrowing

Introduction

This policy provides for the effective and responsible utilisation of borrowings by Council within the government legislative framework.

Borrowing funds is a legitimate and responsible financial management tool. Emphasis is directed towards prudent borrowing decisions to limit unnecessary exposure to debt whilst ensuring sufficient liquidity to finance major projects, as it spreads the cost for such assets across the generations who benefit.

Purpose

The purpose of this Borrowing Policy is to:

- Establish objectives and principles that outline when it is appropriate for Council to undertake borrowings within a sound financial management framework consistent with the *Local Government Act 2020*;
- To ensure borrowings:
 - Are sustainable and comply with legislative requirements.
 - Are considered on a case by case basis to optimise Council's loan portfolio.
 - Facilitate cash flow (liquidity) requirements, particularly where there are large scale projects.
 - Do not adversely impact Council's low risk rating of indebtedness..

The Policy will be adhered to in developing the annual budget and long term financial plan.

Scope

This policy applies to all Councillors, and Council employees who make decisions or provide advice regarding borrowings and those involved in the development and adopting of budgets and long term financial plans.

Definitions

- Borrowing: Indebtedness in respect of money borrowed (loaned) or raised including a lease.
- Indebtedness: Comparison of non-current liabilities (mainly comprising borrowings) to own-sourced revenue. The higher the percentage, the less the entity is able to cover non-current liabilities from the revenues the entity generates itself.
- Lease:
 - An operating lease is where Council hires the asset for a set fee per period and at the end of the agreed time ownership of the asset remains with the lessor or the hire company. Council can terminate the lease at any time without incurring a penalty. This has been used previously by Council for photocopiers and equipment hire. A finance lease is where Council agrees to a series of payments and a residual value for the asset. There is a penalty for terminating the agreement prior to the finishing date. At the end of the period it is expected that Council purchase the asset for the agreed residual value.

Adopted at Council on:
Agenda Item:
Responsibility: Manager Finance
Document Number: 2240162

Department: Finance
To be reviewed by: March 2029

Page Number: 2

- LGPRF: Local Government Performance Reporting Framework.

References

- *Local Government Act 2020*;
- Victorian Auditor General's Office financial sustainability risk indicators and risk assessment criteria.

Policy Detail

The *Local Government Act 2020* (the Act) provides Councils the power to borrow. The Act states 'A council cannot borrow money unless the proposed borrowings were included in the budget or a revised budget.'

1. Principles

- Council will not borrow to fund operating expenditure. This type of expenditure is to be funded from operating revenue streams. The exception to this principle is where 'defined benefit' Superannuation Fund reserves are not sufficient to fund 'calls'. In this circumstance a separate report to Council which will include a recommended method of funding, including the use of working capital, operational savings, capital deferral and/or borrowings.
- Council will not borrow to fund "recurrent" capital works which is inclusive of acquisition, replacement or renewal of assets (e.g. road resurfacing). This type of expenditure is to be funded from operating revenue streams.

2. Borrowing Arrangements

- When entering into borrowing arrangements, Council will seek to minimise interest costs and maximise the best value for the community over the long term without introducing undue volatility in annual interest costs.
- In determining a lending institution Council will use either bank debt, the Treasury Corporation of Victoria and/or the Local Government Funding Vehicle as sources of debt funding. If bank debt is chosen as the appropriate source of funding, requests to appropriate lending institutions will be made in accordance with Council's Procurement Policy inviting written quotations on Council's borrowing requirements.
- Written quotations must include the:
 - Interest rate
 - Term of loan
 - Repayment intervals (monthly, quarterly, etc.)
 - Repayment instalment amount
 - Any applicable fees
 - Loan break costs
- Council will consider the appropriateness of the various types of debt products available (including savings offset arrangements).
- The tenor of a loan will not be greater than twenty-five (25) years or the expected useful life of the asset being funded and will be managed strategically to stagger Council's debt maturity profile and reduce financial risk.
- Borrowings will be either "principal and interest" or "interest" only. Where an "interest" only loan is proposed it must be supported by a business case, incorporating a cost benefit analysis, which has been reviewed by Council's Audit Committee.
- Loan repayments (principal and interest) will be at least quarterly and determined at the time of entering the loan agreement. Consideration should be given to efficiency of payment while minimising interest costs.

Adopted at Council on:
Agenda Item:
Responsibility: Manager Finance
Document Number: 2240162

Department Finance
To be reviewed by: March 2029

Page Number: 3

- The nature of any borrowings (short or long term) and the interest rate (fixed or variable) will take into account the purpose of the loan and seek to balance interest rate exposure with refinancing flexibility.
- When undertaking borrowing decisions, Council's ongoing funding requirements will be considered, and borrowings will be aggregated into a single loan where practical.

3. Leasing

Leasing as a funding option should be considered where appropriate. Prior to considering a lease, appropriate analysis (buy/borrow/lease) should be undertaken. Leasing will be for a maximum period of five years for assets:

- Which diminish in value quickly (e.g. photocopiers and telecommunications equipment);
- Where assets will be disposed of in a short timeframe; and/or
- Where the lease option transfers responsibilities to the asset owner for maintenance and disposal.

4. Lending Institution

- In determining a lending institution Council will use either bank debt, the Treasury Corporation of Victoria or the Local Government Funding Vehicle as sources of debt funding. If bank debt is chosen as the appropriate source of funding, requests to appropriate lending institutions will be made in accordance with Council's Procurement Policy inviting written quotations on Council's borrowing requirements. Written quotations must include the:
 - Interest rate
 - Term of loan
 - Repayment intervals
 - Repayment instalment amount
 - Any applicable fees, including loan break costs

5. Reporting and Monitoring

- Council will report aggregated borrowings in its annual financial statements including financial sustainability risk indicators in accordance with applicable accounting standards and the Act.
- Annually, Council's Audit Committee will receive a report on the financial risk profile, including the level of indebtedness.
- The LGPRF will also be used to measure and report borrowings, including financial sustainability risk indicators, and results published on the Know Your Council website.

Legislative compliance

In addition to this Policy all borrowings must comply with the *Local Government Act 2020* and any associated guidelines.

Charter of Human Rights

It is considered that this Policy does not impact negatively on any rights identified in the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*.

Gender Impact Assessment

The policy does not adversely impact community members or employees of different genders and has been developed in accordance with the *Gender Equality Act 2020*.

Review Date

March 2029

Adopted at Council on:
Agenda Item:
Responsibility: Manager Finance
Document Number: 2240162

Department Finance
To be reviewed by: March 2029

Page Number: 4

9.2 Rating of Residential Properties used for Charitable Purposes Policy Review

- Directorate: Corporate and Community Services
- Author: Prabath Jayawardana, Manager Finance
- Attachments:
1. Rating of Residential Properties used for Charitable Purposes Policy March 2025 [9.2.1 - 4 pages]
 2. Under Separate Cover - Rating of Residential Properties used for Charitable Purposes Policy March 2025 - tracked changes [9.2.2 - 4 pages]

Declaration

Chief Executive Officer – David Rae

In providing this advice to Council as the Chief Executive Officer, I have no interests to disclose in this report.

Author – Prabath Jayawardana

In providing this advice to Council as the Manager Finance, I have no interests to disclose in this report.

Summary

This report recommends that Council adopt the Residential Properties used for Charitable Purposes Policy dated March 2025 as attached.

Introduction

The current Rating of Residential Properties Used for Charitable Purposes policy is due for review. Management has reviewed the attached policy and minor amendments are proposed.

Issues

Council is empowered under the Local Government Act 1989 (the Act) to raise revenue in the form of rates. Section 154 of the Local Government Act states that land would be not rateable land if “any part of land, if that part is used exclusively for charitable purposes” or “vested in or held in trust for any religious body”.

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines to assess the rateability of a house or flat on land that is used exclusively for charitable purposes or is vested in or held in trust for any religious body.

Following review of the policy, there was an additional provision made that Council be notified of any changes in the charitable status or purpose for which the property is used as well as an internal review of properties covered by this policy.

Policy and Legislative Context

This report is in keeping with the commitments in the Council Plan 2021-2025:

Theme Five - Community Leadership
Having strong governance practices

The review of the policy ensures that it remains consistent with the *Local Government Act 1989*.

Internal / External Consultation

The Rating of Residential Properties Used for Charitable Purposes policy has been reviewed internally. A Gender Impact Assessment has been completed to ensure the Policy does not adversely impact community members of different genders and has been developed in accordance with the *Gender Equality Act 2020*.

Council's Audit and Risk Committee considered the proposed amendments at the March 2025 meeting and recommends Council adopt the Policy.

Financial and Resource Implications

There are no financial impacts in the recommendation of this Policy.

Options

The Council has the following options:

1. To adopt the Policy as it is presented, or
2. To adopt the Policy with amendments, or
3. To not adopt the Policy

Conclusions

The Policy has been reviewed with only minor amendments, and it is still compliant with the *Local Government Act 1989*. It is attached to this report for adoption.

RECOMMENDATION - 9.2

That Council:

- 1. Revokes the Rating of Residential Properties used for Charitable Purposes Policy dated April 2022.**
- 2. Adopts the Residential Properties used for Charitable Purposes Policy dated March 2025.**

Rating of Residential Properties used for Charitable Purposes Policy

Corangamite Shire

March 2025



Council Policy



Rating of Residential Properties Used for Charitable Purposes Policy

Introduction

Council is empowered under the *Local Government Act 1989* (the *Local Government Act*) to raise revenue in the form of rates. Section 154 of the *Local Government Act* states that Land would be not rateable land if “any part of land, if that part is used exclusively for charitable purposes” or “vested in or held in trust for any religious body”

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines to assess the rateability of a house or flat on land that is used exclusively for charitable purposes or is vested in or held in trust for any religious body.

Scope

The policy applies to properties owned and/or operated by organisations that are registered with the Australian Charities and Not-for Profits Commission as “charitable organisations” or properties that are “vested in or held in trust for any religious body” pursuant to Section 154 of the *Local Government Act 1989*.

The organisation must directly use the property or part of it for the provision of residential accommodation. A fee or rental for residential accommodation may be charged, but all income derived must be used to defray the costs of providing the accommodation and/or ancillary services provided by the organisation.

References

Legislative Requirement

Section 154 (2)(c) of the *Local Government Act 1989* states that any part of land if that land is used exclusively for charitable purposes is to be “not rateable” land.

Provision of residential accommodation by a charitable organisation could, in itself, be a charitable purpose, provided the resident does not have exclusive occupancy of the dwelling.

Exclusive occupancy is denoted by the resident enjoying a high level of autonomy from the accommodation provider. As such, a property used to provide residential accommodation to a resident would be rateable if the resident was deemed to be in exclusive occupation of the unit.

Adopted at Council on:
Agenda Item:
Responsibility: Manager Finance
Document Number: 2802147

Department: Finance
To be reviewed by: March 2029

Page Number: 2

Policy Detail

Properties used to provide residential accommodation for a fee or rental will be deemed not rateable provided the resident does not enjoy exclusive occupancy of the dwelling.

Whether or not the resident enjoys exclusive occupancy of the dwelling will be assessed using the attached criteria (attachment A). The list is not exhaustive and other relevant criteria may be considered as they become apparent. The applicant must meet a majority of the criteria before being considered non-rateable under this policy.

The subject property must be used directly for the provision of residential accommodation and must be owned or operated by an organisation that is:

- registered with the Australian Charities and Not-for Profits Commission as a "charitable organisation"; or
- a religious body.

If an organisation's charitable status changes or the purposes for which the property is used changes, it must notify Council.

Council will conduct a regular internal review of the properties to assess ongoing compliance.

Charter of Human Rights

It is considered that this Policy does not impact negatively on any rights identified in the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*.

Gender Impact Assessment

The policy does not adversely impact community members or employees of different genders and has been developed in accordance with the *Gender Equality Act 2020*.

Review Date

The next review of this document is scheduled for completion by the Manager Finance on or before March 2029.

Adopted at Council on:
Agenda Item:
Responsibility: Manager Finance
Document Number: 2802147

Department: Finance
To be reviewed by: March 2029

Page Number: 3

Appendix A

	Aspect of Tenancy	Applicant's Response	In Exclusive Occupation
1	Are residents responsible for 'day to day' management of unit?		Yes
2	Do residents pay for services used (eg. utilities)?		Yes
3	Do residents regard units as their private home?		Yes
4	Are units completely self contained?		Yes
5	Does each unit have an entrance/exit separate from other units?		Yes
6	Are residents free to invite visitors to stay in the unit?		Yes
7	Does the accommodation provider retain right of entry at their discretion?		No
8	Does accommodation provider retain a key to units?		No
9	Are residents free to furnish flats as they wish?		Yes
10	Are residents free to paint walls or make internal structural changes to unit etc?		Yes
11	Do residents select which unit they want to live in?		Yes
12	Is permission required for certain activities (eg. keeping pets)?		No
13	Is resident required to notify accommodation provider of intended absences?		No
14	Are standards for cleanliness of units prescribed by accommodation provider?		No
15	Is building insurance provided by accommodation provider?		No
16	Is a "Superintendent" available for repairs, assistance etc?		No
17	Is the tenancy covered by a standard (REIV) tenancy agreement?		Yes
18	Is resident able to be moved to other accommodation by accommodation provider?		No
19	Is tenancy part of a staged aged care program offered by the accommodation provider?		No
20	Are other institutional services provided by the accommodation provider?		No

A majority of the criteria that denote a resident has "exclusive occupancy" means that the property will be rateable.

Adopted at Council on:
 Agenda Item:
 Responsibility: Manager Finance
 Document Number: 2802147

Department: Finance
 To be reviewed by: March 2029

Page Number: 4

9.3 Councillor Professional Development Policy Review

Directorate: Governance and Civic Support
Author: Kathryn Anderson, Manager Governance and Civic Support
Attachments: 1. Councillor Professional Development Policy [9.3.1 - 5 pages]
2. Under Separate Cover - Councillor Professional Development Adopted tracked changes [9.3.2 - 6 pages]

Declaration

Chief Executive Officer – David Rae

In providing this advice to Council as the Chief Executive Officer, I have no interests to disclose in this report.

Author – Kathryn Anderson

In providing this advice to Council as the Manager Governance and Civic Support, I have no interests to disclose in this report.

Summary

This report facilitates Council's review of the Support for Councillor Professional Development Policy which governs the criteria for professional development undertaken by Councillors.

Introduction

Councillors undertake professional development and training to provide them with the necessary knowledge and skills required for their role as elected representatives of their communities. Professional development also provides Councillors with the opportunity to expand their networks within the local government sector for information and support during their term on Council. The Support for Councillor Professional Development Policy promotes good governance and determines the criteria for how and when Councillors can access professional development.

Issues

The Support for Councillor Professional Development Policy is reviewed every four years following the Council election, or as required. The Policy aims to provide guidance on the types of activities and training available to Councillors in addition to the associated costs involved when accessing professional development. The Policy should be read in conjunction with the Council Expenses Policy.

As part of the current review, the Policy (attached) includes significant change of:

- Increase of CEO approval threshold for individual development requests from \$2500 to \$3000. This aligns to previous increases of \$500 at the previous policy year review four years ago.

The minor updates to Policy are:

- Corrected legislative references, to include *Model Councillor Code of Conduct* and the *Government (Governance and Integrity) Amendment Regulations 2024*.
- Update to the definitions of Professional Development.

It is current practice for Councillors to pay any costs associated with their partner accompanying them to conferences or other professional development activities, and provisions relating to this have been retained in the Policy. The Policy also retains the requirement for Councillors to report back to fellow Councillors about their key learnings, which enhances the benefits Councillor professional development provides to the organisation.

Policy and Legislative Context

This report is in keeping with the commitments in the Council Plan 2021-2025:

Theme Five - Community Leadership
Having strong governance practices

Internal / External Consultation

Councillors and senior staff have been consulted during the review of this Policy.

Financial and Resource Implications

Council's annual budget provides for Councillor professional development. There is no individual financial limit for professional development prescribed for each Councillor.

Options

Council may choose to adopt the Councillor Support for Professional Development Policy as presented or determine to make further amendments prior to adoption.

Conclusions

Councillors undertake professional development to provide them with the networks, skills and knowledge necessary for them to carry out their role as Councillors.

The support for Councillor Professional Development Policy provides guidance on the types of activities and training available to Councillors and has been recently reviewed to ensure it remains relevant.

RECOMMENDATION - 9.3

That Council:

- 1. Revoke Support for Councillor Professional Development Policy dated July 2021**
- 2. Adopts the Councillor Professional Development Policy dated March 2025.**

Support for Councillor Professional Development Policy

Corangamite Shire

March 2025



Council Policy



Support for Councillor Professional Development

Introduction

Beyond the mandatory training, Councillors are committed to undertake training or professional development activities to effectively perform the role of a Councillor. Professional development enables Councillors to increase their networks, knowledge and skills and is strongly encouraged.

Corangamite Shire Council strives to seek a balance between the appropriate expenditure of public funds, while at the same time ensuring that the community is represented by well-informed, highly skilled Councillors.

Purpose

This policy provides guidance on the types of professional development supported by Council and the payment of costs incurred by Councillors related to professional development activities undertaken in their official capacity.

Scope

This policy applies to all Councillors representing the Corangamite Shire Council and applies from the date adopted.

The policy should be used by:

- Individual Councillors when considering professional development opportunities.
- Council when considering requests from Councillors for the payment of costs associated with professional development.
- Finance and other related staff in implementing payments for professional development activities.

Definitions

Councillor	A person who holds the office of member of Council as defined in the Local Government Act 2020
Duties as a Councillor	The duties of a Councillor include those that are defined in the Local Government Act 2020, as the duties performed by a Councillor that are necessary or appropriate for the purposes of achieving the objectives of a Council having regard to any relevant Act, regulations, Ministerial guidelines or Council policies
Expenditure	means funds paid in support of an activity.

Adopted by Council on: 25 March 2025
Agenda Item:
Responsibility: Manager Governance and Civic Support
Document Number: 968605

Department: Governance
To be reviewed by: January 2029

Page: 2

Professional Development	Learning or strategic networking that leads that emphasises education or engagement in a specific professional career or field or builds practical job applicable skills or advances professional relationships. This is an extension to the mandatory Councillor training as defined in the Local Government Act 2020.
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References

Local Government Act 2020

Model Councillor Code of Conduct prescribed in Schedule 1 to the Local Government (Governance and Integrity) Amendment Regulations 2024

Policy Detail

Events, Conferences and Seminars

Events, conferences, and seminars provide an opportunity for Councillors to receive information on topics related to local government. These may be provided by both government bodies and commercial providers. Some examples of these include the ALGA National General Assembly, ALGA National Roads Congress and the MAV State Conference.

Training, Workshops and Other Professional Development Activities

Professional development activities undertaken by individual Councillors include formal accredited and non-accredited training related to a Councillor's role. Requests for professional development support must have a direct relationship to the role of a Councillor, and support for training with this focus will be prioritised.

Other Events

On occasion, there may be an opportunity for Councillors to attend trade delegations, industry investigations or other types of activities aimed at increasing the profile of Corangamite Shire¹. These activities should be assessed in accordance with the assessment principles prior to support being granted.

Internal Training Opportunities

Where Councillors believe that a significant training or professional development need is required which would benefit all Councillors and is not addressed by publicly available training and development opportunities, internal training and development may be sourced and delivered. Examples of this type of training may include familiarisation with Council activities or procedures, or legislative changes. In these circumstances, Councillors should contact the Chief Executive Officer to discuss the specific training need so that training can be sourced and delivered.

Each year, the Chief Executive Officer will provide Councillors with internal training related to Governance matters or legislative changes, to support Council's commitment to good governance and ethical leadership.

Councillor Induction Program

In addition to professional development opportunities for Councillors, the Chief Executive Officer will determine an induction program for all Councillors, conducted every four years

¹ It is important that any gifts, including travel and accommodation provided at lower or no cost, are appropriately recorded in the Council's Gift Register.

after the election of a new Council. The induction program will meet the mandatory induction requirements prescribed by the *Local Government Act 2020*.

Where a by-election has been held, the newly elected Councillor will individually receive the mandatory induction training. Approved expenditure

Approved expenditure under this policy includes:

- Conference or training registration fees.
- Travel costs, including road travel, flights, public transport or taxis, and car parking fees.
- Accommodation and meals, but not alcohol, directly related to the event, including accommodation from the day prior to the event, and/or the night following the event where travel is problematic.

Other types of reimbursement (e.g. respite carer payments) may be made available under Council's *Councillor Expenses Policy*.

Where a Councillor's partner accompanies a Councillor to a conference, the registration, accommodation and travel arrangements may be organised by Council, with the Councillor to pay the additional costs incurred by Council due to the partner's attendance, including registration fees, travel expenses, meals and accommodation.

Procedure for Approval

The following process will be strictly observed when assessing requests for expenditure for Councillor professional development.

Approval by CEO

The Chief Executive Officer will approve Councillor professional development expenses where it is calculated that the total amount of expenditure on a single professional development opportunity will not exceed \$3000 per Councillor (excluding GST). This assessment will be undertaken using the assessment principles contained in this policy.

Approval by Council resolution

In the event that the proposed expenditure on a single professional development opportunity exceeds \$3000 per Councillor, the expenditure must be approved by a decision of Council. This approval must be subject to the assessment principles contained within this policy.

Assessment Principles

All expenditure by Council on Councillor attendance at any type of professional development activity should be assessed against the following criteria:

Applicability of content to current or future likely future Council issues

1. Does the event provide an opportunity to receive or upgrade relevant and necessary knowledge or skills, directly related to a councillor role?
2. Does the event provide an opportunity to learn key information about an issue of public policy related to the Corangamite community?
3. Does the event have the potential to foster broad economic development opportunities within Corangamite Shire?
4. Does the event provide an opportunity for a councillor to build their networks both within and across sectors, in a way which will be of benefit to the Corangamite community?

Available funds

The annual budget for Councillors' training will be adequate for Councillors to attend annual conferences plus provision for an annual Councillor Workshop and a sum for other Councillor training needs. This budget item is developed in consultation with Councillors and reflects the need to ensure ongoing professional development, while also ensuring that public funds are expended in a responsible manner.

Each individual Councillor does not have a budgeted financial limit for professional development, as training needs may vary and the budget covers all Councillors collectively.

Reporting

Following participation in an event the Councillor is expected to submit a verbal report at the next available Councillor briefing detailing:

- Whether the objectives of the participation were met.
- The benefits to the Councillor, Council and the community.
- The value of future attendance by Council at similar events.

A written report to Council by a Councillor may be required following attendance at national events.

Costs associated with professional development activities undertaken by Councillors will be reported in Council's annual report, as required by local government legislation.

Reference to linked Procedure or Guidelines Council Expenses Policy

Review Date

This policy will be reviewed by Council by March 2029, or earlier if required.

It is considered that this Policy does not impact negatively on any rights identified in the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act (2006)*.

The *Gender Equality Act 2020* requires Council to undertake gender impact assessments when developing or reviewing any policy, program or service which has a direct and significant impact on the public. This policy **will not** have a direct and significant public impact and a Gender Impact Assessment has not been undertaken.

9.4 Chief Executive Officer Employment and Remuneration Policy Review

Directorate:	Governance and Civic Support
Author:	Kathryn Anderson, Manager Governance and Civic Support
Attachments:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Chief Executive Officer Employment and Remuneration Policy [9.4.1 - 6 pages]2. Under Separate Cover - Chief Executive Officer Employment and Remuneration Policy with track changes [9.4.2 - 7 pages]3. CEO Employment and Remuneration Advisory Committee Terms of Reference [9.4.3 - 3 pages]

Declaration

Chief Executive Officer – David Rae

In providing this advice to Council as the Chief Executive Officer, I have a material conflict of interest to disclose in this report.

Author – Kathryn Anderson

In providing this advice to Council as the Manager Governance and Civic Support, I have no interests to disclose in this report.

Summary

In response to a resolution of Council, to appoint an Independent Advisor to assist the CEO Employment and Remuneration Advisory Committee (the Committee), a review of the Chief Executive Officer Employment and Remuneration Policy (the Policy) was conducted and proposed changes identified.

Beyond the review of the Policy, establishment of Terms of Reference for the the Committee is recommended.

Introduction

The Policy has been developed in accordance with the requirements of section 45 of the *Local Government Act 2020* and provides clear processes for all aspects of the CEO employment, including:

- Recruitment;
- Contract of Employment;
- Remuneration;
- Setting annual performance objectives and measures;
- Managing performance and performance reviews;

Other terms and conditions of employment, including any requirements prescribed in Regulations.

Minor updates to the Chief Executive Officer Employment and Remuneration Policy were completed to allow for the inclusion of a suitably qualified and experienced Independent Advisor as a non-voting member of the Committee and to enable observers to be present at the Committee meetings.

Issues

The Chief Executive Officer Employment and Remuneration Policy has been reviewed in consultation with Councillors.

The amendments reflected in the attached Policy are as follows:

- Inclusion of a suitably qualified and experienced Independent Advisor as non-voting member of the Committee.
- Administration for the committee to be Manager Governance and Civic Support.
- The ability for Councillors who are not members of the Committee to attend the meeting, subject to the consent of the Chair.

The Committee Terms of Reference, as attached, have been developed in support of the Policy and are proposed for adoption. The Terms of Reference make provision for Committee members, meeting frequency and meeting quorum.

Policy and Legislative Context

This report is in keeping with the commitments in the Council Plan 2021-2025:
Theme Five - Community Leadership
Having strong governance practices

Internal / External Consultation

Consultation was undertaken via a briefing with Councillors.

External consultation and benchmarking was undertaken with other Councils within the region.

Financial and Resource Implications

The cost of the Advisor will be approved via Council Resolution and accommodated in future budgets.

Conclusions

The proposed changes to the Chief Executive Officer Employment and Remuneration Policy align to the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020* and best practice. The Policy is recommended for adoption,

RECOMMENDATION - 9.4

That Council:

- 1. Revoke the Chief Executive Officer Employment and Remuneration Policy May 2023.**
- 2. Adopt:**
 - a. Chief Executive Officer Employment and Remuneration Policy March 2025; and**
 - b. Chief Executive Officer Employment and Remuneration Policy Terms of Reference March 2025.**

Chief Executive Officer Employment and Remuneration Policy

Corangamite Shire

March 2025



Council Policy



Chief Executive Officer Employment and Remuneration Policy

Introduction

Corangamite Shire Council is committed to, and will ensure, the application of good governance, transparency and fairness in all matters relating to the employment, management and remuneration of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to support the requirements of the Local Government Act 2020 by outlining Council's approach to managing the CEO performance, remuneration and general employment conditions.

Scope

This policy applies to activity undertaken by the Council, CEO Employment and Remuneration Advisory Committee, Manager Organisational Development, appointed Independent Advisor and candidates or incumbents of the Chief Executive Officer position.

Definitions

CEO	Chief Executive Officer
Council	Corangamite Shire Council
Independent Advisor	A consultant with specialist expertise in human resources, performance monitoring and review for executives.
The Act	The Local Government Act 2020

Adopted at Council on: 25 March 2025
Agenda Item:
Responsibility: Manager Governance and Civic Support
Document Number: 3018370

Department: Governance
To be reviewed by: March 2029

Page Number: 2

References

The Policy has been developed in accordance with the requirements of section 45 of the Local Government Act 2020 and provides clear processes for all aspects of the CEO employment, including:

- Recruitment;
- Contract of Employment;
- Remuneration;
- Setting annual performance objectives and measures;
- Managing performance and performance reviews;
- Other terms and conditions of employment, including any requirements prescribed in Regulations.

Policy Detail

To implement the requirements of the Act the obligations regarding CEO employment, performance and remuneration will be delivered through the CEO The CEO Employment and Remuneration Advisory Employment and Remuneration Advisory Committee.

CEO Employment and Remuneration Advisory Committee

Committee will be chaired by the Mayor and two other Councillors, who are appointed on an annual basis. Following each review a report will be provided to the following Council meeting.

The Independent Advisor will be a non-voting member.

Administrative support will be provided by the Manager Governance and Civic Support, or in the absence of the Manager Governance and Civic Support an alternate senior member of staff, agreed to by the Committee Chair and CEO.

• Membership

The Committee shall be composed of:

- The Mayor, as Chair,
- 2 additional Councillors as appointed by the Council, and
- The Independent Advisor.

• Independent Advisor

Council will engage an Independent Advisor for professional advice in relation to the matters dealt with in this policy, including the reappointment of the current Chief Executive Officer.

The Independent Advisor will be a non-voting member of the Committee. The Independent Advisor will be suitably qualified and experienced in human resources and must not be a Councillor or Council employee or officer.

• Independent Professional Advice

In accordance with section 45 of the Act, this policy provides for the Council to obtain independent professional advice in relation to matters dealt with in this policy.

Where professional/legal advice is sought directly relating to matters contained within this policy, Manager Governance and Civic Support will facilitate the engagement.

- **Observers**

Councillors who are not a member of the Committee may, subject to the consent of the Chair, attend the Committee meeting as an Observer.

- **Integrity of the process**

All information relating to the recruitment and review of the CEO must be kept strictly confidential by all Councillors and staff involved.

CEO Performance Review

The Chief Executive Officer performance review committee will assess the performance of the CEO against the annual key responsibility areas (KRAs).

The review will also include the opportunity for Council to provide the CEO with performance related feedback, and in consultation with the CEO, identify and agree on the KRAs. The CEO will be given the opportunity to present a performance review report to the Council.

The performance review will be completed annually to coincide with the anniversary of the CEO's commencement date, and the CEO's contract of employment.

An informal performance review will be conducted within six (6) months of the formal annual review each year thereafter unless it is agreed by Council and the CEO that such a review is unnecessary.

CEO Remuneration

Following the annual formal performance review of the CEO, the Council review the remuneration package of the CEO giving consideration to any statement of policy issued by the Government of Victoria which is in force with respect to its wages policy (or equivalent), any determination that is in effect under Section 21 of the Victorian Independent Remuneration Tribunal and Improving Parliamentary Standards Act 2019 and the CEO contractual conditions.

CEO Recruitment

The Council will appoint an External Recruitment Consultant in line with council's procurement policy to manage the recruitment process of the CEO. This will include:

- Taking a detailed brief from the Council on the role and the ideal candidate;
- Preparing a detailed scheduled outlining the end to end recruitment process and timeline;
- Developing an advertising strategy to attract suitable candidates;
- Assisting the Council to conduct first and second round interviews to determine a short list of candidates;

- Conducting the relevant psychometrics testing to determine the best fit;
- Conducting reference checks on the preferred candidate;
- Performing probity checks on the preferred candidate;
- Notifying unsuccessful candidates;
- Working with the Manager Human Resources and Risk to issue the contract of employment for the new CEO;
- Working with the Communications teams for the Council to announce the appointment of the new CEO.

CEO Contract of Employment

When considering the CEO Contract of Employment, Council must have regard to any matters prescribed by the relevant regulations including remuneration, termination, re-appointment and other employment conditions based on industry benchmarks, any statement of wages policy issued by the Government of Victoria and any determination that is in effect under Section 21 of the Victorian Independent remuneration Tribunal and Improving Parliamentary Standards Act 2019.

Mandatory contractual terms and conditions for the Chief Executive:

- A contract of employment is to be offered for a period of up to five years;
- The total remuneration package (TRP) includes salary, superannuation, the cost of a motor vehicle but excludes general business expenses such as laptop computer, mobile phone or study leave; and
- Termination of contract provisions.

CEO leave and appointment of Acting CEO

An application for long service leave or an extended absence over four weeks is to be approved by the Mayor on behalf of Council.

If the period of leave is to exceed four weeks in a continuous period, then the appointment of an Acting CEO will be by a formal resolution of Council.

Reappointment of the CEO

No more than 6 months and no less than 3 months prior to the expiry of the current CEO's contract of employment, the CEO Employment and Remuneration Advisory Committee will provide a recommendation to Council on:

- whether the CEO should be reappointed under a new contract of employment;
- if the recommendation is to reappoint the CEO, the proposed provisions of the further contract of employment.

Where the contract of employment is for a term of 12 months or less, the period of months referred to above shall be 'no more than 2 months and no less than 1 month'.

Any reappointment of the current CEO must be made by a resolution of Council.

Review Date

March 2029

This Policy will be reviewed at least every 4 years, including input from the Committee, and within 6 months after each Council election, and the CEO Employment and Remuneration Advisory Committee may make a recommendation to Council with respect to any suggested changes.

It is considered that this Policy does not impact negatively on any rights identified in the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*.

The *Gender Equality Act 2020* requires Council to undertake gender impact assessments when developing or reviewing any policy, program or service which has a direct and significant impact on the public. This policy **will not** have a direct and significant public impact and a Gender Impact Assessment has not been undertaken.

Adopted at Council on: 25 March 2025
Agenda Item:
Responsibility: Manager Governance and Civic
Support
Document Number: 3018370

Department: Governance
To be reviewed by: March 2029

Page Number: 6

Terms Of Reference

CEO Employment and Remuneration Advisory Committee
(ERAC)
March 2025



Establishment of Committee

The Chief Executive Officer Employment and Remuneration Advisory Committee ('the Committee'), is a formally appointed Advisory Committee of the Corangamite Shire Council ('the Council') for the purposes of the *Local Government Act 2020* ('the Act').

The Membership of the Committee and the Terms of Reference will be approved by resolution of the Council.

Purpose of Committee

The Committee's role is to assist and advise the Council on matters including:

- a. Recruitment of the Chief Executive Officer ('the CEO') or the person to act as the CEO;
- b. Determining the Performance Plan of the CEO;
- c. Monitoring the CEO's achievement of the Performance Plan; and
- d. Preparing an Annual Review Report on the CEO's performance and key terms of employment.

In carrying out its role, the Committee must have full regard for the directions set out in the CEO Employment and Remuneration Policy.

Authority and Compliance

The Committee is an advisory committee only and has no delegated decision-making authority.

Membership

The Committee shall be composed of:

- The Mayor, as Chair,
- 2 additional Councillors as appointed by the Council, and
- The Independent Advisor.

Remuneration

Remuneration in the form of a fee will be paid to independent members for meetings attended. The fee amount must be determined by Council resolution. The fee will be paid in arrears within 30 days of meeting attendance. Where requested by the Chair, to attend other meetings in their capacity as an independent advisor they will be entitled to the equivalent fee.

Endorsed by Council Resolution: 25 March 2025

Department: Governance and Civic Support
To be reviewed by: March 2029

Responsibility: Manager Governance and Civic
Support
Document Number:

Page number: 1

Appointment of Acting Chair

In the event the Mayor is unavailable to perform their duties the Deputy Mayor will act as Chair.

Observers

Any Councillor who is not a member of the Committee may subject to the consent of the Independent Chair attend a meeting of the Committee as an Observer.

Support to the Committee

Administrative responsibility and support for the Committee is assigned to the Governance team. This function includes providing:

- information and any necessary training for members in relation to their responsibilities under the Terms of Reference and the Act;
- preparation of meeting agendas;
- advice in respect to matters before the Committee; and
- secretarial and logistical support to the Committee

Responsibility for taking the Minutes within the meeting is assigned to the Manager Governance and Civic Support or in the absence of the Manager for Governance and Civic Support, an alternate senior officer agreed to by Committee Chair and the CEO.

Meeting Schedule

The Committee will meet at least two times per year, with authority to convene additional meetings as required. These include a mid-year review and an annual review.

Quorum

A quorum of the Chair and at least two other members will be necessary to transact the business of the committee. If no quorum able to be established, the meeting will be rescheduled.

If a quorum is not present within 20 minutes of the time appointed for the commencement of the meeting, the meeting shall lapse.

If a quorum fails after the commencement of the meeting, the meeting shall lapse. Business that is unfinished at the completion of a meeting may at the discretion of the Chair be referred to the next meeting of the Committee.

Conflict of Interest

If a Member has a conflict of interest relating to any item on a Meeting Agenda, the member must verbally disclose the type and nature of the interest immediately before consideration of the matter in question.

Endorsed by Council: 25 March 2025

Department: Governance and Civic Support
To be reviewed by: March 2029

Responsibility: Manager Governance and Civic Support
Document Number:

Page number: 2

Confidentiality

All Committee meetings and records are considered confidential and may be designated as confidential in accordance with the Act as the matters relate to personnel and contractual matters.

Records

To be held in accordance with HR policies.

Key Meeting and Reporting Requirements

- Mid-year Review.
- Full Year Performance Review.
- Submission of the Committee's Annual Review and Mid-Year review at the proceeding Council Meeting.

Endorsed by Council: 25 March 2025

Responsibility: Manager Governance and Civic Support
Document Number:

Department: Governance and Civic Support
To be reviewed by: March 2029

Page number: 3

9.5 Councillor Candidates at Federal or State Elections Policy Review

Directorate:	Governance and Civic Support
Author:	Kathryn Anderson, Manager Governance and Civic Support
Attachments:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Council Policy Councillor Candidates at Federal or State Elections Policy [9.5.1 - 4 pages]2. Under Separate Cover - Council Policy Councillor Candidates at Federal or State Elections Policy - tracked changes [9.5.2 - 5 pages]

Declaration

Chief Executive Officer – David Rae

In providing this advice to Council as the Chief Executive Officer, I have no interests to disclose in this report.

Author – Kathryn Anderson

In providing this advice to Council as the Manager Governance and Civic Support, I have no interests to disclose in this report.

Summary

Considering the approaching Federal Elections, it is timely to undertake a review of the Councillor Candidates at Federal or State Elections Policy ahead of its originally scheduled review date.

Introduction

The introduction of the *Local Government Act 2020* and its accompanying Regulations has resulted in a considerable change to the legislative context in which this policy operates. Additionally, there has been new guidance issued by the Municipal Association of Victoria regarding Councillors standing for State or Federal Elections. Appropriately, a new policy has been written with reference to these key documents.

The new proposed policy is attached for Councillors to review, along with the currently adopted policy for the purposes of comparison.

Issues

It is not an uncommon occurrence for a Councillor to seek election to either the Federal or State Parliament. There could possibly be a temptation for a Councillor

who is seeking election to misuse their position as a Councillor in a number of varied ways in order to further their politically focused campaign.

This occurrence poses a risk to the governance of the council in the periods prior to and leading up to an election. In order to guard against this risk, it is important that Council adopts a policy for election candidacy that can assist Council to:

- Ensure good governance at Council prior to and in an election campaign period.
- Ensure Councillors act in the best interest of the community, rather than their own personal interest.
- Prevent Council from making inappropriate decisions during an Election Period before a general election.
- Ensures that Council resources, including council staff, equipment and facilities, are not used inappropriately.
- Ensure that no decisions could be perceived as intended to affect the result of an election are made.

There is also the additional benefit of Councillors being able to protect themselves from breaching provisions of the Local Government Act 2020 that have severe penalties. For example, Section 123 of the Local Government Act 2020 provides it an offence for a Councillor to intentionally misuse their position to gain or attempt to gain an advantage for themselves or for any other person by making improper use of information acquired as a result of their position, or by using public funds or resources in a manner that is improper or unauthorised. Through the adoption of and compliance with such a policy, Councillors are able to provide themselves with some level of protection against such a breach.

Policy and Legislative Context

This report is also in keeping with the commitments in the Council Plan 2021-2025:

Theme Five - Community Leadership
Having strong governance practices

Internal / External Consultation

Nil

Financial and Resource Implications

Nil

Conclusions

Councillor Candidates at Federal or State Elections Policy has been reviewed and only minor editorial changes made:

- Updated reference to the Model Councillor Code of Conduct.
- Inclusion of the Gender Equality Act statement.

- Next review date to be August 2026 to align with the Victorian Election.

RECOMMENDATION - 9.5

That Council:

- 1. Council adopts the proposed Councillor Candidates at Federal or State Election Policy March 2025; and**
- 2. Revoke the Councillor Candidates at Federal or State Election Policy March 2022.**

Councillor Candidates at Federal or State Elections Policy

Corangamite Shire

March 2025



**CORANGAMITE
SHIRE**

Council Policy



Councillor Candidates at Federal or State Elections Policy

Purpose

This policy outlines Council's expectations of a Councillor who is, or seeks to become, a prospective candidate or a nominated candidate in a State or Federal Election.

Compliance with this policy will allow for Councillors to avoid the appearance that they are improperly using their position as a Councillor as a platform for their election campaign in a State or Federal election.

The policy adopts expectations of Councillors to avoid actions and decisions that could be interpreted as inappropriate. It also establishes the expectation that Councillors will not inappropriately use Council resources.

Scope

This policy applies to all Councillors who become or seek to become a Prospective Candidate or Nominated Candidate in a State or Federal Election.

Definitions

Campaigning	Undertaking activities in furtherance of an election campaign.
CEO	Chief Executive Officer.
Election	A Federal or State or Territory election, or a by-election for any of the Commonwealth's parliaments.
Election Campaign	The period of time proceeding an election where a candidate undertakes activities to persuade people to vote for them
Electoral Commission	The period of time proceeding an election where a candidate undertakes activities to persuade people to vote for them.
Formal Nomination Date	Date set by the relevant electoral commission at which nominations to be candidates in an election close.
Nominated Candidate	A Councillor who nominates as a candidate for a State or Federal Election. This is generally in the immediate weeks prior to the relevant election.

Adopted at Council on: 25 March 2025
Agenda Item:
Responsibility: Manager Governance and Civic Support
Document Number: 2054570

Department: Governance
To be reviewed by: August 2026

Page Number: 2

Prospective Candidate

A Councillor who becomes an endorsed candidate of a registered political party or publicly expresses an intention to run as an independent candidate for a State or Federal Election. This generally during the period of time prior to the formal nomination period.

References

Model Councillor Code of Conduct

Governance Rules

Local Government Act 2020 (VIC)

MAV Guidelines on Councillors standing for State or Federal Elections

Policy Detail

Councillors to declare their candidacy

As soon as practicable, a Councillor who becomes a Prospective Candidate or a Nominated Candidate for a State or Federal Election must provide written advice to the CEO. Upon receiving advice that a Councillor has become a Prospective or Nominated Candidate, the CEO will, as soon as practicable, provide written advice to all councillors.

A Councillor who is a candidate for a State or Federal Election should declare this at a meeting of the Council as soon as practicable after the formal nomination date.

Leave of absence

A Councillor who formally nominates as a candidate for a State or Federal Election with a State or Federal electoral commission should apply for leave of absence from the Council. This leave of absence should commence no later than the date of their nomination as a candidate with the relevant electoral commission for the Election and conclude no earlier than the close of voting for the relevant Election.

During this period, a Councillor who is on a leave of absence should not attend meetings of the Council or otherwise act as a Councillor, notwithstanding attending a meeting of the Council for the sole purpose of declaring their candidacy.

Council, upon receiving an application for a leave of absence from a Councillor who is a Nominated Candidate, or who intends to become a Nominated Candidate, should consider this as a reasonable request and approve that application.

Election of an acting Mayor

If a Councillor who formally nominates for a State or Federal Election holds the Office of Mayor, the Deputy Mayor will serve as acting Mayor for a period no longer than the Mayor's leave of absence.

Improper use of Position by Councillors

Section 123 of the *Local Government Act 2020* provides it an offence for a Councillor to intentionally misuse their position to gain or attempt to gain an advantage for themselves or for any other person by, inter alia, making improper use of information acquired as a result of their position, and using public funds or resources in a manner that is improper or unauthorised.

A Councillor who is a Prospective or Nominated Candidate should:

- Take care to declare conflicts of interests that may pertain to their conflicting role as a candidate.
- Take care to differentiate between their role as a State or Federal Election candidate and their role as a Councillor when making public comment.
- Not participate in any way in the processes of Council relating to a matter before Council if the candidate is campaigning on the said matter.
- Avoid campaigning on (through opposition or taking credit for) Council decisions.
- Take all reasonable steps to avoid the appearance that they are using their position as a Councillor as platform to promote or further their candidacy.

Council Resources and Activities

A Councillor who is a Prospective Candidate or a Nominated Candidate must not use Council resources in connection with an election campaign. These include, but are not limited to, officers and support staff, hospitality services, mobile phones, computers, tablets, stationary, printers, vehicles, paper, council publications, council provided email addresses, council facilities, and photographs taken at or for official Council business.

A Councillor who is a Prospective Candidate or a Nominated Candidate. Should not use council activities, including council meetings, events, network meetings and council-related external activities in relation to their candidacy.

Resignation of Office upon successful candidacy

Section 34(2)(a) of the *Local Government Act 2020* specifies a person is not qualified to be a Councillor and ceases to hold the Office of Councillor if they are a member of the Victorian Parliament, the Commonwealth Parliament, or of another State or Territory of the Commonwealth's Parliament. Therefore, a Councillor must resign immediately if their candidacy in a State or Federal Election is successful.

Review Date

August 2026

It is considered that this Policy does not impact negatively on any rights identified in the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*.

The *Gender Equality Act 2020* requires Council to undertake gender impact assessments when developing or reviewing any policy, program or service which has a direct and significant impact on the public. This policy **will not** have a direct and significant public impact and a Gender Impact Assessment has not been undertaken.

9.6 Sexual Harassment - Prevention and Reporting Policy Review

Directorate:	Corporate and Community Services
Author:	Michele Stephenson, Manager Human Resources and Risk
Attachments:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Sexual Harassment - Preventing and Reporting Policy March 2025 [9.6.1 - 12 pages]2. Under Separate Cover - Sexual harassment - Prevention and Reporting Policy March 2025 tracked changes [9.6.2 - 13 pages]

Declaration

Chief Executive Officer – David Rae

In providing this advice to Council as the Chief Executive Officer, I have no interests to disclose in this report.

Author – Michele Stephenson

In providing this advice to Council as the Manager Human Resources and Risk, I have no interests to disclose in this report.

Summary

This report recommends that Council rescind the Sexual Harassment – Prevention and Reporting Policy dated February 2022, and that it adopts the revised Sexual Harassment – Prevention and Reporting Policy dated March 2025.

The Sexual Harassment – Prevention and Reporting Policy (the Policy) aims to inform Councillors, and people who work for Council, about what constitutes workplace sexual harassment and victimisation. It also reaffirms Council's commitment to maintaining a safe, inclusive, and healthy work environment. The Policy applies to all people who work for Council, and given the legislative responsibilities and protections afforded to them, Councillors are included within the Policy's scope.

The Policy provides guidance on reporting instances of sexual harassment or victimisation, and offers information about support services available to those affected by or who are witnesses to such behaviours.

Introduction

Council maintains a zero-tolerance approach towards sexual harassment or victimisation in the workplace. Councils can be held vicariously liable for any acts of sexual harassment or victimisation that occur in connection with work. Under equal opportunity laws, Council has a positive duty to take all reasonable measures to

eliminate such behaviours. Additionally, perpetrators will be held personally liable for substantiated allegations, and certain types of sexual harassment may also constitute a criminal offence.

In 2020 the Victorian Auditor General's Office (VAGO) conducted a sector-wide survey to inform an audit into the prevalence of sexual harassment in local government. A total of 75 Victorian councils participated, with 9,939 employees and councillors responding. The survey results were analysed to identify the context and drivers for sexual harassment in local government. The audit found that sexual harassment was most likely to occur during day-to-day work and was experienced by all roles and levels in councils. People at greater risk were:

- Lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and gender diverse people (48% had experienced harassment)
- Young women (42% aged between 18 and 34 experienced sexual harassment)
- People living with a disability (41% experienced sexual harassment)

Following this analysis, several recommendations were made to address the prevalence of sexual harassment in the workplace. One key outcome was the development of a stand-alone Sexual Harassment – Prevention and Reporting Policy. This Policy and other measures have been implemented in response to the audit's recommendations.

Issues

A review of the 2022 Policy was undertaken in accordance with the policy review cycle. The review also considered the following updates to the VPSC Model for the Prevention of Sexual Harassment in the Workplace:

- An acknowledgement that sexual harassment disproportionately affects certain groups of workers and is often experienced alongside other forms of discrimination based on disability, race, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status and age.
- Support for welfare, anonymous reporting and protection against victimisation
- Clarification of reporting options for individuals or groups who have experienced sexual harassment in the workplace.
- Use of consistent and more inclusive language such as referring to 'reports' rather than 'complaints' of sexual harassment.
- Provision of additional external support options.

The review also considered amendments to the Fair Work Act, enacted on 6 March 2023, which expanded the protections around sexual harassment in the workplace.

Minor administrative adjustments to improve clarity but not change the intent have also been made to the Policy.

Policy and Legislative Context

This report is in keeping with the commitments in the Council Plan 2021-2025:

Theme Three - A Healthy, Active and Resilient Community
Access and inclusion is improved

Theme Five - Community Leadership
Having strong governance practices
We provide a great work environment

The Gender Equality Act 2020 requires Council to undertake Gender Impact Assessments when developing or reviewing any policy, program or service which has a direct and significant impact on the public. A Gender Impact Assessment has been undertaken and it is considered that the policy meets the needs of people of different genders, addresses gender inequality, and promotes gender equality.

Internal / External Consultation

The Sexual Harassment Prevention and Reporting Policy was developed by the Human Resources Department and reviewed by the Executive Leadership Team.

The Policy is in alignment with the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission's Guideline: Preventing and responding to workplace sexual harassment, as well as the Victorian Public Sector Commission's Model Sexual Harassment Policy and Practice Guide. Additionally, it addresses the recommendations from the VAGO audit on sexual harassment in local government.

Financial and Resource Implications

The implementation of this Policy will be within existing resources and budget.

Options

Council may rescind the Sexual Harassment Prevention and Reporting Policy dated February 2022 and adopt the Sexual Harassment Prevention and Reporting Policy dated March 2025 as presented, or with amendment.

Conclusions

This Policy underscores the responsibility of the Council, Councillors, and people who work for Council to ensure a safe, harassment-free working environment. It also provides a means for redress for those affected by workplace sexual harassment or victimisation.

Workplace sexual harassment is a serious issue, and the adoption of this Policy will reinforce Council's commitment to maintaining a safe, inclusive, and healthy environment, free from all forms of harassment and victimisation.

RECOMMENDATION - 9.6

That Council:

- 1. Revokes the Sexual Harassment Prevention and Reporting Policy dated February 2022**
- 2. Adopts the Sexual Harassment Prevention and Reporting Policy dated March 2025**



**CORANGAMITE
SHIRE**

Sexual Harassment – Prevention and Reporting Policy

Corangamite Shire
March 2025

Council Policy



Sexual Harassment – Preventing and Reporting

Introduction and Aim

Sexual harassment is prohibited by both the *Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)* (the Act) and the *Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)*.

Council is committed to fostering a safe, inclusive and respectful environment for councillors and people who work for Council that is free from harassment and victimisation.

This policy explains:

- What sexual harassment and victimisation is
- Everyone's legal responsibility to prevent these behaviours in the workplace
- How individuals can address incidents of sexual harassment or victimisation

Scope

This policy applies to councillors and all people who perform work for Council, including employees, trainees, contractors, work experience students and volunteers.

This policy applies to circumstances including but not limited to:

- Councillor and employee treatment of other councillors, employees, clients, and members of the public encountered in the course of their duties.
- All aspects of employment including during recruitment.
- Work performed wherever and whenever employees may be as a result of their duties, for example: out of hours or off-site work and when working from home.
- In vehicles while performing work, or while travelling to work functions.
- In accommodation (i.e. hotel rooms) provided by Council, and at work-related functions such as conferences, events, or training programs.
- At social functions sponsored and paid for by Council
- At after-parties to such events
- Out-of-hours interaction when there is a strong connection to the employment relationship.
- Face-to-face or electronic communication interactions, including SMS, email, and social media platforms.

Adopted by Council:
Agenda Item:
Responsibility: Manager Human Resources/Risk
Document Number:

Department: HR & Risk Management
To be reviewed by: March 2029
Policy Number:
Page Number: 2

- At any location in situations where the conduct commenced in the workplace and continued outside the workplace and vice-versa.

Definitions

<i>Bystander</i>	Someone who witnesses or overhears sexual harassment
<i>Client</i>	All persons to whom services are provided by Council
<i>Informal Report</i>	Informal reports are not dealt with through a formal process or investigation. They explore options to resolve a matter without requiring factual proof or substantiation
<i>Formal Report</i>	A process where an employee cannot resolve a matter informally, or from the outset wishes to have the matter formally investigated
<i>Complainant</i>	A person who makes a formal or informal report of sexual harassment or victimisation
<i>Gender Equality</i>	Gender equality means equality of rights, opportunities, responsibilities and outcomes between persons of different genders (<i>Gender Equality Act 2020</i>)
<i>Men & Women</i>	These terms are inclusive of trans men and trans women
<i>Natural Justice</i>	All people have a right to natural justice in an investigation or report of inappropriate behaviour. This includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being considered innocent until proven guilty. • Being protected from false or malicious allegations. • Being fully informed of the report and the report process. • Having the right of reply to the report. • Having a support person. • The maintenance of confidentiality.
<i>Positive Duty</i>	Under the Act, employers have a duty to take reasonable and proportionate measures to eliminate discrimination, sexual harassment, and victimisation as far as possible.
<i>Respondent</i>	The person identified by the complainant and/or investigator as having engaged in the alleged behaviour
<i>Sexual Harassment</i>	Unwanted conduct of a sexual nature, which could reasonably be expected to make the other person feel offended, humiliated, or intimidated. It can be physical, verbal or written (including electronic communication).
<i>Vicarious Liability</i>	Refers to an employer's legal responsibility for unlawful actions undertaken by their agents or employees. Employers can be held legally responsible for acts of discrimination or harassment that occur in the workplace in connection with a person's employment
<i>Victimisation</i>	Victimisation occurs when a person punishes or threatens to punish a person because they have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • asserted their rights under the Act. • made a report or allegation of a contravention of the <i>Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)</i> (formal or informal).

Adopted by Council:
Agenda Item:
Responsibility: Manager Human Resources/Risk
Document Number:

Department: HR & Risk Management
To be reviewed by: March 2029
Policy Number:
Page Number: 3

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• helped someone else make a report• refused to do something because it would be discrimination, sexual harassment, or victimisation.
--	--

Policy Detail

Corangamite Shire Council has a zero-tolerance policy towards sexual harassment. All councillors, employees, volunteers, and contractors are expected to treat others with dignity, respect, and fairness, and must not engage in any unlawful conduct, including sexual harassment. Every councillor, manager, supervisor, and employee is responsible for ensuring that sexual harassment does not occur. Training and awareness programs will be implemented to ensure everyone understands their rights and responsibilities.

People working for Council may be personally liable if allegations of sexual harassment are substantiated against them, and employees may have their employment terminated.

Corangamite Shire strongly encourages anyone who feels that they have been sexually harassed or victimised to take immediate action. All reports of sexual harassment will be treated seriously, promptly and with sensitivity.

What is sexual harassment?

Sexual harassment is unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature towards another person.

Sexual harassment can occur at any level of the organisation and can be experienced or perpetrated by anyone, including councillors, co-workers, volunteers, supervisors, managers, service providers, clients, or customers. It is important to note that lack of intent is no defence in sexual harassment cases.

Sexual harassment in workplaces is often driven by gender inequality and women are significantly more likely than men to experience sexual harassment. Sexual harassment disproportionately affects some groups of workers, and often with other forms of discrimination such as based on disability, age, cultural diversity, diverse sexual orientation, marital status and gender identity.

Sexual harassment is a form of gendered violence.

When is it sexual harassment?

Unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature constitutes sexual harassment if, in the given circumstances, a reasonable person would anticipate that the harassed individual might feel offended, humiliated or intimidated by the conduct.

- Relevant circumstances may include the age, relationship status, religious or cultural beliefs of the employee, and the relationship between the individuals involved (ie: conduct by a senior manager towards an employee).
- A single incident is sufficient to be considered sexual harassment, it does not have to be repeated behaviour.

Adopted by Council:
Agenda Item:
Responsibility: Manager Human Resources/Risk
Document Number:

Department: HR & Risk Management
To be reviewed by: March 2029
Policy Number:
Page Number: 4

- The intent of the person engaging in unwelcome behaviour is irrelevant. Sexual harassment is defined by the nature and the impact of the behaviour, not the intention behind it.
- It is important to note that if a person does not object to inappropriate behaviour at the time, it should not be assumed that they are giving their consent.
- Intoxication will never excuse sexual harassment or victimisation

Harassment by third parties

People may experience sexual harassment while performing their role by people who are not directly connected with Council.

Council may take a range of actions to address sexual harassment by third parties including but not limited to:

- Liaising with the authority responsible for the person, if relevant
- Withdrawing council services from a client
- Banning a person from the workplace
- Reporting a matter to the police.

Behaviour that may amount to sexual harassment

- Unwelcome physical contact of a sexual nature
- Making gestures of a sexual nature in a person's presence or leering or staring
- Sexual assault, indecent exposure, or stalking (which are also criminal offences)
- Requesting sex or acts of a sexual nature
- Commenting or asking intrusive questions about someone's private life, sexuality or how they look
- Displaying or exposing someone to offensive imagery or conduct of a sexual nature, for example, screen savers, photos, calendars, or objects
- Making promises or threats in return for sexual favours
- Actions or comments of a sexual nature in a person's presence (even if not directed at that person)

Technology and social media

Sexual harassment can occur through electronic means such as emails, phone calls, text messages, social media or inappropriate websites, regardless of whether the post was made during work hours or not. It can start in 'real life' and carry over to online spaces.

The same rules about sexual harassment apply in the virtual world as in the real world.

Adopted by Council:
Agenda Item:
Responsibility: Manager Human Resources/Risk
Document Number:

Department: HR & Risk Management
To be reviewed by: March 2029
Policy Number:
Page Number: 5

What is not sexual harassment

Sexual harassment is not behaviour which is based on mutual attraction, friendship, and respect. If the sexual or romantic interaction is consensual, welcome, and reciprocated, it is not sexual harassment.

What is victimisation?

The Act makes it unlawful to victimise someone for raising a sexual harassment report. Victimisation involves subjecting or threatening to subject someone to a detriment because they have:

- Made or believed to be about to make a report or allegation of sexual harassment.
- Helped someone else make a report of sexual harassment
- Refused to engage in a behaviour that would constitute sexual harassment, discrimination, or victimisation.

A person will subject another person to a detriment if their conduct makes that person feel uncomfortable, isolated, unwelcome, intimidated, unsafe or insecure.

Examples of victimisation include, but are not limited to:

- Demoting or threatening to demote someone for making or potentially making a report.
- Ostracising or excluding someone in the workplace for making or assisting with a report.
- Denying a promotion to a complainant because they alleged sexual harassment or victimisation.
- Reducing someone's shifts because they made a report.
- Sacking, or threatening to sack some for making a report.

Victimisation also includes behaviour towards individuals who have, or might, complain of sexual harassment, as well as bystanders or those perceived to have assisted in making a report.

Reporting sexual harassment or victimisation

Corangamite Shire strongly encourages anyone who believes that they have been sexually harassed or victimised, or have witnessed sexual harassment or victimisation, to report their experience.

Reports can be made by emailing, phoning or speaking directly with a manager, director or human resources.

Anonymous reports can also be made by telephoning or emailing the Manager Human Resources and requesting anonymity. While every effort will be made to maintain anonymity, it may not always be possible. In certain situations, such as when procedural fairness and natural justice principles apply, or when there is a serious threat to an individual(s) health and safety, it may be necessary to provide the respondent with full details of the allegations.

People affected by sexual harassment will be supported in making a report. Council will listen to and work with complainants to ensure their safety and well-being.

Adopted by Council:
Agenda Item:
Responsibility: Manager Human Resources/Risk
Document Number:

Department: HR & Risk Management
To be reviewed by: March 2029
Policy Number:
Page Number: 6

In cases of sexual assault, complainants will be encouraged to make a report to the police.

Informal intervention

Informal intervention occurs if the complainant wishes the report of sexual harassment or victimisation to be dealt with without a formal process or investigation. The respondent will be made aware of the allegations against them and given the right to respond.

The matter is considered resolved when the complainant and respondent agree on the procedure to be followed.

It should be noted that informal handling of a report may not always be appropriate, even if the complainant does not want any further action. This is because some reported conduct may constitute an occupational health and safety risk, a criminal offence, or require disciplinary action.

Formal report

A formal investigation about a report is carried out when a matter cannot be resolved informally, or if the complainant wishes the matter to be formally investigated from the outset.

Formal investigations may be conducted internally (by a manager or HR) or by an external investigator. The investigator may need to interview the parties involved, including the complainant, the respondent, and any witnesses. Participants may be stood down or provided with alternative duties during the investigation if deemed necessary for safety and efficiency.

Throughout the process, all parties will be kept informed. Complete records of a report, including the name of the investigator, and the rationale for conducting, not conducting or stopping an investigation, will be maintained in a secure and confidential location.

Bystander intervention

The report does not need to have come from the alleged victim. Bystanders, including colleagues, who are witnesses, or who are aware of sexual harassment may also make a report in relation to sexual harassment or victimisation. Action taken by colleagues can positively impact on defining a safe and inclusive workplace culture.

When safe to do so, bystanders who are aware of sexual harassment are encouraged to:

- Provide support to the colleague who is being subjected to sexual harassment
- Formally or informally challenge the concerning behaviour if possible
- Report sexual harassment.

The standard that people walk past is the standard that people accept.

A report of sexual harassment can also be made to the following organisations:

Adopted by Council:
Agenda Item:
Responsibility: Manager Human Resources/Risk
Document Number:

Department: HR & Risk Management
To be reviewed by: March 2029
Policy Number:
Page Number: 7

Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission

Phone: 1300 292 153 (*enquiry line*)

Website: [Make a complaint \(humanrights.vic.gov.au\)](https://www.humanrights.vic.gov.au)

Fair Work Commission

Phone: 1300 799 675

Website: [Fair Work Commission – Sexual harassment](https://www.fairwork.gov.au)

The Fair Work Commission has 'stop sexual harassment' powers, and in addition, can deal with disputes about sexual harassment by:

- Conciliation
- Mediation, or
- Making a recommendation or expressing an opinion

The Commission may also be able to make an order for compensation for lost wages or require a person to do something that's reasonable to remedy any loss or damage suffered.

Victoria Police

Sexual assault may be criminal conduct. Reports of sexual assault should be made to the police, and can be accessed here:

- Sexual Offences and Child Abuse Investigation Team (SOCIT)
- In an emergency situation call 000.
- For police assistance when there is no immediate danger, call 131 444

Information or claims without substance

Individuals found to have knowingly provided false information or making baseless allegations of sexual harassment may face separate disciplinary action.

Confidentiality

Disclosures of sexual harassment will be treated confidentially to protect privacy. However, some matters may need to be escalated or referred without a person's consent, especially if they:

- Constitute a criminal offence
- Pose an occupational health and safety risk, or
- Require disciplinary action.

Findings

A substantiated report of sexual harassment may result in several outcomes determined by the Councillor Code of Conduct, Employee Code of Conduct and Misconduct and Discipline Policy.

The outcome may include any combination of the following:

- Formal apologies and an undertaking to cease the behaviour
- Conciliation/mediation by an impartial third party
- Counselling

Adopted by Council:
Agenda Item:
Responsibility: Manager Human Resources/Risk
Document Number:

Department: HR & Risk Management
To be reviewed by: March 2029
Policy Number:
Page Number: 8

- Disciplinary action against the harasser, up to and including formal warnings or termination of employment
- Disciplinary action against the complainant if the report is found to be vexatious or malicious

If an allegation appears to be a criminal offence, the CEO may be obliged to report the matter to the police, regardless of whether the complainant has done so.

Criminal offences include:

- physical molestation or assault
- indecent exposure
- sexual assault
- stalking
- obscene communications (e.g. telephone calls)

Vicarious Liability

Unless Council has taken all reasonable steps to prevent an employee or councillor from committing sexual harassment or victimisation in connection with their employment or councillor duties, the Council may be vicariously liable for that conduct.

Related Legislation:

As employers and providers of services, councils have obligations under Occupational Health and Safety legislation and anti-discrimination law to provide a safe workplace.

Federal

- *Fair Work Act (2009)*
- *Sex Discrimination Act 1984 Sections 28A and 28B*

State

- *The Victorian Equal Opportunity Act 2010*
- *Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*
- *Local Government Act 2020 Division 5*
- *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*
- Victorian EO and Human Rights Commission Guideline - Preventing and responding to workplace sexual harassment
- Victorian Public Sector Commission – Model Sexual Harassment Policy and Practice Guide

Related Council Policies and Guidelines

The following guidelines and complaints handling procedures will assist employees and councillors to comply with this policy:

- Employee Complaints, Grievance and Dispute Procedure
- Employee Code of Conduct

Adopted by Council:
Agenda Item:
Responsibility: Manager Human Resources/Risk
Document Number:

Department: HR & Risk Management
To be reviewed by: March 2029
Policy Number:
Page Number: 9

- Councillor Code of Conduct
- Occupational Health and Safety Policy
- Equal Opportunity Policy
- Bullying Prevention Policy
- Electronic Communications Policy
- Misconduct and Discipline Policy

Responsibilities

Chief Executive Officer

The CEO is responsible for:

- Assisting councillors in understanding their roles and responsibilities
- Receiving reports of sexual harassment or victimisation from councillors
- Communicating a culture of respect, and ensuring leaders model respectful behaviour

Councillors

Councillors have a responsibility to:

- Uphold the provisions of Division 5 of the *Local Government Act 2020*
- Comply with the Councillor Code of Conduct
- Comply with this policy and related legislation
- Report acts of sexual harassment or victimisation they have experienced or witnessed
- Participate in any training provided, including completing the equal opportunity and bullying and harassment eLearning modules

Employees/Volunteers

All people who work for Council have a responsibility to:

- Comply with this policy, related procedures, and legislation.
- Respect the social and cultural diversity among other councillors, employees, and customers.
- Report acts of sexual harassment or victimisation they have experienced or witnessed
- Avoid gossip and respect the confidentiality of the complaint resolution procedures.
- Participate in any training provided, including completing the equal opportunity and bullying and harassment eLearning modules

Supervisors/Managers

Supervisors and managers have additional responsibilities to:

- Model appropriate standards of behaviour.
- Know the principles supporting this policy to effectively deal with any concerns.
- Make it clear to employee that sexual harassment or victimisation will not be tolerated.

Adopted by Council:
Agenda Item:
Responsibility: Manager Human Resources/Risk
Document Number:

Department: HR & Risk Management
To be reviewed by: March 2029
Policy Number:
Page Number: 10

- Act immediately if they witness or are advised about sexual harassment or victimisation
- Treat employee reports seriously and confidentially in accordance with the grievance procedures.

Human Resources/Risk Management Department

The Human Resources/Risk Department is responsible for reviewing and circulating this policy.

The department will:

- Coordinate ongoing training
- Maintain and coordinate the eLearning modules
- Provide advice and support to people who may have experienced, witnessed, or reported sexual harassment.
- Maintain a register of sexual harassment reports

Support

Making a report of sexual harassment can be very difficult for affected employees. Council will take necessary welfare steps following a report of sexual harassment. This can include supporting alternative work arrangements or other reasonable work adjustments and connecting the individual(s) with Council's Employee Assistance Program, which is a confidential free counselling service for all staff and councillors (and their immediate families).

Council's EAP Provider is Optum Australia and can be contacted on 1300 361 008 (24 hours)

Psychological and general support and advice can also be accessed at:

1800RESPECT

Information, referral, and counselling for people experiencing sexual assault or family violence (24 hours)

Phone: 1800 737 732

Web: 1800respect.org.au

Lifeline

24- hour crisis support and suicide prevention

Phone: 13 11 14

Web: lifeline.org.au

Wire: Women's Support Line

Support, referral and information for women and gender-diverse people

Phone: 1300 134 130 (business hours)

Email: inforequests@wire.org.au

Web: wire.org.au

Mensline

A national phone and online support service for men

Adopted by Council:
Agenda Item:
Responsibility: Manager Human Resources/Risk
Document Number:

Department: HR & Risk Management
To be reviewed by: March 2029
Policy Number:
Page Number: 11

Phone: 1300 789 978
Web: mensline.org.au

Information and support is available from the relevant union.

Australian Services Union

Phone: 93423400 or member line 1300 855 570
Web: asuvictas.com.au

Professionals Australia

Phone: 1300 273 762
Web: professionalsaustralia.org.au

Australian Education Union

Phone: 1800 238 842
Web: aeuvic.asn.au

Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation

Phone: 9272 9333
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Gender Impact Assessment undertaken – no changes to policy required

The *Gender Equality Act 2020* requires Council to undertake Gender Impact Assessments when developing or reviewing any policy, program or service which has a direct and significant impact on the public. A Gender Impact Assessment has been undertaken and it is considered that the policy meets the needs of people of different genders, addresses gender inequality, and promotes gender equality.

Human Rights

It is considered that this Policy does not impact negatively on any rights identified in the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*.

Adopted by Council:
Agenda Item:
Responsibility: Manager Human Resources/Risk
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9.7 Early Years Plan 2025-2035

Directorate: Corporate and Community Services
Author: Katie Hearn, Manager Community Services
Attachments: 1. Corangamite Shire Early Years Plan 2025 - 2035 [9.7.1 - 42 pages]

Declaration

Chief Executive Officer – David Rae

In providing this advice to Council as the Chief Executive Officer, I have no interests to disclose in this report.

Author – Manager Community Services – Katie Hearn

In providing this advice to Council as Manager Community Services, I have no interests to disclose in this report.

Summary

This report presents the 2025 - 2035 Early Years Plan (**Attachment A**) to guide and inform Council in its planning and delivery of Early Years Education and Care services over the next decade. It addresses workforce, infrastructure and service modelling for Kindergarten, Long Day Care and Mobile Child Care.

Introduction

The Early Years Plan (EYP) 2025 – 2035 sets a strategy for Council's work in early years' education and care services for the next decade and has been prepared to guide Council in its response to the State Government's Best Start Best Life reforms as well as working towards meeting the needs of local families.

The EYP includes a point in time overview of infrastructure requirements, service modelling, workforce needs and recommendations for Council to enable the delivery of high quality education and care programs in contemporary learning environments. Council operates early childhood education and care (ECEC) services consisting of the following programs:

- six stand-alone kindergartens
- two after kinder care programs
- three long day care and three mobile child care programs.

Current supply of childcare places is not meeting community demand for long day care and childcare places. Limited childcare options and facilities capable of accommodating long day care programs have led to waitlists for services across the

Shire and region, particularly for birth to three year olds in context of availability of places, as well as days and hours offered.

Council also oversees a small Family Day Care program (four educators, predominantly part time) supported by a Commonwealth Government Sustainability funding until June 2026.

Issues

Council engaged Community Child Care Association and Grounded Solutions to undertake the development of the 10-year strategic early years plan. Family & Children's services staff, stakeholders, early years consumers and the voice of children have contributed to this plan via surveys and in person facilitated participation sessions in line with Child Safe Standards.

A study of the demographic trends for the area shows that Corangamite Shire 0 - 4 age range will remain relatively stable with a slight decrease of 5% between 2021 and 2036. These projections indicate that the demand for education and care across the municipality will not significantly change over the next ten or so years. However, due to current unmet demand, increased capacity of child care and long day care places must be considered. The EYP outlines four priority areas, identified as essential for enhancing the outcomes for children and families:

1. **Infrastructure and access to education and care:** All children across the municipality should have the opportunity to participate in education and care.
2. **Early Childhood Workforce:** The Shire requires expansion of its highly skilled workforce capable of delivering high-quality education and care programs.
3. **High-quality education and care and Maternal & Child Health (M&CH) Services:** Services need to encompass a comprehensive approach to education, care, and maternal and child health services, prioritising inclusion, safety, wellbeing, and educational outcomes.
4. **Health, wellbeing and connection:** Children and their families should have access to the health and family support services they need, as well as have opportunities to connect and be active participants in their community.

Within the four priority areas there are a total of 20 strategies with actions categorised as low, medium or high priority based on criteria such as safety, access, education and health outcomes. Plan implementation will be reviewed annually and subject to budget capacity and ability to attract external funding.

Audit and Facilities Management Plan

The Early Years Audit and Facilities Management Plan evaluated the current and future maintenance, expansion, and/or construction needs of the Corangamite Shire early years facilities. This included the Maternal and Child Health Camperdown complex, Kindergarten, Long Day Care, and Mobile Child Care services. The Facilities Plan provides an assessment of each facility individually including key building and design recommendations, safety concerns and low, medium and high priority requirements in order to enhance the services' compliance with National Quality Standards (NQS).

Current Context

- The State government has released housing targets for every Council across Victoria to support access to affordable housing. Corangamite currently has 8000 homes. Current targets for Corangamite to achieve by 2051 are an additional 1400 homes.
- Access to ECEC programs is a vital enabler to growing our population and will be necessary to ensure our Shire has the services and resources families most need.
- Advocacy for a State operated childcare centre has occurred on numerous occasions which to date has been unsuccessful.
- Recent Commonwealth announcements indicate funding to locate childcare centres on or near school sites in under-served markets which may be an option for Council.
- Council has committed to advocating for childcare both independently and through the South West Victoria Alliance along with growing our own workforce. These issues are clear economic drivers and a major contributor to achieving gender equity.

Early Years Plan

Priorities Year 1-2

- Work with State Government agencies to finalise the Kindergarten Infrastructure and Service Plan (KISP).
- Preliminary concept planning suitable to form a basic grant application has been prepared.
- Prepare designs and apply for funding for alterations to Camperdown MCH building.
- Apply for funding for improvements to Simpson, Timboon, Cobden, Terang Kindergartens and Ecklin, Port Campbell and Glenormiston childcare.
- Investigate funding opportunities to expand/improve infrastructure at Derrinallum and Skipton early years sites.
- Attraction and/or upskilling of a 9 additional degree trained Early Childhood teachers to meet Pre-Prep demand.
- Explore funding avenues to address high-priority recommendations in line with the Facilities Audit (Western Plains, Skipton, Ecklin).
- Advocate for increased access to childcare in high-demand areas such as Camperdown, Cobden and Terang with a focus on infants and toddlers.

Priorities Years 3-6

- Where funding is successful, plan for and upgrade Simpson, Timboon, Cobden, Terang Kindergartens and Ecklin, Port Campbell and Glenormiston childcare.
- Explore opportunities for sector partnerships to increase community access to childcare.
- Attraction and/or upskilling of 9 additional degree trained Early Childhood Teachers (ECTs) to meet Pre-Prep demand.

- Continued investment in the 'Grow Our Own' strategy to support attraction and upskilling of early years professionals.
- Plan for and advocate for funding to update and maintain outdoor play spaces.
- Expand Timboon to accommodate pre-prep and three-year funded kindergarten places by 2031.

Priorities Years 7-10

- Monitor supply and demand of childcare and kindergarten places and update plans as changes occur.
- Review of facilities and services to ensure compliance with National Quality Standards and inform Early Years Plan 2036-2046.
- Consider options for Lismore Early Years Facility.

Internal / External Consultation

The development of the EYP involved alignment with Commonwealth, State and Corangamite Shire Council policies and frameworks, site visits to Council-managed early years services with Grounded Studios, key stakeholder interviews and engagement, and analysis of demographic data.

This Plan has also been informed by stakeholders, service user families, children engaged in our services from 2023 and 2024, early years educators and facilities and coordination staff. Children were provided opportunities to contribute and shape the EYP. Analysis of their engagement emphasised the key areas children value in the early years services and spaces. This included outdoors environments for active, physical, and risky play; resources for imaginative, creative, and sensory play; natural environment; spaces to connect with peers, and family, as well as technology in their services for children to utilise. These key areas were fundamental in informing this EYP and have been incorporated into the plan's priorities and strategies.

A Workforce Plan (2024-2029) has also contributed to the service modelling and planning for the next decade. The current pre prep timeline for Corangamite is as follows:

Pre Prep roll out per year	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031
Corangamite Shire hours to be delivered	15	20	20	20	25	25	30

Policy and Legislative Context

The Victorian Government Best Start Best Life reforms include delivery of 15 hours of 3YO Kindergarten paired with a transition to offer 30 hours of play based learning for 4YO Kindergarten referred to as Pre-Prep by 2031. The Commonwealth is also investing heavily in childcare infrastructure and recognises equity of access as a key enabler.

Early Years is a highly regulated environment with increasing workforce obligations necessary for a safe environment that requires fit for purpose infrastructure and an agile staff pool. It is critical that Council take a planned approach to early years' service provision and infrastructure planning to enable a coordinated approach.

This report is also in keeping with the commitments in the Council Plan 2021-2025:

Theme One - A Connected Community

Infrastructure and services that deliver population growth and new housing

Theme Two - A Thriving Community

Engaging with young people and encouraging opportunities that retain young people in our Shire

Theme Five - Community Leadership

Council advocates strongly and respectfully on issues that matter to our community

Financial and Resource Implications

The recommendations for refurbishment and enhancement of Council facilities are outlined in the Early Years Facilities Audit. Additional funding will be required for Project Management and other functions to support implementation of the EYP and Facilities Plan. Should this Plan be adopted, Council staff will work with Economic Development, Facilities, Victorian School Board and Department of Education to support plan implementation.

The Commonwealth also recently announced 3 days of subsidised childcare with more information to become available as the bill makes its way through parliament. At the time of preparing this report, the Commonwealth advised it was investing \$1 billion to establish the Building Early Education Fund to build early childhood centers inclusive of regional areas and under-served markets. There is a preference for co-location on or near school sites. More information will be available in the coming months. Council continues to apply for grant funding for capital works aimed at enhancing our ageing infrastructure. Council should note, plan implementation will be subject to ability to attract grant funding and Council's annual budget cycle.

Conclusion

The Early Years Plan 2025-2035 is a complex body of work that incorporates investment in upgrade and refurbishment of facilities, service modelling and workforce planning and expansion. Plan implementation will involve working closely with State and Commonwealth agencies and other government and non-government entities. Some facilities are co-located and some service delivery is co-dependent on cooperation with other stakeholders.

The implementation of suggested recommendations will require both capital and operational investment and partnerships. The required funding will be needed from the

Commonwealth and State government(s) to support program changes they have introduced including the promise of three days of subsidised childcare and Best Start Best Life reforms.

RECOMMENDATION - 9.7

- 1. Adopt the Corangamite Shire Early Years Plan 2025 - 2035.**
- 2. Note the implementation of Early Years Plan 2025 - 2035 is subject to annual budget allocation, including external funding.**



Corangamite Shire Council Early Years Plan 2025-2035

Prepared for Corangamite Shire Council

Corangamite Shire Council acknowledges and pays our respects to the Eastern Maar and Wadawurrung peoples, as the Traditional Owners of the Lands that we work, live and play. We also acknowledge their Elders, past and present, and recognise their ongoing cultural, spiritual and educational practices.

Executive Summary	4
About us	6
Introduction	7
Need for project	7
Policy context	7
Vision	9
Council's role in the early years	9
Scope of the plan	10
Methodology	11
Policy informed planning	11
Data informed planning	11
Community informed planning	11
Education and Care Services in Corangamite	12
Council's education and care services	12
Externally managed education and care services	12
Childcare desert	13
Stakeholder engagement	13
Community voices	13
Children's voices	14
ECEC sector voices	15
Community snapshot	18
Birth and population	18

Children and families.....	19
Early years health and development.....	21
Future population.....	22
Education and Care demand.....	23
SWOT Analysis	23
Strengths	23
Weaknesses.....	24
Threats	26
Municipal plan	27
EYP priorities and actions	27
Priority One: Infrastructure and access to education and care	27
Priority Two: Early childhood workforce	30
Priority Three: High-quality – ECE and MCH services.....	33
Priority Four: Health, wellbeing and connection	34
Pre Prep Reform & Basic Modelling	37
Monitoring and evaluation	42
Appendices.....	42
Appendix A: Overview Facility Design Recommendations	42
Appendix B: Workforce & Modelling Guide	42
Appendix C: Types of Funded Kindergarten programs.....	42

Executive Summary

The Corangamite Shire Council Early Years Plan (EYP) 2025 – 2035 sets the strategy for Council's work in strengthening children's early years' education and care services for the next decade.

This strategy will support Council to prepare to meet Corangamite community's early education and care future needs, while complying with Commonwealth and State Government education and care regulations and policies.

Council recognises the significance of the early years, as the early childhood period represents a critical stage for investment with the greatest potential for long-term impact. Thus, Council's vision is that children, families and their community are connected and can thrive in Corangamite Shire. This will occur by ensuring children can access local high-quality education and care programs that optimise learning and growth while they are young and will deliver benefits for the rest of their lives.

The development of the EYP involved a series of key steps – including alignment with Commonwealth, State and Corangamite Shire Council policies, frameworks and regulations, site visits to Council-managed early years services with Grounded Studios (who provided the architectural expertise, profiling and environmental assessment), key stakeholder interviews and engagement, and analysis of demographic data.

Corangamite Shire Council operates a total of 11 early childhood education and care (ECEC) services, including kindergartens, long day care, and mobile child care programs. Council also oversees a small number of family day care services within the municipality. One independent kindergarten and three long day care services are in the Shire but are not operated by the Council.

Feedback from families who use the Council's ECEC services demonstrated high levels of appreciation with the services their children attend, emphasised the quality and varied programming services provide, and made special mention of the skilled local ECEC workforce.

However, current supply of childcare places is not meeting community demand with unmet pressure for long day care and childcare places. Limited childcare options and facilities capable of accommodating long day care programs have led to waitlists for services across the Shire and region, particularly for 0 to 2 year-olds in terms of availability of places, as well as days and hours offered.

Most families (75%) accessing ECEC in the Shire reported they required more hours (27%), more days (21%) or both more hours and more days (23%).

The under access to ECEC was highlighted by early years sector stakeholders' and community feedback. Additionally, Educators emphasised their focus on creating strong connections with families, particularly for families experiencing financial hardship and those facing family violence, social isolation, physical and mental health concerns, and other vulnerabilities.

The importance of this is reinforced by local population profiles which show Corangamite Shire has a higher proportion of low-income households (<\$650 pw) than Victoria (ABS, 2021) and is experiencing higher levels of disadvantage and lower levels of advantage than 60% of other local government areas in Victoria (SEIFA, 2021).

Analysis of Corangamite Shire Council (CSC) education and care services staff also highlighted the needs of the workforce to expand ECEC provision across the Shire.

Children were provided opportunities to contribute and shape the EYP. Analysis of their engagement emphasised key areas children value in the early years services and spaces. This included outdoors environments for active, physical, and risky play; resources for imaginative, creative, and sensory play; natural environment; spaces to connect with peers, and family, as well as technology in their services for children to utilise.

These key areas were fundamental in informing this EYP and have been incorporated into the plan's priorities and strategies.

Study of the demographic trends for the area shows that Corangamite Shire 0-4 age group population will remain relatively stable with a slight decrease of 5% between 2021 and 2036. These projections indicate that the demand for education and care across the municipality will not significantly change over the next ten or so years, but reform and policy changes will affect delivery. Due to current unmet demand, increased capacity of child care and long day care places across the Shire is required to meet current and future demand, particularly for 0 to 2 year-old age group.

Additionally, it is important the increased capacity is coupled with high-quality programming and integrated family supports.

This comprehensive and multidisciplinary review and analysis process informed four priority areas, identified as essential for enhancing the outcomes for children and families:

1. **Infrastructure and access to education and care:** All children across the municipality should have the opportunity to participate in education and care.
2. **Early Childhood Workforce:** The Shire requires a highly skilled workforce, capable of delivering high-quality education and care programs.
3. **High-quality education and care and Maternal & Child Health (M&CH) Services:** Services need to encompass a comprehensive approach to education, care, and maternal and child health services, prioritising inclusion, safety, wellbeing, and educational outcomes.
4. **Health, wellbeing and connection:** Children and their families should have access to the health and family support services they need, as well as have opportunities to connect and be active participants in their community.

Over the next 10 years Council will be focusing on 10 key priorities and actions under the focus areas. The plan fosters a whole of community and whole-of system approach; thus, the strategies and actions emphasise advocacy and collaborations with all levels of government and community to work together so children and families are connected and thrive in Corangamite Shire. Themes include:

- Ensuring facilities and learning environment are fit for purpose through upgrades or redevelopment to increase capacity of places for children
- Advocate for increased access for community to childcare through State and Federal funding
- Review of service delivery to optimise community access and attract investment where possible, to maximise childcare places
- A career-oriented and innovative Council that can attract and retain a highly skilled, engaged and well-compensated workforce in the early childhood sector
- High-quality services encompass a comprehensive approach to education, care, and maternal and child health services
- Children are meeting their developmental milestones by the time they enter school, and are thriving physically, socially and emotionally

About us

Established in 1971, Community Child Care Association (CCC) is the voice of community-based early childhood education and outside school hours care (OSHC) services in Victoria.

Today, we continue to support and champion both community-owned services and the wider sector.

CCC helps education and care services to build meaningful partnerships with families and communities that are vital to the development of children as strong, engaged, and active members of society.

We equip and support early childhood and outside school hours care services, educators and their communities with the skills and confidence to participate in and influence the growth and sustainable management of quality not-for-profit education and care.

We are an incorporated association registered as a charity with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission.

Grounded Studios is a small and thoroughly collaborative architecture practice. Their relationships with other disciplines that support their particular design processes are a core strength. Grounded Studios works with and for partners and projects dedicated to the public realm.

For the Corangamite Shire Early Years Plan project, they produced preliminary designs for Council-managed early childhood years services focussing on architectural solutions that are purpose-designed, welcoming and with a balanced and considered approach to practicality, budget and execution.

Introduction

Need for project

Early childhood is a critical time in shaping a child's development, with lasting impacts throughout their lifetime (Australian Department of Social Services, Early Years Strategy, 2024).

Genetics and environment both play a significant role in shaping individuals, with early experiences having a profound effect on brain development. It is during these formative years that the brain establishes crucial connections, making it essential to provide children with a strong foundation for optimal health and wellbeing (Center on the Developing Child, Harvard University, 2010).

To support children in reaching their full potential, it is vital to take a holistic approach to their development, considering their physical, mental, and emotional wellbeing, as well as their overall sense of identity and belonging. The period from conception to age five, often referred to as the first 2,000 days of a child's life, presents a unique opportunity to positively impact their growth, learning, resilience, and happiness (Center on the Developing Child, Harvard University, 2007). By prioritising the early years through an early years plan, we can set children on a path towards a healthy and fulfilling future.

Municipal Early Years Plans (MEYPs) promote a comprehensive approach to enhancing communities and addressing underlying issues of inequality and vulnerability among children and families. MEYPs are tailored to specific locations and emphasise prevention, equity, health, and fostering positive social and educational outcomes for children. (MAV, 2022)

Although EYPs are not mandated by law, Council recognises the significance of the early years and officially supports this Corangamite Council Early Years Plan. Council understands that a community which prioritises children's wellbeing will benefit all of its members.

Policy context

Both Commonwealth and State Government policies increasingly highlight the importance of investing in the early years from birth to school entry. The pivotal role of local government in shaping local policies, designing and implementing programs, and providing infrastructure that can positively impact the health, education, and overall wellbeing of its younger residents is also widely acknowledged.

Key legislative and policy contexts which influence and inform the Corangamite Shire Council Municipal Early Years Plan include the Victorian Government's Best Start, Best Life reform.

Starting in some small rural locations in 2025, this initiative aims to improve access to kindergarten programs in Victoria by increasing from 15 to 30 hours per week (pre-prep) by 2031. Initially, pre-prep will be implemented in six local government areas (LGAs) and will expand statewide over time, with new LGAs added each year. Corangamite Shire will commence the progressive implementation of increased hours from 2026 in line with changes to Government's more graduated implementation with completion expected by 2031.

This phased approach allows for the necessary growth in workforce and infrastructure to support the expanded programs. By 2036 all children in Victoria will have access to a total of

1,800 hours of funded kindergarten before starting school, including 600 hours of three-year-old kindergarten and 1,200 hours of pre-prep.

Investment in infrastructure is required to support the implementation of Best Start, Best Life, particularly to ensure long day care programs are not displaced in Corangamite as the Shire transitions to 30 hours of pre-prep by 2031.

Legislative and policy contexts which influence and inform the Corangamite Shire Council Municipal Early Years Plan include compliance with the legislative and policy context outlined in Table 1 (below):

Table 1: Legislative and Policy Context

Legislations, Policies and Frameworks	
Legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 • Education and Care Services National Regulations (2011) • Children's Services Act 1996 • Children's Services Regulations 2020 • Local Government Act 2020 • Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 • Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 • Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (DDA). • Working with Children Act 2005 • Family Violence Protection Act 2008 • Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 • United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1990 • United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People 2010 • Occupation Health and Safety Act 2004
Commonwealth Policies and Frameworks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Early Years Learning Framework– Belonging, Being and Becoming – part of the National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC, 2018) • National Quality Framework (Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority [ACECQA], 2018) • National Framework for Universal Child and Family Health Services (Department Health and Ageing, 2011) • National Standards of Practice for Maternal Child and Family Health Nurses in Australia (Maternal Child and Family Health Nurses Australia, 2017) • Australian Government – Early Years Strategy 2024–2034 (2024) • National Principles for Child Safe Organisations (2018)
Victorian State Policies and Frameworks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYLDF) (DET, 2016) • The Early Years Compact 2017-2027 (DET, DHHS, MAV) • Early Childhood Reform Plan (DET, 2017) • Commission for Children and Young People - Child Safe Standards (Commission for Children and Young People [CCYP], 2016) • Roadmap For Reform: Strong Families, Safe Children (DHHS, 2016) • Marrung: Aboriginal Education Plan (DET, 2016-26)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early childhood agreement for children in out-of-home care (DET and DHHS, 2018) • Ending Family Violence – Victoria’s 10 Year Plan for Change (DHHS, 2017) Best Start Policy and Guidelines (DET, 2016) • Supported Playgroup Guidelines (DET, 2017) • Maternal and Child Health Memorandum of Understanding 2017-2020 (DET, DHS, MAV) • Maternal and Child Health Service Guidelines (DHHS, 2019 reissued 2020) • Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Framework 2018–2023 (VAAF)
Corangamite Council Policies and Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corangamite Shire Council Plan 2021-2025 • Regional Early Years Work Force Strategy 2024 -2029 Corangamite Shire (2024) • Kindergarten Infrastructure and Service Plan (KISP) - Corangamite Shire (2020) • 2021-2025 Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan. • Corangamite 2040 Community Vision • Camperdown MCH Building Accessibility Audit 2022 • Corangamite Shire Strategic Early Years Facilities Plan (2020) • Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2021-2025 • Playground Asset Management Plan 2017-2027 • Recreation Reserves Master Plan Project 2021-2031 • Recreation and Open Space Strategy 2016-2026 • Grow and Prosper Corangamite • Camperdown MCH Building Accessibility Audit 2022 • Asbestos Audit Camperdown Pre School - Maternal Child Health 2018 (ECM_2287573_v1_) • Child Safe Policy May (2022) • Corangamite Shire Community Engagement Policy (2021) • Family & Children’s Services Policy Manual (2024)

Vision

Children and family are connected and thrive in Corangamite Shire, by ensuring children have the opportunity to access local high-quality education and care programs to learn, grow and improve their and their family’s health and wellbeing.

This plan aligns and supports Corangamite Shire Council Plan 2021-2025 stated vision – *a connected and thriving community.*

Council’s role in the early years

Councils’ roles across the early years sector focus around five principal areas:

- Advocacy – lobbying and advocating to Federal and State Governments and other key stakeholders on behalf of early years programs, young children, and their families
- Service provision – delivering a range of early years programs, activities, and initiatives
- Planning and coordination – acting as a key coordination point and community planner in early years

- Facility planning – planning, providing, and maintaining a range of early years infrastructure amenities and sites
- Strengthening community capacity – facilitating community connections and community participation in decision-making, including vulnerable families.

Adapted from MAV Resource Guide to Municipal Early Years Planning (MAV, 2022).

Scope of the plan

The objective of this Corangamite Early Years Plan 2025-2035 is to guide the planning and delivery of maternal child health services, early years education and care programs, and the subsequent infrastructure requirements for the next decade.

Consideration has been given to factors such as workforce needs, infrastructure capacity, population trends, service demand, policy changes, and community requirements to support the effectiveness of the plan.

The plan determines local needs and priorities for Council-managed early years services, as well as encompassing broader goals and actions required to enhance early years' experiences for all children in the municipality, including those provided by external providers, and has taken into account input from a variety of stakeholders.

The plan outlines key actions for Council planning and preparation, ensuring families and children have access to high-quality education and care programs to improve the health and wellbeing of children aged 0-5 years in Corangamite Shire.

This plan was created as part of a comprehensive project that included:

- Conducting an audit of current Council-managed early years facilities and providing recommendations for short, medium, and long-term planning, design, and construction.
- Conducting a feasibility study and exploring preliminary design options for the Maternal & Child Health (M&CH) facility in Camperdown.

The EYP aims to assess the present and future requirements for childcare and kindergartens, including location, service models, and planning. It is recommended this plan is reviewed alongside other relevant documents.

The analysis on the impact of pre-prep reform on service modelling has been integrated into the Early Years Plan. It focuses on identifying the most effective level of flexibility to meet community needs and enhance children's access to education and care within the municipality over the next decade.

Methodology

The assessment of present and future requirements for ECEC in the Shire that ensure services meet children and families' needs, requires considerable research and planning.

Policy informed planning

The MEYP is governed by the legislative and policy context which informed the Corangamite Shire Early Years Plan. This includes compliance and alignment with the Commonwealth, State and Corangamite Shire Council policies, frameworks and regulations as outlined in Table 1.

Data informed planning

Localised population profile data was collated and analysed to assess current and future community demand and needs, and to highlight unmet needs.

Observational data was also gathered through site visits of Council-managed ECEC services¹ to assess how the sites are meeting current and future needs of local families, informed by national and state standards, and suitability to provide education and care to local community. A detailed assessment of each site is presented in the audit of current Council-managed early years facilities document.

Community informed planning

According to the Australian Human Rights Commission, a Child Safe Organisation is one that 'creates a culture, adopts strategies and takes action to promote child wellbeing and prevent harm to children and young people.'

As a Child Safe Organisation, Corangamite Shire Council, recognises the importance and value of consulting with children as part of the decision-making process.

Thus, a key part of the stakeholder engagement involved providing children opportunities to contribute. Children accessing Council-managed ECEC services across the Shire were consulted through group discussions and creative art-based projects facilitated by the educators at the services.

As per the Corangamite Shire Community Engagement Policy, opportunities for community members and families living in Corangamite or accessing education and care services in Corangamite to shape the plan were also provided through a widely distributed survey.

Consultations, interviews and surveys with key sector stakeholders to further understand community's needs, current ECEC provision and challenges with provision of ECEC in the Shire were also conducted. This included Corangamite Shire Council (CSC) Director Corporate and Community Services, CSC Manager Community Services, CSC Coordinator Education and

¹ Council-managed ECEC services visited: Western Plains (Derrinallum Preschool & Lismore Preschool), Cobden and District Kindergarten, Simpson and District Kindergarten, Skipton Kindergarten, Terang Children's Centre, Timboon and District Kindergarten, Port Campbell – Mobile Child Care, Glenormiston – Mobile Child Care and Ecklin Hall – Mobile Child Care.

Care, CSC Family and Children Services Coordination Unit, CSC Family and Children Services staff, CSC Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Team and Externally managed ECEC service leaders.

Children, community and sector stakeholder's experiences and ideas of ECEC provision in their area shared through these engagements were fundamental in informing the Corangamite Shire Early Years Plan.

Education and Care Services in Corangamite

Council's education and care services

Corangamite Shire Council operates a total of 11 early childhood education and care services, including kindergartens, long day care, and mobile child care programs.

The kindergartens are; Skipton Kindergarten, Lismore Pre School, Derrinallum Pre School (referred to as Western Plains), Terang Children's Centre, Cobden and District Kindergarten, Timboon and District Kindergarten, and Simpson and District Kindergarten. After-kinder-care services are available at both Terang and Timboon locations.

Long day care is available two days a week at Skipton Kindergarten, with a funded kindergarten program operating on the other days.

Western Plains operates across two settings: at Lismore and Derrinallum Preschools. One provides long day care three days a week, while the other offers funded kindergarten, with a site rotation every 12 months to accommodate families needing access to both services.

The McNicol Early Years Training Centre in Camperdown is specifically for children accessing long day care and supports the Council's endeavours to continue to grow its own workforce, enhancing their capabilities to support workforce participation. Mobile child care services include set-up and pack-down occasional care programs. These programs involve transporting equipment and materials to and from facilities located in shared community buildings in Port Campbell, Glenormiston, and Ecklin South.

Corangamite Shire also oversees a small number of family day care services within the municipality.

Externally managed education and care services

In the municipality, several education and care services are not operated by the Council. These include one independent kindergarten and three long day care services.

Baranbali Camperdown Kindergarten provides kindergarten programs for three and four-year-old children and is community-operated within a Council-owned facility in Camperdown.

There are three privately owned long day care centres: Timboon Children's Centre, Buckle My Shoe Terang, and Banana Splits Camperdown.

Childcare desert

Corangamite Shire is situated in an area experiencing a shortage of childcare services, commonly referred to as a 'childcare desert'. This term describes a situation where the demand for childcare places surpasses the current supply. Studies conducted by the Mitchell Institute indicate that childcare shortages are particularly prevalent in rural and regional settings (Hurley, Matthews, & Pennicuik, 2022). These shortages can result in difficulties such as workforce shortages and a scarcity of volunteers within community organisations, sports clubs, and cultural groups (Hurley et al., 2022).

Across Corangamite Shire, there are more than three children per childcare places and there is a growing demand for long day care places, specifically for children under the age of three. Limited facilities capable of accommodating long day care programs have led to waitlists for these services.

Stakeholder engagement

Community voices

The community was engaged through a survey that was widely distributed and promoted across Corangamite Shire from 18th December 2023 to 29th January 2024. 132 community members shared their feedback. Couple families with children represented most of the survey respondents (89%) and most were parents of young 0–6-year-old children (83%). All communities across Corangamite Shire were presented in the survey, with most respondents living in or near Camperdown (22%), Cobden (18%), Timboon (14%) and Terang (12%). The survey asked questions under four key areas:

- Access to early childhood education and care (ECEC)
- Community ECEC needs
- Challenges and strengths with ECEC provision
- Ways to improve ECEC provision.

When asked about access to ECEC, most families with children under six years old stated they were accessing services in Corangamite Shire (73%), 11% said they were not accessing services and required access, 8% were accessing services outside the Shire and 7% were not accessing services and did not require access. In terms of ECEC services accessed, most services across the Shire, both managed by Council and externally managed, were represented in the survey.

Overall, 64% of families accessing ECEC services felt their current access was completely or mostly meeting their needs. However, for parents of 0–2-year-old children, less than half felt their access was meeting their needs (46%), with a third (33%) stating their current access was slightly or not at all meeting their needs. Whereas, of parents with 3-5-year-old children, 66% felt services were meeting their needs and 26% stated their current access was slightly or not at all meeting their needs. Of the 75% of families accessing ECEC, 27% felt they required more hours, 21% wanted more days and 23% wanted both more hours and more days.

The availability of ECEC in terms of days and hours offered, as well as lack of places locally, were highlighted by community members as key access barriers of ECEC provision in the Shire. Community members shared challenges the community face due to under access to ECEC. Key themes were:

- **Child's development:** Children's development and growth is negatively impacted due to lack of participation in ECEC.
- **Workforce participation:** Parents, mostly mothers, are unable to return to work or are underemployed.
- **Financial stress:** Families experience financial stress due to inability to work while caring for their children.
- **Skills deficit:** Local business owners and employers struggle to attract employees.

In terms of ECEC services' strengths, family respondents emphasised the high regard they had for the teachers and educators in services across the Shire. Families highlighted the value of quality and varied programming and skilled ECEC workforce, reporting high satisfaction with the services their children attend.

The need for additional ECEC provision across the Shire, particularly for 0–2-year-old children, in terms of availability of places, as well as days and hours offered was the strongest theme across the survey. Families highlighted the need for further services across the Shire, with 57% of families reporting the central areas, Terang, Camperdown, Noorat, Cobden, and surrounds, as where they would like to access new programs. Importantly, the majority of families who responded to the survey were from these areas.

Children's voices

A total of 56 children from five² ECEC services across the Shire participated in the consultations. They were asked to consider three questions:

- What do you love about kinder and care?
- What can make it a better place to learn and play?
- If a genie could grant you one wish to change anything in your kinder/childcare, what would your wish be?

The key themes from the children's engagement were:

Outdoor spaces: The importance of outdoors spaces for active, physical, and risky play was emphasised in the children's artwork and responses, with this being the strongest theme raised. Children shared their appreciation of current outdoor spaces as well as requested further structures, fixtures, and equipment to support active and risky play, for example, towers, monkey bars and more bikes.

Resources: Children also focused on resources they value at their services and what they would like to see more of, in particularly for imaginative, creative, and sensory play. For example, art materials, building blocks, puzzles, and water features/slides were suggested.

² Children from Cobden and District Kindergarten, Simpson Kindergarten, Skipton Kindergarten, Terang Children's Centre and Timboon and District Kindergarten participated in the consultations.

Nature and animals: In children's artwork and responses, nature and animals were strongly represented. The children wanted to have animals at their service and/or have the chance to visit animals, as well as visiting the park, climbing trees, and exploring gardens, highlighting the importance of nature to children in the community.

Connections and celebrations: In children's responses around their enjoyment of the spaces, friends, peers, and family were often featured, describing connections around the use of the spaces for play and for celebrations with others.

Technology: Some children also suggested a need to increase and improve the technology in their services, requesting TV, computers and cameras for children to utilise.

ECEC sector voices

All staff from Council-managed ECEC services were engaged through a survey distributed between 31st January and 13th February 2024. 47 staff shared their feedback. All Council-managed services across Corangamite Shire were represented in the survey, with majority of respondents working in Timboon and District Kindergarten (19%), Western Plains (17%), Terang Children's Centre (15%) and McNicol Street Child Care (13%). The survey asked questions under seven key areas:

- Personal feelings and work preferences
- Efficient use of service facilities and spaces
- Leadership and teamwork
- Resources and support
- Professional development and career aspirations
- Workforce strength and needs
- Ways to improve ECEC provision.

In terms of personal feelings towards work and work preferences, a vast majority of staff had strong motivation and felt proud to work in education and care. 83% saw themselves working in education and care for the next two years. 38% reported they saw themselves working more hours in the next two years and 20% saw themselves working less hours in the next two years.

Most staff felt services were efficiently providing inclusive care for children, and that furniture and equipment, teaching resources and materials were working efficiently at their centre. The areas working less efficiently were storage facilities, internet connectivity, computer and software, meeting spaces and planning/staff only areas.

ECEC staff respondents shared the needs of the workforce to improve ECEC provision across the Shire. The key themes were:

- **Professional development:** Staff suggested professional learning and mentoring to build skills and confidence in supporting children with additional needs, responding to challenging behaviours. and embedding cultural learning and inclusive practices.
- **Engaging with families and community supports:** Staff emphasised the importance of creating opportunities to engage and connect with families, particularly working in vulnerable communities with limited locally based allied health services, as well as staff to link in with local family supports.

- **Leadership and teamwork:** Staff suggested training on developing collaborative relationships with communities to deepen connection.

In terms of ECEC workforce strengths, staff respondents emphasised the collaborative culture across their teams, their strong connections with the children and families, and supportive leadership as key strengths. Staff respondents also highlighted the resilience and flexibility of staff as major attributes of the Corangamite Council ECEC workforce, and their importance in adapting to the constant changes and needs of children and families.

ECEC staff respondents shared suggestions on ways to improve ECEC provision across the Shire. Key themes were:

- **Resources and equipment:** Age-appropriate cultural resources, emotional regulation tools/ resources, updated resources, technology (such as iPads), space and cots.
- **Building and facilities:** Update and refurbish spaces, increase size and capacity of buildings, open plan spaces to increase visibility, get rid of the mobile van and have enough storage at facilities to be a static.
- **Communications, collaboration and debriefing:** More opportunities for face-to-face collaboration and learning with other teachers and educators. Prioritising allocated non-contact time to debrief with service team about service challenges and supporting children and families with additional and complex needs.
- **Allied health and additional supports:** Earlier interventions with Occupational Therapy, speech and dental, supports for staff and families with children with additional needs.
- **Wages, conditions and policies:** There is a national push to increase and improve pay and conditions in ECEC to equalise with other professional community standards. Staff also seek family friendly flexibility.

Corangamite Shire Council ECEC services' leadership and coordination unit were engaged through a survey. 15 service leaders and coordination unit staff shared their feedback. The survey asked questions around community needs, workforce skills, Council-managed ECEC strengths and areas of improvement. In terms of key community needs and challenges, respondents echoed community and ECEC staff feedback:

- Need for increased child care availability, in terms of places, days and hours offered
- Impact of lack of access to child care on children's wellbeing and development, as well as on families' finances due to limited workforce participation
- Need for improved access to early intervention, allied health and inclusion support services to provide supports required for children with additional needs
- ECEC staff fatigue, constant reforms, increasing layers of administration, and regulatory change
- Impact on staff wellbeing due to increase sector pressures, more children requiring additional supports and exhibiting challenging behaviours.

ECEC services' leadership and coordination unit staff highlighted strong local community knowledge, a wide range of skills and sector experience as key strengths of the workforce. Respondents attributed Council's ability to attract, retain and develop a skilled ECEC workforce to competitive wages, the positive conditions Council provides, the flexible and supportive

working environment, leadership and coordination support, as well as access to mentoring and professional development opportunities. Suggestions, below, were offered on ways to improve attraction, retain and develop a skilled workforce:

- Support trainees to work across locations in the Shire and support services with higher proportion of children requiring additional supports
- Expand benefits and conditions:, Cover travel costs for staff working across services and expand mentoring opportunities to all staff
- Implement a staff wellbeing program
- Advocate for locally based retention and development incentives
- Further expand career development pathways with financial supports.

In terms of gaps in skills and knowledge, ECEC services' leadership and coordination unit staff identified similar key gaps as ECEC staff had highlighted such as supporting children with additional needs and their families, developing a trauma-informed practice, responding to challenging behaviours as well as embedding cultural learning and inclusive practices.

Externally managed ECEC services were also engaged through interviews with the service leaders. All externally managed ECEC services were invited to participate, with two out of the four providers participating in the consultations. In these, the service leaders were asked about their waitlists and community needs, as well as service and workforce strength and challenges. Key comments from the stakeholder interviews included:

Integration with early years services

- Strong connection of MCH as the foundation of Corangamite's Family & Children's Services Team
- Recognition of children with social skill needs and the demand for behaviour support services are increasing.

Need for increased child care availability

- A need for additional LDC facilities in the Cobden, Camperdown or Terang area
- A significant waitlist for children under the age of three with limited capacity in facilities to accommodate this
- Anticipation that the introduction of free and extended hours kindergarten will affect attendance at long day care services negatively
- Challenges related to a lack of funded places, particularly in relation to increasing access for vulnerable families, and working with communities for who English is a Second Language (ESL).

Early childhood workforce attraction and retention

- Observations about employees shifting from early childhood education to primary school due to better pay and conditions
- Concerns about workforce, particularly relief staff
- Constraints on LDC capacity for children under the age of three due to workforce issues
- Fatigue within the workforce was noted as a significant issue across the sector.

The challenges community and families are facing were further endorsed by Corangamite MCH team. The MCH team highlighted community challenges including under access to childcare

and allied health services impacting health and wellbeing and a lack of access to bulk billing General Practitioners in the Shire.

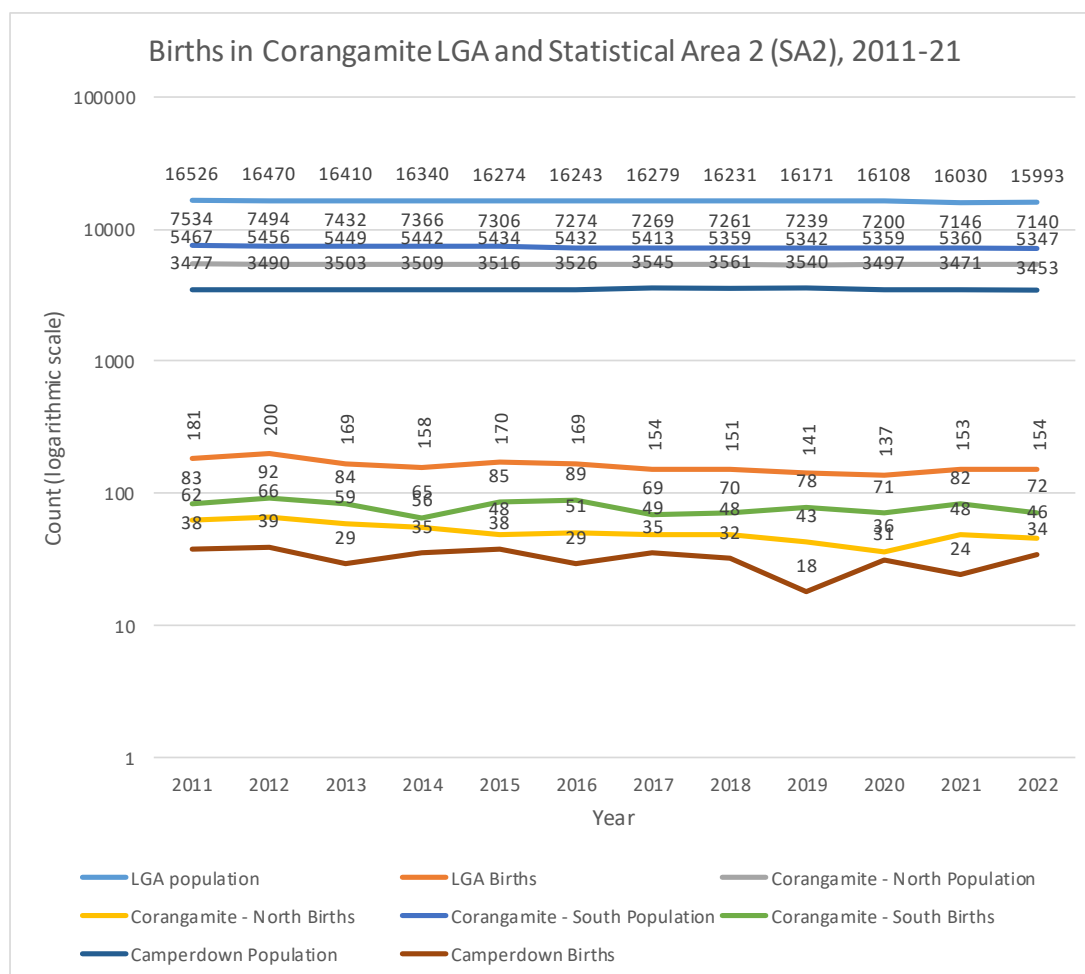
Additionally, the team highlighted isolation for recently settled families from culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

Community snapshot

Birth and population

Birth and population statistical collections for Corangamite Shire show the population has remained relatively consistent in the last 10 years (Graph 1). There was an increase in births Camperdown Statistical Area level 2 (SA2) in 2022 compared to previous year, from 24 in 2021 to 34 in 2022. Whereas there was a slight decrease in births in both Corangamite-North and South (SA2) in 2022 in compared to previous year.

Graph 1: Birth & Estimated Resident Population in Corangamite Local Government Area (LGA) and Statistical Areas 2 (SA2) 2011-2021



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (2022) Births, Australia

<https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/population/births-australia/latest-release#data-downloads>

Children and families

The Corangamite Shire Early Years Plan needs to consider local population profiles to ensure the ECEC services address the needs of children and families in the community.

Overall, Corangamite Shire has a higher proportion of low-income households (<\$650 pw) than Victoria, 22% of households in the Shire compared to 16% in the state. Additionally, according to Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA, 2021), Corangamite Shire is experiencing higher levels of disadvantage and lower levels of advantage than 60% of other local government areas in Victoria. Across the Shire, 3.7% of households speak a non-English language at home and 1.2% of the community are Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander. See Table 2 below for the statistical profiles of Corangamite Shire and each Statistical Area level 2 (SA2) within the Shire.

Table 2: Local Area Profiles

Corangamite Shire	
Total population	16,115
0–4-year-old population	748 (4.6%)
Total families	4,309
Families with children	1,574 (36.5%) couple family with children and 596 (13.8%) one parent family.
Couple families' workforce participation	21.2% both parents employed full-time, 24.4% one employed full-time and other part-time, 15.2% one employed and other not in the labour force.
Low-income families (<\$650pw)	22.3% of households have a total household weekly income of less than \$650.
SEIFA score	The average score of the Shire is 955, which is rated in the fourth decile in the state indicating the Shire is experiencing higher levels of disadvantage and lower levels of advantage than 60% of other local government areas in the Victoria.
Corangamite-North (SA2)	
Total population	5,395
0–4-year-old population	243 (4.5%)
Total families	1,425
Families with children	506 (35.5%) couple family with and 209 (14.7%) one parent family
Couple families' workforce participation	20.4% both parents employed full-time, 26.2% one employed full-time and other part-time, 15.1% one employed and other not in the labour force.
Low-income families (<\$650pw)	24.6% of households have a total household weekly income of less than \$650.
SEIFA score	The average score of this local area is 939 compared to 955 for Corangamite Shire, indicating slightly increased disadvantage.
Camperdown (SA2)	
Total population	3,491
0–4-year-old population	145 (4.2%)
Total families	923
Families with children	305 (33%) couple family with children and 142 (15.4%) one parent family
Couple families' workforce participation	16.7% both parents employed full-time, 23.6% one employed full-time and other part-time, 16.6% one employed and other not in the labour force.
Low-income families (<\$650pw)	25.4% of households have a total household weekly income of less than \$650.

SEIFA score	The average score of this local area is 928 compared to 955 for Corangamite Shire, indicating slightly increased disadvantage.
Corangamite-South (SA2)	
Total population	7,180
0–4-year-old population	356 (5.0%)
Total families	1,947
Families with children	749 (38.5%) couple family with children and 248 (12.7%) one parent family
Couple families' workforce participation	24.6% both parents employed full-time, 23.5% one employed full-time and other part-time, 14.6% one employed and other not in the labour force.
Low-income families (<\$650pw)	18.8% of households have a total household weekly income of less than \$650.
SEIFA score	The average score of this local area is 979 compared to 955 for Corangamite Shire, indicating slightly lower disadvantage.

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021) *Census All persons QuickStats*

<https://abs.gov.au/census/find-census-data/quickstats>;

Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA 2021)

<https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/people-and-communities/socio-economic-indexes-areas-seifa-australia/latest-release>

Early years health and development

The Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) measures the development of children in Australia in their first year of full-time school. It measures local area data about how children in the regions are performing against five pre-set developmental domains including:

- **Physical health and wellbeing:** Children's physical readiness for the school day, physical independence and gross and fine motor skills
- **Social competence:** Children's overall social competence, responsibility and respect, approach to learning and readiness to explore new things
- **Emotional maturity:** Children's pro-social and helping behaviours, and absence of anxious and fearful behaviour, aggressive behaviour and hyperactivity and inattention
- **Language and cognitive skills:** Children's pro-social and helping behaviours, and absence of anxious and fearful behaviour, aggressive behaviour and hyperactivity and inattention

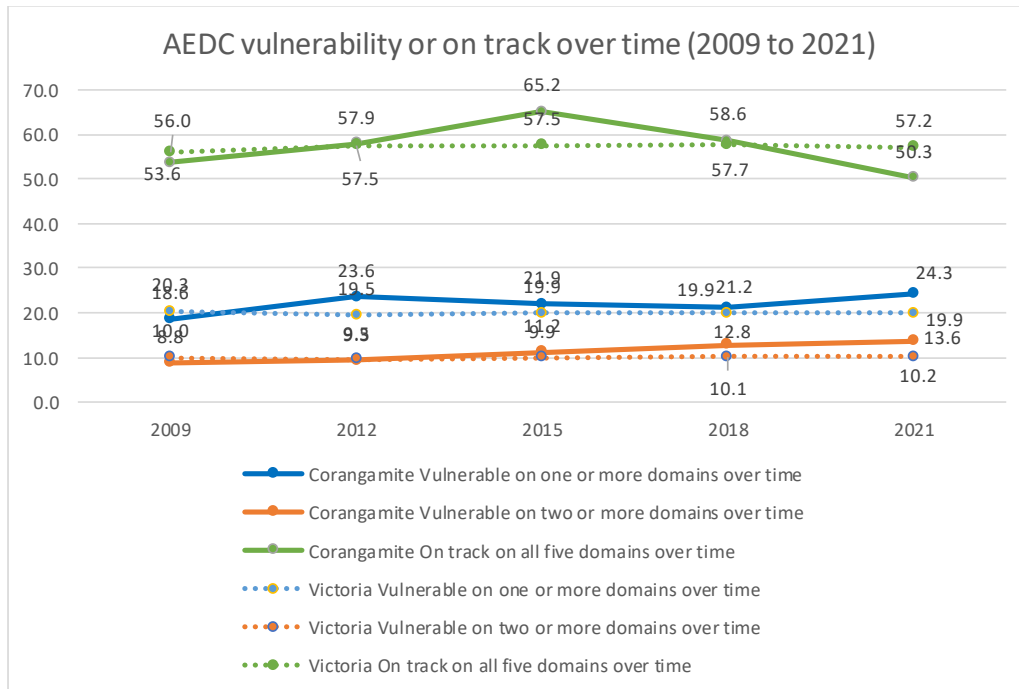
Communication skills: Children's communication skills and general knowledge based on broad developmental competencies and skills measured in the school context.

In Corangamite Shire, AEDC data over time highlighted:

- A decline in the proportion of children who are on track on all five AEDC domains since 2018, which is below Victorian state average

- An increase in children who are experiencing vulnerability on one or more AEDC domains in 2021 from 2018
- The highest level of vulnerability in 2021 was in the health domain and second highest in the social competence domain.

Graph 2: Percentage of AEDC vulnerability or on track in Corangamite Shire and VIC 2009-2021



Source: Australian Early Development Census (2021)

<https://www.aedc.gov.au/data/downloads>

Future population

Population projections suggest Corangamite Shire 0-4 age group population will remain relatively stable with a slight decrease of 5% between 2021 and 2036 (Victoria in Future, 2023). Further projection breakdowns by year, compiled and presented by community researchers and builders.id, informed decision, suggests that 750 0-4-year-olds live in Corangamite in 2024 and by 2034, this will decrease to an estimated 666 0-4 year olds.

Further forecast breakdowns by Statistical Area level 2 (SA2) within Corangamite suggest:

- Corangamite-North (SA2): 242 0-4-year-olds live in Camperdown (SA2) in 2024 and by 2034, this will decrease to an estimated 217 0-4-year-olds
- Camperdown (SA2): 142 0-4-year-olds live in Camperdown (SA2) in 2024 and by 2034, this will decrease to an estimated 120 0-4-year-olds
- Corangamite-South (SA2): 361 0-4-year-olds live in Camperdown (SA2) in 2024 and by 2034, this will decrease to an estimated 324 0-4-year-olds.

It is important to note that SA2 level data applies to large geographic catchment areas within Corangamite Shire, thus it can be difficult to estimate decline or increasing population levels based on SA2 level data. Equally, local industry, unlocking housing programs and immigration is changing the fabric and population of the Shire.

Education and Care demand

Corangamite Shire population projections indicate that the demand for education and care in the municipality will not significantly change over the ten years. However, with the rollout of pre-prep by 2031, the kindergarten supply will not meet demand in some services (see 'Service models factoring pre-prep reforms' section).

This will also create further pressure on current unmet demand for long day care and childcare places, particularly for 0 to 2 year-olds, due to lack of availability of places across the Shire and region.

An increased capacity of long day care places across the Shire is required to meet current and future demand, particularly for 0 to 2 year-old age group. Additionally, it is important the increased capacity is coupled with high-quality programming and integrated family supports, particularly as there is an increase in children who are experiencing vulnerability on one or more AEDC domains in 2021 from 2018, as well as a lack of access to allied health services and early intervention supports for families and children.

SWOT Analysis

Performing a SWOT Analysis allows the municipality to identify internal Strengths and Weaknesses, along with external Opportunities and Threats. This tool is useful for leveraging strengths, addressing weaknesses, capitalising on opportunities, and mitigating risks as part of the strategic planning process. Below are key areas for consideration based on analysis of Corangamite Shire, current and future ECEC demand, as well as stakeholder consultations and engagement.

Strengths

Skilled workforce

- Council-managed ECEC services' staff members are dedicated to upholding the organisation's values, bring a diverse range of teaching experience to their roles and strong local knowledge
- Council staff enterprise agreements and conditions ensure competitive pay and attractive working conditions for employees compared to standard awards in the sector
- A dedicated facility at McNicol Early Years Training Centre is utilised for training educators in a "grow your own" model to address workforce shortages.

Service provision and location

- Council EYM services consistently provided access to funded kindergarten programs approved with the Victorian Government Kinder Tick
- Various funded kindergarten programs, including the Free Kinder initiative, operate at no cost to families at multiple services throughout the municipality

- Kindergarten services are located throughout the municipality, enhancing access to residents who live in areas outside of primary townships
- Some early years facilities provide access to integrated Maternal and Child Health services
- Aftercare services are offered at Terang and Timboon locations to assist working families and provide access to kindergarten for children
- Families deeply appreciate the quality of Corangamite EYM services and spoke positively about educators' teams in stakeholder feedback.

Community connections

- Local families see the value and importance of education and care services within the Shire, thus there is a significant demand for services within the community
- Early years services in the Shire contribute to the local economy by supporting parents to return to the local workforce
- There is a high rate of access and utilisation of MCH services across the municipality, including immunisation services.

Governance

- Council is dedicated to investing in early years initiatives and infrastructure
- Council maintains a flexible and responsive approach to meeting the community's education and care needs, including mobile child care, after-kinder-care, and long day care options
- A collaborative team environment and strong leadership support were noted as strengths in stakeholder engagement.

Weaknesses

Availability of long day care

- Availability of long day care places is significantly limited throughout the municipality
- Council EYM services' operational hours and closure periods do not always align with the needs of working families
- Some kindergarten facilities will not be able to offer both 30 hours of pre-prep and long day care simultaneously with infrastructure upgrades required at Skipton and Timboon.

Access to childcare

- There is a high need for care places for children 0 to 2 years and a lack of facilities that are designed to cater for this age group.
- Most children two years old and under are not able to access ECEC in the Shire
- Families often have to travel long distances to access care due to service enrolment capacity and service availability.

Workforce participation and supply

- Families cannot return to work or are underemployed due to lack of childcare
- Demand for educators exceeds the available supply, leading to difficulties in meeting the needs of families across all services in the municipality
- Family and personal commitments of educators has historically limited the scope of work hours availability.

- The Early Education Employees Agreement (EEEA) for Council-employed ECTs provides for teachers to have a maximum of 25.5 contact hours with children and a half hour planning time for every teaching hour. This does not align with Governments pre prep roll out of 30 hours which will require things like team teaching and additional staff in services.

Outdated facilities

- As highlighted in the Camperdown MCH feasibility study, the facilities are outdated and in need of a refurbishment
- The facilities audit of current Council-managed early years facilities highlighted the need to improve the quality of facilities to meet National Quality Standards and safety regulations
- The facilities audit also highlighted many outdoor areas, yards, fixed play equipment, and gardens in Council EYM facilities are outdated and in need of refurbishment.

Community

- There is a lack of understanding within the community regarding how the workforce crisis impacts service delivery in early childhood education
- Community expectations sometimes conflict with the regulatory and broader global issues affecting the sector
- Lack of availability of allied health support, for example speech and occupational therapists, for children, their families and staff in early childhood services
- Financial challenges faced by families impact the cost of accessing early childhood services.

Opportunities

Availability of education and care to meet community need

- Continued advocacy to Federal and State Governments to address gaps in childcare services within the Shire
- Increase accessibility to long day care facilities through the construction of new facilities
- Engage external service providers by encouraging investment and welcoming their participation in the municipality to establish and deliver education and care services within the Shire
- Develop facilities tailored to the needs of young children, with a focus on infants and toddlers
- Extend operating education and care hours and days, while acknowledging that early years educators are often unable to start earlier or finish later due to their own family commitments.

Skilled and well remunerated workforce

- Advocate for improved regional workforce incentives at Commonwealth and State levels

- Advocate for funding to implement the workforce strategy to attract, grow and develop a high-quality workforce in partnership with Warrnambool and Moyne Councils
- Continue to grow opportunities for professional learning, networking and face-to-face collaboration and learning with other educators across the Shire
- Enhance opportunities to engage with early intervention and health services to support children's wellbeing, as well as staff training and development.

Community engagement and support

- Engage community and provide accessible information on the rollout of pre-prep programs and extended operating hours in the region to grow community understanding of the Best Start Best Life reforms.
- Use children's voices in the planning of and community spaces, celebrations and initiatives.
- Help community to understand workforce sector issues.
- Utilise integrated MCH early years services to enhance access to support the services that families and children need.

Upgrades to Council-owned facilities

- Upgrade Council-owned facilities to ensure high-quality care and support the expansion of pre-prep programs as per audit recommendations.
- Enhance outdoor play areas and gardens in existing EYM facilities as per audit.

Threats

Government policy and reforms

- State and Commonwealth Government priority and policy changes
- Unknown State Government funding models for the rollout of 30 hours.
- At the time of preparing this Plan, very limited government funding is available to build new child care centres.

Early childhood workforce supply and expertise

- Loss of ECEC workforce expertise and experience
- Inadequate Government funding and recognition for EYMs and an absence of incentives for educators responsible for staff management, policy and resourcing
- External providers unable to offer funded kindergarten programs, due to workforce shortage of qualified staff.
- Limited early years workforce to staff services particularly for longer shifts that community seek with Educators also needing to respond to their own family responsibilities.
- Limited affordable housing and lack of availability to meet the increased early childhood workforce required

Community supports and services

- There is community demand for skilled workers across a range of sectors.
- Economic impact in the community as result of lack of workforce participation
- Limited access to health, such as bulk billing doctors, and early intervention services such as speech and occupational therapists.

- Decline in the proportion of children who are on track on all five AEDC domains since 2018, which is below Victorian state average
- Decrease in kindergarten and pre-prep enrolments
- Cost of operating early years' service
- Financial impact on Council
- Closure of childcare and kindergarten services, both external and Council EYM operated.

Municipal plan

EYP priorities and actions

Based on the analysis of stakeholder information, specific priority areas have been identified as essential for enhancing the outcomes for children and families. These are:

- **Priority One: Infrastructure and Access to Education and Care**
- **Priority Two: Early Childhood Workforce**
- **Priority Three: High-quality Education and Care and MCH Services**
- **Priority Four: Health, Wellbeing and Connection.**

The plan outlines specific actions and initiatives that Council can undertake over the next 10 years. It categorises activities as low, medium, or high priority based on criteria such as safety, access, education and health outcomes. While all actions are deemed important, the prioritisation system will help Council to allocate resources and capital funds effectively to achieve sustainable and best outcomes. Actions that have been prioritised at a lower level are recognised as those where the Council is already heavily engaged in meeting the strategy. Lower priority actions also involve a series of other tasks that require a longer timeframe for effective implementation.

High	Implemented over the next 3 years
Medium	Implemented over the next 5 years
Low	Implemented over the next 10 years

Priority One: Infrastructure and access to education and care

What does it look like? Council services have the necessary infrastructure to facilitate the implementation of pre-prep programs for children, ensuring there are sufficient placements available in high-quality and stimulating environments. Adequate access to education and care programs through a diverse range of providers and provider types allows families to access the services that best suit their needs. All children across the municipality have the opportunity to participate in education and care, as well as enjoy access to well-maintained outdoor and recreational facilities, such as parks and playgrounds.

Strategy		
Collaborate with and advocate to all levels of government to secure funding and infrastructure required to meet community needs.		
Actions		Priority
1.	Collaborate with the Department of Education (DE) to develop an updated Kindergarten Infrastructure and Services Plan.	High
2.	Advocate for funding for planning, building, expanding, and improving early years infrastructure.	High
3.	Coordinate with stakeholders such as MAV, Victorian School Building Authority (VSBA), DE to ensure that Council's infrastructure and kindergarten services are well-equipped to support the implementation of funded pre-prep programs in Corangamite Shire starting in 2026.	Medium
4.	Enhance and expand Council kindergarten infrastructure in alignment with the Kindergarten Infrastructure and Services Plan over the next decade.	High

Strategy		
Continue to prioritise investment and planning for early years services in the Shire to facilitate development of education and care services that meet community needs.		
Actions		Priority
1.	Assess the feasibility of enhancing infrastructure and facilities at mobile child care facilities to meet the increasing demand for childcare services.	Medium
2.	Advocate for increased access to child care with attraction of private enterprise and Federal Government support to increase capacity.	High
3.	Assign a designated staff member to manage building and infrastructure operations for all facilities. This will help maintain high-quality services and address infrastructure requirements to achieve 30 hours of pre-prep by 2031.	High
4.	Continuously evaluate the community's infrastructure needs, anticipate future requirements, and collaborate with other Council departments to address them effectively.	Low
5.	Create a contingency plan for when capital works are implemented throughout the organisation.	Medium

Strategy		
Implement recommendations from the audit of current Council-managed early years facilities.		
Actions		Priority
1.	Implement high-priority recommendations from the audit for each facility to ensure safety and quality standards in line with the National Quality Standard.	High
2.	Focus on updating and maintaining outdoor yards and gardens .	Medium

Strategy		
Review education and care service models to meet families' needs.		
Actions		Priority
1.	Continually assess each Council-managed early years service to implement pre-prep roll out in line with community and service needs.	Medium
2.	Continue to review and explore options to support families to access more education and care	High
3.	Include Maternal and Child Health services in new constructions and refurbishments.	Low
4.	Continue to offer Free Kinder initiative across applicable Council-managed early services.	High
5.	Continue to assess individual service capacity to accommodate increased access of children in priority groups, based on the specific need of the services with consideration to workforce availability and pre-prep enrolments.	Medium

Strategy		
Develop partnerships with community groups and local businesses to support the delivery and infrastructure of education and care services.		
Actions		Priority
1.	Continue the expansion of three-year-old and pre-prep programs throughout the Shire, collaborating with the community to involve private businesses in supporting infrastructure for long day care programs.	Medium

Strategy		
Ensure families can access services and family friendly spaces to support their needs.		
Actions		Priority
1.	Assist families in accessing two years of funded kindergarten starting in 2025.	High
2.	Strengthen engagement with communities experiencing vulnerabilities and barriers to services to increase children in priority groups' access to funded kindergarten/pre-prep hours and participation in the Early Start Kindergarten (ESK) program for eligible children.	Medium
3.	Develop and improve playgrounds in accordance with the Corangamite Playground Asset Management Plan.	Low

Priority Two: Early childhood workforce

What does it look like? A career-oriented and innovative Council that can attract and retain a highly skilled, engaged and well-compensated workforce in the early childhood sector. With the main focus on meeting the needs of children and families. A varied and skilled team of educators capable of delivering high-quality education and care programs with opportunities to connect for mentoring, coaching, and professional development to support the growth and success of the workforce.

Strategy		
Develop partnerships and networks to share knowledge, resources and supports for the early years workforce in the Shire.		
Actions		Priority
1.	Implement Workforce Plan in partnership with Warrnambool and Moyne as funding becomes available.	High
2.	Continue to support Educators to participate in professional development and networks to build on ECEC skills, knowledge and contemporary practice.	Medium

Strategy		
Strengthen partnerships with training organisations, support access to training initiatives and incentive opportunities.		
Actions		Priority
1.	Utilise the McNicol Early Years Training centre to continue to expand growing our own ECEC workforce .	High
2.	Strengthen partnerships with Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) and Universities to support the upskilling of the workforce and practicum placements.	High
3.	Continue to support access to and promotion of State and Commonwealth workforce initiatives such as the paid practicum subsidy, early childhood scholarships and incentives programs , and the Certificate III upskill support program (Bridging program).	High
4.	Continue to support Council EYM provisionally registered teachers to move to full registration.	Low

Strategy		
Facilitate access to professional development, mentoring and coaching opportunities to ensure a high-quality early years workforce that meets the needs of children and families in the Shire.		
Actions		Priority
1.	Increase educators' opportunities within Council EYM for internal mentoring and coaching to strengthen practice.	Medium
2.	Provide cultural competency training to all Early childhood and MCH settings.	Low
3.	Ensure educators across the municipality are well-trained and highly skilled in supporting the developmental needs of all children.	Medium
4.	Access grants and funding opportunities to offer professional learning and training around the areas of inclusion, behaviour, trauma, developmental needs and culture.	Medium
5.	Support staff's access to state and federal programs designed to provide coaching and mentoring opportunities for registered teachers.	High

Strategy		
Advocate for and facilitate access to improve pay and conditions for the early childhood workforce.		
Actions		Priority
1.	Collaborate with the MAV to advocate for an improved and transparent funding formula for Early Years Management (EYM).	High

Strategy		
Implement Corangamite Shire workforce attraction and retention strategies to ensure the early childhood workforce is supported and respected.		
Actions		Priority
1.	Enhance initiatives aimed at improving the wellbeing of Council employees.	Medium
2.	Continue to implement flexible workforce strategies, such as part-time options, to better accommodate staff needs.	Low
3.	Develop a change management staffing strategy for transitioning to a 30-hour operational model.	High
4.	Promote working in ECE and with Council as a profession of choice and Council an employer of choice.	High

Priority Three: High-quality – ECE and M CH services

What does it look like? High-quality services encompass a comprehensive approach to education, care, and maternal and child health services. Early childhood education and care services play a vital role in promoting positive outcomes for children and families, aligning with professional standards in both the Early Childhood and Maternal and Child Health sectors. These services prioritise inclusion, safety, wellbeing, and educational outcomes.

Strategy		
Ensure children and community voices are incorporated in the planning and assessment of services to ensure services meets their needs.		
Actions		Priority
1.	Conduct maintenance on EYM outdoor areas and gardens at facilities using input from children to create engaging nature play environments.	Medium
2.	Explore methods to consistently incorporate children's perspectives, values, and priorities to enhance service delivery, programming, and overall improvements.	High
3.	Continue the grow our own strategy to increase staff supply in preparation for pre-prep which may include finding ways to retain staff during the transition period.	High

Strategy		
Provide a range of inclusive, accessible, educational and culturally appropriate services and programs which are responsive to the need of families and children.		
Actions		Priority
1.	Continuously assess and enhance the accessibility, cultural sensitivity, and inclusivity of Maternal Child Health services.	High
2.	Ensure that children's services and learning environments within Corangamite Council are well-equipped and culturally inclusive.	Medium
3.	Work towards reconciliation goals outlined in Council's Aboriginal Engagement Plan and each service's Quality Improvement plan.	High
4.	Continuously strengthen cultural competence and safety in all early years programs and services.	High
5.	Provide high-quality resources that promote diverse cultures and inclusivity.	Medium

6.	Collaborate with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander services to effectively support families and children.	Medium
7.	Advocate for greater access to allied health professionals to address developmental issues and ensure school readiness.	High

Strategy		
Increase children's opportunities to engage with the natural environment and participate in physical activity.		
Actions		Priority
1.	Continue to provide opportunities for children to connect with nature through outdoor education programs.	Medium
5.	Provide training and support for educators to identify, plan for and implement educational programs that support risky and adventurous play in outdoor settings.	Low

Strategy		
Ensure all services have resources and technology required to deliver high-quality programs.		
Actions		Priority
1.	Maintain up-to-date technology and internet access across all Council services.	High
4.	Access grants and funding from the State and Commonwealth to acquire information technology resources and equipment to be used by children and educators.	Medium

Priority Four: Health, wellbeing and connection

What does it look like? Children are meeting their developmental milestones by the time they enter school, and are thriving physically, socially and emotionally. They have access to healthcare services to support their wellbeing, and their families are encouraged and supported in their parental roles. The community offers a variety of events and services that foster a sense of connection, cultural identity, and celebration.

Strategy		
Engage and increase opportunities for children and families to connect within the community.		
Actions		Priority
1.	Continue to connect families and children with resources such as local libraries, playgroups, and toy libraries.	Low

2.	Continue to promote playgroups, activities and events for children within the Shire.	Low
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Strategy		
Advocate for and support local initiatives to increase the accessibility of health, wellbeing and family services across the Shire.		
Actions		Priority
1.	Advocate for funding from State and Federal Governments to improve access to family support and health services.	High
2.	Provide parents and caregivers with opportunities to enhance parenting skills and access resources through resources, events and services	Low
3.	Support early years services across the municipality to engage with health programs and initiatives.	Medium

Strategy		
Ensure families have access to timely and accurate information about early years services and support services they need.		
Actions		Priority
1.	Implement a Change Management Plan for kindergartens to support the rollout of pre-prep to increase community understanding.	High
2.	Provide families with accessible information on services and programs through the organisation's website and Maternal Child Health services.	High
3.	Educate the community on available support for families facing challenges.	Medium

Strategy		
Strengthen Maternal Child Health services across the Shire to ensure accessibility and meet community need.		
Actions		Priority
1.	Advocate for funding to improve the Camperdown Maternal and Child Health complex to align with the evolving needs of the community. (Refer to Feasibility study).	High
2.	Maintain strong connections with families and high participation in key age/stage visits for Maternal and Child Health.	Low

Priorities

Year 1-2

- Assign a designated person to manage building and infrastructure operations for all facilities.
- Prepare designs and apply for funding for alterations to Camperdown MCH building
- Work with DE and the VSBA to finalise the Kindergarten Infrastructure and Service Plan.
- Prepare for and apply for funding for alterations and upgrade of Simpson, Timboon, Cobden, Terang Kindergartens and Ecklin, Port Campbell and Glenormiston child care.
- Investigate funding opportunities to redevelop the Derrinallum and Skipton early years sites to accommodate kindergarten and childcare in one site.
- Attraction and/or upskilling of 9 additional degree trained Early Childhood teachers to meet Pre-Prep demand.
- Explore funding avenues to address high-priority recommendations in line with the Facilities Audit (Western Plains, Skipton, Ecklin).
- Advocate for increased access to childcare in high-demand areas such as Camperdown, Cobden and Terang with a focus on infants and toddlers.

Years 3-6

- Where funding is successful, plan for and upgrade Simpson, Timboon, Cobden, Terang Kindergartens and Ecklin, Port Campbell and Glenormiston childcare.
- Explore opportunities for sector partnerships to increase community access to childcare.
- Attraction and/or upskilling of 9 additional degree trained Early Childhood Teachers (ECTs) to meet Pre-Prep demand
- Continued investment in the 'Grow Our Own' strategy to support attraction and upskilling of early years professionals.
- Plan for and advocate for funding to update and maintain outdoor yards
- If funding is secured, Derrinallum site to offer both long day care and pre-prep programs by 2031.
- Expand Timboon to accommodate pre-prep and three-year funded kindergarten places by 2031.

Years 7-10

- Monitor supply and demand of childcare and kindergarten places and update plans as changes occur.
- Review of facilities and services to ensure compliance with National Quality Standards and inform Early Years Plan 2036-2046.
- Consider options for Lismore Early Years Facility

Pre Prep Reform & Basic Modelling

The following proposed service models for all Corangamite Shire Council Early Years Management services take into account the pre-prep reform, early years best practices, regulatory requirements, awards and agreements, and community expectations. The models being considered for services include:

- Western Plains (Derrinallum Preschool and Lismore Preschool)
- Cobden and District Kindergarten
- Family and Children's Services – McNicol
- Simpson and District Kindergarten*
- Skipton Kindergarten*
- Terang Children's Centre*
- Timboon and District Kindergarten
- Port Campbell – Mobile Child Care*
- Glenormiston– Mobile Child Care*
- Ecklin Hall – Mobile Child Care. *

The objective of the modelling is to determine the optimal level of flexibility in service utilisation to address community needs and improve children's access to education and care within the municipality for the next 10 years. *It should be noted that these facilities are not on Council owned land and would need consultation and approval for future works. Additional MCC facilities operate under Committee of Management governance structures.

Integration of the updated Kindergarten Infrastructure and Service Plan (KISP) has been delayed due to changes announced by Government regarding pre-prep. As a result, the EYP modelling will refer to the Corangamite Shire 2020 KISP.

The Best Start, Best Life reform

Pre-prep will gradually replace four-year-old kindergarten beginning in 2025, and it will be implemented over the following seven years in various Victorian Local Government Areas (LGAs).

Corangamite Shire is one of 12 LGAs that will begin to offer pre-prep programs in 2026, offering between 16-20 hours each week for each child. Up to 30 hours of pre-prep and 15 hours of kindergarten for children aged three are expected to be available in all Victorian programs by 2036.

The gradual implementation plan involves expanding access to pre-prep for children in prioritised groups, including those who identify as Aboriginal, who come from a refugee or asylum seeker background, and those known to Child Protection. By 2026, children in Corangamite Shire will have the option to access up to 25 hours of pre-prep, increasing to 30 hours by 2031.

In addition, children who hold (or whose parents hold) a Commonwealth concession card and those who are part of multiple births (triplets or more) are eligible to receive up to 25 hours of pre-prep by 2028 and 30 hours by 2030.

These specific priority groups should be carefully considered in the planning process. Whenever feasible, these children should be given the option to participate in a program with additional hours (i.e. offered 25 hours over five days in 2026). However, it is important to recognise that due to constraints related to workforce availability and pre-prep enrolments, it may not always be possible to extend days/hours beyond the designated launch hours. Each service will need to assess their capacity to accommodate additional days and hours and make necessary adjustments based on the specific need and capabilities of the service throughout the rollout period.

Thoughtful planning and careful consideration must be taken to guarantee that each service is equipped to meet the demands of the rollout and is fully prepared to support all children in order to facilitate the success of the Best Start, Best Life pre-prep initiative.

According to the data compiled and presented by community researchers and builders, informed decision, there is a projected slight decrease in the number of children aged four years within the region. Pre-prep will require a significant increase in hours offered compared to current kindergarten hours offered to each child. The slight decrease in population with this age group will not have an impact on additional hours needed to roll out pre-prep to all four-year-olds.

Corangamite Council currently offers five hours per day from three to five days per week. All children access 15 hours per week. Current funded kindergarten programs for both three- and four-year-olds are integrated and support the learning of individual children within the group. The primary challenge in implementing these models is the availability of qualified workforce in the region.

Table 3: Pre-prep roll out schedule

2026 pre-prep launch LGAs	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031
Corangamite Shire	15	20	20	20	25	25	30
2026 pre-prep launch priority groups. Statewide, children: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • who identify as Aboriginal • from a refugee or asylum seeker background • who have had contact with Child Protection 	15	25	25	30	30	30	30
2028 pre-prep launch priority groups. Statewide, children: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • who have (or have a parent or guardian who has) a Commonwealth concession card • from a multiple birth (triplets or more) 	15	15	15	25	25	30	30

Adapted from Department of Education website, pre prep reform (accessed May 2024)

According to Corangamite Council's Early Years Workforce Plan, there is a need to increase their workforce from 78 employees to 137 employees. Currently, there are 15 ECTs in the kindergarten programs, but this number will need to increase to 34 ECTs in order to meet the demand for 30 hours of care for all four-year-olds in the Shire by 2031.

For Corangamite services to meet the proposed increase in pre-prep hours refer to **Attachment B – Workforce & Modelling Guide** which offers modelling suggestions and considerations. It's important to note that the move from 25 to 30 hours will require an additional ECT for 4.5 contact hours per week in each program.

Corangamite will need to employ a phased approach as the hours increase towards 30 hours. The table above outlines the anticipated rollout within the Shire, with the initial change to 20 hours projected for 2026, 2029 and 2031. This timeline allows for time to begin the recruitment process for the necessary additional staff positions. It is important to also consider the coordination and management positions and how they will be supported in implementing the pre-prep program and in overseeing the induction and support of new staff members. Additional experienced staff will be

required for the EYM to support leading this reform and managing and supporting additional staff as they are onboarded in preparation.

Awards and agreements

Corangamite Council employs ECTs and educators for their service under two awards and agreements. ECTs and educators working in stand-alone sessional kindergartens are party to the Early Education Employees Agreement 2020. Full-time ECTs employed under this award can perform face-to-face teaching duties up to a maximum of 25.5 hours per week and non-teaching duties of a minimum 12.5 hours per week (pro-rata for part-time teachers) this will require all programs to adopt a team-teaching model to meet the 30 hours of pre-prep.

Educators employed in other care settings such as long day care and mobile child care are employed under the Corangamite Shire Enterprise Agreement 2024. As the industrial implications can be quite complex, it is recommended Council obtains expert advice on awards and agreement relations within their Human Resources department before implementing any changes to modelling.

Operational requirements

The following operational models are aligned with the:

- [Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010](#)
- [Education and Care Services National Regulations](#)
- [Victorian State Government Kindergarten Funding Requirements](#)
- Children's Services Act 1996
- Children's Services Regulations 2020.

All educators who work directly with children need to be suitably qualified. Approved educator qualifications in early years are as follows:

- Certificate III in Early Childhood Education & Care
- Diploma Early Childhood Education & Care
- Bachelor of Early Childhood Education (ECT).

When considering staffing operational models, the following regulatory requirements need to be complied with:

Educator to child ratios

- Children aged from birth to under 36 months, one educator: four children
- Children aged 36 months and over (not including children over preschool age), one educator: 11 children.

Educator qualification ratio requirements

- At all times at least 50 per cent of educators counted in the educator to child ratios must hold a diploma level qualification or higher.

In addition to meeting the educator-to-child and educator qualification requirements, centre-based National Quality Framework (NQF)-compliant services with children who are preschool age or younger, must employ:

- An ECT in attendance at the service or
- Have access to an ECT. Services with fewer than 25 approved places can access an ECT through an information communication technology solution such as telephone or online conferencing platform (e.g. Microsoft Teams).

The requirements for ECT attendance in services are based on the number of approved places and the number of children attending the service.

Centre-based NQF services with 60 or more children of preschool age or under attending the service on a given day must also have in attendance:

- A second ECT or
- A suitably qualified person (SQP).

Occasional care and limited hours services regulated under the Children's Services Act (CS Act) must provide access to an ECT if:

- Any child attends the service for more than 30 hours per week in any given four week period.

[Adapted from Department of Education website, children services regulated under Victorian Law \(2024\)](#)

Monitoring and evaluation

The Corangamite Shire Early Years Plan includes strategies and actions for each of the key priorities along with a high to low priority scale. This guides what type of information and when it will be collected along the way to evaluate the plan's progress and impact.

It is important that Corangamite Shire Council's Family and Children Services coordination team undertake annual reviews of the Early Years Plan to maintain its relevance, reflect on and assess progress made on the key strategies and benefits derived from undertaking each action, and to make any interim adjustments that may be required.

As part of this process, documenting the annual progress through an Early Years Progress Report to Council would also highlight barriers, emerging trends, risks and recommendations for updated and/or additional actions required.

References

Australian Department of Social Services (DSS). Why children and their early years matter. An evidence summary in support of the Early Years Strategy 2024-2034. (2024). Available at: https://www.dss.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/05_2024/why-children-and-their-early-years-matter-evidencesummary-support-early-years-strategy-2024-2034.pdf.

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Hurley, P., Matthews, H., & Pennicuik, S. (2022). Deserts and oases: How accessible is childcare? Mitchell Institute, Victoria University.

Municipal Association for Victoria (2022). MAV Resource Guide to Municipal Early Years Planning. Available at www.mav.asn.

The Timing and Quality of Early Experiences Combine to Shape Brain Architecture, Working Paper No. 5, Center on the Developing Child, Harvard University, 2007.

Appendices

Appendix A: Overview Facility Design Recommendations

Appendix B: Workforce & Modelling Guide

Appendix C: Types of Funded Kindergarten programs

9.8 Morris Street, Port Campbell Footpath Special Charge Scheme

Directorate: Works and Services

Author: John Kelly, Manager Assets Planning

Attachments:

1. Under Separate Cover - Various Property Owner Responses - Proposed Morris Street Footpath [9.8.1 - 8 pages]
2. Under Separate Cover - Proposed Morris Street Footpath Plans [9.8.2 - 3 pages]
3. Under Separate Cover - Apportionment Table for Morris St Footpath Special Charge Scheme [9.8.3 - 1 page]
4. Under Separate Cover - Letter provided to owners re proposed Morris Street footpath [9.8.4 - 2 pages]

Declaration

Pursuant to sections 3(1) and 66(5) of the *Local Government Act 2020* the Chief Executive Officer has designated these attachments as confidential on the grounds that they contain personal information, being information which if released would result in the unreasonable disclosure of information about any person or their personal affairs. In particular the attachments contain personal information regarding property ownership.

Chief Executive Officer – David Rae

In providing this advice to Council as the Chief Executive Officer, I have no interests to disclose in this report.

Author – John Kelly

In providing this advice to Council as the Manager Assets Planning, I have no interests to disclose in this report.

Summary

This report proposes that the installation of a concrete footpath on the western side of Morris Street from Lord Street to the Great Ocean Road in Port Campbell does not proceed. The majority of adjacent property owners have indicated that they do not support contributing funds to a special charge scheme which is required for the proposal.

Introduction

Council's current budget provides for the construction of a concrete footpath, nature strip reinstatement and associated works in Morris Street, Port Campbell. The path would connect with the existing footpath on the western side of Morris Street which terminates just south of Lord Street and would extend to the Great Ocean Road.

Issues

The works in Morris Street would be required to be undertaken under a Special Charge Scheme where benefitting adjacent property owners contribute funds to the works.

Following consultation with affected property owners it is concluded that the majority of the owners do not support contributing funds to the project.

Policy and Legislative Context

This report is in keeping with the commitments in the Council Plan 2021-2025:

Theme One - A Connected Community

Footpaths that provide access to key destinations in our towns

Theme Three - A Healthy, Active and Resilient Community

Improving the health and wellbeing of our residents

Access and inclusion is improved

Theme Five - Community Leadership

Ensuring that we maintain our strong financial position

Council promotes best value and value for money for its ratepayers

The installation of this footpath supports Council's Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025 by providing infrastructure that will support active transport, access and connectivity and improve the physical health of our community.

Council's Special Rates and Charges Policy applies to new infrastructure assets that benefit a specific group of property owners. The Policy outlines the circumstances and the process by which new or improved infrastructure works – such as the path on Morris Street – are carried out with financial contributions from property owners, based on principles of fairness and equity. These contributions are collected through a special charge scheme, which considers both the level of special benefit received by the properties and the broader benefit to the community.

In accordance with the Policy, if Council proposes to contribute 50% or more of the total cost of a proposed scheme, it may declare the scheme without considering objections. To date Council has not exercised this option. In this instance, Council proposed to contribute 75% of the scheme's total cost.

Internal / External Consultation

A preliminary letter and survey were sent on 22 November 2024 to affected property owners to gauge initial support for the proposal before the formal process for establishing a special charge scheme began. Of the seven owners, two indicated they did not support the proposal, while three were undecided. Two owners did not respond.

A follow up on-site meeting was held on 24 February 2025 between the property owners, Mayor Makin, Councillor Vogels and Council officers to provide owners further opportunity to ask questions of the proposed scheme. At the meeting six of the seven owners confirmed that they did not support the proposal. The remaining owner did not reply. The main objection from the owners was that they considered that they should not be required to contribute funds to the works.

Financial and Resource Implications

Council has provided an allocation of \$74,250 (including GST) for the contribution to the footpath installation in Morris Street in the 2024-2025 budget.

Although adjacent property owners have not supported the proposed footpath scheme extension to the Great Ocean Road, it is considered there would still be significant community benefit in extending the footpath in Morris Street by 37 meters. This extension would improve pedestrian safety and enhance accessibility benefiting both residents and visitors. It would run from Lord Street to the car park at the rear of the Port Campbell Hotel. The estimated cost for this extension is \$11,000 (including GST), which is below the \$15,000 threshold set in the Council's Special Rates and Charges Policy. As a result, it would be exempt from the special charge scheme requirement. Given the potential benefits and low cost, it is recommended that this section of footpath be constructed.

Options

Council may decide to proceed with the proposed special charge scheme for the full footpath installation, despite the lack of support from the majority of adjacent property owners.

Council may choose to proceed with the 37-meter footpath extension for \$11,000 and return the remainder of the project budget as savings.

Council may elect to abandon the footpath project in its entirety and return the full \$74,250 allocation as savings and consider the allocation of funding in the 2025-2026 budget.

Conclusions

Based on the preliminary property owner responses, which overwhelmingly did not support the proposal, it is recommended that Council does not proceed with the process for establishing a special charge scheme for construction of the concrete footpath on the western side of Morris Street from Lord Street to Great Ocean Road, Port Campbell. It is however considered there is significant community benefit in reallocating a portion of Council's allocated funds for the original scheme to extend the concrete path from Lord Street to the entrance to the car park at the rear of the Port Campbell Hotel.

RECOMMENDATION - 9.8

That Council:

- 1. Not proceed with the establishment of a special charge scheme for construction of a concrete footpath on the western side of Morris Street from Lord Street to Great Ocean Road, Port Campbell**
- 2. Reallocate \$11,000 including GST of the funds currently in the 2024-2025 Council budget for Morris Street footpath special charge scheme to construct a concrete footpath on the western side of Morris Street from Lord Street to the entrance to the car park at the rear of the Port Campbell Hotel. The remainder of the unallocated project funds are to be returned to Council as savings.**

9.9 Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation of Officers Planning and Environment Act 1987

Directorate: Governance and Civic Support
Author: Kathryn Anderson, Manager Governance and Civic Support
Attachments: 1. S11A Instrument of Appointment Planning and Environment Act [9.9.1 - 2 pages]

Declaration

Chief Executive Officer – David Rae

In providing this advice to Council as the Chief Executive Officer, I have no interests to disclose in this report.

Author – Kathryn Anderson

In providing this advice to Council as the Manager Governance and Civic Support, I have no interests to disclose in this report.

Summary

The purpose of this report is to seek Council's endorsement for appointment of authorised officers under the Planning and Environment Act 1987 through the updated Instrument of Authorisation and Appointment ('the instrument').

This request results from recent staff changes. By authorising the relevant officers to perform their duties under the Planning and Environment Act 1987, Council will ensure these officers have the required authority to carry out their roles within legislated requirements.

Issues

Officers authorised to act under the Planning and Environment Act 1987 have authorisation to enter sites, gather evidence or serve legal notices, etc. if required, as appropriate to their level of experience and qualifications.

The specific authorisations provided through this instrument include:

1. under section 147(4) of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* (Vic) – appointment as an authorised officer for the purposes of the Planning and Environment Act 1987 and the regulations made under that Act; and
2. under section 313 of the *Local Government Act 2020* (Vic) authorisation generally to institute proceedings for offences against the Act and/or any

regulations. If officers are not appropriately authorised, they will not have the legal authority to perform key aspects of their role which would result in a lack of enforcement across the Shire. If officers act without the correct authority, actions can also be challenged and invalidated on that basis, and the officers may be personally liable. The attached instrument has been reviewed and updated to reflect recent staff changes and authorises the following officers:

James Andrew Nield
Belinda Anne Bennett
Darren Stanley Frost
David Martin Rae
Gisele De Souza Couto
Jarrod Leigh Bell
Jason Damien Hoffmann
Justine Ruth Linley
Katherine Valerie Shurvell
Melanie Louise Osborne
Pavit Ramesh
Shwethashree Amaranarayana
Stefan Martin Alber

Policy and Legislative Context

This report is in keeping with the commitments in the Council Plan 2021-2025:

Theme Five - Community Leadership
Having strong governance practices

Internal / External Consultation

This is a legislative requirement and no consultation is required.

Financial and Resource Implications

There are no financial implications.

Options

Endorse the updated instrument This option is recommended by officers as it will ensure the selected officers are appropriately authorised under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*.

OR

Not endorse the updated instrument This option is not recommended by officers as it will limit the authorisations and authority of nominated officers.

Conclusions

By authorising the relevant officers to act under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* Council will ensure these officers have the required authority to carry out their roles within legislated requirements.

RECOMMENDATION - 9.9

Council resolves that:

1. The members of Council staff referred to in the instrument attached be appointed and authorised as set out in the instrument;
2. The instrument comes into force at once the common seal of Council is affixed to the instrument, and remains in force until Council determines to vary or revoke it;
3. The Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation (*Planning and Environment Act 1987* only) dated 17 December 2024 be revoked; and
4. The common seal of Council be affixed to the Instrument.

*S11A Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation (Planning and
Environment Act 1987)*



**CORANGAMITE
SHIRE**

Corangamite Shire Council

Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation
(Planning and Environment Act 1987 only)

S11A Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation (*Planning and Environment Act 1987*)

Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation (*Planning and Environment Act 1987*)

In this instrument "**officer**" means -

James Andrew Nield
Belinda Anne Bennett
Darren Stanley Frost
David Martin Rae
Gisele De Souza Couto
Jarrod Leigh Bell
Jason Damien Hoffmann
Justine Ruth Linley
Katherine Valerie Shurvell
Melanie Louise Osborne
Pavit Ramesh
Shwethashree Amaranarayana
Stefan Martin Alber

By this instrument of appointment and authorisation Corangamite Shire Council -

1. under s 147(4) of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* – authorises the officers to carry out the duties or functions and to exercise the powers of an authorised officer under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*; and
2. under s 313 of the *Local Government Act 2020* authorises the officers either generally or in a particular case to institute proceedings for offences against the Acts and regulations described in this instrument.

It is declared that this instrument -

- comes into force immediately upon its execution;
- remains in force until varied or revoked.

This instrument is authorised by a resolution of the Corangamite Shire Council on 25 March 2025.

The Common Seal of
CORANGAMITE SHIRE COUNCIL
was affixed in the presence of:

.....
Chief Executive Officer

.....
Date

S11A. Instrument of Appointment and Authorisation (*Planning and Environment Act 1987*)

9.10 Business Assistance Scheme - March 2025

Directorate: Sustainable Development
Author: Samantha Fox, Coordinator Wellbeing Economy
Attachments: 1. Under Separate Cover - BAS March 2025 Summary [9.10.1 - 2 pages]

Declaration

Chief Executive Officer – David Rae

In providing this advice to Council as the Chief Executive Officer, I have no interests to disclose in this report.

Author – Samantha Fox

In providing this advice to Council as the Coordinator Economy Wellbeing, I have no interests to disclose in this report.

Summary

The purpose of this report is to provide information on the assessment and recommended funding allocation for the March 2025 round of the Business Assistance Scheme (BAS) and recommend a time-limited revision to Stream 1 for Port Campbell businesses.

Introduction

As part of Grow and Prosper Corangamite, Council has consolidated its approach to economic and community development, inclusive of arts, culture, tourism and the circular economy. The Grow and Prosper Framework outlines new programs including the BAS.

The BAS enables Council to support local businesses, big or small, community enterprises, creative industries and new businesses looking to establish in the municipality.

Issues

The BAS provides business, building owners and community the opportunity to apply for support, including financial assistance. Applications are assessed on merit, considering the eligibility criteria and available funds.

The BAS policy was adopted by Council September 2023. The Scheme is ongoing across the year enabling businesses to submit when suitable for their proposed

project and provides four streams 1) Business Facade Improvement; 2) Creative Industries and Placemaking; 3) Community Enterprise; and 4) Fees and Enabling Infrastructure.

Current applications include one application under Stream 1 Business Façade Improvement and one application under Stream 3 Community Enterprise that have been assessed, and are recommended for assistance to be considered by Council for determination:

- **Milk and Honey Timboon:** this project is to improve safety and beautify the second entrance to the business premises. The funding requested is \$2,207.28 excluding GST. Elements of the project require a planning permit and the project is recommended subject to a planning permit being approved.
- **Lakes and Craters Band Camperdown Inc:** this project includes the development of a new website, training and upskilling that will enable the group (incorporated not-for-profit) to self-manage the content and coordinate the ongoing updates for the Lakes and Craters Band site. The funding assistance requested is \$1,050 excluding GST.

The BAS scheme is an ongoing grant and business support scheme that is open for applications year-round. Council officers work with applicants to enable applications to be 'grant ready'. Applications are assessed against the relevant stream criteria and evaluated by an assessment panel. Applications are assessed to ensure they meet all assessment criteria and align with the objectives of the program and if so, are recommended for approval.

In addition to the two current applications Council Officers are in discussions with Port Campbell businesses who are seeking assistance with front of premise outdoor dining and landscaping works arising from streetscape changes as part of the Port Campbell Town Centre Revitalisation Project. Current discussions have highlighted the opportunity to support businesses through a time and location limited variation to BAS Stream 1.

Currently Stream 1 requires a \$1 for \$1 contribution with Council contributing 50% of costs towards a maximum Council contribution of \$3,500 being a combination of physical infrastructure works (50% of costs at maximum support of \$3,000) and landscaping (50% of costs at maximum support of \$500). To support Port Campbell businesses as the Port Campbell Town Centre project nears conclusion, a variation to BAS Stream 1 is proposed being:

- Removal of \$1 for \$1 contribution requirement, with applicants not being required to fund the works upfront and enabling any combination of landscaping and physical infrastructure works.
- Contribution options for Council consideration include:

- *Option A:* Maximum Council contribution of \$3,500 in line with existing Council BAS Stream 1 maximum contribution.
- *Option B:* Contributions up to maximum of \$7,000 in recognition that some of works under discussion are in both the public realm and comparatively small component in the private domain.
- Time-limited: from March to June 2025.
- Location: Port Campbell businesses with a visible street frontage in line with existing BAS requirements.
- To ensure timely response to businesses and to link in with finishing works in the Port Campbell streetscape project it is proposed to delegate the decision making on applications under this variation to the CEO and report applications back to Council for noting in July 2025.

Policy and Legislative Context

This report is in keeping with the commitments in the Council Plan 2021-2025:

Theme One - A Connected Community

Digital connectivity that meets the needs of our community

Theme Two - A Thriving Community

Facilitating and supporting economic development

Arts and culture that is supported and accessible

Our young people are encouraged and supported to engage in learning

We retain and we grow our population

Theme Three - A Healthy, Active and Resilient Community

Access and inclusion is improved

Our community groups and clubs are engaged and supported and facilities are fit for purpose

Internal / External Consultation

Extensive external promotion and consultation about the BAS has occurred across the Shire including media releases, Council's social media channels, Corangamite News, Corangamite E-News and Corangamite Business E-News.

On receipt of applications internal consultation is undertaken with relevant teams (e.g. planning, building and environmental health) to ensure all aspects of proposals are considered and applicants are supported through the permit processes.

Financial and Resource Implications

The current two applications are seeking a total commitment of funds of \$5,464.55 (excluding GST). Council's 2024-25 adopted budget includes an allocation of \$90,000 for the BAS with a remaining budget of \$79,055.

The planning fee for one planning permit is proposed to be waived by Council at a cost of approximately \$1,465.60.

Applications under the proposed Port Campbell BAS Stream 1 variation will be considered on a case-by-case basis and require quotes and applications to be approved by the CEO.

Options

Officers have assessed the applications and recommend them for assistance under the BAS the options are:

1. Allocate funds of \$5,464.55 to the two Business Assistance Scheme applicants and waive the planning permit fee to the value of \$1,465.60 under officer delegation.
2. Not allocate funding through the program.

Options regarding the proposed Port Campbell variation to Stream 1 are:

1. Approve the variation at a maximum Council contribution of \$3,500
2. Approve the variation at a maximum Council contribution of \$7,000
3. Approve a higher or lower maximum Council contribution variation.
4. To not approve the variation.

Conclusions

The BAS provides businesses, building owners and community enterprises with the opportunity to apply for support, including financial assistance. The March applications meet the objectives of the BAS program and contribute to the growth and prosperity of Corangamite and are recommended for support. Providing a time-limited variation to Port Campbell businesses will enable these businesses to respond to the streetscape upgrades and capitalise on the town centre revitalisation project.

RECOMMENDATION - 9.10

That Council:

- 1. Approve the Business Assistance Scheme applications for funding being:**
 - **Milk and Honey Timboon for \$2,207.28 excl GST and waive the associated planning permit fee.**
 - **Lakes and Craters Band Camperdown Inc. for \$1,050 excl GST.**
- 2. Approve a variation, to end June 2025, to the Business Assistance Scheme Stream 1 for Port Campbell businesses by:**
 - A) removing the \$1 for \$1 contribution requirement with applications under this variation;**
 - B) capping the contribution to a single business/project to an amount to be determined by Council.**
 - C) authorise the CEO to approve the applications lodged through this variation under delegation and to report to the July 2025 Council meeting for noting.**

10 Other Business

11 Open Forum

Members of the public are very welcome to make statements or ask questions relevant to Corangamite Shire at the Open Forum section of scheduled Council meetings.

To assist with the smooth running of the meeting, we ask that you raise a maximum of two items at a meeting and please follow this procedure:

1. Wait until the Mayor asks if there are any items in Open Forum and invites you to speak.
2. Stand if you are able and introduce yourself.
3. Speak for a maximum of five minutes.

We will undertake to answer as many questions as possible at a meeting, and if we cannot answer a question at the meeting, we will provide a written response no later than five working days after the Council meeting.

12 Confidential Items

Nil

Close Meeting