



Colac - Deans Creek Precinct Structure Plan

Phase 1 Engagement Findings Report

September 2023

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Introduction

In 2018 Council adopted the Colac 2050 Growth Plan which established a new town boundary to facilitate Colac's growth to the south and west. Building on this, Council is now preparing a Precinct Structure Plan (PSP) and Development Contributions Plan (DCP) for the Deans Creek growth area to enable the western part of Colac to grow. This project will take several years to complete and will eventually facilitate urban development by rezoning land to an Urban Growth Zone and incorporating PSP and DCP documents into the Colac Otway Planning Scheme. The PSP and DCP will guide the future development of the growth area by providing a high-level urban master plan, and an infrastructure staging and funding plan.

The community and stakeholder engagement program is an important part of planning for the growth area, and seeks input from the public, government agencies and departments, Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation on behalf of Traditional Owners, and other stakeholders at key stages of the project. The program is guided by the PSP 2.0 Guidelines approved by the Minister for Planning in 2019 and Council's Community Engagement Policy 2022. There are three key phases for community and stakeholder engagement as set out in Figure 1.

Figure 1 - Engagement Phases



Council completed preliminary engagement (Phase 1) which was undertaken between October 2022 to May 2023.

As part of preliminary engagement, Council undertook a range of activities. These comprised of:

- A **newsletter** sent to landowners and occupiers in the precinct distributed in October 2022.
- **Pitching Sessions** with landowners and agencies to discuss their respective visions, opportunities, and constraints. These sessions were carried out in December 2022.
- A **survey** that was open to the broader community from December 2022 to January 2023.

The activities were designed and undertaken with the purpose of identifying early in the process opportunities and constraints with potential to influence the planning for the Deans Creek growth area, and to inform the commissioning of the technical reports documenting existing conditions. Furthermore all of this background work will inform the preparation of the first draft PSP plans to be presented at the co-design workshops early next year. The co-design process will form the next phase of community, landowner, and stakeholder engagement.

All feedback received throughout the process will be documented, however it is important to note that not all feedback will be integrated into the PSP. Sometimes, landowners, stakeholders or members of the public have different views about the same topic, and the process of planning requires council to carefully balance often competing views and interests. Furthermore, there are some elements of the planning and design of a growth area that are not able to be changed or influenced, or some matters are beyond the scope of a PSP document. This includes for example, planning matters where there is a policy framework in place obligating a specific outcome, or outcomes required by legislation.

Figure 2 summarises the PSP project timeline and the three phases of engagement (overleaf).

Rationale for the Engagement Activities

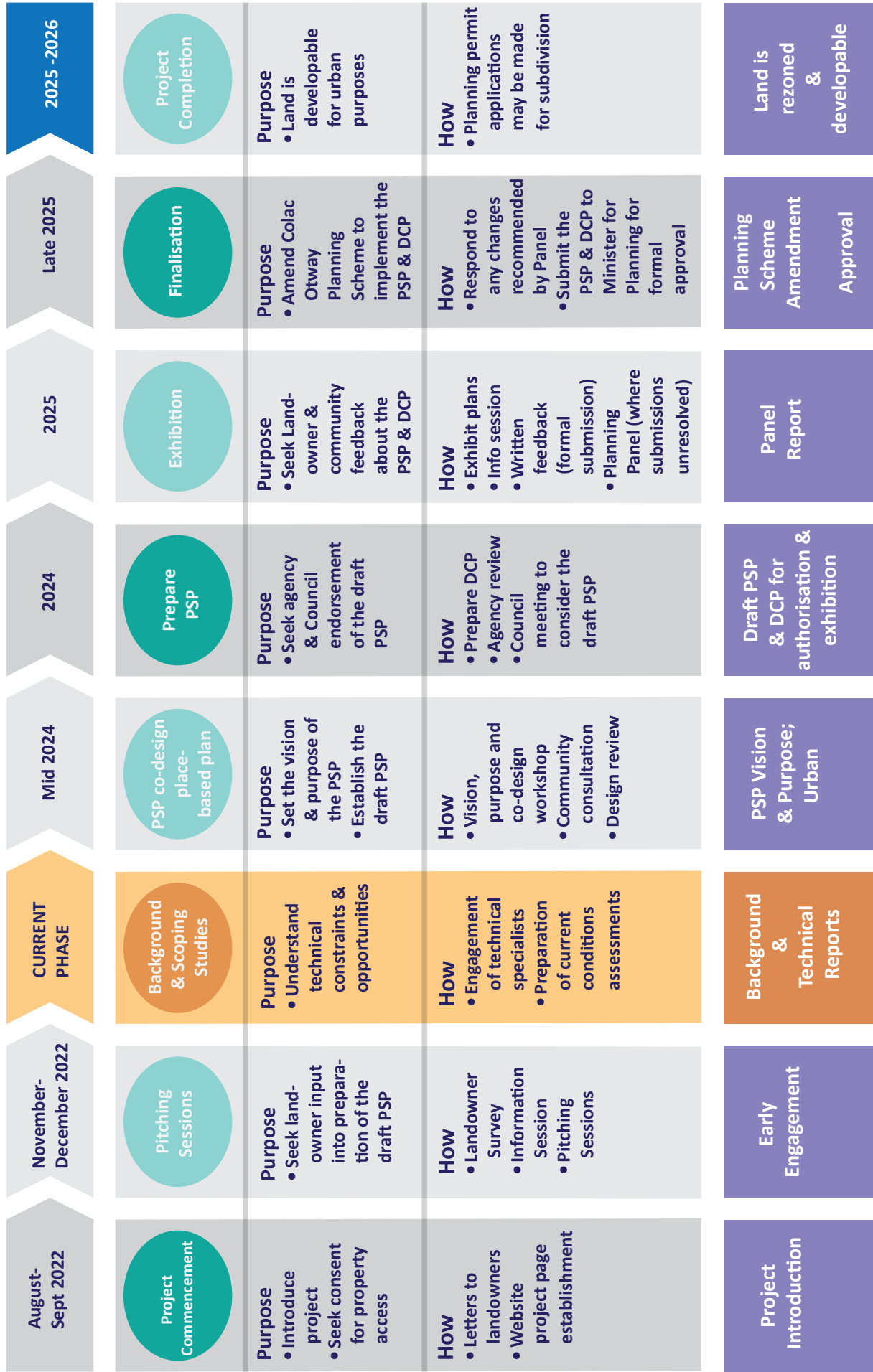
In preparing the engagement activities for Phase 1, Council was informed by the following:

- **Existing key themes from Colac 2050 Growth Plan.** Colac 2050 is structured around five key themes, which were developed and tested with the community through extensive engagement activities including a Citizens' Jury process. The key themes are set out in Attachment 1. These themes were used to guide the drafting of the survey questions, as well as guiding the discussions that occurred in the pitching sessions.
- **Colac Otway Shire Community Engagement Policy 2022.** The policy sets out the principles that are required to be followed when undertaking engagement with the community. Council's engagement objectives for the Deans creek PSP project are to involve and collaborate with landowners in the preparation of the PSP, and to inform and consult with the broader community. In Phase 1 of the project, Council has involved landowners through the pitching sessions, and consulted with the community through the survey. As the PSP project progresses, Council will continue to plan out the engagement for the next phases, and will advise stakeholders of opportunities to participate.
- **VPA PSP 2.0 Guidelines.** The Minister for Planning approved the PSP 2.0 guidelines in 2021 aimed at ensuring a consistent and best-practice approach to the preparation of a precinct structure plan. The PSP 2.0 process aims for early, open and transparent collaboration and engagement with key stakeholders, and identifies pitching sessions, and a co-design process as key stages for engagement.

The next section of this report documents the key findings from the pitching sessions.

Figure 2 - Project Timeline

Deans Creek Precinct Structure Plan Timeline

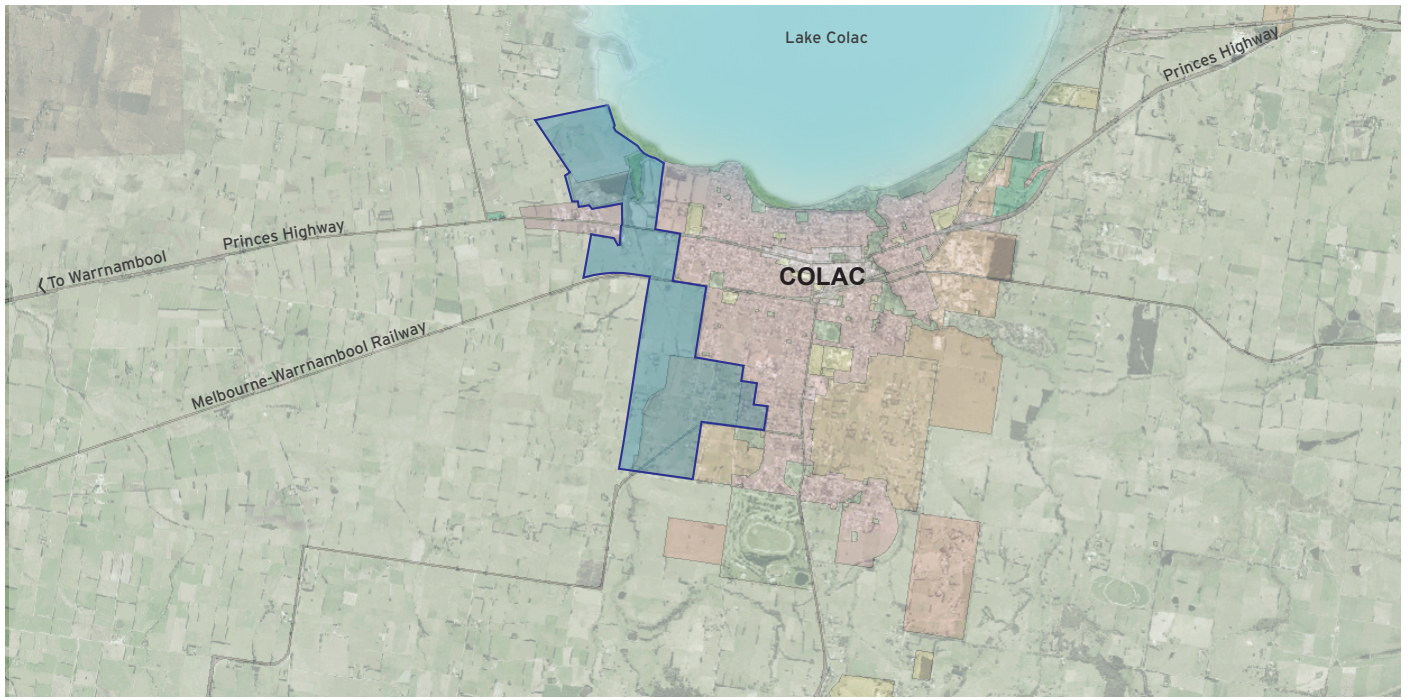


DCP - Development Contributions Plan
PSP - Precinct Structure Plan

The Deans Creek Growth Area

The Deans Creek precinct is a residential growth area located to the west of the Colac township, as shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3 - Context Plan



The Deans Creek growth area is approximately 557 hectares, and is expected to yield between 4500-6000 residential lots, dependent on the outcome of investigations into the extent of developable land within the growth area.

Planning for growth in the Deans Creek Precinct is consistent with the urban growth objectives of both State and local planning policies. The Victorian Government Regional Growth Plan for the G21 region identifies Colac as a district town capable of growth. Furthermore, the Colac 2050 Growth Plan, the Colac Framework Plan (Figure 4) and the Colac Otway Planning Scheme provide clear policy direction to support the growth of Colac in the Deans Creek growth area.

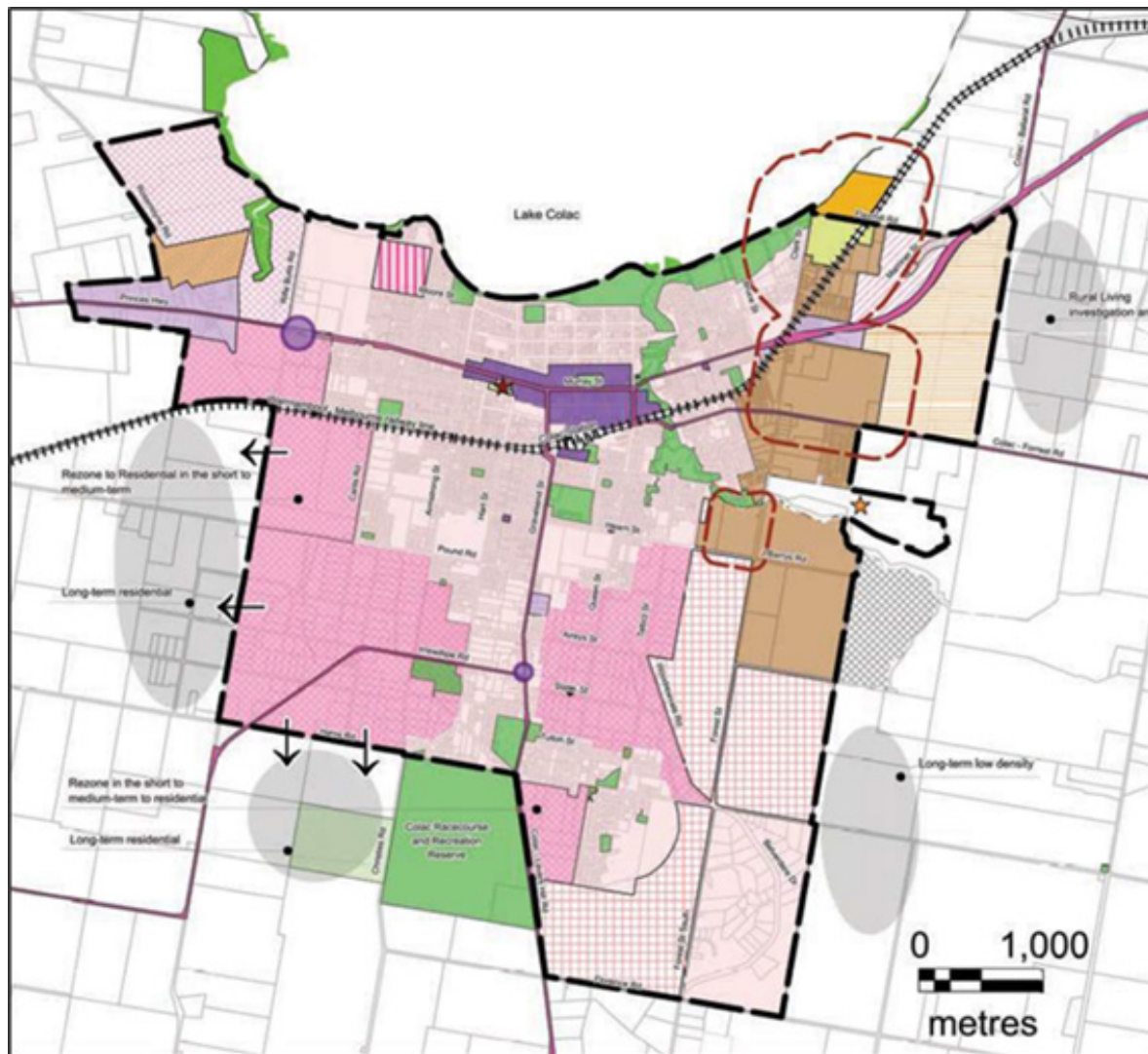
Precinct Structure Plans and Development Contributions Plans

A PSP is a planning document that is used to guide the form of urban development across a relatively large area (generally 500+ hectares). It is an efficient tool to manage urban growth because it facilitates the staging and coordination of infrastructure and growth over larger areas rather than councils managing multiple rezoning requests which are resource intensive to process.

The PSP includes an urban layout plan, land budget, and infrastructure plan. These plans set out the general form and use of the future urban area as well as establish the infrastructure requirements, sequencing and funding arrangements. The infrastructure plan will be implemented through a Development Contributions Plan (DCP).

A DCP establishes a per-hectare monetary contribution payable by landowners when they subdivide the land. The financial contribution goes towards the cost of defined infrastructure items required to service the growth. The benefit of a DCP is that it enables the cost of larger infrastructure with multiple beneficiaries to be shared equitably and does not burden Council with the cost of infrastructure that should be paid for by developers.

Figure 4 - Colac Framework Plan



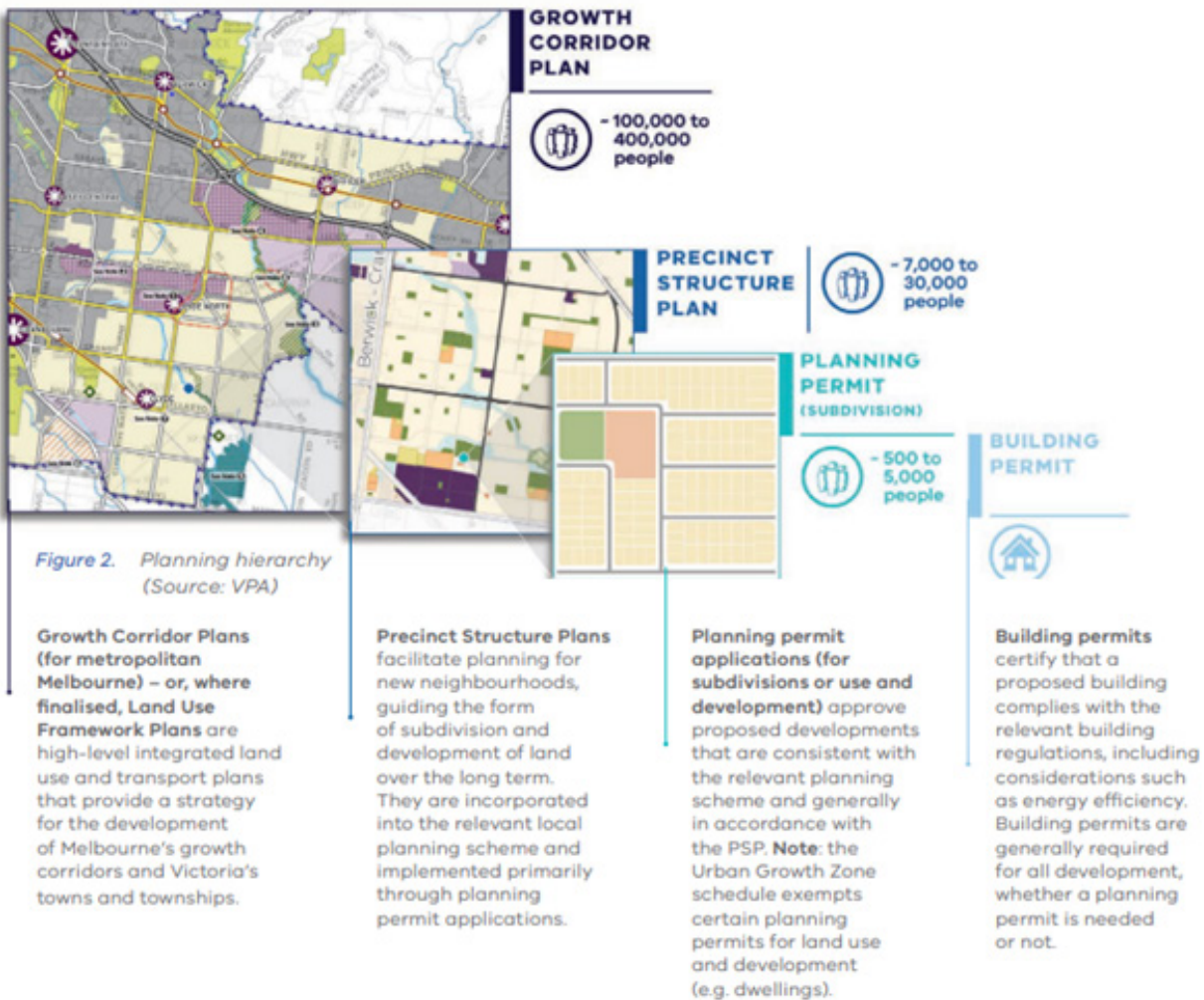
The PSP and DCP project will investigate the suitability for a neighbourhood activity centre, as well as potential for early learning facilities, recreation reserves and other land uses.

A PSP includes a vision and purpose statement, objectives, requirements and guidelines to inform development in relation to:

- Housing
- Activity centres and employment areas
- Community facilities
- Open space
- Conservation areas
- Transport and movement
- Integrated water management and utilities
- Infrastructure planning and staging.

Following the completion of the PSP, a planning scheme amendment will be undertaken to incorporate the PSP and DCP into the Colac Otway Planning Scheme and rezone the land to Urban Growth Zone (UGZ). The entire process, including PSP preparation and rezoning is anticipated to take approximately 4+ years. Preparing a PSP and DCP sits within a broader planning process that can take many years to complete. Once complete the PSP will inform future planning permit applications for subdivision and development, followed by building permit applications for individual dwellings. Figure 5 sets out the planning hierarchy for growth area planning.

Figure 5 - Planning Hierarchy



Pitching Sessions

Purpose of the Pitching Sessions

The pitching sessions are preliminary discussions with individual landowners and government agencies. The purpose is to help identify early opportunities and constraints, inform the commissioning of technical work undertaken as part of background studies, and understand individual and government aspirations and visions for specific land or areas. This background work is then used to inform the co-design workshops, where the first draft PSP plans are prepared.

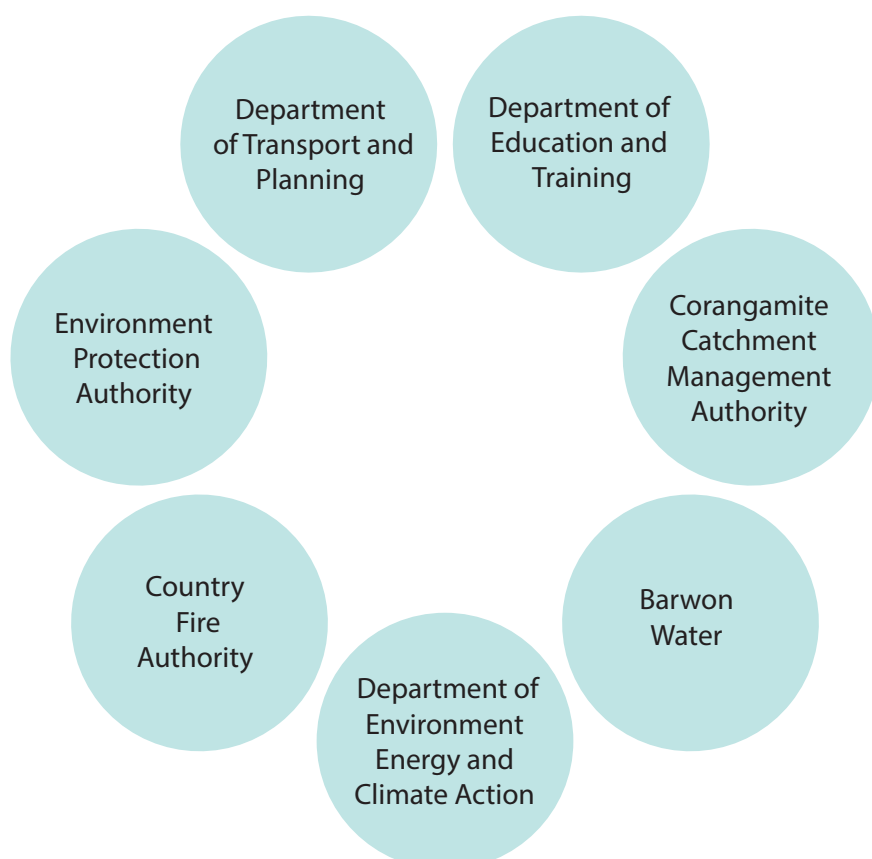
The involvement of landowners in planning for the PSP is a key objective of engagement, and the pitching sessions ensure that landowner views are heard and able to be used to inform the emerging vision and objectives for the PSP.

In the case of government agencies and departments, the objective is to understand what legislative, policy and technical matters are relevant to planning for growth. As a consequence, feedback received from agencies was largely of a technical or policy nature. These technical responses are used to inform the preparation of background reports (such as traffic and transport, stormwater management, and land capability). Background technical assessments help inform the planning for the growth area by understanding the existing conditions and physical characteristics of the PSP area, as well as inform the vision and objectives for the PSP.

Feedback from landowners typically related to ideas and ambitions in relation to specific land parcels, although some landowners chose to provide feedback in relation to broader planning issues such as infrastructure provision.

Pitching Session Contributors

Council invited all landowners in the PSP area to attend a pitching session. Ten landowners attended in-person sessions with council officers. Furthermore, Council facilitated sessions with the following government agencies and departments:-



Summary of Pitching Session Feedback

Landowner Sessions

Most landowner comments related to individual landholdings, with some suggestions/queries about possible approaches to planning for specific areas. The following is a summary of feedback received including questions raised and officer responses:

Landowner Comments

- The land fronting Lake Colac could be a premium product or a potential new destination for Colac. Possibility to have a café or restaurant fronting the lake at Rifle Butts Road.
- The Deans Creek corridor has extensive Indigenous cultural heritage significance and Traditional Owners will need to be consulted how best to protect and manage these areas.
- There is potential to use artificial stormwater detention/treatment wetlands as an open space asset through landscaping, and embellishment (paths, seating etc).
- There is potential for a mix of lot sizes on land to the north of the Princes Highway, or to locate a retirement village there.
- Development should seek a vibrant and sustainable community where people can live, work and shop.
- With appropriate engineering, excess stormwater can be channelled to create a waterway feature through the development.
- The larger land parcels to the south of the Princes Highway can be master-planned to deliver a range of community needs including a commercial precinct, extensive open space areas and boulevard connector streets.
- Suggestion that the Mixed Use Zone could be applied to some areas to allow flexibility of uses (and would facilitate small businesses in proximity to where people live).
- Undersized culverts under the railway line were mentioned as contributing to flooding.

Landowner Questions and Officer Responses

Question: Query about whether individual parcels could be rezoned ahead of the PSP process.

Response: This approach would require each landowner to undertake their own assessments, which would result in increased cost and divert Council's resources away from preparing the PSP and is therefore not supported.

Question: How will pedestrian crossings be managed over the Princes Highway?

Response: Technical assessments will address this, and will investigate how a safe and well-located crossing/s can be designed and funded. This will be in consultation with the Department of Transport and Planning as the State Government manages the Princes Highway.

Questions: How and when would the required infrastructure upgrades occur?

Response: Provision of utilities and infrastructure in most cases will follow existing development fronts – i.e. land closest to the existing urban interface with Colac are likely to progress first as these areas provide efficient connections into existing utility networks and are more efficient in terms of cost.

Agency Pitching Sessions

Department of Education and Training (DET)

DET attended a pitching session which focussed on the provision of State schools and kindergarten services. The Colac 2050 Growth Plan plans for an additional 8000 residents by the year 2050. At the time of preparing Colac 2050, DET advised there would be no further need for new schools in Colac, as the existing State schools had the capacity to absorb the growth.

Recent changes to Government policy (since Colac 2050) requires new schools and kindergartens to co-locate and encourages co-location of existing services. This policy change may also impact the need for school provision, which will be re-assessed as part of the PSP project. In addition, other policy and societal changes (e.g. completion of highway duplication/changing densities due to COVID and release of PSP 2.0 Guidelines), will need to inform the assessment.

Country Fire Authority (CFA)

CFA recommends that a Bushfire Assessment be done prior to investigating potential urban layouts. The assessment should address the following:

- Landscape bushfire risks, and determination of the bushfire hazard of the study area and surrounds.
- Use of the results to determine the likely bushfire behaviour.
- Consideration of availability of bushfire safer areas.
- Recommendations about how setback requirements can be implemented into the PSP to ensure radiant heat benchmarks are met.

The CFA will require the PSP to demonstrate:

- Future development is exposed to radiant heat of no greater than 12.5kW/m², achieved through setbacks for the purposes of defendable space.
- Whether any additional emergency services infrastructure is required to serve the projected population.
- The PSP should address the DELWP Design Guidelines for Settlement Planning at the Bushfire Interface (2020) which could include:
 - Requirements for vegetation management within areas identified for the purposes of defendable space.
 - Incorporation of perimeter roads to urban edges and areas of vegetation to provide for access and defendable space.
 - A road layout that provides for multiple access and egress locations to ensure the safe movement of all vehicles in an emergency.
 - Landscaping within open space areas and streets to be of a bushfire responsive nature, and include management and maintenance in a low threat state.

Corangamite Catchment Management Authority (CCMA)

- CCMA responsibilities in relation to PSP planning extend to waterways and land within 30m of waterways.
- The flood modelling undertaken for Colac 2050 (Colac Stormwater Development Strategy) will need to be updated with the latest data (2019 Australian Rainfall and Runoff). Previous flood assessments demonstrate that flooding in Deans Creek recedes relatively quickly and the most significant flooding occurs in relatively confined areas. The water management plan prepared for the PSP will need to respond to local conditions.
- CCMA requires all future lots, except those used for open space or drainage, to be above the 1 in 100 year (0.1%) flood extent (based on the future 2100 Climatic Scenario), and provide adequate area on each lot for buildings to be constructed at least 0.3 metres above the 1 in 100 year flood extent.
- Deans Creek waterway is a significant community asset and should be prioritised over the other tributaries. To this end it will require a buffer of 30m either side to accommodate environmental and hydrological processes. For constructed sections of Deans Creek, a 40-45m total width would be acceptable,

consistent with Melbourne Water Guidelines on Constructed Waterways.

- Stormwater treatment and detention will need to be located “off-line” (i.e. not within the designated waterway corridor).
- Any drainage plan will need to address Clause 14.02-1S (Catchment planning and management) of the Victorian Planning Policy Framework which seeks to retain natural drainage corridors with vegetated buffer zones at least 30 metres wide along each side of a waterway to:
 - Maintain the natural drainage function, stream habitat and wildlife corridors and landscape values
 - Minimise erosion of stream banks and verges, and
 - Reduce polluted surface runoff from adjacent land uses.

Barwon Water

- It is planned to construct a sewer pump station to the east of Deans Creek (north of Princes Highway) to service new development in Colac West. Once the pump station is constructed it will be possible to connect land to the west of Deans Creek, including the existing industrial area, to reticulated sewer.
- The PSP growth area will be relatively straightforward to provide with reticulated water and sewer from a construction point of view. The main challenge will be fragmented land ownership, particularly towards the southern end of the precinct, which poses challenges in terms of funding and coordination of development.
- The PSP will need to be informed by an Integrated Water Cycle Management Plan (IWCM). An IWCM plan is a plan that considers the whole water cycle, including how the various sources of water can be used more sustainably and efficiently, and how water management infrastructure (such as retention basins and waterways) can be designed and managed to provide environmental and recreation opportunities for the community. The IWCM Plan for Deans Creek will build on the existing projects set out in the Colac Integrated Water Management Plan 2014, and could include
 - Design of the “Botanic Link” Pathway, which is a continuous pathway around Colac, connecting Deans/Barongarook Creeks and the Lake foreshore.
 - Measures to reduce demand for potable water, e.g. water tanks, smart meters and smart tanks, consideration of alternative water supplies.
 - Stormwater harvesting through construction of artificial wetlands, and use of the water for local irrigation of parks, reserves and street trees.
 - Water harvesting infrastructure designed and landscaped to form a feature of the PSP’s public open spaces.
 - Investigation of the feasibility to use Class C recycled water from the existing Colac waste water treatment plant.

Department of Transport and Planning

- The PSP will need to be informed by a Traffic Impact Assessment, which will look at a range of transport modes including public transport, freight, cycling, and the impact of the additional traffic on the existing network. The Assessment will also need to include a “Movement and Place” assessment, which is a high-level assessment that assists in understanding the hierarchy across all transport modes and land uses, by understanding how land is/will be used and the level of service required.
- Some issues that will need to be addressed include:
 - Connection of new cycling infrastructure into the existing Strategic Cycling Corridor for Colac.
 - Review of the existing bus network and design of roads to accommodate new bus routes.
 - Undertaking traffic modelling to determine if Deans Creek Road will be a future arterial road.
 - The Princes Highway is part of the declared Principal Freight Network, and new intersections or property access will need to be designed to ensure priority for the Princes Highway is maintained.
 - Consideration whether a grade separated crossing is required at the intersection of Deans Creek Road and the Melbourne-Warrnambool rail line, or any other road crossings of the rail corridor.
 - Designs of transport infrastructure that facilitate active modes of transport – i.e. walking and cycling.
 - Consideration of impact on other intersections with arterial roads, not just Deans Creek Road. For example the assessment will also need to look at the impact on intersections such as with Colac-Lavers Hill Road.

Environment Protection Authority

The EPA has provided advice to Council in relation to potentially contaminated land, and separation distances to industrial land as well as a number of other matters relating to environmental and human health. Legacy land uses can contribute to contamination of land, such as heavy metals in the case of rifle ranges/gun clubs, hydrocarbons and pesticides in the use of land for agriculture and home based automotive/engineering businesses and chemical stores. Industrial land uses can impact on surrounding land due to noise, emissions and vibration, and therefore in many cases there are buffer requirements applied to protect both the industrial use and prevent the industrial use impacting adversely on surrounding sensitive land uses. Under Ministerial Direction 19, Council is required to seek early advice from EPA when undertaking strategic planning, where there may be impacts on amenity and health from pollution and waste.

Potentially Contaminated Land:

- The framework for the management of potentially contaminated land was updated in 2021, to have a greater preventative and mitigation focus.
- Council must undertake a Land Capability Assessment that assesses land in the precinct for potential for contamination.
- Under Planning Practice Note 30 (PPN30), land within the PSP includes areas of potential contamination as follows:
 - High – Colac Rifle Range at 290 Princes Highway
 - Medium – agricultural land (broad acre and hobby farming)
- Council will be required to assess the occurrence of potentially contaminated land, in accordance with PPN30, including on land already zoned rural residential.
- EPA supports application of an Environmental Audit Overlay (EAO) over the Rifle Range land, prior to rezoning, as it is a known 'high' risk area for contamination. This will negate the need for an upfront assessment (audit), however this would need to be done prior to commencement of use of the land for a sensitive use such as residential development.

Land Use Compatibility and Separation Distances

- Council should identify any existing industries located within the existing Industrial 1 Zone (Rossmoyne Road area) that may generate offsite impacts (including noise, dust and odour) and therefore have the potential to adversely impact on future sensitive land uses. This includes consideration of any recommended separation distances in EPA Publication 1518 (Recommended Separation Distances for Industrial Residual Air Emissions), as well as the threshold distances included at Clause 53.10 of the Colac Otway Planning Scheme.
- The separation distances in EPA Publication 1518 do not consider noise, vibration, ambient and hazardous air pollutants. These are covered in the Environment Protection Regulations (EP Regulations) and the Environment Reference Standard (ERS), and which will need to be considered.

Farming Zone Interface

Council will need to give consideration to the presence of existing agricultural activities abutting the PSP area, including the potential for a separation distance/buffer to minimise the potential for offsite human health and amenity impacts such as odour, dust and noise.

Noise

A number of noise and vibration sources are present in or adjacent to the precinct, including the rifle range, existing industry/agriculture, the Melbourne-Warrnambool rail line and the Princes Highway. The potential impact of noise on sensitive uses will need to be considered.

Survey

Purpose of the Survey

The purpose of the Phase 1 survey was to consult with the broader community prior to the preparation of the draft plan. The information gathered through the survey will be used to inform the vision and objectives of the PSP.

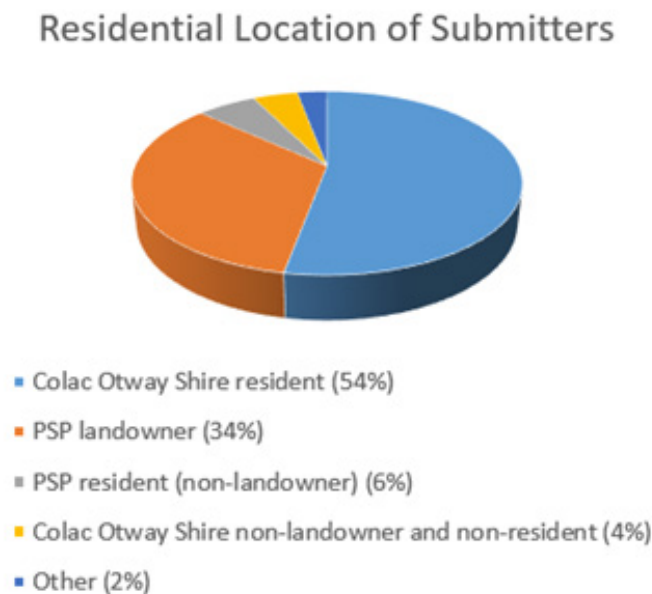
Surveys are a key method by which Council will seek feedback from the community, and will be used at various key stages of the project.

The Phase 1 survey was open from December 2022 to January 2023, and was available online via Council's project page, and in hard copy form from the Colac Otway Shire offices. It was broadly advertised to the Colac community by social media, direct mail to landowners and occupiers in the precinct, and on the Council website. The published survey is in Appendix 2.

Survey Contributors

Council received 57 responses to the survey. Most responses were from the Colac Otway community (non-landowner), followed by landowners within the PSP. The residential location and land ownership status of the submitters is shown in Figure 6.

Figure 6 - Residential Location of Submitters



Survey Responses by Key Theme

Key Themes Overview

The key themes set out in Colac 2050 were used to inform the preparation of the survey questions, as well as to guide the discussions that occurred in the pitching sessions.

The five key themes, of Colac 2050, relevant to the future growth and planning of Colac are:

- Urban growth
- Housing and accommodation
- Economic development and employment
- A cultural landscape, sustainability and a healthy environment
- Infrastructure.

The following section sets out the feedback received from the surveys against the corresponding theme. A complete summary of the comments and frequency they were raised is provided in Attachment 3.

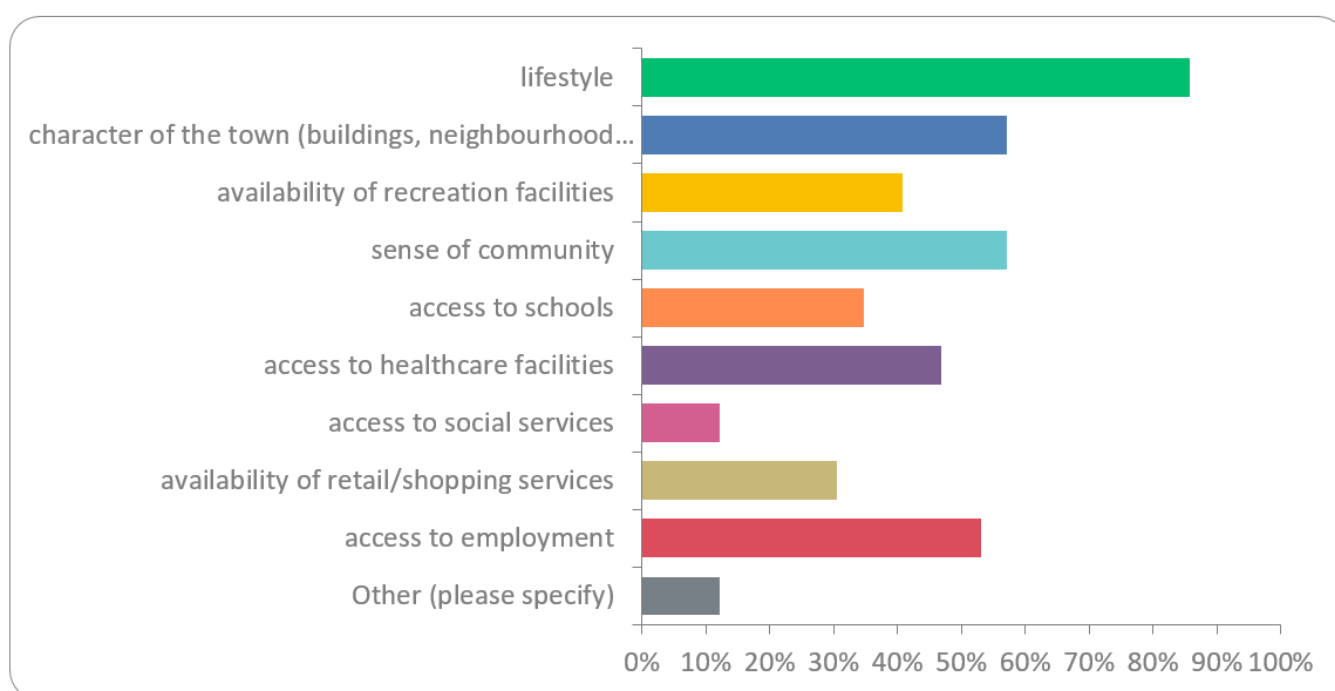
Key Theme 1 - Urban Development

Under this theme, the ideas provided in the survey responses included need for and timing of growth, developability of land including responding to inundation, and built form considerations such as density and character.

As an introduction to the open –ended questions, respondents to this theme were asked the question, with responses shown in Figure 7:

What do you value about living in Colac?

Figure 7



The responses suggest that intangible qualities, such as lifestyle and sense of community, rank highly. Tangible aspects that also ranked highly include access to healthcare, employment and recreation facilities.

Responses to the open ended questions about how the development in Deans Creek might contribute positively to Colac, and reflect the above identified values included:

- Housing supply will enable new residents to move to Colac (responding to the shift of migration towards the regions). Additional residents and growth will benefit the town (economically/socially)
- Preference for development that harmonises with the rural-regional character of Colac.
- Ensure that lots are appropriately sized. Do not replicate the developed outcomes occurring in Melbourne and Geelong as examples.
- Plan for mixed commercial and residential zoning to allow people to live close to where they work.
- Need for appropriate drainage response to manage stormwater and flooding.
- Consider how bushfire risk will be managed around the edges of the precinct, particularly grass fires.



Key Theme 2 - Housing and Accommodation

This theme relates to the performance of the existing housing stock in Colac, and what are potential areas/ opportunities for improvement that could be addressed through the PSP.

Respondents were asked to rate how they thought the existing housing stock meets the needs of the community. The responses indicate that there is a perception that existing housing does not satisfactorily meet the needs of the population in relation to a number of factors such as range of dwelling types, workers housing, and affordable and social housing.

To prompt thinking about housing issues in Colac, survey respondents were asked the following question:

In your opinion, how well does the existing housing stock in Colac meet the needs of the community? (rating out of 5)



Responses to the question about how development in the growth area might address identified housing needs included:

- Need for affordable housing, including social housing.
- Provide for a mix of lot sizes/dwelling types to accommodate varying needs.
- Opportunity for housing that is contemporary or innovative in relation to design/sustainability/character
- Need for key worker housing.
- Management and distribution of social housing.
- Need for community/supported housing for persons with disability.



Key Theme 3 - Economic Development and Employment

This theme relates to how the PSP can contribute to economic development and employment in Colac, and what opportunities there are within the PSP to provide for non-residential uses to meet the needs of the community. Responses to the question about the potential to locate an activity centre in the growth area included:

Retailing:

- Provide a retail node that provides for local shopping needs.
- Locate shops in a prominent/central location to the precinct.
- Ensure that any retailing is viable/doesn't detract from the CBD or other local shops.
- Shopping centre needs to be accessible by car, walking or cycling.
- Construct a supermarket.
- Include a plaza/village square/landscaped areas within the design.
- Provide retail that addresses needs not currently met by local offering.
- Opportunity for a landmark destination with restaurant/café at lake frontage.
- Discourage fast food outlets.
- Buildings should be quality design/materials.

Industrial/Commercial land:

- Locate additional industrial land in the west/north west of Deans Creek.



In relation to commercial centre: Pedestrian scale - unlike Waurm Ponds that is too spread out. Lots of trees and green spaces instead of wide car parking deserts.

Businesses providing services to local residents such as a supermarket, post office, bank, cafes as well as extending the commercial area on the highway for broader goods and services for the district.

Key Theme 4 – A Cultural Landscape, Sustainability and Environment

This theme relates to the health and value of environment and water, and Indigenous and non-Indigenous cultural heritage. Responses to the questions in relation to this theme included:

Cultural Heritage (Indigenous and non-indigenous)

- Recognise the cultural heritage values of the area.
- Provide interpretive signage/landscaping that references Indigenous values.
- Protect and rehabilitate landscapes that are important to Indigenous culture.
- Ensure Traditional Owners are engaged with and listened to.

Deans Creek

- Retain trees/revegetate around creek.
- Provide access to the creek for viewing, recreation, fishing.
- Plan for Deans Creek as an environmental focus and protect and enhance values of ecology and flood water management.
- Encourage wildlife through revegetation/protection of vegetation.
- Use low lying land for wetlands, natural flood control and gardens/landscaped areas.

Lake Colac

- The lake foreshore could be a destination for Colac comprising recreation facilities, landscaping and café/restaurant.

Other

- Plant more trees across the precinct, including street trees.

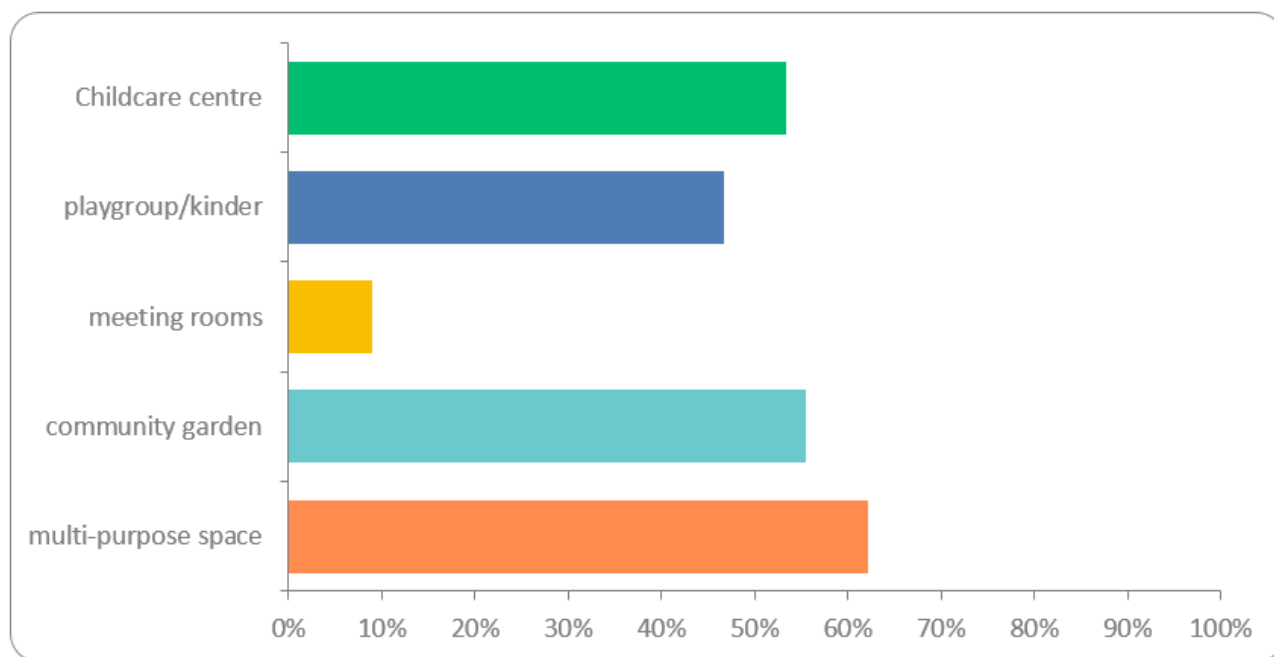


Key Theme 5 - Infrastructure

This theme relates to drainage, transport, community and open space, and utility servicing. To prompt thinking by respondents and to provide context, the survey asked the following question: with responses shown in Figure 8.

In planning for community facilities, what suggestions do you have for the type and location of facilities? Are there any facilities lacking in Colac that you would like to see and that could be located in the Deans Creek Precinct?

Figure 8



Responses to the questions relating to infrastructure included:

Community Facilities:

- Potential to relocate some existing community facilities in Colac to Deans Creek.
- Provide a flexible community meeting space (e.g. for men's shed, craft groups, parents groups etc).
- Plan/provide for schools and kindergartens.
- Look at options to use existing community facilities before building more.
- Opportunity to build a community health centre serving the precinct.

Open Space

- Provide open space with playgrounds and facilities.
- Provide a network of open spaces/recreation/shared paths utilising Deans Creek as a linkage.
- Neighbourhood parks should be provided within walking distance of residents/be well connected.
- Provide exercise stations within open space.
- Recreation facilities that address gaps in current facilities (e.g. soccer, baseball, bike jumps, BMX).
- Provide a major sporting facility to accommodate visiting clubs and a range of user groups.
- Set aside land for sporting and community facilities even if funds are not yet available.

Transport

- Provide a network of connected walking and cycling paths.
- Provide off-road cycling paths.
- Provide footpaths on both sides of streets.

- Design for wider streets (e.g. for parking and street tree planting).
- Construct a safer intersection at Princes Highway/Deans Creek Road.
- Existing unsealed roads need to be sealed.
- Reserve land for a second train station/bus interchange.
- Provide public transport.

Drainage/Flooding

- Provide adequate infrastructure to address drainage and flooding.
- Address flooding caused by the rail line.

Servicing

- Connect sewer to Colac West.
- Sewer all areas of the PSP.
- Provide lighting for safety throughout streets and open spaces.



Issues identified by the community about development in Deans Creek

The Deans Creek PSP is a major project for Colac and one that can have a significant impact on the character and function of the existing urban area. It is acknowledged that some people in the community may have reservations or concerns about development of this scale occurring. It is important for Council to understand what these concerns may be, so that planning for the area can address these where possible. In addition, the community of Colac have local knowledge about the area that is an important source of information in understanding the constraints and opportunities for the area.

The survey was an opportunity to ask respondents to put forward any concerns they may have about development occurring, and to understand how these may be addressed through the project. The following section sets out the feedback received, and provides a response to each theme.

Flooding and Stormwater Management

- Concerns that the extent of low-lying, flood prone land will mean that little of the growth area will be actually developable.
- Need to better understand how development will affect the behaviour of stormwater and how it drains or will be potentially obstructed.
- Deans Creek Road currently is cut off in flood, and there are concerns about how impacts such as this would be managed.
- Concern that the amount of infrastructure required, such as detention and treatment basins to mitigate flood, may be extensive and costly.

Response

The Colac 2050 Growth Plan, which identified the Deans Creek area for growth, was informed by an assessment of stormwater and drainage conditions – the Colac Stormwater Development Strategy. The Strategy included a number of key findings including:

- That the flooding in the Deans Creek corridor is relatively shallow and recedes rapidly after the peak, meaning that it is potentially suitable for flood mitigation works.
- That the mitigation of flooding is technically feasible through the construction of a series of stormwater retention basins and pipes, and engineering of constructed sections of waterways in the Deans Creek floodplain. The Strategy provides a conceptual level plan of the proposed infrastructure, which will be tested and refined through a more detailed assessment that will inform the PSP.
- Flood mitigation would need to ensure that any developable areas, including roads, are above the 1 in 100 year flood event. Council's flood modelling post-dates the floods of 2016 therefore there is a high degree of confidence in the modelling that it is reflective of the current known risks. Furthermore, the PSP will be informed by further technical work in relation to stormwater management and infrastructure design.

Environmental issues

- Concern that development would impact negatively on vegetation and wildlife that use the creek corridor.
- Impact of urban development on the quality of water entering Deans Creek and Lake Colac.

Response

The PSP will be informed by a number of studies that will include recommendations that will be incorporated into the plan to address these issues. These studies include a Biodiversity Assessment, which will identify any areas of significant vegetation and ecological values, and make recommendations for protection and enhancement; and a Stormwater and Integrated Water Management Plan, which seeks to integrate drainage functions with environmental, recreation and open space functions – the outcome being better water quality and more efficient use of stormwater runoff.

Urban Character

Concern that the style of development will not be compatible with Colac's existing character, examples cited include Armstrong Creek and the small setbacks between dwellings as an example of development that is considered not appropriate in Colac.

Response

The PSP is a high-level urban master plan and land use plan, and does not control the detailed design of dwellings that are able to be constructed within the PSP area. The PSP will include dwelling density targets, and this is expected to deliver a range of densities that will meet the needs of a range of households. This is expected to comprise a mix of larger lots suitable for 3-4 bedroom homes, as well as smaller, higher density lots that meet the needs of older persons and 1-2 person households. The urban layout will be informed by a Landscape and Visual Assessment and other urban design considerations that will seek to minimise the visual impact of development through the alignment and width of roads, layout and size of open space areas, and any design or landscape objectives that may be important to achieve in key locations. An objective of the PSP will be to provide area for increased tree planting to support provision of shade and cooling, and to reflect the strong presence of trees in the existing Colac skyline.

Activity Centre/Commercial Land

Concern that an activity centre or other commercial land would compete with existing centres and result in vacant land or shops.

Response

The PSP will be informed by a commercial and employment land assessment that will review the recommendations of previous studies including Colac 2050 and the Colac Economic Development Commercial and Industrial Land Use Strategy 2017. An action of the strategy is to consider the potential for a neighbourhood and / or local retail centre in the planning for new urban areas, such as Deans Creek, in order to accommodate a population of 20,000 persons in Colac, noting that this is a long-term objective (20+ years). A key objective of any new centre will be to provide local facilities to meet the new population, and not undermine the existing CBD.

Appendix 1 - Colac 2050 Key Themes

Key Theme	Key Principle	Key Direction
Urban Growth	<p>To identify suitable locations for a range of development densities.</p> <p>To ensure growth areas are provided with adequate infrastructure.</p> <p>To ensure new urban development is undertaken in a sustainable manner.</p> <p>To protect areas from the threat of bushfire.</p>	<p>Support the rezoning of land identified for development in the Colac Framework Plan and which addresses the matters raised in Colac 2050.</p> <p>Support the development of Shared Infrastructure Plans and/or Infrastructure Contributions Plans or similar mechanisms to provide for or contribute to identified Infrastructure needs.</p>
Housing and Accommodation	<p>To ensure housing development complements the character of Colac and provides a variety of housing types and sizes, and includes affordable housing.</p> <p>To ensure that new subdivisions incorporate sustainability principles.</p> <p>To ensure that new subdivisions are designed to sustainably manage stormwater, ecological values, public open space and management of cultural heritage values.</p> <p>To ensure that new subdivisions provide for community health and safety in their design.</p>	<p>Encourage a diverse range of housing types and sizes.</p> <p>Encourage medium density development within 400m of an activity centre and around areas of public open space.</p> <p>Ensure that new subdivisions address health and safety and ecological sustainability through design.</p> <p>Encourage urban design treatments in new subdivisions to reflect the regional character of the town.</p>
Economic Development and Employment	<p>Protect industrial precincts from land use and development which may impact on their development and operating potential.</p> <p>To enhance an attractive rural landscape at entrances to Colac.</p> <p>To enhance and strengthen the public realm, and promote the town as a desirable place to live.</p> <p>To facilitate sustainable modes of transport.</p>	<p>Maintain a buffer of non-sensitive land uses between Colac's industrial areas and Colac's urban areas.</p> <p>Discourage the development of an out of town neighbourhood centre unless it is required as part of the Deans Creek Growth Area.</p> <p>Consider opportunities to facilitate improvements to the entrances of Colac.</p>

Key Theme	Key Principle	Key Direction
A Cultural Landscape, Sustainability and a Healthy Environment	<p>To include Aboriginal community members in the planning of Colac and apply best practice to engagement and cultural heritage management.</p> <p>To acknowledge, recognise, protect and celebrate Aboriginal culture, stories and areas of cultural significance.</p> <p>To recognise and protect key views.</p> <p>To ensure down-stream stormwater flows are managed to protect waterways and adjoining land.</p> <p>To enhance and preserve the health of Lake Colac, Deans Creek, Barongarook Creek and environs.</p> <p>To protect, rehabilitate, enhance and interpret Colac's environmental attributes.</p> <p>To consider climate change impacts in future development.</p>	<p>Consider opportunities to celebrate and promote local Aboriginal language, history and stories in the Colac's open space network and the naming of future places, street names and infrastructure.</p> <p>Implement the Colac Stormwater Development Strategy and ensure that new development manages flood risk to ensure no urban development is located on land which is flood prone.</p> <p>Ensure that new subdivisions are designed to integrate with the Water Cycle.</p> <p>Consider opportunities for climate-ready actions as part of new development.</p> <p>Ensure that future development achieves a radiant heat flux of less than 12.5kW/m².</p>
Infrastructure	<p>To provide adequate levels of unencumbered public open space in the town to cater for passive and active recreation needs of the community.</p> <p>To integrate future growth areas into the existing infrastructure including transport and movement networks and existing social and urban structure.</p> <p>To provide for an improved transport and movement network including pedestrian and cyclist linkages.</p>	<p>Support the implementation of Shared Infrastructure Plans of similar funding mechanisms & ensure no land is re-zoned until the funding mechanism has been established.</p> <p>Ensure that future growth areas integrate into the existing urban structure to facilitate accessibility.</p> <p>Ensure that new community infrastructure considers the integration of multiple uses, access requirements to service diverse needs.</p> <p>Ensure detailed transport assessments are undertaken as part of planning for growth areas.</p>

Appendix 2 - Survey Questions

General						
Q1	What best describes you? (multiple choice)					
R1	Owner of land in the precinct	Resident of precinct	Resident of Shire	Non-resident landowner in Shire	Live outside Shire	Other (specify)
Q2	What do you value about living in Colac? (multiple choice, select all that apply)					
R2	lifestyle	character (buildings, neighbourhood, open space, rural setting)	availability of recreation facilities	sense of community	access to schools	
	access to healthcare facilities	access to social services	availability of retail/shopping services	access to employment	Other (specify)	
Key Theme 1 – Urban Growth						
Q3	What aspects of living in Colac could be considered in the planning for the Deans Creek Growth Area? Do you have any suggestions about how the planning for Deans Creek could contribute positively to Colac?					
R3	Open ended response					
Q4	Do you have any concerns about development occurring in the Deans Creek precinct?					
R4	Open ended response					
Key Theme 2 – Housing and accommodation						
Q5	In your opinion, how well does the existing housing stock in Colac meet the needs of the community? (multiple choice)					
R5	not at all	not very well	very well	neutral	quite well	very well
Q6	Thinking about your response to question 5, what opportunities could there be for housing provision in the Deans Creek Growth Area to meet an identified need?					
R6	Open ended response					
Key Theme 3 – Economic development						
Q7	Colac 2050 identifies the potential to locate a small commercial centre within the Deans Creek Precinct. In your opinion, what are the important considerations when planning for the centre (e.g. potential locations for the centre, how the centre is designed and accessed, types of business/uses within the centre).					
R7	Open ended response					
Key Theme 4 – A cultural landscape						
Q8	Are there any existing natural or landscape features that you would like to see preserved or enhanced in the design of the precinct? (e.g. waterways, trees, views, heritage or culturally significant places).					
R8	Open ended response					
Q9	How could Colac and the region's history and culture be incorporated into new places, streets and open spaces?					
R10	Open ended response					
Q11	What suggestions would you have for incorporating sustainability initiatives into planning and development of the precinct? (eg stormwater management & reuse, tree planting, revegetation of waterways, encouragement of walking/cycling)					
R11	Open ended response					

Key Theme 5 – Infrastructure						
Q12	In planning for community facilities, what suggestions do you have for the type and location of facilities? Are there any facilities lacking in Colac that you would like to see and that could be located in the Deans Creek Precinct? (add your additional answers to the comment box)					
R12	Childcare centre	playgroup/ kinder	meeting rooms	community garden	multi-purpose space	Other (please specify)
Q13	In relation to traffic and transport (including public transport and cycling/walking), what are some of the issues in Colac that the plan for Deans Creek should address. (e.g locations/accessibility of public transport, suitability of paths and cycle lanes, car parking, road safety etc)					
R13	Open ended response					
Q14	In relation to open space and recreation facilities, how could planning for the Deans Creek precinct address any current gaps? Are there any other suggestions you would like to make in relation to open space and recreation opportunities?					
R14	Open ended response					
Q15	In terms of the key infrastructure required to service the future community, what in your opinion could be the key challenges in designing, supplying or maintaining the infrastructure?					
R15	Open ended response					
Q16	Are there any other comments you would like to make?					
R16	Open ended response					

Appendix 3 - Survey Responses and Number

Colac – Deans Creek PSP - Phase 1 Survey Responses 57 total	
Theme	Frequency of responses
Urban Development	
Built Form	
Larger lots than comparative developments in Geelong etc	7
Ensure development maintains the rural/regional character of Colac	4
Concern about having to subdivide, want to keep using land for existing use	4
Lower densities in the existing rural residential zoned areas (southern end of precinct)	2
Concern about bushfire risk at edge of precinct	2
Consider mixed use zoning to allow for commercial and residential at the same site	1
Other suggestions/comments	
Concern about management of stormwater and flooding	14
Wanting to occur as soon as possible	5
Additional residents will benefit the town (eg economically, socially)	3
Staged release of land to maintain land value	1
Housing and Accommodation	
Need for affordable housing (including social housing)	14
Provide a mix of lot sizes/dwelling types to accommodate varying needs	8
Opportunity for housing that is contemporary in relation to design/sustainability/innovation and character	6
Need for key worker housing	2
Management and distribution of social housing	2
Need community/supported housing for persons with disability	1
Economic Development and Employment	
Retailing	
Provide a retail node addressing local needs	12
Locate shops in a prominent/central location to the precinct	11
Ensure that any retailing is viable/doesn't detract from CBD or other local shops	6
Shops need to be accessible (car, walking, cycling)	6
Construct a supermarket	5
Include a plaza/village square within the design	4
Provide retail that addresses needs not currently met by local offering	4
Locate additional industrial land in the west/north west of Deans Creek	2
Restaurant/cafe with Lake frontage	2
Discourage fast food outlets	1
Buildings should be quality design	1
A Cultural Landscape, Sustainability and Environment	
Indigenous and non-indigenous Cultural Heritage	
Recognise the cultural heritage values of the area	9
Provide interpretive signage/landscaping etc	5
Protect and rehabilitate landscapes that are important in Traditional Owner culture	4

Deans Creek	
Retain trees/revegetate around the creek	10
Provide access to the creek for viewing, recreation, fishing	4
Deans Creek as an environmental focus (waterway and biodiversity function) protection of values	8
Use low lying land for wetlands/gardens/natural flood control	5
Encourage wildlife	2
Lake Colac	
The lake foreshore could be a destination for Colac (e.g. with recreation facilities, café etc)	1
Other	
Plant more trees including street trees	12
Infrastructure	
Community Facilities	
Provide a flexible community meeting space (eg for men's shed, craft groups, parents groups etc)	5
Community Health Centre	3
Provide/plan for schools and kindergartens	2
Look at options to use existing community facilities before building more	1
Potential to relocate some existing community facilities in Colac to Deans Creek	1
Open Space	
Provide a network of open spaces/recreation/shared paths utilising Deans Creek as a linkage	15
Provide open space	10
Recreation facilities that address gaps in current facilities (e.g. soccer, baseball, bike jumps, BMX)	6
Provide a major sporting facility to accommodate clubs and user groups	5
Neighbourhood parks should be provided within walking distance of residents/well connected	3
Provide exercise stations within open space	1
Set aside land for sporting and community facilities even if funds are not yet available	1
Transport	
Network of connected walking and cycling paths	12
Wider streets (eg for parking, tree planting)	7
Provide off-road cycling paths	6
Safer intersection at Princes Highway/Deans Creek Road	3
Existing roads need to be sealed	2
Bypass of the main street	1
Reserve land for a second train station/bus interchange	1
Drainage/Flooding	
Provide adequate infrastructure to address drainage and flooding	11
Provide public transport	6
Footpaths on both sides of streets	4
Address flooding caused by the rail line	2
Servicing	
Connect sewer to Colac West	3
Street lighting for safety	3
Sewer all areas	1