



# Bendigo Regional Employment Precinct

DJANDAK (DJA DJA WURRUNG COUNTRY)

## Background Report

December 2025



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

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The **Victorian Planning Authority proudly acknowledges** Victoria's Aboriginal community and their rich culture and pays respect to their Elders past and present.

**We acknowledge** Aboriginal people as Australia's first peoples and as the Traditional Owners and custodians of the land and water on which we rely.

**We recognise** and value the ongoing contribution of Aboriginal people and communities to Victorian life and how this enriches us.

**We embrace** the spirit of reconciliation, working towards the equality of outcomes and ensuring an equal voice.

**We acknowledge** Dja Dja Wurrung people as the Traditional Owners of the land to which this planning scheme amendment applies.

The Bendigo Regional Employment Precinct is located on the traditional lands of Dja Dja Wurrung people. Dja Dja Wurrung people are represented by Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation / DJAARA.

We acknowledge Dja Dja Wurrung as the Aboriginal Traditional Owners of their unceded Country. We acknowledge their ongoing connection to this land, and we pay our respects to their Elders past and present.

We thank Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation / DJAARA for their engagement throughout this project.

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

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The Victorian Planning Authority (VPA), now part of the Department of Transport and Planning's New Communities division, has prepared Amendment C296gben to the Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme in consultation with the City of Greater Bendigo (CoGB), Development Victoria (DV) and relevant agencies.

The amendment facilitates the coordinated master planning and future development of the Bendigo Regional Employment Precinct (BREP) – a 294-hectare precinct south of the Marong Township that will deliver approximately 3,000 new jobs. The amendment implements the precinct as Bendigo's key regional industrial and employment area and forms part of Victoria's 10-year plan to unlock industrial land.

The amendment includes:

- Amend Clause 02.03 (Municipal Planning Strategy – Strategic Directions) to identify the Bendigo Regional Employment Precinct as the municipality's key industrial and employment area.
- Amend Clause 11.01-1L (Settlement – Marong) to recognise the BREP within the Marong Framework Plan, linking its growth with the Marong Township and future infrastructure planning.
- Insert new Clause 11.03-6L-04 (Bendigo Regional Employment Precinct) to guide the coordinated development, sequencing, and infrastructure delivery of the precinct.
- Rezone all land in the precinct from Farming Zone (FZ) to Industrial 1 Zone (IN1Z) to facilitate industrial use and development.
- Apply Schedule 34 to Development Plan Overlay (DPO34) to ensure integrated planning, staging, and delivery of shared and state infrastructure through Section 173 Agreements.
- Update operational provisions, including Clauses 66.04, 72.03, 72.08 and 74.01, to reflect new referral authorities, maps, background documents, and the application of zones and overlays.

The CoGB wrote to the Minister for Planning (Minister) requesting the VPA become the planning authority for the BREP in late 2021. The Minister appointed the VPA status on 11 February 2022.

The BREP is included in [Plan For Victoria, 2025](#), which directs the future of planning throughout Victoria, and supported by the Victorian Economic Growth Statement at the state level. It is also supported by the Greater Bendigo Industrial Land Development Strategy, 2024 which sets a strategy for the development of land and facilitation of investment to support industrial and employment growth in Bendigo.

The BREP is expected to:

- Unlock 24–30 years of new industrial land supply, meeting medium- and long-term regional demand and implementing Clause 17.03-1S (Industrial Land Supply) of the Victorian Planning Provisions.
- Deliver a 294-hectare greenfield employment precinct, comprising a net developable area of approximately 206 hectares across a diverse mix of large and medium industrial lots suitable for logistics, advanced manufacturing, circular economy, and higher-impact industries.
- Attract a broad range of industry sectors, including logistics, transport, advanced manufacturing, mining and mineral processing, food and beverage production, renewable energy, circular economy enterprises, and data and digital infrastructure.
- Provide direct connectivity to the state freight network, with access via the Calder Alternative Highway, Wimmera Highway, and the planned Marong Western Freight Corridor, enabling regional-scale logistics and manufacturing operations.

- Support an estimated 2,800–3,000 on-site jobs at full development, with capacity for up to 3,700–4,000 workers as employment densities increase over time.
- Offer a competitive regional alternative to Melbourne’s high industrial land costs, attracting “footloose” businesses and strengthening Central and Northern Victoria’s economic base.
- Be implemented through a Development Plan Overlay (DPO), which requires a development plan to be prepared and approved before permits can be granted. The DPO establishes objectives, requirements, conditions and a concept plan to guide integrated transport, biodiversity, cultural heritage, drainage and amenity outcomes, while ensuring certainty and flexibility for future investment.

The BREP builds on the model of other successful regional employment precincts such as Logic (Wodonga) and the Geelong Ring Road Employment Precinct, offering buffered land, freight access, and long-term certainty for industry investment.

The BREP has also been supported by a \$6 million Regional Development Victoria (RDV) grant, signed in January 2024. The grant demonstrates the Victorian Government’s strong commitment to delivering the BREP by directly supporting the early works and infrastructure planning required to bring the BREP to fruition. Projects funded by the grant include the Infrastructure Strategy, Development Strategy, Business Case, Integrated Water Strategy, priority utility works, and freight/transport studies that contribute to the planning of the planned Marong Western Freight Corridor (MWFC).

This investment plus the planned MWFC underscore the State’s leadership in enabling region-shaping employment precincts and ensuring that the necessary foundations are in place to attract investment, provide essential freight network and create long-term jobs for region.

## 1.1 Purpose of this Report

This background report explains the key steps, planning assessments and outcomes that have informed the preparation of the BREP.

Specifically, this report:

- Provides background and history to the project.
- Summarises the physical and strategic context of the BREP.
- Identifies the land use and development issues, opportunities and constraints for the BREP.
- Outlines how technical studies have informed the preparation of the Concept Plan and draft planning scheme ordinance.
- A full list of the supporting documents that have informed the preparation of the background report and the BREP can be found in the appendix of this report.

## 1.2 Project Governance

The governance structure for the BREP has been designed to ensure integrity, transparency and accountability in decision-making.

The governance framework for the BREP is built around two complementary streams:

The VPA is the Planning Authority for BREP, appointed by the Minister for Planning in February 2022. VPA leads the preparation of the planning scheme amendment, rezoning and DPO and provides impartial advice to the Minister for Planning.

VPA convenes and utilises steering committees and working groups with government agencies to guide technical work, coordinate intergovernmental inputs, and ensure consistent decision-making.

In parallel, a CoGB led Project Control Group (PCG) and Project Steering Committee (PSC) oversee the six projects funded through the \$6 million RDV grant. The PCG and PSC provides senior-level strategic advice, risk management, and oversight of these sub-projects. It ensures alignment between the grant-funded workstreams and the broader planning process led by the VPA. Both are chaired by the CoGB and includes senior representatives from RDV, VPA, DV, DTP Transport Services, and Coliban Water.

## Development Victoria's Participation

DV has been engaged by CoGB in its landowner capacity, funded through the RDV grant, to prepare the Infrastructure Strategy, Development Strategy and Business Case on a "best-for-project" basis.

Recognising potential conflicts given DV's possible future role as a developer, DV has its own Probity Plan and appointed a probity adviser. While the VPA has reviewed the technical inputs prepared by DV under the \$6 million RDV grant, these are treated as landowner-led studies that are not endorsed by the VPA. As such, they carry less weight than independent or VPA-commissioned assessments and are confined to explaining the trunk infrastructure requirements necessary to support industrial uses and illustrating the concept layout on the CoGB-owned land (including the drainage basins and the western and eastern access points in Wimmera Highway and Calder Alternative Highway). The statutory planning framework, including the rezoning and DPO is ultimately determined by the VPA based on broader strategic planning, policy alignment and impartial assessment. Delivering trunk infrastructure upgrades is an implementation and funding matter outside the planning scheme.



Figure 1 Concept layout on CoGB's land

While it is not adopted by the VPA to inform the planning scheme amendment documentation, the exhibited Infrastructure Strategy will function as a reference document to support the conversations throughout the planning scheme amendment process.

## Probity

Probity for the BREP is governed by a Probity Plan outlined in BREP project's Charter.

The probity framework ensures that all project activities planning, engagement and decision-making are fair, transparent, and free from bias or undue influence.

The CoGB participates in two clearly separated roles:

- As Municipal Authority, providing local statutory and strategic planning input and representing community interests.



- As a landowner, engaged at the same points as other landowners, with separate officers representing this role to avoid conflicts of interest.

Probity health checks, completed by a probity adviser, is undertaken at key stages of the amendment preparation process, prior to exhibition of the planning documentation, following submissions analysis before the panel stage, and before final approval and gazettal.

Each review examines alignment with the probity plan.

## 2 STRATEGIC CONTEXT

### 2.1 Spatial Context

#### 2.1.1 Regional and Local Context

The BREP is a 294 hectare industrial precinct located in the Loddon Mallee Region on the traditional land of Dja Dja Wurrung People. The BREP is directly south of the Marong Township and is bordered by the Wimmera Highway, Calder Alternative Highway and Cemetery Road. The Bendigo CBD is located approximately 15 kilometres to the east.

The broader transport and freight context includes proximity to:

- Major road corridors on Victoria's Principal Freight Network, including the Wimmera Highway, Calder Highway and Calder Alternative Highway connecting to regional freight routes.
- The planned Marong Western Freight Corridor (MWFC) running north of the BREP, further enhancing linkages into the regional freight network.

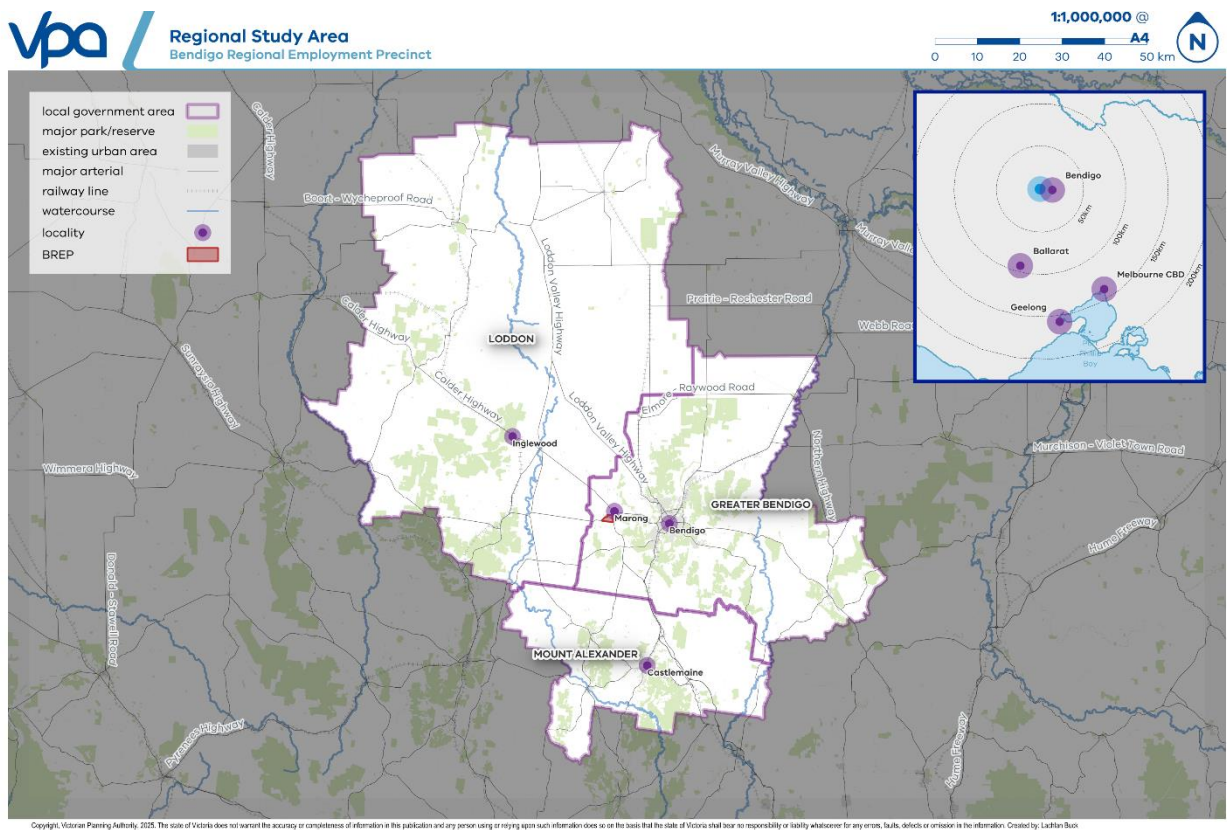


Figure 2 Regional Context Plan

## 2.1.2 Precinct Interfaces

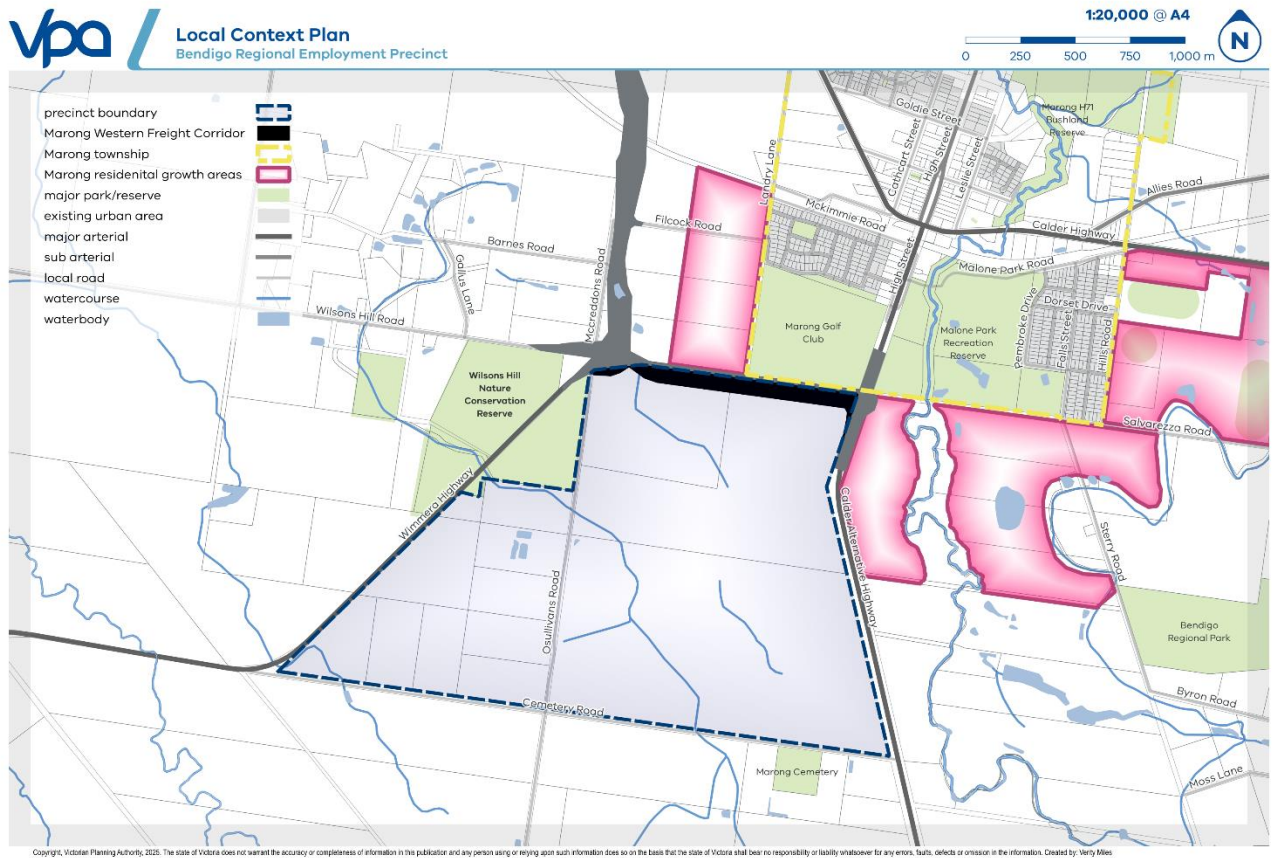


Figure 3 Precinct Context

The BREP is framed by a diverse range of adjoining land uses that create both opportunities and sensitivities to be addressed in its planning and development:

### North (Wimmera Highway / Marong Township Interface):

- Immediately north of the Wimmera Highway lies the Marong Golf Course and the Marong Recreation Reserve, which are key recreational assets for the township.
- Beyond these is the Marong Township, with a population of 1,508 (2021), forecast to reach 8,000 by 2050 under the MTSP.
- The MTSP identifies new residential growth areas directly adjoining the eastern edge of BREP, meaning careful interface planning will be required to manage potential amenity impacts (noise, traffic, visual, and light spill) from industrial development on future residential communities.

### East (Residential Growth / Rural-Residential Interface):

- To the east, land identified for residential expansion along Bullock Creek under the MTSP will bring future housing into close proximity with the precinct.
- This creates a sensitive interface where urban development will need to be buffered from industrial activity in BREP, requiring attention to landscaping, noise attenuation, drainage design, and traffic connections.

### **South (Cemetery Road / Marong Cemetery Interface):**

- Along the southern boundary, the precinct fronts Cemetery Road, with the Marong Cemetery located directly adjacent.
- This is a highly sensitive interface that will require separation to respect the cultural and community values of the cemetery.
- South of Cemetery Road, the land use remains predominantly rural and therefore requires transition arrangements to soften the interface and avoid abrupt change between industrial development and the surrounding rural landscape.

### **West (Conservation and Rural Land Interface):**

- To the west, the BREP is bounded by areas of Wilsons Hills Reserve and rural land use, providing opportunities for ecological and bushfire management buffers and separation from industrial development

## **2.1.3 Landownership**

The BREP is characterised by a diverse land ownership pattern, with different types of landholders playing distinct roles in shaping the future development outcomes. As of 2025, there are six properties within the BREP spread between five landowners ranging from 6.4 hectares to 112.9 hectares. CoGB is a key landowner and own a significant proportion of the BREP.

The northern portion of the BREP along the Wimmera Highway contains a mix of family and developer holdings.

One parcel remains in private rural ownership and is associated with an existing residential home. This land may have a period of transition between residential and industrial as the precinct develops. The BREP PSA does not propose the compulsory acquisition of this parcel.

Several parcels in this area are held by developers and investment entities. These holdings are generally larger or strategically located and are more likely to provide early opportunities for activation. Their presence introduces both the capacity and intent to deliver development outcomes in the short to medium term.

Other parcels in the middle of the BREP are owned by a single family business. These are mid-sized holdings that reflect semi-industrial or mixed-use ownership profiles. While immediate development may not occur, their future role could involve either independent industrial development progression or integration into the future development plans, depending on the approach of the owner.

A significant proportion of the BREP, approximately 155 hectares, is under the ownership of the CoGB. These parcels represent the largest consolidated holdings within the BREP and provide a strong lever for ensuring orderly development, coordinated infrastructure delivery, and the long-term protection of land for industrial and employment uses.

Overall, the ownership structure demonstrates a hybrid model of fragmented private holdings, concentrated development interests, family-operated parcels, and substantial public ownership. This combination presents both opportunities and challenges. Large developer and CoGB owned land can support early activation and delivery, while smaller and more fragmented parcels will require structured planning framework to ensure coordinated and equitable outcomes.





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Figure 4 Land Ownership Map

## 2.2 Policy and Legislation Context

### 2.2.1 Federal Policy

#### **National Freight and Supply Chain Strategy 2025**

National Freight and Supply Chain Strategy (2025) seek land use planning to ensures freight movement is adequately considered and better balance freight needs with urban development. The strategy also identifies the national key freight routes to ensure supply chains remain resilient. The BREP's location on the Calder Alternative Highway, a national key freight route, provides strategic connectivity to Melbourne, regional Victoria, and interstate freight corridors. Its future connection to the planned Marong Western Freight Corridor (MWFC) further strengthens its role as a regionally significant freight and logistics hub, consistent with national objectives to improve freight efficiency and reduce congestion impacts on urban communities.

See more: [National Freight and Supply Chain Strategy](#)

### 2.2.2 State Policies

#### **Plan for Victoria 2025**

Plan for Victoria 2025 identifies the BREP as a key strategic employment area, with its location clearly marked on the 'Bendigo in the Future' map. Its inclusion in the plan reflects the precinct's role in supporting the long-term economic growth of Greater Bendigo and the wider Loddon Campaspe region.

The Plan's vision for Bendigo emphasises:

- Providing sufficient and well-located employment land to support population growth, diversify the regional economy and create jobs closer to where people live.
- Strengthening freight and logistics connections between regional cities, ports, and industrial precincts to improve access to national and international markets.
- Facilitating investment-ready industrial and commercial land, consistent with Action 8 – "Ensure new industrial and commercial land is ready for development", which commits to removing barriers that prevent industrially zoned land from being serviced and developed.
- Supporting innovation and circular economy industries, including advanced manufacturing, renewable energy, and agribusiness clusters that leverage regional transport infrastructure and resources.

By identifying Bendigo and Marong as part of Victoria's next generation of employment corridors, Plan for Victoria 2025 provides clear state-level policy support for the BREP's rezoning. The precinct's scale, regional connectivity and capacity to deliver serviced, infrastructure-ready industrial land directly advance the Plan's objectives for economic competitiveness, freight efficiency and resilient regional growth.

With approximately 206 hectares of developable industrial land, the BREP provides the scale, certainty and long-term pipeline (see **Section 5.2.3**) required under Plan for Victoria and the 10-Year Industrial Land Strategy to support Bendigo's role as a state-significant regional employment centre.

See more: [Plan for Victoria](#)

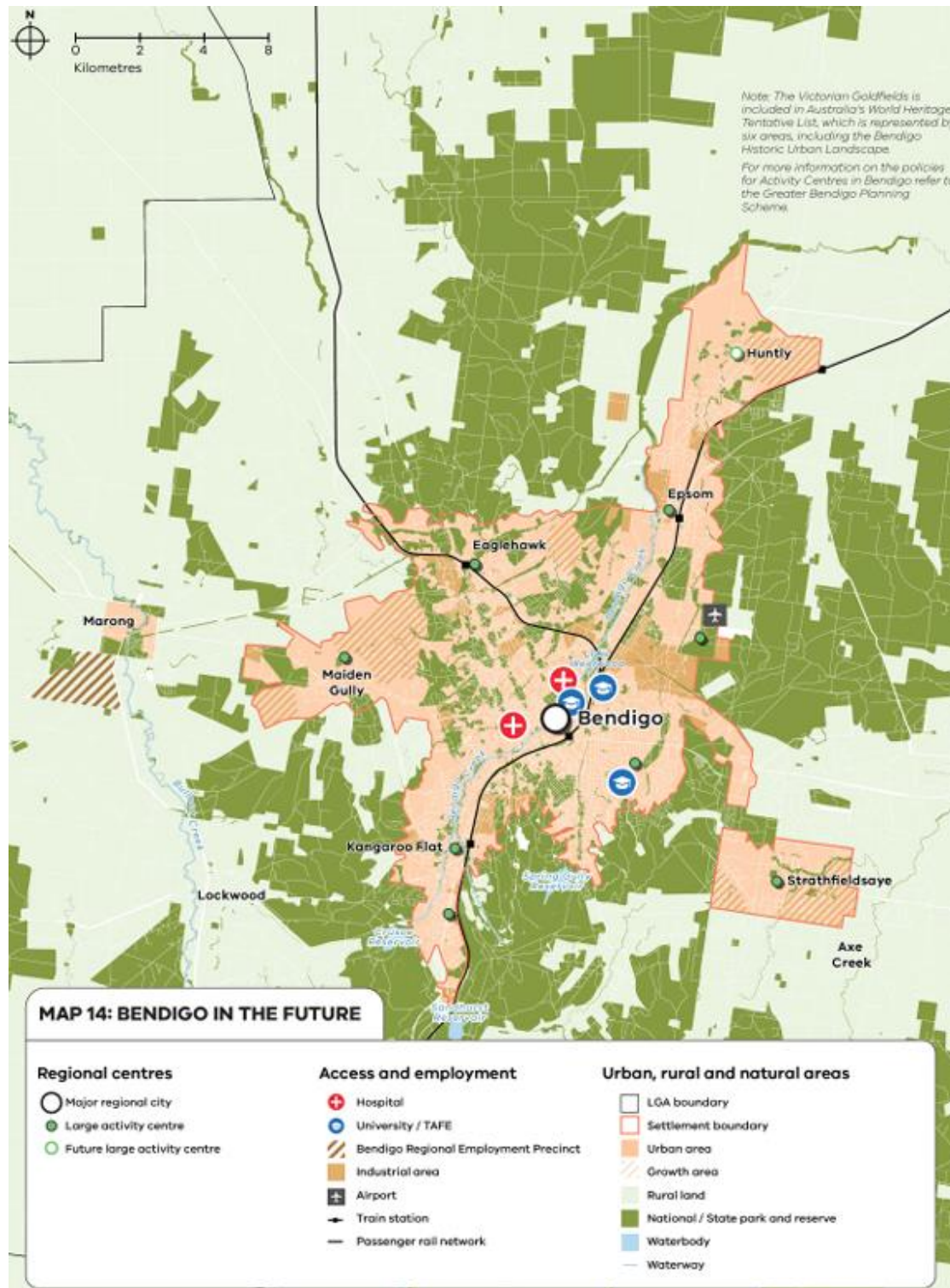


Figure 5 Bendigo in the Future (Plan for Victoria)

## Victoria's Economic Growth Statement 2024

The Victorian Economic Growth Statement (2024) identifies the unlocking of land for jobs in regional greenfield locations as a key driver of state-wide economic growth. Bendigo is specifically recognised as a priority location for industrial expansion to support regional employment and investment attraction.

Through consultation between the VPA and the Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions (DJSIR), the BREP has been confirmed as the designated greenfield employment precinct for Bendigo under the Economic Growth Statement.

The Statement sets out initiatives to:

- **Fast-track planning processes** for regionally significant employment precincts.
- **Boost local job creation** by securing development-ready industrial land.
- **Drive regional economic development** through improved land supply and infrastructure investment.
- **Reinforce state priority sectors**, including manufacturing, renewable energy, logistics, and advanced technology industries.

Rezoning the BREP to IN1Z with a supporting DPO directly implements the objectives of the Victorian Economic Growth Statement 2024 by delivering a long-term pipeline of well-connected, serviced industrial land that will underpin Greater Bendigo's role as a major regional economic hub.

See more: [Victoria's Economic Growth Statement](#)

## Victoria's roadmap - A 10-year Plan for Industrial Land

*A 10-Year Plan for Industrial Land* sets out clear actions to unlock and protect Victoria's future employment land supply. It removes barriers to development, establishes a coordinated pipeline of industrial precinct planning, and aligns land release with infrastructure delivery.

The plan implements the Government's Economic Growth Statement, Victorian Industry Policy, Plan for Victoria and Victorian Freight Plan, enabling industry and government to plan and invest with greater certainty.

In regional Victoria, industrial precincts are central to economic growth and diversification. They relieve pressure on metropolitan markets by providing well-connected, cost-competitive locations along the Principal Freight Network.

As the major regional centre in central Victoria, Bendigo is identified in the 10-Year Plan as a key regional employment hub. The plan recognises the BREP as a state-significant industrial area and provides policy support for its long-term protection, coordinated infrastructure delivery and staged development.

See more: A [10-Year Plan for Industrial Land](#)



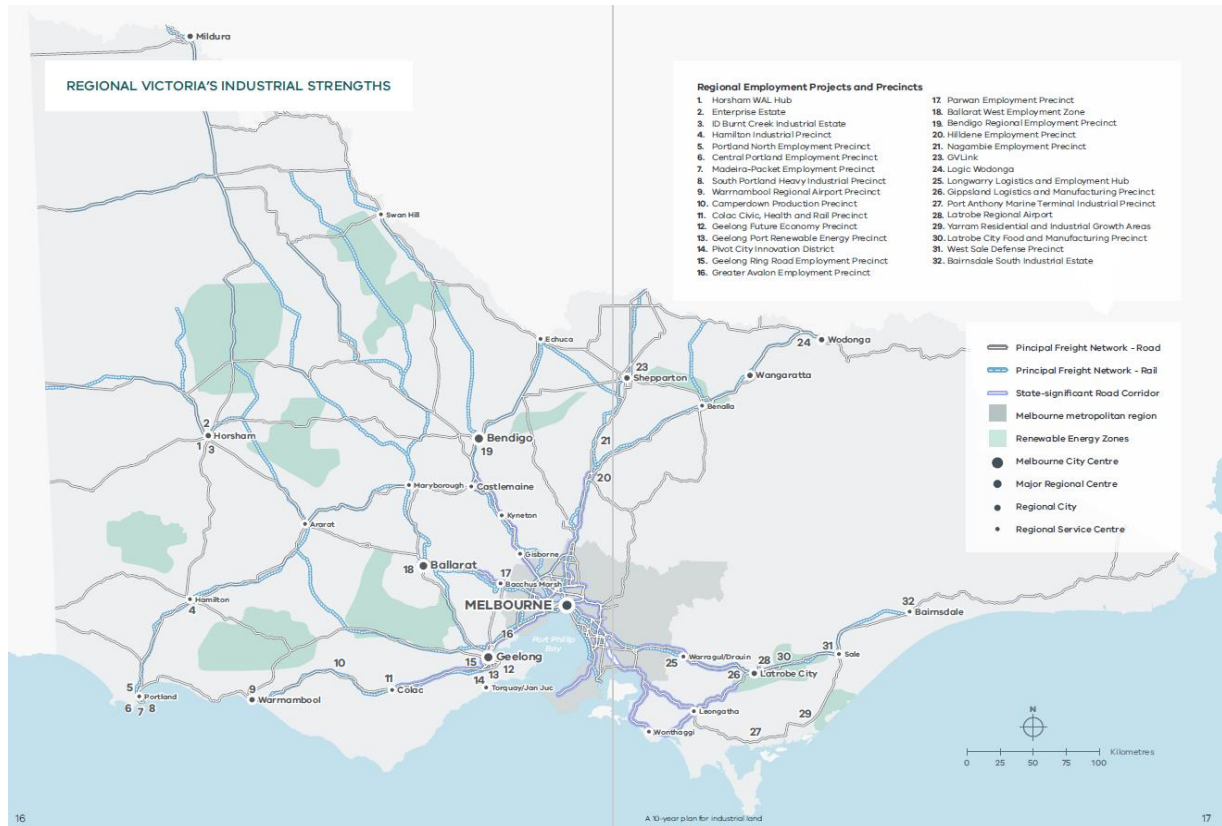


Figure 6 Regional Victoria's Industrial Strengths

## 2.2.3 Regional Strategies

### Loddon Mallee South Regional Growth Plan (Background Document)

The Loddon Mallee South Regional Growth Plan (2014) is listed as a background document in the Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme. Prior to the introduction of Plan for Victoria, regional land use planning across Victoria was guided by eight regional growth plans. Plan for Victoria has now superseded the regional growth plans and references to them have been removed from the Planning Policy Framework. The Loddon Mallee South Regional Growth Plan provides the history and valuable background context to Bendigo's long-term growth direction and the rationale for employment land planning in the Marong area.

The Loddon Mallee South Regional Growth Plan recognised Bendigo's regional significance as a major centre supporting smaller surrounding towns through its diverse retail, community, and employment base. It identifies Marong as a key area for growth — accommodating both residential and industrial/business development to support Bendigo's western hinterland. The plan envisaged an additional 300,000 people living in or supported by the Loddon Mallee Region by 2041, setting a long-term roadmap for the employment land and infrastructure needed to sustain this growth.

A key direction of the plan was to develop employment areas that are strategically located, serviced, and connected to existing and new infrastructure networks, while maintaining and attracting manufacturing and other value-adding industries to strengthen the regional economy. The development of the Marong Business Park was identified as a significant project aimed at attracting and growing such businesses in the region.

Loddon Mallee South

Map 1: Future growth framework

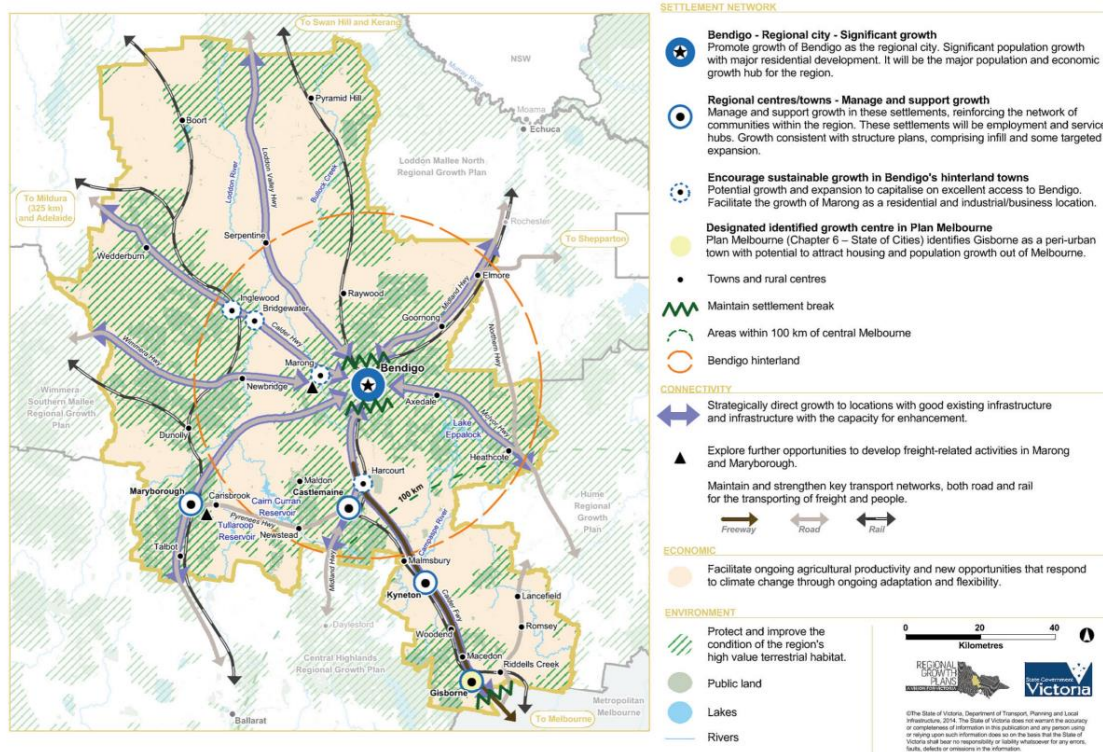


Figure 7 Loddon Mallee South Regional Growth Plan

## Loddon Campaspe Economic Growth Strategy

The Economic Growth Strategy (2019) provides broad direction to assist in focusing action and advocacy efforts on activities that will benefit the economy of the Loddon Campaspe. There are five regional focal investment areas that aim to drive the delivery of economic objectives for the region. They focus on building the strengths of agriculture, food processing, tourism and emerging industries. It highlights Bendigo as the regional capital and the regional employment and innovation corridor between Gisborne and Echuca-Moama. There is a need to ensure that available land is commercially viable and enables medium to long term job creation in sectors demanding industrial land. The Greater Bendigo plays an important role in facilitating the provision of industrial land that can adequately serve available workforce demand in the region.

### 2.2.4 Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme

The Municipal Planning Strategy and Planning Policy Framework (PPF) of Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme contains statewide, regional and local planning policies, which articulate the land use and development outcomes sought by the Planning Scheme. A detailed summary of the planning policy relevant to the BREP is included as an appendix in this report. Below are the key policy influences that have been considered in planning for the BREP.

### Existing Vision and Strategic Directions

**Clause 02.03-7 (Economic development)** highlights Greater Bendigo's role as the key regional city and economic growth hub for the Loddon Mallee South Region. It identifies the strong performance of Bendigo's economy across manufacturing, engineering, food processing, information technology, and services, and

emphasises the importance of making well-located, affordable employment land available to support ongoing growth.

The BREP directly responds to these policy directions by:

- Addressing industrial land shortages: Existing industrial areas in Greater Bendigo are constrained by small lot sizes and adjoining sensitive uses, making them unsuitable for modern industry. BREP provides a large-scale greenfield opportunity with appropriately sized and serviced lots to meet long-term demand.
- Expanding employment-generating industries: By unlocking 294 hectares of industrial land, BREP creates capacity for new and expanding industries such as advanced manufacturing, food processing, logistics and clean energy industries, aligning with Clause 02.03-7's direction to develop and expand employment-generating sectors.
- Providing affordable, well-located land: The precinct's frontage to the Calder Alternative Highway and proximity to the planned Marong Western Freight Corridor ensures strong freight connectivity, enabling BREP to function as a competitive and accessible location for businesses seeking lower-cost alternatives to metropolitan industrial land.
- Supporting regional economic growth: With a forecast of approximately 3,025 jobs at full build-out, BREP underpins Bendigo's role as the economic hub of central Victoria, contributing to the city's status as the fastest growing regional economy in the state.

The BREP will realise the strategic intent of Clause 02.03-7 into a tangible planning outcome by securing long-term industrial supply and strengthening Bendigo's economic base.

**Clause 02.04 (Strategic Framework Plans)** sets out the long-term spatial vision for growth and land use in Greater Bendigo through the Urban Strategic Framework Plan and the Rural Strategic Framework Plan. These plans identify locations for residential growth, activity centres, and areas for industrial and employment land.

At present, the BREP land is not identified within urban growth boundary in Clause 02.04 The Planning Scheme Amendment C282gben for GBILDS will address this gap by formally introducing an industrial strategic framework and recognising the BREP as a designated industrial and employment precinct within the framework. This ensures that the planning scheme reflects the municipality's most significant future employment land supply and responds to evidence of a shortfall in large, serviced industrial land.

Through its location south of Marong, with direct access to the Calder Alternative Highway and connection to the planned Marong Western Freight Corridor, the BREP supports the spatial intent of Clause 02.04 by:

- Balancing planned residential growth in Marong with a complementary employment hub.
- Strengthening regional freight and transport connectivity.
- Providing a master-planned industrial node that avoids land use conflict in constrained urban locations.
- Aligning infrastructure planning with long-term settlement and economic development objectives.

### Existing Planning Policy Framework

**Clause 11.01-1R (Settlement – Loddon Mallee South)** support Bendigo's role as the major regional city and the primary population and economic growth hub for the region. The policy also encourages sustainable growth in Marong, capitalising on its proximity to Bendigo.



**Clause 11.01-1L (Settlement – Marong)** sets the strategic policy for the growth and development of Marong. It emphasises maintaining Marong as a self-contained settlement by directing growth within the defined settlement boundary, while ensuring a non-urban break between Marong and Bendigo's other urban areas.

The clause identifies future residential growth precincts to the west, south and east of Marong and establishes design and servicing requirements for these areas. Importantly, it also recognises the BREP as a key element of Marong's strategic framework:

- The framework plan explicitly references the BREP, requiring planning for infrastructure and servicing that supports its establishment.
- New residential development must be planned and designed to manage interfaces with the BREP, particularly in Precincts 1 and 2.
- This ensures the township's residential expansion and the BREP's industrial development proceed in a coordinated manner, with transport upgrades, buffers and subdivision layouts designed to mitigate land use conflicts and protect environmental and cultural heritage values.

The Marong Framework Plan, shown in Figure 7, under Clause 11.01-1L – Settlement - Marong establishes the township's structure and long-term growth direction. It identifies Marong as a key growth settlement supporting Greater Bendigo's western corridor, with a balanced mix of residential, community, open space and employment uses.

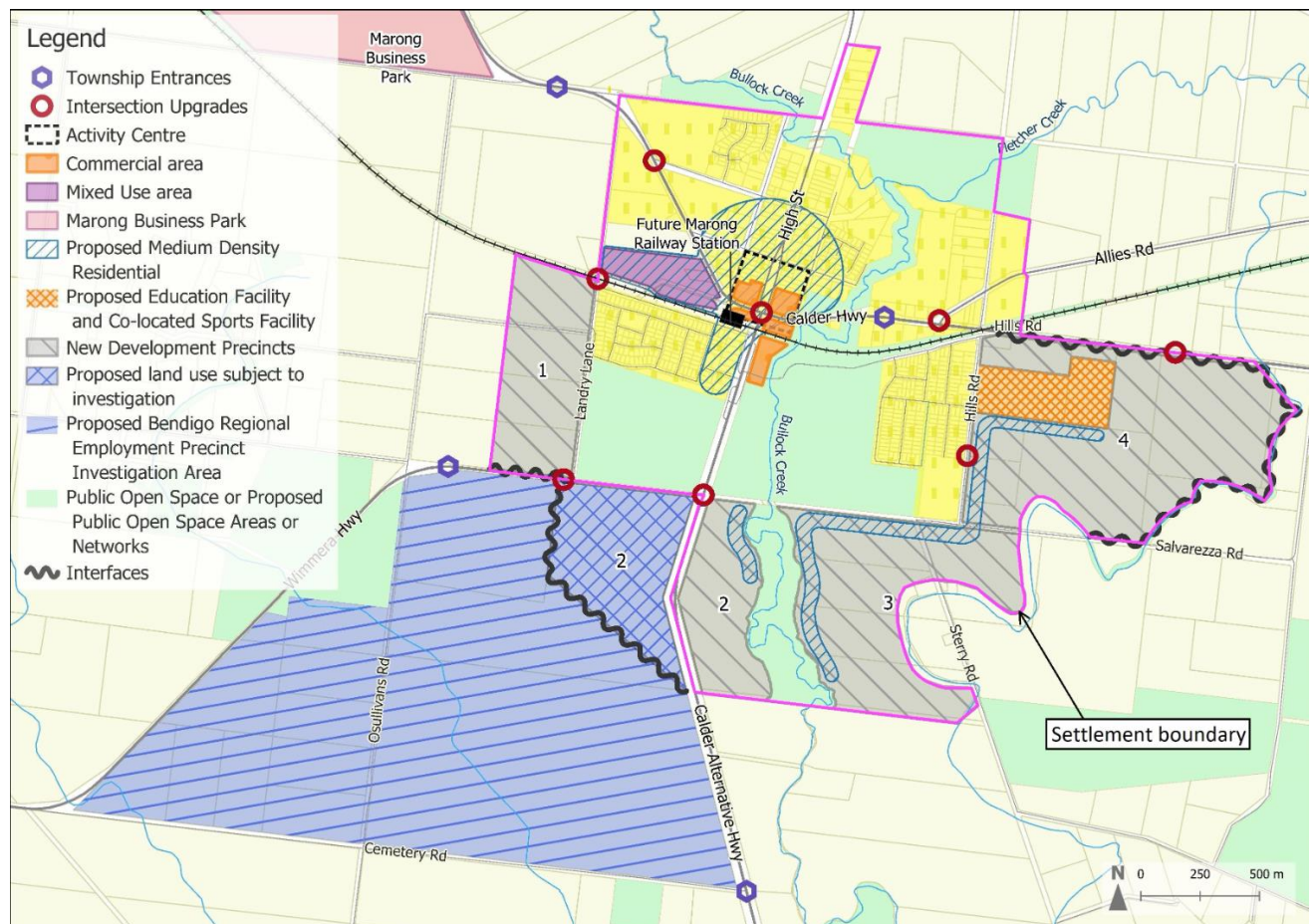


Figure 8 Current Marong Framework Plan

This framework underpins the current local policy to ensure industrial development occurs in planned and serviced locations that provide for long-term township growth and separation from sensitive uses.



The plan designates the settlement boundary of Marong Township and the BREP including:

- Residential growth areas east and north of the township;
- A proposed education and co-located sports facility on Hills Road;
- Land south of Wimmera Highway and west of Calder Alternative Highway as the BREP Investigation Area;
- A clearly defined settlement boundary supported by major transport corridors (Calder Highway and Calder Alternative Highway); and
- The transition interfaces between the BREP Investigation Area and the Marong Township growth areas, where a small parcel of land west of the Calder Alternative Highway outside the settlement boundary is identified as “Proposed land use subject to investigation.”

This planning scheme amendment proposes to update the current framework plan to reflect the new policies and several significant regional and infrastructure initiatives since its adoption.

**Clause 11.03-1S (Activity centres and precincts)** promotes the development of high-quality central activity areas in major regional cities, encouraging both activity and liveability. It also calls for strategic planning for land in and around these cities, which underpins the case for the BREP in Bendigo.

**Clause 11.03-2S (Growth areas)** directs urban growth to locations close to transport corridors and services, ensuring infrastructure is efficient and sustainable while protecting primary production, resource areas and environmental assets. It also supports the creation of significant local employment opportunities, including the delivery of large-scale industrial and regional employment precincts.

**Clause 17.01-1S (Diversified economy)** protect and strengthen existing and planned employment areas, and plan for new employment areas. It will facilitate growth across a range of sectors, building on both emerging and established regional strengths.

**Clause 17.03-1S (Industrial land supply)** ensure an adequate and ongoing supply of industrial land in appropriate locations, including sufficient large sites for strategic investment. It will direct industrial land to growth areas with strong access to employees, freight and road transport, while also ensuring buffer areas protect sensitive uses.

**Clause 17.03-1L (Industrial land supply – Greater Bendigo)** guide how and where industrial development occurs within the municipality. The current policy directs growth to strategic precincts, including East Bendigo, Wellsford Estate, Goornong, the Bendigo Airport Business Park and the Marong Business Park. It will also encourage renewal of older estates, maintain large undeveloped holdings, support environmentally sustainable industry, and discourage ad hoc industrial uses in rural areas. This local policy is proposed to be updated and refined through Planning Scheme Amendment C282gben, which will ensure consistency with Council’s adopted Industrial Land Development Strategy (2022) and the designation of the Bendigo Regional Employment Precinct (BREP) as the municipality’s next major industrial growth area.

## **Emerging Vision, Strategic Directions and Planning Policies - GBILDS**

Planning Scheme Amendment C282gben (under consideration by the Minister for Planning) will refresh the current policies and introduce new policies that strengthen the strategic basis for the BREP:

### **Clause 02.03-7 (Economic development)**

Amendment C282gben Industrial Land Development Strategy further strengthens the strategic directions for economic development by explicitly requiring the planning system to:

- Provide an adequate supply of suitably located industrial land to meet forecasted demand and enhance Greater Bendigo's competitiveness.
- Retain and redevelop existing industrial land to meet short-term needs.
- Improve the function, design and amenity of industrial areas to make them more attractive and efficient.

These directions directly support the case for the BREP. The precinct provides the scale, location and freight accessibility required to function as a large, master-planned business park.

#### **Clause 02.04 (Strategic Framework Plans)**

Amendment C282gben introduces an Industrial Strategic Framework Plan into Clause 02.04. This plan identifies existing, emerging and future industrial locations across Greater Bendigo. For the first time, the BREP is shown as a Future Industrial Area, alongside the Marong Business Park Review Area.

The inclusion of BREP in Clause 02.04 acknowledges the precinct's strategic role in meeting Bendigo's long-term industrial land needs. It builds on the Greater Bendigo Industrial Land Development Strategy (GBILDS) and provides a clear policy basis for subsequent rezoning through Amendment C296gben. The framework plan ensures BREP is spatially recognised within the planning scheme as part of Greater Bendigo's industrial land supply pipeline, strategically located on the Calder Alternative Highway with future connection to the planned MWFC.

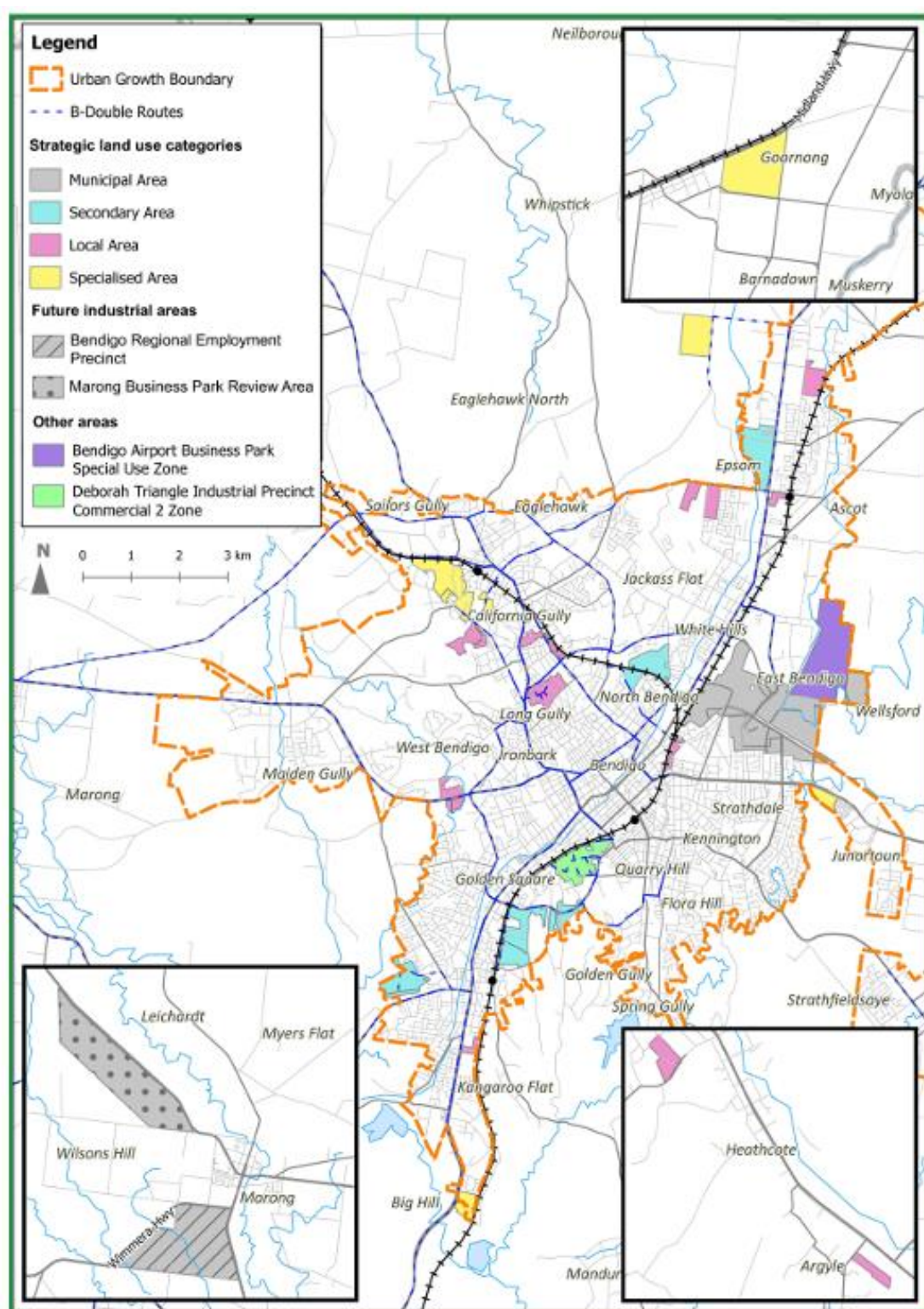


Figure 9 Proposed industrial strategic framework plan under Amendment C282gben

**Clause 14.01 (Agriculture)** will strengthen protection of productive agricultural land by discouraging ad hoc subdivision and non-agricultural development in rural areas. This reinforces the need for major industrial supply to be delivered through a planned greenfield precinct such as the BREP, rather than piecemeal rural conversion.

**Clause 15.01 (Built Environment)** introduces new urban design policy for industrial areas in Greater Bendigo, requiring landscaped buffers, high-quality built form, and amenity protections. The Greater Bendigo Industrial Development Guidelines (2025) also replaces the Good Design Guide for Industry (1997) as relevant policy document as part of the amendment. These guidelines will apply to the BREP and guide how the BREP will be developed to ensure it operates as a modern, high-amenity employment hub while managing impacts on nearby township, cemetery and rural interfaces.

**Clause 17.03-1L (Industrial land supply – Greater Bendigo)** Amendment C282gben updates Clause 17.03-1L to include the BREP within the new Industrial Employment Precincts Plan. It directs planning for large-scale industrial land and regional employment opportunities at the BREP in the short-to-medium term, positioning it as Greater Bendigo’s primary strategic industrial land release.



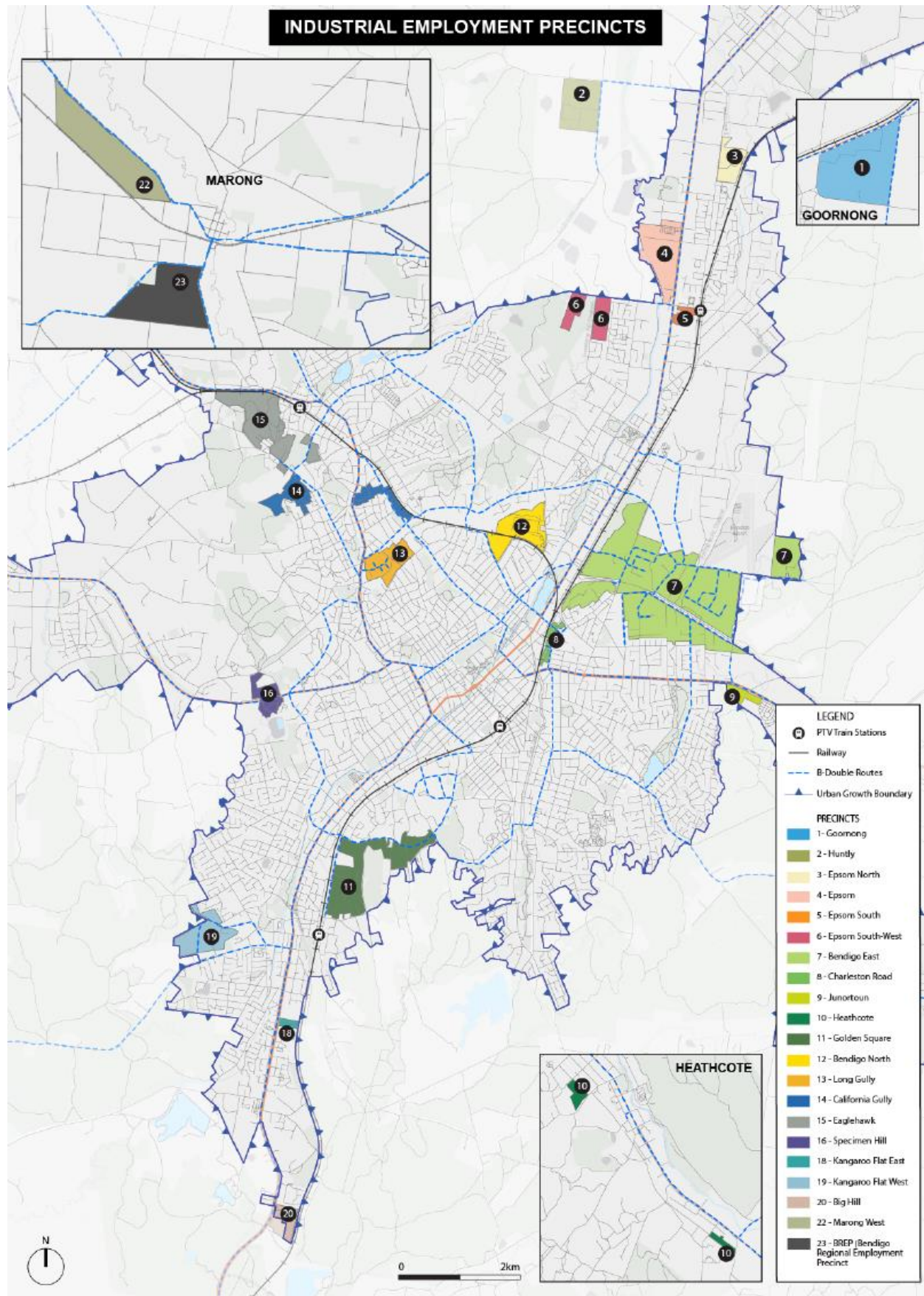


Figure 10 Proposed industrial employment precincts plan under Amendment C282gben

## Industrial 1 Zone

The IN1Z is designed *"to provide for manufacturing industry, the storage and distribution of goods and associated uses in a manner which does not affect the safety and amenity of local communities"*. Its purpose is to facilitate industrial land uses, such as large-scale manufacturing, warehousing and logistics.

The BREPs scale, strategic freight access, and economic role demand a zoning framework that is broad, flexible, and capable of supporting a wide industrial base. IN1Z is the only industrial zone in the Victorian Planning Provisions (VPP) that meets these requirements without unduly constraining permissible uses, making it the most effective zoning choice for the BREP.

Furthermore, as the BREP is located outside the settlement boundary under the Marong Framework Plan and in proximity to the designated growth area of the Marong Township Structure Plan, residential or mixed-use zoning is not supported by existing policies or strategic frameworks. The application of the IN1Z therefore ensures consistency with regional and local planning strategies that seek to direct non-residential employment growth outside township areas while protecting the long-term residential function of Marong.

### Strategic Policy Alignment

- The BREP is identified in Plan for Victoria, the Victorian Economic Growth Statement, and the GBILDS as a priority industrial growth area.
- It will directly address the CoGBs forecast shortage of industrial land, projected to be exhausted in the early 2030s, and deliver a 25 to 33 year supply of industrial land.

### Economic Role and Market Demand

- Greater Bendigo's industrial economy underpins more than half of the municipality's total economic output and supports nearly one-third of local employment, reflecting its critical role in manufacturing, logistics, and value-added production across Central Victoria.
- A sustained shortage of large, serviced and zoned industrial land is constraining the expansion of established industries and limiting the region's capacity to attract new investment, particularly in transport, manufacturing and resource-related sectors.
- The BREP is projected to capture around 6-7 hectares of regional industrial land demand per year, accommodating a workforce of approximately 3,000 jobs at full build-out, with additional flow-on employment across the broader supply chain.

### Location and Connectivity Advantages

- The site benefits from direct access to the Calder Alternative Highway and Wimmera Highway, enabling efficient heavy vehicle movements and regional freight connectivity.
- The Calder Alternative Highway and Wimmera Highway (and the planned MWFC) allows physical separation from sensitive uses, providing operational autonomy for industrial activities.

### Permissible Uses

- The IN1Z is the most flexible of Victoria's industrial zones, allowing a full spectrum of manufacturing, warehouse, service industry, transport, and logistics uses without requiring a permit where appropriate.

- The Industrial 2 Zone (IN2Z) is intended for industries with potential off-site impacts (e.g. heavy chemical, resource or energy operations) and excludes many of the land uses potentially located at BREP, including general warehousing, food production, and lower-impact manufacturing.
- The Industrial 3 Zone (IN3Z) applies to industrial areas with close proximity to sensitive uses, limiting higher-impact operations and restricting many core industrial activities to protect surrounding amenity. While the BREP adjoins the Marong Township growth areas, its planning framework incorporates dedicated landscape buffers and separation distances to manage these interfaces. Given its strategic location with direct freight access and capacity to accommodate a full range of industrial activities, the IN3Z would unduly constrain the precinct's intended regional employment function, whereas the Industrial 1 Zone (IN1Z) provides the necessary flexibility with appropriate interface safeguards embedded through the Development Plan Overlay schedule and the supporting structure planning work.

### Land Use Compatibility

- The IN1Z provides flexibility to accommodate a wide range of industrial and supporting commercial uses that align with identified growth sectors such as manufacturing, logistics, renewable energy, and advanced manufacturing.
- The zone's purpose aligns with the BREPs intended function as a regional industrial hub, comparable to other successful greenfield employment precincts such as Logic Wodonga and the Geelong Ring Road Employment Precinct.

### Development Plan Overlay

The Development Plan Overlay (DPO) is a planning tool under Clause 43.04 of the Greater Bendigo Planning Provisions that ensures land is developed in a coordinated and integrated manner before individual planning permits are issued. It requires the preparation and approval of a development plan that sets out the overall layout, land use, infrastructure, access, landscaping, and staging for a defined area.

Once an approved development plan is in place, subsequent permits must be generally in accordance with it, providing both certainty for investors and flexibility for implementation. Applications to use, develop or subdivide land within the precinct will be assessed against the specific requirements of the DPO schedule.

See more: [PPN23: Applying the Incorporated Plan and Development Plan Overlays](#)

Planning for the Bendigo Regional Employment Precinct (BREP) commenced in 2019 as a Precinct Structure Plan (PSP) under the VPA's Greenfield Planning Program. Following further strategic investigations—including the Greater Bendigo Industrial Land Development Strategy (GBILDS) and targeted technical studies—the project scope was refined in 2024 to adopt a DPO-based precinct planning framework, providing a more streamlined and flexible mechanism for coordinated industrial land development. (see **Section 3.1**).

## 2.2.5 Ministerial Directions

The Minister for Planning issues direction to planning authorities for the preparation of planning schemes and amendments. Below are ministerial directions relevant to the BREP.

### Ministerial Direction 1 – Potentially Contaminated Land

This direction contains requirements for amendments which allow land to be used for a sensitive use, such as residential (which will not be provided for in this employment precinct) or childcare (which could be developed in the precinct).

The Direction also contains requirements for amendments which allow land to be used for agriculture or public open space. Where these uses are allowed on 'potentially contaminated land', the planning authority must satisfy itself that the land is or will be suitable for that use.

Through preparing the Land Capability Assessment, several sites within the BREP have been identified as having a medium to high potential for land contamination.

The proposed rezoning to IN1Z predominantly provides for manufacturing, industrial, warehouse, service industry and supporting commercial uses, which are generally not classified as sensitive uses under Ministerial Direction No. 1. Consequently, most IN1Z uses can occur on potentially contaminated land without triggering the Direction's requirements.

However, the IN1Z does allow for certain permit-required uses that may be considered sensitive under the Direction, such as childcare centres or places of assembly. It also allows for agriculture and public open space, which are explicitly listed in the Direction as needing contamination consideration.

Therefore, while residential use is prohibited in the IN1Z (and is not proposed in this employment precinct), the Direction remains relevant where the amendment facilitates IN1Z uses that are sensitive or that involve agriculture or open space. In these cases, the planning authority must ensure that potentially contaminated land is, or can be made, suitable for the proposed use, consistent with Planning Practice Note 30.

The VPA has satisfied itself as the planning authority that potentially contaminated land within the BREP can be managed through the DPO in accordance with Planning Practice No. 30 and can be suitably remediated if the land is contaminated. Appropriate controls and requirements to address the risk from new development on the potentially contaminated land have been included in the schedule to the DPO.

See more: [Ministerial Direction 1 – Potentially Contaminated Land](#)

### **Ministerial Direction 11 – Strategic assessment of amendments**

The BREP has been assessed against Ministerial Direction 11. The Amendment will implement the objectives of planning in Victoria by providing for the fair, orderly, economic and sustainable use of land identified for urban purposes. This is discussed in detail within the explanatory report that accompanies the amendment. Throughout the development of the BREP, the VPA has considered the potential impacts of new planning provisions on resourcing and administration for the CoGB. The VPA have minimised increasing administrative burden through producing a well-considered planning framework using efficient planning controls necessary to achieve satisfactory planning outcomes.

See more: [Ministerial Direction 11 – Strategic assessment of amendments](#)

### **Ministerial Direction 19 – Amendments that may result in impacts on the environment, amenity and human health**

The purpose of this direction is to require planning authorities to seek the views of the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) in the preparation of planning scheme reviews and amendments that could result in use or development of land that may result in significant impacts on the environment, amenity and human health due to pollution and waste.

Throughout the planning process for the BREP, the VPA has consulted with the EPA to raise and discuss any potential environmental issues and how they should be addressed.

See more: [Ministerial Direction 19 – Amendments that may result in impacts on the environment, amenity and human health](#)



## Ministerial Direction No. 22 Climate change considerations

This Direction requires planning authorities to integrate climate change considerations into scheme amendments and to assess whether land use and development are consistent with Victoria's transition to a net zero emissions, climate-resilient future.

To support compliance with this Direction, the VPA has commissioned a Sustainable Development Opportunities Report (Hip V. Hype 2024) and a Bushfire Risk Assessment (Terramatrix, 2025). These technical inputs identified a suite of sustainability and climate resilience initiatives for the BREP, including, but not limited to:

- Biodiversity enhancement and regeneration of degraded land to create resilient ecological corridors.
- The concept plan highlights the mature, significant vegetation which is to be retained as part of future development.
- Opportunities for large-scale water management, including WSUD measures such as bioretention systems and roof water harvesting and a decentralised wastewater treatment.
- Ensuring that development within the BREP will minimise exposure to risks posed by natural hazards such as bushfire and flooding through the identification of minimisation and protective measures.
- Circular economy initiatives, including construction waste diversion targets and use of recycled/low embodied carbon materials.
- Integration of renewable energy, battery storage and zero-emissions infrastructure to align with Victoria's 2045 net zero target. This included recommendations for the development of a privatised network supported via renewable energy sources.
- Ensuring that the urban structure of the precinct facilitates active transport.
- BREPs close proximity to the Marong Township will support its future population growth as envisaged in the Marong Township Structure Plan.

These inputs demonstrate that the BREP will be delivered as a climate-ready industrial precinct, with statutory planning controls and design guidelines embedding measures to mitigate environmental risks, adapt to climate change, and promote sustainable economic development.

See more: [Ministerial Direction 22 - Climate Change Consideration](#)

### 2.2.6 CoGB-commissioned Strategic Documents and Studies

#### Plan Greater Bendigo

*Plan Greater Bendigo* is the CoGBs strategic infrastructure plan, which sets out a number of transformative projects until 2050. This plan will assist in managing the future population growth (forecast to reach towards 200,000 residents). The plan recognises the need for a diverse range of employment options through ensuring sufficient supply of commercial and industrial land. Through securing employment land, medium to large business can consider expanding or future investment within the municipality.

#### Greater Bendigo Industrial Land Development Strategy

The GBILDS provides a 30-year framework for industrial land supply, identifying priority projects to address a shortage of large, serviced industrial lots in Greater Bendigo. It emphasises coordinated planning, infrastructure sequencing, and market readiness to maintain Bendigo's competitiveness in attracting industrial investment.

The GBILDS establishes a clear sequencing framework for industrial land supply, with a focus on ensuring the CoGB maintains sufficient serviced land to attract and retain investment. The strategy responds to a current shortage of large, readily developable industrial lots with less than 11 years of supply available and identifies the need for coordinated infrastructure-led delivery of new employment land.

Within this framework, the BREP has been identified as the highest priority for short- to medium-term industrial land delivery. Located on approximately 294 hectares south of Marong, the BREP is strategically positioned at the junction of the Wimmera and Calder Alternative Highways and is anticipated to generate in the order of 6,000 direct and indirect jobs. The Minister for Planning has appointed the VPA as the planning authority, reflecting its state-significance. The CoGBs 155 hectare landholding within the broader site provides an important platform for staged development, supported by key enabling works such as the Golden Square–Marong water pipeline upgrade (due to be completed mid-2026) and integration with the State Principal Freight Network.

By contrast, the Marong Business Park (MBP) comprises approximately 313 hectares of land to the north-west of Marong, zoned Comprehensive Development Zone (CDZ) in 2016. The GBILDS has since repositioned the MBP as a long-term industrial land supply area, recognising that while the zoning provides a framework for future development, the site remains unserviced and without committed infrastructure delivery programs. The landowners have indicated their intention to retain agricultural use in the short to medium term, and as a result, the MBP is not expected to contribute to Bendigo’s industrial land supply before 2050, within the current 25-30-year planning horizon.

The GBILDS directs that the MBP should not progress in the short term to avoid dispersing resources away from the priority delivery of the BREP. Instead, it should be retained in policy as a strategic reserve (as a Review Area under the municipal strategic framework), with its role to be reviewed in approximately five years once the BREP has commenced development and demonstrated market uptake.

This sequencing approach provides clarity for investors and infrastructure agencies. By focusing immediate resources on the BREP, the CoGB and State Government can deliver large serviced lots into the market sooner, addressing the critical shortfall and supporting economic diversification.

At the same time, the MBP remains safeguarded within the planning framework to accommodate future demand, ensuring Greater Bendigo has both an immediate and a long-term pathway for industrial growth.

See more: [Greater Bendigo Industrial Land Development Strategy](#)

### **Bendigo Industrial Land Review (REMPAN, 2019) and Industrial Land Site Assessment Economic Impact Analysis (REMPAN, 2020)**

The CoGB commissioned REMPLAN to provide independent analysis of industrial land demand and the associated economic impacts of new industrial development. The 2019 Industrial Land Review informed GBILDS, while the 2020 Industrial Land Site Assessment (ILSA) Economic Impact Analysis quantified the investment and employment impacts of potential new industrial precincts in South Marong (now the eastern portion of BREP).

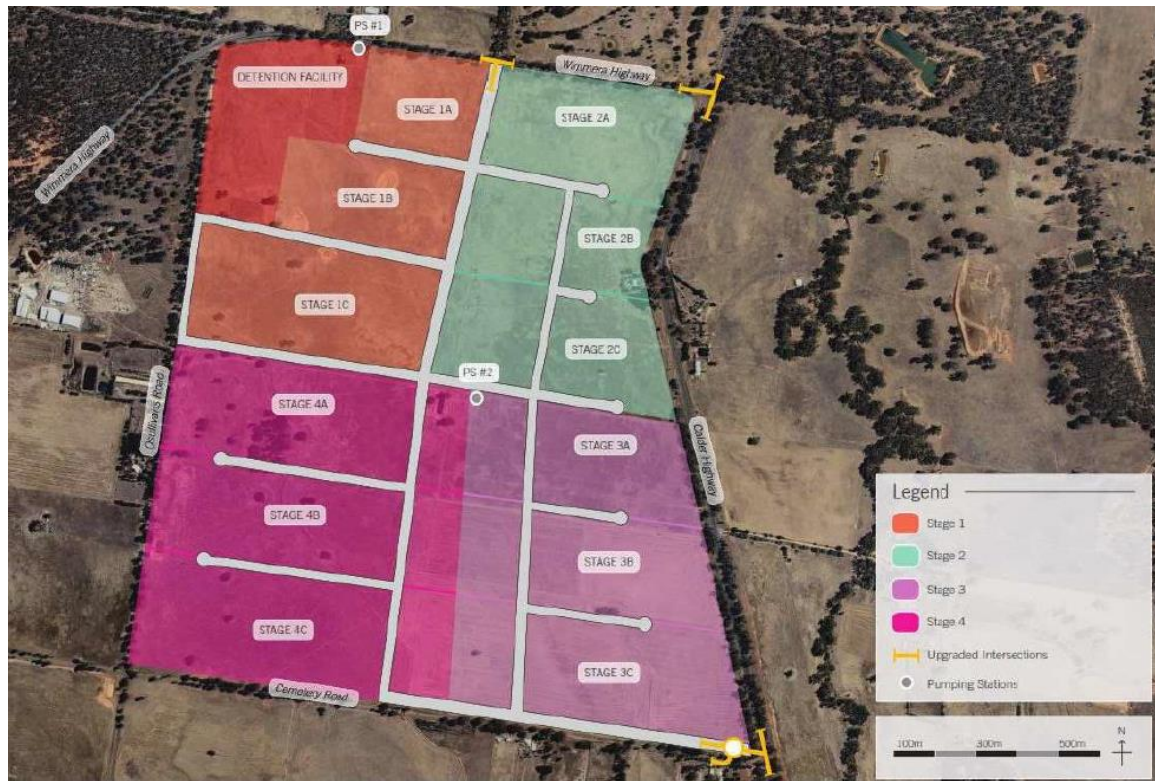


Figure 11 Study area of ILSA: Economic Impact Analysis (REMPAN, 2020)

Key findings include:

- **Employment Growth:** Bendigo's industrial sectors were projected to generate approximately 3,300 additional jobs between 2016 and 2036, underscoring the need for significant new land supply.
- **Land Supply Shortfall:** Analysis identified a requirement for approximately 170 hectares of additional net developable industrial land to 2036, on top of existing supply.
- **Lot Size Pressures:** Demand for larger parcels was a particular risk, with 1 to 5 hectare lots forecast to be exhausted by 2027 and 0.5 to 1 hectare lots by 2029, creating constraints for logistics, advanced manufacturing and large-format industry.
- **Economic Contribution:** The industrial land site assessment projected that, over a 30-year development horizon, development of a major new industrial precinct would catalyse approximately \$2 billion in direct private investment, with flow-on effects lifting the total output to more than \$4 billion through multiplier impacts.
- **Job Creation:** Delivery of a 170–230 hectare industrial precinct was forecast to directly and indirectly support thousands of jobs, both in construction and in long-term industrial operations.

The REMPLAN studies provide the quantitative foundation for Bendigo's industrial land policy framework and directly justify the identification of the large-scale BREP:

- **Quantum:** The proposed rezoning extent of the BREP will provide the potential 220 hectare net developable area which includes the REMPLAN finding that approximately 170 hectare net additional land is required to secure Bendigo's employment future.
- **Timing:** The exhaustion of larger lots before 2030 highlights the urgency of bringing BREP to market to prevent lost opportunities and economic leakage to other regions.

- **Economic Rationale:** The scale of investment and multiplier impacts identified by REMPLAN demonstrate the regional economic uplift that BREP can deliver, supporting both direct industrial operations and secondary industries in supply chains, logistics and services.

### **Review of Future Industrial Land Supply in Bendigo (SGS, 2023)**

SGS's Review of Future Industrial Land Supply in Bendigo (SGS, 2023) was commissioned by the CoGB as part of the Amendment C282gben process.

Its purpose was to provide an independent review of industrial land supply and demand, updating the evidence base established through the REMPLAN studies and the GBILDS and to inform subsequent structure planning and rezoning investigations. The review assessed the adequacy of existing and planned industrial land, analysed consumption trends, and made recommendations on priority precincts for future supply:

- **Supply pipeline:** The report found that Bendigo had less than 11 years of effective industrial land supply remaining, with particularly acute shortages in larger lot sizes. Around 74% of available lots were less than 0.5 hectare, leaving few opportunities for businesses requiring 1 to 5 hectare sites.
- **Employment growth:** Demand projections aligned with earlier studies, pointing to around 3,300 additional industrial jobs by 2036, requiring between 17 to 270 hectares of new industrial land to maintain a 30-year pipeline.
- **Fragmentation of existing supply:** Much of the remaining industrial land was constrained by fragmented ownership, infrastructure limitations, or proximity to sensitive uses, making it less attractive to large-scale industry.
- **Market absorption:** Historical take-up rates of around 9 to 10 hectares per year were identified while SGS noted that consumption was accelerating due to growth in logistics, e-commerce, and advanced manufacturing.
- **Precinct sequencing:** The review recommended that the BREP at South Marong be prioritised for short-term development, with the MBP retained as a long-term option. This sequencing was based on deliverability, servicing feasibility, and policy alignment.
- **Monitoring framework:** The report proposed a structured approach to monitoring industrial land, including consumption rates, industry mix, floorspace development, and freight impacts, to guide future land release decisions.

SGS's report review provides a clear and contemporary mandate for the establishment of the BREP as Bendigo's next major industrial area. Importantly, it concluded that BREP is the only precinct capable of being delivered in the short term to address the CoGB industrial land supply gap. Without such an intervention, Bendigo faces the risk of land shortages within the next decade, particularly for businesses requiring larger sites.

The review highlighted that lot size availability is a critical issue. The supply of medium and large parcels, particularly in the 1 to 5 hectare range, is expected to be exhausted under current consumption trends well before 2030. To remain competitive, BREP must therefore provide a pipeline of lots in these sizes, ensuring a diversity of development opportunities for logistics, advanced manufacturing, and large-format industrial users.

While the MBP retains a role in Bendigo's long-term industrial land portfolio, SGS noted that it lacks the near-term feasibility to respond to current demand. Factors such as land fragmentation, servicing constraints, and the absence of immediate development pathways make MBP a longer-term reserve. By contrast, BREP was identified as both strategically located and practically deliverable in the short to medium term, positioning it as the immediate growth precinct.



The report also reinforced the importance of policy alignment. It emphasised that significant investment in enabling infrastructure is required if BREP is to come to market quickly and competitively. Without this investment, Bendigo risks losing industrial projects to other regional centres with available and serviced land, such as Ballarat or Shepparton.

### **Marong Township Economic Assessment (Urban Enterprise, 2019)**

As part of the technical studies informing the MTSP, CoGB engaged Urban Enterprise to undertake an economic assessment of the township. The assessment established the township's growth trajectory and retail/employment role, providing the basis for understanding workforce catchments, local services, and the interface with the proposed BREP at South Marong.

The assessment provided the key findings:

- Population growth: The Structure Plan anticipates Marong will grow to approximately 8,000 residents by 2046, closely linked with the western growth corridor of Bendigo.
- Retail provision: The assessment identified supportable retail floorspace of around 2,900 square metres by 2031, including a supermarket, convenience shops, and daily needs retail. This positions Marong as a local servicing centre rather than a sub-regional retail destination. New supermarkets are not supported outside designated centres, including within industrial areas.
- Commercial land: Provision of 2 to 3 hectares of additional commercial land within the town centre was recommended, alongside opportunities for light industrial and business services in strategic locations as the township grows.
- Employment profile: The Marong SA2 is dominated by manufacturing and agriculture, aligning well with the establishment of a proximate industrial and employment precinct. BREP falls within Marong's retail catchment.

The assessment makes clear that Marong's retail floorspace is sufficient to support the daily needs of BREP workers—such as food, groceries, and convenience services—particularly with the recommended 10 to 20% contingency uplift to floorspace modelling to capture additional demand from future industrial development. However, it is not intended to accommodate higher-order or bulky goods retail, which will remain concentrated in Bendigo's established centres such as Kangaroo Flat homemaker centre, the CBD, and Eaglehawk.

This reinforces the complementary relationship between Marong Township and BREP:

- BREP will provide the employment base, strategically located with highway and freight access, and buffered from Bendigo's urban fabric.
- Marong Township will service both residents and the local workforce through a modest, well-scaled retail and commercial centre.

### **Bendigo Freight Study 2017**

The Bendigo Freight Study was adopted by the CoGB in November 2017. The study provided a strategic framework for managing freight movement across the municipality, recognising Bendigo's growing role as a regional hub for logistics and heavy vehicle operations.

The 2017 study identified the following priority actions:

- Corridor protection: Safeguarding key freight routes from conflicting land uses and congestion.
- Freight hub planning: Identifying a suitable location for a regional freight terminal to support aggregation/distribution functions.

- Heavy vehicle exchange: Planning for trailer exchange facilities to manage long-haul and last-mile freight movements efficiently.
- Urban amenity: Reducing freight intrusion into residential and sensitive areas.
- Safety initiatives: Improving road users' awareness of heavy vehicles and addressing conflict points within the local network.

Its recommendations informed the planning scheme through Amendment C256gben, which introduced a requirement for future strategic work relating to freight corridors, facilities, and a terminal hub. Amendment C256gben translated the findings of the Freight Study into the Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme. Specifically, it inserted a compressed reference into Clause 74.02s (Further Strategic Work) *"Prepare freight corridor and precinct plans to protect key freight routes, identify heavy vehicle and trailer exchange facilities, and a freight terminal hub"*.

Since adoption, a number of the study's safety-related recommendations have been advanced through the Greater Bendigo Road Safety Action Plan 2023–2027 (RSAP). The RSAP addresses safety-related aspects of freight planning but does not extend to freight corridor reservation, hub feasibility, or land use protection.

The BREP is a strategic response to the direction of the freight study which supports the planning of the MWFC and requires the future development plans to protect key routes, identify heavy vehicle and trailer exchange facilities, and promote a regional freight hub. By locating large-scale industrial development on the Calder Alternative Highway and in proximity to the planned MWFC, the BREP delivers on this strategic work requirement. It provides a planned, master-developed employment precinct that integrates freight, logistics and industrial land supply with long-term transport planning objectives for Greater Bendigo.

### **A Stronger Greater Bendigo 2030 – where all people can thrive**

The CoGB's 'A Stronger Greater Bendigo 2030' economic development strategy establishes a long-term vision to create an inclusive, sustainable, and prosperous economy. Central to this vision is the timely provision of well-located, serviced industrial land to enable business growth, attract new investment, and diversify the employment base. The strategy identifies the need to unlock strategic sites supported by appropriate infrastructure, ensuring the CoGB can respond to changing economic conditions and remain competitive within the Victorian and national context.

Within this framework, the Marong locality is identified as a strategic focus for industrial expansion due to its location at the junction of the Calder Alternate and Wimmera Highways and proximity to the Bendigo to Mildura and Melbourne freight corridors. The proposed BREP, located south of the Marong Township, represents the primary greenfield industrial development opportunity in the short- to medium-term. The project aligns directly with the 2030 strategy's emphasis on delivering 'investment-ready' land supported by enabling infrastructure. The BREP is anticipated to deliver significant economic benefits, including an estimated 6,000 direct and indirect jobs, and attract investment in priority sectors such as advanced manufacturing, logistics, and agribusiness.

The strategy's objectives are further reinforced by the sequencing approach set out in the GBILDS, which prioritises BREP for immediate activation while retaining the MBP to the north-west as a long-term reserve. This sequencing ensures that public and private resources are concentrated on delivering a fully serviced flagship precinct that can meet current market demand, while safeguarding additional capacity for future industrial expansion once BREP has been established and demonstrated market uptake.

By integrating the economic vision of 'A Stronger Greater Bendigo 2030' with the planning framework provided by GBILDS and the BREP planning process, the CoGB and the VPA can ensure that Marong's industrial growth is coordinated, infrastructure-led, and aligned with broader economic development objectives. This alignment

provides a clear and compelling policy rationale for investment in the BREP and positions it as a catalyst for achieving the CoGBs long-term employment, industry diversification, and economic resilience goals.

## 2.3 Surrounding Precincts and Structure Plans

### Marong Township Structure Plan (MTSP)

The MTSP provides the long-term plan for future development of Marong. The BREP has been included within the structure plan boundary, as a key location for future employment due to its strategic location near the arterial road network, lack of land use constraints, limited land ownership, and proximity to the Marong Township. The long-term vision is for Marong to develop as a satellite township of 8,000 people built around a vibrant community town centre and civic focus with a well serviced railway station and an outstanding public space network.

Planning Scheme Amendment C263gben implements the recommendations of the MTSP, the Marong Heritage Citations (Minerva Heritage, June 2024) and the Marong Flood Study (NCCMA), November 2018) by rezoning land and applying new overlays and amending local policies to guide land use and development in Marong.

The BREP is located directly adjoining the MTSP boundary. Its proximity to Marong creates a strong spatial and functional relationship between the township and the BREP. While the BREP will be delivered under a separate planning framework, its development will influence and be influenced by the growth and infrastructure planning for Marong.

The precinct planning has carefully considered the following:

#### Land Use Compatibility

- Ensuring industrial activities in BREP comply with EPA separation distances and operational standards to protect the amenity of residential growth areas in Marong.
- Avoiding and minimising incompatible encroachment of sensitive uses into the industrial buffer areas within BREP.

#### Transport and Access Integration

- Coordinating road upgrades and freight access points to the Calder Alternative Highway and Wimmera Highway to ensure efficient heavy vehicle movements by minimising trucks through residential streets in Marong.
- Addressing the potential broader road network impact on the MTSP road network.
- Planning active transport links and local road connections that can serve the BREP workforce while supporting Marong's connectivity.

#### Infrastructure Coordination

- Ensuring that servicing and infrastructure strategies align with relevant road, utility and servicing authorities to prevent capacity conflicts, optimise network efficiency, and coordinate the timing of upgrade
- Providing recommendations to Marong Township Shared Infrastructure Funding Plan on the contribution requirement of the State infrastructure upgrades.

#### Economic and Workforce Synergies

- Leveraging BREP's job creation to support local employment for Marong residents, reducing commuting distances.
- Encouraging supporting commercial and service functions in Marong to meet the daily needs of the BREP workforce.



## Marong Business Park Review Area

The Loddon Mallee South Regional Growth Plan (2014), which has now been superseded, identified the MBP as a strategic future location for industry and business. The BREP is envisaged to integrate with the Marong and Maiden Gully townships and the broader Bendigo urban area. Its development is recognised as a priority action in support of Bendigo's long-term economic activity, with precinct and structure planning noted as critical next steps.

Preliminary investigations into the site's potential have been undertaken by the CoGB. The MBP concept has been on the strategic agenda for over a decade:

- 2006 to 2007: Initial identification in the Bendigo Future Industrial Land Strategy and the MBP Analysis Project.
- 2015: Amendment C161 proposed rezoning approximately 313 hectares from Farming Zone to Comprehensive Development Zone; however, lack of development intent from landowners limited immediate progression.
- 2017: Victorian Government announced the rezoning of over 300 hectares, projecting up to 3,000 jobs in logistics, manufacturing, research and development, and services.

However, the timing for its development remains uncertain. The GBILDS categorises the MBP as a longer-term proposition for employment land supply, with that the landowners have indicated their intention to retain active agricultural use on the land.

Despite its current strategic status, the site remains unserviced and undeveloped with uncertainties on infrastructure feasibility and development requirements, contributing to delays in implementation.

GBILDS planning scheme amendment C282gben updates the MBP as a Review Area under the municipal industrial strategic framework plan, while shifting near-term focus to the BREP:

- Clause 17.03-1L Industrial land supply – Greater Bendigo
  - Plan for large scale industrial land and regional employment opportunities in BREP in the short-medium term.
  - Retain land to the northwest of Marong zoned Comprehensive Development Zone for future industrial use and development for the municipality and broader region in the longer term to support the demands and growth of industry.

The BREP has emerged as the municipality's immediate focus for industrial expansion. The Victorian Government has committed \$6 million towards technical studies for the BREP, including transport, ecology, cultural heritage, and servicing assessments. Coliban Water is also upgrading a key pipeline to Marong to support future demand, anticipated to complete by mid-2026.

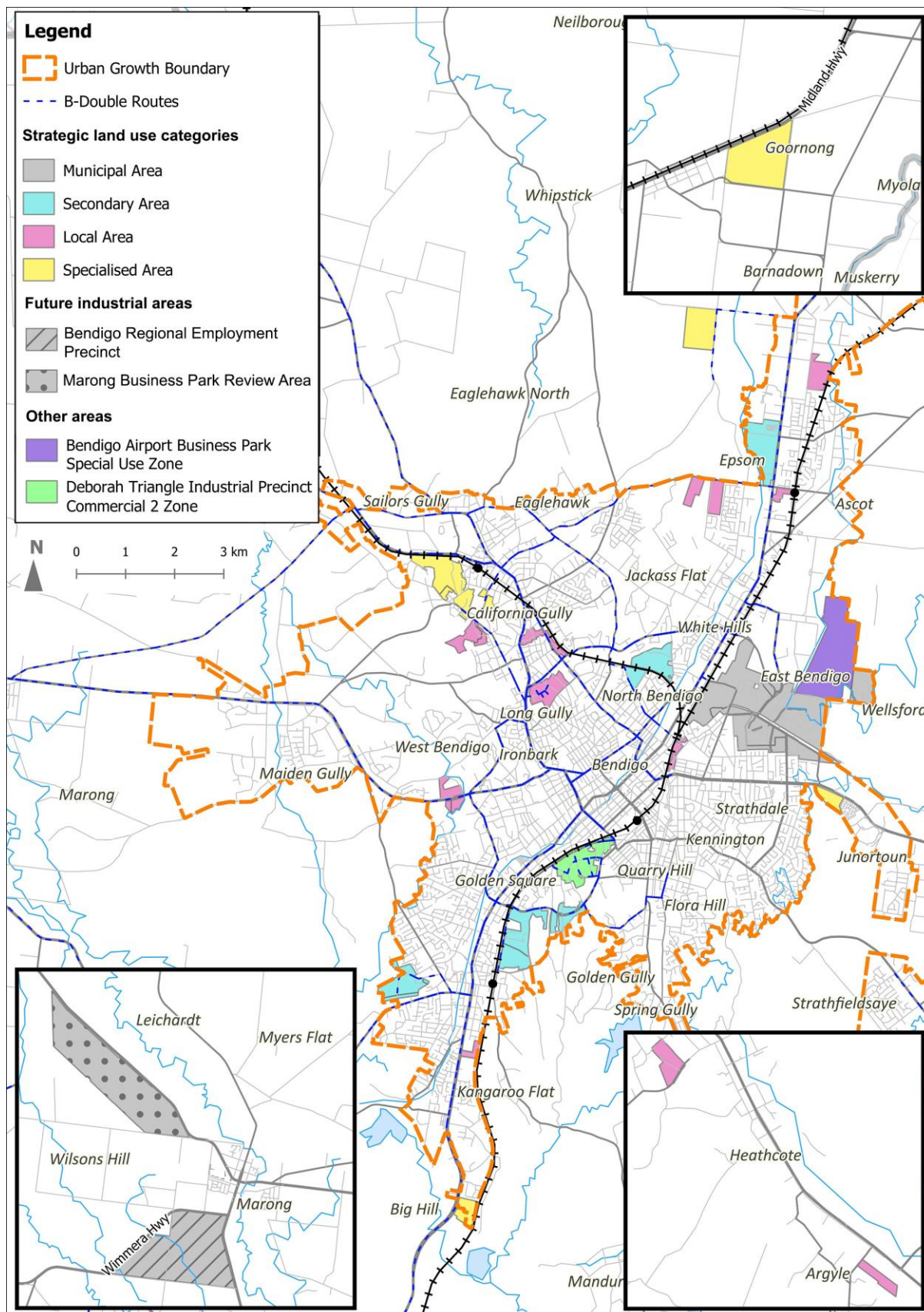


Figure 12 Proposed industrial strategic framework plan under Clause 02.03

## 3 PRECINCT PLANNING PROCESS

### 3.1 Precinct Planning Pathway

#### Project Scoping

The project commenced as a VPA-led PSP process. This approach led to the commissioning of a comprehensive suite of background technical studies.

Over time, it became clear that while a full PSP process provides a comprehensive framework, a more tailored approach would better suit the employment-focused nature of the BREP. The revised pathway offers greater flexibility to accommodate staged industrial development, while also enabling planning outcomes to be delivered in a more streamlined and timely manner.

Furthermore, the BREP was identified as a strategic priority in evidence-based government planning documents, such as Plan for Victoria and Victoria's Economic Growth Statement, reinforcing the need for an agile, fast-tracked planning model.

As part of the VPA's Business Plan 2024-25, the BREP was confirmed on the delivery program, marking a clear and formal government commitment to progress its planning. Consequently, the project has entered a rescoping phase to align its pathway with strategic needs and development efficiency.

As planning progressed, it was determined that an alternative planning pathway would better suit the industrial focus of the BREP by providing greater flexibility, efficiency, and alignment with investment readiness.

Key changes introduced through rescoping include:

- Transition from a PSP to an alternative planning pathway, which comprises:
  - Local planning policy to define strategic intent across the BREP.
  - A DPO to guide subdivision staging, infrastructure delivery, and design
  - Rezoning to IN1Z to establish a permissive industrial land-use framework.
- Continuation of the robust technical and infrastructure work (previously generated under the PSP scope), ensuring no loss of evidentiary power or continuity in planning rigor.
- Streamlined planning processes that enhance delivery certainty while still providing the strategic and environmental oversight necessary for an industrial precinct.

This pathway ensures timely delivery while maintaining strong environmental, infrastructure servicing controls.

#### Precinct Planning Framework – Development Plan Overlay

The integration approach is central to reinforcing BREP's role as a regionally significant employment precinct. Its significance lies not only in the scale of land supply but also in its ability to deliver an industrial environment that is functional, efficient, and attractive to regional, state, and even national business. Without an integrated framework, development would occur in a fragmented manner, resulting in inconsistent networks and disjointed and uneven servicing. Such outcomes would undermine its competitiveness and diminish its capacity to accommodate a broad spectrum of industrial users.

By requiring integration across multiple landholdings, the planning framework ensures that the BREP delivers as a cohesive and market-ready employment hub. Integrated infrastructure and coordinated staging allow the BREP to provide well-serviced industrial lots of varying sizes, facilitate heavy vehicle access through a unified transport network, and manage stormwater at a catchment scale. This level of coordination is essential to maintaining land quality and investment confidence.

Ultimately, the BREPs regional significance depends on its ability to function as more than the sum of its parts. An integrated approach safeguards against piecemeal outcomes and ensures that the BREP is positioned to meet regional employment needs over the long term, reinforcing its strategic importance within the regional industrial land supply.

The consideration of whether to apply a PSP or a DPO to the BREP framework rests on a range of considerations as outlined below:

#### **Employment-focused land use**

- The BREP has been planned as a wholly industrial precinct with a clear, well-defined strategic intent to provide large format industrial land supply for the next 25 to 33 years.
- Unlike greenfield areas in Melbourne's growth corridors, the BREP does not involve complex mixed-use planning, multiple residential neighbourhoods, or significant community infrastructure sequencing that typically necessitate a PSP.

#### **Landownership Pattern**

- The fragmented land ownership pattern in BREP makes the DPO the most appropriate planning tool.
  - The BREP contains a mix of rural lifestyle holdings, developer-controlled parcels, family-operated mid-sized lots, and substantial public land. Without a coordinated mechanism, these differing interests risk delivering piecemeal and inefficient outcomes.
  - The advantages of the DPO tool compared to a PSP is that the ability under the DPO to prepare multiple development plans (i.e. on a staged basis) enable large developer holdings and CoGB-owned land to proceed quickly, delivering early industrial supply and essential infrastructure on an individual basis, while still ensuring that smaller or less active landowners are not a barrier to activation. Each development plan must address road connections, drainage, servicing, and infrastructure contributions in a manner consistent with the overarching framework, ensuring alignment and integration between different ownerships.

#### **Flexibility for Staging and Lot Design**

- The industrial market requires flexible lot sizes and staging that can respond to fluctuating demand (e.g. a mix of large logistics sites and smaller manufacturing lots).
- A DPO schedule allows broad structural requirements (road hierarchy, servicing corridors, buffers, open space) to be locked in while enabling adaptive subdivision layouts to suit market take-up over time.

#### **Simplified Infrastructure Delivery Framework**

- The BREPs infrastructure requirements are largely limited to internal industrial road networks, connections to the external road network, a service extensions, and drainage, with no need for the full Development Contributions Plan and community facility sequencing that a PSP would mandate.
- These can be coordinated efficiently through the DPO's requirement for a comprehensive development plan, supported by infrastructure agreements as needed.

#### **Statutory Efficiency and Reduced Approval Timelines**

- Preparing and approving a PSP can be a multi-year process with extensive detailed planning at the rezoning stage.
- The DPO approach allows the rezoning to occur sooner while requiring detailed site and infrastructure planning before subdivision and development, ensuring investment can be facilitated earlier in line with Bendigo's urgent industrial land shortage.



### Consistency with Recent Employment Precincts

- Other large-format industrial precincts in regional Victoria (e.g. parts of Logic Wodonga, Ballarat West Employment Zone) have successfully been delivered under DPO frameworks rather than PSPs, balancing strategic certainty with delivery flexibility.

## 3.2 VPA-commissioned Background Studies

A comprehensive evidence base underpins the BREP planning process with the following reports prepared under the PSP scope since 2023:

- Utilities Servicing Assessment – Aurecon, April 2024
- Landscape and Visual Assessment – Spiire, November 2023
- Land Capability Assessment – WSP, April 2024
- Historic Heritage Assessment – Heritage Insight, July 2023
- Biodiversity Assessment & Targeted Flora and Fauna Surveys – Ecology and Heritage Partners, October 2023
- Arboriculture Assessment – ENSPEC, 2023
- Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment – DJANDAK, 2024 (stored under Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Register and Information System)
- Sustainable Development Opportunities Report – HIP V. HYPE, March 2024

These reports have been reviewed and are considered suitable to inform the preparation of a future development plan. They provide the technical information necessary to shape the DPO schedule content and concept plan, ensuring subdivision and development are coordinated, evidence-based, and environmentally responsive.

Following the project rescoping in 2024, the VPA has undertaken a series of targeted technical studies to address the technical and economic aspects. These studies were prepared to directly inform the drafting of the DPO schedule requirements and to provide the strategic and evidence base necessary to support amendments to the economic-focused sections of the Planning Policy Framework

- Bushfire Development Report, Terramatrix, 2025
- Bendigo Regional Employment Precinct Independent Development Assessment, Charter Keck Cramer, 2025
- Marong Transport Network Assessment, Stantec 2025

## 3.3 DV-commissioned Reference Document

Planning Practice Note 23 (PPN23) recognises that it is possible to apply a DPO before a development plan has been formally prepared. In such cases, it is critical that a strategic framework is already in place to provide direction and certainty about the intended future use and development of the land. Without such a framework, the overlay can effectively suspend development opportunities until a plan is approved.

DV, funded through the \$6 million RDV grant and engaged by the CoGB in its landowner capacity, has prepared a suite of infrastructure and development studies for the BREP:

- Infrastructure Strategy;
- Stormwater Strategy; and
- Transport Impact Assessment – Access Strategy.

These studies provide the level of technical detail and sequencing normally expected in a draft development plan. They set out:

- The required servicing and staging arrangements for water, sewer, drainage and transport.
- Infrastructure contributions and funding pathways to support delivery.
- Land use configurations and subdivision concepts that respond to biodiversity, heritage, amenity and freight interfaces.
- Integration with the planned MWFC and the State transport networks.

While not formally adopted as a development plan, DV's infrastructure studies represent the intent of a draft development plan. They provide sufficient detail on infrastructure and servicing to explain the infrastructure requirement and illustrate the development concept on the CoGB's land and establish a robust basis for the development layout on the CoGB's land under the Concept Plan of the DPO schedule.

The engagement undertaken by DV with utility service and network providers extends beyond the requirements of the planning scheme. The findings from the DV's infrastructure studies ensures that critical infrastructure needs including power, water, sewerage and telecommunications are coordinated early and effectively planned for. By addressing these broader service delivery considerations, DV's work underpins a comprehensive approach to infrastructure planning for the BREP.

Importantly, while these studies inform the planning scheme amendment process and provide valuable input into the Concept Plan under the DPO schedule, they are not relied upon to define or mandate shared local infrastructure requirements within the precinct.

This approach also ensures that probity is maintained. As DV has been engaged by the CoGB in its role as landowner, and may hold commercial interests in future infrastructure delivery, it is critical that the statutory framework for contributions is set independently. By treating DV's studies as inputs rather than determinative documents, the amendment process preserves transparency and impartiality in establishing infrastructure contributions.

### 3.4 Planned Marong Western Freight Corridor

As the Bendigo Freight Study identified the need to protect and plan for future freight corridors and precincts to support Bendigo's growth as a regional freight hub, the planning and delivery of the planned MWFC is central to the long-term success of the BREP.

The BREP, as a regionally significant industrial precinct, must be supported by efficient freight connections that link Greater Bendigo to wider state and national logistics networks. The freight corridor has been under investigation for several years, evolving from a strategic concept into a defined corridor alignment that now provides the structural certainty needed for integrated land use and infrastructure planning.

- 2018–2019: The freight corridor concept was carried into local and regional transport strategies, emphasising its role in supporting industrial expansion west of Bendigo.
- 2020–2022: The Greater Bendigo Transport Strategy and further technical investigations refined the corridor options, testing traffic modelling, land use impacts, and connectivity with the Calder and Wimmera Highways. Marong was consistently flagged as a preferred industrial growth location.
- 2023: More detailed assessments were undertaken, with the corridor increasingly tied to the planning of BREP. Studies confirmed its importance for enabling regional freight efficiency and protecting Bendigo's long-term competitiveness.

- 2024: DPT-Transport Services identified a preferred alignment for the planned MWFC in October 2024. This provides critical spatial clarity for BREP's structure, ensuring integration with freight and logistics networks. Although still a planning project subject to future approvals, the alignment strengthens BREP's role as a regionally significant industrial hub and inform the development of the DPO schedule.

The preferred alignment is now being incorporated into the proposed BREP planning framework. The planned MWFC's protection within the proposed ordinance ensures coordinated access and long-term integration with the freight network. DTP-Transport Services will undertake a separate amendment and Environmental Effect Statement if required to deliver the planned route at a future point of time.

### 3.5 Engagement with Traditional Owners

The BREP is located within land of cultural significance to Dja Dja Wurrung People, the Traditional Owners of the area. Planning for the BREP has been informed by a structured engagement process with DJAARA and their commercial arm, DJANDAK.

The engagement process commenced with the commissioning of an Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment (ACHIA) through DJANDAK in 2023. This study provided an early overview of cultural heritage values across the BREP. Importantly, the ACHIA has now been uploaded to the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Register and Information System (ACHRIS). This ensures that it will be available for heritage advisors engaged by developers as they prepare development plans, embedding cultural heritage considerations into the statutory planning process.

In 2025, the project team moved to direct engagement with DJAARA to ensure that cultural values are properly recognised and embedded in the planning process. This dialogue has focused on the identification of places and stories of cultural significance, assessment of potential impacts, and opportunities for culturally appropriate design responses.

As part of this engagement, DJAARA issued a Statement of Cultural Significance to support the preparation of the planning scheme amendment. This statement articulates the cultural significance of the BREP and surrounding lands, the key values to be protected, and the expectations for how these values are to be addressed through future development planning.

A Cultural Values Assessment (CVA) is also scheduled to be prepared by DJAARA outside the planning scheme amendment process. The CVA will build on the Statement of Cultural Significance, providing a more detailed analysis of cultural values and their implications for land use planning and development. Under the DPO schedule, the recommendations of the CVA must be considered in the preparation and approval of any future development plan, ensuring that cultural values are appropriately recognised and integrated into the planning and design of the BREP.

The collaboration with DJAARA demonstrates a commitment to embedding Aboriginal cultural significance considerations within the BREP planning process from the outset. This ensures that the BREP not only delivers on its economic and industrial role but also respects and protects the deep cultural significance of the land. The collaboration with DJAARA demonstrates a commitment to embedding Aboriginal cultural significance considerations within the BREP planning process from the outset. This ensures that the BREP not only delivers on its economic and industrial role but also respects and protects the deep cultural significance of the land. Importantly, this planning scheme amendment process is not the end point of engagement with Dja Dja Wurrung People. All stakeholders should remain committed to continuing the collaboration and deepening collective understanding of the BREP land and its cultural values and stories into the future.

## 3.6 Pitching Sessions and Workshops

### Pitching Sessions

The VPA hosted pitching sessions between December 2022 and February 2023 to engage key stakeholders in shaping the vision and planning for the BREP. The sessions provided a platform to raise opportunities, challenges and policy considerations at an early stage of the planning process.

Participants included state and local government agencies, infrastructure providers, private developers, industry spokespeople and Traditional Owners. Engagement occurred through individual meetings and written submissions.

### Key Emerging Themes

Five core themes emerged from the Pitching Sessions and Workshop and are summarised as follows:

**Employment** - The BREP should provide a flexible planning framework that attracts a range of economic development opportunities, industries and jobs ranging from state-of-the-art industry, and manufacturing to service industry supporting cultural tourism opportunities. Planning for BREP should leverage of its accessible location, freight network and location and complement the development of the adjacent MBP.

**Transport Network** - Planning for BREP should be supported by the development of a transport network that connects people to jobs and services with a focus on creating safe and accessible transport options to Marong Township, and the improvement of freight networks and connections.

**Water and Drainage Solutions** - Planning should holistically manage water and drainage to minimise flooding risks from Bullock Creek and Wilson's Hill Channel, improve water quality outcomes and improve ecological values on the BREP. There are opportunities to maximise capture, storage and reuse of water onsite through a number of harvesting/recycled water opportunities.

**Amenity** - The BREP should create a high amenity precinct by incentivising high value-added industry, managing location of industry to ensure amenity impacts are minimised and support the provision of high-quality landscape treatments at key gateways.

**Character, Landscape and Heritage Values** - Planning should respect and reinforce the highly valued local heritage, rural landscape and visual character of Marong. It is important to maintain and reinforce the 'country feel' and landscape attributes of the area as BREP develops.

BREP provides an important opportunity to explore and embed Aboriginal cultural heritage outcomes and value as part of the future precinct.

### Vision and Purpose Workshop

As part of the planning process for the BREP, the VPA hosted a Vision and Purpose Workshop on 21 March 2023. The session built on earlier stakeholder pitching workshops and played a key role in refining the emerging vision, identifying key themes, and establishing future planning directions for the precinct.

### Purpose and Participation

The workshop aimed to:

- Update stakeholders on project progress
- Capture innovative and place-based ideas
- Identify constraints and technical investigation needs

- Test and refine a vision for the BREP.

Participants included landowners, local and state government agencies, utility providers, and community stakeholders. The workshop was facilitated online using interactive platforms, enabling real-time collaboration and feedback.

### Targeted Stakeholder Engagement

From April to June 2025, the VPA undertook targeted engagement with landowners and key stakeholders in the BREP in order to test draft planning provisions and determine appropriate outcomes for the BREP.

The following stakeholders were engaged:

- Coliban Water
- NCCMA
- CoGB (municipal authority)
- DJAARA (Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation)
- Department of Transport and Planning (DTP)
- Country Fire Authority (CFA)
- Department of Environment, Energy and Climate Action (DEECA)
- Landowners and developers with the BREP
- Additionally, written submissions were provided by the stakeholders. Key topics of interest were:
  - MWFC
  - Bushfire
  - Biodiversity
  - Land Supply
  - Utilities and Servicing
  - Staging and delivery of the BREP and key infrastructure
  - Specific provisions and layout of the proposed ordinance

## 3.7 Economic Independent Assessment Interviews

Additional interviews were held through May and June 2025 by Charter Keck Cramer (Charter Keck Cramer) for the purpose of developing the rationale and vision for the BREPs economic framework. Interviews were conducted with landowners within the BREP, as well as officers from local governments through the broader region the BREP may service, and representatives from development agencies and industry organisations. COGB as a landowner was interviewed through this process. Overall, the views of landowners were split between those that support the BREP vision and opportunity and those concerned about its economic merit and disruptive impact. Three owners were highly motivated to proceed with industrial development and two owners expressed concerns.



## 4 EXISTING CONDITIONS

### 4.1 Topography

The BREP is generally flat, with some gentle slopes throughout. The land slopes to the north and west with the difference between the lowest and highest point being 10 metres. There are two higher mounds close to O'Sullivan's Road, with peaks five to 10 metres above the surrounding landscape. The mounds are considered gentle slopes with the steepest point being a gradient of 1:20.

The lowest point within the BREP is at its southwestern corner along the Wimmera Highway.

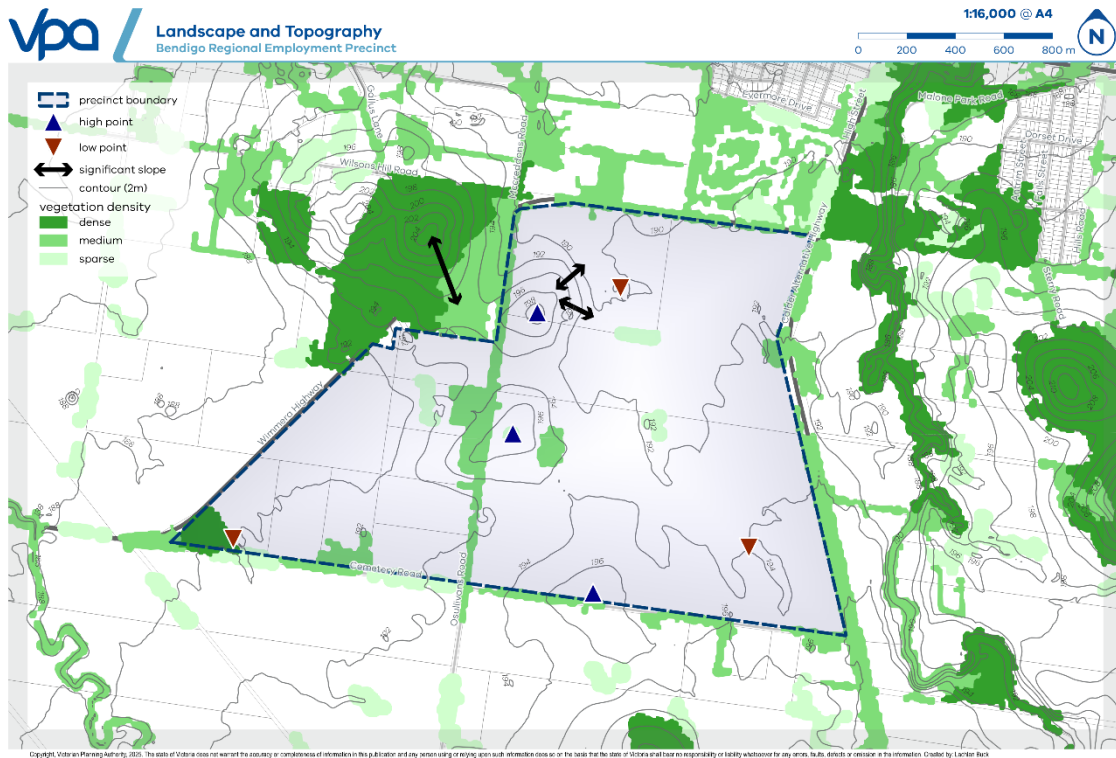


Figure 13 Topography Map

## 4.2 Catchments and Waterways

The Wilsons Hill Channel is an irrigation channel which runs east to west throughout the BREP. The channel assists in moving water into the Wilsons Hills Bushland Reserve.

The BREP drains predominately to the west and northwest and is dissected by two waterways. The historical Wilsons Hill Channel, which extends from the southern boundary to the Wimmera Highway western boundary. There is also the natural watercourse dissecting the area east of O'Sullivan's Road which isn't formally named, however conveys the local catchments to the outlet of the site. It is a tributary of Bullock Creek and connects to the main creek approximately 3.8 kilometres to the north.

The CoGB is the responsible authority for the management of local drainage facilities within the BREP. The NCCMA have identified legal points of discharge, major flows from the eastern side of the BREP to the legal discharge point to the most northern part of the site. Flow from the west discharge to the west.

## 4.3 Utility services

Aurecon were commissioned by the VPA to undertake an assessment of utility service provision for the BREP. Based on their analysis, it has been found that there are predominantly no service offerings within the BREP area, with most services situated in the neighbouring township of Marong. A summary of each utility service is detailed below. A more detailed breakdown is provided in the appendices.

- **Water** - The potable water supply within the Marong Township is provided by Coliban Water. However, there are no existing services (potable and recycled) within the BREP.
- **Sewerage** - The existing sewerage system surrounding the BREP is limited to the local sewer services within the adjoining Marong Township and there are no existing sewer services within the BREP..
- **Electricity** - Powercor Australia is responsible for some existing electricity services within the BREP.. Whilst there is existing electricity services situated within the BREP, there is only 1MW of space capacity to service the BREP.
- **Gas** - Existing gas networks are located in local towns such as Marong, Maiden Gully and Golden Square. However, there are no existing gas services within the BREP.. Tas Gas and AusNet service properties within the BREP, however these networks were designed to service low density residential and light commercial demands. Little capacity remains to service the demands of the BREP. Solstice Energy are to phase out its compressed natural gas (CNG) network in Marong by the end of 2026.
- **Telecommunications** - Both NBN and Telstra are providers of telecommunications to Marong Township, but at present there are no fixed line services within the BREP site.

## 4.4 Natural Waterways

The BREP contains a mix of natural waterways and managed water infrastructure that collectively influence its environmental conditions, development framework, and statutory planning controls. The key features are Dry Creek (south-west corner of BREP), an unnamed natural waterway within BREP, and the Wilsons Hill Channel.

Dry Creek intersects the south-west corner of the BREP, forming part of a broader regional drainage corridor. Although its footprint is spatially limited, it establishes critical vegetation and riparian environment for the BREP. Within the BREP, Dry Creek provides localised flood conveyance, ecological values, and landscape functions, and it is subject to the requirements of the NCCMA for flood risk management.

An unnamed natural drainage line also traverses the BREP. This waterway provides local flood conveyance and supports biodiversity values by linking habitat patches and vegetation. The proposed DPO schedule and

concept plan for the BREP recognise this waterway, requiring its protection through setbacks, drainage reserves, and integration with subdivision layouts to ensure it retains both its ecological and hydrological functions.

## Regional Flood Context

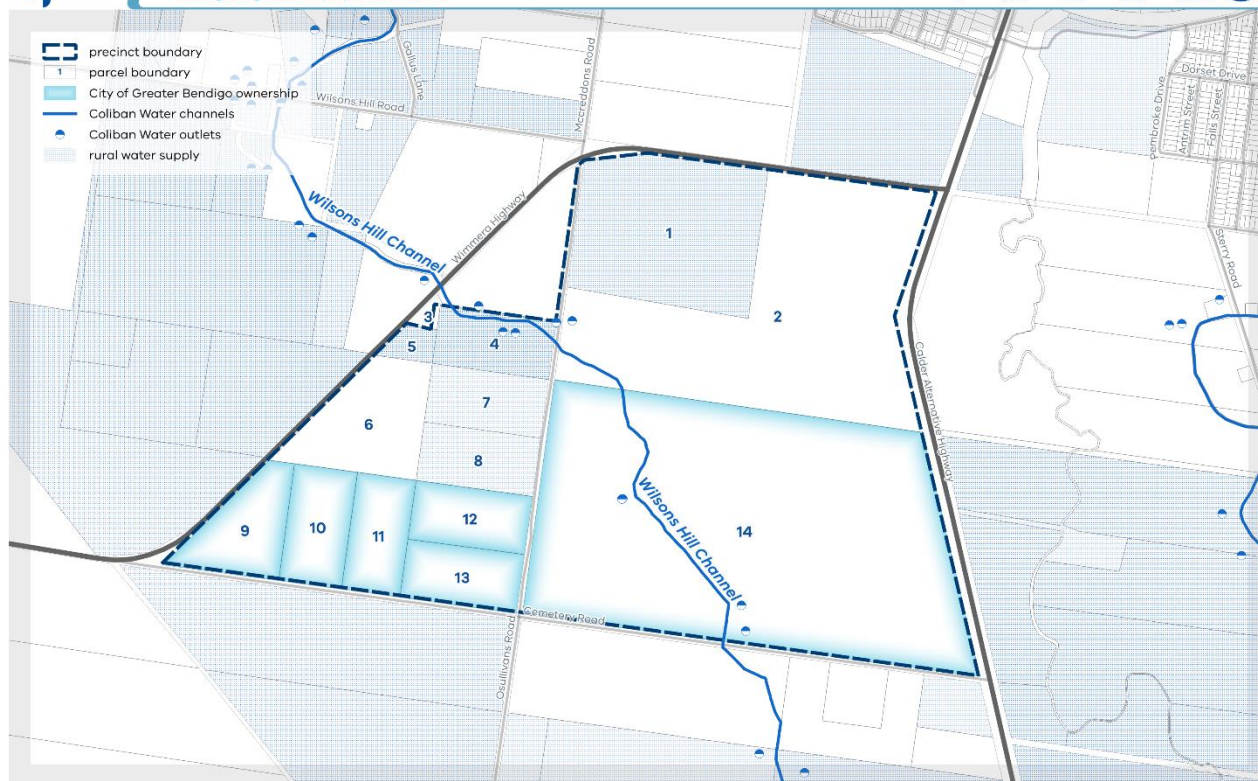
The Marong Flood Study (2018), prepared by the NCCMA, provides the most comprehensive hydraulic modelling of flood behaviour in Marong. The study assessed Bullock Creek and Fletchers Creek, identifying the 1% Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP) flood extent and key breakout locations affecting the township. The township is bisected by Bullock Creek, with historical records of significant flood events in 1974, 1983, 2011 and 2016. Flooding in Marong is shown to be concentrated along low-lying land immediately adjoining Bullock Creek, particularly in the vicinity of Malone Park Reserve and the Calder Highway, where breakout flows extend across transport corridors and into urban areas.

Importantly, the BREP is located the west of Marong Township and far removed from Bullock Creek and its floodplain. The Marong Flood Study confirms that the 1% AEP flood extent associated with Bullock Creek does not extend into, or in proximity to, the BREP. As such, regional flooding from Bullock Creek does not pose a constraint on the development of the BREP.

Flood considerations within BREP are instead limited to local waterways, namely Dry Creek, an unnamed drainage line, and the Wilsons Hill Channel. These require site-specific flood risk and waterway management responses, but do not relate to the broader floodplain risks identified for Marong Township.

## 4.5 Rural water supply

Coliban Water is operating the Wilson's Hill rural supply channel that forms part of its broader network servicing approximately 1,300 rural customers, the majority of whom rely on open channels for supply. In the context of development, the usual expectation is that developers are responsible for piping the channel through the development area. However, where development is imminent and rural customers still rely on the channel, an alternative arrangement may be negotiated. This involves developers compensating rural customers and seeking approval for the channel to be decommissioned, which can be a more cost-effective outcome, saving developers significant costs while also providing financial compensation to affected rural users.



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**Figure 14 Rural Water Supply**

For the BREP, the situation is complicated by the fact that a number of intensive agricultural enterprises in the region currently draw supply from the Wilson's Hill channel. The ongoing need for these customers to access water will depend on whether development plans overlap with their landholdings. While it may be possible to provide an alternative supply such as potable, recycled water or harvested stormwater, the responsibility to identify the most economical and suitable solution lies with the developer.

Outside the planning process, piping, decommissioning, or substitute supply will need to be resolved through negotiations with existing customers and consideration of long-term servicing strategies.

According to the Coliban Water's Land Development Manual, when land proposed for development contains or adjoins a Coliban Water rural channel, the developer has specific obligations.

The developer may be required to enter into a formal agreement with Coliban Water for the underground piping of the rural channel. This includes responsibility for the piping design, construction methodology, fencing and rehabilitation of the site. As an alternative, Coliban Water may instead agree to the provision of a buffer zone within the development to manage drainage, protect the development from flooding, or divert flows from entering the channel.

Where a buffer zone is accepted, new development must set back 30 metres from the edge of the channel or 20 metres from the edge of the channel easement.

Where a land title has an active rural water licence and is subsequently rezoned for urban or industrial purposes, the licence may continue to operate until the land is developed. The entitlement remains valid and subject to normal charges and trading rules while the land is undeveloped and remains the rural activities. However, once the land is connected to Coliban Water's potable supply as part of the subdivision or development process, the rural licence can no longer be retained and must be formally surrendered.



## 4.6 Biodiversity and Vegetation

Targeted surveys were undertaken within areas of suitable habitat within BREP only.

Native vegetation within the BREP included 68.81 hectares of Plains Woodland (RVC 803), 146 scattered trees and 532 large trees in patches of vegetation.

The vegetation in the BREP is representative of many areas within the broader areas west of Bendigo. The vegetation has been previously distributed, is highly modified and possesses large areas of exotic pasture with scattered patches of native vegetation and regrowth from past clearing.

Much of the indigenous vegetation and terrestrial fauna habitat remaining within the BREP is confined to areas less affected by past land clearing and sustained agricultural land use. Native vegetation, where present, is highly modified with most vegetation communities lacking structure and exhibiting a low diversity of native species.

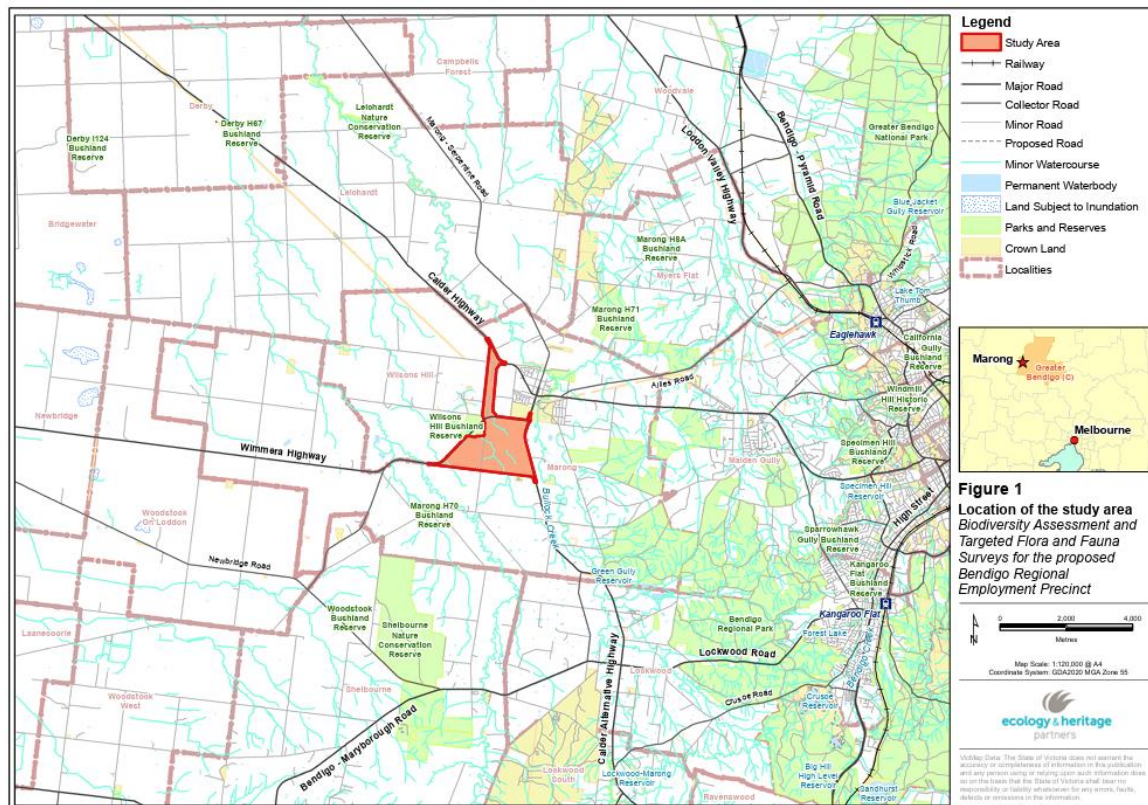


Figure 15 Biodiversity Assessment and Targeted Flora and Fauna Surveys for the Proposed BREP

## 4.7 Dja Dja Wurrung Cultural Heritage and Cultural Values

The BREP is Djandak (Dja Dja Wurrung Country), and as such its landscape may feature both tangible and intangible cultural values that demonstrate Dja Dja Wurrung peoples' connection to Country.

Dja Dja Wurrung are represented by Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation / DJAARA, as the Registered Aboriginal Party.

The Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment (ACHIA) for the BREP was completed in June 2024 and is available on ACHRIS. The report found that there are no registered Aboriginal Places within the activity area,



although 17 sites are recorded within five kilometres, including low-density artefact distributions, artefact scatters and scarred trees. A targeted field survey did not locate cultural material but confirmed that the landscape retains moderate to high archaeological potential, particularly at Wilsons Hill and in proximity to Bullock Creek and Dry Creek. Wilsons Hill was recognised as a culturally sensitive landscape feature, significant both physically and symbolically, with associations to the Djaara creator Bunjil.

### **DJAARA's Statement of Significance**

In accordance with the Statement of Significance provided by DJAARA, the BREP is located on a highly significant part of the Bullock Creek cultural landscape of Djandak (Dja Dja Wurrung Country). This landscape is associated with traditional living-ways, travel routes, water resources and burial traditions, and it retains both tangible and intangible heritage. Historical records highlight the connection of the Malcolm family, in particular Caroline Malcolm, whose testimony in 1865 provided evidence of the last members of the Bullock Creek group. Her recognition as an Apical Ancestor underpins DJAARA's legal standing and enduring cultural connection to the area. The land parcel itself incorporates important features including Dry Creek and sightlines from O'Sullivan's Road across a rise that contains mature native vegetation of environmental and cultural value.

Wilsons Hill Bushland Reserve forms part of this setting and contributes to the ecological and cultural landscape. It supports mature vegetation and has traditionally held strategic value through sightlines and orientation across Country. The reserve is also closely tied to principles of Caring for Country, which emphasise stewardship of flora, fauna and water resources. The Marong-Bullock Creek Cemetery, formally gazetted in 1861, is a further key feature that reinforces the long-standing Dja Dja Wurrung presence in the Marong area. A historic travel route once traversed the BREP site, connecting the Marong Hotel with the cemetery, linking places of community gathering, inquest and burial. Together, these elements demonstrate a layered cultural and historical setting, where the physical landscape is inseparable from the stories, practices and continuing presence of Dja Dja Wurrung people

## **4.8 Post-Contact Heritage**

The desktop research identified a new archaeological site. It was identified and assessed as holding archaeological significance at a local level. The site was nominated to the Heritage Inventory. This nomination was approved and is now listed on Victorian Heritage Inventory as: H7724-0644 – Cemetery Road Gold Mining Landscape.

In addition, several features of local interest were identified (e.g., Wilsons Hill Channel, mature native trees). While the identified features do not meet the criteria for statutory protection, they contribute to an understanding of the historic intangible landscape.

Management recommendations developed as a result of this assessment relate to the protection or preservation of identified heritage places/sites and features of local interest.

## **4.9 Transport Network**

The following map provides an overview of the existing transport network relevant to the BREP.

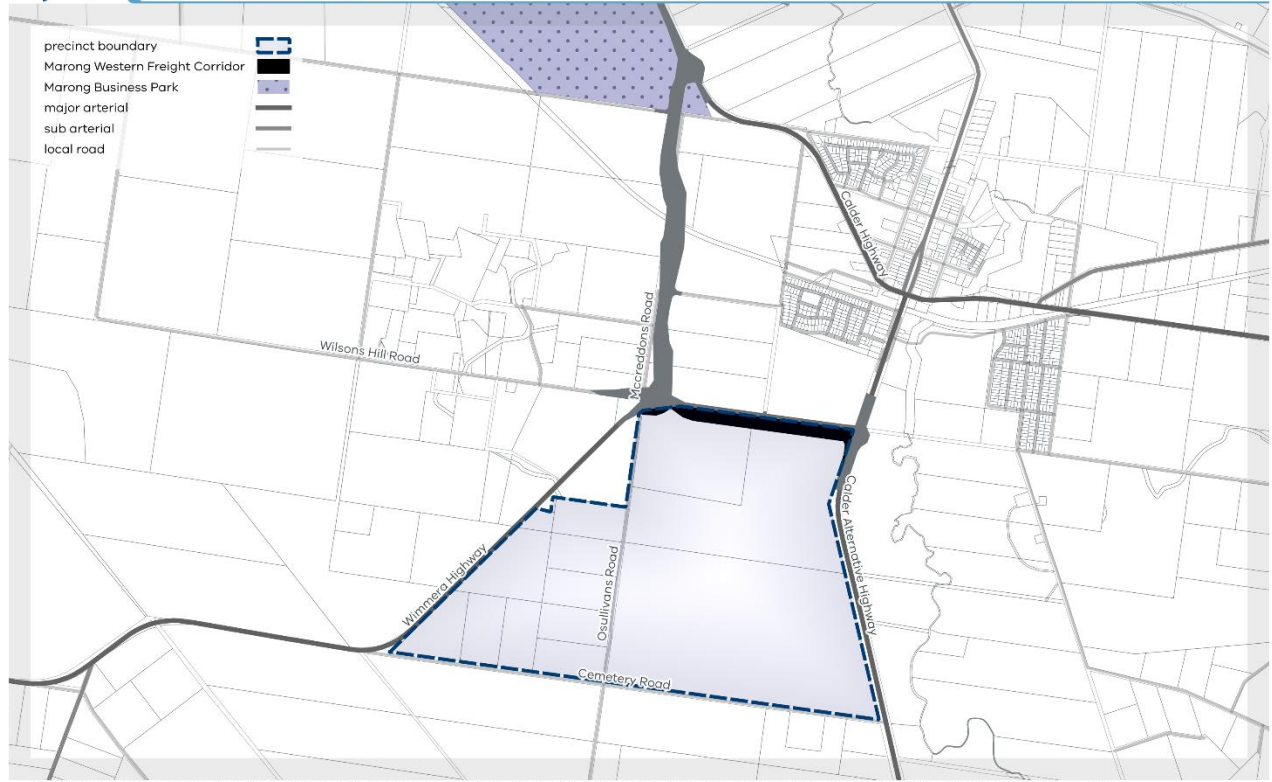


Figure 16 Existing and future transport network

The BREP is strategically located on the western approach to Bendigo, adjacent to major state highways that form part of Victoria's Principal Freight Network:

- Calder Highway (A79) runs through Marong Township and connects directly east into Bendigo. It forms the principal approach to the city from the west and is a key commuter and freight route.
- Calder Alternative Highway (A790) provides the bypass around Kangaroo Flat, linking Marong to the Calder Freeway at Ravenswood. This corridor is identified as a preferred heavy vehicle route, facilitating freight access to Melbourne and broader Victoria without directing trucks through Bendigo's urban area.
- Calder Highway forms the primary north-south arterial linking Melbourne to Bendigo and further north to Mildura. It is a designated freight corridor accommodating High Productivity Freight Vehicles.
- The planned MWFC is a potential future connection between the Calder corridors and the BREP. If delivered, it would provide a direct high-capacity interchange at the northern edge of the precinct, improving freight efficiency and reducing pressure on roads through the Marong Township.
- Local Roads: The BREP land currently relies on rural-standard local roads, including O'Sullivan's Road and Cemetery Road, which provide basic east-west and north-south access across the site. These roads are unsealed in parts and not proposed to be constructed to carry industrial traffic or freight vehicles.

The proximity of the BREP to the Calder Highway system offers direct integration with Victoria's principal freight network (PFN), ensuring long-term viability for logistics and manufacturing users. However, dedicated freight access points into the BREP do not yet exist, and freight-generating development will require new arterial connections and industrial street networks.

### Public Transport

At present, Marong is serviced only by limited bus connections into Bendigo. No services extend into the BREP, and there is no nearby rail station. The nearest regional passenger service is Bendigo Railway Station, approximately 12 kilometres east. This means public transport currently offers little role in providing access to the precinct.

### Walking and Cycling

Active transport infrastructure is minimal. Aside from footpaths within Marong Township, no pedestrian or cycling links currently extend into the BREP. The surrounding rural road network lacks safe cycling conditions, further reinforcing reliance on private vehicle travel until new paths and networks are delivered.

## 4.10 Land Capability

There are a number of development constraints identified that have been considered through the planning framework:

- **Shallow groundwater:** Depth to the groundwater across the site may vary, however a review of available groundwater resource reports found groundwater at the site is expected to be generally shallow across the site (less than five metres below ground level). Further to above, the presence of complex alluvial deposits beneath the BREP contribute to potentially highly variable hydrogeological conditions. As such, the planning framework should ensure effective hydrogeological condition characterisation risk identification and mitigation
- **Sodic/Dispersive Soils:** Mapped data indicates the presence of Sodic soils. Further site-specific characterisation will be required to characterise sodic/dispersive soil and risk mitigation measures required through a requirement for an environmental management plan as part of a development plan.
- **Historical mining and current shafts:** Historical mining has been reported to be conducted across portions of the site and an old mining shaft was reported to be located at the southern portion of the site. Specialist input would be required in relation to decommissioning of the shaft opening and managing risk associated with underground voids. There is a requirement for an environmental management plan as part of a development plan to address this risk.
- **Adverse Amenity impact and applicable separation distances:** Two existing land uses requiring separation distances to be maintained from current activities on site to prevent adverse amenity impacts to future sensitive land uses where identified. These apply to the piggery operation and the WaterStore Poly Tanks premises.
- **Potential for contamination:** Five onsite and two offsite subzones or land uses with a high potential for contamination, two subzones identified for agriculture (infrastructure) activities comprising farmyards and buildings, farm waste storage areas, solid inert waste and soil stockpiles, and burn piles were identified. The Schedule to the DPO have identified properties within the subzones that require a Preliminary Site Investigation as a part of an application to use or subdivide land.

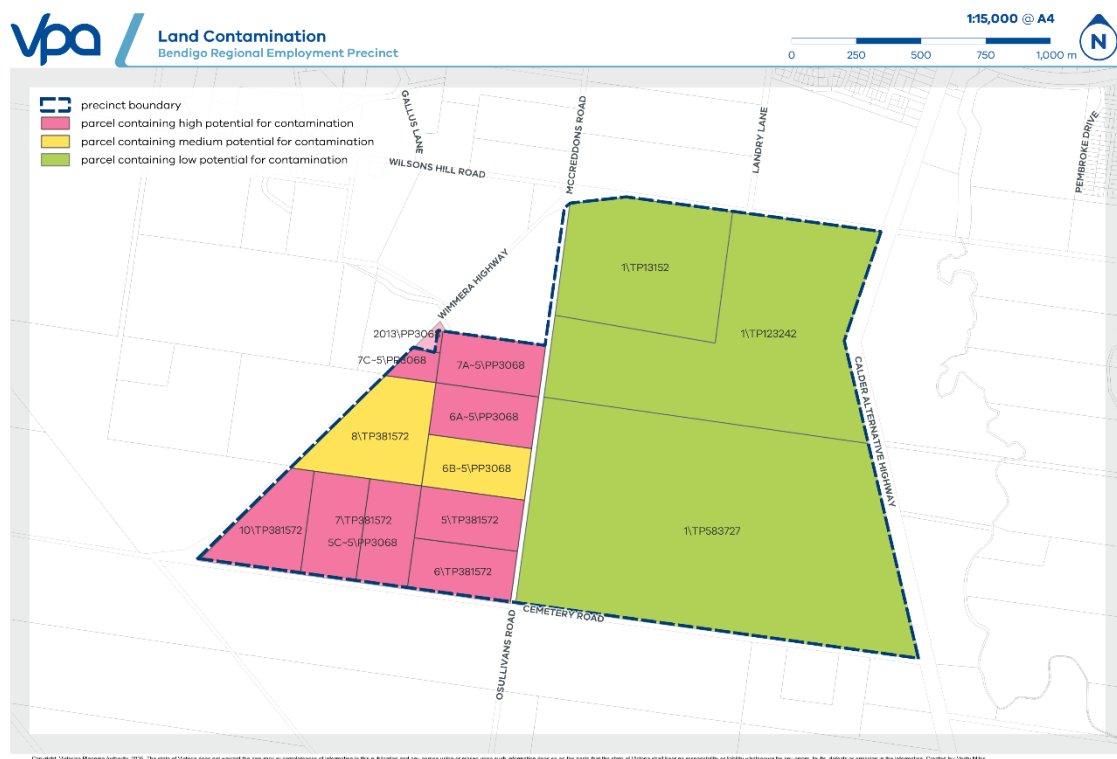


Figure 17 Potential Land Contamination within the BREP

<b>Risk Level</b>	<b>Applicable Land Uses at Site</b>	<b>Applicable Activities at Site</b>	<b>Subzones at the Site</b>	<b>Contamination Development Constraints</b>
<b>High Risk</b>	Commercial (contracting)	Sheds/infrastructure with the potential for storage and use of various contaminants.	Subzone A3	Potential point source contamination is likely to require further investigation to determine the suitability for land use.
	Extractive Areas (mining)	Historical use of cyanide and arsenic during extractive land uses	Subzone A4	Further environmental assessments e.g., site-specific preliminary site investigation (PSI) or detailed site investigation (DSI) required.
	Farming (piggery)	Sheds/infrastructure with the potential for storage and use of various contaminants. Potential livestock burial pits.	Subzone A5	
	Commercial (produce)	Sheds/infrastructure with the potential for	Subzone B3	Site remediation may also be required.

		storage and use of various contaminants.		
	Railway corridor	Historical soil importation during the construction of the railway. Spills, leaks or leaching of contaminants from historic and current use	Subzone B5	
	Extractive Areas (mining offsite)	Historical use of cyanide and arsenic during extractive land uses	Subzone O1	
	Cemetery (offsite)	Historical soil importation during the construction and site levelling. Burial pits, uncontrolled fill soils	Subzone O2	
<b>Medium Risk</b>	Agriculture (infrastructure)	Sheds/infrastructure with the potential for storage and use of various contaminants.	Subzone A2 Subzone B2	May include diffuse source contamination, but more localised impacts, unlikely to render the subzone unsuitable for a commercial / industrial use.
<b>Low Risk</b>	Agriculture (infrastructure)	Grazing of livestock within pastures. Possibly broad application of fertilisers/herbicides.	Subzone A1 Subzone B1	Responsible Authority to document consideration of potential contamination.
	Residential (dwellings)	Potential for septic systems and asbestos	Subzone A6 Subzone B4	



## 4.11 Bushfire Hazard

The BREP is located within a designated Bushfire Prone Area (BPA), which are areas subject to or likely to be subject to bushfire, as determined by the Minister for Planning.

A Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO) covers the Wilsons Hill and the northwest edge of the BREP.

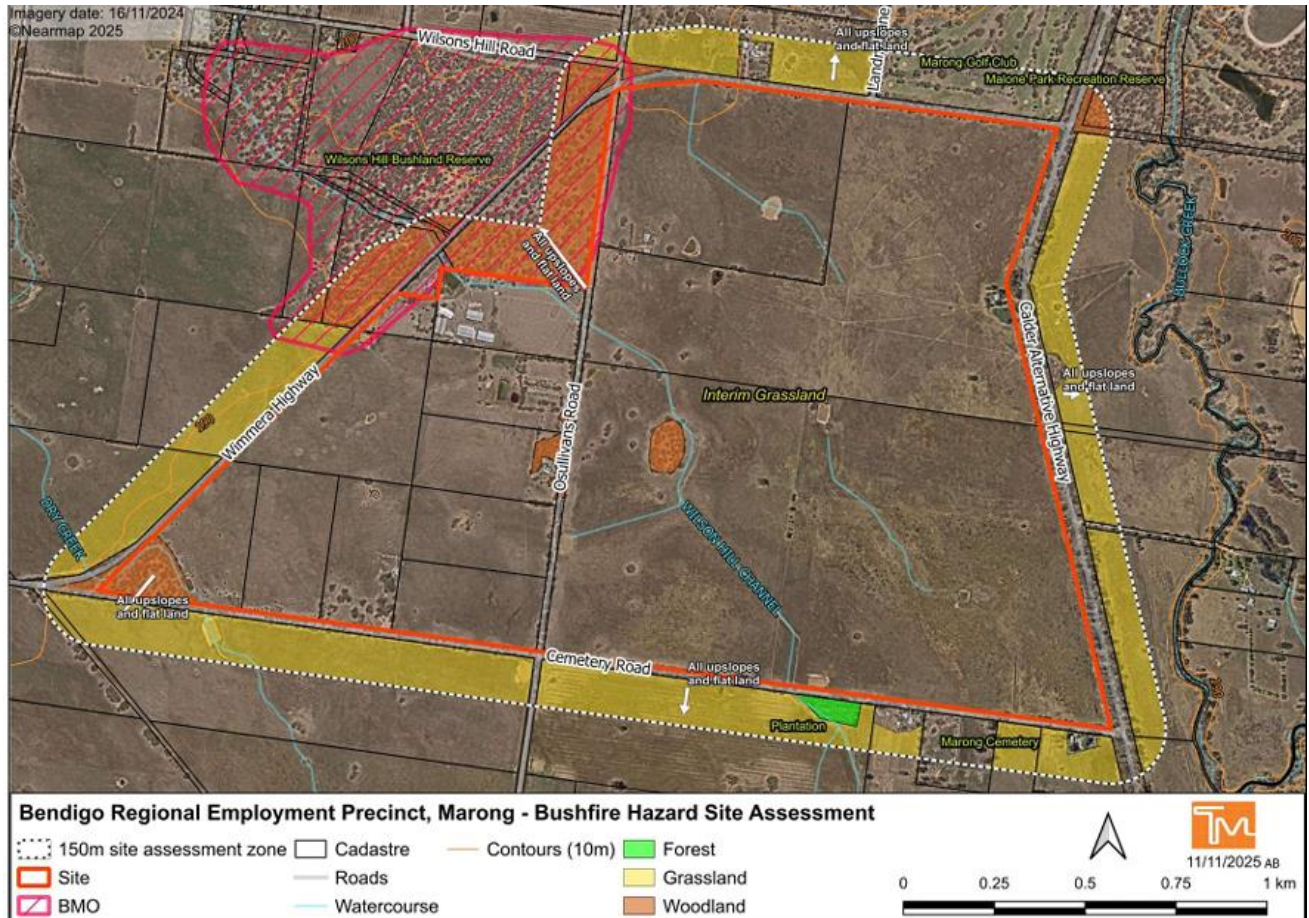


Figure 18 Bushfire hazard assessment

A landscape bushfire hazard site assessment identifies the overall bushfire risk as low to moderate. This conclusion is informed by several key factors:

- Topography: The BREP and its surrounds are generally flat, which reduces the likelihood of rapid bushfire spread.
- Vegetation hazard: The site is not dominated by high-hazard tree or shrub vegetation, with much of the land being cleared or comprising low-risk grassland.
- Access and refuge: The BREP benefits from the relative ease of access to surrounding road networks and proximity to the Marong Township, both of which provide opportunities for shelter and safe evacuation in the event of bushfire.
- Future development conditions: As development progresses within BREP, built form and infrastructure will further reduce exposure to bushfire hazards by creating defensible areas and increasing access to safe places.

The VPA has consulted with the CFA during the preparation of the DPO schedule to ensure bushfire considerations are incorporated into the planning framework.



## 5 Proposed Bendigo Regional Employment Precinct

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### 5.1 Project Vision and Purpose

The overarching Vision for the BREP is to establish a planning framework to deliver a regionally significant employment precinct that harnesses diverse and long-term employment opportunities with flow on benefits to the neighbouring Marong Township and broader Loddon-Mallee region.

The purpose of the planning scheme amendment is to provide a planning framework to deliver:

- A regionally significant employment precinct that will attract new and businesses to the region
- Ancillary uses to support the Marong Township
- A staged approach that aligns with land demand, infrastructure capacity and transition away from existing uses
- A flexible planning framework that allows for future land uses that align with the purpose of the schedule to the DPO
- New employment and investment opportunities that diversify business types and enterprises
- Objectives as set within the Dhelkunya Dja 'Dja Dja Wurrung Country Plan 2014-2034' to embed future enterprise opportunities for Dja Dja Wurrung as part of future development.

**vpa** / **Concept Plan**  
Bendigo Regional Employment Precinct

1:17,500 @ A4

0 250 500 750 1,000 m



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Figure 19 BREP Concept Plan

## 5.2 Key Planning Considerations

### 5.2.1 Rezoning Extent

The rezoning of the entire BREP is consistent with current state and regional planning policy. It gives statutory effect to the strategic intent expressed in Plan for Victoria (2025) and the Planning Policy Framework by ensuring the long-term availability of industrial land in a location with established freight access and servicing potential.

#### Alignment with Plan for Victoria

Plan for Victoria (2025) sets out the State's long-term land-use and infrastructure vision. Within this framework, Bendigo is identified as a key regional city supporting population and employment growth across central Victoria. The Bendigo in the Future map highlights the full extent of the BREP.

Plan for Victoria includes:

*Action 8 – Ensure new industrial and commercial land is ready for development:*

*Why this action is important*

*Ensuring land is available for industry and commerce is essential for increasing job opportunities where people live. Historically, Victoria has had a strong competitive advantage in the supply of well located, reasonably priced industrial land, but supply is dwindling, and prices are rising.*

These statements establish a clear expectation that planning authorities will make strategically located industrial land available and remove barriers to its use. Applying a single rezoning across the full BREP area directly implements Action 8 by creating an integrated supply of employment land that can be developed in stages in accordance with infrastructure capacity.

In contrast, partial rezoning would weaken the investment signal intended by Plan for Victoria, as it would create uncertainty and limit the ability to deliver a unified industrial precinct free from incompatible or competing land uses. The comprehensive rezoning approach therefore ensures consistency with the State's strategic direction to secure a long-term, unconstrained supply of industrial land to support regional economic growth.

#### Alignment with Planning Policy Framework

##### Clause 11.01-1L – Settlement - Marong

- Recognises Marong as a key growth location in Greater Bendigo.
- Supports employment-generating uses to the south of the township.
- Seeks to ensure industrial development occurs in planned and serviced locations that provide for long-term township growth and separation from sensitive uses.
- Promotes integration of land use and infrastructure to support the township's role in the region.

The BREP represents the strategic employment land identified under the Marong Framework Plan. The proposed extent of rezoning adjacent to the township appropriately responds to Clause 11.01-1L (Settlement – Marong) by locating future industrial uses within a planned, serviced and infrastructure-supported setting, separated from sensitive township areas by transport and drainage corridors.



The rezoning also provides certainty that sensitive interface issues will be addressed through the planning permit process under the IN1Z. In particular, high-impact industrial activities located near the Residential Zone or Rural Living Zone land of the township will be subject to assessment under Clause 53.10 (Uses with Adverse Amenity Potential), ensuring appropriate siting and design responses at the permit stage.

A full-precinct rezoning therefore implements the local settlement strategy by establishing a single, integrated employment area rather than isolated pockets of industrial land. It also enables whole-of-precinct infrastructure planning, including coordinated approaches to water, sewerage, drainage and freight networks, consistent with Clause 11.01-1L's emphasis on integrated and orderly growth.

**Clause 17.03-1S (Industrial land supply)** has the objective to ensure availability of land for industry with the strategies below:

- Provide an adequate supply of industrial land in appropriate locations including sufficient stocks of large sites for strategic investment.
- Identify land for industrial development in urban growth areas where good access for employees, freight and road transport is available.

The full-precinct rezoning gives effect to these directions by identifying and protecting a contiguous area of employment land with direct access to the State road network and the planned MWFC. Partial rezoning would result in disconnected pockets of industrial zoning, contrary to the policy. A partial rezoning would fragment this land base and reduce the capacity to accommodate large strategic users.

**Clause 18.02-5S (Freight)** provides the strategies below:

- Support the development of freight and logistics precincts in strategic locations within and adjacent to Principal Transport Gateways and along the Principal Freight Network.

The BREP's location on the Principal Freight Network satisfies this criterion. A single, coherent zoning framework ensures that the future freight and logistics role of the BREP can be realised in a coordinated way.

### **Integrated and Staged Delivery**

The application of the DPO schedule provides the statutory mechanism to stage development in line with infrastructure availability. This approach satisfies the intent of the Planning Policy Framework to plan for long-term industrial land supply while ensuring orderly, coordinated and infrastructure-led development.

Under this framework, full precinct rezoning establishes the strategic intent and land-use certainty required to support regional infrastructure planning and investment. The DPO then regulates when and how individual parcels can develop through the development plan approval process, which must demonstrate that adequate servicing, access, drainage and transport infrastructure are in place.

Maintaining unzoned lands within the BREP would create ambiguity for infrastructure agencies, who plan networks based on the ultimate extent of development. A limited rezoning would also prevent the delivery of precinct-wide and development-plan-specific shared infrastructure, increasing the risk of piecemeal or duplicated works.

Accordingly, the combination of full rezoning and the DPO replaces the need for a partial rezoning approach. Land identified for future stages remains zoned but cannot proceed to permit stage until the DPO requirements are satisfied. This allows the rezoned area to function as a land stock for future industrial demand, enabled progressively through the DPO approval process and consistent with infrastructure sequencing.

## Risks of Partial Rezoning Approach

A partial rezoning, limited only to Council-owned land, would undermine the coordinated and strategic approach required by the Planning Policy Framework and Plan for Victoria.

Deferring portions of the precinct for later rezoning would necessitate additional planning scheme amendments, duplicating the strategic assessment, referral and exhibition processes already undertaken for the current amendment.

Such an approach would impose unnecessary administrative and procedural barriers for both the planning authority and affected landowners, delaying investment and delivery of industrial land supply.

It would also duplicate the role of the DPO schedule, which already provides the mechanism for managing staging, infrastructure coordination and detailed design responses.

Retaining a single rezoning for the entire precinct supported by the DPO ensures that sequencing occurs through the development approval process rather than through repeated scheme amendments.

### 5.2.2 Aboriginal Cultural Significance

The planning framework for BREP integrates these cultural and heritage values through specific requirements in the DPO schedule. Development plans are encouraged to be prepared in a way that responds to Aboriginal cultural heritage and may vary from the concept plan where needed to protect or interpret such values.

Wilson's Hill Bushland Reserve and Dry Creek form part of this cultural setting, contributing both ecological and cultural value. The Reserve supports mature native vegetation and strategic sightlines that traditionally offered vantage and orientation across Country. These features are tied to the DJAARA principle of Caring for Country, and their preservation provides continuity with living traditions. The planning framework for BREP responds to this by requiring landscape buffers, ecological corridors, and sensitive treatment of view lines, ensuring that the prominence of the hill and its vegetation is respected.

The Marong-Bullock Creek Cemetery, established in 1861, is a place of shared significance for both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in the region. Records associated with the cemetery also reinforce the cemetery's importance in evidencing Dja Dja Wurrung presence in Marong during the colonial period. The DPO requires a minimum 50 metre setback and landscape protection to safeguard the cemetery's heritage values, while also recognising the historic travel route that once ran through the BREP from the Marong Hotel to the cemetery entrance.

Engagement with DJAARA, as the Registered Aboriginal Party, has confirmed the cultural significance of the BREP landscape and the need for development to be guided by existing and future cultural heritage management plans or cultural values assessments. The Statement of Significance provided by DJAARA, as part of the exhibition document, highlights the enduring connection of DJAARA members, particularly the Malcolm family, to this Country, and their recognition under the 2013 Recognition and Settlement Agreement strengthens the legal and cultural basis for embedding protections. Planning controls provide for the establishment of Aboriginal heritage reserves, interpretive elements and interface treatments to be prepared in consultation with DJAARA, while also allowing future development layout to respond to cultural significance.

Incorporating these requirements into the planning of BREP ensures that industrial development proceeds in a way that acknowledges and respects Country, safeguards tangible and intangible heritage, and provides opportunities for cultural interpretation. The protection of Wilson's Hill, the Marong Cemetery and related cultural landscapes reinforces that employment land delivery is compatible with respecting Aboriginal cultural values, while demonstrating a model of planning that balances economic and cultural priorities.

### 5.2.3 Economic Significance

Industrial land availability is a critical factor in shaping Greater Bendigo's long-term economic competitiveness. A series of independent studies, including the CoGB-commissioned Bendigo Industrial Land Review (REMPAN, 2019), the GBILDS, the CoGB-commissioned Review of Future Industrial Land Supply (SGS, 2023), and the VPA-commissioned Independent Development Assessment of BREP (Charter Keck Cramer, 2025), consistently highlight the shortage of suitably located and serviced industrial land across the municipality. These studies confirm that Bendigo risks losing investment to competing regional cities if new land is not brought forward in the short term.

#### Regional Land Supply Context

The CoGB needs to explore land to sustain medium to long term industrial expansion.

The Bendigo Industrial Land Review – Strategic Economic Inputs (REMPAN, 2019) identified the need for approximately 170 hectares of additional net developable industrial land to support projected growth to 2036, driven by an expected 3,300 additional jobs in industrial sectors

The Review of Future Industrial Land Supply (SGS, 2023) updated these findings and confirmed that Bendigo's industrial land crisis is intensifying. It found that 74% of available lots were less than 0.5 hectares, leaving few opportunities for larger-format users, and that annual take-up rates had accelerated to approximately 10 hectares per year. More than 70% of the remaining vacant supply is already subject to permits or development approvals, further limiting the pipeline.

The Independent Development Assessment indicates an effective supply of approximately 11 years of industrial land supply in the CoGB. Larger vacant industrial sites (1 hectare or more) become increasingly scarce, with only 19 large vacant industrial lots available in the CoGB in 2024 with a forecast to be exhausted before 2030, less than five years. Existing industrial lands (108 vacant lots) are often fragmented, poorly located or lacks proper infrastructure. Over 70% of these vacant industrial lots are smaller than 0.5 hectare, limiting their suitability for larger industrial users.

Comparable regional cities such as Ballarat and Geelong already benefit from the availability of serviced, large-format industrial precincts. These cities have demonstrated competitive advantage over Greater Bendigo with the delivery of large industrial precincts (owned in part by government) and long-term development perspective. As over two thirds of recent industrial land development derived from the development of larger (1 ha +) vacant industrial lots in CoGB, there is a risk that businesses will outgrow Greater Bendigo and relocate to other areas. Without new supply, Bendigo risks losing investment and job opportunities to these competitors, undermining its role as a key employment and logistics hub in central Victoria. The scale and availability of industrial land within the BREP are therefore central to addressing the region's long-term industrial land supply needs.

#### Industrial Demand Considerations

Industry is a major employer in Greater Bendigo. Employment relating to the CoGB's industrial areas and precincts is expected to provide for about 3000 new jobs by 2036. To meet industry needs particularly in larger lots, there is a need to plan for a pipeline of at least an additional 170-270 hectare of industrial land supply over the next 30 years based on conclusions of REMPLAN (2019). The average annual industrial land development since 2019 comprises 10.2 hectares per annum. A high proportion (73%) of CoGB's vacant industrial land is subject to pending or approved development permits dated in 2025. The value of annual industrial building approvals within CoGB has consistently grown since 2019 and was projected to spike in 2024/2025. This acknowledges the potential of the BREP to address the industrial land supply needs.

The demand-side pressures are reinforced by structural shifts in the industrial economy. REMPLAN (2019) forecasted that lot sizes between 1 to 5 hectares would be in the highest demand segment, and that shortages could materialise as early as 2024. The Industrial Land Site Assessment (ILSA) was prepared by REMPLAN in 2020 for the CoGB and quantified the economic payoff of addressing this gap, with the development of a new precinct projected to generate approximately \$2 billion in direct private investment and more than \$4 billion in regional economic output over a 30-year period once flow-on impacts are included.

Since 2020, industry drivers such as e-commerce logistics, advanced manufacturing, data centres, and trade supply have accelerated demand, a trend confirmed in the VPA-commissioned Independent Development Assessment (Charter Keck Cramer, 2025), which found that industrial development approvals have exceeded long-term averages, with land take-up averaging approximately 10.2 hectares per year and around 73% of the municipality's remaining vacant industrial land already committed through permits or development approvals.

The primary industrial growth sectors in the Bendigo region include agriculture and food processing, advanced manufacturing, engineering, mining support services, renewable energy, and transport and logistics. These sectors are consistently identified in the GBILDS, 2022 and reaffirmed in the Independent Development Assessment (Charter Keck Cramer, 2025) as the foundation of the region's industrial economy.

Emerging opportunities have also been highlighted in the Independent Development Assessment, particularly in mineral sands and rare earth processing, data centres, and defence manufacturing, reflecting shifts in global supply chains and Victoria's growing role in critical minerals and digital infrastructure. The CoGB's Economic Development Strategy (2019–2030) further emphasises the region's competitive advantages with a skilled and adaptable workforce, diverse industrial base, strategic location, and well-established supply chain networks.

These assessments indicate that the BREP will play a pivotal role as a regional hub capable of accommodating both established industries and emerging sectors, supporting innovation, investment, and long-term employment growth.

### **BREP's Strategic Positioning**

The CoGB enjoys favourable conditions conducive to successful continued industrial expansion, however its capacity to facilitate industrial growth is restricted by land availability. Without further land release, it is anticipated that the CoGB will achieve full industrial occupancy early in the next decade. This land supply constrains the CoGBs economic development by limiting enterprise growth and industry attraction.

There is limited availability of medium to large-scale industrial sites (1+ hectares). Existing industrial land is often fragmented, poorly located or lacks proper infrastructure. REMPLAN (2019) identifies between 680 and 1000 forgone jobs in the CoGB by 2036 without new industrial land. The BREP represents economic infrastructure and the optimal solution to a chronic land supply shortage.

There are several comparable greenfield industrial and commercial highway adjacent precincts in Victoria that continue to attract sustained investment.

The BREP site was identified based on several key strategic positions. The proposed rezoning extent of the BREP will provide approximately 206 hectares developable land. This aligns with the pipeline delivery of approximately 170 hectare of additional industrial land from REMPLAN (2019) to secure Bendigo's employment future. The BREP will also address the lot size pressure and risks for the larger parcels demand, with 1 to 5 hectare lots forecasts to be exhausted by 2027 and 0.5 to 1 hectare lots by 2029. The large lots enable circulation, storage and expansion.

The BREP site is also identified with access to the Principal Freight Network. The identified access points (see **Section 5.2.4**) provide an opportunity for integrated freight network for heavy vehicles. The BREP site is within

proximity to Marong Township, without directly abutting residential uses. The site did not require bushfire buffers and were not subject to environmental constraints. The strategic location and positioning of BREP provides industrial land use opportunities whilst separating from Bendigo's urban fabric.

Key supporting attributes enjoyed by BREP include:

- **Direct highway and freight access:** BREP is strategically located near and on the Calder and Calder Alternative Highways and aligned with the Marong–Epsom freight corridor identified in the Bendigo Freight Study (2017). Charter Keck Cramer (2025) highlighted that this access enables BREP to function as a regional-scale employment precinct, drawing demand in a manner comparable to the Geelong Ring Road Employment Precinct.
- **Regional price advantage:** BREP can provide competitive industrial land costs relative to Melbourne, offering a value proposition that attracts both state and national operators seeking affordable large format lots outside the metropolitan area.
- **Separation and buffers:** The precinct benefits from significant separation distances from incompatible land uses, reducing the risk of conflict with sensitive residential areas. Charter Keck Cramer (2025) emphasised that this buffer capacity positions BREP to accommodate higher impact uses while the planning framework will safeguard against encroachment.
- **Workforce access:** Located within a 30 kilometre catchment of Bendigo and nearby regional centres, BREP can draw on a large and diverse labour pool. Charter Keck Cramer (2025) noted that proximity to the growing Marong Township also supports a localised workforce supply for small-to-medium enterprises.
- **Manufacturing and logistics growth:** Charter Keck Cramer (2025) found that Bendigo's demand is increasingly shaped by e-commerce, logistics and advanced manufacturing, with annual consumption projected at approximately 6.5 hectares per year if BREP captures regional demand. This suggests that new facilities are likely to be attracted to BREP, provided sufficient enabling infrastructure is delivered early.

### Long-term strategic pipeline

With approximately 206 hectares developable land, BREP provides the scale and certainty needed to underpin Bendigo's industrial future, addressing the 170 to 270 hectares supply gap identified by GBILDS (2020) and SGS (2023). The BREP is strategically positioned to respond to the CoGB's land supply and demand challenges:

- **Quantum and pipeline:** With approximately 206 hectares developable land, BREP directly addresses the identified shortfall of 170 to 270 hectares required to maintain a 30-year supply.
- **Lot size diversity:** The BREP has the capacity to deliver a wide range of lot sizes, with a focus on one to five hectare parcels which are already nearing exhaustion.
- **Strategic access:** Its location aligns with the Marong to Epsom freight corridor and provides direct connections to the Calder and Calder Alternative Highways as well as the planned MWFC, minimising heavy vehicle intrusion into residential areas.
- **Land use buffers:** Spatial separation from Bendigo's urban fabric allows for a broader range of industrial and logistics activities while minimising amenity impacts.
- **Staging capacity:** The BREP can be delivered incrementally, with servicing and infrastructure investment sequenced to align with demonstrated market demand and long-term growth needs.

### Land Stock and Supply Management

While the overall scale of the BREP has prompted discussion about the balance of land supply and demand, this needs to be understood in the context of Charter Keck Cramer's analysis. Their assessment forecasts an



average annual consumption rate of around 6.5 hectares, based on the BREP drawing demand in a similar way to the Geelong Ring Road Employment Precinct. In other words, this level of uptake is contingent on the BREP being available to the market and positioned as a regional-scale employment precinct.

This reinforces that the extent of rezoning the BREP should not be seen as creating a risk of balancing supply with demand. This forecast aligns closely with the strategic task established in the GBILDS which identified the need for a minimum of 170 hectares of additional industrial land over the next 30 years above existing supply.

It also provides the critical mass, location advantages, and buffers needed to attract and sustain new investment. By planning the BREP with an infrastructure-led delivery model, land release can remain proportionate to actual demand while still providing the long-term certainty required to secure industrial projects that might otherwise be lost to competing regional centres.

At this consumption rate, the existing industrial land pipeline within Greater Bendigo would be exhausted within a decade, underscoring the need for a major new precinct. The balance between land supply and demand should ultimately remain market-driven, not constrained by rigid staging frameworks. By making the BREP service-ready and flexible, the market can determine the rate and scale of development, while infrastructure sequencing and ongoing monitoring guide its orderly rollout. In this way, the BREP functions as a strategic land stock, steadily accommodating Bendigo's growth while ensuring investment is retained locally.

The amendment seeks to facilitate the growth of the BREP by the following approach:

- Full-precinct rezoning under IN1Z: the amendment rezones the entire BREP to IN1Z to provide a unified and flexible planning framework, but land will not be released in one stage. Development will only occur once a development plan has been approved under the DPO schedule, ensuring that land stock and infrastructure provisions remain aligned. This approach allows the BREP to function as a strategic gateway making zoned land available to the market while still sequencing its development through the approval of development plans.
- Infrastructure led sequencing: Rather than staging land release, enabling works such as roads, drainage, and services should be sequenced to support gradual absorption of the BREP in line with market demand. This ensures development proceeds efficiently without creating stranded or prematurely serviced land.
- Market segmentation: The BREP is designed to attract large-format and strategic industrial users that existing estates cannot accommodate. This complements, rather than competes with, the role of established estates which continue to provide smaller lots for local service industries.
- Monitoring framework: Ongoing monitoring of land consumption, floorspace development, and industry mix via the development plan assessment process will allow the CoGB and the relevant authorities to calibrate future infrastructure investment and planning interventions, ensuring that supply remains responsive and proportionate over the long term.

In this way, BREP can provide a long-term strategic pipeline of industrial land without creating distortions in the local market. The scale of the BREP is not a liability but a strength, providing the certainty required for Bendigo to attract large-scale industrial investment while still allowing supply to be absorbed steadily at historic and forecast consumption rates.

The land supply justification of the BREP as a short to medium-term industrial precinct aligns with the GBILDS and Plan for Victoria (2025).

Planning for the BREP has also considered the existing Marong Business Park (MBP), which was rezoned to Comprehensive Development Zone (CDZ) in 2016 to accommodate employment and industrial uses. While originally intended to meet short- to medium-term demand, the GBILDS now identifies the MBP as a long-term industrial land supply area and a review area under Planning Scheme Amendment C282gben. Under this

context, the BREP strengthens and consolidates Bendigo's industrial land hierarchy. It will accommodate large-scale, state and national businesses seeking well-serviced lots in the one-to-five-hectare range and above, while existing industrial estates continue to cater to smaller, local operators. This complementary role ensures that industrial land across the municipality functions efficiently, with the BREP providing the strategic capacity and flexibility required to attract major investment.

As the MBP is identified for long-term strategic consideration, and given the landowner's preference to continue existing farming activities, it does not compete with the role or timing of the BREP. Instead, the MBP forms part of Bendigo's longer-term industrial land pipeline, while the BREP provides the immediate response to current and emerging industrial and logistics land demand.

### Workforce outcome and job number

The Independent Development Assessment (2024) provides an updated evidence base for projecting employment outcomes at full and staged build-out of the BREP. The assessment draws on regional and metropolitan comparators, applies those benchmarks to the BREP context, and identifies the likely employment capacity of the precinct.

Job density benchmarks adopted in the Independent Development Assessment include:

- Logic Wodonga: approximately 8.9 jobs/ha, reflecting large-format logistics and manufacturing.
- Geelong Ring Road Employment Precinct (GRREP): approximately 13.3 jobs/ha, reflecting a balance of heavy industry and mid-scale uses.
- East Bendigo Industrial Precinct: approximately 16.1 jobs/ha, demonstrating the density achievable in a mature regional market with smaller lots and a diverse mix of uses.
- Metropolitan benchmarks: Established business parks and mixed industrial precincts in Melbourne achieve 30 to 50 jobs/ha due to concentrations of service industry, office, and ancillary retail.

Projected employment outcomes for BREP:

- High-impact industry areas (75 ha outside the reverse adverse amenity buffer encroachment): 8.9 jobs/ha equivalent to 666 jobs.
- Other areas (131 ha): 16.1 jobs/ha equivalent to approximately 2,106 jobs.
- Total: approximately 2,772 direct jobs at full build-out (job density 12.7 jobs/ha).
- Long-term intensification: If job densities increase by 1% per annum over 30 years, the BREP could ultimately support approximately 3,700 jobs.

Strategic implications:

- Alignment with regional benchmarks: BREP's projected density of approximately 12.7 jobs/ha sits between Logic (8.9 jobs/ha) and GRREP (13.3 jobs/ha), demonstrating its capacity to accommodate both large-format industrial users and more intensive mixed industrial operations as the precinct evolves.
- Scope for higher density: The initial estimate reflects a conservative, early-stage mix of heavy industry and logistics uses. Over time, as the precinct matures and integrates business park, service industry and technology-based operations, job densities are expected to increase towards metropolitan industrial benchmarks (30–50 jobs/ha).

- **Regional contribution:** The BREP is expected to generate approximately 2,772 direct on-site jobs at full development, consistent with broader City of Greater Bendigo modelling that anticipates around 3,000 direct and 3,000 indirect jobs over a 30-year horizon. This confirms the BREP's strategic contribution to regional employment and economic diversification.
- **Economic resilience:** By unlocking approximately 206 hectares of contiguous industrial land, BREP addresses Bendigo's critical shortage and positions the region to capture growth in advanced manufacturing, logistics, renewable energy, data centres, and defence. This positions Greater Bendigo as a major employment and logistics hub for central Victoria.

## 5.2.4 Marong Transport Network

The VPA has consulted with the DPT - Transport Services on the precinct access points and the connectivity to the State freight network. The work recognises that the strategic success of the BREP relies on direct and efficient integration with the State freight network including the planned MWFC, while minimising the traffic impacts on the Marong Township road network.

### Precinct Access Points

The strategy focuses on delivering primary access to the BREP from Calder Alternative Highway and Wimmera Highway. These highways form part of Victoria's Principal Freight Network and provide the most appropriate interfaces for heavy vehicle and industrial traffic.

There are opportunities to provide access points to the BREP from:

- AP1 Connection into the Marong Western Freight Corridor roundabout at the Wimmera Highway / Wilsons Hill Road / McCreddons Road intersection.
- AP2 Left in access at Wimmera Highway and Landry Lane intersection.
- AP3 Left out access onto Calder Alternative Highway South of Wimmera Highway intersection.
- AP4 Left in and left out on Wimmera Highway with a right turn from Wimmera Highway, north of Cemetery Road into the Bendigo Regional Employment Precinct.
- AP5 Intersection with the Calder Alternative Highway.

Establishing multiple entry points will ensure the local road network internal to the BREP is well connected, distributes traffic demand, and integrates effectively with external freight routes.

### Equitable and Coordinated Access

The VPA has also considered how access is distributed across different landholdings, ensuring that all properties have equitable connection to the State freight network via direct access or future local road network through CoGB's development plan and that development occurs in an integrated precinct-wide manner in long term.

This coordinated approach underpins the ability of the BREP to deliver road upgrades in a staged and orderly manner, avoiding fragmented outcomes and ensuring that the costs and benefits of new access infrastructure are shared appropriately across the precinct.

Each development plan proponent will be required to prepare a Shared Infrastructure Plan (SIP) as part of their development plan approval process. The SIP must:

- Assess and document the demand, timing and triggers for each relevant access point;
- Identify the scope, delivery responsibility and funding arrangements for associated works; and

- Ensure that the delivery of access infrastructure is aligned with precinct staging and consistent with the BREP Guideline for Preparing Shared Infrastructure Plan for State Transport Infrastructure (VPA, 2025).

### State Transport Infrastructure Upgrades

In accordance with Clause 18.01 (Land use and Transport) of the Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme, planning for the BREP must:

- Protect existing transport infrastructure (Calder Highway, Calder Alternative Highway, Wimmera Highway) from encroachment or detriment that could impact their freight and commuter functions.
- Protect infrastructure in delivery, including planned upgrades to the Calder Alternative Highway/ Calder Highway intersection and new intersection works, by staging development in a way that does not interfere with construction or delivery.
- Protect planned infrastructure, notably the planned MWFC, by safeguarding its alignment through the DPO schedule and local policy to ensure the project can be delivered without land use conflict.
- Protect identified potential infrastructure, including future access points and internal road connections, so that staging flexibility is maintained and equitable access to the State freight network is available to all landholdings.

The VPA has commissioned the Marong Transport Network Assessment to confirm the State-managed transport infrastructure upgrades required to support rezoning of the BREP land, and to ensure the surrounding transport network can accommodate the combined growth of both the BREP and the Marong Township.

The assessment identifies a coordinated package of transport upgrades, including improvements to three key intersections i.e. IT2 (Calder Alternative Highway / Wimmera Highway / Salvarezza Road), IT3 (Calder Alternative Highway / Calder Highway), and IT5 (Calder Highway / Allies Road), as identified in the Marong Township Structure Plan 2024. These upgrades are critical to maintaining network performance and freight efficiency, supporting the delivery of the MWFC and enabling the BREP to perform its role as Bendigo's primary industrial and employment growth precinct.

The VPA has incorporated the recommendations of the assessment into the Bendigo Regional Employment Precinct Guideline for Preparing Shared Infrastructure Plan for State Transport Infrastructure as a background document of the planning scheme. This document identifies the shared infrastructure contributions framework for the three intersections and directly informs shared infrastructure plan(s) as part of future development plan approval, as required under the DPO schedule.

The BREP responds to the transport and land use integration objectives by embedding these requirements into the DPO schedule, applying local policy to safeguard the planned MWFC alignment, and mandating permit conditions and Section 173 Agreements to secure developer obligations. This coordinated approach ensures that the necessary State transport upgrades can be delivered in a timely and equitable manner, without compromising development outcomes, while also providing long-term certainty to industrial land investors that high-quality freight connectivity will be achieved.

Further details of the identified intersection upgrades and their justification are provided in the Guideline for Preparing Shared Infrastructure Plan for State Transport Infrastructure (VPA, 2025).

### Integration with Marong Western Freight Corridor

The planned MWFC is a critical State transport project that will underpin the long-term success of the BREP. Identified by DTP-Transport Services as the preferred freight route west of Bendigo, the corridor provides

spatial certainty to guide the planning and development of the precinct as a regionally significant industrial hub.

The planned MWFC will deliver substantial freight and safety benefits by improving connectivity and efficiency across Marong, while diverting heavy vehicles away from the Marong Township road network. This will reduce congestion, enhance safety, and improve amenity for local communities.

The preferred alignment of the planned MWFC traverses the northern edge of the BREP, along Wimmera Highway, ensuring direct integration between the precinct and Victoria's Principal Freight Network. This alignment positions the precinct to take full advantage of State-led investments and to support the long-term transition of freight traffic away from sensitive township areas.

The planned MWFC is a State-led infrastructure project and will not collect contributions from the BREP, as the existing road network with the identified intersection upgrades is sufficient to accommodate the BREP's traffic in the short to medium term.

DPT-Transport Services supports the provision of access points to Wimmera Highway and Calder Alternative Highway at different stages i.e. pre-MWFC and post-MWFC, as illustrated in the BREP Concept Plan (Figure 10). This ensures that access connections can be progressively delivered in step with precinct staging and the planned MWFC upgrades.

BREP developments will, however, be responsible for the cost and delivery of access points or through-traffic connections along Wimmera Highway and Calder Alternative Highway prior to the construction of the MWFC. These interim works will maintain safe and efficient access to the precinct until such time as the MWFC is delivered.

DTP-Transport Services will be responsible for the ultimate delivery of the MWFC, including the upgrade of the Wimmera Highway / Calder Alternative Highway intersection to a dual-lane roundabout configuration. This upgrade will occur either in conjunction with the MWFC construction or when traffic volumes trigger the need for the improvement.

A Public Acquisition Overlay (PAO) or land reservation will not be applied through this amendment. The State Government is expected to introduce a PAO via a separate planning process for the full MWFC route, thereby formally reserving the land for acquisition and delivery. The DPO schedule and local policy will safeguard the land required within BREP for the planned MWFC. This ensures that the corridor can be delivered in the future without compromising development outcomes, while also providing certainty for industrial land investors that long-term freight connectivity will be secured.

Although still subject to detailed design, approvals and funding, the planned MWFC remains central to the strategic positioning of BREP. By aligning the BREP with a dedicated freight corridor, the amendment strengthens Bendigo's role as a major regional city and ensures the BREP can attract and retain investment in freight, logistics and advanced manufacturing industries.





Figure 20 Preferred MWFC Alignment

### Long-term Traffic Outcomes and Development Plan Obligations

While the BREP has a development horizon extending beyond 30 years, it is not possible to predict all future traffic outcomes at this stage. Accordingly, the Transport Impact Statement and Shared Infrastructure Plan required under the DPO schedule will play a critical role in identifying any additional transport upgrades necessary to service individual development plans. These upgrades will be over and above the contribution obligations identified by the BREP Guideline for Preparing Shared Infrastructure Plan for State Transport Infrastructure, ensuring that site-specific transport demands are appropriately addressed at the time of development.

#### 5.2.5 Utilities and Servicing

Existing services are predominantly located in Marong Township, with limited spare capacity across all utility networks to service the BREP. To address this, the VPA engaged Aurecon to assess servicing constraints and staging requirements. The VPA has also reviewed the Integrated Water Management Strategy (Engeny, 2022)

commissioned by Coliban Water and the CoGB and DV's Infrastructure Strategy. These studies provide a coordinated framework for infrastructure delivery.

Service	Existing Capacity / Constraint	Required Upgrades / Solutions	Strategic Initiatives
<b>Potable Water</b>	Limited spare capacity; main currently under duplication from Bendigo to Marong.	New storage tank and trunk main extension to BREP required for ultimate development.	Recycled water substitution and rainwater tanks to reduce potable demand.
<b>Sewer / Recycled Water</b>	Very limited capacity in existing system equivalent to 7 ha developable land.	2.5 km outfall east of Marong for initial connection; ultimate outfall to Epsom WRP + major upgrades (approximately \$25m).	Potential local WRP to service BREP, Marong, Maiden Gully. Class C recycled water by 2030; Class A by 2046.
<b>Power</b>	Existing 22kV network insufficient; initial 28 ha enabled only with upgrade.	Upgrade 22kV feeder (5MW) for initial stages; 66kV extension + new zone substation required for ultimate development.	Private network and on-site renewables (BREP ESD Strategy) to reduce reliance on grid.
<b>Telecoms</b>	No direct fibre; nearest access point 2.1 km from site.	Minor backhaul works to connect; 5G tower option.	Align with smart precinct design and digital infrastructure strategy.
<b>Gas</b>	Gas supply over 7 km away; conflicts with State sustainability objectives. Solstice Energy phasing out its compressed natural gas (CNG) network in Marong at the end of 2026.	Should the CNG network be closed down, alternative energy sources such as renewables will need to be considered.	Transition industries to biogas or hydrogen consistent with State energy policy.
<b>Stormwater</b>	Existing watercourses provide drainage; shallow outlets require filling.	Detention and water quality treatment facilities; outfall pipes to Bullock Creek for east catchment.	Lot/street scale interventions: rainwater tanks, bioretention, passively irrigated tree pits.

The BREP can be supported by existing utility networks only to a very limited extent. Capacity to enable development is contingent on progressive infrastructure upgrades, including major sewer outfalls, augmentation of the power network, and new potable water mains. These upgrades are essential to the long-term function of the precinct and will underpin the orderly staging of development.

At present, however, there is no funding commitment for these works. Responsibility for the delivery of major servicing upgrades rests with the relevant servicing authorities in partnership with developers and is outside the scope of this planning scheme amendment.

There is no requirement for this Planning Scheme Amendment to secure infrastructure funding prior to rezoning. Instead, consistent with Clause 19.03 (Infrastructure Provision), the planning framework establishes a clear and coordinated pathway for development to proceed in tandem with servicing capacity, through agreements with the relevant authorities and progressive delivery of infrastructure as demand arises.

It will be the role of future developers to liaise directly with the relevant servicing authorities (Powercor, telecommunications providers, etc.) to negotiate connection requirements, timing, and contributions. This ensures that infrastructure delivery remains demand-driven and responsive to the needs of specific users within the BREP.

For drainage infrastructure, the DPO schedule allows each development plan to provide its own drainage strategy. This allows for site-specific design solutions, consistent with broader integrated water management principles, while avoiding reliance on a single shared drainage scheme.

## CoGB-Coliban Water IWM Strategy

The Coliban Water Integrated Water Management Strategy provides the overarching framework for sustainable water, sewerage and recycled water services across the broader Marong region, including the BREP. The strategy recognises the need to balance water security, environmental protection and industrial growth by integrating potable water supply, recycled water use, stormwater management and wastewater treatment within a single, adaptive planning framework.

The BREP will generate substantial and variable water and sewerage demands depending on the nature of individual industrial uses. While the development plan and subdivision stages establishes the trunk infrastructure alignments and servicing corridors, the actual servicing demand can only be determined at the time of an application for a specific use and development. Each use may have distinct water, sewerage and trade waste requirements, necessitating detailed assessment by Coliban Water.

To manage this, the DPO schedule requires that an integrated water management assessment be prepared in collaboration with Coliban Water as part of any development plan. This assessment must demonstrate how the proposed land use and development can be feasibly serviced, identify the required upgrades to the water and sewer networks, and address opportunities for recycled water use and on-site stormwater retention. At the permit stage, Coliban Water as a determining referral authority will assess and ensure that detailed design and capacity assessments are undertaken before any industrial use or works are approved.

This approach ensures that development within the BREP proceeds in a staged and coordinated manner, aligned with Coliban Water's network capacity and long-term servicing strategy. It also supports the implementation of IWM principles by promoting water efficiency, recycled water reuse and integrated stormwater management, thereby reducing pressure on existing infrastructure while enabling sustainable industrial growth across the precinct.

## Indicative Infrastructure Stage Triggers

The DV commissioned Infrastructure Strategy identifies service capacity thresholds that act as triggers for major infrastructure upgrades. These triggers provide clarity on how much development can be supported by existing networks and when new investment is required to unlock additional capacity.

- **Sewer:** Existing system capacity across Marong is extremely limited, allowing for only around 7 hectares of development before constraint is reached. Beyond this, a new outfall sewer will be required to connect to the Bendigo system or, alternatively, a local water reclamation plant consistent with the Integrated Water Management Strategy.
- **Power:** Initial development across the precinct can be supported by upgrading the 22kV feeder network, providing around 5MW of capacity. This is estimated to enable approximately 28 hectares of development in total. Once this threshold is reached, a 66kV extension and a new on-site zone substation will be required to support further growth.
- **Potable Water:** Duplication of the trunk main from Bendigo to the Marong storage tank (currently under construction) will provide sufficient supply for early stages. Additional storage and new mains into the BREP are required for full development.

These stage triggers are important because they:

- Provide certainty about the amount of development possible before major upgrades are required.

Ensure that infrastructure delivery can be sequenced and coordinated across the precinct in response to actual demand.

- Avoid overcommitting to infrastructure investment ahead of need, consistent with Clause 19.03 (Infrastructure Provision).

The servicing triggers apply to the precinct as a whole, not to any specific landholding. Development in any part of the BREP will only be supported where it can be demonstrated that servicing capacity exists, or where developers have entered into agreements with the relevant servicing authorities to deliver the necessary upgrades. This approach ensures a coordinated and equitable staging framework, where all landowners are treated consistently and no individual landholding is given an advantage over others.

It is also important to note that the triggers are indicative and subject to refinement. The actual thresholds will depend on the nature of development proposals, the mix of industries attracted to the BREP, and the servicing demand generated by those users. The DV Infrastructure Strategy, as a reference document, represents only one set of planning assumptions which will be detailed tested through the development plan process, in consultation with servicing authorities, and ultimately confirm the capacity available and the upgrades required to service each stage.

### 5.2.6 Shared Infrastructure Delivery and Funding Mechanism

While Development Contributions Plans (DCPs) are the most recognised mechanism for funding precinct-wide shared infrastructure, a tailored approach has been adopted for the BREP. The precinct's delivery model relies primarily on direct provision of infrastructure through development plans and utility servicing authorities, supported by Section 173 Agreements and commercial agreements, rather than a formal DCP.

Key features of this model include:

- Access and local roads: Access points and local roads will be identified through individual development plans and delivered and funded directly at the subdivision stage via permit conditions.
- Local drainage and stormwater: Shared drainage schemes are not mandated. The DPO schedule enables each landholding to prepare its own or shared drainage strategy to support independent development plans across the long development horizon (30+ years).
- Utilities (water, sewer, power): A DCP cannot fund utility services, which remain the responsibility of servicing authorities or are delivered directly by developers.
- Broader road network upgrades: External intersections and state-managed transport network works are addressed through a DP-specific Shared Infrastructure Plan and permit-stage Section 173 Agreements, ensuring upgrades are coordinated at the precinct scale and avoiding duplication of contribution mechanisms across adjoining growth areas.

### Justification for a Non-DCP Approach

An industrial precinct by nature requires greater flexibility to respond to the operational and infrastructure needs of diverse industrial users. Unlike residential precincts, where infrastructure demands are relatively uniform and predictable and can therefore be efficiently captured within a DCP framework, industrial developments vary significantly in their water, sewerage, traffic generation and access requirements. This variability necessitates a more adaptable and site-specific approach to infrastructure planning and cost apportionment, which can be more effectively managed through tailored mechanisms.

As such, rather than adopting a DCP, Section 173 Agreements and development plan-specific Shared infrastructure plans (SIFPs) prepared under the DPO schedule are adopted for the BREP's infrastructure contribution framework. This approach ensures that infrastructure obligations remain transparent and responsive to the scale, timing and servicing needs of individual developments.

In addition, the VPA's Regional DCP Toolkit specifically identifies circumstances where Section 173 Agreements are more suitable than a DCP. The BREP meets these criteria, as it:

- Involves a small number of landowners i.e. five key landholdings of comparable sizes.
- Is expected to develop in an ad hoc or staged manner over a long timeframe (30+ years).
- Does not demonstrate sufficient justification or need for a full DCP.
- Requires detailed, site-specific obligations to address traffic impact, servicing and staging.

The majority of infrastructure required to enable development sits outside the scope of a DCP and is instead sited, designed and delivered directly through development plans and in collaboration with servicing authorities. Only minimal shared state-managed transport infrastructure, identified through the Marong Township Structure Plan 2024, requires a collective funding approach. Establishing a full DCP in this context would be disproportionate and impractical.

With relatively few landowners in the precinct, the equity and transparency benefits of a DCP are outweighed by its administrative burden, cost, and the financial risks it would impose on the road authority. A further limitation is that a DCP cannot resolve the external apportionment of State transport infrastructure upgrades. Without firm funding commitments for the external share, there is a risk that upgrades could be delayed, creating uncertainty and additional cost exposure for developers.

Instead, contributions for BREP are managed through the Marong Township SIFP and Section 173 Agreements tied to DPO permit conditions. This approach aligns with the City of Greater Bendigo's Development Contributions Governance Framework (2024) and the Victorian Planning Authority's Regional DCP Toolkit (2020), which both recognise Section 173 Agreements and SIFPs as proportionate mechanisms where a formal DCP is not justified.

The BREP's infrastructure contribution framework continues to satisfy the principles of need, nexus, equity, transparency, and accountability by:

- Establishing shared infrastructure needs in the DPO schedule via Transport Impact Assessment and Infrastructure Plan.
- Demonstrating a clear nexus between new development and required infrastructure.
- Apportioning costs equitably through a DP-specific SIFP.
- Providing transparency through a consistent framework with detailed obligations in individual agreements.
- Ensuring accountability via registered Section 173 Agreements on title.

Accordingly, the use of a DPO schedule, combined with Section 173 Agreements secured via planning permit conditions, represents a proportionate, transparent, and effective mechanism to facilitate contributions towards the identified State transport infrastructure within the BREP.

### **Operation of Shared Infrastructure Delivery and Funding under DPO Framework**

The operation of the Shared Infrastructure Plan (SIP) and associated Section 173 Agreements under the DPO schedule provides the statutory mechanism for securing infrastructure contributions and coordinating delivery across the BREP.DP-specific Shared infrastructure plan

A SIP is the principal instrument for identifying, costing and apportioning shared infrastructure under the DPO schedule. The SIP must form part of, or be endorsed alongside, an approved development plan. Its primary functions are to:



- define the infrastructure projects and their scope;
- determine the apportionment of costs between benefiting landholdings;
- identify which landowners will deliver works and which will make monetary contributions; and
- set out timing, staging and administrative arrangements consistent with the Greater Bendigo Development Contributions Governance Framework.

Once endorsed, the SIP provides the agreed basis for calculating individual landowner liabilities.

### **Role of Section 173 Agreements**

Under Clause 3.0 of Schedule 34 to the Development Plan Overlay, entering into Section 173 Agreements is a permit condition before the commencement of buildings and works, subdivision or use.

These agreements give legal effect to the SIP by translating its apportionment, payment timing and delivery obligations into binding commitments on each title.

There are three related forms of Section 173 Agreement under Schedule 34 to the Development Plan Overlay:

- Local shared infrastructure agreement – between the landowner and the CoGB, securing infrastructure and contributions identified in the SIP for local and DP-level items.
- Access point agreement – between the landowner, CoGB and the Head, Transport for Victoria, securing the delivery of BREP access intersections connecting to the arterial network.
- State transport infrastructure agreement – between the landowner, CoGB and the Head, Transport for Victoria, securing monetary or works-in-kind contributions towards the State-managed intersections (including IT2, IT3 and IT5).

Each agreement must:

- reference the approved SIP associated with the approved development plan;
- specify contribution rates or works obligations, timing, indexation, credits and reimbursement provisions; and
- be registered on title prior to subdivision certification or development commencement.

The requirement to enter the agreements is mandatory planning permit conditions.

### **Relationship between SIP and Section 173 Agreements**

The SIP and Section 173 Agreements operate sequentially and interdependently:

- The SIP establishes what infrastructure is required and how costs are shared.
- The Section 173 Agreements implement those obligations by setting out who pays or delivers what, when and how.

This ensures that:

- infrastructure obligations are known and agreed prior to permit issue;
- consistent contribution principles apply across all landholdings;
- contributions can be collected or works delivered progressively in line with development staging; and
- financial and delivery risks are appropriately shared between landowners, CoGB and DTP-Transport Services.

The *Planning and Environment Act 1987* (s62(1)(a)) requires a planning permit to include any condition that the planning scheme specifies. By embedding the requirement for Section 173 Agreements in the DPO schedule, both the responsible authority and the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal are obliged to apply the condition on all relevant permits. This provides statutory certainty that contributions will be consistently secured across the precinct.

The DPO schedule can therefore operate as a lawful and certain basis for requiring contributions where the scope of infrastructure is limited and clearly identified. Provided the drafting is precise in identifying the project(s) to which contributions apply, the DPO schedule ensures early certainty for the relevant authorities.

### **Adjustment and Determination of Contribution Charge at Permit Stage**

The standard contribution rates or obligations established under an approved SIP will generally be recorded in the corresponding Section 173 Agreement required under the DPO schedule and indexed annually.

However, if the development intensity or demand characteristics proposed in a planning permit application differ from the underlying assumptions of the approved SIP — for example, changes in traffic generation, gross floor area, site coverage, employment density, or utility demand — the responsible authority may, at its discretion, adjust the contribution rate upwards or downwards to reflect the verified usage.

Any adjustment must be supported by suitable technical evidence (e.g. traffic, drainage, utility or service demand assessment) and agreed to by the CoGB and the relevant servicing or road authority.

This approach links contribution liability directly to the cumulative development intensity and verified service impact of the proposal, ensuring transparency and equity in the funding and delivery of all shared infrastructure. It also provides flexibility to accommodate a long development horizon, where emerging technologies, market conditions or land use patterns may evolve significantly from the original assumptions of the approved development plan.



Figure 21 BREP's shared infrastructure delivery and funding mechanism

## 5.2.7 Environment and Waterway

The BREP is guided by a comprehensive evidence base of environmental, biodiversity, landscape and heritage assessments. These studies have directly informed the design principles and are embedded within the DPO schedule and concept plan to ensure binding implementation.

### Biodiversity and Vegetation

The Biodiversity Assessment and Targeted Flora and Fauna Surveys (Ecology and Heritage Partners, October 2023) established the design principles that underpin the DPO schedule. These principles include:

- Protection and enhancement of waterways and drainage lines as multifunctional spines.
- Retention of remnant vegetation and critical habitat trees.
- Integration of water-sensitive urban design (WSUD) measures to improve stormwater quality, manage runoff and provide habitat.
- Creation of ecological corridors linking habitat patches across the BREP.

In consultation with DEECA, these principles are directly reflected in the DPO schedule which requires development plans to demonstrate biodiversity protection, identify habitat conservation areas.

### Landscape Protection

The Landscape and Visual Assessment (Spiire, 2023) recommended controls to mitigate the highly exposed and open landscape character of the BREP. The DPO schedule translates these into binding requirements, including:

- Important sightlines identified in the concept plan that must be protected.
- Landscape buffers and setbacks from the Marong Cemetery, Wilsons Hill Bushland Reserve, Dry Creek, and highways.
- Tree retention along O'Sullivan's Road and high-value roadside vegetation patches to create ecological and visual corridors.

### Tree Retention

The Arboriculture Assessment (ENSPEC, 2023) identified high-value mature trees, particularly along O'Sullivan's Road and in vegetation patches in the western portion of BREP. The concept plan and DPO schedule map these trees, requiring their retention and protection through subdivision and construction, supported by tree protection strategies and fauna habitat measures.

### Waterways and Drainage

The BREP contains a mix of natural waterways and managed water infrastructure which together shape the environmental and development framework of the site. These include Dry Creek, an unnamed natural waterway, and the Wilsons Hill Channel.

Dry Creek intersects the south-west corner of the BREP, forming part of a broader regional drainage corridor.

A smaller unnamed natural drainage line traverses the BREP, providing localised flood conveyance and ecological value. This waterway is recognised in the DPO schedule and concept plan as requiring:

- Protection through setbacks and drainage reserve designation.
- Integration into the open space network as a biodiversity corridor.
- Sensitive subdivision design to avoid fragmentation of its hydrological and ecological role.

In consultation with the NCCMA, the DPO schedule require a development plan that:

- A Flood Risk and Waterway Management Report map the 1 per AEP flood extent and climate change allowances affecting this corner of the site.
- A minimum 30 metre setback from the top of bank be applied, preserving riparian function and minimising flood risk.

### **Wilsons Hill Channel**

The Wilsons Hill Channel, an operational rural supply channel managed by Coliban Water, runs across the site. Development adjacent to the channel should:

- Respect Coliban Water setback and access requirements for maintenance and water quality.
- Retain buffers to mitigate interface impacts from adjoining industrial development.
- Where relocation, piping or decommissioning is proposed, secure Coliban Water approval and address compensation/alternate supply for affected rural water users.

### **Integrated Outcomes**

The concept plan and DPO schedule embed these waterways into the design of the BREP, ensuring:

- Flood risk management and drainage protection at both the local and regional scale.
- Biodiversity enhancement through continuous ecological corridors.
- Landscape buffers that soften built form and maintain key sightlines.
- Sustainable water management through water sensitive urban design (WSUD) and integrated water management assessment.

### **Sustainable Development**

The Sustainable Development Opportunities Report (HIP V. HYPE, 2024) have been translated into requirements for an ESD Assessment and integrated water management provisions in the DPO schedule. These ensure stormwater harvesting, recycled water, and WSUD are embedded into development planning and subdivision design.

#### **5.2.8 Bushfire planning**

The VPA has consulted with the CFA at the early stage of drafting the DPO schedule and engaged Terramatrix to prepare a Bushfire Development Report to ensure that bushfire considerations are comprehensively incorporated into the DPO schedule and broader planning framework for the BREP.

Under the DPO schedule, a development plan must:

- Include a Bushfire Management Plan.
- Provide a masterplan that identifies bushfire hazards within and adjacent to the development plan site; and
- Incorporate landscape protection measures, including the provision of bushfire buffers where appropriate.

To support ongoing risk mitigation throughout the development lifecycle, the DPO schedule also requires:

- Provision of perimeter roads along interfaces with areas of enduring bushfire hazard.
- Maintenance of non-urban or private vegetation in a low-threat condition.



- A Bushfire Management Plan that identifies and confirms:
  - the subdivision layout, lot design and access arrangements (vehicular and pedestrian),
  - staging of development,
  - interim hazards that may arise between completed stages and undeveloped land,
  - areas required to form setbacks between bushfire hazards and built form,
  - responsibilities for managing vegetation within open space and public realm,
  - bushfire protection measures required for individual lots, and
  - provision of multiple points of access and egress during all construction and post-development phases.

In addition to the DPO provisions, broader statutory controls ensure a comprehensive and consistent approach to bushfire risk mitigation:

- Clause 13.02 (Bushfire Planning) of the Planning Policy Framework establishes the overarching policy requirement to prioritise the protection of human life and apply bushfire risk reduction measures in all planning decisions within the BPA.
- The National Construction Code (NCC) applies mandatory bushfire protection measures for all building approvals within the BPA.
- The NCC references AS 3959:2018 (Construction of Buildings in Bushfire-Prone Areas), which prescribes construction standards based on Bushfire Attack Levels (BAL) to ensure that new buildings incorporate appropriate materials, siting, and design features to mitigate bushfire risk.

The DPO schedule, Clause 13.02 and NCC collectively establish a layered and integrated bushfire planning framework. This ensures that bushfire risks are identified and managed consistently across the key statutory stages of the development process, namely:

- development plan stage, through the preparation of a Bushfire Management Plan and requiring bushfire buffers.
- Planning permit stage, where Clause 13.02 ensures that planning decisions prioritise the protection of human life and apply appropriate risk reduction measures; and
- Building permit stage, where the NCC mandates compliance with AS 3959:2018.

### 5.2.9 Contamination and Adverse Amenity Impacts

The Land Capability Assessment (WSP, 2024) identifies several environmental and amenity constraints relevant to future development of the BREP. These constraints primarily relate to potentially contaminated land and adverse amenity considerations, both within the precinct and at its interface with Marong Township.

#### Potentially Contaminated Land

- The risk of contamination varies across the precinct due to past agricultural, extractive, and contracting activities.
- Low-risk areas include grazing lands, while medium to high-risk areas are associated with farmyards, former contracting yards with chemical and fuel storage, and extractive pits.
- Potential contaminants include hydrocarbons, asbestos, heavy metals, arsenic and cyanide residues, and filled soils.
- The LCA recommends preliminary site investigations (PSI) at the development plan stage, with environmental audits or management strategies where contamination is confirmed.

- EPA obligations under the Environment Protection Act 2017, including the duty to notify and duty to manage, apply where contamination is present.

The DPO schedule requires development plans to demonstrate that land is suitable for its intended industrial or commercial use. This ensures contamination risks are identified and managed up-front, embedding requirements for PSI, environmental audits where necessary, and construction-phase management (e.g. unexpected finds protocols, Construction Environmental Management Plans).

### **Adverse Amenity Sources (On-Site)**

- The LCA identifies existing land uses within the precinct that generate residual emissions, notably:
  - A piggery operation, requiring buffers of 500–1,000 metres depending on scale (EPA *Publication 1518 "Recommended Separation Distances for Industrial Residual Air Emissions"*, 2013; updated in *Publication 1940*, 2021).
  - WaterStore Poly Tanks (plastic fabrication), with odour and volatile emissions requiring a separation of around 150–200 metres.
  - Poultry and viticulture activities, carrying odour and spray drift risks (EPA recommends 300 metres).
  - Rural contracting/storage yards, associated with dust and noise impacts.
- Under EPA guidelines, separation distances apply to protect sensitive land uses, permissible under IN1Z such as education centre, place of assembly, childcare, aged care, hospitals, and open space.
- These sources may therefore constrain staging and land allocation within parts of the BREP until they are decommissioned, relocated, or shown to comply with reduced off-site impacts.

The DPO schedule requires development plans to allocate land uses to respect buffer areas (e.g. placing warehousing/logistics within constrained areas and locating lower-impact uses outside identified buffers), or provide technical assessments to justify any reduced buffer distances. This ensures on-site amenity sources are managed transparently and that development proceeds in a way that avoids conflict with EPA standards.

### **Adverse Amenity Impacts on Marong Township**

- The BREP is located approximately 800 metres from Marong Township. Future industrial activities could generate off-site impacts such as noise, odour, dust, light spill, and traffic.
- The LCA recommends landscape buffers, setbacks, and land use transition to reduce these impacts and to safeguard the township's liveability.
- EPA separation distance guidance (Publications 1518 and 1940) provides a key benchmark to ensure township residents are not exposed to residual emissions from new industrial uses

The DPO schedule has the objective of identifying sensitive interfaces and encouraging compatible land uses and development that enhance the built form for an employment precinct. Development plans to incorporate interface management measures consistent with *Greater Bendigo Industrial Development Guidelines 2024* and in accordance with EPA separation distance guidance.

In addition, planning for industrial uses should also consider the following:

- Agent of Change principle – new industrial uses are responsible for managing and mitigating potential amenity impacts on existing sensitive uses (including residential-zoned lands) in Marong Township and surrounding rural living zoned areas, ensuring that existing communities are not burdened by new industrial operations.

- General Environmental Duty (GED) – all future development and industrial operations must comply with the duties under the environment protection legislation framework at that time, requiring operators to proactively identify, eliminate, or minimise risks of harm to human health and the environment from pollution and waste.

## 6 PLANNING SCHEME AMENDMENT C269GBEN

Amendment C296gben makes targeted changes to the Municipal Planning Strategy, Planning Policy Framework and local provisions of the Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme to embed the BREP within Council's long-term vision for Marong. Specifically, the amendment:

- Amend Clause 02.03 (Municipal Planning Strategy – Strategic Directions) to identify the Bendigo Regional Employment Precinct as the municipality's key industrial and employment area.
- Amend Clause 11.01-1L (Settlement – Marong) to recognise the BREP within the Marong Framework Plan, linking its growth with the Marong Township and future infrastructure planning.
- Insert new Clause 11.03-6L-04 (Bendigo Regional Employment Precinct) to guide the coordinated development, sequencing, and infrastructure delivery of the precinct.
- Rezone all land in the precinct from Farming Zone (FZ) to Industrial 1 Zone (IN1Z) to facilitate industrial use and development.
- Apply Schedule 34 to Development Plan Overlay (DPO34) to ensure integrated planning, staging, and delivery of shared and state infrastructure through Section 173 Agreements.
- Update operational provisions, including Clauses 66.04, 72.03, 72.08 and 74.01, to reflect new referral authorities, maps, background documents, and the application of zones and overlays.

These changes formally embed BREP into the Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme as a long-term employment precinct and ensure that its delivery is guided by both state and local policy objectives.

### 6.1 New BREP Strategic Framework

The amendment establishes a new strategic framework for the BREP through targeted changes to the Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme. These changes elevate BREP as the municipality's primary focus for future industrial and employment growth, supported by a dedicated local policy framework and integration into the city's overarching strategic directions.

#### **Clause 02.03 – Strategic Directions**

The municipality's strategic directions are updated to align with the new BREP framework. The revised clause:

- Identifies BREP as a priority regional employment area that will underpin Bendigo's long-term economic growth and industrial land supply.
- Recognises the precinct's strategic location adjoining the Calder Highway and its ability to support freight, logistics and regional supply-chain industries.
- Highlights BREP's role in providing serviced, zoned and infrastructure-ready industrial land, complementing Bendigo's existing urban employment areas and supporting regional job creation.
- Reinforces consistency with the GBILDS and the BREP Framework Plan under the new Clause 11.03-6L-04, ensuring the precinct's development is aligned with both state and local policy directions.

#### **Clause 11.03-6L-04 – Bendigo Regional Employment Precinct**

A new local policy clause is introduced to formally identify BREP as the municipality's principal industrial and employment precinct. The clause sets out a clear planning framework to guide the coordinated development of the precinct, including:

- Purpose and role – to accommodate regionally significant industries that leverage the precinct’s strategic position along the Calder transport corridor and proximity to the Marong Township and planned MWFC.
- Key objectives – to facilitate the supply of well-serviced industrial land that supports advanced manufacturing, logistics, and circular economy industries; to enable staged development in line with infrastructure capacity; and to protect sensitive interfaces and valued landscapes.
- Framework Plan – introduces the BREP Framework Plan as a spatial reference to guide land use, transport (including the planned MWFC) and servicing integration across the precinct.
- Implementation guidance – outlines expectations for future DPO, infrastructure coordination and cultural values management in collaboration with Dja Dja Wurrung people and relevant agencies.

## 6.2 Clause 11.01-1L – Marong Framework Plan Refresh

The amendment also proposes to update the Marong Framework Plan under Clause 11.01-1L – Settlement – Marong.

The Marong Framework Plan (CoGB, 2018) identified a parcel of land located southwest of the existing Marong Township, now within the BREP area, as “Proposed land use subject to investigation” (the investigation land below).

This designation reflected uncertainty about the most suitable long-term use for the investigation land due to its transitional location between the Marong Township and the identified employment land adjoining the Calder Highway. The Framework Plan indicated that further investigations were required to test the land’s potential while maintaining compatibility with adjoining industrial land and future transport infrastructure.

### Investigation undertaken to inform land use

Since adoption of the current Marong Framework Plan, several significant planning and infrastructure initiatives have emerged that necessitate a refresh to maintain policy currency and alignment with state and regional strategies, including:

#### Greater Bendigo Industrial Land Development Strategy (GBILDS, 2020)

The GBILDS provides the regional policy foundation for industrial land supply and demand across the municipality. It identifies Marong as one of the municipality’s key regional employment nodes capable of supporting large-lot, transport-oriented and higher-impact industrial activities unsuitable within urban Bendigo.

GBILDS emphasises the importance of retaining sufficient unconstrained industrial land to meet long-term demand and cautions against introducing sensitive uses adjacent to industrial investigation areas, as this would constrain future industrial operations and reduce Bendigo’s employment capacity.

### Interface and Buffer Considerations

Interface analysis undertaken through the BREP process assessed potential land use conflicts and appropriate separation distances in accordance with EPA’s Separation Distance Guideline (August 2024) and Clause 53.10 – Uses with Adverse Amenity Potential.

The analysis found that rezoning the investigation land for residential development would introduce sensitive uses within typical buffer distances (100–500 metres or even up to 1,000 metres) of future industrial operations. Such encroachment would sterilise significant portions of the adjoining BREP land on the south and west, limit



operational flexibility for industrial tenants, and create reverse-amenity risks inconsistent with State and local policy objectives.

Clause 13.07-1S (Land Use Compatibility) provides clear State policy direction to:

“Protect community amenity, human health and safety while facilitating appropriate commercial, industrial, infrastructure or other uses with potential adverse off-site impacts.”

The clause requires that planning decisions:

*ensure land uses are compatible with adjoining and nearby uses;*  
*avoid locating sensitive uses within areas affected by adverse off-site impacts;*  
*avoid or minimise adverse off-site impacts through siting, design or operational measures; and*  
**protect employment-generating uses from encroachment by incompatible sensitive uses.**

Applying Clause 13.07-1S, any residential or other sensitive uses on the investigation land would directly conflict with these principles. The land lies within the potential impact zone of future industrial uses envisaged for the BREP and would compromise the ability of those uses to function safely and effectively.

Retaining the investigation land for industrial and employment purposes therefore implements Clause 13.07-1S by maintaining appropriate separation, protecting public amenity, and safeguarding the long-term industrial function of the precinct.

### Marong Western Freight Corridor Preferred Alignment

DPT-Transport Services’ 2023 review of the planned MWFC evaluated alternative routes connecting the Calder Freeway and the Calder Alternative Highway. The preferred alignment has now been confirmed to follow the Wimmera Highway and Calder Alternative Highway corridor, rather than traversing diagonally through the BREP as indicated in earlier conceptual mapping.

This alignment has two major implications for the investigation land:

1. It removes fragmentation within the employment precinct, confirming that the land can develop cohesively for industrial and logistics purposes; and
2. It establishes a clear physical barrier in the form of a significant transport corridor between the Marong Township to the north and the BREP to the south.

The planned MWFC therefore functions as both a land use and physical boundary, providing long-term separation between residential and industrial environments. This outcome removes any strategic rationale for a transitional or mixed-use interface and reinforces the role of the investigation land as part of the employment precinct. This spatial relationship reinforces the role of Clause 11.01-1L’s direction to ensure industrial development occurs in planned and serviced locations that are appropriately separated from sensitive uses.

### Emerging Policy Context

Maintaining the land for employment uses is also consistent with the emerging strategic works below:

- The Marong Township Structure Plan (2024), which provides an updated urban structure for residential, community and open-space growth areas and confirms the township’s long-term settlement boundary. The investigation land is outside the designated settlement boundary.

- Release of Plan for Victoria (2025), which recognises Bendigo's western corridor as a key regional employment and transport node and spatially identifies the BREP boundary within the State's settlement and infrastructure framework.

The investigation land is now clearly incorporated within the BREP boundary, reflecting the outcomes of recent strategic investigations and the State's confirmation of the precinct's long-term industrial role.

The BREP planning scheme amendment will update the Marong Framework Plan (Figure 8) under Clause 11.01-1L to reflect the new boundaries and interfaces of the BREP, ensuring the planning scheme accurately captures the extent of the precinct in supporting Marong's growth and Greater Bendigo's long-term employment land supply.

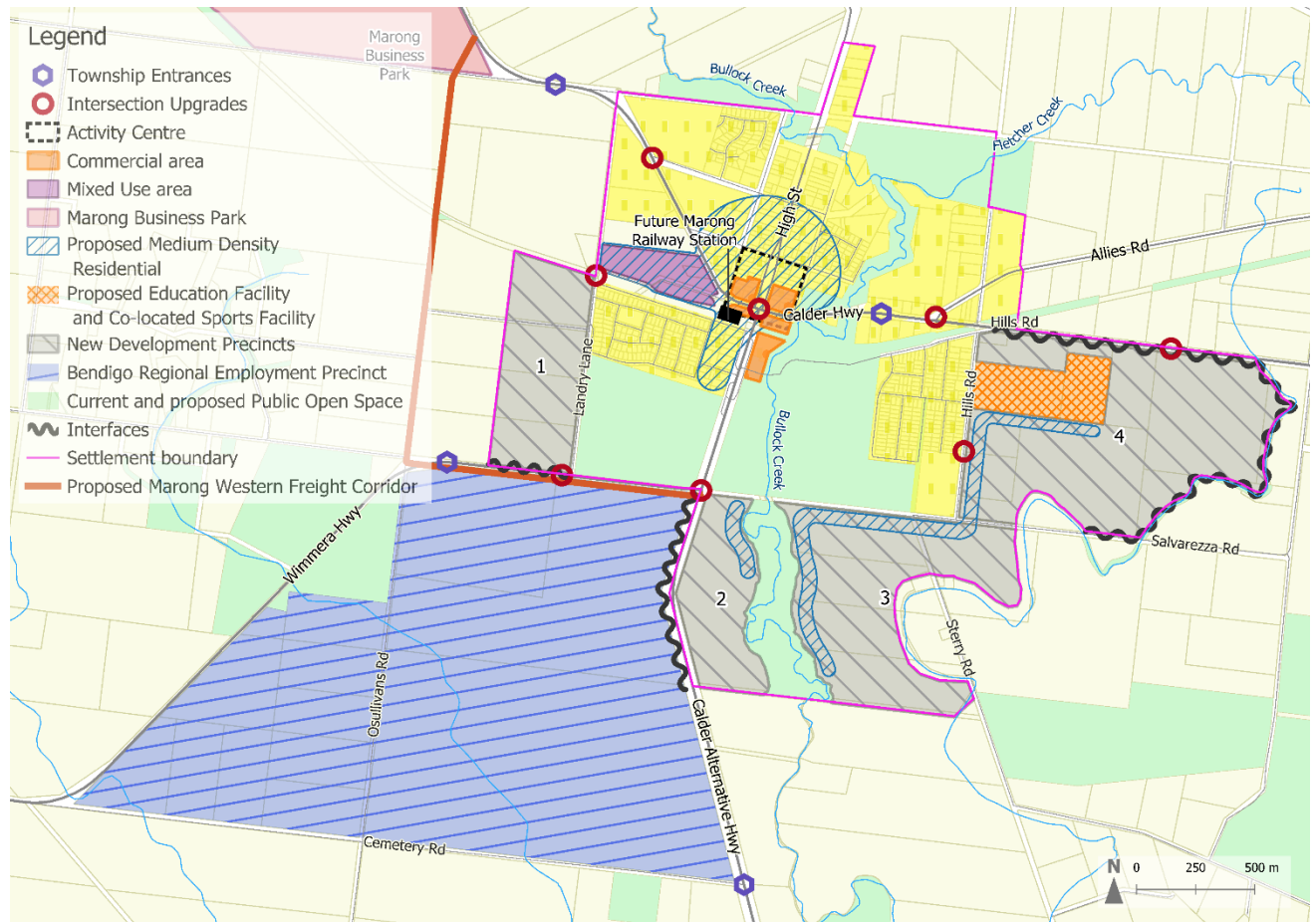


Figure 22 Proposed Marong Framework Plan under Amendment c296gben



## 6.4 Schedule 34 to Development Plan Overlay

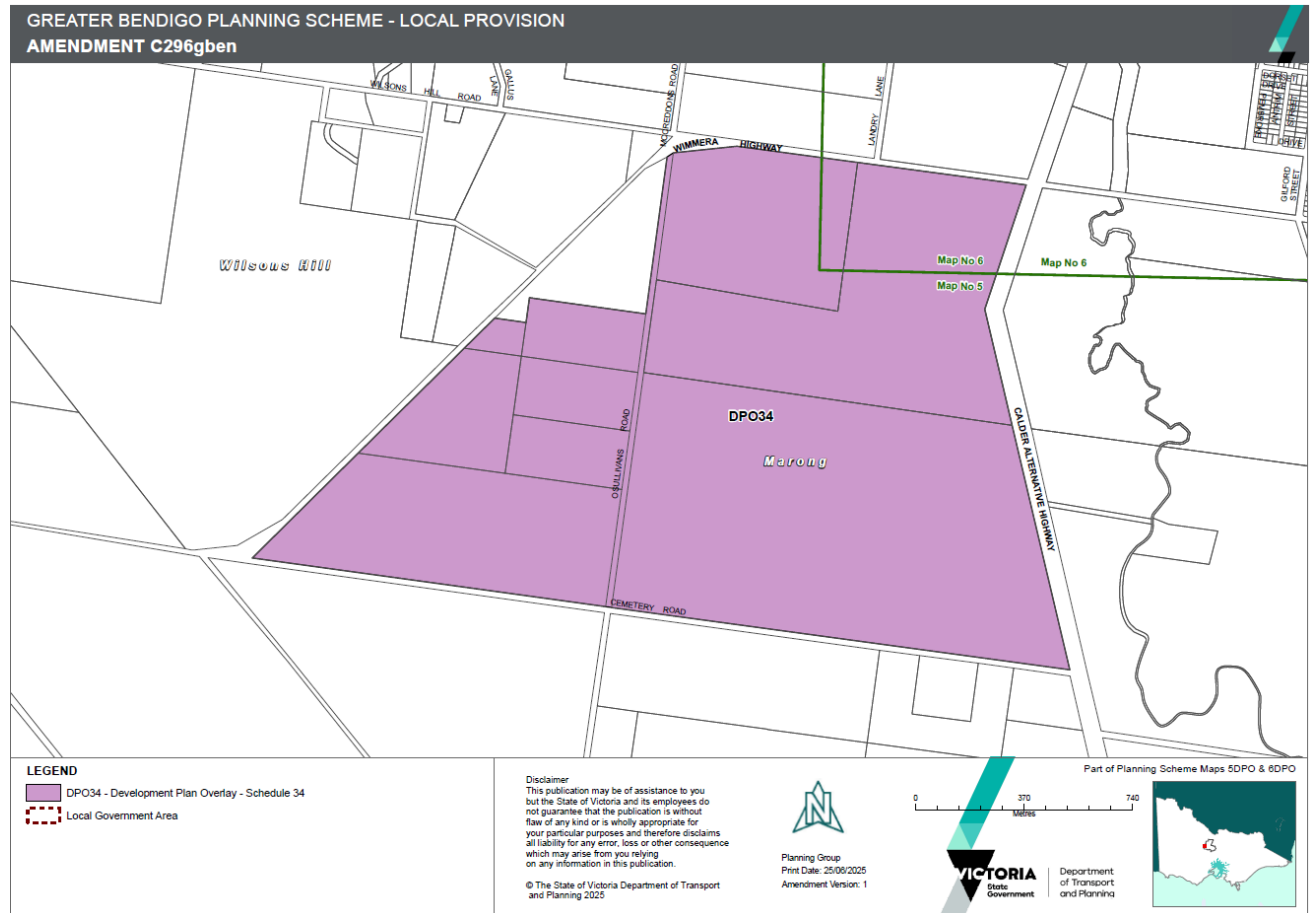
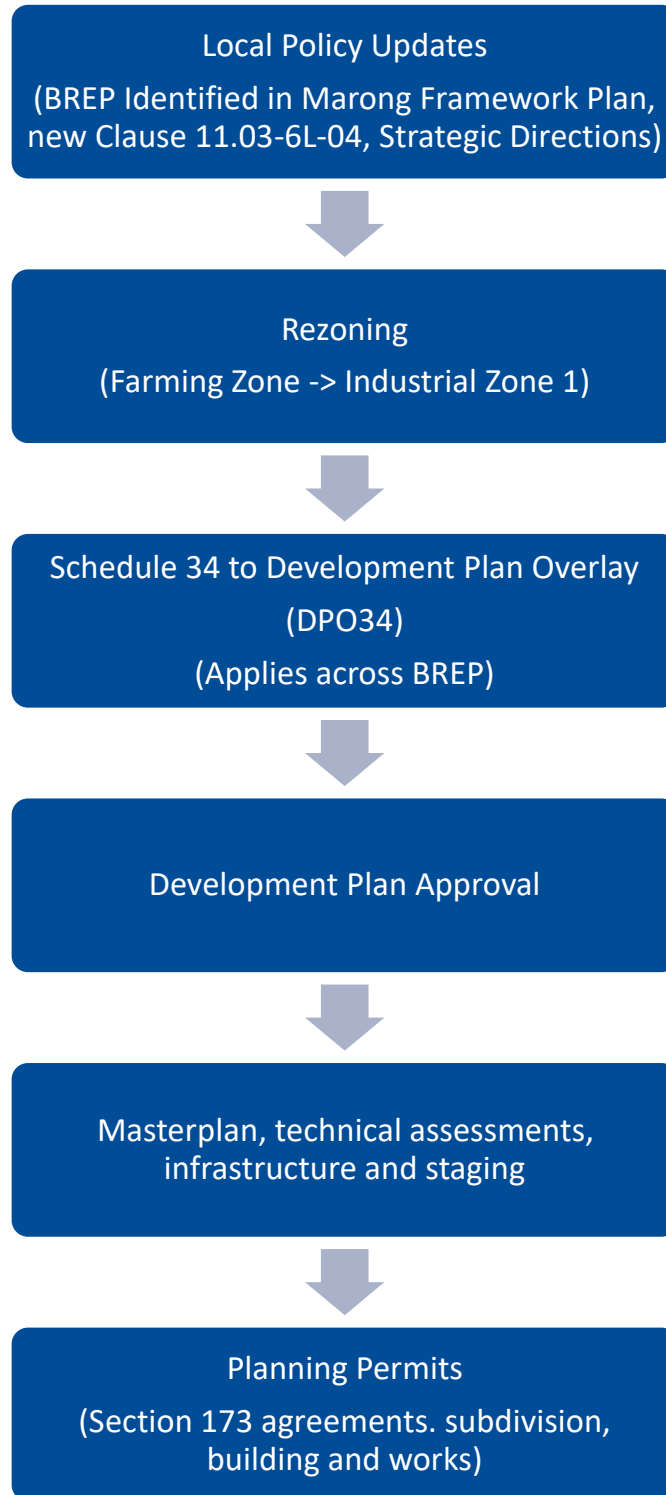


Figure 24 Development Plan Overlay - Schedule 34

The amendment introduces a new DPO Schedule 34 (DPO34) across all land within the BREP. The overlay ensures that development proceeds in an orderly and coordinated way by requiring the approval of a development plan before any subdivision, building, or works can occur.

The DPO schedule includes provisions to:

- Establish a precinct-wide master plan, including land uses, movement networks, drainage corridors, landscape buffers, and staging.
- Require technical assessments (traffic, stormwater, arboriculture, biodiversity, cultural values, bushfire, sodic soils, etc.) to guide design and demonstrate development suitability.
- Secure infrastructure delivery and contributions through Section 173 Agreements, including obligations for shared local infrastructure and external State-managed transport projects, supported by a new background document under Clause 72.08 and policy guideline under Clause 11.03-6L-04 – Bendigo Regional Employment Precinct Guideline for Preparing Shared Infrastructure Plan for State Transport Infrastructure.
- Ensure environmental and cultural values are protected and enhanced, including vegetation retention, integrated water management, and recognition of Dja Dja Wurrung cultural heritage.
- Provide mechanisms to ensure that key technical assessments for future development plans are prepared in close consultation or collaboration with relevant authorities and the Registered Aboriginal Party.



These provisions provide the statutory framework for master planning and infrastructure coordination, giving both landowners and the community certainty about how the BREP will develop over its 30-year horizon.

Figure 25 BREP Development Framework - Implementation Pathway



## 6.5 Referral Authorities

Through an amended Clause 66.04, the PSA provides a mechanism to ensure that relevant authorities are referred development plans and permits. The amendments are outlined in the table below:

Clause	Kind of application	Referral authority	Referral authority type
Schedule 34 to Clause 43.04 (DPO)	An application for subdivision, the use and development of land, to construct a building or to construct and carry out works for land with a frontage to or within 50 metres of the planned Marong Western Freight Corridor.	Head, Transport for Victoria	Determining referral authority
Schedule 34 to Clause 43.04 (DPO)	Any application to construct a building or to construct or carry out works.	Coliban Water	Determining referral authority

The referrals to Head, Transport for Victoria and Coliban Water are required to ensure that specialist agencies with statutory responsibilities over transport infrastructure and servicing infrastructure are formally engaged in assessing development within the BREP.

### Why is referral required?

The referral to the Head, Transport for Victoria is necessary because the planned MWFC will form a major transport route supporting freight movement to and from the precinct. Development occurring within or near this corridor could affect its future alignment, function, or safety. As the coordinating transport authority under the Transport Integration Act 2010, Transport for Victoria must therefore review development proposals to ensure appropriate setbacks, access arrangements, and design integration with planned road infrastructure in Wimmera Highway and Calder Alternative Highway. Making it a determining referral authority allows Transport for Victoria to impose conditions or refuse applications where development would compromise the operation or protection of the planned corridor.

The referral to Coliban Water is required because it is the statutory authority responsible for water supply, sewerage services across the BREP and the broader region. While the subdivision stage already includes a referral process that makes Coliban Water a determining authority, the actual servicing demand can only be accurately assessed at the time of an application for a specific industrial use and development. Each proposed use will have different water, sewerage and trade waste requirements depending on its operational characteristics. The referral at the development stage therefore ensures that Coliban Water can review detailed design and infrastructure needs once the nature and intensity of the proposed use are known, allowing the authority to confirm servicing feasibility, require design modifications or impose conditions consistent with its integrated water management assessment and servicing plans

## 7 APPENDICES

### 7.1 Technical Report Summaries

#### **ABORIGINAL CULTURAL HERITAGE DESKTOP ASSESSMENT**

##### Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment, DJANDAK, 2024

#### **What is the purpose of the report?**

The Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment (ACHIA) was prepared by DJANDAK to provide the VPA with an early understanding of the cultural heritage values of the site and to guide precinct planning and design. The purpose of the report is to identify cultural qualities, potential constraints, and appropriate measures that need to be considered in the planning process. The ACHIA report is not a Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP) under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*, but rather an assessment designed to inform future planning, alongside a Cultural Values Assessment that will capture tangible and intangible values through direct engagement with Dja Dja Wurrung community.

The report is available on the Victoria's Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Register and Information System.

#### **What do we know so far?**

The BREP currently does not contain any registered Aboriginal Places. However, the surrounding area has recorded 17 sites, including low-density artefact distributions, artefact scatters, and scarred trees. The predictive model concluded that the site holds a moderate to high archaeological potential, particularly in relation to low-density artefact distributions and scarred trees, despite the history of agricultural clearance and mining. A targeted field survey undertaken in May 2023 did not identify any cultural material, but it confirmed that the site has areas of varying sensitivity. In particular, Wilsons Hill, a prominent rise located between Bullock Creek and Dry Creek, was identified as a feature of cultural significance with both tangible and intangible values, including the presence of a large eagle's nest associated with Bunjil, the djaara creator. The two named waterways, Bullock Creek and Dry Creek, were also identified as areas of potential cultural heritage value requiring further assessment.

The overall planning process for the site is being undertaken in accordance with the *Barpangu*, the CoGBs reconciliation plan. The plan refers to objective seven of the plan- "*to enhance engagement and delivery with traditional owner's groups*". This has been achieved through partnership with Traditional Owners and the Registered Aboriginal Party (RAP), DJAARA.

#### **What does this mean for the Bendigo Regional Employment Precinct?**

In supporting the proposed scheme amendment, the DJARRA RAP team have confirmed that they will provide a statement of significance and Cultural Values Assessment.

The report recommends that any high-impact development within the BREP will require a CHMP in accordance with the Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006 and the Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2018. It also stresses the need for ongoing consultation with Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation (DJAARA) throughout the life of the project to ensure planning and design respects Aboriginal values and history. Wilsons Hill should be retained as open space due to its cultural and archaeological sensitivity, and an Aboriginal Waterway Assessment should be undertaken for Bullock Creek and Dry Creek before any ground-disturbing works occur. These measures will ensure that development of BREP proceeds in a manner that acknowledges and protects the cultural heritage significance of the area. The BREP area is located on the land of Dja Dja Wurrung People. No previously identified Aboriginal places were located within the area. However, given the relatively low levels of post-

contact disturbance and the possibility of culturally modified trees being present, the area is considered to be of moderate-to-high archaeological value.

## **ARBORICULTURE ASSESSMENT AND REPORT, ENSPEC, (2023)**

### **What is the purpose of the report?**

The purpose of the Arboricultural Assessment is to provide information on tree species, origin, health, structure and retention value. It also provides recommended distances for Tree Protection Zones (TPZ) to guide future development planning to preserve significant trees.

### **What do we know so far?**

The report discovered a total of 4621 of trees within the study area. In that total, 362 (7.8%) were found to be critical and 2384 (61.3%) were of high value. Almost all these trees are remnant indigenous trees, largely grouped within the road reserves. Grey box Eucalyptus (46.9% ) and mixed natives (12%) made up the largest number overall. None of the naturally occurring tree species recorded are listed on the State Threatened Species Lists.

As a part of this assessment, ENSPEC considered potential widening and formalising of existing key roads such as O'Sullivan and Cemetery Road and if they would be suitable for industrial traffic. These roads are currently lined with trees which provide strong biodiversity and landscape values. Upon a review of the existing conditions, several large trees sit within the road reserve, would cause a potential challenge in formalising these roads. This will be discussed further within the transport section.

### **What does this mean for the Bendigo Regional Employment Precinct?**

The Schedule for the DPO for BREP will require the protection of flora and fauna within a landscape concept plan as part of any future development plan. The Schedule will also require new or widened roads to avoid trees of critical and high values. Any native vegetation to be removed which is not exempt, will require a permit if to be removed pursuant to Clause 52.17 of the Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme.

## **BIODIVERSITY ASSESSMENT AND TARGETED FLORA AND FAUNA SURVEY**

**Biodiversity Assessment and Targeted Flora and Fauna Surveys, Ecology and Heritage Partners, October 2023**

### **What is the purpose of the report?**

The Biodiversity Assessment and Targeted Flora and Fauna Survey was prepared for the proposed BREP PSP that was to guide the future development of the land. The study area for the biodiversity assessment (excludes targeted surveys) extends beyond the proposed BREP boundary to include the planned MWFC. Due to changes of the program, the recommendations of the report will guide the development of the DPO Schedule and the future development of the BREP.

The purpose of the Biodiversity Assessment is to identify the extent and type of native vegetation present within the BREP. The targeted survey determines the presence/ absence of significant flora and fauna species and ecological communities. The report provides potential ecological protection recommendations that responds to the three-step approach of avoid, minimise and offset under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) and *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988* (FFG Act).

## What do we know so far?

### Vegetation condition

Most vegetation within the BREP was highly modified due to past and current agricultural practices and is dominated by pasture supporting non-indigenous grasses and weeds. Native vegetation in the BREP is representative of Plains Woodland (EVC 803) and includes:

- A total of 532 large trees in Plains Woodland patches were recorded
- A total of 146 scattered trees were recorded

Low to moderate quality fauna habitat is present in the form of woodlands, derived native grassland and artificial waterbodies located throughout the study area. However, many of these waterbodies lack habitat structure most preferred by a range of fauna due to low levels of submerged, emergent and fringing vegetation. These waterbodies also provide limited dispersal opportunities due to the fragmented occurrences of woody vegetation along these habitats.

### Flora and fauna

Targeted surveys for nationally and state-significant flora and fauna species have been undertaken within areas of potential habitat within the BREP. However, no nationally significant flora or fauna species were recorded.

#### Flora

- One targeted but not recorded nationally significant species (habitat present):
  - Spiny Rice-flower (*Spinescens* subsp. *spinescens*)
- Two state-significant flora species were recorded:
  - Late-flower Flax-lily (*Dianella tarda*)
  - Ausfeld's Wattle (*Acacia ausfeldii*)
- Two targeted but not recorded state-significant species (habitat present):
  - Pale Flax-lily (*Dianella longifolia* var. *grandis*)
  - Cane Spear-grass (*Austrostipa breviglumis*)

#### Fauna

- Targeted but not recorded nationally significant species (habitat present):
  - Blue-winged Parrot (*Neophema chrysostoma*)
  - Brown Treecreeper (*Climacteris picumnus*)
  - Diamond Firetail (*Stagonopleura guttata*)
  - Gang-gang Cockatoo (*Callocephalon fimbriatum*)
  - Golden Sun Moth (*Synemon plana*)
  - Growling Grass Frog (*Litoria raniformis*)
  - Hooded Robin (*Melanodryas cucullata*)
  - Southern Whiteface (*Aphelocephala leucopsis*)
  - Swift Parrot (*Lathamus discolor*)
- Two state-significant fauna species were recorded:
  - Brush-tailed Phascogale (*Phascogale tapoatafa*)
  - Squirrel Glider (*Petaurus norfolcensis*)

- Targeted but not recorded state-significant species (habitat present):
  - Barking Owl (*Ninox connivens*)
  - Black Falcon (*Falco subniger*)
  - Brown Toadlet (*Pseudophryne bibronii*)
  - Bush Stone-curlew (*Burhinus grallarius*)
  - Crested Bellbird (*Oreocia gutturalis*)
  - Fat-tailed Dunnart (*Sminthopsis crassicaudata*)
  - Lace Monitor (*Varanus varius*)
  - Little Eagle (*Hieraaetus morphnoides*)
  - Powerful Owl (*Ninox strenua*)
  - Square-tailed Kite (*Lophoictinia isura*)

**The recommendations provided by EHP include:**

The following precinct design principles should be considered:

- Retain areas of high conservation value
- Protect large areas of native vegetation
- Retain hollow-bearing trees where there is the highest quality habitat for Brushtail Phascogale and Squirrel Glider
- Provide a variety of flora and fauna habitats
- Undertake habitat creation through linear habitat corridors along tracks and waterways
- Incorporate drainage lines into habitat corridors and open public spaces
- Retain native trees in urban active and passive open space areas
- Feature waterways/landscaping combination of a series of smaller connected basins
- Interconnect spaces through open space links
- Rehabilitate and protect significant native vegetation
- Ensure stormwater treatment is designed to provide habitats for significant flora and fauna species
- Achieve high canopy coverage on public and private land
- Connect biodiversity sites with open spaces, thus they are separated from development

The following best practice mitigation measures are recommended:

- Consideration of Water Sensitive Urban Design techniques (e.g. stormwater treatment wetlands, bio-retention systems, porous paving or swales)
- Preparation of Construction Environmental Management Plan and Kangaroo Management Plan

**What does this mean for the Bendigo Regional Employment Precinct?**

The report recommends retaining and enhancing ecological values to assist in creating a more diverse, connected and resilient natural environment. The proposed Schedule to the DPO will require a flora and fauna assessment and a property vegetation plan in both development plan approval and site-specific permit. The proposed schedule also requires the development plan to consider the precinct design principles outlined in the biodiversity assessment. This ensures future development and subdivision in the BREP will protect and enhance the existing vegetation.

The report recommends retaining and enhancing ecological values to assist in creating a more diverse, connected and resilient natural environment. The proposed Schedule to the DPO will require a flora and fauna assessment and a property vegetation plan in both development plan approval and site-specific permit. The proposed schedule also requires the development plan to consider the precinct design principles outlined in the biodiversity assessment. This ensures future development and subdivision in the BREP will protect and enhance the existing vegetation.

In managing the impacts of development on the biological values of the permit area, the proposed DPO schedule will include permit conditions related to the requirements for a Construction Environment Management Plan and a Conservation Management Plan.

## BUSHFIRE ADVICE

### Bushfire Development Report, Terramatrix, November 2025

#### What is the purpose of the report?

This report was prepared to assess how development of the BREP can respond to bushfire risk and comply with the applicable planning policy and building controls that relate to bushfire, such as the objective and applicable strategies of Clause 13.02-1S Bushfire Planning from the Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme. This report also addresses the recommendations and comments from the Country Fire Authority (CFA), which were sent to the VPA by email on 10/04/2025 (Coxon, 2025).

The report has been prepared in accordance with guidance for the assessment of, and response to, bushfire risk, provided in:

- Local planning for bushfire protection, Planning Practice Note 64 (DELWP, 2015)
- Design Guidelines, Settlement Planning at the Bushfire Interface (DELWP, 2020a)
- Planning Permit Applications – Bushfire Management Overlay, Technical Guide (DELWP, 2017)
- Bushfire State Planning Policy Amendment VC140, Planning Advisory Note 68, (DELWP, 2018).
- Applying the Bushfire Hazard Landscape Assessment in a Bushfire Management Overlay (CFA, 2022a).

#### What do we know so far?

The BREP is a designated Bushfire Prone Area (BPA), which are areas subject to or likely to be subject to bushfire, as determined by the Minister for Planning.

The Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO) covers two small areas along the western boundary of the BREP.

The landscape risk is low to moderate due to the flat topography, lack of high hazard tree and shrub vegetation, and relative ease of access to places that offer shelter from bushfire, including the BREP itself when development occurs, and the nearby Marong Township area.

#### What does this mean for the Bendigo Regional Employment Precinct?

The bushfire protection measures recommended to be included in the DPO schedule are summarised as:

- Designation of Building Exclusion Zones, including all land in the BREP that is:
  - Covered by the BMO.
  - Within the minimum distance from any nominated bushfire hazard area (classified vegetation) equivalent to Column A in Table 1 of Clause 53.02 (equivalent to 12.5 kW/m<sup>2</sup> radiant heat). The setback distances from classified vegetation identified in the site assessment both within and beyond the BREP are:
    - 48 metres from Forest
    - 33 metres from Woodland
    - 19 metres from Grassland.
- Applicable buildings constructed to the requisite bushfire attack level (BAL) in accordance with AS 3959:2018.
- Provision of perimeter roads on the interface with permanent bushfire hazards – both external to and within the BREP. The perimeter road can provide part of the low threat setback.



- Provision of multiple egress routes away from the bushfire hazard in line with DELWP (2020).
- Provision of emergency service access via a conventional road network.
- Provision of water for firefighting via a reticulated hydrant network, supplemented by static water supplies in the BMO (if development occurs there) or if required by NCC 2022 for the class and size of building.
- Siting of hazardous industry away from the bushfire interface.
- Inclusion of bushfire in the emergency management plans developed for businesses exposed to a bushfire hazard.
- Vegetation on private property to be maintained to a low threat condition
- Requirements for subdivision applications should include a Bushfire Site Management Plan identifying and confirming:
  - The staging of development.
  - Management of interim bushfire hazard setbacks during staged development (see Section 4.2.11) as:
    - 30 metre 'rolling buffers' (or as per Column A of Table 1 of Clause 53.02, whichever is the greater distance) along the property boundary and between development stages of each site until adjacent land is rendered permanently low threat through development.
  - Notation indicating which authority is responsible for managing vegetation within open space areas and the public realm

## ECONOMIC ASSESSMENT

Independent Development Assessment, Charter Keck Cramer, September 2025.

### What is the purpose of the report?

To inform local policy and schedule requirements, the VPA commissioned Charter Keck Cramer (Charter Keck Cramer) to provide independent advice on the merit of delivering the BREP as a regional employment area and to provide market-based recommendations to inform the planning framework that will guide the delivery of the BREP.

To assess the merit of the BREP, the report undertakes an economic land use assessment to assess whether the region incorporates the potential scale of land demand to support the successful delivery of the BREP. As an independent assessment, the report focuses on the merit of BREP as a fully industrial precinct, rather than BREP supporting alternative non-industrial uses.

### What do we know so far?

As identified in the GBILDS, Bendigo's existing industrial land supply is heavily constrained, by virtue of its fragmented nature, proximity to residential and sensitive uses, inadequate servicing and environmental risks. Importantly, the supply of large industrial sites (1 to 5 hectares) is expected to be exhausted by 2027. As such, there is a requirement for an additional 170 hectares of industrial land by 2036.

In acknowledging the above findings, the BREP has been identified to meet many of CoBGs long term industrial needs, by providing an additional 294 hectares of land which could service an estimated 6000 direct and indirect jobs over a 30 year period. The report identifies the BREP's long term land and employment capacity.

## What does this mean for the Bendigo Regional Employment Precinct?

In assessing the merit of the BREP, the Charter Keck Cramer report explores three key items being the supply of industrial land, the demand for industrial land within the BREP and the capacity of BREP. Their findings are summarised below.

### 1. Industrial Land Supply Options

As identified in the GBILDS (and confirmed by the Charter Keck Cramer report), the supply of existing, development ready, industrial land in the CoGB is limited. Any expansion of Greater Bendigo's industrial land supply will require developing previously non-industrial land. In the short to medium term, BREP is identified as being optimal due to connectivity, size, landform and potential infrastructure connectivity. This is in comparison to the MBP which is to remain a long-term option due to servicing constraints and the absence of immediate development pathways.

Previously identified disadvantages of BREP, such as multiple landowners, have been rectified through the CoGB becoming the largest landowner. Further, additional funding commitments in infrastructure servicing investigation have been made available following the BREP being identified as a regional priority project.

### 2. BREP Industrial Demand Outlook

The BREP incorporates several industrial investment attractors, including direct connectivity to major arterial road infrastructure for heavy vehicles, capacity to provide industry with relatively unconstrained operational conditions, and the sites proximity to established industrial networks. The BREP shares similar locational and connectivity attributes as two recent, successful regional industrial precincts, the Geelong Ring Road Employment Precinct (GREP) and Logic Business Park. As such, the BREP is well positioned to experience similar market dynamics.

### 3. BREP Industrial land Capacity

Charter Keck Cramer modelling has identified that the BREP can meet the aspirations of the GBILDS by providing an estimated 25 to 33 years of industrial land supply. This can be extended to 50 years should the BREP attract an average annual demand of 40%.

## HISTORICAL

### Historic Heritage Assessment, Heritage Insight, July 2023

#### What is the purpose of the report?

Heritage Insight was commissioned by the VPA in September 2022, to undertake a historical heritage assessment for the BREP. The assessment sought to identify and understand non-Aboriginal cultural heritage artifacts, places or archaeological sites within the BREP that could be used to inform the future land use of the area.

#### What do we know so far?

A part of understanding the historic use within the BREP, involved research considering the historic landforms and geomorphology, as well as analysing the previous occupation history of the study area.

Existing on the heritage register was the Former Yorkshire Hotel, located within the planned MWFC study area. Outside of the study area, an additional 18 historic places/sites were also discovered, within a five kilometre buffer of the BREP proposed boundaries.

Morang was among one of the many locations mined during the Gold Rush. Mining within the BREP/Marong and surrounds was delayed to the peak of the gold rush and can be dated back to 1860s. Within the BREP, mining was concentrated towards the southwest and northwest portion. Historic aerial imagery confirmed that majority of the mining features have been destroyed for farming uses. It should be noted that there are currently several abandoned mine shafts present within the precinct (to be discussed further in the LCA section).

Through the desktop and site assessment, an additional archaeological site was discovered, rendering a local level significance: The Cemetery Road, Gold Mining, Landscape. This site has been submitted to Heritage Victoria in February 2023 for inclusion in the heritage inventory and approved in March 2023. It was also acknowledged that additional places of interest (although not protected through any heritage statutory planning controls), were also identified: Wilsons Hill Channel and mature native trees (discussed further in **Section 5.2.1 Aboriginal Cultural Heritage**).

### **What does this mean for the Bendigo Regional Employment Precinct?**

There are no statutory requirements to manage heritage through the Schedule to the DPO.

## **LAND CAPABILITY**

*Land Capability Assessment, WSP, April 2024*

### **What is the purpose of the report?**

WSP were commissioned by the VPA in 2023 to prepare a *Land Capability Assessment* to inform preparation of the BREP (finalised 2024). The purpose of the assessment was to determine previous and current land uses, and environmental conditions within and adjacent to the BREP, and implications in relation to environmental contamination, amenity impacts, hydrology and geology that may require consideration in planning for the BREP.

### **What do we know so far?**

The assessment found that there were 13 titles in total across the 294 hectares of BREP, with six being owned by CoGB. In total, the CoGB own 155 hectares. There are eight current uses within the site, with agricultural use and associated infrastructure the main uses on the site. Eight residential properties occupy part of the site.

Site inspections were carried out by two field engineers. A piggery operation with a surrounding bio-exclusion zone in use and WaterStore poly tanks premises are also present and are noted as having high-medium contamination effects upon the land. Historic mining uses at the adjacent Saddle Reefs area will have highly likely contributed to land contamination. A site specific PSI or detailed site investigation will be needed to assess these issues and include the possibility of environmental auditing and remediation efforts.

Two existing land uses requiring separation distances to be maintained from current activities on site to prevent adverse amenity impacts to future sensitive land uses were identified. These apply to the piggery operation and the WaterStore Poly Tanks premises.

The report also identifies the likely presence of sodic soils. Sodic soils tend to develop poor structure and drainage over time due to dispersal within the soil. Controls will be required to mitigate any adverse impacts of these soils and will require further site-specific characterisation and risk mitigation measures.

### **What does this mean for the Bendigo Regional Employment Precinct?**

Where possible non-sensitive uses have been aligned with sites identified as having high potential for contamination to reduce the burden of having to undergo an unnecessary audit process.

The Schedule to the DPO require a Preliminary Risk Screen Assessment (PRSA) for high-risk sub zones to support an application to subdivide or use land for a sensitive use or construct or carry out buildings and works associated with these uses.

## LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL ASSESSMENT

Landscape and Visual Assessment, SPIIRE, November 2023

### What is the purpose of the report?

The Landscape and Visual Assessment analyses the key landscape and visual characteristics of the BREP. The report provides guidance on the BREP's landscape and visual response as it transitions from a rural to an employment character. Several key objectives are identified within the report which allow for the retention, preservation, and enhancement of the landscape character within the BREP.

### What do we know so far?

Except for the Wilsons Hill Bushland Reserve, the whole site is significantly shaped by farming practices including substantial deforestation. The existing conditions are categorised into natural, constructed elements and cultural elements.

### What does this mean for the Bendigo Regional Employment Precinct?

The Schedule to the DPO requires a development plan to include a site analysis plan that includes a considers views to and from the land generally in accordance with the *Bendigo Regional Employment Precinct – Landscape and Visual Assessment* (Spiire, November 2023).

## SERVICING AND UTILITIES

Utilities Servicing Assessment, Aurecon, April 2024

### What is the purpose of the assessment?

A utility servicing assessment for the BREP was undertaken by Aurecon in 2022 (finalised 2024). This assessment provides a high-level utility servicing review to inform the preparation of the BREP. The assessment investigates the existing utility infrastructure and pinpoints existing constraints and potential opportunities for the future delivery of utilities infrastructure. The assessment also includes the proposed servicing strategies for the BREP.

### What do we know so far?

The analysis was undertaken in consultation with key Utility Service Authorities across potable water, recycled water, sewerage, stormwater drainage, electricity, gas and telecommunication services. Based on the analysis, it has been found that there are predominantly no service offerings within the BREP area, with most services situated in the neighbouring township of Marong. A summary of each utility service is detailed below.

#### Water

The potable water supply within the Marong Township is provided by Coliban Water. However, there are no existing water services within the BREP. The assessment recommends a need for a larger upgrade including upsizing pipeline sections and a second water tank, or the subsequent upgrade of Bendigo Water Treatment Plant. Upgrading approximately 11 kilometres of potable water pipeline from Specimen Hill Reservoir to Marong by one pipe size is required to accommodate the BREP.

There are no operational recycled water services within and surrounding the BREP. The assessment suggests a connection to Lake Neanger in Eaglehawk, specifically at the Cockatoo Channel offtake. However, additional consideration is required to understand the viability of this connection and the BREP's recycled water demand profile. The assessment recommends a recycled water tank constructed at the BREP could address potential peak capacity constraints.

## **Sewerage**

The existing sewerage system surrounding the BREP is limited to the local sewer services within the adjoining Marong Township and there are no existing sewer services within the BREP. The assessment recommends a new dedicated sewer system west of Marong to service the BREP and any potential Marong Township growth. This would enable reuse options either within the BREP itself, the Marong community or with local farmers.

Alternatively, the BREP development could provide forward funding for the cost of the Water Reclamation Plant upgrade through a dedicated New Customer Contribution or through direct funding. As the straight-line access to the plant is more than 17 kilometres away, therefore upsizing the plant to include BREP capacity would be challenging and impractical.

In conclusion, the feasibility of the sewerage system for the BREP is yet to be determined.

## **Stormwater**

The existing stormwater drainage system surrounding the BREP is limited to the service within the adjoining Marong Township. There are no existing stormwater drainage services within the BREP.

A drainage study for the West Marong Township directly north of the BREP was prepared by Aurecon in 2015. The findings from the study could be used to indicatively inform drainage considerations. However, a BREP specific drainage study is still recommended to confirm existing network capacities, required infrastructure sizing, and sensitivity assessments.

## **Electricity**

Powercor Australia is responsible for some existing electricity services within the BREP. There are options for Powercor to extend the current network or to supply a much larger load (e.g. build a new Zone Substation) within the BREP. Design of the services would be dependent on the forecasted electrical demand profile and subdivision layouts within the BREP.

## **Gas**

Existing gas networks are located in local towns such as Marong, Maiden Gully and Golden Square. However, there are no existing gas services within the BREP.

Tas Gas provides gas services including High-Density Polyethylene gas mains servicing existing properties, with the closest gas mains located within approximately 500 metres of the BREP boundary across the Marong Golf course. AusNet is also a provider within the BREP with the nearest gas supply mains in Maiden Gully, approximately 6 kilometres to the east.

Both Tas Gas and AusNet gas network were originally designed to service nearby low density residential and light commercial demands. There is limited capacity to service nearby developments such as BREP. The distance between the BREP and the nearest high-pressure network connection in Golden Square, 11 kilometres away presents challenges in feasibility and economic perspectives.

In August 2025, it was announced that Solstice Energy would phase out its compressed natural gas network in Marong by the end of 2026. This will impact any proponents who would rely on natural gas to service industry within the BREP.

### **Telecommunications**

NBN and Telstra were contacted by Aurecon as part of their dial before you dig assessment. Both are providers of telecommunications to Marong Township, but at present there are no fixed line services within the BREP site.

The existing NBN Fibre Access Note site at Darling Street, Eaglehawk which is approximately 12 kilometres straight line distance away from BREP is noted sizeable and sufficient to service the BREPs telecommunication's needs. However, details such as conduit arrangements, capacity, potential connection points and easement requirements are yet to be provided by NBN.

### **What does this mean for the Bendigo Regional Employment Precinct?**

The assessment finds that the existing networks surrounding the BREP have limited capacity to service the BREP. Extensive lengths of lead-in reticulation are required to meet the BREP's servicing requirements for the proposed land uses and underlying utility demand.

The assessment recommends the following items to address the significant cost implications of utility service:

- Extract and assess the electrical, stormwater, gas and telecommunication detail
- Explore potential alternative servicing strategies to optimise and improve the servicing strategy's efficiency
- Refine the utilities servicing assessment following resolution of the MWFC, including provision of road cross-sections, alignment, construction timing and potential staging considerations
- Collaboration with utility service providers as in integrated working group to explore co-location of infrastructure to optimise the overall land take and easement requirements.

## **SUSTAINABILITY**

### **Sustainable Development Opportunities Report, HipVHype, March 2024**

#### **What is the purpose of the report?**

Sustainability- Hype V Hype were engaged in 2022 to investigate sustainable development opportunities for BREP and potential for integration of sustainable built form outcomes at the site. The purpose of the report included

- Confirming key sustainability targets, strategies, initiatives and partnerships identified as being critical to its development
- Detailing key implementation considerations, mechanisms, stages, and delivery roles and partnerships for the VPA and the CoGB to consider and take forward as the project progresses
- Providing preliminary spatial implications for the initiatives put forward (if relevant)

#### **What do we know so far?**

The BREP is exposed to significant urban heat island effects due to lack of vegetation and canopy cover. Design will need to incorporate features that deliver cooling effects. BREP has significant potential to meet both environmentally sustainable and water sensitive design requirements.



## What does this mean for the Bendigo Regional Employment Precinct?

Recommendations to ensure planning and design enables a zero-carbon precinct, focused on energy and water efficiency and recycling.

Focus Areas for the BREP include:

- Zero carbon
- Climate Resilience
- Circular Economy
- Leadership and Governance

The DPO schedule will require development plans to provide an Environmentally Sustainable Design Assessment (ESD) which demonstrates how the use and development of the land can achieve ESD outcomes in accordance with any relevant CoGB or Victorian policies or strategies, such as Ministerial Direction 22: Climate Change Considerations.

## TRANSPORT

### Marong Transport Network Assessment, Stantec, November 2025

#### What is the purpose of the report?

The VPA commissioned Stantec to undertake a transport network assessment of the BREP and its impacts on the Marong road network. The purpose of the assessment is to confirm the transport infrastructure upgrades required to support the proposed planning scheme amendment to rezone the BREP land, and to ensure the surrounding transport network can accommodate the combined growth of both the BREP and the Marong Township.

This work directly informs the preparation of permit conditions and development plan requirements under DPO schedule, including:

- A Shared infrastructure plan, and
- Section 173 agreements outlining the mechanism for delivering or contributing financially towards State-managed transport intersection upgrades.

Th identified upgrades and the associated cost apportionments to the BREP form part of the recommendations of the BREP Guideline for Preparing a Shared Infrastructure Funding Plan for State Transport Infrastructure.

Through this process, the assessment seeks to provide a coordinated, cross-government basis for determining the scope, timing, and cost apportionment of network upgrades required to support development within BREP.

#### What do we know so far?

The existing network conditions can be summarised as follows:

- Arterial roads (Calder, Calder Alt, Wimmera Hwy) support heavy-vehicle freight routes (PBS Level 3 / A-Triple).
- Local access roads (Cemetery Rd, O'Sullivan's Rd, etc.) are mostly unsealed and to a low-standard.
- Limited public transport (one bus stop in Marong Township) and no active transport links near BREP.
- Freight and safety issues exist (e.g. bridge weight limits, recorded fatal crashes).

Assumptions were made to the future broader road network alongside the development of the BREP:

- The planned MWFC will run along BREP's northern frontage, diverting heavy vehicles from the township.
- Future transport modelling (to 2046) incorporates:
  - Full development of both BREP and the Marong Township growth areas.
  - Traffic growth assumptions from DTP's calibrated VISSIM microsimulation model and SIDRA intersection analysis. Traffic generation rates for the BREP are based on 2013 NSW industrial estate surveys, equivalent to approximately 2.3 vehicle trips per 100 sqm GFA per day
  - The planned MWFC is assumed to be operational in the ultimate 2046 scenario which absorbs a large share of regional freight and through-traffic volumes that would otherwise pass through the Calder Highway / Calder Alternative Highway intersection and the Wimmera Highway corridor through Marong. This reduces total vehicle and heavy-vehicle movements on the existing township network and at several key intersections.
  - The modelling identifies trigger points for each intersection upgrade (e.g. single-lane vs dual-lane roundabout, signalisation) based on the progressive development of BREP and the township in pre- and post-MWFC conditions.

Modelling result provides the evidence base for required upgrades, including those identified by Marong Township Structure Plan 2024:

- IT3 Intersection treatments at Calder Hwy / Calder Alt Hwy (signalisation with slip lanes),
- IT2 Calder Alt Hwy / Wimmera Hwy (roundabout) and  
IT5 Calder Hwy / Allies Rd (signalisation).

### **What does this mean for the Bendigo Regional Employment Precinct?**

The Marong Transport Network Assessment confirms the key transport upgrades and informs how the BREP will contribute to their delivery and funding under Schedule 34 to the Development Plan Overlay.

- The modelling identifies intersection upgrades to accommodate traffic generated by both the BREP and the Marong Township.
- Upgrades of IT2, IT3 and IT5 are triggered based on traffic thresholds linked to the proportion of BREP and township development.
- The planned MWFC will influence the ultimate scale and timing of intersection upgrades e.g. IT2.
- All developments within the BREP are liable for financial contributions toward the cost of the state-managed transport intersection upgrades identified in the Stantec report. These include but are not limited to IT2 (single-lane roundabout), IT3 (signalisation) and IT5 (signalisation).

The VPA prepared the BREP Guideline for Preparing a Shared Infrastructure Funding Plan for State Transport Infrastructure to incorporate the Stantec recommendations. The guideline establishes the framework for preparing a Shared Infrastructure Plan at the development plan approval stage under Schedule 34 to the Development Plan Overlay.

## 7.2 Relevant Planning Policies

### Clause 11 - Settlement

Clause 11 Settlement sets out the policy for directing growth in Victoria. It states that planning is to anticipate and respond to the needs of existing and future communities through provision of zoned and serviced land for housing, employment, recreation and open space, commercial and community facilities and infrastructure

The BREP will assist the facilitation of major growth and focus investment in Greater Bendigo as identified in the Victoria Settlement Framework plan at Clause 11.01-S by planning for a major employment centre which will contribute to accessible jobs and services for the regional community and enabling economic viability.

Clause 11.01-R sets regional policy in accordance with the Growth Plan, consistent with State Policy. The BREP is not identified as the Loddon Mallee South Regional Growth Plan predates the GBILDS.

Clause 11.01-L identifies the BREP as an investigation area in the Marong framework Plan and notes that development is to manage and the interface and integrate with the proposed Marong Western Freight Corridor.

The PSA proposes to include a new Clause 11.03-6L-04 to the Scheme which applies to land within the BREP. Its objective is to support the development of the BREP to become an industrial employment precinct that can support approximately 3000 jobs. and aims to:

- Facilitate the coordinated growth of the BREP and other areas for industrial activities to provide for the region's future employment needs.
- Ensure that industrial and development is sequenced to supply demonstrated regional economic and employment needs.
- Coordinate the sequencing of industrial land supply with the delivery of the required infrastructure and services including potable water, sewer, drainage, electricity, telecommunications and roads integrated into existing and future networks.
- Sequence and prioritise industrial land use and development in the BREP where access to the planned MWFC is provided.
- Ensure that sufficient undeveloped land is set aside in the BREP and other areas for the planned MWFC

Other relevant Settlement Policy provisions being considered by this draft Amendment include:

- Clause 11.02-1S Supply of urban land: To ensure a sufficient supply of land is available for residential, commercial, retail, industrial, recreational, institutional and other community uses.
- Clause 11.02-2S Structure planning: To facilitate the fair, orderly, economic and sustainable use and development of urban areas.
- Clause 11.02-3S Sequencing of development: To manage the sequence of development in areas of growth so that services are available from early in the life of new communities.
- Clause 11.03-2S Growth areas: To locate urban growth close to transport corridors and services and provide efficient and effective infrastructure to create sustainability benefits while protecting primary production, major sources of raw materials and valued environmental areas.

### Clause 12 – Environmental and Landscape Values

Clause 12 Environmental and Landscape Values sets out broad policy that aims to protect, restore or enhance biodiversity and conserve areas with environmental and landscape values. Relevant environmental and landscape values being considered by this draft amendment include:

- Clause 12.01-1S & 1L Protection of biodiversity: To enhance biodiversity and biolinks across Greater Bendigo.
- Clause 12.01-2S Native vegetation management: To ensure that there is no net loss to biodiversity as a result of the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation.
- Clause 12.03-1S River and riparian corridors, waterways, lakes, wetlands and billabongs: To protect and enhance waterway systems including river and riparian corridors, waterways, lakes, wetlands and billabongs
- Clause 12.05-2L Urban Forest Interface – Greater Bendigo: To protect the ecological values of forested private and public land around Bendigo from the impacts of urban development and reinforce the urban forest backdrop surrounding and dispersed within the Bendigo Urban Growth Boundary.
- Clause 12.06-1S Sustainable Environment: To protect and enhance tree canopy in urban areas. protected.

### **Clause 13 – Environmental Risks and Amenity**

Clause 13 Environmental Risks and Amenity states that planning should strengthen the resilience and safety of communities by adopting a best practice environmental management and risk management approach and that Planning should identify, prevent and minimise the risk of harm to the environment, human health, and amenity. This is through ensuring for land use and development compatibility and effective controls to prevent or mitigate significant impacts. Relevant clauses being considered by this draft amendment include:

- Clause 13.01-1S Natural hazards and climate change: To minimise the impacts of natural hazards and adapt to the impacts of climate change through risk-based planning.
- Clause 13.02-1S Bushfire planning: To strengthen the resilience of settlements and communities to bushfire through risk-based planning that prioritises the protection of human life.
- Clause 13.03-1S & 1L Floodplain management: To assist the protection of:
  - Life, property and community infrastructure from flood hazard, including coastal inundation, riverine and overland flows.
  - The natural flood carrying capacity of rivers, streams and floodways.
  - The flood storage function of floodplains and waterways.
  - Floodplain areas of environmental significance or of importance to river, wetland or coastal health
- Clause 13.04-1S Contaminated and potentially contaminated land: To ensure that contaminated and potentially contaminated land is used and developed safely.
- Clause 13.05-1S Noise management: To assist the management of noise effects on sensitive land uses.
- Clause 13.07-1S Land use compatibility: To protect community amenity, human health and safety while facilitating appropriate commercial, industrial, infrastructure or other uses with potential adverse off-site impact

### **Clause 14 – Natural resource management**

Clause 14 Natural resource management aims to preserve and enhance natural resources such as water, land, energy and extraction. Clauses considered by this draft amendment include:

- Clause 14.02-2S Water quality: To protect water quality.

## Clause 15 – Built environment and heritage

Clause 15 Built Environment and Heritage focuses of best practice-built environment to achieve high amenity while balancing character outcomes and both cultural and post-colonial heritage. Clauses considered by this draft amendment include:

- Clause 15.01-1S Urban design: To create urban environments that are safe, healthy, functional and enjoyable and that contribute to a sense of place and cultural identity.
- Clause 15.01-1L Urban Design – Greater Bendigo Industrial areas: Support a high standard of design through improved access, parking, site layout, landscaping and building design in existing industrial areas. Support the renewal of buildings in older industrial areas.
- Clause 15.01-2S Building design: To achieve building design and siting outcomes that contribute positively to the local context, enhance the public realm and support environmentally sustainable development.
- Clause 15.01.2L Environmentally sustainable development – Greater Bendigo: To achieve best practice in environmentally sustainable development from the design stage through to construction and operation.
- Clause 15.01-6S Design for rural areas: To ensure development respects valued areas of rural character.
- Clause 15.03-2S Aboriginal cultural heritage: To ensure the protection and conservation of places of Aboriginal cultural heritage significance. Clause 15.03-2L Aboriginal cultural heritage – Greater Bendigo: Protect areas of Aboriginal cultural heritage significance at Marong by sensitively designing and siting development to avoid any Aboriginal cultural heritage places and values, particularly on land adjoining Bullock and Fletcher Creeks.

## Clause 16 - Housing

Clause 16 Housing was not considered due to the BREP being entirely non-residential.

## Clause 17 – Economic development

Clause 17 Economic Development states planning is to help contribute to economic welfare by providing land, facilitating decisions and resolving land-use conflicts to help achieve the economic potential of the region.

Clause 17.03-1L Industrial land supply is proposed to be amended to include reference to the BREP. Reference is to be made in the 'strategies – Municipal' through planning for large scale industrial land and regional employment opportunities in the BREP and 'strategies – Specialised' through supporting new industries in the BREP such intensive industrial activities that require adequate separation distances.

Relevant clauses considered by this draft Amendment include:

- Clause 17.01-1S Diversified economy: To strengthen and diversify the economy.
- Clause 17.01-1L-01 Diversified economy – Greater Bendigo: Support development that maintains Bendigo as the key regional city and economic growth hub for the Loddon Mallee South region. Clause 17.01-1L-01 Diversified economy – Greater Bendigo
- Clause 17.01-2S Innovation and research: To create opportunities for innovation and the knowledge economy within existing and emerging industries, research and education.
- Clause 17.02-1S Business: To encourage development that meets the community's needs for retail, entertainment, office and other commercial services.

- Clause 17.03-1S Industrial land supply: To ensure availability of land for industry.
- Clause 17.03-1L Industrial land supply: To encourage diversification and expansion of the municipality's industrial base.
- Clause 17.03-2S Sustainable industry: To facilitate the sustainable operation of industry.
- Clause 17.03-3S Significant Industrial Land: To protect significant industrial land.

## Clause 18 - Transport

Clause 18 Transport states that planning should ensure a safe, integrated and sustainable transport network.

The DPO schedule considers the impacts of development on the existing and future transport networks by requiring a TIA for future development plans. Matters to be considered would include (but are not limited to) consideration of infrastructure upgrades and delivery, proposed internal road layouts, integrated pedestrian and bicycle networks and the identification of necessary mitigating works to road networks based on likely traffic generation. The DPO schedule has been designed in reference to the planned MWFC.

Relevant clauses considered are:

- Clause 18.01-1S Land use and transport integration: To facilitate access to social, cultural and economic opportunities by effectively integrating land use and transport.
- Clause 18.01-2S Transport system: To facilitate the efficient, coordinated and reliable movement of people and goods by developing an integrated and efficient transport system.
- Clause 18.01-3S Sustainable and safe transport: To facilitate an environmentally sustainable transport system that is safe and supports health and wellbeing.
- Clause 18.02 Movement Networks: To facilitate an efficient and safe walking network and increase the proportion of trips made by walking.
- Clause 18.02-1S Walking: To facilitate an efficient and safe walking network and increase the proportion of trips made by walking.
- Clause 18.02-2S Cycling: To facilitate an efficient and safe bicycle network and increase the proportion of trips made by cycling.
- Clause 18.02-3S Public transport: To facilitate an efficient and safe public transport network and increase the proportion of trips made by public transport.
- Clause 18.02-4S Roads: To facilitate an efficient and safe road network that integrates all movement networks and makes best use of existing infrastructure
- Clause 18.02-4S-02 Calder Freeway and Calder Highway environs – Greater Bendigo: To ensure that the use and development of land does not prejudice the levels of service, safety and amenity of the Calder Freeway and Calder Highway and to minimise any adverse effects of noise from traffic on sensitive uses.
- Clause 18.02-4S-02 Calder Freeway and Calder Highway environs – Greater Bendigo: To ensure that the use and development of land does not prejudice the levels of service, safety and amenity of the Calder Freeway and Calder Highway and to minimise any adverse effects of noise from traffic on sensitive uses.
- Clause 18.02-4L-03 Car parking - Greater Bendigo: Reduce car parking requirements where it is appropriate to facilitate the transition to sustainable methods of travelling.
- Clause 18.02-5S Freight: To facilitate an efficient, coordinated, safe and sustainable freight and logistics system that enhances Victoria's economic prosperity and liveability.



- Clause 18.02-5L Freight links – Greater Bendigo: To support the safe and efficient movement of freight through Greater Bendigo to maintain its status as a hub for freight activity while minimising impacts on residents.
- Clause 18.02-5R Freight links – London Mallee South: To support the effective and competitive operation of Victoria’s commercial trading ports at local, national and international levels, and to facilitate their ongoing sustainable operation and development.

## Clause 19 - Infrastructure

Clause 19 Infrastructure aims to set strategy around the timely, efficient and effective delivery of infrastructure, and ensuring adequate levels are provided.

The proposed DPO schedule will consider the requirement for contributions for infrastructure and the vesting of land from landowners and developers via a Section 173 agreement. For local infrastructure items, these will be identified via an Infrastructure Delivery and Staging Plan included with a development plan. State infrastructure items will include the safeguarding of land for the planned MWFC.

Relevant clauses considered are:

- Clause 19.01-1S Energy supply: To facilitate appropriate development of energy supply infrastructure.
- Clause 19.01-2S Renewable energy: To support the provision and use of renewable energy in a manner that ensures appropriate siting and design considerations are met.
- Clause 19.01-26 Renewable energy – Loddon Mallee South: Support and facilitate development in renewable energy, waste to energy, carbon sequestration and other new energy opportunities.
- Clause 19.02-6S & 6L Open space: To establish, manage and improve a diverse and integrated network of public open space that meets the needs of the community.
- Clause 19.03-1S Development and infrastructure contributions plans: To facilitate the timely provision of planned infrastructure to communities through the preparation and implementation of development contributions plans and infrastructure contributions plans.
- Clause 19.03-2S Infrastructure design and provision: To provide timely, efficient and cost-effective development infrastructure that meets the needs of the community.
- Clause 19.03-2L Infrastructure planning, design and provision – Greater Bendigo: Provide a consistent approach to the design and construction of infrastructure across the municipality.
- Plan and deliver services and provide infrastructure in Precincts 1 to 4 as shown on the Marong framework plan at Clause 11.01-1L Settlement - Marong in a timely and orderly manner based on a development contributions framework.
- Clause 19.03-3S & 3L Integrated water management: To sustainably manage water supply and demand, water resources, wastewater, drainage and stormwater through an integrated water management approach.

