

Merrifield North

Vision and Purpose Preliminary Report



/ March 2026

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TRADITIONAL CUSTODIANS

The Victorian Planning Authority proudly acknowledges First Peoples Communities throughout Victoria and their rich and enduring culture. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present.

We acknowledge Aboriginal people as Australia's First Peoples and as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the lands and waters and their inherent rights to Country. We respect this enduring connection.

We recognise and value the ongoing contribution of First Peoples Communities to Victorian life and how this enriches our connection to Victoria.

We embrace the Government's commitment to self-determination and seek to embed this in our work.

We acknowledge the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people as the Traditional Owners of the land to which the Precinct Structure plan applies.

The Merrifield North Precinct is located on the traditional lands of the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung People, who form part of the five clans of the Kulin Nation, represented by the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation.

We acknowledge the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung People 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.

Victorian Planning Authority's commitment

The Victorian Planning Authority commits to continuing to improve our practices, to better protect and acknowledge Aboriginal values and heritage in our plans, precinct structure plans and strategic documents.

The protection of tangible and intangible Aboriginal cultural heritage is an important part of continuing cultural practice, understanding history and recognition of the Traditional Owners of Victoria. Commonwealth and State Acts and Regulations provide protection of places and areas of Aboriginal cultural heritage significance.

The ultimate custodians of Aboriginal cultural heritage are Traditional Owners, including groups formally recognised as Registered Aboriginal Parties (RAPs) which are appointed by the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Council under the Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006. In 2025 there are 12 RAPs with decision-making responsibilities for approximately 77.5 per cent of Victoria. Traditional Owner Groups without formal recognition also have a vital role to play as key partners and stakeholders.

Strategic planning for Aboriginal cultural heritage also involves a range of different stakeholders including State Government agencies, local government, developers, landowners, and community groups.

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Level 26, 1 Spring Street
Melbourne VIC 3000
vpa.vic.gov.au

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INTRODUCTION

The Merrifield North Precinct Structure Plan (PSP) Vision and Purpose Session (the Session) was hosted by the Merrifield North project team on 28 July 2025. This team is now located within the Department of Transport and Planning, New Communities branch (DTPNC).

What was the Vision and Purpose Session?

The purpose of the Session was:

- To update key precinct stakeholders, including landowners, on the status of the project.
- To provide an overview of information shared through the pitching activities.
- To test and explore emerging themes, challenges and opportunities identified through the pitching activities.
- To collect feedback to help refine the emerging themes and prepare stakeholder priority outcomes, planning objectives, actions and a vision for the precinct that will form part of the next phase of planning work and technical assessments for the project.
- To outline the next steps for the Merrifield North PSP, including the resolution of the significance and extent to be retained of Inverloch Wetland (also known as 'Inverloch Swamp') and the alignment of Aitken Boulevard.

For an overview of the activities undertaken during the Session, refer to Appendix 1.

The Merrifield North project team would like to thank all stakeholders who attended and participated in the Session.



Purpose of this document

This report summarises what we heard from stakeholders during the Session. It also documents how this information has been used to develop a draft precinct vision, planning outcomes, planning objectives, actions, and clarity on the next steps in the process of developing a plan for Merrifield North. Information contained in this report is a continuation of the information and findings documented in the *Merrifield North Pitching Summary Report* (August 2025).

The final expression of the precinct Vision Statement will be confirmed during the stakeholder engagement process.

This report sits alongside other key background strategic documents for the project including:

- Statement of Common Ground.
- Thematic Statements.

These documents, alongside the outcomes from technical studies will be used to inform the draft Place Based Plan for the precinct.

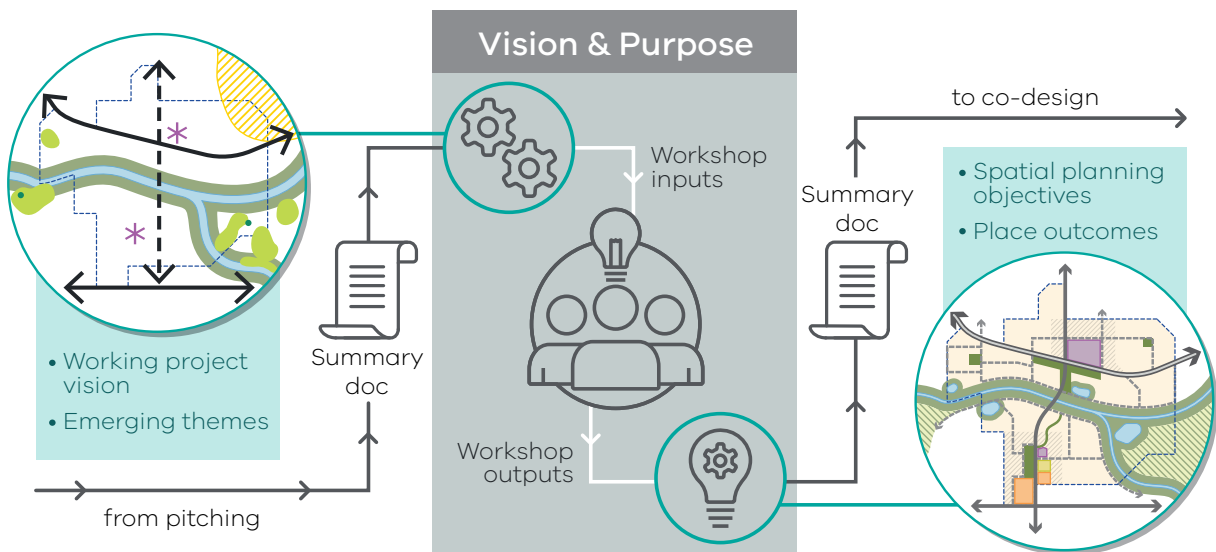
Who attended the Vision and Purpose Session?

Participants invited to the Session included all precinct stakeholders and were the same as those invited to participate in the pitching activities. The following groups attended:

- Dahua Group Australia
- Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA)
- Department of Transport and Planning -Transport (DTP-T)
- Friends of Merri Creek
- Hume City Council
- Insight Planning Consultants
- MAB Corporation
- Melbourne Water
- Merri Creek Management Committee (MCMC)
- Mitchell Shire Council
- Stockland Corporation Limited
- Tract
- Urbis
- Yarra Valley Water
- Windrock Group
- Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation (WWCHAC)

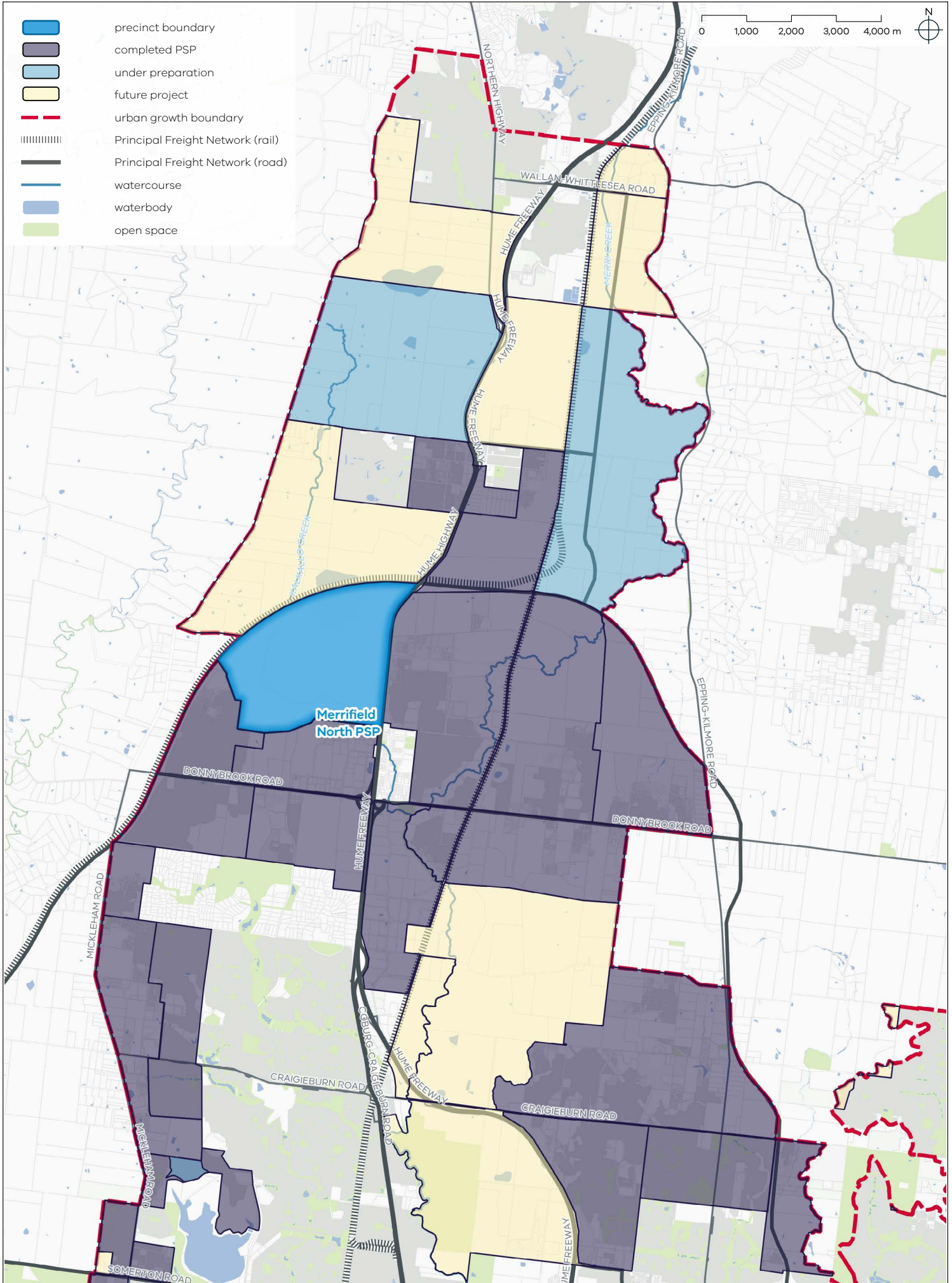
All precinct landowners and their representatives were invited to participate in the Session.

Figure 1: Vision and Purpose Process



Plan 1 – Employment and Activity Centres

Melton East Precinct Structure Plan



EMERGING THEME DEVELOPMENT

The Session explored four themes that emerged from the completed pitching activities, including:

- **Cultural Heritage and Environmental Values.**
- **High Quality Employment Precinct.**
- **Transport.**
- **Water and Drainage.**

The following sections of this report further explore these themes in response to what we heard during the session. Additionally, the development of a Statement of Common Ground will capture matters that need resolution, including differences between stakeholders with respect to the above themes.

Each theme section covers:

- **Stakeholder priority outcomes:** Key desired outcomes identified by stakeholders for the precinct, as communicated by project stakeholders during the session by theme.+
- **Planning objectives:** These adapt stakeholder priority outcomes into planning objectives for consideration and resolution through the PSP process.+
- **Relevant policy:** Outlines relevant policy associated with each theme.
- **Actions*:** Outlines the next steps for DTPNC or others to further explore and deliver on the stakeholder priority outcomes, objectives and actions for discussion with stakeholders.
- **Vision element:** Outlines the refined emerging themes based upon outcomes of the session that will be used to inform the vision that will be further tested with stakeholders.

+ Where priorities identified by stakeholders' conflict or are incompatible, all will be identified and converted to planning objectives. Resolution of this conflict will take place through the PSP process utilising evidence and information.

* Please note: Delivery of any action that is beyond the Merrifield North planning process as identified in the emerging themes section are advisory and will be subject to the determination of others.



EMERGING THEME 1: CULTURAL HERITAGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL VALUES



Determine and respond to cultural heritage and environmental values of the area.

Stakeholder Priority Outcomes

Precinct stakeholders identified the following planning priority outcomes for the Merrifield North precinct:

1. Retain, protect, and enhance the values of existing environmental assets, including Kalkallo Creek.
2. Enhance the environmental quality of the Kalkallo Retarding Basin and investigate its potential to be a Regional Active Open Space destination and place, rather than a water management asset, exclusively.
3. Ensure the future Aitken Boulevard alignment minimises impacts on the Kalkallo Retarding Basin and Biodiversity Conservation Areas while maximising frontage for employment uses.
4. Resolve differing views on extent and significance of the Inverlochy Wetland.
5. Protect items of potential cultural heritage significance including stony rises and Low Density Artefact Distributions (LDADs)

Planning Objectives

The above stakeholder priority outcomes are reflected in the following key objectives:

6. Assess the cultural heritage and values of the precinct, including Inverlochy Wetland and determine the extent to be retained.
7. Utilising appropriate planning requirements, Planning Practice Notes and PSP Guidelines, plan and manage key interfaces between developable land and key environmental assets such as the Kalkallo Retarding Basin and the adjacent Biodiversity Conservation Area/marram baba Merri Creek Regional Parklands.
8. Minimise environmental harm in interface areas between future industry and parkland or greenspaces through appropriate environmental and land use planning controls

Relevant policy

Direction within relevant policy that will also inform the plan for the Merrifield North includes:

- Plan for Victoria Pillars.
 - Sustainable environments.
 - Self-determination and caring for Country
- Precinct Structure Planning Guidelines: New Communities in Victoria Hallmarks.
 - High-quality Public Realm.
 - Performance Target T11: 'The open space network should seek to meet the following minimum targets:'
 - *'Within dedicated employment and/or economic activity areas, 2% of the net developable area for local parks'*
 - General Principle F11.4:
 - *'Public land set aside for utility or service infrastructure should be optimised and designed to be multifunctional where possible; providing land for infrastructure, amenity, environmental systems and for passive recreation (where safety risks can be managed)*

- Water Act 1989.
- Melbourne Strategic Assessment Program as part of the Commonwealth Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999.
- Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006.
- Built Environment Climate Change Adaptation Action Plan (DELWP, 2022).
- Yarra Catchment Integrated Water Management Plan (DEECA, 2023).
- Water is Life: Traditional Owner Access to Water Roadmap (DEECA, 2022).
- marram baba Merri Creek Regional Parklands Future Directions Plan (2023).
- Wurundjeri Strategic Aboriginal Heritage Assessment (2025)Actions

Actions

To explore and deliver upon the above planning outcomes and objectives for Merrifield North, DTPNC will undertake the following technical analyses that will shape precinct outcomes:

9. Assess the extent and significance of Inverlochy Wetland:
 - In conjunction with Melbourne Water, determine the existing extent of Inverlochy Wetland.
 - Working with the Traditional Owners, determine the cultural heritage and values associated with Inverlochy Wetland.
 - Determine the extent of Inverlochy Wetland to be retained based on the outcomes of the above actions.
10. Work with Melbourne Water to investigate the potential to integrate core wetland functions of Inverlochy Wetland, such as flood mitigation, within an enhanced and upgraded Kalkallo Creek catchment.
11. Conduct an Integrated Water Management assessment.
12. In conjunction with Melbourne Water, explore if the water related functions of the Kalkallo Retarding Basin are compatible with acting as a place of Regional Active Open Space (as identified within the Northern Growth Corridor Plan) or other potential alternate uses.

Technical information related to the above actions will inform the draft Merrifield North PSP and be made available for further discussion with precinct stakeholders. The above Outcomes, Objectives and Actions have been drafted without the input of a Cultural Values Assessment and Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment. The outcomes of these studies may impact the implementation of other actions within this theme.

Other priority outcomes that sit outside the Merrifield North planning process and will need to be undertaken by others include:

13. Embed cultural practices for future natural hazard management, waterway health and biodiversity restoration.

Vision element

The future vision should position the Merrifield North PSP in the following manner:

- An employment precinct that incorporates, celebrates, and enhances cultural heritage and values and the natural environment.

EMERGING THEME 2: A HIGH-QUALITY EMPLOYMENT PRECINCT



Support development of an employment precinct that will attract a range of economic development opportunities, industries, and jobs to the region.

Stakeholder Priority Outcomes

Precinct stakeholders identified the following planning priority outcomes for Merrifield North:

1. Maximise Net Developable Area (NDA) within the precinct to deliver critically needed industrial and employment land for the rapidly growing Northern Growth Corridor.
2. Enable high-quality built form outcomes that reflect contemporary employment land uses while maintaining flexibility to respond to potential constraints on NDA within the precinct

Planning Objectives

The above priority planning outcomes are reflected in the following key objectives:

1. Enable flexible land use planning that supports a dynamic employment market while optimising NDA across the precinct.
2. Integrate green and blue infrastructure in ways that enhance worker amenity and precinct identity, without compromising NDA.
3. Facilitate employment opportunities that complement surrounding strategic locations including the Beveridge Intermodal Freight Terminal (BIFT) and Cloverton Metropolitan Activity Centre (MeAC) while making efficient use of available NDA.
4. Acknowledge and capitalise on precinct-specific vantage points, surrounding landmarks and points of interest such as nearby volcanic rises and hills.

Relevant policy

Direction within relevant policy that will also inform the plan for the Merrifield North includes:

- Plan for Victoria Pillars.
 - Accessible jobs and services.
- Precinct Structure Planning Guidelines: New Communities in Victoria Hallmarks:
 - Connect People to Jobs and Services.
 - Thriving Local Economies.
 - Services and Destinations.
- Melbourne Industrial and Commercial Land Use Plan (DELWP, 2020)
- Victorian Industry Policy (DJSIR, 2025)
- Economic Growth Statement (DTF, 2024)

Actions

1. To explore and implement the above planning outcomes and objectives for Merrifield North, DTPNC will undertake the following technical analysis that will inform precinct outcomes:
 - Prepare an Economic and Employment Needs Assessment that:
 - Analyses current land use demands for existing and future employment land uses in the Northern Growth Corridor (NGC), including Merrifield North, specifically.
 - Analyses the potential agglomeration and/or complementary outcomes with other existing or planned employment areas across the NGC.
 - Provides a precinct-specific analysis of locational requirements and/or attractors for industrial employment activities including a review of planned infrastructure that will service Merrifield North.
 - Analyses qualitative features of contemporary employment precincts (e.g., high-quality public realm, climate resilience and circular economy principles, an enhanced natural environment, transport connectivity, active and public transport options, access to amenities etc.)
 - Analyses the timing of employment land consumption based on anticipated levels of land supply and take-up in the region.
 - 2. Complete technical assessments to inform final land use budget within an emphasis on maximising precinct NDA
 - 3. Develop precinct design guidelines that support flexible employment land uses while protecting NDA
 - 4. Assess integrating green and blue infrastructure opportunities in a way that enhances amenity and reduces urban heat without significantly reducing NDA

Technical information related to the above actions will inform the draft Merrifield North PSP and be made available for further discussion with precinct stakeholders.

The project steering groups, advisory groups and other interested parties' groups (landowners and environmental groups e.g. MCMC) will provide additional and ongoing inputs to the development of the PSP, including but not limited to additional feedback on the future employment uses for the Precinct.

Vision element

The future vision should position Merrifield North in the following manner:

- A high-quality contemporary employment precinct, that will provide critically needed land for future industry within the NGC while complementing emerging and existing industrial and commercial activity centres across the northern region. Future workers and visitors will be able to access a high-quality public realm, including a range of open space areas.

EMERGING THEME 3: TRANSPORT



Create a transport network that connects people to jobs and services efficiently.

Stakeholder Priority Outcomes

Precinct stakeholders have identified the following planning priority outcomes for Merrifield North:

1. Merrifield North will fully capitalise on the future Gunns Gully Road interchange, which will serve as the primary vehicular access point between the precinct and the broader principal road network. It will provide access to local employment opportunities for new communities on the eastern side of the Hume Freeway, supporting critical east-west vehicular movements in the NGC and sub-region.
2. The eventual Merrifield North transport network will reduce pressure on the existing freight network across the NGC by providing an alternative north-south arterial connection and an additional access and egress point to the Hume Freeway to reduce congestion pressure and provide alternatives if an accident occurs.
3. The Aitken Boulevard extension will complement the developing major north-south arterial road, and the Western Arterial road and Cloverton Boulevard in providing critical north-south access through the NGC.

Planning Objectives

The above priority planning outcomes are reflected in the following key objectives:

1. Establish a sub-regional arterial road network including Aitken Boulevard as a high-capacity bus capable road.
2. Contribute to a 1.6km grid of arterial roads across the outer north to increase accessibility and ease road congestion on existing infrastructure.
3. Provide appropriate connections to the future Outer Metropolitan Ring Road, capitalising on the project's future connections to existing industrial hubs in Melbourne's west.

Relevant Policy

Direction within relevant policy that will also inform the plan for Merrifield North includes:

- Plan for Victoria Pillars.
 - Accessible jobs and services.
- Precinct Structure Planning Guidelines: New Communities in Victoria Hallmarks.
 - Safe, Accessible and Well Connected.
 - Infrastructure Co-ordination.
 - Services and Destinations.
- VicTrack Rail Development Interface Guidelines (VicTrack, 2019)
- Hume Integrated Growth Area Plan (Hume City Council, 2015)

Actions

To explore and implement the planning outcomes and objectives for Merrifield North, the DTPNC will undertake the following technical analysis that will inform planning outcomes:

1. Prepare an Integrated Transport Assessment (ITA) Report that:
 - Assesses current transport conditions on the existing precinct transport network.
 - Articulates the active and public transport network requirements for the precinct.
 - Assesses key precinct transport network issues, opportunities, and constraints.
 - Assesses the impact of proposed transport infrastructure on hydrology outcomes for the precinct within the context of potential increased flood risk.
 - Identifies required transport infrastructure and staging to align with future precinct development staging.
2. Prepare Strategic Transport Modelling that identifies key transport infrastructure demands.

Technical information related to the above actions will inform the draft Merrifield North PSP and be made available for further discussion with precinct stakeholders.

Vision Element

The future vision should position Merrifield North in the following manner:

- A future precinct that capitalises on its strategic locational advantage of proximity to existing and future road infrastructure, including upgrades to the Gunns Gully Road Interchange and future delivery of Aitken Boulevard, providing and expanding critical access across Melbourne's northern region.



EMERGING THEME 4: WATER AND DRAINAGE



Manage water and drainage solutions on site efficiently while protecting the natural environment.

Stakeholder Priority Outcomes

Precinct stakeholders have identified the following planning priority outcomes for Merrifield North:

1. The precinct's hydrological assets are integrated into its design to enhance drainage performance, contribute to public amenity, and incorporate natural values features.
2. Water is celebrated as a defining feature of the precinct, contributing to identity, investment attraction and ecological value.
3. Industrial/employment development and drainage infrastructure are integrated to deliver both positive economic and environmental outcomes.

Planning objectives

The above priority planning outcomes are reflected in the following key objectives:

1. Apply Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) and Integrated Water Management (IWM) principles and approaches to manage stormwater, improve precinct amenity, and protect natural systems.
2. Use existing precinct water assets (such as the Kalkallo Retarding Basin (KRB) and Kalkallo Creek) to maximise opportunities for passive and active recreation.
3. Manage sodic soils and protect waterways, including Kalkallo Creek and Merri Creek through innovative water management strategies that also attempt to reduce infrastructure costs and deliver natural outcomes.

4. Prevent untreated runoff entering waterways through stormwater harvesting and reuse, potentially integrated into appropriate adjoining industrial land uses.
5. Deliver a transport network that considers increased flood risks across the precinct, including anticipated increased flood risk associated with the KRB.

Relevant policy

Direction within relevant policy that will also inform the plan for Merrifield North includes:

- Plan for Victoria Pillars.
 - Great places, suburbs, and towns.
 - Sustainable environments.
- Precinct Structure Planning Guidelines: New Communities in Victoria Hallmarks.
 - High-quality Public Realm.
 - Infrastructure Co-ordination.
- PSP Notes: Integrated Water Management (Growth Areas Authority).
- Integrated Water Management Framework for Victoria (DEWLP, 2017).
- Healthy Waterways Strategy 2018 – 2028 (Melbourne Water).
- Yarra Catchment Integrated Water Management Plan (DEECA, 2024).
- Water is Life: Traditional Owner Access to Water Roadmap (DEECA, 2022).

Actions

To explore and deliver upon the planning outcomes and objectives for Merrifield North, the DTPNC will undertake the following technical analysis that will inform the plan outcomes for Merrifield North:

1. Prepare an Integrated Water Management Assessment that:
 - Identifies potential Integrated Water Management opportunities, regarding stormwater, sewage/wastewater, and alternative water sources.
2. Investigate economic and operational opportunities for integrating harvested stormwater into future industrial processes.
3. Ensure waterways and drainage corridors are integrated as part of the active transport network and ensure safe active transport connectivity to open space and surrounding residential development.

Vision element

The future vision should position Merrifield North in the following manner:

- An employment precinct that encourages effective responses to stormwater management, including for industrial developments, to enhance natural amenity while minimising harm from development on natural waterways.
- Protection and restoration of natural systems particularly those associated with Kalkallo Creek, Kalkallo Retarding Basin, and the Biodiversity Conservation Areas.



EMERGING VISION



Given the unique position of the simultaneous development of a PSP for Merrifield North and resolving the extent and significance of Inverloch Wetland and the Aitken Boulevard alignment and design, an iterative approach will be taken to developing the precinct vision. This approach will acknowledge the key precinct opportunities already highlighted by previous and ongoing stakeholder engagement and collaboration, while respecting the ongoing nature of approaching the precinct's main barriers to successful development.

As has been previously indicated through due diligence and as reflected in the North Growth Corridor Plan (NGCP), and Economic Growth Statement released by the Department of Treasury and Finance (December 2024), Merrifield North will be a future employment/industrial precinct. An objective common to all PSPs is the maximisation of net developable area. This primary objective will, as in all PSPs, need to be carefully balanced to ensure that future employment land is delivered in a way that carefully considers cultural and environmental values across the precinct. The Economic Growth Statement included two metrics to inform the development of the Merrifield North PSP:

- The PSP is expected to be completed by the end of 2028.
- The PSP is anticipated to provide sufficient employment land to support the creation of 4,700 jobs.

Considering this context, the following high-level aspects have been identified as crucial to informing the precinct vision and ensuring the successful and sustainable development of Merrifield North:

- A contemporary employment precinct that provides workers and visitors alike with access to a high-quality public realm, underscored by green and blue infrastructure, and accessible public spaces. It will provide critically needed land for future industry within the NGC while complementing developing and existing industrial and commercial activity centres across the Northern Region.
- A future precinct that capitalises on its strategic locational advantage close to existing and future road infrastructure, particularly an upgraded Gunns Gully Road and future Aitken Boulevard, providing and expanding access across Melbourne's Northern Region.
- A modern employment precinct that embraces and innovatively integrates unique water management practices to enhance natural amenity while minimising harm on natural waterways from urban development.
- Champion the presence of Kalkallo Creek through the precinct, particularly the Kalkallo Retarding Basin and Biodiversity Conservation Areas.

In addition to the valuable stakeholder feedback captured as part of the Visioning Workshop Session and post-session feedback, the development of a vision for Merrifield North will be guided by additional analysis of the discussed themes. The DTPNC project team will be responsible for developing background papers for each respective theme that highlights their importance and relevance to the precinct and development of the PSP as well as collaboration and escalation options with other government and project stakeholders.

METHODOLOGY

Precinct Stakeholder Post-Session Feedback

During the Session, stakeholders were encouraged to provide feedback either during or immediately after the Session via a questionnaire/survey prepared by DTPNC. Links to the survey were shared during the Session via QR codes provided throughout the venue. The survey provided an additional, alternate option for precinct stakeholders to provide supplementary feedback shared during the Session.

The survey collected basic information from respondents, including name, contact details and the address(es) of the land parcel(s) either in the respondents' ownership or owned by a stakeholder represented by the respondents. Additionally, the survey included prompts on landowner intentions for associated landholdings and their vision for the precinct.

At the time of writing this report, eight (8) individual responses to the survey had been submitted and incorporated into this report.

Additional Stakeholder Feedback

Between the hosting of the Vision and Purpose Session and preparation of this report, the following precinct stakeholders have provided feedback:

- Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation
- Taylors – Urban | Infrastructure
- Urbis
- MAB Corp

Feedback from these stakeholders has been captured and retained by the project team and will be considered when developing the vision for the precinct.



NEXT STEPS

Further Precinct Stakeholder Feedback

In addition to the above-noted survey, the DTPNC Merrifield North project team has prepared an additional stakeholder survey to be circulated to all precinct stakeholders at various key points in the project. This survey is intended to provide the project team with a deeper understanding of stakeholder sentiment around communication and transparency, project collaboration and relationship building, and project direction and engagement. The survey is also intended to capture any otherwise unshared precinct stakeholder feedback on the project progress.

Vision Statement

The DTPNC Merrifield North Project Team will prepare a precinct Vision Statement informed by the above Emerging Vision. A draft Vision Statement will be shared with all precinct stakeholders.

Statement of Common Ground

A draft Merrifield North Statement of Common Ground will be shared with all precinct stakeholders. The Statement of Common Ground will summarise the areas of agreement amongst precinct stakeholders to support effective and joint working, or 'common ground'. It will articulate outstanding or unresolved matters and consider potential solutions to these matters, evaluate options, and outline a preferred option (or set of options by issue/theme) towards resolution of the issue.

The Statement of Common Ground will be an iterative process, with two key refinements over time acting as a record of progress in addressing strategic matters amongst the precinct stakeholders.

Thematic Statements

For each of the key project themes (e.g., jobs/employment, Integrated Water Management, Drainage Services Scheme, cultural values and transport amongst others), a statement will be prepared that summarises key related considerations. The DTPNC Merrifield North project team will seek feedback on these Thematic Understanding Statements from all precinct stakeholders in late 2025.

Technical Assessments

Several technical assessments have been commissioned to inform planning for the Merrifield North PSP. These have been separated into two categories:

- Category 1: Actioning Due Diligence Recommendations.
- Category 2: Precinct Planning.

Category 1 technical reports include:

- *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment (ACHIA)*.
- *Cultural Values Assessment (CVA)*.
- *Palaeoecological Assessment*.

Following completion of the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment, the Cultural Values Assessment and the Palaeoecological Assessment, a Statement of Significance will be prepared by the Merrifield North PSP project team and Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation. The Statement of Significance will describe any cultural values associated with Inverloch Wetland. Additionally, the PSP will be informed by the findings and recommendations of all technical studies.

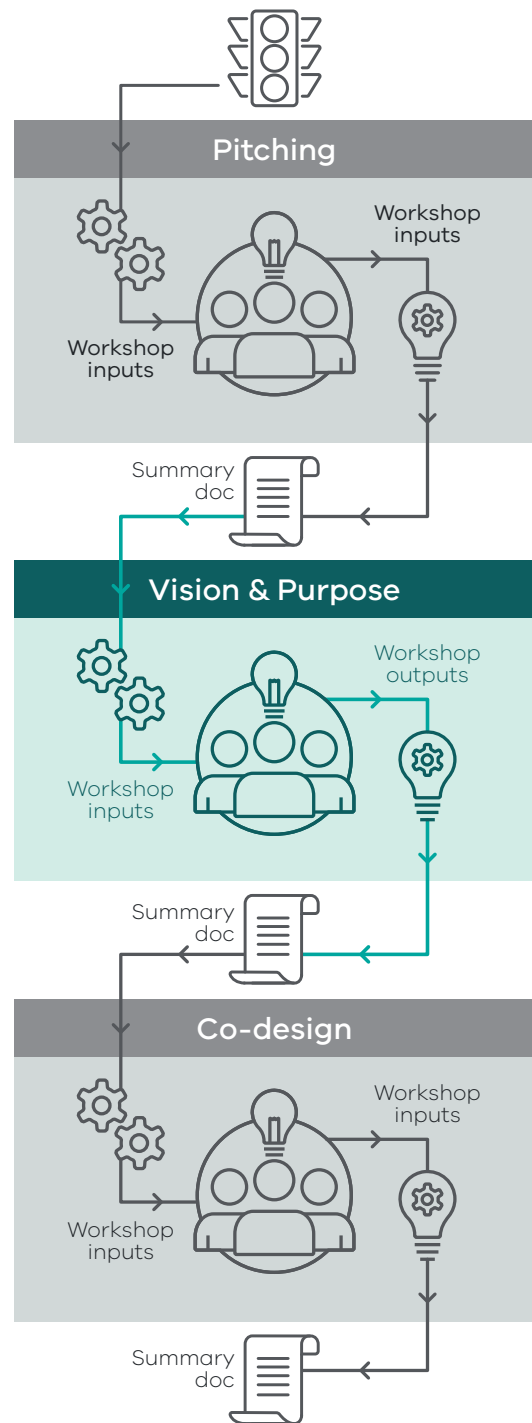
Category 2 technical assessments will be undertaken progressively in line with project needs. These assessments are based upon the actions summarised in this report.

Category 2 technical reports include:

- *Revised Land Capability Assessment.*
- *Arboriculture Assessment.*
- *Bushfire Risk Assessment.*
- *Post Contact Heritage Assessment.*
- *Economic and Employment Needs Assessment.*
- *Landscape Character and Visual Impact Assessment.*
- *Integrated Water Management Assessment.*
- *Integrated Transport Assessment.*
- *Strategic Transport Modelling.*
- *Utility Servicing Assessment.*
- *Safety Management Strategy.*
- *Atiken Boulevard, Western Arterial and OMR Assessment.*
- *Gunns Gully Road/ Western Arterial/ OMR Interchange Design.*

A Climate Change Consideration Report will also be prepared by the project team with consultation from appropriate internal stakeholders. This report will assist in informing how the preparation of the future Planning Scheme Amendment has responded to the appropriate requirements of Ministerial Direction 22: Climate Change Consideration which commenced on 11 September 2025.

Figure 2: PSP performance summary



APPENDIX 1

How participants were involved

The Merrifield North PSP Vision and Purpose Session were run in person hosted at the Department of Transport and Planning offices. Participants were invited through a RSVP process included alongside summaries and minutes from the individual pitching sessions.

The session commenced with a brief introduction from the DTPNC on current project status, overview of key messages from the pitching sessions, opportunities, and challenges, followed by a short presentation from representatives from Melbourne Water and DTP-T regarding the Development Services Scheme (DSS) and transport network development, respectively.

The session culminated in an interactive workshop activity. To facilitate diverse discussion, participants were intentionally seated across 4 tables where each table featured a combination of stakeholders representing landowners, consultants, developers, government, and community groups. A facilitator (a project team member) was responsible for overseeing and guiding the participants in the activity and were each assigned one of 4 of the 5 emerging themes identified from the pitching sessions. These themes were:

1. Cultural and Environmental Heritage
2. A High-Quality Employment Precinct
3. Transport and Connectivity
4. Water and Drainage

Activity sheets were developed for each theme, which contained 2 prompts for participants to respond to. The first prompt asked participants to identify positive examples or characteristics of each theme and then elaborate on how they could be reproduced in Merrifield North. Each table was allocated a 10 – 12-minute period to complete the activity for each theme, before the facilitator would rotate to the proceeding table, completing an entire rotation of the room within a 45-minute period. Each facilitator then summarised the key messages discussed across all the tables for their respective themes.

Each table was affixed an interactive QR code that directed participants to a feedback survey to provide additional commentary for the workshop activity and the session more generally.

At the end of the session, each activity sheet was collected by a DTPNC project member/facilitator where the affixed stakeholder inputs were entered into a spreadsheet to act as a digital copy of the original activity sheets. These answers were analysed and thematically coded to determine the planning outcomes, objectives and actions associated with each of the pitching session themes outlined in both the Pitching and Visioning Summary Reports.



Department
of Transport
and Planning