

# Merrifield North

Precinct Structure Plan

## Background Report



/ August 2026

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

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The Victorian Planning Authority proudly acknowledges the First Peoples of Victoria. We acknowledge their ongoing strength in practising the world's oldest living culture.

The Merrifield North Precinct Structure Plan applies to the traditional Country of the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung. We acknowledge the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung as the Traditional Owners and custodians of their unceded Country, and pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging. We acknowledge their continuing connection to and care for this land, waters and skies, and recognise their inherent right to speak and make decisions for Country. We recognise the long-lasting, far-reaching and intergenerational consequences of colonisation and dispossession, and that the impacts of these continue today.

We also acknowledge the diversity of First Peoples' communities associated with this Country, and the hard work of many generations of First Peoples who have fought for their rights to be recognised. First Peoples' self-determination is a human right enshrined in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Victoria's early land use planning and development laws and processes disregarded the input, interests, rights, and perspectives of First Peoples. Through this Plan, we seek to build genuine partnership with the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung to support self-determination and better outcomes for First Peoples. During the implementation of this Plan, we encourage the Responsible Authority to work in partnership with Traditional Owners to acknowledge this.

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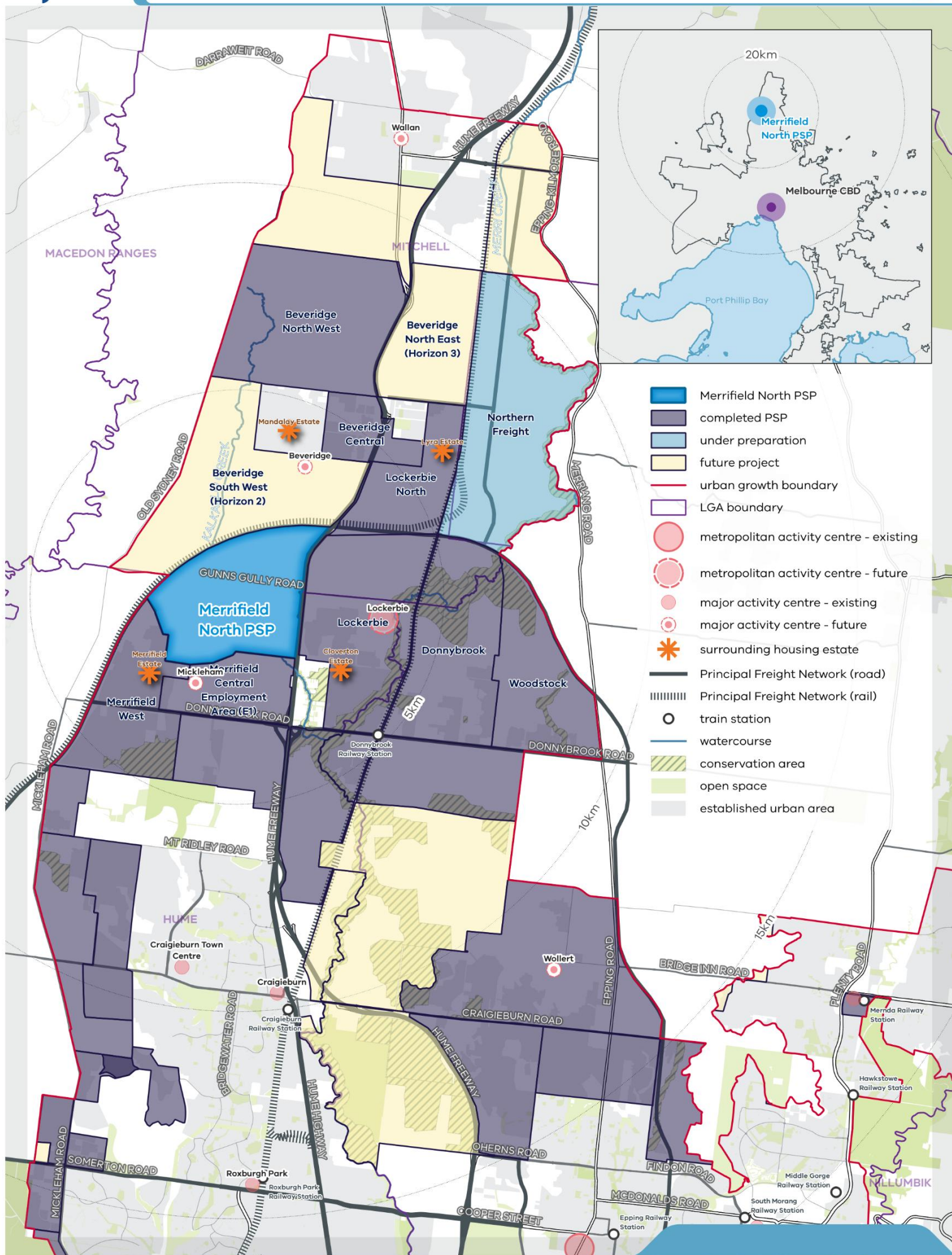
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# 1 INTRODUCTION

The Victorian Planning Authority (VPA), now part of the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) New Communities Division, in partnership with Hume City Council and Mitchell Shire Council (Council) has prepared a Precinct Structure Plan (PSP) and Infrastructure Contributions Plan (ICP) for the Merrifield North precinct.

A PSP is a land use and infrastructure plan to guide the development of an area. An ICP imposes infrastructure contributions from developers and/or landowners to fund the provision of works, services and facilities, and the securing of land for public purposes. The PSP provides a long-term vision for the future development of Merrifield North – a 970.4 hectare precinct in the Northern Growth Corridor that will deliver approximately 4,700 jobs.

Merrifield North is identified as an employment PSP in the North Growth Corridor Plan and as a State Significant Industrial Precinct (SSIP) in *Plan for Victoria (2025)*. Its importance is highlighted by its designation as a Horizon 2 project in *A 10-Year Plan for Melbourne's Greenfields (2024)* and, more recently, as a priority project for immediate action in the *Economic Growth Statement (2024)*. In summary, the Merrifield North PSP:

- Supports the development of an employment precinct that will attract a range of economic development opportunities, industries, and jobs to the region.
- Creates a transport network that connects people to jobs and services efficiently.
- Determines and responds to the cultural heritage and environmental values of the area.
- Manages water and drainage solutions on-site efficiently while protecting the natural environment.

## 1.1 Purpose of this report

The Background Report summarises the key planning assessment and outcomes that have informed the preparation of the Merrifield North PSP.

More specifically, this report:

- Summarises the strategic and physical context of the precinct.
- Identifies the land use and development needs for the precinct.
- Identifies the planning assessment and DTP's position on key issues impacting the PSP.
- Outlines how the precinct performs against the PSP Guidelines performance targets.
- Outlines how the technical studies have helped to inform the preparation of the PSP.

**Note:** The Background Report does not provide an assessment of each of the PSP Guidelines features, as they may not be applicable to this precinct.

## 1.2 PSP Guidelines & PSP 2.0 process

The PSP Guidelines is a Victorian Government initiative to ensure that DTP and other planning authorities prepare plans for places that utilise best-practice and create liveable new communities. The PSP Guidelines ensures a consistent, best-practice approach to the PSP process and outlines the intended performance of new 20-minute neighbourhoods to be articulated by PSPs.

In accordance with Ministerial Direction 12 Urban Growth Zone (UGZ) of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*,

*"In preparing an amendment to incorporate a precinct structure plan in a planning scheme, or change an incorporated precinct structure plan, a planning authority must include in the explanatory report an explanation of how the precinct structure plan, or any changes to it, are in accordance with the Precinct Structure Planning Guidelines, including any general principles and performance targets specified in the Precinct Structure Planning Guidelines."*

The PSP 2.0 process is established under the PSP Guidelines and sets aspirational targets, including co-design of the PSP, streamlining PSP preparation, and optimising the PSP product to embrace innovation and delivering government policy.

Figure 1 illustrates how best practice inputs identified through the PSP process feed into the PSP Guidelines Integrated Framework to deliver a PSP.

The PSP 2.0 process aims to:

- Achieve up-front, early resolution of issues.
- Gain better and earlier information on infrastructure demands to inform agency planning and budget bids.
- Update guidance on PSP content, reflecting new government policy and promoting innovation.
- Provide stronger guidance in PSPs for development staging.

Further information on the PSP 2.0 process can be found on the [VPA website](#).

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

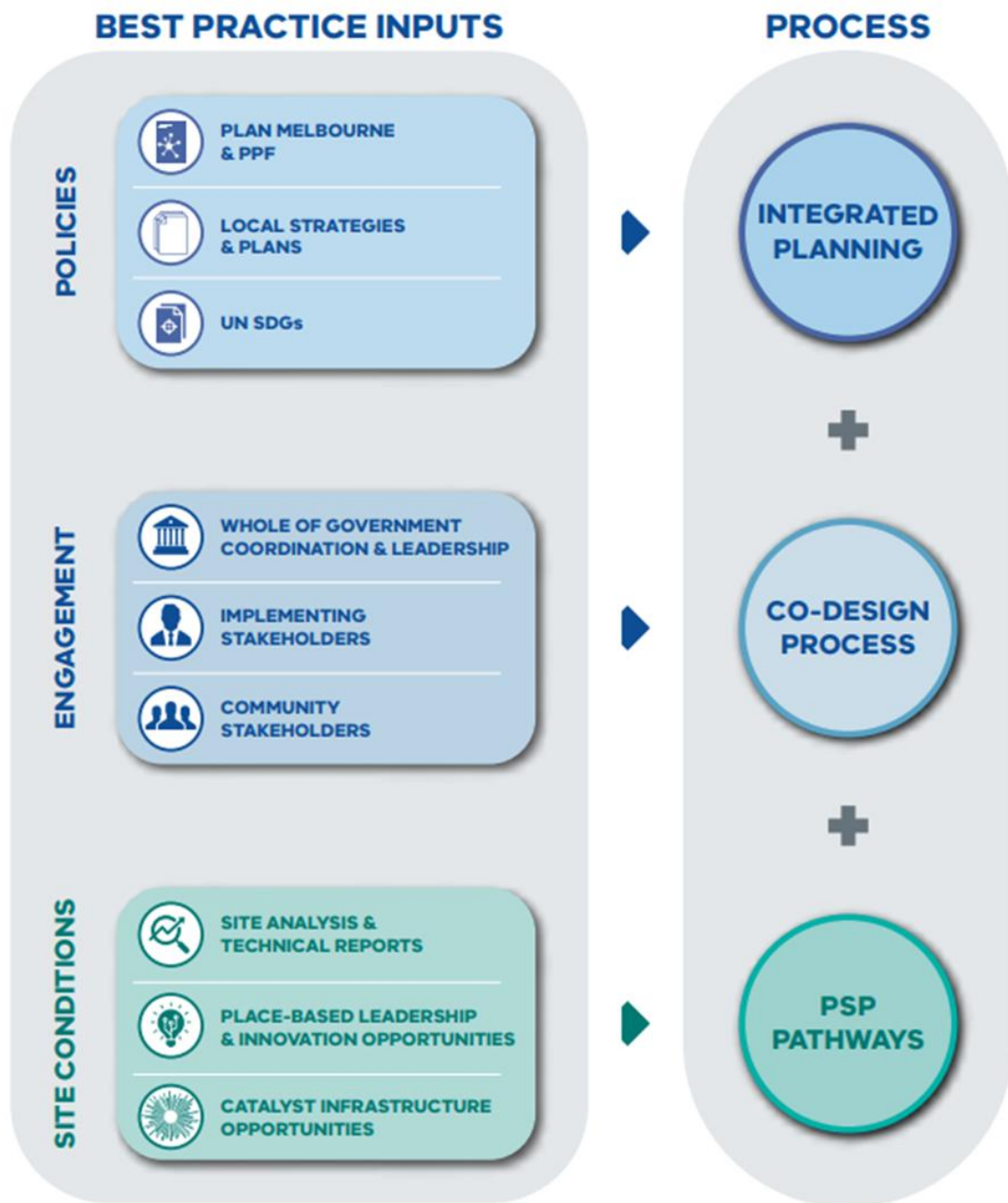


Figure 1 Framework for delivering PSPs

### 1.3 PSP Guidelines in Merrifield North

The Merrifield North PSP is an employment PSP that seeks to deliver outcomes responsive to the precinct features and the surrounding area. The context of the surrounding area is outlined in this report and provides the rationales for the nuanced approach undertaken in this PSP.

The PSP Guidelines has a hierarchy of elements to explain what needs to be considered and delivered in a PSP (see Figure 2). Elements are grounded in state policy and strategy or key future directions for greenfield precincts as determined by the DTP through the preparation process.

The framework for delivering PSPs in accordance with the PSP Guidelines includes a purpose and place-based vision, place-based objectives, principles and performance targets. These frameworks sit within the hierarchy of elements under the 20-minute neighbourhood metric. Successful implementation of both the coordination and innovation pathways will require significant stakeholder buy-in, and a greater effort and commitment from stakeholders will be required to pursue the innovation pathway for desired outcomes.

PSPs make use of these (and other tools) to give expression to the vision and objectives, including plans, diagrams, tables, and requirements. Further, PSPs provide a mechanism for implementation through guiding the preparation and assessment of planning permit applications for subdivision, use and development.

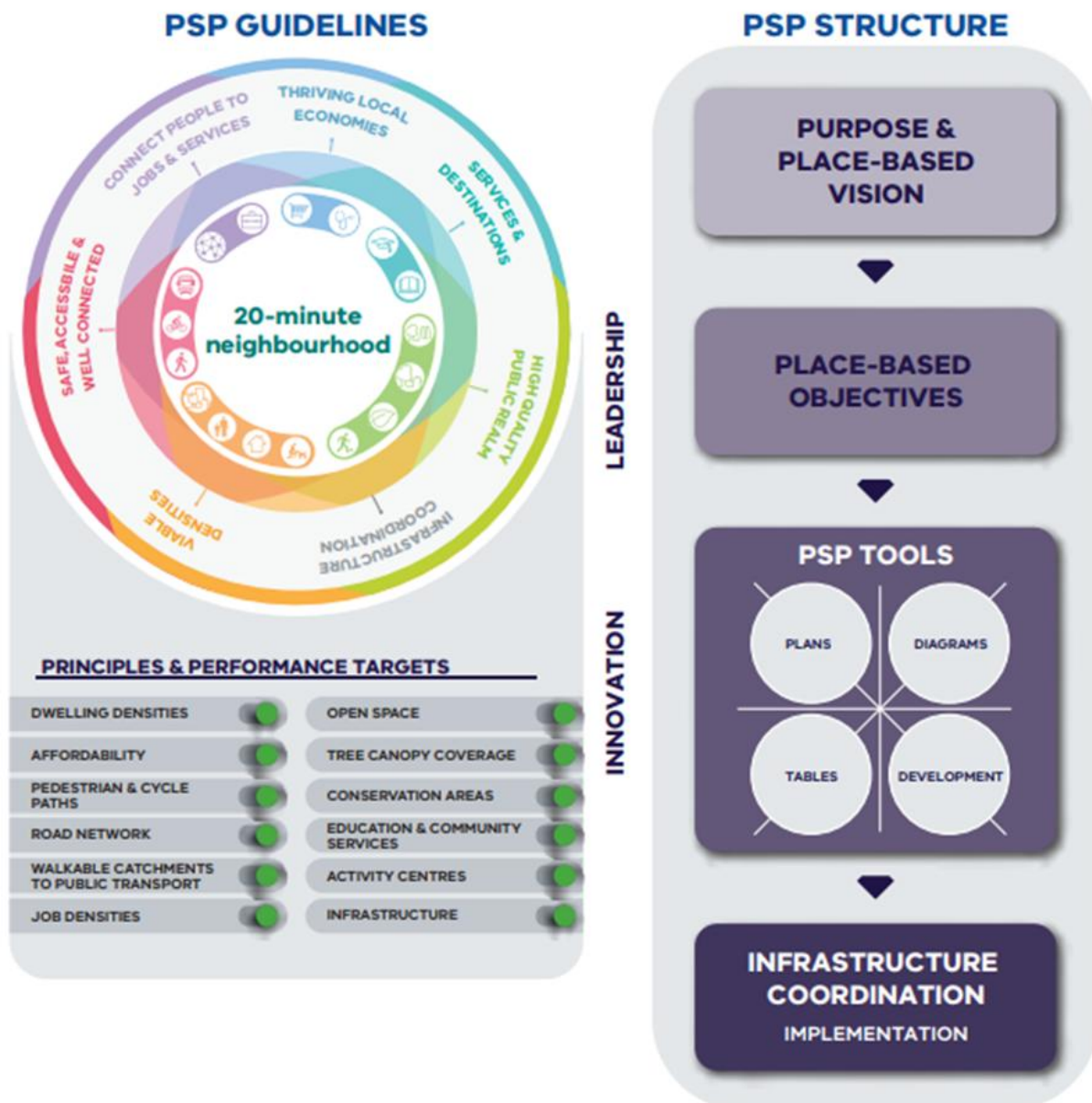


Figure 2 Hierarchy of elements

## 1.4 Progressive certainty

A progressive certainty approach has been applied to enable the Merrifield North PSP to advance to public consultation in a timely manner. It is an incremental process where we work closely with our project stakeholders to bring progressively more refinement to key inputs or decisions. We use progressive certainty when resolution of an issue depends on information that is only partially available. It is also applied where work is proceeding concurrently with the PSP.

This means some information from draft technical assessments are used in the drafting of the PSP prior to public consultation. These technical assessments will be updated and finalised prior to PSP gazettal. Please refer to Table 4 in Section 3.6 Technical reports for the listed technical assessments.

Where applicable, the PSP seeks to identify the specific components of the plan that will be informed by technical assessments which are under preparation. Relevant components that may be updated have been highlighted in red throughout the report. Readers are advised that the content within these marked areas is provisional and may be revised in line with the outcomes of the technical assessments.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

## 2 STRATEGIC CONTEXT

### 2.1 Policy and legislation context

#### 2.1.1 Federal policy and strategies

##### ***Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999***

The *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) provides a legal framework to protect and manage nationally and internationally important flora, fauna, ecological communities, and heritage places defined in the EPBC Act as matters of national environmental significance. Areas within the Merrifield North precinct have been identified for conservation purposes consistent with the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy (BCS) under the EPBC Act. The Merrifield North PSP and the draft amendment provide statutory tools to ensure adequate protection of these conservation areas consistent with the EPBC Act.

See more: [Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999](#)

#### 2.1.2 State policy and strategies

##### ***Plan for Victoria (2025)***

*Plan for Victoria* was released by the Victorian Government in March 2025. It provides high-level strategic guidance for land use and development across Victoria by 2050.

Planning for the Merrifield North PSP implements the pillars identified in *Plan for Victoria*, particularly Pillar 2: accessible jobs and services. Merrifield North precinct is identified as an area for the 10-year plan for greenfields on Map 3. It is also identified as an employment PSP and SSIP on Map 7 and Map 12. This recognises the precinct's role as one of Melbourne's economic strengths.

See more: [Plan for Victoria](#)

##### ***Economic Growth Statement (2024)***

The Economic Growth Statement identifies the need to unlock industrial land to support business investment, expansion and innovation across Victoria. As part of this commitment, it brings forward planning for the Merrifield North precinct as an immediate action to increase available industrial land, with planning commencing in 2024/25 and to be completed by the end of 2028. The Statement highlights Merrifield North's strategic location near the future Cloverton Metropolitan Activity Centre, its role in supporting industrial and employment land supply in Melbourne's northern growth corridor, and its capacity to deliver up to 4,700 jobs.

See more: [Economic Growth Statement](#)

##### ***A 10-Year Plan for Melbourne's Greenfields (2024)***

*A 10-Year Plan for Melbourne's Greenfields* is the Victorian Government's commitment to a concrete greenfield planning program to enable industry and government agencies to plan and invest with certainty. Merrifield North is identified as a Horizon 2 project for commencement between financial years 2025/26 and 2028/29 (see Figure 3). The subsequent *Economic Growth Statement (2024)* brings forward this timeframe, reflecting the precinct's strategic importance in delivering industrial land supply.

See more: [A 10-Year Plan for Melbourne's Greenfields](#)

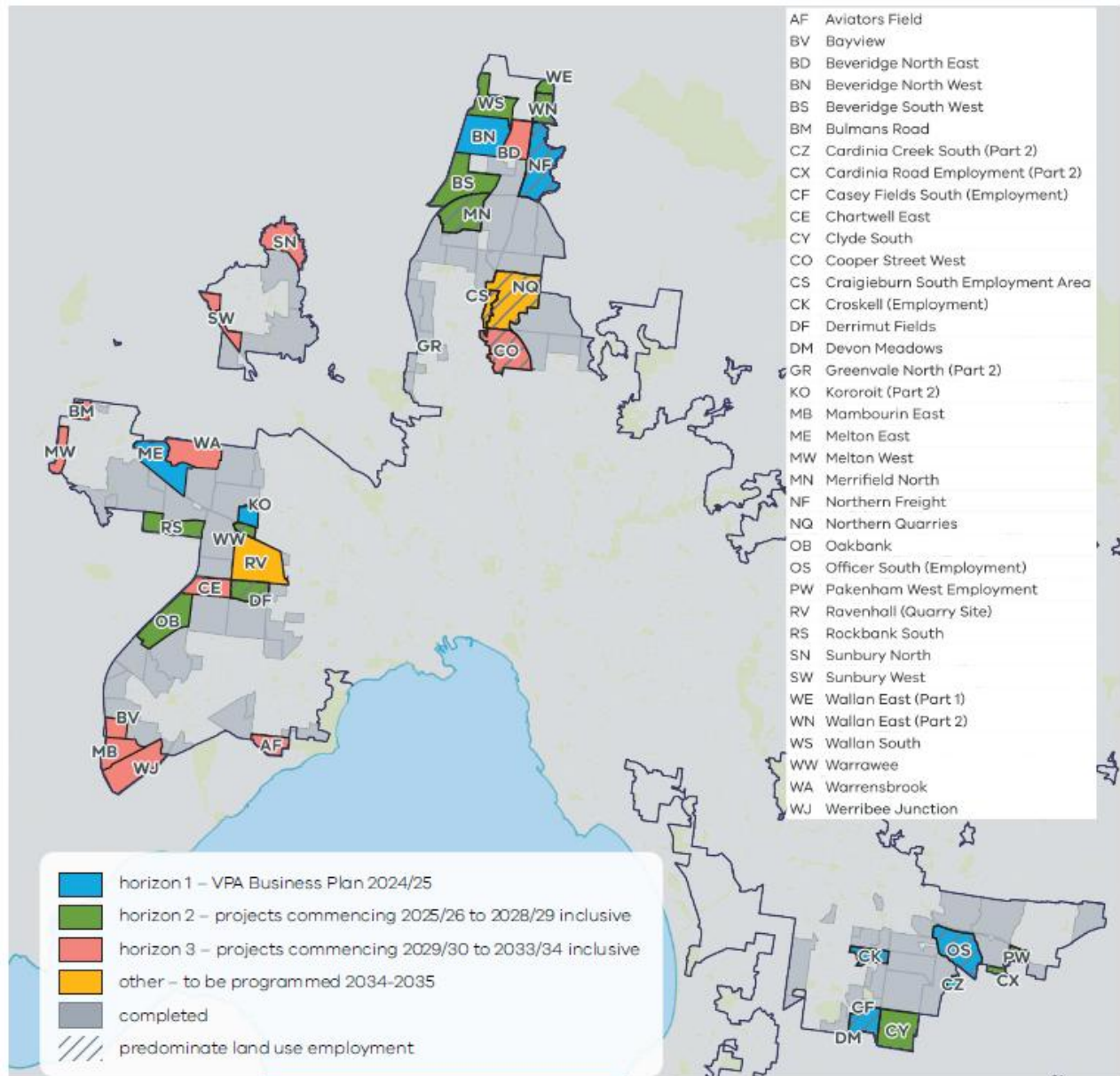


Figure 3 A 10-Year Plan for Melbourne's Greenfields

#### A 10-Year Plan for Industrial Land (2025)

A 10-Year Plan for Industrial Land sets out 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.

The Northern region is expected to play a key role in accommodating demand, with growing levels of take-up. Future rezoning of Merrifield North will deliver key supporting infrastructure in the region. Based on DTP internal analysis (2025), Merrifield North has the capacity to deliver 4,700 jobs (subject to revision as precinct planning progresses and developable area is refined).

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

### **Victorian Freight Plan 2025-2030**

The *Victorian Freight Plan* is the Government's plan to meet the challenge of higher freight volumes as Victoria's population continues to grow and demand for freight continues to increase. The Plan outlines the Government's high-level objectives, vision and actions to deliver these objectives over the next five years to support thriving freight supply chains in Victoria.

The Merrifield North PSP implements objectives from the Plan, particularly Objective 1: Ensure availability of fit-for-purpose freight network and gateway capacity to meet current and future need. Planning for Merrifield North aligns with maintaining capacity of industrial land and provides industry with the confidence it needs to invest in the continued growth and development of Victoria's freight and logistics industry.

See more: [Victorian Freight Plan](#)

### **Victoria's Housing Statement (2024)**

*Victoria's Housing Statement – The Decade Ahead 2024-2034* establishes the State's goal to deliver 800,000 new homes over the next decade and forms part of a broader plan to accommodate 2.24 million new homes by 2051 across Victoria. The Statement emphasises that new housing must be delivered close to jobs, transport, schools and services. Growth areas will play an increasingly important role in meeting this statewide supply.

Merrifield North is one of the 21 priority projects delivering sustainable greenfield land supply and more jobs close to home whilst more housing choices are planned in all parts of Victoria.

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

### **North Growth Corridor Plan (2012)**

The *Growth Corridor Plans* were prepared by the VPA and released by the Minister for Planning in June 2012. The plans seek to accommodate a substantial amount of Melbourne's future housing and employment land supply over the subsequent 30 to 40 years. The plan provides a framework to guide the planning of new communities in each corridor.

Merrifield North PSP is located within the North Growth Corridor Plan. The precinct is identified as an industrial precinct on the employment concept plan (see Figure 4). The Corridor Plan also identifies the conservation area west of the Hume Freeway due to the presence of Golden Sun Moth, Matted Flax-lily, and important habitat for the Growling Grass Frog and waterbirds. The Corridor Plan recognises the potential for additional access onto the Hume Freeway, north and south of the Outer Metropolitan Ring (OMR) and the need for interchanges. The Principal Public Transport Network (PPTN) is identified in the corridor plans and should be planned for in the PSP.

See more: [North Growth Corridor Plan](#)

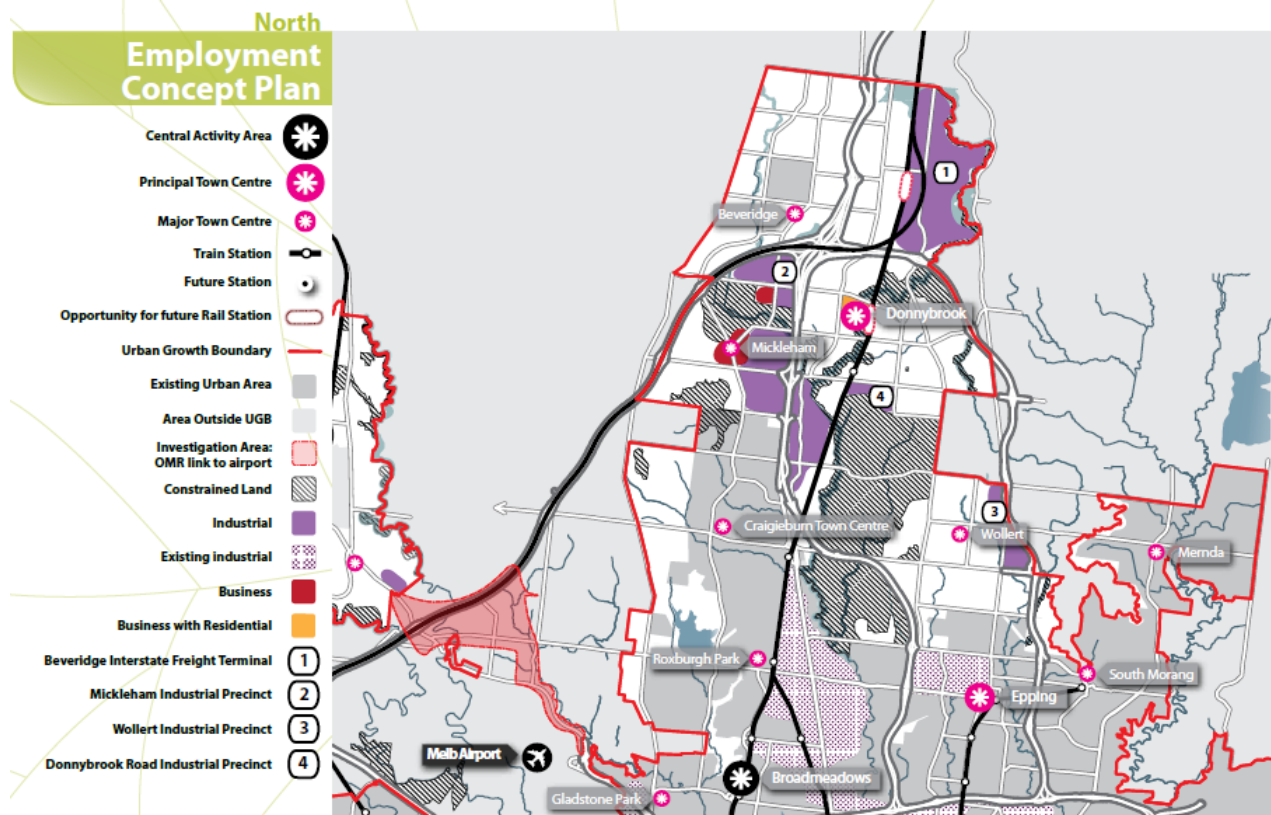


Figure 4 North Growth Corridor Employment Concept Plan

#### **Melbourne Strategic Assessment Program (2009)**

The *Melbourne Strategic Assessment (MSA)* program refers to *Delivering Melbourne's Newest Sustainable Communities: Program Report*, endorsed under the Federal *EPBC Act* in 2010. The MSA focuses on matters of national environmental significance. Four conservation strategies were developed as part of the MSA commitments, including the *Biodiversity Conservation Strategy (BCS)*. The Merrifield North precinct is wholly situated within the MSA area. The MSA informs the biodiversity considerations in the PSP.

See more: [MSA Program](#)

#### **Biodiversity Conservation Strategy for Melbourne's Growth Corridor (2013)**

The BCS covers the biodiversity offsets required under the *EPBC Act* and is the overarching strategy for protecting biodiversity in Victoria's growth corridor. Merrifield North PSP contains two BCS areas in the southern portion of the precinct (see Figure 5). BCS area 23 protects high-quality native grassland that contains Golden Sun Moth whereas BCS area 34 protects important populations of Growling Grass Frog. The BCS areas have high conservation values and form an important stretch of Kalkallo Creek. The extent of the BCS areas are fixed and should be considered in the design of the PSP.

See more: [BCS for Melbourne's Growth Corridor](#)

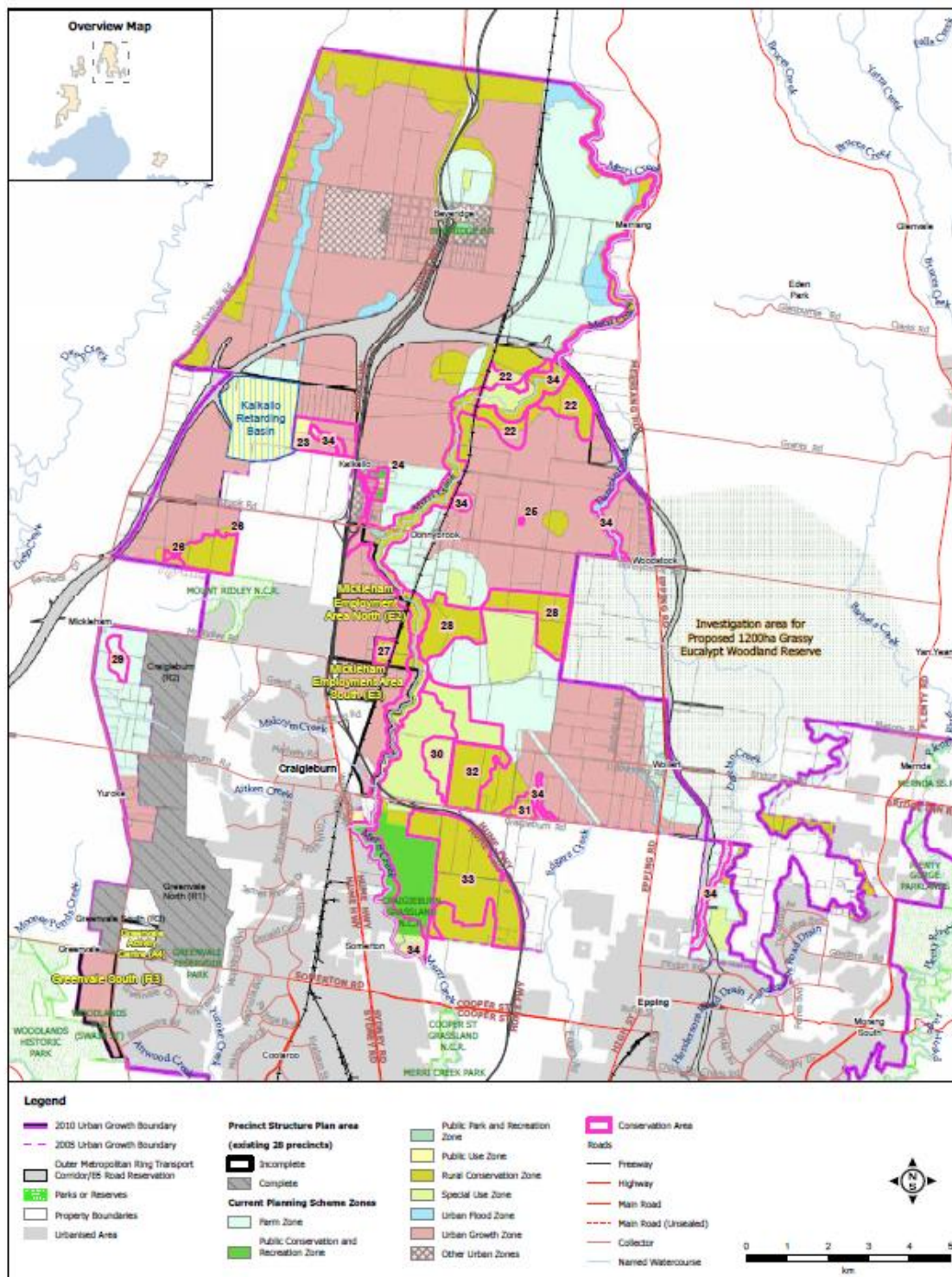


Figure 5 Conservation Areas Northern Growth Corridor

### 2.1.3 Metropolitan, regional and local policies

#### **Melbourne Industrial and Commercial Land Use Plan (2020)**

The *Melbourne Industrial and Commercial Land Use Plan* (MICALUP) assesses current and future needs for industrial and commercial land across metropolitan Melbourne. It provides a planning framework to support state and local governments to more effectively plan for future employment and industry needs.

The northern region has good connections to transport gateways and the existing freight network. By 2031, the region's population is projected to grow by around 375,100 to reach approximately 1.3 million. By 2031, it is projected that approximately 138,000 additional jobs will be created across the region.

The Plan reinforces the strategic importance of Merrifield North by identifying the precinct as a SSIP. This indicates its development should be prioritised to deliver employment opportunities.

See more: [Melbourne Industrial and Commercial Land Use Plan](#)

### **Healthy Waterway Strategy 2018-2028**

The *Healthy Waterway Strategy* identifies the objectives and targets to contribute to the best waterway outcomes across the five major catchment regions (Yarra, Maribyrnong, Dandenong, Werribee and Westernport). Merrifield North is within the Yarra catchment and the Merri Creek upper sub-catchment. The co-designed catchment program sets out key values and waterway condition targets for the Merri Creek upper sub-catchment.

See more: [Healthy Waterway Strategy](#)

### **Hume Integrated Water Management Plan 2020-2025**

The *Hume Integrated Water Management (IWM) Plan* outlines the Council's approach to key and emerging issues in the water industry and beyond. One of the identified issues is the waterway health of Kalkallo Creek. The waterway is currently in relatively good condition but will be most impacted by urban development and increased volume of stormwater runoff.

Through stormwater management, the plan aims to protect the health and water quality of waterways and the values. The action plan includes ensuring that IWM as specified within PSPs are implemented throughout the subdivision planning permit approval and implementation processes and establishing a process by which best practice technical standards and requirements for greenfield streetscape IWM asset design can be developed and integrated into the VPA Engineering Standards for Subdivisions.

See more: [Hume IWM Plan](#)

### **Open Space Strategy for Everyone (2021)**

The metropolitan open space strategy, led by the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Change (DEECA), guides all levels of government in the planning, management, and delivery of a quality open space network over the next 30 years. The vision for the strategy is as follows:

*Melbourne is a city in nature with a flourishing and valued network of public open space that is shared and accessible by everyone.*

The wallan wallan Regional Park feasibility study is identified as part of the Suburban Parks Program initiative and subject to further whole-of-government commitments. The proposed extent of this regional park overlaps with the Kalkallo Retarding Basin in the Merrifield North precinct.

See more: [Open Space Strategy for Everyone](#)

### **Hume Open Space Strategy (2025)**

The Hume Open Space Strategy is a strategic document which sets priorities for the next 20 years to guide open space contribution delivery. The vision of the strategy is as follows:

- Hume's high-quality open space network supports the health and wellbeing of our diverse community and celebrates the waterways, natural values and Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung cultural values of our landscape.

The following priorities are relevant to the Merrifield North precinct:

- The OMR to include an off-road shared path linear reserve that will support cycling between open spaces to help resolve the shortage of nearby open space for residents.
- Redevelopment of the Kalkallo Retarding Basin to support the ecological and cultural values of Regional Parklands and catchment.
- Include linear access connections along Kalkallo Creek and social recreation opportunities. The State Government to secure the adjoining BCS area 23.

See more: [Hume Open Space Strategy](#)

### **Mitchell Open Space Strategy 2013-2023**

The *Mitchell Open Space Strategy* is a strategic document which provides a planning and development framework for the provision of open space and off-road trails in the Shire to 2023. The vision of the strategy is as follows:

- To provide open spaces that serve the needs of people of all ages, cultural backgrounds and abilities.

The strategy regarding open space in non-residential areas is relevant to the Merrifield North precinct:

- Urbanisation in the Shire will increase provision of business and industrial areas.
- There will be demand by visitors and employees for off-road trails for cycling and walking, as well as open space for relaxation, social gathering and enhanced visual amenity.
- Community and recreation component of a levy calculated in the revision of the development contribution system will generally only be applied to residential development unless justification is demonstrated.

See more: [Mitchell Open Space Strategy](#)

**Note:** Mitchell Shire Council is reviewing the *Mitchell Open Space Strategy 2013-2023* and developing a [discussion paper](#) to inform the preparation of the *Mitchell Open Space Strategy 2024-2034*, which guides the delivery of open space for the next 10 years.

The discussion paper identifies opportunities for the proposed wallan wallan Regional Park to incorporate and connect volcanic hills, wetlands and waterways within the Shire.

## **2.1.4 Whole of Country Plan**

The Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung *Whole of Country Plan 2025-2035* was developed by Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation to communicate Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people's vision, priorities, goals, and objectives for the future. This includes Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung cultural objectives for managing Country and cultural protocols to achieve this. The *Whole of Country Plan* outlines goals for enhancing the value, protection, and rehabilitation of Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Country (including all elements of the natural environment), culture and people.

See more: [Whole of Country Plan](#)

## 2.1.5 Hume and Mitchell Planning Policy Framework

The Planning Policy Framework contains statewide, regional and local planning policies which articulate the land use and development outcomes sought by the Hume and Mitchell Planning Schemes. Below are the key policy influences that have been considered in the planning for the Merrifield North PSP.

**Clause 11.01-1R (Settlement-Metropolitan Melbourne)** supports urban growth in Hume and Mitchell to meet the needs of Melbourne's rapidly growing population. Merrifield North precinct is identified as the SSIP on the *Melbourne Settlement Framework Plan*.

**Clause 11.02 (Managing Growth)** enables sufficient development capacity and orderly sequencing of development to meet the needs of current and future Victorians. The development of the Merrifield North PSP aligns with the clause by delivering industrial land in preferred locations to meet forecast demand and planning for infrastructure and service delivery in areas of growth.

**Clause 11.03-2S (Growth Areas)** encourages urban growth close to transport corridors and services and provides efficient and effective infrastructure to create sustainability benefits while protecting valued environmental areas. The planning of Merrifield North PSP will provide significant local employment opportunities, better transport choices, and respond to climate change and environmental sustainability.

**Clause 12.01 (Biodiversity)** ensures planning for the protection and conservation of Victoria's important areas of biodiversity. The biodiversity outcomes of the precinct must be undertaken in accordance with the *EPBC Act* approvals and the *BCS for Melbourne's Growth Corridors*.

**Clause 12.03 (Water Bodies and Wetlands)** protects and enhances the environmental, cultural and landscape values of all waterway systems including rivers, riparian corridors, waterways, lakes, wetlands and billabongs. The strategies and guidelines will inform the planning of the Kalkallo Creek riparian corridor in the Merrifield North precinct.

**Clause 13.01 (Climate Change Impacts)** identifies the need to minimise the impacts of natural hazards and urban heat, and to adapt to the impacts of climate change through risk-based planning. The Merrifield North PSP should respond to the risks associated with climate change in planning and management decision-making processes.

**Clause 13.02-1S (Bushfire Planning)** strengthens the resilience of settlements and communities to bushfire through risk-based planning that prioritises the protection of human life. The entire Merrifield North precinct has been designated as a Bushfire Prone Area. There is no Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO) applied within the precinct. Bushfire hazard identification and assessment must be undertaken according to the clause.

**Clause 13.03-1S (Floodplain Management)** assists the protection of life, property and community infrastructure from flood hazard, the natural flood carrying capacity of rivers, streams and floodways, the flood storage function of floodplains and waterways, and the floodplain areas of environmental significance. Identified land affected by flooding in the precinct should be planned according to relevant strategies and guidelines.

**Clause 13.04-2S (Erosion and Landslip)** identifies the protection of areas prone to erosion, landslip or other land degradation processes when considering the use and development of land.

**Clause 13.04-2L (Erosion and Landslip)** (Mitchell) ensures development in areas where there is erosive or sodic soil is remediated or can be managed without detriment to development.

**Clause 13.05-1S (Noise Management)** ensures development is not prejudiced and community amenity and human health are not adversely impacted by noise emissions. The planning of Merrifield North should minimise the impact on human health from noise exposure to occupants of sensitive land uses (residential use and

school) through suitable building siting and design, urban design and land use separation techniques as appropriate.

**Clause 13.06-1S (Air Quality Management)** assists in the protection and improvement of air quality in land use planning. To improve air quality, the planning of Merrifield North precinct should consider integrating transport and land use planning to improve transport accessibility and connections, providing infrastructure for walking, cycling and public transport, and providing suitable separation between land uses that pose a human health risk.

**Clause 13.07-1S (Land Use Compatibility)** protects community amenity, human health and safety while facilitating appropriate commercial, industrial, infrastructure or other uses with potential adverse off-site impacts. The planning of Merrifield North precinct should ensure the use of land is compatible with adjoining and nearby land uses.

**Clause 14.02 (Water)** assists the protection and restoration of catchments, waterways, estuaries, bays, water bodies, groundwater and the marine environment. The planning of the Merrifield North precinct should undertake appropriate measures on clean and high-quality drinking water provision, impacts on downstream water quality, natural drainage corridors, stormwater flow from developed areas, environmental qualities of waterways, and coordination of activities with catchment management authorities.

**Clause 15.03 (Heritage)** ensures the conservation of places of heritage significance and protection and conservation of places of Aboriginal cultural heritage significance. The planning of Merrifield North precinct should identify, assess and document the protection and conservation of pre-contact and post-contact Aboriginal cultural heritage places.

**Clause 17.01-1L-01 (Diversified Economy)** (Mitchell) supports the early planning and development of Merrifield North in the North Growth Corridor Plan for employment uses. The clause supports uses on adjacent land that will have synergies with the Beveridge Interstate Freight Terminal. The freight terminal will connect with Merrifield North precinct via the planned OMR.

**Clause 17.03 (Industry)** ensures the availability of land for industry and encourages well-planned and located industrial development. Merrifield North is identified as SSIP, the precinct should have good access for employees, freight and road transport, and identify appropriate buffer areas between the proposed industrial land and nearby sensitive land uses.

**Clause 18.01 (Land Use and Transport)** facilitates efficient, coordinated, sustainable and reliable movement of people and goods by developing an integrated transport and land use plan. Merrifield North precinct should plan and develop the land use and movement networks to balance competing demands for road space and function along transport corridors. This includes the OMR, Gunns Gully Road, Gunns Gully Road Interchange Aitken Boulevard and Western Arterial Road.

**Clause 18.02 (Movement Networks)** facilitates an efficient and safe movement network through walking, cycling and public transport. Merrifield North precinct should plan and develop an integrated and active road network for arterial and local roads, PPTN and, shared pedestrian and bike paths.

**Clause 19.01-3S (Pipeline Infrastructure)** ensures the development of pipeline infrastructure is safely delivered. The Western Outer Ring Main (WORM) gas pipeline enters at the western boundary of Merrifield North precinct and runs adjacent to Gunns Gully Road on its south side. The planning for the gas pipeline should have adequate buffers to sensitive land uses with minimal impacts on waterways, flora and fauna and other environmentally sensitive sites.

**Clause 19.03 (Development Infrastructure)** facilitates the timely provision of planned infrastructure to communities through the preparation and implementation of an ICP. An ICP has been prepared in support of the Merrifield North PSP which outlines infrastructure funding for the precinct.

## 2.1.6 Ministerial Directions

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

### **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 in this employment precinct) or childcare (which could be developed in the precinct).

This 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 the preparation of the Land Capability Assessment, several sites within the Merrifield North precinct have been identified as having medium potential for land contamination.

The proposed rezoning to the Industrial 1 Zone (IN1Z) predominantly provides for manufacturing, industrial, warehouse, service industry, and supporting commercial uses, which are generally not classified as sensitive uses under Ministerial Direction 1. Consequently, most IN1Z uses can occur on potentially contaminated land without triggering Ministerial Direction 1'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. In this case, 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.

### **Ministerial Direction 11 – Strategic Assessment of Amendments**

This direction ensures a comprehensive strategic evaluation of a planning scheme amendment and the outcomes it produces. The Merrifield North PSP will be implemented through an amendment to the Hume and Mitchell Planning Scheme GC295. This draft amendment has been assessed in accordance with the criteria set out in Ministerial Direction 11 and the implementation of the objectives of planning in Victoria by providing for the fair, orderly, economic and sustainable use of land identified for urban purposes.

The draft amendment has addressed environmental impacts as the pattern of land use and development was guided by technical studies and policies for the area relating to flora and fauna, flooding and drainage. **The draft amendment is subject to change once the technical works are finalised.** The draft amendment has addressed the relevant social and economic effects and is expected to have a positive social and economic effect through the creation of employment opportunities. The draft amendment has considered the relevant social, environmental, and economic effects and it will result in a net community benefit. The explanatory report for draft amendment GC295 includes a full assessment of this direction.

### **Ministerial Direction 12 – Urban Growth Areas**

This direction aims to manage the provision of sustainable and coordinated urban development in growth areas. The direction applies to the preparation of any planning scheme amendment that provides for the

incorporation of a PSP in the scheme or the introduction of, or changes to, provisions in a schedule to the UGZ. The explanatory report for draft amendment GC295 includes a full assessment of this direction.

### **Ministerial Direction 19 – Amendments that may result in Impacts on the Environment, Amenity and Human Health**

This direction requires 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 the use or development of land that may result in significant impacts on the environment, amenity, and human health due to pollution and waste.

The EPA will be engaged during the public consultation of this draft amendment.

### **Ministerial Direction 22 – Climate Change Considerations**

This direction requires planning authorities to integrate climate change considerations into planning 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 comply with this direction, climate resilience considerations are adapted in various technical studies and the design of the precinct, including, but not limited to:

- Bushfire Risks Assessment to identify bushfire risks responses in the precinct, such as required setbacks between future urban areas and open spaces, conservation areas, and low threat vegetation.
- Mitigating and adapting to flood risks with the use of water infrastructure, siting and the design of drainage reserve.
- IWM Assessment to identify and respond to flooding and water movement through the precinct.
- Design and planning for Kalkallo Creek waterway corridor.
- Land Capability Assessment to identify the likelihood of sodic and acid soils and the risks of landslip and landslides.
- Plan for a minimum of 30% potential canopy tree coverage within the public realm and open space according to PSP target performance 13.
- Plan for passive irrigation of street trees according to PSP performance target 14.
- Utility Servicing Assessment to assess the existing utility conditions and future servicing requirements to ensure a well-considered and sustainable outcome for utility servicing.

A Climate Change Consideration Report will be prepared as part of the draft amendment.

## **2.1.7 Current zones and overlays**

Most of the land in the Merrifield North precinct is zoned UGZ. The southwest portion of the precinct is zoned Public Use Zone – Service and Utility (PUZ1) and a small portion of land to the north of Gunns Gully Road is zoned Farming Zone (FZ). Some irrigation channels to the north of the precinct are in the Urban Floodway Zone (UFZ). See [Figure 6](#) below.

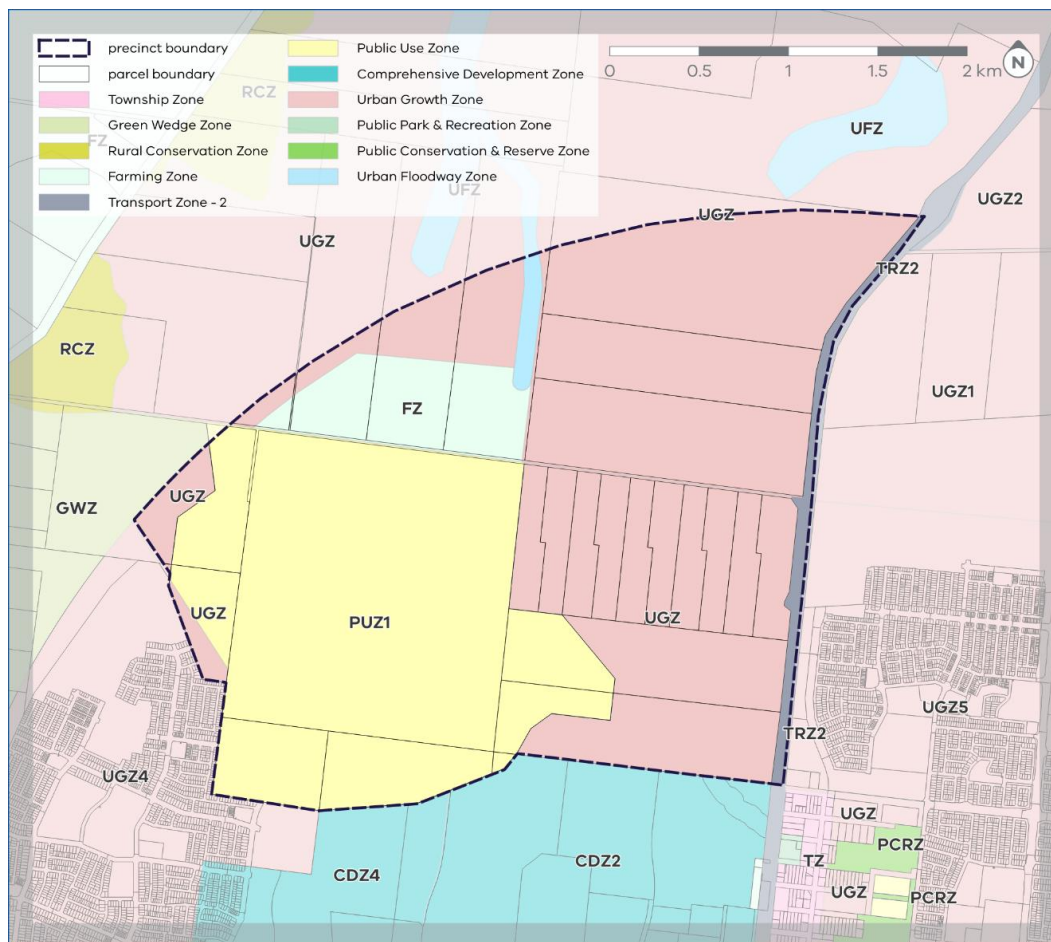


Figure 6 Current planning scheme zones

Kalkallo Creek runs through the precinct from northwest to southeast and is subject to a Floodway Overlay (FO). The Kalkallo Retarding Basin located in the southwest, owned by Melbourne Water is subject to a Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO). LSIO also applies to the southeast portion of Kalkallo Creek. See Figure 7 below.

A Vegetation Protection Overlay (VPO) (Mitchell) applies to a small portion of land along the Hume Freeway north of Gunns Gully Road. A Heritage Overlay (HO) - Schedule HO262 (Hume) applies to 135 and 155 Gunns Gully Road, Mickleham. Public Acquisition Overlay (PAO1 and 3 in Hume and PAO7 in Mitchell) apply to the precinct (see Table 1).

| Planning scheme map reference | Acquiring authority | Purpose of acquisition         |
|-------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>PAO1 (Hume)</b>            | Roads Corporation   | Road construction and widening |
| <b>PAO3 (Hume)</b>            | Roads Corporation   | Outer Metropolitan Ring        |
| <b>PAO7 (Mitchell)</b>        | Roads Corporation   | Outer Metropolitan Ring        |

Table 1 Public acquisition

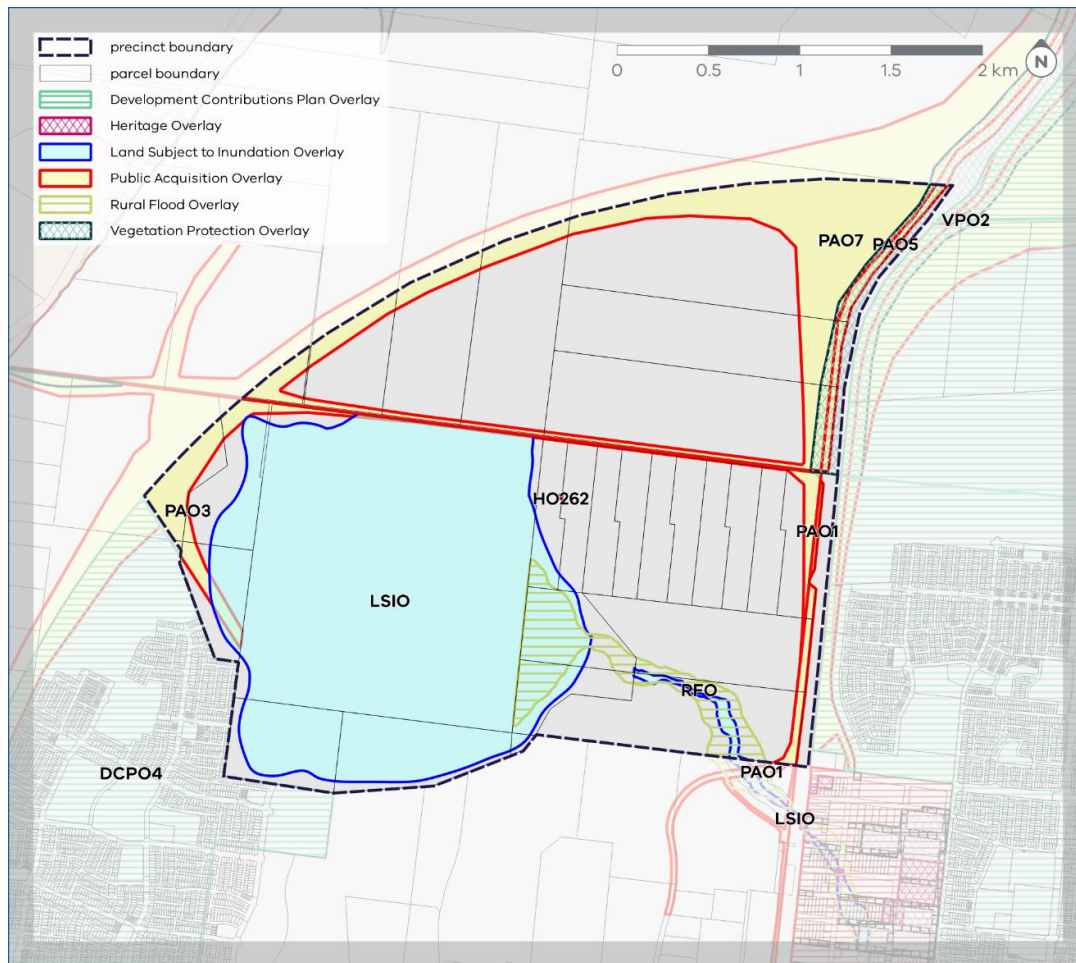
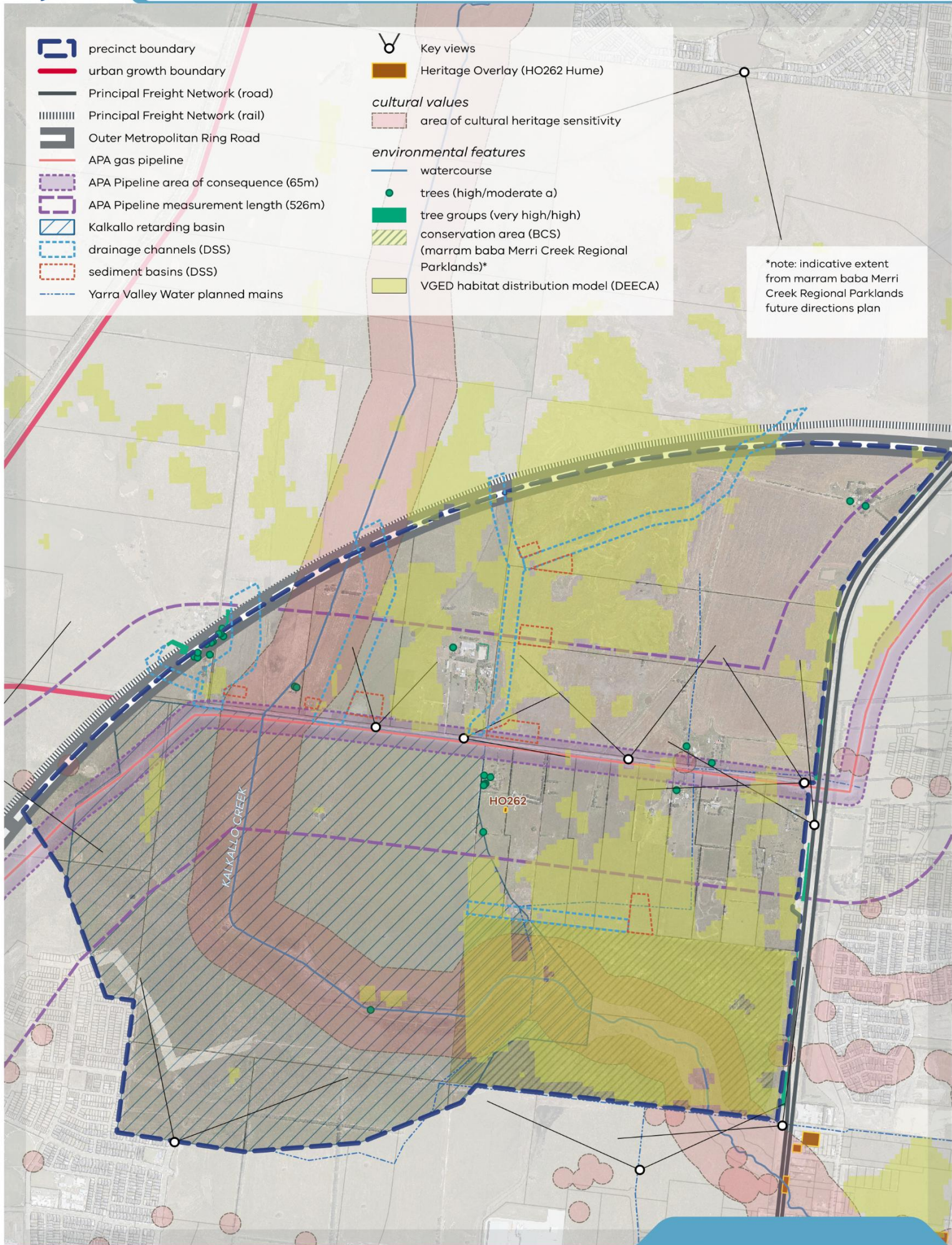


Figure 7 Current planning scheme overlays

## 2.2 Merrifield North precinct context

Merrifield North is an employment precinct identified in the *North Growth Corridor Plan* and located approximately 35 kilometres northwest of Melbourne's Central Business District. The precinct is approximately 970.4 hectares in area and is located within both the Hume City Council and Mitchell Shire Council. The area to the north of Gunns Gully Road is within Mitchell Shire Council; the area to the south of Gunns Gully Road is within Hume City Council. This section describes the precinct features in the Merrifield North precinct (see Plan 2).



### 2.2.1 Lot size and ownership pattern

The precinct contains 29 lots across 1 government agency and 18 private ownerships (see Figure 8). Melbourne Water currently holds approximately 379 hectares of land. The remaining lot sizes range from 12 hectares to 112 hectares.

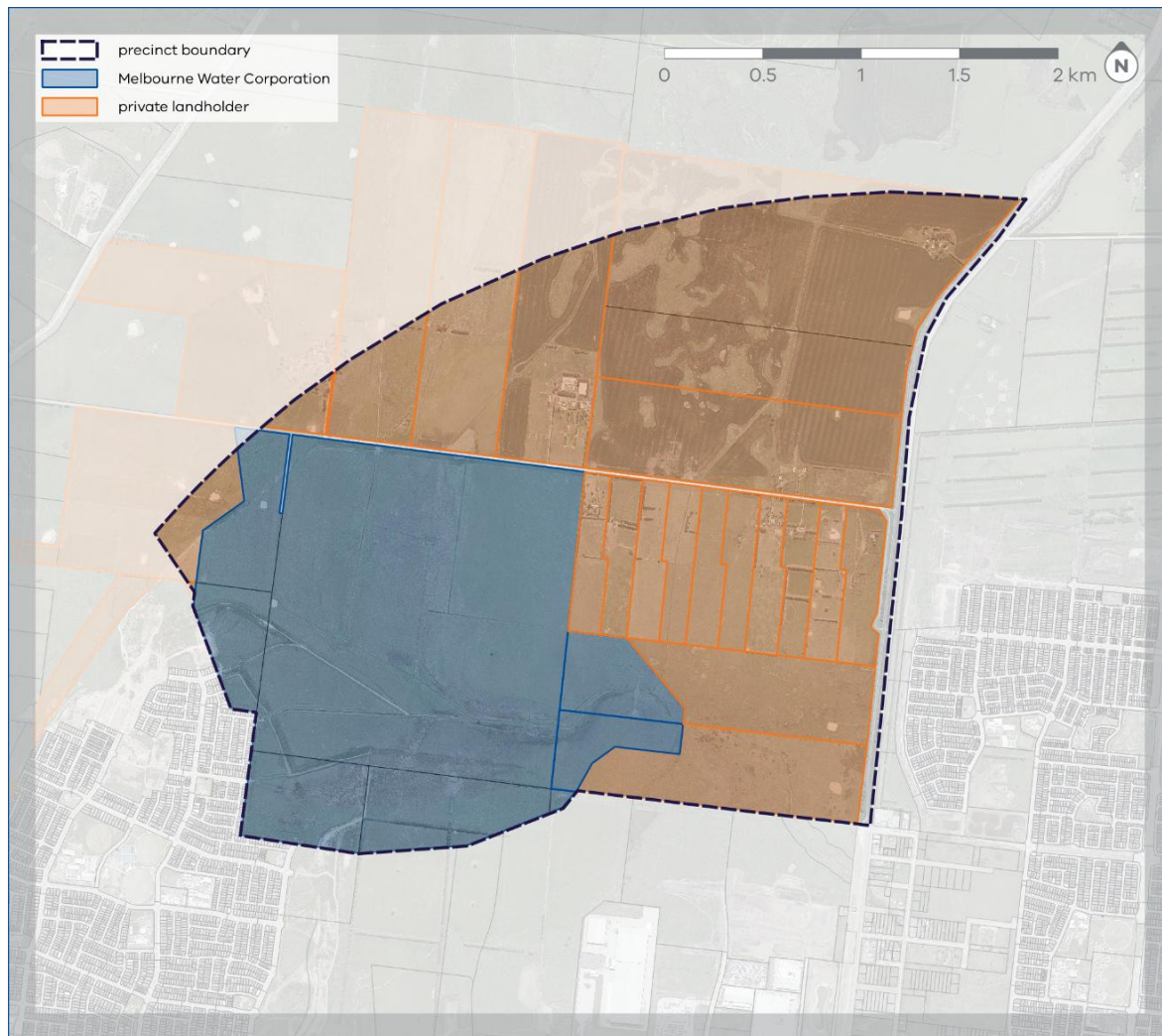


Figure 8 Landownership

### 2.2.2 Aboriginal cultural heritage and values

Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation (WWCHAC) is the Registered Aboriginal Party (RAP) for and on behalf of Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung People. Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung People are recognised as the Traditional Owners of their lands and waters that extend north to Great Dividing Range and beyond, west to the Werribee River, south to Mordialloc Creek, and east to Mount Baw Baw.

WWCHAC aims to protect, preserve and revitalise Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Country, Culture and People by Caring for Country, maintaining an unbroken relationship with their lands and waterways, exercising cultural governance and ensuring the health of both Country and community.

The DTP has consulted with the WWCHAC in relation to Aboriginal cultural heritage and values within the precinct. The technical assessments for Merrifield North PSP, including Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment (ACHIA) and Cultural Values Assessment (CVA), are still in progress. The PSP acknowledges stony rises may be present in the precinct and their potential cultural heritage significance. **Findings and implications for the Merrifield North PSP will be updated once the assessments are concluded.**

It is the intention that these elements aim to embed cultural recognition into the urban form, ensuring the precinct honours the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people's history and continuing connection to Country.

### 2.2.3 Post-contact heritage values

There is one Heritage Overlay (HO) applied within the precinct. HO262 (Hume) applies to the Bleak House (ruin) at 135 and 155 Gunns Gully Road, Mickleham. The Bleak House (ruin) is a collapsed bluestone ruin dating to the 1850s. It is of historical and archaeological significance to the City of Hume.

Clifton Downs Homestead at 63 Gunns Gully Road, Mickleham, is of historical significance. A timber homestead and other buildings are located on this site. The homestead dates to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century and is surrounded by planted trees. A heritage overlay HO395 (Hume) is proposed to be applied to Clifton Downs Homestead as part of the draft amendment GC295.

### 2.2.4 Topography and waterways

The precinct has an undulating topography that slopes up from the west towards the Hume Freeway and down from the north towards Kalkallo Creek and other unnamed waterways (see Figure 9). Kalkallo Creek runs through the precinct from northwest to southeast. Some unnamed irrigation channels are present in the north portion of the precinct.

Due to the precinct's low-lying topography and the presence of multiple waterways, the area has the tendency to feature ephemeral waterways.

Early project scoping and due diligence identified the alignment of Aitken Boulevard and the Western Arterial Road, and the extent of a potential pre-European (PEW) Wetland as key issues to be resolved for the planning of the precinct.

Each of these issues was informed by wetland mapping published by DEECA in 2021 depicting a PEW in the precinct area. The Due Diligence report included this mapping for consideration.

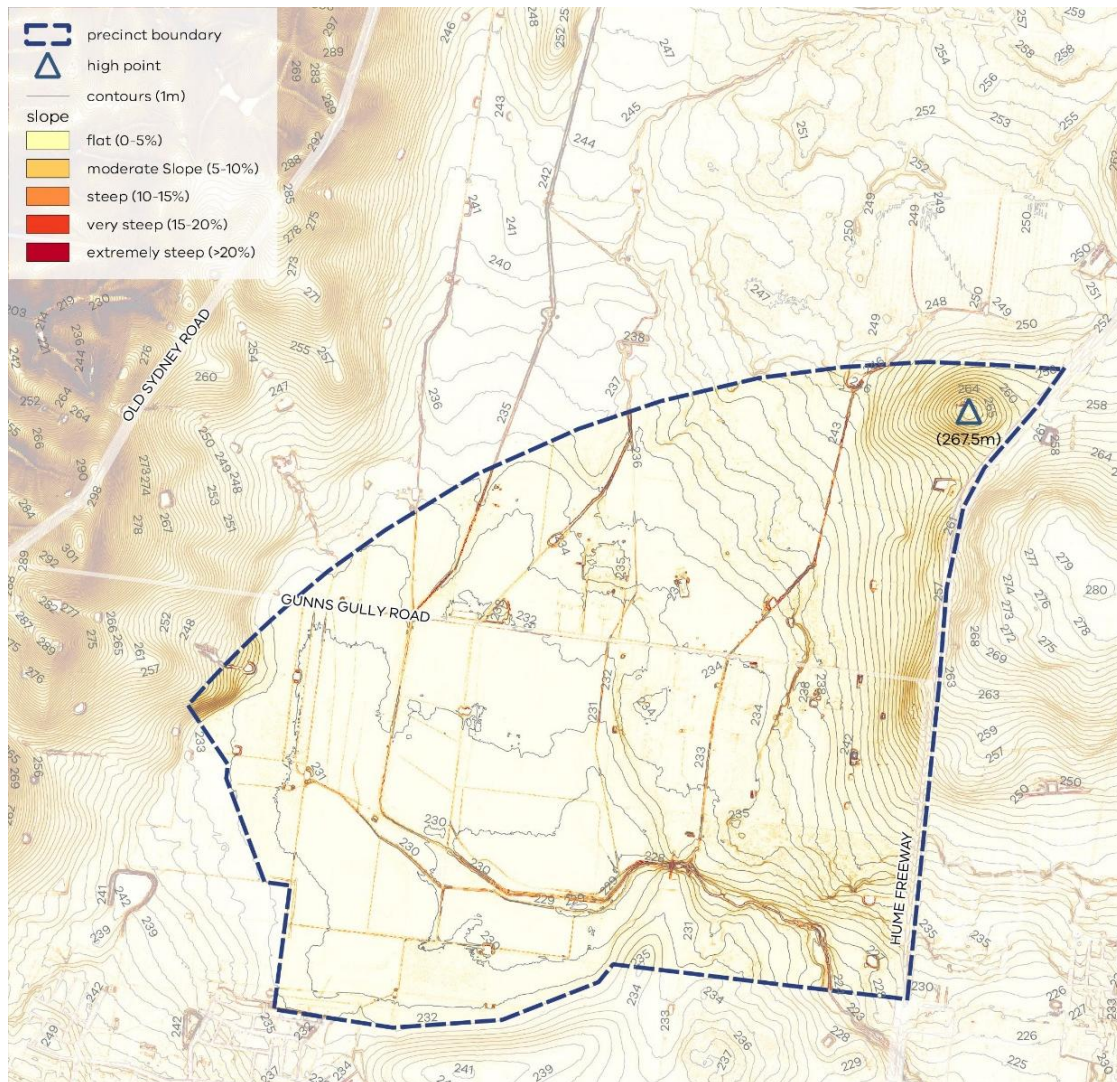


Figure 9 Topography

## 2.2.5 Pre European Wetland (PEW)

It has been confirmed by DEECA and the VPA that the information relied upon to produce mapping in 2021 of an alleged PEW was not reliable or conclusive and was undertaken without any onsite surveys or physical mapping.

As the DEECA mapping has not been verified, it has not been relied upon. Accordingly, this area has not been identified in any PSP plans or reports as a PEW. References to the alleged PEW have also been removed from mapping, statutory authorities' documentation and public exhibition and consultation materials associated with the formal PSP.

In summary, whilst DEECA's wetland mapping layers were considered as part of the preliminary due diligence undertaken during the PSP process, for the reasons outlined above, they have not been treated as determinative of the proposed urban form, land use outcomes or development framework for the Precinct.

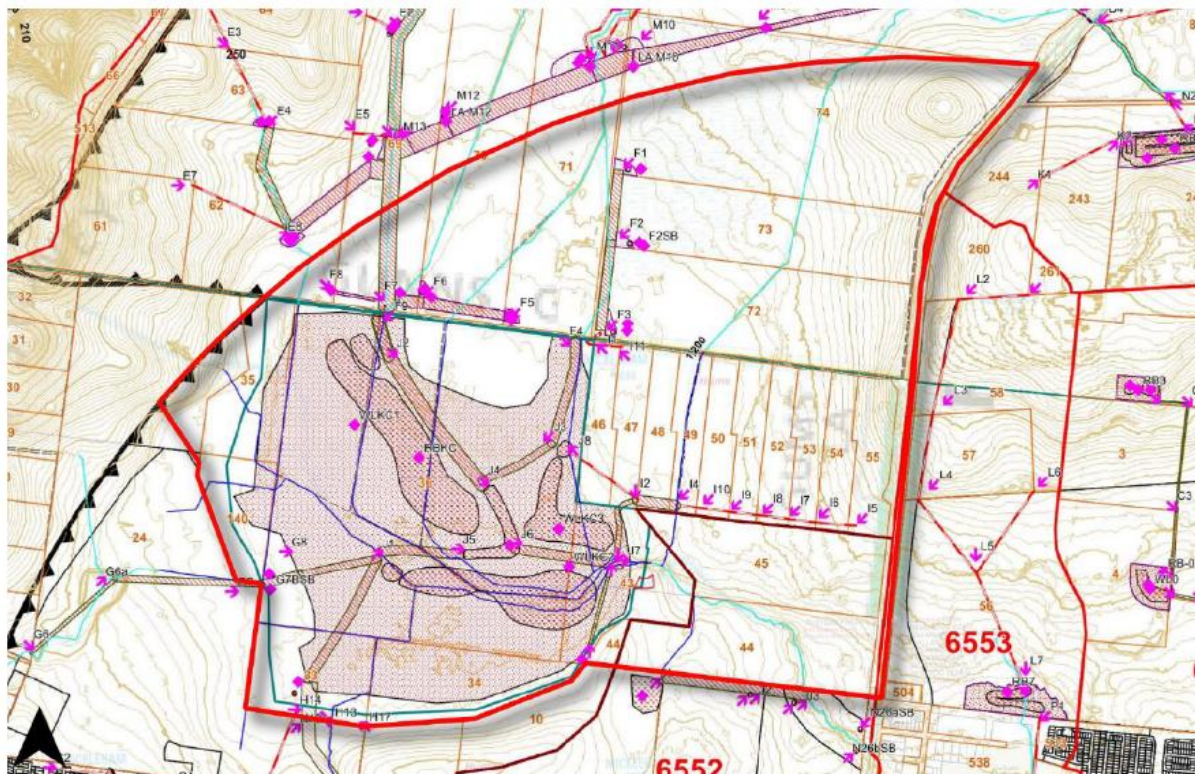
## 2.2.6 Drainage and water infrastructure

Merrifield North precinct is part of the 6550 Kalkallo Creek Development Services Scheme (DSS) (see Figure 10). This currently utilises the Kalkallo Retarding Basin for flood management and stormwater treatment. The BCS

conservation area within the Merrifield North precinct is part of the 6552 Merrifield Estate Strategy. A DSS is a drainage strategy or master plan for a specific catchment area, with a pricing arrangement that requires developers to contribute to the cost of drainage works construction in connection with a development.

The Kalkallo Creek DSS is under review by Melbourne Water. The purpose of this DSS is to achieve flood protection, stormwater quality, and waterway health for all new developments as proposed by the Place-Based Plan. The DSS will identify the necessary drainage infrastructure and the land to be set aside for that purpose. The PSP sets requirements and guidelines to ensure the staging of development and delivery of DSS assets proceed in an orderly way to support the development of the catchment.

The design and configuration of land use in the PSP will be refined subject to the revised version of the Kalkallo Creek DSS. Should more Net Developable Area (NDA) be available, the PSP and ICP will be revised.



### Legend

  PSP boundary

#### DSCM Legend

- DSS Boundary
- DS Strategy Boundary
- DSCM Property
- ▲ Stage (Allocated)
- ▲ Stage (Works in Progress)
- ▲ Stage (Finalised)
- Nodes
- Bio-Retention Swale

- Channel
- Cleanout works
- Culvert
- Grassed Swale
- Low flow pipe with Channel
- Overland flow path
- Pipeline
- Soft Engineering

- Bio-Retention Basin
- Buffer Strip
- Inlet/Outlet Structure
- Junction Pit
- Litter trap
- Retarding Basin
- Sediment trap
- Wetland

#### As Constructed Legend

- Channel
- Natural Waterway
- Sewer Main
- Underground Drain
- Water Main
- Flood Extents
- Lake
- Retarding Basin
- Sediment Trap
- Wetland

Figure 10 Development Services Scheme, Melbourne Water (Source: Integrated Water Management Assessment 2026, Arup)

### 2.2.7 Flora and fauna

There are two BCS areas located in the southern portion of the precinct. The BCS is an overarching strategy for protecting biodiversity in Victoria's growth corridor. It sets out all the conservation measures required for matters of national and state environmental significance.

BCS area 23 protects high-quality native grassland that contains biodiversity values of national significance:

- High-quality Natural Temperate Grassland
- Golden Sun Moth population within high-persistence habitat
- Matted Flax-lily population within high quality habitat
- Growling Grass Frog population within high quality habitat
- Habitat for Australian Bittern (recorded on property at Kalkallo Creek)
- Habitat for Striped Legless Lizard

BCS area 34 protects important populations of the Growling Grass Frog and ensures connectivity between populations within the North Growth Corridor.

The Merrifield North precinct is wholly situated within the MSA area. The biodiversity considerations in the precinct are guided by the MSA. The management of the BCS areas will be determined by DEECA.

### 2.2.8 Victorian Grassland Earless Dragon

The Victorian Grassland Earless Dragon (VGED) was rediscovered west of Melbourne in 2023. VGED is a Matter of National Environmental Significance under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* and is regulated by the Commonwealth Government. The species is also protected under the Victorian *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988*.

DEECA has updated the habitat distribution model for VGED to depict areas of potential habitat for the species. Merrifield North precinct is included in the model. The model does not predict whether the species occurs in the habitat at a particular location, but rather the potential habitat.

Habitat assessment will be undertaken prior to the Standing Advisory Committee process. Targeted surveys will be conducted where modelled potential habitat is confirmed on the ground through the habitat assessment.

### 2.2.9 Potential regional parklands

The precinct falls within the extent of two potential regional parklands that are currently under consideration.

The future marram baba Merri Creek Regional Parklands is guided by an endorsed *Future Directions Plan* (2023) and is progressing through staged planning and delivery. BCS areas 23 and 34 will form part of the future marram baba Merri Creek Regional Parklands.

The potential wallan wallan Regional Park remains at the feasibility stage and is subject to further whole-of-government commitments. The feasibility study was finalised in 2022 and approved by the Minister for Environment in 2025. The feasibility study identifies land that could potentially comprise the regional park.

Significantly more land is identified in the feasibility study than is required for the park. In relation to the land within Merrifield North precinct, this includes the Kalkallo Retarding Basin and the area of cultural heritage sensitivity (200 metres either side of Kalkallo Creek). The PSP will define developable area, and this will guide further work on the regional park boundary.

Please note, marram baba Merri Creek Regional Parklands and wallan wallan Regional Park are not recognised in the PSP plan sets as no formal decision has been taken to establish these parks.

## 2.2.10 Existing transport network

The Principal Freight Network (PFN) is a framework that identifies and protects Victoria's key road and rail freight routes and places. The PFN gives certainty to industry and communities on the preferred routes for freight movements and significantly freight places now and in the future to support land use planning. The Hume Freeway, Donnybrook Road and planned OMR are identified as PFN Road. See Figure 11 for existing road network.

### Hume Freeway (PFN Road)

Hume Freeway is a movement corridor of national significance. It provides a connection between Melbourne, Brisbane and Sydney whilst supporting connections between regional centres. Hume Freeway provides primary road access to metropolitan Melbourne and is managed by DTP. The freeway has two lanes in each direction (110 kph) with restricted access (i.e. access via grade-separated interchanges only). The future Gunns Gully Road Interchange provide access to the Hume Freeway from the precinct. Currently Gunns Gully Road is a left-in/ left-out intersection.

### Donnybrook Road (planned PFN Road)

Donnybrook Road is a primary arterial road managed by DTP. It is a dual-carriageway road (80 kph) with two lanes in each direction between Errol Boulevard and Hume Freeway. It provides access between the Merrifield Estate, Merrifield Business Park and Hume Freeway, via a grade-separated interchange. It also connects further west to Old Sydney Road and further east to Cloverton and Whittlesea.

### Gunns Gully Road

Gunns Gully Road is an unsealed local rural road (100 kph unsigned) managed by Mitchell Shire Council, providing local access to current agricultural land uses. It runs through Merrifield North precinct to the Hume Freeway.

Gunns Gully Road is planned to be an arterial road with interchanges onto the Hume Freeway and OMR.

### Old Sydney Road

Old Sydney Road is a rural road functioning as a sub-arterial (80-100 kph), managed by Hume City Council and Mitchell Shire Council. It is a single-carriageway road, sealed south of and unsealed north of Gunns Gully Road, respectively.

### Aitken Boulevard (E14)

The existing Aitken Boulevard alignment is a collector road managed by Hume City Council, currently located approximately 1.5 kilometres south of the precinct. The section between Mt Ridley Road and Donnybrook Road is currently one lane in each direction (60 kph). This north-south road currently runs through the suburbs of

Craigieburn and Roxburgh Park, providing access to numerous schools, shopping precincts, and recreational facilities.

Aitken Boulevard is planned as a movement corridor connecting the M80 Ring Road to Wallan East. The corridor will connect communities within the North Growth Corridor and provide accessibility to inner metropolitan Melbourne. It is intended that Aitken Boulevard will have a mass transit function given it is part of the PPTN.



Figure 11 Existing road network (Source: Merrifield North Precinct Threshold Issues Assessment 2022, Jacobs)

### Outer Metropolitan Ring (planned PFN Road)

The OMR is a planned PFN (road and rail) aligned through Melbourne's outer north and west. It is proposed to redistribute a significant amount of traffic from the M80 Western Ring Road to the OMR, resulting in more potential traffic approaching the precinct from north-west, rather than via the Hume Freeway. A future interchange at the OMR/Western Arterial Road is proposed. The OMR will connect to the Beveridge Interstate Freight Terminal, to the north-east of Merrifield North, that will provide freight and logistics terminal services.

### Public transport/bus routes

There are no public transport services in the precinct and limited services in the surrounding area. The nearest public transport services are listed in Table 2 and shown in Figure 12.

| Mode/ service                                | Service frequency<br>(peak/ off-peak)                     | Destinations                                                          | Proximity to<br>Merrifield North<br>precinct                       |
|----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Train – V/Line<br/>(Seymour line)</b>     | 30-min frequency on-peak<br><br>60-min frequency off-peak | Melbourne Central Business District (CBD) to Seymour via Broadmeadows | Five kilometres to Donnybrook Station                              |
| <b>Bus Route 525 via<br/>Donnybrook Road</b> | 15-min frequency on-peak<br><br>40-min frequency off-peak | Donnybrook Station, Craigieburn Activity Centre, Craigieburn Station  | Two kilometres to the closest bus stop                             |
| <b>Bus Route 511 via<br/>Hume Freeway</b>    | One or two services on-peak                               | Greater Beveridge Community Centre, Craigieburn Station               | No existing bus stops nearby. However, it runs along Hume Freeway. |

Table 2 Public transport services around the precinct

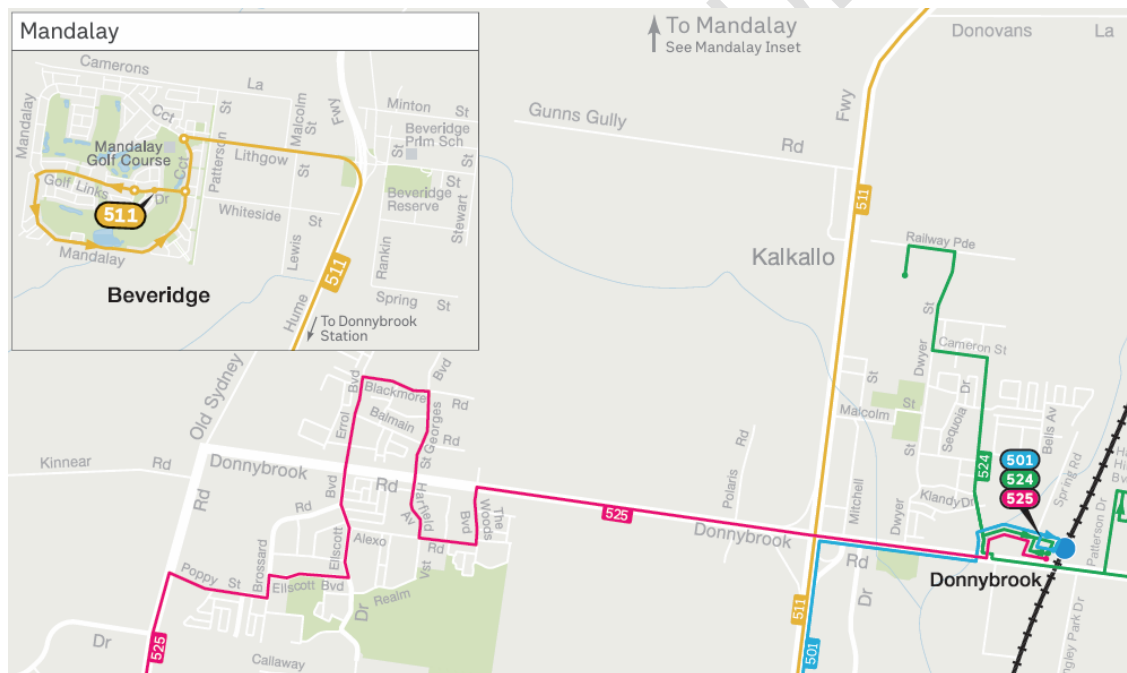


Figure 12 Hume Bus Network (Source: Transport Victoria 2025)

## Walking and cycling

There are limited walking and cycling paths in the precinct and surrounds as the area is currently farmland. There is a 4-kilometre east-west shared-use path along Donnybrook Road. The emerging subdivisions have some cycling infrastructure as part of their local network. Active transport network will be progressively delivered as part of the subdivision requirements.

## 2.3 Sub-regional spatial context

### 2.3.1 Surrounding land use

The precinct is surrounded by urban development, farming and natural landscapes in the adjoining area and the broader sub-region (see ). Several PSPs are currently planned, completed or will be planned around Merrifield North. Adjoining and surrounding PSPs and interface issues are discussed below.

#### North

The north of the precinct is bounded by the OMR, a planned PFN (road and rail) which will provide connections between Werribee, Melton, Tullamarine, Craigieburn and Epping/Thomastown. Further north of the OMR lies the future Beveridge South West PSP, which is a Horizon 2 project on *A 10-year plan for Melbourne's Greenfields* and will commence by the 2028-29 financial year with completion by 2033.

Further to the north is the completed Beveridge Central PSP. It applies to approximately 292 hectares of land and will provide approximately 3,400 homes to accommodate a population of more than 9,500. The precinct will deliver community facilities, including a sports field, a local convenience centre, a network of open space, and a heritage trail for the future residential population.

Further north of Camerons Lane is the completed Beveridge North West PSP gazetted in August 2025. The PSP applies to approximately 1,275 hectares of land and will be home to more than 47,000 Victorians and support nearly 3,000 local jobs. Five community hubs, local shopping options, sport fields and a network of new cycling and pedestrian links will ensure new residents are connected to key infrastructure and integrated with surrounding communities.

#### Northeast

The northeast of Merrifield North is the future Beveridge North East PSP. This PSP is on Horizon 3 project of *A 10-year plan for Melbourne's Greenfields* - commencing between 2029/30 and 2033/34. Further east, over the Melbourne-Albury-Sydney Railway line (PFN), is the Northern Freight precinct (under preparation). This precinct will deliver the Beveridge Interstate Freight Terminal. The precinct encompasses an area of 1,399 hectares and will connect to the OMR transport corridor, Inland Rail and the Hume Freeway. It has the capacity to provide up to 14,300 jobs according to *A 10-year Plan for Industrial Land*. This will support broader industrial and commercial development in Melbourne's north.

#### East

Merrifield North directly interfaces with Hume Freeway to the east, a major transport corridor between Melbourne and Sydney. The Hume Freeway interfaces with residential areas in Kalkallo, the completed Lockerbie and Lockerbie North PSPs. At full development, the population of the Lockerbie PSP is expected to be approximately 29,000 people and Lockerbie North PSP is expected to be approximately 12,500 people. The proposed Cloverton MAC in Lockerbie is intended to generate approximately 50,000 jobs in the long-term. It will be the primary employment and service centre in the sub-region, and will provide health services, education and recreational opportunities for the growing suburbs in the North Growth Corridor.

## South

The Merrifield North precinct directly interfaces with the Merrifield Central Employment Area (Merrifield Business Park) to the south, currently zoned Comprehensive Development Zone Schedule 2 (CDZ2). The business park is an area of approximately 415 hectares.

To the south-west of Merrifield North is the Merrifield West PSP (completed) gazetted in June 2018. It is approximately 723 hectares with a projected population of approximately 20,682 people. Further west of the Merrifield Estate is the Urban Growth Boundary. Old Sydney Road is located outside the Urban Growth Boundary.

### 2.3.2 Interface issues

The precinct is well located adjacent to major existing and planned infrastructure that will support its development as a key employment hub and enhance connectivity with surrounding land uses in the North Growth Corridor. Adjoining land uses create both opportunities and sensitivities to be addressed in the planning of the PSP.

The Beveridge South West PSP, located directly north of the precinct is a Horizon 2 project. In the long term, the planned OMR will provide a substantial perimeter road for the western and northern boundary of the precinct. Perimeter roads are a useful bushfire protection measure to provide a firm edge to the urban area. However, this is likely to occur after the development of the precinct. Interim bushfire setbacks should therefore be considered.

The Lockerbie PSP is located to the east of the precinct and is predominantly planned for residential development, education facilities, local activity centres and open space. Merrifield North is located approximately 200 metres from the residential area in Kalkallo, separated by the Hume Freeway.

The Merrifield West PSP is located to the southeast of the precinct. The area is primarily planned for residential purposes, supported by education centres, local services and commercial uses. The Kalkallo Retarding Basin directly interfaces with the residential area.

The PSP should consider potential adverse amenity, drainage design and traffic connections between industrial activity in Merrifield North and future and existing residential development. The management of the above interface issues will be discussed in Section 4 of the report and in relevant technical studies.

### 3 MERRIFIELD NORTH PSP PREPARATION

This section provides an overview of the PSP process for preparation of the Merrifield North PSP, including details of the background reports undertaken to inform the PSP. The PSP 2.0 process is shown in Figure 13 below. The preparation of the Merrifield North PSP and how it has varied from the PSP 2.0 process are explained in this section.

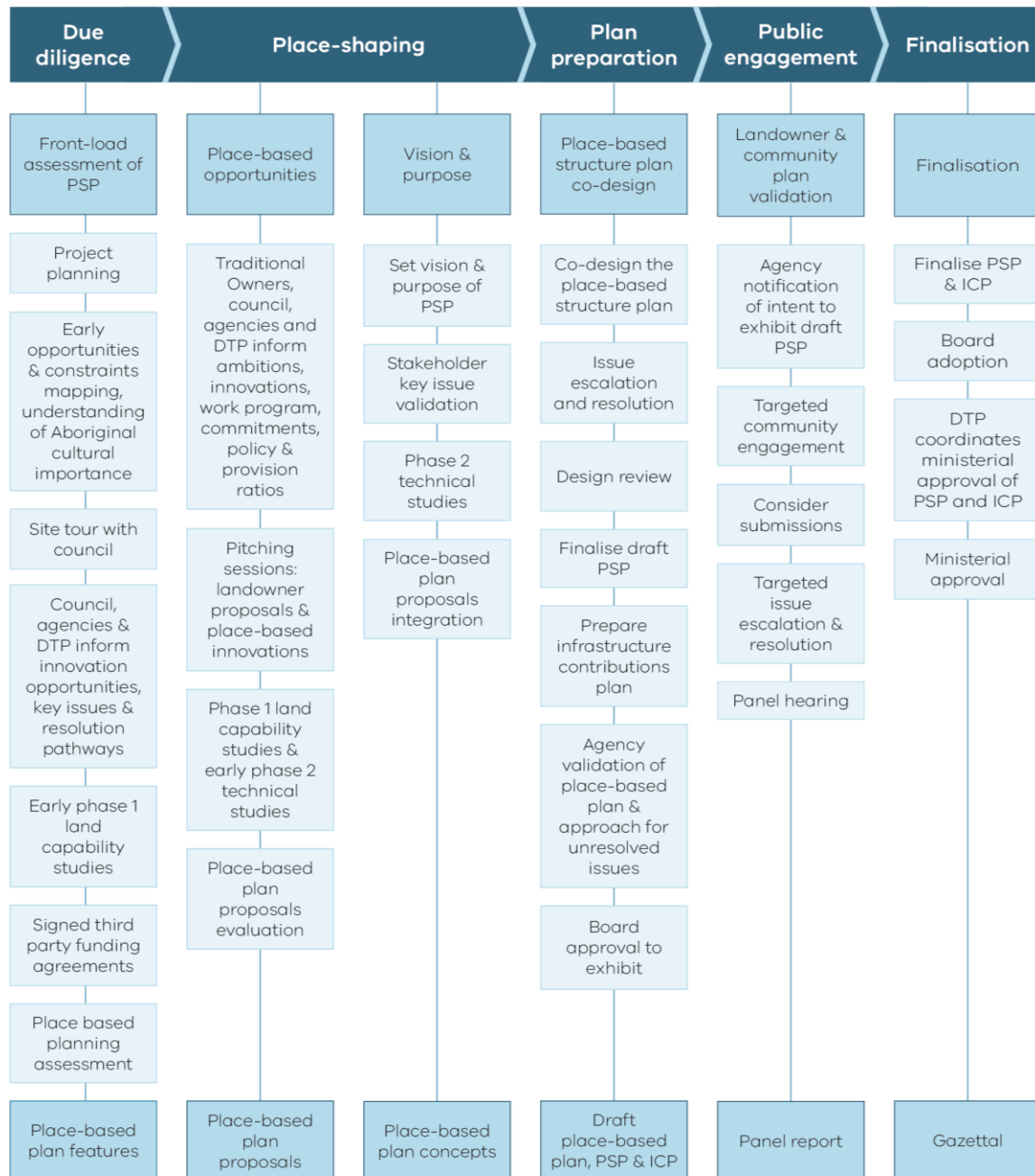


Figure 13 PSP 2.0 process

#### 3.1 Due diligence

Merrifield North was included as a Due Diligence project in the 2023-24 VPA Business Plan. A desktop Due Diligence report was prepared for the precinct in June 2024. The report indicated the alignment of Aitken

Boulevard, including the design and cost of the road and the extent and location of drainage and wetlands as key issues for the PSP.

Merrifield North was then identified as a Horizon 2 in A 10-year plan for Melbourne's Greenfields. The *Economic Growth Statement (2024)* fast-tracked the project, allowing commencement in the 2024-25 financial year, requiring completion by the end of the 2028 calendar year.

## 3.2 Pitching sessions

Pitching sessions were held in June 2025 with the objective of understanding core precinct issues early in the planning process and working with project stakeholders towards fostering a collaborative working group. The pitching activities consisted of 12 online surveys and 15 hybrid-format meetings. Stakeholders included Traditional Owners, state and local governments, agencies, community and industry groups, infrastructure providers and precinct landowners. The information gathered in the pitching activities helped identify the issues, challenges, opportunities and innovations for Merrifield North precinct, and were sorted into six emerging themes.

**Theme 1** – Respect and enhance the existing cultural heritage and environmental values of the area

**Theme 2** – Support development of an employment precinct that will attract a range of economic development opportunities, industries and jobs to the region

**Theme 3** – Create a transport network that connects people to jobs and services efficiently

**Theme 4** – Manage water and drainage solutions on-site effectively while protecting the natural environment

**Theme 5** – Establish service network infrastructure that is optimised and efficient

**Theme 6** – Coordinate staging that supports timely and orderly PSP implementation

The messages were included in the *Pitching Summary Report*, available on the [VPA website](#).

## 3.3 Vision & purpose

A vision and purpose session was held in person at the DTP office on 28 July 2025, with the objective of validating the key themes, opportunities and issues that were raised at the pitching sessions and confirming the vision and purpose for the precinct. The emerging themes were further refined and informed part of the next phase of planning work and technical assessments.

The output of the sessions provided validation for the four emerging themes as the purpose of the PSP. High-level aspects were identified as crucial to informing the precinct vision and ensuring the successful and sustainable development of Merrifield North:

**Theme 1** – Cultural heritage and environmental values

Champion the presence of Kalkallo Creek through the precinct, particularly the Kalkallo Retarding Basin and Biodiversity Conservation Areas.

**Theme 2** – A high-quality employment precinct

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 Northern Growth Corridor while complementing developing and existing industrial and commercial activity centres across the Northern Region.

### **Theme 3 – Transport**

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.

### **Theme 4 – Water and drainage**

A modern employment precinct that embraces and innovatively integrates unique water management practices to enhance natural amenity while minimising harm to natural waterways from urban development.

A *Vision and Purpose Report* was prepared, and stakeholders were invited to provide feedback. The report is available on the [VPA website](#).

Building on due diligence, pitching sessions, vision and purpose session, and consultations with stakeholders, a vision statement was developed.

Merrifield North will become a vibrant precinct that delivers high quality employment land, supports local job creation and celebrates Aboriginal cultural heritage and Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung values. Its identity will be shaped by its cultural heritage through design and meaningful cultural interpretation that seeks to embrace the natural character of its landscape and retain a deep connection between the precinct’s identity and the land it is located on. Workers and visitors will experience a welcoming environment with meaningful cultural interpretation embedded throughout the precinct’s waterways, parks, paths, and gathering places.

Merrifield North will be a contemporary, high quality employment precinct, providing critically needed employment land for Melbourne’s northern region, supporting in excess of up to 4,700 future jobs. A mix of industrial and supporting commercial land uses will create a diverse and resilient economic base with capacity to adapt and evolve over time and act as a catalyst for broader economic development in the region. Merrifield North will be a SSIP, benefitting from its proximity to other adjoining key employment centres, including the Northern Freight Precinct, and direct connection to the future OMR. High amenity and well serviced streets and high-quality built form will ensure daily needs are easily accessible, reinforcing the precinct as a desirable place to work and invest.

The natural environment—particularly Kalkallo Creek, the Kalkallo Retarding Basin, and nearby Biodiversity Conservation Areas—will form the cultural and ecological heart of the precinct. These areas will be restored as interconnected natural corridors that support habitat, improve biodiversity, offer accessible open spaces and support onsite water management. Additionally, they will form a direct link between the precinct and the future marram baba Merri Creek Regional Park ensuring a strong connection between the built and natural realms. Carefully considered interfaces between employment land uses and natural features will be implemented to minimise the impact of employment activities on the natural realm. IWM approaches will ensure stormwater from industrial development is diverted away from waterways to be treated and managed before being integrated into attractive wetlands, waterways and creek edge landscapes. Preserving and incorporating significant trees into areas of open space and retaining valued internal and external view lines seeks to further protect the natural realm while improving amenity and enhancing biodiversity.

Strategic transport connections including the widening of Gunns Gully Road and development of Gunns Gully Road Interchange and Aitken Boulevard will provide fast and reliable access throughout the precinct and the wider northern region. Efficient and accessible public transport will be established along Aitken Boulevard, providing much needed public transport access to the precinct and link precincts and suburbs across the North Growth Corridor. Additionally, improved east west accessibility along Gunns Gully Road will connect the precinct to the proposed Cloverton MAC and Cloverton train station, east of the precinct. A well-designed movement network will balance efficient freight access with safe, comfortable routes for pedestrians and cyclists, supported by shaded paths, protected bike lanes, and footpaths. This integrated transport system will help anchor the precinct as a significant employment destination within the North Growth Corridor.

Merrifield North will be a place where industry, ecology, culture, and community come together. Featuring natural systems, high quality urban design, and strategic infrastructure integration, the precinct will provide employment, environmental benefits, and a strong cultural identity—establishing it as a leading employment hub in Melbourne’s north.

### 3.4 Thematic statements

Thematic statements were prepared and shared with stakeholders for feedback from October 2025 to March 2026. The objective of thematic statements is to ensure stakeholders have a shared understanding of the key issues, why they are important for the PSP and how they relate to Merrifield North. Thirteen thematic statements were developed based on the following key issues:

- Bushfire
- Climate resilience
- Cultural heritage
- Drainage Services Scheme (DSS)
- Flora and fauna
- Infrastructure Contributions Plan (ICP)
- Jobs
- Precinct Interfaces
- Regional parklands and open space
- Sodic soil
- Staging
- Utilities
- Water and Integrated Water Management (IWM)

### 3.5 Plan preparation and stakeholder engagement

Agencies and councils are integral participants and essential to validate and support the opportunities presented through the PSP. To give effect to the *Economic Growth Statement* and streamlining planning processes in the VPA Business Plan 2025-26, Merrifield North was further fast-tracked, subject to securing Third Party Funding. To implement the Government’s commitment to bringing employment land to market, Consultation was brought forward and the preparation of the Merrifield North PSP was prepared on an accelerated program.

Given the accelerated timeframe, some elements that are typically undertaken prior to Exhibition under the standard PSP 2.0 process would not occur before Consultation — specifically Co-Design and Agency Validation.

Notwithstanding this, DTP remains committed to meaningful engagement. For the Merrifield North PSP, stakeholder engagement prior to consultation was undertaken as follows:

- Monthly governance meetings with stakeholders.
- Circulation and feedback on thematic statements and the vision statement.
- Circulation and feedback on the statement of expectations outlining stakeholders' roles and responsibilities regarding the resolution of due diligence issues and the preparation of the PSP.
- Engagement with key agencies to resolve technical matters and outline potential solutions to these matters.

A statement of common ground will be developed to describe the key project stakeholders and their roles in the Merrifield North PSP preparation. A list of stakeholders and their interests or involvement in the project is listed in Table 3 below.

| Project Stakeholder                                                                    | Interest / Involvement                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>APA Group (APA)</b>                                                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• APA is responsible for the WORM gas pipeline which runs through the precinct. APA has installed the WORM, a sub-surface gas transmission pipeline, connecting existing pipelines at Plumpton and Wollert.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA)</b>                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DEECA is committed to achieving the best outcomes for the precinct in terms of water and catchments and the environment, including biodiversity values.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions (DJSIR)</b>                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DJSIR oversees various economic development projects for Victoria, and its Resources Branch, Extractive Strategy Taskforce delivers the organisation's Strategic Extractive Resources Roadmap.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>Environment Protection Authority (EPA)</b>                                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EPA is Victoria's environmental regulator and operates as an independent statutory authority established and operating under the <i>Environment Protection Act 1970</i>. The role of the EPA is to prevent and reduce harmful environmental effects, namely in terms of pollution and waste.</li> <li>• Referrals are required to the EPA on statutory planning matters in keeping with the requirements of the <i>Environment Protection Act 1970</i>.</li> </ul> |
| <b>First Peoples - State Relations (FPSR), Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC)</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FPSR is an established body within the DPC responsible for Aboriginal cultural rights, among other areas (e.g. Treaty and truth-telling). FPSR manages the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Register and all associated statutory functions and powers relevant to the <i>Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006</i>.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                |

|                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                                                                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>FPSR has a strong interest in protecting and managing any Aboriginal cultural heritage and intangible Aboriginal heritage identified within the precinct.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Friends of Merri Creek</b>                                                                                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Friends of Merri Creek is a volunteer community group who works for the protection and enhancement of the Merri Creek, its valley, and tributaries.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>Hume City Council</b>                                                                                              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hume City Council is the local government authority for a portion of the Merrifield North precinct. It is a statutory authority for matters pertaining to land use and development of the precinct post gazettal of the PSP into the Planning Scheme.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>Melbourne Water</b>                                                                                                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Melbourne Water is the relevant water catchment management authority and the asset manager and landowner of the Kalkallo Retarding Basin. The Kalkallo Retarding Basin is central to water management and stormwater quality improvement in the area.</li> <li>The Kalkallo Creek DSS is under review by Melbourne Water. The Merrifield North precinct is within the Kalkallo Creek DSS boundary.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Merri Creek Management Committee (MCMC)</b>                                                                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MCMC is a not-for-profit organisation that leads, in partnership, the preservation of the natural heritage, ecological restoration and repair, and community stewardship, and supports the preservation of cultural heritage of the Merri Creek and tributaries, their corridors, and associated ecological communities.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Mitchell Shire Council</b>                                                                                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mitchell Shire Council is the local government authority for a portion of the Merrifield North precinct. It is a statutory authority for matters pertaining to land use and development of the precinct post gazettal of the PSP into the Planning Scheme.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation (WWCHAC), Cultural Heritage and Research Units</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Under the Victorian <i>Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006</i>, WWCHAC is the RAP for and on behalf of Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung People. WWCHAC has a strong interest in Aboriginal cultural heritage and Aboriginal intangible heritage in the precinct.</li> <li>Through the RAP, WWCHAC evaluates Cultural Heritage Management Plans (CHMPs), provides advice on applications for Cultural Heritage Permits, Agreements and Protections Declarations, provides advice to the Minister for Planning, and other functions as set out under s.148 of the <i>Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006</i>. These activities are managed through the WWCHAC's Cultural Heritage Unit.</li> </ul> |

|                                 |                                                                                                                                                           |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Yarra Valley Water (YVW)</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>YVW is the water retailer responsible for drinking water, non-drinking water, and sewer infrastructure.</li> </ul> |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Table 3 Project stakeholders and their interests in Merrifield North PSP preparation

## 3.6 Technical reports

The technical reports are integral to the preparation of the Merrifield North PSP to inform and support the elements and future urban structure of the precinct. A summary of the reports is provided in Appendix 5.1 and the full reports are available on the [VPA website](#).

The technical reports for Merrifield North are listed in Table 4 below. Some reports are still in draft or being prepared. As discussed in Section 1.4, a progressive certainty approach has been applied to the Merrifield North PSP. Technical reports will be reviewed and finalised concurrently with Public Consultation. **The draft amendments may be revised based on updated technical assessments and feedback received from agencies.**

### 3.6.1 Summary of technical reports

| Technical reports                                              | Consultant                               | Status                   |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment (2026)</b>   | <b>Eco Logical Australia</b>             | <b>Under preparation</b> |
| <b>Arterial Roads Concept Design</b>                           | <b>DTP Technical Advisor, AECOM, WSP</b> | <b>Under preparation</b> |
| <b>Arboriculture Assessment (2026)</b>                         | <b>Tree Logic</b>                        | <b>Final</b>             |
| <b>Bushfire Risk Assessment (2026)</b>                         | <b>Terramatrix</b>                       | <b>Final</b>             |
| <b>Cultural Values Assessment (2026)</b>                       | <b>WWCHAC – Research Unit</b>            | <b>Under preparation</b> |
| <b>Economic and Employment Needs Assessment (2026)</b>         | <b>Colliers</b>                          | <b>Final</b>             |
| <b>Integrated Transport Assessment (2026)</b>                  | <b>Arup</b>                              | <b>Under preparation</b> |
| <b>Integrated Water Management Assessment (2026)</b>           | <b>Arup</b>                              | <b>Under preparation</b> |
| <b>Land Capability Assessment (2026)</b>                       | <b>Jacobs</b>                            | <b>Final</b>             |
| <b>Landscape Character and Visual Impact Assessment (2026)</b> | <b>Veris</b>                             | <b>Under preparation</b> |

|                                                        |               |                          |
|--------------------------------------------------------|---------------|--------------------------|
| <b>Post Contact Heritage Assessment (2026)</b>         | <b>Biosis</b> | <b>Final</b>             |
| <b>Safety Management Strategy (2026)</b>               | <b>Arup</b>   | <b>Under preparation</b> |
| <b>Sodic and Acid Sulfate Soil Assessment (2023)</b>   | <b>Jacobs</b> | <b>Final</b>             |
| <b>Strategic Transport Modelling Assessment (2026)</b> | <b>Arup</b>   | <b>Under preparation</b> |
| <b>Utility Servicing Assessment (2026)</b>             | <b>SMEC</b>   | <b>Final</b>             |

Table 4 Summary of technical reports

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

## 4 PSP OUTCOMES AND DTP POSITION

This section describes how DTP has provided a place-based response to the features and performance targets within the Merrifield North PSP and therefore follows the PSP Guidelines. Some of the PSP Guidelines' targets have been re-ordered within the PSP for simplicity.

### 4.1 Target summary and adaptation

The PSP Guidelines identify 20 performance targets to deliver improved outcomes and achieve the hallmarks. The Guidelines acknowledge the diversity of new communities, and the performance targets allow for place-based achievement.

The Guidelines have set out that all performance targets must be met for metropolitan PSPs, and those which can be varied depending on the status of the target in the context of the Merrifield North precinct (see Table 5).

Performance targets including T1, T2, T3, T4, T6, T9, T12, T18 and T19 are considered out of scope for an employment PSP and are not relevant to Merrifield North.

| #          | Target Summary               | Within Scope? | How is it applied to the precinct? |
|------------|------------------------------|---------------|------------------------------------|
| <b>T1</b>  | Amenity areas                | ✗             | N/A                                |
| <b>T2</b>  | Density Target               | ✗             | N/A                                |
| <b>T3</b>  | Housing Typologies           | ✗             | N/A                                |
| <b>T4</b>  | Affordable Housing           | ✗             | N/A                                |
| <b>T5</b>  | Arterial Network             | ✓             | Target achieved                    |
| <b>T6</b>  | Bicycle Paths                | ✗             | N/A                                |
| <b>T7</b>  | Pedestrian Paths             | ✓             | Target achieved                    |
| <b>T8</b>  | Pedestrian/Cycling Crossings | ✓             | Target achieved                    |
| <b>T9</b>  | Public Transport             | ✗             | N/A                                |
| <b>T10</b> | Local Employment             | ✓             | Employment PSP adaptation          |
| <b>T11</b> | Open Space Land Take         | ✓             | Employment PSP adaptation          |

|            |                                    |   |                            |
|------------|------------------------------------|---|----------------------------|
| <b>T12</b> | Open Space Catchments              | ✗ | N/A                        |
| <b>T13</b> | Tree Canopy Coverage               | ✓ | Achieve at planning permit |
| <b>T14</b> | Passively Irrigated Street Trees   | ✓ | Achieve at planning permit |
| <b>T15</b> | Solar Orientation                  | ✓ | Achieve at planning permit |
| <b>T16</b> | Conservation Areas                 | ✓ | Target achieved            |
| <b>T17</b> | IWM Solutions                      | ✓ | Achieve at planning permit |
| <b>T18</b> | Education and Community Facilities | ✗ | N/A                        |
| <b>T19</b> | Activity Centres                   | ✗ | N/A                        |
| <b>T20</b> | Basic and Essential Infrastructure | ✓ | Target achieved            |

Table 5 PSP performance targets

## 4.2 Safe, accessible, and well-connected

### 4.2.1 Safe streets and spaces

*Be safe, accessible and well connected for pedestrians and cyclists to optimise active transport.*

#### PSP Performance Targets

- T5** The arterial road network should provide a 1.6km road grid with safe and efficient connections, adjusted where necessary to reflect local context.
- T7** All streets should have footpaths on both sides of the reservation.
- T8** Pedestrian and cyclist crossings should be provided every 400-800m, where appropriate, along arterial roads, rail lines, waterways, and any other accessibility barriers.

#### Planning assessment

The PSP outlines performance measures for the urban structure of the employment precinct, and its movement and place requirements, to guide safe, permeable and well-connected outcomes.

The PSP has considered the underlying general principles:

- F4.2 The design of the public realm should ensure these spaces feel safe and are inviting to pedestrians and cyclists.
- F4.3 Permeability of the street network for pedestrians and cyclists and direct access routes to services and facilities should be a feature of the street and path network in precincts.

### DTP position

Merrifield North will provide a permeable and safe road network for both car access and cycling and walking, where appropriate. Truck access to the industrial and business area will be facilitated through the future connector, arterial roads and PFN routes.

The transport technical assessments are still in progress. Findings and implications for the Merrifield North PSP will be updated once the assessments are concluded. Accordingly, the proposed road network and cross sections may be subject to change.

## 4.2.2 Movement and place

*A transport network that balances the role of the movement of goods, people and places, and that is safe, accessible and well connected for pedestrians and cyclists to optimise active transport.*

### PSP performance target

- 
- T5 The arterial road network should provide a 1.6km road grid with safe and efficient connections, adjusted where necessary to reflect local context.**

### Planning assessment

The following transport technical assessments will be undertaken to understand the needs of the future road network. The purpose of each assessment is explained in Appendix 5.1.

- Strategic Transport Modelling Assessment (2026)
- Integrated Transport Assessment (2026)
- Gunns Gully Road, OMR and Western Arterial Road Intersection Alignment and Design (2026)
- Aitken Boulevard Alignment and Design, including the Aitken Boulevard crossing of the OMR (2026)

The transport technical studies are still in progress. Findings and implications for the Merrifield North PSP will be updated once the technical assessments are concluded. Further updates are required to finalise the assessments to the satisfaction of the Head, Transport for Victoria, and potentially in response to submissions from other parties. As discussed in section 1.4, a progressive certainty approach is being applied, and further work will continue to be undertaken.

### DTP position

The PSP proposes the following road network for safe and efficient connections, supported by Plan 2 Place-Based Plan, Plan 4 Movement Network, cross sections and PSP requirements and guidelines. The PSP proposes to establish an arterial road network comprised of a combination of new connections and upgrades to existing roads, which includes:

- Gunns Gully Road (upgrades to existing east-west road connection)
- Aitken Boulevard (extension of existing alignment)

- Western Arterial Road (new north-south road connection)
- Aitken Boulevard/ Western Arterial Road/ OMR Interchange
- Gunns Gully Road Interchange

It is proposed that Gunns Gully Road, Aitken Boulevard (potential alignment) and the Western Arterial Road (planned alignment) will be 6-lane arterial roads. The arterial road network may not achieve a 1.6 kilometre road grid at all instances due to constraints such as the presence of environmental features or the retarding basin. However, the arterial road network is planned to provide safe and efficient connections.

Gunns Gully Road between Aitken Boulevard and Hume Freeway will be a primary arterial road. The section between Aitken Boulevard and the OMR will be a secondary arterial.

The local network of connector street will primarily provide for local movements. This includes Cameron Street providing links between the potential Aitken Boulevard and the Hume Freeway. The proposed connector streets also provide links between the proposed local convenience centres, potential Aitken Boulevard and Gunns Gully Road. The proposed connector street network complements the wider arterial network and is also shown on the Place-Based Plan and Movement Network.

The PSP provides an outcome that responds to the current movement networks of the surrounding context, whilst integrating a future transport network based on equitable and efficient access to key destinations both within and outside the precinct boundaries.

The transport technical assessments are still in progress. Findings and implications for the Merrifield North PSP will be updated once the assessments are concluded. Accordingly, the proposed road network may be subject to change.

#### 4.2.3 Walkability and safe cycling networks

*A high amenity, safe, accessible, direct and comfortable walking and cycling environment.*

##### PSP performance targets

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**T7 All streets should have footpaths on both sides of the reservation.**

---

**T8 Pedestrian and cyclist crossings should be provided every 400-800m, where appropriate, along arterial roads, rail lines, waterways, and any other accessibility barriers.**

---

##### Planning assessment

The transport network for Merrifield North will be designed to provide a safe network for walking and cycling where appropriate. An Integrated Transport Assessment 2026 (under preparation) aims to provide the technical foundation for the strategic active transport connections within the Place-Based Plan as well as the road hierarchy and designs applied for key routes.

The active transport network and relevant development contributions are under investigation and are subject to further technical transport assessments.

## DTP position

The streetscape cross sections in the PSP indicate how the active transport network can be achieved within the Merrifield North PSP. Each of the cross sections identify locations for pedestrian and cycling infrastructure in forms appropriate to the traffic volumes and speeds expected on the roads. This aligns with performance target T7 where footpaths should be provided on both sides of the reservation. The proposed active transport network seeks to provide coverage within the precinct and safe links to the surroundings, including the Merrifield Employment Area, the Cloverton MAC and the future Beveridge South West precinct.

Plan 4 Movement Network shows the proposed location of signalised intersections. The intersections have been spaced at approximately 400–800 metres along the road network considering local traffic conditions. This is consistent with the outcomes specified in performance target T8.

The transport technical assessments are still in progress. Findings and implications for the Merrifield North PSP will be updated once the assessments are concluded. Accordingly, the proposed road network and cross sections may be subject to change.

### 4.2.4 Local public transport

*A public transport network that is supported by high-intensity uses and connectivity between key destinations and major trip generating facilities.*

## DTP position

The *North Growth Corridor Plan (2012)* identifies Aitken Boulevard as a High Capacity Public Transport Corridor to support Merrifield, Beveridge and Craigieburn Town Centre, and the employment areas north and south of Merrifield. The PSP does not dictate where or when a future bus route or train station is provided. However, to enable bus routes to service future development, the PSP transport network will provide a bus-capable road on Aitken Boulevard (a key north-south arterial road). Both Aitken Boulevard and Gunns Gully Road are identified as part of the PPTN and will have a mass transit function.

Aitken Boulevard will be a significant public transport route providing links between the Merrifield Central Employment Area, the future Beveridge South West precinct, the Cloverton MAC, and movement within the precinct. It is proposed that the PSP allows for a maximum width for Aitken Boulevard alignment of six lanes (Currently 60 metres wide, but to be revised once further design work is complete).

Specifically, the PSP includes a requirement to provide bus-capable roads:

- To ensure roads and intersections shown as bus capable on Plan 4 Movement Network must be constructed to accommodate ultra-low-floor buses to the satisfaction of the responsible authority.

Accordingly, it is considered the PSP appropriately responds to the 'local public transport' feature.

The transport technical assessments are still in progress. Findings and implications for the Merrifield North PSP will be updated once the assessments are concluded. Accordingly, the proposed road network may be subject to change.

## 4.3 Connect people to jobs and higher order services

*Facilitate access to quality public transport that connects people to jobs and higher order services*

#### 4.3.1 Local employment opportunities

*Local economic activity and employment opportunities that provide jobs and services close to where people live.*

##### PSP performance target

**T10 The provision of land for local employment and economic activity should be capable of accommodating the minimum job density target of one job per dwelling located within the wider growth corridor.**

The PSP Guidelines highlight alternative approaches to employment provision in relation to performance target T10. For SSIP, the employment provision is to be determined and informed by state policy objectives.

##### Planning assessment

As an identified SSIP in *MICLUP (2020) and Plan for Victoria (2025)*, Merrifield North has the capacity to deliver up to 4,700 jobs. The Merrifield North precinct is linked to nationally significant supply chains and freight gateways and provides access to a substantial and growing resident catchments in the surrounding employment and residential precincts. Merrifield North is located adjacent to the Hume Freeway and the future OMR. The development of Gunns Gully Road interchange will unlock direct access to the Hume Freeway.

DTP commissioned Colliers to undertake an Economic and Employment Needs Assessment (2026). The assessment recommends Industrial 1 Zone (IN1Z) as the appropriate applied zone for most of the precinct, ensuring appropriate flexibility for industrial supply to be market responsive. The Commercial 2 Zone (C2Z) is recommended for the local convenience node (up to 3,500 square metres of retail and commercial floorspace) and adjacent local service industry. According to the assessment, the Merrifield North precinct could support 5,780 to 6,260 jobs at full development based on an NDA of 255 hectares. The rationale for the job calculation is explained in the Economic and Employment Needs Assessment.

The precinct could support a diverse mix of industrial typologies.

- Approximately 65-75% of the NDA is recommended for medium to large footprint industrial uses. These uses would require lot sizes from around 0.5 hectares to 10 hectares.
- Approximately 25-35% of the NDA is recommended for finer-grain local service industry, including the identified convenience node. Up to 3,500 square metres of retail/commercial floorspace is suggested for the convenience node. The lot size for small to medium enterprises generally takes up to around 0.25 hectares.

##### DTP position

The PSP identifies 314 hectares of NDA within the precinct. Approximately 313 hectares of the land are zoned as IN1Z to provide a unified and flexible planning framework. This ensures appropriate flexibility for industrial supply to be market responsive. Approximately 1 hectare of the land is zoned as C2Z to deliver finer-grain local services and the convenience node.

The Kalkallo Retarding Basin, BCS conservation areas, Hume Freeway and future OMR physically separate the surrounding residential precincts from Merrifield North, allowing a broader range of industrial and logistic activities whilst minimising potential amenity impacts.

The future Gunns Gully Road upgrade and Gunns Gully Road Interchange strengthen access to the Hume Freeway and the Cloverton MAC to the east. The Aitken Boulevard alignment and its crossing of the OMR also

link the Merrifield North precinct into nationally significant supply chains and freight gateways. This will connect the precinct to the Merrifield Central Employment Area to the south, the future Northern Freight PSP, and the future Beveridge South West PSP to the north.

In addition, Merrifield North precinct has the capacity to deliver a wide range of lot sizes and respond to different industrial typologies. The regular-shaped parcels to the north of the precinct and its connection to Hume Freeway and the future OMR provide a strategic locational attribute for larger footprint occupiers. The finer-grain local service industry in Merrifield North precinct will also benefit from demand in surrounding areas, including Merrifield West, Lockerbie, Lockerbie North and future Beveridge South West PSP.

The PSP includes Plan 3 Employment and Activity Centre and corresponding requirements to ensure future employment development is planned in an appropriate location, scale, form and intensity.

With a mixture of industrial and business opportunities and improved and new freight connections, the Merrifield North precinct provides the scale and certainty needed to support future employment land supply for the North Growth Corridor. This aligns with the strategic policies which identify Merrifield North as a SSIP. Therefore, the PSP appropriately responds to the 'local employment opportunities' feature.

## 4.4 High quality public realm

### 4.4.1 Open space targets

*Networks of open space and facilities that optimise the use of available land and provide equitable access to sport and recreation, leisure, environmental benefit, cultural benefits and visual amenity.*

#### PSP Performance Targets

- |            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>T11</b> | <b>The open space network should seek to meet the following minimum targets:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Within dedicated employment and/ or economic activity areas, 2% of the net developable area for local parks.</b></li></ul>                            |
| <b>T13</b> | <b>Potential canopy tree coverage within the public realm and open space should be a minimum of 30% (excluding areas dedicated to biodiversity or native vegetation conservation).</b>                                                                                            |
| <b>T14</b> | <b>All streets containing canopy trees should use stormwater to service their watering needs.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>T16</b> | <b>All conservation areas identified in relevant Commonwealth, state and local government strategies should be retained in accordance with relevant legislation.</b>                                                                                                              |
| <b>T17</b> | <b>IWM solutions should meaningfully contribute towards the actions and targets from the relevant Catchment Scale Public Realm &amp; Water Plans and any relevant water-related strategies, plans, or guidelines (including the <i>Healthy Waterways Strategy 2018–2028</i>).</b> |

#### DTP position

The PSP has been developed to ensure quality, accessible and well-integrated public space that meets the recreational needs of the future workers and community. According to the PSP Guidelines, local parks must be unencumbered and functional land. The identified local parks are shown as public open space on Plan 2 Place-

Based Plan and Plan 5 Public Realm. Local parks are identified as credited open space in the Land Use Budget in the PSP.

The PSP identifies 4.8 hectares (1.53% of NDA) for local parks within the Merrifield North precinct. Whilst the designated local park contribution is lower than the performance target T11 (2% of the NDA), the proposed local park network seeks to optimise the precinct's feature and provide equitable access throughout the precinct. Public open space is co-located with high value trees identified in the Arboriculture Assessment (2026) and the post-contact heritage places. This optimises the recreation, leisure and environmental benefits.

The design of the public open space network is planned to maximise accessibility throughout the precinct. The proposed local park adjacent to the convenience node is designed to improve amenity and identify the convenience node as a local destination.

Approximately a further 487 hectares will be set aside for uncredited open space including waterway and drainage (379 hectares), retarding basin within BCS conservation area (34 hectares) and BCS conservation areas (74 hectares). All, if not most, uncredited open spaces will promote passive recreational use. Therefore, the PSP appropriately responds to the 'open space targets' feature.

#### 4.4.2 Green streets and spaces

*Treatment of the public realm (including public infrastructure) that creates a safe, comfortable, high amenity and resilient environment.*

##### PSP performance targets

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**T13 Potential canopy tree coverage within the public realm and open space should be a minimum of 30% (excluding areas dedicated to biodiversity or native vegetation conservation).**

---

**T14 All streets containing canopy trees should use stormwater to service their watering needs.**

---

##### Planning assessment

###### Arboriculture Assessment

DTP commissioned Tree Logic to undertake an Arboriculture Assessment (2026) to determine the extent of any existing vegetation that may be suitable for retention. All individual trees identified as 'high' and 'moderate A' value and tree groups with 'very high' and 'high' landscape value are recommended to be retained. These trees are identified as 'scattered trees to be retained' and 'tree clusters to be retained' on Plan 7 Native Vegetation Retention and Removal (NVRR).

###### Landscape Character and Visual Impact Assessment

DTP commissioned Mesh to undertake the Landscape Character and Visual Impact Assessment (2026) to identify areas of significant value within the precinct. The assessment guided how the open space, interface treatments, employment precinct structure and the movement network should protect and enhance key view lines and landscape character.

The identified key views include:

- Views along the Kalkallo Creek corridor.

- Volcanic rises including Bald Hill, Mount Ridley, Spring Hill, Mount Fraser, Simons Hill, Pretty Sally and Rigg Hill.
- Distant views towards the Macedon Ranges, Kinglake National Park and the Mount Disappointment State Forest.

### DTP position

The PSP is capable of achieving the 30% canopy tree coverage T13. The PSP identifies high-value healthy existing trees and areas of heritage significance, with local parks strategically located to retain and enhance native vegetation that contribute to the precinct's landscape character. The PSP includes requirements and guidelines to encourage subdivisions to incorporate high value trees into subdivisions design (e.g. street layouts and design). It also includes guidelines to encourage passive irrigation of street trees in response to T14. A suite of street cross sections is provided in the PSP demonstrating how canopy trees can be provided within street reserves.

To enhance key view lines and landscape character, the PSP includes guidelines to encourage alignment of the road network to protect key views within and outside the precinct wherever possible. All new above-ground utilities should be located outside of key view lines, and screened, to the satisfaction of the responsible authorities.

Therefore, the PSP appropriately responds to the 'green streets and spaces' feature.

### 4.4.3 Environmental and biodiversity value

*Protected and enhanced areas of significant environmental and biodiversity value, such as native vegetation, waterway corridors and grasslands.*

### PSP performance target

---

**T16 All conservation areas identified in relevant Commonwealth, state and local government strategies should be retained in accordance with relevant legislation.**

### Planning assessment

The Merrifield North precinct is subject to the MSA and is required to protect areas shown in the BCS Conservation Areas 23 and 34. According to the BCS for *Melbourne's Growth Corridor (2013)*, appropriate planning provision should be applied to the land depending on the circumstances.

The key rationale of BCS area 23 is to protect high quality native grassland that contains Golden Sun Moth and other biodiversity values of national significance as specified in section 2.2.7. The key rationale of BCS area 34 is to protect important populations of the Growling Grass Frog. The biodiversity considerations in the precinct are guided by the MSA. The management of the BCS areas will be determined by DEECA.

### DTP position

DTP has worked closely with DEECA to address the conservation area outcomes for Merrifield North PSP. The BCS areas are identified as 'conservation area' on Plan 2 Place-Based Plan and Plan 5 Public Realm. The applied zone for this area is Rural Conservation Zone (RCZ1). The PSP includes requirements to ensure the conservation area will give effect to the requirements of the MSA and BCS, which is consistent with performance target T16.

Development must provide for a minimum public land buffer of 20 metres between the conservation area boundary and the nearest commercial or industrial lot. The PSP includes requirements for development within or adjacent to conservation areas including but not limited to waterway crossings, public path, local parks and public lighting.

To protect important populations of Growling Grass Frog, the PSP includes requirements regarding the design of waterway crossings and stormwater infrastructure within or adjacent to the conservation area.

Concept plans were prepared in the PSP in response to the planning of the conservation area.

- The Conservation Area Concept Plan sets out the conservation objectives of each conservation area and shows the locations for suitable land uses that are compatible with conservation.
- Each BCS conservation area type should be represented by a separate Conservation Area Interface Plan. The plan shows the land uses within 30 metres of the conservation area. Additional separate cross sections may be required for different types of development frontages or interface roads.

Therefore, the PSP appropriately responds to the 'environmental and biodiversity value' feature.

#### 4.4.4 Sustainable water/ integrated water management

*Sustainable water, drainage and wastewater systems that enhance catchment resilience and maintain or enhance the safety, health and wellbeing of people and property now and in the future.*

##### PSP performance target

- 
- T17 IWM solutions should meaningfully contribute towards the actions and targets from the relevant Catchment Scale Public Realm & Water Plans and any relevant water-related strategies, plans, or guidelines (including the *Healthy Waterways Strategy 2018–2028*).**

##### Planning assessment

The DTP commissioned Arup to undertake an IWM Assessment (2026) to identify potential IWM opportunities for the precinct. The potential portfolio of IWM initiatives includes the remediation of Kalkallo Creek, stormwater harvesting from the Kalkallo Retarding Basin, class A recycled water for non-potable supply, lot scale rainwater tanks and passive irrigation. The assessment recommended the following land use planning and spatial land allocation:

- Allow for core infrastructure required for the Kalkallo Retarding Basin regional stormwater harvesting scheme.
- Ensure the Kalkallo Creek waterway corridor land addresses Melbourne Water's decision relating to waterway remediation works.
- Ensure active transport corridors are integrated into Kalkallo Creek.

A full description of the interim report and its findings are discussed in Appendix 5.1.

##### DTP position

The PSP identifies the opportunities to establish good practice scenarios from the IWM assessment via the PSP requirements and guidelines. These opportunities include, but are not limited to, rainwater tanks on all industrial and commercial lots, use of permeable pavement, recycled water networks, local stormwater harvesting systems and roof water collection. These opportunities have the potential to contribute to a

sustainable built environment using alternative water, improve stormwater quality, contribute to lower flood risk, and maximise habitat values for local flora and fauna species.

Plan 6 Water identifies the proposed location and spatial distribution of key water infrastructure in the precinct. Approximately 413 hectares of land in the precinct is dedicated to waterway and drainage reserve and Kalkallo Retarding Basin are identified on the Water Plan. Unnamed waterways and a potential wetland are shown as developable areas unless specified as water and/or drainage assets.

Therefore, it is considered that the PSP appropriately responds to the 'sustainable water' feature.

#### 4.4.5 Aboriginal cultural heritage and values

DTP has commissioned Aboriginal cultural heritage and values technical studies in consultation with WWCHAC. DTP is also committed to the ongoing engagement in the plan-making process of the PSP with WWCHAC. The following assessments provide advice on the protection and conservation of Aboriginal cultural heritage and values in the precinct.

##### Planning assessment

###### Cultural Values Assessment

A CVA was undertaken by WWCHAC's Research Unit. The CVA investigated the precinct, its natural features, and landscapes of cultural heritage significance and Aboriginal intangible heritage through historical and anthropological investigations and On-Country visits. An On-Country visit with WWCHAC's Elders was conducted in May 2026 with further visit to follow. The CVA will provide advice on how the precinct can best protect, conserve, incorporate and manage areas of cultural values.

###### Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment

DTP commissioned Eco Logical to undertake an ACHIA in 2026. The ACHIA investigates areas of cultural heritage sensitivity, registered Aboriginal places and predicted areas of Aboriginal archaeological sites and features or deposits in the precinct.

Findings and implications for the Merrifield North PSP will be updated once the CVA and ACHIA are concluded.

##### DTP position

The PSP recognises the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*, and that a mandatory CHMP may be required in an area of cultural heritage sensitivity. In the Merrifield North precinct, 200 metres from the centreline of Kalkallo Creek is considered an area of cultural heritage sensitivity. Additional areas of cultural heritage sensitivity are found in and around registered cultural heritage places. The PSP makes reference to Aboriginal cultural heritage and values as determined by the findings of CVA and ACHIA. The PSP includes requirements and guidelines to respond to Aboriginal cultural heritage and values.

As the CVA and the ACHIA are still under preparation, the proposed responses to Aboriginal cultural heritage and values may be subject to change.

#### 4.4.6 Bushfire interfaces

##### Planning assessment

DTP commissioned Terramatrix to undertake a Bushfire Risk Assessment (2026) to assess how the development of the precinct has regard to bushfire risk and complies with the applicable planning policy, such as the objective and relevant strategies of Clause 13.02-1S Bushfire Planning in the Planning Policy Framework. The assessment considers factors such as vegetation type, extent and topography.

The Merrifield North precinct is within a designated Bushfire Prone Area, which is an area subject to or likely to be subject to bushfire, as determined by the Minister for Planning. The precinct is in a relatively low bushfire risk landscape. The surrounding landscape is predominantly pastoral or existing urban area, and the terrain is essentially flat. The primary classified vegetation is Grassland on adjacent agricultural land. The BCS conservation area and retarding basin within the precinct may contain Grassland, Shrubland or Woodland, depending on what vegetation is retained or re-established.

The assessment indicates the potential setback requirements within the precinct and provides recommendations for an appropriate planning instrument to outline bushfire protection measures. Refer to Appendix 5.1 for potential setback requirements.

##### DTP position

Plan 8 Bushfire and the PSP requirements ensure development and subdivision must provide bushfire interface or relevant setbacks as required to achieve radiant heat flux of no more than  $12.5 \text{ kW/m}^2$  upon completion of development according to Clause 13.02-1S.

The future OMR will provide a substantial perimeter road for much of the western and northern boundary of the precinct. Prior to the construction of the OMR, interim bushfire setbacks will need to be provided. This will be included as a requirement under the Bushfire Site Management Plan for the subdivision application.

There is a small group of trees on private land just beyond the north-western boundary of the precinct, in the vicinity of land reserved for the OMR (see Figure 16). If these trees are to be retained and considered to be Woodland at permit stage and are within 100 metres of a future development area, it may be necessary to provide the required setbacks for Woodland as detailed in the Bushfire Risk Assessment.

The existing planning and building controls are adequate to mitigate bushfire risks, provided the proposed PSP requirements are implemented. As development removes the vegetation hazard, some land within the precinct may be excised from the Bushfire Prone Area over time. Refer to the Bushfire Risk Assessment (2026) for excision of areas.

#### 4.4.7 Post contact heritage

##### Planning assessment

DTP commissioned Biosis to undertake the Post Contact Heritage Assessment (2026) to confirm any places of significance that require inclusion in the HO in the precinct and recommend the appropriate management of heritage places.

There is one HO place within the Merrifield North precinct. HO262 Bleak House (Ruins) at 135 and 155 Gunns Gully Road, Mickleham is within the Hume Planning Scheme. The Bleak House (Ruins) is a collapsed bluestone ruin believed to date from the 1850s. The remains of the building are some of the largest bluestone ruins in the Donnybrook area. It is recommended that the ruins and surrounding area of archaeological potential at Bleak

House (Ruin) are updated in the HO citation and recorded on a site card for potential listing on the Victorian Heritage Inventory.

Clifton Downs Homestead is a small early twentieth century timber farmhouse at 63 Gunns Gully Road, Mickleham, with small a section of dry stone wall retained on Gunns Gully Road. Clifton Downs is of historical and aesthetic significance to Hume City Council. It is recommended that Clifton Downs Homestead be added to the HO.

There are no HO Places in the Mitchell Shire Council within the precinct.

### **DTP position**

The PSP recognises and incorporates post-contact heritage features into the precinct. It retains HO262 Bleak House (Ruin) at 135 and 155 Gunns Gully Road, Mickleham, and proposes to apply HO395 to Clifton Downs Homestead at 63 Gunns Gully Road Mickleham. The PSP seeks to locate these heritage places within public open space areas in accordance with the Heritage Interpretation Plan. This enhances the integration of historical significance and recreational values.

## **4.4.8 Sodic and acid soils**

### **Planning assessment**

The DTP engaged Jacobs to prepare a Sodic and Acid Sulfate Soil Assessment (2023) for the Merrifield North precinct. It assesses the distribution of sodic and acid sulfate soils, erosion and environmental risks and considers their implications for future planned development in the precinct.

The soils in the precinct are classified as Sodosols and Vertosols. Refer to discussion in Appendix 5.1 for definitions. Across the precinct, most of the soils are sodic, with highly dispersive subsoils. Acid sulfate soils are identified in many of the topsoil samples and in isolated subsoil samples, located in the north and southeast of the precinct.

A vulnerability assessment approach was used to assess the risks associated with sodic soils for future urban development. The vulnerability assessment was completed for the construction phase and future developed land use.

Areas identified with high vulnerability to sodic and acid sulfate soils and the recommended treatments include:

- Conservation area and DEECA mapped wetland: Consideration should be given to the design and layout of the drainage network, so that the volume of runoff is limited or redirected to other locations.
- Constructed waterway and drainage assets: The DSS should be designed with consideration to the erosion risks associated with sodic and dispersive soils.

### **DTP position**

The PSP identifies the BCS areas 23 and 34 as 'conservation area' on the Plan 2 Place-Based Plan. The conservation area is reserved as green space to maintain its ecological values and functions. **The Kalkallo Retarding Basin, drainage channels, and sediment ponds are also identified on the Place-Based Plan subject to refinement of Melbourne Water's DSS.** Accordingly, Kalkallo Creek will be enhanced, and drainage assets will be delivered to manage risks associated with sodic and acid sulfate soils.

Sodic and dispersive soil management plans and acid sulfate soil management plans will be required as permit conditions to be implemented during construction.

#### 4.4.9 Contaminated land

##### Planning assessment

DTP engaged Jacobs to prepare the Land Capability Assessment (2026) for the Merrifield North precinct. The assessment identified potential areas of contamination by assessing land uses, both historical and present, to identify impacts on future development considering hydrology, groundwater, geology/ geomorphology and amenity.

The Land Capability Assessment found that potential contamination in the precinct is generally associated with past agricultural use, including rural septic systems, which typically presents minimal to no contamination risk.

Six properties were assessed as having a medium contamination potential due to evidence of labelled and unlabelled containers, stockpiled materials, abandoned vehicles and possible stock dips near farm residences and associated buildings.

The assessment found no existing off-site amenity constraints affecting the precinct or surrounding areas. However, future industrial uses in Merrifield North may generate off-site impacts, including noise, odour, dust, light spill and traffic. The EPA separation distance guideline will provide a key benchmark for managing these impacts and protecting existing sensitive land uses from residual emissions. Further detail is provided in Appendix 5.1.

##### DTP position

Where a property is assessed as medium potential for contamination on Plan 11 Environmental Constraints in the PSP, it is proposed to complete a Preliminary Risk Screening Assessment (PRSA) as a future application requirement for a sensitive use or construct or carry out buildings and works associated with these uses. The PRSA will determine whether an Environmental Audit is required at the property and its scope.

If a sensitive land use is proposed within the Merrifield North precinct, then it should be located in an area that will minimise constraints on use and development of the precinct for industrial use. Councils should regulate the use and development of land to avoid and minimise such outcomes.

## 4.5 Infrastructure coordination

### 4.5.1 Staging and location of development

*Directing the staging and location of development within a PSP to:*

- *use available capacity in existing infrastructure*
- *support the orderly and economic extension or augmentation of existing infrastructure*
- *match the timely provision of new infrastructure*

*This will include directing the location and timing of development and identifying trigger points for the provision of required infrastructure.*

## PSP performance target

**T20 Identify all basic and essential infrastructure with spatial requirements on the Future Place-based Plan (e.g. open space, schools, community centres, integrated water management, etc.)**

### Planning assessment

DTP assessed each infrastructure item against the ICP principles and the Ministerial Direction on the Preparation and Content of Infrastructure Contributions Plans. There is only one existing vehicular access point available to the precinct (Hume Freeway/Gunns Gully Road). To ensure delivery of critical state infrastructure is aligned with urban development timing, the PSP and ICP are accompanied by an Infrastructure and Development Staging Plan associated with a Specific Controls Overlay (SCO).

The following principles informed the Infrastructure and Development Staging Plan and the SCO:

- Proximity to new or existing arterial roads and the freeway.
- Proximity to existing or proposed development interfaces.
- Alignment with the DSS.

### DTP position

The Infrastructure and Development Staging Plan guides the orderly release of land for development in accordance with infrastructure delivery across the PSP. This plan and accompanying SCO, represents the preferred development staging as determined at the time of plan preparation, considering the local and regional context and the infrastructure requirements of new developments.

The PSP includes provision for a coordinated staging for future development and works. DTP has included the Gunns Gully Road Interchange (with the Hume Freeway) as a hard stage gate in the PSP. Stage 1 should be limited in area to ensure that Gunns Gully Road is delivered logically, either by Council with the use of infrastructure contributions or as a WIK.

A SCO is proposed to be applied to the precinct to restrict development prior to the delivery of the Gunns Gully Road Interchange. This means that planning permits will not be granted to develop the precinct until Gunns Gully Road Interchange has been delivered. The application of the SCO to the precinct will be reviewed in the future once Gunns Gully Road Interchange has been delivered.

The Western Arterial Road provides an important network function for the North Growth Corridor, serving a crucial second north-south connection which will alleviate pressure on the Hume Freeway. Staging for Merrifield North therefore sends a signal that this road should be delivered early using ICP funds. However, it is acknowledged that this road is a 'soft staging' item, meaning that if the responsible authority deems it necessary using the 'generally in accordance' principle, stage 2 development may commence prior to the complete delivery of this road. It is intended that the portion of the precinct to the east of Aitken Boulevard will be developed first.

Infrastructure and development staging will be tested through the public consultation process and amended as appropriate.

## 4.5.2 Existing and future utilities infrastructure

### Planning assessment

#### Safety Management Strategy

DTP commissioned Arup to undertake the Safety Management Strategy (SMS) to determine the implications on future land use changes from the WORM gas pipeline easement in Merrifield North.

APA is responsible for the WORM gas pipeline which runs through the precinct. The WORM gas pipeline has a 500-millimetre diameter and has a maximum allowable operating pressure of 10,200 kilopascal gauge (kPag). The pipeline has been installed at a depth of 1,200 millimetres below natural ground level. As part of the pipeline design process, a measurement length of 526 metres was determined by APA. APA has also specified an Area of Consequence of 65 metres from the pipeline. Area of Consequence is interpreted as an absolute area where APA would require additional protection of the pipeline should a sensitive (S) land use be proposed, subject to the SMS process. Sensitive land uses situated greater than 65 metres but less than the measurement length (526 metres) from the pipeline would also be subject to the SMS process.

The gas pipeline easement has a total width of 10-18 metres and has been applied to ensure the safety of people visiting the precinct and essential services nearby. Conditions are applied to the gas pipeline easement, including in terms of what activity and/or development can or cannot be carried out in the pipeline corridor. This includes the requirement to seek prior written approval from APA for activities within the corridor such as (among other things) replacing or installing fencing, any earthworks, land levelling or contouring, landscaping and planting trees, storing material or erecting structures or use of explosives.

#### Utilities Servicing Assessment

DTP commissioned SMEC to undertake the Utilities Servicing Assessment (2026) to understand servicing strategies and infrastructure requirements necessary to support the proposed development. A summary of each utility service is detailed below.

- **Drinking and non-drinking water:** YVW is responsible for the provision of water supply infrastructure to service the precinct.
- **Sewer:** YVW is responsible for the provision of sewer infrastructure to service the precinct.
- **Electricity:** The majority of the precinct is operated by AusNet Electricity, and the south-west portion of the precinct is operated by Jemena.
- **Gas:** APA is responsible for the WORM, a major gas transmission pipeline that traverses the precinct.
- **Telecommunications:** Telecommunications within the precinct is serviced by Telstra and NBN. It will be the responsibility of developers to provide pit and pipe infrastructure ('fibre ready') in any new development.

A detailed servicing strategy for each utility service is discussed in Appendix 5.1.

### DTP position

#### WORM gas pipeline

Whilst it is possible to locate sensitive development within the measurement length, there is benefit in locating these uses beyond the measurement length to limit the interventions required to the pipeline protections.

Road crossings inside or near the measurement length boundary should be kept to a minimum where possible. Any form of road crossing requires the buried depth of the pipeline to be 1,000 millimetres. APA will be

responsible for the approval of any required interventions and has standard detail options which can be adapted and applied to this development.

#### Water supply and sewer infrastructure

The YVW sewer and water supply infrastructure will need to be located in the road reserve outside of the carriageway itself. If not possible, land will need to be acquired by the service provider to accommodate sewer and water supply infrastructure. Above ground infrastructure will need to be identified at subdivision stage to ensure effective integration with surrounding urban areas.

The PSP includes applicable requirements and guidelines relating to all types of utilities infrastructure.

### 4.5.3 Infrastructure contributions plan (ICP) – infrastructure items

#### DTP position

DTP undertook an analysis to determine what infrastructure items should be proposed within the ICP. The DTP assessed all items under the ICP guidelines criteria and the Ministerial Direction on the Preparation and Content of Infrastructure Contributions Plans. The identified infrastructure items are identified on Infrastructure and Development Staging Plan in the PSP.

The ICP will be tested through the public consultation process and amended as appropriate.

### 4.5.4 Development contributions plan (DCP) – infrastructure items

The Merrifield West DCP was gazetted in June 2012. The need for infrastructure included in the DCP has been determined according to the anticipated development scenario for Merrifield West as described in the Merrifield West PSP and its supporting documents. Hume City Council is the Development Agency and is responsible for the provision of the DCP projects.

An infrastructure item can be included in a DCP regardless of whether it is inside or outside the DCP area. Table 6, Figure 14 and Figure 15 show the DCP infrastructure items that are within the Merrifield North PSP boundary.

| DCP Project Number | Description                                                                                                                     | Land Area (Hectare) | Indicative Provision Trigger                              |
|--------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| OS09               | District Active Open Space. Land acquisition of 30 hectares of district open space to service broader community.                | 30                  | Land acquisition when population growth creates the need. |
| IT01               | Intersection 1. Land acquisition for ultimate intersection of the western north-south connector and Aitken Boulevard extension. | 0.57                | At time of subdivision/ access demand.                    |
| IT02               | Intersection 2. Land acquisition for ultimate intersection of the middle north-south connector and Aitken Boulevard extension.  | 0.17                | At time of subdivision/ access demand.                    |

|             |                                                                                                                                                                                     |      |                                           |
|-------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|-------------------------------------------|
| <b>IT03</b> | Intersection 3. Land acquisition for ultimate intersection of the eastern north-south connector and Aitken Boulevard extension.                                                     | 0.16 | At time of subdivision/<br>access demand. |
| <b>RD01</b> | Aitken Boulevard extension between the northern edge of Mickleham Major Activity Centre (Merrifield City Centre) and Gunns Gully Road. Land acquisition for ultimate arterial road. | 8.53 | At time of subdivision/<br>access demand. |

Table 6 Infrastructure items in [Merrifield West DCP](#)

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

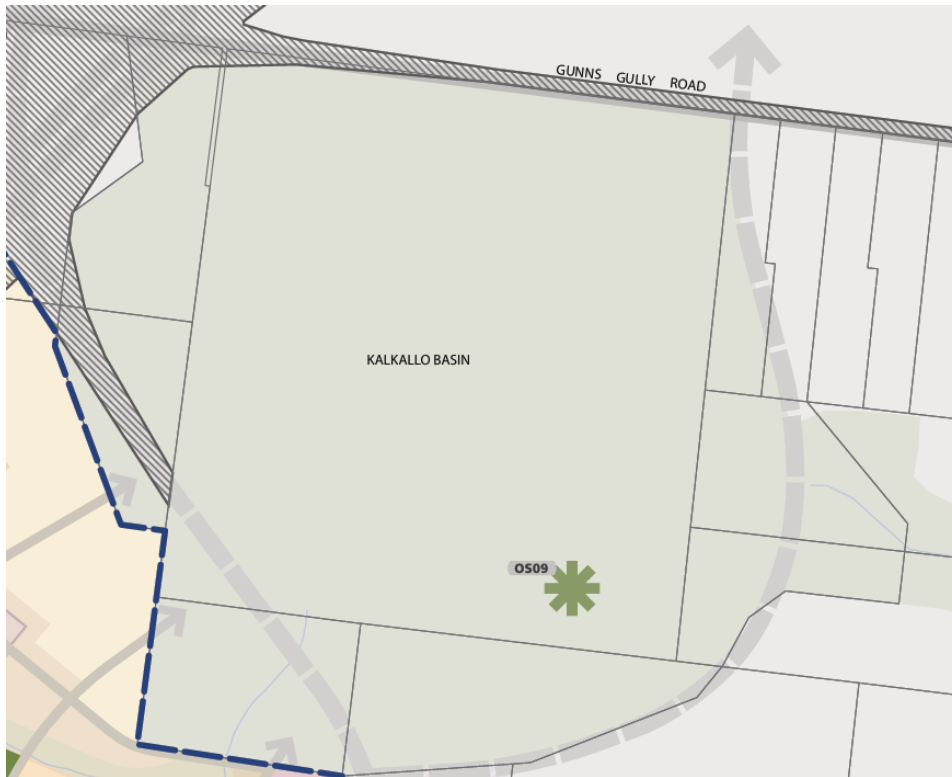


Figure 14 Merrifield West DCP active recreation projects



Figure 15 Merrifield West DCP transport infrastructure projects

### DTP position

The implementation of DCP item OS09 is under investigation with Hume City Council and Melbourne Water.

## 4.5.5 State infrastructure items

### DTP position

DTP analysis has determined the following infrastructure items are considered State infrastructure and therefore cannot be included in the ICP (land for some items is included as noted below):

- OMR construction
- Gunns Gully Road Interchange
- Western Arterial Road and Gunns Gully Road Interchange with OMR
- Aitken Boulevard Crossing of the OMR
- Ultimate development of Gunns Gully Road, Aitken Boulevard or Western Arterial Road (interim delivery is included within the precinct as is land for the ultimate development form).

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

## 5 APPENDICES

### 5.1 Technical report summaries

Some technical reports are still in draft or under preparation. As discussed in Section 1.4, a progressive certainty approach is applied to the Merrifield North PSP preparation, and DTP will continue to work on the finalisation of these reports.

The final outcomes shown in the PSP may differ from the specific recommendations contained in a particular technical report, as the PSP responds to feedback received during the public consultation phase of the project.

#### **Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment (2026), Eco Logical (Under preparation)**

*What is the purpose of the report?*

An ACHIA is being prepared to investigate areas of cultural heritage sensitivity, registered Aboriginal places, and predicted areas of Aboriginal archaeological sites and features or deposits in the Merrifield North precinct. The findings will inform precinct planning and design work which responds to Aboriginal cultural heritage and values.

*Findings and implications for the Merrifield North PSP will be updated once the assessment is concluded.*

#### **Arboriculture Assessment (2026), Tree Logic (Final)**

*What is the purpose of the report?*

An Arboriculture Assessment was prepared to provide information on the tree species, origin, dimensions, health, structure, and retention value within the Merrifield North PSP.

*What do we know so far?*

Site inspections were undertaken in January 2026 within the Merrifield North precinct. Approximately 3150 trees (160 individual trees and 133 tree groups) were assessed within the precinct. Arboriculture ratings and landscape value were assigned to each tree and tree group to reflect their retention value.

Out of all individual trees:

- 10 trees were attributed high value. They are concentrated on the western edge of the precinct and have the most outstanding tree features in the precinct in terms of size and/or quality.
- 16 trees were attributed Moderate A value. These trees are relatively high quality and should be prioritised for retention.
- 39 trees were attributed Moderate B and 54 trees were attributed Moderate C value.
- 35 trees were attributed low value and 6 trees were attributed very low value.

Out of all tree groups:

- 2 tree groups were attributed very high landscape value. They contain indigenous River Red Gum and are located on the western edge of the study area.
- 11 tree groups were attributed high landscape value.

- 80 tree groups were attributed medium landscape value.
- 37 tree groups were attributed low landscape value.
- 3 tree groups were attributed very low landscape value.

High value and moderate A value trees should be prioritised for retention. Tree groups with very high and high landscape value were the standout groupings and provide significant levels of landscape amenity to the precinct. The locations of these trees are shown in Figure 16.



Figure 16 Locations of High and Moderate A rated trees (arb.rating) and Very High/High rated tree groups (Landscape value) (Source: Arboricultural Assessment 2026, Tree Logic)

Native permit requirements under Clause 52.17 apply to 23 trees and 6 tree groups in Mitchell Shire Council and 6 trees in Hume City Council. Furthermore, 2 trees and 4 tree groups in Mitchell Shire Council would trigger a permit requirement under the VPO2. Refer to the Arboriculture Assessment for tree ID and location.

#### What does this mean for the Merrifield North PSP?

All individual trees identified as 'high' and 'moderate A' value and tree groups with 'very high' and 'high' landscape value have been included in Plan 7 NVRR as 'vegetation to be retained'. The NVRR corresponds to the provisions of Clause 52.17 and Schedule to Clause 52.17. Any native vegetation in the precinct that has not been explicitly identified in the NVRR as 'must be retained' does not require a planning permit for native vegetation removal.

Trees and tree groups have been co-located with public open space where possible. The PSP includes requirements and guidelines that seeks to encourage subdivisions to incorporate high-value trees into subdivision design, e.g. street layout and design.

## Arterial Roads Concept Design, AECOM & WSP (Under Preparation)

An Arterial Roads Concept Design Assessment is being prepared to determine the alignment and design of Aitken Boulevard, and the design of the intersections between Aitken Boulevard and the OMR, and Gunns Gully Road/Western Arterial/OMR.

Findings and implications for the Merrifield North PSP will be updated once the assessment is concluded.

## Bushfire Risk Assessment (2026), Terramatrix (Final)

### What is the purpose of the report?

A Bushfire Risk Assessment was prepared to assess how the development of the Merrifield North precinct has regard to bushfire risk and complies with the applicable planning policy such as the objectives and strategies of Clause 13.02-1S Bushfire Planning in the Planning Policy Framework (Hume Planning Scheme and Mitchell Planning Scheme). The assessment considered factors such as vegetation type, extent and topography.

### What do we know so far?

The precinct is within a designated Bushfire Prone Area, which is an area subject to or likely to be subject to bushfire, as determined by the Minister for Planning. The precinct is not covered by the Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO). The precinct is in a relatively low bushfire risk landscape. The topography within and around the precinct is benign, with no significant changes in elevation or slopes that would significantly exacerbate the bushfire attack.

Grassland is the predominant vegetation within the precinct and along its adjacent boundaries. Woodland is not identified within the precinct. However, there is a small group of trees on private land just beyond the northwest boundary of the precinct. If these trees are to be retained and considered to be Woodland at permit stage, and within 100 metres of a future development area, it may be necessary to provide Woodland setbacks. The proposed conservation and drainage reserve could comprise classified Grassland, Shrubland or Woodland, depending on what vegetation is retained or re-established and how it is managed into the future.

Urban development adjacent to these areas will be required to incorporate appropriate setbacks that correspond to the relevant vegetation classification (See Table 7). The low threat setback can be achieved by a combination of:

- Setback of buildings within adjacent lots.
- A perimeter road around the precinct or around an internal reserve.
- A managed low threat strip within or adjacent to the reserve.

| Slope class                       | Vegetation | BAL-12.5 setback distance<br>(defendable space) |
|-----------------------------------|------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| <b>All upslopes and flat land</b> | Grassland  | 19m                                             |
|                                   | Shrubland  | 19m                                             |
|                                   | Woodland   | 33m                                             |
| <b>Downslope &gt;0-5 degree</b>   | Grassland  | 22m                                             |

|  |           |     |
|--|-----------|-----|
|  | Shrubland | 22m |
|  | Woodland  | 41m |

Table 7 Building setbacks for BAL-12.5 (Source: Bushfire Risks Assessment 2026, Terramatrix)

An indicative map of potential setback requirements is shown in Figure 17. This mapping is a high-level assessment and localised variations in slope may result in an assessment of a specific building site requiring a different setback.

The indicative setbacks may be refined subject to changes in waterway corridors and sediment basins.

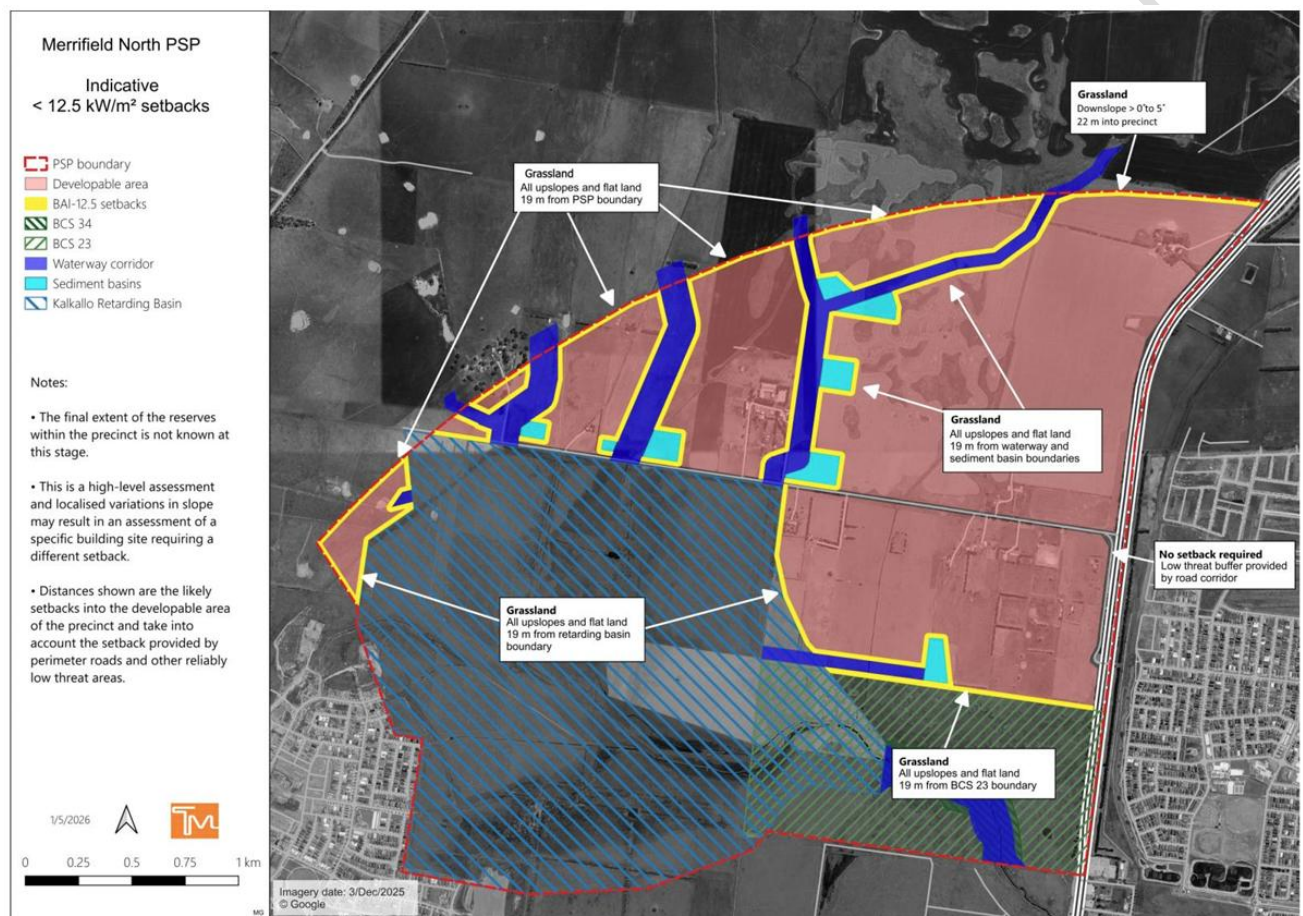


Figure 17 Indicative 12.5 kW/ m<sup>2</sup> setbacks from classified vegetation outside the precinct and in potential conservation and drainage reserve (Source: Bushfire Risks Assessment 2026, Terramatrix)

The assessment also recommended other appropriate planning instruments which can stipulate bushfire protection measures, including:

- Provision of multiple egress roads, away from the external and internal bushfire hazard interface.
- Roads are to comply with fire service requirements for emergency access/ egress.
- Provision of water for firefighting via a reticulated hydrant network.
- Inclusion of bushfire in emergency management plans for businesses exposed to a bushfire hazard.
- Vegetation on private property to be maintained in a low threat condition.

- Requirement for a Bushfire Site Management Plan for subdivision applications.
  - Include the staging of development.
  - Include management of interim bushfire hazard setbacks (i.e. grass to be cut to less than 100 millimetres in height until land is rendered permanently low threat through urban development).

#### What does this mean for the Merrifield North PSP?

Plan 8 Bushfire highlights the corresponding setbacks required for development to occur. The PSP includes requirements and guidelines informed by the findings of the Bushfire Risks Assessment.

Application requirements and conditions for the preparation and implementation of a Bushfire Management Plan have been included in UGZ Schedule for any land identified as containing a bushfire hazard area on Plan 8 Bushfire in the PSP.

In the long term, the future OMR will provide a substantial perimeter road for much of the western and northern boundary of the precinct. Prior to the construction of the OMR, interim bushfire setbacks will need to be provided. This will be included in the requirement under the Bushfire Site Management Plan for the subdivision application.

There is a small group of trees on private land just beyond the north-western boundary of the precinct, in the vicinity of land reserved for the OMR. If these trees are to be retained and considered to be Woodland at permit stage, and are within 100 metres of a future development area, it may be necessary to provide Woodland setbacks.

### **Cultural Values Assessment (2026), Wurundjeri Woi-Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation- Research Unit (Under preparation)**

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

A Cultural Values Assessment (CVA) is being prepared by WWCHAC's Research Unit. The CVA will investigate the precinct, its natural features, and landscapes of cultural heritage significance and Aboriginal intangible heritage\* through historical and anthropological investigations and On-Country visits. On-Country visits with WWCHAC's Elders were conducted in May and June 2026. The CVA will provide advice on how the precinct can best protect, conserve, incorporate and manage areas of cultural values.

*\*Aboriginal intangible heritage is defined in the Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006 (Section 79B) as knowledge or expression of Aboriginal tradition, including oral traditions, performing arts, stories, rituals, festivals, social practices, craft, visual arts, environmental and ecological knowledge, and intellectual creations or innovations derived from these, but excludes anything widely known to the public.*

Findings and implications for the Merrifield North PSP will be updated once the assessment is concluded.

### **Economic and Employment Needs Assessment (2026), Colliers (Final)**

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

An Economic and Employment Needs Assessment was prepared to understand the physical attributes, employment trends and land development markets of the study area and the wider region. The assessment also assessed the anticipated demand for employment typologies and the delivery outlook.

## What do we know so far?

### Employment estimates

The precinct has the capacity to support 5,780 to 6,260 jobs in the precinct at full development based on an NDA of 255 hectares. These jobs numbers are based on assumptions regarding land use typology, including medium to large footprint industrial, local service industry, and local convenience node. The precinct is projected to provide between 7-7.5 % of the 83,000 jobs envisaged in the *North Growth Corridor Plan (2012)*.

A range of indirect jobs (7,380 to 8,000 jobs) outside the precinct will be supported through increasing demand for goods and services produced in other sectors as a result of the demand generated by the direct economic activity.

### Land use typologies

The precinct has the capacity to support a diverse mix of industrial typologies. Three broad categories have been defined to describe the recommended land use mix and inform zoning considerations and planning guidance, namely:

- Medium to Large Footprint Industrial
  - Approximately 65-75% of the precinct NDA should be developed for this category.
  - The uses include but not limited to manufacturing, warehousing, logistic and data centres.
  - The access to the Hume Freeway via the future Gunns Gully Road Interchange provides strategic locational attributes for larger footprint occupiers.
  - Indicative lot size starts from around 0.5 hectares to 10+ hectares.
  - Central and east part of the precinct can be more easily subdivided into larger 'regular shaped' parcels.
  - Occupiers with significant heavy vehicles movements (such as warehousing and distribution) have convenient access to the Hume Freeway.
- Local Service Industry
  - Approximately 25-35% of the precinct NDA should be developed for this category.
  - This includes finer-grain local service and convenience node. The uses include but not limited to small warehouse, factory developments, depots and trade supplies.
  - Indicative lot size up to approximately 0.25 hectares.
  - It is better suited to the west part of the precinct where the presence of environmental and drainage constraints results in developable areas that are irregularly shaped and less suitable for large format occupiers.
- Amenity/Convenience Node
  - Up to 3,500 square metres of retail or commercial floorspace is suggested for the convenience node, resulting in a total site area of 1 hectare.
  - This supports amenities and services for workers within the precinct.
  - The local convenience node would be best located centrally in the eastern part of the precinct and could be co-located with a service station.

### Timing and staging

The development in the precinct is dependent on the timing and delivery of Aitken Boulevard, Gunns Gully Road and the Gunns Gully Road Interchange with the Hume Freeway. The development of the Gunns Gully Road Interchange is particularly important as it would unlock direct access to the Hume Freeway and act as the precursor to initial stages of development.

Parcels in the eastern part of the precinct are regularly shaped and in proximity to the Hume Freeway, thus it creates more incentive for development.

### Zoning

- IN1Z would be the most appropriate 'applied zone' under the UGZ for development in the precinct. This ensures appropriate flexibility for industrial supply to be market responsive.
- C2Z would be the most appropriate 'applied zone' to control the use and development of the local convenience node and adjacent local service industry (such as showrooms and trade supplies).
  - It is recommended that a condition be included in the UGZ that any retail shops comprising over 1,000 square metres of floorspace (such as a small supermarket) must be subject to a permit and justified by retail needs analysis.

### What does this mean for the Merrifield North PSP?

To support a diversity of employment and economic development opportunities, the IN1Z is applied to most of the Merrifield North precinct (313 hectares), and 1 hectare is allocated for C2Z.

## Integrated Transport Assessment (2026), Arup (Under Preparation)

### What is the purpose of the report?

An Integrated Transport Assessment is being prepared to review the movement networks and strategic planning context, and will be informed by the Transport Modelling Assessment, Aitken Boulevard Threshold Impact Assessment, preliminary findings from the Aitken Boulevard alignment, Western Arterial Road and OMR Assessment.

The assessment builds on previous corridor-level transport studies to assess future traffic demands and to inform the development of and finalisation of the precinct road network plan. It will identify and make recommendations for transport infrastructure upgrades and inform the preparation of the ICP.

Findings and implications for the Merrifield North PSP will be updated once the assessment is concluded.

## Integrated Water Management Assessment (2026), Arup (Under Preparation)

### What is the purpose of the report?

An IWM Assessment is being prepared to identify potential IWM opportunities and to recommend a portfolio of potential IWM solutions for the precinct. The interim IWM Assessment provided concept-level guidance for potential incorporation into the development of the PSP and to subsequent development plans.

### What do we know so far?

**The potential portfolio of IWM initiatives for the Merrifield North precinct includes:**

- Enabling stormwater harvesting from the Kalkallo Retarding Basin for regional use to enable catchment scale objectives to be delivered and the Healthy Waterways Strategy target for stormwater harvesting to be achieved.
- Remediation of Kalkallo Creek to create a biodiverse and high value landscape corridor.
- Class A recycled water for non-potable supply for major users within the precinct. This could open pathways for providing climate resilient alternative supply for council open space as well as the future marram baba Merri Creek Regional Parklands.
- Lot scale rainwater tanks should be included for employment buildings to provide for toilet flushing, irrigation and appropriate wash down activities where recycled water is not viable due to the scale of non-potable water demand. Rainwater harvesting will assist in providing local runoff reduction at source to reduce downstream impacts in a sodic soil environment.
- Lot and street-scale opportunities where feasible to support greening and amenity while reducing runoff on a sodic soil-friendly manner. The inclusion of passively irrigated trees and opportunities to embed increased permeability in developments and natural infiltration areas in riparian zones should also be encouraged.

**The interim IWM assessment proposes the following land use planning and spatial land allocation recommendations:**

- Allow for core infrastructure required for the Kalkallo Retarding Basin regional stormwater harvesting scheme.
- Ensure the Kalkallo Creek waterway corridor land addresses Melbourne Water's decision relating to waterway remediation works.
- Ensure active transport corridors are integrated into Kalkallo Creek.

**What does this mean for the Merrifield North PSP?**

Opportunities to establish good practice scenarios for IWM are provided via the requirements and guidelines within the PSP. These opportunities include but are not limited to rainwater tanks on all industrial and commercial lots, use of permeable pavement, recycled water network, local stormwater harvesting system and roof water collection.

## Land Capability Assessment (2026), Jacobs (Final)

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

A Land Capability Assessment was prepared to assess potentially contaminated land within the precinct in accordance with Planning Practice Note 30 and review surrounding land uses to confirm whether any industries or land uses exist that would trigger separation distance requirements under relevant planning guidelines.

**What do we know so far?**

### Contamination

A desktop study and site inspection were undertaken to assess the site's potential for contamination. The potential sources of contamination observed within the precinct were related to general agricultural land use. General agricultural use and rural septic tank systems are generally considered to present a minimal to nil

potential to contaminate the land. At some locations however, contamination potential has been determined to be medium. Refer to Plan 14 Environmental Constraints in the PSP.

- Six properties within the precinct (see Table 8) were considered to have medium potential for contamination. Potential for contamination was typically associated with labelled containers, variously used unlabelled containers, stockpiled materials, abandoned vehicles and likely presence of stock dips in proximity to farm residences and associated buildings.
- Twenty properties within the precinct were considered to have no potential for contamination.

| Address                                    | Legal description |
|--------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| <b>290 Gunns Gully Road Beveridge 3753</b> | Lot 2 PS401696    |
| <b>160 Gunns Gully Road Beveridge 3753</b> | Plan PC373448     |
| <b>50 Gunns Gully Road Beveridge 3753</b>  | Lot 1 TP177321    |
| <b>63 Gunns Gully Road Mickleham 3064</b>  | Lot 7 LP136262    |
| <b>15 Gunns Gully Road Mickleham 3064</b>  | Lot 10 LP136262   |
| <b>135 Gunns Gully Road Mickleham 3064</b> | Lot 2 LP136262    |

Table 8 Medium potential for contamination parcels

Off-site sources of potential contamination in the vicinity of the precinct are low. There are two petrol stations approximately 14 metres and 45 metres to the south-east of the precinct. Since regional and local groundwater direction is likely to be from north to south, any contamination of groundwater (if present) would unlikely intersect the precinct area.

#### Geotechnical/ sodic soil

- The precinct is underlain by alluvial soils and basaltic residual soils. Sodic dispersive soils are also present in the precinct.
- A geotechnical investigation should be undertaken on a site-by-site basis during future development as part of the building permit application process.

#### No adverse amenity impacts on the precinct

There is no industry that has an existing land use separation distance that encroaches into the developable areas of the precinct. No piggeries, broiler farms or landfills were identified within the required separation distances under the EPA Separation Distance Guideline or Clause 53.10 Uses and Activities with Potential Adverse Impacts.

The Extractive Industry Interest Area (EIIA) data shows there are no quarries that are active or pending approval within 500 metres of the Merrifield North precinct. The nearest existing and planned quarries to the precinct are WA147 in the future Beveridge North East PSP and the North Central Quarry (WA1473) in Beveridge North West PSP. These are both more than 3.5 kilometres from the Merrifield North precinct and are not a constraint on the use and development of sensitive land uses within the precinct.

The EIIA layers show an interest area (reference number: 884011) located in the north of the precinct and the future Beveridge South West precinct. A new extractive industry in this area would need to consider its proximity to planned urban uses and could be required to include an end date for its use if specified in its planning permit at the time of approval.

There would be no adverse amenity impacts on surrounding areas:

- The Beveridge South West PSP, located directly north of the precinct, is a Horizon 2 project.
- The Lockerbie PSP is located to the east of the precinct and is predominantly planned for residential development, education facilities, local activity centres and open space.
- The Merrifield North is located approximately 200 metres from the residential area in Kalkallo, separated by the Hume Freeway.
- The Merrifield West PSP is located to the southeast of the precinct and is primarily planned for residential purposes, supported by education centres, local services, and commercial uses. The Kalkallo Retarding Basin directly interfaces with this residential area.

Future industrial activities in Merrifield North could generate off-site impacts such as noise, odour, dust, light spill and traffic. The EPA separation distance guideline provides a key benchmark to ensure existing sensitive land uses are not exposed to residual emissions from new industrial uses.

#### What does this mean for the Merrifield North PSP?

Where the properties were assessed as presenting a medium potential for contamination, it is proposed to complete a PRSA as a future application requirement for a sensitive use or to construct or carry out buildings and works associated with these uses. The PRSA will determine whether an Environmental Audit is required at the property and its scope.

If a sensitive land use is proposed within the Merrifield North precinct, then it should be located in an area that will minimise constraints on use and development of the precinct for industrial use. Councils should regulate the use and development of land to avoid and minimise such outcomes.

## Landscape Character and Visual Impact Assessment (2026), Veris (Under Preparation)

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

A Landscape Character and Visual Impact Assessment is being prepared to analyse key landscape and visual characteristics of the Merrifield North precinct. It will identify significant views to, from and within the precinct, and provides recommendations to retain significant views whilst accommodating future development. The recommended visual and landscape response will help determine a respectful transition of the precinct from rural to industrial character and respond to surrounding residential and employment uses.

#### What do we know so far?

The report will set out the landscape design principles to guide the integration of landscape opportunities and recommendations to the PSP. The following design principles provided direction for protecting key landscape values while informing the design of open space, movement networks and built form interfaces within the precinct:

- 1 Protect internal and external long-range views to key surrounding topographical landscape features.
- 2 Leverage existing topography and view lines to establish key gateway entries into the PSP and secondary gateway entries within the PSP.

- 3 Prioritise retention and integration of existing high-rated and Moderate-A trees and, where feasible, encourage further retention of other high to moderate valued trees and vegetation within the PSP's public open spaces and streetscape design.
- 4 Establish a connected open space network of environmental assets that supports pedestrian and cyclist movements throughout the future employment precinct.
- 5 Deliver Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) initiatives as integrated landscape elements, ensuring they support environmental performance while maintaining the openness and visual character of the precinct.
- 6 Establish appropriate interface treatments to sensitive landscape features.
- 7 Ensure future landscape design integrates existing open space character with proposed amenity to support future users.

The report will also provide four high-level concept designs to address detailed guidance in line with the design principles. These plans will show how major elements such as open space networks, interface treatments, employment precinct structure, and the movement network would work together.

#### What does this mean for the Merrifield North PSP?

To enhance key view lines and landscape character, the PSP includes guidelines to encourage alignment of the road network to protect key views within and outside the precinct wherever possible. All new above-ground utilities should be located outside of key view lines, and screened, to the satisfaction of the responsible authorities.

## Post Contact Heritage Assessment (2026), Biosis (Final)

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

A Post Contact Heritage Assessment was prepared to confirm if there are any places of significance that require inclusion in the HO in the Merrifield North precinct and to recommend appropriate management of heritage values. The assessment conducted a peer review of existing heritage reports and a comprehensive review of heritage listings.

#### What do we know so far?

There is one HO place within the Merrifield North precinct. HO262 Bleak House (Ruins) at 135 and 155 Gunns Gully Road, Mickleham is within the Hume Planning Scheme. The Bleak House (Ruins) is a collapsed bluestone ruin believed to date from the 1850s. The remains of the building are some of the largest bluestone ruins in the Donnybrook area. It is recommended that the ruins and surrounding area of archaeological potential at Bleak House (Ruin) are updated in the HO citation and recorded on a site card for potential listing on the Victorian Heritage Inventory.

Clifton Downs Homestead is a small early twentieth century timber farmhouse at 63 Gunns Gully Road, Mickleham, with a small section of dry stone wall on Gunns Gully Road. Clifton Downs is of historical and aesthetic significance to Hume City Council. It is recommended that Clifton Downs Homestead be added to the HO.

There are no HO Places in the Mitchell Shire Council within the precinct.

#### What does this mean for the Merrifield North PSP?

The HO citation for HO262 Bleak House Ruin at 135 and 155 Gunns Gully Road will be amended. A historical archaeological site card was submitted to Heritage Victoria in April 2026. The heritage place was renamed to 'Gunns Gully Road Ruin' and is acknowledged on the Victorian Heritage Inventory. It is proposed to apply HO395 to Clifton Downs Homestead at 63 Gunns Gully Road. The PSP seeks to locate these heritage places within public open space in accordance with the Heritage Interpretation Plan.

## Safety Management Strategy (2026), Arup (Under Preparation)

### What is the purpose of the report?

An SMS was prepared to assess how the development of the Merrifield North precinct can comply with the legislative requirements for Victorian Pipeline Licensees per the *Victorian Pipelines Act 2005* and *Pipelines Regulations 2017*. The SMS relates to the future land use changes in the precinct and the potential impact of the WORM gas pipeline located along the south side of Gunns Gully Road.

### What do we know so far?

APA is responsible for the WORM gas pipeline which runs through the precinct (see Figure 18). The WORM gas pipeline has a 500-millimetre diameter and a maximum allowable operating pressure of 10,200 kilopascals gauge (kPag). The pipeline has been installed at a depth of 1,200 millimetres below natural ground level. As part of the pipeline design process, a measurement length of 526 metres was determined by APA. APA has also specified an area of consequence of 65 metres from the pipeline. The Area of Consequence is interpreted as an absolute area where APA would require additional protection of the pipeline should a sensitive (S) land use be proposed, subject to the SMS process.

Sensitive land uses situated greater than 65 metres but less than the measurement length (526 metres) from the pipeline would also be subject to the SMS process.

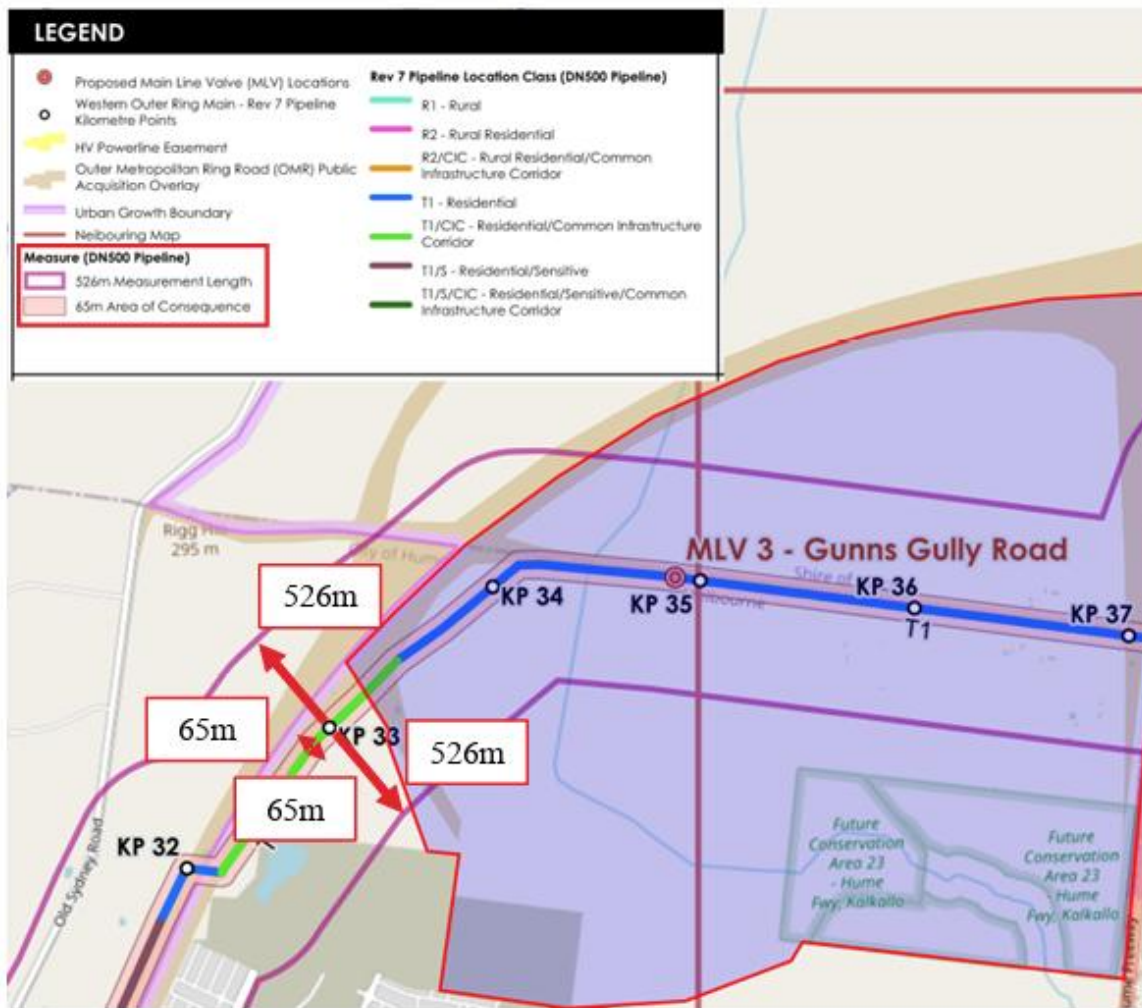


Figure 18 Extract of WORM zoning in Merrifield North precinct (Source: Safety Management Study 2026, Arup)

The report provided the following list of examples of sensitive land uses:

- Accommodations (other than dependent persons units and dwelling)
- Aged care facilities
- Retirement villages
- Childcare/family day care centres
- Cinema-based entertainment facilities
- Prisons/corrective institutions
- Schools or other educational establishments
- Hospitals
- Places of assembly or worship
- Service station or industrial/warehouse uses that have large volumes of volatile and hazardous materials.

The gas pipeline easement has a total width of 10-18 metres and has been applied to ensure the safety of people visiting the precinct and essential services nearby. Conditions are applied to the gas pipeline easement, including in terms of what activity and/or development can or cannot be carried out in the pipeline corridor.

This includes the requirement to seek prior written approval from APA for activities within the corridor such as (among other things) replacing or installing fencing, any earthworks, land levelling or contouring, landscaping and planting trees, storing material or erecting structures or use of explosives.

#### What does this mean for the Merrifield North PSP?

Whilst it is possible to locate sensitive development within the measurement length, there is benefit in locating these uses beyond the measurement length to limit the interventions required for pipeline protections.

Road crossings inside or near the measurement length boundary should be kept to a minimum where possible. Any form of road crossing requires the buried depth of the pipeline to be 1,000 millimetres. APA will be responsible for the approval of any required interventions and has standard detail options which can be adapted and applied to this development.

## Sodic and Acid Sulfate Soil Assessment (2023), Jacobs (Final)

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

A Sodic and Acid Sulfate Soil Assessment was prepared to assess the distribution of sodic and acid sulfate soils, erosion and environmental risks, and consider their implications for future planned development in the precinct.

#### What do we know so far?

The soils in the precinct were classified as Sodosols and Vertosols. Sodosols are defined as soils which display a clear or abrupt textural B horizon (subsoil 30–40 centimetres deep) in which a major part of the upper B2 horizon is sodic and not strongly acid. Vertosols are defined as clay soils with shrink-swell properties that exhibit strong cracking when dry and at depth have slickensides or lenticular peds. Across the precinct, many of the soils were sodic, with highly dispersive subsoils. Acid sulfate soils were identified in many of the topsoil samples and in isolated subsoil samples, located in the north and southeast of the precinct.

A vulnerability assessment approach was used to assess the risks associated with sodic soils for future urban development. The vulnerability assessment was completed for the construction phase and future developed land use.

Areas identified with high vulnerability to sodic and acid sulfate soils and the recommended treatments include:

- BCS conservation area and DEECA mapped wetland: Consideration should be given to the design and layout of the drainage network, so that the volume of runoff is limited and/or directed to other locations (e.g. Kalkallo Retarding Basin).
- Constructed waterway and drainage assets: The DSS should be designed with consideration to the erosion risks associated with sodic and dispersive soils.

#### What does this mean for the Merrifield North PSP?

The PSP identifies BCS areas 23 and 34 as 'conservation area' on Plan 2 Place-Based Plan. The conservation areas are reserved as green space to maintain its ecological values and functions. The Kalkallo Retarding Basin, drainage channels and sediment ponds are identified on the Place-Based Plan, subject to refinement of Melbourne Water's DSS. Accordingly, Kalkallo Creek will be enhanced, and drainage assets will be delivered to manage risks associated with sodic and acid sulfate soils.

In addition, sodic and dispersive soil management plan and acid sulfate soil management plan will be required as permit conditions to be implemented during construction.

## Strategic Transport Modelling Assessment (2026), Arup (Under Preparation)

### What is the purpose of the report?

A Strategic Transport Modelling Assessment is being prepared to model traffic volumes, public transport mode share, accessibility, trip distribution and network performance (volume/capacity and level of service). The assessment utilises existing and proposed roads, including the OMR, public transport routes and interchanges, and pedestrian and bicycle paths. The modelling uses the Victorian Integrated Transport Model (VITM) to reflect the proposed road network and land uses and assess the anticipated traffic volumes on the network.

Findings and implications for the Merrifield North PSP will be updated once the assessment is concluded.

## Utility Servicing Assessment (2026), SMEC (Final)

### What is the purpose of the report?

A Utility Servicing Assessment was prepared to identify opportunities and constraints regarding utility services and infrastructure related to the future development of the Merrifield North precinct. It investigated utility services including drinking and non-drinking water, sewer, electricity, gas, telecommunications and referenced stormwater drainage. The assessment also identified implementation and staging issues for development, the land requirements for utility services infrastructure and potential costs to developers.

### What do we know so far?

#### Drinking and non-drinking water

- YVW is the responsible authority for the provision of water supply infrastructure to service the precinct. No water supply assets currently exist within the precinct. **YVW has advised that the following information is preliminary servicing advice and may change as the PSP progresses.**
- The nearest existing drinking and non-drinking water supply networks are:
  - To the south-west in Polaris Road in Merrifield Business Park.
  - To the east in Cloverton Boulevard (drinking water only) in Cloverton Estate.
- Supply of water infrastructure to the precinct requires extension of distribution mains from the existing network. Figure 19 shows the preliminary location for the key drinking water assets planned to service the precinct, including transfer and distribution mains and pressure reducing stations.
- Non-drinking water supply to employment development is generally not mandated but can be supplied if available and requested by a developer. Figure 20 shows the preliminary location for the key non-drinking water assets planned to service the precinct.

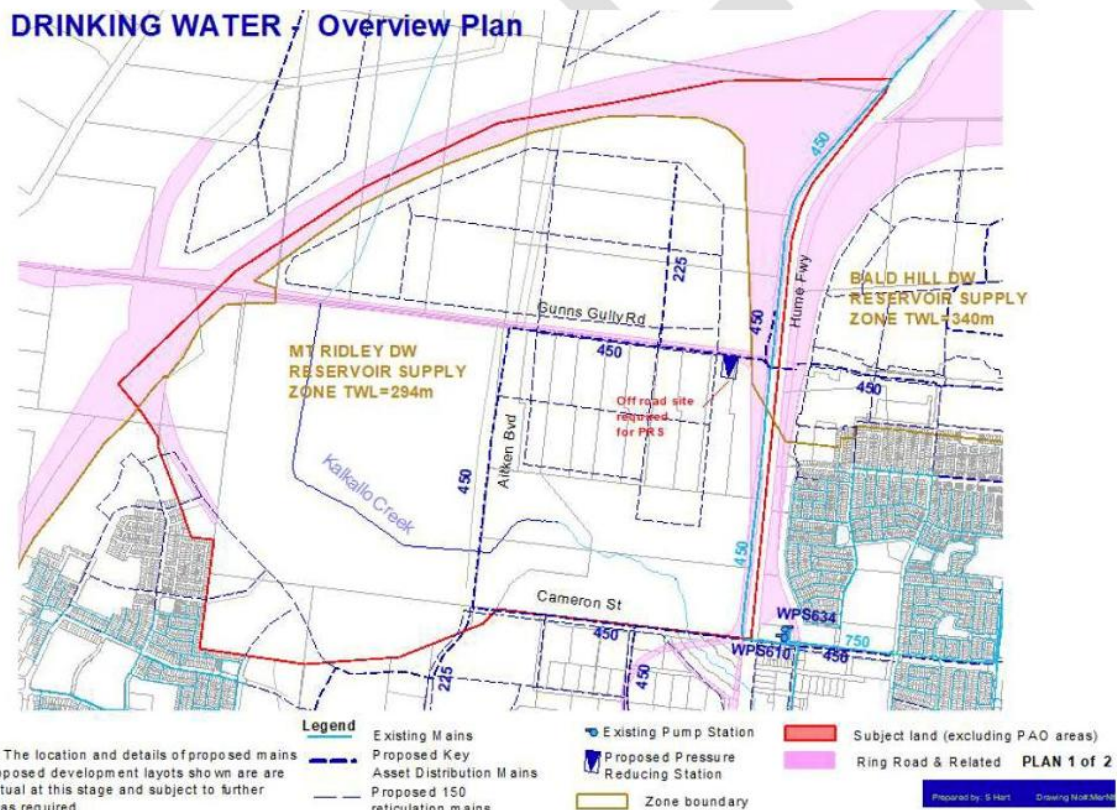


Figure 19 YVW Drinking Water Concept Plan (Source: Utility Servicing Assessment 2026, SMEC)

### NON- DRINKING WATER - PSP Overview Plan

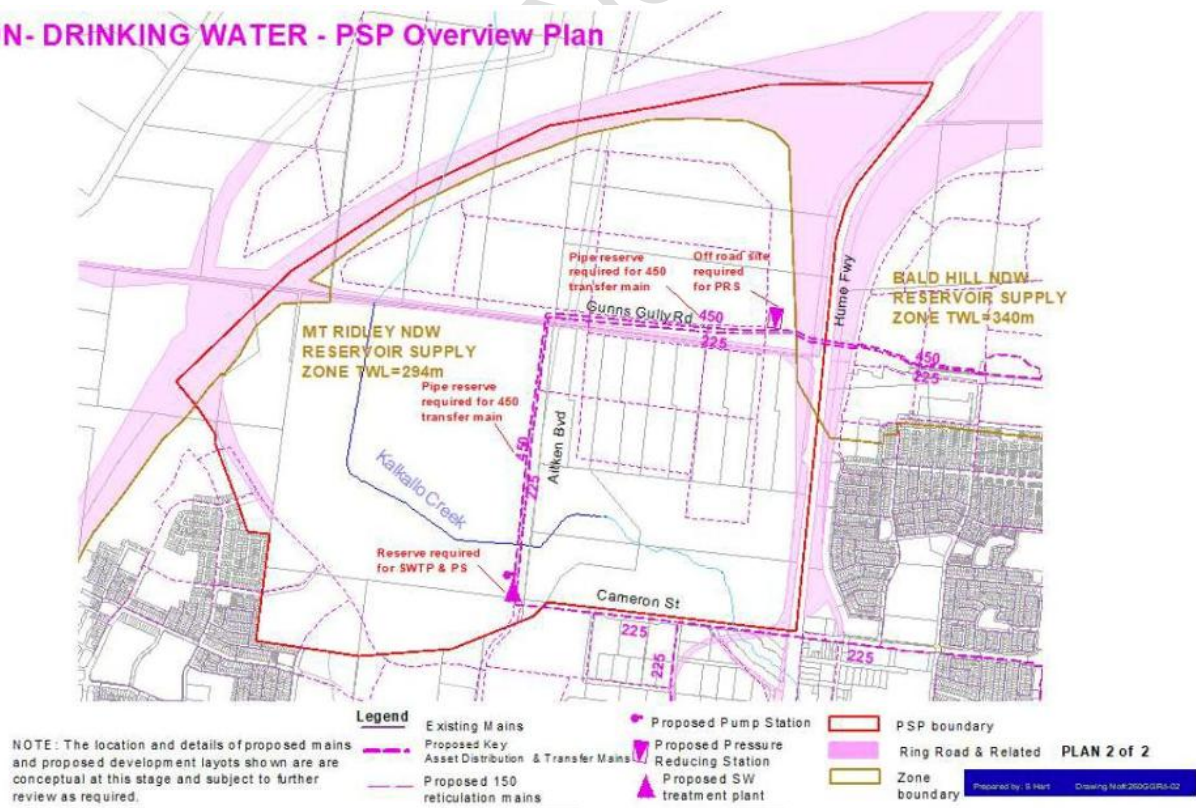


Figure 20 YVW Non-Drinking Water Concept Plan (Source: Utility Servicing Assessment 2026, SMEC)

## Sewer

- YVW is the responsible authority for the provision of sewer infrastructure to service the precinct. YVW has advised that the following information is preliminary servicing advice and may change as the PSP progresses.
- The Merrifield North precinct is serviced by the Merrifield Central Branch Sewer – Section 1. This sewer follows the southern boundary of the precinct before connecting into Errol Boulevard, Mickleham. The major sewer infrastructure is listed in Table 9 and its indicative alignment is shown in Figure 21.

| Asset                                       | Design    | Build     | Fund                                | Servicing                                                                                                    |
|---------------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Kalkallo Creek Main Sewer</b>            | YVW       | YVW       | Bring-forward costs apply (2033) *  | It will service the Merrifield North precinct and provide an outfall to future development north of the OMR. |
| <b>Gunns Gully Creek South Branch Sewer</b> | Developer | Developer | Bring-forward costs apply (2033+) * | It will service the land parcels south of Gunns Gully Road.                                                  |
| <b>Gunns Gully Creek Branch Sewer</b>       | Developer | Developer | Bring-forward costs apply (2033+) * | It will service the parcels north of Gunns Gully Road and east of the Kalkallo Creek Main Sewer.             |

\* This is subject to change.

Table 9 Yarra Valley Water Major Sewer Infrastructure

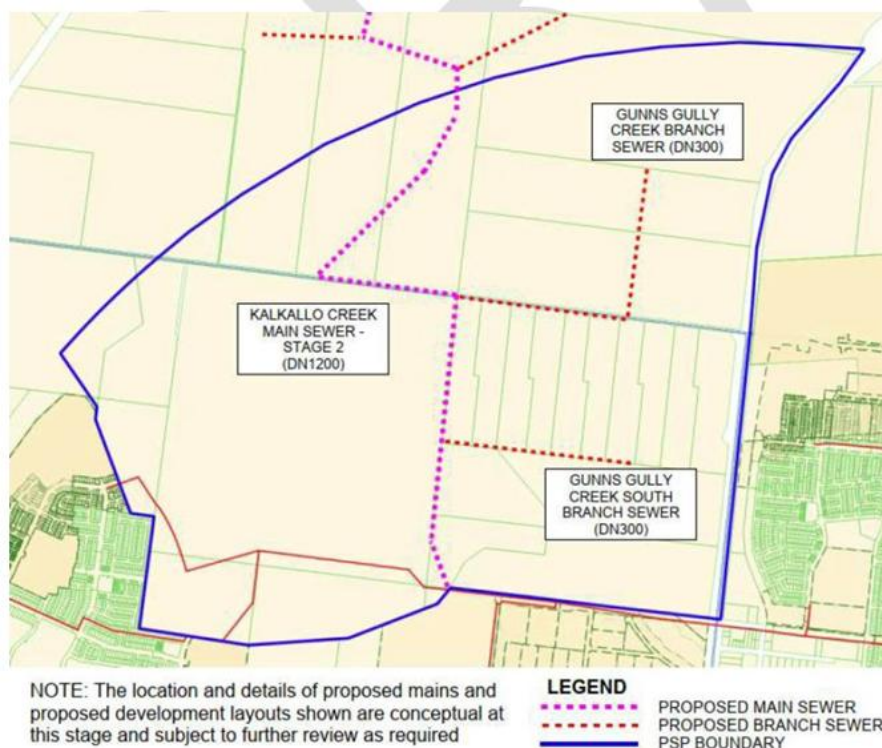


Figure 21 Yarra Valley Water Sewer Concept Plan (Source: Utility Servicing Assessment 2026, SMEC)

## Electricity

- A large proportion of the precinct is operated by AusNet. The southwest portion of the precinct is operated by Jemena. **AusNet has advised that the following information is preliminary servicing advice and may change as the PSP progresses.**
- Based on preliminary advice provide by AusNet, electricity supply to the precinct is expected to be sourced from the Kalkallo Zone Substation on Innovation Drive, located to the south-east of the precinct. Subject to network augmentation, the precinct could be supplied by two 22 kilovolt (kV) feeders, which is expected to be sufficient to service typical employment precinct loads. AusNet has not provided preliminary advice on provision for developments with exceptionally high electrical demand, such as data centres.

## Gas

- APA is responsible for the WORM gas pipeline which runs through the precinct. Please refer to the SMS section above for further information.

## Telecommunications

- Telecommunications within the precinct is serviced by Telstra and NBN. It will be the responsibility of developers to provide pit and pipe infrastructure ('fibre ready') in any new development.

### What does this mean for the Merrifield North PSP?

The YVW sewer and water supply infrastructure will need to be located in the road reserve outside of the carriageway. If this is not possible, land will need to be acquired by the service provider to accommodate sewer and water supply infrastructure. Above ground infrastructure will need to be identified at subdivision stage to ensure effective integration with surrounding urban areas.

## 5.2 Glossary

| Term                                            | Definition                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|-------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Aboriginal cultural heritage</b>             | 'Aboriginal cultural heritage' is defined in the Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006 and refer to Aboriginal places, Aboriginal objects and Aboriginal ancestral remains.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>Aboriginal cultural values</b>               | The WWCHAC Research Unit identifies, documents and interprets Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung cultural values in relation to sites, places and landscapes. These cultural values (also known as Aboriginal intangible heritage as defined in the Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006) form part of a living, dynamic Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung culture. Cultural values work is conducted through knowledge recording sessions held On-Country with Elders and community members. |
| <b>Active transport</b>                         | Transport requiring physical activity, typically walking and cycling.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>Areas of cultural heritage sensitivity</b>   | 'Areas of cultural heritage sensitivity' are defined in the Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2018 and relate to landforms and soil types where Aboriginal places are more likely to be located. These include land within 200 metres of named waterways and land within 50 metres of registered Aboriginal cultural heritage places.                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Arterial road</b>                            | A higher order road providing for moderate to high volumes at relatively higher speeds typically used for inter-suburban or inter-urban journeys, often linking to freeways. The <i>Road Management Act 2004</i> includes a specific definition of arterial roads, being 'a road which is declared to be an arterial road under section 14.' Declared arterial roads are managed by the State Government.                                                      |
| <b>Bushfire attack level (BAL)</b>              | A bushfire attack level is a way of measuring the severity of a building's potential exposure to ember attack, radiant heat and direct flame contact.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>Biodiversity</b>                             | The variety of all life forms, the different plants, animals and microorganisms, the genes they contain, and the ecosystem of which they form a part.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>Biodiversity Conservation Strategy (BCS)</b> | The BCS is the overarching strategy for protecting biodiversity in Victoria's growth corridors. It outlines all the conservation measures required for matters of national environmental significance and state significance to satisfy the commitments to the Commonwealth Government and meet state requirements.                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Bushfire Prone Area</b>                      | Bushfire Prone Areas are where bushfire hazard has been identified and mapped under the building system. These areas are subject to or likely to be subject to bushfires. This identification triggers building permit requirements where new buildings are required to meet a national bushfire construction standard. This is known as a bushfire attack level (BAL).                                                                                        |

|                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|-------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Canopy tree</b>                              | A tree which has an average potential canopy of foliage of 6.4 metres in diameter or greater at maturity in the summer months.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>Canopy tree cover</b>                        | The total area of a tree's foliage (which comprises the layer of leaves, branches, and stems) that covers the ground when viewed from above.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Credited open space</b>                      | Credited open space refers to local network parks in the land use budget.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP)</b> | Cultural Heritage Management Plan is a written report prepared by a Heritage Advisor. It includes an assessment of the potential impact of a proposed activity on Aboriginal cultural heritage. It outlines measures to be taken before, during and after an activity to manage and protect Aboriginal cultural heritage in the area.                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Development Contributions Plan (DCP)</b>     | Development contributions are payments, in-kind works, facilities or services provided by developers towards the supply of infrastructure required to meet the future needs of the community.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>Development services scheme (DSS)</b>        | A development services scheme is a master plan for drainage in a specific catchment area. It guides the standards that need to be met for flood protection, water quality and waterway health.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>Encumbered land</b>                          | Land that is constrained for development purposes, including easements for power/transmission lines, sewer, gas, waterways/drainage; retarding basins/wetlands; landfill; conservation, protected vegetation and heritage areas. This land may be used for a range of activities (e.g. walking trails, sports fields) and is not credited. However, regard is taken to the availability of encumbered land when determining the open space requirement. |
| <b>Future urban structure</b>                   | Future urban structure refers to the future intended land use, built form and infrastructure.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>Greenfield land</b>                          | Undeveloped land identified for residential or industrial/commercial development, generally on the fringe of metropolitan Melbourne.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>High Capacity Public Transport Corridor</b>  | A high capacity public transport corridor is a transport route designed to carry a high volume of passengers efficiently and safely.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Infrastructure</b>                           | Basic facilities and networks (e.g. buildings, roads, and utilities) needed for the functioning of a local community or broader society. Infrastructure can be provided by the private sector (local roads, childcare, shopping centres), or by government (Kindergartens, schools, railways).                                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>Infrastructure Contributions Plan (ICP)</b>  | An Infrastructure Contributions Plan establishes the statutory mechanism for development proponents to make a monetary contribution towards the cost of                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |

|                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|---------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                             | infrastructure projects and/or to provide land to be used and developed for the public purposes identified in the PSP.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Integrated Water Management (IWM)</b>    | An approach to planning that brings together all facets of the water cycle including sewage management, water supply, stormwater management and water treatment - ensuring environmental, economic and social benefits.                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Land Use Budget</b>                      | The land use budget table sets out the total precinct area, gross developable area, net developable area and constituent land uses proposed within the precinct.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>Lot</b>                                  | A part (consisting of one or more pieces) of any land (except a road, a reserve, or common property) shown on a plan, which can be disposed of separately and includes a unit or accessory unit on a registered plan of strata subdivision and a lot or accessory lot on a registered cluster plan.                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>marram baba Merri Creek Parklands</b>    | The marram baba Merri Creek Regional Park will cover more than 2,700 hectares of parkland from Campbellfield to Beveridge. The parklands will include walking and cycling paths, viewing platforms and picnic areas. The name marram baba means 'body of mother' in the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung language. The parklands are located on the traditional land of the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung People, the Traditional Custodians of this land. |
| <b>Melbourne's growth areas</b>             | Areas on the fringe of metropolitan Melbourne around major regional transport corridors that are designated for large-scale change over many years from rural to urban use. Melbourne has seven growth areas – Cardinia, Casey, Hume, Melton, Mitchell, Whittlesea and Wyndham.                                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>Metropolitan activity centre (MAC)</b>   | Higher-order centres intended to provide a diverse range of jobs, activities and housing for regional catchments that are well served by public transport. These centres will play a major service delivery role, including government, health, justice and education services, as well as retail and commercial opportunities.                                                                                                           |
| <b>Melbourne Strategic Assessment (MSA)</b> | The MSA requires the State Government to make commitments to the Commonwealth Government in relation to conservation outcomes and measures to protect matters of national environmental significance, which are outlined in <i>Delivering Melbourne's newest sustainable communities: program report</i> (Victorian Government, 2009).                                                                                                    |
| <b>Net Developable Area (NDA)</b>           | Land within a precinct available for development. This excludes encumbered land, arterial roads, railway corridors, government schools, community facilities and public open space. It includes lots, local streets, and connector streets. Net developable area may be expressed in hectares (i.e. NDHa)                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Passive open space</b>                   | Open space that is set aside for parks, gardens, linear corridors, conservation bushlands, nature reserves, public squares and community gardens that are                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |

|                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|-----------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                     | made available for passive recreation, play and unstructured physical activity including walking, cycling, hiking, revitalisation, contemplation and enjoying nature.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Principal Freight Network (PFN)</b>              | A strategic network of current and recognised future freight places and connecting movement corridors (road and rail) which are nationally, state and/or regionally significant.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Public open space</b>                            | Land that is set aside in the precinct structure plan for public recreation that incorporates active and passive open space.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>Riparian land</b>                                | Land that runs along rivers, creeks, estuaries, lakes and wetlands. Riparian land can vary in width from a narrow strip to a wide corridor.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>State significant Industrial Precinct (SSIP)</b> | Strategically located land available for major industrial development linked to the Principal Freight Network and transport gateways.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Uncredited open space</b>                        | Uncredited open space refers to conservation reserves (BCS area), heritage, waterway and drainage reserves, and flood risk areas in the land use budget.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>Unencumbered land</b>                            | Land that is not constrained by uses required to enable development.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Urban growth boundary</b>                        | The metropolitan strategy released in 2002 known as <i>Melbourne 2030</i> established an urban growth boundary around Melbourne to better manage outward expansion in a coordinated manner. The purpose of the urban growth boundary is to direct urban growth to areas best able to be supplied with appropriate infrastructure and services, and protect other valuable peri-urban land (and environmental features) from urban development pressures.                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>wallan wallan Regional Park</b>                  | A proposed regional park in the Wallan region, with its extent overlapping the Kalkallo Retarding Basin within the precinct. The Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung name for the Wallan region is wallan wallan, which is used in reference to the proposed park.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Water sensitive urban design</b>                 | <p>A sustainable water management approach that aims to provide water quality, flood management and green landscapes. Key principles include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimising water-resistant surfaces</li> <li>• Recharging natural groundwater aquifers (where appropriate) by increasing the amount of rain absorbed into the ground</li> <li>• Encouraging onsite reuse of rainwater and incorporation of rain gardens</li> <li>• Encouraging onsite treatment to improve water quality, and</li> <li>• Removing pollution and using temporary rainfall storage (e.g. Kalkallo Retarding Basin) to reduce the load on drains.</li> </ul> |

**Western Outer Ring Main  
(WORM) Gas Pipeline**

A high-pressure gas transmission pipeline approximately 51 kilometres in length (including end-of-line and mid-line above-ground pipeline facilities). The pipeline connects the eastern and western sections of the Victorian Transmission System between Plumpton and Wollert, allowing increased gas storage at the Iona Underground Gas Storage facility to meet winter peak gas demands.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Merrifield North  
Precinct Structure Plan  
**Background Report**

August 2026



Department  
of Transport  
and Planning