

Planning Talk

Greater Bendigo Development
& Planning Industry newsletter

Issue Four
May 2024



Welcome to the May 2024 edition of Planning Talk

This newsletter has been created as an opportunity for the City of Greater Bendigo to share planning information of interest to the development industry within the region. If you have any topics you would like discussed in upcoming newsletters, please contact us at plt@bendigo.vic.gov.au

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Acknowledgement of Country: The City of Greater Bendigo is on Dja Dja Wurrung and Taungurung Country. We acknowledge and extend our appreciation to the Dja Dja Wurrung and Taungurung People, the Traditional Owners of the land. We pay our respects to leaders and Elders past, present and emerging for they hold the memories, the traditions, the culture and the hopes of all Dja Dja Wurrung and Taungurung Peoples. We express our gratitude in the sharing of this land, our sorrow for the personal, spiritual and cultural costs of that sharing and our hope that we may walk forward together in harmony and in the spirit of healing.



CITY OF GREATER
BENDIGO

Managed Growth Strategy

The Managed Growth Strategy (MGS) will set the context and direction to guide residential growth of Greater Bendigo until 2056.

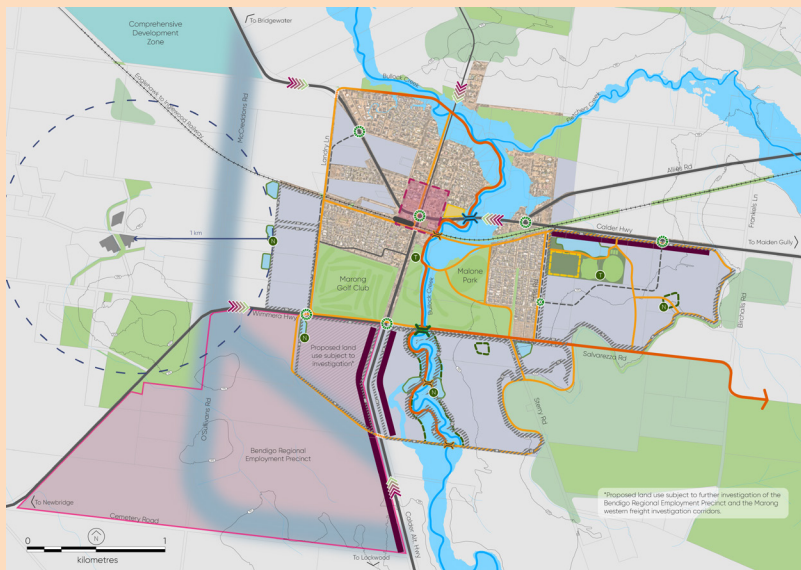
The MGS is being informed by a Housing and Neighbourhood Character Strategy (HNCS) which will provide greater direction as to the level of change expected in the established areas of the municipality. This includes identifying areas as minimal, incremental and substantial change.

Consultation on the draft MGS and HNCS is currently expected in June 2024 following the May Council meeting. This will involve a series of drop in sessions across the municipality, presentations to key groups, a summary brochure, and an online survey.

Further detail will be available over the coming weeks via the City's Let's Talk [website](#).

Feedback received during consultation will help inform a final version of the strategies which will ultimately be proposed to be implemented through a future planning scheme amendment.





Marong Township Structure Plan

In March the City received the Planning Panel Report from Planning Panels Victoria for Amendment C263gben that seeks to implement the recommendations of the Marong Township Structure Plan. This followed the panel hearing that was held over four days in February.

The amendment proposes to introduce planning policy changes for Marong, make rezoning changes to land within the existing township, identify new residential growth areas, and apply the Heritage Overlay, Design and Development Overlay, Development Plan Overlay and flood overlays to land within the township and the surrounding area.

The planning panel hearing considered unresolved submissions to the amendment. Two additional submissions were received following consideration by Council to refer to panel at the 23 October 2023 meeting, meaning a total of 34 submissions received.

The primary issues considered by the panel included the extent of the new growth precincts, infrastructure provision, bushfire setbacks, heritage overlay and interface planning with the Bendigo Regional Employment Precinct, Marong Western Freight Corridor and Scott's Gallus Lane broiler farm.

The Planning Panel recommends that the amendment be adopted as exhibited, subject to some minor changes to the amendment documentation. This includes:

- Amending the wording of Clause 11.03-6L-04, the Design and Development Overlay Schedules 31, 32 and 35 and the Development Plan Overlay Schedule 31, Clause 72.04 Schedule and the Statement of Significance for 1329 Calder Highway, Marong

- Amending the Marong Township Structure Plan with the following additional changes:
 - a) provide greater recognition of Aboriginal cultural heritage values and to guide appropriate planning responses to understand, protect, acknowledge and celebrate cultural heritage values and engage with Traditional owners
 - b) include an additional objective under 'medium density residential development' that allows for the development plan process for new residential development precincts to identify additional opportunities for medium density housing in appropriate locations
 - c) amend guideline G42 relating to the planning for the Marong Western Freight Investigation Corridor (RD 4) (that this should be completed so that the alignment is confirmed prior to rezoning Precinct 1 or the Precinct 2 (west of Calder Alternative Highway))
 - d) include additional actions in the Action Implementation Plan relating to the boundaries of Precinct 1, boundaries of Precinct 4 and monitoring land supply and demand
- Amending the Marong Heritage Citations to include the amended citation for 1329 Calder Highway, Marong

Officers are now preparing a Council report for the June meeting seeking adoption of the amendment with the recommended changes made by the Panel. Subject to Council's adoption, the amendment will be submitted to the Minister for Planning for approval. To **download a copy** of the panel report, please visit www.bendigo.vic.gov.au



Identifying and protecting Post-war heritage in Greater Bendigo

The City recently commenced a new project focusing on the history of development in Greater Bendigo in the Post-war era.

The study, in the form of an Environmental Thematic History, will primarily focus on the history of development in Greater Bendigo from 1945-1980, with less emphasis on development from 1980 to the present day. It is expected to provide the groundwork for future detailed Post-war heritage assessments. The study will consider Post-war development that includes commercial buildings and precincts, industrial buildings, residential developments as well as a range of public buildings and gardens.

While the project aims to produce a list of recommendations for places identified as potentially significant, it will not extend to proposed planning controls and the application of the Heritage Overlay.

Public engagement on the project recently commenced on the Cities Let's Talk platform where a 'Map Post-war heritage sites' tool has been provided for the community to input suggestions of potentially significant Post-war places. An in-person community engagement workshop will also be held on Tuesday May 21 at the Bendigo Regional Tennis Centre function rooms.

Community engagement is open on our Let's Talk page until May 27, 2024. For more details on the project visit www.letstalkgreaterbendigo.com.au/post-war-heritage

Rural Areas Strategy

The City is undertaking a review and update of our 2009 Rural Areas Strategy. Hansen Partnerships, supported by Ag-Challenge Consulting, have been engaged to prepare the updated Strategy.

The first output of this project will be a Discussion and Emerging Ideas paper. The paper will be based on a review of the relevant background information, including the 2009 study, other existing adopted plans and strategies and an analysis of recent planning permit and building occupancy data. The Discussion and Emerging Ideas paper will provide a starting point for conversations with stakeholders, and feedback gathered will help to shape the updated strategy.

Big Hill and Mandurang Valley Significant Landscape Review 2024

The City recently resumed work to identify and protect significant landscapes in the Big Hill and Mandurang Valley areas.

Hansen Partnership were engaged to commence a new landscape study that aims to build upon the significant work undertaken since 2013 and to address gaps identified in the panel report from Planning Scheme Amendment C217 in 2016. Planning Scheme Amendment C217 previously proposed two Significant Landscape Overlays in the Big Hill and Mandurang Valley areas but was unsuccessful with the planning panel report recommending additional supporting work and refinement of previously proposed planning controls.

Work on the study has been progressing with a draft report and recommendations anticipated to go out on community and stakeholder consultation from July 2024.



Revised Landscape Design Guidelines

Good progress has been made on the review of the Landscape Design Guidelines for subdivisions which were first published on the City's website in June 2022. The revised Guidelines will be presented to the Executive Management Team in early May asking them to recommend the Guidelines be approved by Council in late June. Once approved the Guidelines will be referenced in planning permit conditions to guide the production of landscape plans in new developments.

The review was opened to all development industry stakeholders and internal City staff in October 2023 to provide feedback. Most of the changes strengthen existing requirements and elaborate on the City's position. For example, developers' responsibility for the protection of remnant vegetation is now not only on private land but also on adjoining road or bushland reserves where construction works may affect the vegetation especially where the tree protection zones encroach on the development land.

Another aspect highlighted is for more complex sites, including those with waterways, larger basin reserves or play spaces, will require a higher level of consultation with City staff which may take several iterations of the plans before approval.



Sites with higher environmental value will require more detailed weed management plans and an emphasis on indigenous planting.

The Preferred urban tree list and wetland plant list will now be separate documents, but available on the City's website with the Guidelines. This will allow staff to change the lists to adapt to climate changes and nursery availability of species.

There is also a new email address for all subdivision landscape plans enquiries, plan approvals and bond agreements to be sent to: landscapedev@bendigo.vic.gov.au

Keep an eye out for the next Development and Planning Industry Forum, scheduled for August 2024, for a presentation on the revised Guidelines and an opportunity for your questions to be answered.



Major Projects Panel

The City's Strategic Planning Unit coordinates a Major Projects Panel to provide high level expert advice and direction on potential planning proposals.

The Major Projects Panel includes representatives from urban policy and design, engineering, economic development, statutory planning, strategic planning, landscape architecture and ESD.

The Panel is not a decision-making body and its role is advisory only. The advice is intended to assist developers and designers to better understand the City's expectations and consider refinements prior to detailed design being undertaken.

Below are a list of eligible projects for the Major Projects Panel:

- Proposal with a value exceeding \$5 million
- A development or subdivision with 30 or more dwellings
- A development of four or more storeys above ground level
- Proposed large commercial or industrial business operations
- Unique or new, untested initiatives
- Private proposals on Council owned land

The Major Projects Panel generally meets fortnightly. Potential proposals for consideration and advice from the City's Major Projects Panel can be sent through to strategic.planning@bendigo.vic.gov.au. If detailed design has already been undertaken, these proposals are considered through the City's pre-application process.

Changes to the National Construction Code (NCC) 2022

As noted in our November 2023 Planning Talk Newsletter, the National Construction Code (NCC) 2022 has been adopted by states and territories and is being implemented in a staggered approach.

The NCC is a performance based code that sets out the requirements for the construction of buildings, including plumbing and drainage. It sets the minimum required level for the safety, health, amenity, and sustainability of buildings in Australia.

The latest stage of provisions came into effect on May 1, 2024 and included the following provisions:

New livable housing requirements

These new provisions will improve the suitability of new Australian homes for people with reduced mobility.

Updated energy efficiency and condensation mitigation requirements

NCC 2022 builds on the NCC 2019 provisions to further decrease health risks associated with condensation in new homes.

NCC 2022 builds on provisions in NCC 2019, introducing new energy efficiency provisions strengthen minimum requirements for the energy efficiency of new homes, while the new condensation management provisions further decrease health risks associated with condensation in new homes.

The changes will make homes cheaper to run, more comfortable to live in and more resilient to extreme weather.

Victoria will also remove barriers to installation of efficient electric hot water systems, helping households to capture further benefits from investing in solar panels, and supporting those who choose all-electric new homes.

For more information, visit the Victorian Building Authority (VBA) [website](#) or the NCC section of the Australian Building Codes Board (ABCB) [website](#).

Phasing out gas connections

On January 1, 2024, amendment VC250 changed the Victorian Planning Provisions and all planning schemes in Victoria by prohibiting new gas connections for new dwellings, apartments and residential subdivisions where a planning permit is required.

Prohibiting new gas connections is crucial to prevent the growth of fossil gas use and emissions, as well as expensive gas infrastructure.

Clause 53.03 prevents a permit being granted to connect to reticulated natural gas when constructing a new dwelling, apartment development or subdividing land for residential purposes. The clause also requires a mandatory condition to be applied to a planning permit to ensure no gas connections can be constructed after the development is completed.

What developments will the gas connection prohibition not apply to?

The gas connection prohibition does not apply to the following applications:

- Any planning permit application lodged before 1 January 2024.
- A section 72 amendment to a permit if the original permit application was lodged before 1 January 2024.

The mandatory condition does not affect lots that contain an existing dwelling or apartment. It also does not affect a lot where a permit has been granted for a dwelling or apartment on the land in the lot.

For staged subdivisions, if the original permit application is lodged before 1 January 2024, all stages within that subdivision are exempt from the gas connection prohibition, even if future stages are endorsed after this date.

What conditions will be applied to a planning permit?

A permit granted for buildings and works in relation to an application to which this clause applies must include the following mandatory condition(s) as relevant:

For a dwelling:

“Any new dwelling allowed by this permit must not be connected to a reticulated gas service (within the meaning of clause 53.03 of the relevant planning scheme). This condition continues to have force and effect after the development authorised by this permit has been completed.”

A permit granted for subdivision in relation to an application to which this clause applies must include the following mandatory condition:

“Any lot shown on the endorsed plan must not be connected to a reticulated gas service (within the meaning of clause 53.03 of the relevant planning scheme). This does not apply to:

- a lot that will not be used for, or include, a dwelling; or*
- a lot that contains an existing dwelling or apartment; or*
- a lot where a permit has been granted for a dwelling or apartment on the land in the lot.*

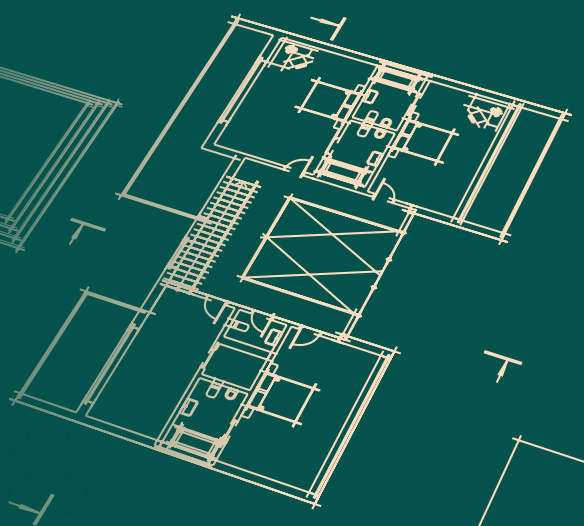
This condition continues to have force and effect after a statement of compliance under the Subdivision Act 1988 has been issued and the subdivision authorised by this permit has been completed.”

For more information, visit: www.energy.vic.gov.au/gas/victorias-gas-substitution-roadmap

The public's response to small second dwelling provisions

The City of Greater Bendigo has seen a significant increase in enquiries this year regarding second dwellings, units, and granny flats. With recent changes to planning provisions regarding **small second dwellings** having come into effect this year, we have responded to **63 enquiries** relating to the new provisions.

This, combined with the presumably extensive number of questions being fielded by external consultants and there certainly seems to be an appetite for this shift.

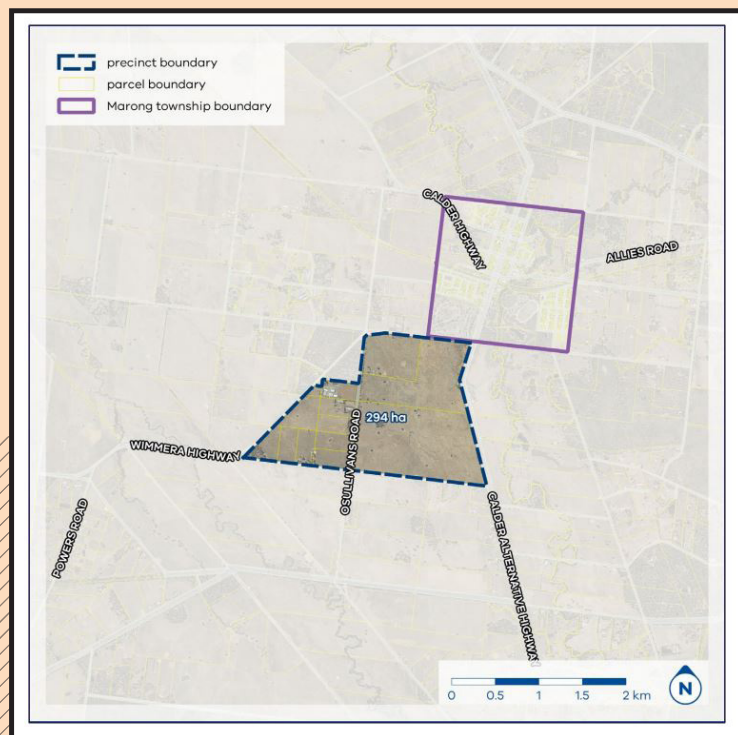


Bendigo Regional Employment Precinct

The City is continuing to work with the Victorian Planning Authority (VPA) to plan for the Bendigo Regional Employment Precinct (BREP).

Several projects being funded through \$6m from the state government are underway, including an upgrade to the water pipeline by Coliban Water, planning for an improved Marong Western Freight Corridor by the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP), and preparation of a development strategy and business case by Development Victoria.

It is expected that DTP will be able to provide an alignment for the freight corridor by the end of September, at which time the background technical studies will be complete for BREP and we will be able to move to the next phase. The VPA will undertake co-design workshops with relevant stakeholders for BREP in late 2024, which will inform the structure plan for the BREP. The structure plan will be prepared and consulted on in 2025, with the planning scheme amendment to be undertaken in 2026.



Current amendments underway

C242gben which proposes planning controls within a 500m buffer to the Eaglehawk Landfill has been adopted by Council and submitted to the Minister for Planning for approval.

C237gben which proposes to apply the Buffer Area Overlay to land surrounding the Coliban Reclamation Plant, has been received by City officers and further information and changes to the amendment have been requested from the proponent to continue to assess the amendment.

The panel report for **C263gben** (which implements the recommendations of the Marong Township Structure Plan), is expected to be considered by Council at the June meeting. Council will also consider whether to adopt the amendment at this meeting, prior to sending to the Minister for Planning for approval.

Officers are in the process of re-submitting the amendment documentation for **C270gben** to the Department of Transport and Planning to consider for authorisation. C270gben proposes to implement the recommendations of the Golden Square Structure Plan and Golden Square Heritage Study.