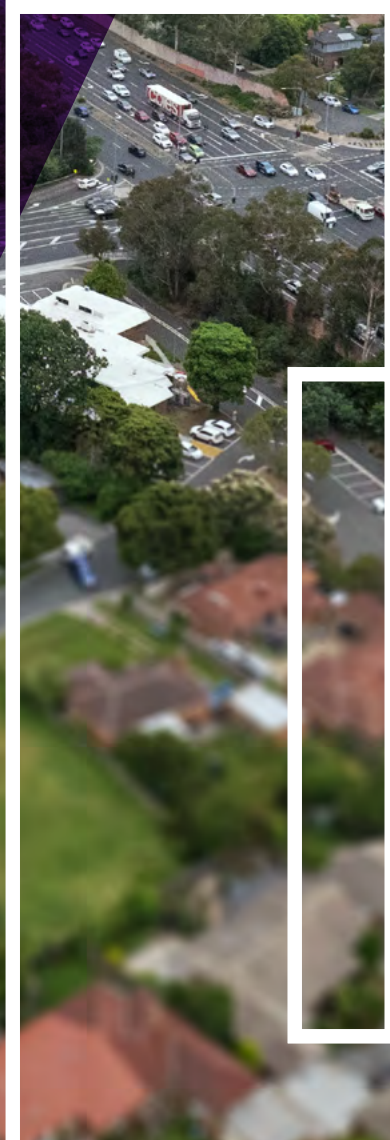




# DRAFT Ringwood Activity Centre Plan

WURUNDJERI COUNTRY

August 2024



## Acknowledgement of Traditional Custodians

We proudly acknowledge Victoria's Traditional Owners and the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung People of the East Kulin Nation, for their ongoing strength in practising the world's oldest living culture.

We recognise the diversity of Victoria's Traditional Owners as distinctive communities with their own sets of laws, customs and processes built upon tens of thousands of years of knowledge.

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners' lands and waters on which we live and work and pay our respects to their Elders, past and present.

## Copyright notice

© **Victorian Planning Authority, 2024**

The *Ringwood Activity Centre Plan* has been developed for the Ringwood activity centre precinct by the Victorian Planning Authority (VPA) for the Department of Transport and Planning, in consultation with other Victorian Government departments and agencies.

Any projections are based on reasonable assumptions at the time of publication but should not be relied upon without first seeking appropriate expert advice. Although every effort has been made to ensure the information in this document is factually correct at the time of publication, the VPA does not warrant the accuracy, completeness or relevance of the information. Any person using or relying on this document does so on the basis that the State of Victoria shall bear no responsibility or liability whatsoever for any errors, faults, defects or omissions in the information.

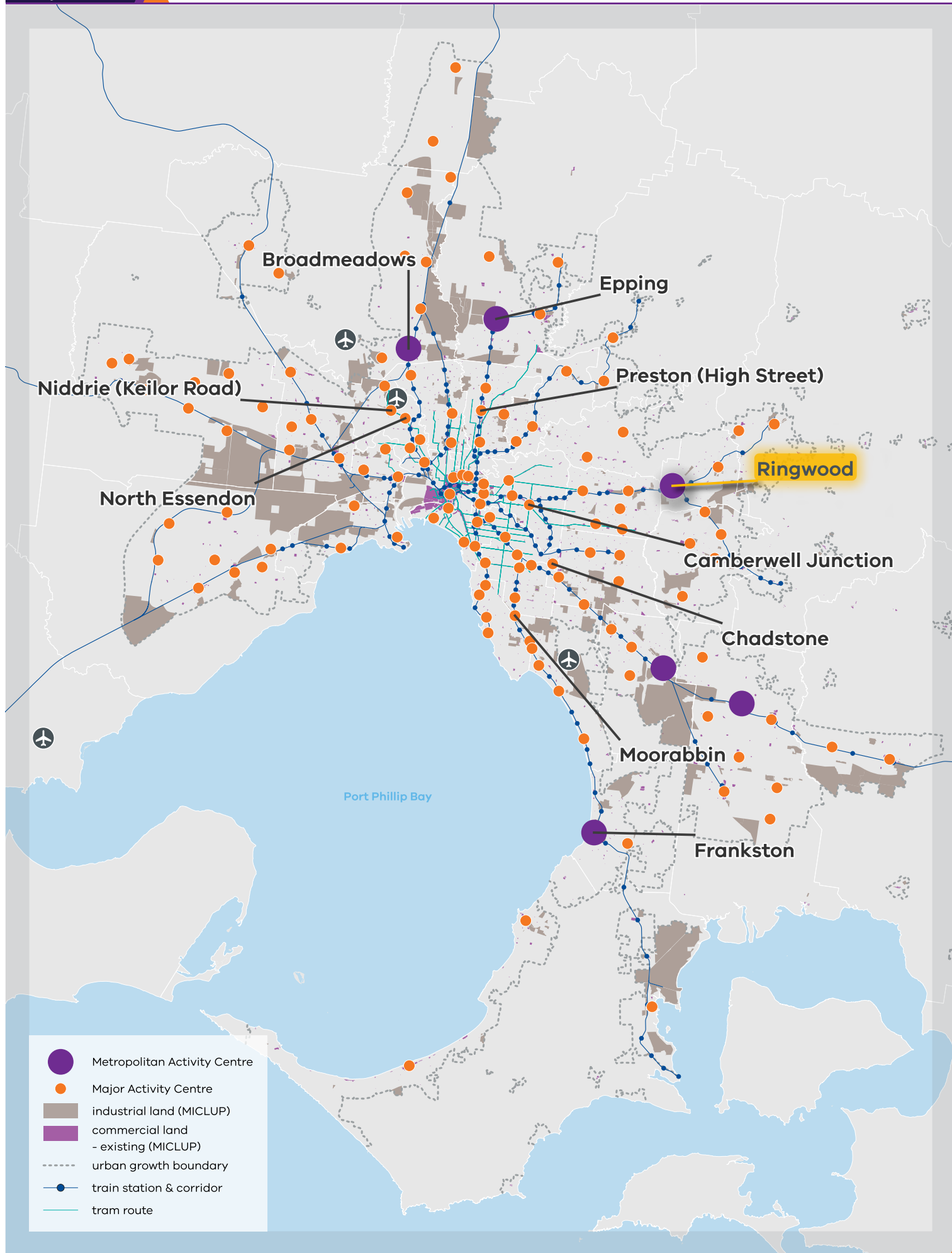
## Accessibility

The Victorian Planning Authority is committed to ensuring that all persons, including those with disabilities, can access information about our key planning projects, are able to participate in community engagement and consultation activities and have access to our premises.

This document has been optimised for compatibility with screen readers. We welcome any feedback you have especially where you feel we are not compliant or could provide better accessibility. If you would like us to send you a printed or electronic copy of this or any VPA publication, please contact us at [accessibility@vpa.vic.gov.au](mailto:accessibility@vpa.vic.gov.au)

# Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>A network of activity centres</b>	<b>5</b>
1.1	Strategic context	5
<b>2</b>	<b>Purpose of this document</b>	<b>7</b>
2.1	Activity Centre Program	7
2.2	Ringwood activity centre	8
2.3	Catchment area attributes	9
<b>3</b>	<b>Catchment area</b>	<b>10</b>
3.1	Defining the catchment area	10
3.2	Proposed residential change	10
3.2.1	Examples of four to six storey development precedents:	11
3.3	Non-residential areas	12
3.4	Key attributes of the activity centre 'catchment' area	12
3.5	Existing planning provisions	12
3.6	Phase 1 community engagement	13
<b>4</b>	<b>Implementation</b>	<b>14</b>
4.1	Built form control – Ringwood activity centre	14
4.2	Future strategic planning work	14
4.3	Aligning existing controls	14
4.3.1	Activity centre	14
4.4	Infrastructure delivery	15
4.4.1	An innovative approach to infrastructure contributions	15
4.5	Affordable housing	15
4.6	Identification of environmental constraints	16
4.6.1	Potentially contaminated land – catchment	16
4.6.2	Noise	16
4.6.3	Amenity and buffers	16
<b>Plans</b>		
<b>Plan 1</b>	<b>Regional context</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Figures</b>		
<b>Figure 1</b>	<b>Ringwood activity centre and catchment area</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Figure 2</b>	<b>Building heights in the Ringwood activity centre and catchment areas</b>	<b>8</b>



# 1 A network of activity centres

## 1.1 Strategic context

In September 2023, the Victorian Government released *Victoria's Housing Statement – The Decade Ahead 2024–2034\** which identified 10 activity centres and their surrounds as key locations for a pilot program. The distribution of the centres is shown at [Plan 1 Regional context](#). This builds on existing policy encouraging increased housing diversity and density in activity centres in *Plan Melbourne 2017–2050\*\** and in the new *Plan for Victoria\*\*\** (under development in 2024).

Activity centres are identified as key locations for increased housing supported by additional jobs, services and amenities. This strategic work for activity centres will complement the new *Plan for Victoria* which is currently being developed to reimagine the future of our cities, suburbs, towns, and regions. This will support delivery of new homes in locations with great public transport access and closer to jobs and opportunities.

The pilot program's seven objectives aim to facilitate increased housing supply through:



### Built form controls tailored to place with guidance for ensuring place identity (public realm, amenity and heritage)

The Activity Centre Program will deliver a coherent, clear and consistent planning approach. This will include implementing a tailored suite of tools and planning controls to ensure local areas of significance are recognised and enhanced.



### A new and simplified approach to infrastructure contributions

The program will deliver a simple approach to infrastructure contributions to contribute to the funding of community infrastructure, open space, walking, cycling and transport infrastructure. The infrastructure will support these growing centres and will include mechanisms to contribute to funding their delivery.



### Focus on walkable catchments, encouraging new housing types and diversity

As well as providing clearer controls to facilitate density in the activity centre core areas, the program will provide guidance for the catchment of the centre, supporting greater housing diversity in areas that are within walking distance.



### Transparent plans (as an alternative to traditional structure plans) that set out place objectives, local values, built form requirements, growth expectations and future vision

An activity centre plan will be prepared for each activity centre and will have clear planning controls that provide certainty of the built form outcomes. This will drive investment into the centres and provides the community with certainty of the long-term development expected.

Introducing deemed to comply standards will provide greater certainty on the supported built form outcomes in each centre. These built form outcomes have been tailored to the local context and ensure development expectations are known.

\* State of Victoria (Department of Premier and Cabinet), *Victoria's Housing Statement – The Decade Ahead 2024–2034*, 2023

\*\* State of Victoria (Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning), *Metropolitan Planning Strategy: Plan Melbourne 2017–2050*, 2017

\*\*\* State of Victoria (Department of Transport and Planning), *Plan for Victoria*, 2024



### **Shorter amendment pathway and streamlined approvals**

Streamlined planning scheme amendment processes ensure development-ready land is available as soon as possible. Coupled with efficient planning permit processes, this means more homes for Victorians sooner.



### **Affordable housing**

Activity centre planning will encourage the delivery of affordable housing by being clear on affordable housing needs and giving greater planning certainty when affordable housing is provided.



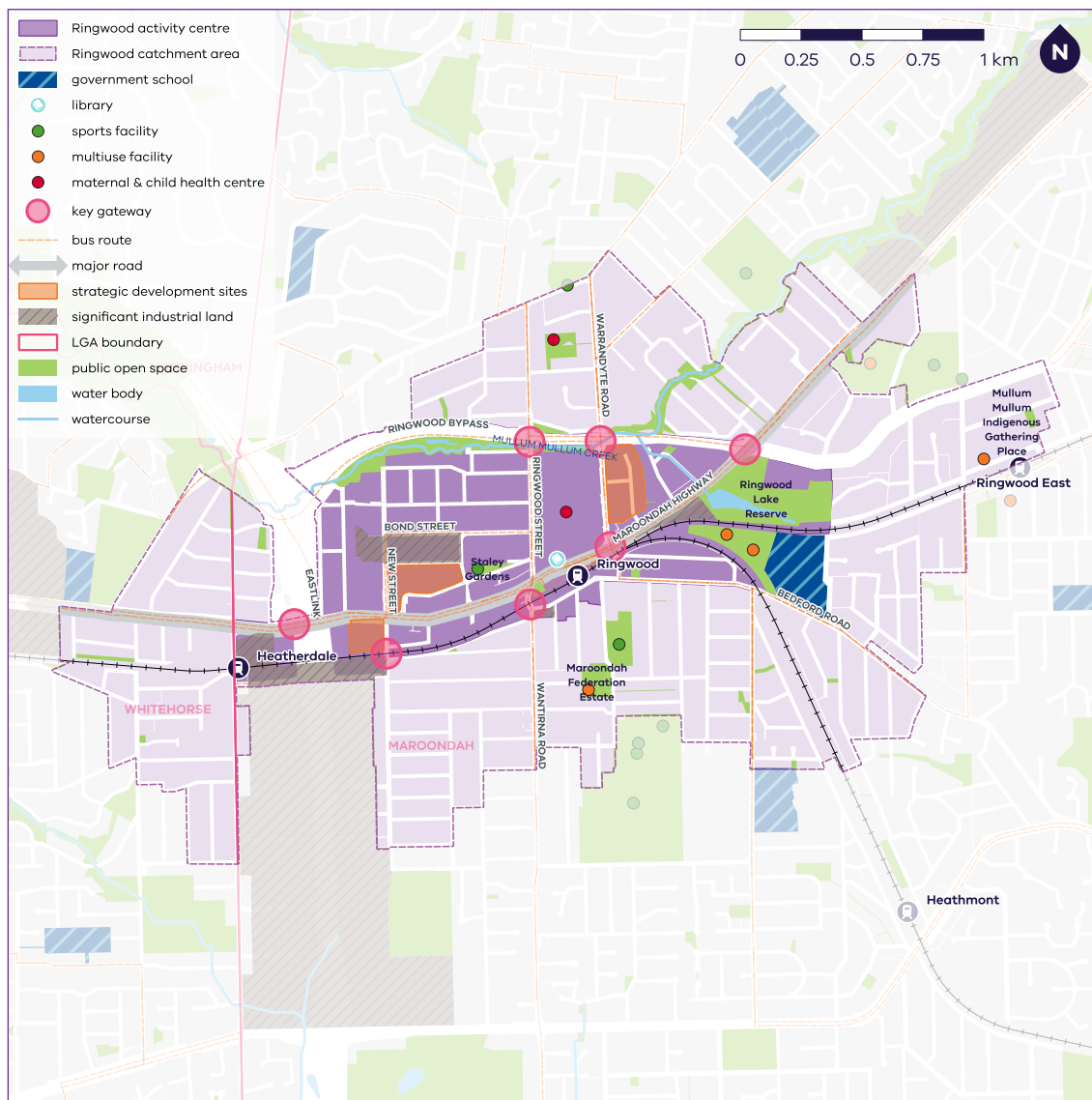
### **Using State Government landholdings to showcase new approaches and deliver housing and services**

Utilising existing State Government landholdings within the centres provides an opportunity for the government to lead the sector in innovative ways to provide greater housing choice and services.

## 2 Purpose of this document

The *Draft Ringwood Activity Centre Plan* addresses development outcomes within the Ringwood activity centre and in the associated catchment areas, shown in [Figure 1](#) [Ringwood activity centre and catchment area](#). This is a draft plan for consultation and will be refined to inform a planning scheme amendment proposed to be completed by the end of 2024.

**Figure 1** Ringwood activity centre and catchment area



### 2.1 Activity Centre Program

Victoria is the fastest growing state in Australia, with the population to reach 10.3 million by 2051. By the 2050s, Melbourne is expected to be home to more than eight million people. However not enough homes are being delivered to support this growing population\*.

The purpose of the Activity Centre Program as identified in *Victoria's Housing Statement – The Decade Ahead 2024–2034* is to unlock 60,000 new homes by 2051. These homes are to be located in the 10 activity centres and their surrounds, having been identified as having great access to services, jobs and transport. This plan outlines how the Ringwood activity centre and catchment area can contribute 8,200 to 12,200 new homes.

\* State of Victoria (Department of Premier and Cabinet), *Victoria's Housing Statement – The Decade Ahead 2024–2034*, 2023.

## 2.2 Ringwood activity centre

The Ringwood activity centre is the commercial core of the precinct. Activity centres are the heart of local businesses, community, transport, leisure, and more intensive styles of housing. They are the places where people come to shop, work, meet, relax and live. State planning policy recognises that activity centres are ideal places to support residential growth.

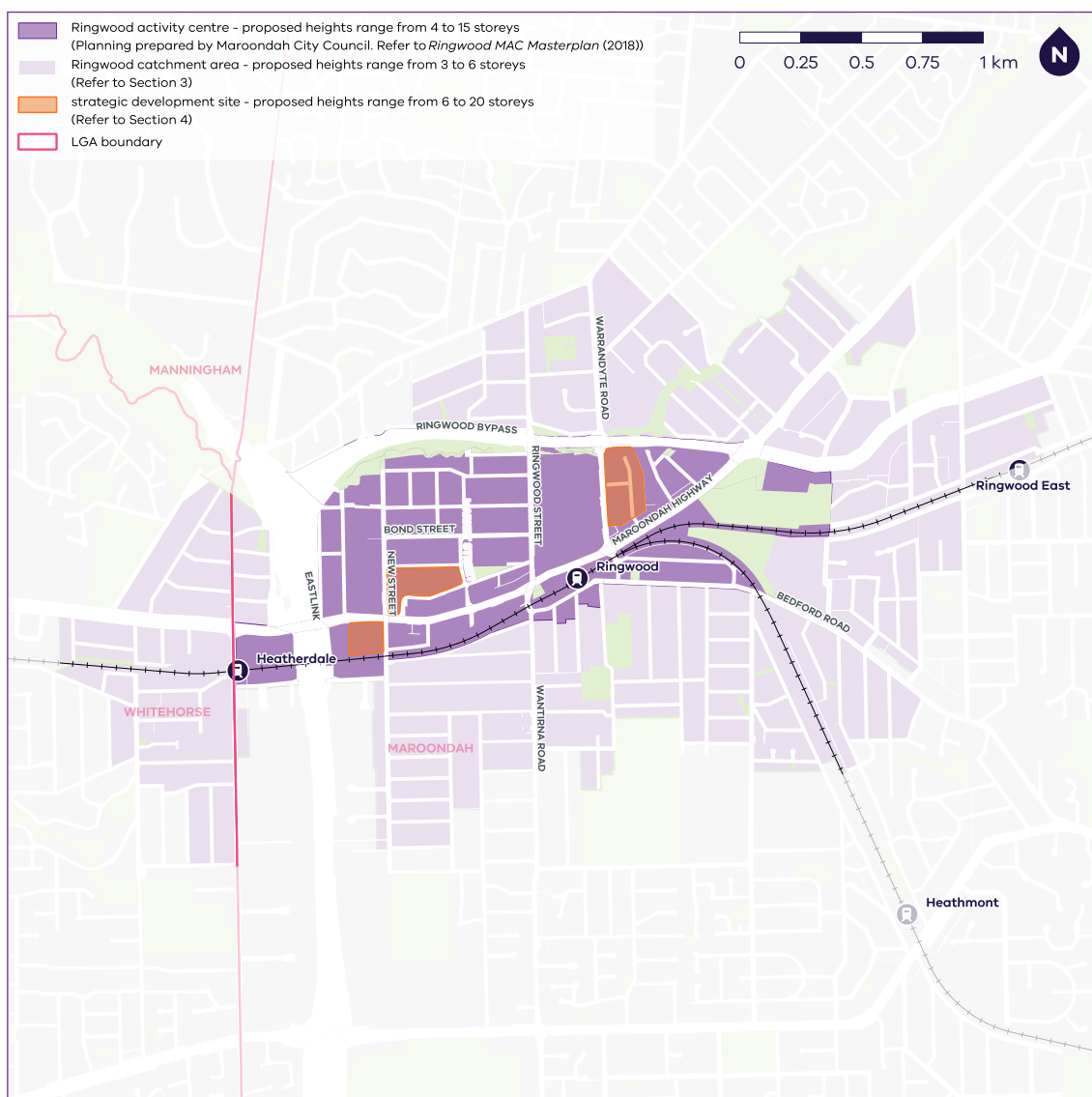
Maroondah City Council has already consulted with the Ringwood community to develop the *Ringwood MAC Masterplan* (2018). The masterplan seeks to enhance the role and function of Ringwood through built form planning controls that will facilitate an increase in population, supported by increased density and better design.

The draft revised *Ringwood MAC Masterplan* is proposed to align with the objectives of the Activity Centre Program. The draft revision of the masterplan focuses on three strategic development sites to support increased housing and employment opportunities and enhanced built form outcomes in these locations (refer Figure 2).

The *Draft Ringwood Activity Centre Plan* builds on the draft revised masterplan by providing additional guidance for the catchment area. Key findings relating to Ringwood activity centre and broader area from phase 1 consultation are detailed in [3.6 Phase 1 community engagement](#).

The revised draft masterplan and this *Ringwood Activity Centre Plan* are proposed to be new background documents at Clause 72.08 in the *Maroondah Planning Scheme*. The revised draft *Ringwood MAC Masterplan* (2024) is available as part of this Phase 2 consultation.

**Figure 2** Building heights in the Ringwood activity centre and catchment areas



## 2.3 Catchment area attributes

Housing growth in catchment areas around activity centres is a longstanding state policy. State Government is seeking to give clearer direction on the level of growth needed in these locations in alignment with our housing needs as identified in *Victoria's Housing Statement*.

The *Draft Ringwood Activity Centre Plan* builds on the strategic work undertaken by Maroondah City Council for the activity centre core by focusing on additional guidance for the catchment area. The catchment area is made up of the residential, retail, commercial and industrial neighbourhoods surrounding the Ringwood activity centre. The catchment provides an opportunity to increase accessibility for more people to meet most of their daily needs within a walkable distance to and from their home.

Built form implementation in the catchment is under investigation. The extent of the catchment and the proposed types of housing are described at [3 Catchment area](#).

## 3 Catchment area

The **catchment area** is the area within walking distance of the local jobs, services and public transport of the Ringwood activity centre. Building more homes here is a good way to create a more lively, inclusive and sustainable local community.

The plans will make sure Victoria builds the right types of homes in the catchment, in the places they fit best.

The plans will encourage greater housing diversity to meet the community's changing needs. This will encourage more efficient use of land through site consolidation, creating space for trees and greenery, as well as liveable and sustainable homes and neighbourhoods.

The catchment area is generally up to 800 metres from the edge of the non-residential areas of the activity centre. The extent of the catchment area is shown at [Figure 1. Ringwood activity centre and catchment area](#).

### 3.1 Defining the catchment area

The catchment area was defined by undertaking a number of steps.

Firstly, the activity centre's residential and non-residential areas were identified.

From the edge of the activity centre's non-residential areas, an 800 metre walkable catchment was identified using streets, rather than "as the crow flies".

This catchment area was then refined to generally apply to whole blocks, and was further reduced where there are:

- Natural and physical barriers
- Limiting planning controls or environmental constraints that make these areas inappropriate for the proposed residential change
- Areas subject to future planning investigations.

Non-residential uses will be removed from future planning approaches within the catchment area.

### 3.2 Proposed residential change

The catchment area will provide an opportunity for more housing diversity including quality social and affordable housing, focusing on higher-density apartments, medium-density apartments, townhouses and semi-detached homes close to the activity centre.

Over time and on appropriate sites, small apartment buildings may be possible up to three to six storeys, mixed with townhouses and detached, semi-detached houses. Examples of different residential apartment building sizes are shown below.

Only the largest blocks of land in the catchment will be able to build up to five to six storeys. Smaller blocks will only be able to build up to three to four storeys, and some homes and buildings may not change at all.

The size and height of buildings will need to respond to standards to:

- Ensure good internal amenity within the new homes
- Opportunities for planting of canopy trees
- Appropriate provision of car parking and storage facilities
- Minimise impact on neighbours.

Planning controls will be reviewed to create these opportunities.

### 3.2.1 Examples of four to six storey development precedents:

#### 4 storeys



##### **Aboriginal Housing Victoria**

Developer: Aboriginal Housing Victoria

Architect: Breathe Architecture



##### **Merri Green**

Developer: MAB

Architect: Six Degrees Architects

#### 5 storeys



##### **122 Roseneath Street**

Developer: Wulff Projects, Icon Developments and Assemble

Architect: Fieldwork Projects



##### **Averi Apartments**

Architect: Jackson Clements Burrows Architects

#### 6 storeys



##### **Ferrars & York**

Ferrars & York, enabled by HIP V. HYPE, designed in collaboration with Six Degrees Architects and built by Ironside.

Photography: Tess Kelly



##### **Balfe Park Lane**

Developer: Aspekt

Architect: Kerstin Thompson

### 3.3 Non-residential areas

Land in the catchment area that is not currently zoned or used for residential purposes has not been identified for more housing.

Existing planning provisions are proposed to be retained in these areas.

### 3.4 Key attributes of the activity centre 'catchment' area

[Figure 1 Ringwood activity centre and catchment area](#) shows some of the community and transport infrastructure in the activity centre and the catchment. The Ringwood activity centre catchment is divided by EastLink and the Ringwood Bypass. It is serviced by two train stations, Heatherdale and Ringwood. Ringwood East adjoins the catchment and there are bus routes throughout the catchment.

Ringwood has the Mullum Mullum Creek, Mullum Mullum Park, Jubilee Park and the Ringwood Lake Reserve. Jubilee Park has Aquanation and local sport facilities for football, cricket, tennis, croquet and soccer.

The area has varied street network with both a rectilinear and a more organic pattern in parts. There is variation of lot shape and sizes.

### 3.5 Existing planning provisions

This section outlines existing planning provisions within the catchment area and describes where there is a planning control with a significant relevance to development opportunities.

The General Residential Zone and the Neighbourhood Residential Zone are the predominant zones in the catchment.

In the catchment, there is:

- Transport Zone
- Public Use Zone
- Public Park and Recreation Zone, and
- Commercial 1 Zone.

Maroondah Planning Scheme's General Residential Zone:

- Schedule 1 General Residential Areas has variations to the requirements of Clause 54 and 55.
- Schedule 3 Greyfield Renewal Precincts has no variations to the requirements of Clause 54 and 55 and provides up to 13.5 metres and four storeys.
- Maroondah's planning scheme Neighbourhood Residential Zone:
- Schedule 2 Ridgeline Protection Area B has variations to the requirements of Clause 54 and 55 and to the minimum subdivision area.
- Schedule 3 Canopy Cover Ridgeline Protection has variations to the requirements of Clause 54 and 55.

Whitehorse Planning Scheme's General Residential Zone:

- Schedule 2 Bush Suburban Precinct 2 has variations to the requirements of Clause 54 and 55.
- Whitehorse's planning scheme Neighbourhood Residential Zone:
- Schedule 1 Bush Environment Areas has variations to the requirements of Clause 54 and 55.
- Schedule 3 Traditional Bus Suburban Areas has variations to the requirements of Clause 54 and 55.

Within the catchment area, there are a number of overlays:

- Bushfire Management Overlay
- Development Contributions Plan Overlay
- Environmental Audit Overlay
- Environmental Significance Overlay
- Land Subject to Inundation Overlay
- Significant Landscape Overlay
- Vegetation Protection Overlay
- Special Building Overlay
- Heritage Overlay.

The Design and Development Overlay applies design objectives and specific requirements relating to the design and built form of new developments in the following areas:

- Schedule 2 Ridgeline Protection Area – B
- Schedule 6 Ringwood East Neighbourhood Activity Centre Commercial Precinct

A Neighbourhood Character Overlay applies specific requirements to ensure that new residential development respects the existing character in the following area:

- Schedule 3 Jubilee Park.

Within the catchment, there is Development Plan Overlay Schedule 7 Ringwood Greyfield Renewal Precinct.

### 3.6 Phase 1 community engagement

Consultation was undertaken from March to May 2024. The purpose of Phase 1 community engagement\* was to:

- Build community understanding about what will change in local neighbourhoods, the new planning controls, and what the community can influence.
- Learn from the community to inform the plans.

Maroondah City Council undertook engagement on its current *Ringwood MAC Masterplan* (2018). The Activity Centre Program intends to use the council's plan for the activity centre, with minor revisions to specific sites to align with the Activity Centre Program.

Community consultation was undertaken, including the establishment of a community reference group for the Ringwood Activity Centre and surrounds. The intent of the community reference group was to allow representatives from the community to provide focused input on the issues and opportunities for the activity centre and surrounding area and build upon existing engagement by council.

We heard:

- The need to balance new homes and key community infrastructure.
- The importance of enhancing the environmental focus in and around the centre.
- The need for improved connectivity in and around Ringwood.
- Balancing development whilst maintaining Ringwood's unique identity, history and culture

---

\* Ringwood Activity Centre Program, *Community Consultation Phase 1: Engagement Summary Report*, August 2024

## 4 Implementation

The proposed changes to the land use and development controls on affected land will be implemented via a planning scheme amendment. The activity centre plan will also be implemented through other statutory and non-statutory measures including, but not limited to, identified future strategic work, establishing infrastructure contributions, and infrastructure projects as well as affordable housing requirements. It is intended that the planning scheme amendment/s to implement this activity centre plan be completed by the end of 2024.

The preferred planning tool for the catchments is to be confirmed. It is not proposed to remove heritage overlays through new provisions.

### 4.1 Built form control – Ringwood activity centre

Built form in the Ringwood activity centre, will be guided by the revised *Draft Ringwood MAC Masterplan* which will be a background document at Clause 72.08 in the *Maroondah Planning Scheme*. This includes focused updates to align the masterplan with the Activity Centre Program and introduce built form controls for strategic development sites.

An update to existing planning controls may be required to align councils strategic work with the broader Activity Centre Program and implement the new built form controls to strategic development sites within the Ringwood activity centre.

### 4.2 Future strategic planning work

The preparation of this plan has identified additional work to be undertaken by the Victorian Government, Maroondah City Council or other agencies. This includes:

- A new simplified and standardised infrastructure funding approach
- Possible preparation of a Parking Precinct Plan and the introduction of a Parking Overlay
- Possible introduction of updated flood management controls (subject to further work with Melbourne Water).

Other non-statutory work has also been identified. This includes engagement with the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation on how to celebrate Aboriginal cultural and values in the design and development process, especially for large opportunity sites and delivery of transport, and community infrastructure including open space.

### 4.3 Aligning existing controls

#### 4.3.1 Activity centre

No further proposed changes, other than those described in Section 4.1 above, apply to the Activity Centre.

The planning controls proposed to be retained in the activity centre are:

- All heritage protection (HO)
- Special Building Overlay (SBO)
- Vegetation Protection Overlays (VPO1)
- Development Contributions Plan Overlay (DCPO1)
- Development Plan Overlay (DPO2)

## 4.4 Infrastructure delivery

The population of the Ringwood activity centre and surrounding catchment is expected to increase with additional housing required to accommodate the growing population. The additional dwellings required is anticipated to be between 8,200 to 12,200 dwellings by 2051.

As more people call Ringwood home, it is important that the local schools, services and infrastructure have the funding they need to grow. During consultation the community has been clear that vibrant places with green parks and local community facilities are important to support housing growth.

### 4.4.1 An innovative approach to infrastructure contributions

The State Government is exploring options for a simplified infrastructure funding mechanism to fund the things the future suburb needs.

This mechanism could provide direct contributions for councils and State Government to deliver essential infrastructure like roads, community centres and local sporting facilities to support growing and changing communities.

The activity centre plan will guide investment in the things a growing suburb needs like community facilities, bike paths and upgrading parks and open spaces.

We are consulting with the community on their priorities for investment in infrastructure.

## 4.5 Affordable housing

Affordable housing is defined in the *Planning and Environment Act, 1987* (The Act) as “housing, including social housing, that is appropriate for the needs of very low-, low- and moderate-income households.” The Act specifies annually updated income range classifications for very low- to moderate-income households.

Applications for residential subdivision and development should consider how they contribute to meeting the need for affordable housing.

Where affordable housing is provided, it should contribute to meeting the needs of very low- to moderate-income ranges.

This contribution can be delivered via the following options:

- Discounted sale or gifting of homes to a Registered Housing Agency or Homes Victoria which provides affordable housing
- A cash contribution equivalent to the above to the Social Housing Growth Fund or nominated trust account to the satisfaction of the responsible authority.
- Any other delivery method that provides for affordable housing, subject to the approval of the responsible authority.

This is in conjunction with the other local, state and federal government initiatives aimed at delivering more affordable housing such as:

- Unlocking surplus government land (State)
- The *Development Facilitation Program* (State)
- The *Short Stay Levy* (State)
- The *Regional Housing Fund* (State)
- The *Big Housing Build* (State)
- The *Public Housing Renewal Program* (State)
- The *Affordable Housing Investment Partnership* (State)
- The *Social Housing Accelerator* (Federal); and
- The *National Housing Accord* (Federal)

In addition, government is seeking feedback on the “Big ideas for Victoria’s future” through the *Plan For Victoria* consultation process. Ideas include setting a minimum amount of social and affordable housing in new developments.

## 4.6 Identification of environmental constraints

To ensure that future residents are afforded a high-quality environment where potential risks of harm to amenity and human health are avoided or mitigated, the activity centre plan highlights the need to consider potential contamination, noise and vibration, as well as amenity and buffers at the permit application stage.

### 4.6.1 Potentially contaminated land – catchment

Identifying contamination is important because it can cause harm to human health and the natural environment. Where a site is contaminated, the local environment, including the soil, indoor or outdoor air, and/or surface water or groundwater may be unsafe for site occupants. Immediate and longterm health effects may occur where people are exposed to harmful levels of contamination.

It is anticipated that council's own strategic work will address matters related to potentially contaminated land within the Ringwood activity centre. However, the approach to planning for housing supply in the catchment area does not require any changes to the underlying residential zoning and will not change existing land use arrangements. As such, across the catchment, council's assessment of an application for a planning permit is the appropriate time for the proponent to address the potential for contamination and mitigate risks posed to human health or the environment, having regard to Section 60 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* (the Act).

Section 60 of the Act requires a responsible authority, before deciding on a permit application, to consider 'any significant effects which the responsible authority considers the use or development may have on the environment or which the responsible authority considers the environment may have on the use or development'. Section 60 is applicable to potentially contaminated land, which may affect, or be affected by, use or development\*.

### 4.6.2 Noise

Consideration of noise (and vibration) is important to ensure that future residents are able to undertake normal activities in and around their home and have access to an adequate sleeping environment.

To accommodate future growth, development should where possible seek to incorporate:

- Appropriate building siting
- Appropriate design, including orientation and internal layout
- Urban design, and
- Land use separation techniques appropriate to the functions and character of the area.

### 4.6.3 Amenity and buffers

It is important to ensure that intensification of existing residential use and the associated development of land is compatible with adjoining and nearby land uses, particularly where there is potential for off-site impacts from commercial, industrial and other uses, such as dust or odour.

Where appropriate, development proposals will be required to demonstrate that the amenity and human health of future residents will not be adversely affected by these uses.

---

\* State of Victoria (Department of Transport and Planning), *Planning Practice Note 30: Potentially Contaminated Land*, updated May 2024.

