

21.03 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT18/02/2016
C54**21.03-1 Business and Industry**18/02/2016
C54***Context:***

Murrindindi Shire seeks an economy that will attract people to the region and municipality, opening further opportunities for business expansion and investment. This economic activity will increase employment prospects, social and cultural benefits and population growth.

Expanded commercial activity is important in key commercial areas of Alexandra, Yea, Kinglake, Eildon and Marysville. There is further opportunity in these centres to develop key sites, expand uses and consolidate business activities and associated development.

There is also a need for strong business activity in smaller townships, assisting the functioning and viability of the towns.

There are opportunities for the expansion of light industrial, manufacturing and trade services to support expanded residential and commercial growth in the municipality.

The houseboat industry services sector provides long term employment and future growth opportunities for Eildon. Alexandra and Yea are the prime industrial areas in the municipality, both having land for lighter industrial uses or for industries that require larger areas and buffers from other land uses. Kinglake Ranges and Narbethong have existing industrial areas to cater for some local industrial and service needs.

There is a diverse and skilled workforce within the Murrindindi Shire that is available for existing industry sectors and for new and expanded businesses. The municipality must retain its lifestyle appeal for business owners, employees and families of new industries that may relocate or establish in the area.

Issues:

- Facilitation of sustainable economic growth to enhance the general economic performance of the municipality.
- Aging population and loss of young people to the area.
- Opportunity to expand key economic sectors and strengths.
- A desire to facilitate and promote economic development generally.
- The need to support the economic prosperity and vitality of the municipality.
- Increasing role and growth potential of home-based industries, small businesses and niche industries.
- Economic impacts of planning for and recovery from natural disasters, including the need to revitalise the economies of towns and communities affected by the 2009 bushfires.
- The need for strong economic performance in existing township business sectors.
- A need to identify and promote particular business strengths for specific towns.
- Provision of adequate land for a range of industrial types in a variety of locations.
- The need to design and develop industrial developments and precincts.
- Availability of a skilled workforce to service industry and the need to provide ongoing training for this workforce.
- A need to provide an adequate supply of industrial land in both Alexandra and Yea for both light industrial use and industries requiring larger areas or buffers.

- The growth of industry in the Lethbridge Street, Alexandra area requires protection from residential and other uses that may impact on the use and development of the land for industrial purposes. Recognition is also required for existing dwellings as industrial expansion occurs to protect existing residential amenity and existing residential use rights as far as possible.

Objective 1: Business and industry investment:

- Create a strong economy to promote business investment and expansion, population growth and social and cultural benefits to the community.

Strategies:

- Support the sustainable growth of Murrindindi Shire's businesses and the local economy.
- Develop and promote opportunities for business retention and expansion, investment and employment.
- Support business growth through the provision of improved infrastructure and services.
- Support diverse and entrepreneurial businesses to establish through encouraging improved information and communications technology.
- Encourage the growth of home-based industries, small businesses and niche industries.
- Build on strengths of existing local industry sectors, identifying and supporting new and emerging industries.
- Facilitate the operation and growth of rural and home based industries and commercial activities.
- Revitalise economies and employment in towns and communities affected by natural disasters, including the 2009 bushfires.

Objective 2: Business and industry in townships:

- Facilitate active and vibrant commercial areas in townships.

Strategies:

- Strengthen the role and identity of townships, including establishing new and/or reinstating businesses within the commercial centres of Kinglake, Kinglake West – Pheasant Creek.
- Support each township as the focus of a residential, commercial, community and service hub for its surrounding area.
- Identify and promote further business development in and around main townships with existing communities and services.
- Facilitate new and expanded commercial and industrial uses and developments in key commercial areas of Alexandra, Yea, Kinglake, Eildon and Marysville.
- Support and facilitate existing and expanded commercial activities in smaller townships.
- Provide a supply of industrial land to cater for a range of future industrial uses and needs.
- Encourage the development of serviced industrial land in the municipality, with service provision in accordance with the level of use and staging of development.
- Facilitate industrial activities within existing settlements to support localised need.
- Provide for the orderly development, continued operation and expansion of industry in the Lamont Street area, Alexandra, including the use of separation distances between industrial and residential uses and developments.

- Support the further development and clustering of value adding opportunities and supporting services in the Yea Saleyards precinct.

Implementation:

- Implement the business and industry directions and actions in any adopted urban design framework / structure plan.
- Implement business and industry actions outlined in the *Economic Development Strategy, Murrindindi Shire Implementation Plan, 2011-2016*.

Reference documents:

- *Economic Development Strategy, Murrindindi Shire, and Implementation Plan, 2011-2016*.
- *Eildon Urban Design Framework*, Urban Enterprise Pty Ltd, August 2003.
- *Kinglake Ranges, Flowerdale and Toolangi Plan and Design Framework*, AECOM, February 2014.
- *Marysville and Triangle Urban Design Framework Report*, Roberts Day, 2009.
- *Yea Urban Design Framework*, Urban Enterprise Pty Ltd, August 2003.
- *Yea Structure Plan*, PLANIT Urban Design and Planning, 2014.

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Agriculture

Context:

The agricultural sector in Murrindindi Shire is diverse and economically significant. Agricultural activities include beef and sheep grazing, horticulture, cropping, vegetable growing, aquaculture, forestry and niche products. Favourable climatic and environmental conditions and proximity to the Melbourne market have seen the recent development of intensive agricultural industries, including an expansion of the viticultural, stone fruit, berries, vegetables and turf production.

The Goulburn River valley and tributaries is a fertile valley of high agricultural quality. The aquaculture industry in the municipality produces most of Australia's commercial fresh water fish. The Kinglake Ranges and Toolangi areas have high quality soils and agricultural value. The Toolangi area is of national horticultural significance, producing the majority of Australia's strawberry runners.

Agricultural land is under increasing pressure for conversion into non- agricultural uses. It is important that any new uses, subdivisions or developments in rural areas do not reduce the productive capacity of agricultural land and the capability of existing agricultural, aquaculture, horticultural, or timber production uses to continue.

Issues:

- Agriculture has economic and strategic significance for the municipality and has potential for continued expansion.
- Land with high quality agricultural attributes that has flexibility to grow a range of agricultural products needs to be identified and protected.
- The protection of agricultural land is necessary to support future growth of the agricultural sector and the diversification of agricultural activities.
- Potential for rural subdivision and housing to lead to incremental loss of productive agricultural land.
- Potential for use of agricultural land for non-agricultural or rural living purposes to conflict with established or future agricultural and horticultural land uses.

- Importance of land uses or developments in rural areas not reducing the capacity or continuity of existing agricultural, horticultural or timber production uses or the ability to value add to agriculture.
- Need for diversification of the agricultural economy, including agroforestry, farm gate agricultural sales, boutique, niche agriculture, agricultural processing and value adding industries.
- Potential for diversion of irrigation water and using water ‘at source’ for use in the municipality for agriculture and agricultural value adding.
- A need to adapt agriculture in the future to cater for climate change and foster carbon farming initiatives.
- Regional significance and increasing prominence of the Yea Saleyards, with a potential to further value add and cluster additional supporting and industrial facilities in this precinct.
- The need for any excision of an existing dwelling to protect productive rural land and not create a de facto ‘rural living’ subdivision. The small lot subdivision of an existing house may in some circumstances assist the process of farm consolidation or may assist in the conservation of an identified heritage place to which the Heritage Overlay applies.

Objective 1: Agricultural production, growth and diversity:

- Support and grow agriculture as one of the Shire’s principal economic activities.

Strategies:

- Retain and expand existing agricultural production activities, including beef and sheep grazing, horticulture, cropping, vegetable growing, aquaculture, timber production and niche products.
- Develop the agricultural economic base through the attraction of value adding agricultural industries.
- Encourage agricultural diversity and expand opportunities for emerging and new farming enterprises.
- Facilitate diversification of agricultural industries that are compatible with existing agricultural practices, including horticulture, intensive animal husbandry, agroforestry, farm gate agricultural sales, boutique, niche agriculture, agricultural processing and value adding industries.
- Encourage the production of high quality and value agricultural product for the export and niche markets.
- Encourage new rural and agricultural uses that meet the challenge of climate change and facilitate carbon farming initiatives.
- Establish appropriate settlement boundaries that help to define the character of both agricultural areas and townships, improve safety and avoid dispersed development that detracts from the agricultural viability of the area.

Objective 2: Rural and agricultural land use and development:

- Protect rural land for productive agricultural uses and compatible rural uses.

Strategies:

- Discourage the fragmentation of rural land into lots that are not capable of productive agricultural and rural use.
- Ensure that the use and development of rural land protects and enhances agricultural potential and the productive capacity of the land.

- Ensure that the use and development of rural land is compatible with surrounding agricultural activities.
- Ensure that agricultural land is not developed for primarily residential purposes.
- Discourage the development or conversion of land to uses incompatible with productive agriculture.
- Identify and protect high quality agricultural land, ensuring that it is protected from unplanned long term loss and is available for ongoing agricultural use.
- Ensure that small lot subdivisions or any excision of an existing dwelling protects and maintains the productive agricultural capacity of land and general area or supports the conservation of an identified heritage place to which the Heritage Overlay applies.
- Protect water catchments and areas of high landscape, biodiversity, conservation and heritage value.

Policy guidelines:

Excision of an existing dwelling:

- Any excision of an existing dwelling will not create ‘rural living’ style vacant lots that are used for residential lifestyle rather than productive rural purposes.
- Any excision of land will have a relationship with and be required for the continuing operation of the rural and agricultural use of the land.
- Any proposal for excision is compatible with and will not have an adverse impact on and not reduce the potential for farming and other rural land uses on the land, adjoining land and the general area.
- Any proposal for excision will meet the principle of ‘right to farm’ in rural areas, where existing agricultural and rural uses in the area have a legal right to continue.
- Subdivision that is likely to lead to a concentration of lots that would change the general use and character and limit the productive capacity of the rural area is discouraged.
- No more than one lot may be excised from a lot that existed on the date that the Murrindindi Planning Scheme was gazetted.
- An adequate distance should be maintained around a dwelling within any existing lot to limit impacts of agricultural activity.
- Subdivision within proclaimed water supply catchment areas is discouraged to protect water quantity and quality.
- Ongoing sustainable use of the land is provided, including consideration of environmental constraints and protection and enhancement of the natural environment.
- Any excision for an existing dwelling should generally provide:
 - A maximum area of 2 hectares for the lot with the existing house located on it, or if existing buildings and dwelling infrastructure covers a large area, as near as practicable to this area;
 - An area of at least 40 hectares for any balance of land;
 - A minimum setback of 30 metres from the dwelling on the land to be excised from any agricultural activity or rural industry on any adjoining land.

Implementation:

- Application of a 40 hectare minimum lot size for subdivision in the Farming Zone and requirement above which no planning permit is required for a dwelling.
- Application of the Environmental Significance Overlay to areas of high quality agricultural land around Toolangi, Kinglake Ranges and the Goulburn River.

- Implement agricultural actions outlined in the *Economic Development Strategy, Murrindindi Shire Implementation Plan, 2011-2016*.

Reference documents:

- *Economic Development Strategy, Murrindindi Shire, and Implementation Plan, 2011-2016*.
- *Kinglake Ranges, Flowerdale and Toolangi Plan and Design Framework*, AECOM, February 2014.
- *Murrindindi Shire Heritage Study*, Context Pty Ltd, 2011.

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Tourism

Context:

The natural and built attractions in the municipality contribute significantly towards its character and appeal and form the basis for an active tourism industry and the municipal economy. This character and appeal is formed through high amenity rural and natural landscapes, diverse public land and forests, rivers and river valleys, native vegetation biodiversity, heritage and attractive townships. The region's environmental assets, particularly the National and State Parks, Lake Mountain Alpine Resort, Lake Eildon and the Goulburn River, offer unrivalled opportunities within 1-2 hours of Melbourne for a broad range of outdoor pursuits.

The newly established Great Victorian Rail Trail is the longest rail trail in Victoria and will continue to grow in usage and significance for the economy of the area and state. There is potential for further tourism and accommodation opportunities associated with the trail.

Eildon township, adjacent to Lake Eildon, and Marysville, near the Lake Mountain Alpine Resort, are strategically located to build tourism in those areas, providing a range of tourism, accommodation and recreation opportunities.

Issues:

- Need to enhance tourism in the municipality, promoting the proximity to Melbourne and the natural environment.
- Considerable potential for the expansion of the tourism industry as a major driver of the municipal economy.
- Potential for further development of outdoor education based activities.
- Contribution of tourism to generate local employment and business opportunities.
- Increasing role and growth potential of home-based tourism industries, the farm-gate agricultural sales sector and the food, wine and hospitality industry.
- The need for provision of a wide range of tourism accommodation options, including backpacker accommodation and boutique luxury accommodation.
- Further growth potential for the nature-based, adventure and backpacker tourist markets.
- Potential for further tourism opportunities and services associated with the Great Victorian Rail Trail.
- Need for rebuilding of visitor accommodation, attractions and visitor facilities in areas impacted by the 2009 bushfires.
- Lake Mountain Alpine Resort, adjacent to the municipality, is well established for winter tourism and offers significant potential for a wide range of summer activities that will benefit the general area.
- Facilitate new settlement and economic growth opportunities that support recreation, tourism and lifestyle pursuits linked to Lake Eildon and the Goulburn River Valley.

- The role of heritage to tourism and the need to promote these assets to enhance tourism visitation to the municipality.

Objective 1: Tourism growth and facilitation:

- Enhance and promote tourism to increase the economic, social and cultural benefits to the municipality.

Strategies:

- Generate sustainable growth in tourism, leveraging Murrindindi Shire's natural assets, proximity to Melbourne and links with neighbouring regions.
- Support and grow tourism that builds upon the strengths of and is linked to the natural environment.
- Foster a range of natural and built tourism attractions that encourage strong visitation to the municipality.
- Facilitate recreational and tourism activities that attract tourists year round.
- Investigate and support the further development of tourism attractions, facilities and accommodation to support the Great Victorian Rail Trail.
- Promote and enhance the range of tourist and recreational activities available across the entire municipality.
- Enhance tourism opportunities in townships with tourism potential.
- Facilitate the development of Eildon and Marysville townships as all year round residential, commercial and tourism destinations.
- Facilitate development of new tourism accommodation options and conference centres.
- Facilitate the rebuilding of tourism accommodation, attractions and facilities in areas affected by natural disasters, including the 2009 bushfires.
- Market, promote and enhance of heritage assets, including the municipality's unique streetscapes, timber, rail and gold history and indigenous cultural heritage.
- Encourage tourism activities in any identified heritage place to which the Heritage Overlay applies.
- Encourage small creative enterprises in tourism, creative arts, home-based businesses, overnight visitor accommodation and farm enterprises/markets that showcase local produce.

Implementation:

- Implement the tourism recommendations in any adopted urban design framework / structure plan.
- Implement tourism actions outlined in the *Economic Development Strategy, Murrindindi Shire Implementation Plan, 2011-2016*.
- Implement tourism actions outlined in the *Kinglake Ranges, Flowerdale and Toolangi Plan and Design Framework, February 2014*

Further strategic work:

- Complete a feasibility assessment of a Great Victorian Rail Trail link between Alexandra and Eildon.

Reference documents:

- *Economic Development Strategy, Murrindindi Shire, and Implementation Plan, 2011-2016. Goulburn River Tourism Destination Management Plan*, Urban Enterprise Pty Ltd, 2014.
- *Eildon Urban Design Framework*, Urban Enterprise Pty Ltd, August 2003.

- *Kinglake Ranges, Flowerdale and Toolangi Plan and Design Framework*, February 2014
- *Marysville and Triangle Urban Design Framework Report*, Roberts Day, 2009.
- *Murrindindi Shire Heritage Study*, Context Pty Ltd, 2011.
- *Tourism Development Plan*, 2011-2016, Goulburn River Valley Tourism and Urban Enterprise Pty Ltd, 2011.
- *Yea Urban Design Framework*, Urban Enterprise Pty Ltd, August 2003.
- *Yea Structure Plan*, PLANIT Urban Design and Planning, 2014.