



Moriac Structure Plan 2022

# Background report – Summary





### **Acknowledgement**

Surf Coast Shire Council Acknowledge the Wadawurrung People as the Traditional Owners and Protectors of the Moriac region.

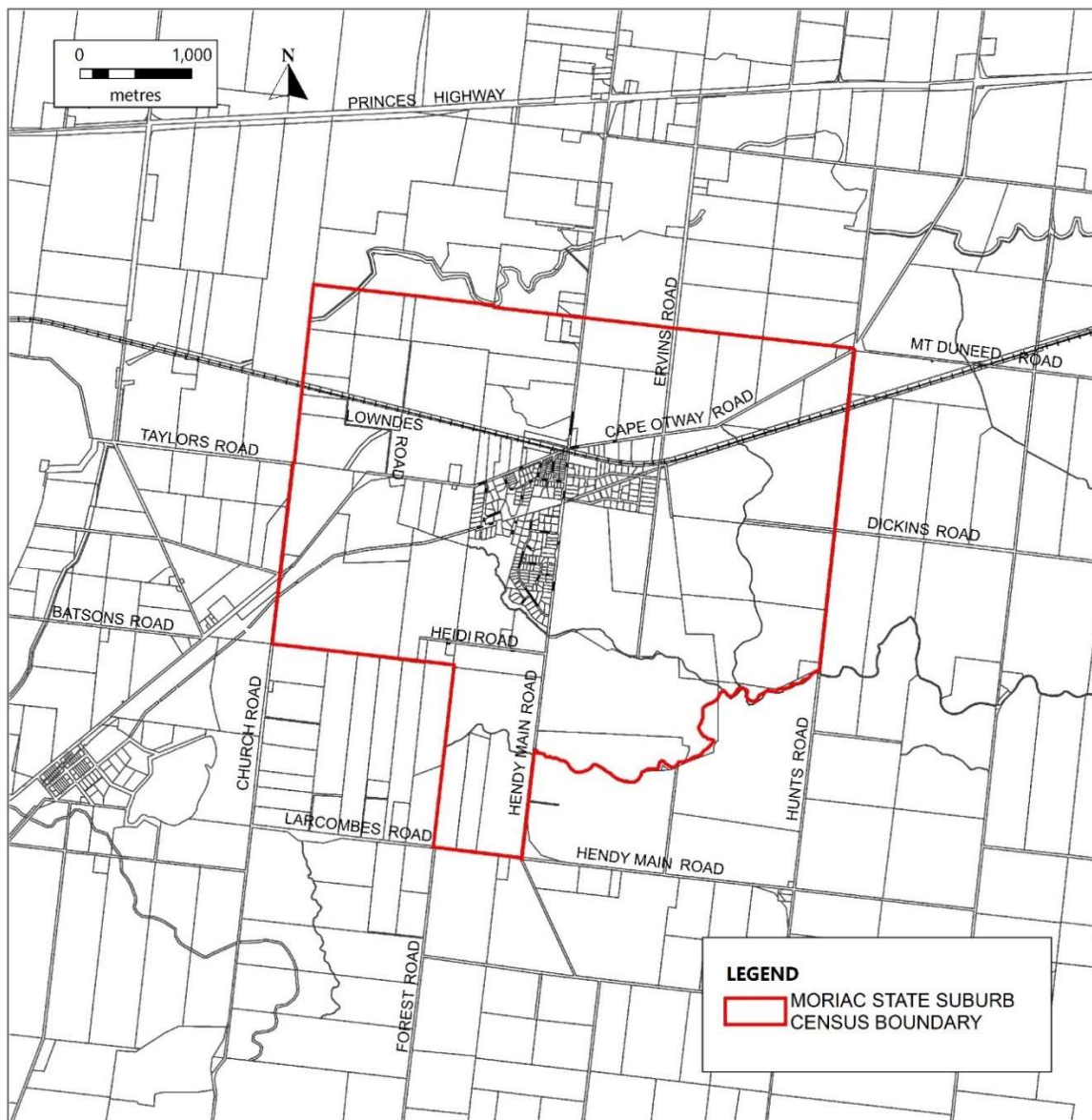
We Acknowledge their Ancestors who cared for the land and waters for thousands of generations. We pay our Respects to their Elders past, present and future.



# Introduction

This document provides a concise summary of the Moriac Structure Plan 2022 – Background Report.

Publication of the Background Report is the first step in the preparation of a new structure plan for Moriac. The purpose of the report is to present technical information to inform a draft structure plan. The report utilises factual information and data available at the time of writing; however, community consultation is likely to identify additional issues to be addressed in the Moriac Structure Plan.



## Background

The current Moriac Structure Plan (MSP) was adopted by the Surf Coast Shire in 2010, and provides the context behind local planning policies applying to Moriac in the Surf Coast Planning Scheme.

A new Moriac Structure Plan is required to address the following:

- State and regional planning policy reforms over the past ten years.
- The need to consider future housing needs for Moriac following the rezoning of the last remaining area of land identified for housing development in the MSP 2010.
- The need to review the provision of public infrastructure including open space,
- footpaths and trails, community buildings and service infrastructure (i.e.
- electricity, water, wastewater) to determine future needs.

To consider the implications of the growth in visitors to Moriac given its strategic location at the intersection of two main roads and the approval of the Cape Otway Road Australia project.

To develop a new Moriac Structure Plan that supports and complements current community aspirations.

The key findings of the Background Report are summarised as follows:

## SUMMARY OF PART A – Moriac in Profile

### Moriac in Profile - Key Facts and Findings

- Moriac is a small town located in Wadawurrung Country.
- Moriac has a relatively young population and is not a targeted node for population growth at a regional or local level.
- There is a high demand for housing in Moriac, a very limited rental market and a limited diversity of dwelling type.
- Retail opportunities within the township are limited and Moriac residents rely on larger population centres such as Geelong, Winchelsea and Torquay for many goods and services.
- Tourism, including agritourism, is a focus however the Hinterland Economy does not currently receive a high share of the Shire's tourism visitation (4%).
- Moriac has a basic range of community facilities commensurate with a population of less than 1,000 residents and generally good access to public open space, including sporting ovals nearby in Modewarre and Mt Moriac.

# SUMMARY OF PART B – Key Issues and Influences for Future Growth

## Planning Policy Context - Key Issues and Influences

- The Council Plan 2021-2025 identifies key challenges for the Shire over the next four years including housing affordability, growth pressures, limited Council resources for new facilities or renewal, reconciliation with First Nations people, climate change and local economic fluctuations.
- State policy seeks to protect strategically important areas, to accommodate new housing and employment in established towns with capacity for growth, to avoid development where there are environmental values or hazards, and to provide non-urban breaks between towns.
- Regional policy directs significant population growth to Torquay and Winchelsea, reinforces the need to maintain settlement breaks between towns and encourages sustainable and well managed tourism in the Great Ocean Road region.
- Local policy supports Moriac's role as a small town with limited growth potential.
- Growth opportunities set out in the MSP 2010 have been realised.
- The Rural Hinterland Futures Strategy 2019 identifies the study area as within an agricultural soil quality hot spot. This finding reinforces existing policy which seeks to limit the outward expansion of the Moriac urban environment.

## Demographics and Housing – Key Issues and Influences

- The population of the Deans Marsh and Moriac Districts is expected to grow by 348 people to the year 2036, with significant growth in retirement aged people.
- Future population growth is expected to be limited due to the lack of opportunities for residential development.
- Demand for housing in Moriac is high and supply is very limited and will not meet longer term demand.
- The cost of housing in Moriac is increasing significantly.
- Supply and demand analysis for the Surf Coast Shire as a whole identify sufficient land to meet growth needs for the next 15 years.
- There are short term opportunities for rural residential style living in Moriac, Winchelsea, Torquay and some longer term opportunities in small towns in adjoining municipalities.
- There is very little housing diversity in Moriac which can negatively impact the ability of a town to accommodate a range of household types, particularly elderly people with different housing needs.

### **Local Economy - Key Issues and Influences**

- There is no land specifically zoned for commercial or industrial use in Moriac. These types of uses typically locate in the Township Zone or Farming Zone where appropriate, subject to conditions.
- Little commercial development or industrial development has occurred in Moriac since 2010.
- Existing policy directs commercial development to land identified as the Town Centre on the Moriac Framework Plan or by expanding to the south of the town centre.
- Council's Economic Development Strategy 2021-2031 facilitates a new approach to economic prosperity that recognises the importance of health, wellbeing and sustainability in creating prosperous places.
- The Moriac District is recognised as being well suited to agribusiness, commercial farming and tourism.

### **Natural Environment and Resources - Key Issues and Influences**

- Biodiversity assets in the Moriac study area have been previously mapped and planning controls, with local objectives, have been applied to Thompsons Creek and Ravens Creek.
- Native grasses and scattered trees are not afforded local controls, however State policy has been strengthened in recent years to provide better protection for environmental assets.
- Moriac is classified as having high to high-average agricultural soil quality.
- Land affected by flooding and salinity has been identified in the Moriac study area. Subdivision and development in such areas is generally not supported by local policy.
- Bushfire planning regulations have been significantly strengthened since the MSP 2010 and it is State policy to prioritise the protection of human life over all other policy considerations.

### **Service Infrastructure - Key Issues and Influences**

- Moriac water supply is close to capacity and upgrades would be required for any future subdivision of scale.
- Stormwater issues in Moriac have occurred both through the failure of septic systems and as a result of flooding. The Moriac Septic Report has made a number of recommendations to address existing problems.
- The lack of a sewerage system is a major constraint to future growth of the town.
- A recently published Septic Report recommends that Council advocate to Barwon Water to undertake a feasibility study into providing a reticulated sewer in Moriac. The outcome of these discussions will influence decisions about future growth.
- Telecommunications services will become more important to Moriac as lifestyles and working arrangements change over time.



## Access and Movement - Key Issues and Influences

- Hendy Main Road and Cape Otway Road are the primary roads through Moriac.
- A number of issues and concerns with the condition and maintenance of Cape Otway Road have been raised by Moriac residents.
- The Cape Otway Road Review 2020 makes a number of recommendations to improve Cape Otway Road and the intersection of Cape Otway Road and Hendy Main Road, including reducing the speed limit through town to 50 km/hr.
- The absence of public transport in Moriac is a significant disadvantage for the town, particularly for older people, teens and non-drivers.
- Moriac has a good network of footpaths that are well utilised by residents and visitors.
- Council is in the process of preparing the Surf Coast Safer Cycling Strategy. It contains a number of recommendations for improvements to the cycling network relevant to the Moriac study area.



## Community infrastructure - Key Issues and Influences

- Residents access a number of community facilities and services in larger urban centres within the region.
- The lack of public transport is likely to present access issues for some residents.
- Extension of footpath, trails and cycle infrastructure are identified as community infrastructure needs through various strategies.
- Council is working with the community on a range of projects to deliver additional facilities.
- There is a need to ensure the needs of an ageing population are considered in the provision of future community infrastructure.
- Access for people of all abilities should be factored into design.

## Potential Guiding Principles

Based on the information and analysis in the Background Report a list of suggested Guiding Principles for the MSP 2022 has been developed. It is anticipated that this list will be further developed, modified and supplemented through consultation with the Moriac Community.

Principle 1: Preserve and enhance the natural environments of Moriac and the surrounding rural hinterland.

Principle 2: Protect rural areas from impacts associated with housing development.

Principle 3. Open space areas will continue to play an important role in defining the character and liveability of the Moriac township.

Principle 4. Future land use and development decisions will prioritise the needs of pedestrians to create a safer built environment through improved accessibility and connectivity

Principle 5. The Moriac Structure Plan will seek to incorporate Traditional Owner knowledge and perspectives in a respectful and educative way.

## Next Steps

The project team will undertake a range of engagement activities to ensure that the Moriac community can have direct input into the project in different ways. Future engagement forums will include the following:

- A community listening post forum to be held in Moriac;
- Meetings with key external stakeholders;
- A media release explaining the Moriac Structure Plan development process and inviting participation in key engagement stages;
- Online summary/landing page with feedback portal.

Following the Phase 1 community engagement officers will prepare a Community Engagement Summary Report. This report along with a refined set of draft guiding principles will be presented at a future meeting of Council prior to preparation of the Draft Moriac Structure Plan.



# STRUCTURE PLAN PHASES

