

The background image shows a building with a large sign that reads 'SUNSHINE BISCUITS' in a stylized font. Above the sign, the word 'STORE' is visible. String lights with white bulbs are strung across the scene. In the foreground, there is a wooden railing and some outdoor furniture. A red sign with a white 'P' and the text 'AUSTRALIA POST' is visible on the right side.

Moriac Structure Plan 2022

Background report – Understanding Moriac

January 2022



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.

Surf Coast Shire Council would like to thank all residents and community groups for their input into the various engagement forums that have informed the drafting of the background report. The drafting of a new Moriac Structure Plan will provide further opportunities for community participation.

Disclaimer

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

Act	<i>Planning and Environment Act 1987</i>
Council	Surf Coast Shire Council
DELWP	Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning
DAL	Distinctive Areas and Landscapes
G21	G21 Geelong Region Alliance
MCN	Moriac Community Network
MSP 2010	Moriac Structure Plan 2010
Planning Scheme	Surf Coast Planning Scheme
PPF	Planning Policy Framework
PPV	Planning Panels Victoria
RAP	Registered Aboriginal Party
MSP 2022	Moriac Structure Plan 2022
SSC	State Suburb Collection (ABS)
VPPs	Victoria Planning Provisions

Zones

FZ	Farming Zone
LDRZ	Low Density Residential Zone
TZ	Township Zone
PPRZ	Public Park and Recreation Zone
PUZ	Public Use Zone
RDZ	Road Zone

Overlays

ESO	Environmental Significance Overlay
FO	Floodway Overlay
LSIO	Land Subject to Inundation Overlay
SMO	Salinity Management Overlay
VPO	Vegetation Protection Overlay

1. Introduction

1.1 Moriac Structure Plan Project

Surf Coast Shire Council (Council) is proposing to prepare a new town structure plan to guide future growth and development in Moriac. At present, the Moriac Structure Plan adopted by Council in 2010 (MSP 2010) provides the existing context for land use planning in Moriac through local policies in the Surf Coast Planning Scheme (Planning Scheme).

Key factors driving the review of the MSP 2010 and the preparation of a new plan include:

- State and regional planning policy reforms over the past ten years.
- The recent rezoning of the last remaining area of land identified for housing development in the MSP 2010 and therefore the need to consider future housing needs for Moriac.
- Timely review of 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 the rural hinterland for Moriac given its strategic location at the intersection of two main roads.
- To develop a new Moriac Structure Plan that supports and complements current community aspirations.

As a first step, this Background Report has been prepared to provide an overview of Moriac's existing features and to identify future land use planning challenges and influences.

The Background Report includes:

- a summary of feedback from the Moriac community identifying key priorities for the future as part of the People Place Future project (2021)
- a profile of present day Moriac
- a review of the planning policy framework
- an analysis of population forecasts and housing supply and demand
- key issues and influences on future growth and development.

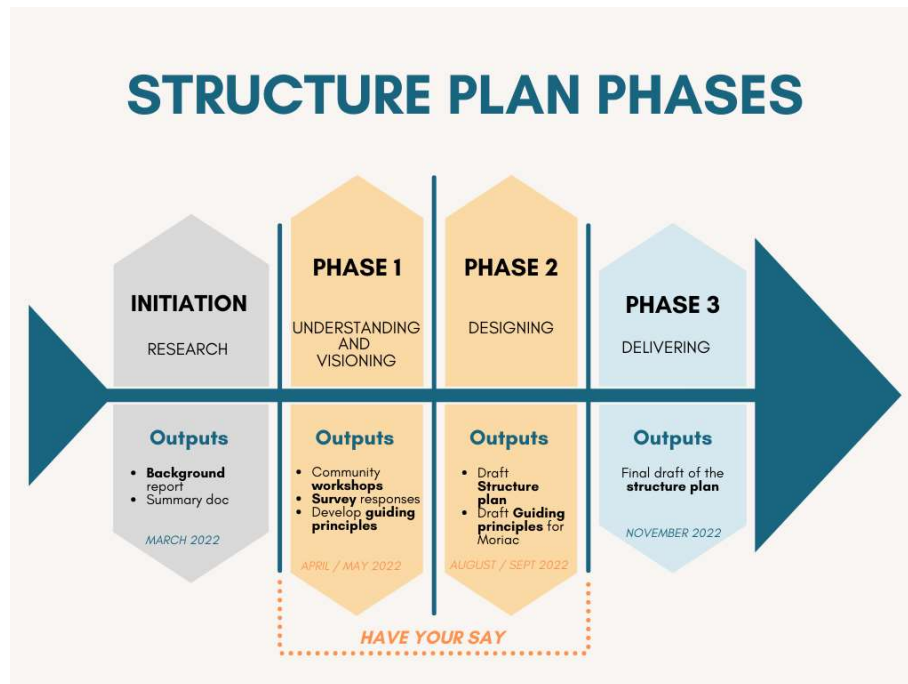
Next steps include consultation with the community and stakeholders to develop a new Moriac Structure Plan (MSP 2022). Community members will play an important role in contributing to the development of the MSP 2022 by sharing their aspirations and concerns for the natural and built environments. Council is committed to working with the Moriac community to develop a new plan for a sustainable future and input will be captured via project surveys, at consultation sessions and through formal written submissions. The MSP 2022 will provide a strategic framework to guide land use planning decisions for the next 10 to 15 years.

Land use planning decisions will play a crucial role in realising shared aspirations. Responding to the growth related challenges of the future will also require new and innovative ways of thinking about the role of the town in the region.

1.2 Process and Timelines

The MSP 2022 will be developed across three phases as shown in Figure 1. Timelines shown are an approximate guide for each of the phases.

Figure 1: MSP 2022 Project Phases



1.3 Community Feedback

Community feedback from Council’s People Place Future project (2021) was reviewed to gain insights into current matters of importance to the Moriac community.

The People Place Future project was a comprehensive community engagement project to assist in developing the Council Plan and Community Vision, the Council Asset Plan and 10 Year Financial Plan.

Over 65 residents from Moriac and the surrounding district participated in the ‘People Place Future’ engagement process early in 2021, attending informal conversations, meetings and workshops, interviews and surveys. The People Place Future program sought to collect information to feed into the development of a new Council Plan.

Top priorities for an ideal community as identified by Moriac and District respondents included:¹

1. Having a good amount of high quality and diverse shared open space (quality and quantity).
2. A natural environment that is protected and built environment that reflects sustainability best practice.
3. An attractive and high quality environment that people can be proud of, including having a sense of character or identity that is unique.
4. Easy access to shared community amenities like the local shops, on foot or by bike.
5. Locally owned and operated businesses that provide the community with their daily needs.
6. Well maintained and managed public domain; footpaths, parks, roads and other public assets.

The project included a liveability survey, which has been used widely across Victoria. The survey captured a broad range of comments relevant to the development of a new structure plan:

- The need for better access to social infrastructure, including sporting facilities, open space and paths and trails.

¹ Refer to People Place Future, Community Engagement Report, Surf Coast Shire, 23 March 2021

- The quality and intensity of residential development.
- The need for bus services.
- The need to address road safety.
- The need to support reconciliation and Aboriginal culture.

With the exception of Aboriginal Culture, which is being addressed through a separate study, these topics are explored in this Background Report.



1.4 Limitations of the Background Report

The Background Report utilises information and data available at the time of writing. It does not identify every asset valued by the community or issue faced, and it is anticipated that community consultation will result in an additional level of detail for development of the MSP 2022. The focus of the Background Report is to identify matters important for the development of future land use planning policies in the Planning Scheme. It refers to other Council policies and plans but generally confines discussion to matters relevant to land use planning and does not explore the provision of other Council services, operations or management responsibilities in detail.

This Background Report considers how Moriac relates to neighbouring settlements but the focus of the MSP 2022 will be to make policy recommendations about land within the study area (refer to Figure 2).

It is recognised that the Background Report has been prepared during the evolving COVID-19 pandemic. The longer term impacts of the pandemic are not yet known. Census data for 2021 is not available until June 2022 and may reveal some variations to the way people live and work. These potential impacts and influences will continue to be monitored as the Moriac Structure Plan project progresses.

Aboriginal Cultural Heritage and Heritage

Two separate studies are proposed to inform the MSP 2022, in addition to this Background Report.

The first study is a review of heritage literature describing Moriac and its surrounding landscape (including both pre and post European contact heritage). This study will provide a contemporary review of historical descriptions of Moriac, to inform a better understanding of place in a landscape that has experienced profound social and environment changes.

The second piece of work is a cultural heritage values study. The purpose of this study is to develop a framework for considering traditional owner knowledge and perspectives in the development of the MSP 2022. The study will explore methods to better facilitate traditional owner involvement in future land use planning and place making initiatives.

It is also noted that there are currently no heritage overlays applying to individual properties or precincts within the Moriac town boundary. Council has prepared a list of properties that require further assessment. The list contains seven (7) buildings, one precinct and one ruin. Council is committed to undertaking a future heritage study which is likely to revisit the identified Moriac structures but this work will not form part of the MSP 2022.

PART A – MORIAC IN PROFILE



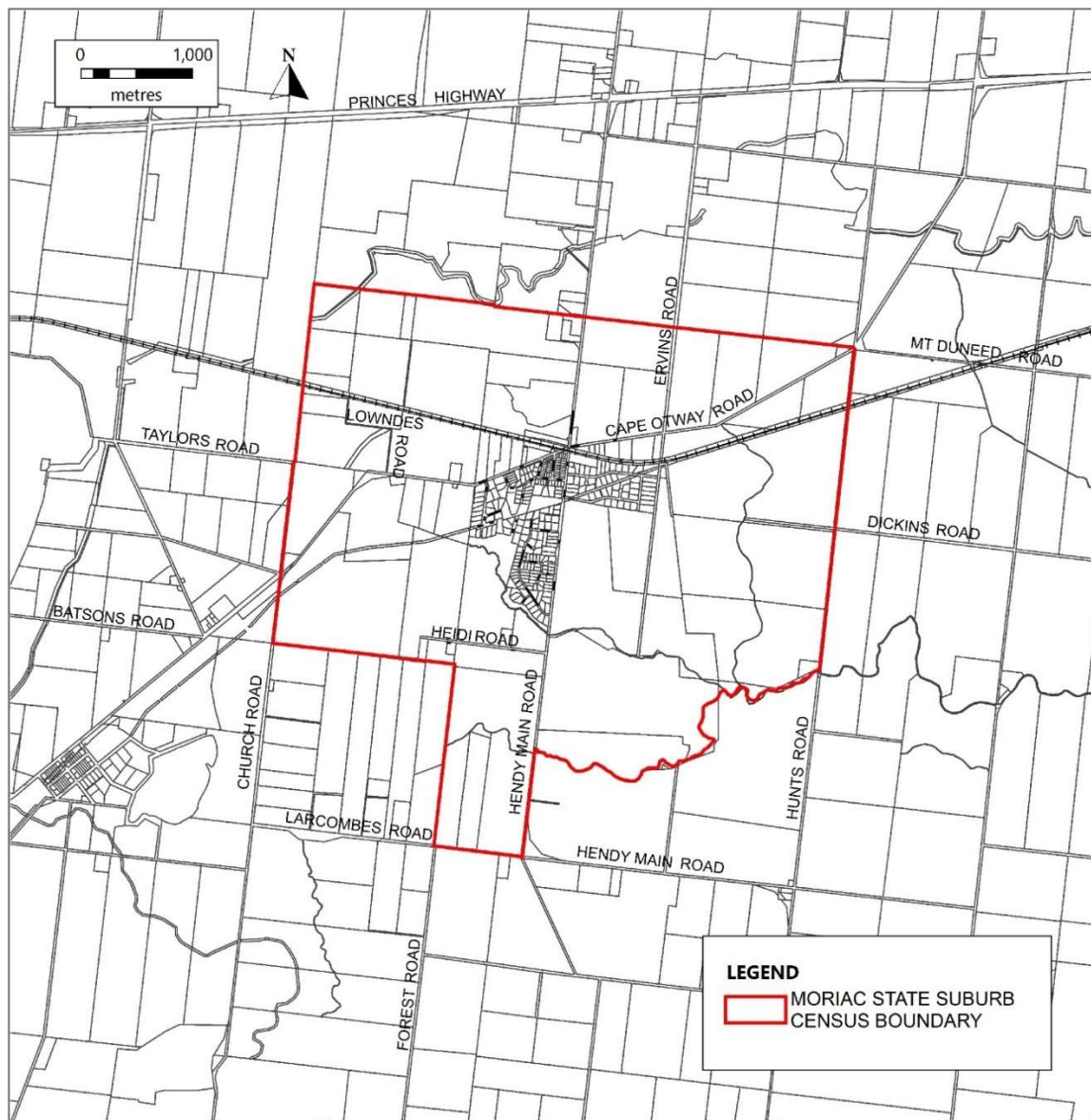
2. Present Day Moriac

Surrounded by open pasture land south of the Princes Highway, the town of Moriac is a special place for both residents and visitors. Located in Wadawurrung country, Moriac is a compact, pedestrian friendly town with quiet residential streetscapes and green open space. Moriac represents a unique and readily distinguishable community located in a region that is experiencing unprecedented population growth, particularly on the outskirts of Geelong and Torquay.

2.1 Study area

The study area is shown in Figure 2. The area includes the township of Moriac and the immediate surrounding rural hinterland and is within the Surf Coast Shire municipality.

Figure 2: Moriac Structure Plan Study Area



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) – SSC boundary - Moriac

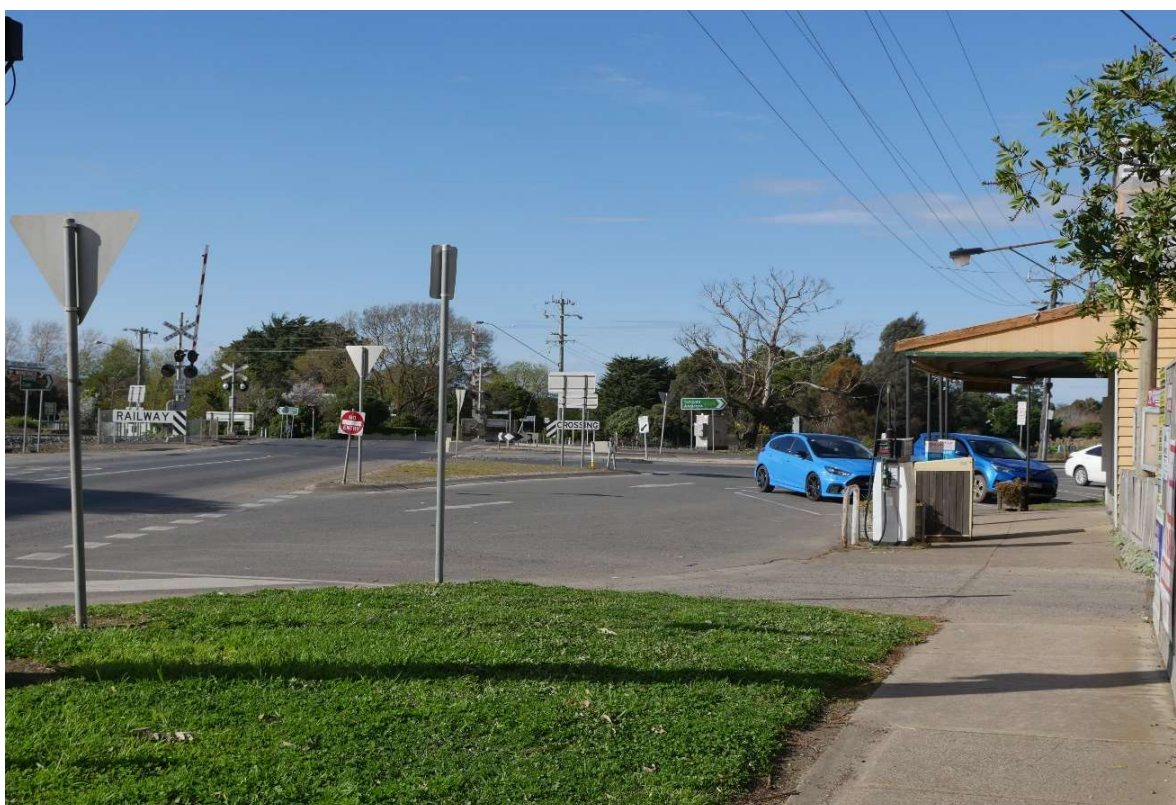
The study area has a total land area of approximately 1,790 hectares and is based on the Moriac State Suburb Census (SSC) collection boundary. The study area is generally consistent with the area considered by the MSP 2010 and allows for the consideration of rural interface related issues. Ravens Creek flows through the north and east, while Thompson Creek flows along the south of the study area.

Moriac township is located at the intersection of Hendy Main Road and Cape Otway Road, a distance of 23km south-west from the Geelong CBD and approximately 20km east of Winchelsea. The Geelong Warrnambool railway line provides a physical barrier along much of the northern boundary of the township, and Thompson Creek forms a natural boundary to the south of the town and the wider study area. The town is surrounded by farmland, which supports grazing and cropping activities.

The Moriac General Store, which includes the post office, is located on Cape Otway Road and represents the social centre of the town. The primary school is located directly across the road on Hendy Main Road to the east, south of the railway line.

The character of Moriac is largely defined by the dominance of single storey houses that are generally well setback from title boundaries. The majority of residential parcels are at least one acre (4,000 square metres) in area, allowing for the establishment of landscaping and reflective of the town not having a reticulated sewer system.

Moriac has experienced a steady increase in new home construction placing increasing demands on services and infrastructure. Alongside rising demand, Moriac is faced with a limited supply of land zoned or designated for future residential growth. Through the People Place Future project (2021), the community has expressed their desire that future development should be more sustainable and not negatively impact on the natural environment.

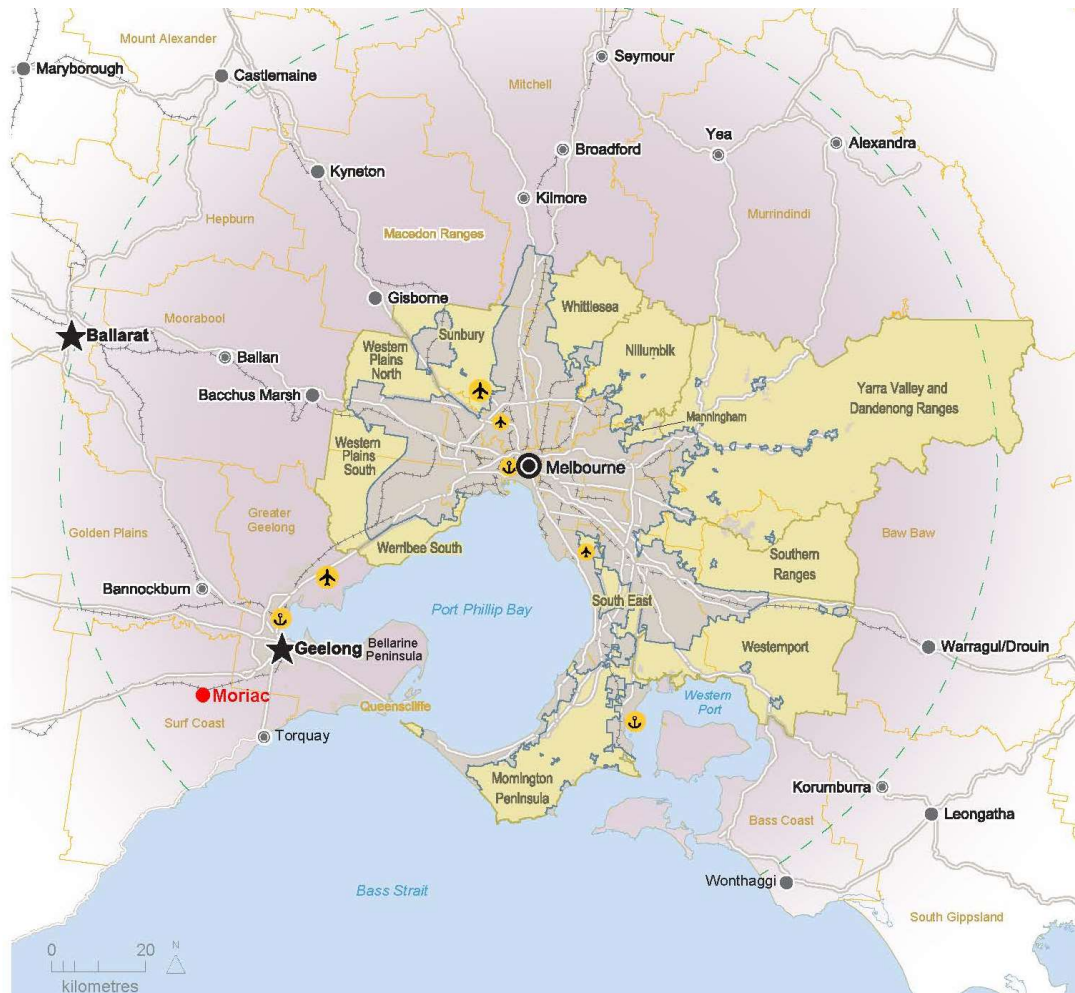


Moriac Streetscape Site photo, 2021

2.2 Regional context

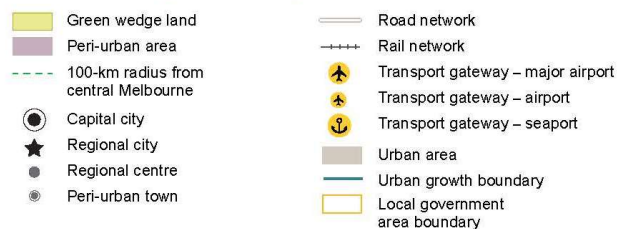
Moriac is a small town located within the peri-urban region of Melbourne (i.e. within 100km of central Melbourne). The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) defines a small town as having a population of less than 10,000 persons.

Figure 3: Map of Peri-Urban Areas in Victoria



Map 19

Melbourne's green wedges and peri-urban areas



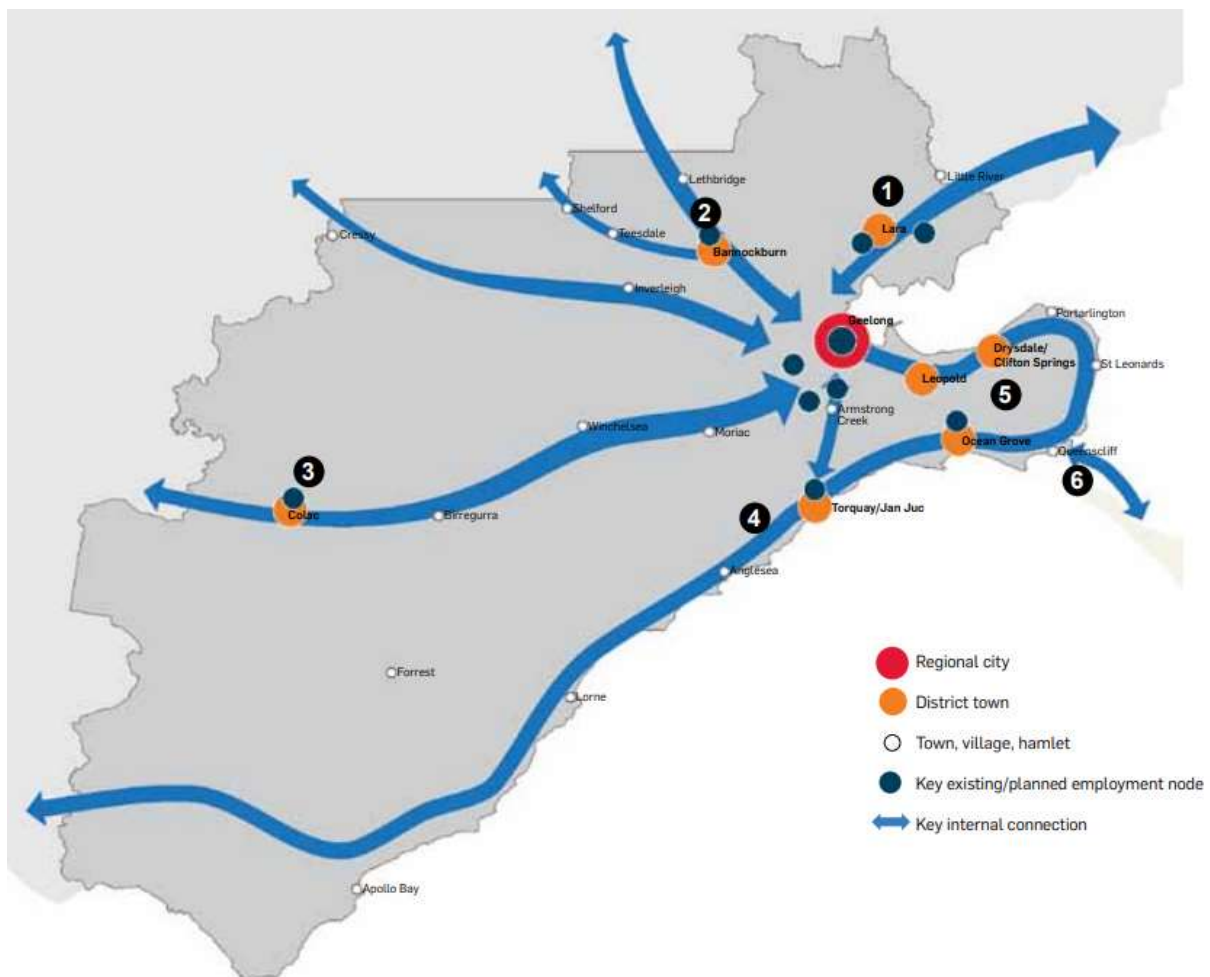
Source: Plan Melbourne 2017-50, DELWP, 2017

Moriac is part of the G21 Region, which includes the Surf Coast Shire, Borough of Queenscliffe, City of Greater Geelong, Golden Plains Shire and Colac Otway Shire. Moriac is described as part of the Western Gateway in the G21 Regional Growth Plan 2013 (G21 Plan):

Western Gateway

The area surrounding Winchelsea to Colac has a significant agricultural role and supports a number of small towns, such as Forrest, Moriac and Birregurra, which provide important housing lifestyle options and niche tourism activity. Colac plays a district town role, providing food production activity and services to settlements within the rural hinterland, including the Otways and Great Ocean Road, and is a gateway to the Great South Coast...²

Figure 4: Roles and Functions within the G21 Region



Source: Geelong Regional Growth Plan 2013

Both Colac and Winchelsea are identified as targeted nodes to accommodate significant population growth in the western region. Moriac is within the 'Town, village, hamlet' classification. Cape Otway Road which runs through Moriac is nominated as a significant tourism route

Within Geelong and the Surf Coast, land use changes are occurring at a rapid pace with large areas of farmland converting to residential use. Winchelsea is 16 kilometres to the west of Moriac and is the

² G21 Regional Growth Plan 2013

closest neighbouring town within the Surf Coast Shire. With a population of 1586 residents in 2016, Winchelsea is designated as one of two 'growth towns' within the Surf Coast Shire (the other being Torquay). Winchelsea is currently growing at a moderate rate but planning has been undertaken to accommodate a potential population of 10,000 residents by 2050. The Winchelsea Framework Plan guides future growth of the town and provides opportunities for new residential development in multiple locations.³

Approximately 14 kilometres east of Moriac is the locality of Mount Duneed in the City of Greater Geelong. Mount Duneed demarcates the edge of the Armstrong Creek Growth Area. Armstrong Creek represents one the largest 'greenfield' growth areas in Victoria, with a target population of between 55,000 and 65,000 residents. The 2020 estimated resident population for the Armstrong Creek – Mount Duneed corridor was 11,793 people⁴.

The MSP 2010 described the role of Moriac in the region as *"largely a dormitory settlement with a majority of residents who commute to Geelong and beyond for employment opportunities, but who choose to live in Moriac for its rural atmosphere and rural residential lifestyle"*⁵. A review of the 2016 Census data indicates that the majority of employed people in Moriac continue to commute for work. In future it is likely that there may be some change to the number of people commuting for work as a result of the COVID 19 pandemic and emerging hybrid working models. It is anticipated that 2021 Census data will indicate a much higher number of people working from home, but whether this leads to permanent change and at what level is as yet unknown. A permanent increase in work from home arrangements will have implications for infrastructure planning, in particular the speed and reliability of internet services.

With regard to the wider hinterland area, the Moriac region is described as part of the peri urban farming, agrifood and agritourism area as shown in Figure 5. Agribusiness is considered a significant contributor to the visitor economy, with rural landscapes, wineries, harvest trails, farmers' markets and small scale food producers contributing to the attraction of the region to a large number of domestic and international visitors.⁶

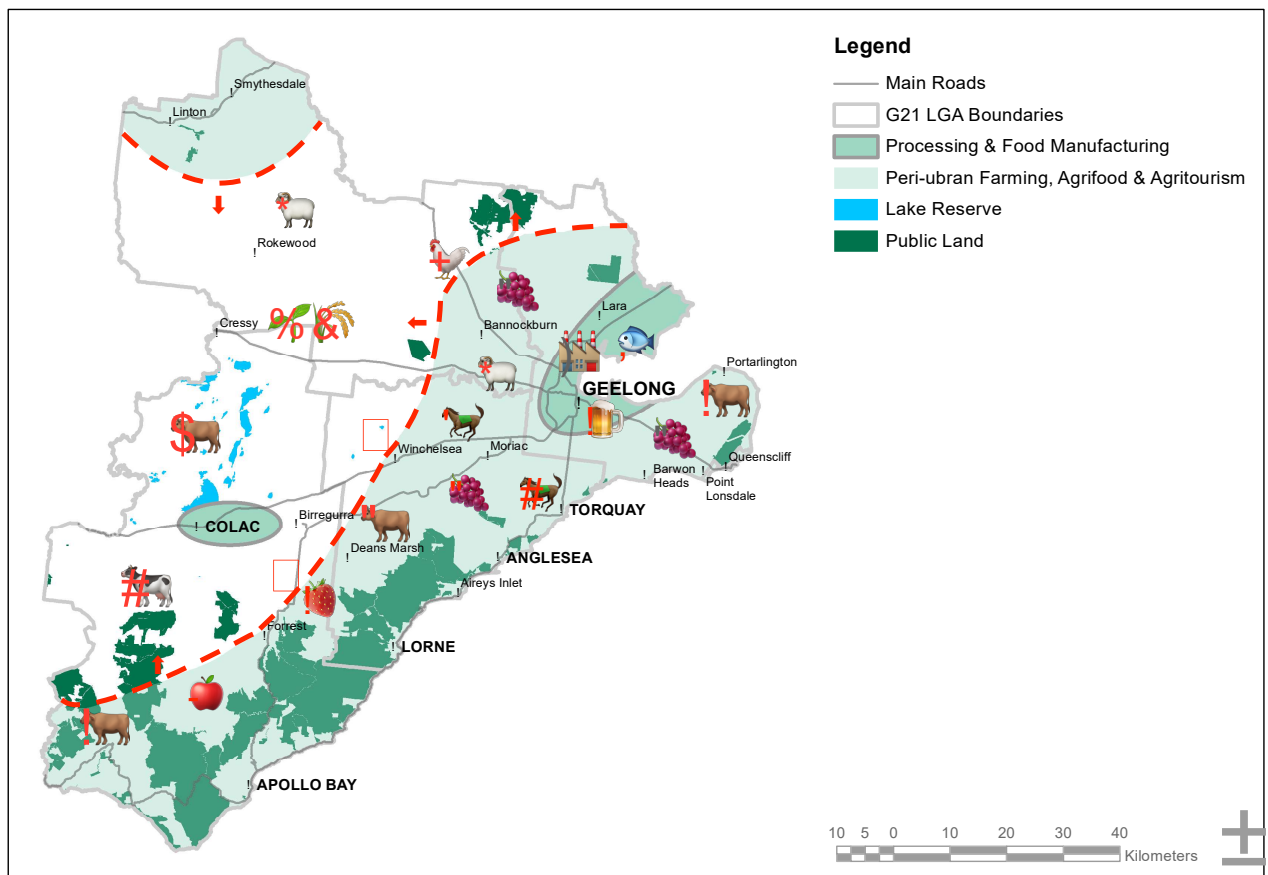
3 Winchelsea Framework Plan, Clause 02.04-4, Surf Coast Planning Scheme

4 <https://profile.id.com.au/geelong>

5 Moriac Structure Plan 2010

6 Sustainable Agribusiness Strategy for the G21 Region 2017-2022, RMCG, July 2017

Figure 5: Agribusiness in the G21 Region



Source: Sustainable Agribusiness Strategy for the G21 Region 2017-2022

2.3 Population

The population profile for Moriac utilises data available from the 2016 Census as 2021 data will not be available until mid-2022. In 2016 the population of the Moriac study area was 782. Figure 6 outlines some broad demographic characteristics of Moriac. Moriac had a relatively young population with a median age of 37 years compared with other towns in Surf Coast Shire including Winchelsea (47 years) and Bellbrae (52 years) but consistent with the median age in Victoria.

Figure 6: Population Characteristics of the Moriac Study Area



Source: ABS 2016 Census Quickstats

Moriac had a larger number of families than both the Surf Coast Shire and Victorian averages, and a larger number of people per household.



Children between 0-14 years made up over 25% of the population, with people between 30-49 years comprising approximately 30%. Just over 9% were aged 65 years and over.

The employment profile of the Moriac population was not dissimilar to the Victorian employment profile. Professional workers made up the largest group of employed people over the age of 15 years at 22.6%. The second largest category includes technicians and trades workers at 19.1% compared to the Victorian figure of 13.1%.

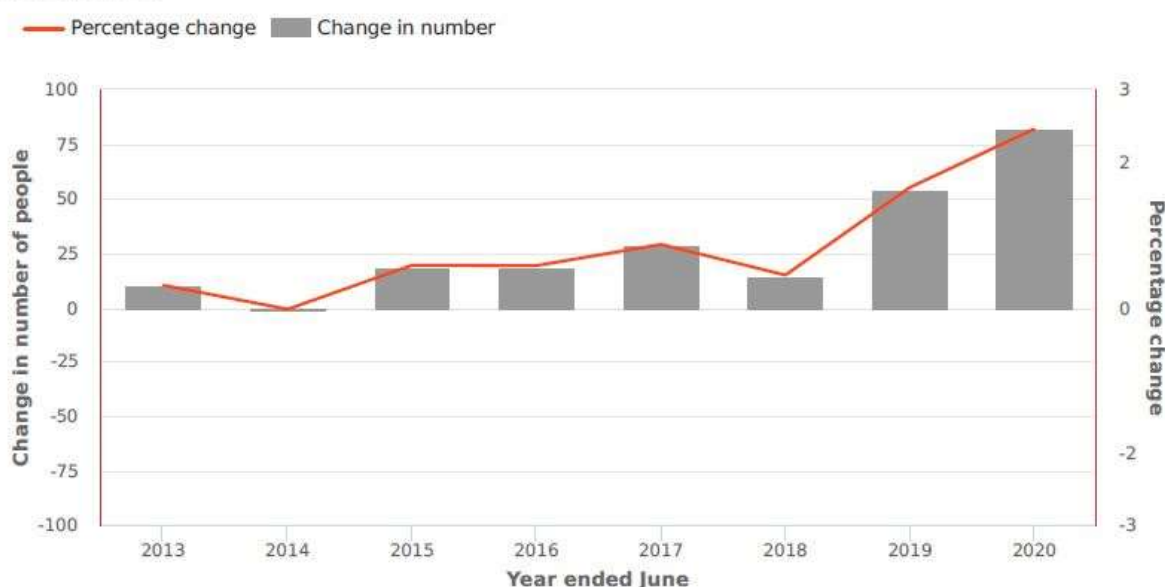
The median weekly personal income for people aged 15 years and over in Moriac was \$728, which was higher than the Victorian median weekly income of \$644 in 2016.⁷

It is recognised that 2016 data is somewhat dated and data modelling suggests that the population in Moriac has grown significantly since that time. Council engages consulting firm, .id, to regularly update estimated resident populations for Surf Coast Shire. To enable more detailed change over time comparisons to be made, .id use larger geographical areas than used in the SSC Census profiles. Figure 7 details the annual change in the estimated resident population of Moriac and District from 2013 to 2020. It is acknowledged that the data collection area includes settlements outside Moriac township, however a review of new building approvals suggests the majority of recent growth occurred in Moriac and more specifically in the Hinterland Estate. The population of the district has increased by over 75 residents in 2020 alone.

Figure 7: Annual Change in Population of Moriac and District

Annual change in Estimated Resident Population (ERP)

Moriac and District



Source: ABS, compiled and presented by .id (informed decisions)

⁷ All data in this section is taken from the ABS, Census Quickstats, 2016

2.4 Housing and residential land

Moriac has a distinctive low density residential character, with the majority of dwellings well setback from title boundaries. Moriac is an unsewered town with all existing dwellings relying on onsite waste water management systems. Single storey dwellings are more common than two-storey dwellings, and the majority of properties contain at least one or more outbuildings.

At the 2016 Census there were 257 private dwellings recorded within the Moriac study area. 98% were classified as 'separate dwellings' and over 94% of all dwellings had 3 or more bedrooms. There were only 15 unoccupied dwellings, indicating that the township has a largely permanent population (in contrast to some of the coastal towns in Surf Coast Shire). 36% of dwellings were owned outright, 58% were owned with a mortgage and only 4.6% were rented. Moriac had significantly fewer rentals than the general average across Victoria, where 28.7% of all occupied private dwellings were rental properties in 2016.⁸

These figures demonstrate a high demand for housing in Moriac, a very limited rental market and a limited diversity of dwelling type.

Dwellings in Moriac reflect a range of architectural periods, styles and influences. The oldest dwellings tend to be located centrally near the intersection of Cape Otway Road and Hendy Main Road. The majority of newly constructed homes (built since 2010) are located in the Hinterland Estate on the eastern side of Hendy Main Road.

Lot sizes vary throughout the town, and help distinguish historical periods in Moriac's development. Generally, the smallest residential parcels are located centrally in town, with average lots sizes increasing as you extend outwards, matching growth throughout the decades. Properties located in the southern portion of Moriac, fronting Greenfields Drive and Buttercup Drive, have an area of around 2,000 square metres. All of the lots within the newer Hinterland Estate subdivision have an area greater than 4,000 square metres (1 acre). In the present day, in the absence of a reticulated system a minimum lot size of 4,000 square metres is generally required to adequately treat sewage on site.

Figure 8 provides some context to visually demonstrate the various lot sizes.

⁸ ABS, Census Quickstats, 2016

Figure 8: Land Area Comparison



Source: Surf Coast Shire mapping 2022 (Modewarre Recreation Reserve)

2.5 Local economy

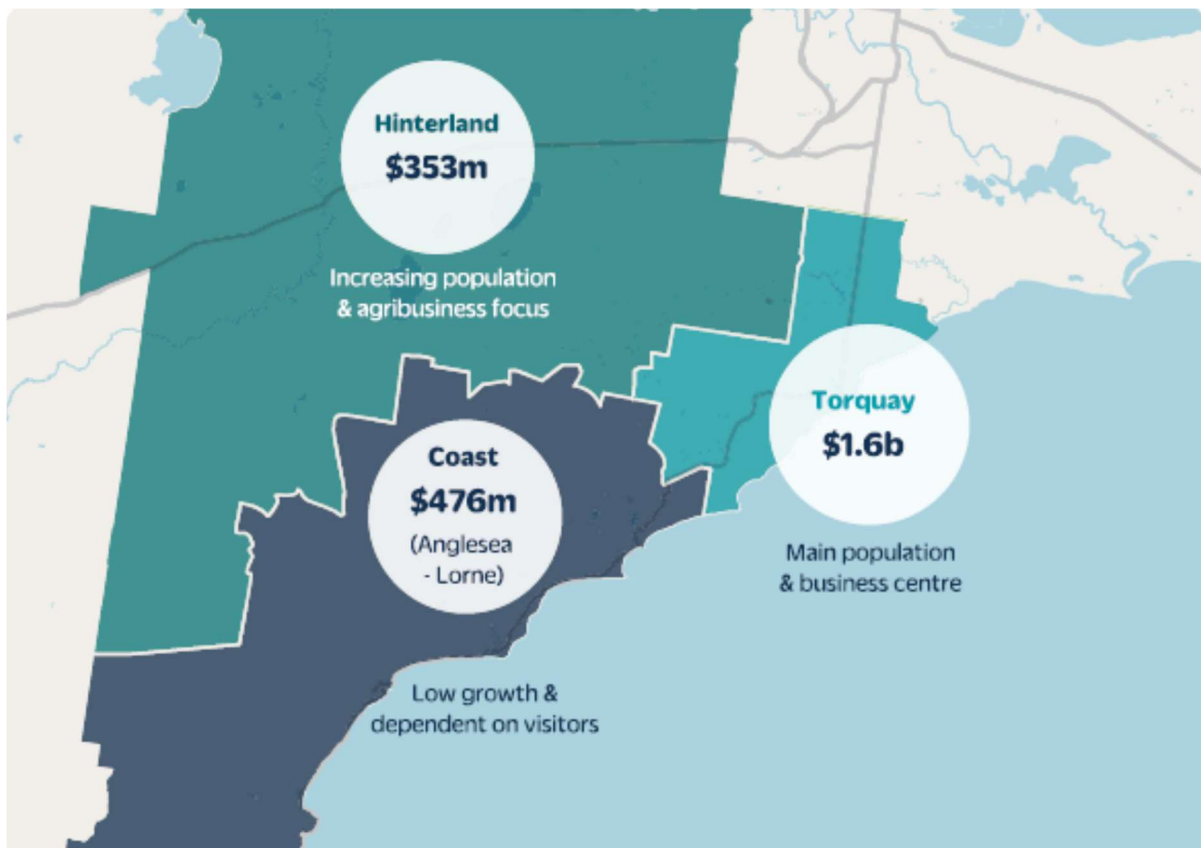
Council recently endorsed the Surf Coast Shire Economic Development Strategy 2021-2031 (EDS) which lays out future aspirations for the region's economic ecology. As part of development of the EDS a background document was prepared, Our Economic Story – the Surf Coast Shire: A Prosperous Place 2021 (Prosperous Place 2021). This latter document describes the Surf Coast as a growing region and with regard to Moriac notes that:

The hinterland villages of Deans Marsh and Moriac maintain strong links to the land, which consists of productive agriculture, rural land and tourist businesses. Rural landscapes in the hinterland are highly valued by the community and finding the most productive use of the land is an important element in its economic future.⁹

Prosperous Places examines long term growth patterns over the last 20 years and identifies the emergence of three distinct local economies in the Shire which differ in scale, population size, industry mix, growth trends and outlook. Moriac is included within the Hinterland sub-economy.

⁹ Our Economic Story – the Surf Coast Shire: A Prosperous Place 2021

Figure 9: Surf Coast Sub-Economies



Source: Our Economic Story – The Surf Coast Shire – A Prosperous Place 2021

Features of the Hinterland economy as described in Prosperous Places include:

- More affordable housing in some areas and larger land parcels offering rural lifestyle opportunities.
- The close proximity of Geelong and Torquay has led to many administration and education based workers commuting to these larger centres for employment.
- In contrast to the coast, most workers are employed full time.
- Key sectors are agribusiness 39%, construction 19%, public administration and safety 9% and education 8%.
- Emerging industries include niche and speciality food manufacturing.
- Some smaller scale producers are developing local, shared value driven supply chains allowing them to create offerings directly responsive to customer demand, justifying a higher market price and ensuring a higher proportion of proceeds are seen 'behind the farm-gate'.
- Attracts just 4% of total Surf Coast tourism visitation. Developing more product and creating inland visitor opportunities would support the region, which is an inland route to Lorne and the 12 Apostles.
- The Cape Otway Road Australia (CORA) development should it be realised has potential to influence population growth in Winchelsea and Moriac (refer to Chapter 3.6 for more detail).

Within the township of Moriac itself, commercial land use and development comprises a general store (including post office), a veterinary clinic, a pharmacy and a saddlery / equestrian store. The general store provides hot food and convenience retail items for local residents, and to visitors

travelling along the Cape Otway and Hendy Main Roads. Anecdotally it is understood that the majority of Moriac residents travel to the larger centres of Winchelsea, Torquay, Wairn Ponds and Geelong for their weekly grocery shopping requirements and higher-order purchases (e.g. clothes, homewares).



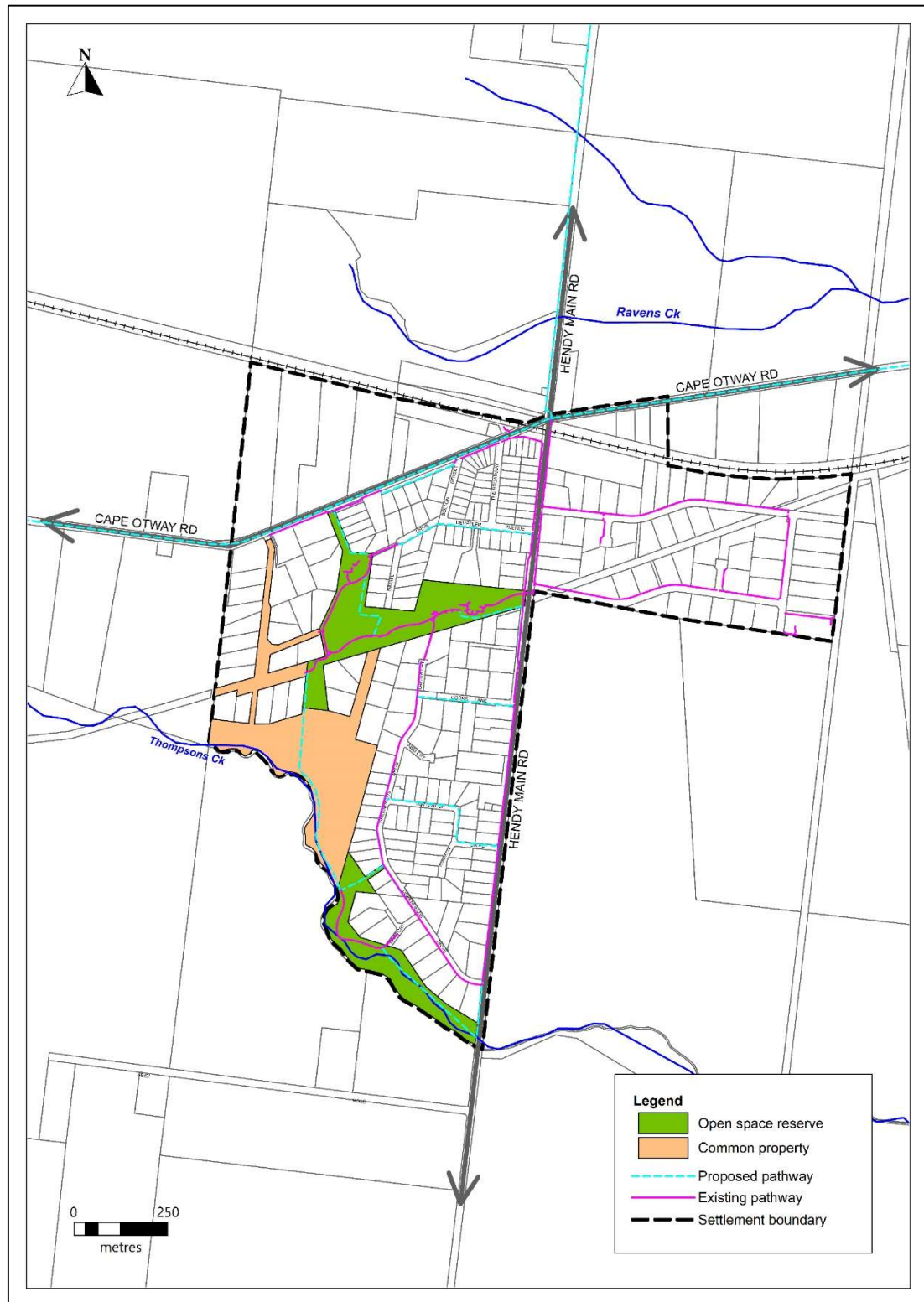
Moriac Town Centre 2021

2.6 Open space and community facilities

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, with the Newling Reserve centrally located within the township. The Newling Reserve has a total area of approximately 5 hectares and is well connected to the surrounding community via footpaths and linking reserves. The Newling Reserve offers passive and active open space opportunities and accommodates the Moriac Tennis Clubrooms (available for community hire) and courts, the Moriac Skate Park, a 'district scale' playground, a basketball half court and public toilets.

The Newling Reserve links with a unique feature of Moriac in the form of a large area of privately held, common property in the south west of town which has a 640 metre interface with Thompson Creek. This area creates an open rural aspect to the rear of numerous dwellings.

Figure 10: Open Space in Moriac



Source: Surf Coast Shire mapping 2022

Other nearby recreation assets include the Mt Moriac Reserve located 3.8km north east of the town and the Modewarre Reserve located 4km to the west.

The Moriac Primary School is located at 785 Hendy Main Road, near the intersection with Cape Otway Road. There are approximately 200 students enrolled at the school, with approximately half coming

from within the township and the remainder travelling from surrounding areas.¹⁰ Before and after school care is offered five days a week.

Moriac Preschool is located in Clerke Court and offers 3 and 4 year old kindergarten programs.

In 2021 a bulk billing, medical centre opened in Moriac.

Moriac in Profile - Key Facts and Findings

- Moriac is located in Wadawurrung Country.
- It is within the peri-urban region of Melbourne but also part of the Western Gateway region in the G21 Plan.
- Moriac is a small town with a relatively young population in comparison with other Surf Coast townships.
- Moriac is not a targeted node for population growth at a regional or local level and current policy recommends limited growth only.
- There are significant new growth areas in close proximity in Torquay, Winchelsea and Mt Duneed.
- There is a high demand for housing, a very limited rental market and a limited diversity of dwelling type.
- It is part of the Surf Coast Hinterland Economy, with key sectors including agribusiness, construction, public administration and education.
- Retail within the township is 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 but 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. The Mt Moriac Recreation Reserve is also home to the Barwon Valley Pony Club.

¹⁰ Moriac Primary School, Annual Report 2020

PART B – KEY ISSUES AND INFLUENCES FOR FUTURE GROWTH

Part B identifies key issues and influences on future land use planning for Moriac.



3. Planning Framework

3.1 Council Plan (incorporating the Health and Wellbeing Plan) 2021-2025

The Council Plan sets out Council's strategic direction for the next four years. Key challenges are identified and include:

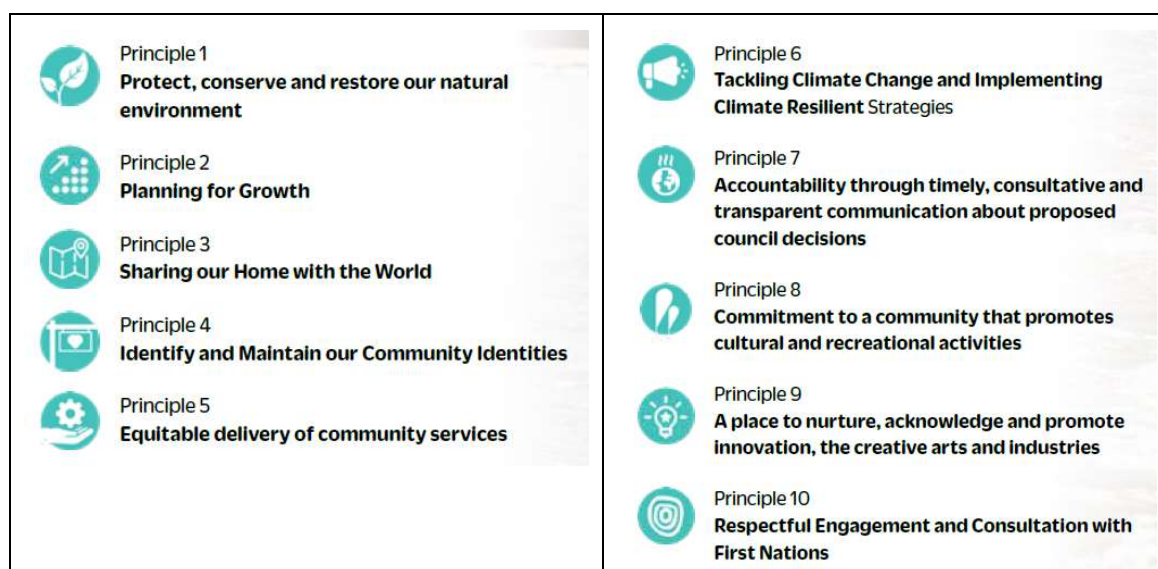
- Housing affordability
- Growth pressure – increasing visitor numbers
- Council income and spending – limited resources to fund facility and asset renewal or upgrade
- Reconciliation with First Nations people
- Climate change
- Local economy – peak season fluctuations, pandemic impacts

The Community Vision is set out in the Council Plan

From hinterland to the coast, from the first peoples to the children of the future, we are an active, diverse community that lives creatively to value, protect and enhance the natural environment and our unique neighbourhoods. We will leave the Surf Coast better than we found it.

The Council Plan sets out ten principles to address the challenges and achieve the Vision:

Figure 11: Council Plan Principles



Health and Wellbeing focus areas included in the Council Plan are:

- Increase healthy eating and active living
- Prevent family violence and promote gender equity
- Improve mental health and social connection
- Tackling the impacts of climate change on health
- Reduce harm from alcohol and other drugs

In particular, strategies for sustainable growth in the Council Plan seek to identify the qualities that contribute to the character of Surf Coast towns and protect these, improve access to more

affordable and sustainable accommodation options, and support off peak tourism ventures and compatible businesses.

3.2 State planning policy

The *Planning and Environment Act 1987* (the Act) establishes a framework for land use planning in the State of Victoria. The Act guides State and local government authorities in the preparation and administration of planning controls.

Surf Coast Planning Scheme

The Planning Scheme is prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Act. The Planning Scheme provides a '*clear and consistent framework within which decisions about the use and development of land can be made*'. All Victorian planning schemes have a consistent format and provide policy directions at a State, regional and local level.

Planning Policy Framework

The Planning Policy Framework (PPF) within the Planning Scheme provides policy directions relevant to decision making in Moriac. Key State policy directions are summarised in the table below:

State planning policies provide overarching objectives and strategies to guide land use and development across Victoria. The importance of proper settlement planning is articulated and requires that future population growth is to be considered in a municipal-wide context. State policies also recognise the importance of agricultural land and outline a range of measures to protect rural landscapes from inappropriate development. State policies relevant to planning for Moriac address the following topics:

- Settlement and structure planning requirements
- Environmental and landscape values
- Environmental risks and amenity
- Natural resource management, including protection of agricultural land
- Built environment and heritage, including Aboriginal cultural heritage
- Housing, including rural residential style development

State policy is also discussed in more detail in the following chapters as relevant to each topic.

State planning policy cannot be amended by local planning authorities.

Plan Melbourne 2017 – 2050

Plan Melbourne provides land use policy directions to guide Melbourne's growth over the next 35 years. It also considers peri urban areas and is thus relevant to Moriac. Plan Melbourne seeks to ensure that 'Melbourne will continue to be a global city of opportunity and choice'. This vision will be achieved through the implementation of seven (7) key outcome strategies. Strategy 7 is detailed below and provides the most relevant direction for future planning in Moriac:

Development in regional Victoria will need to be in keeping with the character, attractiveness and amenity of individual cities and towns. It will also need to be a balance with protecting productive land, economic resources and biodiversity assets that are critical to the State's economic and environmental sustainability.¹¹

Plan Melbourne includes requirements for planning in peri urban areas:

¹¹ Plan Melbourne 2017-2050

- define and protect areas that are strategically important to the metropolitan area and the state, for the environment, biodiversity, landscape, open space, water, agriculture, energy, recreation, tourism, environment, cultural heritage, infrastructure, extractive and other natural resources
- avoid development in locations where there is risk to life, property, the natural environment and infrastructure from natural hazards such as bushfire and flooding
- accommodate additional housing and employment in established towns that have the capacity for growth
- provide for non-urban breaks between urban areas.¹²

Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Legislation

Victoria has significant protections for Aboriginal Cultural Heritage under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*.

The main purposes of the *Aboriginal Heritage Act* are to:

- provide for the protection of Aboriginal Cultural Heritage and Aboriginal intangible Heritage in Victoria;
- empower Traditional Owners as protectors of their Cultural Heritage on behalf of Aboriginal People and all other peoples;
- strengthen the ongoing right to maintain the distinctive spiritual, cultural, material and economic relationship of Traditional Owners with the land and waters and other resources with which they have a connection under traditional laws and customs;
- promote respect for Aboriginal Cultural Heritage, contributing to its protection as part of the common heritage of all peoples and to the sustainable development and management of land and of the environment.

The Thompson and Ravens Creek corridors are included as areas of cultural heritage sensitivity.¹³ The *Aboriginal Heritage Act* requires the preparation of a Cultural Heritage Management Plan if an activity is to occur within such as area that is listed as a high impact activity (resulting in significant ground disturbance, and all or part of the activity area is an area of cultural heritage sensitivity).

Planning Practice Note 37: Rural Residential Development (PPN37)

PPN37 provides guidance when planning for, or assessing proposals for, rural residential use and development. Rural residential development refers to land in a rural setting, used and developed for dwellings that are not primarily associated with agriculture. Because of its primarily residential function, rural residential development requires access to most of the normal services and infrastructure provided in urban settlements. Typically, it also generates urban residential amenity considerations. In a regional context, the zones usually applied to rural residential land are:

- Low Density Residential Zone
- Rural Living Zone

¹² Plan Melbourne 2017-2050, Direction 4.5

¹³ Map of Victoria – Areas of Cultural Heritage Sensitivity, DPCD, Aboriginal Affairs Victoria. 2009.

PPN37 requires consideration of the following broad questions:

- **Strategy:** Does rural residential development align with the overall strategic planning of the municipality?
- **Housing need:** How much rural residential development is required to provide appropriate housing diversity and choice to meet housing needs?
- **Location:** Where should new rural residential development take place?
- **Subdivision and design:** Is the new rural residential development subdivided and designed in an attractive setting offering high amenity and efficient infrastructure?

3.3 Regional planning policy

Relevant Regional policies contained within the PPF are detailed in Appendix 2. In summary, regional policy relevant to Moriac encourages:

- Settlement breaks between towns to maintain unique identities
- Sustainable and well managed tourism in the Great Ocean Road region

G21 Regional Growth Plan 2013

As noted in Chapter 2, in a regional planning context Moriac has not been identified as a location to accommodate targeted growth within the G21 region (which plans for 500,000 people by 2050). The G21 Plan acknowledges that the region's smaller rural settlements will continue to experience minimal growth.

The G21 Regional Growth Plan recognises the importance of protecting settlement breaks between major growth areas. This aspiration is reflecting in the City of Greater Geelong Housing Framework Plan - 2036 which identifies a 'non-urban break' to be maintained along the southern municipal boundary, providing a physical separation between Armstrong Creek and Moriac.

Cape Otway Road is identified as a 'significant tourism route'.

3.4 Local planning policy

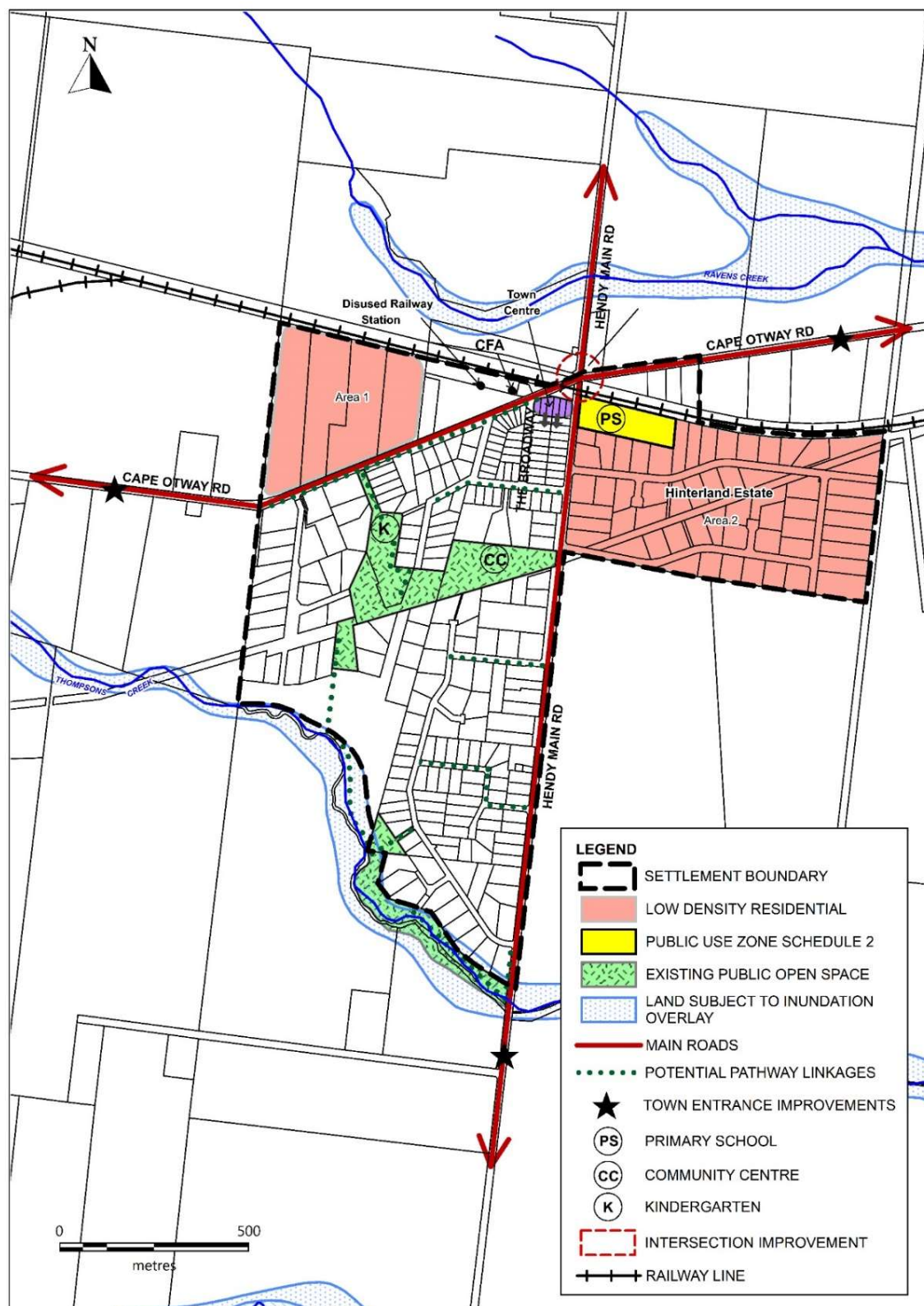
At a local level, the Planning Scheme designates Torquay-Jan Juc and Winchelsea as the major urban growth centres for the Surf Coast Shire and seeks to contain smaller rural towns within designated settlement boundaries to protect rural land and biodiversity assets from urban development. The individual role of each rural town is to be strengthened to maintain the Shire's diverse offering of experiences and opportunities.

Moriac is part of the Mixed Farming landscape (Clause 02.03-2) and of relevant in this Clause is Council's objectives to:

- Protect and enhance the landscape values of the rural precincts.
- Encourage land use and development that is complementary to the rural landscape character.
- Protect the view sheds of the region.

Local policy for Moriac is based on the MSP 2010 and reflects its position that Moriac has limited growth opportunities due to a lack of services and reticulated sewerage. The priority is to protect the rural character of Moriac within its rural setting and to confine residential development to the defined urban boundaries as shown in the Moriac Framework Plan at Clause 02.04-8.

Figure 12: Clause 02.04-8 Moriac Framework Plan



Source: Surf Coast Planning Scheme

Land within the Hinterland Estate as shown on the Moriac Framework Plan has now largely been developed and land in the north-west designated for low density residential has recently been rezoned for this purpose.

Background Documents in the Planning Policy Framework (PPF)

Surf Coast Housing Policy 2006

The Surf Coast Housing Policy, 2006 (Housing Strategy), found that there was adequate residentially zoned land to meet the forecast needs for the Shire for approximately 20 years. The Housing Strategy outlined the following objectives for the Shire:

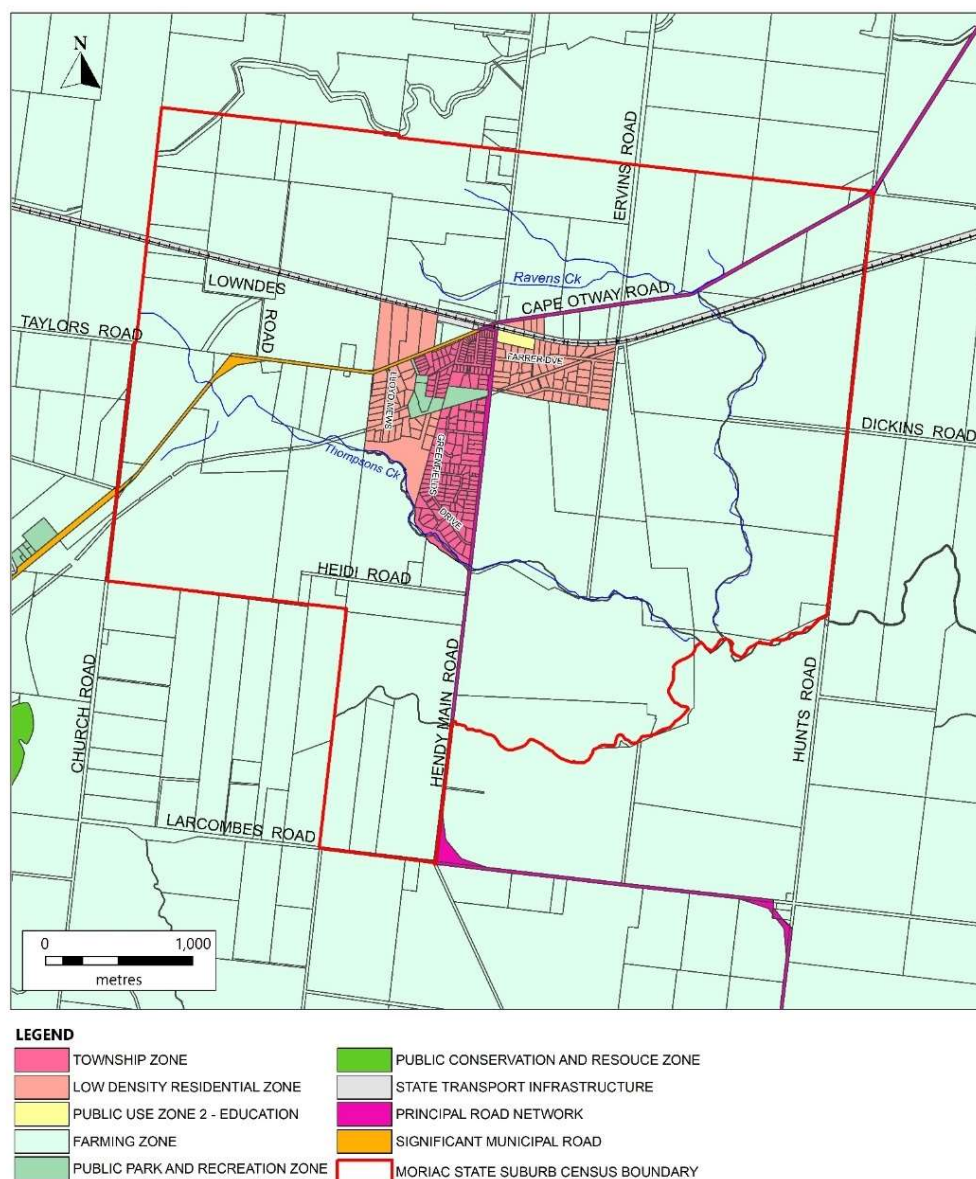
- Protect areas of the Shire with significant environmental and landscape values.
- Protect viable agricultural land from further encroachment by residential uses and township growth.
- Ensure that urban development minimises the impact on the environment, makes efficient use of land, infrastructure and resources, and is concentrated in accessible locations.

3.5 Existing planning controls

Zones

Land use zoning in Moriac is consistent with other small unsewered towns. The largest zone within the town boundary is the Low Density Residential Zone (LDRZ), accounting for 47% of the total land area. In the absence of reticulated sewer mains infrastructure the LDRZ allows for the subdivision of land to create parcels with a minimum area of 4,000 square metres (1 acre). The second largest zone by area is the Township Zone (TZ) which while primarily a residential zone allows for the consideration of a range of land uses, including commercial activities. The majority of the TZ land in Moriac is developed with residential dwellings. Land surrounding the township is within the Farming Zone (FZ). Refer to Figure 13.

Figure 13: Land Use Zones - Moriac



Source: Surf Coast Shire Mapping 2022

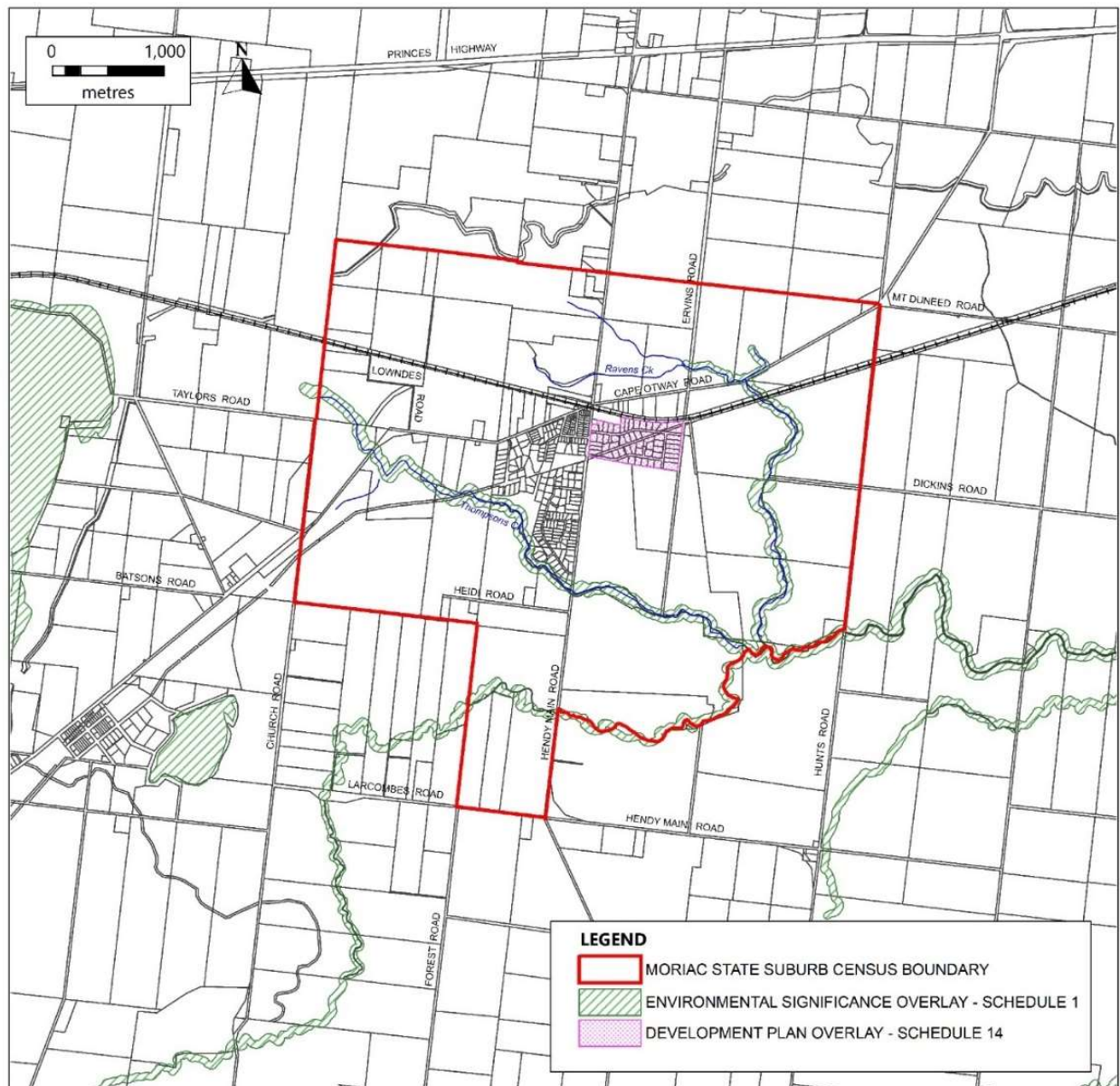
Overlays

Planning overlays have been applied in Moriac to manage environmental assets and hazards and to guide development in new growth areas. The following overlays have been applied in the study area:

- Environmental Significance Overlay, Schedule 1 (ESO1): Aquatic Systems – Significant Wetlands and Waterways
 - applied to Thompson Creek, Ravens Creek, their tributaries and adjoining riparian areas.
- Development Plan Overlay, Schedule 14 (DPO14): 799 & 815 Hendy Main Road, Moriac
 - applied to low density residential estate subdivision east of Hendy Main Road and south of the railway line.
- Floodway Overlay (FO)
 - applied to land at Thompson Creek which has the greatest risk and frequency of being affected by flooding.
- Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO)
 - applied to land at Ravens Creek, adjoining Thompson Creek and its tributaries affected by the 1 in 100 year flood annual exceedance probability or as determined by the floodplain management authority.
- Salinity Management Overlay (SMO)
 - applied to land identified as having saline ground water discharge or high ground water recharge.
- Specific Controls Overlay, Schedule 2 (SCO2):
 - applied to land within the Warrnambool Line Upgrade (Incorporated Document June 2009).

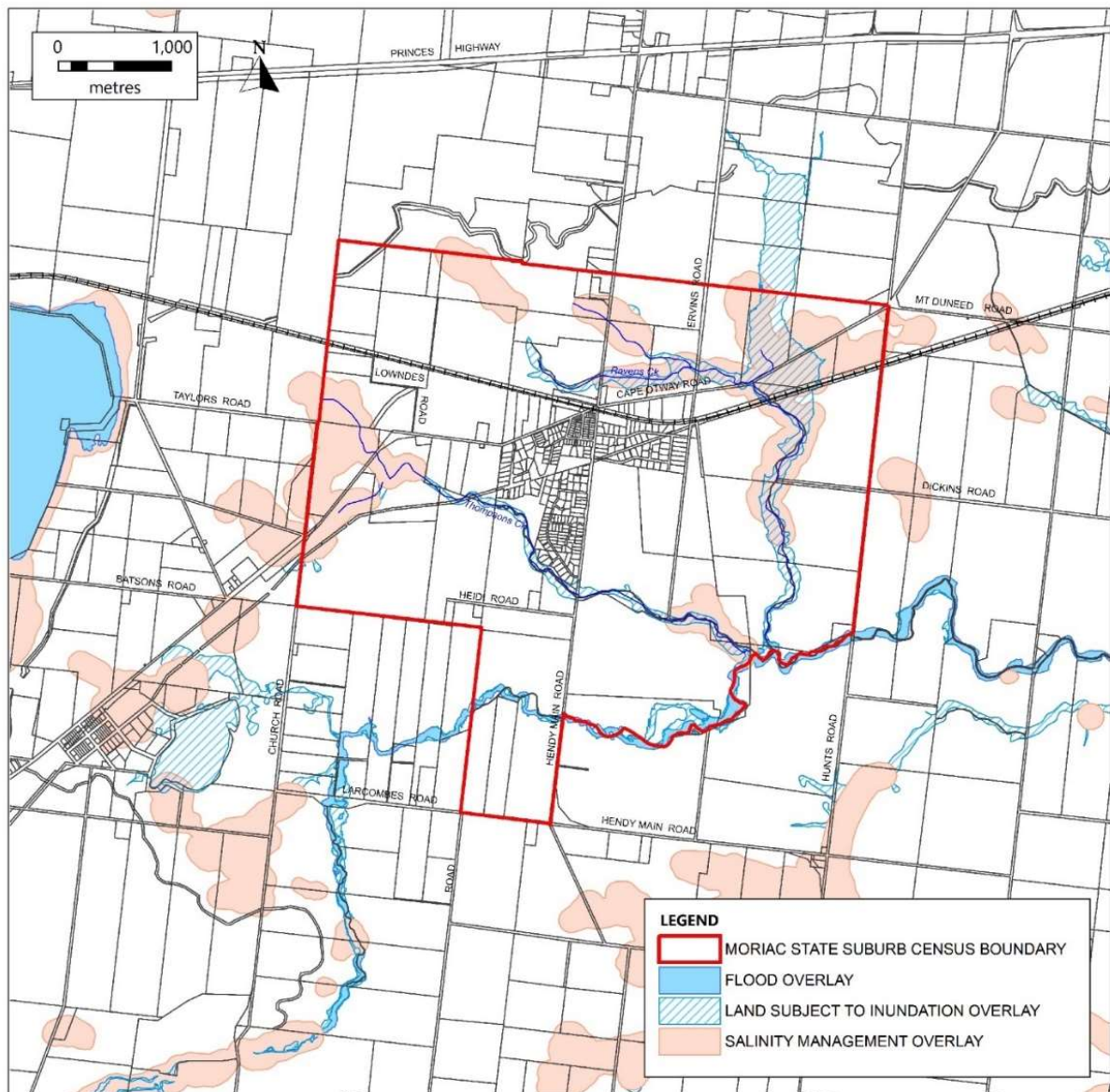
Figures 14 and 15 map where the various overlays have been applied in Moriac.

Figure 14: Environmental and Built Form Overlays



Source: Surf Coast Shire mapping 2022

Figure 15: Land Management Overlays



Source: Surf Coast Shire mapping 2022

3.6 Recent and Proposed Planning Scheme Amendments

Amendment C124 – Rezoning and subdivision of land at 600-640 Cape Otway Road, Moriac

Amendment C124 was approved in September 2021 and rezoned 13.8 hectares of land from Farming Zone (FZ) to Low Density Residential Zone (LDRZ) in Cape Otway Road. A planning permit was granted at the same time to subdivide the land into 29 low density residential lots, each with an area greater than 4,000 square metres. The Amendment also deleted reference to a 'potential light industrial' area from the Moriac Structure Plan north of Cape Otway Road.

Primary concerns from submitters in relation to C124 included:

- potential site amenity impacts, including type and appearance of boundary fencing, tree planting, tree removal
- connectivity, including pedestrian footpath connectivity, and a lack of an internal through-road
- impacts on infrastructure and services including internet and reticulated water supply
- the scale and sequencing of development
- disturbances during construction works, including vehicles entering and exiting the site, vibration associated with rock removal, and dust related impacts¹⁴

The Applicant prepared additional information to address submitters' concerns and proposed some changes to the permit application. As a result all submissions, bar one, were withdrawn. The Panel determined that the remaining issues (road safety, internet access and the proposed location of the development) were either addressed through permit conditions or did not form a basis for refusing the proposal.

One of the challenges associated with the development of land north of Cape Otway Road is the presence of sub-surface basalt deposits. The proponents were required to employ a range of lot design techniques to ensure that all lots within the development could treat and contain domestic waste water in accordance with EPA and Council requirements.

The removal of the area designated 'potential light industrial' on the Moriac Framework Plan relied on the findings of an Industrial Land Assessment (Urban Enterprise Consultants, 2015). The Urban Enterprise report determined that development of the subject land for low density residential purposes was appropriate, in spite of its identification for future industrial /commercial use, for the following reasons (summarised):

- There are significant areas of undeveloped industrial and commercial land supply in the townships of Torquay and Winchelsea. The Planning Scheme promotes growth in these townships.
- Future demand for commercial or industrial land use in Moriac will likely be generated by local residents operating small businesses such as rural sales, mechanics and small workshops. These types of land use activities can be supported in the TZ or the FZ.
- The designation of land for future industrial / commercial use and development in the Moriac Structure Plan was not supported by expert evidence addressing demand and supply.

Council has not been made aware of any significant changes in the local demand for industrial/commercial development opportunities identified in the years since.

¹⁴ Panel Report, Amendment C124

Amendment C125 - CORA (Cape Otway Road Australia)

Amendment C125 (commonly known as the CORA amendment) was approved on 4 August 2020 and rezoned 220 hectares of rural land in nearby Modewarre (approximately 4km from Moriac) to facilitate an “*integrated global sports, tourism and accommodation development including training facilities, a sports science hub and various accommodation types alongside an integrated retail and tourism precinct.*”¹⁵ The complex is proposed to include:

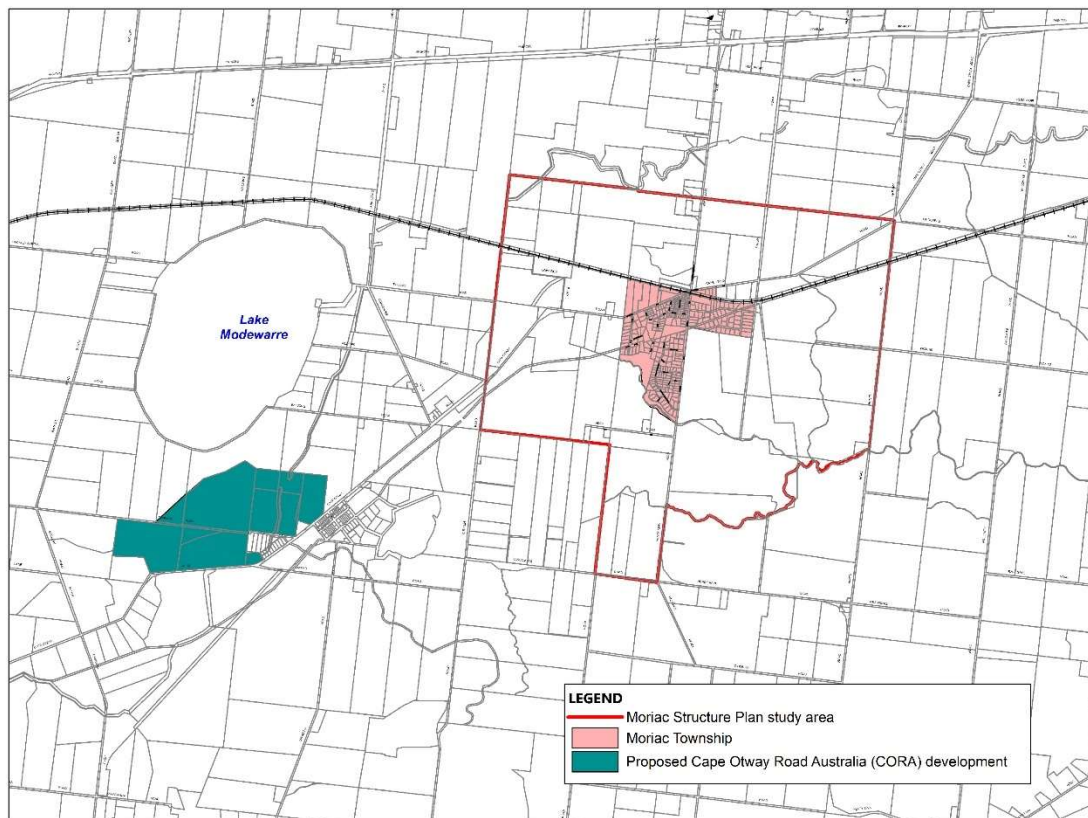
- **Retail and Tourism Precinct** with: art gallery, child care centre, design studio, distribution centre, food and beverage premises, microbrewery, retail premises, and sculpture park.
- **Elite Sports Training Precinct** including: AFL size oval, aquatic centre, cricket field, gymnasium, indoor sports hall, MCG size oval, media centre, rugby pitch, soccer pitches, sports science hub, tennis courts, and wellness centre.
- **Accommodation precinct** including: hotel with 128 rooms and up to 3 storeys in height, 61 eco lodges, staff accommodation, managers residence, rural conservation precinct including a wetland conservation area, waste water treatment plant, organic farm, and depot.

A site wide staging plan is required prior to the approval of a precinct plan for the development. However, stage one is to include at least 50% of the elite sports precinct and the hotel.

Details of the proposal are set out in the *Cape Otway Road Australia Comprehensive Development Plan September 2020* and the *Cape Otway Road Australia Site Wide Plans and Precinct Concept Plans September 2020*. It is intended that these plans will ensure an integrated development outcome that will not create an unreasonable impact on surrounding land and will protect the scenic landscape character of Lake Modewarre and the Cape Otway Road environs. Figure 16 shows the location of CORA relative to the Moriac study area.

¹⁵ Surf Coast Amendment C125 Explanatory Report

Figure 16: Location of CORA proposal



Source: Surf Coast Shire mapping 2022

The Amendment received 246 submissions and an Advisory Committee was appointed to consider the proposal and to provide the Minister for Planning with advice on its suitability against a number of planning and environmental factors. The Advisory Committee recommended adoption of the proposal finding that it would result in both economic and tourism benefits for the region and State more widely. It found that amenity impacts (including noise, light and traffic) could be mitigated and managed and the proposal included plans to rehabilitate parts of the site to offset any native vegetation loss. The Minister was advised that the project would result in *“sustainable development outcomes and will provide a clear net community benefit to the region and Victoria”*¹⁶.

Some submissions to the Amendment raised concern about the potential for negative impacts on existing businesses in nearby towns, including Moriac. Basing its conclusions on the evidence before it, the Committee noted the findings of the Economic Assessment (Urban Enterprise, September 2019) and expert evidence presented at the Hearing; that there would be a minor impact on trading in the region but that ultimately existing businesses would benefit through the increased number of overall visitors to the region.

Concerns were also raised about increases in traffic resulting from the proposal and the potential impacts on road intersections and conditions, particularly along Cape Otway Road. After hearing submissions on the subject, the Committee concluded that Cape Otway Road was an appropriate main access to the site and that the proponent should be responsible for works associated with creating the access; the proponent is not responsible for road improvements beyond the CORA site.

¹⁶ Surf Coast Amendment C125 Advisory Committee Final Report, 17 April 2020

The potential social impacts resulting from the CORA proposal were also considered by the Committee who acknowledged that the proposal would have a lifestyle impact, particularly on immediate neighbours. Overall, however, it was concluded that the project would result in a net community benefit based on economic development, accommodation, tourism and employment opportunities for the local and wider Victorian community. Other issues such as environmental concerns and infrastructure provision were considered by the Committee, to be site specific matters that could be addressed through future planning permit applications.

CORA will treat all effluent on site in a privately owned and operated treatment plant, and reticulated sewerage will not be connected to the site. Therefore, there will not be an opportunity for properties in and around Moriac to connect to a reticulated system.

Some accommodation is to be provided on the site for employees and managers which may provide opportunities for the Moriac business community to provide goods and services to that group. In addition, the retail, tourism, accommodation and sporting complexes are expected to result in job generation and a demand for goods and services from the region. The CORA proponents have advised that their preferred builder for the estimated 1,000 construction jobs is committed to a 75% local labour and supply target, and that CORA will prioritise local labour for the estimated 670 FTE positions (Source: Cape Otway Road Australia website).

Public access will be available to most areas of the site, excluding the conservation area and some sporting facilities which will be controlled by specific tenants. As some facilities are designed for elite athletes and teams, they will be secure areas with private bookings for exclusive use. However, the CORA proponents have advised that they are open to forming partnerships with local schools and sports clubs to provide access to the sports facilities when not in private use. A detailed management plan that documents community access to facilities is required prior to an application being made for a permit for use of the land.

The proposed child care centre in the retail precinct is anticipated to be available to the public but the operation of that facility has not been detailed at this stage.

The CORA site was rezoned to the Comprehensive Development Zone Schedule 9 by the Minister for Planning in October 2020. The Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) is the Responsible Authority for subsequent approvals. The Zone Schedule requires a number of plans to be submitted and approved before construction can commence. Other approvals required include a Works Approval from the EPA, a part road closure and other regulatory approvals by government agencies.

The CORA proponents have stated that construction is expected to take 24 months from the start of development, with the project anticipated to be delivered by 2025. However, at the time of writing this report (first quarter 2022) no further approvals have been issued by DELWP post rezoning of the site. The community access plan and more detailed information about the operation of the complex will influence the extent and type of social benefits available to the Moriac community from the development and in the absence of this information, it cannot be quantified at this time. This may need to be revisited in a review of the structure plan in five years' time if all approvals for the project are issued within that time period.

Rural Hinterland Futures Strategy 2019 and proposed Planning Scheme Amendment C133

The Rural Hinterland Future Strategy (Hinterland Strategy) was adopted by Council in May 2019. Planning Scheme Amendment C133 is underway (but not yet approved by the Planning Minister) to implement its strategic directions within the Planning Scheme. The Hinterland Strategy provides a clear vision for the Surf Coast hinterland to “*revitalise the economy and ensure its long term sustainability*”. It also has a key focus to protect the rural landscapes that exist between the settlements of the Shire. Moriac is identified within the strategy as a location that is well suited to tourism.

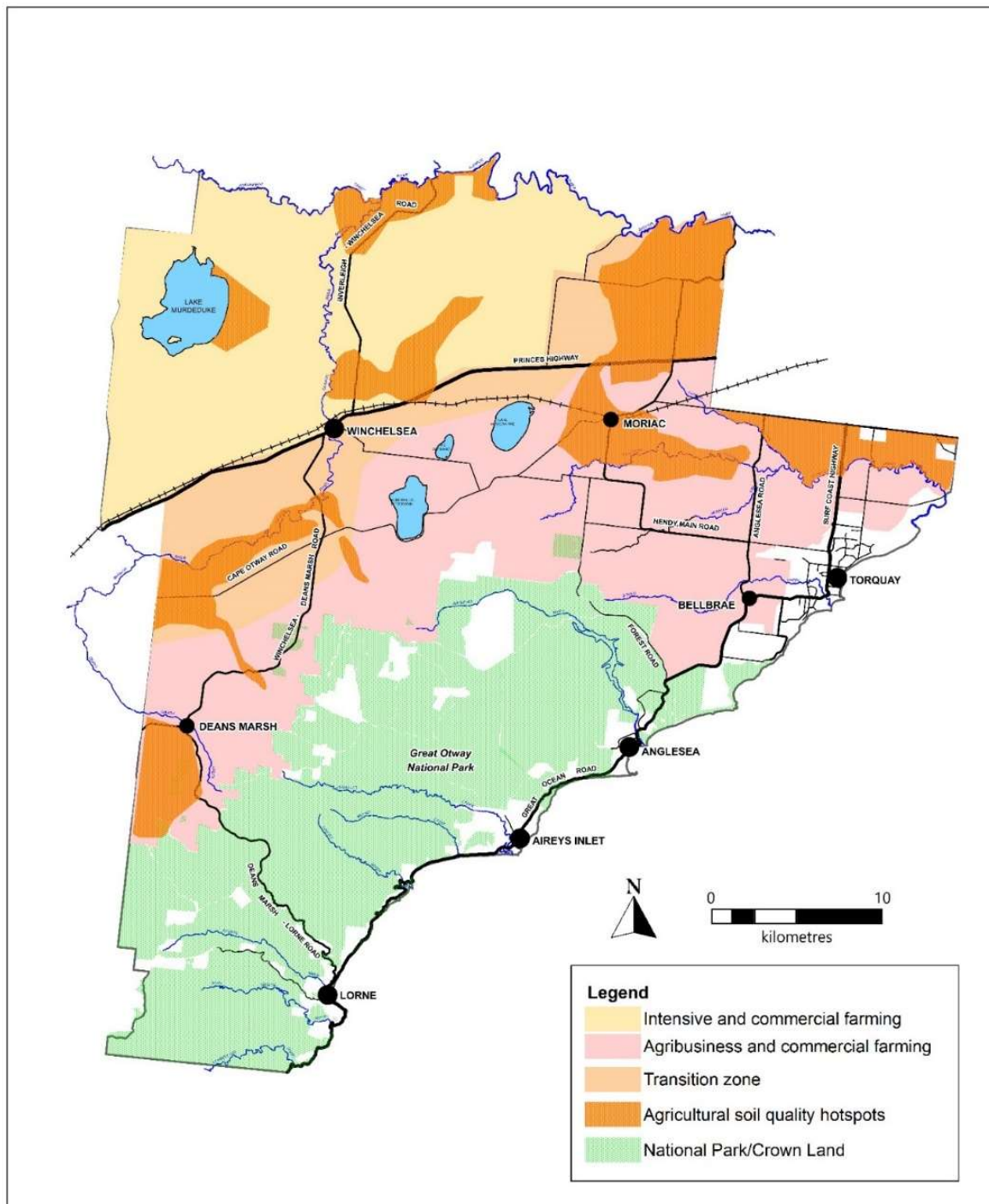
Amendment C133 proposes to strengthen the protection of agricultural land and sustainable agriculture by including the following objectives:

- Promote agri-food and agri-tourism (eg. wineries, cideries and similar produce based and complementary uses) that enhances the tourism offering without undermining the potential for agricultural production.
- Discourage use and development in rural areas that:
 - Is unrelated to agriculture or that does not complement an agricultural use.
 - Does not complement the landscape character and environmental values.
- Encourage innovative and adaptive practices like the use of enabling technologies, protected agriculture and vertical food production systems.

It also seeks to encourage hinterland tourism by encouraging tourism and agricultural based activities that maximise the rural landscape setting, natural features and local food production. It also seeks to ensure new development is located to complement activities where landscape and environmental values are prioritised and bushfire risk is low.

The Hinterland Strategy identifies the land around Moriac as being most suited to agribusiness and commercial farming. It also notes that Moriac is within an area well suited to tourism activities, identifying land at the proposed CORA site as well suited to a tourism activity cluster. The township is located within an agricultural soil quality hot spot, as shown in Figure 17 below. As part of Amendment C133 it is proposed to include a new strategy in the Planning Scheme to discourage use and development in agricultural soil quality hot spots not directly associated with soil based agriculture. If approved this would reinforce existing policy which limits the outward expansion of the Moriac urban environment.

Figure 17: Agricultural Framework Map



Source: Rural Hinterland Futures Strategy, 2019

The Hinterland Strategy also contains the following objective relevant to the structure plan review process, but not appropriate for inclusion within the Planning Scheme.

- Advocate to State Government for upgrades to the road quality, pull out lanes, bicycles lanes and road network signage along State managed roads, in particular Deans Marsh-Lorne Road, Cape Otway Road and Anglesea Road.

Distinctive Areas and Landscape – Surf Coast Shire

In 2019 the Victorian Government declared part of the Surf Coast Shire a 'distinctive area and landscape' under the Act. The declaration recognises that the landscapes and environments surrounding Torquay and Jan Juc are of State significance and must be protected from a range of impacts, many of which are related to development. It is intended to formalise the declaration through a Surf Coast Statement of Planning Policy and landscape planning controls and implement these through a planning scheme amendment.

Moriac is located north of the declared area and therefore will not be subject to any policy controls associated with the declaration. Planning precedent does however suggest that at a regional scale the tightening of controls in one location can lead to greater demand in nearby and adjoining locations.

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, 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 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 reinforces existing policy which limits the outward expansion of the Moriac urban environment.
- Tighter controls on development in the Torquay region through the Distinctive Area and Landscape designation may lead to increased development pressure in adjoining regions.

4. Population and housing growth

4.1 Forecast population growth

Given the small size of the population in Moriac, it is difficult to make accurate projections about future population size and composition. From the housing profile discussion in Chapter 2.4, it is clear that demand for housing in Moriac is high based on the low vacancy rate, limited rental offer and take up of residential land once it hits the market. Population growth is likely to be greatly influenced by the availability of housing and residential land supply (both infill development of vacant lots and new subdivisions).

Future growth will also depend on variables such as:

- availability of comparable housing and land in nearby towns / regions (i.e. rural residential style development);
- the number of persons per occupied dwelling (i.e. the average household size);
- access to employment opportunities and increasing trends towards flexible work arrangements; and
- trends as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and whether these trends are permanent shifts.

Subdivision and development in the Hinterland Estate has facilitated a significant increase in population in recent years as discussed in Chapter 2.3.

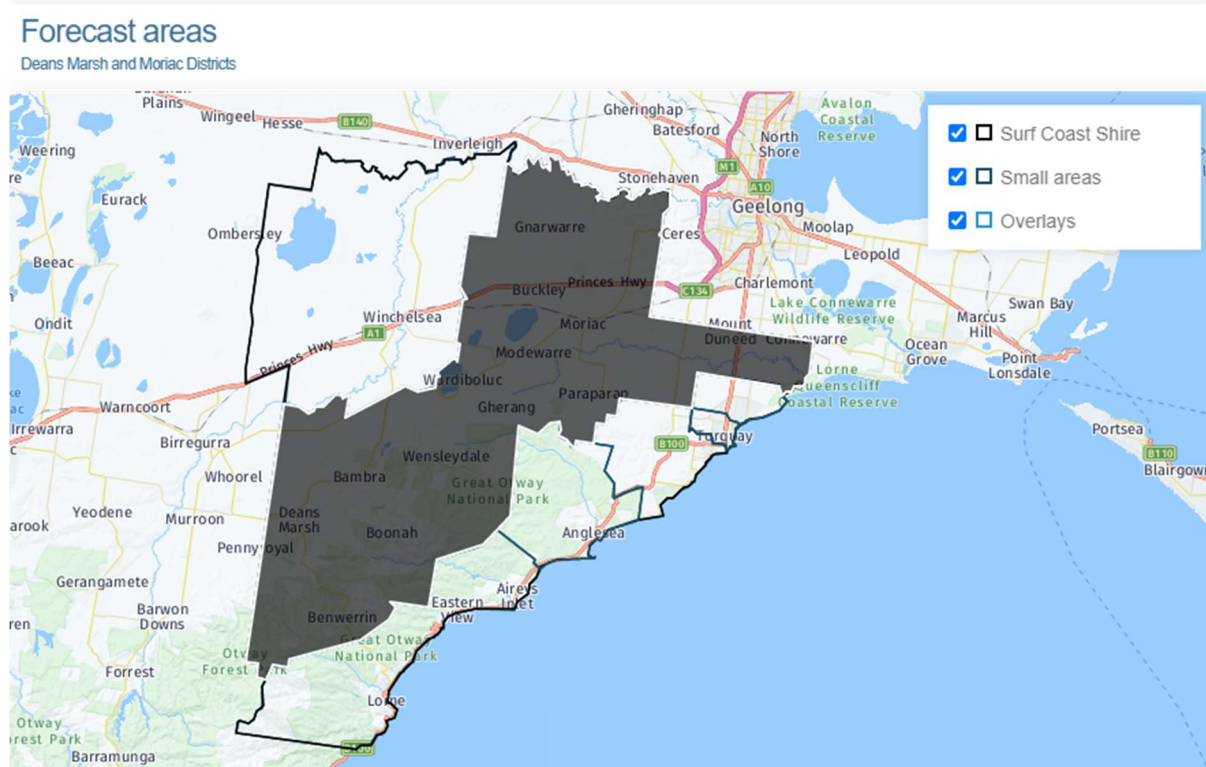
Population forecasts are estimated by consulting firm, .id, updated regularly to take into account changes in the real world and were last evaluated in April 2021. Assumptions and factors taken into account in forecasting population change include dwelling additions, current age structure, birth rates, death rates and migration.

Forecasts were estimated pre-pandemic but some assessment of potential growth impacts from the Covid-19 pandemic at a Shire wide level have been made:

- a slight negative impact for overseas and interstate migration
- a positive impact for intrastate migration
- some negative impact for natural population increase
- some negative impact for economic output and local job impacts (although this is noticeably less in areas with fewer jobs in town)
- some negative impact with regard to housing vulnerability (e.g. mortgage or rental stress)
- a positive impact due to the relatively low levels of disadvantaged people in the Surf Coast.

As noted in Chapter 2.3, .id use a larger statistical area than the study area (Moriac SSC) to establish meaningful estimates. The area which includes Moriac is shown in Figure 18.

Figure 18: Deans Marsh and Moriac Districts Area



Source: Population and household forecasts, 2016 to 2036, prepared by .id (informed decisions), June 2018.

The estimated 2021 population for the Deans Marsh and Moriac Districts small area was 4,558 people which is forecast to grow to 4,906 people by 2036, or an increase of 348 people overall with the greatest population change expected between 2032 to 2036 (refer to Table 1).

Table 1: Components of Population Change

Deans Marsh and Moriac Districts	Forecast period			
Component	2017 to 2021	2022 to 2026	2027 to 2031	2032 to 2036
Births	235	241	245	252
Deaths	101	132	176	232
Natural increase/decrease	134	109	69	20
Net migration	-101	-19	43	125
Total population change	33	90	113	145

Source: Population and household forecasts, 2016 to 2036, .id (informed decisions) 2018

While there has been no further break down of where exactly this population growth might occur, it is partly based on the assumption that there will be residential land supply to the north and east of Moriac (referring to the Hinterland Estate and land recently approved for subdivision as part of Amendment C124) and based on 15 new infill dwellings per year across the wider Deans Marsh and Moriac area. It is also based on current population estimates and these do provide a further break down – with over 70% of the total population residing in the eastern part of the area (known as Moriac and District), and less than 30% in the western area (Deans Marsh and District).

4.2. Housing demand and residential land supply

Demand

Based on recent land sale activity it is considered that demand for new housing in Moriac is very high. As at 30 January 2022, there were no available dwellings or vacant residential land for purchase. The most recent major land release was in June 2021, where nearly \$3.5 million of land in the Hinterland Estate sold in one day (9 lots) with the final lot in negotiation on the same day.¹⁷ Property values have been increasing in the Surf Coast Shire over time and particularly in recent years, including significant increases in the median price of rural residential dwellings.¹⁸

Understanding the current rate of new home construction in Moriac also provides an insight into the strength of demand.

The dwelling approval figures presented in the table below relate to the Moriac and District profile area (i.e. the eastern part of the wider Moriac and Deans Marsh District referred to in the population forecasts above). While this area is larger than the study area, a breakdown of the data reveals that the vast majority of new homes have been constructed within the Moriac town boundary.

Table 2: Moriac and District Dwelling Approvals 2016-2021

Year	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Dwellings approved	0	4	3	15	20	10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2021 approval figures are year to date recorded on the 1 September 2021 						

Source: Surf Coast Shire Council – Building report data

Building activity data collected by Council over a 6 year period indicates that the number of new home approvals is increasing, with a peak of 20 dwelling permits issued in 2020.

The spike in new home approvals correlates with the completion of the Hinterland Estate. Prior to the release of land in the Hinterland Estate new dwelling approvals had shown a declining trend over the previous six year period following the adoption of the MSP 2010. In 2010 there was an average dwelling approval rate of 7 permits per annum, this figure currently sits at 8.6 dwellings per annum (over the 6 year period to 2021). It also highlights that there is likely to be significant latent demand in Moriac, meaning that when vacant land supply opportunities drop so do applications for new dwelling approvals.

It has been forecast that the population will grow by 348 persons in the Deans Marsh and Moriac Districts over the 15 year period to 2036.¹⁹ If it is assumed that the proportion of the population in the Moriac District continues to make up approximately 70% of the wider Deans Marsh and Moriac population (refer to Chapter 4.1), then around 244 people would need to be accommodated in the Moriac District by 2036 (i.e. 70% of the overall population growth forecast). Using the current average household size of 2.81 persons per household (noting this is expected to decline over time), it could be estimated that around 87 new dwellings would be required to 2036 or up to 95 new dwellings using the lower figure of 2.57 persons per household. This is between 5.8 new dwellings and 6.5 new dwellings per annum, a figure not too dissimilar to the average dwelling approval rate since 2010 and perhaps reflective of the continuing limited supply of available land assumed by the population forecasts.

¹⁷ Geelong Advertiser, 21 June 2021

¹⁸ A Guide to Property Values, Valuer-General Victoria, 2020

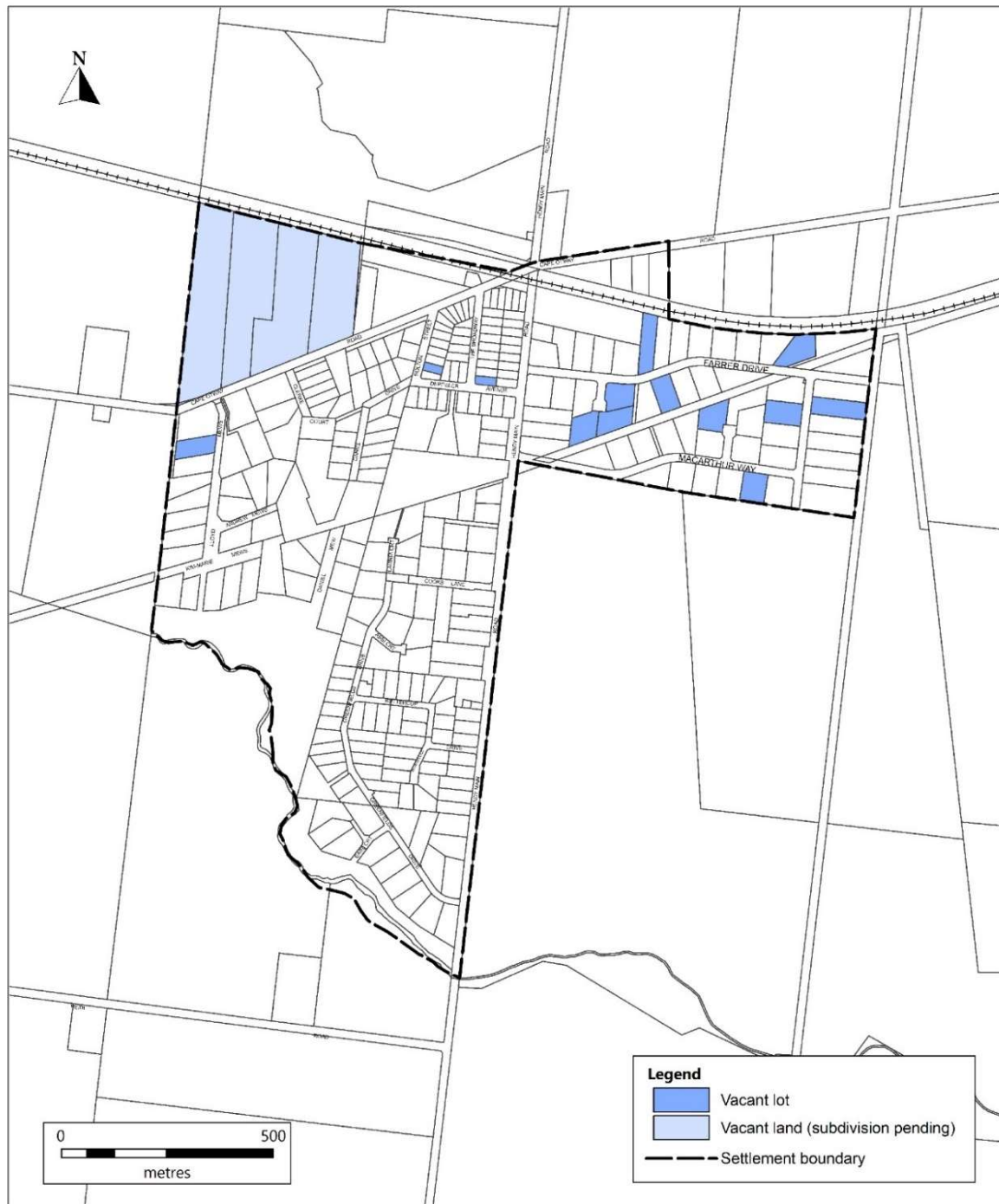
¹⁹ .id forecasts

Residential land supply

At the time of 2016 census there were 257 dwellings in Moriac. Only 15 of these were unoccupied suggesting a high permanent residency (in contrast to many coastal towns in the Surf Coast Shire), representing 5.9% of the total dwelling stock.

Vacant land in Moriac is shown in Figure 19.

Figure 19: Vacant Land in Moriac 2022



Source: Surf Coast Shire mapping 2022

Based on current dwelling approvals per annum, current vacant land would accommodate less than 5 years demand (8.6 dwellings per annum) or around 7 years demand at 5.8 dwellings per annum. This assumes that all of these lots might become available in this time, a proposition that is very unlikely.

State policy requires councils to plan to accommodate population growth over a 15 year period in a municipal wide context. There is no requirement to accommodate growth at a township level and therefore determining what the appropriate level of supply for Moriac might be needs to consider the role of the township and hinterland area within the regional context and to examine the opportunities and constraints to additional growth that might exist within the study area.

The most recent supply and demand assessment for residential land within Surf Coast Shire was completed in September 2018. It concluded that based on both zoned and unzoned land designated for residential development, there was between 14 and 19 years of land stock across the Surf Coast Shire to satisfy demand. The Assessment recommended that the stock of zoned broadhectare residential land be increased in the short term to meet demand requirements²⁰, meaning the conversion of rural land already designated for future residential growth. The Supply and Demand Assessment did not suggest designating additional rural land for future residential development.

With regard, to rural residential land the Supply and Demand Assessment noted that there was a total stock of 1,205 allotments across the Shire of which only 11% were vacant. It noted that there were only two areas identified for future LDRZ, one in Moriac and the other in Torquay. The site referred to in Moriac has now been rezoned and a planning permit issued (Amendment C124).

More recently, the adequacy of residential land supply for the Torquay Jan Juc area (where most growth in the Surf Coast Shire is directed through currently policy) was again considered in the *Surf Coast Distinctive Area and Landscape Settlement Background Paper November 2020*. It determined that between 21-30 years of infill supply and 13 years of greenfield supply was available within the boundaries of the declared area. It noted that if the declaration ultimately resulted in changes to growth policy other locations within the Shire would need to be explored to meet projected demand and accommodate residential growth.

This analysis shows that there is a limited supply of residential land available for future development in Moriac and also a very small supply of land designated for future rural residential growth across the Surf Coast Shire more generally. There are existing opportunities for short term development in Moriac, Torquay and Winchelsea consistent with local policy as set out in the Planning Scheme.

There are some opportunities for rural residential style living in other small towns in the neighbouring municipality of Golden Plains. Table 3 provides a comparison of Moriac to four of these small towns that are also in the G21 region and located within the same concentric band around Geelong at a 20 – 25 km radius. Table 3 shows that three of the four rural towns have larger populations than Moriac and are all unsewered. Anakie is smaller and has limited potential for future growth due to factors such as environmental assets and bushfire threat. The three more populous small towns of Teesdale, Inverleigh and Lethbridge have contemporary structure plans developed within the last 10 years. Their respective structure plans all identify locations for future rural residential style development that is likely to be unsewered and zoned LDRZ. LDRZ subdivisions are generally required to create lots with an area greater than 4,000 square metres (1 acre), to allow for onsite waste water treatment and disposal.

²⁰ Residential Land Supply & Demand Assessment – Surf Coast, Spatial Economics, September 2018

Table 3: Small Town Comparison - G21 Region

Town	Population	Median age	Number of private dwellings	Average people per household	Sewered Y/N	Services and retail
Moriac	782	37	257	3.1	N	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary school • General store • CFA
Teesdale	1721	39	615	2.9	N	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary school • General store • CFA • Chemist
Inverleigh	1474	39	557	2.8	N	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary school • General store • CFA • Hotel • Café • Bakery
Lethbridge	1014	38	373	2.5	N	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary school • General store • CFA
Anakie	690	48	271	2.6	N	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary school • General store • CFA

Source: ABS 2016 Census Quickstats

Table 3 shows that the small towns surrounding Geelong have relatively young populations and larger households similar to Moriac. Residents of the small towns rely on septic systems to treat domestic waste and they have access to relatively few services and retail options.

4.3 Housing type and diversity

Of the 257 dwellings in Moriac at the time of the 2016 Census almost 99% were classified as 'separate houses' and 52.9% had four or more bedrooms. There were only 13 two-bedroom dwellings and none with a single bedroom.

These figures reveal a township with very little housing diversity consisting primarily of large houses on large allotments. A lack of housing diversity can negatively impact the ability of a town to accommodate a range of household types (e.g. different family structures, couples, singles, older persons). Particularly relevant for Moriac is the forecast of an 85.7% increase in population of retirement age in the short term for the Deans Marsh and Moriac District, a trend which is likely to continue in the longer term.²¹ There are few smaller dwellings in the town. Large lot sizes also increase maintenance obligations which can become more difficult to meet as one ages. In rural communities across Victoria older residents are often required to leave larger properties and move to larger population centres which have better access to health services and a wider variety of

²¹ id. Population forecast – Surf Coast Shire, population and age structure, Deans Marsh and Moriac Districts

accommodation types. Provision of smaller lot sizes in Moriac however is unlikely to eventuate in the absence of a reticulated system to treat sewage.

Council's Age Friendly Strategy 2020-24 identified the following needs and issues across the Shire with regard to housing for people to age well in place:

- lack of smaller housing, nothing to downsize to
- planning restrictions with regard to subdivision of blocks for smaller housing / multiple dwellings on a block (granny flats)
- retirement villages
- affordability
- lack of innovated options
- lifestyle blocks' constraints

The Age Friendly Strategy recommends that Council investigate and advocate for necessary changes.

Limited diversity, coupled with a low supply, also impacts on housing affordability. The median sale price in Moriac over the past 12 months was \$885,000.²² It is noted that this is higher than the median house price of \$565,000 for regional Victoria in 2021, and that house prices in regional Victoria grew at the fastest rate in 20 years across 2021.²³

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.
- If development opportunities in the Torquay region are restricted as a result of the Significant Landscape Declaration, growth pressure might be felt in nearby towns.
- 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.
- Council's Age Friendly Strategy 2020-24 recommends that Council investigate and advocate for changes to improve options for people to age well in place.

²² Propertyvalue.com.au

²³ Financial Review, 25 January 2022

5. Local economy

5.1 Existing framework for future growth

There is no land zoned specifically for commercial or industrial development in the Moriac study area. Existing commercial businesses are located in the Township Zone (TZ), a zone which is most often used in small towns where there is no strict segregation between residential and commercial development. The TZ is generally applied in areas where minimal change is anticipated.²⁴ The purpose of the TZ as set out in Clause 32.05 of the Planning Scheme is:

- To implement the Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework.
- To provide for residential development and a range of commercial, industrial and other uses in small towns.
- To encourage development that respects the neighbourhood character of the area.
- To allow educational, recreational, religious, community and a limited range of other non-residential uses to serve local community needs in appropriate locations.

The TZ allows for a range of uses as of right (i.e. without the need to obtain a planning permit) such as a dwelling, medical centre and home based business (all subject to conditions) but most commercial or industrial type uses do require planning permit. Industrial activities with potential adverse impacts (as listed in Clause 53.10 of the Planning Scheme) are prohibited.

As part of the MSP 2010 an economic assessment was prepared for Moriac. The Moriac Structure Plan Economic Assessment (2009) estimated limited future demand for commercial land in Moriac (with up to 0.8 ha for retail and related commercial development required by 2031) to cater for a relatively small increase in the forecast Moriac and district population. It confirmed that most day to day services would continue to be acquired in larger nearby centres such as Geelong, Torquay and Winchelsea. Up to 0.8 ha was also estimated as potentially required for light industrial type activities.

²⁵

The Economic Assessment included some additional guidance about commercial development and this was used as the basis for the following strategies in the Planning Scheme (Clause 17.02-1L):

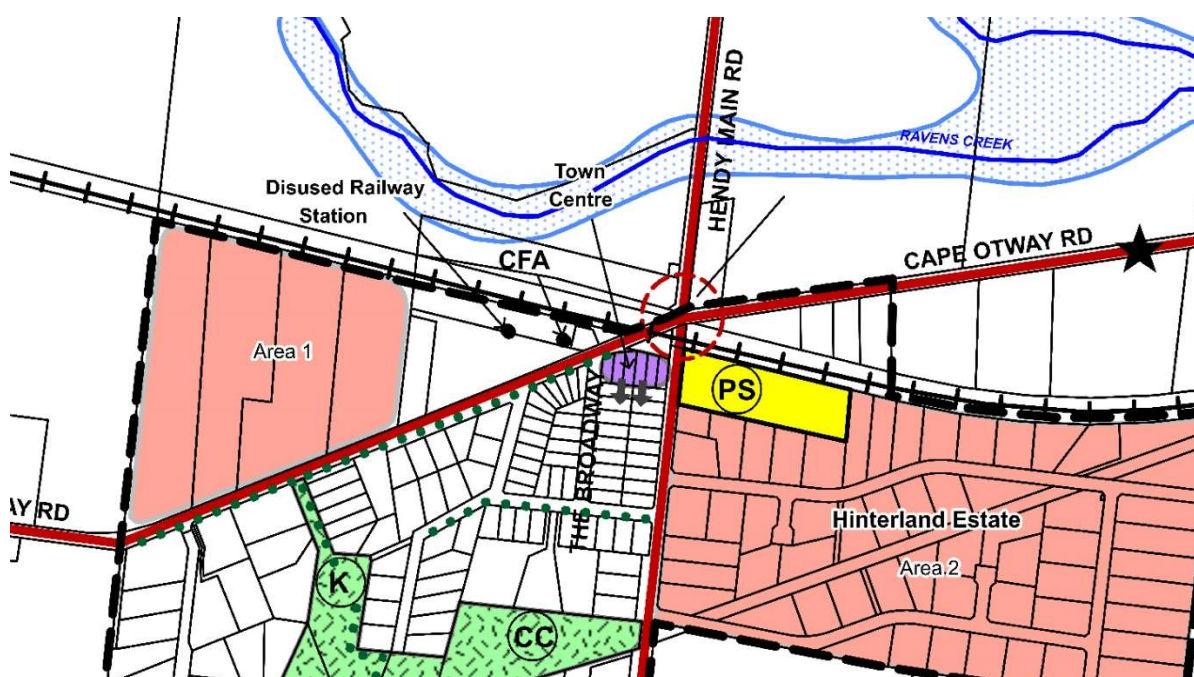
- Direct commercial use and development in Moriac to the Town Centre (identified on the Moriac framework plan in Clause 02.04) so that the centre thrives and remains as the focus for commercial development for the township.
- Encourage the use and development of lots in Moriac fronting Cape Otway Road between The Broadway and Hendy Main Road for business purposes.
- Facilitate the growth of Moriac's town centre by expanding onto adjacent properties to the south (as indicated on the Moriac framework plan in Clause 02.04) should demand warrant it.

Figure 20 shows this depicted on the Moriac Framework Plan at Clause 02.04.

²⁴ Planning Practice Note 91: Using the Residential Zones

²⁵ Moriac Structure Plan Economic Assessment, Tim Nott, 2009

Figure 20: Moriac Town Centre



Source: Clause 02.04 Surf Coast Planning Scheme

While the plan shows six properties highlighted purple, it is noted that they are held as three separate parcels of around 1,500sqm to 1,700sqm. Two of the properties have a commercial offering while the third on the corner of Hendy Main Road is a private dwelling. Treatment of sewage might provide a challenge to more intensive development of these sites.

There has been very limited commercial development in Moriac since the MSP 2010. A medical centre and pharmacy opened in 2021 just south of the area indicated with arrows on the Framework Plan, fronting Hendy Main Road.

It is acknowledged that there is an existing supply of land that would allow future applications for new commercial development. It is also recognised however that this is not without constraints, none of it is currently vacant, there are issues with the size of allotments and sewage treatment and there is a need to protect the amenity of adjacent and nearby dwellings.

As part of implementation of the MSP 2010 into the Planning Scheme, the Framework Plan also identified land for future light industrial development north of Cape Otway Road. This designation was removed however through Amendment C124 based on the findings of the Moriac Industrial Land Assessment (2015).

The Industrial Land Assessment stated that businesses in Moriac both at that time and for the foreseeable future would primarily serve the town population and immediate surrounding rural area, and might include businesses such as mechanics, peripheral sales (e.g. trade supplies and rural sales) and small workshops. It was considered that demand for larger manufacturing, processing or transport businesses would be met in more strategic locations with larger employment bases such as Geelong and Melbourne.

A review of the earlier Economic Assessment was undertaken and the Industrial Land Assessment concluded that “*it is clear that a small amount of industrial land will be required to support population growth in Moriac, however it is equally clear that existing industrial land stocks in nearby larger towns*

*supported for urban growth under local policy are available, and are more appropriate to meet this demand.*²⁶ The Industrial Land Assessment recommended that the designation of land for light industrial development north of Cape Otway Road be removed and this subsequently occurred through Amendment C124.

It is recognised that the Farming Zone (FZ) does allow for some rural industry and smaller scale light industrial development subject to conditions and / or a planning permit.

5.2 Support for the local economy

As noted in Chapter 2.5, Council has recently adopted the Economic Development Strategy 2021-2031 (EDS). The EDS embodies a new approach to economic prosperity and recognises that this is more than material wealth, it is also about health, wellbeing, sustainability and achieving a good quality of life. It centres on creating prosperous places. The Vision of the EDS is:

By 2031, the Surf Coast is prosperous and has shaped its own identity that successfully combines lifestyle, environment, business and a strong sense of place.

The EDS includes goals and actions associated with the three strategic areas of place, people and business. Actions are generally broad and apply Shire wide. A number of specific actions however are more applicable to the wider Moriac hinterland economy such as:

- Deliver high quality, place-appropriate infrastructure for our active outdoor lifestyle including:
 - Tourism products and experiences to support the hinterland and off-peak visitation such as the Sea to Tree Horse Riding Trail (regional trail).
- Deliver the Hinterland Futures Strategy and G21 Sustainable Agribusiness Strategy.

There is an action to ensure that there is adequately zoned land to cater for business scale up, job creation and the evolving needs of emerging industries and business. Noting the small scale types of commercial uses occurring in Moriac and the discussion at Chapter 5.2 above, it is considered that there is adequate zoned land available for future development of this type.

The Hinterland Futures Strategy (discussed at Chapter 3.6) focuses on the hinterland area and opportunities for economic growth. It identifies Moriac as part of a region well suited to agribusiness and commercial farming, but also tourism as it is located on a key tourism route along Cape Otway Road. It did not recommend rezoning land but rather recommended that further policy guidance be included within the Planning Scheme (among other actions) to facilitate these activities. As noted at Chapter 3.6 there is a planning scheme amendment currently underway which seeks to implement these strategies. Amendment C133 proposes to:

*...provide clear land use planning and strategic direction that will help revitalise the hinterland whilst protecting the primacy of the land for farming. It provides improved decision making tools for discretionary uses in rural areas and design principles to protect the high landscape and environmental values.*²⁷

The G21 Sustainable Agribusiness Strategy contains a range of actions designed to achieve the following five strategic priorities and goals:

- Grow our markets
- Develop our people and their businesses
- Encourage innovation and collaboration

²⁶ Moriac Industrial Land Assessment, Urban Enterprise, 2015

²⁷ Amendment C133, Explanatory Report

- Build enabling infrastructure
- Implement the strategy

In terms of land use planning actions, it recommends investigating the efficacy of streamlining local planning schedules in planning schemes to simplify planning policies and processes.

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.
- The Moriac Economic Assessment 2009 forecast that there may be demand for up to an additional 0.8 ha of commercial and 0.8 ha of industrial land to 2031.
- Little commercial development or industrial development has occurred in Moriac since 2010 and population forecasts are slightly less than estimated in the Economic Assessment.
- The Industrial Land Assessment 2015 reviewed the earlier estimate for industrial land and supported the forecast for a small land requirement but recommended that existing industrial land stocks in nearby larger town would be more appropriate to meet this demand than land designated on the Moriac Framework Plan.
- Designation of land for future light industrial development north of Cape Otway Road was removed through Amendment C124.
- 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. These uses are facilitated by the Hinterland Futures Strategy 2019. Amendment C133 proposes to implement policy from this Strategy into the Planning Scheme.
- The G21 Agribusiness Strategy also contains a range of actions to facilitate business growth in the G21 region.
- If the CORA development proceeds, there will be potential employment and other economic opportunities available to Moriac residents.

6. Natural environment and resources

6.1 Landscape

Topography and natural landscape

The township of Moriac is located to the south of the extinct volcanic cone of Mount Moriac. Further to the north are the Barrabool Hills. Moriac is located in the upper reaches of the Thompson Creek Catchment. To the north of the railway line is Ravens Creek. Thompson Creek flows along the southern boundary of the town.

The *Rural Land Use Strategy* (1997) describes Moriac's location as within the Western District Plains geographic area. The document identifies soils in the area as moderately acidic with clay loams overlaying heavy clay subsoils at around 8cm. In the immediate vicinity of Mt Moriac there are small pockets of volcanic ash soil. These soils are well structured, very fertile and well drained. Most of the volcanic soils are however of relatively poor fertility and subject to water logging in Spring.

6.2 Biodiversity assets

Moriac is located in a rural landscape that has been significantly altered since the arrival of European settlers. Perhaps the most significant landscape scale impacts occurred as a result of native vegetation removal and the introduction of exotic pasture species. The native grassland communities that existed across the Victorian Volcanic Plains now represent one of the most threatened ecological vegetation communities in Victoria with less than 1% of the pre-European extent left today.

In 2009 Beacon Ecological completed an environmental assets assessment as part of the development of the MSP 2010. The study area extended beyond the township and considered environmental assets on surrounding farmland. The report found the following assets in the area;

- native grasslands within road and rail reserves;
- Plains Grassy Woodland EVC within roadside reserves;
- scattered mature native Eucalypt trees in the north west of the study area;
- Swampy Riparian Woodland in one small patch on Thompson Creek and aquatic and semiaquatic native vegetation within major drainage lines.

The report recommended applying various environmental overlays to ensure ongoing protection. The recommended overlays included the following:

- Environmental Significance Overlay (ESO) – to apply to wetlands and waterways;
- Vegetation Protection Overlay (VPO) – to apply to grasslands on private land, roadsides and along the railway line, and to apply to scattered paddock trees.

Planning Scheme Amendment C85 applied the ESO1 to Thompson Creek and to Ravens Creek (refer to Figure 14 at Chapter 3.5). The ESO1 triggers the need for a planning permit for any works including vegetation removal within the land covered by the overlay. The ESO1 covers land within 50m either side of the Thompson Creek and 30m either side of Ravens Creek.

Planning Scheme Amendment C81 recommended the application of an ESO to identified grasslands on private land, the road reserve and the railway line. A VPO was also recommended for scattered paddock trees. Amendment C81 was placed on public exhibition however was not adopted by Council due to concerns about the accuracy of mapping (particularly distinguishing between planted

vegetation and that which has naturally regenerated) and the proposed application of overlays to agroforestry assets.

However, it is noted that native vegetation regulations have been strengthened in recent years and the State provisions at Clause 52.17 in the Planning Scheme currently provide protection for environmental assets in the Moriac study area.

Native vegetation regulations have been strengthened since the MSP 2010 and new regulations introduced in 2017. The changes are considered to provide better protection for Victoria's sensitive native vegetation by:

- better accounting for the environmental value of large scattered trees, endangered vegetation types and sensitive wetlands and coastal areas in decision making
- making the system fairer, by allowing some site based information to supplement mapped information, and ensuring the information used in the regulations better reflects the vegetation on the ground
- improving monitoring and reporting on the implementation of native vegetation removal and offsets²⁸

In addition, native vegetation is protected under the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act* and the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*.

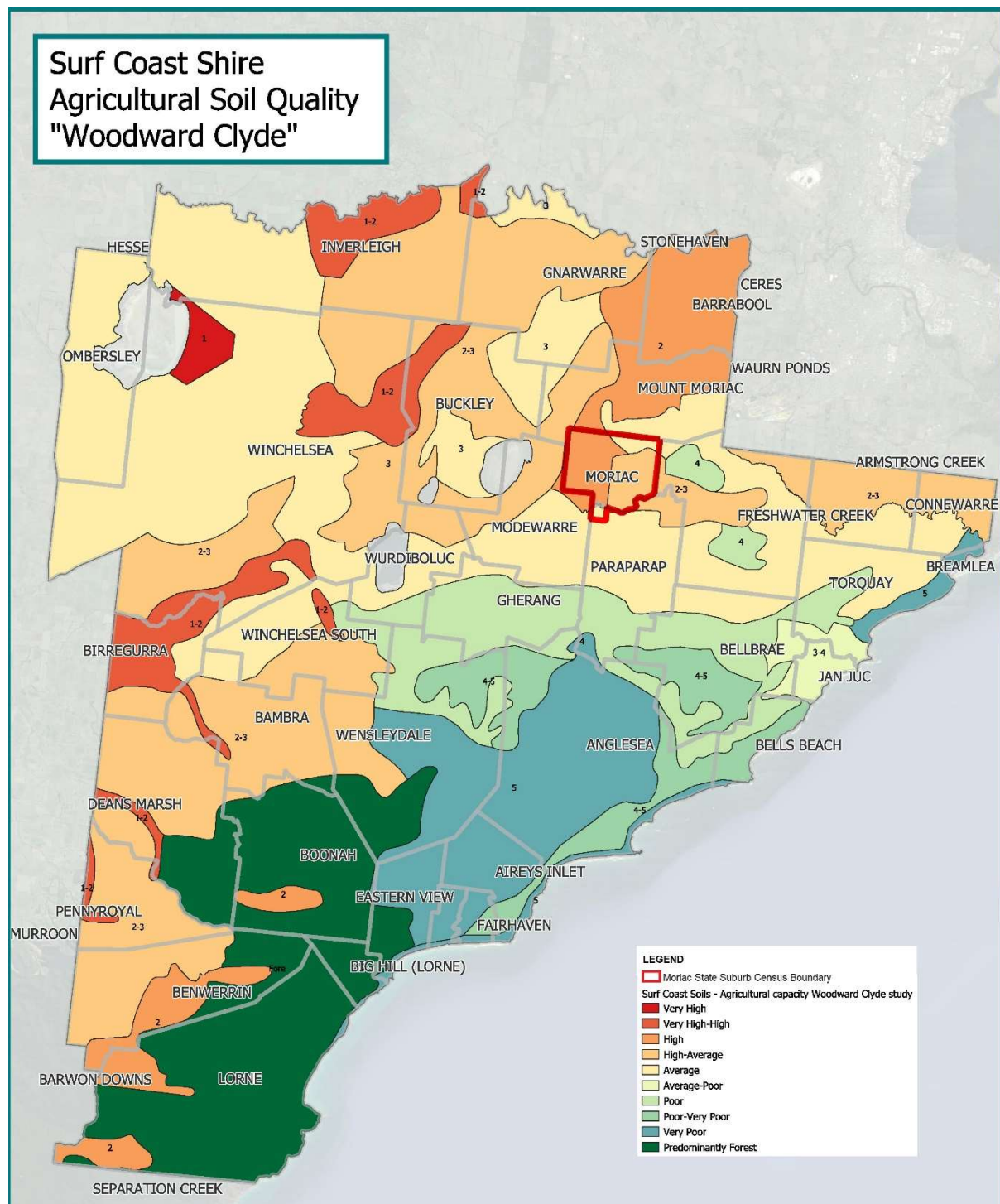
6.3 Agricultural land

The land around Moriac has been rated as being high to average agricultural quality (2 - 3) as shown in Figure 21 below. Land generally west of Hendy Main Road is rated higher quality than land located to the east. The *Rural Land Use Strategy* 1997 identified all land rated 'average to very high' as important agricultural land.

These classifications mean that development of land around Moriac for non-agricultural purposes would be discouraged by State and local policy. It should be noted however that the classifications are broad and not based on detailed land capability analysis. Individual site analysis may reveal different results.

²⁸ DELWP, environment.vic.gov.au/native-vegetation/review-of-native-vegetation-clearing-regulations

Figure 21: Agricultural Quality Mapping Surf Coast Shire



Source: Rural Land Use Strategy, 1997

6.4 Environmental hazards and constraints

Flooding

Both the Ravens and Thompson Creeks are prone to flooding and inundation. Land that may be affected by flooding or subject to inundation is covered by the FO and LSIO in the Planning Scheme (refer to Figure 15 at Chapter 3.5) and includes waterways and the riparian zone. Development and subdivision are strictly controlled in flood prone areas and local policy at Clause 13.03-1L in the Planning Scheme includes a strategy to avoid rezoning or development of land for urban purposes where there is a high risk of flooding. Any development that is permitted must meet certain requirements, including (but not limited to):

- ensuring that development can maintain the free passage and temporary storage of floodwater and be compatible with local drainage conditions;
- minimizing risk to life, health and safety;
- protecting the water quality of waterways by managing urban stormwater;
- protecting water supply catchment areas;
- managing saline discharge; and
- improving river, wetland and floodplain health.

Salinity

Rural land in the north, east and west of the study area are mapped as being potentially impacted by salinity (refer to Figure 15 at Chapter 3.5). Buildings constructed within areas covered by a SMO must be designed to mitigate the potential effects of a saline environment. Local policy at Clause 13.04-3L in the Planning Scheme directs urban growth away from saline land identified through the SMO mapping and discourages use and development that could expand existing saline areas or generate new saline areas.

Bushfire

Like much of rural Victoria, the landscape surrounding Moriac has a long history of impacts associated with bushfire events. Whilst fire plays an important role in maintaining the health of natural environments and ecosystems, uncontrolled bushfire poses a serious threat to the safety of rural communities.

Moriac is located in CFA South West Region - District 7 and the local brigade is part of the Winchelsea Group. The Modewarre Fire Brigade is the local volunteer CFA unit with a two tanker shed located beside the Moriac Primary School in Railway Terrace. A new CFA shed is currently being constructed on a site fronting Cape Otway Road.

Moriac has a designated Neighbourhood Safer Place (NSP) at the Newling Reserve / Moriac Community Centre (Grassed area at rear of building). The address of the NSP as provided by the CFA is 'Hendy Main Road (between Deppeler Avenue and Cooks Land) – Entry also available from Daniel Drive Moriac'.²⁹

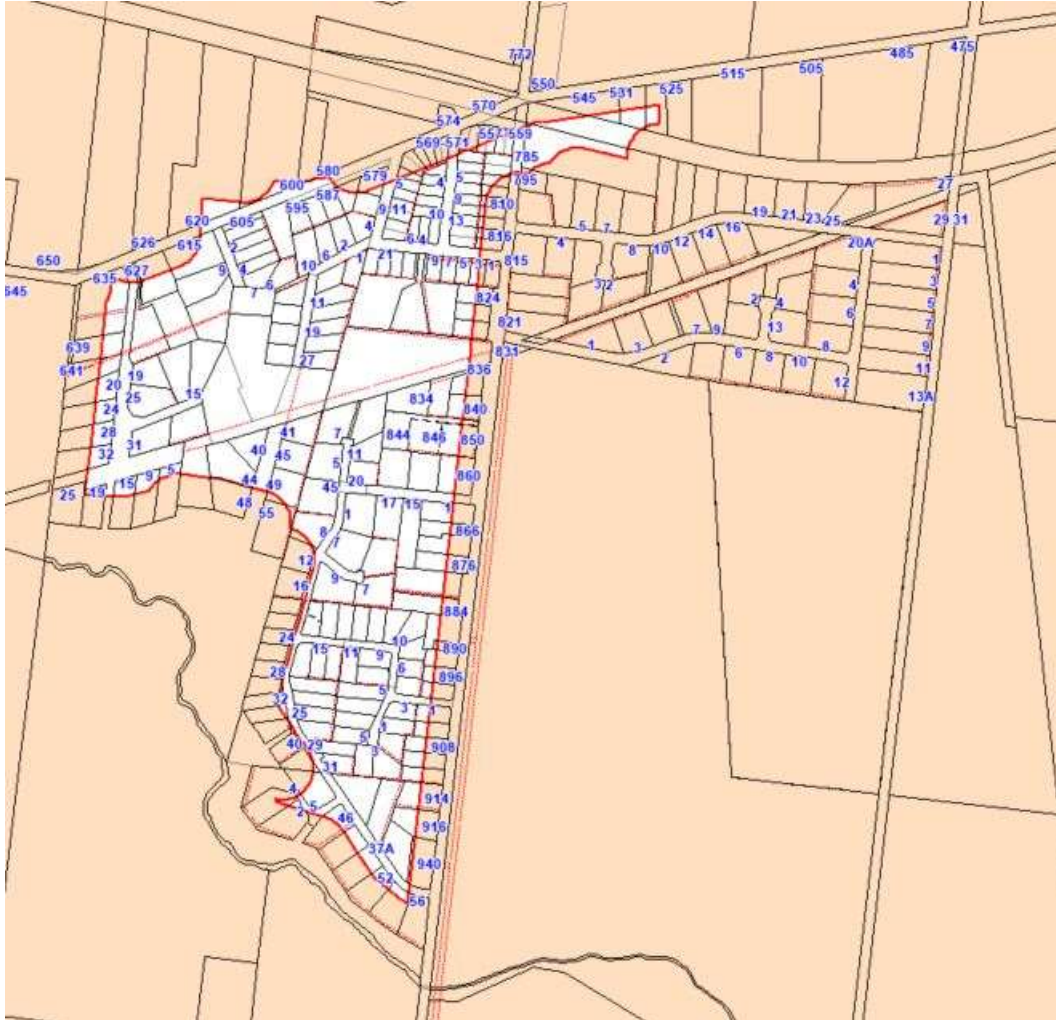
Within the Planning Scheme areas of high bushfire risk are identified through the application of the Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO).

The BMO does not cover any land in the Moriac study area, however much of the town and the surrounding rural landscape is designated as a Bushfire Prone Area.

²⁹ cfa.vic.gov.au/home/local-information

Figure 22 demonstrates how the BPA control extends 60 metres into developed residential areas from adjoining farmland. The BPA designation is typically removed from residential areas once they have been rezoned and fully developed.

Figure 22: Map of Bushfire Prone Areas (BPA)



Source: Surf Coast Planning Scheme, 2021

Bushfire planning regulations have been significantly strengthened since the MSP 2010. It is State policy to prioritise the protection of human life over all other policy considerations. In terms of settlement planning it is also State policy to (summarised):

- direct population growth and development to low risk locations;
- ensure the availability of, and safe access to, areas assessed as a BAL-LOW rating;
- ensure the risk to existing and future residents, property and community infrastructure will not increase as a result of future land use and development;
- achieve no net increase in risk to existing and future residents, property and community infrastructure through implementation of bushfire protection measures;
- assess and address bushfire hazard proposed to the settlement and the likely bushfire behaviour it will produce at a landscape, settlement, local, neighbourhood and site scale;
- assess alternative low risk locales for settlement growth on a regional, municipal, settlement, local and neighbourhood basis;

- not approve any planning policy or document that will result in development in an area that has, or will have, more than a BAL-12.5 rating.³⁰

It is also State policy to ensure settlement growth can implement bushfire protection measures without unacceptable biodiversity impacts and to discourage growth in bushfire affected areas that are also important areas for biodiversity.

If expansion of the Moriac settlement boundary is to be considered as part of the MSP 2022, a strategic bushfire risk assessment would need to be completed as a first priority to understand where higher and lower risk locations are situated.

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 Thompson 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. Development of land for non-agricultural purposes with these classifications is generally discouraged by State and local policy. It is recognised that these classifications are broad however, and not based on detailed site land capability assessments.
- 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. If any expansion of the Moriac settlement boundary is contemplated as part of the MSP 2022, a strategic bushfire risk assessment would need to be completed as a first priority.

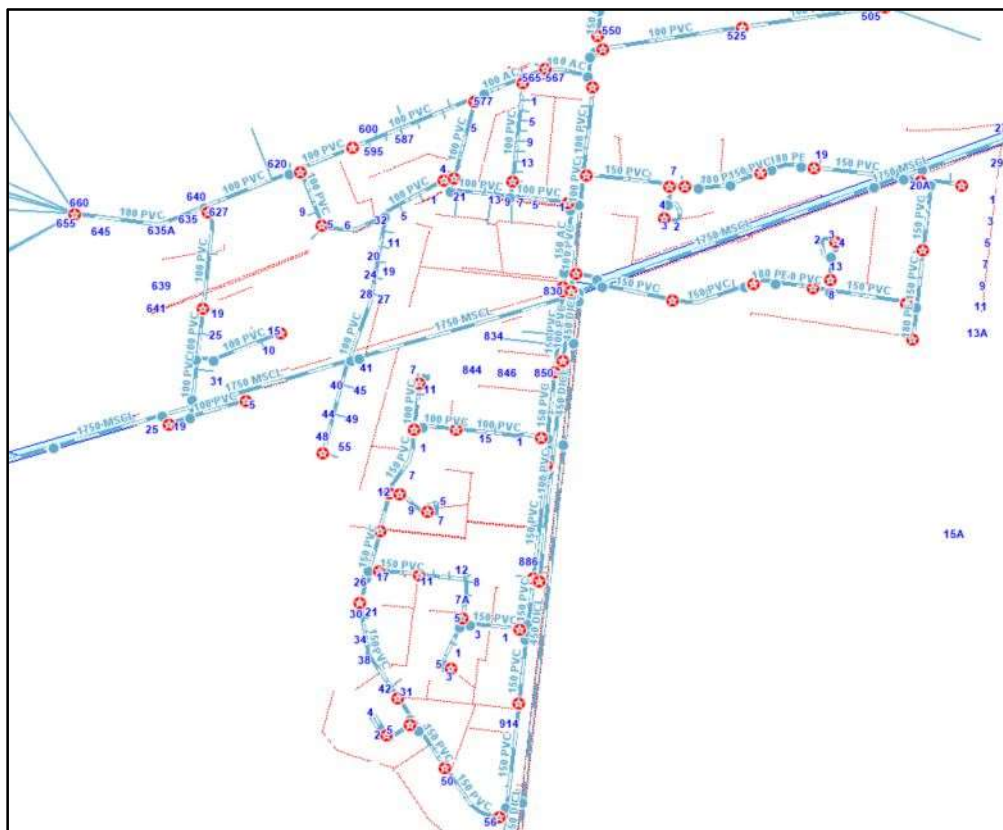
³⁰ Clause 13.02.1S, Surf Coast Planning Scheme

7. Service Infrastructure

7.1 Potable water supply infrastructure

Moriac is currently supplied with drinking water from the Wurdee Boluc Transfer Main, which is the main pipeline supplying Geelong and the Surf Coast. Residential development has historically been located south of the railway line due to its lower elevation and the ability for water to be supplied by gravity without the need for pumps and tanks. Recent residential development has required the augmentation of existing water supply infrastructure. Preliminary discussions with officers from Barwon Water indicate that the Moriac water supply is close to capacity and further augmentation would be required for any future subdivision of scale.

Figure 23: Potable Water Supply Network



Source: Surf Coast Shire mapping 2022

7.2 Stormwater infrastructure

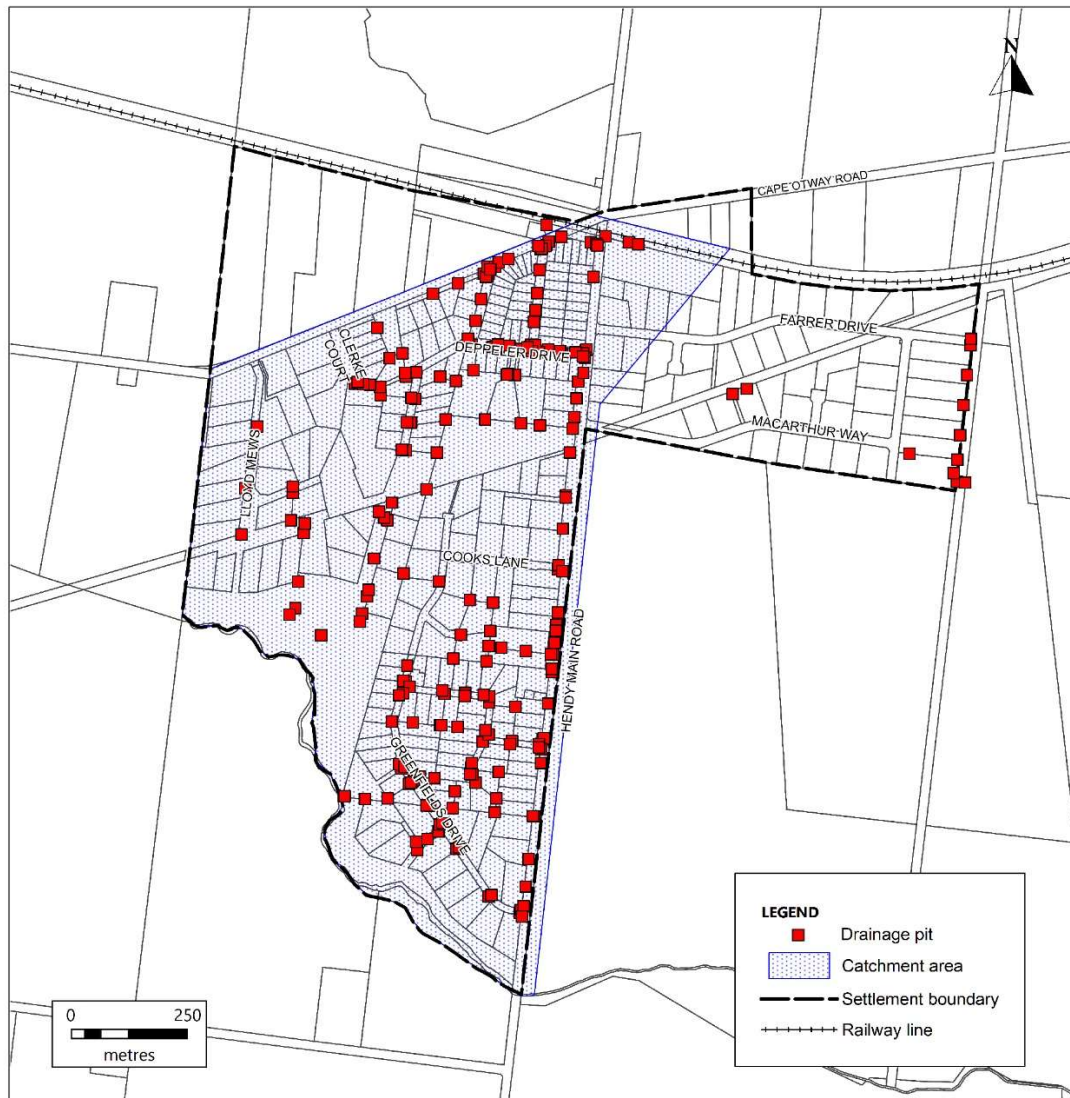
Well designed and properly maintained stormwater infrastructure is an important feature of the built environment, and is particularly important in unsewered areas.

The *Moriac Septic Study Report*, March 2021 (Septic Report) completed last year made the following observations about the stormwater network:

The majority of the Moriac Township drains to the stormwater infrastructure along Hendy Main Road. This infrastructure is split into two systems. North of 802-804 Hendy Main Road up to Cape Otway Road drains North East via an underground drainage network into the rail reserve north of the primary school. The Southern section of the network drains to the South along the roadside via a

combination of underground and above ground drainage systems which discharges to Thompson Creek to the South of the township. The Southern section of the network captures flows from the majority of the township to the West. Stormwater often surfaces from the Hendy Main Road infrastructure during significant rainfall events and over footpaths, this water can sit for many days before it subsides.³¹

Figure 24: Moriac Stormwater Catchment Areas



Source: Surf Coast Shire mapping 2022

The Septic Report was commissioned partly to investigate whether effluent from ageing and degrading septic tank systems in Moriac was leaking into the stormwater system. Water sampling results undertaken for the project were inconclusive, except to indicate that at times there were levels of human waste present within the stormwater system, and high nutrient levels indicated potential for contamination also from greywater discharge (i.e. laundry, showers, kitchen). Levels were low and inconsistent, and the Septic Report recommended a more comprehensive sampling program be conducted over time to obtain more conclusive results.

³¹ Moriac Septic Study Report, Surf Coast Shire, March 2021

Council has recently received funding to commence a sampling program and will commence sampling in 2022.

The Septic Report also reported on an engineering assessment which recommended stormwater upgrades along Hendy Main Road to address flooding issues. The engineering assessment found that a number of upgrades would be required to bring the infrastructure in line with current day standards. The Septic Report outlined a number of smaller works that could be undertaken to reduce the frequency of flooding, including improvements to the Department of Transport (DOT) managed table drain on Hendy Main Road and recommissioning a cross road culvert recently decommissioned as part of a new development.

The Septic Report recommended considering the feasibility of a Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) asset to be installed at the end of the Hendy Main Road Stormwater infrastructure to improve water quality prior to discharging to Thompson Creek.

7.3 Sewage and Wastewater Management

Moriac is an unsewered town with all existing dwellings relying on on-site waste water management systems. On-site waste water systems are generally designed to treat and dispose of wastewater wholly within the boundaries of a property.

The MSP 2010 identified a lack of reticulated sewerage as a major constraint to growth in the township and outlined some of the ongoing septic issues occurring in Moriac. A number of further investigations have been undertaken since that time to respond to concerns about failing septic systems in the town and the subsequent risk to human health and the environment, particularly given the high level of development activity.

As noted above, the most recent report on sewage and wastewater issues in Moriac was completed in 2021. The Moriac Septic Report reiterated findings from the Moriac Domestic Wastewater Management Plan (DWMP) prepared in 2013, which found that the soils and landscape within the Moriac township area are naturally poor for onsite domestic wastewater management. The DWMP noted that heavy clay subsoil, present in the entire township, poses serious limitations for onsite wastewater disposal along with extremely gentle slopes in large parts of town with slow natural runoff and increased rainfall infiltration.

The Septic Report identified examples of effluent leaks from septic tank systems into the street and stormwater system. Some of these incidents related to mis-management of septic tank systems, whilst other leaks were caused by older style systems approved a long time ago but which would not meet current requirements.

Figure 25: Areas of Concern for On-site Wastewater Management



Source: Moriac Septic Report 2021, Surf Coast Shire Council

Recommendations from the Septic Report include:

- Provide education to residents on servicing/maintenance of systems and responsibilities under the new *Environment Protection Act 2017* due to come into force on 1 July 2021.
- Implement ongoing sampling program of Thompson Creek and the Hendy Main Road stormwater infrastructure to ensure any potential contamination is monitored.
- Investigate drainage infrastructure in the older part of the township and identify any improvements that can be instigated to alleviate storm water run-off issues.
- Investigate potential upgrades to drainage infrastructure on Hendy Main Road in conjunction with Regional Roads Victoria (RRV) to minimise water pooling and surfacing over footpaths.
- Consider feasibility of a Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) asset to be installed at the end of the Hendy Main Road Stormwater infrastructure to improve water quality prior to discharging to Thompson Creek.
- Provide this report to Barwon Water and advocate to undertake a feasibility study into providing a reticulated sewer, factoring in future developments and the Moriac Structure Plan.
- Implement a register and maintenance program for all Council owned septic tank systems.

7.4 Electricity and gas

Powercor is the supply service authority for mains electricity in the Moriac study area. No issues have been raised previously in relation to electricity supply to existing or new residential areas.

Moriac does not have a reticulated gas supply and then are no future plans for this.

7.5 Telecommunications

Telstra and/or NBN Co are responsible for the provision of telecommunications services to the Moriac study area. It is standard procedure for new subdivisions to include a draft planning permit condition requiring connection to such services through an agreement between the landowner and service provider.

While outside its role as Council is not the service provider, Council has received written submissions from Moriac residents raising concerns about the reliability of internet connections (most recently via Amendment C124). While Council cannot control internet reliability, it is expected that the current challenges related to internet services can be further explored and described through the MSP 2022 process.

It is considered that internet connection and telecommunication services more generally are becoming more important as the COVID-19 pandemic has dramatically altered the way that people live and work. Some changes are likely to be temporary while others may become the new norms of society. Hybrid working models where more people spend at least some of their time working from home will elevate the importance of reliable communications infrastructure and services.

Service Infrastructure - Key Issues and Influences

- Moriac water supply is close to capacity and further augmentation 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.
- Treatment of sewage via septic systems in Moriac is problematic due to soil structure and the size of many older allotments. Any new development would require large lots capable of accommodating waste water on site, and given the soil characteristics may require even larger lots. Re-subdivision of existing lots is unlikely to be feasible in the absence of a reticulated sewer.
- The lack of a sewerage system is a major constraint to future growth of the town.
- The 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.

8. Access and Movement

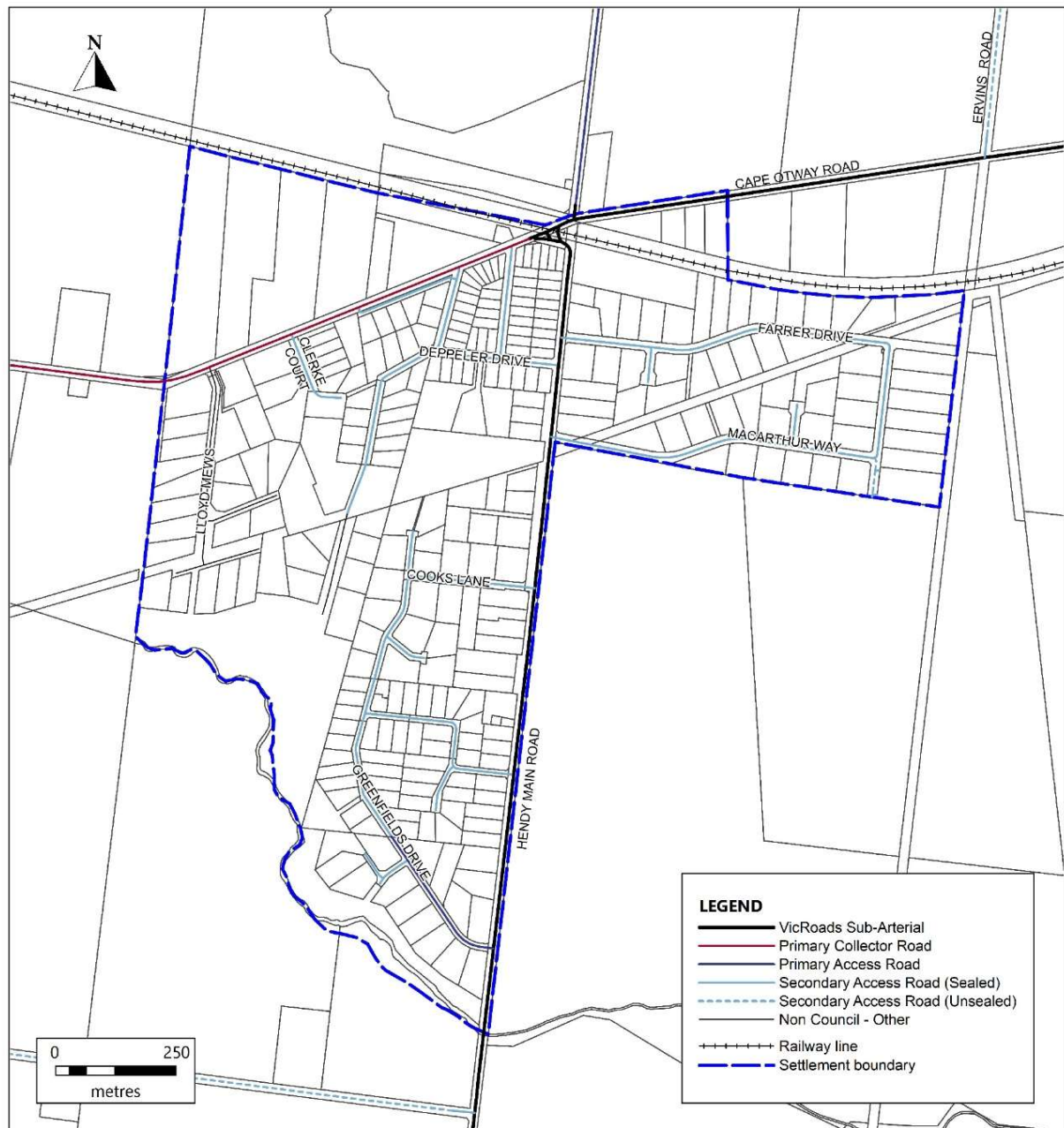
8.1 Roads, traffic and car parking

Roads and traffic

Like many small towns within regional Victoria, Moriac is heavily reliant on private motor vehicles for transport with limited public transport options. Hendy Main Road and Cape Otway Road are the main roads. Both carry relatively high volumes of tourist traffic at peak periods, local traffic and traffic associated with agriculture and other industry.

Various roads have different managers depending on the classification of the road. Cape Otway Road between the Princes Highway and Hendy Main Road is classified an arterial road and is the responsibility of the Department of Transport (DoT). Likewise is Hendy Main Road between Cape Otway Road and Anglesea Road. Other roads within the Moriac study area, except for private roads (e.g. body corporate managed), are the responsibility of Council. Moriac's road network and classifications are shown in Figure 25. Council's Road Management Plan 2021-25 outlines how Council will satisfy its obligations under the *Road Management Act 2004* to inspect, repair and maintain those roads managed by Council.

Figure 26: Moriac Road Network and Classifications



Source: Surf Coast Shire mapping 2022

The MSP 2010 identified the need for traffic management improvement at the intersection of Cape Otway Road and Hendy Main Road. Other concerns about road conditions and safety, intersections and pedestrian safety on Cape Otway Road were also raised as part of consideration of Amendment C124 and Amendment C125. A condition of the planning permit associated with Amendment C124 includes the construction of a new pedestrian crossing across Cape Otway Road near Clerke Court opposite an existing bus stop.



Photo: Railway crossing near the intersection of Hendy Main & Cape Otway Roads

Council commissioned a Road Safety Audit and Route Review (Cape Otway Road Review) in 2020 for Cape Otway Road, between Hendy Main Road at Moriac and the shire boundary (i.e. the Council managed section). The Cape Otway Road Review identified a number of safety issues including roadside hazards, lack of sealed shoulders, inconsistent edge lines, issues with signage, patches of poor or failed pavement, inconsistent pavement widths, etc.

With regard to the intersection of Cape Otway Road and Hendy Main Road, a number of potential safety issues were recorded including the speed limit on Cape Otway Road, areas of poor pavement, turning trucks mounting raised islands and damaging kerbs, road design issues and no facilities to assist pedestrians crossing into Hendy Main Road.

Key recommendations from the Cape Otway Road Review (2020) particularly relevant to the Moriac study area are:

- Retain the existing categorisation of Cape Otway Road as a council-managed road between Hendy Main Road and Birregurra-Forrest Road.
- Undertake widening/upgrade works to provide a consistent cross section along the entire route, with a total carriageway width of 11 m and a minimum seal width of 9 m.
- Reduce the speed limit to 80 km/h for some or all of the route, as both a safety measure and to discourage the use of Cape Otway Road, and by consequence make the far safer Princes Highway a more attractive route to destinations such as Deans Marsh, Lorne and Apollo Bay.
- Reduce the speed limit in Moriac to 50 km/h, and retain the time-based 40 km/hr school speed zone.
- Review signage at intersecting arterial roads and consider changing signage to direct traffic to Geelong via the arterial road network rather than along Cape Otway Road.
- Short term improvements at the Cape Otway Road / Hendy Main Road intersection including line-marking and delineation, and pavement and kerb repairs. And a recommendation to consider changing the intersection to a safer form, i.e. a roundabout in the longer term.

The Cape Otway Road Review (2020) based the recommendation to reduce the through township speed limit to 50 km/h on the presence of a remote school crossing and a railway level crossing, the curved alignment of Cape Otway Road near the level crossing, and pedestrian activity associated with the school, general store and public amenities.

Council is planning a number of actions to implement the recommendations of the Cape Otway Road Review as follows:

- In parallel with the MSP 2022 process, consult with the community on proposed speed limit reductions and alteration of directional signage along the Surf Coast managed segment of the road.
- Submit funding applications to relevant State / federal authorities to support delivery of the road safety audit that meet funding criteria.
- Develop a budget proposal in 2022-2023 to deliver high priority / low coast road safety treatments as recommended.
- Implement road access recommendations to new private development through the planning permit process.
- Continue to advocate for the upgrade of intersections including Hendy Main Road / Cape Otway Road and Deans Marsh Road / Cape Otway Road with the DoT.

8.2 Public transport

There are no public transport options in Moriac. The Geelong - Warrnambool railway line is located directly north of the township, however the railway station located north west of the town has been disused for many years and VLine (now Vic Track) advised previously that reopening is not an option due to financial viability and the small size of the town.

The lack of public transport is a significant disadvantage for the town because of the limited facilities and services in Moriac and the need for people to frequently access health and allied services, employment, higher education and community networks in larger towns in the region. The absence of public transport is particularly a concern for older people (who may be driving less), teenagers and non-drivers.

Council's Age Friendly Strategy identifies the lack of transport options as an impediment to ageing well in place and recommends further investigation of transport options on a Shire wide basis. Increased seating and shelter at bus stops is encouraged. It also recommends checking whether there are adequate designated spots for disabled parking and whether they are in the correct location.

8.3 Active transport networks

Footpaths and trails connect the residents of Moriac to the town centre and to areas of open space. Moriac has a good network of paths that are well utilised by residents and visitors.

The Moriac pathway network is progressively being improved through implementation of Council's Pathways Strategy (2012). It provides an overview of proposed footpaths, bicycle routes and shared paths throughout the towns to encourage more walking and cycling, improve safe crossing of the Cape Otway Road and provide better access to facilities and open space.

Figure 27: Moriac Pathways Network



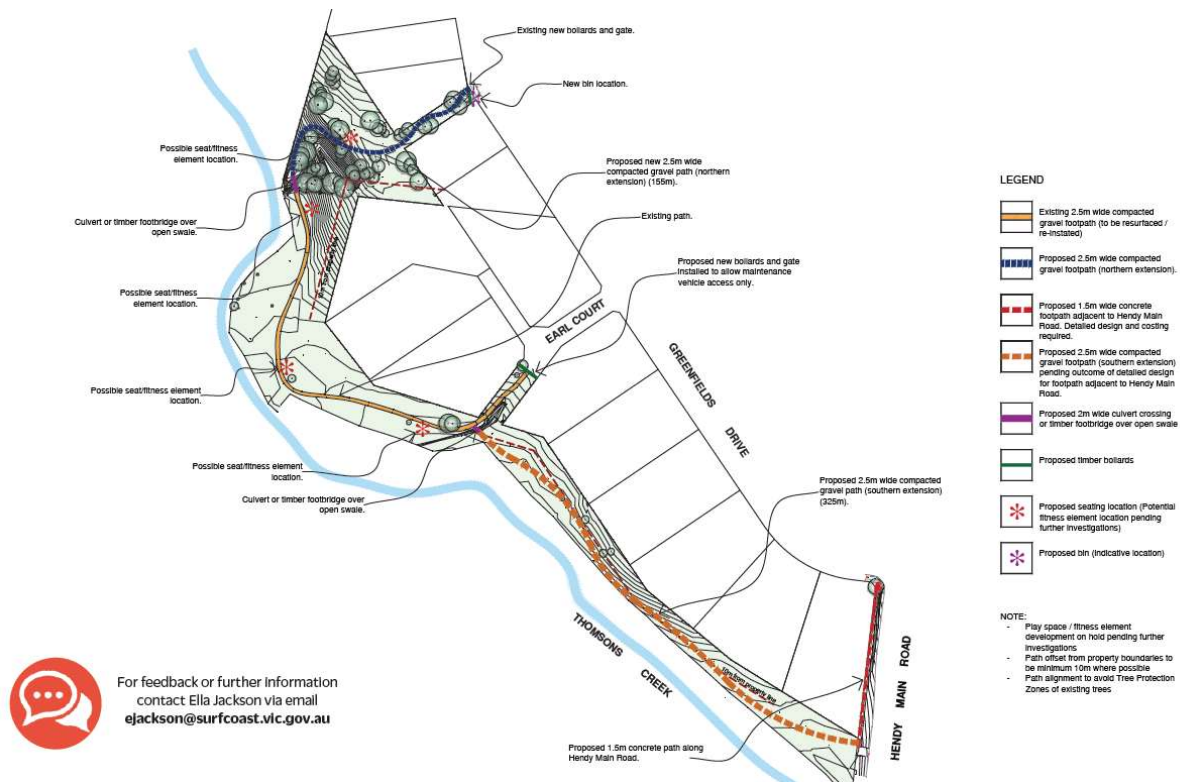
Source: Surf Coast Shire Mapping 2022 (based on Pathways Strategy 2012)

Council is currently working with the Moriac Community Network (MCN) on developing a new trail as described below recommended in the 2012 Pathways Strategy.

Greenfields Reserve Nature and Fitness Trail

Initiated by the MCN, this project involves extending a gravel pathway along the Thompson Creek reserve to create a walking and cycling circuit connecting to existing footpaths within a natural environment. A trail along the Thompson Creek tributary was shown in both the Pathways Strategy and the MSP 2010.

Figure 28: Greenfields Reserve Nature and Fitness Trail



The current project status is:

- Being delivered in 2021/22 under the direction of Council's Social Infrastructure and Open Space Planning Unit.
- The MCN has been engaged in this project and have been working with the project team on the project detail.
- Works began in early February 2022 to clear drainage easements in a bid to resolve the water inundation present within the reserve during wetter months.
- Once this is complete the contractor will begin works on the northern section of path linking Earl Court with Greenfields Drive.
- Further investigations and funding will be required for the remaining southern path linking Earl Court to Hendy Main Road and the section along Hendy Main Road back up to Greenfields Drive.
- The remaining works (seats, bollards & bin etc.) will be scoped to budget following completion of the pathway works and investigations as mentioned above.

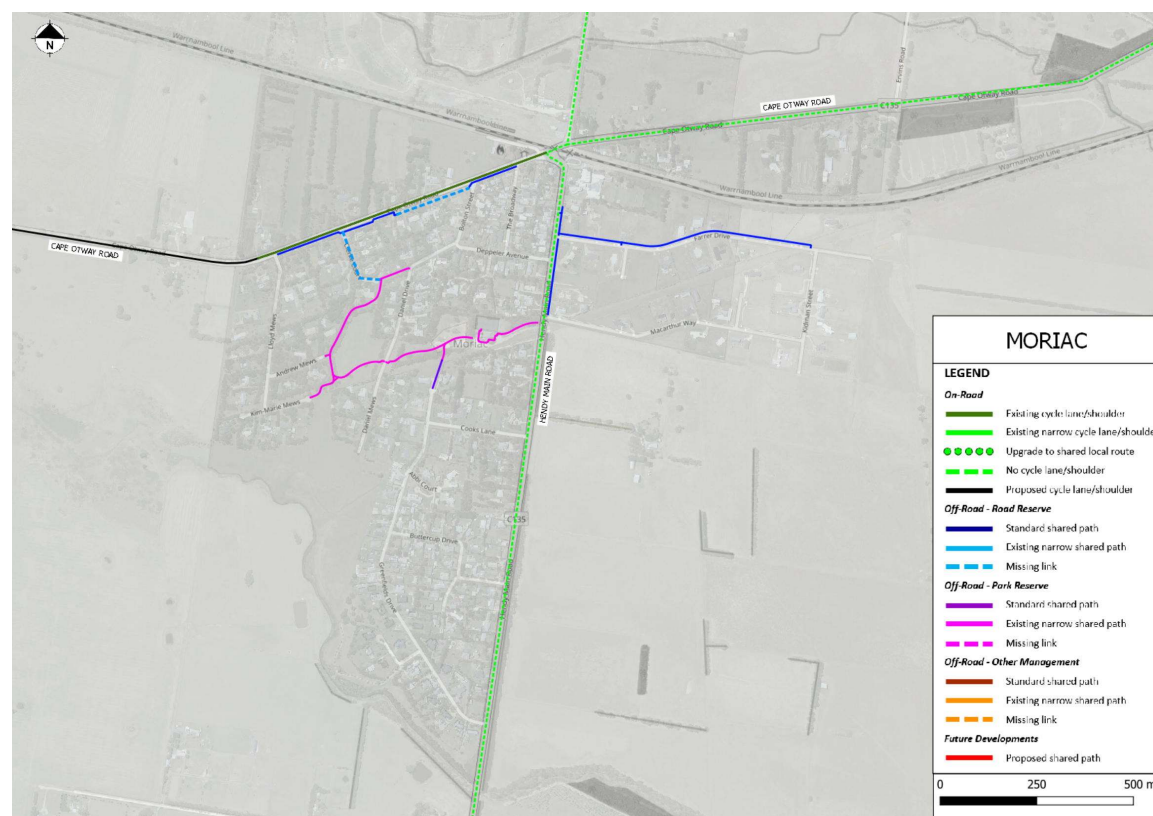
Council is in the process of reviewing and updating the 2012 Pathways Strategy.

Council is also currently developing a Safer Cycling Strategy. The vision is to connect people with places through an integrated, safe cycling network. To achieve this the Strategy sets out its aims to:

- Improve the safety and quality of the cycling experience.
- Reduce serious injury cyclist crashes by 30% and fatal cyclist crashes to zero by 2030.
- Increase participation in cycling.

The Moriac Cycling Network is shown in Figure 29.

Figure 29: Moriac Cycling Network



Source: Draft Surf Coast Safer Cycling Strategy 2022-2027

Proposed actions particularly relevant to the Moriac study area include (summarised):

- Advocate to DoT for provision of new shoulders to complete missing links at the following high priority fitness/training cycling routes:
 - Hendy Main Road –Anglesea Road to Greenfield Drive (approx. 13.5km)
 - Hendy Main Road – Princes Highway to Cape Otway Road (approx. 3.1km).
- Leverage existing proposed capital works at the following high priority fitness/training cycling routes for provision of on-road cycling infrastructure:
 - Cape Otway Road (Lloyd Mews to Lowndes Road)
- Provide wider shoulders in conjunction with upcoming renewal/upgrade/rehabilitation works where possible, at the following high priority fitness/training cycling routes:
 - Cape Otway Road – Church Road/Hortips Road to Buckley Road South (approx. 6km)
- Establish and install consistent signage (W6-V11), messaging boards, pavement marking (Share Road with Cyclists), etc. on the following rural roads if / when separation of cyclists and drivers (with cycle lane, shoulder, etc.) cannot be achieved due to physical or funding constraints:

- Cape Otway Road between Hendy Main Road and Winchelsea-Deans Marsh Road
- Review 100km/h speed limits on key fitness cycling routes and seek a reduction in speed limits to a maximum of 80km/h where appropriate. The following list of routes should be reviewed as a priority:
 - Cape Otway Road
- Advocate increased maintenance of the following priority cycling routes on roads managed by DoT, including:
 - Hendy Main Road
- When planning for growth and new development consideration of the provision for cycling within and through the development to be incorporated into the planning process. This should include consideration of cycling connections to services, recreational spaces, key destinations and connect to the overall cycling network. This may occur at various stages in development planning, including but not limited to the preparation of Precinct Structure Plans, Structure Plans and Development Plans, and the consideration of planning permit applications including applications for subdivision.
- Adopt the minimum criteria set within Austroads Guide to Road Design Part 6A; Paths for Walking and Cycling and within IDM standard drawings for provision of shared cycling facility on designated cycling routes through new subdivisions i.e. currently:
 - 2.5m (minimum width) wide shared primary pathway with 0.5m clearance on each side of path on one side of proposed primary and secondary access roads as described in Council's Road Management Plan
 - 2.5m shared primary pathway with 0.5m clearance on each side of path within proposed parks and recreation reserves
- Adopt the following minimum criteria for provision of cycling infrastructure in new subdivisions on all of the proposed primary and secondary collector roads as described in Council's Road Management Plan:
 - 1.5m wide on-road cycle lane in each direction
 - Shared path to be provided on one side of the road. The shared path width to be in accordance with table 5.4 in Austroads Guide to Road Design Part 6A; Paths for Walking and Cycling taking into consideration projected pedestrian and cyclist volumes. A minimum clearance of 0.5m to be provided on each side of path.
- Consider provision of cycling infrastructure in township place-making/urban renewal projects.

Council is currently considering submissions to the draft Cycling Strategy prior to completing a final draft.

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, along with concerns about a number of intersections.
- 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.
- Council intends to consult with the community on these recommendations in parallel with the MSP 2022 project.
- The absence of public transport in Moriac is a significant disadvantage for the town, particularly for older people, teens and non-drivers.
- Council's Age Friendly Strategy 2020-2024 recommends further investigations of transport options on a Shire wide basis.
- Moriac has a good network of footpaths that are well utilised by residents and visitors.
- The pathway network is being progressively improved and at present work is underway to complete part of the Greenfields Reserve Nature and Fitness Trail.
- 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.

9. Community infrastructure

9.1 Community facilities (including education)

Chapter 2.6 noted that Moriac has a basic level of community infrastructure. The provision of community facilities and services is generally guided by:

- The legislative and policy context for the provision of infrastructure
- Best practice approaches (accepted benchmarks)
- Demographic profile and population forecasts
- Demand assessment – current and future
- Consultation with service providers and the community

Council does not have a specific Community Infrastructure Plan but does have a range of strategies that consider various types of community service provision. For the purposes of this Background Report, a range of Council strategies have been reviewed to identify future community infrastructure needs for Moriac. Community and stakeholder consultation as part of this project will assist in identifying any further needs and priorities. Some general observations about the provision of community infrastructure are also made.

State government guidelines for the provision of community infrastructure are generally only applicable in areas with large populations or in new growth areas anticipating significant population increases. In the absence of standardised benchmarks, assessment of community infrastructure needs in smaller towns often relies on input from service providers and the community and a more detailed analysis of demand and a project's feasibility.

Community facilities in Moriac (as a separate category to public open space and formal sporting facilities which are considered at Chapter 8.2) include the Moriac Primary School, Moriac Preschool (and playground), Moriac Medical Centre, maternal child health services, Moriac Community Centre (at Newling Reserve), and an all access playground and skate park at Newling Reserve. There are also playgrounds just outside the study area at the Modewarre Recreation Reserve and Mt Moriac Recreation Reserve.

Moriac has an active community group, the Moriac Community Network (MCN). The MCN states its aim as follows:

To build and empower our community for us all to continue enjoy living in a friendly, nature-rich semi rural environment – to get to know each other, to support each other, and to improve the place where we live and work.³²

Council is currently working with the MCN on a number of priority community projects and these are discussed in more detail at Chapters 8.3 and 9.3.

³² Website: www.mcn.org.au



Public art installation, Newling Reserve (2021)

As noted above, a number of Council strategies have already been prepared which make various recommendations about community infrastructure provision. The primary focus of this document is land use planning and the built environment so it is these types of infrastructure items which are referenced in Table 4 (rather than specific services).

Table 4: Community Infrastructure Recommendations Relevant for the MSP 2022

Strategy Name	Strategy, Recommendation or Action	Comment
Playground Strategy 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two playground were recommended for the Moriac and District area within the next 10 years a follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Modewarre Reserve – a small local playground Thompson Creek, Moriac – a small local playground for which Council has received development contributions 	<p>A small local playground has been constructed at Modewarre Reserve.</p> <p>The playground proposed for Thompson Creek is currently under review and the previously identified location is no longer considered appropriate.</p>
Accessible & Inclusive Surf Coast Shire Strategic Plan 2014-24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Built and natural environments are well designed and accessible for people of all abilities, and planned to adapt to our community's future accessibility needs People of all abilities actively participate, socialise and have fun in the community and contribute to local decision making. 	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
Age Friendly Strategy 2020-2024	<p>The Age Friendly Strategy includes eight goals to create age-friendly communities. Recommendations are broad and apply Shire wide. Particularly relevant for the MSP 2022 is Council's role to collaborate with the community and respond to identified needs.</p>	<p>Council is working with the Moriac community on a number of community projects as described in Chapters 8.3 and 9.3. It is also proposed to engage with the community widely in the development of the new MSP 2022.</p>
Early Years Plan 2021-25	<p>A range of Shire wide issues were identified and actions recommended. Built form actions include improving bike and footpath networks and improving playgrounds.</p>	<p>The community will be consulted on these matters during development of the MSP 2022. Refer to Chapter 8.3 and 9.3 for current projects in this space.</p>

Provision of school education services is outside the remit of Council. However it is important to understand potential future enrolments as land use planning needs to ensure that where necessary land will be available in the future to accommodate needs. With regard to the primary school, it might be expected that enrolments may increase in the short term as more families move into the new residential estate. However, in the longer term to 2036 overall numbers of primary school aged children is expected to fall.³³

It should also be noted that small towns in the peri-urban region often rely on larger urban centres for many community services. Facilities and services typically accessed in Winchelsea, Torquay or Geelong include hospital and allied health care, long day care, aged care, libraries, museums, theatres,

³³ Surf Coast Shire Population Forecasts, .id, Deans Marsh and Moriac Districts

art galleries, secondary schooling, adult education, community house services and senior citizens clubs. For Moriac, a lack of public transport may present a barrier to some residents accessing these services outside of town.

9.2 Public open space and recreation facilities

Council's Public Open Space Strategy 2016-25 (Open Space Strategy) included a demand and gap assessment of public open space for the Deans Marsh – Moriac precinct. It concluded that while the provision of parklands and gardens as an open space type is limited within the precinct, opportunities exist for a range of recreational pursuits at existing reserves and that there is little need for the addition of any core open space.

In terms of recreation ovals, other rural municipalities have recommended that 1 sporting oval should be provided for every 3,000 - 5,000 people³⁴. The forecast population for Moriac and District to 2036 is anticipated to be less than 5,000 people and therefore this benchmarking standard is reached with both Modewarre Recreation Reserve and the Mt Moriac Recreation Reserve located near to the study area and within the Moriac and District precinct.

Table 5: Council Owned & Managed Open Space Reserves - Moriac & District

Reserve Name	Location	Features	Area
Newling Reserve	Hendy Main Road, Moriac	Multi-purpose community hall, tennis courts, bmx track and skate park, BBQ facilities and sculptures.	4.91 hectares
Mt Moriac Reserve	755 Reservoir Road, Mt Moriac	Two irrigated ovals, one with turf wicket. Club rooms, three tennis courts, pony club, two netball courts and playground. Function room available to hire. Public toilets.	22.81 hectares
Modewarre Recreation Reserve	910 Cape Otway Road, Modewarre	Historic bluestone school building, community hall (available for hire), tennis courts, scout shed, Avenue of Honour, cricket oval.	3.19 hectares

³⁴ Baw Baw Shire Council, Shaping the Future: Community Services Planning Discussion Paper, 2012

9.3 Community initiated projects

Moriac Lions Park Project

Moriac Lions Park is located on VicTrack land and is managed by Council via a tenancy agreement. It is a highly valued open space area playing a key role in ensuring a functional town centre given its central township location immediately opposite the General Store. The park facilities include car parking, public toilets, community noticeboard, pathways, picnic shelter, BBQ and a picnic table.

Council has been recently informed by VicTrack of the potential for site contamination from past railway practices (i.e. historical filling of sites with unknown soil quality, weed spraying and general use of fuels and oils). Recent changes to the *Environmental Protection Act* now places liability for land contamination with the tenant. At the time of writing this report Council has commissioned an environmental land assessment to understand whether land contamination is present and if so what land remediation works would be involved to inform any ongoing land management responsibilities and scope of future landscape upgrades within the Lions Park.

Moriac Streetscape Project

The Moriac Streetscape project is a streetscape beautification scheme proposing landscaping and other town entrance improvement treatments. Specific details continue to be explored and the project is anticipated to be delivered during 2022 under the direction of Council's Open Space Operations Unit.

Community infrastructure - Key Issues and Influences

- Community infrastructure provision in Moriac is basic commensurate with its small size.
- 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.