

Social Impact Assessment

Policy and Guidelines



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Mayor's message

Maribyrnong 2040 Growing the Community Together outlines the organisation's commitment to promoting and protecting the health and wellbeing of the City of Maribyrnong community across all life stages.

The Social Impact Assessment Policy and Guidelines provide a framework to meet this commitment through a focus on liveability including improved amenity and accessibility to local services and facilities.

This will help to make the City of Maribyrnong a great place to live now and into the future.

CEO's message

Our rapidly growing population requires careful consideration of the community's future needs.

The Social Impact Assessment Policy and Guidelines aims to assist developers and Council officers to make informed decisions when considering the social effects of residential and mixed use development across the municipality.

This reflects Council's commitment to facilitate improved planning and design, to deliver high quality infrastructure and services to benefit local communities.

Acknowledgment

We acknowledge the Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of this nation. We acknowledge the people of the Kulin nation as traditional custodians of the lands on which Maribyrnong City Council is located and where we conduct our business. We are committed to honouring Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' unique cultural and spiritual relationships to the land, waters and seas and their contribution to society.



INTRODUCTION

The City of Maribyrnong is a diverse and vibrant community which will experience significant population growth in the next 20 years.

This increase in population presents a number of opportunities for economic growth through new residential and mixed use development.

However, it also presents challenges to liveability and quality of life for the current and future population of the city.

Council is committed to managing land use developments to ensure positive long-term sustainable and liveable outcomes for a rapidly growing and changing population in the City of Maribyrnong.

This includes providing high quality infrastructure and services for local communities across the city.

Council plays an important role in assessing the social effects and maximising the community benefit of developments in the City of Maribyrnong.

In 2002, Council adopted the Social Impact Assessment for Significant Residential Development Policy and Guidelines.

This policy outlined Council's commitment to social consideration in land use planning, and a need to follow the guidelines in preparing social assessment reports as part of the planning process.

The Social Impact Assessment Policy and Guidelines 2018 align with Maribyrnong Council Plan 2017-2021 and the Maribyrnong Planning Scheme.

They also align with Council's Human Rights and Social Justice Framework 2017-2021 which provides a foundation to promote equity of access to the municipality's services, infrastructure and public places.

SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT POLICY

What is social impact?

A social impact is the product of the social effects that occur to people's way of life, community, environment, health, culture and health and wellbeing as a result of significant land use or development.

Social impacts vary in their nature and can be:

- positive (for example, increased local and regional job opportunities);
- tangible (for example, availability of affordable housing) or intangible (for example, social cohesion);
- direct (that is, caused by a particular proposal), indirect (that is, caused by a change that is caused by the proposal); or cumulative; and
- experienced differently by different people and groups within a community and at different times and stages of the proposal.

What is social impact assessment?

Social Impact Assessment (SIA) involves investigating the predicted social impacts of a development on the surrounding community and providing recommendations for mitigating those effects.

Purpose of social impact assessment policy and guidelines

The purpose of the Social Impact Assessment Policy and Guidelines is to assist Council in its decision making process when Council considers:

- 1.1 'social effects' as the planning authority when preparing a planning scheme or an amendment to the Maribyrnong Planning Scheme (Scheme) under section 12(2) of the Planning and Environment Act 1987; and;
- 1.2 'any significant social effects ... which the responsible authority considers the use or development may have', when as the responsible authority Council must consider before deciding a permit application under section 60(1)(f) of the Planning and Environment Act 1987.

Objectives of social impact assessment policy and guidelines

The objectives of the Social Impact Assessment Policy and Guidelines are to:

- Provide clear, consistent and rigorous framework for identifying, predicting, evaluating and responding to the social impacts or effects of significant land use and development.

Objectives of social impact assessment policy and guidelines cont.

- Provide guidance to Council to consider 'social effects' when preparing Scheme amendments or any 'significant social effects' flowing from a proposed development of 300 or more dwellings.
- Facilitate improved project planning and design through earlier identification of potential social effects or significant social effects.
- Support informed decision making by strengthening the quality and relevance of information and analysis provided to Council as the planning authority or responsible authority.
- Provide a basis for Council to determine, as relevant, any social effects, whether the social effects are positive or negative, and if negative, whether they are significant or can be mitigated and minimised.
- Facilitate meaningful, respectful and effective community and stakeholder engagement on social impacts, as appropriate.
- Ensure any social impact assessment is undertaken using accepted social science methodologies.

Implementation

The policy and guidelines are primarily intended to be used by Council officers and developers to assist developers preparing a social impact assessment where Council considers:

- A social effect will result when preparing a planning scheme amendment; or
- A significant social effect will result from a particular land use or development proposal.

The policy and guidelines are the starting basis for an assessment.

Legislative and policy context

The key legislation that underpins the SIA and Guidelines are as follows:

Local Government Act 1989

This Act sets out the objectives of local government which correlates with the principles of SIA.

Section 3C: Objectives of a Council

1. The primary objective of this Act is for Local Government 'to endeavour to achieve the best outcomes for the local community having regard to the long term and cumulative effects of decisions'.
2. In seeking to achieve its primary objectives, a council must have regard to the following facilitating objectives:
 - a. Promote the social, economic and environmental viability and sustainability of the municipal district;
 - b. To ensure that resources are used efficiently and effectively and services are provided in accordance with the Best Value Principles to best meet the needs of the local community;
 - c. To improve the overall quality of life of people in the local community;

- d. To promote appropriate business and employment opportunities;
- e. To ensure that services and facilities provided by the Council are accessible and equitable;
- f. To ensure the equitable imposition of rates and charges;
- g. To ensure transparency and accountability in Council decision making.

Planning And Environment Act 1987

The legislative framework for SIA and authority of Local Government to require SIA to be undertaken for selected developments is contained in the Planning and Environment Act Victoria 1987:

Section 4: Objectives

2. The objectives of the planning framework established by this Act are:
 - c. To enable land use and development planning and policy to be easily integrated with environmental, social, economic, conservation and resource management policies at State, regional and municipal levels;
 - d. To ensure that the effects on the environment are considered and provide for explicit consideration of social and economic effects when decisions are made about the use and development of land;

Legislative and policy context cont.

Section 12: What are the duties and powers of planning authorities?

2. In preparing a planning scheme or amendment, a planning authority:
 - c. Must take into account its social effects and economic effects.

Section 60: What matters must a responsible authority consider?

1. Before deciding on an application, the responsible authority must consider:
 - f. Any significant social effects and economic effects which the responsible authority considers the use or development may have.

Maribyrnong Planning Scheme

In preparing an SIA the relevant provisions of the Maribyrnong Planning Scheme must be considered.

Specifically in regard to the SIA Guidelines, the Maribyrnong Planning Scheme provides the following context:

- **Clause 21.04 Settlement**
 - **21.04-3 Social Impact Objective 6**

To minimise adverse social impacts from development and land uses.

Strategies

- Require a social impact assessment for significant rezoning proposals, residential developments greater than 300 dwellings and major commercial developments.
- Use social impact assessment to determine what new facilities are needed and the contributions required from developers.

- **Clause 21.07 Housing**

- **21.07-1 Residential Capacity and Location**

- **Policy Guidelines**

- Request applications for key strategic redevelopment sites and for developments with more than 300 dwellings provide social impact assessment.

Categories of 'social effects' or 'significant social effects' to be considered

A list of some of the categories of potential social effects of development is provided below. These categories are for consideration and include:

- appropriate housing
- public areas
- health and wellbeing
- public transport
- education, lifelong learning and social inclusion
- active and passive recreation
- arts and culture.

The categories of social effects are for consideration in a SIA and the key questions to be considered in response to each category of social effect is defined and detailed in the 'How to Consider Social Effects' section.

Opportunities for community benefit

Community benefit can be derived from new developments. A list of potential community benefit opportunities include:

Land use to meet the needs of the community

In line with demand, incorporating uses that provide benefit to the community such as child care; public open space; and accommodation of health services.

Integrated public realm

Opportunities could include provision of pedestrian and bicycle linkages to existing public spaces, public plazas, as well as appropriate landscaping and street furniture on the development site.

Affordable housing

Opportunities to provide affordable housing through registered housing providers or s173 agreements. The Planning and Environment Act 1987 defines affordable housing as 'housing, including social housing, that is appropriate for the housing needs of any of the following very low income households; low income households; moderate income households'.

Gaming and liquor applications

The requirement outlined in the Maribyrnong Planning Scheme for the provision of Social Impact Assessment for electronic gaming machine applications is not subject to these guidelines.

These applications must separately respond to the following clauses within the Maribyrnong Planning Scheme:

- [22.06 Gaming Policy](#)
- [52.28 Gaming](#)

The requirement outlined in the Maribyrnong Planning Scheme for the provision of a Cumulative Impact Assessment for licensed premises applications is not subject to these guidelines.

Planning applications that include licensed premises are considered separately under the following clauses within the Maribyrnong Planning Scheme:

- [22.08 Licensed Premises Policy](#)
- [52.27 Licensed Premises](#)

SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT GUIDELINES

Overview

These Social Impact Assessment Guidelines provide guidance for developers undertaking a social impact assessment for developments of 300 or more dwellings or through a significant rezoning process.

Triggers for social impact assessment

The following triggers determine whether a SIA will be requested and to what level of detail.

Applicants are encouraged contact Council to clarify the appropriate SIA requirements.

Development type	Triggers
Residential developments greater than 300 dwellings	All planning permit applications with greater than 300 dwellings.
Significant Rezoning Proposals	As part of a significant rezoning amendment a SIA may be required as determined by the Planning Authority

Components of social impact assessment

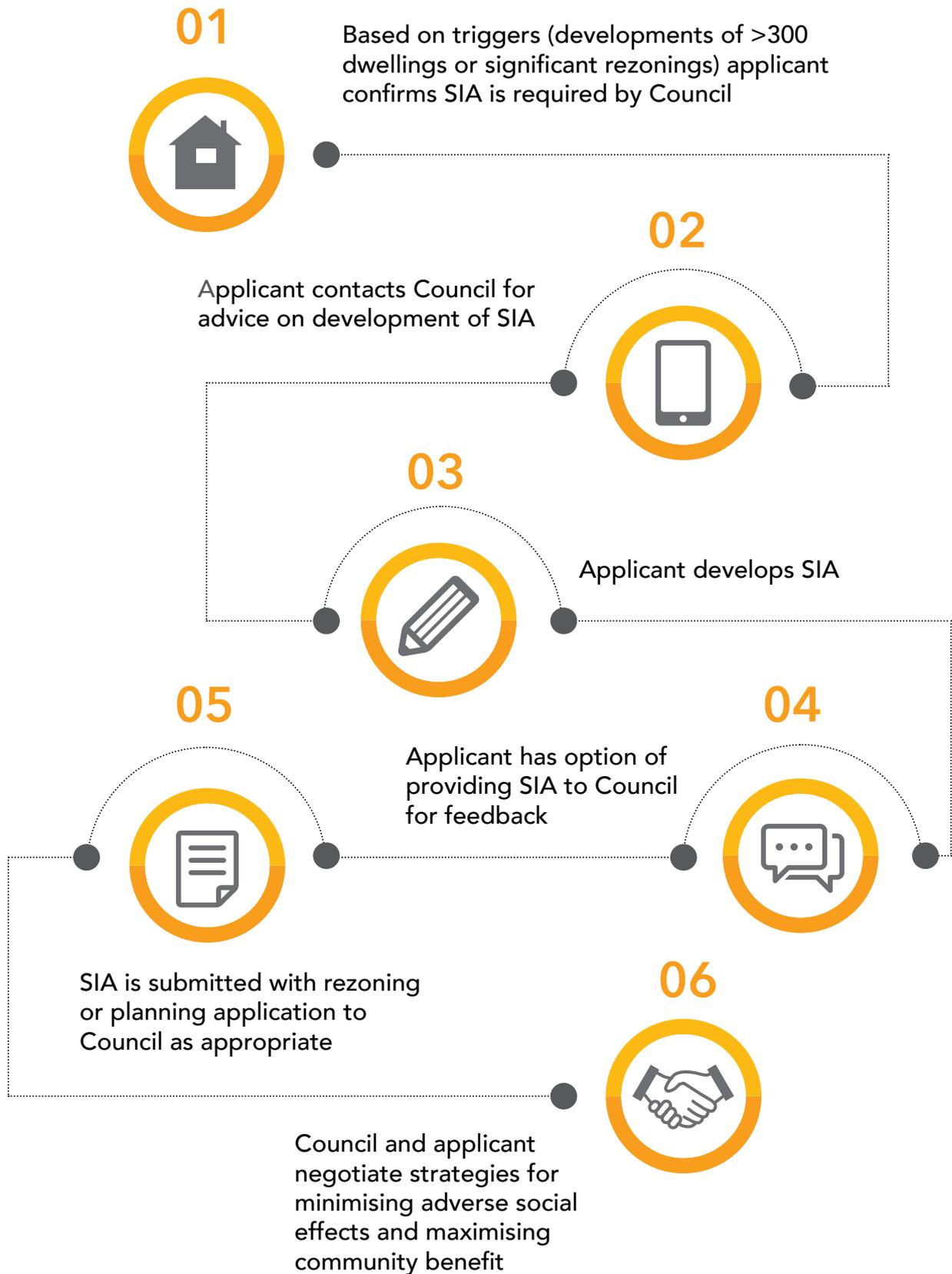
- Prediction of demographic make-up of the development.
- Regional demographic and population growth analysis.
- Analysis of predicted social effects.
- Assessment of predicted social effects.
- Recommendations for mitigation of negative impacts of predicted social impacts.

Details of the City of Maribyrnong's demographic profile and the precinct population forecasts can be found at the following link:

<https://forecast.id.com.au/maribyrnong/population-age-structure-map?WebID=10ts>.

Process for applicants

This section outlines the process for undertaking a SIA for development of >300 dwellings or significant rezoning amendments.



How to consider the social effects

This section outlines the social effects that can inform a social impact assessment. It also provides links to different resources including Council policies and other relevant State Government policies and programs.

Social effects	Considerations	Suggested resources*
Appropriate Housing	<p>How does the development meet the housing needs of the community?</p> <p>Consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Households with children • People with limited mobility and older adults • Lone person households • Students • Affordable housing 	<p>Maribyrnong Housing Strategy 2018 Planning mechanisms for affordable housing Maribyrnong Population Forecasts - Forecast.id Liveable Design Guidelines Apartment Design Guidelines for Victoria Maribyrnong Good Design Standard 2014</p>
Public Areas	<p>How are public areas safe, accessible and consistent with Council's open space principles?</p> <p>Consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate active frontages • Access for all • Community safety • Pedestrian access and links to surrounding pedestrian pathways • Cycling access and links to surrounding cycling paths • Safe vehicle access • Tree planting, landscaping and street furniture 	<p>Maribyrnong City Design Manual 2017 Highpoint Planning and Urban Design Framework 2015 West Footscray Neighbourhood Plan Urban Design Framework 2018 A Shared Approach to Safety in the City of Maribyrnong 2015-17 Footscray Structure Plan 2014 Maribyrnong Bicycle Strategy 2014 Maribyrnong Safe Travel Plan 2012-17 Maribyrnong Walking Strategy 2011 Safer Design Guidelines for Victoria</p>
Health and Wellbeing	<p>How will the development contribute to the health and wellbeing of the community?</p> <p>Consider access to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health services and pharmacies • Maternal and child health services 	<p>Maribyrnong City Council Health and Wellbeing Profile 2016 Vichealth Indicators Survey 2015 LGA Profiles Victorian Health Survey findings 2014 Australia's Health Tracker Atlas Women's Health Atlas of Victoria – Maribyrnong factsheet</p>

Social effects**Considerations****Suggested resources***

Public Transport

How will residents of the development access public transport?

How has the development been designed to facilitate and encourage public transport usage?

Consider access to:

- Pedestrian connections
- Bicycle facilities
- Proximity to Principal Public Transport Network

[Maribyrnong Integrated Transport Strategy 2012](#)

Education, Life Long Learning and Social Inclusion

How will the development contribute to the learning opportunities of the community?

How can appropriate learning facilities and services be integrated into the development?

Consider:

- Kindergartens
- Long day care centres
- Schools
- Libraries
- Neighbourhood houses
- Community meeting space
- Ageing in Place

[Maribyrnong Strategy for Children 2015-18](#)
[Child Friendly Cities](#)

Maribyrnong Library Strategy

[Maribyrnong Human Rights and Social Justice Framework 2017-21](#)

[Disability Access](#)

[Intercultural Cities](#)

[Maribyrnong Strategy for Young People 2014-18](#)

[Age-Friendly Victoria Declaration](#)

Social effects	Considerations	Suggested resources*
Active and Passive Recreation	<p>How will residents of the development have access to the facilities and services they need?</p> <p>Consider access to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local, neighbourhood and regional passive open space • Active recreation opportunities for a diverse community 	Maribyrnong Open Space Strategy 2014
Arts and Culture	<p>How does the development plan for future cultural activities?</p> <p>How can cultural facilities and services be integrated into the development?</p> <p>Consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visual arts • Performing arts • Opportunities relevant for diverse cultures 	<p>Maribyrnong Public Art Strategy Maribyrnong Arts and Culture Strategy 2018-23</p>

*At the time of publication

APPENDICES

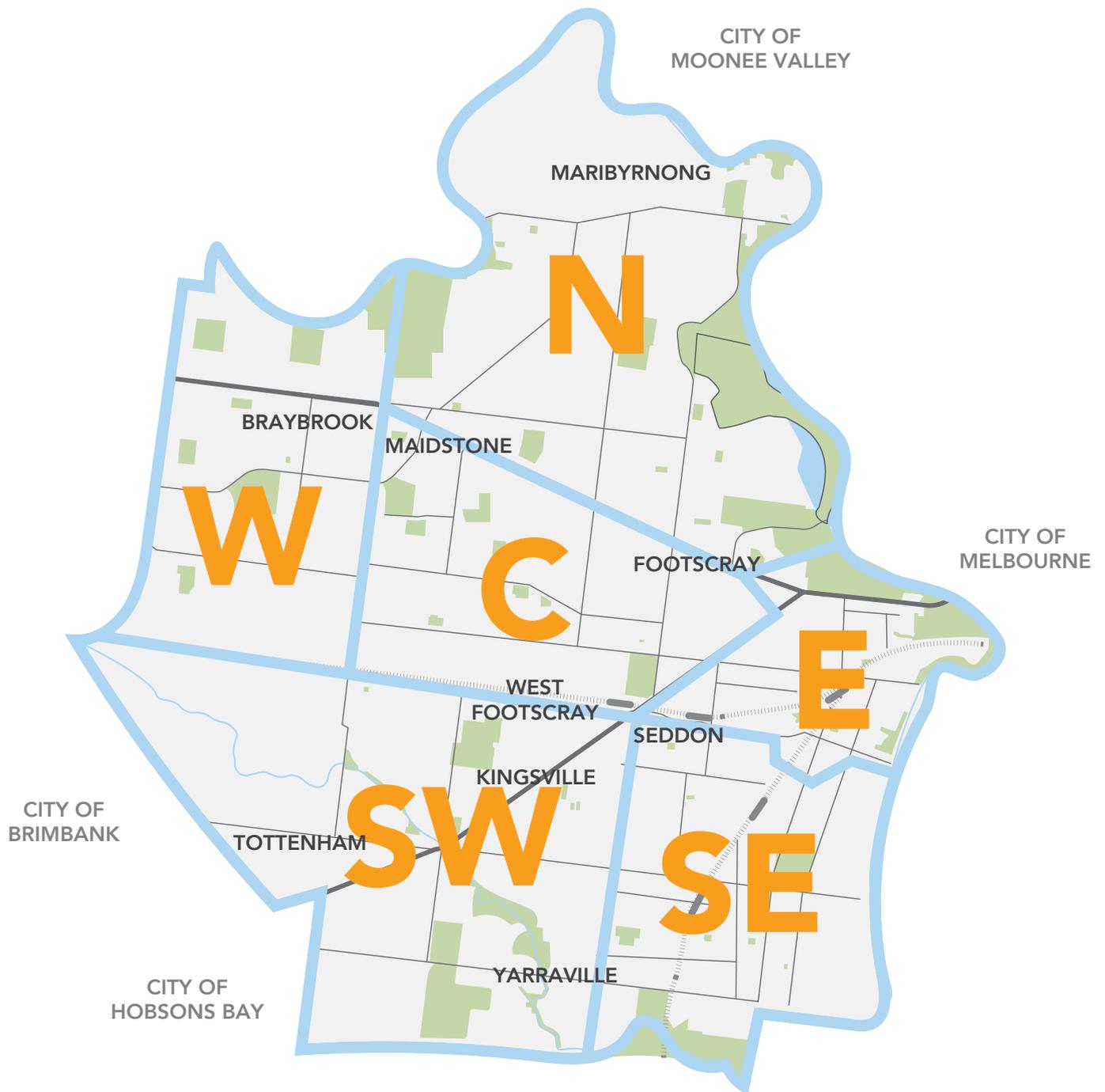
Appendix 1: Glossary

Term	Glossary
Affordable Housing	Affordable housing has the same meaning given by section 3AA of the Planning and Environment Act 1987.
Commercial Development	Development involving business activity. This includes commercial activities such as retail, entertainment and office spaces.
Community Benefit	Community benefit is the community wellbeing derived from residential or mixed use. This can often mean that specific community benefit can be negotiated between developers and council to offset the potential social effects of the proposed development.
Human Rights	Human rights are the 20 human rights set out in the Victorian Charter for Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Charter). Council is obliged to consider the Charter as a named public authority. This means Council must give proper consideration to human rights in decision making and act compatibly with the rights contained in the Charter.
Liveability	Liveability refers to the influence that the urban environment of a city has on the wellbeing of its residents. This includes commercial and residential design, and the amenity of a city such as the accessibility of services and facilities including roads and other civic infrastructure, schools, sporting facilities, parks and gardens, child care and public transport (Plan Melbourne).
Mixed Use Development	<p>The clustering of commercial uses with a residential development (For example: education, employment, housing, business, retail, food, entertainment, community and development infrastructure or other activities (DELWP Urban Design Charter)</p> <p>The Victorian Urban Design Framework defines medium density as a range of complementary uses within the same building, site or precinct. The different uses may be arranged floor by floor, or side by side. The uses may be residential, commercial, retail or institutional.</p>
Open Space	The Maribyrnong Open Space Strategy defines public open space as all publicly owned land that is set aside primarily for recreation, nature conservation and passive outdoor enjoyment. This includes parks, gardens, reserves, playgrounds, waterway corridors and publicly owned urban plazas. Public open space is generally reserved or zoned for that purpose, distinguishing it from other types of publicly owned land.

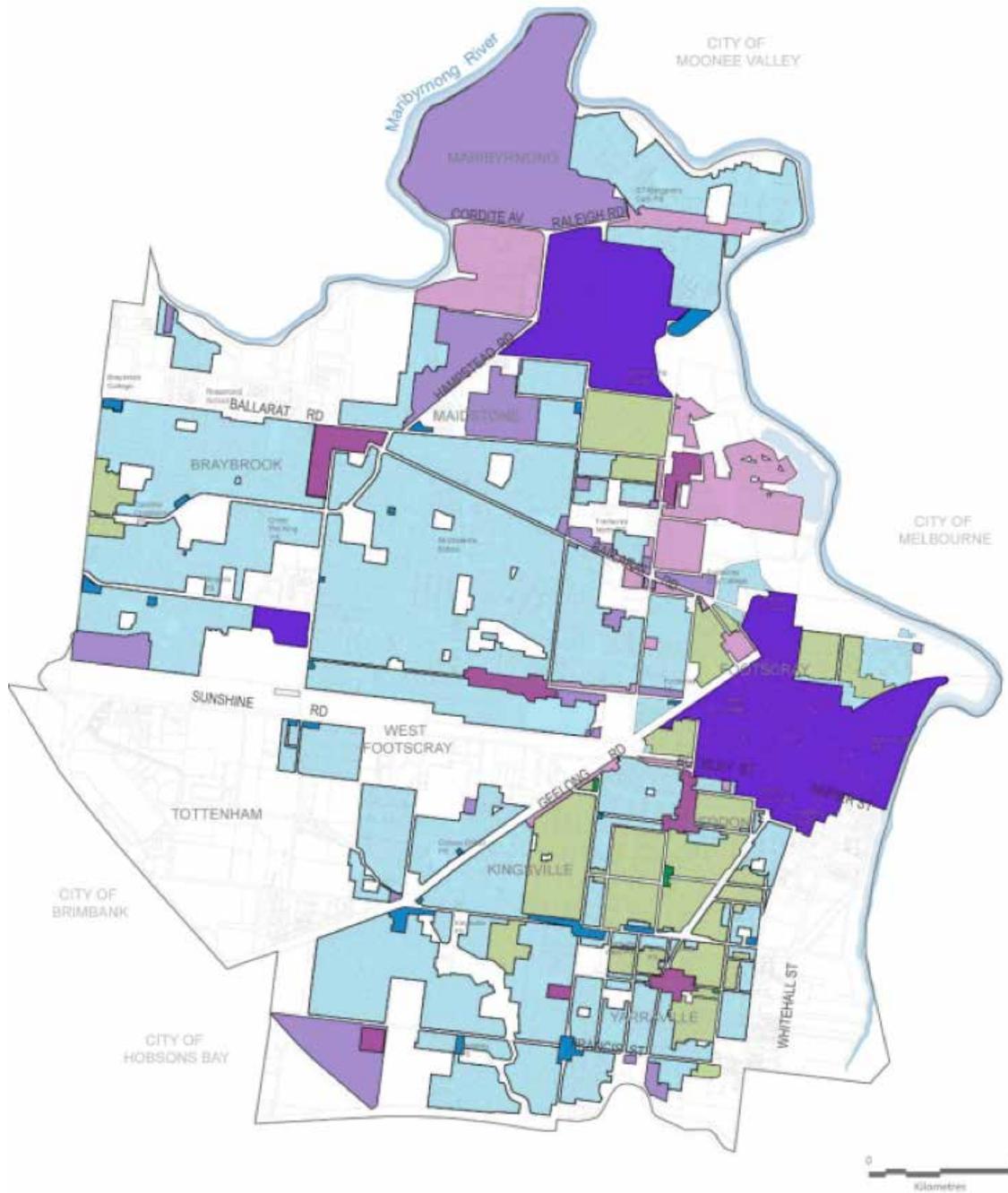
Appendix 1: Glossary cont.

Term	Glossary
Planning Permit	A planning permit is a legal document granted under the Planning and Environment Act 1987, that allows a certain use and /or development on land.
Planning Scheme Amendment	A Planning Scheme Amendment is a formal process that changes the Planning Scheme to improve the scheme or reflect new circumstances that change the way that land can be used or developed.
Precincts	This is based on the six precincts for the City of Maribyrnong which are outlined in Appendix 1.
Residential Developments	This is development associated with residential dwellings.
Rezoning	A rezoning is a legislative action which is considered through the planning scheme amendment process.
Social Impact	Changes that may occur to people’s way of life, environment, health and wellbeing and access to services and infrastructure, as a result of residential or development.
Social Impact Assessment	An assessment of a residential or mixed use development application that identifies the potential social impacts.
Social Effects	Social effects are the key areas that may be impacted by a residential or mixed use development.
Strategic Redevelopment Site	A Strategic Redevelopment Site identified in the Maribyrnong Housing Strategy as urban renewal precincts or large parcels of former commercial or industrial land with the potential for significant growth and change. These locations provide opportunity for increased density proximate to activity centres and fixed line transport.
Wellbeing	Is a state of health, happiness, and contentment, along with security. It can also be described as judging life positively and feeling good. For public health purposes, physical wellbeing (for example, feeling very healthy and full of energy) is also viewed as critical to overall wellbeing. Wellbeing is typically measured with self-reports, and indicators such as household income and unemployment levels (Australian Institute of Health and Wellbeing Australia’s Health Glossary 2018).

Appendix 2: Precinct map for the City of Maribyrnong



Appendix 3: Maribyrnong Housing Framework Plan (Maribyrnong Housing Strategy 2018)



LEGEND

Substantial Change Area		Incremental Change Area		Limited Change Area	
	Activity Centre		Local Centre & Small Destination		Local Centre & Small Destination
	Strategic Redevelopment Site		Established Residential Area		Heritage, Neighbourhood Character & Other Areas
	Neighbourhood Activity Centre				
	Urban Corridor & Development area				

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