

Officer South Employment precinct

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

About the project

What is planned for the Officer South Employment Precinct?

The Victorian Planning Authority (VPA) is leading the preparation of a structure plan for the Officer South Employment Precinct. We are working in partnership with Cardinia Shire Council, state government agencies and service authorities.

The Officer South Employment Precinct Structure Plan (PSP) will deliver a regionally significant commercial area and state significant industrial area. It will be a precinct that locates employment areas and housing close to open space, activity centres, community facilities and access to public transport. The precinct is expected to provide approximately 22,000 jobs and deliver around 1,600 new homes.

Where is the Officer South Employment Precinct?

The Officer South Employment Precinct is in Cardinia Shire Council and is approximately 45km south-east of Melbourne's central business district. The precinct is approximately 1,069 hectares and is bound by Cardinia Creek to the west, Lower Gum Scrub Creek to the east, Princes Freeway to the north and green wedge area to the south.

What is the Victorian Planning Authority (VPA)?

The Victorian Planning Authority (VPA) is a state government authority. The VPA is responsible for planning in new suburbs and renewal sites in Victoria. The VPA reports to the Minister for Planning.

The VPA works closely with councils, government agencies and the planning and development community on integrated land use and infrastructure coordination for important development sites and precincts.

Our major tasks include unlocking land for new homes and communities, facilitating housing diversity and affordability, job creation and better development of new communities in growing and established areas.

How is the VPA working with the Cardinia Shire Council?

The Victorian Planning Authority (VPA) is leading the preparation of the PSP and planning controls for the Officer South Employment Precinct in consultation with the Cardinia Shire Council. The VPA is facilitating a whole-of-government approach, which includes consulting with all relevant stakeholders, including state government agencies, council, and landowners.

What does this plan propose to change with the Cardinia Planning Scheme?

The plan proposes a planning scheme amendment to the Cardinia Planning Scheme to implement the Officer South Employment PSP and Supplementary Infrastructure Contributions Plan (ICP) to guide growth in this area over the next 20-30 years.

What is a Planning Scheme Amendment?

A planning scheme governs the way land can be used and developed within the bounds of the Victorian planning system. A planning scheme is updated from time to time via a Planning Scheme Amendment to change the way land can be used or developed or to improve a particular scheme.

What is a precinct structure plan?

A precinct structure plan (PSP) is a high-level strategic plan for a defined 'precinct' area that sets out the preferred location of land uses and infrastructure to guide development, subdivision and building permits which is incorporated into the local Planning Scheme through a Planning Scheme Amendment.

PSPs are prepared having regard to existing features of the site and surrounds, relevant state government and council policy (including the [Precinct Structure Planning Guidelines: New Communities in Victoria – October 2021](#)) and the aspirations of the community. The views of landowners within the precinct are also considered subject to them being consistent with the above.

Matters considered in a PSP may include the location of future activity centres, roads, cycle and pedestrian paths, heritage places, parks, waterways and other open spaces, schools, and community infrastructure.

Once PSPs are incorporated into the relevant local planning scheme they are implemented primarily through subdivision planning permit applications lodged with the local council.

Planning applications to subdivide and develop land within a precinct must be generally in accordance with an approved PSP. For further information, refer to [Generally in Accordance](#).

What is a place-based plan?

This is the key plan that provides the overall direction on future land uses, major transport networks, open space and activity centres within the precinct structure plan (PSP).

What is an infrastructure contributions plan?

An infrastructure contributions plan (ICP) is a system for funding basic and essential local infrastructure required by a new community.

An ICP ensures that developers within the precinct contribute to the cost of providing new intersections, local open space and community facilities.

An ICP may be made of one or two parts: a standard levy and/or a supplementary levy. The standard levy is a set rate that may be used to fund transport, community and recreation infrastructure and public land provision. In some circumstances, a supplementary levy may also apply. For more information, refer to the [ICP Guidelines Summary by the Department of Transport and Planning](#).

What is a supplementary infrastructure contributions plan?

The supplementary infrastructure contributions plan (ICP) is the primary mechanism for council to collect funds to contribute towards non-standard but allowable basic and essential local infrastructure as identified by the Officer South Employment PSP not already covered by the standard levy. The supplementary ICP for public consultation includes the draft cost estimates for which development will provide a contribution towards.

What is the Ministerial Direction for ICPs?

The Minister for Planning has issued the *Ministerial Direction on the Preparation and Content of ICPs* under section 46GJ of the [Planning and Environment Act 1987](#) (the Act) and reporting requirements for ICPs under section 46GZI of the Act.

The Ministerial Direction specifies where ICPs can be used (i.e. which development settings) and the requirements for preparing an ICP, including standard levy rates, land valuation and indexation methods, and the infrastructure that can be funded by an ICP.

Why is there a Public Acquisition Overlay (PAO) for Thompsons Road?

A Public Acquisition Overlay (PAO) has been applied to the north of the proposed Thompsons Road alignment to ensure the future delivery of the Thompsons Road corridor within the precinct. The PAO extends the total width of the corridor to 70 m, 29 m beyond the standard 41 m allowance for primary arterial roads. This is consistent with the design prepared as part of the federally funded business case for the corridor.

Why is there a Public Acquisition Overlay (PAO) for Princes Freeway?

A Public Acquisition Overlay (PAO) has been applied to land to the east of Officer South Road adjoining the Princes Freeway. Its purpose is to protect land from inappropriate development and land uses to ensure the future construction and delivery of east facing ramps connecting the freeway to Officer South Road.

What is the cultural values investigation area?

The cultural values investigation area is contained by an area within approximately 200 metres from Cardinia Creek along the western boundary of the precinct structure plan. The investigation area is proposed to protect and manage the intangible cultural heritage values identified through the [Officer South Cultural Values Assessment](#).

Who will implement, own, and maintain the cultural values investigation area?

The cultural values investigation area will be owned and maintained by the private landowner for the time being, although there will be continued discussions with agency stakeholders to understand if this ownership and maintenance can be transferred over. The land will be zoned Rural Conservation Zone Schedule 3. This zone does not allow for development in the area that is not compatible with and protects the landscape and intangible cultural heritage values.

What is a Regionally Significant Commercial Area?

Regionally Significant Commercial Areas (RSCA) are identified in [Plan Melbourne](#) as major activity centres or growth area businesses with residential precincts, identified in the Victorian Government's [Melbourne Industrial and Commercial Land Use Plan \(MICLUP\)](#). They should provide for and support access to a wide range of goods and services, including office and retail development and provide for a wide range of employment opportunities. RSCAs are expected to deliver more intensive forms of employment uses including office and commercial activity.

Plan Melbourne identifies the Officer South Employment PSP as a RSCA for the area north of Lecky Road. There is a provision in MICLUP that states RSCAs should have a primary role for economic and employment purposes with no less than 50 per cent of the land in each precinct being allocated for these purposes.

What is a State Significant Industrial Precinct?

State Significant Industrial Precincts (SSIP) are identified in the Victorian Government's broad planning framework, [Plan Melbourne](#). They provide strategically located land for major industrial development linked to the Principal Freight Network and transport gateways. It is state policy that these areas are protected from incompatible land uses to allow continual growth in freight, logistics and manufacturing investment.

The Officer South Employment PSP is identified as a SSIP south of Lecky Road. There is provision within [Melbourne Industrial and Commercial Land Use Plan \(MICLUP\)](#) that states that the Officer South Employment SSIP may be reconfigured to support the establishing community at Cardinia Road Employment PSP.

How did the VPA decide where to locate the different land uses?

The Officer South Employment Place-based Plan delivers on state government policy to prioritise employment outcomes for the south-east while providing a high-amenity residential area with key community infrastructure to support a complete integrated and connected neighbourhood.

State Government policy sets clear expectations for the Officer South Employment Precinct and identifies the southern portion as a future State Significant Industrial Precinct (SSIP) and the northern portion as future Regionally Significant Commercial Area (RSCA).

State policy and guidance, set out in MICLUP, requires that employment is the main focus of the precinct and the amount of SSIP land must be preserved. MICLUP also requires that no less than 50 per cent of the RSCA is allocated to commercial uses. The policy also states the PSP process can explore reconfiguration of the SSIP to support stronger interface outcomes for the adjoining Cardinia Road Employment precinct. If reconfiguration of any state-significant industrial land is required, there must be no net loss of overall state-significant industrial land provision.

The Victorian Planning Authority worked within the MICLUP guidance to consider various land use configuration options for the precinct through the co-design and agency validation process. The land use options were evaluated through a first principles assessment based on the Precinct Structure Planning Guidelines and performance targets based on planning for an integrated and connected neighbourhood. The land use options were then refined based on outcomes of the economic and community infrastructure analysis to achieve good economic outcomes and ensure community infrastructure can be provided for the new community.

What is a Victorian Heritage Inventory site?

A Victorian Heritage Inventory (VHI) site is a site identified within the Victorian Heritage Inventory for having known archaeological values.

An archaeological site is a place which:

- Contains buried evidence like an artefact, deposit or feature which is 75 years old or more
- Provides information about past activity
- Needs archaeological methods to reveal information about the place
- Is not associated only with Aboriginal use.

What is the Urban Design Performance Area?

The Urban Design Performance Area (UDPA) mandates the delivery of a high-level Masterplan to guide a wholistic urban design approach and ultimate outcome within the residential area. The UDPA outlines key urban design performance outcomes for the built environment, and example design outcomes to help measure proposed development.

Drainage

Melbourne Water will respond to any detailed drainage queries.

For more information on the Development Services Scheme for the Officer South Employment Precinct, please visit the **Yoursay project page**, hosted by Melbourne Water:

<http://yoursay.melbournewater.com.au/officer-south-draft-drainage-strategy>

The planning process

What are the Precinct Structure Planning Guidelines?

The PSP 2.0 process is one part of the [Precinct Structure Planning Guidelines](#). The Guidelines set out what needs to be achieved for planning for Victoria's growth and give clarity on how this can be done.

The Guidelines apply to the preparation of PSPs for new residential communities and new employment areas. The purpose of the Guidelines is to:

- Increase consistency and certainty when we are planning for growth
- Assist in the timely preparation and completion of PSPs
- Facilitate the creation of new communities that are better places to live and which respond to the challenges of the future.

What are the steps in the planning process?

The VPA is implementing a process called 'PSP 2.0' for this precinct, which changes the traditional planning process. This new approach to planning establishes a vision and purpose for the precinct and seeks to understand what is valued by the stakeholders from the start of the process.

Pre-commencement February 2020

- Initial discussions with council, agencies and landowners to identify opportunities and constraints

Pitching May 2020

- Pitching sessions where council, agencies and landowners can present their visions, opportunities and constraints
- Technical studies

Vision & purpose July 2020

- Visioning workshops with key stakeholders
- Further technical studies
- Identity of precinct is forming

Drafting the plan November 2020 to September 2023

- Place-based co-design workshop to establish draft plan
- Prepare draft Place-based Plan
- Agency validation

Public consultation September 2023

- Update plans and negotiate with key stakeholders
- Community consultation
- Submissions
- If required, VPA refers unresolved issues/submissions to VPA Standing Advisory Committee

Having your say

What are the next steps?

After the consultation period ends, the Victorian Planning Authority (VPA) will review all submissions to address concerns wherever possible. As part of this process, the VPA will contact submitters if further clarification of their feedback is required.

If the VPA is not able to resolve all the concerns raised, it may refer submissions to the [Victorian Planning Authority Projects Standing Advisory Committee \(VPA SAC.\)](#)

If submissions are referred to the VPA SAC, the SAC will invite submitters with unresolved submissions to participate in an independent review process. The SAC will determine the best way to consider unresolved matters – either by round table discussions, written submissions, or a public hearing.

Do you have advice for how to write a submission?

Anyone can make a submission. We have prepared a guide to help you make a submission on a Planning Scheme Amendment. You can access it on either on the [Officer South Employment Precinct project page](#) or our [Engage Victoria website](#). You can also speak to the team directly for assistance.

What happens to my submission?

Submissions provided to the VPA are part of an open public process where all parties affected by the planning scheme amendment can provide input into the draft amendment.

If you choose to make a submission, you consent to your submission being made public, and being identified as the author of the submission.

Your submission will be made available for public inspection on the VPA website until two months after gazettal of the resulting planning scheme amendment and will also be made available to relevant ministers and local councils, and other involved government agencies.

If you are a private individual, your personal information will be removed from your submission before it is released to parties outside government or local councils. Contact details do not include the address of land which is the subject of your submission.

By making a submission, you also give permission for copyright material to be copied and made public.

Who can I speak to for more information?

Please contact:

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Sarah.Doring@vpa.vic.gov.au

How can I stay involved and informed?

The Victorian Planning Authority will continue to involve you in the planning process as it progresses. Opportunities for informal and formal feedback on the plan will also be provided. If you would like to be kept informed about the process, please register your details in the **'Subscribe now'** section on the [Officer South Employment PSP project website](#).