

Surf Coast Planning Scheme

Amendment C145surf

Explanatory Report

Overview

This amendment implements relevant recommendations of the Moriac Structure Plan 2023 (Surf Coast Shire, adopted December 2023).

The Moriac Structure Plan 2023 (MSP 2023) provides a strategic framework to guide land use and development decisions over the next 10 years.

The amendment will implement key actions and strategies to ensure future growth maintains the town's rural character and considers landscape constraints.

It does this by inserting a new Framework Plan for Moriac in the Municipal Planning Strategy which will provide land use directions and set clear growth expectations by identifying a town settlement boundary. Other proposed changes include updates to local policy and zone corrections to reflect the use of land for open space or to correct mapping errors.

Where you may inspect this amendment

The amendment can be inspected free of charge at:

- Surf Coast Shire website at www.surfcoast.vic.gov.au
- During office hours at the following place:
 - Surf Coast Shire offices, 1 Merrijig Drive, Torquay
- Department of Transport and Planning website at <http://www.planning.vic.gov.au/public-inspection> or by contacting the office on 1800 789 386 to arrange a time to view the amendment documentation.

Submissions

Any person may make a submission to the planning authority about the amendment. Submissions about the amendment must be received by **Sunday 19 October 2025**.

A submission must be sent to:

The Coordinator
Strategic Planning
Surf Coast Shire Council

By post: PO Box 350, Torquay VIC 3228

In person: 1 Merrijig Drive, Torquay

By email: info@surfcoast.vic.gov.au

Panel hearing dates

In accordance with clause 4(2) of Ministerial Direction No.15 the following panel hearing dates have been set for this amendment:

- Directions hearing: 6 April 2026
- Panel hearing: 4 May 2026

Details of the amendment

Who is the planning authority?

This amendment has been prepared by the Surf Coast Shire Council, which is the planning authority for this amendment.

Land affected by the amendment

The amendment applies to land shown in Figure 1 and includes the township of Moriac and the immediate surrounding hinterland.

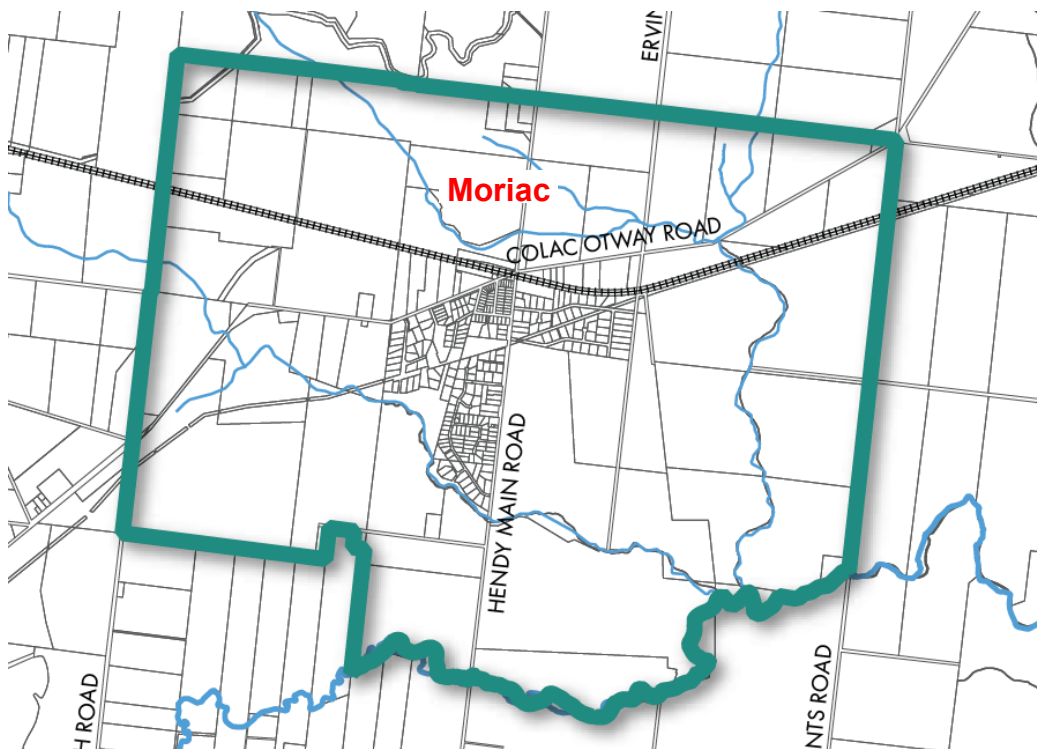


Figure 1 Moriac and Immediate Hinterland

The amendment area is part of Wadawurrung Country and contains approximately 1,790 hectares (ABS Moriac State Suburb Census).

Moriac is located approximately 23 kilometres south-west of Geelong and 20 kilometres east of Winchelsea. It is categorised a 'small town' and at the 2021 census it had a resident population of 852 people with 294 dwellings. The town is part of the Western Gateway region in the G21 Regional Growth Plan 2013 and provides important housing lifestyle options and niche tourism activity.

The Geelong Warrnambool railway line provides a physical barrier along much of the northern boundary and a tributary of Thompson Creek forms a natural boundary to the south. The town is surrounded by farmland which supports grazing and cropping activities.

The character of Moriac is defined by its rural residential atmosphere consisting mostly of single dwellings that are well setback from property boundaries. The low density built form of Moriac is largely the product of a lack of sewer infrastructure.

The largest zone within the town is the Low Density Residential Zone, accounting for 47% of the total land area. The second largest zone by area is the Township Zone (41%) which is mostly developed with dwellings.

Lots sizes within the Low Density Residential Zone are at least one acre (4,000 square metres) so they can treat and retain wastewater onsite. There is no minimum lot size within the Township Zone, however lots created since 1979 have an average area of 2,000 square metres.

Moriac has experienced a steady increase in new home construction (an increase of 37 new homes between 2016 to 2021) placing increasing demands on services and infrastructure.

Moriac supports a small number of commercial businesses operating in the Township Zone including the General Store and post office which represent the centre of town.

The town has good access to open space with Newling Reserve centrally located within the township and is connected to the surrounding community via footpaths and linking reserves.

Agribusinesses 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.

A mapping reference table is attached at **Attachment 1** to this Explanatory Report.

What the amendment does

The amendment introduces a new Framework Plan together with other policy and rezoning recommendations of the MSP 2023.

Specially, the amendment makes the following changes:

Zoning maps

- Amends Planning Scheme Map Nos. 11 and 12 to:

- Rezone land at 38 Greenfields Drive, Moriac from Farming Zone (FZ) and Township Zone (TZ) to Public Park and Recreation Zone (PPRZ) to reflect its public ownership and use as an open space reserve.
- Rezone land at 32 Daniel Drive, Moriac from Township Zone (TZ) and Low Density Residential Zone (LDRZ) to Public Park and Recreation Zone (PPRZ) to reflect its public ownership and use.
- Rezone part of land at 970 Hendy Main Road and 80 Heidi Road, Moriac from Township Zone (TZ) to Farming Zone (FZ) as the land is located outside the town boundary and therefore should not be zoned for urban use.
- Rezone land at 605 Cape Otway Road, Moriac from Township Zone (TZ) to Public Park and Recreation Zone (PPRZ) to reflect its public ownership.
- Rezone public reserves in the Hinterland Estate from Low Density Residential Zone (LDRZ) to Public Park and Recreation Zone (PPRZ).
- Rezone land at 60 Daniel Mews, Moriac to correct zoning anomalies abutting the creek reserve.

Overlay maps

- Deletes Planning Scheme Map Nos. 11DPO and 12DPO as the Hinterland Estate is substantially complete, therefore the overlay is no longer required.

Planning scheme ordinance

- Amends Clause 02.04-8 (Moriac framework plan) to replace the Moriac Framework Plan with a new plan from the MSP 2023.
- Amends Clause 11.01-1L-04 (Moriac) to provide updated strategies.
- Amends Clause 17.02-1L (Business in Surf Coast) to remove strategies no longer relevant.
- Amends Clause 19.03-2L (Infrastructure design and provision in Surf Coast) to provide updated strategies.
- Deletes Schedule 14 to Clause 43.04 (Development Plan Overlay) as the Hinterland Estate has been completed therefore the overlay serves no planning purpose.
- Amends the Schedule to Clause 72.03 (What does this Planning Scheme consist of?) to delete Maps 11DPO and 12DPO.
- Amends the Schedule to Clause 72.08 (Background Documents) to include the MSP 2023.

Strategic assessment of the amendment

Why is the amendment required?

The amendment is required to provide an up-to-date land use and development framework for Moriac. At present, the Moriac Structure Plan adopted by council in 2010 provides the existing context for land use planning in Moriac through local policies in the Surf Coast Planning Scheme.

This amendment will introduce a new Framework Plan and local policies into the planning scheme which respond to the following key factors:

- State and regional planning policy reforms since 2010.
- The rezoning of the last remaining area of land identified for housing development in the MSP 2010 and therefore the need to identify future housing growth options for Moriac.
- Current community aspirations for the town.
- Public infrastructure including open space, footpaths and trails, community buildings and service infrastructure (i.e. electricity, water, wastewater) to determine future needs.
- Implications for growth of the town and growth in visitors to the rural hinterland of Moriac.

The Moriac Structure Plan 2022 Background Report found that the demand for new housing opportunities is high and growing, and supply is limited. Property values have been increasing in the Surf Coast Shire with significant increases in the median price of rural residential dwellings. Forecasts suggest around 244 people will need to be accommodated in Moriac and surrounding district by 2036, requiring up to 95 new dwellings.

Although the amendment does not rezone land for immediate supply, the proposed Framework Plan identifies a Future Low Density Development Area just south of the Hinterland Estate. A future rezoning proposal incorporating a Development Plan Overlay or a combined planning permit for subdivision would be required to unlock this land for future residential use. Short term land supply will be aided by the approval of Amendment C124surf which rezoned 13.8 hectares of land to LDRZ north of Cape Otway Road and approved the subdivision of 29 lots.

The rezoning of parcels adjoining Newling Reserve and Thompson Creek reserve reflects council's ownership and use for public recreation. It is therefore intended to rezone these parcels to Public Park and Recreation Zone (PPRZ). Land adjoining a tributary of Thompson Creek at 970 Hendy Main Road, Moriac shall be rezoned from Township Zone to Farming Zone. This change will correct a mapping error and ensure all urban zoned land is contained within the town settlement boundary.

Similar to the Moriac Framework Plan 2010 a town settlement boundary is proposed

to contain growth and maintain a compact settlement pattern consistent with state planning policy directions.

The Moriac community has played an important role in contributing to the development of the MSP 2023 therefore the amendment is expected to deliver a net community benefit particularly in response to maintaining the small-town rural character whilst providing opportunity for incremental growth.

Settlement Boundary Analysis – Future Residential Growth

In accordance with state and regional planning policy a settlement boundary is proposed to confine urban development. The boundary is identified on the proposed Framework Plan. A Growth Area Multi-Criteria Assessment (GAMA) was undertaken by Mesh Planning to identify where future growth should occur, particularly as the last remaining area of land identified for housing in the MSP 2010 has been rezoned.

Land located immediately to the south of the Hinterland Estate (Area 2A in the GAMA) was identified as the preferred location for growth and part of this area has therefore been included within the town settlement boundary. The reasons for the identification of Area 2A as a future growth location include:

- It is located within an 800 metre radius of the town centre.
- It provides connection to existing open space areas.
- It directly adjoins the Hinterland Estate, an area recently developed for low density residential living.
- It does not contain significant remnant native vegetation.
- It is low risk in relation to bushfire attack.

How does the amendment implement the objectives of planning in Victoria?

The amendment implements the objectives of planning in Victoria as outlined in section 4(1) of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* (PE Act) as follows:

- a) *Provide for the fair, orderly, economic and sustainable use, and development of land*

The amendment will result in the fair, orderly, economic and sustainable use and development of land by implementing a well-planned, holistic strategy that addresses the needs of the existing and future community of Moriac.

- b) *Provide for the protection of natural and man-made resources and the maintenance of ecological processes and genetic diversity*

The Framework Plan applies a town settlement boundary to contain growth and protect important local environmental features, particularly Thompson and Raven Creeks environs.

- c) *Secure a pleasant, efficient and safe working, living and recreational environment for all Victorians and visitors to Victoria*

The amendment rezones land to Public Park and Recreation Zone which will improve existing public open space networks for community use. Policy directions also seek to enhance liveability by encouraging tree protection and supplementary planting of trees to shade private and public land.

d) Facilitate development in accordance with the objectives

The amendment introduces a strategic framework to guide development in accordance with state, regional and local planning policy.

How does the amendment address any environmental, social and economic effects?

Environmental effects

The amendment supports the preservation and enhancement of the environment as follows:

- It applies a town settlement boundary to prevent outward expansion of the town to protect agricultural land from loss and reduce the negative impacts on the environment from urban development.
- It directs future growth to an area that does not contain significant remnant vegetation.
- It directs future growth to a low-risk location having a radiant heat flux of less than 12.5 kilowatts/square metre.
- It encourages retention of significant trees within lots and supplementary planting of canopy trees to help offset the negative effects of climate change.

Social effects

The amendment supports social wellbeing of the community as follows:

- It aims to facilitate the orderly growth and development of Moriac to cater for the needs of the projected population.
- It reflects community aspirations for the town to grow incrementally whilst maintaining its much valued low density character.

Economic effects

The amendment supports economic wellbeing of the community as follows:

- It directs commercial use to the town centre and encourages future development of a potential commercial area north of Cape Otway Road.

Does the amendment address relevant bushfire risk?

The MSP 2023 was informed by a bushfire assessment from Kevin Hazell Bushfire Planning.

The report directly addresses bushfire content in the planning scheme, including the strategies in Clause 13.02-1S Bushfire Planning.

Report findings include:

Landscape bushfire considerations

- The identified landscape type is Landscape type 1. Landscape type 1 is at the lowest end of the landscape risk on the spectrum of risk in Victoria.
- Due to the lack of non-grassland landscape scale hazards, the potential for extreme bushfire behaviour is limited.
- The residual risk at the landscape scale is from grassfire.
- Mitigating the landscape impact of grassfire is highly achievable through separation of development from unmanaged grasslands and the planning of development to be low fuel.

Alternative locations for development

- Development to the east of Hendy Main Road would take advantage of protection afforded by the existing settlement and would not be exposed to grassfire hazards to its north-west, a dominant direction for grassfire to be approaching.
- Where there are choices in preparing the structure plan on which development sites proceed, it is important that new development is contiguous to existing settlement areas and the proximity these provide to low fuel areas.

Availability of safe areas

- BAL: Low places are present in the denser urban areas in the northern and southern parts of Moriac.

Site based exposure

- Development can be set back from bushfire hazards to achieve a radiant heat flux of less than 12.5kw/sq.m in completed development. Based on this, exposure of future development would be consistent with Clause 13.02-1S.

The CFA were consulted in the preparation of the final report and did not raise any concerns.

Does the amendment comply with the requirements of any other Minister's Direction applicable to the amendment?

The amendment complies with the following Ministerial Directions:

Ministerial Direction s7(5) – The form and content of planning schemes

All proposed ordinance and maps have been drafted to comply with this direction.

MD1 – Potentially Contaminated Land

The amendment does not directly rezone land for residential purposes, or directly authorise land to be used for sensitive use. MD1 is therefore not considered relevant to the assessment of the amendment. It is noted an amendment to rezone the Future Low Density Development Area as shown on the Framework Plan will have to address this Direction as it would facilitate a sensitive use. The future growth area

however is not known to be potentially contaminated and therefore it's deemed appropriate for further investigation work to follow this amendment.

MD11 – Strategic Assessment of Amendments

The amendment is consistent with this direction which ensures a comprehensive strategic evaluation of a planning scheme amendment and the outcomes it produces.

MD19 – Amendments that may result in impacts on the environment, amenity and human health

This direction is not considered relevant as the amendment is not expected to cause significant impact on the environment, amenity, human health due to pollution and waste.

How does the amendment support or implement the Planning Policy Framework and any adopted State policy?

G21 Regional Growth Plan

Moriac is not identified as a location to accommodate targeted growth within the G21 region (which plans for 500,00 people by 2050). The G21 Regional Growth Plan acknowledges that the region's smaller rural settlements will continue to experience minimal growth.

The Growth Plan recognises the importance of protecting settlement breaks between major growth areas.

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

Distinctive Area and Landscape

In 2019 the Victorian Government declared part of the Surf Coast Shire a 'distinctive area and landscape' under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*. 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.

Moriac is located well north of the declared area and therefore will not be subject to any policy controls associated with the declaration.

Planning Policy Framework

Clause 11.01-1S – Settlement

The amendment is consistent with the objective of this Clause "*to facilitate the sustainable growth and development of Victoria and deliver choice and opportunity for all Victorians through a network of settlements*" through the implementation of the Moriac Structure Plan.

Clause 11.01-1R – Settlement - Geelong G21

The amendment accords with settlement policy for the Geelong G21 region, which does not identify Moriac as an area for targeted growth. The application of a town

settlement boundary is consistent with policy strategies to contain settlements and protect urban breaks between settlements.

Clause 11.01-1L-04 – Moriac

The amendment updates the settlement policy for Moriac to reflect the MSP 2023.

Clause 11.02-1S – Development capacity

The amendment is consistent with the objective *“to ensure sufficient development opportunities are available to meet the needs of current and future Victorians”* and implements several strategies by identifying a future Low Density Development Area for rezoning to residential when supply is required. The identification of future low density residential land will respect the rural character of the town and ensure lots can treat and manage wastewater onsite.

Clause 11.02-2S – Structure planning

The amendment supports the objective of this clause *“to facilitate the fair, orderly, economic and sustainable use and development of urban areas”* by implementing a structure plan which will guide the orderly growth and development of Moriac.

Clause 12.01-1S – Protection of biodiversity, Clause 12.01-1L – Protection of biodiversity in Surf Coast, Clause 12.01-2S – Native vegetation management

The amendment implements the objectives and strategies in these clauses by applying a town settlement boundary to limit outward expansion of the town and impact on the environment caused by urban development. The Moriac Framework Plan directs future development to locations that do not have high biodiversity significance.

Clause 13.02-1S – Bushfire planning

The amendment meets the requirements for bushfire protection, minimisation and management as discussed earlier in the explanatory report under ‘Bushfire Risk’.

Clause 16.01-1S – Housing supply

The amendment does not rezone land for residential purposes to increase housing supply however the Moriac Framework Plan does identify a potential future low density development area subject to further investigation to meet future housing needs.

Clause 17.02-1L – Business in Surf Coast

The amendment is consistent with strategies directing commercial uses to land within settlement boundaries. The Moriac Framework Plan identifies land within the town boundary for future commercial activity subject to further investigation.

Clause 19.03-2L – Infrastructure design and provision in Surf Coast

The amendment will facilitate limited growth opportunities to ensure Moriac is self-sufficient in the provision of infrastructure. No change is proposed to minimum lot size with lots to treat and retain all wastewater.

How does the amendment support or implement the Municipal Planning Strategy?

The amendment is consistent with the following clauses of the Municipal Planning Strategy and will assist in achieving objectives of the clauses as follows:

- It implements the strategic directions for settlement (Clause 02.03-1) by reinforcing Moriac's small rural town role with limited growth opportunities due to infrastructure constraints (absence of reticulated sewerage).
- It will contain urban development within a town settlement boundary to maintain a compact township and protect rural landscapes and non-urban breaks.
- It implements the strategic directions for environmental risks and amenity (Clause 02.03-3) by considering environmental risks. Future development will be directed to east of the township where bushfire risks can be mitigated.
- It implements the strategic directions for housing (Clause 02.03-6) by directing rural residential development to where it can be serviced without detracting from landscape, cultural heritage, environmental or agricultural values.

Does the amendment make proper use of the Victoria Planning Provisions?

The amendment makes proper use of the Victoria Planning Provisions by updating and amending the Municipal Planning Strategy and Planning Policy Framework to achieve the strategic directions set by the structure plan.

The amendment proposes to rezone land to Public Park and Recreation Zone which accords with Ministerial Direction s7(5) - The form and content of planning schemes with the land owned by council.

PPN37: Rural residential development – the amendment is consistent with the guidance material, in that the identification of future low density residential land is in keeping with role of the town to support limited growth and recognises the fact the town is unsewered and requires larger lots sizes to manage onsite wastewater. The future growth area will abut urban land to the north to minimise land use conflict with agricultural activities. Necessary infrastructure can also be supplied through the adjoining estate to the north.

PPN64: Local planning for bushfire protection – the amendment is consistent with the guidance material, in that bushfire risk has been considered. Refer to the heading *Does the amendment address relevant bushfire risk?* for a detailed response to bushfire risk.

How does the amendment address the views of any relevant agency?

The views of all relevant agencies were sought through the development of the Moriac Structure Plan 2023. The following agencies were invited to comment on the draft structure plan: Barwon Water, Powercor, Downer Utilities, Telstra, VicTrack, Southern Rural Water, Environment Protection Authority, Corangamite Catchment Management Authority, Department of Transport and Planning, Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action and Registered Aboriginal Parties.

VicTrack requested that the designation of their land (currently leased to council) not be referred to as a “Town Park” as it may be required for transport purposes in the future.

Barwon Water confirmed previous feedback, and comments have been adequately addressed. Barwon Water also confirmed Moriac is not currently considered a ‘priority’ township and therefore Barwon Water has no current plans for the provision of reticulated sewage to the existing developed areas.

The CFA made several recommendations which resulted in the preparation of a revised Bushfire Assessment.

Does the amendment address relevant requirements of the Transport Integration Act 2010?

The amendment is unlikely to have a significant impact on the transport system as it will not significantly increase the capacity for development.

The amendment does not rezone land for residential purposes. Land to be rezoned will be within the PPRZ or corrects zoning anomalies which will not impact on the transport system.

The amendment also identifies a future low density residential development area that directly abuts Hendy Main Road. Prior to this land being rezoned for residential use transport impacts and mitigation measures will be further considered.

How does the amendment have regard to the principles set out in the *Yarra River Protection (Wilip-gin Birrarung murrn) Act 2017* in relation to Yarra River land and other land, the use or development of which may affect Yarra River land?

The amendment does not affect Yarra River land.

Resource and administrative costs

What impact will the new planning provisions have on the resource and administrative costs of the responsible authority?

The amendment is not expected to have a significant impact on council resources or administrative costs. The proposed changes are generally local policy changes that specifically relate to Moriac and surrounding hinterland. The amendment will therefore not generate an increase in planning permit applications. The introduction of a new Framework Plan will provide clear guidance to local residents and set community expectations which may reduce impact on resources.

Attachment A – Mapping reference table

Location	Mapping Reference	Address	Proposed Zone changes	Proposed Overlay changes	Proposed deletion changes
Moriac	Surf Coast C145surf 001znMaps11_12 Exhibition	38 Greenfields Drive	Rezone from TZ and FZ to PPRZ		
Moriac	Surf Coast C145surf 001znMaps11_12 Exhibition	32 Daniel Drive	Rezone from TZ and LDRZ to PPRZ		
Moriac	Surf Coast C145surf 001znMaps11_12 Exhibition	970 Hendy Main Road and 80 Heidi Road	Rezone from FZ to PPRZ		
Moriac	Surf Coast C145surf 001znMaps11_12 Exhibition	605 Cape Otway Road (RES1 LP210223)	Rezone from TZ to PPRZ		
Moriac	Surf Coast C145surf 001znMaps11_12 Exhibition	Hinterland Estate (Res1, 2 & 3 on PS809711)	Rezone from LDRZ to PPRZ		
Moriac	Surf Coast C145surf 001znMaps11_12 Exhibition	60 Daniel Mews	Corrects FZ and LDRZ anomalies abutting the creek reserve		
Moriac	Surf Coast C145surf 002d-dpoMaps11_12 Exhibition	Hinterland Estate Land bound by Hendy Main Road to the east			D-DPO14