

Yarra Ranges Draft Housing Strategy – Monbulk FAQs

Where in the Draft Housing Strategy is future housing growth in Monbulk discussed?

A summary of future housing growth investigation areas is included in Appendix 2, of the Draft Housing Strategy. Neighbourhood Character is addressed in Chapter 8. Both documents are available at <https://shaping.yarraranges.vic.gov.au/housing-strategy-2023>. Appendix 2 can be found under 'Additional Documents'.

What is proposed for future housing growth in Monbulk?

Residential land in the township is currently in a Low Density Residential Zone (LDRZ). This requires a minimum lot size of 4000sqm per home and restricts opportunities for medium density development, such as units and townhouses.

It is proposed that three well-located and suitable areas within a reasonable walking distance of the town centre be rezoned to Neighbourhood Residential Zone (NRZ). This zone allows for modest, medium density development (See Appendix 2, Map 1).

What is the background for proposing future housing growth in Monbulk?

The Monbulk Structure Plan, adopted by Council in 2017, made recommendations to investigate areas for medium density development near the town centre.

Following the approval of the Structure Plan, an expert bushfire consultant in consultation with the Country Fire Authority, completed a study to establish which areas were of low bushfire risk and therefore acceptable for housing growth.

Council officers have also undertaken a preliminary assessment of which housing areas, within easy walking distance to the town centre, may be suitable for rezoning. Further information can be found in Appendix 2. The identified areas will be subject to further review as part of any planning scheme amendment process.

What type of housing will amending the zoning allow? How does it differ from existing housing in Monbulk?

Applying the Neighbourhood Residential Zone (NRZ) will allow for development of more diverse housing in Monbulk. The current housing is largely low density, family homes. The NRZ still keeps generous spacing around buildings for landscaping, to complement the neighbourhood and landscape character of Monbulk's residential areas.

What are the main points of neighbourhood character for future housing in Monbulk?

The Draft Housing Strategy describes this further under Section 8.2.7 'Township Suburban' (p.90-91). This includes a statement of existing character as well as 'Preferred Future Character', which includes:

- Future dwellings will have pitched roofs and verandahs facing the street.
- Future dwellings will be well set back from all boundaries with canopy trees in the front, side and rear.
- Buildings will not obstruct significant views.
- Buildings will be subservient to the landscape.

Detached homes will continue to be the main the housing type, but more dense development will be allowed in the NRZ area.

Will future planning controls require a minimum subdivision lot size?

No. Planning controls for setbacks, open space, landscaping, site cover and other requirements will apply instead. These are further detailed on pg. 73 of the Neighbourhood Character Study.

Council has tested scenarios for the proposed development settings and depending on the size of the land, most blocks could be subdivided into 2-3 lots, accommodating an average three-bedroom homes.

The settings are intended to achieve a balance between allowing for different types of housing while protecting the valued neighbourhood and landscape character, sense of place and cultural identity.

Does this mean that every block in the NRZ can be subdivided?

Many lots in Monbulk contain an existing home. In some cases, these homes are not positioned on a block in a way that would easily accommodate an additional home in the rear. In these cases, the original would need modification or demolition to enable subdivision. Due to these challenges, it is unlikely that every block will be subdivided.

Will there be more opportunity to provide feedback on the changes proposed for Monbulk?

If the Housing Strategy is adopted by Council in 2024, the next step will be to prepare a planning scheme amendment. The amendment will implement the Housing Strategy recommendations and actions in the form of new zones, overlays and planning policies in the planning scheme.

Every planning scheme amendment process will include more specific details on the proposed changes and public consultation. All planning scheme changes need final approval by the Minister for Planning.

The Housing Strategy creates the strategic foundation for changes to the planning scheme, by showing intent for more housing development in Monbulk, where it could occur, and in what form.