

## 2.0 Policy Context Overview

Local governments have an important role in the policy landscape for housing, which is also affected by Federal and State Government policy. This Strategy has been prepared in the context of the relevant policy framework.

### 2.1 Housing Policy Context

The policies that have informed this Strategy are further discussed in Appendix 1 and are summarised below in Table 1.

Council must work within the directions and context of State Government planning policy in carrying out its role to bring about a strategic approach to planning for population growth.

The State Government’s metropolitan planning strategy **Plan Melbourne 2017-2050** guides residential, commercial and industrial development to 2050. It directs population and new housing growth to be kept within the existing Urban Growth Boundary, identified growth areas and selective redevelopment areas within existing communities. **Plan Melbourne 2017-2050** seeks sustainable population growth, with new accommodation to be provided in locations that capitalise on existing infrastructure, jobs, services and public transport.

At a local government level Councils can facilitate State policy through the Planning Scheme and other policies and strategies, by encouraging housing supply and diversity and guiding new development into sustainable locations with access to services, transport and facilities. Councils can influence the liveability of new housing for its residents through design guidelines for new development. Importantly, the Planning Framework provides the community with certainty about where housing change will occur and the level of change.

Once established through a Housing Strategy, the Residential Framework is then translated into planning scheme provisions that enable Council to consider new housing in a strategic and targeted way to create more liveable communities, renew community facilities and maintain infrastructure assets.

### 2.2 How Will the Strategy Address Policy Gaps?

The Housing Strategy builds on the direction and content of Yarra Ranges’ existing 2009 Housing Strategy, which established the strategic basis and direction for housing in the residential policies and provisions of the Planning Scheme.

The 2009 Strategy delineated residential areas into three separate change areas to direct where varying rates of growth would occur. These were:

- Consolidation (High change)
- Restricted Change (Moderate change)
- Least Change (Low change)

However, the 2009 Strategy was written before statewide residential zone reforms were introduced in 2013. As changes have occurred over time to the State-wide planning system, inconsistencies have occurred in Yarra Ranges, due to conflicts between the State-standard zones as they now operate, and the existing Yarra Ranges residential framework as intended by the 2009 Housing Strategy.

There is a need to address these policy gaps by providing a clear and consistent revised residential framework along with more recent population growth and settlement issues in Yarra Ranges, changed demographic characteristics and housing needs, and responding to important issues such as housing diversity, affordability and environmental sustainability.

Changes to State and Federal level planning directions and policy may impact parts of the Housing Strategy, which may need updates in future if inconsistencies arise. For example, the Victoria Government’s Housing Statement: The Decade Ahead 2024-2034 introduced a target to build 800,000 homes over the next decade in Victoria and to improve housing affordability. Similar targets may result in a need to adjust the Housing Strategy to State and Federal policy intentions if required.

Table 1. Key Roles and Policies

Government level	Roles and responsibilities	Relevant policy area/initiatives
Federal	The Federal Government does not have a direct role in housing provision but does have an interest in affordability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Immigration policy</li><li>• Taxation</li><li>• National Affordable Housing Agreement</li><li>• Commonwealth rent Assistance</li></ul>
State	The Victorian Government provides statutory and strategic guidance about land use planning in Victoria as well as managing public housing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Victoria Planning Provisions</li><li>• State Planning Policy</li><li>• Plan Melbourne 2017-2050</li><li>• Eastern Metropolitan Land Use Framework Plan (2022) (draft)</li><li>• Residential Zones</li><li>• Homes for Victorians (2017)</li><li>• The Upper Yarra Valley and Dandenong Ranges Regional Strategy Plan</li><li>• Yarra Ranges Localised Planning Statement (2017)</li></ul>
Local	Yarra Ranges Council influences housing policy at a local level through the provisions of the local Planning Scheme and through advocacy to other levels of government.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Local Planning Policy in the Yarra Ranges Planning Scheme</li><li>• Council Plan 2021-2025</li><li>• Health and Wellbeing in Yarra Ranges 2021-2025</li><li>• Guiding Principles - Housing and Homelessness (2020)</li><li>• Connected – Yarra Ranges Integrated Transport Strategy 2020-2040</li><li>• Healthy and Active Aging Plan 2019-2023</li><li>• Liveable Climate Plan 2020-2030</li><li>• Economic Development Strategy 2022-2032</li><li>• Structure Plans and Place Plans</li></ul>

## 2.3 How Will the Strategy Address the Key Objectives of the Council Plan?

By creating a long-term strategic plan to manage future population growth and the change in residential areas and activity centres in Yarra Ranges, the Strategy addresses Objectives 1 and 2 in the Yarra Ranges Council Plan 2021-2025.

Figure 4. Council Plan Strategic Objective 1



This objective relates to supporting the health, resilience and wellbeing of communities, to create a fairer and safer environment for all. Enabling access to quality services is an essential part of this Objective. The Housing Strategy assists this by directing future population growth to areas with the best access to services, transport, employment options, and with other benefits urban areas can offer.

Figure 5. Council Plan Strategic Objective 2



This objective relates to creating places that are attractive to use, engaging and rewarding, and that are provided with the necessary infrastructure to enable them to function effectively. The Housing Strategy aims to support the role of Yarra Ranges' activity centres as hubs of population growth which support local economic development, while preserving the valued characteristics of suburban areas.

Figure 6. Council Plan Strategic Objective 3



The Strategy also contributes to achieving Objective 3 by directing population growth away from areas with significant landscapes or ecological significance.

The Council Plan 2021-2025 requires Council to work with all levels of government, key stakeholders and the community in pursuit of these objectives.