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This clause provides local content to support Clause 16 (Housing) of the State Planning Policy Framework.

21.08-1 Housing location and diversity28/04/2016
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The type, location and form of housing has a major influence on the general wellbeing of the community. Land use planning has a direct and important role to play in the provision of housing choices that meet the needs of local communities. Planning for housing is closely connected with settlement planning (refer to Clause 21.03).

The population of Mount Alexander Shire is ageing and households are getting smaller. Compared with Victoria as a whole, the Shire has an older age profile, fewer family households and more single (or lone) person households (ABS, 2011). Population projections prepared by the State Government estimate that the population will continue to age and the number of people per household will continue to fall in the Shire over the next 20 years (Victoria in Future, 2012).

As in the past, single detached dwellings are expected make the greatest contribution to the Shire's new housing stock in the foreseeable future, although Castlemaine in particular is ideally placed to create different housing stock within the existing urban area. More strategic planning work is needed to identify the preferred areas for different forms of accommodation and other strategies for how Council may encourage a greater diversity of housing, having regard to neighbourhood character and heritage attributes.

Key issues

- Recognising that housing preferences and needs are influenced by a complex range of factors and often change as people move through different stages in life.
- Responding to increases in demand for different housing types as a result of demographic changes, including smaller houses, shared housing and housing suitable for older people.
- Increasing the diversity of housing stock in the Shire, which is currently dominated by single detached dwellings on relatively large lots.
- Creating specialised accommodation that is suitable for the people with special needs or disabilities.
- Recognising that significant numbers of people prefer to 'age in place' and that existing housing stock may need to be adapted to accommodate changing needs.
- Adapting existing building stock for alternative forms of accommodation, including shop top living or warehouse style living.
- Understanding the implications of housing that is unoccupied for long periods, reflecting a greater part-time community.

Objective 1

To provide housing that will accommodate the needs of residents at various stages in their lives.

Strategies

- Strategy 1.1 Promote the development of smaller dwellings to respond to the changing housing needs of the community.
- Strategy 1.2 Encourage high quality, environmentally responsible infill and higher density development where appropriate in the Shire's towns, particularly in Castlemaine.

Strategy 1.3 Encourage alternative residential design concepts (e.g. cluster housing) in appropriate areas.

Implementation

The strategies in relation to housing location and diversity will be implemented through the planning scheme by:

Policy guidelines

- Encouraging new subdivisions to have a diversity of lot sizes.

Application of zones and overlays

- Applying the General Residential Zone, Neighbourhood Residential Zone, and Residential Growth Zone to appropriate locations.

Further strategic work

- Updating the Castlemaine Residential Strategy to identify the preferred areas for different forms of accommodation.
- Preparing a housing strategy or similar strategic research to improve the understanding of the Shire's future housing needs.
- Investigating the need for appropriate zoned land for the development of independent living, supported accommodation and full care residential facilities to meet longer term demand.

Reference documents

- Castlemaine Residential Strategy, 2004

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Affordable housing

Adequate, appropriate and affordable housing are basic factors affecting quality of life. Recent trends indicate that housing is becoming less affordable and that there is a mismatch between the needs of the existing community and the provision of housing within the municipality. Research undertaken for the Shire has confirmed, using accepted measures, that certain groups in the Shire face issues in accessing housing that they can afford.

Housing affordability is a complex issue to understand and address through the planning system. It is affected by the supply of residential zoned land, the suitability of housing stock and the location of housing in relation to shops and services and places of employment. It is also influenced by a broad range of factors outside the planning system. There is a strong desire from the Mount Alexander community to ensure that housing is affordable and accessible for all members of the community.

Key issues

- Ensuring that different housing options remain affordable as this is one of the Shire's competitive advantages in attracting new residents.
- Developing meaningful strategies to address affordable housing, noting that responsible authorities have limited opportunities to directly respond to housing needs.

Objective 1

To ensure that all people, including low-income earners, can afford to live in the Shire.

Strategies

Strategy 1.1 Encourage large developments to include a proportion of social housing within the development.

Strategy 1.2 Encourage larger developments to provide a mix of housing types and sizes, including one and two bedroom accommodation suitable for smaller households.

Implementation

The strategies in relation to housing location and diversity will be implemented by:

Policy guidelines

- Encouraging new subdivisions to include smaller lots to promote affordability.

Further strategic work

- Monitoring housing trends, housing needs and housing prices to understand affordability issues and pressures.
- Investigating the setting of targets to address the supply of housing types that are under-represented in the Shire.