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CONTEXT

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The Mornington Peninsula Shire acknowledges the Boon Wurrung / Bunurong people, the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waters of the Peninsula, and pays respect to Elders past, present and emerging. [Council Plan]

The Mornington Peninsula is a special place, with a ~~special-unique~~ relationship to the rest of Melbourne. The Shire is located between Port Phillip Bay and Western Port Bay, approximately 50 kilometres south-east of central Melbourne. ~~It contains Victoria's first European settlement site (at Sorrento),~~ and is one of Victoria's most visited destinations for informal recreation. [21.02]

The Shire has a total area of more than 720 square kilometres, with productive rural areas ~~of above-average productivity~~, scenic landscapes of State-state significance and a coastline extending ~~for~~ more than 190 kilometres. Substantial areas of the Shire, ~~including such as~~ the Western Port coast and ~~the~~ Mornington Peninsula National Park, are of high conservation value and support sites of national and international significance. ~~Western Port also contains Victoria's largest bulk liquid cargo port.~~ [21.02]

The ~~Mornington~~ Peninsula is not a designated urban growth area, ~~and the limitation of urban development on the Peninsula is consistent with State policies for the Peninsula that have emphasised environmental and landscape conservation, the role of the Peninsula as a recreational area and the potential of Western Port for deep water port activities. These priorities continue to be emphasised in the State Planning Policy Framework.~~ The green wedge planning provisions implement a 'green break' to protect the Peninsula from inappropriate metropolitan development and protect areas of environmental, landscape and scenic value. These areas include the Peninsula's biodiversity assets, national and state parks, Ramsar wetlands and coastal areas. In this context, the Peninsula has a different but complementary role to other parts of Melbourne in meeting the overall needs of the community. [21.02 & 11.01-1R Blended]

The Peninsula ~~s~~ retains a distinctive settlement pattern ~~consists-consisting~~ of more than 20 ~~separate settlements~~ townships, within a hierarchy ranging from ~~relatively~~ larger centres ~~such as Mornington, Somerville Hastings, Dromana and Rosebud, through~~ to smaller towns and coastal villages ~~such as Red Hill, Flinders and Merrieks Beach.~~ Around 70 per cent of the Shire is rural land within the green wedge planning zone and 30 per cent is taken up by towns and villages. Green wedge policy seeks to consolidate any new residential development into these existing settlements. This-The settlement pattern, rich history of buildings, places and sites of heritage significance, and the relationship between the townships, ~~the~~ coast and ~~the~~ rural landscape contribute to the Peninsula's distinctive "sense of place". [21.02, 21.03-3 & Council data Blended]

The Mornington Peninsula Shire has a permanent population of approximately ~~120,000~~ 160,000 people (~~1999~~ ABS 2016 Census). ~~This increases to over 180,000 people~~ Many holiday houses are located on the Peninsula, leading to a substantial increase in its population during the summer peak period. ~~The current rate of population growth is approximately 1.06 per cent per year, compared with the average for Melbourne of 0.8 per cent.~~ [21.02 & ABS Census]

~~Finally, the attraction of t~~ The Peninsula has ~~led to~~ a substantial rural population that is not directly or primarily engaged in traditional agriculture. ~~In this sense~~ That is, many properties ~~on the Peninsula~~ are used for "rural living", generating a further ~~set-range~~ of demands and expectations. issues [21.09] ~~However, the Peninsula's attraction as a residential location and its appeal to hobby farmers has led to~~ including fragmentation of ~~some~~ rural land into ~~relatively smaller~~ parcels, ~~which leads to~~ While the small size of many landholdings leads to pressure on effective and economic agriculture on the Peninsula, the Shire seeks a strategic response which will maintain and foster agricultural viability. [21.09-2]