



City of Knox

Appendix 4: State and regional PPF/rural zones



During the audit period, a review of Victoria's Planning Policy Framework (PPF) was changing the content of planning schemes. Planning schemes are always dynamic. However, the PPF translation is particularly significant because it re-organises the structure of the entire local policy portion of a planning scheme in one amendment.

KEY:	
✘	No support
◓	Some support (could be augmented).
●	Strong support
N/A	Not applicable

	Knox Planning Scheme: PPF									Knox Planning Scheme: Zone Schedules			Council Plans, Policies, Strategies		Notes:
	Clause 11.01-1R Green Wedges - MM	Clause 11.03-3S Peri-Urban Areas	Clause 11.03-5S Distinctive Areas and Landscapes	Clause 14 Natural Resource Management	Clause 14.01-1S Protection of Agricultural Land	Clause 14.01-1R Protection of Agricultural Land - MM	Clause 14.01-2S Sustainable Agricultural Land Use	Clause 17.01-1S Diversified Economy	Clause 35.04 Green Wedge Zone Schedules	Clause 35.06 Rural Conservation Zone Schedules	Clause 35.07 Farming Zone Schedule	Council and Community Plan 2017-2021	Knox Green Areas and Rural Strategy Issues and Opportunities Paper (draft for consultation)		

Peri-urban Planning Scheme Audit Benchmarking Principles

Food Production	Does the planning scheme support 'accepted agricultural practices' and 'accepted farm structures' by exempting them from the requirement to obtain a planning permit (note: other regulation may apply).	N/A	✘	✘	N/A	✘	✘	◓	N/A	✘	✘	✘	✘	✘	Default outbuilding exemptions in rural zones.
	Does the planning system facilitate expansion of the array of food produced - to satisfy demand for local food and expand access to local food for the community.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	◓	✘	✘	✘	✘	✘	◓	GRAS very light on - only Precinct 3 recognised as having agribusiness potential. Refers to recommendations of two background reports which are not publicly available.
	Does the planning system facilitate resilience against climate change, peak oil, and other threats?	N/A	N/A	✘	✘	N/A	N/A	◓	N/A	✘	✘	✘	✘	✘	GRAS does not integrate climate change mitigation with ag
	Does the planning scheme support new sources of revenue on-farm, such as non-exempt agricultural uses, by taking a generally flexible and scale-sensitive approach? These might include farm-based businesses, agritourism, and direct sales.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	◓	◓	✘	✘	✘	✘	◓	GRAS very light on - only Precinct 3 recognised as having agribusiness and agritourism potential. Refers to recommendations of two background reports which are not publicly available.
Food Processing and Manufacture	Does the planning system respond to the scale of an operation and developmental needs for food processing - such as other regulatory requirements, and the infrastructure needed for packaging and distribution.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	✘	N/A	✘	✘	✘	✘	✘	
	Does the planning system provide for the on-farm sale of prepared food, if components of that food are produced or processed on the farm?	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	◓	N/A	✘	✘	✘	✘	✘	

		Knox Planning Scheme: PPF								Knox Planning Scheme: Zone Schedules			Council Plans, Policies, Strategies		
		Clause 11.01-R Green Wedges - MM	Clause 11.03-3S Peri-Urban Areas	Clause 11.03-5S Distinctive Areas and Landscapes	Clause 14 Natural Resource Management	Clause 14.01-1S Protection of Agricultural Land	Clause 14.01-1R Protection of Agricultural Land - MM	Clause 14.01-2S Sustainable Agricultural Land Use	Clause 17.01-1S Diversified Economy	Clause 35.04 Green Wedge Zone Schedules	Clause 35.06 Rural Conservation Zone Schedules	Clause 35.07 Farming Zone Schedule	Council and Community Plan 2017-2021	Knox Green Areas and Rural Strategy Issues and Opportunities Paper (draft for consultation)	Notes:
Aggregation, Distribution and Storage (Wholesale Distribution)	Does the planning system facilitate producers self-distributing their products, especially when they have small and medium sized farms?	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	
	Does the planning system facilitate producers' access to all types of local and regional supermarkets, restaurants and institutions- where most food is purchased- which is a necessary precursor to significantly expanding the consumption of locally grown products. This might relate to the availability of a variation of scales and types of on-farm and commercial storage, aggregation and distribution services.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	
	Does the planning system facilitate "secondary integrated agricultural activities" on farms - such as the sale of non-farm products (where these are ancillary to the marketing of an on-farm product), and the hosting of educational and cultural events related to farming.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	Educational uses and place of assembly (in some zones) are prohibited so would have to provide a legal planning argument for support.
	Does the planning system facilitate personal relationships among producers and consumers whose collective desire is to eat food that is healthy, fresh, tastes good, and to support those who produce it. This might encompass farmers markets, food hubs, shared marketing, shared distribution, regional brand development.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	✗	N/A	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	Planning would require specific policy references - markets, food hubs, shared assets for distribution on farms. Goes against most policy direction to discourage commercial uses not directly related to the farm business.
Nutrient Management	Does the planning system facilitate the prevention of nutrient losses in the environment, moving away from waste management to nutrient management?	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	✗	N/A	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	
	Does the planning system facilitate the production and use of compost as a valuable component of sustainable farming operations?	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	✗	N/A	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	
	Does the planning system facilitate sustainable agriculture practices - for example, environmental stewardship that supports soil health and biodiversity conservation/enhancement, prevents manure and fertilizer runoff, reduces soil erosion and prevents livestock access to waterways. This may be achieved with buffers and setbacks that relate to the scale of the use/development.	N/A	N/A	N/A	Ⓜ	N/A	N/A	Ⓜ	N/A	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	

Summary recommendations:

Note for all Council Matrices

The Farm to Plate Victorian Peri-Urban Planning Scheme Audit defined the problem via a literature review, VCAT review, and a review of state and local government policy reforms, using this information to make recommendations for local planning scheme content within each Council matrix. Relevant content from publicly available, local Council strategies and plans has also influenced the recommendations. Possible changes to the wording in local policy to support local sustainable food systems have been proposed below (refer strike-through and blue text). However, planning schemes are dynamic and there can be no guarantee that the policy content that was reviewed here remains the same at time of reading.

Council documents and the planning scheme show little Council engagement with agriculture and local food production. However, at the time of the audit, the *Knox Green Areas and Rural Strategy Issues and Opportunities Paper (draft)* (GARS) was out for consultation. The GARS project represents a strategic planning review of five precincts within Knox that are of environmental, recreational, agricultural, rural living and landscape value to the Knox community. Having completed consultation, the strategy is now in development. Recommendation 3 of the GARS Issues and Opportunities Paper is:

“Prepare a new local planning policy to provide strategic direction and priorities for agriculture in Knox, based on the findings of the report *Assessment of Agricultural Potential of Rural Land in Knox (RMCG 2016)*” (not publicly available). “As per the new PPF structure, the recommended location for such policy is after 14.01-1R Protection of agricultural land - Metropolitan Melbourne.”

There is a clear intention to provide new policy content based on this strategic work, with the GARS report acknowledging that there is no local policy content relating to agriculture in the existing planning scheme.

Given this intent, and the lack of other Council policies and strategies that support the local food system and local food economy, no recommendations for policy changes are provided here. I would note, however, that the direction being taken with GARS is not a food systems approach and the new policy content is unlikely to reflect the policy direction of the benchmarking principles.