

# PLAN HARCOURT

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS SHEET 6 - INFORMATION ON THE 'PLANNING SCHEME'

### What is the Mount Alexander Planning Scheme?

The Mount Alexander Planning Scheme sets out how land in Mount Alexander, including Harcourt, can be used and developed. Planning permit applications are assessed against the Scheme to make sure they are consistent with planning policy. Council must take into account both State and local policies when making decisions. Separate to the zones and overlays, the planning scheme also contains the Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) which includes local context, the vision for the Shire, strategic directions for the Shire, and the strategic framework plans. Planning policy (state, regional and local) is also contained within the scheme, in the Planning Policy Framework (PPF). To see the proposed changes to the MPS and PPF as part of C94malx, visit Council's website to view the amendment documentation.

### What is a planning scheme amendment?

Amendments are used by Councils to change their planning scheme to achieve a desirable planning outcome or to support a new policy direction. Amendments affect the wider community because they change the way land can be used or developed and can change the way planning applications are assessed. Any amendment to the planning scheme involves all the parties who have an interest in or may be affected by it. Your feedback on Plan Harcourt will assist us in preparing our planning scheme amendment documentation in future.

### What is a zone?

The zone sets out how land in a specific area should be used including residential zones, commercial zones and a range of other zones. A zone includes 3 kinds of controls:

1. Uses which are allowed without the need to obtain a permit.
2. Uses which require planning permission.
3. Uses which are prohibited.

A zone also covers land uses, subdivision, construction of new buildings and other changes to land.

### What is an overlay?

If an overlay applies, the land will have some special feature such as a heritage building, significant vegetation or flood risk. Overlays can also provide requirements and guidelines for the design of new development. Not all land has an overlay, and some land has more than one overlay. Many overlays have schedules to specify local objectives and requirements.

For example, a 'design and development' overlay sets out guidelines for building and development on land within its boundaries. New buildings must comply with the objectives and requirements specified in a design and development overlay schedule.

Please see the Harcourt Framework Plan graphics at Appendix 1 of Plan Harcourt to see whether your land is affected by a zone and/or overlays.

### Any other question not answered here?

Please see the other fact sheets specifically for existing residents, businesses and horticultural producers, visit [www.mountalexander.vic.gov.au/PlanHarcourt](http://www.mountalexander.vic.gov.au/PlanHarcourt) or contact Strategic Planning by email [info@mountalexander.vic.gov.au](mailto:info@mountalexander.vic.gov.au) or phone (03) 5471 1700.