



Planning Panels Victoria

Department of Transport and Planning

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30 May 2025

Dear Party

Victorian Planning Authority Projects Standing Advisory Committee Referral 12: Melton East Precinct Structure Plan

The purpose of this letter is to outline procedural issues raised at the Directions Hearing.

Please find attached:

- Committee Directions
- Distribution List v1
- Notional Timetable outline

The following key dates apply:

Time	Date	Actions for filing and other matters	Direction
12 noon	Wednesday, 4 June 2025	All parties to confirm the information specified, including expert details and site or precinct features for the Committee to inspect	12
12 noon	Tuesday, 10 June 2025	VPA to set up document sharing platform	2
12 noon	Wednesday, 11 June 2025	VPA to provide Committee only with site inspection map and itinerary	10a
12 noon	Thursday, 12 June 2025	VPA to provide summary tables of proposed changes to relevant documents	10b
12 noon	Thursday, 12 June 2025	VPA and Melbourne Water to provide the specified joint information	11
12 noon	Friday, 13 June 2025	VPA to provide advice to all parties on accessing document sharing platform	3
12 noon	Wednesday, 25 June 2025	VPA Part A submission	14
12 noon	Wednesday, 25 June 2025	VPA Day 1 documents	15
12 noon	Monday, 30 June 2025	All expert witness reports due	16
12 noon	Thursday, 3 July 2025	All parties other than VPA and Melbourne Water may circulate opening submission position statements	13
12 noon	One business day before the material is to be presented	Any other material to be presented at the Hearing	21
12 noon	Monday, 7 July 2025	Any supplementary submission from a party not appearing at the Hearing	25
10 am	Monday, 7 July 2025	Hearing commences	

Privacy Statement

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Hearing venue and final timetable

The Hearing will be conducted in person with capacity for parties to present and participate online. The Hearing venue is anticipated to be predominantly held at Flex located at 500 Bourke Street, Melbourne and Hearing Room 1 at Planning Panels Victoria, 1 Spring Street, Melbourne on a limited number of days. The Committee considered the possibility of conducting part of the Hearing in Melton. Due to the limited number of community submitters and the fact that most submitters are represented by Melbourne based advocates, the Committee has decided that the entirety of the Hearing will be conducted in the Melbourne CBD. The Committee thanks the VPA and Melton City Council for exploring this option.

The attached notional Timetable is based on the structure set out by the Committee in its email of 26 May 2025 and confirmed at the Directions Hearing. This includes hearing the majority of evidence in the first two weeks of the Hearing by Table 1 theme. Parties are asked when confirming their experts to identify the theme that the evidence primarily relates too. Experts covering off several themes such as urban design and planning will be allocated to the primary theme order of experts but can present their evidence on other issue themes at the same time. Some change in order may be necessary to accommodate availability of experts and advocates.

The Committee's Hearing Timetable will be updated with party submission dates, expert order, venue details and a video link once parties have confirmed expert details. This includes arrangements for any expert meetings that might be conducted for transport and ICP matters.

Confirmation of submission issues before the Committee

Several parties identified the need for submitters to understand the elements of referred submissions that were within the referral letter Table 1 issue themes.

The Committee verbally directed the VPA circulate its 'VPA referred submissions summary table' to parties. This document identifies referred submission elements referred to the Committee by Table 1 issue theme. Matters that are not identified in this summary table or not included in the Table 1 issues are not matters before the Committee. The Committee notes that the VPA has now distributed this document to parties.

The Committee will consider any specific matters that the VPA formally refers to it by way of an Amended Table 1 if it elects to do that in the circumstances where a major change to the exhibited PSP Place based plan has been made and a party has not had the opportunity to make a submission on that change.

In this regard the Committee received an amended referral letter dated 30 May 2025 (attached) which updates Table 1 issues under Community Infrastructure seeking advice on whether:

The location and size of sports reserves and schools within the precinct is appropriate to balance community needs while maximising Net Developable Area.

Evidence and submissions

Submissions and evidence are to be limited to the referral Table 1 (as amended) issue themes and the specific elements of each theme (this extends to the matters identifies in the 'VPA referred submissions summary table'). Drainage evidence should be limited to the matters before the Committee and not extend to detailed design and modelling of assets.

Submissions and evidence are to be structured in accordance with the Table 1 referred issues.

The VPA has advised that issues in relation to Pre-European wetlands and the archaeological sensitivity of these areas can be considered under the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage theme as the advice sought by the VPA specifically references Plan 17 of the PSP that shows the areas of archaeological sensitivity being consistent with/coinciding, as relevant, with the Pre-European wetlands as shown on Plan 7 of the PSP.

Meetings of experts

The Committee will consider whether there is value in directing meetings of experts in the fields of transport and ICPs once the parties' experts have been confirmed.

Unresolved submissions

The VPA has indicated it will continue to work with submitters to resolve matters where possible, before the Hearing commences. The VPA is encouraged to focus its discussions with current parties to assist in reducing or narrowing the issues and costs of calling evidence. The Committee's directions provide for VPA updates on the progress of such discussions including identifying key changes in its Day 1 documents.

Unredacted versions of Cultural Values and Impact Assessments

Several parties requested the provision of unredacted versions of the:

- Aboriginal Cultural Values Assessment, Unearthed Heritage, 18 December 2024
- Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment, Unearthed Heritage, 27 February 2025.

The Committee prefers that the VPA discuss the potential provision of these documents in unredacted (or less redacted) form on a limited basis (parties calling Cultural Heritage evidence or raising related submission issues and for hearing purposes only) directly with the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation. The VPA will then advise the Committee and parties of the basis on which these documents may be provided, if permitted, as soon as practicable.

Croskell (Employment) Precinct Structure Plan

The Committee advised at the Directions Hearing that a number of matters relating to drainage design in the context of the Development Services Scheme process, land take and drafting progressive certainty and applied zoning provisions for drainage land were raised and considered during the recent VPASAC Referral 11 hearing. While the Committee's report on that matter has been submitted, the VPA has indicated that it is unable to confirm the timing for public release of the report at this stage.

The Committee anticipates that the Day 1 version of the PSP and UGZ13 will also include more recent advice on drafting both from the VPASAC Referral 11 report and the Committee's Report on the Officer South Employment Precinct Structure Plan.

Declarations

Ms Davies declared the following:

With respect to one of the Proponent's experts, I note that Paul Shipp of Urban Enterprise was engaged by SD Planning in 2024 as a subconsultant to provide technical input into an Urban Growth Strategy prepared by my company for Strathbogie Shire Council. This strategy is currently in draft form and may enter a second public exhibition phase in the next few months

It is important to state that Urban Enterprise's work on the project is now complete, and no further involvement or correspondence with me is anticipated. I will not have any correspondence with Mr Shipp during the course of this matter.

Mr Hartigan declared the following:

I live on a rural property on the northern border of the City of Melton. We lease the property and do not pay rates to the City of Melton. I do not consider that I have a conflict of interest with my sitting on this Committee.

No parties raised concerns about these declarations.

If you have questions, please contact Chris Brennan, Senior Project Officer on [REDACTED] or email planning.panels@transport.vic.gov.au.

Yours sincerely



Hosting the Hearing and document sharing

1. The VPA must provide administrative support to manage the Hearing.

Note

The Hearing will be held as an in person Hearing with video conferencing (online) access. Planning Panels Victoria will host the Microsoft Teams online link and will liaise with the VPA to finalise Hearing arrangements.

Administrative support from the VPA will include finding a suitable venue for a hybrid Hearing (except for the dates that it advised it cannot provide a suitable venue), providing technical support, publishing online notice of the Hearing, and establishing and managing a document sharing platform.

2. The VPA must host and manage an online document sharing platform. The platform must:
 - a) Be set up by **12 noon on Tuesday 10 June 2025**
 - b) Include folders for documents from each party.
 - c) Allow a party to upload documents directly.
3. The VPA must email all parties on the distribution list to provide advice on how to access and use the online document sharing platform by **12 noon on Friday 13 June 2025**.
4. Parties wishing to provide access to the document sharing platform for additional people not on the distribution list (such as expert witnesses and consultants) should email the VPA directly with their request.
5. Parties must circulate documents to the Committee and parties by:
 - a) Uploading them to the document sharing platform.
 - b) Emailing the Committee and all other parties on the distribution list to inform them of the document(s) that have been uploaded.
6. Documents must be available to access and download from the document sharing platform until the date the report is submitted by the Committee. Each party is responsible to retain any documents before that date.
7. Documents must meet the following requirements:
 - a) Files must not exceed 20MB in size.
 - b) File names must be as short as possible and begin with the name of the party as it appears on the distribution list:

[Party name] - [Document Title].
 - c) If tabling more than 10 documents at once, they must be accompanied by an indexed list.
 - d) A Microsoft Word version or unlocked pdf version of the document must be emailed directly to planning.panels@transport.vic.gov.au after being uploaded.
8. All information presented to the Committee for the purposes of the Committee process is a public document solely for that purpose unless the Committee directs otherwise. It cannot be used for any other purpose.

Notes

Any request to access a document after that date will be subject to the Freedom of Information process.

For more information on how your submission will be used, refer to the [PPV Website](#).

If your document is larger than 20MB, break it down into parts that are less than 20MB each.

If you do not file documents by the specified time, the Committee may not accept the evidence or material. If you think you will not meet the specified deadline you must provide reasons in writing to planning.panels@transport.vic.gov.au before the deadline.

Directions:

The Committee will not publish or accept material that contains offensive or defamatory material, or personal information about other people (such as emails and phone numbers or photographs of people, particularly children).

Paper documents will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances.

If you have with difficulties providing documents electronically you should contact Planning Panels Victoria.

Before the Hearing

Notice of the Hearing

9. The VPA must publish notice of the Hearing on its website, with information on how members of the public can observe it in person and online.

Information to be provided by the VPA

10. The VPA must provide the following information before the Hearing:
 - a) A site inspection map and itinerary for the Committee to conduct its unaccompanied site inspection by **12 noon on Wednesday 11 June 2025**. The map / itinerary must:
 - (i) identify precinct submitters by submitter number
 - (ii) identify key precinct features relevant to submission issue focus
 - (iii) include any sites identified by parties
 - (iv) be provided only to the Committee.
 - b) Summary tables of the proposed changes since exhibition to the relevant PSP and ICP documents by title, chapter, section (including Plan, Table, Requirement or Guideline number), and by Clause for draft Amendment documents by **12 noon on Thursday 12 June 2025**. This document should set out changes made to address unresolved submissions (both referred and non-referred) and any drafting changes made to correct errors or reflect more recent VPASAC reports.

Information to be provided by the VPA and Melbourne Water

11. The VPA and Melbourne Water must jointly provide the following information to all parties on the distribution list by **12 noon on Thursday 12 June 2025**:
 - a) A summary of the status of the Development Services Schemes (DSSs) and agreed changes proposed to the DSSs and any resultant changes to the exhibited PSP
 - b) an overview of Melbourne Water's outstanding drainage issues.

Information to be provided by parties

12. All parties must advise the Committee of the following by **12 noon on Wednesday 4 June 2025**:
 - a) The details of experts to be called including name and organisation, and the theme that the expert's evidence primarily relates to (refer to Table 1 in the VPA's referral letter).
 - b) Confirm advocate details, distribution list changes, any advocate/expert availability changes and estimated timeframes for primary submissions noting the Committee directions regarding submissions and evidence.
 - c) Sites or precinct features to be included in the Committee's site inspection map and itinerary (please copy in the VPA's representatives in this advice).
13. Other than the VPA and Melbourne Water, parties may circulate opening submission position statements by **12 noon on Thursday 3 July 2025** that:
 - a) identify matters that are understood to be resolved
 - b) identify changes sought to address remaining unresolved issues
 - c) summarise the submission position.

VPA Part A (background and context) submission

14. VPA must file its Part A (Background and context) submission by **12 noon on Wednesday 25 June 2025** that includes:
- A summary of the strategic context, including:
 - relevant planning policies and controls, Ministerial Directions, Practice Notes and relevant Guidelines
 - other amendments that may be under preparation or recently approved that may impact on the Amendment
 - current permit applications that may impact on the Amendment.
 - A summary of the main unresolved issues of the referred submissions
 - An update of any resolved submissions
 - A summary of its Day 1 Changes
 - Any other strategic material that the VPA intends to rely upon in support of the Amendment that has not yet been provided, or that might assist the Committee in its consideration of the Amendment.

VPA Day 1 documents

15. The VPA must circulate a Day 1 version of the Amendment documents and PSP by **12 noon on Wednesday 25 June 2025** which:
- shows any suggested changes in response to submissions or identifies VPA document review drafting
 - is marked up against the exhibited version
 - is labelled 'VPA Day 1 version – Clause/Document X'
 - be in an editable format such as MS Word
 - is supported by a summary table of changes by clause, document section or planning scheme map.

Expert witness reports

16. All expert witness reports must be circulated **12 noon on Monday 30 June 2025**.
17. Expert witness reports are to be constructed to specifically respond to the relevant Table 1 issue theme elements.
18. An expert witness report must:
- comply with the PPV Practice Note 1 - Expert Evidence ([Expert witnesses \(planningpanels.vic.gov.au\)](https://planningpanels.vic.gov.au))
 - not refer to any individual submitter by name – if necessary, individual submitters should be referred to by submission number. Community groups, organisations, corporations and government agencies can be referred to by name.

At the Hearing

VPA opening submission

19. The VPA must present an opening submission on Day 1 of the Hearing that provides:
- An overview of the Day 1 changes
 - The status of any unresolved issues referred to the Committee
 - Its broad position in relation to the referred Table 1 issues.

Melbourne Water opening submission

20. Melbourne Water must present an opening submission on Day 1 of the Hearing that provides:
- An overview of the relevant DSSs and any proposed changes in response to submissions
 - The identification of its outstanding drainage issues
 - Its broad position in relation to the relevant referred Table 1 issues.

Presenting material to the Hearing

21. Submissions, presentations and other material presented to the Committee:
- must be presented electronically
 - must be filed by **12 noon on the business day before the material is to be presented**
 - must relate to the matters before the Committee (Table 1 issues)
 - uploaded to the document sharing platform.

VPA Part B (main) submission

22. The VPA must address the following issues in its main submission or through evidence:
- The VPA's position on Table 1 issues
 - The VPA's response to the issues raised in submissions and evidence
 - Any further changes the VPA proposes to make to the Amendment in response to expert evidence or submissions.

Other party submissions

23. Written submissions must be structured in a manner that:
- sets out the position in relation to the relevant Table 1 issues
 - clearly sets out document changes sought.
24. Oral submission presentations are to focus on the referral Table 1 issues.
25. A party not intending to make an oral submission presentation at the Hearing must circulate any supplementary written submission by **12 noon on Monday 7 July 2025**.

Evidence-in-chief and cross examination

26. Evidence-in-chief should be no longer than 30 minutes for evidence related to the relevant referral Theme issues. It must focus on opinions relating to the relevant referral Table 1 issues.
27. An expert witness may present a summary of their evidence at the Hearing, but it must:
- not include new evidence
 - be filed by 12 noon the business day before that witness is scheduled to appear.
28. Cross examination of witness will be limited to matters within the referred Table 1 issues and be conducted in an efficient manner.
29. If cross examining an expert witness, a party must:
- be present for the whole of the expert witness giving their evidence
 - ask clear and relevant questions, directed to matters of fact or professional opinion, that genuinely assist the Committee in understanding the issues
 - allow the expert witness time to explain their answer.

Notes

The Chair will regulate cross examination. During the Hearing, the Chair may ask you how much time you will need for cross examining each witness, and will ask you to keep to your estimate. You should aim to complete your cross examination as concisely as possible.

Directions:

Cross examination time may be limited.

You may be asked to move on to another topic if the line of questioning is not useful to the Committee.

Things to avoid when cross examining include:

- making a submission or providing your opinion
- giving extensive comment or context as an introduction to your question
- asking questions that are unrelated to the evidence
- arguing with the witness
- commenting on the expert or the evidence
- asking questions that have already been asked by another party.

If you do not support the evidence or basis on which it was prepared, or consider the evidence should not be given weight, detail your reasons in your submission rather than raising these issues in cross examination.

If you are not experienced in cross examination, you are encouraged to write your questions down to ensure they are succinct, structured into themes and able to be asked without long explanations of the context.

For information on how to cross examine, refer to the [PPV Website](#).

Part C (closing) submission

30. The VPA, Melbourne Water and Council will be provided time to present a Part C (closing) submission.

The Part C (closing) submission:

- a) must not raise new matters
- b) may respond to matters raised in other parties' submissions or evidence
- c) identify any final proposed drafting changes to the Day 1 documents
- d) the VPA is to include its final version of the Amendment documentation. The final version must:
 - (i) be labelled 'VPA Part C (closing) version – Clause/Document X'
 - (ii) be marked up against the VPA Day 1 version
 - (iii) show changes proposed in response to evidence or submissions presented at the Hearing.

31. The Committee proposes that parties wishing to provide drafting comments must do so three working days following receipt of the VPA's Part C (closing) version of documents. This will be confirmed by the Committee on the final day of the Hearing. Drafting comments must only relate to drafting issues, not broader issues.

Privacy and use of personal information

32. A party must not record, keep, distribute or publish contact details of any other party obtained during the Committee process, or use those contact details for any other purpose.
33. A party must not record any part of a Hearing by any means without permission from the Chair.
34. A party who wishes proceedings to be recorded must make a request to the Chair at least five business days before the Hearing commences, outlining its reasons.
35. If Planning Panels Victoria records a Hearing, any person provided with a copy of the recording must not publish or distribute that recording or use it for any purpose other than for the Committee process.

Distribution List

Victorian Planning Authority Projects Standing Advisory Committee Referral 12: Melton East Precinct Struct

Use this list to file expert witness reports and other information in accordance with the Committee’s directions. It must not be used for any other purpose. If you are unsure about whether any material or content is appropriate for filing, please seek guidance from Planning Panels Victoria before filing the material.

Version 1

Electronic documents

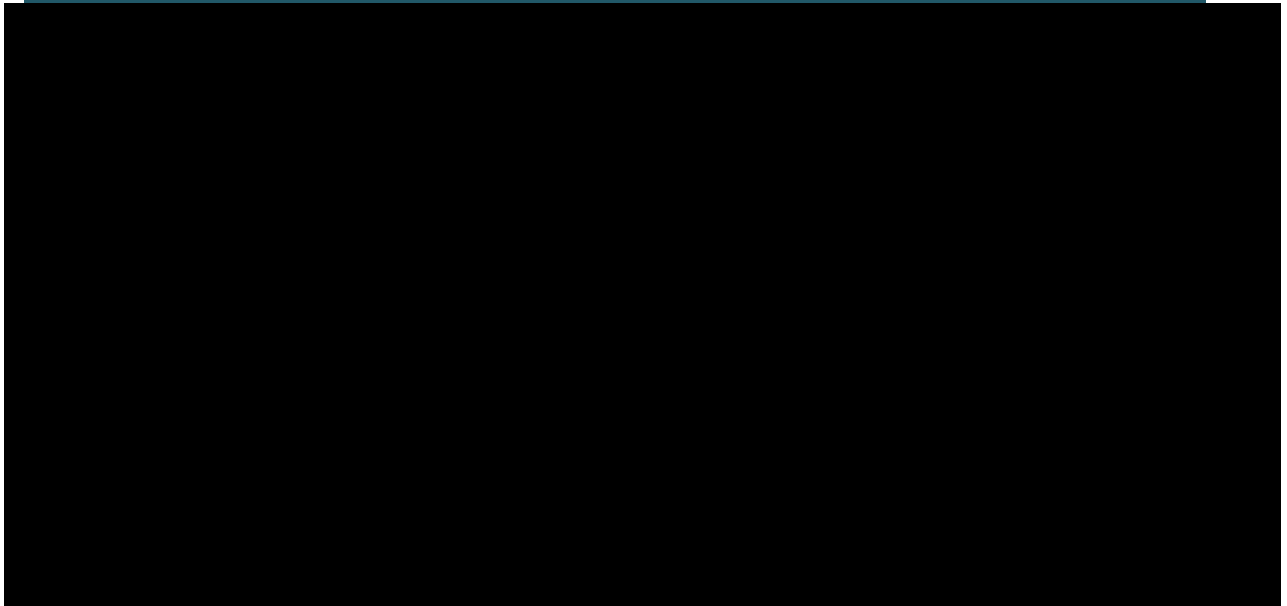
Party	email address

Distribution list:

Victorian Planning Authority Projects Standing Advisory Committee Referral 12: Melton East Precinct Structure Plan

Party

email address



Notional Timetable Outline

Victorian Planning Authority Projects Standing Advisory Committee Referral 12: Melton East Precinct Structure

Note: The Committee will issue a detailed Timetable after 4 June 2025

Week 1: 7-11 July 2025

- Opening submissions from the VPA and Melbourne Water
- Evidence on residential densities and affordable housing (incl. planning and urban design)
- Evidence on drainage, land take and flooding

Week 2: 14-18 July 2025

- Evidence on drainage, land take and flooding cont.
- Evidence on ICPs and staging and infrastructure (incl. costings and economics)
- Evidence on community infrastructure
- Evidence on transport network
- Evidence on cultural heritage (noting these experts might be scheduled as part of the relevant party's primary submission if the timetable cannot accommodate in this week)
- Limited primary submissions for parties not available in following weeks.

Week 3: 21-25 July 2025

- Evidence on other themes – Subject to parties demonstrating that it relates primarily to one of the eight themes in the VPA's referral letter
- Primary submissions commencing with the VPA, Melbourne Water and Council
- Primary submissions for parties not available in following weeks.

Week 4: 28 July-1 August 2025

- Primary submissions cont.

Week 5: 4-8 August 2025

- Primary submissions cont.
- Closing submissions from Council, followed by Melbourne Water and VPA
- Drafting discussion

Week 6: 11-15 August 2025

Reserve – The Committee will confirm in its detailed timetable whether a sixth week will be required

Hearing Timetable Notes:

1. If you are unable to be present at your scheduled time, please contact Planning Panels Victoria at planning.panels@transport.vic.gov.au.
2. Please be present or online at least 15 minutes before your scheduled start time.
3. The Committee may amend a party's start time without notice, however you will be contacted in advance if you are to be rescheduled to a different day.
4. Time will be made for morning and afternoon breaks each day. Break times will be taken at appropriate points in the proceedings, and break times in the timetable are indicative only.
5. If you have any questions about the timetable, please contact Planning Panels Victoria at planning.panels@transport.vic.gov.au.