

125-135 Argyle Street Little River



PLANNING REPORT

S72 AMENDMENT TO PLANNING PERMIT PP-194-2021

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Background

██████████ on behalf of the landowner for the purposes of this planning permit amendment application. This submission has been prepared to accompany an application seeking to amend Planning Permit PP-194-2021.

PP-194-2021 was issued on 13 July 2021 and approved the development of land for a shed. The shed approved under the permit has since been constructed on the land.

The subject land is located in a peri-urban rural settlement within the City of Greater Geelong, approximately half way between Werribee and the Geelong CBD and is contained within the Farming Zone (FZ) and subject to the Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO1). The land is also contained within an area of Cultural Heritage Sensitivity.

This report has been updated to address the items raised in Council's Request for Further Information dated 20 May 2026.

Subject Site

The subject land is formally described as Lot 2 on PS834239M and is more commonly known as 125-135 Argyle Street, Little River.



Figure 1 - Site Aerial (Source: DELWP Spatial Services, December 2025)

The subject land is located on the northern side of Argyle Street opposite the junction to Stirling Street. The allotment follows the typical subdivision pattern of land north of the road, being that it is long and narrow. The land comprises of 8.126ha in area and is bounded to the north by Little River and its reserve.



Figure 2 - Satellite Aerial (Source: Landchecker, April 2026)

Neighbourhood Description

Little River is a peri-urban township located on Melbourne's western fringe, where land use is defined by a combination of low-density residential areas, broad-acre farming land and conservation landscapes. The township itself retains a compact village form centred around the rail station and historic core, with detached dwellings on large lots reflecting its rural character. Surrounding areas are dominated by grazing land, volcanic plains grasslands, and industrial and logistics uses associated with the Princes Freeway and nearby freight corridors. Development patterns have historically been limited, with modest residential growth occurring incrementally rather than through large-scale subdivision. Over time, spatial change has been shaped by regional infrastructure investment and Melbourne's outward expansion, increasing development pressure while strong planning controls and environmental constraints have moderated urban growth. As a result, Little River continues to function as a distinct rural township, with gradual residential infill and peripheral change occurring alongside the preservation of its landscape setting and separation from adjoining urbanised areas such as Werribee and Lara.

Land abutting the Little River and along Argyle Street is characterised by a mix of low-density residential use, open space, and riparian landscapes. Residential development along Argyle Street predominantly comprises detached dwellings on generous allotments, many of which date from the early to mid-20th century and contribute to the area's historic character. The river corridor itself functions as an environmental and recreational buffer, limiting intensive development and reinforcing a clear edge to urban growth. Development patterns in this area have remained largely low intensity, with minimal subdivision and only incremental infill or dwelling replacement over time.



Figure 3 - Wider Neighbourhood Aerial (Source: Landchecker, April 2026)

Certificate of Title

The Certificate of Title for Lot 2 on PS834239M does not contain the presence of any restrictive Covenants, Section 173 Agreements or other encumbrances registered on the land.

Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Sensitivity

The subject land is located partially within an area affected by Cultural Heritage Sensitivity, however, the area of land subject to this amendment application is not. As such, an assessment against the *Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2018* is not required to consider this application.

Proposal

As previously cited, Little River is a suburb that has experienced incremental residential growth as part of its broader change into a more recognised rural township. The proposal intends to take advantage of an existing approved and constructed building to create a liveable dwelling without requiring further buildings and works. The only new works would consist of internal partitions, flooring and a small roof form to be erected atop the driveway for undercover parking and entry.

The proposed dwelling would sit within the envelope of the existing shed. A floor plan of the proposed dwelling is included for reference in the application plans.

As such, the amendment application seeks to include *the use of land for a dwelling* into the permit preamble and to replace the previously endorsed plans with the plans submitted for consideration.

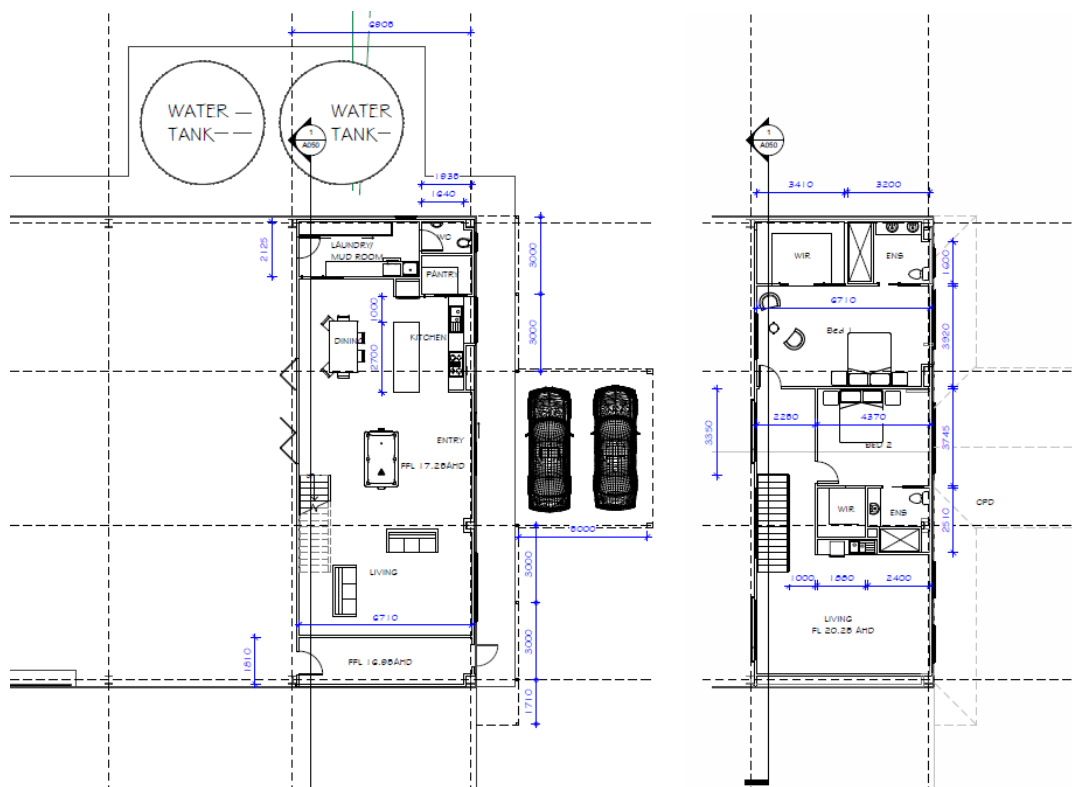


Figure 4 - Excerpt from Application Plans

The proposed partial conversion of the existing shed into a dwelling is the primary component of the application. The application also seeks approval for a series of structures throughout the land.

The structures comprise of:

- Six shipping containers (including 4 proximate to the existing shed and two in the rear paddock) – used for the storage of farm equipment, maintenance equipment, hay bales, stock and feed associated with the farm.
- Five other structures located further north throughout the paddocks used as animal shelters (see RFI cover letter for more detail).

We note that current aerial imagery indicates the presence of utes, trucks and personal vehicles, as well as scrap metal and the like being stored openly on the site. Vehicles and materials not related to the operation of the farm are intended to be removed from the farm and a notation on the plan confirms this. This can be further enforced via the inclusion of a permit condition to the satisfaction of Council.

In summary, the application seeks to amend the permit in the following ways:

- Use the land for a dwelling;
- Construct a building or construct or carry out works to alter part of the existing shed into a dwelling;
- Construct a building or construct or carry out works associated with an existing farm (seek retrospective approval for nine shipping containers and several small animal shelters) under the LSIO.

Planning Policy Framework

Zone	Farming Zone (FZ)
Overlays	Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO1)
Planning Policy Framework	Clause 15.01-6S: Design for Rural Areas Clause 16.01-3S: Rural Residential Development Clause 16.01-3L: Rural Residential Development
Particular Provisions	N/A

Farming Zone (FZ)

The subject site is located within the Farming Zone under the jurisdiction of the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme. It is the purpose of the Zone to:

- *Provide for the use of land for agriculture;*
- *Encourage the retention of productive agricultural land;*
- *Ensure that non-agricultural uses, including dwellings, do not adversely affect the use of land for agriculture;*
- *Encourage the retention of employment and population to support rural communities;*
- *Encourage use and development of land based on comprehensive and sustainable land management practices and infrastructure provision.*

Pursuant to Clause 35.07-1, a dwelling is a Section 1 land use if all of the following conditions are met:

- It must be the only dwelling on the lot;
- It must be on a lot that is at least 80ha in area (as directed by the Schedule);
- It must meet the requirements of Clause 35.07-2;
- Must be located more than 1km away from the criteria listed at this Clause

The land is less than 80ha in area and as such, the use of the land for a Dwelling falls to Section 2 and requires planning permission.

Pursuant to Clause 35.07-2, any lot used for a dwelling must meet the following requirements:

- Access to the dwelling, small second dwelling or rural worker accommodation must be provided via an all-weather road with dimensions adequate to accommodate emergency vehicles.
- Each dwelling, small second dwelling or rural worker accommodation must be connected to reticulated sewerage, if available. If reticulated sewerage is not available all wastewater from each dwelling must be treated and retained within the lot in accordance with the requirements of the Environment Protection Regulations under the *Environment Protection Act 2017* for an on-site wastewater management system.
- The dwelling, small second dwelling or rural worker accommodation must be connected to a reticulated potable water supply or have an alternative potable water supply with adequate storage for domestic use as well as for firefighting purposes.
- The dwelling, small second dwelling or rural worker accommodation must be connected to a reticulated electricity supply or have an alternative energy source.

Pursuant to Clause 35.07-4, a planning permit is required to construct a building or construct or carry out works associated with a Dwelling.

As such, the use and development of land for a dwelling requires primary consent under the Farming Zone and must be considered as part of this amendment application.

Furthermore, the development of land to construct shipping containers and animal shelter structures does not require a planning permit under the Zone for the following reasons:

- The structures are associated with a Section 1 Use;
- The structures are beyond 100m from the nearest dwelling on an adjacent lot.
- The structures are set back beyond 20 metres from a road and 5 metres from a boundary.
- The structures are set back beyond 100m from any waterway, floodplain or relevant overlay.
- The structures are not within 100m of a residential zone.
- The structures do not require earthworks.

It is considered that the proposal provides an excellent response to the purpose of the Farming Zone, as it seeks to introduce a dwelling that is to be used in association with an existing shed and agricultural land use – therefore offering residents with a place to live whilst they work. Furthermore, it takes advantage of a previously constructed building and therefore does not result in any new dwelling or substantial works needing to occur.

Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO1)

The purpose of this Overlay is to:

- *Identify flood prone land in a riverine or coastal area affected by the 1 in 100 (1 per cent Annual Exceedance Probability) year flood or any other area determined by the floodplain management authority.*
- *Ensure that development maintains the free passage and temporary storage of floodwaters, minimises flood damage, responds to the flood hazard and local drainage conditions and will not cause any significant rise in flood level or flow velocity.*
- *Minimise the potential flood risk to life, health and safety associated with development.*
- *Reflect a declaration under Division 4 of Part 10 of the Water Act, 1989.*
- *Protect water quality and waterways as natural resources by managing urban stormwater, protecting water supply catchment areas, and managing saline discharges to minimise the risks to the environmental quality of water and groundwater.*
- *Ensure that development maintains or improves river, marine, coastal and wetland health, waterway protection and floodplain health.*

Pursuant to Clause 44.04-2, a planning permit is required to construct a building or construct or carry out works unless otherwise specified in a Schedule.

Schedule 1 to the LSIO indicates that a planning permit is not required for development that is consistent with the following circumstances:

- *A building that is open on all sides with a floor level at natural ground level, including a domestic shed, animal enclosure, stockyard or agricultural shed.*

- *An upper storey extension to an existing building within the existing building footprint.*

The LSIO does not trigger a planning permit for use. These modifications do not require planning permission under the LSIO.

The placement of shipping containers, however, does trigger a permit under the LSIO.

Response

The proposed amendment represents an acceptable and positive response to the decision guidelines of the Farming Zone because it retains the primary agricultural character and function of the land while introducing a modest residential component that is directly associated with, and subordinate to, the ongoing rural use of the property. The land is already used as a farm and contains an existing approved shed. Rather than establishing a new standalone domestic enclave in the rural area, the application seeks a partial retrofit of that existing built form to accommodate a dwelling, thereby consolidating development within an established building envelope and limiting additional disturbance of productive land. This approach is consistent with the Farming Zone purpose of supporting agriculture while ensuring that dwellings do not adversely affect the use of land for agriculture.

In relation to the general decision guidelines, the proposal is an orderly and efficient form of rural development. It makes use of an existing approved structure, reduces the need for unnecessary new built form, and confines the residential component to an already developed part of the site. On that basis, the proposal reflects sustainable land management outcomes and makes reasonable use of existing infrastructure and site access, rather than dispersing structures across the property. Subject to satisfactory wastewater treatment and disposal, the land is capable of accommodating the dwelling without compromising its rural function. These are all matters expressly called up by Clause 35.07-6.

The proposal also responds positively to the agricultural decision guidelines because it does not appear to undermine the productive capacity of the land. The dwelling is not presented as the driver of a broader residential intensification of the site, but as a limited adaptation of existing rural infrastructure on land already used for farming. Importantly, the shipping containers, ancillary storage areas and animal shelters are described as supporting the ongoing farm operation and, are sited with setbacks sufficient to avoid a permit trigger under the Farming Zone. That reinforces the conclusion that the broader pattern of development remains agriculture-led, with ancillary structures serving operational farm storage and animal management functions rather than introducing an unrelated non-rural land use. The Farming Zone is principally concerned with protecting and promoting farming and agriculture, and this proposal maintains that outcome.

The amendment can also be said to minimise the loss of productive agricultural land. Because the dwelling is achieved through a partial retrofit of the existing shed, the proposal avoids the establishment of a separate residential building footprint elsewhere on the site and reduces the extent to which additional land is sterilised from agricultural use. Similarly, the ancillary containers and outbuildings are described as modestly scaled and sufficiently setback and sit within the working farm context and not materially constrain cropping, grazing, access, or the future operation and expansion of agricultural activity on the land or nearby land.

This is aligned with the decision guidelines directed to whether development supports agricultural production, affects soil quality, removes land from production, or limits adjoining agricultural uses.

From a siting and compatibility perspective, the proposal is also favourable. Locating the residential accommodation within an existing shed and treating the additional containers and outbuildings as subordinate rural structures, is a more contained and less intrusive outcome than a scattered pattern of new standalone buildings. In that sense, the proposal is compatible with the surrounding rural context and maintains the visual and functional character expected in the Farming Zone. The zone's decision guidelines require consideration of compatibility with nearby land uses and the relationship of the development to sustainable land management, both of which are addressed by this consolidated, low-intensity development pattern.

The proposed shipping containers can be supported against the decision guidelines of LSI01 because they are ancillary rural storage structures associated with the ongoing farming use of the land and, subject to detailed siting and any conditions required by Council or the floodplain management authority, are capable of being accommodated in a manner that is commensurate with the flood hazard affecting the site. In planning terms, the containers are not a sensitive or vulnerable form of development such as a dwelling or other habitable building. Their role is limited to farm storage, and they can therefore be designed and sited so as to respond appropriately to inundation risk while maintaining the practical operation of the rural property.

More broadly, the strategic direction within Greater Geelong's rural policy settings is to preserve productive agricultural capacity, discourage discretionary non-agricultural uses in rural areas that could be located in urban zones, and ensure that new dwellings do not compromise productive agricultural land and are associated with the productive agricultural use of the land. With this in mind, the amendment is capable of being characterised as consistent with those directions because the dwelling is tied to an existing farming property, is accommodated within existing approved built form, and is accompanied by ancillary structures that support the operation of the farm rather than displace it.

Concluding Statements

This report has given insight into the relevant policies, strategies, objectives, and statutory requirements within the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme pertaining to the proposal.

It is considered that the proposal satisfies the requirements listed within the relevant areas of the Planning Scheme for the reasons outlined below.

The proposal is considered to achieve purpose of the Farming Zone by ensuring that the use is tied to the existing development and function of the site.

The proposal does not impede on the prevailing riparian landscape or result in a poor use of land within this context.

Overall, it is considered that the proposal contributes to the use and development trends occurring in the surrounding area and provides a good response to the key issues raised throughout the Planning Policy Framework.

It is with high confidence that we consider the response to positively reflect Council's vision for use and development within this precinct, and therefore we strongly recommend that Council supports the decision to amend the planning permit accordingly.