

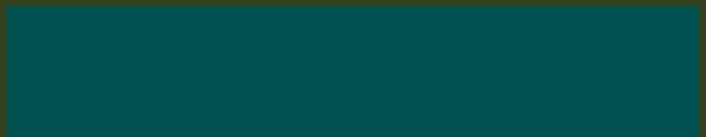


MPAA
STUDIO

TOWN PLANNING REPORT

USE AND DEVELOPMENT OF LAND FOR INTENSIVE AGRICULTURE
393 COORAMOOK ROAD, GRASSMERE

26 MARCH 2026



OVERVIEW

Background

Address 393 Cooramook Road, Grassmere

Lot Description Land in Plan of Consolidation 365415V.
Lot 1 on TP192272B

Relevant Planning Controls

Municipal Planning Strategy Clause 02.01 Context
Clause 02.02 Vision
Clause 02.03 Strategic directions

Planning Policy Framework Clause 11.01-1S – Settlement
Clause 12.01-1S – Protection of Biodiversity
Clause 13.02-1S – Floodplain Management
Clause 14.01-1S – Protection of Agricultural Land
Clause 14.01-2S – Sustainable Agricultural Land Use
Clause 14.02-1S – Catchment Planning and Management
Clause 14.02-2S – Water Quality
Clause 17.01-1S – Diversified Economy Great South Coast
Clause 19.03-3S – Integrated Water Management

Zone Farming Zone

Overlays None applicable

Particular Provisions Nil

Permit Application Details

Description of Proposal Use and development of land for intensive animal production

Permit requirement Clause 35.07-1 (FZ) – Section 2 Use
Clause 35.07-4 (FZ) – Buildings and works

QUALITY ASSURANCE

Town Planning Report

Intensive Agriculture
393 Cooramook Road, Grassmere

Project Number

26-1653

Revision

02

Prepared By

CM

Project Lead

CM

Issued

26 March 2026

| Revision | Date | Issue |
|----------|---------------|-------------------|
| 01 | 5 March 2026 | Draft for review |
| 02 | 26 March 2026 | Council lodgement |

CONTENTS

| | |
|---|----|
| OVERVIEW | 2 |
| QUALITY ASSURANCE | 3 |
| 1. INTRODUCTION | 5 |
| 2. SITE AND SURROUNDS..... | 6 |
| 2.1. Site description and title particulars | 6 |
| 2.2. Site description and context | 6 |
| 3. PROPOSAL..... | 8 |
| 3.1. Overview | 8 |
| 4. PLANNING POLICIES AND CONTROLS..... | 11 |
| 4.1. Municipal Planning Strategy | 11 |
| 4.2. Planning Policy Framework (PPF) | 12 |
| 4.3. Farming Zone | 12 |
| 4.4. Overlays | 13 |
| 4.5. Particular Provisions | 13 |
| 4.6. Decision Guidelines | 13 |
| 5. PLANNING ASSESSMENT..... | 14 |
| 5.1. Overview | 14 |
| 5.2. Key considerations | 14 |
| 6. Conclusion | 19 |

1. INTRODUCTION

MCAA Studio acts on behalf of the proponent in relation to a planning permit application for the use and development of land for Intensive Animal Production (dairy housing barn system) at 393 Cooramook Road, Grassmere.

The proposal comprises the construction and operation of two open-sided dairy housing barns with a combined footprint of approximately 25,650, plus associated agricultural infrastructure, effluent management systems (inclusive of a new digester lagoon), internal circulation areas and tractor tracks. The development will operate as part of an established agricultural enterprise and be used in association with existing ancillary operational facilities. Due to the intensity, the primary land use will now be used for the housing, feeding and management of adult dairy cattle within a controlled environment, with approximately 2,160 cattle to be managed at full operation.

The facility is a modern intensive animal production model based on open-sided barn design, passive ventilation, bedding-based housing systems, and integrated effluent capture and reuse practices. It is not a cattle feedlot or processing facility, but an agricultural housing system directly supporting primary production activities within the wider farm operation. It is not used for feeding or finishing beef cattle. The land use is considered intensive because the feed will be majority imported and because of the density of cattle within the barn structures.

The subject land comprises a rural holding of approximately 278 hectares within the Farming Zone, in a locality characterised by grazing and dairy-based primary production. The scale of the landholding enables the proposed infrastructure to be centrally located with substantial internal setbacks, including approximately 600 metres to the nearest dwelling not in the same ownership (to the north) and around 1 kilometre to the nearest waterway to the east.

The barns will utilise passive ventilation to facilitate airflow and operational functionality. Stormwater from roof areas will be captured and reused on-site where possible, re-directed to water storage. Effluent will be regularly removed, including to existing and proposed effluent ponds for storage and land application across the broader farm in accordance with nutrient management practices. A new digester lagoon forms part of the application and will be constructed prior to commencement of the use.

Feed storage areas will be the existing feed centre adjacent to the barns to consolidate operational activities and minimise internal vehicle movements.

This report provides an assessment of the proposal against the relevant provisions of the Moyne Planning Scheme, including the Planning Policy Framework, Municipal Planning Strategy, Farming Zone, and Clause 65 decision guidelines.

The proposal triggers permit requirements under the following clauses:

- Clause 35.07-1: Farming Zone – Use
- Clause 35.07-4: Farming Zone – Buildings and Works

The following documents accompany and should be read in conjunction with this report:

- Water cycle and nutrient memorandum (prepared by Premise March 2026)

2. SITE AND SURROUNDS

2.1. Site description and title particulars

| | |
|---|---|
| Site address | 393 Cooramook Road, Grassmere |
| Title details | Land in Plan of Consolidation 365415V. Lot 1 on TP192272B |
| Easements, restrictions or covenants | E1 = 12-metres wide, powerline in favour of Powercor. A-1 = 10.06 metres wide, carriageway in favour of Land in C/T Vol 3630 Fol 876 |

2.2. Site description and context

The subject land is located at 393 Cooramook Road within the rural locality of Grassmere, near Glenmore, approximately 12 kilometres north-east of the Warrnambool town centre in south-west Victoria. The land forms part of a large rural landholding within the Moyne Shire municipality and is legally described as land in Plan of Consolidation 365415 and Lot 1 on Title Plan 192272.

The site comprises approximately 278 hectares of land and is irregular in shape, extending between Beveridges Road to the north and Cooramook Road to the south. The property forms part of a broader agricultural landscape characterised by large rural allotments and long-established farming enterprises.

The land is located within the Farming Zone (FZ) under the Moyne Planning Scheme and is not affected by any planning overlays. The site is identified as being within a Bushfire Prone Area, although it is not affected by a Bushfire Management Overlay. Areas of Aboriginal cultural heritage sensitivity are present in the broader locality, generally associated with nearby waterways and low-lying areas.

The landholding is predominantly used for agricultural purposes associated with the broader dairy and grazing industry that characterises the Western District region. Surrounding land uses are similarly rural in nature and typically include grazing, dairy farming, and associated agricultural infrastructure. Rural dwellings are dispersed throughout the area on both large and small allotments, generally separated by substantial distances typical of working agricultural landscapes.

The subject land forms part of a relatively open farming landscape comprising cleared pasture, agricultural infrastructure and scattered windbreak vegetation. The wider area is serviced by a network of rural roads including Cooramook Road, Beveridges Road and other local roads that provide access to surrounding farming properties and connections toward Warrnambool and other regional destinations.

Topographically, the land is relatively gently undulating with broad rural paddocks typical of the basalt plains environment of the district. The wider landscape includes agricultural drainage lines and waterways associated with the regional catchment system located within the Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority area.



Figure 1: Enlargement of applicable subject site area (Source: Nearmap)

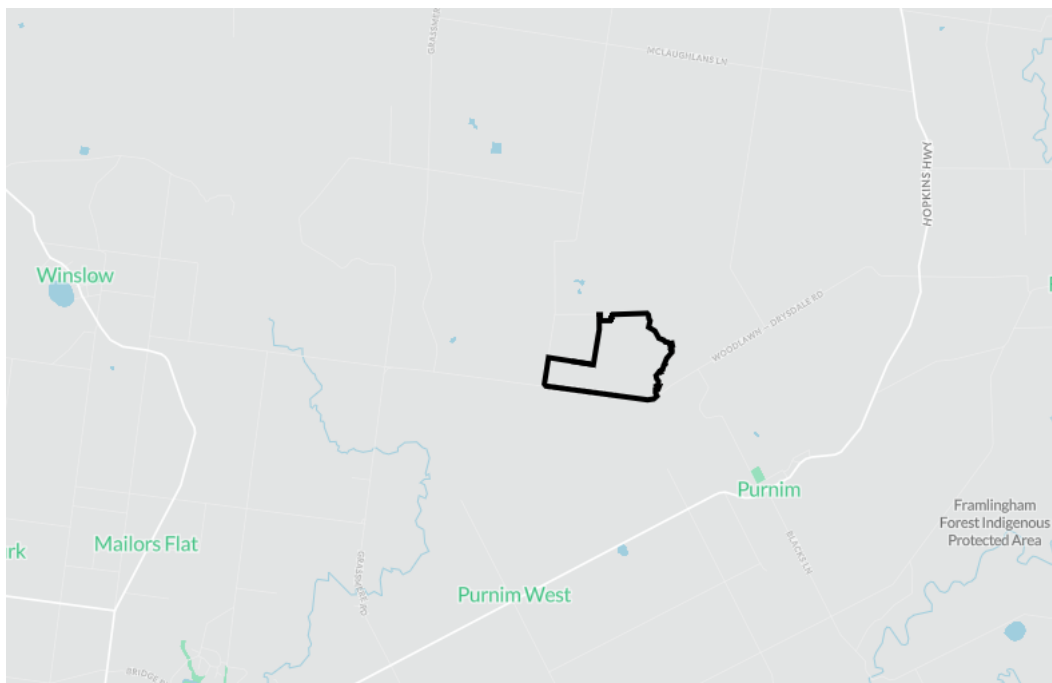


Figure 2: Subject site broader location context

3. PROPOSAL

3.1. Overview

The application seeks a planning permit for the use and development of land for Intensive Animal Production in the form of a dairy housing barn system at 393 Cooramook Road, Grassmere. The proposal comprises the establishment of a purpose-built, open-sided livestock housing facility designed to accommodate adult dairy cattle within a controlled environment, supported by associated agricultural infrastructure and effluent management systems. This planning application is Phase 1 of 2, all going well with approvals and delivery.

The proposed structures are also known as lactation barns (often referred to as a free-stall barn or comfort barn in modern dairy farming). They are a specialised, engineered housing system designed to maximise the comfort, health, and production of dairy cattle while they are actively producing milk.

2.1 Overview of the Use

The proposed use involves the housing, feeding and management of 2,160 adult dairy cattle (approximately 1,080 per barn) as part of a broader and established regional dairy production enterprise. The proposed structures will not operate as a dairy processing facility, nor as a conventional cattle feedlot. Rather, it will function as a specialised agricultural facility focused on intensive, controlled animal husbandry within a barn-based system, with cattle forming part of a wider dairy production.

The facility is intended to house and manage adult stock only, with no breeding, calf rearing, or industrial-scale processing proposed on the land. Feed will be primarily imported to the site and provided as a mixed ration, consistent with contemporary intensive dairy housing practices.

Cattle will walk to a nearby milking parlour to be milked each day as required, but then walk back through newly constructed lanes to spend their time feeding and resting within the housed barn system in lieu of pasture.

The use will operate on a continuous basis (24 hours as required), typical of modern agricultural enterprises, with staffing levels and operational logistics scaled accordingly.

2.2 Built Form and Development

The development component of the proposal comprises two large-scale, open-sided dairy housing barns with a maximum height of 15.1 metres, and with dimensions of 270 metres in length and 47.5 metres in width (each). The barns will be constructed using durable rural agricultural materials, including steel portal framing and cladding, and will be designed to integrate with the working farm landscape.

The barns will be open-sided and utilise passive ventilation rather than mechanical systems. This design approach facilitates natural airflow, reduces odour concentration, and supports improved animal welfare outcomes while minimising noise and mechanical infrastructure typically associated with enclosed intensive animal facilities.

The built form will be centrally located within the broader 278 hectare landholding, positioned between Beveridges Road and Cooramook Road, ensuring substantial internal setbacks from property boundaries and neighbouring sensitive receptors. Ancillary agricultural infrastructure is to be clustered around the barn complex and is expected to include:

- Feed silos and adjacent feed storage areas (existing feeding centre)
- Hardstand and loading/unloading areas
- Internal access tracks and circulation areas (new tractor lanes provided).
- Effluent management infrastructure, including a new digester lagoon and associated systems to sort solid.

Clustering of infrastructure adjacent to the barns creates a consolidated operational node, reducing the spatial footprint of the intensive use across the wider farming land and improving operational efficiency and biosecurity management.

In the future, it is intended to apply for approvals for Phase 2, which involves an additional two barns. These are also shown on some sheets within the town planning drawings to identify the scalability; however, the plans showing four barns do not need to be endorsed.



2.3 Effluent, Waste and Environmental Management

Effluent generated within the dairy housing barns, including manure, bedding material and wash-down water, is collected via graded concrete floors and internal drainage channels. These systems convey the effluent to a central collection point to the south of the barns, where it enters a primary transfer system (typically a sump and pump arrangement).

From the collection point, the effluent is directed to a solid-liquid separation system, which comprises mechanical separators (e.g. screw press or rotary screen). This stage removes a significant proportion of coarse organic solids and fibrous bedding material from the liquid fraction. The separated solids are able to be exported off-site to nearby compost facilities.

The liquid fraction continues through a series of treatment and storage stages. Initially, it will pass through the digester or primary lagoon, where anaerobic processes further break down organic material and reduce biological load. From there, the partially treated liquid is conveyed via separation drainage lines or transfer channels to the larger effluent storage pond designed in accordance with agricultural effluent management guidelines.

The effluent pond provides long-term storage capacity and allows for additional settling and stabilisation. Subject to appropriate management and seasonal conditions, the stored liquid effluent can be reused for irrigation of pasture or fodder crops, thereby recycling nutrients within the broader farming operation.

Stormwater management will be achieved through the collection of roof water from the barns into rainwater storage for on-site reuse, ensuring separation of clean stormwater from effluent streams and reducing runoff impacts.

The subject land is located approximately 1 kilometre from the nearest waterway to the east, and preliminary consultation with the Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority.

The proposed development has been conceived as the initial stage of a broader, scalable agricultural system, with the current application representing Stage 1-2 (two barns) of an ultimate development scenario. The supporting infrastructure, including effluent management systems and irrigation capacity, has been designed upfront to accommodate future expansion in a coordinated and orderly manner, rather than requiring ad hoc retrofitting. This approach ensures that the environmental performance of the system is established at the outset and that any future expansion can occur within a framework that has already been technically assessed and demonstrated to be capable of managing increased operational demand.

2.4 Water, Lighting and Operational Infrastructure

Water supply for the facility may include existing or supplementary farm water sources, with advice obtained from Southern Rural Water for the construction of a dam in the property. External lighting will be required to support 24-hour agricultural operations; however, all lighting will be designed and baffled to minimise light spill and avoid adverse amenity impacts on surrounding rural properties.

The barns will rely on passive ventilation and will not incorporate mechanical fan systems, thereby reducing noise emissions and maintaining consistency with the rural character of the locality.

2.5 Access, Traffic and Site Functionality

Vehicle access to the site will be obtained via both Beveridges Road to the north and Cooramook Road to the south, providing flexible and efficient access for agricultural vehicles, staff, and service movements. Traffic generation is anticipated to be modest relative to the scale of the broader farming operation and will primarily consist of:

- Staff utility vehicles
- Feed delivery vehicles
- Periodic waste and manure transport to licensed facilities

Feed storage areas are existing to the west of the proposed barns and will streamline operational logistics and minimise unnecessary vehicle movements across the broader site. While heavy vehicle access (including larger agricultural vehicles) may occur, such movements will be typical of rural agricultural operations and compatible with the surrounding farming context. New tractor tracks are proposed for circulation around the barns as required.

4. PLANNING POLICIES AND CONTROLS

4.1. Municipal Planning Strategy

The following clauses within the Moyne Shire Municipal Planning Strategy, as relevant include the following:

Clause 02.01 – Context

Recognises Moyne as a predominantly rural municipality with a strong reliance on agriculture, dairy and primary production industries.

Clause 02.02 – Vision

To support sustainable environmental practices and economic vitality, including innovation in farming and land stewardship.

Clause 02.03-1 – Settlement

To maintain a clear distinction between urban and rural areas and protect agricultural land from inappropriate development.

Clause 02.03-2 – Environmental and Landscape Values

To protect natural landscapes, waterways and ecological systems while enabling appropriate rural development.

Clause 02.03-4 – Natural Resource Management

To promote sustainable farming practices, protect productive agricultural land and prevent land use conflicts with sensitive uses.

Clause 02.03-7 – Economic Development

Agriculture is the most important sector of the local and regional economy and a major source of local employment. The Shire is within Australia's largest dairy production region that contributes around a quarter of the nation's milk production.

There are opportunities for economic diversification through the development of aquaculture, horticulture and intensive agricultural enterprises, and agriculturally linked value adding industries. Value adding onsite or closer to the source of the product provide opportunities to expand the local economy.

The preservation of agricultural land in large holdings is necessary to maintain the economy of the Shire, including the service and processing industries that support agriculture.

- Promote agriculture as the primary industry of the economy.
- Protect agricultural land from non-productive use and development.
- Encourage consolidation of rural land holdings to increase the viability and sustainability of agriculture.
- Ensure that the use and development of land does not prejudice agricultural industries or the productive capacity of the land.
- Protect and promote the dairy industry to ensure its long term growth.
- Support the growth, diversification and value-adding of primary industry, including agriculture, aquaculture and agroforestry, and processing of agricultural products grown within the municipality or harvested offshore.
- Encourage enterprises that add value to primary production at or near the source, in appropriate locations.

Clause 02.03-9 – Infrastructure

To ensure development infrastructure is designed, managed and delivered in a sustainable and efficient manner, including drainage and servicing in rural areas.

4.2. Planning Policy Framework (PPF)

To ensure the overarching objectives of planning in Victoria are met, policies contained within the Planning Policy Framework (PPF) must be considered. The PPF clauses of most relevance to the Site and the proposal are set out below.

Clause 11.01-1S – Settlement

To promote the sustainable growth and development of Victoria's settlements in a manner that is efficient, supports economic activity and protects productive rural land.

Clause 12.01-1S – Protection of Biodiversity

To assist the protection and conservation of Victoria's biodiversity, including the careful management of development near natural environments and waterways.

Clause 13.02-1S – Floodplain Management

To ensure that development responds to flood risk and protects environmental systems and natural drainage functions.

Clause 14.01-1S – Protection of Agricultural Land

To protect productive agricultural land for primary production and avoid land use conflicts with non-agricultural uses.

Clause 14.01-2S – Sustainable Agricultural Land Use

To encourage sustainable agricultural practices that maintain land capability, protect natural resources and support long-term agricultural productivity.

Clause 14.02-1S Catchment Planning and Management

Aims to assist the protection and restoration of catchments, waterways, estuaries, bays, water bodies, groundwater, and the marine environment.

Clause 14.02-2S – Water Quality

To protect and enhance water quality through appropriate land use and development practices, including effluent and runoff management.

Clause 17.01-1R – Diversified Economy – Great South Coast

Support agriculture as a primary source of economic prosperity and increase the region's contribution to the nation's food production.

Support rural production and associated economic development opportunities including rural industry, rural sales, accommodation and tourism.

Clause 19.03-3S – Integrated Water Management

To sustainably manage water supply, stormwater, wastewater and drainage in new development.

See Section 5 for an assessment of the application against the Planning Policy Framework.

4.3. Farming Zone

The Site is located within the Farming Zone (Clause 35.07). The purposes of the Farming Zone include:

- To implement the Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework.
- To provide for the use of land for agriculture.
- To encourage the retention of productive agricultural land.
- To ensure that non-agricultural uses, including dwellings, do not adversely affect the use of land for agriculture.
- To encourage the retention of employment and population to support rural communities.
- To encourage use and development of land based on comprehensive and sustainable land management practices and infrastructure provision.
- To provide for the use and development of land for the specific purposes identified in a schedule to this zone.

Pursuant to Clause 35.07-1 and Clause 35.07-4, a permit is required to use and develop land for intensive animal production, as it is a Section 2 Use.

Decision guidelines are listed at Clause 35.07-6. See Section 5 for a detailed response to the relevant decision guidelines.



4.4. Overlays

The Site is not located within any Overlays.

4.5. Particular Provisions

There are no relevant particular provisions

4.6. Decision Guidelines

Clause 65.01 Approval of an Application or Plan

Before deciding on an application or approval of a plan, the responsible authority must consider, as appropriate:

- The matters set out in section 60 of the Act.
- Any significant effects the environment, including the contamination of land, may have on the use or development.
- The Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework.
- The purpose of the zone, overlay or other provision.
- Any matter required to be considered in the zone, overlay or other provision.
- The orderly planning of the area.
- The effect on the environment, human health and amenity of the area.
- The proximity of the land to any public land.
- Factors likely to cause or contribute to land degradation, salinity or reduce water quality.
- Whether the proposed development is designed to maintain or improve the quality of stormwater within and exiting the site.
- The extent and character of native vegetation and the likelihood of its destruction.
- Whether native vegetation is to be or can be protected, planted or allowed to regenerate.
- The degree of flood, erosion or fire hazard associated with the location of the land and the use, development or management of the land so as to minimise any such hazard.
- The adequacy of loading and unloading facilities and any associated amenity, traffic flow and road safety impacts.
- The impact the use or development will have on the current and future development and operation of the transport system.

5. PLANNING ASSESSMENT

5.1. Overview

The following chapter outlines the key planning considerations of the proposal in response to relevant policy and the provisions of the Moyne Planning Scheme. In summary, the following key considerations are relevant to the assessment of the proposal:

- Is the proposal consistent with the Municipal Planning Strategy?
- Is the proposal consistent with the Planning Policy Framework?
- Does the proposal appropriately respond to the Farming Zone?
- Does the proposal appropriately respond well to the considerations at Clause 65?

5.2. Key considerations

5.2.1. Is the proposal consistent with the Municipal Planning Strategy?

The proposal demonstrates strong alignment with the Municipal Planning Strategy of the Moyne Planning Scheme, which recognises agriculture, dairy production and primary industry as the foundational economic and land use drivers of the municipality.

Clause 02.01 (Context) identifies Moyne Shire as a predominantly rural municipality with a strong reliance on grazing agriculture, dairy and primary production across highly productive farming land. The subject site is located within this established agricultural landscape and the proposed intensive animal production use is entirely consistent with the existing rural land use pattern and economic structure of the region.

Clause 02.02 (Vision) promotes sustainable environmental practices, innovation and the ongoing vitality of the rural economy. The proposal is aligned with these objectives through the introduction of contemporary agricultural infrastructure that improves efficiency, animal welfare and environmental management while maintaining the agricultural character of the land.

Clause 02.03-1 (Settlement) seeks to maintain a clear distinction between urban and rural areas and protect productive agricultural land from inappropriate development. The proposal does not introduce urban or non-agricultural development into the rural area; rather, it consolidates and intensifies agricultural activity on a large rural holding, thereby reinforcing the strategic separation between rural production land and settlement areas.

Clause 02.03-3 (Environmental Risks and Amenity) emphasises the need to ensure appropriate buffers between sensitive uses and land uses with potential off-site impacts. The development benefits from substantial spatial separation from sensitive receptors, including approximately 600 metres to the nearest dwelling not in the same ownership, combined with passive ventilation, regular effluent separation and removal, and the absence of on-site composting. These factors significantly reduce the potential for adverse amenity impacts and are consistent with the policy direction to manage rural amenity conflicts.

Clause 02.03-4 (Natural Resource Management) strongly supports sustainable farming practices that protect land capability, water resources and long-term agricultural productivity. The proposal incorporates controlled effluent management, land application of nutrients, stormwater reuse and environmental reporting, all of which demonstrate a responsible and sustainable approach to intensive agricultural land use.

Clause 02.03-7 (Economic Development) is particularly supportive, recognising agriculture as the most important sector of the local economy and encouraging the growth, diversification and value-adding of primary industry, including enterprises that add value at or near the source of production. The proposed intensive animal production facility directly supports the dairy sector and represents a form of value-adding agricultural infrastructure that strengthens the regional supply chain and agricultural resilience (ie: from drought and climate change).

The MPS also seeks to protect agricultural land from non-productive uses and prevent land use conflicts between agriculture and sensitive development. The proposal is inherently productive, agriculturally linked, and located on a substantial 278 hectare landholding, ensuring that the use will not prejudice surrounding farming activities and will instead reinforce the ongoing agricultural function of the locality.

Furthermore, the strategic directions relating to environmental management and sustainable infrastructure are satisfied through the provision of new effluent infrastructure, nutrient management planning, and integrated stormwater collection systems, which collectively ensure that the development responds appropriately to site capability and environmental constraints.

The proposal is highly consistent with the Municipal Planning Strategy as it supports the agricultural economy, protects productive rural land, incorporates sustainable farming practices, and introduces well-managed intensive agricultural infrastructure that is appropriately located within an established farming context.

5.2.2. Is the proposal consistent with the Planning Policy Framework?

The proposal for the use and development of land for Intensive Animal Production is supported by the relevant objectives and strategies of the Planning Policy Framework, particularly those relating to agricultural productivity, sustainable land use, environmental management and regional economic development.

At a strategic level, Clause 11 (Settlement) seeks to facilitate land use and development that supports economic activity while protecting productive rural land from inappropriate fragmentation or non-agricultural encroachment. The subject land is located within a rural farming context and will continue to be used for primary production purposes. The proposal does not introduce a non-agricultural land use; rather, it represents an intensification and modernisation of agricultural infrastructure on a large rural holding, thereby reinforcing the long-term productive function of the land.

Clause 13 (Environmental Risks and Amenity) requires that development appropriately manage environmental and amenity impacts, including potential effects relating to odour, noise, runoff and waste. The proposal incorporates a range of proactive environmental management measures, including open-sided, passively ventilated barns to reduce odour concentration, modern effluent infrastructure (including a new digester lagoon), and roof stormwater capture for on-site reuse. These design and operational responses ensure that environmental risks are contained within the site and appropriately mitigated.

The application is supported by a detailed Water Cycle and Nutrient Assessment prepared by Premise (Technical Memorandum P004136). The assessment has been deliberately undertaken on a conservative basis, modelling an ultimate development scenario comprising four (4) dairy housing barns, notwithstanding that the current planning application seeks approval for only two (2) barns.

This approach provides a robust, “worst-case” assessment of the effluent generation, storage and reuse system, demonstrating that the proposed infrastructure is capable of accommodating a significantly greater operational scale than currently proposed. The modelling confirms that nutrient balance can be achieved within the available irrigation area at the two-barn stage, with sufficient capacity to assimilate effluent without adverse off-site impacts.

The proposal as submitted represents a materially reduced outcome relative to the assessed ultimate scenario, with a corresponding reduction in environmental risk. The conservative nature of the assessment provides a high level of confidence that the effluent management system, including the proposed digester lagoon and storage infrastructure, will perform effectively under all anticipated operating conditions.

Clause 14.01-1S (Protection of Agricultural Land) is of relevance and seeks to protect productive agricultural land for primary production. The proposal is inherently agricultural in nature and directly supports ongoing farming operations within the Western District, a region well recognised for intensive dairy and livestock production. The use does not sterilise or fragment agricultural land; instead, it enhances its productive capacity through the introduction of contemporary agricultural infrastructure aligned with modern farming practices.

Clause 14.01-2S (Sustainable Agricultural Land Use) encourages sustainable farming practices that maintain land capability and protect natural resources. The proposal adopts a controlled housing model that allows for improved effluent capture, nutrient management and land application compared to more dispersed grazing systems.

Clause 14.02 (Water) and in particular water quality considerations are addressed through the separation of clean stormwater and effluent streams, roof water harvesting, and controlled effluent pond storage and land application. Consultation with the Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority, Southern Rural Water, and the preparation of supporting environmental reporting further demonstrate that water resources will be protected and managed in a responsible manner, especially consideration the nearby creek (1-kilometre east).

Clause 17 (Economic Development) supports the diversification and strengthening of key industries, including agriculture and agribusiness. The proposal contributes to regional economic productivity by supporting a modern dairy-related enterprise that enhances operational efficiency and reinforces the role of agriculture as a primary economic driver within south-west Victoria.

Clause 19 (Infrastructure) is also satisfied, as the proposal utilises existing rural road networks (Beveridges Road and Cooramook Road) and provides clustered operational infrastructure to minimise internal vehicle movements and infrastructure demand across the broader site. Stormwater reuse, effluent infrastructure and sustainable servicing arrangements further demonstrate an integrated and efficient infrastructure response.

5.2.3. Does the proposal appropriately respond to the Farming Zone?

The proposal aligns with the purposes of the Farming Zone. The use is fundamentally agricultural in nature, comprising the housing, feeding and management of dairy cattle as part of an established broader farming enterprise. It does not introduce a non-agricultural or incompatible land use; rather, it represents a contemporary intensification of agricultural activity that enhances productivity and operational efficiency on a large rural holding of approximately 278 hectares.

Importantly, the development will not fragment or sterilise productive agricultural land. The barns and associated infrastructure are centrally located and occupy a relatively small portion of the overall landholding, allowing the balance of the land to continue to function for agricultural purposes, including effluent reuse and broader farm management activities. Given the proposal's intensity it is considered to be a primary land use that requires compliance with the planning scheme (Clause 64.01).

A key consideration in the Farming Zone is whether the proposal supports and enhances agricultural productivity. The Moyne Shire area is a well-established dairy and grazing region characterised by fertile soils, favourable climate conditions and strong agricultural infrastructure.

The proposed intensive animal production facility represents a significant investment in modern agricultural infrastructure that:

- Improves livestock management and welfare outcomes
- Enhances feed efficiency and production consistency
- Supports the resilience of the dairy supply chain
- Enables controlled nutrient management and land application

Rather than diminishing agricultural capability, the proposal strengthens the productive use of the land by introducing infrastructure that is directly linked to primary production and consistent with contemporary agricultural practices.

The barns and associated infrastructure are proposed to be centrally sited between Beveridges Road and Cooramook Road, resulting in:

- Substantial internal setbacks from property boundaries
- Approximately 600 metres separation to the nearest dwelling not in the same ownership
- Approximately 1 kilometre separation to the nearest waterway to the east
- A consolidated operational footprint within an expansive rural property

This siting approach is a deliberate and appropriate planning response that minimises off-site amenity impacts and ensures the intensive components of the use are spatially contained within a large agricultural landscape.

It is acknowledged that intensive animal production can give rise to concerns relating to odour, noise, lighting, traffic and general rural amenity. Notwithstanding this, the proposal incorporates multiple design and operational measures that significantly mitigate potential amenity impacts:

- Open-sided barns with passive ventilation to reduce odour concentration
- Bedding-based housing system to assist moisture and odour control
- Well-planned effluent systems.
- No mechanical ventilation systems (reducing noise emissions)
- Baffled external lighting designed to minimise light spill (can be secured via permit condition)
- Large separation distances to sensitive receptors
- Clustering of infrastructure to avoid dispersed impacts across the site

In a working agricultural landscape, such impacts are not unexpected; however, the scale of the landholding and the proactive environmental management framework ensure that any off-site amenity impacts will be acceptable and consistent with the expectations of the Farming Zone.

Environmental risk management is a critical component of Farming Zone assessments for intensive animal production. The proposal adopts a comprehensive and precautionary environmental management approach, including:

- Solids separation systems
- Existing and proposed effluent areas.
- Controlled land application of treated effluent across the broader farm
- Stormwater capture from barn roofs for on-site reuse
- Nutrient Loading Report to guide sustainable land application rates

The provision of a new digester lagoon as part of this permit application demonstrates a proactive and responsible planning approach, ensuring that environmental infrastructure is established before operational commencement rather than retrofitted at a later stage.

Access to the site can be obtained via both Beveridges Road and Cooramook Road, which are established rural roads servicing agricultural land uses. Traffic generation is expected to remain typical of large-scale farming operations and will primarily consist of staff vehicle, feed delivery trucks and periodic solid waste transport vehicles.

The utilisation of the existing feed storage centre adjacent to the barns further enhances operational efficiency and reduces unnecessary internal vehicle movements across the wider farm, consistent with orderly and sustainable agricultural development.

The surrounding area is characterised by productive farming land, including grazing and dairy operations. The proposed use is entirely compatible with this context and does not introduce a sensitive land use that could constrain existing or future agricultural activity.

The proposal reinforces the agricultural function of the locality and avoids the types of land use conflicts that typically arise from non-agricultural encroachment into rural areas. The development therefore supports the long-term viability of agriculture within the Farming Zone.

In considering an application under the Farming Zone, the responsible authority must consider matters including the capability of the land for agriculture, environmental impacts, amenity, and the orderly planning of the area.

Agricultural capability:

The land is a large rural holding within a highly productive agricultural region and is well suited to intensive agricultural infrastructure.

Environmental impacts:

Potential impacts relating to effluent, runoff and water quality are appropriately addressed through effluent pond infrastructure, nutrient management planning, stormwater reuse and agency consultation.

Amenity impacts:

Given the 600 metre separation to the nearest dwelling, open-sided passive ventilation design, and active waste management regime, amenity impacts are expected to be acceptable within a rural farming environment.

Orderly planning of the area:

The proposal consolidates intensive agricultural infrastructure within a defined node on a large farming property, maintaining the broader rural character and productive use of surrounding land.

5.2.4. Does the proposal appropriately respond well to the considerations at Clause 65?

The proposal for the use and development of land for Intensive Animal Production at 393 Cooramook Road, Grassmere has been assessed against the relevant decision guidelines of Clause 65 and represents an appropriate planning outcome within a rural and agricultural context.

The proposal is strongly supported by the Planning Policy Framework and the Moyne Municipal Planning Strategy, which prioritise the protection of productive agricultural land and the ongoing viability of primary production. The development is inherently agricultural in nature and supports the modernisation and efficiency of the regional dairy industry.

The subject land, comprising approximately 278 hectares within an established farming landscape, is well suited to intensive agricultural infrastructure. The barns are centrally located within the landholding, providing substantial internal buffers, including approximately 600 metres to the nearest dwelling not in the same ownership and approximately 1 kilometre to the nearest waterway.

Environmental risks relating to effluent, nutrient loading and water quality are addressed through a proposed management framework including solids separation, regular removal of solids to a licensed off-site facility, stormwater harvesting and reuse, and the provision of existing and new effluent systems. Supporting technical input, including a Nutrient Loading Report and engagement with the Catchment Management Authority/Southern Rural Water, indicates that impacts can be appropriately managed.

Potential amenity impacts are mitigated through the open-sided, passively ventilated barn design (reducing odour concentration and build up), and the absence of on-site composting. Lighting will be directed to minimise off-site spill and traffic levels will remain consistent with agricultural operations. Given the separation distances and rural context, amenity impacts are expected to be acceptable.

The surrounding area is characterised by productive agricultural land uses. The proposal is consistent with this context and will not prejudice existing or future agricultural activity, instead reinforcing the agricultural function of the locality.

Based on the anticipated scale of operations, the proposal is not expected to trigger EPA works approval or licensing requirements (as the number of head is under 5,000). Nevertheless, the operational design adopts EPA-aligned environmental management practices including controlled effluent storage, off-site waste removal and nutrient management planning.

6. Conclusion

This report has assessed the proposed use and development of land for Intensive Animal Production 393 Cooramook Road, Grassmere against the relevant provisions of the Moyne Planning Scheme, including the Planning Policy Framework, Municipal Planning Strategy, Clause 35.07 (Farming Zone) and Clause 65.

The proposal is inherently agricultural and represents a contemporary intensification of primary production on a substantial 278 hectare landholding within an established farming landscape. It directly supports the dairy and agricultural economy of Moyne Shire and aligns with the strategic policy direction to protect productive agricultural land and encourage sustainable, value-adding agricultural investment.

The development has been appropriately sited with significant separation to sensitive receptors (approximately 600 metres to the nearest dwelling and approximately 1 kilometre to the nearest waterway), and incorporates open-sided, passively ventilated barns, clustered infrastructure, and a comprehensive environmental management framework. This includes solids separation, regular removal to a licensed facility, stormwater reuse, and the provision of new effluent system infrastructure to be operational prior to commencement, supported by a Nutrient Loading Report.

Potential impacts relating to amenity, environmental management, traffic and land use compatibility have been carefully considered and are acceptable within the context of a working rural environment. The proposal is compatible with surrounding agricultural uses, will not prejudice the ongoing use of land for agriculture, and has been informed by relevant guidance for animal production and intensive livestock operations.

Overall, the proposal is consistent with the objectives of the Planning Policy Framework and Municipal Planning Strategy, satisfies the purposes and decision guidelines of the Farming Zone, and achieves an appropriate balance between agricultural productivity, environmental management and rural amenity. Accordingly, the use and development of the land for Intensive Animal Production is considered to be a good response to the Moyne Shire Planning Scheme and the project is recommended for approval.

We look forward to collaborating with Council on this project.