

Strategic Extractive Resource Areas Information for Wyndham



Strategic Extractive Resource Areas (SERAs) are now in place in Wyndham.

Extractive resources like rock, sand and gravel are essential inputs to the building and construction sector.

The extractives sector is playing a key role in the state's post-COVID economic recovery effort. In the longer term our population is forecast to exceed 10 million people by 2050. Demand for extractive resources in Victoria is expected to more than double 2015 levels by 2050.

We need to plan ahead now, to ensure that quarry materials can be sourced close to where they will be used, to keep transportation and construction costs down. That's why the Victorian Government has developed Strategic Extractive Resource Areas (SERAs).

SERAs aim to get the right balance so that communities can continue to develop, but not too close to where quarries are or to where important areas of sand, stone and gravel resource can be found for use in the future.

What are Strategic Extractive Resource Areas?

SERAs indicate the locations of existing quarries and potential future quarries in areas close to where they are needed for construction and infrastructure projects. SERAs aim to identify and safeguard land with the highest potential to supply material to build Victoria's future.

SERAs are also used to provide buffers to existing quarries so they can continue to operate, by ensuring sensitive or incompatible land uses are not built too close to an operating quarry.

SERAs apply a suite of existing planning controls in areas where access to potentially valuable quarry materials such as sand, stone and gravel may be at risk because of new sensitive or incompatible land uses. SERAs serve as strategic land markers in the planning system, indicating locations where extractive resources may exist and ensuring they are considered in land use decision making.

The planning controls that SERAs provide include:

- utilising the Special Use Zone (SUZ) for existing quarries
- applying a State Resource Overlay (SRO1) to areas that have been identified as potential new or expanded quarries in the future
- applying a State Resource Overlay (SRO2) around existing quarries as a buffer.

A SERA is not an approval for a quarry. All proposals for new and expanded quarries in Victoria, including in SERAs, must be assessed under the Mineral Resources (Sustainable Development) Act 1990 and the relevant Council's Planning Scheme, as well as a range of environmental, water and cultural heritage legislation and regulations.

Why do we need SERAs?

SERAs will better identify potential quarry sites so they are more clearly considered in the assessment of local development and buffer zones. This has the potential to reduce local friction resulting from residents living near to quarries.

SERAs will provide greater certainty to industry, land use planners and the community to better inform future land uses well in advance, by defining the locations of strategic state resources while considering other existing land uses, environmental assets and community interests.

What is changing?

The following changes were introduced to the Wyndham Planning Scheme:

- land containing existing extractive industries has been rezoned to the Special Use Zone (SUZ)
- the State Resource Overlay Schedule 1 (Strategic Extractive Resource Area) has been applied to those same existing operations being rezoned to SUZ, and to other land where extractive industries may be developed in the future

- the State Resource Overlay Schedule 2 (Protecting extractive industries) has been applied around land in the SUZ to manage the encroachment of sensitive or incompatible uses near extractive industry operations.

What amendments were made to SERAs after public consultation?

Several important changes were made to the proposed planning controls and maps following a review of submissions received during public consultation.

In Wyndham, the State Resource Overlay will not be applied to land that is designated for the Western Grassland Reserve. The Special Use Zone and State Resource Overlay will only apply to land inside the future Reserve where that land contains an existing quarry operating under an approved work authority.

The location of the State Resource Overlay has also been adjusted to provide a greater setback distance from Little River township and Eynesbury Estate. The increased setbacks ensure that any future extractive industries developed in these areas can maintain appropriate separation distances from existing settlements.

