

13 February 2026

The Hon. Nick Staikos  
Minister for Local Government  
2 Treasury Place  
EAST MELBOURNE VIC 3002  
By email: [nick.staikos@parliament.vic.gov.au](mailto:nick.staikos@parliament.vic.gov.au)

Dear Minister Staikos

**Request for Erosion Management Planning Support**

**Recommendations arising from the Board of Inquiry into the McCrae Landslide**

At its meeting of 24 November 2025, Knox City Council (Council) resolved to write to the State Government to seek clarification on policy guidance, technical support, and financial funding to assist the local government sector with erosion management planning. This resolution follows recommendations made relating to the Victorian planning system set out in the report from the Board of Inquiry into the McCrae Landslide. The resolution also follows erosion management planning work underway in nearby councils. As the issue of erosion management and landslide is multifaceted, I have also written to your colleagues, the Ministers for Planning and for Emergency Services and Natural Disaster Recovery.

**Board of Inquiry into the McCrae Landslide**

The report of the Board of Inquiry into the McCrae Landslide has recently been released and is instructive in the technical analysis of the drivers for landslide events, in addition to providing commentary and recommendations regarding the obligations for government, service authorities and municipal authorities to protect communities. While the report provides recommendations relevant to Mornington Peninsula Shire based on the findings of the McCrae incident, wider recommendations present findings relevant state-wide.

In particular, it is noted that there are recommendations that include substantive actions for the State Government to lead and instruct through appropriate guidance and planning reforms. This includes preparing updated state-wide data on landslide risk and broadening its monitoring programs to include landslide events. Given the breadth and nature of the risk involved, it is considered appropriate for the State Government to lead on risk and planning reform in this area. The provision of grant funding support to impacted councils that face imminent risk is appropriate to undertake timely technical studies; along with providing assistance in implementing interim planning controls as a first and much needed step in addressing inherent risk.

## **Erosion Management Overlay work underway in Yarra Ranges and Mornington Peninsula**

Our neighbour Yarra Ranges Council recently exhibited Amendment C225yan which seeks to update mapping for the existing Erosion Management Overlay Schedule 1 (EMO1) within the Yarra Ranges Planning Scheme to address landslip susceptibility and introduce a new Erosion Management Overlay Schedule 2 (EMO2) addressing debris flow risk.

The amendment relies on advanced geotechnical analysis undertaken in response to the significant storm period of 2019 – 2022. These significant storm events resulted in adverse environmental impacts throughout the Yarra Ranges, which included instances of land slip. These events, both in frequency and magnitude, are expected to increase based on the anticipated impacts of climate change.

Knox City Council lodged a submission to the amendment following a review of the documentation which found:

- The analysis depicted an area in the vicinity of Bowen Avenue in The Basin in an abutting vegetated reserve that demonstrates characteristics of a debris flow path event. This area is within Knox in the Dandenong Foothills.
- An area of rural character in Sassafras was highlighted as a potential source location for a debris flow event. The full extent of the flow path from land in Yarra Ranges into Knox was not identified as it was outside the Yarra Ranges study area.
- Landslip susceptibility mapping indicated areas of high, medium, low and no susceptibility near the western boundary of Yarra Ranges abutting Knox, particularly in steep terrain in Ferntree Gully and Upper Ferntree Gully.

Mornington Peninsula Shire Council has undertaken similar technical risk mapping work and is progressing recommendations to implement erosion management controls in the Mornington Peninsula Planning Scheme.

### **Obligations on local government**

The work underway by Yarra Ranges and Mornington Peninsula Shire Councils recognises the obligations on local government in fulfilling their statutory obligations and planning scheme requirements to identify potential natural hazards that have capacity to impact human life, property and the community more broadly. These obligations are set out in the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*.

Planning for long term environmental resilience and adaptation to climate change are key considerations for any local government authority in the contemporary landscape and remain key priorities for environmental hazard mitigation and management service planning.

### **Work to be advanced by Knox City Council**

Following the recommendations arising from the Board of Inquiry into the McCrae Landslide and the findings of the work underway in the adjoining Yarra Ranges Council, Knox City Council is in the process of commissioning a preliminary erosion risk assessment across Knox. A clear focus area will be the Dandenong Foothills given their proximity to the adjoining Dandenong Ranges National Park, however the assessment is expected to be municipal wide.

Council may seek to undertake a detailed assessment pending the outcomes of the preliminary assessment. This could lead to amendments to the Knox Planning Scheme to implement any recommendations relating to the application of the Erosion Management Overlay to address landslip and landslide risks.

### **What is being sought from the State Government**

The Board of Inquiry has made recommendations which present a significant issue for Victorian councils from a risk and resourcing perspective. This includes recommendations for planning reforms relating to erosion management and taking a lead role in determining and managing risk.

The Board of Inquiry also made recommendations for a standardised approach to methodology in carrying out risk assessments, and providing the local government sector with technical support, guidance, and financial assistance to undertake erosion management risk assessments.

Knox City Council is seeking for the State Government to provide a response to the recommendations from the Board of Inquiry in a timely manner. This is particularly important given Council will shortly be commencing erosion management risk assessment work following on from the planning scheme amendment in Yarra Ranges Council and the recommendations arising from Board of Inquiry into the McCrae Landslide.

As erosion management and landslide risk are a multifaceted challenge, I have written to whom we considered to be the relevant Ministers. If other Ministers or parts of Government should be apprised of Council's request, we would be grateful for my correspondence to be provided to them.

Further, I would be very interested in meeting with you personally, alongside your appropriate counterpart to discuss this important matter further.

Yours sincerely



**Cr Paige Kennett**  
Mayor

Enquiries: Bruce Dobson, Chief Executive Officer  
Document ID: D26-28786

cc: The Hon. Vicki Ward, Minister for Emergency Services, Natural Disaster Recovery  
The Hon. Sonya Kilkenney, Minister for Planning



## The Hon Nick Staikos MP

Minister for Consumer Affairs  
Minister for Local Government

Level 1, 2 Treasury Place  
East Melbourne, Victoria 3002

Cr Paige Kennett  
Mayor  
Knox City Council  
By email: [Eleonore.Smith@knox.vic.gov.au](mailto:Eleonore.Smith@knox.vic.gov.au)

CMIN260200749

Dear Cr Kennett,

Thank you for your letter of 13 February 2026 regarding support for erosion management planning.

With the circumstances that led to the McCrae Landslide Board of Inquiry and its subsequent findings, I am pleased that Knox City Council is taking proactive steps to understand the landslide risks in the municipality.

Recommendation 20 from the McCrae Landslide Board of Inquiry does reference the option of the provision of technical or financial assistance to local government authorities where necessary. The Victorian Government, in response to the report, has stated that further work is necessary to understand the full requirements of this recommendation and related recommendations 23 and 25.

My department has contacted the Department of Transport and Planning and understand they will address your concerns around the technical aspects of erosion management planning. Unfortunately, the Victorian Government is unable to support your request for financial support at this time.

Thank you again for taking the time to write to me.

Sincerely,

**The Hon Nick Staikos MP**  
Minister for Consumer Affairs  
Minister for Local Government

25 / 03 / 2026



## The Hon Sonya Kilkeny MP

Minister for Planning

GPO Box 4356  
Melbourne, Victoria 3001 Australia

Ref: CMIN-1-26-1210

Cr Paige Kennett  
Mayor  
Knox City Council  
511 Burwood Highway  
WANTIRNA SOUTH VIC 3152  
[knoxcc@knox.vic.gov.au](mailto:knoxcc@knox.vic.gov.au)

Dear Mayor

Thank you for your letter of 13 February 2026 regarding support for erosion management planning.

I acknowledge your request for support with erosion management planning following the McCrae Landslide Board of Inquiry and the findings of the Yarra Ranges Shire Council landslip work at the interface with the City of Knox. I note that your council intends to undertake a preliminary erosion risk assessment across the municipality.

The Victorian Government is committed to improving the planning system response to landslide risk and has provided in-principle support to Recommendation 26 of the McCrae Landslide Board of Inquiry, to strengthen erosion management planning in Victoria's planning system. The Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) will lead implementation of this work, as well as Recommendation 20 to develop options to address data gaps on landslide risks.

The Victorian Government is coordinating efforts across departments to progress the McCrae Landslide Board of Inquiry recommendations. This work will help to inform the approach to planning work associated with Recommendations 20 and 26.

I understand that you have written to the Ministers for Local Government and for Emergency Services and Natural Disaster Recovery on erosion management matters that relate to their portfolios.

For more information on erosion management planning, please contact Stuart Menzies, Executive Director State Planning Policy and Reform, DTP by email to [stuart.menzies@transport.vic.gov.au](mailto:stuart.menzies@transport.vic.gov.au).

I trust this information is of use. Thank you for raising this matter.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'SK', with a flourish at the end.

**The Hon Sonya Kilkenny MP**  
Minister for Planning

Date: 15/4/2026