



Amendment C375

AUGUST 2018

**Greater Geelong Planning Scheme
Barwon Heads Structure Plan**

EXPERT EVIDENCE

PREPARED FOR
MID WEST GROUP (BARWON HEADS)

PREPARED BY
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Expert Evidence | Strategic Advice | Development Approvals



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Attachments

- 1 Robert Milner’s evidence to Amendment C159
- 2 Relevant documents considered
- 3 Witness Statement
- 4 Curriculum vitae

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose

- 1 I have been asked by Norton Rose Fulbright Australia, lawyers, on behalf of the Mid West Group (Barwon Heads) to review the merits of Amendment C375 to the *Greater Geelong Planning Scheme* (the **Amendment**) and comment upon the conclusions drawn in the *Barwon Heads Structure Plan* (August 2017) (**BHSP 2017**) and incorporated into the Amendment as they apply to a western expansion of the Barwon Heads settlement.
- 2 The Mid West Group hold interests in the following land (the **Subject Site**) that is located between Barwon Heads Road and Taits Road, west of the existing settlement and boundary of Barwon Heads (Figure 1).
 - 135 Taits Road, Barwon Heads;
 - 137 Taits Road, Barwon Heads; and
 - 1941-1949 Barwon Heads Road, Barwon Heads.
- 3 The Subject Site is appropriately considered in the context of other land south of the Barwon Heads Road and north of Taits Road, contained by a lagoon and wetlands, to the west, and the existing settlement to the east, which is put in submissions to the Panel considering C375 as potentially having alternative roles to the enhanced benefit of the settlement (the **Western Option**) (Figure 2).

1.2 Background

- 4 I presented evidence to the Panel considering Amendment C159 to the *Greater Geelong Planning Scheme* (November 2009) and the incorporation of the BHSP 2007.
- 5 That evidence was prepared on behalf of Macafee Investments Pty Ltd the owners of the land to the immediate south of Barwon Heads Road and forming part of the Western Option.

- 6 The subject and substance of that evidence was not dissimilar to the matter before the current Panel as it relates to the merits of a western expansion of Barwon Heads.
- 7 I was asked to comment upon the merits of the strategic planning process that underpinned the BHSP 2007 and environmental constraints that might influence the further development of the settlement.
- 8 In that evidence (**Attachment 1**) I concluded the BHSP had failed to adequately evaluate the growth or the environmental impacts upon the town.
- 9 In response the Panel concurred with my prime observations that an assessment of growth options is at least desirable if not a fundamental component of a structure plan. It noted the BHSP was not devoid of such an assessment however it concluded that the scope of the assessment is limited and that it failed to consider potential benefits that might accrue from expanding the settlement boundary.
- 10 The Panel also up held my view that a consideration of the potential implications of climate change should be undertaken as part of the next review and that this could potentially lead to the conclusion that part of the existing town will be under threat from rising sea levels and storm tide inundation and possibly be unsustainable for growth and diversification.
- 11 In the BHSP 2017 an assessment of the influences of climate change has occurred but a comprehensive evaluation of the Western Options remains a lingering shortcoming.

1.3 The scope and content of this evidence

- 12 This evidence is intended as a strategic, high-level, commentary on the merits of the conclusions drawn in BHSP 2017 not to provide for further growth and extend the western coastal settlement boundary.
- 13 It critically reviews the information relied upon by the Planning Authority to form that conclusion.
- 14 This evidence proceeds on the assumption that the C375 Panel:

- Has read and considered the BHSP 2017 and the associated amendment documentation;
- Has reviewed the Panel Report to Amendment C159;
- Has considered my earlier evidence at **Attachment 1**;
- Has inspected and has an appreciation of Barwon Heads and the Western Option; and
- Is familiar with the scope of the relevant policy framework.

15 This evidence presumes that the Panel will not be greatly assisted by a detailed summary of the above.

16 In preparing this evidence I have considered the documents detailed at **Attachment 2**.

1.4 Witness Statement

17 A witness statement is included at **Attachment 3** and curriculum vitae at **Attachment 4**.



Figure 1: Aerial photo - Subject Site (shown indicatively) (nearmap)



Figure 2: Aerial photo - 'Western Option' (shown indicatively) (nearmap)

2 OVERVIEW

- 18 The rationale of planning policy that directs growth to preferred centres and establishes settlement boundaries around coastal townships to contain growth is soundly based strategic land use planning applied to the management of growth.
- 19 It should be consistently applied unless opportunities or genuine anomalies are identified which if appropriately addressed would result in equal or more sustainable development and a net community benefit.
- 20 In this evidence I do not draw a conclusion on a specific variation to the settlement boundary around Barwon Head but do persist with a previously expressed view that the opportunity needs to be comprehensively and properly evaluated before the current boundary is “irrevocably” embedded.
- 21 There are circumstances surrounding the strategy and structure planning for Barwon Heads and the Western Option, that are unsatisfactorily resolved, and which give rise to the land being repeatedly brought before the Planning Authority and Panels for review.
- 22 The unresolved circumstances can be summarised as follows.
- With one notable exception Barwon Heads is a coastal village contained and moulded by the natural attributes of its coastal and estuarine landscape. It derives a strong part of its charm and character from this engagement with this setting.
 - The exception is that the settlement’s western boundary terminates, without seeming rationale or reference to topography, road or other physical feature, as a straight, 2km, ‘hard edged’ suburban, residential, interface of principally side and rear boundary fences against rural land.
 - The Murtagurt Lagoon and wetlands extending to the Barwon River present a natural, substantial, western boundary containing the locality of Barwon Heads and yet the settlement’s western boundary has been established without apparent reference or relationship to this natural feature.

- Within the narrow space contained between the lagoon, the wetlands and the settlement are three large, fragmented, parcels of essentially flat rural land further fragmented by the presence of isolated dwellings, an animal sanctuary, and a treatment plant.
- The land is poorly used and maintained, low-lying and partly subject to inundation. It is land of limited agricultural value and potential for productive use.
- Two of the land parcels have frontage to an arterial road and bus route and secondary unresolved connections via local roads in to the established neighbourhoods to the east.
- The land is encumbered with the constraints and negative influences upon effective agricultural practice and the right to farm, presented by an immediate suburban residential interface. These constraints are compounded by the land having a width little more than 600-650 metres from the edge of the lagoon and wetland.
- There are a broad range of environmental, economic and social issues presented by Barwon Heads warranting strategies and actions that might be resolved in whole or part by the Western Option.

23 Within this context it is appropriate to consider whether the Western Option should be put to a multiplicity of more beneficial purposes include all or a combination of the following:

- Improve the character and experience of the coastal character of the village from its western approach;
- Further protect and enhance the values of the wetlands and lagoon;
- Greater protection of any identified cultural heritage values;
- A greater contribution to the protection of water quality and long-term flooding, particularly arising from global warming;
- Improved public access and circulation around the edge of the settlement;
- Contribute to the restoration of landscapes and coastal vegetation;

- Contribute to the further development of tourism and tourism accommodation; and
- Contribute to the choice and diversity of housing.

24 In this evidence I seek to demonstrate how the relationship between the Western Option and these potential benefits have not been effectively explored or evaluated through the structure plan review process and why my criticism of almost a decade ago remains valid despite strong community concerns, changes in planning policy and the evolution of Barwon Heads over the last 10 years.

3 POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

25 Barwon Heads and its environs encompasses and requires an appropriate balance to be struck between competing planning policy considerations including:

- The coast and coastal development;
- Regional and local settlement planning and development;
- The protection of the environment, cultural history and biodiversity values;
- Protection from the environmental risk including climate change considerations and flood management;
- Economic development and particularly tourism; and
- Protection of natural resources and particularly productive agricultural land.

26 The BHPS2017 has considered the appropriate scope of planning policy and I acknowledge that since the last structure plan review there has been a range of revisions to that policy including, the *G21 Regional Growth*; the *Bellarine Peninsula Localised Planning Statement*; the *Victorian Coastal Strategy*; and the MSS.

27 None of those plans and policies identify Barwon Heads as a future growth centre. There is a range of settlements, including neighbouring Ocean Grove and proximate Torquay / Jan Juc, where policy explicitly provides for planned growth and expansion to reinforce the role of district towns.

28 I am also satisfied that at a municipal level there is at least 15 years residential land supply.

29 The settlement and coastal policy framework is appropriately characterised as strongly cautioning against rather than prohibiting spatial growth outside the nominated centres.

30 However strategic planning policy and structure plans, such as the BHSP, are expected to be regularly reviewed. That review process may extend to

coastal settlement boundaries, a point explicitly recognised in the *Planning Practice Note 36 – Implementing a Coastal Settlement Boundary*.

- 31 Unlike the metropolitan Urban Growth Boundary, which will be permanently retained (Clause 11.01-1R1), the need to review a coastal settlement boundary may arise over time due to emerging information “*about the environmental values of an area, increased infrastructure capacity or other strategic considerations*”.
- 32 The Practice Note indicates that any change to a coastal settlement boundary should be the product of a comprehensive strategic review, and must give adequate recognition and consideration to the *Victorian Coastal Strategy (VCS)* including an analysis of the hierarchy of principles for coastal planning and management and consistency with strategic objectives.
- 33 According to the VCS and the BHSP further development should only be considered where located within existing, modified and resilient environments, where the demand for development is evident and any impacts can be managed sustainably.
- 34 In my opinion such are the circumstances with the larger part of the Western Option particularly proximate to the abrupt interface with established urban development.
- 35 My support for an appropriate comprehensive strategic review of the settlement boundary at Barwon Heads should not be seen as disrespectful of preferred growth area planning on the Bellarine Peninsula.
- 36 Rather it is motivated to find a more sustainable long-term role(s) for the poorly resolved Western Option so that it positively contributes to the social, economic and environmental outcomes sought for Barwon Heads.
- 37 In delivering those outcomes a change in the boundary might be justified and a residential component may be part of an overall package of urban and non-urban attributes.
- 38 There is strategic justification for a potential variation that can be reasonably relied upon to counter criticism of a precedent being set for ‘boundary creep’ as advanced in the BHSP.

- 39 In a similar vein to Barwon Heads' other physical boundaries, the Lagoon and wetlands are clear long established, long term, defensible natural boundaries beyond which any further settlement extension could not be strategically justified.

4 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 40 The earlier discussion and Figures 3 and 4 identify the Western Option influenced by:
- Proximity to the Ramsar listed, Lagoon and the wetland corridor;
 - Significant Moonah vegetation on land north of Tait's Road;
 - Key view lines either side of the Barwon Heads Road; and
 - Climate change risk and flooding to the year 2100 that would intrude into the western and southern margins of the Western Option but impacting more significantly on the established areas of Barwon Heads.
- 41 The overlays of the planning scheme identify:
- The wetland and the clusters of Moonah north of Tait's Road are included in an Environmental Significant Overlay (Figure 5) but the balance of the Western Option is not covered by any form of vegetation protection.
 - Small pockets of the Subject Site and the land south of Barwon Heads Road are included in the Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (Figure 6).
 - None of the Western Option is covered by a Flood Overlay;
 - None of the Western Option is included in the Significant Landscape Overlay or the Bushfire Management Overlay.
- 42 The conclusion to be drawn is that environmental asset and risk would not appear to present significant or insurmountable constraints upon different roles for the Western Option.
- 43 While land potentially subject to inundation or longer-term rise in sea level and flooding must be protected there is nothing to indicate that the current settlement boundary is a requirement for the protection of the lagoon and wetlands.

- 44 The potential exists for the Western Option to contribute to extended wetland systems, improved flood protection and enhance water quality around Barwon Heads.
- 45 The opportunity also exists to secure an important public benefit in the form of a wider corridor of public land and access alongside the wetlands, which would provide greater protection of the significant landscape feature and an assured, improved long term buffer for the Ramsar listed area.
- 46 The enhancement of view lines either side of Barwon Heads Road could also be achieved by landscape design and the appropriate siting of any development.
- 47 The character of the southern side of the arterial road is already powerfully defined by an avenue of trees in the road reservation that serve the role of an elongated entrance statement.
- 48 An opportunity exists to secure a similar public benefit and outcome on the north side of the Barwon Heads Road. With time vegetation should come to define the western approach to Barwon Heads in a similar manner as it does in the entrances to Mortlake and Woodend.
- 49 An alternative role for the Western Option would also enable the development of strategies for re-establishment of extensive vegetation, tree cover and biodiversity links.

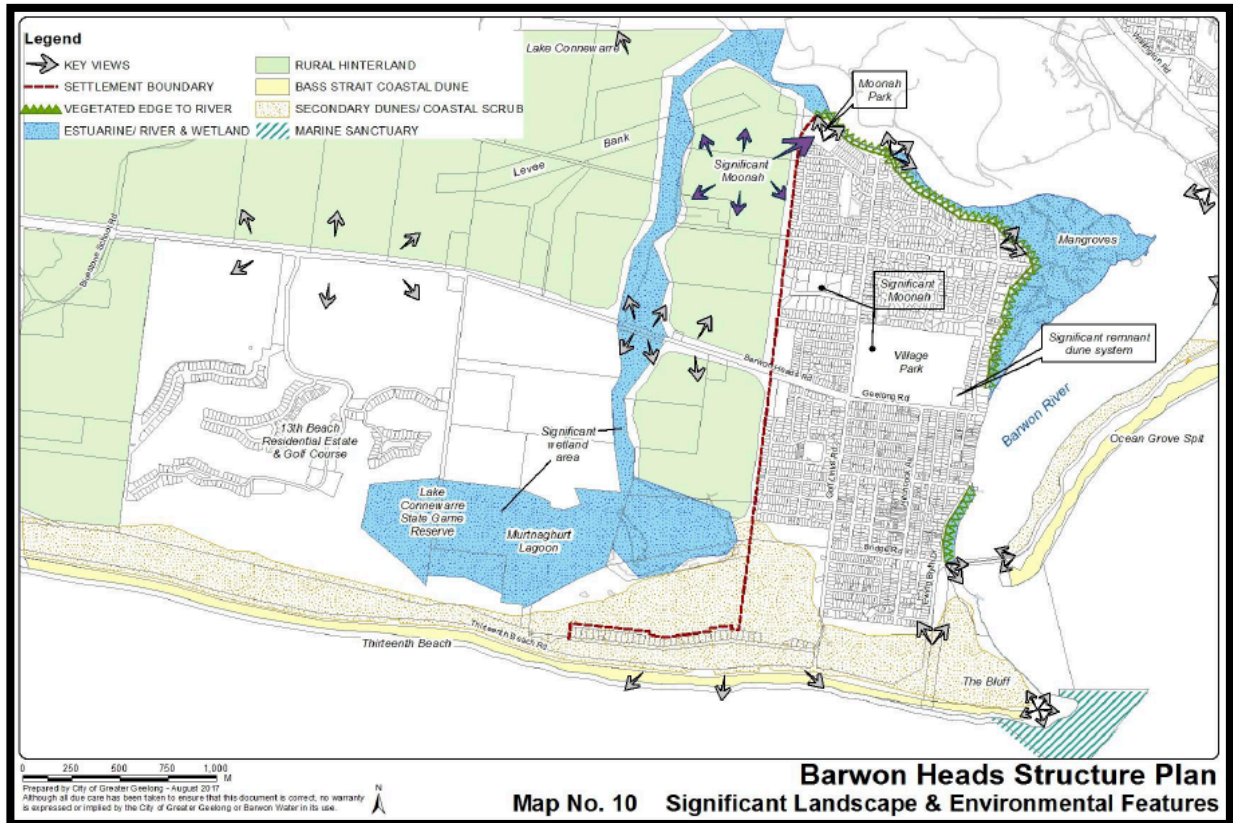


Figure 3: Excerpt Barwon Heads Structure Plan (Adopted August 2017)

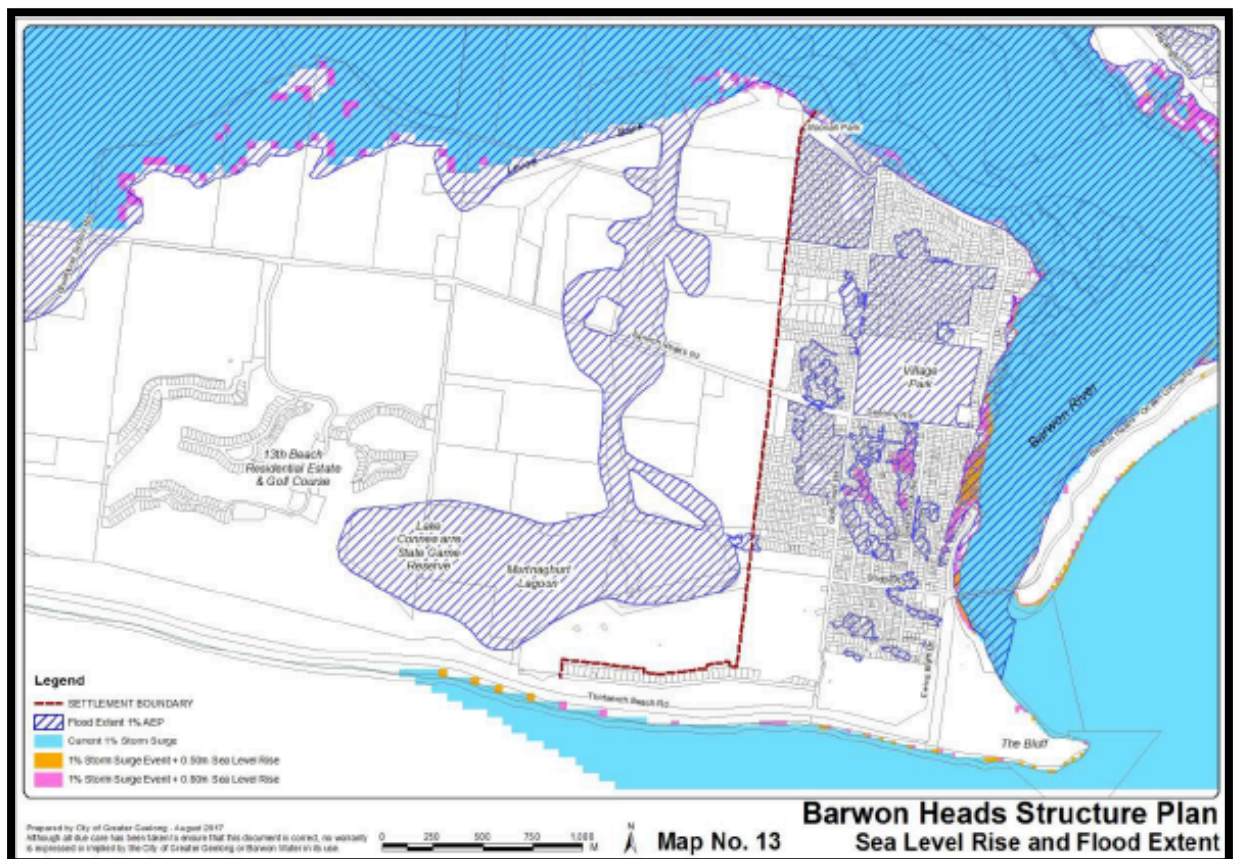


Figure 4: Excerpt Barwon Heads Structure Plan (Adopted August 2017)

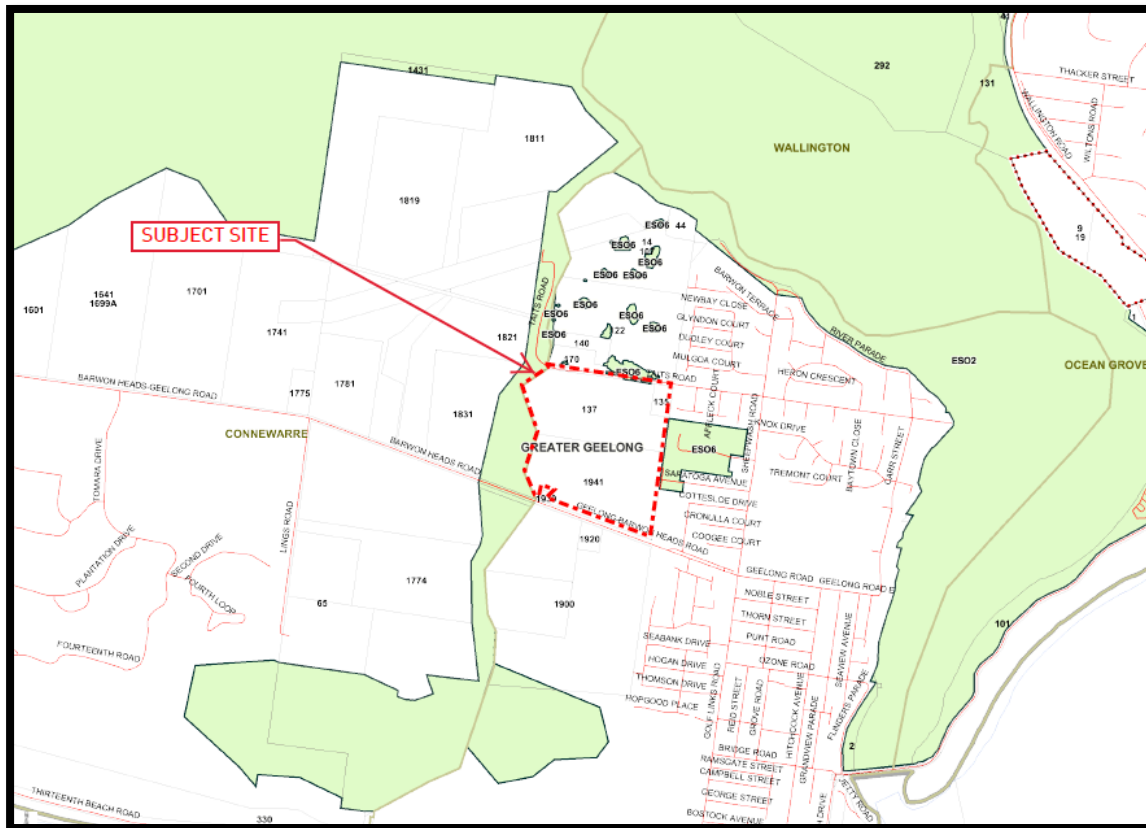


Figure 5: Environmental Significance Overlay map (Subject Site shown indicatively)

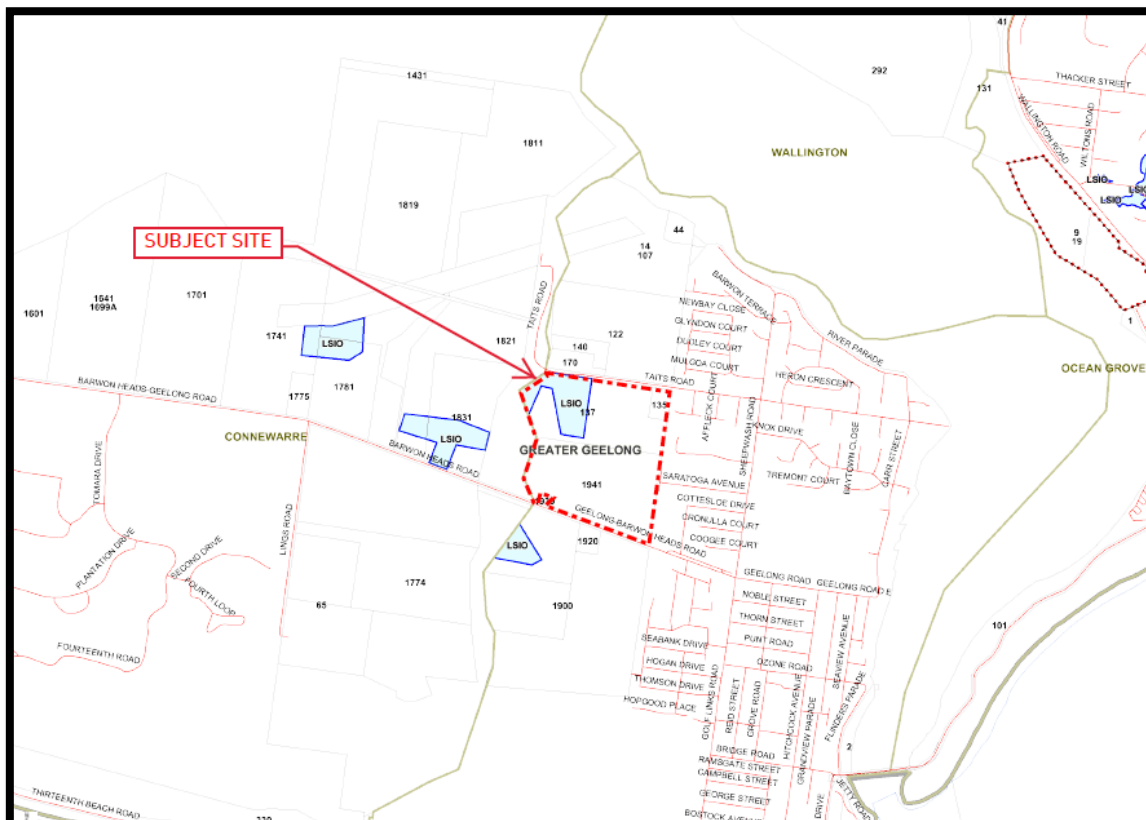


Figure 6: Land Subject to Inundation Overlay map (Subject Site shown indicatively)

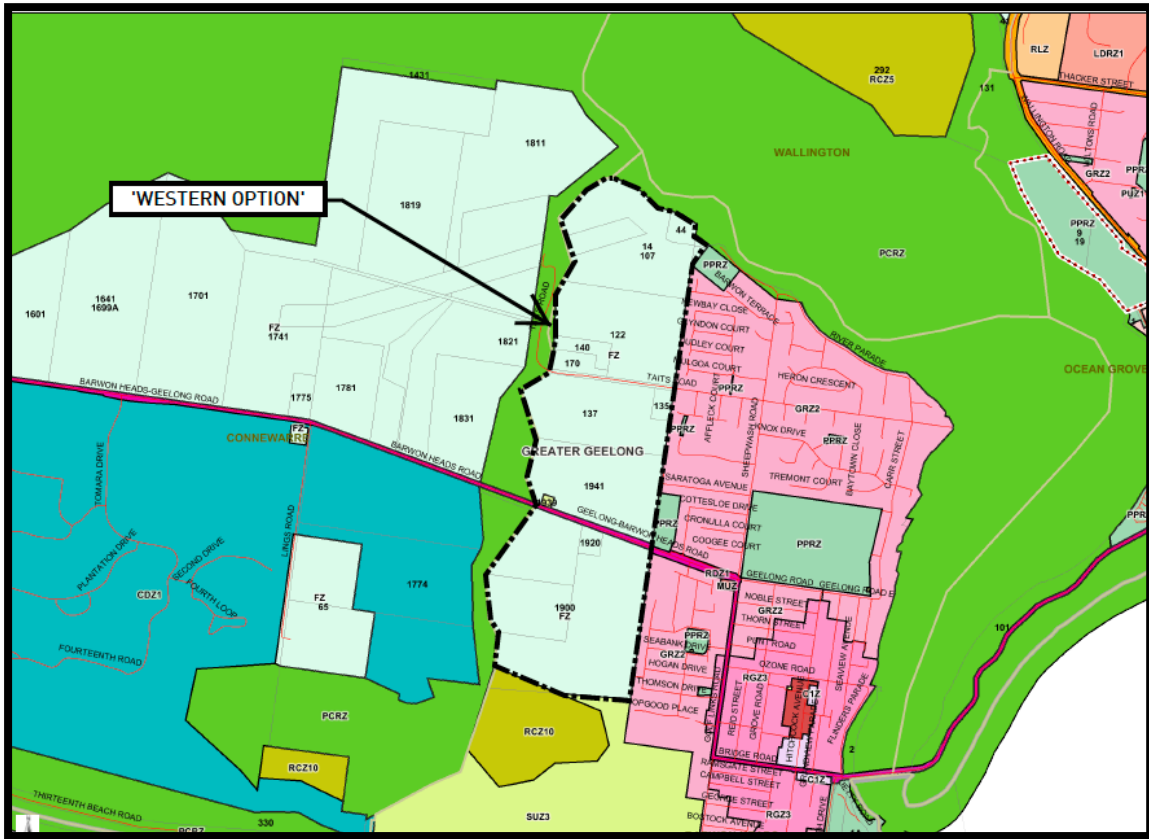


Figure 7: Zoning map ('Western Option' shown indicatively)

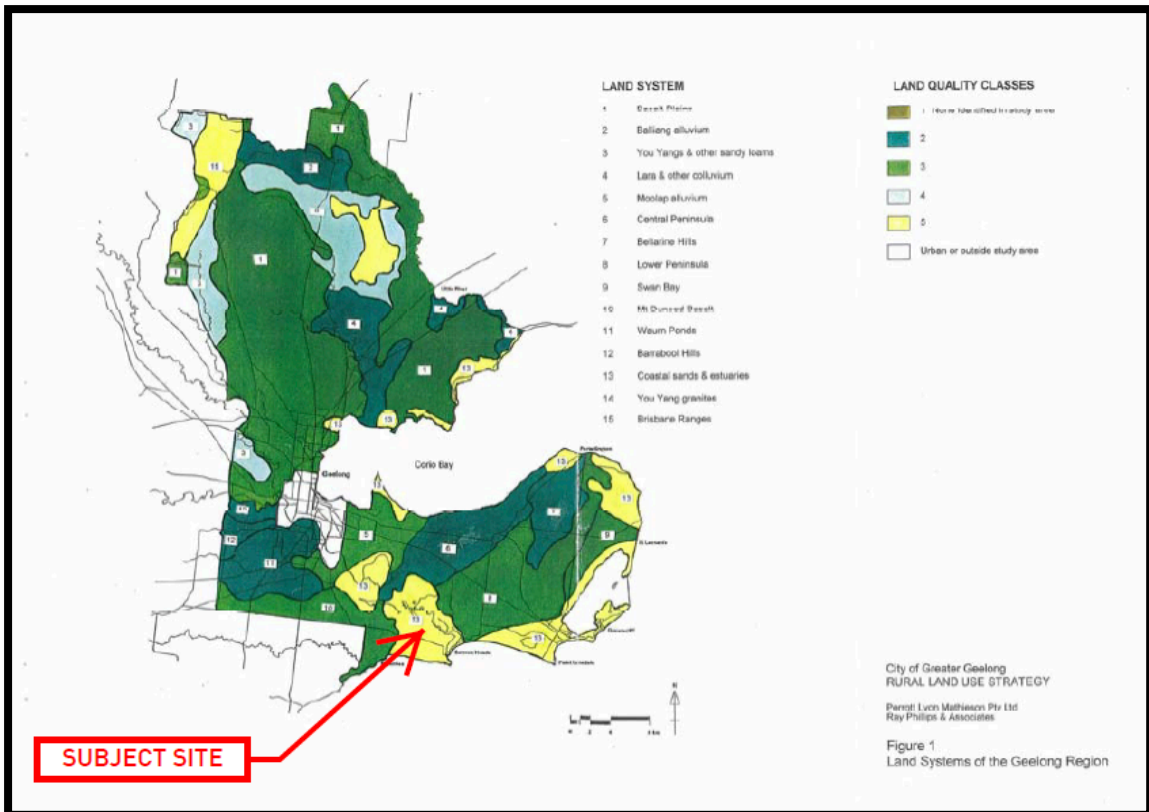


Figure 8: Agricultural capability (Subject Site shown indicatively) (Excerpt Rural Land Use Strategy)

5 ECONOMIC CONSIDERATIONS

5.1 Agricultural production

5.1.1 Farming

50 The Western Option's primary role is agriculture, given the Farming zoning that applies to the land (Figure 7).

51 The BHSP notes:

- The relevant policy context for rural and coastal areas provides for the protection and enhancement of productive agricultural capacity, rural landscape character and environmental conditions; and
- A need to maintain a non-urban break between settlements, ensuring there will be no fragmentation of rural land.

52 The *Rural Land Use Study (2007)* (**RLS**) identified the land to the immediate west of the Barwon River and Barwon Heads as having the poorest capability of soils in Greater Geelong. This tends to be confirmed by a site inspection and anecdotal advice from the landowners (Figure 8).

53 While a strategic review should be informed by a more detailed soils capability evaluation the RLS suggests the Western Option is highly unlikely to be classified as farmland of strategic significance or highly productive.

54 The latter point is reinforced by the constraints on a meaningful agricultural role presented by the immediate urban interface affecting the Western Option.

55 Effective and secured agricultural practice is undermined when intense urban development literally abuts the agricultural land unit. Noise, odour, dust, spraying of chemicals, use of farm equipment and the like can be a source of frequent conflict and tension, while intrusion, waste disposal and the presence and proximity of domestic animals pose a threat to farming.

56 Poor quality soils, existing fragmentation of holdings (by wetland systems and roads) and the above interface issues render the Western Option compromised farmland with limited prospect of being able to sustain meaningful production, going forward.

57 In the above context effective land care and maintenance is challenging.

5.1.2 Rural landscape character and non urban breaks

58 The Western Option's contribution to rural landscape character is principally of a relatively flat and open plain, which exposes the urban interface on the western approach to Barwon Heads.

59 It is a rural landscape character that extends between 10 -13 km west of the settlement to the eastern margins of Armstrong Creek and Torquay, respectively.

60 There are no intrinsic special character attributes about the Western Option that should command its protection. Its use for other strategic roles beneficial to Barwon Heads would not materially impact on the pervading scale and experience of the vast rural landscape west of Barwon Heads or the sheer expanse of the non-urban break to the next settlements.

5.1.3 Environmental conditions

61 The foregoing discussion of Section 4 advances the prospect that the environmental conditions of the Western Option could be markedly enhanced by the consideration of different roles.

5.2 Tourism and recreation

5.2.1 Tourism

62 The BHSP observes that tourism is an essential part of the vitality and economic future of Barwon Heads, and that the popularity of the town is a direct consequence of the natural features, beaches, parklands and recreational offer of the town (page 95).

"Tourism is important to the local economy and opportunities exist to support and improve tourist accommodation options and tourism facilities."

63 The many of attractions nominated by the BHSP are either located on or surround the Western Option including:

- Jirrahlinga Koala and Wildlife Sanctuary;

- 13th Beach Golf Resort;
- Barwon Heads Golf Course.

64 Addressing the future of tourism, the BHSP notes that tourism-based facilities are steadily growing, and it is important the structure plan supports the continued growth of this aspect of the town.

65 Key opportunities identified in the tourism strategy include:

- An indicative accommodation gap of 20 rooms for nature-based cabins and 80 rooms of hotel accommodation;
- Potential for nature-based accommodation, such as cabins, along the Barwon River, Lake Connewarre or overlooking the coast.
- Reinvestment in existing commercial accommodation and caravan parks, including additional self-contained cabin development and improved facilities in caravan parks.

66 The strategy concludes that:

- stress on the road network and parking around the town centre;
- congestion around key beach access points; and
- high land costs and the difficulty expanding within the urban setting

make it difficult for tourism operators to be viable in the longer term.

67 Having established the constraints on achieving the tourism objectives the BHSP is silent on where the solution might rest.

68 An option not considered in the Structure Plan is the role that the Western Option might perform in this desired growth sector, particularly given that many of the tourism and recreation facilities associated with Barwon Heads are located to the town's west.

69 If the Western Option was included within the settlement boundary and made a positive contribution to tourism and recreation facilities it would have an assured long-term interface with the town's natural setting.

5.2.2 Open space leisure and recreation facilities

- 70 The BHSP records that *Greater Geelong Open Space Strategy* seeks to explore opportunities to improve access to and enhance existing open space in the area of Tait's Road as well as;
- Establish suitable interfaces between development and areas of significant environmental value;
 - Provide linkages between existing and new residential areas, open space natural areas and the coast; and
 - Improve integration between sporting and natural areas at recreation reserves.
- 71 The strategy also records that there are a number of potential major trail projects for Barwon Heads constrained by budgeting, funding and other considerations.
- 72 The completion of the '*Round the Heads Trail*' would establish a continuous 11.5km recreation trail around Barwon Heads and would traverse the Western Option and / or be proximate to the wetlands. The BHSP records that the delivery of the trail would require the permanent or part closure of a section of the Lake Connewarre State Game Reserve, potential acquisition or negotiation of private land and available funding.
- 73 Part of the package of benefits that might arise from a westward variation or extension of the coastal settlement boundary could be an ability to secure one or more of the desired open space and recreational access outcomes.

6 SOCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 Population and housing

- 74 The demographic history of Barwon Heads over the last 40 years has been one of constant growth, paralleled by a more recent change from a dominance of retirees towards parents, homebuilders and primary schoolers (Refer Section 4 of the BHSP).
- 75 A substantial holiday period influx remains a constant.
- 76 Preferred housing policy outcomes for greater choice, diversity and affordability in Barwon Heads will be challenging.
- 77 Barwon Heads presents a highly constrained housing market with minimal vacant land supply, operating in conjunction with a high level of demand for this coastal location that has inflated housing prices and reduced affordability.
- 78 The supply of additional accommodation is further constrained by properties held for holiday rental; redevelopment that replaces existing building stock with a larger footprint and the longer term constraints presented by sea level rise and flooding that Figure 4 suggests will impact on large areas of the existing township.
- 79 As the *Barwon Heads Residential and Landscape Character Assessment 2017* noted with the development of approximately 21 lots:
- “...there is now virtually no greenfield land available around Barwon Heads for new residential subdivision. As a consequence unless there is a change to the settlement boundary (a matter being considered as part of the Structure Plan Review) the majority of new housing will be infill development.”*
- 80 Infill in this context should be read as principally one for one replacement.
- 81 The BHSP response to the above and residential character considerations is to establish an ‘*Incremental Change Residential Area*’, rezoning General Residential zoned land to Neighbourhood Residential and establishing an ‘*Increased Housing Diversity Area*’.

- 82 The recent history of residential development in Barwon Heads would suggest that these strategies, which are dependant upon the established urban area, would have marginal impact upon supply, diversification or affordability.
- 83 On the other hand a considerable part of the housing strategy in the BHSP is directed at protecting and enhancing the character of the settlement rather than resident or visitor / tourist housing and accommodation needs.
- 84 If the latter needs are to be meaningfully addressed there ought, at the least, to be consideration and evaluation of the planning options and opportunities and their implications.

6.2 Vision and Character

- 85 The response of the BHSP to any form of urban development outside the existing settlement boundary has been to invoke coastal and settlement policy as though prohibitive and to conclude that any change would *“irrevocably erode the “village” atmosphere of the town and undermine the vision of the town which aspires to be a place where human impact is management to support the fragile surrounds.”*
- 86 The planning authority also places considerable weight upon substantial established community resistance to change.
- 87 These reasons warrant more fulsome considerations.
- 88 This report has previously noted the relevant planning policy is not prohibitive, despite Barwon Heads not being a designated growth area.
- 89 The unanswered question arising from the above is whether any change in settlement boundary would:
- Literally, “irrevocably erode” the character of Barwon Heads; and
 - Compromise the attainment of the vision for the settlement.

6.2.1 Character

- 90 The *Barwon Heads Residential and Landscape Character Assessment* (**Assessment**) has appropriately drawn the distinction between township and neighbourhood characteristics and the policy position to protect the

unique characteristics of Barwon Heads as a small coastal village located within a sensitive environmental and significant landscape setting.

- 91 The Assessment identifies the township character relating to:
- Its coastal location near a surf beach;
 - Its location on the Barwon River;
 - Clearly defined urban edges and entries and approaches to the town;
 - Clearly defined town centre and heart of the town;
 - Location within rural and wetland settings;
 - The relatively limited range of services and facilities;
 - The dual roles of the town as a home for permanent population and its strong tourist role
 - Its size and scale, being a small village with a relatively small population and with limited opportunities for population growth.
- 92 The last observation acknowledges scope to contemplate some limited growth and the other township characteristics do not preclude variation in the western boundary.
- 93 Even a variation in existing settlement boundary can retain a clearly defined urban edge and provided development is contained within and suitably setback from the rural / wetland setting, it could be respected.
- 94 Significantly the Assessment notes that some areas of the town may have a greater influence on the township character than others. It draws the distinction between the areas proximate to the bridge, estuary edge and the areas around the town centre as most strongly aligned with the informal coastal village character.
- 95 By way of contrast and distinction the Assessment singles out the new estates to the west and north west of Barwon Heads, being the land to the east of the Western Option as having a 'suburban' character typically associated with many new growth areas.

96 Insufficient strategic development of options has been undertaken on the Western Option for this evidence make specific recommendations of the amount and location of land that might serve a tourism or residential roles, but sufficient is known to conclude that a limited amount of land and some variation in the western settlement boundary, in conjunction with a thoughtful and responsive master plan, might provide for the following range of benefits:

- A positive contribution to nominated tourism outcomes;
- A limited supply of more diverse housing choices meeting sectoral needs acknowledged in the BHSP;
- A repositioned but clearly defined urban edge;
- A layout, siting, character and form of development that is clearly aligned with the older informal village character of Barwon Heads rather than the more recent suburban development;
- An ability to retain Barwon Heads as a village surrounded by natural and environmentally significant areas within a broader rural landscape;
- Provision of additional public land as a buffer to the wetlands and for the completion of the Round the Heads Trail;
- The provisions of connection and bio-diversity links in to the community and around the long-term defensible boundaries Barwon Heads.

97 The above should be characterised as a logical and balanced response to the range of social, economic and environmental issues facing the settlement.

98 The BHSP acknowledges that delivering additional utility services would not be an insurmountable constraint to the above concept.

6.2.2 Vision

99 In the above context I consider the envisaged change in roles for the Western Option and consequential variation in the settlement boundary

would reinforce rather than detract from the vision confirmed in the BHSP as:

Barwon Heads will be a unique and sustainable, residential and environmental hub, a landlocked community surrounded by pristine river, coast and wetlands. An intimate community which supports all ages and provides a place of belonging for residents and visitors alike; where human impact is management to support a fragile natural surrounds by;

- *Clearly defined limitations on urban development;*
- *Protection and nurturing of the surroundings by managing human footprint*
- *Supporting walking, cycling, fishing, sailing, surfing swimming and generally enjoying what our coastal village has to offer in an environmental sensitive way.*

7 CONCLUSIONS

- 100 The Barwon Heads Structure Plan draws attention to the relevant scope of planning policy that should be considered in setting the direction for the next phase of the settlement's development.
- 101 The BHSP has identified a range of social, economic and environmental issues to be addressed but in advancing a revised strategy has not fully or appropriately evaluated the benefits and consequences of integrating land to the west of the settlement and east of the lagoon / wetland system.
- 102 The relevant settlement and coastal policy considerations are not prohibitive to this option, and while community resistance to change is understandable this should not prematurely and inappropriately foreclose on the proper assessment of the Western Option.
- 103 The analysis of this report is insufficient to recommend a particular location for any variation in the extent of urban development and a revised coastal settlement boundary, but it is sufficient to recommend to the Panel that it not endorse the Planning Authority's view that there should be no change to the boundary and it should in effect be permanent.
- 104 It should be recommended to the Planning Authority that it uses the next iteration of the structure plan review to test and evaluate the strategy advanced in this evidence.

Robert Milner
August 2018

Attachment

1 Robert Milner's evidence to Amendment C159

Planning Evidence

Amendment C159
Greater Geelong Planning Scheme
Barwon Heads Structure Plan

4 November 2009

Prepared by Rob Milner Dip T&CP, LFPIA, FVPELA

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The evidence

Background to the evidence given in this matter.

Name and address of the expert

Robert Milner of CPG Australia, 24 Albert Road, South Melbourne, has prepared this report. He holds the position of Senior Principal Consultant, Planning.

Expert's qualifications and experience

Robert Milner has an honours diploma in Town and Country Planning from Liverpool Polytechnic. He is a Life Fellow of the Planning Institute of Australia and a Fellow of the Victorian Planning and Environmental Law Association.

Relevant experience includes:

- 8 years as a planner in local government undertaking statutory and strategic work
- 29 years experience in private practice with various planning and property related consultancies
- State and National President of the Royal Australian Planning Institute
- A member of the Local Government and Planning Advisory Council.
- A curriculum vitae is included at Attachment 1.

Statement identifying the expert's area of expertise

Robert Milner is recognised as a leader and expert in the field of urban and regional planning. He has given evidence before the Victorian Civil & Administrative Tribunal, Planning Panels Victoria, and the Supreme Court on many occasions.

Statement setting out the expert's expertise to make the report

Robert Milner has a broad range of expertise in planning and development matters enabling him to comment on a wide spectrum of urban and rural, statutory and strategic planning issues and processes.

Instructions that define the scope of the report

I have been instructed by Minter Ellison Lawyers to provide expert planning evidence in respect of Amendment C159 to the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme. In particular, I have been requested to focus on the question of, what constitutes best practice when preparing a Structure Plan for a coastal settlement, and does the Barwon Heads Structure Plan achieve that best practice example.

The facts, matters and all assumptions upon which the report proceeds

I have reviewed the following material which has formed the basis of my report:

- The Greater Geelong Planning Scheme;
- The Barwon Heads Structure Plan, Public Discussion Draft, August 2007;
- The Barwon Heads Structure Plan, Adopted December 2007;



- Council reports dated 28 July 2009, 11 December 2007 and 24 July 2007;
- Ballerine Peninsula Strategic Plan 2006;
- DSE VPP Practice Note: Implementing a Coastal Settlement Boundary, October 2006;
- DSE General Practice Note: Structure Planning for Activity Centres, December 2003;
- DPCD General Practice Note: Managing coastal hazards and the coastal impacts of climate change, December 2008;
- Precinct Structure Planning Guidelines, Growth Areas Authority.
- Victorian Coastal Strategy, 2008.

I have not made any assumptions of which I am aware.

Documents and other materials the expert has been instructed to consider or take into account in preparing his or her report and the literature or other material used in making the report

None.

Identity of the person who carried out any tests or experiments upon which the expert relied in making the report and the qualifications of that person

In this matter Mr Michael Deidun, Senior Associate at CPG Australia has undertaken research and assisted me in the preparation of this report.

Summary of the opinion or opinions of the expert

Refer to Section 3.

I have made all the enquiries that I believe are desirable and appropriate and no matters of significance which I regard as relevant have to my knowledge been withheld from the Panel.

Rob Milner, CPG Australia
November 2009

Introduction

I have been approached by Minter Ellison Lawyers to prepare evidence that examines best practice structure planning for settlements, with particular regard to structure planning for coastal settlements, and to compare that model, to the best of my ability, with what has occurred in relation to the Barwon Heads Structure Plan.

Minter Ellison lawyers act on behalf of Macafee Investments P/L, a company that owns land immediately to the west of the existing Barwon Heads township and land that has been identified in the past for potential urban growth. I have had no previous involvement in formulating or advancing the development proposals for this parcel of land.

Structure Planning for coastal townships is a process that must be guided by both state, regional and local considerations. In this case the process has clearly been undertaken with reference to the Victorian Coastal Strategy, and informed by a substantial amount of regionally based background work under the banner of the Bellarine Peninsula Strategic Plan 2006-2016.

In my view the Barwon Heads Structure Plan has failed to adequately evaluate the options available to it in terms of growth, nor the environmental impacts on the town. The Draft August 2007 version for Public Discussion advanced a position of controlled growth, and the December 2007 version adopted by Council advanced a position of no outward growth of the present town boundaries. However in neither document can one find a structured and measured examination of the advantages and disadvantages of both options, nor an analysis of the environmental constraints, including flooding, vegetation and sites of environment significance, that may weigh upon both options.

In my view, the absence of such an analysis is to the detriment of the veracity of the structure planning process and the end product.

In undertaking this task I have drawn upon my broad experience co-ordinating structure plans, including the following:

- Cowes, Silverleaves, Ventnor & Wimbleton Heights Structure Plan;
- Wonthaggi and Dalyston Structure Plan;
- Cobram Structure Plan;
- Bairnsdale Growth Area Strategy;

as well as my experience in providing expert evidence, in which I have had regard to and considered a broad range of structure plans.



Best practice structure planning

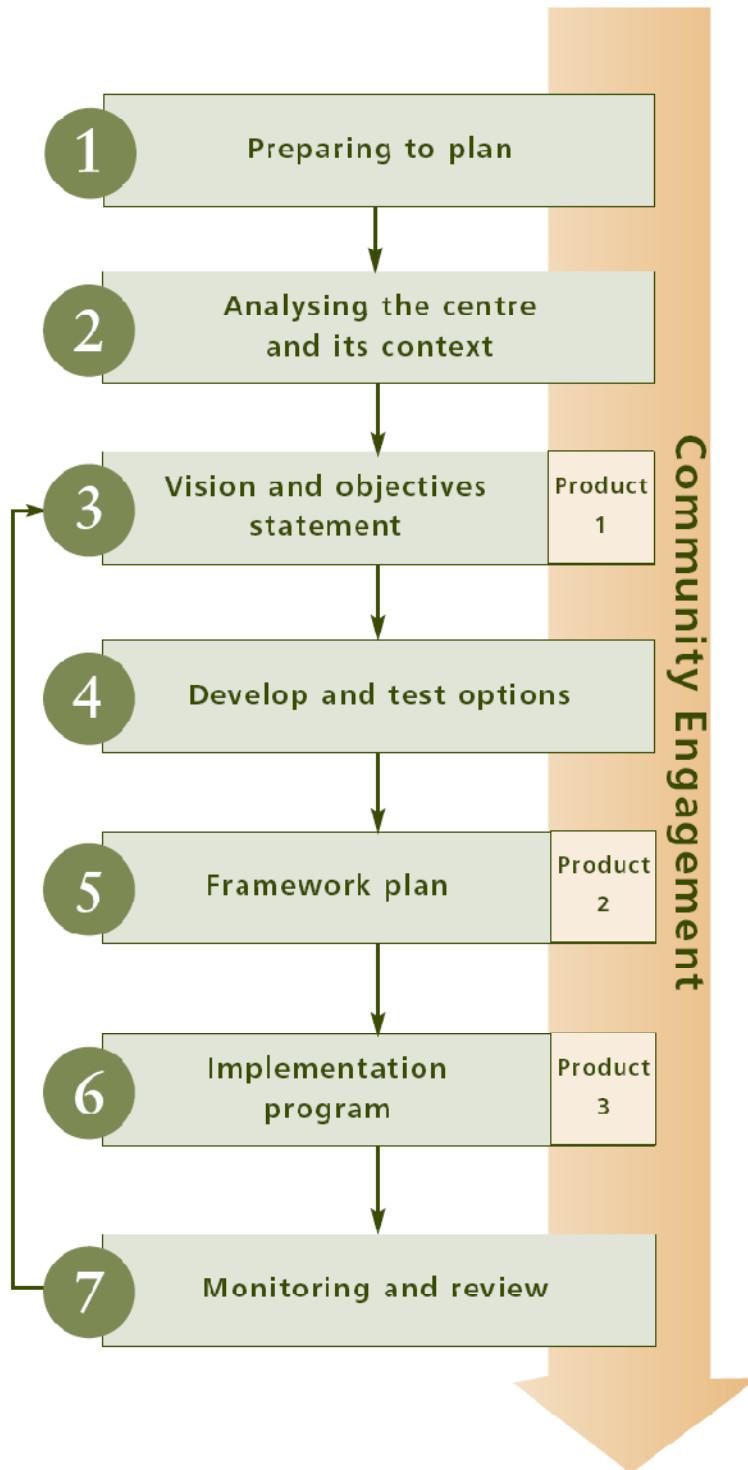
1.1 Structure Planning – established guidelines

There is no definition or model of ‘best practice structure planning’ set out in either the Planning and Environment Act 1987 or the Victorian Planning Provisions. In the absence of a legislative basis for such an analysis, one must turn to other authoritative sources for guidance on what is expected from a structure planning process.

The Department of Planning and Community Development, and its predecessor, have for a number of years been issuing Practice and Advisory Notes to guide decision making and other processes within the Victorian Planning System.

There are three Practice and Advisory Notes that provide guidance in relation to structure planning. The first is the, “General Practice Note: Structure Planning for Activity Centres, December 2003.” This Practice Note contains the process diagram for structure planning for activity centres that is depicted on the following page.

Structure Planning Model



The next relevant Practice Note is the, “VPP Practice Note: Implementing a Coastal Settlement Boundary, October 2006.” This Practice Note describes the strategic planning process that should occur in establishing a coastal settlement boundary. Much of this process correlates with that identified in the, “General Practice Note: Structure Planning for Activity Centres, December 2003.” In combining the two processes outlined in the two Practice Notes, we start to gather an idea of a ‘best practice’ approach, which is as follows:

- Preparing to plan (review any existing strategic work, identify the stakeholders, identify relevant data sources, establish the project team).¹
- Analyse the centre and its context (scope the issues, identify community values, identify role and function of centre, define the study area).¹
- Vision and objectives statement.¹
- Analyse land opportunities and constraints within a minimum 10 year planning horizon.²
- Process: desired future vision for a settlement; role and function of the settlement in comparison with other settlements; constraints on development such as topography; areas with susceptibility to flooding and other risks; supply/demand of land within a 10 year planning horizon and opportunities for future growth (if any).²
- Develop and test physical options for the future development of the town or centre.¹
- Structure or Framework plan, in the form of an annotated plan or map.¹
- Implementation program of the process ahead.¹
- Method of implementation: inclusion of policy objectives and strategies; setting of a boundary on a map; identification of opportunities and constraints that support the location of the settlement boundary; identification of areas suitable for future urban development inside the settlement boundary.²
- Monitoring and review.¹

The outcomes from the methodology must be guided by the above process. In the case of a coastal settlement, the outcome must also be guided by the Victorian Coastal Strategy 2008, which seeks to identify coastal locations that may or may not be subject to future growth. In the Victorian Coastal Strategy 2008 Barwon Heads is identified as having a low growth capacity.

The final relevant document is the recently released Precinct Structure Planning Guidelines. Whereas the two Practice Notes seek to shape and define the process involved, the Precinct Structure Planning Guidelines seeks to identify the influences and considerations throughout the process.

¹ General Practice Note: Structure Planning for Activity Centres, December 2003.

² VPP Practice Note: Implementing a Coastal Settlement Boundary, October 2006.



1.2 Structure planning – in practice

In practice it is my experience that structure planning must take on a number of defined steps, to be set out in the final document. It all commences with a background or context report, where key issues are identified and explored, key stakeholders are consulted and a vision for the town or precinct is defined and adopted.

One then moves onto the strategy itself, which should contain the following:

- Vision Statement;
- Key Strategic influences and drivers of change;
- Principles and Strategies;
- The Structure Plan itself; and,
- An implementation strategy.

The Structure Plan should also identify the options that exist for different areas of growth, and critically examine each of these options in some detail. An example of this process that is found within the Cowes, Silverleaves, Ventnor & Wimbleton Heights Structure Plan Foundation Report (June 2008) is attached at Appendix 2 to this evidence.

Attributes of the Barwon Heads Structure Plan

The formulation of the Barwon Heads Structure Plan followed a lengthy process, the main milestones of which are set out in the chronology below:

1. 2006 - Bellarine Peninsula Strategic Plan 2006-2016 adopted by Greater Geelong City Council.
2. 27 July 2007, Council decision to amend the draft Structure Plan for Barwon Heads and release it for public comment.
3. 20 August to 15 October 2007, public exhibition of draft structure plan, including two community information sessions;
4. 11 December 2007, Council meeting to consider submissions on the draft structure plan. Council resolved to make changes and exhibit a planning scheme amendment.
5. December 2007, Barwon Heads Structure Plan.
6. 5 February 2009, authorization gazetted to exhibit Amendment C159. Delay was due to DPCD taking ten months to give authorization, which was apparently as a result of approaches made to the Minister by the people involved with Thirteenth Beach;
7. 5 February 2009 to 23 March 2009, exhibition of Amendment C159;
8. 28 July 2009, Council report to consider submissions and refer them to the Panel.

On most counts the process that resulted in the Barwon Heads Structure Plan compares well with the 'best practice' model set up by the various Practice Notes set out above. The Greater Geelong Council undertook an in-depth background study in the form of the Bellarine Peninsula Strategic Plan 2006-2016 which, among other things, examined the provision of housing for the region over a 10 year period, and also enabled the community to establish a vision for the various towns within the Bellarine Peninsula.

The Council also, as part of the Barwon Heads Structure Plan, undertook extensive research into the demographics at play within Barwon Heads, and undertook a thorough State and local policy analysis. The structure plan itself was also subject to two separate processes of public exhibition and comment.

Having regard to the 'best practice' model, there are two shortfalls of the Barwon Heads Structure Plan. Firstly, the plan itself fails to undertake an analysis of the various options open to it in terms of the expansion of the town boundary. Barwon Heads is constrained to its north and east by the Barwon River, and to the south by the coastline. However there are different options for growth along its western boundary, both to the north and to the south of Barwon Heads Road. There is also the option of no expansion of the existing town boundary.

One would normally expect an examination of the advantages and disadvantages of these options as part of the Structure Plan itself. Instead the Structure Plan leads one directly to the conclusion, and in the case of the Barwon Heads Structure Plan that conclusion has changed completely from the draft version in August 2007 to the final version in December 2007. An analysis of the various options within the Structure Plan may have assisted in the consideration of the plan by the community and might have explained why the ultimate conclusion was reversed, or indeed influenced the conclusion that was reached.

A description of the Macafee land and the proposed rezoning occurs on page 123 of the Structure Plan, and an outline of the arguments put in favour of the proposal, and the responses from DSE and Barwon Water follows on page 125. However the analysis that follows on page 128 is headed by an outline of the Practice Note 'Implementing a Coastal Settlement Boundary,' followed by an outline of the desired future vision established by community consultation as a result of the Barwon Heads Urban Design Framework. It is at that point that the conclusion has been reached and is sought to be justified by the analysis on constraints, and supply and demand of land, that follows.

At no point are other options ever seriously considered, such as expansion of the western boundary of the town to the north of Barwon Heads Road. The only options that are considered is the one put forward by the proponents for the rezoning of the Macafee land, and the option put forward by the community of no expansion. At no stage does the structure plan seek to undertake an independent process of identifying and assessing options for growth.

In my view this is a significant failure of the structure plan and the structure planning process. It may result in an inappropriate outcome having been reached, though this would not be known without employing a proper and full analysis of the available options.

The second significant shortfall of the Barwon Heads Structure Plan is the failure to consider environmental impacts on the town, and the options that exist for growth. The most important of those environmental impacts are the impact of sea level rises and storm surges. In the case of Barwon Heads this is particularly important as much of the town sits at fairly low levels. There are also documented issues with the drainage infrastructure within Barwon heads, which would only exacerbate any tidal surge event³.

Policy at Clause 15.08 seeks that decision making by planning and responsible authorities apply the principles for coastal planning and management as set out in the Victorian Coastal Strategy 2008, which include:

Ensure development on the coast is located within existing modified and resilient environments where the demand for development is evident and the impact can be managed.

³ Barwon Heads Drainage Flood Management Plan (November 2005)

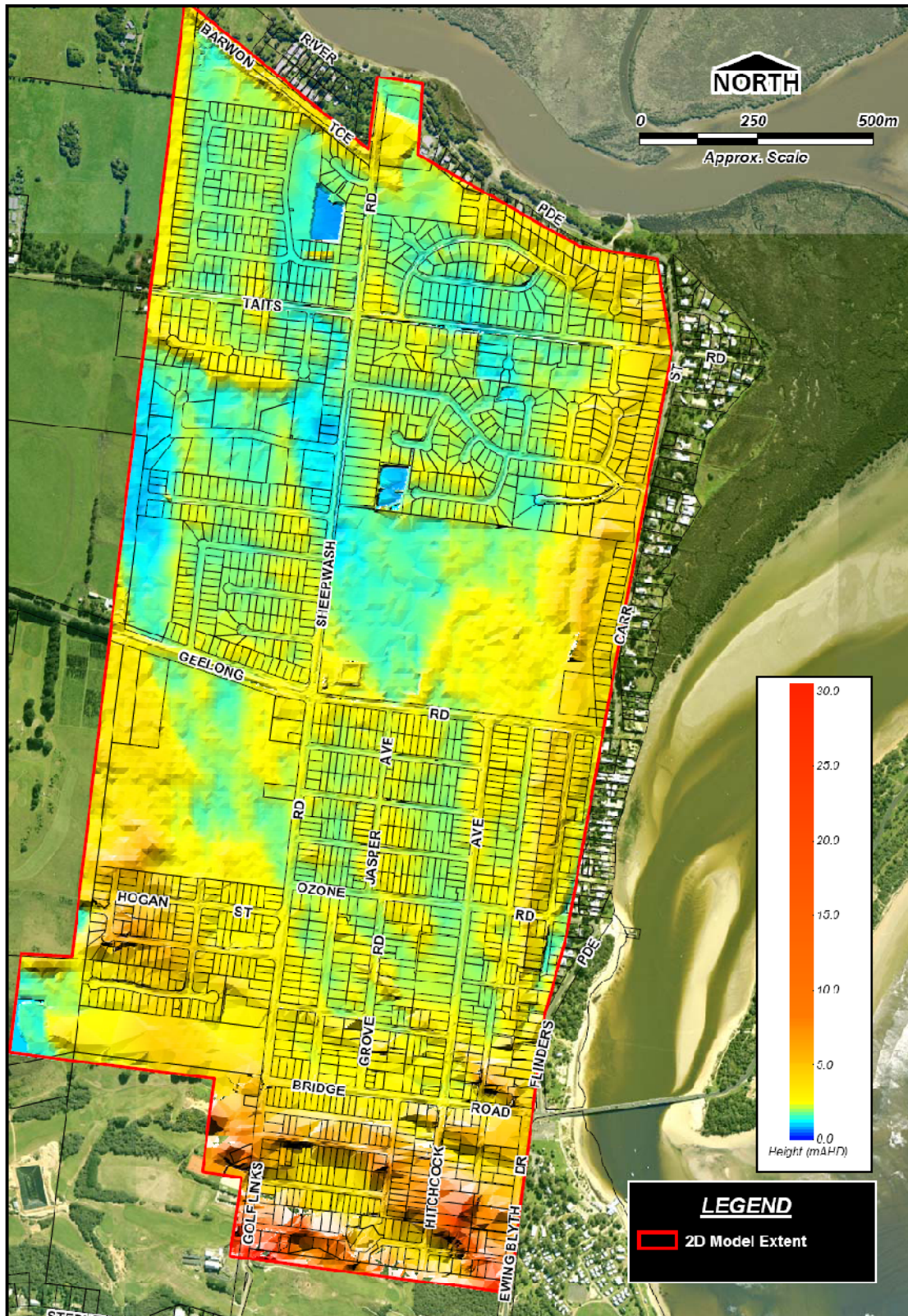


The failure of the structure plan to determine the resilience of the existing township to coastal inundation amounts to a failure to comply with this part of State Planning Policy.

This policy is supported by the VPP Practice Note Implementing a Coastal Settlement Boundary (October 2006), which states that the process in establishing a coastal settlement boundary should identify the areas with susceptibility to flood, from both river and coastal inundation. A number of other environmental constraints are also listed as relevant issues to be identified, including landscape, erosion and salinity. The Barwon heads Structure Plan has not sought to identify any such constraints.

Both the State Planning Policy at 15.08 and the VPP Practice Note are supported by Ministerial Direction No 13 Managing Coastal Hazards and the Coastal Impacts of Climate Change. This Ministerial Direction strictly does not apply to this Amendment, as it applies to amendments which have the effect of allowing non-urban land to be used for an urban use or development. However, given that the Barwon Heads Structure Plan could have proposed such an outcome, it is a relevant consideration. It is noted that the Ministerial Direction is dated 18 December 2008, after the creation of the Barwon Heads Structure Plan.

The direction applies to all land with a height of less than 5 AHD within one kilometre of the coastline. Land with these credentials are identified presumably because they are at some risk of coastal inundation. The Barwon Heads Drainage Flood Management Plan identified that much of the existing township is below that AHD level, as shown on the plan below.





The failure of the structure plan to consider the impact of such coastal hazards is significant. If, for example, it determined that one part of the existing town was particularly susceptible to sea level rises and storm surges, then it may have been prudent to mark that area as one which, in the longer term, residents will be encouraged to relocate from. In those circumstances the identification of a small area for growth of the township would have been appropriate, particularly if that growth were to occur on land not susceptible to sea level rises and storm surges.

Conclusion

While the process employed to create the Barwon Heads Structure Plan was thorough, and well grounded in a broader background study, it has failed to have regard to the best practice model established in Practice Notes. Principally this failure is that to document, contextually analyse and publicise the consideration of different options for growth for the township. The failure to undertake such an analysis in my view weakens the conclusion that has been reached to not allow for outward growth of the present town boundary.

The structure plan has also failed to consider environmental constraints, such as flooding, and more importantly the impact of sea level rises and storm surges on the populated areas of the town. The failure to identify these issues means that the conclusion to continue to consolidate growth within the existing town boundary may ultimately not be the wisest or safest decision for the residents of Barwon Heads. It is also contrary to a recent General Practice Note that strongly encourages the consideration of such issues in planning decisions.

In my view both of these matters are critical to the creation of a Structure Plan in a coastal location, and therefore the Barwon Heads Structure Plan should be reviewed and potentially recast having regard to these matters.

The Panel should therefore recommend that the Amendment be abandoned on the basis that the Barwon Heads Structure Plan has failed to consider the options for growth, and has failed to consider the potential impacts of coastal inundation on the existing town and surrounding areas.

Rob Milner
Senior Principal, CPG Australia
Dip T&CP, LFPIA, FVPELA



Attachment 1 – Curriculum vitae



**Attachment 2 – Extract from the Cowes, Silverleaves, Ventnor & Wimbleton Heights Structure
Plan Foundation Report**

Attachment

2 Relevant documents considered

Documents considered in preparation of the evidence

- *Greater Geelong Planning Scheme*;
- Amendment C375 to the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme;
- *Barwon Heads Structure Plan 2017*;
- *Barwon Heads Structure Plan 2007*;
- Panel Report on Amendment C159 to the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme;
- *G21 Regional Growth Plan* (2013);
- *Bellarine Peninsula Localised Planning Statement* (2015);
- *Murnaghurt Lagoon, Bellarine Peninsula and Related landforms* (2009);
- *Barwon Heads Residential and Landscape Character Assessment* (2017);
- *Greater Geelong Rural Land Use Study* (2007);
- *Greater Geelong Managing Development in Rural Areas – Planning Policy Review* (2015); and
- *Planning Practice Note 36 – Implementing a Coastal Settlement Boundary*.

Attachment

3 Witness Statement

Expert Witness Statement

The name and address of the expert

Robert Milner, Director of 10 Consulting Group Pty Ltd, 3/2 Yarra Street, South Melbourne, Victoria, 3205.

The expert's qualifications and experience

Robert Milner holds an Honours Diploma in Town and Country Planning from Liverpool Polytechnic. He is a Life Fellow of the Planning Institute of Australia and a Fellow of the Victorian Planning and Environmental Law Association.

A Curriculum Vitae is included at Attachment 4.

The expert's area of expertise to make this report

Robert has a broad range of expertise in planning and development matters enabling him to comment on a wide spectrum of urban and rural, statutory and strategic planning issues and processes.

Other significant contributors to the report

Not applicable

Instructions that define the scope of the report

Robert Milner has been instructed by Norton Rose Fulbright Australia to prepare expert evidence on behalf of their clients, Mid West Group (Barwon Heads).

The identity of any person who carried out tests or experiments upon which the expert has relied on and the qualifications of that person

Not applicable.

The facts, matters and all assumptions upon which this report proceeds

There are no other facts, matters or assumptions upon which the report relies other than those explicitly stated in the report.

Documents and other materials the expert has been instructed to consider or take into account in preparing his report, and the literature or other material used in making the report

Rob Milner has reviewed the material as referenced in the body of this report and detailed in Attachment 1.

A summary of the opinion or the opinions of the expert

A summary of Robert Milner's opinions are provided within the body of the report.

Any provisions or opinions that are not fully researched for any reason

Not applicable.

Questions falling outside the expert's expertise and completeness of the report

Robert Milner has not been instructed to answer any questions falling outside his area of expertise. The report is complete.

Expert declaration

I have made all inquiries that I believe are desirable and appropriate and no matters of significance which I regard as relevant have to my knowledge been withheld from the Panel.



Robert Milner
August 2018

Attachment

4 Curriculum vitae

ROBERT MILNER – Curriculum vitae

Qualifications and Positions

- Director 10 Consulting Group Pty Ltd and The Milner Group Pty Ltd.
- Diploma in Town and Country Planning (First Class Honours) Liverpool Polytechnic.
- Life Fellow Planning Institute of Australia.
- Fellow of the Victoria Planning and Environmental Law Association.
- Former State and National President of the Planning Institute of Australia.
- Member, Planning and Local Government Advisory Council (1994 – 1999).
- Deputy Chairman, Future Farming Expert Advisory Group (2009).

Employment History

2010 – Current	Director 10 Consulting Group Pty Ltd.
1999 – 2010	General Manager – Planning, CPG Australia Pty Ltd (Formerly the Coomes Consulting Group).
1994 – 1999	Director, Rob Milner Planning Pty Ltd and Savage Milner.
1991 - 1994	Project Director, Collie Planning and Development.
1988 – 1991	General Manager, Town Planning, Jones Lang Wootton.
1980 - 1988	City Planner - City of Box Hill.
1977 – 1980	Planner, Perrott Lyon Mathieson, Architects and Planners.
1976 – 1977	Planner, Kirklees Metropolitan Borough Council (UK).

Career Overview

Rob Milner is a respected strategic and statutory planner.

He is a recognised leader of the planning profession in Victoria.

He has had a high profile career spanning more than 40 years with extended periods of experience working for local government and in private practice.

He is the sole Director of 10 Consulting Group, a small consultancy offering the highest level of advice and service to clients wanting the benefit of his considerable experience, knowledge and understanding of planning in Victoria.

He is regularly retained to provide expert evidence to courts, panels and tribunals on the broadest range of land use and development planning issues.

He is able to evaluate and form a robust opinion on complex matters quickly and has a capacity to manage a considerable body of work in an efficient and timely manner.

He has a reputation for integrity, objectivity, an original style of evidence and for providing clear and fearless advice to proponents and objectors; the responsible authority; claimants and government agencies.

Particular expertise is in complex and controversial projects, gaming matters, acquisitions and restrictive covenants.

He is an acknowledged advocate and negotiator and is regularly engaged in development approval and rezoning projects where process and relationships need to be carefully nurtured to ensure a viable and timely outcome.

His ability to communicate effectively among a broad range of stakeholders means that he is regularly engaged to facilitate workshops, conferences, consultation and other situations where leadership and engagement of groups is required.

His clients have included many State government agencies (including planning, community development, justice, roads, growth areas and regional development), municipalities throughout Victoria, as well as a broad range of corporate and other private sector interests.

He has committed to 'giving back' to a profession that has provided him with a rewarding career. As well as contributing to the development of the Planning Institute of Australia he has acted over the last two decades in the capacity of mentor for many younger planners.

He regularly attends and gives papers at professional development forums.

Areas of Expertise and Experience

Strategic studies, policy development and statutory implementation

Robert Milner is widely acknowledged for his capacity to take a strategic perspective to urban and regional planning challenges and provide direction and leadership that is responsive and creative in a more detailed statutory context.

He also has extensive experience in assembling and managing consultant teams to undertake strategic plans and projects.

In 1994 he lead the planning consultancy that recommended the model for the Victorian Planning Provisions.

In 2009 he served as the Deputy Chairman on the Future Farming Expert Advisory Group reporting to the Minister for Planning.

Most recently he has been retained by DELWP to review, research and prepare an issues and options paper for Ministerial consideration on the green wedge planning provisions.

Expert evidence and advocacy

Robert Milner is regularly called upon to provide expert evidence and reports to clients, courts, Independent Panels and VCAT. He has acted in this capacity and as an advocate throughout his career.

In a Supreme Court of Victoria – Court of Appeal matter of 2016¹ his evidence was singled out for being “*rational, detailed and credible.*”

He is often retained to provide the strategic perspective to planning disputes. He is equally capable in commenting on matters of urban design, and compliance with planning policy and provisions. Recent major cases have included:

- Melbourne Metropolitan Rail Project;
- Fishermans Bend Urban Renewal Area;
- Westernport Freeway;
- Building controls for the Central City and Southbank;
- The redevelopment of the Victoria Market;
- Widening of Punt Road;

¹ *Winky Pop Pty Ltd & Anor v Mobil Refining Australia Pty Ltd & Anor* S AP1 2015 0084

- The further development of Flemington Racecourse;
- Development over Ormond Station;
- Waterfront Place, at Station Pier.

Legislative and planning scheme reviews and amendments

Robert Milner has extensive experience in planning scheme reviews, amendments to planning schemes and projects that redefine the planning provisions.

Recent relevant projects have included:

- Major Hazard Facilities Advisory Committee (evidence);
- Activity Centre Zone construction and application in Footscray, Doncaster, Knox and Sunshine
- Tramway infrastructure and the VPP's;
- Higher density living adjacent to tramway corridors;
- Liquor licensing legislation and planning provisions;
- Gaming (EGM) policy and provisions for Councils;
- Review of the Farming and Green Wedge zones for their economic implications

Gaming policy and applications

Robert Milner has been responsible for local planning policy on gaming in many metropolitan and regional based planning schemes.

That experience has been complemented by the preparation and presentation of expert evidence before Tribunals and Panels on particular policies or applications for approval.

Restrictive Covenants

Robert Milner is regularly retained to provide reports expressing his opinion on the merits of the removal or variation of covenants, from a planners and beneficiaries perspective. This work often requires application of the provisions of the *Property Law Act*, but also includes applications for planning permit or amendments to planning schemes under the provisions of the *Planning and Environment Act*.

Acquisition and compensation

Acquiring authorities or claimants regularly retain Robert Milner to provide reports and give evidence on the planning context to property valuation for land that is to be

publically acquired. This requires judgement about the planning context in the absence of the purpose of the proposal.

Relevant recent projects have included:

- Bypasses of Geelong, Craigieburn, Kilmore and Drysdale;
- The Outer Metropolitan Route;
- The Regional Rail Link;
- The Melbourne Metropolitan Rail Project;
- Mornington Peninsula Link;
- The Western Port Highway;
- East-West Link.
- New station at Mernda.

Organisation audits and process reviews

Robert Milner has a long association with the conduct reviews of planning documents, teams and processes, particularly in a local government environment.

Trained as a LARP facilitator in 1990 as part of a Commonwealth government initiative, his experience in this manner of work commenced with the development of planning and building specifications for tenders as part of compulsory competitive tendering process and the coaching of bid teams.

He has developed a specialisation in reviews and advancing recommendations to State and local government, on the audit of planning schemes, the performance of planning teams and development approvals processes.

In the last 20 years he has worked with the majority of metropolitan councils and many regional municipalities.

He prepared the model audit process for the Department of Sustainability and Environment in 2003 and provided a facilitated program for the Department of Planning and Community Development on how it processes planning scheme amendments.

He has also undertaken this type of work in New South Wales and South Australia.

His most recent work has included a major contributor to the VicSmart program and longer term thinking for the Smart Planning reform program.



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