

Geelong City Council Planning Scheme Amendment C395.

**Victoria Planning Panel Hearing
Statement of Evidence**

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TITLE: EXPERT WITNESS STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE

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1

Preamble

1.1

Introduction and scope of assessment

I have been requested by Maddocks, on behalf of the Lovely Banks Development Group (LBDG), to consider the urban design implications of the proposed Geelong City Council Planning Scheme Amendment C395 as they relate to the Northern Geelong Growth Area (NGGA).

Attachment 1 provides a summary of my professional qualifications and experience in accordance with the Planning Panels Victoria "Guide to Expert Evidence 2019"

I received instructions from Maddocks in correspondence dated 11th Oct 2019 to review the materials provided in my brief and prepare an expert evidence statement that considered urban design matters relating to:

- The distribution of activity centres throughout the NGGA Framework Plan with regard to site responsive design, walkability and place activation as well as inherent site constraints including the existing gas easement.
- The site's distinctive and unique attributes and opportunities to achieve core objectives within the Framework Plan including to "Create a Growth Area with high amenity and character".
- The proposed sequencing of the four PSP's for the NGGA and potential implications for the delivery of key elements of the Framework Plan including the sub-regional activity centre, regional open spaces and strategic connections.
- The level of detail in the Framework Plan including specific notes on the spatial configuration of the Clever and Creative Corridor and implications for the delivery of the Framework Plan vision and objectives.

In preparing this statement of evidence I have:

- Familiarised myself with the NGGA site and its urban context including undertaking a number of site inspections of the Growth Area and the surrounding regions.

- Reviewed the documentation of the C395 Amendment including background and technical reports, Amendment documents and Geelong City Council officer reports and meeting agendas as well as relevant submissions including LBDG's submission.
- Considered relevant strategic planning policies and direction.

1.2

Summary of conclusions

My assessment of the City of Greater Geelong's Planning Scheme Amendment C395, within the scope as instructed, is generally supportive of the core objectives and intentions of the NGGA Framework Plan, however I recommend a number of refinements including:

- Changes to the distribution and location of activity centres including the sub-regional activity centre;
- Restrictions on the proposed development sequencing being removed; and
- Greater flexibility in the interpretation and implementation of the Clever and Creative Corridor concept.

There is an opportunity to better realise the vision, objectives and key actions established in the Framework Plan through a more site responsive design to:

- Fully leverage the dynamic landscape and unparalleled views from key areas of the site to support the vibrancy and character of the proposed activity centres;
- Create regional destinations that can attract local, national and international visitors; and
- Promote and encourage active transport modes and integrate the potential regional open spaces.

There is a need to improve the future walkability of the Framework Plan and to facilitate the early delivery of critical services, community infrastructure and social activation for the first neighbourhoods in the north-east sector of the Growth Area.

The development sequencing could be adjusted to avoid significant delays in completing vital networks including the connection of the strategic monocline ridgeway trail to the sub-regional activity centre and the Clever and Creative Corridor, as well as to facilitate the earlier delivery of employment areas and enhance connections to the established areas of Geelong.

2

The Site

2.1

The Growth Area's strategic context

The suitability of the NGGA was established through the G21 Regional Growth Plan that identified 6 tests for creating liveable, vibrant and cohesive communities, including but not limited to:

"Ability to create a diverse and unique community":

"Ability to deliver significant community benefit to Geelong":

"Ability to provide accessible and integrated transport choices": and

"Ability to provide exceptional physical environments".

(NGGA Framework Plan, page 16)

The G21 Regional Growth Implementation Plan acknowledges that the NGGA has:

"Minimal land use constraints associated with growth... but highlights the importance of delivering ample public transport connections and creating neighbourhoods that are not isolated from the rest of Geelong"

(NGGA Framework Plan, page 16)

Geelong is acknowledged as a UNESCO City of Design and a member of the Creative Cities Network. Geelong's commitment to design is recognised in the Framework Plan as a:

"Key element of Geelong's economic development and creativity is an essential driver for sustainable urban development in the delivery of the Northern and Western Geelong Growth Areas" (NGGA Framework Plan, page 24)

This is reflected in Greater Geelong City Council's vision for a Clever and Creative Future which emphasises designing for people being one of several measure of success. The 9 community aspirations underpinning this vision are referenced throughout the NGGA Framework Plan objectives.

2.2

Site features and landform

The topographical and geological feature known as the monocline is the dominant landscape feature of the NGGA creating the ridgeline to an expansive plateau area to the west.

While defined as a uniform dip in the rock substrata of the region, the landform through the NGGA is more nuanced with a number of pronounced gullies creating elevated promontories with distinct vantage points and panoramic views.

The value of this landscape is acknowledged in the NGGA Framework Plan which states:

“The monocline escarpment allows panoramic views across the region and it’s varied landform creates valleys and natural amphitheatres that will inform the urban landscape”
(NGGA Framework Plan, page 59)

During numerous site visits it was evident that the pronounced ridgeline and the expansive plateau located immediately west of the monocline limits panoramic views of the wider region to the edges of the monocline.

Over much of the eastern areas of the NGGA the full effect of panoramic views is significantly diminished, as little as several hundred metres west of the escarpment edge.

If the civic spaces of a proposed activity centre are to become an attractive visitor destination, and to capitalise on the panoramic views of Port Phillip Bay and the You Yangs, it will be vital that they are located on, or as close to, the escarpment edge as possible and that the views not be obstructed by built form.

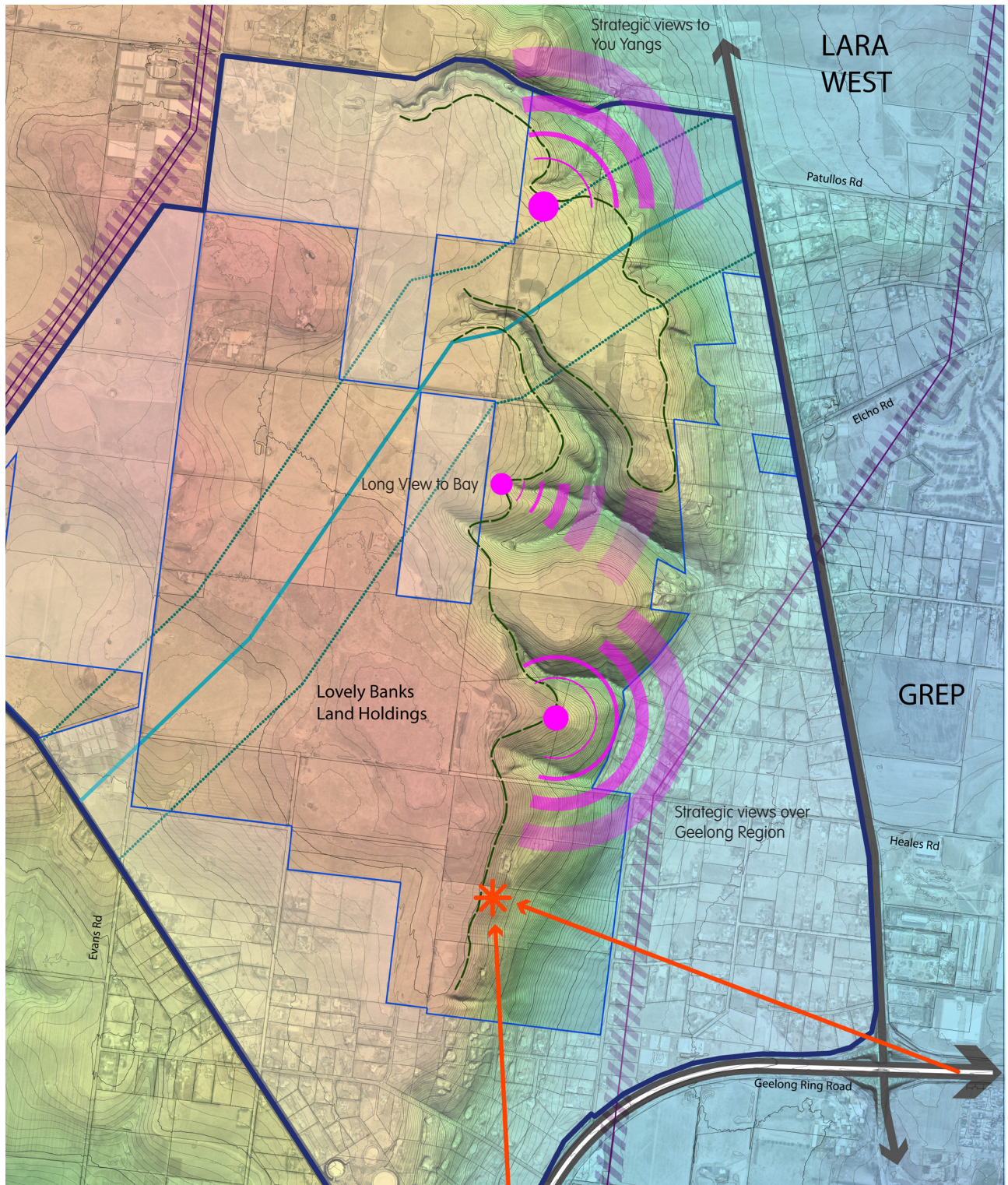
2.3

Strategic views

Several strategic vantage points have been identified in the NGGA Framework Plan (NGGA Framework Plan, Plan 06-Landform and Viewline page 58)

An assessment of the vantage points indicated on Plan 06 has revealed that, while the site’s identified do enjoy some quality views, several are limited, and a number of other key vantage points have not been identified.

Figure 1 Site analysis plan



One key discrepancy is the vantage point identified on plan 06 in the southern area of the monocline. While site observations have revealed that this area enjoys glimpses of the key regional landmarks including the You Yangs, far better and genuinely panoramic views are better achieved on the pronounced promontory location closer to the monocline ridgeline.

Extensive site walks have confirmed that the pronounced promontory area immediate north of Heales Road enjoys significantly superior panoramic views. This promontory is framed by incised valleys on both sides that boast uninterrupted views over a 180-degree arc capturing the You Yangs, Corio Bay and the Geelong city centre.

The proposed location of the north-eastern neighbourhood activity centre on the NGGA Framework Plan is not noted as having panoramic views. This has been verified through on-site investigations. Numerous site visits have however identified that the landscape character of the monocline area south of Elcho Road is distinctively unique.

In particular, the area where several incised valleys converge and create a mini gorge feature is notable and worthy of activation. A high point overlooking this gully landscape enjoys a long view down one of the valleys towards the bay.

The northern most vantage point identified in Plan 06 is noteworthy for its unparalleled views of the You Yangs, views over the Port Phillip Bay Sunklands and, on a clear day, views of the Melbourne CBD. This area is considered to be of merit and a potential location for social and community activation hub.

Figure 2 Proposed activity centre views analysis

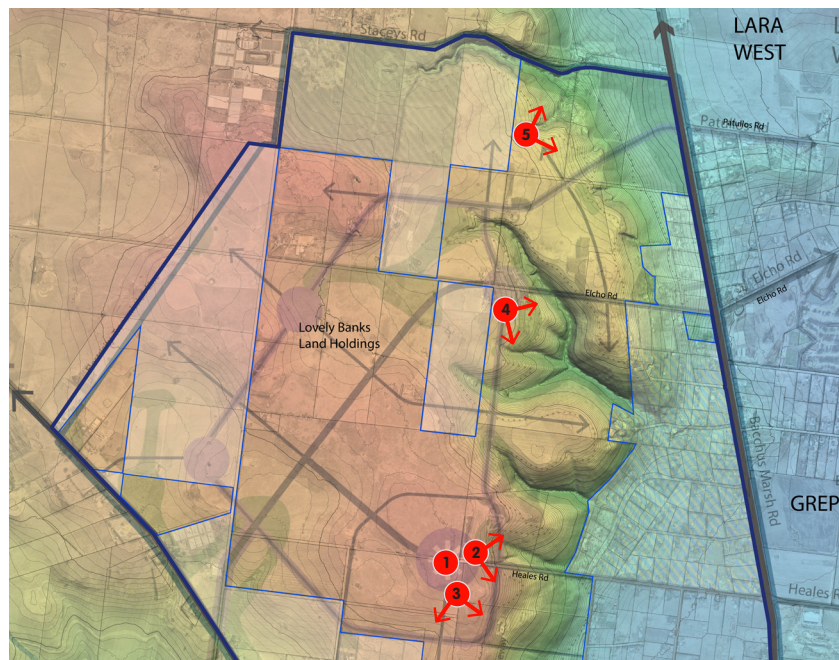


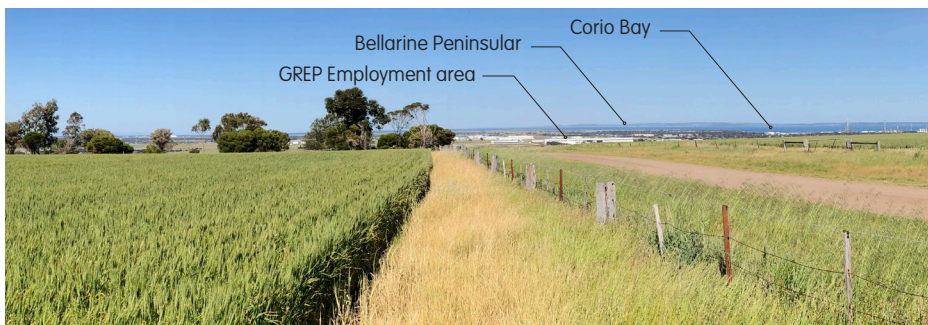
Figure 3 Views from NGGA activity centres



1. Sub-regional activity centre.

View of near the centre of the activity centre.

Glimpses of Bellarine only, no view of Geelong CBD

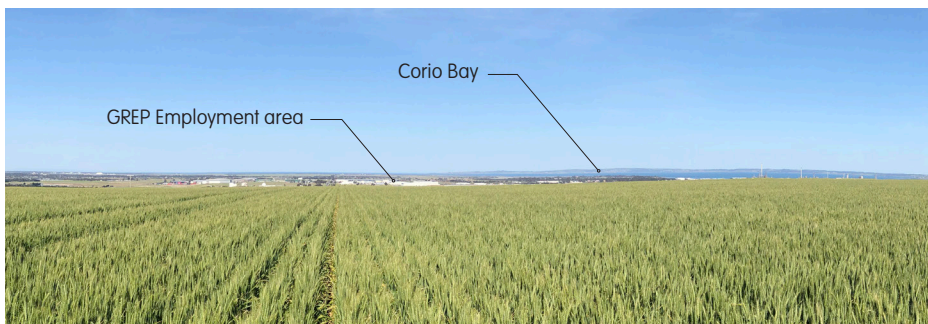


2. Sub-regional activity centre.

View near north edge of activity centre.

Views of employment areas with Bay behind.

No Views of Geelong CBD.



3. Sub-regional activity centre.

View near south edge of activity centre.

Views of employment areas with Bay behind.

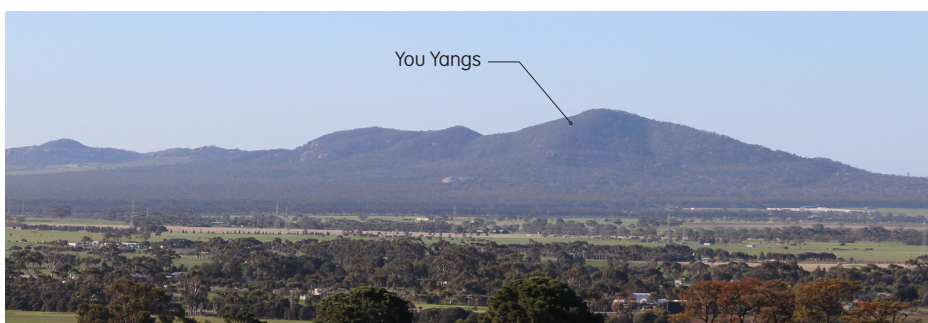
No Views of Geelong CBD.



4. North-east activity centre.

Distant views of employment centre and bay.

No views into valley fall or gullies.



5. Northern vantage point

Elevated views over You Yang ranges.

Views to Melbourne CBD

3

3.1

Assessment

NGGA Framework Plan place vision and objectives

The NGGA Framework Plan is founded on the concept of a “Clever and Creative Future” for Greater Geelong. This vision was developed in consultation with the Geelong community and is enunciated in the Clever and Creative Future Community Vision Document, 2017.

This Council endorsed vision recognises Geelong’s location on Corio Bay and the diverse and unique natural environment of the region as strategic assets for the future of the city. Moreover, Council reaffirmed the potential to create destinations that attract local and international visitors as one of the nine core Community aspirations for the city.

The NGGA Framework Plan notes *“Innovative urban design elements will form the basis to achieving the vision” (NGGA Framework Plan, page 27)*

The place vision for the NGGA reflects the importance of the unique natural setting and the need for site responsive urban design. The vision statement for the Growth Corridor stipulates that:

“Northern Geelong will be distinguished by neighbourhoods with panoramic views across the region and built around diverse and accessible employment hubs that epitomise Geelong’s creativity, innovation and enterprise” (NGGA Framework Plan, page 35)

This is further reinforced in the NGGA Urban Development Objectives, viz:

“Create growth areas with high amenity and character. Establish a district of neighbourhoods that exploit the panoramic vistas across the region, deliver an attractive interface to neighbourhood precincts and enhance Geelong’s local character” (NGGA Framework Plan, page 37)

“Create integrated open space networks. Cultivate a stunning trail along the ridgeline of the Lovely Banks monocline and substantial green links along infrastructure easements with an adjoining network of recreation reserves and local parks” (NGGA Framework Plan, page 37)

The importance of site responsive design as a key driver of place character is recognised in the NGGA Framework Plan which acknowledges:

“The character of a neighbourhood is largely influenced by the land it inhabits” (NGGA Framework Plan, page 120); and

“Effective neighbourhood design provides a site-specific design response” and should “celebrate natural and existing features including landform and view lines” (NGGA Framework Plan, page 122)

This is further reinforced in Action N2.1.3 which states:

“Neighbourhoods will be designed to create a unique sense of place, character and identity”

In light of these objectives the landform characteristics of the locality have a vital to play in the siting of the activity centres of the NGGA, including the sub-regional activity centre.

They are critical elements in the urban design response to achieving the project vision and objectives for neighbourhood character. A site responsive design is key to achieving the inherent aims of the Framework Plan.

3.2

Sub-regional activity centre location

The NGGA Framework Plan acknowledges the role activity centres play as:

“the meeting places and focus points for the neighbourhoods” and that they become; and

“the heart of the local community”

(NGGA Framework Plan, page 163)

Crucially, the Framework Plan recognises the importance of site responsive design in the location of the activity centres. The NGGA Framework Plan states:

“Panoramic views and distinctive landforms afforded by the Lovely Banks monocline will provide an attractive setting for its activity centres” (NGGA Framework Plan, page 160)

Furthermore, Action N3.1.8 highlights:

“The sub-regional activity centre will be characterised by a hierarchy of high-quality public spaces” and “A welcoming, high amenity public realm will respond to the monocline escarpment” (NGGA Framework Plan, page 165)

Moreover, Action N3.1.11 states that through a process of staged delivery, the sub-regional activity centre will expand to: “address the views and landform of the monocline escarpment and ridgeway” (NGGA Framework Plan, page 166)

Close, and extensive on-site, assessment of the proposed location of the sub-regional activity centre has revealed that it is located too far west of the monocline to enjoy panoramic views from the civic spaces within and immediately surrounding the urban centre.

In order to best achieve the aims of the Framework Plan, and to capitalise on the potential expansive views over Corio Bay and the You Yangs, the sub-regional activity centre should be located closer to the monocline escarpment.

The proposed location identified in the LBDG’s submission to Amendment C395 is a far superior location than that depicted on the Framework Plan. This promontory enjoys unparalleled panoramic views over Corio Bay, central Geelong, Lara and the You Yangs.

Figure 4 Panoramic views from proposed sub-regional activity centre



1. Views to bay and Geelong CBD



2. Views into gully and towards You Yangs

The alternate site proposed by LBDG presents a number of distinct community benefits, viz:

- Expansive views from key civic spaces within the sub-regional activity centre which will significantly contribute the vibrancy and social activation of the centre;
- A direct interface between the sub-regional activity centre and the strategic trail along the monocline ridgeline fostering active transport links to the centre;
- A close nexus between the sub-regional activity centre and high amenity landscape areas including the proposed botanical gardens in the incisive valley.

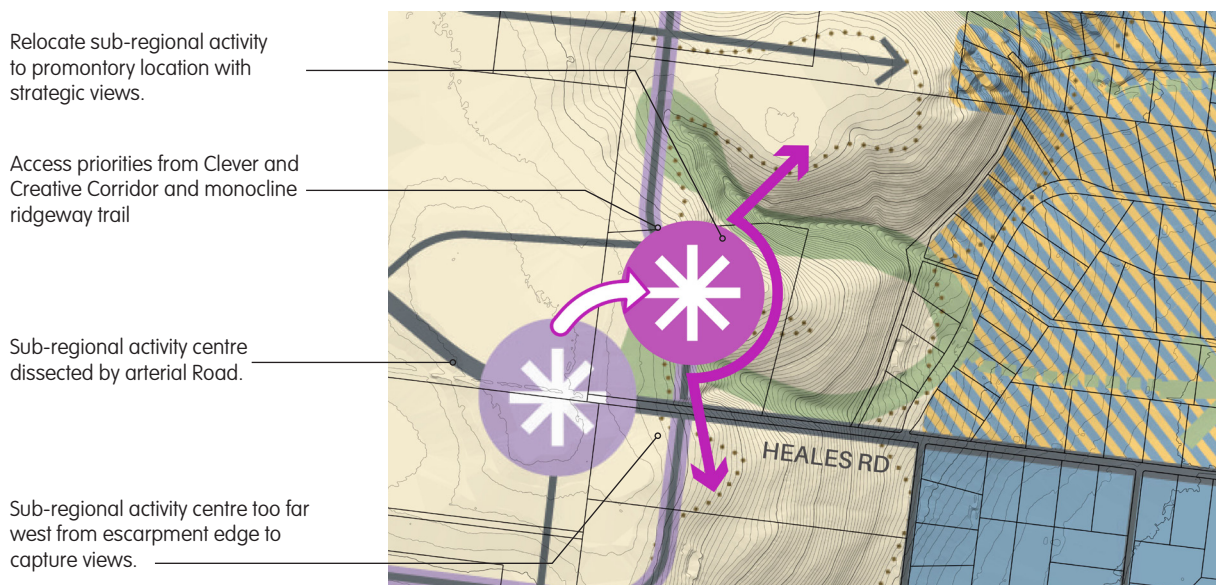
Greater potential to become a visitor and festival event destination as articulated in the community's aspiration for:

"A destination that attracts local and international visitors"
(NGGA Framework Plan, page 161)

This proposed re-location of the sub-regional activity centre also strikes a better balance between achieving main road connectivity and avoiding the risk of reduced amenity and walkability within the centre. Having the sub-regional activity centre adjacent too but not dissected by the arterial road is a preferred outcome. This is evident in a number of notable precedent case studies including:

- The Rouse Hill Town centre in the North West of Sydney;
- The Huntlee Town Centre in the Hunter Valley;
- The Ellenbrook Town Centre in the City of Swan; and
- The Point Cook town Centre in the City of Wyndham.

Figure 5 Sub-regional activity centre re-location



3.3

The north-eastern activity centre location

The T92 Lara to Iona Gas Transmission Pipeline traverses the NGGA area. The APA Pipeline Safety Management Statement (SMS), submitted as a technical study and background report on the NGGA, has established a range of buffer measurement lengths from the easement.

This SMS has determined that the minimum distance APA will accept for sensitive use such as schools and retail to the pipeline is 350m.

The proposed neighbourhood activity centre located on Elcho Road in the north-east sector of the NGGA is partially located within the 350m measurement length.

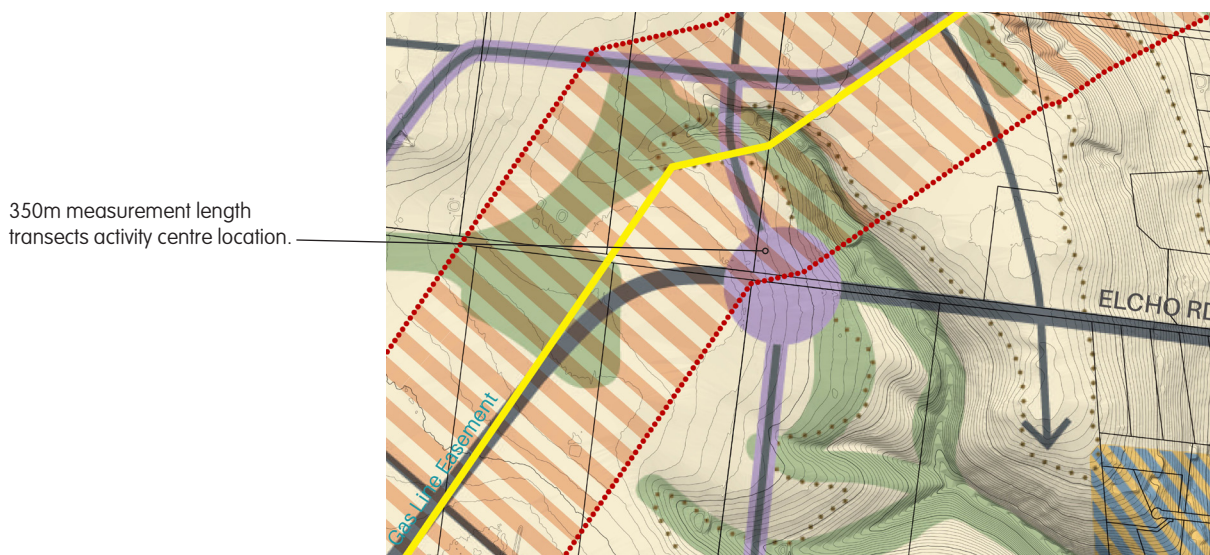
The measurement length, topography and proposed arterial connections through the area significantly limit the available land for the proposed retail uses as well as supporting community uses, including schools and community centres.

Through detailed assessment of the proposed location of this neighbourhood centre it became evident that the site depicted on the Framework Plan does not enjoy strategic or panoramic views and has limited access to the landscape.

To most effectively achieve the actions outlined in the Framework Plan the northern neighbourhood activity centre should be relocated to:

- A site with strategic views and access to high amenity landscapes;

Figure 6 North-east activity centre & 350m measurement length



- Outside the 350m measurement length with consideration given to ensure that supporting sensitive uses, including schools and community centres, are also located outside the measurement length;
- Prioritise public transport, cycle and pedestrian connectivity to the centre and avoid potential risks of reduced amenity and walkability within the activity centre that may occur as a result of the Elcho Road Arterial dissecting the centre.

The proposed location identified in the LBDG's submission to Amendment C395 is considered a more suitable site for the neighbourhood activity centre. This strategic position is outside the 350m measurement length and enjoys panoramic views of a uniquely nuanced area of the monocline, including a strategic view corridor through an incised valley to Corio Bay. See figure 7.

It is noted that the City of Greater Geelong's Part A Submission to the Panel proposes to remove the designation of a specialised activity centre from the NGGA. (*City of Greater Geelong, Part A Submission, Page 65*)

The projected population of the NGGA is over 47,000 people creating substantial demand for leisure and entertainment. Moreover, given the unique natural attributes such as the monocline and panoramic views off the Lovely Banks plateau, it anticipated that nominated destinations along the elevated ridgeline will be sought after local, state and national destinations.

Figure 7 Panoramic views from proposed specialised activity centre



Furthermore, it would be inconsistent with the 20 Minute Neighbourhood design principles, which underpin the Framework Plan, not provide for the recreational and entertainment needs of the community within the NGGA and visitors to the Growth Area.

It is recommended that the provision be made in the NGGA Framework Plan for:

“a specialised activity centre, catering for local and regional needs and incorporating opportunities for dining and entertainment, recreation and local events”

(NGGA Framework Plan Action N3.1.1)

The LBDG’s proposed alternative location and vision for the northern activity centre has the potential to meet these needs given the following attributes:

- A unique natural setting with the opportunity to incorporate a series of civic spaces and terraces overlooking an activated high amenity landscape;
- A relatively central location within the NGGA with strategic transport and open space connections to the sub-regional activity centre; and
- A direct interface with the strategic recreational and art trail located along the monocline ridgeline fostering the use of active transport modes to the centre.

3.4

Walkability and access to service in the north-east

Plan 28 - Activity Centres in the NGGA Framework Plan assesses the walkability of the proposed Growth Area based on 1km walkable catchments of the activity centres.

(NGGA Framework Plan, page 162)

This plan highlights extensive areas outside the defined walkable catchments especially in the north-east sector of the site where areas of residential development would have limited walkable access to daily needs including; local retail, community infrastructure and social activation.

Moreover, limited walkable access in this location will be compounded as these areas are, in large part, at the base of the monocline.

The steep grades that separate the low-lying areas from the plateau could adversely impact distances residents are likely to walk and cycle in this locality.

These areas, that have the most limited walkable access to services, are proposed to be the initial neighbourhoods in the Growth Area as stipulated below:

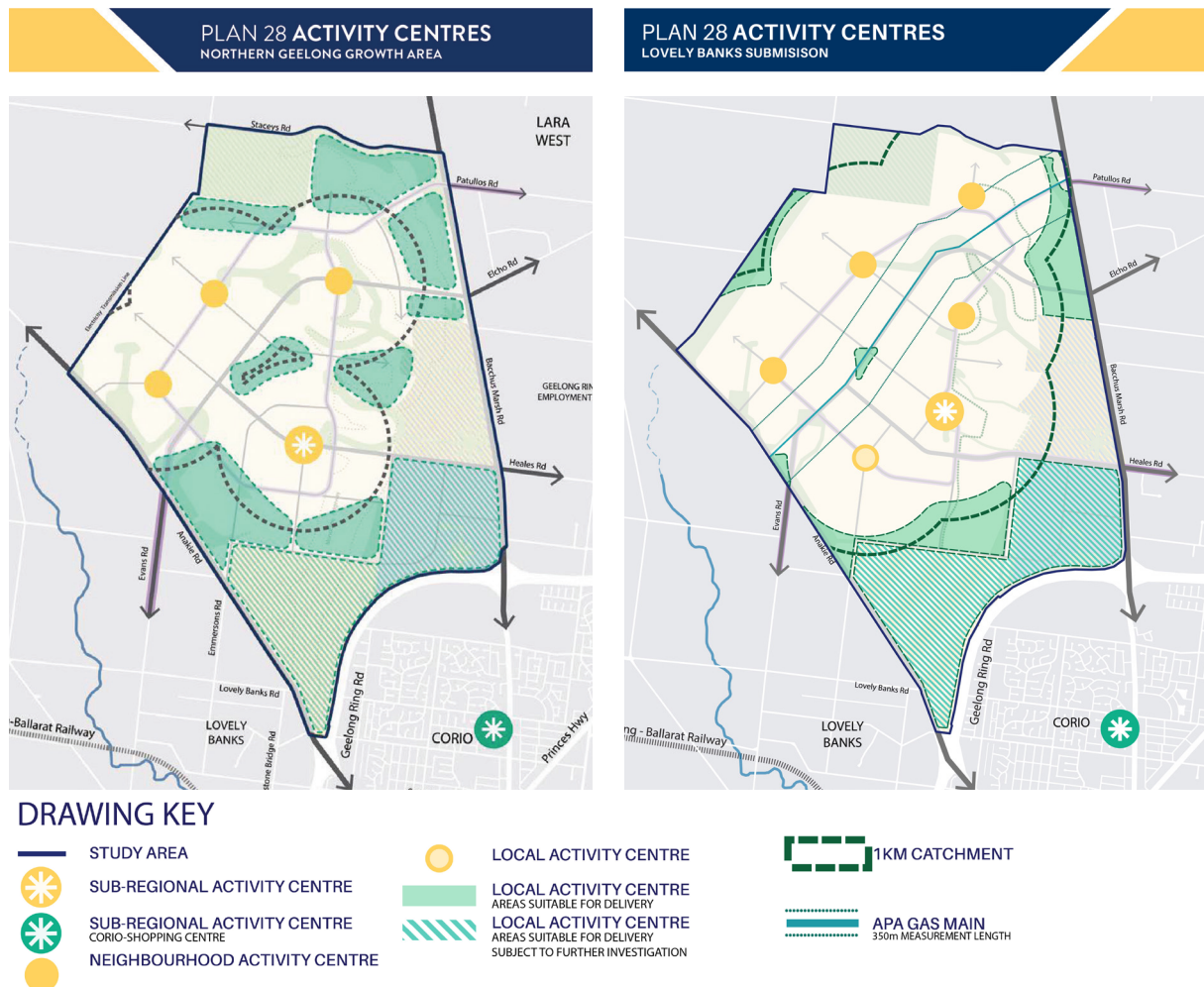
“Urban development in the NGGA will commence on the land adjoining Lara West” (NGGA Framework Plan, page 219).

Action N2.5.3 states:

“Social infrastructure will be provided to new neighbourhoods in the early stages of development.” And that “Social infrastructure will be delivered to ensure each precinct is supported with stand-alone infrastructure so that communities are not reliant on long-term development outcomes” (NGGA Framework Plan, page 136)

This will not be able to be achieved in the north-east sector of the Growth Area as the Framework Plan is currently configured. The plan should be revised to include a neighbourhood activity centre in the north-east sector to improve walkable access to services and allow for the early delivery of those services.

Figure 8 Figure 8. – Comparison of walkability



It is noted that the City of Greater Geelong's Part A Submission to the Panel proposes to add an action to the NGGA that strengthens the role of the local centres in an attempt to redress the limited walkability of extensive portions of the Growth Area. (*City of Greater Geelong, Part A Submission, Page 65*)

This is considered a sub-optimum outcome, specifically in the north-east areas of the Growth Area given:

- Local centres are unable to provide the same levels of community service as neighbourhood activity centres;
- The Gas Transmission Pipeline and associated buffer areas significantly constrain the north-east area and negate the opportunity for a series of local centres to be evenly distributed at closer intervals; and
- The framework plan can and should be structured to ensure all residents have walkable access to a higher order activity centre wherever possible.

Given the above, the LBDG submission to Amendment C395, advocating an additional activity centre in the north-east sector of the NGGA Framework Plan, is sound. This additional neighbourhood activity centre will:

- Improve the walkability of the north-east sector of the Growth Area bringing an estimated 3,500 – 4,500 dwellings within the walkable catchment of a neighbourhood activity centre; and
- Allow for the early provision of critical services, community infrastructure and social activation for residents.

Furthermore, the LBDG's proposition that a 5,000m² retail allocation for this centre could be excised from the larger neighbourhood activity centre's allocation of 10,000m² is also valid, for the following reasons:

- The Elcho Road activity centre's principal commercial activity is proposed to be leisure and entertainment focused, rather than retail, and will in turn not require two full-line supermarkets;
- Reducing the convenience retail within the proposed specialised activity centre will minimise any adverse trading impact on the staged growth of the sub-regional activity centre; and
- It results in a more even distribution of centres and will greatly improve walkability to primary retail activities above what can be achieved through supporting local centres.

3.5

NGGA development sequencing

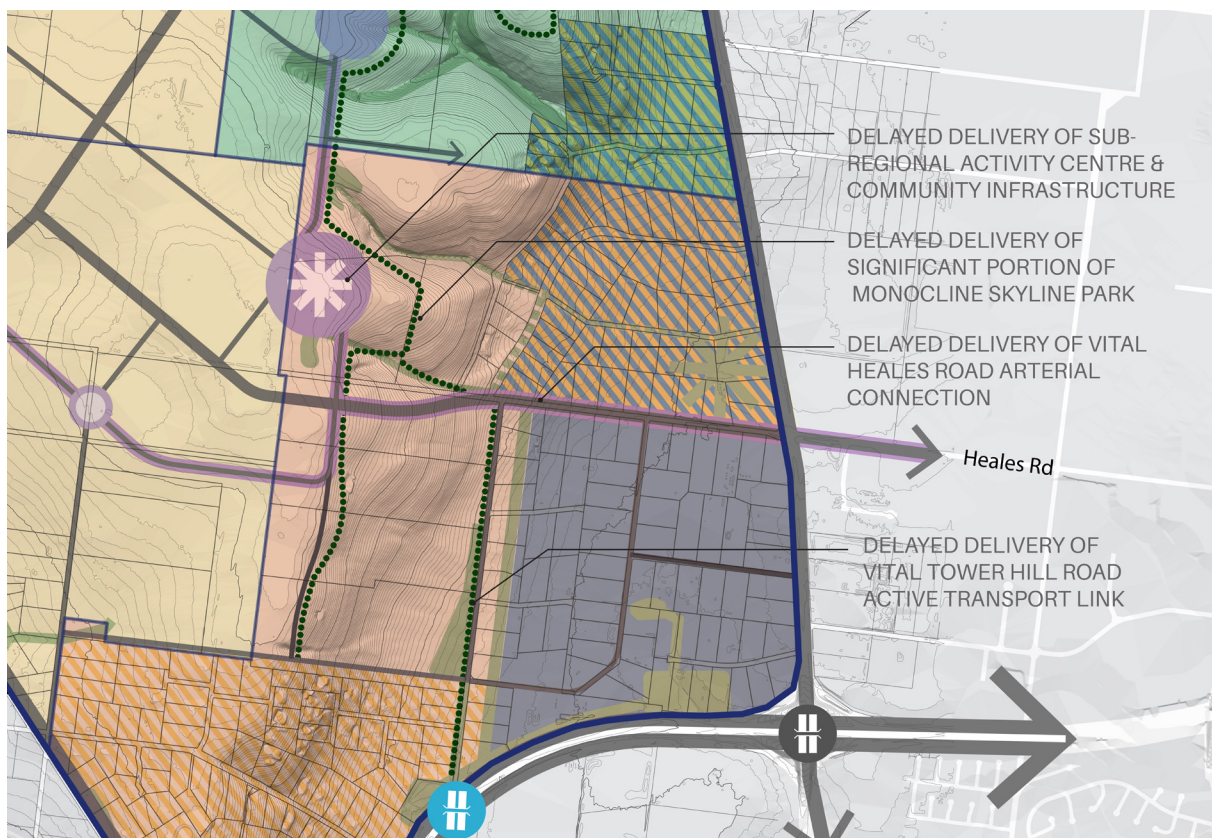
Action N5.2.3 of the Framework Plan states that the Heales Road East precinct will be the final PSP to be executed underpinned by a strategy, to:

“Delay urban development in the rural living areas and southern monocline areas in the short and medium term”
(NGGA Framework Plan, page 220)

This has several implications for the urban development of the Growth Area including:

- Reduced ability to realise the staged delivery of the sub-regional activity centre;
- Limitations on achieving the overarching NGGA Framework Plan objective to: “Cultivate a stunning trail along the monocline ridgeline” (NGGA Framework Plan, page 37);
- Delays in realising a fully integrated and connected Clever and Creative Corridor network including the proposed public transport infrastructure; and
- Delays in connectivity to the established areas of Geelong including active transport links to Corio.

Figure 9 Figure 9. – Analysis of impact of delayed development in south-east



Sub-regional activity centre

Approximately fifty percent of the walkable catchment of the sub-regional activity centre falls within an area classified medium-term and the balance within a long-term development area.

This planning limitation could have significant implications for the early delivery of the sub-regional activity centre given the reduced catchment until the final stages of the Growth Area's development.

Action N3.1.6 notes the sub-regional activity centre is anticipated to be:

"delivered at a scale that generates significant local employment opportunity" (NGGA Framework Plan, page 165)

Delaying the catchment of the centre will limit the opportunity to realise these critical jobs in a timely manner.

Moreover, relocating the sub-regional activity centre to a more easterly location, adjacent to the monocline, and capitalising on the panoramic views off the promontory, will result in it being positioned entirely within the long-term development area.

Monocline ridgeway trail

Action N1.1.4 states:

"The crest of the monocline, the monocline ridgeway, will deliver a continuous linear public realm The monocline ridgeway will integrate the Clever and Creative Corridor, linear and local parks, activity centres, and waterways"
(NGGA Framework Plan, page 60)

The importance of this ridgetop trail as a continuous connected pathway that links key destinations and nodes of activity is highlighted in Action N2.5.13 which states:

"The monocline ridgeway provides excellent opportunities for passive enjoyment and can provide linkages between social infrastructure between neighbourhoods"
(NGGA Framework Plan, page 138)

It is evident that, if the development sequencing is adopted as proposed in the Framework Plan, half of the monocline ridgeway will be delivered in the first short-term PSP and the remaining sections not delivered until the final stages of development in the long-term PSP.

Under this scenario many of the boarder strategic benefits of this extensive ridgeway trail will not be realised until the latter stages of the NGGA..

Clever and Creative Corridor

The effectiveness of the Clever and Creative Corridor will only be fully realised as an integrated and connected public transit and active transport route. The designation of a vital section of the link to be delayed until the final stages of development, in the long-term PSP area, risks undermining the initiative.

This is highlighted in Action N5.2.5 that states:

“Development staging will provide for the timely provision and delivery of the integrated transport network, including the Clever and Creative Corridor.”

(NGGA Framework Plan, page 221)

Active transport connectivity to Geelong

The initiative to provide a strategic active transport link to Corio along Tower Hill Road via the proposed pedestrian footbridge over the Geelong Ring Road is of paramount importance.

Moreover, the G21’s Growth Area Plans noted:

“The importance of... creating neighbourhoods that are not isolated from the rest of Geelong”

(NGGA Framework Plan, page 16)

This is reaffirmed in the NGGA’s Objectives that stipulate:

“residential and commercial neighbourhoods that are easily interconnected and identify as part of the established Geelong community” (NGGA Framework Plan, page 37):

It would be preferable for this Tower Hill Rd active transport link to be realised in the medium term to allow for better integration between the NGGA and the established areas of Geelong including Corio.

The LBDG’s submission on Amendment C395 identified the opportunity for the non-rural residential areas of the Heales Road East PSP to be classified as medium-term. Lifting the restrictions on the development of this area will allow for the earlier delivery of key initiatives, vital services and strategic connections including:

- The staged delivery of the sub-regional activity centre;
- A continuous and connected ridgeway trail along the full length of the monocline;
- The Clever and Creative Corridor as an interconnected public transit and active transport loop; and
- The strategic Tower Hill Road active transport link to Corio.

It is noted that council is not supporting this aspect of the LBDG's submission as:

- Neighbourhood-sized precincts have been identified in the Growth Area.
- Broad hectare land in the subject area will assist in progressing PSP planning for the surrounding employment areas and rural living areas.
- The subject Land is highly visible / exposed to the broader Geelong community and delaying its development will allow for the housing market in the Growth Area to produce more attractive development outcomes.

(Summary of Submissions and Officer Responses, page 85)

Given the significance of the critical infrastructure and connections that are realised through the development of this area, it is recommended that further consideration is given to clever and creative ways it can be brought forward as a priority development area for the NGGA.

Options could include:

- A re-organisation of the proposed sequencing of the PSP areas to bring the Heales Road East PSP area forward, preferable as the second PSP area;
- A commitment to execute this PSP area in parallel with another PSP, preferable with the Elcho Road West PSP;
- A restructuring of the PSP boundaries to transfer the broader areas of Heales Road East PSP into an adjoining PSP area with an accompanying funding agreement to ensure a PSP for the remaining rural residential areas can be delivered as a final structure planning exercise.

Council's concerns regarding the quality of development on the highly visible / exposed monocline areas in the south are noted. However, it is considered an imperative that a high standard of development be achieved on all areas of the monocline irrespective of the location.

The Framework Plan includes clear guidelines on how the PSP's should address development on the steeper slopes of the monocline including:

- Action N1.1.2 *"Minimise landscape scarring and avoid the need for larger amounts of cut and fill"*
(NGGA Framework Plan, page 59);
- Action N1.1.5 *"Key views will be protected and maximised using a street grid that... is responsive to the sloping topography"* *(NGGA Framework Plan, page 60);*
- Action N1.1.6 *"View lines to significant landmarks and site features will be protected"* *(NGGA Framework Plan, page 60):*

- Action N2.1.5 *“Urban development on the monocline escarpment will.... deliver high quality-built form and respects the prominence of the landform”*
(NGGA Framework Plan, page 123):
- Action N2.4.4 *“Housing throughout the monocline escarpment will be designed to integrate and enhance the natural amenity of the landform... and deliver high quality buildings that minimise visual bulk”*
(NGGA Framework Plan, page 133):

There is no evidence that delaying this area until the final stages of development will result in better development outcomes than if it is developed in the medium term.

3.6

The Clever and Creative Corridor

The Clever and Creative Corridor initiative is a commendable initiative, with the following dimensions having considerable merit, viz:

- The integrated public transport strategy;
- Integrated active transport as the privileged and preferred modes;
- The intended economic outcomes including supporting small and medium enterprises;
- The social engagement and activation programmes;
- The potential to deliver increased densities and housing diversity.

The vision for:

“A tree lined boulevard style transit corridor that priorities public transport, walking and cycling between activity centres, schools and community facilities”

(NGGA Framework Plan, page 45),

is sound, however the interim / ultimate approach adopted with land reserved for *“future rail or road-based modes”* (NGGA Framework Plan, page 45), is considered sub-optimum.

A more progressive approach would be to work towards the integration of the emerging integrated mass transit technologies in the initial stages of the development and avoid an entrenched “business as usual” outcome until a future date.

Action N2.5.4 calls for “innovative methods of delivering social infrastructure ”and the delivery of social infrastructure that will “maximise community benefit by identifying innovative provision methods including.... shared use of infrastructure” (NGGA Framework Plan, page 136):

This approach should also be applied to the delivery of the Clever and Creative Corridor.

A homogeneous character along the length of the Clever and Creative Corridor should be avoided. This is highlighted in Action N.2.1.3 which states:

“Neighbourhoods will be designed to create a unique sense of place, character and identity and.... will offer unique interface treatments to the Clever and Creative Corridor”
(NGGA Framework Plan, page 127):

The Clever and Creative Corridor:

- Is over 10km in linear length;
- Engages with a range of urban environments including activity centres, mixed-use higher density urban environments as well as residential neighbourhoods; and
- Is aligned along a range of landscape character areas and varied topography including interfaces with regional open spaces and the monocline ridgeway trail.

It is also anticipated that there will be a range of varied vehicle capacity demands on different sections of the Clever and Creative Corridor.

Clearly sections of the Clever and Creative Corridor may be required to higher order peak traffic flows, however it may be desirable to have select sections of the Clever and Creative Corridor that are car free, especially in activity centres including the sub-regional activity centre or through regional open spaces.

It is questionable whether the wider “Boulevard Style” street with a large median and generous nature strips will create the intimate, pedestrian prioritised “main street” environment that is desirable for local and neighbourhood activity centres.

It is recommended that the Framework Plan avoid prescriptive and pre-determined outcomes such as specific median dimensions.

Alternatively, a comprehensive matrix of key performance criteria could be established to inform the development of the PSP’s and to allow for clever and creative solutions that are site and context responsive whilst still meeting the principal objectives of the Framework Plan.

4

Recommendations

My assessment of the City of Greater Geelong's Planning Scheme Amendment C395, within the scope as instructed, is generally supportive of the core objectives and intentions of the NGGA Framework Plan, however I recommend a number of refinements including:

- The distribution and location of activity centres including the sub-regional activity centre;
- Consideration of the sequencing of the PSP to avoid the fragment delivery of critical links; and
- Greater flexibility in interpretation and implementation of the Clever and Creative Corridor concept.

The location of the sub-regional activity centre should be slightly revised to:

- Reposition the centre into an area east of the current location which enjoys strategic views and access to high amenity landscapes consistent with the NGGA Framework Plan's core objects and actions;
- Strengthen the interface of the centre with the monocline ridgeway trail and prioritise public transport, cycle and pedestrian connectivity to the centre; and
- Avoid potential risks of reduced amenity and walkability within the town centre that may occur as a result of the Heales Road Arterial connection dissecting the centre.

The north-eastern activity centre should be repositioned and reconfigured to:

- Ensure it is located outside the gas easement 350m measurement length and located in an area with strategic views and access to high amenity landscape areas;
- Capitalise on the unique natural setting along the monocline through the introduction of a specialised activity centre within the NGGA that

"incorporates opportunities for dining and entrainment, recreation and local events" (NGGA Framework Plan Action N3.1.1)

- Prioritise public transport, cycle and pedestrian connectivity to the centre and avoid potential risks of reduced amenity and walkability within the centre that may occur as a result of the Elcho Road Arterial connection dissecting the centre.
- Reduce the retail floorspace from 10,000m² to 5,000m²

An additional activity centre should be incorporated in the north-east sector of the NGGA Framework Plan to:

- Improve the walkable catchment to daily needs within the north-east sector of the site;
- Allow for the early delivery of the critical services, community infrastructure and social activation for the first neighbourhoods; and
- Ensure *"a network of activity centres... become the heart of the local community"* (NGGA Framework Plan Action N3.1.1)

A 5,000m² retail allocation for this centre could be excised from the larger retail activity centre's allocation of 10,000m² noting:

- The proposed specialised retail centre's principal commercial activity will be leisure and entertainment focused in addition to convenience retail and will not require two full line supermarkets;
- Reducing the convenience retail within the proposed specialised activity centre will minimise disruption to the staged growth of the sub-regional activity centre; and
- Creates a more even distribution and improved walkability to primary retail over and above what can be achieved through supporting local centres.

Restrictions on the Heales Road East PSP as a long-term prospect and the final PSP area should be lifted to:

- Avoid delays in the completion and interconnectivity of the strategic monocline ridgeway trail;
- Allow for the earlier delivery of the sub-regional activity centre including the local job opportunity this centre is to provide;
- Enable better and more timely integration with the established neighbourhoods of Geelong including Corio through the proposed Tower Hill Road active transport link; and

- Avoid significant delays in the delivery of vital sections of the Clever and Creative Corridor and realise the benefits of the proposed comprehensive and interconnected public transport system.

Greater flexibility should be allowed for in the design of the Clever and Creative Corridor to create opportunities for variation in the profile and structure of the streetscapes to:

- Avoid homogenous outcomes and allow for site and context responsive solutions;
- Allow for compact, pedestrian prioritised outcomes in key locations including through activity centres.

It is recommended that the Framework Plan avoids prescriptive and pre-determined outcomes such as specific median dimensions.

A comprehensive matrix of key performance criteria should be established to inform the development of the PSP's and to allow for clever and creative solutions that are site and context responsive whilst still meeting the principal objectives of the Clever and Creative Corridor.

In acknowledging the Framework Plan is fundamentally sound I am therefore supportive of the Amendment subject to the refinements outlined above.



Mike Day
Co founder *FPIA FAICD*

Attachment 1.
**Expert Witness
Declaration**

Name and address

Mike Day is the Co-founder and a Director of Roberts Day Pty Ltd.

Level 5
411 Collins Street
Melbourne VIC, 3000

Roberts Day
Planning | Design | Place

Melbourne | Sydney |
Brisbane | Perth

Professional qualifications

- Bachelor of Arts in Urban and Regional Studies.
- Post Graduate Diploma in Town Planning.
- Fellow of the Planning Institute of Australia (FPIA).
- Fellow of the Australian Institute of Company Directors (FAICD).

Professional experience

A co-founder of Roberts Day, Mike has moderated visioning + planning design forums and led the firm's design teams responsible for an array of urban renewal projects and new towns throughout Australia, New Zealand, UAE and Asia since the inception of the company in 1993.

Mike was the principal master planner and urban designer of the Ellenbrook New Town in Western Australia and in 2004, the recipient of the Russell Taylor Award for Design Excellence for Ellenbrook. Ellenbrook received the International Real Estate Federation [FIABCI] 2015 World Prix d'Excellence Award as the world's best master-planned community.

Consecutive Western Australian Planning Ministers appointed Mike; Deputy Chairman of the Subiaco Redevelopment Authority and Board member of the East Perth Redevelopment Authority from 2002 - 2010. Mike has held the positions of; Chair EPRA Planning Committee, Chair SRA Planning Committee and Chair Housing Industry of Australia WA – Planning Committee.

The Victorian Department of Planning and Community Development appointed Mike to the independent property industry panel that nominated the 900-hectare Werribee East landholdings, within the City of Wyndham, as the site for a model 21st century city for metropolitan Melbourne.

Mike was awarded the 2018 Place Leaders Asia Pacific Centrepiece Award | Leadership Excellence in Promoting Walkable Urbanism.

Based in Melbourne since 2005, Mike is leading the practice's design teams implementing new towns and urban renewal projects in Victoria, South Australia, Queensland and the Aust Capital Territory.

Mike was appointed Chair of UDIA Victoria's Building, Design and Civic Realm Committee in August 2018.

Areas of expertise in preparing this report

- Strategic Planning and Urban Design;
- Integrated transport and walkability;
- Advice and assessments on development proposal to the development industry, local authorities and state government;
- Preparation and presentation at planning panels, VCAT, participation in various government appointed committees and reference groups; and
- Involvement in multiple new town scaled developments and the structure planning of Growth Areas across Australia.

Instructions that define the scope

I have been requested by Maddocks, on behalf of the Lovely Banks Development Group (LBDG), to consider the urban design implications of the proposed Geelong City Council Planning Scheme Amendment C395 as they relate to the Northern Geelong Growth Area and to considered Urban design matters relating to:

- The distribution of activity centres throughout the NGGA Framework Plan with regard to site responsive design, walkability and place activation as well as inherent site constraints including the existing gas easement.
- The site's distinctive and unique attributes and opportunities to achieve core objectives within the Framework Plan including to "Create a Growth Area with high amenity and character".
- The proposed sequencing of the four PSP's for the NGGA and potential implications for the delivery of key elements of the Framework Plan including the sub-regional activity centre, regional open spaces and strategic connections.
- The level of detail in the Framework Plan including specific notes on the spatial configuration of the Clever and Creative Corridor and implications delivery of the Framework Plan vision and objectives.

Facts, matters and assumptions relied upon

- Familiarised myself with the NGGA site and its urban context including undertaking a number of site inspections of the Growth area and the surrounding regions.
- Reviewed the documentation of the C395 Amendment including background and technical reports, Amendment documents and Geelong City Council officer reports and meeting agendas as well as relevant submissions including LBDG's submission.
- Considered relevant strategic planning policies and direction.

Documents taken into account

As noted above.

Summary of opinions

Refer report.

Declaration

I have made all the inquiries that I believe are desirable and appropriate and matters of significance which I regard as relevant have to my knowledge been withheld from the panel.



Mike Day
Co founder *FPIA FAICD*

