

Wonthaggi North East

Public consultation report



December 2020

Prepared by	Naomi Oosting
Date	08/12/2020
Reviewed by	John Petrakos
Date	09/12/2020
Reviewed by	Marco Bass
Date	11/12/2020
Authorised by	Mat Garner
Date	11/12/2020

CONTENTS

1	Executive Summary	4
2	Overview	5
2.1	Project background	5
2.2	The VPA's Fast Track Program	5
2.3	Public consultation overview	5
2.4	Previous community consultation	6
2.5	Government agency and service provider consultation	7
2.6	Local council consultation	7
2.7	Landowner consultation	7
3	Consultation Methodology	8
3.1	Consultation program	8
4	Summary of Feedback	9
4.1	Process and implementation	9
4.2	Road alignments and intersections	9
4.3	Drainage	9
4.4	Infrastructure provision and the Development Contribution Plan (DCP)	9
4.5	Land Uses	9
4.6	Written submissions	9
5	Post Consultation & Next Steps	11
5.1	Resolution of submissions	11
5.2	Pathway to approval	11
6	Appendices	12
6.1	Project brochure	12

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Wonthaggi North East Precinct Structure Plan (the PSP) will guide the development of a new growth area in Wonthaggi. The PSP will plan for the construction of approximately 5,000 new homes over the next 30 to 50 years. It will also identify what infrastructure is needed to support the growing community, such as roads and community facilities, and land for employment and retail.

The Victorian Planning Authority (VPA) has worked with Bass Coast Shire. to prepare a Precinct Structure Plan (PSP) and associated draft planning scheme amendment for this site.

This consultation report summarises the public consultation process for the Wonthaggi North East PSP and supporting draft planning scheme amendment C152 to the *Bass Coast Planning Scheme*, which ran for four weeks from Monday 2 November until Monday 30 November 2020. The report also provides a thematic overview of feedback heard during this time.

The VPA's approach to community consultation for this project mirrored the key elements of the planning scheme amendment notice and submission process required under Section 19 of the *Planning and Environment Act*. It ensured that the Wonthaggi community, local businesses, key stakeholders, government agencies and site landowners had ample opportunity to understand the proposed planning changes for the Wonthaggi North East site; discuss the planning concepts with the VPA planning team and make a written submission to the plan and associated draft amendment.

The VPA collected 17 comments and/or questions across its public events, with 16 people contacting the team over the phone and a further 11 people attending the online session. The key topics of interest were PSP implementation matters that are dealt with at the planning permit stage, road access, infrastructure coordination and delivery, questions about the details of the proposed planning scheme amendment (e.g. proposed zones, public acquisition overlay) and drainage. Those with any concerns about the proposed amendment were advised to make a submission to the planning scheme amendment in order for them to be considered.

28 written submissions were received to the draft amendment, which the VPA has acknowledged and is working to resolve where possible in the time available.

A detailed outline of the consultation process is contained in this report including council, landowner and agency consultation ensuring that all views are known.

2 OVERVIEW

2.1 Project background

Wonthaggi North East has been identified as a key growth area for Bass Coast Shire and the peri-urban area around Melbourne. The PSP will identify land for houses and ensure the infrastructure is provided to support these new homes.

The Wonthaggi North East Precinct Structure Plan will capture the benefits of growth while maintaining Wonthaggi as a strong regional centre with attractive new communities and surrounding farmland. The Victorian Government and Bass Coast Shire Council see it as an ideal place to support the Bass Coast Shires' growing population, thanks to its existing infrastructure and amenity. The VPA and Bass Coast Shire Council have prepared the draft Wonthaggi North East PSP, Wonthaggi North East Development Contributions Plan (DCP) and Wonthaggi North East Native Vegetation Precinct Plan (NVPP). These documents will guide new urban development and reserve land for key infrastructure within the precinct, manage development contributions and native vegetation retention and removal.

The proposed changes to the area will be implemented through amendment C152 to the *Bass Coast Planning Scheme*, to include the Wonthaggi North East PSP as an Incorporated Document and make the required changes to the Planning Policy Framework. The draft Amendment will enable the Wonthaggi North East precinct to develop in line with Wonthaggi North East PSP.

2.2 The VPA's Fast Track Program

The Wonthaggi North East PSP is part of the VPA – Fast-Track Program, an element of the Victorian Government's response to support a post-COVID economic recovery. This accelerated work program will provide certainty for communities and a pipeline of development that will assist in delivering future jobs and homes for Victorians as the economy recovers from the impact of the pandemic.

As part of the VPA – Fast-Track Program, if required, the Wonthaggi North East project will be subject to the VPA Projects Standing Advisory Committee (VPA SAC). The VPA SAC has been established to provide independent advice on draft planning scheme amendments to the VPA and the Minister for Planning. More information on this process is available in Section 5.

2.3 Public consultation overview

The Wonthaggi North East PSP, DCP and NVPP and associated draft planning scheme amendment were released for public comment on Monday 2 November until Monday 30 November 2020. The identified stakeholders include the Wonthaggi community, local councils, state government agencies and services providers, landowners and the general public. The consultation consisted of a project letter, project brochure, telephone conversations, a virtual-drop-in session, online question and answer board and the offer of virtual one-to-one meetings with landowners within the site, as well as local and state government authorities.

These engagement activities were designed to reflect the relevant public health restrictions at the time of consultation and closely followed the elements of the planning scheme amendment notice and submission process under section 19 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*.

A complete suite of the planning documentation was made accessible on the VPA's *Have your Say* platform as well as the project *Engage Victoria* page and hardcopy versions were offered to any person with limited access to the website. Formal feedback was collected in the form of written submissions.

2.3.1 Purpose

The key purpose of this consultation process was to provide an opportunity for the local community and key stakeholders to write a submission to the draft amendment before it is progressed through the planning system. The consultation also provided an opportunity to 'close the loop' with local residents who have been involved in the planning process for the Wonthaggi North East since 2008 and in this precinct structure plan since 2014 and to clarify any matters to assist community members who wished to make a submission to the draft amendment.

2.3.2 Promotion and reach

The opportunity to get involved was promoted through direct mail to approximately 526 addresses within 50m of the site

The mailout included a letter and project brochure which outlined the key features of the plan and planning process. It included background information on the VPA's Fast Track program; details for making a submission, project team names and direct contact details and information about upcoming community events.

A further 23 community subscribers on the Wonthaggi North East digital database received a project update regarding the consultation opportunity. The Wonthaggi North East webpage was visited 364 times during the consultation period, while the Wonthaggi North East page on Engage Victoria received 889 visits.

2.4 Previous community consultation

Council has conducted several phases of engagement, both with landowners and the broader community regarding growth in the north-east of Wonthaggi and within the PSP.

This process originally started with the 2008 Wonthaggi Dalyston Structure Plan and later became the 2009 Wonthaggi North East Growth Plan.

Council advises that engagement on the current Wonthaggi North PSP began with one on one meetings with landowners to introduce the PSP commenced in 2014.

Community engagement exercises including publications, media releases and drop in sessions were held in 2017 and 2019.

2.5 Government agency and service provider consultation

Throughout the planning process for Wonthaggi North East precinct, the VPA project manager and planning team met with the necessary government and delivery agencies to ensure a coordinated whole-of-government approach was being applied.

Government agencies were offered the opportunity to review and provide informal comments on the proposed plan and planning scheme amendment documentation prior to the broader public consultation in November 2020. As a result, several improvements were made to the planning documentation before it was made publicly available.

A further six government agency and service provider submissions were received during the public consultation period.

2.6 Local council consultation

The VPA worked closely with Bass Coast Shire Council to prepare the plan and associated planning materials for the Wonthaggi North East site to ensure the project aligns with local planning policy. Bass Coast Shire Council was invited to make a submission to the draft amendment during public consultation Council Bass Coast Shire Council did not make a separate submission.

2.7 Landowner consultation

As the Wonthaggi North East precinct is privately owned, the VPA and Bass Coast Shire Council consulted with its landowners while preparing the plan to ensure the views of this stakeholder group were known. The landowners were also invited to prepare a written submission during this final public consultation process. The VPA received nineteen submissions from landowners within the precinct.

3 CONSULTATION METHODOLOGY

3.1 Consultation program

The consultation period of draft Amendment C152 to the Bass Coast Planning Scheme ran from Monday 2 November until Monday 30 November 2020. The activities and responses are summarised below.

Frequency and date	Public consultation activity	Audience	Outcomes
2 November 2020	Letters and project brochure sent within 50m of Wonthaggi North East site.	Community & landowners	526 delivered
2 November 2020	Update to project webpage	Community, landowners & agencies	364 unique page views
Various times	Hardcopy documents delivered on request	Community	1 sets delivered
Throughout consultation within business hours	Telephone calls	Community, landowners and agencies	16 calls
25 November 2020 (evening)	Virtual drop-in	Community & landowners	11 participants
Offered on an as-needed basis	landowner meetings	Landowners only	2 meeting
Offered on an as-needed basis	Government and agency meetings	Local government and state agencies	5 meetings
2 November – 30 November 2020	Written submissions	All	28 submissions in total <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government agency and service providers (6) • Landowners within the site (19) • Local community and interested parties(3)

4 SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK

A total of 28 written submissions and an additional 26 questions/comments through phone/ email/ Zoom were made to the Wonthaggi North East project during the consultation period.

An overview of the key themes raised through feedback heard over the phone, virtual meetings and at the virtual drop-in session is outlined below.

4.1 Process and implementation

There were questions seeking clarity about the process and timing of the PSP, particularly regarding how properties already developed or with planning permissions would be treated. People were also concerned about the existing use rights of landowners.

There was a high level of interest around the implementation of the PSP, the timing of delivery and the details of infrastructure coordination.

4.2 Road alignments and intersections

There were many comments about the locations or alignments of roads, and roundabouts, within or entering the precinct. Others related to the impact of roads on existing or future residents.

4.3 Drainage

There were questions about how the centralised stormwater management system will be implemented.

4.4 Infrastructure provision and the Development Contribution Plan (DCP)

There were several comments about the provision of infrastructure to the PSP, some of these centred around timing and when the infrastructure would be delivered in relation to the development of the PSP.

4.5 Land Uses

VPA heard various comments about the land uses proposed for the precinct, including the location of the industrial land and its proximity to existing and future residential properties,

4.6 Written submissions

28 pieces of written feedback

The VPA received 28 submissions during this consultation process. All submitters received an immediate acknowledgement of receipt and the submissions are available (with personal details redacted) on the VPA's website.

The VPA will continue to respond to and resolve the key issues raised in the written feedback where possible. Any unresolved submissions will be reported to the Minister for Planning, who will consider whether to refer matters to the VPA SAC for independent advice and the manner in which they may be heard.

The key issues raised by submitters have been grouped into the following categories:

High significance

- Whether properties rezoned in 2013 should be included in the PSP and DCP area – some of these properties have permits, individual infrastructure agreements and are under development.
- Whether council should ensure the early delivery of retarding basin that will service a large area of the precinct by applying a Public Acquisition Overlay over the land containing the proposed basin.
- Adjacent landowner seeking speculative inclusion in the amendment.

Medium significance

- A request that some land be rezoned for a higher use than industrial.
- That the amendment shows more detailed planning for the historic industrial area in the precinct.
- The scope, costing and priority of DCP funded infrastructure projects.
- Postpone the amendment until the Wonthaggi Bypass location and the DAL process are finalised
- Compensate landowners where land between, but not containing, native vegetation is shown as a conservation use.

Low significance

- Provide third part notice and appeal rights to existing rural residents to be rezoned to industrial.
- Provide ongoing rural residents with 'reasonable personal use' exemption for native vegetation removal.
- Fund an extension of a rail trail outside the precinct through the DCP.
- Question the fast track process.
- Landowners with smaller properties seeking assistance with bringing utility infrastructure to their land.

5 POST CONSULTATION & NEXT STEPS

5.1 Resolution of submissions

As part of the VPA – Fast-Track Program, the VPA has recommended the Minister for Planning refer submissions to the Wonthaggi North East project to the VPA Projects Standing Advisory Committee (VPA SAC). The VPA SAC has been established to provide independent advice on draft planning scheme amendments to the VPA and the Minister for Planning.

The VPA will seek to resolve issues raised by submitters within the time available before the proceedings of the VPA SAC. Should the Minister for Planning seek to refer these matters to the VPA SAC, Planning Panels Victoria will contact affected submitters regarding next steps, process and timings.

The VPA will provide a written response to submitters whose submissions are not referred to the VPA SAC to ensure they are aware of the outcome of their submission.

5.2 Pathway to approval

The VPA SAC will provide advice on the draft amendment to the VPA and the Minister for Planning. The VPA will then make recommendations to the Minister for Planning, who will consider the appropriate approval pathway for an amendment to the *Bass Coast Planning Scheme*.

6 APPENDICES

6.1 Project brochure

- [Wonthaggi North East Brochure November 2020](#)

