



RIVERLEE

19 August 2020

Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning

Via email to: planning.implementation@delwp.vic.gov.au

Dear Sir / Madam,

Draft Bellarine Peninsula Statement of Planning Policy

This submission is made on behalf of Riverlee.

Riverlee is a fully integrated property development and investment group, primarily specialising in urban renewal and mixed-use precinct developments. Riverlee's diverse portfolio includes commercial, residential, retail and tourism assets. Over the past 30 years Riverlee has successfully completed more than \$2.5 billion of urban land and township projects, commercial office complexes, high rise residential and hotel developments. Riverlee has a current development pipeline in excess of \$3 billion, across 15 active development projects.

Riverlee has been a long-standing property owner on the Bellarine Peninsula and controls the land at 1852 to 1600 Bellarine Highway and 312 to 320 Grubb Road as indicated in **Attachment 1**.

Riverlee makes the following submissions to the Draft Statement of Planning Policy (SPP):

- That the Minister send submissions regarding the Draft SPP to the Standing Advisory Committee established for that purpose.
- That the SPP should provide for a strategic review of Ocean Grove (as set out in Clause 21.14 of the scheme) before a permanent settlement boundary is established.
- That the SPP should recognise and formalise the existing activity and tourism node on the Bellarine Highway at Wallington.

Activate the Standing Advisory Committee

Riverlee requests that submissions regarding the Draft SPP be referred to the Standing Advisory Committee established for that purpose. This is anticipated on the Department of Environment, Water and Planning (DELWP) Website at - [Distinctive Areas and Landscapes Standing Advisory Committee | Engage Victoria](#) which provides the following:

“The Minister for Planning has appointed an independent Standing Advisory Committee known as the Distinctive Areas and Landscapes Standing Advisory Committee (the Committee). The Committee can advise on draft Statements of Planning Policy and any other planning policy and implementation matter referred to it by the Minister for Planning.”

The Terms of Reference also on the Website state:

“The purpose of the Standing Advisory Committee is to advise the Minister for Planning on any matters listed below as they relate to the preparation of SPPs for the Bass Coast, Bellarine Peninsula and Surf Coast declared areas: a) the rigor of any policy proposed in a draft SPP....”

The Advisory Committee will ensure the independence, integrity and rigor around the process. The need for this process is particularly important as the SPP is a 50-year plan and will have immediate consequences as soon as it is adopted by the Victorian Government.

It would also be helpful if DELWP referred their preferred form on Planning Scheme Amendment to implement the DAL to the Advisory Committee so the Amendment and submissions regarding it can be considered.

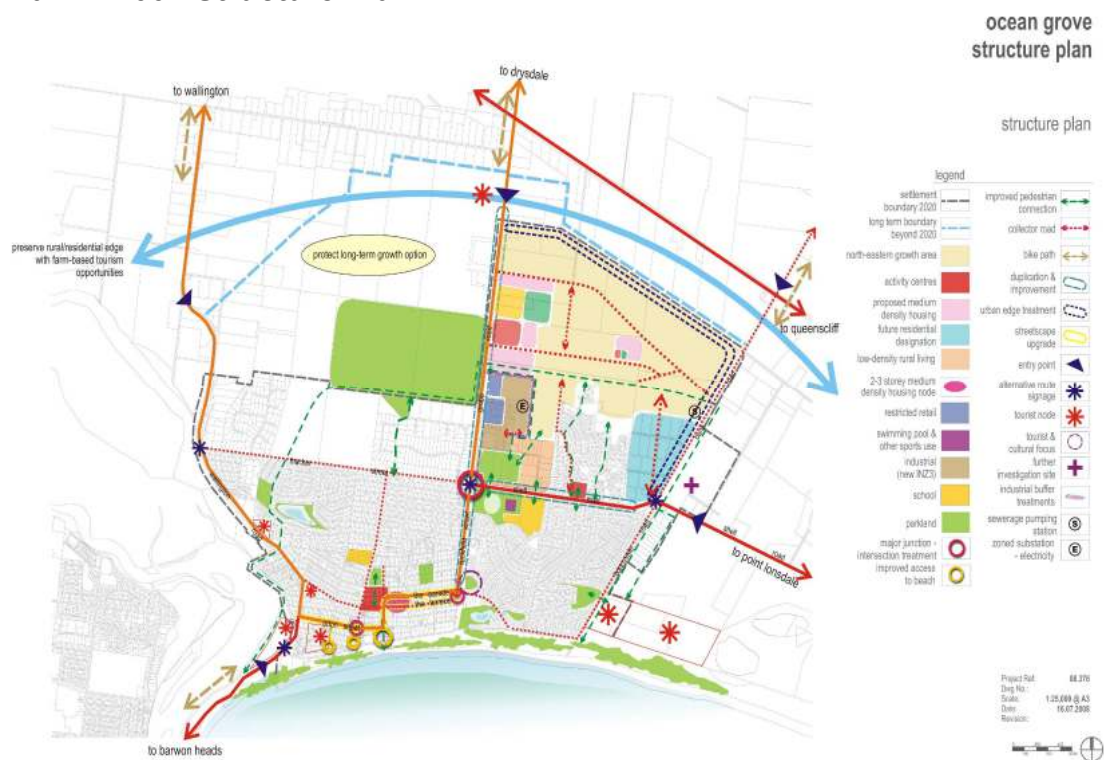
Undertake an Ocean Grove Strategic Review

Riverlee submits that the SPP should provide for a strategic review of Ocean Grove (as set out in Clause 21.14 of the scheme) before a permanent settlement boundary is established.

The 2007 Ocean Grove Structure Plan identified the land north of Ocean Grove and south of Wallington as being within a future investigation area (refer 2007 Structure Plan Diagram below). Stakeholders expect that there would be a further process to consider the final long term settlement boundaries for the town.

The background and technical work behind the SPP is focused mainly around high level landscape, environmental values and neighbourhood character considerations. The strategic review has not given consideration to many localised issues and considerations vital to ensure sound long term strategic planning. A more fine grained analysis and submission process can ensure the long term planning framework is suitable and considers social, economic and environmental consequences.

Plan 1: 2007 Structure Plan



The submission for a more fine grained strategic review is supported by Clause 21.14 of the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme which provides:

Review the Structure Plan including an assessment of long term infill growth options for Ocean Grove by no later than 2021. The assessment should include consideration of:

- *the role of Ocean Grove as a district town*
- *other planned growth on the Bellarine Peninsula.*
- *development trends, lot supply and housing capacity within the settlement boundary.*
- *the desirability of providing a diversity of living options. physical and environmental constraints, including the importance of protecting the biodiversity values of the Nature Reserve and maintaining a rural break between settlements.*
- *the protection of landscape values and implications for the character of approaches to Ocean Grove township along the Bellarine Highway, Grubb Road and Wallington Road.*
- *the implications for significant agricultural uses and their employment generating potential.*

Recognise the Wallington Tourism Node

The SPP should recognise and formalise the existing activity and tourism node on the Bellarine Highway at Wallington (refer Plan 2). There are a mix of activities at this location as shown on the image below. There are benefits to consolidate this location as a well landscaped tourism activity node.

Existing uses include:

- Adventure Park.
- A tourism maze.
- Mini-golf.
- Wallington Landscape Garden Supplies.
- Fagg Mitre 10.
- Wallington Park Equestrian Centre.
- Big 4 Bellarine Holiday Park.
- Farmer's Harvest.
- Bellarine Bushland reserve.
- Banks Road Vineyard.
- Per resort.
- Van Noon's Nursery.
- Flying Brick Cider.

Plan 2 Existing tourism and activity cluster

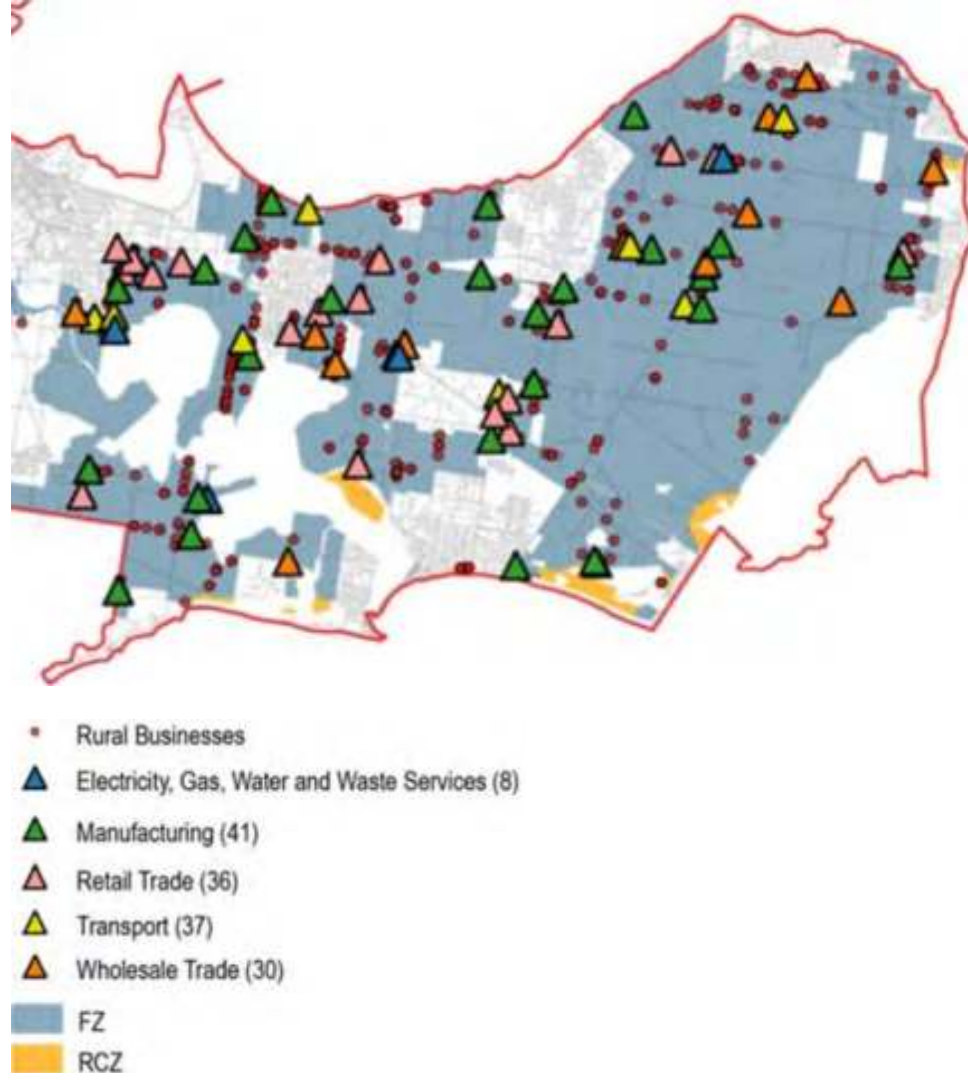


Through such a designation, there is a planning opportunity to:

- Provide a central, planned location for future tourism related investment.
- Integrate the existing uses into a cluster at the Grubb Road and Bellarine Highway intersection.
- Facilitate a high-quality landscaped gateway to Ocean Grove and the southern Bellarine Peninsula.
- Reduce the scope for such uses to locate elsewhere.
- Introduce strong landscape design requirements for new developments within the node to achieve an excellent outcome.

Plan 3 below indicates the location of existing agriculture, food, wine, events, accommodation, equine and transport and manufacturing business located outside town on the Bellarine.

Plan 3 Existing Rural and Tourism Business Base



It can be seen from Plan 3 that these uses tend to cluster on key highways and arterials and near key settlements. The existing cluster where Ocean Grove intersects with the Bellarine Highway is a key cluster in the wider area.

There are some similarities to the organic and natural clustering of similar uses that occurs in the Yarra Valley (see Plan 4 below) and on the Mornington Peninsula.

Plan 4: Organic Clustering of tourism uses in the Yarra Valley



The SPP encourages nature-based tourism to locate generally anywhere on the Peninsula – without providing sufficient direction to support existing nodes. For example, page 47 of the SPP provides:

“Appropriately scaled and located tourism accommodation and activities should be encouraged in rural areas but only if they preserve productive agricultural capacity, complement and respect the rural landscape character and where possible enhance environmental values.”

Riverlee takes this policy position to support additional tourism related uses being located on its Bellarine Highway and Grubb Road land that is subject to this submission.

Riverlee submits that the DAL should provide flexibility for well-conceived, landscape responsive, attractive tourism and related developments which employ the latest in sustainability techniques to be located in tourism clusters, subject to core design principles which should form part of the policy and be included in the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme.

Planning Scheme Flexibility should be retained for such proposals to be considered on their merits.

The relevant plans in the SPP should be amended to indicate the existing tourism cluster around the Grubb Road and Bellarine Highway intersection.

Please contact me on [REDACTED] to discuss further.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Riverlee

Attachment 1: Riverlee Property

