

# **East of Aberline**

PRECINCT STRUCTURE PLAN

## **Pitching Sessions Summary Report**

JUNE 2023



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### Disclaimers

Any information herein is based on reasonable assumptions at the time of publication but should not be relied upon without first seeking appropriate expert advice. Although every effort has been made to ensure that the information in this document is factually correct at the time of publication, the VPA does not warrant the accuracy, completeness or relevance of the information. Any person using or relying upon this document does so on the basis that the State of Victoria shall bear no responsibility or liability whatsoever for any errors, faults, defects or omissions in the information.

## Acknowledgement of Traditional Custodians

*The land, skies and waters that make up the East of Aberline Precinct and its surrounds are the country of the Eastern Maar.*

The Victorian Government proudly acknowledges Victoria’s Aboriginal communities and their rich cultures and pays respect to their Elders past, present and emerging. We acknowledge Aboriginal people as Australia’s First People and as the Traditional Owners and custodians of the land and water on which we rely. We recognise and value the ongoing contribution of Aboriginal people and communities to Victorian life and how this enriches us. We embrace the spirit of reconciliation and ensuring that Aboriginal voices are heard.

### Victorian Planning Authority’s commitment

The Victorian Planning Authority (VPA) commits to continuing to improve our practices, to better protect and acknowledge Aboriginal values and heritage in our plans, precinct structure plans and strategic documents.

The protection of tangible and intangible Aboriginal cultural heritage is an important part of continuing cultural practice, understanding history and recognition of the Traditional Owners of Victoria. Commonwealth and State Acts and Regulations provide protection of places and areas of Aboriginal cultural heritage significance.

The ultimate custodians of Aboriginal cultural heritage are Traditional Owners, including groups formally recognised as Registered Aboriginal Parties (RAPs) which are appointed by the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Council under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*. In 2023, there are 11 registered RAPs with decision-making responsibilities for approximately 75 per cent of Victoria. Traditional Owner Groups without formal recognition also have a vital role to play as key partners and stakeholders. Strategic planning for Aboriginal cultural heritage also involves a range of different stakeholders including State Government agencies, local government, developers, landowners and community groups. The Traditional Owners of the Warrnambool region are the Eastern Maar people, of the Gunditjmara Nation.

Continuous engagement and collaboration with the Eastern Maar traditional owners will be a priority throughout, to ensure their knowledge and values are considered and respected in the planning and development of the area.

A photograph of a wetland area with a body of water, surrounded by dense green vegetation and reeds. The water is calm, reflecting the surrounding greenery. The foreground is filled with tall, green reeds and grasses. The background shows a misty or overcast sky, creating a serene and natural atmosphere.

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# Introduction

## What is Pitching?

For landowners and community groups, pitching sessions are an opportunity to discuss opportunities, challenges, and aspirations for the precinct.

For government agencies and other stakeholders, pitching sessions are an opportunity to present relevant background information and policy that will need to be considered when preparing the Precinct Structure Plan (PSP).

These pitching sessions mark the continuation of the strategic planning process for the East of Aberline PSP.

The purpose of the pitching sessions was to:

- Understand core issues, challenges, and priorities upfront in the planning process.
- Foster a collaborative working relationship between stakeholders and the VPA.
- Facilitate the creation of a shared vision and objectives for the site that reflect the values and priorities of the community.

This was achieved by:

- Inviting landowners within the precinct and key agencies to present their ideas and concerns in a one-to-one meeting with the VPA.
- Preparing a clear agenda and supporting materials for each pitching session to ensure that all parties are informed and on the same page.
- Actively listening to and recording all feedback and ideas to ensure that they are captured accurately and considered.
- Encouraging discussion of innovative ideas.

## Purpose of this document

This document is a summary of the information captured during the pitching sessions for the East of Aberline PSP.

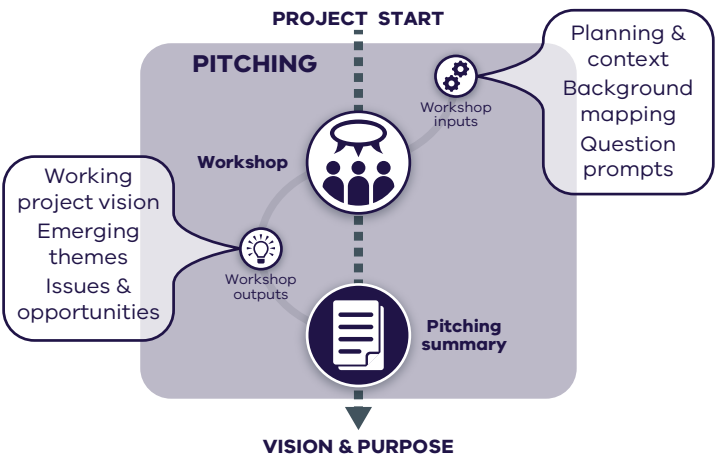


Figure 1 PITCHING PROCESS

Outcomes of pitching sessions will inform the development of a shared vision and objectives for the East of Aberline PSP.

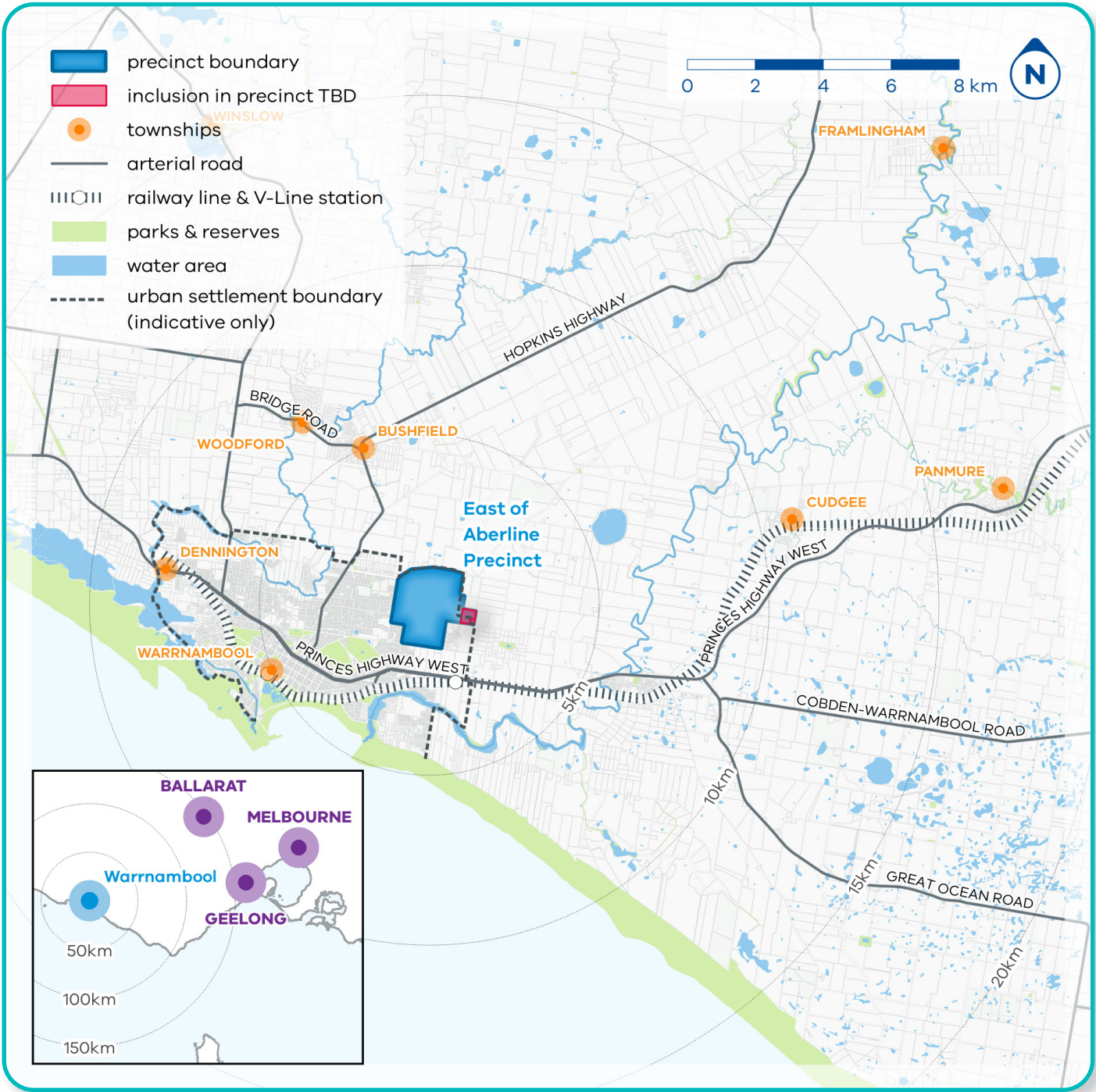


Figure 2 Regional context plan



Who attended the sessions?

Pitching sessions were held with representatives from state and local government agencies, key stakeholders, community groups and infrastructure providers. Precinct landowners were also contacted to participate.

These were held online and in-person as individual meetings with the VPA project team.

Attendees included:

- Warrnambool City Council
- Department of Transport and Planning (DTP)
- Department of Education (DE)
- Diocese of Ballarat Catholic Education Limited (DOBCEL)
- Wannon Water
- Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority (GHCMA)
- Moyne Shire
- Powercor
- Tozer Reserve Committee
- Private landowners and developers

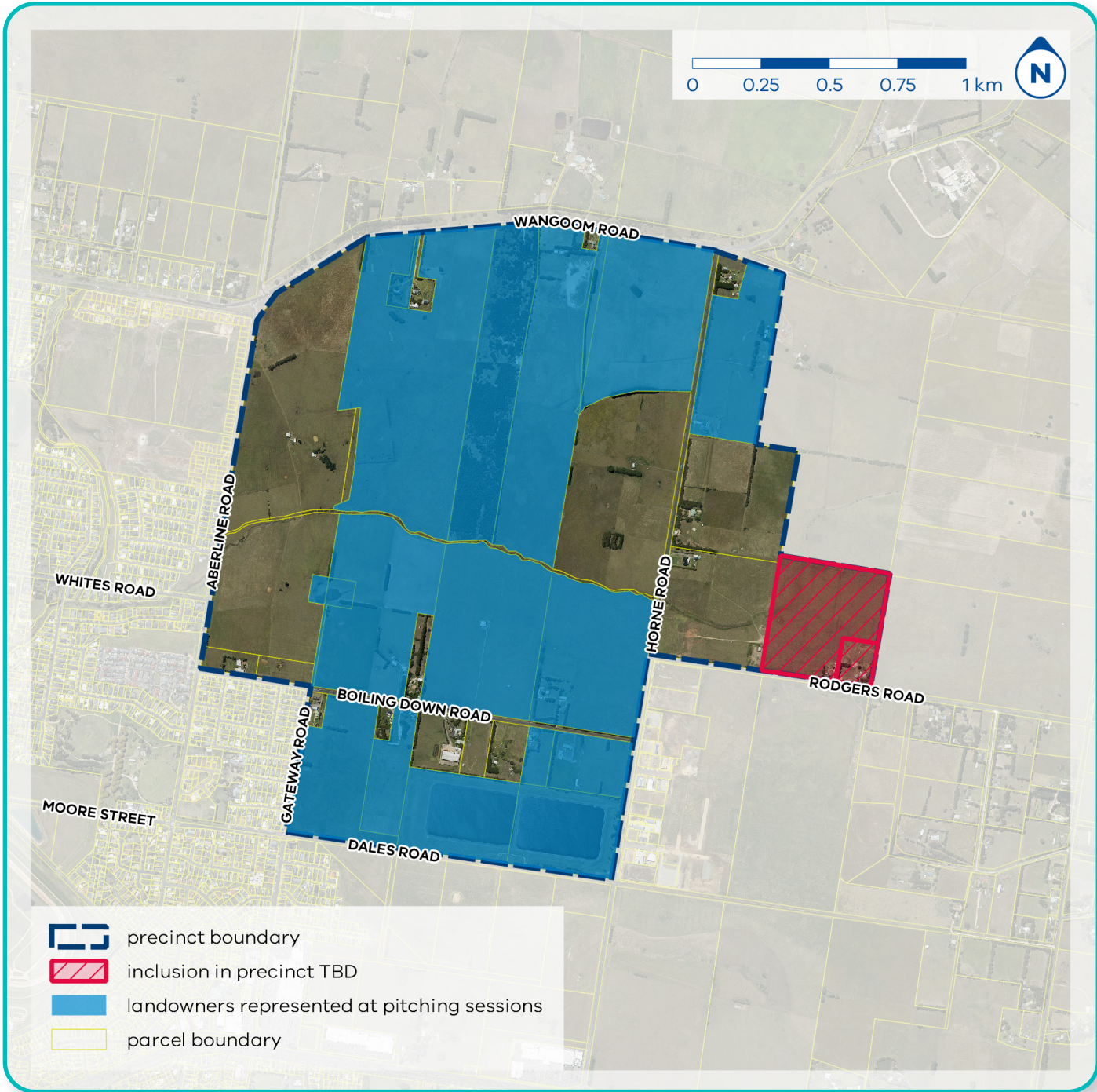


Figure 3 Landowners represented at pitching sessions

Background

Population growth in Warrnambool is driving the need for more residential zoned land. The East of Aberline PSP is a strategic project led by the Victorian Planning Authority which is anticipated to facilitate the development of 4,000 homes.

In 2018, the Warrnambool City Council commenced the preparation of the East of Aberline Precinct Structure Plan, including procurement of technical documents. In 2019, the project was handed over to the VPA. Whilst the project was paused in 2020, the VPA are continuing the preparation of the PSP, under the [PSP 2.0 process](#).

Precinct features and interface

The East of Aberline PSP area is approximately 409ha in size (refer to Figure 2 for the regional context and Figure 4 for the study area). Of that approximately 17.5ha is still subject to confirmation for inclusion in the precinct.

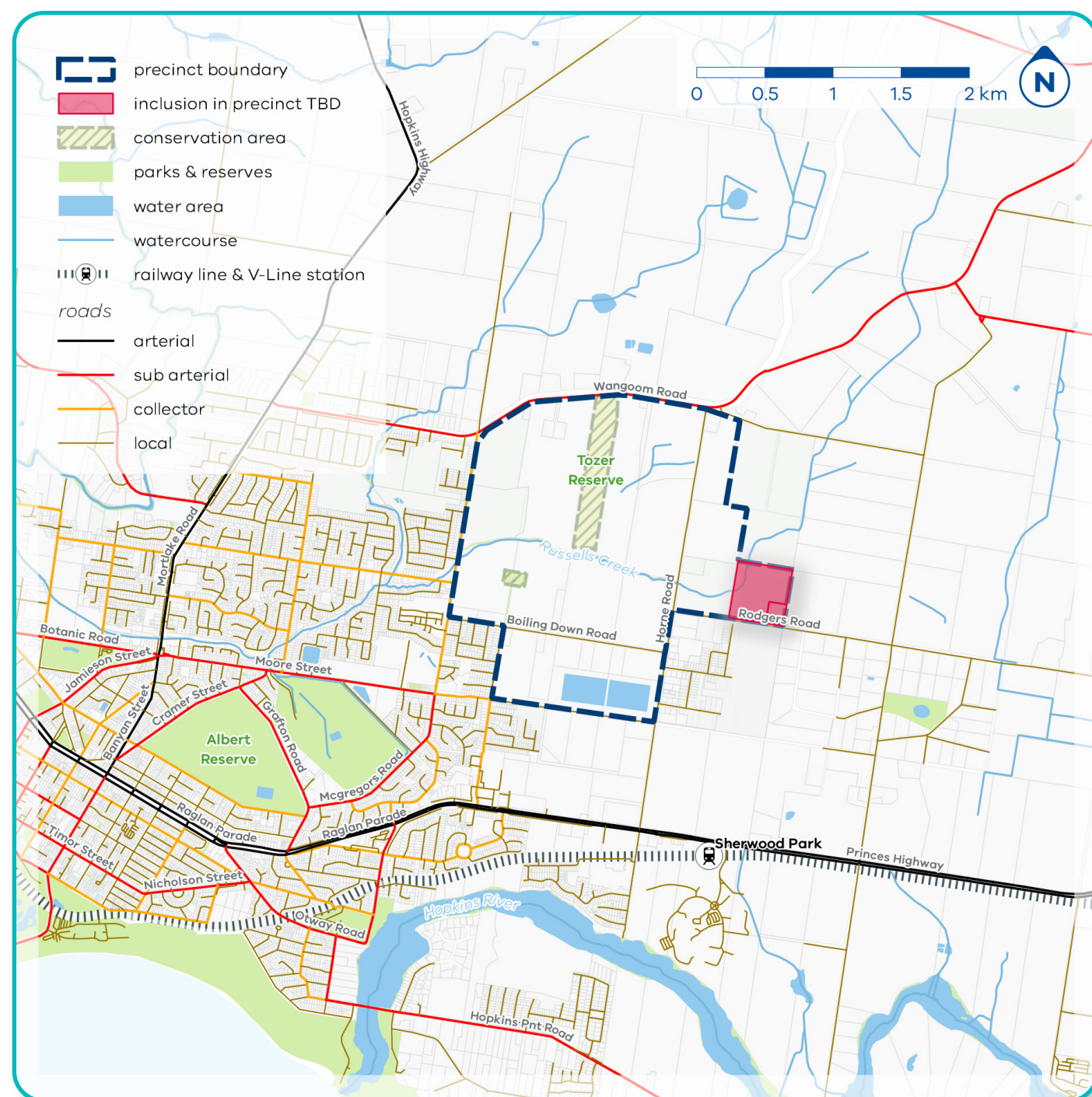
The precinct contains the following key features:

- 41 individual titles across council, government agency and private ownership. The majority of this land is zoned Farming Zone (FZ).
- Several existing dwellings associated with low intensity agriculture based activities such as grazing.
- Tozer Memorial Reserve is located central to the PSP area and is owned by the Department of Education.
- The land within the PSP area has a gentle undulating topography. There is fall towards Russells Creek that traverses the precinct. The land also has a 1:60 fall to the north towards Wangoom Road. There is minimal east-west cross-fall. There is an area of cultural heritage sensitivity within Russell Creek.
- Wannon Water storage ponds are located in the south-east corner of the PSP and are zoned Public Use Zone (PUZ1).
- Some native vegetation (including native grasses) and potential habitat for native species, listed for protection either under state or federal legislation.

The precinct includes the following interfaces:

- Key roads framing and within the PSP area (Aberline Road, Wangoom Road and Horne Road) are zoned Transport Zone 3 (TRZ3), deemed as significant municipal roads.
- The Horne Road Industrial Precinct sits to the southeast of the precinct and is zoned Industrial 3 Zone (INZ3).
- The site abuts the Warrnambool City / Moyne Shire boundary to the north and comprises land zoned Farming Zone (FZ).
- Residential land along the western boundary is predominantly zoned General Residential Zone (GRZ).
- Retail areas to the south which is zoned Commercial 1 Zone (C1Z).





**Figure 4 Precinct area**

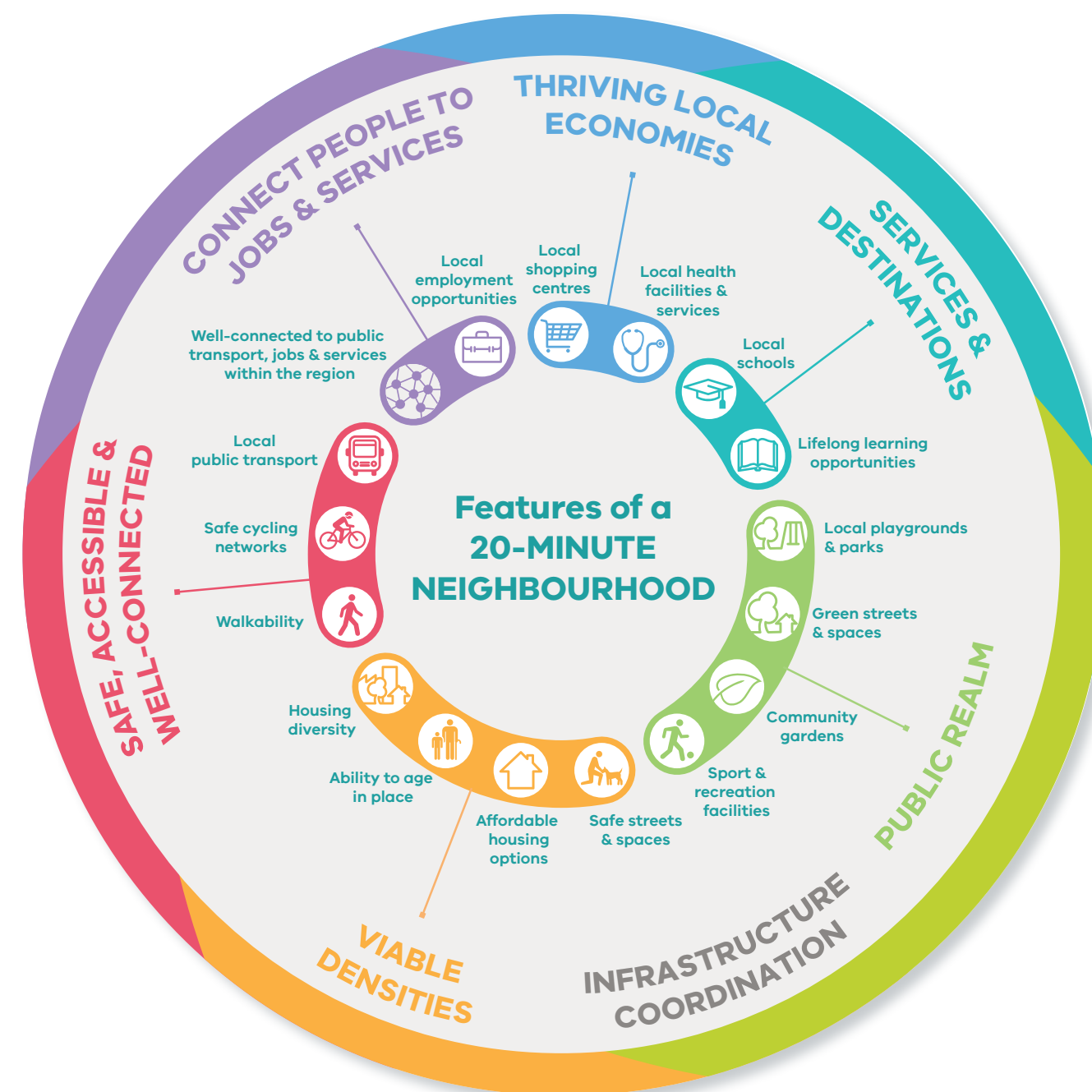
## Emerging themes

The information collected during pitching sessions has been organised and examined, resulting in the identification of five (5) key emerging themes.

The five (5) emerging themes will be instrumental in shaping the vision and objectives for the precinct. Furthermore, they will be incorporated where possible into the eventual place-based-plan as part of the co-design process.

The East of Aberline PSP will also consider the PSP Guidelines and the seven (7) hallmarks of the 20-minute neighbourhood to identify potential opportunities and constraints and ensure that essential benchmarks are met.

You can see the key metrics in Figure 5. Furthermore, Figure 6 shows how each emerging theme is connected to the PSP Guidelines and the hallmarks of the 20-minute neighbourhood.



**Figure 5 PSP Guidelines and the 20-Minute Neighbourhood hallmarks**

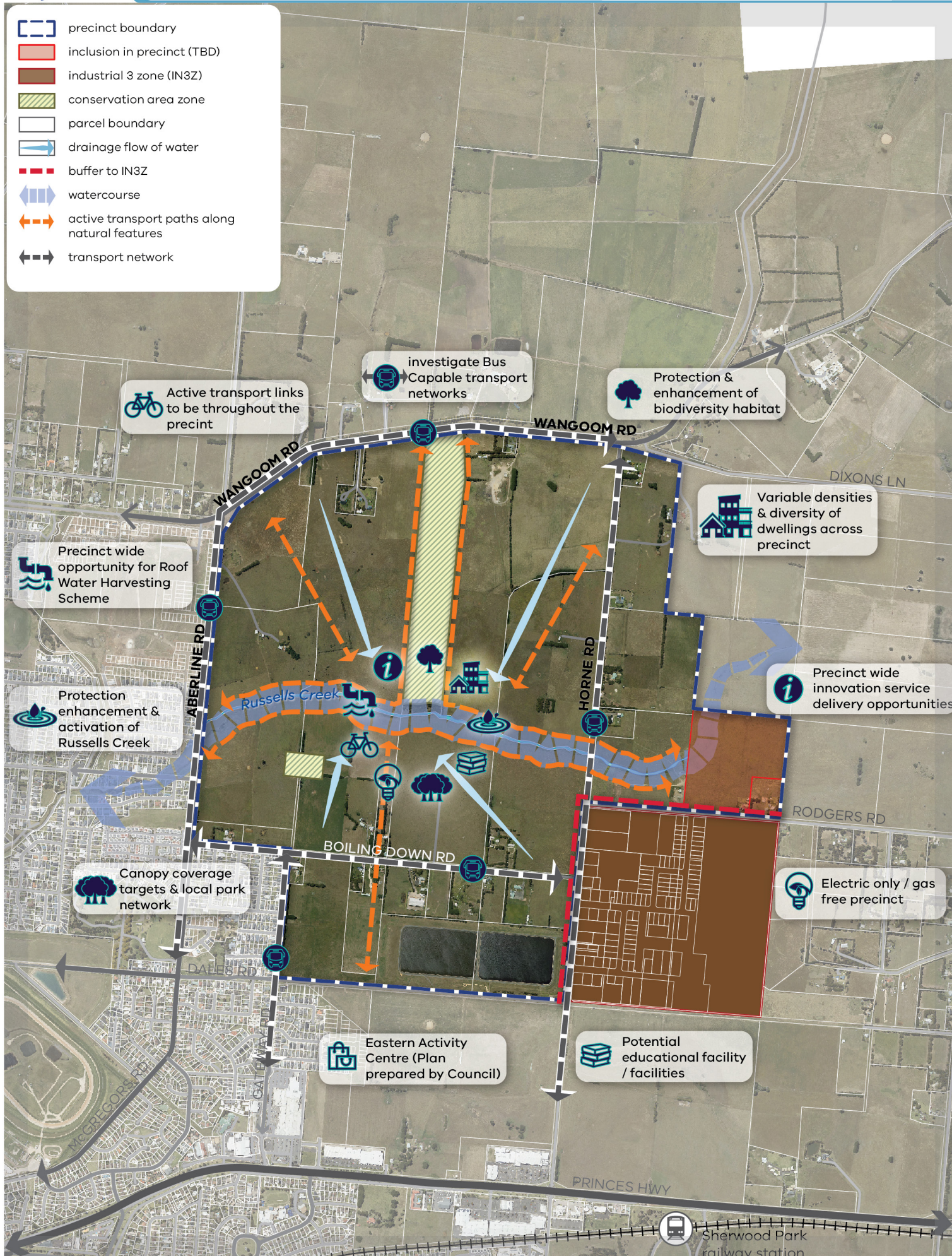


Emerging Themes	PSP Guidelines and the 20 minutes neighbourhood hallmarks
<b>EMERGING THEME 1</b> – Support development of a sustainable residential precinct which prioritises high-quality built form and housing diversity.	<div> <div>Viable Densities</div> <div>High Quality Public Realm</div> <div>Thriving Local Economies</div> </div>
<b>EMERGING THEME 2</b> – Create a transport network that connects people to their homes, jobs and services, safely and efficiently.	<div> <div>Safe Accessible and Well Connected</div> <div>Connect People to Jobs and Services</div> <div>Infrastructure Co-ordination</div> <div>Services and Destinations</div> </div>
<b>EMERGING THEME 3</b> – Holistically manage water and drainage solutions on site, in a sustainable manner and protect natural systems	<div> <div>High Quality Public Realm</div> <div>Infrastructure Co-ordination</div> </div>
<b>EMERGING THEME 4</b> – Facilitate the coordinated delivery of utility services and community infrastructure to ensure high amenity outcomes for future residents.	<div> <div>High Quality Public Realm</div> <div>Services and Destinations</div> <div>Infrastructure Co-ordination</div> <div>Safe Accessible and Well Connected</div> </div>
<b>EMERGING THEME 5</b> – Protect and enhance the landscape character, biodiversity and environmental values of the precinct.	<div> <div>High Quality Public Realm</div> </div>

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## EMERGING THEME 1

**Support development of a sustainable residential precinct which prioritises high-quality built form and housing diversity.**

The development of a sustainable community, which is adaptive to future climate variability is a priority.

Through the pitching process, there was a strong desire from both landowners and agencies to strive for elevated environmental outcomes. The implementation of a precinct-wide roof water harvesting scheme was pitched as an opportunity to improve future economic and environmental outcomes across the precinct.

While the development of the precinct will assist in meeting the demand for new residential land in the region, the need for strategically planned dwelling diversity was also discussed. There was an intent to meet the needs of a broader community, through providing a range of high-quality housing typologies which cater for different demographics.

Subdivision design and built form outcomes should strive to maximise energy efficiency for ongoing affordability and sustainability of future neighbourhoods within the precinct.

### Ideas and opportunities discussed:

- The precinct will develop over many years and will need to respond to evolving market needs (i.e. provide opportunities for a mix of land uses, retain flexibility via a range of lot sizes and be delivered in a strategic manner to support population growth and jobs demand).
- Varied and diverse lots sizes and densities to accommodate a range of resident demographics. Higher density areas must be nearby high amenity areas including commercial precincts, public open space and public transport.
- The needs of essential workers and low-income households should be accommodated within the precinct, through implementation of affordable housing strategies.
- Sustainable design principles should be incorporated as built form requirements for new dwellings, including passive solar orientation and renewable energy systems.
- Sustainability measures must be feasible.
- Roof Water Harvesting Scheme (RWHS) should be implemented in collaboration with Wannon Water, to effectively manage post development runoff flows and provide an additional potable water supply.

- Utilise the opportunity for RWHS to reduce the carbon emissions associated with pumping from Gellibrand River to service Warrnambool's demand.
- Explore opportunities for local electricity generation and storage through solar panels and development of community battery.
- Investigate the opportunity for the establishment of a community garden for local food production.
- Future proof renewable energy sources and develop the precinct without a reticulated gas network. The power utility provider is aware of the associated increased power demand, should this be implemented.

### Other considerations:

Council has previously prepared a *Zero Net Carbon Development Opportunities and Feasibility Report* to uncover sustainable options to reduce reliance upon conventional infrastructure that can be implemented into the East of Aberline PSP. VPA will also collaborate with Council as the municipal authority to explore net zero emissions development opportunities that can be embedded.

Green Warrnambool (2018) Policy has targets for Integrated Water Management and Sustainable Growth.

Wannon Water has already successfully implemented RWHS in North of Merri precinct and Gateway Industrial Business Park. The data and projections completed by Wannon Water indicate RWHS roll-out in the East of Aberline precinct could increase the supply provided to the City's water storages to 7%, a positive contribution to sustainable development practices.

Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority support innovative water capture and management.



## EMERGING THEME 2

**Create a transport network that connects people to their homes, jobs and services, safely and efficiently.**

The East of Aberline PSP is strategically located within the broader Barwon Southwest region, with convenient access to significant municipal roads such as Wangoom Road, Aberline Road and principal road networks such as Princes and Hopkins Highways. While planning for the future community, the likely impacts of existing vehicle movement, particularly heavy and freight vehicles must be investigated.

The transport network will prioritise safe and efficient connectivity, both within the precinct and to surrounding areas. This includes the creation of accessible walking and cycling paths, as well as public transport connections that link the precinct to central Warrnambool and the wider region.

By creating a high-quality transport network, the East of Aberline PSP will be well connected to employment, community services, and amenities. These objectives will allow future residents to be less reliant on private vehicles and able to conveniently utilise sustainable transport modes.

### Ideas and opportunities discussed:

- Evaluate the current transport infrastructure within the precinct and identify areas where improvements and upgrades are needed.
- Plan for future transport needs and incorporate flexibility in the transport network designed to accommodate future growth and changing demands.
- Assess the potential impacts of the Horne Road Industrial precinct and associated freight on the future land uses. Noise pollution and increased traffic will likely require mitigation strategies to be implemented.
- Consider vehicles commuting from Warrnambool to employment areas in Mortlake and Allensford and alternative travel routes around the precinct post-development.
- Plan for reduced vehicle speed limits on major roads such as Boiling Down, Dales and Aberline Road to improve safety for residents.
- Investigate the intersection treatments which will be required on larger roads, especially future connections onto Wangoom Road.
- Explore options to create accessible walking and cycling paths within the precinct to encourage active transport options.
- Provide separate cycling routes where possible for improved safety outcomes.

- Utilise and activate buffers around natural features such as Russell Creek and Tozer Reserve to create active transport links.
- Evaluate the required east-west internal connection to be developed, noting vehicle and pedestrian crossings through Tozer reserve should be minimised to avoid vegetation removal and habitat destruction.
- Upgrade the car parking associated with Tozer Reserve along Wangoom Road to improve safety for visitors.
- Strategically plan for north-south movement within the precinct to consider if any additional creek crossings are required. Aberline and Horne Road likely to remain major arterials for the area.
- Investigate ways to enhance public transport connections to the East of Aberline PSP to improve access to jobs, services, and community amenities.
- Investigate ways to promote the use of electric and low-emission vehicles within the precinct to reduce carbon emissions and promote sustainability.

### Other considerations:

VPA will be working closely with DTP and Council to understand the need for new road infrastructure.

In addition, VPA will be undertaking an Integrated Transport Assessment (Phase 2 Study), which will consider truck movement/freight logistics, how to manage existing network issues and determine active and public transport options for the East of Aberline precinct.

## EMERGING THEME 3

**Holistically manage water and drainage solutions on site, in a sustainable manner and protect natural systems.**

The East of Aberline PSP contains highly valuable environmental assets including Tozer Reserve and Russell Creek. The holistic management of water and drainage solutions on site is vital to protect these assets and the biodiversity which they support. Sustainable water management infrastructure will be required to ensure that stormwater is effectively managed, and the water quality is not degraded.

There are low lying areas throughout the site which are currently prone to flooding. The management of this flood hazard and increased risks associated with post development overland flows will be critical. Technical resolutions will be investigated to ensure a place-based solution is developed, which effectively mitigates risk and protects downstream catchments from any future impacts.

### Ideas and opportunities discussed:

- Managing future water and drainage to ensure there are no downstream or offsite impacts post development.
- Explore opportunities for multi-functional wetlands, use of recycled water and implementation of the roof water harvesting scheme were recommended as potential innovations to address drainage challenges in the precinct.
- Prioritise the protection of the Russell Creek corridor and capture runoff before it enters the waterway.
- Maintain the natural formation of Russell Creek where possible, avoiding an overly engineered corridor.
- Elevate the impacts of development on overland flows and drainage of the agricultural land to the north and east.
- Utilise existing flood protection barriers and existing flood breaks, such as the recent upgrades to Boiling Down Road.
- Implement innovative engineering solutions where high-quality built form and environmental outcomes can be achieved. For example, wetlands adjoining Russell Creek and Tozer Reserve may include recreation amenity for future residents, as well as functional habitat corridors.

- Collaborate with local environmental groups to ensure that natural systems are appropriately protected and preserved throughout the development process.

### Other considerations:

VPA is procuring a Drainage Assessment, Roof Water Harvesting Report and Integrated Water Management Assessment to support development within the East of Aberline PSP. This iterative process will provide a thorough understanding of current conditions through flood modelling, and determine the infrastructure upgrades required to support development, while also providing recommendations on future implementation of integrated water initiatives.

Continued collaboration with the Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority and Wannon Water will ensure the precinct effectively responds to the conditions and challenges within the wider catchment and can be effectively serviced.

The community should be made aware of outcomes of any flooding assessment, particularly long-term residents, due to their understanding of existing water conditions and how it has changed over time. This is best placed to occur following completion of a flooding assessment.



## EMERGING THEME 4

### Facilitate the coordinated delivery of utility services and community infrastructure to ensure high amenity outcomes for future

To create a thriving future community within the East of Aberline precinct, key amenities and services need to be planned for early ensuring future demand can be met.

Coordinated service and infrastructure delivery including utilities, public transport, parks, playgrounds, and commercial precincts will be critical to the successful growth of the precinct, as well as establishing an identifiable sense of place for residents.

Similarly, the roll out of community services such as health facilities, recreational precincts, childcare centres, schools, and community centres should be strategically planned based on the pace of development, capacity of existing facilities and accessibility. These services should be designed to ensure the wellbeing of the growing communities without placing strain on existing services in the region.

#### Ideas and opportunities discussed:

- Collaborate with both government and non-government school providers to ensure the roll out of education facilities meet the demands of the precinct as it grows.
- Consider the existing catchments and provision of kindergarten, primary and secondary schools in the wider Warrnambool region to determine appropriate locations for additional facilities within the precinct.
- Co-locate schools with community recreational facilities such as sporting ovals or performing arts facilities where possible, to allow for multiple uses.
- Co-locate kindergarten with any new primary schools in accordance with the State policy.
- Explore the potential location of school facilities nearby features such as Russell Creek or Tozer Reserve to facilitate learning from existing habitats.
- Consider the amenity impacts of existing Horne Road Industrial precinct and avoid development of sensitive community infrastructure near this area.
- Investigate the provision of a larger active recreation precinct which may include a stadium, ovals and associated facilities. The sporting precinct should be accessible via protected walking/ cycling paths or public transport for those without private vehicles.

- Evaluate the likely demand for community facilities extending beyond the PSP.
- Provide opportunity for development of a Major Activity Centre with a large anchor tenant and smaller retail tenancies, as well as smaller scale Neighbourhood Activity Centre.
- Strive for commercial development within walkable residential catchments.
- Collaborate with Department of Transport and Planning to develop efficient public transport networks which connect to essential community facilities and services.
- Understand servicing requirements early, enabling utility providers and authorities appropriately plan and budget for required works.
- Plan holistically in relation to staging and sequencing of development and the associated roll out of services.
- Plan development contributions scheme to ensure infrastructure can be funded in line with development needs.
- Consider the unique needs of different demographic groups within the community, such as families with young children, seniors, and people with disabilities, when planning for community infrastructure and service delivery.
- Ensure that the built environment is accessible and inclusive, with features like barrier-free design, universal design elements, and community spaces that promote social interaction and cohesion.

#### Other considerations:

Technical work will be undertaken to determine any potential adverse impacts of existing land uses such as the Horne Road industrial precinct on future residential development. Any land use compatibility conflicts will be managed through applied planning controls.

Development staging is typically based on demand and where areas can be serviced. The East of Aberline PSP process will consider logical staging, which will be informed by outcomes of the technical investigations currently underway.

In addition, VPA has an updated Utility Servicing Assessment underway and will consult various utility providers to understand existing services and the types of servicing required.

## EMERGING THEME 5

### Protect and enhance the landscape character, biodiversity and environmental values of the area.

The landscape which forms the East of Aberline PSP encompasses significant biodiversity and environmental values which should be protected and enhanced through this development.

The development response should protect the ecological values of the area including biodiversity and native vegetation, particularly within Tozer Reserve and along the Russell Creek corridor.

A holistic approach to the protection and enhancement of the area's landscape values will ensure that the East of Aberline PSP is developed sustainably and in a way that respects the unique character of the area.

#### Ideas and opportunities discussed:

- Develop place-specific strategies to protect and enhance the identified landscape character and biodiversity values.
- Incorporate appropriate landscape and biodiversity design principles in the development of open spaces and public areas.
- Conduct an analysis of Tozer Reserve and Russell Creek to identify the natural systems present and assess their ecological value.
- Establish development buffers around Tozer Reserve to mitigate disturbance and impacts of abutting residential land uses. Road reserves, adjoining walking paths or open space uses may be appropriate land uses within this buffer.
- Implement restrictions or curfews on future domestic animals (particularly cats) to protect native species including insects, reptiles, and birds.
- Protect and conserve existing vegetation, natural features, and waterways as part of the development process.
- Collaborate with local environmental groups to ensure that natural systems are appropriately protected and preserved throughout the development process.
- Create functional green corridors or wildlife habitats to improve biodiversity and connectivity of natural systems within and around the precinct.
- Design for retention of view lines toward key natural features within the precinct.

- Ensure that the East of Aberline precinct is designed to provide a high level of amenity for residents, including safe and attractive streetscapes with high tree canopy cover and planting that reflects native flora of the area.
- Explore the opportunity to impose design guidelines to manage future development outcomes.

#### Other considerations:

VPA is engaging with key community groups in an ongoing manner to inform development of a future plan for the East of Aberline PSP.

A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment has been prepared for the precinct. This assessment identifies landscape and visual characteristics within the precinct, to act as a focus for visual amenity. Maintaining view lines and recognition of these features will provide an ongoing sense of place as the land transforms.



# Next steps

## Vision and purpose

The next step in the East of Aberline PSP process is the vision and purpose stage (refer to Figure 7). This stage will either be undertaken as an online workshop or via an online survey.

All stakeholders including landowners in the precinct will be notified prior to the vision and purpose process and invited to participate.

The purpose of the vision and purpose stage is to provide feedback on the initial themes which have resulted from pitching and agree on a shared vision for the precinct going forward.

Further information on the vision and purpose stage will be provided to participants in the coming weeks.

## Technical reports

Various technical studies have been commissioned to support early planning for East of Aberline to identify land capability constraints and support early planning decisions.

### Phase 1 technical reports include:

- Land Capability Assessment (i.e., contamination, geology, hydrology)
- Arboriculture Assessment
- Flora and Fauna Assessment (i.e., biodiversity)
- Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment and Cultural Values Assessment
- Historical Heritage Assessment
- Adverse Amenity Assessment
- Bushfire Risk Assessment
- Drainage and Flooding Assessment
- Utility Servicing Assessment
- Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

Two phases of technical reports will be completed for the East of Aberline Precinct. Phase 2 technical reports will be undertaken following the phase 1 technical reports.

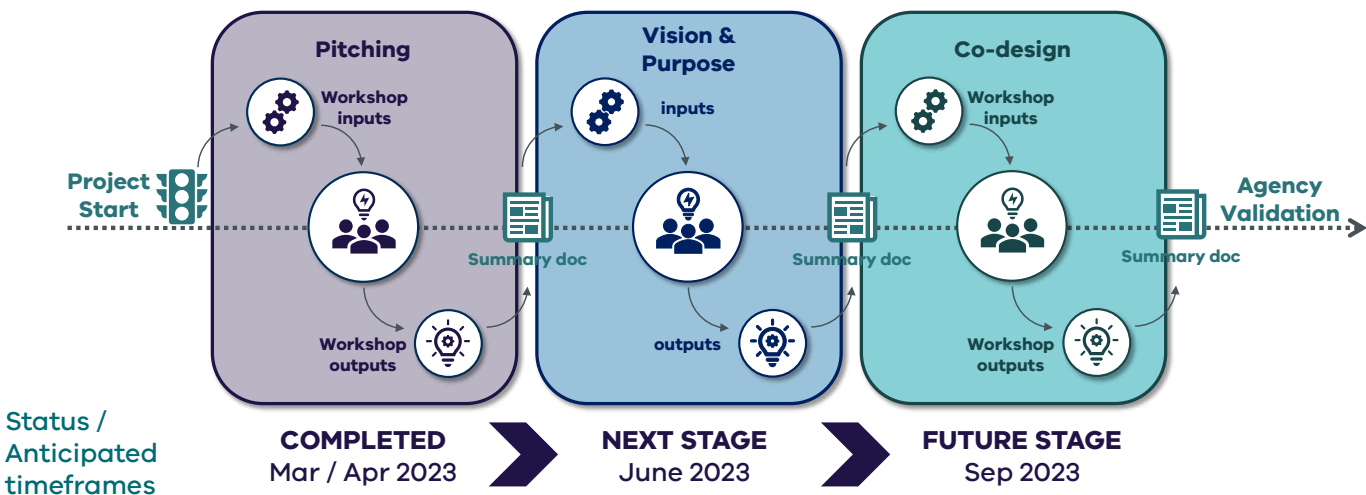


Figure 9 East of Aberline planning process overview and anticipated timeframes

PSP2.0

VICTORIA  
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Victorian Planning Authority