

PSP2.0

VICTORIA
State
Government

Ballarat North

PRECINCT STRUCTURE PLAN

Co-design Summary

OCTOBER 2024

vpa
Victorian Planning Authority

Acknowledgement of Traditional Custodians

The land, skies and waters that make up the Ballarat North precinct and its surrounds are Wadawurrung Country. 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 2024, there are 12 RAPs with decision-making responsibilities for approximately 78 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 involves a range of different stakeholders including State Government agencies, local government, developers, landowners and community groups. Strategic planning for Aboriginal cultural heritage involves a range of different stakeholders including State Government agencies, local government, developers, landowners and community groups.

Accessibility

The Victorian Planning Authority is committed to ensuring that all persons, including those with disabilities, can access information about our key planning projects, are able to participate in community engagement and consultation activities and have access to our premises.

This document has been optimised for compatibility with screen readers. We welcome any feedback you have especially where you feel we are not compliant or could provide better accessibility. If you would like us to send you a printed or electronic copy of this or any VPA publication, please contact us at accessibility@vpa.vic.gov.au

© Victorian Planning Authority, 2024

Level 25, 35 Collins Street, Melbourne VIC 3000
03 9651 9600 | vpa.vic.gov.au

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.

Contents

1	Introduction	5
1.1	What is the VPA's role?	5
1.2	The PSP 2.0 process	5
1.3	Purpose of this document	6
2	Co-design engagement	7
2.1	Background	7
2.2	Emerging vision and themes	7
2.3	Co-design workshop	8
2.3.1	Overview	8
2.3.2	Workshop format	8
3	Summary of the co-design workshop	10
Activity 1	Activity centres & community facilities	11
A3.1	Activity prompt	11
A3.2	Place Shaper Kit results – activity centres and community facilities	12
A3.3	Interactive discussion results	15
A3.4	Online poll results	15
A3.5	Discussion	16
A3.6	Implementation	17
A3.7	Further investigation	17
Activity 2	Education	18
A3.1	Activity prompt	18
A3.2	Place Shaper Kit results – education	19
A3.3	Discussion	22
Activity 3	Active open space (sports reserves and pavilions)	24
A3.1	Activity prompt	24
A3.2	Place Shaper Kit results – active open space	25
A3.3	Interactive discussion results	26
A3.4	Discussion	26
A3.5	Implementation	27
A3.6	Further investigation	27
Activity 4	Passive open space & transport connections	28
A3.1	Activity prompt	28
A3.2	Place Shaper Kit results – passive open space & transport connections	29
A3.3	Discussion	31
A3.4	Implementation	32
A3.5	Further investigation	32
4	Draft place-based plan & next steps	33
4.1	Neighbourhood activity centre	33
4.2	Local activity centres	33
4.3	Community facilities	33

4.4	Government primary schools	34
4.5	Government secondary schools	34
4.6	Independent school	34
4.7	Active open space	34
4.8	Passive open space	35
4.9	Transport connections	35
4.10	Investigation area	35
5	Appendices	37
Appendix 1	Workshop table results – activity outputs	37
Appendix 2	Activity sheets	45
Appendix 3	Summary of technical work	47
Appendix 4	Reference maps	49

Figures

Figure 1	The PSP 2.0 process	5
Figure 2	Base plan used at the co-design workshop	9
Figure 3	Place Shaper Kit results – neighbourhood activity centre	12
Figure 4	Place Shaper Kit results – local activity centres	13
Figure 5	Place Shaper Kit results – community facilities	14
Figure 6	Online poll results – preferred community facilities	15
Figure 7	Place Shaper Kit results – government primary schools	19
Figure 8	Place Shaper Kit results – government secondary schools	20
Figure 9	Place Shaper Kit results – independent schools	21
Figure 10	Place Shaper Kit results – active open space	25
Figure 11	Place Shaper Kit results – passive open space	29
Figure 12	Place Shaper Kit results – transport connections	30
Figure 13	Draft place-based plan	36

Plans

Plan 1	Regional Context Map	49
Plan 2	Aerial	50
Plan 3	Council Owned Land	51
Plan 4	Property Number	52
Plan 5	Potential Heritage Sites	53
Plan 6	Potentially Contaminated Land and Amenity Buffers	54
Plan 7	Trees and Native Vegetation	55
Plan 8	Key Views	56
Plan 9	Internal Views	57
Plan 10	Catchment Plan and Drainage Schematic	58

1 Introduction

1.1 What is the VPA's role?

The Minister for Planning has appointed the VPA as the planning authority to lead the preparation of the *Ballarat North Precinct Structure Plan* (PSP) from conception to finalisation.

Throughout the project, we will work closely with the City of Ballarat, Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation, State Government agencies, landowners and the local community to ensure the plan considers their input.

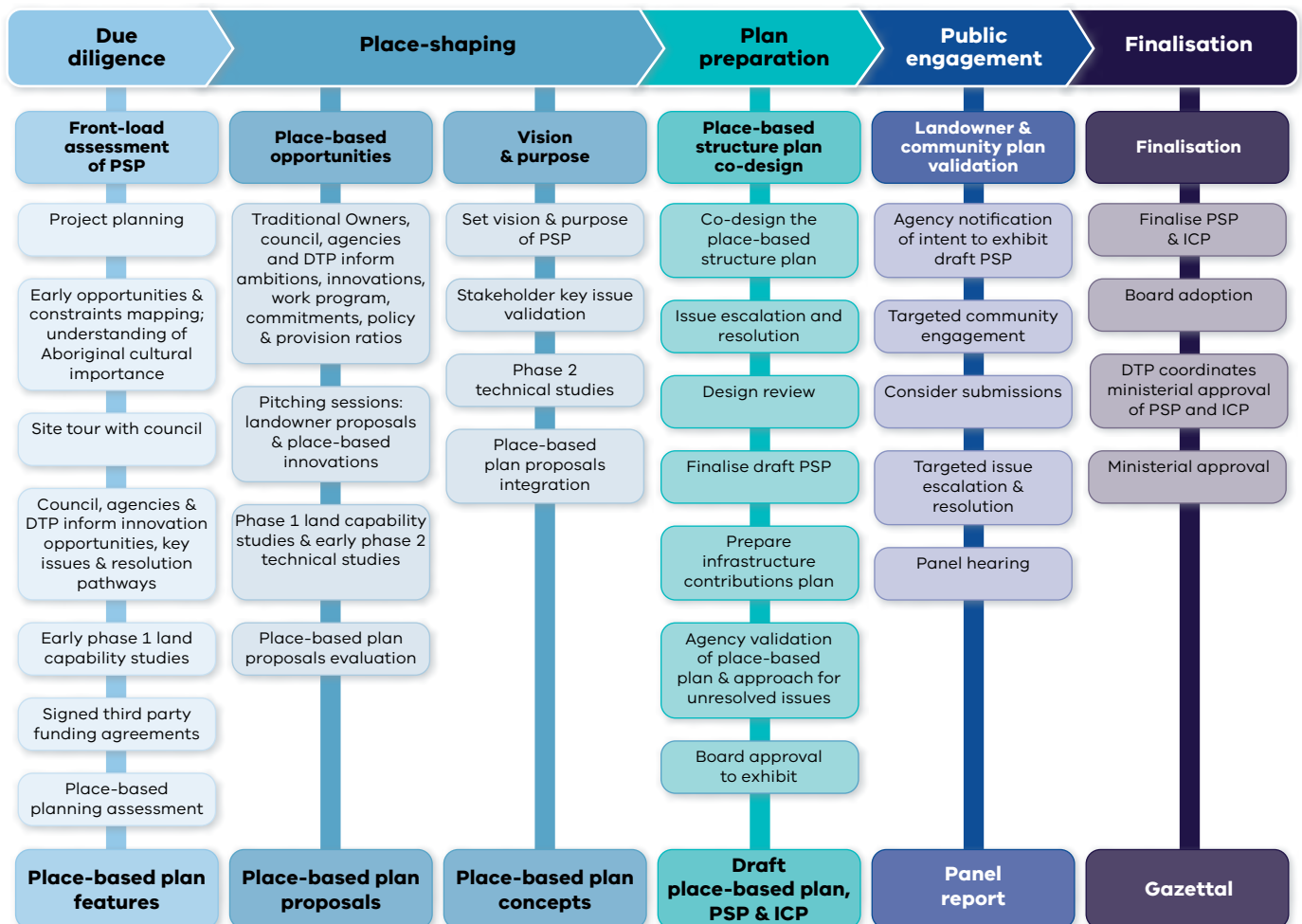
The role of planning authority involves preparation of a PSP and development contributions plan (DCP) as well as preparing a planning scheme amendment to implement the PSP.

1.2 The PSP 2.0 process

The PSP 2.0 process was developed through VPA's [Precinct Structure Planning Guidelines: New Communities in Victoria](#) (2021). It encourages an innovative and site-responsive approach. It enables meaningful collaboration between stakeholders, guided by a clearly articulated place-based vision, that provides a mission statement for the PSP.

Early collaboration and co-design ensure key issues and possibilities for their resolution can be properly considered. This supports the goal to engage on the PSP and to embed relevant opportunities and ideas in the preparation phases.

Figure 1: The PSP 2.0 process



1.3 Purpose of this document

This document is a summary of the information captured during the co-design workshop (workshop) for the Core Area of the Ballarat North PSP held in-person in July 2024. The material covered in this summary document provides the basis to develop a high-level draft place-based plan, which is included at the end of this report.



2 Co-design engagement

2.1 Background

The PSP 2.0 process represents a commitment to provide better opportunities for collaboration with precinct landowners and agency stakeholders. The PSP preparation process offers various opportunities for engagement to best capture and reflect stakeholder ideas and concepts for the future precinct. Previous engagement sessions held between the VPA and stakeholders include:

Pitching sessions, July 2023

- An opportunity for stakeholders to pitch concepts and innovations for the precinct. The [Pitching Summary](#) is available on the VPA website.

Vision and Purpose survey, December 2023

- An opportunity to form a clear vision of what the PSP aims to achieve in the future and how we will get there. The [Vision and Purpose Summary](#) is available on the VPA website.

The ideas and feedback from the pitching sessions and vision and purpose survey have informed the emerging vision and themes of the co-design workshop.

2.2 Emerging vision and themes

The Ballarat North PSP envisions a **thriving residential community** shaped by a combination of **unique landscapes, rich local heritage**, and aspirations for a more **connected and sustainable community**, planned around a cohesive **network of green spaces**.

The **Ballarat Town Commons** will remain protected, along with **Mount Rowan**, which stands as a significant landmark and represents the **cultural history of the Wadawurrung people**. Both will be preserved for their **natural beauty** for future generations and will integrate elements of **intangible and tangible cultural heritage** in partnership with Traditional Owners.

Education and community hubs will emerge within the residential areas, emphasising the importance of **community and learning**. Housing will cater to a variety of needs and preferences, with a focus on delivering **diverse housing types** for a wide range of households.

Green links featuring trees and pedestrian-friendly routes will be central to the design of the neighbourhood. This will promote internal and external **connections to new schools, community facilities, playgrounds, and other amenities** to deliver the essential infrastructure that the community needs.

Infrastructure development will prioritise **safe roads, public transport, cycling routes, and pedestrian routes**. This will ensure effective connectivity within and outside of the precinct.

Environmental initiatives will include the **conservation of native vegetation**, improvement and **protection of Burrumbeet Creek**, advanced **stormwater management** to protect and manage flood risks and **improve drainage** in the precinct.

Sustainability will be a guiding principle, with **environmentally-conscious subdivisions**, **solar energy** adoption, and **eco-friendly designs** at the forefront.

2.3 Co-design workshop

The co-design workshop focussed on the Core Area of the precinct and aimed to:

- Highlight the emerging vision for the PSP that was developed through earlier stakeholder consultation
- Provide an update on the status of the project and summarise the background technical studies
- Get participants to consider the different opportunities and constraints of the area based on the technical analysis completed
- Create a space where stakeholders (agencies and precinct landowners) could collaborate
- Identify stakeholders' motivations and determine areas of agreement and disagreement between different parties
- Build partnerships to achieve the PSP vision and purpose.

The key outcome of the Ballarat North PSP co-design workshop was to develop a high-level draft place-based plan that applied the emerging vision, and the opportunities and constraints identified in the background technical studies.

2.3.1 Overview

The co-design workshop was held in person at The Goods Shed Ballarat on 17 July 2024.

Approximately 62 stakeholders attended the workshop, including VPA staff, representatives from the City of Ballarat, landowners and:

- Department of Transport and Planning
- Department of Education
- Central Highlands Water
- Diocese of Ballarat Catholic Education Limited
- Ballarat Grammar, and
- Victoria State Emergency Service.

2.3.2 Workshop format

A workshop primer pack was developed by the VPA and provided to participants before the workshop, which included:

- A summary of the project and process so far
- A summary of the technical work undertaken to date.

At the workshop, participants were organised into small groups with a mix of six to eight different stakeholders per table.

The workshop explored the spatial locations of various land uses typically depicted on a place-based plan. The groups worked to 'build up' the place-based plan, through four key activities:

Activity 1 – Activity centres and community facilities

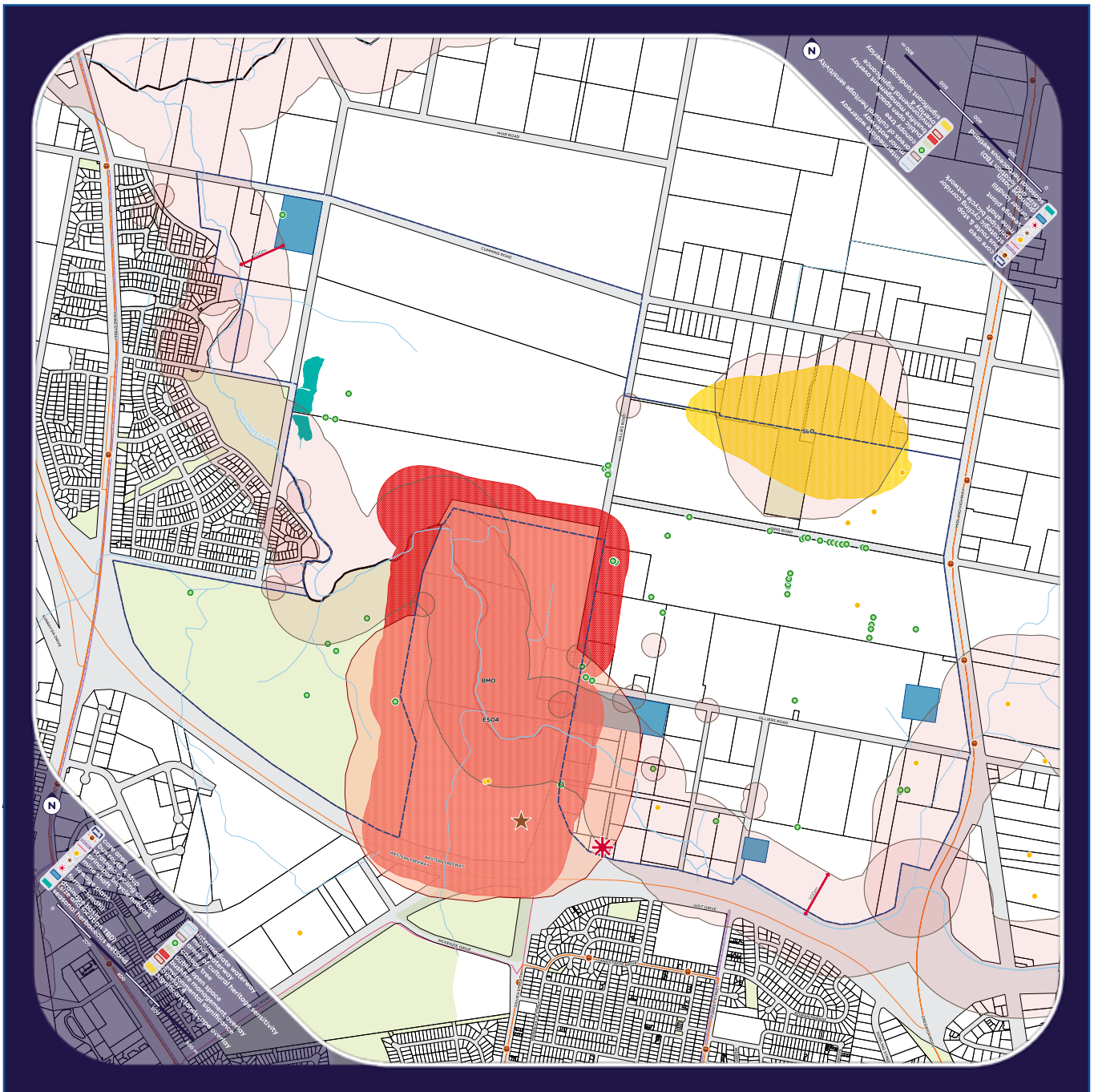
Activity 2 – Education

Activity 3 – Active open space

Activity 4 – Passive open space & transport connections

With guidance from group facilitators, stakeholders used the VPA's Place Shaper Kit to visually convey ideas and opinions over a base plan (refer to [Figure 2](#) overleaf), with table scribes taking notes to ensure all views were captured.

Figure 2: Base plan used at the co-design workshop



Participants were asked to consider where various land uses should be located to achieve relevant performance targets from the PSP Guidelines.

As part of interactive discussion and online poll activities, participants were also asked to consider more subjective elements of place through questions such as:

What characteristics does a well-functioning town centre have?

What community facilities do you think should be available to future residents?

What makes a good open space?

3 Summary of the co-design workshop

The co-design workshop focussed on the Core Area.

This part of the document focuses on the key themes and corresponding ideas discussed.

The workshop findings are summarised and grouped based on the workshop activities identified above in [2.3.2 Workshop format](#).

Each section is structured as follows:

Activity prompt

Outlines what aspects of the PSP participants were asked to consider in the activity.

Place Shaper Kit results

Maps out the location of land uses proposed by each table. The corresponding table numbers are identified on the map.

Discussion

Summarises the feedback from all tables for each activity, highlighting the key agreed aspects and points of difference across tables.

Implementation

Notes how the results and discussion will be considered by the VPA.

Further investigation

Notes the ideas and potential issues needing further investigation by the VPA and/or other stakeholders.

These findings are high level only and will be further refined with further technical studies and input from agency stakeholders in the process of developing the place-based plan. Outcomes from further investigations will also be considered in the next stages of preparing the PSP.

Full results from each table at the workshop are available in [Appendix 1 Workshop table results – activity outputs](#) of this report.

ACTIVITY 1: Activity centres & community facilities

A1.1 Activity prompt

Participants were asked to consider where activity centres and community centres should be located. The background studies identified the need for:

- **3× activity centres:**
 - » 1× neighbourhood activity centre: 4.6–4.9 hectares
 - » 1× local activity centre: 0.8–0.9 hectares
 - » 1× potential local activity centre: 1.0–1.1 hectares

Note: This centre could be in the expanded or core area.
- **1× level 1 community centre:** 0.8 hectares
- **1× level 2 community centre:** 1.0 hectares

Participants were advised of the relevant Performance Targets of the PSP Guidelines that will need to be achieved in the place-based plan:

TARGET 18

The location of dwellings should achieve the following accessibility targets in relation to education and community facilities:

- 80 per cent of dwellings within 800 metres of a community facility.
- 80 per cent of dwellings within 800 metres of a health facility (private or public).

TARGET 19

80–90 per cent of dwellings should be located within 800 metres of an activity centre.

A1.2 Place Shaper Kit results – activity centres and community facilities

Figure 3: Place Shaper Kit results – neighbourhood activity centre



In summary:

- Most tables agreed that a neighbourhood activity centre should be located centrally.

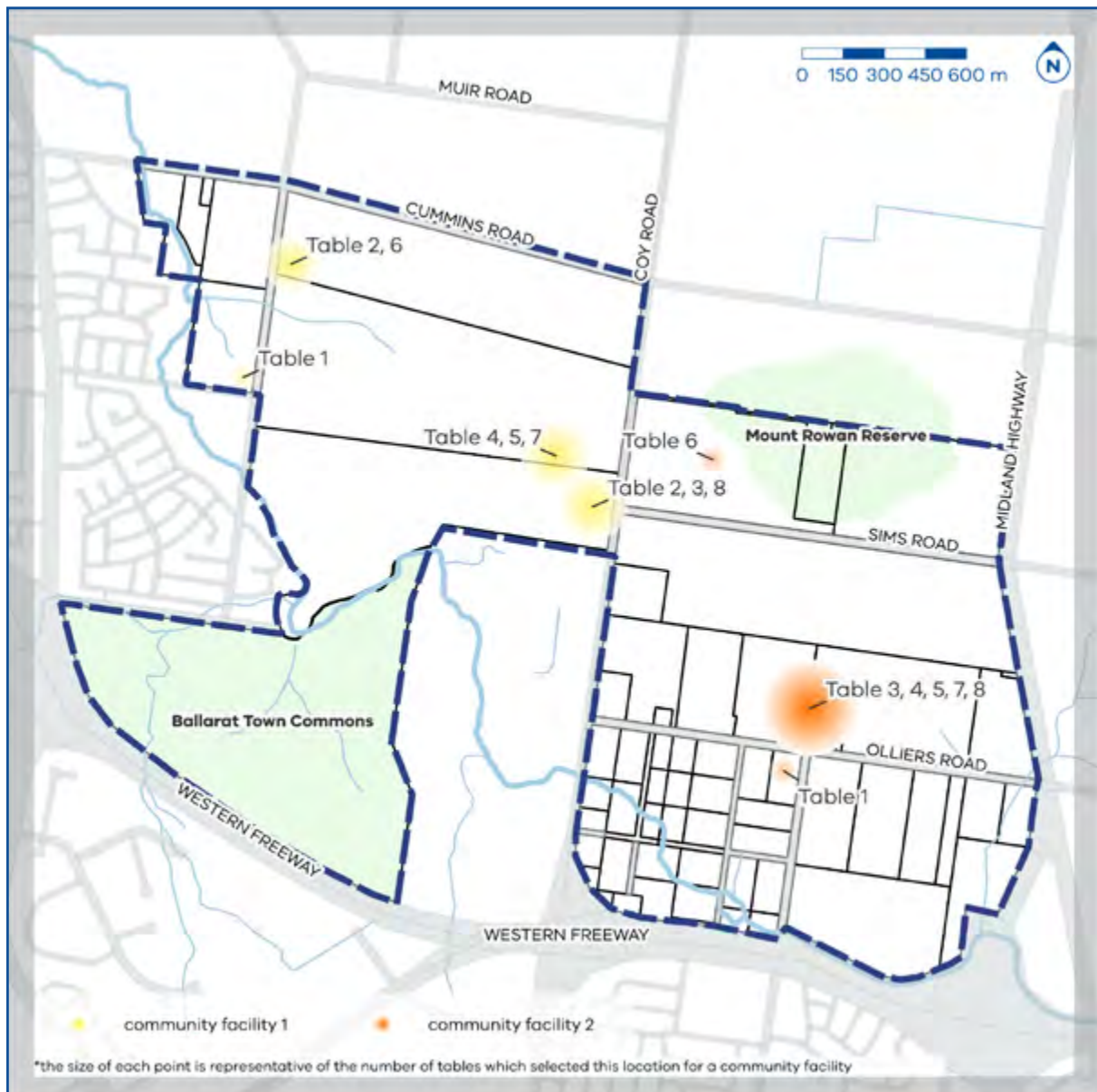
Figure 4: Place Shaper Kit results – local activity centres



In summary:

- Most tables agreed that a local activity centre should be located in the south-east.
- There was less consensus about where a north-east local activity centre should be located.

Figure 5: Place Shaper Kit results – community facilities



In summary:

- Most tables agreed that one community facility should be located in the east and another west of Gillies Road.
- While there was consensus on the location of a community facility in the east, there was less consensus about where the community facility west of Gillies Road should be located.

A1.3 Interactive discussion results

During Activity 1, participants were also asked to consider the subjective qualities of a town centre via the following question:

What characteristics does a well-functioning town centre have?

The following key characteristics emerged from participants' responses:

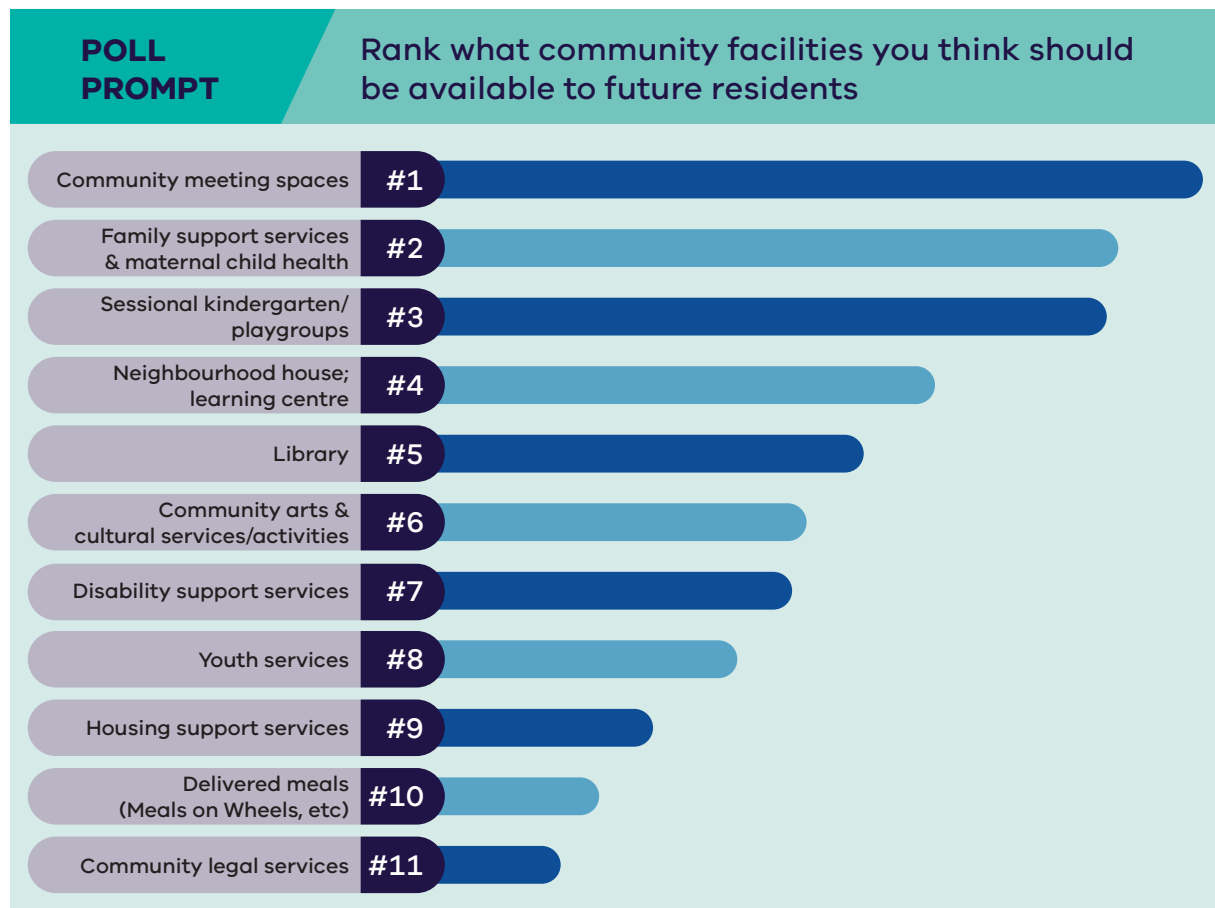
- A sense of neighbourhood character and respect for the heritage of the area
- Pedestrian friendly/walkable environment
- Supported by medium density dwellings and diverse housing typologies
- Includes a community gathering place
- Provides day-to-day uses/activities (such as groceries, bakery, bank, healthcare etc.)
- Supports ancillary uses such as entertainment and health services.

Full results from the interactive discussion are available in [Appendix 1](#) of this report.

A1.4 Online poll results

During Activity 1, participants were also given the opportunity to rank their preferred community facility for the PSP. The results are shown below.

Figure 6: Online poll results – preferred community facilities



A1.5 Discussion

Key agreed aspects

- 1. Central location of neighbourhood activity centre:** Most tables agreed that having the large neighbourhood activity centre located centrally within the precinct, particularly near the intersection of Gillies Road and Sims Road, would optimise accessibility. Co-locating activity centres with community facilities was also highlighted as an opportunity to enhance usability and convenience.
- 2. Location of local activity centre – eastern:** The location of the eastern local activity centre garnered the most support.
- 3. Location of one community facility to the east:** There was a consensus that at least one community facility should be located east of Gillies Road.
- 4. Co-location of schools and community facilities:** There was a consensus that community facilities should be co-located with either schools or the activity centres to create hub of activity and reduce the need for multiple trips.
- 5. Transport and connectivity:** Enhancing active transport options (walking and cycling) was seen as crucial. The Strategic Cycling Corridors are noted as important elements for connecting the precinct. Additionally, improved public transport and road connectivity, especially in linking the precinct with surrounding areas, was widely supported.
- 6. Diverse housing options:** A diverse mix of housing types catering to different demographics was supported. This diversity is seen as essential for creating inclusive communities, particularly around activity centres.
- 7. Preservation of heritage and natural features:** There is an understanding that natural features such as Burrumbeet Creek should be preserved and incorporated into the overall design of the PSP. Buildings with heritage values should also be preserved although not necessarily as community facilities.

Key differences

- 1. Location of local activity centre – western:** There was no clear consensus for the best location for the western local activity centre (see [Figure 4](#)). For example, some stakeholders preferred it within the core area, while others advocated for positioning it in the potential expanded area.
- 2. Use of heritage buildings for new development:** There were differing views on how much heritage preservation should influence the placement and development of new facilities. Some suggested more integration while others advocate for new, purpose-built structures.
- 3. Infrastructure provision and staging:** While there was a general agreement on the need for enhanced infrastructure, there were differing opinions on prioritisation, particularly regarding the timing and funding of transport infrastructure including crossings of the Western Freeway.
- 4. Viability of small retail spaces:** Concerns were raised about the sustainability of small retail spaces, with some participants unsure of their ability to thrive in the long term.

A1.6 Implementation

The VPA recognises that location of a larger neighbourhood activity centre centrally within the PSP is a good opportunity to provide a highly visible and accessible location for precinct residents.

Co-location of community facilities with schools and/or activity centres to create convenient, walkable access to community hubs, basic needs and to achieve optimal land use efficiency is supported by the VPA, consistent with planning policy and the PSP Guidelines.

Higher density housing around amenities including activity centres and community facilities are supported by the VPA both to achieve the relevant PSP guideline targets and enable diversity of housing typologies throughout the precinct.

A1.7 Further investigation

Appropriate guidance for heritage buildings will be considered by the VPA in consultation with affected landowners. The VPA will continue to investigate the potential to use heritage buildings as community facilities subject to agreement with relevant stakeholders.

Connectivity, public transport and active transport opportunities will continue to be explored by the VPA as part of the upcoming transport assessment for the precinct.

Feedback from the co-design workshop will be considered as part of further technical work.

ACTIVITY 2: Education

A2.1 Activity prompt

Participants were asked to consider where schools should be located. The background studies (including discussions prior to co-design with the Department of Education) identified the need for:

- **2× government primary schools**
- **1× government secondary school**
- **1 or 2× independent schools (primary/secondary)**

The school provisions assume an estimated 18,726 future residents in the core area. Participants were advised of the relevant Performance Targets of the PSP Guidelines that will need to be achieved in the place-based plan:

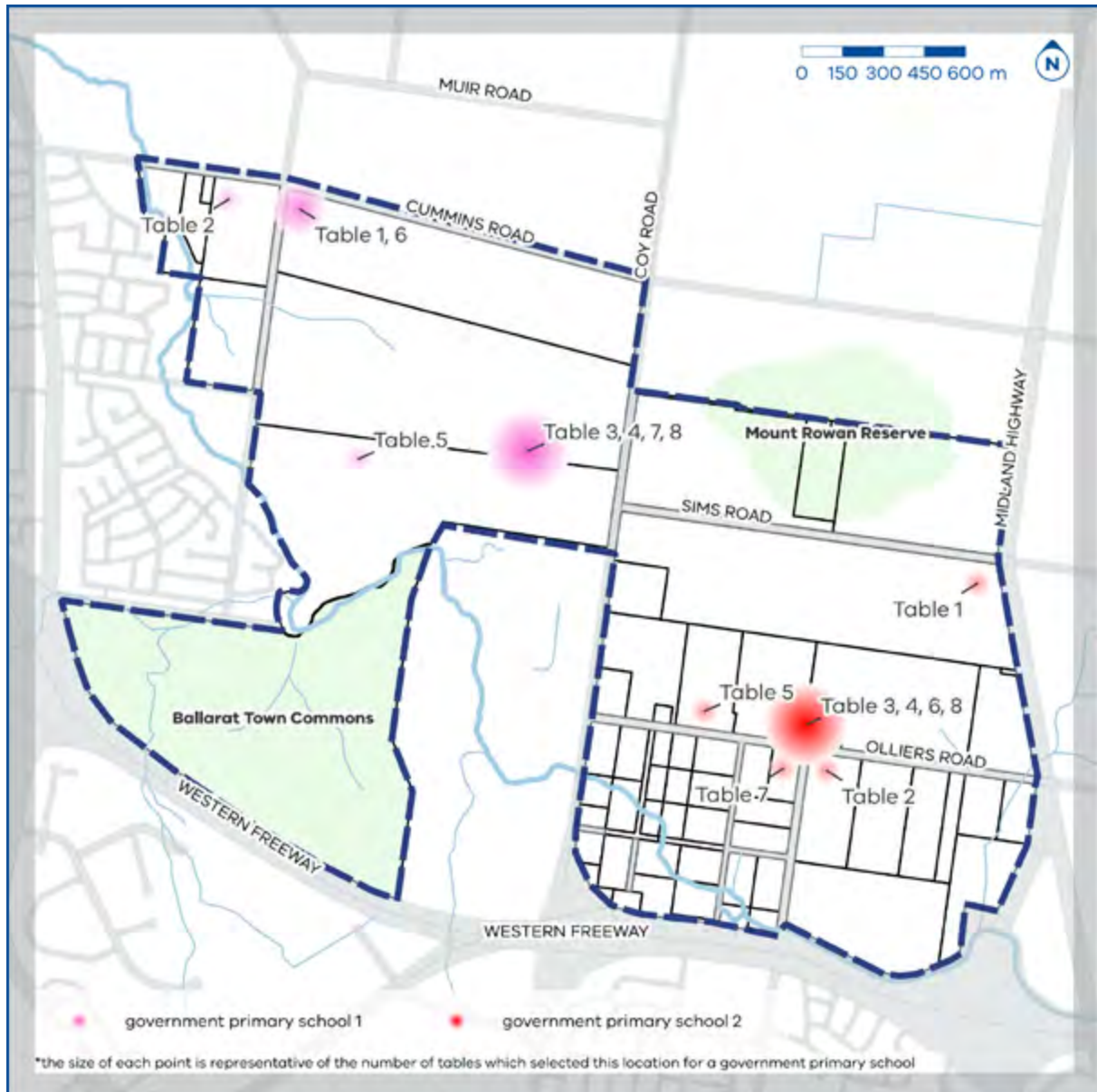
TARGET 18

The location of dwellings should achieve the following accessibility targets in relation to education and community facilities:

- 70 per cent of dwellings within 800 metres of a government primary school
- 100 per cent of dwellings within 3,200 metres of a government secondary school.

A2.2 Place Shaper Kit results – education

Figure 7: Place Shaper Kit results – government primary schools



In summary:

- Most tables agreed that one primary school should be located in the east and another west of Gillies Road.
- There was less consensus about the exact location of these schools.

Figure 8: Place Shaper Kit results – government secondary schools



In summary:

- Although the exact location of a government secondary school did not have a consensus, most tables veered towards locating this school to the north-west.

Figure 9: Place Shaper Kit results – independent schools



In summary:

- Most tables agreed that an independent school should be located along Sims Road in the east, mirroring the location of the existing Ballarat Grammar School.

A2.3 Discussion

Key agreed aspects:

1. **Need for schools:** There was general agreement that multiple primary schools would be necessary to cater to the growing population. The specific number of schools suggested varied, but the need for multiple educational institutions was clear.

The necessity for secondary schools was acknowledged, though opinions on the exact location varied.
2. **General location of government primary schools:** Many tables agreed that primary schools should be located to the east and west of the precinct, however, there was less of an agreement as to their exact location.
3. **Location of government secondary school:** Most tables located the government secondary school within the western portion of the precinct (see [Figure 8](#)).
4. **Co-locations of schools with amenities:** Many tables agreed on the importance of locating schools (both primary and secondary) near community facilities and activity centres. This was viewed as beneficial for creating a cohesive and accessible community. Co-location of primary schools with kindergartens and other community facilities was also favoured for convenience and efficiency.
5. **Transport and accessibility:** There was consensus across tables on the need for good transport links to schools, including safe pedestrian and cycling routes. This would help to encourage walking and cycling as a means of reducing traffic congestion around schools.

The importance of avoiding main roads for school locations was highlighted, particularly for safety reasons.

Key differences

1. **Exact location of government primary schools:** There was no consensus on the exact locations of government primary schools (see [Figure 7](#)). Various tables had different views on whether schools should be centralised, co-located or spread out across the precinct.

The proximity to existing schools like those on Forest Street was raised; some tables recommended this be considered to ensure the catchment areas for schools in the PSP do not overlap with existing schools near the PSP. However, in general, each table located at least one government primary school within the western and eastern portions of the precinct.
2. **Co-location of primary, secondary and independent schools:** There were mixed opinions about the co-location of government schools and independent schools. Some stakeholders favoured it for efficiency, while others raised concerns about traffic safety when multiple schools are co-located.
3. **Timing of school development:** Differences arose regarding the timing of school development relative to residential development. Some stakeholders recommended early provision of schools to meet demand, while others suggested that residential development should precede school construction to avoid land being unused for extended periods.
4. **Demand for independent schools:** Some tables questioned the need for additional independent schools considering Ballarat Grammar already owns land within the core area and recommended the expanded area as a more suitable located for additional independent schools.

- 5. Integration with existing schools:** The potential use of existing schools in nearby areas like Wendouree was debated. While some saw value in leveraging these facilities, others felt that the lack of connections (such as flyovers across the freeway) limited the precinct's access to existing schools.

Unique considerations

- The role of topography and environmental factors (e.g., flood-prone areas) in determining school locations was mentioned, particularly in terms of avoiding problematic sites.
- Integration of open spaces and ensuring that schools did not occupy the most valuable land was also discussed.

Implementation

The VPA considers that a government secondary school should be located in the north-west, co-located with active open space, a local activity centre and a Government primary school to enable a community hub to be established. The VPA also supports the second government primary school being co-located with supporting amenities in the south-east of the precinct.

Topographical and environmental constraints are also recognised as a constraint for development of the PSP overall, but particularly for sensitive uses such as schools.

Further investigations

Further consultation and refinement of school locations with stakeholders, including landowners and the Department of Education, will be undertaken by the VPA through the upcoming agency validation and public consultation process.

ACTIVITY 3: Active open space (sports reserves and pavilions)

A3.1 Activity prompt

Participants were asked to consider where the active open space should be located. The background studies, including discussions prior to co-design with the City of Ballarat identified the need for:

- **2× active open space reserves:** 8–10 hectares to meet the minimum provision of 5–7 per cent of the net developable area (NDA) for active open space

Note: At the time of the workshop the potential of Howe Street Reserve (4.3 hectares) to be an active open space reserve was not known. The above provisions assume the Howe Street Reserve would not be developed as active open space.

Participants were advised of the relevant Performance Targets of the PSP Guidelines that will need to be achieved in the place-based plan:

TARGET 11

For residential areas, set aside 5–7 per cent of NDA for sports field reserves (i.e. active open space).

TARGET 12

Set aside a minimum of 1 hectare of land for a sports reserve to be located within 800 metres' safe walkable distance of each dwelling.

A3.2 Place Shaper Kit results – active open space

Figure 10: Place Shaper Kit results – active open space



In summary:

- Most tables placed at least one active open space in the east and west of the precinct. However, there was less of a consensus on the exact locations.

A3.3 Interactive discussion results

During Activity 3 participants were asked to consider the subjective qualities of active open spaces and passive open spaces via the following question:

What makes a good open space?

The following key characteristics emerged from participants' responses:

- Accessible facilities that cater to all ages and community needs.
- Should have passive surveillance, be well-lit and should feel safe at night.
- Accessible via walking and active transport and well-connected to the surrounds via green and active links.
- Co-located with community hubs of activity such as schools and community facilities.
- Features canopy trees, attractive landscaping and aesthetically pleasing urban design.
- Well-serviced by amenities such as:
 - » drinking fountains
 - » barbeque areas
 - » bins
 - » bicycle parking
 - » shaded seating areas
 - » dog off-leash areas
 - » exercise stations.

A3.4 Discussion

Key agreed aspects

- 1. Co-location with schools and community facilities:** Most tables agreed on the importance of co-locating active open spaces with schools and community facilities. This approach was seen as beneficial for shared use, accessibility, and efficient land use.
- 2. Use of flood-prone and constrained land:** There was general support that flood-prone or constrained lands should be used for active open spaces, as these areas are less suitable for sensitive residential or commercial development. It was raised that utilising flood-prone land for sports reserves and open spaces could increase efficiency of land use.
- 3. Distribution and accessibility:** Ensuring even distribution of active open spaces across the precinct to cater to various communities was emphasised. The aim to make these spaces accessible to residents by placing them within walking distance or close to activity centres was generally supported across tables.
- 4. Integration with natural features:** There was consensus that it would be beneficial to integrate active open spaces with natural features like the Burrumbeet Creek and wetlands in the precinct. This would help preserve the natural environment, enhance the aesthetic and recreational value of the spaces, and afford future residents greater opportunity to interact with the natural environment in the precinct.

Key differences

1. **Size and number of active open spaces:** There were some differing opinions on the size and number of active open spaces required. While some stakeholders favoured fewer, larger spaces to serve as regional facilities, others advocated for multiple smaller spaces spread across the precinct to better serve local needs.
2. **Specific locations:** Although two locational clusters emerged across tables in the south-east and west (see [Figure 10](#)), there was no clear consensus of the exact locations of active open spaces. Some tables suggested specific locations near existing schools or in the north-west of the precinct, while others raised concerns about topographical constraints, such as flooding and drainage issues, which could affect these sites.
3. **Co-location with passive open spaces:** While co-locating active and passive open spaces was generally seen as beneficial, some stakeholders questioned the practicality of this approach, especially in areas with existing constraints or where the focus should be solely on active sports facilities.
4. **Management and usage:** There were differing opinions on the management and year-round use of these spaces. Some stakeholders raised concerns about how effectively these areas could be used outside of peak sports seasons, especially in flood-prone areas.
5. **Impact of growth and future demand:** Differences in opinions arose regarding the future demand for active open spaces based on the precinct's growth. Some participants questioned the need for large regional facilities, while others stressed the importance of planning for future population growth and demand.

A3.5 Implementation

The emerging pattern across the tables highlights that most participants located active open space reserves in the western and south eastern areas of the precinct, creating two notable 'clusters'. The VPA will explore the optimal locations for active open space generally within the clusters shown in [Figure 10](#), co-located with complementary uses and amenities.

A3.6 Further investigation

Further consideration of the appropriateness of locating the active open space reserves within land subject to inundation and other site constraints will be explored by the VPA. Although active open spaces may be placed within certain constrained areas, the VPA must also consider factors such as cultural heritage, the potential impacts of landfill gas buffers, and other relevant issues.

Therefore, the inclusion of a land use in the draft place-based plan does not guarantee its presence in the final approved version. Further assessment will be necessary before any decisions are finalised.

The VPA will continue to investigate the future land use of the Howe Street Reserve. If there is no certainty on the future or timing of the Howe Street Reserve, the active open space provision will need to be considered as part of planning of the core area of the PSP.

ACTIVITY 4: Passive open space & transport connections

A4.1 Activity prompt

Participants were asked to consider where local parks should be located and where transport connections should be prioritised. The background studies, including discussions prior to co-design with the City of Ballarat, identified the need for:

- **A combination of smaller local parks and medium order parks** (2.5–4.0 hectares) to meet the minimum provision of 3–5 per cent of NDA (around 10–11 hectares in total).

Participants were advised of the relevant Performance Targets of the PSP Guidelines that will need to be achieved in the place-based plan:

TARGET 11

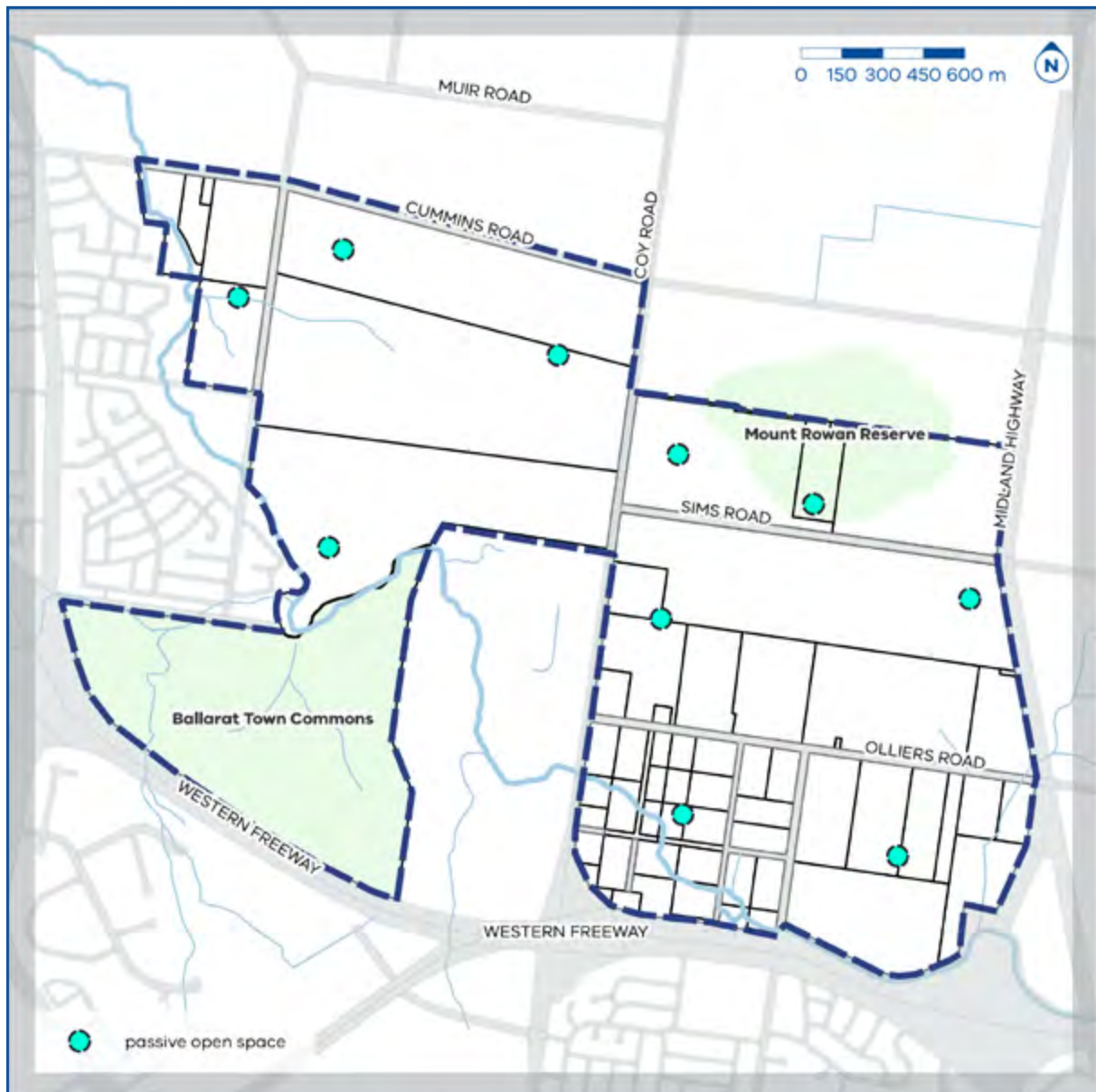
For residential areas, set aside 3–5 per cent of NDA for local parks.

TARGET 12

Locate a local park within a 400 metres safe walkable distance of each dwelling.

A4.2 Place Shaper Kit results – passive open space & transport connections

Figure 11: Place Shaper Kit results – passive open space



Note: Each point was selected by three or more tables as a potential location for a passive open space.

Figure 12: Place Shaper Kit results – transport connections



A4.3 Discussion

Key agreed aspects

- 1. Distribution and accessibility:** Most tables agreed that local parks and passive open spaces should be evenly distributed throughout the precinct. Walkability and proximity to community hubs, such as schools and activity centres, were emphasized as key factors for effective park placement.
- 2. Connectivity:** There was a consensus on the importance of connecting parks and open spaces through a network of linear parks, walking paths, and bike lanes. This connectivity would not only promote active transportation but also enhance the usability of the parks.
- 3. Integration with natural features:** Stakeholders largely agreed on the value of integrating parks with natural features such as the Burrumbeet Creek and wetlands. This approach was seen as beneficial for both preserving natural environments, enhancing the aesthetic and recreational appeal of the precinct and afford future residents a greater opportunity to interact with the nature environment in the precinct.
- 4. Flexible use of space:** Several tables highlighted the need for flexibility in the use of passive open spaces. Spaces should cater to a variety of activities, including playgrounds, walking paths, and community gathering areas. This flexibility would ensure that the parks meet diverse community needs.

Key differences

- 1. Size and number of parks:** While some participants favoured larger parks, others advocated for smaller, more numerous parks. Discussion centred on whether to prioritise fewer, larger regional parks or more frequent, smaller local parks.
- 2. Specific locations:** There were differing opinions on the exact locations of parks. Some stakeholders proposed specific locations near existing amenities or natural features, while others were concerned about the impact of existing site conditions such as flood-prone areas or existing infrastructure, which could complicate park placement.
- 3. Co-location with other facilities:** Although many agreed on the co-location of parks with schools or activity centres, some stakeholders expressed concerns about overcrowding or the potential for certain facilities to dominate the use of these spaces. For example, there were mixed views on whether passive open spaces should be integrated with active sports areas.
- 4. Environmental constraints:** The management of environmentally constrained lands, such as flood zones or areas with waterway purposes, led to different views. While some participants saw these areas as opportunities for passive open spaces, others were concerned about their usability and maintenance.
- 5. Design principles:** The approach to locating parks varied, with some stakeholders advocating for unique, varied park designs that avoid a 'cookie-cutter' approach, while others preferred a more standardised layout to ensure consistency across the precinct.

A4.4 Implementation

The approximate locations of local parks consistent proposed by tables during the workshop are shown in [Figure 10](#). Generally, local parks should be distributed throughout the PSP to ensure effective coverage of catchments to enable residents to have access to parks within a short distance from homes.

Noting that precinct structure plans are high-level and do not provide detailed design guidance for individual local parks, it is acknowledged that the exact location and shape of local parks is subject to the 'generally in accordance' principle and may shift during preparation of subdivision plans.

The VPA will explore inclusion of PSP Guidelines in the PSP to guide the design of local park infrastructure and opportunities to create a connected active transport network.

A4.5 Further investigation

As noted in [Activity 3](#), further consideration of the appropriateness of locating the local parks within land subject to inundation and other site constraints will be explored by the VPA.

4 Draft place-based plan & next steps

A draft place-based plan has been developed reflecting feedback from Core Area landowners and key agencies during the co-design workshop as well as the findings from completed technical studies. The VPA has made every effort to incorporate all viewpoints, even where they may conflict with each other or with the technical studies.

Please note additional technical studies are still underway, including but not limited to:

- Transport impact assessment
- Drainage strategy
- Landfill gas risk assessment.

The results of these studies may impact the location and size of land uses on the plan. Additionally, the upcoming Exhibition/Public Consultation phase may further influence the plan.

The results of the co-design workshop and further discussions will inform preparation of the draft PSP and associated planning scheme amendment. The draft PSP will be circulated for review by government and agency stakeholders during the Agency Validation phase (Q4 2024). Pending the outcome of Agency Validation, the PSP will then be released for public consideration during Exhibition/Public Consultation, anticipated in 2025.

4.1 Neighbourhood activity centre

The neighbourhood activity centre has been located centrally on the draft place-based plan.

This location generally reflects the discussions at co-design and the results of our economic and retail assessment. We acknowledge that some co-design participants wanted the neighbourhood activity centre to be located further north, however, at this stage of the project the neighbourhood activity centre has been located abutting the wastewater treatment plant which sits outside of the precinct.

The proposed location of the neighbourhood activity centre maximises efficient land use. The area north of the wastewater treatment plant is subject to an Environmental Significance Overlay (ESO), serving as a buffer where sensitive uses such as housing should not be located. This area also falls within a Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO). By situating the neighbourhood activity centre here, we avoid placing sensitive uses within the plant's buffer and minimise, as much as possible, housing development in the BMO.

4.2 Local activity centres

The draft place-based plan shows two local activity centres, one in the north-west and one in the south-east of the precinct.

These locations generally reflect the feedback the VPA received from the co-design workshop. Both locations also align with the advice from the economic and retail assessment for the PSP.

4.3 Community facilities

One of the community facilities in the draft place-based plan is shown in the southeast of the precinct, co-located with a primary school and local activity centre. This matches the preferences from the co-design workshop.

The second community facility has been located in the north-west of the precinct, co-located with a government primary school and government secondary school. While

many tables at the co-design workshop advocated for a second community facility to be located centrally with the neighbourhood activity centre, further discussions with the Department of Education and council have led to its location on the north-west to enable co-location with a primary school. The funding criteria for some components of a community facility require co-location with a primary school and this location aligned with two tables' discussion for the location of community facilities.

4.4 Government primary schools

The draft place-based plan shows one government primary school in the south-east of the precinct and one in the north-west. The southeast location aligns with results from the co-design workshop.

The northwest location generally aligns with some discussions from the co-design workshop. We recognise that many participants preferred the school to be placed centrally in proximity to the neighbourhood activity centre. However, this location was chosen in anticipation of potential future residential development north of Cummins Road, ensuring the school can serve residents in the Core Area and any potential future development in the Expanded Area.

4.5 Government secondary schools

The government secondary school has been located in the north-west of the precinct, adjacent to the primary school, community facility and active open space. The Department of Education has indicated a preference to locate a secondary schools in the Core Area, adjacent to active open space to allow future students to use the sporting facilities. Most workshop participants also generally preferred for the secondary school to be located west of Gillies Road.

4.6 Independent school

The draft place-based plan shows the independent school to the south of Mount Rowan – this was the most preferred location indicated at the co-design workshop.

4.7 Active open space

Co-design workshop participants did not have a clear consensus on the location of active open space, though there was a clear preference for open space in each the eastern and western portions of the precinct.

The draft place-based plan includes an open space in the northwest of the precinct and another in the southeast.

The draft place-based plan places the south-east active open space entirely on council-owned land to maximise land use efficiency. Normally, the cost of acquiring land for active open space is included in the development contributions plan (DCP). By using council-owned land, the per-hectare rate in the DCP can be reduced, as land purchase costs are excluded. This placement of the active open space borders the Burrumbeet Creek waterway corridor, allowing for the development of a unified open space that serves both active and passive functions. The active space includes sporting fields, while the passive space will offer walking trails. This integrated approach benefits the community by providing varied recreational options and simplifies maintenance for the council.

The south-east open space is located separately from the proposed future primary school. Discussions with the Department of Education has identified that primary schools generally have sufficient open space internally and may not need to be co-located with the active open space reserve in this instance. However, through the PSP process, the VPA will ensure that future students have a seamless and practical route to access this active open space.

The southeast active open space is also located within the 500 metre buffer for the former Wendouree Tip. Locating it within the buffer reduces the amount of sensitive land uses (including residential) within 500 metres of the former landfill.

The location of the southeast active open space is still under review. A landfill gas risk assessment is in progress, and further work is required to assess the site's cultural heritage sensitivity. If these studies recommend against this location, the VPA may need to relocate the active open space elsewhere within the eastern portion of the PSP.

The northwest active open space has been co-located with the secondary school. While many participants preferred the active open space to be located at 62 Howe Street, the location currently shown on the draft place-based plan had support from some participants as well as having the benefit of maximising the catchment of the active open space particularly if the Expanded Area is developed in the future.

4.8 Passive open space

The proposed locations of local parks are based on:

- The results from co-design
- Preferences provided by the council
- The ability to enable future residents to be located within 400 metres of a park
- Site constraints.

Metrics testing of the draft place-based plan indicates that 94.3 per cent of the residential area is within 400 metres of a local park.

4.9 Transport connections

A transport impact assessment will be prepared to provide the technical foundation for determining road types and connections within the place-based plan.

During co-design discussions, many participants expressed a preference for a key east-west connection to the Midland Highway and Howe Street via Cummins Road. Participants also highlighted the importance of using Gillies Road as a key connection and requested walking paths along the creek, as well as a north-south connection across the freeway to the existing residential area in the south-east of the precinct.

The draft place-based plan proposes the east-west connection along Olliers Road instead of Sims Road. We recognise the importance of this connection and have placed it on Olliers Road to optimise the use of existing infrastructure. This location also serves the future local activity centre, school and community facility, and would utilise an existing link to the Midland Highway.

While it is not explicitly shown on the place-based plan, the PSP will also include a requirement to ensure that walking trails are provided in the PSP along the Burrumbeet Creek, aligning with the discussions had at the co-design workshop.

Please note that a connection from Noble Court to Forest Road cannot yet be confirmed. While the draft place-based plan shows a potential boulevard connector, its feasibility is subject to ongoing discussions with the Department of Transport and Planning, as well as further technical transport assessments.

4.10 Investigation area

An investigation area has been located north of the Ballarat Town Commons. The size and shape of this area is subject to the results of a cultural heritage management plan that is currently under preparation.

Figure 13: Draft place-based plan

**Caveats:**

- This plan is draft only.
- The exact location of land uses and other assets are subject to change and will be dependent on further technical assessments.
- The amount of developable land depicted in this version of the place-based plan may also be subject to change.

5 Appendices

APPENDIX 1 Workshop table results – activity outputs

TABLE 1

Activity 1: Activity Centres & Community Facilities



Activity 2: Education



Activity 3: Active Open Space



Activity 4: Passive Open Space & Transport Connections



TABLE 2**Activity 1: Activity Centres
& Community Facilities****Activity 2: Education****Activity 3: Active Open Space****Activity 4: Passive Open Space
& Transport Connections**

TABLE 3**Activity 1: Activity Centres
& Community Facilities****Activity 2: Education****Activity 3: Active Open Space****Activity 4: Passive Open Space
& Transport Connections**

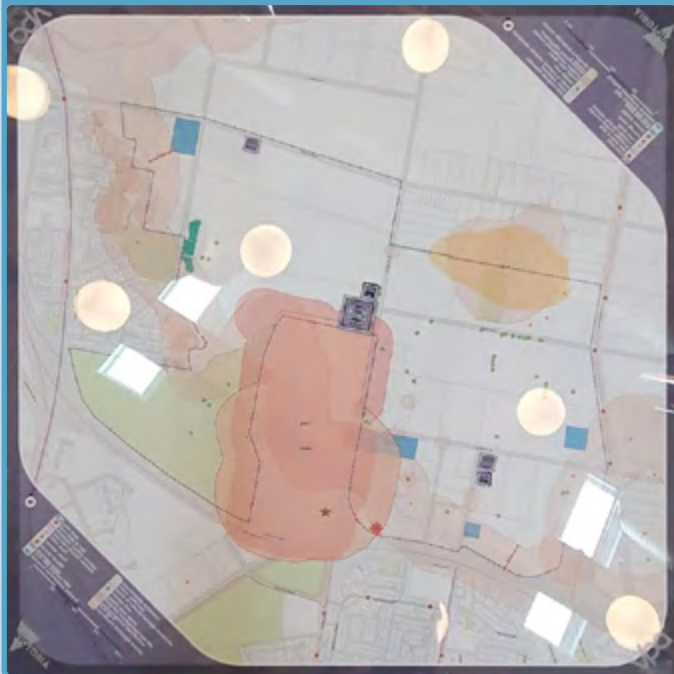
TABLE 4**Activity 1: Activity Centres
& Community Facilities****Activity 2: Education****Activity 3: Active Open Space****Activity 4: Passive Open Space
& Transport Connections**

TABLE 5**Activity 1: Activity Centres
& Community Facilities****Activity 2: Education****Activity 3: Active Open Space****Activity 4: Passive Open Space
& Transport Connections**

TABLE 6**Activity 1: Activity Centres
& Community Facilities****Activity 2: Education****Activity 3: Active Open Space****Activity 4: Passive Open Space
& Transport Connections**

TABLE 7

**Activity 1: Activity Centres
& Community Facilities****Activity 2: Education****Activity 3: Active Open Space****Activity 4: Passive Open Space
& Transport Connections**

TABLE 8**Activity 1: Activity Centres
& Community Facilities****Activity 2: Education****Activity 3: Active Open Space****Activity 4: Passive Open Space
& Transport Connections**

APPENDIX 2 Activity sheets

The instructions and prompts for each activity are replicated below.

Activity 1 Activity Centres and Community Facilities

Objectives

- Identify locations for one (1) large Neighbourhood Activity Centre
- Identify locations for and one (1) or two (2) supporting Local Activity Centres.
- Identify locations for the level 1 and level 2 community centres.
- Ensure activity centre and community facility placement fulfills VPA performance targets.

Targets

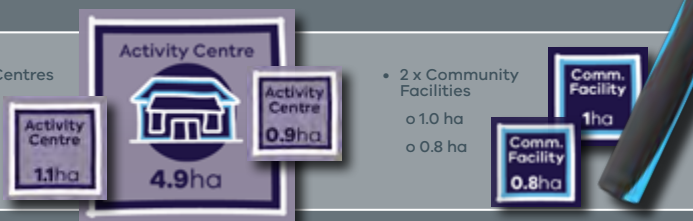
- 80% of dwellings within 800m of a community facility.
- 80-90% of dwellings should be located within 800m of an activity centre.

Instructions

- Place sliders for the activity centres and community facilities on the Place Shaper Kit (PSK).
- Use the 800m buffer tool to determine the catchment of the activity centres and community facilities, noting the performance targets.
- Add any other ideas or comments using the sticky notes and post onto the PSK.
- When prompted, scan the QR code to participate in the poll. The question will be shown on the screen.
- FACILITATORS At the end of the activity, take a photo of the PSK and then remove the sticky notes ready for the next activity.

Sliders

- 3 x Activity Centres
 - 4.9 ha
 - 1.1 ha
 - 0.9 ha
- 2 x Community Facilities
 - 1.0 ha
 - 0.8 ha



Prompts

- How can activity centres be located so they service the greatest number of residents in the PSP?
- Should community facilities be collocated with activity centres?
- How do the centres interact with their surrounds otherwise.
- How does the location make use of natural features or take into account the constraints of the site?

Please scan the QR code to go to the online poll



Activity 2 Education

Objectives

- Identify locations for primary and secondary schools.
- Ensure school placement fulfills VPA performance targets.

Targets

- 70% of dwellings within 800m of a government primary school
- 100% of dwellings within 3,200m of a government secondary school

Instructions

- Place sliders for schools on the PSK.
- Use the 800m buffer tool to determine the catchment of the primary schools, noting the VPA's performance targets. It can be assumed that the entire precinct will be contained within the 3.2 km catchment for the government secondary school.
- Add any other ideas or comments using the sticky notes and post onto the PSK.
- FACILITATORS At the end of the activity, take a photo of the PSK and then remove the sticky notes ready for the next activity.

Sliders

- 2 x Government Primary Schools 3.5 ha
- 1 x Government Secondary School 8.4 ha
- 2 x Combined Independent Primary Secondary 2 x 11.0 ha (table may use one or both sliders)



Prompts

- Are there any locations where schools should not be located? Why?
- Consider how we could make the schools accessible to students and their families. Consider walking and cycling to school.
- What kind of environment should the schools be located in? There are significant landscapes such as Burrumbeet Creek and Mount Rowan.
- Think of elements surrounding schools that you'd like to see (eg: streets with large canopy trees, easy parking etc).

Activity 3 Active Open Space

Objectives

- Identify locations for the active open space reserves.
- Ensure active open space network fulfills VPA performance targets.

Targets

- For residential areas, set aside 5-7% of NDA for sports field reserves (i.e active open space).
- Set aside a minimum of 18 ha of land for a sports reserve to be located within 800m safe walkable distance of each dwelling.

Instructions

- Place sliders for active open spaces on the PSK.
- Use the 800m buffer tool to determine the catchment of the active open space, noting the VPA's performance targets.
- Add any comments using the sticky notes and post onto the PSK.
- When prompted, scan the QR code to participate in the poll. The question will be shown on the screen.
- **FACILITATORS** At the end of the activity, take a photo of the PSK and then remove the sticky notes ready for the next activity.

Sliders

- 2 x Active Open Space Reserves
 - 10.0 ha
 - 8.0 ha



Prompts

- Should active open space reserves be co-located with other uses (e.g. schools)?
- How can key views be considered for the placement of the active open spaces?
- Consider the natural environment which we want to locate the active open spaces.
- How accessible will they be? (by car, bus, bike, on foot?)
- Discuss elements of active open spaces that you'd like to see.
- Discuss what you'd like to see surrounding the active open spaces.

Activity 4 Passive Open Space and Transport Connections

Objectives

- Identify locations for passive open space.
- Indicate preferred amount of passive open space provision.
- Ensure passive open space network fulfills VPA performance targets.

Targets

- For residential areas, set aside 3-5% of NDA for local park (11ha).
- Locate a local park within a 400m safe walkable distance of each dwelling.

Instructions

- Place sliders for passive open spaces on the PSK. These sliders have a 400m buffer attached to help visualise VPA's performance targets.
- Add any comments using the sticky notes and post onto the PSK.
- Using the different coloured markers, draw:
 - Shared paths (red)
 - Dedicated bike paths (green)
 - Bus routes (orange)
 - Connector boulevards (brown)
- **FACILITATORS** At the end of the activity, take a photo of the PSK and then remove the sticky notes ready for the next activity.



Sliders

- Passive Open Space
 - 6 x 1 ha
 - 2 x 2.5 ha
 - 2 x 2 ha
 - 2 x 0.5 ha
 - 2 x 0.75 ha

Prompts

- Where should passive open space be located noting where you've placed other uses, sensitive areas and existing vegetation?
- What is a good balance between NDA and passive open space provision.
- Consider the natural environment which we want to locate the passive open spaces.
- Discuss the different elements you'd like to see in the passive open spaces.

APPENDIX 3 Summary of technical work

The following is a summary of the findings of technical reports undertaken as part of Phase 1 of the project with the key findings. See all available supporting documentation on the [VPA website](#).

Finalised background technical reports include:

Economic and retail assessment

- Analyses the context, market trends, population and employment projects, floorspace demand and locational needs in the Ballarat North precinct.

Integrated water management and drainage assessment

- Provides high-level conceptual direction on integrated water management (IWM) options for Ballarat North PSP.
- Identifies IWM options, portfolios and recommendations using stakeholder participation to drive a way forward for IWM for the PSP.
- Provides an adaptive plan to assist in IWM planning by stakeholders in the post-PSP phase.

Utilities and servicing assessment (part 1 of 2)

- Discusses sustainability and innovation measures relating to infrastructure servicing, to inform PSP preparation.
- Identifies critical infrastructure upgrades needed to support development of the precinct.

Post-contact heritage assessment

- Identifies the post-contact heritage values and themes within the precinct.

Arboricultural assessment

- Identifies moderate and high retention value trees throughout the precinct that are recommended for retention.

Adverse amenity impact assessment

- Identifies industries within the precinct and within a 2km catchment area that require a buffer and/or have a potential air/noise/vibration source which may affect future development of the land.

Biodiversity assessment

- Identifies likely and known high-value flora and fauna habitats in the precinct.
- Provides recommendations to ensure that areas of ecological importance in the PSP are retained and improved.

Bushfire development report and risk assessment (part 1 of 2)

- Assesses the environmental conditions (i.e. vegetation type and extent, topography, weather) and the resultant bushfire risk posed to the PSP.

Draft background technical reports include:

Community infrastructure and open space needs assessment

- Provides a demand analysis of the community infrastructure and open space required to appropriately service the anticipated additional residential population planned for the precinct.

Land capability assessment

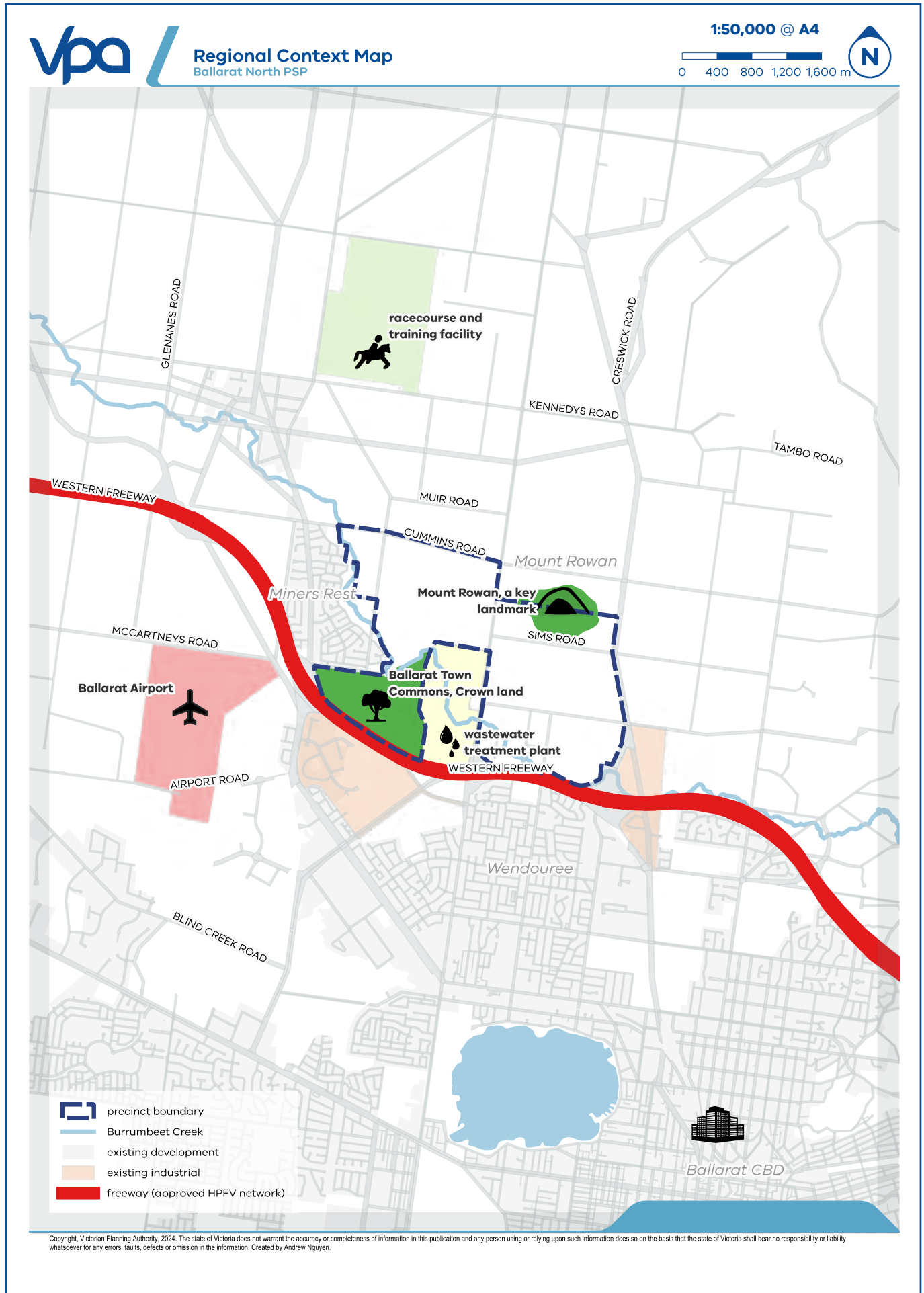
- Identifies potential environmental constraints relevant to the proposed development of Ballarat North.
- Identifies 27 properties with medium to high potential for contamination.
- Recommends methods to address known and potential environmental constraints.

Upcoming background technical reports include:

- Utilities and servicing assessment (part 2 of 2)
- Bushfire development report and risk assessment (part 2 of 2)
- Drainage functional designs and costings
- Transport assessment
- Cultural values assessment
- Affordable housing.

Note: Through the planning process, there may be a need for further technical work that is not listed in this appendix.

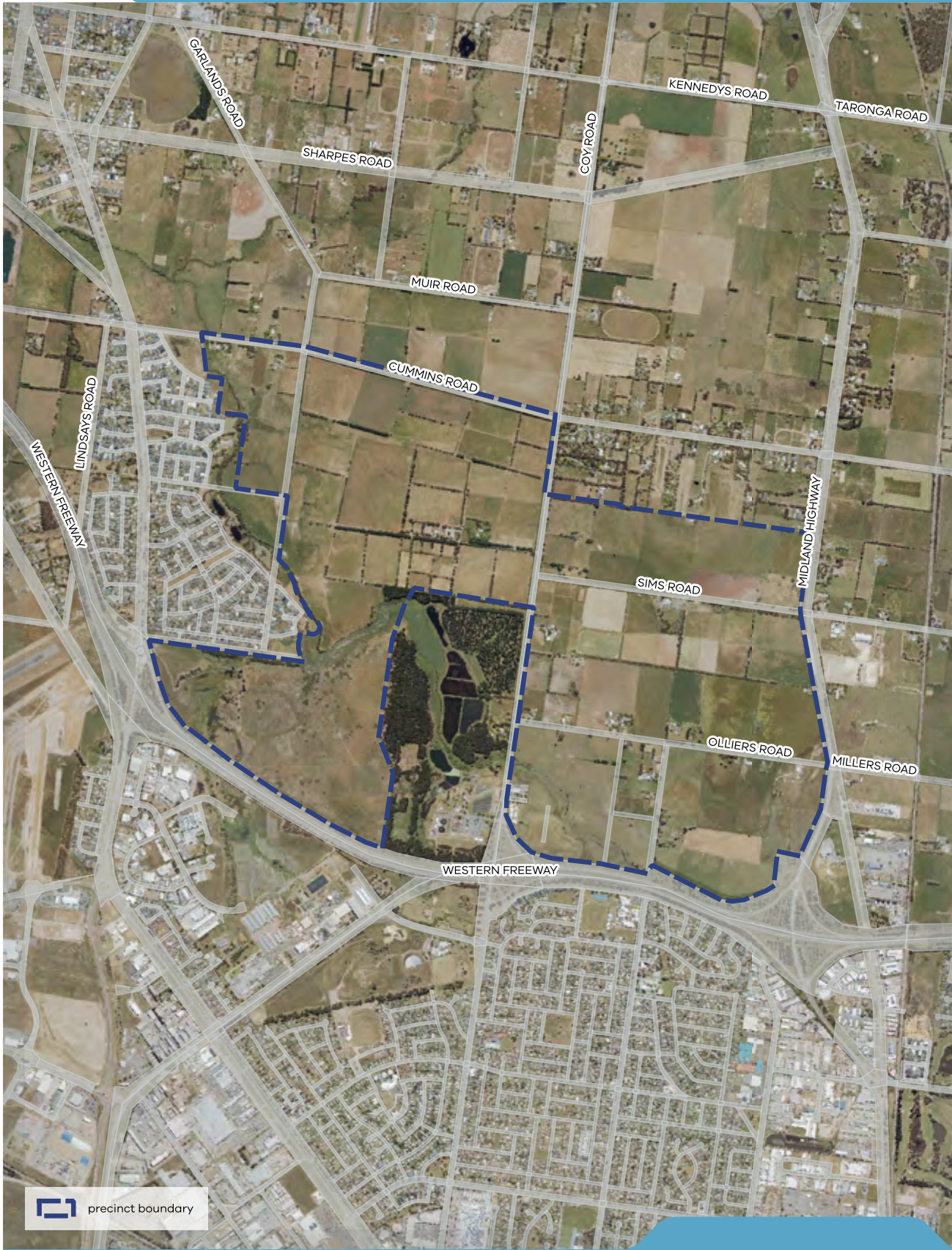
APPENDIX 4 Reference maps





Aerial
Ballarat North PSP

1:25,000 @ A4

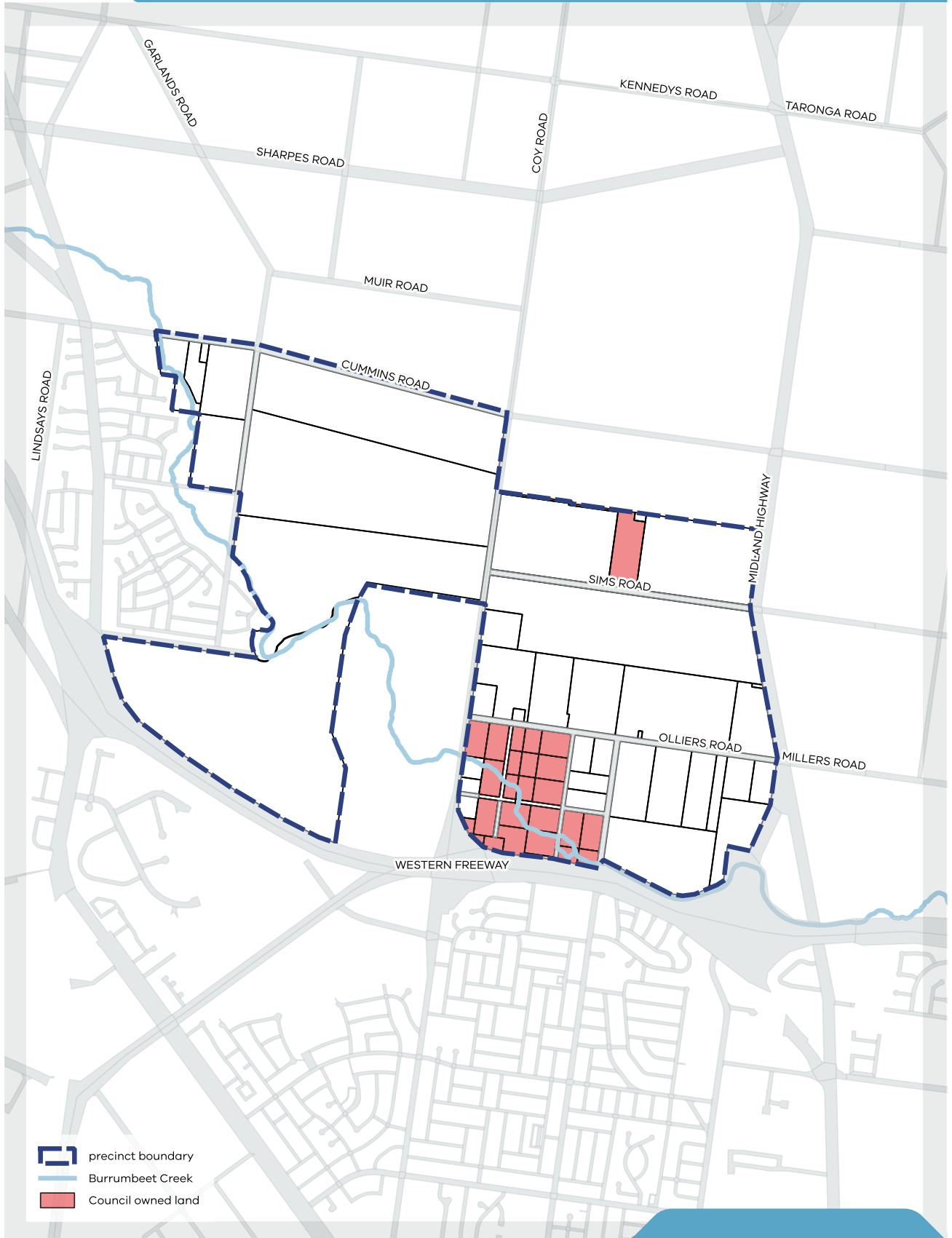


Copyright, Victorian Planning Authority, 2024. The state of Victoria does not warrant the accuracy or completeness of information in this publication and any person using or relying upon such information does so on the basis that the state of Victoria shall bear no responsibility or liability whatsoever for any errors, faults, defects or omission in the information. Created by Andrew Nguyen.



Council Owned Land
Ballarat North PSP

1:25,000 @ A4

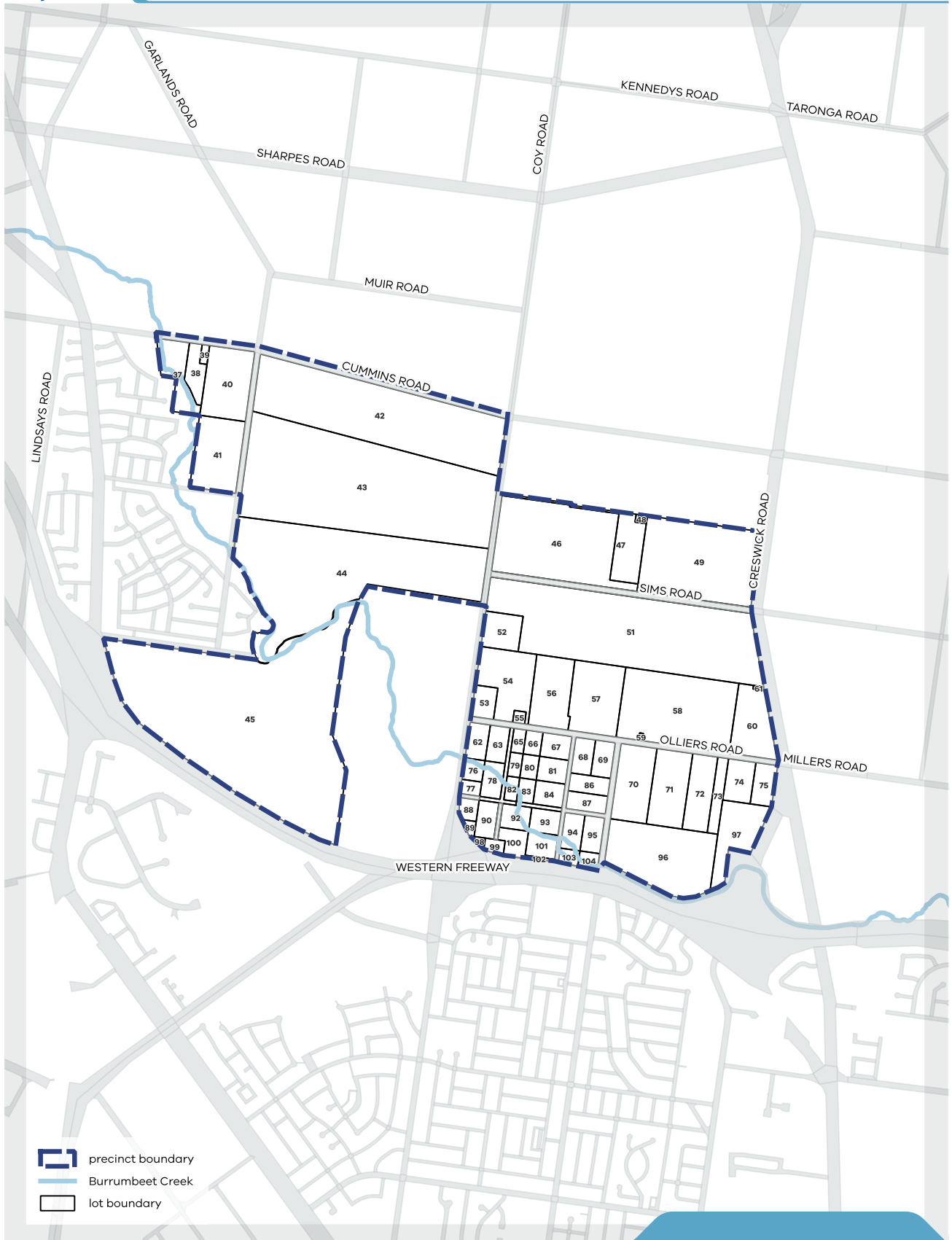


Copyright, Victorian Planning Authority, 2024. The state of Victoria does not warrant the accuracy or completeness of information in this publication and any person using or relying upon such information does so on the basis that the state of Victoria shall bear no responsibility or liability whatsoever for any errors, faults, defects or omission in the information. Created by Andrew Nguyen.



Property Number
Ballarat North PSP

1:25,000 @ A4



Copyright, Victorian Planning Authority, 2024. The state of Victoria does not warrant the accuracy or completeness of information in this publication and any person using or relying upon such information does so on the basis that the state of Victoria shall bear no responsibility or liability whatsoever for any errors, faults, defects or omission in the information. Created by Andrew Nguyen.

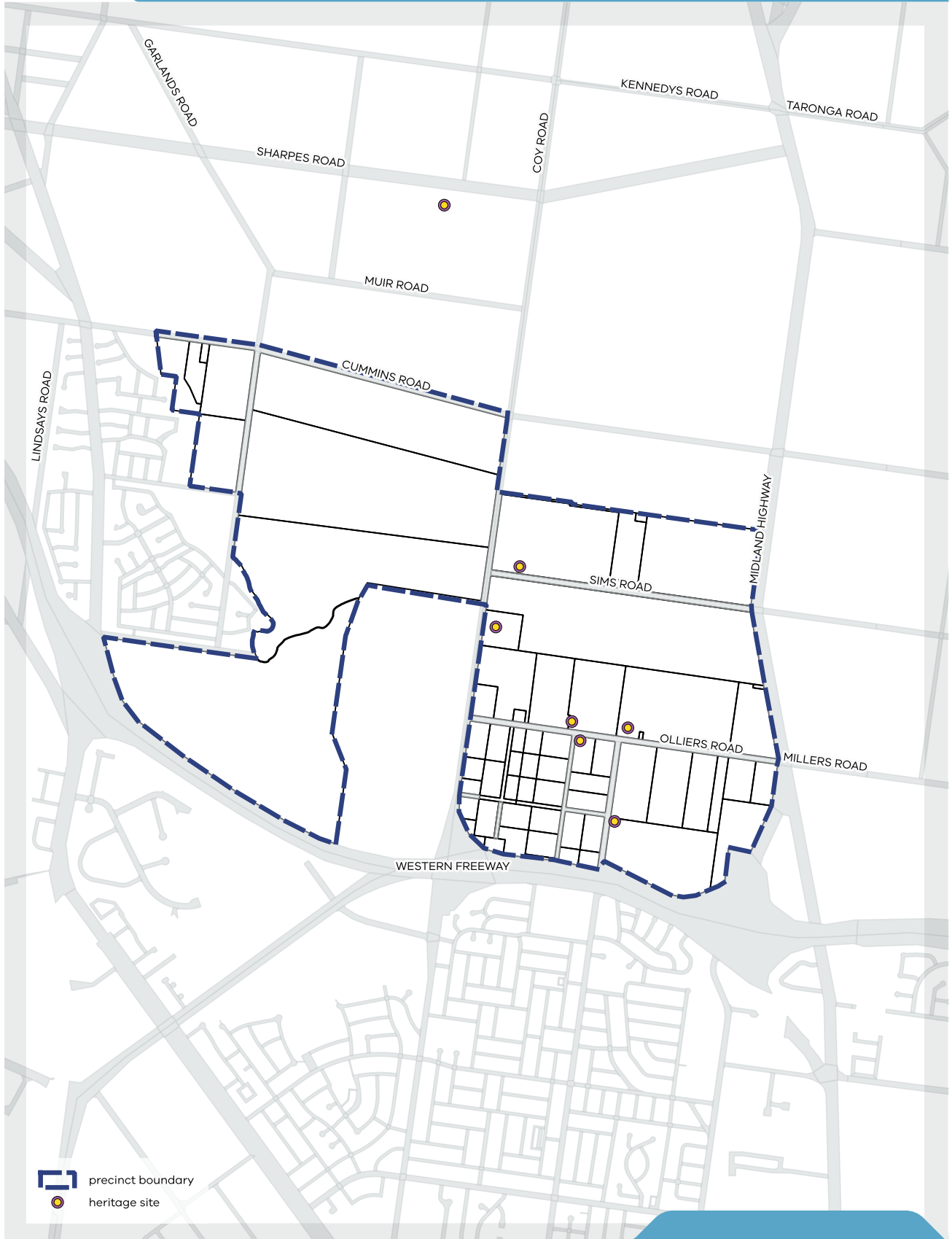


Potential Heritage Sites

Ballarat North PSP

1:25,000 @ A4

0 200 400 600 800 m



Copyright, Victorian Planning Authority, 2024. The state of Victoria does not warrant the accuracy or completeness of information in this publication and any person using or relying upon such information does so on the basis that the state of Victoria shall bear no responsibility or liability whatsoever for any errors, faults, defects or omission in the information. Created by Andrew Nguyen.

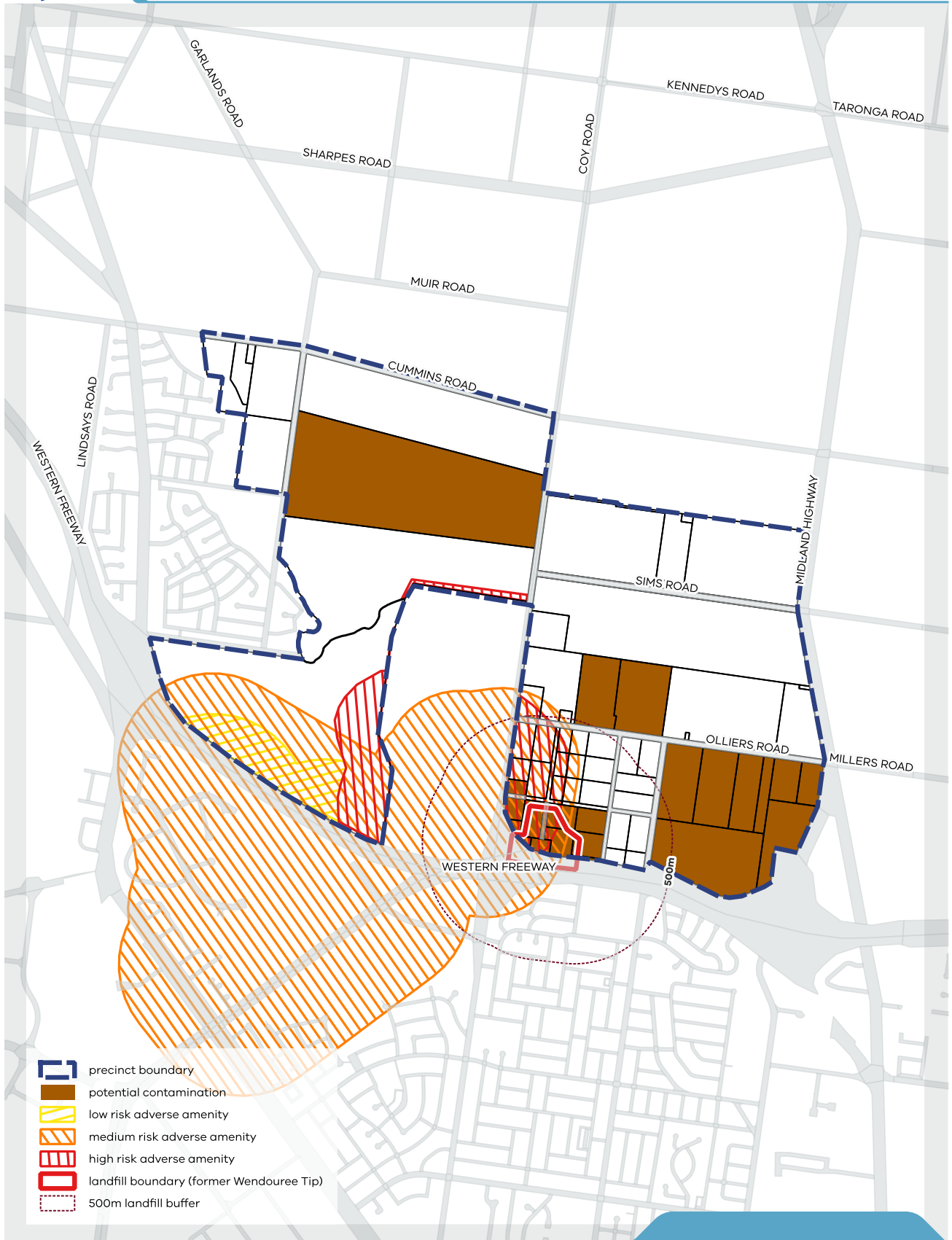


Potentially Contaminated Land and Amenity Buffers

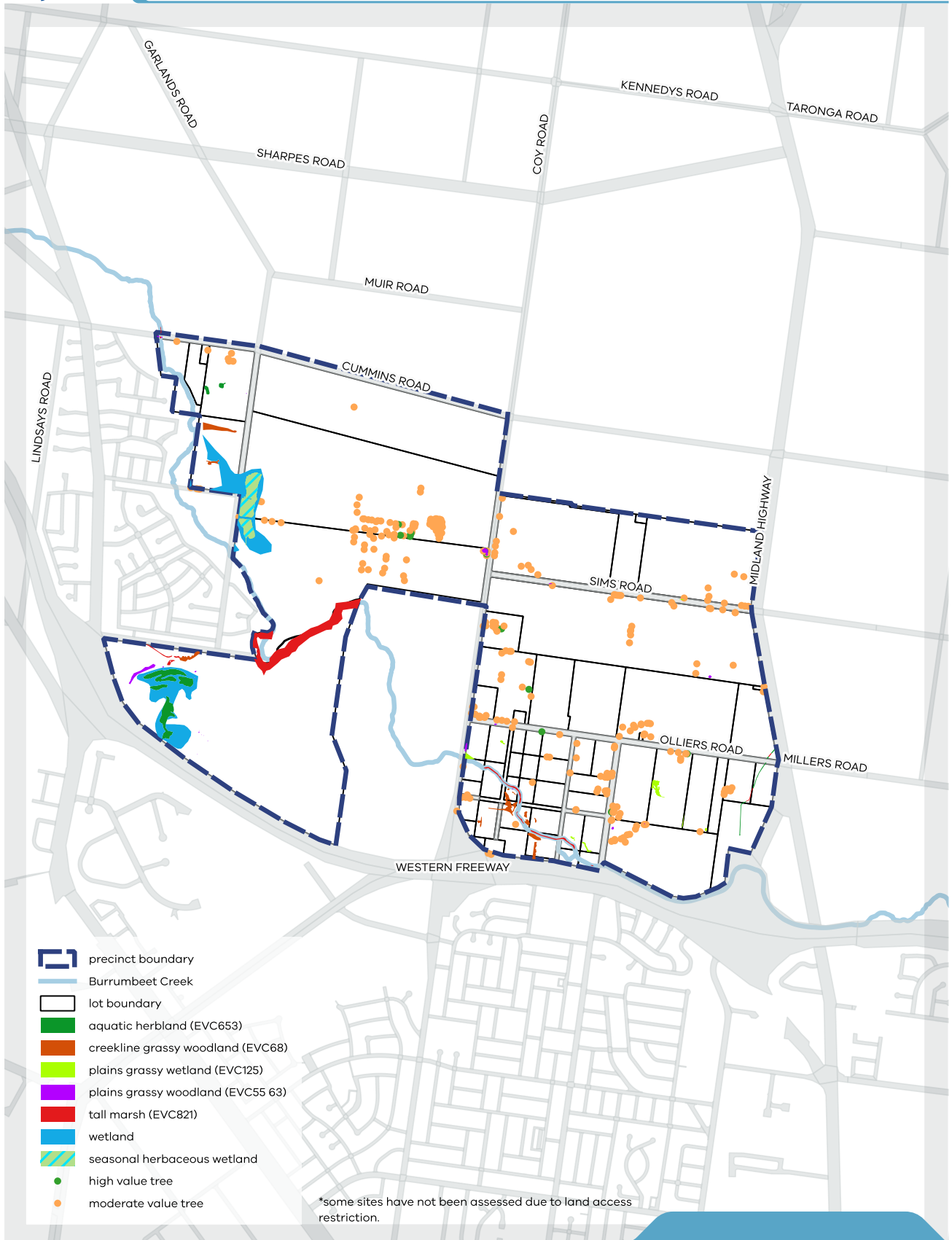
Ballarat North PSP

1:25,000 @ A4

0 200 400 600 800 m

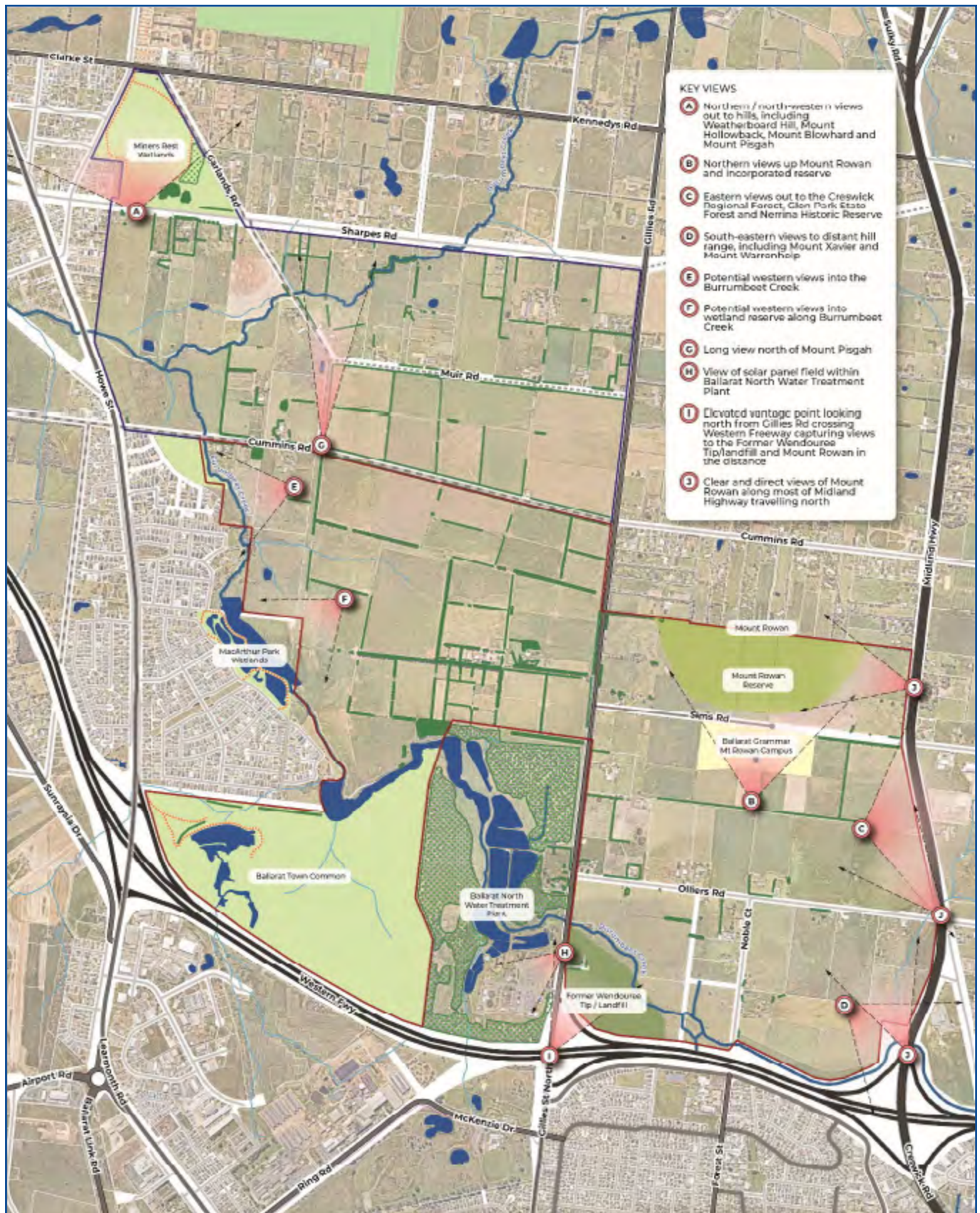


Copyright, Victorian Planning Authority, 2024. The state of Victoria does not warrant the accuracy or completeness of information in this publication and any person using or relying upon such information does so on the basis that the state of Victoria shall bear no responsibility or liability whatsoever for any errors, faults, defects or omission in the information. Created by Andrew Nguyen.



Copyright, Victorian Planning Authority, 2024. The state of Victoria does not warrant the accuracy or completeness of information in this publication and any person using or relying upon such information does so on the basis that the state of Victoria shall bear no responsibility or liability whatsoever for any errors, faults, defects or omission in the information. Created by Andrew Nguyen.

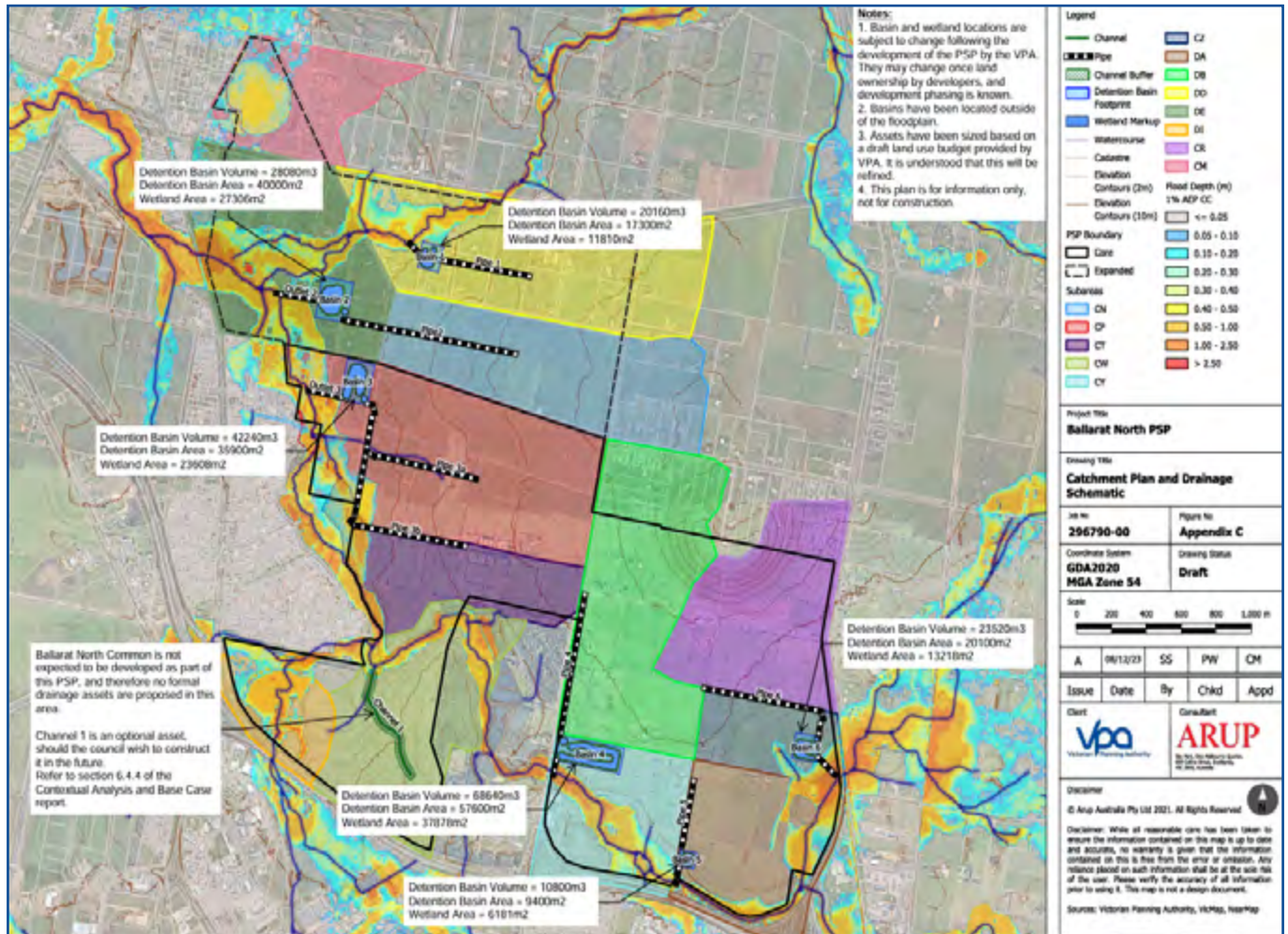
Plan 8: Key Views



Plan 9: Internal Views



Plan 10: Catchment Plan and Drainage Schematic



PSP2.0

VICTORIA
State
Government

vpa
Victorian Planning Authority