

12 February 2026

[REDACTED]
New Communities
Department of Transport and Planning
Delivery via email: BREP@transport.vic.gov.au

Dear [REDACTED]

Re: Bendigo Regional Employment Precinct (BREP)

Villawood Properties Bendigo have active interests in delivering residential growth and infrastructure in and around Bendigo. We welcome the opportunity to provide feedback on draft plans for the Bendigo Regional Employment Precinct located south of Marong township.

This submission outlines the potential infrastructure synergies and broader regional opportunities that our Ravenswood project presents which we believe can contribute to the long-term success of BREP. Villawood does not own land in or adjacent to BREP and does not currently intend to appear or be represented at the planning panel hearing, however we reserve the right to change that position should the need arise.

Ravenswood – a masterplanned new community

The Ravenswood site is a 2000-hectare landholding that presents a highly significant development opportunity to assist the City in achieving greenfield housing supply in accordance with the recently released State Housing target for the City of Greater Bendigo. The site is located east of the Calder Highway and partly abuts the Bendigo railway line. It is the only site in Greater Bendigo that has the scale to deliver vibrant, sustainable and diverse housing choice for Bendigo. Our vision is for a masterplanned community with around 3,000 lots and small town centre offering commercial land use and higher density living. Expansive areas will be set aside for open space and biodiversity/landscape protection.

Refer to **Appendix 1 – Concept Plan** prepared by Mesh Planning

Sewer and water infrastructure

The Infrastructure Strategy, by Stantec 2025 and Utilities Assessment by Aurecon, 2024 both identify the existing sewerage system has limited capacity to service only initial development of the BREP site. A duplication of the existing outfall transfer system is required, or an alternative local treatment solution is required to support full development. The existing Marong - Maiden Gully - Eaglehawk - Epsom sewer transfer system to the Epsom wastewater treatment plant is a long way through existing urban areas and significant elevation lift and duplication is likely to be expensive and energy intensive. The assessments recommend exploring local integrated water alternatives, to service BREP site and potentially the surrounding South Bendigo region with sewerage services and possibly recycled water for the development and the region's agriculture.

We understand Coliban Water is undertaking long term planning over the next 30 years to secure the region's water supply within a more constrained environment that forecasts less water supply over the long term, coupled with increased water demand as population and industry continues to grow.

The recommendation to explore alternatives, including the potential for a new dedicated sewer system west of Marong to service BREP and Marong township growth, is reflective of capacity constraints in the current system and the need to undertake servicing strategy reviews holistically to consider potential regional benefits and opportunities.

Ravenswood is a large potential development in the region that requires identification of servicing strategies that can be implemented in the short, medium and long term. The Ravenswood project offers a strategically important opportunity to partner with BREP and Coliban Water to provide significant scale to efficiently deliver a more sustainable circular economy and integrated water local solution that supports the region. The opportunity is for a leading edge local facility which treats wastewater and organic wastes to generate recycled water, energy and organic fertiliser reducing the environmental footprint, possibly carbon neutral development, and support local agriculture. The option could also free capacity in the existing stressed Bendigo and Castlemaine systems to service development in other areas of the townships.

Refer to **Appendix 2** – potential wastewater treatment opportunities (source: Aurecon) and **Appendix 3** – circular economy opportunities (source: Aurecon)

A new sustainability hub and treatment plant to the south of Bendigo would take pressure off the Epsom and Castlemaine wastewater treatment plants. The facility would also support sustainability vision and objectives of Development Victoria, Coliban Water, Council and Villawood, plus improve the green star rating of local industries and development through recycling, carbon capture and renewable energy generation. A local regional facility within Coliban's network and servicing BREP, Marong, Lockwood and Harcourt and Ravenswood with a sewage outlet, recycled water to reduce the region's water footprint and provide climate resilient water for local agriculture, industry and landscape, and beneficial carbon and nutrient capture.

Successful exploration of opportunities that may be associated with identification and implementation of a regional servicing strategy is currently being hampered by uncertainty regarding the status of Ravenswood as a growth area. Ravenswood has been afforded status as an investigation area with the adopted version of the Managed Growth Strategy but recent contact with Coliban Water has revealed that Coliban Water is uncertain about the status of Ravenswood. This uncertainty can be overcome, and Council could actively investigate the potential of Ravenswood and request Coliban Water's assistance to actively consider servicing opportunities in partnership with Council and Villawood Properties.

Villawood Properties and its consultants are ready and willing to participate in such a process and are confident that beneficial opportunities will be identified by working together on regional servicing solutions. To that end we are now seeking Council's support for initiation of a more inclusive servicing review process that includes Ravenswood.

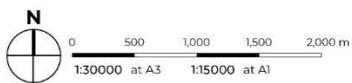
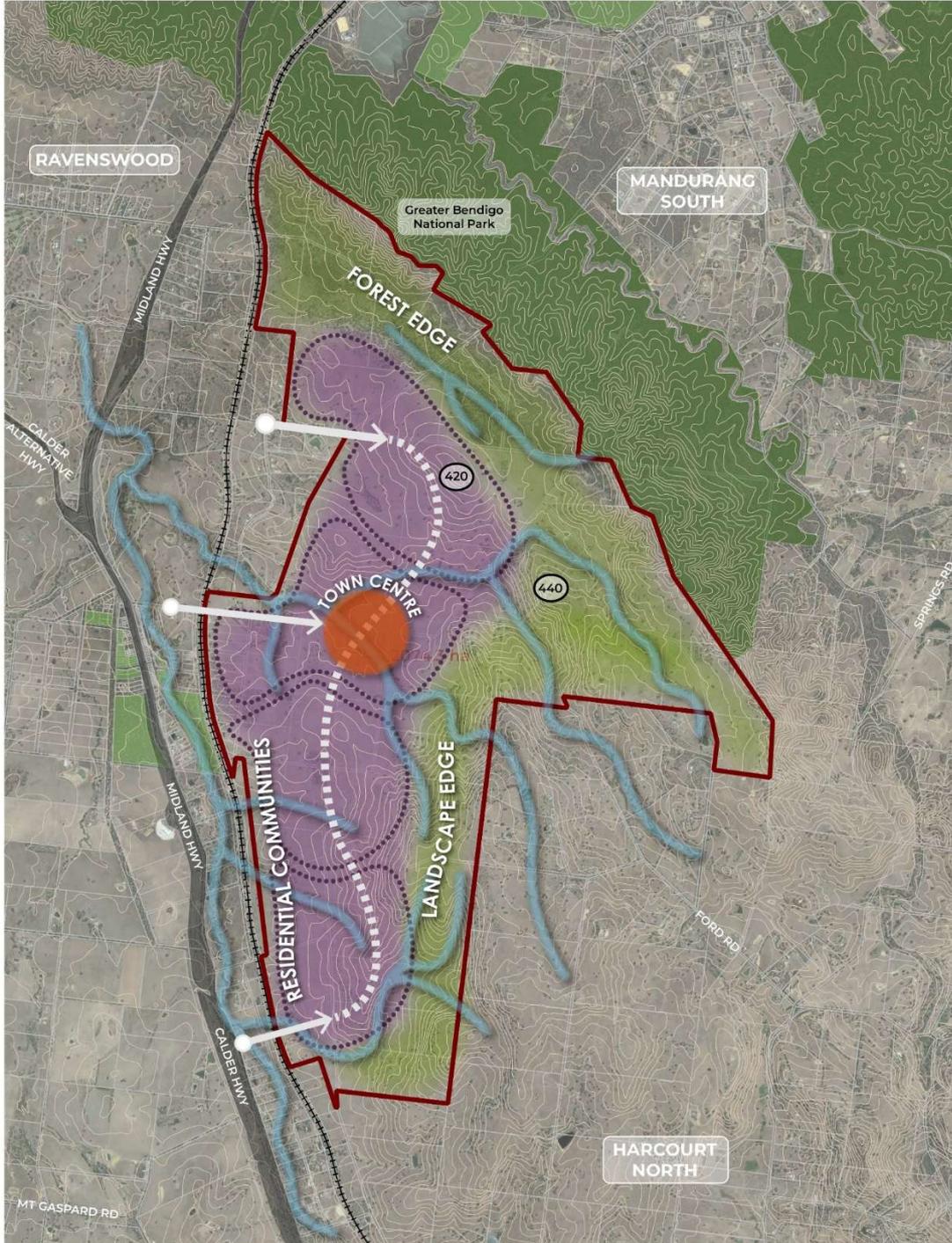
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APPENDIX 1- Ravenswood concept plan (Source: Mesh)

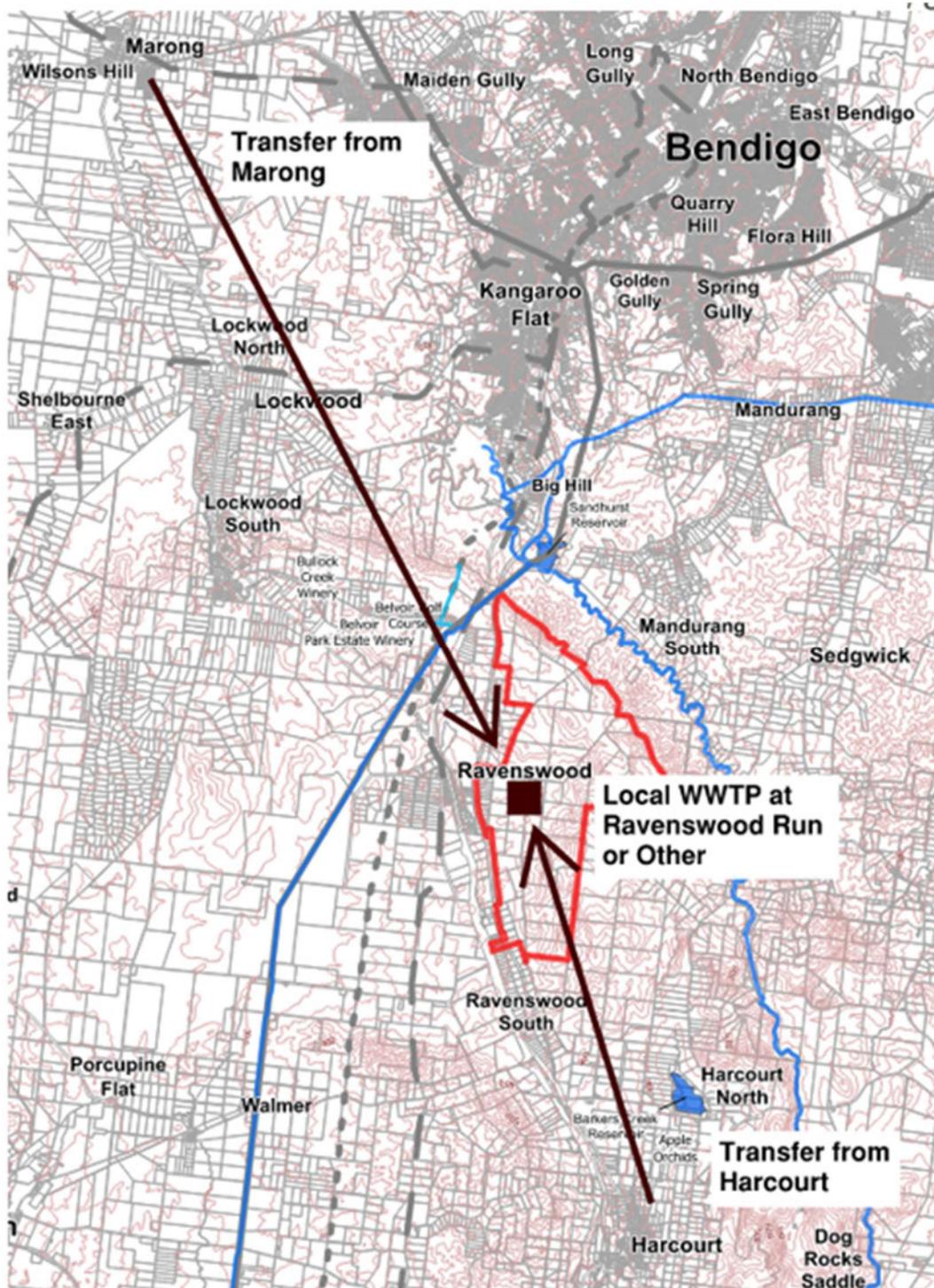


April 2023
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 Villawood Properties - Bendigo
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APPENDIX 2 - Potential wastewater treatment opportunities (Source: Aurecon)



APPENDIX 2 - Circular economy – Goulburn Valley example (Source: Aurecon)

