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1. introduction

North Dennington is a major growth area of Warrnambool, occupying a unique position in the city being located on the banks of the Merri River, with existing and future community, commercial and recreation facilities nearby.

North Dennington is one of four planned major greenfield growth areas in Warrnambool. The growth area is located approximately west of the Warrnambool City Centre and lies on the south side of the Merri River.

1.1 purpose

The purpose of the North Dennington Structure Plan is to set out the land use and development framework that will be used by the community, landowners and developers to guide the future growth of North Dennington.

The Structure Plan establishes a vision and overall layout for the growth objectives and guidelines required to guide changes in land use, open space and the road network to achieve that vision.

The NDSPI is an Incorporated Document in the Warrnambool Planning Scheme. It is to be used to guide the detailed preparation of Development Plans and Planning applications that affect the North Dennington Growth Area.

The North Dennington Structure Plan forms the strategic basis for the Dennington Development Contributions Plan (also an Incorporated Document in the Warrnambool Planning Scheme), which will enable the efficient delivery of infrastructure to service planned growth.

1.2 land to which this plan applies

The land to which the NDSPI applies is shown in the figure opposite. The Structure Plan boundary generally includes farming land east of Road 1500 and east of the Merri River and north of former, railway line developed residential areas.



2. role and context

2.1 regional context

Warrnambool is a Regional City within the Great South Coast Region approximately 250 kms south west of Melbourne. The City is located on the Princes Highway, which provides direct road access to Geelong and Adelaide. Rail access to Melbourne is provided by the Warrnambool to Melbourne V/Line service.

The City of Warrnambool is designated a regional centre within the Great South Coast Region Urban Growth Warrant. According to the ABS, the estimated resident population of Warrnambool, including Dennington (state suburb geographical areas) was 32,878 people as at June 2021. It is projected that the population of Warrnambool will be approximately 44,832 by 2031. The City is projected to accommodate approximately 50% of the Great South Coast Region's population growth over this period. This growth is supported by road and rail to Melbourne and its coastal location, which is favoured by people moving from State areas. The type of population growth will also change in line with trends to an ageing population and smaller household sizes, as is common throughout most of the State.

2.2 municipal context

The North Dennington Area is identified in the Warrnambool Land Use Strategy (2004) as one of four residential expansion areas. The area is identified as appropriate for the City's growth area was originally identified as appropriate in the Warrnambool Land Use Strategy. However, in recognition of supply shortages in Warrnambool, the policy directions that seek to make efficient use of available land and to accommodate population growth in the area is considered more appropriate for standard residential development. Such development typically consists of a range of lot sizes including some larger lots and smaller lots. In the context of a regional city such as Warrnambool, densities of around 12 dwellings per hectare are considered appropriate.

2.3 study area

The North Dennington Structure Plan Area is situated approximately 4 kms west of the Warrnambool City Centre. The study area is bounded generally by the Merri River to the north and west, Harrington Road and existing residential development to the east, and the Eastern Milk Processing Plant lies to the south of the study area. Warrnambool Seafoods is located to the west of the study area.



3.local context

This section of the Structure Plan presents the relevant existing conditions with study area in regard to use and ownership, landscape, natural environment, movement and access, heritage, community infrastructure and open space commercial activities and which need to be considered in the formulation Structure Plan.

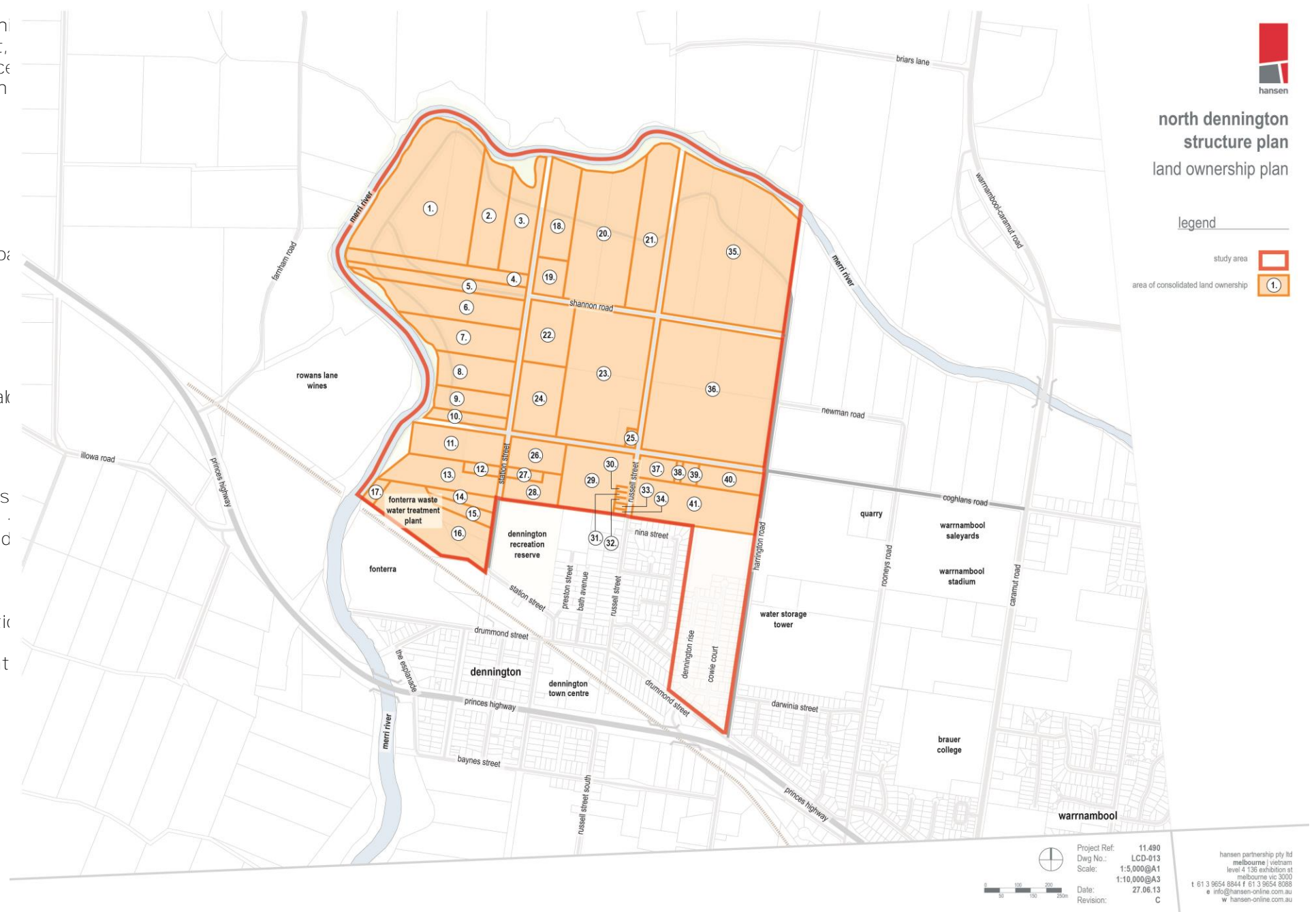
3.1 land use and ownership

Whilst the study area in the Dennington Rise, which is mostly developed the undeveloped sections of the NDSP are consist of 52 parcels of land under the ownership of 41 landowners. Parcels sizes from 0.11ha to 1.3ha. Land ownership within the NDSP is highly fragmented and will require an innovative approach practical approach to ensuring timely delivery of key infrastructure

The NDSP area is predominantly, having been used for crop associated with the productive river for the Merri River grazing over a number of years. Some allotments and dwellings however the area is largely undeveloped. The NDSP area also includes the Fonterra Milk Australia Processing Plant water facility Station Street and some existing residential development at Dennington Rise and Cowie Court.

potentially contaminated land

There is no known history of industry, mining or the storage of chemicals satisfy itself that the environmental conditions of the land within the study be, suitable for sensitive use residential, open space. It is known that some land within the study has been used for market gardens, and a site assessment has been prepared by a suitably qualified professional. This assessment reviews the site history and potential for soil and groundwater contamination preparation of future Development Plans. The assessment concludes that a statutory environmental audit is not required at the site. The site, under its current suitable for rezoning for the purpose of future residential development.



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3.2 landscape and natural environment

native flora and fauna

The majority of the North Dennington Growth Area has been cleared of native vegetation. It is understood that this occurred in the early 19th century for the establishment of farms in the area. There are some remnant patches of riparian vegetation along the Merri River Corridor.

topography

The topography within the Structure Plan Area includes the river flats along the Merri River floodplain and a prominent ridgeline that runs generally east-west through the NDSP area. Some parts of the study area, through the moderate to steep sections, include relatively steep slopes.

landscape

The North Dennington Growth Area has a unique rural landscape quality. The use of the area for farming has created a pastoral landscape that softly undulates down towards the rich river flats of the Merri River. Evidence of historic farming activities is scattered across the area, including traditional cypress windrows, drystone walls (on Coghlan's Road), a number of farm houses and structures and cultivated paddocks.

The Merri River is a dominant feature of the area. The importance of views across the river to the rural landscape is a key landscape character element of the NDSP area.

flooding and drainage

A flood study has been undertaken by Glenelg Hopkins Water Management Authority, which identifies areas subject to flooding in a 1 in 100 year return event (see map opposite).

Further investigation is required at more detailed planning stages (i.e. as part of a Development Plan or subdivision planning permit application as specified by Council). Affected areas may require adoption of specific design responses and treatment measures to enable development to occur.

Land that is subject to flooding is considered encumbered land and is not suitable for urban development. The encumbered land can be used for drainage purposes, or other uses such as passive open space purposes. The protection of riparian vegetation and water quality of the Merri River is an important function of the drainage corridor.

acid sulfate soils

Acid sulfate soils contain a high amount of iron sulfate that, once oxidised, can produce large amounts of acid which can affect plants, aquatic life and infrastructure (DPI, 2003: 3). The Department of Primary Industries has produced Acid Sulfate Soil Hazard Maps showing where acid sulfate soils are located. The area immediately surrounding the Merri River in North Dennington is identified as potentially containing acid sulfate soils, which means there could be a low to high probability of these soils occurring within the designated area. Further investigation is required at more detailed planning stages (i.e. as part of a Development Plan or subdivision planning permit application as specified by Council). Affected areas may require adoption of specific design responses and treatment measures to enable development to occur.

