Planning and Environment Act 1987

WHITTLESEA PLANNING SCHEME

AMENDMENT C259WSEA

EXPLANATORY REPORT

Who is the planning authority?

This amendment has been prepared by the Minister for Planning who is the planning authority for this amendment.

The amendment has been made at the request of the Minister for Health and the Victorian Health Building Authority (VHBA).

Land affected by the amendment

The amendment applies to parts of the land at:

- 1410A Plenty Road, Mernda.

What the amendment does

The amendment applies a Public Acquisition Overlay (PAO) to land required for the development of the future City of Whittlesea Community Hospital.

The amendment makes the following changes to the Whittlesea Planning Scheme:

- Amends the Schedule to the Clause 45.10 'Public Acquisition Overlay' to introduce PAO16, with the Minister for Health as the acquiring authority for the land within the PAO16 and the City of Whittlesea Community Hospital as the purpose of acquisition.
- Amends the Planning Scheme Map No, 13PAO to show PAO16 applying to the land to be acquired.

Strategic assessment of the amendment

Why is the amendment required?

The amendment is required to apply a PAO to reserve the land for the compulsory acquisition of the land by the Minister for Health for the future development of the community hospital within the Mernda town centre. The PAO is required to initiate the compulsory acquisition process.

The community hospital will form part of the VHBA's Community Hospitals Program. The program will support the development of 10 community hospitals close to major growth areas across Victoria.

Community hospitals are small public hospitals which provide a range of 'everyday' health services for people who are not critically unwell. Located in growing communities across Victoria, community hospitals give people better access to many important health services closer to home.

The community hospital is required to accommodate the projected growth in the City of Whittlesea whilst taking pressure off nearby major hospitals who are often operating at capacity.

How does the amendment implement the objectives of planning in Victoria?

The amendment implements the following objectives of planning in Victoria:

(a) To provide for the fair, orderly, economic and sustainable use, and development of land
(c) To secure a pleasant, efficient and safe working, living and recreational environment for all Victorians and visitors to Victoria
(e) To protect public utilities and other assets and enable the orderly provision and co-ordination of public utilities and other facilities for the benefit of the community.
(f) To balance the present and future interests of all Victorians

The amendment will introduce a PAO to reserve the land for the fair and orderly future development of the community hospital.

The PAO will provide certainty for the development of the community hospital which will contribute to a safe environment for Victorians.

The location of the community hospital has been determined to best provide for the health needs of the Whittlesea community, as it is close to where the community live and work and to other allied health and community services.

Development of the community hospital in this location will provide for the current and future needs for health care services within this growing community.

How does the amendment address any environmental, social and economic effects?

The amendment will result in the following environmental, social and economic effects:

Environmental Effects

The amendment will not result in any direct impact on the environment, given the amendment will only reserve the land for a public purpose and will not allow any use or development of the affected land.

The area is either currently under development already or has approval for substantial development and as such there are limited environmental considerations. Environmental effects will be given careful consideration during the design and development phase of the community hospital.

Social Effects

The amendment is required to reserve land for the development of a community hospital. This will provide much needed health services to the municipality of Whittlesea resulting in significant social benefits. The amendment will increase the ability and capacity of the State of Victoria to provide critical health services to people closer to home.

Economic Effects

The amendment is required to reserve land for acquisition and the future development of a community hospital. The facilitation of this community hospital will provide substantial economic benefits to the State of Victoria through delivery of this $675 million Community Hospital project. These benefits include direct and indirect employment benefits during construction as well the health care workers employed within the facility. The economic benefits will also be seen through provision of appropriate levels of care and associated reduction in demand for health services.

Additionally, the identification of land within the Mernda Town Centre for significant health infrastructure will have a beneficial impact on the activity centre by fostering an increased level of activity in this area.

Does the amendment address relevant bushfire risk?

While the site is located within a Bushfire Prone Area (BPA), it is noted that the site is also within the Comprehensive Development Zone – Schedule 1. Given the current development occurring on the parent site and on surrounding land, it is considered that the bushfire risk will be reduced. It is noted that DELWP regularly conduct reviews of the BPA within growth areas, and it is likely that the BPA can be removed once the area is developed.

Regardless, VHBA will address bushfire risk mitigation through the design, development and during the building approval for the new community hospital.

Overall, the amendment is not considered to increase the risk to life, property, community infrastructure and the natural environment from bushfire.

The amendment will not increase the risk to life, property, community infrastructure and the natural environment from bushfire.

Does the amendment comply with the requirements of any Minister's Direction applicable to the amendment?

Ministerial Direction – The Form and Content of Planning Scheme

The amendment complies with the requirements of the Ministerial Direction on the Form and Content of Planning Schemes (section 7(5) of the Act).

Ministerial Direction 9 – Metropolitan Planning Strategy

The amendment is consistent with Ministerial Direction 9 relating to the Metropolitan Planning Strategy (Plan Melbourne 2050). The new community hospital will deliver on the relevant principles, outcomes and directions by locating new health services which are local to the Mernda residents and within a larger precinct that is serviced by public transport and other community services. The provision of the community hospital will support a strong and healthy community by providing easy access to a range of public and non-urgent healthcare services. Additionally, the community hospital supports the planned growth in the Whittlesea municipality by providing a critical piece of social infrastructure needed for the future population and by reducing current demand on existing major hospitals.

The following principles are of particular relevance to the project:

- Principle 5 – living locally 20-minute neighbourhoods
- Principle 7 – strong and healthy communities
- Principle 8 – infrastructure investment that supports balanced city growth

Direction No. 11 Strategic Assessment of Amendments

The amendment has been prepared in accordance with Ministerial Direction No. 11 – Strategic

Assessment of Amendments.

How does the amendment support or implement the Planning Policy Framework and any adopted State policy?

The amendment supports the objectives and strategies of the Planning Policy Framework, including:

- Clause 11.03-1R Activity Centres – Metropolitan Melbourne

This clause encourages the concentration of major retail, residential, commercial, administrative, entertainment and cultural developments into activity centres that are highly accessible to the community. It gives an indication as to what land uses are encouraged within activity centres. The amendment applies to land within the Mernda activity centre which allows for co-location of community services in an activity centre that is easily accessible to the greatest proportion of the population.

- Clause 13.02-1S Bushfire Planning

This clause applies to land within the BPA and aims to strengthen settlements with risk-based planning that prioritises the protection of human life. The application of the PAO will not increase bushfire risk in the Mernda town centre area. Bushfire requirements will be addressed during the design and development phase of the City of Whittlesea Community Hospital.

- Clause 19.02-1S Health Facilities

This clause aims to assist the integration of health facilities with local and regional communities. It

includes strategies to take into account the existing and future demand requirements and integration of services into communities, as well as ensuring adequate car parking is provided for staff and visitors. The community hospital will help meet future demand requirements within the identified growth area of Whittlesea. The site was identified through an extensive selection process considering the location of other future community services.

The application of the PAO to the identified future community hospital site will deliver on the objectives of Clause 19.02-1S by facilitating health services in this local area.

Car parking has been identified as a key consideration during the consultation process and will be addressed during the design and development phase of the community hospital as per the requirements of Clause 52.06.

How does the amendment support or implement the Local Planning Policy Framework, and specifically the Municipal Strategic Statement?

The Whittlesea Planning Scheme has an integrated Planning Policy Framework, which incorporates local planning policies under the wider state policy. The proposal is consistent with the identified local

planning policies by ensuring the future development of the community hospital will occur in the Mernda Town Centre, a key future activity centre in the City of Whittlesea. Community uses and increased intensity and scale of development is generally encouraged within activity centres. The community hospital will provide much needed community infrastructure that will provide health services in an accessible location.

How does the amendment support or implement the Municipal Planning Strategy?

The Whittlesea Planning Scheme includes a Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) at Clause 02.

The amendment supports and implements the MPS of the Whittlesea Planning Scheme including the Infrastructure – Strategic Directions (Clause 02.03-9) objectives. The amendment supports and implements the MPS by ensuring the site responds to the local setting and strategic vision of Mernda Town Centre. It is important that while Whittlesea continues to grow, it also provides services for the growing local and sub-regional population. The community hospital provides an opportunity to diversify the economy and provide local employment opportunities for the community while providing key health services to support the population.

Does the amendment make proper use of the Victoria Planning Provisions?

The application of the PAO to the land makes proper use of the Victoria Planning Provisions as the appropriate process for reserving the land for a public purpose (health). It will enable the compulsory acquisition of the land by the Minister for Health for the future community hospital. This will provide certainty to the landowners, the public and the community hospital project and allow for acquisition to occur in the required timeframes.

How does the amendment address the views of any relevant agency?

The views of relevant agencies have been considered during the preparation of the amendment.

Extensive consultation has been undertaken in regard to future development of each site.

Those consulted in this process include:

- The landowners.
- Adjoining landowners and occupiers.
- Whittlesea City Council.

The views of these parties have been considered in the preparation of this amendment.

Council has indicated that they support the PAO, the Amendment and the community hospital development.

Does the amendment address relevant requirements of the Transport Integration Act 2010?

The proposed amendment in introducing the PAO will not have a significant impact on the transport system. Traffic implications will be addressed during the construction phase of the community hospital. This will include discussions with the Department of Transport as required.

Resource and administrative costs

What impact will the new planning provisions have on the resource and administrative costs of the responsible authority?

There will be limited impacts on Council in applying the PAO to the land that relate to consequent amendments to planning policy. The site's future acquisition and development will be undertaken by the Minister for Health directly with limited impacts on the Responsible Authority. Subdivision to excise the parcels will occur in line with Section 35 of the Subdivision Act with minimal impacts on the Responsible Authority.

Following acquisition, Whittlesea Council or the landowner may need to amend the CDZ controls or Mernda Town Centre Comprehensive Development Plan in the future to reflect the location of the community hospital.

Where you may inspect this amendment

The amendment can be inspected free of charge at the Whittlesea City Council website at www.whittlesea.vic.gov.au; or

The amendment is available for public inspection, free of charge, during office hours at the following places:

- Whittlesea City Council, 25 Ferres Blvd, South Morang

The amendment can also be inspected free of charge at the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning website at www.planning.vic.gov.au/public-inspection or by contacting 1800 789 386 to arrange a time to view the amendment documentation.