

6.1 PLANNING PROPOSAL - SERVICE CENTRE, HUME HIGHWAY, BOWNING

SUMMARY

To present a report on a draft Planning Proposal seeking an amendment to the Yass Valley LEP 2013 for a Highway Service Centre at Bowning. It is recommended that the proposal be submitted for a Gateway Determination.

RECOMMENDATION

That Planning Proposal PP-2017-01 for a Highway Service Centre, Hume Highway, Bowning be endorsed and forwarded to the Minister to request a Gateway Determination pursuant to s56 Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Nil

POLICY & LEGISLATION

- *Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979*
- Yass Valley Local Environmental Plan 2013 (Yass Valley LEP 2013)
- Sydney-Canberra Corridor Regional Strategy

REPORT

1. Introduction

Highway Service Centres are important commercial developments which complement the road network. They provide for vehicle refuelling/recharging as well as opportunities for drivers to rest and alleviate fatigue, contributing to overall road safety.

The Standard Instrument LEP defines a highway service centre as:

'a building or place used to provide refreshments and vehicle services to highway users. It may include any one or more of the following:

- (a) A restaurant or café,*
- (b) Take away food and drink premises,*
- (c) Service stations and facilities for emergency vehicle towing and repairs,*
- (d) Parking for vehicles,*
- (e) Rest areas and public amenities'*

They should be strategically located to best cater for the travelling public.

To prevent a proliferation of Highway Service Centres within the 'RU1 Primary Production' zone across the Yass Valley (on land abutting Barton, Hume and Federal Highways), it was determined that the proponents would need to request an LEP amendment once a site had been selected.

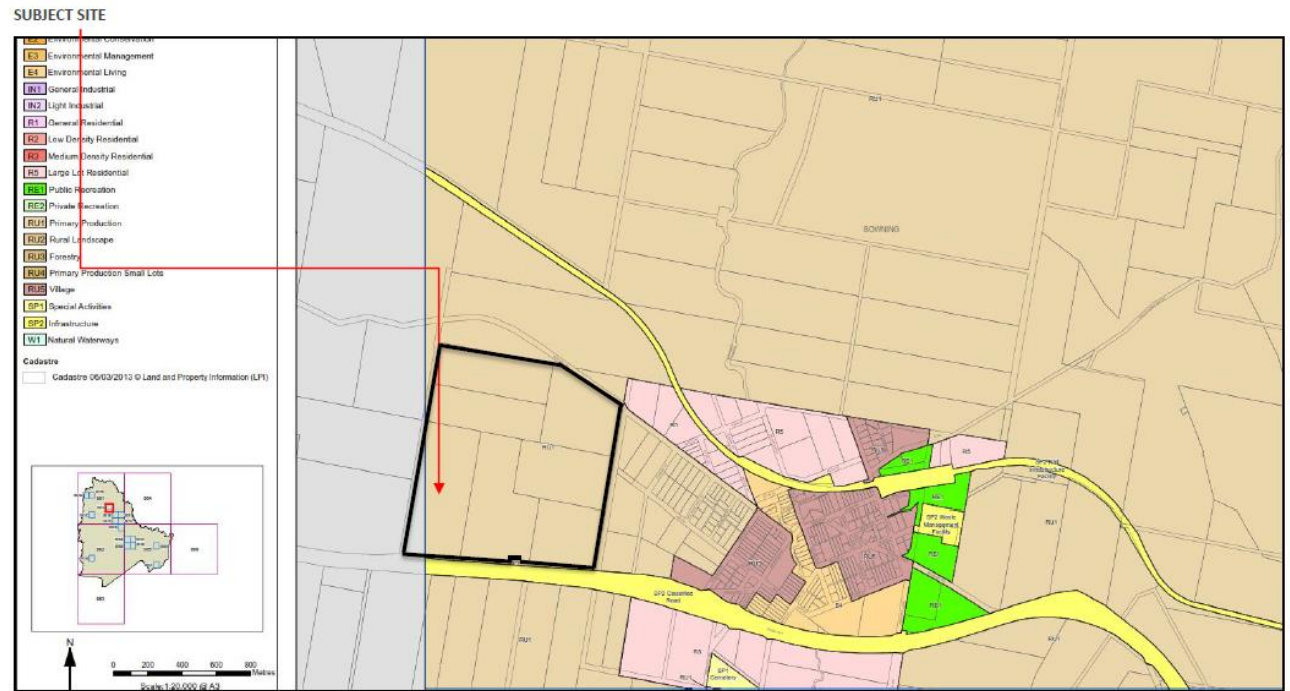
This is also consistent with the Sydney-Canberra Corridor Regional Strategy ie

'Local environmental plans are to limit inappropriate adjoining development and access points off the Hume Highway, Barton Highway, Federal Highway, Illawarra Highway and the Kings Highway.'

2. Planning Proposal

An amendment is sought to the Yass Valley LEP 2013 to allow the development of a Highway Service Centre at 27782 Hume Highway, Bowning. The land is located on the northern side of the Hume Highway, to the immediate west of Bowning Village (refer **Figure 1**).

The total site area is approximately 121ha, however it is proposed that only 18ha is to be used as a Highway Service Centre.



Source: Yass Valley LEP 2013

Figure 1: Proposed Highway Service Centre location

The subject site is zoned 'RU1 Primary Production' within the Yass Valley LEP. It abuts the 'SP2 Infrastructure (Classified Road)' zone. A Highway Service Centre is not listed as a permitted use within the 'RU1 Primary Production' zone.

The proponent has requested that a Highway Service Centre be added as an additional permitted use for the site within Schedule 1 of the LEP. This approach is considered acceptable, although rezoning the land to 'SP1 Special Activities (Highway Service Centre)' zone is an alternative mechanism, and consistent with the zoning of the existing Yass Highway Service Centre. The draft Planning Proposal is provided in a Separate Enclosure.

In terms of nearby Highway Service Centre locations- the existing Yass Highway Service Centre which is located on the southern side of the Hume Highway (on Yass Valley Way) is the closest. This is the only Highway Service Centre between Gundagai and Marulan, however Council has recently received a Development Application for another service station opposite the existing Yass Highway Service Centre within the 'IN1 General Industrial' zone – although this appears to be targeted towards servicing the future industrial development of the immediate area.

Vehicle traffic, particularly heavy vehicle freight has altered substantially since the consideration and approval of the existing Yass Highway Service Centre which coincided with the Hume Highway bypassing of Yass Town in 1994.

The draft Planning Proposal includes details on the likely eventual design of the Highway Service Centre, however most of these details would be reviewed and assessed as part of a future Development Application. This proposal is only to consider the suitability of the subject site for the proposed land use.

Parts of the site are identified as having biodiversity values and partly located within an area of groundwater vulnerability (refer **Figure 2**).

A flora and fauna assessment has been undertaken over the site which indicates that the adjacent Crown and Hume Highway road reserves are more likely to contain areas of Box Gum Woodland. The subject site has been cleared for grazing, colonised with mostly exotic pasture plants and weeds. The Yass Daisy was not observed on the site.

Access to the site is more likely to impact on environmental values of the adjacent road reserve, however until the Roads & Maritime Service's requirements are known, these are unable to be assessed.

The Highway Service Centre is proposed to be located on the western portion of the site avoiding the area identified as having groundwater vulnerability. The proponent has advised that the underground storage tanks would be installed according to EPA requirements.

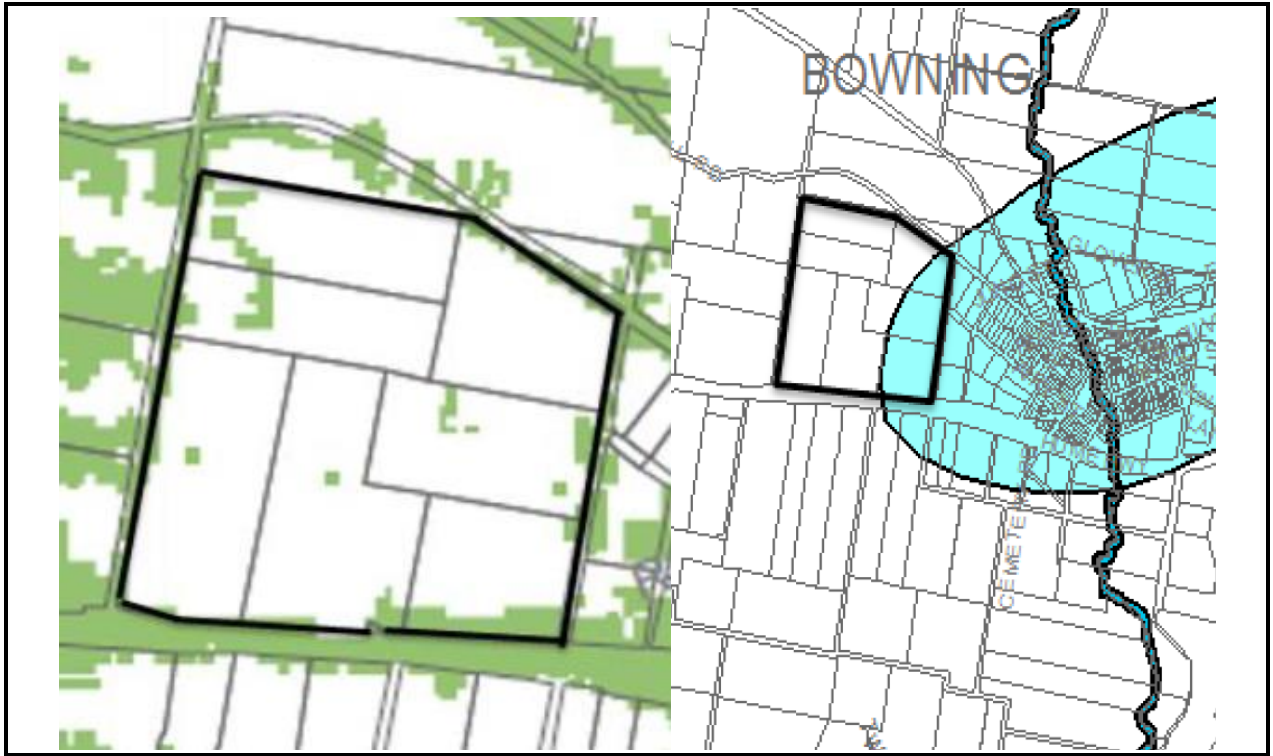


Figure 2: Biodiversity Value (left), Groundwater Vulnerability (right)

An Aboriginal Heritage Due Diligence assessment was also undertaken indicating the results:

'..... found no Aboriginal archaeological objects or areas of archaeological potential within the study area. The study area displayed a (disturbed) agricultural soil structure with minimal to low archaeological potential. According to the OEH Due Diligence Code of Practice for the Protection of Aboriginal Objects in New South Wales, the proposed highway service centre can proceed with caution as it will not impact any Aboriginal objects or Aboriginal places.'

The land is not considered to be highly productive agricultural land, with the land having been cleared in the past and used for grazing. The Department of Primary Industries Land Classification over the site indicates the land has comparatively moderate-low level of production due to constraints.

An Environmental Noise Impact Assessment has also been prepared, although the detailed review of noise would be undertaken as part of any development assessment. The report does state that the main sources of noise will be from mechanical plant, car and truck movements and restaurant patron noise. It also states that the Highway Service Centre is proposed to operate 24 hours a day, 7 days per week. Other details relating to the Highway Service Centre have been based on standard assumptions, as the design has not been finalised. The report concludes that the level of noise emitted will be able to meet the requirements of the EPA's *Industrial Noise Policy* and *Road Noise Policy*.

An exterior lighting design has also been submitted regarding light spill and glare onto nearby dwellings (closest is approximately 550m on the opposite side of the Highway). Again, this level of detail is not able to be confirmed at this time and is considered as part of any development assessment.

3. Roads & Maritime Services

There is no current Roads & Maritime Services' (RMS) strategy for Highway Service Centres along the Hume Highway, nor are they referenced in the Department of Planning & Environment's *Draft South East and Tablelands Plan*.

There is both an RMS Policy and DP&E Minister's s117 Direction for the Pacific Highway, and although the Pacific Highway is very different in its function and alignment, the framework of the policy can be referred to in this instance.

The intent of the Policy and Direction is to protect highway safety and efficiency, and the Government's considerable investment in it. The policy also aims at keeping retailing activity within settlements, where it is best placed to serve the community, but at the same time providing for strategically placed highway service centres.

In selecting sites for Highway Service Centres along the Pacific Highway, there was an emphasis given to locations close to bypassed towns so the economic benefits can remain with those centres. In this regard, Bowning was bypassed – although this deviation of the Hume was completed and through traffic removed in 1973.

Travel time intervals between existing/planned Highway Service Centres on the Pacific Highway vary between 25 minutes and 1 hour 10 minutes.

The current travel times on the Hume Highway from the existing Yass Highway Service Centre are:

- Yass Highway Service Centre (south side Hume Highway to Gundagai North Highway Service Centre - 52 minutes
- Yass Highway Service Centre (south side Hume Highway) to Marulan Highway Service Centre - 1 hour 11 minutes

There is no Highway Service Centre with frontage to the northern side of the Hume between Gundagai North and Marulan, however vehicles can currently access services indirectly by exiting the highway at Goulburn or Yass.

The proponent has provided a Transport Impact Assessment. While this assessment covers matters usually covered within the detailed design and assessment process, the report includes the following conclusions:

- Proposed development would not generate any additional new vehicle trips, instead providing for vehicles passing the site
- Assumes a draw off ratio of 15-20% of existing Hume Highway traffic- site could be expected to attract 100 vehicles in any peak hour
- Notes that the peak season for this site is mostly associated with winter – people returning from the ski fields
- Need to prevent westbound traffic attempting to crossover the Highway by removing existing links/cut throughs. Propose to create a 4km diversion as a deterrent

This site, having direct Hume Highway frontage and being adjacent to an existing settlement – which has been previously bypassed by the highway - is considered to have sufficient merit to allow it to progress through the DP&E's Gateway process to allow further consideration. The site's rural locale and distance from nearby dwellings also means that noise and light spill issues are likely to be able to be addressed.

If DP&E recommends that the Planning Proposal should proceed, it will issue a determination to Council accordingly, outlining public agency referral requirements – particularly those of RMS. It will also advise community consultation requirements stating the minimum required public exhibition period.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION

Key Pillar	1. Our Environment
CSP Strategy	EN4 - Maintain a balance between growth, development and environmental protection through sensible planning
Delivery Program Action	EN4.1 - Ensure Council's statutory planning instruments are up to date and reflective of the community needs
Operational Plan Activity	EN4.1.1 – Undertake ongoing strategic land use planning and reviews of existing instruments

Attachments: A. Draft Bowning HSC Planning Proposal *(Under Separate Cover)*