

Strategic Planning Section
February 1999

COBARGO

RURAL RESIDENTIAL LAND SUPPLY

DRAFT LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL STUDY

ENJOY THE SAPPHIRE COAST

BEGA VALLEY SHIRE COUNCIL



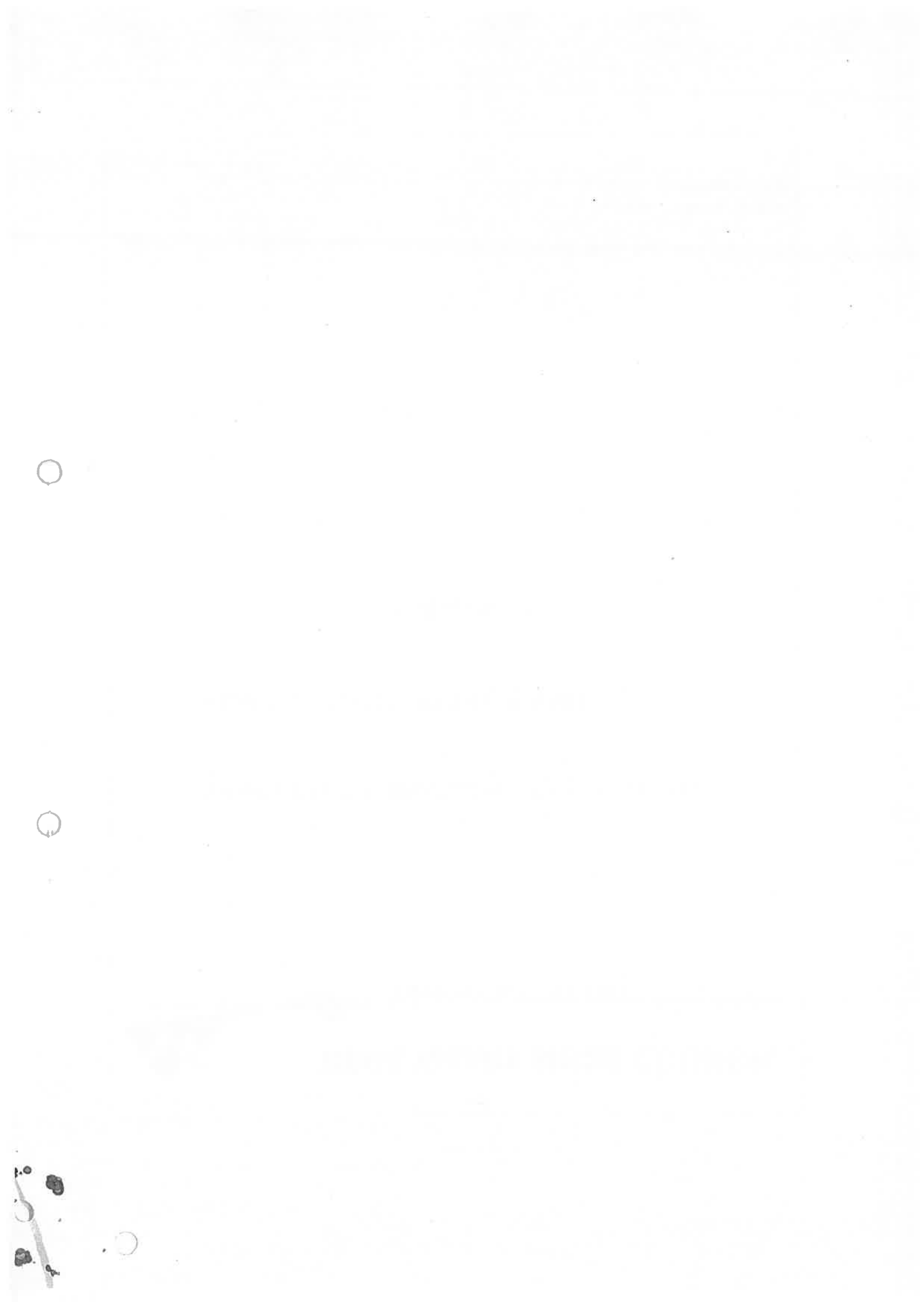


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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of the Report

The purpose of this report is to provide a 20 year supply of rural residential land for the Cobargo area.

1.2 Background

The report attempts to implement the strategic actions proposed in the Bega Valley Shire Local Strategy for Residential and Rural Land Supply 1997 which was endorsed by Council on 13 May 1997. The Local Strategy was prepared to implement the 1997 Lower South Coast Settlement Strategy with respect to land supply for residential and rural use through to the year 2016. The Local Strategy establishes a detailed schedule to be addressed in the preparation of individual planning reports for each area.

The Local Strategy indicates the following planning tasks in relation to Cobargo Rural Small Holdings:

- Investigate potential to provide a small 1(c) zone in close proximity to Cobargo (maximum 20 to 30 lots). This may include rationalisation of part or all of the current 10 zone.
- Investigate the alternative of increasing concessional allotment supply within a 10 km radius of Cobargo.

This report should be read in conjunction with the Draft Study Map and above-mentioned study and Development Control Plan for Cobargo Village.

The overall conclusion of this study is that the Cobargo area, measured within a 10 km radius has an adequate land supply for the 20 years projection. The report proposes only minor further areas to be developed given development constraints such as topography, agricultural land quality, access and drainage.

1.3 Objectives

The objectives of the report are:

- to define rural residential development for the Cobargo area;
- to rationalise the 10 zone within the Cobargo area;
- to categorise the rural land within the study area based on topography, access, services, flooding and water ways; and
- to improve catchment management of the area including vegetation, catchment values, soil management and visual presentation for Cobargo.

2. AREA OF THE PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT

The town of Cobargo is located 40 km north of Bega and 13 km west of Bermagui. It is situated on the Princes Highway which provides a convenient regional north-south connection. The Bermagui/Cobargo Road runs from Cobargo to the coast at Bermagui. The area of the preliminary assessment includes the rural surroundings of the Cobargo town except the land to the south of the town. It is shown on Map No. 2. This area was assessed in respect to environmental conditions such as topography, soil quality, hydrology and servicing systems (access, potential for dams or town water, power, etc.). As a result of this investigation, two areas were further considered for rural residential purposes.

2.1 Natural Resources

2.1.1 Topography

The study area is undulating to hilly with more than 3 degrees and no more than 8 degrees of slope. Several gullies drain to the local creeks with a junction near the centre of the village. These include Wilgo Creek, Murrabrine Creek and Narira Creek. The topography and vegetation cover change in the proximity of the State Forests to the north and south of Cobargo.

2.1.2 Soil

The assessment of agricultural soil quality is based on 'Agricultural Land Classification Atlas' prepared by the Department of Agriculture New South Wales in 1986. There are 5 classes that indicate the agricultural quality of the land. The highest quality land is Class 1, the lowest quality Class 5. Department of Agriculture recommend that land classified 1 to 3 should be retained for farming purposes.

Most of the study area falls within land classified in class 3. These are lands well suited to pasture improvement that may be cultivated for an occasional crop depending on the nature of the existing constraints. Overall there is moderate suitability for agriculture.

The nature of many of the holdings in the study area is mostly of small lots not viable in isolation for professional agriculture.

2.1.3 Acid Sulfate Soil

According to the Acid Sulfate Soil Planning Mapping for the Bega Valley Shire there are no acid sulfate soils in the vicinity of the Cobargo area.

2.1.4 Vegetation

The current extent of forested land in the Cobargo area consists of a narrow tract of eucalypt forest extending from the Murrah State Forest in an approximately northern direction to the southern outskirts of the town. From there it becomes scattered mature trees across the approximately 4.5 km gap to the Bodalla State Forest. Areas where tree cover is most intact include the rivers and drainage lines.

2.2 Existing Land Use and Current Planning Controls

The study area includes land zoned 1(a) Rural and Future Urban zone 10. Future Urban areas are situated west of and north of the village. These are currently undeveloped with one dwelling on the western part. The rest of the study area is zoned Rural 1(a) and is partially fragmented along the Cobargo Bermagui Road and the Princes Highway. Characteristic features of the area are large dairy farms particularly in the northern and western part of the study area. For existing zoning see map No. 1.

2.3 Services

2.3.1 Water Supply

The Cobargo village has a reticulated water supply. Most dwelling houses within the study area have individual water supply.

2.3.2 Sewer

The Cobargo area is currently not served with a reticulated sewerage scheme, the majority of residences being served by septic tanks with absorption trenches, with some aerated septic tanks with local effluent irrigation systems. This has raised concerns both from the local community regarding the impact of effluent overflow from the absorption trenches and the Environment Protection Authority regarding treatment and disposal of effluent.

CMPS&F Pty Limited Environmental Engineering Division has prepared "Feasibility Study for Provision of Sewerage Services to Cobargo, Candelo, Wolumla and Kalaru", 1997. The feasibility study has considered various options for the reticulation/collection system, treatment plant and effluent management for each village. However further investigation and discussion with other authorities is required to assist Council in selecting a preferred option for each village.

In relation to Cobargo the study includes land zoned village and future urban with an exemption of small areas where there are difficulties with the provision of water supply. A suggested Sewage Treatment Works site is located southeast of the village and is shown on the Map No. 2 with 400 m buffer.

Furthermore, costs of building accesses across the gullies and creeks could be excessively expensive and uneconomic in some cases.

Undulating to hilly topography of the study area with a dense network of creeks and gullies is another constraint for rural residential development. As development for rural residential purposes involves on site waste disposal gully floors need to be excluded to reduce the pollution of waterways.

2.4.3 Topography/Drainage

Although Cobargo has a convenient road network, the provision of safe and legal access is not always possible. Existing access points from the Princes Highway have in some cases poor sight distances which do not comply with RTA guidelines. The situation is worse in higher speed limit areas where required sight distances are much greater. The inability to provide safe and legal access is one of the major constraints for development of this area. As a matter of policy Council and the RTA seek to minimise additional access points onto major roads.

2.4.2 Access

The area of preliminary assessment has good quality agricultural land with a predominance of agricultural land of suitability class three as identified by NSW Agriculture. It is used for farming purposes. This land should be retained for agricultural use where holding sizes are adequate and fragmentation should be prevented.

2.4.1 Agricultural Quality

There are some factors that limit or exclude land from potential for rural small holding development.

2.4 Constraints on Development

Cobargo has sufficient infrastructure to support a larger population especially with the embellishment of existing facilities.

A variety of shopping needs are met in the town with a general store, newsagent, butcher, baker, service stations, hardware, pharmacist etc.

Other community facilities include the CWA Hall, meeting rooms, mobile library and the village hall.

Community facilities for the study area are concentrated in the Cobargo village. There is a number of sporting facilities including a nine hole golf club, football field, tennis courts, swimming pool, equestrian facilities and squash courts.

2.3.3 Community Services

2.4.4 Catchment Protection

The Cobargo area lies within the Narira Creek Catchment. The area has a network of creeks and gullies which divide it into several smaller sub-catchments. Flowing from west to east Wilgo and Murrabrine Creeks join together in the village and create Narira Creek, which is the main waterway in the study area and flows ultimately to Wallaga Lake.

The "Stressed Rivers Assessment Report" (DLWC, 1998) contains an assessment of the environmental stress of the freshwater sub-catchments within the Bega Catchment. The Narira Creek is also included in this study. The following are the assessed indicators and their rating for the Narira Creek:

- | | | |
|-----|--------------------------------------|---|
| (1) | <i>extent of riparian vegetation</i> | - over half the creek has lost its riparian vegetation; this parameter has a high rating, |
| (2) | <i>geomorphological health,</i> | - over half the channel in this reach of creek is unstable; geomorphology is also rated high, |
| (3) | <i>barriers to fish passage</i> | - no dams or barriers to fish on the creek; this parameter is rated low, |
| (4) | <i>present of major dams</i> | |
| (5) | <i>catchment landuse</i> | - 64% of the catchment has been cleared; the land use rating is medium. |

General conclusion of the report is that:

"Narira Creek and its tributaries are at risk from further rural residential development incorporating riparian rights. Intensive water demand or any other development requiring constant water supply would be a major risk in this sub-catchment. Further deterioration in the stability of the water course could increasingly deteriorate the capacity of the catchment to both yield water in good quality and quantity but also the access to that water would be at risk. Stabilising the riparian zone would be of benefit to this catchment and those who rely on the water within it."

Comment

The low density of the proposed development would have minimal catchment impacts.

During development assessment opportunity will be taken to improve revegetation of waterways.

supply (dams/bore/rain) is considered appropriate for further in Site 1 would be generally not warrant a new reservoir.

and areas are in the close proximity to the village and can be serviced by community facilities, in Cobargo

LAND AND DEMAND ANALYSIS FOR THE COBARGO

d Demand

for rural residential lots was based on dwelling approvals granted in the 1997. It was estimated that an average of 11 dwelling houses per year were estimated to be within a 10 km radius of the village itself, Quanaama village and the Cobargo village but does not include the 9 km east of Cobargo the Bernagui Road. estimate of the 20 year demand is 22 lots.

old of land supply

3 sources of land supply for residential and rural residential purposes in the area, namely:

illage zone, proposed in this report 1(c) zone and clause 42 amendment LEP; and concessional lot entitlements.

lage Zone

al development of the Cobargo village is the subject of a separate Draft Control Plan and it is not the subject of this study.

posals of this Report

ort proposes changes in planning controls, which would result in 13 additional residential lots.

3. AREAS PROPOSED FOR REZONING

3.1 Identification

As a result of the investigation of the study area, the following areas, shown on the Map No. 4, are proposed to be considered for rural residential development.

- Site 1
Charlotte Street, north of Cobargo
- Site 2
Lot 6133 DP 814585

3.2 Location/Zoning/Landuse

• Site 1

This area adjoins an approved subdivision (1997) and the northern part of the village. Access to Area 1 is via unsealed Charlotte Street.

Currently this area comprises 3 zones: (V) Village, 1(a) Rural and 10 Future Urban. The total area is 40 ha. The village zone has an old subdivision of 15 lots. There is only one dwelling house within this zone. The 1(a) zoned land north of the Charlotte Street has an approved subdivision of 6 concessional lots (1997). The study area includes the land adjoining this subdivision to the west.

The area zoned 10 adjoining the village is undeveloped. Both V village and 10 zoned areas are evidently within one ownership.

The land is used for grazing purposes.

• Site 2

Lot 6133 is situated east of the Cobargo village and north of the Bermagui Cobargo Road. The western boundary of the lot is an unformed Crown Road. There is a dwelling house on the lot situated relatively close to the Bermagui Cobargo Road.

The owner of Lot 6133 has previously requested its rezoning.

3.3 Vegetation/Threatened Species

Areas where tree cover is most intact include the rivers and drainage lines, of which one unnamed creek runs through the northern section of Site 1. To date, there is no direct evidence of koalas using the area during dispersal and given the infrequent recording of the species it is expected that the survey effort required to prove or disprove this point would be significant. However, koala populations are known to occur in the Murrumbidgee State Forest and it may be that remnant forest, scattered trees, and riparian vegetation in the Cobargo area provide an occasional, albeit fragmented, dispersal corridor between the

Murrah and Bodalla State Forests. In fact, it is likely that recorded sightings of this species in the area are of dispersing young animals.

For this reason, some consideration should be given to the retention of and rehabilitation of fauna corridors, in particular at Site 1.

For the purpose of threatened species assessment in accordance with Section 5A of the EP&A Act, it is not expected that subdivision of Sites 1 and 2 into lots with a minimum average area of 5 hectares would result in an effect on threatened species, provided that there are provisions for retaining existing tree cover, especially on creeks and gully lines, and encouraging the replacement of locally indigenous native vegetation.

3.4 Services

Roads/Access

• Site 1 Charlotte Street

The access to this area is proposed via Charlotte Street from the Princes Highway. Currently this road is unsealed. Upgrading of the road would be needed at the subdivision stage. It is envisaged this can be effected in an economic manner from development contributions.

• Site 2

This site adjoining to the Cobargo Bermagui Road has an access to the existing dwelling house on Lot 6133.

It is assessed that the existing access is close to the best that can be achieved for an entrance from the Cobargo Bermagui Road. Sight distance from the west is just under 300 metres and from the east around 180 metres. The existing access with improvements should be able to be used for future subdivision. No further access points should be permitted.

Sewer

On site effluent disposal is proposed for the potential development areas. Detailed investigation and soil tests would be undertaken at DA stage at proposed sites in order to determine the nature of the soil and deeper materials present and the degree to which soil limits septic absorption potential.

Environmental & Health Protection Guidelines "On-site Sewage Management for Single Household, 1998" provides further information for potential developers.

The low density of the proposed development should comply readily with the Guidelines provided low lying areas are avoided and high standard soil and water requirements imposed.

No longer meets RMs for sight distance specification



This report proposes changes in planning controls, which would result in 13 additional rural residential lots.

The Proposals of this Report

Residential development of the Cobargo village is the subject of a separate Draft Development Control Plan and it is not the subject of this study.

The V Village Zone

- (1) Village zone,
- (2) As proposed in this report 1(c1) zone and clause 42 amendment LEP, and
- (3) Concessional lot entitlements.

R5

Cobargo area, namely:

There are 3 sources of land supply for residential and rural residential purposes in the

4.2 Yield of land supply

Hence, an estimate of the 20 year demand is 220 lots.

The demand for rural residential lots was based on dwelling approvals granted in the years 1995-1997. It was estimated that an average of 11 dwelling houses per year were approved for that period. The area to which the estimate applies is that within a 10 km radius of Cobargo village but does not include the village itself, Quama village and the 1(c) zone approximately 9 km east of Cobargo on the Bermagui Road.

4.1 Land Demand

4. YIELD AND DEMAND ANALYSIS FOR THE COBARGO AREA

Both proposed areas are in the close proximity to the village and can be serviced by existing community facilities, in Cobargo.

Other Services

Private water supply (dams/bores/rain tanks) is considered appropriate for further development proposed in this report. Water pressure in Site 1 would be generally extremely low and the density of development does not warrant a new reservoir.

Water Supply

Approvals last 20 yrs.
Average 5/yr
Estimate 20 yrs = 20x
inc = 100

locality
Cobargo
RUI
R5

Concessional Allotments

It is estimated that nearly 400 concessional lot entitlements are left within a radius of 10 km of the Cobargo village. This area is zoned 1(a) and also includes a considerable area of State Forests. The estimate area is shown on Map No. 3. The Quama village, the 1(c) zone 9 km east of Cobargo and the Cobargo village area itself are excluded from the demand/yield analysis.

Is should be stressed that this number does not reflect environmental conditions, current land uses and services provided and other factors which can affect the practicable number of dwelling lots. It is considered unlikely that more than 200 lots could be practically and economically created within 10km of Cobargo and perhaps 40 lots within 2km of Cobargo.

Total no of dwelling lots for rural residential purposes from all sources within 10km of Cobargo is estimated at about 200.

However within 2km radius this potential drops to approximately 60 lots (with allowance for 20 new lots in the proposed rezoning).

5. SUMMARY

The overall conclusion of this study is that a small additional yield of 15-20 lots close to Cobargo is warranted immediately. This can be supplied from sites 1 and 2.

There appears to be adequate potential in concessional lots to address the remainder of requirements for short term rural small holding supply.

Village lot supply is being assessed separately as part of the proposed Cobargo Village DCP. However there is adequate land both within the village zone and 10 zoned lands on the Wandellow Road to meet medium term demand for village lots. Sewering of Cobargo is likely will further increase subdivision potential of the current urban area.

The land monitor will pick up changes in demand and Council will review supply needs every 5 or so years.

The environmental impacts of the proposed additional 15-20 lots are considered acceptable. The lot density (average of 1 lot per 5 hectares) will ensure adequate areas for waste disposal and dams for water supply without the need for Council to provide reticulated water. Catchment protection can be enhanced by requiring revegetation works in gullies as part of DA conditions.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

That Council resolve to prepare Draft Bega Valley Local Environmental Plan 1987 (Amendment No. 121) to propose implementation of the Cobargo Draft Local Environmental Study on Rural Residential land supply as follows:

- (a) that area 1 be rezoned to 1(c1) Rural Small Holdings (Hobby Farm) with minimum average lot size 5 ha. (See Map No. 4).
- (b) that Lot 6133, DP 814585 be considered for subdivision of up to 5 lots (4 having frontage to the Bermagui Cobargo Rd and 1 residue lot to the north).