

**AMENDMENT C375
BARWON HEADS
STRUCTURE PLAN
Planning Submission**

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1. Introduction

St Quentin is managing this submission on behalf of a consortium of landowners identified on the map below (**Submission Site**) which totals just under 40 hectares. The three properties are located between Barwon Heads Road to the south and Tait's Road to the north; and between Murtnaghurt Creek to the west and the existing urban settlement to the east. The **Submission Site** is therefore within the study area boundary as identified within the Barwon Heads Structure Plan (**BHSP**).

The property addresses are as follows:

- 135 Tait's Road, Barwon Heads (1 hectare): Jamie Grant, Matthew Boyd, Jason Olver
- 137 Tait's Road, Barwon Heads (18 hectares): Lee Crawford
- 1941-1949 Barwon Heads Road Barwon Heads (20 hectares): David Fisher



Map showing **Submission Site**.

This submission will identify the shortcomings of Amendment C375 to the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme (**C375**) and the **BHSP** and outline changes to **C375** that facilitate a more equitable and sustainable future for Barwon Heads.

2. Growth

Although the **BHSP** acknowledges the limited housing supply in Barwon Heads, it implies that Council has no obligation to plan for future growth in Barwon Heads. The **BHSP** draws support for this approach from clause 11.02-1 of the State Planning Policy Framework (**SPPF**), which states that *‘residential land supply will be considered on a municipal basis, rather than a town by town basis’*.

However, the **BHSP** is not consistent with other clauses of the SPPF. In particular. Clause 11.05-1 states that it is policy to:

- *“support a network of diverse coastal settlements which provides for a broad range of housing types, economic opportunities and services”; and*
- *“encourage urban renewal and redevelopment opportunities within existing settlements to reduce the demand for urban sprawl.”*

C375 however is seeking to restrict development within the existing settlement boundary by replacing the General Residential Zone with the more restrictive Neighborhood Residential Zone; and replacing the Residential Growth Zone with the more restrictive General Residential Zone. Neither of these amendments are supporting Clause 11.05-1 and will reduce the likelihood of infill development within the town.

We consider that a western expansion of the settlement boundary could assist in addressing the limited housing supply in Barwon Heads and may also provide land supply for other basic services that are needed by the existing community.

The BHSP not only dismisses the notion of expanding the settlement boundary, but also restricts development within the settlement boundary. C375 is therefore not consistent with the SPPF.

3. Wetlands

We agree that the wetlands around Barwon Heads are of significance and deserve to be protected. However, the **BHSP** relies on a series of assumptions regarding the ‘substantial threat’ to these wetlands posed by development to the west of the settlement boundary, without any evidence to support such assumptions. As acknowledged in the **BHSP**, Council has not undertaken a detailed feasibility assessment of individual sites.

If Council is to consider the potential impacts to the wetlands then it should do so within a detailed, site specific context, taking into account a range of development options. It should not simply rely on its own assumptions of how a development will look or use anecdotal evidence from other previously approved developments upstream, which Council now considers to be inappropriate.

The BHSP should remove all arguments for not extending the western boundary due to the potential impacts on significant biodiversity and sensitive environments, because this is simply unsubstantiated.

4. Alternative Types of Development

We do not propose that intensive development of the western boundary area would be appropriate for Barwon Heads or the wetlands, rather we seek a sustainable approach to any development.

The **BHSP** states (page 10) that:

'It is acknowledged that any development of land on the western edge could be designed to be "hidden" from view, thus minimizing visual intrusion on the landscape. However, attempts to minimize the visual intrusion of urban form, with the provision of setbacks and minimal access points, would lead to the development of isolated urban areas which lack connections to the broader township given limited connection points. There is also the prospect of further substantial urban growth to the extent that the village atmosphere of the township would be threatened and its centralised services and facilities over-stretched'.

In effect, the **BHSP** assumes that it is not possible to design an innovative, sustainable and efficient development that is hidden from view, protects the environment and does not erode the village atmosphere.

An expansion to the western boundary could involve well-planned development with large separation distances to environmental values, plenty of parkland and vegetation, integrated water management, highly sustainable development outcomes and great linkages to the existing town.

5. Flawed Community Consultation Methods

In rejecting the westward expansion of the settlement boundary, the **BHSP** relies heavily on 'significant community opposition to development'.

The Save Barwon Heads Alliance (**SBHA**) conducted a campaign which resulted in the submission of 96 hard copy responses with another 875 being submitted through an online survey managed by the **SBHA**. This portal encouraged respondents to choose from pre-written responses as opposed to submitting their own opinions on the possible change to the western boundary. This point and click response should not carry much weight by Council in planning for the future of Barwon Heads as they do not represent the opinions of residents, rather they represent the opinion of residents on a series of leading statements put to them by the **SBHA**. It is important to note that only 642 of the **SBHA** respondents resided in Barwon Heads, representing just 16.5% of the population.

Council has included the online survey prepared by the **SBHA** as part of their supposed 1,000 submissions and more importantly uses the survey responses to back their stance that there is significant community opposition to the expansion of the settlement boundary. Council should give less weight to submissions made as a result of the **SBHA** campaign.

Council should remove any claim from the BHSP that the decision not to extend the western boundary is due to significant community opposition.

6. Conclusion

Although the **BHSP** acknowledges the lack of land supply in Barwon Heads, it does not offer any method of achieving growth in Barwon Heads. **C375** also reduces the potential for infill development. We consider that a western expansion of the settlement boundary could achieve a net community benefit by addressing the limited land supply in Barwon Heads, and also providing land supply for other basic services that are needed by the existing community.