



Environment,
Land, Water
and Planning

Community Consultation Report | December 2016

Project Background

The City of Greater Geelong, Wyndham City and the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning are working together to deliver the Avalon Corridor Strategy. The Strategy will set the long term strategic land use direction for the area between Lara and Werribee.

Hansen Partnership were appointed as the lead consultant to deliver the Strategy and are working with other consultants with expertise in ecology, engineering and economics.

At the commencement of the project it was decided to undertake consultation with the community with two specific aims;

1. Informing the community that the project was being undertaken, introducing them to the project funding partners and the project consultant team, and
2. Gaining important local information about what the community valued about the corridor, what issues they felt the project needed to address and to glean what their vision for the corridor was.

Consultation Methods

The community consultation occurred between **26 October** and **25 November 2016**. Consultation was publicised via the preparation of a community bulletin (Appendix A) which was included on the internet, newspaper advertisements in the Star Weekly, Geelong Advertiser and the Geelong Independent, leaflet drop and direct mail out, or email to community groups and landowners and occupiers in the study area.

A drop in session was held on 10 November 2016 at the Mechanics Institute in Little River. An online survey was made available between 26 October and 25 November 2016. A copy of the survey is included at Appendix B.

The project partners recognise and wish to acknowledge the considerable involvement of the community in the project so far. The project website has received over 2400 hits, over 100 survey responses were received and approximately 250 people attended the drop in session.

Purpose of this Report

The purpose of this report is to provide a summary of the information and key findings that arose from the consultation process. A broad range of topics were covered in the responses received and the project team (comprising consultants and officers at the City of Greater Geelong, Wyndham City and DELWP) have collated the information received and summarised it in this report under specific themes. This report will be used to inform further work on the Avalon Corridor Strategy.

The information in this report represents the views of the individuals and the community groups engaged through this process, they do not constitute the views of the project funding partners or the consultancy team.

Themes from Consultation

LITTLE RIVER

- Retain the rural character of Little River by not allowing any further subdivision.
- Keep commercial development, hot house development and large development away from the town.
- Little River school a significant local asset.
- Little River – a great residential location but lacks the full array of services/facilities that are available in urban Geelong or Melbourne.
- Allow more 5-10 acre blocks in Little River-to increase services on offer.
- Noise pollution impacting the town.
- Little River should not just become an extension of Lara or Werribee - it's the last place you can enjoy a rural environment close to Melbourne.

LARA

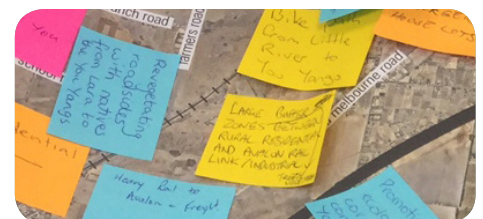
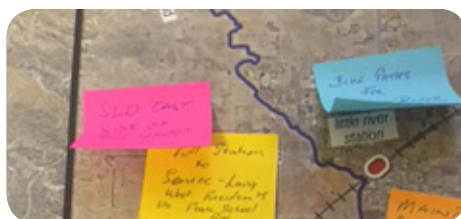
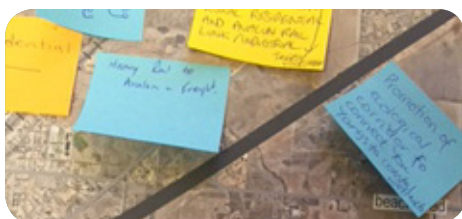
- No more development for Lara.

TOURISM OPPORTUNITIES WITHIN THE CORRIDOR

- The You Yangs should be the key focus of tourism opportunity in the region.
- A large number of overseas tourists were already taking guided tours of the You Yangs which could be increased. Overseas tourists valued nature based activities and You Yangs has this with kangaroos and koalas etc.
- Current tourism deficiency relates to the lack of accommodation within the study area.
- Local tourism organisations were working towards tourism plan, including potential cycle path links through region and connecting to the You Yangs.
- A number of residents within the area mentioned the potential opportunities (tourism mainly) to making the coast more accessible for fisherman and other water based activities.

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

- The landscape values around You Yangs should be further protected by an increase in the area of the Significant Landscape Overlay.
- Important to preserve landscape vistas to You Yangs – especially north side of the freeway. Industrial uses should not be allowed to degrade these views.
- Suggested we should consult with Film Victoria to determine the value of the film industry in the region – based on the extent of filming conducted at the You Yangs and surrounding properties (including in Little River).
- Existing and proposed quarries around You Yangs were of concern due to landscape impact.
- Some farming activities such as the construction of large hot house structures were having a negative impact on the rural vista/ landscapes around the You Yangs.
- Development should be sympathetic to the You Yangs.
- Need to keep rural land-not just land for housing and industry.

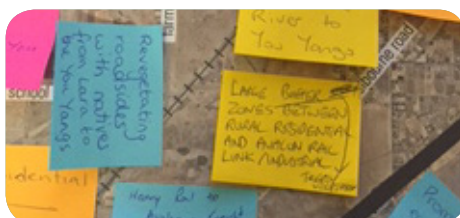


ACCESS AND MOVEMENT

- Existing and proposed quarries around the You Yangs were of concern due to physical impacts of truck movements.
- Trucks associated with existing quarries to the west of the You Yangs are problematic to the safety of road users / cyclists i.e. roads not wide enough to accommodate 2 trucks passing and trucks impacting on structural integrity of heritage bridge.
- Area of Little River on the Greater Geelong side and a single exit point in the event of a fire. A secondary access road towards the rail line should be investigated as a priority.
- A number of Lara and Little River residents commute to Melbourne and believe that there needs to be investigation for new station (in-between the two towns to provide for the new Lara West residents) accessed via Peak School Road but also the spur from the new Wyndham Vale Station to provide access to the Werribee Train Station.
- Need bike paths from Little River to You Yangs.
- Need bike paths from Lara to the You Yangs.
- Need for bike paths to Lara train station.
- A bike path should be included on Avalon Road.
- The rail line to Avalon Airport should include allowance for freight.
- Need for a second crossing over the river near the Little River pub in the event of fire.
- Single lane roads in growth areas.
- Truck routes from Bacchus Marsh Road to the Highway need to be addressed.
- Good location to build jobs hub for low skilled employment in the west. Air, rail and road freight distribution would compare favourably to Tullamarine in terms of affordability, access to workforce and traffic flow.

PLANNING CONTROLS

- The Western Grasslands Reserve is problematic. It is a good concept but has failed in implementation i.e. no money to buy/ acquire land has created land blight for many land owners. Also no money for the ongoing management of the grasslands which are significantly weed infested and degraded. It needs to be managed like a farm and not a parkland reserve.
- One landowner of land in Melton Shire was of the view that the process for selecting the location of the Western Grassland Reserve did not adequately take into account economic issues in their creation. They are advocating that the land affected by the Airport Environs Overlay for Avalon Airport should be the site for relocation of the Western Grasslands Reserve since it will be noise encumbered.
- Land around Boomaroo Nursery (and Avalon Airport) should be rezoned for complementary uses.
- Many Little River residents expressed dismay towards the 'split governance' of the township due to the two municipalities taking different approaches to zoning/policy.
- If commercial/industrial development were to occur south of the freeway, residents located close to the former saltworks would like to see appropriate buffers in place to protect their amenity.
- Smaller allotments within the Farming Zone should be rezoned to Rural Living Zone.
- A Significant Landscape Overlay should be applied on the east and west side of Little River.
- Land to the north east of Lara should be rezoned from Rural Living to allow for urban residential development.
- Need for buffers to separate rural residential development and Avalon rail and industrial development.



AGRICULTURE

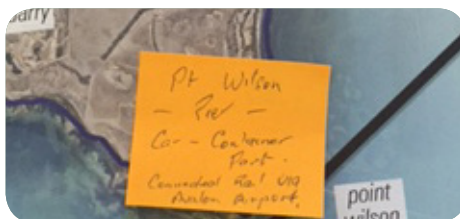
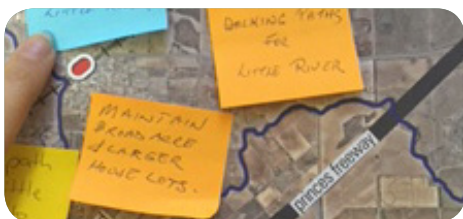
- Substantial farming/ agricultural activities being conducted on land around the You Yangs. Land is a viable farming resource, although land has been fragmented and current farming practices tend to lean towards large land holdings. Notwithstanding, farming can still be economically viable.
- Hot houses have significant amenity impact in rural living areas.
- Food security for metropolitan Melbourne is an important consideration.
- Agriculture is an important employer and contributor to the economy of the region and Victoria.
- Some farmers want to stop farming as water is low. Farmland can be found elsewhere. This land is 30 kilometres to the city and is too valuable for farming
- Keep Melbourne within the growth boundary and use the outskirts for food production.

WATER AND DRAINAGE

- Potential access to recycled water as a resource would be positive – but current cost of recycled water does not make it commercially viable.
- Drainage issues already cause problems for residents.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

- Concern over the Lara Intermodal site remained a significant concern to many and would strongly oppose it again if the proposal was reactivated.
- A large number of Little River residents expressed opposition of commercial/ business/ industrial land use between the township and Princess Highway, but were less concerned with this activity being conducted south of the Highway around Avalon.
- Land under ANEF noise contours should be the focus for industrial/ employment use.
- Desire among some people/or historic assumption to be able to subdivide larger farming or rural residential allotments for conventional residential development.
- Residential development should be allowed-area had good access to transport and job opportunities. Will help housing affordability.
- General view that the study area provided lifestyle opportunities and should not accommodate urban expansion/ development. Should remain and maintain its open/rural character.
- Opportunity for a car import terminal at Point Wilson which could connect to the rail network via Avalon Airport.
- Further subdivision of land adjacent existing industrial/commercial activity supports their business.
- Rural living areas should be able to further subdivide.
- Land in the area is very well located, close to road, rail and bus transport. It is over due for retail development to serve fast growing areas of Melbourne's western suburbs.
- Increased pressure to house more people-who can't all work in CBD Melbourne.
- Don't support development of the area-this open space is part of what makes the area great to live in.
- West is underserved with employment compared to the east of Melbourne.



ENVIRONMENT

- Strong views of the environmental assets to the south of Princess Highway – both river and coastal – which should be protected and enhanced.
- Significant flora and fauna values in the You Yangs, the Melbourne Water land and along the coast line.
- Promotion of ecological corridor from You Yangs to coastal wetlands.
- Need for roadside revegetation works from Lara to You Yangs.
- Space around Serendip and the You Yangs for animals to travel.
- Important environmental values including grasslands that are threatened through Victoria.

AIRPORT IMPACTS

- Residents of Avalon are concerned about noise in the event of the development of the east-west runway at the airport.
- Concern from some residents/ landowners in Little River (Wyndham side) over future expansion of Avalon Airport and ANEF contours of ultimate Avalon Airport runway scenario re: Aircraft noise and quality of life, and effect on value of land and ability to subdivide for residential use in the future.
- One resident advocated it was unfair – that they moved to Little River for the peace and quiet, but can't afford to move elsewhere now – so should be allowed to subdivide their land for housing.
- The current and future role of Avalon Airport is an opportunity for the region.
- Avalon airport and associated industrial/commercial could be a significant asset.
- Expansion of operations and international flights at Avalon Airport a good thing – opportunity to fly fresh produce direct to China and Asian markets.
- More airport development south of the Highway.
- Avalon Airport should be upgraded to be an international airport, it needs a fuel pipeline connection.

HERITAGE

- Need to protect areas of significance especially any Aboriginal Archaeological sites.

What happens now?

Feedback from the Drop in Session and the online survey will now be used to inform the preparation of the Draft Avalon Corridor Strategy. It is anticipated that this will be completed in the second quarter of 2017. You will have the opportunity to have your say on this draft document and further drop in sessions will be held.

Refer to following pages for Community Bulletin 1 (Appendix A) & Survey (Appendix B)