

Registrar

Victorian Planning Authority
Level 23, 35 Collins Street
MELBOURNE VIC 3000
via email: amendments@vpa.vic.gov.au

18 December 2020

Dear Registrar

**Craigieburn West Precinct Structure Plan Submission
1520 & 1530 Mickleham Road, Craigieburn**

Tract has been engaged by the SVR2 Pty Ltd ATF The SVR2 Discretionary Trust (SVR2) to review and make submissions on their behalf in relation to the draft Craigieburn West Precinct Structure Plan ('the PSP').

SVR2 is contracted to purchase two allotments at the northeast corner of the intersection of Mickleham and Craigieburn Road (the Site). The land is identified as Lots 1 and 2 on LP55516 (1520 & 1530 Mickleham Road, Mickleham) and is identified in Figure 1 below.

On behalf of the SVR2, we commend the VPA on the preparation and exhibition of the draft PSP. This submission is broadly supportive of the PSP however identifies minor refinements that would assist in its interpretation and implementation.



Figure 1 - Subject Site

Overview

The draft Craigieburn West PSP identifies the Site for residential development. This designation is supported. As noted, the Site is located at the corner of Mickleham Road and Craigieburn Road, two key arterial roads within the growth area. To accommodate future traffic flows, the draft PSP proposes the substantial upgrading of the intersection. It is anticipated that the upgraded intersection would likely comprise up to ten lanes in each direction in accordance with VPA template design.

The potential for the Site for residential development is constrained by its location at the corner of two major arterial roads. The amenity of this Site, particularly close to its two frontages would be substantially impacted by future traffic flow, particularly if the intersection upgrade results in a ten-lane formation. The noise associated with traffic would likely be a deterrent for future residents and pedestrian amenity would be compromised.

In this context, the Site is considered to offer limited amenity for future conventional residential use however is well suited for convenience uses and complementary services to serve passing traffic and residents within the broader growth corridor. We note that these uses are permissible within a residential zone however the PSP should more explicitly identify the opportunity to achieve this outcome.

In particular, we suggest that the PSP be amended to include a notation that clearly identifies the Site as having potential to accommodate a service station, convenience uses and complementary services.

Service and convenience centre opportunity

SVR2's aspiration is to develop the site for a convenience centre comprising a fuel offering, one or two convenience restaurants, a convenience shop and potentially a medical centre and/or childcare centre. These uses would leverage off the Site's convenient access and provide facilities to support the emerging community of Craigieburn West. They would offer local employment and promote land use diversity within the corridor.

We note that the nearest service station along Mickleham Road sits around 6km away in Greenvale. The nearest service station along Craigieburn Road is approximately 2.8km away, towards the centre of Craigieburn. All nearest convenience restaurants are situated closer to the centre of Craigieburn and other surrounding suburbs. It is evident that the proposed use would not result in an agglomeration of services stations or convenience restaurants. A service station or convenience restaurant would be well-placed along this section of Mickleham Road.

The provision of convenience services and related uses on the Site would reduce the likelihood of these uses being provided on sites with better amenity and attributes for residential development or fine grain commercial products. In general, corner sites represent preferred locations for convenience-related activities. A mid-block outcome or an alternative location on lower order roads has potential to compromise the future residential character of the area.

We note that a cluster of appropriately-scaled commercial uses in this location would not jeopardise the role and function of the town centre. Convenience centres primarily serve passing traffic. By virtue of their unique purposes, the proposed uses would not compete with commercial activities within the local town centre and therefore would not affect the viability of other commercial developments within the PSP area.

Convenience services are especially suited to locations adjacent to major roads where finer grain commercial services are less appropriate. Therefore, convenience uses on this Site would fulfil a role separate to the more pedestrian-oriented, fine grain retail typical of a town centre.

Access

Access to a convenience centre in this location will be a primary consideration and will require consent from Vicroads. Requirement R8 of the PSP currently states:

Vehicle access to lots fronting arterial roads must be provided from the local internal loop road or rear lane, to the satisfaction of the Road Authority.

It is accepted that this is a suitable restriction for residential uses however is not practicable for a service centre outcome where direct access is desirable for patrons where it can be appropriately managed. Access via the local road network for these types of uses is not desirable as it results in external traffic travelling through the local road network including increased traffic networks through the lower order roads. It therefore is requested that R8 of the PSP be amended to allow the following alternative outcomes for non-residential uses:

- Direct vehicular access; and/or
- access via a service road.

This would remain subject to the consent of the Road Authority.

Request

1. Designation to allow service centre, convenience uses and complementary uses

It is acknowledged that the proposed uses are permissible within the residential designation proposed in the PSP and the specific nature of these activities will ultimately be dealt with through future planning approvals. Accordingly, this submission does not seek to change to the land use designation proposed in the PSP. However the discretionary nature of the proposed uses represents a risk scenario for SVR2 that could be readily rectified through a minor refinement of the PSP.

To achieve this, we request that the PSP be amended to expressly identify the site for potential appropriately scaled local convenience uses. We request that the Placed Base Plan (Plan 4 in the PSP) be amended to include the changes highlighted in red in Figure 2 overleaf.

This change would offer clarity to all parties and provide greater certainty to the SVR2.

2. Access

Access for a service centre and convenience uses is not appropriate via loop roads and rear lanes as required through Requirement R8 of the PSP. This submission seeks to amend Requirement R8 allow for direct access or access via a service lane for non-residential uses that have direct frontage to arterial roads, subject to the consent of the Roads Authority.

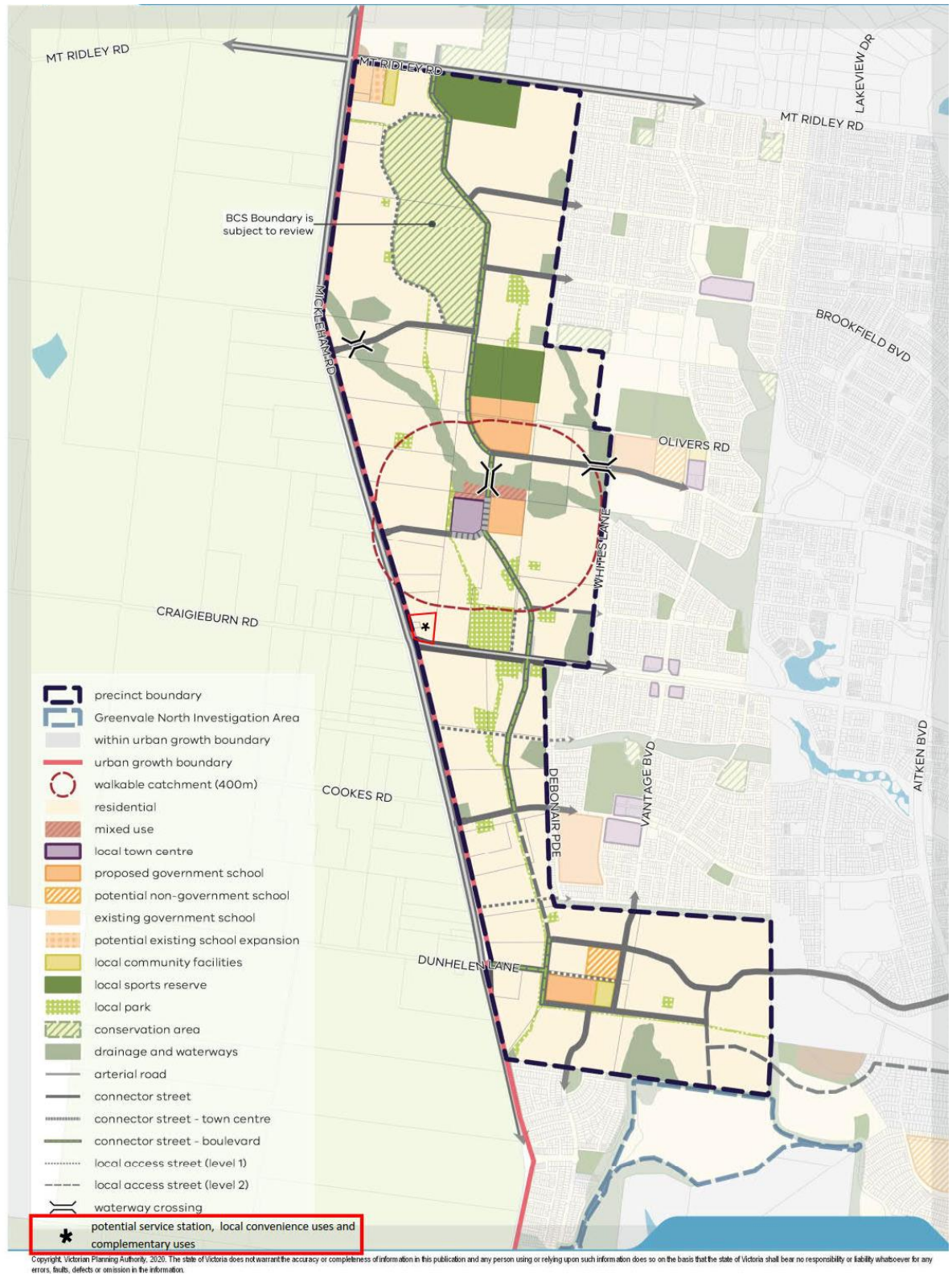


Figure 2: Requested Amendment to Placed Based Plan (Plan 4 of the PSP)

Summary

SVR2 support for the designation of the Site for residential uses. This designation appropriately allows convenience uses without creating the opportunity for other kinds of commercial development that would be less appropriate on the Site.

The Site's position and visibility render it ideal for convenience uses and commercial services to support the emerging community of Craigieburn West. Given the distance to the nearest convenience services, it represents suitable dispersal and distribution for these facilities. The PSP process offers an opportunity to provide clear guidance for future development. For this reason, the SVR2 request that the PSP be amended to identify the Site as offering potential for a local convenience and services role. This would offer certainty for the development of an appropriate and logical outcome. It would avoid ambiguity and provide clarity to landowners and decision makers alike.

We would be pleased to meet with VPA to discuss the content of this submission as you see fit. Our preference is to work collaboratively with VPA to seek to resolve the matters as soon as practicable.

Should you wish to discuss this matter further, please don't hesitate to contact me on 0403347211 or at kmurphy@tract.net.au.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. Murphy', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Katie Murphy

Principal Town Planner
Tract