

27 October 2023

Nino Polon
Manager South-East Region
Melbourne Water
990 La Trobe Street
Docklands VIC 3008

**RE: Officer South Draft Drainage Strategy
130 Stephens Road, Officer**

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission in relation to the *Officer South Draft Drainage Strategy*. Melbourne Water is preparing the Draft Drainage Strategy, which includes a Development Services Scheme (**DSS**), to support the Victorian Planning Authority's Officer South Employment Precinct Structure Plan (**PSP**), which is also currently on exhibition.

Insight Planning Consultants, on behalf of the Mack Brothers, are acting for 130 Stephens Road, Officer (**the Site**), and are pleased to provide the following submission in response to the Strategy.

In general terms, our clients support the progression of the DSS for the Officer South Employment Precinct (**the Precinct**), however have major concerns regarding specific matters that are outlined in this submission that we seek to be addressed.

This submission relates to the DSS and supporting documents that are available on Melbourne Water's 'yoursay' website and seeks to outline key issues that we believe will enhance the deliverability of the Precinct, particularly in so far as it relates to the Site.

I trust the contents of this submission are clear however, we look forward to working closely with the Melbourne Water to progress the approval of the DSS.

1. Subject Site

The Site is located at 130 Stephens Road in Officer (Lot. 1 PS446665). The Site is located on the north-western corner of the intersection between Stephens Road to the east and the extension of the Lecky Road reserve to the south. The Site is generally rectangular in shape and has a total area of approximately 12 hectares.

The Site is currently occupied by an existing dwelling and associated outbuildings. The Site historically formed part of a larger property named 'Gwinganna', which was purchased by the previous owner in 1979. The property at this time was bound by Stephens Road to the east, Lecky Road to the south, Cardinia Creek to the west and Handford Lane to the north.

The 'waterway' located generally along the eastern boundary of the Site, extending between Lecky Road and Handford Lane, was created by extracting sand, which was dug out to supply to local development projects at the time.

The circular pond near the corner of Lecky Road and Stephens Road was dug out as a bird sanctuary. A bore on the northern boundary was put in to tap into a spring to provide water to their Murray Grey cattle herd.

As such, the current mapping and description of this as an 'existing waterway' is inaccurate as this has been dug out by the previous owner of the Site. An aerial of the Site is shown below.



FIGURE 1: AERIAL OF SITE (LANDCHECKER)

2. Submission

The following submission is provided to assist in ensuring the deliverability of the Site and broader Officer South Employment Precinct.

Key Issues

There are a number of key issues that we have identified in the DSS that relate to the Site. We understand that the DSS has informed the drainage assets and infrastructure shown in the PSP, and that any changes to the DSS will be incorporated into the final PSP. As such, a separate submission on the PSP will also be submitted to the VPA, including these and other issues. In supporting the DSS moving forward, our clients are looking to improve the developability of the Site and broader Precinct.

Drainage Reserves

The DSS Asset Overview Plan shows a watercourse along the eastern boundary of the Site, with a proposed retarding basin and associated drainage reserve in the southern part of the Site. An extract of this plan is shown below.

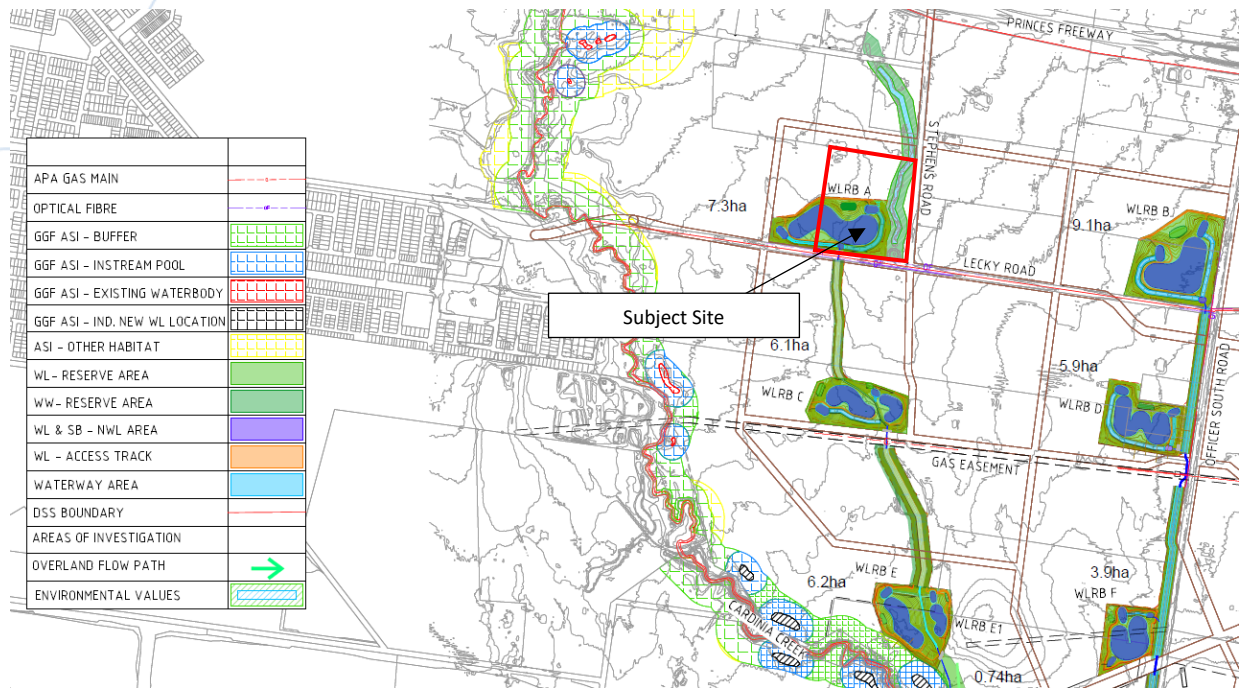


FIGURE 2: EXTRACT OF DSS ASSET OVERVIEW PLAN (MW)

The proposed retarding basin and associated drainage reserve located on the Site is identified as WLRD A. This asset takes up a large proportion of the Site, which significantly reduces the amount of developable land within the Site. This is currently shown to be split amongst the Site and the property adjoining the Site to the west (90 Handford Lane) with approximately 69% located on the Site. It is requested that this retarding basin be redistributed more equally between the Site and adjoining property to result in a more equitable and regular shaped drainage reserve outcome.

Nina Barich of Incitus has undertaken a preliminary review of the DSS and associated modelling, and advised that the proposed drainage reserve across the Site could be reduced in size by up to 1ha in total, or 0.7ha for the Site specifically (if the current distribution was maintained). It is therefore requested that along with a fairer redistribution of this drainage reserve, that the overall size of this asset be reduced. We note that further work will need to occur to more accurately determine the precise reduction in size of this asset that can be achieved.

Further, between the proposed retarding basin adjacent the southern boundary and the proposed waterway reserve along the eastern boundary, the majority of the developable land within the Site is effectively land-locked, until the proposed connector streets north or west of the Site are developed and connecting road access is provided by these properties. The cost of crossing the waterway to access the balance of the Site directly from Stephens Road will be a significant cost barrier unless the amount of developable land within the Site can be increased.

The current alignment of the waterway reserve is also an issue as it results in a sliver of industrial land, approximately 45 metres wide at its widest part, along the eastern boundary of the Site which effectively cannot be developed. The proposed requirements and guidelines of the draft PSP make it near impossible to realistically develop the sliver of industrial land along the Stephens Road frontage. Ideally, given that the waterway is man-made, as previously outlined in this submission, this waterway

reserve would be realigned along the eastern boundary of the Site to provide a more efficient development outcome.

Requested Changes:

- Redistribute a greater portion of the drainage reserve on the Site to the adjoining property to the west (Property 12).
- Reduce the size of overall drainage reserve by up to 1ha, subject to further discussion with Melbourne Water.
- If the waterway cannot be realigned to the eastern boundary of the Site, replace the sliver of industrial land along the Site's eastern boundary with credited open space (linear park).

We trust the above information is sufficient for Melbourne Water's review of the submission.

Given the limited time available for the lodgment of this submission, it is requested that additional time be provided to allow a more detailed review of the DSS documentation and further drainage investigation and modelling work to occur, ahead of ongoing discussions with Melbourne Water with regard to the requested changes.

Given the major implications that the DSS could have on the deliverability of the Site, we will value the opportunity to discuss these further.

Finally, we reserve our right to provide additional submissions as the process continues and look forward to being involved in discussions to resolve the matters raised.

Please do not hesitate to contact me on [REDACTED] if you have any queries.

Yours sincerely

Jason Black
Managing Director
Insight Planning Consultants