

Special use rezoning, Barragup

Lots 3, 4, 5, 6 and 8 Douglas Place, Barragup

Shire of Murray

**Report and recommendations of the
Environmental Protection Authority**

**Environmental Protection Authority
Bulletin 484
December 1990**

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ASS No. 521
ISBN 0 7309 3585 X
ISSN 1030-0120

Introduction

The Environmental Protection Authority has assessed a proposal by the Shire of Murray to amend its Town Planning Scheme to allow additional uses in the existing Special Use zone, Lots 3, 4, 5, 6, and 8 Douglas Place Barragup. The site is within the area defined as the Peel-Harvey Coastal Catchment by the Minister for the Environment.

The Peel-Harvey Estuary is badly degraded because large quantities of nutrients have flowed into the Estuary from surrounding farm land and urban areas. Algae live on the nutrients and multiply rapidly, stifling life in the Estuary in warmer weather. The algae accumulate and rot on the shores of the Estuary, causing odour problems, polluting the shore, and killing wildlife and fish.

The strategy accepted by the State Government to improve the Estuary's condition includes the construction of the Dawseville Channel to improve flushing and catchment management to reduce nutrient input through controlling clearing, drainage and nutrient inputs.

The proposal to amend the Shire of Murray's Town Planning Scheme was referred to the Environmental Protection Authority by the Department of Planning and Urban Development. In recognition of the environmental concerns regarding the Peel-Harvey Estuary, the level of assessment was set at Consultative Environmental Review.

Proposal

The land is located north of Pinjarra Road, on the corner of Douglas Place and Husband Road, Barragup (see Figure 1). The current Special Use zoning for the land lists the following uses as being permitted:

- saddlery;
- veterinary surgery;
- stockfeed supply;
- growers mart; and
- plant nursery.

The proposal involves an amendment to the Town Planning Scheme to allow the following uses in the Special Use zone, with Council approval:

- saddlery;
- veterinary surgery;
- stockfeed supply;
- growers mart;
- plant nursery;
- caretakers house;
- shop;
- restaurant/cafe;
- takeaway food outlet;
- open air display and sales;
- bank;
- office;
- consulting room(s);
- medical clinic;
- showrooms;
- liquor store;
- licensed restaurant; and
- dry cleaning service.

The land is not serviced by reticulated sewerage, and effluent disposal would be by conventional on-site effluent disposal.

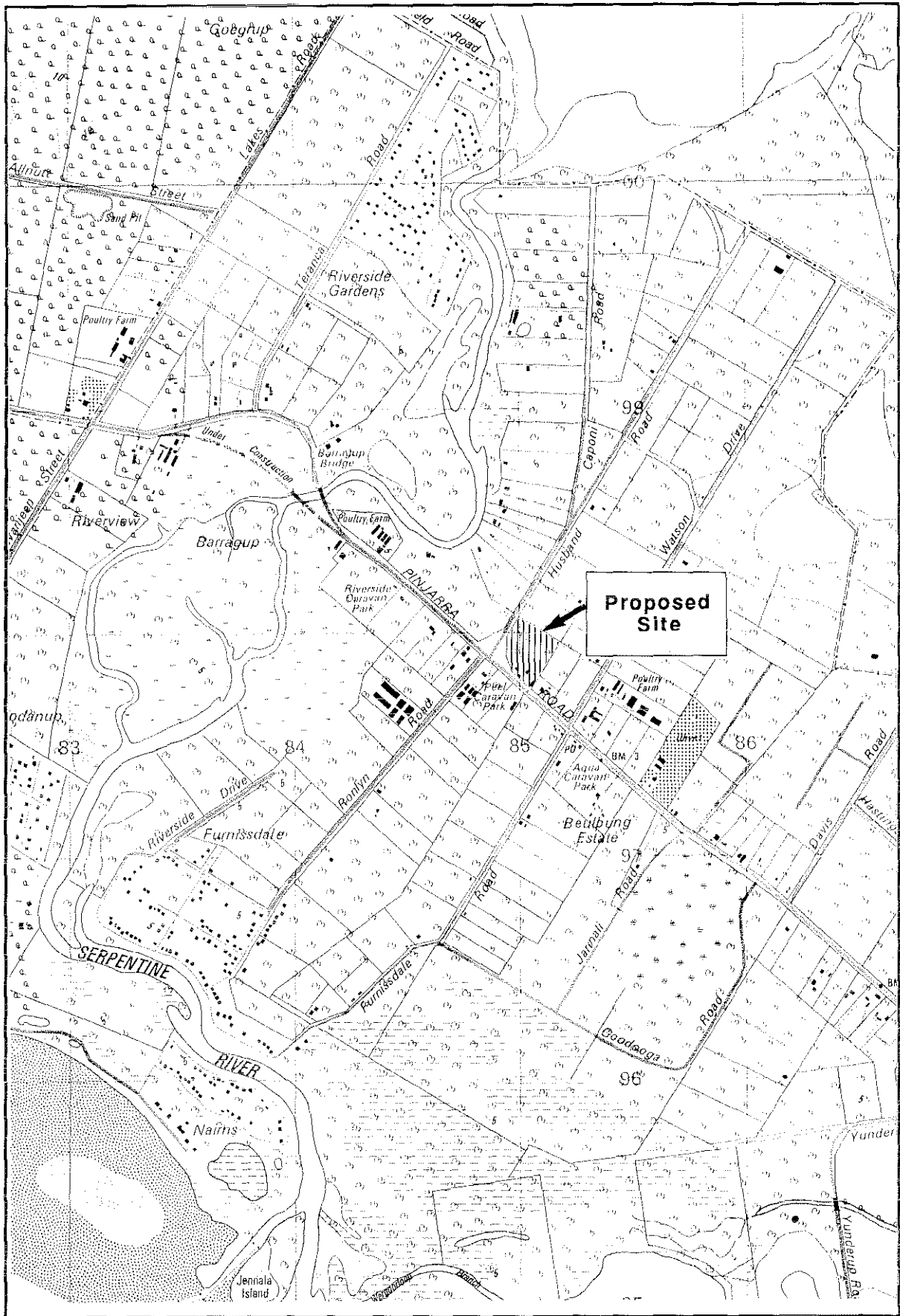


Figure 1: Location of land zoned Special Use.

Consultation

The Environmental Protection Authority received comments on the proposal from the Department of Planning and Urban Development and the Water Authority of Western Australia

Environmental assessment

Based on the Authority's investigations concerning the Peel-Harvey catchment, information submitted by the proponent, and submissions received from government agencies, the following environmental issues have been identified:

- disposal of sewage wastes
- drainage management.

The Environmental Protection Authority considers that, if the Government's objectives for the Estuary are to be achieved, then nutrient discharge from all developments within the Peel-Harvey Coastal Catchment must be minimised. Specifically, all proposals for commercial developments within townsites and settlements in the Peel-Harvey coastal catchment must be connected to reticulated sewerage, and drainage must be contained on site.

The Barragup Special Use zone however is not within an existing townsite or settlement, and the Water Authority of WA has advised that connection to reticulated sewerage would not be viable at present.

In view of the recently released Peel Region Plan which seeks to identify land within the Shire of Murray with development potential, it is important that the issue of servicing is being examined by the Department of Planning and Urban Development, Water Authority of WA and Shire of Murray. Specifically, priority areas must be identified, giving consideration to issues such as land suitability and potential for future development.

While the Authority would prefer the proposed commercial development to be connected to reticulated sewerage, it is recognised that it is not currently available. Providing reticulated sewerage is not expected to become available in the short to medium term, the objective should be to minimise the export of nutrients from the site if on-site effluent disposal is to be utilised.

After considering these issues, the Authority has concluded that the amendment to the Special Use zone should only proceed if the additional uses would not result in any additional nutrient application to the site than with the uses currently permitted. In this regard, uses such as Restaurants, Take-away Food Outlets and Dry Cleaning Services are not acceptable. The proposed amendment would be environmentally acceptable providing nutrient application to the site is minimised through restricting and managing the uses permitted, appropriate location and design of the septic tank/leach drain systems, and on-site disposal of drainage.

Recommendation 1

The Environmental Protection Authority has concluded that the proposal, as described in the documentation submitted by the proponent, for an amendment to the uses permitted in the Special Use zone at Lots 3, 4, 5, 6 and 8 Douglas Place Barragup is environmentally acceptable and recommends that it could proceed subject to the Authority's recommendations in this Assessment Report.

The Authority's experience is that it is common for details of a proposal to alter through the detailed design and construction phase. In many cases alterations are not environmentally significant or have positive effect on the environmental performance of the project. The Authority believes that such non-substantial changes, and especially those which improve environmental performance and protection, should be provided for.

The impact of the proposed amendment to the commercial development site would be minimised if the range of uses permitted is restricted to those which would not contribute nutrients to the system additional to those uses currently permitted, and the septic tank/leach drain systems are located and installed appropriately.

In addition, no stormwater drainage should be discharged directly to the Peel Main Drain, but retained on-site for at least three days in a 1 in 10 year storm event.

Recommendation 2

The Environmental Protection Authority recommends that the Shire of Murray's Town Planning Scheme should indicate that uses permitted in the Barragup Special Use zone is restricted to Saddlery, Veterinary Surgery, Stockfeed Supply, Growers mart, Plant Nursery, Caretakers House, Shop, Open Air Display and Sales, Bank, Office, Consulting Room(s), Showrooms, and Liquor Store

Recommendation 3

The Environmental Protection Authority recommends that any development proposal with an effluent discharge created as a result of the commercial operations, other than sewage disposal, must demonstrate that excessive nutrients would not be discharged to the groundwater or off-site to the satisfaction of the Environmental Protection Authority, on advice from the Shire of Murray.

Recommendation 4

The Environmental Protection Authority recommends that all sewage disposal systems are located and installed such that there is at least a 2 metre vertical separation between the base of the leach drain and the highest recorded groundwater level (any fill imported to the site to achieve this criteria must have a phosphorus retention Index at least that of Spearwood sands), and at least a 100 metre horizontal separation between the disposal system and the nearest water body, to the satisfaction of the Environmental Protection Authority, on advice from the Shire of Murray.

Recommendation 5

The Environmental Protection Authority recommends that all stormwater is disposed of on-site, with design criteria of three day detention for 1 In 10 year storm event, and is done to the specifications and satisfaction of the Environmental Protection Authority, on advice from the Shire of Murray.

The Authority believes that any approval for the proposal based on this assessment should be limited to five years. Accordingly, if the proposal has not been substantially commenced within five years of the date of this report, then such approval should lapse. After that time, further consideration of the proposal should occur only following a new referral to the Authority.