

# Port Albert Rural Residential Lifestyle Lots Review



## Newsletter 2: What's happened since Newsletter 1?

Wellington Shire Council and Spiire Australia extend their thanks to the Port Albert community for their input during the recent community consultation phase of the Port Albert Rural Residential Lifestyle Lots Review.

The consultation has involved a community meeting and drop-in sessions which were attended by 30 members of the community, and an online survey completed by over 40 respondents.

## Issues and Options Paper

This study aims to determine the extent of available land with a rational potential for rezoning in order to increase the provision of rural lifestyle living opportunities in Port Albert.

The study:

- Investigates land that was directly translated into a Farming Zone under Planning Scheme Amendment C43 in 2007 that are clearly not able to be farmed as per the purpose and objectives of the Farming Zone.
- Examines the current supply and likely future demand for rural lifestyle lot opportunities within the study area based on recent trends and take-up rates.
- Identifies opportunities for the potential rezoning of land to meet identified rural lifestyle living opportunities in Port Albert.

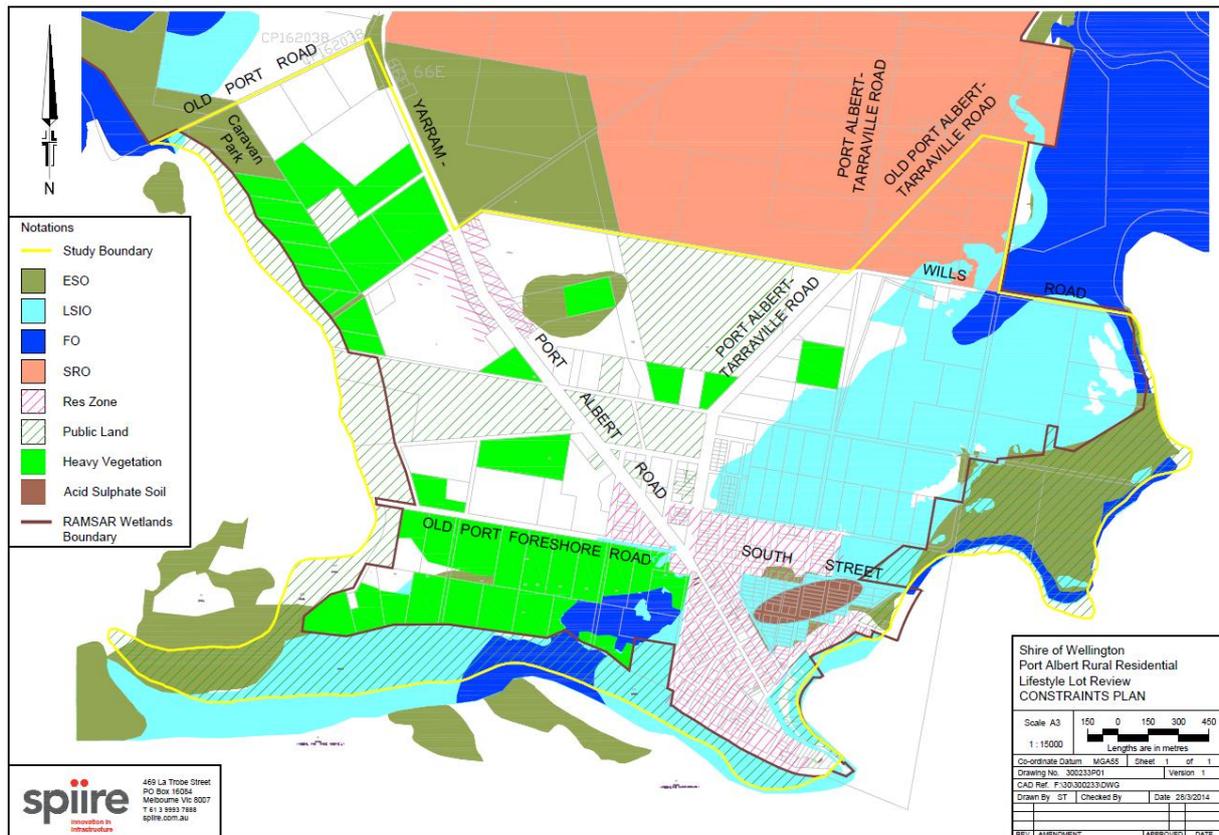
Using the work undertaken for this study, including the results of the consultation, an Issues and Options Paper has been prepared, which provides an overview of the key issues relating to the provision of additional rural residential development and land in the Port Albert hinterland. It also provides a set of strategic directions and key principles to further develop during the project.

The full Issues and Options Paper can be viewed in hard copy at Council's Customer Service Centres in Yarram and Sale, or online at:

[www.wellington.vic.gov.au/Developing-Wellington/Planning-Projects/Port-Albert-Rural-Residential-Lifestyle-Lots-Review](http://www.wellington.vic.gov.au/Developing-Wellington/Planning-Projects/Port-Albert-Rural-Residential-Lifestyle-Lots-Review)

This newsletter provides a brief summary of the Paper, but interested parties are encouraged to view the final document.

The Issues and Options paper identifies these land use constraints of the Port Albert hinterland:



*Study area with land use constraints shown.*

## Issues Summary

Issues include:

- The impact of previous planning decisions including Amendments and a lack of certainty and consistency in land use outcomes and rules.
- An inability to build a dwelling on land within the Farming Zone due to requirements for agricultural activity.
- Existing lot sizes; too small to productively farm, making the application of the Farming Zone appear 'misguided' and inappropriate..
- Constraints on development due to the application of planning overlay controls, high levels of existing native vegetation, fire risk, ability to treat wastewater and the capacity to manage storm water. The perception of these constraints is significant in stymieing development/investment.
- Very low supply of rural residential lots. Anecdotal demand exists for rural residential lots between 1 and 20 acres (0.4 – 8 hectares) where dwellings can be built.

- A substantial number of township lots are currently for sale with few buyers.
- Low population levels, limited job opportunities, lack of a commercial hub and low levels of investment are impacting on Port Albert generally.
- Lack of investment and appropriate development due to a confidence loss within coastal areas.
- Holiday service role highlights infrastructure limitations and the impact of poor land management.
- Community belief that people should be able to build when and where they want within the area.
- Difficulty of balancing removal of vegetation with the protection of the existing landscape character and recognition that not all the vegetation is significant/remnant.

## Key Principles Summary

The key principles and strategic directions of the Issues and Options Paper include:

- Retaining Port Albert's role as a small coastal town with significant built heritage in Wellington Shire.
- Retaining high quality agricultural land within the hinterland.
- Responsible recognition of the environmental features and constraints for the area including levels of inundation (mainly tidal or drainage related), potential fire risk, coastal wetlands and vegetation cover.
- Recognising the existing assets available before creating new opportunities for dwellings and population growth – in relation to existing dwelling supply and vacant lots.
- The need to protect existing levels of vegetation cover and landscape characteristics.
- Recognition of the town's fishing village and seasonal role and the varying demands on infrastructure throughout the year.
- Recognition of community desires for growth within the context of existing demographic trends.
- Recognition of the requirements and guidelines with Planning Practice Note 37 and Planning Practice Note 42 regarding the appropriateness of rural residential land and the application of the rural zones.

## Next Steps

Spiire is currently developing a Draft Recommendations Report for the Port Albert Rural Residential Lifestyle Lots Review, for Council's consideration.

We expect the Draft Report to be finalised by the end of May 2014 and released for public comment in early June 2014. We will invite submissions on the proposed recommendations for several weeks once the Draft Report is released.

Council will formally consider the Draft Recommendations Report in August 2014.

If you have any questions contact Barry Hearsey, Wellington Shire Council at [barry.hearsey@wellington.vic.gov.au](mailto:barry.hearsey@wellington.vic.gov.au) or Erica Fox from Spiire at [erica.fox@spiire.com.au](mailto:erica.fox@spiire.com.au).

