

Prominent Merri River site slated for subdivision



The vacant land on the corner of Stanley St and Pertobe Rd, Warrnambool, which is now before council seeking approval for an eight-lot subdivision.

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[/dropcap]rominent Warrnambool lawyer **James Tait** has lodged fresh plans to Warrnambool City Council to subdivide one of the most prominent pieces of vacant land in the city on the corner of Pertobe Road and Stanley St, South Warrnambool, overlooking the Merri River.

Mr Tait, via his company NFM Nominees, is intending to subdivide the .73 ha lot into eight – yes, eight – blocks sized between 512sq/m and 692 sq/m, with a cul-de-sac up the centre.

[box]YOU CAN VIEW/DOWNLOAD THE [LAND MANAGEMENT PLAN](#) HERE AND THE [FULL APPLICATION HERE](#) (each file is a pdf about 3mb)[/box]

It is the second time Mr Tait has attempted to gain planning approval for what is almost certain to be a subdivision that generates a lot of discussion, especially among those who

would prefer to see this rare slice of vacant river land remain just that, vacant, or at least with less blocks.



The .73ha site would include .12ha set aside as a conservation reserve, with a 1.2m cyclone fence to be built to keep out the public (and presumably those who will eventually live in the eight dwellings to be later built on site). A further 1000 sq/m of flood prone land on the southern side will be donated to the council as a reserve.

Any houses, by the way, will be subject to separate planning approvals. The application now before council is purely for the subdivision.

"...(this) is considered to represent an excellent subdivision outcome for this land and surroundings," is how it was described in a letter to council by **Brendan Howard**, a former council planner, now from Urbanomics, who has prepared the application for NFM Nominees. (*note, an earlier version of this piece incorrectly attributed this quote to WCC planner Kirsty Miller. We apologise for that error).



The proposed eight-lot subdivision at the corner of Stanley St and Pertobe Rd, South Warrnambool.

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[/dropcap]o what are the environmental implications of such a subdivision on a prime coastal site?

We aren't experts, but according to the environmental assessment on behalf of NFM Nominees, the "near threatened" Latham's Snipe has been spotted on the site and the adjacent estuarian wetland.

This is the same bird that eventually scaled right back the development of land next to the Powling St wetlands in Port Fairy, although it was found in much larger numbers at that site. (See our [earlier story on that lengthy battle here](#).)

It is also an ideal environment for the critically endangered Orange Bellied Parrot, although the report does not say if any

have been found there.

Overall, however, the environmental assessment concluded that the majority of the Stanley St land was covered in introduced vegetation, and only .106ha of native vegetation would need to be removed for the subdivision.

With the towering Lady Bay motel development diagonally across from this last remnant of vacant land, it appears the high-density development of this area of South Warrnambool is set to continue.

Submissions on the subdivision plan close on December 11.