

# Emirates Luxury Resort, Wolgan Valley



Concept Plan Modification Application (s75W EP&A Act 1979)

## Preliminary Enviromental Assesssment



Prepared for: Emirates Resorts and Hotels

October 2006

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# Emirates Luxury Resort

## Executive Summary

This report is a Preliminary Environmental Assessment of the modification to the Concept Plan.

This report is submitted on behalf of Emirates Resorts (Australia) to the Minister for Planning for approval under Part 3A of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, 1979 (EP&A Act). The Acting Minister for Planning on 12 May 2006 approved the Concept Plan for the Emirates site. The Concept Plan approval was for the land described as:

- DP 751666: Lots 4, 5, 6A, 7A, 8A, 8B, 9A, 9B, 10, 10A, 11, 11B, 12B, 12C, 18, 19, 26, 43, 46;
- DP 726429: Lot 1;
- DP 751624: Lots 4, 5, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 26; and
- DP 751634: Lots 1, 2, 3.

The Concept Plan approval was for:

*A tourist facility that includes:*

- 40 villas, with an average floor area of 115m<sup>2</sup>;
- Ancillary facilities, including:
  - a main reception building with administration, gift shop, lounges, library, restaurant, bar and conference rooms;
  - a spa building with a gym, change rooms, spa, sauna, pools and various treatment rooms;
- Staff accommodation for up to 128 people;
- Associated infrastructure, including:
  - road and internal access works;
  - utility works, including the on-site sewage treatment and disposal works; and
  - a helipad
- Landscaping the site in 5 distinct precincts;
- Conserving the existing slab homestead and wattle and daub hut; and
- Demolishing the 1957 homestead.

The site has a total area of 1,099ha and is located in the Wolgan Valley, 35 kilometres north of Lithgow, in an isolated valley surrounded by steep cliffs within various National parks forming part of the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area (GBMWH).

The aim of the project is to create a natural sanctuary where guests can enjoy absolute luxury, tranquillity and connection with nature. The project has been designed to sit lightly within its environment in a manner that is sympathetic to the very special natural, cultural and scenic values of the valley. The key environmental assessment issues related to:

- Threatened plant and animal communities;
- Bushfire hazard;
- Vehicular access;

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- Protection and management of the environment;
- Cultural heritage;
- Water quality (sewage treatment & disposal);
- Utility supply; and
- Scenic quality and character.

This Preliminary Environmental Assessment addresses a proposed modification to the Concept Plan approval, including:

- Marginal modification of the resort layout.
- Incorporation of highly disturbed National Parks and Wildlife land under a lease from the Minister for the Environment.
- Addition of a feral fence.
- Addition of electricity line including fibre optic cable to service the site.
- Relocation of approved dam on site.
- Re-alignment of the internal access road.
- Addition of gatehouse (not visible from Wolgan Road).
- Addition of stables (for 12 horses).
- Relocation of staff accommodation and maintenance areas.
- Relocation of helipad.
- Diversion of water under current irrigation licences.
- Extraction of water from bores.
- Design and coordination of a water pipeline from an inactive mine and diversion of the mine water to the Wolgan River.



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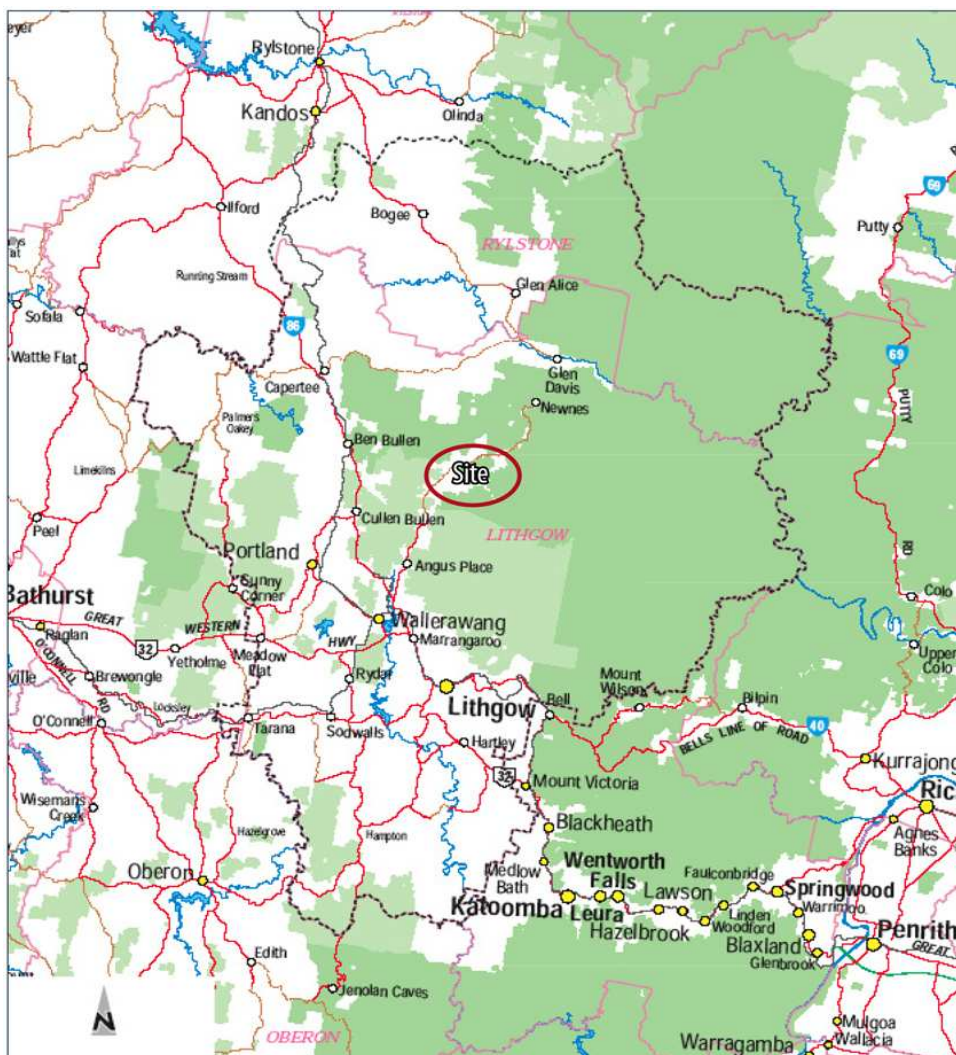
## 1 Introduction

The Acting Minister for Planning on 12 May 2006 approved the Concept Plan for the Emirates site in accordance with Section 75O of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, 1979. Emirates are now seeking a modification to the Concept Plan Approval pursuant to section 75W of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, 1979. This Preliminary Environmental Assessment identifies the environmental assessment that is proposed in relation to the modification being sought.

### 1.1 Regional Context of Site

The site is located approximately 190km or 3 hours drive north-west of Sydney airport and CBD, within the Lithgow Local Government Area. It lies within a valley to the western escarpment of the Blue Mountains plateau, within the Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Area.

Figure 1 - The site in its regional context.



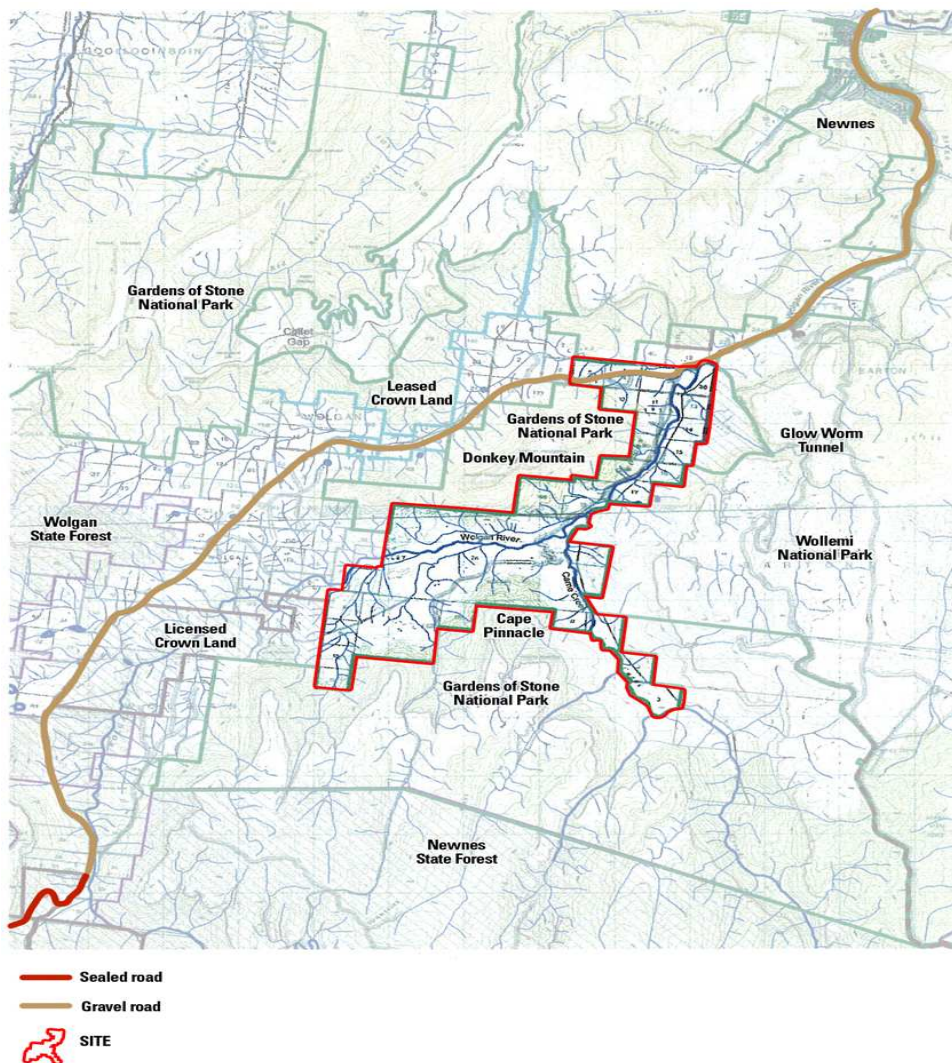


# Emirates Luxury Resort

## 1.2 Local Context of Site

The 1457 hectare site is located on the Wolgan Road, 35 kilometres north of Lithgow, and 3 kilometres south of Newnes. It sits between Gardens of Stone National Park to the north and south and Wollemi National Park to the east; both part of The Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage area. Wolgan State Forest is located further to the west and Newnes State Forest further to the south. Glow Worm Tunnel, Newnes Industrial Ruins, Deep Pass, Blackfellows Hand Rock and Baal Bone Gap are located within the vicinity of the site. The junction of Carne Creek and Wolgan River is located within the site.

Figure 2 – The site in its local context



# Emirates Luxury Resort

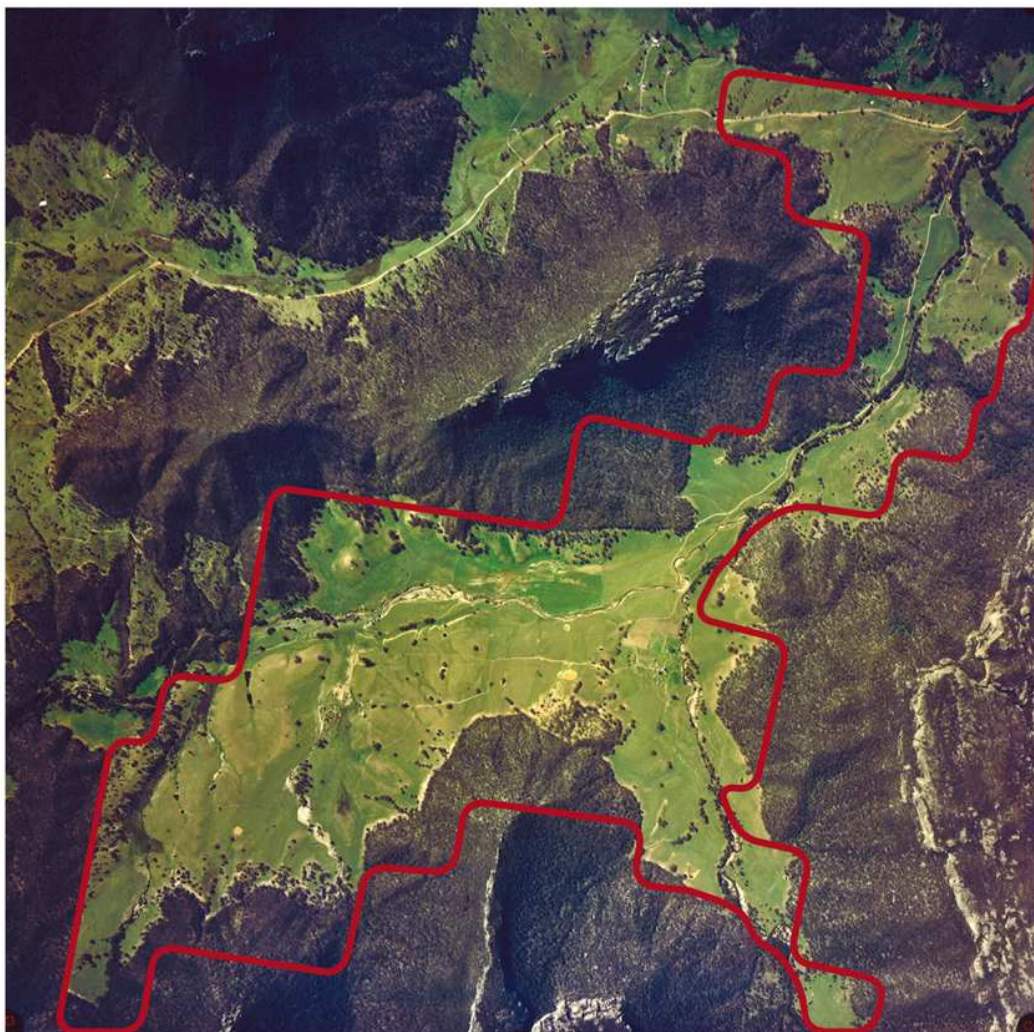
## 1.3 Site Description

The site has an area of 1,457ha and is legally described as:

- Lots 3A, 4, 5A, 7A, 8A, 8B, 9B, 10, 10A, 11, 11B, 12B, 12C, 17, 18, 19, 26, 46 in DP 751666.
- Lots 1 in DP 726429
- Lots 4, 5, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 26 in DP751624
- Lots 1, 2, 3 in DP 751634

Please note that additional lots and revised map including NPWS land will be provided as part of the project application.

Figure 3 – The site



 Site



# Emirates Luxury Resort

## 2 Statutory Planning Considerations

### 2.1 Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999

The project has been declared a 'Critical Action' under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act, 1999 (EPBC Act) due to its proximity and potential to effect the Greater Blue Mountain World Heritage Area.

### 2.2 State Environmental Planning Policies

The following relevant State Environmental Planning Policies have been reviewed.

#### 2.2.1 State Environmental Planning Policy (Major Projects) 2005

State Environmental Planning Policy (Major Projects) 2005 (Major Projects SEPP) came into affect on 1 August 2005. The Major Projects SEPP defines the classes of development for major project developments (i.e. developments which have been declared by the Minister for Planning, to be state significant) and which are to be determined by the Minister for Planning. The Department of Planning has confirmed in writing that the development will constitute State Significant development<sup>1</sup> and be subject to the provisions of the Major Projects SEPP.

#### 2.2.2 State Environmental Planning Policy No 58 - Protecting Sydney's Water Supply

A person must not carry out development specified in Schedule 1 or 2 except with the consent of the consent authority and includes designated development and, tourist and recreation facilities that: are unsewered, involve significant land modification, or involve periods of significant use.

#### 2.2.3 State Environmental Planning Policy 44 – Koala Habitat Protection

SEPP 44 encourages the conservation and management of natural vegetation areas that provide habitat for koalas to ensure permanent free-living populations will be maintained over their present range. Local councils cannot approve development in an area affected by the policy without an investigation of core koala habitat.

### 2.3 Greater Lithgow Local Environmental Plan 1994 (GLLEP 1994)

The site is located within a 1(a) Rural (General) zone under the provisions of the Greater Lithgow Local Environmental Plan 1994 (GLLEP 1994). The zoning provides flexibility whilst protecting rural land. It aims to promote the proper management and utilisation of natural resources by protecting, enhancing and conserving rural land, soil, forests, valuable deposits of minerals, trees and other vegetation in environmentally sensitive areas, water resources, and localities of significance for nature conservation and items of heritage significance. The objectives of GLLEP 1994 also provide land for other non-agricultural purposes whilst providing separation of conflicting land uses.

The proposed development is not specifically defined in GLLEP 1994. The LEP adopts the Environmental Planning and Assessment Model Provisions 1980, which defines the use as a 'tourist facility', which is permissible with consent in the zone.

### 2.4 Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, 1979

The modification to the Concept Plan approval being sought by Emirates is pursuant to 75W of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, 1979. Section 75W of the EP&A Act States that:

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“(1) In this section:

**Minister’s approval** means an approval to carry out a project under this Part, and includes an approval of a concept plan.

**modification of approval** means changing the terms of a Minister’s approval, including:

- (a) revoking or varying a condition of the approval or imposing an additional condition of the approval, and
  - (b) changing the terms of any determination made by the Minister under Division 3 in connection with the approval.
- (2) **The proponent may request the Minister to modify the Minister’s approval for a project.** The Minister’s approval for a modification is not required if the project as modified will be consistent with the existing approval under this Part.
- (3) The request for the Minister’s approval is to be lodged with the Director-General. The Director-General may notify the proponent of environmental assessment requirements with respect to the proposed modification that the proponent must comply with before the matter will be considered by the Minister.
- (4) The Minister may modify the approval (with or without conditions) or disapprove of the modification.
- (5) The proponent of a project to which section 75K applies who is dissatisfied with the determination of a request under this section with respect to the project (or with the failure of the Minister to determine the request within 40 days after it is made) may, within the time prescribed by the regulations, appeal to the Court. The Court may determine any such appeal.
- (6) Subsection (5) does not apply to a request to modify:
- (a) an approval granted by or as directed by the Court on appeal, or
  - (b) a determination made by the Minister under Division 3 in connection with the approval of a concept plan.
- (7) **This section does not limit the circumstances in which the Minister may modify a determination made by the Minister under Division 3 in connection with the approval of a concept plan.**” (Our emphasis)

## 2.5 Other NSW Legislation:

- *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974* (Section 90 - consent to knowingly destroy, deface or damage or knowingly cause or permit the destruction or defacement of or damage to, a relic or Aboriginal place).
- *Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995* (Schedule 1 and 2 - Lists threatened and vulnerable species).
- *Water Management Act 2000* (Section 89, 90, 91 - water use approval, water management work approval or activity approval under Part 3 of Chapter 3).

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## 3 Approved Concept Plan

The Acting Minister for Planning on the 12 May 2006 approved the Concept Plan for the Emirates Luxury Resort. The approval was for a tourist resort comprising 40 luxurious hotel villas and associated facilities, including a restaurant, day spa and conference facilities. The resort itself will be located on the eastern central part of the site adjacent to both banks of Carnes Creek, in the general vicinity of the existing slab house and homestead. Separate manager's accommodation will be located further to the north on the eastern bank of Wolgan River, with ancillary staff accommodation and maintenance plant adjacent to Wolgan Road, with the vast majority of the site used for passive recreation and environmental rehabilitation.

The project for which Concept Plan approval has been granted comprises of:

- 40 detached luxury villas.
- Main reception building comprising administration, gift shop, lounges, library, restaurant, bar and conference rooms.
- Spa building comprising gym, change rooms, spa, sauna, pools and various treatment rooms.
- Manager's Accommodation (8 people) and helipad.
- Staff Accommodation (120 people) and maintenance facilities.
- Ancillary road, utility and on-site sewage treatment and disposal works.
- Landscape works.
- Environmental conservation works.
- Retention of the existing slab house and wattle and daub hut.

Specifically, the approved Concept Plan provided for:

### ***Villas***

Total gross floor area: 4,530 m<sup>2</sup>

- 35 Standard Suites (1 bed), each of 93m<sup>2</sup>.
- 3 Royal Suites (2 bed), each of 175 m<sup>2</sup>.
- 2 Owner's Suites (3 bed), each of 375m<sup>2</sup>.

### ***Main Building***

Maximum gross floor area: 3,868m<sup>2</sup>

- Reception.
- Activities office.
- Administration Offices.
- Gift Shop.
- 2 Lounges.
- Library with billiards.
- Restaurant - Seating for 90 and private dining for 30.
- Bar – with external seating for 90.

# Emirates Luxury Resort

- Banquet Area.
- Boardroom.
- Conference rooms.
- Kitchen.
- Buffet area.
- Business Centre.
- Limited to a total of 80 delegates and those staying in the resort only.

## ***Spa Complex***

Maximum gross floor area: 1,006m<sup>2</sup>

- Food/beverage area.
- Weight/cardio equipment room.
- Changing rooms.
- Spa, Sauna, Steam Room and Cold Plunge.

## ***Pool***

- Hydrotherapy room.
- Rasool room.
- 4 single treatment rooms (with shower).
- 2 double treatment rooms (with shower).
- Indoor/Outdoor 25m lap pool and relaxation pool.
- Pool Deck and covered outdoor area.

## ***Staff Accommodation and maintenance***

Maximum gross floor area: staff – 2,326m<sup>2</sup> and maintenance – 913m<sup>2</sup>

- Accommodation for 128 staff in a combination of single, double and quad rooms.
- Kitchen and Dining facilities.
- 2 Lounges.
- Laundry.
- Pool and Courtyard (BBQ and recreation area).
- Workshops.
- Vehicle wash bay (drive through).
- Vehicle, buggy, firetruck and equipment storage.
- Nursery.
- Helipad.
- Parking.

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## *Housekeeping units*

Maximum gross floor area: each 45m<sup>2</sup>

- 4 small units.
- Storage of linen and other supplies.

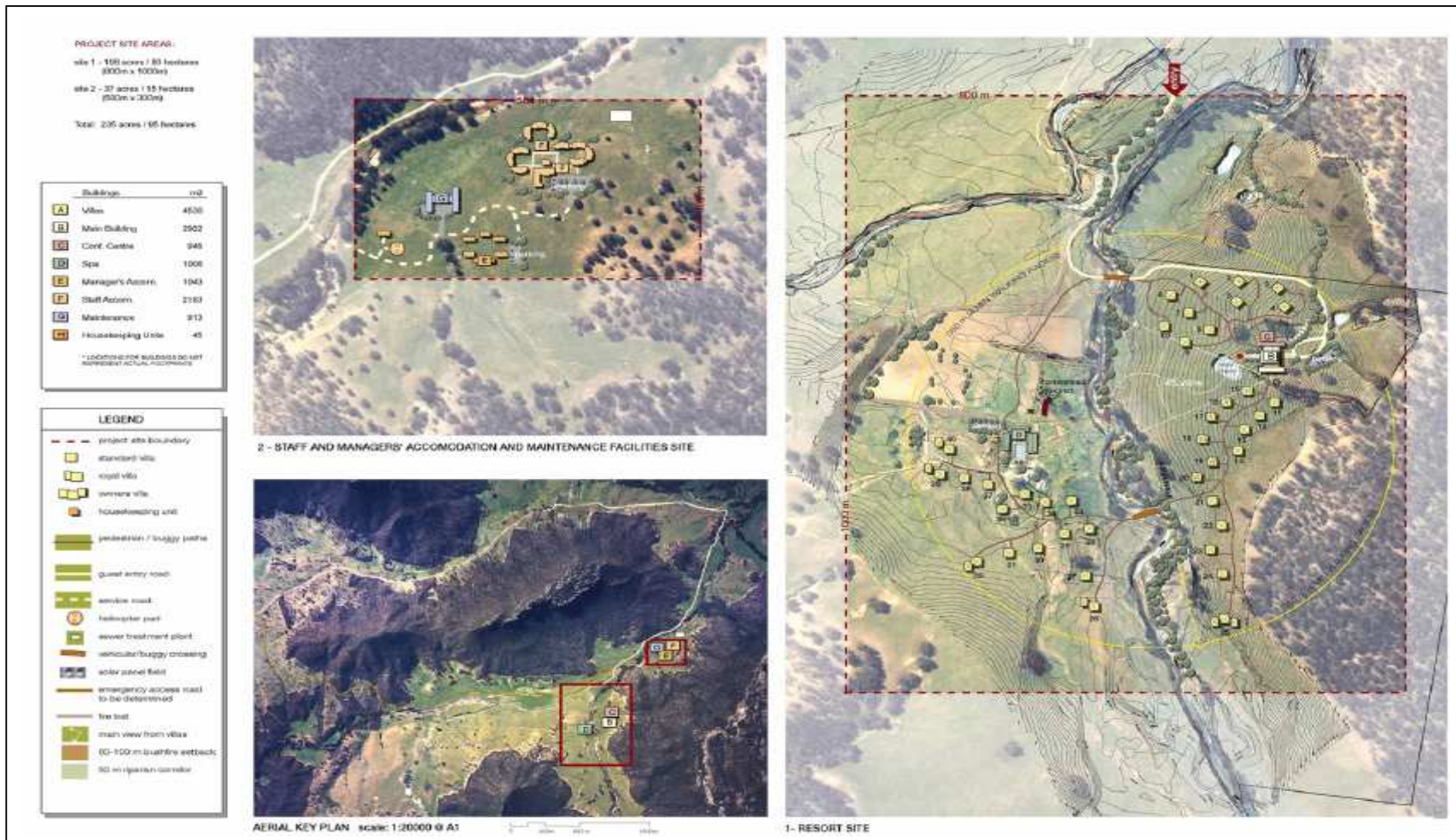
The Concept Plan approval relates to the following aspects of the project:

- Demolition of the 1957 homestead.
- Indicative building siting and road layout.
- Indicative architectural themes and styles.
- Landscape concept plan.
- Sewage treatment plant location and concept design.
- Use as a tourist facility, including temporary accommodation and ancillary facilities for the exclusive use of resort guests.
- Environmental rehabilitation works across the site.
- A maximum number of 40 villas, with an average floor area of 115m<sup>2</sup> each.
- A maximum of 8,645m<sup>2</sup> floor area of ancillary facilities, including a day spa, restaurant, bar, lounge, reception, administrative offices, indoor swimming pool and conference rooms.
- Staff accommodation and associated facilities for up to 128 staff.
- Supporting infrastructure including electrical, gas and water supply.



# Emirates Luxury Resort

Figure 4 - Approved Concept Plan Resort Layout



# Emirates Luxury Resort

## 4 Proposed Modifications to Concept Plan Approval

### 4.1 Modification being sought

Modification to the approved Concept Plan is being sought for the items listed below.

1. Modification of resort layout: The resort itself will be relocated to the eastern side of the Wolgan River.
2. Incorporation of National Parks and Wildlife Services land: The proposal involves, the incorporation National Parks and Wildlife Services (NPWS) land in order to accommodate the relocation of the resort layout. The NPWS land that will be acquired by Emirates is cleared grazing land. To offset the acquisition of the cleared NPWS land, the Proponent will dedicate forested private land back to the NPWS.
3. Addition of feral fence: The proposal includes the addition of a feral proof fence which will be constructed in order to encourage native fauna to return to the Wolgan Valley. The feral fence will span approximately 10 kilometres from Cape Pinnacle, running north along Wolgan Road to the eastern side of the site near the main entrance.
4. Addition of electricity line including fibre optic cable to service the site: The proposal requires the addition of an electricity line and fibre optic cable to be installed to service the site.
5. Relocation of approved dam on site: The proposal involves the water storage being to the eastern end of the site.
6. Re-alignment of the internal access road: The proposal involves the re-alignment of the internal road network responding to the modified resort layout. It will provide for more efficient circulation and reduce the number of river crossings.
7. Addition of gatehouse (not visible from Wolgan Road): The proposal will include the addition of a gatehouse which will function as a security point/welcoming point for guests.
8. Addition of stables (for 12 horses): The proposal will include the addition of stables for 12 horses for recreational riding by resort guests.
9. Relocation of staff accommodation and maintenance areas: The proposal includes the relocation of staff and maintenance facilities from Wolgan Road in to the main resort site, in response to the modification of the resort layout.
10. Relocation of helipad: As a result of the relocation of the staff and maintenance facilities the helipad is proposed to be relocated to the western side of Wolgan River, opposite the staff and maintenance facilities.
11. Supply of Water: The water supply will include various options from which the site may have access to water from. Please note that details of water supply will be included in the Project Application.

# Emirates Luxury Resort

## 4.2 The Project as proposed to be modified

The project as proposed to be modified will comprise:

### ***Villas***

Total gross floor area: 4,530 m<sup>2</sup>

- 36 Standard Suites (1 bed), each of 85 m<sup>2</sup>.
- Three Royal Suites (2 bed), each of 180 m<sup>2</sup>.
- One Owner's Suites (3 bed), each of 220 m<sup>2</sup>.

### ***Main Building***

Maximum gross floor area: 3,128 m<sup>2</sup>

- Reception.
- Administration Offices.
- Retail (Gift) Shop.
- Lobby Lounge area.
- Dining room -Seating for 90 persons.
- Private dining room – Seating for 12 persons.
- Bar lounge area.
- Conference room – Seating for 60 persons.
- Main kitchen.
- Country kitchen (informal meals area) – Seating for 30 persons.
- Food storage including coolrooms and dry stores.
- General storage (for example furniture store).
- Mechanical plant rooms.
- Staffroom.
- Toilets and change rooms.

### ***Spa Complex***

Maximum gross floor area: 660 m<sup>2</sup>

- Relaxation area including juice bar.
- Six treatment rooms with ensuites/changing rooms.
- Hair, manicure and pedicure salon.
- Staff preparation room and office.
- Separate toilets for staff and guests.

### ***Pool Building***

Maximum gross floor area: 250 m<sup>2</sup>

# Emirates Luxury Resort

- Free form shape pool.
- Pool deck.
- Covered outdoor area to pool building.
- Male change room.
- Female change room.
- Gym.
- Sauna.
- Steam room.
- Plunge pool.

## ***Staff Accommodation***

Maximum gross floor area: 2,510m<sup>2</sup>

- Accommodation for 90 staff.
- Main staff amenity building which includes:
  - Kitchen;
  - Dining;
  - Bar;
  - Lounge;
  - Laundry;
  - Training room;
  - Administration space;
  - Garbage collection area;
  - Housekeeping; and
  - Toilets.
- Staff accommodation will comprise of a combination of single, double and quad bedroom units.
- All staff units will include:
  - Bedroom/s;
  - Kitchen;
  - Dining; and
  - Living.
- Pool and Courtyard (BBQ and recreation area).

## ***Maintenance Facility***

Maximum gross floor area: 648 m<sup>2</sup>

- Workshops.
- Vehicle maintenance area.
- Vehicle, buggy, fire and equipment storage.

# Emirates Luxury Resort

- Nursery.
- Parking.

## *Housekeeping units*

Maximum gross floor area: each 40 m<sup>2</sup>

- 4 small units.
- Storage of linen and other supplies.

The modification to the resort layout will reduce the overall footprint of the development. Relocating all facilities to the east of the Wolgan River provides the following positive outcomes:

- A reduction in the number of creek and river crossings, which further reduces.
  - The visual impact of crossings on the landscape; and
  - The potential environmental impacts associated with developing formal infrastructure.
- Less exposure of the resort footprint to potential flood impacts.
- Less impact on archaeological heritage sites and items, including the original homestead precinct.

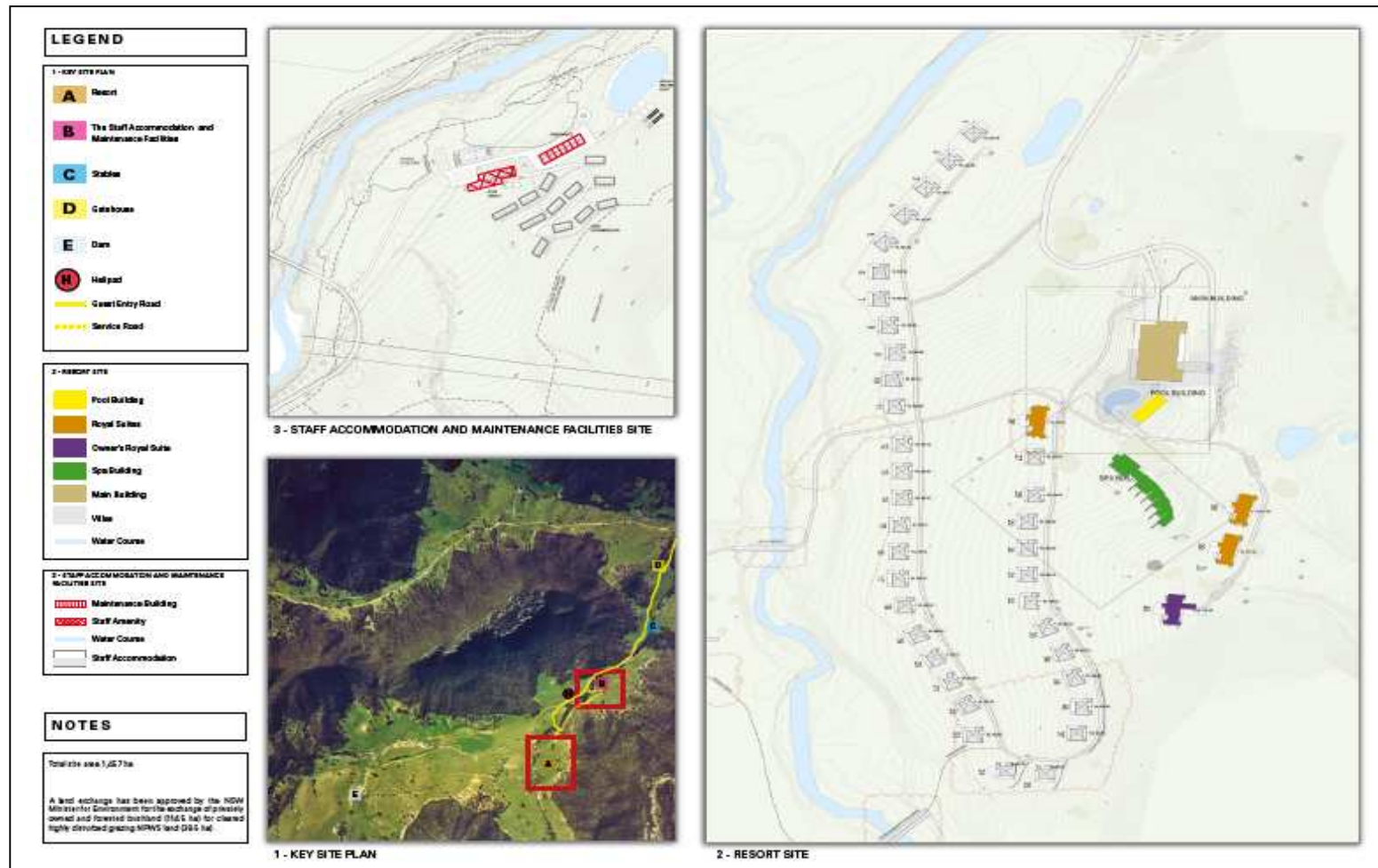
The proposed river and creek crossings will include a formal bridge structure to cross Wolgan River, a splash crossing used in low flow situations and to give a sense of entry to the resort, a buggy bridge and a pedestrian suspension bridge.

Please see below, figure 5 the proposed project as to be modified.



# Emirates Luxury Resort

Figure 5 – Proposed modifications site layout



# Emirates Luxury Resort

## 4.3 Incorporation of National Parks and Wildlife Services land

The proposal includes the exchange of privately owned forested bushland (114.5ha) for cleared highly disturbed grazing National Parks and Wildlife Services (NPWS) land (approximately 39.5ha).

The existing boundary of the site is drawn following the cadastral boundary. However, the actual site footprint follows the natural environmental and is defined by cleared grazing land and forested bushland. The NPWS land that is being proposed for acquisition can be identified by overlaying the cadastral boundary and the boundary set by the natural environment. As a result, the land being proposed for acquisition is a small pocket of cleared and highly disturbed grazing land.

Approval for the exchange of privately owned land for NPWS land has been granted, in principle by the NSW Minister for Environment on 9 October 2006. Figure 6 indicates the area of land being proposed for exchange.

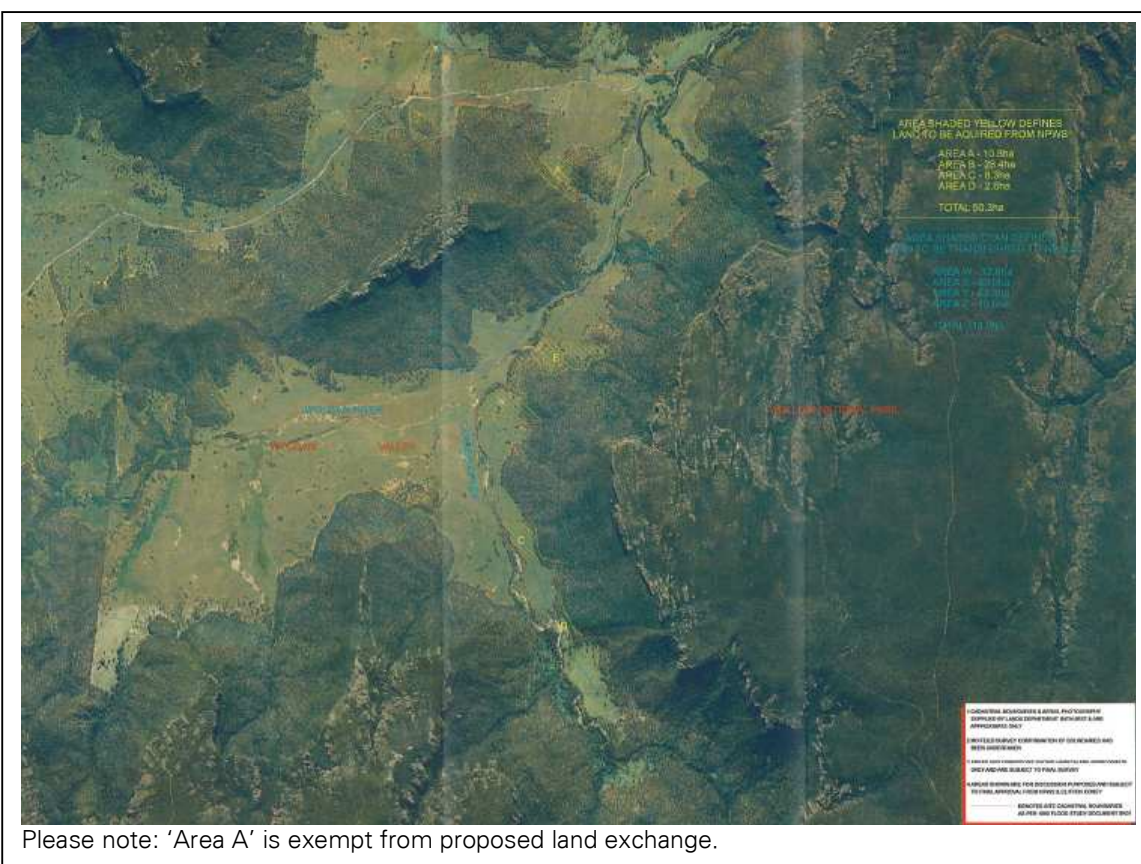


Figure 6 - Map to be provided showing land being swapped

# Emirates Luxury Resort

## 4.4 Modified resort layout

The modification proposes the reconfiguration of the development layout, this involves:

- Movement of the staff and maintenance buildings
- Movement of the resort suites
- The addition of a horse stables facility

The layout of both the resort and the staff and maintenance facilities are more concentrated in comparison with the approved concept plan. The modified layouts have a smaller footprint which ultimately results on less disturbance of the site. The modified layouts create a more efficient means of movement between the various elements of the proposed development.

Appendix A indicates the layout of the resort as modified. Refer to figure 5 for location of resort in context of the entire site.

## 4.5 Addition of a feral proof fence

The proposed modification to the Concept Plan includes the addition of a feral proof fence. The fence will span a distance of approximately 10 kilometres. It will run from Cape Pinnacle (located in the south eastern portion of the site) in a northerly direction crossing Wolgan River to Wolgan Road. Once the fence reaches Wolgan Road it will follow Wolgan Road all the way to the front gate of the site. At the front gate the feral proof fence will have an access gate which will allow visitors, staff and service people to access the site. The fence will then continue from the other side of Wolgan Road in an easterly direction to Tunnel Creek near the dismantled railway.

Located at the ends of the fence will be bait zones which will be used to trap any feral animals before they make their way round the fence and to discourage any would-be feral entrants onto the site. Two additional bait traps will be located south of the site, at points where access to the Wolgan Valley might be easily accessible by feral animals.

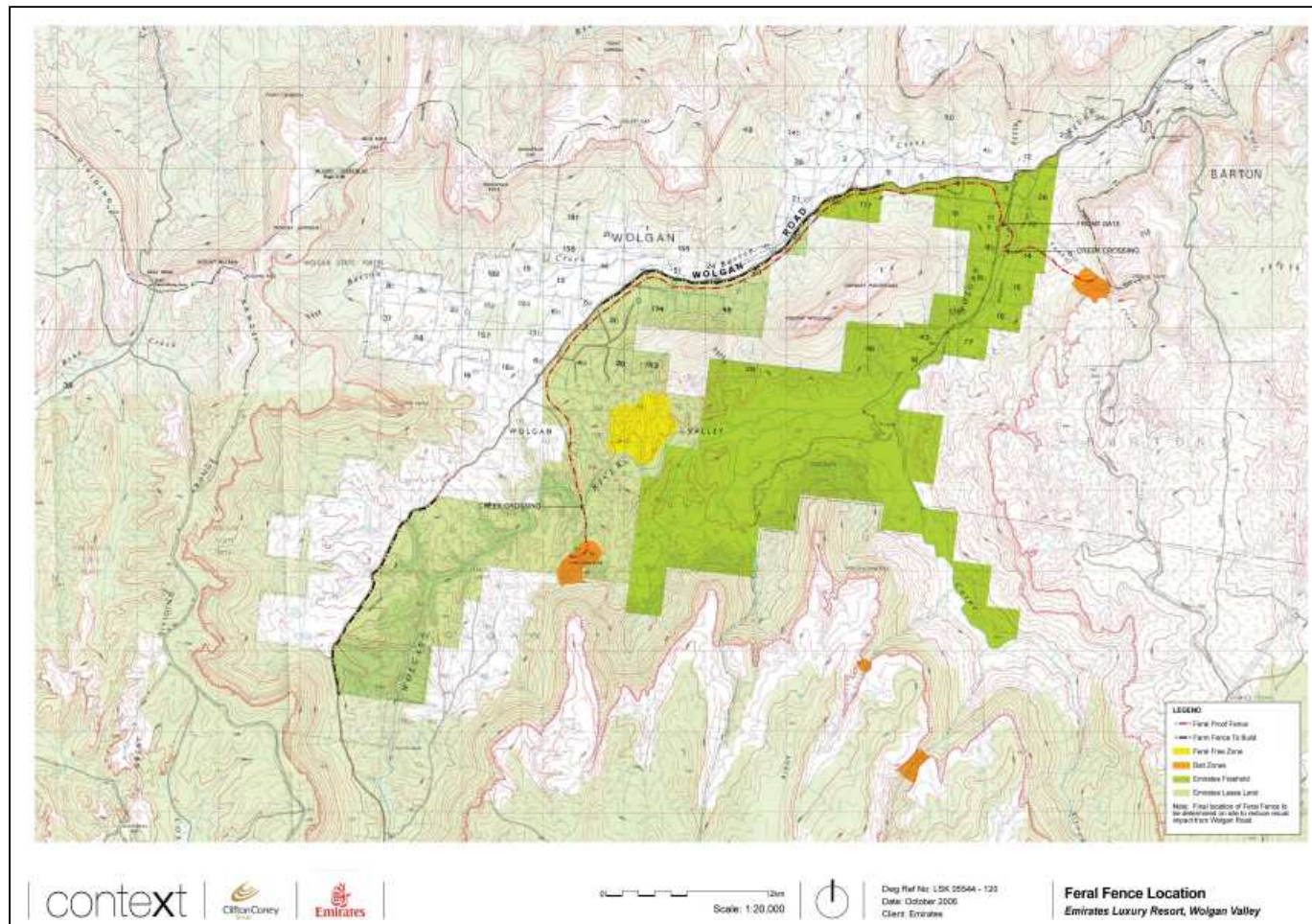
The fence will be made of galvanised steel posts and rabbit proof wire mesh. A mesh overhang will be supported by a curved pipe to the outside of the protection zone, for the purposes of stopping any feral animals from climbing over the fence.

Please refer to Figure 7 for the location of the feral proof fence and Appendix B for details of the feral proof fence construction.



# Emirates Luxury Resort

Figure 7 - Location of feral proof fence



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## 4.6 Addition of electricity line and fibre optic cable to service the site

The proposal requires the addition of an electricity line and fibre optic cable to be installed to service the site. The proposed electricity power line and fibre optic cable will extend for approximately 14 km to the site entrance. The overhead line is rated at 1.5MVA and will run at a voltage of 11kV.

An assessment of the impacts associated with the installation of the power line is currently being undertaken. The assessment will include:

- Archaeological heritage assessment.
- Flora and fauna assessment.

Figure 8 indicates the intended location of the electricity cable in relation to the site.

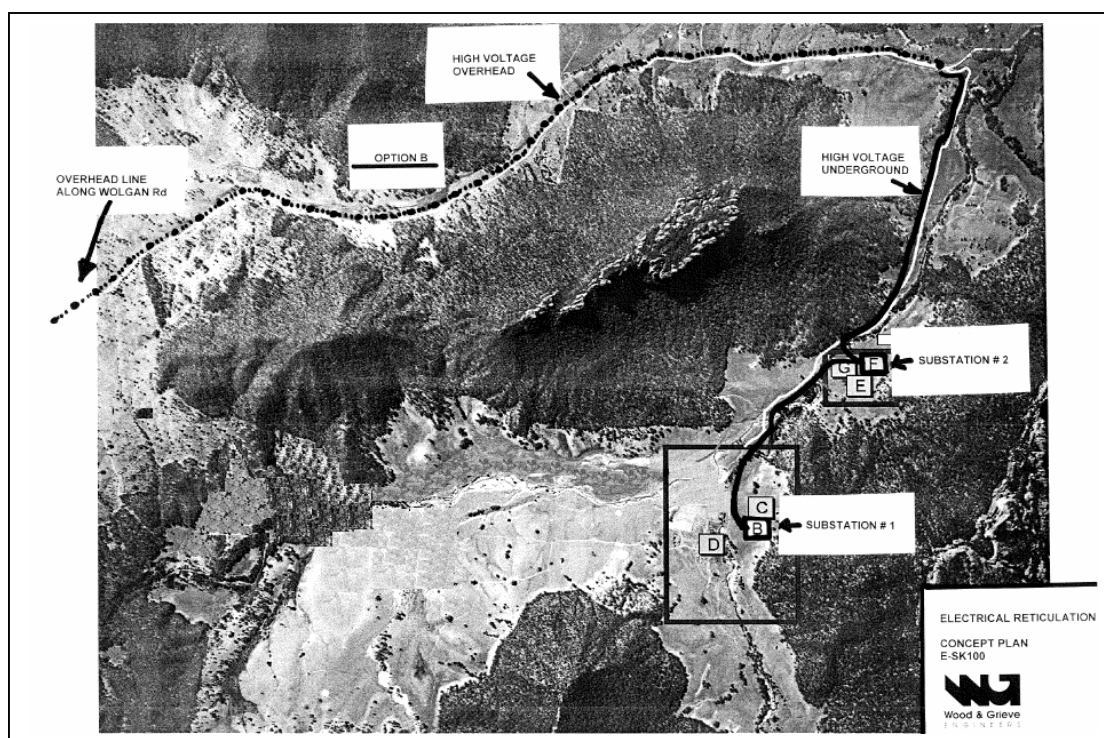


Figure 8 - location of electricity cable – Athol Malone and Tony Burg

## 4.7 Relocation of approved dam on site

The proposed modification of the Concept Plan will include a 116ML water storage facility. This dam will be an earth-clay structure.

Appendix C indicates the layout of the internal road network. Refer to figure 5 for location of road in context of entire site.



# Emirates Luxury Resort

## 4.8 Re-alignment of the internal access road

The internal road network will require re-aligning to follow the proposed modification to the resort layout. Importantly, the re-alignment will minimise the number of river and creek crossings. The internal road will create an outback trail atmosphere as guests will be driven down from the gatehouse, down an incline into the valley. The main river crossing leading to the main resort will include a formal bridge structure that can weather a 1 in 100 year flood event. The road will then wind its way through the creek where an informal crossing will be developed so not to inhibit the flow of the creek but to provide a splash effect when driving through. The guests will then be driven past a set of large trees where once over this area the main resort will be visible.

The internal road between the main resort, villas and Royal suites will be an informal trail. Golf buggys will be used to travel between the resort precincts however, the precincts will be easily accessible by foot. Appendix D indicates the layout of the internal road network. Refer to Figure 5 for location of road in context of entire site.

## 4.9 Addition of gatehouse

The modification includes the proposed development of a 'gatehouse' to the site. The function of the gatehouse is for security of the site as well as a welcoming point for guests. The gatehouse will be manned by a security guard where it is envisioned that all guests, staff and service people will have to register their arrival with the security person on duty prior to entering the site.

The gatehouse will be the formal entrance to the site and will not be visible from Wolgan Road. The image and presence that the gatehouse is meant to convey is that of a rural standalone out building. The gatehouse will include a lounge area, covered waiting area, office, toilet and carparking for approximately eight carparking bays. The gatehouse building will have a total floor area of 40m<sup>2</sup> and will be made Australian hardwood timber board construction. The roof of the structure will be metal roof sheeting (zincalume finish). Appendix E indicates the layout of the gatehouse. Refer to Figure 5 for location of gatehouse in context of entire site.

## 4.10 Addition of stables

The proposed Concept Plan modification will include the development of stables for 12 horses. The stables will also include: an indoor grooming area, concreted grooming horse shoe area, grain feed store, hay and straw store, tack area, reception, staff office kitchen and toilets. It is expected that the stables will be made of Australian hardwood timber board construction with zincalume metal roof sheeting. The total area of the stables will be approximately 750 m<sup>2</sup>. Appendix F indicates the layout of the stables. Refer to Figure 5 for location of stables in context of entire site.

## 4.11 Relocation of staff accommodation and maintenance areas

The staff accommodation and maintenance areas will be relocated away from the resort in response to the modification of the resort layout. The staff and maintenance areas will not be visible from the resort but are a necessary part in supporting the function of the resort. The proposed layout of the staff and maintenance facilities is identified in Appendix G. Refer to Figure 5 for location of stables in context of entire site.

## 4.12 Relocation of helipad

In response to the relocation of the staff accommodation and maintenance areas the helipad will need to be relocated. It is proposed that the helipad be relocated to the western side of the Wolgan River opposite the staff accommodation and maintenance areas. Refer to Figure 5 for location of stables in context of entire site.

# Emirates Luxury Resort

## 4.13 Diversion of water under current irrigation licences

The proposal will include diversion of water under the current irrigation licence. The current licence allows for the extraction of 42ML per year from Carne Creek for irrigation purposes. This is the equivalent of 0.115ML/day. The site is expected to require approximately 120kL/d. The water supply assessment undertaken by Coffey Geotechnics has identified that the surface water from carne Creek is considered likely to be sufficient to meet resort requirements.

## 4.14 Extraction of water from bores

The proposed modification will include the extraction of water from bores located on the site and at the Invincible Mine. Investigations undertaken by Coffey Geotechnics have identified that it is considered likely to be technically feasible to extract sufficient groundwater from deep water aquifers though treatment maybe required to meet water quality requirements. High quality groundwater has been found on site in shallow groundwater aquifers however the sustainable yield has not been proven yet. Additionally, investigations into the location of a suitable bore for water extraction purposes from Invincible Mine are currently being undertaken. Please refer to Appendix H for location of test bores on site and location of Invincible Mine.

## 4.15 Design and coordination of a water pipeline from an inactive mine and diversion of the mine water to the Wolgan River

The proposed modification includes a water pipeline that will run from Invincible Mine along a dirt road to Wolgan Gap then along Wolgan Road to the Wolgan River. The distance from the Invincible Mine airshaft to Wolgan Gap is 4.8kms. Once the pipeline reaches the Wolgan River the water will be discharged into the river. The site will then draw water downstream of the Wolgan River to match their needs. At present, the exact route of the pipeline is not available and further design of the pipeline is currently being undertaken.

An assessment of the impacts associated with the construction of the water pipeline is currently being undertaken. The assessment will include:

- Archaeological heritage assessment.
- Flora and fauna assessment.

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## 5 Preliminary Environmental Assessment

The key environmental and planning issues associated with the modification of the Approved Concept Plan have been considered below.

### 5.1 Impact on National Park and World Heritage Values

The total site area as identified in the approved Concept Plan is 1,099ha. The NPWS land that will be acquired by the site is highly disturbed land that has been subject to grazing and other farming practices. In return for the acquisition of approximately 50ha of highly disturbed NPWS land the Proponent is handing over some 114ha of forested private land to the NPWS.

The proposed footprint of the resort is expected to be less than 2% of the total site area. In context of the size of the site, the resort will not have a detrimental impact on the significant cultural, ecological and recreational value of the adjoining National Park land and World Heritage site. The proposal as a whole will encourage the return of native fauna into the Wolgan Valley and it will include revegetation of the site.

The construction and operation of the site will require the various management plans to be implemented in order to ensure that all environmental impacts addressed. Further, the management plans will be the framework in which environmental management measures will be adopted that will further consider the impacts of development in regards to the entire site.

### 5.2 Impact on Wolgan River

The proposal will include a reduction in the overall footprint of the resort. This is likely to have a positive impact on the Wolgan River as there will be fewer crossings of the River and less formal infrastructure being constructed across the River.

### 5.3 Indigenous Heritage

The indigenous heritage impacts associated with the proposed modification specifically relate to the installation of the electricity line and the fibre optic cable and the water pipeline. A linear assessment of the electricity cable route and areas where the power poles are located is currently being undertaken, as well as a linear assessment of the water pipeline route.

There is an aboriginal heritage management plan currently being prepared as part of the approved Concept Plan.

### 5.4 Ecology

The ecological impacts associated with the proposed modification specifically relate to the installation of the electricity line and the fibre optic cable. A linear assessment of the electricity cable route and areas where the power poles are located is currently being undertaken.

There is a flora and fauna management plan currently being prepared as part of the approved Concept Plan.

### 5.5 Traffic

The operating conditions will not change in light of the proposed modification. Importantly, the proposed modification to the resort layout will provide a more concentrated layout. This will result in

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a more efficient internal road layout which will provide for better movement around the resort. Further, because the distance are shorter between the resort villas, the main building and other resort facilities it is likely that guests will be more inclined to walk between there chosen destinations.

## 5.6 Fire and Emergencies

The fire and emergency impacts associated with the proposed modification specifically relate to the re-alignment of the internal road network. The internal road network will also include a dedicated service road from the staff accommodation and maintenance areas to the main resort building and facilities. The service road will also function as an emergency route specifically, if a 1 in 100 year flood incidence occurs. However, the site was to be threatened by bushfire then the main access road along the Wolgan River need to be used which is away from forested NPWS bushland.

There is a bushfire management plan currently being prepared as part of the approved Concept Plan.

## 5.7 Water

The proposal will require the water storage dam to be relocated in response to the modified resort layout. However, the overall capacity will not change from the Approved Concept Plan. The dam will be made of an earth-clay structure.

## 5.8 Visual

The proposed modification will include a more concentrated resort footprint which will be set on the eastern side of Wolgan River. The proposed modification is not likely to have a detrimental visual impact on the landscape given that the development will have a footprint of approximately 2%, all villas being predominately single storey and the main building being constructed to a two storey level. The location of the resort set on the far eastern side of the site will not detract from the wide expansive views of the Valley.

## 5.9 Impact of Horses

The proposal includes the addition of 12 horses on the site. No further assessment is required as the horses will replace the existing 1000 head of cattle that currently graze on the site.

## 5.10 Noise

### *Main resort building and villas*

The modification of the resort layout will give rise to any additional noise impacts from those identified in the original Concept Plan Approval.

### *Helicopter flights*

Noise impacts associated with the proposed modification specifically relate to the relocation of the helipad. The helipad is required to be moved in response the relocation of the staff accommodation and maintenance areas. The helipad will be located approximately 300 metres away from the staff facilities. It is likely that given the coverage in the valley that noise from helicopter flights arriving and departing the resort will not have a detrimental impact on the immediate surroundings.

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## 6 Conclusion

This report has provided a Preliminary Environmental Assessment of the modification to the Concept Plan. The report has addressed all the relevant environmental and planning issues associated with the proposed modification. The proposed modification to the Concept Plan approval includes:

- Modification of the resort layout.
- Incorporation of the National Parks and Wildlife land.
- Addition of a feral fence.
- Addition of electricity line including fibre optic cable to service the site.
- Relocation of approved dam on site.
- Re-alignment of the internal access road.
- Addition of gatehouse (not visible from Volgan Road).
- Addition of stables (for 12 horses).
- Relocation of staff accommodation and maintenance areas.
- Relocation of helipad.

The relevant environmental issues that have been addressed include:

- Impact on National Park and World Heritage values.
- Impact on Volgan River.
- Indigenous heritage.
- Non-indigenous heritage.
- Ecology.
- Traffic.
- Fire and emergencies.
- Water.
- Visual.
- Impact of horses.
- Noise.

In light of the assessment undertaken in this report, the proposed modification to the Concept Plan approval is not likely to generate any additional environmental impacts. The environmental impacts of the proposed modifications are considered to be manageable.



# appendices

