



HUON VALLEY COUNCIL

Part 2 – Specification of the Services

1. Description:

The Huon Valley Council is seeking to engage a qualified and experienced consultant (the “Contractor”) to prepare a Rural Living Densification Study for all land currently zoned as Rural Living under the Tasmanian Planning Scheme (TPS) and Local Provisions Schedule (LPS) within the Huon Valley municipal area.

The study will support Council’s strategic objectives to guide future subdivision and densification in Rural Living Zones, ensuring decisions are underpinned by evidence and best practice planning principles.

The Contractor will be required to deliver expert services in strategic land use planning, community engagement, environmental and agricultural value assessments, transport planning and infrastructure analysis.

2. Background:

The Land Use and Development Strategy (LUDS) is the Huon Valley Council’s primary strategic document guiding long-term land use and development decisions. It ensures that land use decisions align with community needs and preferences while remaining consistent with the State and regional planning frameworks. Recent changes in the state’s planning system necessitate that the LUDS operates within this broader context.

The development of the LUDS began in July 2022 with the creation of the State of the Valley Report, a comprehensive analysis of key factors such as population, housing, infrastructure and employment. This report established a robust evidence base to support community engagement and consultation.

The community’s vision for the Huon Valley was captured through extensive engagement, which identified key themes such as the need to balance rural living opportunities with the protection of natural landscapes and agricultural land. The strategy emphasises the dual challenge of preserving agricultural land and enabling rural living, given the distinct needs for lot sizes and the separation required between residential and agricultural uses.



HUON VALLEY COUNCIL

One of the defining characteristics of the Huon Valley, according to the community, is its natural beauty and rural lifestyle. The LUDS outlines a balanced approach to enable residential development in rural areas while considering natural hazard risk management and safeguarding natural landscapes, productive agricultural land and community values. Central to this is Strategic Direction 10.6, which calls for the identification of existing Rural Living Zone areas that may support greater density.

In July 2023, Council passed Motion 13.008/23, reaffirming its commitment to the Huon Valley's rural character. The motion emphasised support for a mosaic of land uses, including agricultural, rural living and natural areas. It acknowledged the community's desire for increased density in Rural Living Zones and committed to a strategic process to achieve this. The motion also called for expediting the Strategic Land Use study to resolve long-standing planning issues. Council's position highlights the importance of increasing rural living opportunities while protecting agricultural land and landscape values.

The Rural Living Zone currently accommodates four lot sizes: 1ha, 2ha, 5ha and 10ha. Historical subdivision approvals have resulted in a high number of smaller lots in the Huon Valley. Approximately 26% of lots are between 1ha and 10ha, while only 13% are larger than 10ha, and a significant proportion of dwellings are being approved outside existing towns and villages. This has implications for agricultural activities. During the recent transition from Huon Valley Interim Planning to the Statewide Tasmania Planning Scheme, the Planning Authority's Section 35F report recommended zoning changes for many properties, resulting in Rural Living Zone assignments. However, additional properties, not initially included in the Planning Authority's recommendation, were considered by the Tasmania Planning Commission (the Commission) during hearings, leading to the involvement of approximately 850 landowners and a change in zoning for over 1,100 properties.

Because of the variety of lot sizes in the Rural Living Zone, some landowners sought lot sizes that would permit further subdivision of their land in recent Commission hearings. However, in almost all cases, the Planning Authority determined the lot sizes in a way that would prevent further subdivision. While there is some merit in exploring subdivision in certain areas, ***the Planning Authority advocated to the Commission that any increase in subdivision or density should not proceed without a comprehensive strategic land use study.*** This study would be necessary to assess the impact of increased density on the broader municipal area.

The Rural Living Densification Project is a direct response to this strategic direction, aiming to identify opportunities for increased density within existing Rural Living Zones.



HUON VALLEY COUNCIL

This project will assess the feasibility of increasing density within current Rural Living Zone clusters, taking into account factors such as infrastructure capacity, environmental impacts and community expectations.

This study will provide a structured and transparent process for assessing densification potential and will help establish clear expectations and decision-making criteria.

3. Project Purpose:

The purpose of this project is to develop an evidence-based decision-making framework that:

- Defines clear criteria for assessing densification feasibility, ensuring alignment with local, regional and state planning policies.
- Empowers communities to take ownership of their planning aspirations by providing a structured pathway to work with consultants on planning proposals.
- Provides case studies and scenarios to illustrate how the framework should be applied.
- Ensures a fair and transparent process that prevents individual landowners from lobbying for private rezonings without strategic justification.

The study **WILL NOT** recommend specific areas for densification but instead provide a structured framework that communities can use to assess their own areas.

4. Project Objectives:

The primary objective of this project is to engage a qualified consultant to develop a comprehensive and strategic Rural Living Densification Study for the Huon Valley municipal area. The study will be developed in collaboration with key stakeholders and the community, ensuring alignment with the Huon Valley Council's strategic goals and addressing community needs.

The key tasks driving the scope of work includes:

- Develop a decision-making framework that establishes a structured criteria-based model or decision tree to assess whether an area is suitable for densification. This framework will serve as a transparent assessment tool for communities to self-evaluate potential subdivision opportunities.



HUON VALLEY COUNCIL

- Review existing Rural Living Zone clusters to understand the feasibility of further subdivision or densification. This includes identifying and accounting for land use patterns constraints, and the potential impacts on growth and development.
- Determine policy alignment by evaluating how densification opportunities fit within the Huon Valley Land Use and Development Strategy (LUDS), the Southern Tasmania Regional Land Use Strategy (STRLUS) and the draft Tasmanian Planning Policies (TPP).
- Evaluate infrastructure capacity to determine whether essential services such as water supply, sewerage, roads and public transport can support increased density within Rural Living Zones. The study will also assess whether minor infrastructure upgrades could improve feasibility.
- Assess environmental and agricultural constraints to ensure that densification aligns with strategic land use principles, particularly those related to the protection of natural landscapes, agricultural land and environmental values. The study will also examine potential risks such as bushfire hazards, flooding and biodiversity impacts.
- Identify opportunities for community-led planning proposals by providing a structured pathway for landowners and community groups to develop subdivision plans collaboratively.
- Develop case studies and hypothetical scenarios that illustrate how the decision-making framework can be applied in different rural contexts. These examples will be based on real-world conditions but will not reference actual clusters. The purpose of these case studies is to demonstrate how various factors, such as infrastructure limitations and environmental constraints, influence subdivision feasibility.
- Ensure a fair and transparent process by preventing ad-hoc rezoning requests from individual landowners. The study will establish clear decision-making criteria that will guide future planning proposals and avoid disputes related to subdivision approvals.

There are number of other related Huon Valley plans and State Policies that need to be considered when preparing the study, including:

- Southern Tasmania Regional Land Use Strategy
- Draft Tasmania Planning Policies
- Huon Valley State of the Valley report 2023
- Huon Valley Community Vison 2023
- Land Use and Development Strategy 2024



HUON VALLEY COUNCIL

This study will provide an evidence-based approach to managing Rural Living Zone development, ensuring that future subdivision opportunities are strategically planned, community-driven, and aligned with broader land use objectives.

5. Scope of Work:

Key action	Indicative timing
Stage 1 – Background Study and draft Framework	
Initial inception meeting with Council team	April 2025
Consultant reviews existing information, data, reports and planning framework etc. and commences preparing discussion paper & prepares Community/Stakeholder Engagement Plan (allow for 1 x 1.5 meetings to review baseline data).	April 2025
Preparation of draft study paper (allow for 2 x 1.5 meetings for reviews with Council), Project team to provide ongoing feedback as required.	April 2025
Workshops with key agencies, stakeholders, Council staff, Council (allow for 2 x 1.5 meetings for workshops)	May 2025
Finalisation of Draft Study	May 2025
Key hold point – Council review prior to Stage 2	
Stage 2 – Community feedback & Council	
Draft Study put on public exhibition	June 2025
Prepare final Study based on consultation outcomes	June 2025
Final Study distributed for comment	June 2025
Final Study endorsed	June 2025

6. Project Deliverables:

Stage 1: Background Study and draft Framework



HUON VALLEY COUNCIL

A draft study to be developed in consultation with key agencies and stakeholders including landowners and residents. The draft study should address all objectives and tasks specified in section 4 and include the below (but not limited to):

Background Study

This should include (but not be limited to):

- Overview covering the following: Why a study? Key issues and opportunities? What have we heard from the previous community engagement?
- Huon Valley Community Vision and LUDS, Key Findings, Implementation progress, Community and stakeholder input
- Desktop review and data collection, Revision of the current Rural Living Zone clusters, Assessment of data on land size, land use, ownership, Code, overlays and existing infrastructure capacity
- SWOT – preliminary findings of densification of each Rural Living clusters - Present and future for each cluster: Features | Strengths Weakness and potential Threats and Opportunities
- Overview of key Land Use Planning considerations: Existing and future land use based on detailed analysis

Decision-Making Framework

The framework will establish structured criteria for assessing densification potential, covering:

- Policy and strategic alignment, ensuring consistency with LUDS, STRLUS and TPPs.
- Lot size and subdivision potential, determining whether an area meets zoning requirements for subdivision.
- Infrastructure capacity, assessing access to water, sewerage, roads, public transport and essential services.
- Environmental constraints and agricultural impacts, including bushfire risk, flood hazards, biodiversity and land use conflicts.
- Community and stakeholder considerations, ensuring local needs and expectations are incorporated.



HUON VALLEY COUNCIL

The framework will be presented as a decision tree or criteria-based model to help communities assess land suitability.

Case Studies and Hypothetical Scenarios

The study will include:

- Different case studies demonstrating the framework in different rural contexts.
- Example scenarios that illustrate constraints, infrastructure considerations and potential solutions.
- Guidance on how communities can collaborate with their consultants to develop planning proposals.

Stage 2: Community Engagement & Council

The draft study to be put on exhibition and feedback sought from stakeholders and the community on potential change. This feedback will inform the draft study and recommendations. There will be opportunities for landowners within the Rural Living clusters to engage on the draft study in mid-2025 once the consultant has complete work on the draft study.

The consultant must:

- document all engagement efforts, keeping a detailed record of input or feedback from all stakeholders, including elected members, state agencies and the community.
- compile a comprehensive summary report of community input and engagement activities.
- demonstrate how stakeholder input has been considered in revising the draft study, clearly outlining the impact of feedback on the final recommendations.
- provide transparent records of all engagement activities to ensure accountability and openness throughout the process.

As part of this the consultant will need to:

- Attend all required project meetings.
- Meet all project reporting and administrative requirements.



HUON VALLEY COUNCIL

The consultant will deliver:

- A comprehensive final report (digital and hardcopy) summarising the framework, findings and engagement outcomes.
- A decision-tree flowchart (digital and hardcopy) and supporting visuals to ensure accessibility.

Note: All documents delivered are to be practical, readable and well-structured and edited for correct spelling and grammar and invest full copyright and ownership in the Huon Valley Council.

7. Project Timeframe:

The commencement date is upon signing the contract. It is anticipated that the services including the provision of all deliverables will commence by April 2025 and run for approx. 3-4 months including 1 month for community consultation. The consultant must adhere to this timeline, ensuring timely delivery of all project components while accommodating necessary adjustments based on stakeholder input.

8. Required Consultant Profile:

The selected consultant must be highly qualified, experienced and capable of delivering the project's objectives within the defined timeframe. The following requirements will be used as selection criteria by the selection committee:

- **Technical Capability and Experience** - Demonstrated experience in urban design, strategic planning, community engagement, transport planning and infrastructure projects in complex stakeholder environments.
- **Methodology, Project and Context Understanding and Proposal Quality** - A clear and innovative approach to delivering the project, demonstrating an understanding of the objectives and potential challenges as well as the ability to assess and manage opportunities and risks associated with both the regional and Local Government context.
- **Stakeholder Engagement Skills** - Proven ability to engage effectively with a diverse range of stakeholders, including elected members, state agencies, community groups, landowners and residents.



HUON VALLEY COUNCIL

- **Project Management, Analytical and Design Skills**- Strong project management skills to ensure the timely and efficient delivery of the project, including coordination of subconsultants if needed as well as high-level analytical skills, supported by a track record of developing creative, practical and evidence-based design solutions.
- **Communication and Reporting** - Excellent communication skills, both written and verbal, with a focus on preparing clear, well-structured reports and visual presentations that are accessible to a broad audience.
- **Value for Money** - Competitive pricing with a transparent and detailed cost breakdown, ensuring the project delivers value for the investment.
- **References** - Positive feedback from previous clients on similar projects, showcasing the consultant's reliability and quality of work.

The consultant **MUST** also retain or have access to sub-consultants specialising in areas such as planning, infrastructure, transport planning, economics and urban design, as required by the project scope.

9. Huon Valley Council Input:

The Huon Valley Council will provide support to the consultant throughout the project. This support will include:

- access to relevant data, reports and strategic documents necessary for background analysis and planning.
- assistance with research, including coordinating meetings with key stakeholders and other relevant councils.
- facilitation of community engagement activities, including booking venues and managing event logistics as needed.
- ongoing feedback and input from the Council's project team to ensure alignment with strategic goals and objectives.
- administrative support for scheduling and organising workshops, meetings and consultation sessions.

10. Regular Meetings:

The consultant will be required to attend regular meetings with the Huon Valley Council project team throughout the duration of the project. These meetings will serve to:



HUON VALLEY COUNCIL

- provide updates on progress and address any issues or challenges.
- discuss and review project deliverables at various stages.
- ensure ongoing alignment with project objectives and timelines.
- facilitate collaboration and communication among stakeholders.

Meetings may be held in person or virtually, depending on the nature of the discussion and the availability of participants. The frequency of these meetings will be determined at the project's inception and adjusted as needed to ensure effective communication and project delivery.

11. Risk Assessment:

Managing risks is crucial to the successful delivery of the project. The consultant must identify potential risks early and develop strategies to mitigate them. Key risks associated with this project include:

- **High Community and Council Expectations** - The project carries significant public interest and high expectations from both the community and senior levels of Council. The consultant must implement effective communication and engagement strategies to manage and meet these expectations.
- **Timeframe Constraints and Project Compression** - The project is subject to strict timelines, with potential compression due to internal and external expectations. The consultant should have robust project management practices to ensure that milestones are met on schedule, with contingencies in place for potential delays.
- **Budget Limitations** - Financial constraints may impact project delivery. The consultant must ensure that all activities are cost-effective and align with the project's budget.
- **Stakeholder Coordination** - Coordinating input from multiple stakeholders, including state agencies, community members and elected officials, may present challenges. The consultant must have strong stakeholder management skills to facilitate collaboration and address any conflicts.

The consultant is expected to maintain a proactive approach to risk management, providing regular updates on risk status and proposed mitigation measures to Huon Valley Council.



HUON VALLEY COUNCIL

12. Project Handover Requirements:

As per the Conditions of Contract, Huon Valley Council owns any existing material provided or created in the course of providing the Deliverables.

Upon completion of the project, the consultant must ensure a seamless handover of all materials to the Huon Valley Council. The handover requirements include but not limited to:

- all project deliverables, including the final structure plan, reports and supporting documents, in both digital (PDF and editable formats such as Word and CAD files) and hard copy formats as required
- all design related files, including 3D visualisations, GIS files, CAD files, Indesign files, PS and Illustrator files and any graphics created during the project, in accessible formats. Ensure all data is organised and properly labelled
- transfer full copyright and ownership of all materials to the Huon Valley Council, ensuring that the Council has unrestricted rights to use and modify the documents as needed.

Note: Council reserves the right to edit and make changes to final documentation prior to endorsement and public release. The consultant must also be available for follow-up consultations if any clarification or additional guidance is required after the project handover.

13. Return Brief and Fee Proposal:

The provider must submit a return brief that demonstrates a thorough understanding of the project, including the proposed approach, work methodology and a detailed fee proposal. The fee proposal should be based on an hourly rate "do and charge" arrangement, capped at a fee ceiling of \$__ (excluding GST) and inclusive of all estimated outgoings, such as travel costs. The return brief must clearly identify all consulting team members and any subcontractors, detailing their skill sets, roles and respective hourly rates.

The return brief **MUST** also include a Detailed Project Plan, outlining:

- **Project Objectives and Outcomes** - A summary of the key objectives and the intended outcomes of the project.
- **Work Methodology** - A description of the approach and methodology to be used, including key activities, data analysis methods, community and stakeholder engagement strategies and how risks will be managed.



HUON VALLEY COUNCIL

- **Project Timeline** - A detailed timeline that includes specific start and end dates, key milestones, and deliverable deadlines, ensuring alignment with the project scope and objectives.
- **Resource Allocation** - A breakdown of how consulting team resources will be allocated throughout the project, including specific tasks and time commitments for each team member or subcontractor.
- **Risk Management Plan** - An identification of potential risks (including potential conflicts of interest) and a strategy for mitigating these risks, ensuring the project stays on track and within budget.
- **Communication Plan** - An outline of how the provider will communicate progress and updates to the Huon Valley Council, including the frequency and format of status reports and meetings.

The return brief should comprehensively outline how the provider intends to deliver the project efficiently and effectively, ensuring a clear and organised approach to achieving the desired outcomes.

14. Timing:

The quote must be received by 5:00pm (EST) Monday **14 April 2025**

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