MINUTES

COUNCIL MEETING

TUESDAY 27 JULY 2021
6:00 PM

LIVE STREAMED ON THE CITY'S WEBSITE:
www.geelongaustralia.com.au/meetings

COUNCIL:

Cr S Asher (Bellarine Ward) - Mayor
Cr T Sullivan (Bellarine Ward) - Deputy Mayor
Cr J Mason (Bellarine Ward)
Cr E Kontelj (Brownbill Ward)
Cr S Mansfield (Brownbill Ward)
Cr P Murrihy (Brownbill Ward)
Cr B Harwood (Kardinia Ward)
Cr B Moloney (Kardinia Ward)
Cr R Nelson (Kardinia Ward)
Cr A Aitken (Windermere Ward)
Cr K Grzybek (Windermere Ward)

CITY OF GREATER GEELONG

INDEX

1. PROCEDURAL MATTERS.....5
1.1. Acknowledgement of Country 5
1.2. Apologies 5
1.3. Leaves of Absence.....5
1.4. Declarations of Conflicts of Interest 5
1.5. Confirmation of Minutes 5
1.6. Public Question and Submission Time 5
1.7. Petitions 6
2. REPORTS 7
2.1. Avalon Corridor Strategy.....7
2.2. Sparrovale Wetlands Master Plan.....80
2.3. Portarlington Recreation Reserve Master Plan (Draft).....151
2.4. Gender COVID-19 Impact Analysis Report.....260
2.5. Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2018-21 Final Report 317
2.6. Draft Climate Change Response Plan 346
2.7. Rabbit Control Plan 2021-2026.....389
2.8. Rural and Peri Urban Advisory Committee Terms of Reference 418
2.9. Amendment C422GGEE - Permanent Heritage Overlay at 12-16 Kinsmead Street, Waurn Ponds - Consideration of Submissions 430
2.10. Amendment C414GGEE - Proposed Rezoning of Former Rail Land, McCurdy Road, Herne Hill 470
2.11. Road Naming - Unnamed Laneway Belmont to Bechervaise Lane, Belmont 486
2.12. Tender T2100076 - Leisurelink 50m Pool Renewal 491
2.13. Tender T2100079 - Infringement Administration.....497
2.14. Proposed Lease of Retail and Office Spaces at Wurriki Nyal, 137-149 Mercer Street Geelong - Civic Precinct.....502
2.15. Proposed Lease to Telstra Corporation Limited - Mt Anakie 2392A Ballan Road, Anakie Vic 3213.....508
2.16. Proposed Lease to Ene.Hub Pty Ltd for Smart City Infrastructure.....513
2.17. Proposed Lease of 2/240 Pioneer Road, Grovedale (Leisurelink Kiosk) ..523
2.18. Proposed Sale or Lease of 151 Mercer Street, Geelong - Civic Precinct .527

2.19. Glenlee, Stages 5 and 6 - Revocation of Flood Prone Area 532
2.20. Warralily Stage 102 - Revocation of Flood-Prone Area 538
2.21. Update to Instruments of Delegation.....544
3. NOTICE OF MOTION 557
3.1. Provision for Low Cost Camping in the North of Geelong.....557
3.2. Investigation into Greyhound off-leash Designated Areas 560
4. URGENT BUSINESS.....562
5. RECORD OF INFORMAL MEETINGS OF COUNCILLORS.....563
6. PLANNING DELEGATIONS.....566
7. CONFIDENTIAL.....569
7.1. 2020-21 Community Events Grants Round 2 569
7.2. Civic Accommodation Update 569
8. CLOSE OF MEETING.....570

1. PROCEDURAL MATTERS

1.1. Acknowledgement of Country

Council acknowledges Wadawurrung Traditional Owners of this land and pays its respects to all Elders past and present and to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People who are part of the Greater Geelong community today.

Obituary

Cr Murrihy, on behalf of the Mayor, Councillors and staff of the City of Greater Geelong expressed respect and condolences on the passing of Jean Inglis, wife of former Mayor of the City of Geelong, Ian Inglis.

1.2. Apologies

Nil

1.3. Leaves of Absence

That Leave of Absence be granted to Cr Mansfield for the period 9 August to 20 August 2021 inclusive.

Noted

1.4. Declarations of Conflicts of Interest

Nil

1.5. Confirmation of Minutes

Cr Grzybek moved, Cr Mansfield seconded -

That the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 22 June 2021 be confirmed.

Carried

1.6. Public Question and Submission Time

Two questions and one submission from community members were received prior to the meeting and will receive a response via email. All Councillors have received and read the questions and submission.

Questions were received from Caroline Danaher regarding Climate Emergency and Sally Fisher regarding Draft Climate Change Response Plan.

A submission was received from David Hodge on behalf of the landowners identified as “future intermodal” in the Lara Structure Plan regarding the Avalon Corridor Strategy.

1.7. Petitions

Cr Mansfield presented a petition from a community member requesting 2-hour parking signs be installed for Maple Crescent, Bell Park.

Cr Nelson presented a joint letter from residents requesting Council provide traffic calming features in Jacobs Street, Belmont.

2. REPORTS

2.1. Avalon Corridor Strategy

Source: **City Planning & Economy**
Director: **Gareth Smith**

Purpose

1. To seek Council endorsement to release the draft Avalon Corridor Strategy (ACS) (Attachment 1) for community consultation and confirm the role of the Victorian Planning Authority (VPA) in the planning for the Avalon Employment Precinct.

Background

2. The ACS is a land use strategy prepared by the City and Wyndham City Council (WCC) in collaboration with the Victorian Government Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP). It was developed in response to a Plan Melbourne 2017-2050 action to maintain a non-urban break between Geelong and Melbourne.

3. Given the state and national significance of opportunities presented under the ACS and potential implications for assets like Avalon Airport, the City has liaised closely with the Victorian Government throughout development of the strategy. This has included discussions about the role of the state in implementation of the ACS.

Key Matters

4. The draft ACS recommends:

   4.1. Protecting significant cultural, landscape and environmental values and maintaining a green break between Werribee and Geelong (while also retaining important economic transport connections between the two regions);

   4.2. Safeguarding of state significant infrastructure and the long-term role of Avalon Airport from urban encroachment; and

   4.3. Creation of a Structure Plan for the proposed Avalon Employment Precinct, to guide development of land located immediately adjacent to Avalon Airport.

4. Community consultation is proposed to occur over a six-week period from 11 August, in conjunction with WCC. The draft ACS and proposed engagement approach will be presented to WCC's Planning Committee for approval on 10 August.

5. Given the State significance of the area and the need to engage multiple State agencies is recommended that the VPA leads the development of a structure plan for the Avalon Employment Precinct. This precinct will contribute to the long-term employment land supply for the city. Work on the scope of the structure plan and engagement with landowners should proceed concurrently with finalising the ACS.

RESOLUTION - Item 2.1

Cr Aitken moved, Cr Grzybek seconded -

That Council:

1. **Endorse the release of the draft Avalon Corridor Strategy (Attachment 1) for community consultation for a minimum period of six weeks; and**

2. **Fast track delivery of the employment precinct and request the Minister for Planning to appoint the Victorian Planning Authority as the Planning Authority for the proposed Avalon Employment Precinct.**

Carried

Financial Sustainability

6. Supporting background technical reports produced in 2017 were recently updated to remain current and relevant. Further updates may be required, if finalisation of the ACS again experiences considerable delays.

7. The ACS is intended to provide economic security and certainty for future employment opportunities within the Avalon Corridor and the northern part of Geelong. Further delays to finalising the draft ACS could result in delays to the delivery of new jobs and employment opportunities to the Greater Geelong region.

8. Preparation of and consultation on the Structure Plan for Avalon Employment Precinct will be delivered by the VPA with third party funding from the development industry. The City will continue to provide input and work collaboratively with the State through officer resource rather than direct financial support.

Community Engagement

9. Community consultation was initially undertaken in late 2016 to understand community interests in the Avalon Corridor. A consultation report is available on the project webpage and was used to inform the draft ACS. Updates to the community have been provided via community bulletins uploaded onto the project webpage.

10. The next phase of community consultation will commence on 11 August for a six-week period. This marks the first opportunity the community will have to view and comment on the draft ACS. This consultation will be undertaken in conjunction with WCC, as project partner.

11. The community will be consulted again on any planning scheme amendments that will be pursued following finalisation of the strategy.

12. Engagement has occurred on an ongoing basis with key stakeholders during development of the draft ACS including Victorian Government departments and agencies (including DELWP and the VPA), Commonwealth Government departments, Wadawurrung Traditional Owners, Avalon Airport, Melbourne Water, and others.

13. Finalisation of the ACS was delayed while Avalon Airport sought endorsement of the proposed Australian Noise Exposure Forecast (ANEF) from Airservices Australia. Though this endorsement has not yet been formalised, it is proposed that community consultation proceeds in order to prevent further delays to the project.

Social Equity and Sustainability

14. Protection and enhancement of Aboriginal cultural heritage and values is considered an important objective for the Avalon Corridor. The draft ACS has been considered against principles of the Wadawurrung Healthy Country Plan (‘Paleert Tjaara Dja’) 2020-2030.

15. Through a supporting Cultural Values Assessment that was undertaken in early 2021, the Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation (WTOAC) also directly provided a number of recommendations to the City to inform the ACS. This includes a recommendation to review the current extent of two Significant Landscape Overlays (SLOs) that fall within or adjacent to the Avalon Corridor, including the Foothills of the You Yangs (Wurdi Youang). This recommendation has been included in the draft ACS as an area for further work, to be pursued with WTOAC, DELWP and WCC.

Relevant Law/Policy/Legal Implications

16. The draft ACS and Framework Plan are consistent with State Government planning policy, in particular Plan Melbourne 2017-2050. Policy Direction 7.2.2 notes the need to safeguard State infrastructure opportunities and complementary development in the future, while maintaining a non-urban settlement break between Melbourne and Geelong. It also notes that land use buffers for existing infrastructure and areas of high biodiversity value (such as Ramsar wetlands) must be protected.

17. In line with Ministerial Direction 19, the draft ACS was referred to the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) Victoria for response. Ministerial Direction 19 requires planning authorities to seek early advice from the EPA when undertaking strategic planning processes and preparing planning scheme amendments. Comments received from the EPA have been considered and incorporated into the draft ACS, where relevant.

18. Input from relevant policy areas in other Victorian and Commonwealth Government departments and agencies was also sought and has been taken into account. As a close collaborator on the project, DELWP indicated their support for the release of the draft ACS for community consultation, noting further opportunities will be available to relevant government areas to influence the final version.

Alignment to Community Plan and Vision

19. This report aligns with Our Community Plan 2021-2025 strategic priority:
    Sustainable growth and environment.

20. This report aligns with the Community led 30-year Vision, “Greater Geelong: A Clever and Creative Future” community aspiration:
    Sustainable development that supports population growth and protects the natural environment.

Conflict of Interest

21. No officer involved in the preparation of this report declared a general or material conflict of interest.

Risk Assessment

22. The release of the draft ACS for community consultation is subject to approval by WCC’s Planning Committee on 10 August 2021. The City and WCC have worked closely together throughout the project and WCC officers have reviewed and commented on various draft iterations.

23. The proposed ANEF noise contours for Avalon Airport are depicted on the draft Avalon Corridor Framework Plan. In the absence of a final endorsed ANEF and updated airport Master Plan, it is important to safeguard future potential to deliver a second parallel (north-south) and third cross (east-west) runway.

Environmental Sustainability

24. A key aim of the draft ACS is to identify land within the Avalon Corridor to be protected for its environmental and landscape values. This includes areas with significant biodiversity, such as Ramsar wetlands and the Western Grasslands Reserve.

25. An Existing Conditions Report, Flora and Fauna was prepared by Ecology and Heritage Partners and helped to inform development of the draft ACS and Framework Plan. This report identifies a potential conflict between the nationally significant Avalon Saltworks wetland and proposed land use change to the west of Avalon Airport.

26. This potential conflict, and any other environmental impacts from future infrastructure projects and industrial or commercial development, will need to be considered through relevant planning processes, such as structure plan development for the proposed Avalon Employment Precinct.

Attachments

Draft Avalon Corridor Strategy.

CITY OF GREATER GEELONG AND
WYNDHAM CITY COUNCIL

AVALON CORRIDOR STRATEGY

NOVEMBER 2022



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CITY OF GREATER
GEELONG

Open landscapes within the Avalon Corridor with longer range views to Wurdi Youang / the You Yangs
(image courtesy of D.Jones: Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation, 2021)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The City of Greater Geelong and Wyndham City Council acknowledge the Wadawurrung People as the Traditional Owners of the land, waterways and skies of the Avalon Corridor. We pay our respects to their Elders, past and present. We acknowledge all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who are part of our Greater Geelong and Wyndham communities today.

WADAWURRUNG CULTURAL VALUES STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Mula mula-a Anakie Youang baa Wurdi Youang ngubitj-iyu baa maiwan parrarr Nerm baa Wadawurrung ngoon di kinkinbil bango di tonak baa benganak marlo, booyankal, tolam ngubitj baa lakoora-bul, wul-a baa karringa-a.

In the shadows of Anakie Youang / The Anakies and Wurdi Youang / You Yangs down to the waters and former grasslands of Nerm / Port Phillip Bay and Corio Bay, this is a special place for Wadawurrung People and their animals, plants, birds, waters and skies; a place to care for and nurture.

Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Avalon Corridor is an area of approximately 30,000 hectares of land between Geelong and Melbourne, which contains a number of state and regionally significant assets such as Avalon Airport and the Melbourne Water Western Treatment Plant (WTP). It encompasses the township of Little River and parts of Lara, and accommodates a wealth of biodiversity values and landscapes of environmental and cultural importance.

The Avalon Corridor requires clear strategic guidance regarding potential land use and development change, and direction on how to foster opportunities associated with its strategic location and the presence of significant assets and infrastructure. Within this context, the Avalon Corridor Strategy (the Strategy) has been prepared to provide a long-term strategic vision for the Avalon Corridor to 2050 in order to guide planning decisions for individual sites and the surrounding region. The Avalon Corridor Strategy has been jointly commissioned by the City of Greater Geelong (CoGG) and Wyndham City Council (WCC), in collaboration with the Victorian Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP).

The development of the Avalon Corridor Strategy has involved:

- Desktop review of existing strategic work which either broadly or specifically considers the future land use and development potential of the Avalon Corridor.
- Examination of opportunities and constraints within the Avalon Corridor with a view to define areas capable of being developed and areas to be retained as part of a green break to separate urban Melbourne and Geelong and to protect the area's significant views, grasslands and wetland habitat areas and cultural heritage.
- Engagement with major stakeholders – including local and state government, Melbourne Water, Avalon Airport, Wadawurrung Traditional Owners and other major landowners –to inform the preparation of the Strategy and to guide future development within the corridor.
- Development of a Framework Plan suitable for inclusion in the Wyndham & Greater Geelong Planning Schemes.

The key output of the Avalon Corridor Strategy is the Framework Plan (Figure 19), which outlines strategic guidance on the broader pattern of land use within the corridor and provides direction for future land use and development. The Framework Plan outlines various objectives and strategies at broad and precinct/sub-precinct level that relate to the strategic context and spatial representation of land uses across the corridor. These objectives and strategies will need to be considered when planning for future land use and development proposals.

The key guiding principles which underpin the Framework Plan include:

i. Maintain and reinforce a green break between Geelong (regional Victoria) and Werribee (metropolitan Melbourne).

ii. Protect green wedge and rural landscapes, as well as cultural and environmental features of identified value.

iii. Protect ongoing and future operations of the Western Treatment Plant.

iv. Protect ongoing and future expanded functional operations of Avalon Airport as per Avalon Airport, Master Plan.

v. Focus appropriate commercial and industrial development within and surrounding Avalon Airport, as per the Framework Plan.

vi. Create economic development and employment opportunities in the northern part of Geelong.

vii. Highlight the ongoing importance of the economic and transport connections between Werribee and Geelong.

viii. Protect and enhance traffic movement on major roads (current and proposed) and rail corridors.

ix. Avoid residential development within the Avalon Corridor.

x. Protect areas of acknowledged environmental value including coastline and Ramsar wetlands and grasslands (Figure 15).

xi. Protect Wadawurrung cultural values and areas of known cultural heritage significance, as well as post-contact heritage sites (in addition to undertaking further investigations as part of specific land use change and development proposals).

Although the Framework Plan sets out the broader directions for land use and development within the Avalon Corridor, it cannot anticipate all potential land use and development proposals of state or regional significance. Therefore, it needs to be flexible enough to be able to consider alternate outcomes which have not previously been identified. It will also be necessary for further detailed work to be completed, as outlined in Section 16.

Future work to be undertaken includes (but is not limited to) the following:

- Progressing relevant planning scheme amendments to implement the Avalon Corridor Strategy.
- Reviewing the extent of relevant Significant Landscape Overlays (SLOs).
- Developing Precinct Structure Plans (PSPs) for Werribee Junction and Mambourin East, as well as a Structure Plan for a Structure Plan for the proposed Greater Avalon Employment Precinct.
- Undertaking further environmental and cultural heritage assessments prior to future land use or development changes.
- Undertaking further assessments of movement and access within the corridor, particularly around proposed development areas.
- Reserving land required for major infrastructure projects, such as the Bay West Port.
- Establishing a formal township settlement boundary around Little River.
- Working with Avalon Airport to finalise the proposed Australian Noise Exposure Forecast (ANEF) and revise the Avalon Airport Master Plan, as required.

VISION STATEMENT

The Avalon Corridor will continue to provide a green break between Geelong (regional Victoria) and Werribee (metropolitan Melbourne), while protecting areas of recognised environmental, landscape, heritage and cultural value. It will limit residential growth while supporting the expanded operations of Avalon Airport as Victoria's second international airport and fostering new land use, development and employment opportunities on airport land and immediate surrounds (as appropriate). It will protect operations of the Western Treatment Plant to ensure it can continue to provide low-cost sewage treatment, recycled water for irrigation and support broader biodiversity values in the region.

CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY **3**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY **4**

Vision Statement 5

1.0 INTRODUCTION **8**

1.1 Project Context and Aims 9

1.2 Methodology 10

1.3 Stakeholder Consultation 10

2.0 METROPOLITAN AND MUNICIPAL CONTEXT **12**

2.1 Environmental Assets 14

2.2 Major Infrastructure Assets 14

2.3 Melbourne and Geelong Green Break 16

2.4 Access and Movement 19

2.5 Other Influential Assets 20

3.0 STRATEGIC LAND USE STUDIES AND PLANNING POLICY **22**

3.1 Strategic Land Use Studies 23

3.2 Planning Policy 33

3.3 Summary of Key Considerations 44

4.0 LAND USE ANALYSIS **46**

4.1 Major Land Uses 47

4.2 Land Size and Ownership 50

4.3 Buffer Separation and Amenity Management 51

5.0 AVALON AIRPORT ANALYSIS **54**

6.0 ECONOMIC ANALYSIS **58**

6.1 Economic Overview 59

6.2 Land Available for Development 60

6.3 Relevant Economic Trends 60

6.4 Key Issues and Opportunities 61

6.5 Economic Planning Implications 61

7.0 TRANSPORT ANALYSIS **62**

7.1 Princes Freeway 63

7.2 OMR Transport Corridor 64

7.3 Avalon Airport Access Upgrades 64

7.4 Broader Road Network 65

7.5 Bay West Port Freight Network 65

7.6 Future Freight Network 67

7.7 Rail Network 68

7.8 Aviation Infrastructure 69

8.0 UTILITIES SERVICING ANALYSIS **70**

8.1 Summary of Corridor Utilities 71

8.2 Gas and Oil Pipelines 72

9.0 CULTURAL VALUES AND HERTIAGE ANALYSIS **74**

9.1 Aboriginal Cultural Heritage 75

9.2 Cultural Values Assessment 76

9.3 Post Contact Heritage 79

10.0 LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ANALYSIS **82**

10.1 Summary of Key Considerations 84

10.2 Landscape Recommendations 86

11.0 ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS **89**

11.1 Flora and Fauna Analysis 90

11.2 Western Grassland Reserve 92

11.3 Important Wetlands 92

11.4 Marine Environment 94

11.5 Climate Change, Sea Level Rise and Flooding 94

11.6 Bushfire Risk 97

11.7 Weeds and Pest Plants 97

11.8 Hydrology, Salinity and Acid Sulphate Soils 97

12.0 EMERGING TRENDS AND INFLUENCES **98**

13.0 OPPORTUNITIES, CONSTRAINTS AND ISSUES **100**

13.1 Opportunities 101

13.2 Constraints 102

13.3 Issues 103

14.0 TOWARD A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK PLAN **104**

14.1 Major Land Uses and Influences 105

14.2 Key Drivers and Role of the Framework Plan 105

14.3 Transport Synergies 106

14.4 Timing 106

14.5 Future Urban Development 108

14.6 Precincts - North and South 108

15.0 FRAMEWORK PLAN **110**

15.1 Framework Plan Objectives and Strategies 111

15.2 South Precinct 112

15.3 North Precinct 116

16.0 IMPLEMENTATION **120**

16.1 Framework Plan Implementation 121

16.2 Further Work to be Undertaken 124

17.0 APPENDIX 1 **128**

17.1 Planning Policy Framework 129

FIGURES

Figure 1:	Study area	11
Figure 2:	Regional context	15
Figure 3:	Green break	18
Figure 4:	Access and movement	21
Figure 5:	Planning controls implemented as part of the SERA pilot project	26
Figure 6:	Status of Green Wedge Management Plans	29
Figure 7:	Zones	40
Figure 8:	Overlays	43
Figure 9:	Existing land use	49
Figure 10:	Bay West Port development transport connection concepts	66
Figure 11:	Envisaged road and road freight interactions in Melbourne's west	67
Figure 12:	Cultural and post contact heritage	81
Figure 13:	Landscape assessment summary	85
Figure 14:	Landscape character	88
Figure 15:	Environmental influences	93
Figure 16:	Climate change, flooding and bushfire influences	95
Figure 17:	Major land uses and external influences	107
Figure 18:	Key principles	109
Figure 19:	Framework Plan	119

DIAGRAMS

Diagram 1:	Agricultural land quality class	29
Diagram 2:	Wyndham soil classifications	32
Diagram 3:	ANEC for 2019 airport operations	57
Diagram 4:	Proposed ANEC for ultimate airport operations	57
Diagram 5:	Key features in the view	87
Diagram 6:	Extent of landscape character area with high landscape value	87

ABBREVIATIONS

BIFT – Beveridge Interstate Freight Terminal

BPA – Bushfire Prone Area

CHMP – Cultural Heritage Management Plan

CoGG – City of Greater Geelong

DELWP – Department of Environment, Land Water and Planning

DJPR – Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions

DoT – Department of Transport

EIIA – Extractive Industry Interest Area

EPBC Act – Environment Protection & Biodiversity Conservation

FZ – Farming Zone

FFG Act – Flora and Fauna Guarantee

GRZ – Green Wedge Zone

Hansen – Hansen Partnership Pty Ltd

NEIC – National Employment and Innovation Cluster

NIW – Nationally Important Wetland

OMR – Outer Metropolitan Ring

P&E Act – Planning & Environment

PPF – Planning Policy Framework

PSP – Precinct Structure Plan

RDF – Refuse Disposal Facility

RLUS – Rural Land Use Strategy

SERA – Strategic Extractive Resource Area

SLO – Significant Landscape Overlay

UGB – Urban Growth Boundary

VHI – Victorian Heritage Inventory

WCC – Wyndham City Council

WIFT – Western Interstate Freight Terminal

WTOAC – Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation

WSUD – Water Sensitive Urban Design

WTP – Western Treatment Plant

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction 9
1.1 Project Context and Aims 9
1.2 Methodology 10
1.3 Stakeholder Consultation 10

1.0

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Avalon Corridor Strategy (the Strategy) has been prepared by Hansen Partnership, the City of Greater Geelong (CoGG) and Wyndham City Council (WCC), in collaboration with the Victorian Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP).

Key specialist inputs which have informed the Strategy have included:

- Landscape Character Assessment (2021) – Hansen Partnership
- Economic Outlook Report (2021) – Ethos Urban
- Existing Conditions Report, Flora and Fauna (2021) – Ecology & Heritage Partners
- Servicing Report (2021) – GHD
- Cultural Values Assessment (2021) – Unearthed Heritage and Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation

Additional detailed commentary, input and guidance has been provided by the community and government agencies throughout the course and development of the Strategy.

1.1 PROJECT CONTEXT AND AIMS

The Avalon Corridor constitutes the large extent of land located between Geelong and Werribee, including the township of Little River and part of the township of Lara. The Avalon Corridor covers approximately 30,000 hectares of land and is illustrated in Figure 1.

Project aims:

To prepare a Framework Plan to guide land use and development in the Avalon Corridor to 2050 and to identify:

- Land to be protected for its environmental, cultural and landscape values.
- Land with capacity to be developed for infrastructure and other complementary employment generating uses.
- Issues and opportunities such as land capability and national and state infrastructure planning.
- Measures required to maintain a green break between Melbourne and Geelong.

The key project tasks have included:

- Desktop review of existing strategic work which either broadly or specifically considers the future land use and development potential of the Avalon Corridor.
- Examination of opportunities and constraints within the Avalon Corridor with a view to define areas capable of being developed and areas to be retained as green break to delineate a break between Melbourne and Geelong and to protect the area's significant views, grassland and wetland habitat areas and cultural heritage.
- Engagement with government and other major stakeholders including Melbourne Water, Avalon Airport, Wadawurrung Traditional Owners and other major landowner interests to inform the preparation of the Framework Plan to guide the future development of the corridor.
- Development of a Framework Plan suitable for inclusion in the Wyndham & Greater Geelong Planning Schemes.

Key matters the Avalon Corridor Strategy seeks to address include:

- Provide direction on suitable future land uses, including areas suitable for development and those that should be protected.
- Outline high level infrastructure commitments.
- Address buffer or separation issues (as appropriate).
- Define issues that need to be addressed by development proponents.

As a Land Use Framework Plan, the Strategy sits at the highest level of the Victorian planning hierarchy and guides subsequent planning processes such as Precinct Structure Plan (PSP) development. It is intended for key aspects of the Strategy to be incorporated both into the State and Local Planning Policy Framework, and for the Strategy itself to be designated as a background document.

1.2 METHODOLOGY

Preparation of the Avalon Corridor Strategy involved:

- Project inception, including guided project team tour of the Avalon Corridor.
- Desktop review of relevant policies, strategies and reports relating to the corridor.
- Targeted engagement with a range of major stakeholders.
- Initial community and stakeholder engagement from October to November 2016.
- Development and preparation of draft Framework Plan and associated report.
- Additional community and stakeholder engagement on the draft Strategy and Framework Plan from August to September 2021.
- Finalisation of Strategy following community and stakeholder engagement.

1.3 STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION

A wide range of government agencies and other authorities were consulted during preparation of the Avalon Corridor Strategy, including:

- APA
- AusNet
- Avalon Airport
- Barwon Water
- CitiPower and Powercor
- Commonwealth Department of Defence (DoD)
- Commonwealth Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW)
- Department of Environment Land, Water & Planning (DELWP)
- Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions (DJPR)
- Department of Transport (DoT)
- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
- Greater Western Water
- Parks Victoria
- Melbourne Water
- VIVA Energy
- Victorian Planning Authority
- Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation

AVALON CORRIDOR STRATEGY

AERIAL

21 May 2021

KEY

- Study Area Boundary
- Municipal Boundary
- Railway station
- Railway line
- Freeway
- Major road
- Secondary road
- Avalon Airport
- Western Treatment Plant
- Youth Justice Facility, Cherry Creek (under construction

Figure 1: Study area

Project Ref: 19.322
Dwg No.: UDD-001
Scale 1:80,000@A3
Date: 14.12.21
Revision: D

hansen

METROPOLITAN AND MUNICIPAL CONTEXT

2.0	Metropolitan and Municipal Context	13
2.1	Environmental Assets	14
2.2	Major Infrastructure Assets	14
2.3	Melbourne and Geelong Green Break	15
2.4	Access and Movement	18
2.5	Other Influential Assets	20

2.0

2.0 METROPOLITAN AND MUNICIPAL CONTEXT

Policies within Plan Melbourne were a key driver for the development of this Strategy.

Avalon Airport is recognised in *Plan Melbourne 2017-2050* as a state significant Transport Gateway, with the purpose to secure adequate gateway capacity for moving passengers and freight into and out of Victoria and support future employment and economic development opportunities at major ports, airports and interstate terminals.

Key policies:

Policy 4.5.2 Protect and enhance valued attributes of distinctive areas and landscapes seeks to recognise and protect green wedges and peri-urban areas which contain landscapes that have significant geographic and physical features.

Policy 7.2.2 Strengthen transport links on national networks for the movement of commodities seeks to foster economic opportunities associated with the movement of goods within Victoria, interstate and internationally. This policy seeks to identify key freight corridors and interstate freight terminals.

Policy 7.2.2 specifically recognises that 'the Avalon corridor near Geelong contains nationally significant economic assets, including airport, road, rail and waste facilities. This corridor must be safeguarded for state infrastructure opportunities and complementary development in the future, as well as maintaining a settlement break between Melbourne and Geelong. Land use buffers for infrastructure and Avalon Airport and areas of high biodiversity value, including Ramsar conservation areas, must be protected.'

The *G21 Regional Growth Plan* is a reference document to State Planning Policy *Clause 11.01- 1R Geelong G21*. The Plan provides a strategic land use and growth framework to manage population growth of the region to 500,000 by 2050. The Plan identifies Avalon Airport and surrounds as an 'employment growth' opportunity and the development of a national transport and logistics precinct which includes and connects Avalon Airport, the Port of Geelong and the Geelong Ring Road Employment Precinct to maximise efficiencies in freight movement. This includes improving road and rail access to and from existing broad and standard gauge rail networks and major roads, including the Princes Freeway and the Geelong Ring Road.

In its metropolitan and municipal context the Avalon Corridor is strategically located between the outer edge of metropolitan Melbourne at Werribee and Victoria's second largest city of Geelong. The Avalon Corridor spans part of WCC and CoGG, with the alignment of Little River forming the municipal boundary line.

The Avalon Corridor contains a significant range of cultural and environmental values, as well as important infrastructure and assets. There is limited residential development within the established settlements of Lara and Little River.

The existence of important environmental and infrastructure assets gives rise to competing objectives. A particular strategic consideration is how these matters can be balanced and appropriately addressed through relevant policy frameworks. Noting this will constitute a functional role of the Frameworks Plan, there is a need to first consider the existing context and the range of relevant and influential considerations. This includes matters such as the long held planning principle of maintaining a green break between Melbourne and Geelong (land maintained for farming and agriculture, environmental value, landscape setting, and some low density and rural residential living). For clarity a green break is also referred to in some policy documents as a 'settlement break' or 'non-urban break').

The general metropolitan and municipal context of the Avalon Corridor is illustrated in Figure 2, with further details of environmental and infrastructure assets within the Avalon Corridor outlined under relevant headings.

2.1 – 2.2

2.1 ENVIRONMENTAL ASSETS

A range of significant environmental assets are located within the Avalon Corridor, including:

- Port Phillip Bay (Western Shoreline) Ramsar site
- Conservation reserves, such as:
  - Port Phillip Bay Coastal Reserve
  - Limeburners Bay Flora and Fauna Reserve
  - The Spit Wildlife Reserve
  - Werribee River Regional Park
  - Werribee Plains South and Werribee South green wedges
  - Western Grasslands Reserve
- Significant waterbodies, such as:
  - Western Treatment Plant (WTP) sewage treatment and conservation ponds
  - Werribee-Avalon Area Nationally Important Wetlands (including the former Cheetham Saltworks site)
  - Waterways and riparian corridors (including Werribee River, Little River, Lollypop Creek, Cherry Tree Creek and Hovells Creek)
  - Swamplands (Ryans Swamp Wetland, Paul and Belfrages Swamp, Edgars Road Swamp and Cherry Swamp)

The above environmental assets are notable for providing for significant wildlife habitat for a number of endangered and critically endangered species and communities, such as the Orange-bellied Parrot and Natural Temperate Grasslands of the Victorian Volcanic Plains.

2.2 MAJOR INFRASTRUCTURE ASSETS

The regional and metropolitan significance of the Avalon Corridor is reinforced by the number of state and nationally significant infrastructure assets it contains. Major infrastructure assets identified below are further expanded upon in subsequent sections of this Strategy.

Major infrastructure assets within the Avalon Corridor Strategy include:

- Avalon Airport, as Victoria's second international airport
- Princes Freeway, as the main road transport corridor between Melbourne and Geelong
- Geelong-Melbourne rail line, including the possible Avalon Airport Rail Link
- Melbourne Water WTP
- Wyndham refuse disposal facility (RDF), which serves a metropolitan catchment
- Cherry Creek Youth Justice Facility
- Point Wilson Munitions Facility
- Oil pipelines and high pressure gas pipelines
- The Outer Metropolitan Ring (OMR) Transport Corridor, as a future transport project with alignment confirmed and protected
- Bay West Port, designated by state government as the location for Melbourne's second container port terminal (targeted for operation from around 2055)
- Areas identified as containing or potentially containing extractive resources needed for the construction industry, such as rock, sand and gravel. These are shown as either Work Authorities (WAs) where quarries are operating or have licence to operate, Extractive Industry Interest Areas (EIIAs) where potential extractive resources of state significance have been identified, or Strategic Extractive Resource Areas (SERAs) where extractive resources of state significance have been confirmed.

AVALON CORRIDOR STRATEGY

REGIONAL MAP

KEY

- Study Area Boundary
- Geelong and Wyndham Municipal Boundaries
- Outer Metro Ring (OMR) transport corridor
- Rail
- Freeway
- Sorrento - Queenscliff ferry
- Around the bay bicycle route
- Suburban Rail Loop (note: alignment is conceptual and indicative only, and will be subject to change based on future detailed work)
- Land within the Urban Growth Boundary
- Western Plains South green wedge
- Werribee South green wedge
- Regional/ national parks
- Western grassland reserve
- Ramsar wetlands areas
- Wyndham Refuse Disposal Facility/ Holcim Quarry
- Avalon airport
- Western Treatment Plant
- Potential location of future Bay West port
- Future Bay West port (indicative concept design – subject to future planning and change)
- Extractive Industries Works Approvals (WA) – current and proposed
- Extractive Industries Interest Area (EIIA)
- Geelong Urban extent
- Strategic Extractive Resource Area (SERA)

Melbourne Airport
Sunshine
MELBOURNE
Cheltenham
Port of Melbourne
Port Phillip Bay
Potential Western Interstate Freight Terminal
CITY OF WYNDHAM
Werribee
Werribee South Intensive Agricultural Precinct
Brisbane Ranges National Park
You Yangs Regional Park
Little River
Lara
CITY OF GREATER GEELONG
Potential location of future Bay West Port
Point Wilson
Port of Geelong
GEELONG
Queenscliff
Point Lonsdale
Point Nepean
Mornington Peninsula
Sorrento
0 5 10 15km

Figure 2: Regional context

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2.3

2.3 MELBOURNE AND GEELONG GREEN BREAK

The Avalon Corridor provides a physical break in urban development between Melbourne and Geelong, being Victoria's capital city and second largest city respectively.

2.3.1 HISTORY OF GREEN BREAK

The concept of containing the extent of Melbourne growth has its basis in *Town and Country Planning Act 1944*, and has been progressively enshrined in planning policy in the following decades, culminating in the application of the current Metropolitan Melbourne Urban Growth Boundary (UGB). Whilst there has also been a long held planning principle to maintain a green break between Melbourne and Geelong, this has rarely been explicitly stated with the metropolitan strategic documents prepared for Melbourne over recent decades.

Of interest, *Planning Policies for Metropolitan Melbourne 1971* prepared by the former Metropolitan Board of Works (MMBW) adopted a corridor approach for accommodating future population growth, which resulted in the creation of green wedge areas still found within the boundary of metropolitan Melbourne, identified by the Green Wedge Zone (GWZ). This 1971 document also identified the need for a metropolitan-regional boundary and identified land south of the Princes Freeway as an important non-urban area. This included land still known as the Werribee South agricultural precinct.

Melbourne 2030 introduced the concept of the UGB in 2002 and served to formally cement this break between the outer edge of Metropolitan Melbourne at Werribee. Since then, there have been significant expansions to the UGB, including in 2010 and the subsequent logical inclusions process.

Plan Melbourne 2017-2050 outlines the importance of connection between cities and regions under *Direction 7.2 Improve connections between cities and regions*. This Direction explicitly states that the Avalon Corridor should be preserved for state infrastructure opportunities but also to ensure a maintenance of a settlement break between Melbourne and Geelong.

The Greater Geelong Planning Scheme (Clause 21.06-2) and Wyndham Planning Scheme (Clause 21.02-1) both identify the need to maintain a green break between Geelong and Werribee. For Greater Geelong, the G21 Strategy further contains a principle relating to 'connected communities', which refers to the need to provide settlement breaks between towns to maintain their unique identities.

Currently the state government is undertaking program of investigating Distinctive Areas and Landscapes within designated peri-urban areas (through relevant legislation including Part 3AAB of the P&E Act 1987). However no part of the Avalon Corridor has to date been designated as an area for investigation. Despite this, large areas of the study area form part of the Port Phillip Bay (Western Shoreline) and Bellarine Peninsula Ramsar Site, in addition to numerous sites of Aboriginal Cultural Heritage sensitivity and Victorian Heritage Register listings.

2.3.2 GREATER GEELONG SETTLEMENT STRATEGY

The principle of a settlement break between Melbourne and Geelong is reinforced by the Greater Geelong *Settlement Strategy 2020*, which was formally incorporated into the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme on 6 May 2021 via amendment c395. The Settlement Strategy clarifies what is defined as the green break or non-urban break, and its location between Geelong and Melbourne (Wyndham), as per the following statement (page 78-79):

> Non-urban breaks are critical to the identity of our municipality and individual townships and will also help establish long term settlement boundaries. There are some physical land constraints and uses that, by their nature, help maintain these breaks. However, in other cases, non-urban breaks will need to be more actively managed. Non-urban areas outside the Urban Growth Boundary in Melbourne are known as green wedges and are managed via a Green Wedge Management Plan. This could be an option for managing the non-urban breaks outside long term boundaries in Greater Geelong.

The following areas help maintain a non-urban break between Geelong and Melbourne:

- The Ramsar wetlands (mainly associated with Melbourne Water WTP and areas along the northern shore of Corio Bay and Outer Harbour)
- Areas reserved for conservation purposes, including the You Yangs Regional Park, part of the Brisbane Ranges National Park, the Serendip Sanctuary and the Mount Rothwell Conservation and Research Centre
- Areas with landscape value, such as the Barrabool Hills and You Yangs
- Areas containing infrastructure of regional and state significance, such as WTP and Avalon Airport.

2.3

The Settlement Strategy contains further principles and directions relating to the settlement boundary. Principles and directions relevant to the green break between Geelong and Melbourne (Wyndham) include:

Principle

Maintain the unique identity of Greater Geelong and its townships.

Directions

a. Maintain the non-urban breaks between Geelong and Melbourne (Wyndham), Geelong and the Surf Coast, urban Geelong and the Bellarine Peninsula, and the townships on the Bellarine Peninsula.

b. Assess areas with special local environmental or landscape values and consider options to help preserve and manage these breaks into the future.

2.3.3 DELWP GREEN WEDGE STRATEGIC WORK

Melbourne's green wedges are also vital for protecting green break land on the metropolitan fringe, with the concepts around the need to protect these dating back to the 1860s. Protection of Melbourne's green wedges is included in the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* as well as throughout the Victoria Planning Provisions.

Of relevance, DELWP is undertaking detailed strategic work to strengthen the green break role of nominated GWZ areas, which includes part of the Avalon Corridor within WCC. This project is part of the Victorian Government's commitment to protecting Melbourne's green wedge and peri-urban areas as outlined in Actions 17, 72 and 73 of Plan Melbourne. The project considers agricultural land within 100km from Melbourne and therefore has implications for both CoGG and WCC.

In 2020, DELWP released the *Planning for Melbourne's Green Wedges and Agricultural Land Consultation Paper* for public consultation. Page 20 of the Consultation Paper notes that 'the western study area is an important non-urban break between Melbourne and Geelong'. As such, the current designated GWZ land and the additional strategic work being undertaken to strengthen controls for its planning and protection will function to further reinforce a green break within and beyond the Avalon Corridor.

AVALON CORRIDOR STRATEGY

GREEN BREAK MAP

KEY

- Study Area Boundary
- Geelong and Wyndham Municipal Boundaries
- Outer Metro Ring (OMR) Transport Corridor
- Rail
- Freeway
- Around the bay bicycle route
- Suburban Rail Loop (note: alignment is conceptual and indicative only, and will be subject to change based on future detailed work)
- Land within the Urban Growth Boundary
- Western Plains South Green Wedge
- Werribee South Green Wedge
- Green Wedge Zone
- Regional/ national parks
- Western Grassland Reserve
- Farm Zone (FZ)
- Wyndham Refuse Disposal Facility/ Holcim Quarry
- Western Treatment Plant
- Potential location of future Bay West port
- Future Bay West port (indicative concept design – subject to future planning and change)
- Extractive Industries Works Approvals (WA) – current and proposed
- Extractive Industries Interest Area (EIIA)
- Geelong Ring Road Employment Precinct
- Pivot City Innovation Precinct
- Geelong urban extent
- Strategic Extractive Resource Area (SERA)

Melbourne Airport
Sunshine
Potential Western Interstate Freight Terminal
Brisbane Ranges National Park
CITY OF WYNDHAM
Werribee
Mambourin East PSP
You Yangs Regional Park
Werribee Junction PSP
Little River
Port Phillip Bay
Potential location of future Bay West Port
CITY OF GREATER GEELONG
Lara
Point Wilson
Port of Geelong
Geelong
0 5 10 15km

Figure 3: Green break

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2.4

2.4 ACCESS AND MOVEMENT

The key access and movement networks within the Avalon Corridor are illustrated on Figure 4.

2.4.1 AVALON AIRPORT

Avalon Airport accommodates domestic and international flights, thereby playing a supporting role to functions and operations of Tullamarine Airport. Operational capacity of the airport has room for expansion, in line with the federally endorsed *Avalon Airport Master Plan* (2015). Expansion of airport activities will elevate Avalon Airport's status as Melbourne's second international airport.

2.4.2 PRINCES FREEWAY AND OMR TRANSPORT CORRIDOR

Princes Freeway is the major piece of road infrastructure which bisects the Avalon Corridor, consisting of a separated carriageway with three lanes of traffic in each direction. Princes Freeway plays a significant role on the movement of freight and people between Melbourne, Geelong and the regions beyond. Ensuring quick and reliable travel times between Melbourne and Geelong on the Princes Freeway is an important strategic priority to be maintained into the future. The functional role and operation of the Princes Freeway will be further augmented with the construction of the multi-modal OMR Transport Corridor, estimated to be built within 15-30 years.

2.4.3 GEELONG-MELBOURNE RAIL LINE

Like the Princes Freeway, the Geelong-Melbourne rail-line plays a significant role in the movement of people between Melbourne, Geelong and the regions beyond. The potential for a future rail link to Avalon Airport has been protected through a Public Acquisition Overlay (PAO). The existing rail-line configuration consists of three running lines: the eastern two being broad gauge (BG) intrastate lines servicing mainly passenger trains to Geelong; and the third western line being a standard gauge (SG) single bi-directional intrastate line.

The *Western Rail Plan* is a major Commonwealth and Victorian Government initiative that sets out objectives to deliver a faster, high-capacity rail network servicing growing outer suburbs and regional cities. The Plan seeks to deliver full separation of regional and metro services on the Geelong and Ballarat lines. The Geelong Fast Rail project is a targeted aspect of the Western Rail Plan and seeks to deliver faster journeys between Geelong and Melbourne, with a travel time of around 50 minutes. Construction is anticipated to commence in 2023.

Another associated rail project is the Suburban Rail Loop (SRL), a 90 kilometre rail line that will link every major service from the Frankston Line to the Werribee Line via Melbourne Airport. SRL West from Melbourne Airport to Werribee will build on the major road and rail projects already being delivered in the west, including Geelong Fast Rail.

2.4.4 INTERSTATE FREIGHT TERMINALS

The Victorian Government *Freight Strategy* (2018-2050) designates the Western Interstate Freight Terminal (WIFT) and the Beveridge Interstate Freight Terminal (BIFT) as the future intermodal freight terminals for Melbourne and Victoria. At a metropolitan scale the proposed WIFT at Truganina (north of the Avalon Corridor) is a major infrastructure initiative of state importance in the longer term. The Victorian Government is currently finalising the full business case for the WIFT and BIFT, including the preferred transport connections and staging. The business case is jointly funded by the Victorian and Commonwealth Government. The location of the WIFT is shown on Figure 2.

The Department of Transport's fact sheet on *Victoria's new intermodal freight precincts* notes that "the Victorian Government is planning to deliver new intermodal freight precincts at Truganina in Melbourne's west and Beveridge in Melbourne's outer north. The role of the new precincts will be primarily to handle interstate freight, but also the import and export container trade."

Currently, interstate freight containers are railed to terminals at Dynon adjacent to the Port of Melbourne, and then trucked to the outer suburbs and regional areas. However, the Dynon terminals have limited space and capacity, and can be difficult to access due to increasing congestion on the inner Melbourne road and rail networks.

The intended benefits of the WIFT is to allow more efficient freight movement by providing modern terminal facilities closer to the large industrial cluster in Melbourne's west, which in turn will reduce the time and length of truck trips. This will have the added benefit of reducing freight traffic through the inner west, potentially removing up to 2,000 truck movements daily. It is also intended for the WIFT to include provision for connection to the Bay West Port. Other benefits of the WIFT as a long term strategic option have been highlighted to:

- Significantly improve the capacity of interstate freight transport in the north-south and east-west national corridors connecting Melbourne;

- Complement other improvements to the north-south intermodal rail supply chain with matching capacity and service level improvements;
- Enhance national productivity by lowering the door-to-door cost of freight for interstate movements;
- Create opportunities for urban renewal in the North Dynon area;
- Reduce truck movements through Melbourne's inner west; and
- Improve rail access for port-related freight by removing many non-port freight movements from the Dynon precinct.

The *West Growth Corridor Plan* (2020) locates the WIFT on the northern side of Boundary Road, Truganina, between Christie's Road and the OMR Transport Corridor (well outside the Avalon Corridor study area).

Once state government determines its preferred solution, necessary steps will be taken to reserve land and access corridors required for future interstate terminals through relevant planning scheme provisions.

With regard to timing, 0-5 years has been indicated for planning and prioritisation of further investigation, and then between 10-30 years for the anticipated completion.

2.5 OTHER INFLUENTIAL ASSETS

The Avalon Corridor is also located adjacent to a number of important environmental, open space, extractive resource and tourism related assets, including:

- Port Phillip Bay and Corio Bay coastal environs (to the south).
- The Western Grasslands Reserve (to the north), which will become Victoria's largest native grasslands reserve and a site of strategic importance as an offset for Melbourne's continued urban expansion within the UGB. The reserve plays a strategic role in firming up Metropolitan Melbourne's UGB and supporting the protection of the green break between Wyndham and Greater Geelong. A small part of the reserve is located within the Avalon Corridor.
- The You Yangs Regional Park (to the west), which constitutes the single most significant landscape feature within the wider region. Strategic land use directions for the You Yangs Regional Park are guided by the *You Yangs Precinct Master Plan* (2021).
- The Werribee Open Plains Zoo and Werribee Mansion (to the east), which is a regionally important tourism node. The state government recently announced $84 million funding to make Werribee Open Plains Zoo the most significant open range zoo in Australia, to transform it into a world class facility, including a 1.6km tree top Sky Safari gondola boasting 360-degree views.
- Strategic Extractive Resource Areas (SERAs) in WCC, which contain strategic extractive resources (hard rock) needed for the construction industry and major state infrastructure projects. To protect these resources, the Victorian Government introduced the State Resource Overlay (SRO) in 2021.

The Avalon Corridor is also broadly influenced by the location of the other major land uses outside of, but within close proximity, including:

- Geelong Ring Road Employment Precinct
- Port of Geelong
- Pivot City Innovation Precinct
- Northern Geelong Growth Area

Ongoing investigations into the East Werribee Employment Precinct (EWEP), located just outside of the Avalon Corridor to the east are being undertaken. EWEP is proposed to be developed as a mixed use business precinct generating over 50,000 new jobs. It will be centred on a new lake and capitalise on the current heritage and economic base of the former Werribee Technology Precinct and emerging Health, Education and Justice Precincts. The proposed development will help to establish Werribee as a key business, service and employment hub of Melbourne's west.

AVALON CORRIDOR STRATEGY

ACCESS & MOVEMENT

KEY

- Study Area Boundary
- Municipal Boundary
- Avalon Airport Master (including revised Avalon Airport Ground Transport Plan)
- Railway station
- Railway line
- Proposed railway link
- Freeway
- Major road
- Secondary road
- Local road
- Outer Metro Ring Transport Corridor
- Around the bay bicycle route (indicative)
- Proposed new road connection
- Western Treatment Plant
- Potential location of future Bay West Port
- Public Acquisition Overlay - Schedule 10
- Future Bay West port (indicative concept design – subject to future planning and change)
- Extractive Industries Works Approvals (WA) – current and proposed
- State Extractive Resource Area (SERA)
- Geelong urban extent
- Proposed Armstrong/Ison Road connection to the existing Princes Freeway interchange at Geelong Road
- Anticipated SERA (quarry) traffic movement (to Werribee junction before Ison Rd connection) - Current routes
- Anticipated SERA (quarry) traffic movement (to Werribee junction after Ison Rd connection) - Likely future routes
- Planned removal of Little River Road connection to Princess Freeway resulting from OMR connection to Princes Freeway

Figure 4: Access and movement

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STRATEGIC LAND USE STUDIES AND PLANNING POLICY

3.0	Strategic Land Use Studies and Planning Policy	23
3.1	Strategic Land Use Studies	23
3.2	Planning Policy	33
3.3	Summary of Key Considerations	46

3.0

3.0 STRATEGIC LAND USE STUDIES AND PLANNING POLICY

A wealth of existing background documentation is available which provides relevant strategic context for the Avalon Corridor. This work is critical for understanding the evolving scope of strategic influences within the Avalon Corridor, which have influenced the findings and recommendations relating to the Avalon Corridor Strategy.

A desktop analysis was undertaken of key policy and strategy documents across a range of professional expertise. An overview of key documents is provided in the following sections, along with a summary of key findings and directions.

3.1 STRATEGIC LAND USE STUDIES

A substantial number of background strategic land use related studies have been prepared which have either direct or indirect relevance to the Avalon Corridor Strategy. These include:

- *Plan Melbourne 2017-2050* (DELWP, 2017)
- *Rural Land Use Strategy* (CoGG, 2007)
- *Outer Metropolitan Ring/E6 Transport Corridor Planning Assessment Report* (VicRoads, 2009)
- *Delivering Melbourne's Newest Sustainable communities: Program Report* (Victorian Government, 2009)
- *Werribee-Geelong: Planning Investigation of Strategic Intent Developable Land Analysis* (Department of Transport Planning and Local Infrastructure, 2014)
- *G21 Regional Growth Plan and Implementation Plan Background Report* (G21, 2013)
- *South West Victoria Landscape Assessment Study - Regional Overview Report:* 2013
- *Avalon Airport Rail Link: Rail Corridor Establishment:* September 2014, Department of Transport Planning & Local Infrastructure
- *Native Vegetation Precinct Plan: Geelong Ring Road Employment Precinct (Amendment C423)* (Ecology Partners Pty Ltd, 2013)
- *Victorian Coastal Strategy* (Victorian Government, 2014)
- *West Growth Corridor Plan* (Growth Area Authority, 2012)
- *Avalon Airport Master Plan* (Avalon Airport, 2015)
- *Inundation Report: Bellarine Peninsula – Corio Bay Local Coastal Hazard Assessment* (Cardno, 2015)
- *Extractive Resources in Victoria: Demand and Supply Study 2015-2050* (PWC, 2016)
- *Werribee South Green Wedge Policy and Management Plan* (Wyndham City Council, 2016)
- *Victoria's 30-Year Infrastructure Strategy* (Infrastructure Victoria 2016)
- *Preparing Advice on Victoria's Future Port Capacity: Discussion Paper* (Infrastructure Victoria, 2016)
- *Second Container Port Advice: Evidence Base* (Infrastructure Victoria, 2017)
- *Port Phillip Environmental Management Plan 2017-2027* (DELWP, 2017)
- *Avalon Airport Ground Transport Plan* (Avalon Airport, 2017)
- *Protecting Victoria's Environment – Biodiversity 2037* (DELWP, 2017)
- *City Forest and Habitat Strategy 2017-2040* (WCC, 2017)
- *Healthy Waterways Strategy 2018-28* (Melbourne Water, 2018)
- *Port Phillip Bay (Western Shoreline) and Bellarine Peninsula Ramsar Site Management Plan* (DELWP, 2018)
- *Helping Victoria Grow – Extractive Resources Strategy* (DEDJTR, 2018)
- *Western Rail Plan* (Victorian Government, 2018)

3.1

- *Western Plains South Green Wedge Management Plan: Background Report* (WCC, 2018)
- *Melbourne Sewage Strategy* (Melbourne Water, 2018)
- *Industrial Land Supply Report* (CoGG, 2018)
- *Victorian Freight Plan: Delivering the Goods* (DJPR, 2018)
- *Avalon Signage Audit* (SMEC, 2019)
- *Greater Geelong Settlement Strategy* (CoGG, 2020)
- *Strategic Extractive Resource Areas Pilot Project* (DELWP, 2020)
- *Planning for Melbourne's Green Wedges and Agricultural Land: Consultation Paper* (DELWP, 2020)
- *Avalon Airport ANEC Study: Noise modelling report* (GHD, 2020)
- *Victoria's 30-Year Infrastructure Strategy* (Infrastructure Victoria, 2020)
- *Lara Flood Study* (Amendment C339) (CoGG, 2020)
- *Lower Barwon and Lower Moorabool Flood Investigation* (DELWP, 2019)
- *Bellarine Peninsula - Corio Bay Local Coastal Hazard Assessment* (DELWP, 2015)
- *Marine and Coastal Policy* (DELWP, 2020)
- *Wyndham Coastal & Marine Management Plan 2020-2025* (WCC, 2020)
- *Independent review of the Victoria Ports System* (Victorian Government, 2021)
- *Draft Western Metro Land Use Framework Plan,* 2021 (DELWP, 2021)

The context and influence of these documents have been analysed along with a further analysis of a range of further municipal level strategies which have relevance with the context of the WCC and CoGG. The following text is a high level abridged summary of the key matters of influence and relevance to the Avalon Corridor Strategy.

GENERAL SUMMARY

The Avalon Corridor has been acknowledged as a strategic location of cultural values, economic assets, natural resources and existing infrastructure including:

- Avalon Airport
- Point Wilson Munitions Facility
- Western Treatment Plant (WTP)
- Existing major road and rail infrastructure
- Areas containing strategic extractive resources (hard rock and gravel) needed for the construction industry
- Ramsar-listed wetlands;
- Landscapes of recognised importance
- Cultural heritage and values
- Regional waterways
- Commonwealth and State-listed flora, fauna and communities
- Green wedge land.

Further summary commentary on the above items is provided below:

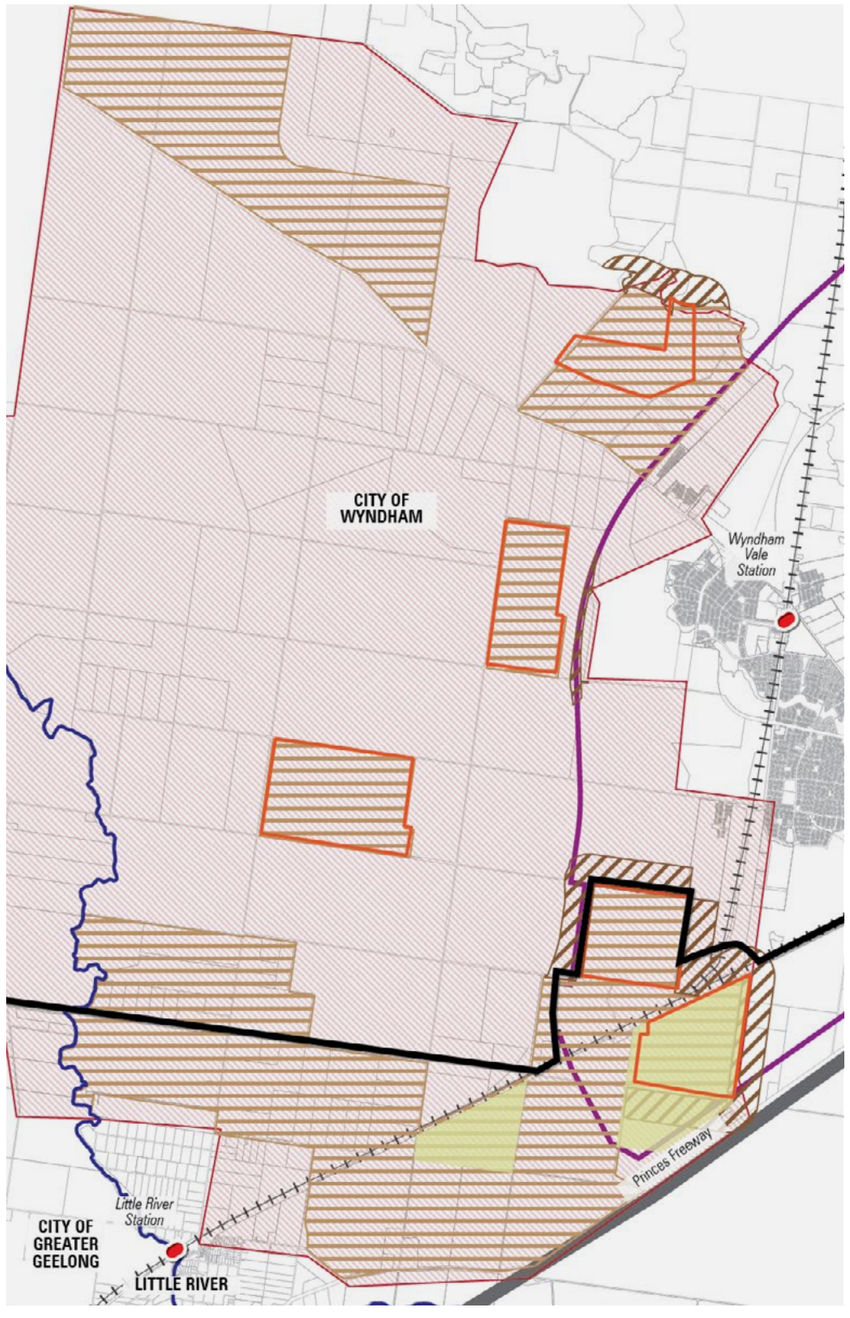
- The State significance and strategic importance of Avalon Airport is strongly highlighted through various documents, noting it provides opportunities for domestic travel and future growth in international capacity, freight services, and aeronautical industry.
- Avalon Airport is acknowledged as an important major employment node in Geelong's north, which also promotes economic opportunities on adjacent land. This precinct benefits from proximity and links to the Geelong Ring Road Employment Precinct, Geelong Port and freight and passenger rail networks. It therefore has major potential relating to export of regional products.

3.1

- A future rail link to Avalon Airport connecting Melbourne and Geelong passengers has been contemplated by a number of studies, with a preferred alignment protected through the application of a Public Acquisition Overlay (PAO14).
- The federally endorsed *Avalon Airport Master Plan* (2015) outlines future development plans, including details for ground transport and surface access. Excluding current runways and associated taxiways, the Master Plan notes that total developable land at Avalon Airport is approximately 1,600 hectares. It identifies seven developable precincts for the airport to guide its expansion and defines individual development objectives and indicative land uses into the future. These precincts are further outlined in the Land Use Plan attached to the Master Plan which provides details regarding the management and permissibility of development within the precincts.
- An update to the Master Plan has been flagged by Avalon Airport in light of emerging strategic directions and considerations around the need for a third cross runway. While it has not yet been confirmed when a revised Master Plan would be available, there remains a need to safeguard the option for a third runway into the future. Potential updates to the Master Plan would not change the overall intent of this Strategy to protect the operations of the airport and the option to develop the third runway.
- The *Victorian Freight Plan* (2018) nominates Bay West as the preferred location for Victoria's second container port. The preferred location of Bay West Port is within the Avalon Corridor, along the WTP coastline. Actions for the Bay West Port nominated in the Freight Plan include:
  - **Short term (1-5 years):**
    Further investigate the feasibility of Bay West as a container port including:
    - Determining the location of the port site at Bay West
    - Identifying preferred land transport corridors and the required land area
    - Commence a baseline environmental program for the Bay West Port site
    - Monitor key indicators to inform future decisions such as the size of container vessels.
  - **Medium term (5-10 years):**
    Subject to study outcomes, progressively plan, reserve land, and prepare for development of Bay West as a container port.
  - **Long term (10+ years):**
    Progressively plan and prepare for development of Bay West as a container port.
- Earlier work of Infrastructure Victoria, which informed the designation of the Bay West Port as the preferred option, noted that the capacity of Victoria's existing commercial ports should be optimised before any investment in a second major container port. Infrastructure Victoria also noted that:
  - The Port of Melbourne should be developed to have a capacity of approximately 8 million shipping containers.
  - A second major container port will not be required until the Port of Melbourne reaches approximately 8 million shipping containers, which is likely to be around 2055.
  - Detailed development planning for a second major container port needs to begin approximately 15 years prior to the port being required. Based on current analysis and projections, detailed planning for a second major container port should begin around 2040, with the new port to begin operation around 2055.
  - Bay West Port is the preferred location for a second major container port.
  - Bay West Port has strong transport, land use, environmental and amenity advantages, when compared to Hastings. Bay West Port is a good option for catering to container demand once capacity at the Port of Melbourne has been exhausted and is also well suited to becoming Melbourne's future container port in the long term.
  - Government should act now to protect the future Bay West Port option. This includes immediately identifying and securing land, applying planning protection for transport corridors and buffers (particularly future road and rail connections within the UGB), and commencing baseline environmental monitoring.

3.1

- Various strategic planning policies such as *Plan Melbourne* (2017) highlight and reinforce the importance of the provision of a green break and separation between Geelong and the outer edge of Metropolitan Melbourne at Werribee.
- The Greater Geelong *Settlement Strategy* (2020) reinforces the green break between the urban edge of Geelong and Melbourne (Werribee). The intent of this green break is to maintain the unique identity of Greater Geelong and its townships, and to address its physical characteristics, which includes Ramsar wetlands, the You Yangs Regional Park (including surrounding areas with significant cultural and landscape values), infrastructure of regional and state significance (including the WTP and Avalon Airport).
- The WTP vision for 2050 is to maximise the long term economic, social and environmental values of the WTP for the benefits of the community. Directions and initiatives include:
  - Ensuring ongoing capacity for sewage treatment, which is predicted to double by 2050.
  - Support development of Melbourne's circular economy through resource recovery including biosolids reuse programs, biogas harvesting for power generation, recycled water, organic food-waste co-digestion, and investigating nutrient recovery and renewable energy options.
  - Further developing agricultural production on site to take advantage of nutrient rich recycled water and proximity to transport and markets.
  - Maintain and enhance biodiversity and environmental values of local, state, national and international significance. The site is part of the Port Phillip (Western Shoreline) and Bellarine Peninsula Ramsar site, and is protected under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Act (1999). The environmental values of the site are based on a reliable, year round source of water and nutrients. The site is an important drought refuge for many water birds.
  - Growing visitation and recreation opportunities through development of ecotourism based on birdwatching, biodiversity and heritage of the site to complement guided educational tours, and investigating potential regional cycling trail connections, through a green corridor along the Princes Freeway.



AVALON CORRIDOR STRATEGY

PLANNING CONTROLS IMPLEMENTED AS PART OF STATE EXTRACTIVE RESOURCE AREA (SERA) PILOT PROJECT

KEY

- Study Area Boundary
- Municipal Boundary
- Urban Growth Boundary
- Railway Station Boundary
- Railway line Boundary
- Special Use Zone Extractive Industry (SUZ26)
- State Resource Overlay (SR01)
- Extractive Industries Works Approvals (WA) - current & proposed
- Extractive Industries Interest (EIIA)

Figure 5: Planning controls implemented as part of the SERA pilot project

Project Ref:	19.322 UDD-001
Dwg No.:	80.000 @A4
Scale	15.12.21
Date:	A

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3.1

- The Victorian Government's SERA pilot project identified areas within WCC as containing strategic extractive resources (hard rock) needed for the construction industry and major state infrastructure projects.
- The SERA pilot project made the following commentary regarding land of interest within WCC:
  - The Wyndham area is recognised for its vast flat basalt plains. A number of hard rock quarries have been operating in the area for decades, producing good quality road base and aggregate from the extracted basalt, which is used for major road projects and other infrastructure in and around greater Melbourne.
  - The large Western Grassland Reserve and the location of small settlements and nearby towns have helped to shape the proposed SERA boundary, which avoids these important areas. The SERAs encompass existing quarries and areas where there are potential extractive resources that may be suitable for future quarry development.
  - The formal gazettal of the pilot project into the Wyndham Planning Scheme has resulted in new planning controls in the form of the State Resource Overlay (SRO) being applied over the identified land, as shown in Figure 5.
- CoGG's *Industrial Land Supply Report* (2018) concluded there is an adequate supply of zoned and unzoned industrial land stocks to meet current trends and accelerated consumption rates across the municipal area of Geelong. It concluded there is no immediate shortfall of industrial land by specific lot size with an ample availability of smaller lots as well as the ability to service larger industrial users if required within the Geelong Ring Road Employment Precinct and Armstrong Creek North East Industrial Precinct.
- The study area is noted to include land formally known as the New Corio Estate. Planning issues associated with this area have previously been considered in detail as part of Amendment C243 which formalised the designation of a Native Vegetation Precinct Plan area associated with the Geelong Ring Road Employment Precinct.
- CoGG's *Rural Land Use Strategy* (2007) remains a strategically valid document and provides commentary regarding agricultural land use within the study area. The recommendations of the strategy include reinforcing rural activity and farmed landscapes, while protecting and providing opportunities for productive agriculture.
- The *Werribee-Geelong: Planning Investigation of Strategic Intent Developable Land Analysis* prepared by GHD (2014) for the former Department of Transport Planning & Local Infrastructure informed the preparation of Plan Melbourne and is relevant to the Avalon Corridor Strategy. This analysis divided the Avalon Corridor into five main investigation areas:
  1. **North Plains** - including land north of the Melbourne-Geelong railway alignment
  2. **Central East** - including land east of Little River between the Melbourne-Geelong railway alignment and Princes Freeway
  3. **Central West** - including land south of Melbourne-Geelong railway alignment between Lara and Little River
  4. **Central Coast** - including Melbourne Water land to west of Little River
  5. **Airport Environs** - including the current extent of Avalon Airport land.
- Land constituting the larger extent of the Lara and Little River townships and WTP land (east of the Little River waterway) were excluded from the investigation area for the GHD analysis.
- Based on the designated investigation areas, the report provides a high level analysis of the constraints posed by the identified environmental, heritage, planning, infrastructure and other land constraints within the area, and outlines development opportunities for the investigation areas. The study also highlights the role played by the green break between Geelong and Melbourne for landscape, heritage and social values and its implications for development.
- While the significant existing and planned transport infrastructure for the area poses opportunities for development, the report highlighted considerable constraints including biodiversity and conservation values, airport and quarry buffer requirements, odour impact from the WTP, landscape and visual impacts, flooding and drainage issues, and servicing upgrade requirements.

3.1

- The report designates land based on three indicators including:
  - Land potentially suitable for development
  - Further investigation required
  - Land unsuitable for development.
- Of note, the majority of land identified as being potentially suitable for development is quite fragmented, with the only larger continuous area being located to the west of Avalon Airport. As this report was based on a desktop assessment of available information, further investigation of development potential is required. The merits of any proposal should be assessed against relevant Planning Scheme requirements.
- In general, the report acknowledges potential for employment and infrastructure development. It does not identify residential development opportunities due to considerable constraints. The report suggests leveraging key infrastructure assets for compatible and complimentary land uses, including industrial and logistical uses in areas subject to noise, odour and height constraints (such as Avalon Airport).
- Green wedge considerations are also relevant to the Avalon Corridor Strategy. Green wedge land has protection under Part 3AA of the P&E Act, which requires any planning scheme amendment to alter or remove controls over GWZ land to be approved by the Minister for Planning and ratified by both Houses of Parliament. In addition to this legislative protection, DELWP are facilitating a major piece of strategic work to better plan for the management and protection of green wedge land.
- DELWP's *Planning for Melbourne's Green Wedges and Agricultural Land: Consultation Paper* (2020) was out for community consultation until February 2021. This project is part of the Victorian Government's commitment to protecting Melbourne's green wedge and peri-urban areas as outlined in Actions 17, 72 and 73 of Plan Melbourne. The project considers agricultural land within 100km from Melbourne and therefore has implications for both CoGG and WCC.
- Land within the Avalon Corridor designated as GWZ is located within WCC. This includes land located outside of the UGB and extending to Little River which forms the municipal boundary between WCC and CoGG.
- The Consultation Paper identifies that while green wedge areas have been largely protected from urban encroachment, existing policy and planning measures are no longer effective. The paper highlighted the following concerns:
  - Increased land speculation and pressure to convert farmland to other uses
  - Increased appetite for rural lifestyles and use of these areas for a range of urban activities
  - Incremental and irreversible loss of land that is agriculturally productive or has important non urban uses
  - More land use conflicts, particularly where urban areas adjoin rural areas.
- The Consultation Paper outlined a number of recommendations that aim to deliver lasting protection of agricultural land and guide decision-making on green wedge areas, including:
  - Anticipate challenges to agricultural productivity under climate change
  - Realise the unique and strategic opportunities afforded by the study area's unique natural attributes, proximity to Melbourne and infrastructure capabilities
  - Protect the special qualities and significant features of the environmental, economic, cultural and health values of the study area for our communities
  - Achieve greater certainty and consistency of planning and decision-making across the study area to realise a sustainable future for our growing city and state.
- Strategic land use decisions affecting green wedge land in WCC are further guided by the Green Wedge Management Plans for Werribee South (2016) and Western Plains South (ongoing).
- The *Werribee South Green Wedge Management Plan* (2016) covers land within WCC located outside of the UGB and south of the Princes Freeway. Land within the Avalon Corridor affected by the Werribee South Green Wedge Management Plan is noted to exclusively fall within the WTP site.

3.1



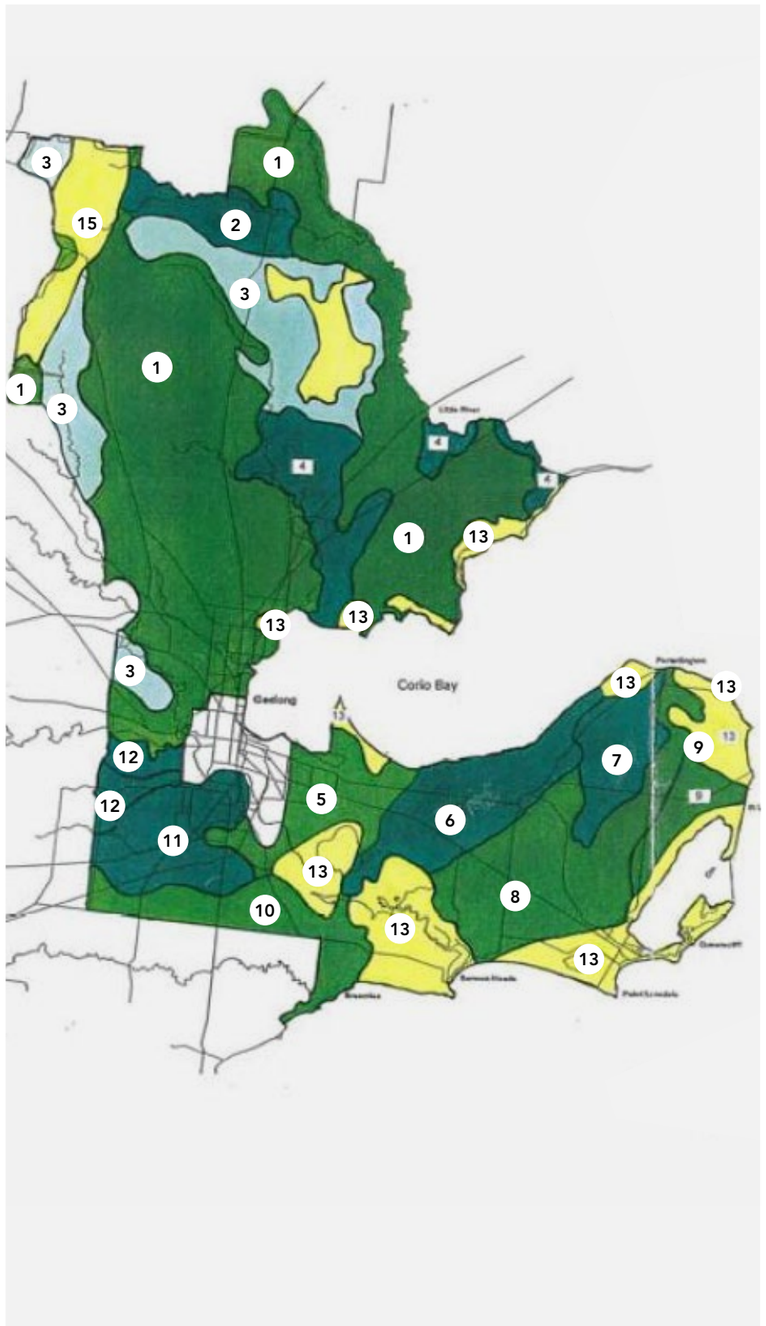
Figure 6: Status of Green Wedge Management Plans (source: Planning for Melbourne's Green Wedges and Agricultural Land: Consultation Paper, DELWP, 2020)

AVALON CORRIDOR STRATEGY

STATUS OF GREEN WEDGE MANAGEMENT PLANS

KEY

- Complete
- Not Complete
- Green Wedge
- Urban Area



LAND SYSTEM

KEY

- Besall Plains 1
- Balliang Alluvium 2
- You Yangs & other Sandy Loams 3
- Lara & other Colluvium 4
- Moolap Alluvium 5
- Cental Peninsula 6
- Bellarine Hills 7
- Lower Peninsula 8
- Swan Bay 9
- Mt. Duneed Basalt 10
- Waurn Ponds 11
- Barrabool Hills 12
- Coastal Sands and Estuaries 13
- You Yangs Granites 14
- Brisbane Ranges 15

LAND QUALITY CLASSES

- 1 None Identified Study Area
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- Urban or Outside Study Area

Diagram 1: Agricultural land quality class (source: CoGG Rural Land Use Strategy, 2007)

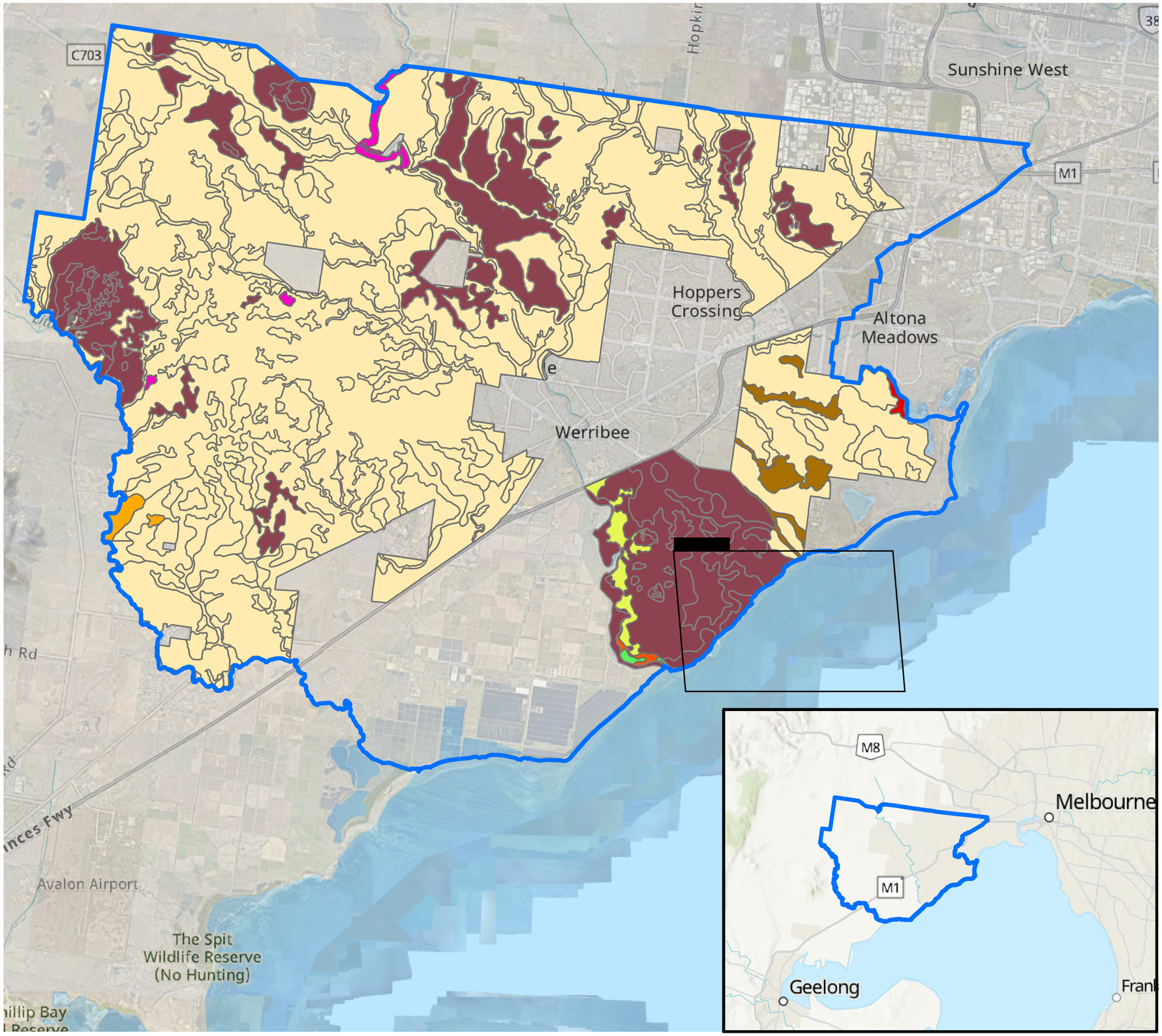
3.1

- The *Western Plains South Green Wedge Management Plan: Background Report* (2018), covers a larger area of land within WCC located outside of the UGB to the west and northwest of Werribee. Large areas of this green wedge are located within the Western Grasslands Reserve and have therefore already been identified for long term conservation.
- For other parts of the Western Plains South Green Wedge within the Avalon Corridor, the Background Report raises a range of considerations for further analysis through the development of a draft Green Wedge Management Plan:
  - Develop a clear vision, strategic objectives and land use outcomes that reinforces the role and function of the green wedge and UGB.
  - Encourage improved interfaces between the green wedge and future urban and infrastructure development to prevent land use conflict and protect visual amenity.
  - Consider precincts as a mechanism to acknowledge diversity of landscapes, land uses and values within the green wedge and tailor policy to respond to localised issues and opportunities.
  - Consider natural attributes of the land, current land use, strategic directions and preferred land use outcomes including opportunities for agriculture, tourism and recreation.
  - Consider a landscape character study of the green wedge including identification of views and viewpoints.
  - Consider appropriate planning controls and management measures for sensitive landscape areas on the basis of the landscape character study.
  - Consider tourism and recreation opportunities that support protection and enhancement of biodiversity values.
  - Continue to apply measures that recognise and protect heritage values.
  - Consider measures to improve understanding and appreciation of dry stone walls and the role of landholders as custodians.
  - Continue to engage with Traditional Owners in the planning and management of the green wedge.
  - Consider opportunities for beneficial reuse of recycled water from the Melton Recycled Water Plant.
  - Continue to apply measures to protect utilities and extractive industry from encroachment by sensitive uses.
  - Work closely with VicRoads and relevant agencies to reduce impacts arising from the implementation of road infrastructure including the OMR Transport Corridor.
- The *Port Phillip Bay (Western Shoreline) and Bellarine Peninsula Ramsar Site Management Plan* (DELWP, 2018) sits within an overarching framework for the management of coastal ecosystems in Victoria and Australia. At the national level, the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act) establishes the basis for managing Ramsar sites and provides a set of national guidelines for describing ecological character and developing management plans (DEWHA 2008). In Victoria, the Victorian Waterway Management Strategy guides the management of rivers, estuaries and wetlands. The Site Management Plan aligns with Action 3.4 and 3.9 in Water for Victoria by improving waterway health and knowledge of waterways and catchments.
- The primary purpose of the Site Management Plan is to maintain ecological character and promote appropriate land use within the Ramsar site. The site supports a number of environmental, economic, social and cultural values, which need to be maintained. Accordingly, the Site Management Plan aims to 'maintain, and where necessary improve, the ecological character of the Port Phillip Bay (Western Shoreline) and Bellarine Peninsula Ramsar Site and support wise and sustainable use.'
- CoGG's *Rural Land Use Strategy* (2007) (RLUS) provides direction for agricultural land use within the Avalon Corridor. The strategic directions outlined in the Executive Summary (page 4) state that the Rural Land Use Strategy sets out a long term vision for the City's rural areas that:
  - Reinforces a rural, farmed landscape beyond urban areas
  - Continues to protect and provide opportunities for productive agriculture
  - Enhances the condition of the environment and the natural resource base
  - Contributes to the ongoing economic prosperity and quality lifestyle of the region.

3.1

- The RLUS includes an agricultural land quality class map (Diagram 1). Within the Avalon Corridor the following land quality classifications are present:
  - Class 2 - high quality agricultural land
  - Class 3 - moderate quality agricultural land
- Section 10.8 (Northern area) of the RLUS is relevant to the Avalon Corridor Strategy and notes:
  - The northern areas of the City comprise rural landscapes used for cropping, grazing and viticulture
  - The You Yangs and Brisbane Ranges are significant landscape features
  - Land is largely of Class 3 quality, with some areas of Class 2 quality land
  - Land is still largely in parcels of productive size, and there are a number of large properties comprising many parcels of land being farmed.
- The RLUS nominates that land within the Avalon Corridor should be maintained for agricultural use, and development adjacent to the You Yangs should be limited and carefully managed to protect landscape features.
- Section 10.9 Avalon notes that Avalon Airport is a significant state and regional transport facility. Rural and agricultural land near the airport provides potential for intensive horticulture activities and presents significant opportunities for export of high quality produce to domestic and international markets. Such activities should be supported as a part of the agricultural economy of Greater Geelong.
- Recommendations of the RLUS are clear in seeking to reinforce rural activity and farmed landscapes, while protecting and providing opportunities for productive agriculture. Key types of agriculture identified by the RLUS are outlined below:
  - Broad acre farming relates to the large scale production of grains and other crops, or the grazing of livestock for meat or wool, on a large scale.
  - Intensive farming relates to methods of agricultural production that requires high inputs to maximize productivity of a small piece of land for either crops or animals.
  - Dryland farming relates to the cultivation of crops without irrigation in regions of limited moisture, typically less than 50 centimetres of precipitation annually.
  - Irrigation farming relates to the agricultural process of applying controlled amounts of water to land to assist in the production of crops, as well as to grow landscape plants and lawns.
  - Greenhouse farming relates to the farm practice of growing crops within sheltered structures covered by a transparent, or partially transparent, material. The main purpose of greenhouses is to provide favourable growing conditions and to protect crops from unfavourable weather and pests.
- Agricultural viability within the study area is noted to be moderate to high based on the RLUS. There is also potential for alternate forms of agriculture such as greenhouse farming to be contemplated. However, this form of farming is generally not supported by the community for amenity reasons, and could impact the broader rural landscape character of the Avalon Corridor. If greenhouse farming is pursued within the Avalon Corridor, siting and design considerations would be of critical importance.
- There are opportunities to consider potential use of recycled water within the Avalon Corridor from the WTP (Melbourne Water), Northern Treatment Plant in Corio (Barwon Water) and Melton Recycled Water Plant (Greater Western Water). Currently, the production of recycled water is not cost-effective. However, recycled water may become more financially viable in the future through technical advancement or Government investment, incentives and subsidies.
- The soil profile of the Avalon Corridor aligns with the Newer Volcanics Province, which extends from the west of Melbourne to Mount Gambier. The underlying bedrock is generally characterised by basalts and lavas, with later sedimentary units around waterways and the coastline. Ongoing quarrying activities in the area have also created deposits south of the Princes Highway.
- Due to the underlying geology, soils in WCC vary across the municipality with Brown Sodosols being the most common unit (Diagram 2). Red Sodosols are also present within localised areas of WCC, such as the Werribee Irrigation District. Sodic soils contain high levels of sodium and can be challenging to manage due to their chemistry, structure and behaviour in wet and dry environments. Areas containing sodic soils within WCC and the wider Avalon Corridor require ongoing management of erosion and soil stability, as well as flow on impacts on surrounding natural systems.

AVALON CORRIDOR STRATEGY - WYNDHAM SOIL MAP



KEY

SOIL ORDER (AUSTRALIAN SOIL CLASSIFICATION)

- Red Dermosols
- Red Ferrosols
- Extratidal Hydrosols
- Redoxic Hydrosols
- Arenic Rudosols
- Red Sodosols
- Brown Sodosols
- Black Sodosols
- Black Vertosols
- Wyndham LGA boundary

Wyndham City Council - Created September 2022

Esri, NASA, NGA, USGS, Vicmap, Esri, HERE, Garmin, FAO, NOAA,USGS, Esri, CGIAR, Vicmap, Esri, HERE, Garmin, Foursuare, METI/NASA, USGS, Esri, Geoscience Australia, NASA, NGA, USGS, Esr, HERE, Garmin, METI/NASA, USGS.

Coordinate System: WGS 1984 Web Mercator Auxiliary

Diagram 2: Wyndham soil classifications

0 5 10

3.2

3.2 PLANNING POLICY

A range of planning policies are relevant to the Avalon Corridor Strategy, including the State Planning Policy Framework (PPF) and the Local PPF contained in both the Wyndham and Greater Geelong Planning Schemes. A summary of relevant planning policies at both State and municipal level are outlined below.

3.2.1 PLAN MELBOURNE

Plan Melbourne (2017) contains a number of directions, policies, principles and outcomes of relevance to the Avalon Corridor. It identifies Avalon Airport and the proposed Bay West Port as a state significant transport gateways and recognises the need to secure adequate capacity for moving passengers and freight into and out of Victoria. Plan Melbourne also supports future employment and economic development opportunities at major ports, airports and interstate terminals, noting the need to protect these assets from incompatible land uses.

POLICIES

- **Policy 1.1.5 Support major transport gateways as important locations for employment and economic activity** - speaks specifically to designated ports, and airports and acknowledges the Bay West Port as a possible seaport within the Avalon Corridor. This policy seeks to ensure that land around state-significant transport gateways are protected from incompatible land uses to ensure they keep generating economic activity and new jobs.
- **Policy 1.1.6 Plan for industrial land in the right locations to support employment and investment opportunities** - highlights the economic contribution of industrial land, the need to protect existing industrial land from incompatible land uses to allow for future growth, and to identify strategic locations for major development linked to the Principal Freight Network and transport gateways and networks. The Plan Melbourne 2017-2050 Addendum 2019 recognises Avalon Airport as a transport gateway and identifies the Avalon Rail Link and the Western Rail Plan as potential transport infrastructure improvements.
- **Policy 3.4.1 Support sufficient gateway capacity with efficient landside access** - seeks to evaluate appropriate locations for Victoria's second container port and also speaks to the importance of the WIFT and Avalon Airport.
- **Policy 4.5.1 Strengthen protection and management of green wedge land** - identifies the Avalon Corridor as being partially within a green wedge area (Western Plains South) and a peri urban area and seeks to protect GWZ areas from inappropriate land use and development.
- **Policy 7.2.2 Strengthen transport links on national networks for the movement of commodities** - specifically refers to the Avalon Corridor, noting:
  - "Victoria's economy depends on its ability to move goods between state-significant places (such as regional cities and Melbourne) and to interstate and international markets. Transport network planning must ensure that industries such as Victoria's food and fibre industry remain viable and competitive. This should include identification of key freight corridors and interstate freight terminals. For example, the Avalon corridor near Geelong contains nationally significant economic assets, including airport, road, rail and waste facilities. This corridor must be safeguarded for state infrastructure opportunities and complementary development in the future, as well as maintaining a settlement break between Melbourne and Geelong. Land use buffers for infrastructure and Avalon Airport and areas of high biodiversity value, including Ramsar conservation areas, must be protected."

PRINCIPLES

- **A globally connected and competitive city -** relates to developing and delivering on infrastructure to support competition across different sectors
- **Environmental resilience and sustainability -** relates to the protection of biodiversity and natural resources
- **A city of centres link to regional growth** - relates to physical, social and economic connections between Melbourne and regional areas

3.2

OUTCOMES AND DIRECTIONS

OUTCOME	DIRECTION
Outcome 1 Melbourne is a productive city that attracts investment, supports innovation and creates jobs	**Direction 1.1** Seeks to strengthen competitiveness of the economy and direction 1.4 seeks to support the productive use of land in non-urban areas
Outcome 3 Melbourne has an integrated transport system that connects people to jobs and services and goods to market	**Direction 3.4** Seeks to improve freight efficiency and increase capacity of gateways while protecting urban amenity
Outcome 4 Melbourne is a distinctive and liveable city with quality design and amenity	**Direction 4.5** Seeks to protect green wedges and peri-urban areas
Outcome 6 Melbourne is a sustainable resilient city	**Direction 6.5** Seeks to protect and restore natural habitats, this is relevant due to the Avalon Corridor's environmentally significant sites
Outcome 7 Regional Victoria is productive, sustainable and supports jobs and economic growth	**Direction 7.2** Seeks to improve connections between cities and regions

IMPLEMENTATION

Plan Melbourne includes a separate implementation plan with short, medium and long term actions.

- **Action 17 Support strategic planning for agriculture** seeks to 'improve planning decision-making to support sustainable agriculture by identifying areas of strategic agricultural land in Melbourne's green wedges and peri-urban areas. This will give consideration to climate change, soils and landscape, access to water, integration with industry and significant government investment in agricultural infrastructure.'
- **Action 18 Management of extractive industry** seeks to 'protect the extractive industry and future extractive-resource assets from incompatible land uses by adopting planning options consistent with the findings of the Extractive Resources in Victoria, Demand and Supply Study, 2015–2050.'
- **Action 48 Strategy for future gateways** seeks to 'protect options for future air and sea ports and intermodal terminals through appropriate planning frameworks.'
- **Action 72 Review green wedge planning provisions** seeks to 'review green wedge planning provisions to ensure they support Plan Melbourne outcomes for green wedges.'
- **Action 73 Green Wedge Management Plans** seeks to 'support local government to complete and implement green wedge management plans to protect and enhance the agricultural, biodiversity, environmental, natural resource, tourism, landscape and other values of each of Melbourne's green wedges.'
- **Action 74 Localised planning statements for distinctive areas and landscapes** seeks to 'prepare localised planning statements for other distinctive areas within Melbourne's green wedges and peri-urban areas.'
- **Action 95 Environmental protection for coastlines and waters of Port Phillip Bay and Western Port** seeks to 'improve environmental protection for Melbourne's coasts and the waters of Melbourne's bays through local planning schemes.'

3.2

3.2.2 PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

The PPF is contained in all Victorian Planning Schemes and include policies that relate to the use and development of land throughout Victoria. The PPF covers issues of state importance that address settlement planning, residential development, environmental and landscape values, natural resource management, built environment and heritage, housing, economic development, transport and infrastructure, in addition to more specific regional focused policies.

Beyond the overarching Plan Melbourne strategy, there are a number of Regional Strategic Plans embedded into Clause 11 - Settlement. The regional Development Plan relevant for the CoGG is the G21 Regional Growth Plan directly referenced at Clause 11.01-1R - Geelong (G21).

Further relevant policies of the PPF are listed in Appendix 1.

3.2.3 PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK: WYNDHAM PLANNING SCHEME

The PPF at a local level includes two key sections, including: the Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) and local planning policies. The MPS sets out the vision documents for Council. Within the Wyndham Planning Scheme, the MPS acknowledges expected increases in population growth and sets out key strategies for settlement planning, land use direction, environmental protection, economic development, transport, infrastructure and landscape values.

In relation to the Avalon Corridor, the MPS places an importance on safeguarding areas of environmental significance and landscape value (with specific mention to the Ramsar sites), maintaining the green break between Werribee and Geelong, diversifying the local economy, supporting integrated transport networks and providing for increased industrial land development opportunities.

Relevant Clauses within the Wyndham MPS include:

- **Clause 02.03-1 Settlement – Little River** includes strategic directions to provide for limited consolidation in the Little River area, subject to resolution of airport noise from Avalon Airport, infrastructure constraints and development of a township plan; and to Manage the development of Little River to avoid overdevelopment, protect adjoining rural precincts from development impacts and prevent further expansion of the township into the surrounding rural precincts.
- **Clause 02.03-1 Settlement – Green Wedges** includes the strategic direction to protect Wyndham's Green Wedges from inappropriate development and urban intrusion. Broadly it seeks to protect green wedges from inappropriate development, retain biodiversity values, and encourage compatible rural uses.
- **Clause 02.03-2 Environmental and landscape values** contains objectives to protect and restore biodiversity and natural habitats; to protect Wyndham's natural environment and landscape with respect to growth, land use and the impacts of climate change; to protect and enhance the distinctive sense of place, cultural identity and landscape within the growth areas of Wyndham; to manage urban encroachment on the coast and its impacts on environmental values along the coast.
- **Clause 02.03-3 Environmental risks and amenity** contains objectives to promote environmental sustainability through built form, urban infrastructure and consolidation; to apply the 'precautionary principle' when planning for the City to help avoid serious or irreversible climate change effects; to minimise the City's contribution to climate change and gas emissions and minimise the impacts of climate change on Wyndham's natural and built environment; to protect the community from the economic, social and environmental risks associated with flooding; to ensure that new use and development include adequate fire protection measures.
- **Clause 02.03-4 Natural resource management** contains objectives to minimise the loss of productive agricultural land and the impacts of incompatible uses on farming operations; to protect the Werribee South market gardens as an area of State agricultural significance; to support the role of rural areas beyond the Urban Growth Boundary to protect and restore biodiversity and viable future rural land uses; and to protect waterways, aquatic areas, wetlands, swamps, catchments, riparian land and waterway valleys.
- **Clause 02.03-7 Economic development** contains objectives to provide sufficient land to attract investment and generate additional jobs, and to promote Wyndham as a place for long term business attraction and expansion.
- **Clause 02.03-8 Transport contains relevant objectives to:** provide improved and accessible transport options, and to maintain and enhance existing road infrastructure.

Local planning policies contained in the Wyndham Planning Scheme provide more specific policy direction in relation to neighbourhood character, amenity associated with non-residential development, telecommunications, advertising signage, heritage and electronic gaming machines. It is noted that none of these local policies have particular relevance to the scope of the Avalon Corridor Strategy.

3.2

3.2.4 PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK: GREATER GEELONG PLANNING SCHEME

The PPF at a local level includes two key sections: the Municipal Planning Strategy (MPS) at Clause 02 and local components of planning policies at Clauses 11 to 19. At Clause 02.02 the MPS sets out the overarching vision for Greater Geelong: *Geelong, coast, country and suburbs, is the best place to live through prosperity and cohesive communities in an exceptional environment.*

Relevant Clauses within the Greater Geelong MPS include:

- **Clause 02.03-1 Settlement** provides strategic direction for settlement growth in Greater Geelong, particularly directing and containing residential growth within identified areas of the municipality, and limiting rural living developments to existing zoned land. With respect to Lara, this clause notes that the Avalon Airport and nearby land provide significant opportunities for employment and economic growth and includes a direction to protect and enhance key environmental, cultural and landscape features, including the rural characteristics of Lara.
- **Clause 02.03-7 Industry** notes the need to provide support for ongoing employment and economic development in the Geelong region and the need to support industry through the maintenance and improvement of infrastructure including roads, rail and Avalon Airport. The clause provides strategic directions to:
  - Provide an adequate supply of industrial land that meets the needs of different industries.
  - Focus new industrial development around major transport routes and infrastructure assets.
  - Encourage the growth of new and economically sustainable industry sectors.
  - Provide a diverse range of high quality industrial and commercial land.
- **Clause 02.03-8 Transport** notes that Avalon Airport is a major economic and tourism asset to the region and includes a direction to protect and enhance the role of the Avalon Airport, including its expansion options and ongoing technical viability and operational requirements.
- **Clause 02.03-2 Environmental and landscape values**

The Local Planning Policy Framework (Clauses 11 to 19) also includes various policies relevant to the Avalon Corridor, including:

- **Clause 11.01-1L-01 Settlement – Greater Geelong**
  - Retention of the rural landscape setting including views to the You Yangs.
  - Protection of agricultural land, particularly to the north of Lara and aquaculture or intensive agricultural production activities adjacent and complementary to Avalon Airport.
  - Protection of opportunities for a potential intermodal transport facility [With regard to the 'potential intermodal transport facility', the Lara Structure Plan Map contained in Clause 11.01-L-03 Lara clarifies this to be to the northeast of the township and between the Melbourne/ Geelong railway alignment and Old Melbourne Road].
  - Protection of the current and future operations and development of Avalon Airport including associated or compatible uses.
- **Clause 14.01-1L-02 Dwellings and subdivision in farming areas**
  - An objective to ensure that the development of dwellings and excision of existing dwellings are consistent with the use of land for sustainable rural uses.
  - A strategy to discourage house lot excisions.
  - A strategy to support construction of a dwelling where:
    - The dwelling will not result in the property being removed from agricultural production and the primary use of the land will continue to be agriculture.
    - Existing agricultural activity on adjoining land will not be compromised.
    - The proportion of the property used for the dwelling and ancillary infrastructure is minimised and located on the area of lowest agricultural quality.
- **Clause 17.01-1L-01 Diversified economy – Greater Geelong**
  - Support the development of seafood and aquaculture industries, particularly in North Geelong, Portarlington and Avalon.
  - Support the development of aerospace industries within the confines of the Avalon Airport site.
- **Clause 17.04-1L-02 Tourism in rural areas**
  - Support tourism uses associated with an agricultural activity on the land.
  - Discourage tourism uses not associated with an agricultural activity on the land unless specified criteria apply.



Open, flat agricultural fields which are typical of the plains landscape

3.2

3.2.5 ZONES

A variety of zones are applied in the Avalon Corridor through the Greater Geelong and Wyndham Planning Schemes. The largest single zone within the Avalon Corridor is the Public Use Zone (PUZ) which applies to the WTP, followed by the Green Wedge Zone (GWZ) within WCC and the Farming Zone (FZ) predominantly found within CoGG.

Both the GWZ and FZ seek to limit development and maintain larger lots for rural and related activities, which is further articulated through relevant state and local policies of the PPF. The result of such zones and policies is that land within these areas is relativity free of development and generally maintains larger lot sizes and an open landscape rural character.

A summary of the applicable zones and overlays is provided below and in Figures 7 and 8.

PUBLIC USE ZONE

The Public Use Zone (PUZ) recognises public land use for community services and facilities. It applies to publicly owned land and includes a variety of uses as outlined in the relevant Schedule.

- PUZ1 applies to land containing services and utilities. Within the Avalon Corridor, this includes the WTP, which extends across both Wyndham and Geelong municipality.
- PUZ2 applies to land used for education. In the Avalon Corridor this relates to Little River Primary School.

TRANSPORT ZONE

The Transport Zone (TRZ) seeks to provide for an integrated and sustainable transport system, and applies to land previously controlled by the PUZ. Land within the Avalon Corridor is allocated for state transport infrastructure (TRZ1 – regional railway), principal road network (TRZ2 – Princes Highway and intersections) and significant municipal roads (TRZ3).

SPECIAL USE ZONE

The Special Use Zone (SUZ) applies to sites that have been developed or used for a specific purpose that is listed within the relevant Schedule. The SUZ includes areas that are within the Port Phillip (Western Shoreline) and Bellarine Peninsula Ramsar site. The Ramsar site needs to be taken into consideration in any planning or development proposals, given it is a matter of national environmental significance under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation ACT 1999.

- SUZ6 in the Wyndham Planning Scheme relates to the Earth and Energy Resource Industry and provides for the operation of a number of quarry sites, both active and approved, including the Wyndham RDF and Holcim Quarry, the Holcim extractive industry site adjacent to the west and the proposed extractive industry site to the north.
- SUZ1 in the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme relates to Environmental Wetlands, Salt Production and Land Based Aquaculture Activities, and applies to the former Cheetham Saltworks site west of Avalon Airport.
- SUZ11 in the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme relates to the Avalon Airport precinct and contains the following specific purposes:
  - To provide for an operational airport and associated activities.
  - To provide for a range of employment generating land uses which do not adversely interfere with the operation of the airport.
  - To provide for use and development that facilitates the vision and development objectives contained in any approved Master Plan for the airport.
  - To provide for a range of commercial, industrial and retail facilities which add to the diversity of economic generating activities.
  - To ensure the use and development of the site are compatible with existing uses in the vicinity.
  - To ensure that land uses have consideration of environmental attributes of the area.

3.2

INDUSTRIAL 2 ZONE

The Industrial 2 Zone (I2Z) applies to the Mountain View Quarry Site and surrounds. The I2Z prioritises land to be available for heavy industry which requires substantial buffers, as articulated within the relevant zone purposes:

- To provide for manufacturing industry, the storage and distribution of goods and associated facilities in a manner which does not affect the safety and amenity of local communities.
- To promote manufacturing industries and storage facilities that require a substantial threshold distance within the core of the zone.
- To keep the core of the zone free of uses which are suitable for location elsewhere so as to be available for manufacturing industries and storage facilities that require a substantial threshold distance as the need for these arises.

PUBLIC PARK & RECREATION ZONE

The Public Park & Recreation Zone (PPRZ) applies to publicly owned land that provides community facilities. Within the Avalon Corridor this relates to land on the north-eastern border next to the Werribee River and also adjacent to the Little River watercourse.

PUBLIC CONSERVATION & RESOURCE ZONE

The Public Conservation & Resource Zone (PCRZ) applies to land south-west of the WTP along the coastline including the Spit Wildfire Reserve. The PCRZ provides for the protection of environmentally sensitive landscape while also allowing for some nature based recreation activities or accommodation.

RURAL CONSERVATION ZONE

A small portion of the study is affected by the Rural Conservation Zone (RCZ), to the north of the railway adjacent to the Wyndham RDF. The RCZ identifies land of high environmental value and aims to protect the land from inappropriate urban encroachment and agricultural use. RCZ within the Avalon Corridor is associated with the Western Grasslands Nature Conservation Reserve that forms part of the Melbourne Strategic Assessment (MSA) area.

LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL ZONE

Land zoned Low Density Residential Zone (LDRZ) within the Avalon Corridor exists on the outskirts of Little River township. The LDRZ is a residential zone that provides for dwellings to be built on lots as small as 0.4 hectares.

GREEN WEDGE ZONE

The GWZ only applies to land within Wyndham and seeks to recognise, protect and conserve green wedge land for its agricultural, environmental, historic, landscape, recreational and tourism opportunities, and mineral and stone resources. GWZ land within the Avalon Corridor is located north of the alignment of the Little River watercourse, extending broadly north to the Avalon Corridor boundary.

RURAL LIVING ZONE

Rural Living Zone (RLZ) land within the Avalon Corridor is located on the edge of Lara, both north and south of the Princes Freeway. The RLZ is a residential zone that provides for small scale hobby farming and dwellings on lots no smaller than two hectares.

FARMING ZONE

The FZ applies to a small portion of land within Wyndham, to the north east of the Avalon Corridor around the Wyndham RDF and Holcim Quarry. A much larger portion of FZ land is located within CoGG, including land north of the Princes Freeway extending from Lara through to Little River, as well as land south of the Princess Freeway to the west of Avalon Airport. The purpose of the FZ is to prioritise and protect agricultural uses, but also allow complementary activities such as tourism. Minimum lot sizes apply to subdivision and development within FZ land:

- CoGG: 80 hectare minimum lot subdivision and for an area for which no permit is required to construct a dwelling; and
- Wyndham: 40 hectare minimum lot subdivision and for an area for which no permit is required to construct a dwelling.

AVALON CORRIDOR STRATEGY

ZONES

(For consultation purposes only. Refer to Planning Schemes Online for Zoning information)

KEY

- Study Area Boundary
- Municipal Boundary
- Railway line
- Public Use Zone (PUZ)
- Special Use Zone (SUZ)
- Industrial Zone (INZ)
- Green Wedge Zone (GWZ)
- Public Park & Recreation Zone (PPRZ)
- Public Conservation & Resource Zone (PCRZ)
- Farming Zone (FZ)
- Rural Conservation Zone (RCZ)
- Urban Growth Zone (UGZ)
- General Residential Zone (GRZ)
- Low Density Residential Zone (LDRZ)
- Rural Living Zone (RLZ)
- Activity Centre Zone (ACZ)
- Commercial Zone (CZ)
- Township Zone (TZ)
- Transport Zone 1 - State Transport Infrastructure (TZ1)
- Transport Zone 2 - Principal Road Network (TZ2)

Figure 7: Zones

Ford Proving Ground
Kirks Bridge Road
Black Forest Road
Ballan Road
WERRIBEE
East Werribee Employment Precinct
Duncans Road
Regional Rail Link
Princes Highway
Bulban Road
Edgars Road
Little River-Ripley Road
Wyndham refuse disposal facility / Holcim Quarry
Werribee River Park
K Road
Diggers Road
CITY OF WYNDHAM
You Yangs Regional Park
You Yangs Road
Little River
Little River Road
Farm Road
Branch Road
Farrars Road
Forest Road North
Peak School Road
Old Melbourne Road
Princes Freeway
Western Treatment Plant
CITY OF GEELONG
Point Wilson Road
Mill Road
Windermere Road
Beach Road
LARA
Lara
forest road south
Avalon Airport
Kirks Point
The Spit Wildlife Reserve
Port Phillip Bay
Avalon Road
Geelong Grammar School
Mountain View Quarry
Avalon College
Point Wilson

0 1.6 3.2
0.8 2.4 4km

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Dwg No.: UDD-001
Scale 1:80,000@A3
Date: 29.09.2022
Revision: E

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3.2

3.2.6 OVERLAYS

A variety of overlays are applied to the Avalon Corridor through the Greater Geelong and Wyndham Planning Schemes.

LAND SUBJECT TO INUNDATION OVERLAY

The Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO) is a floodway overlay aimed to ensure the protection of water quality and reduce the impact of development. It also aims to ensure that the free passage and flow of floodwaters is not restricted. The LSIO affects only land located within CoGG, including land within Avalon Airport and the WTP, as well as land north of the Princes Freeway between Lara and Little River.

ENVIRONMENTAL SIGNIFICANCE OVERLAY

The Environmental Significance Overlay (ESO) serves to ensure that development "is compatible with identified environmental values." Land within CoGG is affected by ESO2 and ESO4, while land in Wyndham is affected by ESO1, ESO4 and ESO5. Each Schedule sets out the permit triggers and environmental objectives to be achieved on affected sites.

- ESO2 in Greater Geelong relates to "High Value Wetlands and Associated Habitat Protection" and applies broadly along the coastal environs and the WTP land within the CoGG.
- ESO4 in Greater Geelong and ESO5 in WCC were introduced to protect areas of Natural Temperate Grassland of the Victorian Volcanic Plain – a critically endangered ecological community and matter of national environmental significance. The presence of ESO4 and ESO5 represents a significant commitment and obligation of the Victorian Government to secure grassland protection outcomes.
- ESO1 in Wyndham relates to "Waterway Corridors" and applies to narrow sections of land along the Werribee River, Cherry Creek and Lollypop Creek.
- ESO4 in Wyndham relates to the "Western Grasslands Reserve" and applies to a band of land along the northern boundary of the Avalon Corridor. This overlay functions to recognise and protect grasslands through the creation of a grasslands reserve.

ENVIRONMENTAL AUDIT OVERLAY

The Environmental Audit Overlay (EAO) identifies land where there is a potential risk of contamination due to previous land use, and applies to a small area of land to the south west corner of the Avalon Corridor within Wyndham.

HERITAGE OVERLAY

- The Heritage Overlay (HO) identifies land or precincts with heritage significance. Five overlays exist for places of state historical significance on the Victorian Heritage Register and are subject to the provisions of the *Heritage Act* (2017):
- Former Metropolitan Farm (VHR H2400)
- Water Tank (VHR H1416)
- Little River Railway Station and Goods Yard (VHR H1572)
- Hume and Hovell Memorial (VHR H1547)
- Rothwell Bridge (VHR H1454)

Outside the townships of Lara and Werribee, there are 29 places of local historical significance, which are subject to specific HO controls. 16 of these occur within the township of Little River (13 building features, two riverside reserves, and the Grant Bridge), with six further rural places and three remnant networks of drystone walling along road and paddock boundaries in the area north of Little River. All of the preceding places occur within Wyndham. Two further rural places associated with the Avalon College and Geelong Grammar occur within CoGG adjoining Limeburners Bay. Dry stone walls within the CoGG area between Little River and Lara are subject to generic protection under the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme rather than individual HOs.

Beyond these specific sites, there are other numerous elements of historical interest within the study area. These include 23 sites on the Victoria Heritage Register/Victorian Heritage Inventory (VHI) that are the subject of archaeological permits under the Heritage Act. These places are predominantly ruins or minor surface features associated with past rural and marine/coastal activities. A specific area of historical interest includes the historical crossing place of the Old Melbourne Road over the Little River at Rothwell, with the Travellers Rest Inn ruin and other potential archaeological features in the vicinity.

3.2

Heritage Overlays are evolving. Municipal heritage studies undertaken by CoGG and a Heritage Review (Gap Study) undertaken by WCC in 2019 have identified a number of historical sites that have the potential to meet the threshold for protection under a HO. Both Councils are proposing to undertake further investigation of these over the next five years.

DEVELOPMENT PLAN OVERLAY

The Development Plan Overlay (DPO) identifies areas where a development plan has been prepared specific to that land to guide future land use and development. DPO1 in CoGG applies to the 'Special Industrial Area, Point Wilson'. The Schedule further clarifies the intent of the overlay with the following statement:

"This schedule applies to the Industrial 2 zone located in Dandos Road, Point Wilson. Whilst this land has not been developed apart from an existing quarry operation, the zoning of the land recognises its potential as a site for a large scale industrial development requiring substantial buffer distances. A development plan is required to ensure that the area's environmentally significant flora and fauna is protected and that all planning issues are fully addressed prior to the issue of a permit for the development of the land."

DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT OVERLAY

The Design and Development Overlay (DDO) provides specific design and built form requirements to land. DDO20 is a CoGG specific schedule that applies to all Industrial 1, 2 & 3 Zone land within the municipality.

PUBLIC ACQUISITION OVERLAY

The Public Acquisition Overlay (PAO) affects land that has been designated for a future project and will need to be acquired. PAO14 applies within CoGG and relates to land put aside for train infrastructure associated with the alignment of the potential Avalon Airport Rail Link. PAO5 applies to land within Wyndham and relates to land designated to accommodate the OMR/E6 Transport Corridor. PAO10 in CoGG also relates to the OMR/E6 Transport Corridor. Although located outside of the study area, PAO11 in CoGG and PAO7 in Wyndham relate to the Western Grasslands Reserve.

VEGETATION PROTECTION OVERLAY

The Vegetation Protection Overlay (VPO) affects land with identified significant vegetation and aims to prevent further loss. VPO1 is located within CoGG and relates to "Significant Roadsides and Linear Reserves", including sections of Sandy Creek Road and Gillets Road.

SIGNIFICANT LANDSCAPE OVERLAY

The Significant Landscape Overlay (SLO) affects land identified to contain significant landscape character values. SLO1 affects a small portion of the north western corner of the Avalon Corridor within CoGG and relates to the protection of the foothills of the You Yangs (located immediately outside of the Avalon Corridor to the west).

STATE RESOURCE OVERLAY

The State Resource Overlay (SRO) affects land within Wyndham, and functions to protect areas of mineral, stone and other resources that have been identified as being of state significance from use and development that would prejudice the current or future productive use of the resource. Land within the Avalon Corridor affected by the SRO consists of large areas to the west of Werribee and to the north of the Princes Freeway.

Two schedules to the SRO apply within Wyndham:

- **SRO1 (Strategic Extractive Resource Areas)** – applies to land within Wyndham known as SERAs. These are locations with a state-significant supply of hard rock resources, and where future investment in extractive industries is encouraged.
- **SRO2 (Protecting Extractive Industries**) – applies a 500 metre separation distance around land that contains a work authority issued under the *Mineral Resources (Sustainable Development) Act* (1990).

These Schedules ensure that new uses and developments do not inhibit current or future productivity of existing extractive industry operations, or the potential future establishment of extractive industry operations within SERAs.

AVALON CORRIDOR STRATEGY

OVERLAYS

KEY

- Study Area Boundary
- Municipal Boundary
- Railway line
- Freeway
- Vegetation Protection Overlay (VPO)
- Environmental Significance Overlay (ESO)
- Flood Overlay (FO)
- Environmental Audit Overlay (EAO)
- Heritage Overlay (HO)
- Significant Landscape Overlay (SLO)
- Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO)
- Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO)
- Public Acquisition Overlay (PAO)
- State Resource Overlay (SRO)
- Design and Development Overlay (DDO)
- Development Plan Overlay (DPO)
- Development Contributions Plans Overlay (DCPO)
- Parking Overlay (PO)
- Incorporated Plan Overlay (IPO)

Figure 8: Overlays

Ford Proving Ground
Kirks Bridge Road
Black Forest Road
Ballan Road
WERRIBEE
East Werribee Employment Precinct
Duncans Road
Regional Rail Link
Princes Highway
Little River-Ripley Road
Edgars Road
Bulban Road
Wyndham refuse disposal facility / Holcim Quarry
CITY OF WYNDHAM
Werribee River Park
K Road
Diggers Road
You Yangs Regional Park
You Yangs Road
Little River
Farm Road
Little River Road
Branch Road
Farrars Road
Princes Freeway
Peak School Road
Old Melbourne Road
Forest Road North
Western Treatment Plant
Point Wilson Road
CITY OF GREATER GEELONG
Windermere Road
Mill Road
Beach Road
LARA
Lara
Forest road south
Avalon Airport
Kirks Point
The Spit Wildlife Reserve
Port Phillip Bay
Avalon Road
Geelong Grammar School
Mountain View Quarry
Avalon College
Point Wilson
0 1.6 3.2
0.8 2.4 4km

Project Ref:	19.322
Dwg No.:	UDD-001
Scale	1:80,000@A3
Date:	29.09.22
Revision:	E

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3.3

3.3 SUMMARY OF KEY CONSIDERATIONS

Based on the review of strategic land use studies and planning policies, the key strategic considerations for the Avalon Corridor are:

- Management of ongoing airport activities, and facilitation of major future expansion to a full scale international airport.
- Potential for substantial economic activity in and around Avalon Airport for compatible land uses such as commercial, industrial, agricultural and tourism.
- Safeguarding land for the expansion and development of major state infrastructure projects such as the OMR Transport Corridor and Bay West Port.
- Limitations on residential development into important non-urban land, as identified through the GWZ and other policy.
- Importance of environmental protection for key flora, fauna, ecological communities and habitats such as the Western Grasslands Reserve and Ramsar site.
- The importance of protecting and managing identified EIIAs and SERAs within the Avalon Corridor.

To further summarise the desktop analysis, matters of strategic influence to the Avalon Corridor also include:

- Various planning policies and strategies - which reinforce a physical green break between the outer edge of metropolitan Melbourne (Werribee) and Geelong, including the Western Grasslands Reserve.
- The possible Avalon Airport Rail Link - which is safeguarded through PAO14 in the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme.
- The OMR Transport Corridor - which is incorporated within the Wyndham Planning Scheme and has an indicative timeframe of completion within 15-30 years.
- The WIFT - which is currently under investigation, with Infrastructure Victoria indicating up to 5 years for finalising planning and 10-30 years for construction.
- Bay West Port - which has been nominated by Infrastructure Victoria as the preferred location for the Melbourne's second container port terminal and is targeted for operations from around 2055.
- The Western Treatment Plant (WTP) - Melbourne Water is investigating options for increased community access to select areas through regional cycling path connections, bird watching and ecotourism opportunities that are compatible with the site's primary purpose and environmental values.
- Avalon Airport - acknowledged as a significant land use and economic, employment and tourism generating asset for the region.
- West Growth Corridor Plan - which includes the Mambourin East and Werribee Junction Precinct Structure Plans (PSPs). These PSPs are designated for primarily industrial and related activity. These future industrial areas will be influenced by and have an influence on future activities within the Avalon Corridor.
- East Werribee National Employment and Innovation Cluster (NEIC) - although the status and potential timing for future development of the NEIC are unknown, it remains of contextual relevance given the site is located just outside the Avalon Corridor and will be guided by the East Werribee Employment Precinct PSP.
- Avalon Airport Master Plan (2015) - which was endorsed by the Commonwealth Department of Defence in 2015 and sets out the long term vision of the expanded operations of the airport over the next 20 years. While this Master Plan sits as a reference document within the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme, updates to the Avalon Airport Master Plan are ongoing. Further work is required to secure ongoing operations (both current and future) and protect the option for a third cross runway. This will require further protections within the relevant Planning Schemes (both Greater Geelong and Wyndham).
- Lara Structure Plan (2011) - which guides any future development and land use change within the Lara township.
- Little River - while Little River does not have a Structure Plan, it is constrained by a number of surrounding land uses and other considerations including Avalon Airport, WTP and existing zoning.

3.3

- Land use buffers - for sites such as WTP, Wyndham RDF, Holcim Quarries (WA184 and WA420), Mountain View Quarry (WA41) and an approved extractive industry site south of Little River (WA980). Specific buffer analysis identified that potential odour impact arising from landfill operations is the most important consideration for setting buffer distances, where sensitive uses are within medium to high risk areas. Specific modelling further determined that areas of medium to high risk of odour may extend beyond the 'default' EPA 500 metre buffer distance, although some areas of encroachment would need consideration through later PSP processes.
- Basalt Dimension Stone Quarry (WA980) - which is located to the north of Avalon Airport and was granted permission to develop a new materials recycling facility on site through Planning Permit PP-852-2015 issued by CoGG.
- Point Wilson Munitions Facility - depending on the types of munitions to be stored by the Department of Defence in future, buffers distances may be required once the facility is fully operational. Early advice indicates that an 'Outer Explosive Ordnance Safety Arc' of 1.5 to 2.0 kilometres should be maintained.
- Industrial land supply - although considerable supply in Greater Geelong was identified in the 2018 study, there is a lack of land to accommodate large scale industrial uses requiring buffer zones of 1 kilometre from sensitive uses.
- Wurdi Youang / the You Yangs - as a prominent landscape feature and visual backdrop, as well as a site of cultural significance. Limited protection for the foothills of the You Yangs is currently offered by SLO1.
- EIIAs, WAs and SERAs - a number of extractive industry values and operating quarries are present in the Avalon Corridor. These are protected through different planning and land use controls.
- GWZ and peri-urban land - the Victorian Government is undertaking strategic planning work to strengthen the role of Melbourne's green wedges and wider peri-urban areas. This work underpins the intent of the Avalon Corridor Strategy to protect and reinforce the green break between Melbourne and Geelong.
- Melbourne Sewerage Strategy (2018) - a 50-year strategy developed by Melbourne Water, Greater Western Water, South East Water, Western Water and Yarra Valley Water, which outlines how the sewerage system needs to be transformed into a resource recovery system to enhance its contribution to public health, the environment and affordable essential services.
- Water for Life - a 50-year strategy under development by Melbourne Water, Greater Western Water, South East Water, Western Water and Yarra Valley Water, which seeks to provide a secure water future for Greater Melbourne and build system resilience and manage future climate variability.
- Flood risks - which are associated with the low lying coastal wetland interface of the Avalon Corridor. Flood risk will increase as a result of climate change, sea level rise and coastal erosion. It is important to ensure land use and development is compatible with flood risk, to the satisfaction of Melbourne Water as the floodplain management authority.

LAND USE ANALYSIS POLICY

4.0	Land Use Analysis Policy	47
4.1	Major Land Uses	47
4.2	Land Size and Ownership	50
4.3	Buffer Separation And Amenity Management	51

4.0

4.0 LAND USE ANALYSIS

Established land uses within the Avalon Corridor are outlined below and illustrated on Figure 10.

4.1 MAJOR LAND USES

The major land uses within the Avalon Corridor include:

- Princes Freeway
- Melbourne-Geelong rail line
- Western Treatment Plant (WTP)
- Avalon Airport
- Point Wilson Munitions Facility
- Extractive industries and quarries (various locations)
- Wyndham RDF
- Agriculture
- Township of Little River
- Township of Lara
- Education facilities, including Geelong Grammar and Avalon College
- Cherry Creek Youth Justice Facility
- Crown land and coastal conservation reserves
- Aquaculture (onshore and offshore), including Bates Point Aquaculture Fisheries Reserve

These major land uses are described briefly below:

- The Princes Freeway transport corridor constitutes a dual, divided road carriageway with 3 lanes in each direction. Due to carriageway width and treatment the Princes Freeway effectively bisects the Avalon Corridor into a northern and southern precinct.
- The Melbourne-Geelong rail transport corridor consists of three running lines, with the eastern two being broad gauge (BG) intrastate lines servicing mainly passenger trains to Geelong and the third western line being a standard gauge (SG) single bi-directional intrastate line. Two train stops are located with the Avalon Corridor at the townships of Lara and Little River. Although the rail alignment creates a physical barrier through the landscape, it is not a substantial as the divide created by the Princes Freeway.
- The largest single land use and land holding within the Avalon Corridor is the WTP, comprising approximately 10,500 hectares. The WTP provides an essential service, treating over half of Melbourne's sewage. Land uses and activities across the site include treatment lagoons, resource recovery (recycled water, biosolids and biogas), agriculture, biodiversity conversation, wetland and grassland ecosystems, heritage conservation, education and tourism (recreational birdwatching). Other relevant considerations include:
  - Approximately 5,000 hectares of the site is competitively outsourced for broad acre agriculture, which is a compatible land use within the sewage treatment odour buffer and makes use of recycled water produced on site. Agriculture is also compatible with the biodiversity conservation function of WTP and overall land management needs.
  - In addition to low-cost sewage treatment, the site is a Ramsar-listed wetlands of international significance, forming a major segment of the Port Phillip Bay (Western Shoreline) and Bellarine Peninsula Ramsar site. Over 300 bird species have been recorded on site and the lagoons and foreshore supports over 120,000 waterbirds including internationally significant migratory birds. Melbourne Water is obligated to protect these values under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act (EPBC Act) 1999.
  - Biodiversity offset credit sites have been established under DELWP's program on WTP land parcels north of the Princes Freeway. Additional sites are being explored, including south of the freeway. These require on-going protection under the biodiversity offset credit program, limiting potential future land use changes.

4.1

- A further concentration of land use and activity is associated with Avalon Airport, which comprises approximately 1,750 hectares. Although all current operations of the airport are concentrated towards the northern end of the site and all flights are currently accommodated on the existing north-south runway, the Avalon Airport Master Plan (2015) outlines future development and land use across the landholding. The Master Plan accommodates a second north-south aligned runway and third east-west aligned runway. Land use and development within the Avalon Corridor must not impact on the ability to develop these additional runways.
- The Department of Defence (DoD) Point Wilson Munitions Facility is a 326 hectare site located to the south of Avalon Airport, which has been operating since 1961 and is the only government owned importation facility capable of large scale movement of explosive ordinances. It is the primary importation and storage point for munitions in Australia, including capability for road and sea transportation. Recognising the importance of this asset, DoD has commenced remediation of the existing waterside infrastructure in order to recommence large scale importation. Due to the use of the site for munitions storage and distribution, 'safety arc' separation distances are a relevant consideration to the Avalon Corridor Strategy.
- A number of existing and proposed quarries are located within the Avalon Corridor. Currently operational quarries include the Holcim Quarry (to the northeast) and the Mountain View Quarry (south of Avalon Airport). A further two approved quarries are located to the north and west of the Holcim Quarry. EIIAs across the Avalon Corridor indicate the likely presence of additional extractive resources to be protected for possible future extraction.
- The Wyndham RDF is located adjacent to the Holcim Quarry and functions as a solid waste landfill. The RDF effectively fills in previously excavated quarry areas and has EPA approval to 'mound' buried refuse above ground level to a height of approximately 24 metres.
- Open rural landscapes located north of the Princes Freeway are located within the FZ or GWZ. Landholdings in this area have become fragmented over time and are generally not of adequate scale to accommodate broad acre farming. Smaller scale cropping and livestock grazing is undertaken on various land parcels.
- The township of Little River is located within the Avalon Corridor to the north of the Princes Freeway. While Little River straddles the municipal boundary between WCC and CoGG, the township core is located to the east of the alignment of the Little River waterway (within Wyndham). Urban zoned land (Township Zone and Low Density Residential Zone) within Little River covers approximately 40 hectares. Surrounding this township core, the wider extent of Little River consists of dwellings on larger rural allotments within the FZ or GWZ.
- The eastern extent of the Lara township extends into the Avalon Corridor along its western edge, with land use being predominantly residential within the Rural Living Zone (RLZ). The urban zoned land of Lara (predominantly General Residential Zone) within the Avalon Corridor covers in the order of 890 hectares.
- Apart from two small clusters of dwellings to the west and south of Avalon Road, there are no other dwellings or residential settlements located to the south of the Princes Freeway.
- Part of the Geelong Grammar campus is located within the south western corner of the Avalon Corridor. Geelong Grammar also owns the Avalon College campus located on Avalon Road.
- Cherry Creek Youth Justice Facility is a newly constructed youth justice facility located southwest of the Wyndham RDF, between the Princes Freeway and Melbourne-Geelong rail line.
- Werribee River Regional Park is located along the eastern boundary. Parks Victoria has plans for a redevelopment of the park which will improve accessibility down to the bay from the Princes Freeway.

AVALON CORRIDOR STRATEGY

LAND USE

KEY

- Study Area Boundary
- Municipal Boundary
- Railway station
- Railway line
- Freeway
- Major road
- Secondary road
- Oil / gas pipeline
- Rural residential
- Mixed farming and grazing
- Airport
- Sewerage treatment plant
- Quarries and/or landfill
- Conservation area
- Regional park
- Recreation
- Unspecified private land
- Wetlands & coastal interface
- Department of defence
- Werribee South Youth Justice Facility (under construction)

Figure 9: Existing land use

Project Ref:	19.322
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4.2 LAND SIZE AND OWNERSHIP

The following observations are made regarding patterns of land size and ownership within the Avalon Corridor:

- The WTP constitutes the single largest land holding within the Avalon Corridor, comprising approximately 10,500 hectares of state government owned and controlled land.
- Other larger land holdings within the Avalon Corridor include Avalon Airport, the former Cheetham Saltworks site, Mountain View Quarry, Point Wilson Munitions Facility, Wyndham RDF and Holcim Quarry, the coastal foreshore reserve (Crown land) and Cherry Creek Youth Justice Facility.
- The smallest land holdings generally constitute residential properties within the township centres of Lara and Little River, along with rural residential lots surrounding these settlements.
- The balance of land within the Avalon Corridor is broadly characterised by moderate to large rural properties which are relatively free of development and exhibit an open rural landscape character.

4.3

4.3 BUFFER SEPARATION AND AMENITY MANAGEMENT

Amendment VC175 (gazetted May 2020) updated the Planning Policy Framework and *Clause 53.10 - Uses with Adverse Amenity Potential* to improve how the planning system addresses buffers for amenity, human health and safety impacts. Major current and proposed land uses in the Avalon Corridor that require buffer separation and amenity management include:

- Western Treatment Plant (WTP)
- Bay West Port
- Avalon Airport (see Section 5)
- Point Wilson Munitions Facility
- Quarries, including designated SERAs
- Wyndham RDF

Buffer considerations for these land uses are outlined below:

- There is potential for odour impacts associated with the WTP. Odour risk during routine operation is generally low due to the large scale of the site and associated buffer distances between treatment plant odour sources and the site boundary. Odour risk increases in association with periodic maintenance activities which can result in complaints. Increasing development encroachment will increase the odour risk profile of the WTP.
- Avalon Airport has the potential to create amenity impacts through aircraft noise. Aircraft noise is likely to increase in the future as airport operations are expanded to accommodates the possible second and third runways. This issue is separately addressed in Section 5.
- Safety arc separation distances are relevant to the Point Wilson Munitions Facility. These distance requirements vary depending on the type of munitions being stored at the site. Department of Defence have advised that a safety arc of 1.5 to 2 kilometres from the external boundaries of the site should be maintained.
- Buffer separation and amenity impacts from the Wyndham RDF and various quarries in the Avalon Corridor are similar as both are subject to EPA guidelines and requirements. In 2015, WCC commissioned GHD to prepare the *Wyndham Vale Buffer Study: Environmental Audit Report* to assess potential environmental risks. The report also outlines appropriate buffer distances for sensitive land uses and considers potential land uses that may be located within the buffer distance.
- Landfills have the potential to impact the surrounding environment and community by discharging landfill gas for more than 30 years after closure. Any building or structure is considered a sensitive use due to the risk of explosion or asphyxiation. Consequently, land use change or development near landfills require specific consideration.
- Potential odour impact arising from landfill operations is also an important consideration for setting buffer distances. Specific modelling further determined that the area of medium to high risk of odour may extend beyond the default EPA 500 metre buffer distance. However, a default 500m buffer for landfills that accept putrescible waste (also known as Type 2 landfills) should be applied in accordance with EPA Publication 788.3 *Best Practice Environmental Management: Siting, design, operation and rehabilitation of landfills* (2015).
- In an operational capacity, basalt quarries tend to utilise blasting to prepare rock for excavation. Buffers of 500 metres may be required in some situations.
- As part of the SERA project, the Victorian Government introduced a State Resource Overlay (SRO). SRO2 extends around existing quarries in certain circumstances to discourage encroachment of incompatible uses.
- The future Bay West Port is likely to require buffers for noise and light. This should be further investigated by state government, with a focus on potential impacts to migratory birds at WTP. WTP forms part of the Port Phillip Bay (Western Shoreline) and Bellarine Peninsula Ramsar site. Buffers will be needed to protect treatment lagoons and other critical habitats from potential noise, light and pollution associated with the proposed port infrastructure. Project design should minimise requirements for buffers on WTP land.
- It is also important that the 'agent of change' principle is considered as part of any new land use or development within the Avalon Corridor. Under this principle, the person or organisation who seeks to change the existing environment has a responsibility for mitigating any offsite impacts.



Water channels within the WTP



Lagoons within the WTP

AVALON AIRPORT ANALYSIS

5.0 Avalon Airport Analysis 55

5.0

5.0 AVALON AIRPORT ANALYSIS

Avalon Airport comprises approximately 1,750 hectares of land, including land on long-term lease from the Commonwealth Government. Existing operations of the airport are currently concentrated towards the northern end of the site and all flights are accommodated on the existing north-south runway, which is anticipated to meet demand for the next 20 years.

The Avalon Airport Master Plan (2015) was endorsed by the Commonwealth Department of Defence in 2015 and sets out the long-term vision for expanded operations and activities of the airport. This intended expansion will elevate Avalon Airport's role and function as Melbourne's second international airport.

Development of Avalon Airport is guided by four principles:

- Increasing passenger operations
- Increasing freight operations
- Increasing retail and commercial developments
- Increasing technical aviation operations.

The Master Plan is underpinned by the following objectives:

- Maintain the safe, secure and efficient movement of passengers, freight and aircraft at all times.
- Ensure airport capacity is increased and delivered on-time to accommodate forecast demands.
- Strengthen the airport's role as a major driver of economic activity in the Geelong, Melbourne and regional Victoria region.
- Realise commercial, retail and industrial development opportunities that are compatible with on-site aviation activity to support economic development and employment creation in Victoria.
- Improve the integration of the airport with the surrounding community; and maintaining the curfew free status of the airport.

The Master Plan outlines future development plans as well as details regarding the future need for ground transport and surface access. Excluding current runways and associated taxiways, the total developable land at Avalon Airport is around 1,600 hectares. The Master Plan identifies seven developable precincts for the airport to guide its expansion and defines individual development objectives and indicative land uses into the future. For land on the airport site not designated for core airport activities, the Master Plan indicates precincts for non-aviation business, retail, commercial, and industrial facilities. The associated Land Use Plan provides details on the management and permissibility of development within the precincts.

With regard to airport activities, the Master Plan provides for the establishment of a new high capacity parallel runway (to the east of the existing north-south runway), as well as a third cross (east-west) runway to reduce conflict between general aviation activity and commercial airline and charter activity, and to accommodate aircraft during periods of strong cross winds.

While Avalon Airport has the potential to expand into the future without curfews or any other operational constraints, expansion is likely to create offsite amenity impacts through additional aircraft noise, particularly as the airport grows through the potential development of the two additional runways. Of note, the Australian Noise Exposure Concept (ANEC) contained in the current Master Plan extends directly over the township of Little River.

In 2020, Avalon Airport commissioned GHD to undertake a revised ANEC analysis of future operations. The 2020 ANEC models the second parallel runway, though does not model the third cross runway. From consultations with Avalon Airport, it is understood that the 2020 ANEC will be used to produce a new 20-year Australian Noise Exposure Forecast (ANEF) to replace the existing ANEF endorsed by the Commonwealth Government (via Airservices Australia) in 2011. While not governed by the provisions of the Airports Act 1996, conditions within the Avalon Airport lease require the preparation of an ANEF on a 20 year basis.

Following endorsement of the ANEF, an update to the Master Plan has been flagged by Avalon Airport in light of emerging strategic directions and considerations around the need for the third cross (east-west runway). Any proposal to remove the third cross runway would have to be justified on a detailed evidence base by the airport operator. The operator would also need to demonstrate that removal of the third runway would not result in any safety or efficiency implications, nor limitations to long-term capacity and growth opportunities at Avalon Airport.

However, as the potential third cross runway is included in the current endorsed Avalon Airport Master Plan (2015) – and no subsequent updates to the Master Plan have yet been formalised – the Avalon Corridor Strategy acknowledges and protects the opportunity for this runway into the future. It is recommended that all subsequent detailed planning processes for land at and around Avalon Airport should take a conservative approach on the potential development of the third cross runway. Ongoing work on an updated Master Plan will not change the overall intent of the Strategy to protect operations of the airport and the option of the third runway.

5.0

Of further relevance, Amendment VC218 (gazetted May 2022) made changes to the VPPs by updating the Planning Policy Framework to further implement the National Airports Safeguarding Framework in Victoria.

Clause 18.02-7S Airports and airfields seeks to *'strengthen the role of Victoria's airports and airfields within the state's economic and transport infrastructure, guide their siting and expansion, and safeguard their ongoing, safe and efficient operation.'* It contains strategies to protect airports and airfields from incompatible land use and development and lists the current Avalon Airport Master Plan (2015) as a relevant policy document.

Avalon Airport has yet to submit a revised Master Plan showing its preferred ultimate runway configuration for Commonwealth and Victorian Government approval. Any update to the Master Plan will need to be endorsed by the Commonwealth, before Minister for Planning approves a VC amendment to include it in the PPF at *Clause 18.02-7S*.

Following the preparation and approval of the revised Master Plan, it is recommended that an updated ANEF for the preferred ultimate capacity runway system is adopted into relevant planning schemes and additional controls are pursued, such as:

- An Airport Environs Overlay (AEO)
- Protections to address other safeguarding matters, such as public safety areas, intrusions into protected airspace and risk of wildlife strike.



Existing aircraft hangers at Avalon Airport



KEY

- Existing Runway
- Logger Location
- Locality Boundary

CURRENT ANEC

- 20
- 25
- 30
- 35
- 40

Diagram 3: ANEC for 2019 airport operations (source**:** Avalon Airport ANEC Study: Noise modelling report, GHD, 2020)



KEY

- Proposed Runway
- Logger Location
- Locality Boundary

PROPOSED ANEC

- 20
- 25
- 30
- 35
- 40

Diagram 4: Proposed ANEC for ultimate airport operations (source**:** Avalon Airport ANEC Study: Noise modelling report, GHD, 2020)

ECONOMIC ANALYSIS

6.0	Economic Analysis	59
6.1	Economic Overview	59
6.2	Land Available For Development	60
6.3	Relevant Economic Trends	60
6.4	Key Issues and Opportunities	61
6.5	Economic Planning Implications	61

6.0

6.0 ECONOMIC ANALYSIS

A preliminary Economic Outlook Report was prepared by Ethos Urban in 2021 to inform the Avalon Corridor Strategy. The report provides an overview and assessment of economic issues and opportunities associated with proposed land use change and development. The land supply and job creation figures provided in this section are estimates only and will be refined through future planning processes.

6.1 ECONOMIC OVERVIEW

The following sections highlight the economic outlook for the Avalon Corridor, including consideration of issues and opportunities and associated implications that will need to be considered in the future planning of this area.

The aim of the Strategy is to set the direction for the future use and development of land between Geelong and Werribee. It examines how the green break between Lara and Little River can be protected, with potential for the wider area to accommodate utilities and other complementary employment generating uses. Identifying the land use and development potential of the state significant Avalon Airport is also a strategic aim of the project.

Resident population numbers in the surrounding region incorporating the cities of Greater Geelong and Wyndham are expected to increase from 547,880 people in 2021 to reach 865,000 people over the 20-year period to 2041. This represents a net increase of +317,120 residents at an average annual rate of +2.3%.

Almost two-thirds of the increase in population (64%) is forecast to be generated in WCC (a net increase of +203,080 residents), with the remainder occurring in Greater Geelong (+114,040 residents).

The resident labour force in Greater Geelong and Wyndham combined is expected to increase by an estimated +148,530 people over the period 2021 to 2041. This estimate takes into account the growth in resident population noted above and application of the estimated (crude) labour force participation rate in Greater Geelong and Wyndham (46.8% combined).

The Avalon Corridor has the potential to accommodate a substantial share of new jobs for the region, in light of its unique attributes. These attributes include:

- A high level of accessibility via the Princes Freeway, the Geelong Ring Road, the planned OMR Transport Corridor and the Geelong-Melbourne rail line.
- Major infrastructure including Avalon Airport, WTP and the proposed Bay West Port.

An analysis of existing and future infrastructure in the Avalon Corridor highlights several important opportunities to support investment and job creation. Avalon Airport is a significant feature, which has potential to attract further investment and development (both airport and non-airport related). Such investment would likely strengthen the airport's existing economic role in the Avalon Corridor and generate net economic benefits extending further afield.

Other important factors supporting the Avalon Corridor's development include road and rail transport infrastructure, especially the OMR Transport Corridor that will provide links to the north of metropolitan Melbourne and to the Hume Freeway. Development of a new seaport at Bay West in the long-term would alleviate container freight capacity pressures for the Port of Melbourne and strengthen the Avalon Corridor's freight role.

Potential for the development of tourism associated with the Avalon Corridor is noted which builds on existing events such as the Avalon Airshow, the nearby Wurdi Youang / You Yangs, environmental features (including the Ramsar wetlands with associated bird species) and the development of bike paths and coastal walks. The Port Phillip Bay Trail will be a visitor attraction when the missing link between Wyndham and Greater Geelong is completed. However, this is unlikely to result in the Avalon Corridor becoming a noted visitor destination in its own right (such as the Bellarine Peninsula).

6.2–6.3

6.2 LAND AVAILABLE FOR DEVELOPMENT

Land identified in the Avalon Corridor with potential to be developed for employment purposes totals approximately 1,800 hectares in net developable area (NDA). This land supply would indicatively support around 36,000 jobs, assuming 1 hectare of developable employment land would support 20 full time equivalent (FTE) jobs.

Assuming annual employment land consumption is equivalent to 15 percent of the recent uptake per annum of industrial land in Greater Geelong and Wyndham (combined), the Avalon Corridor could accommodate an estimated additional 5,040 direct FTE jobs over a 20 year period. This is equivalent to 14 percent of the 36,000 additional FTE jobs that could be supported if full development of identified land was to occur. As such, existing and potential land supply in the Avalon Corridor exceeds the likely area of land that could be developed over the next 20 years.

However, employment figures outlined in this section are highly indicative and are based on preliminary modelling only. Job estimates and targets will be further refined through subsequent planning processes, once precinct boundaries have been confirmed and land uses have been further refined.

While an employment land demand and supply assessment is applicable to Avalon Corridor, future development will also be informed by its strategic location between Melbourne and Geelong and key infrastructure such as Avalon Airport. In this regard, the actual development trajectory of the Avalon Corridor is influenced by a wide range of factors and a significant level of uncertainty.

In light of the large quantum of developable land, it will be necessary to avoid fragmented development that detracts from functionality and economic viability of new employment areas. A key outcome of the Avalon Corridor Strategy is therefore to identify strategic areas for future employment land supply.

A number of development proposals for land located nearby Avalon Airport demonstrate private sector interest in developing sites for industrial and employment activities. An important consideration for the Avalon Corridor Strategy is to ensure that development is complementary to existing uses (such as Avalon Airport) and consistent with broader strategic planning directions for Greater Geelong and Wyndham.

6.3 RELEVANT ECONOMIC TRENDS

The Avalon Corridor Strategy needs to acknowledge that emerging economic trends, such as continued economic expansion in Asia and population growth in Melbourne and Geelong, will impact on the locational decisions of firms and prospects for future investment and employment. The Strategy needs to be sufficiently flexible to respond to changing circumstances, as technological advancements and associated impacts become more clearly understood.

Important trends that influence future development include continuing growth in agricultural exports, digital technologies and advanced manufacturing, economic growth among Australia's trading partners and the Avalon Corridor's linkages to metropolitan Melbourne and regional Victoria where population growth continues.

6.4–6.5

6.4 KEY ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Key issues:

- The need to protect the Avalon Corridor as a location for state significant infrastructure, including the Avalon Airport, Melbourne Water WTP, road and rail infrastructure, Wyndham RDF, quarries and the future Bay West Port.
- The need to accommodate for substantial population and labour force growth in western metropolitan Melbourne (including Wyndham) and Greater Geelong.
- The need to ensure that development of new employment precincts and services in the Avalon Corridor does not undermine existing industrial land provisions or centre hierarchies of Greater Geelong and Wyndham.
- The need to identify owner-occupier opportunities for long term, confident investment in the precinct, noting that Avalon Airport is largely made up of leasehold land owned by the Commonwealth Government.

Key opportunities:

- Promoting the development potential of the Avalon Corridor as an important employment node, with state significant infrastructure and associated services.
- Ensuring the continued growth and development of Avalon Airport and recognising its national and international function for air travel and freight, as well as its role as an emerging employment hub.
- Land surrounding Avalon Airport benefits from the transport gateway and presents an opportunity for a varied scale of owner-occupier investment in development which is compatible with the airport, such as commercial and industrial land uses.
- Potential to position the Avalon Corridor as a tourism gateway and focal point in the region, as well as to support tourism opportunities associated with existing assets including the Avalon Airshow, Wurdi Youang / the You Yangs, the Port Phillip Bay Trail, ecotourism associated with coastal wetlands (such as bird watching and guided educational tours) and other rural focused tourism uses.

6.5 ECONOMIC PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

Given the Avalon Corridor's unique economic context and attributes, there is an opportunity for development of employment precincts with modern business park attributes. Employment precincts could accommodate activities such as:

- Metropolitan and regional scale warehouse and distribution facilities exceeding 40,000 square metres in built floorspace
- Commercial offices within business park settings, supported by retail and other amenities.

However, it is important that the Avalon Corridor Strategy achieves a balance between:

- Potential economic benefits, including creation of local jobs and employment opportunities; and
- Potential impacts on activity centre hierarchies and the orderly supply of employment land in the wider region.

To reach a balance between these considerations, the Avalon Corridor Strategy provides broad guidance on the type and extent of future employment uses to be established within the Avalon Corridor.

TRANSPORT ANALYSIS

7.0	Transport Analysis	63
7.1	Princes Freeway	63
7.2	OMR Transport Corridor	64
7.3	Avalon Airport Access Upgrades	64
7.4	Broader Road Network	65
7.5	Bay West Port Freight Network	65
7.6	Future Freight Network	67
7.7	Rail Network	68
7.8	Aviation Infrastructure	69

7.0

7.0 TRANSPORT ANALYSIS

To inform preparation of the Avalon Corridor Strategy, GHD prepared a background Servicing Report in 2021. The Servicing Report includes an analysis of transport and utility infrastructure servicing considerations to ensure the early identification of potential issues and opportunities. The report also includes a high level summary of relevant policies and strategies of relevance to the Avalon Corridor. This section contains a summary of key transport considerations from the GHD Servicing Report.

Key transport policies and strategies of relevance to the Avalon Corridor include:

- *Delivering the Goods: Victorian Freight Plan* (Victorian Government, 2018)
- *Outer Metropolitan Ring/E6 Transport Corridor Planning Assessment Report* (VicRoads, 2009)
- *G21 Regional Growth Plan* (G21, 2013)
- *Avalon Airport Master Plan* (Avalon Airport, 2015)
- *Extractive Resources in Victoria: Demand and Supply Study 2015-2050* (PWC, 2016)
- *Victoria's 30-Year Infrastructure Strategy* (Infrastructure Victoria, 2016)
- *Preparing Advice on Victoria's Future Port Capacity: Discussion Paper* (Infrastructure Victoria, 2016)
- *Second Container Port Advice - Evidence Base: Discussion Paper* (Infrastructure Victoria, 2017)
- *Avalon Airport Ground Transport Plan* (Avalon Airport, 2017)
- *Helping Victoria Grow: Extractive Resources Strategy* (DEDJTR, 2018)
- *Western Rail Plan* (Victorian Government, 2018)
- *Independent review of the Victorian Ports System* (Victorian Government, 2021)

7.1 PRINCES FREEWAY

The Princes Freeway is the key piece of road infrastructure in the Avalon Corridor. It is controlled and managed by the DoT, as the only declared road within the study area. The Princes Freeway is the major transport link between Melbourne and Geelong, generally comprising a three lane carriageway in each direction (six lanes in total).

The Princes Freeway is a link to many key features within and beyond the Avalon Corridor including:

- Avalon Airport
- Western Treatment Plant (WTP)
- Point Wilson Defence Facility
- You Yangs Regional Park
- Werribee Regional Park
- Werribee Open Range Zoo
- A number of operating and planned quarries
- Townships of Lara and Little River

There are currently no major upgrade plans for the Princes Freeway between Geelong and Werribee. However, there is future provision for the addition of an extra lane in each direction, should this be required.

The Princes Freeway is susceptible to flooding in the section running over the Lollypop and Skeleton Creek catchments, following the equivalent of a 1-in-30-year rain event. There is not currently a mitigation strategy for flood events, though DoT have indicated that possible future raising of the road would be preferred over realignment. The frequency and severity of flood events is expected to increase in future years as climate change and sea level rise impact on the ability of the catchment to drain to Port Phillip Bay.

Closures to the Princes Freeway occurred in 2018 during the Little River fires. These closures highlight a lack of resilience and alternate route options that exists in the case of unplanned closure. The only workable alternative is to re-route traffic via Bacchus Marsh. There are no state government plans at present to develop an emergency by-pass route.

7.2–7.3

7.2 OMR TRANSPORT CORRIDOR

The Outer Metropolitan Ring (OMR) Transport Corridor provides an opportunity for the investigation of rail connections in the short to medium term and orbital road and rail traffic solutions around Melbourne in the long term. The entire corridor is around 100 kilometres in length and includes a planned road and rail system that will connect the Princes Freeway through Werribee, Melton, Tullamarine, Craigieburn, Mickleham, Epping and Thomastown. The current alignment of the OMR was gazetted in 2010 by means of Public Acquisition Overlay (PAO). However, further works are required prior to any construction, including relevant environmental and planning approvals.

The planning for the OMR provides options for an ultimate freeway standard road, capable of up to four lanes in each direction.

The OMR aims to:

- Create better connections to key international transport hubs such as Melbourne Airport, Avalon Airport and the Port of Geelong.
- Improve access to the proposed Donnybrook/Beveridge Interstate Rail Terminal.
- Serve as an important travel and freight route to interstate and regional destinations
- Link residential and employment growth areas in the north and west of Melbourne.
- Improve access in this major employment corridor, which includes Avalon Airport, Werribee, Melton, Melbourne Airport, Mickleham and Donnybrook.

While current planning suggests development of the OMR is well into the future, the development of greenfield land either side of the corridor is progressing quickly up to its boundaries.

The OMR connection to the Princes Freeway presents significant opportunities for transport and freight movement in Melbourne's West, with a particular focus on improving connections between the Princes Freeway and the Western Freeway, where increased efficiencies could be achieved with earlier development.

The OMR is also expected to require the reconfiguration of the existing Little River Road Interchange to increase separation distances. The on ramp will be integrated with the Point Wilson Junction further to the west.

Further details on the role of the OMR Transport Corridor relating to road and rail freight movements associated with the future Bay West Port is addressed in Section 7.5.

7.3 AVALON AIRPORT ACCESS UPGRADES

Avalon Airport has developed a ground transport plan for future road upgrades within and surrounding the airport in conjunction with DoT. Upgrades will respond to the anticipated growth in passenger movements through the airport, in order to address road safety and capacity issues. Proposed upgrades include:

- Reservation of a potential rail link corridor through a PAO
- Upgrade to terminal access from Beach Road
- Upgrade and expansion of parking within the terminal
- Upgrade of the Beach Road and Princes Freeway interchange
- Upgrade works to the Point Wilson Road Interchange.

Upgrade works to the Point Wilson Road Interchange involve increasing the design speed for ramp connections onto the freeway. This forms part of an interim stage of works, which seeks to align Point Wilson Road Interchange as a future airport access route. The future plan contemplates Point Wilson Road working in conjunction with Beach Road with separation of passenger and freight vehicle movements.

The future upgrade of the Point Wilson Interchange will also involve the realignment of Little River Road on the northern side of the Princes Freeway. Modifications will ensure sufficient clearance is maintained for the future OMR intersection.

7.4–7.5

7.4 BROADER ROAD NETWORK

Broader considerations that influence the present and future road network within the Avalon Corridor include:

- The long term role of Point Wilson Road for passenger and freight access to Avalon Airport and Little River.
- Upgrades to the Beach Road and Avalon Road Interchange to accommodate future passenger and freight growth.
- New roads and traffic demand expected to arise from the predominantly industrial areas of Werribee Junction and Mambourin East.
- Quarrying activity associated with SERA identified land is expected to require new freight movements.
- Future upgrades to Ison Road and Armstrong Road will result in an existing road becoming an arterial road (four lanes) under the control of DoT. The road will create an additional connection to the Princes Freeway via the Geelong Road Interchange at Werribee.
- The creation of a new Parks Victoria site intended for recreational use and sporting facilities, with vehicle access proposed via William Thwaites Drive (off the Werribee Intersection).
- The existing Peak School Road functions as an access point from the Princes Freeway through to Bacchus Marsh Road and presents a potential bypass between Lara and Little River, with direct connection to the Barwon Prison Precinct.

7.5 BAY WEST PORT FREIGHT NETWORK

In 2018, Infrastructure Victoria recommended that Victoria's second container port be located at Bay West Port on the western shores of Port Phillip Bay. The development is proposed to include a land reclamation area of around 4.5 kilometres in length that will be connected to the shore via a multi lane bridge and connect to Victoria's road and rail freight network. Bay West Port is proposed to be integrated into the region's future network of logistics facilities, including the WIFT (located outside of the Avalon Corridor).

Following Infrastructure Victoria's recommendations, the location of the Bay West Port was confirmed as state policy in the *Victorian Freight Plan* (2018). Updates to the *Victorian Commercial Ports Strategy* (expected in 2023) will provide further detail on the scope of the Bay West project and update the proposed timing based on current forecasts.

In recognition of the state government's commitment to the Bay West Port there is a short term need to undertake detailed design to further define the port site location and supporting land connections. Following this, there is a need to protect associated buffers and transport connections through appropriate planning controls.

Landside development of the Bay West Port is planned to include a future rail marshalling facility west of or within the OMR Transport Corridor (to be confirmed). Associated port precinct areas are also to be confirmed through specific studies proposed as part of the updated Victorian Commercial Ports Strategy. The Infrastructure Victoria report considered options for locating port precinct areas within the land reclamation footprint, on WTP land or in land areas either side of the existing rail corridor.

The OMR will include a future southbound connection into the Bay West Port to enable road and rail freight movements. Whilst this southbound connection has not yet formally reserved, planning for the Bay West Port assumes that future north-south road and rail connections to the OMR will be elevated over the Princes Freeway, while east-west road connections will be at grade with the Princes Freeway.

The preferred Bay West Port road network concept includes a westbound and northbound connection at the OMR intersection, as well as a separate eastbound interchange located closer to Farm Road or the Werribee Main Road intersection.

7.5

A corridor connecting to the Princes Freeway at the Werribee Main Road interchange will reduce eastbound journeys towards Melbourne by around 17 kilometres when compared to an arrangement that only has one connection to the Princes Freeway at the OMR intersection.

Figure 10 depicts indicative design of transport connections to Bay West Port (Infrastructure Victoria, 2017).

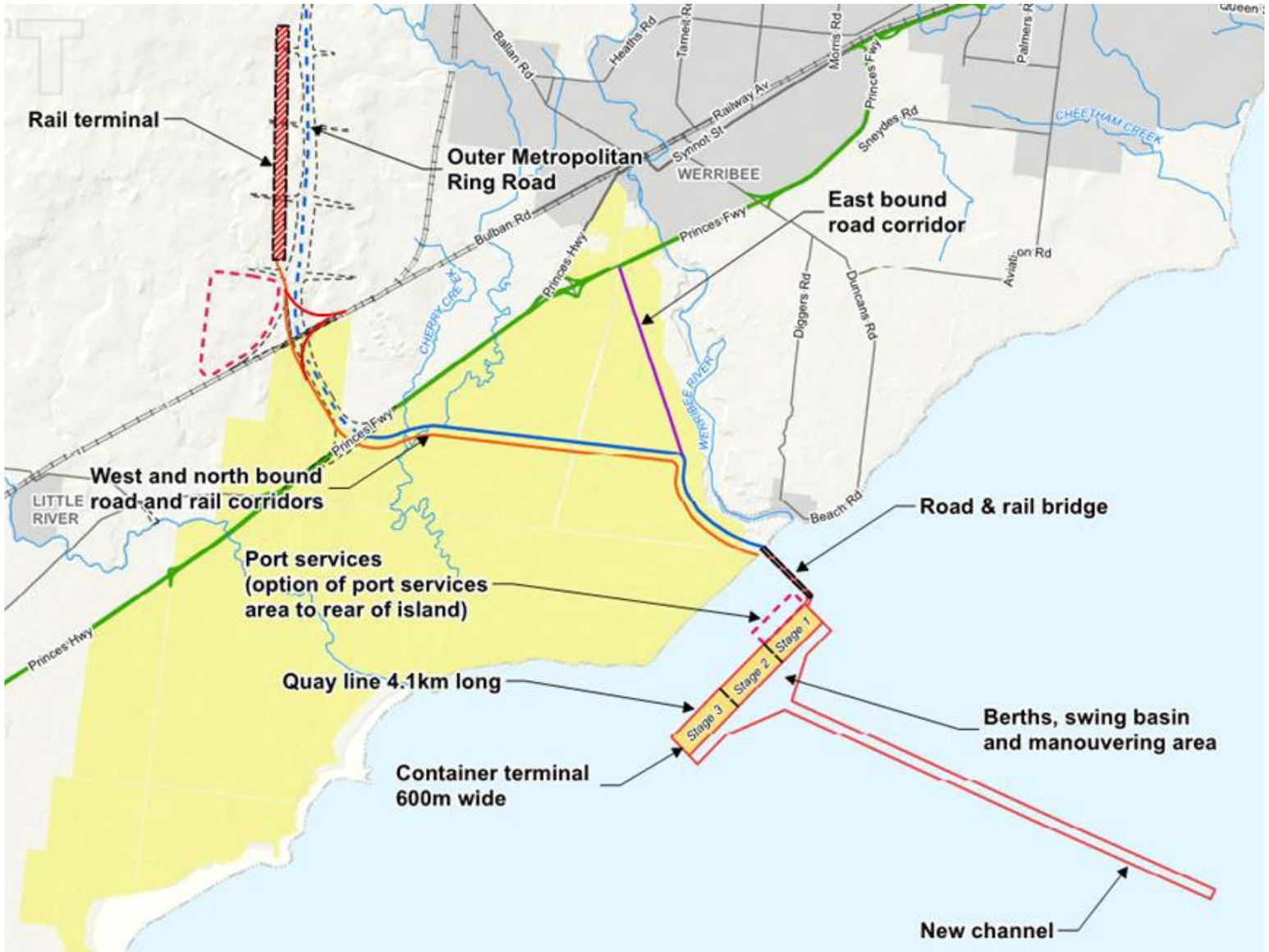


Figure 10: Bay West Port development transport connection concepts (Source: Advice on securing Vic Port capacity, Infrastructure Victoria, 2017)

7.6 FUTURE FREIGHT NETWORK

The future freight network within the Avalon Corridor will play a critical role for Victoria into the future by accommodating:

- Growth of extractive industries
- Increased road and rail freight movements
- Increased air freight and passenger movements at Avalon Airport
- New sea freight movements through Bay West Port.

Whilst there may be some synergies for these freight operations, it should be noted that the Bay West Port and Avalon Airport have very different freight roles. Port freight is characterised by large volumes and typically includes non-time sensitive goods, while air freight is characterised by small volumes and typically includes high value or perishable goods.

The biggest increase in freight movements is expected to arise from the Bay West Port and designated interstate freight terminals including the WIFT. Figure 11 conceptualises how freight could be expected to move with the establishment of WIFT and the Bay West Port over the next 10+ years.

The development of WIFT is currently being considered as part of a major project business case funded by the Australian and Victorian governments. The facility will enable intra and interstate freight movements with proposed connections to the Inland Rail Service, capable of accommodating double-stacked 1,800 metre trains. The site for the WIFT is under consideration, along with the Beveridge Interstate Freight Terminal (BIFT).

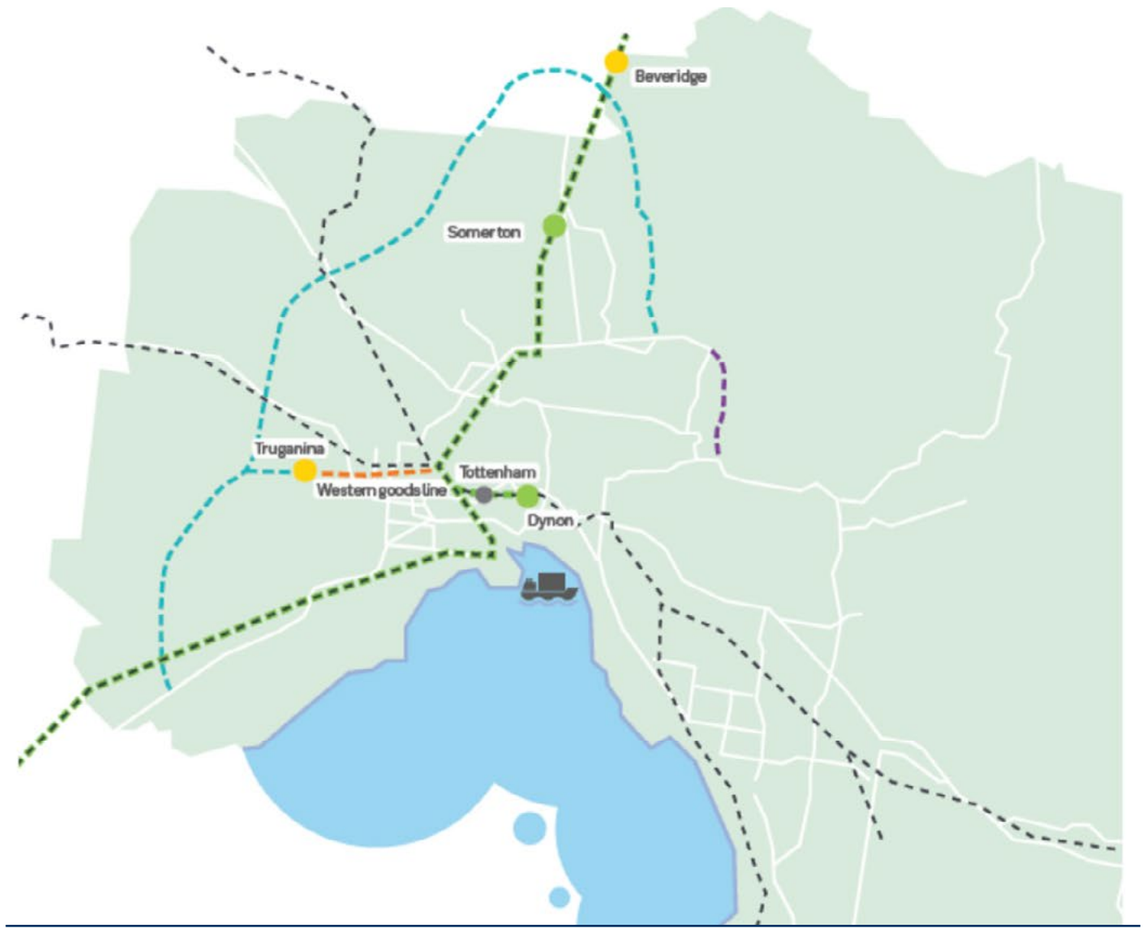


Figure 11: Envisaged road and road freight interactions in Melbourne's Western Region (source: Victoria's new intermodal freight precincts, DoT)

7.7

7.7 RAIL NETWORK

The existing rail network within the Avalon Corridor can be summarised as follows:

- One standard gauge (SG) track servicing freight (north of BG tracks)
- Two broad gauge (BG) tracks servicing passengers (south of SG track)
- Existing Train stations at Lara and Little River
- Current V/Line passenger connections to and from Geelong via the Regional Rail Link (RRL)
- Historic passenger connection to from Geelong via the Werribee Line (up until 2015), which includes separate SG and BG tracks to Melbourne
- Current freight connections via the Werribee Line.

Future rail infrastructure development can be summarised as follows:

- Freight rail connections to Bay West Port (refer to Section 7.5)
- Rail connections within the OMR Transport Corridor (refer to Section 2.4.2)
- Western Rail Plan including Geelong Fast Rail (refer to Section 2.4.3)
- Suburban Rail Loop (SRL), a 90 kilometre rail line linking major services from the Frankston to Werribee Lines via Melbourne Airport (refer to Section 2.4.3)
- Connection of the RRL to metro services via Werribee Station
- Potential rail line and station to service Avalon Airport
- Potential duplication of the standard gauge ARTC line through the Avalon Corridor.

7.8

7.8 AVIATION INFRASTRUCTURE

Existing aviation infrastructure at Avalon Airport can be summarised as follows:

- Provides both passenger and freight transport services.
- Currently houses a 1.5 million litre fuel storage facility which is serviced by regular road tankers out of the Geelong Refinery site.
- Currently has mains connection supplies for gas, water and electricity.
- Sewerage is a standalone system incorporating detention ponds on the site, without an EPA discharge license.

Future aviation infrastructure can be summarised as follows:

- The Avalon Airport Master Plan (2015) includes direction for infrastructure development over the next 20 years.
- The long-term plan includes two additional runways with one running parallel (north-south) to the east of the existing runway, and another potential runway running in an east-west direction to allow for full utilisation of the airport in any weather condition.
- Development of the second parallel runway will likely be 20 years away, while the potential development of the third cross runway would be 50 years away (if determined necessary).
- Future provision for a direct fuel connection between the existing VIVA Energy pipeline and the airport. Estimated cost is up to $20 million dollars and is currently not financially viable.
- Planned pipeline to connect to on site fuel storage facility within 10 years, with fuel tanks to be relocated to the western boundary.
- Possible future rail link to Avalon Airport via the Geelong-Melbourne rail line has been reserved by a Public Acquisition Overlay (PAO) and is reflected under the current Avalon Airport Master Plan (2015).
- Although a rail reservation to the airport has been designated through a PAO, Avalon Airport has indicated their preference for a new airport station to be located on the existing rail line, rather than bringing a new rail connection into the airport terminal.
- Avalon Airport has indicated a longer term plan to relocate the main terminal to the same location as their preferred station location (along the existing rail line). However, this proposal needs to be considered against the completion of the Geelong high speed rail investigation and objectives to protect the existing green break north of the Princes Freeway.

UTILITIES SERVICING ANALYSIS

8.0 Utilities Servicing Analysis 71

8.1 Summary of Corridor Utilities 71

8.2 Gas and Oil Pipelines 72

8.0

8.0 UTILITIES SERVICING ANALYSIS

Alongside analysis of transport infrastructure, the background Servicing Report prepared by GHD (2021) provides utility infrastructure considerations for the Avalon Corridor to ensure the early identification of potential issues and opportunities. This section contains a summary of the report's findings and recommendations.

8.1 SUMMARY OF CORRIDOR UTILITIES

Consultation was undertaken with utility providers to understand high level servicing opportunities and constraints in the corridor.

Key findings:

- There is limited access to reticulated sewerage infrastructure in the corridor and the sewer system does not cross south of the Princes Freeway.
- No feasibility investigation has been completed for sewering the Avalon Corridor but initial discussions with Barwon Water have indicated that it could be possible.
- An alternative to a mains connected sewer network could include the potential use of small package systems with reuse of waste effluent for beneficial purposes.
- Currently there is no recycled water reticulation to properties within the Avalon Corridor, despite the immediate proximity of the Melbourne Water WTP and Barwon Water Northern Treatment Plant in Corio.
- The ability to discharge additional treated wastewater to Corio Bay and other local waterways would need to be further investigated and consider EPA licencing requirements.
- The Northern Treatment Plant in Corio (just outside the Avalon Corridor) would likely be able to process sewage and produce recycled water for nearby reuse. However, the commercial viability of this would need to be further investigated. A connection to WTP could also be investigated for commercial viability.
- No major issues were identified from a water supply perspective. Most of the area could be supplied with asset upgrades and extensions to the existing network.
- Additional feeder mains may be required to service growth in the demand for power from development and operations of Avalon Airport and other employment precincts.
- The Avalon Corridor largely constitutes low lying, flat plains. The majority of flood outlet locations for waterway catchments exist at the coastal interface. Key issues relate to stormwater sediment and retention.
- Flood plains of the Lollypop Creek and Little River systems are known to be extensive and are under further investigation by WCC.
- CoGG recently completed the Lara Flood Study and will be implementing updated LSIO mapping via Amendment C339.
- High pressure oil and gas pipelines traverse the corridor. Future development near these major pipelines will require further investigation and possible preparation of a Safety Management Study (SMS).

8.2

8.2 GAS AND OIL PIPELINES

The Avalon Corridor contains a high pressure gas pipeline owned and operated by APA Group, as well as three oil pipelines owned and operated by VIVA Energy. The high pressure gas pipeline raises a number of technical and planning considerations for adjacent land, including the need to consider relevant measurement lengths from the pipeline easement.

The general intent is to discourage the establishment of sensitive uses within the nominated measurement lengths such as community facilities, aged care, hospitals, schools and early learning centres. Where development or land use change is proposed within a nominated measurement length, a SMS must be prepared in accordance with AS 2885 to assess and reduce potential risks.

There is also a general preference to avoid construction of roads and road crossings over gas pipeline easements, due to the challenges this can cause to management and maintenance of the pipeline. Where this is unavoidable, a proponent must demonstrate that the number of crossings has been minimised and that crossings have been designed to be as perpendicular as possible to the pipeline to minimise the area of impact.

Any proposed landscaping within or nearby the easement should consider the *APA Site Planning and Landscape National Guidelines* (2020). Relevant considerations include maintaining a line of sight along the pipeline easement and avoiding large selection of species with large root zones.

The three VIVA Energy oil pipelines in the Avalon Corridor accommodate more than half of Victoria's fuel requirements and are therefore critical to the state's economy. The pipelines operate in a single direction only, with the WAG pipeline supplying crude oil to the Geelong Refinery and the WOPL and BOPL pipelines supplying refined oil back to Newport.

The major priority for the VIVA Energy pipelines is to ensure that any development occurring adjacent or near the pipelines meets the current standards, which may differ to the standards that applied when the pipelines were originally built. The requirements for the VIVA Energy pipelines are similar to the APA Group gas pipeline, being also covered under AS 2885. An SMS needs to be completed to determine the risk profile of any significant land use change or development adjacent to the pipeline easement and to consider how the risk can be appropriately mitigated.



Existing Mountain View Quarry located to the south of Avalon Airport

CULTURAL VALUES AND HERITAGE ANALYSIS

9.0 Cultural Values and Heritage Analysis 75
9.1 Aboriginal Cultural Heritage 75
9.2 Cultural Values Assessment 76
9.3 Post Contact Heritage 79

9.0

9.0 CULTURAL VALUES & HERITAGE ANALYSIS

The Traditional Owners of the lands, waters, seas and skies relating to the Avalon Corridor and surrounding region are acknowledged as the Wadawurrung, who are represented by the Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation (WTOAC) as the Registered Aboriginal Party (RAP).

A background Cultural Values Assessment (CVA) was prepared by Unearthed Heritage and WTOAC in 2021 to inform the Avalon Corridor Strategy. The CVA was informed by the *Healthy Country Plan* (WTOAC, 2020), which provides high-level principles, values and strategies for protecting and caring for Wadawurrung Country.

9.1 ABORIGINAL CULTURAL HERITAGE

As is illustrated on Figure 12 large sections of the Avalon Corridor are nominated as being 'areas of cultural heritage sensitivity.' Such areas are defined in the *Aboriginal Heritage Regulations* (2018) (the Regulations) and relate to landforms and soil types where places of Aboriginal heritage significance are more likely to be located. This generally includes land within 200 metres of named waterways and land within 50 metres of registered Aboriginal cultural heritage sites.

The function of the designation of 'areas of cultural heritage sensitivity' is to specifically identify when a Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP) must be prepared under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act* (2006).

As noted within the relevant regulations, some land use and development activities are more likely to harm Aboriginal cultural heritage when carried out in an area of cultural heritage sensitivity. These activities are defined as 'high impact activities'. If a high impact activity is proposed in an area of cultural heritage sensitivity, a CHMP must be prepared before the activity can be carried out.

High impact activities generally include buildings and works that result in significant ground disturbance. The specified activities include, but are not limited to:

- Subdivisions of three or more lots
- The construction of three or more dwellings
- The construction of roads, bicycle and walking tracks over 100 metres in length
- Activities that require an Earth Resources Authorisation
- Industrial developments.

Given that large tracts of the Avalon Corridor are considered areas of cultural heritage sensitivity, including the Avalon Airport site and surrounding land, future land use change and development applications for high impact activities would need to undertake more detailed analysis and site investigations to address the requirement for the preparation and development of a CHMP.

9.2 CULTURAL VALUES ASSESSMENT

Unearthed Heritage were commissioned to undertake a Cultural Values Assessment (CVA) of the Avalon Corridor. The aims of this assessment were:

- To determine the level of previous Wadawurrung and Aboriginal heritage investigation of the study area and the surrounding region, in partnership with WTOAC.
- To determine the presence of registered Wadawurrung and Aboriginal heritage places within the study area and the surrounding region.
- To determine the environmental context of the study area.
- To review the historical and cultural setting of the study area and surrounding region.

In addition to tangible aspects of Wadawurrung and Aboriginal cultural heritage in the Avalon Corridor, the assessment also considered less tangible, living cultural values and narratives inherent in the landscape.

High level recommendations of the CVA are provided in full below (with further detailed recommendations included within the CVA itself):

a. *The WTOAC/RAP supports and recognises the merits in ensuring that the Avalon Corridor retains its non-urban character and that no future residential developments be permitted outside of existing zoned lands for that purpose. Thus, the WTOAC/RAP recommends that residential development is contained within in existing locations, with no further extensions to developable land in Lara or Little River. WTOAC/RAP recommends that all industrial or commercial development should be contained to appropriate areas immediately adjacent to Avalon Airport, subject to thorough investigation of potential impacts on Wadawurrung living cultural heritage and the natural and avian environment.*

b. *The WTOAC/RAP recommends that any future planning scheme amendment or land use or development inside the Corridor needs to embody statutory provisions that require respect of the unalienable spiritual and visual relationship that Wurdi Youang has upon this living cultural landscape that stretches across the Avalon Plain to the shores of Nerm (Port Phillip Bay). Thus, any future development needs to respect and consciously engage with and be assessed against this relationship.*

c. *The WTOAC/RAP supports maintaining the current nature of statutory and strategic planning instruments and provisions over this Corridor, but would recommend the strengthening and enhancement of these provisions (including VPP 42.01 Environmental Significance and VPP 42.03 Significant Landscape and the associated Schedule 1 to Clause 42.03 provisions) and their geographical scope to better respect and conserve Wadawurrung Country values and lands and waters attributes (including cultural flows, environmental management of vegetation and water systems, visual connections and cultural landscapes, migratory and inter-tidal bird habitats, and unrecorded sites of Wadawurrung cultural heritage).*

9.2

d. *The WTOAC strongly supports and raises as a matter of urgency that an Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment be undertaken for the foreshore corridor from the mouth of Werribbi Yulluk (Werribee River) down to Point Wilson to better assess, appraise and identify resilience measure to prevent future negative impacts to existing Wadawurrung tangible cultural heritage sites and places along this corridor, and especially to provide evidence to underpin an ecosystem-based adaptation response to sea level rise from climate change.*

e. *The WTOAC strongly supports the current Melbourne Water ethos in carefully managing its fragile ecosystems to enable and support existing and future bird and animal communities, and also ensuring the conservation of extant vegetation communities that possess integrity of species mosaic and host known rare, endangered and vulnerable species.*

f. *The WTOAC invites co-design opportunities with all proponents and project designers to enable the above Recommendations, and any opportunities for Wadawurrung to be afforded employment experience associated with the project's further design, construction and operation.*

The above recommendations of the CVA have informed the preparation of the Avalon Corridor Strategy. Some recommendations are beyond the scope of the Strategy to address and require further investigation through subsequent processes, including:

- Further detailed investigation into potential expansion of the SLO to address matters of cultural value, including consideration of whether the SLO is the most appropriate planning scheme tool (refer to Recommendation C).
- The completion of an Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment and/or CHMP for land use change and development proposals (refer to Recommendation D).

Heritage dry stone walls and open rural landscape with longer range views to Wurdi Youang

9.3

9.3 POST CONTACT HERITAGE

Based upon a number of studies undertaken by WCC and CoGG and public consultation on the draft report, the post contact heritage values of the Avalon Corridor centre around four themes:

EXPLORATION, COLONISATION AND DISPOSSESSION

Point Wilson is believed to be in the vicinity of where the expedition of Hamilton Hume and William Hovell reached the southern coast of Australia in 1824 after setting out from Yass in NSW. This feat of European exploration is significant to Aboriginal peoples and Europeans. For Europeans, the expedition opened up southeast Australia to colonisation and settlement, and the Australian-born Hume was a remarkable bushman who guided the expedition utilising traditional bush skills he had learned amidst the Dharawal people of NSW. For Aboriginal peoples, the expedition is a symbolic catalyst for the invasion and dispossession of traditional lands across southeast Australia.

Whilst peripheral to this Strategy, it should be recognised that the management of the memory and physical manifestations of that event needs to be handled with sensitivity and respect, including future management of the registered Hume and Hovell Centenary Memorial (VHR H1547) on the fringe of Lara, and the current application of the name Hovells Creek to the traditional waterway discharging into Limeburners Bay.

Little River is a residential and farming community on the western boundary of WCC and takes its name from the deep river that flows from the Brisbane Ranges to the sea near Lake Borrie. The river is slightly smaller than the Werribee, hence its name. In early days of settlement, the road from Melbourne to Geelong had a crossing at Little River. The Traveller's Rest Inn was built in 1839 and a post office was opened in 1858. Lot 14, one of the Port Phillip Association's first allotments, was taken up by pioneer James Simpson. Little River later became part of the vast Chirnside empire. When the Geelong to Melbourne railway opened in 1876, bluestone station buildings and goods sheds were constructed.

Little River became an important hub for local farmers, graziers and haycarters who used the railway to carry their goods to markets in both Geelong and Melbourne. The line is still heavily used today carrying commuters in both directions.

TRANSPORT AND UTILITIES

The heritage values of the registered former Metropolitan Farm (VHR H2400) at WTP need to be conserved for their significance as a major early civil engineering feature. Early related structures from the farm may also occur within the surrounding coastal foreshore area. Where practicable, these should be left in place and conserved if still in use, or left as redundant structures or ruins if not.

The Old Melbourne Road that runs through Little River delineates the general route of one of the earliest European tracks within Victoria. Running between Melbourne and Geelong from the mid-1830s, Old Melbourne Road developed into a major road over the following decade. The crossing of this route over the Little River at Rothwell formed a key stopping place at which the Traveller's Rest Inn was developed in 1839.

The Rothwell Bridge was later built to replace the adjacent ford. The heritage value of the registered Rothwell Bridge (VHR H1454) needs to be conserved and the historical and archaeological importance of this crossing place requires further investigation, along with potential shared values as a camp and crossing place for Wadawurrung Traditional Owners.

Secondary transport features on the Victorian Heritage Inventory (VHI) include a number of coastal jetties and trig stations. These are reasonably protected within the coastal foreshore reserves, but may warrant further investigation.

Avalon Airport is not considered to be of heritage significance at this time, though may take on some historical or social significance in the long term as Melbourne's second airport and the home of Australia's major airshow.

9.3

RESOURCE HARVESTING

The landscape between the Princes Freeway and the base of Wurdi Youang (the You Yangs) is predominantly a pastoral landscape divided into rectilinear blocks by fencelines, tree plantings and remnants of dry stone walls. There are a number of Heritage Overlay (HO) farm homesteads and complexes, which need to be conserved for their heritage value. The historical and archaeological significance of dry stone walls south of Little River requires further investigation.

Secondary natural resource harvest areas include the former Cheetham Saltworks adjoining Avalon Airport, which are included on the VHI and may warrant further investigation prior to any redevelopment. The lime burning kilns on the foreshore adjoining Geelong Grammar, also on the VHI, may warrant investigation should they be at risk of disturbance. There are a number of minor recreational fishing sites included on the VHI which are of no special significance but may also warrant investigation prior to any disturbance.

EDUCATION

Geelong Grammar is located on the southern edge of the study area and is protected under a HO. Nature based research and education associated with the Port Phillip foreshore is the subject of increasing social and educational importance to the community. These values are generally protected under the Natural Resource Management policies for the area and do not. Some smaller reservations along water courses in the Avalon Corridor are also of heritage significance, including two are protected under HOs at Little River.

Beyond the above themes, significant post contact aesthetic and social values complement Wadawurrung cultural values relating to natural heritage of the native bushland of the You Wurdi Youang (the You Yangs). Wurdi Youang has importance to the wider community as one of the two most significant natural landmarks within Greater Geelong, with the other being Corio Bay. Community consultation also indicates they possess wider aesthetic significance as a backdrop to the pastoral landscape between Lara and Little River.

Municipal heritage studies undertaken by CoGG and a Heritage Review (Gap Study) undertaken by WCC in 2019 have identified a number of historical sites that have the potential to meet the threshold for protection under HOs. Both CoGG and WCC are proposing to undertake further investigation of these sites over the next 5 years. The WCC gap study has identified 15 potential HO places within the study area, relating primarily to residential and non-residential (community, commercial, industrial, military and landscapes) themes within settlement areas.

AVALON CORRIDOR STRATEGY

CULTURAL VALUES ASSESSMENT & POST-CONTACT HERITAGE

KEY

- Study Area Boundary
- Municipal Boundary
- Railway station
- Railway line
- Freeway
- Contour
- Area of Cultural Heritage Sensitivity
- Victorian Heritage Register Places
- Heritage Overlay
- Future Bay West port (indicative concept design – subject to future planning and change)
- Victorian Heritage Inventory Sites
- Early Historial Route & Crossing Node at Little River

Figure 12: Cultural and post contact heritage influences

Ford Proving Ground
Mount Rothwell Biodiversity Interpretation Centre
Black Forest Road
Werribee Station
East Werribee Employment Precinct
WERRIBEE
Regional Rail Link
Werribee Zoo
CITY OF WYNDHAM
Wyndham refuse disposal facility / Holcim Quarry
Werribee River Park
You Yangs Regional Park
You Yangs Road
Little River Station
Werribee River
Western Treatment Plant
Little River
Serendip Wetlands Wildlife Reserve
Proposed Rail Link Avalon
CITY OF GREATER GEELONG
Lara Station
Avalon Airport
Kirks Point
The Spit Wildlife Reserve
Port Phillip Bay
Hovells Creek
Geelong Grammar School
Mountain View Quarry
Avalon College
Point Wilson

Victorian Heritage Register Sites

1. Metropolitan Farm
2. Werribee Park
3. Bulban Reserve Rothwell Bridge
4. Hume & Hovell Memorial

0 1.6 3.2
0.8 2.4 4km

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LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ANALYSIS

10.0 Landscape Character Analysis 83
10.1 Summary of Key Considerations 84
10.2 Landscape Recommendations 86

10.0

10.0 LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ANALYSIS

A background Landscape Character Assessment was prepared by Hansen Partnership in 2021 to inform the Avalon Corridor Strategy. A summary of key findings and recommendations is provided in this section and Figure 14.

Key findings from desktop assessment:

- The concentration of landscape character and visual values are located within the northern portion of the Avalon Corridor, including FZ and GWZ agricultural areas, the You Yangs Regional Park and the concentration of dry stone walls around Little River.
- Key view corridors exist along the Princes Freeway, Melbourne-Geelong rail line, a number of minor roads around Wurdi Youang (the You Yangs) and from the edge of the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) in WCC.
- Much of the western portion of the Avalon Corridor is covered by an Environmental Significance Overlay (ESO). While the intention of the ESO is primarily to protect environment and habitat, areas deemed significant enough to require environmental protection often also provide valuable landscape character.
- Identified landscape character and visual values are relatively limited within the southern portion of the Avalon Corridor, though include a significant stretch of coastline as a Public Conservation and Resource Zone (PCRZ), some areas of Rural Conservation Zone (RCZ) and a Heritage Overlay (HO) associated with Geelong Grammar.
- The *South West Victoria Landscape Assessment Study* (DELWP, 2013) previously considered a portion of the Avalon Corridor and identified two landscape character areas of note:
  - Western Volcanic Plain: "Volcanic activity has shaped much of South West Victoria's landscape. This extensive Character Type is formed by a flat to undulating basaltic plain scattered with volcanic features including stony rises, old lava flows, numerous volcanic cones and old eruption points which together create a unique visual landscape. This is a place of big skies, long views with volcanic rises that punctuate the horizon. Shelterbelts of cypress and pine were planted to protect crops and livestock from the winds that sweep the plain and are now a defining characteristic of the Type. Many paddocks and roadsides are edged with beautifully formed dry stone walls that were created when early pastoralists cleared the land of rocks for agricultural purposes."
  - Uplands: "Defined by topography, this diverse Character Type rises dramatically to the north of the flat volcanic plain, stretching from near the Grampians Ranges in the west to the edge of the study area at Bacchus Marsh in the east. Granitic intrusions have formed steeply sloping peaks and ridges, some of which are carpeted in vegetation at higher elevations. While the Uplands are largely cleared for agriculture they also support numerous large areas of public land, including Parks, Reserves and State Forests which contain a wealth of vegetation including wet and dry forests, Box-Ironbark woodlands and endangered grasslands."
- The You Yangs Regional Park is also identified as a state significant landscape, defined as: "the designation of a particular landscape as special or important arising from its cultural landscape values, including aesthetic values (both visual and non-visual) historic, environmental, scientific, social or other values."

10.0–10.1

Following the desktop assessment, fieldwork was undertaken to confirm landscape character areas and significant visual amenity values within the Avalon Corridor. Landscape character areas can be described as areas of similar patterns of elements in the landscape such as landform, vegetation, waterbodies, features and land use.

The Avalon Corridor contains a number of landscape character areas, including:

- Agricultural Plains
- Township
- Rural Dwelling
- Airport
- Former Salt Works
- Active Industry
- Wastewater Treatment
- Education
- Coastal Fringe

A number of landscape character areas adjacent to the Avalon Corridor have also been identified, including:

- Granite Hills
- Bushland Foothills
- Cleared Foothills
- Elevated Plains
- Recreation
- Small Scale Agriculture

10.1 SUMMARY OF KEY CONSIDERATIONS

A number of key views associated with Wurdi Youang (the You Yangs) were identified within the Avalon Corridor, including:

- Landmark journey segments on the Princes Freeway and Melbourne-Geelong rail line, as identified in the *South West Victoria Landscape Assessment Study* (DELWP, 2013).
- Major viewline from the Wyndham UGB, as identified in the Wyndham Landscape Context Guidelines (WCC, 2013).
- Local views from You Yangs Road, Little River-Ripley Road and Branch Road, as identified in the *South West Victoria Landscape Assessment Study* (DELWP, 2013).

These views were verified through fieldwork, recognising that views in the northern portion of the Avalon Corridor have a key relationship to the You Yangs. Given the prevalence of the You Yangs in views from the Avalon Corridor, it was also considered of high importance to also consider views to the Avalon Corridor from the You Yangs.

The proposed amendment to SLO1 recommended by the 2013 *South West Victoria Landscape Assessment Study* includes a series of decision guidelines that address how to consider impacts on landscape character, view points and vegetation conservation and how to minimise intrusion of built form. Of note to the Avalon Corridor is the consideration of the visible impact of building or works from Flinders Peak.

The Landscape Character Assessment for the Avalon Corridor sought to understand the extent of views from Flinders Peak in the You Yangs. This is illustrated by Diagram 5 and 6 which include photos taken from the Flinders Peak viewpoint. The landscape between the You Yangs and the Princes Freeway forms the middle ground of this view from Flinders Peak, with the You Yangs bushland foothills in the foreground. While the coastline of Port Phillip Bay and the Bellarine Peninsula can be seen in the distance, they do not form a prominent view from Flinders Peak.

Significant views associated with the You Yangs are further illustrated on Figure 13.

AVALON CORRIDOR STRATEGY

LANDSCAPE ASSESMENT SUMMARY

KEY

- Subject site
- Municipal boundary
- Railway station
- Railway line
- Freeway
- Contour
- Significant Landscape Overlay (SLO1)
- Environmental Significance Overlay (ESO)
- South West Victoria Landscape Assessment - agricultural land character contribution to the You Yangs - Farming Zone (FZ)
- Regional Park
- Western Grasslands Reserve concept plan - scenic landscape
- South West Victoria Landscape Assessment - state significant landscape
- South West Victoria Landscape Assessment Study - identified landmark journey segment
- Wyndham landscape context guidelines - major viewline
- South West Victoria Landscape Assessment - view corridor
- South West Victoria Landscape Assessment - view point
- Wyndham dry stone wall study - surviving dry stone walls

Figure 13: Landscape assessment summary

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10.2 LANDSCAPE RECOMMENDATIONS

The background Landscape Character Assessment (Hansen Partnership, 2021) identified significant landscape qualities and views for the Avalon Corridor. Areas of high, moderate and low landscape value were identified, along with areas with a visually sensitive relationship to the You Yangs.

The Agricultural Plains landscape character area contains high overall landscape value and is of importance to the setting for the You Yangs. There is a strong inter-relationship of views between these two areas.

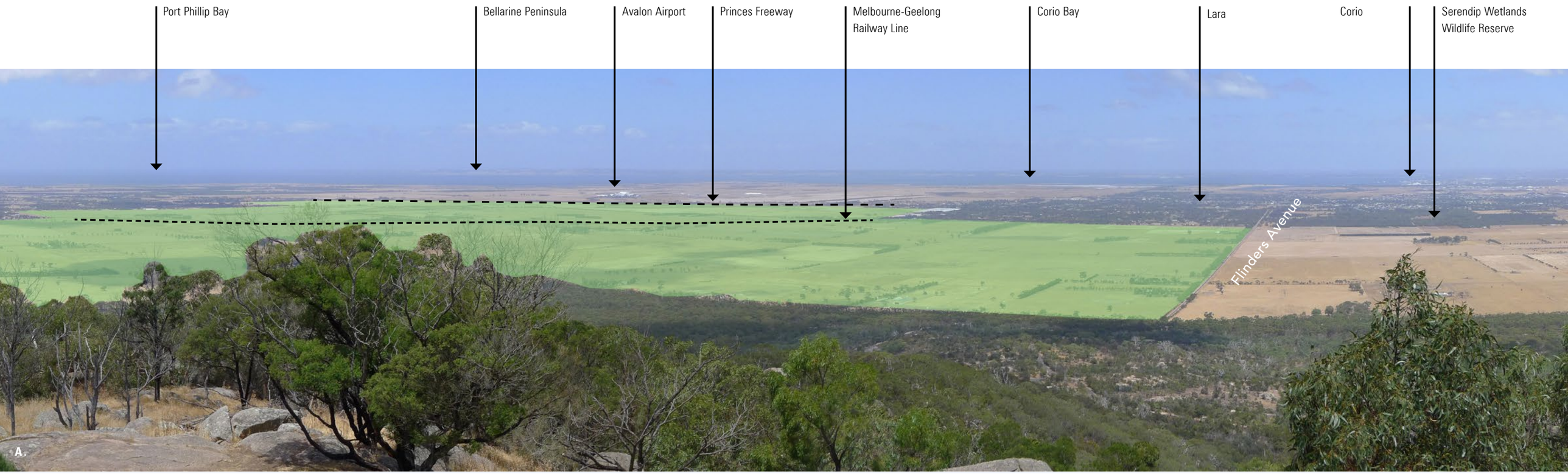
Important landscape character values and views are currently protected in part by the Significant Landscape Overlay (SLO1) in the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme for the Foothills of the You Yangs. SLO1 contains the following objectives:

- To protect and enhance the open character, contrast and scenic quality of the landscape.
- To maintain an open view path to the regionally significant You Yangs.
- To protect the landscape from visual intrusion by inappropriate buildings and works and their siting, design or materials.
- To encourage the siting, design and landscaping of buildings and works to be responsive to the landscape values of the area.
- To facilitate the rehabilitation of extractive industries when they reach the end of their economic life.

The northern portion of the Avalon Corridor has open and expansive views to the You Yangs due to the flat landscape that prevails over much of the Avalon Corridor. This includes portions of the Avalon Corridor determined to have moderate or low overall landscape value in their own right. It is recommended that views to and from the You Yangs are considered in the development of the Framework Plan.

The key recommendation of the Landscape Character Assessment is to investigate the potential expansion of SLO1 to accommodate the landscape setting and views to and from the You Yangs. This recommendation aligns with recommendations of the CVA to expand SLO1 to protect areas of Wadawurrung cultural significance. Relevant government agencies should work with WTOAC to consider the potential extent of SLO1 and should consult with affected landowners on any proposed changes.

The Landscape Character Assessment further notes opportunities for rehabilitation, restoration and regeneration of former quarry and landfill sites to complement the cultural, environmental and landscape values of the Avalon Corridor.





A. Diagram 5: Key features in the view

B. Diagram 6: Extent of Agricultural Plains landscape character area with high landscape value

AVALON CORRIDOR STRATEGY

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

KEY

- Study Area Boundary
- Municipal Boundary
- Railway station
- Railway line
- Freeway
- Contour
- Youth Justice Facility, Cherry Creek (under construction)

Landscape Character Areas within the study area

- Agricultural plains
- Township
- Rural dwelling
- Airport
- Former salt works
- Extractive industry
- Wastewater treatment
- Education
- Coastal fringe

Landscape Character Areas outside the study area

- Granite hills
- Bushland foothills
- Cleared foothills
- Elevated plains
- Recreation
- Small scale agriculture

South West Victoria Landscape Assessment Character Areas

- Western Volcanic Plain - Winchelsea Western Plain
- The Uplands - You Yangs

Figure 14: Landscape character

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ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

11.0 Environmental Analysis 90
11.1 Flora and Fauna Analysis 90
11.2 Western Grassland Reserve 92
11.3 Important Wetlands 92
11.4 Marine Environment 94
11.5 Climate Change, Sea Level Rise and Flooding 94
11.6 Bushfire Risk 97
11.7 Weeds and Pest Plants 97
11.8 Hydrology, Salinity and Acid Sulphate Soils 97

11.0

11.0 ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

A background Existing Conditions Report (Flora and Fauna) was prepared by Ecology and Heritage Partners in 2021 to inform the Avalon Corridor Strategy. A summary of key findings and recommendations is provided in this section and Figure 15.

The legislative framework for environmental considerations in the Avalon Corridor includes obligations which exist under the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act* (1988). Public authorities and Ministers have duties under Section 4B to consider potential biodiversity impacts when exercising their functions.

Also of relevance is the Melbourne Strategic Assessment (MSA) program facilitated by the Victorian Government, which seeks to protect biodiversity in Melbourne's growth areas. Under the Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act* (1999) (EPBC Act), four development actions that relate to the MSA program were approved. This means that developers don't need any further approvals under the EPBC Act in affected growth areas, as long as they follow relevant conditions set out under the MSA.

11.1 FLORA & FAUNA ANALYSIS

The Existing Conditions Report (Flora and Fauna) aimed to inform the Avalon Corridor Strategy by providing:

- An overview of the natural environment within and adjacent to the Avalon Corridor
- Maps and descriptions of the natural assets within and adjacent to the Avalon Corridor
- Identification of issues affecting natural assets that need to be considered
- Identification of opportunities affecting natural assets within the Avalon Corridor which could drive land use outcomes
- Identification of opportunities to integrate and grow natural assets with planning for open space, drainage and broader land use planning.

The Existing Conditions Report (Flora and Fauna) identified the following key ecological values within the Avalon Corridor:

- Native vegetation, including remnant patches and scattered trees
- 74 'Current Wetland' sites mapped by DELWP
- Significant waterbodies, including the WTP sewage treatment ponds, former Cheetham Saltworks, Werribee River, Little River, Lollypop Creek, Cherry Tree Creek, Hovells Creek, Ryan's Swamp Wetland, Paul and Belfrages Swamp, Edgars Road Swamp and Cherry Swamp
- The Port Phillip Bay and Corio Bay marine environment
- A diverse assemblage of plants and animals, with 739 flora species and 469 fauna species previously recorded
- The known occurrence of 13 nationally significant and 79 state significant flora species recorded since 1980
- The known occurrence of 18 nationally significant, 32 state significant and 17 regionally significant fauna species recorded since 1980
- The known and potential presence of ecological communities of national and state significance, including the internationally significant Port Phillip (Western Shoreline) and Bellarine Peninsula Ramsar site and nationally important Werribee-Avalon Area wetland
- Conservation reserves, including the Werribee Regional Park, Port Phillip Bay Coastal Reserve, Spit Wildlife Reserve, Limeburners Bay Flora and Fauna Reserve, Freshwater Swamp and Little River Wildlife Reserve and Western Grassland Reserve
- Sites of biological significance (BioSites), mapped by DELWP and CoGG
- Ecological values supported within the WTP
- Biodiversity corridors formed by established reserves, waterbodies and tracts of native vegetation.

11.1

11.1.1 SUMMARY OF KEY CONSIDERATIONS

Key threats to ecological values identified in the Avalon Corridor include:

- The introduction and spread of diseases and invasive plant and animal species
- Direct impacts associated with vegetation clearing
- Inappropriate grazing and fire regimes
- Fragmentation of habitat and edge effects associated with expanding development
- Increased traffic (direct mortality)
- Changes to hydrology
- Chemical run-off, sedimentation and erosion
- Impacts associated with climate change, including direct loss of habitats and increases in ambient ultraviolet-B (UV-B) radiation.
- Increased community access.

Key considerations related to native grasslands and habitats under Commonwealth and Victorian Government regulations include:

- The difficulty in identification of grasslands (visually inconspicuous)
- Likely wide dispersal across the Avalon Corridor
- Likely high conservation significance
- Very limited offset opportunities for removal (offsets can be entirely unavailable).

Key recommendations for the Avalon Corridor Strategy and further work to be undertaken include:

- Further assess areas of native vegetation and populations of threatened species and communities.
- Retain areas of native vegetation (remnant patches and scattered trees) and habitat where possible.
- Improve and create biodiversity corridors within the Avalon Corridor, potentially through revegetation activities that provide greater connectivity between established reserves, waterbodies and tracts of native vegetation. Establish a formalised environmental corridor between the Western Grasslands Reserve and the coast, through the WTP.
- Determine strategies to protect sensitive habitats from new industrial or commercial land uses and development, as required.
- Ensure key ecological values are protected through the application of relevant overlays and other planning tools such as Precinct Structure Plans.
- Consider potential impacts of increased community access on areas of significant ecological value which have been relatively isolated and ensure appropriate protections are in place.
- Consider new and existing policy instruments that can be implemented to reduce the rate of habitat loss and its effect on biodiversity.
- Establish a new biolink along the Princes Freeway and create linear habitat corridors to link conservation reserves with the aim of supporting biodiversity.
- Determine whether developable land west of Avalon Airport is constrained by the presence of the Werribee-Avalon Area Nationally Important Wetland and habitat for state and federally listed species. It is recommended that any development proposed to be located west of Avalon Airport is subject to further investigation to confirm development potential.
- Consider relevant recommendations and actions for improvement and protection of waterway health from existing government strategies and policies.

The Existing Conditions Report was based on a high level assessment of ecological values within the Avalon Corridor, drawing predominately on the findings of a detailed desktop review. The report concludes that "any future development proposals within the study area must be informed and supported by detailed ecological studies, including vegetation surveys and targeted surveys for significant species of flora and fauna."

11.2–11.3

11.2 WESTERN GRASSLAND RESERVE

The Western Grassland Reserve was established by the Victorian Government, covering 15,000 hectares outside the UGB southeast of Melton and west of Werribee. The area contains the largest and highest quality example of Natural Temperate Grassland remaining in Victoria, and is a key biodiversity asset for the state. The reserve also protects a range of habitat types including ephemeral wetlands, waterways, Red Gum swamps, rocky knolls and open grassy woodlands. The reserve will connect the You Yangs Regional Park to the Werribee River across the Victorian Volcanic Plains. Land in the Western Grassland Reserve is subject to a PAO and ESO under relevant planning schemes.

The Western Grassland Reserve is central to the Melbourne Strategic Assessment (MSA) program - a long term initiative that works alongside urban development in Melbourne's growth areas. 18 percent of land within the Western Grassland Reserve has already been purchased, resulting in permanent protection for more than 2,630 hectares of threatened grasslands and wetlands. Negotiations with landowners to acquire more land are ongoing and are funded by revenue raised through the MSA Levy.

WCC is a delivery partner for the Western Grassland Reserve and has supported landowners to control weeds on more than 3,220 hectares of private land. Other activities include controlled burning, spraying artichoke thistle with drones, planting native grasses, managing serrated tussock and cane needle grass and surveying 1,264 hectares of vegetation.

Select areas of the Western Grassland Reserve have been identified as containing strategic extractive resources (hard rock and gravel) needed for the construction industry. These areas were identified by the Victorian Government's SERA pilot project, with new planning controls introduced over affected land. Other areas of the Western Grassland Reserve were identified by Infrastructure Victoria as having potential value in accommodating a rail stabling yard associated with the future Bay West Port proposal. This includes land immediately to the west of the alignment of the OMR Transport Corridor.

These alternate uses pose a potential land use conflict with the designation of the Western Grassland Reserve for biodiversity conservation. Such conflicts would need to be further considered and addressed through relevant planning processes at the state government level. It is not the intention of the Avalon Corridor Strategy to resolve all potential land use conflicts identified.

11.3 IMPORTANT WETLANDS

The Port Phillip (Western Shoreline) and Bellarine Peninsula Ramsar site covers approximately 15,182 hectares (51 percent) of the study area. The entire Ramsar wetland covers an area of approximately 22,897 hectares.

The Ramsar site is characterised by:

- A range of marine and inland wetlands characteristic of the South East Coastal Plain bioregion as well as artificial wetlands.
- Significant habitat that provides one of the most important sites in Victoria for migratory shorebirds and supports more than 20,000 waterbirds (including large numbers of migratory waders, black swans, ducks, ibis and cormorants).

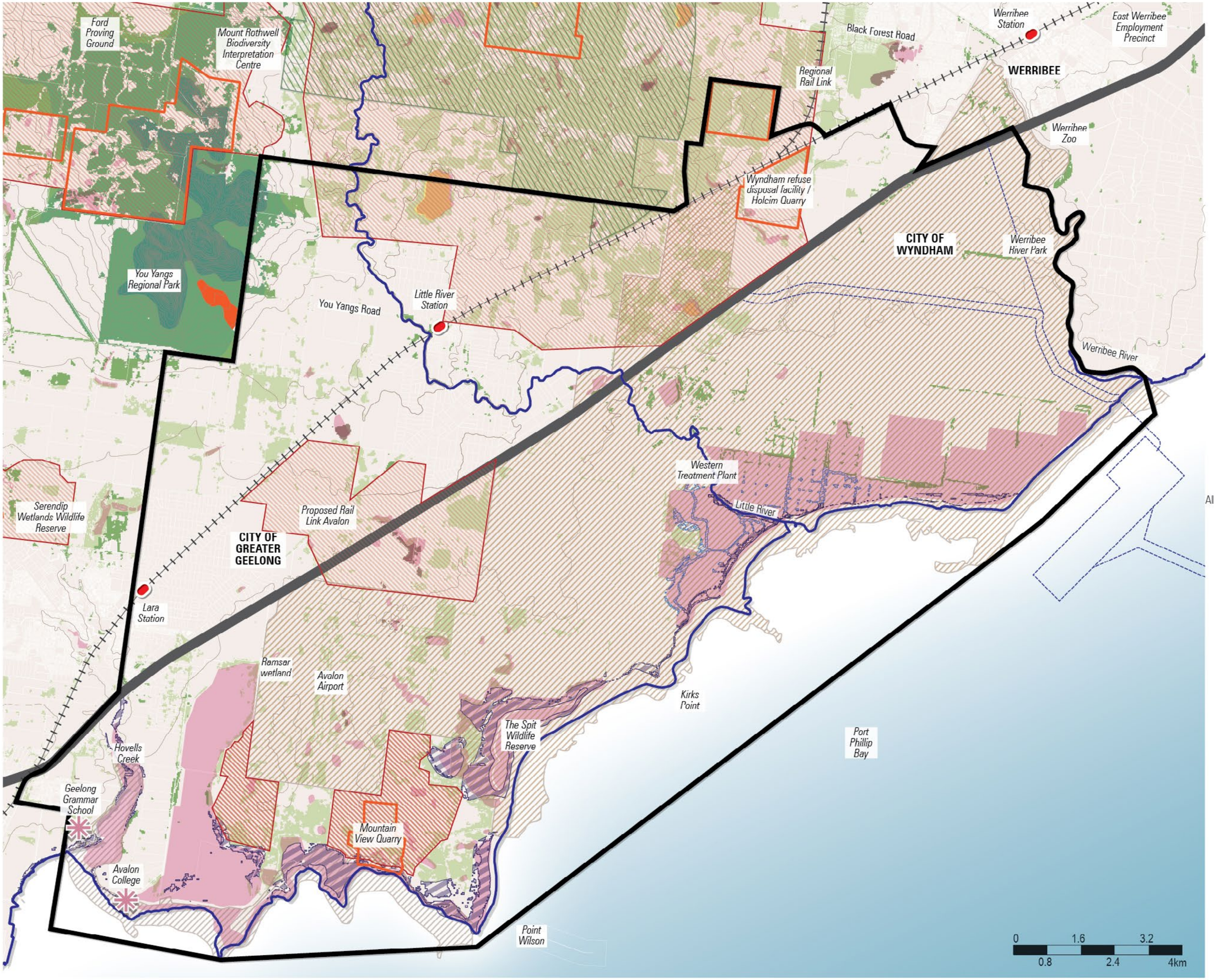
Any potential future development in close proximity to the Ramsar site would need to consider possible direct and indirect impacts on the wetlands and may need to be referred to the Commonwealth Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW). Impacts could include loss of habitat for migratory wetland birds or reductions in water quality.

Development would need to have regard to the policy for managing Ramsar sites in Victoria as set out in the Victorian Waterway Management Strategy (DEPI, 2013), as well as the Port Phillip (Western Shoreline) and Bellarine Peninsula Ramsar Site Management Plan (DELWP, 2018).

In addition to the internationally significant Ramsar site, the Avalon Corridor contains approximately 3,220 hectares of the Werribee-Avalon Area Nationally Important Wetlands, which is listed on the Australian Directory of Important Wetlands (DoEE, 2016) and are covered under the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands (1971). The extent of the Werribee-Avalon Area Nationally Important Wetlands overlaps with the Ramsar site and includes additional areas to the north including the former Cheetham Saltworks site.

AVALON CORRIDOR STRATEGY

ENVIRONMENTAL INFLUENCES



KEY

- Study Area Boundary
- Municipal Boundary
- Railway station
- Railway line
- Freeway
- Contour
- Western Grassland Reserve
- Plains Grassy Woodland (EVC 55)
- Plains Grassland (EVC 132)
- Coastal Alkaline Scrub (EVC 858)
- Coastal Saltmarsh/ Mangrove Shrubland Mosaic (EVC 302)
- Plains Grassy Wetland (EVC 125)
- Cane Grass Wetland (EVC 602)
- Alluvial Terraces Herb-rich Woodland (EVC 67)
- Granitic Hills Woodland (EVC 72)
- Hills Herb-rich Woodland (EVC 71)
- Ramsar Wetlands
- Werribee Avalon Area Nationally Important Wetland
- Extractive Industries Works Approvals (WA) – current and proposed*
- Extractive Industries Interest Area (EIIA)*
- Future Bay West port (indicative concept design – subject to future planning and change)

(*) Sourced from Melbourne Supply Area - Extractive Industry Interest Areas Review

Figure 15: Environmental influences

Project Ref:	19.322
Dwg No.:	UDD-001
Scale	1:80,000@A3
Date:	14.12.2021
Revision:	D

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11.4 MARINE ENVIRONMENT

The Avalon Corridor encompasses approximately 6,900 hectares of the Port Phillip Bay and Corio Bay marine environment. While there are no marine national parks or sanctuaries present, the boundaries of the Spit Wildlife Reserve and Port Phillip Bay Coastal Reserve encroach into the intertidal areas of Port Phillip Bay and Corio Bay.

Mapping was undertaken by Natural Resource Systems for the Land Conservation Council as part of a *Marine and Coastal Special Investigation*. This investigation encompassed the marine area of the Bidentified that the Bates Point Aquaculture Fisheries Reserve - a 20 hectare area located approximately 900 metres south of Bates Point. The investigation found that the marine environment supports a range of habitat types, including intertidal sandy beaches, seagrass beds and subtidal rocky reefs. Seagrass and microalgae mapping datasets held by the Victorian Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions (DJPR) also indicate that seagrass beds and large areas of macroalgae are present.

11.5 CLIMATE CHANGE, SEA LEVEL RISE AND FLOODING

Climate change is increasing the risk and severity of coastal hazards as a result of sea level rise and more frequent and severe extreme weather events. This will impact on the future use and development of land along the coast and inland locations along waterways. Understanding the dynamic processes of the coastal environment within the Avalon Corridor is important for ensuring any future development responds appropriately to these increased risks.

In the context of Port Phillip Bay, key risks to the coastline resulting from sea level rise include:

- Coastal inundation - this includes both permanent inundation, which will see high tide levels permanently increase as a result of sea level rise, and periodic inundation, caused by the combined effects of high tide and storm surge events.
- Coastal erosion - the shoreline will be progressively eroded and moved inland as a result of sea level rise and storm surges. The level of vulnerability is greatly affected by the geology of the shoreline.
- Groundwater change and salinity - as sea levels rise, the underground water table will also increase in height and salinity, which can affect groundwater and soils. This can potentially impact on buildings, infrastructure, vegetation and crops. There is currently limited data available to understand the likely risks associated with this hazard in the Avalon Corridor and Port Phillip Bay more broadly.

Current state planning policy seeks to plan for sea level rise of no less than 0.8 metres by 2100. This benchmark is subject to evolving science and international standards that could result in an increase to 1.1 metres. The current benchmark is based on the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's *Fifth Assessment Report* (2014), which projects sea level rise between 0.52 to 0.98 metres by 2100.

The Victorian Coastal Inundation Dataset was released by DELWP in 2012 and provides a high level assessment of the risks associated with sea level rise and storm surge along the Victorian coast. The regional scale data provides an understanding of both permanent and periodic inundation under various scenarios out to 2100. The data includes a layer that is based on a 0.8 metre increase to the high water mark for permanent inundation, with a 1% Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP) storm tide flood event added for periodic inundation.

AVALON CORRIDOR STRATEGY

CLIMATE CHANGE, FLOODING & BUSHFIRE INFLUENCES

KEY

- Study Area Boundary
- Municipal Boundary
- Railway station
- Railway line
- Freeway
- Contour
- Bushfire Prone Area
- 0.82m sea level rise projection (2100)
- 1-in-100-year flood event extent (waterways)
- 0.82m sea level rise storm tide projection (2100)
- Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO)
- Land Subject to Inundation Overlay, Schedule 2 (LSIO2)
- Floodway Overlay (FO)

Figure 16: Climate change, flooding and bushfire influences

Ford Proving Ground
Mount Rothwell Biodiversity Interpretation Centre
You Yangs Regional Park
You Yangs Road
Little River Station
Serendip Wetlands Wildlife Reserve
CITY OF GREATER GEELONG
Lara Station
Avalon Airport
Hovells Creek
Geelong Grammar School
Avalon College
Mountain View Quarry
Point Wilson
The Spit Wildlife Reserve
Kirks Point
Port Phillip Bay
Western Treatment Plant
Little River
Black Forest Road
Regional Rail Link
Wyndham refuse disposal facility / Holcim Quarry
CITY OF WYNDHAM
Werribee Station
WERRIBEE
East Werribee Employment Precinct
Werribee Zoo
Werribee River Park
Werribee River

0 1.6 3.2
0.8 2.4 4km

Project Ref: 19.322
Dwg No.: UDD-001
Scale 1:80,000@A3
Date: 14.12.2021
Revision: D

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11.5

Amendment VC171 (gazetted September 2021) makes changes to the VPPs to implement the *Marine and Coastal Policy* (DELWP 2020), support coastal hazard planning and sea level rise adaptation and update policy references. Functionally the changes strengthen the planning scheme provisions to plan for and mitigate coastal hazard risk to reduce the exposure of settlements to coastal hazard risks.

CoGG has undertaken further work as part of the Our Coast project, which involved the preparation of the detailed *Bellarine Peninsula - Corio Bay Local Coastal Hazard Assessment* (2015). This work resulted in updates to the Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO) in the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme, including a new Schedule (LSIO2) that was introduced as part of Amendment C394ggee (September 2020). LSIO2 applies to land affected by the combined impacts of a 1% AEP flood event and a 0.8 metre sea level rise.

DELWP's Coastal Erosion Vulnerability mapping provides an indication of sections of the Victorian coast that are most vulnerable to erosion. While the data is high level, areas of high and very high risk have been mapped along the Avalon Corridor coastline (see Figure 16).

A large portion of land within the Avalon Corridor affected by coastal inundation under a 0.8 metre sea level rise scenario is classified as public land with a direct interface to the coast or tributaries. Responding to the impacts of sea level rise in these locations will generally be the responsibility of the various public land managers and authorities.

The most significantly impacted location is the WTP. Engineered solutions and protection measures will play a significant role in locations that contain state significant infrastructure to ensure ongoing viability and reliability of assets.

A significant portion of the salt production and aquaculture activities surrounding the Avalon Coastal Reserve is projected to be periodically and permanently inundated. Areas within this location are also subject to high or very high vulnerability to coastal erosion.

Planning responses that seek to manage the use and development of land to mitigate risks of climate change, sea level rise and flooding will have a role to play within the Avalon Corridor. As recognised by the application of the LSIO in Greater Geelong, built form solutions related to the siting of buildings and floor level heights are necessary in vulnerable locations. Such solutions should also be considered during detailed design for the future Bay West Port.

There is a need to ensure land use and development consider flood risk to the satisfaction of Melbourne Water or the relevant Floodplain Management Authority. Where severe risks are identified, the long term development viability of the land will need to be considered. Options could include restricting sensitive uses, limiting the intensification of existing activity or identifying planned retreat options.

Of further note, CoGG exhibited Amendment C339ggee in 2021 which seeks to address riverine flooding risk through the targeted application of the Flood Overlay and LSIO to land within and beyond the Avalon Corridor.

Reports underpinning Amendment C339ggee include:

- *Bellarine Peninsula - Corio Bay Local Coastal Hazard Assessment* (2015)
- *Lower Barwon and Lower Moorabool Flood Investigation* (2018)
- *Lara Flood Study* (2020)

11.6–11.8

11.6 BUSHFIRE RISK

Although no areas of the Avalon Corridor are covered by the Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO), large sections are mapped as Designated Bushfire Prone Areas as illustrated in Figure 16.

Such areas are identified by the Bushfire Prone Area (BPA) Map, which was introduced in response to the recommendations made by the 2009 Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission. The Minister for Planning makes a formal determination to designate BPAs under section 192A of the Building Act (1993), based on Bushfire Hazard Level - an indicator of how extreme a bushfire can be, based on landscape conditions.

The BPA Map identifies bushfire hazards for most of Victoria, including grassland areas. Minimum construction standards apply to new residential buildings, schools, child care centres, hospitals, aged care facilities and associated buildings in designated BPAs. For example, a minimum Bushfire Attack Level (BAL) of 12.5 is applied to certain buildings, such as dwellings.

Noting that the BMO does not apply within the Avalon Corridor, potential impacts of bushfire need to be considered on a case-by-case basis as part of specific applications for building and planning permits.

11.7 WEEDS AND PEST PLANTS

Activities within the Avalon Corridor potentially involve the removal and transportation of plant material through the use of various machines, vehicles and equipment. This creates risks of spreading plant diseases and pest plants (weeds). The Avalon Corridor is noted to contain a range of environmental and noxious weeds, such as Chilean needle grass and serrated tussock, which threaten native vegetation and agricultural activities. Preventing further spread of weeds and invasive flora species should be a priority for land managers.

11.8 HYDROLOGY, SALINITY AND ACID SULPHATE SOILS

Wetlands, waterways and the coastal interface are characteristic landscape and ecological features of the Avalon Corridor. Landscape scale and site specific hydrological knowledge is required to ensure these environmental assets can function appropriately alongside current and future land uses.

Overland flows and stormwater management must be carefully considered across the entire Avalon Corridor area, in particular areas flagged for development and land use change. Freshwater inputs into saline environments can be detrimental to the point of impacting on Matters of National Environmental Significance (MNES). Salinity is therefore a relevant consideration to the Avalon Corridor, both in terms of its relation to ecological systems and the constraints it may place on certain types of development.

Management arrangements will need to be considered which support the protection and function of the Werribee-Avalon Area Nationally Important Wetlands (ref. VIC121), particularly the former Cheetham Saltworks site. The functioning of these ponds is reliant on hydrological regimes that extend beyond the area of Crown land managed by Parks Victoria.

It is further important to ensure development considers and mitigates risks associated with the disturbance of coastal acid sulphate soils, which may be present within the Avalon Corridor.

EMERGING TRENDS AND INFLUENCES

12.0 Emerging Trends and Influences 99

12.0

12.0 EMERGING TRENDS AND INFLUENCES

Beyond strategic, economic and environmental considerations relating to the Avalon Corridor, there are a range of emerging technological mega-trends and advancements which will influence future land use and development.

The current pace of technological change is expected to create significant changes in future employment markets, including the creation of new jobs and industries that do not currently exist. Administrative, manufacturing and production roles are most likely to see dramatic declines with the rise of automation. Conversely, the demand for advanced mathematics and computer science skills will likely increase. While there are anticipated increases in skilled employment associated with the implementation, management and servicing of new and emerging technologies, the true extent of this employment cannot be accurately estimated.

Future advancement and wider usage of 3D printing will reduce manufacturing costs and provide greater opportunity to deliver new products to the market. Future energy sources and potential decreases in energy costs could drive productivity, leading to further economic growth. However, technological advancements also have potential to create greater disparity in income distribution, resulting from a loss of lower skilled labour opportunities.

Rapid population growth and urbanisation will continue globally throughout the course of the century. Such processes will drive growth and demand in numerous sectors, particularly food production. A growing global population is expected to demand 35 percent more food by 2030, whilst the demand for a variety of food products will increase as incomes rise, particularly in cities. Although urban expansion continues to accelerate in metropolitan Melbourne and central Geelong, the rate of expansion is considerably slower than that experienced at a global level.

Rapid global urbanisation will drive new commercial opportunities in food production, to respond to growing demand. The Avalon Corridor is well positioned to capture some of these opportunities, in light of its unique attributes and assets such as available agricultural land, potential access to recycled water, a robust transport and freight network and the ability to move goods domestically and internationally via Avalon Airport and the future Bay West Port.

The Avalon Corridor also presents potential renewable energy and circular economy opportunities that will help to address climate change. This includes generation of recycled water, biosolids and biogas at the Melbourne Water WTP, which currently treats 50 percent of Melbourne's sewage. Based on projected population growth, sewage load is expected to double by 2050. Similar opportunities are associated with the Barwon Water Northern Treatment Plant in Corio.

Noting the availability of agricultural land and potential access to a significant supply of recycled water, food production would appear to have substantial potential within the Avalon Corridor, with the added benefit of easy access to Avalon Airport for rapid export to global markets.

In this context, a variety of technological and scientific advancements are having significant impacts on agricultural and food production sectors, including:

- Precision agriculture or satellite farming, involving GPS tracking systems and satellite imagery to monitor crop yields, soil levels, and weather patterns to increase efficiency.
- Technological farming assistance, including the use of drones and wireless sensors.
- Emerging water conservation and sustainability initiatives, including strategically placed irrigation and dry land agriculture techniques.

The cost of producing recycled water to support agricultural production in the Avalon Corridor remains an issue, with price exceeding farmers' willingness to pay. However, this has the potential to change in future either through technological advancements reducing the cost of recycled water production, or (as an example) state or federal governments subsidising water recycling costs to generate investment in this sector. There is opportunity to also consider recycled water use beyond farming and food production.

These considerations represent only a fraction of changes anticipated through technological advancements. Opportunities and issues associated with these changes will need to be managed by various sectors. Governmental policies at the global and national level will form an integral part of this process. While it is beyond the scope of the Avalon Corridor Strategy to predict or respond to the breadth of anticipated technological advancements and associated impacts, the Strategy recognises the need for flexibility to adapt to future change.

OPPORTUNITIES, CONSTRAINTS AND ISSUES

13.0 Opportunities, Constraints and Issues 101
13.1 Opportunities 101
13.2 Constraints 102
13.3 Issues 103

13.0

13.0 OPPORTUNITIES, CONSTRAINTS AND ISSUES

The earlier sections of this Strategy have summarised a significant volume of information and highlight matters associated with land use and development of relevance to the Avalon Corridor. This section seeks to further summarise this background work into a list of opportunities, constraints and issues to inform the Framework Plan.

The Avalon Corridor benefits from a unique combination of attributes that is not found elsewhere within Victoria. However, the role of this Strategy is to provide strategic guidance regarding appropriate development within targeted areas (based on relevant opportunities), and avoid development in inappropriate areas (based on relevant constraints).

13.1 OPPORTUNITIES

- Princes Freeway and the Geelong-Melbourne rail corridor bisect the Avalon Corridor. Both constitute regionally significant major transport assets which provide substantial opportunity relating to the movement of freight and people and facilitate wider regional connections.
- Road and rail access to the Princes Freeway will be augmented by the future OMR Transport Corridor. The alignment for the OMR has been designated and formally protected through relevant planning scheme controls.
- Development at Avalon Airport is controlled by a federally endorsed Master Plan which anticipates major development and expansion of airport and non-airport activities in coming decades. Airport activities at Avalon Airport have the potential to expand without curfews or other operational constraints.
- Avalon Airport has potential to substantially expand on its status as Melbourne's second international airport to further support Tullamarine Airport.
- Avalon Airport has potential for a future rail link, which has been protected through a PAO.
- Substantial availability of undeveloped land both at and surrounding Avalon Airport and opportunity to leverage off the state significant transport gateway for economic growth and employment in the Avalon Corridor and wider region.
- The state policy designation of the future Bay West Port within the Avalon Corridor as the preferred location for Melbourne's second port facility.
- Limited residential development to the south of the Princes Freeway, with the exception of a small number of RLZ and FZ allotments west of Avalon Road.
- Transport opportunities associated with Geelong Fast Rail and the Western Rail Plan.
- Majority of the land to the south of the Princes Freeway accommodates the WTP, which is in public ownership. This provides state government with the opportunity to maximise the value and use of the WTP site for Victorians, through private sector and community partnerships in areas such as ecotourism, circular economy and agriculture.
- WTP is a long term, state significant infrastructure asset which will remain in long term operation to service metropolitan Melbourne. Ongoing operations provide opportunities for recycled water access by nearby farms and agricultural properties to the north of Princes Freeway (if cost and salinity challenges can be overcome).
- Preservation of views to Wurdi Youang (the You Yangs) as a regional landmark and tourism gateway.
- Potential to create artistic gateway features on the Princes Freeway to demarcate the edge of metropolitan Melbourne at Werribee and the entrance to Greater Geelong at Avalon Airport.
- Potential co-location of activities which have direct synergies with the ongoing activities at the Wyndham RDF and otherwise require buffers from urban areas.
- Potential to improve public access to the Port Phillip Bay coastline at appropriate points.
- Potential to protect environmental and biodiversity values associated with coastal environs and to explore opportunities these natural assets may offer including blue carbon, climate change adaptation, biodiversity offsets and ecotourism.
- Potential for aquaculture facilities both onshore (Crown parcel 2008\PP3891) and offshore (Bates Point Aquaculture Fisheries Reserve) on Crown and freehold land.
- Potential to improve local and regional cycling trails and shared path networks, including the potential to complete missing link of the Port Phillip Bay Trail between Werribee and Geelong.
- Potential for rehabilitated quarries to have an innovative end use such as recreation or biodiversity conservation.
- Potential of regional extractive resources to supply the infrastructure and urban development needs for Melbourne and Geelong.
- Opportunity to protect, enhance and celebrate living Wadawurrung cultural heritage and values, as well as sites of post contact heritage significance.

13.2

13.2 CONSTRAINTS

- Strong existing policy position to protect the role of the Avalon Corridor as a green break between Victoria's two largest cities.
- Potential for future increased traffic to negatively impact on the functional operation of the Princes Freeway as the main regional access road between Melbourne, Geelong and beyond.
- Rain shadows from Wurdi Youang and the Otway Ranges creating drier than average conditions in the Avalon Corridor (compared to the rest of southern Victoria).
- General constraints relating to farming, rural activities and land management including water access, weed and pest management, bushfires, access to networks and supplier inability to move goods due to existing vehicle restrictions on lower order roads.
- Current costs associated with producing recycled water of a suitable quality for agriculture exceed willingness to pay.
- Extent of residual land contamination within large sections of the WTP site due to historic land use activities.
- Significant environmental assets requiring careful management and protection including native grasslands, riparian corridors, coastal environs and Ramsar wetlands.
- Requirements for buffer separation from quarries (both current and future), Wyndham RDF and Point Wilson Munitions Facility.
- Landscapes character values and views associated with the foothills of Wurdi Youang.
- Need to manage potential biodiversity impacts of future land use change and development including expansion of services and road networks into critically endangered grassland EVCs.
- Need to limit impacts of development and operations of Avalon Airport on surrounding townships and settlements in Avalon, Lara and Little River.
- Need to manage, mitigate and avoid potential impacts of development on sites of identified cultural heritage significance.
- Gas and oil pipelines traversing the Avalon Corridor including the need to avoid sensitive land uses in relevant measurement lengths and to limit road crossings within easements.
- The requirement for landscaping along to gas and oil pipeline easements to maintain sight lines and avoid impacts of large tree roots.

13.3

13.3 ISSUES

- Potential amenity impacts for existing residential and rural living properties in Avalon, Lara and Little River associated with significant future expansion of Avalon Airport and adjacent land to accommodate employment uses.
- Need to manage future traffic movements on Princes Freeway between Melbourne and Geelong and risks associated with increased volumes of freight and commuter vehicles.
- Need to protect areas required for development of the future Bay West Port through appropriate planning controls.
- Need to consider and manage potential impacts of Bay West Port on WTP and the adjoining sensitive coastal interface, including the internationally significant Ramsar wetlands.
- Ensuring protection of the ongoing long-term operations of the WTP.
- Potential for further fragmentation of rural land located to the north of the Princes Freeway.
- Potential for small scale or incremental land use and development to be in conflict with broader strategic aspirations.
- Potential conflicts between present and future land uses north of the Princes Freeway with identified landscape character values.
- Potential conflicts between extractive industry aspirations with the Western Grasslands Reserve, as well as other areas of high cultural, environmental and landscape values.
- Exacerbated impacts of flooding, inundation and sea level rise as a result of climate change.
- Need to further undertake assessments of cultural heritage significance for large tracts of the Avalon Corridor, including the coastline of WTP.
- Need for planning to have a degree of flexibility in light of uncertainty over the future impacts of emerging technologies on industry, manufacturing, food production, freight logistics and employment.



Views of the Avalon Corridor from Wurdi Youang

TOWARD A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK PLAN

14.0 Toward a Conceptual Framework Plan 105
14.1 Major Land Uses and Influences 105
14.2 Key Drivers and Role of the Framework Plan 105
14.3 Transport Synergies 106
14.4 Timing 106
14.5 Future Urban Development 108
14.6 Precincts - North and South 108

14.0

14.0 TOWARD A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK PLAN

This section summarises recommendations and spatial considerations relevant to development of the Framework Plan.

14.1 MAJOR LAND USES AND INFLUENCES

Major land uses and influences in the Avalon Corridor of relevance to the Framework Plan are spatially illustrated on Figure 17. These include:

- The extent of land area influenced by the future expansion of the Avalon Airport to full capacity, including associated noise contours and building height restrictions.
- The extent of buffers and separation distances associated with various land uses such as quarries, landfills and the Point Wilson Munitions Facility.
- The location of the future Bay West Port at WTP and its landside connections to the Princes Freeway and the OMR Transport Corridor.
- The extent of designated Green Wedge Zone land within WCC
- The small area of the Western Grasslands Reserve within WCC.
- The extent of the WTP site.
- The location of the Youth Justice Facility at Cherry Creek.
- The location and alignment of the potential Avalon Airport rail link and the OMR Transport Corridor, as designated by relevant PAOs.
- Land located inside the UGB that is identified to be included within future PSPs.
- The landscape character values and visual significance of Wurdi Youang (the You Yangs) and foreground landscapes, including the foothills.
- Existing quarries and extractive resources, as identified by WAs, EIIAs and SERAs.
- The extent of important flora and fauna habitat along the coastal foreshore, including the Ramsar site.
- Significant flora, fauna and ecological communities extending beyond the coastal foreshore.

14.2 KEY DRIVERS AND ROLE OF THE FRAMEWORK PLAN

The key driver of the Avalon Corridor Strategy is to maintain the green break between Melbourne and Geelong and to protect important infrastructure and significant cultural and environmental values.

The Framework Plan seeks to spatially identify high level future land uses within the Avalon Corridor and to clearly designate areas that are suitable for development. The Framework Plan does not attempt to identify all possible land uses within the area. Greater spatial detail on future land use will be provided through subsequent planning processes, such as the development of Structure Plans.

The Framework Plan must address the overarching project aims by spatially identifying:

- Land to be protected for its environmental, cultural and landscape values.
- Land with capacity to be developed for infrastructure and other complementary employment generating uses.
- Issues and opportunities such as land capability and national and state infrastructure planning.
- Measures required to maintain a green break between Melbourne and Geelong.

14.3 – 14.4

14.3 TRANSPORT SYNERGIES

In order to inform the opportunities and directions of the Framework Plan, it is important to understand synergies and locational attributes associated with different modes of transport, including road, rail, air and sea.

Engagement with Infrastructure Victoria highlighted there are no direct synergies between port and airport activities, due to the types of freight preferred by each mode:

- Sea freight typically handles large, bulky items (generally of low value)
- Air freight typically handles small, lightweight items (generally of high value)

This understanding of the role of different freight modes suggests that there is no justification for the future Bay West Port to be collocated near or connected to Avalon Airport. However there are direct synergies to be drawn between sea and rail freight, as both typically carry larger bulky items over long distances.

14.4 TIMING

The Framework Plan is influenced by the timing of various parallel land use and infrastructure development projects within the Avalon Corridor, including:

- Further expansion of international flights at Avalon Airport.
- Construction of the second parallel runway.
- The long term status of the third cross runway, and whether it is likely to be ultimately required and constructed.
- Construction of improved public transport connections to Avalon Airport.
- Uptake of developable employment land within and surrounding the Avalon Airport site.
- Updates to the Avalon Airport Master Plan in relation to Greater Avalon Employment Precinct (GAEP) Structure Plan.
- Preparation of the Werribee Junction and Mambourin East PSPs.
- Construction of the OMR Transport Corridor.
- Development of the Bay West Port and associated landside connections.
- Construction of the WIFT at Truganina.
- Upgrades to the Geelong-Melbourne rail line and completion of other public transport projects such as the Suburban Rail Loop.

As the delivery of these projects is outside the control of the Avalon Corridor Strategy, it is difficult for the Strategy to predict or respond to their timing. However, the Framework Plan should still have regard for confirmed or proposed projects that influence overall land use and development directions.

AVALON CORRIDOR STRATEGY

MAJOR LAND USES AND EXTERNAL INFLUENCES

KEY

- Western Treatment Plant
- Avalon Airport
- State Extractive Resource Area (SERA)
- Extractive Industry Works Approvals (WA) – current and proposed
- Extractive Industry Interest Area (EIIA)
- Default EPA buffer zone
- ANEC for ultimate capacity of proposed two parallel runways: GHD 2020 (subject to change)
- Approximate location of noise contours for potential third cross runway (no ANEC available).
- Airport runway
- Building height restrictions (Inner zone limitations on height ranging from RL 10 53m. Outer zone limitations ranging from 53-163m)
- Oil / gas pipeline
- Western Grasslands Reserve
- Significant Landscape Overlay (SLO)
- Coastal saltmarsh/ mangrove shrubland mosaic (EVC 302)
- Plains grassland (EVC 132)
- Plains grassy wetland(EVC 125)
- Regional Park
- Study area Boundary
- Municipal Boundary
- Green Wedge
- Urban Growth Boundary
- Lara Structure Plan Boundary
- Extent of Little River township (TZ & LDRZ land)
- Precinct Structure Plan - not started
- Precinct Structure Plan - completed
- Future Outer Metropolitan Ring (OMR) Transport Corridor
- Railway line & station
- Proposed railway link
- Freeway
- Indicative Outer Explosive Ordinance Safety Arc
- Youth Justice Facility, Cherry Creek (under construction)
- Future Bay West port (indicative concept design – subject to future planning and change)
- Potential location of future Bay West port

(Sourced from Melbourne Supply Area - Extractive Industry Interest Areas Review)

Figure 17: Major land uses and external influences

0 1.6 3.2
0.8 2.4 4km

Project Ref:	19.322
Dwg No.:	UDD-001
Scale	1:80,000@A3
Date:	27.09.22
Revision:	D

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14.5 FUTURE URBAN DEVELOPMENT

Plan Melbourne (2017) and other strategic documents such as the Greater Geelong Settlement Strategy (2020) set out clear objectives to protect green wedge and peri-urban areas, in order to maintain the green break between Geelong and Melbourne. These policy positions preclude consideration of further residential and urban development within the Avalon Corridor, beyond what is already planned.

The Avalon Corridor Strategy has focused on the designation of appropriate future land uses within the Avalon Corridor to take advantage of the region's strategic location and assets, whilst not undermining the long term intent for protection of green wedge and peri-urban areas.

14.6 PRECINCTS - NORTH AND SOUTH

Based on background analysis presented in earlier sections of this Strategy, two high level precincts have been identified - the North and South Precinct. These precincts are delineated the Princes Freeway and have been utilised to spatially differentiate the Avalon Corridor based on land use, land ownership and landscape considerations. The further designation of sub-precincts in the Framework Plan allows for the development of more targeted strategies and objectives.

NORTH PRECINCT

The North Precinct includes all land located to the north of the Princes Freeway. Apart from residential and rural residential land use associated with Lara and Little River, the North Precinct is characterised by open rural landscapes and farming land with limited development. Due to the limited presence of canopy vegetation (other than in isolated patches and along road corridors), substantial open views towards Wurdi Youang (the You Yangs) are available throughout the North Precinct, including glimpses along the Princes Freeway.

The Wyndham RDF, Holcim Quarry and Cherry Creek Youth Justice Facility are located to the north eastern corner of the North Precinct. Additionally, the precinct contains substantial tracts of potential stone resources designated as EIIAs or SERAs. Further investigations will be required to determine the appropriateness of this land for quarrying and to assess potential impacts against other objectives and values within the Avalon Corridor.

The North Precinct also includes the Werribee Junction and Mambourin East PSP areas located within the edge of the UGB.

North sub-precincts

- Lara and Little River townships
- Open rural landscapes and farming land
- Princes Freeway corridor (north side)
- Land within the UGB and OMR Transport Corridor alignment

SOUTH PRECINCT

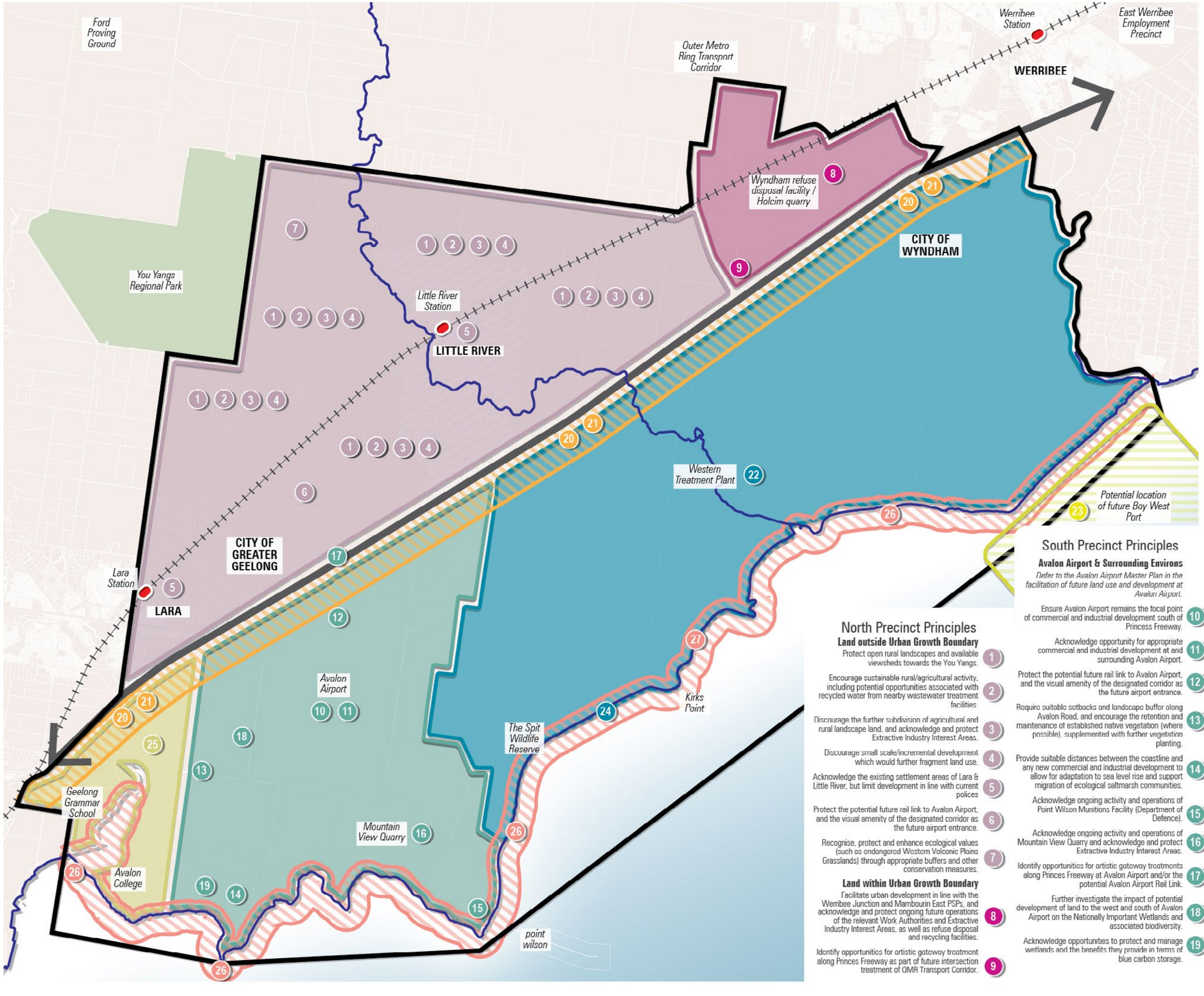
The South Precinct includes all land located to the south of the Princes Freeway. Land ownership and existing land use plays a large role in defining this area, noting that the WTP covers approximately three quarters of the South Precinct. Other larger specific land holdings within the South Precinct includes Avalon Airport, former Cheetham Saltworks, Mountain View Quarry, Point Wilson Munitions Facility and Crown land reserves.

Despite these major land holdings, the South Precinct is particularly hidden through a combination of the following factors:

- Alignment of the Princes Freeway creating a land use barrier.
- Extent of mature vegetation along the southern side of the Princes Freeway which limits views into and across the South Precinct.
- Flat topography, with no significant landforms such as Wurdi Youang to frame or draw visual focus.
- Limited road access points and the lack of established township settlements (other than a small area of rural residential living west of Avalon Road).

South sub-precincts:

- Avalon Airport and surrounding environs
- Western Treatment Plant (WTP) and environs
- Bay West Port and environs
- Princes Freeway corridor (south side)
- Existing settlement areas west of Avalon Road
- Coastal environs



AVALON CORRIDOR STRATEGY

KEY PRINCIPLES

i. Maintain and reinforce a green break between Geelong (regional Victoria) & Werribee (metropolitan Melbourne).

ii. Protect green wedge and rural landscapes, as well as cultural and environmental features of identified value.

iii. Protect ongoing operations of the Western Treatment Plant.

iv. Protect ongoing and future expanded functional operations of Avalon Airport (as per Avalon Airport Master Plan).

v. Focus appropriate commercial and industrial development within and surrounding Avalon Airport.

Create economic development and employment opportunities in the northern part of Geelong

vi. Highlight the ongoing importance of the economic and transport connections between Werribee and Geelong.

vii. Protect and enhance traffic movement on major roads (current and proposed) and rail corridors

ix. Discourage future residential population growth within the Avalon Corridor.

x. Protect areas of acknowledged environmental value including coastline and Ramsar wetlands.

xi. Protect areas of known Wadawurrung cultural heritage and post-contact heritage significance (in addition to undertaking further investigations as part of specific land use change and development proposals).

North Precinct Principles

Land outside Urban Growth Boundary

Protect open rural landscapes and available viewsheds towards the You Yangs. 1

Encourage sustainable rural/agricultural activity, including potential opportunities associated with recycled water from nearby wastewater treatment facilities. 2

Discourage the further subdivision of agricultural and rural landscape land, and acknowledge and protect Extractive Industry Interest Areas. 3

Discourage small scale/incremental development which would further fragment land use. 4

Acknowledge the existing settlement areas of Lara & Little River, but limit development in line with current polices 5

Protect the potential future rail link to Avalon Airport, and the visual amenity of the designated corridor as the future airport entrance. 6

Recognise, protect and enhance ecological values (such as endangered Western Volcanic Plains Grasslands) through appropriate buffers and other conservation measures. 7

Land within Urban Growth Boundary

Facilitate urban development in line with the Werribee Junction and Mambourin East PSPs, and acknowledge and protect ongoing future operations of the relevant Work Authorities and Extractive Industry Interest Areas, as well as refuse disposal and recycling facilities. 8

Identify opportunities for artistic gateway treatment along Princes Freeway as part of future intersection treatment of OMR Transport Corridor. 9

South Precinct Principles

Avalon Airport & Surrounding Environs

Refer to the Avalon Airport Master Plan in the facilitation of future land use and development at Avalon Airport.

Ensure Avalon Airport remains the focal point of commercial and industrial development south of Princess Freeway. 10

Acknowledge opportunity for appropriate commercial and industrial development at and surrounding Avalon Airport. 11

Protect the potential future rail link to Avalon Airport, and the visual amenity of the designated corridor as the future airport entrance. 12

Require suitable setbacks and landscape buffer along Avalon Road, and encourage the retention and maintenance of established native vegetation (where possible), supplemented with further vegetation planting. 13

Provide suitable distances between the coastline and any new commercial and industrial development to allow for adaptation to sea level rise and support migration of ecological saltmarsh communities. 14

Acknowledge ongoing activity and operations of Point Wilson Munitions Facility (Department of Defence). 15

Acknowledge ongoing activity and operations of Mountain View Quarry and acknowledge and protect Extractive Industry Interest Areas. 16

Identify opportunities for artistic gateway treatments along Princes Freeway at Avalon Airport and/or the potential Avalon Airport Rail Link. 17

Further investigate the impact of potential development of land to the west and south of Avalon Airport on the Nationally Important Wetlands and associated biodiversity. 18

Acknowledge opportunities to protect and manage wetlands and the benefits they provide in terms of blue carbon storage. 19

Princess Freeway Corridor (South Side)

Further establish landscaped vegetation buffer along the full extent of Princes Freeway, encourage the retention and maintenance of existing/mature native vegetation (where possible), supplemented with further vegetation planting, with planting selection having regard to underground utility infrastructure. 20

Encourage off freeway bicycle path to connect in with broader regional bike path network. 21

Western Treatment Plant & Environs

Acknowledge potential opportunities for recycled water to be used as part of intensive agriculture activity on land to the north of the Princess Freeway (within study area) and further afield (outside study area). 22

Acknowledge Bay West as the State Government preferred location for Melbourne's second container port terminal. 23

Further investigate areas of cultural heritage significance along the coastline of the Melbourne Water WTP landholdings (refer to Cultural Values Assessment recommendations). 24

Existing Settlement Areas West of Avalon Road

Acknowledge existing residential dwellings and rural land uses to the west of Avalon Road, but discourage further residential development. 25

Coastal Environs

Protect areas of acknowledged environmental importance, including coastline and Ramsar wetlands, and facilitate planned adaptation to sea level rise and other climate change impacts. 26

Encourage targeted and controlled public access links to Port Phillip Bay along the coastline where appropriate. 27

Figure 18: Key principles

Project Ref:	19.322
Dwg No.:	UDD-001
Scale	1:80,000@A3
Date:	27.09.22
Revision:	D

hansen

FRAMEWORK PLAN

15.0 Framework Plan 111
15.1 Framework Plan Objectives and Strategies 111
15.2 South Precinct 112
15.3 North Precinct 116

15.0

15.0 FRAMEWORK PLAN

The Framework Plan (Figure 19) guides future detailed land use and development in the Avalon Corridor out to 2050.

The Framework Plan is guided by a series of overarching objectives and strategies. More specific objectives and strategies also apply to the North and South Precincts and associated sub- precincts.

15.1 FRAMEWORK PLAN OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

Objectives

- To identify and protect land within the Avalon Corridor that constitutes the green break between Geelong and Melbourne.
- To acknowledge and protect land within the Avalon Corridor which has known cultural, environmental and landscape character values.
- To identify various state significant assets and promote a coordinated approach to infrastructure planning and development.
- To identify developable land for future employment uses.

Strategies

- Maintain and reinforce green break between Geelong and metropolitan Melbourne and discourage further population growth within existing settlements, beyond that outlined in current strategies.
- Protect ongoing and future expanded operations of Avalon Airport.
- Centralise future commercial and industrial development on land located south of the Princes Freeway at Avalon Airport (in line with the Master Plan) and immediate surrounds.
- Enable the future preparation of a Structure Plan for the GAEP.
- Encourage strategic land uses with a focus on employment generating activities.
- Prioritise protection of views to the culturally significant Wurdi Youang north of Princes Freeway.
- Acknowledge the location of the future Bay West Port.
- Protect and enhance the existing and future transport network.
- Minimise and eliminate (where possible) impacts of future land use and development on environmental values and sensitive ecosystems, including the Ramsar wetlands.
- Ensure impacts of climate change, including sea level rise, are considered and appropriately mitigated as part of all future land use and development.
- Protect green wedge and rural landscapes.
- Protect agricultural areas and the right to farm from incompatible land uses and further urban encroachment.
- Protect areas of acknowledged environmental importance, including grasslands, coastline and Ramsar wetlands.
- Protect non-urban land areas within the Avalon Corridor which are recognised for their cultural and landscape values.
- Protect ongoing operations of the WTP.
- Protect identified SERAs and EIIAs for potential future quarrying activities to meet demand for stone and sand for construction in the metropolitan Melbourne and Geelong areas.
- Position the Avalon Corridor as a tourism gateway and support tourism opportunities associated with existing activities and assets within the region.
- Ensure the protection of existing environmental linkages and wildlife corridors and encourage the provision of new environmental linkages both within the study area and to areas adjacent and beyond the study area.
- Undertake future detailed biodiversity assessments as part of future Structure Plan processes.

15.2 SOUTH PRECINCT

15.2.1 AVALON AIRPORT AND SURROUNDING ENVIRONS

Objectives

- To support and facilitate the major expansion of Avalon Airport and the opportunity for commercial and industrial development which benefits from the transport gateway anchored by the airport.

Strategies

- Acknowledge future expansion of Avalon Airport consistent with the Avalon Airport Master Plan (or future updates), including potential for substantial increase in airport traffic and possibility of two additional runways.
- Ensure Avalon Airport remains the critical focus of commercial and industrial development south of Princes Freeway.
- Acknowledge opportunities for airport and related commercial and industrial development of land surrounding Avalon Airport, but apply the following guiding principles to future development on and surrounding Avalon Airport:
  - Airport land – development to be consistent with Avalon Airport Master Plan.
  - Land surrounding Airport – ensure development of land immediately surrounding the airport includes commercial or industrial activities which are compatible with the airport and benefit the transport gateway locational attributes of the precinct.
  - Non-airport related – discourage activities, which are incompatible with the functional operation of the airport.
- Prepare a Structure Plan for the Greater Avalon Employment Precinct (GAEP).
- Acknowledge the need to undertake additional investigations regarding the current values of the Werribee-Avalon Area Nationally Important Wetland located to the west and south of Avalon Airport, including the former Cheetham Saltworks site. Such investigations should be undertaken as part of the Structure Plan process for the GAEP.
- Investigate the potential for an environmental buffer interface between the GAEP and adjacent coastal environs.
- Consider the direct and indirect impacts of the potential development of Avalon Airport and surrounding land on Ramsar wetland sites, and consider opportunities to restore the wetlands, either as part of development proposal or if development does not proceed.
- Consider visual amenity buffers for existing rural residential areas, such as setbacks and landscape buffers along Avalon Road.
- Acknowledge ongoing activities and operations of the Point Wilson Munitions Facility.
- Acknowledge ongoing activities and operations of Mountain View Quarry, and have regard for future rehabilitation opportunities.
- Identify opportunities for artistic gateway treatments along Princes Freeway at Avalon Airport and the potential future Avalon Airport Rail Link.
- Acknowledge land identified as EIIAs and land with authorised quarries.
- Undertaken a Safety Management Study (SMS) in accordance with AS 2885 for proposed land use change and development within applicable measurement lengths from gas and oil pipeline easements.
- Consult the *Site Planning and Landscape National Guidelines* (APA, 2020) for guidance on tree species selection within proximity of the gas pipeline easement.

15.2

15.2.2 WESTERN TREATMENT PLANT AND ENVIRONS

Objectives

- To ensure the long term operation of the WTP and its role relating to resource recovery.
- To support opportunities for sustainable and beneficial recycled water use.
- To encourage renewable energy generation opportunities.
- To ensure the Bay West Port infrastructure and operations do not compromise current or future sewage treatment capacity or operations within the WTP site.

Strategies

- Protect ongoing operations of the WTP.
- Encourage a range of land uses and activities on the WTP site which broadly relate to waste water treatment and resource recovery.
- Protect identified post contact and cultural heritage values and undertake further assessment of Wadawurrung cultural values present at WTP.
- Develop community water literacy and environmental awareness through site based education and visitation programs.
- Investigate the potential use of recycled water for agriculture within the Avalon Corridor.
- Encourage expanded opportunities for alternative forms of energy generation on WTP site, including biogas and solar.
- Further develop agricultural production within the WTP site.
- Protect the role of WTP as a functioning part of the Ramsar wetland site and a significant habitat for a number of migratory and shorebird species.

5.2.3 BAY WEST PORT AND ENVIRONS

Objectives

- To recognise the future Bay West Port as the location of Melbourne's second container port terminal, as supported by state policy.
- To ensure the Bay West Port infrastructure and operations do not compromise current or future sewage treatment capacity or operations within the WTP.
- To ensure the Bay West Port infrastructure planning and design considers and protects current and future infrastructure and operational requirements of the WTP.
- To minimise and eliminate impacts from the development and operations of the Bay West Port on significant biodiversity and environmental values, including sensitive coastal ecosystems and wetlands of international significance.

Strategies

- Implement necessary planning controls to protect long term development opportunities associated with the Bay West Port.
- Undertake baseline environmental and Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Impact Assessments for the final location of the Bay West Port.

View towards Avalon Airport from the WTP, with longer range open views to Wurdi Youang

15.2

15.2.4 PRINCES FREEWAY CORRIDOR (SOUTH SIDE)

Objectives

- To create a substantially landscaped vegetation corridor along the south side of the Princes Freeway.
- To further investigate and develop an off-road bicycle route or shared path to connect the missing link of the Port Phillip Bay Trail between Werribee and Geelong.

Strategies

- Encourage landscaped vegetation buffer along full extent of Princes Freeway, ensuring the selection of suitable species which will not impact negatively on gas or oil pipeline easements.
- Encourage development of an off-road bicycle or shared path to connect to the broader regional bike path network, including the Port Phillip Bay Trail and trails to the northern areas of Little River, Lara and the You Yangs.

15.2.5 EXISTING SETTLEMENT AREAS WEST OF AVALON ROAD

Objectives

- To acknowledge existing settlements in Avalon and protect their visual amenity and character through appropriate design controls for development of the GAEP and Avalon Airport.

Strategies

- Acknowledge existing rural residential dwellings and land uses to the west of Avalon Road, but discourage further residential development.
- Protect visual amenity through suitable design strategies such as setbacks and landscape buffers to the east side of Avalon Road (within the GAEP boundary).

15.2.6 COASTAL ENVIRONS

Objectives

- To protect the coastal environment, including areas of acknowledged environmental importance such as the Ramsar wetlands.
- To enhance public knowledge and appreciation of significant coastal environ areas.

Strategies

- Protect areas of environmental importance, through existing relevant policy frameworks.
- Encourage targeted and controlled public access links to Port Phillip Bay along the coastline, where appropriate.
- Investigate and address impacts of sea level rise and coastal erosion on coastal environs and habitat.
- Encourage regeneration and rehabilitation of wetlands areas, including saltmarsh within the areas of the former Cheetham Saltworks site (both public and private land).
- Investigate opportunities to expand areas of protected wetlands, where appropriate.

15.3

15.3 NORTH PRECINCT

15.3.1 LARA AND LITTLE RIVER TOWNSHIPS

Objectives

- To acknowledge the existing settlement area of Lara and facilitate residential development in line with the Lara Structure Plan (2012) and Greater Geelong Settlement Strategy.
- To investigate a township plan and permanent settlement boundary for Little River, which protects the current character of Little River and discourages further residential expansion.
- To protect future operations of Avalon Airport from residential encroachment.
- To recognise that the neighbouring townships of Lara and Little River have differences in scale, aspirations and resources.

Strategies

- Implement residential land use planning in line with the relevant policies and strategies of the Wyndham and Greater Geelong Planning Scheme.
- Investigate a permanent settlement boundary for Little River and implement appropriate planning controls which discourage further residential expansion.
- Implement appropriate planning controls for Avalon Airport to limit noise impacts on surrounding areas.

15.3.2 OPEN RURAL LANDSCAPES

Objectives

- To protect open rural landscapes and viewsheds towards the You Yangs.
- To protect identified green wedge and peri-urban land for agricultural and rural land uses.
- To support landowners to undertake rural landscape restoration.
- To acknowledge land identified as EIIAs or SERAs.

Strategies

- Encourage broad scale rural and agricultural activity.
- Discourage the further fragmentation of land.
- Discourage small scale, incremental development which would be in conflict with broader land designations.
- Discourage large scale buildings which would interrupt views to the You Yangs, including greenhouses.
- Implement appropriate planning controls to protect areas of acknowledged cultural or landscape significance, such as the foothills to Wurdi Youang (the You Yangs).

15.3

15.3.3 AVALON AIRPORT GATEWAY

Objectives

- To protect the potential opportunity for the Avalon Airport rail link.
- To enhance the visual amenity of connections into Avalon Airport as the entrance gateway to the Greater Geelong region and Melbourne Western Metro region.

Strategies

- Discourage development which would visually detract from the future Avalon Airport gateway entrance.

15.3.4 OMR TRANSPORT CORRIDOR ALIGNMENT AND LAND WITHIN UGB

Objectives

- To acknowledge the future alignment of the OMR Transport Corridor and its connection with the Princes Freeway.
- To identify opportunities for artistic gateway treatments at the future intersection of the OMR Transport Corridor with the Princes Freeway.
- To support and protect ongoing future operations of the Wyndham RDF and Holcim Quarry.

Strategies

- Encourage an artistic gateway as part of the future OMR Transport Corridor as a new visual marker for the entrance to Werribee.
- Maintain and enforce appropriate buffers associated with the Wyndham RDF and Holcim Quarry.

Port Phillip Bay coastal foreshore within the WTP site

Ford Proving Ground

You Yangs Regional Park

Outer Metro Ring Transport Corridor

Proposed Railway Station

Regional Rail Link

Electric Rail Line Spur

Werribee Station

East Werribee Employment Precinct

WERRIBEE

Mambourin East PSP

Wyndham refuse disposal facility / Holcim quarry

Werribee Junction PSP

CITY OF WYNDHAM

Little River Station

LITTLE RIVER

Potential Rail Link Avalon

Western Treatment Plant

Lara Station

CITY OF GREATER GEELONG

LARA

Avalon Airport

Kirks Point

The Spit Wildlife Reserve

Port Phillip Bay

Geelong Grammar School

Mountain View Quarry

Avalon College

Point Wilson

Sensitive coastal environs (including Ramsar)

Airport runway

Proposed highway landscape planting

Existing highway landscape planting

Mantain and protect gas pipeline

Sensitive landscape integration / interface requirement

Parkland

Potential access/ public access point

Victorian Coastal Inundation Sea Level Rise 2100 (82cm)

Diamond interchange/ road intersection'

Railway line / station

Youth Justice Facility, Cherry Creek (under construction)

Possible Avalon Airport Rail Link (per PAO14 designation)

Freeway

Outer metro ring transport corridor

Indicative alignment for off-road Around the Bay Cycle Trail

Future Outer Metropolitan Ring (OMR) Transport Corridor

Proposed new road connection

Future Bay West port (indicative concept design – subject to future planning and change)

AVALON CORRIDOR STRATEGY

FRAMEWORK PLAN

KEY

- Study area
- Municipal boundary
- Future Werribee gateway
- Future Avalon, Geelong gateway
- Little River, You Yangs, tourism gateway
- Intersection upgrade
- Long-range views to You Yangs
- Long-range glimpsed/framed views
- Agriculture / rural landscape setting for the You Yangs
- Werribee urban interface (refer to specific PSPs for further guidance)
- Extent of Lara Structure Plan. Discourage future township growth
- Existing dwellings in GWZ & FZ land
- Extent of Little River (T7 & LDR7 land) Discourage future township growth
- Extractive Industries Works Approvals (WA) – current and proposed*
- Strategic Extractive Resource Area (SFRA)
- Extractive Industry Interest Areas (for further investigation)
- Quarry & potential reuse for industry requiring buffers (note: Dept of Defence site adjacent may impact potential use/ employee density)
- Greater Avalon Employment Precinct boundary
- Rural /agriculture/ education (existing)
- Agriculture/ aquaculture/ environmental
- Potential location of future Bay West port
- Western Treatment Plant (refer to MW Future Landuse Plan)
- Airport activities (refer to Avalon Airport Masterplan)
- Biodiversity
- Department of Defence Site
- Western Grassland Reserve

Figure 19: Framework Plan

Project Ref:	19.322
Dwg No.:	UDD 001
Scale	1:80,000@A3
Date:	25.10.22
Revision:	D

hansen

IMPLEMENTATION

16.0 Implementation 121

16.1 Framework Plan Implementation 121

16.2 Further Work to be Undertaken 124

16.0

16.0 IMPLEMENTATION

16.1 FRAMEWORK PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

The Avalon Corridor Strategy provides a long term strategic vision of the Avalon Corridor to ensure planning decisions on individual sites are made in context of the broader vision for the region. The Avalon Corridor Strategy has been tasked with preparing strategic guidance for a large tract of land, which extends from the eastern edge of Geelong to the western edge of Werribee.

The key output of the Avalon Corridor Strategy is the Framework Plan, which outlines the broader spatial pattern of land use for the Avalon Corridor and identifies relevant objectives and strategies for sub-precincts. The Framework Plan is high level in focus and therefore does not go into details that will be determined through subsequent planning processes, such as the development of Structure Plans for the GAEP, Werribee Junction and Mambourin East.

WERRIBEE URBAN INTERFACE

The Werribee urban interface area as illustrated on the Framework Plan will be the subject of further detailed investigations and concept planning associated with the preparation of the Werribee Junction and Mambourin East PSPs. These PSPs are to be led and developed by the VPA in collaboration with WCC.

The Mambourin East PSP and majority of the Werribee Junction PSP are identified as 'regionally significant industrial precincts' for potential employment uses focused on industry and logistics, per the West Growth Corridor Plan, Melbourne Industrial and Commercial Land Use Plan (MICLUP) and Draft Western Metro Land Use Framework Plan. Land use relating to industry and logistics in these PSPs will likely benefit from proximity to Avalon Airport, the future Bay West Port and the OMR Transport Corridor.

GREATER AVALON EMPLOYMENT PRECINCT

While the Framework Plan sets out the broader directions for land use and development, it will be necessary for further detailed work to be completed to assess a range of specific land use/ development issues and options at and surrounding Avalon Airport.

The Framework Plan identifies land which has potential for commercial/ industrial airport related development given locational attributes and proximity to Avalon Airport. However, it is not a matter of simply rezoning and redeveloping individual sites around the airport on a piecemeal basis, as this could undermine the intent of why the Avalon Corridor Strategy is being prepared i.e., the significant opportunities provided by an integrated airport and related commercial business precinct focused on Avalon Airport.

Therefore, it will be necessary to prepare a Structure Plan for the land identified in the Framework Plan as 'potential commercial / industrial / airport related business' which will function to strategically consider the optimal arrangement and integration of future land use and development of land surrounding the Avalon Airport, and would be broadly guided by the Avalon Corridor Strategy and Framework Plan. During the planning and development of the Structure Plan there is a need to consider practices and principles relating to Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) and Biodiversity Sensitive Urban Design (BSUD), particularly for land west of Avalon Airport.

It will be the role of the Structure Plan to investigate and develop an appropriate response to key matters prior to development proceeding. Although the Avalon Corridor Strategy sets high-level land use and policy direction, more detailed matters will need to be addressed through relevant structure planning processes

Functionally speaking, the Structure Plan would be informed and guided by the broader findings, conclusions and recommendations of the Avalon Corridor Strategy. The preparation of a Structure Plan would enable the consideration of all specific issues at a detailed and comprehensive level, to achieve the best outcome for the entire airport precinct. This approach avoids addressing issues on a site by site basis, which could lead to a fragmented assessment, consequently undermining the opportunity to maximise the potential to develop this area as a fully integrated airport and related precinct.

Given a Structure Plan functions to take a precinct wide approach, it allows precinct wide issues to be considered and addressed. For example, through the preparation of a precinct wide transport management strategy and precinct wide drainage catchment strategy, where an optimal response

to such matters can be embedded into the Structure Plan. This process then also allows the preparation and implementation of a Development Contributions Plan (DCP) to fund required items, such as drainage as one particular example.

It is also highlighted that the Framework Plan contains numerous elements which fall outside of the immediate control of Greater Geelong & Wyndham Councils to influence or implement, with these relating to matters of state significance such as:

- Avalon Airport being granted approval for further international flights
- Construction of improved public transport connections to Avalon Airport
- Construction of the OMR Transport Corridor
- Construction of the Bay West Port as the preferred port option and its potential construction

IMPLICATION OF PLANNING POLICY

- Incorporate necessary policy references within the Planning Policy Framework (PPF), including State, Regional, Local and MSS of both the Greater Geelong and Wyndham Planning Schemes.
- Incorporate necessary policy references within the G21 Regional Growth Plan.

APPLICATION OF ZONES AND OVERLAYS

- Implement overlay controls to address airport noise contours and building height restriction associated with the functional operation of Avalon Airport.
- Implement required zones and overlays in the short term to protect long term development opportunities associated with the Bay West Port.
- Consider amending the existing Farming Zone of the Geelong Motor Sports Complex to recreational open space or other suitable zone, which could be facilitated via a future rezoning associated with the implementation of the Greater Avalon Employment Precinct Structure Plan.

The above implementation of the Avalon Corridor Strategy into the Greater Geelong and Wyndham Planning Scheme should be undertaken in the short term (0-2 years).

Former Cheetham Saltworks site with longer range open views to Wurdi Youang

16.2 FURTHER WORK TO BE UNDERTAKEN

The Framework Plan functions as high level strategic planning strategy to guide future land use and development. However, the Framework Plan is not resolved to a level to contemplate and spatially map out all potential future land use and development, nor address every potential issue to a specific and detailed level.

Accordingly, the next level of detailed strategic analysis will be captured by other formal steps involved in the consideration of the future land use and development, including:

- Planning Scheme Amendment process to implement aspects of this strategy;
- Preparation of detailed Structure Plans for key future development areas; &
- Required statutory approvals for site specific proposals.

In the final drafting stages of this Strategy, the Victoria Planning Authority (VPA) were appointed by the Minister for Planning to become the planning authority to prepare a Structure Plan for the proposed employment precinct adjacent to Avalon Airport, known as the Greater Avalon Employment Precinct (GAEP). Initial background site investigations for the Structure Plan has already commenced by the VPA.

Following below is further strategic work which should be undertaken by CoGG and WCC (as applicable), following the formal adoption of this strategy. This list is not exhaustive, and other items of work are likely to be identified in due course. Future work to be actioned includes the following which has been set out in terms of short, medium and longer term priority:

SHORT TERM (1-5 YEARS):

1. CoGG to work with the VPA to commence the preparation of a Structure Plan for the GAEP (refer to Section 16.1 for further discussion and detail on the role and function of the Structure Plan), including:
   - Undertake detailed environmental assessments of land immediately to the west of Avalon Airport to consider potential impacts of future development on identified Werribee-Avalon Area Nationally Important Wetlands (NIW).
2. CoGG and/or the VPA and DoT to assess movement and access in developing the Structure Plan, including:
   - The long-term role of Point Wilson Road for passenger and freight access to Avalon Airport and access to Little River.
   - Upgrades of Beach Road and Avalon Road interchange to accommodate future passenger and freight growth.
3. WCC and the VPA to continue the preparation of the Werribee Junction and Mambourin East PSPs in a manner that is consistent with the high-level objectives and land use guidance of the Avalon Corridor Strategy.
4. VPA to undertake further environmental assessments as part of the investigation and confirmation of the Greater Avalon Employment Precinct Structure Plan including mitigation of stormwater runoff on wetlands, and the current values of the nationally important wetlands (Former Cheetham Saltworks) to the west and south of Avalon Airport.
5. CoGG, WCC, DELWP and WTOAC to undertake further analysis and investigation regarding the potential expansion of the SLO to address cultural values, noting that:
   - The Cultural Values Assessment completed for the Avalon Corridor Strategy included a recommendation from the WTOAC to look at extending the SLOs for the You Yangs (Wurdi Youang) and Anakie Ranges.
   - This request is influenced by current work of DELWP, which is considering the purpose and use of SLOs on a number of fronts, including whether SLOs are an appropriate tool for protecting cultural heritage.
6. CoGG and WCC to advocate to CCMA, Melbourne Water and Barwon Water to improve catchment health through relevant IWM Forums, including returning environmental flows and creating wildlife corridor through to WTP.
7. CoGG and WCC to confirm alternate water supply opportunities for the Avalon Corridor region, such as through development of Integrated Water Management (IWM) plans with relevant stakeholders (e.g. Melbourne Water, Barwon Water and Greater Western Water), in consultation with relevant IWM Forums.

16.2

MEDIUM TERM (5-10 YEARS):

8. CoGG and WCC to investigate opportunities to create a strategic biodiversity link between the You Yangs, the adjacent native grassland remnants, and the Western Grasslands Reserve.
9. CoGG to review outstanding post-contact heritage recommendations for Heritage overlays identified in the Outer Areas Heritage Study and investigate the HO potential of early dry stone walls and other features in the area, as part of a five year program looking at the Outer Areas.
10. WCC to implement the recommendations of the Stage 1 Heritage Review Gap Study2019 as endorsed by Council in June 2021; this work is proposed to be carried out in a staged manner in the next one to five years.
11. CoGG, in discussion with Heritage Victoria and community groups, to explore the potential inclusion of the Wurdi Youang/You Yangs in the Victorian Heritage Register or a Heritage Overlay.
12. DoT, COGG and WCC to undertake further investigations to understand the need for transport network upgrades, based on current and future demand.

LONGER TERM (10+ YEARS):

13. CoGG and WCC to work together to prepare a township plan for Little River and to establish a township settlement boundary to restrict further urban/residential expansion.
14. CoGG and WCC to further investigate investment and infrastructure needs for facilitating sustainable ecotourism activities such as fishing, birdwatching, water sports, bay trail rides in the corridor.
15. CoGG and WCC to investigate and consider opportunities with DELWP and Parks Victoria to expand coastal park and Ramsar wetland areas on publicly owned land.
16. CoGG and WCC to review the Avalon Corridor Strategy and associated Framework Plan, if justified by significant changes to overarching state policy and land use directions for the Avalon Corridor.

Beyond matters that CoGG and WCC can action, further work has been identified which should be undertaken by other organisations:

- Relevant state government departments to urgently undertake further design to define the port site location and supporting connections, and investigate the implementation of appropriate planning scheme mechanisms to protect future potential alignment/s to facilitate the preferred location of the Bay West Port.
- Relevant state government departments to undertake further work to address connectivity and expansion of significant biodiversity and native vegetation areas, including Ramsar sites, coastal reserves, waterways/wetlands, conservation reserves, patches of native vegetation and biosites etc.
- Relevant state government departments to undertake further work to assess potential environmental and cultural heritage impacts of major infrastructure projects, such as the Bay West Port.
- Relevant state government departments to undertake further work to assess potential buffer requirements around high value biodiversity areas for prevention of noise/light/pollution impacts, particularly with regard to migratory birds around Ramsar wetlands and WTP.
- Relevant state government departments to advance acquisition and protection of the Western Grasslands Reserve and to resolve any potential existing or future land use conflicts within the reserve.
- Relevant state government departments to undertake a further work to analyse timing, sequencing and delivery of major various projects within the Avalon Corridor (i.e. OMR Transport Corridor, Bay West Port etc.).
- Relevant state government departments to undertake further work to preserve the functional importance of the Princes Freeway and rail link between Werribee and Geelong including considerations of:
  - Safeguarding against climate change – sea level rise, intense rainfall and increased flooding.
  - Resilience for longer-term freight security – including backup routes in case of closure and functional limits on bridges and culverts.

16.2

  - Avalon Airport to finalise and incorporate the proposed ANEF into a revised Master Plan, in consultation with relevant local, state and federal government departments/ agencies. Interim planning work for and around the airport (including the proposed PSP for the Avalon employment precinct) to protect the option to develop a second parallel and third cross runway, as signalled under the current 2015 Master Plan, unless superseded by an updated Master Plan.

- CoGG and WCC to liaise with relevant entities to identify and protect remaining volcanic ecosystems.
- DELWP to further investigate the extent and condition of native grasslands predicted to be present in the study area.



Open rural landscapes north of the Princes Freeway

APPENDIX 1

17.0 Appendix 1 129

17.1 Planning Policy Framework 129

17.0

17.0 APPENDIX 1

17.1 PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

The following policies of the Planning Policy Framework (PPF) are of relevance to the Avalon Corridor Strategy:

- **Clause 11.01-1S - Settlement** includes a strategy to focus investment and growth in places of state significance in Metropolitan Melbourne and the major regional cities.
- **Clause 11.01-1R - Settlement - Geelong G21 (Greater Geelong)** seeks to Maintain a significant settlement break between the region and Melbourne.
- **Clause 11.01-R - Green Wedges Metropolitan Melbourne (Wyndham)** seeks to protect the green wedges of Metropolitan Melbourne from inappropriate development. Further relevant strategies include:
  - Promote and encourage the key features and related values of each green wedge area. Support development in the green wedge that provides for environmental, economic and social benefits.
  - Plan and protect major state infrastructure and resource assets, such as airports and ports with their associated access corridors, water supply dams, water catchments and waste management and recycling facilities.
  - Support existing and potential agribusiness activities, forestry, food production and tourism.
  - Protect areas of environmental, landscape and scenic value such as biodiversity assets, national and state parks, Ramsar wetlands and coastal areas.
  - Protect significant resources of stone, sand and other mineral resources for extraction purposes.
  - Provide opportunities for renewable energy generation.
- **Clause 11.01-1R Settlement - Metropolitan Melbourne (Wyndham)** seeks to maintain a permanent UGB around Melbourne to create a more consolidated, sustainable city and protect the values of non-urban land.
- **Clause 11.03-3R Peri-urban areas (Greater Geelong)** includes a number of relevant strategies:
  - Identify and protect areas that are strategically important for the environment, biodiversity, landscape, open space, water, agriculture, energy, recreation, tourism, environment, cultural heritage, infrastructure, extractive and other natural resources.
  - Prevent dispersed settlement and provide for non-urban breaks between urban areas.
  - Improve connections to regional and metropolitan transport services.
- **Clause 12 - Environmental and landscape values** outlines that:
  - Planning should help to protect the health of ecological systems and the biodiversity they support (including ecosystems, habitats, species and genetic diversity) and conserve areas with identified environmental and landscape values.
  - Planning should protect, restore and enhance sites and features of nature conservation, biodiversity, geological or landscape value.
- **Clause 12.01-1S – Protection of biodiversity** seeks the protection and conservation of Victoria's biodiversity, including important habitat for flora and fauna and strategically valuable biodiversity sites.
- **Clause 12.01-2S Native vegetation management** seeks to ensure that there is no net loss to biodiversity as a result of the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation.
- **Clause 12.02-1S - Protection of the marine and coastal environment** seeks to recognise the value of coastal areas to the community, conserve and enhance coastal areas and ensure sustainable use of natural coastal resources, in addition to enhancing ecological values; avoiding cumulative impacts on ecosystems; and avoiding disturbing acid sulphate soils etc.
- **Clause 12.03-1S River corridors, waterways, lakes and wetlands** seeks to protect and enhance river corridors, waterways, lakes and wetlands.
- **Clause 12.05-1S Environmentally sensitive areas** seeks to protect and conserve environmentally sensitive areas.

17.1

- **Clause 13 Environmental Risks and Amenity** outlines that:
  - Planning should strengthen the resilience and safety of communities by adopting a best practice environmental management and risk management approach.
  - Planning should identify, prevent and minimise the risk of harm to the environment, human health, and amenity through: Land use and development compatibility and Effective controls to prevent or mitigate significant impacts.
  - Planning should identify and manage the potential for the environment and environmental changes to impact on the economic, environmental or social wellbeing of society.
  - Planning should ensure development and risk mitigation does not detrimentally interfere with important natural processes.
  - Planning should prepare for and respond to the impacts of climate change.
- **Clause 13.01-1S Natural hazards and climate change** seeks to minimise the impacts of natural hazards and adapt to the impacts of climate change through risk-based planning.
- **Clause 13.01-2S Coastal inundation and erosion** seeks to plan for and manage the potential coastal impacts of climate change, and includes specific strategies to:
  - Plan for sea level rise of not less than 0.8 metres by 2100 and allow for the combined effects of tides, storm surges, coastal processes and local conditions such as topography and geology when assessing risks and coastal impacts associated with climate change.
  - Ensure that land subject to hazards is identified and appropriately managed to ensure that future use and development is not at risk.
  - Avoid use and development in areas vulnerable to coastal inundation and erosion.
  - Respond to marine and coastal processes in the context of the coastal compartment type.
  - Assess the effectiveness, costs, benefits, impacts (direct, cumulative and synergistic) and path dependency of available adaptation options in the following order: 1. non- intervention; 2. avoid; 3. nature-base methods; 4. accommodate; 5. retreat; & 6. protect
  - Ensure that development or protective works that seek to respond to coastal hazard risks avoid detrimental impacts on coastal processes.
- **Clause 13.03 Floodplains** seeks to assist the protection of:
  - Life, property and community infrastructure from flood hazard, including coastal inundation, riverine and overland flows.
  - The natural flood carrying capacity of rivers, streams and floodways.
  - The flood storage function of floodplains and waterways.
  - Floodplain areas of environmental significance or of importance to river, wetland or coastal health.
- **Clause 13.07-1S Land use compatibility** seeks to protect community amenity and human health and safety while facilitating appropriate commercial, industrial, infrastructure or other uses with potential adverse off-site impacts.
- **Clause 14 Natural Resource Management** outlines that:
  - Planning is to assist in the conservation and wise use of natural resources including energy, water, land, stone and minerals to support both environmental quality and sustainable development.
  - Planning should ensure agricultural land is managed sustainably, while acknowledging the economic importance of agricultural production.
- **Clause 14.01-1S Protection of agricultural land** seeks to protect the state's agricultural activities by preserving productive farmland.
- **Clause 14.01-2R Agricultural productivity - Geelong G21 (Greater Geelong)** seeks to support new opportunities in farming and fisheries.
- **Clause 14.01-1R Protection of agricultural land - Metropolitan Melbourne (Wyndham)** seeks to protect agricultural land in Metropolitan Melbourne's green wedges and peri-urban areas to avoid the permanent loss of agricultural land in those locations.
- **Clause 14.02-1S Catchment planning and management** seeks to assist the protection and restoration of catchments, water bodies, groundwater, and the marine environment.
- **Clause 14.02-2S Water quality** seeks to protect water quality, including water catchments and natural environs.
- **Clause 14.03-1S Resource exploration and extraction** seeks to encourage exploration and extraction of natural resources in accordance with acceptable environmental standards.

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- **Clause 15.03-1S Heritage conservation** seeks to ensure the conservation of places of heritage significance.
- **Clause 17 Economic Development** outlines that:
  - Planning is to provide for a strong and innovative economy, where all sectors are critical to economic prosperity.
  - Planning is to contribute to the economic wellbeing of the state and foster economic growth by providing land, facilitating decisions and resolving land use conflicts, so that each region may build on its strengths and achieve its economic potential.
- **Clause 17.01-1S Diversified economy** seeks to strengthen and diversify the economy.
- **Clause 17.01-1R Diversified economy - Geelong G21 (Greater Geelong)** contains the following strategies:
  - Build on the region's competitive strengths, including tourism and agricultural land resources and economic, social and natural assets.
  - Support new businesses that provide employment and innovation opportunities in identified employment nodes across the region.
  - Support industries that utilise skills within the region.
- **Clause 17.03-1S Industrial land supply** seeks to ensure there is an adequate supply and availability of land for industry.
- **Clause 18 Transport outlines** that planning should ensure a safe, integrated and sustainable transport system that: provides access to social and economic opportunities to support individual and community wellbeing; facilitates economic prosperity; actively contributes to environmental sustainability; Facilitates network-wide efficient, coordinated and reliable movements of people and goods; & supports health and wellbeing.
- **Clause 18.01-1S Land use and transport planning** seeks to facilitate access to social, cultural and economic opportunities by effectively integrating land use and transport.
- **Clause 18.01-2S Transport system** seeks to facilitate the efficient, coordinated and reliable movement of people and goods by developing an integrated and efficient transport system.
- **Clause 18.01-2R Transport system - Geelong G21 (Greater Geelong)** seeks to support improved transit and access within Geelong and the wider region and support a greater connection to the Werribee growth corridor and Melbourne.
- **Clause 18.02-1S Cycling** seeks to facilitate an efficient and safe bicycle network and increase the proportion of trips made by cycling.
- **Clause 18.02-2R Cycling - Metropolitan Melbourne (Wyndham)** seeks to develop local cycling networks and new cycling facilities that support the development of 20-minute neighbourhoods and that link to and complement the metropolitan-wide network of bicycle routes - the Principal Bicycle Network.
- **Clause 18.02-3S Public Transport s**eeks to facilitate an efficient and safe public transport network and increase the proportion of trips made by public transport.
- **18.02-3R Principal Public Transport Network (Wyndham)** seeks to facilitate high quality public transport access and improve the Principal Public Transport Network.
- **Clause 18.02-4S Roads** seeks to facilitate an efficient and safe road network that integrates all movement networks and makes best use of existing infrastructure.
- **Clause 18.02-5S Freight** seeks to facilitate an efficient, coordinated, safe and sustainable freight and logistics system that enhances Victoria's economic prosperity and liveability. Further relevant strategies include:
  - Support the movement of freight within Victoria's freight and logistics system.
  - Improve freight efficiency and capacity.
  - Manage negative impacts of freight generating activities on urban amenity, the development of urban areas, and on the efficient operation of movement networks.
  - Prioritise new technologies that enhance road and rail safety, optimise the metropolitan road network, better manage congestion and reduce supply chain costs.
  - Increase the capacity of the rail network to carry larger volumes of freight.
  - Protect and develop the Principal Freight Network, including freight movement corridors and freight places, and Principal Transport Gateways, by:
    - Facilitating the movement of high volumes of freight and freight of strategic value.
    - Linking areas of production and manufacturing to national and international gateways and export markets.
    - Increasing the capacity of Principal Transport Gateways and supporting their use and
    - Development as important locations for employment and economic activity.

- Designing the Principal Freight Network to adapt to commodity, market and operating changes.
- Managing encroachment from incompatible land use and development that would undermine its ability to operate.
- Support the development of freight and logistics precincts in strategic locations within and adjacent to Principal Transport Gateways and along the Principal Freight Network movement corridors by:
- Allocating land for complementary uses and employment-generating activities, such as distribution and warehousing.
- Reserving and appropriately zoning land for interstate freight terminals to support development that allows for the direct and immediate delivery of goods to market.
- Allocating land to allow high-volume freight customers to locate adjacent to interstate freight terminals, including the Western Interstate Freight Terminal and the Beveridge Interstate Freight Terminal.

- **Clause 18.02-5R Freight links - Geelong G21 (Greater Geelong)** seeks to recognise and develop a national transport and logistics precinct to the north of Geelong, connecting Avalon Airport, Geelong Port and the Geelong Ring Road Employment Precinct.
- **Clause 18.02-5R Freight links - Metropolitan Melbourne (Wyndham)** seeks to ensure suitable sites are provided for intermodal freight terminals at key locations around Metropolitan Melbourne, particularly for the Beveridge Interstate Freight Terminal and the WIFT.
- **Clause 18.02-6S Ports** seeks to support the effective and competitive operation of Victoria's commercial trading ports at local, national and international levels, and to facilitate their ongoing sustainable operation and development. Further relevant strategies include:
  - Identify and protect key transport corridors linking ports to the broader transport network.
  - Manage any impacts of a commercial trading port and any related industrial development on nearby sensitive uses to minimise the impact of vibration, light spill, noise and air emissions from port activities.
  - Protect commercial trading ports from encroachment of sensitive and incompatible land uses in the port environs.
  - Plan for and manage land in the port environs to accommodate uses that depend upon, or gain significant economic advantage from, proximity to the port's operations.
  - Ensure that industrially zoned land within the environs of a commercial trading port is maintained and continues to support the role of the port as a critical freight and logistics precinct.
  - Identify and protect key transport corridors linking ports to the broader transport network.
  - Ensure any new use or development within the environs of a commercial trading port does not prejudice the efficient and curfew-free operations of the port.
- **Clause 18.02-7S Airports and airfields** seeks to strengthen the role of Victoria's airports and airfields within the state's economic and transport infrastructure, facilitate their siting and expansion, and protect their ongoing operation. Further relevant strategies include:
  - Protect airports from incompatible land uses.
  - Ensure that in the planning of airports, land use decisions are integrated, appropriate land use buffers are in place and provision is made for associated businesses that service airports.
  - Ensure the planning of airports identifies and encourages activities that complement the role of the airport, and enables the operator to effectively develop the airport to be efficient and functional and contribute to the aviation needs of the state.
  - Protect the environs of Avalon Airport so it can operate as a full-size jet airport focusing on freight, training and services.
  - Plan the location of airfields, nearby existing and potential development, and the land-based transport system required to serve them, as an integrated operation.
  - Plan the visual amenity and impact of any use or development of land on the approaches to an airfield to be consistent with the status of the airfield.
  - Plan for areas around all airfields so:
    - Any new use or development that could prejudice the safety or efficiency of an airfield is precluded.
    - The detrimental effects of aircraft operations (such as noise) are taken into account in regulating and restricting the use and development of affected land.
    - Any new use or development that could prejudice future extensions to an existing airfield or aeronautical operations, in accordance with an approved strategy or master plan for that airfield, is precluded.

17.1

- **Clause 19 Infrastructure** outlines that:
  - Planning for development of social and physical infrastructure should enable it to be provided in a way that is efficient, equitable, accessible and timely.
  - Planning should ensure that the growth and redevelopment of settlements is planned in a manner that allows for the logical and efficient provision and maintenance of infrastructure, including the setting aside of land for the construction of future transport routes.
  - Planning should minimise the impact of use and development on the operation of major infrastructure of national, state and regional significance, including communication networks and energy generation and distribution systems.
  - Planning authorities should consider the use of development and infrastructure contributions in the funding of infrastructure.
- **Clause 19.03-3S Integrated water management** seeks to sustainably manage water supply, water resources, wastewater, drainage and stormwater through an integrated water management approach.
- **Clause 19.03-5S Waste and resource recovery** seeks to reduce waste and maximise resource recovery so as to reduce reliance on landfills and minimise environmental, community amenity and public health impacts.

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2.2. Sparrovale Wetlands Master Plan

Source: **City Services**
Director: **Guy Wilson-Browne**

Purpose

1. For Council to consider and adopt the Sparrovale Wetlands Master Plan.

Background

2. In 2019 the City acquired approximately 500 hectares of land adjoining the Barwon River known as Sparrovale Wetlands.

3. The Sparrovale Wetlands were acquired to provide an end of drainage solution for the storm water from the Armstrong Creek and Horseshoe Bend Development Precincts that is currently entering Hospital Swamps unregulated, impacting the ecology character of this internationally important wetland.

4. The draft Master Plan was released for public consultation between May and July 2020. Fifty-one submissions were received from our community and stakeholders.

5. The 20-year Master Plan provides an over-arching vision, objectives and actions for the site which incorporates extensive areas of flood prone open space, native vegetation, natural wetlands and approximately four kilometres of Barwon River frontage.

6. Actions are phased over three stages to prioritise environmental protection, open up the wetlands park and create a regional gateway to the Lake Connewarre Ramsar area.

Key Matters

7. The Sparrovale Wetlands adjoins the Lake Connewarre State Game Reserve, which forms part of the Port Phillip Bay (Western Shoreline) and Bellarine Peninsula Ramsar site which is protected under the Federal Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act).

8. The Sparrovale Wetlands form an important part of the Wadawurrung cultural heritage and in May 2021 the reserve has received an indigenous co-name, Nubitj yoorree, meaning lots of water or ‘wetlands’.

9. Habitat for the critically endangered Orange-bellied Parrot is a feature of the wetlands and in 2020 Growling Grass Frog and Yarra Pygmy Perch were recorded within the reserve. All species are listed under the EPBC Act.

10. Two hundred hectares of a natural wetland basin will be utilised to store stormwater from the new growth areas. The recently constructed Southern Deviation Channel connects Armstrong Creek to the Sparrovale Wetlands.

11. The consultation responses from the community show overwhelming support for the goal to protect and enhance the natural habitat and biodiversity values of Sparrovale, Barwon River and Lake Connewarre Ramsar areas.

RESOLUTION - Item 2.2

Cr Mason moved, Cr Moloney seconded -

That Council adopt the Sparrovale Wetlands Master Plan (Attachment 1).

Carried

Financial Sustainability

12. The Sparrovale Wetlands Master Plan is funded as part of the Developer Contributions Plan (DCP). Funding required to implement the actions of the Master Plan and Monitoring and Management Plan that are outside of the DCP activities, will be considered in the annual planning and budget cycles. An indicative ten-year budget is outlined in the table below. The City will also seek external funding opportunities to deliver the actions within the Master Plan.

13. Indicative ten-year budget:

SPARROVALE WETLAND MASTER PLAN IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE SUMMARY

Prepared by TBLD P/L for City of Greater Geelong 14/05/2021. Note preliminary cost estimates are for planning purposes only and subject to survey and design.

Phase	FY 20/21	FY 21/22	FY 22/23	FY 23/24	2025 - 2030	Total Cost
Master Plan Phase 1 - Protecting the Wetlands and Barwon River (2019-2023)	$94,500	$325,500	$203,500	$143,500	$468,000	$1,235,000
Master Plan Phase 2 - Opening the park (2023 - 2030)	$0	$40,000	$67,500	$353,000	$410,000	$870,500
Management and Monitoring	$174,000	$231,000	$231,000	$231,000	$1,422,000	$2,289,000
Total	$268,500	$596,500	$502,000	$727,500	$2,300,000	$4,394,500
Contingencies (10%)	$26,850	$59,650	$50,200	$72,750	$230,000	$439,450
Total Works 2020-2030	$295,350	$656,150	$552,200	$800,250	$2,530,000	$4,833,950

Community Engagement

14. The development of the Master Plan was informed by extensive community engagement including:

    14.1. Seven face-to-face meetings with the Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation (including two site visits);

    14.2. There were 3,000 Have Your Say postcards letter dropped throughout the Armstrong Creek postcode;

    14.3. A video promoting the project and the opportunity to contribute to the Master Plan was placed on Facebook and Instagram which generated over 25,000 views, 93 shares and 479 reactions on Facebook and 1,411 views on Instagram;

    14.4. An advertisement was placed in the Armstrong Creek Times on 2 July 2020;

    14.5. An article about the Sparrovale wetlands and master plan featured in the April edition of the City's Community News. Other media releases included Geelong Advertiser 11/05/2020 and Surfcoast Times 28/05/2020;

    14.6. A total of 42 surveys were completed (actual number received was 45 with one submission repeated 4 times) along with nine detailed written responses emailed directly to the project officer by the closing date of 13/07/2020. The responses have been summarised below;

    14.7. Six presentations were provided to interested community groups and agencies;

    14.8. Copies of a series of four Sparrovale values plans were provided to developer sales offices for distribution; and

    14.9. One community guided tour occurred in September 2019.

15. The following themes were identified from the engagement feedback:

Cultural Heritage	• Management Partnership with Wadawurrung important; • Consider re-naming of precinct with Aboriginal values; and • Opportunity to educate public about Aboriginal Heritage important.
Historical Heritage	• Need to retain former railway line and racecourse; and • Need to reference stables.
Flora	• Revegetation in areas which have become degraded; • Removal of pest flora and fauna; and • Will community have opportunity to be involved in planting/works?
Fauna	• Requires world class advice to inform establishment and ongoing management; • Boating on the river must be strictly controlled to protect wildlife; and • Nominate Sparrovale Wetland to be included in the Ramsar area.
Flooding and Drainage	• Maximise efficiency in managing water/run-off; • Not sure about releasing storm water into Lake Connewarre as this is a saline lake; • Lack of detail about hydrological management; and • Wetland design must have best practice design.
Recreation	• Duck/quail shooting has no place in the proposed/planned wetland; • Support increased connectivity and access; • Like to see dedicated bike area; • Potential safety risks to people when hunters are shooting. • Bushwalking/bird watching section too short; • Caution re disturbance to birds on Connewarre Delta; • How will this affect the future of Field and Game; • Priority to be given to design the trail from Geelong along the river; • Like to see more recreational area; • Like to see duck hunters' areas increased into Sparrovale Wetlands; • There should be good grounds for hunting; • Like to see dog friendly areas; • Like to see boardwalks and all-weather walks; • Priority to introduce walking paths; and • Limit cycling access.

Commercial	• Introduction of wetland will present risks to the eel fishery; • Grazing regimes must be managed/informed by environmental guidelines; • Use of farming area to educate sustainable farming in Stage 2 is good; and • Phasing out grazing and extending vegetation is supported.

16. Minor changes made to the Master Plan based upon community feedback are outlined in the community consultation Report.

Social Equity and Sustainability

17. The delivery of actions within the Master Plan will support connections between and within communities. It will also provide access to a large open space and Barwon River frontage and provide interpretative information regarding the sites significant cultural, historic, and natural features.

Relevant Law/Policy/Legal Implications

18. The site contains habitat for the critically endangered Orange-bellied Parrot, and the vulnerable Growling Grass Frog and Yarra Pygmy Perch. The City is legally obligated through the Federal EPBC Act and the Victorian Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act to protect matters of national and state significance. Ongoing monitoring of the site is key to appropriate management.

19. The Wadawurrung Aboriginal Corporation is currently in the process of finalising a Language Agreement with the City for the use of two names. One for the co-naming of the entire reserve, Nubitj yoorree, and one for the conservation zone at the eastern end of the site, Boot boot-a, meaning swampy place.

20. As a condition of the planning permit, PP-35-2019 for the construction of the Sparrovale Wetland, a ten-year Wetland Monitoring and Management Plan has been prepared to the satisfaction of the responsible authority, DELWP and Parks Victoria. This includes the requirement for periodic reporting on the findings of the monitoring to DELWP, Parks Victoria and the City.

21. The Corangamite Catchment Management Authority (CCMA) has a statutory obligation under the Water Act 1989 to prepare and implement a Seasonal Watering Proposal, which in turn informs the Seasonal Watering Plan of the Victorian Environmental Water Holder. On Sparrovale the channels that link the Barwon River to Hospital Swamps are utilised by the CCMA to implement the recommendations of the Lower Barwon Wetlands Seasonal Watering Plan.

Alignment to Community Plan and Vision

22. This report aligns with Our Community Plan 2021-2025 strategic priority:

    Sustainable growth and environment.

23. This report aligns with the Community led 30-year Vision, “Greater Geelong: A Clever and Creative Future” community aspiration:

    Development and implementation of sustainable solutions.

Conflict of Interest

24. No officer involved in the preparation of this report declared a general or material conflict of interest.

Risk Assessment

25. The Master Plan is presented as a series of three phased plans to inform activities over time as the site becomes accessible and safe for people to utilise. These plans will enable the community to provide input into what the open space area (approximately 140 hectares) could be utilised for, taking into account that the entire site is contained within the Barwon River floodplain.

Environmental Sustainability

26. While the primary purpose of the site is an end of line drainage solution for storm water there are significant environmental opportunities. The Master Plan outlines the objectives and priority actions that will deliver a nationally significant conservation reserve, that will provide:

    26.1. no detrimental impacts on the adjoining wetlands of international importance;

    26.2. threatened ecological communities or resident species from storm water;

    26.3. increased area of protected natural habitat including ephemeral freshwater wetlands;

    26.4. beneficial outcomes on social well-being by improving community access to nature;

    26.5. an improvement in water quality available for the environment;

    26.6. an increased area revegetated with local indigenous species;

    26.7. an increase in number and diversity of water bird populations, including migratory shorebirds which are protected under several international agreements;

    26.8. eradication of woody weeds from the site and a reduction in area of high threat herbaceous weeds;

    26.9. stabilisation of the Barwon River banks through the removal of stock grazing and revegetation;

    26.10. reduction in threats from pest animals including rabbits, foxes and deer;

    26.11. buffer zone to internationally important wetlands from a development precinct; and

    26.12. opportunities for sustainable water management.

Discussion

27. The vision for the Sparrovale Wetlands identified within the draft Master Plan is:

27.1. A diverse and sustainable wetland and waterway wildlife reserve to enjoy nature, history and improve community well-being.

28. The key goals include an integrated and resilient wetland and waterway parkland that:

28.1. protects and enhances the natural habitat and biodiversity values of the Sparrovale Wetlands, Barwon River and Lake Connewarre Ramsar area;

28.2. retains the capacity and natural connectivity of the Barwon River floodplain;

28.3. recognises and celebrates values and layering of indigenous and non-indigenous cultural heritage;

28.4. improves community access to the Barwon River and connection with the natural environment;

28.5. provides open space and recreational facilities in a natural setting for a diverse and growing community;

28.6. attracts local, regional and international visitors by providing an accessible and unique wetland and cultural history experience;

28.7. provides sustainable management for stormwater to maintain biodiversity values within the natural wetland basin;

28.8. responds and adapts to the challenges of climate change;

28.9. protects and enhance the natural values of the Sparrovale Wetlands; and

28.10. increases awareness of management of threatened species habitat and values.

29. The implementation of the Master Plan will be over three stages:

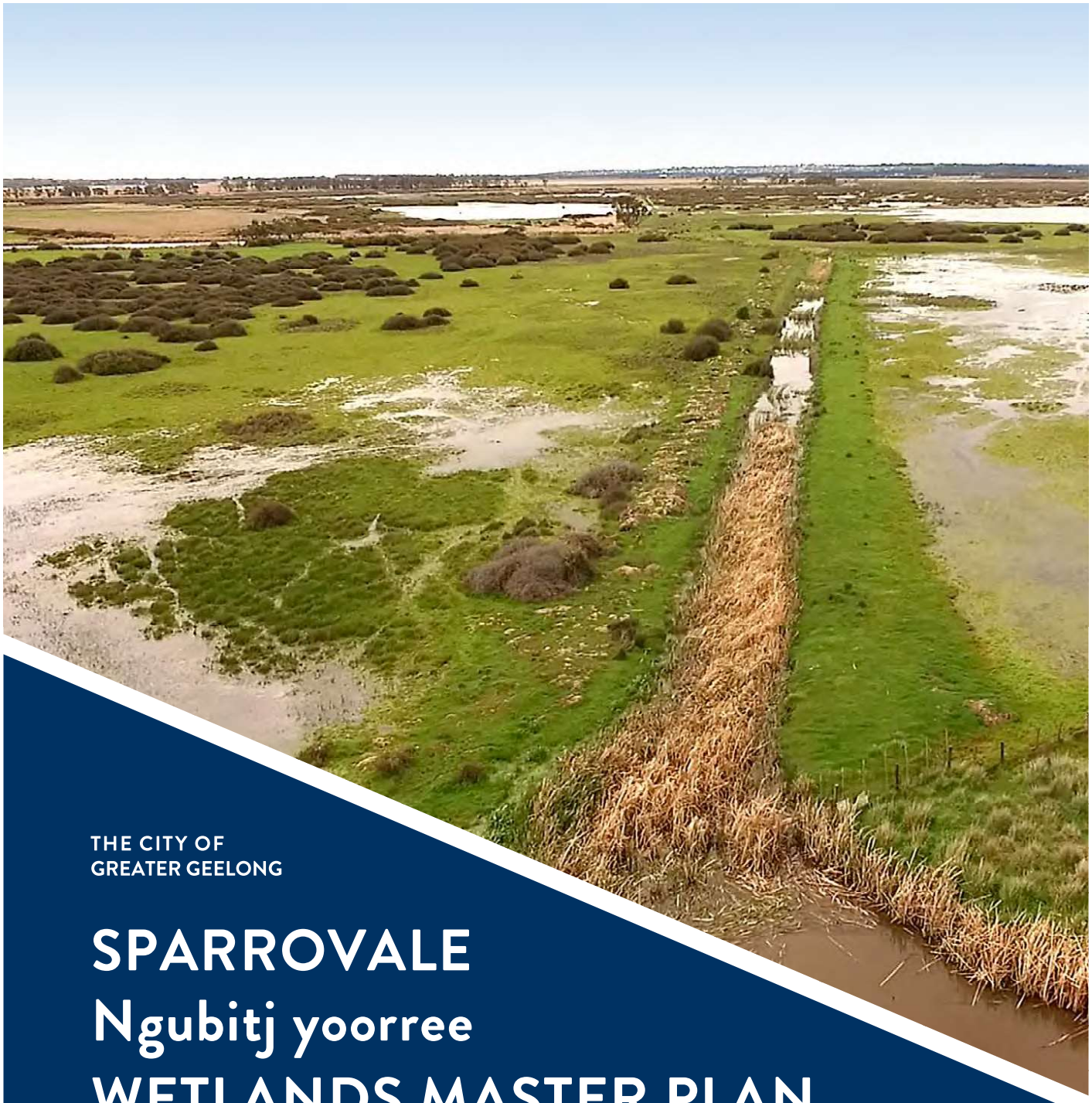
29.1. Phase 1 - 2019 to 2022: will include completion of major drainage infrastructure works, pest plant and animal control, protection of threatened species and preparation of a revegetation plan;

29.2. Phase 2 - 2022 to 2030: will include establishment of public parkland and facilities, continued pest plant and animal control and revegetation; and

29.3. Phase 3 - 2030 to 2040: will connect the Barwon River Trail to Geelong, upgrade walking tracks, complete revegetation, and promote Sparrovale Wetlands as a key tourism, environmental, cultural and recreational site for the region.

Attachments

1. Sparrovale Wetlands Master Plan [**2.2.1** - 64 pages]



THE CITY OF
GREATER GEELONG

SPARROVALE
Ngubitj yoorree
WETLANDS MASTER PLAN

JUNE 2021

GROWING OUR NATURAL
AREAS

CITY OF GREATER
GEELONG

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land, the Wadawurrung People of the Kulin Nations. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present and acknowledge all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who are part of the Greater Geelong community today.

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Disclaimer: This Master Plan was prepared by an independent consultant in conjunction with City of Greater Geelong (the City). The Master Plan is reflective of a higher-level vision for the Sparrovale Wetlands Master Plan and is subject to further consultation and consideration by the City.
The contents of this report are endorsed by the City, however, may require revision over time to reflect current council policy.
All illustrative plans, perspectives and imagery contained within this report are indicative artists impressions to illustrate conceptual ideas only and are subject to further resolution, consultation, detailed design, and approvals.
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REVISION	DATE	AMENDMENT
G	16/06/2021	V7 – Revised as per City of Greater Geelong comments
F	26/04/2021	V6 – Revised as per City of Greater Geelong comments and co-naming
E	31/03/2021	V5 – Incorporating Community Consultation feedback
D	14/04/2020	V4 – Additional comments from Graham Perkins
C	30/01/2020	V3 – Revised as per City of Greater Geelong comments
B	17/10/2019	V2 – Revised as per PWG comments
A	15/5/2019	V1 – Internal Project Working Group Review

TABLE OF CONTENTS

		Page #
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY		**1**
1	**INTRODUCTION**	**8**
1.1	Project Brief	8
1.2	Master Plan Vision	8
1.3	Study Area	9
1.4	Land Ownership and Management	10
1.5	Armstrong Creek Urban Growth Area	12
1.6	Zoning and Overlays	13
1.7	Community Consultation	16
2	**CULTURAL HERITAGE**	**18**
2.1	Indigenous Heritage	18
2.2	Other Historical Heritage	20
3	**ENVIRONMENT**	**26**
3.1	Geology and Geomorphology	26
3.2	Flora	26
3.3	Fauna	30
4	**FLOODING AND DRAINAGE**	**32**
4.1	Flooding	32
4.2	Drainage	33
5	**RECREATION**	**38**
5.1	Existing Adjoining Open Space	38
5.2	Future Open Space	39
5.3	Recreational Trails	40
5.4	Other Recreation	43
6	**COMMERICAL**	**45**
6.1	Tourism	45
6.2	Existing Agreements	45
6.3	Events	46
7	**ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT**	**47**
7.1	Management Planning	46
7.2	Ecological Monitoring	46
8	**IMPLEMENTATION**	
8.1	Overall Objectives and Staging	49
8.1.1	Phase 1 – Protecting the Sparrovale Wetlands Park and Barwon River	49
8.1.2	Phase 2 - Opening the Sparrovale Wetlands Park	52
8.1.3	Phase 3 – Gateway to Lake Connewarre Ramsar Area	54

REFERENCES **59**

GLOSSARY **61**

List of Figures

Figure 1 – Site Context Plan *11*
Figure 2 – Land Ownership and Management Plan *12*
Figure 3 – Precinct Plan *13*
Figure 4 – Zoning and Overlays *14*
Figure 5 – Cultural Heritage *19*
Figure 6 – Marshalltown Racecourse 1888 *22*
Figure 7 – Sketch map of Sparrovale Farm *22*
Figure 8 – Biodiversity Values *27*
Figure 9 – Port Phillip Bay (Western Shoreline) and Bellarine Peninsula Ramsar Site *30*
Figure 10 – Drainage and Flooding *34*
Figure 11 – Future Open Space Plan *39*
Figure 11A – Potential walking loops *42*
Figure 12 – Phase 1 Protecting the Wetlands and Barwon River (2019-2022) *51*
Figure 13 – Phase 2 Opening the Park (2022-2030) *53*
Figure 14 – Phase 3 Gateway to the Lake Connewarre Ramsar Area (2031-2040) *55*

ATTACHMENTS

A Draft Master Plan for Consultation
B Community Consultation Report
C Community Consultation Plans

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Project Scope

In 2019 City of Greater Geelong (the City) acquired almost 500 hectares of mostly flood prone farmland adjoining the Barwon River, Lake Connewarre and Hospital Swamp area which form part of the Port Phillip Bay (Western Shoreline) and Bellarine Peninsula Ramsar Site. The Master Plan, prepared in consultation with the local community and key stakeholders provides an overarching vision for the entire site along with key objectives and priority actions for the staged establishment of a nationally significant conservation reserve.

The primary purpose for acquiring the land is to provide for capture and treatment of urban stormwater runoff from the adjoining Armstrong Creek development area to mitigate development impacts on the Barwon River and the ecological character of Hospital Swamp. The natural and constructed wetlands will occupy approximately 200 hectares of the 500 hectare site and the design and construction of the new stormwater wetlands, channels and management infrastructure has now been completed.

The remaining 300 hectares, including over 4 kilometres of river frontage currently used for agricultural grazing and cropping is also flood prone and part of the Barwon River floodplain. The Master Plan will seek to guide the staged transition of this land from an agricultural landscape to public open space and rehabilitated floodplain conservation reserve to complement the biodiversity values of the natural and new wetlands and the Barwon River.

Key considerations

- In consultation with the *Wadawurrung the Ngubiti yoorree* (Wetlands) has been adopted as the co-name for the new reserve. Boot boot-a refers specifically to the 140 hectare natural section of river floodplain adjoining Lake Connewarre.
- The Barwon River and floodplain form an important part of the *Wadawurrung* cultural heritage and dreaming. There are 39 registered Aboriginal sacred sites within a 5 kilometres radius of the site.
- The Sparrovale Farm Complex is listed on the Victorian Heritage Inventory and there are a range of sites and infrastructure significant to the early development of Geelong including the former Geelong Racecourse site, lower breakwater and Geelong Harbour Trust levees and farm infrastructure.
- Remnant native vegetation on the site is representative of five Ecological Vegetation Classes (EVCs) and 5 Nationally significant and 59 State significant flora species have been identified in the broader region.
- Lake Connewarre Wetland Complex and the lower reaches of the Barwon River adjoining the site form a critical part of the Port Phillip (Western Shoreline) and Bellarine Peninsula Ramsar Site. This is one of 11 wetlands of international significance in Victoria and the area is protected under State and Federal legislation and three international treaties. Values associated with the reserves listing as a wetland of international significance include:
  - Rare and threatened species that are directly supported by the wetlands.
  - Habitat and critical life stage support for a large number of migratory shorebirds, waterfowl and water birds and fish species.
  - Important feeding and nursery areas for a number of native fish and frog species.
- The Lake Connewarre State Game Reserve is managed by Parks Victoria and directly adjoins the site. The State Game Reserve is used for seasonal duck hunting.
- The Armstrong Creek Urban Growth Area is anticipated to provide housing for 54,000 people and employment for 22,000 people in industries and local businesses. Planning for provision of local and regional open space east of Barwon Heads Road and adjoining the Sparrovale Master Plan area include:

  - A network of recreational walking and cycling trails that provide direct links from the site to activity centres, schools and major parks in the growth area.
  - Future extension of the Barwon River Trail providing off road walking and cycling access back to Belmont Common and central Geelong.
  - Armstrong Creek East Precinct Active Open Space to Barwon Heads, a regional multi-purpose sports facility.
  - Horseshoe Bend Precinct Regional Park including a regional playground and passive open space area.
  - A supporting network of local parks and open space links throughout the new residential areas.
- Greater Geelong and The Bellarine attracts approximately 5 million visitors per year and of the 2.8 million day trippers a significant proportion pass within 500m of future Sparrovale Wetland park on Barwon Heads Road or within 3 kilometres on the Surf Coast Highway.

Vision

A diverse and sustainable wetland and waterway wildlife reserve to enjoy nature, history and improve community well-being.

Key goals

An integrated and resilient wetland and waterway parkland that:

- Protects and enhances the natural habitat and biodiversity values of Sparrovale, Barwon River and Lake Connewarre Ramsar area – a world class nature reserve.
- Retains the capacity and natural connectivity of the Barwon River floodplain.
- Recognises and celebrates values and overlap of Indigenous and non-Indigenous cultural heritage.
- Improves community access to the Barwon River and connection with the natural environment.
- Provides open space and recreational facilities in a natural setting for a diverse and growing community.
- Attracts local, regional and international visitors by providing an accessible and unique wetland and cultural history experience.
- Provides sustainable management for stormwater to maintain biodiversity values within the natural wetland basin.
- Responds and adapts to the challenges of climate change.
- Protects and enhance the natural values of the Sparrovale Wetlands.
- Increases awareness of management of threatened species habitat/values within Sparrovale.

Key Objectives and Staging

The following is a summary of the key objectives and staged approach to development of the wetland park.



PHASE 1
PROTECTING THE SPARROVALE WETLANDS PARK AND BARWON RIVER

Timeframe 2019 to 2022 - subject to completion of the constructed wetlands and channels

The new wetland and parkland area will need to remain closed to the public in the short term to ensure public safety while required major drainage and site rehabilitation works are completed in accordance with existing endorsed plans and permit requirements. Master Plan implementation projects in this period will focus on complementary environmental rehabilitation projects such as revegetation works along the Barwon River and securing the parkland perimeter and maintenance access. Public access will be limited to guided tours and planting days to minimise potential public risk while new drainage systems and access tracks are established.

The sheer size and unsupervised nature of the site means recurrent land management costs may potentially reduce available funds for new public access and environmental rehabilitation projects. Therefore, to retain and protect existing environmental values while minimising new land management costs to Council sections of the site will continue to be licenced back to the family currently working the property to continue historical grazing and cropping activities. This is the most cost-effective strategy to maintain the land in its current state and minimise changes to the ecology and proliferation of new weeds during establishment of the wetlands and parkland.

Phase 1 Key Objectives

- Engage and involve the *Wadawarrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation* in building appreciation and understanding of the cultural values of the site. Partner with the *Wadawarrung* to manage cultural values.
- Complete drainage infrastructure works as required to enable flexible and sustainable long-term management of the reserve wetlands and existing areas of environmental value.
- Undertake cost effective upgrade and reinstatement of maintenance access tracks and bunds using surplus material from civil works where possible to provide future for future public walking access.
- Ensure ongoing threatened species management monitoring actions are undertaken and prepare and implement management plans for areas of environmental significance.
- Ensure ongoing protection of environmental and cultural heritage values in accordance with endorsed permit requirements during works.
- Establish and implement management plan for native vegetation offset sites.
- Develop and implement native vegetation, hydrological and ecological monitoring programs on site.
- Establish of an ‘operations plan’ that is informed by the requirements to maintain appropriate water levels, drying cycles and water flows into the larger Ramsar system.
- Prepare a revegetation plan and commence reinstatement of Indigenous overstorey trees along the Barwon River and floodplain consistent with the prevailing EVC.
- Retain licenced grazing as the most cost-effective short term land management use for paddocks subject to low levels of inundation.
- Commence restoration of the grassy woodland on the western boundary consistent with the prevailing EVC.

- Confirm future ownership and operational management responsibility for existing and new wetland and waterway management infrastructure and assets.
- Commence local provenance indigenous seed harvesting and begin preparation for direct seeding works.
- Ensure public safety and protection of environmentally sensitive habitat zones by keeping the reserve closed to public access for the duration of the construction and initial rehabilitation works.
- Create community awareness of the site's significance and its potential through signage and guided access for community or school groups and special events. Work with the *Wadawurrung* on cultural significance interpretation opportunities and investigate opportunities for co-naming.
- Refurbish the existing farm shed on Groves Road to provide a base and storage facility for staff and contractor operations. Restore electrical and water connections to enable the shed to be used for environmental education purposes.

Refer to Figure 12 for Phase 1 Actions and Priorities.



PHASE 2
OPENING THE SPARROVALE WETLANDS PARK

Timeframe approximately 2023 through to 2030 during the ongoing development of new residential areas and open space adjoining the wetlands park.

Following completion of major drainage and site rehabilitation works the aim is to provide public walking access through to the Barwon River and to allow informal access around the wetlands using the existing network of levees and farm tracks used in ongoing management of the site. The unsealed maintenance access tracks and existing levee banks will provide for dry weather walking only access. The tracks will provide access for fishing, bird watching and nature appreciation and the City will continue to support guided tours and community and school planting days to build local community ownership and appreciation of the natural values in consultation with the Wadawurrung.

Restricted public vehicle access to the river could be considered for single day events such as fishing competitions in dry weather subject to event management plan applications and approval but flood constraints mean there is no plan for provision of public car parking or road access within the wetlands park.

For those not as adventurous or able to undertake the 1 kilometres walk to the Barwon River and around the wetlands (approximately 1 hour return journey) a new fully accessible elevated wetland viewing point and parking area will be established at the end of Groves Road. This location provides 270-degree views and the best spot to appreciate the interaction between the Barwon River and natural and constructed wetlands during both dry and wet weather.

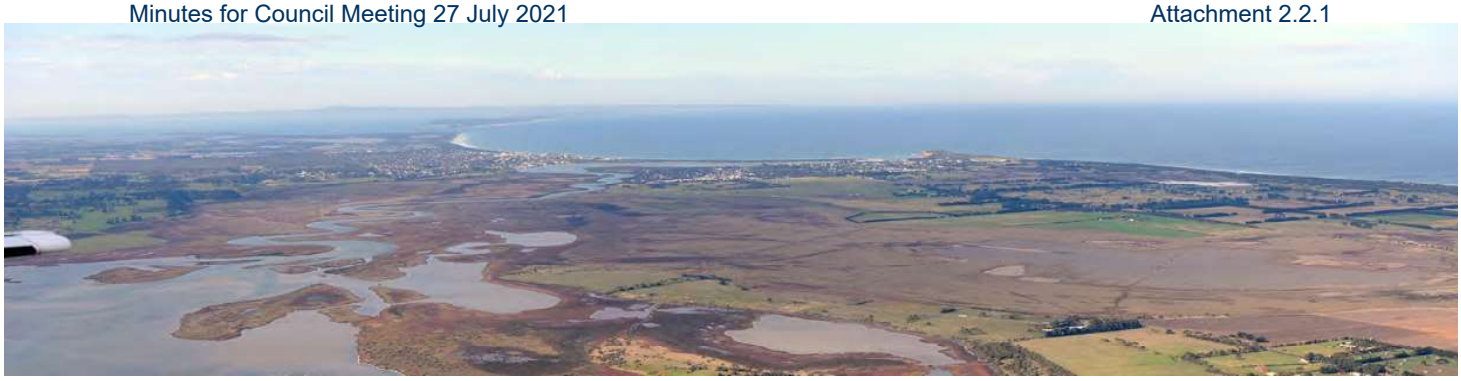
Other Master Plan implementation projects in this phase will focus on continued floodplain rehabilitation and improving pedestrian and cycle links to new open space areas in the adjoining Armstrong Creek and Horseshoe Bend residential development areas. Licenced grazing and cropping activities will continue in areas with lower environmental values.

Phase 2 Key Objectives

- Establish a new public open space parkland and visitor facilities with signed off-road shared trail and walking links to the adjoining open space network.
- Establish an elevated wetland interpretation and orientation point.
- Provide self-guided walking only access through the wetlands to and along the banks of the Barwon River.
- Support improved canoe/kayak access between Geelong and Barwon Heads.
- Continue revegetation focusing on establishment of indigenous overstorey shade trees for new public access areas and tracks in consultation with the Wadawurrung.
- In consultation with the *Wadawurrung* increase local and broader community awareness and appreciation of the wetlands and Barwon River through interpretative signage.
- Support continued licensed grazing as the most cost-effective land and weed management for paddocks subject to low levels of flooding.
- Ensure ongoing protection and enhancement of cultural and environmental values.
- Maintain appropriate ecological monitoring and operational management for significant revegetation communities weed threats.

- Investigate opportunities to establish sustainable farming initiatives and enhanced community engagement and education programs on licenced farming areas.
- Review, document and appropriately action the key improvements and issues arising from Phase 1 and develop appropriate adaptive management actions.

Refer to Figure 13 for Phase 2 Actions and Priorities.



PHASE 3
REGIONAL GATEWAY TO THE LAKE CONNEWARRE RAMSAR AREA

Timeframe approximately 2030 to 2040 as development of the Armstrong Creek Urban Growth Area nears completion.

The further completion of new development at Armstrong Creek will provide supporting visitor infrastructure such as picnic and toilet facilities, play spaces and additional car parking at the Horseshoe Bend Regional Park (Sparrovale Road) and Armstrong Creek Active Sports Precinct which will be linked via completion of the new Barwon River Trail around the Sparrovale Wetlands park.

As the drainage catchment reaches full development and the number of visitors to the wetlands increases funding for the final phases of floodplain environmental rehabilitation can be more easily secured reducing the need for continuation of licenced grazing and cropping activities to offset land management costs.

A direct boulevard road link from Barwon Heads Road through the Armstrong Creek East Precinct will eventually provide direct access and upgraded service connections through to the elevated wetland viewing point and parking area at the end of Groves Road established in Phase 2. Ultimately this visitor node could then be upgraded to a regional wetland visitor destination with direct access for passing tourism traffic on Barwon Heads Road and the Surf Coast Highway to the best views out over the wetland and the Lake Connewarre system.

To fast track the establishment of the site as a regional visitor destination an iconic wetland lookout structure could be developed to expand on the initial viewing mound developed in Phase 2. An iconic architectural lookout tower at this point, visible from Barwon Heads Road could assist in generating additional visitor traffic to support longer term establishment of a dedicated wetlands visitor centre with café and expanded picnic facilities to support longer stay visitation in the area.

Phase 3 Key Objectives

- Connect the Barwon River Trail back to Geelong and upgrade off road links to other open space areas within the Armstrong Creek and Horseshoe Bend Precincts.
- Upgrade and formalise wetland and Barwon River circuit walking tracks to enable all weather/all ability use.
- Investigate establishment of a regional wetland interpretation centre and iconic wetland lookout structure to promote tourism, eco tourism and wide recognition of the wetlands and Lake Connewarre Ramsar area.
- Investigate options to provide public parking and all ability access closer to the banks of the Barwon River in consultation with public land managers.
- Cease grazing and complete revegetation of remaining paddocks to expand and enhance biodiversity and habitat values.
- Review, document and appropriately action the key improvements and issues from Phase 2 and develop appropriate adaptive management actions.

Refer to Figure 14 for Phase 3 Actions and Priorities.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Brief

The Sparrovale *Ngubitj yoorree* Wetlands Master Plan covers the 500 hectares of agricultural property acquired by the City of Greater Geelong in June 2019. The land will be used to provide end of line stormwater storage and treatment for the Armstrong Creek Urban Growth Area to protect and enhance the cultural, biodiversity and habitat values of the Barwon River and Lake Connewarre Ramsar area.

The wetlands will collect stormwater from the majority Armstrong Creek Growth Area and the new stormwater treatment wetlands and associated infrastructure such as drainage channels, levee banks and maintenance access tracks currently in construction will cover approximately 200 hectares of the 500 hectare site. The construction of the drainage infrastructure is funded through Development Contributions collected as part of the adjoining residential development. The rest of the land, whilst part of the Barwon River floodplain, is currently used for cropping and grazing. The Master Plan will seek to guide a staged transition from the existing agricultural use and landscape to a mix of public open space and conservation reserves to complement the existing natural values and the new wetlands.

The Master Plan will seek to provide an overarching vision for the site and outline the objectives and priority actions to be implemented in delivering a nationally significant conservation reserve, sustainable stormwater management system and an accessible and inclusive open space for the Geelong community.

The Master Plan will be consistent with the overall vision for the Barwon River Parklands.

1.2 Master Plan Vision

Lake Connewarre and the lower Barwon River are one of the largest, most picturesque cultural and ecologically important wetland systems in Australia with environmental values of National and International significance.

Public access and visitation to Lake Connewarre and the Barwon River in this area are generally restricted to Barwon Heads and Ocean Grove end only and the large volume of passing tourists visiting the Great Ocean Road and Bellarine Peninsula are largely unaware of the river and wetlands. This lack of awareness even extends to some people who have lived in Geelong for many years.

The limited public awareness and visitation is primarily due to the lack of a main visitor destination and access point. The development of the Sparrovale Wetlands Master Plan provides an historic opportunity for City of Greater Geelong, Parks Victoria, regional stakeholders and the local community, to be involved in creation of an inspiring and unique parkland ecosystem. A park that protects whilst at the same time celebrates recreational exploration, enjoyment and increased understanding and appreciation of the complex layers of saline and freshwater wetland habitats and cultural heritage without compromising these values, legislative and international treaty obligations and existing use of Lake Connewarre State Game Reserve as a seasonal duck hunting venue.



Photo 1: *Barwon River - Lake Connewarre*

1.3 Study Area

The 500 hectare area covers two former farming properties. Sparrovale Farm, located at 109-215 Sparrovale Road, Charlemont and Cold Winds Farm 1-87 Groves Road, Armstrong Creek.

The site is only 8 kilometres from the centre of Geelong, located off Barwon Heads Road forming the eastern boundary of the Armstrong Creek Growth Area. The site includes 4 kilometres of Barwon River frontage along its eastern boundary and forms the buffer between the new residential area and Lake Connewarre State Game Reserve, managed by Parks Victoria. These wetlands form part of the Port Phillip Bay (Western Shoreline) and Bellarine Peninsula Ramsar site.

The land has been used for farming purposes for over a hundred years however it is flood prone and an integral part of the Barwon River floodplain. Structures and channels completed by the Geelong Harbour Trust in the early 20th Century continue to detain stormwater on the site and connect the Barwon River directly through to Hospital Swamp. The historic structures and channels were maintained by the landowners, water authority (now Corangamite Catchment Management Authority) and Geelong Field and Game to manage water levels in the river and to provide seasonal environmental flows to the wetlands in support of biodiversity values and water bird habitat associated with the State Game Reserve. The smaller channels linking the Barwon River to the Barge Hole (partially completed channel dug in early 1900s) and then the Barge Hole to Hospital Swamp were constructed in the early 1980's by Geelong Field and Game Club.

Stormwater flows from the new Horseshoe Bend and Armstrong Creek East Development Precincts have now been diverted to the site to protect the brackish wetland ecology in Hospital Swamps.

Any works to be undertaken in the Sparrovale Wetland area are subject to the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme. The area is currently listed as Farming Zone and a separate planning process will be undertaken to finalise land use zoning and overlays applicable to the study area and surrounds.

PROJECT PROCESS



1.4 Land Ownership and Management

1.4.1 City of Greater Geelong (The City)

The 500-hectare Sparrovale Master Plan area (former Sparrovale Farm and Cold Winds Farm) is now owned by City of Greater Geelong. This includes the eastern part of the main Sparrovale levee bank and the outlet regulator. Refer Figure 2.

Adjoining road reserves including Reserve Road, Sparrovale Road, Harriot Road and Groves Road are also owned and managed by the City.

The City have licenced 70 hectares of less flood prone paddock areas in the north of the Master Plan area back to the former Sparrovale Farm owner for grazing/cropping purposes to reduce short term operational land management costs. Periodic grazing in flood prone areas to assist in managing fire risk is also being considered.

The new Sparrovale Road Constructed Wetlands built by the City and new Southern Deviation Channel Diversion from Armstrong Creek which is being built by the adjoining land developers will ultimately all be owned and managed by the City.

1.4.2 Corangamite Catchment Management Authority (CCMA)

The Crown land frontage on the Barwon River west bank downstream of Reserve Road is managed by CCMA. This land includes the northern section of the main Sparrovale levee bank.

CCMA are responsible for the bed and banks of the Barwon River and the Lower Breakwater and fishway. The CCMA are operationally responsible for the existing channel structures which control flows from the Barwon River into Hospital Swamp.

The CCMA are the approval authority for any works within the Q100 (1% ARI floodplain) of the Barwon River. This covers the majority of the 500 hectare Master Plan study area.



Figure 1: *Site Context Plan*

1.4.3 Parks Victoria (PV)

The Lake Connewarre State Game Reserve, including Hospital Swamps is Crown land managed by PV. This includes the southern section of the main Sparrovale levee bank and the new outlet channel connecting from the outlet regulator to Lake Connewarre. PV also manages a section of Barwon River crown frontage adjoining Sparrovale.

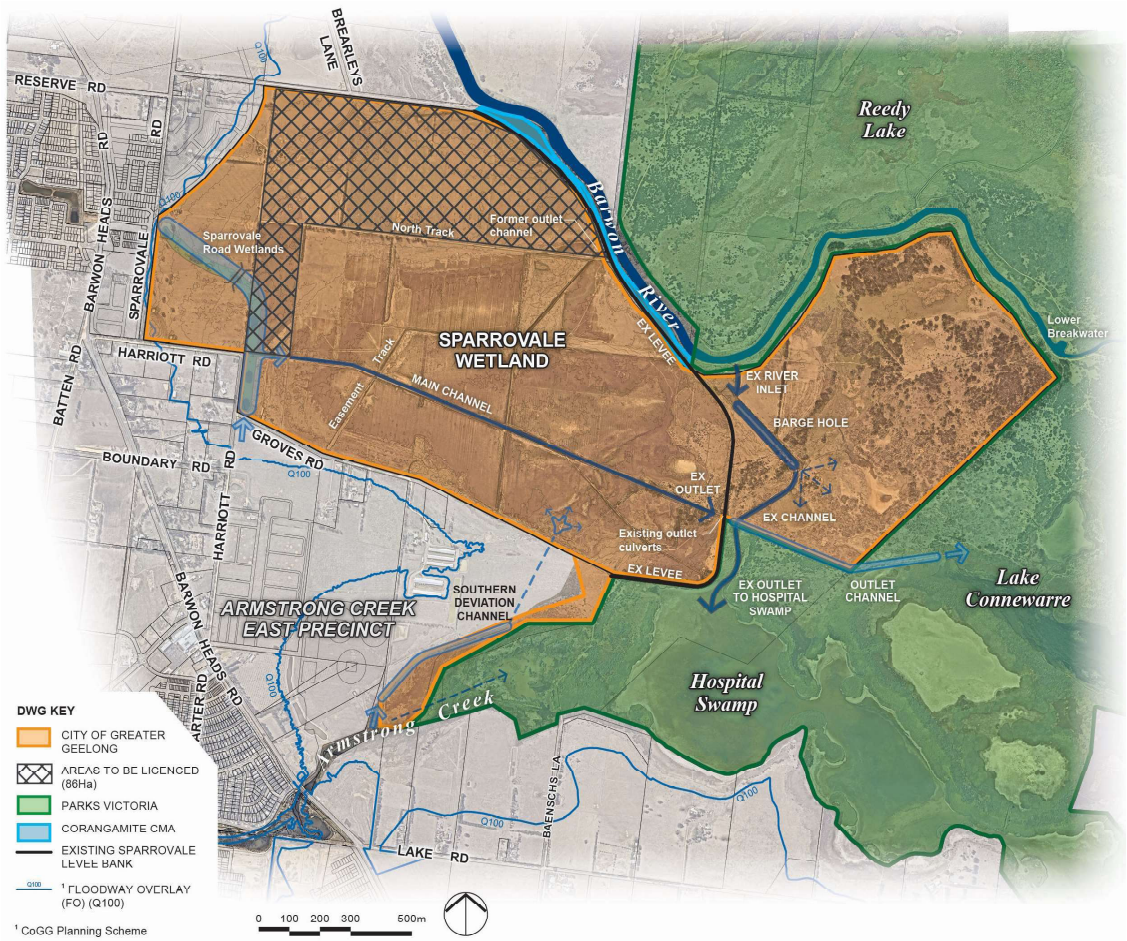


Figure 2: *Land Ownership and Management Plan*

1.5 Armstrong Creek Urban Growth Area

The Armstrong Creek Urban Growth Area provides the principal urban growth area for the City of Greater Geelong and the broader Geelong Region. The Armstrong Creek Urban Growth Area is anticipated to provide housing for 54,000 people and employment for 22,000 people in industries and local businesses.

Strategic planning for the growth area aims to protect the high value landscape and conservation values of the Barwon River and associated floodplain, that form the Sparrovale Master Plan area, from development.
Planning for provision of local and regional open space east of Barwon Heads Road and adjoining the Sparrovale Master Plan area include:

- A network of recreational walking and cycling trails that provide direct links from the site to activity centres, schools and major parks in the growth area.
- Future extension of the Barwon River Trail providing off road walking and cycling access back to Belmont Common and central Geelong.
- Armstrong Creek East Precinct Active Open Space, a regional multi-purpose sports facility.
- Horseshoe Bend Precinct Regional Park including a regional playground and passive open space area.
- A supporting network of local parks and open space links throughout the new residential area.

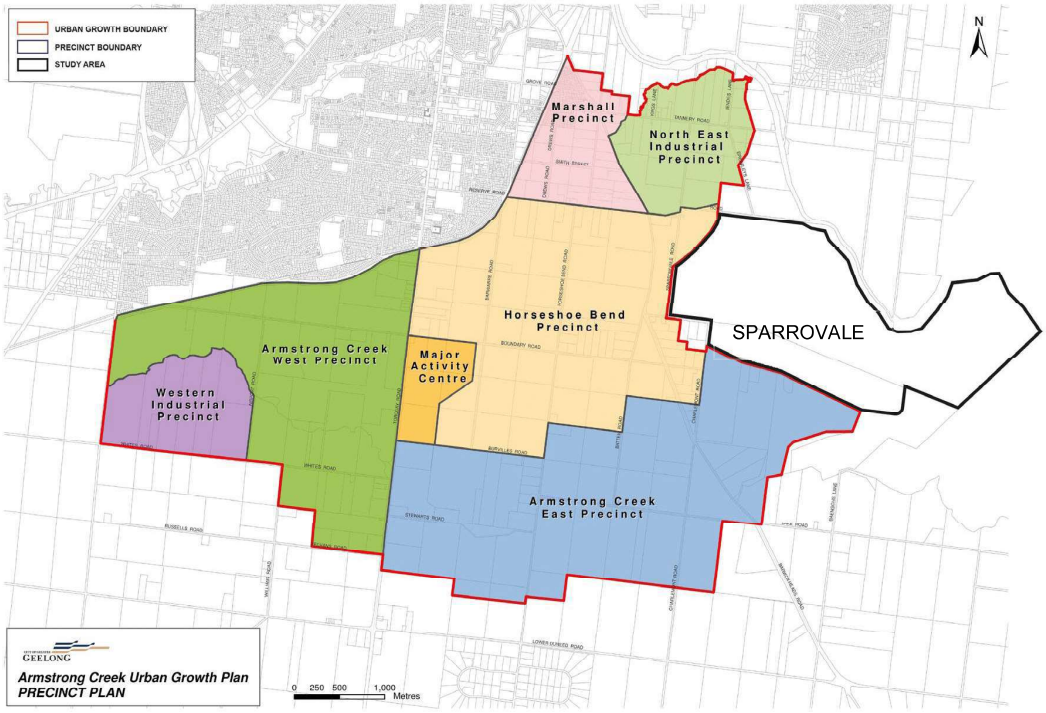


Figure 3: *Precinct Plan*

1.6 Zoning and Overlays

1.6.1 Zoning

The Sparrovale Wetlands area is currently zoned as Farming Zone (FZ) under the *Greater Geelong Planning Scheme*. The Master Plan vision is to transform the area into a publicly accessible space and a conservation reserve, this change of use will need a Planning Scheme Amendment to rezone the area to Public Conservation and Resource Zone (PCRZ). Areas between the new Sparrovale Parkland (PAO12) and the Urban Growth Area (UGA) boundary which are located below the Q100 flood level are subject to a Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO).

These privately owned areas are also zoned as Farming Zone (FO) and potential re-zoning of these areas is being considered in a separate planning process. Refer Figure 4.



Figure 4: *Zoning and Overlays. (City of Greater Geelong Planning Scheme 2019)*

1.6.2 Environmental Significance Overlay (ESO)

Land along the Barwon River and through the Lake Connewarre system is covered by an Environmental Significance Overlay (ESO2) that extends along the western and southern banks of the Barwon River through the study area.

- The site includes wetlands of regional, state, national and international significance.
- The site forms part of the Port Phillip Bay (Western Shoreline) and Bellarine Peninsula Ramsar Site and is listed under the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran, 1971).
- The wetlands provide important habitat for migratory birds, waterfowl and endangered species and sustain significant proportions of the Australian populations of these species. They are also remnants of wetland types that were once much more extensive in the Geelong region and elsewhere in Victoria, contain a high diversity of plant and animal species and conserve the genetic diversity of particular species.
- The site is habitat for species listed under an international agreement for the conservation of plants or animals, eg. the Japan-Australia Migratory Bird Agreement (JAMBA), the China-Australia Migratory Bird Agreement (CAMBA) and the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (the Bonn Convention).
- The site is part of or is nominated for inclusion in the East Asian-Australasian Shorebird Site Network.
- The site is habitat for threatened animal species and threatened communities listed in the *Fauna and Flora Guarantee Act 1988*.
- The site contains habitat that is an extension of, or which provides a buffer to, wetland communities identified above.

The environmental objectives to be achieved under the ESO include:

- To maintain the ecological character (the sum of the biological, physical and chemical components of the wetland ecosystem, and their interactions which maintain the wetland and its products, functions and attributes) of Ramsar wetlands.
- To protect natural resources and maintain ecological processes and genetic diversity.
- To protect and ensure the long-term future of terrestrial and aquatic habitat for native plants and animals, including shorebird feeding areas and roosts and species and communities listed under the *Fauna and Flora Guarantee Act 1988*.
- To encourage ecological restoration, regeneration and revegetation with indigenous species within the site and in adjoining areas.
- To maintain the function of the wetland or habitat area as part of the broader natural system, including maintenance of natural flows and flooding regimes.
- To prevent further loss of wetland habitat.
- To manage the site in order to maintain and/or improve its value as a conservation site for native plants and animals.
- To protect water quality and prevent water pollution in watercourses, water bodies, wetlands and groundwater.
- To protect cultural (including Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal heritage) values.
- To protect visual amenity.
- The ESO boundary does not match with the identified areas of environmental significance and realignment should be considered as part of the zoning amendment.

1.6.3 Vegetation Protection Overlay (VPO)

Native vegetation within the Sparrovale Master Plan area is covered by a Vegetation Protection Overlay (VPO1) in the *Greater Geelong Planning Scheme*. The current VPO includes grassland near the Southern Deviation Channel and the trees along Sparrovale Road. A planning permit is required to remove or destroy or lop any native vegetation. This VPO relates to protection of these identified areas during development works. The VPO will not be required after change of the entire study area zoning to PCRZ and adjustment of the ESO to cover all areas of significant indigenous vegetation.

1.6.4 Floodway Overlay (FO)

Flooding within the Sparrovale Master Plan area is covered by a Floodway Overlay (FO) in the *Greater Geelong Planning Scheme*. The purpose of this overlay is to ensure that any future development maintains or improves river and wetland health, waterway protection and flood plain health. A planning permit is required to construct a building or to construct or carry out works including fencing, roadworks and bicycle pathways and trails.

1.6.5 Public Acquisition Overlay (PAO)

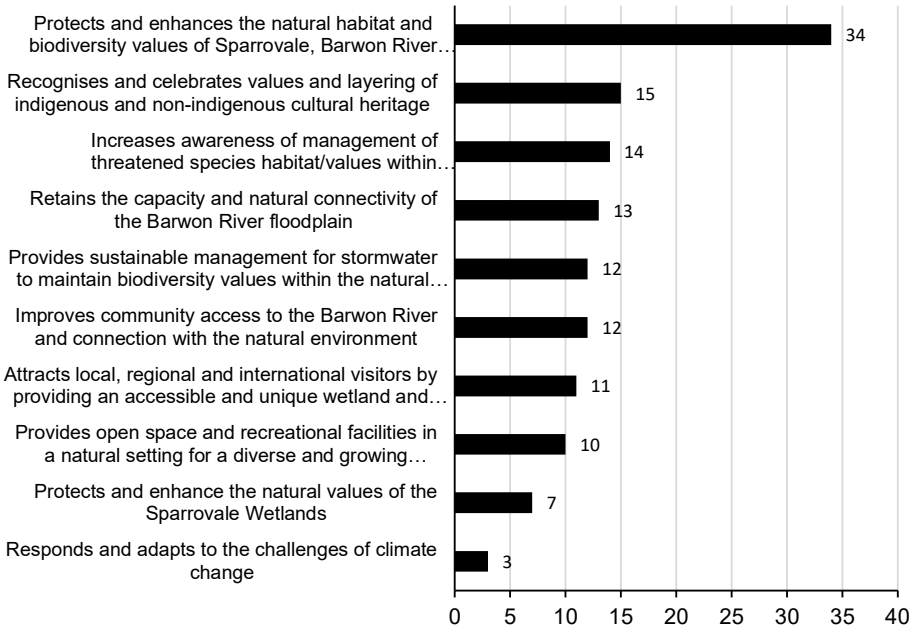
The Greater Geelong Planning Scheme has currently classified the Sparrovale Wetlands area as Public Acquisition Overlay (PAO12). As the area has now been acquired by the City in June 2019, a Planning Scheme Amendment will need to be undertaken at some point in the future to remove this overlay. This will likely be done in conjunction with the reset of the (ESO) environmental protection overlay and with any changes to the farming zone needed to guide change of use in this area.

1.7 Community Consultation

Engagement with key stakeholder groups was undertaken throughout 2019 and 2020 culminating with an eight week community consultation period from May to August 2020. The project has been promoted through a number of different activities, including:

- Seven face to face meetings with the *Wadawurrung* (including two site visits).
- 3,200 Have Your Say postcards were letter dropped throughout the Armstrong Creek postcode.
- A video promoting the project and the opportunity to contribute to the master plan was placed on Facebook and Instagram which generated over 25,000 views, 93 shares and 479 reactions on Facebook and 1,411 views on Instagram.
- An advertisement was placed in the Armstrong Creek Times on the 2 July.
- An article about the Sparrovale Wetlands and master plan featured in the April edition of the City's Community News. Other media releases included Geelong Advertiser 11/05/2020 and Surfcoast Times 28/05/2020.
- A total of 42 surveys were completed (actual number received was 45 with one submission repeated 4 times) along with nine detailed written responses emailed directly to the project officer by the closing date of 13/07/2020. The responses have been summarised below.
- Six presentations have been given to interested community groups and agencies through into 2021 and there was one on site community guided tour.
- Copies of a series of four Sparrovale values plans were provided to developer sales offices for distribution.

Community response to key master plan goals was as follows:



Detailed written submissions were also received from the following groups:

- Barwon Heads Association
- Berissa Eels P/L
- Corangamite CMA
- Geelong Environment Council
- Geelong Field Naturalists Club

- Geelong Field and Game Association
- National Trust Geelong and Region Branch
- Spiire (Jinding Australia)

Community and stakeholder feedback was used to refine and finalise the masterplan. Refer to the full summary at Attachment B.

2. CULTURAL HERITAGE

2.1 Indigenous Heritage

The *Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation* are the Registered Aboriginal Party (RAP) for the area under the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006 (Amended 2016). The *Wadawurrung* is the Aboriginal language group who have continually occupied the Geelong area for tens of thousands of years. Their language boundary extended from the Otway Ranges to the Werribee River and incorporates the Bellarine Peninsula and Geelong.

The floodplain and wetland environments along the Barwon River including the Sparrovale Master Plan area would have provided an abundance of food and resources to Wadawurrung people. The river and wetland environment supported the "greatest concentrations of Aboriginal people in Victoria", providing both fresh water and the "richest food environments" with Aboriginal people often camping close to the banks.

The Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Management Plan (*EHP 2019*) findings have indicated the existing vegetation such as Plains Sedgy Wetland (EVC647) were utilised for food, either directly or by supporting game which could be hunted and developing weapons, domestic items and potentially medicines. In particular, the leaves of the Hollow Sedge (*Carex tereticaulis*) were used in basket making, and Poison Lobelia (*Lobelia pratioides*) may have had medicinal uses (Williams 2013:429).

Other vegetation ecosystems such as Tall Marsh (EVC 821) and Coastal Alkaline Scrub (EVC858) were used within the community to make baskets, and to build fish-traps(Gott and Conran 1991:58). Flax lily leaves were boiled as a tea drink and blue roots and blue fruits of some species are edible, and the needle-like stems of the various species of she-oak (*Allocasuarina spp*.) were chewed to quench thirst (Nash 2004:5,12).

Plains Grassland (EVC 132) in particular Kangaroo Grass seeds ripen in summer can be ground into some flour for the preparation of damper (Nash 2004). Other plants and fungi were also valuable food and medicine. Bowls and dishes were made from the bark and from large tree gnarled growths, for food and water transportation. Canoes were also made from the bark of gum trees. The removal of bark characteristically results in visible modification of the trees that make them identifiable as scarred or culturally modified trees. Other items such as spears, boomerangs and spears were made from the timber of Eucalypts (Nash 2004).

It is an ongoing process for the *Wadawurrung* to trace and record their histories, traditions, culture and language, as traditions, culture and language has been impacted by European colonisation of their Traditional lands. City of Greater Geelong endeavours to continue working closely with *Wadawurrung* as the recognised Traditional Owners of the City municipal area, building relationships through the City Reconciliation Action Plan, in order to preserve important cultural values and heritage and in collaboration with *Wadawurrung* to educate the wider community regarding the rich cultural history of this area.

As part of this process the name *Ngubitj yoorree which means wetlands has been adopted for the overall Sparrovale Wetlands Reserve. The name Boot boot-a, which means swampy place, will also be used to identify the 140 hectare natural river floodplain area directly adjoining Lake Connewarre.*

There has been various desktop, standard and complex assessments undertaken as part of the completed Armstrong Creek PSPs and ongoing liaison with Aboriginal Victoria and

Traditional Owners as required under the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006 (Amended 2016) and Victoria Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2018. The Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Register (VAHR) indicates that there are 39 registered archaeological sites within approximately a 5 kilometres radius of the study area. The majority of these sites take the form of stone artefact scatters, mostly low in density and ranging from single isolated pieces to multiple finds.

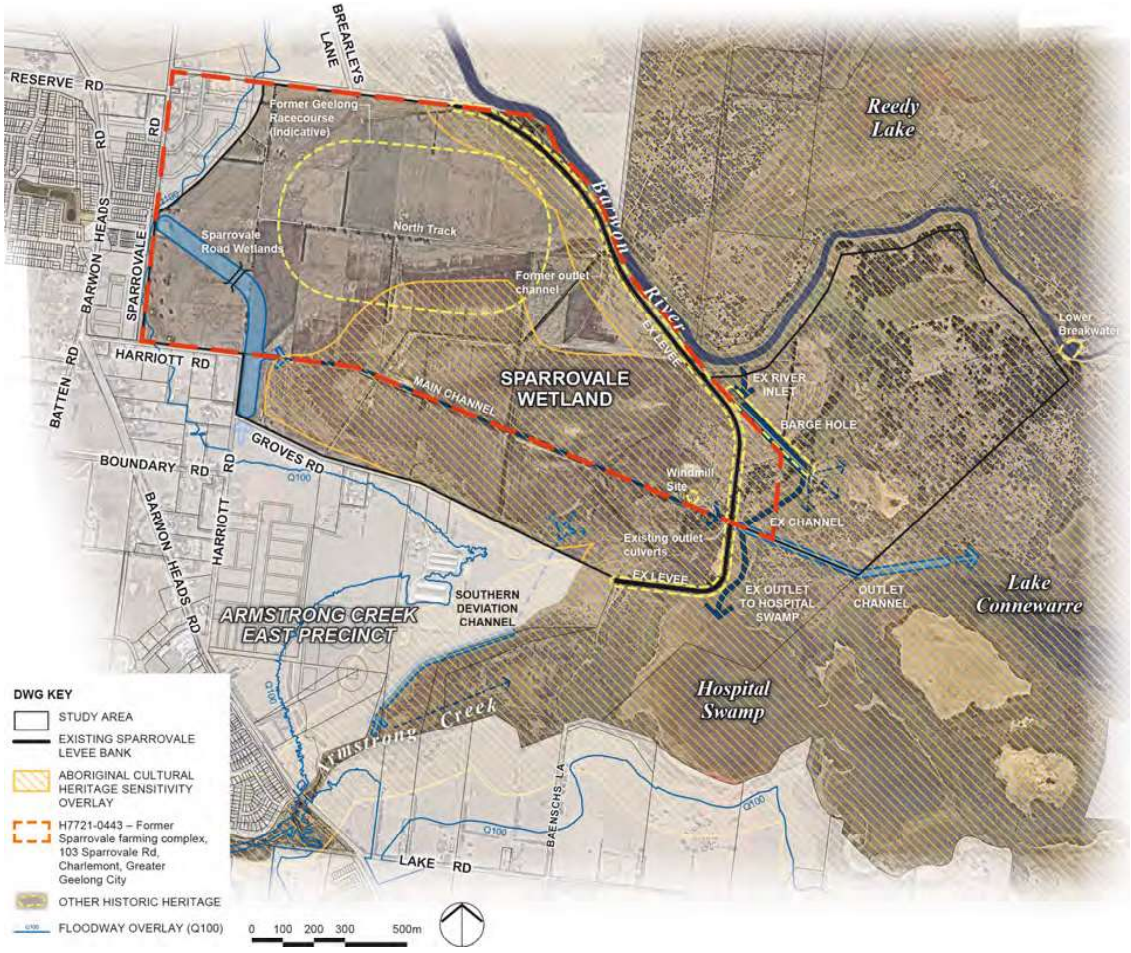


Figure 5: *Cultural Heritage*

Ongoing consultation with the *Wadawurrung* will be undertaken as part of cultural heritage management plan requirements and as part of the Sparrovale Master Plan development process.

Protection and awareness of Sparrovale's cultural areas in particular flora and fauna will be incorporated in the Sparrovale Master Plan to provide visitors understanding of the cultural significance of the site.

The key framework for consideration will be The Healthy Country Plan: Paleert Tjaara Dja – Let's make country good together 2020-2030.

Key Master Plan opportunities include:

- Investigation and research associated with Aboriginal naming of the parklands and key features.
- Naming of unnamed waterways and other features.
- On site Aboriginal cultural heritage interpretation.

- Ongoing engagement and involvement of the *Wadawurrung* as the Traditional Owners in land and water management.
- Explore potential links of Sparrovale's Cultural Heritage with the *State Government of Victoria: Protecting Victoria's Biodiversity 2037 Plan* in relation to working with Traditional Owners and Aboriginal Victorians to consider Aboriginal values in biodiversity planning and management.

2.2 Other Historical Heritage

2.2.1 Barwon River Breakwaters

When European settlers first arrived in Geelong, the water from Barwon River was seasonally brackish right through to Buckley Falls. The ebb and flow of the tides brought saltwater from the Barwon Estuary all the way into Geelong. To improve access to fresh water at the new settlement a stone breakwater was built across the river at Breakwater Road (now Gun Dog Lane) in 1841 which still exists today. (*Carmichael et al 2002)*

During the dry summer of 1893, local farmers, without government approval, built a second breakwater, 7 kilometres downstream from the 1841 structure and 1.5 kilometres before the river flows into Lake Connewarre at the current lower Breakwater site within the Sparrovale Master Plan area. As a result, stock could now drink fresh water between the two breakwaters.

The lower Breakwater was rebuilt a few metres upstream of the 1893 structure by the Geelong Harbour Trust in 1905 to support their farming operations. The new breakwater construction also included a ramp so that rowing crews could move their boats over it when they were rowing from Geelong to Barwon Heads. (*Carmichael et al 2002)*

The last major refurbishment works were completed by CCMA in 2019 and included incorporation of fish ladders. The lower Breakwater continues to maintain water levels in the Barwon River adjoining Sparrovale and allows diversion of environmental flows into both Reedy Lake and Hospital Swamp as well as water skiing use from Boundary Road to Coppards Road.



***Photo 2**: Flood gates released in 1971 (Geelong Advertiser, February 1971)*



Photo 3: *Current lower breakwater in 2018*

2.2.2 Marshalltown (Geelong) Racecourse

In 1849 a start was made on a Racecourse for Geelong, with 727 acres of land beside the Barwon River at Marshalltown set aside within the current Sparrovale Master Plan area. Refer Figure 5. In 1862 The Australian Champion stakes ran at the Marshalltown course. This was the richest race run at Geelong until after World War II. The Geelong Racing Club was founded in March 1865 and in 1872 the first Geelong Cup was held at Marshalltown course, where a new grandstand was opened. In 1878, a railway branch line was provided to the course. The Geelong Cup and other race meetings were held at the Marshalltown course until 1905 when frequent flooding forced the club to relocate to higher ground at the current Geelong Racecourse site on Breakwater Road, East Geelong. (Geelong Racing Club, 2018 <https://country.racing.com/geelong/about-us/past-cup-winners>)

2.2.3 Geelong Harbour Trust

In 1905 the government handed over 4,500 hectares of land on both sides of the Barwon River to the newly created Geelong Harbour Trust. Most of this land was salt laden, flood prone and less than a metre above sea-level. The Harbour Trust decided to use this land as a dairy farm. This necessitated the building of a levee bank and the conversion of salt affected land into productive paddocks. Some more land was purchased on the north bank for agistment. Stock were moved across the Barwon River using a punt.

In 1907 the Marshalltown Racecourse site was relocated, and the land endowed to the Geelong Harbour Trust. The farm was named “Sparrovale” after Mr. E.R.Sparrow, the auctioneer and secretary of the Geelong Racing Club. The design and construction of the Sparrovale Farmland reclamation and channel works was carried out under the direction of A.C.MacKenzie, the chief engineer of the Geelong Harbour Trust. William Baird was the farm manager.

The Trust decided that a levee bank was needed to prevent flooding of the farm area. The original levee was only 2.6m high however Sparrovale Farm was inundated by flood waters in 1909 and 1911 with levels reaching 4m. These floods left a layer of silt on the ground which dried and cracked, preventing stock from grazing. It was decided

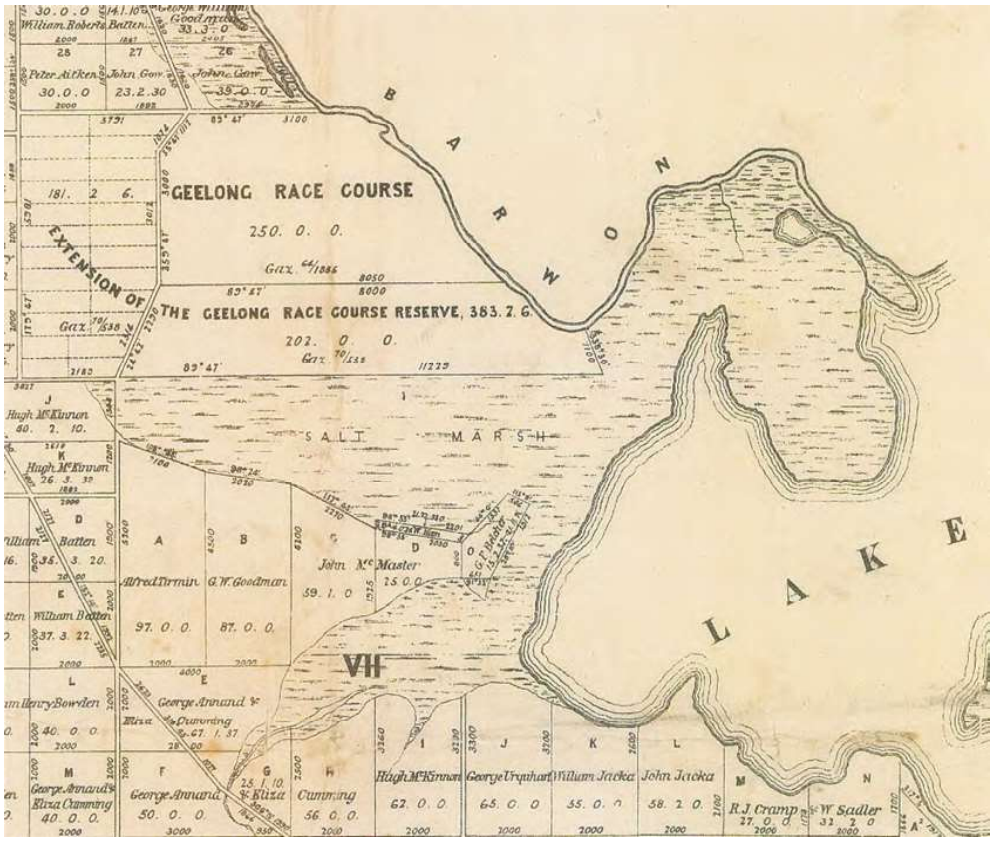


Figure 6: *Marshalltown Racecourse in 1888 (State Library)*

to raise the main Sparrovale levee to a height of 4.6m. To provide the material for the levee, the Trust decided to dig a new channel from the adjoining bend in the river through to Lake Connewarre to enable the flood waters to drain more quickly. ("*Sparrovale Farm, Marshall", Ferguson, Investigator (Magazine of the Geelong Historical Society, Vol 28, No 3, September 1993)*.

The remains of this channel, now known as the Barge Hole are still visible on the site today and it has been used since the 1970's to direct flows from the Barwon River through to Hospital Swamp.

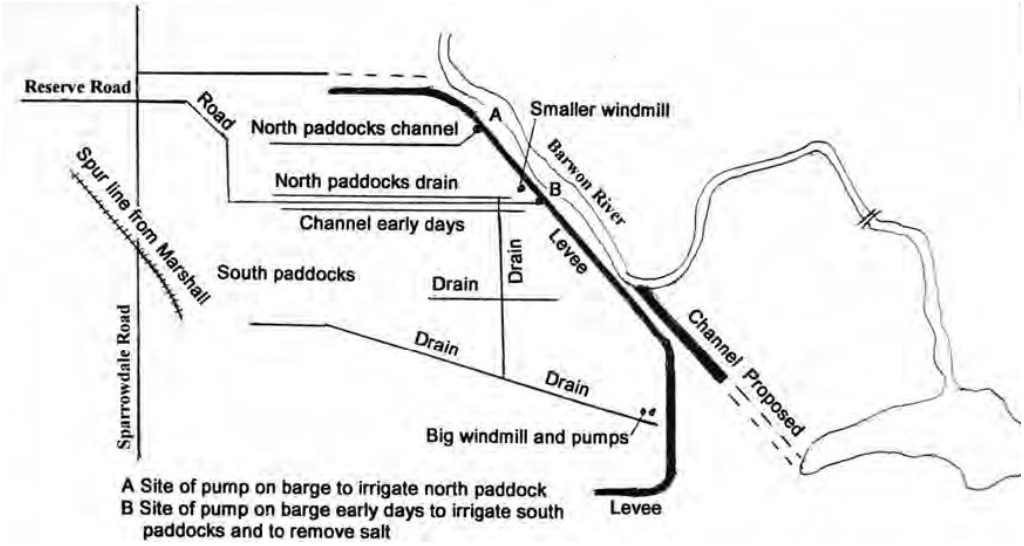


Figure 7: *Sketch map of Sparrovale Farm* (*Carmichael et al 2002)*

Excavation of the channel commenced in 1913 using a steam powered grab shovel. A light rail line was laid from the farm buildings, along the outside of the levee bank and along the side of the channel. The excavated material was placed directly into rail trucks which delivered the earth to the work site where workers, with the aid of horse-drawn scoops and other equipment, placed and compacted the earth on the levee bank. These works were continued until 1914 when the Trust could no longer provide funding for the channel and the work was abandoned. The light rails were removed and rolling stock was sold.

To reclaim the land inside the levee bank, agricultural drains were placed 30m apart. When the land was irrigated, the fresh water removed salt as it seeped down through the soil. It was then able to move through the agricultural pipes to open drains which directed the water to the south-east corner of the farm. The effluent was then pumped over the levee bank and found it was way into Lake Connewarre. Irrigation water was pumped from the river to irrigate various paddocks while the salt affected effluent was pumped out with a huge windmill, whose sail-wheel was 7m in diameter. The pump was mounted above flood level on a massive concrete foundation and enclosed by a weatherboard building, beside the windmill (Photo 4).

Sparrovale Farm was a 'progressive' farm in the early 20th Century. It had a boiler and refrigeration plant for the milk, steam traction engines to pull ploughs and other implements for driving the machines which cut maize and other crops for fodder. Fodder was stored in 2 large reinforced concrete silos whose construction was advanced technology in 1910 with designs completed by Sir John Monash.

The milking sheds held 50 cows, 25 to a side with a railway line running down the middle (Photo 5). Cow bails were opened and closed by an innovative device designed by A.C.MacKenzie and there were also 12 Hartnett milking machines driven by an oil engine.



Fig. 4.—Pumping from Main Effluent Drain into Lake Connewarre.

***Photo 4**: The big windmill and the weatherboard building housing the centrifugal pump. ("Sparrovale Farm, Marshall", Ferguson, Investigator - Magazine of the Geelong Historical Society, Vol 28, No 3, September 1993)*

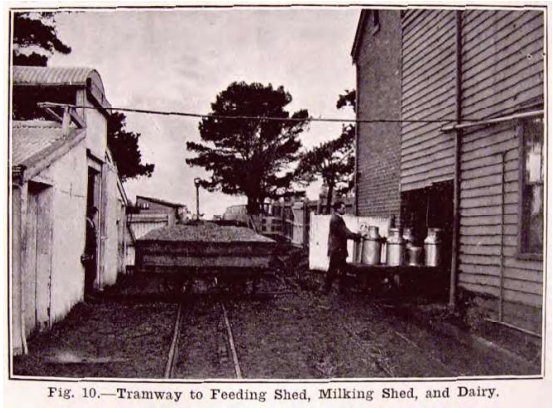


Fig. 10.—Tramway to Feeding Shed, Milking Shed, and Dairy.

***Photo 5**: Milk cans transported by rail truck. ("Sparrovale Farm, Marshall", Ferguson, Investigator - Magazine of the Geelong Historical Society, Vol 28, No 3, September 1993)*

There were other farm buildings for stables, stock shelter, pens, and machinery sheds. Production of each animal was recorded, and prizes were won at agricultural shows. Accommodation was also built for employees and there was another accommodation

building for students of the University of Melbourne who did practical work at "Sparrovale". ("*Sparrovale Farm, Marshall", Ferguson, Investigator - Magazine of the Geelong Historical Society, Vol 28, No 3, September 1993).*

In 1927 William Baird retired and the farm was privately leased until 1934. It was also at the same time Geelong Harbour Trust was restructured and the farm was sold, and it has since been private property. (*Carmichael et al 2002)*

Sparrovale Farm is listed as a Victorian Heritage Inventory site (H7721-0443) however there is no heritage overlay in the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme.

2.2.4 Cold Winds Farm

The main area of the Geelong Harbour Trust land was made up of 2 properties – Sparrovale and the Wyllies. The property known as Cold Winds was part of the Wyllies. In 1934 the land reverted to Crown land and was auctioned by the Lands Department. The properties were to be sold in one lot however there was no-on bid, so the properties were then split with the Wyllies (Cold Winds Farm) sold to W.J. Hanson. Sparrovale was not sold until 1936 to W.H.Bailey.

2.2.5 Landowners

In 1952 "Sparrovale" was purchased by Claude Perkins and farmed until his retirement in the mid-1970s, when the ownership transferred to Graham Perkins and family. It was run as a fat lamb and vealer property until 2019 when the acquisition by the City of Greater Geelong took place.

Farm operations included grazing and dry land cropping. Graham also continued to manage the remaining operational Geelong Harbour Trust infrastructure including the levee, on behalf of the Barwon Water and later the Corangamite CMA.

CCMA manages the regulator infrastructure. Graham has made an adjustment on occasion where the adjustment was time critical (later reviewed by CCMA). Through over 60 years of direct management he has a detailed understanding of the hydrology and interaction of the various channels with the floodplain as experienced in major and minor floods events including that of 1995. This knowledge and extensive historical information made available to the City and CCMA forms an important part of the current understanding of the site.

The Perkins family have agreed to continue to maintain some of the drier areas in the northern end of the site for grazing and cropping activities, continuing their ongoing involvement with the property.



Photo 6: *Water Flowing over the levee bank in November 1978 (G. Perkins, 1978)*



Photo 7*: Photo of Levee bank in 1971 (Geelong Advertiser, February 1971)*

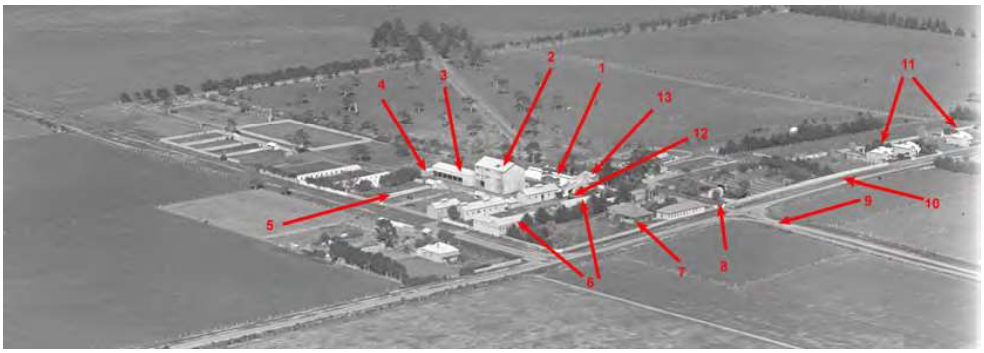


***Photo 8**: 1936 aerial photo of Sparrovale Farm by Charles Pratt [Airspy]. (State Library of Victoria, H91-160-861)*

Key:

1. Milking Shed
2. 3 Storey barn
3. Stables
4. Small building near piggery
5. Piggery
6. Employees quarters
7. Manager's residence
8. Farm gate
9. Reserve Road
10. Sparrovale Road
11. Farmworkers cottages
12. Dairy buildings, boiling house and Stabling
13 Brick dairy building – refrigeration and testing

The original Sparrovale Farm buildings are listed in the Greater Geelong Outer Areas Heritage Study 1998 - 2000 (Huddle and Rowe) as of Regional significance.

The key features include:

- The Stables, at 103 Sparrovale Road
- The Manager's House
- The silo ruins, which were built to specifications of civil engineer and later WW1 Army General Sir John Monash.

These sites are located outside the Sparrovale Wetlands Master Plan area and are subject to redevelopment as part of the Horseshoe Bend Precinct.

3. ENVIRONMENT

3.1 Geology and Geomorphology

The site is located within the Pleistocene alluvial terrace deposits and the Holocene coastal lagoon deposits commonly found across the Barwon Estuary. The land is predominately flat and low-lying with occasional rises many of which have been created by historical farming operations. The north-western part of Sparrovale is underlain by significant sand, gravel and silt derived from the underlying alluvial terrace deposits (channelled stream flow) from the Pleistocene Age. The south-eastern part of Sparrovale is underlain by significant silt and clay derived from the underlying coastal lagoon deposits (water process-delta plain) from the Holocene Age. *(Diomides & Associates Pty Ltd, 2018)*

3.2 Flora

The Lake Connewarre State Game Reserve, which includes Reedy Lake, sections of Hospital Swamp and the Lower Barwon River through the Armstrong Creek area, is the largest area of remnant indigenous vegetation on the Bellarine Peninsula. The large, shallow, estuarine lagoon is linked to the sea at Barwon Heads by the mangrove-fringed channel of the Lower Barwon River. The combination of dry climate, estuarine influence and large area has contributed to the development of diverse, species-rich salt marsh and sub-saline marsh vegetation.

The study area is located on the boundary of the Otway Plain and Victorian Volcanic Plain bioregions, but predominantly falls within the Otway Plain bioregion. Biodiversity assessment completed by Ecology & Heritage Partners identified five Ecological Vegetation Classes (EVCs) across the Master Plan area.

It is vital to maintain the monitoring regime regarding these existing areas of native vegetation to ensure appropriate management practices are undertaken during the development of the Sparrovale Master Plan and to guide ongoing future management of the site in accordance with relevant permit requirements.

The environmental rehabilitation of the Sparrovale site will mainly focus on protecting existing areas of indigenous vegetation assisting the natural regeneration and expansion of these communities with targeted weed control, pulse grazing and hydrologic management to maintain and enhance biodiversity values.

New planting works will be undertaken in partnership with the CCMA and PV and will initially focus on reinstatement of indigenous overstorey canopy cover where this is unlikely to recover without planting. Seed sourced from existing remnant indigenous overstorey trees on the site and nearby will be used to grow new trees and shrubs which will be planted in accordance with EVC benchmarks and to suit the modified hydraulic conditions at Sparrovale.

New planting will target riparian areas along the Barwon River where native vegetation has been removed and areas of modified/disturbed slightly raised land along existing tracks and channels which will favour the sustainable establishment of indigenous trees including Moonah and Bellarine Yellow Gum. Plantings will also be targeted at the western end of the property to enhance the large remnant River Red Gums.

The revegetation program will also be guided by ongoing ecological assessment and review of habitat and biodiversity values as a key component of adaptive management for the site.

3.2.1 Lignum Swamp (EVC 104)

Lignum Swamp is the predominant EVC within the area to the east of the existing levee, and was considered to be in poor condition, due to the low native species diversity and high weed cover. This community is likely to spread following reduction in grazing activities.

Lignum Swamp is dominated by *Duma florulenta* associated with the wetland and offers the ideal habitat for smaller birds or as nesting resources for larger species.

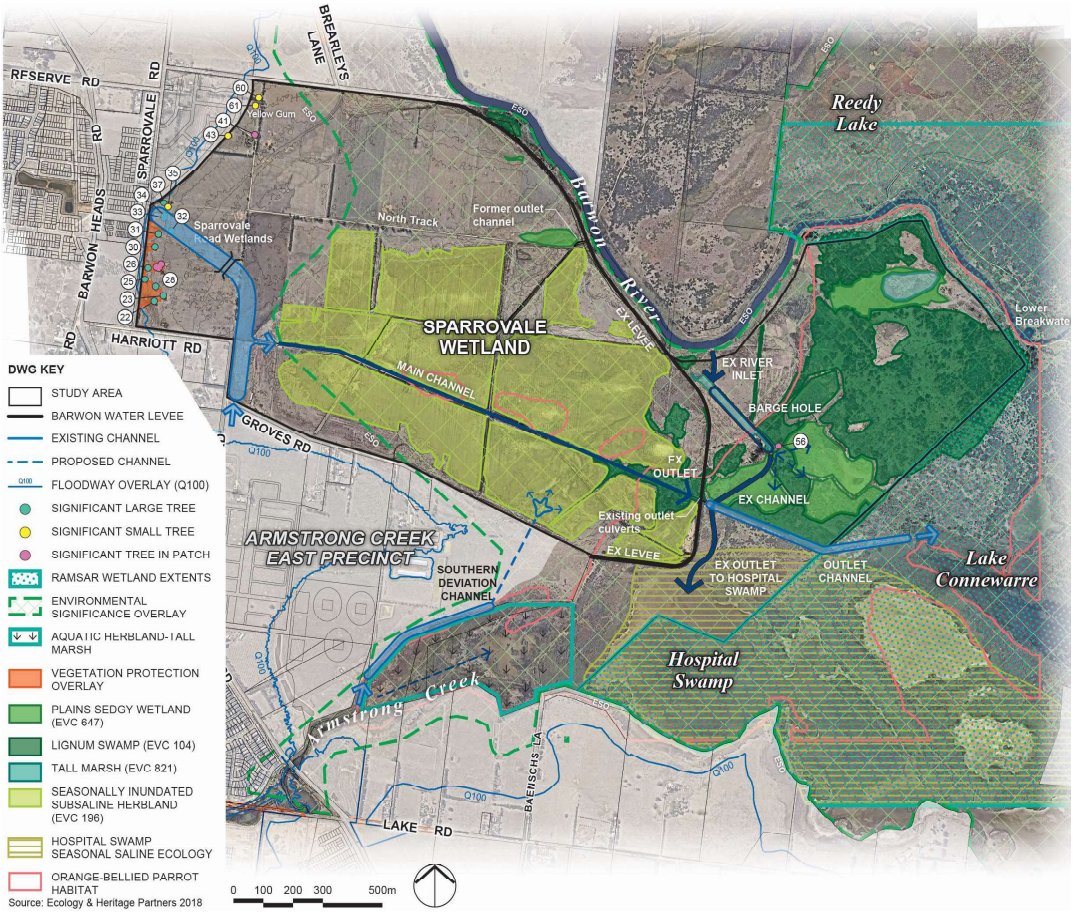


Figure 8: *Biodiversity Values.*

3.2.2 Tall Marsh (EVC 821)

Tall Marsh was identified in one area to the east of the levee and was considered to be in moderate condition. This community is likely to spread to new channels once established and can inhibit the free passage of water. CCMA complete regular ongoing clearance in existing channels through to Reedy Lake to maintain water flow.



Photo 9*: Lignum Swamp (EHP 2018).*



Photo 10*: Tall Marsh (EHP 2018).*

3.2.3 Seasonally Inundated Sub-saline Herbland (EVC 196)

Seasonally Inundated Sub-saline Herbland was present across the majority of Sparrovale Wetland (west of the levee bank) and was considered to be in poor condition as despite having low weed cover, as species diversity is limited to one dominant species Bearded Glasswort.

It is vital to maintain the monitoring regime for protection of these existing areas of native vegetation which provide habitat for the critically threatened species such as the Orange-bellied Parrot and to ensure appropriate management practices are undertaken during the development and ongoing implementation of the Master Plan.

3.2.4 Plains Sedgy Wetland (EVC 647).

Plain Sedgy Wetland was recorded in two areas within the far eastern portion of the study area and was considered to be in poor condition.



***Photo 11**: Seasonally Inundated Sub-saline Herbland (EHP 2018).*



***Photo 12**: Plains Sedgy Wetland (EHP 2018).*

3.2.5 Plains Grassy Woodland (EVC 55)

Plains Grassy Woodland was recorded in three areas within the far western portion of the study area and was considered to be in poor condition. Removal of grazing will also enable natural regeneration and expansion of these areas to complement the new constructed wetlands.

3.2.6 Mature trees

The assessment identified fourteen scattered River Red-gums *Eucalyptus camaldulensis* trees (including 11 Large Trees), and one Yellow Gum, *Eucalyptus leucoxylon*, along Sparrovale Road. The Yellow Gum is considered an intergrade between the two state significant subspecies *bellarinesis* (Bellarine Yellow-Gum) and *connata* (Melbourne Yellow-Gum) but has not been clearly classified as either subspecies. However, as both subspecies are considered State significant, the specimen recorded during the site assessment is likewise considered of State significance. These trees and other remnant indigenous trees located within nearby Dooliebeal will provide an important source of local provenance seed for future revegetation works within the study area.



***Photo 13**: Planted River Red Gums*



***Photo 14**: Plains Grassy Woodland (EHP 2018).*

3.2.7 Hospital Swamp

Hospital Swamp supports a complex system of Wet Saltmarsh, Coastal Tussock Saltmarsh and Brackish Lignum Swamp. The section adjoining Sparrovale at Baenchs Lane also has Aquatic Herbland and Tall Marsh.

Hospital Swamp is part of the Lake Connewarre State Game Reserve managed by Parks Victoria and is not part of the master plan study area however the addition of fresh water and urban runoff from development along Armstrong Creek presents a significant threat to the Hospital Swamp system. A key focus of planning for the Sparrovale site has been to maintain and protect the existing brackish wetland character and associated habitat values of Hospital Swamp particularly in summer by diverting the additional urban stormwater from Armstrong Creek to the Sparrovale site via the new Southern Deviation channel. The works include adjustable inlet and outlet structures which will enable flows to be regulated as needed to support the existing brackish wetland ecology.

3.2.8 Revegetation

There have been various attempts at revegetation on the site. River Red Gums plots established on the Barwon River by Barwon Water/CCMA in partnership with Graham Perkins have become well established however the seed provenance is unknown (likely Barwon Water nursery stock) and should not be used for seed collective unless verified.

Shelter belt row planting using a mix of exotic and native species along the main farm tracks has struggled to become established due to periodic inundation and harsh saline conditions. Where possible these trees should be retained to provide habitat and landscape character until new tree planting of appropriate native vegetation can be established.

The environmental rehabilitation of the Sparrovale site will mainly focus on protecting existing areas of indigenous vegetation assisting the natural regeneration and expansion of these communities with targeted weed control, pulse grazing and hydrologic management to maintain and enhance biodiversity values.

Targeted new planting works will be undertaken in partnership with the CCMA and PV and will initially focus on reinstatement of indigenous overstorey canopy cover where this is unlikely to recover naturally without planting. Seed sourced from known existing remnant indigenous overstorey trees on the site and nearby will be used to grow new trees and shrubs which will be planted in accordance with EVC benchmarks and to suit the modified hydraulic conditions at Sparrovale.

New planting will target riparian areas along the Barwon River where native vegetation has been removed and areas of modified/disturbed slightly raised land along existing tracks and channels which will favour the sustainable establishment of indigenous trees including Moonah and Bellarine Yellow Gum.

Plantings will also be targeted at the western end of the property to enhance the large remnant River Red Gums. This can include direct seeding using local provenance native grasses and wildflowers consistent with the ECV.

The revegetation program will also be guided by ongoing ecological assessment and review of habitat and biodiversity values. Ongoing ecological assessment will be used to monitor the natural regeneration of indigenous vegetation at the site and to prioritise targeted weed control. Ecological monitoring will be a key component of adaptive management for the site as it changes back to an indigenous landscape and targeted intervention to enhance key habitat for key species may be required if regeneration indicates outcomes reduce habitat for significant species.

3.3 Fauna

Lake Connewarre and the lower reaches of the Barwon River form a critical part of the Port Phillip (Western Shoreline) and Bellarine Peninsula Ramsar Site. This is one of 11 wetlands of international ecological significance in Victoria listed under the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran 1971). The values associated with the reserves listing as a wetland of international significance include:

- Threatened species that are directly supported by the wetlands.
- Habitat and critical life stage support for a large number of migratory shorebirds, waterfowl and water birds and fish species.
- Important feeding and nursery areas for a number of native fish and frog species.



***Figure 9**: Port Phillip Bay, (Western Shoreline) and Bellarine Peninsula Ramsar Site. (DELWP 2018.)*

The Barwon River downstream of Waurn Ponds Creek is home to several rare and threatened fish species including Australian Grayling, Yarra Pygmy Perch and Australian Mudfish. The dense cover of reeds and variable cover of floating and submerged aquatic vegetation provides moderate to high value habitat for frogs including potentially the Growling Grass Frog and a variety of common to rare water birds including Brolga *Grus rubicunda* (vulnerable under *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988*), White faced Heron, and Pacific Black Duck amongst others.



***Photo 15**: Brolga Grus rubicunda*



***Photo 16**: Barwon River upstream of the lower breakwater*

The existing vegetation and the location of the wetlands provide an important habitat refuge for a range of native birds and other wildlife such as the Red-necked Stint, Sharp-tailed Sandpiper and the critically endangered Curlew Sandpiper. No significant fauna species were recorded during the most recent assessment by EHP in 2018; however, there is suitable habitat within the study area for several significant fauna species, including but not limited to the threatened species including Orange-bellied Parrot *Neophema chrysogaster*, Brolga *Grus rubicunda* Yarra Pygmy Perch *Nannoperca obscura*, Australian Mudfish *Neochanna clevaeri* and Growling Grass Frog *Litoria raniformis*.

Existing drainage lines and low-lying areas in adjoining grazing land provide low to moderate habitat value supporting wetland dependant species such as Dusky Moorhen, Australasian Swamphen and where un-grazed and featuring dense vegetation potentially rare Crakes and Rails including Lewins Rail, Butt-banded Rail and Lathams Snipe Swamp Rat. There is habitat for frogs including Common Froglet and Spotted Marsh Frog as well as reptiles such as Lowland Copperhead and potentially Glossy Grass Skink. The site provides habitat for Water Rat (Rakali) and Swamp Rat.

Threats include a large fallow deer population who move in and out of the site from Hospital Swamp.



***Photo 17**: Orange-bellied parrot in saltmarsh (Port Phillip Bay - Western Shoreline and Bellarine Peninsula Ramsar Site Management Plan, DELWP, 2018).*



***Photo 18** :* Yarra Pygmy Perch *Nannoperca obscura*. (*Friends of Waurn Ponds Creek)*

4. FLOODING AND DRAINAGE

4.1 Flooding

The study area is located outside the Armstrong Creek Urban Growth Zone and entirely within the Q100 (100yr) or 1% Annual Recurrence Interval (ARI) flood level for the Barwon River.

Assessment of flooding (overbank flow) on the Barwon River *(Craigie 2012)* indicates:

- All land within the study area below 3.0m AHD and subject to inundation in the Q100 or 1% ARI flood event.
- Estimated annual overbank flow frequencies of approximately 3 events per year however the frequency of over bank flow events over the last 10 years has been well below the long-term average.
- The total annual duration of overbank flow events into Reedy Lake and Hospital Swamp has been estimated as 10 days historically. Overbank flow events are strongly concentrated over the months of July through to October however exceptions can occur with summer storm events.
- Historically low flow events (i.e. where there is no overbank flow events for more than 365 days) occur on average once every 5 years.
- The height of natural banks separating Lake Connewarre and Hospital Swamp are approximately 0.5m AHD. These banks are overtopped on average once per year to a depth of greater than 0.1m creating significant inundation of these wetlands.

The water level in the Barwon River is artificially controlled by the lower breakwater (barrage) and there has been significant historical manipulation of the floodplain, especially at Sparrovale Farm. Flood levels below the Q10 (10% ARI level) are controlled by a series of constructed levees and outlet. Refer photo 1 and 2.



***Photo 19**: Sparrovale Levee bank*



***Photo 20**: Outlet*



***Photo 21**: Main channel*

The proposed Armstrong Creek development will also generate significant stormwater run-offs and some areas will be subject to flooding after local rainfall events even when there is no flooding on the Barwon River. The design of the new drainage infrastructure is further discussed in section 4.2.

The design and siting for new recreational infrastructure such as paths, bridges and other facilities within the site must consider the impacts of flooding on cultural heritage and public safety, and the durability and sustainability of these facilities when inundated.

Key principles to be considered for development of infrastructure include:

- Barwon River Trail to be located above Q10 (10% ARI) flood level where possible in accordance with Melbourne Water guidelines for the establishment of Shared trails.
- Where the Barwon River Trail or other shared trail pedestrian/cycle links are located below Q10, consider the following:
  - Use of concrete for increased durability.
  - Installation of flood risk warning signage and use of passive drown-outs or other access control measures will be needed where depth x flow velocity ratios during flood events exceed 0.35.
- Unsealed maintenance and informal walking tracks will be subject to more frequent inundation especially where located closer to the Barwon River. These tracks will require additional maintenance and potentially risk/warning signage regarding potential hazards in use of these tracks during and after flood events.
- Bridges and culverts used for pedestrian and cycle access across drainage outfalls and overland flow paths are to generally achieve Q10 protection and ensure no impact on upstream flood levels. These areas are also more likely to be subject to higher velocities.
- Use of solid or chain mesh fencing perpendicular to flood flows is not preferred as it is more likely to require maintenance or be damaged/pushed over due to build-up of debris in a flood event. This may present some challenges for localised control of rabbits.
- Use of cut to fill balance to slightly lift path levels can be considered where there is no overall fill in the floodplain i.e. built-up areas of path are offset by excavation/cut to lower adjoining areas. This type of works may also increase biodiversity values through creation of additional ephemeral wetland areas but will be subject to design review and formal Cultural Heritage due diligence assessment approval.
- Establishment of expensive assets i.e. public toilets and other facilities such as BBQs that can be damaged and/or cause environmental or safety concerns after flooding, are not recommended with the floodplain. Therefore, links to open space areas such as Regional Open Space in the Glenlee Estate and the Future Active Open Space where toilets and BBQ facilities can be provided is critical.

4.2 Drainage

4.2.1 Horseshoe Bend Precinct

The primary purpose for acquiring the land is to provide for capture and treatment of urban stormwater runoff from the adjoining Armstrong Creek development area to mitigate development impacts on the Barwon River and the ecological character of Hospital Swamp. The natural and constructed wetlands occupy approximately 200 hectares of the 500 hectare site and the design and construction of the new stormwater wetlands, channels and management infrastructure has been coordinated by the City of Greater Geelong Capital Works Department.

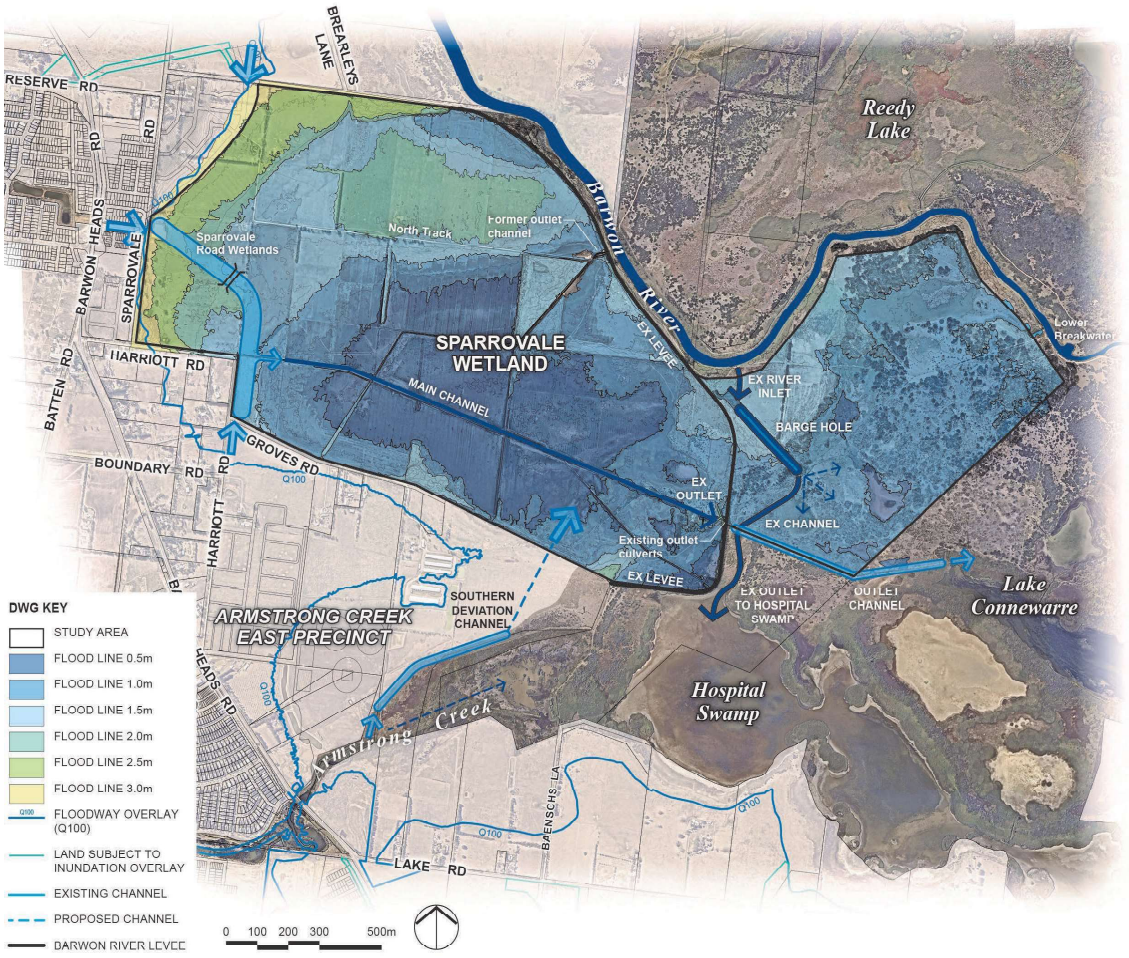


Figure 10: *Drainage and Flooding*

The new constructed wetlands will form the primary interface of the wetlands park to urban development on the west side. Retention of existing mature trees and longer-term establishment of the Horseshoe Bend Regional Park and Barwon River Trail (along Sparrovale Road) will significantly benefit from views and passive recreation opportunities as revegetation becomes established within the new wetland.



Photo 22: *Sparrovale Road Constructed Wetlands Site (Sparrovale Road) prior to construction*



Photo 23: *Sparrovale Road Constructed Wetlands Site (Harriott Road) prior to construction*



Photo 24: *Sparrovale Constructed Wetlands at Harriott Road*

The Sparrovale Road Wetlands treat stormwater run-off from urban development in the Horseshoe Bend Precinct. There are two main inlets directed into the wetland along low lying natural gully forms and existing farm dam. These inlets are joined together at the north east corner of Harriott Road before discharging into the main wetland via the main channel.

The Sparrovale Road Wetlands have been designed for ultimate development however their connection to the Barwon River floodplain and natural wetland system means they will operate after flooding as soon as the new levee system and regulators are established.

4.2.2 Armstrong Creek (Southern Deviation Channel)

Armstrong Creek is the main stormwater outfall from the Armstrong Creek East Precinct. A series of new water quality treatment wetlands and retarding basins are being developed on the creek upstream of Barwon Heads Road to provide best practice pre-treatment of stormwater prior to discharge into Hospital Swamp. These wetlands and creek rehabilitation works will also enhance habitat values and corridor links to inland bio sites at Dooliebeal, Charlemont and the Cemetery Land.

A key requirement for drainage management is the protection of the existing wetlands at Hospital Swamp. The Southern Deviation Channel diverts urban stormwater fresh water flows from Armstrong Creek over summer to the Sparrovale Wetlands to maintain the existing saline ecology in Hospital Swamp.



Photo 25: *Southern Deviation Channel (prior to construction)*

The diversion structure at Armstrong Creek is adjustable and diverts flows via an open channel with the last 100m consisting of a large underground concrete pipe to overcome the change in topography and protect adjoining native vegetation.

There is also a large stormwater harvesting system proposed to service the active open space on the north side of the creek, east side of Barwon Heads Road. These works will be delivered by the land developer.



Photo 26: *Southern Deviation Channel (Pipe Section)*



Photo 27: *Southern Deviation Channel (in construction)*

4.2.3 North East Industrial Precinct (Keystone Business Park)

A small catchment from Tannery Road will be ultimately directed towards the Sparrovale Road Wetlands however there is no current detailed design for the outfall to be located in the north west corner of the site off Reserve Road.

4.2.4 Sparrovale Levee Bank

The levee was constructed in 1913 by the Geelong Harbour Trust (refer section 4.2.3) and extends almost 3 kilometres along the Barwon River Frontage to separate the Sparrovale Farm from Hospital Swamp. The levee is constructed of compacted earth and rises to a height of 2.6 metres AHD with outflow controlled by a concrete culvert. The City have recently upgraded the outlet and created a new channel through to Hospital Swamp to improve the function of the system.

The northern section of the levee is contained with the CCMA managed Crown land river frontage. This section is in good condition and can be used by maintenance vehicles and pedestrians. Refer photo 19.



Photo 28: *The City managed levee section.*



Photo 29: *PV managed levee section.*

The City manage the central section including the regulator and new outfall channel. This section is not suitable for maintenance vehicles but provides all weather walking access.

Parks Victoria manage the southern section of the levee. This section is in poor condition and cannot be safely accessed by maintenance vehicles and/or walkers at the moment. There is severe rabbit infestation and lignum regrowth restricts access for inspection and ongoing maintenance.

The levee was breached by David Perkins and Vic Draper as the outlet became blocked by rubbish during the 1995 floods. This lowered the level enough to open Groves Road to allow feed trucks carrying pallets to the Broiler sheds. This lowered the water level to allow pasture to dry out, with the remaining water being pumped out. David Perkins repaired the

levee with his bulldozer. The current structural integrity of the levee in this section is unknown as there is no ANCOLD assessment for the structure. Lowering and strengthening the levee such that it can be used for walking and maintenance vehicle access through to the Barwon River in winter and other periods of inundation is a key opportunity. These works need to also consider use of passive drown outs (sections artificially set below the main levee at the start and end) to restrict access into the site during a major flood event when the entire structure may be overtopped. It is also recommended that management of the levee is delegated to a single authority (likely City of Greater Geelong) to ensure continuity of management and regular inspections as needed for this type of structure.

5. RECREATION

5.1 Existing Adjoining Open Space

5.1.1 Lake Connewarre State Game Reserve

The reserve is managed by Parks Victoria (PV) and forms the eastern boundary of the Barwon River Parklands study area including approximately 2 kilometres of river frontage. The adjoining Sparrovale is Crown land also managed by PV. There is currently limited public access to the reserve from the west and the adjoining land use is predominantly rural.

The Lake Connewarre State Game Reserve is part of the Port Phillip (Western Shoreline) and Bellarine Peninsula Ramsar Area. This is one of 11 wetlands of international significance in Victoria listed under the International Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran 1971). The Reserve hosts recreational hunting activities and is part of the duck season which extends from March to June depending on seasonal conditions.

Key considerations for the interface to the Lake Connewarre State Game Reserve include:

- Maintenance of a riparian and wetland parkland buffer between the reserve and any new urban development precincts.
- Aboriginal Cultural heritage management.
- Control/visitor management to protect existing high value habitat areas within wetlands and along the Barwon River frontage.
- Control/management of other recreational access into the State Game Reserve during duck season and vice versa.
- Design of stormwater drainage systems from future development precincts to ensure no impact on existing water quality, wetland flora and habitat values. Where possible new wetlands are to be incorporated into the reserve to maximise potential habitat value.
- Connection of existing visitor nodes via extension of the Barwon River Trail.

The public access visitor areas of Lake Connewarre State Game Reserve within proximity to Armstrong Creek include:

5.1.2 Taits Point

This is currently the main viewing and interpretation point for the reserve on the southern shoreline. There is a boat ramp, car park and elevated picnic/viewing areas overlooking Lake Connewarre and Hospital Swamp. Access is only via car along Staceys Road from Barwon Heads Road.

5.1.3 Baenchs Lane

There is an informal grass car park which provides access to Hospital Swamp for bird watchers and hunters during duck season. There are no other facilities and the area is difficult to access in wet conditions. Corangamite Catchment Management Authority (CCMA) are currently undertaking resurfacing of the access track through to the levee as this track still goes under water.



***Photo 30**: Tait Point*



***Photo 31**: Baenchs Lane*

5.2 Future Open Space

5.2.1 Horseshoe Bend Precinct

A **Horseshoe Bend Precinct Regional Park (Glenlee Estate)**
The Horseshoe Bend Precinct Regional Park is to be developed as outlined in the *Armstrong Creek Horseshoe Bend Precinct Structure Plan 2014* (ACHBPSP). The Regional Passive Park (1.94Ha) is located south of 274-280 Reserve Road, Charlemont and west of Sparrovale Road Wetlands (Glenlee Estate). It includes existing trees and views over Sparrovale Road to the new constructed wetlands. The reserve will feature a regional scale play space, public toilets and picnic facilities and will be connected via the future Barwon River Trail which will approximately run along the current Sparrovale Road. The planning and design of the Regional passive park will be in accordance with the Horseshoe Bend Precinct Structure Plan guidelines.

B **Horseshoe Bend Precinct Local Park (103 Sparrovale Road, Charlemont)**
The Horseshoe Bend Precinct Local Park is being proposed at the higher ground of Sparrovale at 103 Sparrovale Road, Charlemont. The local park (0.60Ha) is located on the eastern side of the estate near Brearleys Lane to protect the 5 remnant trees located within the proposed area.



Figure 11: *Future Open Space Plan*

5.2.2 Armstrong East Precinct

C **Armstrong Creek East Regional Active Open Space**
The Armstrong Creek East Regional Active Open Space will be developed in accordance with the *Armstrong Creek East Precinct Structure Plan 2010* (ACPSP). The Regional Active Open Space (21.40Ha) will include playing fields, courts, pavilions and public toilets in support of active sporting use. The Active Open Space will be accessed directly from Barwon Head Road and via the Armstrong Creek Shared Path and a new boulevard.

D **Halcyon Estate Linear near Open Space**
A 30m wide linear open space reserve is being proposed in the central area of Halcyon Estate, south-west of Sparrovale Wetlands. This reserve is an important part of the shared path connection between Sparrovale Warralily Neighbourhood Activity Centre (NAC) through the East Precinct to the Active Open Space on the Surf Coast Highway. The reserve runs from north to south with a 30m wide boulevard with on street parking, pedestrian paths, bicycle lane and on street parking provisions. The boulevard will also provide direct access through to The Active Open Space and eventually the Sparrovale Wetlands from Barwon Heads Road.

5.3 Recreational Trails

5.3.1 Barwon River Trail

The Barwon River Trail will form the key access and spine of visitor use into the new parkland area. The extension of the Barwon River trail south along the river into the new open space at Armstrong Creek will improve two-way recreational access. Armstrong Creek residents will be able to access the existing Barwon River Trail network (20 kilometres+) with safe off-road access back into central Geelong. In the longer term with completion of the Ring road crossing on the river, the community will have access to the Bellarine Rail Trail. Existing Geelong residents will also have access to the largest piece of new public open space in the area and eventually improved access through to Barwon Heads, Armstrong Creek, and the southern areas of the Bellarine Peninsula.

Key design criteria for establishment of the path will:

- Provide access above the Q10 flood level in accordance with Melbourne Water Shared Path Guidelines.
- Minimise impacts on ecological and cultural heritage values through careful selection of trail routes and sustainable design of infrastructure.
- Be developed in accordance with best practice and to meet and the requirements of *AS1428 Access and Mobility Standards*.
- Be developed in accordance with current AustRoad Standards and the City Guidelines.

To achieve Q10 flood protection the Barwon River Trail will need to be located around the perimeter of the new wetland park. Refer Figure 11

The trail will utilise mostly the former Sparrovale Road and may meander into the western body of Sparrovale, ensuring protection of existing trees. It will then use the road reserves at Harriott Road and Groves Road. As these existing roads are below the Q100 flood level they will be replaced with new roads as residential development progresses. Eventually the Barwon River Trail will connect from the east of Groves Road to future path links to be provided along Southern Deviation Channel and Armstrong Creek, while maintaining a buffer to habitat values in Hospital Swamp.



***Photo 32**: Sparrovale Road (Future Barwon River Trail)*



***Photo 33**: Groves Road (Future Barwon River Trail)*

5.3.2 Wetland and Maintenance Access

The existing unsealed roads and vehicle tracks used by landowners as part of existing farm management will form the basis for future maintenance vehicle access network. This network could also form an excellent secondary walking trail network for public access to the Barwon River and a series of loops and circuits around new wetlands and larger space areas. Fencing and gates to restrict illegal vehicle and motorbike access will be a key requirement to protect habitat values in the wetlands and along the Barwon River.



***Photo 34**: Existing north track*



***Photo 35**: Former electrical easement track*



***Photo 36**: New Main Channel Converts*

5.3.3 Proposed Walking loops

Sparrovale Road Wetland Walking Loop

This will be an all ability circuit of just over 2 kilometres (approximately 30 minutes) and will require a bridge/boardwalk crossing on the new Sparrovale Road constructed wetlands. This circuit will likely be the most popular circuit in the initial phase of wetland park development as it is closest to the residential area and Barwon River Trail. The circuit walk will also have direct connection to the future Horseshoe Bend Regional Park which provides an important additional passive recreation options that will have a playspace, picnic facilities and public toilets. The walking path will be subject to inundation only in a

major flood event and views will be focused more on the constructed wetlands rather than the larger natural wetlands further east.

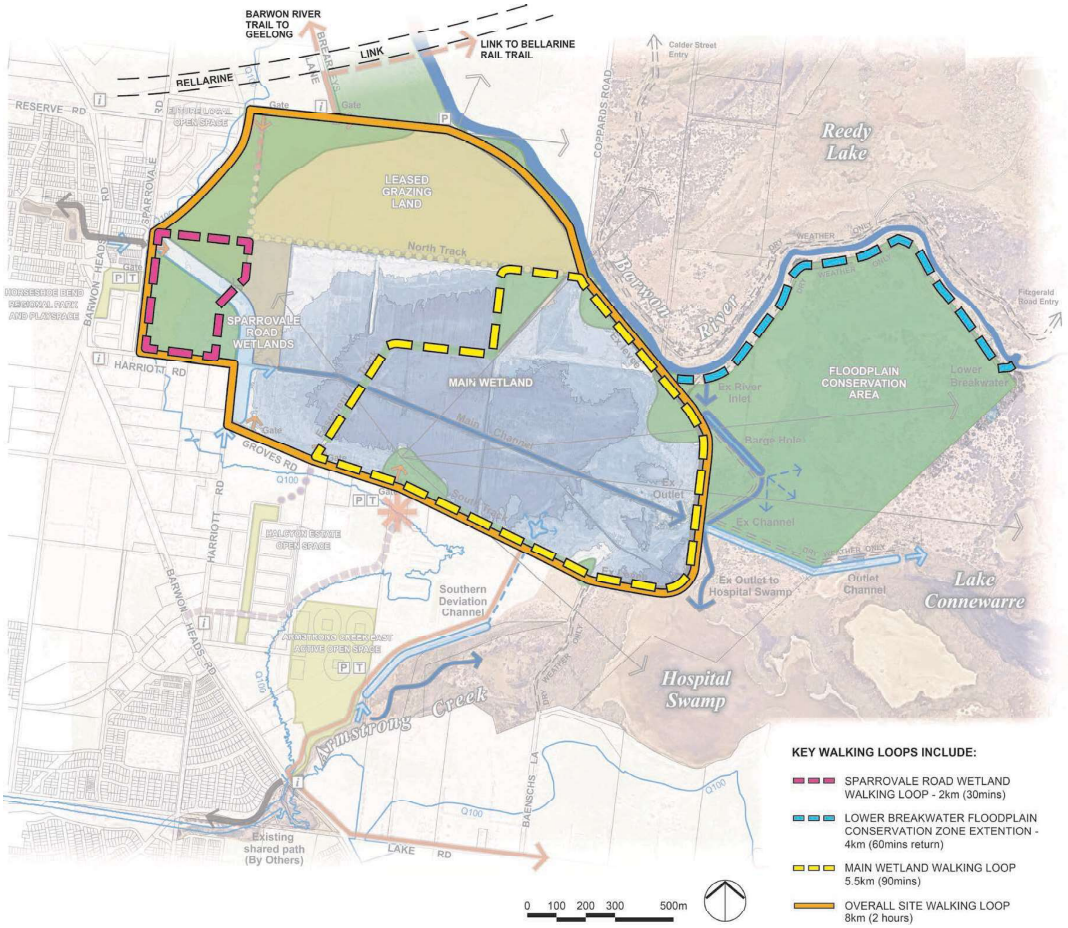


***Figure 11a**: Potential walking loops*

Main Wetland Walking Loop

This circuit of 5-6 kilometres (approximately 90 minutes) will start/end at the proposed viewing point and car parking area at the end of Groves Road. Targeting more intrepid walkers and bird watchers this circuit will use the existing network of levee banks and maintenance access tracks to complete a full circuit of the main wetland. Use of the existing levee system will require establishment of a new culvert/bridge crossing across the main channel on the former electrical service easement track (currently in planning) and use of the main Sparrovale levee, requiring improvements to access in the PV managed sections. The walking path will be subject to inundation only in a major flood event and will provide access into the wetlands and Barwon River when they are almost full of water and at their most spectacular. Passive drown outs (artificially lowered sections of path which are covered by water first) will be used at the path entry points to restrict access to the site before flood waters reach dangerous levels. Use of chicanes and stiles will be needed to restrict illegal motorbike access at the entries.

Lower Breakwater Floodplain Conservation Area Walking Loop

This extension to the main wetland walking loop of approximately 4 kilometres (60 minutes return) will form an informal track along the Barwon River down to the Lower Breakwater. It will be best accessed from the end of Groves Road and will only be useable in dry weather. The lower breakwater is likely to become a popular fishing spot and intrepid fishers and bird watchers are likely to be the main users of this informal 'rubber boots required' walking track.

Overall Site Walking Loop
A circuit walk including the Sparrovale Road Wetland Walking Loop and the Main Wetland Walking Loop will take around 2 hours. This route would enable users to visit both the Horseshoe Bend Regional Park and the proposed viewing point and future visitor centre at the end of Groves Road providing the complete wetland experience.

5.4 Other Recreation

5.4.1 Passive Recreation

New regional active open space and sporting ovals will be established within the Armstrong Creek East Precinct and a new regional park and playspace will provide for passive recreation. Other local open space will be provided for within the Urban Growth Area as indicated in each Precinct Structure Plan. There is currently no land based active recreation or sporting use planned within the study area.

Bush Walking/Bird Watching

Bush walking/bird watching and nature appreciation are expected to become a key attractor for visitors to the area. The parklands will provide public access to one of the most significant bird habitat areas in Victoria and an area of National and International significance. Refer section 3. An opportunity to escape from the urban environment will also be a key attraction for many visitors.

An initial environmental educational centre will be established with re-development of the existing farm sheds on the corner of Groves Road and Harriott Road. Longer term a more expansive purpose built facility will be considered as part of potential future visitor centre development near the eastern end of Groves Road.

5.4.2 Water Sports

Geelong Water Ski Club currently has almost exclusive use of the Barwon River between Boundary Road and Coppards Road just north of the study area. The club is located at the end of Wilsons Road on the east bank and has a private boat ramp on the east bank.

The Barwon River Parklands Strategy and South West Regional Trails Strategies recommend investigation for establishment of a canoe/kayak link between Geelong and Barwon Heads. As Armstrong Creek develops and water-skiing and other uses of the Barwon River including fishing and canoeing increase, the potential for conflicts with the water-skiing and duck hunting season use may also increase.

The Barwon River is used for canoeing and kayaking however the restriction to access under the Aqueduct and the drop at the lower breakwater limit use. Lake Connewarre is also difficult to negotiate with shallow tidal conditions suited to only the most experienced of users.

5.4.3 Hunting

The Lake Connewarre State Game Reserve is managed by Parks Victoria (PV) and forms the eastern boundary of the new Sparrovale Wetlands Park. The Lake Connewarre State Game Reserve hosts recreational hunting activities primarily focussed on the duck season which extends from March to June depending on seasonal conditions. Quail hunting is also held at the between April to June.

Approximately 2 kilometres of the southern bank Barwon River frontage adjoining Sparrovale is also Crown Land managed by Parks Victoria. There is currently no public access to Sparrovale from the east and access to the southern section of the main levee

bank, directly adjoining the State Game reserve is completed from the south via Baenschs Lane.

Hunting is not proposed on Council owned and managed land at Sparrovale Wetlands. The Master Plan also does not propose any changes to the Lake Connewarre State Game Reserve which will continue to be used for hunting under existing agreements unless altered by the State Government.

Public access into the new Sparrovale Wetlands Park will be via controlled entry points on Sparrovale Road, Groves Road and at Brearleys Lane.

The management of the interface between the new Council managed Sparrovale Wetlands Park and the Lake Connewarre State Game Reserve during duck season will be consistent with other similar the City managed public open space areas around the lake as follows:

- There will be a signed and clearly identified boundary established between the new Council managed wetlands park and the State Game Reserve.
- Signage will clearly indicate that there is to be no shooting on or over Council land and this will be enforced as with other regulations during duck and quail season.
- There will be no access through the new Sparrovale wetlands park to the State Game Reserve for the purposes of hunting or recovery of injured birds.
- Evaluation of these public safety measures will be reviewed over duck and quail season prior to the new wetland park being opened to the public.
- The City will also seek to review and refine management of the new wetland park interface responsibilities with the CCMA and PV via a separate management agreement.
- The City will engage contractors as needed to control feral animals including deer.
- The City does not intend to sell or lease any part of Sparrovale for hunting purposes.

5.4.4 Fishing

There is currently no public access to the west bank of the Barwon River south of Horseshoe Bend Road. The establishment of the Sparrovale Wetlands Park will enable a significant improvement to fishing access with over 4 kilometres of new river frontage and provision of improved access to the lower breakwater area.

There is currently no public road access to the river and fishers will need to walk in from adjoining roads. Flood restrictions and the cost of providing and maintaining public road access and parking will preclude establishment of this higher-level access until road access improvements can be completed near Brearleys Road. The most direct access will be via the levee however there is no continuous pedestrian access in the Parks Victoria managed section.

5.4.5 Recreational Facilities

The entire study area is located within the Barwon River floodplain and is therefore subject to flooding. There will only be limited recreational infrastructure provided within the wetlands with visitor infrastructure such as public toilet facilities, picnic areas, play spaces, drinking fountains, rubbish/recycling bins and car parking located to adjoining new open space areas outside the Sparrovale Wetlands conservation zone.

The placement of seats and potentially bird hides and other low key recreational infrastructure along tracks within the wetlands and along the Barwon River will be further considered once the regeneration of indigenous vegetation allows a more detailed assessment of habitat impacts and views. Future siting, design and management of this low key infrastructure will at all times consider the ecological impacts and will be constructed of durable natural materials consistent with the natural character of the wetland and floodplain environment.

6. COMMERCIAL

6.1 Tourism

Pre COVID-19 the Greater Geelong and Bellarine region attracted around 5 million visitors annually including around 2.8 million day trippers most of whom pass within 3 kilometres of Sparrovale via the Surf Coast Highway or within 500 metres on Barwon Heads Road.

Despite its status as one of the largest, most picturesque, and important wetland systems in Victoria, with environmental values of National and International significance, visitation levels to Lake Connewarre are low. There is a general lack of awareness that the area exists even amongst people who live in Geelong or have visited the region many times.

The Greater Geelong and Bellarine has its primary tourism strengths in nature-based attractions and that the water-based assets of the region act as a key motivator for visitation and this is expected to be further strengthened post COVID. The development of the Sparrovale Wetlands has the potential to provide a gateway to the Lake Connewarre Ramsar Area with provision of viewing, walking and interpretive information/signage (in consultation with *Wadawurrung*) about one of the most significant wetlands in Victoria and Australia adding significant value to the existing local tourism offer. Establishment of a regional wetland interpretation centre and iconic wetland lookout structure will also promote tourism, eco-tourism and wider recognition of the wetlands and Lake Connewarre Ramsar area.

The State Government of Victoria: Protecting Victoria's Biodiversity 2037 Plan has been developed to stop the decline of Victoria's native plants and animals and improve on the natural environment, so it is healthy, valued and actively cared for.

The plan indicates specific aspects such as helping Victorians take advantage of the many health and development benefits of connecting to nature and explore the wonders of Victoria's biodiversity.

The development of the Sparrovale Wetlands has the potential to provide nature-based tourism and recreational activities such as bush walking, bird watching and fishing as this provides an important vehicle for people to connect with nature. On-going management of tourism is vital to ensure visitors have the opportunity to enjoy the site whilst protecting the biodiversity of Sparrovale Wetlands.

6.2 Existing Agreements

6.2.1 Mixed Farming Licence

The northern section of the site is less subject to flooding and will remain as viable farming land while development in the Stormwater catchment area continues. It will continue as a mixed farming license agreement with the former land owner who has agreed to license approximately 70 hectares of the site on an annual basis with the option for periodic grazing when agreed for areas of the site if needed to control pasture grass. The area south of the main track is not included in the licensed areas. Refer Figure 2.

Grazing/cropping of these areas will remain the most cost-effective land management approach to maintain the land of lower environmental value in its current condition until full scale floodplain revegetation works can commence. In order to continue grazing the license will require access to potable water (for stock) and stockyards and access roads.

Longer term as more urban stormwater is diverted to the wetlands the extent and duration of inundation will increase and viability and environmental impact of continued agricultural use.

6.2.2 Other activities

There are three types of eel fisheries permitted in Victoria: wild harvest, stock enhanced and intensive aquaculture. The Victorian eel fishery is managed under the *Victorian Eel Fishery Management Plan 2017* guided by *Fisheries Act 1995* to ensure that the fishery remains viable, profitable, and sustainable for all users of the resource.

There are two commercial licenses for wild harvest eel fishing on the Barwon River. The licenses cover areas from Queen's Park to Lake Connewarre and part of the river downstream of the lake. Any requests including license amendments will need to be referred to Victorian Fisheries Authority for approvals.

Aboriginal Victorians currently have a number of existing rights to access natural resources recognised under law. Members of Traditional Owner groups with a Native Title determination under the Commonwealth's Native Title Act 1993 have non-exclusive rights to hunt, fish and gather natural resources for personal, communal, and cultural purposes, without the need to obtain a license. Eels were, and continue to be, an important resource for some Aboriginal communities *(Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010).*

Commercial activities are unlikely to be supported and will not be considered where they conflict with the primary vision and objectives of the park.

6.3 Events

The restriction of public access to the site as required for safe completion of planned new wetlands and flood management works will last for at least 3 years. However, in order to increase public awareness, appreciation and use of the site during this period a series of regular events could be considered. These may include:

- **Site tours and planting days**
  These could involve local community groups as well as schools.

- **Fishing competitions**
  Supervised day access into the site via the north track and use of temporary grass areas for public parking in coordination to enable fishing competitors on a difficult to access and rarely fished section of the Barwon River.

- **Bird watching tours**
  Guided walking tours with members Geelong Field Naturalists Club during seasonal bird-watching periods.

- **Partnering with education sectors such as Schools/Universities**
  Investigate partnering with schools and universities to set up conservation programs within the wetland for the benefit of future management of the site.

Other events are unlikely to be supported and will not be considered where they conflict with the primary vision and objectives of the park.

7. ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT

7.1 Management Planning

The Sparrovale Wetland Monitoring and Management Plan, June 2020 has been prepared to guide the monitoring of environmental conditions in the Sparrovale wetlands so that the City of Greater Geelong, Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP), Parks Victoria and the community are better able to determine the success of environmental management actions to protect and enhance the ecological values of the wetlands.

The plan also serves a statutory function as a tool for auditing management actions and testing the assumptions of the hydraulic modelling undertaken to design the wetland system. The monitoring program is integral to planning approval granted on the condition of "no loss of native vegetation" or significant impacts on the receiving Ramsar site.

The plan enables management actions to be adapted (adaptive management) in response to on-ground learnings and observations. Consequently, the outcomes of the management actions may result in requirements to offset any significant loss in the extent of native vegetation or reinstate any environmental values impacted in the receiving environment. This monitoring process enables management processes to be adapted in response to on-ground learnings and observations.

7.2 Ecological Monitoring

The main key ecological attributes to monitor the function of Sparrovale as outlined in the plan are:

- Water regime and quality (set parameters)
- Native vegetation (quality and extent of ecological vegetation classes (EVC), changes in composition, quality and extent of native vegetation in addition to EVC benchmarks)
- Birds (number and diversity)
- Macroinvertebrates (diversity)
- Frogs (species and distribution)
- Fish (species)
- Threats to (high priority species and distribution)

Adaptive management requires significant on-going monitoring, the data collected will be used to delve into why indices do or do not change over time. Project evaluation provides the mechanism to look at the strength of causality between what has been implemented (intervention) and what is happening on the ground (response). Key evaluation questions focus the monitoring program and provide a quantitative and qualitative interpretation.

The key questions for the Sparrovale Wetland system are:

- How has the vegetation within the Sparrovale wetland basin changed (health, extent)?
- To what extent have vegetation assemblages in Baenschs wetland and Hospital Swamps changed? If so, why?
- To what extent were the changes directly or indirectly produced by the planned interventions?
- To what extent have the on-ground actions addressed the threatening processes?
- How have the faunal species responded to the management inventions?

- How effective was the function of the Sparrovale stormwater wetland system in achieving vegetation protection (improved condition, diversity and reduced threat of high threat weeds)?
- To what extent has the Sparrovale management plan been implemented?
- To what extent have the planned activities achieved their outcomes (water regime, improved vegetation condition, reduced high threat weeds and pests)? Why or why not?
- How appropriate are the prescribed management actions been in achieving biophysical outcomes?
- What were the unexpected outcomes from the project?

The overarching objectives for the Sparrovale Wetland Monitoring Plan 2020-2030 are:

- The floristic communities of the Ramsar wetlands of Hospital Swamps and Lake Connewarre are not impacted by poor water quality, including through inappropriate freshwater intrusion, from the Armstrong Creek and Horseshoe Bend Development precincts.
- Sparrovale wetlands will continue to provide suitable habitat values for significant faunal species (waterbirds, frogs and fish) based on 2019/2020 baselines through the abatement of threatening processes.
- Maintain, and where possible, improve the extent, floristic diversity, structural complexity and ecological function of native vegetation (including mapped ecological communities as identified in Biodiversity Assessment: 1-87 Groves Road, Armstrong Creek, and 109-215 Sparrovale Road, Charlemont, Victoria (Sparrovale Wetland).
- Maintain the distribution and abundance of high priority invasive weed species, restrict new introductions, and eradicate outlying occurrences of Weeds Of National Significance (WONS) so that the impacts on native species are reduced.

The monitoring program is to facilitate assessment of:

- The concentrations and loads of pollutants from the upstream catchments in the Horseshoe Bend and Armstrong Creek Precincts;
- The effectiveness of stormwater treatment measures in the Horseshoe Bend and Armstrong Creek Precincts;
- The water quality status of the receiving wetlands;
- Wetland ecology and sustainability (flora & fauna);
- Potential water quality risks and management responses.

Reporting on adaptive management will be ongoing and will inform implementation and potential changes to master plan actions and priorities where needed. Refer to Sparrovale – Wetland Monitoring and Management Plan June 2020.

8. IMPLEMENTATION

8.1 Overall Objectives and Staging

8.1.1 Phase 1 - Protecting the Sparrovale Wetlands Park and Barwon River

Timeframe 2019 to 2022 - subject to completion of the constructed wetlands and channels

The new wetland and parkland area will need to remain closed to the public in the short term to ensure public safety while required major drainage and site rehabilitation works are completed in accordance with existing endorsed plans and permit requirements. Master Plan implementation projects in this period will focus on complementary environmental rehabilitation projects such as revegetation works along the Barwon River and securing the parkland perimeter and maintenance access. Public access will be limited to guided tours and planting days to minimise potential public risk while new drainage systems and access tracks are established.

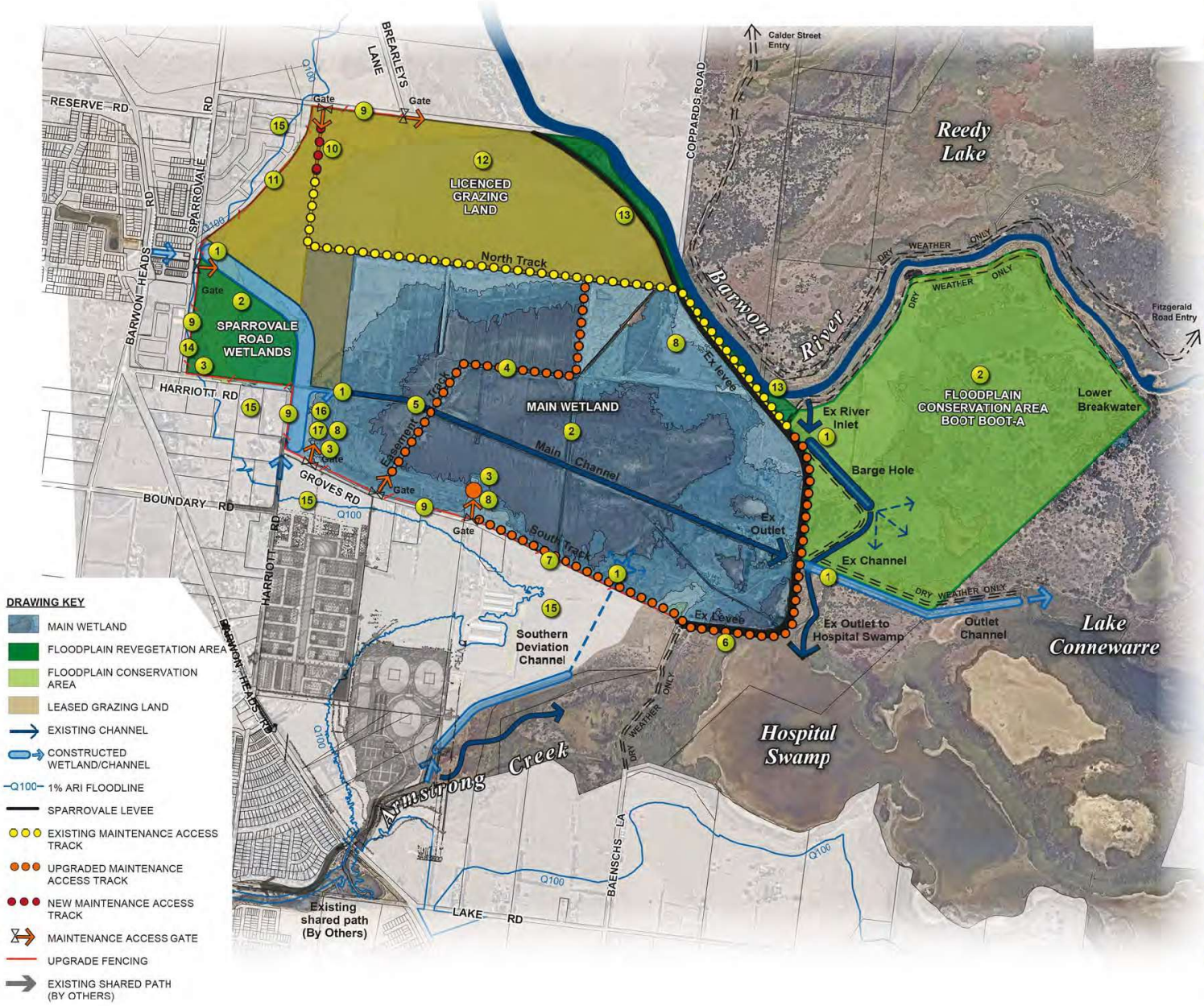
The sheer size and unsupervised nature of the site means recurrent land management costs may potentially reduce available funds for new public access and environmental rehabilitation projects. Therefore, to retain and protect existing environmental values while minimising new land management costs to Council sections of the site will continue to be licenced back to the family currently working the property to continue historical grazing and cropping activities. This is the most cost-effective strategy to maintain the land in its current state and minimise changes to the ecology and proliferation of new weeds during establishment of the wetlands and parkland.

Phase 1 Actions

- Engage and involve the *Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation* in building appreciation and understanding of the cultural values of the site. Partner with the *Wadawurrung* to manage cultural values.
- Monitor water quality and flooding in the constructed and natural wetlands and implement adaptive management actions where required to meet the management plan objectives.
- Monitor flora and fauna across the site and implement adaptive management actions where required to meet management plan objectives.
- Refurbish the existing farm shed to provide an operations base for staff, contractors and volunteers working at the site and facilities for school and community groups on environmental education tours.
- Top dress the former electrical easement access track to improve maintenance and walking access.
- Investigate provision of flow controls at the former electrical easement culvert across the main channel to enable short term detention of stormwater upstream for habitat and weed management purposes.
- Liaise with Parks Victoria to monitor the structural integrity of the levee bank. Investigate options to strengthen and formalise a new spillway point closer to the Groves Road end to restrict high risk access along the levee during major Barwon River floods.
- Top dress the informal track east of Groves Road to improve all weather access to the levee bank. Use material from the Sparrovale Road wetland bund or Southern Deviation Channel works if available at no cost.
- Undertake general removal of rubbish and top dress left over spoil stockpiles improve site amenity and prepare for future indigenous overstorey tree planting works. Continue ongoing removal of windblown litter.

- Repair and secure reserve perimeter fence lines and gates to prevent unauthorised vehicle access into the reserve. Progressively remove redundant fencing from within the reserve retaining timber fence posts in place.
- Establish new unsealed maintenance access road from Brearleys Lane through to the main track to facilitate maintenance and lease area access.
- Maintain potable water connection and meter for offline stock watering from the former Sparrovale Farm homestead when land is redeveloped.
- Retain grazing access to northern paddocks and along the Barwon River (summer only) for fire prevention and to minimise weed control and other land management costs.
- Continue community and contractor revegetation works along the Barwon River.
- Direct seed the understory with native grasses and wildflowers of local provenance in appropriate places.
- Protect existing remnant indigenous on Sparrovale Road and undertake propagation of new trees for Grassy Woodland revegetation using collected seed.
- Co-ordinate development interface planning to minimise visual and environmental impacts on the wetland reserve and to maximise open space links and passive surveillance.
- Continue onsite community engagement with supervised controlled access public events such as planting days, walking, birdwatching tours and potential one day only fishing competitions to ensure maximum safety while works are completed, and the site is made safe for public access.
- Install new reserve signage including Wadawurrung co-naming for key areas.

Refer to Figure 12 for Phase 1 Actions and Priorities.



KEY PHASE 1 ACTIONS

1. Monitor water quality and flooding in the constructed and natural wetlands and implement adaptive management actions where required to meet the management plan objectives.
2. Monitor flora and fauna across the site and implement adaptive management actions where required to meet management plan objectives.
3. Engage and involve the Wadawarrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation in building appreciation and understanding of the cultural values of the site. Partner with the Wadawarrung to manage cultural values. Install new reserve signage including Wadawurrung co-naming for key areas.
4. Top dress the former electrical easement access track to improve maintenance and walking access.
5. Investigate provision of flow controls at the former electrical easement culvert across the main channel to enable short term detention of stormwater upstream for habitat and weed management purposes.
6. Liaise with Parks Victoria to monitor the structural integrity of the levee bank. Investigate options to strengthen and formalise a new spillway point closer to the Groves Road end to restrict high risk access along the levee during major Barwon River floods.
7. Top dress the informal track east of Groves Road to improve all weather access to the levee bank. Use material from the Sparrovale Road wetland bund or Southern Deviation Channel works if available at no cost.
8. Undertake general removal of rubbish and top dress left over spoil stockpiles improve site amenity and prepare for future indigenous overstorey tree planting works. Continue ongoing removal of windblown litter.
9. Repair and secure reserve perimeter fence lines and gates to prevent unauthorised vehicle access into the reserve. Progressively remove redundant fencing from within the reserve retaining timber fence posts in place.
10. Establish new unsealed maintenance access road from Brearleys Lane through to the main track to facilitate maintenance and lease area access.
11. Maintain potable water connection and meter for offline stock watering from the former Sparrovale Farm homestead when land is redeveloped.
12. Retain grazing access to northern paddocks and along the Barwon River (summer only) for fire prevention and to minimise weed control and other land management costs.
13. Continue community and contractor revegetation works along the Barwon River.
14. Protect existing remnant indigenous on Sparrovale Road and undertake propagation of new trees for Grassy Woodland revegetation using collected seed.
15. Co-ordinate development interface planning to minimise visual and environmental impacts on the wetland reserve and to maximise open space links and passive surveillance.
16. Continue onsite community engagement with supervised controlled access public events such as planting days, walking, birdwatching tours and potential one day only fishing competitions to ensure maximum safety while works are completed, and the site is made safe for public access.
17. Refurbish the existing farm shed to provide an operations base for staff, contractors and volunteers working at the site and facilities for school and community groups on environmental education tours.

PHASE 1 PROTECTING THE WETLANDS AND BARWON RIVER (2019-2023)

SPARROVALE Ngubitj yoorree WETLANDS MASTER PLAN

Figure 12
JUNE 2021
0 100 200 300 500m
THOMPSON BERRILL LANDSCAPE DESIGN P/L
CITY OF GREATER GEELONG

8.1.2 Phase 2 - Opening the Sparrovale Wetlands Park

Timeframe approximately 2022 through to approximately 2030 during the ongoing development of new residential areas and open space adjoining the wetlands park.

Following completion of major drainage and site rehabilitation works the aim is to provide public walking access through to the Barwon River and to allow informal access around the wetlands using the existing network of levees and farm tracks used in ongoing management of the site. The unsealed maintenance access tracks and existing levee banks will provide for dry weather walking only access. The tracks will provide access for fishing, bird watching and nature appreciation and the City will continue to support guided tours and community and school planting days to build local community ownership and appreciation of the natural values in consultation with the Wadawurrung.

Restricted public vehicle access to the river could be considered for single day events such as fishing competitions in dry weather subject to event management plan applications and approval but flood constraints mean there is no plan for provision of public car parking or road access within the wetlands park.

For those not as adventurous or able to undertake the 1 kilometres walk to the Barwon River and around the wetlands (approximately 1-hour return journey) a new fully accessible elevated wetland viewing point and parking area will be established at the end of Groves Road. This location provides 270-degree views and the best spot to appreciate the interaction between the Barwon River and natural and constructed wetlands during both dry and wet weather.

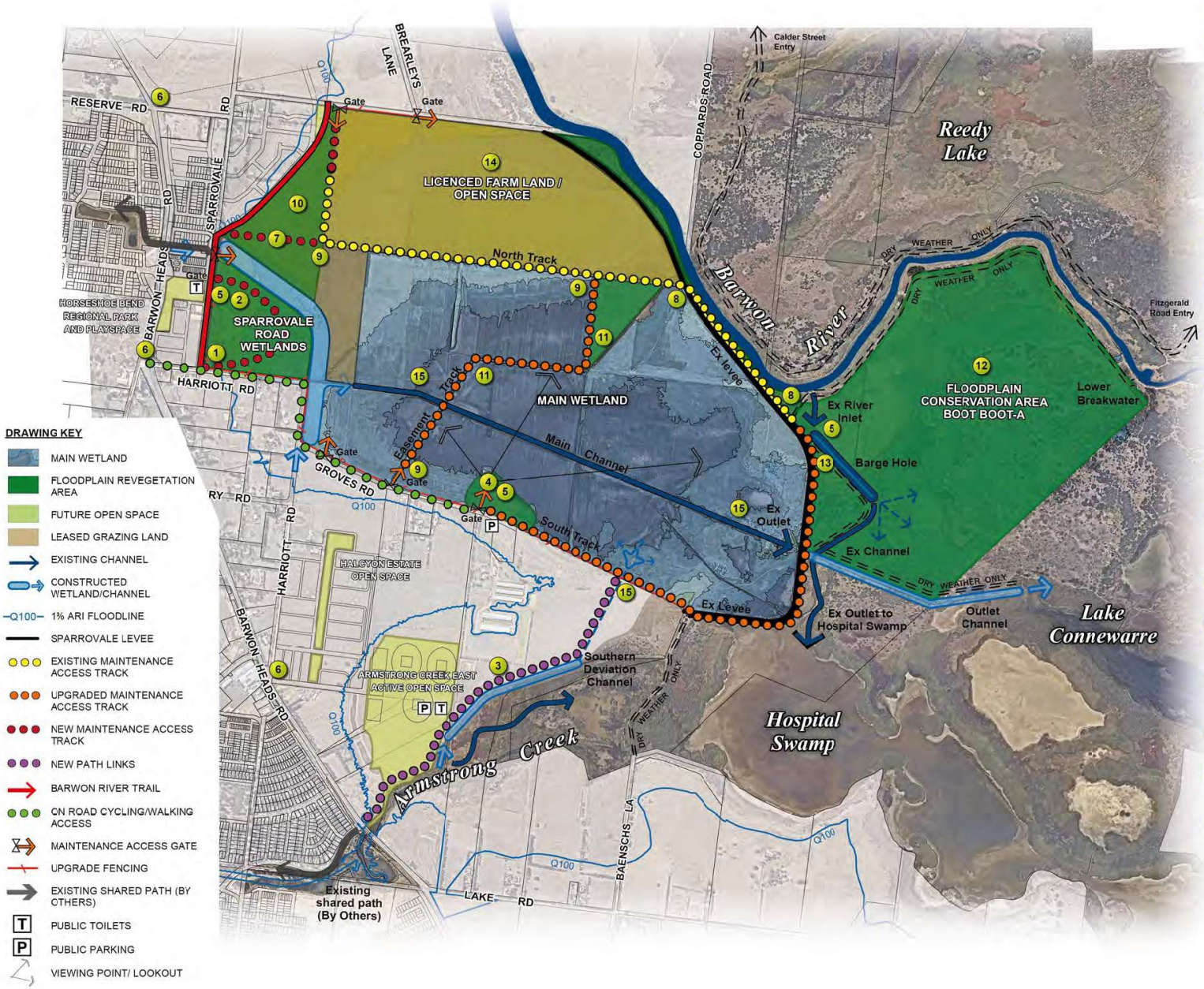
Other Master Plan implementation projects in this phase will focus on continued floodplain rehabilitation and improving pedestrian and cycle links to new open space areas in the adjoining Armstrong Creek and Horseshoe Bend residential development areas. Licenced grazing and cropping activities will continue in areas with lower environmental value.

Phase 2 Actions

- Establish a small picnic area opposite Horseshoe Bend Regional Park amongst the existing trees and overlooking the Sparrovale Road Wetlands to include small picnic shelter, picnic tables and drinking fountain.
- Provide walking path access and links to the new Horseshoe Bend Municipal Park and former Sparrovale Road greenway including low boardwalk across natural drainage lines.
- Provide unsealed path link along the Southern Deviation Channel from Groves Road through to the future Active Open Space Reserve and existing open space and path networks along Armstrong Creek in the Warralily Estate.
- Provide a fully accessible elevated lookout point at the eastern end of Groves Road with views out over the wetlands and across the levee to Hospital Swamp and Lake Connewarre.
- Develop and install interpretive signage highlighting historical and environmental values and the functionality of wetland management infrastructure at the new picnic area and lookout point.
- Provide directional signage to the wetland reserve and new visitor areas on Barwon Heads Road.
- Provide an unsealed walking path link from the new Sparrovale Road picnic area to the north track. Use new timber stiles at existing north track stock gates to providing public walking only access to the Barwon River while retaining livestock security and restricting motorbike access.
- Provide seats at fishing and viewing spots on the Barwon River in conjunction with signage highlighting environmental and cultural heritage values.

- Sign the return walking loop from the Barwon River via the natural wetlands using the former electrical easement track and levee bank using passive drown outs to restrict public access to these areas during major floods.
- Expand indigenous revegetation works to new parkland areas east of Sparrovale Road.
- Undertake indigenous overstorey tree planting along the north track and the former electricity easement track to improve habitat diversity and amenity for walkers.
- Remove grazing from the eastern conservation area to allow natural regeneration to restrict public access to more sensitive environmental areas.
- Investigate establishment of a rest space/viewing area at the Barge Hole with interpretive signage.
- Investigate opportunities to establish sustainable farming initiatives and enhanced community engagement and education programs on licenced farming area.
- Implement adaptive management for key habitat areas as needed and guided by ongoing ecological monitoring.

Refer to Figure 13 for Phase 2 Actions and Priorities.



DRAWING KEY

- MAIN WETLAND
- FLOODPLAIN REVEGETATION AREA
- FUTURE OPEN SPACE
- LEASED GRAZING LAND
- EXISTING CHANNEL
- CONSTRUCTED WETLAND/CHANNEL
- Q100 1% ARI FLOODLINE
- SPARROVALE LEVEE
- EXISTING MAINTENANCE ACCESS TRACK
- UPGRADED MAINTENANCE ACCESS TRACK
- NEW MAINTENANCE ACCESS TRACK
- NEW PATH LINKS
- BARWON RIVER TRAIL
- ON ROAD CYCLING/WALKING ACCESS
- MAINTENANCE ACCESS GATE
- UPGRADE FENCING
- EXISTING SHARED PATH (BY OTHERS)
- T PUBLIC TOILETS
- P PUBLIC PARKING
- VIEWING POINT/ LOOKOUT

KEY PHASE 2 ACTIONS

1. Establish a small picnic area opposite Horseshoe Bend Regional Park amongst the existing trees and overlooking the Sparrovale Road Wetlands to include small picnic shelter, picnic tables and drinking fountain.
2. Provide walking path access and links to the new Horseshoe Bend Municipal Park and former Sparrovale Road greenway including low boardwalk across natural drainage lines.
3. Provide unsealed path link along the Southern Deviation Channel from Groves Road through to the future Active Open Space Reserve and existing open space and path networks along Armstrong Creek in the Warralily Estate.
4. Provide a fully accessible elevated lookout point at the eastern end of Groves Road with views out over the wetlands and across the levee to Hospital Swamp and Lake Connewarre.
5. Develop and install interpretive signage highlighting historical and environmental values and the functionality of wetland management infrastructure at the new picnic area and lookout point.
6. Provide directional signage to the wetland reserve and new visitor areas on Barwon Heads Road.
7. Provide an unsealed walking path link from the new Sparrovale Road picnic area to the north track. Use new timber stiles at existing north track stock gates to providing public walking only access to the Barwon River while retaining livestock security and restricting motorbike access.
8. Provide seats at fishing and viewing spots on the Barwon River in conjunction with signage highlighting environmental and cultural heritage values.
9. Sign the return walking loop from the Barwon River via the natural wetlands using the former electrical easement track and levee bank using passive drown outs to restrict public access to these areas during major floods.
10. Expand indigenous revegetation works to new parkland areas east of Sparrovale Road.
11. Undertake indigenous overstorey tree planting along the north track and the former electricity easement track to improve habitat diversity and amenity for walkers.
12. Remove grazing from the eastern conservation area to allow natural regeneration to restrict public access to more sensitive environmental areas.
13. Investigate establishment of a rest space/viewing area at the Barge Hole with interpretive signage.
14. Investigate opportunities to establish sustainable farming initiatives and enhanced community engagement and education programs on licenced farming area.
15. Implement adaptive management for key habitat areas as needed and guided by ongoing ecological monitoring.

PHASE 2 OPENING THE PARK (2023-2030)

SPARROVALE Ngubitj yoorree WETLANDS MASTER PLAN

Figure 13
MAY 2021
0 100 200 300 500m
THOMPSON BERRILL LANDSCAPE DESIGN P/L

CITY OF GREATER GEELONG

8.1.3 Phase 3 - Regional Gateway to the Lake Connewarre Ramsar Area

Timeframe approximately 2030 to 2040 as development of the Armstrong Creek Urban Growth Area nears completion.

The further completion of new development at Armstrong Creek will provide supporting visitor infrastructure such as picnic and toilet facilities, play spaces and additional car parking at the Horseshoe Bend Regional Park (Sparrovale Road) and Armstrong Creek Active Sports Precinct which will be linked via completion of the new Barwon River Trail around the Sparrovale Wetlands park.

As the drainage catchment reaches full development and the number of visitors to the wetlands increases funding for the final phases of floodplain environmental rehabilitation can be more easily secured reducing the need for continuation of licenced grazing and cropping activities to offset land management costs.

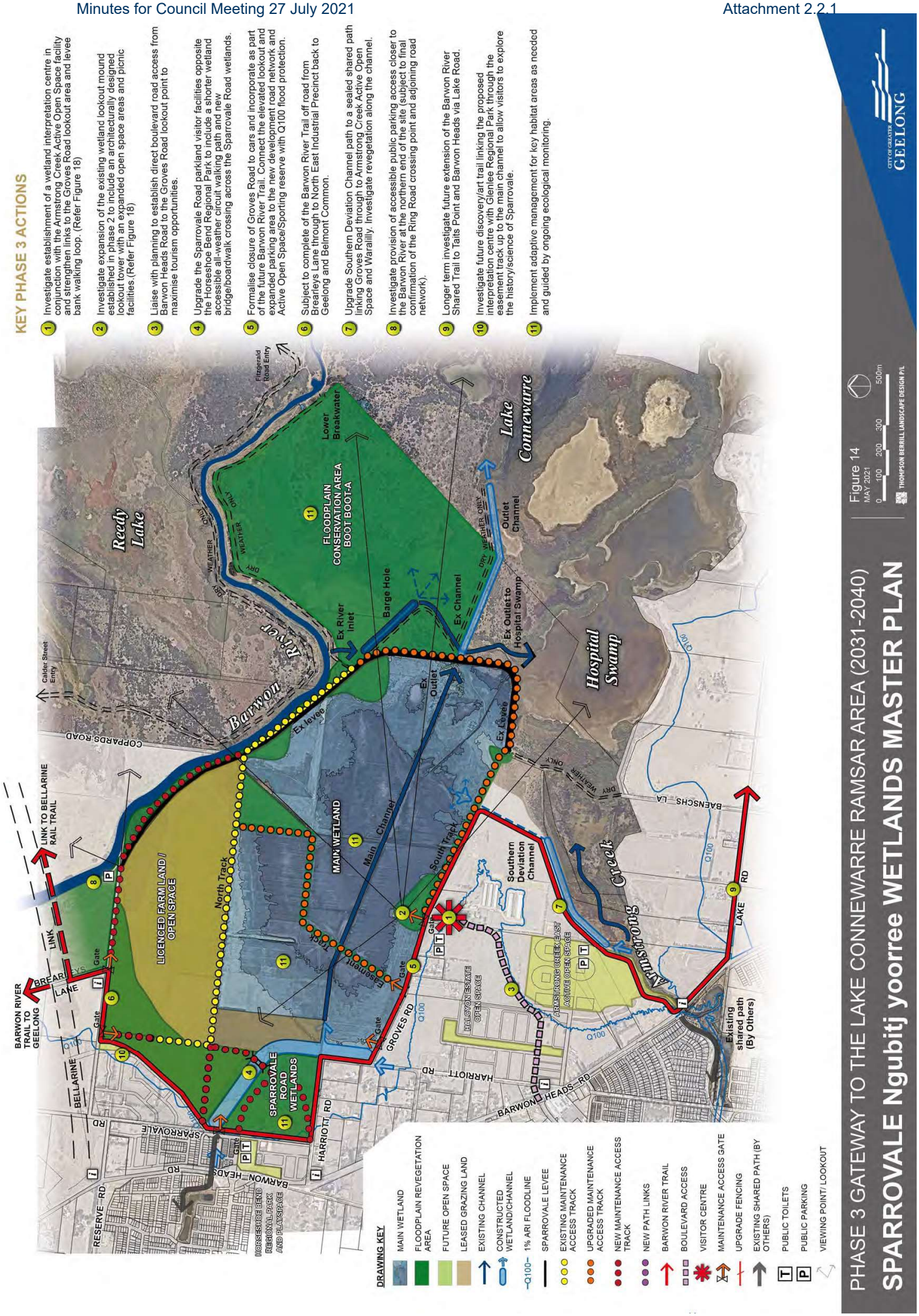
A direct boulevard road link from Barwon Heads Road through the Armstrong Creek East Precinct will eventually provide direct access and upgraded service connections through to the elevated wetland viewing point and parking area at the end of Groves Road established in Phase 2. Ultimately this visitor node could then be upgraded to a regional wetland visitor destination with direct access for passing tourism traffic on Barwon Heads Road and the Surf Coast Highway to the best views out over the wetland and the Lake Connewarre system.

To fast track the establishment of the site as a regional visitor destination an iconic wetland lookout structure could be developed to expand on the initial viewing mound developed in phase 2. An iconic architectural lookout tower at this point, visible from Barwon Heads Road could assist in generating additional visitor traffic to support longer term establishment of a dedicated wetlands visitor centre with café and expanded picnic facilities to support longer stay visitation in the area.

Phase 3 Key Objectives

- Connect the Barwon River Trail back to Geelong and upgrade off road links to other open space areas within the Armstrong Creek and Horseshoe Bend Precincts.
- Upgrade and formalise wetland and Barwon River circuit walking tracks to enable all weather/all ability use.
- Investigate establishment of a regional wetland interpretation centre and iconic wetland lookout structure to promote tourism, eco-tourism and wide recognition of the wetlands and Lake Connewarre Ramsar area.
- Investigate options to provide public parking and all ability access closer to the banks of the Barwon River in consultation with public land managers.
- Cease grazing and complete revegetation of remaining paddocks to expand and enhance biodiversity and habitat values.
- Review, document and appropriately action the key improvements and issues arising from Phase 2 and develop appropriate adaptive management actions.

Refer to Figure 14 for Phase 3 Actions and Priorities.


KEY PHASE 3 ACTIONS
1 Investigate establishment of a wetland interpretation centre in conjunction with the Armstrong Creek Active Open Space facility and strengthen links to the Groves Road lookout area and levee bank walking loop. (Refer Figure 18)
2 Investigate expansion of the existing wetland lookout mound established in phase 2 to include an architecturally designed lookout tower with an expanded open space areas and picnic facilities.(Refer Figure 18)
3 Liaise with planning to establish direct boulevard road access from Barwon Heads Road to the Groves Road lookout point to maximise tourism opportunities.
4 Upgrade the Sparrovale Road parkland visitor facilities opposite the Horseshoe Bend Regional Park to include a shorter wetland accessible all-weather circuit walking path and new bridge/boardwalk crossing across the Sparrovale Road wetlands.
5 Formalise closure of Groves Road to cars and incorporate as part of the future Barwon River Trail. Connect the elevated lookout and expanded parking area to the new development road network and Active Open Space/Sporting reserve with Q100 flood protection.
6 Subject to complete of the Barwon River Trail off road from Brearleys Lane through to North East Industrial Precinct back to Geelong and Belmont Common.
7 Upgrade Southern Deviation Channel path to a sealed shared path linking Groves Road through to Armstrong Creek Active Open Space and Warailily. Investigate revegetation along the channel.
8 Investigate provision of accessible public parking access closer to the Barwon River at the northern end of the site (subject to final confirmation of the Ring Road crossing point and adjoining road network).
9 Longer term investigate future extension of the Barwon River Shared Trail to Taits Point and Barwon Heads via Lake Road.
10 Investigate future discovery/art trail linking the proposed interpretation centre with Glenlee Regional Park through the easement track up to the main channel to allow visitors to explore the history/science of Sparrovale.
11 Implement adaptive management for key habitat areas as needed and guided by ongoing ecological monitoring.
Reedy Lake
Barwon River
Lake Connewarre
Hospital Swamp
Armstrongs Creek
FLOODPLAIN CONSERVATION AREA BOOT BOOT-A
MAIN WETLAND
LIGENCED FARM LAND / OPEN SPACE
SPARROVALE ROAD WETLANDS
HORSESHOE BEND REGIONAL PARK AND PLAYSPACE
HOLLYOAK ESTATE OPEN SPACE
ARMSTRONG CREEK EAST ACTIVE OPEN SPACE
LINK TO BELLARINE RAIL TRAIL
BARWON RIVER TRAIL TO GEELONG
BREARLEYS LANE
BELLARINE RD
SPARROVALE RD
RESERVE RD
BARWON HEADS RD
HARRIOTT RD
GROVES RD
BAENSCHS LA
LAKE RD
COPPARDS ROAD
Calder Street Entry
Fitzgerald Road Entry
Lower Breakwater
Outlet Channel
Ex River Inlet
Barge Hole
Ex Channel
Ex Outlet to Hospital Swamp
Ex Outlet
Ex Levee
Main Channel
South Track
North Track
Southern Deviation Channel
Existing shared path (By Others)
DRY WEATHER ONLY
Q100
DRAWING KEY
MAIN WETLAND
FLOODPLAIN REVEGETATION AREA
FUTURE OPEN SPACE
LEASED GRAZING LAND
EXISTING CHANNEL
CONSTRUCTED WETLAND/CHANNEL
1% ARI FLOODLINE
SPARROVALE LEVEE
EXISTING MAINTENANCE ACCESS TRACK
UPGRADED MAINTENANCE ACCESS TRACK
NEW MAINTENANCE ACCESS TRACK
NEW PATH LINKS
BARWON RIVER TRAIL
BOULEVARD ACCESS
VISITOR CENTRE
MAINTENCE ACCESS GATE
UPGRADE FENCING
EXISTING SHARED PATH (BY OTHERS)
PUBLIC TOILETS
PUBLIC PARKING
VIEWING POINT/ LOOKOUT
PHASE 3 GATEWAY TO THE LAKE CONNEWARRE RAMSAR AREA (2031-2040)
SPARROVALE Ngubitj yoorree WETLANDS MASTER PLAN
Figure 14
MAY 2021
0 100 200 300 500m
THOMPSON BERRILL LANDSCAPE DESIGN P/L
CITY OF GREATER GEELONG

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GLOSSARY

Abbreviation	Definition in this Discussion Paper
AAV	Aboriginal Affairs Victoria
ARI	Annual Recurrence Interval (1% = 1% chance of flooding in any given year)
BW	Barwon Water
CaLP Act	Catchment and Land Protection Act (1994)
CCMA	Corangamite Catchment Management Authority
CFA	Country Fire Authority
CHMP	Cultural Heritage Management Plan
Dbh	Diameter of a tree measured at breast height
DEPI	Department of Environment and Primary Industries
DTPLI	Department of Transport, Planning and Local Infrastructure
FDE	Federal Department of Environment
ENG	City of Greater Geelong Engineering Unit
ENV	City of Greater Geelong Environment Unit
EPA	Environment Protection Authority
EPBC Act	Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999
ESO	Environment Significance Overlay
EVC	Ecological Vegetation Class
FFG Act	Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988
UGAT	City of Greater Geelong Urban Growth Area Team
HO	Heritage Overlay
LSIO	Land Subject to Inundation Overlay
OHS	Occupational Health and Safety
PAO	Public Acquisition Overlay
PCRZ	Public Conservation and Resource Zone
PPRZ	Public Park and Recreation Zone
PUZ	Public Use Zone
PV	Parks Victoria
RAP	Registered Aboriginal Party
REC	City of Greater Geelong Recreation and Open Space Unit
The City	City of Greater Geelong
RZ	Residential Zone
SWMS	Safe Works Method Statement
VHR	Victoria Heritage Register
WMO	Wildfire Management Overlay
WONS	Weeds of National Significance
WSUD	Water Sensitive Urban Design

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CITY OF GREATER GEELONG

2.3. Portarlington Recreation Reserve Master Plan (Draft)

Source: **Community Life**
Director: **Robyn Stevens**

Purpose

1. To seek Council's approval for the release of the Portarlington Recreation Reserve Master Plan (Draft) for public consultation over a period of six weeks.

Background

2. In 2018 the State Government provided $50,000 to renew and update the existing 2011 master plan for the Portarlington Recreation Reserve, which will guide future development.

3. A Project Reference Group of key stakeholders and user groups of the reserve was established and has provided insight and input to the draft master plan.

4. Between May and June 2020, to inform development of the draft master plan, community engagement was undertaken that identified the community valued both the active sport, recreation and environmental values of the entire reserve as per page 44 of the Portarlington Recreation Reserve Master Plan (Draft) section 6.3.

Key Matters

5. The Master Plan (Draft) proposes investments that respond to the community values for the reserve identified in the engagement process, while proposing to invest significantly to ensure future sport and recreation needs are accommodated, as indicated by data, benchmarking and insights from current user groups.

6. In the active sporting precinct, the proposed investments ensure that facilities can accommodate growth and meet contemporary standards for sport and recreation. The proposed investments include a major redevelopment of the main pavilion, improved accessibility to existing netball and tennis pavilions, redeveloping the cricket nets to improve safety and provide greater multi-use, construct a new agricultural shed and provide additional opportunities for community use of the reserve through a new community garden, enhanced playground and new bike jump area.

7. Throughout the rest of the reserve the plan is responding to parking, access and amenity issues through additional planting, landscaping, more formalised parking and safer path connections.

8. As outlined in the Ecological assessment to inform the Master Plan report, the passive recreation area, being an area noted for its existing environmental values, future investment opportunities include an upgrade of the existing trail network to further improve the nature-based recreation opportunities and re-establishment of an improved functioning wetland system.

9. Importantly, the Master Plan (Draft) retains opportunities for growth into the future, such as additional sporting infrastructure should a need be identified. Noting any expansion or works that occur in the passive recreation area are subject to complying with Government policy and legislative processes relating to the removal of native vegetation.

RESOLUTION - Item 2.3

Cr Sullivan moved, Cr Mason seconded -

That Council approves the release of the Portarlington Recreation Reserve Master Plan (Draft) for the purpose of broader community consultation for a period of six weeks.

Carried

Financial Sustainability

10. A preliminary cost estimate will be developed for all projects listed in the final master plan.

11. The final plan will also consider project priorities and future staging of works.

12. The final master plan will inform the City's long-term investment priorities and guide the future funding for the reserve.

Community Engagement

13. The project is governed by a Project Control Group (PCG) and Project Working Group (PWG) that includes key internal departments and Sport & Recreation Victoria.

14. A Project Reference Group (PRG) exists and is made up of all current tenants of the reserve and community organisations. The PRG includes members from the Portarlington Community Association, Portarlington Football and Netball Club, Portarlington Cricket Club, Portarlington Tennis Club, Bellarine Guides Group, Portarlington Pony Club, Portarlington Community Garden Group, Bellarine Agricultural Society and Bellarine Bayside Foreshore Committee.

15. The Master Plan (Draft) as presented in this report has been developed in response to stakeholder feedback from the PRG and the first round of community consultation.

16. The first round of community consultation occurred in May and June of 2020 for a period of six weeks that received significant input to the plan. 192 surveys were completed, 191 quick poll responses received and 75 contributions to the social map were made.

17. Subject to the resolution of Council, it is proposed that the Portarlington Recreation Reserve Master Plan (Draft) be made available for a further six-week period of community engagement.

18. This will involve providing an opportunity for residents and stakeholders to 'have their say' through a variety of engagement tools in line with the community engagement plan.

Social Equity and Sustainability

19. The Portarlington community is a relatively small community of approximately 4,000 residents featuring an older demographic with strong historical ties to the area. It is not part of a designated growth area although receives significant seasonal fluctuations during the holiday season.

20. The Master Plan (Draft) outlines potential future investment. In doing so, the approach is to apply adopted sporting association guidelines and standards to ensure equity of investment across all sporting infrastructure in the City. The guidelines adopted by each sporting code are assessed against the anticipated growth in local population, current and future club membership numbers and diversity, with a key regard to accessibility and diversity of participation. The anticipated future demand for usage of facilities is assessed through analysis of the most recent population data, future housing development and applying optimistic growth forecasts to arrive at the likely number of new participants across a range of sports

21. Initiatives in the Master Plan (Draft) are aimed at providing opportunities for people of all ages and backgrounds to participate in formal sport, community programs and informal recreation. The plan aims to create an inclusive and accessible park for all and reduce barriers to participation and active living.

Relevant Law/Policy/Legal Implications

22. Initiatives in the passive recreation area are aimed at avoiding the need to remove native vegetation. Should there be an identified need to remove native vegetation in the passive recreation area, the proponent (the City or a person with consent from the City) would need to apply for a Planning Permit under Clause 52.17 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*. In addition, any proposal may also trigger the need to apply for a permit under the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988* and be referred to the Commonwealth to assess if plans might significantly impact on matters of national significance under the *Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*.

23. The reserve is an area of cultural heritage sensitivity and projects that require soil disturbance may be required to undertake a Cultural Heritage Management Plan under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006* / *Regulations 2018* before they can proceed.

24. Consent for the development of future projects may also be required under the *Marine and Coastal Act 2018*.

25. The Master Plan (Draft) complies with all relevant legislation and Council policy and there are no other known legal, statutory or policy implications associated with the draft recommendations.

Alignment to Community Plan and Vision

26. This report aligns with Our Community Plan 2021-2025 strategic priority:
Healthy, caring and inclusive community; and
Sustainable growth and environment.

27. This report aligns with the Community led 30-year Vision, “Greater Geelong: A Clever and Creative Future” community aspiration:
An inclusive, diverse, healthy and socially connected community.

Conflict of Interest

28. No officer involved in the preparation of this report declared a general or material conflict of interest.

Risk Assessment

29. The release of the Master Plan (Draft) for further consultation will provide greater insights to the needs and expectations of the whole community. The feedback gained along with further engagement with the PRG will be used to develop the Final Master Plan.

Environmental Sustainability

30. The environmental values of the reserve have been identified through the Ecological assessment to inform Master Plan report. The whole of the passive recreation area has significant value as a large patch of native vegetation that is limited across the Bellarine. The area varies in its condition, however as a whole it is independently deemed to have significant environmental value through the combination of depleted Ecological Vegetation Classes, rare and threatened species, wetland values and habitat.

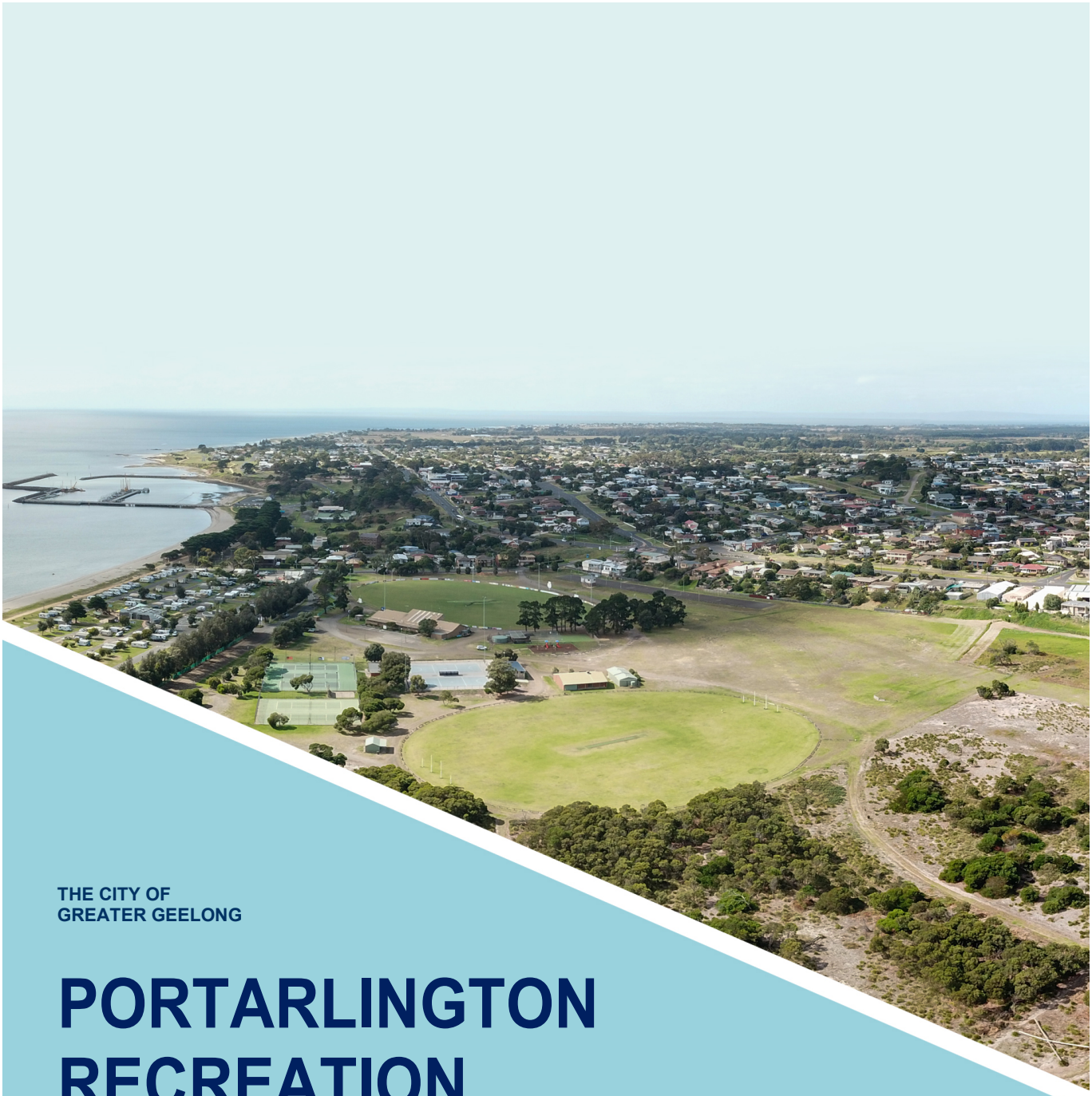
31. Legislation and policy require that the whole area is currently managed for those values, which is also consistent with the Cities *Environment Strategy* 2020-2030.

32. Areas of environmental sensitivity are being avoided in considering new or redeveloped infrastructure wherever possible.

33. Additional planting identified in the Master Plan (Draft) will improve the amenity, environmental values of the reserve and tree cover in line with the Cities *Urban Forest Strategy 201-2025*.

Attachments

1. Portarlington Recreation Reserve Master Plan (Draft) [**2.3.1** - 69 pages]
2. Portarlington Recreation Reserve Ecological Assessment to Inform Master Plan [**2.3.2** - 35 pages]



THE CITY OF
GREATER GEELONG

PORTARLINGTON RECREATION RESERVE

MASTER PLAN (DRAFT)

REPORT
JUNE 2021

CITY OF GREATER GEELONG

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land, the Wadawurrung People of the Kulin Nations. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present and acknowledge all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who are part of the Greater Geelong community today.

Disclaimer: This Master Plan Report was prepared by an independent consultant in conjunction with the City of Greater Geelong. The Master Plan Report provides an overview of the context, need and community engagement methods undertaken which have helped to form the Draft Master Plan. This report is also subject to further consultation and consideration by the City of Greater Geelong.

The contents of this report are approved by the City of Greater Geelong, however, may require revision over time to reflect current council policy.

All illustrative plans, perspectives and imagery contained within this report are indicative artists impressions to illustrate conceptual ideas only and are subject to further resolution, consultation, detailed design, and approvals.

All images throughout this document have been credited where required.

The City of Greater Geelong wish to acknowledge contributions to this report made by the Project Reference Group, Project Control Group, Project Working Group, and the greater Geelong community.

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CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Executive Summary 4

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Overview 7
1.2 Study Area 7
1.3 Project Objectives 7
1.4 Recent Infrastructure Projects 7
1.5 Project Methodology 9
1.6 Master Plan Development Principles 9

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

2.1 Literature Review 11
2.1.1 Statewide Strategic Context 11
2.1.2 Regional Strategic Context 12
2.1.3 Local Strategic Context 13
2.1.4 Sport Specific Strategies 14
2.2 Demographic Overview 15
2.2.1 Local demographic influences on participation 15
2.3 Design Trends 16
2.3.1 Universal Design 16
2.3.2 Environmentally Sustainable Design 17
2.3.3 Gender Neutral Facilities 17
2.3.4 Multi Use 17
2.3.5 Open Space Design 18
2.3.6 Nature Design 18
2.3.7 Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design 18

SITE OVERVIEW

3.1 Site Location and Context 19

EXISTING CONDITIONS

4.1 Active Sport and Recreation Area 20
4.2 Environmental Values and Passive Recreation Area 31

SITE USAGE

5.1 Sporting Club Participation 36
5.2 Sporting Participation Catchment (AFL) 37
5.3 Sporting Infrastructure Supply and Provision Ratios 39

CONSULTATION SUMMARY

6.1 Project Reference Group 41
6.2 State Sporting Organisations 42
6.3 Community Consultation 44

DRAFT MASTER PLAN

7.1 What is Proposed 51
7.2 Vision and Goals 51
7.3 Future Character Description 52
7.4 Draft Master Plan (Landscape Plan) 53
7.5 Summary of Draft Master Plan Recommendations 55

NEXT STEPS

8.1 Next Steps 68

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Portarlington Recreation Reserve Master Plan (Draft) has been developed to provide a clear direction for the overall improvement of Portarlington Recreation Reserve. Following broad consultation with stakeholders, the Draft Master Plan aims to strike a balance between the embellishment of the Reserve and its intended future use as a local level facility. In addition, the Plan also considers the capability and capacity of potential investment partners and future resources required for implementation.

Portarlington Recreation Reserve is a 38-hectare allotment which serves a variety of purposes for the community including sport, recreation, event, and flora and fauna uses. The Reserve is situated within the township of Portarlington, which has a current population of 4,046. The township offers an enviable combination of rural and coastal lifestyles, maintaining a small town feel even throughout the summer months when there is an influx of holiday makers.

It is anticipated that the current Portarlington population is expected to experience growth of 26% to 2030, at an average annual change of approximately 2%. This equates to approximately 1,087 additional persons living in Portarlington in 2030. Most of the population growth will be experienced within the 60 – 75 year old age cohort.

Portarlington sits just outside of the City of Greater Geelong's growth boundaries, and therefore, according to the 2017 Portarlington Structure Plan, the town's role over the next 10 years will be as a popular holiday destination, along with an acknowledgement that elderly persons will continue to comprise a very high proportion of permanent resident population.

The Portarlington Recreation Reserve Master Plan (Draft) and its recommendations have been considered and shaped around the future likely use and demographic of the Reserve over the next 10 years. These considerations have resulted in the shaping of recommendations that are both aspirational and achievable.

The Reserve currently offers a diverse range of uses and activities across the sporting and active recreation area and throughout the passive recreation area. As discovered through the findings within this report, both active and passive areas of the Reserve are highly valued by the community and, as such, a balanced approach to their improvement, activation and management has been actively considered throughout the development of the Draft Plan.

The Recreation Reserve has a strong organised sporting contingent, with tennis, netball, football, and cricket codes all represented. The Reserve is also home to Girl Guides as well as an agricultural society, who host the town's popular annual event, the Bellarine Agricultural Show.

The passive recreation area, as previously mentioned, holds significant environmental and biodiversity values, and is located to the west of the active sporting precinct. Trails and habitat throughout this area can be found, and is well utilised by walkers, joggers, and nature enthusiasts alike.

The Draft Master Plan's recommendations have utilised the findings from engagement through a Project Control Group, Project Working Group and Project Reference Group, along with a four week community consultation period. In addition, this report has reviewed relevant literature, facility inspections and participation analysis to provide supporting background information.

The Draft Master Plan has been driven by four development principles and six goals, of which each of the recommendations align. These include sustainability, accessibility, multi-use and fit for purpose. In line with these, key themes of the Draft Master Plan and its recommendations, include:

Refurbishment of identified sporting facilities where they do not align with recommended guidelines. The Draft Plan recognises that most sporting infrastructure at the Reserve is in good structural condition, particularly with regards to the various pavilions, however there are some deficiencies in their quality and function. Several opportunities exist also for the associated sporting amenities and playing surfaces to be upgraded to encourage their multi-use and to contribute to greater programming and participation opportunities.

Improvement in vehicle and pedestrian movement and connections, making access safer and more inclusive. Throughout the Reserve, draft recommendations have been made to enhance car parking areas and to formalise access routes that experience high volumes of traffic. Connectivity throughout the Reserve as well as to neighbouring land parcels including the Point Richards Flora & Fauna Reserve and the Portarlington Holiday Park are recommended to increase visitation and the safety of pedestrians.

Greater improvements to the passive recreation area to enhance the biodiversity aspects of the Reserve, as well as contribute to a better user experience. The western area of Portarlington Recreation Reserve has been improved through the regeneration of vegetation and habitat. Combined with the Point Richards Flora and Fauna Reserve adjacent, this represents the largest area of native vegetation of the northern Bellarine Peninsula. The Draft Master Plan's recommendations include improving vegetation and habitat whilst elevating the quality of recreation access and enjoyment of the area.

A better variety of community activities throughout the Reserve such as diversified play for a broader age group of children and adolescents as well as community garden, will contribute to increased opportunities for involvement.

Additional tree canopy and landscaping commensurate with the character and context of the site, will make the Reserve more visually appealing and offer greater amenity and habitat. Strategically placing new plantings in areas which improve the overall value of the Reserve, but that does not hinder the deliverability of community events, is recommended.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The following summary provides a high-level overview of the key recommendations of the Draft Portarlington Recreation Reserve Master Plan:



Refurbishing the existing main (football/cricket) pavilion as well as small extentions to the tennis and netball pavilions will ensure that essential sporting infrastructure components including change rooms and amenities, are meeting the requirements and expectations of the modern game.



Improvements to car parking and vehicle movement throughout the site will enhance connectivity, make it safer for pedestrians, and encourage more active modes of transport.



Upgraded entrances will make the Reserve more visually appealing and improve the management of foot and vehicle traffic.



Additional community activities have been recommended throughout the Draft Master Plan including improved play space, multi-use sporting surfaces, BMX/bike jumps and community garden.



Upgrading the cricket practice nets will enable multi-use opportunities whilst providing a more up to date and safer facility for players and spectators.



Draft recommendations for the passive recreation area aim to improve the Reserve's biodiversity properties and value whilst creating opportunities for greater visitation and passive recreational activities.



Recommendations to provide additional tree canopy throughout the Draft Master Plan aim to enhance the amenity of the Reserve whilst contributing to a greener parkland.



Undertaking small improvements to the open space and events area within the Reserve will ensure it is well serviced to host current and future community events.



Consolidating and replacing, where appropriate, old infrastructure that is past its useful life and no longer fit for purpose has been recommended.



Accessible pathways and connections, including wayfinding signage is recommended both within the Reserve and to adjacent land parcels and neighbouring properties. Connections between the active recreation and passive recreation areas are highlighted throughout.



Functional upgrades to the tennis and netball courts, including lighting and spectator seating, as well as the provision of a netball warm up area, will provide greater participation and programming opportunities.



Improving community amenity within the Reserve, including park benches and picnic facilities will offer greater opportunities for other recreational activities including unstructured play and nature appreciation.



Image 1: Portarlington Recreation Reserve – image of active recreation area including tennis courts and new netball courts

INTRODUCTION

1.1 PROJECT OVERVIEW

The City of Greater Geelong, with funding from the Victorian Government, has commissioned the development of a Master Plan for Portarlington Recreation Reserve. The Master Plan (Draft) aims to assist in guiding the community's vision for the site and to provide clear strategic direction for future investment and development.

With growing demand for improved sporting and community infrastructure, better pedestrian and vehicle accessibility and enhanced open space and passive recreation areas, a coordinated approach to development is required.

This report provides the supporting context to the Master Plan and a summary of the issues and opportunities that have been addressed as part of the process. Through the analysis of supporting information and consultation undertaken to date, the Draft Master Plan will enable greater function, activation, and participation at the Reserve.

1.2 STUDY AREA

The project study area for the Portarlington Recreation Reserve is identified in 'Map 1' on the adjacent page. The study area includes the ovals, netball and tennis courts, playground and the open space area to the south which is commonly used for events. The area to the west of the active precinct is known, for the purposes of this report, as the 'passive recreation area' and is also included within the Master Plan's scope. This area is primarily used for the creation and retention of habitat and for more passive recreation pursuits including walking, jogging, nature appreciation and for overflow event parking.

It should be noted that the original scope for the Master Plan's development did not include the passive recreation area. A change in scope throughout the masterplanning process has seen the inclusion of this precinct.

1.3 PROJECT OBJECTIVES

Through broad consultation with user groups, the community, Council and other stakeholders, the objectives of the project are to:

- Provide a strategic vision and future direction for the Reserve which responds to community need;
- Understand the role Portarlington Recreation Reserve plays in the local community and its diverse range of uses including for active, passive and nature-based activities;
- Highlight the most appropriate approach to the activation and programming of the Reserve so that capacity and utilisation is maximised;
- Understand improvement opportunities that enhance user experience, sentiment, and sense of place;
- Optimise sports facility and open space usage and increase multi-use of recreational facilities;
- Plan for the protection and enhancement of the passive recreation area of the Reserve;
- Identify infrastructure development opportunities for the Portarlington Recreation Reserve for the next 10 years;
- Provide a preliminary concept plan showing potential layouts and various options to address identified priorities;
- Identify the broad costs and staging opportunities associated with the implementation of proposed Master Plan recommendations; and
- Identify areas where a soft transition in use, from active sport to informal recreation, can be achieved.

1.4 RECENT INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

At the time of writing this report, investment has been confirmed for the delivery of the following infrastructure projects at Portarlington Recreation Reserve:

- Upgrade to sports lighting on Oval 1 (underway)
- Upgrade to sporting lighting on netball courts (completed)

Funding for these projects has been received through various funding streams including the Commonwealth Government, Victorian Government, and the City of Greater Geelong.



Map 1: Portarlington Recreation Reserve – image of study area

1.5 PROJECT METHODOLOGY

STAGE	TASKS	DATES
1	**Project Establishment** • Project commencement • Project inception meeting • Site inspections	**Completed**
2	**Needs Analysis and Stakeholder Engagement** • User group (Project Working Group, Project Reference Group) consultation • Demographic review • Literature review • Site inventory and existing conditions assessment • Community engagement	**Completed**
3	**Issues and Opportunities Report** • Consultation summary and findings • Issues and Opportunities Report • Project Working Group, Project Reference Group and Project Control Group meetings	**Completed**
4	**Draft Master Plan** • Draft Master Plan options identified • Preliminary cost estimates and investment opportunities outlined • Draft Master Plan for review and approval by PCG • Draft Master Plan for review by PRG and PWG	**This document**
5	**Public Exhibition Period** • Draft Master Plan considered by Council and released to Public Exhibition.	July-August 2021
6	**Final Master Plan and Recommendations** • Review of Public Exhibition feedback • Development of Final Master Plan and Cost Estimates • Review of final Master Plan and approval by PCG • Review of final Master Plan by PRG and PWG • Council Endorsement of final Master Plan	October-November 2021

1.6 MASTER PLAN DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES

The following principles and goals have underpinned and guided the Master Plan's development. These principles were shaped following the strategic literature review, site inspections, demographic analysis and community consultation outcomes outlined throughout this report.

1. SUSTAINABILITY

Economic Sustainability

- Utilising resources efficiently and responsibly, including technological advancements, through the recommendations in the Master Plan to deliver long term economic growth without any negative impact.
- Facility investment that increases the capacity of not-for-profit organisations to drive revenue and fundraising initiatives and deliver infrastructure upgrades that can demonstrate financial responsibility to the rate payer and offer opportunities for collaborative investment.

Environmental Sustainability

- Enhancing and protecting the values of the Reserve and its environmental properties and to make contributions towards managing the impacts of climate change.

Cultural Sustainability

- A need to understand and protect areas of cultural heritage sensitivity, and to work with traditional owners, throughout the management and development of the Reserve.

Social Sustainability

- Through the provision of facilities that support community participation that enhances social cohesion and capacity.

2. ACCESSIBILITY

- Improving opportunities for all people of all backgrounds, genders, abilities, cultures, and beliefs to utilise the facility in a manner that avoids segregating people and makes the facility more appealing and intuitive to use.
- Improving the connectivity of the Reserve with adjacent land parcels to create a more vibrant sense of place.

4. MULTI-USE

- Offer opportunities to maximise community participation through flexible facilities that are available for a wide range of uses.
- Building the capacity of facility's existing attributes including improved utilisation.

5. FIT FOR PURPOSE

- Use activity and industry specific, universal design, strategic and informing documents to determine facility and infrastructure needs to address facility gaps and needs.
- Continue to ensure Portarlington Recreation Reserve provides a balance of sporting activity, event, community and environmental uses and functions.

GOALS

- See page 51



Image 2: Portarlington Recreation Reserve – active recreation area - view of Oval 2 and open space and events area

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

2.1 LITERATURE REVIEW

The following pages provide a high-level summary of the documents and key strategic influences which have guided the development of the Portarlington Recreation Reserve Master Plan.

2.1.1 STATEWIDE STRATEGIC CONTEXT

ACTIVE VICTORIA: A STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK FOR SPORT AND RECREATION IN VICTORIA 2017-2021

This document, developed by the Victorian Government, aims to provide a consolidated approach to the improvement in participation in sport and recreation from a state-wide perspective.

The vision for participation outcomes in sport within the document are based upon five key areas;

- **More active:** increased proportion of Victorian's regularly participating in sport or active recreation.
- **More diverse and inclusive:** providing opportunities for all to become involved.
- **Robust, flexible, sustainable, and affordable:** providing flexible and affordable choices for participants.
- **Collaborative:** well-planned and connected investment that maximises participation and other community benefits.
- **Broad-based and connected:** A system that addresses the different demands, contributors and structure of sport and active recreation and maximises connections across the system.

The Master Plan's development has considered these focus areas throughout. The importance of delivering a Plan which drives multi-use and offers diverse and broad participation outcomes will be imperative to its success and implementation.

PROTECTING VICTORIA'S ENVIRONMENT – BIODIVERSITY 2037

This document provides a strategic approach to stop the decline of biodiversity and to see its improvement over the next 20 years.

The Biodiversity Plan outlines priorities which aim to see more Victorian's valuing nature and for Victoria to have a healthy natural environment.

The Plan states that biodiversity in Victoria is experiencing a number of threats, with many plants and vertebrate animals considered as rare, threatened or near-threatened. It is outlined within the document that there is a continued decline in the quality and extent of habitat due to habitat loss, weeds, pest animals and changes in fire and water regimes – all of which will be exacerbated by the effects of climate change.

Biodiversity is considered fundamental to the health, wellbeing and prosperity of current and future generations, and it has an intrinsic value and right to exist.

The Key Priorities outlined in the Plan to protect and improve Victorian biodiversity, include:

- Increase opportunities for all Victorian to have daily connections with nature.
- Increase opportunities for all Victorians to act to protect biodiversity.
- Embed consideration of natural capital into decision making across the whole of government.
- Help to create more liveable and climate-adapted communities.
- Better care for and showcase Victoria's environmental assets as world-class natural and cultural tourism attractions.
- Engage with Traditional Owners and Aboriginal Victorians to include Aboriginal values and traditional ecological knowledge in biodiversity planning and management.

The Master Plan's development relies on the directions in the Biodiversity 2037 Plan to guide recommendations, particularly for those surrounding the passive recreation area. Demonstrating the commitment to achieving a number of the noted key priorities will be important in the Master Plan's future directions and implementation.

2.1.2 REGIONAL STRATEGIC CONTEXT

G21 PHYSICAL ACTIVITY STRATEGY 2014-2017

This document is a region-wide approach to improving opportunities for physical activity and participation in a range of passive and active sports.

The G21 Physical Activity Strategy provides an overview of the importance of physical activity and the way in which the G21 Region can help to create environments to support it. Key actions within the Strategy as they relate to the Master Plan include:

- Work within local sport and active recreation settings to address barriers to participation for vulnerable groups within our community.
- Encourage broader community access to tenanted sport and recreation facilities.
- Ensure that all active sport and recreation settings such as recreation reserve, stadiums, tennis courts are planned, designed, managed, and maintained to be accessible and appropriate to the needs of all user groups.

The Master Plan has a strong focus on opportunities for broader community benefit and involvement through its implementation. This includes for all genders and abilities.

CITY OF GREATER GEELONG COUNCIL PLAN 2018-2022

This document provides the overall direction for Council, outlining their responsibilities and commitment to providing services, infrastructure, and opportunities to the community. The Council Plan supports the development of social infrastructure that provides opportunities for participation by a wide range of people, of all ages and abilities.

The City's Council Plan outlines 11 strategic priorities towards making Greater Geelong a clever and creative city-region. The Plan aims to guide resources to deliver infrastructure, services, and programs to the community in a sustainable way.

Key focus areas which will be considered in the Master Plan's development include: 1) Informed social infrastructure and planning – through providing more quality spaces that support active lifestyles as well as supporting the growth of localised sporting facilities 2) A more inclusive and diverse community through promoting gender equity and diversity in sporting facilities and improving access to facilities for people of all abilities.

CITY OF GREATER GEELONG SOCIAL INFRASTRUCUTRE PLAN (GENERATION ONE) 2020-2023

This document sets the strategic drivers for decision making and prioritisation in relation to the planning, development, and investment of social infrastructure in the City of Greater Geelong.

Five (5) directions for the strategic development of outdoor community sporting facilities are identified in the Plan, including the investment in infrastructure that improves the quality, functionality and carrying capacity of venues and the activation of facilities to increase participation and maximise use. The completion of the Portarlington Recreation Reserve Master Plan is listed as a priority under the 'sport and recreation planning projects' within the Outdoor Sport and Recreation Network Report.

The principles within the Social Infrastructure Plan have assisted in guiding and recommending the projects identified within the Master Plan. Ensuring projects align with the major objective identified in the Network Report being to 'build capacity in the network', including increased capability of facilities.

CITY OF GREATER GEELONG ENVIRONMENT STRATEGY 2020-2030

This document outlines a roadmap to improving the region's environment and reducing its environmental footprint. The Strategy outlines several planning and decision-making initiatives to improve the health of the local environment over the next 10 years.

The Strategy acknowledges that to respond to population growth estimates for the City, that it must lead, educate, advocate and support for the improvement, retention, development, and restoration of the natural environment. Following extensive community consultation, five key goals were identified, including:

- Become a zero-emission, climate ready city and region;
- Create greener community spaces;
- Contribute to a circular economy by reducing waste;
- Protect, enhance, and restore our region's biodiversity; and
- Achieve better integrated water management through planning and design.

The Master Plan includes recommendations that align with improving the goals outlined within this Strategy. To ensure these objectives are met, the Draft Master Plan has demonstrated commitment to contributing to a healthier natural environment for the present and future community.

CITY OF GREATER GEELONG URBAN FOREST STRATEGY 2015-2025

This document outlines the key actions and tasks associated with increasing the urban tree population throughout the City of Greater Geelong to improve the City's look, feel and liveability as well as the health of the community.

The City of Greater Geelong's Urban Forest Strategy has a vision for Geelong to be a 'cool, green city for the future'. This vision aims to be achieved through the development of healthier and more dynamic urban forests and improved tree canopy in streetscapes, urban growth areas, open space areas and reserves.

The addition of tree planting, vegetation, and landscaping within Draft Master Plan recommendations will improve the Reserve's environmental properties will contribute to achieving this vision.

CITY OF GREATER GEELONG PLAY STRATEGY 2012-2021

This document provides a strategic approach to the need, role, and function of Geelong's play spaces to ensure children receive equitable access to quality playgrounds and can also participate in a range of play experiences.

The Play Strategy outlines a range of principles regarding the provision and design of places of play, including:

Improving supporting infrastructure at play spaces.

Creating better connections to cycling/walking networks.

Improving play opportunities throughout the municipality by focusing on delivering diversity in play for all ages and abilities. The Draft Master Plan has considered the above in its recommendation for new or redeveloped play facilities within the Reserve.

2.1.3 LOCAL STRATEGIC CONTEXT

PORTARLINGTON RECREATION RESERVE MASTER PLAN 2011

The 2011 Portarlington Recreation Reserve Master Plan has guided the development and improvement of the Reserve over the last 10 years. The document aimed to enhance opportunities for community participation at the Reserve through sports, events, and informal recreation. The review of this document has been undertaken and consideration will be given to any outstanding, relevant actions that need to be considered in the updated Plan.

The 2011 Master Plan has been included within the strategic review, like all other informing and strategic documents, to further understand where the new Plan will need to address any outstanding items and/or where actions have been superseded. The new Master Plan refers to the new context and environment that it relates to, and to respond to newer and emerging trends that may not have been apparent or required within the previous Plan.

BELLARINE BAYSIDE COASTAL MANAGEMENT - DRAFT NORTHERN BELLARINE COASTAL AND MARINE MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Draft Plan aims to reflect the objectives and long-term aspirations for the sustainable management of the northern Bellarine foreshore. Specific to the Master Plan's development, the following is noted within:

- Contribute to CoGG's Portarlington Recreation Reserve Master Plan to improve connections to Portarlington Holiday Park.
- Work with CoGG to promote use of Portarlington Recreation Reserve for events during the peak holiday period.

The Master Plan's development includes representation from the Bellarine Bayside Coastal Management Committee on the Project Reference Group to provide input and to assist in achieving collaborative aspirations.

PORTARLINGTON RECREATION RESERVE DRAFT WORKS PLAN 2016

This document lead by the City of Greater Geelong's Environment Department, highlights improvements to be undertaken within the western section of Portarlington Recreation Reserve, otherwise referred to as the 'passive recreation area'. These recommendations aim to expand the environmental properties and habitat within this area and make a clear distinction between the active and passive spaces.

Recommendations within the Draft Works Plan have been utilised alongside an ecological assessment, to inform the Draft Master Plan which includes actions for the passive recreation area.

BELLARINE PENINSULA DISTINCTIVE AREAS AND LANDSCAPES

The Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning is currently developing a draft Statement of Planning Policy for the Bellarine Peninsula. This Policy aims to acknowledge and protect the Peninsula which is currently noted by DEWLP as 'under significant urban development pressure as well as threat from climate change risks. In addition, the Policy will include a 50 year vision and land use strategies to better protect the unique features of the Bellarine Peninsula, and designate long-term protected settlement boundaries to provide greater certainty for current and future generations. The Draft Policy is expected to be released for public consultation in late 2020.

The progress of the Distinctive Areas and Landscapes Policy for the Bellarine Peninsula has been monitored throughout the development of the Draft Master Plan. Where recommendations and the final documentation is released, alignments to the Plan will be made.

PORTARLINGTON STRUCTURE PLAN 2017

The Portarlington Structure Plan aims to identify and address several purposes to determine the application of local planning policies, planning zones and overlays, and to assist the City of Greater Geelong when considering applications for planning permits. The key purposes of the Structure Plan, include:

- Identify the strategic planning issues facing the township, including community aspiration and needs:
- Articulate the preferred future planning directions for the township, and
- Identify appropriate planning controls which will protect and enhance the distinctive elements of the township, biodiversity, and landscape features.

The Structure Plan, based on the above principles and underpinning information, created the following vision for Portarlington - *'Portarlington will be the jewel of the Bellarine Peninsula. Our focus is a commitment to nurturing a vibrant, sustainable community, enhancing, and maintaining our lifestyle, heritage, and artistic pursuits'.*

The Draft Master Plan aligns with the recommendations within the Structure Plan to ensure Portarlington maintains a balance coastal-rural lifestyles, community, environment, and economic opportunity.

2.1.4 SPORT SPECIFIC STRATEGIES

The City of Greater Geelong and the G21 Geelong Region Alliance have several strategic documents that have been developed in conjunction with peak sporting bodies and are relevant to the Portarlington Master Plan. In addition, state-wide strategic sporting documents also provide support and justification.

These include:

- AFL Victoria 'Growing the Heartland' Football Facilities Development Strategy (2014-2020);
- Victoria Cricket Infrastructure Strategy (2018-2028);
- Netball Victoria Statewide Infrastructure Strategy (2019-2022);
- Tennis Australia: Tennis 2020 Facility Development and Management Framework for Australian Tennis;
- G21 & AFL Barwon Regional Strategy (2015);
- G21 & Cricket Victoria Barwon Regional Strategy (2019); and
- G21 Regional Tennis Strategy (2015-2025).

These documents have been summarised and utilised to help create and shape the recommendations within the Draft Master Plan.

AFL VICTORIA 'GROWING THE HEARTLAND' FOOTBALL FACILITIES DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2014-2020

The 'Growing the Heartland' Strategy aims to provide a planned approach to the provision of infrastructure across the State. One of the key development pillars of the Strategy is 'Great Infrastructure' which includes the objective to 'advocate for and collaborate in facility development for the network of community football leagues, their clubs and schools'.

The Strategy notes that Geelong is its highest participation region for Country Victoria which, at the time of the Strategy's development, boasted an additional 5,000+ players than the next highest region.

The development of the Portarlington Recreation Reserve Master Plan fits the AFL's planning facility hierarchy identified in the Strategy, seeing venue improvement plans and master plans as a key component to infrastructure development.

VICTORIAN CRICKET INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY 2018-2028

This Strategy provides the Victorian cricketing community and its stakeholders with a detailed assessment and analysis of the Victorian cricket facility landscape and identifies future planning and development priorities. The Strategy highlights critical actions for cricket participation and growth. Those most relevant to the development of the Portarlington Recreation Reserve Master Plan, includes:

- Prioritise and support the upgrade and development of facilities at sites with identified and potential female participation growth.

The Geelong/Barwon region, similarly to AFL, had the highest participation of any Country Region and the Geelong LGA had one of the highest saturations of cricket players to population ratios.

The Strategy highlights a low provision of inclusive, all gender facilities along with 59% of cricket practice nets in the Barwon Region presenting potential safety concerns.

The aspirations to improve facilities including the delivery of all gender change facilities and safer, multi-use cricket practice facilities at Portarlington Recreation Reserve align with the directions within this Strategy.

NETBALL VICTORIA STATEWIDE FACILITIES STRATEGY 2019-2022

The Plan outlines how Netball Victoria aims to deliver on their key strategic drivers for the future direction, demand, and investment into netball facilities.

The Strategy indicates that two courts be provided for local outdoor club-based netball competition as well as supporting infrastructure including:

Floodlighting;

Accessible change rooms and amenities; and

Player and officials shelters.

The G21 Region is recorded as having the highest number of participants of any Rural & Regional area in Netball.

TENNIS AUSTRALIA - TENNIS 2020: FACILITY DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK FOR AUSTRALIAN TENNIS

Key priorities identified within the Framework are:

- Better planning;
- More and better national infrastructure; and
- Better management practices.

This aims to result in:

- Healthier communities;
- More active players;
- More great champions; and
- More devoted fans.

The Framework identifies that community expectations of tennis facilities is changing and that certain standards must be met to attract and retain new participants. It notes that there is opportunity in offering multi-use facilities which promote broader community outcomes. The key role that facilities with greater than four courts, such as Portarlington Recreation Reserve, play is to host interclub tournaments and grass roots development and to help improve the sustainability of tennis and community health improvements.

G21 & AFL BARWON REGIONAL STRATEGY 2015

This document provides the principles and framework to support the future development, governance and growth of football and club-based netball throughout the Region. It also investigates issues facing the sport and makes recommendations for both regional and local priorities.

One of the priorities within the document is to 'Increase the quality and functionality of facilities to maximise carrying capacity' and that investment into facilities to meet minimum requirements will ensure participation growth can be accommodated for.

Currently, a 2020 update to the Strategy is underway, which will focus on what is changed since 2015, most notably being the significant increase in female participation and the introduction of the AFL Preferred Facility Guidelines and Netball Victoria Facilities Manual.

The 2020 Strategy will continue to focus on infrastructure and enhanced participation opportunities and will utilise the Sports Facility Auditor data as one method to prioritise improvements. It is likely that the clubroom facilities at Portarlington Recreation Reserve will be identified as a priority.

G21 & CRICKET VICTORIA BARWON REGIONAL CRICKET STRATEGY 2019

This Strategy investigates issues and opportunities facing cricket both 'on-field' (facilities and infrastructure) as well as 'off-field' (sport development, increasing participation and partnerships). The key strategic priority within the Strategy is 'Improved Governance and Cricket Activity Management' through developing an aligned and collaborative structure to manage cricket. Subsequent priorities include participation growth and facility provision, capacity, and renewal.

In terms of facility development for the Region, the Strategy recommends utilising facility audit data to identify gaps in provision and site-specific renewal programs. Projects that increase carrying capacity, functionality and activation of existing facilities including change room refurbishment should be prioritised.

This priority further supports and underpins the opportunity to improve cricket facilities at Portarlington Recreation Reserve including practice nets and change rooms. With Portarlington Cricket Club's steady growth in female participation, the improvement to these facilities will prove integral to the sustainability and prosperity for women in sport.

G21 REGIONAL TENNIS STRATEGY 2015-2025

The Strategy provides key directions to support the growth of tennis through the implementation of key priorities including infrastructure. The Strategy has a vision to see the G21 Region being the fastest growing and most accessible region for tennis. Key priorities including developing an aligned approach and structure to tennis as well as participation and facility provision and renewal are identified.

A key infrastructure focus within this Strategy is the provision of floodlighting to improve capacity. The Portarlington Tennis Club recently received investment to install improved floodlighting which supports flexible programming and greater participation opportunities. The upgrade to the supporting tennis amenities will further support their operations and offer modern infrastructure for players.

2.2 DEMOGRAPHIC REVIEW

The City of Greater Geelong has an average growth rate from 2020-2030 of 2.1%, which is higher than that of metropolitan Melbourne.

The City of Greater Geelong has an estimated population of 263,280 in 2020*. This is expected to grow to 324,289 in 2030 and 386,890 in 2040, primarily because of several growth areas to the south and north-west of the municipality.

Whilst the City of Greater Geelong boasts several residential growth areas, the township of Portarlington, as identified in the 2017 Portarlington Structure Plan, is set outside of this boundary. The Structure Plan recognises the uniqueness of Portarlington and sees its role over the next 10 years as a popular holiday destination, but with an acknowledgement that elderly persons will continue to comprise a very high proportion of the permanent population.

Portarlington itself has a total population of 4,046 in 2020 and is anticipated to reach 5,133 in 2030**. The average population growth rate of Portarlington is approximately 2%.

Portarlington and neighbouring towns including St Leonards and Indented Head have the smallest population base, with a total of 7,877 residents occupying the three towns with an expected population of 10,062 in 2030.

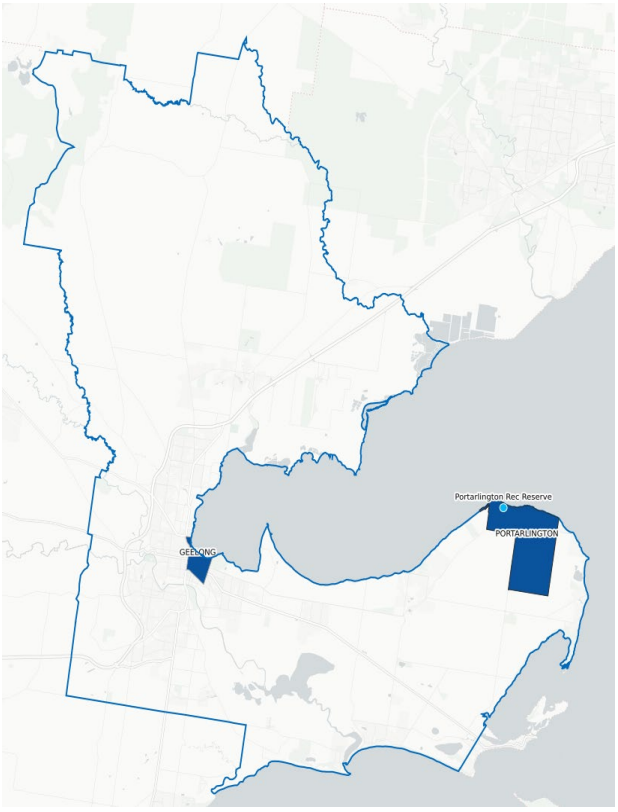
Portarlington experiences significant population growth in the summer months. It is estimated that an additional 6,000 – 8,000 people visit the seaside towns of Portarlington, St Leonards, and Indented Head from December to February each year.

2.2.1 LOCAL DEMOGRAPHIC INFLUENCES ON RECREATION

- The majority of population growth expected between 2020 and 2030 in Portarlington is within the 60-74 year old age cohort. In 2030, this age group will make up approximately 32% of the total Portarlington population.
- The largely older age demographic will present more demand for targeted activities that generally attract older people. This includes activities such as cycling, nature appreciation, tennis, and walking. Aging is inevitable, and the ability for active sports such as AFL, netball, and cricket to adapt to a point where they can continue to offer suitable and/or appealing programs for older adults is unlikely. It is therefore important that the Portarlington Recreation Reserve Master Plan considers participation opportunities and facilities that can service younger people, but flexible enough to cater for the diversity of its demographic profile.
- In terms of the younger age demographic, it is forecasted that population growth of 4.2% in the 5-9 year old age cohort will be experienced. This is a change of approximately 24 persons from 2020 to 2030. The 5-9 year old age group is considered a key introductory market for organised sporting programs. The limited growth in this age cohort will likely decrease demand for junior programs. Attracting participants from neighbouring towns where appropriate may be necessary to support greater participation into the future.
- There will be an average growth of 4%, or an additional 60 persons, from 2020-2030 in the 15-19 year old age cohort. This group is one where retention of active participants or players is important, as generally there is a decline or drop off in organised sport between these ages. A focus on modified formats, social and flexible participation opportunities will assist in the ongoing engagement of this demographic.
- The 5-39 year old age cohort is considered the key market for organised sport, and particularly with the rise in female participation, the attraction and retention of females is imperative to both community health and the sustainability of the game. There will be an additional 115 females within this age group residing in Portarlington and opportunities to engage them in sport and recreation via welcoming and inclusive facilities will be crucial.
- The seasonal population of Portarlington, particularly during summer months, offers opportunity to engage visitors in informal, social sport and recreation. Whilst these participants are unlikely to be retained post-holiday, it does offer more opportunities to improve health and activity outcomes as well as generate financial outcomes for Clubs.

"Portarlington will see an additional 24 people aged between 5-9 and 60 people aged between 15-19 living within the township between 2020 and 2030"

"An additional 115 females aged 5-39 will reside in Portarlington by 2030. This age cohort is considered the key market for organised sport"



Map 2: The City of Greater Geelong indicating the location of the Geelong CBD and Portarlington Recreation Reserve

Source:
**City of Greater Geelong population projections*
***Forecast.id*

2.3 DESIGN TRENDS

Current design trends have influenced the development of the Master Plan as they inform modern, accessible, and efficient facilities that achieve the objectives of the community and the City, as well as potential future investment partners. These trends and associated strategic design documents include:

2.3.1 UNIVERSAL DESIGN

Universal Design involves a holistic approach to the design of an environment so that it is accessible, intuitive, and understood by all people regardless of age, ability, gender, or culture.

- **Sport & Recreation Victoria's Design for Everyone Guide**
  The Guide aims to instil the principles of Universal Design to make the built environment more simplified and inclusive of as many users as possible. Equitable design, for people of all genders, all abilities and of all cultures should be at the forefront of any design process and have been incorporated throughout the development of the Master Plan.

2.3.2 ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE DESIGN (ESD)

Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD) aims to improve the health and comfort of the built environment for user groups and occupants whilst concurrently reducing negative impacts on the environment. ESD helps future proof communities against rising utility costs and reduces the impact of climate change.

- **Sport & Recreation Victoria's Environmentally Sustainable Design Fact Sheet –** This Fact Sheet outlines some key design opportunities that can be considered during design development to reduce operational and environmental impacts while increasing building resilience. These include, but are not limited to:
  - Renewal energy generation
  - Utilising environmentally friendly products
  - Water efficient and water saving
  - Reducing construction waste
  - Optimising site potential and reduced operating costs through north facing elements
  - Natural light and cross flow ventilation
  - Optimising operational and maintenance costs
  - Finding sustainable trades people and professionals

2.3.3 GENDER NEUTRAL FACILITIES

The inclusion of facilities that are inclusive of all people and gender is imperative to any modern development. For sporting facilities, the rise in female participation has created increased demand for amenities that cater to the diversity of people attracted to sport. Guiding documentation for the development of gender-neutral facilities in the active sport setting, include:

- **SRV Female Friendly Infrastructure Guide -** The Guide aims to provide information on developing facilities which offer more gender equitable environments. This occurs through three main components, including facility planning and design, maximising use and policy that drives change.
- **Sporting Facility Guidelines -** Most peak sporting bodies have guidelines relating to facility development that include information in relation to the provision of gender-neutral amenities.
- **AFL Preferred Facility Guidelines 2019 -** These Guidelines outline the preferred facility requirements for venues which are utilised for AFL training and competition. The Guidelines are to be used as a key tool during the planning phase of a project to identify the spatial requirements for facilities to support male and female teams, umpires, officials, and the broader AFL community. The Guidelines also provide recommendations for the specification of supporting infrastructure such as floodlights.
- **Tennis Australia Infrastructure Planning 2018 -** This resource is designed to educate, inform, and guide tennis facility planning and development for existing venues and new builds.
- **Netball Victoria Facilities Manual 2017 -** Netball Victoria's Facilities Manual contains technical information on netball courts and associated infrastructure. It is Netball Victoria's expectation that all new and redeveloped facilities are constructed to meet the standards outlined within the Manual.
- **Cricket Australia Community Cricket Facility Guidelines 2015 -** The Cricket Australia Community Cricket Facility Guidelines provides facility planning, development, management, and maintenance information for use by the community, government and national cricket industry partners and stakeholders.

2.3.4 MULTI USE

Providing flexible spaces that offer multi-use opportunities for the community will see better social outcomes and returns on investment. Encouraging broader use of facilities by the community, outside of traditional uses such as sport, will be an important consideration in the Master Plan's development.

- **City of Greater Geelong's Social Infrastructure Plan –** This document, as referenced in the Strategic Context section of this Report, provides a framework as to how the City will prioritise and invest in social infrastructure. A key component guiding this decision making is the principle of 'multi use'. The Plan outlines that a focus on moving standalone facilities to more flexible and multipurpose community hubs should be considered, and that community infrastructure should be developed where shared use and integration of other services and users can be adapted.

2.3.5 OPEN SPACE DESIGN

The design of the Portarlington Recreation Reserve Master Plan aims to create opportunities for unstructured recreation in a manner that is safe and integrates the balance of the Reserve's activities.

- **Urban Design Guidelines for Victoria (Local Parks)** – These Guidelines developed by the Victorian Government offer principles for a range of settings in the public realm. For the purposes of this Report however, those relating to the development of local parks, include:
  - Ensuring convenient and safe access to and through local parks.
  - To encourage use of local parks at different times of the day by a wide range of users.
  - To ensure amenity and safety for local park users.
  - To emphasise a sense of place and character in local parks.
  - To ensure local parks are well maintained.

2.3.6 NATURE DESIGN

Nature design is the concept of incorporating native plant communities into the designed landscape. The success of vibrant, public open spaces which offer diversity and respond to their contextual setting can be attributed to the principles of nature design. Nature design includes improving aesthetics as well as creating an ecological relationship to the indigenous landscape. Creating spaces that improve a connection to nature through better mental and physical wellbeing along with better habitat that supports native species and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the criticality of providing spaces that contribute to a healthier community and environment have never been more apparent.

Incorporating nature design within a strategic planning document such as a Master Plan, according to ecolandscpaing.org, can include:

- Fostering a visual connection and contrast between the landscape and its surroundings;
- Minimising the disturbance of existing native vegetation;
- Allocating areas for varying landscape types including woodlands and open spaces;
- Incorporating native plant communities found in similar conditions in the surrounding areas;
- Using and planning for natural processes of change to modify the landscape;
- Preserving rainwater on site including the use of ponds, irrigation catchments, and wetlands.

2.3.7 CRIME PREVENTION THROUGH ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design poses the idea that by using knowledge and creativity in the approach to the built environment, crime can be lessened or prevented. These ideas stem from the concept that where more people are around a public space, then incidents of crime are less likely to occur. The following guideline outlines this in further detail:

- **Victorian Government Safer Design Guidelines –** These Guidelines were developed to help planners and designers apply principles that will improve the safety of the built environment, minimise the opportunity for crime and promote safe, accessible, and liveable places. The public spaces principles within the design guide framework include:
  - Ensuring all users have convenient and safe access to and through public spaces
  - Achieving and creating vibrant public spaces
  - Establishing and supporting activity at the edges of public spaces
  - Ensuring safety and amenity in public spaces
  - Ensuring comfortable and enjoyable public spaces
  - Supporting a strong sense of place and local character
  - Ensuring public spaces are well utilised and maintained

SITE OVERVIEW

3.1 SITE LOCATION AND CONTEXT

Land Tenure: Portarlington Recreation Reserve is a 38-hectare Crown Land allotment with the City of Greater Geelong as the responsible land manager. As designated public land, it is provided to the community for a range of uses including recreation, cultural, conservation and government services.

Zoning: Portarlington Recreation Reserve is zoned Public Park and Recreation Zone (PPRZ) under the Geelong Planning Scheme which encourages enhancement and use of the land in support of appropriate recreation activities.

Cultural Significance: The traditional custodians of Portarlington Recreation Reserve are the Wadawurrung People, with the Wathaurong Aboriginal Corporation as the Registered Aboriginal Party (RAP) for the land.

A property report for the Reserve generated through the Victorian Government's Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) website identified that the Reserve as an area of cultural sensitivity.

Under the Aboriginal Heritage Regulations (2018), the development of a Cultural Heritage Management Plan (CHMP) may be required for the delivery of infrastructure developments should they be designated as high-risk activities.

Regional Setting: Portarlington Recreation Reserve is located 31km from Geelong's CBD on the popular Bellarine Peninsula.

Local Setting: The Reserve is adjacent to Point Richards Flora & Fauna Reserve which is Public Conservation Reserve and Marine and Coastal Act zoned land. The Point Richards Flora & Fauna Reserve contains significant vegetation, environmental and coastal properties. The western area of Portarlington Recreation Reserve, which borders Point Richards, supports important habitat for a range of coastal bird species and hosts important biodiversity properties *(source: Portarlington Recreation Reserve – Environmental Draft Works Plan 2016).*

The Portarlington Holiday Park to the north of the Reserve is touted as the largest holiday park in Australia with many of its occupants utilising the recreation reserve for activities and meals during their stay. Further north of the Holiday Park is the Portarlington Foreshore, with its natural coastal environment attracting recreational fishing, boating and beachgoers, particularly during summer.

Study Area: The project study area for the Portarlington Recreation Reserve consists of two parts - the active sporting area including playing fields and open space to the east, and the passive recreation area to the west of the Reserve.

Bordering land, including the Point Richards Flora & Fauna Reserve and Portarlington Holiday Park, will be considered in terms of their interface with the study area.



Map 3: Map of the Portarlington township boundary

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The existing conditions summary provides an overview of observations obtained through on-site inspections by the project team. These inspections were conducted in February 2020 and their findings have assisted in shaping the Draft Master Plan's recommendations.

4.1 ACTIVE RECREATION AREA

FOOTBALL/CRICKET PAVILION



Asset age: Circa 1970

Building description: The building is generally single level and consists of a slab on ground, double external walls, and a gable truss framed roof with metal/Colourbond roof cladding.

Building condition: Building appears to be in good condition structurally however the finishes and fixtures are dated.

Building Owner: City of Greater Geelong

Building Maintainer: City of Greater Geelong and Clubs

Tenancy Arrangement: Seasonal Licence

Building Code compliance: The internal public amenities would not cater for maximum function room use/occupancy based on the current Code calculations. In addition, there is no accessible WC compartment or ambulant WC facilities. Provision of these facilities would be a high priority for any refurbishment project.

DDA compliance: DDA access is not compliant in terms of door opening sizes and circulation space.

Sporting code compliance: The home and away change rooms are large in size, however the finishes are poor/dated. The amenities associated are not suitable for all genders. The umpire facilities are very undersized and internally accessed, which is not ideal from a functional perspective.

Opportunity: Overall the building is relatively large for a local pavilion and in good structural condition. The building could be retained and refurbished (internally and externally) and possibly extended to address several functional requirements. Extensions or enhancement to the second storey of the pavilion must be fully funded by club or other external sources.

TENNIS PAVILION



Asset age: Circa 1980

Building description: Slab on ground, single level, metal/Colourbond roof cladding.

Building condition: Building is in good structural condition. Finishes and fixtures are generally in good condition but are dated.

Building Owner: City of Greater Geelong

Building Maintainer: City of Greater Geelong and Club

Tenancy Arrangement: Seasonal Licence

Building code compliance: The accessible WC does not meet current standards (i.e. 2009 Australian Standard/NCC requirements).

DDA compliance: Some limitations existing with the building, pathways and access to the facility require improvement to ensure DDA compliance.

Sporting code compliance: There are no dedicated player change rooms which are recommended within the Tennis Vic planning guidelines.

Opportunity: The upgrade to the amenities block can provide compliant toilets and change facilities for both players and umpires. May also provide additional ancillary facilities such as improved storage and a first aid area.

NETBALL PAVILION



Asset age: Circa 2012

Building description: The facility was recently constructed and is in good condition internally and externally. The construction type is modular and consists of 8 square light weight modules in total.

Building condition: Excellent condition

Building Owner: City of Greater Geelong

Building Maintainer: City of Greater Geelong and Club

Tenancy Arrangement: Seasonal Licence

Building code compliance: The building appears to meet DDA compliance.

DDA compliance: DDA access provisions appear to meet current Code requirements and the accessible WC meets the 2009 Australian Standards.

Sporting code compliance: The player and umpire change rooms are split into 3 equal sized (13m2 each) compartments, with roller shutter access between each space. This is a functional design in terms of maximising space/usage, however the change rooms are undersized and should ideally be 20m2 each. It should be noted that the design/construction pre-dates the release of the 2017 Netball Victoria Facility Manual.

The umpire's room does not include any dedicated amenities (2 WC's would be preferable) and are presumably shared with the player amenities.

The player amenities contain one WC and shower in each compartment – ideally two WC's should be provided to meet both Code and Netball Victoria Facility requirements

There is currently no medical / first aid room within the facility, which is recommended under the Netball Facility standards at 10m2.

Opportunity: The building whilst in excellent condition, is slightly smaller than the recommendations of current sporting code guidelines. There is opportunity for a small footprint extension to ensure compliance, particularly with player and umpire change rooms and medical room.

GUIDE HALL



Asset age: Circa 1980

Building condition: Based on external observations, the building is in good condition structurally. The finishes are dated externally, and some maintenance repair is required, particularly to the eaves, gutters and downpipes.

Building Owner: Club

Building Maintainer: Club

Tenancy Arrangement: Ground Lease

Building Code compliance: Unsure – internal access was not available during the inspection.

DDA compliance: Unsure – internal access was not available during the inspection

Sporting code compliance: The facility is not currently used for sporting purposes hence no player change rooms or amenities are provided. Based on the existing conditions plan and external building site measurements, the hall and kitchen appear to be large / functional in size.

Opportunity: A refurbishment to this facility could provide improve functionality and usage opportunities.

AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY SHED



Asset age: Unknown

Building condition: Based on external observations, the shed is in good structural condition and appears to be fit for purpose.

Building Owner: Club

Building Maintainer: Club

Tenancy Arrangement: Ground Lease

Building Code compliance: Unsure – internal access was not available during the inspection.

DDA compliance: Unsure – internal access was not available during the inspection

Sporting code compliance: Not applicable.

Opportunity: Retain shed in existing condition to continue to service the needs of the Agricultural Society and for community events. Consider expansion of existing footprint of facility.

PATHWAYS AND CONNECTIONS



Description: There are no current defined pathways linking key features of facilities in the sporting precinct of the reserve.

Issues: Pedestrian pathways for general circulation, fitness and connectivity between recreational facilities and buildings are non-existent. Pedestrians share the use the gravel access roads. As a result, access for people in wheelchairs and reliant on mobility aids is difficult. Conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians are possible.

Connectivity to the caravan park and adjoining residential areas east of Sproat Street is ill defined.

The asphalt hardstand between the Main Sports Pavilion and Oval is in reasonable condition and provides ample spectator opportunities and good access from the main pavilion to the sports oval.

Opportunity: Address and improve pedestrian pathways and connections as part of the Master Plan to improve equity, accessibility, and safety.

Define connections to delineate clear access and egress to the Holiday Park and recreation and passive recreation area.

CAR PARKING AND VEHICULAR CIRCULATION



Description: There is limited hard stand parking at the Reserve. Informal car parking is unrestricted and disorganised throughout the reserve

Issues: The asphalt car park on the north side of the pavilion is broken up with gravel hardstands and could be made more efficient if it were sealed and line marked.

Vehicular movement and parking is generally unrestricted. Parking can occur anywhere in the reserve except for spectator areas around the pavilions and playground which are either fenced or safe guarded using timber bollards and post and rail fencing.

The nature of the car parking and vehicular movement throughout the site presents safety concerns due to a lack of safe access routes and pathways for pedestrians, along with the disorganised nature of the carparking throughout the site.

It is acknowledged that, particularly during peak use times including football, that some informal parking will continue to occur.

Opportunity: Address, organise and formalise vehicular circulation and parking to improve traffic flow, parking congestion and safety.

ENTRANCES



Description: Entrances for vehicles exist on Sproat Street (x1) and Boat Road (x2). These are poorly defined and visually lack appeal.

A ticket booth is located at the main entrance along Boat Road to control ticketed access during football match days.

The footpath on the west side of Sproat Street provides opportunity for additional dedicated pedestrian entry points from nearby surrounding areas into the reserve. This could connect to a broader pathway network if it were established.

Issues: Pedestrians would precariously (in busy times) share the same entrances into the reserve as vehicles, those arriving on foot are met with a confusing entry way to the reserve.

Opportunity: Improved entrances and wayfinding signage will improve safety and pedestrian experience. Separating vehicle and pedestrian entrances where appropriate should be explored. Improving and maintaining access for emergency vehicles will continue to be a priority.

RESERVE FRONTAGES



Description: The Reserve frontages consist of those along Boat Road and Sproat Street. There is a mix of fencing types and several advertising signs are scattered within entrances and along the Reserve boundary.

Issues: The residential interface along the site's southern boundary is visually unappealing which may impact on visitor experience.

Opportunity: Addressing the interface of the Reserve along its residential and road boundaries with additional planting would improve the views to adjoining residential properties. Whilst the frontages to Boat Road and Sproat Street afford good views into the Reserve which should be maintained, the frontage could be softened to make it more visually appealing.

PARK LIGHTING



Description: Park lighting is limited to the car park north of the main pavilion. A solar light exists near the public toilets, however its effectiveness is unknown. Lighting to the car park is aged and most certainly non-compliant in achieving minimum levels of luminance at night.

Issues: Inadequate park lighting can present a safety concern, particularly during winter months when daylight is limited. It also can increase the risk of trips and falls, particularly for people with mobility concerns. With the current path network through the Reserve undefined, it is difficult to ascertain where additional park lighting would be best placed. In addition, there is a need to balance the amount of park lighting for visitor safety and amenity, without enabling light pollution.

Opportunity: The adequacy of lighting to the car park and other passive open spaces should be reviewed in accordance with Council policy and relevant Australian Standards. Lighting should be kept away from flora and fauna areas with lighting spill minimised.

CRICKET PRACTICE NETS



Description: The existing cricket practice nets are sited south of Oval 1 and comprise 4 synthetic grass lanes. The nets support training and provide opportunities for community participation also. The current fencing separating the lanes and the practice facility from the Reserve shows some signs of wear and does not encompass the entirety of the bowlers run up area.

Issues: There may be an element of potential risk to passers-by when the nets are in use. The location of the playground adjacent to the nets is questionable given there is the possibility of errant balls potentially causing injury.

Sporting code compliance: Cricket Victoria guidelines recommend the complete enclosure (i.e. chain link fencing around all four sides as well as the top) of cricket practice facilities where a ball may damage property or cause injury to pedestrians. A minimum of 3 synthetic training wickets are recommended.

Opportunity: Consider the redevelopment of the existing cricket practice nets into an outdoor multi-purpose training facility. Opportunities to include retractable, soft netting and line marking for sports such as half court netball and basketball. This opportunity will provide for greater use of this facility, and address safety concerns, for usage both within and outside of cricket season.

A rainwater tank is located north of the cricket nets. It is visually obvious and could be partially screened\ with vegetation or relocated to reduce its visual impact and/or removed if redundant.

OVAL 1



Description: Oval 1 measures approximately 170m x 115m and has a cool season turf profile with automatic irrigation system, perimeter pipe and rail fence, synthetic centre wicket and sports lights. There is a spectator area attached to the main pavilion.

Issues: No issues evident, the playing surface is in good condition with well-established grass cover.

Sporting code compliance: Oval 1 falls slightly short of the AFL's preferred guideline of 165m x 135m boundary to boundary however this would not affect use. The sports lighting on Oval 1 has less than 50 lux which is lower than the recommended average of 50 lux (minimum) for football training (upgrade currently underway).

Opportunity: Although Oval 1 is slightly smaller than recommendations, this is a guide only. Any recommendation for expansion would be considered a low priority. The sports lighting identified as not meeting training standard recommendations is soon to be upgraded to 50 lux. This will therefore deem it adequate for AFL training activities.

OVAL 2



Description: Oval 2 measures approximately 135m x 115m and consists of a warm season turf profile, an automatic irrigation system, post and rail perimeter fence and synthetic centre wicket. There is also a small spectator/scorer's shelter located in the northern pocket on the oval.

Issues: The perimeter fence shows some signs of age.

Sporting code compliance: Oval 2 is mostly used for junior football and lower grade cricket. Its measurements comply with the recommended guidelines for football as well as requirements for open age community cricket. The oval has good grass coverage and overall is in a very satisfactory condition. The oval does not have any sports lighting however this is not a requirement.

Opportunity: The development of the Master Plan should consider the inclusion of sports lighting (to training standard) on Oval 2. Providing sports lighting on Oval 2 could increase the capacity and programmability of the oval and broaden participation opportunities. A schedule of use demonstrating that Oval 1 is experiencing capacity, along with projected participation outcomes as a result of the installation of lights on Oval 2 should support this proposal. In addition, should future demand necessitate there is opportunity to extend Oval 2 in length to the south of its current footprint.

SPORTS LIGHTING: TENNIS AND NETBALL COURTS



Description: Sports lighting is presently provided on 3 x tennis courts and the new netball courts. Some lighting is provided on old asphalt netball courts however this facility is not presently utilised.

Issues: The current provision of sports lighting is of a high standard on three tennis courts as well as the new netball courts, with both facilities having upgraded lighting recently installed. The lighting on the old asphalt netball courts does not likely meet minimum requirements.

Sporting code compliance: The current sports lighting on the 3 eastern tennis courts is commensurate with recommendations for training and competition. The two western courts are not lit.

Opportunity: Maintain existing sports lighting on new netball and three tennis courts.

Should a sixth tennis court be developed (see page 28 for further information) floodlighting should be provided to all western courts to further facilitate participation and use.

NETBALL COURTS (NEW)



Description: There are two acrylic surface netball courts situated between the tennis club rooms and the main football/cricket pavilion. These courts are serviced by the netball pavilion and include bench areas for players, separate scorers' shelter, covered spectator viewing area and perimeter fence. There is sports lighting on both courts which has recently been upgraded.

Issues: Both courts physically present in very good condition however the Club notes that at times, capacity issues are being experienced due to high demand. Also there is presently no spectator seating within proximity to the courts.

Sporting code compliance: The two new netball courts comply with sporting code guidelines

Opportunity: Consider opportunity to additional spectator seating within close proximity to the netball courts. Consideration should be given to ensure recommended distances for court-run offs are maintained.

NETBALL COURTS (OLD)



Description: There are four old netball courts located along the southern boundary of the Reserve which are constructed from asphalt. There is sports lighting on these courts however its condition is unknown.

Issues: The four old netball courts are underutilised, no longer compliant with guidelines for the sport and are not aesthetically pleasing. The courts have also been superseded by the two newer acrylic courts within the Reserve.

Sporting code compliance: All four courts do not comply with current sporting code guidelines.

Opportunity: The netball court area could be more widely activated, and the space reinvigorated for broader activity opportunities that appeal to the wider community. Opportunities including community garden, bike discovery area and netball warm up spaces all present valid opportunities and have been suggested through the community consultation process.

TENNIS COURTS



Description: There are five tennis courts with acrylic surfaces at the reserve. New perimeter fencing has been installed on first three courts (pictured right in above image). These three courts also have a high standard of sports lighting provision. The other two courts (to the left of above image) have an acrylic surface however it shows some signs of wear and requires cleaning. These two courts do not have any sports lighting. The courts are separated by a hit up wall (also pictured) which shows signs of age however is in good structural condition.

Issues: Some cracking is evident on the two courts (pictured left in above image) however this is still considered playable and fit for purpose. Some slip issues may occur on these courts should cleaning be delayed.

Sporting code compliance: All courts comply with sporting code guidelines.

Opportunity: Monitor the cracking on the acrylic playing surface and program cyclical maintenance to improve asset performance and longevity. Consider upgrading lighting to training standards on two western courts.

Consider developing a sixth tennis court to the west of existing two court bank if demand necessitates.

HALF SIZE BASKETBALL COURT



Description: There is a half-size basketball court located at the western end of the old netball courts.

Issues: The court's use is unknown, and its positioning suggest it is not located in the most ideal location to facilitate use. The line marking is considerably faded, and the ring and back board are aged.

Opportunity: Consider transforming this area for broader community activities such as BMX and/or bike jumps area.

PARK FURNITURE



Description: Seating within the reserve is minimal and generally located near the netball and tennis courts and the main sports oval for spectating purposes. Two new styled seats existing near the playground, presumably installed as part of the previous playground upgrade.

Issues: The existing park seats are not consistent in style and there is a lack of seating throughout the Reserve. In addition, there are no other supporting picnic facilities, shelter, bike racks, drink fountains or bottle refill stations within the Reserve.

Opportunity: Consideration should be given to the installation of park furniture where demand is deemed highest. Aged seating should be removed and/or replaced where required. A consistent approach to style should be taken for uniformity and aesthetic purposes.

PLAYGROUND



Description: There is a local level playground located at the Reserve which has recently been upgraded and caters for children under the age of 12. The playground is centrally located and includes perimeter seating and soft fall.

Issues: The playground is in good condition with some natural shade and amenity. The location of the playground may present a safety concern due to the cricket practice nets not being enclosed.

Opportunity: Consider the location of the playground in the context of the cricket practice nets and the broader public amenities of the Reserve including toilets, park furniture, BBQs etc. Improve natural shade through landscaping of its surrounds. Opportunity to incorporate playground into broader play space which appeals to a wider demographic including innovative features that are different from the main Portarlington playground located in the township. Opportunity to incorporate play elements that appeal to children and teens of all genders.

EVENTS AREA INCLUDING PUBLIC TOILETS



Description: The open space area to the south of the Reserve is used primarily for the Bellarine Agricultural Show but also for parking for the Portarlington Mussel Festival and other events. Due to the diverse use of the area, the grass cover appears varied and the surface is uneven in places. The event space is supported by several amenities including public toilets, horse/cattle tethering/yard area and a livestock loading ramp.

Issues: The post and rail area for tethering horses and livestock shows is currently fit for purpose. The public toilet block located between the main oval and the old netball courts is unroofed and generally non-compliant in terms of accessibility and standard amenity provision. The grass in the area appears to be Kikuyu with varying levels of condition.

Opportunity: Consider initiating improvements to the event grass area to enhance condition including levelling the surface to create more flexible usage and programming opportunities. Retain toilet block until end of useful life, and then replace for updated, compliant facility which will continue to support the area. Replace livestock tethering rails when they reach end of useful life.

OPEN SPACE AREAS AND LANDSCAPING



Description: There are vast amounts of open space within the active Reserve area which offer varied opportunities for passive recreational pursuits. Within the active Reserve at present, a grove of Cypress trees (pictured above) line a small section of the landscape. Other than this however, there is minimal other vegetation to support and improve the environmental aspects of the Reserve including habitat, biodiversity, and aesthetic. The wide open space areas of the Reserve are considered a key feature and that future recommendations for landscaping need to retain part of this character.

Issues: Vegetation coverage within the active reserve area is sparse and open. Understory planting is minimal except for several floral garden beds around the main pavilion. The Reserve has limited natural shade coverage around the active sport areas.

Limited landscaping makes the Reserve look and feel as though it is lacking in general amenity, with minimal natural shade and wind breaks. The tree species presently occupying the Reserve are non-native or non-indigenous and potentially create weed issues and possibly reduced biodiversity outcomes.

In terms of passive recreational opportunity, there is ample space for activities throughout the open space areas, however amenity is limited given the lack of landscaping that would contribute to the user's experience.

Opportunity: Improve landscaping through the active Reserve area. A strategic approach to planting should be undertaken to minimise interference with any Reserve activity that requires a designated amount of space. That said however, greater plantings and improved landscaping will complement the Reserve when undertaken in a considered manner and should be a priority of the Master Plan's implementation.

4.2 ENVIRONMENTAL VALUES AND PASSIVE RECREATION AREA EXISTING CONDITIONS

The passive recreation area of Portarlington Recreation Reserve hosts a range of values and habitat which have been considered within the Draft Master Plan's development. As part of the initial planning process, an Environmental Report undertaken by an independent ecologist was completed. This report aimed to understand the status of the area and has assisted in the Draft Master Plan's recommendations. There are no recognised environmental values remaining in the active sport and recreation area and therefore the focus of the assessment was on the passive recreation area only.

Description: The 25 hectare passive recreation area is situated in the western section of the Reserve (as highlighted in Map 4 adjacent) and adds significantly to the environmental values and landscape character of the Bellarine Peninsula and the City of Greater Geelong. It is particularly important as it extends the values of the adjoining Point Richards Flora & Fauna Reserve, which combined, represent the largest extant area of native terrestrial vegetation remaining on the northern Bellarine Peninsula.

The passive recreation area contains three depleted Ecological Vegetation Classes (EVC); EVC 3 Damp Sands Herb-rich Woodland, EVC 821 Tall Marsh and EVC 891 Plains Brackish Sedge Wetland, These EVC's are listed as 'vulnerable' within the Otway Plain Bioregion and when combined with the adjacent Point Richards Flora & Fauna Reserve represent the only significantly sized area of EVC 3 (Damp Sands Herb-rich Woodland) on the Bellarine Peninsula and within the City of Greater Geelong.

The survey by Mark Trengove Ecological Services in July 2020 identified 40 indigenous plant species including Austral Crane's-bill (Geranium solanderi var. solanderi) which is listed as 'rare' on the Victorian Rare and Threatened Advisory Species List. Another species of note was the identification of a single Native Sow Thistle (Sonchus hydrophilus) which is of regional significance and potentially state significance.

The Victorian Biodiversity Atlas has recorded five bird species in the study area but as many as 118 fauna species combined with the Point Richards Flora & Fauna Reserve. These findings provide an indication of the value of the remnant habitat. Thirteen species exist on the Department of Environment Water Land and Planning advisory list of threatened flora and fauna. The vulnerable Grey Goshawk and Great Egret are also recorded from the area. A significant population (greater than 50) of Growling Grass Frog (listed under the FFG and EPBC Acts) is present in the adjoining reserve, and likely utilised wetland habitat in the passive area.

The condition of vegetation and diversity of native flora species across the study area varies considerably, transitioning from good in the north to poor in the south. Whilst the vegetation in the Reserve has previously been quite degraded due to neglect, effective weed control efforts in recent years has significantly improved its quality and resulted in prolific natural regeneration of the indigenous vegetation.

Public consultation for the Portarlington Recreation Reserve Master Plan revealed the importance of the passive recreation area to the community *(see Consultation Summary section of this report for further detail*), with environmental and landscape amenity deemed one of the most valued aspects of the Reserve via the Quick Poll.

Consultation has also shown that, although most people surveyed use the Reserve for playing or watching sport, almost 28% use the Reserve for appreciating nature and walking with or without their dog. This was reinforced by the Social Map engagement tool, where nearly half of the responses indicated they highly value this area and its passive recreational opportunities.

Uses: At present, the passive recreation area is utilised for walking, jogging, cycling, bird watching and nature appreciation. It is currently zoned as an on-leash dog walking area. The area is also presently used for overflow event parking.



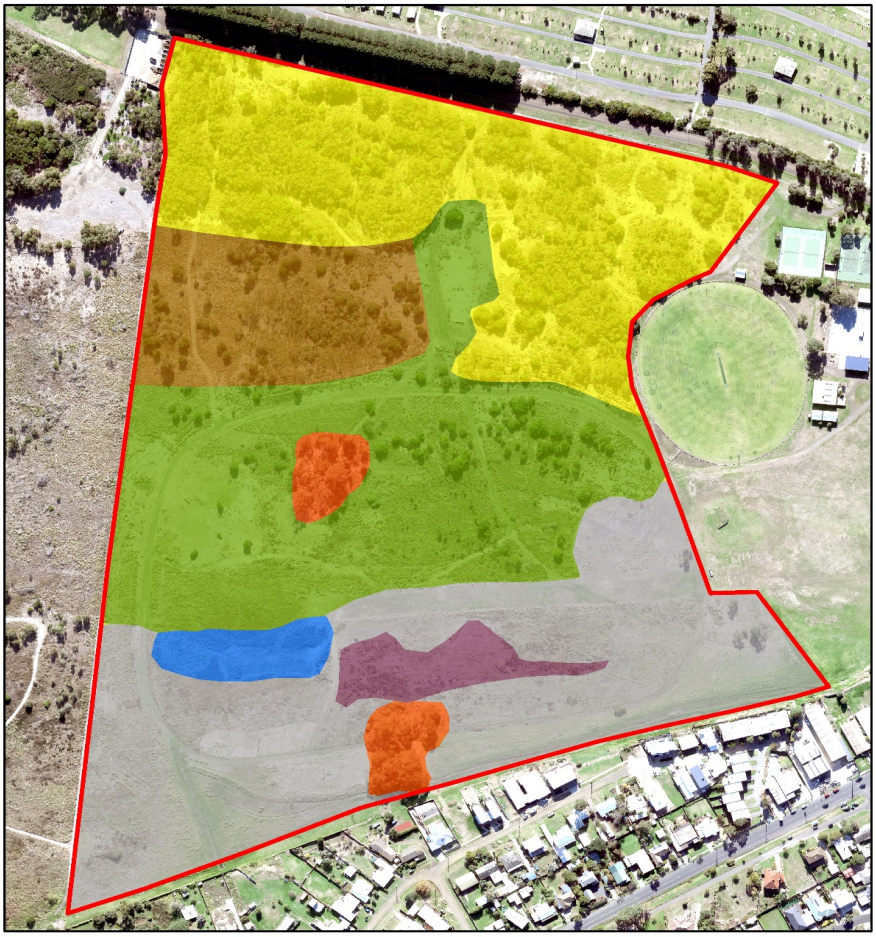
Map 4: Passive recreation area of Portarlington Recreation Reserve

Risks: To effectively protect the environmental values within the area, identifying and addressing the threats to its values must be considered. Through a risk evaluation process, each risk can be assessed based on its likelihood of occurring and the potential consequences associated. Through the development of a comprehensive risk assessment, strategies to assist in mitigation and action can be developed. A risk assessment for the area has been developed which will assist in the creation of the Draft Master Plan. **A summary of the risk assessment is provided on pages 33-34 of this report.**

Past disturbances and land use have had a significant impact on the diversity and quality of values in the passive recreation precinct and ongoing and future risks will continue to make this area a challenge to manage. The relatively small size of the Reserve and fragmentated nature will limit the ability for many of the natural processes to occur. In this regard the adjoining Point Richards Flora & Fauna Reserve plays a critical role creating a larger body of vegetation and habitat. As a small Reserve, the loss of vegetation within the passive recreation area has a proportionally larger impact and therefore the variety of threats from trail expansion and other activities, particularly in better quality areas, is a high risk. The biodiversity and habitat values of the Reserve are important with vulnerable vegetation communities present, albeit in a variety of states of regeneration and recovery. The past and ongoing impacts of weeds and changes in fire regimes have had a deleterious impact on the diversity and condition of vegetation and habitat. Weeds continue to be the major threat to vegetation in this area due to their type and abundance. The changes in vegetation have also had significant impacts on the habitat values which have limited the presence and diversity of fauna in the Reserve.

Opportunity: Continued investment and responsible management of the passive recreation area will ensure the ongoing preservation of this regionally significant site, which will be for the benefit of current and future generations. Several opportunities exist to protect and enhance the environmental values of the area, which will assist in the Draft Master Plan's development. These include:

- **Weed Management** – a holistic and integrated approach to weed control to encourage the regeneration of native vegetation and increase flora diversity.
- **Biodiversity Management –** introduce targeted revegetation activities consistent with findings in the ecological report to supplement natural regeneration of indigenous species. Undertake further flora and fauna surveys and studies to improve knowledge of species, values and habitat. Review previous fire management plans to identify a suitable regime that promotes positive ecological outcomes and fuel management objectives. Consolidate trails for pedestrians and cyclists and create a formalised network.
- **Collaborative Management –** investigate opportunities for a more integrated and collaborative management of values and risks across this precinct and adjoining public land.
- **Water and Wetland Management –** consider re-establishing a wetland system along the southern end of the Reserve to enhance the EVC 821 Tall Marsh and EVC 891 Plains Brackish Sedge Wetland as well as improve run off from adjacent residential properties.



Map 5: Study area and distribution of vegetation areas based upon July 2020 survey

PASSIVE RECREATION AREA RISK ASSESSMENT

Key Risks:	Threats	Description of threat	Rating
Loss of vegetation and habitat	Re-opening horse trails	Loss of vegetation can result from new infrastructure, creation of new trails, trampling of vegetation from vehicles or people.	High
Loss of flora biodiversity and habitat	Invasion of native vegetation by 'noxious weeds'	An assessment of weed species within the reserve found 59 species of exotic species and 3 native species that pose a threat to native vegetation. Whilst it is acknowledged that the historical EVC is significantly altered, weed species will continue to threaten both the extent of native vegetation and quality by occupying greater space as they compete with and smother native vegetation. The large variety of weed species makes this a greater challenge as the control techniques for one species may create a space for other exotic or environmental weeds to take over. Aggressive weeds such as Flax-leaf Broom and Gorse have had large populations in the past and have significant annual seed set colonising areas quickly supressing native regeneration and biodiversity. An ongoing source for weeds will come from both those areas that are more highly infested and adjoining private land where garden weeds may escape.	Extreme
	New and emerging weeds	New and emerging weeds such as Bridal Creeper and Chilean Needlegrass pose one of the largest future threats to the reserve biodiversity due in part to its smothering nature and the difficulties in treating this weed.	Extreme
	Inappropriate fire regimes causing disruption to sustainable ecosystem processes and resultant loss of biodiversity	Fire has been part of the Australian landscape for thousands of years. With colonisation those fire regimes and purposes have significantly altered along with the change and loss of vegetation. Fire regimes need to have clear objectives with fire frequency and intensity maintained within the tolerance limits of the desired native vegetation characteristics. Inappropriate use of fire could further alter the desired vegetation diversity and structure or trigger major weed events from dormant species such as Broom, Gorse and Coast Wattle.	High
	Loss of biodiversity as a result of the spread of invasive plants native to Victoria, such as Coast Wattle (Acacia longifolia subsp. sophorae) and Sallow Wattle (Acacia longifolia subsp. longifolia), into areas outside their natural range	Coast Wattle is recognised as a particularly invasive and aggressive coloniser of disturbed areas. It is widely distributed across the study area and potentially has a large dormant seedbank. Further disturbance and/or the use of fire could trigger major colonisation events that would need to be carefully managed if they were to be used for other objectives.	High
	Spread of Pittosporum undulatum in areas outside its natural distribution	Sweet Pittosporum is like many other native plants that have expanded beyond their range initially as garden escapees. The additional challenge of this species is the allelopathic effects it has on soil and the suppression of other plants species growing under its canopy. There are relatively few plants in the reserve.	Moderate
	Fragmentation	The passive recreation area, is quite fragmented with a high edge to core ratio. Fragmentation further reduces the ability for natural processes to occur with disturbance along edges being a source of further weed invasions and weed spread.	Moderate
	Trail use spreading weeds	The use of trails may be a source of new weeds coming in or spread of weeds along tracks further reducing biodiversity values.	Low

	Trail maintenance spreading weeds	Machinery brought into the reserve for maintenance, particularly slashing activities can be a source of weeds such as Chilean Needlgreass and potentially new weed species and or spread weeds along tracks and vegetation edges.	Low
Wetland loss and degradation	Change in water regime, dredging, draining, filling and grazing	Past and future changes to drainage at the Reserve dry out previously wetter areas reducing natural flooding and inundation regimes changing vegetation characteristics in key EVC's. Past changes to drainage have reduced the frequency and duration of ephemeral wetland events reducing the wetland habitat for a range of bird and frog species.	High
Loss of fauna biodiversity	Predation of native wildlife by the cat, Felis catus.	Cats are a highly aggressive and effective hunter of native wildlife. Although there are a small number of fauna species listed and an unknown cat population, they remain a risk to the presence or increase of fauna populations.	Moderate
	Predation of native wildlife by the introduced Red Fox Vulpes vulpes.	Foxes are a highly aggressive and effective hunter of native wildlife. Although there are a small number of fauna species listed and an unknown fox population, they remain a risk to the presence or increase of fauna populations. Trails increase the access to habitat reducing core areas that may afford greater protection against predation.	Moderate
	Off-lead dog disturbing or causing loss of wildlife	Dogs off-lead have the potential to reduce bird diversity and abundance through predation and disturbance. Under the current controls, dogs off-lead are not permitted, however evidence suggests this still may occur, but the frequency is uncertain. There is likely to be a higher consequence from dogs off-lead with potential bird mortality and a greater area impacted. This may also be a risk factor to other small mammals if they exist.	Moderate
	Motorbikes	Motorbikes have the potential to reduce bird diversity and abundance through disturbance with higher speed and noise.	Moderate
	Dogs on lead disturbing wildlife	Dogs on-lead have the potential to reduce bird diversity and abundance through disturbance. No data has been collected on the frequency or duration of dog walking but from the community consultation and anecdotal evidence suggests it is a common activity. The level of disturbance is unknown as no research has been undertaken on the abundance of birds, but research indicates this is a risk factor.	Low
	Walking and cycling disturbing wildlife	Walking and cycling has the potential to reduce bird diversity and abundance through disturbance. No data has been collected on the frequency or duration of walking but from the community consultation and anecdotal evidence suggests it is a common activity. The level of disturbance is unknown as no research has been undertaken on the abundance of birds, but research indicates this is a risk factor.	Low
	Impacts of climate change	Changes in climate may put further pressure on fauna through impacts on migratory species, changes in vegetation and habitat and increased risk of extreme weather events and fire. There are likely to be impacts over and above other impacts.	Low

PASSIVE RECREATION AREA IMAGES



Lightwood Dominated Woodland



Manna Gum Dominated Woodland



Spiny Mat-rush Dominated Open Sedge/Grassland



Spiny Mat-rush



Common Reed Dominated Wetland



Brackish Sedge Wetland

SITE USAGE

5.1 SPORTING CLUB PARTICIPATION

The 2020 Sport Australia AusPlay Survey data found that the top activities for sports club participation within the City of Greater Geelong are:

1. Australian Football
2. Golf
3. Netball
4. Basketball
5. Football/soccer
6. Tennis
7. Cricket
8. Bowls

All four sports tenanting Portarlington Recreation Reserve are represented within this listing, demonstrating a strong demand for participation and access to clubs and programs, as well as facilities that are modern, accessible, welcoming and fit-for- purpose.

To assist in identifying current and future demand for sport at Portarlington Recreation Reserve, an overview of participation for all active sporting user groups is provided below.

TOTAL MEMBERSHIP – 2019

CLUB	TOTAL	SENIOR MALE	SENIOR FEMALE	JUNIOR MALE	JUNIOR FEMALE	JUNIOR PROGRAMS MALE	JUNIOR PROGRAMS FEMALE	SOCIAL MEMBERS
PORTARLINGTON FOOTBALL NETBALL CLUB (FOOTBALL)	**615**	79	-	163	11	46	16	300
PORTARLINGTON CRICKET CLUB	**280**	85	15	80	14	18	-	68
PORTARLINGTON FOOTBALL NETBALL CLUB (NETBALL)	**255**	-	56	-	70	-	29	100
PORTARLINGTON TENNIS CLUB	**44**	13	17	7	7	-	-	-
TOTALS	**1,194**	177	88	250	102	64	45	468

The previous table shows active participation numbers (i.e. registered players) per club, including social members and officials such as coaches, trainers, support staff and volunteers. The table demonstrates that there is a healthy number of junior and female participants which is considered imperative to the sustainability of any sporting club.

The Portarlington Recreation Reserve is one several sporting venues that host local competition finals. This includes for all four sports, i.e. AFL, Tennis, Cricket and Netball. During weekends in February/March and September/October the Reserve has an influx of spectators and competitors utilising the venue for final's matches. These events attract a greater crowd than the home and away season, and there is recognition that the venue should continue this function. Finals games also offer a financial incentive for the hosting club and are an excellent way to raise revenue.

The AFL has detailed, historical participation information that demonstrates trends over a four-year period. The following table demonstrates the positive trend Portarlington Football Club has experienced since 2016:

FOOTBALL CLUB PARTICIPATION TRENDS				
	2016	2017	2018	2019
No of players	250	251	277	315
Change %	-	+0.4%	+10.4%	+13.7%

In addition, AFL Barwon has supplied detailed participation data for Portarlington Netball Club as follows:

NETBALL CLUB PARTICIPATION TRENDS				
	2016	2017	2018	2019
No of players	135	146	186	155
Change %	-	+8.2%	+27.4%	-16.6%

It should be noted that other current users such as the Bellarine Agricultural Society and Portarlington Girl Guides will further bolster participation numbers and reserve attendance numbers through their relevant activities. It is estimated that combined these activities, particularly the Bellarine Show and associated events, would attract thousands to the Reserve each year.

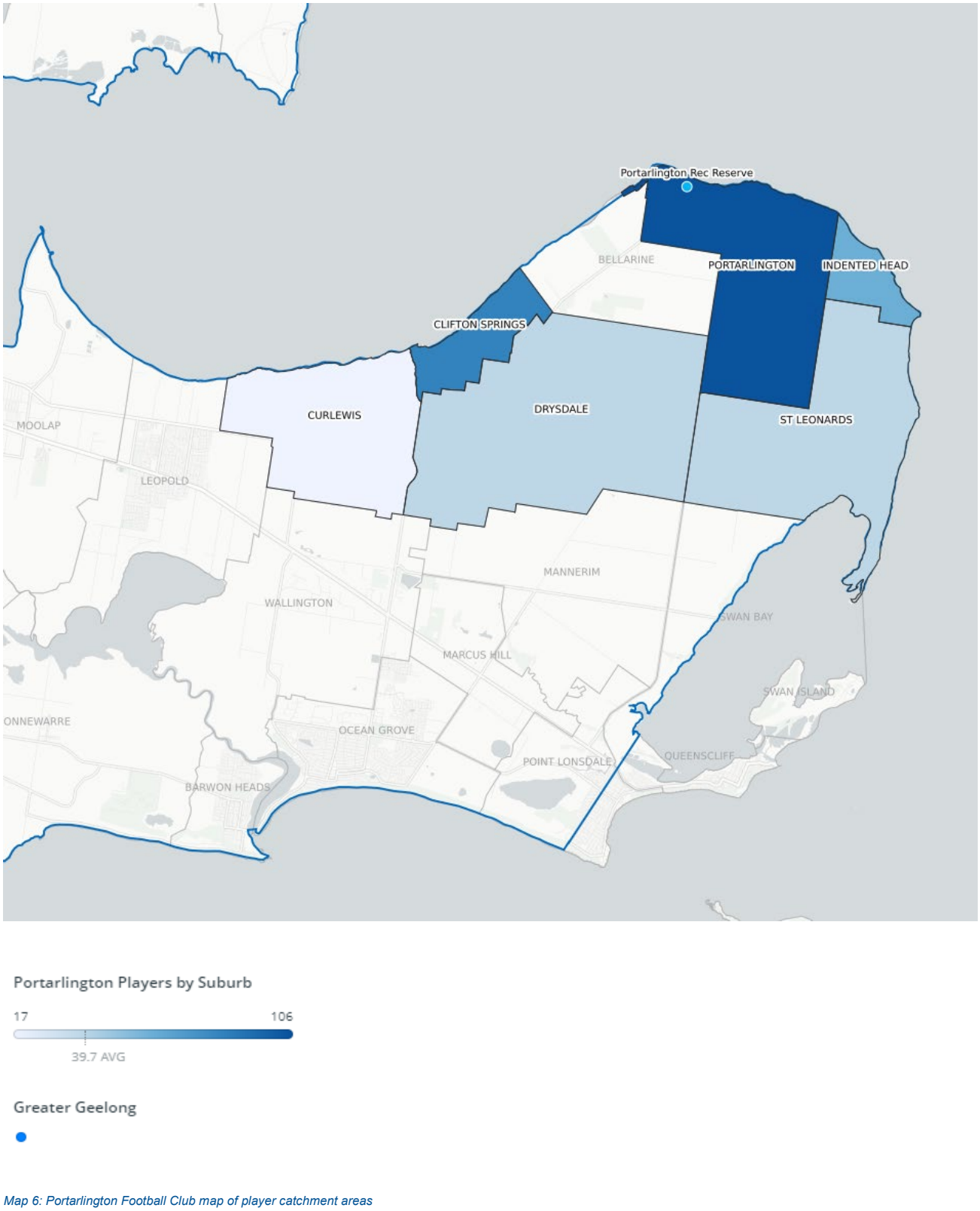
As previously mentioned within this report, due to the largely older demographic permanently residing in Portarlington that there will likely be demand for more unstructured activities and opportunities that appeal to the older age groups. Whilst participation trends remain healthy, it must be acknowledged that there may be a potential cap on the expansion of these sports purely due to demographic projections. The retention of players and a focus on no net loss of participants in the future can be viewed as a measure of success for these sports.

5.2 SPORTING PARTICIPATION CATCHMENT (AFL)

Whilst the future total population growth in Portarlington of 26% is high, the actual rate of change is approximately 2%, meaning that the number of additional people to 2030 within the township is minimal. In addition, a higher number of people will be aged over 60. It is therefore likely that future participation in organised sport at Portarlington Recreation Reserve will need to be drawn from the township as well as surrounding areas. This participation catchment is consistent with current trends, particularly in terms of the Portarlington Football Club who have the highest participant base of any tenant club at the Reserve. AFL also have detailed participation data available for analysis including the residential postcodes of registered participants. This data has demonstrated that in season 2019, the highest number of AFL players at Portarlington Football Club resided in the following locations:

PORTARLINGTON	116
CLIFTON SPRINGS	38
INDENTED HEAD	27
DRYSDALE	30
ST LEONARDS	25
CURLEWIS	17
ELSEWHERE	62

The Clifton Springs and Curlewis areas will continue to be important localities for the Club to source participants, with both suburbs set to experience population growth. Curlewis alone is forecast to double its population from 3,328 in 2020 to 6,583 in 2030. Both Clifton Springs and Curlewis do not have designated active recreation reserves and will become more reliant on facilities at Portarlington, Drysdale, and Leopold to accommodate demand.



Map 6: Portarlington Football Club map of player catchment areas

For comparison, a participation catchment analysis was also conducted for neighbouring football clubs Drysdale and Leopold. The aim of this exercise was to understand whether many players residing in Portarlington were travelling outside of the township to participate elsewhere. As evident in the following tables, both clubs only attracted a minor number of participants from Portarlington. This will likely indicate that Portarlington Football Club has a strong culture, is competitive and offers programs that retain and attract local participants. The viability and sustainability of Portarlington Football Club will continue to depend upon its ability continue to attract participants from the local area. Strong junior introductory and player pathway programs along with girls' and women's' teams are now the cornerstone of modern football. To remain competitive, the Club must proactively pursue these initiatives. Many clubs on the Bellarine Peninsula have access to modern facilities, which also contributes to participant experience and provides a welcoming and inclusive environment. As demonstrated in the tables below, these neighbouring clubs also attract a high number of their participants from their immediate local area. Therefore, it will be difficult for Portarlington to compete for and attract players from these areas given the strong local connection to all townships being experienced. The upgrade to Portarlington amenities along with program development however will assist the Club in staying competitive and on an equal playing field to the neighbouring clubs and others across the Bellarine.

DRYSDALE FOOTBALL CLUB

PORTARLINGTON	7
CLIFTON SPRINGS	164
DRYSDALE	148
CURLEWIS	70
ST LEONARDS	10
LEOPOLD	28
ELSEWHERE	71

LEOPOLD FOOTBALL CLUB

PORTARLINGTON	1
MOOLAP	10
CURLEWIS	6
LEOPOLD	351
ELSEWHERE	76



Map 7: Location of Bellarine Football Netball League venues within the City of Greater Geelong

5.3 SPORTING INFRASTRUCTURE SUPPLY AND PROVISION RATIOS

Supply and provision ratios are useful in assisting to understand, along with other influencing factors, the likely requirements for infrastructure. Ratios utilised within this report have been derived from industry benchmarks, recommended peak sporting body guidelines as well as other strategic infrastructure documents developed for sport. The ratios applied are those used for local sporting provision, which is consistent with the classification of Portarlington Recreation Reserve as a local level venue.

Provision ratios should be considered in conjunction with other influences such as participation, facility condition and community access. Other considerations when assessing provision ratios should include:

- Any localised strategic planning that identifies gaps in facility provision based on need;
- The proximity of like venues to those within the township and the geographical spread of infrastructure;
- Access and ownership limitations of existing facilities; and
- Condition of existing assets and their level of capacity to host sport.

The table on the following page indicates the current infrastructure provision at Portarlington Recreation Reserve against the township's population ratios and future forecasts. From the analysis, the current provision of sporting ovals and courts is sufficient to meet the future needs of the community for the next 20 years considering a growth rate at the higher end of the forecast population projections and participation scenarios.

A focus of the Draft Master Plan should be given to improving the quality and capacity of infrastructure through potential playing surface improvements, lighting upgrades and access rather than the inclusion of additional playing surfaces.

Given most sports are deemed to be well-serviced from a provision perspective, this provides ample opportunity to enhance other recreational aspects at the Reserve which encourage informal participation, particularly within the older age demographic. The Master Plan for the Reserve should focus on a balanced approach to both organised and unstructured recreation to better service the community now and into the future.

"The current provision of sporting ovals and courts is sufficient to meet the future needs of the community for the next 20 years considering a growth rate at the higher end of the forecast population projections and participation scenarios"

SPORT	Total no. of assets at PRR	2020 Portarlington population	2019 Participants	Recommended Industry Population/Provision Benchmark*	2020 Playing area to population ratio	Recommended Industry Participant/ Provision Benchmark **	2020 Playing area to participant ratio	Does supply meet, exceed or is less than benchmark	2031 Portarlington population	2031 Playing area to population ratio	Does supply meet, exceed or is less than benchmark
AFL	**2**	4,046	315	**1:5,000**	**1:2,023**	1:175 participants	**1:127**	Exceeds population ratio and participant ratio	5,133	**1:2,567**	Exceeds
NETBALL	**2**	4,046	155	**1:7,070**	**1:2,023**	1:60 participants	**1:78**	Exceeds population ratio Small need using participant ratio	5,133	**1:2,567**	Exceeds
TENNIS	**5**	4,046	44	**1:3,000**	**1:809**	N/A	N/A	Exceeds	5,133	**1:1,027**	Exceeds
CRICKET	**2**	4,046	212	**1:4,000**	**1:2,023**	N/A	N/A	Exceeds	5,133	**1:2,567**	Exceeds

*Recommended industry population/provision benchmark ratios utilised within the above table have been derived from the City of Greater Geelong's Social Infrastructure Plan (Generation One) 2020-2023

**Recommended industry/participant provision benchmark ratios utilised have been supplied by the relevant peak sporting body (where available)

CONSULTATION SUMMARY

Community consultation for the Master Plan's development aimed to understand what the community like, and what they think could be improved at Portarlington Recreation Reserve. The broad consultation program resulted in a high level of engagement and responses received. The findings from the initial consultation have assisted in developing insights and recommendations for the Draft Master Plan.

The below provides a summary of the various consultation methods undertaken.

6.1 PROJECT REFERENCE GROUP

The Project Reference Group was engaged through several meetings including an initial onsite discussion in February 2020, a subsequent meeting in September 2020 and a presentation of the Draft Plan in December 2020. Additional engagement has also occurred with the group through until June 2021, working collaboratively to develop the recommendations within the Draft Plan. This group consists of representatives of key user groups and stakeholders of the Reserve. The purpose of this group is to provide information to assist in forming the recommendations within the Master Plan, including guidance around the functionality and future infrastructure requirements as the main user of the facility.

Representatives of the group, include:

- Portarlington Football Netball Club
- Portarlington Cricket Club
- Portarlington Tennis Club
- Portarlington Pony Club
- Bellarine Agricultural Society
- Portarlington Girl Guides
- Portarlington Community Association
- Portarlington Community Garden Group
- Bellarine Bayside Foreshore Committee
- Office of Lisa Neville MP, Member for Bellarine

The PRG summary of engagement has been categorised into three consultation themes and feedback, as below, these include:

- Sporting Infrastructure
- Community Infrastructure
- Open Space Infrastructure

Sporting Infrastructure

- Previous history of site planning and development, that **now requires collective alignment and joint investment** to ensure successful implementation.
- **Buildings onsite are old but in good structural condition** including football/cricket, tennis and guide hall however are lacking in modern amenity. Desire for second storey improvements to main pavilion.
- Internal **public amenities do not align with current standards** in both football/cricket and tennis club pavilions.
- **No accessible facilities in football/cricket and tennis club pavilions.**
- **Umpire facilities are undersized** in football/cricket pavilions.
- **Provision of gender-neutral change facilities,** particularly for cricket and football, **would further support and provide opportunities for females to participate** given the existing facilities do not support this adequately at present.
- **No dedicated umpire change facilities** in tennis or netball pavilions.
- **Floodlights and maintaining access around Oval 2 would increase capacity** and opportunities for participation. Expansion of Oval 2 length by 20m. Increase 30m access around Oval 2 boundary for cars and spectators.
- **Current kitchen in football/cricket building sub-standard** – no longer compliant needs to be upgraded.
- **Pony Club have indicated that they do not desire to relocate to the Reserve,** noting that they are comfortable at their current home facility in Willis St, Portarlington.
- **Upgrade to cricket nets – consider a multi-use facility** e.g. with retractable nets and synthetic surface for more opportunities such as netball to use for warm up. Include storage facility as part of upgraded nets. An indoor basketball/multipurpose building is also desired.

- **Installation of fence on Oval 1** – using local fencing product.
- **Tennis court resurfacing and Book A Court to be installed** onto three courts shortly. **Remaining two tennis courts require resurfacing.** Make allowance for an additional two tennis courts to the existing western bank.
- **Netball courts experiencing capacity issues**, consideration towards providing an additional courts to the east of the existing two netball courts should be given. Under cover netball spectator seating also requested.
- **The netball change facilities whilst in good condition**, **have the potential to be expanded** to increase the change room and umpire room sizes to current standards as per the 2017 Netball Victoria Guidelines. **Facility also does not have a medical/first aid area or separate showers for umpires**.
- **Plan for potential sporting infrastructure to be included in the passive recreation area**.

Community Infrastructure

- **Ill-defined connectivity** between caravan park and reserve.
- **Consider all abilities access throughout the site** and connectivity to Portarlington Holiday Park.
- **Consider footprint for community garden** which would require supporting amenities including storage, water connections and an area for meeting. The old netball court area could be repurposed for this use.
- **Other recreational activity options to be considered** in the development of the Master Plan outside of organised sport such as BMX, skate, scoot, basketball etc.
- Improvements to **existing public toilet block closest to old asphalt netball courts.**

Open Space Infrastructure

- **No accessible connections within reserve** for pedestrians, participants or vehicles.
- **Upgrade surface in open space/event area** so it is more suitable for events during the Bellarine Agricultural Show and other multi-purpose opportunities.
- **Vehicle management and access across the site requires improvement.**



Image 3: Tennis practice at Portarlington. Photo credit: Portarlington Tennis Club

6.2 STATE SPORTING ORGANISATIONS

Interviews with State Sporting Organisations including AFL Barwon, Cricket Victoria, Tennis Victoria and Netball Victoria were undertaken to understand their aspirations for the sports who tenant the Reserve, including questions relating to participation, programs, infrastructure and alignment to their strategic documentation. A summary of the responses to these questions is provided below.

Netball Victoria

- Netball Victoria (NV) describes netball participation at Portarlington Recreation Reserve as relatively stable between season 2016 to 2019. NV indicates that the Netball Club has demonstrated the ability to grow their junior program through the delivery of NetSetGO and supports nine junior teams and five senior teams.
- The Netball facilities at Portarlington Recreation Reserve host finals matches for the Bellarine Football Netball League and is considered an important venue for this purpose. Access to two netball courts and supporting infrastructure is integral to the netball games played at the Reserve during the finals period.
- NV indicates that minor improvements to the netball facilities including a dedicated change area and amenities for umpires, greater storage space and bigger and better structured player and official benches would provide greater benefits. NV noted that should additional netball court provision be explored as part of the Master Planning process, they would be supportive of this however would encourage multi-purpose, multi-lined playing surfaces. Shade and shelter for spectators and volunteers is also seen as priority.
- In terms of participation, NV notes that a strong NetSetGO program at Portarlington Recreation Reserve including both girl's and boy's participation is key to the sustainability of the sport. Supporting the development of coaches, umpires and officials would also improve the participation experience. NV also notes that the holiday population of Portarlington also presents an opportunity to run informal, summer programs.
- NV recognises the importance of the facilities at Portarlington Recreation Reserve as it provides opportunities for local participation in the sport. Strong junior participation will continue to be a focus for the Club and NV moving into the future.

The current facilities at the Reserve are adequate for to service the demand for netball, however NV notes that the future population and development on the Bellarine Peninsula may alter the need or increase demand. Parking and traffic management improvements at the reserve are supported.

Tennis Victoria

- Tennis Victoria (TV) describes tennis participation at the Reserve as steadily increasing. There is presently a new Executive Committee who are focusing on participation outcomes through junior, senior, ladies mid-week and in-house competitions.
- TV noted that outside of local competition, Portarlington Recreation Reserve tennis courts also host the Tennis Geelong finals which attract greater numbers of spectator and competitors than would the regular games or events.
- TV sees that improvements to the pavilion, particularly the change room facilities, would provide a more welcoming environment for both existing and future participants.
- The local level tennis venue at Portarlington Recreation Reserve is supported by the G21 Tennis Strategy (2015-2025) and is regarded as an important venue to service local demand.
- TV indicates that the current provision of tennis courts adequately services the demand for the sport. TV supports the installation of their Book-A-Court technology to increase capacity and opportunities to participate, particularly during the summer months with the seasonal visitors.

Cricket Victoria

- Cricket Victoria (CV) notes that there has been a steady growth in participation at Portarlington Cricket Club. This is largely due to the Club's tireless work in increasing participation, in both junior and senior formats. The Club has also been successful in fielding a senior women's team in the first season of the Barwon Women's Cricket Competition.
- The Reserve has hosted several Bellarine Peninsula Cricket Association senior cricket finals as well as tournaments such as junior country week. CV notes that the main playing oval at Portarlington would be suitable to host junior representative cricket.
- CV notes that improvements to infrastructure, programming and increasing population will have the greatest impact on participation. More specifically:
- Infrastructure – An improvement in the cricket training nets at the Reserve would add to the overall appeal of the venue and address safety concerns.
- Programming – The continued growth in junior and female programs will positively impact on participation.
- Population – As Portarlington is a smaller town and somewhat segregated from the larger growth areas on the Bellarine, this number of people who may potentially play cricket may be limited.
- CV indicated that the current facilities at the Reserve service demand adequately however an upgrade to the change facilities, practice nets and drainage on Oval 2 would further support participation for both males and females.

AFL Barwon

- AFL Barwon have conducted Football and Netball finals for Geelong Junior Football League and the Bellarine Football Netball League over the past 20 years, and in recent years for Senior Female Football Finals. The venue is a good option as it has expansive carparking and a consistently good playing surface for football. The relatively new netball facility provides an excellent venue to conduct the netball finals matches, with the ability to use the tennis courts also for warm up.
- The current facilities at Portarlington Recreation Reserve are adequate for football and netball purposes, but whilst well maintained, some of the building infrastructure is aging and in need of an update. In particular, the away team football change rooms.
- There is inadequate provision for facilities for umpires, with little to no provision to cater for female umpires.
- The venue would benefit from an extension to the veranda area to cater for inclement conditions and some form of elevation to enhance viewing.
- The coach's boxes need replacing as they are too close together and do not adequately cater for the teams' bench personnel.
- Secure perimeter fencing that would facilitate the potential to effectively monitor patron admission without the need for temporary fencing hire would also enhance the Reserve as a preferred finals venue. More sealed, designated carparking areas would also provide more carparking options for days of inclement weather.
- The social rooms and upstairs corporate area are excellent and provide a great facility to entertain official guests.

6.3 COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

The initial community engagement for the Master Plan commenced on May 13, 2020. The consultation was open for a six-week period and welcomed responses via a survey, quick poll, and interactive map. Feedback received from the community, the methods of engagement and distribution are outlined below, and the consultation summary Report appears on page 45.

Community Engagement Distribution

45	**Days of engagement**
340	**Residential dwellings contacted via mail**
	Social media posts – including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn.
	YouTube video
	Newspaper advert
	Posters at Portarlington Recreation Reserve

Engagement Methods

The City of Greater Geelong's Have Your Say page was the main platform for the community to provide feedback and ideas to contribute to the Draft Master Plan's development. The methods to collect this feedback included:

Survey	**192 responses**
Quick Poll	**191 responses**
Interactive Map	**75 comments**
Email	**6 responses**

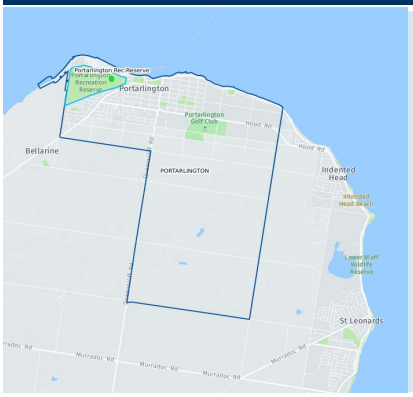
All engagement touch points aimed to collect information from responders about what they like about the Reserve presently, and what they would like to see improved into the future. The following summary provides an outline of the responses received:

User Profile

- 91% of people responding to the survey were current users of Portarlington Recreation Reserve
- 55% of these respondents were a local resident of the community, 32% were a member of a community organisation or club based at the Reserve, and 14% were visitors
- 76% of those who belonged to a community organisation or club at the reserve were affiliated with a sporting club.
- 62% of those were connected with Portarlington Football Netball Club
- 17% of those were connected with Portarlington Cricket Club
- 13% of those were connected with Bellarine Agricultural Society
- 54% of people surveyed live in Portarlington
- 24% of people live elsewhere on the Bellarine.
- Most respondents (30%) were aged 35-49
- 52% were male, 37% were female and 11% did not disclose their gender.

CONSULTATION FEEDBACK

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY REPORT



The City of Greater Geelong is inviting the community and stakeholders to help set a new vision for the Portarlington Recreation Reserve through a new Master Plan.

The current plan for the Reserve was developed in 2011 and changes since then have highlighted a need for its review. The updated Master Plan will include recommendations that consider the cultural and environmental values of the Reserve, landscape and amenity, sporting infrastructure requirements, needs of tenant clubs and groups, trail connections and community events. Engagement with the community to understand what they like, and what they would like to see improved, through the Master Plan has been undertaken. A summary of the consultation process and feedback received is provided below.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STATISTICS – 13 MAY TO 26 JUNE 2020

45 DAYS
of engagement

340
residential dwellings contacted

7000
Facebook post views

53
Facebook comments

1,105
Have Your Say website views

1
Print advert in local newspaper

39
YouTube views

243
Twitter views

36
LinkedIn reactions

4
email responses

458
interactions with the Have Your Say engagement platform

75
Social Map comments

192
Survey responses

191
Quick Poll responses

SNAPSHOT OF SUBMISSIONS

SURVEY RESPONSE PROFILE

32%
of people surveyed belong to a community organisation or club at the Reserve

54%
of people surveyed live in Portarlington

24%
of people surveyed live elsewhere on the Bellarine

AGE

30%
of people surveyed were aged 35-49

GENDER OF RESPONDENTS

52% MALE

37% FEMALE

11% did not disclose their gender

VISIT

57% of people surveyed visit the Reserve between 1 to 5 days per week

75% of people surveyed travel to the Reserve by car

PURPOSE

70%
of people surveyed feel the Reserve has a combined role providing for sport, open space, and events

Sporting venue

Open Space

Events venue

What the community loves about Portarlington Recreation Reserve

Sporting facilities	Environmental values	Open Spaces	Community events	Playground
"The community loves the football, netball, cricket and other sports played here"	*"It is a wonderful area to walk in and extends the unique vegetation of Point Richards Reserve. I love listening to the frogs when it rains"*	*"The area provides constant joy. There are always people, dogs, bikes, kites, football, and cricket being played. The Reserve provides a general sense of space and well-being"*	*"Portarlington Recreation Reserve is an amazing space for sports and events"*	*"The atmosphere is magnificent during the evenings and weekends when the Reserve is full of young kids in the playground"*
#1 most valued aspect of the Reserve in the Quick Poll was the sporting facilities	**#2** most valued aspect of the Reserve in the Quick Poll was the environmental and landscape amenity	**#3** most valued aspect of the Reserve in the Quick Poll was using the open space areas for passive recreation	**#4** most valued aspect of the Reserve in the Quick Poll was attending community events	**44%** of people surveyed are either satisfied or very satisfied with the playground

What the community likes to do at Portarlington Recreation Reserve

Play sport	Walking and Dog Walking	Attend Events	Play	Nature Appreciation
35% of survey respondents like to play sport at the Reserve whilst 23% like to watch sport	**20%** of people like to visit the Reserve to walk	**8%** of people like to attend events at the Reserve	**4%** of people like to take their children to the playground	**5%** of people like to visit the Reserve to enjoy and appreciate nature

What the community think could be improved at Portarlington Recreation Reserve



Sporting club rooms – condition and capacity

"Over the years the facilities have become tired and worn with the need to revamp them to keep up with community and safety needs"



Better trails and connections

"The walking paths throughout the Reserve are not accessible for all people. There is great potential to provide better connections to encourage more walkers and cyclists"



More accessible areas and car parking

"The amenities are not up to standard; there are not enough toilets and the car parking is ordinary. Better car parking including safe pedestrian crossings and public lighting is needed"



Increased vegetation, habitat, and landscaping

"The landscaping throughout the sports area needs improvement, as it is very bare at present"

"The passive recreation area would benefit from increased native vegetation and more trees being planted"



Quality passive open space areas

"There is certainly room for improvement to make it more appealing and inviting for continued use"



Include areas for other community activities

"Providing areas for wider community interests including activities such as BMX and community garden would get more people involved"

PERFORMANCE



36%

of survey respondents feel the Reserve is achieving its purpose well or very well



20%

of survey respondents feel OK about how well the Reserve is achieving its purpose



32%

of respondents feel the Reserve is performing poorly or very poorly



12%

of respondents did not answer this question

ISSUE	SATISFACTION RATING	IMPROVEMENT IDEA
Trails and Connections	Presently there is a lack of accessible pathway connections throughout the entire Reserve	Create a better network of trails throughout the Reserve that are compliant and suitable for people of all abilities. Create safe connections to encourage more people to use for recreational pursuits including walking, running, cycling and nature appreciation
Cars and Car Parking	39% of survey respondents were very dissatisfied or dissatisfied with the car parking throughout the Reserve	Formalise car parking and vehicle movement to assist in greater safety for pedestrians and better traffic flow
Sports Facilities	40% of people surveyed indicated that they were dissatisfied or extremely dissatisfied with the sporting club rooms, particularly the main pavilion	Consider ways to increase the capacity of the sporting club rooms to facilitate broader and more diverse participation opportunities.
Vegetation, habitat, and landscaping	36% of survey respondents indicated that there were either dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the landscaping at the Reserve	Explore opportunities to improve the landscaping and vegetation throughout the active reserve area Within the passive recreation area, explore opportunities to improve the biodiversity properties and habitat commensurate with use
Passive Open Space Areas	Passive use of the Reserve, including for non-organised activities such as walking, playing and kite flying was the third most valued attribute in the Quick Poll	Consider improving the open space areas for informal activity as well as community events
Other Community Activities	Development ideas for the Reserve within the survey included more opportunities for community activities outside of organised sport	Consider including additional and diverse activities in the Master Plan. These activities could be both active and passive in nature allow for a broader range of involvement

WHEN ASKED TO RANK THE CURRENT ISSUES AT PORTARLINGTON RECREATION RESERVE, THE FOLLOWING RESPONSES WERE IDENTIFIED, IN ORDER OF IMPORTANCE:	
1	**Facilities in poor condition**
2	**A lack of facilities where there is an established demand**
3	**Facilities no longer fit for purpose**
4	**Over capacity – facilities not keeping up with demand**
5	**A lack of vegetation and landscaping**
6	**Reserve is underutilised**
7	**Lack of trail connections**
8	**A lack of safe pedestrian access**



Image 4: Portarlington Recreation Reserve Oval 1, Events Area/Open Space

"There are some of my favourite trails through the (passive) Reserve. It is a beautiful oasis of plant and animal life"

"I enjoy walking through the Reserve and the freedom and tranquillity it provides"

"The Bellarine Agricultural Show - what a great community event - showcasing and celebrating our local farming community!"

"The current infrastructure could be upgraded while keeping the environmental values and open space requirements for community events"

"The community loves the football, netball, cricket and other sports played here"

"The venue is not fit for purpose. The facilities are very old and need an upgrade. The facilities are not disability or gender diverse accessible"

DRAFT MASTER PLAN

7.1 WHAT IS PROPOSED?

The Draft Portarlington Recreation Reserve Master Plan has considered all consultation, background information, strategic context and other drivers in its development. The Draft Plan has aimed to respond to the needs, aspirations and challenges captured to date, to provide a clear approach to enhancing Portarlington Recreation Reserve.

The Draft Plan provides a balanced approach that is in line with community expectations as well as the City's strategic direction. The Draft Plan looks to enhance the Reserve's existing features, whilst maintaining a close connection to its long history and function as a local level reserve. The Draft Plan recommends improving facilities and attributes that will make the Portarlington Recreation Reserve a more appealing place to visit, with modern facilities that enhance safety and amenity, as well as better environmental properties through tree planting and habitat creation.

The project objectives and Draft Master Plan principles have been used to create a vision and goals to guide the strategic development of the Reserve.

The following section provides an overview as well as a more detailed summary of the draft recommendations. This section begins by introducing the recommendations through the proposed Landscape Plan, followed by a summary of key recommendations and themes.

For the purposes of this report, the summary of recommendations has been broken down into individual areas to highlight the outcomes associated, particularly around key directions. An overview of these areas is provided on page 55 followed by a summary of each from page 56 onwards.

7.2 VISION AND GOALS

DRAFT MASTER PLAN VISION

Portarlington Recreation Reserve is a spacious coastal recreation reserve in a rural setting providing contemporary facilities for sport, community use and events, balanced with passive recreation areas set amongst coastal bushland.

DRAFT MASTER PLAN GOALS

Sporting & Social Infrastructure

Sporting and other social infrastructure will be redeveloped and replaced in line with the City's Social Infrastructure Policy to ensure they are compliant, inclusive, accessible, support multi use and are fit for purpose.

Social infrastructure will be designed and developed in a way that is creative, sustainable, and responsive to the character and scale of the reserve.

Social infrastructure and trail connections will be developed to improve safety, wayfinding, and encourage more engaging experiences.

Places and Community Use

Maintain the diversity of opportunities and spaces including organised sport, other community use and informal recreation to support community connections, health, wellbeing, and enjoyment of the reserve.

Environment & Amenity

The reserves amenity and environmental values will be improved providing a more inviting and richer landscape.

Cultural Heritage

The cultural heritage values of the reserve will be protected, and opportunities provided to improve awareness and understanding of the history and stories of the Reserve.

Park Management

The planning, development and management of the Reserve will be done in a holistic manner integrating all current uses and functions in consultation with the community.

New and emerging uses will be assessed according to the goals for the Reserve, local needs and the regional context to determine whether they are suitable.

Park Character

The Reserve will be managed in a way that protects the rural coastal character blending sporting and community use facilities with wide open spaces, scattered trees and areas of natural bushland explored through a winding trail network.

7.3 FUTURE CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

Portarlington Recreation Reserve is the primary home for the town's sporting and recreation activities and an important area for tourists during the holiday season. It extends across the coastal flats fringed by the Portarlington Holiday Park and Port Phillip Bay, with houses overlooking the Reserve along its southern and eastern boundaries. The active sport and recreation area is the hub of the Reserve, built around a more developed core that includes the main ovals, pavilion, netball courts, tennis courts, Guides Hall, and Agricultural Society buildings. More formal and organised parking, roads and paths provide access and movement between the key facilities. The sporting facilities are surrounded by wide open spaces that are the basis for its important role as an events destination. The loose informality of the roads, parking and trails in the area creates a relaxed atmosphere and sense of freedom. Indigenous tree plantings enhance the amenity of the open spaces, improving shade and shelter from the elements. The Reserve has a strong connection and transition between spaces with the active sport and recreation precinct blending into regenerating coastal bushland, providing a natural backdrop to the more developed pockets. This passive recreation area provides opportunities to explore wetlands, pockets of Manna Gums and coastal bushland through a web of interlinked trails. Usage of the Reserve ebbs and flows across the day, the week, and the seasons. It is a place where sporting trials, tribulations and memories are made. Events bring a burst of life to the Reserve, gathering the community together to celebrate the history, diversity and creativity of people and the town. It is also a place that provides opportunities for quiet reflection and the appreciation of nature, or a casual moment spent walking the dog.



Image 6: Current view of active recreation area



Image 7: Current view of passive recreation area

7.4 DRAFT MASTER PLAN (LANDSCAPE PLAN)



Map 8: Draft Portarlington Recreation Reserve Master Plan – Landscape Plan – image 1 of 2

EXPLANATORY NOTES

ACCESSIBILITY AND SITE CONNECTIVITY

1. Formalise and expand the car park at the main entry utilising the existing car park and gravel road alignment. Include garden bed planting, trees and lighting. Approximately 100 proposed car parking spaces. Construction of the car park could potentially occur in two stages. Include traffic calming measures/safe pedestrian crossing points.
2. Standardise informal car parking around Ron Evans Oval, utilising existing informal tracks and desire lines, to provide distinction between vehicle and pedestrian movement. Include traffic calming measures/safe pedestrian crossing points.
3. Formalise the main entry by providing a new ticket booth, landscaping and consolidating existing signage, maintaining appropriate emergency services access.
4. Provide feature landscaping and signage to pedestrian entry points into the Reserve and Passive Recreation Area. Install dog litter bins at trailheads into the Passive Recreation Area.
5. Provide pedestrian connections throughout the reserve which are DDA compliant and provide universal access.
6. Provide a pedestrian crossing and new pedestrian footpaths for safe connectivity from the Reserve's main entry to residential areas and the Holiday Park. Continue to liaise with Bellarine Bayside to provide signage connections to the Holiday Park.
7. Retain existing overflow parking north of tennis courts and consider formalising if wear and tear warrants it.
8. Further investigate the feasibility of extending Oval 2 to the south to create a larger oval.
9. Liaise with sports clubs to provide greater definition for informal parking around southern and eastern sides of Oval 2.
10. Maintain maintenance and emergency vehicle access across the site.
10. Retain existing informal vehicle access to access open space and events area.

SPORTING FACILITIES

11. Upgrade the main pavilion based around improvements to the kitchen, bar, accessible toilets, changerooms, player amenities, first aid and umpire facilities to address gender accessibility, compliance with current code requirements and enhance the functionality of the main social rooms.
12. Replace existing asphalt area with concrete spectator area between the pavilion and Ron Evans oval.
13. When required, replace the main oval fence with suitable materials that reflect the character of the reserve but are long-lasting and sustainable.
14. Consider providing new sports lighting to Oval 2 to enable it to accommodate overflow from Ron Evans Oval.
15. Provide a new shelter to Oval 2.
16. Provide new sports lighting to existing western tennis courts and make allowance for a potential sixth court if demand necessitates.
17. Provide soft netting to the north-east side of Oval 2 to prevent errant balls from entering vegetated area.
18. Consider an extension to existing netball club pavilion to ensure it meets the recommended guidelines outlined by Netball Victoria for a local level facility. Extension to the end of the pavilion will likely require tree removal.
19. Provide additional 3-tier seating to the western side of the existing netball courts.
20. Consider an extension to existing tennis club pavilion to ensure that amenities are meeting modern day and accessible standards.
21. Consider fully enclosing existing cricket nets to increase safety. Consider incorporating basketball half court line marking, backboard and ring to allow multi-purpose use of the nets and to replace the informal basketball area at the existing asphalt netball courts. Consider providing a netball ring for warm-up opportunities. The enclosed facility is to meet Cricket Australia guidelines for a local level facility.
22. Consider undertaking surface improvements to the old asphalt netball courts to provide a netball warm up area.

PARK INFRASTRUCTURE AND OPEN SPACE

23. Provide new boundary fencing along Boat Road, 4th Avenue and Sproat Street to improve visual amenity while restricting vehicles and pedestrians to allocated entry points.
24. Investigate alternative solutions for water tanks north of the cricket nets.
25. Improve passive recreation opportunities by providing new picnic area and scoot track targeted at younger children. Consider providing additional play targeted at teenagers such as a bouldering wall or other suitable activity for all genders.
26. Provide a duplication of the current Agricultural Shed as a new footprint adjoining the current shed.
27. Investigate options to level the event space to create more multi-use options.
28. Retain existing cattle/horse tie up rails and replace with like for like at the end of their useful life.
29. Consider re-purposing areas of the existing asphalt netball courts into a community garden and potential bike discovery area. Re-purpose the existing building and water tanks for storage and irrigation for the community garden. Provide open space around the proposed community garden for potential future expansion if circumstances demanded it.
30. Provide additional seating around Reserve at regular intervals as indicated on this plan. Upgrade existing seats if required. Seats to have back and arm rests and be aesthetically consistent across the Reserve.
31. Retain existing loading ramp.
32. Retain existing toilet block and replace at end of useful life.

LANDSCAPING AND ENVIRONMENT

33. Provide new canopy trees which are consistent with the biodiversity of the area to provide shade, blur the boundary between the Reserve and the Passive Recreation Area, and to increase the vegetation character of the site
34. Provide low tree and shrub planting on southern boundary residential fences to improve visual amenity while also maintaining sightlines and reducing maintenance, fire hazard and likelihood of snakes. Species to be consistent with the biodiversity of the area.
35. Consider the removal of of a select number of existing cypress trees to allow for cricket net expansion.
36. Provide water sensitive urban design (WSUD) in the form of a vegetated swale to capture car park run-off and to target drainage issues that currently occur between tennis club building and the existing car park.



EXPLANATORY NOTES

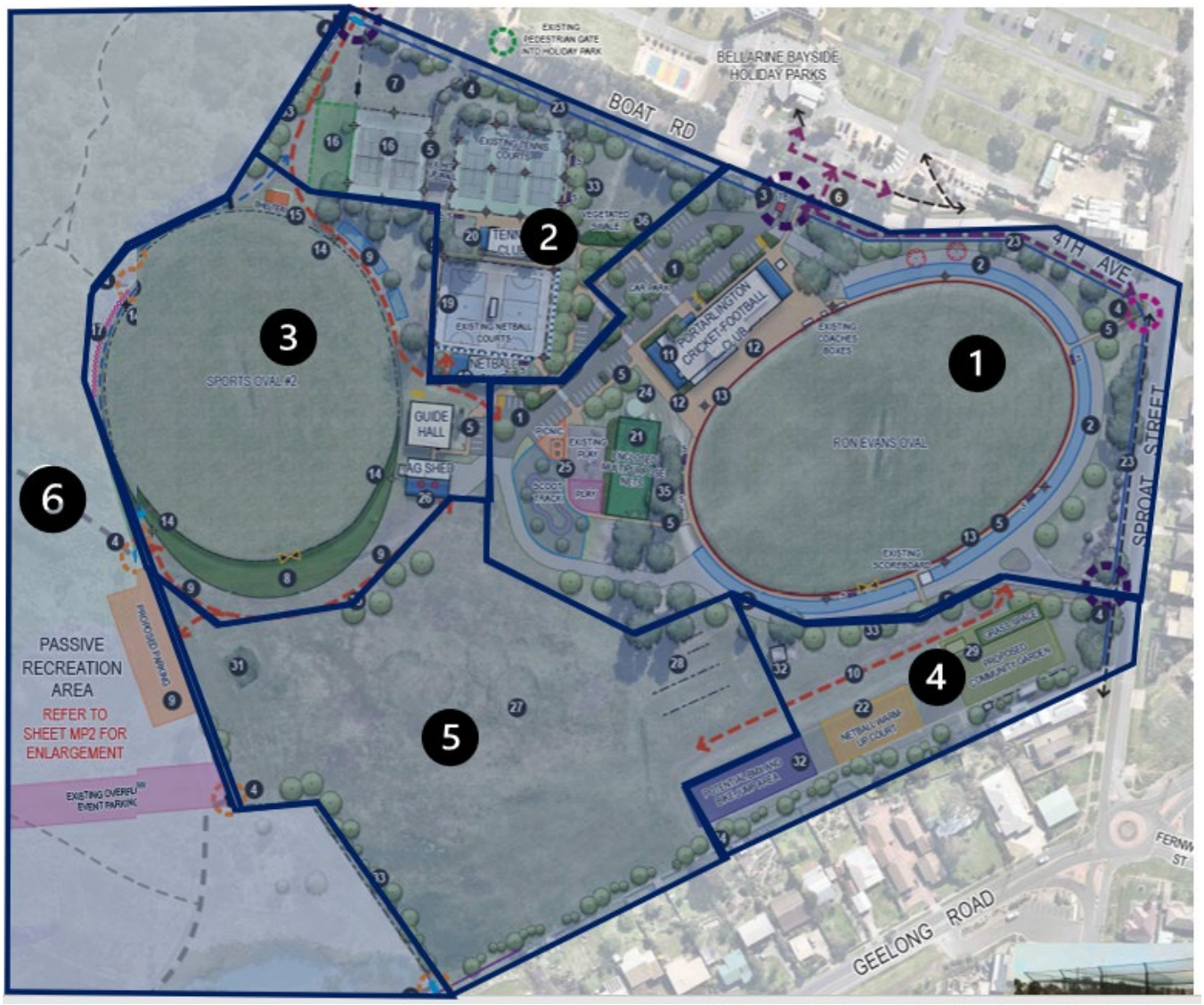
ACCESSIBILITY AND SITE CONNECTIVITY

- **A** Liaise with Bellarine Bayside to improve fire and maintenance access into the Reserve from Traum Street. Investigate the steepness of Traum Street and the viability of providing pedestrian access into the Reserve including a viewing platform and fencing on the north side of the path to stop dogs entering Point Richards Reserve
- **B** Work in partnership with Bellarine Bayside to improve fire access into the western side of the Passive Recreation Area from Point Richards Reserve.
- **C** Provide maintenance and fire access along southern boundary including gated access into the Active Sport and Recreation Area. Coordinate with the proposed potential wetland works and location of stormwater outlets.
- **D** Consolidate existing trails for pedestrians and cyclists. Primary trails to potentially be gravelled for shared fire, maintenance and pedestrian use. Secondary trails to largely remain as grass tracks.
- **E** Provide pedestrian stair access to the Reserve from Welfare Street.
- **F** Continue to liaise with Bellarine Bayside to provide improved and consistent signage and connections to Point Richards Flora and Fauna Reserve.
- **G** Provide signage, rubbish bins and dog litter bins at access points into the Passive Recreation Area. Signage to depict ways to sustainably explore the precinct.
- **H** Investigate establishing a system of sediment ponds and deeper wetland pools at the southern end of the Reserve to improve stormwater quality management, biodiversity values and expand habitat for the Growling Grass Frog and other threatened fauna. Stormwater outlets entering the Reserve from adjoining residential areas to have gross pollutant treatment traps.
- **I** Continue to maintain and improve environmental conditions within the Passive Recreation Area in line with recommendations from the Portarlington Recreation Reserve Environmental Report October 2020.
- **J** Investigate providing a boardwalk over new wetland area to provide recreational and educational opportunities as well as a potential connection to Welfare Street and residential areas.
- **K** Create a new parking area for access to the Passive Recreation Area that also functions as event parking.
- **L** Set aside the area marked within the Passive Recreation Area for temporary event parking. Permit conditions will apply. Encourage regeneration of indigenous vegetation west of this area along the former gallop track.
- **M** Develop interpretative signage regarding flora and fauna values at the Reserve in consultation with the Bellarine Bayside Committee. Provide interpretative signage and seating at key locations in the Passive Recreation Area which depict the various Ecological Vegetation Classes.

Map 9: Draft Portarlington Recreation Reserve Master Plan – Landscape Plan –image 2 of 2

7.5 SUMMARY OF DRAFT MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

For the purposes of this report, a summary of Draft Master Plan recommendations are discussed in further detail as per the six areas identified below. Due to the size and expanse of Portarlington Recreation Reserve, the following layout provides a more succinct way to summarise the recommendations and their associated outcomes. **It should be noted that the below areas do not constitute the priority order of the Draft Master Plan's implementation.** A recommended approach to staging and prioritisation will be considered in the Final Master Plan.

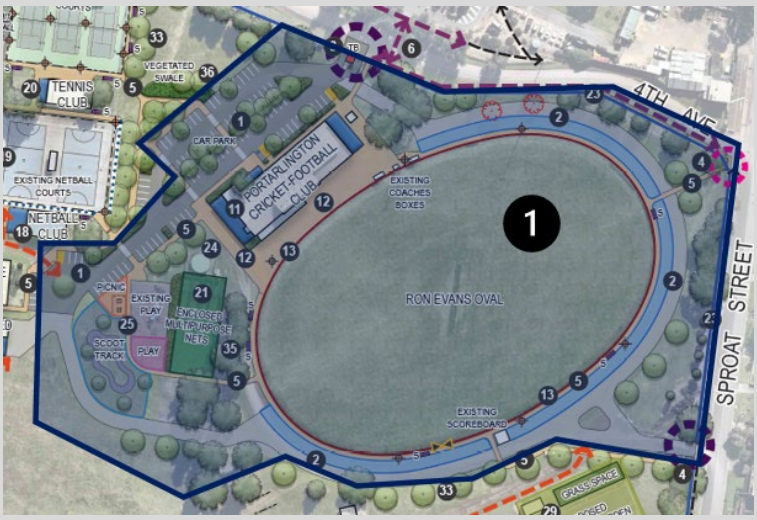


Map 10: Identification of areas used to separate and discuss the Draft Master Plan's recommendations

Within each area summary and recommendation, a key is included to provide the reader with a reference back to the Draft Master Plan Landscape Plan (see pages 53 & 54 of this Report). In addition, the theme of each recommendation is represented by an infographic. A summary of these graphics can be found below.

Sporting Infrastructure	Sporting Activities	Vehicle Movement and Car Parking	Community Activities	Open Space	Environment and Nature	Walking and Pedestrians

AREA 1



- **Main (Football/Cricket) Pavilion**
- **Oval 1**
- **Play Space**
- **Cricket Practice Nets**
- **Car Parking and Vehicles**
- **Reserve Entrances, Frontages and Pedestrians**

MAIN (FOOTBALL/CRICKET) PAVILION

A refurbishment and extension to the main pavilion is recommended to improve the core functions of the building. Whilst the pavilion has good structure and size, amendments to the player and umpire facilities is will ensure the building is consistent with modern standards. This includes the provision of all gender, universally designed, change rooms and amenities. Small improvements are also recommended for the kitchen, kiosk and foyer/entrance areas to improve functionality and accessibility. Upgrades to the internal social room toilets are also likely to be required to ensure building code requirements are being met. Consideration should also be given to providing externally accessible toilets for broader community use outside of scheduled activities.



Sample image

Landscape Plan ID	Recommendation	Key themes
11	Upgrade the main pavilion based around improvements to the kitchen, bar, accessible toilets, changerooms, player amenities, fist aid and umpire facilities to address gender accessibility, compliance with current code requirements and enhance the functionality of the main social rooms. The enhancement and/or extension to the second storey of the main pavilion may be considered however club and/or external funding must be sought.	
12	Replace existing asphalt area with concrete spectator area between the pavilion and Ron Evans (Oval 1) Oval.	

OVAL 1

Recommendations for Oval 1, also known as Ron Evans Oval, include improvements to the informal parking area around the oval's perimeter. This recommendation aims to improve pedestrian and spectator safety, as well as create efficiencies in traffic flow and vehicle movement. Improved parking areas will assist in removing the current ad-hoc flow of cars and informal tracks throughout the Reserve. It is recommended that the perimeter parking however remain unsealed to retain the character of the reserve. In addition, consideration should be given to the installation of a new oval perimeter fence to improve visual amenity and to improve condition and reduce ongoing maintenance liability.



Sample image

Landscape Plan ID	Recommendation	Key themes
2	Standardise informal car parking around Ron Evans Oval, utilising existing informal tracks and desire lines to provide distinction between vehicle and pedestrian movement. Include traffic calming measures/safe pedestrian crossing points.	
13	When required, replace the main oval fence with suitable materials that reflect the character of the reserve but are long-lasting and sustainable.	

PLAY SPACE

Providing additional supporting infrastructure to the existing play space is recommended within the Draft Master Plan to produce greater amenity and increase play offerings for a broader age range of children. Opportunities to explore additional play and active recreation components along with supporting infrastructure for park users, including parents, children and teens of all genders, will add to the broader value of this area, making it a more inviting and inclusive hub of activity. The existing playground serves the precinct well and will continue to be upgraded and maintained as per the City's cyclical programs. Toilets and amenities to service the play area are recommended to be incorporated into the design of the main pavilion and/or the extension to the netball pavilion which are both in close proximity. The play space will continue to be supported with opportunities for informal recreation and unstructured play in the adjacent open space area. There is also opportunity to extend park furniture to include suitable facilities for picnics etc.



Sample image

Landscape Plan ID	Recommendation	Key themes
25	Improve passive recreation opportunities by providing new picnic area and scoot track targeted at younger children. Consider providing additional play targeted at teenagers such as a bouldering wall or other suitable activity for all genders.	

CRICKET PRACTICE NETS

The Draft Master Plan recommends the redevelopment of the existing cricket nets and the construction of a new, safer and multi-purpose facility that can facilitate cricket training as well other activities such as basketball, and/or as a warm up area for netball. Servicing a range of active pursuits including organised sport and information community participation will also complement the proposed play area. It is recommended that the new facility is enclosed to enhance the safety of Reserve users, and that it is constructed to the recommendations for sport for a local level venue. Investigating alternate solutions for water tanks presently located to the north of the cricket nets may improve sightlines and visual amenity of this area.



Sample image

Landscape Plan ID	Recommendation	Key themes
21	Consider fully enclosing existing cricket nets to increase safety. Consider incorporating basketball half court line marking, backboard, and ring to allow multi-purpose use of the nets and to replace the informal basketball area at the existing asphalt netball courts. Consider providing a netball ring for warm-up opportunities. The enclosed facility is to meet Cricket Australia guidelines for a local level facility.	

CAR PARKING AND VEHICLES

Widespread improvements to car parking and vehicle movement are recommended throughout the Draft Master Plan, including within Area 1. These recommendations aim to improve traffic flow and organisation of vehicle management throughout the Reserve and maintain access for emergency vehicles. The draft recommendations aim to keep vehicles on designated roads and car parks, and to improve the safety of all pedestrians as well as encourage more active modes of travel. The Draft Master Plan has proposed accomodating the majority of cars through a centralised car park that would replace the existing, ad-hoc car park behind the main pavilion. Up to 100 car parking spaces are proposed which would service the main pavilion, tennis facilities, netball facilities, Oval 2, Guide Hall, Agricutural Society Shed and play space. The car park will have the ability to be constructed in a staged fashion where necessary.


Sample image

Landscape Plan ID	Recommendation	Key themes
1	Formalise and expand the car park at the main entry utilising the existing car park and gravel road alignment. Include garden bed planting, trees and lighting. Approximately 100 proposed car parking spaces. Construction of the car park could potentially occur in two stages. Include traffic calming measures/safe pedestrian crossing points.	

RESERVE ENTRANCES, FRONTAGES AND PEDESTRIANS

Improved entrances to the Reserve will contribute to its overall visual appeal, and improve sightlines for vehicles as well as better management of pedestrians. This includes during regular, daily use of the Reserve as well as during levels of increased visitation, such as annual events, holiday periods and football and cricket finals.

The use of signage and separating pedestrian and vehicles where appropriate will contribute to safer outcomes for all users. Improvements to pathways that are compliant with guidelines for people of all abilities are also essential. The provision of enhanced crossing points, connections to neighbouring residential areas and the Bellarine Bayside Holiday Park will provide a safer and more enjoyable experience for all.


Sample image

The main entrance off Boat Road is recommended to be improved both functionally and visually and will be the main entry point to the Reserve and car park. Secondary entrances from Boat Road are recommended to be utilised to service the proposed informal car park for the tennis club in the event that overflow parking is required.

Emergency vehicle access points will be available to service all areas from the main entrance from Boat Road, with all facilities accessible from this entry point.

Maintenance vehicle access points will remain accessible via the main entrance for the active Reserve precinct, as well as via the current access point on Boat Road into the passive recreation area.

Landscape Plan ID	Recommendation	Key themes
3	Formalise the main entry by providing a new ticket booth, landscaping and consolidating existing signage and improving emergency services access.	
4	Provide feature landscaping and signage to pedestrian entry points into the Reserve and into the passive recreation area. Install dog litter bins at trailheads into passive recreation area.	
5	Provide pedestrian connections throughout the Reserve which are DDA compliant and provide universal access.	
6	Provide a pedestrian crossing and new pedestrian footpaths for safe connectivity from the Reserve's main entry to residential areas and the Holiday Park. Continue to liaise with Bellarine Bayside to provide signage and connections to the Holiday Park.	
23	Provide new boundary fencing along Boat Road, 4th Avenue and Sproat Street to improve visual amenity while restricting vehicles and pedestrians to allocated entry points.	

AREA 2



- **Tennis Courts**
- **Tennis Club Rooms**
- **Netball Club Rooms**
- **Open Space Area (east of tennis courts)**

TENNIS COURTS

The three existing tennis courts directly north of the tennis club rooms are currently well provisioned with good quality surface, fencing and sports lighting to competition standard. There is opportunity however for the remaining two tennis courts to the west to undertake surface and lighting upgrades to provide greater programming opportunities. There is also opportunity to identify a space for a sixth tennis court to the western bank of the existing courts to facilitate future participation if demand necessitates.



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Landscape Plan ID	Recommendation	Key themes
16	Provide new sports lighting to existing western tennis courts and make allowance for a potential sixth court if demand necessitates.	
7	Retain existing overflow parking north of tennis courts and consider formalising if wear and tear warrants.	

TENNIS CLUB ROOMS

A small extension to the existing tennis club rooms is recommended to ensure amenities meet accessible, modern standards that can be universally accessed. The proposed extension recommends the demolition of the existing amenities block attached to the tennis club rooms, and the construction of new, compliant facilities. Additional access points via the proposed pathway network will provide better access and egress into the facility.



Landscape Plan ID	Recommendation	Key themes
20	Consider extension to existing tennis club pavilion to ensure that amenities are meeting modern day and accessible standards.	

NETBALL CLUB ROOMS

Whilst netball is well provisioned with new, modern courts and club rooms, there is a small deficiency in the size of the change facility. The current rooms are slightly undersized in accordance with Netball Victoria facility guidelines for local level venues. A small extension, utilising a similar, modular construction as the existing building, would see the facility present greater functionality and flexibility. This includes providing dedicated umpire change rooms and improved storage areas. Extension to the facility can be made to the east or west of the existing building and should consider the provision of an externally accessible toilet to support Oval 2 and the play space. In addition, the provision of a formalised spectator area for netball, by way of 3-tiered seating, would enhance amenity for supporters.



Landscape Plan ID	Recommendation	Key themes
18	Consider extension to existing netball club pavilion to ensure it meets the recommended guidelines outlined by Netball Victoria for a local level facility. Extension to the end of the pavilion will likely require tree removal.	
19	Provide additional 3-tier seating to the western side of the exiting netball courts.	

OPEN SPACE AREA (EAST OF TENNIS COURTS)

The open space/grassed area between the existing tennis courts and main entrance is utilised during the Bellarine Agricultural Show for display purposes. The area is also important to the Reserve's drainage function, capturing run off from the car park and both tennis and netball courts. To improve its function, and to maintain the area's importance for events, the Draft Master Plan recommends the incorporation of a vegetated swale drain. The swale would consider an appropriate location that does not encroach onto the area utilised for the Show and utilise water sensitive design principles to minimalise environmental impacts.



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Landscape Plan ID	Recommendation	Key themes
36	Provide water sensitive urban design (WSUD) in the form of a vegetated swale to capture car park run-off and to target drainage issues that currently occur between tennis club building and the existing car park.	

AREA 3



- **Oval 2 and surrounds**

OVAL 2 AND SURROUNDS

The Master Plan includes recommendations for this area which are focused around Oval 2. This includes consideration towards the inclusion of sports lighting on this oval. Sports lighting, commensurate with AFL guidelines for local level facilities, can provide greater capacity for training, participation and programs, particularly during the winter months. The provision of lighting however needs to be supported by a detailed analysis of future use, to demonstrate the return on potential investment (both social and financial). Furthermore, investigations into the expansion of Oval 2, particularly its length to the south of its existing boundary, could assist in further facilitation of participation should demand necessitate.

To support participation and the amenity of spectators, it is also recommended that the existing shelter on Oval 2 be replaced. It is recognised that a new, basic structure would replace the existing shelter which is nearing the end of its useful life.



Landscape Plan ID	Recommendation	Key themes
14	Consider providing new sports lighting to Oval 2 to enable it to accommodate overflow from Ron Evans Oval (i.e. Oval 1).	
15	Provide a new shelter to Oval 2.	
9	Liaise with sports clubs to provide greater definition for informal parking around southern and eastern sides of Oval 2.	
17	Provide soft netting to the north-eastern side of Oval 2 to prevent errant balls from entering the vegetated area.	
8	Further investigate the feasibility of extending Oval 2 to the south of its existing footprint to create a larger oval.	

AREA 4



- **Old netball courts and building**
- **Public toilets**
- **Tree canopy and landscaping**

OLD NETBALL COURTS AND BUILDING

It is recommended that a portion of the old asphalt netball courts be transformed into a community garden that provides raised garden beds within a small plot. A small number of informal car parks should be provided as well as use of the existing utilities connections. The previous netball club rooms which are non-compliant with DDA requirements, present an opportunity to be repurposed, given they are in an ideal location to the proposed garden. The ground level of the facility, consisting of a mostly brick construction, could likely be retained for the purposes of storage for the community garden. The second level of the building should be removed so that future public access is prevented.

The remaining section of old netball courts could be considered for surface improvements to provide a space for netball warm-up. This area should be limited to the equivalent of one full size netball court only.



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In addition, a recommendation for the construction of a bike play area should be considered. This aims to provide diversity in community activities on offer at the Reserve, in a location that is well activated by the proposed community garden, netball warm up area and passive surveillance from houses along the southern boundary.

Finally, the redundant water tanks alongside the old netball courts, previously used by the CFA for training, should be consolidated and re-used (where appropriate) for water harvesting by the community garden.

Landscape Plan ID	Recommendation	Key themes
29	Consider re-purposing areas of the existing asphalt netball courts into a community garden and potential bike play area. Re-purpose the existing building and water tanks for storage and irrigation for the community garden. Provide open space around the proposed community garden for potential future expansion if circumstances demand.	
22	Consider undertaking surface improvements to the old asphalt netball courts to provide a netball warm up area.	

PUBLIC TOILETS



The existing public toilet block, located north-west of the old asphalt netball courts, is reaching the end of its useful life as it no longer meets the expectations or standards of a modern facility. It is recognised that these public toilets are utilised during events, particularly the Bellarine Agricultural Show, and anticipated to be used by the proposed community garden. Therefore, it is recommended that this facility is replaced once the asset is no longer fit for purpose.

Landscape Plan ID	Recommendation	Key themes
32	Retain existing toilet block and replace at end of useful life.	

TREE CANOPY AND LANDSCAPING



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Improving landscaping throughout the Reserve will create a better aesthetic, deliver more shade for users, and generated enhanced environmental properties. Selecting trees which are consistent with the biodiversity of the area as well as those which can connect and provide a sense of unity between the active recreation and passive recreation areas is recommended. Additional tree planting will contribute to a cooler and greener parkland and municipality, which is both a priority of the Victorian Government and the City of Greater Geelong.

Landscaping throughout the Reserve should connect to the local identity and context and be strategically placed throughout. Selecting species that are fit for purpose, can be well managed and maintained, and that do not impede on sightlines and on key activity areas throughout the Reserve is recommended.

Whilst the subject of providing additional tree canopy and landscaping is discussed within this specific area of the Reserve, it remains a common theme throughout the Draft Master Plan and should be given an equal and holistic approach to its implementation.

Landscape Plan ID	Recommendation	Key themes
33	Provide new canopy trees which are consistent with the biodiversity of the area to provide shade, blur the boundary between the Reserve and the passive recreation area, and to increase the vegetation and character of the site.	
34	Provide low tree and shrub planting on southern boundary residential fences to improve visual amenity while also maintaining sightlines and reducing maintenance, fire hazard and likelihood of snakes. Species to be consistent with the biodiversity of the area.	

AREA 5



- **Events/Open Space Area**
- **Livestock tie up rails**
- **Park furniture**

EVENTS/OPEN SPACE AREA

The existing Events/Open Space area makes the Reserve unique, providing it with the ability to host broader community events including the Bellarine Agricultural Show. Recommendations within the Draft Master Plan include expanding the existing shed utilised by the Agricultural Society, to enable greater function and utilisation.

In addition, supplementary tree canopy around the perimeter of the area that does not encroach into the programmable event space will be important. The overall retention of this open space area aligns with broader open space planning principles regarding the value of green infrastructure and offering greater non-structured recreation including activities such as kite flying, dog walking and informal play. To improve the quality of the events area, opportunities to level and fill (where appropriate) the grassed area surface will further support show activities and other future opportunities.



(Image courtesy of the Bellarine Agricultural Show)

Landscape Plan ID	Recommendation	Key themes
26	Provide a duplication of the current Agricultural Shed as a new footprint adjoining the current shed.	
27	Investigate options to level the event space to create more multi-use options.	

PARK FURNITURE

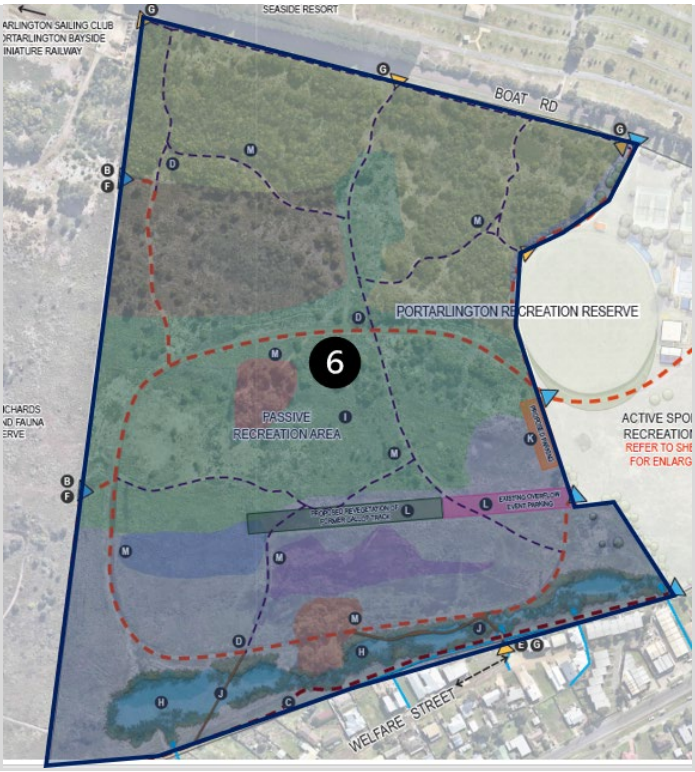
Within Area 5 and throughout the entire Reserve, the provision of park furniture, including bench seats, rubbish bins and picnic tables are recommended at strategic intervals to improve user amenity and encourage greater visitation. All park furniture should be installed with a consistent style that adheres to the City's guidelines.



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Landscape Plan ID	Recommendation	Key themes
Referenced throughout Master Plan	Provide additional seating around Reserve at regular intervals as indicated on this plan. Upgrade existing seats if required. Seats to have back and arm rests and be aesthetically consistent across the Reserve.	

AREA 6



- **Passive recreation area**

PASSIVE RECREATION AREA



The whole of the passive recreation area has significant value as a large patch of native vegetation that is limited across the Bellarine Peninsula. The area varies in its condition, however as a whole it holds significant environmental value through the combination of depleted EVC's, rare and threatened species, wetland values and habitat. Legislation and policy require that the area is currently managed for those values, which is consistent with the City's Environment Strategy.

Assessment process

Should there be an identified need to remove native vegetation in this area for another purpose, the proponent (the City or a person with consent from the City) will need to apply for a Planning Permit under Clause 52.17 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987. In addition, any proposal may also trigger the need to apply for a permit under the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988 and also be referred to the Commonwealth to assess if plans significantly impact on matters of national significance under the EPBC Act 1999.

Assessment of need

As the land manager, the City's obligations are to establish a need and find alternatives for the use or development that avoid impacts to native vegetation in line with the objectives of the Native Vegetation Management Framework.

An assessment of the existing facilities, provision standards, benchmarking, changes in population and current and future demand indicate that the existing provision of sporting infrastructure at Portarlington Recreation Reserve is largely sufficient to meet future need. The assessment indicates that any new infrastructure for active sport can be met within the active sport and recreation precinct. A range of other recreation opportunities can be undertaken in the passive recreation area including walking, dog walking, running, trail running, cycling, nature appreciation and bird watching.

Page 2 of the Draft Master Plan – Landscape Plan (see page 54) outlines the recommendations for the passive recreation area. As an expansive precinct, this area offers ample opportunity to improve the biodiversity and environmental properties of the Reserve, whilst creating an enhanced visitor experience, and encouraging more activities and recreational pursuits. The Draft Master Plan has acknowledged the importance of balancing community access and use of the area for activities including overflow parking, in conjunction with protecting the vast environmental values of the area.

Accessibility and Site Connectivity

An improved and consolidated trail network, including wayfinding and interpretative signage will attract and enhance the local community's connection with the area whilst providing greater protection to the areas under greatest threat.

Improved pedestrian access via Traum and Welfare Streets, will promote more foot traffic and active modes of off-road travel, including recreational cycling. Connecting trails aim to improve the interface with Point Richards Flora & Fauna Reserve, the active sporting and recreation area and surrounding residential areas. It is recommended that a variety of made and unmade trails be incorporated to encourage recreation and active travel, as well as offer passive experiences and to deter users from creating informal tracks through vegetated areas.

The Draft Master Plan recommends retaining a large portion of the existing overflow parking area, also known as the 'old gallop track', as well as establishing an additional parking area on the fence line that borders the open space/events area. This recommendation aims to provide better connection and proximity for events, whilst minimising the environmental impact on the passive recreation area.

The Draft Master Plan does not make any recommendation for the re-opening of former horse trails following consultation with stakeholders and the recommendations within the Portarlington Recreation Reserve Master Plan Environmental Report (2020).

Landscape Plan ID	Recommendation	Key themes
D	Consolidate existing trails for pedestrians and cyclists. Primary trails to be potentially graveled for shared fire, maintenance, pedestrian and cyclist use. Secondary trails to largely remain as grass track for pedestrian and cyclist use only.	
E	Provide pedestrian stair access to the Reserve from Welfare Street	
F	Continue to liaise with Bellarine Bayside to provide improved and consistent signage connections to Point Richards Reserve.	
G	Provide signage, rubbish bins and dog litter bins at access points into the passive recreation area. Signage to depict ways to sustainably explore the precinct.	
J	Investigate providing a boardwalk over new wetland area to provide recreational and educational opportunities as well as a potential connection to Welfare Street and residential areas	
K	Create a parking area for access to the passive recreation area that also functions as event parking.	
L	Set aside the area marked within the passive recreation area for temporary event parking. Permit conditions will apply. Encourage regeneration of indigenous vegetation west of this area along the former gallop track.	
M	Develop interpretative signage regarding flora and fauna values at the Reserve in consultation with the Bellarine Bayside Committee. Provide interpretative signage and seating at key locations in the passive recreation area which depict the various Ecological Vegetation Classes.	

Weed, Environment and Biodiversity Management

The Draft Portarlington Recreation Reserve Works Plan (2016) and the Portarlington Recreation Reserve Master Plan Environmental Report (2020) remain important reference points and guiding documents for the area, particularly in regard to the management of existing vegetation communities, weeds and flora and fauna. Within the passive recreation area, there are environmental and ecological values of varying degree, which presents opportunities to improve condition and quality as well as enhance education and knowledge of the importance of the area to the community.

Broad scale weed control to address specific weed threats in areas identified as having high environmental properties will continue to be an ongoing management priority. Encouraging the regeneration of highly disturbed areas, such as the western portion of the 'old gallop track' with indigenous species is recommended. Targeted revegetation and indigenous tree planting within the area, in partnerships with local community groups, is also recommended to encourage regeneration and improve value of the area.

Surveying, monitoring and evaluating flora and fauna changes as a result of management activities will create a measure of success, as well as a continued focus on identifying opportunities for improvement over the life of the Master Plan.

The establishment of sediment ponds and deeper wetland pools at the southern end of the area aims to create and expand habitat whilst providing drainage solutions and improving stormwater management and quality. Including pollutant traps within the future design of the wetlands will assist in preventing stormwater pollution from entering the waterway. The establishment of a boardwalk area across the wetland area which connects to proposed pedestrian connection points to residential areas is also recommended.

Landscape Plan ID	Recommendation	Key themes
H	Investigate establishing a system of sediment ponds and deeper wetland pools at the southern end of the Reserve to improve stormwater quality management, biodiversity values and expand habitat for the Growling Grass Frog and other threatened fauna. Stormwater outlets entering the Reserve from adjoining residential areas to have gross pollutant treatment traps.	

Collaborative Management

Draft recommendations include continuing to liaise with adjacent land managers, Bellarine Bayside Foreshore Committee, in collaborative management of both the passive recreation area and the Point Richards Flora & Fauna Reserve. Recommendations to improve connectivity between the two sites will increase the value of the two land parcels as well as ensure access for maintenance and emergency vehicles remains.

Landscape Plan ID	Recommendation	Key themes
A	Liaise with Bellarine Bayside to improve fire and maintenance access into the Reserve from Traum Street. Investigate the steepness of Traum Street. Investigate the steepness of Traum Street and the viability of providing pedestrian access into the Reserve including a viewing platform and fencing on the north side of the path to stop dogs entering Point Richards Reserve.	
B	Work in partnership with Bellarine Bayside to improve fire access into the western side of the passive recreation area from Point Richards Reserve.	
C	Provide maintenance and fire access along southern boundary including gated access into the active sport and recreation area. Coordinate with the proposed potential wetland works and location of stormwater outlets. Work closely with traditional owners in the implementation management of the reserve.	
I	Continue to maintain and improve environmental conditions within the passive recreation area in line with recommendations for the Portarlington Recreation Reserve Environmental Report October 2020.	

NEXT STEPS

8.1 NEXT STEPS

The following process outlines the next steps to be undertaken in progressing the Portarlington Recreation Reserve Master Plan.

TASKS	DATES
Public Exhibition of Draft Master Plan	July-August 2021
Review of community feedback and preparation of Final Master Plan	August-September 2021
Endorsement of the Final Master Plan by the PCG, PWG and PRG	October 2021
Endorsement of Final Master Plan by Council	October-November 2021

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Portarlington Recreation Reserve

Ecological assessment to inform Master Plan

Prepared for the

City of Greater Geelong

by an Independent Consultant.

October 2020

Contents

CONTENTS 2
INTRODUCTION 4
STUDY AREA 4
METHODOLOGY 5
TAXONOMY 5
LITERATURE AND DATABASE REVIEW 5
STRATEGIC CONTEXT AND PREVIOUS STUDIES 5
FIELD SURVEY 7
DEFINING SIGNIFICANCE 7
RESULTS 8
ECOLOGICAL VEGETATION CLASS 8
VEGETATION DESCRIPTION 8
BROAD VEGETATION COMMUNITIES 9
Area 1 – Golden Wattle dominated Woodland *9*
Area 2 - Lightwood dominated Woodland *10*
Area 3 - Spiny Mat-rush dominated open sedge/grassland. *11*
Area 4 - Common Reed dominated wetland *12*
Area 5 - Brackish Sedge Wetland *13*
Area 6 - Manna Gum dominated woodland *14*
Area 7 – Highly disturbed areas *15*
FLORA SIGNIFICANCE 17
FAUNA SIGNIFICANCE 17
OVERALL SIGNIFICANCE 18
4 RISKS TO VALUES 19
EVALUATION: 22
RECOMMENDATIONS 23
WEED MANAGEMENT 23
BIODIVERSITY MANAGEMENT 23
COLLABORATIVE MANAGEMENT 24
WATER AND WETLAND MANAGEMENT 24
CONNECTING THE COMMUNITY TO NATURE 24
APPENDIX 1 - ASSESSING CONSERVATION SIGNIFICANCE 26
APPENDIX 2 INDIGENOUS PLANT SPECIES RECORDED JULY 14 2020 AND CONSERVATION SIGNIFICANCE 27
APPENDIX 3 EXOTIC PLANT SPECIES RECORDED JULY 14 2020, LIFE FORM AND THREAT LEVEL 29
REFERENCES 32
PLATES 1-6 VEGETATION EXISTING CONDITIONS 33

Disclaimer

Although Mark Trengove Ecological Services have taken all the necessary steps to ensure that an accurate document has been prepared, no liability is accepted for any damages or loss incurred as a result of reliance placed upon the report or its contents.

Introduction

This report was commissioned by Inside Edge on behalf of the City of Greater Geelong (CoGG) to provide an assessment of the current conservation significance of the indigenous vegetation of the Portarlington Recreation Reserve.

Project objectives:

- Collate all known environmental values in the reserve and provide an indication of the significance of those values.
- Identify other potential values based on EVC and habitat that could potentially exist.
- Discuss the overall strategic significance of the reserve from a landscape and bioregional perspective highlighting the relationship and connectedness with the Point Richards flora and fauna reserve and foreshore.
- Discuss the collective size that block creates when combined with Point Richards and the relevance of that for the Bellarine, referencing other strategic biodiversity strategies and distinctive landscape recognition.
- Discuss changes in condition over last 10 years.
- Identify key threats to the values such as weeds (including weeds of national significance), pest animals, disturbance, fire and dogs.

Study Area

Portarlington Recreation Reserve (38.5 ha) is a City of Greater Geelong managed Reserve located to the east of the Point Richards Flora and Fauna Reserve (Figure 1) at Portarlington. The subject of this assessment is the western area of the Reserve (approximately 25 ha), specifically the area that is comprised in the main of native vegetation (highlighted in yellow).



Figure 1. Study area location.

Methodology

The project involved a review of relevant data and literature and a single site field survey to understand the values and significance of the area.

Taxonomy

Scientific names for plants follow the Flora of Victoria (RBG website). Common names for plants follow the Flora of Victoria Vols 2-4 (Walsh and Entwisle 1994-1999).

Literature and Database Review

Relevant literature, online resources and databases were reviewed to provide an up to date assessment of ecological values associated with the study area and surrounds, including:

- The Victorian Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) NVIM tool (DELWP website ii) for:
    - Modelled data for remnant vegetation patches and habitat for rare or threatened species and
    - the extent of historic and current Ecological Vegetation Classes (EVC)s.
- The Victorian Biodiversity Atlas (VBA) (DELWP website iii) for previously documented flora and fauna records within the project locality (to approximately 10 kilometres of the study area).
- Aerial photography of the study area (Google maps).

Strategic context and previous studies

The City's Environment Strategy 2022-2030 guides planning, decision-making and actions that aim to improve the health of the local environment, reduce the Cities environmental footprint and protect the lifestyle the community enjoys. The strategy and supporting action plan have been informed by local and international environmental trends, and by the knowledge and ideas of the community and regional stakeholders.

One of the 5 goals is to:

- Protect, enhance and restore our region's biodiversity.

As part of the strategy, one of the key targets is to:

- Establish conservation protection for all remnant biodiversity patches larger than 10 hectares by 2025.

Key actions of the strategy that are relevant to this report include:

- Review and update the biodiversity strategy
- Ensuring planning controls provide strong protection for biodiversity
- Undertake assessments to identify, protect and manage existing biodiversity values.

This assessment and report on the environmental values of the Portarlington Recreation Reserve will directly contribute to the overall objectives of these strategies.

The City of Greater Geelong prepared a biodiversity strategy in 2003 which highlighted that 'Land use impacts, predominantly for agriculture and more recently industrialisation and urbanisation, have reduced the pre-European biodiversity of the region to a fraction of that which formerly existed. It is conservatively estimated that about only 5% of former pre-European indigenous vegetation exists in the City of Greater Geelong and that which remains is often severely degraded'.

The 2003 biodiversity strategy identified several strategic objectives and a hierarchy of conservation assets. The study area within the Portarlington Recreation Reserve aligns with a Secondary Biodiversity Conservation Area, recognizing the role that parks and open space play in conserving a paucity of biodiversity assets. The reserve has been mapped as a

biodiversity site within a primary biodiversity zone in figure 2.0 that highlights the lack of remnant vegetation on the Bellarine Peninsula and the significant role the reserve can play.



Figure 2.0 – Biodiversity map East

In 2018 the Victorian Government passed legislation to recognise and protect the states distinctive areas and landscapes. This was done through the Planning and Environment Amendment Act (Distinctive Areas and Landscapes) Act 2018. The Bellarine Peninsula was identified as a Distinctive Area landscape to protect the environment, landscape and lifestyle of the area. The department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning is developing a Statement of Planning Policy to help identify the measures to implement the legislation.

Other previous studies undertaken for his reserve and the adjacent Flora and Fauna Reserve include the following:

- Bellarine Bayside Vegetation Management Plan (Mark Trengove Ecological Services 2015).
- Fire Management Plan Point Richards Flora and Fauna Reserve and Portarlington Recreation Reserve (Peter Moulton Western Ecological Consultants and Mark Trengove Ecological Services 2005).

- Point Richards Flora and Fauna Reserve and Portarlington Recreation Reserve Vegetation Communities Plan (Thompson Birrell Landscape Design and Mark Trengove Ecological Services 2004).
- The City of Greater Geelong Biodiversity Management Plan (Ecology Australia 2001) assessed the study area as having State conservation significance for the large population of Austral Crane's-bill and for the tree form of Silver Banksia. It appears the Silver Banksia is no longer extant in the Reserve.

Field Survey

The site was inspected on foot on the 14th of July 2020. The entire site was traversed. Records were made of all indigenous vascular plant species. Records were made of the dominant exotic vascular plant species. The location of native vegetation communities was mapped. Native vegetation communities were photographed.

Defining Significance

A number of criteria are applied in order to assess the significance of flora species and vegetation communities. The definition of the criteria is detailed in Appendix 1.

Results

Ecological Vegetation Class

Ecological Vegetation Classes (EVCs) are the primary level of classification of vegetation communities within Victoria. An EVC contains one or more plant (floristic) community and represents a grouping of vegetation communities with broadly similar ecological attributes. Classification of EVCs in this report follows Oates and Taranto (2001).

The pre-1750 EVC mapping of the study area undertaken by Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) (DELWP website iii) indicates that the study area and immediate surrounds were comprised of the following EVCs:

- EVC 3 Damp Sands Herb-rich Woodland.

This assessment finds that the study area is comprised of partially intact to relatively intact native vegetation that accords with the EVC 3 Damp Sands Herb-rich Woodland, EVC 821 Tall Marsh and EVC 891 Plains Brackish Sedge Wetland.

Each EVC has a determined bioregional conservation significance (DSE Website iii). The bioregional conservation status of the extant EVCs is provided as follows in Table 1.

Table 1 EVCs recorded for the study area and Bioregional Conservation Significance

EVC	BCS (Otway Plain)
3 Damp Sands Herb-rich Woodland	Vulnerable
821 Tall Marsh	Vulnerable
891 Plains Brackish Sedge Wetland	Vulnerable

Vegetation Description

The vegetation of the conservation area mostly consists of a continuous area of relatively intact vegetation that conforms to EVC 3 Damp Sands Herb-rich Woodland within the northern and central areas.

The Northern area, subjected to an ecological/fuel reduction burn in (Dec 2007) is dominated by now mature Golden Wattle with a relatively intact understorey dominated by Spiny Mat-rush.

The central area is dominated by mature Lightwood with a relatively intact understorey dominated by Spiny Mat-rush. Further south the central area is dominated by more open Spiny Mat-rush dominated vegetation with occasional trees including one population of Coast Manna Gum.

To the south are areas of more disturbed areas dominated by exotic plant species as well as damper areas dominated by Common Reed (EVC 821 Tall Marsh) and sedges and herbs (EVC 891 Plains Brackish Sedge Wetland) as well as one population of Coast Manna Gum.

Evident within the central sector is the extensive amount of weed management that has been undertaken (in particular removal of the woody Flax-leaf Broom [as is also the case in the Flora and Fauna Reserve] and the Kikuyu that was planted in association with the previous horse tracks) as well are revegetation and rationalization of the track network in keeping with the CoGG Works Plan. These works have led to an increase in vegetation quality.

Refer to Figure 2 for the distribution of extant vegetation communities.

Broad Vegetation Communities

Area 1 – Golden Wattle dominated Woodland

Description	Image
This area is characterised by relatively intact native vegetation with a canopy of Golden Wattle of similar age and is in the best condition overall. It is likely that an ecological and fuel reduction burn undertaken in the reserve circa 2007 stimulated the seedbank. There is no eucalypt tree canopy cover but there is quite a diverse and intact understorey. This area has previously been infested with Flax-leaf Broom but an active control strategy over recent years has removed most of those woody weeds. Some remain along with other environmental weeds such as Sallow Wattle and a mixture of grassy weeds along the more disturbed track edges. **The area is rated as in Good condition**	 

Key recommendations:

- Monitor regeneration and continue weed management.
- Continue the control of woody weeds, particularly the Flax-leaf Broom.
- Focus on regeneration of areas where woody weeds have been removed.
- Address Sallow Wattle as significant weed.
- Re-introduce Silver Banksia.

Area 2 - Lightwood dominated Woodland

Description	Image
This area is characterised by relatively intact native vegetation with scattered Lightwoods presenting as the only canopy tree. There is no eucalypt tree canopy cover. The understorey is dominated by Spiny Mat-rush with some diversity of other native species. The lack of canopy and inter-tussock spaces means this area is slightly more disturbed. This area has previously been infested with Flax-leaf Broom but an active control strategy over recent years has removed most of those woody weeds. Some remain along with other environmental weeds such as Sallow Wattle and a mixture of grassy weeds along the more disturbed track edges. **The area is rated as in Moderate to Good condition**	 

Key recommendations:

- Monitor regeneration and continue weed management.
- Continue the control of woody weeds, particularly the Flax-leaf Broom.
- Focus on regeneration of areas where woody weeds have been removed.
- Address Sallow Wattle as significant weed.
- Re-introduce Silver Banksia.

Area 3 - Spiny Mat-rush dominated open sedge/grassland.

Description	Image
This area is largely an understorey dominated by Spiny Mat-rush, native grass tussocks and other sedges and is relatively intact and in fair to good condition. Scattered Lightwood and Golden Wattle exist, and this area surrounds a patch of Manna Gum identified as a separate area. A greater number of introduced weeds are present in this block. It represents a transition from the more highly disturbed area 7 towards area 1 and 2 where more middle storey and canopy wattles exist. Previous woody weed control has been largely successful with grassy weeds such as Kikuyu along trails also contained. **The area is rated as in Moderate condition**	 

Key recommendations:

- Monitor regeneration and continue weed management.
- Continue to control Kikuyu along former Pony trails.
- Continue the control of woody weeds, particularly the Flax-leaf Broom.
- Focus on regeneration of areas where woody weeds have been removed.
- Address Sallow Wattle as significant weed.
- Maintain as predominately open vegetation with limited woody large shrubs/trees.
- Biomass control/ use of fire/ use of herbicide

Area 4 - Common Reed dominated wetland

Description	Image
This flat and slightly low-lying area is a wetland dominated by Common Reed. It is surrounded by areas of Spiny Mat-rush dominated Sedgeland/Grassland. Although the wetland is located away from the southern edge of the reserve and the water channels dug along its edge have become dominated by weeds, it still retains soil and water characteristics suitable for this community. **The area is rated as in Poor to Moderate condition with low diversity.**	

Key recommendations:

- Monitor regeneration and continue weed management.

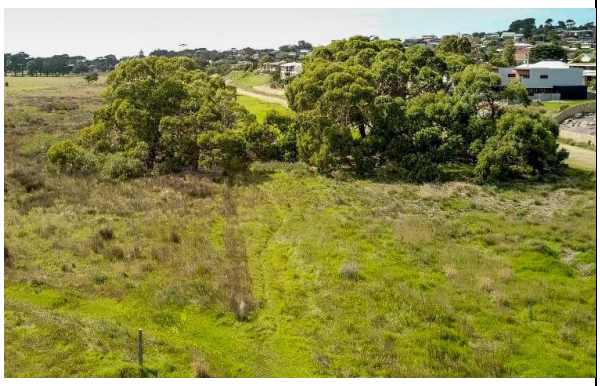
Area 5 - Brackish Sedge Wetland

Description	Image
The Brackish Sedge Wetland is a relatively degraded vegetation community located within the lower lying areas at the south of the study area. In the survey it was difficult to confirm the distribution due to high weed cover. The extent of this community is likely constrained by variations in soil conditions and drainage modifications across the southern end of the site. **The area is rated as in Poor condition with low diversity.**	

Key recommendations:

- Monitor regeneration and continue weed management.

Area 6 - Manna Gum dominated woodland

Description	Image
Manna Gums *Eucalyptus viminalis* ssp. *pryoriana* rather than Messmates are the only Eucalypt species at the site. Manna Gums are associated with EVC 3 as the canopy species in the Benchmark for the Warrnambool Plain bioregion so arguably could represent the canopy species at this site instead of Messmate. Manna Gums also occur in the adjoining Point Richards Flora and Fauna Reserve. The Manna Gums occur in two distinct and separated patches in the southern half of the precinct with relatively few individuals in each patch. They consist of a mixture of mature trees and some younger plants. The canopies are in good health except one individual. They are a striking difference, adding significant change in structure, to the vegetation throughout the rest of the precinct. There is limited diversity of indigenous understorey but also few weeds. **The area is rated as in good condition with low diversity**	 

Key recommendations:

- Monitor regeneration and continue weed management.
- Expand into revegetation area and to form link with Point Richards FFR

Area 7 – Highly disturbed areas

Description	Image
Significant sections around the southern part of the precinct are dominated by exotic species, Kikuyu which has smothered other vegetation to create virtual monocultures. In other areas a range of other exotic species dominate with pockets of native vegetation surviving. These areas are associated with higher levels of disturbance from past uses ranging from a racecourse, cross country horse track and overflow parking use. Sections have been treated through an active spraying program to reduce the weed cover and are transitioning to a Spiny Mat-rush dominated open sedge/grassland. There is also evidence of changed hydrological regimes with a drainage channel running along the southern boundary. This boundary is also the boundary with residential dwellings with increased weed risks coming from gardens. A wide swathe within this area remains as a slashed break approximately 300m long x 20m wide. A further 10m slashed break runs along the southern edge including the embankment up to the adjoining properties. **This area is rated as in poor condition with moderate diversity**	  

Key recommendations:

- Continue weed control and revegetate with indigenous woody species and Spiny Mat-rush.

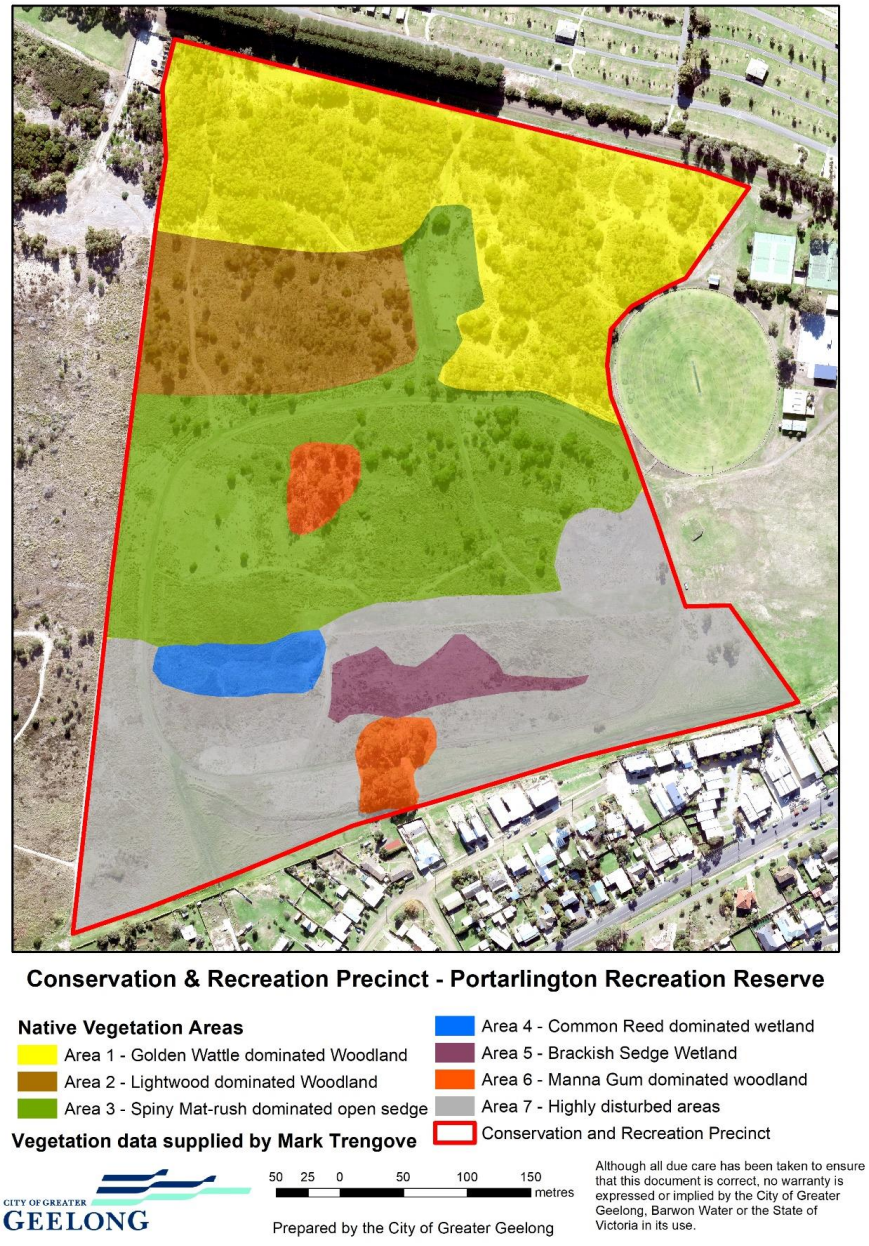


Figure 2. Study area and distribution of broad vegetation communities based upon July 2020 survey.

Flora significance

A total of 42 indigenous vascular plant species were recorded for the study area. The indigenous vascular plant species list (*refer below* Table 1) is comprised of the data collected during this survey.

All indigenous vascular plant species recorded for the study area, including botanical and common name and conservation significance are listed in Table 2. State significant species are listed in bold type. All exotic vascular plant species recorded for the study area are listed in Table 3.

Note that the Regionally significant tree form of Silver Banksia (*Banksia marginata*) is apparently no longer extant in the Reserve. This plant could be re-introduced form the nearest appropriate provenance.

Note that only one plant of the regionally (and potentially State) significant Native Sow Thistle was recorded this survey. This plant should be monitored.

While the overall condition of native vegetation may not be as high as pristine remnants that have seen minimal disturbance, there remains a diverse mix of indigenous species that will continue to provide a solid platform for restoration efforts going forward.

Fauna significance

There has only been limited survey efforts and records of fauna for the study area and no further fauna specific study was part of the scope of this project. The Victorian Biodiversity Atlas (VBA) has recorded 5 bird species using a polygon of the Recreation Reserve. This expands to 118 fauna species when the Point Richards Flora and Fauna Reserve is included. While not all 118 fauna observations were record within the Portarlington Recreation Reserve, it still provides an indication of what fauna are likely to use the reserve as habitat. The VBA shows that 105 bird species have been recorded in the vicinity of the reserve, one bat species, seven frog species, three reptile species and one small mammal.

Thirteen fauna species recorded are listed on the Department of Environment Land Water and Planning's advisory list of threatened flora and fauna. One record of the Endangered Australasian Bittern (also listed as Endangered under the EBPC Act) dates from 1976. There has been a more recent record of the Endangered Freckled Duck. The Vulnerable Grey Goshawk and Great Egret are also recorded in the area. The Endangered Growling Grass Frog (listed as Vulnerable under the EPBC Act) was recorded there in 2009.

These results highlight the existing and potential habitat that the conservation and recreation precinct provide as an extension to the Point Richards Flora and Fauna Reserve.

The Point Richards Flora and Fauna Reserve was gazetted following a recommendation in the Land Conservation Council Melbourne Study Area Final Recommendations (1977) as is was an 'area of special significance as habitat for the Short-Nosed (Common Brown) Bandicoot, in grassland'.

Although there are no known recent records for the Common Brown Bandicoot (the most recent records seem to be from the early 1980's (Laurie Conole, Grant Baverstock and Trevor Pescott *pers comm*), the sections of the study area that have native vegetation provide significant habitat for native fauna species for the following reasons:

- Relatively large habitat area.
- Relative intact native vegetation.

The study area and the Point Richards Flora and Fauna Reserve combined is assessed by Ecology Australia as having 'moderate fauna habitat significance'.

Overall Significance

The Portarlington Recreation Reserve and Point Richards Flora and Fauna Reserve combined represent the only significantly sized area of EVC 3 Damp Sands Herb-rich Woodland on the Bellarine Peninsula and within the CoGG.

The Portarlington Recreation Reserve and Point Richards Flora and Fauna Reserve combined represent the largest extant area of native terrestrial vegetation remaining on the northern Bellarine Peninsula and contributes significantly to the goals of the Bellarine Distinctive Area Landscape.

The three Ecological Vegetation Classes recorded for the study area, EVC 3 Damp Sands Herb-rich Woodland, EVC 821 Tall Marsh and EVC 891 Plains Brackish Sedge Wetland are all depleted within the Otway plain bioregion.

The City of Greater Geelong Biodiversity Management Plan (Ecology Australia 2001) assessed the study area as having State conservation significance for the large population of Austral Crane's-bill and for the tree form of Silver Banksia. Combined with the other flora, the reserve contains an important diversity of native flora species.

Whilst recognising the current fauna data is limited, the flora and vegetation communities are likely to support a range of bird species and other potential fauna with further research.

Risks to Values

To effectively protect the environmental values within the Portarlington Recreational Reserve, a risk evaluation process was undertaken to rate each risk according to the likelihood of it occurring and the potential consequences. The risk assessment assists in developing mitigation strategies and actions to protect the identified values.

This section describes the risks to the environment values and the potential consequences.

Key Risks:	Threats	Description of threat and its impacts	Rating
Loss of vegetation and habitat	Vegetation removal and trampling	Loss of vegetation can result from new infrastructure, creation of new trails, trampling of vegetation from vehicles or people.	High

Key Risks:	Threats	Description of threat	Rating
Loss of flora biodiversity and habitat	Invasion of native vegetation by 'noxious weeds'	An assessment of weed species (table 3) within the reserve found 59 species of exotic species and 3 native species that pose a threat to native vegetation. Whilst it is acknowledged that the historical EVC is significantly altered, weed species will continue to threaten both the extent of native vegetation and quality by occupying greater space as they compete with and smother native vegetation. The large variety of weed species makes this a greater challenge as the control techniques for one species may create a space for other exotic or environmental weeds to take over. Aggressive weeds such as Flax-leaf Broom and Gorse have had large populations in the past and have significant annual seed set colonising areas quickly supressing native regeneration and biodiversity. An ongoing source for weeds will come from both those areas that are more highly infested and adjoining private land where garden weeds may escape.	Extreme
	New and emerging weeds	New and emerging weeds such as Bridal Creeper and Chilean Needlegrass pose one of the largest future threats to the reserve biodiversity due in part to its smothering nature and the difficulties in treating this weed.	Extreme

	Inappropriate fire regimes causing disruption to sustainable ecosystem processes and resultant loss of biodiversity.	Fire has been part of the Australian landscape for thousands of years. With colonisation those fire regimes and purposes have significantly altered along with the change and loss of vegetation. Fire regimes need to have clear objectives with fire frequency and intensity maintained within the tolerance limits of the desired native vegetation characteristics. Inappropriate use of fire could further alter the desired vegetation diversity and structure or trigger major weed events from dormant species such as Broom, Gorse and Coast Wattle.	High
	Loss of biodiversity as a result of the spread of invasive plants native to Victoria, such as Coast Wattle (*Acacia longifolia* subsp. *sophorae*) and Sallow Wattle (*Acacia longifolia* subsp. *longifolia*), into areas outside their natural range.	Coast Wattle is recognised as a particularly invasive and aggressive coloniser of disturbed areas. It is widely distributed across the study area and potentially has a large dormant seedbank. Further disturbance and/or the use of fire could trigger major colonisation events that would need to be carefully managed if they were to be used for other objectives.	High
	Spread of *Pittosporum undulatum* in areas outside its natural distribution.	Sweet Pittosporum is like many other native plants that have expanded beyond their range initially as garden escapees. The additional challenge of this species is the allelopathic effects it has on soil and the suppression of other plants species growing under its canopy. There are relatively few plants in the reserve.	Moderate
	Fragmentation	The conservation and recreation block is quite fragmented with a high edge to core ratio. Fragmentation further reduces the ability for natural processes to occur with disturbance along edges being a source of further weed invasions and weed spread.	Moderate
	Trail use spreading weeds	The use of trails may be a source of new weeds coming in or spread of weeds along tracks further reducing biodiversity values.	Low
	Trail maintenance spreading weeds	Machinery brought into the reserve for maintenance, particularly slashing activities can be a source of weeds such as Chilean Needlgreass and potentially new weed species and or spread weeds along tracks and vegetation edges.	Low

Key Risks:	Threats	Description of threat	Rating
Wetland loss and degradation	Change in water regime, dredging, draining, filling and grazing.	Past and future changes to drainage at the reserve dry out previously wetter areas reducing natural flooding and inundation regimes changing vegetation characteristics in key EVC's. Past changes to drainage have reduced the frequency and duration of ephemeral wetland events reducing the wetland habitat for a range of bird and frog species.	High

Key Risks:	Threats	Description of threat	Rating
Loss of fauna biodiversity	Predation of native wildlife by the cat, *Felis catus*.	Cats are a highly aggressive and effective hunter of native wildlife. Although there are a small number of fauna species listed and an unknown cat population, they remain a risk to the presence or increase of fauna populations.	Moderate
	Predation of native wildlife by the introduced Red Fox *Vulpes vulpes*.	Foxes are a highly aggressive and effective hunter of native wildlife. Although there are a small number of fauna species listed and an unknown fox population, they remain a risk to the presence or increase of fauna populations. Trails increase the access to habitat reducing core areas that may afford greater protection against predation.	Moderate
	Off-lead dog disturbing or causing loss of wildlife	Dogs off-lead have the potential to reduce bird diversity and abundance through predation and disturbance. Under the current controls, dogs off-lead are not permitted, however evidence suggests this still may occur, but the frequency is uncertain. There is likely to be a higher consequence from dogs off-lead with potential bird mortality and a greater area impacted. This may also be a risk factor to other small mammals if they exist.	Moderate
	Motorbikes	Motorbikes have the potential to reduce bird diversity and abundance through disturbance with higher speed and noise.	Moderate

	Dogs on lead disturbing wildlife	Dogs on-lead have the potential to reduce bird diversity and abundance through disturbance. No data has been collected on the frequency or duration of dog walking but from the community consultation and anecdotal evidence suggests it is a common activity. The level of disturbance is unknown as no research has been undertaken on the abundance of birds, but research indicates this is a risk factor.	Low
	Walking and cycling disturbing wildlife	Walking and cycling has the potential to reduce bird diversity and abundance through disturbance. No data has been collected on the frequency or duration of walking but from the community consultation and anecdotal evidence suggests it is a common activity. The level of disturbance is unknown as no research has been undertaken on the abundance of birds, but research indicates this is a risk factor.	Low
	Impacts of climate change	Changes in climate may put further pressure on fauna through impacts on migratory species, changes in vegetation and habitat and increased risk of extreme weather events and fire. There are likely to be impacts over and above other impacts.	Low

Evaluation:

The above assessment has highlighted several key threats to the values at the reserve that pose a risk to the environmental objectives for the precinct. The past disturbance and land use have had a significant impact on the diversity and quality of values in the precinct and ongoing and future risks will continue to make this area a challenge to manage.

The relatively small size of the reserve and fragmentated nature will limit the ability for many of the natural processes to occur. In this regard the adjoining Flora and Fauna reserve plays a critical role creating a larger body of vegetation and habitat.

The biodiversity and habitat values of the reserve are important with vulnerable vegetation communities present albeit in a variety of states of regeneration and recovery. The past and ongoing impacts of weeds and changes in fire regimes have had a deleterious impact on the diversity and condition of vegetation and habitat. Weeds continue to be the major threat to vegetation in this area due to their type and abundance. The changes in vegetation have also had significant impacts on the habitat values which have limited the presence and diversity of fauna in the reserve. Recent weed control activities have however, shown the ability to have a positive impact on reducing this risk.

Further vegetation loss through removal and trampling would also reduce the values in the reserve. The exact impacts would depend on the extent of the loss and the quality of the areas being impacted but should be avoided where possible.

The exact nature and timing of changes to drainage at the reserve are somewhat unknown but a modified drainage channel exists along the southern boundary. Remnants of EVC 821 Tall Marsh and EVC 891 Plains Brackish Sedge Wetland suggest these may have been more

prominent in this southern section of the reserve but have perhaps been impacted by these changes. Further changes to water regimes and drying episodes associated with climate change may reduce the viability of the EVC's being present at the reserve. This may further impact on the habitat values for frogs using these wetter environments.

There have been few fauna records from the reserve indicating the need for more fauna surveys to be undertaken, however this could also reflect how changes in vegetation over time that have impacted their habitat. Combined with the previous disturbance, continued threats of predation from foxes and cats are likely to remain. The impacts from dog walking and other recreation activities are generally rated low, particularly in the more disturbed areas.

Recommendations

A variety of high-level recommendations are suggested here to provide guidance for operational plans to protect and enhance the environmental values of the reserve. These actions could also form part of a risk mitigation strategy to help protect environmental values from threats identified above.

Weed management

1. Take a holistic and integrated approach to weed control to create conditions that will encourage the regeneration of native vegetation and increase flora diversity starting with higher value areas and working outward to more degraded ones.
2. Continue to control weeds of National Significance including Broom and Gorse to prevent further seed spread and reduce weed seedbank with the aim of eradicating from the reserve.
3. Target emerging highly invasive weeds such as Bridal Creeper and Chilean Needlegrass to contain and eradicate from the reserve.
4. Ensure plant and equipment brought into the reserve for maintenance activities are free from weed seed to minimize the introduction of new weed species.
5. Implement more broad scale weed control as required to address specific weed threats in high value areas and contain a wide variety of weeds within disturbed areas.

Biodiversity management

6. Introduce small scale targeted revegetation activities as required of species consistent with the EVC benchmarks to supplement the natural regeneration of indigenous species.
7. Undertake further flora surveys to build on our current knowledge of floristic values and improve the resolution of EVC mapping. Further assess EVC 891 Plains Brackish Sedge Wetland to clarify the EPBC listed status in the survey work undertaken by EHP in 2016.
8. Undertake fauna surveys to improve knowledge of fauna species utilising habitat within the reserve and establish a baseline from which we can monitor future change potentially arising from management actions and climate change.
9. Implement a monitoring program to evaluate flora and fauna changes over time in response to management actions and climate change, in populations of state and regionally significant species.

10. Consolidate trails and discourage users from creating informal tracks in vegetated areas through signage and other deterrents.
11. Continue to restrict vehicle access to defined areas.

Collaborative management

12. Collaborate with the Wadawurrung Traditional Owners and use traditional knowledge of country to enhance the natural and cultural values of the site, including opportunities to carry out cultural burns.
13. Prepare a fire management plan in partnership with DELWP and the CFA. Review previous fire management plans to identity a suitable regime that promotes the desired vegetation community and reflects the ability to use fire for positive ecological outcomes and fuel management objectives including consideration of cultural burning practices.
14. Investigate opportunities for more integrated and collaborative management of values and risks across this precinct and the adjoining Flora and Fauna Reserve.
15. Chose indigenous species consistent with the EVC Benchmarks when planting in the adjoining open space areas to the east, to further enhance the biodiversity values of the reserve.
16. Investigate planting a linear corridor of indigenous vegetation through the open space area to initiate the start of a biolink into Portarlington.

Water and wetland management

17. Re-establish a wetland system along the southern end of the reserve creating conditions to enhance the EVC 821 Tall Marsh and EVC 891 Plains Brackish Sedge Wetland.
18. Install litter and pollutant traps on drains entering the reserve from adjoining residential areas and create new sediment ponds and deeper wetland pools as part of the wetland system to improve stormwater quality management and wetland habitat, in particular for the Growling Grass Frog

Connecting the community to nature

19. Improve information and interpretative signage about the values and ways to sustainably explore the precinct.
20. Improve regulatory and information signage to more clearly identify what is and is not permitted and when.
21. Encourage volunteering and citizen science to support the environmental programs in the precinct.
22. Monitor and enforce dog regulations and review if there are compliance and further impacts identified.
23. Investigate the use of boardwalks to connect new wetlands along the southern boundary with the natural wetlands to the north.
24. Improve the amenity of the reserve by meandering the straight path adjoining Boat Road.
25. Identify, in partnership with the Bellarine Agriculture Show organizers, an area for event parking in the approximate location of the former gallop track and the weedy area south/east of the gallop track and the appropriate fencing required.

26. Liaise with Bellarine Bayside to investigate improved pedestrian access through from Traum Street to the reserve and provide access at Welfare Street.

Appendix 1 - ASSESSING CONSERVATION SIGNIFICANCE

Conservation significance is assessed at a range of scales, including global, international, national, state, regional and local. Criteria used for determining the conservation significance of flora at national to local scales are presented below for botanical conservation significance.

Botanical Significance

National botanical significance applies to an area when it supports one or more of the following attributes:

a population of at least one nationally threatened plant species listed by Briggs and Leigh (1996) or plant species listed on the schedules to the Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*.

A nationally threatened ecological community listed on the schedules of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*.

State botanical significance applies to an area when it supports one or more of the following attributes:

A population of at least one plant species threatened in Victoria, as listed by Gullan et al. (1990), NRE (2000a) or more recently in the unpublished records of the Flora Information System (NRE), or on the schedules to the Victorian *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988*.

An ecological community considered threatened in Victoria through its listing on the schedules of the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988*.

Regional botanical significance applies to an area that supports one or more of the following attributes:

Supports a population of one or more regionally depleted species defined in a valid regional assessment of biodiversity (eg. Regional Native Vegetation Plan, Environment Conservation Council Report or Comprehensive Regional Assessment documents).

An ecological vegetation class that is considered endangered or vulnerable in a particular bioregion (based on Conn 1993 and the Regional Native Vegetation Plan), in which case the area is of **High Regional** significance.

An ecological vegetation class that is considered depleted in a particular bioregion (based on Conn 1993 and the Regional Native Vegetation Plan), in which case it is of **Regional** significance.

Local botanical significance applies to all remnant native vegetation that does not meet the above criteria. In much of Victoria native vegetation has been so depleted by past clearing and disturbance that all remaining vegetation must be considered to be of at least local conservation significance.

Appendix 2 Indigenous Plant Species recorded July 14 2020 and Conservation Significance

Botanical Name	Common Name	Conservation Significance
Acacia implexa	Lightwood	R
Acacia longifolia ssp *sophorae*	Coast Wattle	L (potential weed)
Acacia mearnsii	Late Black Wattle	L
Acacia melanoxylon	Blackwood	L
Acacia pycnantha	Golden Wattle	L
Acaena novea-zelandiae	Bidgee-widgee	L
Austrostipa flavescens	Coast Spear-grass	L
Bursaria spinosa	Sweet Bursaria	R
Clematis microphylla	Small-leaf Clematis	L
Convolvulus erubescens	Blushing Bindweed	L
Cotula australis	Common Cotula	L
Dianella brevicaulis	Coast Flax-lily	L
Dianella revoluta	Black-anther Flax-lily	L
Dichondra repens	Kidney Weed	L
Distichlis distichophylla	Austral Salt-grass	L
Eleocharis acuta	Common Spike-rush	L
Epilobium hirtigerum	Hairy Willow Herb	L
Eucalyptus viminalis ssp. *pryoriana*	Coast Manna Gum	R
Ficinia nodosa	Knobby Club-rush	L
Geranium solanderi var. *solanderi*	Austral Crane's-bill	S
Imperata cylindrica	Blady Grass	R
Juncus spp.	Rush	
Lepidosperma gladiatum	Coast Sword-sedge	R
Leptospermum laevigatum	Coast Tea-tree	L (potential weed)
Lobelia alata	Angled Lobelia	L
Lomandra longifolia	Spiny Mat-rush	L
Muehlenbeckia australis	Climbing Lignum	L
Myoporum insulare	Common Boobialla	L
Pelargonium australe	Austral Storks-bill	L
Phragmites australis	Common Reed	L
Poa poiformis var. *poiformis*	Coast Tussock-grass	L
Pseudognaphalium luteoalbum	Jersey Cudweed	L
Pteridium esculentum	Bracken Fern	L
Rhagodia candolleana	Seaberry Saltbush	L

Rubus parviflorus	Native Bramble	L
Schoenus nitens	Shiny Bog-rush	R
Selliera radicans	Swamp Selliera	L
Senecio biserratus	Jagged Fireweed	L
Senecio minimus	Small Groundsel	L
Solanum laciniatum	Kangaroo Apple	L
Sonchus hydrophyllis	Native Sow Thistle	R ?S
Tetragonia implexicoma	Bower Spinach	L

Conservation Significance:

L – Local

R – Regional

S – State

Appendix 3 Exotic Plant Species recorded July 14 2020, Life Form and Threat Level

Botanical Name	Common Name	Life Form	Threat	Status
Acacia longifoia ssp. longifolia (sophorae)	Sallow Wattle	MS	S	
Aira sp	Hair Grass	MTG	L	
Anagallis arvensis	Pimpernel	MH	L	
Arctotheca calendula	Capeweed	LH	M	
Asparagus asparagoides	Bridal Creeper	SC	S	WoNS, R
Avena fatua	Wild Oat	MTG	M	
Banksia integrifolia	Coast Banksia	MT	S	
Briza maxima	Large Quaking Grass	MTG	M	
Bromus catharticus	Prairie Grass	MTG	M	
Bromus diandrus	Great Brome	MTG	M	
Bromus hordeaceus ssp. *hordeaceus*	Soft Brome	MTG	M	
Cakile maritima	Sea Rocket	MH	M	
Cenchrus clandestinum	Kikuyu	MNG	S	
Centaurium erythraea	Common Centaury	SH	L	
Cerastium glomeratum	Common Chickweed	SH	L	
Chenopodium album	Fat Hen	MH	L	
Chenopodium glaucum	Glaucous Goosefoot	MH	L	
Cirsium vulgare	Spear Thistle	LH	M	R
Conyza bonariensis	Flax-leaf Fleabane	MH	M	
Conyza canadiensis	Canadian Fleabane	LH	L	
Cynodon dactylon	Couch Grass	MNG	M	
Dactylis glomeratus	Cocksfoot	MTG	S	
Ehrharta calycina	Perennial Veldt-grass	MTG	S	
Ehrharta erecta	Panic Veldt-grass	MTG	S	
Ehrharta longiflora	Annual Veldt-grass	MTG	S	
Euphorbia peplus	Petty Spurge	SH	L	
Fumaria muralis	Smoke Plant	MH	M	
Galena pubescens	Blanket Weed	MH	S	
Galium murale	Bedstraw	SH	L	
Genista linifolia	Flax-leaf Broom	LS	S	RC
Genista mospessulana	Montpelier Broom	LS	S	

Hedypnois rhagadioloides ssp. *cretica*	Cretan Hedypnois	SH	L	
Helminthotheca echioides	Bristly Ox Tongue	MH	M	
Hypocharis radicata	Flatweed	SH	M	
Lactuca serriola	Prickly Lettuce	MH	L	
Lagurus ovatus	Hare's-tail Grass	MTG	M	
Leotodon taraxacoides	Hairy Hawkbit	MH	L	
Lolium perenne	Perennial Rye-grass	MTG	M	
Malva dendromorpha	Tree Mallow	LH	M	
Medicago polymorpha	Burr Medic	SH	M	
Melilotus indicus	Sweet Melilot	MH	M	
Oxalis pes-caprae	Soursob	MH	S	
Parapholis incurva	Coast Barb-grass	MTG	M	
Phalaris aquatica	Canary Grass	LTG	S	
Pittosporum undulatum	Sweet Pittosporum	MT	S	
Plantago coronopus ssp. *coronopus*	Buck's-horn Plantain	MH	M	
Plantago lanceolata	Ribwort	MH	M	
Polycarpon tetraphyllum	Four-leaf Allseed	MH	L	
Rapistrum rugosum	Giant Mustard	LH	M	
Romulea rosea	Common Onion Grass	SH	L	
Rubus fruiticosus spp. agg.	Blackberry	LH	S	
Rumex crispus	Curled Dock	MH	M	
Solanum nigrum	Black Nightshade	MH	M	
Sonchus asper	Prickly Sow Thistle	MH	L	
Sonchus oleraceus	Common Sow Thistle	MH	L	
Sporobulus africanus	Rat-tail Grass	MTG	M	
Stellaria media	Chickweed	MH	L	
Stenotaphrum secundatum	Buffalo Grass	MNG	S	
Trifolium dubium	Clover	SH	L	
Ulex europeaus	Gorse	LS	S	RC
Vicia sativa	Common Vetch	SC	L	
Vulpia bromoides	Squirrel-tail Fescue	MTG	L	
Vulpia myoris	Fescue	MTG	L	

Life Form

LT- Large Tree, MT- Medium Tree, LS- Large Shrub, MS- Medium Shrub, SS- Small Shrub.
LH- Large Herb, MH- Medium Herb, SH- Small Herb, Gc – Cormous Geophyte, LTG- Large

Tufted Graminoid, MTG- Medium Tufted Graminoid, MNG- Medium Non-tufted Graminoid, SC- Scrambler/Climber.

Threat Level:

S – Serious

M – Medium

L – Low

Status

WoNS – Weed of National Significance.

RC – Regionally Controlled

R – Restricted (CaLP Act).

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Plates 1-6 Vegetation existing conditions



Spiny Mat-rush dominated open sedge/grassland.



Manna Gum dominated woodland with areas of Brackish Sedge Wetland in foreground.



Lightwood dominated Woodland.



Golden Wattle dominated Woodland.



Sallow Wattle weed invasion.



Native Sow-thistle.

2.4. Gender COVID-19 Impact Analysis Report

Source: **Community Life**
Director: **Robyn Stevens**

Purpose

1. To endorse the Gender COVID-19 Impact Analysis Report and the short-term action plan post pandemic recovery.

Background

2. The City of Greater Geelong responded promptly to challenges facing residents impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, by instituting several supports and funding aimed at mitigating the economic, emotional and stress impacts reported.

3. As part of the COVID-19 response package, on 21 September 2020 Council approved a $30,000 allocation to conduct research establishing local evidence of the impacts of the pandemic on women, resulting in the Gender COVID-19 Impact Analysis Research Report. The report recommendations guide immediate actions responding to the pandemic and provide direction for longer term solutions to issues exacerbated by the pandemic.

4. The research was commissioned and designed with an intersectional lens to ensure the reflection of women's different life experiences echoed cultural backgrounds, ages, abilities, economic and social status, ensuring the engagement with cis and trans-gender women as well as gender diverse people.

Key Matters

5. The Executive Summary and short term Action Plan 2021-22 attached and full research report also attached, provide an insight into the experiences of women and makes recommendations to ensure that recovery responses and future service delivery planning can be designed with a gender lens.

6. The data is qualitative and richly illustrates the complexity of assessing the extent of impact on women, such as:

    6.1 exacerbating a number of pre-existing structural and personal difficulties that women face, including gender stereotypes and gendered roles; and

    6.2 lack of affordable housing, family violence, mental illness, and isolation due to age, disability, limited English language skills, limited digital literacy or access to communication infrastructure, limited mobility or transport

7. The Gender COVID-19 Impact Analysis report recommends a range of opportunities to respond to the findings which have been incorporated into the action plan.

8. The report provides context to inform the City's gender equity work and responsibilities. The action plan provides direction for immediate and practical responses to issues raised through the research, along with longer term approaches to address the pre-existing structural difficulties which were exacerbated through the pandemic.

RESOLUTION - Item 2.4

Cr Mansfield moved, Cr Moloney seconded -

That Council:

1. **Endorses the Gender COVID-19 Impact Analysis Report and 2021–22 short term action plan; and**

2. **Notes that stakeholder and community engagement sessions will be held in August to help refine the action plan.**

Carried

Financial Sustainability

9. There are no initial financial implications in accepting the report. The inclusion of actions in any Council strategy and action plan includes the identification of resources required for implementation.

Community Engagement

10. Researchers engaged with women from across the Municipality including members of the Women in Community Life Advisory Committee (WICLAC) and women representing specific interest areas. All of who provided their time generously, openly sharing their experiences during the pandemic. There were 370 respondents to an online survey, two targeted focus groups and 14 individuals interviewed.

11. Efforts were made to identify a range of engagement tools including focus groups, an on-line survey, individual interviews and a literature review.

12. The final research report was discussed with members of the Women in Community Life Advisory Committee (WICLAC) on 18 June 2021. The Action Plan implementation will be reported at ongoing WICLAC meetings.

Social Equity and Sustainability

13. The report reflects the three social equity principles by embedding an intersectional analysis which ensures social equity is considered across all Council planning, infrastructure provision, partnerships, services and programs.

14. Research participants identified their desire to be heard by Council and included when it comes to planning and designing services, infrastructure, programs and advocacy.

15. The research was enabled as part of the City's response to the challenges for residents impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Relevant Law/Policy/Legal Implications

16. The research and associated data will help inform the City's Gender Impact Assessments and Gender Equity Action Plan being undertaken as part of planning new services, approaches, policies and programs ensuring the City is able to meet its obligations according to the Gender Equality Act 2020.

Alignment to Community Plan and Vision

17. This report aligns with Our Community Plan 2021-2025 strategic priority:

Healthy, caring and inclusive community;
High-performing council and organisation;
Strong local economy; and
Sustainable growth and environment.

18. This report aligns with the Community led 30-year Vision, “Greater Geelong: A Clever and Creative Future” community aspiration:

A fast, reliable and connected transport network;
A leader in developing and adopting technology;
A prosperous economy that supports jobs and education opportunities;
An inclusive, diverse, healthy and socially connected community;
Creative and diverse culture;
Development and implementation of sustainable solutions; and
People feel safe wherever they are.

Conflict of Interest

19. No officer involved in the preparation of this report declared a general or material conflict of interest.

Risk Assessment

20. The recommendations of this report will be considered in the implementation of the Gender Equality Act 2020.

Environmental Sustainability

21. Providing recreational space, a connection with nature and enhanced air quality have all been identified as having a positive impact on mental and physical health and wellbeing of women and gender non-binary people within this research report.

Attachments

1. Gender COVI D-19 Impact Analysis Report - Full Report [**2.4.1** - 43 pages]
2. Gender COVID 19 Impact Analysis Report - Action Plan 2021-22 [**2.4.2** - 10 pages]

PANDEMIC IMPACT ON WOMEN* IN GREATER GEELONG: A COMMUNITY RESEARCH PROJECT

FINAL REPORT

For

The City of Greater Geelong

By

Consultants

Meg Montague and Kerry Stubbings

April 2021

Table of Contents

Executive Summary ..... **i**

1. Introduction **1**

2. Methodology **1**
2.1 Literature review 2
2.2 Individual interviews 2
2.3 Focus groups 3
2.4 On-line survey 3

3. Positive and Negative Impacts of the Pandemic on Women* **5**
3.1 Employment 5
3.2 Education 6
3.3 Finances 7
3.4 Housing 8
3.5 Physical health 8
3.6 Mental health and emotional wellbeing 9
3.7 Violence, abuse and harassment at home, work and in the community 11
3.8 Home and family life 12
3.9 Community engagement and connection 13

4. Themes in Pandemic Impact for Women* and Implications for Council **16**
4.1 It's not over yet 17
4.2 The compounding effect of existing vulnerabilities and marginalisation 17
4.3 Positive impacts of the pandemic for women* 18
4.4 The mental health impact on women* 19
4.5 The exacerbation of existing structural and personal challenges faced by women* 19
4.6 The emergence of new challenges due to COVID 20
4.7 Flexible work arrangements 22

4.8 The digital divide 22
4.9 Changes in service co-ordination, collaboration and focus 22
4.10 New ways of community connection and support 23

5. Conclusion and Recommendations 24
5.1 Framework for the recommendations 24
5.2 Recommended areas for Council action 25

Appendix 1: Pandemic Research Working Group Membership 29

Appendix 2: Bibliography 30
Geelong Region 30
Victoria 30
Australia 31
International 32

Executive Summary

Introduction

This research was contracted by the City of Greater Geelong to provide a gender equity perspective on the impact of COVID and to inform the development of response and recovery strategies by exploring the impact of the pandemic on women*[1] in the Greater Geelong area. The work was undertaken by consultants Meg Montague and Kerry Stubbings with the support of the Gender Equity officer and a Pandemic Impact Working Group and carried out between December 2020 and March 2021.

A rich mix of quantitative and qualitative data were collected via a review of relevant local, Victorian, national and international literature, one to one and group discussions with women in Greater Geelong, and an on-line survey responded to by over 350 women (Table 1).

Efforts were made to ensure that the research was informed by perspectives from women of a wide range of ages, situations, backgrounds and circumstances. However, it should be noted that those who participated in the consultations and the survey do not represent a statistically randomised or stratified sample of women living in Greater Geelong. As such, the results of this research are to be considered as indicative rather than statistically definitive of women's experiences and views.

Results:

Section 3 of this report contains a detailed description of the impacts identified by the research, described within nine key areas; employment, education, finances, housing, physical health, mental health and emotional wellbeing; violence, abuse and harassment at home, and in work, study and community settings; home and family life, and community engagement and connection. The interviews, focus groups and the survey explored these nine areas in some depth and the qualitative results are described in Table 2 with illustrative quotes drawn from the written and verbal responses of women.

This rich source of qualitative material indicates that both positive and negative impacts were experienced in all areas, often presenting a view from different sides of the same coin.

Table 3 in this section, gives some quantitative data drawn from the survey responses. These data illustrate the complexity of assessing the extent of impact on women: in some cases women checked both the negative and the positive impact boxes as they experienced both; all of the nine areas were reported as having positive, negative *and* no impact; some areas stand out as attracting more negative than positive comments; some drew more positive than negative comments; and some areas were reported by the majority as having had no impact. Briefly the results are summarised below.

- The three areas of education, housing and experience of violence and abuse appear to be areas of relatively low impact with between 70% and 84% of respondents reporting "no impact for me" in these areas. It should however, be remembered that this may say more about who completed the survey rather than being a global picture of women's experience.

[1] As per the COGG definition that Women* refers to cis and trans women and gender non-binary people.

- Responses about the impact of the pandemic on women's community engagement and connection, whilst more positive than negative, were spread across the spectrum from positive (30.4%) to negative (63.8%), to no impact (21.0%).
- An almost equal proportion of women report experiencing a positive (49.3%) and negative (52.9%) impact in relation to their home and family life.
- In terms of women's financial situation, a similar proportion of women reported positive (32.9%), negative (43.6%) and no impact (31.6%) on their finances.
- Responses re the impact on women's physical health present a mixed picture with 68.4% reporting a positive impact; 31.6% a negative impact and 12.4% no impact.
- Mental health and emotional wellbeing is clearly an area of significant negative impact for women, with three quarters or 76.3% of women reporting a negative impact in this area. However, it should be noted that at the same time, just under a quarter (22.8%) experienced a positive impact on their mental health and emotional wellbeing and one tenth (11.2%) reported no impact.
- Employment also stands out as an area of significant impact, both positive and negative, for the majority of women. Comments made by survey respondents (and supported by interview and focus group responses) illustrate that women overwhelmingly endorsed the benefits (albeit mentioning many of the drawbacks) of working remotely and from home. Many women report that this has made it easier for them to manage the multiple roles they play at home, as parents and in the workforce at the same time as challenging them as they juggle these multiple roles.

Secondly, the next section of the report summarises the major themes that emerged from the research and their implications for Council (see Table 4). These include the following:

- It's not over yet: The emergency and the highly restricted phases of the pandemic appear to be over, however, this does not mean the end of impact for women - in a number of instances impact will become more evident in the time ahead. Council needs to remain mindful of this.
- The compounding effect of existing vulnerabilities and marginalisation: It is evident that there is a compounding or intersectional effect that has magnified and will prolong the impact experienced by vulnerable and already disadvantaged groups over the last year.
- Positive impacts of the pandemic for women: Women in Greater Geelong identified a number of positive impacts as did others' research elsewhere. Many of these positive impacts could be embedded or enhanced into the future. In particular it is worth noting the positive impacts described as a result of being able to work flexibly from home.
- The mental health impact on women: Whilst there have been some positive emotional wellbeing implications for women of the pandemic year, many women described their feelings of anxiety, depression, worry, stress, overload, tension, right through to complete mental health breakdown. In some cases this was a magnification of existing mental health issues, in others it was a new experience. The multiple roles women have at work and at home were described as being even more challenging as a result of the pandemic and on occasions this tipped women over from stress and tension into to more serious mental health issues.

- The exacerbation of existing structural and personal challenges faced by women: The pandemic exacerbated a number of pre-existing structural and personal difficulties that women face. These include gender stereotypes and gendered roles and expectations at home and at work, lack of affordable housing, family violence, mental illness, and isolation due to age, disability, limited English language skills, limited digital literacy or access to communication infrastructure, limited mobility or transport. For many women these factors have always had a negative impact but the pandemic brought them into focus or magnified them and highlighted the need to respond to them.
- The emergence of new challenges due to COVID: Women have also faced new challenges that were thrown up by the COVID pandemic and by the measures used to tackle the emergency such working and schooling from home, new practices at work especially in the health and care sectors, adapting businesses to new restrictions, maintaining family connection during lockdown and managing more pressurised and crowded home situations.
- Flexible work arrangements: The pandemic has highlighted both the benefits and the challenges for women of flexible work arrangements, and without recognition of the benefits for parents and carers (not just for women) and action to encourage both men and women to adopt flexible work, a continuation of remote working arrangements could result in more pressure on women to manage multiple work, parenting, caring and domestic roles.
- The digital divide: The pandemic highlighted the digital divide between those who have the skills, the infrastructure and the confidence to make use of the many (some new) means of communication and connection on line, and those who don't.
- Changes in service co-ordination, collaboration and focus: Agency co-ordination and collaboration and service provision were also impacted by the pandemic; some "pivoted" and improved, some declined, all were changed.
- New ways of community connection and support: The pandemic has stimulated people to find and use creative and proactive ways to connect and support each other within local areas and through community networks.

Conclusions:

This research highlights some key ways in which Council could underpin its post-pandemic recovery plans so as to address the impact that the women of Greater Geelong have experienced over the last year. The women of Greater Geelong have told us again and again to

Listen to us; hear what we need and act on our experiences and our advice; work with the agencies that know us and support us; give us good advice, information, services and support so we can raise our families, be healthy, and get assistance when we need it; help us to share our heavy loads and our many roles at work, at home and in the community.

Council is encouraged to respond to their voices as reported in this document and to:

- Listen and integrate women's views and experiences into research, policy, planning and services, especially the voices of women who are most vulnerable, marginalised and disadvantaged.
- Adopt a gender lens in all that it does; this will not only inform and enable compliance with the requirements of the Gender Equality Act 2020, but will also support Council to recognise the range of positive and negative impacts of the last year, and the ways in which women are disadvantaged, ignored or unsupported and hindered from full participation in, and contribution to, their community.

- Partner, collaborate with and support agencies that have specific and specialised knowledge of women's experiences and needs, and support new ways for women to access opportunities, networks and services through outreach and digital platforms.
- Provide and fund services, business development, local infrastructure and natural environments that are designed *with* women's input and that will meet women's needs.
- Educate and promote new thinking and behaviours about women's roles at home and at work that emphasize a sharing of domestic, caring, parenting and income earning roles.
- Reconsider Council's own policy, practices and research and plan new policies and practices that take all of the above into account, especially in relation to Council's employment policies and practices.
- Advocate for local, state and federal recovery thinking and action that takes the above into account.

Recommended Areas for Council Action:
Table 5 details the recommendations for Council consideration and action within a matrix that cross references the key roles of local government with the four environments for health and wellbeing. We trust this will assist future planning so as to integrate gender equality framed action into core Council business. This is reproduced in full below.

KEY ROLES OF COUNCIL	RECOMMENDED ACTION WITHIN THE ENVIRONMENTS FOR HEALTH AND WELLBEING			
	Social /Cultural Environment	**Built Environment /Infrastructure**	**Economic Environment**	**Natural Environmental**
Advocate: raise awareness of the issues and needs of local residents and businesses, initiate or support campaigns for positive change	**Advocate** to state and federal governments regarding the critical impact mental health has on women and the need for gender sensitive prevention and intervention **Advocate** to local businesses and employers around the adoption of gender equity and family friendly employment practices	**Advocate** to state and federal governments and to developers about the need for social housing especially to cater for women fleeing family violence **Advocate** to state government on the improved public transport provision in the region including wheelchair accessible taxis	**Advocate** to federal government to maintain JobKeeper, increase JobSeeker and extend age limits in JobMaker **Advocate** to regional and state government bodies about the importance of economic stimulus and support initiatives incorporating and responding to women's workforce patterns, and the importance of gender equity and family friendly employment practices	**Advocate** to state government around the importance of safe, accessible and beautiful urban and peri-urban natural open spaces

	Social /Cultural Environment	Built Environment /Infrastructure	Economic Environment	Natural Environmental
Partner and co-ordinate: develop relationships and alliances and work with others to achieve common goals	**Implement** active community engagement strategies to harness women's experience and needs **Liaise with, regularly consult with and build relationships** with organisations which focus on women's' experience and needs especially in relation to young women, First Nation women, women with a disability, women experiencing family violence and housing stress and women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds			
Provide: a range of services and support, preventative interventions, infrastructure and facilities to individuals and groups	**Provide** outdoor and on-line activities (and promote them to women) that include interaction, recreation and exercise in a safe environment at prices all women can afford, including: gym exercises, dancing, music, workshops, yoga, etc. **Provide and enhance** outreach library services which are of particular value for isolated, transport challenged and homebound women **Provide support services** for small community organisations to assist them to operate sustainably e.g. managing compliance issues. **Address** the digital divide and • Plan digital service hubs within local areas, using existing facilities such as libraries, Council service hubs etc • Listen and respond to the specific needs of those most digitally disadvantaged	**Provide** community transport to fill gaps in public transport system **Develop** footpaths, pavements, roadways, paths etc that are safe, accessible, and suitable for women with wheels (assisted mobility vehicles, wheelchairs, prams, pushers, children on bikes and scooters and women on bikes) **Provide** more outdoor infrastructure for activities in local areas such as community gardens, adult exercise facilities, all ages playgrounds, picnic and shelter areas	**Provide** support to local businesses and social enterprises through Council's economic development programs with a focus on the specific needs and aspirations of women	**Provide and enhance** beautiful accessible urban and peri-urban open spaces that encourage use by women for recreation, exercise, social and community connection eg, support "friends of" areas, community garden groups, street based networks and home and nature strip based gardening etc

	• Support training for, translations and use of information apps such as Telegram app and the agencies that promote and use them as multilingual means of information dissemination • Use and deliver platforms for public interest webinars • Provide IT platforms and practical training to assist community organisations to use these methods for their activities and to ensure cyber safety.			
Key Roles of Council	**Social /Cultural Environment**	**Built Environment /Infrastructure**	**Economic Environment**	**Natural Environmental**
Fund: provide grants funding or subsidies to local groups and agencies to progress and develop services and infrastructure for individuals and groups	**Fund** appropriate organisations to undertake pro-active outreach activities that enhance community connection, link vulnerable isolated people with support and increase a focus on prevention **Fund** community organisations to deliver engaging initiatives led by women which build social connections and the enhance health and wellbeing of women.	**Fund** modifications to existing buildings and infrastructure in ways that will encourage women to use them by addressing their security and safety concerns eg lighting, safe entrances, no hidden scary dark areas etc.	E**nsure** the majority of business recovery funds go to initiatives in areas where women work: retail, hospitality, caring and women owned small business	**Fund** initiatives and groups that aim to promote and care for local parks and gardens, reserves, foreshores, and community gardens etc ensuing this is done in ways that support the inclusion and benefit of women
Inform, promote and educate: share information, raise awareness and develop knowledge and skills to empower individuals and groups	**Educate and inform** the community about the benefits for all, especially for children, of shared roles for both parents across work and home settings. This includes work hours, flexible	**Educate and inform** planners and developers about the importance of applying a gender lens to the design and construction of the built environment.	**Inform and support** employers and businesses to adopt family friendly and gender equity employment practices and workplace policies such as parental leave and flexible,	**Promote, inform and educate** the community about the benefits of using natural public open space for recreation, mental health community connection, every day as well as in times of pandemic and social

	work arrangements, domestic, parenting and care tasks, involvement in education and schools etc **Promote** the equal division of domestic, caring and paid work through Council's employment policies and practices **Educate** Council's own workforce and the broader community on the importance of respectful relationships in all contexts and between all people Support initiatives designed to raise awareness and change behaviour around family and sexual violence		hours, locations and **emphasise t**he benefits for all of these approaches for women **Inform and support** businesses and employers to be aware of the impact of family violence on women employees (and thus on the workplace and the business generally) and to develop supportive employment practices in response	distancing. **Promote** the mental and physical benefits of home gardening
Key Roles for Council	**Social /Cultural Environment**	**Built Environment /Infrastructure**	**Economic Environment**	**Natural Environmental**
Research and plan: collect, analyse and disseminate quantitative and qualitative data to inform evidence-based planning, priority setting, decision making and evaluation for services and infrastructure which responds to current and future needs and requirements	Routinely **seek out** women's voices when undertaking research and planning activities and make sure that appropriate and sensitive ways of hearing these voices are used, especially in relation to the voices of women from marginalised and vulnerable groups **Undertake** gender equity focussed research, data collection and analysis and apply to planning, policy and discussions for example; on the on impact on women of urban growth, moves from metro Melbourne on rural/farming communities **Explor**e Council's capacity to provide and stimulate the provision of emergency and long term social housing with particular emphasis on the unmet need of women leaving family violence relationships, First Nation and CALD women			

	Social /Cultural Environment	Built Environment /Infrastructure	Economic Environment	Natural Environmental
Regulate: provide governance and regulatory controls such as local laws and health and building controls	**Utilise** Council's role in public health to enhance the health of women through immunisation programs, strategies for infection control, and messaging about the safe use of public facilities and spaces	**Increase** requirement for developers to provide a proportion of public/social housing **Consider** planning policy relating to the interface between rural/farming and growing residential development – impacts on women/families		**Consider** planning policy relating to the provision, design and maintenance of open space that caters to women's need for beautiful, safe, accessible and useable parks, gardens, reserves and open and natural spaces

1. Introduction

This is the final report of the community research project that explores the impact of the pandemic on women*[2] in the Greater Geelong area. The work was commissioned by the City of Greater Geelong in late 2020 to provide a gender equity perspective on the impact of COVID and to inform the response and recovery process. As the brief states the Project was designed to advise the City of Greater Geelong (COGG) on the provision of

> *"meaningful supports and programs that will enable a balancing of the scales to support women* and gender non-binary people beyond the pandemic through informed recovery approaches.[3] This will be advised by gathering locally sourced information from local women* and gender non-binary people about how they have been impacted and what they think will help them through recovery to re-establish and enable equitable and fair access to work, income security, pay parity, equal distribution of unpaid domestic duties, social status, leadership and decision making in order to achieve gender equality."*

2. Methodology

In November 2020, Meg Montague and Kerry Stubbings were selected as consultants to carry out this work. Day-to-day support was provided to the consultants by the Gender Equity Officer. In addition, a Project Working Group was established to advise and support the research project and many members of this group provided invaluable advice and support to the consultants. The Working Group met with the consultants on three occasions; at the research design stage, at mid-point progress report stage and finally, at the draft final report stage. Members of the Working Group are listed in Appendix 1.

The methodology for conducting the research was designed as per the Project brief and with the advice of the Pandemic Impact Project Working Group. The work was conducted between December 2020 and March 2021. Due to the continuing pandemic restrictions and the third lockdown period in Victoria in February 2021, meetings and interviews were conducted remotely. However, it was possible to conduct one face-to-face focus group in late March.

Efforts were made to ensure that this research is informed by perspectives from women of a wide range of ages, situations, backgrounds and circumstances. However, it should be noted that those who participated in the consultations and the survey do not represent a statistically randomised or stratified sample of women living in Greater Geelong. As such, the results of this research are reported in general rather than statistical terms as indicative of women's experiences and views. Table 1 below summarises the methods that were used.

[2] As per the COGG definition that Women* refers to cis and trans women and gender non-binary people. Please note that beyond this introductory section, for simplicity sake, this document uses the word women without the asterisk except in section, table and major headings.
[3] Consultant Brief Community Research: Pandemic Impacts on Women * in Greater Geelong. COGG. October 2020.

Table 1: Methodology Summary

Method of Inquiry	Specifications[4] and Purpose	Data/ Results
2.1 Literature review	*"….to include current findings concerning the gendered impacts of COVID-19 from international, national and state sources. The review could include examples of gender based COVID-19 recovery initiatives and mitigation strategies that will strengthen capacity to attain gender equality. "*	There has been a good deal of research and commentary on pandemic impact. This largely focuses on the negative impact, a small amount on positive impact. Most comment is on impact generally, some on women specifically, a very small amount on the impact in relation to trans women and gender non-binary people. Research that covers recovery strategies is beginning to emerge, but, as yet there is limited material that evaluates recovery strategies. A detailed bibliography is contained in Appendix 2, and insights and findings from the documents listed are integrated throughout the report.
2.2 Individual interviews • Eight interviews were held with women living in Greater Geelong who were able to speak from a wide spectrum of perspectives	*"…to document individual narratives, experiences, concerns and hopes for recovery and community life."*	1. Woman living with a disability, also a member of a Council Advisory Committee 2. Older woman living alone in public housing with high care needs and daily support services 3. Woman caring for older family member with high care needs and daily support services 4. Woman participant in the Rainbow Alliance 5. Local township resident, older woman and member of a Council Advisory Committee 6. Young woman – university student, active volunteer with Headspace, low income family situation and experience of mental health issues 7. Woman farmer active within the farming industry and community 8. Mother of 4 children - two of whom had COVID
• Six interviews were held with staff members and volunteers working for Council and local agencies with specific roles in relation to the	This group were not specifically mentioned in the Project brief, however, they have been a vital source of information on the situation of their women clients as well as being able to comment from their own personal experiences (except	1. Agency staff working with Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) women 2. Council staff involved in the delivery of home care services to older and disabled residents

[4] Quotes from the City of Greater Geelong Consultant Brief Community research: Pandemic Impacts on Women* in Greater Geelong: October 2020

women of Greater Geelong. All (except one) were themselves women living and working in Geelong	one who was a man). In addition to their insights on impact on clients, they also provided valuable commentary on the impact of the pandemic on their agency's workers, most of whom are women, and on their agency as a whole and the strategies that were devised to cope with impact and to support women in the community. They also assisted in recruiting women for individual interview and in promoting the on-line survey.	3. Agency staff working with homelessness agencies across the Barwon South West area 4. Agency staff working with women experiencing sexual assault and family violence 5. Agency staff working on the front line on phone support for local families in isolation and quarantine 6. A First Nation woman with a key role in an indigenous organisation
Method of Inquiry	**Specifications[5] and Purpose**	**Data/ Results**
2.3 Focus groups	*"…to discuss impacts of COVID-19 and key focus areas for recovery that will enable the City to ensure gender equitable recovery efforts."*	1. Women living with a disability convened with the assistance of Women with Disabilities Victoria 2. Bilingual support workers –wellbeing navigators providing telephone support to women from CALD backgrounds and refugee and asylum seeker circumstances. Convened with the assistance of Diversitat
2.4 On-line survey	*" to capture local data about agreed universal measures as well as unique gendered impacts of COVID-19 and participants' stories that will help identify key focus areas for recovery efforts that will promote and enable gender equality".* The timing of the project over the holiday period made planning and execution of the survey challenging. The survey was widely promoted through Council, agency and community networks and was open for 4 weeks from late-February to late-March. The invitation to participate on Facebook was clicked 441 times and seen by 7,992 women in Greater Geelong.	370 responded to the on-line survey, and an extensive range of qualitative and qualitative data was collected. However, not all respondents completed all the questions. The profile of respondents is as follows: AGE Under 18 years 1.0% or 2 individuals 18-24 years 2.0% or 4 individuals 25-34 years 12.9% or 26 individuals 35-49 years 44.3% or 89 individuals 50-59 years 22.4% or 45 individuals 60-69 years 10.9% or 22 individuals 70-84 years 5.5% or 11 individuals 85 years+ 1.0% or 2 individuals LIVE alone 15.3% or 31 individuals with flat / housemates 2.5% or 5 individuals with parent(s) / guardian(s) 1.5% or 3 individuals Couple with children 38.9% or 79 individuals Single parent 12.3% or 25 individuals Couple only 22.2% or 45 individuals IDENTIFY AS

[5] Quotes from the City of Greater Geelong Consultant Brief Community research: Pandemic Impacts on Women* in Greater Geelong: October 2020

		Not ATSI 95.1% or 195 individuals Aboriginal origin 2.0% or 4 individuals Woman 96.6% or 198 individuals Trans woman 1.0% or 2 individuals Gender non-binary 1.0% or 2 individuals LANGUAGE SPOKEN AT HOME English 97.5% or 194 individuals Mandarin 0.5% or 1 individual Other 2.0% or 4 individuals LIVING WITH A DISABILITY Yes 12.7% or 26 individuals No 83.4% or 171 individuals CARING ROLE WITH AN ADULT Yes 10.3% or 21 individuals No 85.8% or 175 individuals Responses have been integrated into Sections 3 and 4 of this report. The full results are not included here to protect the anonymity of respondents, however, they are available in a separate document for in-house Council consideration. An analysis was also made of the responses of the 125 women who completed a survey on the pandemic that Council conducted in mid-2020. This document is similarly an internal Council document.

3. Positive and Negative Impacts of the Pandemic on Women*

Nine main areas of impact emerged from the literature review and the local consultations: employment; education; financial and economic circumstances; housing; physical health; mental health and emotional wellbeing; violence and abuse at home, at work or school and in community; home and family life and community engagement and connection. The interviews, focus groups and the survey explored these nine areas in some depth and the results are described below in Table 2 with illustrative quotes drawn from the written and verbal responses of women.

This rich source of material indicates that both positive and negative impacts were experienced in all areas, often representing different sides of the same coin. As noted above in section 2, it must be remembered that this research does not claim to be statistically representative of women living in Greater Geelong; however, it does provide insight into the experiences of many.

Table 2: Overview of Positive and Negative Impacts for Women* of the Pandemic

Area of Impact	Positive Impacts for Women*	Negative Impacts for Women*
3.1 Employment Survey responses: N=279 No impact - 16.7% Some positive impact – 39.9% Some negative impact – 65.8%	Increased work and study flexibility via home based setting and more productive use of time to work or study due to fewer distractions, interruptions or alternative activities, higher productivity and better work-life balance *I have appreciated that as a fulltime working mother of young children having a work life balance is so important. Before COVID-19 I felt so guilty not being able to do the 'mum' things like walking my kids to school. Now with work being flexible I'm able to balance both and my mental health is so much better. I'm just sad that it had to take COVID-19 for employers to accept that working from home and having flexibility is not a bad thing and is necessary for modern day especially for working mothers. The traditional working in the office is so out dated and before COVID when I couldn't get into the office due to train issues my employer told me I had to take the day as annual leave even though I could have worked from home.* Increase in business due to the switch to on-line sales Decreased time, expense and stress of commuting to work or study and more time to contemplate work life balance, opportunity to choose new ways of working or new approaches to work-life balance eg retirement	Loss of or decrease in employment due to over representation of women in casual, insecure work, and lack of eligibility for JobSeeker or JobKeeper *The realisation that my work role was so dispensable, programs just stopped. It also showed me that being a casual is a very precarious position and that I am a woman on my own, I am self-reliant, I must depend on myself to meet all my needs and that can be very difficult and anxiety provoking.* *Being unable to perform emergency teaching during remote learning and not receiving JobKeeper or any benefits.* Some jobs and some training was just not possible and could not be done or completed because it has to be hands-on Increased work and study costs due to home based employment and education eg need to purchase home based work items, such as office equipment and internet access and to skill up in technology, increased heating and lighting bills Lack of separation of work, home and study made life difficult to navigate and space limitations at home exacerbated this *Significant impact as a sole mother, trying to work from*

	Acquisition of new on-line skills, confidence and infrastructure to support home based learning and work Working from home facilitated better management of chronic pain or illness, reduced expectations of sociability, feeling safe at home; soothing presence of pets: all these had a positive impact on physical and mental health. Positive financial impact of working from home without travelling, spending on petrol, parking, public transport, coffees, lunches, work wardrobe, etc, In front line jobs there was a greater sense of cohesiveness and attentiveness to welfare by colleagues during the stressful times.	*home, manage remote learning, losing my small supplementing income and increased living expenses was very difficult. As a mother, I became mother, teacher, principal, friend, psychologist, coach, motivator, worker, cleaner, cook, everything!! It was very difficult to balance all demands with zero support.* Increased anxiety and pressure at work (front-line anxiety, new systems and processes, managing PPE, longer time to do things, concern about infection of self, clients and family at home). Especially an issue for women due to their major role in the front line in the health, child, disability and aged care workforce Loss of face-to-face debrief, mutual support time especially hard for women in personal care roles where they generally work alone; zoom not a good substitute for a "good chin wag" coupled with challenges of managing what for many is new or unfamiliar technology, new anxieties and challenges among clients, and greater isolation generally
Area of Impact	**Positive Impacts for Women***	**Negative Impacts for Women***
3.2 Education Survey responses: N=235 No impact – 70.7% Some positive impact – 13.3% Some negative impact – 20.4%	Able to focus more on study and undertake variety of short, on-line education courses as working from home meant more time, more energy, and more money to pay for courses *From working from home I've been less tired, therefore I have been able to consider and take up education. I have also had money to be able to pay for this from saving on petrol and other costs associated with going to work in an office building. It's brilliant* Due to COVID, unemployment and free vocational courses on line some were able to study and find work in new areas *Due to my unemployment I was seeking something I could do from home. I'm now half way through Certificate IV in Disability and that has been entirely free f or me. I now have a job in the industry and feel as though I probably wouldn't have made it here if the course wasn't offered for free* *I attended TAFE and our classes went to zoom. It was great to still have classes and less stress to travel into TAFE and*	Challenges in undertaking secondary and tertiary study on line; infrastructure challenges as well as the lack of face-to-face interaction and support; this was especially tough for those for whom 2020 was a transition year –eg into high school, or into university or a new course Lack of digital skills, infrastructure and internet connection required for work and education; hindered progress in study or caused drop out or deferral from uni courses Challenges in managing children's education and own study/work at home or at work Mental stress of working, studying, presenting, on line, managing the technology, and generally multi-tasking and multi-caring *The frustration at how hard women had to work to manage work (either leaving the home for work or working from home) while managing remote learning. The kids needed so much attention and support (emotional*

	find parking New skills and confidence in self -navigating online resources and using new software/applications to communicate and participate in learning. More contact with children's school and teachers and appreciation of school support	*support, tech support, encouragement, reassurance plus general help with their learning)*
Area of Impact	**Positive Impacts for Women***	**Negative Impacts for Women***
3.3 Finances Survey responses N = 235 No impact – 70.7% Some positive impact – 13.3% Some negative impact – 20.4%	Decreased spending and improved financial circumstances due to free child care, consistent and higher rates of JobSeeker and JobKeeper payments, COVID student allowance, and money saved due to decreased expenses and spending on commuting, holiday travel, shopping, sports, entertainment, etc *I'm in a far better financial situation. I have not had to go to staff lunches, or chip in for presents etc. These things impact on a woman like me with a single income/household. COVID has seen me be able to do some of the things my married friends with two incomes do. I feel more equal. It's great. I never want to go back to the way it was.* *I had time to rethink my life plan and reassess my financial dependence on an employer. I decided to create my own income and live frugally and sustainably. Therefore I creatively and sustainably pursued major renovations and, subsequently created resort style accommodation at my home by the beach, a business that has been financially thriving since opening in December 2020 and giving me autonomy and freedom* More work available in front line positions so earned more *Financially as a single woman I feel I'm catching up and feeling more 'equal' to my male or married counterparts. This makes me feel more part of the community. I can participate more.*	Financial struggle due to reduced income from employment and lack of access to JobKeeper and JobSeeker payments due to casual, part-time insecure work roles Increased food insecurity due to lower income and difficulties in accessing emergency food agencies and supplies. The Wathaurong Aboriginal Cooperative made a submission to the Senate Inquiry into COVID: *The Australian government announced that it was working with the Red Cross as part of a food security initiative. Wathaurong contacted Red Cross to assist in the coordination of food packages for 600 local Aboriginal community members that we had identified as in need. We were told by management that this couldn't happen and that each individual person had to go online and fill in the registration form. There was no consideration by the Australian government or Red Cross that Aboriginal people don't have access to the internet or computers or if they had phone credit and data to fulfil this request, which is why we contacted Red Cross in the first instance. This demonstrates when governments and NGOs such as Red Cross fail to partner appropriately with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander agencies, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people miss out on such essential services.* Increased spending on on-line shopping, gambling etc, also on home bills such as heating, lighting, digital software and internet connection, office set up, etc and on mental health treatment costs

		Drawing down on super during COVID may create even greater inequality and poverty later on in women's retirement The banks' mortgage moratorium was good but creates future problems With secure jobs in personal care, women become principal breadwinner whose income acquired much greater importance in family budget and put more strain on women as both income earner and domestic manager.
Area of Impact	**Positive Impacts for Women***	**Negative Impacts for Women***
3.4 Housing Survey responses N=232 No impact – 75.4% Some positive impact – 10.3% Some negative impact – 17.9%	Greater housing security; moratorium on evictions, lower rental payments, and a variety of homelessness initiatives *My home has become a place I love and a home. Not just somewhere I go to sleep or where I go when I'm not working. I feel more comfortable in myself because of this. I have also had more money to do a few improvements and hire local people. Usually as a single person I would not have had the income for improvement* State Government Homelessness Emergency Response Program (HERP) good in short term (though not perfect) meant a safe place to live for some, and promised increased in funds flowing into the sector for affordable housing in long term and support services in short term	Increased housing stress due to reduced income, inability to meet or defer mortgage or rent payments Challenges faced by those in the midst of renovations, moves, re-financing etc and accommodating family members who had to move in due to their own housing stress HERP and rent moratorium not always 100% effective especially towards the end of the year; pressure on and shift in focus for service providers from prevention activities to support services Lack of emergency or short term housing for those needing it, especially critical for women leaving a violent relationship
3.5 Physical health Survey responses N=253 No impact – 12.4% Some positive impact – 31.6% Some negative impact – 68.4%	More healthy eating and home cooking, decreased fast and convenience meals, fewer opportunities to go out and buy junk or impulse food Reduced access to alcohol and other drugs leading to reduced intake More time and motivation to take-up and increase in regular exercise eg via walking, cycling, gardening, on line physical activity such as zumba, dance, Pilates, yoga, meditation, etc Discovery of new places locally to walk and cycle and greater feeling of safety on the street and in open spaces due to larger numbers of fellow walkers, cyclists and less motor traffic	Decline in physical health and weight gain due to closure of gyms, pools, dance and yoga classes, bowling clubs and fitness programs and especially critical for those living with chronic pain or disability who need continual work to maintain muscle tone, balance and pain management *I have put on weight due to stress/comfort eating. Pilates classes were cancelled due to COVID which meant my back and neck issues became much worse.* *Not going to my regular sessions at the pool meant I lost muscle tone; I have got less flexible and less strong and this is bad for me, I fell out of my wheelchair a couple of times and ended up in hospital*

	Increased JobSeeker payments meant less reliance on food support services Less sickness due to isolation, social distancing and focus on infection control *I have not had one sick day since March 2020.* *For the first time in possibly a decade when running annual blood works my health was best it had been in a decade or more.*	Decline in physical health due to increased eating, drinking, smoking and weight gain Increased alcohol and other drug consumption Difficult for many to access alternative exercise options outside or on-line due to pandemic and /or physical restrictions, or lack of digital literacy /capacity Reduced capacity to access therapies, health services and essential supports; especially for those living with a disability, LGBTIQ, with a chronic illness, or undergoing gender based therapies and surgeries *Many of my disability supports which help me with my mobility etc were suspended. It impacted my health and wellbeing negatively*. *I was diagnosed with breast cancer just before the pandemic hit. I was unable to have anyone with me during treatments, surgery etc, which was hard.* Access to food and household supplies: People saw supermarket shelves being stripped and were very anxious about access to food and other supplies such as nappies for children. This was cited a big issue within the Aboriginal community.
Area of Impact	**Positive Impacts for Women***	**Negative Impacts for Women***
3.6 Mental health and emotional wellbeing Survey responses N=247 No impact – 11.2% Some positive impact – 22.8% Some negative impact – 76.3%	Quieter less stressed life, more time to relax, to contemplate rather than rush, adopt a slower pace, adopt a back to basics approach, live in the moment, to 'recalibrate' and reflect on what is important and what is not, and review life directions and accomplishments, even relationships More time to pursue or participate in creative activities, eg music, art, reading, dance and time to learn new skills, knitting, crocheting, tapestry, dog grooming and training Telehealth consultations could feel safer as they are more anonymous when not face to face and there is less stress in making efforts to attend services	Increased depression, feelings of anxiety, isolation and loneliness especially evident with CALD women, young women and women with a disability Migrant and asylum seeker women faced significant stress due to isolation, loss of contact with close family members and inability to visit family members in home country or have proper ceremonies here in Australia, inability to interact with people with shared language and culture, lack of understanding, anxiety and confusion about restrictions and implications of the pandemic Increased expectations and reliance on women for caring of family members, emotional support for friends and family experiencing

	I think a positive that has come out of it was that I was able to access support via telehealth. Due to the nature of my mental health I would have struggled to attend appointments in person but being able to do so via telehealth was perfect. Also I had suffered on and off with mild mental health concerns f or years prior but never took the time to seek help for them. I can see now that I should have sought support long ago *I have severe anxiety and clinical depression and usually therapists force me to go out and engage. During pandemic I felt safer at home and didn't feel pressure to go out. I think my anxiety was reduced.* Less exposure to stressful situations in workplace, school, education and community settings *I find it easier to get a break from stressful or upsetting episodes at work because I can close my laptop, walk away, immediately debrief with my husband in the next room and try to disconnect from work. When I was in the office, it was harder to get away from a stressful or upsetting situation like that, and also challenging to get that instant connection for support.* Reduction in pressure from friends, family school or workmates to go out, socialise, spend money, look or dress a certain way Pandemic funds have enabled agencies to develop new ways of offering support via outreach, wellbeing navigators, TelegramApp etc People have found new energy and ways of supporting emotional health of others in family and community eg regular phone texts, emails, Facebook sharing etc Discovered the healing effects of nature and the presence of growing things and animals *I realised I don't need as much counselling as I thought I did; I found many new ways of improving my mental health by walking and being in nature. I spent time meditating on*	difficulties, supporting children and young people, especially hard for those with young children and babies *This has been the hardest part. Having my work stripped from me, made me feel worthless. Being at home 24/7 with my 4 children was very hard, including home schooling, a toddler at home and a breast feeding baby. I had some sessions with a psychologist to try and help, but I was at the lowest, darkest time of my life. I had to implement massive coping strategies* *Very stressful the juggle of work home-schooling being made redundant, looking for work, single parenting and family in Melbourne* *Very emotionally stressful trying to keep my 3 teenagers engaged in remote learning while concurrently working (myself) Space - all of us home all day -everyday - we did get 'stir crazy' and irritable!* Telehealth consultations less satisfactory - feeling disconnected when not face to face Having a baby during the COVID year was very difficult, isolating, anxiety provoking and frightening Increased suicidal or self-harm ideation and /or action *Acute and chronic stress and anxiety. Suicidal ideation. Anger and rage at this situation brought on us by something outside of our control.* Growing concern about the way the world is going and the selfishness of some members of the community. *Realisation that there are nasty selfish people out there who flouted the lockdown rules, pushed conspiracy theories, blamed others and hated the politicians who were trying to keep us safe. Lost some friendships over disagreements about these things.* *I have been distressed at criticism of Dan Andrews and his*

	nature, there was less pollution, more birds, lovely walks by the river and in the parks, the flowers and birds and trees were marvellous. I also discovered the joy of pets Women mentioned the empowerment, strength or mindfulness they had found or acquired as a result of the COVID pandemic *Definitely allowed me to find my voice, articulate and assert my needs, as well as advocate with male Management about the gender inequity. I had many discussions with management about the impact f or me. It was something they were not aware of, or experiencing themselves. They also were not aware of my previous career and qualifications, assuming I was only skilled for my casual role.* *I feel more empowered and appreciated as a woman. I also feel like I am doing better as a woman as I have more time.* *Feeling more thankful and mindful of what I have and what I need to do to keep it. More aware of others in community. More aware of the privilege I have compared to many others.*	*team. People have limited understanding about how difficult the situation was, and how any decision would impact people.* *I'm concerned where the world is heading. I observed 'COVID mania' in people either by way of them not coping with being restricted and unable to go out, they felt hatred towards politicians and medical professionals and a loss of their freedom. They also developed conspiracy thinking. I hadn't seen this behaviour in these people/family members before.* *I lost respect f or friends who became conspiracy theorists. I have also become more socially isolated overall.*
Area of Impact	**Positive Impacts for Women***	**Negative Impacts for Women***
3.7 Violence, abuse and harassment at home, work and in the community Survey responses N=229 No impact – 84.4% Some positive impact – 9.3% Some negative impact – 8.0%	Decreased incidence of violence, abuse and harassment due to lower exposure at work, school or in the community *I was being a bit bullied or intimidated at work by my boss, and it was so much easier not going into the office and not having to see him* Greater feelings of safety on the street and in open spaces due to higher numbers of fellow walkers and cyclists and fewer cars and trucks *I have felt safer while out walking as there have been so many people out and about, even if we were socially distancing, it felt better just having people around and lots of them were other women*	Increased incidence, threats or fear of violence, abuse and harassment at home and at work *Really stressful interactions at work and home. Mainly fighting with my other half as I took on increased responsibility while he became so dependent on me. I was trying to carry the burdens of the whole family. My partner exploded at me one night which tipped our relationship over the edge. No physical violence though.* Inability to get away to report violence or abuse or to seek out support when everyone working or studying from home *It made the emotional abuse too great to bear as there was no escape or place to regather my thoughts as the gym was closed and avenues to catch up face to f ace with friends were no longer an option* Decreased responsiveness or availability of support services and

		loss of options to escape violence, abuse and harassment *I was hurt by a family member and needed to go to hospital. Efforts to seek support via several pathways were not followed up on.* Shift in focus for agency staff from primary prevention to support; pandemic exposed the lack of pre-planning by governments and agencies for increased levels of family violence when disaster strikes More anger and abuse from the public due to their frustration and anger about COVID and the restrictions, especially when they were anti-lockdown people *I experienced some anger and abuse at work from members of the public who were frustrated about limitations or small inconveniences like showing ID or signing in. Also some work related abuse from my direct manager who did not cope well with COVID restrictions and took it out directly on staff.*
Area of Impact	**Positive Impacts for Women***	**Negative Impacts for Women***
3.8 Home and family life Survey responses N=265 No impact – 16.6% Some positive impact – 49.3% Some negative impact – 52.9%	Increased time spent together as a family and engaging in shared activities; discovery of new ways to do things as a family or with kids - jigsaws, quizzes, on-line games, home invented games, walking the dog, playing music, singing together); greater tolerance between siblings, Increased understanding, support and participation by male partner in household, child rearing and kids' education activities, decreased gender segregation of household and caring tasks. Potential for longer term erosion of social norms that currently lead to a lopsided distribution of the division of labour in house work and child care and a resultant shift in gender roles in family and household. Closer connection with family and friends via on-line methods not used before, eg older people and people living with a disability; appreciation of snail mail!	Increase in caring and educational burdens due to closure of child care and schools, fewer opportunities to go out and pressure of juggling caring, home schooling and work based responsibilities at home *Prior to COVID my husband and I had a 50/50 split of the household chores and management, but during COVID with my husband still working onsite and working longer days and I being at home I found that I was doing more of the household work which did create some conflict as I was still working as hard and with just as much stress at I would in the office or in community* *I think it has highlighted even more the inequity of work expected of women in the domestic home. When I am in the office - I am at work. When I am working from home - I am home and therefore have to take control of children, cleaning and anything else that needs to happen during the day. Pre-COVID we had quite a shared responsibility in the home, during COVID that was not the case.*

	More understanding and participation in children's education and appreciation of and connection with children's teachers More opportunities and impetus to sort house, paint, mend, do odd jobs, plan renovations or modifications, catch up on tasks long put off. Acquisition of a dog or other pet with the pleasure and companionship this has brought.	Took up new caring roles eg brought older relative home from residential care Overcrowding and housing stress due to close living and shared accommodation plus, work, and study pressures at home Challenge of supporting home learning by women with very little education and English language skills themselves Increase in family tension, stress and squabbling
Area of Impact	**Positive Impacts for Women***	**Negative Impacts for Women***
3.9 Community engagement and connection Survey responses N=258 No impact – 21.0% Some positive impact – 30.4% Some negative impact – 63.8%	Increased interaction in local neighbourhood and increased sense of shared community effort with new friends and activities Discovery of new places in the neighbourhood to go for exercise, play, interaction for self and /or children, new appreciation of nature, fresh air, birds etc Great appreciation of quality, flexibility and accessibility of Council home care services Development of new means of connection, interaction and collaboration/inclusion via zoom, Microsoft teams, TelegramApp; Facebook, FaceTime, WhatsApp, outreach by family violence and multicultural services, and within the Aboriginal community New sources of funding to enhance community connection, outreach, use of TelegramApp etc, and members of community groups developed new ways of connecting with, and supporting each other, as well as continuing to undertake activities together in different ways. *Social contact is so important to keep well. People need the chance to just talk. I set up a social media group - called 'Kindness Warriors' and collaborated with another coach to organise an activity every day such as yoga and cooking and this went for about 3 months.* *I would drop off food for an elderly couple living on a farm who were fearful of COVID and had no one else to get their supplies.*	Increased isolation and disconnection from community, and decline in work, school, volunteer and community connection skills Loss of volunteer opportunities so decreased community engagement Fewer opportunities for casual social interaction with closure of local meeting places eg, neighbourhood houses, seniors centres, meal programs, sport and rec centres, health services, cafes, and even causal chats at school and child care drop off times New mothers missed out on participation in new mothers' groups Increased pressure on existing friendships and relationships that has in some cases exacerbated existing issues or revealed new ones; potentially to the point of relationship breakdown Not able to date, find a partner, go out and socialise *Being young I found it so hard not being able to go out and find a partner, have fun, socialise and just be young and foolish* *I think given my age and fact I haven't been able to date people has added an element to stress (time clock is ticking).* Communication, inclusion and connection challenges due to lack of computer literacy, infrastructure, access to the internet or wifi

	We responded with food services through a partnership with Second Bite to create the Feed Me program – It was a fantastic development combining food security with social enterprise, employment element. We delivered 2,000 meals a week, voluntary with some employed including 5 women.	

Table 2 provides a rich qualitative picture of women's experience. Table 3 provides some quantitative data derived from the responses by women to the on-line survey.

Table 3: On line Survey Responses from Women* re Impact of the Pandemic

Area of Impact	Report of "Some Positive Impact"	Reports of "Some Negative Impact"	Reports of "No Impact for me"
Employment (N=279)	39.3% N=91	65.8% N=150	16.7% N=38
Education (N=235)	13.3% N=30	20.4% N=46	70.7% N=159
Financial situation (N=243)	32.9% N=74	43.6% N=98	31.6% N=71
Housing situation (N=232)	10.3% N=23	17.9% N=40	75.4% N=169
Physical health (N=253)	31.6% N=71	68.4% N=154	12.4% N=28
Mental and emotional health (N=247)	22.8% N=51	76.3% N=171	11.2% N=25
Home and family life (N=265)	49.3% N=110	52.9% N=118	16.6% N=37
Experience of violence and abuse (N=229)	9.3% N=21	8.0% N=18	84.4% N=190
Community engagement and connection (N=258)	30.4% N=68	63.8% N=143	21.0% N=47

The quantitative data from the survey presented in Table 3 illustrate the complexity of assessing the extent of impact on women: in some cases women checked both the negative and the positive impact boxes as they experienced both; all areas were reported as having positive, negative *and* no impact; some areas stand out as attracting more negative than positive comments, some drew more positive than negative comments; some areas were reported by the majority as having had no impact. Briefly the results are summarised below.

- The three areas of education, housing and experience of violence and abuse appear to be areas of relatively low impact with between 70% and 84% of respondents reporting "no impact for me" in these areas. It should however, be remembered that this may say more about who completed the survey rather than be a global picture of women's experience.
- Responses about the impact of the pandemic on women's community engagement and connection, whilst more positive than negative, were spread across the spectrum from positive (30.4%) to negative (63.8%), to no impact (21.0%).
- An almost equal proportion of women report experiencing a positive (49.3%) and negative (52.9%) impact in relation to their home and family life.
- In terms of women's financial situation, a similar proportion of women reported positive (32.9%), negative (43.6%) and no impact (31.6%) on their finances.
- Responses re the impact on women's physical health appear also present a mixed picture with 68.4% reporting a positive impact; 31.6% a negative impact and 12.4% no impact.
- Mental health and emotional wellbeing is clearly an area of significant negative impact for women, with three quarters of women reporting a negative impact in this area. However, it should be noted that at the same time, just under a quarter experienced a positive impact on their mental health and emotional wellbeing and one tenth reported no impact.
- Employment also stands out as an area of significant impact, both positive and negative, for the majority of women. Comments made by survey respondents (and supported by interview and focus group responses) illustrate that women overwhelmingly endorsed the benefits (albeit mentioning many of the drawbacks) of working remotely and from home. Many women report that this has made it easier for them to manage the multiple roles they play at home, as parents and in the workforce[6] at the same time as challenging them as they juggle these multiple roles.

[6] Incidentally research into men's experience of flexible work reports that many have the same experience and prefer a more flexible approach to work to enable them to take on more family responsibilities.

4. Themes in Pandemic Impact for Women* and Implications for Council

This section of the report summarises the themes that emerged from the literature, the local consultations and the survey. These themes are set alongside a brief discussion of the implications they have for consideration and response by Council. The themes are grouped under nine headings:

1. The emergency and the highly restricted phases of the pandemic appear to be over, however, this does not mean the end of impact for women - in a number of instances impact will become more evident in the time ahead.
2. There is a compounding effect or intersectional effect that has magnified and will prolong the impact experienced by vulnerable and already disadvantaged groups over the last year.
3. Women in Greater Geelong identified a number of positive impacts as did others' research elsewhere. Many of these positive impacts could be embedded or enhanced into the future. In particular it is worth noting the positive impacts described as a result of being able to work from home.
4. There is a reported impact for many women on their mental health and emotional wellbeing. women described feelings of anxiety, depression, worry, stress, overload, tension, right through to complete mental health breakdown. In some cases this was an exacerbation of existing mental health issues, in others it was a new experience. The multiple roles women have were described as being even more challenging as a result of the pandemic.
5. The pandemic exacerbated a number of pre-existing structural and personal difficulties that women face. For many women these have always had a negative impact but the pandemic brought them into focus or magnified them and highlighted the need to respond to them. The literature review and the local consultations identify particularly vulnerable groups of women for whom specific strategies and approaches should be adopted to ensure appropriate responses.
6. Women have also faced new challenges that were thrown up by the COVID pandemic and by the measures used to tackle the emergency.
7. Agency co-ordination and collaboration and service provision were also impacted by the pandemic; some "pivoted" and improved, some declined, all were changed.
8. The pandemic has highlighted both the benefits and the challenges for women of flexible work arrangements, and without recognition of the benefits for parents and carers (not just for women) and action to encourage both men and women to adopt flexible work, this could result in more pressure on women to manage multiple work, parenting, caring and domestic roles.
9. The pandemic highlighted the digital divide between those who have on line, remote access and those who don't.

10. The pandemic has stimulated people to find and use creative and proactive ways to connect and support each other within local areas and through community networks.

Table 4: Impact themes and implications for Council

Themes	Implications for Council
4.1 It's not over yet The ending of the pandemic emergency response does not mean the challenges are over not that the full impact has necessarily been seen. Women have borne a good deal of the impact of the pandemic at home, at work and in the community. They have been primary carers, parents, home makers as well as front line health, welfare and care workers; they are over-represented as members of the a casualised, insecure workforce in hospitality, cleaning, health, caring and service sectors. The employment and financial impact and in particular, the emotional toll continue. The impact on women was immediate during the year and will continue to emerge over next year (or longer). Strategies are needed to keep abreast of this on-going and, in some instances, compounding impact.	**General policy recognition** is needed that this is not a period of 'post-COVID recovery' but a time where adjustments will be needed to a 'new normal' for at least 12 months. Adaptation, contingency and forecasting plans are needed to manage this. Many people, especially those who are the most vulnerable, are not 'over the impact' but are still experiencing it – emotionally, educationally, financially etc and the effects will continue to emerge for some time. This will be further exacerbated if more lockdowns occur. A long term focus is required to continue identifying emerging changes exacerbated /created through the pandemic. Examples include planning issues to be addressed such as the trend for people to move from Melbourne and the impact this is having, and will continue to have, on housing prices and availability; the impact of changing residential patterns on farming/rural areas and the potential competition or conflict between the priorities of those engaged in farming and those with a more urban perspective (noise, dirt, smell, fire readiness etc); the longer term impact of the mental and emotional challenges many women faced as well as the rise for some women in family tension and violence. **Council driven economic recovery strategies and initiatives** need to recognise and respond to the gender segmentation of the labour market and should not focus solely on sectors –such as the building industry- where women are poorly represented in the workforce. There are opportunities to build on innovative economic development initiatives for social enterprises, small business, arts programs, local tourism etc. Adopting a gender lens will ensure that initiatives are not assumed to be of benefit to all when in fact they may have a differential impact, if any, on women (See useful discussions of this in Equity Economics 2020; Council Business Support Package etc).
4.2 The compounding effect of existing vulnerabilities and marginalisation The compounding of vulnerabilities and the intersectionality of disadvantage has been noted during this research and by other researchers more broadly.	**Council needs to be more aware of the compounding aspects of intersectionality** and to keep an active eye on how best to respond and to become aware of merging trends. Embedding an intersectional lens within Council's policy, planning and service delivery processes would strengthen Council's capacity to identify and respond to these compounding factors and will be consistent with the work Council

The literature describes those who, prior to COVID-19, already faced challenges across the multi-dimensions of employment; economic security; housing; health and connections as likely to experience greater impact as a result of the pandemic. The Brotherhood of St Laurence (2020) described this compounding effect as "strongly intersectional in nature – particularly regarding gender." Refugees and new migrants, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and anyone facing stigma or discrimination due to disability or difference are likely to experience these challenges in "particularly significant and complex ways." OutRight Action International (Bishop 2020) explored the impact internationally of the pandemic on LGBTIQ people and noted that "history has shown us, that in times of crisis those most marginalized tend to suffer disproportionately compared to the broader population", and that "the background literature review confirms that emergencies tend to exacerbate vulnerability for those already struggling against inequality in its many forms." The local consultations with women in Greater Geelong indicate that there are specific groups of women who appear to be especially vulnerable to the impact of the pandemic, these include • young women and young trans people • CALD women • First Nations women • Women in family violence situations, who may be living in the family home in unsafe circumstances or living with homelessness as a result of family violence.	will need to do relevant to the Gender Equality Act 2020. **Improved ways are needed to respond to needs of (and hear the voices of) the most vulnerable, hard to reach groups of women** who have been especially vulnerable to the impact of the pandemic. This could include consideration of methods of data gathering, modes of communication, remuneration to participants, tapping of intermediary sources of voice; provision of appropriate venues, opportunities, supports, timeframes etc.
Themes	**Implications for Council**
4.3 Positive impacts of the pandemic for women* See Section 3 above summarises the positive impact of the pandemic across 9 key areas: employment; education; financial and economic circumstances; housing, physical, mental and emotional health; violence and abuse; home and family life; community engagement and connection. Women in Greater Geelong have mentioned many of these including • Increased work flexibility • Changed demands on spending, increased income due to higher JobSeeker rates • Short term improvement in housing options • Quieter more reflective life with reduced work pressures, adoption of new skills and activities; more exercise and heathy eating, no commuting; and	**Consideration of building on these positive changes**, in conjunction with the other suggestions below. Firstly, Council could build on the positives for example with communications to the community that promote the combined and separate benefits of; • neighbourliness, community connection and mutual support • the value of the natural environment in maintaining emotional and mental health and providing safe spaces for interaction, recreation and physical exercise • shared domestic roles and care for children • healthy eating together as a family • family networking and connection via non-face to face methods • the acquisition of on-line communication skills.

opportunities to reconsider goals or lifestyle • More sharing of domestic roles between partners, more time with children, fathers more involved in children's learning and development • More frequent contact with friends and family via internet, phone etc • Development of new communication methods both in the home and in the workplace (zoom, iPad, Facebook, TelegramApp etc); • Many examples of the development of resilience and creativity, neighbourliness and greater community connection as people looked out for one another or for those more vulnerable • Government funding facilitating access to services, the development of innovative programs; for example free child care, the placement of people who are homeless in accommodation, the development of outreach programs and new communication and engagement strategies, JobKeeper and JobSeeker payments etc.	Secondly, Council could use this information to inform and strengthen services and programs that enhance the positive impacts as well as address gender equality and public health goals.
Themes	**Implications for Council**
4.4 The mental health impact on women* Whilst there have been some positive emotional wellbeing implications for women of the pandemic year, many many women described their feelings of anxiety, depression, worry, stress, overload, tension, right through to complete mental health breakdown. In some cases this was an exacerbation of existing mental health issues, in others it was a new experience. The multiple roles women have were described as being even more challenging as a result of the pandemic. In many ways this finding goes to the core of the pressures of gender inequality in the workplace, in the home and in the community generally.	**Council needs to be aware of the emotional challenges women face and consider way to support preventive action as well as intervention to reduce the toll.** Advocacy on broader platforms of the importance of prevention strategies and adequate mental health services and support are important. Council can also consider the importance of responses to and compliance with the requirements of the Gender Equality Act as a means for Council to reduce the gender inequality in its own operations as well as the Greater Geelong community. Council could identify opportunities for improved early intervention which will emerge from the State Government's response to the Mental Health Royal Commission.
4.5 The exacerbation of existing structural and personal challenges faced by women* During COVID, women encountered many of the same challenges that affect them on an everyday basis: some of these challenges have been amplified during the time of COVID. These include • Gender segmentation and inequality in the workforce; casualised part-time, insecure, low paid and low skilled work • Gendered assumptions and expectations of women's role domestically and emotionally at home, as parents, and as carers • Lack of affordable and appropriate accommodation, increased by reported population shifts from metropolitan to regional areas • Violence and abuse in family situations, exacerbated by close proximity and	**Importance of maintaining an advocacy role** in relation to the structural issues that affect women and gender equality generally. Many issues may be outside the capacity of Council to influence directly, eg Centrelink income support; the local education sector; sea change trends, affordable housing supply, public transport planning. However, maintaining a voice and an advocacy perspective is important to bring local and regional issues into regional, state and national debates and responses. **Looking for ways for Council to adopt local responses to structural issues** where this is possible particularly in relation to • Applying a gender lens to business support and incentives • Housing supply and affordability e.g adopting a Mandatory Inclusion Zone

pressures of lockdown • Isolation due to age, living situation, disability, lack of English language skills, limited digital literacy and lack of access to communication infrastructure, limited transport or mobility options etc. • Mental and physical health challenges exacerbated by all of the above.	approach to support an increase in the supply of affordable housing, address limits on emergency housing in GG, plan ahead to engage with the newly announced public/social housing budget • Council employment policy and practices to ensure gender equality is enshrined in remuneration, permanency, work hours, flexibility and work-life balance, actively supporting initiatives that support men as well as women to take up the caring and domestic roles, acknowledging and responding to the impact of family violence on women workers etc, all of which is line with the requirements of the Gender Equality Act 2020 • The provision and upgrades of physical infrastructure and services to support community facilities to be universally accessible and COVID safe; consider new infrastructure to address existing gaps in health facilities (e.g a public hydrotherapy pool) • Advocate for adequate public transport and wheelchair accessible taxis at all times and address the supply of community transport • Ensure existing local agencies can continue to support women in ways that have been shown to be effective • Adopt strategies that address the digital divide. • Be aware that investment in care services rather than infrastructure is a far more cost-effective way to boost employment especially for women (ACOSS 2021)
Themes	**Implications for Council**
4.6 The emergence of new challenges due to COVID Women have also had to grapple with new challenges in the face of the pandemic. These include • supporting home learning • working, studying and communicating remotely • working in highly pressured front-line situations with high levels of anxiety and infection control measures • managing and adapting a business or an agency to the pandemic context • maintaining family and community connection whilst being locked down • finding new ways to maintain physical and emotional health • coping with pressured family situations of close proximity with little relief • isolation from friends and family support networks Many women have struggled with these new challenges in isolation. Some agencies have made especial efforts to reach out to women thus isolated and less able to find their way to supports outside the home.	**Consider ways to adopt, encourage, support and fund outreach approaches** that reach out to isolated and vulnerable women who may not ask for help or make contact with services, but who may respond to generalised inquiries about their health and wellbeing. This type of outreach can provide an important connection with someone outside their home, and can also ensure that they are linked to appropriate services as needed. The focus of such outreach would be on psycho-social rather than practical needs, though there can also be a capacity to refer. Good examples exist locally as in the Wellbeing Navigators program through Diversitat, and the local Headspace initiatives for young people. Other examples exist around the state, including buddy systems, initiatives to reach out to older and young people, people living with a disability and women in family violence situations. Local government also has potential to play a valuable role in supporting staff in community organisations to develop the skills and systems needed for effective and safe outreach approaches.

	Recognise and support the value of people who work on a one to one basis in outreach and home based settings getting together for mutual support and training. For example, Council home based services are provided by personal care workers who are mainly women who work in isolation from one another in home based settings. During COVID they have missed the regular face-to-face support session where they got together to share experiences, provide mutual support, and undertake professional development. The bilingual support workers who ran the Wellbeing Navigator's project benefitted enormously from the opportunity to get together regularly with a skilled casework who assisted them to debrief, discuss challenges and identify training needs. **Enhance the capacity for communication and connection for all, especially those vulnerable to isolation and exclusion.** There are many ways people would like Council to play a role in enhancing the communication capacity of people, especially for community based groups and for those who are vulnerable, isolated or excluded by social, physical or emotional factors. Council could consider developing new ways of addressing the following: • Tailored and /or personalised support to use on-line means of communication. The consultations noted a disjunction between what people have been offered or may think they have been offered, and what they really need help with. Thus being offered opportunities to learn how to use a computer may not appeal to someone who does not see her phone or her iPad as a computer but who could benefit from an opportunity to expand her skills in using her device. Potentially, rather than urging people to avail themselves of 'computer skills training', perhaps messaging and support could be reframed in terms of how you can use your phone or IPad to find on exercise program on line; talk to your grandson in Paris, find where you can buy a widget, find that song whose words you cannot remember, get the bus timetable …. etc. • Using zoom may seem easy to those familiar with such programs, but is a rather frightening mystery for many older people who could benefit from the opportunity it offers to meet and chat with family and friends, or participate in interactive activities, such as on-line gentle exercise programs, U3A classes, craft activities, leisure programs, book clubs etc. CALD women could also, with support, better use the internet to access English language classes, chat sessions, resources etc. • Internet access is an issue for many who cannot afford an internet connection or a large supply of data, and whose access is limited to free wifi (which

	disappeared during COVID when café's or libraries etc closed down). • Supporting diverse community groups to be able to manage their activities using new on-line options and COVID safe practices- especially relevant for small, voluntary based groups • Supporting the on-going development of initiatives such as Diversitat's work with Telegram App to reach migrant and refugee women.
Themes	**Implications for Council**
4.7 Flexible work arrangements This research highlights the benefits and the challenges of the pandemic induced changes to working arrangements and the increase in options to work remotely from home. Women have enjoyed the flexibility this has offered and the opportunities to manage work, parenting, caring and home duties. However, they also note that it puts more pressure on them to juggle these multiple roles and at times increases the expectation that they will "do it all".	**Council can consider ways it can make flexible work arrangements available** to those who want it particularly for parents and carers. Flexible work supports parenting and caring roles, but this should not be seen as something women should do. If men do not share access to flexible work and do not pick up this option, then women could find that this is a change that actually creates more pressure on them to manage multiple roles.
4.8 The digital divide There have been great strides in the development of service models, communication systems, support methods, recreation opportunities on-line and many people commented how great this had been in terms of keeping in touch, finding distractions, maintaining and adopting new ways of exercising, interacting etc. But many others are on the other side of what could be termed a digital divide, for them lockdown brought isolation and disconnection and they faced many challenges as they did not have the skills or the access to digital means of communication, information search, support, connection. Issues they faced include the lack of funds to buy appropriate hard and soft ware; lack of understanding or capacity to use what they do have access to; anxiety or fear of virtual communication or of potential risks, loss of privacy or violation of confidentiality. Assumptions are easily made that all have equal access to and facility with digital systems, but certain groups are critically left behind; older people with little prior experience of digital systems, people with limited funds to purchase equipment, people with limited education or English language skills or even the physical or mental capacity to use computers effectively.	**Consider ways to reduce the digital divide** by using existing facilities such as libraries or other council facilities within local areas. Council could develop new ways of providing access, support, digital infrastructure, education, training and oversight to reassure people regarding safety and confidentiality risks.
4.9 Changes in service co-ordination, collaboration and focus Some services blossomed into new on-line methods and ways of delivering services; some adopted inspiring, proactive, outreach approaches, some hunkered down and reduced co-operation, collaboration, and communication (for example council	**Council needs to keep an eye on these developments as service co-ordination and supply is critical and early intervention and prevention activities are vital to pre-empt the need for support and reduce the need for crisis support.** Collaboration between Council and agencies delivering services in the family violence, homelessness, multicultural areas and the recent move being led by the

services that ATSI people used were reported as having been shut down or reduced). Some focussed on crisis responses and reduced their primary prevention focus Agencies are reporting that they have faced increased demands for support that have taxed their workforce and demanded the adoption of new ways of connecting with and meeting client needs and delivering support. Whilst this has been seen as important, it has presented them with new challenges and diverted resources and effort away from prevention activities.	Wathaurong to establish a 'Closing the Gap Consortium' have been mentioned as a positive process during the pandemic. It would be beneficial to continue these collaborations and to support partnerships which improve service access, co-ordination and address critical service gaps.
Themes	**Implications for Council**
4.10 New ways of community connection and support The importance of people being connected within their community and within their networks was frequently highlighted through the research, interviews and the survey. There were many examples of people initiating creative and new ways of connecting throughout the lockdown periods and many of these have continued. Some of these were led by staff of community service organisations; some were led by volunteers involved within community groups and some just initiated by local residents within their areas. Examples include fun on-line activities (cooking classes, disco sessions), small locally based social enterprises, and scheduled catch-up sessions within community networks.	**Council can support the continuation and further development of creative initiatives which build community connections with and for women.** These can be supported by maximising the use of existing council programs and facilities to promote community connection including such things as: • Council's community grants program/s • facilitating access to community facilities and digital infrastructure • promotion and co-ordination of community initiatives through Council's communication systems, and community leadership programs • facilitating the sharing of ideas and information on successful initiatives through community networks and groups

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Framework for the recommendations

This research highlights some key ways in which Council could underpin its post-pandemic recovery plans so as to address the impact that the women of Greater Geelong have experienced over the last year. The women of Greater Geelong have told us again and again to

Listen to us; hear what we need and act on our experiences and our advice; work with the agencies that know us and support us; give us good advice, information, services and support so we can raise our families, be healthy, and get assistance when we need it; help us to share our heavy loads and our many roles at work, at home and in the community.

Council is encouraged to respond to their voices as reported in this document and to;

- **Listen and integrate** women's views and experiences into research, policy, planning and services, especially the voices of women who are most vulnerable, marginalised and disadvantaged.
- **Adopt** a gender lens in all that it does; this will not only inform and enable compliance with the requirements of the Gender Equality Act 2020, but will also support Council to r**ecognise** the range of positive and negative impacts of the last year and the ways in which women are disadvantaged, ignored or unsupported and hindered from full participation in and contribution to their community.
- **Partner, collaborate with and support** agencies that have specific and specialised knowledge of women's experiences and needs.
- **Provide and fund** services, business development, local infrastructure and natural environments that are designed *with* women's input and that will meet women's needs.
- **Educate and promote** new thinking and behaviours about women's roles at home and at work that emphasize a sharing of domestic, caring, parenting and income earning roles.
- **Reconsider** Council's own policy, practices and research and **plan** new policies and practices that take all of the above into account, especially in relation to Council's employment policies and practices.
- **Advocate** for local, state and federal recovery thinking and action that takes the above into account.

In crafting the recommendations below, the consultants have been mindful that Council already has a number of statements, plans, values, principles and strategies that frame their actions. Many of these will be re-developed in 2021. The recommendations detailed below are informed by and are reflective of the values outlined in the COGG Council Plan 2018-2022.

1. Respect and encourage each other
2. Create a healthy and safe environment for all
3. Embrace new ideas and better ways to work

4. Make people the centre of our business.

Table 5 details the recommendations within a matrix that cross references the key roles of local government with the four environments for health and wellbeing. We trust this will assist future planning so as to integrate gender equality framed action into core Council business.

5.2 Recommended areas for Council action

KEY ROLES OF COUNCIL	RECOMMENDED ACTION WITHIN THE ENVIRONMENTS FOR HEALTH AND WELLBEING			
	Social /Cultural Environment	**Built Environment /Infrastructure**	**Economic Environment**	**Natural Environmental**
Advocate: raise awareness of the issues and needs of local residents and businesses, initiate or support campaigns for positive change	**Advocate** to state and federal governments regarding the critical impact mental health has on women and the need for gender sensitive prevention and intervention **Advocate** to local businesses and employers around the adoption of gender equity and family friendly employment practices	**Advocate** to state and federal governments and to developers about the need for social housing especially to cater for women fleeing family violence **Advocate** to state government on the improved public transport provision in the region including wheelchair accessible taxis	**Advocate** to federal government to maintain JobKeeper, increase JobSeeker and extend age limits in JobMaker **Advocate** to regional and state government bodies about the importance of economic stimulus and support initiatives incorporating and responding to women's workforce patterns, and the importance of gender equity and family friendly employment practices	**Advocate** to state government around the importance of safe, accessible and beautiful urban and peri-urban natural open spaces
Partner and co-ordinate: develop relationships and alliances and work with others to achieve common goals	**Implement** active community engagement strategies to harness women's experience and needs **Liaise with, regularly consult with and build relationships** with organisations which focus on women's' experience and needs especially in relation to young women, First Nation women, women with a disability, women experiencing family violence and housing stress and women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds			
Provide: a range of services and support, preventative interventions, infrastructure and facilities to individuals and groups	**Provide** outdoor and on-line activities (and promote them to women) that include interaction, recreation and exercise in a safe environment at prices all women can afford, including: gym exercises,	**Provide** community transport to fill gaps in public transport system **Develop** footpaths, pavements, roadways, paths etc that are safe, accessible,	**Provide** support to local businesses and social enterprises through Council's economic development programs with a focus on the specific needs and aspirations of women	**Provide and enhance** beautiful accessible urban and peri-urban open spaces that encourage use by women for recreation, exercise, social and community connection eg, support "friends of" areas, community garden

	dancing, music, workshops, yoga, etc. **Provide and enhance** outreach library services which are of particular value for isolated, transport challenged and homebound women **Provide support services** for small community organisations to assist them to operate sustainably e.g. managing compliance issues. **Address** the digital divide and • Plan digital service hubs within local areas, using existing facilities such as libraries, Council service hubs etc • Listen and respond to the specific needs of those most digitally disadvantaged • Support training for, translations and use of information apps such as Telegram app and the agencies that promote and use them as multilingual means of information dissemination • Use and deliver platforms for public interest webinars • Provide IT platforms and practical training to assist community organisations to use these methods for	and suitable for women with wheels (assisted mobility vehicles, wheelchairs, prams, pushers, children on bikes and scooters and women on bikes) **Provide** more outdoor infrastructure for activities in local areas such as community gardens, adult exercise facilities, all ages playgrounds, picnic and shelter areas		groups, street based networks and home and nature strip based gardening etc

	their activities and to ensure cyber safety. •			
Key Roles of Council	**Social /Cultural Environment**	**Built Environment /Infrastructure**	**Economic Environment**	**Natural Environmental**
Fund: provide grants funding or subsidies to local groups and agencies to progress and develop services and infrastructure for individuals and groups	**Fund** appropriate organisations to undertake pro-active outreach activities that enhance community connection, link vulnerable isolated people with support and increase a focus on prevention **Fund** community organisations to deliver engaging initiatives led by women which build social connections and the enhance health and wellbeing of women.	**Fund** modifications to existing buildings and infrastructure in ways that will encourage women to use them by addressing their security and safety concerns eg lighting, safe entrances, no hidden scary dark areas etc.	E**nsure** the majority of business recovery funds go to initiatives in areas where women work: retail, hospitality, caring and women owned small business	**Fund** initiatives and groups that aim to promote and care for local parks and gardens, reserves, foreshores, and community gardens etc ensuing this is done in ways that support the inclusion and benefit of women
Inform, promote and educate: share information, raise awareness and develop knowledge and skills to empower individuals and groups	**Educate and inform** the community about the benefits for all, especially for children, of shared roles for both parents across work and home settings. This includes work hours, flexible work arrangements, domestic, parenting and care tasks, involvement in education and schools etc **Promote** the equal division of domestic, caring and paid work through Council's employment policies and practices **Educate** Council's own workforce and the broader community on the importance of respectful relationships in all	**Educate and inform** planners and developers about the importance of applying a gender lens to the design and construction of the built environment.	**Inform and support** employers and businesses to adopt family friendly and gender equity employment practices and workplace policies such as parental leave and flexible, hours, locations and **emphasise t**he benefits for all of these approaches for women **Inform and support** businesses and employers to be aware of the impact of family violence on women employees (and thus on the workplace and the business generally) and to develop supportive employment practices in response	**Promote, inform and educate** the community about the benefits of using natural public open space for recreation, mental health community connection, every day as well as in times of pandemic and social distancing. **Promote** the mental and physical benefits of home gardening

	contexts and between all people Support initiatives designed to raise awareness and change behaviour around family and sexual violence			
Key Roles for Council	**Social /Cultural Environment**	**Built Environment /Infrastructure**	**Economic Environment**	**Natural Environmental**
Research and plan: collect, analyse and disseminate quantitative and qualitative data to inform evidence-based planning, priority setting, decision making and evaluation for services and infrastructure which responds to current and future needs and requirements	Routinely **seek out** women's voices when undertaking research and planning activities and make sure that appropriate and sensitive ways of hearing these voices are used, especially in relation to the voices of women from marginalised and vulnerable groups **Undertake** gender equity focussed research, data collection and analysis and apply to planning, policy and discussions for example; on the on impact on women of urban growth, moves from metro Melbourne on rural/farming communities **Explor**e Council's capacity to provide and stimulate the provision of emergency and long term social housing with particular emphasis on the unmet need of women leaving family violence relationships, First Nation and CALD women			
Regulate: provide governance and regulatory controls such as local laws and health and building controls	**Utilise** Council's role in public health to enhance the health of women through immunisation programs, strategies for infection control, and messaging about the safe use of public facilities and spaces	**Increase** requirement for developers to provide a proportion of public/social housing **Consider** planning policy relating to the interface between rural/farming and growing residential development – impacts on women/families		**Consider** planning policy relating to the provision, design and maintenance of open space that caters to women's need for beautiful, safe, accessible and useable parks, gardens, reserves and open and natural spaces

Appendix 1: Pandemic Research Working Group Membership

Julie Spec	Gender Equity Officer, Social Equity and Safety, Healthy Communities
Jane Wager	Coordinator Social Equity and Safety, Healthy Communities Gender Equity, CALD, Aboriginal, Governance and Advisory committees
Felicity Bolitho	Coordinator Engagement, Corporate Affairs, Governance, Strategy & Performance
Emma Wheatland	Coordinator Community Inclusion, Recovery Group, Access and Inclusion
Hayley Ince	Team leader Economic Performance and Communication, Economic Development Plans
Chantal Chauvet-Allen	Coordinator Health Equity and Planning, Healthy Communities, Municipal Public Health and Well-being Plan, Healthy Ageing
Kylie Riley	Acting Coordinator Health Equity Planning, Healthy Communities
Kaley Nicholson[7]	Senior Lead Diversity and Inclusion, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Liaison
Sharon Rixon	Economic Development Coordinator - Barwon South West Region

[7] Kaley Nicholson left the COGG before the completion of the project.

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THE CITY OF
GREATER GEELONG

GENDER COVID-19 IMPACT ANALYSIS RESEARCH REPORT

IMPLEMENATION ACTION PLAN 2021 - 22

CITY OF GREATER GEELONG

Executive summary

THE RESEARCH

As part of the COVID-19 response package on 21 September 2020 Council approved $30,000 to conduct research; establishing local evidence of the impacts of the pandemic on women, resulting in the Gender COVID-19 Impact Analysis research report.

The research was commissioned and designed with an intersectional lens to ensure the reflection of women's different life experiences echoed cultural backgrounds, ages, abilities, economic and social status, ensuring the engagement with cis[1] women, trans women[2] and gender non-binary / gender diverse[3] people.

The data is qualitative and richly illustrates the complexity of assessing the extent of impact on women, such as:

- exacerbating a number of pre-existing structural and personal difficulties that women face, including gender stereotypes and gendered roles; and
- lack of affordable housing, family violence, mental illness, and isolation due to age, disability, limited English language skills, limited digital literacy or access to communication infrastructure, limited mobility or transport.

In addition to providing the basis to respond to initial impacts of the pandemic the report provides context to inform the City's gender equity work and responsibilities.

METHODOLOGY FOR RESPONDING

This implementation action plan responds to the research recommendations actions both in terms of those that are already happening and can be implemented in the short as well as those actions for the medium and longer terms.

Further, the actions fall into two key categories those that are responsive providing an immediate impact and those that address the underpinning structural challenges that have been exacerbated through the pandemic.

"Council is encouraged to respond to their voices as reported in this document and to:

- **Listen and integrate** women's views and experiences into research, policy, planning and services, especially the voices of women who are most vulnerable, marginalised and disadvantaged.
- **Adopt a gender lens** in all that it does; this will not only inform and enable compliance with the requirements of the Gender Equality Act 2020, but will also support Council to recognise the range of positive and negative impacts of the last year, and the ways in which women are disadvantaged, ignored or unsupported and hindered from full participation in, and contribution to, their community.
- **Partner and collaborate** with and support agencies that have specific and specialised knowledge of women's experiences and needs, and support new ways for women to access opportunities, networks and services through outreach and digital platforms.
- **Provide and fund** services, business development, local infrastructure and natural environments that are designed with women's input and that will meet women's needs.
- **Educate and promote** new thinking and behaviours about women's roles at home and at work that emphasize a sharing of domestic, caring, parenting and income earning roles.
- **Reconsider** Council's own policy, practices and research and plan new policies and practices that take all of the above into account, especially in relation to Council's employment policies and practices.
- **Advocate** for local, state and federal recovery thinking and action that takes the above into account."[4]

IMPLEMENTION AND ACTIONS

The following table is a summary of the actions responding to specific concerns and issues raised through the research. The focus of the first table is the immediate responses and actions.

The additional tables identify actions as they relate to the mechanisms identified above and the response domains these tables, on the whole focus on the longer-term structural responses highlighted by and arising from the impacts of the pandemic.

1 Cis refers to people whose sense of personal identity and gender corresponds with their birth sex.

2 Trans women can refer to either a woman who was assigned male at birth, identifies as a woman, but does not wish to undergo physical changes, or a transsexual woman

3 Gender non-binary / gender diverse are terms for gender identities that are neither male or female that is people who identity that are outside the traditional gender binary.

4 Pandemic Impact Research Report April 202; Meg Montague and Kerry Stubbings.

ACTION PLAN | 2021 - 2022

This action plan table focuses on the tangible challenges identified through the research highlighting where there are current responses and proposing future short-term actions to progress. The City's Recovery Plan for COVID-19- Initiatives has a number of actions responding directly to the issues raised through the consultation - these are marked as occurring in this plan. The medium to long term actions (2022 and beyond) are identified at the end of the table and require further discussion and development.

Themes identified by women as having both a positive and negative impact on their lives as a result of the pandemic include:

- Employment, Education & Finances
- Housing
- Physical health
- Mental health and emotional wellbeing
- Violence, abuse and harassment at home, at work and in the community
- Home and family life
- Community engagement and connection

More specifically key challenges identified:

- Affordable housing
- Access to income
- Loss of employment
- Food security
- Family violence
- Mental illness
- Isolation due to age
- Disability
- Limited English language skills
- Limited digital literacy or access to communication infrastructure
- Limited mobility or transport
- Community safety.

Gender COVID-19 Actions

PRIOIRTY THEME	ACTIONS	TIMELINE	COMMENT / UPDATE
Communication	Develop a communication plan to promote all services, supports and programs within this action plan targeting women identified within the research as experiencing immediate and negative impacts of COVID-19.	July 2021	Information provision is occurring and an ongoing activity, the communication plan will focus and target the promotion of programs and supports for women. A targeted plan linked to this action plan is currently being finalised.
	Utilise Council community signs and the CAOS newsletter to target and promote information programs to women.	Occurring/ ongoing	
	Review the National Women's Alliances. (2020) Disaster Recovery, Planning and Management for Women to identify strategies for consideration by this project.	Short/ immediate	
	Implement the communication and support plan developed by the interagency Cultural and Linguistically Diverse COVID-19 (Barwon Health, COGG, Department of Family, Fairness and Housing) working group. This plan includes a focus on sharing key information in key community languages and mechanisms to engage CALD communities during an outbreak.	Occurring/ ongoing	
Employment	Through the response to the Gender Equity Act 2020 and the development of the Gender Equity Action Plan adopt family friendly and gender equity employment practices and workplace policies and develop supportive employment practices in response to family violence.	Occurring/ ongoing	
	Unemployed and underemployed women are a priority group for the Jobs Advocate program, a 3-year funded program providing linkages to local job services.	Occurring to 2023	

Timeline:	Short/Immediate - Current	Medium – 3 to 9 months	Long (Establish scope) – 9 to 12 months

PRIOIRTY THEME	ACTIONS	TIMELINE	COMMENT / UPDATE
	The Vital Communities project identifies employment as a priority focus area. Work with this project to ensure action and strategies reflect women as a key target group.	Occurring/ ongoing	
Education	Initiate discussion with the relevant strategic networks such as the LLEN and G21 Education and Training Pillar to focus attention on the identification of strategies to assist and address the issues raised by women regarding their own and their family's education needs.	Short/ immediate	
Digital Inclusion	The Free – Wi-Fi Mapping Project is complete. Ensure that the map is promoted and available to the public.	Occurring/ ongoing	There are a range of issues under the banner of digital inclusion that had a specific impact during COVID-19 regarding working from home and education from home. Technical skills, increased costs related to data usage, access to space and hardware as well as internet speed are examples.
	Continue the mapping of community services organisation provide access to digital programs supporting digital inclusion neighbourhood houses and libraries. On completion of the mapping.	Occurring/ ongoing	
	Implementation of the public Wi-Fi project in the Northern suburbs.	Short/ immediate	
	Explore opportunities to develop digital inclusion projects in collaboration with the NBN and local community services.	Short/ immediate	
Food and income security.	Continue to promote the existing food and income support programs that exist including programs specifically developed as part of the COVID-19 response.	Occurring/ ongoing	
	Coordination of food recovery efforts during the recovery phase included: • Coordination of food delivery services, social services and community groups to deliver and provide food in a safe way to people who can't leave their homes • leadership in the creation of new initiatives like buddying schemes, shopping for others; support for existing initiatives to scale up; or local food and hospitality businesses to reposition themselves	Occurring/ ongoing	

Timeline:	Short/Immediate - Current	Medium – 3 to 9 months	Long (Establish scope) – 9 to 12 months

PRIOIRTY THEME	ACTIONS	TIMELINE	COMMENT / UPDATE
	A program of food support has been implemented to support international students caught in Australia without access to employment or financial aid. Many of these students are young women.	Occurring/ ongoing	
Physical health **Including Community safety in public spaces**	Implementation of safety projects such as YourGround https://yourground.crowdspot.com.au/page/welcome to hear the voices of women regarding what makes a space safe and friendly and what are some of the actions that can address those areas with poor safety. Utilise the findings to advise works and budget to address issues raised.	To 30 July 2021	The results, available after 30 July will advise future priority areas for attention.
	Investigate Council's regulatory role in public health to identify opportunities to enhance the health of women.	Short/ immediate	
Mental health and wellbeing	Identify opportunities for Council to support and bolster existing programs and facilities for women such as women's circles, neighbourhood houses, seniors' centres, libraries, walking groups, peer programs, family violence, sexual assault support groups and U3A programs.	Short/ immediate	Mental health and wellbeing consider issues such isolation due to age, mental illness, disability and social connection
	Provide young women a variety of safe, supported and accessible opportunities to participate in social activities aimed at improving connectedness.	Occurring/ ongoing	
	Support to International Students through the International Friends program an online network to connect students unable to leave Australia due to COVID-19.	Occurring/ ongoing	
	Support to community organisations to provide online services, be available for food relief, access to quick response grant and rent relief.	Occurring/ ongoing	
	Women's peer support program for carers of people with a disability.	Occurring/ ongoing	
	Mental health first aid for care providers.	Occurring/ ongoing	

Timeline:	Short/Immediate - Current	Medium – 3 to 9 months	Long (Establish scope) – 9 to 12 months

PRIOIRTY THEME	ACTIONS	TIMELINE	COMMENT / UPDATE
Family violence	Safe at Home web hub was created in response to the potential for risk to women and children, older people, people from various and diverse communities to escalate during the pandemic. Redesign the web pages so that more efficient access to information and resources for people experiencing violence, perpetrating or at risk of violence escalating. Information is sectioned by: • What is family violence • Support Services – for a broad section of the community • Culturally specific lists of services and in various language groups, information on family violence and parenting – created by local CALD communities • Support for men • Gender Equity & • Campaigns, Plans and Research	Occurring/ ongoing	The Safe at Home hub is currently being updated and included in the communication plan immediately.
	G21 Respect 2040 Strategic Plan Gender Equity and Prevention of Violence Against Women - under development	Short/ immediate	
	Utilising local, state and national data to compare local priorities	Short/ immediate	
Affordable housing	Co-ordinate, execute and conclude the current Feasibility Study for 100 homes jointly funded by Homes Victoria (formerly DHHS) and the City.	Occurring/ ongoing	The work in this area is guided by the actions outlined in the City's Social Housing Plan 2020 – 2040. While this is a whole of population plan the evidence clearly identifies women of all ages as experiencing the highest levels of housing related stress. https://www.geelongaustralia.com.au/socialhousing/documents/item/8d7bb60089eabef.aspx
	Investigate the appropriate Governance / Trust model and prepare an options paper for Council's consideration	Occurring/ ongoing	
	Victoria's Big Housing Build – Actively participate and negotiate components of the Victorian Government's policy – i.e. Local Government Compact and Maximum Guarantee Investment	Occurring/ ongoing	

Timeline:	Short/Immediate - Current	Medium – 3 to 9 months	Long (Establish scope) – 9 to 12 months

PRIOIRTY THEME	ACTIONS	TIMELINE	COMMENT / UPDATE
	Coordinating Council activities responding to homelessness	Occurring/ ongoing	
	Investigating opportunities for social housing renewal and public realm upgrades in Corio-Norlane, in conjunction with the Victorian Planning Authority (VPA), Homes Victoria and Department of Transport (DoT).	Occurring/ ongoing	
	Explore Council's capacity to provide and stimulate the provision of emergency and long-term social housing with emphasis on the unmet need of women leaving family violence relationships, First Nation and CALD women.	Medium	
Transport and mobility	Focus expenditure in key communities to ensure footpaths, pavements, roadways, paths that are safe, accessible, and suitable for women with wheels (prams, wheelchairs).	Short/ immediate	
Advocate	Develop and advocacy plan which identifies projects and raise awareness of the issues and needs of residents and businesses, initiate or support campaigns for positive change.	Medium	
Partner and coordinate	Develop relationships and alliances and work with others to achieve common goals including implementation of active community engagement strategies to harness women's experience and needs.	Medium	This project will build on the existing approaches to support a whole of organisation approach. Feeding into the TOM and the Gender Equity Action Plan are 2 key vehicles along with the links to the City's Engagement Policy.
	Liaise with, regularly consult with and build relationships with organisations which focus on women's' experience and needs especially in relation to young women, First Nation women, women with a disability, women experiencing family violence and housing stress and women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.	Occurring/ ongoing	

Timeline:	Short/Immediate - Current	Medium – 3 to 9 months	Long (Establish scope) – 9 to 12 months

PRIOIRTY THEME	ACTIONS	TIMELINE	COMMENT / UPDATE
Provide	Identify gaps in the range of services, support, preventative interventions, infrastructure and facilities to individuals and groups.	Medium	
Fund	Review the current programs to ensure grants, funding or subsidies to local groups and agencies progress and develop services and infrastructure for individuals and groups that challenge the gender rigid norms and drivers that impact on gender equity.	Medium	
Inform, promote and educate	Review current practices to ensure gender is considered when sharing information, raising awareness and developing knowledge and skills which empower individuals and groups.	Medium	
Research and plan	Develop an internal clearing house to collect, analyse and disseminate quantitative and qualitative data to inform evidence-based planning, priority setting, decision making and evaluation for services and infrastructure which responds to current and future needs and requirements.	Long	The focus of these projects is to bring a coordinated approach to the work that is already occurring as well as identify key areas to focus research and planning.
	Identify mechanisms to routinely seek out women's voices when undertaking research and planning activities and make sure that appropriate and sensitive ways of hearing these voices are used, especially in relation to the voices of women from marginalised and vulnerable groups.	Medium	
	Undertake gender equity focussed research, data collection and analysis and apply to planning, policy and discussions for example; on the on impact on women of urban growth, moves from metro Melbourne on rural/farming communities.	Medium	
Regulate	Identify existing approaches and opportunities to provide governance and regulatory controls such as local laws, health and building controls.	Medium	
Review and renew	This action plan in 12 months – June 2022	June 2022	

Timeline:	Short/Immediate - Current	Medium – 3 to 9 months	Long (Establish scope) – 9 to 12 months

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CITY OF GREATER GEELONG

2.5. Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2018-21 Final Report

Source: **Community Life**
Director: **Robyn Stevens**

Purpose

1. For Council to note the final report for the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan (MPHWP) 2018-21.

Background

2. The MPHWP is a legislated, whole of organisation plan required under section 26 of the Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008. Its implementation has been monitored through the Council Plan reporting process and via internal engagement. Each year, an annual report is prepared for the Secretary of the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH). This annual report will also be provided to DFFH.

Key Matters

3. Over the last three years, the City has worked with its partners to meet community needs and create future opportunities for improved health and wellbeing. Some of the key activities implemented since the Plan's adoption include: the RISE Employment Program, the Vital Communities Project, heatwave vulnerability mapping and research to understand the impacts of a changing climate along the coast, the Supporting Community Mental Health and Wellbeing Pilot Project, the Shared Trails Masterplan, and the development and implementation of the Social Housing Plan 2020 - 41, Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan and Ba-gurrk Gender Equity Framework.

4. A range of other core areas of Council business such as the delivery of capital works projects, compliance programs, street activation programs, parenting and youth programs also form a suite of activities delivered across the three years which provide health and wellbeing benefits to the community.

5. Three projects were selected as case studies for 2020-21 to demonstrate health and wellbeing outcomes in communities. These were the My Story project, the Nature Stewards Program and the Safer and Stronger Communities Pilot Project.

6. Population health data collected in 2017 was used to inform the Plan. Whilst there were some areas of improvement such as feelings of safety, nine out of 18 indicators worsened, particularly mental health and wellbeing, incidents of family violence and consumption of takeaway meals and sugary drinks. Learnings include a focus on capacity building in evaluation for implementing the Our Community Plan 2021-25

RESOLUTION - Item 2.5

Cr Mansfield moved, Cr Moloney seconded -

That Council:

1. **Notes the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2018-21 Final Report; and**

2. **Notes that the final report will be submitted to the Secretary of the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) in accordance with the requirements of section 26(6A) of the Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008.**

Carried

Financial Sustainability

7. Activities in delivering the MPHWP have been considered as part of the annual budget process.

Community Engagement

8. Internal stakeholders were surveyed in February 2020 to review the internal process for reporting on the actions within the Plan. Feedback presented challenges in systems used to collect data, monitoring actions and manual methods impacted on resources.

Social Equity and Sustainability

9. Health and social equity are underpinning principles of the MPHWP. Many of the activities highlighted in the report have been implemented to work towards more equitable health outcomes.

Relevant Law/Policy/Legal Implications

10. Section 26 of the Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 requires local governments to undertake an annual review of their MPHWP and its measures. This report includes a review of the MPHWP's implementation and data for key population health measures.

Alignment to Community Plan and Vision

11. This report aligns with Our Community Plan 2021-2025 strategic priority:
Healthy, caring and inclusive community.

12. This report aligns with the Community led 30-year Vision, "Greater Geelong: A Clever and Creative Future" community aspiration:
An inclusive, diverse, healthy and socially connected community.

Conflict of Interest

13. No officer involved in the preparation of this report declared a general or material conflict of interest.

Risk Assessment

14. There are no known risks associated with implementing the final report.

Environmental Sustainability

15. The City must have regard to climate change when preparing a Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan. This report outlines various activities undertaken over the last three years which show the relationship between health and climate change. The health impacts of climate change has been chosen as a specific priority in the new Our Community Plan 2021-25.

Attachments

1. Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2018-21 FINAL REPORT [**2.5.1** - 26 pages]

THE CITY OF
GREATER GEELONG

MUNICIPAL PUBLIC HEALTH AND WELLBEING PLAN 2018-2021

FINAL REPORT

JUNE 2021

CITY OF GREATER GEELONG

Contents

Executive Summary 3

Monitoring and Evaluation 4

Implementation of the MPHWP Goals 6

Partnerships 16

Learnings 17

Appendices 18

Acknowledgement of Country

Council acknowledges Wadawurrung Traditional Owners of this land and all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People who are part of the Greater Geelong community today.

Executive Summary

Welcome to the final report for the City of Greater Geelong's Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan (MPHWP) 2018-21.

The City's Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan (MPHWP) 2018-21 was adopted by Council in October 2018. The four goals of the Plan were:



Monitoring of the MPHWP occurred through the Council Plan reporting process. Further information was obtained from each department towards the end of the financial year to provide a more detailed description of the City's contribution to community health and wellbeing.

Objectives for the Plan were developed as an internal resource, articulating how the organisation's work delivers on the goal areas of the Plan. This report presents the activities undertaken within these objectives that align with each goal area of the Plan across the last three years, including 2020-21.

In 2020-21, three case studies were developed in close partnership with project staff using an adapted version of the Most Significant Change (MSC) methodology, showing how each project has impacted the target audience. These case studies are presented in **Appendices 1, 2** and **3**.

The *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008* asks councils to work with partners in implementing the Plan, and several examples of projects in partnership with others have been included throughout the report.

In line with a 'health in all policies' approach, and as permitted by section 27 of the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*, the new Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan has been integrated into the City's new Community Plan 2021-25 which was adopted by Council on 22 June 2021.

The following **learnings** relate to monitoring and evaluating Our Community Plan 2021-25.

1. Establish an evaluation framework for Our Community Plan 2021-25.
2. Utilise a mixed methods approach to ensure a robust monitoring and reporting process for Our Community Plan 2021-25.
3. Incorporate strategic business planning into monitoring and reporting processes.
4. Seek and produce case studies which show the health and wellbeing impact of relevant actions and projects from Our Community Plan 2021-25.
5. Continue to build organisational capacity in all types of evaluation.
6. Establish a coordinated way to engage with a wide range of internal and external health and wellbeing partners in the delivery of Our Community Plan 2021-25.

As required by the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*, this report will be submitted to the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH).

Monitoring and Evaluation

A monitoring and evaluation framework for the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan (MPHWP) was developed in 2018.

EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

In summary, the framework referred to three levels of evaluation:

Evaluation type	Purpose
Process evaluation	Monitoring the implementation of **actions and strategies** that contribute to the four goal areas of the Plan
Impact evaluation	Using **case studies** to understand the impact of our work on the target populations
Outcome evaluation	Monitoring **population level health data** over time, noting that the City is only one of a range of influencers in community health and wellbeing outcomes. This data provides a useful snapshot of community wellbeing and how it has changed over time.

Process evaluation

To monitor the implementation of the MPHWP, we relied on bi-annual reporting (December and June each year) of activities and initiatives which related to the Plan's goal areas via the City's corporate reporting software 'CorVu'. This allowed Managers to draw on the work implemented through the City's various other strategies and plans which linked with health and wellbeing. This approach reiterated a 'health in all policies' narrative.

However, a review of this reporting process in February 2020 revealed that rather than relying solely on reporting software, multiple methods of capturing information were needed to provide a more robust process. A more streamlined and integrated reporting process could be achieved in the future if implementation is more strategic, with health and wellbeing reflected in **business plans.**

An internal committee was established to help raise awareness of the MPHWP across the organisation. The operation and effectiveness of this committee with interrupted by COVID-19. For more information about the operation of this committee, refer to **Appendix 4**.

Impact evaluation

There are three **case studies** presented in Appendices 1, 2 and 3. They present a more detailed analysis of three key projects implemented as part of this MPHWP, and the impact these projects had on participants. The projects were: The My Story project, the Nature Stewards Program and the Safer and Stronger Communities Pilot Project. Participants reflected on the benefits of participating, citing improvements in social connections, connection to nature, having a voice and feelings of empowerment.

For more information about the methodology used, refer to **Appendix 5**.

Outcome evaluation

Population level health data which informed the MPHWP has been revisited. The data has been presented under the relevant goal areas in the body of this report. The data shows:

- There has been a **significant increase in high to very high psychological distress** from 10.3 per cent in 2017 to 20 per cent in 2021. Women (25%) are being significantly more affected than men (15%).

- Social support networks the level of tolerance for diversity have both decreased, potentially indicating that people may have **fewer social connections**.
- A significantly higher percentage of adults are getting the recommended levels of physical activity, rising from 41 per cent in 2017 to 67 per cent in 2021. Both **males and females are more physically active**.
- Vegetable consumption and water intake have both increased, but **fruit consumption has decreased** over time.
- The **consumption of take away meals** once to three times per week has increased markedly from 10.6 per cent (2017) to 42 percent (2021), and **sugar sweetened beverages** are also being consumed by a higher proportion of adults.
- There are also now fewer adults in Greater Geelong at an increased risk lifetime **alcohol related harm**.
- **Spending on EGMs** has increased from approximately $9 million to $11 million over the last four years.
- The community feels generally safer where they live than they did in 2017, but **incidents of family violence are rising**.

From this, we can make some interpretations about how the health of the Greater Geelong community has changed, and whether this change has been positive or negative. However, we cannot make a direct link between the actions or strategies implemented by the City and population level health outcomes. Instead, we draw on available evidence to inform our work. The City's work is one contributing factor, along with the work of our partners and broader societal influences such as the impacts of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

Learnings

The key learnings from monitoring and evaluating this MPHWP are to:

1. Establish an evaluation framework for Our Community Plan 2021-25.
2. Utilise a mixed methods approach to ensure a robust monitoring and reporting process for Our Community Plan 2021-25.
3. Incorporate strategic business planning into monitoring and reporting processes.
4. Seek and produce case studies which show the health and wellbeing impact of relevant actions and projects from Our Community Plan 2021-25.
5. Continue to build organisational capacity in all types of evaluation.

Implementation of the MPHWP Goals

The below highlights represent a small selection of activities and initiatives undertaken as part of implementing the MPHWP. Further details are available in the 2018-19 and 2019-20 annual reports.

GOAL 1: SUPPORTING SOCIAL CONNECTION TO IMPROVE MENTAL HEALTH

Due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, mental health and social connection are more important now than ever before. This goal area acknowledges the importance of access to employment, living in an inclusive community, targeting those at risk of isolation and loneliness, increasing awareness of mental health and wellbeing and the impacts of climate change, and the importance of lifelong learning.

Summary

Strategic Indicators	Source	Baseline	2021	Change
Self-reported health ** (excellent or very good)	GPHS	59.2% (2017) M 62.6% F 55.9%	53.6% (2021) M 52.5% F 54.6%	↓
Life satisfaction (very highly or highly satisfied)	GPHS	85.8% (2017) M 85.4% F 86.2%	86% (2021)	↑
Psychological distress (high or very high)	GPHS	10.3% (2017) M 7.7% F 12.7%	20% (2021) M 15% F 25%	↑
Ability to get help from friends, family and neighbours when needed ** (strong support networks in family and friends)	VPHS	Friends: 93% Family: 94.8% Neighbours: 57.3%	Friends: 80.7% Family: 83.4% Neighbours: 56.4%	↓
Feeling valued by society (adults who definitely feel valued)	VPHS	44.9% (2014)	49.15% (2017)	↑
Tolerance of diversity ** (adults who feel multiculturalism makes life in their area better)	VPHS	57.4% (2014)	51.68% (2017)	↓

** Council Plan measure; GPHS = Geelong Preventative Health Survey; VPHS = Victorian Population Health Survey

Throughout the last four years, the City has delivered employment programs and traineeships, social engagement opportunities through events and forums, youth programs, parenting programs, arts programs, community grants, Mental Health First Aid training and delivered meals to those who needed them the most.

Despite this, the above population level data shows that **four out of six indicators have worsened over the last four years**. The ongoing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic will have impacted this data however the indicators show mental health and wellbeing continues to be an ongoing concern for the community.

Evaluation of projects and programs is important to help understand the impact of our work on community mental health and wellbeing. The recommendations of the *Supporting Community Mental Health and Wellbeing Pilot Project* provide a starting point and could be implemented as part of the new Community Plan 2021-25.

Over the last three years from 2018, the City has worked with its partners to meet community needs and create future opportunities.

Objective 1.1: Increase access to employment opportunities and reduce barriers to employment

In 2019-20, 42 young people participated in the **RISE Program,** 23 of whom completed the program. Over the two-year pilot phase, over 75% of RISE graduates achieved full time work and apprenticeships in construction, with the remaining participants pursuing other employment and education pathways.

In 2021-21, nine local unemployed residents of the City were offered **18-month traineeships** in Certificate III in independent living by the Community Care department.

Objective 1.2: Foster an inclusive community that values, supports and celebrates diversity in all its forms

In 2019-20, the **Vital Communities project** commenced. Community profiles of all three areas were completed and an action plan to guide integrated work on job readiness was presented to the Governance Group. In 2020-21, the City provided funding for the Vital Communities social research project conducted by Deakin University, with focused attention on the communities of Corio, Norlane and Whittington.

In 2019-20, the City adopted its first **Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP)**, meeting the requirements for the 'reflect' stage of the RAP framework developed by Reconciliation Australia.

In 2019-20, a variety of **grants** were provided to improve health and wellbeing including the City's COVID related grant program, the Creative Communities Rapid Response and Professional Development grant, and over $540,000 worth of grants to community groups with a focus on improving community health.

Objective 1.3: Provide opportunities for social connection and community participation that are targeted to those at risk of isolation and loneliness

During Covid 19 restrictions in 2020-21, Community Care workers and Food Services workers continued to **deliver care and meals** into homes where people had no other social contacts. Around 285 community care workers supported nearly 5000 clients in this year. Client **newsletters** were sent with advice on staying well and suggestions on how to connect with others during lockdowns. These were augmented by **welfare calls** to vulnerable clients who had ceased their services during the peak of Covid 19 due to their health vulnerabilities. Youth-designed **postcards** to improve social connection were sent out with meals which were well received by clients.

Objective 1.4: Increase awareness of climate change and its health impacts, particularly for vulnerable populations

Council adopted a **Sustainability Framework** in February 2020, aiming to integrate sustainability principles into all the City's operations.

The City in partnership with Deakin University and the State Government aimed to better understand the impacts that climate change and **heatwaves** may have on our municipality by identifying high risk areas.

The City entered into a partnership with CSIRO, Borough of Queenscliff and the State Government to better understand the **impacts of a changing climate along the coast**.

Objective 1.5: Improve understanding and awareness of mental wellbeing, especially for vulnerable populations

In 2018-19, a **discussion paper** was developed about the City's role in mental health and funding through the budget process was obtained to progress this work in 2019-20. The **Supporting Community Mental Health and Wellbeing Pilot Project** was implemented which resulted in the development of a resource and bespoke learning framework for Council departments to understand their role in mental health and wellbeing.

Throughout 2020, Tourism Greater Geelong and the Bellarine (TGGB) pivoted their role from destination promotion to **industry support** with regular engagement and check-ins including one on one phone calls to each of the 700+ TGGB members.

For **International Day for People with Disability (IDPWD)** on 3 December 2020, the City coordinated a range of activities including the delivery of the Geelong Disability Awards and the **My Story Project**. 30 community events were held and there were over 60,000 views of videos from My Story and the Disability Awards. **See Case Study in Appendix 1.**

Objective 1.6: Provide opportunities for lifelong learning

In 2018-19, the Indoor Leisure Centres hosted five **health workshops for members** focusing on mental health, healthy eating and managing chronic health conditions.

In 2019-20, Council congratulated 13 graduates of the **Community Leadership Program**.

In 2019-20, the **National Wool Museum** held the 'Without Consent' and 'Now You See Us' exhibitions about forced adoptions and endangered birds respectively. In 2020-21 the **National Wool Museum** partnered with the **Asia Education Foundation** for a series of workshops focused on local heritage. The **'On the Land' exhibition,** developed in partnership with Wadawurrung was the first exhibition by Traditional Owners of Geelong.

GOAL 2: INCREASING PARTICIPATION IN PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

This goal area recognises the importance of partnerships and working with others to increase opportunities for living a healthy lifestyle as well as the importance of equity, access to nature, infrastructure and our pets.

Summary

Strategic Indicators	Source	Baseline	2021	Change
Adults who meet physical activity guidelines **	GPHS	41% (2017) M 45.8% F 36.6%	67.1% (2021) M 67.9% F 66.4%	

** Council Plan measure; GPHS = Geelong Preventative Health Survey

The City has a strong, established role in physical activity – both in direct program/service delivery and also in providing and maintaining facilities and infrastructure that support the community. Throughout the last four years, the City has delivered Walk to School programs, physical activity as part of early education services, youth programs, swimming programs, outdoor playgroups, maintained assets such as the Waterfront for the community to enjoy, facilities such as playgrounds, fenced dog parks, and our Leisure Centres, pivoting to online classes during lockdowns, and planning for connected walking trails and improved pathways.

The above population level data for Goal 2 shows a **significant improvement in the percentage of adults who meet physical activity guidelines**. This data includes the impact of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, which is one factor affecting results.

Evaluation of these projects and initiatives will help us to understand the impact of our work and our level of influence over population health outcomes. Population level data is focused on adults, so it would be useful to understand our impact on physical activity levels for children.

Increasing active living is a priority for the new Community Plan 2021-25, which acknowledges the importance of physical activity as a modifiable risk factor for the City's relatively high levels of chronic disease when compared to the state average.

Over the last three years from 2018, the City has worked with its partners to meet community needs and create future opportunities.

Objective 2.1: Work in partnership with others to promote and facilitate healthy lifestyle opportunities

In October 2018, the Healthy Communities team supported 38 local Geelong primary schools to participate in VicHealth's **Walk to School** initiative. Approximately 8,800 students together with their families used methods of active travel to and from school. In 2019, 41 primary schools participated, which was the highest number of schools since the program began. All five LGAs in the G21 region collaborated for the first time to promote the initiative, using a consistent key message of '*let's get active together*'.

The City was successful in gaining funding from VicHealth through the Physical Activity Innovation Grant for **'Move Your Way'**, a project to help change the environments of our current leisure facilities to be more inclusive for women and girls. In 2019, the City commissioned research to understand the motivations and barriers to physical

activity for inactive females aged 25 to 55 years. After the completion of Phase One, VicHealth reconsidered funding innovation projects, which impacted the continuation of Phase Two.

Tourism Greater Geelong and the Bellarine (TGGB) partners with **Active Geelong** to advocate for tourism and event opportunities that encourage residents and visitors to be more active. In 2019-20, Active Geelong developed a **physical activity tracking web platform** as a tool to engage with workplaces and the community in becoming more physically active. Active Geelong has gathered information on 223 individuals and 112 workplaces on their physical activity behaviours and this will continue to grow.

Objective 2.2: Ensure equitable access to sport, recreation and leisure facilities and programs

In 2018-29, 12 local or district **playgrounds** were renewed and a new sub-regional playground was constructed.

In 2019-20 the **City's Leisure Centres** delivered over 400 virtual and group fitness classes.

In 2019-20, the City piloted a **Men's Swimming Program** attracting 160 participants tailored to the culture-specific needs of refugee men from various backgrounds. The **Women's Swimming Program** attracted 226 participants.

Other targeted programs include **Girls Go Extreme (GGX) Program, Shred Sistas Program, Mini Movers** and the **LiveWell program.**

In 2020-21, the City created **"LiveWell at Home"** for Leisure Centre members during COVID restrictions. This provided member access at home to online group exercise classes.

Objective 2.3: Increase opportunities and provide connected infrastructure that encourages active travel

In 2018-19, The Grovedale Youth Walk, Lake Lorne Mindfulness Walk Drysdale, and Waurn Ponds Environmental Walk were developed as part of the **Knowing Your Place Walks** offerings. The 3222: Gurnang-Griggs Creek Walk, the latest in a series of Know Your Place Walks was developed by Year 11 VCAL students from St Ignatius College Geelong with the support and guidance of a City Project Officer.

In 2019-20, Council adopted the **Shared Trails Masterplan,** a 10-year plan aimed at creating a fully connected network of shared trails across the Greater Geelong region. By 2020-21, a number of pathway and trail connections had been completed and planning was underway to deliver the balance of connections identified in the masterplan.

In 2020-21, the **Ocean Grove Principal Pathway Network** was initiated which proposes an additional 25.2km of pathways to support the local community to be more active with improved active transport connectivity.

Objective 2.4: Plan for and provide locations for residents to exercise with their pets

In 2019-20, the City identified locations for **two new fenced dog park**s in Belmont and Lara, with a third site on the Bellarine yet to be determined.

Objective 2.5: Ensure quality open space is available, accessible and connected to encourage contact with nature, access to shade and opportunities for physical activity

A **new baseball and softball pavilion** opened at Stead Park, Corio in November 2019. The **Northern Skate Park** in Corio opened in January 2020.

In 2019-20, the draft 20-year masterplan for **Sparrovale Wetlands** was developed. This will become a world class nature reserve near Armstrong Creek.

GOAL 3: IMPROVING ACCESS TO SAFE AND HEALTHY LOCAL ENVIRONMENTS, SERVICES AND FOOD

In accordance with this goal area, local government's role is to plan and deliver liveable and accessible places, along with services and programs that increase community participation. Accessing healthy food options required to support a healthy lifestyle is also reflected in this goal's objectives.

Summary

Strategic Indicators	Source	Baseline	2021	Change
Vegetable consumption (meet recommended daily intake)	GPHS	10% (2017) M 3.8% F 15.7%	14.6% (2021) M 12.7% F 16.3%	
Fruit consumption (meet recommended daily intake)	GPHS	52.8% (2017) M 48.2% F 66.9%	46.3% (2021) M 45.5% F 47.0%	
Consumption of take away meals (consumed take away meals / snacks 1-3 times per week)	GPHS	10.6% (2017) M 14% F 7.6%	42.0% (2021) M 47.8% F 36.7%	
Water consumption (adults who drink 2 litres or more each day)	GPHS	11.1% (2017) M 15.7% F 6.9%	16.3% (2021) M 21.9% F 11.1%	
Daily consumption of sugary drinks (consumed daily)	GPHS	16.4% (2017) M 19.7% F 13.5%	22.3% (2021) M 28.3% F 16.8%	
Proportion of adults at lifetime risk of alcohol related harm (fewer adults at increased risk)	GPHS	57% (2017) M 66.3% F 48.6%	36.8% (2021) M 47.1% F 27.3%	
Expenditure on EGMs (decrease in player $ losses per month)	VCGLR	$9.37 million (April 2019)	$11.06 (March 2021)	

** Council Plan measure; GPHS = Geelong Preventative Health Survey; VCGLR = Victorian Commission of Gaming and Liquor Reform

Throughout the last four years, the City has delivered a range of initiatives such as accessibility improvements, street activations, compliance programs, bus shelters, community centres, meals to address food security, a social housing plan, referrals to services, resources and toolkits, projects such as the Water in Sport project focusing on reducing access to sugary drinks at the City's leisure centres, the Achievement Program in early learning centres and primary schools and environmental education programs.

The above population level data for Goal 3 shows that **four out of seven indicators have worsened over the last four years**: decreased fruit consumption, increased consumption of take away meals and sugary drinks and increased spending on electronic gaming machines. This data includes the impact of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, which is one factor affecting results. The data does not acknowledge the wide variety of other influencing factors e.g. education, levels of income etc.

To understand how these initiatives help to achieve population level health outcomes, projects and programs should incorporate impact evaluation, and building our capacity in this area is an important next step. This goal area, along with the other goal areas of the Plan are focused on long term change. Implementing initiatives that are based on evidence is an important foundation.

Over the last three years from 2018, the City has worked with its partners to meet community needs and create future opportunities.

Objective 3.1: Ensure the built environment is accessible for all and designed to encourage social connections

In 2019-20, the **activation of Little Malop Central** in the Geelong CBD has resulted in people feeling safer and much more welcome in the area than they did before. A program of improvements was formed in consultation with Victoria Police, community groups, traders and property owners.

In 2019, the **Cloverdale Community Centre** in Corio was redeveloped, providing updated facilities and extra space for programs. The new **Rosewall Community Centre** also opened in 2019.

The **Revitalising Central Geelong Action Plan** is creating more accessible facilities and footpaths in central Geelong, including at the waterfront.

A range of **compliance programs** were delivered throughout the life of this Plan that contribute to providing access to safe and healthy local environments, services and food. These include the food safety programs and advice, school crossing program, animal compliance, amenity / local law monitoring and fair and equitable car parking.

Objective 3.2: Advocate for accessible, connected, safe and reliable transport options

In 2019-20, Council installed five bus shelters at various locations across the municipality as part of its **Bus Shelter program**. In addition, Council received funding from the **Department of Transport** to install a further three bus shelters across the Northern Bellarine. These works were completed in May 2020.

With funding from the **TAC's Safer Cyclist and Pedestrian Fund**, the City's **Building Better Bike Connections - Western Link Project** aimed to provide a safe on road environment for cyclists, connecting Central Geelong to Geelong West and Herne Hill.

Objective 3.3: Advocate for suitable, safe and accessible housing for everyone

The **Social Housing Plan 2020-41** was adopted by Council in February 2020. The Plan's overarching purpose is to facilitate an increase in the supply of social housing. Through the City's 2020-21 budget, new roles have been created to lead the implementation of the Plan. Coupled with a grant from the State Government, the City is currently undertaking a **Feasibility study of Council land** to assess the potential yield of new social housing dwellings.

Objective 3.4: Ensure Council's services are culturally safe, inclusive, equitable and accessible to those who need them the most

The City's **Delivered Meals Program** provides meals to elderly or vulnerable members of the community, providing on average 897 meals per week. During COVID-19, council staff were redeployed to continue this service due to the vulnerability of and risk to volunteers. In addition, over the last three years, 32,000 **meals were provided to young people** to address food insecurity.

An independent consultancy (Social Ventures Australia) was engaged in November 2019 to review food assistance in Greater Geelong and prepare a **Food Assistance Business Case**. A funding agreement between the City and the **Geelong Food Relief Centre** is currently being implemented with the aim of increasing access to food assistance throughout the region.

Objective 3.5: Improve access to health services across the municipality

In 2019-20, the Healthy at Home toolkit was developed which includes an online resource hub and hard copy health promotion materials to support and enable the community to create and live a healthy lifestyle at home.

The Youth Development Unit (YDU) facilitates **referrals** for young people to mental health, drug and alcohol support services including headspace, BCYF and the Salvation Army. In 2018-19, the YDU facilitated 20 referrals. In 2020-21, this had reduced to 15 referrals however 151 instances of **crisis support** were provided.

Objective 3.6: Advocate for and provide accessible, equitable, adaptable and sustainable infrastructure that responds to current and future needs

The **Social Infrastructure Plan (SIP)** and accompanying policy was endorsed by Council in July 2020. It is aimed at ensuring our future decision making and investment in community infrastructure and services is clear, fair, equitable, and based on evidence of need and insights from our community.

Objective 3.7: Ensure the local environment promotes healthy choices, especially in socioeconomically disadvantaged areas

In 2019-20, the City supported **Barwon Valley School's** wellbeing team to tailor the universal **Achievement Program** to the special learning needs of the school, it's students and the school community. The City linked the school with community partners to ensure sustainability of the program. Barwon Valley School has achieved all the Achievement Program benchmarks.

In September 2020, Council approved a **COVID-19 Community and Economic Support Package** to include $20,000 towards establishing community gardens and the development of Community Garden Assessment Guidelines. A key priority of the City's Sustainability Framework Action Plan 2020–2022 is to support community wellbeing and social equity through improving food security, by supporting local production and sustainable systems.

Objective 3.8: Improve access to healthy food and drink options in Council owned and operated settings

In partnership with VicHealth and Deakin University, the City of Greater Geelong actively worked to reduce the sale of sugar sweetened beverages (SSBs) in community operated facilities by mid-2020. During 2018-19, the **Water in Sport** project achieved increased awareness, access and promotion of healthy drink choices through the Choose Water This Summer regional campaign, supportive government resources and development of the Sugar Sweetened Beverage Guide. At the conclusion of the project in June 2020, six centres owned and run by the City achieved either equal to or less than 20 per cent of red category drink products, or these products were totally removed. Promotional material for project is being designed and will be distributed to centres once COVID is no longer considered a barrier.

Objective 3.9: Provide opportunities for local businesses and the economy to thrive

Geelong Design Week 2020 recognised Geelong's designation as a UNESCO Creative City of Design. Due to COVID-19, events were delivered in an online format. There were more than 28,000 visits to the website www.geelongdesignweek.com.au and a social media reach of over 370,000.

In 2020-21, Tourism Greater Geelong and the Bellarine (TGGB) worked directly with businesses to ensure **locally sourced produce was celebrated** and used as much as possible.

Objective 3.10: Maintain and improve the natural environment whilst protecting it for future generations

The City partnered with Outdoors Victoria in running an environmental education program called **Nature Stewards** from 2 May to 11 July 2020. **See Case Study in Appendix 2.**

The City participated in citizen science events such as the **City Nature Challenge** and the **Aussie Backyard Bird Count (ABBC)**.

In accordance with directions in the **Urban Forest Strategy 2012-25,** more than 1800 trees were set to be planted during April to September 2020.

The City implements an annual **Mosquito Management Program** to reduce mosquito levels, especially in coastal areas.

Objective 3.11: Demonstrate leadership in climate change adaptation and encourage the community to reduce greenhouse gas emissions

As part of the Sustainability Framework, the City is developing a **Climate Change Response Plan (CCRP)** to communicate our climate change response to Council and the community. Community engagement on the draft Plan was held during March to June 2021, with Council endorsement planned for early 2021-22.

GOAL 4: INCREASING COMMUNITY SAFETY AND PREVENTING VIOLENCE AND INJURY

This goal area acknowledges the importance of the built environment, community initiatives and raising awareness, safe travel, and working in partnership with others.

Summary

Strategic Indicators	Source	Baseline	2021	Change
Feelings of personal safety in own area ** (always feel safe in the area where they live)	GPHS	53.8% (2017) M 58.6% F 49.5%	61.3% (2021) M 67.5% F 55.5%	
Percentage of adults who feel safe walking down the street after dark (adults who say yes, definitely)	VPHS	59.5% (2014)	60.56% (2017)	
Number of family violence incidents recorded by police (rate per 100,000 population)	VicPol (Crime Statistics Agency)	1,343.8 (2016-17)	1, 508.1 (2019-20)	
Criminal incident rate (per 100,000 population)	VicPol	7776.9 (2016)	6,271.6 (2020)	

** Council Plan measure

Throughout the last four years, the City has delivered a range of initiatives such as pedestrian crossing upgrades, accreditation for pool safety, lifeguard services, community safety awareness raising initiatives, street activation programs, bushfire safety initiatives, safety audits in public open spaces, pet owner education, graffiti management, family violence training for Family Services staff and awareness raising sessions for newly arrived communities, CCTV cameras in CBD public areas, funding for new lighting in Leopold, as well as the adoption and implementation of the Ba-gurrk Gender Equity Framework.

Many of these initiatives may have a direct impact on community safety, and particularly perceptions of safety. It would be useful to further understand how these initiatives work towards population level outcomes by incorporating impact evaluation across projects and programs in this area.

The above population level data for Goal 4 shows that **one out of four indicators has worsened over the last four years**: an increase in the number of family violence incidents reported to police. **Overall, people feel safer and the crime rate has decreased since 2017**. Recent data includes the impact of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, which is one factor affecting results. An increased number of family violence incidents could mean that family violence is on the rise or that more people are reporting it, or both. Either way, addressing the drivers of family violence, including gender equity remains one of the health and wellbeing priorities for the new Community Plan 2021-25.

Over the last three years from 2018, the City has worked with its partners to meet community needs and create future opportunities.

Objective 4.1: Ensure the built environment, including community infrastructure, is designed to promote community safety

Pedestrian crossing improvements continue to be rolled out across the City, including improved accessible parking spaces in Central Geelong.

Objective 4.2: Facilitate initiatives to promote and enhance community safety, especially for vulnerable communities

On Sunday 13 October 2019, as part of Community Safety Month, Victoria Police in partnership with the City hosted the **Geelong Community Safety and Emergency Management Day** at Steampacket Gardens, Geelong.

The City celebrated **'World Elder Abuse Awareness Day' (WEAAD)** on 15 June 2020 and 15 June 2021 with social media messages. Suspected cases of elder abuse, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic, are being referred to the Older Persons Advisory Network (OPAN). Engagement in OPAN webinars is supporting Community Care staff to be responsive to emerging needs.

In March 2020, the City was successful in obtaining funding through Victorian Government's **Safer Together Initiative**. The project is a collaboration with the Country Fire Authority (CFA), Department of Environment, Water, Land and Planning (DEWLP) and other stakeholders, initially focusing on two townships - Anakie and Breamlea - identified as high fire risk areas within the municipality.

The **New Recruits Social Cohesion program**, a partnership between the Youth Development Unit and Victoria Police, used a group approach to build relationships between young people and Victoria Police members and ran on a weekly basis since 2017, engaging over 150 CALD young people, winning the 2018 Victoria Police Annual Multicultural Award.

In 2020-21, the City supported and guided **350 sporting clubs and community groups** to develop their COVID Safe Work Plans.

Through the **Working for Victoria (WFV) program**, the City has provided **COVID cleaning services** to all 73 summer seasonal club tenants. COVID Safe Officers are providing support and guidance to 240 community tenants in both the community and sporting sector.

Through the **Working for Victoria (WFV) program**, a number of new staff members audited a range of open space and parks area with a focus on safety. These **safety audits** provide valuable information to assist when designing and /or carrying out maintenance works on our public open spaces.

Youth programs aimed at increasing community safety and preventing violence were delivered in partnership with BCYF, school wellbeing staff, Batforce, Drummond Street, Victoria Police, Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) and Bethany.

Objective 4.3: Promote and support safe travel

In 2018-19, the **Pedestrian Intervention Project** was implemented at Apollo Place, Whittington.

The $70,000 City-funded **pedestrian safety upgrade** on Barrabool Road (Highton) was completed in December 2019, in response to community requests. The works are designed to make crossing the road safer and more convenient for pedestrians travelling to and from the Barwon River.

Objective 4.4: Encourage responsible pet ownership

The core work of the Animal Management team is to promote **responsible pet ownership,** educating pet owners with the aim of reducing dog attacks. Animal compliance can ensure that people feel safe and are encouraged to engage with outdoor activities.

Objective 4.5: Activate safer public spaces through the use of public art

In 2019-20, **STREETFACE** adorned 14 public buildings across Greater Geelong throughout October 2019, highlighting positive stories about workplace safety from young people who 'live, work or play' in the city.

There were 3,038 incidences of **graffiti** reported in the 2019-20 financial year. The City developed a short educational video to help business owners reduce crime and graffiti at their premises. The video was funded through a $30,000 Graffiti Prevention Grant from the Victorian Government. In 2020-21, collaboration with other infrastructure authorities and service providers commenced to work toward a **coordinated response to graffiti**.

Objective 4.6: Work with others to influence the prevention of family violence and other forms of violence within the community

The **Ba-gurrk Gender Equity Framework** was adopted by Council in February 2019. The framework addresses gender equity as a governance, community and organisational issue and provides a guide to develop, implement and monitor actions. In July 2019, the City also adopted the Foundational Implementation Plan 2019-22 and is progressing with actions. Part of this Plan is to coordinate activities during the **Barwon Month of Action**. During the Barwon Month of Action and 16 Days of Activism to end Violence Against Women and Girls (October to December 2019), 13 new organisations hosted a series of events. The calendar included activities were such as Digital Projections, Reclaim the Night Walk and HERstory at Geelong Regional Library.

In 2019-20 the City, in partnership with G21 Health Alliance Prevention of Violence Against Women, has created a **family violence information hub** on the Geelong Australia website.

During 2020-21, the MAV piloted a **Gender Equity Analysis tool** that was used on a number of services and provided information around whether these services were considering a gender lens. The pilot project is now complete, and it is intended to expand the use of the tool for a number of services over the next 12 months.

The City provided funding for a range of **COVID-19 recovery projects** including significant social research on the impact of gender during COVID.

In 2020-21, Family Services implemented the **Safe and Stronger Communities Pilot Project** to educate CALD families about family violence. **See Case Study in Appendix 3.**

Objective 4.7: Work in partnership with others to increase road, pedestrian and cycle safety for people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities

In 2020-21, grant funding was received to improve the community's sense of **safety in Leopold**, focused on new lighting installations and upgrades.

Partnerships

Working in partnership with internal departments and key health and wellbeing partner organisations is a key tenant of municipal public health and wellbeing planning enshrined in the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*.

Some of the organisation's partnerships have been discussed in the previous section where they related specifically to funded projects or initiatives implemented in partnership with other organisations. Departments within the organisation have also been working in partnership on the Clever Together Project.

One of the organisation's key health and wellbeing partnerships is with the G21 Regional Alliance.

G21 Healthy Eating and Active Living (HEAL) Partnership

The City of Greater Geelong is part of the Healthy Eating and Active Living (HEAL) partnership, part of the G21 Health and Wellbeing Pillar. The HEAL Evaluation and Learning Framework was developed together with all HEAL working groups in October 2019. The framework includes overarching evaluation questions as well as specific process and impact-level evaluation indicators. One of the impact-level evaluation indicators includes the following:

- 100% of HEAL partners agree to consistently share/use evidence-based messaging for relevant social marketing campaigns in HEAL workplans.

Choose Water Every Day is a community-wide, targeted social marketing and awareness campaign promoting water as the drink of choice in the Geelong Region. All partners have used their social media channels to deliver the campaign.

The partnership is currently evaluating its collective efforts in promoting healthier eating and active living against the Evaluation and Learning Framework. The new **HEAL Regional Plan 2021-25** is currently under development. More information can be found on the HEAL webpage.

LEARNINGS:

Work with our health and wellbeing partners in particular, has focused on engaging through G21 in healthy eating and active living (HEAL) and preventing violence against women. The new Community Plan 2021-25 and its health and wellbeing priorities are broader and will include many other stakeholders.

It is recommended to:

6. Establish a coordinated way to engage with a wide range of internal and external health and wellbeing partners in the delivery of Our Community Plan 2021-25.

Learnings

The City's new Community Plan 2021-25 was adopted by Council on 22 June 2021. This is the City's integrated Council Plan and Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan for the next four years.

This is the first time the City has had an integrated and unified plan. We can build on the learnings from monitoring and reporting on the MPHWP 2018-21 to develop an improved monitoring and reporting framework for Our Community Plan 2021-25.

The key learnings outlined in this report are to:

1. Establish an evaluation framework for Our Community Plan 2021-25.
2. Utilise a mixed methods approach to ensure a robust monitoring and reporting process for Our Community Plan 2021-25.
3. Incorporate strategic business planning into monitoring and reporting processes.
4. Seek and produce case studies which show the impact of relevant actions and projects from Our Community Plan 2021-25.
5. Continue to build organisational capacity in all types of evaluation.
6. Establish a coordinated way to engage with a wide range of internal and external health and wellbeing partners in the delivery of Our Community Plan 2021-25.

Appendices

Appendix Number	Title
Appendix 1	Case study 1 - The My Story Project
Appendix 2	Case Study 2 - Nature Stewards Program
Appendix 3	Case Study 3 - The Safe and Stronger Communities Pilot Project
Appendix 4	Internal Committee – MPHWP Stakeholder Alliance
Appendix 5	Most Significant Change (MSC) Case Study Methodology

APPENDIX 1: CASE STUDY 1 - THE MY STORY PROJECT

ABOUT THE PROJECT

PROJECT DETAILS

Goal: To support equity and accessibility for people with disability and mental health challenges in the region.

Participants partnered with one of seven mentors (professional workers, artists and story tellers) to help them find their own voice to 'tell their own story in their own way'. Stories were told through words, paintings, photography, music, sound, and movement.

Time period: 12 weeks from June to September 2020.

Project partners were ArtGusto, Back to Back Theatre, genU and Nelson Park School. This project is planned to run in 2021 and is supported by the Community Inclusion Unit's existing resources.


Jordan Pecar's artwork


Luke Beavis

What problems/issues in your community did this project seek to address?

- Poor disability and mental health awareness in the community.
- Lack of understanding of what life is like living with disabilities and mental health challenges.
- Community prejudice and stigma surrounding people with disabilities and mental health challenges.
- Lack of community inclusiveness for people with disabilities and mental health challenges.


Luke Beavis's photography


Trevor A Hang's artwork (participant)

THE CHANGES:

WHAT HAVE WE BEEN TOLD?

"The MYSTORY project was an opportunity to share my story, decrease stigma of mental health and inspire others. But it ended up being so much more. This project helped me to heal and come to a deeper level of love and acceptance of myself, I learned to trust myself, my journey and my friends." ***Participant***

"Channelling this time into helping others, especially in creative ways, was something that was as important to me as it was to those participating." ***Mentor***

"These small but gradual changes are very important to help others recognise the commonality, the frequency, and the impact of mental health and mental illness." ***Participant***

"MYSTORY allowed me to be part of something that wasn't all about my current circumstances. It was about being involved in a community of people and trying provide any assistance I could." ***Mentor***

"Disabled people are people too….we have a story as well." ***Participant***

"I had an impression that the conversation surrounding mental health had developed significantly, but during this process, I felt that the development was not as significant as once thought." ***Participant***

"I do notice that people don't realise that some people with disabilities can live independently with help away from family and carers which is why I did my story on how I moved away from home." ***Participant***

"a colleague did not know that I have had a history of mental illness. I took this opportunity to explain to them and educate them…" ***Participant***

"Some friends were wanting more information about why I wrote a particular poem and were open to hearing about experiences that are not necessarily commonly talked about between cultural groups." ***Participant***

"This project has allowed me to refocus and realign my passion, advocacy, and the way that I communicate my experiences and personal knowledge to others." ***Participant***

Most significant changes that have happened as a result of the project:

- These unique stories captured lived experiences from 119 community members aged between 15 and 82.
- Participants overwhelmingly expressed an increase in confidence and a profound sense of validation.
- The project enabled participants to remain socially connected during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Mentoring groups organically developed a sense of trust, comradeship and kinship.
- The project raised awareness and understanding of what life is like living with disabilities and mental health challenges.

Why were these changes significant/important to you/the community?

- It promoted empowerment, acceptance, inclusiveness and individual growth for both the participants and mentors.
- It gave the opportunity for the community to start a conversion about mental health and disability helping to foster attitudinal change and reducing stigma.
- Participants recognised themselves as role models and advocates for others in the community (many have since applied for grants, leadership programs, awards and participated in other community initiatives).

LEARNING AND REFLECTIONS

- This program has been transformational benefitting both mentors and participants.
- Through this program, participants were given a voice sharing their experiences of life living with a disability and/or mental health challenge with the community.
- My Story has the potential to reach and impact on more people outside the Greater Geelong Community. Thought needs to be given on how to further progress this project so it's not forgotten e.g. having its own website or promoted via social media.

APPENDIX 2: CASE STUDY 2 - NATURE STEWARDS PROGRAM

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

PROJECT DETAILS

Goal: To educate the community in the basics about their local environment, how to help look after it and encourage them to become volunteers and advocates.

Time period: 10-week program started on 19 September 2020, with weekly three-hour classes held via Zoom online video link. Session content included geology, flora and fauna, waterways, seasons and climate change.

The Program is ongoing, subsidised by the City. It is funded and presented by Outdoors Victoria.





What problems/issues in your community did this project seek to address?

- Lack of knowledge on the basics of the local environment and how to look after it.
- Lack of connection with the outdoors and the benefits of being in nature.
- Lack of appreciation of what is close to home.
- Poor mental health

THE CHANGES: WHAT HAVE WE BEEN TOLD?

"The rubbish dropped in the street has always troubled me and the course gave me renewed energy to keep on picking it up..." **Participant**

"I am more aware of the importance of protecting our native plants and more capable of identifying our native grasses from weeds." **Participant**

"The larger amount of people volunteering to protect our environment, the healthier our world will be for future generations." **Participant**

"I have acquired a better understanding of Aboriginal culture." **Participant**

"I now know how and where to volunteer in the community to help protect nature." **Participant**

"I'm terrified about climate change and are trying to care for my local area." **Participant**

"Any small change is important - for instance even the planting of one native plant or picking up of one piece of litter has a positive impact and sets a good example for others in the community." **Participant**

"I've made great connections with other people from our community who have a similar interest in learning about conservation and protecting our environment." **Participant**

"In my role I come across injured wildlife, i.e. seals, dolphins, birds, that have become tangled in litter which could have been prevented if people did the right thing by not littering in the first place or by members of the community picking it up. This simple act will make a significant change to the welfare of these animals." **Participant**

Most significant changes that have happened as a result of the project:

- 21 community members participated.
- Participants felt better connected with nature.
- Participants socially connected with other community members.
- Participants gained a better understanding of:
  - their local areas
  - Aboriginal culture
  - how to protect their environment
  - how to identify different plants
  - where to go to volunteer

Why were these changes significant/important to you/the community?

- It encouraged participants and others to do their bit to help protect the environment.
- It helped to support better mental health.
- More people will volunteer and advocate to conserve and protect the environment.
- Participants are sharing their knowledge and experiences with others in the community.
- Participants have gained a renewed strength to continue to do what they believe in.



Nature Stewards facilitator Rustem Upton

WHAT COULD HAVE BEEN DONE DIFFERENTLY?

- Longer sessions or additional sessions to allow more time for participants to absorb the large amount of information given.
- Additional follow up activities would have been beneficial to allow participants to continue to learn more about the environment.
- Due to COVID-19, all sessions were restricted to online, but participants were able to actively connect with each other both during and outside the sessions as well as organising their own nature walks.

LEARNING AND REFLECTIONS

- This program has supported community members to access, learn and look after their local environment.
- Participants were deeply concerned about protecting their local environment and the program empowered them to take more responsibility in doing so.
- Participants were aware of the impact that one person can have in protecting their local environment, for e.g. picking up litter and this program gave these participants the support, encouragement and motivation to continue looking after it.
- Participants connected both to nature and with other people, having positive impacts on their mental health and wellbeing.

APPENDIX 3: CASE STUDY 3 - THE SAFER AND STRONGER COMMUNITIES PILOT PROJECT

ABOUT THE PROJECT

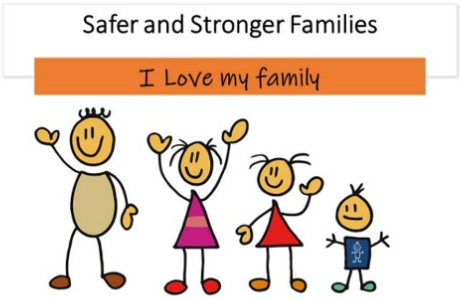
PROJECT DETAILS

Goal: The Safer and Stronger Communities Pilot Project aims to prevent family violence. Educational workshops were delivered to the Karen and Karenni communities as part of the pilot to strengthen their understanding of family violence.

Time period: Weekly educational workshops were delivered over 4 weeks via Zoom starting on 24 August 2020.

About the workshops: Both men and women of the Karen and Karenni community participated in the weekly workshops. Workshop content included parenting myths, role modelling between parents and children and positive communication styles.

A working group was set up to oversee and support the project and consisted of representatives from the City of Greater Geelong, Diversitat, Barwon Health and Department of Health and Human Services. The Project is funded by the Department of Premier and Cabinet and has been extended to the end of June 2021.



diversitat VICTORIA Premier and Cabinet CITY OF GREATER GEELONG

What problems/issues in your community did this project seek to address?

- Karen and Karenni communities want to feel safe and protected.
- Adjusting to life in Australia can be very tough for new arrivals. They are learning a new way of life in a new country, trying to understand the cultural differences and knowing what support and services are available to them.

THE CHANGES

WHAT HAVE WE BEEN TOLD?

"I did it [the workshops] to keep our families in peace and to be united in this country." **Participant**

"We can share our knowledge and experiences and learn from each other." **Participant**

"It's [the project] been good to educate the community now living in Australia and to know about Australia law….it's very different to our culture." **Participant**

"I'm aware of what we have to do and the changes to make within in the family…even if it's a simple family connection." **Participant**

"this project lets them [women] know that this issue [suffering and family violence] is not right and there is a way to get help." **Participant**

"I did it [the workshops] to keep our families safe and to protect them." **Participant**

"I've started feeling change and different within myself." **Participant**

"It might seem like a simple issue but it would be a big issue if there's no change….in our community all families would be separated." **Participant**

Most significant changes that have happened as a result of the project:

- Approximately 100 Karen/Karenni community members/leaders attended the workshops.
- Communities are continuously sharing the knowledge gained from the workshops.
- An information book, fridge magnet and YouTube video were developed which included translated information from the workshops. These were shared with the community and has had very positive feedback.



YouTube video in Karenni and Burmese



For support, call:

Police	**000**
Diversitat	**5260 6000**
The Orange Door	**1800 312 820**
The Sexual Assault & Family Violence Centre	**5222 4318**

Fridge magnet

Why were these changes significant/important to you/the community?

- The translated information, whether shared by watching a video, reading the book or having a
- Community members are destigmatising family violence by having the conversation and learning from each other.
- Women feel empowered to make changes within their family to keep them safe and strong.

LEARNING AND REFLECTIONS

NEXT STEPS

- The project has now been extended for a further six months with a focus on Northern Bay families. There will also be men-only workshops to give them the specific support they need. The community is also organising family-friendly events and coming up soon is a movie night where all family members are invited to attend.
- Community members have suggested that an annual refresher workshop would be beneficial to include to new/updated information or services.

APPENDIX 4: INTERNAL COMMITTEE - MPHWP STAKEHOLDER ALLIANCE

The MPHWP Stakeholder Alliance was an internal committee focused on keeping the conversation going about health and wellbeing in the City's day to day work and increasing engagement with the Plan across the organisation.

Its purpose was to bring together representatives from across Council (i.e. champions) whose work influenced health and wellbeing, providing a multi-disciplinary approach to the governance and monitoring the Plan and reaffirming a 'health in all policies' approach to our work.

At its first meeting in July 2019, members expressed their hopes for the group:

- ensure a two-way exchange / dialogue to benefit all members;
- share data and information;
- utilise the MPHWP as an opportunity to leverage non-mandated plans and strategies; and
- assist in evaluating the impact of our work as a Council.

At the first meeting, members discussed the proposed Monitoring and Evaluation Framework for the Plan, including the draft objectives. Following members feedback, this framework was finalised and used as an internal document to inform the monitoring and evaluation of the Plan.

A Terms of Reference for the group were also agreed.

The second meeting, in November 2019, was facilitated by evaluation expert Wei Leng Kwok. This discussion aimed to clarify the alignment of the MPHWP to Council's work. Despite the fact that work has been happening in health and wellbeing for a long time, members agreed that we haven't brought this work together to understand the overall health and wellbeing benefit. It was agreed that, as an organisation, we are still in the early stages of measuring how our work impacts the health and wellbeing of the community. This is especially true for complex population health and wellbeing challenges such as obesity and chronic disease.

After this meeting, 5 people nominated for a follow up workshop with Wei Leng about capacity building for case study impact evaluation. There was interest from the Arts and Culture and Central Geelong and Waterfront departments.

Further work with Wei Leng halted due to employment of Health Impact and Evaluation Officer and the onset of COVID-19. The Health Equity and Impact Officer worked directly with project managers to develop the three case studies presented in this report.

A third meeting was planned for March 2020, however due to the impacts of COVID-19, this was not held.

Internal engagement for Our Community Plan 2021-25 will be considered as part of an evaluation framework, and how we will monitor and report on the Plan.

APPENDIX 5: MOST SIGNIFICANT CHANGE (MSC) CASE STUDY METHODOLOGY

The use of the adapted Most Significant Change (MSC) methodology[1] to understand how a project has impacted its target audience provides valuable reflections about what has been most significant to participants. This methodology involves a collection of significant change stories focussed around the following questions:

- From your point of view, describe the **most significant/important changes** that has happened as a result of the project – both for you and your community?
- Why were these changes significant/important to you/your community?

The Health Equity and Impact Officer worked directly with project managers to develop these three case studies presented in this report.

[1] Davies, R. and Dart, J. (2005) The 'Most Significant Change' Technique - A Guide to Its Use, Funded by CARE International, United Kingdom Oxfam Community Aid Abroad, Australia | Learning to Learn, Government of South Australia Oxfam New Zealand | Christian Aid, United Kingdom | Exchange, United Kingdom Ibis, Denmark | Mellemfolkeligt Samvirke (MS), Denmark Lutheran World Relief, United States of America.

2.6. Draft Climate Change Response Plan

Source: **City Services**
Director: **Guy Wilson-Browne**

Purpose

1. To endorse the Draft Climate Change Response Plan for public exhibition and stakeholder and community consultation.

Background

2. The Draft Climate Change Response Plan has been developed to renew and consolidate the City's Climate Change Adaptation Strategy, Zero Carbon Emissions Strategy 2017-2020 and the Community Zero Carbon Action Plan.
3. The Plan will guide the City's response to climate change issues and associated impacts on our region.
4. The Draft Plan was informed by extensive community engagement between September 2020 and March 2021.

Key Matters

5. The development of the Draft Climate Change Response Plan was a key action contained within the Sustainability Framework and recently adopted Environment Strategy 2020-2030.
6. The Draft Plan has been developed as a roadmap for collaborative action. It seeks to improve the region's response to climate change risks, reduce regional emissions and respond to the global climate emergency.
7. The Plan includes actions and support the City will provide to demonstrate leadership and accelerate further action across multiple sectors within our municipality.
8. The Draft Plan sets a municipal wide community emissions reduction target of zero net emissions by 2035. This target is supported by an action plan that addresses the priority areas of community support, energy, transport, waste and climate resilience.
9. Feedback from extensive community engagement shows overwhelming support for Council taking a leadership role in climate change action for the region and the development of a Plan that is underpinned by an ambitious municipal-wide emissions reduction target.

RESOLUTION - Item 2.6

Cr Moloney moved, Cr Mansfield seconded -

That Council:

1. **Endorse the release of the Draft Climate Change Response Plan for stakeholder and community consultation for 30 days; and**

2. **Receive a further report and final plan for endorsement following the consultation period.**

Carried

Financial Sustainability

10. Funding to implement actions contained within the Draft Climate Change Response Plan will be derived from existing Council budgets and future budget bids for consideration in the annual planning and budget process. Funding opportunities from external sources will also be sought.

11. Emission reduction programs such as the purchase of 100% renewable energy via the Victorian Energy Collaboration Project and the LED street lighting upgrade project have realised significant ongoing financial savings for the City.

Community Engagement

12. The development of the Draft Climate Change Response Plan was informed by extensive community engagement including:

    12.1 April and May 2020 - held 21 workshops with relevant City departments;

    12.2 August and September 2020 - online individual discussions with 24 groups representing community, business and agencies;

    12.3 August and September 2020 - engagement with The Geelong Youth Council;

    12.4 December 2020 - Have Your Say page was launched. A community emissions target “quick poll” was embedded – 147 responses were received;

    12.5 December 2020 - three targeted co-design community workshops aimed at developing options to respond to residential emissions, business emissions and climate change adaptation;

    12.6 February 2021 - three targeted co-design community workshops aimed at prioritising actions to respond to residential emissions, business emissions and climate change adaptation;

    12.7 March 2021 - community forum and Councillor workshop;

    12.8 March 2021 - interviews with key community businesses and organisations including Viva Energy, Geelong Ports, Godfrey Hirst, Deakin University, The Gordon, Barwon Water, Corangamite Catchment Management Authority and the Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation; and

    12.9 May 2021 - Sustainability Advisory Committee workshop.

13. The following themes were identified from the engagement feedback:

    13.1 Leadership, advocacy and support – participants expressed a desire for the City to take a proactive stance to help drive collective action, through public commitment and advocacy at the highest levels;

    13.2 Coordination, collaboration and governance - there was a strong desire for the City to facilitate a collaborative and integrated approach across the region;

    13.3 Raising awareness - participants noted that many people do not feel individually affected by climate change. Consequently, raising awareness of the issues and impacts is critical;

    13.4 Utilising and building regional capacity - participants noted that the region has an impressive track record in climate action and has access to an extensive pool of community knowledge and skills;

13.5 Embedding climate action in decision making - participants emphasised the need for embedding climate emergency action formally in all strategic documents and decisions; and

13.6 Funding and resourcing – participants noted that long-term funding commitments are needed to help provide certainty and a signal of commitment over the longer term.

Social Equity and Sustainability

14. The Draft Climate Change Response Plan recognises the importance of equity, access and inclusion as a key priority area contributing to the long-term sustainability of our community.

15. Actions contained within the Draft Plan will address and improve social equity including reducing climate change impacts and contributing to access to affordable, clean energy.

Relevant Law/Policy/Legal Implications

16. The Draft Plan will provide direction when preparing updated and/or new Council policies and strategies.

Alignment to Community Plan and Vision

17. This report aligns with Our Community Plan 2021-2025 strategic priority, Sustainable growth and environment.

18. This report aligns with the Community led 30 year Vision, “Greater Geelong A Clever and Creative Future” community aspiration:

18.1 Development and implementation of sustainable solutions; and

18.2 Sustainable development that supports population growth and protects the natural environment.

Conflict of Interest

19. No officer involved in the preparation of this report declared a general or material conflict of interest.

Risk Assessment

20. The delivery of the actions within the Draft Climate Change Response Plan will minimise risks to the environment, human health and infrastructure assets. Alignment and implementation of key areas of the Draft Our Community Plan 2021-25 will also assist the City to deliver on its commitments and manage risk.

Environmental Sustainability

21. The implementation of the draft Climate Change Response Plan is supported by the Sustainability Framework and Environment Strategy 2020-2030. The Draft Plan provides a roadmap for the City to support the region to reduce emissions, minimise climate change impacts and facilitate new opportunities and partnerships with community in relation to the global climate emergency.

Attachments

1. Draft Climate Change Response Plan [**2.6.1** - 38 pages]



THE CITY OF
GREATER GEELONG

CLIMATE CHANGE RESPONSE PLAN

DRAFT

CITY OF GREATER GEELONG

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements 4

Mayor's message....5

Executive summary....6

How this fits with our existing work....6

Our Climate Change Response Plan 2021–30 (draft) 6

How we're changing the way we do business 7

Funding 8

Evaluation 8

Review 8

Introduction 9

Our climate emergency....10

Critical risks to our region posed by climate change……11

What this means for our region 11

Community emissions profile....11

Responding to the emergency 13

How we can respond 13

Reducing emissions 14

Managing impacts 14

Who is responsible? 14

Our role 14

The role of business....15

The role of community organisations....15

The role of residents 15

About this plan 16

Our Environment Strategy 2020–30 16

How we engaged....17

What we heard 17

Our climate change response plan 19

Our organisational targets 20

Funding 21

Evaluation 21

Review 21

Principle 1: Support an empowered and active community……22

Focus area 1.1 Community awareness, education and capacity building….22

Focus area 1.2 Governance and accountability……23

Focus area 1.3 Resources and investment focus……..23

Principle 2: Increase energy efficiency and renewable energy production……..25

Focus area 2.1 Improve energy efficiency in existing buildings, facilities and infrastructure……..25

Focus area 2.2 Optimise energy efficiency in new buildings, facilities and infrastructure……26

Focus area 2.3 Increase renewable energy use……..27

Principle 3: Switch to sustainable transport and cleaner fuels……..29

Focus area 3.1 Prioritise the development of sustainable transport infrastructure and services……. 29

Focus area 3.2 Transition the regional fleet to zero-emission power sources……..30

Principle 4: Reduce non-energy emissions and increase carbon storage……31

Focus area 4.1 Reduce waste and recover waste energy……31

Focus area 4.2 Support establishment of regional drawdown solutions……31

Principle 5: Increase awareness and understanding of climate change impacts……..33

Focus area 5.1 Improve local climate risk knowledge……...33

Principle 6: Build climate action into decision-making……..34

Focus area 6.1 Embed climate thinking in our decisions……..34

Focus area 6.2 Corporate climate risk management and disclosure……..34

Principle 7: Increase collaborative climate change responses……36

Focus area 7.1 Build networks and partnerships for adaptation responses……..36

Focus area 7.2 Collaborate in areas of emerging climate risks……...36

References……38

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The City of Greater Geelong recognises the rich Aboriginal heritage of this country and acknowledges the Wadawurrung People as the Traditional Owners of the land. We pay respect to their elders, past, present and future. We also acknowledge all other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People who are part of the Greater Geelong community today.

This plan been developed in consultation with community groups, businesses and agencies from across the municipality. We would like to acknowledge the many individuals and organisations whose enthusiasm, commitment and contributions helped shape the plan.

COMMUNITY GROUPS AND NON-GOVERNMENT ORGANISATIONS	BUSINESSES AND PEAK BODIES	GOVERNMENT AGENCIES
100% Clean Bellarine	Geelong Chamber of Commerce	Barwon Coast Committee of Management
Active Geelong	Geelong Port	Barwon Water
Australian Parents for Climate Action	Godfrey Hirst	Corangamite Catchment Management Authority
Bellarine Bayside Committee of Management	Viva Energy	Our councillors and employees
Bellarine Catchment Network	Wadawurrung	Deakin University
Bellarine Landcare		Department of Health and Human Services
Centre for Climate Safety		Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning
Diversitat		Kardinia Park Stadium Trust
Friends of the Ocean Grove Nature Reserve		Sport & Recreation Victoria
Geelong Environment Council		Sustainability Advisory Committee
Geelong Field Naturalists Club		Sustainability Victoria
Geelong Sustainability		The Gordon
Geelong Youth Council		
Ocean Grove Coastcare		
Ocean Grove Community Association		
Public Transport Users Association - Geelong		
Transition Streets Geelong		
Trust for Nature		

Mayor's message

The Mayor’s message will be prepared once the community engagement process for the draft document is complete.

Executive summary

At the City of Greater Geelong, we acknowledge the changing climate is a global emergency and, as a local government, we have a significant role to play in accelerating a municipal-wide response to the situation.

The past decade has highlighted the unprecedented scale, intensity and frequency of extreme weather events associated with climate change. We know we are likely to experience an increase in these risks across our region.

A critical shift is occurring across communities, businesses and governments worldwide. Climate change is no longer a potential future threat, but rather a global emergency in need of urgent action. While we can't predict how climate change responses will develop globally, we must do our part to reduce emissions and prepare for climate impacts.

Climate change is not solely an environmental issue. It has implications for every aspect of how we live – our social systems, economic systems and the natural systems upon which we all depend. We need to act quickly, decisively and collaboratively to make a difference.

As part of the development of this plan, we have been talking to the community and other key stakeholders about climate change. The environment and climate change are a significant priority for residents and stakeholders and they're looking to us for leadership on these issues. The overwhelming message is that we need a coordinated and collective response that is underpinned by an ambitious, municipal-wide emissions reduction target.

HOW THIS FITS WITH OUR EXISTING WORK



Figure 1: Our environment and sustainability planning framework

This plan fits within a much broader framework of strategic planning at the City. As with all plans, it has been guided by the community's long-term vision, established in 2017:

By 2047, Greater Geelong will be internationally recognised as a clever and creative city-region that is forward looking, enterprising and adaptive, and cares for its people and environment.

Figure 1 shows how the plan fits within the current framework we're using to guide our response to climate and environment issues. It is a key deliverable of both the *Sustainability Framework 2020* and the *City of Greater Geelong Environment Strategy 2020–30*.

OUR CLIMATE CHANGE RESPONSE PLAN 2021–30 (DRAFT)

By 2035, the Greater Geelong community will achieve net zero community emissions and increased resilience to climate change impacts through a coordinated and collective response from the community led by the City.

The proposed plan (see Figure 2, page 7) aligns closely with Goal 1 of the *City of Greater Geelong Environment Strategy 2020–30*, as well as our *Sustainability Framework 2020.*

While the plan is designed to guide our organisation's response to climate change over the next 10 years, we strongly encourage individuals and organisations to use it as a road map for guiding their individual and collective responses. We cannot achieve the targets and actions set out in this plan by ourselves; the community must play an active role.

Clever and creative vision	By 2047, Greater Geelong will be internationally recognised as a clever and creative city-region that is forward looking, enterprising and adaptive and cares for its people and environment.						
Goal	Become a zero-emissions, climate-ready city and region.						
Key success factor	A coordinated and collective response from the whole community						
Targets	**Mitigation target** Achieve net zero community emissions by 2035				**Adaptation target** Become a climate-ready municipality, with increased resilience to current and future climate risks		
Principles	**Principle 1** Support an empowered and active community	**Principle 2** Increase energy efficiency and renewable energy production	**Principle 3** Switch to sustainable transport and cleaner fuels	**Principle 4** Reduce non-energy emissions and increase carbon storage	**Principle 5** Increase awareness and understanding of climate change impacts	**Principle 6** Build climate action into decision-making	**Principle 7** Increase collaborative climate change responses
Focus Areas	*1.1* *Community awareness, education and capacity building*	*2.1* *Improve energy efficiency in existing buildings, facilities and infrastructure*	*3.1* *Prioritise the development of sustainable transport infrastructure and services*	*4.1* *Reduce waste and recover waste energy*	*5.1* *Improve local climate risk knowledge*	*6.1* *Embed climate thinking in our decisions*	*7.1* *Build networks and partnerships for adaptation pathways*
	1.2 *Governance and accountability*	*2.2* *Optimise energy efficiency in new buildings, facilities and infrastructure*	*3.2* *Transition the regional fleet to zero-emission power sources*	*4.2* *Support establishment of regional drawdown solutions*		*6.2* *Corporate climate risk management and disclosure*	*7.2* *Collaborate in areas of emerging climate risk*
	1.3 *Resources and investment focus*	*2.3* *Increase renewable energy use*	**There is a list of actions below each focus area with identified lead/support roles and anticipated costs (see page 22 onwards).*				

Figure 2 Overview of the *City of Greater Geelong Climate Response Plan 2021–30 (draft)*

How we're changing the way we do business

As an organisation, our operational emissions come from buildings and facilities, vehicle fleet and municipal waste. These emissions peaked in 2015–16 and have been declining since. This is due to the switching of electricity sources to renewable sources, capture and use of methane from landfill, building efficiency improvements and onsite renewable

energy from solar photovoltaic (PV) generation. In 2019-20, emissions from our operations were 36,780 tonnes CO2-e, which is just over one per cent of the total community emissions profile.

To support the community-wide mitigation target, we have committed to the following:

- All City-managed operations to reach net zero emissions by 2025.
- 100 per cent renewable electricity supply used for all City-owned and operated buildings, and streetlights by 2021.
- 95 per cent of Drysdale Landfill methane gas emissions recovered and used for energy production by 2025.
- All City-owned light fleet vehicles powered by zero-emission power sources by 2027.
- Undertake an assessment of our gas-using infrastructure by 2022.

Funding

While many of the proposed actions in the plan are already funded, there are others that will not be possible without additional resources. While we aim to fund some actions as part of future annual budgets, we will actively work with our partners to pursue other funding opportunities.

An innovative new funding model that we are implementing is the community climate action partnership fund. This will be used to support climate action delivered by volunteers and not-for-profit groups in the community and create a sustainable economic model for delivering this plan.

Evaluation

On 22 June 2021, our Council endorsed a series of Sustainability Performance Indicators and Targets that will be reported on annually, including a carbon reduction target.

The timing of this draft plan has prevented us from aligning these indicators and targets with the actions proposed in this plan. However, we will address this in the final version of the plan so the community can see how local actions are contributing to the global effort.

Review

Although the plan is intended to guide our climate response until 2030, it will be reviewed in 2024. This review will help us reflect emerging priorities, take advantage of newly identified opportunities and keep pace with the rapid changes that are happening in the climate change arena.

Introduction

Climate change is already having an impact on our region. While everyone has a role to play in combating climate change – individually and collectively – leadership is needed to create a coordinated and collaborative approach.

At the City of Greater Geelong, we acknowledge the changing climate is a global emergency and, as a local government, we have a significant role to play in accelerating a municipal-wide response.

This plan includes actions we all need to implement to achieve net zero community emissions by 2035. It builds on the work we have been doing since 2006 to address this significant challenge. The focus of the plan is to rapidly reduce emissions and adapt to climate change risks through collective effort.

Community attention on climate change is growing. To harness this interest, the region needs a holistic plan that demonstrates how everyone – the City, residents, businesses and organisations – can work together to make a local impact on this global challenge. To become a platform for collaborative action, the plan must be broadly understood, accepted and supported.

Many individuals, organisations and businesses in our community are already doing everything they can to achieve better climate outcomes for our community. By providing further support and improving collaboration, we aim to increase the collective impact of each contribution and share vital knowledge for the benefit of all.

Our climate emergency

Our region is facing a drier, warmer future. We need to better understand the risks and work out ways to secure a more sustainable future.

Our everyday activities are contributing to rising atmospheric greenhouse gas emissions that are warming the planet at an unprecedented rate. If emissions continue to increase at the current rate, global warming is likely to reach 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels as soon as 2030.

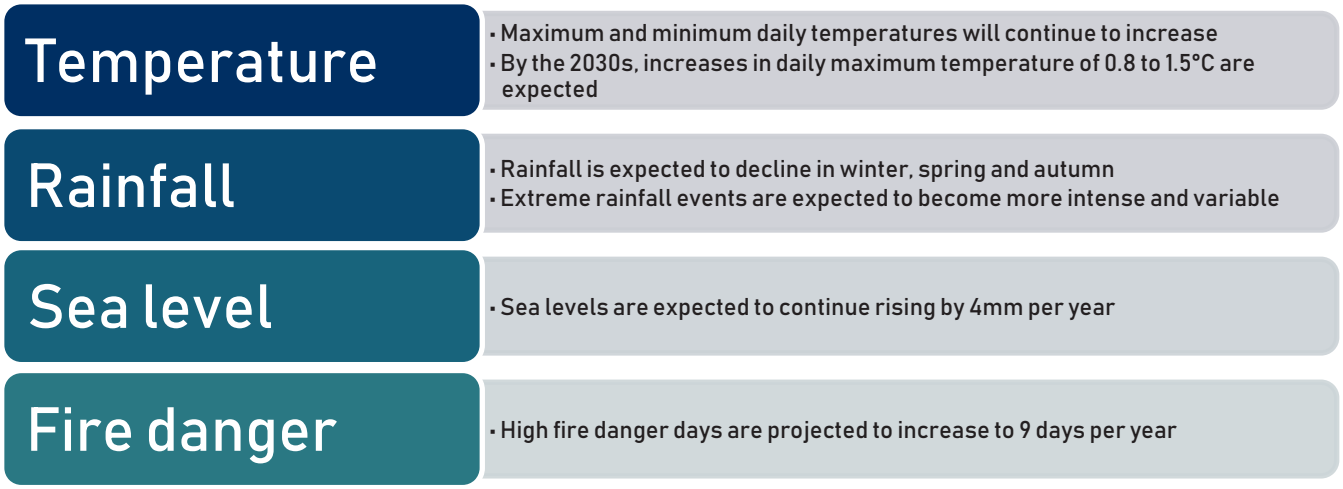
A warming planet has a significant impact on a range of climate variables. Some of the climate changes we are experiencing now include:

- temperature rise
- variations in rainfall intensity and frequency
- sea level rise and
- stronger wind patterns.

The local effects of these climatic changes were noticeable almost a decade ago when we prepared our first climate change adaption strategy in 2011. With the region already warmer and drier – a climate trend likely to continue[1] – these effects could become much worse.

By the 2050s, some predictions suggest Geelong's climate will be more like the current climate of Shepparton[2]. The frequency of extreme weather events, such as droughts, bushfires, heavy rain, storms and heatwaves, are also expected to increase (see Figure 3).

Figure 3 Climate projections for the Barwon Region[2]



1 DELWP (2015) Climate-ready Victoria: Barwon South West

2 Clarke JM, Grose M, Thatcher M, Round V & Heady C. 2019. Barwon Climate Projections 2019. CSIRO, Melbourne Australia

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR OUR REGION

Climate change risk is determined by climate change impacts, likelihood and consequences. Global warming caused by human activity in the past two centuries, is likely to persist for centuries to come.

Simultaneously, increasing population growth and the cumulative impact of other threats to our natural environment will intensify the consequences of climate change impacts. Consequently, the region's exposure to climate risk is increasing (see box inset).

Unless we can urgently reduce emissions to zero and draw down the carbon already in the atmosphere, the climate risks we face will increase.

CRITICAL RISKS TO OUR REGION POSED BY CLIMATE CHANGE

- Sea level rise and higher-intensity coastal storms likely to damage natural and constructed coastal assets
- More frequent intense rainfall events resulting in increased stormwater run-off and greater stress on natural and built infrastructure such as wetlands, drains, pipes and roads
- Greater pressure on municipal emergency management due to stronger wind patterns and inundation of residential areas
- More severe droughts impacting water security, agriculture, bushfire risk and emergency response costs
- More hot days and heatwaves decreasing outdoor activity and increasing mortality, especially in vulnerable groups
- More frequent disruptions to transport routes and higher costs for repairing damage to road infrastructure
- More pressure on accessible green open spaces for heat refuge and recreational services
- Sustained economic disruptions from extreme events (i.e. fire, flood, storms, heatwaves)

COMMUNITY EMISSIONS PROFILE

Greenhouse gas emissions are caused by human activities associated with the extensive burning of fossil fuels for energy and heat, together with industrial processes, waste, land clearing and agriculture.

Our Community Emissions Profile includes all greenhouse gas emissions resulting from the actions of people, businesses and organisations in the City of Greater Geelong municipality, but does not include emissions associated with consumption of goods and services – for example, food and air travel.

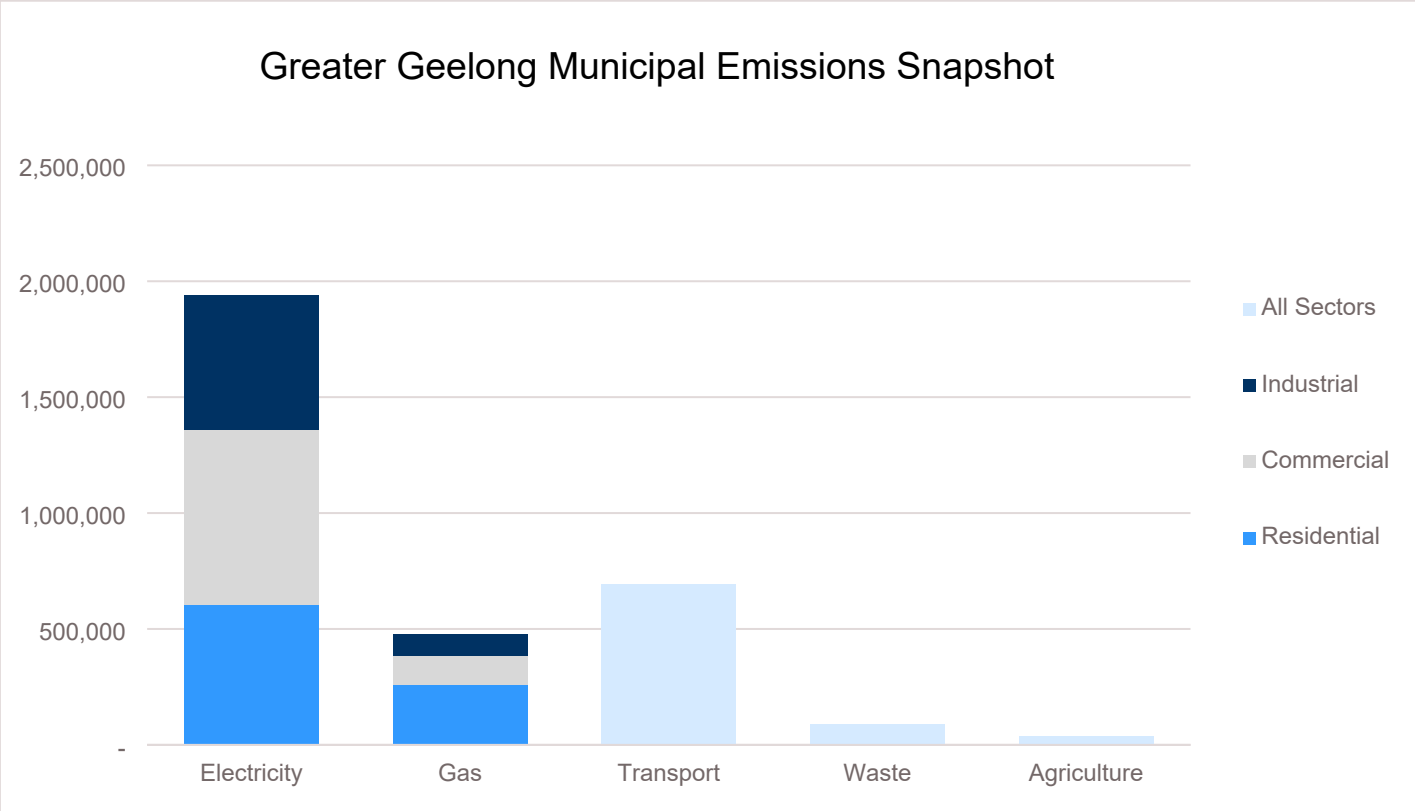
For the 2019 calendar year, the community emissions profile for the municipality was estimated to be 3,232,000 tonnes CO_2-e[3] (see Figure 4). The primary community emission sources included:

- Electricity – 60 per cent
- Transport – 21 per cent
- Gas – 15 per cent
- Waste – 3 per cent
- Agriculture – 1 per cent.

As an organisation, our operational emissions come from buildings and facilities, vehicle fleet and municipal waste. These emissions peaked in 2015–16 and have been declining since. This is due to the switching of electricity sources to renewable sources, capture and use of methane from landfill, building efficiency improvements and onsite renewable energy from solar photovoltaic (PV) generation. In 2019-20, emissions from our operations were 36,780 tonnes CO2-e, which is just over one per cent of the total community emissions profile.

3 Beyond Zero Emissions and Ironbark Sustainability, Snapshot – community climate tool (accessed 17 June 2021)

Figure 4 City of Greater Geelong community emissions profile 2019[4]



4 Beyond Zero Emissions and Ironbark Sustainability, Snapshot – community climate tool (accessed 17 June 2021)

Responding to the emergency

The climate emergency is a complex problem for us all. It has complicated global impacts and a cumulative cause beyond the control of any person, group, organisation or country. There is also varying degrees of understanding about the threat, as well as views on how it should be addressed.

Across the Greater Geelong municipality, there has generally been strong community support for action on climate change, but low levels of coordinated action at scale.

Across the world, and in our region, activism is growing. In 2016, the Geelong–based community group Climate Safety was instrumental in the now worldwide 'Climate Emergency Declaration' movement. In 2019, a coalition of local activist groups banded together to lobby Council to declare a climate emergency.

The 2018 International Panel on Climate Change indicates we only have until 2030 to reach an emissions target that keeps global warming to less than 1.5 degrees Celsius. The overwhelming message from community groups, businesses and other organisations is that the time for debate is over. We need to act urgently and extensively as a municipal community to be part of the solution to the climate crisis.

Figure 5 North Geelong, Corio Bay



HOW WE CAN RESPOND

There is no single answer that will help us achieve the scale of change we need over the next decade. It will take many approaches across many sectors, however there are two primary ways we can respond (see Figure 6):

Reducing emissions

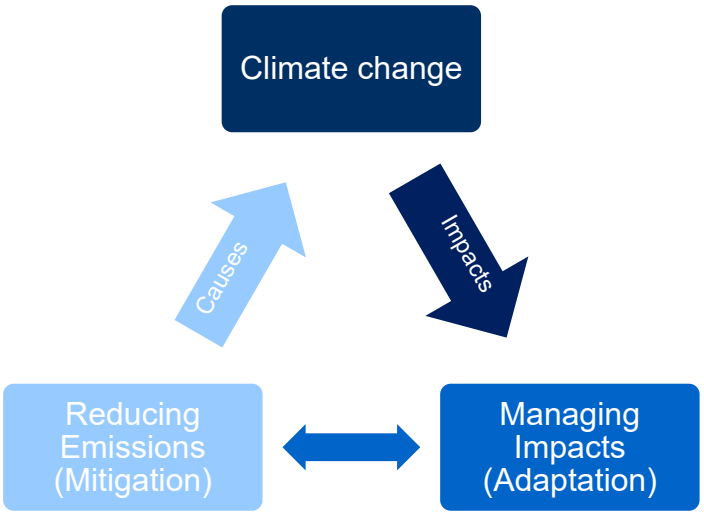
Also called *mitigation*, this refers to any action addressing the underlying cause of climate change – namely, greenhouse gas emissions. Examples include improving energy efficiency, increasing availability and use of renewable electricity, using electric vehicles, diverting organics from landfill and carbon offsets.

Managing impacts

Also called *adaptation*, these are the actions we can take to prepare for current and projected climate impacts. Examples include planning and designing new urban infrastructure to cope with extreme weather, planning overlays that minimise future risk to properties and establishing emergency management planning and policies.

These responses can be mutually beneficial. For example, an energy-efficient building not only uses less energy – reducing emissions and saving money – but it also improves thermal comfort during extreme heat events.

Figure 6 Climate change responses



WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?

While much of what shapes climate change in the region is determined by global and national forces, there's still a lot we can influence and control. As individuals, we can change our patterns of consumption and lifestyles. As groups and organisations, we can increase renewable energy use and maximise energy efficiency.

Of course, there is only so much any individual, group and organisation acting alone can achieve. We need collective action, as well as individual responses, at all scales.

Our role

As a local government, we play a variety of roles when it comes to reducing emissions and managing the impacts of climate change. These include:

Leading and supporting a collaborative, municipal-wide response

Reducing operational emissions caused by:

- vehicle fleet, gas heating, municipal waste breakdown and third-party activities
- grid-sourced electricity used for our buildings, depots, community, leisure and sporting facilities

Planning to manage current and future climate-related risks

Administering the planning scheme and assessing development applications

Delivering community infrastructure and services that are climate ready

Building awareness of climate change and preparedness within the community

Representing the needs and values of local communities

Collaborating with other stakeholders to develop appropriate adaptation responses

Supporting community climate action efforts either:

- directly through community education, regional capacity building or financial in-kind support or
- indirectly through facilitating, coordinating, collaborating, investing and advocacy

Figure 7 City of Greater Geelong Coastal Adaptation Program Team Leader, Ralph Roob, attending to an artificial shellfish reef designed to minimise beach erosion



The role of business

An effective municipal climate response is not possible without support from the business sector. While many companies in the region are already operating more sustainably, others need help to make significant change.

Supporting a lower-carbon economy helps business to lower costs and build positive brand associations. However, the lack of collaboration between individual businesses minimises the collective impact of change. Government organisations and business alliances are well placed to help address this.

The role of community organisations

We are fortunate to have so many community-based groups driving climate action in our region. These groups are the activists, innovators and early adopters in our regional climate emergency response. Most contribute their time, expertise and energy to addressing climate action in a voluntary capacity.

By drawing on their members' knowledge, skills and experience, these groups drive specific climate action initiatives such as awareness and educational outreach programs and sustainable group procurement. Most groups are calling for better coordination to help drive the quantum shift in societal norms needed to address the climate emergency. All groups will play a critical role in reaching out to a broader community audience.

The role of residents

With a population of more than 250,000, empowering residents to take individual and collective climate action is a critical element of a municipal response to climate change. While many local residents are already acting, some need additional help – whether that's better access to information and advice, or direct support to implement more sustainable ways of living.

About this plan

We identified climate change as a global emergency in 2020 when our Council adopted the Sustainability Framework.

We committed to adopting and implementing a climate change response plan that would build on the significant body of work that started for our organisation in 1996 – when we first identified climate change as an issue.

This plan fits within a much broader framework of strategic planning at the City. As with all plans, it is guided by the community's long-term vision that was established in 2017:

By 2047, Greater Geelong will be internationally recognised as a clever and creative city-region that is forward looking, enterprising and adaptive, and cares for its people and environment.

Figure 8 shows how the plan fits within the current framework we're using to guide our response to climate and environment issues. It is a key deliverable of both the *Sustainability Framework 2020* and the *City of Greater Geelong Environment Strategy 2020–30*.



Figure 8 Environment and sustainability planning framework

OUR ENVIRONMENT STRATEGY 2020–30

The City's Environment Strategy 2020-2030 defines five key goals:

Goal 1: Become a zero-emission, climate-ready city and region

Goal 2: Create greener community spaces

Goal 3: Contribute to a circular economy by reducing waste

Goal 4: Protect, enhance and restore our region's biodiversity

Goal 5: Achieve better integrated water management through planning and design

This plan aligns most closely with the first goal of our Environment Strategy 2020–30, with some minor adjustments to accommodate what we heard during the community engagement process.

HOW WE ENGAGED

The engagement conducted for this plan built on what we already knew from previous engagements. We sought input from community groups, residents, agencies and businesses as part of a four-stage engagement process (Figure 9), which aligned with the approach outlined in the *Zero Carbon Communities Guide 2020*.

This draft plan being released for community feedback signals that we have reached the final step in Stage 3 of the engagement process.

Stage 1 – Understanding the issues Apr to Sep 20	Stage 2 – Co-designing the solutions Dec 20 to Feb 21	Stage 3 – Develop the plan Mar to Jun 21	Stage 4 – Endorse the plan Jul to Oct 21
• Conducted 21 employee workshops • Online individual discussions with 24 groups representing community, business and agencies.	• Launched online engagement • Facilitated 6 community co-design workshops • General community forum • Engaged with stakeholders and organisations	• Facilitated a community forum, councillor workshop and interviews with 10 key community businesses and organisations. • Facilitated workshops with the Community Sustainability Advisory Committee • Reviewed the engagement outcomes from our council planning process • Draft plan developed • Release plan for feedback from the broader community	• Review feedback received • Incorporate changes into the plan • Formal endorsement of the plan by Council • Ongoing collaboration using the plan as a shared platform for community action

Figure 9 Community engagement schedule

What we heard

The key themes that came out of the engagement process were concerned with:

- leadership, advocacy and support
- coordination, collaboration and governance
- raising awareness
- utilising and building regional capacity
- embedding climate action in decisions
- climate change mitigation
- climate change adaptation.

The extensive feedback we received has been embedded throughout the plan. To see the full stakeholder consultation report, visit www.yoursay.geelongaustralia.com.au/CCRP



Figure 10 Climate Rally 2019 (Photo credit: Centre for Climate Safety)

'The community is interested in being energy efficient and using renewables; they just need some help.'

Workshop participant

Our climate change response plan

Clever and creative vision	By 2047, Greater Geelong will be internationally recognised as a clever and creative city-region that is forward looking, enterprising and adaptive and cares for its people and environment.						
Goal	Become a zero-emissions, climate-ready city and region.						
Key success factor	A coordinated and collective response from the whole community						
Targets	**Mitigation target** Achieve net zero community emissions by 2035				**Adaptation target** Become a climate-ready municipality, with increased resilience to current and future climate risks		
Principles	**Principle 1** Support an empowered and active community	**Principle 2** Increase energy efficiency and renewable energy production	**Principle 3** Switch to sustainable transport and cleaner fuels	**Principle 4** Reduce non-energy emissions and increase carbon storage	**Principle 5** Increase awareness and understanding of climate change impacts	**Principle 6** Build climate action into decision-making	**Principle 7** Increase collaborative climate change responses
Focus Areas	*1.1* *Community awareness, education and capacity building*	*2.1* *Improve energy efficiency in existing buildings, facilities and infrastructure*	*3.1* *Prioritise the development of sustainable transport infrastructure and services*	*4.1* *Reduce waste and recover waste energy*	*5.1* *Improve local climate risk knowledge*	*6.1* *Embed climate thinking in our decisions*	*7.1* *Build networks and partnerships for adaptation pathways*
	1.2 *Governance and accountability*	*2.2* *Optimise energy efficiency in new buildings, facilities and infrastructure*	*3.2* *Transition the regional fleet to zero-emission power sources*	*4.2* *Support establishment of regional drawdown solutions*		*6.2* *Corporate climate risk management and disclosure*	*7.2* *Collaborate in areas of emerging climate risk*
	1.3 *Resources and investment focus*	*2.3* *Increase renewable energy use*	**There is a list of actions below each focus area with identified lead/support roles and anticipated costs (see page 22 onwards).*				

Figure 11 Overview of the *City of Greater Geelong Climate Response Plan 2021–30*

By 2035, the Greater Geelong community will achieve net zero community emissions and increased resilience to climate change impacts through a coordinated and collective response from the community led by the City.

We all need to do our part to reduce emissions and prepare for climate impacts, even though we cannot predict how climate change responses will develop at broader scales. While our plan (see Figure 11) is designed to guide our organisation's response to climate change over the next 10 years, we strongly encourage individuals and organisations to use it as a road map for guiding their individual and collective responses. We cannot achieve the targets and actions set out in this plan by ourselves; community must play an active role.

OUR ORGANISATIONAL TARGETS

To support the community mitigation target, we have also committed to achieving the following organisational targets:

- All City-managed operations to reach net zero emissions by 2025.
- 100 per cent renewable electricity supply used for all City-owned and operated buildings, and streetlights by 2021.
- 95 per cent of Drysdale Landfill methane gas emissions recovered and used for energy production by 2025.
- All City-owned light fleet vehicles powered by zero-emission power sources by 2027.
- Undertake an assessment of our gas-using infrastructure by 2022.



Figure 12: A beach recovery project on the Bellarine Peninsula is an example of an adaptation response



Figure 13 Solar PV array on Leisurelink Waurn Ponds is an example of a mitigation response

FUNDING

While many of the proposed actions in the plan are already funded, there are others that will not be possible without additional resources. While we aim to fund some actions as part of future annual council budgets, we will actively work with our partners to pursue other funding opportunities for others.

An innovative new funding model that we are implementing is the community climate action partnership fund. This will be used to support climate action delivered by volunteers and not-for-profit groups in the community and create a sustainable economic model for delivering this plan (see Focus Area 1.3).

EVALUATION

On 22 June 2021, our Council endorsed a series of Sustainability Performance Indicators and Targets that will be reported on annually, including a carbon reduction target.

The timing of this draft plan has prevented us from aligning these indicators and targets with the actions proposed in this plan. However, we will address in the final version of the plan so the community can see how local actions are contributing to the global effort.

REVIEW

Although the plan is intended to guide our climate response until 2030, it will be reviewed in 2024. This review will help us reflect emerging priorities, take advantage of newly identified opportunities and keep pace with the rapid changes that are happening in the climate change arena.

Principle 1: Support an empowered and active community

A fundamental challenge for large-scale, collective action is the wide spectrum of attitudes towards climate action in the community. While some people are highly aware, engaged and mobilised, others have low awareness and little motivation to get involved at this stage.

We need a collaborative, coordinated approach to building community awareness about climate change. This approach will use existing community knowledge and skills, as well as local networks. Such an approach will help address the issue of misinformation in the climate debate by giving the community a trusted local source of climate information.

Awareness building and education should be based on science. It is also important to link climate action with more intrinsic benefits such as stronger community cohesion, improved health and wellbeing and personal satisfaction. We need to help people feel they can be part of the solution.

FOCUS AREA 1.1 COMMUNITY AWARENESS, EDUCATION AND CAPACITY BUILDING

There are many inspiring local case studies and stories of individuals and communities acting on climate change, but there is limited local recognition of these efforts. We need a community awareness program that highlights positive stories to support a better outlook for those who feel concerned about the climate situation. Positive stories also have the potential to stimulate engagement with the problem and show that action does not have to be difficult.

Community-based networks can help share information, build action clusters and galvanise local community efforts. Local 'climate action mobilisers' are critical activators within their networks and sectors. There is a need to grow our pool of potential climate change champions through support and capacity building.

Ref	Action	Lead	Support	Cost*
1.1.1	Develop an awareness campaign by 2023 that will provide a municipal-scale knowledge network for local climate risks, impacts and responses, and share appropriate information with the community about climate change.	City	DELWP	Low**
1.1.2	Develop and implement a collaborative community awareness program for climate action, leveraging the capacity available in the region by 2023.	City	Community	Med**
1.1.3	Partner with climate action mobilisers to help support community efforts to reduce emissions and adapt to climate impacts by 2022.	City	Community	Med
1.1.4	Assess the region's capabilities and skills in climate action and develop a 'regional knowledge base' to help the community share locally available information and resources by 2023.	City	Community	Low**
1.1.5	Support community involvement in citizen science programs to collect climate-change-related data by 2022.	City		Low
1.1.6	Identify and work with members of the community who possess specialist technical skills and knowledge to strengthen decision making by 2022.	City		Low
1.1.7	Work in partnership with community groups, businesses and other organisations to promote and educate the community about sustainable practices by 2023.	City		Low**
1.1.8	Continue to lead the implementation of the clever and creative vision and identify how the vision partner group will work with others to deliver municipality-wide emissions reduction.	City		Low

* Low ($0–$100,000), Med ($100,000–$500,000) High (500,000+)

** Subject to funding

FOCUS AREA 1.2 GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The current municipal response to climate change is fragmented, reflecting the organic growth of interest and activism. There is overwhelming support for a more coordinated approach to better integrate collective efforts and achieve greater scales of action.

As an organisation, we are well-positioned to facilitate a coordinated and collaborative approach; however, community support will be crucial. Our recently formed Sustainability Advisory Committee, as a form of collaborative governance, will have an essential role in supporting the successful implementation this plan.

One of the hallmarks of an effective action plan is constant monitoring of progress to direct community effort. The total community emissions footprint that underpins this plan is useful, but it has some limitations. A more localised and complete picture is needed to guide community decision making.

Community expertise and citizen science will be required to help build the evidence base for the community footprint. There's also an opportunity to seek data directly from critical sources, such as businesses, organisations and community entities. By doing this, it will help us build a more complete picture of our emissions footprint.

Ref	Action	Lead	Support	Cost*
1.2.1	Recognise, communicate and address the local impacts of the global climate emergency, and reconsider the need to declare a local climate emergency by 2022.	City		Low
1.2.2	Provide regular plan progress updates to Council and the Sustainability Advisory Committee.	City		Low
1.2.3	Create more opportunities for public participation to: • support sustainability in decision making and • aid the effective implementation of the Sustainability Framework 2020 and supporting action plans.	City		Low
1.2.4	Develop and implement a comprehensive plan for monitoring, evaluating and reporting climate action efforts and effectiveness, aligning with the Sustainable Development Goals by 2022.	City		Low
1.2.5	Support the *Victorian Climate Change Framework* target for Victoria to achieve net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.	City		Low
1.2.6	Evaluate the effectiveness of our sustainability reporting and continuously improve our reporting practices by 2022.	City		Low

* Low ($0–$100,000), Med ($100,000–$500,000) High ($500,000+)

FOCUS AREA 1.3 RESOURCES AND INVESTMENT FOCUS

Community climate action is driven by voluntary efforts, complemented by formal funding through program resources, grants and incentives. The collective resources available to the region do not currently meet the scale of the challenge.

Climate change community advocates need to be supported and recognised for their contributions. Linking like-minded people, while supporting and recognising the varied strengths of the various players, will be an important first step. Long-term funding agreements that provide ongoing support will also be vital.

We want to adopt a new way of supporting community climate action. The climate action strategic partnership fund will support climate action delivered by volunteers and not-for-profit groups in the community and create a sustainable economic model for delivering this plan.

Ref	Action	Lead	Support	Cost*
1.3.1	Allocate resources for the establishment of community climate change officers by 2022.	City		Med**
1.3.2	Allocate resources for Climate Change Response Plan implementation project funding by 2022.	City		Med**
1.3.3	Establish a climate action strategic partnership fund to support partnerships that enable climate action across the community by 2021.	City		Med
1.3.4	Increase support for community-generated ideas and projects for sustainable practice and education through the City's Environmental Sustainability Grants by 2021.	City		Low
1.3.5	Advocate for additional resources and investment to the region for climate action from government, business and philanthropic organisations.	City	Community	Low

* Low ($0–$100,000), Med ($100,000–$500,000) High ($500,000+)

** Subject to funding

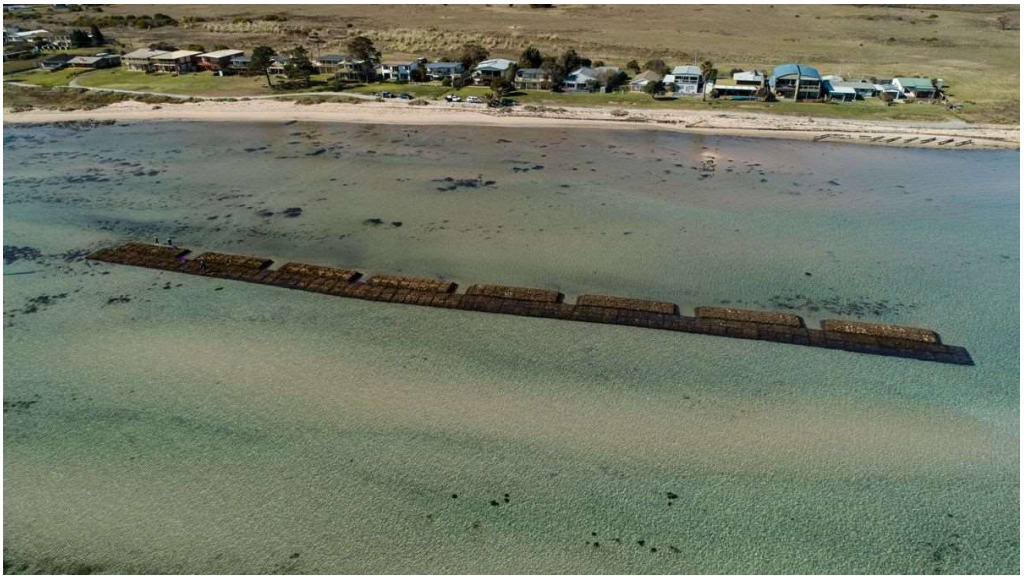


Figure 14 Beach erosion control using an artificial shellfish reef at Portarlington

Principle 2: Increase energy efficiency and renewable energy production

Emissions from stationary energy collectively make up more than two-thirds of our total community emissions profile. Energy in this context refers to electricity and natural gas for stationary activities, such as buildings, facilities and energy-using equipment.

The use of grid-sourced electricity accounts for more than half of the region's emissions, primarily derived from coal-burning.

Grid-sourced electricity emissions from the commercial sector account for approximately 23 per cent of the region's total community emissions. This sector – which includes non-industrial business, schools, universities and public utilities – is therefore our single greatest contributor to emissions.

Grid-sourced electricity used in the industrial sector accounts for 15 per cent of total community emissions, which is equivalent to household contributions. Gas usage is highest in the residential sector, accounting for about 7 per cent of the region's community emissions profile.

BECOMING MORE ENERGY EFFICIENT

Residents

- Carry out a home energy assessment to establish a baseline
- identify energy efficiency measures and track improvements – for example, by installing insulation or moderating your heating and cooling
- Support community solar bulk buys and access government rebates for energy-efficient equipment
- Buy or lease houses with high energy efficiency ratings

Business

- Conduct an energy assessment to identify potential upgrades
- Implement an energy management plan and track improvements
- Lease, purchase or build energy-efficient buildings
- Train staff to adopt energy efficient work practices

FOCUS AREA 2.1 IMPROVE ENERGY EFFICIENCY IN EXISTING BUILDINGS, FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Despite an overall increase in City-owned buildings, our annual emissions from stationary energy have decreased significantly. This is due to our focus on improving energy efficiency, better energy management and installing and using power from renewable energy sources.

We will continue to increase our capacity to improve energy efficiency across our operations. We will also explore and where possible implement options for reducing gas use, particularly in public swimming pools.

Streetlighting is a significant source of electricity-based emissions and we are currently upgrading approximately 25,000-street lights to energy efficient LED lighting that will reduce 8,000 tonnes of carbon emissions each year.

Whilst most people understand the benefits of energy efficiency, it may not be a priority and available information can be overwhelming and a barrier for some. We need to provide information on why energy efficiency needs to be considered be a priority and make it easier for people to find the information they need to make informed decisions. In line with our social equity principles, adopted in 2017, we need to deliver this assistance in a way that is fair and equitable and reaches priority areas and groups, irrespective of gender, age, background, location, socio-economic circumstances and ability.

There is an opportunity to scale up energy management support and advisory services to both residents and business through new partnerships.

Ref	Action	Lead	Support	Cost*
2.1.1	Continue to adopt leading technologies to improve energy efficiency in City-owned and operated facilities by: • upgrading lighting, heating and cooling systems in key facilities • undertaking an assessment of our gas-using infrastructure by 2022, to support a longer-term transition to gas-free operations • providing funding to transition gas infrastructure.	City		Med**
2.1.2	Adopt a proactive energy efficiency management model and prioritise investment for upgrades for the City's operations by investigating energy consumption data to better inform future decisions.	City		Low
2.1.3	Upgrade all streetlights with energy efficient LED lighting by 2025 as part of a broader effort to implement leading technologies that reduce streetlight-related emissions.	City		High
2.1.4	Empower local businesses to reduce emissions by promoting access to energy efficiency and productivity initiatives, including: • energy assessments • energy management plans • advice on energy-efficient buildings.	City		Med**
2.1.5	Support community efforts to reduce emissions by promoting access to energy efficiency programs, including: • home energy assessments • advice on available rebates and programs • tailored programs to support community members most vulnerable to climate change impacts • advocacy to state government to improve energy and thermal performance of existing public housing stock in the Geelong region.	Community		Med**

* Low ($0–$100,000), Med ($100,000–$500,000) High (more than $500,000+)

** Subject to funding

FOCUS AREA 2.2 OPTIMISE ENERGY EFFICIENCY IN NEW BUILDINGS, FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

With a rapidly growing population and expanding urban footprint, stationary emissions will increase unless we reduce our reliance on fossil fuels for energy in new buildings, facilities and infrastructure. Through the planning scheme, we can make sure all new buildings that require a planning permit are as energy efficient as possible including multi-unit, commercial and industrial buildings.

Transport is likely to remain a significant source of emissions in the foreseeable future given the region's strong car dependence and expanding urban footprint. Improved public transport, active travel infrastructure and new infrastructure that supports low-and-no emissions vehicles will require significant investment.

We have already committed to achieving a 5-star 'Green Star' environmental rating for all new City-owned and managed buildings and facilities. We are also consolidating our corporate operations into a single, energy-efficient building as part of our new Civic Precinct and will save $1 million annually by securing zero-emissions renewably sourced electricity for the next decade via the Victorian Energy Collaboration (VECO) Power Purchase Agreement.

There is an opportunity to increase uptake of renewables through existing mechanisms – for example, Environmental Upgrade Agreements – and new measures – such as rate rebates. Setting standards for energy efficiency in new residences, buildings and facilities will also provide a buffer against incremental increases in energy use over time.

Ref	Action	Lead	Support	Cost*
2.2.1	Review and strengthen our Sustainable Buildings Policy to lower whole-of-life emissions for new buildings and energy-using infrastructure by 2022.	City		Low
2.2.2	Develop and implement best practice Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD) Plans for all new urban developments, including: • Geelong Northern Growth Area • Geelong Western Growth Area.	City	Developers	Low
2.2.3	Amend procurement policy and practices to prioritise low embodied energy, sustainably produced, climate-resilient infrastructure and asset purchases – such as road and pavement surfaces – and undertake a climate risk assessment of significant infrastructure and procurement decisions, to identify preferred choices.	City		Low
2.2.4	Actively discourage gas infrastructure in new developments and support renewable alternatives by 2022.	City	Community	Low
2.2.5	Ensure all new buildings meet '7-Star' building standards under changes to the National Construction Code.	Builders	Building Inspectors	Med
2.2.6	Educate prospective new building owners of the advantages of ESD buildings by 2023.	Community	City	Med
2.2.7	Carry out ESD compliance with planning permits by 2022.	City		Low**

* Low ($0–$100,000), Med ($100,000–$500,000) High ($500,000+)

** Subject to funding

FOCUS AREA 2.3 INCREASE RENEWABLE ENERGY USE

The switch to renewable energy is happening quickly and on a broad scale. This is due to a range of factors including: solar Photo-Voltaic panels (solar PV) on rooftops and in solar farms; the availability of market mechanisms, such as renewable power purchase agreements; and community-led initiatives, such as bulk-buys of solar PV and battery systems, as well as community-owned renewable energy generation initiatives.

As an organisation, we have been transitioning to renewables since we installed our first rooftop solar system in 2008. We have installed more than one megawatt (MW) of solar PV across 27 of our facilities and have committed to zero-emissions electricity for all our operations over the next decade, as part of the Victorian Energy Collaboration Project. Other large regional organisations making significant commitments to renewables include Barwon Water and Deakin University.

Opportunities to increase the uptake of renewables include a subsidised energy audit service to businesses and residents, supporting community bulk buys, community-owned renewable energy initiatives and exploring the possibility of rate rebates.

Ref	Action	Lead	Support	Cost*
2.3.1	Continue to implement the City's renewable energy program by: • sourcing renewable energy for the City's operations via a Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) by 2021 • installing behind-the-meter solar systems on City-owned buildings • investigate energy trading opportunities for energy generated in City-owned buildings.	City		Med

Ref	Action	Lead	Support	Cost*
2.3.2	Support community-owned renewable energy initiatives.	Community	City	Med
2.3.3	Support community-based programs that enable economies-of-scale procurement of renewable technology – for example, solar and batteries for home and business owners, renters and landlords.	Community	City	Med
2.3.4	Investigate opportunities to support 'smart grids' in new developments.	Developers	City	High
2.3.5	Support the establishment of a regional renewable energy research and development hub to support knowledge transfer and education across the region.	Deakin University		Med
2.3.6	Investigate and implement additional ways of supporting greater uptake of renewables for business and community by 2023 including: • existing mechanisms, such as Environmental Upgrade Agreements	City		High**
2.3.7	Collaborate with regional partners to investigate options to produce green hydrogen as a new renewable fuel source.	City		High

* Low ($0–$100,000), Med ($100,000–$500,000) High ($500,000+)

** Subject to funding

Principle 3: Switch to sustainable transport and cleaner fuels

With a growing population and expanding areas of urban development, emissions from transport are expected to increase unless we make significant changes to our transport systems.

Transport-related emissions, including diesel, petrol, and LPG, account for almost one third of our total community emissions profile. About one third of total household emissions come from cars used for private transport.

To reduce our current transport emissions footprint, we must change the way we move around our communities. However, it will take significant commitment and investment from a range of different stakeholders for us to not only create viable alternatives, but to plan neighbourhoods that support this outcome.

Public transport could be a viable alternative to car-based travel, but not without significant changes to the way it operates in our region.

REDUCING TRANSPORT EMISSIONS

Residents

- Use active travel – walk, run, ride, skate, scoot
- Use of public transport
- Vehicle pooling and car sharing
- Advocate for improved public transport and active travel networks and infrastructure

Business

- Coordinate meetings and trips, support online meetings
- Encourage vehicle pooling, public and active transport use by staff
- Provide end-of-trip facilities for staff who commute via active travel
- Advocate for improved public transport and active travel networks and infrastructure

FOCUS AREA 3.1 PRIORITISE THE DEVELOPMENT OF SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES

While we're lucky to have access to bus and some rail services in our region, many users feel they are not worth the hassle and do not always provide a viable and usable alternative to car-based travel. As such, transport is dominated by private vehicles.

Significant investment is needed to keep building safer active travel infrastructure, such as bike trails and walking paths. We also need strong advocacy for improved public transport and consolidated urban growth around public transport nodes.

Ref	Action	Lead	Support	Cost*
3.1.1	Initiate the development of a draft integrated transport strategy for better integration between modes of transport, and to support sustainable transport choices by 2022.	City		High
3.1.2	Deliver and promote the Better Bike Connections Project to encourage active transport and reduce emissions by 2022.	City		High
3.1.3	Deliver and promote the *Shared Trails Master Plan* to encourage active transport and reduce emissions by 2022.	City		High
3.1.4	Investigate options to incentivise alternatives to private vehicle usage, including end-of-trip facilities, car-sharing and active travel.	City		Low
3.1.5	Advocate for sustainable transport, including consolidated urban growth around public transport nodes, as well as more reliable and regular public transport services across the region.	City		Low

* Low ($0–$100,000), Med ($100,000–$500,000) High ($500,000+)

FOCUS AREA 3.2 TRANSITION THE REGIONAL FLEET TO ZERO-EMISSION POWER SOURCES

Technological innovation in electric vehicles, with lower or zero emissions, is occurring at a rapid pace globally and accelerating now in Australia. However, the cost of such vehicles is still prohibitive for many people.

While some European countries are already planning to ban new fossil-fuel-based vehicles within the next decade, the lack of publicly accessible rapid charging infrastructure is a critical local barrier for our community.

Mass transport – that is, trains, trams and buses – are well suited for electrification as they follow predictable routes and distances and can accommodate the necessary batteries.

Ref	Action	Lead	Support	Cost*
3.2.1	Transitioning City-owned light and passenger fleet vehicles to zero-emission power sources, including: • increasing hybrid vehicles in our fleet • assessing and installing EV charging infrastructure by 2024 • changing over fleet vehicles to EV alternatives by 2027.	City		Med**
3.2.2	Assess transition to EV charging infrastructure to fuel and vehicle options for Council's heavy and commercial vehicles by 2022.	City		Med
3.2.3	Advocate for the transition of the public bus fleet to renewable energy.	City		Med
3.2.4	Investigate opportunities to provide incentives for zero-carbon options – for example, bike and electric vehicle users.	City		Med
3.2.5	Install a network of publicly available electric vehicle charging stations powered by renewable energy across the region by the end of 2024.	City		Med**
3.2.6	Investigate the viability of establishing free, renewable-energy-powered 'Park and Ride' shuttles across the City, like the Deakin Free Shuttle model.	City	Deakin	Med
3.2.7	Decarbonise private vehicle transport via an electric vehicle bulk buy program by 2021.	Community	City	Med
3.2.8	Investigate the transitional aspects of the region's transport networks as technologies mature and become more affordable.	City		Low

* Low ($0–$100,000), Med ($100,000–$500,000) High ($500,000+)

** Subject to funding

'We need to create more electric vehicle charging stations locally and incentives to get more large transport operators to switch faster.'

Member of Geelong Youth Council

Principle 4: Reduce non-energy emissions and increase carbon storage

Both waste and agriculture are essential to the discussion about climate action in our region due to the proximity of farming areas to urban populations and the prominence of waste in people's day-to-day lives.

Emissions of methane from the breakdown of municipal waste are responsible for about three per cent of total community emissions. The primary source of waste emissions is organic waste which, when deposited in landfill, breaks down and forms methane, a potent greenhouse gas. Another source of waste emission is wastewater or sewerage, which emits methane during the treatment process.

Reducing waste and recovering waste energy are hallmarks of a circular economy – one that continues to recirculate its resources sustainably and with reduced environmental impact.

Agriculture is responsible for approximately one per cent of total community emissions. While not a significant emissions source, there are opportunities to support sustainable agricultural and local food production practices across the region.

FOCUS AREA 4.1 REDUCE WASTE AND RECOVER WASTE ENERGY

We started capturing methane from the Drysdale landfill and using it as an energy source for electricity production in 2018. Since then, we've converted methane emissions into electricity through an on-site generator.

Barwon Water undertakes wastewater treatment for most of the municipality at the Black Rock Water treatment plant. The process generates methane emissions, so they are leading a partnership that is working to find a regional circular economy solution for this.

Several effective programs exist to promote sustainable waste management and the transition to a more circular economy including Transition Streets Geelong and community gardens. These and other volunteer-led initiatives need support to reach broader audiences.

Ref	Action	Lead	Support	Cost*
4.1.1	Prioritise service and infrastructure solutions to reduce and capture municipal waste emissions, which continuing to capture and reuse methane gas emissions from the Drysdale municipal landfill to produce energy.	City		Low
4.1.2	Implement a pilot food waste collection service for residents by 2022.	City		Med
4.1.3	Investigate opportunities to manage residual waste, such as an organic waste processing facility to support the circular economy by 2022.	City	Barwon Water G21 councils and Wyndham City Council	Med

* Low ($0–$100,000), Med ($100,000–$500,000) High ($500,000+)

FOCUS AREA 4.2 SUPPORT ESTABLISHMENT OF REGIONAL DRAWDOWN SOLUTIONS

Another essential element of the emissions reduction challenge is to draw down carbon from the atmosphere.

Sequestration of carbon is a common form of drawdown and involves removing carbon emissions from the atmosphere in some way – for example tree planting (green carbon), improving soil carbon (brown carbon), marine systems (blue carbon) and wetlands (teal carbon). These types of drawdown are regularly used to support carbon offset schemes.

Blue carbon is an area of considerable interest in our region. As well as our extensive tidal estuaries and areas of seagrass, which offer high sequestration rates, Deakin University's Blue Carbon Lab is a world leader in this area.

There is also significant interest in a self-generated, voluntary regional offset scheme. Such a scheme could be part of a more diverse mix of offsets for businesses and organisations. With climate pressures already impacting vulnerable areas, including coastal and low-lying zones, this type of scheme could support private landowners and help protect and conserve valuable natural assets.

There are many challenges associated with setting up such a scheme, notably reaching the agreement on the best verification process. However, the benefits of such a program as a mechanism for directing investment to local climate and environmental solutions could be significant.

'Our region could be a world leader in blue carbon offsets.'

Workshop participant

Ref	Action	Lead	Support	Cost*
4.2.1	Promote climate conscious sustainable agriculture practices through: • education and incentives • policy and planning.	City		Low
4.2.2	Investigate the feasibility of a regional carbon offsets scheme covering a variety of carbon sequestration solutions by: • establishing regional carbon offset working group • developing a business case for a regional pilot scheme.	Corangamite Catchment Management Authority	City	Med
4.2.3	Establish a carbon sequestration target to be achieved through revegetation biomass gains by: • investigating baseline conditions and options for sequestration • developing and implementing a biodiversity strategy by 2022.	City	Corangamite Catchment Management Authority	Low
4.2.4	Continue research into opportunities for blue carbon in the Geelong region.	Deakin		Med

* Low ($0–$100,000), Med ($100,000–$500,000) High ($500,000+)

Principle 5: Increase awareness and understanding of climate change impacts

The likelihood of climate-related hazards is increasing with improved climate modelling and predictions. So too are potential consequences due to the frequency, intensity and duration of climate-related events.

Climate change is expected to pose a growing range of threats to community health and wellbeing – both mental and physical. Human health is dependent on the health of our environment, and there is a growing recognition of the link between nature and human health.

Climate impacts will likely have a disproportionate effect on already disadvantaged residents through increased exposure and costs. For example, heatwaves can be problematic for the region, particularly in some geographic areas of Geelong.

One of the most significant climate change risks facing the region is the Urban Heat Island effect. The hard surfaces of urban landscapes – for example, roads and roofs – collect and store significantly more solar radiation than living, green areas. On days of extreme heat, urban areas can heat up faster and become much warmer than the surrounding living landscapes, forming an 'island' of urban heat.

FOCUS AREA 5.1 IMPROVE LOCAL CLIMATE RISK KNOWLEDGE

Climate risk will increase over the coming decades with the potential to impact our environmental, social and economic systems. By improving our understanding of current and potential climate risks, we can develop adaptation pathways to help reduce the region's vulnerabilities, as well as increase the resilience of these systems.

By building general awareness about potential impacts, it will give more people in the community the impetus to act. Given that many climate-related decisions will affect local communities, they should be involved in the decision-making process where possible.

Ref	Action	Lead	Support	Cost*
5.1.1	Improve understanding of local changes in temperature, rainfall, and related variables related to urban infrastructure condition and function by making existing climate data more accessible and useful for the community.	City		Low
5.1.2	Monitor, evaluate, report and improve climate change adaptation by developing and implementing a long-term framework based on state-wide risk assessments for the municipality.	City		Low
5.1.3	Continue to provide guidance material to support government, business and community in planning and delivering effective place-based adaptation to address the impacts of climate change.	Department Environment Land Water & Planning	City	Med

* Low ($0–$100,000), Med ($100,000–$500,000) High ($500,000+)

Principle 6: Build climate action into decision-making

Climate change poses a range of risks that need to be managed to ensure the best long-term outcomes for the community.

As a local government, we perform a range of roles relevant to climate change including planning for urban growth and development, setting strategic directions for the region, building community infrastructure, and managing and delivering services.

It is challenging to embed climate action in decision-making, as local governments are complex organisations that are guided by multiple pieces of legislation. It requires not only buy-in and support from key decision makers, but also a shared understanding of the issues and necessary responses.

FOCUS AREA 6.1 EMBED CLIMATE THINKING IN OUR DECISIONS

We can impact streetscapes, major drainage, stormwater and public open space in new developments as part of our statutory planning responsibilities. However, we have limited authority to mandate energy efficiency standards for single dwellings via the planning scheme, as planning permits are generally not required for single houses.

We can influence urban precincts to be more sustainable using precinct plans. But we don't have a legislated authority to mandate energy-efficient or climate-resilient developments. Instead, outcomes are highly dependent on state government planning policy provisions and the goodwill of the development industry.

Our Environmentally Sustainable Design Local Planning Policy is one approach we've taken to work within these limitations. It allows us to assess multi-unit developments (3 and above), mixed-use, commercial and industrial precincts, and require minimum standards.

Planning, designing, and building climate ready community infrastructure is a challenge, as there is no existing process demonstrating how to plan and build infrastructure under different future climate scenarios. However, we are working on a 10-year rolling annual plan that will help us consider climate change risks in all community infrastructure decisions. Similarly, our Corporate Asset Management Strategy will help us consider future risks to significant assets.

Ref	Action	Lead	Support	Cost*
6.1.1	Ensure local planning schemes, standards, codes and policies support the use of best available climate change data and adaptative planning principles as part of decision making, particularly as it relates to infrastructure, development and land use changes.	City		Med
6.1.2	Develop a policy to ensure all new strategies and plans consider the implications of climate change risk and demonstrate how to manage such issues by 2023.	City		Low
6.1.3	Plan for climate change and emergency management at the municipal level, provide relief and recovery services and support emergency response operations.	City		Low
6.1.4	Support and enhance a culture in the City that leads to improved decisions for climate change resilience.	City		Low

* Low ($0–$100,000), Med ($100,000–$500,000) High ($500,000+)

FOCUS AREA 6.2 CORPORATE CLIMATE RISK MANAGEMENT AND DISCLOSURE

Managing climate change as a corporate strategic risk is a critical aspect of our adaptation approach. Our Audit and Risk Committee leads these assessments and evaluates the effectiveness of risk management controls. Part of the risk assessment involves our investments.

Currently there is limited connection between our financial investments and our broader sustainability agenda. This needs to be addressed so that more funds can be invested into accredited environmentally sustainable ventures, such as renewable energy generation, low-carbon transport, low-carbon buildings and sustainable water management infrastructure.

Ref	Action	Lead	Support	Cost
6.2.1	Monitor, evaluate and report on the City's effectiveness of climate change adaptation readiness.	City		Low
6.2.2	Implement new risk management and reporting software solutions to manage risks and enable integrated reporting by 2022.	City		Low
6.2.3	Integrate climate change risk management into investment decisions and develop a financial risk disclosure statement.	City		Low
6.2.4	Review the City's Financial Investment Policy and develop an investment strategy based on the City's *Sustainability Framework 2020*.	City		Low
6.2.5	Pursue financial divestment away from fossil-fuel-aligned investments.	City		Low

* Low ($0–$100,000), Med ($100,000–$500,000) High ($500,000+)

Principle 7: Increase collaborative climate change responses

Climate risks span geographic environments, jurisdictions and boundaries. They are complex challenges and require a systems-based approach.

As a local community, we must have a shared understanding of the risks and agree on the appropriate measures to manage or respond to those risks. Without formal networks and partnerships across different organisations, this holistic approach is unlikely to occur.

The *Wadawurrung Country Plan* highlights the importance of climate risks to the cultural, ancestral, spiritual and historical connections to the country, identifying opportunities for new perspectives on climate action. The plan provides a unique opportunity to work in partnership with the Wadawurrung People, to guide the future landscape resilience of the Geelong region and restore its balance, while preparing for the realities of climate change.

Collaboratively managing current and future climate-related risks will enable the most innovative and effective adaptation pathways. Our role is to lead in climate change adaptation, working with the community and stakeholders to understand the issues and risks, evaluate the alternatives and collaboratively implement appropriate adaptation responses.

FOCUS AREA 7.1 BUILD NETWORKS AND PARTNERSHIPS FOR ADAPTATION RESPONSES

We have established various working groups and partnerships in critical risk areas of coastal planning, health and wellbeing and emergency management. Using our Enterprise Risk Framework, there is an opportunity to also establish a cross-department group to drive collaborative responses.

At the broader regional scale, the new Barwon South West Climate Alliance will provide an opportunity for us to share knowledge, coordinate advocacy and deliver collaborative climate action across the region.

Ref	Action	Lead	Support	Cost*
7.1.1	Help establish the Barwon South West Climate Alliance to build networks and cross-agency relationships in climate change adaptation planning and identify opportunities to collaborate across tenures and boundaries by 2022.	City	Barwon South West region local governments	Low
7.1.2	Ensure critical decisions consider climate change mitigation and adaptation implications.	City		Low
7.1.3	Improve coordination of policy development and implementation between various levels of government and different land managers to avoid maladaptation and promote synergies.	Department Environment Land Water & Planning	City	Low

* Low ($0–$100,000), Med ($100,000–$500,000) High ($500,000+)

FOCUS AREA 7.2 COLLABORATE IN AREAS OF EMERGING CLIMATE RISKS

Climate change directly affects health through extreme weather events, prolonged heatwaves, flooding and bushfires. It also has indirect health impacts, such as poorer air quality, an increasing incidence of infectious disease, risks to food safety and drinking water quality and effects on mental health. The data is already showing environmental effects locally, as well as health effects for those most vulnerable to climate change impacts.

With these risks in mind, some of the key areas where we need to collaborate to address emerging climate risk include agriculture, health, support for vulnerable communities and coastal adaptation.

Ref	Action	Lead	Support	Cost*
7.2.1	Collaborate with primary producers to: • investigate how climate change could impact agriculture and sustainable land use • improve understanding of local supply chains and • identify critical gaps.	City		Low
7.2.2	Partner with Traditional Owners to ensure their cultural, ecological and economic values and expertise are integrated into climate adaptation planning	City	Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation	Low
7.2.3	Increase resilience to, and reduce risk of, the urban heat island effect by: • completing urban heatwave vulnerability modelling and identifying priority urban greening sites by 2023 • developing an urban ecology plan by 2025 • increasing tree canopy cover in urban Greater Geelong to 25 per cent by 2045, with an interim target of 20 percent by 2030.	City	Deakin University	Low
7.2.4	Investigate the establishment of a Regional Adaptation Strategic Partnership to improve our understanding of coastal processes in particular coastal erosion by 2022.	City	Department Environment Land Water & Planning	Low
7.2.5	Develop coastal adaptation plans by 2024 that identify the adaptation pathways and responses for priority coastal hazard sites along the Bellarine Peninsula, Corio Bay and outer coast.	City		Low
7.2.6	Investigate market incentives for retrofitting homeowner and rental properties.	City		High
7.2.7	Consider climate change risk assessments for biodiversity assets across the municipality, in conjunction with the development of the Biodiversity Strategy.	City		Low

* Low ($0–$100,000), Med ($100,000–$500,000) High ($500,000+)

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COGG (2020c) City of Greater Geelong Environment Strategy 2020–2025

COGG (2019a) Enterprise Risk Management Policy

COGG (2019b) Council Plan 2018-2022 Update

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Encader Consulting (2020) Stage 1 Stakeholder Consultation Report: Geelong's Climate Change Response Plan – November 2020

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Sustainability Victoria (2018) Take 2 Pledge

The State of Victoria Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (2020) Victoria’s Climate Change Strategy

The State of Victoria Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (2016) Victoria’s Climate Change Adaptation Plan 2017 – 2020

2.7. Rabbit Control Plan 2021-2026

Source: **City Services**
Director: **Guy Wilson-Browne**

Purpose

1. To adopt the Rabbit Control Plan 2021-2026 **(Attachment 1).**

Background

2. Rabbits are Australia's most serious herbivore vertebrate pest. Rabbits degrade ecosystem quality and damage recreational infrastructure.

3. The Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994 requires all landowners and land managers to take reasonable steps to prevent the spread of rabbits and, as far as possible, eradicate them.

4. The City receives many queries from the community about rabbits and how they are being controlled. Although most community enquires received by the City want us to do more rabbit control, there are also varied and conflicting community views on what actions the City should take to control rabbits.

5. A draft Rabbit Control Plan was endorsed by Council for public comment on 30 June 2020. The engagement report **(Attachment 2)** outlines the results of this third and final phase of community engagement that informed the content of the final Rabbit Control Plan 2021-2026 (the Plan).

Key Matters

6. The Plan considers:

   6.1. pest animal legislation and our responsibilities as a land manager;

   6.2. industry best-practice information and advice sourced from experts including the Victorian Rabbit Action Network, the Centre for Invasive Species Solutions and Agriculture Victoria;

   6.3. the views of the community, Landcare groups, the City's Rural Peri-Urban Advisory Committee and stakeholders; and

   6.4. our role in supporting the rural community to address land management issues.

7. The Plan describes the impacts that rabbits are having in the Greater Geelong region, identifies rabbit prone locations, priority areas for control, outlines our rabbit control commitments and our vision, goals and actions for the next five years. It also sets out a methodology for effective rabbit control utilising an integrated approach and how we will collaborate with stakeholders and the community to reduce rabbit impacts.

8. The results of the final phase of consultation showed strong community and stakeholder support for the Plan. While many people commended the Plan, there were a small number who either questioned the Plan's goals or objected to some of the proposed control methods.

RESOLUTION - Item 2.7

Cr Mason moved, Cr Moloney seconded -

That Council adopt the Rabbit Control Plan 2021-2026.

Carried

Financial Sustainability

9. The development and implementation of the Plan will be funded from the City's existing reserve management budget. It is anticipated the Plan will also assist the City in its applications for external funding opportunities. The City's annual rabbit control expenditure has been $160,000 per annum for the last two financial years (2019-20, 2020-21).

Community Engagement

10. The City completed 3 phases of community consultation in developing the Plan.

11. Below is a summary of each of the 3 consultation phases.

    11.1. Phase one was conducted in December 2018 and January 2019. Comments were received from 16 participants via a community workshop and a community feedback form. The feedback form was distributed in partnership with the Bellarine Catchment Network and the Geelong Landcare Network.

    11.2. Phase two occurred in August to October 2019. Comments were received from 90 participants via three workshops and a survey. Three open-house style community workshops (Leopold, Lara and Geelong) where held and 72 responses were received via the online survey on our 'Have Your Say' web page. A printed copy of the survey was also available on request. The views of the Rural Peri-Urban Advisory Committee were also sought.

    11.3. The final consultation phase occurred in July to August 2020. During this time, stakeholders, interested groups and the community were invited to comment on the draft Rabbit Control Plan. Comments were received via online surveys on the City's "Have your Say" website or through written submissions. In total, 51 respondents provided feedback via the online survey, (42 complete and 9 partially complete). We also received submissions from 17 stakeholder and community groups and 3 community members. The main changes to the Plan following the final phase of consultation are:

        11.3.1. Goal 1 – changed to clarify our commitment to integrated rabbit control;

        11.3.2. Pindone use – included more information on how we manage the risks involved;

        11.3.3. Immunocontraception (and other non-lethal control technologies) – stated that we will investigate further research opportunities;

        11.3.4. Biocontrol agents – clarified our role in release events;

        11.3.5. Native vegetation (and other constraints) – provided more information about what we do when native vegetation is present and why;

        11.3.6. Controlling other pest animals – stated that controlling other pest animals will be considered during the review of the Plan in 2026;

        11.3.7. Size of the target areas – reduced the size of two of the four target areas to ensure we concentrate our efforts where they are needed most; and

11.3.8. Timing of the Plan – extended to 2026.

Social Equity and Sustainability

12. The implementation of the Plan will encourage and support connections between and within communities in relation to rabbit control and environmental restoration projects.

Relevant Law/Policy/Legal Implications

13. The *Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994* requires all landowners/land managers to take reasonable steps to prevent the spread of rabbits and, as far as possible, eradicate them.

14. Rabbits are a "key threatening process" to protected native flora, fauna and vegetation communities under the *Federal Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* and the *Victorian Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988.*

15. Other relevant legislation and policies are listed on page 10 of the Plan.

Alignment to Community Plan and Vision

16. This report aligns with Our Community Plan 2021-2025 strategic priority:
Healthy, caring and inclusive community.
Sustainable growth and environment.

17. This report aligns with the Community led 30-year Vision, "Greater Geelong: A Clever and Creative Future" community aspiration:
Development and implementation of sustainable solutions.
Sustainable development that supports population growth and protects the natural environment.

Conflict of Interest

18. No officer involved in the preparation of this report declared a general or material conflict of interest.

Risk Assessment

19. There are a range of risks associated with undertaking rabbit control. These include occupational health and safety risks in relation to working with chemicals and machinery, as well as risks to public safety, wildlife, cultural heritage, native vegetation, soils and the City's reputation. Controls must be put in place that effectively mitigate these risks prior to works commencing at a site.

20. The Plan states that for all rabbit control activities, we will identify processes and control measures before we start work. Our goal is to be a leader when it comes to managing safety and risk. Risks will be addressed by applying a variety of management tools including; risk assessments, site hazard identifications, risk registers, risk management plans and hazard maps, safe work method statements, safe operating procedures and contractor safety checklists.

Environmental Sustainability

21. The implementation of the Plan will reduce rabbit numbers across the municipality, which will help to protect and enhance our region's environment and amenity.

Attachments

1. Rabbit Control Plan 2021-2026 [**2.7.1** - 24 pages]
2. Rabbit Control Plan 2021 2026 Engagement Plan [**2.7.2**]

THE CITY OF GREATER GEELONG

RABBIT CONTROL PLAN

2021–2026



CITY OF GREATER GEELONG



CONTENTS

Mayor's message 4
Executive summary 5
Introduction 6
Our region 7
Biodiversity 7
Agriculture 7
Population growth 7
Rabbits in our landscape 7
Our commitment to control rabbits 8
Rural and Peri-Urban Advisory Committee 8
Restoring Rural Landscapes 8
The bigger picture 10
Who's responsible for rabbit control? 10
The engagement process 12
Community consultation 12
Phase one 12
Phase two* 12
Phase three 12
What we heard 13
What shaped this plan 14
Guiding principles 14
Rabbit control constraints 16
Managing risk 17
Our methodology 18
Rabbit Priority Area Scoring tool 18
Data collection, monitoring and reporting 18
Community engagement and support 18
Our Rabbit Control Plan 2021–26 19
Vision 19
Goals 19
Objectives 19
Action Plan 2021–2026 20
References 22

Council acknowledges Wadawurrung Traditional Owners of this land and all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People who are part of the Greater Geelong community today.

MAYOR'S MESSAGE



From the moment they were introduced in the 1850s, rabbits have been destructive to our region's natural environment and to our agricultural industry.

They degrade the quality of our ecosystems, compete with livestock for pasture, reduce crop yields, promote the spread of invasive weeds and sustain other vertebrate pests, such as foxes and feral cats.

They also create problems at reserves, degrading sites with high environmental value and damaging sport and recreational facilities.

The City of Greater Geelong's *Rabbit Control Plan 2021-2026* sets a clear vision and details a variety of integrated strategies for reducing the impacts of rabbits on City-owned land.

The plan also outlines how the City will partner with Landcare groups to support the community to effectively manage rabbits on private land. It will be implemented with the help of funding from the City's Restoring Rural Landscapes program, an exciting new initiative with a major focus on pest plant and animal control.

Thank you to the many members of our community who have offered their insights to help the development of this plan, including local Landcare groups and the City's Rural and Peri-Urban Advisory Committee. Thanks also to the City staff who have brought the plan to this point.

The goals and strategies set out in this document are innovative and we believe they'll set a new bar for other local governments aiming to manage their rabbit populations.



CR STEPHANIE ASHER

Mayor, City of Greater Geelong

Rabbits – an introduced pest

The first rabbits were introduced in 1859 when 24 rabbits arrived in Corio Bay in Geelong on 'The Lightning' on route to Thomas Austin of Barwon Park, Winchelsea.

From Winchelsea, their fast rate of reproduction allowed them to expand into new territories, spreading at an astounding rate of 70 kilometres per year across Victoria.

Rabbit numbers in Australia peaked at over one billion just prior to the release of the first biological control, Myxomatosis, in 1951. Afterwards, numbers dropped to one million, but have been growing since, despite the release of other biocontrol agents over the intervening years.

Currently there are about 400 million rabbits across Australia, with around 20 million in Victoria (Bloomfield, T 2018c).

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As an introduced species, rabbits thrive at the expense of many native plants and animals. They degrade ecosystems and landscapes, damage community infrastructure and impact agricultural production. As a land manager, we have a responsibility to prevent the spread of rabbits and, where possible, eradicate them.

The purpose of this document is to explain how we plan to control rabbits on City-managed land, while supporting the community to reduce their impact more broadly.

We discuss the impact rabbits are having in the Greater Geelong region, and outline our rabbit control commitments. We also set out a methodology to achieve effective rabbit control using an integrated approach and for collaborating with the community to reduce rabbit impacts.

Finally, we set out our vision, goals and actions for the next five years.

In developing this plan, we have considered the following:

- pest animal legislation and our responsibilities as a land manager
- industry best-practice and advice sourced from industry experts, including the Victorian Rabbit Action Network (VRAN), the Centre for Invasive Species Solutions and Agriculture Victoria
- rabbit control constraints and risks
- the views of the community (including Landcare groups and our Rural Peri-Urban Advisory Committee) and stakeholders who participated in our community engagement process (see page 13)
- our role in supporting the rural community to address land management issues
- appropriate ways to prioritise rabbit control, given the size of our municipality, and
- how best to monitor and continuously improve our rabbit control activities.



Figure 1: A rabbit-proof fence protects an indigenous grassland at Mount Brandon (Barwon and Moorabool River Reserve), Highton. Rabbit grazing impacts are evident outside of the fenced area.

INTRODUCTION

European rabbits (*Oryctolagus cuniculus*) are not a natural part of Australia's ecology. As an introduced species, a thriving rabbit population has a significant impact on agriculture and comes at the expense of many native plants and animals. They degrade landscapes in the Greater Geelong region by:

- digging warrens
- selectively grazing on vegetation and undermining native vegetation
- preventing natural regeneration and damaging revegetated sites (Figure 2)
- promoting the spread of invasive weeds
- aggressively competing with livestock for pasture
- reducing crop yields
- sustaining and supporting other vertebrate pests, such as foxes and feral cats
- causing soil erosion
- increasing waterway siltation
- degrading ecosystem quality and resilience
- degrading cultural heritage sites
- creating unsafe surfaces for vehicles and pedestrians and
- undermining buildings and road structural integrity.

For all the reasons listed above, rabbits are considered to be Australia's most serious herbivore vertebrate pest. Rabbits are listed as a significant threat for 304 species of nationally threatened native plants and animals (Centre for Invasive Species Solutions 2019).

The *Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994* requires all landowners to take reasonable steps to prevent the spread of rabbits and, as far as possible, eradicate them.

This Plan targets rabbits and doesn't address other pest animals such as foxes as we consider rabbits to be causing the most damage to our environmental, recreational and agricultural assets at this time.



Figure 2: Rabbit grazing impacts on revegetated indigenous species along the Ted Wilson Trail, Hamlyn Heights. Rabbits are constantly eating she-oak (*Allocasuarina verticillata*) growth above the top of the tree guard.



Figure 3: Native poa grasses trimmed by rabbits.

What is an Integrated Rabbit Control Program?

This plan is underpinned by an Integrated Rabbit Control Program. These programs achieve long-term pest control using a variety of control techniques – such as baiting, ripping, fumigation, implosion and harbour removal – at the right time, to the right standards (DEDJTR 2018).

OUR REGION



Covering 1,252 km², the Greater Geelong municipality is a very biodiverse region. We have some of the most breathtaking landscapes in Australia – from rugged untouched coastline on the Bellarine Peninsula, to wildflower-infused grassland on the volcanic plain, to majestic open forest in the Brisbane Ranges.

BIODIVERSITY

Our coastlines, waterways, wetlands, bush and grasslands all provide important habitat for native plants and animals, and are places of rich biodiversity.

Our natural environment has been subject to extensive clearing for agriculture and urban expansion since European settlement. Remaining areas are also under threat from further clearing for development, climate change, and pest plants and animals, such as rabbits.

Rabbits are a 'key threatening process" to protected native flora, fauna and vegetation communities under the *Federal Environment Protection and Biodiversity Act 1999* and the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988.*

AGRICULTURE

The gross value of agriculture production in our region was $495 million in 2017–18, with poultry, sheep and lambs, and wool contributing 56 per cent of this figure (Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment 2020). The damage to agriculture from rabbits has been increasing over the past two decades as immunity levels to the Calicivirus (or Rabbit Haemorrhagic Disease) in the rabbit population has been slowly rising (DEDJTR 2018).

POPULATION GROWTH

The Greater Geelong region is currently experiencing strong population growth and our population is predicted to exceed 393,000 by 2041 (Forecast.id, 2019). This growth will increase the size of the urban-rural interface – known as peri-urban areas – and will expose more people to the harmful impacts of rabbits. It will also put pressure on our existing areas of biodiversity as rabbits are forced to look for new areas to inhabit.

RABBITS IN OUR LANDSCAPE

Natural landscapes in our region are many and varied. These landscapes vary not only in form, but also in soil type and underlying geology – from poorly draining basalt clays on the volcanic plains around Little River, to the deeper, often sandier soils formed by alluvial processes that are usually found on the Bellarine, or near waterways.

Rabbit populations tend to establish warren systems in deep loams and/or sandy soils as they are easy to dig and free draining. We will therefore prioritise these areas for control measures in an aim to reduce rabbit dispersal across the landscape.

The type of City-managed land we manage where rabbits can be an issue include:

- waterways – Hovells Creek, Waurn Ponds Creek, Barwon River, Moorabool River, Lake Lorne and McLeod's Waterholes
- roadsides and trails – the Bellarine Rail Trail, Ted Wilson Trail, Knights Road, Creswell Road and Manifold Road
- reserves – Haines Reserve, Drysdale Pony Club and Mount Duneed Recreation Reserve.

"Though the rabbit makes the warren, it's the warren that makes the rabbit."

Successful rabbit breeding depends on the availability of burrows and warrens.

The burrow, when first dug, is approximately one metre long and is used for both breeding and shelter from climate extremes and predators. The most successful breeding occurs in larger, more complex warren systems, which are made up of numerous single entrance burrows (Bloomfield T 2018a).

Surface harbour is important for shelter, but will not enable successful breeding (Bloomfield T 2018a).

A long-term, successful control program must treat warrens to prevent rabbits from re-populating the treated area.

OUR COMMITMENT TO CONTROL RABBITS

We have increased our focus on rabbits in response to strong community advocacy demanding action on pest plant and animals. The Rural and Peri-Urban Advisory Committee has played a vital role in this, as well as the development of our Restoring Rural Landscapes program. Implementing an effective rabbit control program requires a long term commitment of 15 years or more. The City therefore commits to renewing this plan in 2026.

RURAL AND PERI-URBAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Council authorised the formation of the Greater Geelong Rural and Peri-Urban Advisory Committee in May 2018. The objective of the committee is to consider and advise Council on matters relevant to rural and peri-urban constituents.

Pest plant and animal management is a key interest of the committee. A sub-committee, made up of passionate and experienced members, has been established to guide the development of relevant recommendations.

RESTORING RURAL LANDSCAPES

Restoring Rural Landscapes is a City-funded program that commenced in 2019–20 to increase pest plant and animal control activities. In its first year, the program has focused on controlling pest plant and animals on City-managed land.

Phase one prioritises four target areas within the municipality (Figure 4). Phase two of the program will extend into new zones, while maintaining the works that have occurred within phase one zones. While this work is being undertaken, traditional pest plant and animal control programs are being maintained outside of the target areas.

The four target areas are:

1. Lara zone – Hovells Creek catchment
2. Curlewis/Drysdale zone
3. Swan Bay zone
4. South-west zone – Batesford, Fyansford, Ceres, the Barrabool Hills, Waurn Ponds and Mount Duneed.

The target areas were selected because they contain:

1. High-value landscapes and significant habitats that need to be protected.
2. Many rabbit priority areas – waterways, reserves or roadsides – and large rabbit populations.
3. Many roadsides and reserves, with high-threat noxious weeds.
4. A higher proportion of City-managed reserves than other areas, so we can have a greater influence.
5. Active community groups we can partner with to achieve our joint objectives.

The four target areas contain a total of:

- 160 target roads
- 240km of roadside
- 1400ha of reserves

CASE STUDY:

Knights Road, Mannerim (within the Swan Bay Catchment target area)

The roadside located at the south-eastern end of Knights Road, Mannerim, was heavily infested with rabbits. In 2019, prior to control works, warren mapping calculated a high density of warrens (Figure 5).

One of the control challenges at this site is that it supports protected remnant native vegetation (Figure 6). We therefore used fumigation to treat the warrens near the native vegetation, as it creates less disturbance, and only ripped areas where damage would be minimal. This work was done in consultation with the adjoining landowners and the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP).

Since our control efforts commenced in 2019, we have fumigated over 200 warrens (over 640 burrows) and ripped over 25 warren systems on the roadside. These works, combined with the rabbit control efforts of adjoining landowners, have reduced rabbit numbers on the roadside. We are monitoring these results and will perform more control activities as required.

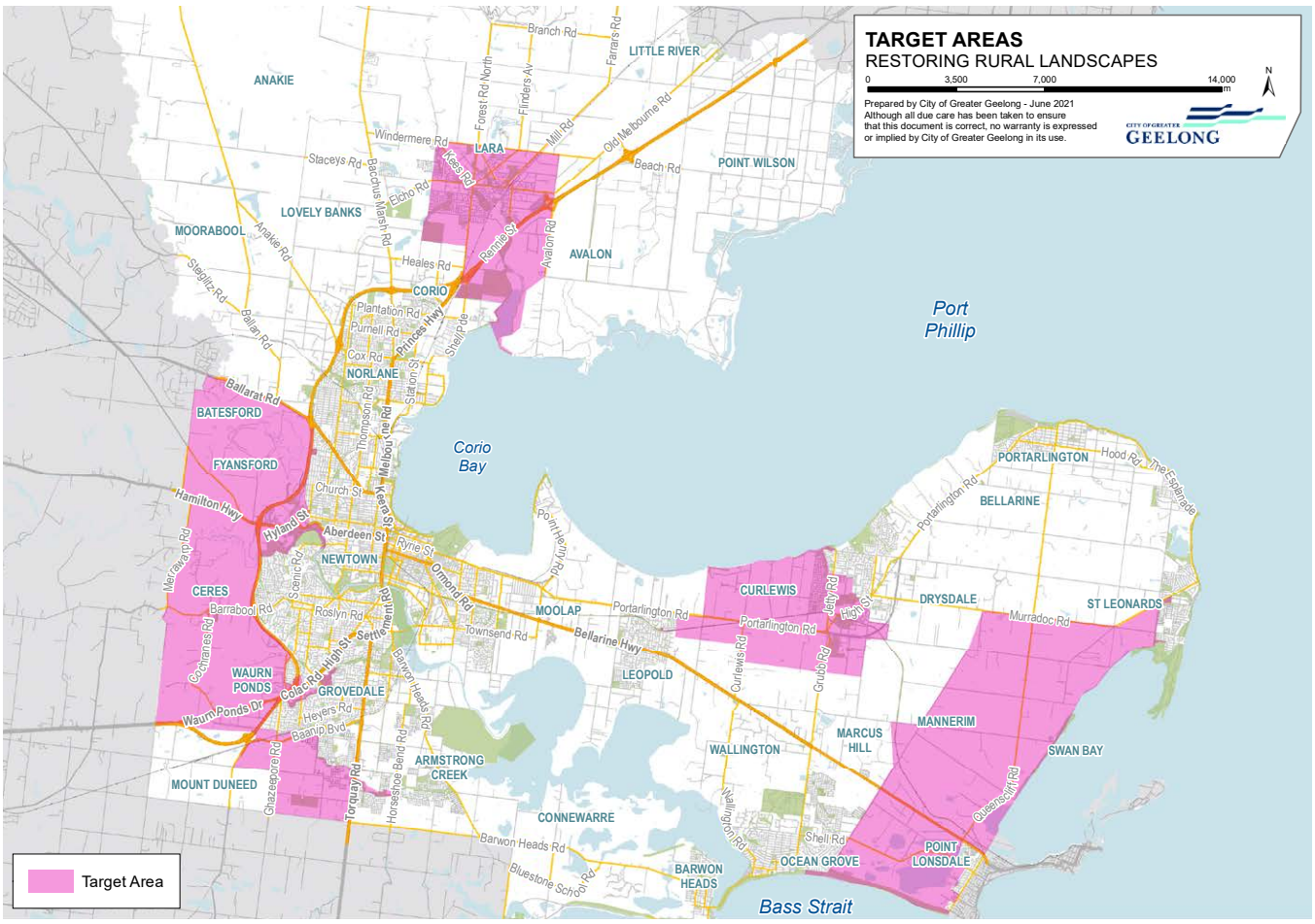


Figure 4: Phase one target areas for the Restoring Rural Landscapes Program

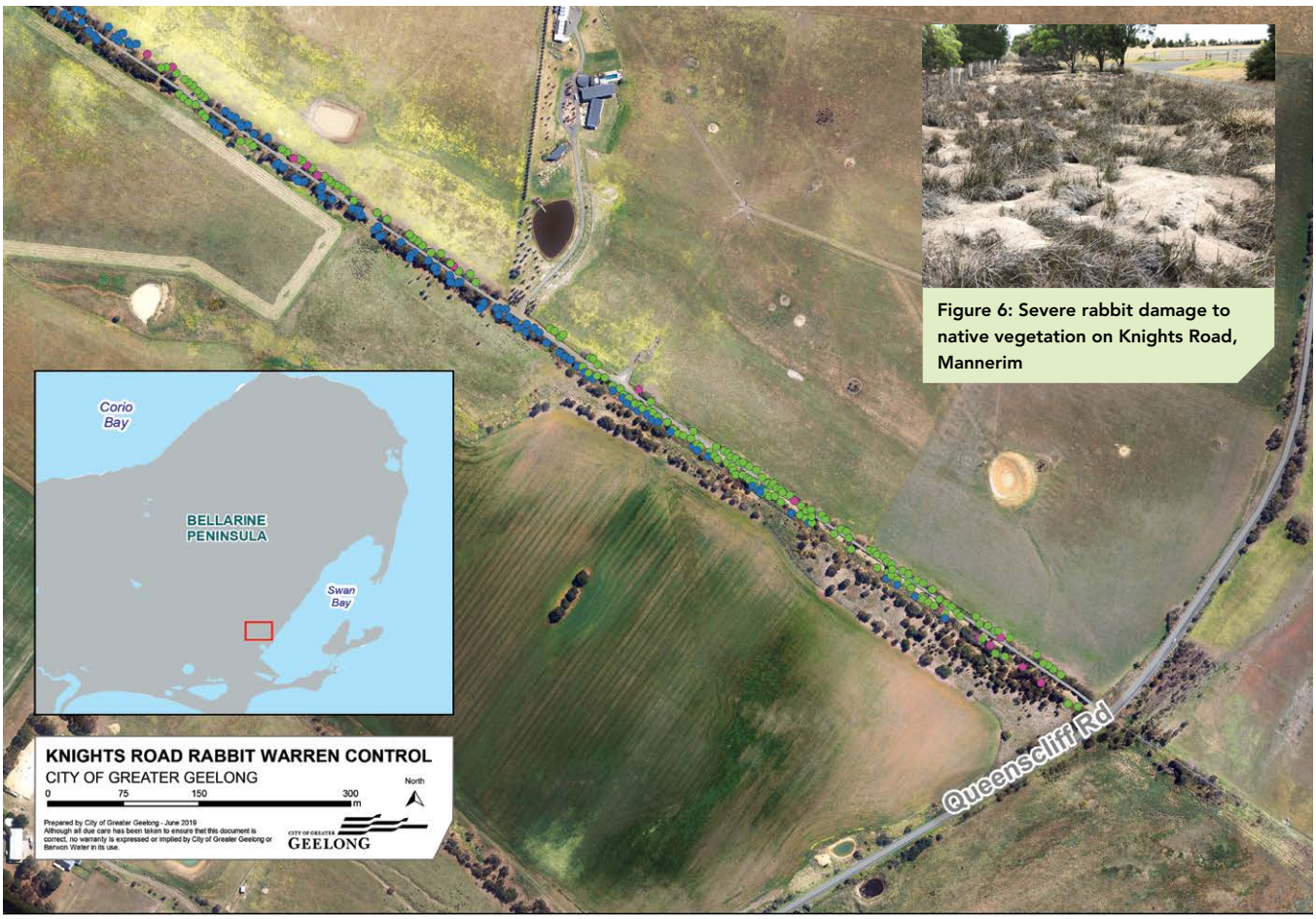


Figure 5: Each coloured dot represents a warren system located on the Knights Road roadside (2019)

Figure 6: Severe rabbit damage to native vegetation on Knights Road, Mannerim

THE BIGGER PICTURE

This plan has been informed by Australian and Victorian Government legislation and policies, as well as regional efforts to control invasive species.

It aligns with the community-led clever and creative vision, our *2018-22 Council Plan* and other relevant corporate policies and strategies. Its content has been guided by expert advice on managing rabbits and community expectations.

WHO'S RESPONSIBLE FOR RABBIT CONTROL?

Under the *Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994* all landowners are required to take all reasonable steps to control rabbits on their land. The City identifies priority sites and allocates resources to control rabbits through our annual rabbit control program.

Effective rabbit control over the long term requires an integrated control program with neighbouring landowners all working toward the goal of eradication. This is why we are committed to adopting a whole-of-landscape approach to rabbit control – that is, seeking to collaborate with our neighbours and other stakeholders to achieve prolonged benefit across larger areas.

The key stakeholders involved in rabbit control are:

- Agriculture Victoria – the lead agency responsible for pest animal legislation oversight and enforcement
- the Corangamite Catchment Management Authority – supports land managers and environment groups by giving grants to support on-ground pest plant and animal removal
- Government agencies and committee's of management – these include Parks Victoria, Barwon Water, Regional Roads Victoria, VicTrack, Barwon Coast, Bellarine Bayside and others
- key support and advisory groups – the Victorian Rabbit Action Network (VRAN) and the Rural and Peri-Urban Advisory Committee
- special interest groups – regional Landcare, environmental, 'friends of' and other volunteer groups
- Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation
- private land owners.

Table 1 Legislation and policy guiding rabbit control in the City of Greater Geelong

LEVEL	LEGISLATION AND POLICY
Federal	*Agricultural and Veterinary Chemicals Code Act 1994*
	Australian Pest Animal Strategy 2017-27
	Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999
State	*Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*
	Agricultural and Veterinary Chemicals (Control of use) Act 1994
	Biosecurity Strategy for Victoria
	Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994
	Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Act 1981
	Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988
	Invasive Plants and Animals Policy Framework
	Local Government Act 1989
	National Parks Act 1975
	Planning and Environment Act 1987
	Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986
	Wildlife Act 1975
	Protecting Victoria's Environment - Biodiversity 2037
Regional	*Corangamite Regional Catchment Strategy 2013-2019*
Local	*Biodiversity Strategy 2004*
	Environment Management Strategy 2020–30
	Greater Geelong: A Clever and Creative Future
	The City of Greater Geelong Council Plan 2018–22

"Breeding like rabbits"

Rabbits are rapid breeders and a single pair of rabbits can increase to 184 individuals within 18 months.

Rabbits mature at 3–4 months and continuously breed as long as green feed is present. The gestation period is 28–30 days and the average litter size is four to six kittens. Female rabbits (doe) are fertile immediately after giving birth and mating often occurs within 0.5 to 2 hours after giving birth. A doe can average 28 kittens per year (DEDJTR 2018).

The spread of rabbits into new territories is related to dominance hierarchies in rabbit social groups. Young rabbits are pushed away from the burrow before they are two months old and forced to find a new home. The spread of rabbits is therefore a social behaviour that never stops (Bloomfield T 2018c, DEDJTR 2018).

Figure 7: Rabbit damage along Knights Road, Mannerim one of the most rabbit infested locations in the municipality.

THE ENGAGEMENT PROCESS



Figure 8: Community consultation session in progress at the Leopold Community Hub

We carried out extensive community engagement – from November 2018 to August 2020 – taking the opportunity to collate a diverse range of ideas, concerns, issues and opportunities.

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

Phase one

- November 2018 – Rabbit control community feedback form
- 6 December 2018 – Bellarine community workshop
- December 2018 – Feedback form distributed via Geelong Landcare Network contact list

Phase two

- August 2019 – Three open-house style community workshops (Leopold, Lara and Geelong)
- August–September 2019 – online survey on our 'Have Your Say' web page, with hardcopies available on request (72 responses received)

Phase three

- July–August 2020 – Online survey on our 'Have Your Say' web page to receive feedback on the contents of the draft plan (51 participants)
- July–August 2020 – submissions (mail, email, phone) were received by 17 community and stakeholder groups and 3 community members.
- Please note, this engagement was tailored to suit Covid19 restrictions in place at the time which didn't allow for face to face consultation.

WHAT WE HEARD

Phase One and Two – consultation prior to the draft plan

We heard from 108 people during the first two phases of consultation.

The main findings were:

- respondents felt that rabbit numbers have increased in their local area over the past three years.
- rabbit burrowing and grazing behaviours were identified as having the most damaging impacts.
- respondents were concerned about the impacts on native flora and fauna.
- In a multiple-choice survey question: What are your main concerns about rabbits?
  - 90 per cent of respondents were concerned about rabbit impacts to natural areas
  - 63 per cent of respondents were concerned about rabbits not being controlled on public land
  - of least concern was potential off-target impacts of baiting with Pindone.
- When asked about 'hotspot' areas for rabbits across the municipality, the majority of respondents answered public land.
- The method most commonly used by respondents to control rabbits was Pindone baiting, followed by warren fumigation and harbour removal.
- Taking an integrated control approach was recommended by the community.
- 40 per cent of all comments focused on how we could support the community to control rabbits.

Phase Three – consultation on the draft plan

In total, 51 respondents provided feedback via the online survey, (42 completed and 9 partially completed), and we received submissions from 17 stakeholder and community groups and 3 community members.

Most respondents who completed the "Likert scale" surveys were supportive of the Plan. "Strongly agree" was the highest response received for all of the six questions followed by "agree" which was the second highest response for each question.

A total of 296 individual comments were provided via the survey and submissions. While the overall response to the plan was generally positive, some comments revealed opposing views in the community relating to:

- our vision and goals, primarily Goal 1
- our proposed control methods and the associated risks
- restricting control methods to protect native vegetation.

Other topics frequently commented on included:

- the importance of partnering with Landcare
- support for private landowners
- communication and engagement
- compliance and enforcement
- suggested changes to actions

Updates to the Plan

Following the final phase of consultation, we made some updates to the Plan relating to the following topics:

- Revising Goal 1
- Pindone use
- Immunocontraception (and other non-lethal control technologies)
- Biocontrol agents
- Native vegetation (and other constraints)
- Controlling other pest animals
- Size of the target areas
- Extend the timing of the Plan

For further detail on what we heard refer to the engagement reports available at yoursay.geelongaustralia.com.au/DRCP

WHAT SHAPED THIS PLAN

As well as the extensive community engagement process, this plan has been shaped by a number of other factors, including our guiding principles, current challenges and constraints, risk management and best practice rabbit control.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

When addressing rabbit control challenges across the municipality, we will:

PRINCIPLE	OUR COMMITMENT
Commit	We are committed to providing adequate, long-term resourcing to achieve effective rabbit control on City-managed land and support landowners and community groups to control rabbits on private land. This commitment is born of: • our legal responsibility to prevent the growth and spread of rabbits • our social responsibility to support the community in their attempts to control pest animals • the need to address the devastating effects rabbits have on the environment and other community assets.
Prioritise and deliver	We'll evaluate and rank management zones and specific sites each year to identify the priority areas. We'll prioritise rabbit control in areas where there is existing community action, significant rabbit impacts, high-value biodiversity and/or other community assets present. We'll deliver effective rabbit control by utilising a range of control techniques (dependant on site constraints) to maximise our long-term successes. To be industry leaders, we'll apply and adapt best practice rabbit management and trial new techniques.
Mitigate and evaluate	We'll mitigate risks to the public, cultural heritage, wildlife and native vegetation by systematically identifying hazards and applying controls on a site-by-site basis. We will implement our risk management system to identify and address risks associated with all rabbit control tasks. We will identify and prioritise the most effective techniques, within the constraints of each site. If site constraints prevent the use of a particular control technique, then we'll commit to applying alternative techniques or innovative solutions rather than allowing the problem to get worse. We'll monitor results and measure successes to better understand the effectiveness of the program. We'll adapt the program and refine processes to increase program effectiveness and efficiency. We'll seek to apply monitoring techniques that enable us to measure improvements to assets and not rely entirely on rabbit counts as an indicator of success.

PRINCIPLE	OUR COMMITMENT
Collaborate and empower	We'll establish new and foster existing relationships with land management partners and government agencies. We'll collaborate with other land managers and the community to achieve greater value for investment. We'll also continue to seek advice from industry experts and rabbit action networks. As collaboration is a critical component of an effective, long-term rabbit control program, this will be our focus. Effective collaboration will also build trust and improve relationships with stakeholders and the community. We'll support and empower community groups and rural landowners to undertake effective rabbit control.
Communicate and engage	We'll communicate plans, experiences, learnings and results with stakeholders and the community. Our messages will focus on how and why effective rabbit control benefits the community. We'll listen to the community about where and how rabbits are impacting them. We'll also celebrate our successes with them. We'll create resources to engage with and educate the community about the impacts of rabbits and the importance of employing an integrated control program when managing rabbits on their property. We'll empower community groups and landowners to effectively control rabbits on a landscape wide by running training and incentive programs and encouraging a coordinated approach.



Figure 10: Rabbits dictate what species of vegetation survives and regenerates – only boxthorn and blanket weed are thriving at the location above.

Key rabbit control considerations:

Rabbits populations benefit from:

- land managers with a poor understanding of rabbit biology and ecology in the local environment
- landscapes with abundant spiny woody weeds, such as gorse and boxthorn, and other surface harbour
- well-established warren systems
- poorly-planned, small-scale and disconnected control programs
- short-term program funding commitments and
- a lack of commitment to creating a sustainable, long-term change in the landscape.

Conversely, research in Victoria has shown that well-run and coordinated control programs – including broad-scale warren ripping – were able to reduce rabbit populations by 80–97 per cent. These rabbit numbers were also maintained at these low levels for 20 years (Bloomfield T 2018a, McPhee and Butler 2010., Forsyth et al., 2016).

RABBIT CONTROL CONSTRAINTS

Rabbit control activities on City-managed land are always going to be constrained by a range of factors, as described below in Table 2.

Table 2: Rabbit control constraints

CONSTRAINT	DESCRIPTION	LEGISLATION
Community perception / understanding	There are some in the community who are against lethal means of controlling rabbits such as baiting. At this point in time lethal control methods are the only practical means for managing rabbits and baiting is recommended as an essential part of an integrated control program. Our long-term objective is to use baits less as warrens systems are treated and rabbits are not able to quickly repopulate our reserves. We choose to use Pindone when baiting rabbits as it has an antidote, requires multiple doses to be lethal and is slow acting so most rabbits die below ground. We use Pindone in accordance with the product label and have developed a risk management process to ensure we mitigate risks to people, domestic animals and wildlife.	*Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986* *Wildlife Act 1975*
Cultural heritage	Many of our reserves are within, or close to, areas of Aboriginal cultural heritage significance. To avoid damaging these sites, we need to be cautious about carrying out rabbit removal works that will impact the soil, such as warren ripping. We work with Traditional Owners to achieve effective rabbit control in areas of cultural significance.	*Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*
Increasing resistance to biocontrol agents	Releasing biocontrol agents can achieve short-term reductions in rabbit numbers over large geographical areas. However, in rabbit populations, rapid rates of reproduction allow resistant genes to quickly build up, so that numbers can replenish. Therefore, while they are important, biocontrol agents can only have a limited role in minimising rabbits.	
Lack of coordinated action	Areas treated for rabbits can quickly be reinfested by rabbits from untreated areas. It is therefore essential that neighbours work together and coordinate their actions.	
Native vegetation as harbour for rabbits	Rabbit warrens are sometimes located beneath native vegetation. As native vegetation is protected in Victoria, planning processes will be followed prior to undertaking warren removal works. Our priority is always to avoid or minimise impacts to native vegetation, and any native vegetation removed will be recorded. We will aim to restore any native vegetation impacted by rabbit control activities.	*Planning and Environment Act 1987* *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988*

CONSTRAINT	DESCRIPTION	LEGISLATION
Wildlife and pets	We perform rabbit control to protect and enhance the habitat available for native wildlife. Our rabbit control programs are performed in accordance with best practice guidelines from the relevant authorities.	*Wildlife Act 1975*
Roadsides	Local governments have only recently become legally responsible for managing noxious weeds and pest animals on roadsides. Without ongoing rabbit control, these roadsides have consequently come to support large infestations.	*Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994* *Road Management Act 2004*
Weed harbour	Rabbits often dig warrens beneath weeds that offer protection from predators, such as African boxthorn or gorse. Weed harbour must be removed for warrens to be effectively treated.	*Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994*
Risk management	There are a range of risks associated with undertaking rabbit control on our reserves. These include occupational health and safety risks in relation to working with chemicals and machinery. Controls are put in place that effectively mitigate these risks prior to works commencing at a site.	*Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004* *Agricultural and Veterinary Chemicals Code Act 1994* *Agricultural and Veterinary Chemicals (Control of Use) Act 1992*
Underground services	Buried pipes or cables are often located within roadsides or reserves so a "Dial Before You Dig" enquiry is required prior to the treatment of warrens. No ripping or implosion is permitted within the vicinity of these services.	

MANAGING RISK

In all rabbit control activities, we aim to identify processes and control measures well before we start work. Our goal is to be a leader when it comes to managing safety and risk.

We will continue to address risks by applying a variety of risk management tools, including:

- risk registers
- risk assessments
- site hazard identifications
- risk management plans and hazard maps
- safe work method statements
- safe operating procedures and
- contractor safety checklists.



Figure 11: Pindone baiting location 2020.

Our pindone baiting program includes the following mitigation measures:

- fence off baiting areas or close reserves.
- warning signs
- daily removal of uneaten baits and rabbit carcasses.
- mail out to neighbouring properties.
- remind local veterinary clinics to have Vitamin K1 (pindone antidote) in stock.
- monitoring for and testing of deceased wildlife.

OUR METHODOLOGY

INTEGRATED RABBIT CONTROL

We can only implement effective rabbit control if we use a variety of control methods at the optimal time. Knowing the values and constraints of our sites, and the impacts rabbits are having on these values, is also essential.

In developing this plan, we have sought advice from rabbit control experts and started an annual monitoring program on our key reserves. The information we've gathered so far has helped us identify the following best-practice control process.

Our integrated rabbit control program will involve the following steps:

1. **Assess** rabbit populations, the damage they are causing, their warren systems (which should be mapped) and site-specific risks and constraints – environmental, cultural and safety.
2. **Bait** to reduce rabbit numbers prior to warren and harbour removal.
3. **Remove** harbour such as woody weeds, rubbish, rock and soil stockpiles.
4. **Destroy** warrens via ripping, implosion or other methods – the technique chosen will vary according to site constraints, such as the presence of native vegetation, closeness of cultural heritage sites and underground utility assets.
5. **Monitor** the effectiveness of the program, measuring both rabbit numbers and biodiversity, and modify where necessary.
6. **Maintain** success by fumigating, re-ripping, spot baiting and long netting, as required.

The success of this process will be reviewed annually, and changes made as required.

In addition to the above, we'll also support the Australian and Victorian Governments when they release new biocontrol agents.

Rabbit proof fencing will also be used to protect high value assets from rabbit grazing impacts and treated areas from re-infestation.

RABBIT PRIORITY AREA SCORING TOOL

We will prioritise how each of our reserves will be treated when planning our annual rabbit control program. Each of our reserves and roadsides will be scored against a set of criteria and ranked. Factors we will assess include:

- site location
- site significance (environmental, agricultural, social, cultural or recreational assets)
- rabbit population size and impact
- impact to communities and neighbouring properties
- rabbit control actions planned, or being undertaken, on neighbouring properties.

When resources allow, we will treat all known rabbit priority areas annually. When there's not sufficient resources, we'll treat sites in order of priority, only stopping once funding runs out, or the season ends.

DATA COLLECTION, MONITORING AND REPORTING

To assess the effectiveness of the control program and identify opportunities to improve it, priority sites will be monitored annually, and warren locations mapped. The results of the program will be summarised then reported to Council and the community at the end of each year.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND SUPPORT

To support the community to better address rabbit issues, we will do the following:

- produce a range of community education materials
- introduce incentive programs to assist landowners
- support Landcare and rabbit action groups to run field days and other activities and
- publish a rural landowner education toolkit, as part of the Restoring Rural Landscapes Program.

OUR *RABBIT CONTROL PLAN 2021–2026*

VISION

Apply an integrated approach to rabbit control, supported by the community, that enables natural regeneration on our reserves, and restores natural and rural landscapes. We aspire to have no active rabbit warrens on City managed land.

GOALS

1. Apply an integrated control program to have rabbits and warrens under effective control* on all City-managed land in the Restoring Rural Landscape target areas by 2026.
2. To identify the extent of the rabbit infestations across all City managed land to identify our next target areas by 2025.
3. To partner with all Landcare groups in programs that will engage and equip rural landowners to control rabbits by 2026.

*Rabbit numbers low enough to enable regeneration in natural areas - warrens ripped preferably, or fumigated if constraints present, and harbour removed.

OBJECTIVES

PRINCIPLE	OBJECTIVE
Commit	Sufficiently resource rabbit control to achieve and maintain our goals.
Prioritise and deliver	Rabbit control prioritised in areas where there is existing community action, significant rabbit impacts, high-value biodiversity and/or other community assets. Use the full suite of available control techniques to maximise impact. Act where we can achieve the best results.
Mitigate and evaluate	Identify hazards and adopt control measures to minimise risk of harm. Monitor results and measure success to better understand the rabbit problem and adapt the program.
Collaborate and empower	Establish new relationships, and foster existing ones, with our land management partners and government agencies. Support and empower community groups and rural landowners to undertake effective rabbit control.
Communicate and engage	Share our plans, results and learnings with the community and partner agencies. Create resources that engage the community about rabbits, the damage they cause and control methods.

ACTION PLAN 2021–2026

PRINCIPLE	ACTION	TIMING	MEASURE OF SUCCESS
Commit	1. Approve an annual budget that supports effective rabbit control across all City-managed land for the life of this plan and beyond.	Annual	Adequate resources for the effective implementation of this plan allocated.
	2. Extend the term of the Rural and Peri-Urban Advisory Committee.	Ongoing	The term of the committee is extended.
	3. Advocate to the Victorian Government to commit more resources for extension, enforcement and biological control.	Ongoing	Meet once a year, or as situations arise.
	4. Review the Plan in 2026 and consider including other pest animals.	2026	Reviewed plan adopted and implemented.
Prioritise and Deliver	5. Map rabbit warrens on priority sites.	June 2022	All rabbit warrens on priority sites mapped
	6. Survey all City managed land to identify the extent of rabbit infestations.	2025	All infestations identified and prioritised.
	7. Use a site prioritisation tool for City-managed land to target resources effectively.	Annual	All sites ranked and priority sites identified each year.
	8. Undertake extensive works program on priority sites, applying all steps of our integrated rabbit control program (see page 18), installing fencing where appropriate.	Annual	Effective control achieved on priority sites and natural regeneration occurring.
	9. Deliver restoration projects on sites that have been impacted by rabbit control activities. This may include intensive weed control to encourage natural regeneration, and revegetation.	Annual	Two restoration projects each year.
	10. Trial new and innovative rabbit control techniques including non-lethal technologies.	As opportunities arise	Trial any new control technique approved by the Centre for Invasive Species.
Mitigate and Evaluate	11. Develop and implement a site-specific risk management framework for rabbit control that considers public safety, occupational health and safety, cultural heritage, native vegetation and wildlife risks.	August 2021	No rabbit-control-related incidents involving public safety, occupational health and safety, cultural heritage, native vegetation or wildlife.
	12. Require contractors adhere to our site-specific risk management framework for rabbit control and undertake regular audits.	Ongoing	No rabbit-control-related incidents involving public safety, occupational health and safety, cultural heritage, native vegetation or wildlife.
	13. Develop a monitoring program that incorporates new technologies to assess the effectiveness of our control program.	2022	A monitoring program will be in place by 2022.
	14. Review and adapt the rabbit control program at the end of each season.	Annual	Continuous improvement in rabbit control resulting in a greater reduction in rabbit impacts and numbers each year.
	15. Ensure land handed over to the City by developers is free from rabbits and rabbits warrens, and is made rabbit-proof where required.	Ongoing	Rabbit control conditions applied to all new developments.

PRINCIPLE	ACTION	TIMING	MEASURE OF SUCCESS
Collaborate and Empower	16. Partner with Landcare groups to develop assistance programs, equipping landowners to control and monitor rabbits.	June 2022	Assistance program introduced.
	17. Partner with Landcare groups and the Victorian Rabbit Action Network to deliver collaborative events for landowners in the region.	Annual	Support two rabbit collaborative events in the Geelong region – one on the Bellarine Peninsula and one elsewhere.
	18. Partner with Landcare and industry experts to organise a rabbit forum to encourage best practice rabbit management.	December 2024	Rabbit forum is held, with presentations from industry experts.
	19. Maintain regular correspondence with Landcare groups and agencies.	Annual	Attend four Landcare group meetings a year.
	20. Establish demonstration sites at prominent locations within Restoring Rural Landscape zones to demonstrate successful rabbit control programs and illustrate the positive improvement to the environment.	June 2022	Three demonstration areas established, monitored and results promoted.
	21. Collaborate with the Wathaurung Aboriginal Corporation to enter into an Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Land Management Agreement for priority reserves.	December 2023	Agreement is signed and implemented.
	22. Reconvene Public Land Rabbit Control Group with government agencies.	Annual	Hold two meetings per year (December and June).
	23. Identify and report rabbit infestations on private land to Agriculture Victoria and advocate for a rabbit compliance program.	Annual	Agriculture Victoria regularly informed about heavily-infested properties.
	24. Connect with universities and government agencies.	Ongoing	Discuss partnership opportunities with two universities/TAFE institutions and the Centre of Invasive Species.
Communicate and Engage	25. Develop a rabbit control communication plan.	Ongoing	Report to councillors once a year. Report annually to the community. Report to the City's Rural and Peri-Urban Advisory Committee quarterly. Promote rabbit control plan at two rural events each year. Promote community control programs using our communication channels. Update the rabbit control web page as required – approximately three times a year – and include maps and annual program information.
	26. Create a rural land management education toolkit that covers rabbit and weed control.	June 2022	Education toolkit created and distribution started. Investigate and trial the use of online applications.

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Conservation volunteers installing a new rabbit-proof fence to protect a future direct seeding site at Mt Brandon.

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2.8. Rural and Peri Urban Advisory Committee Terms of Reference

Source: **City Planning & Economy**
Director: **Gareth Smith**

Purpose

1. For Council to adopt the Terms of Reference for the Rural and Peri Urban Advisory Committee (Committee) - **Attachment 1**.

Background

2. Council established the Committee in February 2018 to provide advice to Council on matters relating to the rural and peri urban community. The Committee consisted of five independent members, representatives from the G21 Councils, Agriculture Victoria and City of Greater Geelong officers.

3. The objective of the Committee is to consider and provide advice to Council on matters relevant to rural and peri-urban constituents including transition strategies for saleyards services, rural and peri-urban agricultural, environmental management practices and biosecurity strategies.

Key Matters

4. The Terms of Reference for the Committee have been reviewed and updated to reflect the changes in the *Local Government Act 2020* and learnings from the operations of the Committee.

5. In accordance with the Terms of Reference the Chief Executive Officer will appoint the five independent members and relevant Council officers to the Committee. Invitations have also been extended for representation from other G21 Councils and Agriculture Victoria.

6. The independent representation bring experience in biosecurity, farm management, livestock production, agriculture, environmental and land management, along with extensive networks and links to industry supporting the objectives of the Committee.

RESOLUTION - Item 2.8

Cr Mason moved, Cr Moloney seconded -

That Council adopt the revised Terms of Reference (Attachment 1) for the Rural and Peri Urban Advisory Committee.

Carried

Financial Sustainability

7. There are no financial implications arising from this report.

Community Engagement

8. The independent members to the Committee will be appointed following the completion of an expression of interest process advertised to the community and relevant stakeholders.

9. The Committee will enhance engagement on matters affecting Council's rural and peri-urban community.

Social Equity and Sustainability

10. The Committee will allow consideration of social equity issues that affect Council's rural and peri-urban constituents.

11. The inclusion of external members on the Committee supports the transparency of the Committee. The recruitment process was open to anyone, whilst requiring experience in the objectives of the Committee.

Relevant Law/Policy/Legal Implications

12. Formation of the Committee is compliant with the *Local Government Act 2020* as well as Council's policies and procedures relating to the establishment of advisory committees.

Alignment to Community Plan and Vision

13. This report aligns with Our Community Plan 2021-2025 strategic priority:
    Sustainable growth and environment.

14. This report aligns with the Community led 30-year Vision, "Greater Geelong: A Clever and Creative Future" community aspiration:
    Development and implementation of sustainable solutions.
    Sustainable development that supports population growth and protects the natural environment.

Conflict of Interest

15. No officer involved in the preparation of this report declared a general or material conflict of interest.

Risk Assessment

16. There are no known risks arising from this report.

Environmental Sustainability

17. There are no direct environmental implications arising from this report.

Attachments

1. Committee terms of reference Rural and Peri Urban Advisory Committee [0LR2] [**2.8.1** - 9 pages]

THE CITY OF
GREATER GEELONG

RURAL AND PERI URBAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

TERMS OF REFERENCE

VERSION: 02

Approval Date	***XXXXXX***
Approved by	**Council**
Review Date	**27 July 2025**
Responsible Officer	Director, City Planning & Economy
Authorising Officer	CEO

CITY OF GREATER GEELONG

Contents

Introduction 3

Summary 3

Objectives and functions 3

Definitions 4

Terms of Reference 5

Term 5

Membership 5

Membership & Eligibility 5

Chairperson 6

Nomination of Eligible Members 6

Appointment of Eligible Members 6

Length of Appointment of Eligible Members 6

The Role of a Community Representative 6

Neighbouring councils 7

Authority 7

Meeting Procedure 7

Reporting 7

Secretariat 7

Facilities and resources 7

Evaluation 7

Records 8

Introduction

SUMMARY

A Rural and Peri-Urban Advisory Committee (Committee) is established to bring together interested community members and industry representatives to engage with Council on wellbeing and sustainability of its rural and peri-urban constituency.

The Rural and Peri-Urban Advisory Committee is to be guided by Council priorities outlined in strategic documents that support the objectives of the Committee including the Clever and Creative Vision, Community Plan and other major strategies/frameworks. The purpose of the Committee is to draw upon local expertise, experience and networks to inform Council decision making through provision of a formal pathway created to collect community and stakeholder input, regular feedback and recommendations.

Advice from the Committee will help to achieve Council's objective of providing for the best outcomes for the local community having regard to the long term and cumulative effects of decisions. In doing this the Committee will have regard to the need for Council to:

- promote the social, economic and environmental viability and sustainability of the municipal district; and
- improve the overall quality of life of people in the local community; ensure services and facilities provided by Council are accessible and equitable.

OBJECTIVES AND FUNCTIONS

The objective of the Committee is to consider and provide advice to Council on matters relevant to rural and peri-urban constituents, including:

a) Transition strategies for saleyards services such as:
   i. Livestock exchange;
   ii. Information exchange;
   iii. Hygiene and vehicle wash-down;
b) Rural and peri-urban agricultural and environmental management practices;
c) Bio-security strategies;
d) Community Plan strategies;
e) Key planning strategies and structure plans;
f) Relevant matters referred to the Committee by Council;
g) Ongoing community advocacy and policy development for best rural and peri-urban agricultural and environmental management practices;
h) Collaboration with G21 members, major and other local, State and Federal government organisations;
i) Consideration of past consultation, reports and decisions as well as current and new strategy documents and externally sourced technical information; and
j) Undertaking consultation to inform advice as required.

Definitions

Municipal District - means the municipal district of the Greater Geelong City Council.

Neighbouring councils - means the municipal districts of Surf Coast Shire Council, Colac Otway Shire Council and Golden Plains Shire Council.

Terms of Reference

TERM

Committee ends on the day of a Council resolution to abolish the committee.

MEMBERSHIP

Membership & Eligibility

1. The Committee will comprise a membership that is appropriately experienced and skilled in matters affecting Council's rural and peri-urban community. Membership will be drawn from Council, Council officers, representatives of relevant statutory authorities and community representatives.
2. The term of community membership will be two years.
3. A Councillor will be appointed by Council as chairperson of the Committee for a set term.
4. A Councillor may be appointed as an alternative chairperson to the Committee for a set term.
5. Community members may be reappointed for a second term following an Expression of Interest process, however no more than half of the members who have served a full term may be reappointed at the commencement of a new term, subject to the expression of interest process.

The following persons will be invited to become members of the Committee:

6. Five independent community representatives who are residents or ratepayers of the municipal district representing a balanced and diverse mix of rural and peri-urban interests, including but not limited to such persons who are:
    a. A farmer and/or hobby farmer from the municipality;
    b. A member of the Victorian Farmers Federation;
    c. A representative of a community environmental network;
    d. A resident within the Rural/Peri Urban areas; and
    e. An experienced or qualified person in biosecurity or agricultural best management practice.
7. Four City of Greater Geelong Council officers representing a balanced and diverse mix of Council functions, including:
    a. Land use planning;
    b. Economic development;
    c. Community wellbeing; and
    d. Agricultural and environmental matters.
8. A representative from Agriculture Victoria; and
9. A member representative from each of the following Councils:
    a. Golden Plains Shire;
    b. Colac Otway Shire; and
    c. Surf Coast Shire.
10. All stated members of the Committee are eligible members.

Chairperson

1. Council, by resolution, will appoint a Councillor to be the chairperson of the Committee for a set term.
2. Council, by resolution, may appoint a Councillor to be the alternative chairperson of the Committee for a set term.

Nomination of Eligible Members

1. Council's Chief Executive Officer shall nominate City of Greater Geelong Council officer representatives.
2. Statutory authorities will be invited by the Chief Executive Officer to nominate their own representatives.
3. Independent community representatives will be invited onto the Committee via an expressions of interest process. Selection will be made in accordance with the Council's Committee Representation Policy.

Appointment of Eligible Members

1. Council shall appoint a Councillor as chairperson of the Committee.
2. Council may appoint a Councillor as an alternative chairperson of the Committee.
3. The Chief Executive Officer will determine the successful independent community representatives following the internal assessment of expressions of interest.
4. The Chief Executive Officer shall appoint to the Committee:
    a. Council officers;
    b. Statutory authority representatives; and
    c. Independent community representatives.

Length of Appointment of Eligible Members

1. Eligible Members, with the exception of Councillors, will be appointed for a period of two years.
2. Eligible Members must remain as such in order to maintain Committee membership. If an Eligible Member no longer meets the criteria to be an Eligible Member during their term, their Committee membership will be revoked and a new Eligible Member appointed in accordance with the selection process for the remainder of the term, except in circumstances where there remains less than six months of their term.

The Role of a Community Representative

1. Commit to the Terms of Reference of the Committee.
2. Attend any induction/s for Committee members and adhere to standard Codes of Conduct.
3. Attend meetings of the Committee personally (no proxy allowed) and attend at least 80 per cent of all meetings.
4. Abide by best practice in the conduct of Committees by declaring any real or perceived conflicts of interest as soon as they become known.
5. Bring knowledge, skills and experience of sustainability to the Committee and contribute to the development of the Committee's collective wisdom.
6. Represent the views and ideas of their networks to the Committee and communicate the collective wisdom of the Committee to their networks.
7. Actively contribute by participation in group discussions and offer knowledge and opinions.
8. Treat other representatives with respect and have due regard to the opinions, rights and responsibilities of others.
9. Maintain the confidentiality of all information provided to the Committee unless otherwise advised.

10. Act in a voluntary capacity.

Members representing an organisation are expected to be able to represent the views and ideas of that organisation while participating in the Committee as an individual with their own views, ideas and experience to be contributed for the benefit of the Committee.

NEIGHBOURING COUNCILS

The Council acknowledges the importance of collaborating with its neighbouring Councils to understand the rural and peri-urban needs and issues of the region.

AUTHORITY

1. The Committee is an advisory committee of Council. It does not have delegated authority.
2. The Committee may appoint working groups to pursue specific projects and issues on an as needs basis however no Secretariat support will be provided for such working groups.
3. The Committee has no financial delegation authority.

MEETING PROCEDURE

1. The Committee will meet quarterly on dates and at times which shall be determined at the first meeting of the Committee, then at the fourth meeting of each annual cycle. Additional meetings of the Committee may be called by the Chairperson if an urgent matter arises, however a meeting of the Committee will not be called with less than two weeks' notice to all members, unless exceptional circumstances exist.
2. A quorum for a meeting shall be one more than half of the membership of the Committee and must include three of the five independent community representatives.
3. Meeting minutes and agendas will be circulated at least one week prior to the meeting.

REPORTING

The Committee shall report to Council annually providing an update of committee activities.

SECRETARIAT

Council's Chief Executive Officer shall nominate a Council officer to provide secretariat services to the Committee.

FACILITIES AND RESOURCES

Adequate human resources shall be provided to ensure the effective quarterly operation of the Committee.

EVALUATION

The Committee will review its objectives, activities and participation biennially.

Records

Records shall be retained for at least the periods shown below.

Table 1: Record retention and disposal schedule

Record	Retention / Disposal Authority	Retention Period	Location
Meeting minutes and agendas	Committee	PROV	Document management system
Correspondence	Committee	PROV	Document management system
Submissions	Committee	PROV	Document management system

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CITY OF GREATER GEELONG

2.9. Amendment C422GGEE - Permanent Heritage Overlay at 12-16 Kinsmead Street, Waurn Ponds - Consideration of Submissions

Source: **City Planning & Economy**
Director: **Gareth Smith**

Purpose

1. To consider submissions to Planning Scheme Amendment C422ggee and recommend all the submissions be referred to an Independent Planning Panel.

Background

2. Under threat of demolition, the City sought the Minister for Planning to apply an interim heritage overlay to the site whilst an amendment to include the site in a permanent heritage overlay was prepared.

3. On 18 September 2020 the City's delegate resolved to prepare and exhibit Amendment C422ggee.

4. The Amendment proposes to apply the heritage overlay on a permanent basis. The area proposed to be included in the heritage overlay is shown in Attachment 1.

Key Matters

5. Exhibition of Amendment C422ggee took place between 11 February and 15 March 2021. Notices were sent to 34 landowners and occupiers and appeared in local newspapers. The Amendment documentation was made available on the Geelong Australia website.

6. Thirty-six submissions were received. One (1) submission notes the Amendment but makes no comment. Three (3) submissions are from the affected landowners and do not support the Amendment. One submission from the Wadawurrung provided no comment on the Amendment. The balance of 33 submissions are from residents/community, including the National Trust, and these support the Amendment whilst seeking some changes to the proposed Design Guidelines to be incorporated into the Planning Scheme.

7. Key issues in the submissions can be summarised as: (1) Is a permanent heritage overlay warranted?; (2) Building condition; (3) Future development and use of the site; (4) Future access and traffic impacts; (5) changes to the Design Guidelines Incorporated Document; (6) Consultation; and (7) Financial impact of the heritage overlay.

8. In accordance with the Planning and Environment Act 1987 Council must now either: change the Amendment in the manner requested by the submitters; refer the submissions to an Independent Planning Panel; or abandon the Amendment.

9. The City has considered the submissions and recommend continued support for applying the heritage overlay to 12-16 Kinsmead Street, Waurn Ponds on a permanent basis.

10. As all submissions can't be resolved, it is recommended that all submission be referred to an Independent Panel appointed by the Minister for Planning.

RESOLUTION - Item 2.9

Cr Grzybek moved, Cr Harwood seconded -

That Council having considered all submissions to Amendment C422ggee to the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme:

1. **Request the Minister for Planning to appoint an Independent Panel under Part 8 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987;**

2. **Refer all submissions to the Panel; and**

3. **Officers submit to the Panel its response to the submissions generally as outlined in this report.**

Carried

Financial Sustainability

11. There are no financial implications to Council beyond the costs associated with a planning scheme amendment.

Community Engagement

12. The Amendment was placed on exhibition between 11 February and 15 March 2021. The submission period was extended until 26 March for the affected landowners.

13. Exhibition of the Amendment was conducted in accordance with the Planning and Environment Act 1987.

14. The City met with the owners on site on 9 March 2021. Further discussions have been held with the owners post receipt of the structural engineering assessment.

15. In accordance with Clause 4(2) of Ministerial Direction No. 15 a pre-set panel hearing dates was set for June. This has been deferred to allow time to undertake the structural assessment. A new panel hearing date will be established with Planning Panels Victoria.

16. Planning Panels Victoria will notify all submitters of the Panel dates and invite requests to be heard at the hearing.

Social Equity and Sustainability

17. The Amendment will have positive social effects through the protection of this place in the Planning Scheme. This will benefit the community by:

    17.1. Adding to the understanding of Greater Geelong's rich cultural history;

    17.2. Recognising and realising the positive contribution that culturally significant places made to the City of Greater Geelong; and

    17.3. Heritage buildings providing a link to the past and giving us a sense of place, who we are – our cultural identity. Protecting our heritage helps to ensure that this identity and sense of place may be appreciated for present and future generations.

Relevant Law/Policy/Legal Implications

18. The Amendment will result in a good planning outcome ensuring the preservation of a locally significant heritage place.

19. The Amendment will achieve the objectives of the State Planning Policy Framework at Clause 15.03-1 (Heritage conservation) by ensuring the conservation of a place of heritage significance.

20. The Amendment will achieve the objectives of the Local Planning Policy Framework (LPPF) including Clause 21.06-5 Heritage and Identity includes an objective "to conserve and enhance individual places and areas of pre and post contact cultural heritage significance" with relevant strategies.

21. Clause 22.09 Cultural Heritage is a local policy that applies to all properties affected by a Heritage Overlay and will guide decision making on the subject site included in the

Heritage Overlay. This Amendment will help achieve the Council cultural heritage objectives and implement the strategies identified in Clause 22.09.

Alignment to Community Plan and Vision

22. This report aligns with Our Community Plan 2021-2025 strategic priority:
Sustainable growth and environment.

23. This report aligns with the Community led 30-year Vision, “Greater Geelong: A Clever and Creative Future” community aspiration:
Sustainable development that supports population growth and protects the natural environment.

Conflict of Interest

24. No officer involved in the preparation of this report declared a general or material conflict of interest.

Risk Assessment

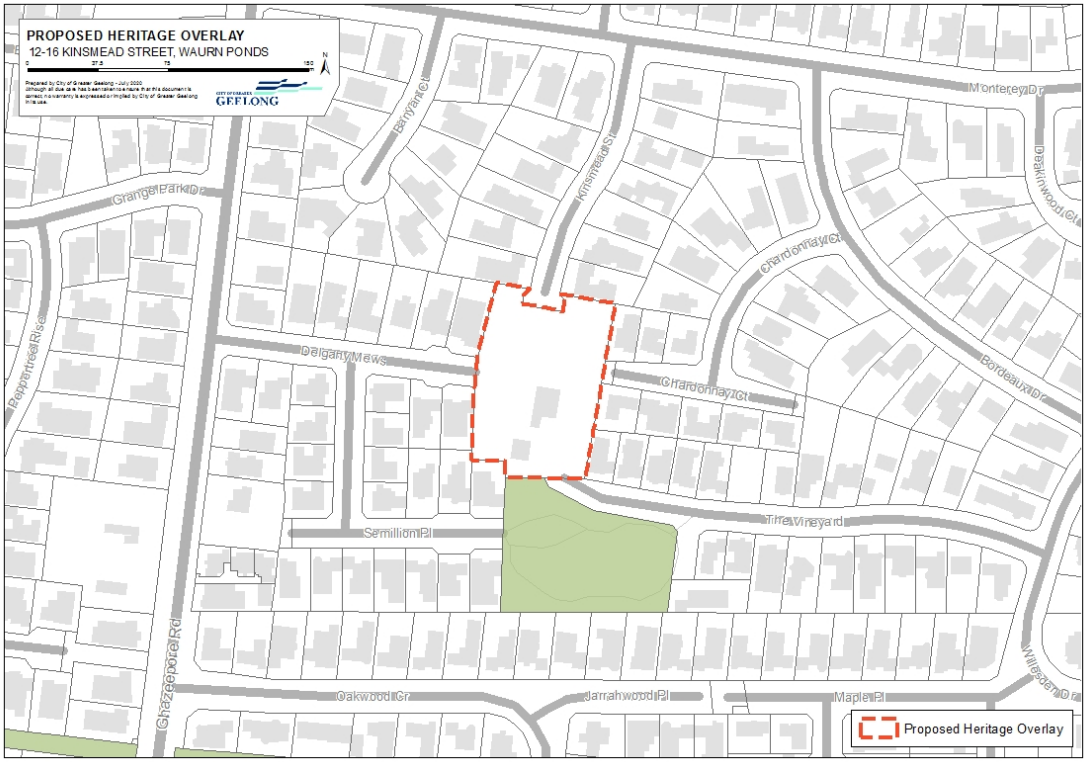
25. Deferral or delay in proceeding to a panel hearing is likely to cause uncertainty for the landowners and will impact on the timeframe to complete this Amendment before the interim heritage overlay expires on 31 December 2021

Environmental Sustainability

26. The proposed Amendment will not have any adverse effects on the environment.

Attachments

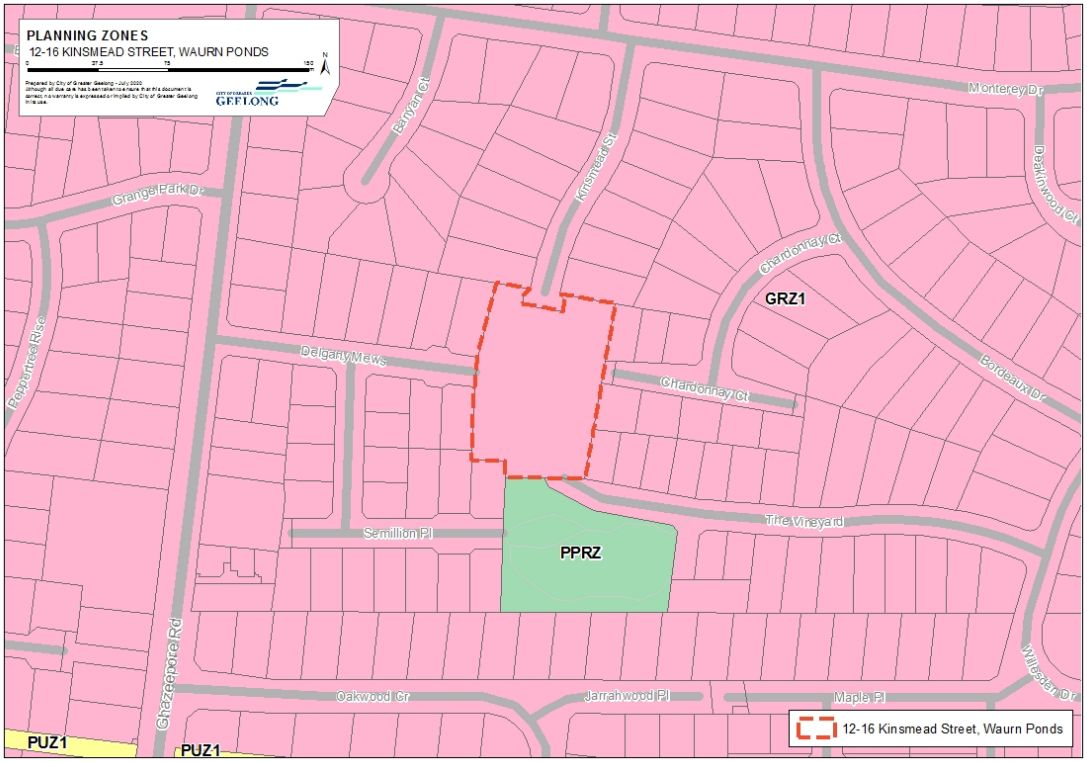
1. Proposed heritage area overlay [**2.9.1** - 2 pages]
2. Report on Submissions [**2.9.2** - 11 pages]
3. Summary of Submissions and City response [**2.9.3** - 23 pages]



12-16 Kinsmead Street, Waurn Ponds – extent of permanent Heritage Overlay



12-16 Kinsmead Street, Waurn Ponds – aerial location plan



12-16 Kinsmead Street, Waurn Ponds – zoning view plan

Background

1. In response to a demolition consent for the land in mid-2020 the City commissioned Dr David Rowe, Authentic Heritage Services Pty Ltd in June 2020 to undertake a review and update of the heritage assessment prepared by Lorraine Huddle in the Greater Geelong Outer Areas Heritage Study Stage 2 (prepared in 2000).

2. The review found that the Claremont Homestead was built in 1857 to a design by local architects, Shaw and Dowden, for Thomas Powell. The Homestead has associations with the crop farming and vine and fruit growing in Waurn Ponds and the Barrabool Hills.

3. Claremont Homestead is one of the few surviving, intact Victorian dwellings in Waurn Ponds, and one of a select number of surviving, rural verandahed homesteads in the Victorian style built in the 1850s in Greater Geelong. It is a fine representative example of Victorian Georgian architecture in Greater Geelong. It has similar integrity to comparable dwellings of its type in Greater Geelong included as heritage overlays, i.e. has undergone only minor changes since developed and used as a farm homestead.

4. The then threat of imminent demolition of the homestead demonstrated the need to seek an interim heritage protection.

5. A subsequent Ministerial Amendment C420ggee applied the heritage overlay to the land on an interim basis with an expiry date of 31 December 2021. This has allowed time for the City to pursue the preparation of a permanent heritage overlay.

6. The Amendment will apply a permanent heritage control to 12-16 Kinsmead Street, Waurn Ponds. It will do this by amending the Schedule to Clause 43.01 Heritage Overlay (HO) to include the house and land at 12-16 Kinsmead Street, Waurn Ponds (HO) on a permanent basis and to include design guidelines for new development on the site as an incorporated document to clause 72.04. The *Greater Geelong Outer Areas Heritage Study Stage 2 Review: Claremont Homestead 12-16 Kinsmead Street, Waurn Ponds, June 2020* heritage assessment report prepared by Authentic Heritage Services Pty Ltd (May 2017), is included as a reference document in Clause 22.09.

7. The Amendment was placed on exhibition between 11 February and 15 March 2021. The submission period was extended until 26 March for the affected landowners.

Summary of Submissions

8. A total of 36 submissions were received to the exhibited Amendment C422ggee. The submissions can be generally categorised as follows:

9. Three submissions from the directly affected landowners objecting to the Amendment.

10. One submission from the Wadawurrung provided no comment on the Amendment noting that normal obligations under the Planning and Environment Act 1987 and the Aboriginal heritage Act 2006 will be respected and adhered to.

11. The balance of 32 submissions from residents and the National Trust supported the implementation of the heritage overlay on a permanent basis, with some of these seeking changes to the proposed Incorporated Plan Design Guidelines.

12. A summary of all submissions in table format is presented in **Attachment 3**.

13. The key issues raised have been grouped together under the following themes: (1) Is a permanent heritage overlay warranted?; (2) Building condition; (3) Future development and use of the site; (4) Future access and traffic impacts; (5) changes to the Design Guidelines Incorporated Document; (6) Consultation; and (7) Financial impact of the heritage overlay.

14. Issues or objections that do not fit within the themes have been responded to in **Attachment 3**.

Submission Themes and City Response

Is a permanent heritage overlay warranted?

15. The three objecting submissions oppose the application of the heritage overlay on a permanent basis for several reasons with the three key reasons being poor condition of the building, financial impact/cost of the overlay and other means of historical recognition of the Baum family. They submit that a permanent overlay is unnecessary to recognise the heritage of the Baum family in Waurn Ponds. These submissions have not addressed or challenged the significance of the place directly.

City Response

16. The property was under some threat of demolition which prompted the City to commission Dr David Rowe, Authentic Heritage Services Pty Ltd, to undertake a review and update of the heritage assessment in the Greater Geelong Outer Areas Heritage Study Stage 2 (prepared in 2000). On 8 September 2020 the Minister for Planning's delegate agreed to the Council's request for a Ministerial amendment to apply the Heritage overlay to 12-16 Kinsmead Street, Waurn Ponds on an interim basis. The approval was gazetted on 17 September 2020 and the overlay now applies. The interim control was applied with an expiry date of 31 December 2021 to allow time for Council to prepare an amendment on a permanent basis.

17. The review found that the Claremont Homestead was built in 1857 to a design by local architects, Shaw and Dowden, for Thomas Powell. The homestead has associations with the crop farming and vine and fruit growing in Waurn Ponds and the Barrabool Hills.

18. Claremont Homestead is one of the few surviving, intact Victorian dwellings in Waurn Ponds, and one of a select number of surviving, rural verandahed Victorian styled dwellings built in the 1850s in Greater Geelong. It is a representative example of the Victorian Georgian type in Greater Geelong. It has similar integrity to other comparable dwellings of its type in Greater Geelong included as heritage overlays.

19. The review also found that the homestead has a mature Norfolk Island Pine, a local landmark, remnant of the early garden and has enduring associations with the Baum family for over 116 years.

20. The review recommended a heritage overlay for the site. Places identified in a local heritage study, provided the significance of the place can be shown to justify the application of the overlay, should be included in the heritage overlay.

21. The review found that the place was locally significant to the City of Greater Geelong, meeting the HERCON criterion A (historical significance), B (rarity), D (representativeness), E (aesthetic significance), F (technical significance) and H (associative significance). This work advanced the earlier work of the Outer Areas Heritage Study and confirms the local heritage significance of the site. No submission has provided contrary evidence or opinion on these findings.

22. Section 4 of the Act sets out the objectives of planning in Victoria with the key relevant one being:

> *"(d) to conserve and enhance those buildings, areas or other places which are of scientific, aesthetic, architectural or historic interest or otherwise of special cultural value;"*

23. This is supplemented by the policies of the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme to conserve and enhance individual places and areas of pre and post contact cultural

heritage significance through retaining culturally significant heritage places and areas of pre and post contact cultural heritage significance, ensuring that the use and development of a heritage place contributes to its heritage significance and longevity, and encouraging the design of new development in heritage areas to provide for a contemporary interpretation that relates to the location, bulk, form and materials of existing and /or neighbouring significant buildings.

24. Applying the Heritage Overlay to 12-16 Kinsmead Street, Waurn Ponds on a permanent basis implements Council's obligation to protect identified places of heritage significance.

25. Other means of recognising significance through local records, family associations etc are important and complement the application of the heritage overlay. They provide valuable source material about the place for future generations and the wider community.

Building condition

51. Submissions opposed to the permanent heritage overlay have outlined the current poor condition of the homestead with structural cracks on load bearing walls, rotten floorboards and compromised walls and veranda. Photographs and a builder's report have supported this contention, opining that there is little original material that could be re-used and a that a complete re-build would be necessary, resulting in a reproduction building. The preparation of the Heritage Review and the Statement of Significance was made without the benefit of a close-up external view and inspection of the integrity of the inside of the house.

City Response

52. This is an issue that is commonly raised in response to proposed heritage listings and inclusion of properties in the Heritage Overlay.

53. The heritage significance of Claremont Homestead relates to it being one of the few surviving, intact Victorian dwellings in Waurn Ponds, is one of a select number of surviving, rural verandahed Victorian styled dwellings built in the 1850s in Greater Geelong, has historic association with one of the Waurn Ponds long time farming families, the Baum's, and had associations with crop farming and vine and fruit growing from the 1850s.

54. It is acknowledged that the consultant review of the site was not from close quarters, but rather was confined to site inspections from adjacent roads, which limited their intimate knowledge of the condition of the place. There is some acknowledgement and discussion in the Review that the condition was 'fair' when viewed from outside the property boundaries.

55. Post exhibition of Amendment C422 and the receipt of objecting submissions documenting problems with the structure, the City commissioned a structural engineering assessment to assess the existing conditions and structural integrity of the Claremont Homestead. The report by Block1 Pty Ltd, which is available on the amendments page of the City's website, has found that the homestead "*shows pronounced levels of deterioration to the slate roof and external masonry walls including two chimneys (that are leaning and present a clear danger to any occupants or visitors.) Most of the masonry walls (external and internal), and the slate roofing, is unrepairable and requires full replacement*". The report paints a clear picture of deterioration of the dwelling and concludes that the "*only existing elements of Claremont Homestead that can remain (in part) are the roof framing, and subfloor timber framing, along with the two northern chimneys. It's possible parts of the verandahs might be salvageable, but only if heritage desired, which nonetheless would require full reworking with probably most of the timbers replaced.*

56. The Engineering assessment raised structural concerns regarding the integrity of the building, and in response the Municipal Building Surveyor has issued an emergency

order to require the site to be fenced with protective site fencing to prevent access to the building.

57. The question for Council is whether condition is a valid consideration when identifying heritage places and protecting them through their inclusion in the heritage overlay. Or put another way, does the condition of the building compromise the ability to proceed with the heritage overlay? This has been addressed in previous planning panel reviews of heritage amendments in Greater Geelong and other municipalities across Victoria.

58. In Moreland C149 the Panel said that condition is not generally to be relevant at the stage of listing, with exceptions being where there is a high certainty that the building would be demolished, or the extent of reparation would destroy the integrity of the building. The Melbourne C207 Panel considered this matter further as follows:

We consider it is possible that condition may become relevant in the circumstances where the necessary renovations of a building, which is being considered for listing/retention, are so extensive that the original fabric of the building is in large measure lost and the form and nature of the heritage place would no longer be able to be appreciated. In that way, the significance of the place would be degraded. Again we expect that the certainty threshold would be a very high one.

59. The Greater Geelong C359 Panel also considered this principle in 2018 and found as follows:

The Panel accepts the long-standing principle that condition should not determine the heritage significance of a place, unless it impacts upon its integrity or how the significance of the place is understood. Ruins, for example, can still have cultural heritage significance, as long as they are understood in context. The Heritage Overlay is a decision making tool to manage the processes of conservation, alteration, additions or even demolition (including recording the fabric should demolition be permitted) balanced with an understanding of heritage value. This is part of a two-stage process – the first stage is testing whether the place is significant at the planning scheme Amendment Stage. The second stage is planning permit stage – when there is a balance all of the issues including condition, replacement building and the like, against the heritage values of the place. On the matter of property rights and the ability to develop the land in the future, the Panel observes that Geelong has had heritage controls in place for many years and there are a plethora of examples where heritage fabric has been integrated with modern development.

60. In reference to a specific property in Mercer Street, Geelong, the C359 Panel concluded:

The Panel concludes that the primary consideration for whether a place should be formally recognised in the planning scheme under the Heritage Overlay is whether it is of cultural heritage significance. As opposed to 'intactness' or 'integrity', the condition of a building does not inform whether a building is significant. The issue of condition is more appropriately considered at the planning permit stage when plans are put before the Council.

61. The Surf Coast C50 Panel explains that the issue about the management of heritage places stating that it is a two-stage process involving identification of the heritage significance of the place and then later on-going management of the place having regard to issues such as economics of building retention and repair, reasonable current day use requirements, balancing competing policies. In effect, the building condition will be considered at the time of considering any permit applications for future use and development at the site. The issue of cost impact of retaining and restoration of the Homestead are considered elsewhere in this report.

62. Council needs to consider the long-held principle that the relevant issue in deciding whether to include a place in the heritage overlay is whether the place has heritage

significance. No contrary position or opposing evidence has been put by the submissions that the homestead does not meet the heritage criteria for local significance. The latest review by Authentic Heritage Services updated the heritage assessment from the Outer Areas Heritage Study Stage 2, also by Authentic Heritage Services in 2000. This original assessment had identified the heritage significance of the site and this has not diminished in the intervening period.

63. A place may be quite run-down but still be substantially intact and retain its heritage values. Claremont Homestead is reasonably intact for a building constructed in the 1850s. Being in poor condition does not of itself disqualify a place from being included in the Heritage Overlay, whereas lack of intactness may do so. Whilst the structural assessment identifies some serious problems with the building, there has been interest in enquiries of the City by potential purchasers of the site about restoration of the homestead. Following the principle of the two-stage planning process, including the site in the heritage overlay on a permanent basis will allow for these possibilities to be explored.

64. Should the present condition limit the ability of Claremont Homestead to be conserved or developed in accordance with the Design Guidelines, then such limitations can be investigated and considered in the context of approving future works through the permit approval process.

Future development and use of the site

65. Many submissions are concerned about the future use and development of the site. Submitters are opposed to more intense development, two storey dwellings and smaller subdivided lots submitting that these will impact on the privacy of adjoining properties, views to the homestead and beyond, increase local traffic, and place more strain on existing services. Some submissions are opposed to any changes on the site as they seek to retain the status quo of this quiet residential area.

City Response

66. This Amendment focuses on heritage matters affecting the significance of the site and provides guidance for any future development around the periphery. Matters beyond this such as subdivision design and road layout are beyond the scope of the amendment and will be considered as part of any future planning permit application under the requirements of the GRZ1.

67. Taking this further, this Amendment is primarily about whether the heritage significance of the site is of a level that warrants permanent inclusion in the heritage overlay. This has been established in the Heritage Review and the Statement of Significance.

68. Council's Settlement Strategy aims for 50% of new residential development within Greater Geelong to be achieved by infill development within established urban areas. As this is a large site in a residential area, it is reasonable to expect that some additional development may be contemplated at the site and there will naturally be considerations about what happens to the balance of the site. With the heritage overlay, consideration needs to be given to the impact that any development has on the heritage significance of the site.

69. The Statement of Significance has provided comments about how best to protect this significance from additional development on the site. This has been translated into the Design Guidelines proposed to be incorporated into the Planning Scheme.

70. These Incorporated Plan Design Guidelines (Guidelines) have taken a balanced approach to protecting the significant aspects of the homestead and providing opportunities and constraints for subdivision and development around the periphery of the homestead. The Guidelines allow consideration for development occurring in the more sensitive parts of the site, including limiting any development in the former orchard

area and in the east driveway zones to single storey and allow consideration of two storey dwellings in the rear zone.

71. This is a reasonable response to the circumstances of the site and balances the heritage significance of the homestead with the large surrounding land area in a residential location. The land is within the General Residential Zone 1, not a Residential Growth Zone, leading to a lessened expectation of substantial development potential for the site. A nuanced response for development proposals on sites with unique characteristics such as heritage will be balanced at the planning permit stage through design response. At this stage in the planning process, the identification and protection of the identified heritage value of 12-16 Kinsmead Street is the matter being considered.

72. The use of the Heritage Overlay to restrict development and for achieving other aims such as ensuring the privacy or views of a neighbour, or to regulate the order and proper planning of the area or to limit traffic movement is beyond the purpose of the overlay but rather rightly sits within the land use zone.

73. Future uses and development will be subject to planning permission and issues of local amenity, traffic and will be considerations in any decision making. The heritage listing of the site will have some influence on any changes to the homestead and future subdivision and development of the site but is not a tool to be used to quarantine against any development or changes. One of the purposes of the General Residential Zone 1 is to encourage development that respects the neighbourhood character of the area. Another is to encourage a diversity of housing types and housing growth particularly in locations offering good access to services and transport. The decision guidelines of the Zone require that the purpose of the Zone is considered and more specifically, for subdivision, to consider as appropriate the pattern of subdivision and its effect on the spacing of buildings. Clauses 54 and 55 of the Scheme also provide the objectives, standard and decision guidelines for single and multiple dwellings. These provisions will be primary considerations in assessing any future development of the site.

74. The Heritage Assessment recommended that two-storey development on the western area of the site was capable of two storey development without compromising the heritage significance of the homestead. This has been translated into the Design Guidelines. The surrounding residential area has a mix of single and double storey dwellings and baring any negative impact on the heritage significance of the Homestead, the site is capable of accommodating two storey dwellings on some parts of the site that will mix in with development of the surrounding area.

75. It is important to not use heritage controls to protect non-heritage values. The purposes of the heritage overlay at clause 43.01 of the Planning Scheme are very specific:

- *To implement the Municipal Planning Strategy and the Planning Policy Framework.*
- *To conserve and enhance heritage places of natural or cultural significance.*
- *To conserve and enhance those elements which contribute to the significance of heritage places.*
- *To ensure that development does not adversely affect the significance of heritage places.*
- *To conserve specified heritage places by allowing a use that would otherwise be prohibited if this will demonstrably assist with the conservation of the significance of the heritage place.*

76. The Incorporated Document Design Guidelines give direction for ensuring that development does not adversely affect the significance of heritage places and to conserve and enhance those elements of Claremont Homestead that contribute to its significance. Matters beyond this are appropriately controlled by the other planning scheme tools, namely the Zone provisions and clauses 54 and 55.

77. The principle consideration in applying the heritage overlay is whether the place reaches the threshold for local heritage significance and questions of the potential of the land for other uses and development and their effects should be considered at a later stage of the planning process.

78. A possible response could be to curtail the application of the Heritage Overlay to just the homestead building and a curtilage rather than the whole title. This is not recommended as implementing such an approach is not supported by the Statement of Significance, and it also removes the possibility of ensuring that surrounding development is sensitive to the heritage values of the Homestead

Future access and traffic impacts

79. Many submissions have expressed concerns that new development at the site will increase the volume of traffic in the area and negatively impact on the amenity of the local streets. Submitters argue that more intense development, including two storey development, will impact on road safety for vehicles and pedestrians, especially children, moving throughout the area to access Baum Park, and increase on-street parking use. Some submissions are opposed to any changes on the site as they seek to retain the status quo of this quiet residential area.

80. Some submitters are opposed to any changes to the truncation of the four roads leading into the site whilst others have sought the connections to be opened, either for vehicles or pedestrians, to allow for easier access to Baum Park.

City Response

81. The land is privately owned, and the City has no plans to acquire any of the site for the creation of a shared path through the site. Any current access to the site has not been with the consent of the current landowner who has taken measures such as signage, locking of gates and fencing to prevent and discourage this activity. Access through the site to Baum Park from any of the surrounding roads of Chardonnay Court, Kinsmead Street and Delgany Mews is currently not planned for but may be a consideration of a future subdivision proposal for the site and planning permit process.

82. The use of the Heritage Overlay for achieving other aims such as regulating the order and proper planning of the area and limiting traffic movement is beyond the purpose and scope of the Heritage Overlay but rather rightly sits within the land use zone. The heritage listing of the site will have some influence on any changes to the homestead and future subdivision and development of the site but is not used to quarantine against any development or changes.

83. The amendment does not change the no through road status of the site or increase traffic circulating throughout the area. Future planning decisions will address this issue if a development proposal arises.

84. The permanent heritage listing of the site does not itself create the traffic concerns being raised in the submissions. The primary function of this amendment is to include the land in the heritage overlay on a permanent basis. This is supplemented by an incorporated document to give guidance for future development of this site to ensure that the most important areas of significance are protected and any new development of this large site within the middle of a residential area is respectful of this significance. Except for the need to retain the homestead with the front garden and the Norfolk Island Pine, the Heritage Assessment did not identify any subdivision controls that needed to be included in the Guidelines. Subdivision guidelines are not included as that is a matter for the zone to regulate.

85. It is premature to speculate about what future development plans may arise, but it is clear within the zone objectives and decision guidelines that matters of local amenity are

a priority for consideration as part of the planning permit process. The merits of cross-block links will need to be considered as part of any subdivision proposal.

86. The land surrounding the homestead is private land and being used by the landowner for private purposes. Council has no interest in purchasing and developing the land. A road reserve and Baum Park adjoin the site to the south. There is similarly no intention to develop this open space or close the road.

Design Guidelines Incorporated Document

87. Many of the supporting submissions seek changes to the proposed Design Guidelines Incorporated Document to further protect the heritage values of the site and avoid deletion of existing heritage fabric. Changes sought include restricting additional development on the site to single storey, retention of the substantial rear outbuilding, re-instatement of the former orchard and underground well, changes to the solar panel location, requiring permits for the construction of driveways and car parks, no external alterations to rooflines, and an increase appropriate buffer to better protect the spatial setting of the house and outbuildings.

City Response

88. The role of the proposed incorporated document – the Design Guidelines, as provided for under the Heritage Overlay, is to clarify the types and scale of development that can occur without the need for a planning permit. It is not intended to be a catch all for all future development matters related to the site.

89. The primary issue to address about the Design Guidelines is the matter of what constitutes an appropriate curtilage area around Claremont Homestead. This is dependent on two key factors:

90. Firstly, the significance of the setting in which the homestead sits, including the presence of any significant outbuildings and hard or soft landscaping features, plus any significant viewscapes to or from the homestead.

91. The landscape context has changed irrevocably: The homestead, which once sat as a modest landscape feature within a vast area of orchards and vineyards now sits on an oversize residential lot within a 20-year-old suburban estate.

92. The immediate landscape environs are of limited significance: The two outbuildings are in a derelict and structurally unsafe state, necessitating demolition or major rebuilding. The only surviving landscape features of any significance are the Norfolk Pine and the filled-in well/cistern on the western veranda - both to be retained. There are a few remnant garden plants adjoining the north verandah which suggest the former presence of an ornamental garden in this area but are otherwise of no importance.

93. No significant historical viewscapes to or from the site are recorded. The view of the homestead's main/north façade is not important historically but has come to possess some value since the surrounding residential subdivision was completed as the key public vista of the homestead from the public.

94. The proposed curtilage/protected area should protect those parts of the property that are of significance. Aside from the physical and visual relationship between the homestead and the only substantial landscape feature of significance - the Norfolk Pine – that justifies the area between these two features within a protected curtilage, along with the vista from Kinsmead Street to the homestead frontage – which closely aligns with the Homestead to Pine area, there is little if any landscape significance within the property requiring protection and no obvious historical demarcation lines that might form an appropriate curtilage boundary.

95. Secondly, Claremont Homestead and setting needs to provide a sustainable and workable fit into its future landscape context.

96. Currently, the surrounding area is used and zoned for private residential, with lot sizes of around 500 to 1000m^2 size and development up to two storeys (by modern residential heights). The future use of the homestead is expected to be as a private dwelling, consistent with the existing use and land zoning of the surrounding neighbourhood.

97. The proposed curtilage/protected area seeks to achieve a balance between appropriate conservation of setting and sustainable and equitable use. A larger lot size would not provide any appreciable heritage benefit, but may unduly hinder the use or economic development of those parts of the property that are of nil or little significance.

98. Given the recent traffic of trespassers across the broader site, particular travelling between Baum Park and adjoining streets, and other experience with homesteads being retained on oversize blocks within suburban contexts, there is every reason to believe retention of the homestead on a large block of >1500m^2 will also encourage ongoing illegal access, whilst a smaller block will stand a better chance of providing security and privacy for future owners of Claremont.

99. The second key issue submitted about the Design Guidelines is the allowance for two storey development on some parts of the site. In reply, the homestead has high ceilings with a steep hip roof; providing an overall height equivalent to a modern two-storey residential dwelling. Considering this, and the existence of two storey dwellings on adjoining properties already, it is appropriate to allow two storey development on the site as this is consistent with the scale of development across the area.

100. Whilst the Design Guidelines provide guidance on building heights for any new development on site, it remains that the General Residential Zone 1 includes requirements for dwellings focusing on the Clause 54 and 55 requirements for matters such as site coverage, setbacks, fence heights, private open space and permeability. No further additions the Design Guidelines are required as the Heritage Overlay itself also includes decision guidelines that require the responsible authority to consider whether the location, bulk, form or appearance of the proposed building will adversely affect the significance of the heritage place or and whether these are in keeping with the character and appearance of adjacent buildings and the heritage place.

101. A walkway between Kinsmead Street (or any of the other adjoining roads) and Baum Park is not a heritage necessity of the heritage overlay or the Design Guidelines. As part of any subdivision of the site, this could be a matter for consideration.

<u>Consultation</u>

102. The objecting submissions are dissatisfied with the consultation process with the landowners at the time of the completion of the heritage assessment review. They are also disappointed that there was no notification about the interim protection order finding out through local print media articles. The notice about the permanent overlay was not received by the landowners although the notice addressed to the occupier of 12-16 Kinsmead Street was, yet rates notices are correctly mailed to the owners.

City Response

103. Notice of the amendment was given in accordance with the requirements of the Planning and Environment Act 1987. Notices were sent to landowners and occupiers of adjoining and nearby land using the landownership database. It is unfortunate that the mail was not delivered to the landowner's address and returned mail has not been received. The landowner has been inconvenienced by not receiving the letter but has not been disadvantaged with the City extending the timeframe for making a submission by two weeks.

104. The City could have improved the consultation with the affected landowner at the conclusion of the preparation of the heritage assessment and statement of significance and prior to the implementation of the interim and permanent amendments. More engagement early in the process would have added more knowledge about the structural integrity of the homestead rather than later in this permanent heritage overlay amendment process. In the haste to deal with the interim overlay this step was overlooked.

Financial impact of the heritage overlay

105. One of the points of objection to the heritage overlay is the financial cost and impact of the restriction on the landowner. Submission 35 submits that the interim heritage overlay has affected the land value by approximately $500,000 based on real estate estimates and prospective purchaser offers. The submission further estimates that rebuild costs and compliance with the heritage overlay would be hundreds of thousands of dollars. The remaining land around the homestead would be largely unusable for subdivision due to access and size restrictions causing a further financial impact. The Baum family owners/inheritors should not be expected to bear the financial cost and personal cost of a place of little or no heritage value to the Geelong community.

City Response

106. The financial cost of a heritage overlay is a theme often included in submissions opposing inclusion in a heritage overlay. The City can't quantity or verify the impact outlined in the submission.

107. The application of a heritage overlay acknowledges that the site has heritage values (in this case, historic and aesthetic) and that these need to be considered in any future development proposal – refer to point 4 above. Section 4(1)(d) of the Planning and Environment Act 1987 outlines the objectives for planning in Victoria including: *"to conserve and enhance those buildings, areas or other places which are of scientific, aesthetic, architectural or historical interest, or otherwise of special cultural value."* The Planning Scheme, by the heritage overlay, provides the mechanism and tool to do this.

108. Planning Panels have addressed this matter on many occasions. The Panel consideration of Greater Geelong C71 (2004) reported:

The Panel acknowledged the economic implications of Heritage Overlay listing for property owners but held that these must be offset against the benefit to the community from retention of places of heritage significance and their ongoing contribution to the character of the area and the community's understanding of and identification with its past. It recognised the requirements in the Act and the SPPF to protect places of heritage significance and noted that social and economic impacts, as well as heritage values, would be considered in making decisions on future development of properties.

109. The Greater Geelong C190 (2011) Panel commented on the issue of economic impacts of a heritage overlay:

Panels have repeatedly ruled that such issues are not material to this stage of the planning process – a position supported by Practice Notes and numerous VCAT decisions. This view maintains that although it is appropriate for the responsible authority to consider all the objectives of the Planning and Environment Act 1987 - including, inter alia, fair, orderly, economic and sustainable use, and development of the land (s.4(1)(a)) … and … to balance the present and future interests of all Victorians (s.4(1)(g)) – the question of personal economic impact or potential constraint on development are matters for the next stage of the planning process i.e. at the time a permit is applied for. This approach has the merit of separating two distinct issues: assessment of the significance of the place, and the question of its conservation, adaptation, alteration or demolition. This conforms with proper heritage conservation practice and mirrors the processes of

the Victorian Heritage Act 1985. It reflects the desirability of considering long term matters (if we accept that heritage significance is likely to be somewhat enduring, if not immutable) at one point in time; and, shorter term matters (personal desire, financial considerations and economic circumstances) when they are most relevant.

110. The Panel in Greater Bendigo C223 (2017) noted that *"given the basis and requirements of the Act, the Panel does not accept the principle of property and development rights as a reason to not apply the Heritage Overlay, nor does it accept compensation ought to apply."* This general opinion is also reported in many other panel reports for heritage-based amendments to the Greater Geelong and other Planning Schemes.

111. While not dismissing the submitters concerns about the impact of heritage listing on the property value, the heritage assessment of 12-16 Kinsmead Street, Waurn Ponds was prepared to determine the cultural heritage significance of the place in line with obligations under the Act.

112. Council's website provides the following information about heritage property valuations:

"Heritage Victoria (Heritage Listing & Property Valuations In Victoria, March 2001) recently reviewed a number of studies that investigated the effect of heritage listings upon property values and development potential. The studies ranged from those which indicated a positive impact upon property values following heritage listing to those that indicated a negative impact. In summary, it found that research studies, both domestic and international, indicate that heritage listing on a macro level is not a significant factor in determining property value either at the time of listing or following. However, there are individual cases where the effects are more significant, either positive or negative. It is often difficult to estimate the specific effects of heritage listing on the value of a property since heritage controls do not prohibit development, subdivision or demolition but require that approval to be obtained. Where there is some capacity to develop the particular place and achieve additional development on the land without seriously compromising the heritage significance of the place, the impact on values may not be as great as where the capacity for further development is more limited."

113. The past subdivision and residential development of the broader Claremont farm acreage is expected to have provided a reasonable economic return. The Design Guidelines have been prepared to protect the areas of significance on site and ensure that the whole site is not quarantined from future development; allowing further subdivision and development around the homestead and also provide for adaptation and upgrade of the homestead to provide for its ongoing sustainable use and conservation.

Summary of submissions and City response

No.	Type	Summary of Submission	Theme / Response
1	S	• Supports the amendment as a significant piece of post-contact history of the area. • Balance of the homestead land parcel could become a community park. • Fence and gateway at west end of Chardonnay Court to be removed and permanent pedestrian access to be allowed across the site for permeability of the area. • Late owner wanted land to be available to the area.	Support for permanent heritage overlay noted. The site is privately owned land and the City has no plans to acquire any of it for public open space purposes. Baum Park to the south of the subject site was gifted to the City by the landowner as part of previous land subdivisions. No provision of further land to the City was made as part of the Estate of the late Mr Baum. Refer to theme *Future access and traffic impacts.*
2	S	Same as submission 3.	Refer to submission 3 response.
3	S	• Supports keeping the heritage listing and retaining the 1850's dwelling as a memory in Waurn Ponds and as a feature when viewed from Baum Park. • Opposes building additional dwellings on the land as this would affect the local area and community. • Supports retention of the Norfolk Island Pine tree as a feature and home for animals. • Additional dwellings and people on the site would impact on the safe and quiet court, cause traffic problems and impact on the open space.	Support for permanent heritage overlay noted. The Norfolk Island Pine tree is included in the heritage overlay listing and to be retained. Refer to theme *Future development and use of the site.* Refer to theme *Design Guidelines Incorporated Document.*
4	S	• Supports the permanent heritage overlay. • Property and its surrounds, including the Norfolk Island Pine should be preserved at all costs. • Any development of the site will be detrimental to the quiet street and parkland and impact on the lifestyle.	Support for permanent heritage overlay noted. Refer to theme *Future development and use of the site.* Refer to theme *Future access and traffic impacts.* Refer to theme *Design Guidelines Incorporated Document.*

No.	Type	Summary of Submission	Theme / Response
		• Multi-level development will increase traffic to the narrow streets compromising safe access, decrease green space, impact on property values and cause overlooking and loss of privacy. • Supports retaining the 'No Through Road' status of The Vineyard. • Supports retaining some of the property's green space and natural beauty.	The Design Guidelines provide for the spatial setting of the homestead and Norfolk Island Pine when viewed from Kinsmead Street to be retained free of buildings, walls and solid fences.
5	S	• Supports permanent heritage overlay. • Concerned about current state of the house as it is a security risk for break ins, building safety from the 2020 tornado, storage of rubble on site, car parking for the park and walking track and large trucks entering. • Border between the playground (Baum Park) and site needs to be clearly identified for public safety. • Concerned about the balance of the land around the homestead and whether it will be retained as green space or developed.	Support for permanent heritage overlay noted. The safety of the homestead has been raised as a concern to the City. The Municipal Building Surveyor has issued an emergency order to require the site to be fenced with protective site fencing to prevent access to the building. Refer to theme *Future development and use of the site.* Refer to theme *Design Guidelines Incorporated Document.* The balance of the site will not be retained as green space – it is anticipated that there may be some additional development on the site in accordance with the Design Guidelines. This will be subject to a future planning permit application(s) and in accordance with the provisions of the General Residential 1 Zone. The demarcation between the private property and Baum Park will be instated as part of any future development of the site, or through fencing by the current owner.
6	S	• Happy that the integrity of the homestead and tree is important. • 2 storey proposal on the Vineyard side of the property would increase traffic. • Purchase in the area as a no through road and a quiet residential area to avoid through traffic.	Support for permanent heritage overlay noted. Refer to theme *Future development and use of the site.* Refer to theme *Future access and traffic impacts.*

No.	Type	Summary of Submission	Theme / Response
		• Objects to high density housing in the street and any change to closed access to traffic.	Refer to theme *Design Guidelines Incorporated Document.*
7	S	• Supports the heritage overlay. • Opposed to any future development of Council land adjacent to the site. • Two storey units will impact on increased traffic and diversions through Semillon Place to connect to The Vineyard. • Site should be restricted to single storey development.	Support for permanent heritage overlay noted. The amendment does not propose any future development of the adjoining Council land. Refer to theme *Future development and use of the site.* Refer to theme *Design Guidelines Incorporated Document.*
8	S	• Supports preserving the house and tree. • Remaining space should be turned into a park to allow Kinsmead Street. Delgany Mews, Chardonnay Court and The Vineyard to remain quite streets. • Seeks a No Parking sign at the end of each of these streets as parking there restricts rubbish truck movements.	Support for permanent heritage overlay noted. The land is privately owned, and Council has no plans for acquire any of the site for the creation of public open space. The request for a 'No Parking' sign at the end of Kinsmead Street. Delgany Mews, Chardonnay Court and The Vineyard will be forwarded to the City's Waste Unit for consideration. Refer to theme *Design Guidelines Incorporated Document.*
9	S	• Supports saving the historic property for future generations to enjoy. • Supports retaining the existing link between the property and Baum Park.	Support for permanent heritage overlay noted. Baum Park is located to the south of the subject site. There is no formal fencing between them. This may change if any further development of the site is planned. The Vineyard road reserve forms half of the southern border of the subject land and this connection is not affected by the amendment. Refer to theme *Future access and traffic impacts.*

No.	Type	Summary of Submission	Theme / Response
10	S	• Supports the permanent heritage controls.	Support for permanent heritage overlay noted.
11	S	• Supports the permanent heritage listing as a link to the past • Hopes the Norfolk Island Pine should be retained. • Development on the site could distract from the Claremont Homestead. • Two storey buildings on the southern side of the site could be extreme and mean high density. • Possibility of student accommodation and 30-40 houses or units will increase traffic in narrow streets. • Any internal through road would be a short cut to Ghazeepore Road and affect quiet and safe neighbourhood.	Support for permanent heritage overlay noted. The Norfolk Island Pine tree is included in the heritage overlay listing. Refer to theme *Design Guidelines Incorporated Document.* Double storey dwellings can be achieved on the site without compromising the heritage significance of the homestead and will complement the mix of development heights in the surrounding area. Refer to theme *Future development and use of the site.* Refer to theme *Future access and traffic impacts.*

12	S	• Supports permanent heritage overlay to protect the homestead for future generations.
		• Supports protection of the historical Norfolk Island Pine tree and gardens from being heavily developed.
		• Expects the Kinsmead Street, The Vineyard, Delgany Mews and Chardonnay Court to remain as no-through roads to protect neighbourhood character.
		• Seeks some changes to the Incorporated Plan to:
		  • limit extent of external alterations to the homestead so that the 1857 design is not compromised,
		  • Buildings should be designed to be in keeping with the homestead and not to obstruct the external view of the north and west side of the property,
		  • reconsider allowance to demolish or alter structures of nil significance or the large shed,
			Support for permanent heritage overlay noted.
			
			The Norfolk Island Pine tree is included in the heritage overlay listing and to be retained. There are no further established gardens of significance on site to be protected.
			
			Refer to theme *Future access and traffic impacts.*
			
			Refer to theme *Future development and use of the site.*
			
			Refer to theme *Design Guidelines Incorporated Document.*
			
			The Design Guidelines seek to conserve the northern half of the homestead and key northern and eastern facades. The southern part being of lesser significance, in poorer structural

No.	Type	Summary of Submission	Theme / Response
		• solar panel allowance should be only on the large shed roof to avoid damage to the homestead's slate roof, • addition of a clause to re-install an elevated circular iron water tank, and • the City to investigate the existence of a well on the west side of the homestead and if in situ, to be reinstated.	condition, and containing unserviceable kitchen and wet areas that will need to be upgraded for residential use, results a more flexible approach to alterations and additions being recommended for the southern part and the results of which should be barely if at all visible in the significant views of the homestead. The northern and eastern facades are deemed to be the most architecturally significant and are to be conserved with adjacent space to preserve their view setting. There is no heritage benefit in protecting a larger area than ~1000-1500m^2 of the setting/curtilage of the homestead and Norfolk Pine. The large shed is of lesser significance than the homestead and is in an extremely poor and unsafe condition. It is unreasonable to mandate its retention given the amount of work and new building material that would be required to repair it, however if the owner has capacity to stabilise and reuse the shed that is not prevented by the guidelines and shall be encouraged. Solar panels will require a planning permit where they are visible from a street, lane or public park. This process will assess their impact on the heritage significance and appearance of the homestead. According to the Structural Engineer Assessment, the slate roof is substantially damaged already and will need to be replaced. This reduces the submission that solar panels will damage the slate roof. The Design Guidelines at clause 2.4 outlines where solar panels can be installed without planning permission. This does not include the large shed as that can be demolished due to its deteriorated condition.

No.	Type	Summary of Submission	Theme / Response
			Heritage overlays cannot demand reinstatement of features that ceased to exist prior to the overlay's creation, e.g. the elevated circular iron water tank. The guidelines do not prevent the owner from opting to build a replica or similar water tank in keeping with the historical character and use of the homestead. A well does exist on the west side of the homestead and the form of it should be retained if practicable, however it has been substantially filled in for safety reasons. To reinstate it to hold water will likely require major works and modifications including protective measures such as required for swimming pools. Whilst the guidelines do not prevent this, safety has to be the priority, and it is proposed the well remain filled in and just its footprint be retained in the interim.
13	S	• Supports the heritage overlay. • Seeks demarcation between the Vineyard open space and the resident boundary. • Provide pedestrian access from Kinsmead Street through to the Vineyard to encourage connections and physical activity for children. • Not against removal of the large shed to create land or space for a home that faces onto Baum Park. • New development be consistent with established homes and residential blocks nearby. • Any changes to merging Kinsmead Street and Delgany Mews into one should consider minimising traffic flow and speed and avoid becoming a short cut for Monterey Drive and Ghazeepore Road.	Support for permanent heritage overlay noted. Demarcation of the boundary can occur at anytime by the current or future landowners. It is most likely to happen as part of any future additional development at the site. The Design Guidelines allow for the removal of the large shed. Refer to theme *Future access and traffic impacts.* Refer to theme *Future development and use of the site.* Refer to theme *Design Guidelines Incorporated Document.*
14	S	• Supports the amendment as it will protect the property of significance and Norfolk Island pine, protect from	Support for permanent heritage overlay noted.

No.	Type	Summary of Submission	Theme / Response
		overdevelopment and potentially prevent construction of a through road on Kinsmead Street, Delgany Mews, Chardonnay Court and The Vineyard. • Seeks to maintain the quiet and peaceful place for their family.	Refer to theme *Future access and traffic impacts.* Refer to theme *Future development and use of the site.*
15	S	• Homestead and Norfolk Island Pine should be heritage listed. • Removal of the Orchard was saddening. • Memories of the former property owner are often shared with others. • Opposes any other dwellings, either single or double storey being built on the land as will not benefit the community. • Supports renovations to the existing homestead and someone making it their own. • Submitter chose to live on a no-through road for less traffic. • If additional dwellings built on the land, there will be an increase in local traffic posing a safety risk for residents of the area and park users. • Owners received a large enough inheritance without squeezing on more homes and damaging the community.	Support for permanent heritage overlay noted. Norfolk Island Pine is included as significant. Refer to theme *Future access and traffic impacts.* Refer to theme *Future development and use of the site.* Removal of the orchard occurred before the interim heritage overlay was applied. The landowner has advised that the orchard was removed due to rotten plants. The homestead needs restoration and repairs and will require a significant investment to restore. Inheritance matters of the landowner are a private issue and have no bearing on the heritage significance or development possibilities of the site.
16	S	• Gives in principle support to the amendment document. • House is badly in need of repair and the Norfolk Island pine is a major landmark for the area. • Development on the southern end of the property could be tastefully managed. • Only in favour of single storey dwellings on the old orchard area (western boundary of the land). • Does not support vehicle access to the property by Delgany Mews as increasing traffic volumes from Armstrong Creek is	Support for permanent heritage overlay noted. Refer to theme *Future access and traffic impacts.* Refer to theme *Future development and use of the site.* Refer to theme *Design Guidelines Incorporated Document.*

No.	Type	Summary of Submission	Theme / Response
		already making access to Ghazeepore Road difficult, especially during peak times.	
17	S	• Strongly supports the amendment because of the historic significance of Claremont House and the Norfolk Island Pine Tree. • Has enjoyed the presence of Claremont House when living in Kinsmead Street and the neighbourly interaction with the Baum's about the family history and early development of Waurn Ponds. • Agrees with retention of Claremont Homestead as Waurn Ponds has few significant remnants of its history and development from the early 1800s. • Considers Design Guidelines will protect the homestead and tree whilst providing reasonable future subdivision and housing development opportunities.	Support for permanent heritage overlay and Design Guidelines noted. The Heritage Assessment and the Design Guidelines have balanced the identification of the heritage significance of the site with the fact that the homestead sits on a very large lot in the middle of an established residential area and could reasonably be expected to have some further development.

18	S	• Largely in support of the amendment, specifically retention of the Norfolk Island Pine, retaining enough open space around the dwelling and retaining the Victorian Georgian style and materials.
		• Seeks consideration of the following:
		  • Retain family friendly area by preventing construction of a through road,
		  • Provide access to Baum Park from Kinsmead Street through the property, and
		  • Restrict the use of the historic dwelling for events such as weddings, functions that will impact the surrounding area with late night noise and alcohol consumption.
			Support for permanent heritage overlay noted.
			
			Refer to theme *Future access and traffic impacts.*
			
			Refer to theme *Design Guidelines Incorporated Document.*
			
			Use of the land is subject to a planning permit application under the provisions of the General Residential Zone 1. As the inclusion of the site in the Heritage Overlay does not allow for prohibited uses to be considered, the future use of the site will need to be considered solely under the zone provisions. A reception/function centre is classified under the term Place of Assembly, is a permit required use and subject to planning application and consideration. It is beyond the scope of this amendment to consider.

No.	Type	Summary of Submission	Theme / Response

19	S	• Supports the permanent heritage overlay for reasons outlined in the Statement of Significance.
		• Retention of the Claremont Homestead will fulfill the wish of the late Mr Baum.
		• Seeks changes to the Incorporated document:
		  • 3.1 – change to remove the hipped roof form to restore integrity of the dwelling,
		  • 3.4 – should provide more space surrounding the dwelling and provide for more spaces for viewing the dwelling from the western and southern sides,
		  • 3.5 – concern about the allowance for inclusion of an attic room which was not part of the original Homestead design,
		  • 3.6 – concerns about allowance for removal of sections of the hipped roof three and the hipped roof to the south and part of the western veranda. Restoring the integrity of the building is important, and
		  • All new buildings on the site should be single storey only and their design complementary to the Homestead and other dwellings in the surrounding area.
		• There should not be a through road connecting Kinsmead Street and Delgany Mews as shown on an early subdividers sketch as this would cause traffic problems in Kinsmead Street.
		• Access to the southern part of the site from The Vineyard does not support the option of allowing higher density storey development on The Vineyard frontage.
		• Retain connection between the Homestead property and the Baum Park as established by the late Mr Ken Baum and maintain site lines from the Park to the Homestead.
		• Claremont Homestead's association with vine and fruit growing could be recognised by appropriate planting in section of Baum Park.
			Support for permanent heritage overlay noted.
			
			Refer to theme *Future development and use of the site.*
			
			Refer to theme *Future access and traffic impacts.*
			
			Refer to theme *Design Guidelines Incorporated Document.*
			
			The City can't speculate on the wishes of the late Mr Baum, but the heritage significance of the site is being implemented by inclusion in the permanent heritage overlay.
			
			3.1 & 3.4 & 3.6: The Guidelines seek to conserve the prominent twin hipped form over the northern half of the homestead and key northern and eastern facades. The western and southern facades are of lesser architectural significance, whilst the southern part is in poorer structural condition, and containing unserviceable kitchen and wet areas that will need to be upgraded for residential use - this results in a more flexible approach to alterations and additions being recommended for the southern part and the results of which should be barely if at all visible in the significant views of the homestead.
			
			3.5: Attic rooms are recognised as an appropriate way to increase floor area without changing the historical form of buildings. These are only recommended in the southern part of the building and not the significant north and east elevations.
			
			The homestead has high ceilings with a steep hip roof; providing an overall height equivalent to a modern two-storey residential dwelling. Considering this, and the existence of

No.	Type	Summary of Submission	Theme / Response
			two storey dwellings on adjoining properties already, it is appropriate to allow two storey development on the site. Sight lines between Baum Park and the homestead was not identified as a significant vista or visual relationship in the Heritage Assessment and subsequently has not been recommended for protection in the design guidelines. Whilst the suggestion for appropriate planting in a section of Baum Park as a means of recognising Claremont's Homestead is beyond the scope of the amendment, it will be referred to City's Parks and Gardens Unit for consideration in future park planning and maintenance.
20	S	• Support the permanent heritage controls. • Submitter has a long background with the form City of South Barwon and City of Greater Geelong and approved previous subdivisions of the surrounding area in 1990 on the basis that the Claremont Homestead and immediate surrounding land was to be kept as a separate entity for part of it to be permanently preserved in some way. • Previous owner expressed desire to preserve the Claremont house and Norfolk Island Pine permanently due to their rare historic value to Waurn Ponds. • Claremont House is the only homestead in the collection of South Barwon that has survived. • Supports heritage management objective to retain the two northern most hipped-roof forms and removal of the later sunroom and reinstatement of the original veranda. • Future development guidelines are well drafted and for the balance of the site outside of the Claremont House and Norfolk Island Pine tree envelope. • Seeks further measure of protection as places of local significance by Heritage Victoria.	Support for permanent heritage overlay noted. Inclusion of the property in a permanent heritage overlay is recognition of the heritage significance of the site. The Design Guidelines promote the retention of part of the property with the homestead. The significance of the site has been assessed as of local significance and the Norfolk Island Pine is included as a tree for the purposes of the heritage overlay provisions. Support for the Design Guidelines is noted. The site has been determined to be of local significance. Inclusion of the site in the heritage overlay within the Planning Scheme is the appropriate place for recognition of this place of local significance. Heritage Victoria only includes places of state significance on its Register. The Heritage Council Registrations and Permits Review Committee formed the view in May 2020 that the case for inclusion on the Heritage

No.	Type	Summary of Submission	Theme / Response
			Victoria Register as a place of state significance or for an interim protection order was not sustained. The site was included in the heritage overlay on an interim basis by the Minister for Planning to give time for the City to consider and prepare a permanent heritage overlay.
21	S	• Do not wish for any changes to be made at the site. Purchased home in The Vineyard as it is a quiet area and wish for that to remain.	Refer to theme *Future development and use of the site*
22	S	• Interim heritage overlay should not have been necessary as the Claremont Homestead and Storage Shed place was identified as being of Regional Significance by the City of Greater Geelong Outer Areas Heritage Study Stage 2 1998-2000. • Heritage at risk and action only taken under threat of demolition. It is vital that the recommendations for the suburbs of Kardinia Ward are now urgently reviewed, particularly in Marshall where significant development is occurring. • Explanatory report should have referenced the Greater Geelong Heritage Strategy 2017-2021 and outstanding recommendations from the Outer Areas Heritage Study. • Clause 22.09 should include the complete City of Greater Geelong outer Areas Heritage Study Stage 2 by as a reference document. • Comments on the Design Guidelines Incorporate Plan January 2021, ▪ Permits need to be required for the construction of driveways and car parks (2.1), ▪ 3.5 external alterations to the rooflines should not be allowed ▪ 3.6 subdivision and redevelopment should not be allowed until an appropriate buffer is determined, ▪ Reducing the extent of the heritage overlay to an area marked in red on the guidelines will not protect the spatial	Support for permanent heritage overlay noted. Refer to theme *Design Guidelines Incorporated Document* The inclusion of the complete City of Greater Geelong Outer Areas Heritage Study Stage 2 as a reference document in the Planning Scheme will be a feature of a future amendment when the balance of the Study is implemented either directly or through updated heritage studies for the areas involved. The reference is not needed as part of this amendment as the most relevant and recent heritage assessment of the Claremont Homestead is being included as the appropriate reference document. The inclusion of the complete Stage 2 is not opposed per se, however, the inclusion of reference documents in the Planning Scheme need to be justified for decision making. With the balance of the area not yet included in the heritage overlay, there is no direct or explicit need for Stage 2 documents to referenced. Urgent additional heritage listings required for the suburbs of Kardinia Ward, such as Marshall where significant development is occurring is noted. The City has prioritised its heritage amendments and it is beyond the scope of this amendment to address.

No.	Type	Summary of Submission	Theme / Response
		setting of the house and outbuildings and heritage values of the property, ▪ The outbuilding is of primary significance and needs to be retained and treated in the same way as the Homestead and Norfolk Island Pine. It should be within the red zone and not the yellow zone, ▪ The apple orchard was removed in August 2020. An area to the west of the Homestead should be retained in the overlay and required to be re-planted with an apple species appropriate to the time the orchard was planted, ▪ An appropriate buffer needs to be determined and any subdivided land must be in blocks no smaller than the surrounding neighbourhood and buildings restricted to single storey, and ▪ Further public access to Baum Park, which was gifted to the public, should be created where possible.	Past Council decisions on implementing in its entirety the Outer Areas Heritage Study are not a matter that can be resolved by this amendment. The amendment proposes to extend the inclusion of the whole of the site in the heritage overlay – there is no proposal to reduce the overlay extent. 2.1 – permits for driveways etc are not exempt in the red zone (the area of highest significance) but are exempted elsewhere on site. 3.5 - The Guidelines seek to conserve the prominent twin hipped form over the northern half of the homestead and key northern and eastern facades. The western and southern facades are of lesser architectural significance, whilst the southern part is in poorer structural condition, and containing unserviceable kitchen and wet areas that will need to be upgraded for residential use - this results in a more flexible approach to alterations and additions being recommended for the southern part and the results of which should be barely if at all visible in the significant views of the homestead. 3.6 - The appropriate curtilage or buffer setting for Claremont Homestead is discussed in the theme *Design Guidelines Incorporated Document,* focussing on restricting development to the north and east of the homestead. There is no heritage benefit in preserving a larger area than ~1000-1500m^2 around the homestead; the farm setting that was once around the homestead has long gone and the future of the homestead is as an integral part of a residential area.

No.	Type	Summary of Submission	Theme / Response
			The large shed is of lesser significance than the homestead and is in an extremely poor and unsafe condition. It is unreasonable to mandate its retention given the amount of work and new building material that would be required to repair it, however if the owner has capacity to stabilise and reuse the shed that is not prevented by the guidelines and shall be encouraged. Whilst it existed the orchard contributed to the significance of the place, and the advice of the owners is that it contained many more fruit varieties than apples. The orchard trees were in an extremely poor health at the time they were removed. Heritage overlays cannot demand reinstatement of features that ceased to exist prior to the overlay's creation, e.g. the orchard, and even if the orchard had survived in a healthy state it would not necessarily have been of such significance as to demand its ongoing retention. The guidelines do not prevent the owners from planting similar fruit trees around the homestead. The creation of further public access to the site or to Baum Park is beyond the scope of this amendment.
23	S	• Supports the heritage overlay to retain and conserve the house, tree, gardens and shed. • Recently purchased house in adjoining street and prefers street to be maintained as no through roads and to be able to view the homestead from Kinsmead Street. • Wishes to see Norfolk Island Pine cared for and maintained and there is no development or disturbance to the tree roots. • It is great to live around the heritage homestead.	Support for permanent heritage overlay noted. Refer to theme *Future development and use of the site.* Refer to theme *Future access and traffic impacts.* The Norfolk Island Pine is included as a significant tree within the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay. The Design Guidelines provides a root protection zone to ensure any development in the vicinity does not cause damage to the Norfolk Island Pine.

No.	Type	Summary of Submission	Theme / Response
24	S	• Supports the heritage overlay. • Does not want to see demolition by neglect and to become the target of squatters and vandals. • Application of the heritage overlay to the house and Pine Tree and some subdivision into house blocks similar in size to those in Kinsmead Street and Delgany Mews will provide capital for ongoing maintenance and security of the Homestead.	Support for permanent heritage overlay noted. Refer to theme *Future development and use of the site.* Unfortunately, the homestead has not undergone any substantial renovations of maintenance since the early 1970s and this combined with the building techniques and materials from the 1850's has contributed to its significant deterioration. The landowners have advised that the site is already the subject of vandalism and theft, with police patrols occurring. The site is currently for sale and with it is anticipated that the building will be retained as part of a wider site development.
25	S	• Support the heritage overlay as the homestead and surrounds are important to Waurn Ponds and Geelong. • Maintain access to Baum Park from Kinsmead Street. • Retain Kinsmead Street as a no through road. • Heritage management objective 3.1-3.6 are supported providing development is limited and that Claremont Homestead has an unobstructed view. • Future subdivision outside the overlay to be in keeping with the area so that the ambience of Claremont Homestead can be maintained. • Appropriate redevelopment of the site could be a reminder of the history of Waurn Ponds and Geelong for future generations.	Support for permanent heritage overlay noted. Refer to theme *Future access and traffic impacts.* Refer to theme *Design Guidelines Incorporated Document.* The homestead site is privately owned and does not provide sanctioned access to Baum Park from Kinsmead Street. The amendment proposes a permanent heritage overlay supplemented by Design Guidelines to ensure that the significant features of the site are protected in any further development on the site. This does not include subdivision parameters and directions on providing public access. Support for heritage management objective 3.1-3.6 in the guidelines is noted. The Guidelines also seek to retain the area at the front or on the northern side of the Homestead containing the Norfolk Island Pine.

No.	Type	Summary of Submission	Theme / Response
			The Design Guidelines seek to provide appropriate development parameters whilst protecting areas of significance on the site. Application of the heritage overlay to the homestead itself acknowledges the history of the area.
26	S	• Supports the permanent heritage overlay as it will ensure the maintenance of neighbourhood character in future housing development on the land. • Objects to the allowance of two storey dwellings on the site as this will visually impact on the area and increase traffic in this quiet area of Waurn Ponds.	Support for permanent heritage overlay noted. Refer to theme *Future development and use of the site.* Refer to theme *Design Guidelines Incorporated Document.* The permanent heritage overlay is being implemented to recognise the heritage significance of the Claremont Homestead. It is not being implemented to achieve a specific neighbourhood character or housing outcome for the area.
27	S	• Agree with the permanent heritage overlay. • Homestead and tree are landmarks for Waurn Ponds and their loss would affect the character of the area. • Wish to see the Homestead renovated to its' former glory. • Opposed to two storey development on the site as they would affect their privacy, light and vista and create more traffic and congestion in the area. • Purchased in the area in 2003 as there were few unit sites. • Do not want to see over development of the site.	Support for permanent heritage overlay noted. Refer to theme *Future development and use of the site.* Refer to theme *Design Guidelines Incorporated Document.* Refer to theme *Future access and traffic impacts.* Renovation of the homestead is not a requirement of the heritage overlay and will be a private landowner decision. There are structural concerns for the homestead which need to be addressed before it can be occupied.
28	S	• Supports permanent heritage overlay to retain local history and reminder of the Baum family association with Waurn Ponds. • Seeks inclusion of the following to the Incorporated Document:	Support for permanent heritage overlay noted. Refer to theme *Future development and use of the site.*

No.	Type	Summary of Submission	Theme / Response
		○ Provision for pedestrian access to Baum Park from Delgany Mews, Kinsmead Street and Chardonnay Court. ○ Limit any subdivide blocks to be in keeping with the surrounding properties – no smaller than 700m2 on the north and west sides and no smaller than 450m2 on the east and west sides of the property. ○ Any additional subdivisions land at the south end of the property be limited to single storey dwellings to enable to the Homestead to be viewed from Baum Park (should pedestrian access be provided). ○ The homestead, gardens, tree and rear shed be situated on enough land to maintain its aesthetic significance. ○ Any demolition of the rear shed be supported by a qualified structural engineers report.	Refer to theme *Design Guidelines Incorporated Document.* Refer to theme *Future access and traffic impacts.* The Design Guidelines are intended to address the future development parameters for new development to ensure that it does not negatively impact on the heritage significance of the site. It is not a catch-all document about all future development needs of the site. Subdivision and traffic management will be considered by a future planning permit process. Changes to the Design Guidelines to include additional requirements on subdivision size and accessibility are not supported. The Design Guidelines support up to two storey development on land to the south and west of the Homestead in line with the recommendations of the Heritage Assessment. Maintenance of views to the homestead from Baum Park were not identified in the Assessment as being critical to the retention of the heritage values of the site. The aesthetic significance of the homestead and its surrounding gardens and tree is recognised in the red zone included in the Design Guidelines. This has been selected to ensure these valuable elements are retained together and is considered enough space for this purpose. The rear shed is in a very bad state and can be demolished. A structural engineering assessment is not required to verify this.
29	S	• Agrees with the permanent heritage overlay.	Support for permanent heritage overlay noted.

No.	Type	Summary of Submission	Theme / Response
		• Access to the site and number of units to be built are major issues. Roads leading into the site are narrow and car parking is already difficult in the street. • Use of Semillon and The Vineyard as entrances to the site will require the purchase of public land on the south side of Baum Park. • Disagrees with allowing two storey units to be built south of the Homestead as will increase the number of traffic and parking problems. • 30-40 Units will increase traffic to 45-50 cars. • Number of units needs to be reduced and controlled and no double storey development allowed.	Refer to theme *Future development and use of the site.* Refer to theme *Future access and traffic impacts.* Refer to theme *Design Guidelines Incorporated Document* The homestead has high ceilings with a steep hip roof; providing an overall height equivalent to a modern two-storey residential dwelling. Considering this, and the existence of two storey dwellings on adjoining properties already, it is appropriate to allow two storey development on the site.
30	S	• Full support to Council for decision to apply permanent heritage overlay.	Support for permanent heritage overlay noted.
31	S	• Supports the heritage overlay. • Former owner Mr Ken Baum used to say that he hopes they don't pull my old home or tree down.	Support for permanent heritage overlay noted.
32	S	• Pleased to see heritage listing. • Land around the homestead should not be over-developed, preferring single-storey family homes like the surrounding area. • Include a public walkway through the land from Kinsmead Street to Baum Park so it is accessible to residents. • Council needs to develop the land attached to other areas as it is currently being used as a dumping ground.	Support for permanent heritage overlay noted. Refer to theme *Future access and traffic impacts.* Refer to theme *Future development and use of the site.* Refer to theme *Design Guidelines Incorporated Document.*
33		• Confirms that the WATOC is the Registered Aboriginal Party for the subject site and its context. • Provides no comment on the amendment recognising that normal obligations under the Planning and Environment Act 1987 and	Submission noted.

No.	Type	Summary of Submission	Theme / Response
		the Aboriginal heritage Act 2006 will be respected and adhered to.	
34	O	Objects to the amendment: • *Structural integrity of the Homestead* – internally in very poor condition with structural cracks on load bearing walls, rotten floorboards and compromised walls and verandas. Master Builder advice is a total rebuild required. The Heritage Assessment states the Claremont Homestead is a representative example of the Victorian Georgian type in Greater Geelong and has similar integrity to other comparable dwellings of this type already included in heritage overlays. This statement was made without viewing the structural integrity of the inside of the house. • *Report inconsistencies regarding veranda* – the report identifies that the extent and concave form of the original return veranda is part of the fabric of significance however this was altered in the 1920's and the original wooden slats removed in the 1970's. • *Consultation and communication* – disappointingly consultation with the landowners did not take place early as recommended by the heritage assessment report, only occurring in March 2021. Notice about the amendment was addressed to the occupier of 12-16 Kinsmead Street but not to the current owners, yet rates notices are correctly mailed to the owners. No notification about the interim protection order, and this was brought to the City's attention by locals in response to the possible sale and demolition of the homestead. Landowner found out through local print media articles. • *Historical associations, attachments and use significance* – Family history undertaken by Jean Baum (submitter's mother) producing a family history book and extensive family tree. Four hundred people attended the Baum family reunion in 1975 and through them Claremont's history will live on. The social	Refer to theme *Is a permanent heritage overlay warranted?* Refer to theme *Building Condition.* Refer to theme *Consultation.* The submitter is correct that no on-site inspections took place as part of the heritage review in June 2020. The review document itself acknowledges this fact. The City has since commissioned a structural engineering assessment which finds considerable failings in the building and which will require significant replacement/restoration. The heritage significance of the homestead remains as per the criterion for assessing significance. Should the present condition limit the ability of Claremont to be conserved or developed in accordance with the Design Guidelines, then such limitations can be investigated and considered in the context of approving future works through the permit approval process. The submitter counters the position of some other points of submission that the outbuildings should be retained. The condition of the shed is very poor and was evident from the City's site inspection in March 2021. The Design Guidelines allow for this to be removed and submissions seeking its mandatory retention are not supported given the amount of work and new building material that would be required to repair it, however if the owner has capacity to stabilise and reuse it the shed that will is not prevented by the guidelines and shall be encouraged.

No.	Type	Summary of Submission	Theme / Response
		attachments raised in the supporting submissions do not take account of the state of the homestead. Whilst Ken Baum allowed neighbours to walk through the property as a short cut to Baum Park, the property is now vulnerable after his passing and the current Baum family actively discourage this practice with Keep Out signs. • *Baum Park gift* – the Baum family gifted a parcel of land to Council for use a park. The remaining property is not public land. Majority of submitters seem more concerned with losing their perceived entitlement to walk through the private property than with the heritage. Council has approved 3 subdivisions of Claremont over 30 years and had the park gifted. To now after 30 years have the house deemed as of significance is difficult. • *Security* – Break ins on at least 7 occasions, most recently on 13 March 2021. These have result in thousands of dollars of damage and stripping of copper wiring, smashed mirrors, broken glass panes and graffiti inside and outside. Police need to regularly patrol the area as the public know the house is unoccupied. • *Wishes of Ken Baum* – contrary to supporting submissions, the submitter has never heard of his desire to keep the house and tree beyond his life. If this was wanted, Ken Baum would have left the property in a trust in his will as had been done with a house in Lorne. • *Clause 21.06-5 Retain culturally significant places* – how can this be achieved with Claremont which requires a complete rebuild? It would be re-creation rather than conservation and then where is the historical significance? • *No on-site inspections* – No one from Authentic Heritage Services, the City or the National trust has been on site for an internal property inspection which impacts capacity to assess the integrity of the homestead.	The 1920s modifications to the verandah are part of the early significant evolution of the homestead; overall the verandah modifications have not detrimentally effected the architectural significance of the homestead – hence verandahs remain a significant and distinctive feature of the north and east facades. The history gathered and lived by the family is valuable historical information. Historical associations about a prominent family are a relevant criterion for determining the heritage significance of a place and inclusion within the heritage overlay. The two can complement each other. The land is privately owned and people have taken advantage and opportunity to access across/through the site without the permission of the landowners. A heritage overlay does not infer any public rights to access private land. Any access to the site in future would need to be considered as part of any future subdivision application and be at the discretion of the property owner. Security of the homestead has clearly been an issue whilst it has not been occupied. However, this does not impact on the heritage significance of the site which this amendment is seeking to permanent include in the heritage overlay. The wishes of Ken Baum are not a relevant consideration for determining the heritage significance of the property. They are only anecdotal comments in submissions and no weight is given to them. Retaining culturally significant places as required by Clause 21.05 is achieved through inclusion of the site in the heritage overlay. This does not prevent repairs or reinstatement of

No.	Type	Summary of Submission	Theme / Response
		• *Condition of outbuildings* – Objects to clauses 3.5 and 3.6 of the Design Guidelines. External alterations to the rooflines should not be allowed and subdivision and redevelopment not allowed until an appropriate buffer is determined. The shed is in extremely poor condition with unsafe floors, rotting wall linings and roofing blown away in the Waurn Ponds tornado. • *Fruit orchard* – Objects to the Apple Orchard statements. The fruit trees were in extremely poor condition with hollow trunks and limbs fallen off. The orchard was never just an apple orchard as other fruit varieties were over 60 years old including plums, cherries, apricots and peach trees. The 2019 crop was very small.	significant portions of buildings. It is reasonable to expect that old places will need ongoing maintenance and repair and that fabric will be updated and replaced. As outlined in the heritage review, the Claremont Homestead has associations with the crop farming and vine and fruit growing in Waurn Ponds and the Barrabool Hills, the area becoming synonymous for cultivating large quantities of wine and fruit in the 1850s when the homestead was constructed. The remnant orchard is a physical legacy of one of the enduring land uses from the 19th century. It is unfortunate that it has been removed but the photograph included with the submission show that the trees were in poor condition with rot and hollowed middles. The City does not support the need to reinstate the orchard.
35	O	Objects to the heritage overlay: • *Homestead condition* – the current condition of the homestead is very poor from the ground up. Only the bare minimum maintenance has been undertaken since the 1970's. Inspection by the City or heritage consultant would have revealed this condition. Master builder and trades have provided advice that there is little if any original material that could be reused and a complete rebuilding using new materials would be required, resulting in a reproduction building. • *Financial cost and restrictions* – the interim heritage overlay has affected the land value by approximately $500,000 based on real estate estimates and prospective purchaser offers. Rebuild costs and compliance with the heritage overlay would be hundreds of thousands of dollars. Remaining land around the homestead would be largely unusable for subdivision due to access and size restrictions.	Refer to theme *Is a permanent heritage overlay warranted?* Refer to theme *Building Condition.* Refer to theme *Financial Impact of the heritage overlay.* Refer to theme *Consultation.* Refer to theme *Future access and traffic impacts.* It is agreed that the Norfolk Island Pine is not indigenous to the area, but it is a landmark tree forming part of the heritage landscape of the site and makes a strong aesthetic contribution to the site and area. The Heritage Review of the site noted that the Norfolk Island Pine Tree has scientific significance as a remnant of an early rural homestead landscape in Greater Geelong and a local heritage landmark

No.	Type	Summary of Submission	Theme / Response
		The Baum family owners/inheritors should not be expected to bear the financial cost and personal cost of a place of little or no heritage value to the Geelong community. • *Inclusion of the Norfolk Pine and garden* – the Norfolk Pine is not indigenous to the area, it is large and old, and is not rare as many examples elsewhere. Whilst a landmark, it is not of any heritage value. The layout of Kinsmead Street suggests it was planned to go through it. The garden to the north of the homestead was primarily used as a pumpkin patch and has no heritage value. • *Future use of the property* – Restrictions of the heritage overlay will mean that approximately one third of the homestead will need to be rebuilt as a replica with the remaining southern attachment a modern dwelling. This does not provide any historical benefit for future generations. There has been no consideration for access or road planning. Restricting the proposed area to the centre of the property will make it difficult for practical use of the balance of the land. The truncation of Kinsmead Street, Delgany Mews and The Vineyard, suggests that they were to be linked somehow. The financial loss resulting from the heritage overlay and the development restrictions imposed outweigh any benefits that the heritage order has for the Geelong community. • *Motive for heritage listing and submitters* – The late Mr Baum allowed, even encouraged neighbours to walk through and use the property which seems to have fostered a sense of public ownership of the land. It is not – it is private property. Most submissions from neighbour's object to an increase in housing development, loss of access, increased traffic, changes to the character of the area rather than the preservation of the heritage of the site. This is considered the motive for the application for heritage listing – to prevent or highly restrict any development of the site. This will be subject to further Council decision and would be the appropriate time to consider such	on the property and immediate residential area. For these reasons, the proposed Incorporated Document identifies that the tree is to be retained with the homestead. In this context, the tree control in the Heritage Overlay is justified. During an on-site inspection by the City, the landowners pointed out scar on the tree caused by a lightning strike in the 1950s. It is important to be clear that that whilst the heritage overlay will trigger the need for a planning permit to remove the tree it doesn't mean the tree can't be removed or lopped if it demonstrated in the future that that the tree poses an immediate risk. The City has not undertaken an arborist assessment of the tree. The Heritage Overlay at Clause 43.01-1 states that a planning permit is required to: "Remove, destroy or lop a tree if the schedule to this overlay identifies the heritage place as one where tree controls apply. This does not apply: • To any action which is necessary to keep the whole or any part of a tree clear of an electric line provided the action is carried out in accordance with a code of practice prepared under Section 86 of the Electricity Safety Act 1998. • If the tree presents an immediate risk of personal injury or damage to property." The history gathered and lived by the family is valuable historical information. Historical associations about a prominent family are a relevant criterion for determining the heritage significance of a place and inclusion within the heritage overlay. The two can complement each other. A structural engineering assessment has been undertaken. This has been shared with and the City has discussed it with the landowner. Consideration of the submissions has been deferred from April to July 2021 to allow for this to take place.

No.	Type	Summary of Submission	Theme / Response
		concerns. Previous subdivision of the original Baum holding has benefitted the community through the creation of Baum Park. • *Process and lack of consultation* – Owners found out about the heritage overlay from newspaper article. Notification was not personally mailed to the owners but addressed to the Occupier at Claremont Homestead. Attempts by the Baum family to arrange on-site consultation over months were to no avail. Officers attended on site on 9 March after the permanent heritage overlay was proposed. Requests that when significant change is proposed, parties should be fully informed of the process and afforded full consultation. Not to do so does not treat landowners respectfully. • *Preservation of Baum family heritage* – The late Mrs. Jean Baum was dedicated to researching and recording the Baum family history in Waurn Ponds and Geelong. Their daughter holds all these records and artefacts in trust until the best means for display and conservation of these is determined. This historical record of the Baum family is more important than rebuilding a small portion of the original homestead, preserving a non-indigenous tree and front yard. Requests the amendment be withdrawn or withheld until proper inspection is carried out on the existing structure and consultation undertaken with the current owners before deciding to on whether to proceed.	
36	O	• Objects to the permanent heritage overlay. • Reliance upon heritage assessment which is not substantiated by external and internal inspection of the property to determine the condition of the buildings. • Lack of consultation from the Council about the heritage listing.	Refer to theme *Is a permanent heritage overlay warranted?* Refer to theme *Consultation.* Refer to theme *Building condition* – structural engineering assessment has been undertaken and consideration of the submissions has been deferred from April to July 2021.

No.	Type	Summary of Submission	Theme / Response
		• Seeks a structural report to determine the state of the building. Cost to be funded by Council. Decision to be deferred until an informed decision can be made. • No basis to most of the submissions as no one has been inside to view the building. National Trust submission includes inaccuracies. • Submitters supporting heritage overlay believing it will continue right of passage through the property are incorrect as property is for sale. Will only continue if these submitters purchase it. • Timeline of the amendment provided. • Photos of the structural condition of the external walls and the remnants of rotten tree stumps/trunks from the orchard.	Refer to theme *Future access and traffic impacts.* All submissions need to be considered. Many submissions are seeking matters beyond the scope of the amendment and heritage overlay to be addressed such as providing access across the site. These are responded to in the key themes of *Future access and traffic impacts* and *Future development and use of the site.*

2.10. Amendment C414GGEE - Proposed Rezoning of Former Rail Land, McCurdy Road, Herne Hill

Source: **City Planning & Economy**
Director: **Gareth Smith**

Purpose

1. To seek Council support for a submission to be made to the C414ggee Former Fyansford Cement Works Railway Line Advisory Committee for the site at 67B and 67C McCurdy Road, Herne Hill.

Background

2. VicTrack has requested the Minister for Planning to change the planning scheme by rezoning the land at 67B & 67C McCurdy Road, Herne Hill to facilitate the sale of part of the former Fyansford cement works railway line which was determined to be surplus to operational requirements and declared surplus on 27 September 2018.

3. The Amendment seeks to rezone the site from Public Use Zone 4 – Transport to Neighbourhood Residential Zone – Schedule 8, apply the Environmental Audit Overlay and the Design and Development Overlay – Schedule 14 to the land.

4. The Minister has referred Amendment C414ggee to the Government Land Advisory Committee, with submissions to be considered by the Advisory Committee. The Committee will provide independent advice to the Minister on relevant planning matters associated with the proposed rezoning and application of overlays. The City is not the planning authority for this Amendment.

5. The proposal is on public exhibition from 28 June to 6 August 2021. The City can make a formal submission about the Amendment within this time period following resolution of this report. An Advisory Committee hearing is scheduled in the week commencing 4 October 2021.

6. The site is a linear piece of land located on the eastern side of McCurdy Road, between Fraser Street to the south and extends towards Itkenston Street to the north. It is adjacent to Kevin Kirby Reserve in Herne Hill (see map in **Attachment 2**). The proposed Amendment is shown in **Attachment 3.**

Key Matters

7. A submission will be drafted, which generally supports the rezoning subject to future development issues being addressed including:

   7.1. Connections and access between the Gabrielle Blyth Memorial Walk and the subject land;

   7.2. Formalising the Walk alignment at the southern end near Hyland Street;

   7.3. Development interface to the Gabrielle Blyth Memorial Walk;

   7.4. Stormwater management measures to ensure the subject land integrates with the existing drainage system; and

7.5. A potential contribution to social housing.

8. Subject to Council endorsement, the City will present the issues raised in **Attachment 1** of this report to the Advisory Committee Hearing in October 2021.

RECOMMENDATION - Item 2.10

That Council:

1. Support in principle the proposed rezoning of surplus former railway land at 67B & 67C McCurdy Road, Herne Hill, subject to several matters being addressed as outlined in Attachment 2 to this report;

2. Lodge a formal submission generally as outlined in Attachment 1 to this report to the C414ggee Former Fyansford Cement Works Railway Line Advisory Committee; and

3. Officers appear at the C414ggee Former Fyansford Cement Works Railway Line Advisory Committee public hearing to present Council's submission.

AMENDED RESOLUTION - Item 2.10

Cr Kontelj moved, Cr Mansfield seconded -

That Council:

4. Support in principle the proposed rezoning of surplus former railway land at 67B & 67C McCurdy Road, Herne Hill, subject to several matters being addressed as outlined in Attachment 1 to this report, in particular maintaining public access and the continuation of the Gabrielle Blyth Memorial Walk access to the Kevin Kirby Reserve;

5. Lodge a formal submission generally as outlined in Attachment 1 to this report to the C414ggee Former Fyansford Cement Works Railway Line Advisory Committee; and

6. Officers appear at the C414ggee Former Fyansford Cement Works Railway Line Advisory Committee public hearing to present Council's submission.

Carried

Financial Sustainability

7. There are no financial implications to Council as a result of this report.

Community Engagement

8. This is a State Government process and a public exhibition period inviting submissions is being conducted from 28 June to close of business 6 August 2021. The City can make a formal submission about the Amendment within this time period following resolution of this report.

9. An Advisory Committee hearing is scheduled in the week commencing 4 October 2021.

Social Equity and Sustainability

10. The amendment supports the provision of housing growth and offers an opportunity for housing diversity within an existing urban area with potential for a social housing contribution.

11. The application of the DDO14 will ensure that the future development of the land will satisfactorily consider the sharing of views to regional landscape features.

12. The Amendment does not include any development control or guidance for protecting the interface with and the integrity of the Gabrielle Blyth Memorial Walk. Key concerns include ensuring that there is no access over the Walk in the northern end of the development site and the need to formalise the ultimate path alignment in the southern end and access to Hyland Street.

Relevant Law/Policy/Legal Implications

13. The Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS) at clause 21.06-2 has the objective to contained growth within identified locations across the municipality, to be achieved in part by the strategy of directing the majority of future housing needs to urban Geelong including through urban infill.

14. The MSS at clause 21.06-5 has the objective to facilitate infill development to increase its housing supply contribution to 50 percent by 2047. A key strategy to achieve this is to provide for incremental change in the Neighbourhood Residential Zone (schedule 8).

15. Further, the MSS seeks to ensure housing diversity is achieved in established communities through the implementation of the Housing Diversity Strategy and the delivery of a broad range of lot sizes and housing types (Clause 21.06-3).

16. The amendment supports these objectives by providing additional residential land within the existing urban extent of Geelong. The surplus land is of a size to enable a range of development typologies that can respond to the character of the surrounding area.

Alignment to Community Plan and Vision

17. This report aligns with Our Community Plan 2021-2025 strategic priority:
Sustainable growth and environment.

18. This report aligns with the Community led 30-year Vision, “Greater Geelong: A Clever and Creative Future” community aspiration:
Sustainable development that supports population growth and protects the natural environment.

Conflict of Interest

19. No officer involved in the preparation of this report declared a general or material conflict of interest.

Risk Assessment

20. The summary of the City’s position in Attachment 1 highlights the potential risks/issues associated with future development along the adjoining Gabrielle Blyth Memorial Walk.

Environmental Sustainability

21. The land may be of potential contamination risk and therefore the application of Environmental Audit Overlay will ensure land contamination measures are satisfactorily addressed prior to the use of the land for a sensitive purpose.

Attachments

1. Proposed submission to C414GGEE proposed amendment [**2.10.1** - 7 pages]
2. Proposed amendment subject area [**2.10.2** - 1 page]
3. Proposed Planning Scheme Amendment [**2.10.3** - 4 pages]

Background

1. The Minister for Planning has referred the request of the Victorian Rail Track (VicTrack) to rezone land in McCurdy Road Herne Hill to the Government Land Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee has prepared Amendment C414ggee.

2. The Amendment applies to the land identified as 67B & 67C McCurdy Road, Herne Hill. The land comprises part of the former Fyansford Cement Works railway line.

3. The amendment:

   3.1 Rezones the land from Public Use Zone – Schedule 4 (PUZ4) to Neighbourhood Residential Zone - Schedule 8 (NRZ8);

   3.2 Applies the Environmental Audit Overlay (EAO) to the land; and

   3.3 Applies Design and Development Overlay – Schedule 14 (DDO14) to the land.

4. The Victorian Government Landholding Policy and Guidelines (LHPG) requires Victorian Government departments and agencies to review and manage their land assets on an ongoing basis. Land no longer needed for a public purpose must be declared surplus to requirements and disposed of by sale.

5. The subject site has been deemed surplus to Victorian Government requirements.

6. The amendment is required to facilitate the sale of public land in accordance with the Victorian Government Land Transaction Policy and Guidelines (DELWP, 2016). The amendment will rezone the land to the most appropriate underlying non-public zone, being the Neighbourhood Residential Zone – Schedule 8 (NRZ8), which is consistent with the zoning of surrounding residential land.

Summary of the City's Position

7. The City recognises that the land is surplus to VicTrack's requirements and has not been used for railway purposes since the closure of the Fyansford Cement Works in 2001.

8. The City recognises that the existing zone cannot continue to apply to land that is not required for public use. The amendment has considered the most appropriate planning provisions that best reflect the characteristics and context of the land.

9. The City's settlement policies (Municipal Strategic Statement) seeks to direct a lot of future housing needs to urban Geelong including urban infill. A key objective for managing this urban consolidation is through facilitating infill development to increase its housing supply contribution to 50 per cent by 2047. One of the City's strategy for achieving this is through providing for incremental change in the Neighbourhood Residential Zone (Schedule 8) areas.

10. The proposed rezoning is consistent with these objectives and strategy. The amendment will provide a small area of additional residential land (approximately 1.9 hectares) within the existing urban extent of Geelong.

11. The proposed rezoning does not include a provision for social or affordable housing. The policy context for Geelong's Social Housing Plan 2021 to 2041 (Policy Context - Table 24) is underpinned by State Government's 'Homes for Victorians' commitment of identifying underutilised and surplus government owned land for disposal with a requirement to include a component of social and affordable housing.

12. This is consistent with policies in the Social Housing Plan by which future housing developments shall require a meaningful contribution for social and affordable housing where there is a demonstrated uplift in land value in a rezoning context.

13. Consistent with the objectives in the Social Housing Plan 2021 -2041, the City would like to pursue the following:

    13.1 A social housing needs assessment to determine the level of social housing contributions appropriate for the site at 67B & C McCurdy Rd, Herne Hill and to be within the context of Amendment C414GGEE.

    13.2 Covenant or Section 173 Agreement to be included to be guided by the findings of the social and affordable housing assessment.

14. Based on the environmental assessment of the site and the comments of the EPA, the City supports the application of the Environment Audit Overlay to the land to ensure that the condition of the land is suitable for any future sensitive uses such as residential.

15. The City supports the application of the Design and Development Overlay Schedule (DDO14) to the site. This is entirely consistent with the application of this overlay to all the surrounding NRZ8 land.

16. Relationship of this site to the surrounding Gabrielle Blyth Memorial Walk is of importance to the City's open space network. Shown on the following location plan.



17. The DDO14 is to be applied to protect views to important landscape features and applies to dwellings above 7.5m in height, its design objective is about ensuring that the siting, height and visual bulk of dwellings achieves a reasonable sharing of views between properties to significant landscape features.

18. The Amendment does not include any further development controls to address the relationship between this long, narrow site and the Gabrielle Blyth Memorial Walk along its eastern side.

19. The Planning Report by Auld Planning & Projects, January 2021 for VicTrack has concluded that a Development Plan Overlay or similar control is not required to address the future land use and development of the land as this can be managed effectively through the residential development provisions of the Planning Scheme (Clauses 55 and 56).

20. Addressing the retention of the existing bike path, the Report concludes that the majority of the bike path is either within the land already zoned NRZ8 or within Derby Road, and that only two small sections of the path are proposed to be rezoned at the northern and southern ends of the site.

21. Similarly, the Auld Planning Report considers that the retention of moderate or high arboriculture value trees can be managed through the existing residential provisions of the Scheme (again Clauses 55 and 56). The Report notes that two 'high' value trees are located close to the border of the site with Derby Road and that retention of these should be able to be accommodated within a future development.

22. Council has an adopted 10-year plan aimed at creating a fully connected network of shared trails across Greater Geelong. The Shared Trails Master Plan 2020 has set out a prioritised list for the building of new trails (network gaps), filling of missing links in existing trails (trails gaps) and upgrades to existing trails (trail deficiencies). The Gabrielle Blyth Memorial Walk fits into the trail deficiencies category (under a broader extent of the Tom McKean Trail) and needs upgrading to implement path markings along the existing road corridor.

23. The City recommends that the Advisory Committee considers the use of an overlay such as the Development Plan Overlay (DPO) or the Design and Development Overlay (DDO) to address the parameters for development and the maintenance of the integrity of the adjoining Gabrielle Blyth Memorial Walk. This is an important recreation and pathway link in the central/western part of the municipality.

24. Where public land is being rezoned and sold to private entity's, it is insecure for the City to have the relationship between this land and the Walk to be left to the subdivision process with no guiding principles or objectives for how adjoining development will be delivered.

25. Key issues that need to be resolved are:

    25.0 Development access in the northern portion of the area (west of Derby Road) shown in the following plan. The Gabrielle Blyth Memorial Walk is located within the western verge of Derby Road and the City will not support driveway crossings of the walk.



Access concerns across the Gabrielle Blyth Memorial Walk in red highlight area

25.1 The Gabrielle Blyth Walk alignment on McCurdy Road in association with development access and interface in the southern portion of the area as shown on the following aerial plan.



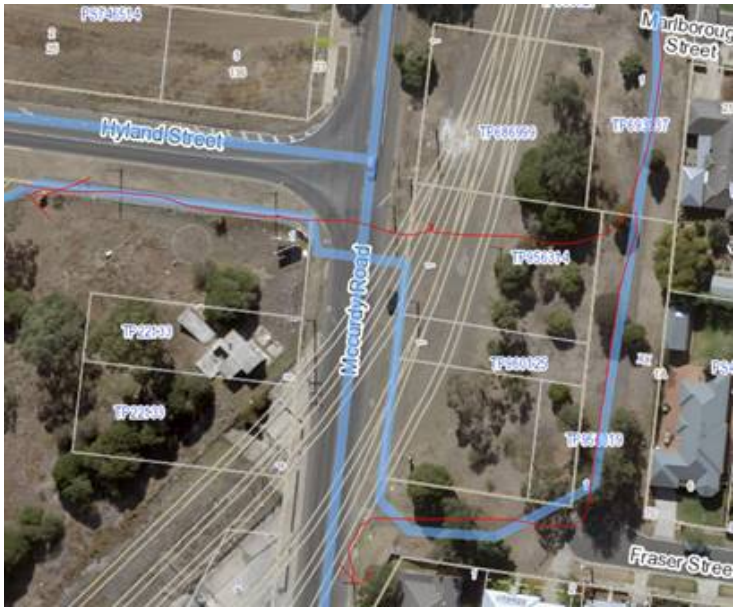
Walk alignment at the southern end of the development site

25.2 Development interface with Gabrielle Blyth Memorial Walk to the east in the southern area as shown in the following plan.



Interface issues at the southern end of the subject land

25.3 The ultimate path alignment and land areas needed requires confirmation. Direct access from the Gabrielle Blyth Memorial Walk to the shared path on Hyland St may be preferential with the inclusion of a walkway/shared path reserve than the current dog leg configuration. Interface to this walkway reserve will require consideration as shown on the following aerial plan.



Connection option to Hyland Street shared path

25.4 The nomination for retention and integration of high value trees within the development and the protection of trees in proximity beyond the development boundary. This will allow for existing high value trees to be retained for their both arboriculture value and their landscape/amenity contribution to new development on the site.

26. The City has identified these areas along the Gabrielle Blyth Memorial Walk that require development solutions. The City seeks direction from this Amendment to address these through specific planning provisions rather that under the whim of a private development as part of a subdivision planning permit application. A DDO or DPO could require a development plan to address these specific design issues as part of either a development plan or to be featured in any subdivision design proposal.

27. The City identifies that stormwater management needs careful consideration in the future development of the site.

28. A drainage system needs to allow for an appropriate transition from PUZ4 to NRZ8 as the permeable surface area will decrease with new development.

29. Consideration should be given to the limited existing stormwater drainage systems which can cause drainage issues and flooding during 1% AEP events.

30. Best practice guidelines for water quality and quantity should be met on-site and for water leaving the site.

31. As part of future development considerations, a detailed drainage assessment will be required. The site requires functional stormwater mitigation facilities which are designed to manage the impacts of the proposed development on stormwater discharges.

32. Future development design must ensure that the post-development flows cause no adverse impact on neighbouring properties.

33. Development needs to meet best practice environmental management plan (BPEMP) targets. Post-development scenarios should remove water pollutants to meet the BPENP's requirement.

34. The City recommends that these requirements could be incorporated into either a DPO or DDO overlay.



Subject land - Aerial view

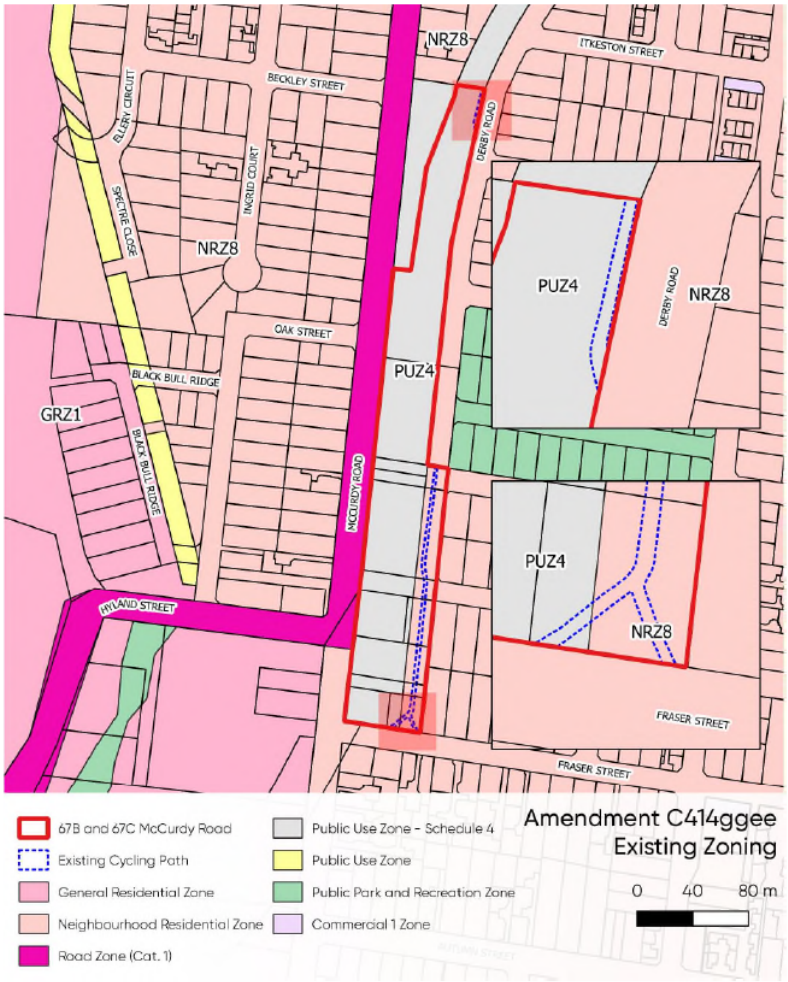


FIGURE 3: EXISTING ZONING

Zoning plan and existing cycling path location

Planning and Environment Act 1987

GREATER GEELONG PLANNING SCHEME

AMENDMENT C414ggee

INSTRUCTION SHEET

The planning authority for this amendment is the Minister for Planning.

The Greater Geelong Planning Scheme is amended as follows:

Planning Scheme Maps

The Planning Scheme Maps are amended by a total of 3 attached map sheets.

Zoning Maps

1. Amend Planning Scheme Map No. 36 in the manner shown on the 1 attached map marked "Greater Geelong Planning Scheme, Amendment C414ggee".

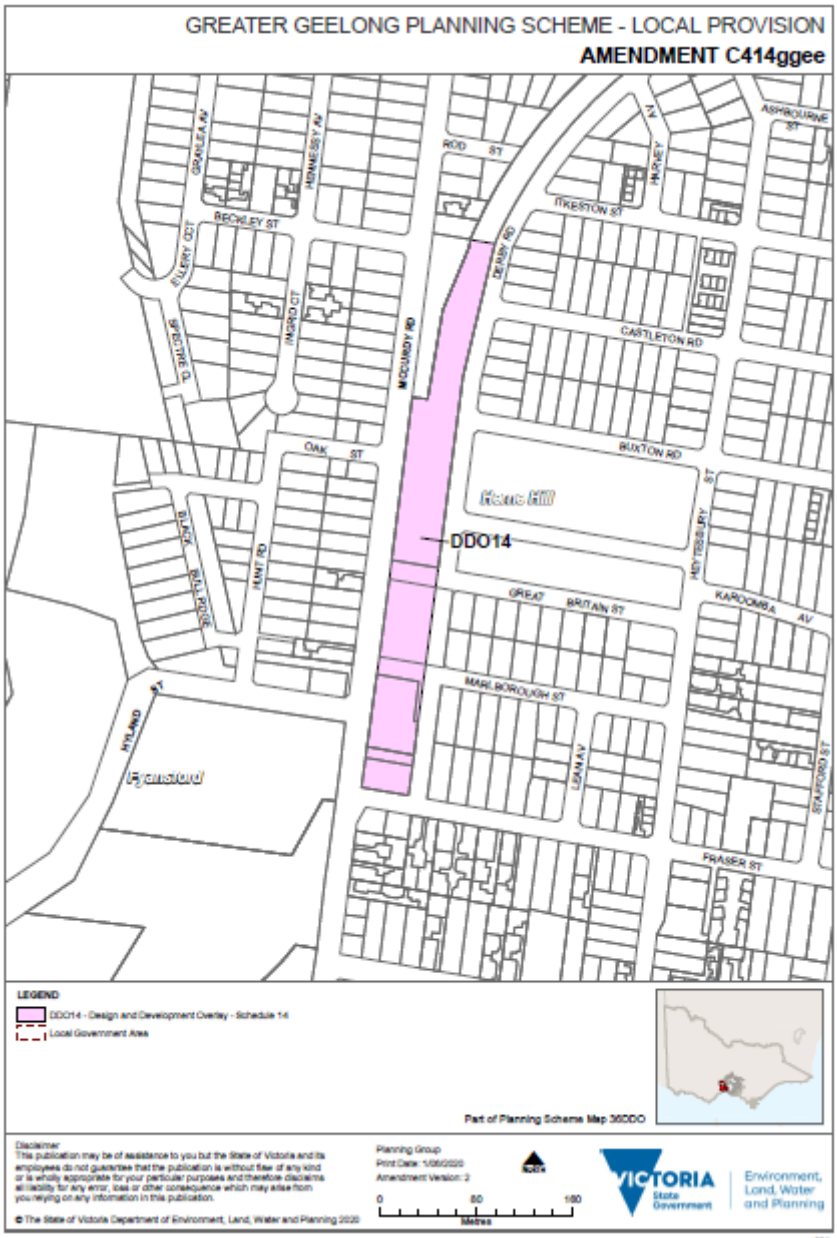
Overlay Maps

2. Amend Planning Scheme Map No. 36EAO in the manner shown on the 1 attached map marked "Greater Geelong Planning Scheme, Amendment C414ggee".

3. Amend Planning Scheme Map No. 36DDO14 in the manner shown on the 1 attached map marked "Greater Geelong Planning Scheme, Amendment C414ggee".

End of document


GREATER GEELONG PLANNING SCHEME - LOCAL PROVISION
AMENDMENT C414ggee
NRZ8
Ferne Hill
Fyansford
LEGEND
NRZ - Neighbourhood Residential Zone
Local Government Area
Part of Planning Scheme Map 36
Disclaimer
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Amendment Version: 3
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GREATER GEELONG PLANNING SCHEME - LOCAL PROVISION
AMENDMENT C414ggee
DDO14
Eastern Rd
Fyansford
LEGEND
DDO14 - Design and Development Overlay - Schedule 14
Local Government Area
Part of Planning Scheme Map 30DDO
Disclaimer
Planning Group
Print Date: 1/06/2020
Amendment Version: 2
0
80
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Metres
VICTORIA
State Government
Environment, Land, Water and Planning


GREATER GEELONG PLANNING SCHEME - LOCAL PROVISION
AMENDMENT C414ggee
EAO
Herne Hill
Eastern Park
GRANLEA AV
HOWARD AV
BECKLEY ST
ELLERY CCT
SPECTRE CL
INGRID CT
OAK ST
McGUIRDY RD
DEAN RD
ROD ST
ITKESTON ST
HURLEY
ASHBOURNE ST
CASTLETON RD
BUXTON RD
HOTTSBURY ST
GREAT BRITAIN ST
KAROOMBA AV
MARLBOROUGH ST
LEAH AV
BRAFORD ST
FRASER ST
HYLAND ST
HUNT RD
BLACK BALL ROAD
LEGEND
EAO - Environmental Audit Overlay
Local Government Area
Part of Planning Scheme Map 36EAO
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2.11. Road Naming - Unnamed Laneway Belmont to Bechervaise Lane, Belmont

Source: **Customer & Corporate Services**
Director: **Michael Dugina**

Purpose

8. To seek approval to name an unnamed sealed laneway in Belmont to Bechervaise Lane, Belmont.

Background

9. Submissions were received during the advertising period of the proposed naming of Inspiration Lane requesting a laneway be named in honour of Mr Bechervaise.

10. There are 62 properties that have rear access off this laneway.

11. Mr John Bechervaise resided at 185 Roslyn Road, Belmont which is in close proximity to this laneway, and other laneway's named in honour of explorers.

12. Mr Bechervaise was an Australian writer, photographer, artist and Antarctic explorer.

Key Matters

13. Letters and surveys have been sent to 62 affected property owners and residents advising them of the proposed name for the unnamed laneway.

7. Fifteen survey responses were received from property owners and residents, with thirteen in favour and two against. These are summarised as follows:

    7.1. Ten survey responses were in favour of naming the laneway "Bechervaise Lane";

    7.2. One property owner preferred to name laneway "The Lane". This name, as per the Naming Rules, is unable to be used due to "The" being a prefix;

    7.3. One property owner requested Reynolds Lane as it is an extension of Reynolds Road. This name is unable to be used as it would be classed as duplication within the Naming Rules;

    7.4. Fifty affected property owners did not respond to the survey with a nonresponse deemed in favour of renaming as per The Naming Rules; and

    7.5. Three further submissions, in favour of the proposed naming were received from non-affected property owners.

14. An indigenous name was not chosen for this naming due to the historical significance of Mr Bechervaise residing in close proximity, and the current theme of road names in this area.

15. Geographic Names Victoria require a formal proposal to name the unnamed laneway and be approved by council prior to gazettal and registration.

RESOLUTION - Item 2.11

Cr Nelson moved, Cr Harwood seconded -

That Council:

1. **Approve the naming of the unnamed laneway to Bechervaise Lane, Belmont; and**

2. **Note that once approved the naming will be submitted to the Office of Geographical Names for official registration.**

Carried

Financial Sustainability

16. The approximate cost to the City is $690. This includes signage, notification to adjoining property owners and residents and notification to authorities.

Community Engagement

17. Correspondence including a survey were sent to affected and adjoining property owners and residents.

18. An advertisement was placed in City News of the Geelong Advertiser on 1 May 2021.

19. Details were placed in the “Have Your Say” section of the Geelong Australia website open for a 30-day submission period.

Social Equity and Sustainability

20. The City has a responsibility to the community to ensure that all properties can be identified in a clear and logical manner for emergency services and visitors to the area.

Relevant Law/Policy/Legal Implications

21. The *Local Government Act 1989* - schedule 10, The *Geographical Place Names Act 1998* and the *Naming Rules for Places in Victoria* have been followed and met.

22. The City is required to use the *Naming Rules for Places in Victoria* when naming roads, features and localities. The rules outline the consultation process for naming, renaming or changing the boundaries of roads, features and localities in Victoria. The naming rules allow for members of the community to develop and make a naming proposal to the City.

Alignment to Community Plan and Vision

23. This report aligns with Our Community Plan 2021-2025 strategic priority:
Healthy, caring and inclusive community.

24. This report aligns with the Community led 30-year Vision, “Greater Geelong: A Clever and Creative Future” community aspiration:
People feel safe wherever they are.

Conflict of Interest

25. No officer involved in the preparation of this report declared a general or material conflict of interest.

Risk Assessment

26. In an emergency, the City’s proposal to name this laneway will minimise the risk of emergency services being able to locate the emergency in a timely manner.

27. Failure to name this laneway may cause a risk to public safety.

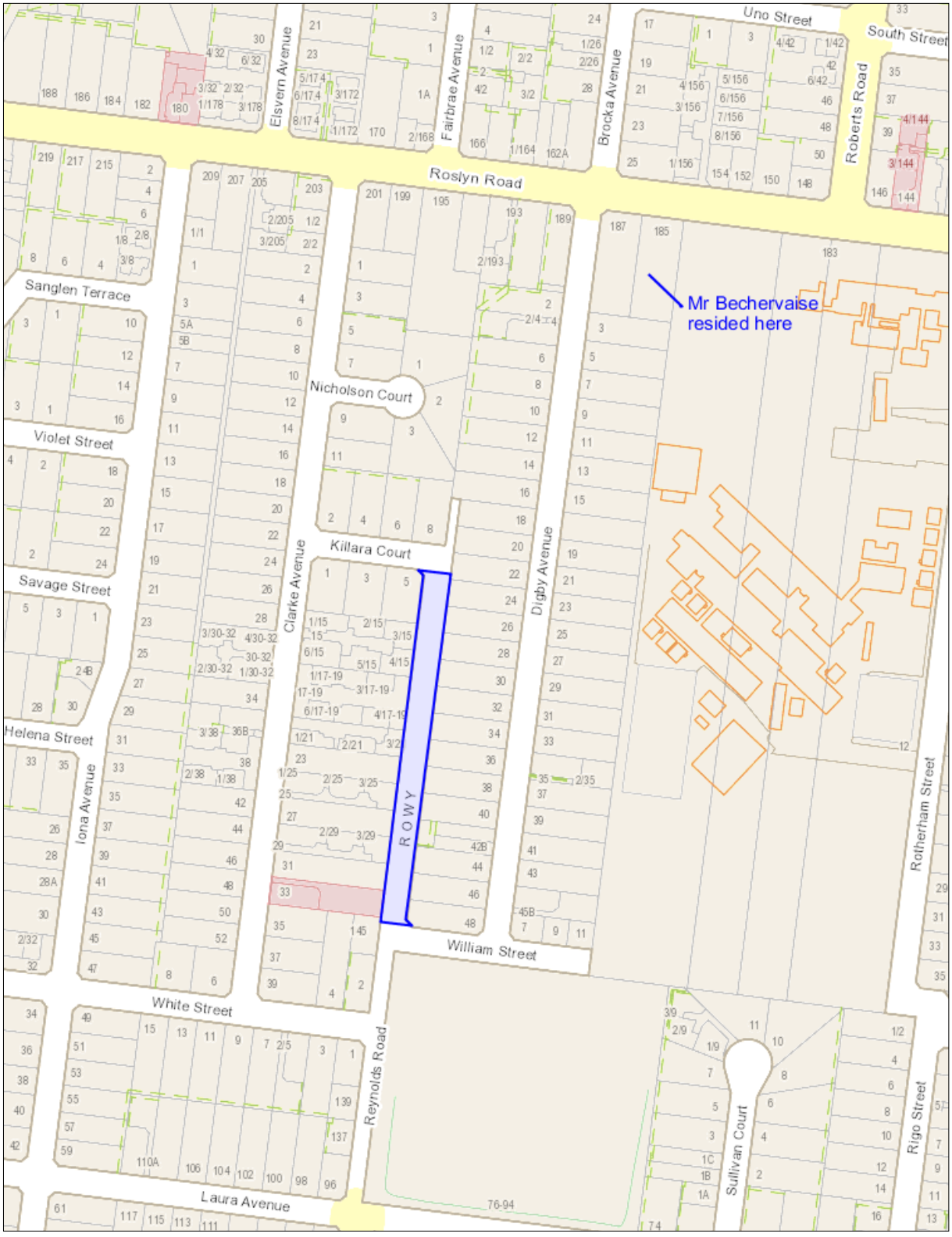
Environmental Sustainability

28. There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

Attachments

1. Proposed Laneway Locality Plan [**2.11.1** - 1 page]

Locality Plan



Proposed laneway to be named Bechervaise Lane

2.12. Tender T2100076 - Leisurelink 50m Pool Renewal

Source: **Customer & Corporate Services**
Director: **Michael Dugina**

Purpose

1. To award Contract C2100076 for the Leisurelink 50m Pool Renewal – Construction to AW Nicholson Pty Ltd (ABN 14 118 404 381).

Background

2. In 2010 the Leisurelink facility in Waurn Ponds opened. The facility included a 50-metre pool constructed from a shell that was originally installed at Melbourne's Rod Laver Arena for the 2007 FINA World Aquatics Championships. Recent reports have identified that the pool shell is reaching the end of its useable life and now must be replaced.

3. The works will demolish the existing pool and replace with a tiled concrete pool.

Key Matters

4. The Procurement Services unit administered an open tender process on behalf of Capital Projects for the reconstruction of the 50-metre swimming pool at Leisurelink, upgrade to the slide, winter garden pumps and water supply.

5. The submissions were evaluated in accordance with the processes detailed in the City's *'Procurement and Contracts Manual'.*

6. Based on the tenderers project experience, expertise, value for money and project risks the Tender Evaluation Panel (TEP) recommend that AW Nicholson Pty Ltd be awarded the contract for the provision of these works.

7. Subject to Council awarding the Contract, the project will commence 2 August 2021.

8. The lump sum price for the delivery of the project is $4,708,099 excluding GST.

RESOLUTION - Item 2.12

Cr Nelson moved, Cr Harwood seconded -

That Council:

1. **Award Contract C2100076 to AW Nicholson Pty Ltd for the Leisurelink 50m Pool Renewal Construction (ABN 14 118 404 381) for the tendered lump sum price of $4,708,099.00 excluding GST; and**
2. **Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to execute Contract No. C2100076 and any other documents required by or to give effect to the terms of the Contract on behalf of Council.**

Carried

Financial Sustainability

9. The project has come in within the allocated budget.

10. The project is being fully funded by the City of Greater Geelong.

Community Engagement

11. No community engagement was held for this project as the works are being completed due to safety issues with the current pool.

12. Communication with the public has commenced to let the users know the pool, slides and winter garden will be closed for the duration of works.

13. The Kardinia outside swimming pool will be open for longer than usual to accommodate the needs of the public during these works.

Social Equity and Sustainability

14. As per the aquatic facility strategy the replacement of the pool will ensure equitable access to aquatic facilities across the municipality is continued.

Relevant Law/Policy/Legal Implications

15. This tender was advertised in accordance with the requirements of section 186 of the *Local Government Act 1989* and the tender process has been conducted in accordance with the City's Procurement Policy.

Alignment to Community Plan and Vision

16. This report aligns with Our Community Plan 2021-2025 strategic priority:
High-performing council and organisation.

17. This report aligns with the Community led 30-year Vision, "Greater Geelong: A Clever and Creative Future" community aspiration:
An inclusive, diverse, healthy and socially connected community.

Conflict of Interest

18. No officer involved in the preparation of this report declared a general or material conflict of interest.

Risk Assessment

19. The tender evaluation process involved the assessment of Work, Health and Safety policies, procedures and risk assessment documents.

Environmental Sustainability

20. Any environmental implications associated with this contract will arise from the execution of the works. It is considered that these are the responsibility of the contractor and will be managed through the contract documentation.

Tender Details

Contract Details

21. Contract C2100076 Leisurelink 50m Pool Renewal Construction.

Invitation to Tender

22. The City issued an open tender T2100076, closing 2pm Wednesday 2 June 2021, seeking to appoint a suitably qualified and experienced contractor to undertake works associated with the Leisurelink 50m Pool Renewal Construction project.

Table 1 Invitations to Tender

Medium	Date Advertised
Geelong Advertiser	Saturday 1 May 2021
eProcure	Saturday 1 May 2021

Tender Evaluation Panel

23. The Tender Evaluation Panel comprised the following staff and external advisors:

Table 2 Tender Evaluation Panel

Position Title	Panel role
Procurement Services Officer	Chair
Manager Capital Works	Member
Project Manager, Capital Works	Member
Facilities Operations Coordinator, Leisure & Recreation Services	Member
External Probity Advisor	Advice
Quantity Surveyor	Advice
Project Architect	Advice
Project Architect	Advice

Tender Submissions

24. Tenderers had to meet the following mandatory criteria:

24.1. Attend mandatory site briefing;

24.2. Must have completed a similar aquatic project within the past 3 years; and

24.3. Must have completed a project with a value over $5 million in the past 5 years.

Table 3 Tender Submissions Received

Tender		Conforming tender
A	A W Nicholson Pty Ltd	Yes
B	Tender B	Yes
C	Tender C	No
D	Tender D	No

Tender Evaluation

25. The Evaluation Panel used the following qualitative criteria (in order of weighting) to assess the submissions:

Table 4 Comparative Criteria Weighting

Comparative Criteria	Weighting %
Economic & Local Content contribution (mandatory)	10%
Organisation Capability and Experience	20%
Proposed Team Experience	20%
OHS and Risk Management	20%
Quality Management	5%
Methodology and Project Plan	25%

Tender Evaluation Scores

26. The tender was evaluated by the evaluation panel in a two staged process:

26.1. Qualitative assessment of a weighted score totalling 100%; and

26.2. Evaluation of price against weighted score:
VFM = Tendered Price ÷ Weighted Score (lowest VFM Score = preferred supplier).

Table 5 Tender Evaluation Scores

Rank		Score
2	A W Nicholson Pty Ltd	61.88
1	Tender B	74.88
	Tender C	0 Non-Compliant
	Tender D	0 Non-Compliant

Table 6 Tender Value for Money Scores

Rank		Score
2	A W Nicholson Pty Ltd	$76,084
1	Tender B	$76,050

Post Tender Contact

27. A number of clarifications were sought from both A W Nicholson and Tender B regarding confirmation of timeframes, contractors, suppliers and costs.

28. The submission from A W Nicholson Pty Ltd allows for the winter garden to be open to the public by the September school holidays.

29. The submission from A W Nicholson Pty Ltd allows for the 50m Pool to be open mid-2022.

30. The submission from A W Nicholson Pty Ltd agrees to comply with the terms and conditions of the Contract supplied by the City with only minor changes to dates requested.

31. The submission from A W Nicholson confirmed acceptably experienced sub-contractors.

32. The submission from A W Nicholson confirmed the tendered price under the allocated budget.

33. Tender B, while having a higher qualitative score, and slightly higher Value for Money score were not able to confirm the ability to meet the City's required timelines and while being a very experienced and qualified company the risks associated with the delayed construction completion dates, coupled with the higher price led the Tender Evaluation Panel to recommend A W Nicholson for this project.

Probity

34. A Probity Report was sought and provided by RSM Australia Pty Ltd. No probity issues were identified.

2.13. Tender T2100079 - Infringement Administration

Source: **Customer & Corporate Services**
Director: **Michael Dugina**

Purpose

1. To award Contract C2100079: Infringement Administration to DCA Technologies Pty Ltd (ABN 73 075 154 755).

Background

2. The current contract is due to expire on 31 July 2021.

3. To facilitate the provision of infringement administration services, Procurement Services undertook an open (public) tender on behalf of Health and Local Laws.

4. The annual budget allocated for this contract is $450,000.00 (ex. GST).

Key Matters

5. Procurement Services managed an open tender process seeking to appoint a suitably qualified and experienced vendors to provide infringement administration services.

6. The submissions were evaluated in accordance with the processes detailed in the City's 'Procurement and Contracts Manual'.

7. Based on the tenderer's experience, expertise and value for money, the Tender Evaluation Panel (TEP) recommend that DCA Technologies Pty Ltd (ABN 73 075 154 755) be awarded the contract for the provision of the above services.

8. Subject to awarding the contract, the contract will commence on 1 August 2020, for an initial 3-year term, with the option of 2 x 1-year extensions as sole discretion of the City.

9. The estimated cost across the maximum 5-year term of the contract for the delivery of the services is $2,250,000.00 (excl. GST).

RESOLUTION - Item 2.13

Cr Sullivan moved, Cr Nelson seconded -

That Council:

1. **Award Contract C2100079: Infringement Administration to DCA Technologies Pty Ltd (ABN 73 075 154 755) on a tendered schedule of rates basis (excl. GST); and**

2. **Authorise the Chief Executive Officer to execute Contract No. C2100079 and any other documents required by or to give effect to the terms of the Contract on behalf of Council.**

Carried

Financial Sustainability

10. The current budget allocation for infringement administration services is estimated at $450,000 per annum (ex-GST).

Community Engagement

11. No community engagement was undertaken.

Social Equity and Sustainability

12. The recommended tenderer provides the option for a customer to undertake a payment plan conducive to their financial situation and provides options regarding access to the National Relay Service for customers if required.

Relevant Law/Policy/Legal Implications

13. This tender was publicly tendered in accordance with the requirements of section 186 of the *Local Government Act 1989* and the tender process has been conducted in accordance with Council's Procurement Policy.

14. Confidential information contained in this Council Report will be managed in accordance with section 89(2) of the *Local Government Act 1989*, as the information relates to contractual matters and premature disclosure of the information could be prejudicial to the interests of Council or other persons.

Alignment to Community Plan and Vision

15. This report aligns with Our Community Plan 2021-2025 strategic priority:
High-performing council and organisation.

16. This report aligns with the Community led 30-year Vision, "Greater Geelong: A Clever and Creative Future" community aspiration:
People feel safe wherever they are.

Conflict of Interest

17. No officer involved in the preparation of this report declared a general or material conflict of interest.

Risk Assessment

18. The tender evaluation process involved the assessment of Work, Health and Safety policies, procedures and risk assessment documents. Any other risks associated with the acceptance of this tender will be managed through the contract conditions.

Environmental Sustainability

19. Any environmental implications associated with this contract provision are the responsibility of the Contractor and will be managed through the contract documentation.

Tender Details

Contract Details

20. Contract C2100079 Infringement Administration.

Invitation to Tender

21. The City issued Tender T2100079, closing 2:00pm Wednesday 2 June 2021, seeking to appoint a vendor to provide infringement administration services to the City.

Table 1 Invitations to Tender

Medium	Date Advertised
Geelong Advertiser	Saturday 1 May 2021
City of Greater Geelong website - eProcure	Saturday 1 May 2021

Tender Evaluation Panel

22. The Tender Evaluation Panel (TEP) comprised the following staff:

Table 2 Tender Evaluation Panel

Position Title	Panel role
Senior Procurement Specialist	Chair
Manager Health & Local Laws	Member
Coordinator Amenity Protection	Member
Finance Business Partner	Member

Tender Submissions

23. At tender close the City received 1 tender submission:

Table 3 Tender Submissions Received

Tender		Conforming tender
A	DCA Technologies Pty Ltd	Yes

Tender Evaluation

24. The TEP used the following qualitative criteria (in order of weighting) to assess the submissions:

Table 4 Comparative Criteria Weighting

Comparative Criteria	Weighting %
Relevant Experience	30
Implementation / Delivery Capability	30
Economic & Local Content contribution	10
Clever and Creative (Innovation)	10

Customer service	10
Quality Management	5
Risk Management	5

Tender Evaluation Scores

25. At the conclusion of the qualitative evaluation the single submission was deemed and capable of providing services to the City.

Table 5 Tender Evaluation Scores

Tender		**Rank**
A	DCA Technologies Pty Ltd	1

Post Tender Contact

26. The proposed contract was negotiated between the City and DCA Technologies Pty Ltd as part of the tender evaluation process and mutual terms agreed to prior to the recommendation to award the contract.

Probity

27. No probity issues were identified.

2.14. Proposed Lease of Retail and Office Spaces at Wurriki Nyal, 137-149 Mercer Street Geelong - Civic Precinct

Source: **Customer & Corporate Services**
Director: **Michael Dugina**

Purpose

1. To provide Council with an update on the Community engagement process and to seek recommendation to undertake market testing to find suitable tenants for the lettable spaces for retail and office uses within the Civic Precinct at 137-149 Mercer Street, Geelong (Wurriki Nyal).

Background

2. Community engagement was undertaken in accordance with the Council resolution of 27 April 2021, section 223 of the *Local Government Act 1989* and the *City of Greater Geelong Community Engagement Policy*.

3. There are three retail/commercial spaces (commercial spaces) and one café space (café space) to be constructed at Wurriki Nyal as part of the project:

   3.1. Space 1 comprises approximately 96m²;

   3.2. Space 2 comprises approximately 53m²;

   3.3. Space 3 comprises approximately 25m²; and

   3.4. Space 4 (Café) comprises approximately 150m².

4. Within the City office building of Wurriki Nyal, it is proposed that level 2 comprising approximately 2,205m2, may be leased for office accommodation (Office Space) and that the State and Federal Government tenancies may complement the City's occupation.

3. The rental value of the spaces is not yet known, and market valuations would be undertaken for each space which would also consider any commercial terms relevant to a proposed lease.

4. It is anticipated the building will be available for access in April / May 2022 to commence fitout, with the project scheduled for completion by 3 June 2022.

Key Matters

5. Community engagement was undertaken and no submissions were received.

6. The City proposes to first test the market and invite submissions seeking responses for the use of these lettable spaces to compliment Wurriki Nyal.

7. The City may choose to engage agents / brokers with a national / global market presence, to attract and field applications for the commercial spaces, café space and office space.

8. The commercial and café spaces are proposed to be offered as a vacant shell, which would enable a tenant to undertake the fitout.

9. It is anticipated long-term leases will be sought, to offset the capital contribution required by the tenants and for security of tenure for the lettable spaces.

RESOLUTION - Item 2.14

Cr Murrihy moved, Cr Sullivan seconded -

That Council:

1. **Approve the market testing and search for suitable tenants of lettable spaces within Wurriki Nyal, 137-149 Mercer Street, Geelong 3220, Certificate of Title Volume 11160 Folio 008;**
2. **Note the outcome of the section 223 process and the community engagement process; and**
3. **Authorise the lease documents to be signed under delegation.**

Carried

Financial Sustainability

10. Leasing the lettable spaces within Wurriki Nyal will provide financial income to the City and will contribute to the economic benefits within the CBD be activating office space and retail spaces.

11. Market valuations will be obtained to ensure appropriate commercial terms are included in any leases.

Community Engagement

12. Community engagement was completed in compliance with both the *Local Government Act 1989* and *Local Government Act 2020,* due to the staged repeal of the *Local Government Act 1989* provisions and the new *Local Government Act 2020* requirements.

13. This provided an opportunity for the community to provide its feedback to Council on the proposal.

14. The market testing process for potential tenants and uses of the retail spaces affords further engagement.

Social Equity and Sustainability

15. There are no adverse social equity issues created by the recommendation to enter leases of the lettable spaces within Wurriki Nyal.

Relevant Law/Policy/Legal Implications

16. The Council complied with sections 190 and 223, *Local Government Act 1989* prior to 1 July 2021 by giving notice of the proposed leases to inform decision making on whether to resolve to lease the lettable spaces.

17. As at 1 July 2020 section 190 *Local Government Act 1989* was repealed and section 223 no longer applies, with section 15 of the *Local Government Act 2020* now the sections governing the proposed lease of land.

18. To comply with this in the transitional period, the City complied with both Acts by giving public notices and engaging in accordance with its *Community Engagement Policy*.

Alignment to Community Plan and Vision

19. This report aligns with Our Community Plan 2021-2025 strategic priority:
    High-performing council and organisation.

20. This report aligns with the Community led 30-year Vision, “Greater Geelong: A Clever and Creative Future” community aspiration:
    Sustainable development that supports population growth and protects the natural environment.

Conflict of Interest

21. No officer involved in the preparation of this report declared a general or material conflict of interest.

Risk Assessment

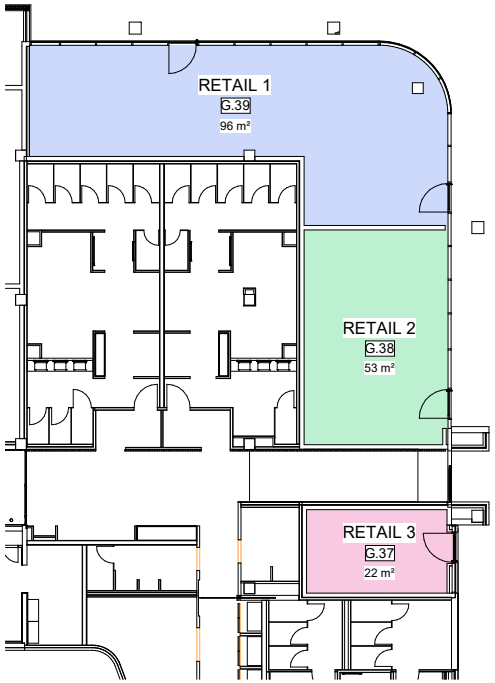
22. Wurriki Nyal development project addressed risk management; however, each lease proposal will be considered as associated risks to ensure they are mitigated or managed.

Environmental Sustainability

23. There are no environmental implications to this proposal, however environmental impacts of the responses received from the market testing process for the retail spaces may be further considered in assessing the submissions.

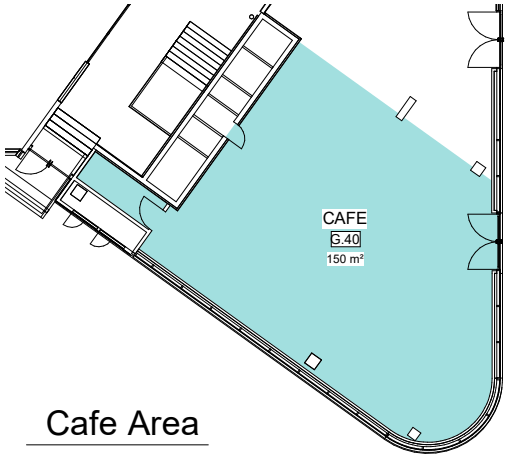
Attachments

1. CIVIC ACCOMMODATION GROUND FLOOR [**2.14.1** - 1 page]
2. CIVIC ACCOMMODATION LEVEL TWO [**2.14.2** - 1 page]



North East Area

1 : 200



Cafe Area

1 : 200

By Occupancy Legend

- CAFE
- RETAIL 1
- RETAIL 2
- RETAIL 3



Key Plan

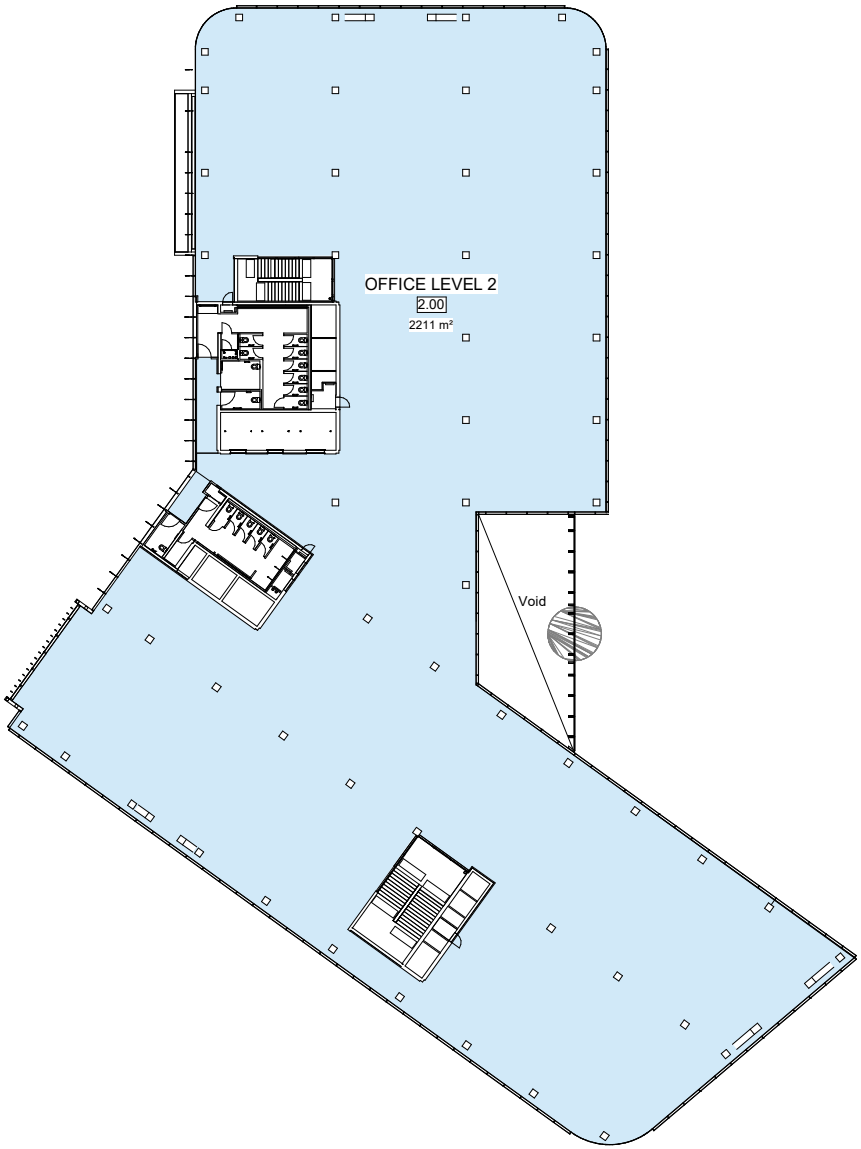
1 : 500

Disclaimer Note:

- Any electronic CAD data or PDF information issued, is to be used for the purpose of communication only. The recipient shall be responsible for any risk or consequence whatsoever arising from the use of these files by third parties.
- City of Greater Geelong cannot guarantee the accuracy and detail of these drawings. The user is to confirm all existing conditions before proceeding with any works or alterations.

Project / Building: CIVIC ACCOMMODATION 137-149 Mercer Street Geelong	CITY OF GREATER GEELONG
Drawing Title: GROUND FLOOR LEASING PLAN	CORPORATE STRATEGY & PROPERTY MANAGEMENT
Original Sheet Size: A3 | Scale: As indicated	Latest Update: 03/06/2021 | Building ID: ####
	Drawn: vsemjaniv | Sheet: LP01

Ph: 03 5272 4320
Fax: 03 5272 4322
38 Brougham Street,
Geelong, VIC, 3220



By Occupancy Legend

OFFICE LEVEL 2

LEVEL 2

1 : 350

Disclaimer Note:

- Any electronic CAD data or PDF information issued, is to be used for the purpose of communication only. The recipient shall be responsible for any risk or consequence whatsoever arising from the use of these files by third parties.
- City of Greater Geelong cannot guarantee the accuracy and detail of these drawings. The user is to confirm all existing conditions before proceeding with any works or alterations.

Project / Building: CIVIC ACCOMMODATION 137-149 Mercer Street Geelong	CITY OF GREATER GEELONG CORPORATE STRATEGY & PROPERTY MANAGEMENT Ph: 03 5272 4320 Fax: 03 5272 4322 38 Brougham Street, Geelong, VIC, 3220
Drawing Title: LEVEL 2 LEASING PLAN	Latest Update: 03/06/2021 Building ID: ####
Original Sheet Size: A3 Scale: 1 : 350	Drawn: VSEMJANIV Sheet: LP02

2.15. Proposed Lease to Telstra Corporation Limited - Mt Anakie 2392A Ballan Road, Anakie Vic 3213

Source: **Customer & Corporate Services**
Director: **Michael Dugina**

Purpose

1. To seek Council approval to undertake community engagement in accordance with section 115(4) of the *Local Government Act 2020* and Council's community engagement policy for the intention to enter into a 21-year lease with Telstra Corporation Limited (Telstra) for the site located at Mt Anakie, Crown Allotment 86D, 2392A Ballan Road, Anakie VIC 3213 as shown attached.

Background

2. Telstra has been in occupation at Mt Anakie pre 1995 when the Greater Geelong City Council was appointed Committee of Management control by the then Minister for Environment and Conservation.

3. The existing lease with Telstra at Mt Anakie expired 21 February 2021 and is in overholding.

4. The Telstra leased area is 1,394m2 of land at the top of Mt Anakie. Inside the Leased Area is a brick equipment building and a telecommunication tower, refer to the diagram attached.

Key Matters

5. To ensure continued tenure and management of the site, it is proposed that a new lease be granted to Telstra, which will comply with Section 17D of the *Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978.*

6. In line with State Government policy and the *Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978*, a 21-year lease is recommended.

7. Council must comply with section 115 of the *Local Government Act 2020* which requires the Council to undertake a community engagement process in accordance with the Council's community engagement policy before entering into the lease**.**

RESOLUTION - Item 2.15

Cr Aitken moved, Cr Grzybek seconded -

That Council:

1. **Approve community engagement be undertaken in accordance with the City's community engagement policy of the City's intention to enter into a lease with Telstra Corporation Limited for a maximum term of 21-years for the Leased Area at 2392A Ballan Road, Anakie VIC 3213;**

2. **Invite submissions by any person in relation to the proposed lease and that if submissions are received and wish to be heard, convene a Submissions Review Panel to hear and report to Council, on any submissions in relation to the proposed lease; and**

3. **Note that a further report will be presented to Council to consider the outcomes of the Submissions Review Panel and/or the proposed lease.**

Carried

Financial Sustainability

8. There are no financial implications of completing the community engagement process for the lease.

9. If granted, the lease represents an income of $15,000 per annum.

10. There are no ongoing cost implications to the City in maintaining the site as the lessee will be responsible for maintenance.

Community Engagement

11. Community engagement will be undertaken in accordance with the community engagement policy to consider the proposed lease. This provides an opportunity for the community to provide its feedback to Council on the proposal, to assist in further consideration.

12. Any person will have an opportunity to make a written submission on the proposed lease. A submitter is entitled to request in the submission, that the person wishes to appear or be represented by a person specified in the submission, at a meeting to be heard in support of their submission.

Social Equity and Sustainability

13. There are no known social equity issues by the recommendation undertake community engagement for the proposed lease.

Relevant Law/Policy/Legal Implications

14. Council must comply with section 115 of the *Local Government Act 2020* which requires that, as the proposed lease is for a term of greater than 10 years, community engagement must be undertaken in accordance with the Council's community engagement policy in respect of the proposal to inform decision making on whether to enter the lease.

15. As the site proposed to be leased is on Crown land, the lease will be a s17D Crown Land Lease and require the approval of the Ministers Delegate in accordance with the *Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978*.

Alignment to Community Plan and Vision

16. This report aligns with Our Community Plan 2021-2025 strategic priority:
High-performing council and organisation.

17. This report aligns with the Community led 30-year Vision, “Greater Geelong: A Clever and Creative Future” community aspiration:
A leader in developing and adopting technology.

Conflict of Interest

18. No officer involved in the preparation of this report declared a general or material conflict of interest.

Risk Assessment

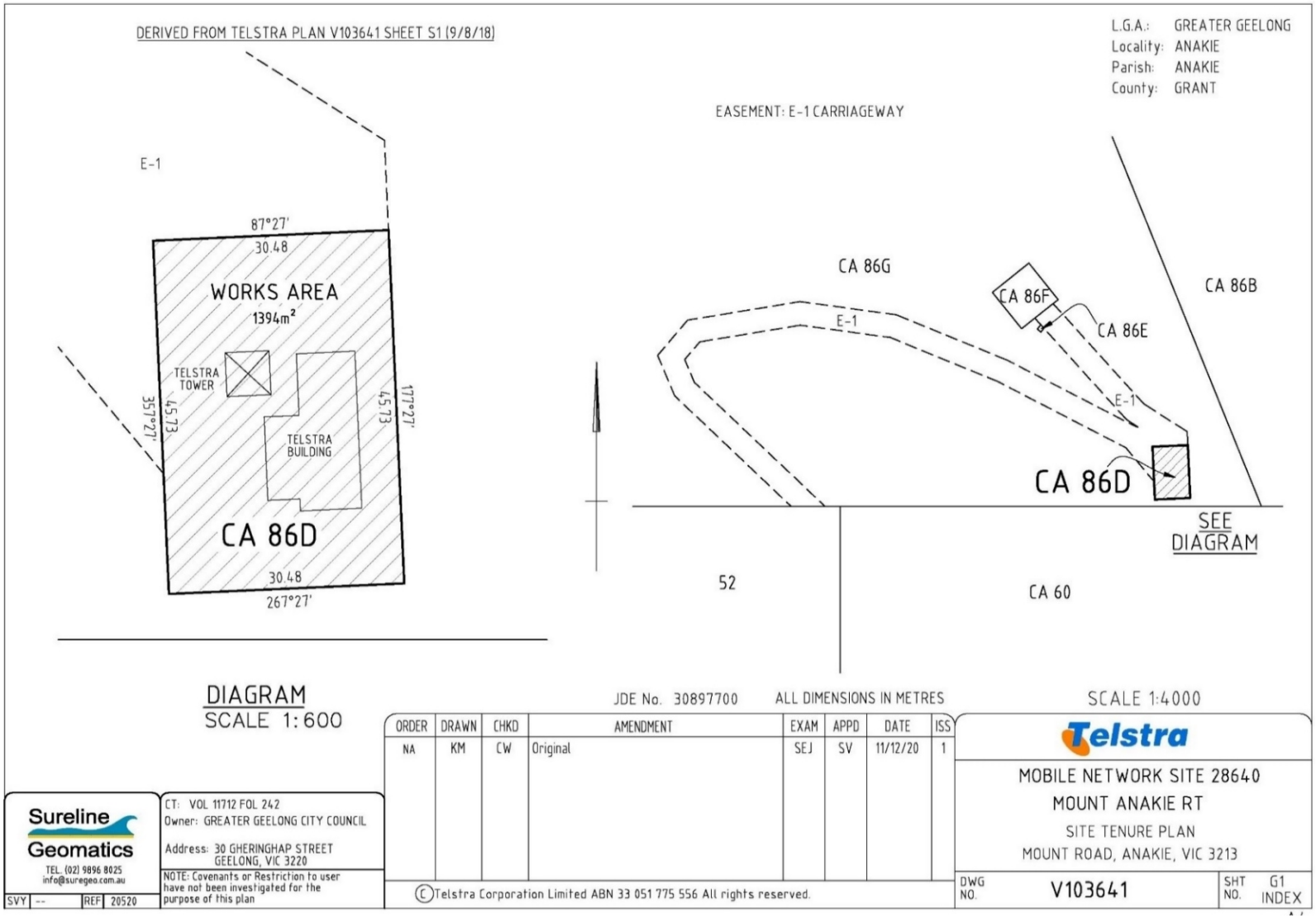
19. There are no notable risks associated with the implementation of the recommendation to undertake community engagement for the lease.

Environmental Sustainability

20. There are no environmental implications to this proposal.

Attachments

1. Mobile Network Site [**2.15.1** - 1 page]


DERIVED FROM TELSTRA PLAN V103641 SHEET S1 (9/8/18)
L.G.A.: GREATER GEELONG
Locality: ANAKIE
Parish: ANAKIE
County: GRANT
EASEMENT: E-1 CARRIAGEWAY
E-1
87°27'
30.48
WORKS AREA
1394m²
TELSTRA TOWER
TELSTRA BUILDING
45.73
357°27'
177°27'
CA 86D
30.48
267°27'
CA 86G
CA 86F
CA 86E
CA 86B
E-1
E-1
CA 86D
SEE DIAGRAM
52
CA 60
DIAGRAM
SCALE 1:600
JDE No. 30897700
ALL DIMENSIONS IN METRES
SCALE 1:4000
ORDER DRAWN CHKD AMENDMENT EXAM APPD DATE ISS
NA KM CW Original SEJ SV 11/12/20 1
Telstra
MOBILE NETWORK SITE 28640
MOUNT ANAKIE RT
SITE TENURE PLAN
MOUNT ROAD, ANAKIE, VIC 3213
Sureline Geomatics
TEL (02) 9896 8025
info@suregeo.com.au
CT: VOL 11712 FOL 242
Owner: GREATER GEELONG CITY COUNCIL
Address: 30 GHERINGHAP STREET GEELONG, VIC 3220
NOTE: Covenants or Restriction to user have not been investigated for the purpose of this plan
SVY -- REF 20520
© Telstra Corporation Limited ABN 33 051 775 556 All rights reserved.
DWG NO. V103641
SHT NO. G1 INDEX

2.16. Proposed Lease to Ene.Hub Pty Ltd for Smart City Infrastructure

Source: **Customer & Corporate Services**
Director: **Michael Dugina**

Purpose

1. To seek Council approval to undertake community engagement in accordance with section 115(4) of the *Local Government Act 2020* and Council's community engagement policy for the intention to enter into a lease on a number of Crown land reserves for the purpose of the installation of smart node infrastructure which are listed attached.

Background

2. The City entered into a 'Smart City Infrastructure Agreement' with Ene.Hub Pty Ltd on 6 March 2019 for a period of 20 years, for delivery of a state-funded project for the construction, maintenance and operation of smart node infrastructure on land owned by the City or Crown land where the City is appointed as the Committee of Management.

3. The City issued a s17D Crown Land Lease with Ene.Hub Pty Ltd commencing 1 June 2019 for a term of 20 years for small areas within the Crown Land reserves occupied by the smart node infrastructure at Geelong Eastern Beach Recreation Reserve and Geelong Eastern Beach Public Park.

4. A further contract with Ene.Hub was executed in September 2020, which involves installation of additional Smart Nodes which can provide a range of features, including free WIFI and an option for enhanced broadband service for businesses and the public.

Key Matters

5. The Installation of Smart Nodes will activate the space and future proof the sites for their longevity and use. Smart Nodes will comply with all council and heritage permit requirements.

6. The additional sites are located on Crown land, where the City is appointed Committee of Management: Western Beach Public Purposes Reserve, Geelong Western Beach Foreshore Reserve, Steampacket Gardens Reserve, Steampacket Place Reserve, Geelong Eastern Beach Public Park, Kardinia Park, Johnstone Park, South Barwon Recreation Reserve, Belmont Common, Bellarine Rail Trail and Austin Park.

7. To govern the occupation of the sites for the existing smart node infrastructure and the new installations included in the rollout, it is proposed to enter into a new lease for all known required sites.

8. The new lease will replace the existing lease for a term of 18 years, expiring on 31 May 2039 and include all the reserves identified on the attached list and noted in the recommendation, however the lease will only extend to the areas of land where the infrastructure is installed and provide no exclusive rights over the balance of the reserves.

9. Council must comply with section 115 of the *Local Government Act 2020* which requires that the Council must undertake a community engagement process in accordance with the Council's community engagement policy in respect of the proposal, before entering into the lease.

RESOLUTION - Item 2.16

Cr Murrihy moved, Cr Sullivan seconded -

That Council:

1. **Approve community engagement in accordance with section 115(4) of the *Local Government Act 2020* and the community engagement policy and invite submissions of its intention to enter into a lease for the existing and additional parts of Crown land reserves being the areas to be encumbered with the smart node infrastructure on the following reserves:**

Crown Allotment 18, Section 39, Parish of Corio	Geelong Waterfront
Crown Allotment 31, Section 86A, Parish of Corio	
Crown Allotment 32, Section 86A, Parish of Corio	
Crown Allotment 33, Section 86A, Parish of Corio	
Crown Allotment 17, Section 39, Parish of Corio	
Crown Allotment 2026, Parish of Corio	
Crown Allotment 34, Section 86A, Parish of Corio	
Crown Allotment 1, Section 55B, Parish of Corio	Johnstone Park
Crown Allotment 11, Section 31B, Parish of Corio	Kardinia Park
Crown Allotment 11A and 11B, Section 31B, Parish of Corio	
Crown Allotment 1A, Section 4, Parish of Bellarine	Bellarine Rail Trail
Crown Allotment 10A, Section A, Parish of Moolap	
Crown Allotments 7, 8, 10, 11 Section C, Parish of Corio	South Barwon Recreation Reserve
Crown Allotment 2002, Parish of Corio	
Crown Allotment 84A, Section 2, Parish of Connewarre	
Crown Allotment 2009 Parish of Woornyalook	Austin Park

2. **Invite submissions by any person in relation to the proposed lease and that if submissions are received and the submitter wishes to be heard, convene a Submissions Review Panel to hear and report to Council, on any submissions in relation to the proposed lease; and**

3. **Note that a further report will be presented to Council to consider the outcomes of the Submissions Review Panel and/or the proposed lease.**

Carried

Financial Sustainability

10. There are no financial implications of completing the community engagement process for the lease.

Community Engagement

10. Community engagement will be undertaken in accordance with the community engagement policy to consider the proposed lease. This provides an opportunity for the community to provide its feedback to Council on the proposal.

11. Any person will have an opportunity to make a written submission on the proposed lease. A submitter is entitled to request in the submission, that the person wishes to appear or be represented by a person specified in the submission, at a meeting to be heard in support of their submission.

Social Equity and Sustainability

12. Providing free WIFI locations and the availability of a high speed internet connection, the infrastructure also enables additional projects to promote digital inclusion and minimise the digital divide, with planning and detailed design underway to determine how this network of Smart Nodes will best serve our community.

13. Additional sites have been identified for this subsequent rollout of implementation of the Smart City Infrastructure Agreement.

Relevant Law/Policy/Legal Implications

14. Council must comply with section 115 of the *Local Government Act 2020* which requires that, as the proposed lease is for a term of greater than 10 years, community engagement must be undertaken in accordance with the Council's community engagement policy in respect of the proposal to inform decision making on whether to enter the lease.

15. As the sites proposed to be leased are on Crown land, the lease will be a s17D Crown Land Lease and require the approval of the Ministers Delegate in accordance with the *Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978.*

Alignment to Community Plan and Vision

16. This report aligns with Our Community Plan 2021-2025 strategic priority:
High-performing council and organisation.

17. This report aligns with the Community led 30-year Vision, “Greater Geelong: A Clever and Creative Future” community aspiration:
A leader in developing and adopting technology.

Conflict of Interest

18. No officer involved in the preparation of this report declared a general or material conflict of interest.

Risk Assessment

19. There are no notable risks associated with the implementation of the recommendation to undertake community engagement for the lease.

Environmental Sustainability

20. There are no notable environmental implications associated with the implementation of the recommendation to undertake community engagement for the lease. The Smart City Infrastructure Agreement will address environmental implications through its implementation.

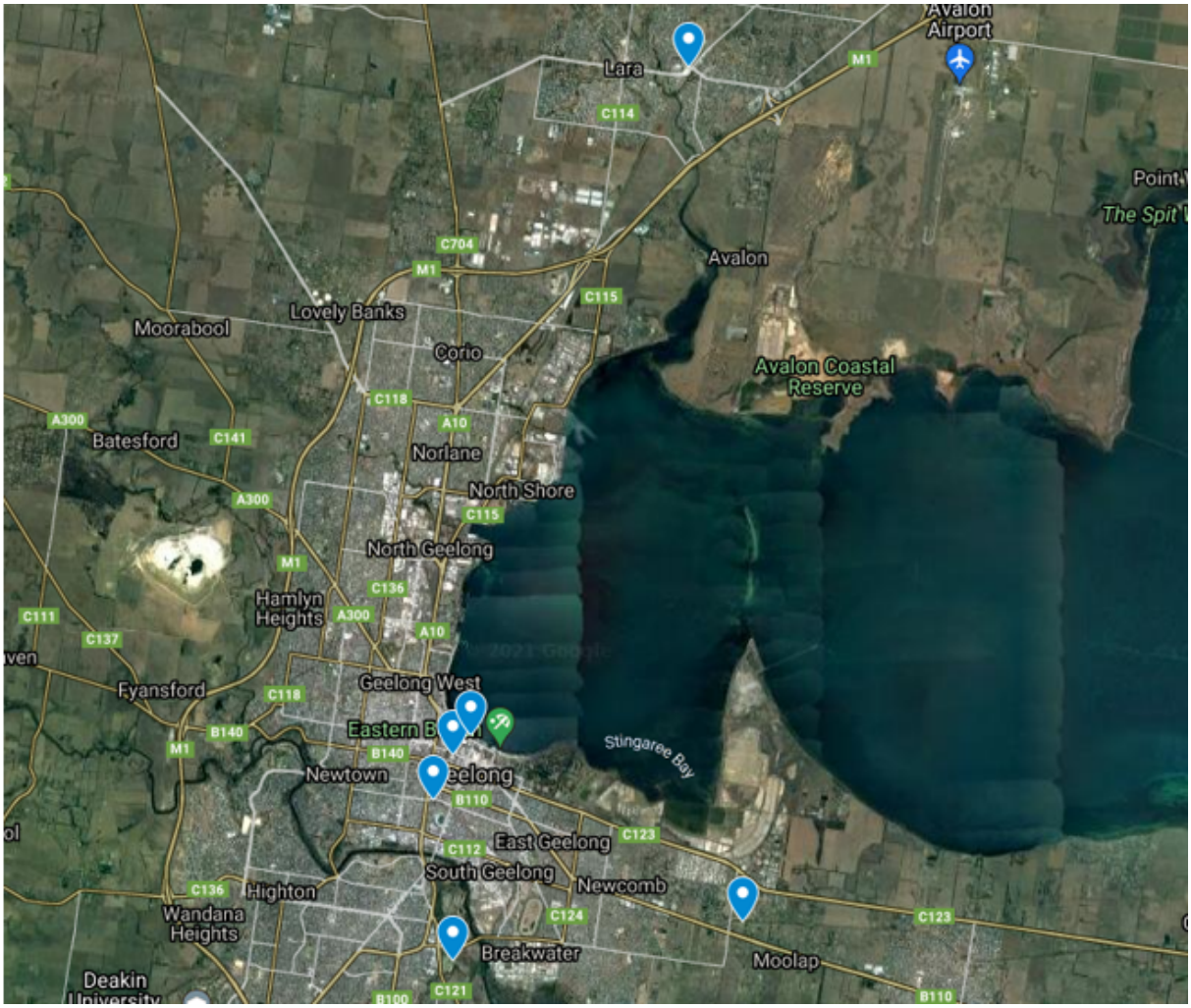
Attachments

1. List of Crown land reserves for Smart Nodes [**2.16.1** - 1 page]
2. Smart Node Locations [**2.16.2** - 4 pages]

List of Crown land reserves where the Smart Nodes will be installed.

Reserves	Reserve details
Geelong Eastern Beach Recreation Reserve, Geelong Eastern Beach Public Park, Geelong Western Beach Foreshore Reserve, Western Beach Public Purposes Reserve, Steampacket Gardens Reserve and Steampacket Place Reserve 14-72 Western Foreshore Road, Geelong, 1-95 Eastern Beach Road, Geelong and 100 Western Foreshore Road, Drumcondra	Crown Allotment 18 Section 39, Parish of Corio, Crown Allotment 31 Section 86A, Parish of Corio, Crown Allotment 32, Section 86A, Parish of Corio, Crown Allotment 33 Section 86A, Parish of Corio, Crown Allotment 17, Section 39, Parish of Corio, Crown Allotment 2026, Parish of Corio and Crown Allotment 34, Section 86A, Parish of Corio
Johnstone Park, 24-28 Gheringhap Street, Geelong	Crown Allotment 1, Section 55B, Parish of Corio
Kardinia Park Reserve and Kardinia Park Memorial Swimming Pool Reserve, 331 Latrobe Terrace, South Geelong	Crown Allotment 11, Section 31B, Parish of Corio, Crown Allotment 11A and 11B, Section 31B, Parish of Corio
Bellarine Rail Trail, Thomson	Crown Allotment 1A, Section 4, Parish of Bellarine and Crown Allotment 10A, Section A, Parish of Moolap
South Barwon Recreation Reserve and Belmont Common, 167 Barwon Heads Road, Belmont	Crown Allotment 7, 8, 10,11 Section C, Parish of Corio, Crown Allotment 2002, Parish of Corio and Crown Allotment 84A, Section 2, Parish of Connewarre
Austin Park, 5 Waverley Road, Lara	Crown Allotment 2009, Parish of Woornyalook

Additional Sites on Crown Land

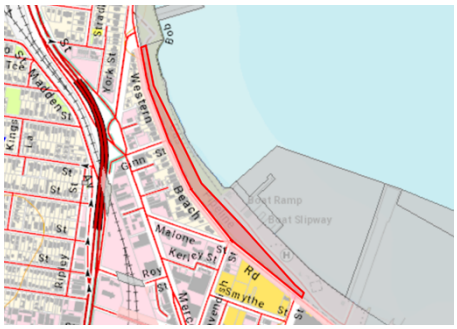


Location of Smart Nodes

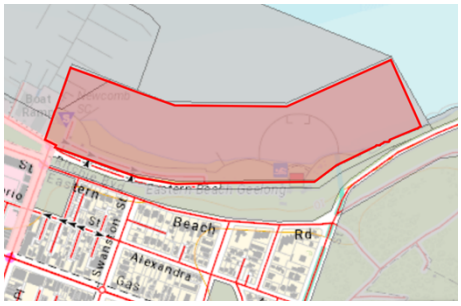
Geelong Eastern Beach Public Park



Western Beach Public Purposes Reserve



Geelong Eastern Beach Recreation Reserve



Geelong Western Beach Foreshore Reserve



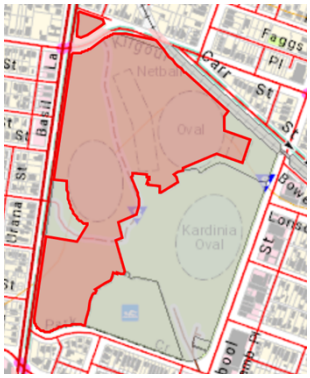
Steampacket Gardens Reserve



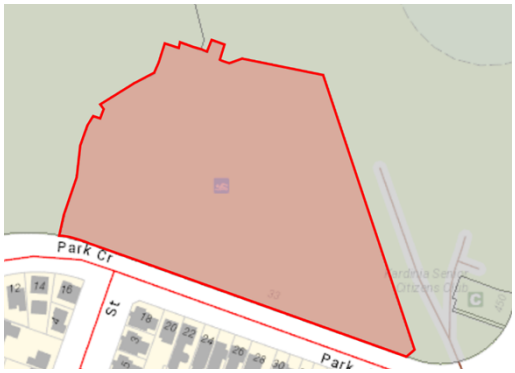
Steampacket Place Reserve



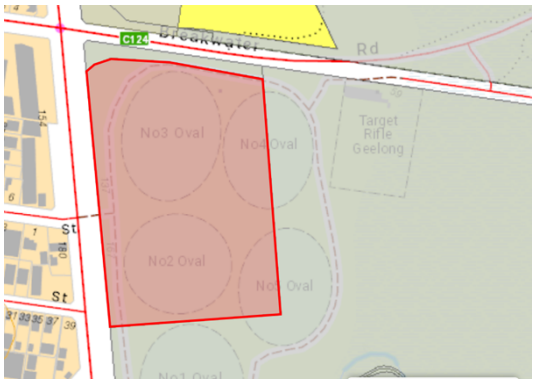
Kardinia Park Reserve



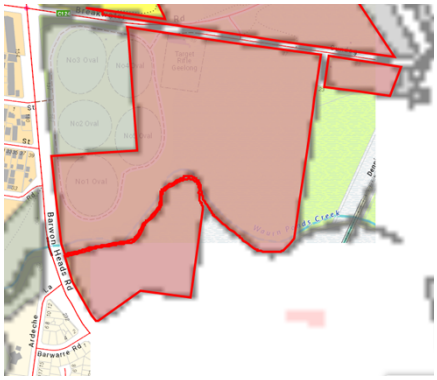
Kardinia Park Memorial Swimming Pool



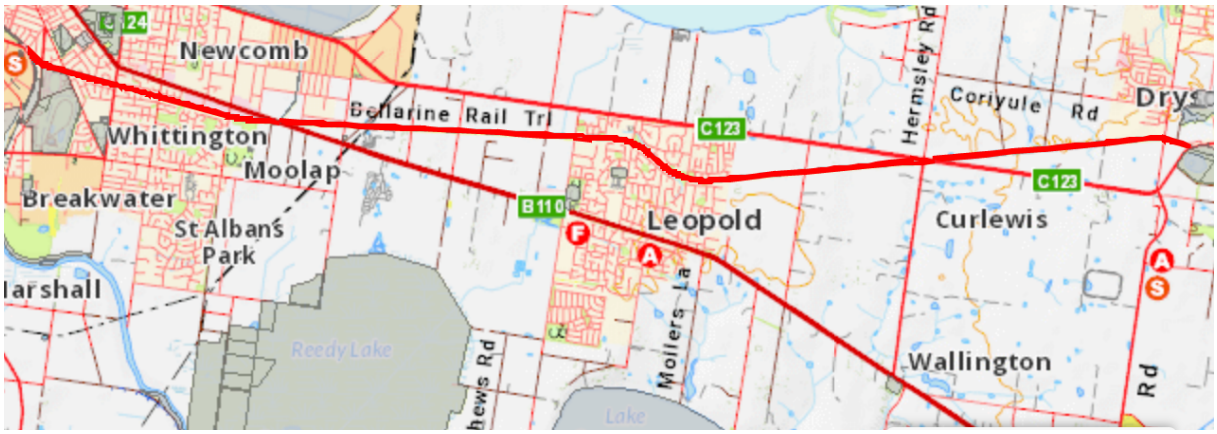
South Barwon Recreation Reserve



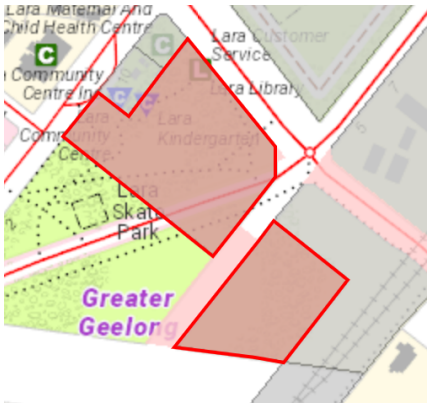
Belmont Common



Bellarine Rail Trail



Austin Park



Johnstone Park Reserve

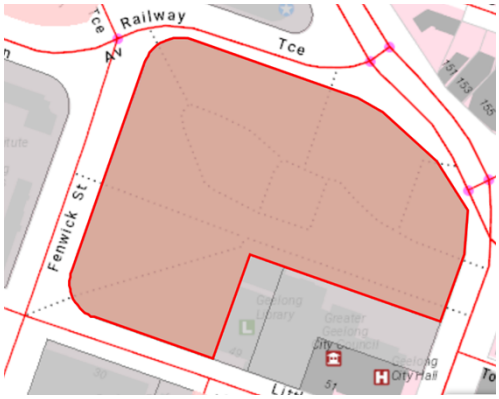


Image of Smart Node pole installed



2.17. Proposed Lease of 2/240 Pioneer Road, Grovedale (Leisurelink Kiosk)

Source: **Customer & Corporate Services**
Director: **Michael Dugina**

Purpose

1. To provide Council with an update on the Community engagement process and to seek recommendation to undertake market testing to find a suitable tenant for the lease of the café space at 2/240 Pioneer Road, Grovedale 3216.

Background

2. The Premises includes a lettable area of approximately 80m² which excludes the adjoining common dining area which is available for all patrons.

3. At the 27 April 2021 Council meeting, the Council resolved to:

   3.1. Give notice in accordance with section 223 of the Local Government Act 1989 and the City's Community Engagement Policy of its intention to lease the land at 2/240 Pioneer Road, Grovedale, contained in Certificates of Title Volume 11978 Folio 496, Volume 9499 Folio 304, Volume 9034 Folio 242, Volume 11978 Folio 513;

   3.2. Appoint a Submissions Review Panel to hear any submission if any person wishes to appear in person or be represented by a person specified in support of a submission; and

   3.3. Note that a further report will be presented to Council to consider the outcomes of the Submissions Review Panel and/or the proposed lease of the land.

Key Matters

4. Community engagement was undertaken in accordance with section 223 of the *Local Government Act 1989* and the City of Greater Geelong community engagement policy; one submission was received. The submitter did not request to be heard.

3. The submission supported the ongoing use as a café to provide a gathering point, foster a social atmosphere, include appropriate food and beverage choices for the patronage of the leisure centre and recommended attracting a local operator. A copy of the submission has been provided to the Councillors.

4. The lettable area is to be offered as a vacant shell, which would enable a tenant to undertake a fitout.

5. It is anticipated a long-term lease will be sought, to offset the capital contribution required by the tenant and for security of tenure.

RESOLUTION - Item 2.17

Cr Nelson moved, Cr Harwood seconded -

That Council:

1. **Approve market testing seeking proposals to lease the café space at 2/240 Pioneer Road, Grovedale 3216 (Leisurelink Kiosk) with submissions to outline the proposed commercial terms and fitout;**

2. **Note the outcome of the section 223 process and the community engagement process; and**

3. **Authorise the City of Greater Geelong to enter into a lease with the successful party following the completion of the market testing process.**

Carried

Financial Sustainability

6. There are no financial implications with undertaking the market testing process. This process will be managed by internal officers.

7. The financial implications of awarding the lease are unknown at this time and will be considered as part of the market testing assessment to ensure the best financial outcome for the asset while considering the best use for the facility.

Community Engagement

8. Community engagement was completed in compliance with both the *Local Government Act 1989* and *Local Government Act 2020*, due to the staged repeal of the *Local Government Act 1989* provisions and the new *Local Government Act 2020* requirements.

9. This provided an opportunity for the community to provide its feedback to Council on the proposal to assist in further consideration and one submission was received which has been addressed earlier in this report.

10. The market testing process will create further engagement.

Social Equity and Sustainability

11. There are no adverse social equity issues created by the recommendation to give public notice and invite submissions for the proposed lease of the lettable area.

Relevant Law/Policy/Legal Implications

12. A proposed lease shall consider and align with the City's Healthy Food Policy.

13. The Council complied with sections 190 and 223, *Local Government Act 1989* prior to 1 July 2021 by giving notice of the proposed lease of the Premises to inform decision making on whether to resolve to lease the Premises.

14. As at 1 July 2021 Section 190 *Local Government Act 1989* were repealed and section 223 no longer applies, with section 115 of the *Local Government Act 2020* now the sections governing the proposed lease of land.

15. To comply with this in the transitional period, the City complied with both Acts by giving public notice and engaging in accordance with its community engagement policy.

Alignment to Community Plan and Vision

16. This report aligns with Our Community Plan 2021-2025 strategic priority:
Strong local economy.

17. This report aligns with the Community led 30-year Vision, "Greater Geelong: A Clever and Creative Future" community aspiration:
An inclusive, diverse, healthy and socially connected community.

Conflict of Interest

18. No officer involved in the preparation of this report declared a general or material conflict of interest.

Risk Assessment

19. The City will call for well-developed submissions which will include consideration of risks in their proposals.

Environmental Sustainability

20. There are no known environmental implications to this proposal however, this will be further considered in assessing the proposals.

Attachments

Nil

2.18. Proposed Sale or Lease of 151 Mercer Street, Geelong - Civic Precinct

Source: **Customer & Corporate Services**
Director: **Michael Dugina**

Purpose

1. To provide Council with an update on the section 223 *Local Government Act 1989* and community engagement process and to seek recommendation to undertaken market testing for the sale or lease of 151 Mercer Street, Geelong.

Background

2. The City purchased the property at 151 Mercer Street, Geelong to enable part of the property to be included in the development of the Civic Precinct (Wurriki Nyal) at 137-149 Mercer Street, Geelong.

3. The remaining property includes a building which has local heritage significance, and while it had previously been extended, the extensions have been removed and the original footprint building retained.

4. The remaining building does not serve any operational use for the City under our current service delivery.

5. The subdivision of 151 Mercer Street is still to be registered which will result in one part to be included within Wurriki Nyal and the balance of the land comprising a land area of 189m2 as shown on the attached locality plan.

6. At the 27 April 2021 Council meeting, the Council resolved to:

   6.1. Give notice in accordance with section 223 of the Local Government Act 1989 and the City's Community Engagement Policy of its intention to sell or lease the land, which is part 151 Mercer Street, Geelong, being Lot 3 of Plan of Subdivision 83401OW (unregistered);

   6.2. Appoint a Submissions Review Panel to hear any submission if any person wishes to appear in person or be represented by a person specified in support of a submission; and

   6.3. Note that a further report will be presented to Council to consider the outcomes of the Submissions Review Panel and/or the proposed sale or lease of the land.

Key Matters

7. The sale or lease proposal at 151 Mercer Street, Geelong was advertised on the City of Greater Geelong Have Your Say webpage from Saturday 15 May 2021 to Friday 11 June 2021 and was also advertised in the City News section of the Geelong Advertiser.

6. One submission was received and did not request to be heard.

7. The submission stated "This property, 151 Mercer Street, should not be sold to a private investor, rather it should be maintained by council to respect its history with

leaseholds to bring in some income. The building could run like a new community space, including pop-up medical care, a site for private functions or a small cinema space. The Geelong station is nearby, surely this would entice people to visit this part of the city."

8. Feedback received supported the City's desire for the building to remain and honour its heritage value and the opportunity for it to be redeveloped into a use which will complement the precinct. The land and building area may limit the viability for some uses proposed in the submission, however these may be further considered through further exploration of potential suitable uses.

9. It is proposed that the Council could seek offers for the sale or lease of the property through market testing, with submissions required to outline the proposed uses, development plans, retention or restoration of the heritage fabric and commercial terms.

10. The market testing responses will be assessed, and these will inform a business case used to determine the preferred option for the property for the Council to consider.

RESOLUTION - Item 2.18

Cr Kontelj moved, Cr Mansfield seconded -

That Council:

1. Resolve that the property at 151 Mercer Street, Geelong being Lot 3 of Plan of Subdivision 83401OW (unregistered) is not required by the City for its services and will be sold or leased;

2. Approve the market testing and seek proposals to purchase or lease the property, with submissions outlining the proposed uses, development plans, retention or restoration of the heritage fabric and commercial terms;

3. Note the outcomes of the section 223 and community engagement process;

4. Approve the preparation of a business case to assess the submissions and recommend the preferred submission; and

5. Note that Council receive a further report to consider the business case.

Carried

Financial Sustainability

11. A real estate agent may be engaged to assist in the marketing and advertising of the market testing process.

12. An independent valuer will be engaged to assess the valuation of the property for sale or lease terms, in compliance with the *Local Government Act 2020* which will have minor costs as part of the process.

13. Being a heritage building requiring significant works will have a financial impact on any proposal and will form part of the proposal assessment. The financial impact cannot be determined until the proposals are developed as part of the process.

14. The financial implications of awarding the sale or lease to any preferred submission will be assessed in the business case.

Community Engagement

15. Community engagement was completed in compliance with both the *Local Government Act 1989* and *Local Government Act 2020,* due to the staged repeal of the *Local Government Act 1989* provisions and the new *Local Government Act 2020* requirements.

16. This provided an opportunity for the community to provide its feedback to Council on the proposal to assist in further consideration and one submission was received which has been addressed earlier in this report.

19. The future and opportunities for the site was also raised during design week presentations, with feedback summarised as:

    19.1. The potential of the building was recognised – that is a blank canvas inside, with an opportunity to open up the rear of the building and use the roof top to unlock a new view of the city;

    19.2. Any future use should activate and complement the surrounding precinct;

    19.3. Recognition of the heritage of the building and its links to the City's automotive and working-class past were also seen as an opportunity to educate visitors and foster civic pride; and

    19.4. The inclusion of the site's 'story' was important to some attendees.

Social Equity and Sustainability

17. There are no adverse social equity issues created by the recommendation for the proposed sale or lease of the property at Wurriki Nyal.

Relevant Law/Policy/Legal Implications

18. The Council complied with sections 189, 190 and 223, *Local Government Act 1989* prior to 1 July 2021 by giving notice of the proposed sale or lease of the property to inform decision making on whether to resolve to sell or lease the property.

19. As at 1 July 2020 Sections 189 and 190 *Local Government Act 1989* were repealed and section 223 no longer applies, with section 114 and 115 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is now the sections governing the proposed sale of land or lease of land.

20. To comply with this in the transitional period, the City complied with both Acts by giving public notices and engaging in accordance with its community engagement policy.

Alignment to Community Plan and Vision

21. This report aligns with Our Community Plan 2021-2025 strategic priority:
High-performing council and organisation.

22. This report aligns with the Community led 30-year Vision, “Greater Geelong: A Clever and Creative Future” community aspiration:
A prosperous economy that supports jobs and education opportunities.

Conflict of Interest

23. No officer involved in the preparation of this report declared a general or material conflict of interest.

Risk Assessment

24. The risk impact of potentially selling or leasing the land has been assessed as part of the overall Wurriki Nyal project.

25. The suggested market testing process will enable the City to call for well-developed submissions which will include consideration of risks to their proposals.

26. If the land is determined to be sold or leased following completion of the statutory process, risk assessments will be included in business case in assessing the submissions.

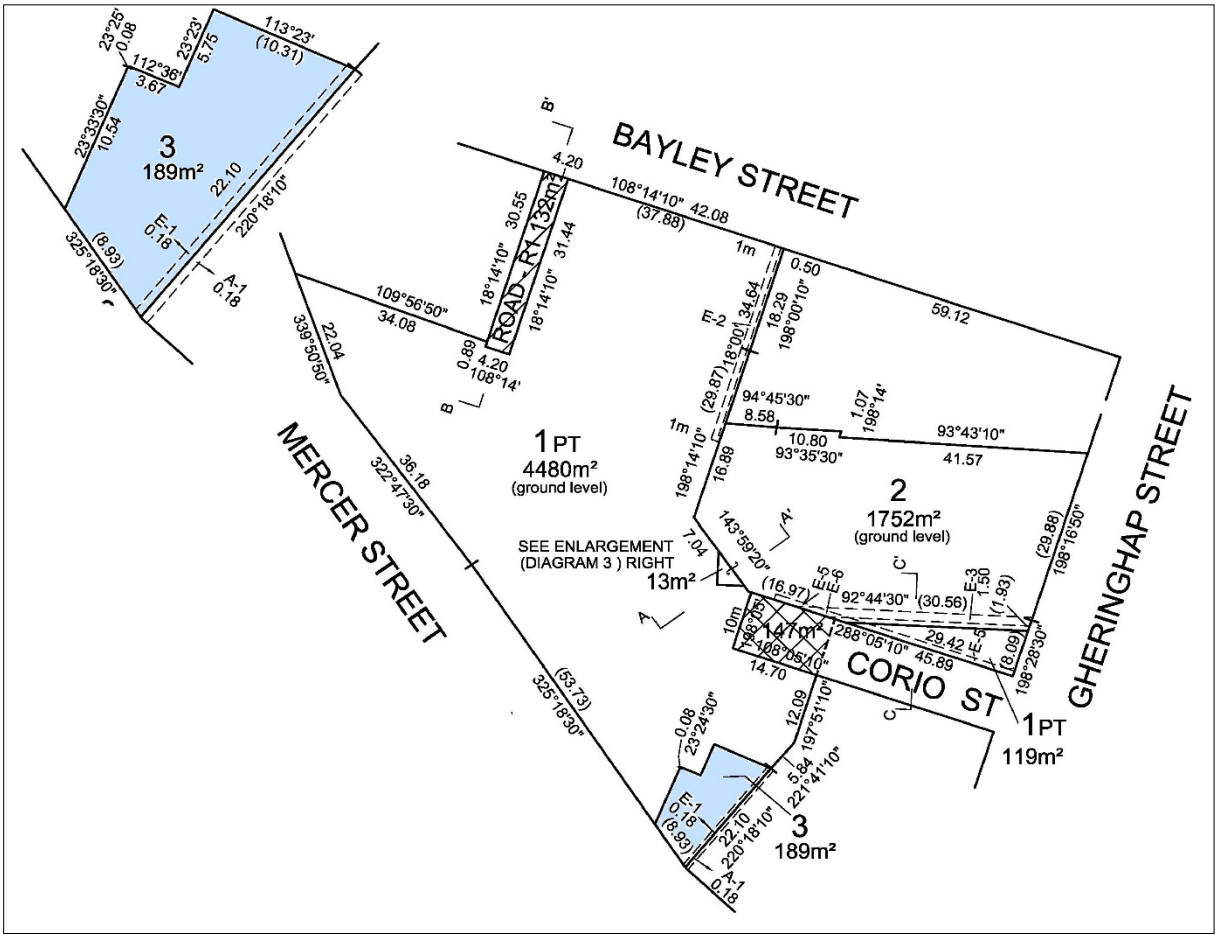
Environmental Sustainability

27. There are no environmental implications to this proposal, however this will be further considered in assessing environmental impacts of the submissions.

Attachments

1. Locality Plan [**2.18.1** - 1 page]

Locality Plan



151 Mercer Street Geelong– Property to be sold or leased.

2.19. Glenlee, Stages 5 and 6 - Revocation of Flood Prone Area

Source: **City Services**
Director: **Guy Wilson-Browne**

Purpose

1. To revoke Council's designation from 12 December 2006 of flood affected land at Glenlee, Stages 5 and 6 as liable to flooding pursuant to regulation 153 of the Building Regulations 2018.

Background

2. Council has a statutory obligation under the Building Regulations 2018 to designate land as liable to flooding where it reasonably knows it to be prone to flooding. Conversely, there is an obligation to remove the encumbrance of designation from land that is no longer considered to be flood-prone.

3. The current designated flood mapping (Attachment 1) was designated by Council at its meeting on 12 December 2006.

4. This revocation will result in another two stages of new lots in Glenlee Estate, one fronting 274-280 Reserve Road, Charlemont and the other fronting 10 Parkes Avenue, Charlemont, being free of their flood prone status, paving the way for homes to be built on this land.

Key Matters

5. The flood mapping is subject to a revision due to the subdivision and development at 274-280 Reserve Road, Charlemont & 10 Parkes Avenue, Charlemont. Prior to subdivision the parent lots were considered liable to flooding. These development sites which are also known as Glenlee, Stages 5 and 6 achieves flood immunity for newly created lots for flood events up to and including the 100 year Average Recurrence Interval (ARI) event due to the completion of approved internal works.

6. The recommendation by Council engineers that the flood prone status can be removed includes assessment of internal drainage, road construction and earthworks to contain potential floodwaters from the 100 year ARI event within road and drainage reserves (Attachment 2).

7. It should be noted that designation is separate to the creation of flood overlays within the Planning Scheme, which generally follows designation. In the case of this development, the planning scheme amendment to create post-development flood zones or overlays is proposed after the design of the proposed precincts.

RESOLUTION - Item 2.19

Cr Nelson moved, Cr Harwood seconded -

That Council revoke the Council designation from 12 December 2006 of flood affected land at Glenlee, Stages 5 and 6 as liable to flooding pursuant to regulation 153 of the Building Regulations 2018.

Carried

Financial Sustainability

8. There are no financial implications arising from the subject of this report.

Community Engagement

9. A revocation of designation does not warrant public consultation as it constitutes the removal of an encumbrance on land.

10. Relevant City databases and flood maps will be revised and updates sent to the Corangamite Catchment Management Authority and Building Control Commission.

Social Equity and Sustainability

11. Council have a responsibility to the community to provide the best possible information on areas that are flood prone. The removal of flood prone designation allows owners to build on their land without a special permit from the City, and without raising the floor level of their home. It also reduces the cost of property insurance.

Relevant Law/Policy/Legal Implications

12. The City has various statutory responsibilities for drainage management and flood management (prevention, response and recovery) as set out in the Local Government Act 1989, Local Government Regulations 1990, Planning and Environment Act 1987, Building Regulations 2018, Water Act 1989, Subdivision Act 1988 and Emergency Management Act 1986.

13. The works have resulted in the lots being protected from flooding during a major storm event that has a one per cent probability of occurring in any one year and occurs on average once in 100 years. This is the required standard for new subdivisions.

Alignment to Community Plan and Vision

14. This report aligns with Our Community Plan 2021-2025 strategic priority:
Sustainable growth and environment.

15. This report aligns with the Community led 30-year Vision, “Greater Geelong: A Clever and Creative Future” community aspiration:
Sustainable development that supports population growth and protects the natural environment.

Conflict of Interest

16. No officer involved in the preparation of this report declared a general or material conflict of interest.

Risk Assessment

17. Council has some risk exposure with any failure to disclose the flood-prone status of a property in a Land Information Certificate.

18. The revocation of the designation is the final step in minimising Council's risk.

Environmental Sustainability

19. The revocation of flood-prone areas designation and designation of revised flood data through the design of this stage is considered unlikely to result in any known adverse environmental impacts.

Attachments

1. Current Floodmap Glenlee [**2.19.1** - 1 page]
2. Revised Floodmap Glenlee [**2.19.2** - 1 page]

Current Flood Map - Glenlee, Stages 5 and 6



Revised flood Map – Glenee



2.20. Warralily Stage 102 - Revocation of Flood-Prone Area

Source: **City Services**
Director: **Guy Wilson-Browne**

Purpose

1. To revoke Council's designation of 12 December 2006 of flood affected land at Warralily, Stage 102 as liable to flooding pursuant to regulation 153 of the Building Regulations 2018.

Background

2. Council has a statutory obligation under the Building Regulations 2018 to designate land as liable to flooding where it reasonably knows it to be prone to flooding. Conversely, there is an obligation to remove the encumbrance of designation from land that is no longer considered to be flood-prone.

3. The current designated flood mapping **(Attachment 1)** was designated by Council at its meeting of 12 December 2006.

4. This revocation will result in another stage of new lots in Warralily Estate fronting 30 Evergreen Street, Armstrong Creek being free of their flood prone status, paving the way for homes to be built on this land.

Key Matters

5. The flood mapping is subject to a revision due to the subdivision and development at 30 Evergreen Street, Armstrong Creek, prior to subdivision the parent lot was considered liable to flooding. This development site, which is also known as Warralily, Stage 102 achieves flood immunity for newly created lots for flood events up to and including the 100 year Average Recurrence Interval (ARI) event due to the completion of approved internal works.

6. The recommendation by Council engineers that the flood prone status can be removed includes assessment of internal drainage, road construction and earthworks to contain potential floodwaters from the 100 year ARI event within road and drainage reserves **(Attachment 2)**.

7. It should be noted that designation is separate to the creation of flood overlays within the Planning Scheme, which generally follows designation. In the case of this development, the planning scheme amendment to create post-development flood zones or overlays is proposed after the design of the proposed precincts.

RESOLUTION - Item 2.20

Cr Harwood moved, Cr Nelson seconded -

That Council revoke the Council designation of 12 December 2006 of flood affected land at Warralily, Stage 102 as liable to flooding pursuant to regulation 153 of the *Building Regulations 2018*.

Carried

Financial Sustainability

8. There are no financial implications arising from the subject of this report.

Community Engagement

9. A revocation of designation does not warrant public consultation as it constitutes the removal of an encumbrance on land.

10. Relevant City databases and flood maps will be revised and updates sent to the Corangamite Catchment Management Authority and Building Control Commission.

Social Equity and Sustainability

11. Council have a responsibility to the community to provide the best possible information on areas that are flood prone. The removal of flood prone designation allows owners to build on their land without a special permit from the City, and without raising the floor level of their home. It also reduces the cost of property insurance.

Relevant Law/Policy/Legal Implications

12. The City has various statutory responsibilities for drainage management and flood management (prevention, response and recovery) as set out in the Local Government Act 1989, Local Government Regulations 1990, Planning and Environment Act 1987, Building Regulations 2018, Water Act 1989, Subdivision Act 1988 and Emergency Management Act 1986.

13. The works have resulted in the lots being protected from flooding during a major storm event that has a one per cent probability of occurring in any one year, and occurs on average once in 100 years. This is the required standard for new subdivisions.

Alignment to Community Plan and Vision

14. This report aligns with Our Community Plan 2021-2025 strategic priority:
Sustainable growth and environment.

Conflict of Interest

15. No officer involved in the preparation of this report declared a general or material conflict of interest.

Risk Assessment

16. Council also has some risk exposure with any failure to disclose the flood-prone status of a property in a Land Information Certificate.

17. The revocation of the designation is the final step in minimising Council's risk.

Environmental Sustainability

18. The revocation of flood-prone areas designation and designation of revised flood data through the design of this stage is considered unlikely to result in any known adverse environmental impacts.

Attachments

1. Current Flood Map Warralily Stage 102 [**2.20.1** - 1 page]
2. Revised Flood Map Warralily Stage 102 [**2.20.2** - 1 page]

Current flood map



Revised flood map



2.21. Update to Instruments of Delegation

Source:	**Office of the Chief Executive**
Chief Executive Officer:	**Martin Cutter**

Purpose

1. To remake the Greater Geelong City Council (Council) instrument of delegation to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), **Attachment 1** to take into account changes to legislation.

2. To adopt the Council to members of Council staff instrument of sub-delegation **Attachment 2** in response to changes to the *Environment Protection Act 2017* (EPA Act) and *Environment Protection Regulations 2021* (the Regulations) which commenced 1 July 2021.

Background

3. From 1 July 2021 Council's role as a regulator under the EPA Act and the Regulations include new delegated powers, duties and functions. Instead of explicitly setting out certain council powers in the EPA Act, certain powers are now conferred by Environment Protection Authority through Delegation.

Key Matters

4. Council can exercise powers directly under the EPA Act and Regulations or under delegation, including the regulation of:

   4.1. residential noise;

   4.2. noise from residential construction;

   4.3. litter and waste, including illegal dumping; and

   4.4. on-site wastewater management systems (Septics) with a flow rate equal to or less than 5,000 litres per day.

5. The attached Instruments of Delegation have been prepared based on models provided by Maddocks Lawyers as part of a subscription service to Council.

RESOLUTION - Item 2.21

Cr Grzybek moved, Cr Sullivan seconded -

In the exercise of the power conferred by s 11(1)(b) of the *Local Government Act 2020* (the LGA Act), Greater Geelong City Council (Council) resolves that:

1. **There be delegated to the person holding the position, or acting in or performing the duties, of Chief Executive Officer the powers, duties and functions set out in the Instrument of Delegation to the Chief Executive Officer (Attachment 1), subject to the conditions and limitations specified in that Instrument;**

2. **The instrument comes into force immediately upon the resolution of Council;**

3. **The Instrument be signed by the Chief Executive Officer on behalf of Council;**

4. **On the coming into force of the instrument all previous delegations to the Chief Executive Officer are revoked; and**

5. **The duties and functions set out in the instrument must be performed, and the powers set out in the instruments must be executed, in accordance with any guidelines or policies of Council that it may from time to time adopt.**

In the exercise of the powers conferred by s 437(2) of the Environment Protection Act 2017 and the Instrument of Delegation of the Environment Protection Authority under the EPA Act dated 4 June 2021, Greater Geelong City Council (Council) resolves that:

1. **There be delegated to the members of Council staff holding, acting in or performing the duties of the offices or positions referred to in the attached Instrument of Sub-Delegation to members of Council staff, the powers, duties and functions set out in that instrument, subject to the conditions and limitations specified in that Instrument (Attachment 2);**

2. **The Instrument comes into force immediately upon the resolution of Council; and**

3. **The Instrument be signed by the Chief Executive Officer on behalf of Council.**

Carried

Financial Sustainability

5. There are no financial implications associated with this report.

Community Engagement

6. The attached Instrument to members of Council staff has been prepared in consultation with relevant Council officers.

Social Equity and Sustainability

7. There are no social equity issues arising from the subject of this report.

Relevant Law/Policy/Legal Implications

8. The attached Instruments have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Act 2020 and the Environment Protection Act 2017.

Alignment to Community Plan and Vision

9. This report aligns with Our Community Plan 2021-2025 strategic priority:

   Healthy, caring and inclusive community; and
   High-performing Council and organisation.

Conflict of Interest

10. No officer involved in the preparation of this report declared a general or material conflict of interest.

Risk Assessment

11. There are no high or extreme risks associated with the subject of this report.

Environmental Sustainability

12. There are no environmental implications identified for the subject of this report

Attachments

1. Instrument of Delegation Council to Chief Executive Officer [**2.21.1** - 4 pages]
2. Instrument of Sub Delegation Council to Members of Council Environment Protection [**2.21.2** - 6 pages]

Greater Geelong City Council

Instrument of Delegation

to

The Chief Executive Officer

Instrument of Delegation

In exercise of the power conferred by s 11(1) of the *Local Government Act 2020* (**the Act**) and all other powers enabling it, the Greater Geelong City Council (**Council**) delegates to the member of Council staff holding, acting in or performing the position of Chief Executive Officer, the powers, duties and functions set out in the Schedule to this Instrument of Delegation,

AND declares that

1. this Instrument of Delegation is authorised by a Resolution of Council passed on 27 July 2021;

2. the delegation:

   2.1 comes into force upon the resolution of Council;

   2.2 is subject to any conditions and limitations set out in the Schedule;

   2.3 must be exercised in accordance with any guidelines or policies which Council from time to time adopts; and

   2.4 remains in force until Council resolves to vary or revoke it.

Signed for GREATER GEELONG CITY COUNCIL
MARTIN CUTTER, Chief Executive Officer

_____
Chief Executive Officer

SCHEDULE

The power to

1. determine any issue;

2. take any action; or

3. do any act or thing

arising out of or connected with any duty imposed, or function or power conferred on Council by or under any Act.

Conditions and Limitations

The delegate must not determine the issue, take the action or do the act or thing

1. if the issue, action, act or thing is an issue, action, act or thing which involves

1.1.1 entering into a contract exceeding the value of $2,000,000 (excluding GST), or exceeding $1,000,000 (excluding GST) where it is proposed not to accept the lowest tender;

1.1.2 making any expenditure that exceeds $2,000,000 (excluding GST), unless it is expenditure made under a contract already entered into or is expenditure which Council is, by or under legislation, required to make in which case it must not exceed the specific amount provided for that item in a budget approved by the Council;

1.1.3 appointing an Acting Chief Executive Officer for a period exceeding 28 days;

1.1.4 electing a Mayor or Deputy Mayor;

1.1.5 granting a reasonable request for leave under s 35 of the Act;

1.1.6 making any decision in relation to the employment, dismissal or removal of the Chief Executive Officer;

1.1.7 approving or amending the Council Plan;

1.1.8 adopting or amending any policy that Council is required to adopt under the Act;

1.1.9 adopting or amending the Governance Rules;

1.1.10 appointing the chair or the members to a delegated committee;

1.1.11 making, amending or revoking a local law;

1.1.12 approving the Budget or Revised Budget;

1.1.13 approving the borrowing of money;

1.1.14 approving or amending the Community Vision;

1.1.15 approving or amending the Financial Plan;

1.1.16 approving or amending the Asset Plan;

1.1.17 approving or amending the Revenue and Rating Plan;

1.1.18 the exercise of any power that is subject to section 223 of *Local Government Act 1989* except the administrative procedures necessary to enable Council to carry out its functions under section 223; or

1.1.19 subject to section 181H(1)(b) of the *Local Government Act 1989,* declaring general rates, municipal charges, service rates and charges and specified rates and charges;

2. if the issue, action, act or thing is an issue, action, act or thing which is required by law to be done by Council resolution;

3. if the issue, action, act or thing is an issue, action or thing which Council has previously designated as an issue, action, act or thing which must be the subject of a Resolution of Council;

4. if the determining of the issue, taking of the action or doing of the act or thing would or would be likely to involve a decision which is inconsistent with a

4.1.1 policy; or

4.1.2 strategy,

adopted by Council;

5. if the determining of the issue, the taking of the action or the doing of the act or thing cannot be the subject of a lawful delegation, whether on account of s 11(2)(a)-(n) (inclusive) of the Act or otherwise; or

6. the determining of the issue, the taking of the action or the doing of the act or thing is already the subject of an exclusive delegation to another member of Council staff.

Greater Geelong City Council

Instrument of Sub-Delegation

to

Members of Council Staff

Instrument of Sub-Delegation

By this Instrument of Sub-Delegation, in exercise of the power conferred by s 437(2) of the Environment Protection Act 2017 ('Act') and the Instrument of Delegation of the Environment Protection Authority under the Act dated 4 June 2021, the Council:

1. delegates each duty and/or function and/or power described in column 1 of the Schedule (and summarised in column 2 of the Schedule) to the member of Council staff holding, acting in or performing the duties of the office or position described opposite each such duty and/or function and/or power in column 3 of the Schedule;

2. declares that:

2.1 this Instrument of Delegation is authorised by a resolution of Council passed on 27 July 2021 pursuant to a power of sub-delegation conferred by the Instrument of Delegation of the Environment Protection Authority under the Act dated 4 June 2021; and

2.2 the delegation:

2.2.1 comes into force immediately upon the resolution of Council;

2.2.2 remains in force until varied or revoked;

2.2.3 is subject to any conditions and limitations set out in sub-paragraph 2.3, and the Schedule; and

2.2.4 must be exercised in accordance with any guidelines or policies which Council from time to time adopts;

2.3 this Instrument of Sub-Delegation is subject to the following limitations:

2.3.1 the powers, duties and functions described in column and summarised in column 2 of the Schedule are only delegated for the purpose of regulating:

2.3.2 onsite wastewater management systems with a design or actual flow rate of sewage not exceeding 5000 litres on any day; and

2.3.3 noise from the construction, demolition or removal of residential premises;

2.4 the delegate must not determine the issue, take the action or do the act or thing:

2.4.1 if the issue, action, act or thing is an issue, action or thing which Council has previously designated as an issue, action, act or thing which must be the subject of a Resolution of Council; or

2.4.2 if the determining of the issue, taking of the action or doing of the act or thing would or would be likely to involve a decision which is inconsistent with a

(a) policy; or

(b) strategy

adopted by Council; or

2.4.3 if the determining of the issue, the taking of the action or the doing of the act or thing cannot be the subject of a lawful delegation; or

2.4.4 the determining of the issue, the taking of the action or the doing of the act or thing is already the subject of an exclusive delegation to another member of Council staff.

Signed for GREATER GEELONG CITY COUNCIL by
MARTIN CUTTER, Chief Executive Officer

_____
Chief Executive Officer

SCHEDULE

ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION ACT 2017

Column 1		Column 2	Column 3	Column 4
Statute or Source	**Provision**	**Matter delegated**	**Delegate by Position**	**Conditions and Limitations**
ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION ACT 2017	s 271	Power to issue improvement notice	Manager Health & Local Laws Coordinator Environmental Health Team Leader Environmental Health Environmental Health Officer Environmental Health Technical Officer Food Safety Assessment Officer Food Safety Officer Coordinator Amenity Protection Local Laws Lead Officer Health and Amenity Officer	
ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION ACT 2017	s 272	Power to issue prohibition notice	Manager Health & Local Laws Coordinator Environmental Health Team Leader Environmental Health Environmental Health Officer Environmental Health Technical Officer Food Safety Assessment Officer Food Safety Officer Coordinator Amenity Protection Local Laws Lead Officer Health and Amenity Officer	
ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION ACT 2017	s 279	Power to amend a notice	Manager Health & Local Laws Coordinator Environmental Health Team Leader Environmental Health Environmental Health Officer Environmental Health Technical Officer Food Safety Assessment Officer Food Safety Officer Coordinator Amenity Protection Local Laws Lead Officer Health and Amenity Officer	

Column 1		Column 2	Column 3	Column 4
Statute or Source	**Provision**	**Matter delegated**	**Delegate by Position**	**Conditions and Limitations**
ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION ACT 2017	s 358	Functions of the Environment Protection Authority	Manager Health & Local Laws Coordinator Environmental Health Team Leader Environmental Health Environmental Health Officer Environmental Health Technical Officer Food Safety Assessment Officer Food Safety Officer Coordinator Amenity Protection Local Laws Lead Officer Health and Amenity Officer	
ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION ACT 2017	s 359(1)(b)	Power to do all things that are necessary or convenient to be done for or in connection with the performance of the Environment Protection Authority's functions and duties and to enable the Authority to achieve its objective.	Manager Health & Local Laws Coordinator Environmental Health Team Leader Environmental Health Environmental Health Officer Environmental Health Technical Officer Food Safety Assessment Officer Food Safety Officer Coordinator Amenity Protection Local Laws Lead Officer Health and Amenity Officer	
ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION ACT 2017	s 359(2)	Power to give advice to persons with duties or obligations	Manager Health & Local Laws Coordinator Environmental Health Team Leader Environmental Health Environmental Health Officer Environmental Health Technical Officer Food Safety Assessment Officer Food Safety Officer Coordinator Amenity Protection Local Laws Lead Officer Health and Amenity Officer	

3. NOTICE OF MOTION

3.1. Provision for Low Cost Camping in the North of Geelong

NOTICE OF MOTION – Cr Grzybek

Background

In November 2013, Council passed a motion to promote Greater Geelong in partnership with the tourism industry as a destination that welcomes Recreation Vehicles (RV) to the city and highlights the facilities and experiences that encourages visitation and increased length of stay. Council also recognised the opportunity to better cater for the needs of RV users visiting the City of Greater Geelong by providing dedicated short term parking options and welcome information packs that gives details of overnight and long stay options in the 26 commercial parks located throughout the Municipality. The Council Report included an assessment of RV issues and opportunities and an RV Friendly Town Review (October 2013).

Since that time there has been short term parking options (three locations) reserved for caravans/RV motorhomes in Central Geelong and a welcome brochure produced by Tourism Greater Geelong and The Bellarine highlighting the facilities and experiences available in the region.

There is a need to update the assessment from 2013 to consider the provision of low-cost camping in the north of Geelong including a publicly accessible dump point.

There are many towns right across Australia that are welcoming low-cost camping in their towns as they recognise the value in tourism revenue it is bringing.

Many travellers around Australia are self-contained, use little to no power and are self-sufficient in terms of amenities. It is felt that these travellers have and would bypass the north of Geelong if they didn't have a low-cost option available.

Many of our commercial caravan parks are full in summer which is a great thing for private enterprise business. There is another market which I feel we are not engaging with.

According to the Campervan and Motorhome Club of Australia (CMCA) there are subsidies that can be obtained for the costs of a publicly accessible dump point to be located in Geelong. CMCA will provide the Dump Ezy unit and some signage at no cost to council.

Many residents and potential tourists have contacted me requesting that Geelong capture this market of low cost travellers to bring further tourism and trade to our small towns in the north of Geelong.

I feel that tourism in the north of Geelong has been left behind without this type of facility. The Bellarine, Surf Coast and Urban Geelong have established caravan parks which service the caravan holiday market. The northern parts of Geelong, like the You Yangs, Serendip, Anakie and Little River would benefit from low cost camping and a publicly accessible dump point.

There are many “pop up” sites in the north of Geelong due to events like the Airshow and Lara Food and Wine Festival. An updated assessment could consider a potential site for low cost camping and an operational model which may include management by the City and/or by volunteer organisations like Rotary or Lions Clubs. The updated assessment would also need to engage with all stakeholders including caravan, camping and RV associations, caravan park sector, local community and businesses and RV users/potential visitors to the region and consider the potential tourism dollars this could inject to the north of Geelong.

The Spirit of Tasmania coming to Geelong is welcomed but residents have concerns regarding overnight parking of cars, caravans and RV’s prior to loading onto the ship. An updated assessment should consider a low-cost caravan/RV site to service this market.

RESOLUTION - Item 3.1

Cr Grzybek moved, Cr Aitken seconded -

That Council:

1. **Request the Chief Executive Officer to undertake an update to the 2013 assessment of Recreation Vehicle (RV) users issues and opportunities and the RV Friendly Town Review to be presented to Council by March 2022 with a specific focus on the north of Geelong which will consider:**
   - **1.1. recommendations to better service the needs of RV users including caravan/RV parking, low-cost camping and dump points with focus on specific sites for parking servicing the Spirit of Tasmania services;**
   - **1.2. an updated market assessment of the potential of the caravan/RV sector to consider the opportunities with the Spirit of Tasmania to better service this future market;**
   - **1.3. including a demand and supply analysis of RV, caravan and camping facilities to identify any market gaps not currently serviced by the caravan park sector or public amenities;**
   - **1.4. investigating the feasibility of a low-cost camping park to be established in the north of Geelong including a location for such park and options relating to an operational model;**
   - **1.5. an audit of publicly accessible dump points including potential sites and engagement with the Campervan and Motorhome Club of Australia (CMCA) to determine the criteria to apply for the subsidy for a dump point; and**
   - **1.6. engagement with all stakeholders relating to RV's including caravan, camping and RV associations, caravan park sector, local community and businesses and RV users/potential visitors to the region.**

2. **Endorse an allocation of $30,000 in the 2021-22 budget to undertake the update to the 2013 assessment of Recreation Vehicle (RV) users issues and opportunities and the RV Friendly Town Review with a specific focus on the north of Geelong.**

3. **Request the Chief Executive Officer to engage with Tourism Greater Geelong and The Bellarine to further promote Greater Geelong in partnership with the tourism industry as a destination that welcomes Recreation Vehicles (RV) and is RV friendly highlighting the facilities and experiences that encourages visitation and increased length of stay.**

Carried

3.2. Investigation into Greyhound off-leash Designated Areas

NOTICE OF MOTION – Cr Aitken

Background

1. The City of Greater Geelong has one of the largest animal populations of any Victorian municipality, and currently has over 45,000 registered dogs and cats.
2. The Geelong region is home to hundreds of walking tracks, parks and recreation reserves where people can take their dogs.
3. All public areas in our municipality have been designated as being 'on-leash' for the purposes of dogs, except where otherwise signed. There are a number of places where you can take your dog off-leash, if they are under direct supervision. Details are available on the City's website – www.geelongaustalia.com.au/pets.
4. The City has dedicated dog parks where owners can exercise and socialise their dogs off lead. They are located in Corio and Belmont. Further dog parks are under development, with a park in Lara due to open later in the year and planning is underway for a dog park to be developed in the Bellarine Ward.
5. These facilities are popular as they enable dogs and their owners to socialise, exercise and enjoy the company of others.
6. Owners of retired racing greyhounds do not have the same access to facilities as other breeds. Their access and utilisation of off-leash areas and enclosed dog parks is currently constrained or not allowed due to guidelines and legislation. This leads to the exclusion of these greyhounds and their owners from using the facilities for the benefit of both the dog and owner.
7. In accordance with *the Domestic Animals Act 1994*, Council may consider implementing dedicated pet greyhound off-leash areas for the purpose of exercise. When doing so, it must specify that it applies only to pet greyhounds, the location, approved times and the specified purpose.
8. As Geelong has a growing population of retired greyhounds as pets, these dogs and their owners should have the opportunity to also socialise and exercise their pets in a safe environment.

RESOLUTION - Item 3.2

Cr Aitken moved, Cr Grzybek seconded -

That Council:

1. **Request that the Chief Executive Officer investigate opportunities to provide greyhound off-leash authorised areas in the Greater Geelong municipality in accordance with *the Domestic Animals Act 1994,* giving consideration to both existing and potentially new dedicated off-leash areas, including a possible dedicated greyhound slipping track;**

2. **Officers consult with Greyhound Racing Victoria, local representatives of the Greyhound Adoption Program and Greater Geelong community greyhound owners of both retired or never-bred-to-be-raced greyhounds as part of the investigation of opportunities;**

3. **Receive a briefing on the outcomes of the investigations into these opportunities no later than October 2021; and**

4. **Receive a Council report, if required, by the end of 2021 including recommendations for Council support.**

Carried

4. URGENT BUSINESS

Nil

5. RECORD OF INFORMAL MEETINGS OF COUNCILLORS

5.1. Record of Informal Meetings of Councillors

Source:	**Office of the Chief Executive**
Chief Executive Officer:	**Martin Cutter**

Key Matters

1. The Governance Rules of the City of Greater Geelong require the tabling of records of informal meetings of Councillors at the next convenient Council meeting and that their record be included in the minutes of that Council meeting.

2. A summary of the informal meetings of Councillors is attached as an Appendix to this report.

RESOLUTION - Item 5.1

Cr Sullivan moved, Cr Grzybek seconded -

That Council receive the summary of informal meetings of Councillors for the period to 27 July 2021.

Carried

INFORMAL MEETINGS OF COUNCILLORS
(Council Meeting 27 July 2021)

Informal Meeting Details	Councillors	Officer Attendees	Agenda Items	Conflict of Interest Disclosures
Strategic Discussion **6 July 2021**	Crs Asher, Aitken, Grzybek, Harwood Kontelj, Mansfield, Mason, Moloney, Murrihy, Nelson, Sullivan	M Cutter (CEO) G Smith (DIR) M Dugina (DIR) K Phyland (DIR) S McKew (MGR) J Harris (MGR) L Dundas (OFF) J Daly (MGR) R McMahon (MGR) K Olesnicky (Chief Financial Officer) N O'Shea (Head of Financial Planning & Analysis) C Ruiter (CO RD)	• Quarterly Future Ways of Working Update • Advocacy Priorities • Parking Strategy • Revenue and Rating Strategy	• Nil
Council Briefing **13 July 2021**	Crs Asher, Aitken, Kontelj, Mansfield, Mason, Moloney, Nelson, Sullivan	M Cutter (CEO) G Smith (DIR) R Stevens (DIR) M Dugina (DIR) K Phyland (DIR) G Wilson-Browne (DIR) I Hicks (MGR) S McKew (MGR) J Hurse (MGR) R Thomas (MGR) J Van Slageren (MGR) A Higgs (CO ORD) P Anderson (Project Director – Civic Accommodation) K Ivens (Senior Advisor - Mayor & CEO) M Macgugan (Senior Communications Advisor)	**Presentations:** • Optimal Regional Recycling Infrastructure Model; and • Climate Change Response Plan. **Discussion:** • Arts and Culture Strategy – Community Engagement **Council Reports:** • Portarlington Recreation Reserve Master Plan (Draft) • Sparrovale Wetlands Master Plan • Avalon Corridor Strategy – Community Consultation • Gender COVID-19 Impact Analysis Report • Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing 2018-21 Final Report	• Nil.

			• Amendment C422GGEE – 12 Kinsmead Street, Waurn Ponds, Permanent Heritage Controls – Consideration of Submissions • Draft Climate Change Response Plan • Rabbit Control Plan 2021-26 • Amendment C414GGEE – Proposed Rezoning of Former Rail Land, McCurdy Road, Herne Hill • 2020-21 Community Events Grands – Round 2 (Confidential) • Rural and Peri-Urban Advisory Committee • T2100076 Tender Leisurelink 50 Metre Pool Construction • T2100079 Tender Infringement Administration • Civic Accommodation Update – Decisions on Lot 2 Sale and Variation on Contract Sum (Confidential) • Proposed Lease of Retail and Office Spaces at Wurriki Nyal, 137-149 Mercer Street, Geelong – Civic Precinct • Proposed Lease to Telstra Corporation Limited – Mt Anakie 2392A Ballan Road, Anakie • Proposed Lease of 2-240 Pioneer Road, Grovedale (Leisurelink Kiosk) • Proposed Road Naming of Unnamed Laneway to Bechervaise Lane, Belmont • Revocation of Flood-Prone Area – Warralily Stage 201 • Revocation of Flood-Prone Area – Glenlee Stages 5 and 6	

6. PLANNING DELEGATIONS

6.1. Planning Delegations

Source: **City Planning & Economy**
Director: **Gareth Smith**

Purpose

1. To provide the schedule of planning permit applications determined under delegation since the last report.

Background

2. Section 11 of the *Local Government Act 2020* and section 188 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* empower Council to delegate its powers, duties and functions under relevant legislation to members of Council staff.

3. Section 63 of the *Local Government Act 2020* and section 188 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* allow Council to establish a delegated committee with the power to determine planning permit applications.

4. Council to Staff Instrument of Delegation allows staff to determine planning permit applications where there are less than 6 objections lodged.

5. The Planning Committee's terms of reference provide for determination of planning permit applications where there are 6 or more objections lodged.

6. The City is required by Council to provide information on planning permit applications determined under delegation.

Key Matters

7. The Schedule attached to this report provides information on the planning permit applications determined under delegation since the last report.

RESOLUTION - Item 6.1

Cr Grzybek moved, Cr Harwood seconded -

That Council receive the information in the Schedule entitled Planning Decisions Report June 2021.

Carried

Planning Decisions Report - June 2021

App Number	Location	Application Type	Decision Date	Description	Authority Description/ No of objectors
PP-12-2020	295 Hamilton Highway, FYANSFORD VIC 3218	Use and Development of part of the land for Motor Racing Track (Motorcycles) and Earthworks	11/6/2021	DMC Refusal	Decision Making Committee
PP-1337-2020	2 Kestrel Court, NORLANE VIC 3214	Construction of a Second Dwelling and a Two (2) Lot Subdivision	7/6/2021	No Appeal Lodged Permit Issued	Delegated Authority
PP-1518-2020	555 Sandy Creek Road, LITTLE RIVER VIC 3211	Earthworks Associated with Quarry Rehabilitation	4/6/2021	NOD - PC/C Planning Permit	Planning Committee
PP-342-2020	1-2 Bluff Road, ST LEONARDS VIC 3223	Use and development of the land for retail premises and dwellings; Subdivision of land adjacent to a Road Zone Category 1; and Reduction in the required car parking and bicycle parking rates.	28/6/2021	Permit Issued - VCAT	VCAT
PP-426-2020	20 Idris Avenue, LOVELY BANKS VIC 3213	Use of land for a Disability Services Facility	4/6/2021	Refusal to Grant a Planning Permit	Planning Committee
PP-1038-2020	24 Tova Avenue, BELL POST HILL VIC 3215	Development of the Land for Four Dwellings with One Exceeding 7.5 metres in Height	18-Jun-2021	NOD - Delegate	3
PP-1049-2020	357 Ryrie Street, GEELONG VIC 3220	Buildings and Works associated with Partial Demolition, Alterations and Additions to a Dwelling in a Heritage Overlay	23-Jun-2021	NOD - Delegate	1
PP-1054-2020	20 Sutalo Street, MARSHALL VIC 3216	Construction of Three (3) Dwellings and a Three (3) Lot Subdivision	4-Jun-2021	NOD - Delegate	5
PP-1207-2020	52 Shannon Avenue, GEELONG WEST VIC 3218	Construction of Two (2) Dwellings and Two (2) Lot Subdivision and Access to a Road Zone - Category 1	24-Jun-2021	NOD - Delegate	5
PP-1380-2020	38 Church Street, GROVEDALE VIC 3216	Construction of Six (6) Dwellings and Reduction of Visitor Car Parking	30-Jun-2021	NOD - Delegate	2
PP-1504-2020	3/19 The Esplanade, GEELONG VIC 3220	Extension of a Dwelling on a Lot Less Than 300 Square Metres	18-Jun-2021	NOD - Delegate	4

PP-188-2021	10 The Esplanade, PORTARLINGTON VIC 3223	Construction of a Dwelling over 7.5 Metres in Height	21-Jun-2021	NOD - Delegate	1
PP-361-2021	116 Wandana Drive, WANDANA HEIGHTS VIC 3216	Buildings & Works Associated with the Construction of a Dwelling Greater than 7.5 metres in Height	29-Jun-2021	NOD - Delegate	2
PP-909-2020	251-269 Queenscliff Road, PORTARLINGTON VIC 3223	Use and development of the land for the purposes of a rural industry (packaging and processing herbs and vegetation grown on the land to make essential oils); primary produce sales; business identification signage and access to a Road Zone Category 1	24-Jun-2021	NOD - Delegate	1
PP-948-2020	106 Tanner Street, BREAKWATER VIC 3219	Use and Development of Forty-One (41) Stores (Personal Storage Units), Forty-One (41) Lot Subdivision, Reduction of Car Parking and Demolition of a Front Fence	17-Jun-2021	NOD - Delegate	1

7. CONFIDENTIAL

7.1. 2020-21 Community Events Grants Round 2

RESOLUTION - Item 7.1

Cr Aitken moved, Cr Sullivan seconded -

Pursuant to sections 3(1) and 66(5) of the Local Government Act 2020, the information contained in this report is confidential because it contains personal information that would if released result in the unreasonable disclosure of information about personal affairs. This section is applicable because the agenda item contains a level of detail which if released would diminish the organisation's capacity to compete in a commercial environment.

Carried

7.2. Civic Accommodation Update

RESOLUTION - Item 7.2

Cr Aitken moved, Cr Kontelj seconded -

Pursuant to sections 3(1) and 66(5) of the Local Government Act 2020, the information contained in this report is confidential because it contains Council business information being information that would prejudice the Council's position in commercial negotiations. This section is applicable because there is potential for future commercial negotiations.

Carried

Cr Aitken moved, Cr Mason seconded -

That the meeting be closed to the public.

Carried.

The meeting was closed to the public at 8:38pm

Cr Nelson moved, Cr Mason seconded -

That the meeting be opened to the public.

Carried.

The meeting was opened to the public at 8.46pm

A record of the proceedings of this section of the meeting is contained in a Confidential Minute Book.

8. CLOSE OF MEETING

As there was no further business the meeting closed at 8.46pm on Tuesday 27 July 2021.

Signed: _____

Cr Stephanie Asher (Mayor)

Date: _____