

AGENDA

COUNCIL MEETING

Tuesday 28 July 2026
6:00 pm

City Hall
57 Little Malop Street, Geelong 3220

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

COUNCIL:

Cr S Kontelj (Kardinia Ward) - Mayor
Cr E Kontelj (Hamlyn Heights Ward) - Deputy Mayor
Cr R Nelson (Barrabool Hills Ward)
Cr E Sinclair (Charlemont Ward)
Cr M Cadwell (Cheetham Ward)
Cr E Wilkinson (Connewarre Ward)
Cr A Aitken (Corio Ward)
Cr A Katos (Deakin Ward)
Cr T Sullivan (Leopold Ward)
Cr R Story (Murradoc Ward)
Cr C Burson (You Yangs Ward)

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1. PROCEDURAL MATTERS

1.1. Acknowledgement of Country

Council acknowledges the Wadawurrung People as the Traditional Owners of the Land, Waterways and Skies. We pay our respects to their Elders, past, present and emerging. We acknowledge all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who are part of our Greater Geelong community today.

1.2. Apologies

1.3. Leaves of Absence

That Leave of Absence be granted to Cr R Nelson from 30 July to 9 August 2026, inclusive.

That Leave of Absence be granted to Cr E Wilkinson from 17 August to 21 August 2026, inclusive.

1.4. Declarations of Conflicts of Interest

1.5. Confirmation of Minutes

That the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 23 June 2026 be confirmed.

1.6. Public Question and Submission Time

1.7. Petitions

1. Child Protection Overlay

2. REPORTS

2.1. Environment Strategy Highlights Report 2025 - 26

Source: Growth & Place
Interim Executive Director: Jacqueline Randles

Purpose

1. To celebrate and highlight the City's substantial achievements and positive momentum in delivering the Environment Strategy 2020-30. The report demonstrates strong progress across a broad range of environmental priorities, including significant reductions in corporate carbon emissions, expanded community greening, restoration of key waterways, support for the circular economy, strengthened sustainable development outcomes, and continued community participation in household electrification.

Background

2. The Environment Strategy 2020-30 was adopted by Council on 8 September 2020.
3. The Environment Strategy 2020-30 established 5 goals:
 - 3.1. Become a zero-emission climate ready City;
 - 3.2. Create Greener Community Spaces;
 - 3.3. Contribute to a circular economy by reducing waste;
 - 3.4. Protect, enhance and restore our regions biodiversity; and
4. Achieve better integrated water management through planning and design.
5. The Environment Strategy Action Plan 2024-26 sets out the actions to achieve the Environment Strategy 2020-30 goals. The Environment Strategy Highlights Report 2025-26 at Attachment 1 celebrates the significant achievements delivered during the 2025-26 financial year and highlights the City's continued leadership and momentum in improving environmental outcomes for the region.

Key Matters

6. The Environment Strategy 2020-30 guides planning and decision making to improve the health of the local environment, reduce our environmental footprint, and protect the lifestyle our community enjoys.
7. A review of the 81 actions within the Environment Strategy Action Plan 2024-26 found that 48% were completed, 40% were on track, and 12% required improvement.
8. Key environmental sustainability outcomes and achievements delivered under the Environment Strategy Action Plan 2024-26 and detailed in the Environment Strategy Highlights Report 2025-26 at Attachment 1 include:

- 8.1. Continued reduction in the City's corporate carbon emissions (reduced by 41% since 2019), with measures including street lighting upgrades, solar installations and the purchase of renewable energy, delivering an estimated \$900,000 in annual savings.
- 8.2. Increased greening of community spaces via:
 - 8.2.1. The introduction of updated Nature Strip Landscaping Guidelines in 2026; and
 - 8.2.2. Our Environment Partnership Grant Programs, which has resulted in over 82 nature strip gardens registered with the City for landscaping.
- 8.3. Restoring the Waurin Ponds Creek, Barwon River and Moorabool River systems, by planting approximately 50,000 indigenous plants in collaboration with the Corangamite Catchment Management Authority (CCMA), the Wadawurrung Traditional Owner Aboriginal Corporation, Deakin University and Golden Pains Shire.
- 8.4. Supporting the local circular economy by making compost processed by the City of Greater Geelong available to the public in 25-litre bags that are available to purchase at local Mitre-10 stores.
- 8.5. Developing new Environmentally Sustainable Design provisions for growth area development, including emission reduction, water efficiency, sustainable transport, urban greening and climate resilience.
- 8.6. Continuing to deliver the Electric Homes Program, engaging over 3,200 residents and supporting 759 household electrification upgrades, leveraging approximately \$4.9 million in community investment from a Council contribution of around \$150,000.
9. In achieving these actions, the City is also advancing the Climate Change Response Plan 2021–2030 and building a more sustainable, resilient and climate-ready community.

Recommendation

That Council notes the Environment Strategy Highlights Report 2025-26 (Attachment 1), and the key environmental sustainability outcomes and achievements.

Financial Sustainability

10. Implementation of the Environment Strategy 2020-30 is supported through existing budget and external grant funding.
11. The City has secured \$566,000 in external grant funding to support the upgrade of gas boilers to high-efficiency electric boilers powered by renewable energy at Kardinia Aquatic Centre. The project is currently underway and is expected to deliver a payback period of less than one year. Without these electrification works; the City would have faced operational energy costs exceeding \$3 million over the next decade.

Community Engagement

12. The development of the Environment Strategy 2020-30 was informed by extensive community consultation including community workshops, a drop in engagement session, organisation workshops and peer review, online stakeholder workshops, 8-week community survey, 140 written submissions and 194 comments.
13. Implementation of the Environment Strategy 2020-30 includes partnership programs with other agencies, organisations and our community via the Climate Change Partnership Grants program and the Environment & Sustainability Grants program.

Social Equity and Sustainability

14. Social equity has been supported by implementation of the Environment Strategy 2020-30 and projects that improve the City's liveability, resilience to urban heat through re-greening and energy efficiency and annual energy savings for businesses, community facilities and households.

Gender Equality – Gender+ Impact Assessment

15. A Gender+ Impact Assessment is not required for the Environment Strategy Highlights Report 2025-26.
16. Actions supporting the implementation of the Environment Strategy 2020-30 aim to reduce adverse impacts on our natural environment and assist homeowners to build resilience to extreme heat in turn, helping to reduce gendered impacts of climate change.

Relevant Law/Policy/Legal Implications

17. Relevant legislation includes the *Local Government Act (2020)* specifically that "Councils are required to promote the economic, social and environmental sustainability of the municipal district, including mitigation and planning for climate change risks."
18. The *Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Act (2008)* requires that local governments must have regard for the Victorian public health and wellbeing plan, which lists "tackling climate change and its impact on health" as a priority.
19. The *Victorian Climate Change Act (2017)* requires consideration of climate change when local government prepare their Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan including:

- 19.1. the potential impacts of climate change relevant to the decision or action (adaptation); and
- 19.2. the potential contribution to the State's greenhouse gas emissions of the decision or action (mitigation).
- 20. The *Planning Environment Act (1987)* and *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Act (1999)*, both provide requirements for Council in relation to protecting and enhancing the natural environment.

Alignment to Council Plan and Vision

- 21. This report aligns with the Council Plan 2025-29 strategic priorities:
- 22. Core and Critical Infrastructure
 - 22.1. responsible and sustainable growth and development
- 23. Environment and Circular Economy
 - 23.1. Natural habitat and areas of important biodiversity are identified, protected, connected and restored.
 - 23.2. Significant reductions in emissions and increased community resilience to climate change impacts.
 - 23.3. Minimise waste and manage effective recovery of resources.
- 24. 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

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

Risk Assessment and Risk Appetite Statement

- 26. The Environment Strategy 2020-30 and the supporting Environment Strategy Action Plan 2024-26 serves as key instruments to mitigate Council's strategic risks related to 'Natural Environment' and 'Climate Change.'
- 27. Consistent with Council's balanced risk appetite for Environment & Waste, the proposed approach supports measurable environmental improvement and advances circular economy and emissions reduction initiatives within regulatory obligations, aligning with indicators relating to sustainable practice and ongoing operational benefit.
- 28. The recommendation also aligns with Council's cautious financial risk appetite, as initiatives are funded within existing budgets and external grants, delivering demonstrated cost savings and avoiding long-term liabilities. There are no identified areas where the proposal sits outside appetite, with risks appropriately managed and proportionate to the strategic environmental and community outcomes being achieved.

Environmental Sustainability

29. The Environment Strategy 2020-30 provides a framework and operational guidance for the City's environmental sustainability performance across its 5 strategic goals. Working towards achieving these goals requires cross-departmental collaboration and buy-in. This progress report demonstrates there have been significant achievements to date. An Environment Strategy Action Plan for the period 2027-2030 is currently being prepared, to guide the final 3 years of the Environment Strategy 2020-30.

Attachments

1. Environment Strategy Highlights Report 2025-26 [**2.1.1** - 16 pages]

THE CITY OF
GREATER GEELONG

ENVIRONMENT STRATEGY HIGHLIGHTS REPORT 2025-26

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PROGRESS ON ACTIONS

INTRODUCTION

We developed the Environment Strategy 2020-2030 to define and communicate how the City of Greater Geelong will act to protect and improve our region's environment and reduce our environmental footprint.

The strategy includes five goals:

1. Become a zero-emission climate ready City.
2. Create greener community spaces.
3. Contribute to a circular economy by reducing waste.
4. Protect, enhance and restore our regions biodiversity.
5. Achieve better integrated water management through planning and design.

The Environment Strategy has a 2-year Action Plan and previous reporting on progress of actions can be found in our [Environment Strategy Action Plan 2024 -26](#) report.

This report provides an annual update on actions carried out in the 2025-26 financial year.

PROGRESS OF ACTIONS

Goal	On track	Completed	Incomplete	Needs improvement
1. Climate Action	13	14		2
2. Greener Community Spaces	6	6	1	
3. Circular Economy	4	8		1
4. Nature and Biodiversity	4	11	1	
5. Integrated Water Management	5	1		4

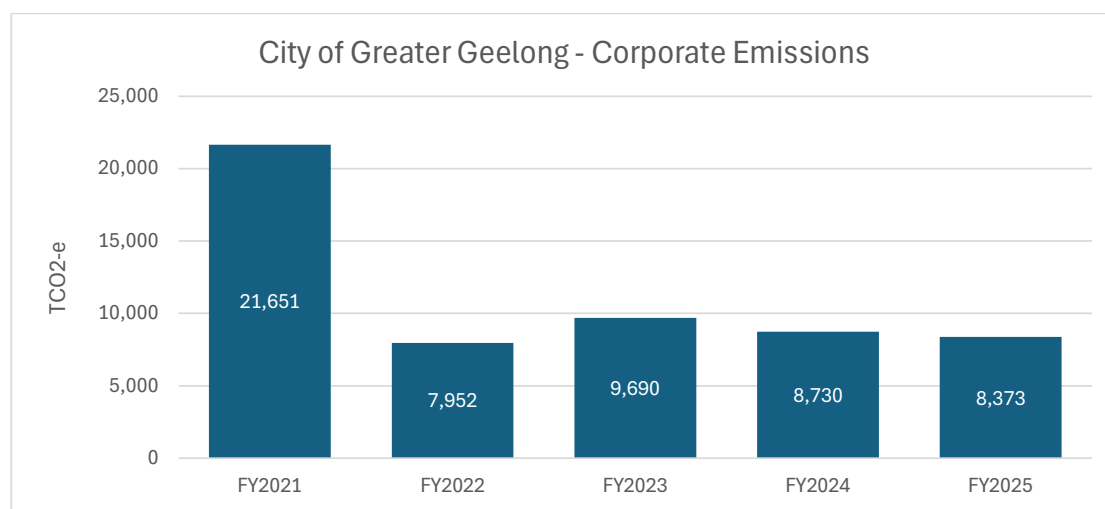
GOAL ONE: BECOME A ZERO-EMISSION, CLIMATE-READY CITY REGION

Climate change is driving rising temperatures and more extreme conditions, posing increasing risks to our environment, infrastructure and community. We have a responsibility to reduce emissions and prepare for these impacts to minimise future risks and protect community wellbeing. Without action, these changes could have significant consequences for public assets, natural systems and community health.

CORPORATE EMISSIONS

The City's emissions profile includes natural gas used in council buildings and fuel consumption across our light and heavy fleet. Since 2021, emissions have decreased by 64%, with reduction measures delivering an estimated \$900,000 in annual savings.

These reductions have been driven by initiatives such as the VECO 100% renewable electricity contract, construction of Green Star-rated facilities, and energy efficiency upgrades and solar installations across City buildings.



*FY2026 emissions data is subject to a reporting lag and will be available in October 2026

VECO - RENEWABLE ELECTRICITY CONTRACT

The City was a founding member of the Victorian Energy Collaboration (VECO) which set up a renewable electricity contract for 51 Victorian councils from the Dundonnell wind farm in south-west Victoria. This renewable electricity supply contract came into full effect from 1 July 2021. VECO is the largest ever emissions reduction project undertaken by local government in Australia and now means our buildings and facilities, including streetlights generate zero emissions.

By participating in the VECO renewable energy project, the City is estimated to have saved \$1.06 million dollars since the contract started.



STREET LIGHTING LED UPGRADES

In 2025, the City of Greater Geelong, in partnership with Powercor, completed a major LED Street Lighting and Smart Control Project. Over 4.5 years, more than 22,000 inefficient streetlights were replaced with energy-efficient LED fittings, making it the largest council-led smart lighting rollout in Australia.

The upgrades are forecast to deliver operational savings of approximately \$2.2 million and reduce greenhouse gas emissions by over 3,300 tonnes of CO₂ each year. Lighting compliance and safety were also improved, particularly in high-risk areas.

In addition to the LED upgrades, smart controllers and a Central Management System were integrated, enabling remote monitoring and adaptive lighting control to enable further efficiency gains.



ALL ELECTRIC HOMES 2025

Since 2023, the Electric Homes Program has engaged more than 3,200 residents, generated over 2,300 enquiries, and delivered 759 household electrification upgrades. Supported by a Council investment of approximately \$150,000, the program has leveraged almost \$4.9 million in community investment, representing a return of approximately \$32 for every dollar invested.

Participating households are projected to save more than \$11.5 million in energy costs over the life of installed technologies while avoiding approximately 35,400 tonnes of CO₂-e emissions. The program has also delivered significant community benefits through the donation of 45.32kW of solar PV and 12 heat pump hot water systems to local households and organisations.



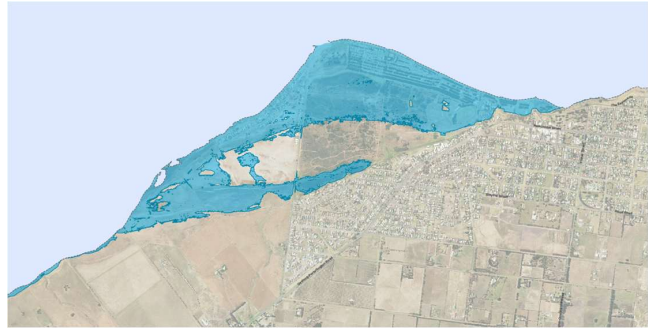
Source: All Electric Homes - Geelong Sustainability

BARWON SOUTH WEST CLIMATE ALLIANCE - RESILIENT COMMUNITIES ASSETS PROJECT

The Barwon South West Climate Alliance (BSWCA) is a regional partnership of local governments and organisations working collaboratively on climate change. The City is Chair of the BSWCA, playing a leadership role in driving priority projects across the region. The Resilient Communities Assets Project supports councils and partner organisations to better understand and respond to climate-related risks to community infrastructure and assets.

Funded through the Department of Justice and Community Safety, the project provides participating organisations with baseline climate risk assessment methodologies, spatial data tools, and asset vulnerability analysis to help identify and prioritise risks from hazards such as flooding, heat, bushfire and coastal inundation.

Delivered across the Barwon South West region, the project enables councils to access technical expertise, regional datasets and shared capability development that would otherwise be difficult to resource individually. It is also strengthening long-term organisational capacity by supporting integration of climate risk considerations into asset management, strategic planning and future investment decisions. Outcomes from the project will inform adaptation planning, infrastructure resilience, and evidence-based decision making across the region.



Coastal Inundation Mapping – Portarlington

GOAL TWO: CREATE GREENER COMMUNITY SPACES

Population growth is increasing pressure on our urban areas, which risk becoming hotter and less liveable without considered action. Expanding green infrastructure such as trees, parks and open spaces will help cool our city, enhance biodiversity and improve community wellbeing. Creating greener community spaces is essential to supporting healthier, more resilient and liveable neighbourhoods.

NATURE STRIP LANDSCAPING GUIDELINES

The City updated its Nature Strip Landscaping Guidelines in 2025, responding to growing community demand for more flexible, greener and more diverse nature strips.

Importantly, the guidelines place an emphasis on strengthening biodiversity outcomes by encouraging indigenous plants and urban wildlife habitat. They also contribute to climate resilience by promoting greener streetscapes that help reduce urban heat, improve urban cooling, and enhance overall liveability and community wellbeing.

The guidelines provide clear direction on permitted works, clarify responsibilities between the City and residents, and ensure safety, accessibility and protection of public infrastructure. They also support greater design flexibility, including edible gardens and varied planting approaches.



Planted nature strip – Mt Duneed

GUIDELINES AND CLIMATE CHANGE PARTNERSHIP GRANTS IN ACTION

The City's Climate Change Partnership Grants are supporting Highton Rotary Club's Nature Strip Blitz project, which demonstrates early implementation of the guidelines, with community-led projects delivering practical outcomes on the ground. The pilot program commenced in 2025, transforming 20 nature strips into indigenous gardens designed to support biodiversity and create pollinator pathways.

Following strong local uptake, the initiative has expanded in 2026 to support around 100 households across Geelong and the Bellarine, with participants receiving design guidance, plants, mulch and hands-on support. Projects prioritise indigenous, drought-tolerant species to reduce water use, attract pollinators and help cool streets.

Beyond environmental benefits, the program highlights the social value of nature strip landscaping, with residents reporting increased neighbour interaction, knowledge sharing and a stronger sense of community connectedness as streets are collectively transformed.



A nature strip being transformed through the Highton Rotary Club's Nature Strip Blitz project

TREE CITIES OF THE WORLD STATUS

Awarded by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the recognition acknowledges cities that meet global standards in urban tree management. In 2025, 283 cities across 24 countries were designated as Tree Cities of the World. Greater Geelong is one of only 12 Australian councils recognised, and one of just two in Victoria alongside Banyule City Council.

The City manages more than 190,000 urban trees, including over 119,000 street trees and 45,000 trees in parks, spanning 393 species. In the past year, more than 6,300 trees were planted across the region, with a further 4,000 trees incorporated through new developments. Trees play a central role in shaping Greater Geelong's character and liveability, with Lara, home to the highest number of City-managed trees.



Tree planting at Barwon Heads

The region's most common species include River Red Gum, Yellow Gum and Brush Box, and there are 53 recorded tree hollows - features that can take up to a century to form and provide important habitat for wildlife. Trees also contribute to health and wellbeing, with street trees absorbing around 73 tonnes of air pollution each year and helping manage stormwater volumes equivalent to four Olympic-sized swimming pools.

NEW URBAN DEVELOPMENTS

Increased Canopy Coverage Targets

New increased tree canopy targets now exist for new urban developments. Plan for Victoria sets a target to increase canopy cover to 30 per cent and new planning scheme controls have been introduced that set a minimum canopy cover requirement on private land of approximately 10 per cent on land up to 1,000 square metres and 20 per cent on land greater than 1,000 square metres. This will mean that for many new developments there will be requirements to enhance canopy cover.

Developer Delivered New Reserves

As our urban areas continue to grow, so too does our green infrastructure, including new reserves. Delivered by developers and vested in the City of Greater Geelong, these reserves come in a variety of forms, including community reserves, nature reserves, linear reserves, drainage reserves and small walkway reserves. In 2025-26, 44 new reserves totalling 24.65 hectares were handed over to the City, contributing to an expanding green network.

DRAFT URBAN FOREST STRATEGY

The Urban Forest Strategy (UFS) has been updated, and a draft is ready for Council consideration and public comment. The Draft UFS seeks to increase the municipal canopy target from 25 per cent to 30 per cent by 2036, increase alignment with state government policy, more strategic selection of available planting sites, strengthen community partnerships beyond Council owned and managed land, and improve coordination across Council programs.

Current planting programs alone are not sufficient to achieve the long-term canopy target, and opportunities exist to expand planting into underutilised spaces including nature strips, road reserves, drainage corridors, vacant land, and private land.

The Draft Urban Forest Strategy will be presented to Council in July 2026 for consideration and release for public feedback.

GOAL THREE: CONTRIBUTE TO A CIRCULAR ECONOMY BY REDUCING WASTE

The City of Greater Geelong set a vision to contribute to a circular economy by leading and supporting the community to actively avoid waste and increase the reuse and recycling of products and materials. Achievements and outcomes for 2025-26 demonstrate our commitment to this goal.

BETTER FOR GEELONG BAGGED COMPOST

Every year, we turn 35,000 tonnes of garden material from residents' bins into premium compost, right here in Greater Geelong.

In April 2026, that compost became even more accessible, launching in convenient 25-litre bags at local Mitre-10 stores. Previously only available in bulk, this new format makes it easier for households to enjoy high-quality, locally produced compost. This milestone not only expands access for the community but also strengthens our partnership with a trusted national retailer.

Now, more residents can garden sustainably with a product that supports resource recovery, reduces waste, and helps create healthier soils.



Better for Geelong Compost 25-litre bags available for purchase at a local Mitre-10 store.

DETOX YOUR HOME EVENT

A Detox Your Home event is a free community drop-off service where residents can safely dispose of household chemicals (e.g. paints, pesticides and cleaners) that cannot be placed in kerbside bins or accepted at resource recovery centres, helping protect public health, waterways and the environment.

In May 2026, the City delivered a highly successful Detox Your Home event at the Corio Depot. For the first time, the event included a textile drop-off, expanding opportunities for resource recovery.

A total of 1,860 kg (5,437 items) of textiles were collected. Of these, 79 per cent will be rehomed in communities where they are most needed. The remaining items will be repurposed into industrial rags, furniture padding, insulation fillers and craft materials (14 per cent), or processed into clinker for cement production (7 per cent) as an alternative to fossil fuels.

TURNING ROAD WASTE INTO A RESOURCE

Across the City, the pothole repair program is doing more than maintaining roads - it is putting circular economy principles into practice.

Instead of sending leftover asphalt to landfill, crews collect and return it to depots at Corio, Belmont and Drysdale, where it is stockpiled and repurposed into road base for future works. Around 9,000 tonnes of reclaimed asphalt pavement is reused each year, helping to keep valuable materials in circulation.

In 2025 alone, in-house teams processed 11,148 tonnes - equivalent to about 465 truck and trailer loads - turning waste into a resource. This approach reduces disposal costs, cuts landfill and supports more sustainable procurement, delivering better outcomes for the community.



Stockpiled road asphalt.



Asphalt after being crushed into road base

LANDY FIELD - RECYCLED RUBBER FOR ATHLETICS TRACK

Supporting the circular economy from truck to track. In 2024, upgrades at Landy Field incorporated the use of 57 tonnes of recycled crumbed rubber sourced from used truck tyres to construct the base rubber mat on the athletics track. This is equivalent to nearly 2,000 truck tyres.



Recycled crumbed rubber used on Landy Field athletics track upgrade and resurfacing

GOAL FOUR: PROTECT, ENHANCE AND RESTORE OUR REGION'S BIODIVERSITY

Our region's natural environment is critical to biodiversity, ecosystem health and community wellbeing, yet it's in decline and requires urgent action. As a major land manager and planning authority, we play a key role in protecting and restoring habitats while partnering with community and stakeholders to strengthen biodiversity outcomes across the region.

IMPROVING BIODIVERSITY, HABITAT AND COMMUNITY AMENITY

Green Links – Waurn Ponds Creek, Barwon and Moorabool Rivers

Between 2025-26, the City secured over \$1.3 million in external funding to deliver priority on-ground biodiversity projects across the Geelong region.

This included \$478,000 through two state-funded Green Links projects: Round 1 - the Waurn Ponds Creek Restoration Project led by the Corangamite Catchment Management Authority (CCMA) and Round 2 - the Moorabool and Barwon Rivers Restoration Project led by the City.

These projects are delivering a coordinated, landscape-scale program of riparian restoration across the Waurn Ponds Creek, Barwon River, including Sparrovale Wetlands, and Moorabool River systems. To support the successful delivery of both projects, collaboration with project partners was critical. Project partners included, the CCMA, the Wadawurrung Traditional Owner Aboriginal Corporation, Deakin University and Golden Plains Shire.

Both projects focus on reconnecting fragmented habitats, improving ecological function and enhancing biodiversity outcomes within increasingly urbanising catchments. Across the two projects, more than 45 hectares are being treated through pest plant removal, pest animal management and protection of remnant vegetation. In addition to this, approximately 50,000 indigenous plants are being established to restore native vegetation communities and strengthen habitat connectivity.

Together, the projects will deliver significant biodiversity benefits by improving habitat for threatened and priority species, including Growling Grass Frog, Yarra Pygmy Perch, koala and platypus. They will also strengthen ecological connections to key systems such as the Barwon River floodplain and adjacent Ramsar wetlands and be supported by ongoing community and Traditional Owner involvement.



Revegetation along Waurn Ponds Creek



Armstrong Creek Waterway Revegetation

The establishment of new reserves in Mt Duneed and Armstrong Creek demonstrates how biodiversity outcomes are being embedded in urban development early in the planning stages of such developments.

Planning for the Armstrong Creek waterway, which flows through both areas has prioritised habitat protection and restoration within a rapidly developing landscape. With the growth areas being delivered in stages, each phase is applying evolving approaches to revegetation and habitat creation. Lessons from earlier phases have been embedded into later stages, resulting in improved biodiversity and amenity outcomes and more resilient landscapes.



Mt Duneed revegetation activities along the Armstrong Creek

NAGOYA-GEELONG PARTNERSHIP

The Nagoya–Geelong Partnership is a formal international collaboration between the City of Greater Geelong and the City of Nagoya, established in 2007 through a wetlands affiliation agreement. It focuses on protecting internationally significant wetlands in both regions, which support migratory bird species travelling between Japan and Australia.

The bi-annual Nagoya–Geelong Wetlands Partnership Conference was held in March 2026 as part of the official Nagoya delegation visit to Geelong. The program included a civic welcome at Geelong City Hall, an official meeting between the City of Nagoya and the City of Greater Geelong, and a series of site visits and field-based activities focused on wetland management, coastal environments, and environmental education.



Nagoya students visit Swan Bay as part of the 2026 visit

Key locations included Sparrovale Wetlands, Swan Bay, Queenscliff Harbour, the Marine and Freshwater Discovery Centre, Barwon Heads and the You Yangs. The visit also provided valuable opportunities for student engagement, cultural exchange, and knowledge sharing on wetland protection and management practices, further strengthening the long-standing partnership between Nagoya and Geelong.

GOAL FIVE: ACHIEVE BETTER INTEGRATED WATER MANAGEMENT THROUGH PLANNING AND DESIGN

We need to manage our water resources wisely, securing a sustainable water supply for the ongoing health of our community and our environment.

Integrated water management (IWM) is a collaborative approach to managing all water resources - including drinking water, sewerage, waterways, floodplains, drainage and stormwater networks. It involves working with all relevant stakeholders to plan and deliver improved water management processes.

BARWON INTEGRATED WATER MANAGEMENT FORUM

The Integrated Water Management Forum, led by Barwon Water, brings together government, water, catchment and local government sectors to coordinate decisions, share resources, and maximise investment for water resilience and liveability in the Barwon region.

Through strong collaboration, the forum has secured over \$50 million in funding and delivered key projects such as stormwater upgrades, recycled water initiatives, and urban greening across multiple municipalities. Recently, it has also coordinated \$1.5 million in new project submissions, with outcomes expected in 2026.

The forum is now entering a new phase, with refreshed executive-level representation and leadership to strengthen strategic alignment and investment outcomes. It will meet twice yearly and focus on setting regional priorities, updating its terms of reference, and improving collaboration with industry.

The City has provided \$10,000 to support a 3-year Regional IWM Officer and Technical Working Group to further enhance water security, climate resilience, and delivery of IWM projects across the region.

CONSTRUCTED WATERWAYS – IWM IN ACTION

Constructed waterways play an important role in stormwater management in new urban developments. These systems collect and slow runoff, removing litter, sediment and other pollutants. In the Armstrong Creek Growth Area, a network of constructed waterways directs stormwater to Sparrowvale Wetlands that provides further treatment and storage, helping protect the internationally significant wetlands of Lake Connewarre.

The constructed waterway located in the Banksia Estate in Armstrong Creek is a recent project that demonstrates IWM in action.



Waurn Ponds constructed waterway – Hams Rd



Banksia Estate constructed waterway – Armstrong Creek

CREAMERY ROAD PRECINCT STRUCTURE PLAN - IWM INITIATIVES

The Creamery Road Precinct Structure Plan (PSP) in the North Western Geelong Growth Area incorporates integrated water management (IWM) as a core design element, supporting sustainable urban growth while protecting downstream waterways. The PSP adopts a water-sensitive urban design (WSUD) approach to manage stormwater, improve water quality and respond to flood risk across the catchment.

Key measures include constructed wetlands, bio-retention systems and retarding basins to treat and slow stormwater before it enters Cowies Creek and the broader Barwon River system. These systems reduce pollutants, manage peak flows and support environmental values, helping to protect receiving waterways.

Stormwater infrastructure is integrated within the open space network, with waterways and drainage corridors designed as multifunctional assets that provide flood storage and habitat for the nationally threatened Growling Grass Frog. This supports landscape connectivity, urban cooling and improved community amenity, while ensuring development is appropriately located outside high-risk flood areas.

The PSP also incorporates the use of recycled water to service new dwellings, reducing demand on potable water supplies and improving long-term water efficiency across the precinct.

CITY OF GREATER GEELONG

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Wurriki Nyal
137-149 Mercer Street, Geelong
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2.2. Geelong Plan for Nature 2026-36

Source: City Infrastructure
Executive Director: James Stirton

Purpose

1. To seek Council adoption of the Geelong Plan for Nature 2026-36 (Attachment 1).
2. To seek Council's acknowledgement of, and thanks to, the community and employees for their valuable contributions to the development of the Geelong Plan for Nature 2026-2036.

Background

3. The City has prepared a Geelong Plan for Nature 2026-36 (the Plan) to set the future direction for biodiversity programs in Greater Geelong and is seeking Council endorsement.
4. The Plan is aligned to Council's commitment to nature as outlined in:
 - 4.1. The 30-year community vision of the Greater Geelong: A Clever and Creative Future for the Greater Geelong region - recognises the uniqueness and significance of our natural environments.
 - 4.2. Our Council Plan 2025-29 - Environment and Circular Economy - commits to protect and enhance our unique natural environment and surrounds.
 - 4.3. Environment Strategy 2020-30 - contains multiple actions to meet the goal of protecting, enhancing, and restoring the regions biodiversity by 2030.
5. The draft Plan was unanimously endorsed for four weeks community engagement by Council on 24 March 2026.
6. Following this endorsement the City commenced a month of engagement, extending from the 25 March to the 31 April 2026 with face-to-face meetings and a Have Your Say page to collect feedback.
7. Over 350 participants and community groups completed the on-line survey and/or provided detailed written submission. We also spoke to nearly 200 people during the engagement.
8. Feedback from community members, organisations, agencies and industry representatives demonstrates strong overall support for the Plan. Participants widely recognise the Plan as a comprehensive and timely response to biodiversity decline, and an important step toward improving the region's ecological health for future generations.

Key Matters

9. The Plan was updated following the extensive feedback during the consultation phase. For more details, see The Geelong Plan for Nature Community Engagement Report 2026 (Attachment 2).
10. Changes made to the Plan aim to strengthen its goals, strategic outcomes, targets and actions, while remaining aligned with the original intent. Key themes include:
 - 10.1. Connectivity as a core priority
 - 10.2. Protection of remnant vegetation and habitat
 - 10.3. Wadawurrung partnerships and cultural knowledge
 - 10.4. Community and partnerships – community is essential but needs support
 - 10.5. Concerns for insect populations
 - 10.6. Urban nature equity and ‘nature poor’ areas
 - 10.7. Impact of light and noise pollution
 - 10.8. Management of domestic animals (cats and dogs)
 - 10.9. Invasive species management
 - 10.10. Implementation, funding and accountability
 - 10.11. Quality of maps and future biodiversity mapping
11. The strong community response to the Plan has created valuable opportunities to establish long-term partnerships that will support the delivery of meaningful, on-ground outcomes and demonstrate measurable progress for nature.
12. The Plan now incorporates a robust Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and Improvement (MERI) framework to guide implementation and track progress.

Recommendation

That Council:

1. **Adopts the Geelong Plan for Nature 2026-36 (Attachment 1).**
2. **Acknowledges and thanks the community and employees for their valuable input and feedback throughout the development of the Plan.**

Financial Sustainability

13. The financial budget implications are highlighted against each action within the Action Plan.
14. Over 80% of the recommended actions will be funded through existing business-as-usual arrangements.
15. Council have allocated a further \$100,000 in the FY27 Budget to support the implementation of the Geelong Biolinks Project.
16. Applications for grants will be pursued to fund operational initiatives, expand Capital Projects, and introduce new programs. Over the past 18 months, the City's Environment Team has secured several grants amounting to more than \$1,000,000, which are designated to support the implementation of actions in the draft Plan.
17. Additional resources may be needed for certain actions in the Action Table, and business cases will be prepared as needed.

Community Engagement

18. The Plan was finalised following extensive feedback from the community, stakeholders, including Wadawurrung Traditional Owners, environmental groups, agency representatives and City Staff. Over 350 detailed surveys and submissions received during the month consultation process have been read and incorporated into the Plan without changing the intent.
19. The Geelong Plan for Nature Community Engagement Report 2026 provides further information (Attachment 2).

Social Equity and Sustainability

20. Within Goal 4: Foster stewardship and strong partnerships of the Plan, there are clearly defined strategic outcomes, targets, and actions aimed at engaging a broader and more diverse demographic in environmental education and conservation initiatives and supporting urban nature equity. These measures include specific targets for increasing participation among culturally and linguistically diverse communities and younger individuals.

Gender Equality – Gender+ Impact Assessment

21. A Gender Impact Assessment was not required for this report.

Relevant Law/Policy/Legal Implications

22. The Plan is guided by conventions, legislation, strategies, and policies at the international, national, state, and local levels. A detailed listing is available in Table 2: Planning Hierarchy on page 11 of the Plan.

Alignment to Council Plan and Vision

23. This report aligns with the Council Plan 2025-29 strategic priority: Environment and Circular Economy

24. 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

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

Risk Assessment and Risk Appetite Statement

26. The Plan aligns with the objectives to sustain the natural environment while managing growth. It provides innovative solutions to limit its impact on the environment from its growth and activities, meeting a balanced appetite for risks. Those initiatives are individually costed, with funding existing through business-as-usual activities with the exploration of grants funding to expand operational initiatives and capital projects, meeting the cautious appetite for financial risks.
27. Enterprise Risk Assessment (158) - Strategic Risk: Natural Environment: The City may contribute to or fail to prevent the degradation or loss of Geelong’s natural environment. The risk consequences are documented below.
- 27.1. Damage to our natural environment or wildlife
 - 27.2. Loss of internationally significant habitats
 - 27.3. Disruption to migration corridors for species
 - 27.4. Species extinction events
 - 27.5. Impact to community enjoyment of environment
 - 27.6. Unforeseen remediation and/or offset costs
 - 27.7. Fines
 - 27.8. Unsustainable remediation/management costs for land handed to the City following development
28. Exacerbation of climate change impacts
- 28.1. The Plan serves as an essential instrument enabling the Council to address and reduce this strategic risk.

Environmental Sustainability

29. The Plan sets the future direction for biodiversity programs in Greater Geelong.

Attachments

- 1. Geelong Plan for Nature 2026-36 [2.2.1 - 94 pages]
- 2. Geelong Plan for Nature Community Engagement Report 2026 [2.2.2 - 19 pages]



THE CITY OF
GREATER GEELONG

GEELONG PLAN FOR NATURE

2026-36

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Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Wadawurrung People as the Traditional Owners of the Land, Waterways and Skies. We pay our respects to their Elders, past, present and emerging. We acknowledge all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who are part of our Greater Geelong community today.

We acknowledge the Wadawurrung Traditional Owners for their insights shared during the development of this Plan for Nature. The City of Greater Geelong is committed to supporting the Wadawurrung people care for and heal Country, and to play an increasing role in managing the natural environments of the City.

Executive Summary

The Geelong Plan for Nature 2026–36 (the Plan) sets out how we will identify, protect, restore and enhance our region's biodiversity in the context of rapid population growth and climate change. It responds to the ongoing loss of native plants, animals and ecosystems, and recognises that a healthy natural environment is essential to our region's future health, liveability and resilience.

The Plan is grounded in partnership. It acknowledges the Wadawurrung Traditional Owners as original custodians of Country and recognises the deep connection between nature, culture and wellbeing. It has been shaped through extensive engagement with Wadawurrung, the community, environmental groups, government agencies and City staff.

The Plan is guided by five strategic goals in key areas:

1. Value Wadawurrung Country and culture
2. Prioritise protections
3. Connect and restore
4. Foster stewardship and strong partnerships
5. Build resilience to a changing climate.

A place-based approach underpins the Plan. Six landscapes guide local action across urban, rural, coastal and waterway environments. The plan's targets focus on achieving outcomes across both public and private land, recognising that we need action at all scales. A rolling two-year Action Plan ensures we can adapt, measure and respond as we implement.

By working collaboratively with the community, Traditional Owners, landholders and partner agencies, the Plan provides a clear pathway to halt biodiversity decline, build resilience and ensure nature continues to support people and place, now and into the future.

ACRONYMS

CMA – Catchment Management Authority

City – City of Greater Geelong

CVA – Cultural Value Assessment

DEECA – Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action

EPBC Act – *Commonwealth Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*

FFG Act – *Victorian Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988*

PV – Parks Victoria

TfN – Trust for Nature

WTOAC – Wadawurrung Traditional Owner Aboriginal Corporation.

GLOSSARY

Biodiversity – the variety of all life on earth (animals, plants, fungi, microbes), their interactions and the natural patterns they form. This includes the variety (or diversity) of species, the variety within species (genetic diversity) and the variety of ecosystems.

Biolink/area – geographical area that is a priority for protection and restoration of biodiversity combining corridors, zones and nodes.

Biolink/corridor (C) – geographical area that provides suitable conditions for animal and plant movement through the landscape.

Biolink/habitat node (HN) - geographical area of habitat >10 hectares comprising either remnant vegetation or wetlands

Biolink/restoration node (RN) - geographical area mostly >100 hectares owned by one entity where habitat can be restored

Biolink/priority corridor (PC) – geographical area such as a major river, coastal zone or wetland that is highly significant for animal and plant movement through the landscape.

Biolink Zones (Z) - geographical area > 100 hectares comprising multiple habitats nodes highly significant for biodiversity.

Blue carbon – coastal and marine ecosystems (e.g. mangroves, tidal marshes, seagrasses) that capture and store atmospheric carbon dioxide at rates that can exceed those of terrestrial forests.

CALD Communities – culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

Citizen science – the collection and analysis of data about the natural world by members of the public, often in partnership with researchers or conservation organisations.

Ecosystem – a unique community of living and non-living organisms interacting as a system.

Ecosystem services – the benefits provided to humans through the transformation of natural resources (including land, water, vegetation and atmosphere) into essential goods and services, such as clean air, water and food.

Flora – plant species.

Fauna – animal species.

Green card accreditation – environmental hygiene and biosecurity certification program (e.g. Dieback Green Card) confirming that land managers and field workers can prevent the spread of weeds, diseases and soil-borne pathogens.

Habitat – an area for a species which has the right structure and composition of native vegetation to provide food and shelter and opportunities for breeding.

Habitat connectivity – the connections available in the landscape for flora and fauna to access resources and to retain natural patterns of movement and dispersal.

Invasive species – introduced or non-native species that cause harm to the natural environment by outcompeting, displacing or disrupting native species and ecological processes.

Key wildlife species – ecologically critical or keystone fauna that determine the structure and function of ecosystems and rely on connected habitat corridors for movement.

Nature Kit – a statewide online mapping and data exploration tool for biodiversity data integration and decision support.

No net loss – under Victoria’s native vegetation removal regulations, the ‘no net loss’ objective ensures that biodiversity value is not reduced when native vegetation is approved for removal. This is achieved through an avoid, minimise, and offset hierarchy.

Stewardship – in a catchment context involves both individual and collective efforts in managing natural systems to generate intergenerational benefits for the environment, people and place.

Teal carbon – non-tidal freshwater wetlands (e.g. peatlands, swamps, bogs) that store large amounts of organic carbon in waterlogged soils and vegetation.

Vegetation community migration zones – defined geographical pathways and refugia that enable plant communities to shift distribution in response to climate change, including rising temperatures and sea-level rise.

Introduction

PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

The Geelong Plan for Nature 2026-36 (the Plan) is an investment in protecting, enhancing and restoring biodiversity in the City of Greater Geelong. Now, more than ever, it is critical that we take stock and do what we can to reverse the trend of loss of our critical and unique ecosystems and our native plants and animals. To do this, we will need to work closely with the community, Wadawurrung Traditional Owners and regional stakeholders.

The purpose of this Plan aligns with the Victorian Government's broader commitment to biodiversity. The Government recognises that **biodiversity has an intrinsic right to exist, thrive and flourish regardless of whether it provides tangible benefits to humans, and all Victorians have a duty to protect biodiversity**¹. The City supports this commitment by ensuring that **natural habitat and areas of important biodiversity are identified, protected, connected and restored**².

VISION

The Plan has been designed to align with the City's Environmental Strategy Goal of:

Protect, enhance, and restore our region's biodiversity

BRINGING THE VISION TO LIFE

Achieving this vision will require a step-change in how nature is valued, protected, and restored across Geelong. Clear, ambitious targets and strong community support will guide action and inspire collective stewardship of the natural environment.

Restored habitats will support rich native biodiversity and be linked through wildlife corridors, enabling species to move, thrive, and adapt to change. Over time, this recovery will create the conditions needed to reintroduce locally extinct species, such as the Southern Brown Bandicoot, signalling a healthier and more resilient ecosystem. The City will also contribute to national and global goals, including conserving at least 30% of land and wetlands by 2030, while more residents actively participate in conservation and citizen science. Together, these efforts will protect, enhance, and restore Geelong's natural environment for future generations.



Figure 1. Caring for nature³

¹ Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (2017) *Biodiversity 2037*

² City of Greater Geelong (2025) *Our Council Plan 2025-29*

³ City of Greater Geelong (n.d.). Available at: <https://www.geelongcity.vic.gov.au/services/environment-and-sustainability/nature-and-environment/nature-volunteers>.

OUR REGION

The City of Greater Geelong (City) is in south-western Victoria, approximately 75km south-west of Melbourne centred around Corio Bay. Covering 1,247 square kilometres, it includes a large part of the Bellarine Peninsula. Our region is made up of the city of Geelong, surrounding suburbs, rural and coastal townships and rural, agricultural and coastal landscapes, including the lower Barwon River. With a population of nearly 290,000⁴, Geelong is Victoria's largest regional city and the leading commercial centre for south-western Victoria.

Our region hosts a diverse mix of urban, rural and coastal environments. Many areas, particularly along waterways and the coast, are set aside as public nature reserves⁵ that support remnant indigenous vegetation and a diverse range of plants and animals. These include many protected species of international, national or state significance.

Our waterways include the Barwon and Moorabool rivers, lakes, small creeks and estuaries, which provide habitat for a range of freshwater and riparian species. Alongside these waterbodies the region hosts extensive coastline areas, including Corio and Port Phillip bays, that include intertidal mudflats, rocky reefs, sandy beaches and escarpments that provide important habitat for marine and bird life.

Our region hosts 11,639 hectares of wetlands, including significant areas within the Port Phillip Bay (Western Shoreline) and Bellarine Peninsula Ramsar Site. Designated under the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, this site includes Swan Bay, the Lake Connewarre complex, Limeburners Bay and the wetlands around Avalon and Point Wilson. Together, these areas provide critical habitat and refuge for many threatened and migratory bird species of both local and international significance.

Wadawurrung values

The Wathaurong (Wadawurrung) people are the Traditional Owners of this region and are today represented by the Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation (WTOAC). For thousands of generations, Wadawurrung people have cared for Country. In Wadawurrung knowledge, the coast, wetlands, grassy and volcanic plains of the Dja (Country) were formed by Bundjil the Eagle, the Ancestor Creator. The name "Geelong" comes from the Wadawurrung word for the region "Djilang" which means "tongue of land"⁶.

Wadawurrung culture and livelihoods are deeply connected to the region's biodiversity, with dja (land) and warre (sea) Country seen as one. The inland plains, waterways, coast and warre Country provided abundant food, shelter, medicine and clothing to sustain thousands of generations of Wadawurrung people.

Many animals once common on Wadawurrung Country, like the Fat-tailed Dunnart are now rare. **Kwenda** (Bandicoot), **Yoorn** (Spotted-tail Quoll) and the Eastern Barred Bandicoot are now extinct or rarely seen in this landscape.

Together, these animals, plants and people make Country healthy.

The now threatened Victorian Volcanic Grasslands (most recent estimates suggest between 1 to 5% remain^{7,8,9}) were once full of food grasses, snakes, lizards, frogs, moths, birds and animals, providing enough food resources for the Wadawurrung people to live there permanently and year-round. The coastal dunes are layered with living places and hearths from the many generations of Wadawurrung ancestors living, harvesting, sharing meals, trading and practising ceremony. The sandy beaches, rock pools, rocky platforms and reefs continue to be places of abundance for harvesting food and resources like crustaceans, shellfish and kelp.

"Most of the large animals, including Go-yin (wallabies), Goim (kangaroos), Walert (possums), ducks and swans were hunted and processed by men using boomerangs and spears. Buniya (eels) were caught in eel traps and water birds were caught in nets that our women wove and made from plant fibres, a practice we continue today. The sea provides bountiful sources of crayfish, abalone, mussels, oysters, pipis and fish"

~ Wadawurrung Traditional Owners¹⁰

⁴ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2024) *Region Summary: Greater Geelong*. Available at: <https://dbr.abs.gov.au/region.html?lrg=iga&rgn=22750>

⁵ City of Greater Geelong (2020) *Environment Strategy 2020-30*

⁶ City of Greater Geelong (2025) *Reconciliation Action Plan - Wadawurrung Aboriginal history*. Available at: <https://www.geelongaustralia.com.au/>

⁷ State Wide Integrated Flora and Fauna Teams (SWIFFT) (n.d.) Available at: https://www.swiff.net.au/cb_pages/team_linear_reserves_project.php

⁸ Grassy Plains Network (n.d.) Available at: <https://grassyplains.net.au/grasslands/>

⁹ Corangamite Catchment Management Authority (n.d.) Available at: <https://ccma.vic.gov.au/projects/victorian-volcanic-plains/>

¹⁰ Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation (WTOAC) (2020) *Paleert Tjaara Dja - Healthy Country Plan 2020-30*.

The region's waterways were rich in eels, fish and waterbirds. The name 'Barwon' comes from parwan, meaning "magpie" or "great wide", and the Wadawurrung refer to yulluk (great river) that runs from the barre (mountains) to the warre (ocean). Coastal waters have long provided abundance with kelp forests supporting diverse marine life and the Wadawurrung harvesting rock lobster and abalone for food, and kelp to use as water carriers. Australia's largest stretch of registered cultural sites in Australia occurs along the coastline of the Wadawurrung (*Paleert Tjaara Dja*).



Figure 2. Wadawurrung Country and Connection, Billy-Jay O'Toole (2019)¹¹

Post-colonisation landscape

European settlement dates from 1836, with land largely used for farming, grazing and vineyards. Major development occurred in the post-war years, particularly during the 1960s and 1970s, driven by industrial growth, public housing and migration. Population growth shifted to the Bellarine Peninsula in the 1980s, then in the 1990s to the fringe urban areas of Grovedale, Highton, St Albans Park, Wandana Heights and Waurn Ponds, and outlying areas of Lara, Leopold and Ocean Grove. More recently growth has centred in Armstrong Creek, Mount Duneed and Curlewis as well as to Geelong's north and west.

Close proximity to Melbourne, an affordable and diverse housing market, good transport links and lifestyle opportunities continue to drive strong population growth. An additional 152,000 people are expected to live here by 2036 – an average annual growth rate of 2.5 per cent¹².

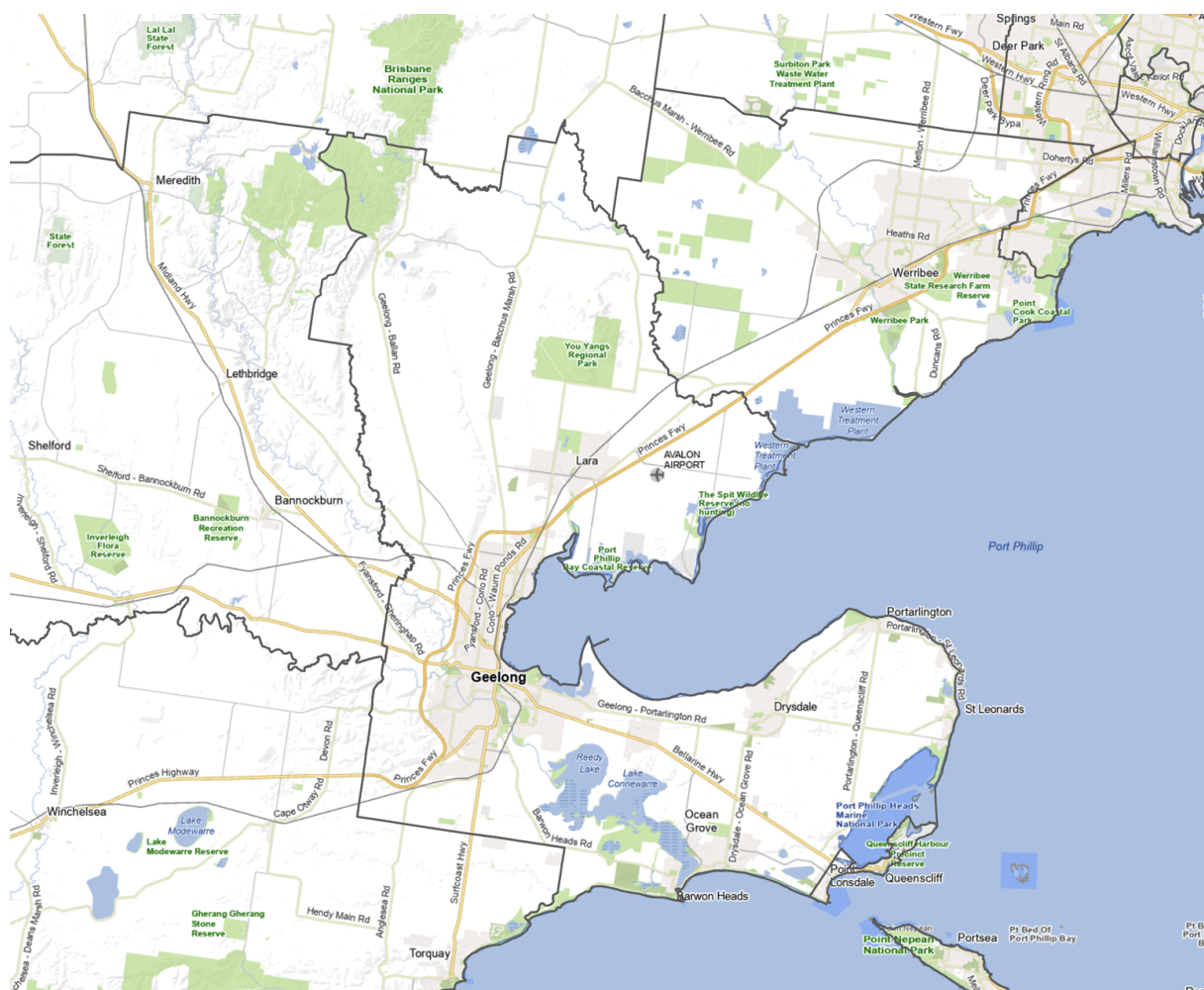
Long-term land clearing and urban expansion have left little remnant native vegetation, much of it small and fragmented. Larger remaining areas include the Brisbane Ranges National Park, Wurdi Youang (You Yangs) Regional Park, Barwon River, Lake Connewarre State Game Reserve, Barwon Bluff Marine Sanctuary and Swan Bay.

¹¹ City of Greater Geelong (n.d.) *Reconciliation Action Plan* page. Available at: <https://www.geelongaustralia.com.au/rap/article/item/8d86f96f7bf8a7c.aspx>

¹² City of Greater Geelong (2026) *Greater Geelong Planning Scheme*. Available at: https://planning-schemes.app.planning.vic.gov.au/Greater%20Geelong/ordinance/02_03.

Table 1. City of Greater Geelong at a glance

The region at a glance	
Total Land Area	1,247km ²
Population	289,565 ¹³
River Basins ¹⁴	Barwon and Moorabool Basins
Major Waterways	Barwon, Moorabool and Little River
Traditional Custodians	Wadawurrung
Wetlands of National Importance	Lake Connewarre State Wildlife Reserve, Avalon, Point Wilson/Limeburners Bay and Swan Bay ¹⁵ , all part of Port Phillip Bay (Western Shoreline) and Bellarine Peninsula Wetlands Ramsar site
Bioregions	Victorian Volcanic Plains, Otway Plains and Central Uplands bioregions
Land Use	Primary production is the major land use, followed by residential land ¹⁶
Largest Contributors to the Regional Economy	Manufacturing, extractive industries and tourism, especially the Bellarine Peninsula and the coast. Agricultural production is modest, but important and valued in the municipality's north. Recent drivers of Geelong's economic growth include health care, education, construction and retail ¹⁷

Figure 3. City of Greater Geelong¹⁸

¹³ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2024) *Region Summary: Greater Geelong*. Available at: <https://dbr.abs.gov.au/region.html?lga=lga&rgn=22750>

¹⁴ Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (2025) *Australian Water Resource Council Major River Basins of Victoria* [Dataset]. Available at: <https://discover.data.vic.gov.au/dataset/awrc-major-river-basins-of-victoria>

¹⁵ Australian Government (2019) *Directory of Important Wetlands*. Available at: <https://www.environment.gov.au/cgi-bin/wetlands/search.pl?smode=DOIW>

¹⁶ idcommunity (2021) *City of Greater Geelong: community profile*. Available at: <https://profile.id.com.au/geelong/about>

¹⁷ G21 (2013) *G21 Regional Growth Plan*. G21

¹⁸ Victorian Government (n.d.) *Know Your Council*. Available at: <https://www.vic.gov.au/know-your-council>.

THE BIGGER PICTURE

The Plan has been informed by international, national, state and local conventions, legislation, strategies and policies. The State of Victoria has over 25 pieces of legislation and over 30 strategies that relate to environmental management. Those relevant to this Plan are listed below in Table 2.

Table 2. Planning Hierarchy

Level	Strategy/Agreement
City of Greater Geelong	• Our 30-year vision • Our Council Plan 2025–29 • Environment Strategy 2020-30.
International conventions, agreements, legislation, and policy	• Kyoto Protocol 1997 • The Ramsar Convention on Wetlands 1971 • United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change Paris Agreement 2015 • United Nations Sustainable Development Goals • Bilateral migratory bird agreements¹⁹
Commonwealth context	• Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999.
Victorian context	• Environment Protection Act 1970 • Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988 • Planning and Environment Act 1987 • Local Government Act 1989 • Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006 • Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994 • Climate Change Act 2017 • Water Act 1989 • Rivers of the Barwon (Barre Warre Yulluk) Action Plan 2021 • Victoria's Climate Change Strategy 2026-30 • Victorian Waterway Management Strategy 2013 (currently being renewed) • Protecting Victoria's Environment - Biodiversity 2037.
Regional context	• Paleert Tjaara Dja Let's make Country good together: Wadawurrung Country Plan: 2020-30 • Corangamite Regional Catchment Strategy 2021 - 27 • Port Phillip and Western Port Regional Catchment Strategy 2021 -27 • Healthy Waterways Strategy 2018-2028: Port Phillip and Westernport, Victoria • Corangamite Waterway Strategy 2014 - 22 • Kitjarra-dja-bul Bullarto langi-ut masterplan 2023.

¹⁹ Migratory Bird Agreements: JAMBA (Japan-Australia, 1974), CAMBA (China-Australia, 1986), and ROKAMBA (Republic of Korea-Australia, 2006)

How we engaged

This Plan has been shaped through extensive engagement with Wadawurrung Traditional Owners, community-based environment and Landcare groups, local naturalists, the wider community, agency stakeholders and City staff.

Find further information about the consultation process and engagement methods used in the updated *Plan for Nature Community Engagement Report 2026*.

Table 3. How we engaged with community and stakeholders in developing the Plan

Wadawurrung Traditional Owners	Community-based environment groups	The wider community	Agency stakeholders	Geelong City Council staff
<i>Regular meetings with the Wadawurrung Traditional Owner Aboriginal Corporation over the period 2021 – 2024.</i> <i>One walk on Country with Traditional Owners.</i>	<i>Presentations to the Nature Stewards and Community Nature Group Celebration during the engagement campaign during Oct 2023 – Jan 2024.</i> <i>Community group mail out to key volunteer environment groups during the 2022/23 engagement campaign.</i> <i>Two meetings with a community technical advisory group, which included representatives from community-based environment groups in the City and local conservationists.</i>	<i>A wide community engagement campaign was held during Oct 2022 – Jan 2023 which included:</i> <i>a tailored project website, which hosted three survey formats and invited photo submissions</i> <i>information stalls at regional events</i> <i>promotional material distributed to community centres</i> <i>open house sessions at the City's office</i> <i>social media posts</i> <i>presentations to the Youth Council.</i>	<i>Two meetings with an agency stakeholder technical advisory group.</i> <i>Input via the 2022/23 engagement campaign.</i> <i>Two biolink workshops in March 2023 and January 2024.</i>	<i>Two meetings with a Council staff technical advisory group.</i> <i>Meetings with the City's Sustainable Advisory Committee and Councillors from the Environment portfolio.</i> <i>One staff workshop to identify key actions, held in June 2024.</i> <i>Councillor workshop in November 2025.</i>

WHAT WE HEARD

What people value about nature in the City

Survey respondents identified the following values:

- **Native flora and fauna**, especially the contribution they make to people's wellbeing in urban areas
- Opportunities for **recreation** provided by natural reserves
- Enjoyment of waterways and beaches
- **Remnant intact habitat** such as large old trees
- Benefits nature provides to psychological, physical and emotional wellbeing
- **Accessibility and diversity** of natural areas around the City.

The natural places people enjoy most

- **Barwon and Moorabool River** corridors are one of the community's favourite natural places in the City.
- **You Yangs Regional Park** and the **coastal reserves** are also enjoyed by many people.
- Some people also identified natural parklands, wetlands, grasslands of the Victorian Volcanic Plains and woodland reserves as favourite places by some people.

- Many respondents also nominated natural areas not listed in the survey, most commonly the Bellarine Peninsula, Serendip Sanctuary, Edwards Point, Ocean Grove Nature Reserve, St Leonards and Breamlea – Thompson's Creek estuary and wetlands.

Many of the sites valued by people are not managed directly by the City. Some are managed by Parks Victoria, such as the You Yangs Regional Park and Serendip Sanctuary. Others occur across public and private land tenures, like the grasslands of the Victorian Volcanic Plains. Breamlea estuary and wetlands exist on the border with Surf Coast Shire. We need partnerships and cooperation between the City, other public land managers and private landholders.

Perceived threats to nature

- **Extensive habitat loss or fragmentation, subdivision and development pressures, and barriers to wildlife movement** were identified as the most urgent threats. It is likely that these threats are perceived to be interlinked, as many respondents expressed concern about the effect of urban development on remnant habitat and wildlife movement.
- Climate change impacts, pest animals (rabbits, foxes, feral cats), loss of hollow-bearing trees, weed invasion, herbicides, pesticides and other air pollutants, and urban stormwater runoff were all listed as other significant threats to nature in the City.
- Additional threats include littering, rubbish dumping and plastic pollution in waterways, disturbance by domestic dogs and cats, duck shooting and the associated pollution of wetlands with shooting debris, and the invasive Indian myna.

Opportunities for enhancement

Survey respondents identified the following opportunities to enhance nature, in order of perceived importance:

- Establish wildlife corridors across the landscape linking existing habitat
- Greater use of land use planning controls and other regulatory tools to protect existing natural areas and biodiversity
- Support for community groups and landholders to undertake nature restoration works
- More opportunities for the community to become engaged in nature projects
- Managing people's impact to parks and reserves where there are high natural values
- Collaborative projects between agencies and the community for on ground nature works
- Long term stewardship and protection programs aimed at land conservation, such as covenants and acquisition
- Connection to Country of the Wadawurrung people.

There was an overwhelming common concern about the **impact of increasing population growth and land use change on nature**, particularly remnant habitat and wildlife movement. Many people want to see more restrictions placed on housing development to preserve and restore native habitat within urban areas, as well as establishing corridors to support wildlife movement across an otherwise fragmented landscape.

A public exhibition phase was also undertaken for the Plan via the City's Have Your Say platform from 1 April to 30 April 2026, providing the community and stakeholders with a further opportunity to review and comment on the proposed directions and actions.

Feedback received during this exhibition period has been carefully considered and incorporated where appropriate, helping to refine, strengthen and finalise the Plan.



Figure 4. From top left: Community drop-in session at the Geelong Waterfront Market, City workshop, Plan for Nature Postcards and Bellarine Biolinks Workshop

Drivers of change

THE CITY IS UNDERGOING SUBSTANTIAL POPULATION GROWTH. TOGETHER WITH BENDIGO AND BALLARAT, GREATER GEELONG IS EXPECTED TO ABSORB HALF OF ALL GROWTH OUTSIDE METROPOLITAN MELBOURNE BY 2036.²⁰

At the same time, climate change is driving a drier, warmer future. Together, these pressures will intensify impacts on our natural environment²¹.

We need a more coordinated response to protecting and managing nature to ensure the City can continue to support and enhance the liveability of our region.

CLIMATE CHANGE

The Barwon region has already become drier and warmer, a trend expected to continue²². Changes include rising temperatures, more variable rainfall, sea level rise and stronger winds²³. By the 2050s, some predictions suggest Geelong's climate will resemble Shepparton's climate today²⁴. Extreme weather events such as droughts, bushfires, heavy rain and heatwaves are also expected to become more frequent (see Figure 5).

TEMPERATURE	- Maximum and minimum daily temperatures will continue to increase - By the 2030s, increases in daily maximum temperature of 0.8 to 1.5°C are expected
RAINFALL	- Rainfall will be variable but continue to decline in winter, spring and autumn - Extreme rainfall events are expected to become more intense and variable
SEA LEVEL	Sea levels are expected to continue rising by 4mm per year
FIRE DANGER	High fire danger days are projected to increase to 9 days per year

Figure 5. Climate projections for the Barwon Region²⁵

Biodiversity in Victoria, including in the City, has declined significantly since European settlement due to land clearing, fire, pest plants and animals, land development, altered hydrological regimes and water pollution. Climate change is likely to amplify these threatening processes, reducing the ability of native plants and animals to adapt and increasing the risk of loss or extinction of local populations and species.

Below are some of the changes that may shape the City's natural environment.

Native vegetation and waterways

The Barwon River, Moorabool River and key urban waterways including Hovells Creek are the City's primary waterways and underpin regional hydrology, providing critical habitat, supporting remnant riparian vegetation and sustaining downstream wetlands and estuarine systems, including the Barwon Estuary and the Ramsar-listed wetlands of the lower Barwon River system, including the Lake Connewarre wetland complex. These waterways are part of a connected, living system extending across the Barwon catchment, linking rivers, creeks, wetlands and estuarine environments from the uplands to the coast.

Reduced inflows and altered flow regimes in the Barwon and Moorabool Rivers²⁶ driven by climate variability and water use across the catchment are already affecting water availability, water quality and ecological condition, with flow variability influencing sediment transport, salinity and habitat suitability for aquatic species.

²⁰ Victoria in Future (2019)

²¹ City of Greater Geelong (2021) *Climate Change Response Plan*

²² Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (2015) *Climate-ready Victoria: Barwon South West*

²³ City of Greater Geelong (2021) *Climate Change Response Plan*

²⁴ Clarke et al. (2019) *Barwon Climate Projections 2019*

²⁵ Clarke et al. (2019) *Barwon Climate Projections 2019*.

²⁶ Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (2021) *Rivers of the Barwon (Barre Warre Yulluk) Action Plan*

Growing population and urban development within the catchment are adding to these pressures²⁷, particularly through increased stormwater runoff and demand for water resources.

Extended dry periods and drought with reduced rainfall and higher temperatures will impact availability of soil moisture and water for surface and groundwater systems. This will change the composition of vegetation communities, with some species replaced by those better suited to warmer, drier conditions. Grassland species may also change in response to elevated carbon dioxide and shifting soil moisture levels.

Old remnant trees are particularly vulnerable to altered wetting and drying cycles, extreme heat and bushfire. These trees' hollows, expansive canopies and complex branch structures provide irreplaceable habitat for a range of native mammals, birds, insects and reptiles. They also play a vital role in nutrient cycling, carbon sequestration and water regulation. The death of these trees reduces habitat and releases stored carbon back into the atmosphere.

Bushfires are expected to become more frequent and intense, favouring fast-growing, fire-tolerant species and increasing soil erosion, nutrient loss and sedimentation of waterways, impacting wildlife and increasing sediment and nutrient loads entering waterways such as the Barwon and Moorabool Rivers.

Along the coast, sea level rise and stronger storms threaten vulnerable Bellarine and Corio Bay ecosystems. Over time, the natural inward migration of coastal vegetation communities, such as saltmarsh and mangrove, forced to migrate inland, may be lost as they hit sea walls, road infrastructure and other impediments.

More frequent and intense rainfall is increasing stormwater run-off that could affect wetlands, streams and estuaries and downstream marine environments. We already have examples where the combination of increased urban development (and impervious surfaces) coupled with rainfall changes is impacting the natural hydrology of the Sparrowale Wetlands Reserve - *Ngubiti yoorree* and the coastal wetlands between Ocean Grove and Point Lonsdale. In highly urbanised catchments such as Hovells Creek, increased impervious surfaces accelerate stormwater flows, contributing to channel erosion, reduced water quality and impacts on downstream ecosystems including Corio Bay.

These waterways also function as key ecological corridors²⁸, supporting species movement across the landscape. Maintaining riparian condition and connectivity along the Barwon and Moorabool Rivers and Hovells Creek is critical to sustaining biodiversity in an increasingly fragmented and urbanised environment.

Native fauna

Our most threatened ecological communities like Coastal Saltmarsh and threatened species like Orange-bellied Parrot and Hooded Plover are most vulnerable to climate change.

Changes in temperature, rainfall and sea level are altering habitats, reducing food and shelter and shifting where species can survive. More frequent and intense bushfires are shrinking unburnt habitat, while rising seas are likely to reduce coastal vegetation and impact the wildlife populations that depend on these environments.

Higher temperatures change the timing of life cycle events and distribution for animals and plants. Those with highly specific habitat requirements, limited dispersal ability or fragmented habitats may be most affected, leading to more local extinctions.

Drying wetlands and waterways will affect aquatic species by reducing water availability and quality, while increasing water temperatures, reducing dissolved oxygen levels and increasing the risk of toxic algal blooms.

Climate change is likely to favour more-tolerant, faster-breeding invasive species, adding more pressure to native species through competition for dwindling food sources, increased predation and habitat loss.

²⁷ Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (2021) *Rivers of the Barwon (Barre Warre Yulluk) Action Plan*

²⁸ Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (2021) *Rivers of the Barwon (Barre Warre Yulluk) Action Plan*.



Figure 6. The endangered Hooded Plover²⁹

The Hooded Plover (which is nationally listed as vulnerable) will experience the compounding impacts of climate change. Coastal erosion and sea level rise will threaten their habitat, while growing beach use (including dogs) will further disturb. Habitat loss through the incursion of sea wheat grass and ongoing predation by foxes and native birds add further pressure, reducing the Hooded Plover's ability to survive.

Cultural impact

Climate change has significant and distinct impacts for Indigenous people, affecting culture, knowledge and spiritual connection to Country. Declining biodiversity, changing ecosystems and increasing species loss reduce access to resources central to cultural practices. Wadawurrung people are already seeing the loss of kelp forests, dramatic changes in sea life, rising sea levels and risk to cultural sites³⁰.

Climate change is also disrupting Indigenous seasons, with environmental triggers occurring at different times. The long absence of cultural burning for centuries has altered ecosystems across Country and limited opportunities to heal and regenerate Country. Wadawurrung knowledge recognises fire as intrinsic for managing Dja (Country), particularly in the context of harsher weather patterns and longer fire seasons³¹.

Indigenous knowledge, shaped by thousands of generations living with Country, is vital for guiding climate adaptation and supporting healthy landscapes into the future.

POPULATION GROWTH

The City's recent strong population growth is likely to continue. The population is expected to grow to 441,984 by 2046³², an increase of more than 44% on the current estimated resident population. The main factors contributing to this phenomenon are:

- Geelong feeds off broader population increases in Australia, Victoria and Melbourne.
- According to 2021 census data³³, Geelong gains population via migration from overseas, interstate and within Victoria particularly south-west Victoria, which is likely to continue.
- House prices are lower than Melbourne and there is less traffic congestion. New transport upgrades provide good access to Melbourne's job market and services and local employment opportunities are growing.

²⁹ City of Greater Geelong (n.d.) Hooded Plover image. Available at: <https://www.geelongaustralia.com.au/hoodedplover/article/item/8cf5b098da0360a.aspx>

³⁰ Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation (2020) *Paleert Tjaara Dja – Wadawurrung Country Plan*

³¹ Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation (2020) *Paleert Tjaara Dja – Wadawurrung Country Plan*

³² City of Greater Geelong population forecast (2026) Available at: <https://forecast.id.com.au/geelong>

³³ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2021) *Census of Population and Housing, Usual Residence Data*.

This population growth has led to rapid urban expansion, particularly in Armstrong Creek and on the Bellarine at Leopold, Ocean Grove and Drysdale/Clifton Springs. Future growth will continue to be focus on Armstrong Creek and the Northern and Western Geelong Growth Areas, the largest regional urban expansion in Victoria, comprising over 5,300ha³⁴. Growth on the Bellarine may be more limited due to support for maintaining its character through planning controls guiding land use, management and development for the next 50 years.

Strategic planning frameworks and initiatives³⁵, including the Northern and Western Geelong Growth Areas, the Geelong Growth Areas Strategic Assessment, the Melbourne Strategic Assessment and the Greater Avalon Employment Precinct, are guiding large-scale land use change across the region to accommodate population growth, housing demand and employment opportunities. These areas support regionally significant biodiversity values, including remnant native grasslands to the north of Geelong, riparian and floodplain habitats associated with the Barwon and Moorabool River systems, and coastal and wetland environments linked to the lower Barwon River and Bellarine Peninsula. These changes have the potential to affect the extent, condition and connectivity of these biodiversity values across the landscape, particularly in areas undergoing transition from rural or natural land uses to urban or industrial development. Planning for these precincts incorporates measures to avoid, minimise and offset impacts on these values, including consideration of high-value vegetation, habitat connectivity and application of native vegetation removal and offset requirements.

Without adequate planning, the significant population growth and urban expansion will continue to put pressure on biodiversity and the remaining natural areas in the City³⁶. Only a careful, collaborative response can prevent further loss and fragmentation of remnant vegetation and protect and restore ecological communities that are already threatened or endangered, such as the grassland communities to the City's north.

LAND USE CHANGE

Since European settlement, widespread vegetation clearing for agriculture, horticulture, industry and townships has significantly reduced native vegetation across the City³⁷. Most remaining native vegetation is now found in public reserves and parks, protecting important habitat remnants that have been largely cleared elsewhere. Around 12,094ha (approximately 9.7%) of City land is permanently protected, including Parks Victoria managed land, City nature reserves and private land protected under Trust for Nature covenants. Outside these areas, native vegetation is mostly threatened and largely fragmented, occurring in small patches along roadsides, waterways and the coast, or scattered across private property.

The consequences of native vegetation loss are well-known and include reduced biodiversity, increased salinity, soil erosion, and deteriorating water quality in our rivers, creeks and wetlands³⁸.

Without appropriate planning and management, several land use changes may continue to contribute to the loss, fragmentation and degradation of native vegetation in the City. These are:

- Widespread urban development and expansion into previously agricultural or natural areas, leading to potential removal or fragmentation of remaining patches of vegetation. This includes removal or fragmentation of old habitat trees, woodland habitats and grasslands
- Increased built infrastructure, including utilities and roads, which has expanded to service a fast- growing population
- Subdivision of larger farms to meet increased demand for lifestyle properties – a trend particularly evident across the Bellarine. Subdivision can lead to further removal of native vegetation to make way for housing and services and can increase the threat to wildlife from domestic pets and introduction of garden weeds.
- Offsets required under Victoria's *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and the state's Native Vegetation Removal Guidelines to mitigate the net loss of biodiversity from a planning development are commonly purchased outside the City. This leads to further biodiversity loss within the City, contributing to the ongoing fragmentation of threatened ecosystems.

³⁴ Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW)(2025) Geelong Growth Areas Strategic Assessment. Available at: <https://www.dcceew.gov.au/environment/epbc/approvals/strategic-assessments/geelong-growth-areas>

³⁵ DCCEEW (2025) Geelong Growth Areas Strategic Assessment. Available at: <https://www.dcceew.gov.au/environment/epbc/approvals/strategic-assessments/geelong-growth-areas>

³⁶ City of Greater Geelong (2021) *Climate Change Response Plan*

³⁷ Corangamite Catchment Management Authority (CCMA) (2024) *Corangamite Regional Catchment Strategy*

³⁸ CCMA (2024) *Corangamite Regional Catchment Strategy*.

In recent years, the City's nature reserves nearly doubled from around 700ha to 1,358ha, largely through land transferred as development offsets. While the total area has grown, many new reserves are small and fragmented, raising concerns about their long-term ecological quality and resilience.

PEST PLANTS AND ANIMALS

Pest plants and animals are a major problem in the City. They compete with native species for resources, prey on native fauna, damage habitats and disrupt ecosystems. Established pest animals in the region include rabbits, foxes, feral cats, deer, and invasive bird species such as the Indian myna. Rabbits and foxes and some deer species (e.g. sambar, fallow, red deer) are declared established pest animals under the Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994, while feral cats and Indian mynas are not formally declared but are widely recognised significant threats to biodiversity. Indian mynas are highly adaptable and aggressive birds that compete with native wildlife for nesting sites and can displace hollow-dependent species, reducing local biodiversity.

Pest plants also threaten biodiversity and agriculture by invading native vegetation, providing shelter for pest animals, increasing fire fuel loads and, in some cases, reducing land values.



Strategic Direction

The Plan forms a key part of the City's broader environmental program. It provides detailed direction on how we can achieve our goal of protecting, enhancing, and restoring biodiversity in line with the Environment Strategy 2020-30 and, more broadly, our community vision. Achieving these goals requires sustained investment in biodiversity. Without it, we cannot achieve this goal or contribute to the community aspiration of:

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.

Specifically, the *Environment Strategy 2020-30* and *Geelong Plan for Nature 2026-36* will focus on delivering the following components of the community vision:

- Sustainable development that supports population growth and protects the natural environment
- Development and implementation of sustainable solutions.

The Plan specifies five goals, each with defined outcomes, targets and actions, which align with and support the guiding principles of Goal 4 in the Environment Strategy.

Figure 7 outlines the strategic foundation of the Plan.

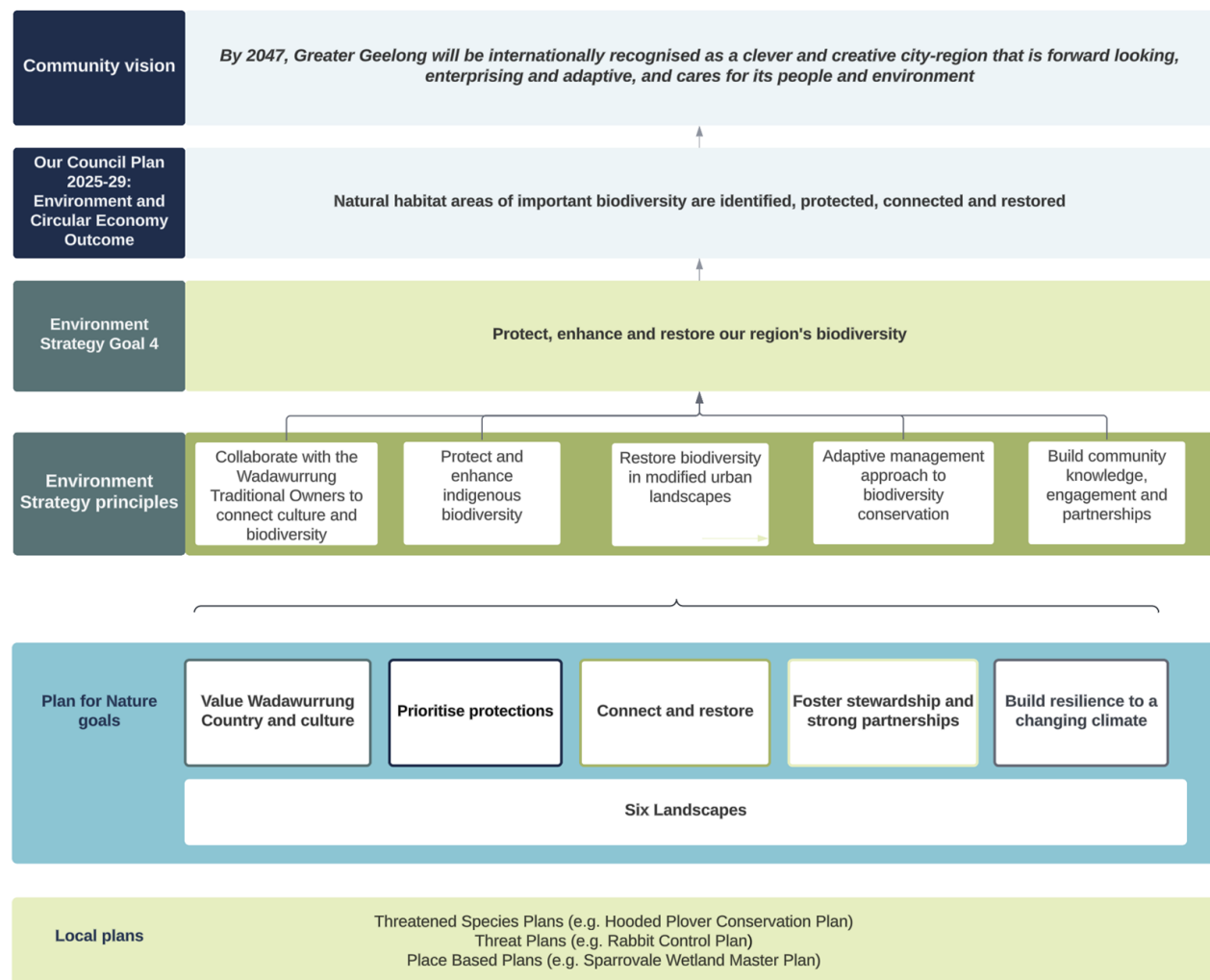


Figure 7. Strategic foundation of the Plan

STRUCTURE OF THE PLAN

The Plan sets long-term (10 year) strategic objectives and targets for each of the five goals. These higher-level objectives will be implemented over the life of the Plan. Underpinning this is a shorter-term Action Plan, comprising a series of actions that will be implemented over two years. Many of the short-term actions are place-based and will apply to one of six landscapes (refer next section), while some actions will apply to the whole of the City. The Action Plan will be reviewed and updated every two years on a rolling basis.

State of Nature reports have been prepared for each of the six landscapes and describe the current state of biodiversity, threats and opportunities. Key species have also been identified for each landscape and are documented in this Plan.

Figure 8 provides an overview of the elements of the Plan, which are described in detail in the following sections.



Figure 8. The elements of the Plan



Landscapes: Values, Threats and Opportunities

The Plan has also adopted six landscapes. These areas align with the landscapes (or local areas) described by the Corangamite Catchment Management Authority (CMA) and Melbourne Water in the Corangamite and the Port Phillip and Western Port Regional Catchment Strategies (refer to Figure 9).

These are areas with common features based on demographics, land use, vegetation, geology, geomorphology, soil, topography, hydrology, climate, bioregions and connectivity³⁹. The six landscapes described in this Plan allow for more detailed, place-based planning and more locally focused management of biodiversity values.

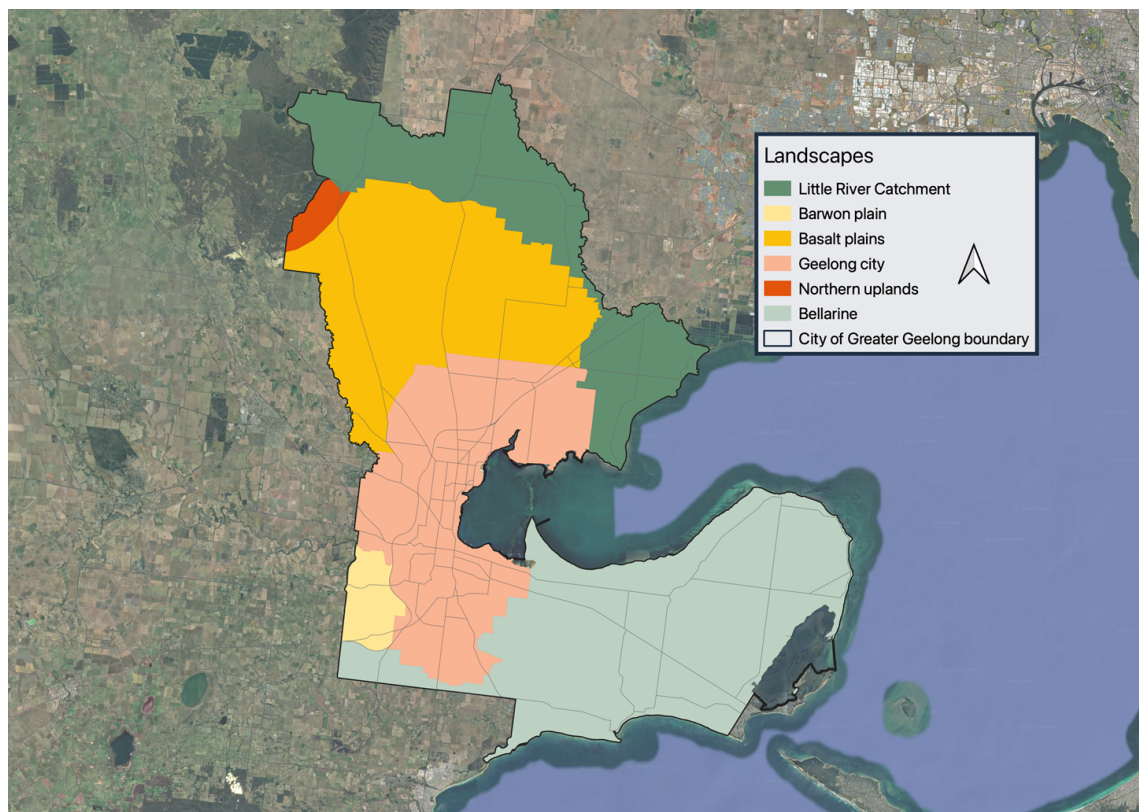


Figure 9. Landscapes or local areas that occur in the City of Greater Geelong (as based on the Corangamite and Port Phillip and Western Port Regional Catchment Strategies)

This section describes each of these landscapes, its current condition, as well as the key threats and opportunities for its biodiversity. Localised, short-term (two-year) actions have been identified for each landscape (as well as some actions that apply across the whole City), which build on longer-term strategic objectives. The first section provides a snapshot for the entire municipality.

More details about the state of nature have been developed for each landscape as part of the development of this Plan. This information provides a more in-depth account of the state of biodiversity, trends, threats and opportunities pertaining to each landscape. This information is available by contacting the City.

³⁹ Corangamite CMA (2021) Summary of Local Areas. URL: <https://corangamite.rcs.vic.gov.au/local-areas/summary-of-local-areas/> (Accessed 26 August 2024)

Across Djilang

The Wadawurrung connection to Geelong, known as “Djilang”, is a powerful lens for understanding the region’s landscapes and biodiversity. Djilang, the “place of the sea bird over the white cliffs”, spans warre (sea), coastal wetlands, estuaries, saltmarshes, inland waterways including the Parwan (Barwon River), grassy plains, hills and woodlands. Once, the rich habitats were connected and uninterrupted, reflecting Wadawurrung belief that warre and dja (land) are inseparable.

The diverse landscape supports a rich array of flora and fauna, including migratory and resident birds, native mammals such as the Go-yin (wallabies) and Walert (possums), fish, amphibians and reptiles.

While Djilang is still a place of significant biodiversity, the landscape has been profoundly changed by urban growth, agriculture, industry, introduced species and climate change. It’s now fragmented, with remaining patches of remnant vegetation scattered across the City. Though limited, what remains is critically important, supporting species that were once widespread and are now threatened.

We must act now and work together with Wadawurrung and our growing community to protect and restore biodiversity across Djilang.

CURRENT CONDITION

- Highly fragmented landscape, with patches of remnant vegetation remaining that are mostly threatened, with very significant biodiversity values
- Stands of scattered and isolated old trees exist across the landscape, particularly in the north
- Areas of very high biodiversity value exist across the Ramsar wetlands, including expansive and diverse areas of saltmarsh vegetation.
- Table 4 provides a snapshot of some nature indicators for the municipality.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Creating landscape scale biolinks to increase habitat connectivity
- Supporting Wadawurrung Traditional Owners to have a more prominent role in Caring for Country
- Increasing the diversity in community participation and engagement in biodiversity conservation across the City
- Stronger planning protections for biodiversity across the City
- Partnerships with Corangamite CMA, Melbourne Water, Parks Victoria and other key stakeholders.
- Monitoring and promoting the importance of invertebrates in restoring and sustaining healthy ecosystems.

THREATS

The threatening processes impacting biodiversity across the City are discussed in detail in this Plan (refer to the Drivers of Change section). The main threats are:

- Climate change
- Population growth
- Land use change
- Pest plants and animals.

KEY SPECIES AND HABITAT

As part of promoting species protection across the Greater Geelong region, the City has identified six key species and their associated habitats to guide monitoring efforts and strengthen the community’s connection to nature. These species and habitats are not exhaustive or definitive but serve as examples to highlight the City’s broader conservation values and priorities.

Invertebrates (including insects and spiders and aquatic groups such as crustaceans) are a key focus for the Plan due to their critical role in sustaining biodiversity and ecosystem health. For example, insects are primary pollinators, supporting the reproduction of many native plants and underpinning broader habitat resilience. Invertebrates also drive nutrient cycling by breaking down organic matter and enriching soils, which is essential for ecosystem productivity and restoration. As a foundational part of food webs, they support birds, mammals and other wildlife, while also acting as indicators of environmental health. Protecting invertebrate diversity is therefore fundamental to achieving long-term biodiversity outcomes.

Barwon Plain

The Wadawurrung know the Barrabool Hills as *barro aabil*, meaning “place of rounded hills”. Prior to European colonisation, the landscape was mostly open woodlands of drooping sheoak, acacias and banksias, with a diverse ground layer of herbs and grasses. Pure grasslands covered the elevated areas and stands of river red gums and swamp gums lined the Barwon River.

Farmers cleared most of the area, harvesting sheoak for firewood and replacing native perennial grasses with exotic pastures and crops. Key natural values of the Barwon Plain landscape are the Barrabool Hills, the Barwon River and Waurn Ponds Creek.

CURRENT CONDITION

- Very few examples of intact remnant vegetation remain
- No City managed nature reserves (other than roadsides) or any other public land for nature conservation
- The best remaining remnant vegetation exists along the Barwon River corridor.

Map 7 shows the mapped extent of existing remnant vegetation, its biodiversity conservation significance and old trees⁴⁰

Map 13 shows protection measures

Table 4 provides a snapshot of some nature indicators for the Barwon Plains.

• KEY SPECIES AND HABITAT

Bundjil (Wedge-tailed Eagle *Aquila audax*)

Habitat: Open country with large old trees

Australia's largest bird of prey, the Wedge-tailed eagle has a wingspan up to 2.3 m and a distinctive wedge-shaped tail. On the Barwon Plains, they favour the open country and large old trees for locating prey and building their nests. They can be seen perched on trees or soaring high overhead⁴¹.

According to the Wadawurrung, Bundjil, often depicted as a Wedge-tailed Eagle, is an ancestral spirit who created the land, water, sky and people of the wider landscape.

Protecting old habitat trees and reinstating Bundjil habitat in this landscape is very important.



THREATS

- Climate change
- Pest plants and animals
- Population growth and urban development in surrounding areas
- Loss of old 'habitat' trees.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Waterways (Barwon River and Waurn Ponds Creek) as biolink corridors
- Private land restoration
- Partnerships with Deakin University to restore Waurn Ponds

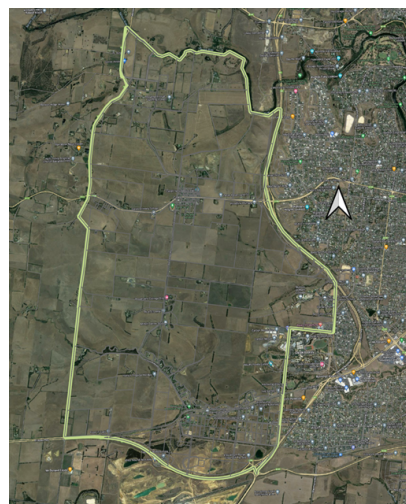


Figure 10. Map of the Barwon Plain landscape

⁴⁰ Native Vegetation – City of Greater Geelong Biodiversity Mapping 2013 - 2025

⁴¹ Birdlife Australia (2024) Wedge-tailed Eagle. URL: <https://birdlife.org.au/bird-profiles/wedge-tailed-eagle/> (Accessed 25 August 2024).

Bellarine

The Bellarine's name comes from the Wadawurrung word Bellawiyn, meaning "resting by the fire". Before European settlement, the Bellarine Peninsula was dominated by extensive open eucalypt woodlands. Very little remnant vegetation remains today, the largest being the Lake Connearre Complex including extensive saltmarsh and mangroves. Lake Connearre and Swan Bay form part of the Port Phillip Bay (Western Shoreline) and Bellarine Peninsula Ramsar Site, including important saltmarsh habitat, seagrass habitat, wetlands and an estuarine environment where Barwon River meets the sea. The area also supports marine parks and habitat for threatened species such as Orange Bellied Parrot, Swift Parrot and Hooded Plover.

The Bellarine landscape has evolved over thousands of years and supports high biodiversity. For the Wadawurrung people, the connected chain of ponds from the Barwon River to Reedy Lake, Hospital Swamps, Lake Connearre and Estuary Bay are linked through Connearre (Black Swan) Dreaming.

CURRENT CONDITION

- Highly fragmented landscape, with patches of remnant vegetation along the thin shoreline strip and within wetlands
- Significant roadside remnants remain, plus larger protected areas such as the Ocean Grove Nature Reserve, the Point Richards Reserve, and the Lake Connearre wetlands
- Remaining patches of remnant vegetation with significant biodiversity values are mostly threatened
- Grassy woodlands have been significantly reduced or degraded
- Large trees have been extensively cleared
- Heathy woodlands (with grasstree understory), once wide-spread on the Bellarine, have been reduced to small remnant pockets
- Highly engaged community – 37 caring for nature and citizen science volunteer groups most supported by Bellarine Catchment Network
- Small coastal tributaries on the bayside are largely degraded.

Map 8 shows the mapped environmental values⁴².

Map 14 shows protection measures.

Table 4 provides a snapshot of some nature indicators for the Bellarine.

THREATS

- Climate change
- Significant and increasing threat to coastal ecosystems from sea level rise, storm surges and coastal erosion
- Population growth and urban development
- Continued fragmentation and loss of habitat.
- Natural regeneration of habitat is threatened from grazing by rabbits, some wildlife and domestic animals
- Loss of old 'habitat' trees
- Pest plants and animals
- Untreated stormwater as threat to wetlands.



Figure 12. Map of the Bellarine landscape

⁴² Native Vegetation – City of Greater Geelong Biodiversity Mapping 2013 - 2025

OPPORTUNITIES

- Blue carbon opportunities, for example, south-east Bellarine, at the Point
- Protection of old habitat trees and enhancement of wetlands, woodlands, grasslands
- Restoring and creating habitat nodes at future sites such as the Drysdale Resource Recovery Centre
- Opportunities to encourage multiple “hobby farmers” on 5-acre blocks to plant indigenous vegetation and create restoration nodes
- Enhancement of the habitat in the City managed Buckley Park Foreshore Reserve zone
- Increased habitat connectivity, especially along coastal creeks of the Bellarine, the Bellarine Rail Trail, the Ocean Grove Nature Reserve zone and the zone around the old Bellarine Basin reserve (Murrk Ngubitj Yarram Yaluk) through collaboration with public/private landholders
- Coastal erosion adaptation and roadside protection
- Enhancement of the Bellarine Rail Trail vegetation quality to create a better functioning biolinks corridor
- Coordinated pest plant and animal control
- improve management of stormwater into wetlands to protect values
- Working with Wadawurrung Traditional Owners at priority sites
- Strengthened and diversified volunteering opportunities
- Reviewed and amended planning controls.
- Working with Wadawurrung Traditional Owners at priority sites
- Strengthened and diversified volunteering opportunities
- Reviewed and amended planning controls.

KEY SPECIES AND HABITAT

Eastern Yellow Robin (*Eopsaltria australis*)

Habitat: Remnant grassy woodlands and heathy woodlands with shrubs and understory

The Eastern Yellow Robin is a little woodland bird of eastern Australia - one of the pouncing robins. They are found in a range of habitats including remnant woodlands with low to mid level shrubs across the Bellarine Peninsula. Both the female and male are similar in appearance with a grey head and grey/olive back with a bright yellow rump. Its' song is one of first to be heard in the morning chorus. They can be seen on the side of a tree trunk or low perch. They forage mostly on the ground or pounce from a low perch eating insects, spiders and other invertebrates. Woodland birds are declining due to loss, fragmentation, and simplification of habitat.



Figure 13. Eastern Yellow Robin (photo by Rob Solic)

Basalt Plains

The Basalt Plains landscape area is part of a larger landscape system extending west from Greater Geelong. It's home to known rare and threatened species and significant and endangered vegetation communities like native grasslands. Threatened species include the Grassland Earless Dragon, Growling Grass Frog, Striped Legless Lizard, Golden Sun Moth and Spiny Rice-flower.

Other significant natural features include highly biodiverse Wurdi Youang (You Yangs or "big hill") and part of Anakie Youang (Mt Anakie or "little hill"). Hovells Creek is a key waterway connecting the Basalt Plains to Limeburners and Corio Bays.

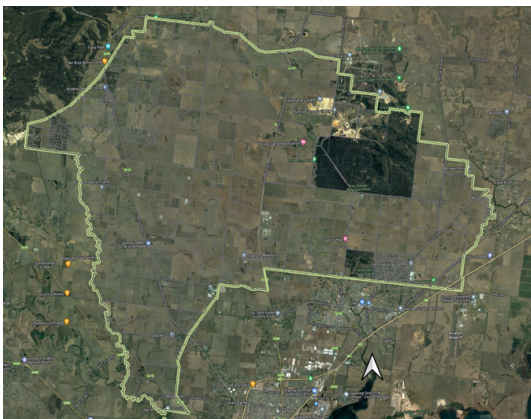


Figure 14. Map of the Basalt Plains landscape

CURRENT CONDITION

- Native grasslands lack diversity and are fragmented
- Extensive stands of old trees remain on Hovells and Sutherlands creeks and in the higher country
- Some of the best examples of remnant grasslands occur on City managed roadsides, for example, the Old Melbourne and Peak School Roads.
- Map 9 shows the mapped extent of existing remnant vegetation, its biodiversity conservation significance and old trees⁴³.
- Map 15 shows protection measures.
- Table 4 provides a snapshot of some nature indicators for the Basalt Plains.

THREATS

- Continued loss, degradation and fragmentation of grassland habitat on private land
- Climate change
- Pest plants and animals
- Loss of old 'habitat' trees.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Private land conservation focused on grasslands, grassy woodlands and old habitat trees
- Protection and enhancement of biolink corridors along Hovells and Sutherlands creeks
- Supporting Wadawurrung Traditional Owners to undertake cultural burning
- Protection of high value roadsides
- Partnerships with Grassy Plains Network, Victorian National Parks Association (VNPA) or North West Alliance.

KEY SPECIES AND HABITAT

Pobblebonk Frog or Eastern Banjo Frog (*Limnodonastes dumerilii*)

Habitat: Season freshwater wetlands, dams and waterways

The common, burrowing frog is found in waterways and farm dams across the Basalt Plains. It is easily identified by its distinctive loud "bond" or "plonk" call likened to a banjo string being plucked, making it great for surveys, even if it can't be seen. Adults grow up to 7.5 cm long, with a brown to green colouring and distinctive warty back, orange or yellow mottling on the sides, and a pale back yellow stripe from under eye to shoulder⁴⁴.

Restoring habitat along Hovells and Sutherlands creeks will help support local populations.



Figure 15. Pobblebonk Frog

⁴³ Native Vegetation – City of Greater Geelong Biodiversity Mapping 2013 - 2025

⁴⁴ Australian Museum (2021) URL: <https://australian.museum/learn/animals/frogs/eastern-pobblebonk-frog/> (Accessed 18 Dec 2025)

Geelong City Landscape

Geelong's name comes from the Wadawurrung word Djilang, meaning "tongue of land". Spanning more than 28,000 hectares, the city landscape encompasses the urban centres of both Geelong and Lara. Despite its population density, important natural values remain. These include habitat within public reserves, coastal wetlands and saltmarshes, waterways such as the Barwon River, Waurn Ponds Creek and local creeks, as well as areas of remnant native grasslands in open spaces and along roadsides. The nationally significant Grey-headed flying Fox camp at Eastern Park is another key natural asset in the Geelong City landscape.

The Barwon River (Parwan) flows through the city centre and is central to Wadawurrung Country. Wadawurrung people consider the Barwon and its connected waterways and wetlands as a living entity. Stands of river red gum, woolly tea tree and silver wattle line the riverbanks, and over 100 bird species occur here, along with the water rat (Rakali), platypus and swamp wallaby.

Warre (sea) country strongly shapes Geelong's identity. The coastline from Limeburners Bay through Avalon to Point Wilson forms part of the Port Phillip Bay (Western Shoreline) and Bellarine Peninsula Ramsar Site. This internationally significant wetland system supports extensive saltmarshes, seagrass beds and estuarine habitats, which are critical for migratory shorebirds and a wide range of marine and coastal species.

Geelong is also experiencing significant growth, particularly in the north and west, where urban expansion areas are being carefully planned to balance development with environmental protection. The Strategic Assessment process plays an important role in this work, taking a landscape-scale approach rather than assessing impacts on a site-by-site basis. This integrated approach is expected to deliver improved environmental outcomes by identifying and protecting key ecological values early in the planning process, while providing greater certainty for development. Additional mechanisms, such as Victoria's Native Vegetation Removal Regulations, support the avoidance, minimisation and offsetting of impacts on native vegetation across the municipality.

Further strengthening protection of key waterways, the Rivers of the Barwon (Barwon and Moorabool) Action Plan has led to the introduction of new and updated planning controls. These controls provide stronger policy direction for managing development along the Barwon and Moorabool river corridors, helping to protect environmental values, cultural heritage, landscape character and public access. Together, these measures reinforce a more coordinated, catchment-wide approach to river health and land use planning.



Figure 16. Map of the Geelong City landscape

CURRENT CONDITION

- Highly urbanised environment
- Most remnant vegetation exists in public land reserves, especially linear reserves along waterways and the coastline, and in nature reserves and open space areas
- Higher proportion of environmental volunteer groups than other landscapes (except the Bellarine).
- Map 10 mapped environmental values 45.
- Map 16 shows protection measures.

Table 4 provides a snapshot of some nature indicators for the Geelong City.

THREATS

- Climate change
- Expansion of urban areas into natural habitats
- Greater pressure (disturbance and pollution) on waterways, wetlands, and remnant vegetation.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Supporting community restoration of habitat corridors along urban waterways
- Home gardens and nature strips
- Working with Wadawurrung Traditional Owners on public land reserves
- Blue carbon opportunities in coastal saltmarsh areas
- Community engagement activities (Gardens for Wildlife, Nature Strip Plantings, Geelong Nature Forum).

- Key species and habitat

Perridak (*Platypus Ornithorhynchus anatinus*)

Habitat: Geelong waterways with remnant instream and riparian habitat

The Platypus is a unique egg-laying mammal, known as a monotreme, found in the Barwon and Moorabool Rivers and Waurin Ponds Creek across Geelong. It is semi-aquatic and difficult to see, spending much of its time feeding in streambeds or sheltering in burrows along riverbanks, beneath vegetation roots, or among rocks and debris. Ideal Platypus habitat includes waterways with earth banks, shady native vegetation, logs and gravel substrates that support microinvertebrate (a main food source). Protecting and restoring Geelong's in-stream and riparian habitats is essential to survival of Platypus in the Geelong City Landscape.

Records of Platypus in the Barwon and Moorabool Rivers around Geelong are increasing, but the last recorded sighting in the Warun Ponds Creek.



Figure 17. Perridak (Platypus)

⁴⁵ Native Vegetation – City of Greater Geelong Biodiversity Mapping 2013 - 2025

Little River

The Little River, *Worrin-yaloke*, flows from the Brisbane Ranges to Port Phillip Bay, forming large coastal wetlands. Lake Borrie, Spit Nature Conservation Reserve and the Western Treatment Plant are all part of the Port Phillip Bay (Western Shoreline) and Bellarine Peninsula Ramsar Site. Together they support important habitat including kelp and seagrass beds, marine meadows, intertidal salt and freshwater marshes, sandy shorelines and mudflats.

Before the landscape beyond the Brisbane Ranges was largely cleared, River Red Gum (*Eucalyptus camaldulensis*) were the dominate tree species, scattered sparsely across the plains and along Litte River and other waterways. Bandicoots (Kwenda) and spotted tail quolls (Yoon) were abundant on the grasslands, where they played crucial roles in maintaining soil and ecosystem health.

The Wadawurrung have a long connection with this landscape and were practicing sedentary agriculture long ago.

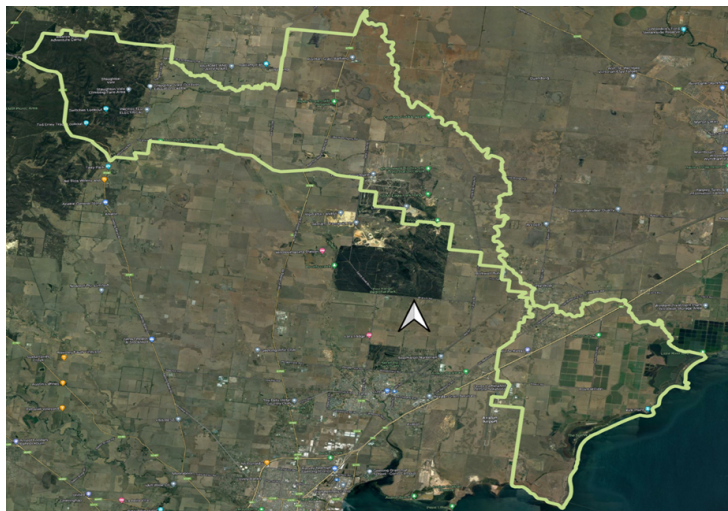


Figure 18. Map of the Little River landscape

CURRENT CONDITION

- High biodiversity values contained in public land reserves
- High value roadsides that surround the Brisbane Ranges, as well as the Old Melbourne Road
- Most native grasslands have been lost; however, the remnants that remain are often recoverable due to intact tussock structure, though they typically lack forbs and contain undesirable weeds.
- Map 11 mapped environmental values ⁴⁶.
- Map 17 shows protection measures.
- Table 4 provides a snapshot of some nature indicators for the Little River.

⁴⁶ Native Vegetation – City of Greater Geelong Biodiversity Mapping 2013 - 2025

THREATS

- Climate change
- Pest plants and animals
- Loss of high value roadside vegetation
- Continued loss of grassland habitat on private land.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Blue carbon opportunities in intertidal areas
- Reviewed and amended planning controls
- Protection and restoration of high value roadsides
- Private land conservation and restoration programs focused on grasslands and grassy woodlands
- Working with Wadawurrung Traditional Owners
- Habitat connectivity and restoration along Little River
- Partnerships with Melbourne Water, Wyndham City Council, Grassy Plains Network, Victorian National Parks Association (VNPA) or North West Alliance

KEY SPECIES AND HABITAT

Fat-tailed Dunnart (*Sminthopsis crassicaudata*)

Habitat: Native Grasslands with cracking soils, rock piles and old logs

This small native marsupial lives in grasslands and open woodlands of the Victorian Volcanic Plains, where cracking clay soils provide shelter and foraging habitat⁴⁷. It has yellow-brown fur, large ears and a pointed nose, and stores fat in its tail to survive low food periods. The Fat-tailed Dunnart is listed as threatened under the Victorian Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act (1988) with threats including habitat loss, competition from pest animals, predation by feral cats and foxes, and accidental harm through vermin control.

In the 1980s survey work around the Western Treatment Plant recorded several sites containing Fat-tailed Dunnarts some with multiple individuals. Very few have been recorded since.



Figure 19. Fat-tailed Dunnart

⁴⁷ State Wide Integrated Flora and Fauna Teams (SWIFFT) URL: https://www.swiff.net.au/cb_pages/sp_fat-tailed_dunnart.php (Accessed 18 Dec 2025)

Northern Uplands

The City includes a small section of the Northern Uplands landscape encompassing private land to the southwest of the Brisbane Ranges. This small section includes large areas of intact remnant vegetation remaining on private land, and the presence of old trees.

For the Wadawurrung people, this landscape including the nearby Brisbane Ranges, holds great cultural, social and spiritual significance.

CURRENT CONDITION

- High biodiversity values on private land, including large, old trees and standing dead trees
- High value roadsides.
- Map 12 mapped environmental values⁴⁸
- Map 18 shows protection measures
- Table 4 provides a snapshot of some nature indicators for the Northern Uplands.

THREATS

- Climate change – drier, hotter, more extreme events, longer fire season, migration/loss of native species and old trees
- Pest plants and animals
- Loss and degradation of high value roadside vegetation.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Protection of high value roadsides
- Private land conservation
- Protection of old habitat trees
- Supporting Wadawurrung Traditional Owners to undertake cultural burning
- Wildlife road crossings
- Koala habitat protection and restoration
- Partnership with Koala Clancey Foundation.

KEY SPECIES AND HABITAT

Ngaambulmum (Koala *Phascolarctos cinereus*)

Habitat: Dry eucalypt forests and large old gum trees like manna gums

Koalas rely on eucalyptus forests for both food and shelter. Across the Geelong region, threats include habitat loss, urban development, disease, vehicle strikes, dog attacks and climate change.

Regular monitoring of Koalas in the Geelong region by Koala Clancey indicate Koala numbers are in decline.

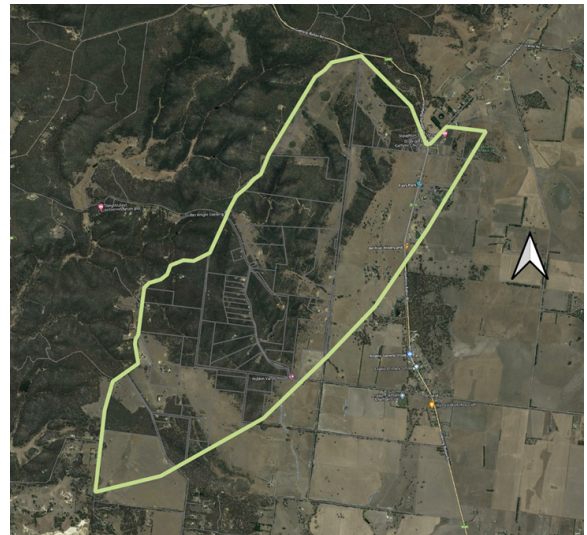


Figure 20. Map of the Northern Uplands landscape



Figure 21. Ngaambulmum (Koala)

⁴⁸ Native Vegetation – City of Greater Geelong Biodiversity Mapping 2013 - 2025

Table 4 provides a snapshot of some indicators across the municipality (Djilang) and the six landscapes.

Theme	Djilang	Barwon Plain	Bellarine	Basalt Plains	Geelong City	Little River	Northern Uplands
Remaining remnant vegetation and wetlands (estimated)	18%	1%	15%	21%	8%	31%	65%
Hectares managed by the City for nature conservation	1,358 (ha)	1.3 (ha)	845 (ha)	19 (ha)	465 (ha)	8.5 (ha)	19 (ha)
% of the total area in the municipality protected in the conservation estate	9.7%		13.7%	7.7%	3.4%	14%	5.9%
Number of Ecological Vegetation Classes (EVCs) mapped (including mosaics)	69	7	31	29	34	35	16
% of rare, vulnerable, and endangered EVCs mapped		86%	94%	90%	100%	80%	63%
Number of threatened species and ecological communities	191						
Number of Threatened species and ecological communities listed under the <i>EPBC Act</i>	42	6	24	21	31	27	1
Number of species listed under the <i>EPBC Act</i> with habitat on City managed land	24	6	21	12	19	18	1
Number of caring for environment, citizen science, and network groups	80	1	38	7	30	3	1
Number of caring for environment, citizen science, and network groups involved in managing City nature reserves.	39		21		17	1	

Refer Appendix 1, 2 and 3 for a list of threatened species and ecological communities, and a list of volunteer environmental groups and networks.



Goal 1: Value Wadawurrung Country and Culture

We will support Traditional Owners to care for and heal Country. As the original custodians of this landscape, Wadawurrung Traditional Owners hold deep knowledge of caring for Country built over thousands of generations. We have much to learn from the Wadawurrung in how we protect nature.

CONTEXT

Colonisation dispossessed Wadawurrung and other First Nations peoples of their Country. Protecting biodiversity in the Geelong region will also support the restoration and strengthening of connections to Wadawurrung cultural practices by preserving important totem species, bush foods and medicines.

This plan provides opportunities for Wadawurrung to apply their knowledge and skills in managing and conserving the City's natural environment, while enabling the broader community to learn from their stewardship of Country⁴⁹.

Through ongoing collaboration, we will work with Wadawurrung to understand cultural values across the landscape, manage nature reserves of high cultural and/or ecological value, and support the use of Wadawurrung language, stories and cultural practices in the City's natural areas.

This Plan supports a stronger, ongoing role for Wadawurrung in Caring for Country, and aligns with the principles and goals of *Paleet Tjaara Dja, the Wadawurrung Country Plan*.

We will also support opportunities for traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) exchange with community volunteers where this is led by and occurs with the free, prior, and informed consent of Wadawurrung, including through activities such as restoration programs and, where appropriate, cultural burning.

STRATEGIC OUTCOMES

- Increasing role of Wadawurrung in the management of the City's nature reserves
- Wadawurrung are leading identification, protection and management of cultural values
- Greater integration of Wadawurrung language, stories and cultural practice within the City's nature reserves.

TARGETS

- Establish active collaborative relationships between Wadawurrung and the City across five (5) nature reserves
- Complete two (2) Cultural Values Assessments (CVAs) of cultural landscape areas
- Incorporate Wadawurrung language, stories or cultural practice into the planning, design and management of:
 - new nature reserves of high cultural and/or ecological value
 - five (5) existing nature reserves.

• 74% of the area of City land managed as nature reserve falls within areas of cultural heritage sensitivity⁵⁰

⁴⁹ Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (2017) Biodiversity 2037. Victorian State Government, Melbourne.

⁵⁰ Nature reserves layer in the City's Public Open Space spatial data (Accessed Dec 2025).

Goal 2: Prioritise protection

The City's remaining native vegetation and habitat are limited and increasingly vulnerable. To maintain biodiversity, we must prioritise protection and restoration and long-term stewardship of what remains, while avoiding further loss. This requires a strong, coordinated focus on land use planning, other protection mechanisms, and collaborative action across public and private land.

CONTEXT

Only small and highly fragmented areas of remnant vegetation and habitat remain across the municipality on both public and private land. While limited, these remnants are vital for biodiversity, providing critical habitat for threatened flora and fauna species that have adapted over thousands of years to exist in these vegetation communities. These patches also offer complexity in vegetation age and structure that can take years to replicate, supply seeds for collection and conservation, and serve as important benchmarks to guide future revegetation and landscape recovery.

The City's internationally significant wetlands, including the Ramsar-listed Port Phillip Bay (Western Shoreline) and Bellarine Peninsula site, are vital biodiversity strongholds. They support tens of thousands of waterbirds and other wildlife, including rare and threatened species. These wetlands provide crucial breeding and feeding grounds and help reduce the impacts of climate change by providing natural flood mitigation, shoreline stabilisation and storm protection.

Artificial light at night and chronic noise disturbance are emerging pressures on biodiversity, particularly in coastal and wetland environments. Light pollution can disrupt the behaviour, navigation and breeding of migratory shorebirds, wetland birds, bats, insects and marine species, including within internationally significant areas such as Swan Bay and the Ramsar-listed wetlands. Similarly, ongoing noise from traffic, construction, watercraft and recreation can affect wildlife movement, communication and breeding success. Recognising and managing these impacts will be increasingly important as urban areas expand and visitation to natural areas grows.

Untreated and poorly managed stormwater runoff also poses a significant threat to wetlands, waterways and marine environments across the municipality. Runoff from urban areas can carry pollutants, sediments, nutrients and litter into sensitive ecosystems, degrading water quality and impacting vegetation and wildlife. These impacts are already evident in some wetland systems and are likely to increase with urban growth. Improving stormwater management at a catchment scale, including through integrated water management and nature-based solutions and stronger controls in new development areas, will be critical to protecting ecological values and supporting long-term environmental health.

Habitat is also found throughout the City in places such as our gardens and backyards, parks and green spaces, waterways, street trees, rooftop gardens and coastal areas. Together these areas provide critical refuges for wildlife.

With so little habitat remaining in the City, preventing further loss and protecting and enhancing what remains is critical.

Biolink areas have been identified throughout the City to guide where protection, connection and restoration actions will be prioritised. Further details are provided in Goal 3. Refer also to Maps 1 to 6 and Appendix 4 for further detail.

Many City-managed reserves contain areas of high-value remnant vegetation that provide critical habitat for threatened species. Strengthening protection of these areas through planning scheme overlays and, where appropriate, permanent protection mechanisms such as conservation covenants will be a key priority.

Landscape-scale planning and growth areas

Significant population growth is occurring in the north and west of the municipality. The Strategic Assessment process provides an important opportunity to move from a site-by-site approach to a landscape-scale approach to biodiversity protection. This includes the use of tools such as Native Vegetation Precinct Plans (NVPPs), which can deliver more coordinated and effective conservation outcomes by identifying and protecting key habitat areas early in the planning process.

Embedding biodiversity considerations into growth area planning will be essential to avoiding cumulative loss and ensuring long-term ecological resilience. This approach will also align with the Bellarine Distinctive Areas and

Landscapes framework, supporting the protection of valued landscapes and environmental features while guiding sustainable land use and development.

Protecting biodiversity through land use planning and other mechanisms

The City's conservation estate covers just 9.7% of the municipality and includes land managed by Parks Victoria, Corangamite CMA, Barwon Water, Coastal Committees of Management and the City, and a small portion of private land protected under Trust for Nature covenants. By protecting and conserving this conservation estate, and seeking opportunities to expand it, we will contribute to Australia's national '30 by 30' target to conserve 30% of landmass and marine areas by 2030.

Several wetlands in the City are listed under the Ramsar Convention as part of the Port Phillip Bay (Western Shoreline) and Bellarine Peninsula Ramsar site. This includes much of the Lake Connewarre wetland system, Swan Bay, Point Wilson / Limeburner's Bay and the Avalon coastal area. These wetlands are recognised internationally for their significant biodiversity and habitat values.

Beyond the conservation estate, small patches and linear strips of remnant vegetation persist along waterways, coastal areas, and roadsides and on private land. The Greater Geelong Planning Scheme provides regulatory mechanisms to protect and enhance vegetation and habitat values over the long-term, including the Vegetation Protection Overlay (VPO), Environmental Significance Overlay (ESO) and Significant Landscape Overlay (SLO). The Rural Conservation Zone (RCZ) guides subdivision and planning requirements for development and works that are compatible with conservation values, while the Public Conservation and Resource Zone (PCRZ) outlines permitted and prohibited activities that support the conservation purposes of the zone. Refer Map 7 to 12.

While these planning controls provide an important framework for protecting biodiversity, their effectiveness can vary depending on how they are applied and enforced. Strengthening the strategic use of overlays, alongside complementary tools such as covenants and stewardship agreements, will be important to achieve more meaningful and long-term protection outcomes.

A more proactive and strategic approach to protection will also consider future climate change impacts, including sea level rise, storm surge and shifting habitat and species distributions. Integrating climate modelling into planning and decision-making will help prioritise areas for in-situ protection and restoration, ensuring the long-term resilience of biodiversity across the landscape.

Protection of native vegetation is also regulated under Clause 51.17 of all Victorian Planning Schemes, with the most recent approvals associated with new urban development. Despite the City's planning permit and compliance processes, illegal vegetation removal continues to occur.

Biodiversity offsets are required under the Victorian planning framework, and while the City has limited influence over how the system operates, there are opportunities to support stronger local outcomes. The City will encourage a preference for offsets to be secured within the municipality where feasible, including by investigating ways to increase local offset supply (such as supporting landholders and establishing sites on Council-owned land). Where local options are not available, offsets may still be secured within the broader catchment. Avoidance and minimisation of vegetation removal will remain the priority, with offsets as a last resort.

Protecting biodiversity also requires improved stormwater management in new development, to ensure runoff is appropriately treated, retained and managed to minimise impacts on downstream waterways, wetlands and coastal environments.

Protecting biodiversity on private land

A significant proportion of high value remnant vegetation occurs on private land, particularly in rural areas, but only a small proportion is permanently protected, such as through conservation covenants. Working with private landholders is essential to protecting, enhancing and preventing any further loss. The City can support this through education, incentives and collaboration with organisations such as Landcare and Trust for Nature.

Conservation covenants, such as those administered by Trust for Nature, under the *Victorian Conservation Trust Act 1972*, along with Section 69 agreements under the *Conservation, Forests and Lands Act 1987*, Section 173 agreements under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, and other landholder agreements provide a range of mechanisms to permanently safeguard native vegetation on private land. However, their uptake can be limited due to perceived costs and constraints on land use. The City will support covenants while also exploring more flexible approaches, including conservation contracts and land management or stewardship agreements.

The City will provide incentives, stewardship support and technical advice, and continue to partner with Landcare and other organisations to support on-ground outcomes. Engagement will be strengthened by better targeting landholders most likely to participate in conservation activities.

As detailed above, planning scheme overlays, including VPO, ESO and SLO, will be applied to private land where significant biodiversity values exist, particularly within biolink areas and in rural and farming areas where larger or strategically important remnant vegetation is present.

Building internal capacity to protect and enhance nature

Achieving meaningful biodiversity protection requires a whole-of-City approach. This includes embedding biodiversity protection across all areas of our work, including policies, projects and operations. Strengthening ecological understanding across the City's departments helps ensure biodiversity is consistently considered in planning, infrastructure delivery, community programs and day-to-day decision-making, so that environmental impacts are identified and addressed early.

Providing practical training, tools and guidance will build capability and confidence to act for nature across the organisation. The City will take a coordinated approach to applying biodiversity considerations in planning, project delivery and asset management, so that environmental outcomes are clearly understood, assessed and managed across all activities. This will support a consistent standard of environmental management and position the City to lead by example in delivering best-practice outcomes for biodiversity, liveability and community wellbeing.

STRATEGIC OUTCOMES

- Contribution to the '30 by 30' target, with increased area of land under effective conservation management
- Expansion and strengthening of permanently protected areas, including City-owned reserves
- Increased protection of high-quality remnant vegetation, particularly in biolink areas and on private land
- More areas of remnant vegetation are permanently protected across both public and private land
- Greater and more strategic use of nature-based planning overlays (i.e. VPO, ESO, SLO) across both public and private land
- Improved protection of threatened species and habitats across nature reserves, open spaces and roadsides
- A greater proportion of vegetation offsets secured within the City
- Fewer instances of unauthorised vegetation removal
- Improved management of light and noise impacts on biodiversity, particularly in coastal, wetland and other high-value habitat areas
- Greater uptakes of conservation covenants, Crown frontage agreements and other stewardship agreements
- Nature and biodiversity considerations embedded across all relevant City policies, strategies and operational processes.

TARGETS

- Increase the level of protection for remnant vegetation within biolink areas, with a focus on patches greater than two (2) hectares
- Establish conservation protection for all remnant biodiversity patches larger than 10 hectares within biolink areas
- Increase the total area of remnant vegetation within the City's conservation estate and other public protected areas.
- Increase the total area of biodiversity permanently protected on private land or Crown water frontages (e.g., via Trust for Nature covenants, Section 69 Agreements, or Riparian management licences⁵¹ or other protection mechanisms)

⁵¹ DELWP (2021) https://www.forestsandreserves.vic.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0023/540716/DELWP-Crown-Water-Frontage_Riparian-Management-Licences.pdf

- Permanently protect five (5) City owned Nature Reserves through Trust for Nature Covenants or Section 69 Agreements⁵²
- Achieve improved protection of threatened species and their habitat across City-managed nature reserves, open space and roadsides through the implementation of six (6) conservation action plans
- Increase the proportion of biodiversity offsets secured within the City
- Reduce the annual rate of vegetation clearing without a permit, including the loss of old trees
- Increase the integration of biodiversity protection into the City's policies, strategies and operational procedures
- Develop and implement guidelines or a policy to minimise light and noise impacts on biodiversity, with a focus on sensitive environments such as coastal areas, wetlands and biolink corridors.

⁵² Section 69 of the *Conservation, Forests and Lands Act 1987*

Goal 3: Connect and restore

Healthy, biodiverse-rich ecosystems depend on being well-connected and resilient. To do this we must link remnant vegetation, restore degraded areas and create new habitat so native plants and animals can move, adapt and survive. Building this resilience is key, especially as our climate changes.

CONTEXT

The City has a responsibility to restore and expand native vegetation and habitat, so biodiversity is protected, strengthened and does not continue to decline. This commitment aligns with Victorian Government targets for achieving **a net gain in the extent of habitats by 2037⁵³ and recognises the importance of nature for** community health and wellbeing, and for future generations.

In a changing climate, restoring, connecting and expanding habitat is essential to help species survive and adapt. This includes supporting natural regeneration, undertaking revegetation programs, reconnecting fragmented habitats, restoring degraded waterways and wetlands, increasing habitat across urban areas and reducing threats such as pest plants and animals. Climate change is likely to amplify existing pressures, particularly in fragmented landscapes where species have limited ability to move in response to change. Well-connected, healthy habitats give our remaining species the best chance to persist and adapt.

Restoration efforts will also recognise the importance of freshwater systems across the municipality, such as degraded waterholes and small wetlands on the Bellarine. There is a significant opportunity to prioritise restoration of these systems, particularly around Drysdale and surrounding areas, through the creation and enhancement of freshwater habitats and improved ecological function.

Supporting insect populations is also critical to healthy ecosystems. Insects underpin food webs, pollination and soil processes, and increasing insect diversity helps support birdlife and other fauna. Opportunities exist to incorporate insect-friendly habitat into restoration projects and to expand citizen science initiatives to improve understanding of local biodiversity.

Public reserve management

The City manages a network of nature reserves providing important habitat for native plants and animals, including many threatened species. The reserves range from small 1 hectare urban parks to large reserves over 100 hectares with high biodiversity value. Even smaller reserves can be important for protecting remnant vegetation and supporting wildlife.

While some reserves have conservation or master plans, many are outdated or incomplete, and some reserves have no plan in place. Reviewing and updating management plans, particularly for reserves supporting threatened species, is a key priority.

Pest plants and animals are a major pressure across the City and threaten the success of restoration efforts. They compete with native species for resources, prey on native fauna, degrade habitat, cause erosion and disrupt ecosystem function. Established pest animals in the region include rabbits, foxes, feral cats and deer, many of which are declared under the *Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994* and well established across the municipality. Rabbits in particular pose a significant risk to revegetation outcomes by preventing plant establishment.

Pest plants also threaten regional biodiversity by invading native vegetation, providing harbour for pest animals and increasing fire risk.

Stronger, coordinated pest management across agencies, land tenures and municipal boundaries is required to effectively manage these impacts, including targeted control of rabbits, foxes, feral cats, deer and invasive bird species such as Indian Mynas, which outcompete native birds for nesting hollows and habitat.

Management of high value City reserves, particularly coastal reserves, also requires careful control of human pressures. For example, dogs on beaches can threaten species like the Hooded Plover. Hooded Plovers rely on the narrow strip of coastal land between the sea and dunes, which is already under pressure from climate impacts.

⁵³ Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) (2017) *Protecting Victoria's Environment – Biodiversity 2037*. Victorian State Government, Melbourne.

Alleviating avoidable pressures, such as dogs in key habitat areas, will be critical to improving breeding success and species' resilience.

Coastal and marine environments are also affected by recreational activities. Pressures such as boat disturbance, trampling of sensitive habitats including rock platforms, illegal shellfish harvesting and marine litter can degrade habitat and disrupt wildlife. Managing these impacts will be important to protect biodiversity values across coastal and marine ecosystems.

Domestic and feral cats also threaten native wildlife. Cats prey on a wide range of native animals including reptiles, birds, mammals, frogs and invertebrates. Research suggests that on average, each pet cat allowed to roam (even for only part of the day or night) kills 186 reptiles, birds and mammals per year in Australia, including 110 native animals. That averages out to more than two native animals per cat per week⁵⁴. While a municipal dusk-to-dawn curfew is in place, the City will focus on community education and behaviour change to encourage responsible pet ownership and voluntary containment, supported by targeted programs in nature reserves.

Feral cats will continue to be targeted in broader pest management programs and in conjunction with surrounding land managers, such as Bellarine Bayside Committee of Management, Barwon Coast Committee of Management and Parks Victoria.

Linear reserves

The City manages extensive linear habitats, including rural roadsides, waterways and rail corridors, which provide critical opportunities to connect fragmented landscapes.

Rural roadsides can support high quality native vegetation and provide important wildlife corridors. Some of the most intact and diverse remnant vegetation within the municipality occurs in the roadside reserves, with approximately 300 kilometres (540 hectares) mapped as having high conservation value. Across Western Victoria about 30 percent of known native grasslands occur on roadsides. Within the City, Old Melbourne Road between Lara and Little River represents Geelong's largest roadside grassland reserve.

Urban nature strips also provide opportunities for restoring biodiversity, while delivering other community benefits. When planted with native vegetation, they can provide nesting and feeding sites for native animals, increase insect diversity, connect green spaces, help manage stormwater, help cool neighbourhoods and improve air quality. The City supports residents to plant their nature strips through our Nature Strip Guidelines and Specifications (2024).

Waterways and rail reserves form additional linear nature corridors, such as along the Bellarine Rail Trail Reserve, offering valuable connectivity across the landscape. Even degraded creeks and small tributaries can be restored to strengthen habitat links and improve ecological function.

Many community groups already have strong connections to their local waterways, and people tend to connect most with places close to home, regardless of their condition⁵⁵. This presents a real opportunity to engage the community in restoring biodiversity and improving connectivity across the City's waterways.

Biolinks areas

Biodiversity corridors (or biolinks) are connected areas of habitat across the landscape. They allow plants and animals to move between habitats to find food, water and shelter. By improving connectivity, biolinks help species adapt to climate change, provide refuge and support the natural movement of wildlife. They also help to reduce future greenhouse gas emissions by storing carbon within native vegetation.⁵⁶

Maps 1 to 6 highlights the key biodiversity areas and connections within the City. These include riparian vegetation corridors along waterways such as the Barwon River, and along roadsides and the coastal fringe, as well as biodiversity zones (including Avalon, Brisbane Ranges and Lake Connemara), along with key habitat and restoration nodes. The City has also identified and mapped biolink opportunities in each of the six landscapes, as detailed in the Landscapes section above.

⁵⁴ Threatened Species Recovery Hub (date n/a). *The impact of cats on Australian wildlife*. URL: https://www.nespthreatenedspecies.edu.au/media/dehnttbf/7-4-the-impact-of-pet-cat-impacts_f.pdf (Accessed 6 March 2025)

⁵⁵ Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (2022). *My Victorian Waterway: Social research to understand the community's connection to Victorian waterways*. Full report prepared by Quantum Market Research for the Victorian State Government, Melbourne.

⁵⁶ <https://www.dcceew.gov.au/environment/biodiversity/conservation/wildlife-corridors> ((Accessed 29 December 2024).

Implementation of these priorities will be guided by the Geelong Biolinks Plan and broader Geelong Biolink Project, which provide the strategic and collaborative framework for delivering connectivity outcomes across the municipality.

These biolinks also provide an important opportunity to link new estates with established suburbs through green corridors and nature-based infrastructure, strengthening connectivity for both biodiversity and the community.

Biolink areas set the priority for where protection, connection and restoration efforts will be targeted (refer Maps 1 to 6 and Appendix 4). These corridors can also support multiple uses, including shared trails and other linear infrastructure, where designed appropriately. A multidisciplinary approach that considers ecological, recreational and community values will be critical to the success of these spaces.

In addition to vegetation connectivity, safe wildlife movement across the landscape must be considered, particularly for larger species such as kangaroos and wallabies. Identifying and protecting key movement corridors, and incorporating appropriate crossing infrastructure where required, will help reduce habitat fragmentation and wildlife mortality.

Coastal biolinks are a key priority, particularly along Corio Bay and the Bellarine Peninsula, where significant opportunities exist to restore and reconnect saltmarsh, mangrove and dune systems. Prioritising the protection of existing coastal vegetation, alongside targeted restoration and habitat reconnection, will be critical to strengthening ecological function and resilience in these environments. These priorities will be guided by the Geelong Biolinks Project and supporting mapping, which identifies coastal corridors and restoration nodes as priority areas for action.

Supporting wildlife

Built-up areas also play an important role in supporting wildlife. Urban parks, private gardens, street trees, waterways and built infrastructure can provide shelter, food and movement pathways for many native species, particularly in highly modified landscapes.

Wildlife in urban areas and peri-urban areas is increasingly exposed to risks such as vehicle strikes, attacks by pets, entanglement and ongoing habitat loss, which can result in injury, displacement or mortality. Road networks and expanding development can create significant barriers to movement, particularly for larger species such as kangaroos and wallabies that rely on established movement patterns across the landscape.

Improving outcomes for wildlife will require greater recognition of safe movement corridors, alongside habitat restoration. This includes identifying and protecting key movement pathways and, where appropriate, supporting interventions such as crossings and other measures that reduce conflict between wildlife and infrastructure.

The City recognises the important role of wildlife carers and community responders who support injured and orphaned animals. It will continue to work with partners to improve awareness, reduce risks to wildlife and support effective responses to wildlife injury and care across the municipality.

The City's broader open space network, including local parks and pocket parks, also provides important opportunities to support biodiversity in urban areas. Small-scale interventions such as retaining unmown grass areas, installing nesting boxes, planting diverse indigenous vegetation and creating insect-friendly habitats can significantly enhance ecological value. These spaces contribute to habitat connectivity, support pollinators and other fauna, and help bring nature closer to the community.

Private land conservation

Achieving real biodiversity outcomes requires restoration action across both public and private land. Given the significant proportion of land in private ownership, real gains will not be possible without strong participation from landowners across both rural and urban areas.

Alongside permanently protecting remnant vegetation through planning controls and conservation covenants, the City will work with and support private landholders to restore and expand biodiversity on their properties. This includes encouraging natural regeneration, revegetation and threat management, and participation in building biolinks and connectivity across the landscape, especially for woodlands, grasslands, old trees and along the edges of farm dams. Stewardship incentives such as small grants or rate-based mechanisms may be used support these actions.

The City will support nature-friendly land management approaches, including in agricultural areas, and promote initiatives such as Nature Friendly Farming and similar programs that integrate biodiversity outcomes with productive land use. Stewardship incentives, technical advice and partnership programs will be used to support these actions, with a focus on achieving coordinated, landscape-scale outcomes.

Urban residents also have an important role to play. Programs such as Gardens for Wildlife support community members to create more biodiverse, wildlife-friendly gardens. Residents can also contribute to the City's goal of achieving 30% urban canopy cover by planting trees in backyards and on nature strips.

STRATEGIC OUTCOMES

- More biolinks are restored and established across the City landscape
- Increased biodiversity restoration on private and public land
- Expanded and improved habitat quality on City managed land
- Wider use and increased diversity of indigenous plant species across City-managed areas and projects
- Improved protection of wildlife in areas with high community interaction areas, such as roads and new development sites
- Increasing populations of the City's six (6) representative wildlife species and improved condition of their habitats
- Greater access to natural open space and nature-based experiences for residents in "nature-poor" suburbs.

TARGETS

- Establish 150,000 indigenous plants, and restore a further 50 hectares of habitat within City managed biolink areas
- Increase the use and diversity of indigenous plant species across City-managed areas and projects
- Increase natural regeneration to achieve 10 plus hectares of additional vegetation within nature reserves
- Complete biodiversity restoration works across 1,000 hectares of private land in biolink areas through City supported incentive programs
- Reduce the extent and impact of high-threat weeds across City-managed nature reserves and roadsides
- Reduce pest animal populations within City managed nature reserves and roadsides
- Reduce the impacts of dogs in high value wildlife areas, including City-managed coastal reserves
- Reduce the impacts of domestic cats on biodiversity across the City's urban areas
- Increase biodiversity restoration across open space reserves within biolink areas.

Goal 4: Foster stewardship and strong partnerships

Lasting protection and restoration of the City's biodiversity and natural assets can only be achieved through strong partnerships and an engaged community. **By working together to share knowledge, pool resources, and strengthen stewardship, we can create real change that endures for future generations.**

CONTEXT

Research shows that **connecting people with nature** enriches lives, improves health and wellbeing, and fosters positive environmental attitudes and values that can promote a lifelong relationship with nature⁵⁷. Connecting people with nature can also be the catalyst that drives environmental stewardship. Ensuring that opportunities to connect with nature are inclusive and accessible to people of all abilities is essential to achieving this. This includes removing physical, social and informational barriers so that all members of the community can participate in and benefit from nature.

We are also committed to supporting, improving, and expanding the environmental volunteer sector in the City. This aligns with the Victorian Government's target of **five million Victorians acting to protect the natural environment by 2037**⁵⁸ and the City's own *Environment Strategy 2020-30* target to **engage 100,000 people in nature education and conservation by 2030**.

Environmental volunteering

The City benefits from a strong network of individuals and community groups who actively restore habitat, protect threatened species and waterways, and help to deliver sustainability programs. Around 90 environmental volunteer groups operate across the City, most focused on caring for nature, including 36 groups that work on City managed land. Refer Appendix 3 for further details.

Engagement is also growing across schools and other public and private organisations. Many primary schools participate in environmental programs, reflected in high levels of involvement in the Geelong Nature Festival. Corporate interest is also increasing, with organisations keen to engage their staff in local conservation activities. For example, the City has partnered with the Geelong Football Club to offer Geelong AFLW members a *Green Cats* membership option. Geelong AFLW players have joined the City to plant trees along the Moorabool River at Fyansford over two consecutive years since 2023.

Community preference is shifting toward practical, outdoor and short-term volunteering, such as planting and clean-up events. These activities are consistently popular and align with volunteer data from across Victoria, where increasingly people are seeking meaningful, one-off event-based volunteering opportunities as opposed to long-term commitments⁵⁹. Ensuring volunteer opportunities are accessible and inclusive for people of all abilities will also be important in broadening participation across the community.

Volunteering across the City is uneven, with most groups based on the Bellarine (46%) and in the Geelong City area (41%). Across the city, around 81% of volunteer environment groups focus on caring for nature, citizen science or network activities.

Research highlights several challenges facing the environmental volunteering sector. While people continue to sign up to volunteering, they are committing fewer hours than in the past. Increasing time pressures within the community make it more difficult to attract new volunteers and sustain a reliable volunteer workforce. Environmental volunteers also tend to be older than the wider volunteering sector, and the sector lacks diversity, with fewer volunteers from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities, who are more likely to engage in informal rather than structured volunteering.

⁵⁷ Department Of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (2017) *Biodiversity 2037*. Victorian State Government, Melbourne.

⁵⁸ *ibid.*

⁵⁹ Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (2018) *Victorians Volunteering for Nature: Environmental Volunteering Plan*. Victorian State Government, Melbourne.

A 2018 volunteer survey⁶⁰ explored what would encourage and support people to participate in environmental volunteering. The findings show that volunteers are looking for:

- Greater flexibility in how and when they volunteer, so they can balance their contribution with family, work, study and caring responsibilities.
- More event-based volunteering that allows for short-term meaningful commitments. They also want these opportunities easier to find, as they are not always accessible or readily available.
- Meaningful volunteer roles and recognition for their efforts. Many volunteers want to feel valued by the organisations they work with, while some are seeking to volunteer through their workplace or are looking for pathways to employment and skills development.
- Simplified administration and legal requirements to make it easier for both volunteer groups and individual volunteers to participate.

Schools and environmental education

Schools can play a critical role in building long-term environmental stewardship across the City. The City will work with early learning centres, primary and secondary schools to embed environmental education as part of learning and community connection to nature. Opportunities will prioritise whole-school approaches that integrate sustainability into school culture, operations and curriculum, supporting student led action and positive nature-based behaviour change. Schools will also be supported to provide opportunities for students to contribute to and inform implementation of the Plan.

Private land stewardship

Although the City has many active environmental volunteer groups, many are working on public land reserves or on private land via an existing landholder connection. To strengthen biodiversity outcomes, we also need to work directly with individual landholders (especially those not already involved with a volunteer group such as Landcare) to protect and enhance habitat on their property and its long-term stewardship. The City can help by providing incentives to encourage landholders to apply for conservation covenants or adopt other sustainable land management practices.

Agency partnerships

Caring for nature in the City also requires strong collaboration with our agency partners (particularly the Corangamite CMA, Barwon Water, Melbourne Water and the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA), as well as other public land managers (e.g. Parks Victoria and coastal committees), policy makers, private businesses and industry. Nature isn't bound by management boundaries, so it is essential that we coordinate our efforts with other agencies and neighbouring municipalities. The private sector can also play an important role in the protection and enhancement of nature in Geelong.

The City will strengthen coordination and shared delivery with key partners including neighbouring municipalities and the Borough of Queenscliff, recognising shared landscapes and ecological systems across the Bellarine.

The City will also expand partnerships with the corporate sector, philanthropic organisations, Deakin University and The Gordon to support research, innovation and delivery of nature-positive outcomes. This includes supporting voluntary corporate stewardship programs and encouraging investment in biodiversity protection, restoration and management on private land.

Connecting people with nature in “nature poor” areas

Across the City there are areas where nature, and access to natural areas, is scarce. These “nature poor” areas include our northern suburbs such as Corio and Norlane. Improving access to nature in these areas is a priority to address inequities in health and wellbeing and environmental outcomes. All residents should be able to experience and benefit from nature, regardless of where they live or their level of ability.

In nature poor areas, we will prioritise investment and planning responses that increase urban biodiversity and access to nature, including strengthening development standards and supporting programs such as the Gardens for Wildlife program, Nature Strip Planting initiative, Schools for Wildlife and targeted tree planting using indigenous species. This

⁶⁰ *ibid.*

includes ensuring that open spaces and natural areas are designed or retrofitted to be physically accessible, inclusive and welcoming for people of all abilities.

STRATEGIC OUTCOMES

- Broader and more diverse community participation in nature conservation across the City
- Increasing biodiversity knowledge and awareness across the City and the wider community
- Stronger and more effective partnerships are supporting and enhancing biodiversity outcomes across the City
- Improved access to nature for people of all abilities across the City
- Stronger collaboration across agencies, education providers, industry and community partners to deliver coordinated biodiversity outcomes.

TARGETS

- Increase the number of Geelong residents connected and engaged with nature
- Increase participation in the Geelong Nature Festival and other community-based nature activities
- Deliver a minimum of twenty (20) targeted activities per year to increase participation by culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities in environmental education and nature related activities
- Deliver a minimum of twenty (20) targeted activities per year to increase participation by young people in environmental education and nature related activities
- Increase the number of Geelong residents volunteering in nature-related activities
- Increase participation in citizen science programs
- Establish baseline levels of community awareness and participation through surveys.

Goal 5: Build resilience to a changing climate

Evidence shows that ecological change in response to climate change is unavoidable, widespread and substantial. Our ability to manage biodiversity through these changes depends on **understanding how ecosystems might change and identifying places where biodiversity has the greatest potential to persist into the future**⁶¹.

CONTEXT

The City's natural assets will be impacted by climate change. These impacts are well documented and have already been discussed in this Plan (refer to Drivers of Change above).

Our focus must shift to building the resilience of natural systems to adapt and persist under a changing climate. The City's natural assets are adaptive as they have persisted through climate change in the past, however, their capacity to continue to adapt has been compromised by changes such as fragmentation, competition for water use and the introduction of non-native plants and animals.

The best way we can help nature adapt to climate change will be largely reflected in how we manage our catchments and landscapes into the future. However, the potential scale, timing and severity of a changing climate may mean our traditional approaches may not be enough. We may have to change or even transform how we manage these systems, because the natural assets themselves may change dramatically⁶².

The City will apply a structured and adaptive approach to climate change that focuses on selecting the most appropriate type and scale of intervention for each natural asset. This approach recognises that responses may range from strengthening existing management practices, through to implementing new approaches or fundamentally changing how systems are managed where necessary.

This will be informed by an ongoing assessment process that considers the condition, significance and vulnerability of natural assets to climate change, including their exposure, sensitivity and capacity to adapt. Based on this assessment, management responses may include:

- **Strengthening resilience** through improvements to existing practices where the magnitude of change is small and predictable. Adaptation can occur through incremental changes to the current management of natural assets, for example, such as fencing waterways to exclude stock and enable recovery, reducing pressures from pests or removing dogs from sensitive wildlife areas to alleviate their compounding impact on vulnerable species. These actions aim to support ecosystems to retain their function and capacity to adapt.
- **Supporting transition** where the magnitude of change is greater or less predictable, requiring more substantial changes to management approaches and the introduction of new measures. This may include restoring ecological processes, assisting species movement within landscapes, or changing water regimes at wetlands, such as the Sparrowvale Wetland Reserve *Nubiti-joorree*, to support vulnerable species adapt to projected reductions in stream flows.
- **Enabling transformation** where change is extensive and systems are unlikely to persist in their current form. This may require fundamentally different approaches to the management of natural assets, including innovative or engineered solutions. Examples include relocating fish populations from small climate vulnerable creeks to larger permanent waterways, or creating artificial reef to mitigate coastal climate change impacts and create new habitat for vulnerable marine species.

This approach will ensure that management actions are proportionate to risk, evidence-based, and responsive to changing conditions. Recognising that ecosystems are dynamic, this assessment will be regularly reviewed and

⁶¹ Corangamite Catchment Management Authority (2024) *Corangamite Regional Catchment Strategy*. Corangamite CMA, Colac.

⁶² *ibid*.

updated over time, incorporating monitoring results, new information and updated climate projections. This will enable the City to adapt its management approach as natural assets respond to climate pressures.

Supporting climate adaptation also creates opportunities for the City, such as the creation of new habitats and green spaces that will benefit the community. Public open spaces across the City can contribute to habitat restoration and ecological connectivity, and the City has committed to restoring biodiversity within modified urban landscapes through the City's Environment Strategy. Urban open spaces, which include parks, gardens, recreational reserves, drainage reserves and streetscapes, will become increasingly important refuges for native wildlife and the community, as the climate warms. These spaces can also help reduce the heat island affect in the City. Urban greenspaces may also play an important role in allowing movement of species across the landscape in response to changes in climate and other pressures.

Biolink planning will adopt a climate-responsive approach to ensure ecological connectivity remains functional into the future. This includes considering projected climate conditions when identifying priority areas, supporting species movement and range shifts, and recognising that ecological networks are dynamic and will need to adapt over time. Flexible and connected landscapes, rather than fixed corridors, will be prioritised and regularly reviewed as conditions change.

The protection of blue and teal carbon ecosystems presents another important opportunity for the City to achieve greater biodiversity outcomes, build the resilience of natural systems to respond to climate change, limit the amount of carbon released into the atmosphere and contribute to carbon emission offsets. Blue carbon is the carbon stored in coastal and marine ecosystems. Teal carbon is the carbon stored in inland freshwater wetlands. Protection of these ecosystems provides protection from coastal storm surges and inland flooding and helps to mitigate erosion.

These ecosystems provide habitat for a range of estuarine and freshwater species including migratory bird and commercially important fish species (supporting both mature and juvenile life stages). They also contribute towards improved water quality and nutrient cycling⁶³. Across the City, there are significant opportunities to protect and restore blue and teal carbon ecosystems.

The City of Greater Geelong has already taken an innovative approach to combat coastal erosion and inundation on the Bellarine Peninsula, while creating new habitat. Projects such as the Ramblers Reef Foreshore Project in Portarlington and the Eco Reef in Clifton Springs are prime examples. Since the installation of the Ramblers Reef in 2018, the project has expanded beach and foreshore habitat and reduced coastal inundation events. Seagrass is also thriving again the shallow waters, further enhancing ecological health.

STRATEGIC OUTCOMES

- Improved understanding of climate change impacts on natural areas, with adaptation and mitigation measures embedded in decision making
- Increased protection and restoration of blue and teal carbon ecosystems across the City
- Improved outcomes within the City open space reserves as the climate changes
- Improved stormwater management to avoid and minimise negative impacts on the natural environment.

TARGETS

- Ensure climate change considerations are embedded across all relevant decision making processes
- Increase the implementation of nature and eco-system-based solutions to minimise the negative impact of climate change on natural systems
- Increase the extent of blue and/or teal carbon ecosystems protected and restored
- Reduce impacts of stormwater on receiving environments and nature through the application of Integrated water management solutions and other stormwater management innovations in growth areas.

⁶³ Vic Catchments (2024) Blue and teal carbon investment opportunities in Victoria. URL: https://viccatchments.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/Blue-and-Teal-Carbon_FINAL-WEB-1.pdf (Accessed 25 August 2024)



Action Plan

This section of the Plan presents the actions that the City will deliver to help achieve the ten-year strategic objectives and targets for each of the five Goals. The actions are short-term, intending to be delivered over the next one to two years, after which the action plan will be reviewed and updated. These short-term actions are outlined in Table 4 below. While some actions apply to a specific landscape, others will be implemented City wide.

Note **supplementary actions to be implemented if time and resources allow.

The landscapes are described as:

Djilang – Geelong wide (whole of municipality)	BaP – Basalt Plains	Bell – Bellarine	BwP – Barwon Plains
GC – Geelong City	LR – Little River	NU – Northern Uplands	

Table 5. Plan for Nature actions to be delivered over the next three years

Goal	Strategic Outcomes (10 years)	Targets (10 years)	Actions (2 years)	Landscape							Resourcing
				Djiang	BaP	Bell	BwP	GC	LR	NU	
Value Wadawurrung Country & culture	- Increasing role of Wadawurrung in the management of the City's nature reserves - Wadawurrung are leading identification, protection and management of cultural values - Greater integration of Wadawurrung language, stories and cultural practice within the City's nature reserves.	- Establish active collaborative relationships between Wadawurrung and the City across five (5) nature reserves - Complete two (2) Cultural Values Assessments (CVAs) of cultural landscape areas - Incorporate Wadawurrung language, stories or cultural practice into the planning, design and management of: - new nature reserves of high cultural and/or ecological value - five (5) existing nature reserves.	1) Meet with Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation (WTOAC) four (4) times each year to support collaborative actions that strengthen connections between culture and nature.	✓							BAU
			2) Identify City nature reserves where WTOAC can lead or partner in conservation management, and undertake two (2) traditional ecological practices, for example, cultural burning. This would include opportunities to share traditional ecological knowledge with community volunteers involved in restoration, where appropriate.			✓		✓		✓	BAU
			3) **a) Identify and prioritise landscapes suitable for Cultural Values Assessment by WTOAC b) Commence one (1) Cultural Values Assessment.	✓							Resource Required
			4) a) Incorporate Wadawurrung language and stories at two (2) existing City nature reserves, through naming, interpretative displays and/or other activities b) Prioritise new nature reserves for similar treatment, aligning with the City's <i>Place Naming Policy 2025</i> .			✓		✓		✓	BAU
Prioritise protections	- Contribution to the '30 by 30' target, with increased area of land under effective conservation management - Expansion and strengthening of permanently protected areas, including City-owned reserves - Increased protection of high-quality remnant vegetation, particularly in biolink areas and on private land - More areas of remnant vegetation are permanently protected across both public and private land - Greater and more strategic use of nature based planning overlays (i.e. VPO, ESO, SLO) across both public and private land - Improved protection of threatened species and habitats across nature reserves, open spaces and roadsides - A greater proportion of vegetation offsets secured within the City - Fewer instances of unauthorised vegetation removal	- Increase the level of protection for remnant vegetation within biolink areas, with a focus on patches greater than two (2) hectares - Establish conservation protection for all remnant biodiversity patches larger than 10 hectares within biolink areas - Increase the total area of remnant vegetation within the City's conservation estate and other public protected areas. - Increase the total area of biodiversity permanently protected on private land or Crown water frontages (e.g., via Trust for Nature covenants, Section 69 Agreements, or Riparian management licences or other protection mechanisms) - Permanently protect five (5) City owned Nature Reserves through Trust for Nature Covenants or Section 69 Agreements - Achieve improved protection of threatened species and their habitat across City-managed nature reserves, open space and roadsides through the implementation of six (6) conservation action plans - Increase the proportion of biodiversity offsets secured within the City	5) a) Review the planning scheme (including the environmental zones, overlays, and local policy) to ensure sufficient protection for areas of environmental significance and to enhance biodiversity. b) Prepare planning scheme amendment(s) to implement the Environment Strategy and Plan for Nature and recommendations of the planning scheme review on environmental matters.			✓		✓		✓	Resource Required
			6) Develop management standards to ensure stronger recognition and protections for areas of environmental significance within biolink areas.	✓							BAU
			7) a). Secure permanent protection for two (2) new and existing City owned Nature Reserves through Trust for Nature Covenants or Section 69 Agreements. b) Actively promote and support private landholders to establish Trust For Nature covenants through the City's incentives program.			✓		✓		✓	BAU/Grant
			8) **Prepare and implement conservation action plans to provide a coordinated protection and management framework for threatened species and their habitats located on City managed land.	✓							Resource Required
			9) a) Prepare two (2) conservation plans for EPBC listed species located on City managed land: 1. Grey Headed Flying Fox 2. Growling Grass Frog. b) Enhance the management, protection, and restoration of Bellarine and Melbourne Yellow Gum Woodlands to provide better habitat support for the Swift Parrot			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	BAU
			10) **a) Develop guidelines to promote retention of important habitat not protected under native vegetation regulations; for example, planted areas of vegetation, and large old, planted trees, as well as for wildlife without threatened species protection b) Develop a process/framework to better support wildlife (e.g. kangaroos) in areas of high community interaction like roads and new development areas c) Promote the Hollows Hunt App, ensuring the information is readily accessible for decision making.	✓							Resource Required
			11) **a) Investigate funding opportunities to acquire more land for nature reserves, prioritising high-quality vegetation and habitat not commonly represented in reserves	✓		✓	✓			✓	Resource Required

Goal	Strategic Outcomes (10 years)	Targets (10 years)	Actions (2 years)	Landscape						Resourcing
				Djiang	BaP	Bell	BwP	GC	LR	
	- Improved management of light and noise impacts on biodiversity, particularly in coastal, wetland and other high-value habitat areas - Greater uptakes of conservation covenants, Crown frontage agreements and other stewardship agreements - Nature and biodiversity considerations embedded across all relevant City policies, strategies and operational processes.	- Reduce the annual rate of vegetation clearing without a permit, including the loss of old trees - Increase the integration of biodiversity protection into the City’s policies, strategies and operational procedures - Develop and implement guidelines or a policy to minimise light and noise impacts on biodiversity, with a focus on sensitive environments such as coastal areas, wetlands and biolink corridors.	**b) Advocate for Open Space (Clause 53.01) style contributions to be added as a requirement for subdivision to support protection and enhancement of biodiversity in growth areas" or similar.							
			12) **a) Identify priority sites within the City suitable for retaining future vegetation offsets. **b) Assess the costs and benefits of purchasing land with high quality remnant vegetation for offset purposes. **c) Actively promote benefits of participating in the vegetation offset market to private landowners. d) Develop an internal policy that prioritises securing vegetation offsets within the municipality, including through first-party offset sites on City-managed land (e.g. expansion of existing sites such as Sparrovale Wetlands Reserve - Ngubitiŋ yoorree), with a tiered approach allowing offsets within the broader Corangamite CMA and Melbourne Water regions where local offsets are not feasible.	✓						Resource Required
			13) a) Improve access to high quality biodiversity information to support better decision making for the protection and management of nature b) Review the City’s biodiversity mapping program, identify gaps, determine future directions, and undertake updated mapping c) Use technology to improve biodiversity mapping and provide better community access and input d) Develop a process to consolidate all City-wide biodiversity mapping into a central system, starting with reserve handovers e) Use Artificial Intelligence (AI) to develop an index that tracks the City’s response to nature protection and management to inform decision making.	✓						BAU/Grant
			14) Develop a methodology to enable natural assets to be accounted for in the City’s corporate asset accounting systems.	✓						BAU/Partnership
			15) a) Develop a City-wide Environmental Incident Reporting System b) Educate landholders about native vegetation regulations and their responsibilities, targeting identified compliance hotspots c) Actively promote and enforce legislation to prevent and reduce illegal removal for native vegetation and habitat d) Review the City’s processes around incidents regarding the illegal removal of native vegetation and habitat.	✓						BAU
			16) a) Introduce mandatory Green Card Accreditation requirements for relevant City staff and contractors b) Deliver two (2) Green Card Training opportunities for City staff and contractors.	✓						BAU
			Connect & restore	- More biolinks are restored and established across the City landscape - Increased biodiversity restoration on private and public land	- Establish 150,000 indigenous plants, and restore a further 50 hectares of habitat within City managed biolink areas - Increase the use and diversity of indigenous plant species across City-managed areas and projects	17) Undertake appropriate restoration and biolink planning for each landscape, which could make use of landscape scale conservation action plans. This should include targets for permanent protections for each landscape.	✓			
18) a) Develop the Geelong Biolinks Project b) Prioritise City greening programs to within City-managed biolinks c) Establish 30,000 indigenous plants across City-managed priority biolinks, and through natural regeneration, create 10 hectares of new habitat.	✓									

Goal	Strategic Outcomes (10 years)	Targets (10 years)	Actions (2 years)	Landscape							Resourcing			
				Djiang	BaP	Bell	BwP	GC	LR	NU				
	- Expanded and improved habitat quality on City managed land - Wider use and increased diversity of indigenous plant species across City-managed areas and projects - Improved protection of wildlife in areas with high community interaction areas, such as roads and new development sites - Increasing populations of the City's six (6) representative wildlife species and improved condition of their habitats - Greater access to natural open space and nature-based experiences for residents in “nature-poor” suburbs.	- Increase natural regeneration to achieve 10 plus hectares of additional vegetation within nature reserves and City managed biolink areas - Complete biodiversity restoration works across 1,000 hectares of private land in biolink areas through City supported incentive programs - Reduce the extent and impact of high-threat weeds across City-managed nature reserves and roadsides - Reduce pest animal populations within City managed nature reserves and roadsides - Reduce the impacts of dogs in high value wildlife areas, including City-managed coastal reserves - Reduce the impacts of domestic cats on biodiversity across the City’s urban areas - Increase biodiversity restoration across open space reserves within biolink areas.	19) a) Expand the landowner incentives programs to include rural properties within biolink areas b) Complete 300 hectares of biodiversity restoration works on private land within biolink areas.		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	BAU/New Funding		
			20) Facilitate delivery of the Geelong Biolinks Project through an agreement (i.e. Memorandum of Understanding) with environment groups and networks.	✓									New Funding	
			21) a) Prepare a conservation action plan for nature reserves to guide restoration and management, incorporating community and Wadawurrung input where relevant. b) Increase the extent of vegetation in nature reserves by three (3) hectares through natural regeneration c) Establish a monitoring program to map biodiversity quality improvements at ten (10) nature reserves.				✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	BAU	
			22) **Develop a method to capture and report on the contribution of natural regeneration to increasing indigenous habitat	✓									BAU	
			23) a) Develop indigenous planting procedures, including standards around local provenance, indigenous street trees and plant selection for major works, new development areas and biolinks, and processes for reintroduction of locally threatened or extinct plant species (e.g. Lara Grevillea, Button Wrinklewort) into suitable reserves. b) Review the <i>Indigenous Plants of the Geelong Region</i> guide to strengthen guidance on species diversity, reintroduction opportunities and priority habitats. c) Better support local indigenous nurseries to ensure the supply of plants of local provenance, including species required for restoration and reintroduction programs.	✓									BAU	
			24) Select suitable indigenous street trees and plants for nature strips within approximately 200 metres either side of a biolink area.				✓		✓					BAU
			25) Prepare guidelines and standards for nature reserves and biodiversity outcomes in new development areas. This will include establishing urban biodiversity standards that address biodiversity sensitive urban design, minimum canopy and understorey diversity targets, habitat connectivity, and wildlife-friendly infrastructure (e.g. lighting and fencing), to support nature positive development outcomes.	✓			✓				✓	✓		BAU
			26) Identify and prioritise opportunities to enhance urban biodiversity and strengthen connections to nature in “nature-poor” suburbs, including the development of targets to guide implementation. This will focus on interventions such as pocket parks and urban greening within biolink areas to improve habitat connectivity and increase access to nature.						✓					Partnerships
			27) a) Investigate opportunities to provide artificial habitat infrastructure to support wildlife (for example, sprinklers for the Grey Headed Flying Fox Camp, wildlife road crossings, floating pontoons for water birds, old piles) b) Deliver two (2) habitat enhancement infrastructure projects.				✓		✓		✓	✓		Capital Projects
			28) Collaborate with Melbourne Water, Wyndam City and the community to explore future management of the Little River corridor.										✓	Partnerships
			29) **Identify high priority roadsides for nature conservation and increase management programs in these areas.	✓										BAU
			30) Review and expand the <i>Rabbit Action Plan</i> to include other pest animals such as foxes, deer and feral cats.	✓										BAU
			31) Update the City’s Weed Prioritisation Tool (2017) to strengthen the identification and management of high-threat weeds, including clear priorities and actions for control.	✓										BAU
			32) **Develop and deliver community education and behaviour change initiatives to support responsible cat ownership, informed by research and examples from other municipalities.	✓										BAU
			33) a). Support the community to develop management and control measures for Indian Myna. This would include community education on monitoring and humane trapping measures. b). Investigate control opportunities for Indian Myna on priority City managed nature reserves.				✓		✓					Partnerships
			34) In high value wildlife areas managed by the City, continue to identify dogs-on-leash or dog exclusion zones through the <i>Domestic Animal Management Plan</i> 2026-29. This will maintain a strong focus on sustainable access management in response to population growth and increasing pressure on coastal and natural areas and may include provision of additional off-leash areas in new suburbs. Targeted education campaigns will support responsible dog ownership, including awareness of legal obligations and impacts on wildlife.				✓		✓					BAU

Goal	Strategic objectives (10 years)	Targets (10 years)	Actions (2 years)	Landscape							Resourcing
				Djiang	BaP	Bell	BwP	GC	LR	NU	
Foster stewardship and strong partnerships	- Broader and more diverse community participation in nature conservation across the City - Increasing biodiversity knowledge and awareness across the City and the wider community - Stronger and more effective partnerships are supporting and enhancing biodiversity outcomes across the City - Improved access to nature for people of all abilities across the City - Stronger collaboration across agencies, education providers, industry and community partners to deliver coordinated biodiversity outcomes.	- Increase the number of Geelong residents connected and engaged with nature - Increase participation in the Geelong Nature Festival and other community-based nature activities - Deliver a minimum of twenty (20) targeted activities per year to increase participation by culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities in environmental education and nature related activities - Deliver a minimum of twenty (20) targeted activities per year to increase participation by young people in environmental education and nature related activities - Increase the number of Geelong residents volunteering in nature-related activities - Increase participation in citizen science programs - Establish baseline levels of community awareness and participation through surveys.	35) a) Prepare a community engagement, participation and awareness plan that provides a framework for connecting people to nature including programs for City staff **b) Increase understanding of the barriers experienced by minority groups (ability, age, ethnicity) to engage in nature conservation and identify opportunities to support their participation.	✓							BAU/Grant
			36) Continue to deliver the Geelong Nature Festival every two (2) years and nature week/month activities every alternate year.	✓							BAU
			37) Partner with two (2) City festivals and events to promote nature to a larger, more diverse community (for example Youth Festivals, Design Week).	✓							BAU
			38) Build community involvement in citizen science and monitoring programs to support the City's (6) key wildlife species and track trends in invertebrate populations. This will include strengthening the role of 'key' species to build community understanding and connection, through storytelling, education and practical guidance on how to create habitat and support their survival.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Partnerships
			39) a) Continue to support and build capacity of the City's Caring for Nature volunteer groups and hold an annual event/activity b) Facilitate formation of two (2) new Caring For Nature Volunteer groups c) Increase the opportunities for people to volunteer for nature without needing to join a formal community group.	✓							BAU/Partner ships
			40) Engage urban residents in nature conservation through the Gardens for Wildlife program, nature strip plantings initiative and demonstration gardens, with priority given to properties within 200-metres of a biolink area and nature poor areas.			✓		✓			BAU/Partner ships
			41) **Establish a 'schools for wildlife' program and engage six (6) schools. This will support schools to create habitat on-site, connect with local biolinks projects, and access education and support to build student understanding and involvement in nature conservation.			✓		✓	✓		BAU/Partner ships
			42) Deliver the Nature Stewards course annually, prioritising participation of residents from 'nature-poor' suburbs.	✓							BAU
			43) **Develop a procedure to support corporate groups to fund and participate in nature-based volunteering.	✓							BAU
Build resilience to a changing climate	- Improved understanding of climate change impacts on natural areas, with adaptation and mitigation measures embedded in decision making - Increased protection and restoration of blue and teal carbon ecosystems across the City - Improved outcomes within the City open space reserves as the climate changes - Improved stormwater management to avoid and minimise negative impacts on the natural environment.	- Ensure climate change considerations are embedded across all relevant decision making processes - Increase the implementation of nature and eco-system-based solutions to minimise the negative impact of climate change on natural systems - Increase the extent of blue and/or teal carbon ecosystems protected and restored - Reduce impacts of stormwater on receiving environments and nature through the application of Integrated water management solutions and other stormwater management innovations in growth areas.	44) Develop and deliver targeted communication and education initiatives on the impacts of climate change on local biodiversity and key species, to build community understanding and support for conservation actions.	✓							BAU
			45) Improve catchment health and stormwater management to protect downstream ecosystems, including Port Phillip Bay, Corio Bay and Ramsar-listed wetlands. This will include prioritising restoration of Bellarine Peninsula waterways as biolink corridors, increasing investment in stormwater treatment (e.g. gross pollutant traps, nature-based systems and permeable materials), and protecting sensitive marine environments such as Swan Bay and Barwon Bluff Marine Sanctuary.			✓		✓	✓		BAU/ Capital Project/Grant /Partnership
			46) Develop guidelines to embed climate change considerations in strategic and statutory planning for natural areas, including recommendations for vegetation community migration zones. This will include establishing a methodology to assess adaptation needs of natural assets, and a process for regularly reviewing and updating these assessments over time in response to changing conditions.	✓							BAU
			47) a) Identify opportunities to protect and restore blue and teal carbon ecosystems within both City managed and private land b) Develop a proposal to access the blue carbon market, creating further incentives for protecting and restoring coastal environments through the <i>Tidal restoration of blue carbon ecosystems method</i> c) Deliver one (1) blue carbon restoration project.			✓		✓	✓		BAU/ Capital Project/Grant /Partnership
			48) a) Identify suitable locations to restore intertidal and marine environments using nature-based solutions such as living seawalls, reefs and piles, and seagrass and mangrove restoration b) Deliver two (2) marine restoration projects.			✓		✓	✓		Capital Project/Grant
			49) Implement integrated water management solutions alongside innovative stormwater management approaches to reduce impact on natural saline ecosystems, including Sparrovale Wetlands Reserve - <i>Ngubiti yoorree</i> , Moonahwarri, Point Richards Flora and Fauna Reserve and Portarlington Recreation Reserve, Limeburners Bay and Avalon. This includes nature-based solutions and techniques such as stormwater offsets, permeable surfaces, water-sensitive urban design, green infrastructure, and catchment-scale measures to slow, treat and reuse runoff before it reaches sensitive environments.			✓		✓			Partnership/ Grants/BAU



Implementation and renewal

Successful governance and implementation of the Plan rely on coordinated long-term and annual monitoring, supported by regular evaluation to ensure actions can be refined, better targeted and continually improved over time.

The City is committed to maintaining a robust monitoring, evaluation, reporting and improvement (MERI) framework to guide delivery and track progress.

IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK

A strengthened implementation framework will underpin delivery of the Plan (Figure 22). This will include:

- Clear timelines for actions and milestones
- Defined responsibilities across relevant City departments
- Measurable performance indicators
- Public reporting requirements to ensure transparency and accountability
- Defined processes to address underperformance or non-delivery

Further detail will be provided through supporting implementation documentation.

IMPLEMENTATION PLANNING AND RESOURCING

The City commits to preparing and maintaining a detailed implementation arrangements to support delivery of this Plan. This will include:

- Short-term (two-year) action planning, updated on a rolling basis
- Longer-term (10-year) resourcing and delivery priorities
- Clear funding pathways and investment priorities
- Identification of internal and external delivery partners

Opportunities will also be explored to strengthen funding, including:

- Corporate sponsorship, government funding initiatives and partnerships
- Engagement with philanthropic trusts and individual donors
- Potential establishment of dedicated fundraising mechanisms or entities to support ongoing investment in nature.

REVIEW AND RENEWAL

The shorter-term Action Plan will be reviewed and updated every two years on a rolling basis to ensure it remains responsive and effective. The broader Plan will undergo a major review every 10 years.

Progress towards the Plan's strategic outcomes will be evaluated at the end of the Plan's life in 2036, informing the next iteration of the Plan.

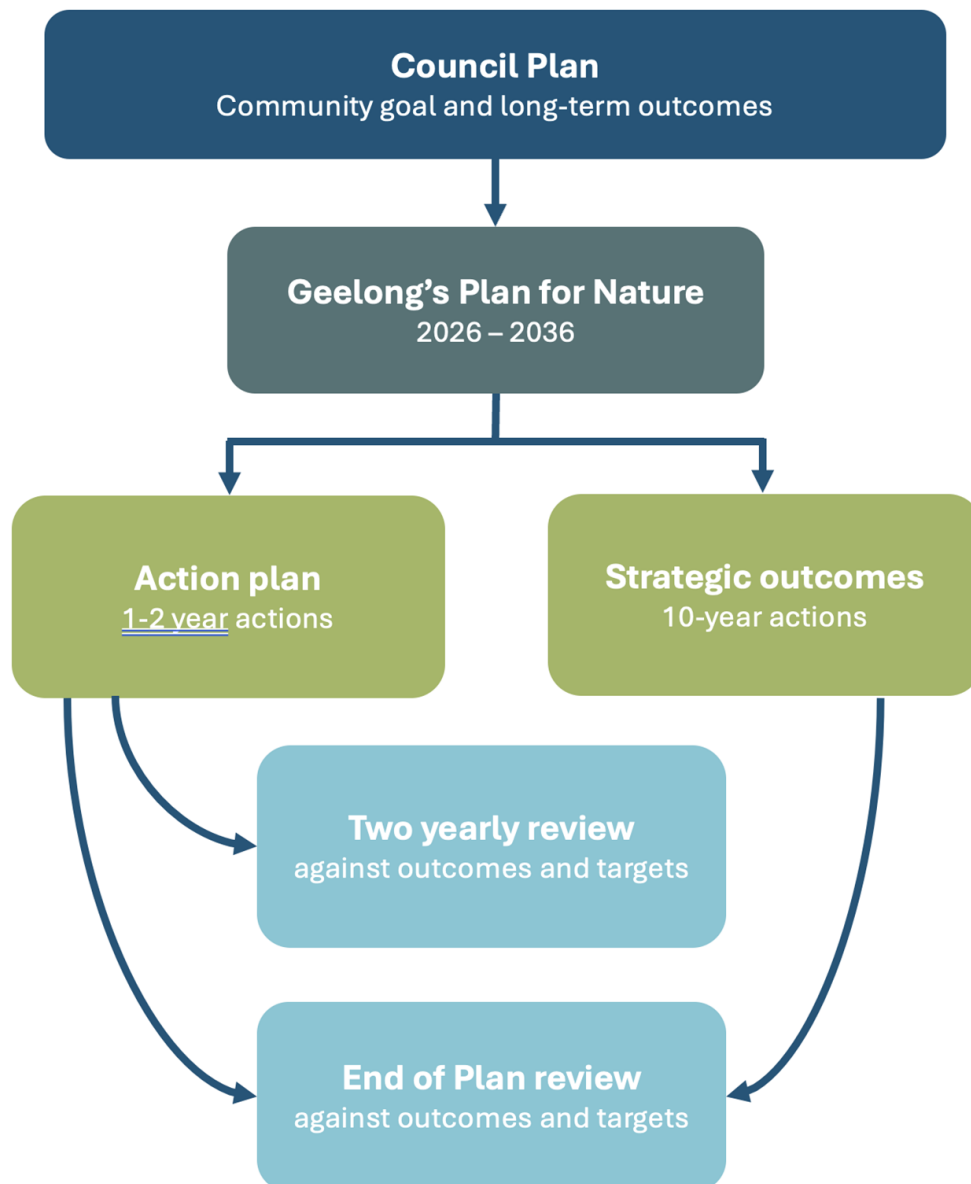


Figure 22. Plan and timing for implementation and review

Monitoring and evaluation

The City is committed to ongoing monitoring, reporting, evaluation and improvement (MERI) used the latest best practices and technologies. These processes formalise the collection of insights gained through implementing the Plan. They also support adaptive management and continuous improvement by ensuring that lessons are used to inform future actions.

A key focus for evaluating the Plan's success will be tracking progress against the targets set under each of the five goals and across each of the six landscapes.

The Plan aligns with international best practice by incorporating clear targets, measurable outcomes, regular monitoring and reporting, and an adaptive management approach, while contributing to global commitments such as the '30 by 30' conservation target.

Table 6. Monitoring requirements

WHAT NEEDS MONITORING	BASELINE EXISTS	WHEN?
The extent and variety of protected natural habitat.	- Nature Reserves – 1358 hectares - Conservation Estate - 9.7% - City Biodiversity Mapping 2024 - Protection Measures (as per mapping 2026).	Biennial (every two-years)
Habitat quality and condition of nature reserves.	Sparrovale Wetlands Reserve - <i>Ngubiti yoorree</i> , Old Melbourne Road Grassland Buckley Park Foreshore reserve.	Five yearly
Status of conservation management plans for threatened species.	Hooded Plover Conservation Action Plan Latham's Snipe Plan	Five yearly
Connectiveness of priority corridors.	TBD.	
Extent of blue and/or teal carbon habitat that is protected.	- Southeast Bellarine Biolink Blue carbon mapping - Swan Bay Incentive Program - The Point Blue Carbon Mapping - Shell Foreshore Mapping - City Biodiversity Mapping 2024 - Corangamite CMA Mapping.	Five yearly
Geelong residents' engagement with nature.	80 Caring for Nature Groups - Attendance at Geelong Nature Festival (no.) - Attendance at other nature events (no.) - Nature Stewards Alumni (no.)	Biennial (every two-years)
No. of nature reserves where language, stories or cultural practice is established.	Number of nature reserves where language, stories and cultural practice exist.	Five yearly

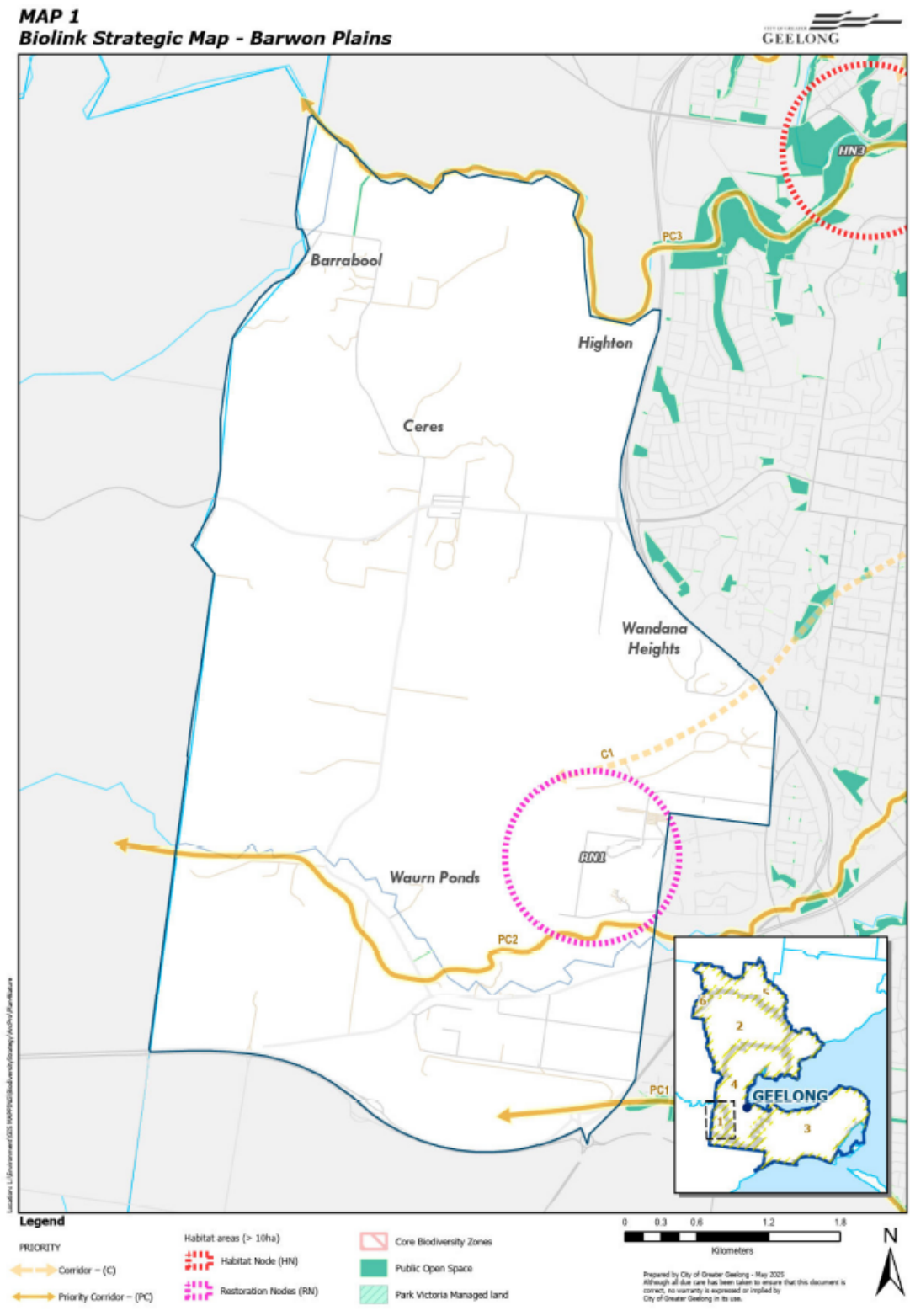
The evaluation of the success of the Plan will also be guided by the following themes and key evaluation questions (KEQs).

Table 7. Themes and Key Evaluation Questions

THEMES	KEY EVALUATION QUESTIONS (KEQs)
Plan design Focuses on whether the governance and actions were appropriately designed to deliver the intended targets (and goals)	Was the design of the Plan appropriate to deliver the intended outcomes?
Plan implementation Focuses on whether the actions of the Plan were delivered as planned and seeks to identify how these approaches have ensured efficient and cost-effective delivery.	To what extent have the Plan actions been delivered as planned? To what extent was the delivery good value for money?
Plan impact Focuses on what the Plan has achieved to date against the intended targets (and goals). At the end of the Plan term, the focus is also on the legacy of the program and to what extent the impact of the actions will extend beyond the life of the Plan (long-term outcomes).	To what extent did the actions lead to the achievement of the targets? What impact will the actions have beyond the life of the Plan?

MAPS 1-6: Environment Values

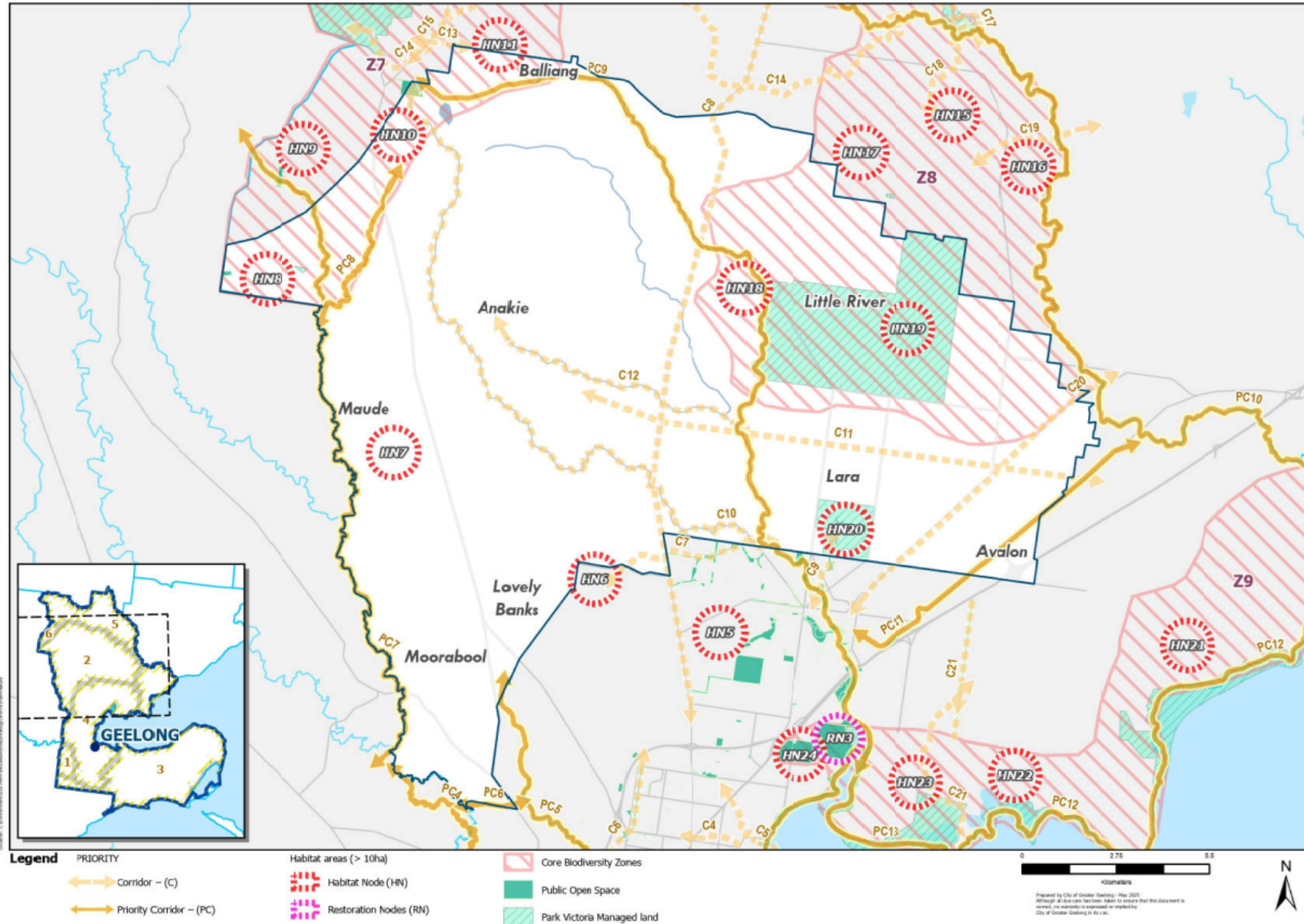
MAP 1
Biolink Strategic Map - Barwon Plains



MAP 2
Biolink Strategic Map - Bellarine



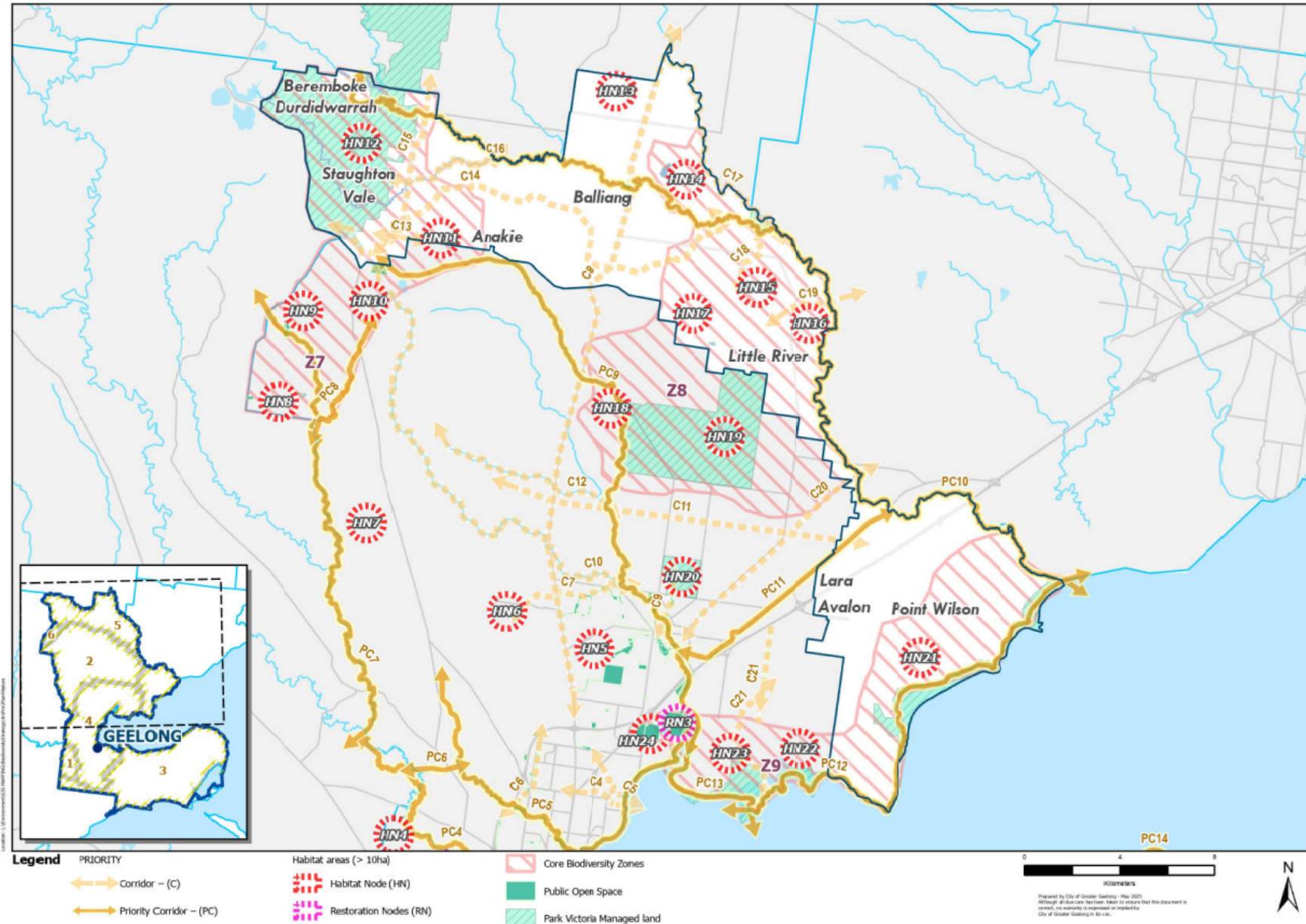
MAP 3
Biolink Strategic Map - Basalt Plains



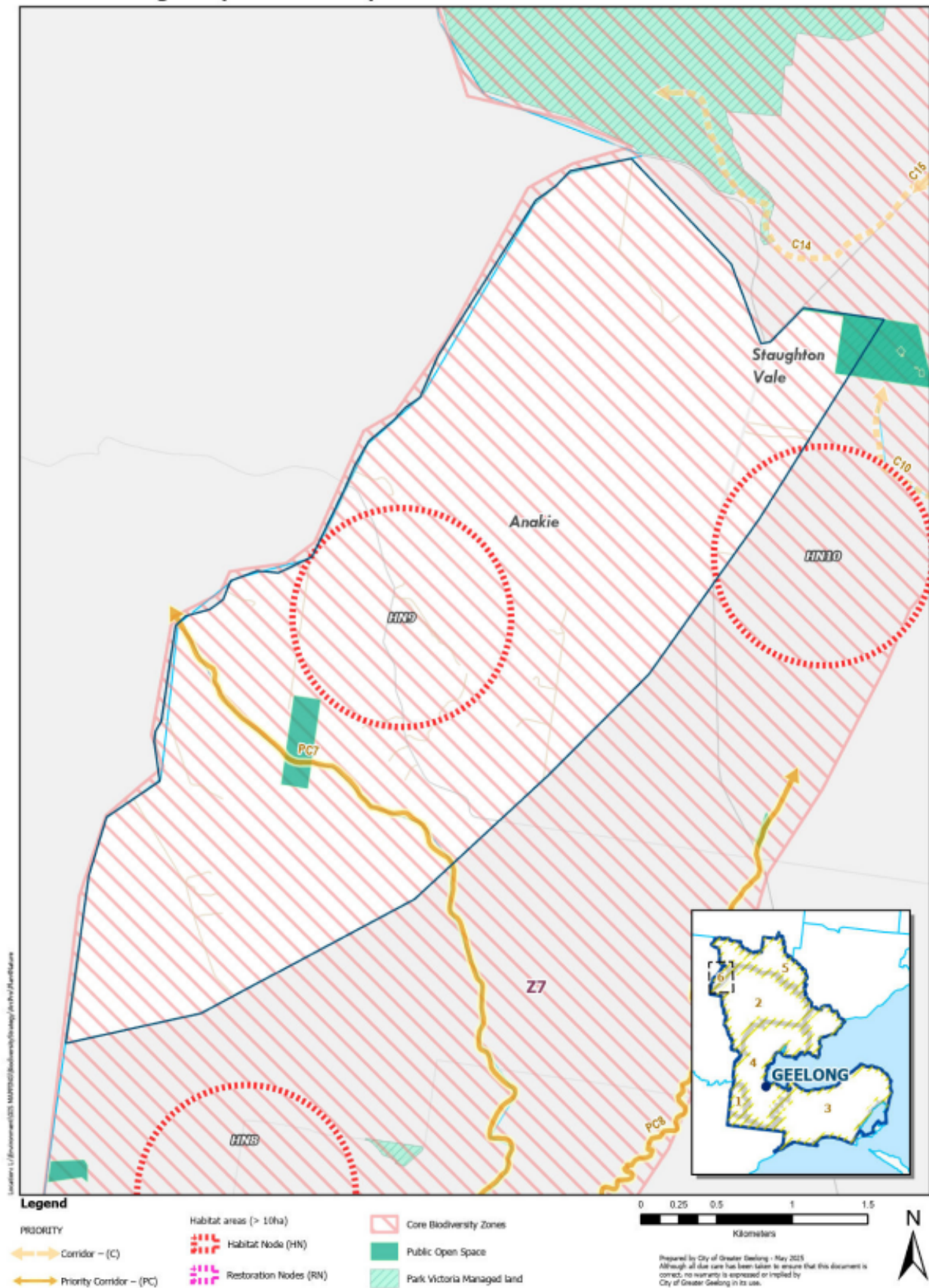
MAP 4
Biolink Strategic Map - Geelong City



MAP 5
Biolink Strategic Map - Little River

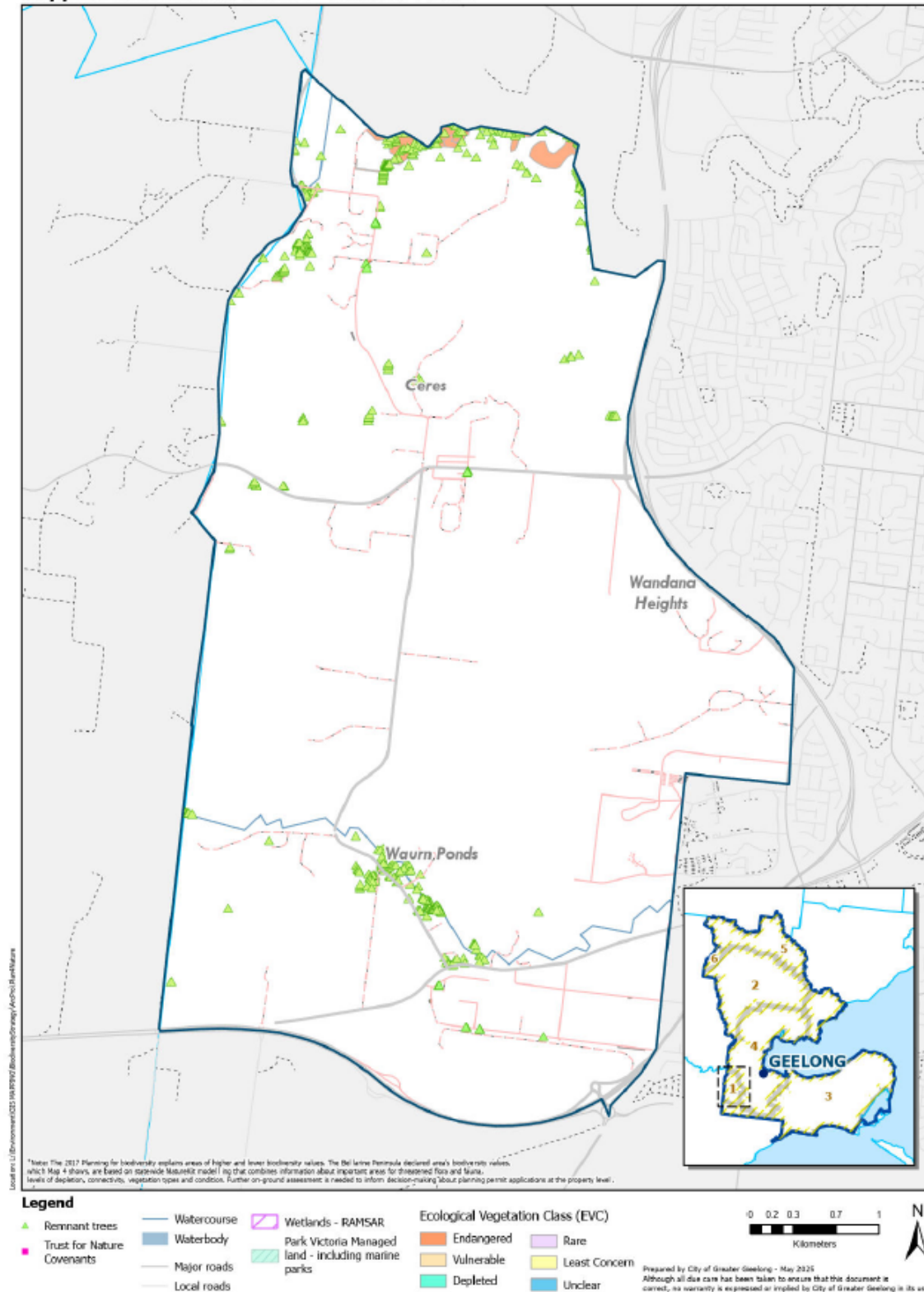


MAP 6
Biolink Strategic Map - Northern Uplands

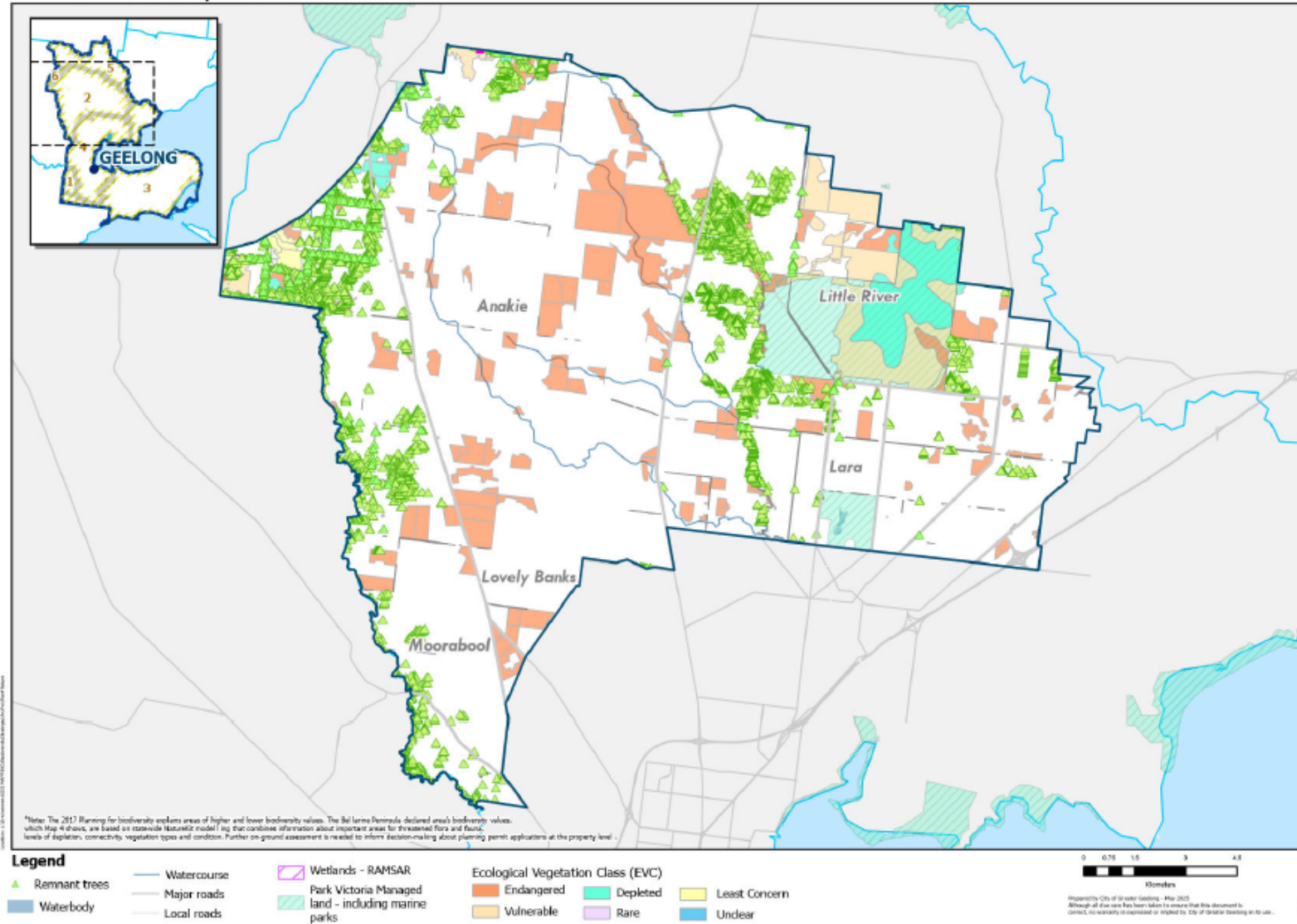


MAPS 7-12: Environmental Values

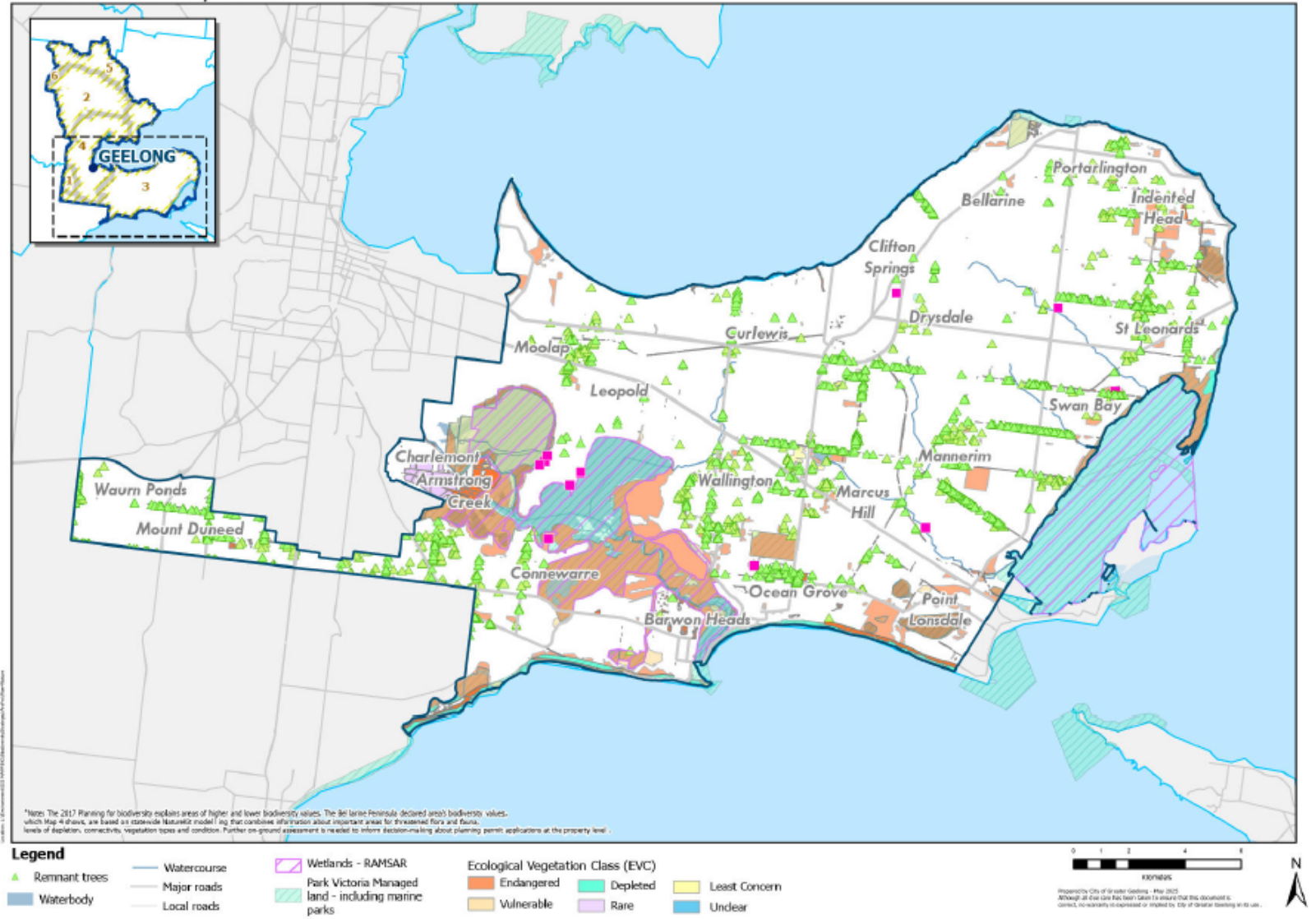
Map 7
Mapped Environment Values - Barwon Plains



Map 8
Environmental Values Map - Basalt Plains

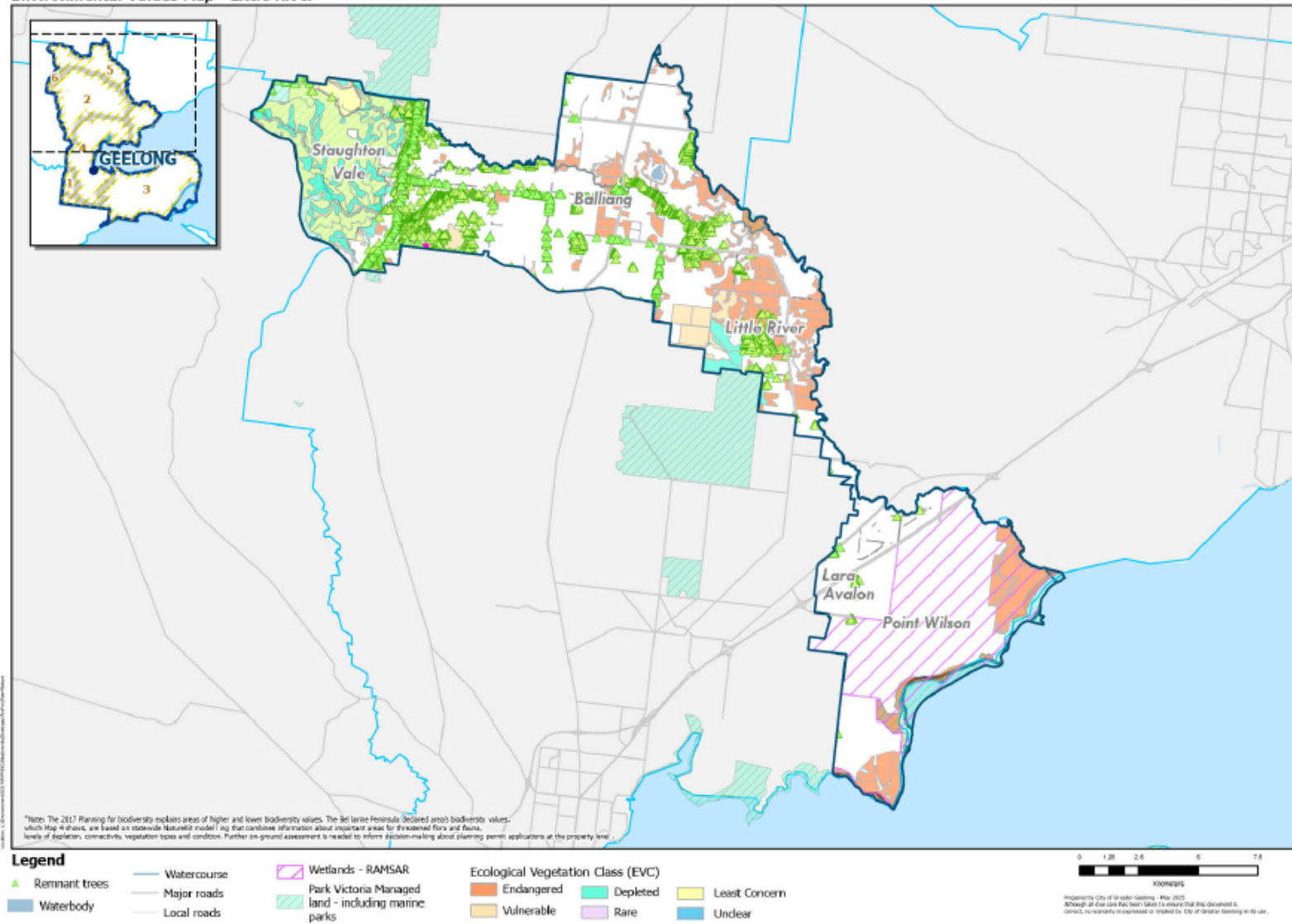


Map 9
Environmental Values Map - Bellarine

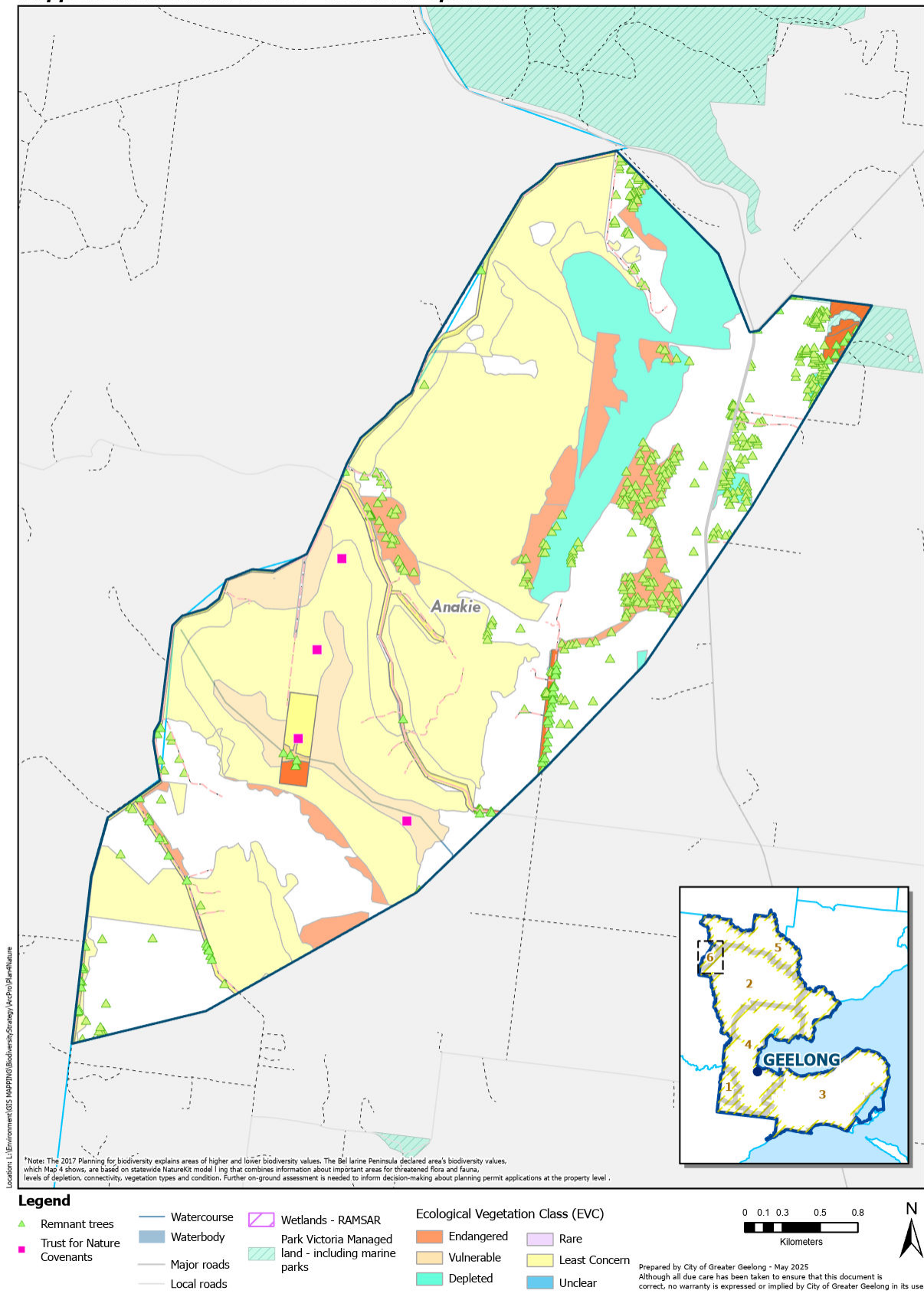




Map 11
Environmental Values Map - Little River



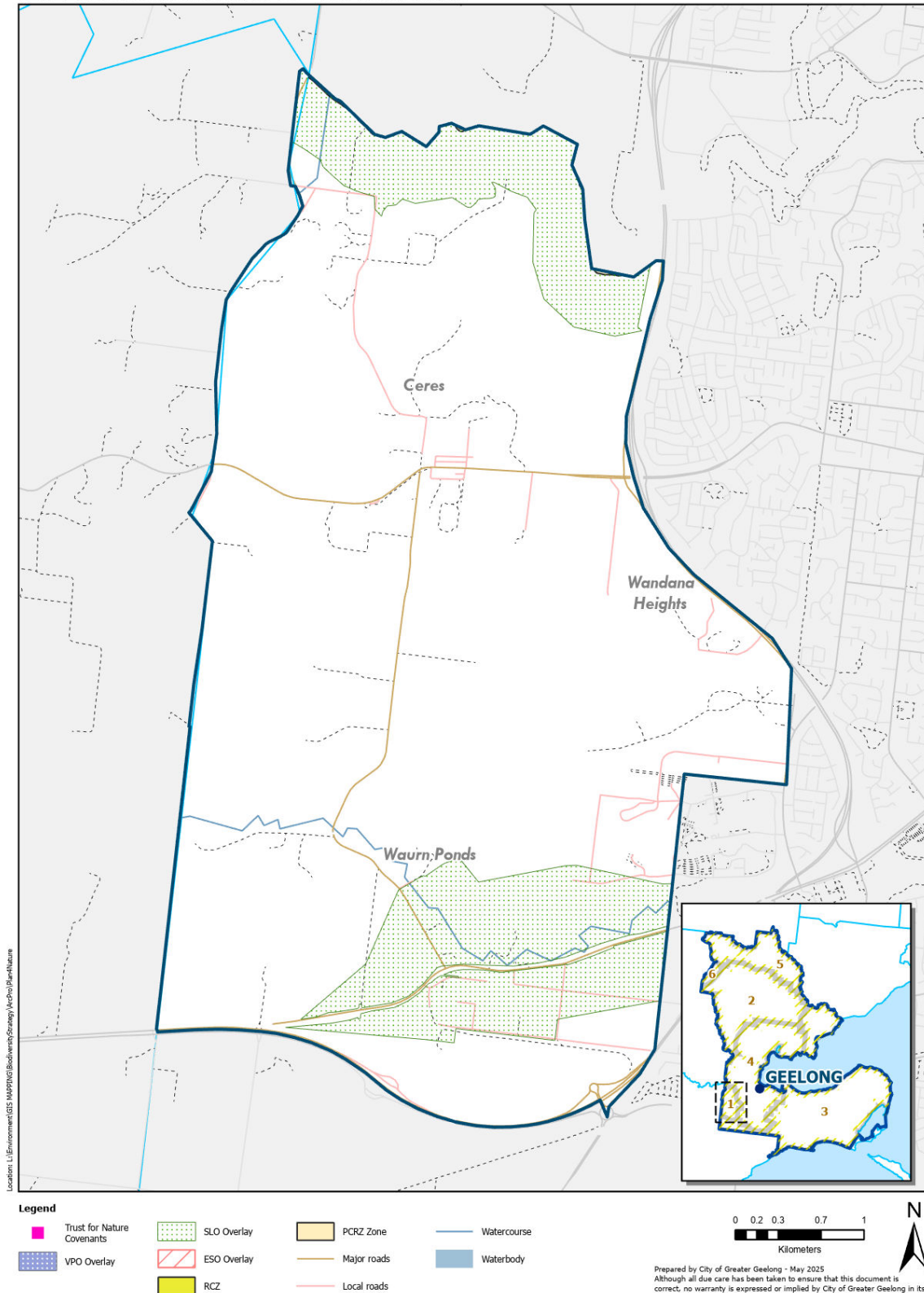
Map 12
Mapped Environment Values - Northern Uplands



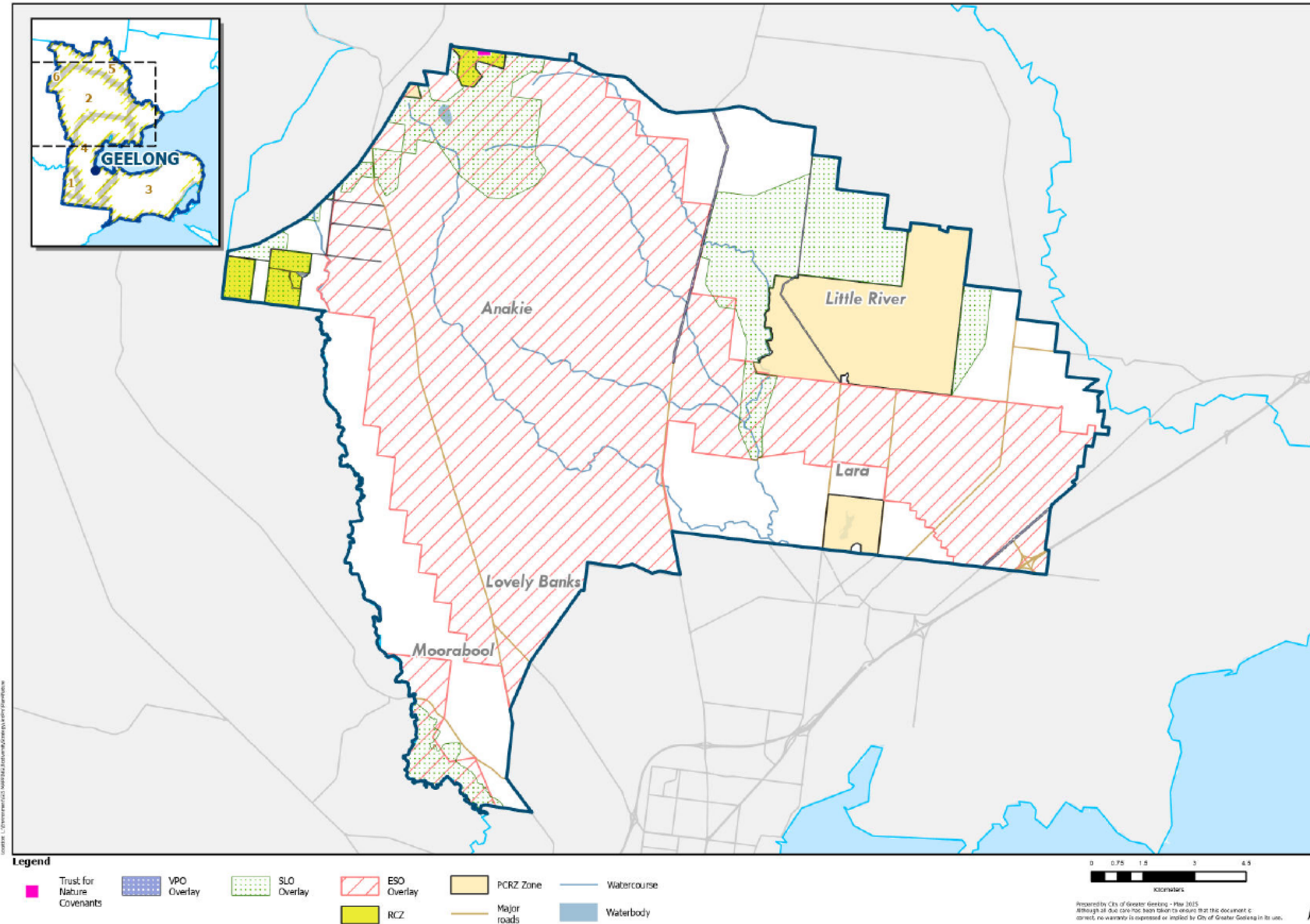
MAPS 13-18: Protection Measures

Map 13

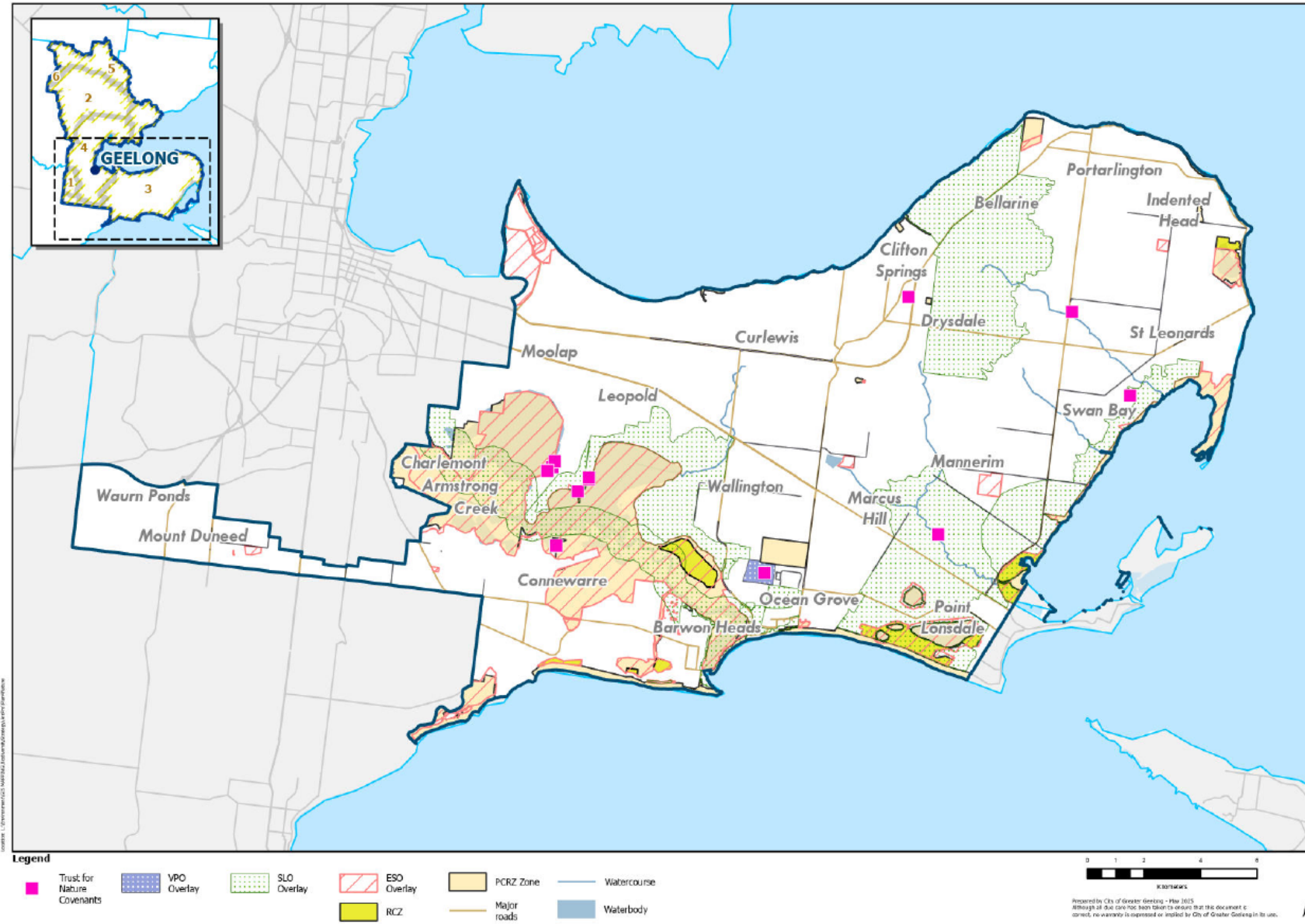
TITLE: Protection Measures - Barwon Plains



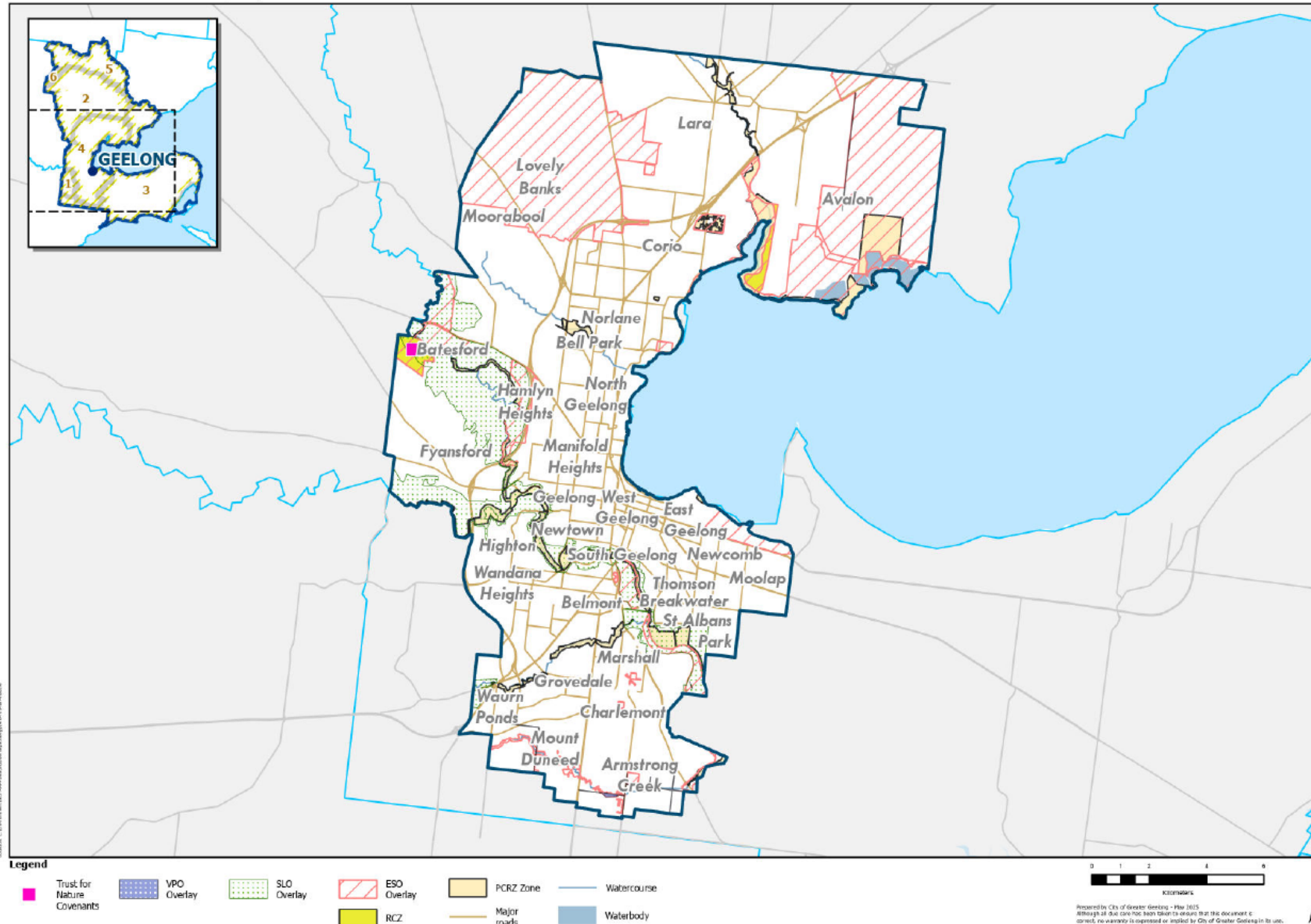
Map 14
Protection Measures - Basalt Plains



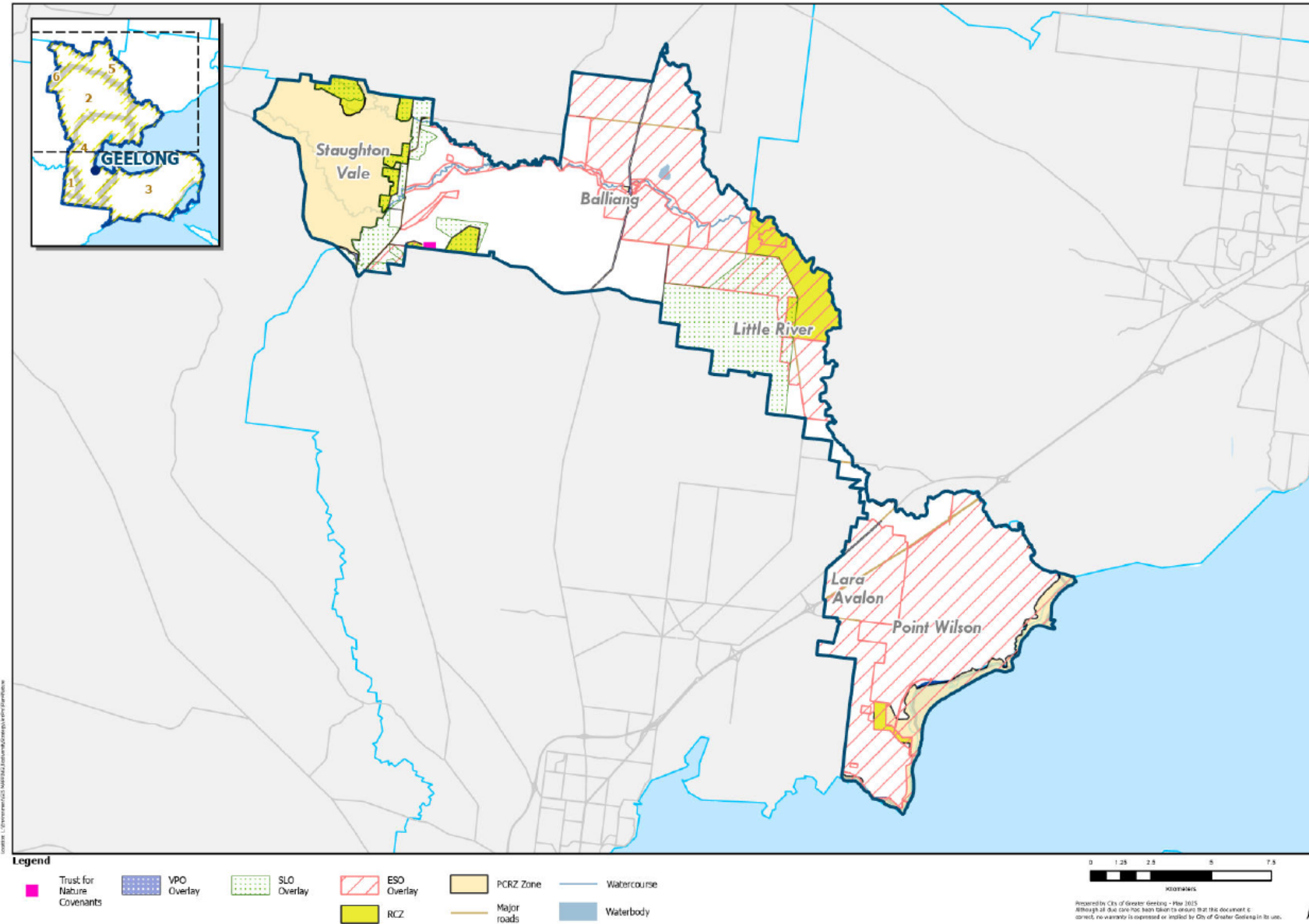
Map 15
Protection Measures - Bellarine



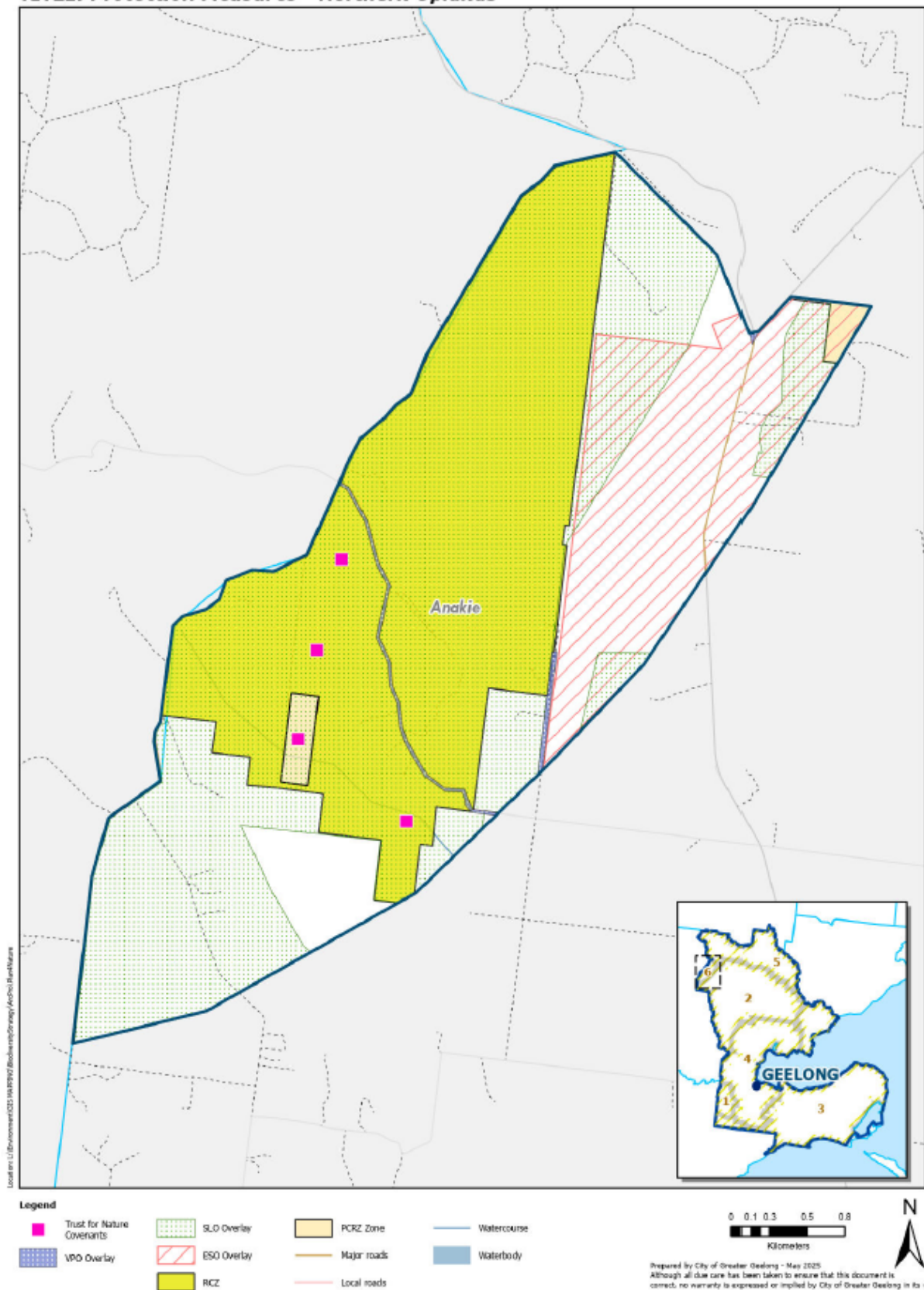
Map 16
Protection Measures - Geelong City



Map 17
Protection Measures - Little River



Map 18
TITLE: Protection Measures - Northern Uplands



Appendix 1: Threatened Species and Ecological Communities Summary

<u>TAXONOMIC GROUP</u>	<u>THREATENED TOTAL</u>	<u>EPBC LISTED</u>	<u>EPBC SPECIES AND CATEGORY OF THREAT</u>	<u>CR EN</u>	<u>CE SPECIES</u>
<u>Mammals</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>Grey Headed Flying Fox (V)</u> <u>Southern Brown Bandicoot (E)</u>	<u>0</u>	
<u>Birds</u>	<u>62</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>Australian Bittern (E)</u> <u>Gang-gang Cockatoo (E)</u> <u>Hooded Plover (V)</u> <u>Latham's Snipe (V)</u> <u>Lesser Sand Plover (E)</u> <u>Painted Honeyeater (V)</u> <u>Red Knot (V)</u> <u>Sharp-tailed Sandpiper (V)</u> <u>Shy Albatross (E)</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>Eastern Curlew</u> <u>Great Knot</u> <u>Orange-bellied Parrot</u> <u>Plains Wanderer</u> <u>Swift Parrot</u>
<u>Reptiles</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>Stripped Legless Lizard (V)</u> <u>Glossy Grass Skink (V)</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>Grassland Earless Dragon</u>
<u>Amphibians</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>Growing Grass Frog (V)</u>	<u>0</u>	
<u>Fish</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>Australian Grayling (E)</u> <u>Yarra Pygmy Perch (V)</u>	<u>0</u>	
<u>Invertebrates</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>Golden Sun Moth (V)</u>	<u>0</u>	
<u>Plants</u>	<u>91</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>Clover Glycine (V)</u> <u>Spiny Peppercreess (V)</u> <u>Swamp Everlasting (V)</u> <u>Small Golden Moths (E)</u> <u>Fragrant Leek-orchid (E)</u> <u>Dense Leek-orchid (V)</u> <u>Ornate Pink-fingers (V)</u> <u>Matted Flax Lily (E)</u> <u>White Sunray (E)</u> <u>Button Wrinkle Wort (E)</u> <u>Large-headed Fireweed (V)</u> <u>Adamson's Blown-grass (E)</u> <u>Purple Eyebright (E)</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>Spiny Rice-flower</u>
<u>Ecological Communities</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>Subtropical and Temperate Coastal Saltmarsh (V)</u> <u>Grey Box (Eucalyptus microcarpa) Grassy Woodlands and Derived Native Grasslands of South-eastern Australia (E)</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>Natural Temperate Grasslands of the VVP</u> <u>Grassy Eucalypt Woodland of the VVP</u> <u>Seasonal Herbaceous Wetland of the Temperate Lowland Plains</u> <u>Natural Damp Grasslands of the Victorian Coastal Plain</u>
<u>Total</u>	<u>192</u>	<u>43</u>		<u>11</u>	

Appendix 2: Threatened Species and Ecological Communities

Taxonomic Group	Common Name	Scientific Name	EPBC - Category of Threat	FFG - Category of Threat	Habitat on City Managed Land	Barwon Plain	Basalt Plains	Cities Geelong	Bellarine	Northern Uplands	Little River
mammal	Brush-tailed Phascogale	<i>Phascogale tapoatafa</i>		V						yes	yes
mammal	Burunan Dolphin	<i>Tursiops australis</i>		CE				yes	yes		yes
mammal	Common Bent-wing Bat	<i>Miniopterus schreibersii</i>		CE							
mammal	Common Dunnart	<i>Sminthopsis murina</i>		V							
mammal	Fat-tailed Dunnart	<i>Sminthopsis crassicaudata</i>		V			yes				yes
mammal	Grey-headed Flying-fox	<i>Pteropus poliocephalus</i>	V	V	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes		yes
mammal	Platypus	<i>Ornithorhynchus anatinus</i>		V				yes			
mammal	Southern Brown Bandicoot	<i>Isodon obesulus obesulus</i>	E	E			yes	yes	yes		yes
mammal	Southern Right Whale	<i>Eubalaena australis</i>		E					yes		
bird	Australasian Bittern	<i>Botaurus poiciloptilus</i>	E	CE	yes		yes	yes	yes		yes
bird	Australian Little Bittern	<i>Ixobrychus dubius</i>		E					yes		
bird	Australian Painted Snipe	<i>Rostratula benghalensis</i>		CE					yes		
bird	Australasian Shoveler	<i>Anas rhynchotis</i>		V					yes		
bird	Barking Owl	<i>Ninox connivens</i>		CE						yes	yes
bird	Black Falcon	<i>Falco subniger</i>		CE			yes	yes	yes		yes
bird	Black-tailed Godwit	<i>Limosa limosa</i>		E					yes		
bird	Blue-billed Duck	<i>Oxyura australis</i>		V					yes		
bird	Brolga	<i>Antigone rubicunda</i>		E				yes	yes		yes
bird	Bush Stone-curlew	<i>Burhinus grallarius</i>		CE				yes			
bird	Caspian Tern	<i>Hydroprogne caspia</i>		V				yes	yes		
bird	Chestnut-rumped Heathwren	<i>Calamanthus pyrrhopygius</i>		V							yes
bird	Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>		V					yes		yes
bird	Diamond Dove	<i>Geopelia cuneata</i>		V							
bird	Diamond Firetail	<i>Stagonopleura guttata</i>		V			yes				yes
bird	Eastern Curlew	<i>Numenius madagascariensis</i>	CE	CE	yes			yes	yes		yes
bird	Eastern Great Egret	<i>Ardea alba modesta</i>		V				yes	yes		
bird	Elegant Parrot	<i>Neophema elegans</i>		V							
bird	Fairy Tern	<i>Sterna nereis</i>		CE					yes		
bird	Freckled Duck	<i>Stictonetta naevosa</i>		E					yes		
bird	Gang-gang Cockatoo	<i>Callocephalon fimbriatum</i>	E	E	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes		yes
bird	Great Knot	<i>Calidris tenuirostris</i>	CE	CE	yes			yes	yes		yes
bird	Greater Sand Plover	<i>Charadrius leschenaultii</i>		V							
bird	Grey Goshawk	<i>Accipiter novaehollandiae</i>		E				yes	yes		
bird	Grey Plover	<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>		V							
bird	Grey-crowned Babbler	<i>Pomatostomus temporalis</i>		V							
bird	Grey-headed Albatross	<i>Thalassarche chrysostoma</i>		E							
bird	Grey-tailed Tattler	<i>Tringa brevipes</i>		CE							
bird	Gull-billed Tern	<i>Gelochelidon nilotica macrotarsa</i>		E					yes		yes
bird	Hooded Plover	<i>Thinornis rubricollis</i>	V	V	yes				yes		
bird	Hooded Robin	<i>Melanodryas cucullata cucullata</i>		V							
bird	Latham's Snipe	<i>Gallinago hardwickii</i>	V	V	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes		yes
bird	Lesser Sand Plover	<i>Charadrius mongolus</i>	E	E	yes			yes	yes		yes
bird	Lewin's Rail	<i>Lewinia pectoralis</i>		V					yes		yes
bird	Little Eagle	<i>Hieraetus morphnoides</i>		V			yes				yes
bird	Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta nigripes</i>		E					yes		
bird	Little Tern	<i>Sternula albifrons</i>		CE					yes		yes
bird	Magpie Goose	<i>Anseranas semipalmata</i>		V			yes				

Taxonomic Group	Common Name	Scientific Name	EPBC - Category of Threat	FFG - Category of Threat	Habitat on City Managed Land	Barwon Plain	Basalt Plains	Cities Geelong	Bellarine	Northern Uplands	Little River
bird	Major Mitchell's Cockatoo	<i>Cacatua leadbeateri</i>		CE							
bird	Masked Owl	<i>Tyto novaehollandiae</i>		CE							
bird	Musk Duck	<i>Biziura lobata</i>		V					yes		
bird	Northern Giant-Petrel	<i>Macronectes halli</i>		E					yes		
bird	Orange-bellied Parrot	<i>Neophema chrysogaster</i>	CE	CE	yes			yes	yes		yes
bird	Pacific Golden Plover	<i>Pluvialis fuvu</i>		V					yes		yes
bird	Painted Honeyeater	<i>Grantiella picta</i>	V	V			yes				yes
bird	Plains-wanderer	<i>Pedionomus torquatus</i>	CE	CE			yes	yes			yes
bird	Plumed Egret	<i>Ardea intermedia plumifera</i>		CE							
bird	Powerful Owl	<i>Ninox strenua</i>		V						yes	yes
bird	Red Knot	<i>Calidris canutus</i>	V	E				yes	yes		yes
bird	Ruddy Turnstone	<i>Arebaria interpres</i>		V							
bird	Sharp-tailed Sandpiper	<i>Calidris acuminata</i>	V	V	yes			yes	yes		yes
bird	Shy Albatross	<i>Diomedea cauta</i>	E	E	yes				yes		
bird	Southern Giant-Petrel	<i>Macronectes giganteus</i>		E					yes		
bird	Speckled Warbler	<i>Chthonicola sagittata</i>		E							yes
bird	Swift Parrot	<i>Lathamus discolor</i>	CE	CE	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
bird	Terek Sandpiper	<i>Xenus cinereus</i>		V					yes		
bird	Wandering Albatross	<i>Diomedea exulans</i>		CE							
bird	Whimbrel	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>		E					yes		
bird	White-bellied Sea-Eagle	<i>Haliaeetus leucogaster</i>		E					yes		yes
bird	White-faced Storm-Petrel	<i>Pelagodroma marina</i>		E					yes		
bird	Wood Sandpiper	<i>Tringa glareola</i>		E					yes		
bird	White-throated Needletail	<i>Hirundapus caudacutus</i>		V				yes			
reptiles	Victorian Grassland Earless Dragon	<i>Tympanocryptis pinguicolla</i>	CE	CE			yes	yes			yes
reptiles	Striped Legless Lizard	<i>Delma impar</i>	V	E	yes		yes	yes			yes
reptiles	Glossy Grass Skink	<i>Pseudemoia rawlinsoni</i>	V	E	likely			yes	yes		
reptiles	Tussock Skink	<i>Pseudemoia pagenstecheri</i>		E							
amphibians	Brown Toadlet	<i>Pseudophryne bibronii</i>		E							
amphibians	Growing Grass Frog	<i>Litoria raniformis</i>	V	V	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes		yes
fishes	Agassiz's Glassfish	<i>Ambassis agassizii</i>		E							
fishes	Australian Grayling	<i>Prototroctes maraena</i>	E	V	yes			yes	yes		
fishes	Australian Mudfish	<i>Neochanna cleaveri</i>		E							
fishes	Macquarie Perch	<i>Macquaria australasica</i>		E							
fishes	Yarra Pigmy Perch	<i>Nannoperca obscura</i>	V	E	yes	yes		yes	yes		
crustaceans	Hairy Burrowing Crayfish	<i>Engaeus sericatus</i>		V							
crustaceans	Otway Burrowing Crayfish	<i>Engaeus fultoni</i>		V							
crustaceans	Ghost Shrimp	<i>Pseudocalliax tooradin</i>		E							
insects	Fiery Jewel Butterfly	<i>Hypochrysops ignitus ignitus</i>		E							
insects	Large Ant Blue Butterfly	<i>Acrodipsas brisbanensis</i>		E							
insects	Large River Damselfly	<i>Caliaegion billinghursti</i>		V							
insects	Small Ant Blue Butterfly	<i>Acrodipsas myrmecophila</i>		E							
insects	Golden Sun Moth	<i>Synemon plana</i>	V	V			yes	yes			yes
insects	Yellow Sedge-skipper Butterfly	<i>Hesperilla flavescens</i>		E				yes	yes		
echinoderms	Sea-cucumber species	<i>Thyone nigra</i>		E							
Brassicaceae	Hairy Shepherd's Purse	<i>Microlepidium pilosulum</i>		CE							
Brassicaceae	Forest Bitter-cress	<i>Cardamine papillata</i>		E							
Brassicaceae	Spiny Peppercress	<i>Lepidium aschersonii</i>	V	E	yes			yes	yes		
Brassicaceae	Western Bitter-cress	<i>Cardamine lineariloba</i>		E							
Thymelaeaceae	Spiny Rice-flower	<i>Pimelea spinescens subsp. spinescens</i>	CE	CE	yes		yes	yes			yes
Malvaceae	Salt Lawrencea	<i>Lawrencea spicata</i>		E							
Malvaceae	Coast Hollyhock	<i>Malva preissiana s.s. (white-flowered coastal form)</i>		E							
Orchidaceae	Mauve-tuft Sun-orchid	<i>Thelymitra malvina</i>		CE							

Taxonomic Group	Common Name	Scientific Name	EPBC - Category of Threat	FFG - Category of Threat	Habitat on City Managed Land	Barwon Plain	Basalt Plains	Cities Geelong	Bellarine	Northern Uplands	Little River
Orchidaceae	Crimson Sun-orchid	<i>Thelymitra X macmillanii</i>		V							
Orchidaceae	Small Golden Moths	<i>Diuris basaltica</i>	E	CE				yes			
Orchidaceae	Brittle Greenhood	<i>Pterostylis truncata</i>		CE							
Orchidaceae	Sharp Greenhood	<i>Pterostylis X ingens</i>		V							
Orchidaceae	Fragrant Leek-orchid	<i>Prasophyllum suaveolens</i>	E	CE				yes			
Orchidaceae	Naked Beard-orchid	<i>Calochilus imberbis</i>		CE							
Orchidaceae	Large White Spider-orchid	<i>Caladenia venusta</i>		E							
Orchidaceae	Winter Sun-orchid	<i>Thelymitra hiemalis</i>		CE							
Orchidaceae	Slender Pink-fingers	<i>Caladenia vulgaris</i>		V							
Orchidaceae	Naked Sun-orchid	<i>Thelymitra circumsepta</i>		E							
Orchidaceae	Dense Leek-orchid	<i>Prasophyllum spicatum</i>	V	CE				yes			
Orchidaceae	Swamp Diuris	<i>Diuris palustris</i>		E							
Orchidaceae	Mentone Greenhood	<i>Pterostylis X toveyana</i>		E							
Orchidaceae	Green Leek-orchid	<i>Prasophyllum lindleyanum</i>		E							
Orchidaceae	Ornate Pink-fingers	<i>Caladenia ornata</i>	V	E							yes
Orchidaceae	Matted Flax-lily	<i>Dianella amoena</i>	E	CE	yes		yes				yes
Orchidaceae	Arching Flax-lily	<i>Dianella sp. aff. Longifolia</i>		CE							
Casuarinaceae	Buloke	<i>Allocasuarina luehmannii</i>		CE							
Poaceae	Coast Fescue	<i>Poa billardierei</i>		E							
Poaceae	Dune Poa	<i>Poa poliformis var. ramifer</i>		E							
Mimosaceae	Cup Wattle	<i>Acacia cupularis</i>		CE							
Mimosaceae	Rough Wattle	<i>Acacia aspera subsp. parviceps</i>		E							
Mimosaceae	Coast Wirilda	<i>Acacia uncifolia</i>		E							
Mimosaceae	Snowy River Wattle	<i>Acacia boormanii</i>		E	?						
Fabaceae	Clover Glycine	<i>Glycine latrobeana</i>	V	V				yes			
Fabaceae	Southern Swainson-pea	<i>Swainsona behriana</i>		E							
Fabaceae	Small Scurf-pea	<i>Cullen parvum</i>		E							
Fabaceae	Scented Bush-pea	<i>Pultenaea graveolens</i>		E							
Fabaceae	Golden Bush-pea	<i>Pultenaea gunnii subsp. tuberculata</i>		V							
Fabaceae	Wiry Bossiaea	<i>Bossiaea cordigera</i>		E							
Fabaceae	Tough Scurf-pea	<i>Cullen tenax</i>		E							
Fabaceae	Swamp Bush-pea	<i>Pultenaea weindorferi</i>		E							
Fabaceae	Hoary Bush-pea	<i>Pultenaea daltonii</i>		V							
Polygalaceae	Small Milkwort	<i>Comesperma polygaloides</i>		CE							
Asteraceae	Swamp Everlasting	<i>Xerochrysium palustre</i>	V	CE					yes		
Asteraceae	Velvet Daisy-bush	<i>Olearia pannosa subsp. cardiophylla</i>		E							
Asteraceae	White Sunray	<i>Leucochrysium albicans subsp. tricolor</i>	E	E			yes				
Asteraceae	Lanky Buttons	<i>Leptorhynchos elongatus</i>		E							
Asteraceae	Branching Groundsel	<i>Senecio cunninghamii var. cunninghamii</i>		E							
Asteraceae	Satin Daisy-bush	<i>Olearia minor</i>		E							
Asteraceae	Button Wrinklewort	<i>Rutidosia leptorhynchoidea</i>	E	E	yes		yes	yes	yes		yes
Asteraceae	Pale Swamp Everlasting	<i>Coronidium gunnianum</i>		CE							
Asteraceae	Large-headed Fireweed	<i>Senecio macrocarpus</i>	V	CE			yes	yes			yes
Asteraceae	Basalt Podolepis	<i>Podolepis linearifolia</i>		E							
Asteraceae	Cut-leaf Burr-daisy	<i>Calotis anthemoides</i>		CE							
Proteaceae	Small-flower Grevillea	<i>Grevillea micrantha</i>		CE							
Proteaceae	Smooth Grevillea	<i>Grevillea rosmarinifolia subsp. glabella</i>		E							
Proteaceae	Golden Grevillea	<i>Grevillea chrysophaea</i>		V							
Proteaceae	Brisbane Range Grevillea	<i>Grevillea steiglitziana</i>		E							
Amaranthaceae	Hairy Tails	<i>Ptilotus erubescens</i>		CE	yes				yes		
Plumbaginaceae	Yellow Sea-lavender	<i>Limonium australe</i>		E							
Chenopodiaceae	Marsh Saltbush	<i>Atriplex paludosa subsp. paludosa</i>		E							
Chenopodiaceae	Coast Saltwort	<i>Salsola tragus subsp. pontica</i>		E							

Taxonomic Group	Common Name	Scientific Name	EPBC - Category of Threat	FFG - Category of Threat	Habitat on City Managed Land	Barwon Plain	Basalt Plains	Cities Geelong	Bellarine	Northern Uplands	Little River
Chenopodiaceae	Fragrant Saltbush	<i>Rhagodia parabolica</i>		V							
Myrtaceae	Yarra Gum	<i>Eucalyptus varraensis</i>		CE							
Myrtaceae	Melbourne Yellow-gum	<i>Eucalyptus leucoxylon subsp. connata</i>		E							
Myrtaceae	Bellarine Yellow-gum	<i>Eucalyptus leucoxylon subsp. bellarinensis</i>		CE							
Myrtaceae	Gum-barked Bundy	<i>Eucalyptus goniacalyx subsp. laxa</i>		V							
Euphorbiaceae	Coast Bitter-bush	<i>Adriana quadripartita</i>		E							
Poaceae	Small-flower Wallaby-grass	<i>Rytidosperma monticola</i>		E							
Poaceae	Purple Blown-grass	<i>Lachnagrostis punicea subsp. semibarbata</i>		E							
Poaceae	Adamson's Blown-grass	<i>Lachnagrostis adamsonii</i>	E	E				yes	yes		
Poaceae	Straw Wallaby-grass	<i>Rytidosperma richardsonii</i>		E							
Poaceae	Rye Beetle-grass	<i>Tripogonella loliiformis</i>		E							
Poaceae	Salt Blown-grass	<i>Lachnagrostis robusta</i>		E							
Juncaceae	Creeping Rush	<i>Juncus revolutus</i>		E							
Cyperaceae	Hoary Rapier-sedge	<i>Lepidosperma canescens</i>		E							
Solanaceae	Austral Tobacco	<i>Nicotiana suaveolens</i>		E							
Lamiaceae	Snowy Mint-bush	<i>Prostanthera nivea var. nivea</i>		R #							
Verbenaceae	Grey Mangrove	<i>Avicennia marina subsp. australasica</i>		E							
Plantaginaceae	Winged Water-starwort	<i>Callitriche umbonata</i>		E							
Orobanchaceae	Rough Eyebright	<i>Euphrasia scabra</i>		E							
Orobanchaceae	Purple Eyebright	<i>Euphrasia collina subsp. muelleri</i>	E	E			yes				
Orobanchaceae	Buloke Mistletoe	<i>Amyema linophylla subsp. Orientalis</i>		CE							
Loranthaceae	Drooping Mistletoe	<i>Amyema pendula subsp. longifolia</i>		CE							
Zosteraceae	Tasman Grass-wrack	<i>Heterozostera tasmanica</i>		E							
Zosteraceae	Australian Grass-wrack	<i>Heterozostera nigricaulis</i>		E							
Juncaginaceae	Tiny Arrowgrass	<i>Triglochin minutissima</i>		E							
Juncaginaceae	Prickly Arrowgrass	<i>Triglochin mucronata</i>		E							
Zygophyllaceae	Coast Twin-leaf	<i>Roepera billardierei</i>		E							
Geraniaceae	Pale-flower Crane's-bill	<i>Geranium sp. 3</i>		E							
Geraniaceae	Austral Crane's-bill	<i>Geranium solanderi var. solanderi s.s.</i>		E							
community	Natural Temperate Grasslands of the Victorian Volcanic Plains		CE	CE	yes		yes	yes			yes
community	Grassy Eucalypt Woodland of the Victorian Volcanic Plains		CE	CE	yes		yes				yes
community	Seasonal Herbaceous Wetland of the Temperate Lowland Plains		CE	CE	yes		yes		yes		yes
community	Natural Damp Grasslands of the Victorian Coastal Plain		CE	Th							
community	Subtropical and Temperate Coastal Saltmarsh		V	V	yes			yes	yes		yes
community	Grey Box (<i>Eucalyptus microcarpa</i>) Grassy Woodlands and Derived Native Grasslands of South-eastern Australia		E		yes						
community	Coastal Moonah (<i>Melaleuca lanceolata subsp. lanceolata</i>) Woodland Community			Th	Yes				yes		
community	Western (Basalt) Plains Grassland community			Th			yes		yes		yes
community	Western Basalt Plains (River Redgum) Grassy Woodland Floristic Community 5504			Th							
community	Grey Box - Buloke Grassy Woodland Community			Th							

References:

Atlas of Living Australia - <https://www.ala.org.au/>

Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988 Threatened List, September 2025

Threatened species under the EPBC Act - DCCEEW

SWIFFT - State Wide Integrated Flora and Fauna Teams - Threatened Species - <https://www.swifft.net.au/>

Victorian Biodiversity Atlas

Appendix 3: Environment Volunteer Groups and Networks

GROUP	LOCATION	ACTIVITY
<u>Barwon Plain</u>		
Barrabool Hills Landcare Group	Barrabool Hills	Caring for Landscapes
<u>Basalt Plain</u>		
Anakie Community Garden	Anakie	Sustainable Living
Grassy Plains Network	Basalt Plains	Networks / Other
Laracare	Lara	Caring for Landscapes
Moorabool Catchment Landcare Group	Bacchus Marsh	Caring for Landscapes
Moorabool Environment Group	Bacchus Marsh	Caring for Landscapes
Mt Rothwell Friends	Mt Rothwell	Caring for Landscapes
North West Alliance	Basalt Plains	Networks / Other
Victorian National Parks Association	Basalt Plains	Networks / Other
<u>Bellarine and Surfcoast</u>		
100% Clean Bellarine	Barwon Heads	Sustainable Living
Barwon Estuary Project	Barwon Heads	Caring for Landscapes
Barwon Heads Community Arts Garden	Barwon Heads	Sustainable Living
Barwon Heads Landcare Group	Barwon Heads	Caring for Landscapes
Barwon Region Alliance for Community Energy (BRACE)	Barwon Heads	Sustainable Living
*Beach Patrol - Bellarine	Ocean Grove	Caring for Landscapes
*BeachWatch	Bellarine Peninsula	Caring for Landscapes
Bellarine Catchment Network	Queenscliff	Networks / Other
*Bellarine Landcare Group	Bellarine Peninsula	Caring for Landscapes
Bellarine Landcare Nursery	Drysdale	Caring for Landscapes
Bellarine Landcare Rabbit Action Group	Mannerim	Caring for Landscapes
Bellarine Marine Care Group	Bellarine Peninsula	Caring for Landscapes
*Bellarine Peninsula Orange-bellied Parrot Regional Group	Bellarine Peninsula	Citizen Science
*Birdlife Australia - Bellarine Peninsula	Bellarine Peninsula	Citizen Science
Boomerang Bags – Leopold	Leopold	Sustainable Living
Born Wild Community	Bellarine Peninsula	Caring for Landscapes
Breamlea Coast Action	Breamlea	Caring for Landscapes
*Breamlea Community Association	Breamlea	Caring for Landscapes
*Clifton Springs Curlewis Coastcare	Clifton Springs	Caring for Landscapes
Connewarre Landcare Group	Connewarre	Caring for Landscapes
*Drysdale Clifton Springs Curlewis Association	Drysdale	Caring for Landscapes
*Friends of Begola Wetlands	Ocean Grove	Caring for Landscapes
*Friends of Buckley Park Foreshore	Ocean Grove	Caring for Landscapes
Friends of Edwards Point Wildlife Reserve	St Leonards	Caring for Landscapes
*Friends of Indented Head Woodland	Indented Head	Caring for Landscapes
*Friends of Moonah Park	Barwon Heads	Caring for Landscapes
Friends of Ocean Grove Nature Reserve	Ocean Grove	Caring for Landscapes
Friends of Point Richards Flora and Fauna Reserve	Portarlington	Caring for Landscapes
*Friends of Ramblers Road Foreshore	Portarlington	Caring for Landscapes
*Friends of the Basin Reserve	Drysdale	Caring for Landscapes
*Friends of the Bellarine Rail Trail	Leopold	Caring for Landscapes
Friends of the Bluff	Barwon Heads	Caring for Landscapes
*Friends of the Hooded Plover - Bellarine	Ocean Grove	Caring for Landscapes
Friends of The Lobster Pot	Barwon Heads	Caring for Landscapes
Ocean Grove Coastcare	Ocean Grove	Caring for Landscapes
*Ocean Grove Community Association	Ocean Grove	Caring for Landscapes
Ocean Grove Park Inc	Ocean Grove	Caring for Landscapes

GROUP	LOCATION	ACTIVITY
Ocean Grove Rotary	Ocean Grove	Sustainable Living
Queenscliff Indigenous Nursery	Queenscliff	Caring for Landscapes
*Repair Café Bellarine	Ocean Grove	Sustainable Living
*St Leonards Community Care	St Leonards	Caring for Landscapes
Swan Bay Environment Association	Swan Bay	Caring for Landscapes
Transition Network/Towns - Barwon Heads	Barwon Heads	Sustainable Living
*Weekday Weeders	Ocean Grove	Caring for Landscapes
Australian Parents 4 Climate Action - Geelong and Bellarine	Bellarine Peninsula	Sustainable Living
Geelong Cities		
Australian Conservation Foundation	Geelong	Caring for Landscapes
Avalon Landcare Group	Lara	Caring for Landscapes
*Batesford - Fyansford - Stonehaven Landcare Group	Batesford	Caring for Landscapes
*Bats of Geelong	Geelong	Caring for Landscapes
*Beach Patrol - Geelong	Geelong	Caring for Landscapes
Boomerang Bags - Armstrong Creek	Armstrong Creek	Sustainable Living
Boomerang Bags - Norlane	Norlane	Sustainable Living
*Corio Bay Angling Club	Geelong	Caring for Landscapes
*Conservation Volunteers Australia	Statewide	Networks / Other
Corio Landcare	Corio	Caring for Landscapes
Dog Rocks Flora and Fauna Sanctuary	Batesford	Caring for Landscapes
Fishcare Victoria Inc -Geelong and Bellarine	Geelong	Caring for Landscapes
*Friends of Buckley Falls	Highton	Caring for Landscapes
*Friends of Cowies Creek	Cowies Creek	Caring for Landscapes
*Friends of Geelong Botanic Gardens	Geelong	Caring for Landscapes
*Friends of Jerringot Wetlands	Geelong	Caring for Landscapes
*Friends of Kevin Kirby Reserve	Herne Hill	Caring for Landscapes
*Friends of Rippleside Park & Environs Inc [FORPE]	Drumcondra	Caring for Landscapes
*Friends of Waurm Ponds Creek	Waurm Ponds	Caring for Landscapes
*Gardens for Wildlife - Geelong	Geelong	Caring for Landscapes
Gardens for Wildlife - Point Lonsdale	Point Lonsdale	Caring for Landscapes
*Geelong Environment Council Inc	Geelong	Caring for Landscapes
*Geelong Fiend Naturalist Club	Geelong	Caring for Landscapes
Geelong Intrepid Landcare	Geelong	Caring for Landscapes
Geelong Landcare Network	Geelong	Networks / Other
Geelong Repair Café	Highton	Sustainable Living
Geelong Sustainability Group	Geelong	Sustainable Living
*Greening Australia	Corio	Networks / Other
Highton Rotary	Geelong	Sustainable Living
Serendip Sanctuary Volunteers	Lara	Caring for Landscapes
*Sparrovale Wetlands Waterwatch	Charlemont	Citizen Science
St Luke's Uniting Church Environment Action Group	Highton	Caring for Landscapes
Transition Network/Towns - East Geelong	East Geelong	Sustainable Living
Transition Network/Towns - Geelong (Transition Streets)	Norlane	Sustainable Living
Urban Upcycle	Grovedale	Sustainable Living
Victorian Serrated Tussock Working Party	Geelong	Networks / Other
Wathaurong Community	North Geelong	Caring for Landscapes
Little River		
*Brisbane Ranges Landcare Group	Anakie	Caring for Landscapes
Friends of the Brisbane Ranges	Anakie	Caring for Landscapes
Little River Community Landcare	Little River	Caring for Landscapes
Northern Uplands		
Koala Clancy Foundation	Staughton Vale	Networks / Other

*Groups that work on City managed land

Appendix 4: Biolink Areas

BIOLINK AREAS

Corridors (C): geographical area that provides suitable conditions for animal and plant movement through the landscape

Priority Corridor (PC): geographical area such as major rivers, waterways, coast and wetlands that are highly significant for animal and plant movement through the landscape

Zone (Z): geographical area > 100 hectares comprising multiple habitat features and highly significant for biodiversity

Habitat Node (HN): geographical area of habitat >10 hectares comprising either remnant vegetation or wetlands

Restoration Node (RN): geographical area mostly >100 hectares owned by one entity where habitat can be restored through revegetation/direct seeding

BIOLINK NAME	BIOLINK NUMBER	DESCRIPTION	VALUES
Kardina Creek	C1	Kardina Creek west of the Geelong Ring Road through to Pepperdine and Shoubra Reserve in Highton	EPBC: Gang-gang Cockatoo Common Eastern Froglet , Pobblebonk/Banjo Frog , Spotted Marsh Frog and Southern Brown Tree Frog
Fyansford Unused Rail Reserve	C2	Extends from the old cement works to the Geelong Railway	Provides a restoration link between the Moorabool River and Cowies Creek
Rippleside	C3	Links Fyansford Unused Rail link to the Bay via Geelong Golf Course, Saleyard and Council managed crown land	opportunities to connect corridors and restore habitat in urban landscape
Cuthbertson Creek	C4	Princess Highway to the Bay at Geelong Port	opportunity to restore a habitat corridor in urban landscape
Shell Creek	C5	Through Viva to the Bay	opportunity to restore a habitat corridor in urban landscape
Easement South of Geelong Ring Road to Cowies Creek	C6	Easement South of Geelong Ring Road to Cowies Creek	opportunities to connect corridors and restore habitat in urban landscape
Hovells Creek Tributary (1)	C7	Northern Conservation Reserve to Hovells Creek	EPBC: Natural Temperate Grassland , Golden Sun Moth , Stripped Legless Lizard
Bacchus Marsh Roadside	C8	Bacchus Marsh Roadside - from Geelong city to	EPBC: Golden Sun Moth
Hovells Creek Tributary (2)	C9	Hovells Creek to Serendip Sanctuary	EPBC: Grassland Earless Dragon Serendip Sanctuary
Hovells Creek Tributary (3)	C10	Mt Anakie to Barwon Prison through to Hovells Creek	corridor restoration opportunity , Fat-tailed Dunnart
Peak School Road	C11	Peak School Road from Old Melbourne Road to the unused section on the west of Bacchus Marsh Road. Includes Blairs Road.	EPBC: Natural Temperate Grassland , Spiny Rice-flower
Hovells Creek Tributary (4)	C12	North of Peak School Road to Hovells Creek	corridor restoration opportunity
Granite Roadside	C13	Granite Roadside from Staughton Vale Road to Hovells Creek	Grassy Woodland Hills Herb-rich Woodland roadside that links other corridors, large old remnant trees
Sandy Creek	C14	Along Sandy Creek through proposed solar farm joining Stony Creek west of Mt Rothwell	corridor restoration opportunity , Fat-tailed Dunnart
Staughton Vale Roadside	C15	Staughton Vale Roadside from Ballan Road to Murphy's Road	Melbourne Yellow Gums , Grassy Woodland , Plains Grassy Woodland , large old remnant trees , one of the largest old redgums known in the City in the triangle reserve , Brisbane Ranges National Park (adjoins) , crosses Stony Creek , Little River
Stony Creek	C16	Stony Creek - connects the Brisbane Ranges to Little River	Grassy Woodland , large old remnant trees , koalas , corridor restoration opportunity

<u>BIOLINK NAME</u>	<u>BIOLINK NUMBER</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	<u>VALUES</u>
<u>Balliang Creek</u>	<u>C17</u>	<u>Sharkey Property - part of link that flows into the Little River</u>	<u>Buloke Woodland, Large old remnant trees</u>
<u>Mt Rothwell to Little River</u>	<u>C18</u>	<u>Revegetation out the front of Mt Rothwell, Smith property to Worthy.</u>	<u>EPBC: Natural Temperate Grassland, Matted Flax Lily koalas, koala Clancey Project Area (partnership with Melbourne Water), habitat restoration works, old remnant trees, Fat-tailed Dunnart, raptors</u>
<u>Western Grassland Reserve</u>	<u>C19</u>	<u>Little River tributary</u>	<u>Future Western Grassland Reserve, Fat-tailed Dunnart, raptors</u>
<u>Melbourne - Geelong Railway</u>	<u>C20</u>	<u>Lara to Little River</u>	<u>EPBC: Natural Temperate Grassland</u>
<u>Avalon</u>	<u>C21</u>	<u>Gillet's Road to Avalon Coast - stops at the Princes Highway - almost makes it to the Old Melbourne Road Biolink. Includes the Cheetham Saltworks</u>	<u>Ramsar site -migratory birds EPBC: Natural Temperate Grassland, Coastal Saltmarsh, Spring Rice-Flower</u>
<u>Scarborough Creek</u>	<u>C22</u>	<u>Western creek that flows into the bay at Clifton Springs</u>	<u>opportunity to restore a habitat corridor in urban landscape</u>
<u>Clifton Springs Golf Course Creek West</u>	<u>C23</u>	<u>Creek flows from beyond Portarlington Road to the Bay</u>	<u>corridor restoration opportunity</u>
<u>Clifton Springs Golf Course Creek East</u>	<u>C24</u>	<u>Creek flows from near Portarlington Road to the Bay</u>	<u>Close to a patch of Old Sheoak, Podolepis sp, Ptilotus macrocephalus, corridor restoration opportunity</u>
<u>Ibbotson's</u>	<u>C25</u>	<u>North South Link between Indented Head and St Leonards</u>	<u>Diverse patch of Grassy Woodland at McCarthys Reserve with over 60 different species many rare on the Bellarine Supports connection between Edwards Point, Salt Lagoon & The Bay</u>
<u>McDonald Creek</u>	<u>C26</u>	<u>Small creek on private land flowing into Swan Bay - Port Phillip Marine National Park</u>	<u>Ramsar site - migratory birds Swan Bay - Port Phillip Marine National Park, corridor restoration opportunity, remnant vegetation</u>
<u>Yarram Creek North</u>	<u>C27</u>	<u>Yarram Creek and tributaries connecting to the Drysdale and Wallington corridors</u>	<u>corridor restoration opportunity</u>
<u>Wallington Waterway</u>	<u>C28</u>	<u>Connects Lake Connemara to remnant trees and small landholdings around Wallington west of Grubb Road</u>	<u>corridor restoration opportunity</u>
<u>Ocean Grove</u>	<u>C29</u>	<u>Ocean Grove Nature Reserve to Lake Connemara</u>	<u>EPBC: Swift Parrot, Latham's Snipe, Black Falcon, Royal Spoonbill, Grey Goshawk, Bellarine Yellow Gum, Hoary Rapier-sedge</u>
<u>Barwon Heads</u>	<u>C30</u>	<u>Includes Barwon Heads Village Park and the Warrenbeen ESO Area</u>	<u>Coastal Moonah Woodland, Royal Spoonbill, Bellarine Yellow Gum, Moonahs, large old remnant trees, Leafy Greenhood, Coast Twin-leaf, Coast Wirilda</u>
<u>Sparrovale Wetlands Reserve - Ngubiti yoorree</u>	<u>HN1</u>	<u>Sparrovale Wetlands Reserve - Ngubiti yoorree</u>	<u>EPBC: Growling Grass Frog, Yarra Pygmy Perch, Orange Bellied Parrot, Spiny Peppergrass Nationally significant number of Sharp-tailed sandpipers (6000+) observed 2021 Yellow Sedge-skipper Butterfly, migratory birds, adjoins Ramsar sites, 4km of Barwon River frontage</u>
<u>Belmont Wetlands</u>	<u>HN2</u>	<u>Belmont Common, Jerringot, Barwon Golf Course, Breakwater wetlands, Aquaduct Park</u>	<u>EPBC: Latham's Snipe migratory birds, brolgas, platypus, high quality wetlands adjoin the Barwon River</u>
<u>Barwon - Moorabool River Confluence</u>	<u>HN3</u>	<u>Barwon - Moorabool River Confluence</u>	<u>cultural values, platypus, large old remnant trees, confluence of the Barwon and Moorabool Rivers</u>
<u>Dog Rocks and Honeys Woodland</u>	<u>HN4</u>	<u>Dog Rocks and Honeys Woodland</u>	<u>koalas, platypus, large old remnant trees, Moorabool River Frontage</u>
<u>Lara Golf Course</u>	<u>HN5</u>	<u>Lara Golf Club in Lara</u>	<u>Potential restoration opportunity</u>
<u>Northern Conservation Reserve</u>	<u>HN6</u>	<u>Northern Growth Area - Conservation Reserve - Staceys Road</u>	<u>EPBC: Natural Temperate Grassland, Stripped Legless Lizard, Golden Sun Month</u>
<u>Sutherland Creek Woodlands</u>	<u>HN7</u>	<u>Sutherland Creek Woodlands</u>	<u>large old remnant trees- River Red Gums, Grey Box, close to priority corridor, Plains Grassy Woodland</u>
<u>Lynch Road Grassy Woodlands</u>	<u>HN8</u>	<u>Lynches Road Grassy Woodland</u>	<u>koalas, Manna Gum Woodland</u>

<u>BIOLINK NAME</u>	<u>BIOLINK NUMBER</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	<u>VALUES</u>
Northern Uplands Dry Forests	HN9	Northern Upland dry Forests	large old remnant trees - box iron bark forest, Melbourne Yellow Gums, Redbox, Red Stringy bark, koalas, Jolly's Reserve
Anakie Woodlands	HN10	Anakie Woodland	koalas, remnant vegetation, large old remnant trees, Scoria Cone Woodland
Granitic Hills Woodland	HN11	Granitic Hills Woodland	remnant vegetation, large old remnant trees - Melbourne Yellow Gum, Manna Gum, Red Stringbark
Brisbane Ranges	HN12	PV managed Brisbane Ranges National Park and adjoining private land	Brisbane Ranges National Park, koalas, large old remnant trees, high quality remnants
Swamp Road Swamp and Woodland	HN13	Swamp Road Swamp and Woodland	high quality lignum swamp,
Sharkey's Swamp and Buloke Woodlands	HN14	Sharkeys Swamp and Buloke Woodland	EPBC: potential Grey Box - Buloke Grassy Woodland Community large old remnant trees - bulokes
Mt Rothwell	HN15	Mt Rothwell Little River - private wildlife sanctuary	473 hectares of predator free safe haven for native wildlife, native grasslands and grassy Woodlands, koalas, adjoins future Western Grassland Reserve
Little River - Ripley Road Grasslands	HN16	Little River Ripley Road/ Kirk Bridge Road Grasslands and Shrublands	EPBC: Natural Temperate Grassland, Stripped Legless Lizard high quality remnant vegetation, Fat-tailed Dunnart, Cunningham Skink
Ford Proving Ground	HN17	Ford Proving Grounds and associated private land to the north of the You Yangs	EPBC: potential Grey Box - Buloke Grassy Woodland Community high quality remnant, large old remnant trees - Yellow Box
Woolloomana Station	HN18	Woolloomana Station	large old remnant trees - redgums, Plains Grassy Woodland, Creek line Grassy Woodland
You Yangs	HN19	PV Managed You Yangs	You Yangs
Serendip	HN20	PV Managed Serendip	Serendip
Western Treatment Plant	HN21	Western Treatment Plant	Ramsar site - migratory birds EPBC: Subtropical and Temperate Coastal Saltmarsh, Orange-bellied Parrot Fat-tailed Dunnart
Avalon Airport South	HN22	Avalon Airport - south	Ramsar site - migratory birds EPBC: Subtropical and Temperate Coastal Saltmarsh, Orange-bellied Parrot Fat-tailed Dunnart
Cheatham Saltworks - including Avalon Coast	HN23	Cheatham Saltworks - including Avalon Coast	Ramsar site - migratory birds EPBC: Subtropical and Temperate Coastal Saltmarsh, Orange-bellied Parrot Fat-tailed Dunnart
Corio Grassland	HN24	Corio Grassland, Shell Parade	EPBC: Natural Temperate Grassland partly City owned partly private
Eastern Park, GBG and Golf Course	HN25	Eastern Park, GBG and East Geelong Golf Course	EPBC: Grey Headed Flying Fox Nationally significant GHFF Camp, native grasslands
Moolap Saltworks and Point Henry	HN26	Moolap Saltworks and Point Henry	Proposed Ramsar site EPBC: Subtropical and Temperate Coastal Saltmarsh, Orange-bellied Parrot
Drysdale Wetlands - Lake Lorne and McLeods Waterholes	HN27	Drysdale Reserves including the Basin, Belchers, Lake Lorne, McLeods Waterhole and associated remnants on private land	EPBC: Latham's Snipe City nature reserves - The Basin, Belchers, Lake Lorne, McLeods Waterhole, high quality remnants on private, Heathy Woodland, large old remnant trees and grass trees, migratory birds, water birds
Portarlington Reserve and Point Richards Flora Reserve	HN28	Portarlington Reserves and adjoining private land	EPBC: Subtropical and Temperate Coastal Saltmarsh, Orange-bellied Parrot, Growling Grass-frog, Australasian Bittern Red-capped plover breeding site, Brown Quail, Birding Hotspot
Indented Head woodlands	HN29	Indented Head Woodland Nature Reserve, Barwon Water and Private Land	EPBC: Latham's Snipe Large Old Trees - Redgums

<u>BIOLINK NAME</u>	<u>BIOLINK NUMBER</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	<u>VALUES</u>
<u>Salt Lagoon and Sheoak Woodland</u>	<u>HN30</u>	<u>PV Salt Lagoon, adjoining City nature reserve and private land remnants</u>	<u>EPBC: Subtropical and Temperate Coastal Saltmarsh</u> <u>migratory birds</u> <u>Coastal habitat, remnant Moonahs</u>
<u>Edwards Point Wildlife Reserve</u>	<u>HN31</u>	<u>PV managed Edwards Point Wildlife Reserve</u>	<u>EPBC: Subtropical and Temperate Coastal Saltmarsh,</u> <u>Orange-bellied Parrot</u> <u>Edwards Point Wildlife Reserve, migratory birds</u>
<u>Anderson Roadside woodlands and saltmarsh</u>	<u>HN32</u>	<u>Grassy Woodland remnants on private land and roadsides - Grassy Point Road and Anderson Road</u>	<u>EPBC: Glossy Grass-sink</u> <u>Grassy Woodland remnants on private land and roadsides - Grassy Point Road and Anderson Road,</u> <u>Sheoak Woodland, Bellarine Yellow Gums</u>
<u>Swan Bay Road Sheoak woodland</u>	<u>HN33</u>	<u>Swan Bay Road remnant sheoak woodland</u>	<u>Approximately 60 hectares Sheoak Woodland likely the largest remaining on the Bellarine Peninsula</u>
<u>Swan Bay south and Yarram Creek</u>	<u>HN34</u>	<u>Swan Bay south and Yarram Creek</u>	<u>EPBC: Subtropical and Temperate Coastal Saltmarsh,</u> <u>Orange-bellied Parrot</u> <u>Coastal Alkaline Scrub remnants, Grassy Woodland,</u> <u>high quality remnants</u>
<u>South-east Bellarine wetlands Moonahwarri and Moonah Woodland</u>	<u>HN35</u>	<u>PV managed Lake Victoria and smaller lakes (Moonahwarri), Coastal Moonah Woodland</u>	<u>EPBC: Subtropical and Temperate Coastal Saltmarsh,</u> <u>Hooded Plover</u> <u>Large patch of Coastal Moonah Woodland, migratory</u> <u>Birds, adjoins Buckley Park Foreshore Reserve, State</u> <u>Significant Landscape, Flows into nearby Swan Bay</u> <u>Marine Park and Ramar Wetland</u>
<u>Kingston Park and surrounding remnants</u>	<u>HN36</u>	<u>Kingston Park Nature Reserve and surrounding Remnants</u>	<u>EPBC: Swift Parrot</u> <u>Grassy Woodland, large old remnant trees, Bellarine</u> <u>Yellow Gums, wildflowers and native grasses</u>
<u>Maddens Woodlands</u>	<u>HN37</u>	<u>Mannerim Woodland Marcus Hill</u>	<u>adjoins Murk Ngubiti Yarram Yaluk and Yarram Creek,</u> <u>high quality remnant vegetation, Grassy Woodland and</u> <u>Heathy Woodland</u>
<u>The Grubb Road woodlands Wallington</u>	<u>HN38</u>	<u>Grubb Road Woodlands, Wallington</u>	<u>EPBC: Swift Parrot,</u> <u>near Murk Ngubiti Yarram Yaluk and Yarram Creek, high</u> <u>quality remnant vegetation, large old remnant trees,</u> <u>Grassy woodland and Heathy Woodland</u>
<u>Wallington Woodland</u>	<u>HN39</u>	<u>Remnant Woodland east and west of Wallington Road</u>	<u>Roadside vegetation, Bellarine Yellow Gums, Old Trees</u>
<u>Ocean Grove Nature Reserve and surrounds</u>	<u>HN40</u>	<u>Ocean Grove Nature Reserve, Yellow Gum Nature Reserve and associated Grassy Woodland remnants on private land</u>	<u>EPBC: Swift Parrot</u> <u>Ocean Grove Nature Reserve, Yellow Gum Nature</u> <u>Reserve, Grassy Woodland, Bellarine Yellow Gum</u> <u>Woodland, large old remnant trees - Bellarine Yellow</u> <u>Gums and Manna Gums, kookaburra, echidna</u>
<u>Lake Connewarre</u>	<u>HN41</u>	<u>Lake Connewarre Barwon River Corridor</u>	<u>Ramsar site - migratory birds</u> <u>EPBC: subtropical and Temperate Coastal Saltmarsh,</u> <u>Orange-bellied Parrot</u>
<u>Murnaghurt Wetland and 13th Beach Golf Course</u>	<u>HN42</u>	<u>Murnaghurt Wetland, 13th Beach Golf Course and Barwon Heads Golf Course</u>	<u>EPBC: Subtropical and Temperate Coastal Saltmarsh</u> <u>Murnaghurt wetland, migratory birds, Coast Fescue,</u> <u>good quality remnant vegetation</u>
<u>Breamlea Flora and Fauna Reserve</u>	<u>HN43</u>	<u>PV Managed Breamlea Flora and Fauna Reserve and Karaf Wetland</u>	<u>EPBC: Subtropical and Temperate Coastal Saltmarsh,</u> <u>Hooded Plover</u> <u>migratory birds</u>
<u>Armstrong Creek Corridor</u>	<u>PC1</u>	<u>Armstrong Creek Headwaters to Sparrovale Wetland Reserve</u>	<u>large old remnant trees, Dooliebeal Reserve, remnants,</u> <u>cultural values, riparian restoration</u>
<u>Waurm Ponds Creek</u>	<u>PC2</u>	<u>Waurm Ponds Creek from City boundary to Breakwater Wetlands</u>	<u>EPBC: Yarra Pygmy Perch, Latham's Snipe</u> <u>platypus, cultural values, riparian restoration</u>
<u>Barwon River</u>	<u>PC3</u>	<u>Barwon River connecting the coast to the City boundary</u>	<u>Ramsar site - migratory birds</u> <u>EPBC: Gang-gang cockatoo, Latham's Snipe, Australian</u> <u>Grayling, Yarra Pygmy Perch,</u> <u>major wildlife corridor from the coast eventually through</u> <u>to the Otway, cultural values, broilgas, platypus, large old</u> <u>remnant trees, riparian restoration</u> <u>Adjoins Porrongitj Karrong, Sparrovale - Nubiti-yoorree</u>
<u>Moorabool River</u>	<u>PC4</u>	<u>From Redgum Island to Sutherlands Creek</u>	<u>major wildlife corridor from the confluence of the Barwon</u> <u>River eventually through to the Wombat Forest and</u> <u>Brisbane Ranges hinterland, cultural values, platypus,</u> <u>koalas, large old remnant trees, riparian restoration</u>

<u>BIOLINK NAME</u>	<u>BIOLINK NUMBER</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	<u>VALUES</u>
<u>Cowies Creek</u>	<u>PC5</u>	<u>Cowies Creek</u>	<u>EPBC: Growling Grass Frog</u> <u>cultural values, riparian restoration</u>
<u>Ballarat Rail Reserve</u>	<u>PC6</u>	<u>Extends from Evans Road to the Moorabool River linking Cowies Creek to the Moorabool River</u>	<u>opportunities to connect corridors and restore habitat in urban landscape</u>
<u>Sutherland Creek</u>	<u>PC7</u>	<u>Starts up at the Brisbane Ranges in the north of the City joins the Moorabool River north of Batesford</u>	<u>Large old remnant trees, koalas, Jolly's reserve</u>
<u>Anakie Creek</u>	<u>PC8</u>	<u>Sutherlands Creek to Hovells Creek</u>	<u>corridor restoration opportunity, remnant vegetation</u>
<u>Hovells Creek</u>	<u>PC9</u>	<u>Extends from the northern uplands through the basalt plains joining Corio Bay at the Ramsar site</u>	<u>Ramsar site - migratory birds</u> <u>Large old remnant trees, koala habitat</u>
<u>Little River</u>	<u>PC10</u>	<u>From the Bay to Brisbane Ranges</u>	<u>Ramsar site - migratory birds</u> <u>EPBC: Natural Temperate Grasslands, Subtropical and Temperate Coastal Saltmarsh, Orange-bellied Parrot</u> <u>Western Treatment Plant, Fat-tailed Dunnart, raptors</u>
<u>Old Melbourne Roadside</u>	<u>PC11</u>	<u>From Lara to Little River</u>	<u>EPBC: Natural Temperate Grassland, Spiny Rice-flower</u> <u>Native grassland with diversity of species including wildflowers, three chain road reserve</u>
<u>Limeburner's Bay to Little River Coast</u>	<u>PC12</u>	<u>Little River to Limeburner's Bay</u>	<u>Ramsar site - migratory birds</u> <u>EPBC: Subtropical and Temperate Coastal Saltmarsh, Orange-bellied Parrot</u> <u>Burrnan Dolphin, Western Treatment Plant, Hovells Creek, Little River</u>
<u>Corio Bay</u>	<u>PC13</u>	<u>Limeburner's Bay to Point Henry on the coast</u>	<u>Ramsar site - migratory birds</u> <u>EPBC: Subtropical and Temperate Coastal Saltmarsh, Grey Headed Flying Fox</u> <u>Plains Grassland, Shell Foreshore, Hovells Creek, Burrnan Dolphin, Rakali, Fiddler Rays</u>
<u>Bellarine Bay Coast</u>	<u>PC14</u>	<u>Point Henry to Point Lonsdale</u>	<u>Ramsar site - migratory birds</u> <u>EPBC: Subtropical and Temperate Coastal Saltmarsh, Orange-bellied Parrot</u> <u>Edwards Point Wildlife Reserve, Swan Bay - Port Phillip Marine National Park</u> <u>Point Richards Flora and Fauna Reserve, Portarlington Recreation Reserve</u> <u>Coastal Moonah Woodland, Headland Scrub, Red-capped plover breeding site</u>
<u>South Bellarine Ocean Coast</u>	<u>PC15</u>	<u>Ocean coast between Breamlea and Point Lonsdale</u>	<u>EPBC: Subtropical and Temperate Coastal Saltmarsh, Hooded Plover</u> <u>migratory birds, Breamlea Flora and Fauna Reserve, Murtnaghurt wetland, Barwon Bluff Marine Sanctuary, Moonahwarri Wetlands (adjoins), Coastal Moonah Woodland, large old remnant trees, spinifex grassland, Barwon Heads and Thirteen Beach Golf Clubs, State Significant landscape (DAL), Double-banded Plover, Red-capped Plover</u>
<u>Murtnaghurt</u>	<u>PC16</u>	<u>North south link including existing crown land connecting Lake Connnewarre via Murtnaghurt to the coast</u>	<u>EPBC: Subtropical and Temperate Coastal Saltmarsh</u> <u>Murtnaghurt wetland, migratory birds, Coast Fescue</u>
<u>Bluestone School</u>	<u>PC17</u>	<u>North south link across private land linking Lake Connnewarre with Thirteenth Beach</u>	<u>Brolga, Coast Fescue, Coast Bitter-bush</u>
<u>Yellow Gums</u>	<u>PC18</u>	<u>Ocean Grove Nature Reserve to Lake Connnewarre</u>	<u>Grassy Woodland, Bellarine Yellow Gum, large old remnant trees</u>
<u>Wallington</u>	<u>PC19</u>	<u>Ocean Grove Nature Reserve to Wallington, Murk Ngubiti Yarram Yaluk and Swan Bay Road</u>	<u>Grassy Woodland, Sheoaks, High quality Heathy Woodland, Austral Grass-trees, Leafy Greenhood</u>
<u>Drysdale</u>	<u>PC20</u>	<u>Murk Ngubiti Yarram Yaluk, Griggs Creek to the Bay at Clifton Springs</u>	<u>EPBC: Latham's Snipe</u> <u>migratory birds, Murk Ngubiti Yarram Yaluk (Barwon Waters new Nature Reserve), Belchers Reserves, Basin Reserve, Lake Lorne, McLeod's Waterhole, Griggs Creek, large old remnant trees, Heathy Woodland, Grassy Woodland, wedge-tailed eagles</u>
<u>Leopold</u>	<u>PC21</u>	<u>Green Wedge between Geelong and Leopold linking Lake Connnewarre to the Bay</u>	<u>Ramsar site - migratory birds</u> <u>large old remnant tree, corridor restoration opportunity</u>

BIOLINK NAME	BIOLINK NUMBER	DESCRIPTION	VALUES
Bellarine Rail Trail	PC22	Rail Reserve extending from Geelong to Queenscliff	Ramsar site - migratory birds Major link between Geelong and Swan Bay, Swan Bay - Port Phillip Marine National Park, corridor restoration opportunity, remnant vegetation. Could link all the way to the Barwon River through the Show Grounds and roadsides
Swan Bay Road	PC23	From Swan Bay north to remnant Sheoak Patch on Swan Bay Road	Ramsar site - migratory birds EPBC: Subtropical and Temperate Coastal Saltmarsh Swan Bay - Port Phillip Marine National Park Sheoak Woodland, remnant roadside vegetation
Grassy Point Road	PC24	Roadsides - Anderson, Manifold, Grassy Point Road	Grassy Woodland, wildflowers and native grasslands
Masons Creek	PC25	Masons Creek and tributaries flowing to Swan Bay - Port Phillip Marine National Park - from Drysdale Landfill	Ramsar site - migratory birds Swan Bay - Port Phillip Marine National Park, corridor restoration opportunity, remnant vegetation Centre of the Northern Bellarine
Yarram Creek South	PC26	Murk Ngubiti Yarram Yaluk along Yarram Creek to Swan Bay Swan Bay - Port Phillip Marine National Park	Ramsar site - migratory birds Murk Ngubiti Yarram Yaluk (new Barwon Water Nature Reserve), Yarram Creek headwaters, Swan Bay Swan Bay - Port Phillip Marine National Park, wedge-tailed eagles, corridor restoration opportunity
Moonahwarri to Swan Bay	PC27	Lake Victoria to Swan Bay - Port Phillip Marine National Park	Ramsar site - migratory birds EPBC: Subtropical and Temperate Coastal Saltmarsh, Hooded Plover Swan Bay - Port Phillip Marine National Park, Coastal Moonah Woodland
Deakin Biodiversity Restoration	RN1	Deakin Waurm Ponds Campus	habitat restoration across the Deakin Waurm Ponds Campus aligned to their Biodiversity Strategy
Batesford Quarry	RN2	Batesford Quarry	Restoration of the Batesford Quarry as part of the NWGGA
Corio Landfill	RN3	Old Landfill site adjoining Limeburner's Bay and Hovell's Creek with	restoration opportunities for wildlife
Drysdale Landfill	RN4	Extensive habitat restoration opportunity when landfill closes - aligned to a Master Plan	Extensive habitat restoration opportunity when landfill closes - aligned to a Master Plan
Sparrovale Wetlands Reserve - Ngubiti yoorree	RN5	Sparrovale Wetlands Reserve - Ngubiti yoorree	Extensive habitat restoration opportunity at Sparrovale Wetlands Reserve - Ngubiti yoorree aligned to the Master Plan
Brisbane Ranges and Hinterland	Z1	Brisbane Ranges National Park, Adjoining private land, Northern Upland dry Forests, Lynches Road Grassy Woodland	Mt Anakie, Scoria Cone Woodland, large old remnant trees,
Wurdi Youang	Z2	You Yangs, Woolloomanata Station, Ford Proving Grounds and associated private land to the north of the You Yang, Mt Rothwell, Little River Ripley Road/ Kirk Bridge Road Grasslands and Shrublands, Sharkeys Swamp and Bullock Woodland	You Yangs, Woolloomanata Station, Ford Proving Grounds and associated private land to the north of the You Yang, Mt Rothwell, Little River Ripley Road/ Kirk Bridge Road Grasslands and Shrublands, Sharkeys Swamp and Bullock Woodland
Avalon	Z3	Western Treatment Plant, Corio Grassland, Cheatam Saltworks - including Avalon Coast, Avalon Airport - south, Corio Landfill	Ramsar site - migratory birds EPBC: Subtropical and Temperate Coastal Saltmarsh, Orange-bellied Parrot
Moolapio	Z4	Botanic Gardens, Eastern Park and East Geelong Golf Course Moolap Saltworks and Point Henry	future Ramsar site - migratory birds EPBC: Subtropical and Temperate Coastal Saltmarsh, Grey Headed Flying Fox Native Grasslands
Point Richards	Z5	Portarlington Reserves and adjoining private land	EPBC: Subtropical and Temperate Coastal Saltmarsh, Orange-bellied Parrot, Growling Grass-frog, Australasian Bittern Red-capped plover breeding site Damp Sands Herb-rich Woodland, wetlands, threatened flora species (Geranium) Brown Quail, Birding Hotspot
Indented Head Woodland and Coast	Z6	Indented Head Woodland Nature Reserve, PV managed Salt Lagoon, adjoining City nature reserve and private land remnants	EPBC: Subtropical and Temperate Coastal Saltmarsh, Latham's Snipe large old remnant trees, Grassy Woodland, Coastal Moonah Woodland, Headland Scrub Red-capped plover breeding sites

<u>BIOLINK NAME</u>	<u>BIOLINK NUMBER</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	<u>VALUES</u>
			Point Richards Flora and Fauna Reserve, Portarlington Recreation Reserve
<u>Swan Bay and surrounds</u>	<u>Z7</u>	<u>Edwards Point Wildlife Reserve</u> <u>Grassy Woodland remnants on private land and roadsides - Grassy Point Road and Anderson Road</u>	Ramsar site - migratory birds EPBC: Subtropical and Temperate Coastal Saltmarsh, Orange-bellied Parrot Grassy Woodlands - Sheoak Woodlands
<u>Moonahwarri</u>	<u>Z8</u>	<u>South East Bellarine Coast and Wetlands</u>	EPBC: Subtropical and Temperate Coastal Saltmarsh, Hooded Plover State Significant Landscape, Migratory Birds, Coastal Moonah Woodland
<u>Wallington Woodland</u>	<u>Z9</u>	<u>Grubb Road Woodlands, Mannerim Woodland Marcus Hill</u>	EPBC: Swift Parrot
<u>Ocean Grove Woodland</u>	<u>Z10</u>	<u>Ocean Grove Nature Reserve, Yellow Gum Reserve and associated Grassy Woodland remnants on private land</u> <u>Kingston Park and Surrounding Remnants</u>	EPBC: Swift Parrot Grassy Woodland, large old remnant trees, wildflowers
<u>Lake Connewarre Wetland System</u>	<u>Z11</u>	<u>Lake Connewarre Wetland System to Barwon River Estuary & Sparrovale Wetlands Reserve - Ngubiti yoorree</u>	Ramsar site, migratory birds EPBC: Subtropical and Temperate Coastal Saltmarsh, Orange Bellied Parrot, Sharp-tailed Sandpiper, Growling Grass Frog, Yarra Pygmy Perch, Spiny Peppercress Sparrovale Wetlands Reserve - Ngubiti yoorree, nationally significant number of Sharp-tailed sandpipers (6000+) observed 2021, Brolgas
<u>Breamlea</u>	<u>Z12</u>	<u>Breamlea Flora and Fauna Reserve, Karaf Wetland, Thompsons Creek Estuary,</u>	EPBC: Subtropical and Temperate Coastal Saltmarsh, Hooded Plover migratory birds

BIOLINK AREA INFORMATION

Corridors

Biolinks for the Greater Geelong area were identified in collaboration with community and industry experts via a series of workshops between 2020 and 2024. These workshops included:

1. Three workshops to develop the Bellarine biolinks map on 21 February 2020, 31 July 2020 and 25 August 2020.
2. Two further workshops to develop biolinks for the rest of Greater Geelong on 16 March 2023 and 30 January 2024.

These biolinks are called 'Corridors' in the Plan for Nature.

Priority Corridors

During the consultation process, we have identified several key biolinks that will be a focus of the City's conservation programs going forward. These key biolinks are called 'Priority Corridors'.

Nodes

During community workshops, large patches of native vegetation and habitat were identified and recorded. If these were over 10 hectares in size they were initially identified as being a 'Biodiversity feature'. (Biodiversity features were included in the Bellarine Peninsula Distinctive Areas and Landscapes Statement of Planning Policy 2023). These habitat areas have been recorded across the whole municipality and have been called 'nodes' in the Plan for Nature. Most Corridors will connect to at least one Node.

Zones

There are several areas across Greater Geelong that support regionally significant biodiversity and are often much larger than 10 ha in size. These are the City's biodiversity hotspots, and are called 'zones' in the Plan for Nature. Zones often incorporate multiple Nodes and are linked by Priority Corridors.

References

Practical Ecology - Native Veg Mapping Private Land (Moderate to Very High Confidence only) - 2024

Sundew Ecological - Native Veg Mapping Private Land -2024 - 2025

Crown Land - Native Veg Aerial Photo Analysis

City of Greater Geelong - Native Vegetation - Reserves & Roadsides 2013 -2019

Native Veg Aerial Photo Analysis

Remnant vegetation mapping community/stakeholder workshops 2019

Biolink community/key stakeholder workshops March 2023 and January 2024

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THE CITY OF
GREATER GEELONG

GEELONG PLAN FOR NATURE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT REPORT

—

2026

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1 Community Engagement

Retaining or improving the biodiversity of living species within the Geelong region is not just a feel-good aspiration (although those people involved will gain much satisfaction). Retaining biodiversity is our obligation to future generations, to Wadawarrung culture and heritage and to the continued existence of the amazing ecosystems that have existed around the Geelong region. Barry Lingham – GFNC

The City prepared a Draft Plan for Nature (the Plan) to set the future direction for biodiversity programs in Greater Geelong. The draft Plan was unanimously endorsed by Council on the 24 March 2026.

The Plan provides Council with a key mechanism to meet an important outcome in Our Council Plan 2025-29; that natural habitat and areas of important biodiversity are identified, protected, connected and restored.

Following this endorsement the City commenced a month of engagement, extending from the 25 March to the 31 April 2026 with face-to-face meetings and a Have Your Say page to collect feedback.

The City would like to thank the over 350 participants and community groups who completed the on-line survey and provided such detailed and thoughtful written submission and the nearly 200 people we spoke to during the engagement process.

1.1 SUMMARY

The Plan is well supported in principle, but its success will depend on delivering visible, well-resourced and coordinated actions that lead to measurable improvements in biodiversity outcomes.

Feedback from community members, organisations, agencies and industry representatives demonstrates strong overall support for the Plan. Participants widely recognise the Plan as a comprehensive and timely response to biodiversity decline, and an important step toward improving the region's ecological health for future generations.

There is broad agreement that the Plan identifies appropriate strategic priorities, particularly in relation to habitat protection, ecological connectivity, community involvement and private landowner engagement. Stakeholders also acknowledge the urgency of biodiversity loss and endorse the Plan's vision, direction and ambition to protect, restore and connect biodiversity across Greater Geelong.

While support for the Plan in principle is strong and consistent, submissions emphasise that its success will ultimately depend on effective implementation. Key themes across feedback highlight the need for:

- Adequate and sustained funding
- Strong planning controls and policy integration
- Clear delivery mechanisms across Council functions
- Genuine partnerships with traditional owners, community, agencies and stakeholders.
- Visible, on-ground outcomes that demonstrate progress

1.2 HOW WE ENGAGED

1.2.1 What did we do?

The City undertook community engagement from late March through to April 2026 to gather feedback on the Plan, to set a long-term framework to identify, protect, restore and enhance biodiversity across the municipality.

The purpose of this engagement was to:

- Understand community and stakeholder perspectives on the draft Plan
- Identify key priorities, gaps and concerns
- Inform refinement of the Plan prior to finalisation and Council consideration and endorsement.

The engagement sought both quantitative feedback (survey results) and qualitative insights (written submissions and comments) to ensure a comprehensive evidence base.



Figure 1: Bellarine Community Biolinks Workshop



1.3 ENGAGEMENT TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES

A range of engagement tools and techniques were used to provide different types of opportunities for stakeholders and community to have their say. The main tools and techniques are explained in further detail below.

HAVE YOUR SAY ONLINE PORTAL	An online HYS project page was designed to update the Plan's progress, provide access to the Plan and the Community Engagement Summary Report for review, and to encourage feedback, by completing the survey, making a submission or attending one of the two open house sessions <u>Geelong's Draft Plan for Nature Have Your Say</u>
ONLINE SURVEY	The survey was published on the HYS project page to gather feedback about the Plan and if there was anything that should be added or changed.
ONLINE SURVEY NOTIFICATIONS	The community was invited to provide feedback about the Plan on the HYS Project Page. 1. Notification to our 165 followers 2. Email to our 70 plus community environment groups 3. Ocean Grove Voice online story on 6/4/26 4. Geelong Independent – online story 7/4/26 and printed in the 10/04/26 edition 5. Time News Group – 13/04/2026 in the Geelong Times and Armstrong Creek Times 6. Social media posts 7. Eight in person and community meetings
DISPLAYS, WORKSHOPS AND PRESENTATIONS X 6	• Bellarine Catchment Network Update (30) – 25/03/26 • One Planet Living Festival Display (50) - 28/03/26 • Bellarine Biolinks Community Workshop (55) - 10/04/26 • Wadawurrung Traditional Owner Aboriginal Corporation (1) - 15/04/26 • Barwon Heads Discovery Centre Presentation (33) -15/04/26 • Brisbane Ranges Landcare Meeting (14) – 16/04/26
OPEN HOUSE X 2	Two Open House session were conducted on the 16 April 2026 at Wurriki Nyal. These sessions gave people the opportunity to discuss the Plan with City staff and/or complete a survey.
WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS	50 written submissions were received - some through the Have Your Say project page and other directly emailed to the City at ebadmin@geelongcity.vic.gov.au

1.4 WHO WE ENGAGED WITH

The Nature Plan needs to be embedded into the Planning Scheme and planning regulations reviewed and formalised in order to have the strength to check future inappropriate development proposals near areas of high biodiversity value, or in locations that would fragment existing or planned biolink corridors, thus impacting on habitat connectivity.

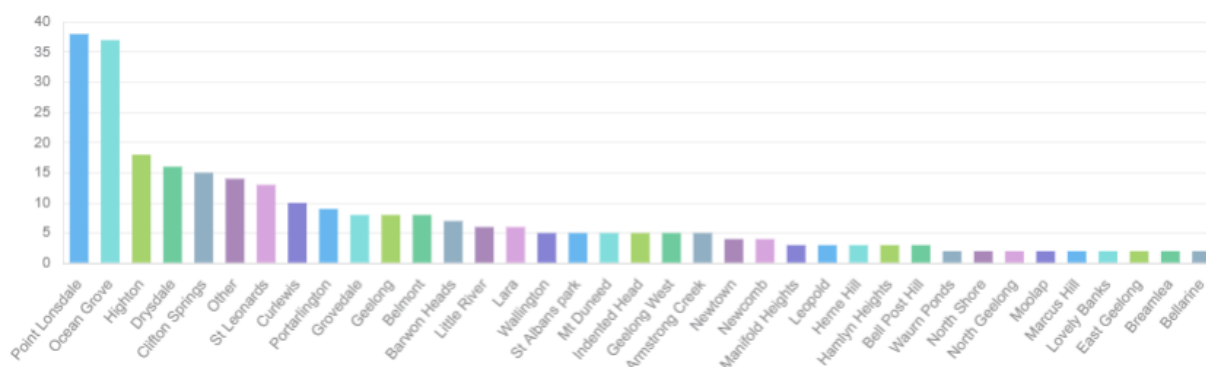
1.4.1 Participation

During late March and April more than 13788 people engaged with the City about the Plan.

Of these 12126 engaged on Instagram and Facebook with 1014 interactions, 345 people completed the survey or made a written submission, 165 people followed the project on the Have Your Say Page and 188 engaged in person through workshops, and our face to face events.

The community were invited to share some demographic data with us, primarily through our HYS page.

Response rate by suburb (responses less than 3 are excluded)



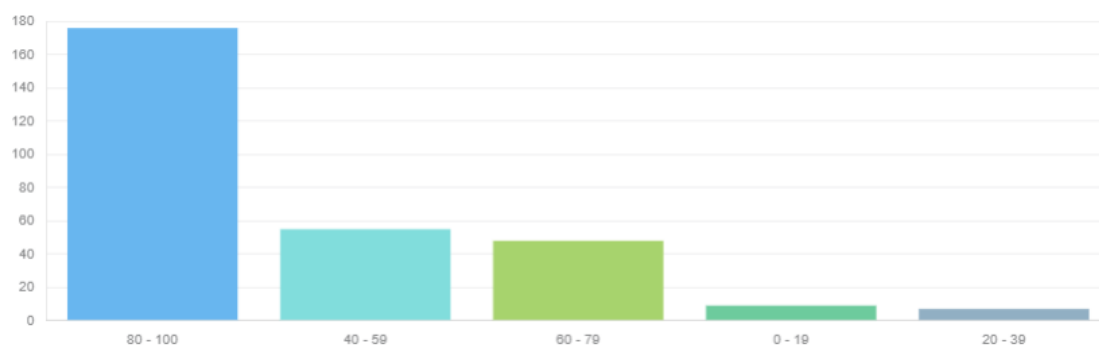
2 What we heard and how it shaped the Plan

We invited the community to contribute to the development of the Plan for Nature. Participants were asked to provide their views on the following:

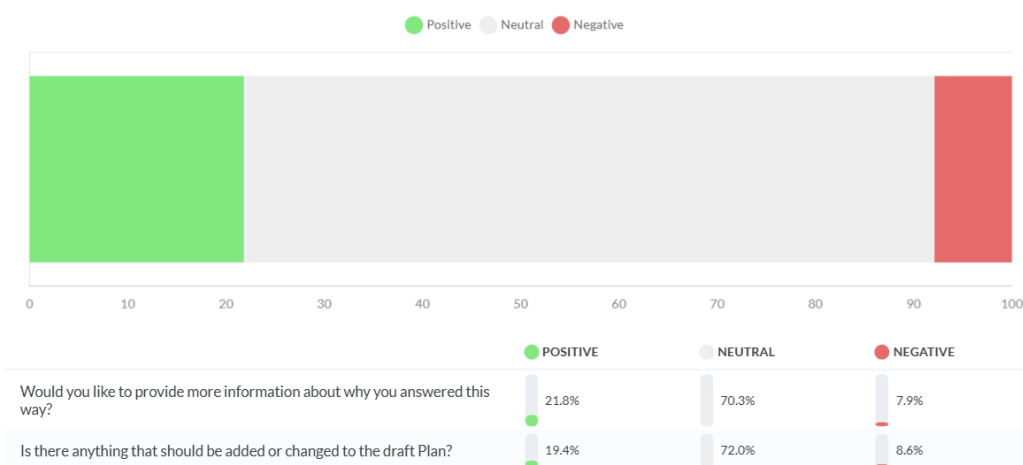
- In your opinion, will the Plan have a positive impact on nature across Geelong?
- Would you like to provide further information about your response?
- Is there anything that should be added to or changed in the draft Plan?
- An option to provide a written submission

The feedback expressed a hopeful but cautious outlook on the Plan, acknowledging its comprehensive nature and its alignment with community desires for environmental protection. However, a significant concern raised by many is the perceived lack of concrete implementation, adequate funding and consistent enforcement, especially in light of past Council actions that many have favoured development over environmental preservation. There was a strong desire for measurable outcomes, and a belief the Plan's success hinges on genuine commitment by the Council to translate aspirations into tangible actions.

In your opinion, will the Plan positively impact nature throughout Geelong?



Sentiment diagram



2.1 KEY THEMES

City staff have reviewed and processed all survey responses and submissions received from more than 350 participants. Feedback ranged from high-level commentary to detailed action ideas, along with everything in between.

As a result, many changes have been made to the Plan, across most sections (refer to Table 1 for a summary of these changes).

Many of the detailed ideas provided during the consultation will inform the implementation phase rather than being incorporated directly into the Plan or Action Plan – and we now have a list of incredible ideas.

Notably, no participants commented that the Plan was too long—on the contrary, there was a desire for more detail. One response did note that there were too many actions, which we acknowledge. However, to ensure valuable actions were not lost, we have retained these as supplementary actions and will review their feasibility over the first two years of implementation.

The key themes arising from this engagement are outlined below. Findings from the survey responses and written submissions were strongly aligned and so all sections of the consultation have been grouped together under these key themes

TABLE 1: GEELONG PLAN FOR NATURE SECTIONS WITH CHANGES – SUMMARY

No.	Plan Section	Change
1	Glossary	Additional definitions added
2	Vision	Bringing the Vision to Life
3	How We Engaged	Now references the Community Engagement Plan
4	Drivers for Change	Expanded in response to consultation
5	Landscape	Conditions, threats and opportunities expanded
6	Key Species	Revised to "Key Species and Habitat". Invertebrates added to <i>Dlilang</i> . Eastern Yellow Robin replaces Superb Fairy-wren
7	Table 4	Updated
8	Goal Titles	Expanded to action-oriented statements
9	Goals	Expanded in response to consultation
10	Strategic Objectives	Renamed to "Strategic Outcomes"
11	Targets	Strengthened
12	Biolink Area A3 Map	Replaced with six Biolink Area maps - one per Landscape (see Change 16)
13	Actions	Expanded and updated
14	Implementation and Renewal	Expanded and strengthened
15	Monitoring and Evaluation	Expanded and strengthened
16	Maps	18 maps in total: • Maps 1–6: Biolink Areas (updated; replaces A3 Biolink Area map, see Change 12) • Maps 7–12: Environmental Values (updated) • Maps 13–18: Protection Measures (updated)
17	Appendix 1	Updated
18	Appendix 2	Updated
19	Appendix 3	Updated
20	Appendix 4	Updated

2.2 CONNECTIVITY AS A CORE PRIORITY

Establishing wildlife corridors is one of the most important actions the City can take. I grew up in Little River, and I would love to see the river restored as a functioning wildlife corridor linking the Brisbane Ranges to the Western Treatment Plant — one of the most significant bird habitats in Australia. This must include restoring environmental flows. My father, a market gardener and farmer, used to take water samples to Barwon Water to check salinity before irrigating his vegetables. He always said that once the Stony Creek Dam was built, flows to the Little River dropped and salinity increased. Yet our family has letters from the 1850s describing people living on the banks of the river and drinking from the river and growing food along its banks. Restoring flows is not just ecological — it is cultural, historical and essential for the health of the entire corridor.

The establishment of landscape-scale wildlife corridors and biolinks was the most consistent and strongly supported theme from the feedback. Participants emphasised that improving ecological connectivity is fundamental to achieving biodiversity outcomes. There was broad recognition that effective conservation requires a landscape-scale approach, rather than a focus on isolated sites, and that corridors should be prioritised across growth areas and both public and private land. Connectivity was widely identified as critical for supporting species movement, maintaining ecosystem health, and enhancing climate resilience.

Feedback also highlighted important nuances in corridor planning. In particular, it was noted that movement pathways for larger fauna, such as kangaroos and wallabies, may not always align with identified biolinks. These species often utilise established movement routes across agricultural land with limited biodiversity value. In addition, roadside corridors were identified as posing risks to wildlife, including increased incidence of road strikes involving native animals. In response, information on large fauna movement and risks associated with roadside biolinks has been strengthened in the Plan.

Within urban and peri-urban areas, there was strong support for prioritising biolinks across both growth and established areas. Submissions emphasised the importance of aligning corridor delivery with capital works, open space planning, and infrastructure investment to ensure integrated and cost-effective implementation.

Consultation also identified additional biolink opportunities. Where these aligned with the biolink criteria, they have been incorporated into the mapping. In the Bellarine Landscape, priority corridors have been aligned with the Distinctive Areas and Landscapes (DAL) framework. The Plan recognises that the biolink network will continue to evolve over time, with further corridors to be added as opportunities arise.

A number of priority biolinks were identified for targeted action which will be further unpacked in the Geelong Biolink Project. These include the coastal corridor from Avalon to Point Impossible, the Little River corridor connecting the Brisbane Ranges to the Western Treatment Plant, and key river and creek systems such as the Barwon River, Moorabool River, Waurm Ponds Creek and Cowies Creek. Other priority areas include the Bellarine Rail Trail, Grassy Point Road, and coastal creeks within the Bellarine Landscape, including Masons Creek and Yarram Creek South.

2.3 PROTECTION OF REMNANT VEGETATION AND HABITAT

Protecting remnant habitats, restoring degraded land and waterways, and reconnecting landscapes through ecological corridors are central to the Plan. Together, these actions provide native plants and animals with the opportunity not only to persist, but to recover and adapt in a changing climate.

There is widespread concern among participants about the ongoing loss of remnant vegetation, habitat and large trees, particularly in the context of urban growth. Feedback consistently emphasise the critical importance of protecting existing high-quality habitats and restoring degraded areas to support biodiversity and strengthen ecological connectivity.

Participants highlighted that existing vegetation is irreplaceable and must be protected, supported by stronger planning controls and enforcement. Protection is expected to extend across both public and private land, including large trees and areas of critical habitat.

2.3.1 Role of Planning and Development Integration

The planning system is widely viewed as the City's most effective mechanism for protecting biodiversity. Submissions call for stronger integration of biodiversity considerations into planning and development decisions, with a clear focus on preventing habitat loss at the outset rather than relying on offsets. Participants also emphasised the need to better address the cumulative impacts of urban growth and expansion.

There is strong support for embedding nature conservation principles into urban planning and development processes to avoid further habitat loss and fragmentation. This includes strengthening planning controls, protecting existing vegetation, and improving the integration of biodiversity considerations into housing developments and capital works.

Offsets were discussed extensively, with many participants expressing concern that they can undermine local biodiversity outcomes, particularly where offsets are not required to be delivered within the municipality. In response, the Plan strengthens actions relating to the City's approach to offsets. However, it is acknowledged that offset policy settings are largely determined at the State and Commonwealth level, and that the availability of suitable offsets within the municipality is limited.

2.3.2 Private Land Stewardship

Given that a significant proportion of biodiversity occurs on private land, there is a clear need to support landholders to protect and manage high-value conservation areas. Securing and managing these sites will be essential to achieving long-term biodiversity outcomes across the landscape.

Submissions emphasised the importance of providing targeted incentives, stewardship programs and covenants, along with greater support and guidance for landholders. Clear and accessible pathways for participation in conservation and restoration activities were also identified as important.

The Plan recognises the importance of private land for nature conservation and includes actions to strengthen engagement with private landowners. The City currently delivers targeted incentive programs and works in partnership

with Landcare and other regional networks, which play a key role in delivering on-ground outcomes. Strengthening these partnerships and expanding existing programs will be critical to achieving meaningful and lasting change.

2.3.3 Large Old Trees and Canopy Cover

Participants strongly advocate for the protection of large trees across both public and private land, and for increased canopy cover to support biodiversity, urban cooling and liveability outcomes. There is support for adopting more ambitious canopy targets, aligned with leading practice across other councils.

Submissions call for the strongest possible protection of canopy trees, including improved controls on tree removal and enhanced requirements for tree retention on private land.

The Plan prioritises the protection of large, old remnant trees and recognises the broader ecological value of mature trees more generally. Mapping of remnant trees is included and will continue to be refined following adoption of the Plan. Additional tree locations identified during consultation, including River Red Gums and Moonahs not currently mapped, will be incorporated into future mapping programs.

The City's *Urban Forest Strategy* (draft) further strengthens tree protection and planting objectives, including the State-mandated target of 30% canopy cover. Actions within the *Urban Forest Strategy* (draft) complement and support the delivery of outcomes identified in the Plan.

2.4 WADAWURRUNG PARTNERSHIP AND CULTURAL KNOWLEDGE

We would like to learn from the Wadawurrung about their cultural values and perspectives on living sustaining in this landscape and on protecting nature for the future. We would like to work with Wadawurrung Traditional Owners at our regeneration sites to understand and ensure the work is aligned with cultural values. Clifton Springs Curlew Coastcare Group

Consultation feedback indicates strong support for embedding Wadawurrung knowledge and values throughout the Plan. Participants highlighted the importance of genuine partnership and shared decision-making, including opportunities for co-designed projects, long-term collaboration, and appropriate resourcing to support Traditional Owner-led initiatives.

The Traditional Owner targets and actions outlined in the Plan were developed in partnership with the Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation (WTOAC) through ongoing discussions. In response to feedback, these actions have been further strengthened. Engagement will continue through quarterly meetings with WTOAC to refine and support effective collaboration, including opportunities to enable cultural practices, stories and language across the City's nature reserves.

2.5 COMMUNITY AND PARTNERSHIPS – COMMUNITY IS ESSENTIAL BUT NEEDS SUPPORT

BLG strongly supports the Draft Plan for Nature and its ambition. Our community is ready to be part of the solution. With clear priorities, adequate resourcing and genuine partnerships, this Plan can help turn that commitment into lasting, positive change for the Bellarine's natural environment. Bellarine Landcare Group

Consultation feedback consistently highlighted the critical role of community groups, volunteers and partnerships in delivering biodiversity outcomes.

There was strong support for expanding community engagement and education, strengthening Landcare, Coastcare and volunteer networks, and providing sustained funding, coordination and long-term support. However, participants also emphasised that community effort cannot replace adequate Council investment and responsibility.

Community groups and volunteers were widely identified as essential to successful delivery. Participants stressed that these contributions must be supported through appropriate funding, coordination, training and access to resources.

Participants highlighted the importance of moving beyond one-off activities towards more considered ongoing engagement. Building long-term relationships, trust and capacity within the community was seen as critical to achieving lasting environmental outcomes.

There was also strong support for expanding engagement to schools, young people and the broader community. Engagement through schools was identified as a particular priority requiring further strengthening to support early awareness and long-term stewardship.

A clear theme of shared responsibility emerged across submissions. Participants emphasised that caring for nature requires collaboration between Council, Traditional Owners, community groups and private landholders. The Plan was seen as providing a pathway for broader community participation, particularly given the extent of privately owned land across the municipality.

Feedback also highlighted the need for greater community engagement, public awareness and stronger support for volunteer activity. Suggestions included improving the promotion and visibility of environmental initiatives, such as planting programs, litter clean-ups and citizen science activities, alongside providing increased support, education and resources to landholders and community groups to protect and enhance natural areas.

Submissions noted that, with clear priorities, adequate resourcing and genuine partnerships, the Plan has the potential to translate strong community commitment into lasting, positive environmental outcomes. In response to this feedback, the Plan has been updated and strengthened throughout the Plan and associated targets and actions.

2.6 INSECTS ARE IMPORTANT

'Measuring biodiversity is a complicated process. As habitat is enhanced, restored or created, the initial changes to biodiversity would be at the indigenous invertebrate level as more insects and other small ecosystem dwellers multiply to take advantage of the vegetation. A good entomologist could use surveys to decipher the numbers of species and individuals from small survey sites. Changes in invertebrate populations are a good measure of biodiversity change, although seasonal factors would have to be taken into account.'

Several participants highlighted concerns about a noticeable decline in insect numbers, recognising insects as important indicators of ecosystem health and calling for their more explicit inclusion in the Plan. This feedback reflected both observation and personal concern. One participant noted they now see “approximately one butterfly a month” and, while celebrating each sighting, expressed sadness at how rare these encounters have become. Others similarly observed a broader decline in insect populations over recent years and raised concerns about the implications for ecosystem health. While some acknowledged that insect conservation may be implicitly recognised in the Plan, there was a clear view that it should be more explicitly articulated.

Participants also shared examples from overseas to illustrate alternative land management approaches that support insect populations. One observation referenced German meadowlands and woodland areas, where large sections of open space—including parks, roadsides and nature strips—are left unmown to encourage insect activity. It was noted that, from an Australian perspective, these areas may appear “weedy”, as the plant species that thrive in gardens, lawns, vacant land and railway corridors are often those adapted to disturbed environments. However, from a European perspective, such areas are valued for their ability to support insects and may include a diversity of native herbs and grasses. These approaches were also seen to have practical benefits, including reduced mowing and maintenance costs.

In response to this feedback, invertebrates have now been incorporated into the Plan including an invertebrate community monitoring program supporting the inclusion of key species monitoring within each landscape

2.7 URBAN NATURE EQUITY AND “NATURE POOR” AREAS

The plan acknowledges areas that are "nature poor" and states "all residents should be able to experience and benefit from access to nature, regardless of where they live.... but then only provides vague treatment. As an anecdote, in Whittington/Newcomb, we recently experienced Newcomb Central Shopping Centre compliantly remove a significant volume of semi-mature native canopy from their car park. This did not require Council permission and resulted in loss of habitat and shade coverage in a large open asphalt area. It also deeply impacted members of the community who actively valued the integration of this green space into the shopping precinct.'

Feedback highlighted strong support for the inclusion of the concept of “nature poor” areas within the Plan. However, participants consistently noted that the term is not clearly defined and lacks supporting detail regarding how these areas will be identified, prioritised and improved over time.

There was a clear expectation that the Plan should more explicitly articulate what constitutes a nature poor area, including whether specific locations—particularly in the northern suburbs—should be identified. Participants also called

for the establishment of meaningful targets, minimum access standards, and monitoring approaches to track progress in addressing inequities in access to nature.

Many submissions emphasised the importance of strengthening actions in these areas. This included improving urban biodiversity outcomes through stronger planning controls, increasing canopy cover, and prioritising greening initiatives such as street tree planting, nature strips, gardens and school-based programs and nature stewards programs. Participants also highlighted the need to reduce barriers to participation in key programs, noting that cost, time and access to resources may limit involvement in lower-income areas. More broadly, feedback indicated that while the Plan acknowledges inequity in access to nature, it does not yet clearly demonstrate how this inequity will be addressed or how a broader cross-section of the community will be supported to experience and benefit from nature.

In response, the Plan has been refined to strengthen its focus on urban nature equity and the importance of improving access to nature for all residents, regardless of where they live or their level of ability.

Further work will be undertaken to better define and identify nature poor areas, including consideration of environmental, access and socio-economic factors. While recognising that many of these areas are not located near existing biolinks, the Plan acknowledges the need for complementary approaches to improving nature access in urban environments.

Collaborative actions through this Plan and the City's new *Open Space Strategy* (draft) and *Urban Forest Strategy* (draft) will identify opportunities to improve urban biodiversity outcomes and access to nature in these locations.

The Plan also strengthens its commitment to supporting participation in nature-based programs and initiatives, with consideration to reducing barriers to access for lower-income communities. Further detail on targets, delivery mechanisms and monitoring will be developed through implementation planning to enable the City to track progress in addressing urban nature inequity over time.

2.8 IMPACT OF LIGHT AND NOISE POLLUTION

There is no mention nor recognition of the impact that Light Pollution is having on Biodiversity. There is no mention of the Federal Governments Guidelines for Reducing Light Pollution for Wildlife, or recognising the work of the Biodiversity Council also working on reducing light pollution.

Consultation feedback highlighted a strong concern that the Plan did not adequately recognise or address the impacts of light pollution on biodiversity. Participants consistently described this as a significant omission, noting that artificial light at night can disrupt migration pathways, alter habitats, and contribute to increased mortality, with some submissions explicitly stating there was "no mention nor recognition" of its effects and calling for clearer acknowledgement of these well documented impacts. Noise pollution was also raised as a related issue, although less prominently, with concerns about its potential to disturb wildlife and degrade habitat quality. In response to this feedback, the Plan has been updated to include more information and an associated action addressing the impacts of light and noise on biodiversity, strengthening the Plan's approach to managing environmental pressures on species and habitats.

2.9 MANAGEMENT OF DOMESTIC ANIMALS (CATS AND DOGS)

There may be a need to allocate some new off-lead dog zones in new suburbs to cater for the explosion in dog numbers. Dog owners should have targeted campaigns to improve their understanding of their legal obligations and the impacts of dogs on natural areas and wildlife.

Consultation feedback identified strong concern regarding the impacts of domestic animals, particularly cats and dogs, on native wildlife. Participants highlighted predation and disturbance pressures associated with free-roaming cats and off-leash dogs, and there was broad support for stronger controls.

Many submissions called for expanded cat curfews and increased cat containment, including suggestions for a 24-hour curfew. Feedback also emphasised the need for improved compliance with dog leash requirements, particularly in natural areas, with some Participants advocating for restrictions on dog access in highly sensitive locations.

In response to this feedback, the Plan reinforces the importance of responsible pet ownership as a key component of biodiversity protection. The existing municipal cat curfew, requiring cats to be confined from dusk to dawn, will remain in place consistent with the *Domestic Animal Management Plan 2026–29*.

The City will prioritise behaviour change approaches that support voluntary containment, including reduced registration fees for cats that are contained to their property at all times, and targeted community education to promote the benefits of containment for both pets and wildlife.

Recognising that improved outcomes rely on community awareness and compliance, the City will strengthen education and engagement initiatives to support responsible pet ownership.

The Plan also includes actions to manage the impacts of dogs in high-value biodiversity areas. The City will continue to improve compliance and education, advocate for no dog zones in areas of high ecological sensitivity and strengthen management within Council-managed nature reserves.

2.10 INVASIVE SPECIES MANAGEMENT

Our backyards were once a haven for our tiny native bird species. Their comfortable and safe habitats have been taken over by the voracious Indian Myna.

Consultation feedback highlighted strong concern regarding the increasing presence of invasive species, particularly the Indian Myna bird, which is widely perceived as a significant threat to native wildlife. Participants consistently described the species as aggressive and highly competitive, noting impacts on native birds through displacement from nesting sites and direct harm.

Several submissions identified the management of Indian Mynas as a gap in current biodiversity efforts, with calls for a more proactive and coordinated response. This included requests for Council-led eradication programs, access to trapping resources, and increased public education to support community action.

In response to this feedback, the Plan has been strengthened on invasive species management, including the addition of a new action specifically addressing Indian Mynas. While recognising that control of established invasive species is

complex and requires sustained effort, the City will take a more active role in managing impacts within its own natural areas.

The City will also explore opportunities to support coordinated community responses and provide guidance where feasible. This will be supported by engagement with the community to build shared understanding and identify practical and effective pathways forward.

2.11 IMPLEMENTATION, FUNDING AND ACCOUNTABILITY

A stronger implementation framework. The Plan should include: timelines, responsible departments, performance indicators, public reporting requirements and consequences for non-delivery.

A consistent and strongly expressed theme across submissions is concern that the Plan may remain aspirational without clear and credible delivery mechanisms. While participants broadly support the vision and direction of the Plan, many emphasised the need to shift from strategy to implementation, with a stronger focus on how outcomes will be achieved in practice.

A central issue raised is the lack of clarity around funding and resourcing. Participants frequently noted that, without firm and transparent financial commitments, the Plan risks lacking credibility and may not deliver meaningful on-ground outcomes. There were repeated calls for long-term funding allocations that are proportionate to the scale of the Plan's ambition, including clearer indications of how investment will be sourced and sustained over time. Some participants suggested that specifying funding commitments—such as a proportion of rates or dedicated budget allocations—would strengthen accountability and demonstrate organisational commitment. The importance of resourcing was also linked to staffing capacity, with participants noting that ongoing personnel and technical capability are essential to effective implementation.

Closely related to this is a perceived gap in the Plan's implementation framework. Participants highlighted limited detail regarding timelines, sequencing of actions, and allocation of responsibilities. There is a strong expectation that the Plan clearly articulates who is accountable for delivery, how actions will be prioritised, and over what timeframe they will be delivered. This includes embedding biodiversity outcomes across multiple Council functions, such as planning, infrastructure and water management, to ensure a coordinated and integrated approach rather than siloed delivery.

Governance and accountability mechanisms were also identified as an area requiring further strengthening. Submissions emphasised the need for clear roles and responsibilities, supported by robust governance structures to oversee delivery. In particular, stakeholders are seeking more explicit accountability for outcomes, ensuring that commitments made within the Plan are tracked and reported against.

There is also a strong call for comprehensive monitoring, evaluation and reporting frameworks. Participants emphasised the importance of establishing measurable performance indicators and targets to track progress over time. Regular and transparent public reporting was viewed as critical to maintaining community trust and demonstrating progress. Importantly, stakeholders expect that monitoring results will not only report on performance but also inform adaptive management, including adjustments to priorities and future funding allocation.

Finally, several submissions highlighted the importance of strengthening regulatory and policy mechanisms to support delivery. There is a clear view that strategic intent alone will not be sufficient without enforceable planning controls and integration into statutory frameworks. Effective implementation is therefore seen as reliant on a combination of policy, regulation, funding and operational delivery tools.

Overall, stakeholders are seeking a Plan for Nature that is not only visionary, but also practical, funded and accountable—one that provides a clear pathway to achieving tangible biodiversity outcomes.

In response to consultation feedback, the implementation and monitoring sections of the Plan have been strengthened. Effective governance and delivery of the Plan will rely on a combination of long-term and annual monitoring, supported by regular evaluation. This approach will enable actions to be refined, better targeted, and continuously improved over time.

The City is committed to maintaining a robust Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and Improvement (MERI) framework to guide implementation and track progress. The shorter-term Action Plan will be reviewed and updated every two years on a rolling basis to ensure it remains responsive and effective. The broader Plan will undergo a major review every 10 years. Progress towards the Plan's higher-level 10-year strategic outcomes will be evaluated at the end of the Plan's life in 2036, informing the next iteration of the Plan.

2.12 QUALITY OF MAPS AND FUTURE BIODIVERSITY MAPPING

A useful addition to the Plan would be a map showing existing areas under indigenous vegetation. Bellarine Landcare Group has over many years kept records of restored and revegetated sites. Such a map would give a better idea of existing and potential connectivity. A good 45 years of mostly indigenous planting on my own property, for example, is not shown at all.

Many participants were dissatisfied with the quality, scale and usability of maps in the draft Plan. The Biolinks Area Map in particular lacked detail, resolution and clarity, making it difficult to interpret.

Stakeholders also identified gaps in mapping, including missing remnant vegetation, wetlands, large old trees, restoration areas and long-term revegetation sites on private land. There were strong calls for improved landscape-scale mapping, clearer labelling, and additional layers such as indigenous revegetation. Suggestions also included expanding inland biolinks and exploring links with walking and cycling corridors. Some participants acknowledged that producing more detailed mapping would take time.

Mapping has been improved in the final Plan, including reformatting the Biolink Areas into individual A4 maps by landscape. The Plan now includes 18 maps. The City is also progressing interactive online mapping, which will allow users to view and navigate biodiversity data in more detail. Ongoing mapping improvements will prioritise gaps identified through consultation, including additional remnant vegetation, wetlands and significant trees. New layers—such as indigenous revegetation, key species and insect monitoring—will also be progressively incorporated, along with future opportunities to demonstrate improvements to habitat connectivity at a landscape scale.

3 Conclusion/Next Steps

The Plan has been updated in response to the extensive consultation feedback. It will now proceed to Council for consideration and endorsement at the Council meeting on 28 July 2026.

A summary version of the Plan will be produced, with the full, detailed Plan available on our website.

The City would like to thank the more than 350 participants and community groups who completed the online survey and provided detailed and thoughtful written submissions, as well as the nearly 200 people we spoke with during the engagement process.

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CUSTOMER SERVICE CENTRE

Wurriki Nyal
137-149 Mercer Street, Geelong
8.00am – 5.00pm

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2.3. Draft Urban Forest Strategy: Healthy Country 2026-2036

Source: Growth & Place
Interim Executive Director: Jacqueline Randles

Purpose

1. To seek Council endorsement for the Draft Urban Forest Strategy – Healthy Country 2026-2036 (Attachment 1) to commence a period of four weeks community consultation.

Background

2. The City has prepared a Draft Urban Forest Strategy - Healthy Country 2026-2036 (the Draft Strategy) in response to Council Resolution of July 2025 to update the existing Urban Forest Strategy 2015-2025. The Strategy sets the future direction for tree canopy and urban greening across the City of Greater Geelong and is seeking Council endorsement prior to a community consultation process (Attachment 1).
3. The Strategy is aligned to Council's commitment to trees as outlined in:
 - 3.1. The 30-year community vision of the Greater Geelong: A Clever and Creative Future for the Greater Geelong region - recognises the uniqueness and significance of our natural environments;
 - 3.2. Our Council Plan 2025-29 - Environment and Circular Economy - commits to protect and enhance our unique natural environment and surrounds; and
 - 3.3. Environment Strategy 2020-30 - contains multiple actions to meet the goal of protecting, enhancing, and restoring the regions biodiversity by 2030.
4. The Draft Strategy will undergo four weeks of community consultation and is scheduled to return to Council for adoption late 2026.

Key Matters

5. The Draft Strategy provides a clear, long-term framework to guide how Council plans, delivers and manages tree canopy and urban greening across the municipality. It is an update of the Urban Forest Strategy 2015-2025.
6. The Draft Strategy establishes a strategic approach to increasing canopy cover, improving climate resilience, and enhancing liveability by identifying where planting should occur, how it can be delivered, and how it integrates with broader Council planning and infrastructure. It responds to increasing climate risks, population growth, and the need to accelerate canopy cover across the municipality.
7. The Draft Strategy includes actions to increase municipal canopy toward the 30% target through more strategic use of available planting space, stronger community partnerships, and improved coordination across Council programs.

Recommendation

That Council:

- 1. Endorses the Draft Urban Forest Strategy Healthy Country 2026-2036 (Attachment 1) to be released for a four-week period of community consultation; and**
- 2. Notes a further report will be presented to Council following community consultation.**

Financial Sustainability

8. The Draft Strategy is designed to be delivered within existing resources and partnerships. The Strategy provides guidance for ongoing recurrent activities to ensure these maximise opportunities to add to the urban forest.
9. The 30% canopy coverage timeframe aligns with the City's long-term Clever and Creative Vision for 2047, providing an appropriate timescale to measure canopy growth appropriately, while also providing interim targets toward 2047.
10. Community Infrastructure Grant funding for planting programs ensure Community groups and partnerships are engaged to deliver increased planting.

Community Engagement

11. Extensive community engagement has been undertaken for Trees on Private Land and the Plan for Nature, which has been considered in preparing the Draft Strategy.
12. The Draft Urban Forest Strategy: Healthy Country will be available for feedback for 4 weeks on the City's Have Your Say page. During the 4-week period, social media and media releases will be used to promote the Have Your Say page for community feedback and direct emails to key stakeholders will also be undertaken.

Social Equity and Sustainability

13. The Draft Strategy supports social equity by improving access to greener, cooler, and more liveable environments, particularly in areas of higher vulnerability, which can be delivered sooner with appropriate funding allocation. The draft advances sustainability outcomes through increased urban canopy.

Gender Equality – Gender+ Impact Assessment

14. A gender impact assessment (GIA) was not undertaken for the Draft Strategy. However, it recognises the impact of low canopy and shade in low socio-economic areas which has an indirect impact on gender, specifically urban heat island impacts and health and well-being. The GIA will be explored as a key assessment tool over the life of the Strategy.

Relevant Law/Policy/Legal Implications

15. The Draft Strategy is guided by conventions, legislation, strategies, and policies at the State, and local level. A detailed listing is available under the Policy Context section in the Draft Strategy.

Alignment to Council Plan and Vision

16. This report aligns with the Council Plan 2025-29 strategic priority:
Environment and Circular Economy.
Healthy and Caring Community.
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.
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 and Risk Appetite Statement

19. The Urban Forest Strategy serves as a key instrument to mitigate Council's strategic risk "Natural Environment – Council may contribute to or fail to prevent the degradation or loss of Geelong's natural environment". Its endorsement will actively participate to mitigating this strategic risk. It will also assist in mitigating risks related to Climate Change.
20. The Urban Forest Strategy aligns with the balanced appetite for environmental risks as it aims to improve tree canopy while managing growth. Initiatives are generally funded through existing business-as-usual activities with the exploration of grant funding to expand initiatives, meeting the cautious appetite for financial risks.

Environmental Sustainability

21. The Urban Forest Strategy supports both climate mitigation and adaptation by increasing urban canopy, which contributes to carbon sequestration, reduces urban heat, retaining water within landscapes after extreme rainfall events and improves resilience to climate risks.
22. The proposal is expected to deliver reductions in energy consumption by lowering urban temperatures and reducing cooling demand for households. Water use will be a key consideration, with an emphasis on integrating stormwater harvesting and water sensitive urban design to support efficient irrigation and improve stormwater quality.
23. The Draft Strategy will provide positive outcomes for natural habitats through increased biodiversity, improved ecological connectivity, and enhanced urban ecosystems while also improving amenity, and health and well-being for the greater community.

Attachments

1. Draft Urban Forest Strategy Healthy Country 2026-2036 [2.3.1 - 26 pages]

THE CITY OF
GREATER GEELONG

URBAN FOREST STRATEGY: HEALTHY COUNTRY

2026-2036

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Executive summary

GROWTH, EQUITY, RESILIENCE

Trees are on the job for us, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, working to improve our local neighbourhoods, our wellbeing and helping mitigate impacts of our changing climate. Our vision is for an expanding urban forest that not only grows canopy cover but also nurtures the full character of a forest – a whole system that provides shade, habitat, and connection to nature.

Cities all over, are looking to nature-based solutions to strengthen the resilience of the environment and our neighbourhoods. Trees and plants are no longer just a nice to have – they're essential urban infrastructure making our city a great place to live. They keep us cool in the summer heat, mitigate flooding, and support our health and wellbeing every day.

In 2015 we adopted our first urban forest strategy, which established a framework for strategic management of our urban trees and set ambitious targets to increase canopy cover. Since then, we have seen canopy cover increase across our region from 14 per cent to 17 per cent planting more than 50,000 new trees. While these achievements lay a strong foundation, it's not the finish line. As the City changes and develops, our urban forest must change with it and evolve to meet our future needs and challenges.

The *Urban Forest Strategy: Healthy Country* continues the direction of, and updates to, our priorities and actions. It forms a key component of the City of Greater Geelong's response to a changing climate and integrates with our other City plans to deliver our goal of 30 per cent canopy cover and a resiliently greener, greater Geelong.

Why? The strategy in a nutshell

The *Urban Forest Strategy: Healthy Country* focuses on the growth and long-term care of trees and plants across both public and private land. Its goal is to expand canopy cover and strengthen the understory throughout Greater Geelong, creating a healthier, cooler and more resilient landscape. More trees help lower temperatures, retain moisture in soils, improve air and water quality and reduce flood risk. Shaded, greener places and corridors are also far more inviting - people are more likely to walk, ride, rest and spend time in cool, comfortable open spaces.

Urban forests provide strong economic and social returns as well: for every \$1 invested in trees, communities receive around \$4 in benefits through improved mental health, productivity and local amenity (*Priority Urban Greening Analysis - Mosaic Insights*). By delivering the actions outlined in this strategy, our whole community can help build a more resilient landscape to the impacts of a changing climate while enhancing the liveability of our neighbourhoods, supporting our wellbeing and sustaining Greater Geelong's diverse plant and animal life.

This update of the *Urban Forest Strategy: Healthy Country* is driven by three key factors: growing community demand for greener neighbourhoods, the needs and pressures of Greater Geelong's future growth, and strengthened expectations set by state policy and City's own strategic commitments.

COMMUNITY CONTEXT

The community has played a big part in shaping Geelong's vision for a greener city. From the first *Urban Forest Strategy 2015–2025* to the *Climate Change Response Plan 2021–2030*, the *Environment Strategy 2020–30*, and the Plan for Nature, as well as discussions about trees on private property, people have consistently told us they want more trees, more shade, and more green spaces across Greater Geelong.

Our *Council Plan 2025–29* builds on this message with a clear objective: *to protect and enhance our unique and beautiful natural environment* while helping our community adapt to a changing climate. This shared ambition is already being recognised with Greater Geelong named a *Tree City of the World* for the third year in a row to 2025, one of only 11 cities in Australia named. To earn this recognition, we meet five international standards of taking clear responsibility for our trees, having a strong management policy and up-to-date tree inventory, dedicating an annual tree budget, and celebrating trees with the community each year.

While this is something to be proud of, creating a cooler, greener, and more connected Geelong can't be done by the City alone. The success of our urban forest depends on all of us, residents, schools, community groups, and businesses, working together to plant, protect, and care for the trees and plants that make our city a healthier, more beautiful place to live.

WADAWURRUNG VALUES

Wadawurrung people are the Traditional Owners of this region and are today represented by the Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation (WTOAC). For thousands of generations, Wadawurrung people have cared for Country. In Wadawurrung knowledge, the coast, wetlands, grassy and volcanic plains of the **Dja** (Country) were formed by Bundjil the Eagle, the Ancestor Creator. The name "Geelong" comes from the Wadawurrung word for the region "Djilang" which means "tongue of land"^[1].

Wadawurrung culture and livelihoods are deeply connected to the region's biodiversity, with dja (land) and warre (sea) Country seen as one. The inland plains, waterways, coast and warre Country provided abundant food, shelter, medicine and clothing to sustain thousands of generations of Wadawurrung people.

^[1] City of Greater Geelong (2025) Reconciliation Action Plan - Wadawurrung Aboriginal history. URL: (<https://www.geelongaustralia.com.au/>) (Accessed 18 December 2025).

The Statewide Treaty Bill was introduced in October 2025. Victorian traditional owners and the State have worked together to ensure traditional owners play a lead role in managing and protecting land, natural resources and cultural heritage. The Urban Forest Strategy aims to support the intentions of Treaty by recognising the role and authority of Wadawurrung Traditional Owners. The City recognises the State Government's responsibilities under the Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006, the Conservation, Forests and Lands Act 1987 and the Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010 and will endeavour to maintain open dialogue and consultation with Wadawurrung Traditional Owners to established cultural stewardship and appropriate action throughout the life of the strategy.

CHALLENGES

The City of Greater Geelong is defined by its remarkable variety of landscapes. Greater Geelong is home to dense city streets, established neighbourhoods, fast growing peri-urban corridors, productive farmland, rural and seaside towns, world renown wetlands and a coastline that stretches from Avalon to Barwon Heads. We are one of the most unique local governments in the country.

Although we have room to grow, increasing competition for space requires balancing canopy and understory growth with urban development pressures. In 2025, our population stands at 299,735 and is projected to grow to about 442,000 by 2047.

Space to accommodate planting is in competition with limited publicly available land underground infrastructure such as electricity, water and the National Broadband Network. Adequate maintenance funding that's in lockstep with acquired land also constrains greening outcomes.

Images (c) and (d) illustrate that higher residential density and single-dwelling renovation (or construction of new dwellings) can reduce backyard space, vegetation and canopy. This results in larger areas covered by impervious surfaces, and less potential habitat for flora and fauna (source: Nearmap).



(c) 2009



(d) 2018

Images (e) and (f) show a redevelopment of four allotments with four detached dwellings to yield 12 dwellings – a gain of eight dwellings. However, there is a corresponding loss of significant vegetation cover, an almost complete loss of canopy and potential habitat, and a gain in impervious surfaces (source: Nearmap).



(e) 2010



(f) 2018

Figure 1. Change in green space over time

Additionally, inequitable canopy distribution means vulnerable communities often experience higher heat stress and reduced access to green space. Addressing these challenges requires integrated planning and stronger cross-team collaboration, as well as, and most critically, improved community participation in plantings.

Geelong hotspots



Figure 2. Known urban heat spots due to lack of canopy coverage

BENEFITS

Urban forests deliver multiple benefits; reducing that debilitating and prolonged heat in summer, decreasing the impacts of intense rainfall, improving habitat for smaller mammals, insects, and birds, and helps us mentally through connections into nature.

Canopy cover reduces street-level temperatures by up to 8°C in heavily concreted urban areas. Through its shade, it can lower air conditioner use in summer by 12-15 per cent and can increase property values by up to 10 per cent.

An urban forest improves the enjoyment and accessibility for all of us to better use our open spaces, parks and gardens, which in turn, helps our health and wellbeing, all while supporting our wildlife.

The Urban Forest Strategy strongly aligns with Wadawurrung's *Healthy Country*: a holistic concept reflecting the deep, spiritual connection between Wadawurrung and Country, where the land's health is directly linked to people's health, community strength, and spirit. For Wadawurrung caring for country is fundamental to the duty of life linking beginning of creation to infinite future, alive with ancestors and descendants. It embodies the idea that by caring for Country, its lands and waters, the Wadawurrung and all peoples will in turn be cared for, fostering wellbeing and resilience.





Figure 3. Benefits of Urban Greening

POLICY CONTEXT

The Urban Forest Strategy builds on the foundation established through the *Urban Forest Strategy 2015–2025*, which coordinated tree planting and canopy growth across Greater Geelong. Since its adoption, state, regional and national policy settings have evolved, placing stronger emphasis on urban cooling, climate resilience and nature-based solutions.

This updated strategy aligns with Victorian Government planning and climate frameworks that establish a clear direction toward achieving 30 per cent urban canopy cover and embedding green infrastructure within urban development while also aligning with the City's *Council Plan 2025-29*.

State and Regional Policy Alignment

State planning policy now explicitly supports increased urban canopy and climate-responsive design. Key policy drivers include:

- **Clause 12.06-1S (Urban Tree Canopy)** – establishes a strategic direction toward achieving an overall 30% tree canopy target in urban areas, encouraging retention of existing trees and planting of new canopy trees in both public and private realms.
- **Clause 52.37 (Canopy Trees)** – protects significant canopy trees in residential zones, requiring a planning permit for removal and strengthening retention outcomes on private land.
- **Clause 15.01-2L (Environmentally Sustainable Development)** – supports urban cooling, integrated water management and climate resilience through sustainable settlement planning.
- **Clause 15.01-3 (Subdivision Design)** – promotes subdivision layouts and infrastructure that enable long-term tree establishment and adequate soil volumes.
- **Clause 15.01-4S (Healthy Neighbourhoods)** – reinforces the role of canopy in shade, walkability, thermal comfort and community wellbeing.
- **Clause 56.07 (Stormwater Management)** – supports water-sensitive urban design outcomes that contribute to cooling and habitat enhancement.

These provisions collectively reinforce the requirement to protect mature canopy, increase new tree planting, and embed green infrastructure within development and infrastructure delivery.

Legislative and Strategic Framework

The Strategy aligns with:

- **Local Government Act 2020** – requiring long-term planning and sustainable service delivery
- **Climate Change Act 2017 (Vic)** – embedding climate adaptation and emissions reduction in decision-making
- **Plan Melbourne 2017–2050** – promoting urban greening and climate-resilient settlement
- **National Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy 2021–2025**
- **Nature Positive Plan (2022)**
- **Trees for Cooler and Greener Streetscapes (DELWP 2019)**

These frameworks establish canopy expansion and ecological restoration as core components of climate adaptation and liveability.

Water and Integrated Infrastructure Policy

Urban canopy expansion is supported by integrated water management and stormwater policy, including:

- EPA Urban Stormwater Guidelines (2021)
- Northern and Western Growth Areas Integrated Water Management Strategy (2021)

These documents promote stormwater retention, reuse and 'harvest-ready' infrastructure, creating opportunities to support passive irrigation, green infrastructure and urban cooling.

Local Policy Integration

This strategy ensures alignment with the City's internal policy framework, including:

- *Council Plan 2025–2029*
- *Environment Strategy 2020–2030*
- *Climate Change Response Plan 2021–2030*
- Plan for Nature
- Open Space Strategy (draft)
- Climate Change Adaptation Policy for Stormwater Hydrology (draft)
- *Asset Plan 2022–2035*

Embedding these policies across the organisation ensures that precinct structure plans, open space strategies, capital works and planting programs consistently support achievement of the 30% canopy target.

Forest structure: Canopy + Understory

WHAT IS AN URBAN FOREST?

An urban forest includes all vegetation across public and private land — trees, shrubs, groundcovers, climbers, wetlands, green roofs and green walls. Together, these layers create a living infrastructure network that cools the city, helps to manage stormwater, improves biodiversity, supports walkability, and strengthens climate resilience.

A water-sensitive approach underpins the entire urban forest: a healthy long-lived urban forest relies on maximising stormwater capture and reuse and passive irrigation and healthy sub- surface environments and enhanced soil volumes. This ensures the urban forest grows not only in quantity, but in quality and is resilient to sudden or gradual changes in the environment.

CANOPY

Canopy is the upper layer of our urban forest—the broad sweep of leaves and branches that shades our streets, cools hard surfaces, intercepts rainfall and creates habitat for birds and other wildlife. As Geelong grows and our climate continues to warm, expanding this leafy layer is one of the most cost-effective ways the City can improve comfort, resilience and liveability across neighbourhoods.

To strengthen and expand the canopy, the City will focus on planting trees where they are needed most particularly in heat-vulnerable suburbs, busy activity centres and rapidly developing growth areas. Each year, 2,400 advanced trees will continue to be planted to improve shade and cooling benefits from the outset, with increased funding recommended to meet 30 per cent canopy coverage targets by 2047.



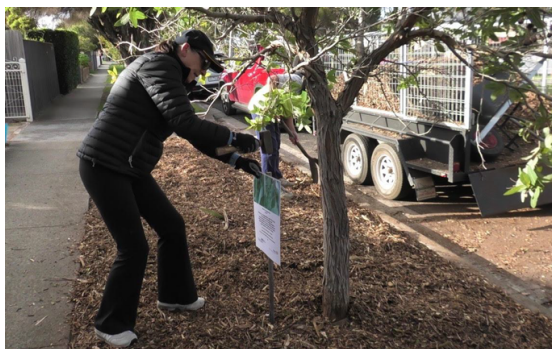
Supporting canopy growth also means shaping the conditions beneath the ground. Updated engineering standards and stormwater strategies will increase soil volumes, improve root space and make greater use of passive irrigation, allowing trees to capture stormwater naturally and better withstand periods of drought.

Planning controls at the state level, particularly Clause 52.37 in the Victoria Planning Provisions under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*, will embed stronger requirements for tree protection and the use of large-growing species in new developments, ensuring that as Geelong expands the canopy grows with it. Priority planting sites within drainage corridors and road reserves will further enhance water access for trees, making our urban forest healthier, more resilient, and better connected across the city.

UNDERSTORY

Beneath the canopy, the understory brings richness and texture to the urban forest. Shrubs, grasses, groundcovers and climbers add layers of habitat that support insects, pollinators, small birds and other wildlife. These plantings stabilise soil, retain moisture, reduce erosion and contribute to the visual character of streets and open spaces. A thriving understory strengthens the entire ecosystem helping trees establish, which in turn improves soil conditions and enhances the resilience of the landscape.

To grow this vital layer, the City will expand biodiversity-rich plantings across parks, reserves, waterway corridors and key streetscapes. Through community led programs, nature strips will increasingly transition from simple turf to biodiverse planting. Many of these plantings will be located within natural stormwater infiltration zones, allowing understory vegetation to make use of available moisture and thrive through hotter, drier periods.



Community participation is central to this transformation. Education programs, social media campaigns, and partnerships with community organisations renowned for their conservation and planting projects will help residents understand, adopt and care for understory plantings in their own neighbourhoods.

Together, a healthy canopy and understory create a layered, water-responsive urban ecosystem; one that provides shade, habitat, cooling, and enduring climate resilience for a growing, Greater Geelong.

INTEGRATING URBAN FORESTS WITH INTEGRATED WATER MANAGEMENT

As Greater Geelong grows, the health of our urban forest increasingly depends on how well we manage water across the city. A resilient canopy and thriving understory don't exist in isolation, they are shaped by the landscapes that support them and by the way water moves through our streets, reserves, and neighbourhoods. For this reason, the City's approach to canopy expansion and understory enrichment is deliberately aligned with the principles of Integrated Water Management (IWM). This ensures that every new tree, shrub, or groundcover is supported not only by soil and space, but by thoughtful water availability across its lifespan.

Healthy canopy trees require consistent moisture to establish strong roots, while understory plants play a vital role in stabilising soil, improving infiltration and



filtering stormwater. Together, they form living green infrastructure that cools neighbourhoods, protects our waterways and bay, and contributes to a more climate-resilient city. By embedding water-sensitive urban design into planting practice, the City strengthens both the ecological function and long-term survival of its green assets.

Across Greater Geelong, this approach is becoming visible in a range of interventions that subtly reshape the way water is captured and used in the landscape. Passive irrigation systems redirect rainfall from roads and footpaths into the root zones of canopy trees. These systems can reduce the need for active irrigation by up to 70 per cent, making them particularly valuable for large shade trees in high-heat suburbs.



Along key walking and cycling corridors, rain gardens and vegetated swales slow and capture runoff helping young trees and shrubs establish during hotter, drier months. In larger landscapes, our world-renowned wetlands, as well as retarding basins and creek corridors play an important role in enhancing biodiversity, extending habitat networks, and contribute to broader cooling across suburbs.

This integration of canopy and water systems is already being demonstrated in Greater Geelong's emerging precincts. In Armstrong Creek, for example, stormwater is first managed through wetlands and retarding basins to reduce flood risk and improve water quality. Increasing infiltration in the landscape through good design and use of swales and other passive irrigation designs, stormwater and also recycled water can be increasingly used to irrigate sports reserves, parks and linear open spaces. Over the longer term, precinct-scale water harvesting and recycled-water networks are planned to provide more reliable irrigation across the landscape, supporting the establishment of canopy trees, understory plantings and climate-resilient public spaces.

By aligning tree planting with the way water is captured, stored, and reused, the City is building an urban forest that is not only larger, but designed smarter to thrive under a changing climate and to deliver multiple community benefits. This foundation sets the scene for the next chapter in our strategy: moving forward, how we grow, connect, and care for Greater Geelong's urban forest in the decades ahead.

Where are we up to?

Since the adoption of the current strategy, the City has made measurable progress towards its goals. Prior to 2015, the City managed around 120,000 urban trees across streetscapes, rural roads, waterways, parks and reserves. Since the establishment of the *Urban Forest Strategy* in 2015, the City has increased our tree population to over 190,000 trees to deliver a 3 per cent increase of canopy with more than 70,000 new trees across streets, parks and reserves. This figure, however, does not include the number of trees and plants planted in nature reserves and by community volunteer groups, other agencies and organisations and residents so the likely figure is higher. Addressing this gap in data will be a focus of this *Urban Forest Strategy* update.

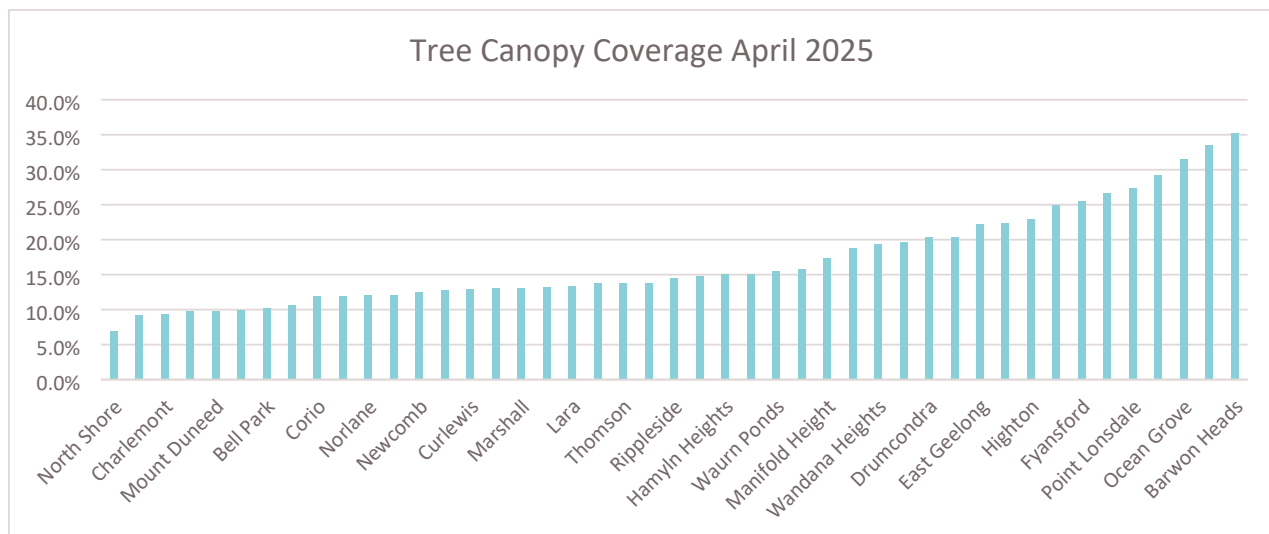


Figure 4. Tree canopy coverage April 2025

KEEPING IT LOCAL: WHERE DOES THE URBAN FOREST STRATEGY FIT?

Greater Geelong's nature reserves and open spaces currently form a patchwork of green space. The Urban Forest Strategy aims to link these spaces and create an interconnected green network. Whether it be the *Plan for Nature*, *Public Realm Strategy* or *Open Space Strategy*, each plays a distinctive role, but neither achieves its full potential without the other. The *Open Space Strategy* provides the structure: the



parks, reserves, play spaces, sporting fields, linear corridors and waterfront areas that shape how people move, recreate, gather and experience Greater Geelong. It defines the hierarchy of spaces, establishes accessibility and quality standards, and ensures every community has access to well-designed, functional and welcoming places.

The *Urban Forest Strategy*, by contrast, provides the life within that structure. It shapes the trees, understory, groundcovers, cooling corridors, habitat systems, water-sensitive landscapes and street-level greening that make these open spaces thrive. Where the *Open Space Strategy* asks, '*what does this place do for people?*', the Urban Forest Strategy asks, '*how can nature make this place healthier, cooler and more resilient?*'

Together, they form a mutually reinforcing system. Importantly, the *Urban Forest Strategy* is not limited to parks alone. It is a whole-of-community strategy, connecting the public realm, private gardens, nature reserves, biodiversity corridors, drainage networks, streetscapes, new growth areas and established suburbs into one coherent green system. In doing so, it helps the ambitions of the *Plan for Nature*, which emphasises the importance of ecological connectivity, habitat health, Indigenous knowledge and community stewardship across Greater Geelong. Where Plan for Nature identifies the ecological values and conservation priorities of Greater Geelong, the Urban Forest Strategy operationalises these values across everyday places in front yards, nature strips, local parks, stormwater corridors, school grounds, commercial centres and neighbourhood streets.

An urban forest is not only its trees, but the spaces between them, the understory that shelters birds and insects, the green verges that link streets, the drainage corridors that become habitat pathways, and the canopy that cools entire neighbourhoods. By weaving these elements together, the strategy creates a continuous green network that links open spaces and nature reserves into a functioning urban ecosystem. This network supports biodiversity, encourages movement of wildlife, improves walkability, reduces heat stress, and enhances the health and wellbeing of residents.

In this way, the *Urban Forest Strategy* sits alongside and interlocks with the *Open Space Strategy* and the *Plan for Nature*, each playing a distinct and complementary role in shaping the city's landscape. The *Open Space Strategy* focuses on the provision, accessibility and function of public open spaces where people gather, play, rest and connect. The *Plan for Nature* prioritises biodiversity outcomes, including habitat creation, ecological and social connectivity and the protection and enhancement of native flora and fauna across urban and natural environments. The *Urban Forest Strategy* integrates these objectives by prioritising tree canopy and understory across streets, verges, car parks, drainage reserves and other under-utilised urban spaces that sit outside the primary scope of open space and conservation planning, but delivers shade, cooling, habitat and climate resilience. Together, these strategies create a Greater Geelong landscape that is greener, healthier, more inclusive and more resilient to climate and weather stressors—where open spaces are not only functional but flourishing, streets function as green corridors, and communities are supported to care for a thriving urban ecosystem.

Moving forward – Our future forest

As Greater Geelong continues to grow and adapt to a changing climate, it has become increasingly clear that our urban forest is far more than the sum of its trees. While canopy cover remains a critical component providing shade, cooling, carbon sequestration, and iconic character, focusing solely on canopy trees provides only a partial picture of the living systems that support a healthy, resilient city. For this reason, the updated strategy broadens the definition of the urban forest to recognise all layers of vegetation, including understory plants, shrubs, groundcovers, climbers, and the diverse forms of living green infrastructure found across both public and private land.

Expanding this definition reflects how natural ecosystems function. Healthy forests are multi-layered, from tall canopy to low shrubs and grasses contributing in unique and interconnected ways. This complexity builds resilience, supports biodiversity, enriches habitat, enhances soil health, and creates microclimates that people and wildlife rely on. By adopting a more ecological understanding of the urban forest, the strategy acknowledges the full range of vegetation that cools neighbourhoods, absorbs stormwater, and supports bees, insects and birds.

The broadened definition strengthens our ability to respond to climate change. While large canopy trees are irreplaceable in their cooling benefits, many parts of Greater Geelong particularly established, or heavily serviced urban areas are physically constrained and cannot always accommodate large canopy trees where new housing estates and contemporary homes can take up an entire lot. In these places, the public realm and canopy trees, understory planting, verge gardens, raingardens, green roofs, and other forms of green infrastructure become vital tools. They reduce radiant heat at street level, improve water infiltration, slow stormwater flows, and create greener, more appealing streetscapes. Recognising these contributions expands the range of interventions available to the City and the community and ensures every suburb has options to increase its greenery, even in tight or complex settings.

Importantly, this shift also brings Greater Geelong into alignment with contemporary best practice. Leading cities and global urban forest frameworks increasingly define urban forests as integrated systems rather than as isolated tree assets. By embracing this expanded definition, the strategy connects more naturally with City's work in biodiversity, water-sensitive urban design, open space planning, and climate adaptation. It also positions Greater Geelong to draw more effectively on state, federal, and philanthropic funding streams that prioritise holistic, nature-based solutions.

Equally significant is the recognition that most of Greater Geelong's green cover exists on private land. The broadened definition allows the strategy to better acknowledge and support the role of household gardens, nature strips, community-led plantings, and developer-led landscaping as essential components of the region's natural infrastructure. Residents increasingly plant native shrubs, pollinator gardens, edible landscapes, and groundcovers that collectively contribute meaningfully to local microclimates and ecological networks. By formally including these plantings in the urban forest, the strategy affirms community efforts and strengthens pathways for participation, partnership, and stewardship.

Together, this richer, more inclusive vision of the urban forest gives Greater Geelong a more realistic and powerful framework for building resilience. It captures everything that contributes to a thriving green city, from the tallest canopy trees to the smallest groundcover, and recognises that a truly healthy, climate-adapted urban environment relies on the diversity and interplay of all living layers.

The 30% canopy coverage timeframe aligns with the City's long-term *Clever and Creative Vision for 2047*, providing an appropriate timescale to measure canopy growth appropriately, while also providing interim targets toward 2047. Progress will be transparently tracked through a community-facing dashboard with updates each year, supported by a formal strategy review every five years in line with Council election cycles. Within the first five years of the strategy, our aim is to plant an extra 60,000 plants and trees, subject to additional funding. This approach ensures that urban greening is not only more environmentally effective, but also more equitable, achievable, and reflective of the way people and nature interact across the city's landscapes.

Funding recommendations

Funding required to deliver optimal outcomes is outlined below. To ensure we can remain on track to deliver on objectives and targets, programs and actions outlined in the Action Plan are scalable subject to funding availability.

Funding Recommendation	Description	Investment
Maintain and increase funding for planting, establishment and maintenance.	Annual budget to support 2,400 new trees p.a., watering, pruning and risk management. 5 per cent increase in planting numbers for the life of the 10-year action plan.	\$62,400 (p.a.)
Establish environmental capital works investment in municipal transport entrance corridors and community plantings.	Annual budget to support greening projects, e.g. entry points to Greater Geelong, stormwater-fed planting systems, precinct cooling corridors.	\$50,000 (p.a.)
Increase funding to existing community grants programs to support scaled, community-led planting.	Community and Council planting program aligned with the <i>Urban Forest Strategy</i> , including delivery toward a potential target of 15,000 plants and trees p.a. to 2036.	\$100,000 (p.a.)
Pursue state and federal grants.	Target grants for urban cooling, biodiversity, climate adaptation, water-sensitive design and resilience programs.	External (variable)
Private-land incentives (urban and rural).	Up to 50 rebates to support tree planting, rural conservation areas, agroforestry pilots, or Special Rates options.	\$1500-\$5000 per household
Invest in canopy mapping and tree asset systems.	GIS, or LiDAR, mapping, heat/soil monitoring, GIS and asset-management system integration, where appropriate.	\$20,000 every 3 years

Objective One: Urban greening and canopy expansion

CONTEXT: INCREASE CANOPY, BIODIVERSITY AND VEGETATION ACROSS AVAILABLE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SPACE

Objective one aims to accelerate the transformation of Geelong's urban landscape by increasing tree canopy and low-and-mid storey planting cover across all available public and private land. This objective recognises that urban greening is not just about planting more trees; it is about strategically activating overlooked, under-utilised, hard-surface, or perceived low-value sites and transitioning them into high-performing green infrastructure assets. These sites hold immense, often untapped potential to mitigate heat, improve amenity, manage stormwater, and strengthen climate resilience at the street, neighbourhood, city, and regional scale.

This objective seeks to integrate canopy and vegetation expansion into urban development, renewal, and maintenance. Embedding trees and understory planting into streetscapes, car parks, nature strips, drainage corridors, and community spaces, leveraging stormwater as a resource and enabling green infrastructure to actively support urban cooling, walkability, ecological connectivity, and long-term community wellbeing is key to unlocking the urban forest's potential. Through this approach, greening Greater Geelong strengthens the City's capacity to adapt to a changing climate while demonstrating the value of nature as essential infrastructure.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Achieve 30 per cent urban canopy cover across Greater Geelong by 2047.

- A sustained increase in total urban canopy cover across both public and private land, progressing toward 30 per cent by 2036
- Mature trees are retained, where appropriate, with structured succession planning ensuring generational canopy continuity.
- Urban canopy is systematically integrated into capital works, asset renewal programs, infrastructure upgrades and planning decisions.

Improve canopy distribution in heat-vulnerable suburbs and towns.

- Canopy cover is measurably increased in existing suburbs with low existing tree cover and high surface heat exposure.
- Pedestrian routes, activity centres, school precincts and transport corridors provide continuous and functional shade networks.
- Urban heat island intensity is reduced in priority locations through coordinated canopy expansion and cooling interventions, and are transparently monitored using spatial mapping, remote sensing and surface temperature data to inform adaptive management.

Growth areas are designed to achieve long-term canopy resilience.

- Precinct Structure Plans and subdivision designs embed canopy requirements that support long-term tree establishment and survival.
- Streetscapes and open space reserves provide adequate soil volumes, deep soil zones and water access to enable large-canopy species to reach maturity.
- New neighbourhoods are structurally capable of achieving substantial canopy cover within one to two generations.
- Remnant vegetation is protected and biodiversity corridors strengthened, contributing to ecological connectivity and climate resilience.

The city, community, and developers contribute upward of 15,000 trees, and mid-low storey plants, planted annually.

- Annual tree planting, including low-mid storey shrubbery, across public and private land consistently exceeds 15,000 trees, contributing to long-term canopy targets.
- Community, institutional and private landholders are active partners in urban greening programs.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- Developers deliver canopy outcomes aligned with municipal targets in new growth areas.
 - Species selection reflects diversity, climate suitability and long-term resilience, reducing vulnerability to pests, disease and climate stress.
-

TARGETS

- Increase overall municipal urban canopy cover to 30 per cent by 2047, with interim milestones set for 2030 and 2035.
- Increase canopy cover in identified heat-vulnerable suburbs by a minimum of 20 per cent above their 2024 baseline by 2035.
- Ensure all new growth areas are designed to achieve minimum 30% canopy cover at tree maturity, embedded within precinct structure planning and subdivision approvals.
- Achieve and sustain 15,000+ trees, including low-mid storey shrubbery, planted annually across public and private land.
- Maintain species diversity so that no single species represents more than 10% of the municipal tree population, improving climate resilience.
- Protect and retain significant trees by ensuring canopy loss is offset through replacement planting at a minimum 2:1 ratio, where removal is unavoidable on public land.
- Publish a municipal canopy report every five years to track progress, distribution equity, and heat reduction outcomes in-line with Council election cycles.

Objective Two: Urban innovation and green infrastructure integration

CONTEXT: INTEGRATION OF VEGETATION AND HABIT INTO THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT TO REDUCE HEAT, INCREASE BIODIVERSITY AND ENHANCE AMENITY

Objective two aims to embed vegetation, habitat and nature-positive design into the built environment, ensuring that buildings, streetscapes and public spaces actively contribute to cooling, biodiversity and urban amenity. As Greater Geelong densifies and experiences more frequent extreme heat and intense rainfalls, nature must become a core component of urban form, not an afterthought. This objective integrates canopy trees, habitat features and climate-responsive design into streets, activity centres and growth areas to improve ecological performance, reduce heat and enhance liveability. Large tree lined active transport corridors, minimum standards for new developments to ensure large canopy trees and 30 per cent canopy cover target is designed for more opportunities for vertical greening, water-sensitive design, habitat-rich façades, integrated passive irrigation, and climate-responsive materials all form part of a forward-looking approach that elevates ecological function and human comfort in urban places.

By empowering residents, schools, businesses, developers and community groups to participate in helping the City reach its target of 15,000 additional trees and plants each year to 2047, this objective strengthens local ownership, builds everyday capacity for urban greening, and ensures long-term maintenance and resilience of public and semi-public green spaces. Through collaboration, demonstration projects and accessible design tools, urban innovation and green infrastructure accelerates the shift from isolated plantings to a region network of living systems that support biodiversity, reduce heat and enhance the liveability of Geelong.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- Embed improved soil quality, adequate tree spacing and deep soil standards in the built environment to support canopy coverage of at least 30 per cent.
- Deliver tree-lined active transport corridors that provide continuous shade and habitat connectivity, where appropriate and practical.
- Integrate passive irrigation, water-sensitive urban design and structural soil systems into streetscapes and public spaces.
- Explore vertical greening and habitat-rich façades in activity centres and commercial precincts.
- Enable community, schools, businesses and developers to contribute toward 15,000 additional trees and plants annually.

TARGETS

- All new growth areas and major redevelopments designed to achieve minimum 30 per cent canopy cover at specified tree species maturity.
- Establish shaded active transport corridors by 2035 especially in new growth areas and road entry points into Geelong, in line with and in collaboration with the development of the Integrated Transport Strategy.
- Deliver passive irrigation or integrated WSUD solutions in priority streets and precincts by 2035.
- Achieve measurable surface temperature reductions in priority urban heat hotspots.
- Seek to increase vertical greening coverage (green walls/roofs), where possible.
- Maintain ≥85% three-year survival rate for trees planted within built-up urban environments.

Objective Three: Planning, policy and asset integration

CONTEXT: EMBED TREES AND GREENING INTO CITY SYSTEMS, DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORKS AND ASSET MANAGEMENT

Objective three aims to ensure that trees, vegetation and green infrastructure are embedded as core elements of City's planning, design, construction and asset management systems. This objective recognises that lasting urban greening outcomes depend on strong governance frameworks where greening is treated as essential infrastructure, protected through policy, and consistently prioritised across all stages of the development lifecycle. By integrating canopy and habitat requirements into planning controls, assessment, engineering standards and public realm and open space design guidelines, the City can secure long-term gains in shade, cooling, biodiversity and community amenity.

The purpose of this focus area is to create a seamless, organisation-wide approach to urban greening, one that aligns strategic intent with operational delivery. This includes maintaining existing tree protections, improving coordination across departments, embedding passive irrigation and nature-based solutions into capital works, and ensuring that green assets are valued, monitored and maintained over time. Through clear policy direction, consistent standards, and integrated asset systems, Planning, Policy and Asset Integration provides the enabling architecture that allows the whole organisation to deliver, protect and grow Greater Geelong's urban forest at scale.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- Embed canopy, habitat and green infrastructure requirements into precinct structure plans and development assessment.
- Maintain tree protection mechanisms to reduce avoidable canopy loss.
- Integrate green infrastructure and passive irrigation into capital works and infrastructure upgrades.
- Align planning, engineering, open space and asset management systems to support long-term canopy viability.
- Recognise trees and green infrastructure as essential assets within asset management frameworks.
- Improve internal coordination, monitoring and lifecycle management of green assets.

TARGETS

- Updated design guidelines that integrate best practice within 3 years to achieve medium to long-term canopy targets.
- Require all new Precinct Structure Plans to include the development of an Integrated Water Management Plan
- Explore green infrastructure integration into major capital works projects.
- Reduction in net canopy loss from development-related removals.
- Tree protection controls maintained as outlined in the Tree Management and Maintenance Plan.
- Green assets incorporated into corporate asset management systems with lifecycle costing.
- Organisation-wide canopy reporting integrated into annual performance reporting.

Objective Four: Monitoring, capability and long-term stewardship

CONTEXT: TRACK PROGRESS, MEASURE PERFORMANCE AND SUPPORT EVIDENCE-BASED PLANNING

Objective 4 ensures that urban forest performance is measured, reported and actively managed to support evidence-based planning and long-term canopy resilience. Achieving and sustaining 30% canopy requires ongoing measurement, adaptation and skilled stewardship. Without accurate data, transparent reporting and strong maintenance systems, canopy gains may be temporary or unevenly distributed.

This objective builds a robust evidence base that guides investment, tracks canopy health and biodiversity outcomes, measures heat mitigation and carbon sequestration, and strengthens staff and community capability. Through integrated monitoring systems and clear reporting, the City can ensure Greening Geelong delivers long-term climate resilience and liveability outcomes.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- Urban forest performance is measured, monitored and publicly reported.
- Data informs adaptive canopy investment and prioritisation.
- Integrated greening databases capture all public and private planting activity.
- Staff and volunteers are equipped to support long-term canopy health.
- Maintenance systems align with biodiversity, water efficiency and emissions reduction goals.
- Carbon sequestration from canopy expansion is accurately tracked and reported.

TARGETS

- Municipal canopy data updated and reported publicly at least every two years.
- Central greening database established capturing 100 per cent of City delivered plantings and progressively integrating developer and community data.
- Public-facing urban forest dashboard operational within three years.
- Monitor survival rate at three years across municipal plantings.
- Demonstrated reduction in turf maintenance area and associated operational emissions.
- Annual reporting of estimated carbon sequestration from canopy expansion.

Action Plan

This section of the plan presents the actions that the City will deliver to help achieve the ten-year strategic objectives and targets for each of the four objectives goals. The actions are short-term, intending to be delivered over the next one to two years, after which the action plan will be reviewed and updated to reflect long-term goal achievement. These short-term actions are outlined in the table below.

Objective	Strategic Objective (10 years)	Targets (10 years)	Actions (2 years)	Indicators	Impacts (10 years)
Urban greening and canopy expansion	Increase municipal canopy cover toward 30 per cent by 2047 (supports Obj 4).	Increase canopy from 17 per cent (2024 baseline) to: 22 per cent by 2030; 25 per cent by 2035; 30 per cent by 2047.	- Update canopy baseline mapping. - Scale annual community planting program. - Implement succession planting strategy. - Develop and pilot a Rural Agroforestry Support Program to enable tree establishment on private rural land through incentives, technical guidance and partnership delivery, where appropriate.	% canopy cover (biennial GIS); annual net canopy gain	Reduced urban heat; increased biodiversity; improved liveability
	Deliver sustained annual planting (supports Obj 4).	15,000+ trees and plants annually across all departments	- Expand municipal planting to include more community and corporate participation. - Expand volunteer led planting and maintenance programs including nature strips. - Prioritise climate-suitable species.	Trees planted/year; # of community participants	Long-term canopy establishment and resilience

	Improve canopy equity in heat-vulnerable suburbs (supports Obj 4)	≥20 per cent canopy uplift in identified priority suburbs by 2036.	- Update heat hotspots mapping and at street level. - Prioritise planting in capital works and community programs.	Canopy percentage in priority areas; surface temperature change.	More equitable cooling; improved public health outcomes.
	Achieve net positive canopy annually.	Net canopy gain recorded each year.	- Embed a “retain first” approach across Council policies, design standards, and project approvals, prioritising protection of mature trees in Council operations and supporting retention on private land through guidance - Monitor removals and replacements.	Annual net canopy change; removal vs replacement ratio	Sustained canopy growth trajectory.
Urban innovation and green infrastructure integration	Embed improved soil quality, adequate spacing and deep soil standards in the built environment to support canopy coverage (supports Obj 3).	All new subdivision and building and works applications are designed to achieve 30 per cent canopy at maturity as required by the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme.	- Update environmentally sustainable design provisions within new precinct structure plans to include canopy percentage calculation methodologies. - Integrate canopy requirements and conditions into development referrals as required by the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme.	Percent developments meeting canopy standard; soil volume compliance.	Mature canopy sustained in the municipality.
	Deliver shaded active transport corridors (supports Obj 1).	Deliver staged shaded corridor network to 2035	- Identify priority corridors - Integrate canopy planting into transport upgrades	km shaded corridor delivered; canopy coverage along routes.	Reduced pedestrian heat exposure; increased active transport.

	Integrate passive irrigation and water-sensitive design (supports Obj 3 and 4).	Passive irrigation integrated into priority streets and precincts.	- Map stormwater diversion sites. - Deliver pilot passive irrigation projects.	# sites installed; tree health metrics.	Improved establishment success; reduced flood pressure.
	Expand vertical greening and habitat-rich design (supports Obj 1).	Increase vertical greening coverage across activity areas and industrial areas.	- Develop Green Factor score for new builds. - Develop incentives for demonstration buildings in industrial areas.	m ² vertical greening installed; local surface temperature change	Reduced heat load; enhanced biodiversity complexity
	Explore Green My Street AI tool.	Increase participation in tool usage	Develop or partner with phone application(s) providers that illustrate greening potential for neighbourhood streets.	# of users; # of follow-up applications; engagement metrics.	Behavioural shift towards greener streetscapes.
Planning, policy and asset integration	Embed canopy targets into precinct structure planning.	Deliver canopy coverage in growth areas	Ensure planning controls developed for Growth Areas deliver the 30 percent target	Adoption of appropriate planning scheme provisions	Reduced development-related canopy loss.
	Collaborate with Asset Planners, Capital Works, Assets and Engineering teams to embed green infrastructure and canopy opportunities into infrastructure upgrades and public realm projects (supports Obj 2).	Increase incorporation of canopy, soil volume and passive irrigation opportunities in eligible streetscape, drainage and public realm projects.	- Establish a collaborative review process between Urban Forest team, and Capital Works and Asset Planners at early project stages. - Develop practical green infrastructure guidance for infrastructure upgrades. - Identify priority corridors where capital works can accelerate canopy growth.	# of capital works projects incorporating green infrastructure elements; Soil volume increases delivered through infrastructure projects; Passive irrigation opportunities integrated.	Improved tree establishment and canopy growth aligned with infrastructure renewal, reducing retrofit costs and increasing climate resilience.
	Recognise trees and green infrastructure as essential	Green assets incorporated into asset	Update asset management framework, including canopy	Asset register updated; lifecycle budgets allocated.	Long-term funding certainty and maintenance stability.

	infrastructure assets (supports Obj 4).	register with lifecycle costing	valuation.		
Monitoring, capability and long-term stewardship	Publicly monitor and report urban forest performance (supports Obj 1).	Canopy data updated and reported publicly at least every two years	- Develop integrated canopy database. - Launch public dashboard	Dashboard operational; reporting frequency.	Evidence-based planning; increased transparency.
	Capture and report all greening and carbon data (supports Obj 1).	100 per cent City plantings recorded; annual carbon sequestration reporting.	- Standardise planting data capture. - Integrate carbon modelling.	Percentage data completeness; estimated tCO ₂ /year.	Accurate carbon accounting; improved investment targeting.
	Strengthen maintenance systems and capability (supports Obj 1 and 2).	≥85 per cent survival rate maintained; reduction in turf-dominated maintenance.	- Deliver staff and volunteer training. - Update biodiversity-focused maintenance protocols.	Survival rate; turf reduction; operational emissions.	Resilient urban forest; reduced operational emissions.
	Embed the principles and knowledge of the Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation Healthy Country Plan into urban forest site planning and stewardship to support Healing Country outcomes (supports Obj 1 and Obj 3).	Integrate culturally informed species selection, landscape management and ecological indicators into urban forest programs. Incorporate Healthy Country principles into priority planting, habitat restoration and stewardship initiatives.	- Develop Memorandum of Understanding with Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation to inform, guide and participate in proposed urban plantings. - Identify pilot projects that demonstrate Healing Country outcomes within urban landscapes.	Partnership agreement established and active; Inclusion of cultural and ecological indicators within biennial canopy reporting; # of projects co-designed or informed by Wadawurrung knowledge.	Deepened and sustained partnership between Council and Wadawurrung; Contribution to broader Healing Country outcomes across Greater Geelong; Urban Forest management reflects Caring for Country principles; Strengthened biodiversity outcomes informed by Traditional Ecological Knowledge.

CITY OF GREATER GEELONG

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CUSTOMER SERVICE CENTRE

Wurriki Nyal
137-149 Mercer Street, Geelong
8.00am – 5.00pm

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2.4. Adoption of Planning Scheme Amendment C484ggee - Heritage Design Guidelines

Source: Growth & Place
Interim Executive Director: Jacqueline Randles

Purpose

1. To adopt Planning Scheme Amendment C484ggee implementing new Heritage Design Guidelines and commensurate local policy update.

Background

2. The City's current Heritage and Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 1997) have provided an effective framework for guiding development in heritage areas for more than two decades.
3. Council adopted the Heritage Design Guidelines 2025 and resolved to commence this Planning Scheme Amendment at its meeting on 25 November 2025.
4. However, the 1997 Guidelines were prepared in a different policy context. Recent changes include increased focus on sustainable design, accessibility and contemporary architectural approaches. The 1997 Guidelines required updating to reflect updated planning policy, community expectations, and best practice heritage management.
5. The new Greater Geelong Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, July 2026) will replace the Heritage and Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 1997), building on their successful legacy with contemporary design principles, sustainability standards and accessibility considerations.
6. Introducing the Greater Geelong Heritage Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, July 2026) as an incorporated document under Clauses 15.03-1L and 72.04 of the Planning Scheme will give them statutory weight, providing greater certainty and consistency for applicants and Statutory Planning.
7. Amendment C484ggee also makes commensurate updates to the local planning policy in the Planning Scheme at Clause 15.03-1L Heritage conservation - Greater Geelong to ensure there is consistency and alignment between policy and the Guidelines and to remove duplication with the state planning policy clause.

Key Matters

8. Heritage design guidelines provide clear, practical advice to guide alterations, additions, infill development, and new works within heritage overlays. They include principles for appropriate scale, form, and siting of new development, integration of sustainable design and accessibility improvements, demolition, conservation, and repair of heritage fabric, and use of materials, colour and detailing that complement heritage character. The new Guidelines will assist applicants in preparing proposals that respect heritage values and support consistent, transparent decision-making by Council.

9. Amendment C484ggee supports the Planning Policy Framework (PPF) within the Planning Scheme by updating heritage design guidelines to ensure they are modernised and reflect current development approaches and sustainability.
10. The Guidelines were developed in consultation with heritage specialists and Council officers and benchmarked against best practice examples from other Victorian local government authorities.
11. Some updates of clarification, gaps and administrative improvements were made to the Guidelines post-Council endorsement for proceeding to exhibition. These clarified the Guidelines for altered streetscapes of bluestone kerbs and channel, updated some images and captions, corrected minor typos and grammatical errors, and clarified requirements for towers, faceted bays and heritage landscapes. These formed part of the exhibited Guidelines. As the Guidelines have been changed, the date of them is also updated in the document and where they are referenced in the local policy and list of incorporated documents.
12. Exhibition of the amendment was undertaken between 16 April and 18 May 2026. No submissions were received.
13. Post-exhibition it has been necessary change the local policy clause 15.03-1L to ensure that the strategy related to altered streetscapes of bluestone channels (under 70% intactness) is aligned to the clarification that was included in the Guidelines. A minor change to the local policy clause about subdivision of land has also been updated to use the term 'support subdivision' instead of 'encourage subdivision' as it better reflects the intent of this policy and harmonises with the requirements of the policy. With these changes included, the amendment can now be adopted.
14. With the updates to the Guidelines, it is appropriate that they be re-adopted in the changed form.

Recommendation

That Council:

1. **Adopts Amendment C484ggee – Heritage Design Guidelines – in the form outlined in Attachment 1 of this report;**
2. **Adopts the Greater Geelong Heritage Design Guidelines, July 2026 (Attachment 1); and**
3. **Submits the adopted Amendment C484ggee together with the prescribed information to the Minister for Planning requesting approval.**

Financial Sustainability

15. The amendment approval fee is met within the department budget.

Community Engagement

16. The amendment was placed on exhibition on Council's webpage and with notice in City News on 10 April 2026. Direct notice was given to Heritage Victoria, National Trust, Deakin University School of Architecture and Built Environment, and Department of Transport and Planning - Transport.

Social Equity and Sustainability

17. The amendment will have positive social equity and sustainability effects by promoting and contributing to equitable access to heritage places, more inclusive design outcomes, and positive environmental and climate objectives by:
 - 17.1. Supporting community identity and connection through the protection of Geelong's heritage;
 - 17.2. Providing clear, publicly available guidance to ensure transparent, consistent decision making;
 - 17.3. Enabling diverse housing opportunities within heritage areas by supporting contextually appropriate infill and adaptive reuse projects; and
 - 17.4. Promoting retention and adaptive reuse of existing buildings, reducing demolition waste and embodied carbon emissions.

Gender Equality – Gender+ Impact Assessment

18. A Gender+ Impact Assessment has not been completed on the planning scheme amendment as it is implementing Guidelines for future changes to places of heritage significance and does not fall within the criteria of key plans affecting Council services, programs and policies.

Relevant Law/Policy/Legal Implications

19. The amendment achieves the following objectives of planning in Victoria as set out in Section 4 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* including:
 - 19.1. *“(a) to provide for the fair, orderly, economic and sustainable use and development of land.*
 - 19.2. *(b) to provide for the protection of natural and man made resources and the maintenance of ecological processes and genetic diversity.*
 - 19.3. *(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.*
 - 19.4. *(e) to protect public utilities and other assets and enable the orderly provision and co-ordination of public utilities and other facilities for the benefit of the community.*

19.5. (g) to balance the present and future interests of all Victorians.”

20. The amendment achieves these by providing updated heritage design guidance for development affecting places included in the heritage overlay across Greater Geelong.

Alignment to Council Plan and Vision

21. This report aligns with the Council Plan 2025-29 strategic priority: Heritage and Culture.
22. 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

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

Risk Assessment and Risk Appetite Statement

24. The recommendation aligns with Council’s cautious appetite for Regulatory, Legal and Governance risks by implementing contemporary heritage guidance through the statutory planning scheme amendment process and supporting consistent, transparent decision-making.
25. The recommendation also aligns with Council’s balanced appetite for Community risks by protecting heritage places that contribute to community identity and sense of place. Adoption of the Guidelines supports consistent heritage outcomes while balancing conservation, sustainability and contemporary development. Failure to proceed would result in reliance on outdated guidance, increasing the risk of inconsistent outcomes and gradual loss of heritage character.

Environmental Sustainability

26. The amendment will not have any adverse effects on the environment. Protection for heritage places will retain existing infrastructure and resources. Geelong Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, July 2026) promotes sustainable development through conserving valuable resources and economizing on materials, balanced against the demands for development.

Attachments

1. Amendment C484ggee – Heritage Design Guidelines [2.4.1 - 111 pages]

Attachment 1

Amendment being adopted

Planning and Environment Act 1987

Greater Geelong Planning Scheme

Amendment C484ggee

Instruction sheet

The planning authority for this amendment is the City of Greater Geelong.

The Greater Geelong Planning Scheme is amended as follows:

Planning Scheme Ordinance

The Planning Scheme Ordinance is amended as follows:

1. In **Planning Policy Framework**- replace Clause 15.03-1L with a new Clause 15.03-1L in the form of the attached document.
2. In **Operational Provisions** – Clause 72.04, replace the Schedule with a new Schedule in the form of the attached document.

End of document

GREATER GEELONG PLANNING SCHEME

15.03
31/07/2018
VC148

HERITAGE

GREATER GEELONG PLANNING SCHEME**15.03-1S**02/09/2025
VC283**Heritage conservation****Objective**

To ensure the conservation of places of heritage significance.

Strategies

Identify, assess and document places of natural and cultural heritage significance as a basis for their inclusion in the planning scheme.

Provide for the protection of natural heritage sites and man-made resources.

Provide for the conservation and enhancement of those places that are of aesthetic, archaeological, architectural, cultural, scientific or social significance.

Encourage appropriate development that respects places with identified heritage values.

Retain those elements that contribute to the importance of the heritage place.

Encourage the conservation and restoration of contributory elements of a heritage place.

Ensure an appropriate setting and context for heritage places is maintained or enhanced.

Support adaptive reuse of heritage buildings where their use has become redundant.

Consider whether it is appropriate to require the restoration or reconstruction of a heritage building in a Heritage Overlay that has been unlawfully or unintentionally demolished in order to retain or interpret the cultural heritage significance of the building, streetscape or area.

Policy guidelines

Consider as relevant:

- The findings and recommendations of the Victorian Heritage Council.

Policy documents

- The Burra Charter: The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance (Australia ICOMOS Incorporated, 2013).

GREATER GEELONG PLANNING SCHEME

15.03-1L Heritage conservation - Greater Geelong

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Proposed C484ggee

Policy application

This policy applies to all land within a Heritage Overlay.

Strategies

Support the retention and conservation of heritage places.

Discourage the demolition of a heritage place unless:

- It is identified as non-contributory (not significant).
- The demolition is partial and retains the three-dimensional form and principal fabric.
- It will enhance the significance of the heritage place.

Support use and development of a heritage place that enhances its significance and contributes to its longevity.

Encourage external alterations of buildings to make a positive contribution to the significance of the heritage place.

Encourage new development to provide a contemporary design interpretation which considers scale, form, materials, and where appropriate, streetscape context.

Encourage the retention or re-instatement of streetworks including street trees and bluestone kerbs, street construction form, asphalt footpaths, channels and crossovers.

Support the subdivision of land where the proposed subdivision will not adversely affect significant fabric, setting, layout, and historical relationship of buildings or views to the heritage place from the public realm.

Encourage the retention of original landscape elements that are significant to the heritage character of the site.

Policy guidelines

Consider as relevant:

- Where sites that are not contributory or significant are proposed for demolition, support will only be considered in conjunction with planning approval for a replacement development.
- The following measures (except in the Rocky Point, Girton Crescent, Drysdale and McLeods Waterholes Heritage Areas) where the retention of the existing bluestone kerb and channel is not possible:
 - Where a street is predominantly bluestone (70 per cent), re-instatement of original street detailing should occur.
 - For altered streetscapes of bluestone channels (those under 70 per cent intactness), the existing construction and appearance may be simulated. This may be achieved through the use of Run-of-Mill (ROM) bluestone pitchers measuring 300 x 2125 x 150mm, together with grey coloured concrete trays and bases. Concrete trays and bases are to include chamfered corners and are to be constructed to a total width of 500mm.
 - Laneways with bluestone detail should be retained and pavements should be reconstructed with either a chip seal and gravel or asphalt surface.
 - Where a concrete tray is used with bluestone kerb, the concrete should be treated with a colour mix to give a faded grey colour.

Policy document

Consider as relevant:

GREATER GEELONG PLANNING SCHEME

- *Greater Geelong Heritage Design Guidelines* (City of Greater Geelong, July 2026)

GREATER GEELONG PLANNING SCHEME

15.03-2S31/07/2018
VC148**Aboriginal cultural heritage****Objective**

To ensure the protection and conservation of places of Aboriginal cultural heritage significance.

Strategies

Identify, assess and document places of Aboriginal cultural heritage significance, in consultation with relevant Registered Aboriginal Parties, as a basis for their inclusion in the planning scheme.

Provide for the protection and conservation of pre-contact and post-contact Aboriginal cultural heritage places.

Ensure that permit approvals align with the recommendations of any relevant Cultural Heritage Management Plan approved under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*.

Policy guidelines

Consider as relevant:

- The findings and recommendations of the Aboriginal Heritage Council.
- The findings and recommendations of the Victorian Heritage Council for post-contact Aboriginal heritage places.

Policy documents

Consider as relevant:

- *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*

GREATER GEELONG PLANNING SCHEME

15/01/2024
VC249

SCHEDULE TO CLAUSE 72.04 INCORPORATED DOCUMENTS

1.0

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Proposed C484ggee

Incorporated documents

Name of document	Introduced by:
3 Bridge Road, Barwon Heads (June 2020)	C415ggee
14 Shepherd Court, North Geelong, Cotton On Office Redevelopment (July 2011)	C257
Adventure Park Comprehensive Development Plan (May 2014)	C288
Anakie, Lara & Lovely Banks Heritage Places Incorporated Plan (May 2016)	C316
Armstrong Creek East Native Vegetation Precinct Plan (May 2010)	C206
Armstrong Creek East Precinct Structure Plan (May 2010, Amended November 2011)	C214
<i>Armstrong Creek East Precinct Development Contributions Plan</i> (Urban Enterprise, December 2023)	VC249
Armstrong Creek Horseshoe Bend Precinct Structure Plan (September 2014)	C259
<i>Armstrong Creek North East Industrial Precinct Development Contributions Plan</i> (Urban Enterprise, December 2023)	VC249
Armstrong Creek North East Industrial Precinct Growling Grass Frog Conservation Management Plan (May 2010)	C207
Armstrong Creek North East Industrial Precinct Native Vegetation Precinct Plan (May 2010)	C207
Armstrong Creek North East Industrial Precinct, Precinct Structure Plan (May 2010)	C207
Armstrong Creek South Precinct Structure Plan (February 2016)	C301
Armstrong Creek Town Centre Precinct Structure Plan (March 2014)	C267
<i>Armstrong Creek Town Centre Development Contributions Plan</i> (Urban Enterprise, December 2023)	VC249
<i>Armstrong Creek Urban Growth Plan Framework Plan</i> (City of Greater Geelong, February 2025)	C468ggee
<i>Armstrong Creek West Precinct Development Contributions Plan</i> (Urban Enterprise, December 2023)	VC249
Armstrong Creek West Precinct Native Vegetation Precinct Plan (November 2012)	C240
Armstrong Creek West Precinct Structure Plan (September 2012)	C240
<i>Australian Standard AS2021-2015 Acoustics - Aircraft Noise Intrusion - Building Siting and Construction</i> (Standards Australia Limited, 2015)	VC244
Barwon Heads Road (Settlement Road, Belmont to Reserve Road, Marshall) Duplication Project Incorporated Document (October 2020)	C413ggee
Batman Park, Indented Head Incorporated Plan (June 2015)	C274
BUPA Aged Care Facility, Bellarine Lakes (May 2016)	C336
<i>Central Road Drysdale Development Contributions Plan</i> (Urban Enterprise, December 2023)	VC249
Chisholm Road Prison Project, Lara, Incorporated Document (June 2019)	C389ggee
City of Greater Geelong Sign Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, February 2024)	C383ggee

GREATER GEELONG PLANNING SCHEME

Name of document	Introduced by:
"Claremont" 12-16 Kinsmead Street, Waurin Ponds Design Guidelines Incorporated Plan (February 2022)	C422ggee
"Claremont Homestead" 12-16 Kinsmead Street, Waurin Ponds Statement of Significance (February 2022)	C422ggee
Commercial Tenancies at 55, 57 & 59 Kilgour Street, Geelong (July 2017)	C358
Community Care Accommodation Facility, 120 Russells Road, Mount Duneed, Incorporated Document (September 2020)	C401ggee
Drysdale Bypass (November 2017)	C369
Environmental Weeds (City of Greater Geelong, September 2008)	C129 (Part 1)
Fibre Optic Project, Integrated Approval Requirements (December 2002)	VC17
Geelong City Urban Conservation Study Vol. 1 Restoration and Infill Guidelines, Commercial and Civic Buildings (Graeme Butler for the City of Geelong, 1993)	C258
Geelong Convention and Exhibition Centre Strategic Development Site Project (April 2023)	C456ggee
Geelong Library and Heritage Centre Redevelopment (March 2013)	C287
Geelong Ring Road – Section 4C Incorporated Document (June 2010)	C232
Geelong TAC Office Development (October 2006)	C142
Geelong Waterfront Safe Harbour Precinct Project Incorporated Document (July 2019)	C398ggee
Great Western Hotel Heritage Place 177-179 Aberdeen Street, Newtown Incorporated Plan (December 2017)	C365
Greater Geelong Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, July 2026)	C484ggee
<i>HO25 Marathon Estate Woolshed & Yard Complex Statement of Significance</i> (City of Greater Geelong, March 2023)	C452ggee
<i>HO126 Coronal, 7 Coronal Avenue, Newtown Statement of Significance</i> (City of Greater Geelong, December 2022)	C452ggee
<i>HO154 McKellar Memorial Chapel Statement of Significance</i> (City of Greater Geelong, October 2023)	C452ggee
HO1613 McLeods Waterholes Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1613 McLeods Waterholes Heritage Area Statement of Significance (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1617 Rocky Point Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
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HO1618 Woollen Mills Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
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HO1622 Latrobe Terrace Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1622 Latrobe Terrace Heritage Area Statement of Significance (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1623 Newtown Hill Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
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HO1624 Latrobe Terrace Shops Heritage Area Statement of Significance (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1625 Chilwell and Saffron Street Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
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HO1626 Aberdeen, George and Skene Streets Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
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HO1630 Drumcondra and Rippleside Heritage Area Statement of Significance (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1631 The Esplanade Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1631 The Esplanade Heritage Area Statement of Significance (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1632 Girtton Crescent Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1632 Girtton Crescent Heritage Area Statement of Significance (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1633 Lawton Avenue Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
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HO1634 Pakington Street Commercial Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1634 Pakington Street Commercial Heritage Area Statement of Significance (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee

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Name of document	Introduced by:
HO1635 Villamanta Street Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1635 Villamanta Street Heritage Area Statement of Significance (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1637 Geelong Commercial Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
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HO1638 Woolstores Industrial Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
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<i>HO1641 City South Heritage Area Statement of Significance (City of Greater Geelong, July 2025)</i>	C432ggee
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HO1903 Wimmera Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee

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HO1905 Evans Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1906 Kardinia Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1908 Belmont Heights Estate Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1909 Elderslie Estate Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1916 Aberdeen Street (Newtown) Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1917 Eyre Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1918 Hermitage Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1919 William and Margaret Streets Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1920 Shannon Avenue Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1921 Clarkes Hill Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1922 Bareena Estate Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
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HO1960 Milton Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1961 Pineville Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO1962 Waterloo Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO2005 Upper Skene Street Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO2006 Newtown West Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO2007 West Melbourne Road Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO2016 Austin Park and Environs Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong 2022)	C417ggee

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Name of document	Introduced by:
HO2017 Myers Street Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
HO2018 Western Beach Road Heritage Area Heritage Design Guidelines (City of Greater Geelong, 2022)	C417ggee
<i>HO2023 Kelvendon Statement of Significance</i> (City of Greater Geelong, July 2025)	C432ggee
<i>HO2424 Kardinia Villa Statement of Significance</i> (City of Greater Geelong, July 2025)	C432ggee
<i>HO2025 Penlea Statement of Significance</i> (City of Greater Geelong, July 2025)	C432ggee
<i>Horseshoe Bend Precinct Development Contributions Plan</i> (Urban Enterprise, December 2023)	VC249
<i>Jetty Road Urban Growth Area Stage 1 Development Contributions Plan</i> (Urban Enterprise, December 2023)	VC249
<i>Jetty Road Urban Growth Area Stage 2 Development Contributions Plan</i> (Urban Enterprise, November 2024)	C387ggee
<i>Lara West Development Contributions Plan</i> (Urban Enterprise, December 2023)	VC249
Lara West Growth Area, Lara, Native Vegetation Precinct Plan (September 2013)	C246
Lara West Precinct Structure Plan, Revision J (25 September 2013)	C246
<i>Little River Battery Energy Storage System (BESS)</i> (Department of Transport and Planning, March 2025)	C466ggee
<i>Marshall Development Contributions Plan</i> (City of Greater Geelong, June 2025)	C278ggee
<i>Marshall Native Vegetation Precinct Plan</i> (Ecology & Heritage Partners, May 2025)	C278ggee
<i>Marshall Precinct Structure Plan</i> (City of Greater Geelong, August 2025)	C278ggee
Melbourne Geelong Interconnection Project (June 2010)	C229
Manzeene Village, Lara, Native Vegetation Precinct Plan (June 2014)	C285
Mental Health Beds Expansion Program Incorporated Document (November 2020)	GC176
Native Vegetation Precinct Plan: Armstrong Creek Town Centre Precinct (July 2021)	C399ggee
Native Vegetation Precinct Plan, Horseshoe Bend Precinct, Armstrong Creek Urban Growth Area (July 2021)	C399ggee
Newtown Heritage Study Review Report, Volume 3 (City of Greater Geelong, 2008)	C191
New Station Estate Restructure Plan (July 2010, Amended December 2017)	C376pt1ggee
Part 1 / 250 Beach Road, Avalon, August 2022	C448ggee
Rail Gauge Standardisation Project, Integrated Approval Requirements (December 2002)	VC17
Regional Fast Rail Project, Integrated Approval Requirements (December 2002)	VC17
Rail Upgrades at Geelong Port Project (May 2010)	C211
<i>Rippleside Comprehensive Development Plan</i> (Urbis, June 2025)	C480ggee
<i>Rippleside Urban Design Guidelines</i> (Urbis, June 2025)	C480ggee
Saleyards Comprehensive Development Plan (April 2023)	C434ggee

GREATER GEELONG PLANNING SCHEME

Name of document	Introduced by:
<i>Small Lot Housing Code</i> (Victorian Planning Authority, November 2024)	C481ggee
Specialist Training Facility Incorporated Document (June 2019)	C392ggee
Stage 5 GMHBA Stadium Development Kardinia Park Moorabool Street, Geelong South Incorporated Document (March 2021)	C423ggee
Thirteenth Beach Golf Resort, Barwon Heads Comprehensive Development Plan (Land Design Partnership, Anthony Cashmore & Associates and the Planning Group, May 2001 amended September 2006)	C54
Warrnambool Line Upgrade Incorporated Document (December 2019)	GC121
Waterfront Geelong Design and Development Code (Keys Young, July 1996)	NPS1
Waurm Ponds Train Maintenance and Stabling Facility Project Incorporated Document (May 2020)	GC104
West Fyans-Fyans Street Precinct Structure Plan (June 2009)	C205



Greater Geelong Heritage Design Guidelines

July 2026

Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Wadawurrung People as the Traditional Owners of the Land, Waterways and Skies. We pay our respects to their Elders, past, present and emerging.

We acknowledge all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who are part of our Greater Geelong community today.

Figure 1 View of the *You Yangs* from Geelong.

JULY 2026 FINAL

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Figure 2 Deakin University Waterfront Campus, Geelong

A successful example of adaptation that celebrates the heritage fabric of the former woolstores.

Introduction

Places of cultural significance enrich people's lives, often providing a deep and inspirational sense of connection to community and landscape, to the past and to lived experiences. They are historical records, that are important expressions of Australian identity and experience. Places of cultural significance reflect the diversity of our communities, telling us about who we are and the past that has formed us and the Australian landscape. They are irreplaceable and precious.

– The Burra Charter 2013, p.1

The City of Greater Geelong's heritage has been shaped over generations by a variety of communities, beginning with the Wadawurrung People, the Traditional Custodians of Country.

These Guidelines focus on the City's built and (in part) landscape heritage, which play a key role in defining Greater Geelong's unique identity.

As a UNESCO City of Design, Geelong has long been a leader in design innovation, and many of its modern buildings may be recognised as heritage places in the future.

The City's heritage represents a lasting legacy of thoughtful design, strong community ties, and a commitment to sustainability.

Today, Greater Geelong boasts a rich array of historic buildings and places, but the need for rapid housing growth and higher urban density poses challenges. Careful planning and thoughtful design is needed to ensure the preservation of Greater Geelong's valuable heritage.

Purpose

The purpose of the Heritage Design Guidelines is to assist property owners, developers, designers and planning consultants, in addition to Council officers that manage change to a heritage place. The Guidelines help to interpret the Heritage Overlay: to respect the heritage fabric while achieving quality, contemporary design solutions.

These Guidelines apply to all planning permit applications under the Heritage Overlay in Greater Geelong. They must be considered in addition to any other provisions of the Planning Scheme, including (but not limited to) the decision guidelines at Clause 43.01-8.

These Guidelines are intended to provide guidance on the typical and common heritage contexts in Greater Geelong.

Other non-heritage planning permit triggers to places under the Heritage Overlay are not part of the purpose of these Guidelines.

Planning permits

These Guidelines relate to heritage places in the Heritage Overlay.

To find out if your property is heritage listed in the Heritage Overlay, refer to the **Victorian Heritage Database**.

To find out more about the planning permit process, refer to the **City of Greater Geelong Planning webpage**.

When applying for a planning permit for change to a place in a Heritage Overlay, it is best to check heritage-related provisions in the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme.

What is heritage?

A heritage place

A heritage place is an individual site that has heritage value – these types of places can be buildings, bridges or engineering structures, or cultural landscapes.

A heritage place can also be an area that contains a group of buildings and landscapes such as a historical town, suburb, small residential area, or large complex site.

Heritage significance

Heritage significance is the reason the heritage place is important for aesthetic/architectural, historical, scientific, social, or spiritual reasons.



Figure 3 Examples of heritage places

Levels of significance

Throughout these Guidelines the term 'significant heritage building' refers to a place of State, Regional, Local or Contributory Significance (the buildings of State Significance are those included in the Victorian Heritage Register).

A Level - State Significance

Most places of State Significance are in the Victorian Heritage Register, administered by Heritage Victoria.

B Level - Regional Significance

Places of Regional Significance are included as Heritage Overlays in the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme. These places are significant to the Greater Geelong region.

C Level - Local Significance

These places are significant to a particular locality in Greater Geelong. Places of Local Significance are included as Heritage Overlays in the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme.

D Level - Contributory Significance

Places of Contributory Significance are included within heritage area overlays identified in the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme. Collectively, these places define the significance of a heritage area.

Non Contributory - Not significant

Places that have no significance that are situated within heritage areas also require a planning permit for external buildings and works because of their location in an important heritage area.

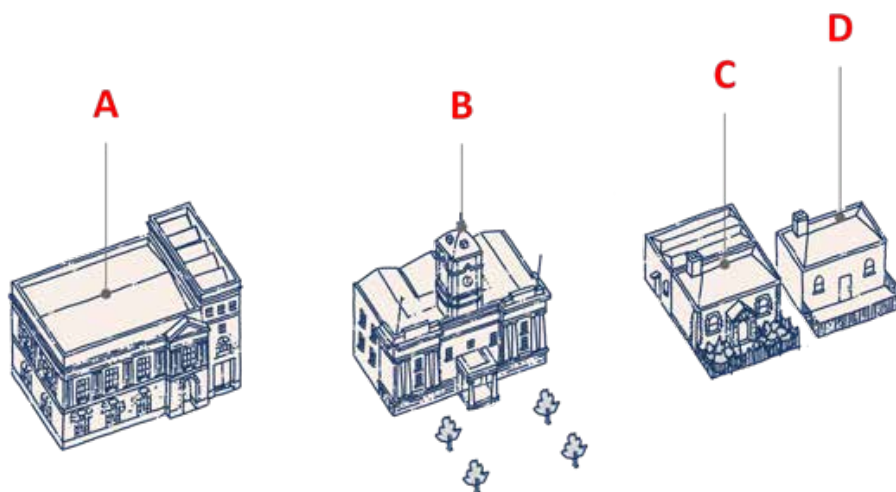
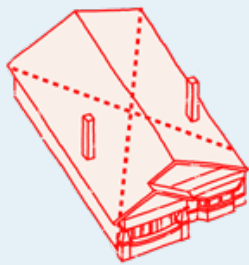


Figure 4 Levels of significance

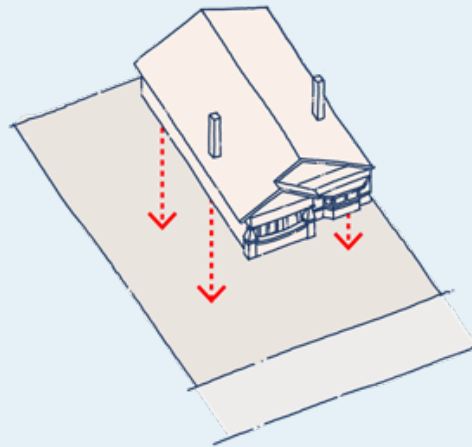
How to use these Guidelines

The following pages contain illustrations and photographs to visually communicate The City of Greater Geelong heritage objectives.

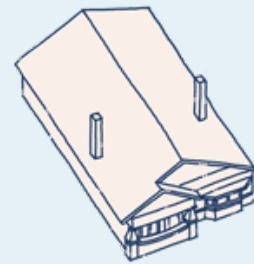
1. Demolition



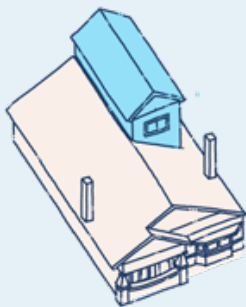
2. Relocation



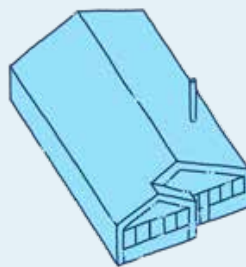
3. Conservation



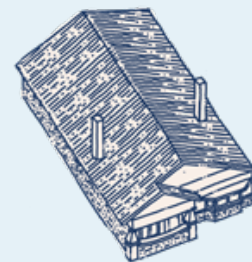
4. Additions



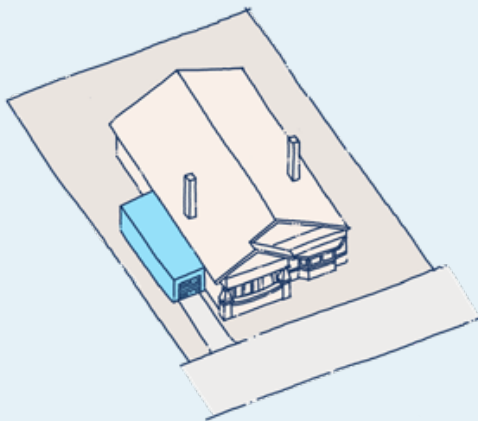
5. New buildings



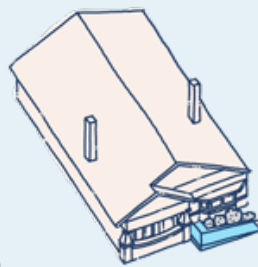
6. Exterior finishes



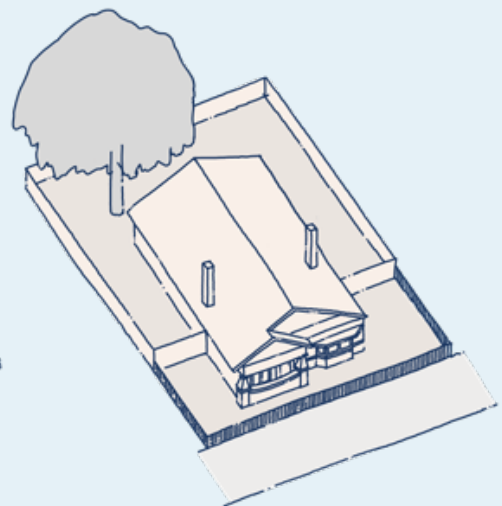
7. Vehicle access & accommodation



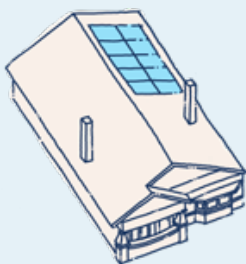
8. Accessibility



9. Settings



10. Sustainability



11. Subdivision & consolidation

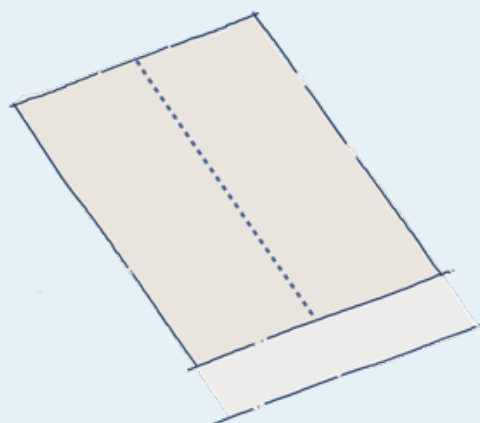
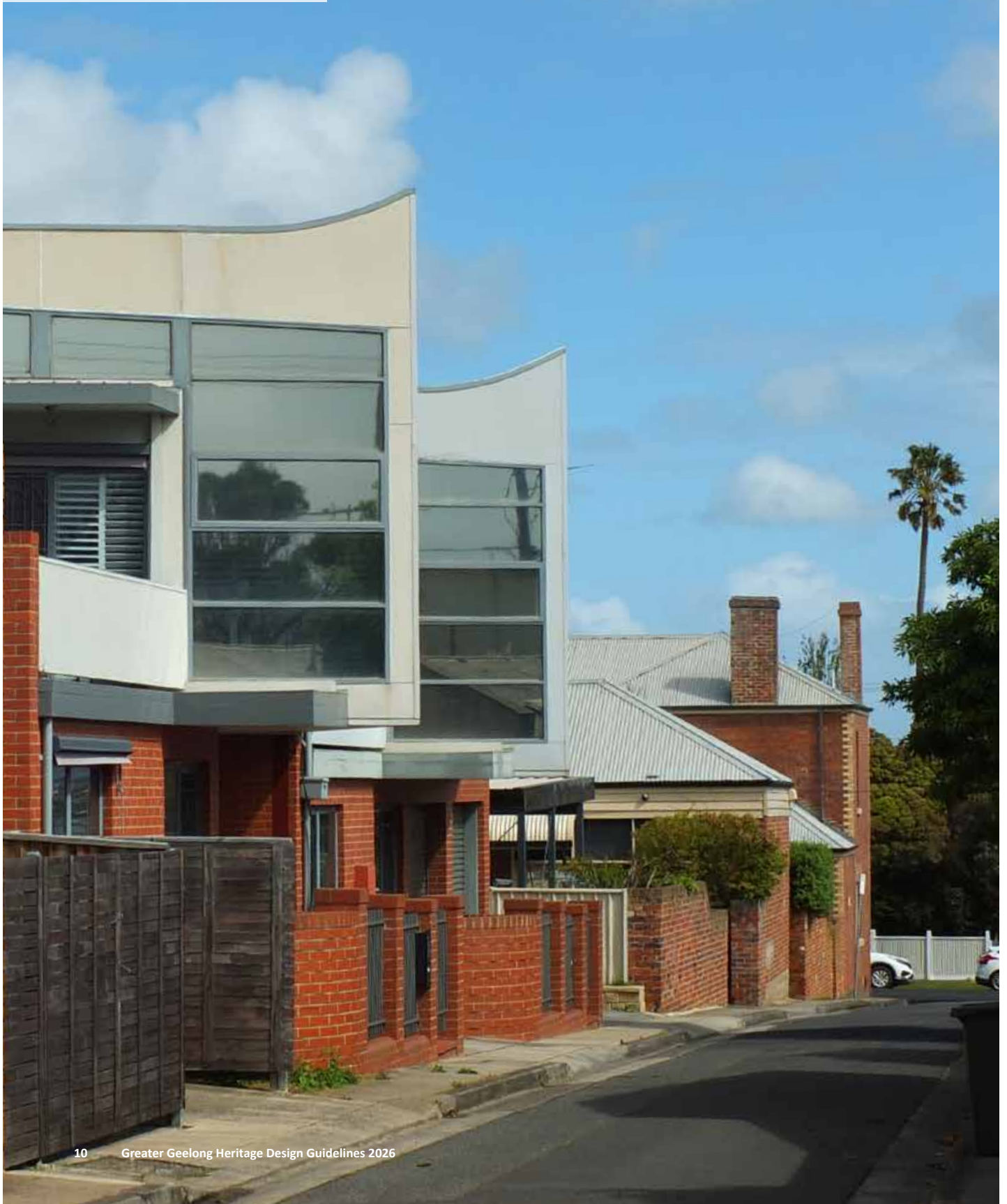


Figure 5 Dwellings, Geelong

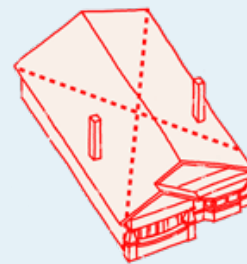
These dwellings have been constructed with designs independent to the prevailing heritage character of the area but where no adverse affect on significance has resulted because of the lower order integrity of the street.



The Guidelines

1. Demolition

Demolition of significant fabric of a place is generally not acceptable. However, in some cases minor demolition may be appropriate as part of conservation. Removed significant fabric should be reinstated when circumstances permit.



– Burra Charter 2013: Article 15.3

The primary objective of heritage conservation is to retain and conserve significant heritage fabric and therefore demolition is discouraged except in exceptional circumstances.

The preferred approach is to repair, reinforce, or adapt existing structures rather than demolish and replace them. This is because the significance of the heritage place is embodied in the building fabric, including its three-dimensional form. Additionally, retention and adaptive reuse of heritage buildings is preferred over demolition for environmental reasons.

For demolition, the existing condition of a building is not the overriding factor used in determining a permit application outcome. 'Demolition by neglect' by which a heritage building is left unused and unmaintained with a view to justifying future demolition is unacceptable.

Also, whether the building meets current building codes and regulations is not an overriding factor. Many heritage buildings were constructed before these regulations existed.

Key issues to consider are:

- Is the place habitable?
- Is the place ruinous?
- Can the place be repaired and respectfully changed to provide for a new use, address safety, and an environmentally sustainable outcome?
- Can the place be brought up to the required building standards by introducing new structure or fabric to make it compliant without negatively impacting its significance?

Demolition of a heritage building, or a significant part of a building, will only be considered if:

- It has been demonstrated that the building is beyond reasonable repair (physically and financially) as supported by independent structural engineering and heritage advice.
- The integrity of the place has been undermined due to exceptional circumstances such as fire, flooding, or accident.

Demolition of a building

- The significant portion of heritage buildings should be retained in its entirety even if it is not visible from the public realm.
- A non-contributory place may be demolished if the replacement building does not affect the significance of the heritage area.
- Removal of unsympathetic or non-contributory additions may be supported if it enhances the heritage value of the heritage place.
- Significant buildings also include outbuildings if identified in a heritage study and therefore should be retained.

The significant portion of a heritage building

The significant portion of a heritage building is considered to be the main three-dimensional form and fabric of significance (including the roof form and cladding, exterior walls and cladding, and overall structural integrity which support the three-dimensional form, and all features such as windows, doors and chimneys) of the heritage building.

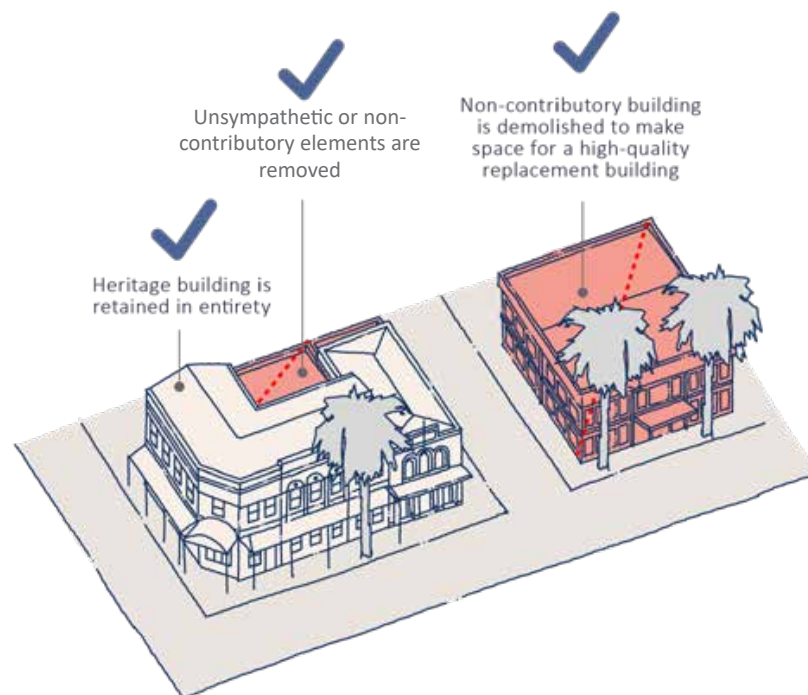


Figure 6 Demolition of a building.

Partial demolition

- Partial demolition of a heritage building may be supported if it does not undermine the heritage significance of the place and supports adaptive reuse.
- Partial demolition should retain significant fabric and the building's three-dimensional form.
- Partial demolition must not result in the retained portion of the heritage building being vulnerable to damage or instability.
- Chimneys of heritage buildings should be retained.

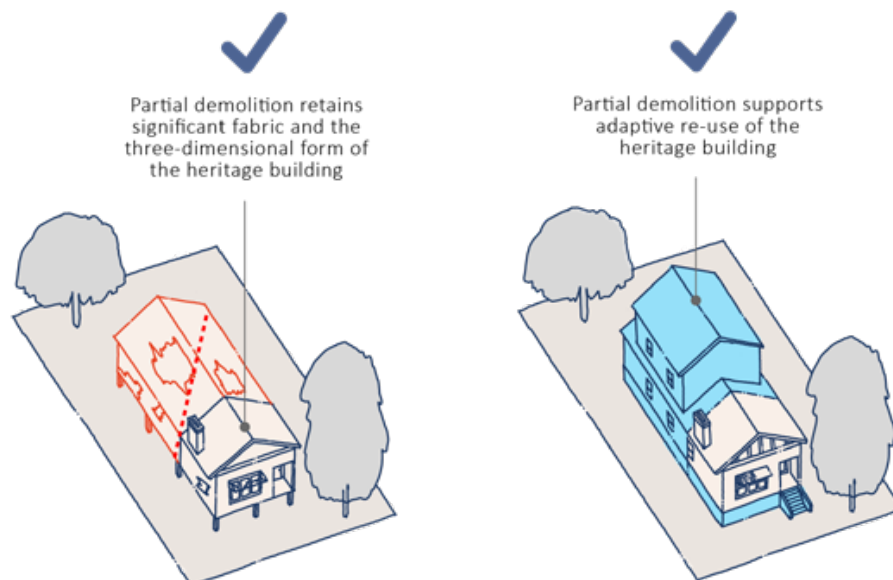


Figure 7 Partial demolition.

Outbuildings and fences

- Fences and outbuildings of significance should be retained.

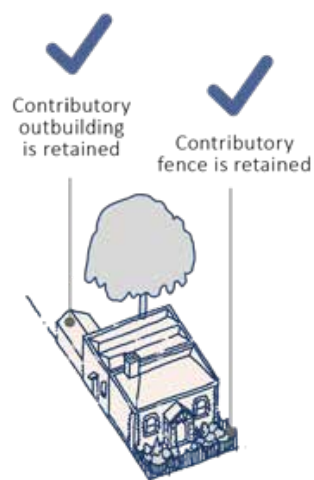


Figure 8 Outbuildings and fences.

Application considerations

If a heritage building or element is structurally unsound, demolition should be supported by an engineering assessment and a proposal for reconstruction or replacement.

Any proposal should be accompanied by a demolition method statement outlining that the retained fabric will be safeguarded during demolition and construction (structurally propped, weatherproofed and not damaged).

For complete demolition, a structural engineering assessment report is required, prepared in accordance with the Australia ICOMOS Burra Charter, addressing the extent and nature of deterioration; the feasibility of repair, reinforcement, or adaptive reuse; and a cost comparison between repair and replacement of essential remedial works (to rationalise why retention cannot be achieved).



Figure 9 Dwelling, Geelong. Partially retained, restored and repaired dwelling that was safeguarded during demolition and construction.

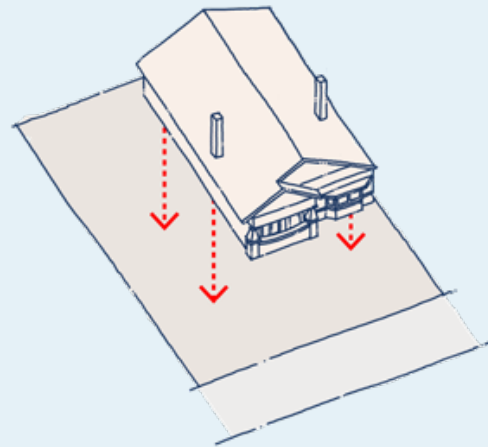
2. Relocation

The physical location of a place is part of its cultural significance. A building, work or other element of a place should remain in its historical location. Relocation is generally unacceptable unless this is the sole practical means of ensuring its survival.

- Burra Charter 2013: Article 9.1

Relocation of heritage buildings is discouraged. The preferred approach is always to retain and conserve heritage buildings in their original location, as this preserves the historical context and integrity. It also ensures that the building fabric is not undermined by relocation.

Relocation may be considered if it is the only means of ensuring the building's survival and does not adversely affect the significance of the heritage place.



Relocation of heritage buildings

- Heritage buildings should be retained insitu.
- Relocation of a heritage building may be considered if:
 - » there is a proven history of relocation
 - » the building was originally designed for relocation
 - » the building's significance does not specifically relate to its current location and setting and does not contribute to the setting of the heritage place.
 - » In its current location the building is under immediate physical threat.
- The relocation should:
 - » not diminish the building's significance.
 - » maintain or enhance the building's historical and visual context.
- Detailed records such as photographs, drawings, or a written history of the building and its original location should be made before a heritage building is relocated.
- Relocation should allow for the possibility of returning the building to its original location if circumstances change.

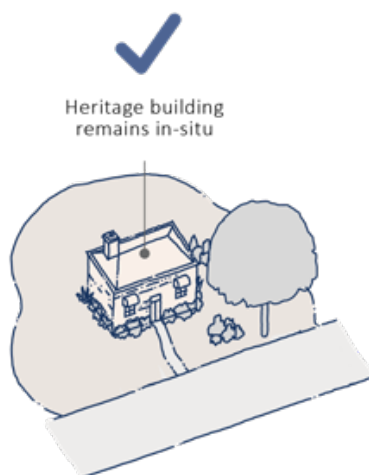
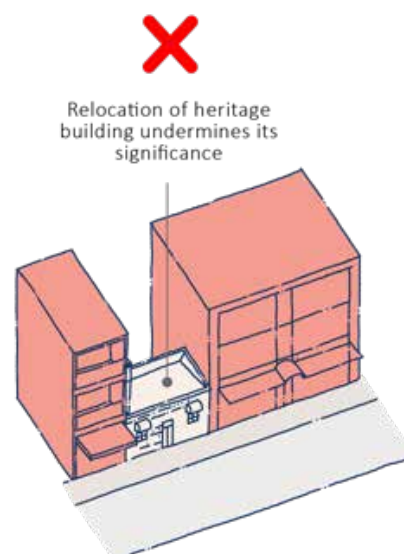


Figure 10 Relocation.

Application considerations

For relocation, a structural engineering assessment is required, prepared in accordance with the Australia ICOMOS Burra Charter. The assessment should outline a procedure for:

- relocating all significant fabric (including all ancillary elements such as chimneys and verandahs).
- how the significant building and fabric will be safeguarded during transportation.
- how the building will retain its original appearance once relocated (including reconstruction of the ancillary elements).



3. Conservation

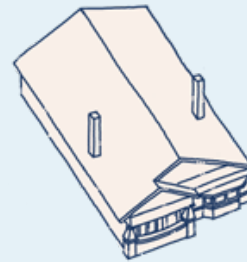
Conservation is based on a respect for the existing fabric, use, associations and meanings. It requires a cautious approach of changing as much as necessary but as little as possible.

– Burra Charter 2013: Article 3.1

Conservation ensures heritage places are retained for the future. Any work on heritage fabric should be based on a proper understanding of the significance of the fabric. Use of compatible materials and construction methods will help to ensure that the building is being conserved the right way.

Heritage buildings and structures move, deflect and weather. This does not mean that they are inherently inadequate and require replacement. Engaging suitably qualified or experienced practitioners in the conservation process will ensure a quality outcome.

Conservation should always be undertaken according to the principles of the Australia ICOMOS Burra Charter. The Charter sets out the meaning of conservation and can involve maintenance (protective care), preservation, restoration, reconstruction and adaptation (Refer to **Definitions** for further details).



Conservation works

- Follow established conservation standards, such as those outlined in the Australia ICOMOS Burra Charter.
- Follow an evidence-based approach, informed by a thorough understanding of the heritage building's significance including its history, context and fabric.
- Preserve original materials, features, and finishes wherever possible. Only remove or alter elements if absolutely necessary for safety or preservation.
- Conduct only the work required to stabilise, repair, or conserve the building. Avoid unnecessary restoration or reconstruction.
- Ensure new work is distinguishable from original fabric.
- Prioritise repairs that prevent serious or irreversible damage.
- Ensure a heritage building is actively maintained so that the building remains weatherproof, secure, and safe.
- Where possible, design new elements so they can be removed without damaging the original fabric. Use non-invasive fixing methods and compatible materials.
- Involve heritage architects, conservators, tradespeople, and other qualified professionals in planning and executing conservation work.
- Use materials and construction techniques that are compatible with the original building's period and style. This includes:
 - » mortar and render repairs that match existing in strength (composition/mix), texture and colour;
 - » roofing materials including:
 - slate (ensure the same profile, size, texture and colour).
 - terracotta (ensure size, profile and colour match the original as close as possible).
 - metal roofs- refer to section on **Exterior finishes**.
- Establish a schedule for ongoing maintenance to prevent deterioration. Address issues such as water ingress, structural instability, and pest control promptly.

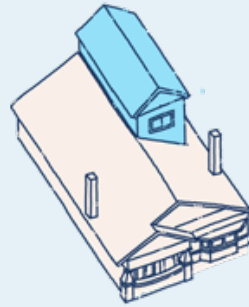


Figure 11 *Bungalow, Newtown, 1920s.* Bungalow featuring distinctive brickwork construction enhanced by tuckpointing repairs.

4. Additions

New work...may be acceptable where it respects and does not distort or obscure the cultural significance of the place or detract from its interpretation and appreciation.

– Burra Charter 2013: Article 22.1



The primary objective when considering an addition, is to retain and conserve significant fabric and features, and not overwhelm them.

The design of additions should be an evidence-based approach tailored to the site's unique setting. The design of the new work cannot be considered in isolation and should respond to the visual characteristics and appearance of the heritage place including consideration of character, scale (i.e. height, bulk, density, grain), form (i.e. shape and volume), siting (i.e. setbacks and location), detailing (e.g. chimneys, fenestration, verandahs), materials and colours, fences and setting (i.e. landscapes, streetscapes, and gardens).

Unless specified in a statement of significance or policy for the heritage place (individual property or heritage area), the rear yard of a property is the most ideal location for additions, even where the new work is substantial. This allows for the retention of the significant three-dimensional form, character and appearance of the main heritage building from the street.

Additionally, boundary-to-boundary development may also be possible at the rear if there are only incidental views of the new work from the public realm and where side setbacks are a predominant characteristic at the front (that is, side setbacks are retained for most of the existing building).

4.1 Residential

General residential considerations

- New additions should complement, but not mimic features of the heritage building or streetscape.
- Ensure the addition:
 - » is located to retain the visual prominence and the three-dimensional form of the heritage building.
 - » has minimal impact on the context and setting, and maintains the established streetscape pattern.
 - » retains unobstructed views to the heritage building from the public realm.
 - » is sympathetic in scale, proportion, form and massing to the heritage building or streetscape.

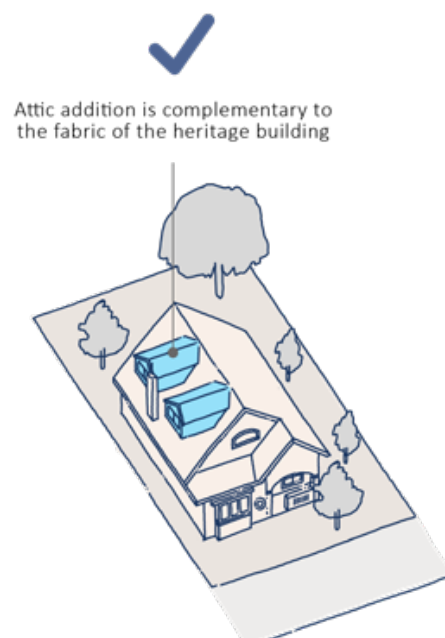


Figure 12 Residential additions.

Rear additions

- Locate rear additions:
 - » where they will allow for retention of the three-dimensional form of the heritage building.
 - » where views of the new addition are limited from the public realm.
 - » within the rear yard of a heritage building, unless the rear yard is specified in a statement of significance or guideline for the heritage place.
- Ensure that additions are respectful of the character and appearance of the heritage building, including roof form and articulation.
- Ensure the new addition appears distinguished from and not seamless with the heritage building.
- Where a rear addition is proposed to be equal to or greater than the footprint of the heritage building, consider a separate physical entity connected to the heritage building by a link.
- Rear additions may be designed with different forms and complexity if there are minimal views from the public realm.

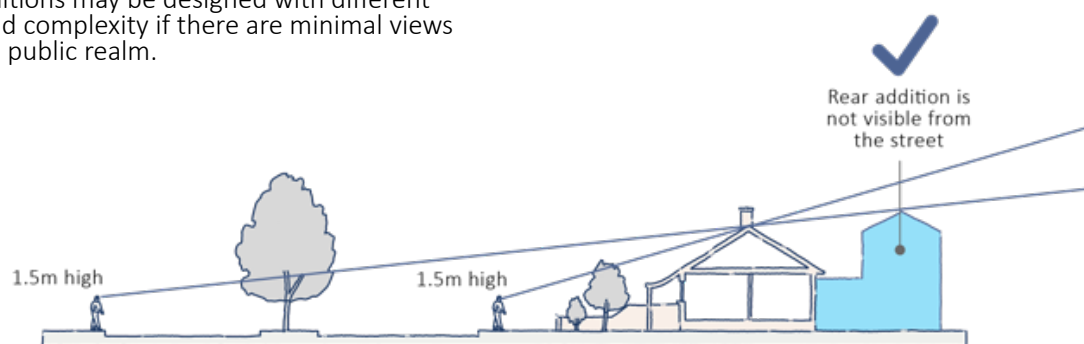


Figure 13 Streetscape section - the rear addition is not visible from the street.



Figure 14 Streetscape elevation - the rear addition is not visible from the street.

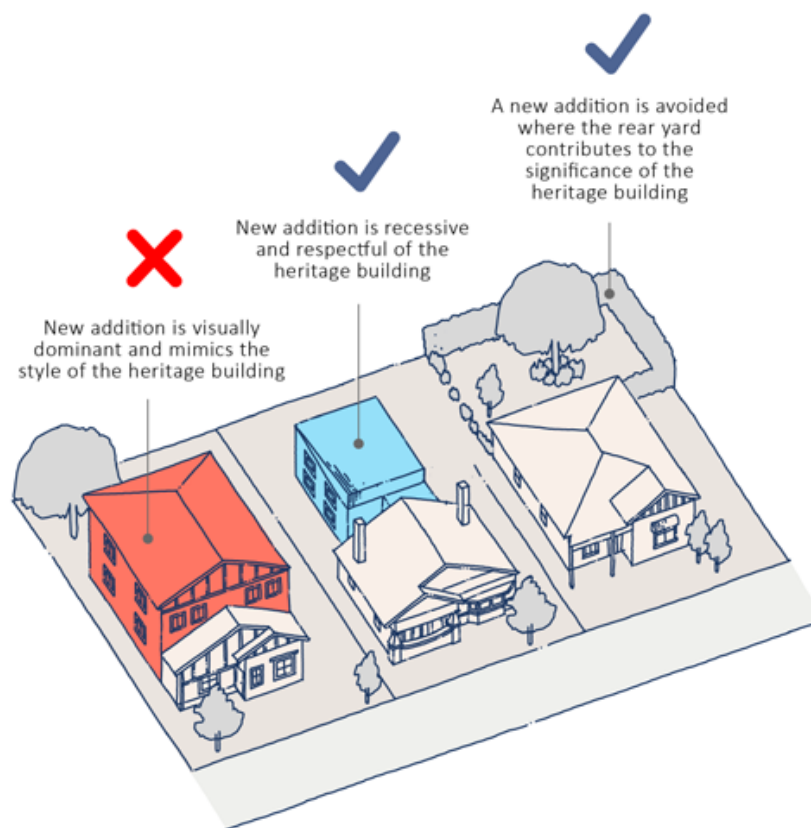


Figure 15 Rear residential additions.



Figure 16 Dwelling, Geelong West. Contemporary two storey additions as a separate entity at the rear with minimal visibility from the street. The garage is recessive and is a contemporary interpretation of the dwelling given its exposure at the front.

Two storey additions

- The height of the proposed two storey addition should respond to the prevailing heights of neighbouring heritage dwellings.
- Two storey additions should be setback and designed to minimise visibility and dominance from the public realm.
- For corner sites two storey additions should be setback in alignment with the prevailing setbacks of heritage buildings along both streetscape frontages.
- Two storey additions above a dwelling should:
 - » be visually recessive from the principal frontage of the heritage building when viewed from the public realm.
 - » be setback in alignment with the traversing roof ridgeline or apex point of the heritage dwelling and neighbouring heritage dwellings where applicable. Otherwise, a minimum 5 metre setback from the existing front wall plane should be considered.
 - » reflect the roof forms, lines and proportions of the heritage building to break up bulk and avoid a monolithic appearance.
- Two storey additions that are to be constructed as separate visual entities to the existing building, should be:
 - » Located at the rear (see **Rear additions**).
 - » Carefully connected to the existing building by a link. They may be designed with different forms and complexity if there are minimal views from the public realm.

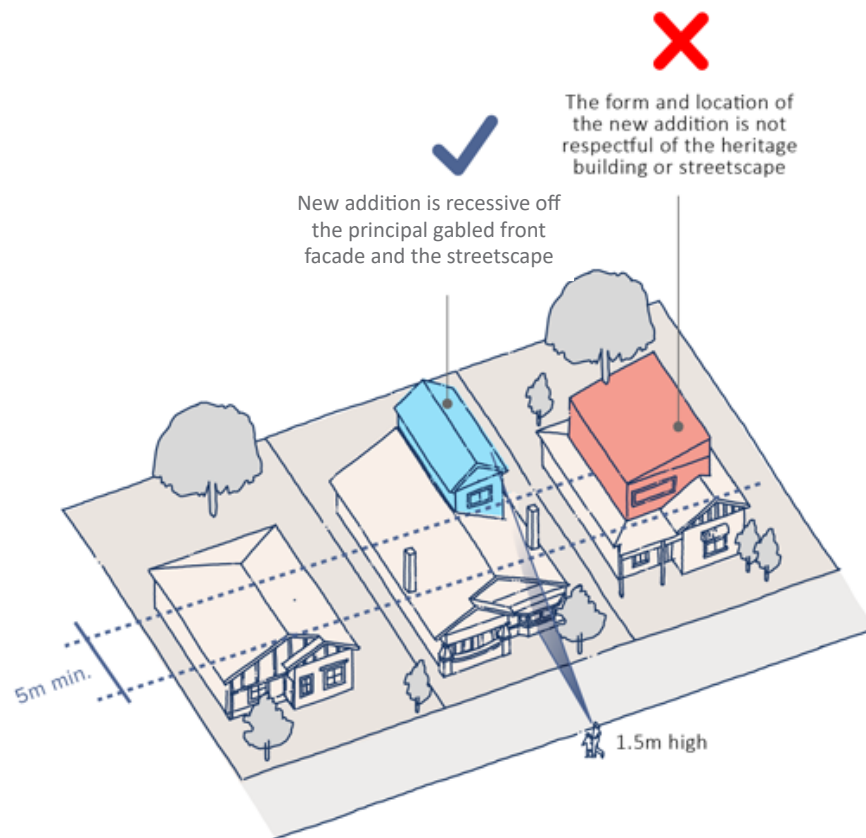


Figure 17 Two storey residential additions.



Figure 18 *Dwelling, Geelong.* The two storey addition at the rear has minimal visibility from the street.

Side additions

- Side additions should be avoided if the side setback is important to the significance of the heritage place.
- Side additions should be highly recessive, modest in scale, and read as a separate visual entity to the heritage building.
- Side additions should be setback by a minimum of 1 metre from the frontage of a heritage building on the site, and any adjoining heritage building.
- The roof of any side addition should be located under the eaves or gutter line of the heritage building.

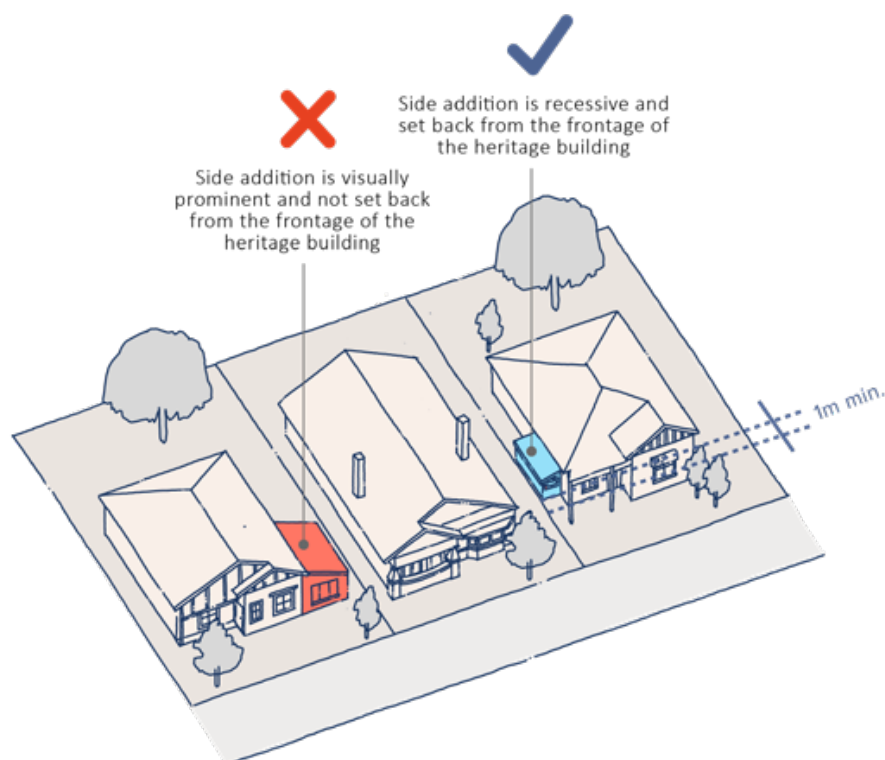


Figure 19 Side residential additions.



Figure 20 Dwelling, Geelong

This side addition is highly recessive and modest in scale, located under the eaves of the heritage dwelling (source: City of Greater Geelong).

4.2 Commercial

General commercial considerations

- Additions should not physically or visually undermine the significant fabric and setting of the heritage building.
- Additions should maintain the visual prominence of the heritage building.
- Additions should retain the three-dimensional form and construction of the heritage place, and avoid facadism. The retention of only the front facade provides limited appreciation of the building's significance.
- Ensure additions have regard to the scale and height of the existing building and the heritage context.
- Ensure that the additions are setback at least 6 metres from the front wall plane of the heritage building. For corner buildings, the upper level addition should also be set behind the secondary street wall plane.
- The addition should use materials and finishes that respect but do not replicate the character and appearance of the heritage building and neighbouring heritage buildings.
- New additions should respect the form, architectural expression and rhythm of the heritage buildings and neighbouring heritage buildings.

Commercial considerations in Central Geelong

- In addition to the general considerations:
 - » Additions should provide free air space from the retained portions of the heritage building and neighbouring buildings (Figure 21).
 - » For upper level and tower additions, in addition to the general commercial considerations, reference should also be made to Figures 21 and 22.

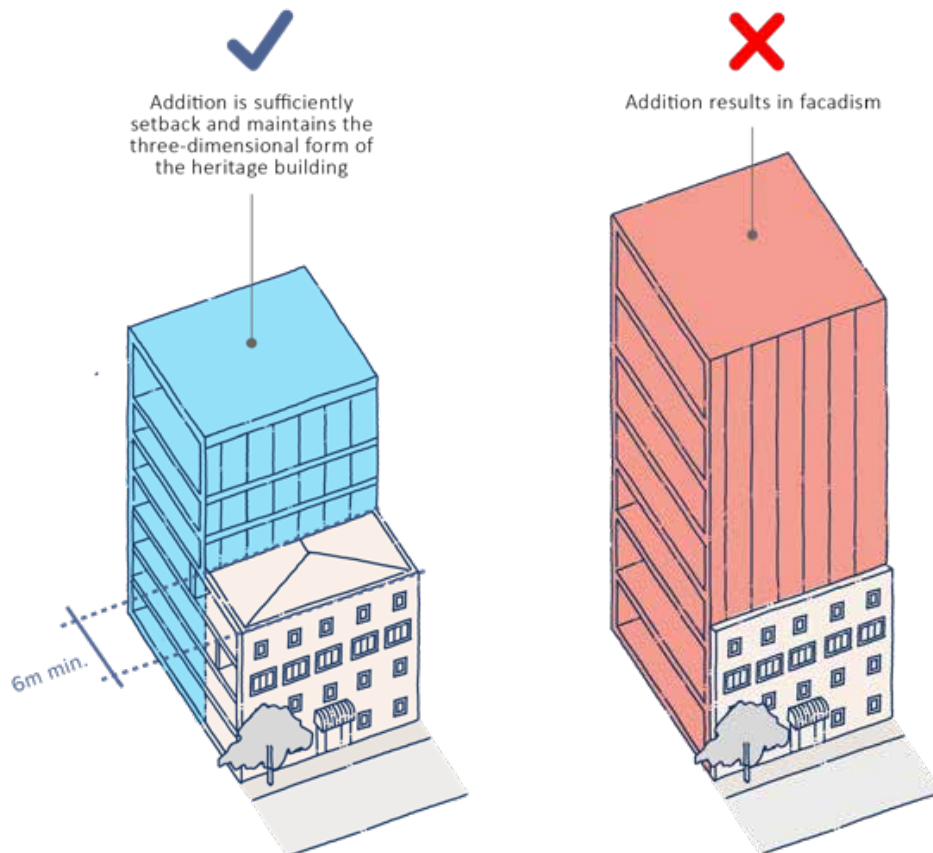


Figure 21 Commercial additions.

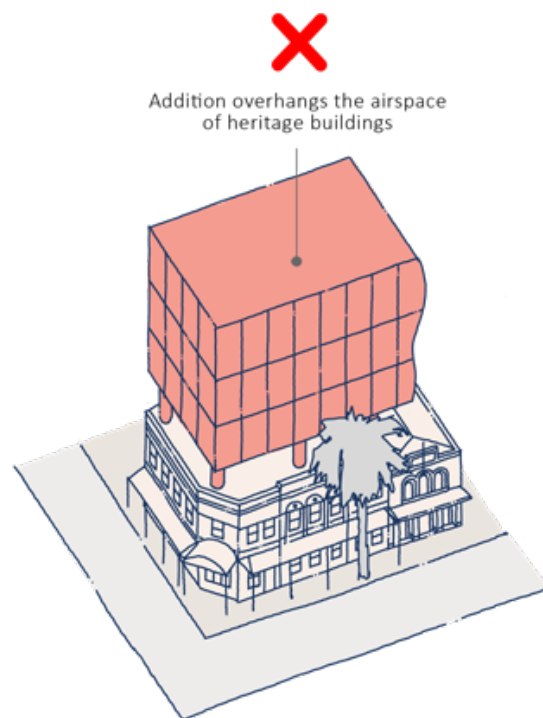


Figure 22 Commercial additions above the air space of a heritage building.

Verandahs in Geelong

Existing and reconstructed verandahs are an important part of our streetscapes.

From the 19th century Geelong's commercial streetscapes have been characterised by a range of verandah types influenced by stylistic and technological advancements and evolving legislation. This includes post supported verandahs with standard verandah types initiated by the Geelong Town Council in 1893. The first cantilevered verandah was built in Geelong in 1911.

Verandah additions

- The reconstruction of a street verandah should be based on historic and/or physical evidence.
- Where no evidence of an original verandah exists, a contemporary interpretation of an original street verandah could be considered.

Verandah reconstruction

- The reconstruction of a street verandah in Central Geelong may be considered if it aligns with the policies and recommendations in the **Geelong Verandah Study (2006)**.
- The reconstruction of a street verandah in Pakington Street, Geelong West, may be considered if it is based on historical, physical and/or comparative evidence. This evidence might include historic photographs or drawings, evidence of verandah roof outlines on the front walls or from a comparative perspective or original verandahs as part of stylistically similar buildings.



Figure 23 Moorabool Street, Geelong. Looking south from Malop Street showing post-supported verandahs, c.1910, State Library of Victoria.



Figure 24 Commercial building at 160-162 Moorabool Street, Geelong

Verandah reconstruction is sympathetic of the existing character of the heritage building.

5. New buildings

New work should be readily identifiable as such, but must respect and have minimal impact on the cultural significance of the place.

– Burra Charter 2013: Article 22.2

A thoughtful design approach for new buildings is encouraged to respect and enhance the heritage significance, character and appearance of the heritage place. Therefore a contemporary design approach is needed that is evidence-based and considers scale, form, materials, and streetscape context.

Contemporary interpretation can have a variety of meanings. In this case it is an analysis of the nearby buildings in the heritage area; the significance of the heritage place; and its integrity. Combined these considerations will assist in determining the type of contemporary interpretation that will best suit the site.

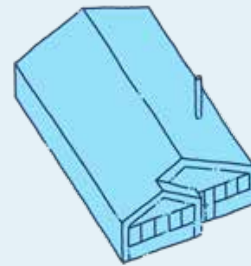


Figure 25 *Dwelling, Drumcondra (centre).* An example of conservative middle infill.



Figure 26 *Dwelling, Geelong West (centre).* An example of creative middle infill.

5.1 Residential

General residential considerations

- Maintain view lines to and from heritage buildings.
- New buildings should not visually dominate or obscure heritage buildings when viewed from the public realm.
- New buildings should be sympathetic in proportion, and match prevailing heights, forms and lines of neighbouring heritage buildings.
- New buildings should respect and respond to existing significant heritage features of neighbouring buildings such as verandahs, and fenestration with contemporary design solutions.
- New buildings should not mimic features of heritage buildings.

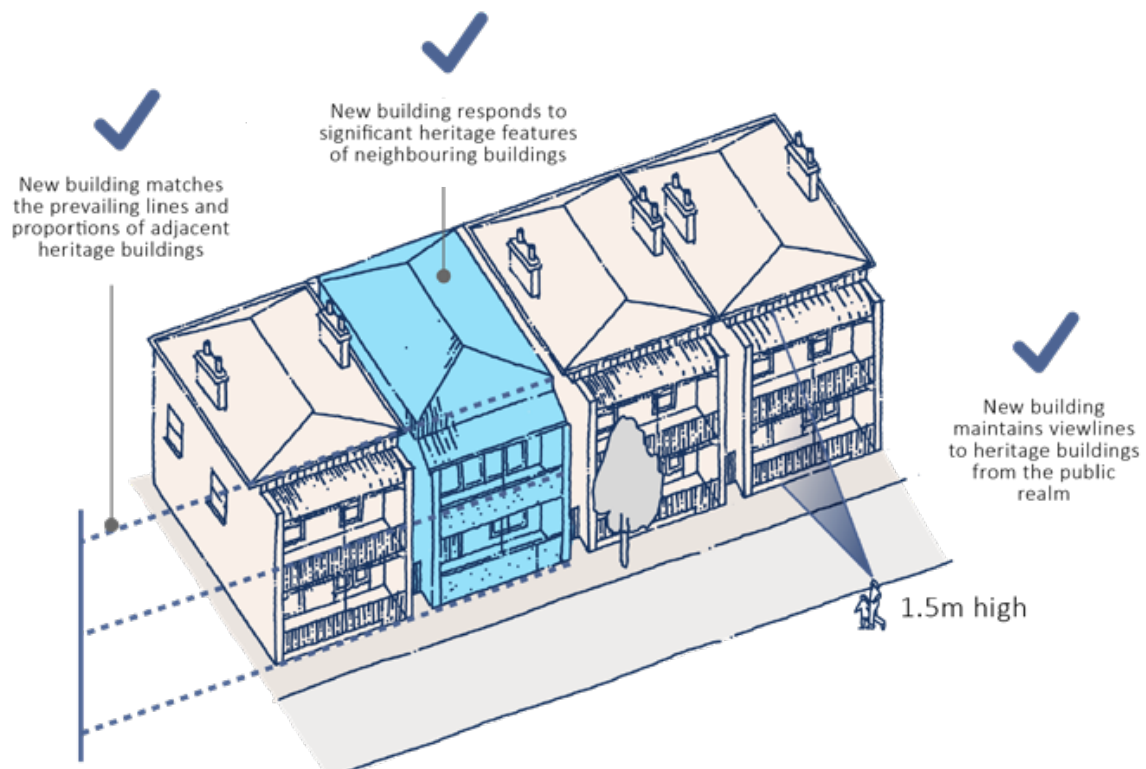


Figure 27 General residential new buildings.

Setbacks

- The front setback of a new building must match the predominant pattern of front setbacks of neighbouring heritage buildings.
- If there is no predominant pattern, the new building should be set back within the range established by adjacent heritage buildings.
- For corner sites, the setback to the secondary street traditionally may be smaller given that in most situations dwellings on corner sites were 'bookends' in the streetscape.
- New buildings should not be set closer to the front boundary than the closest adjacent heritage building.

Innovative design solutions

Innovative solutions might draw on the principal roof forms in the heritage streetscape. Any 'atypical' elements should be recessive and secondary to ensure that the proposal contributes to the rhythm and character of the street.

Height and form

- The height, massing and form of new buildings should respond to the scale and pattern of neighbouring heritage buildings.
- The street-facing elevation should align with the established parapet or eave heights of significant neighbouring buildings.
- Where the streetscape context is varied, the height of the new building should transition between adjoining lower and higher elements.
- The roof form and overall shape of a new building should be sympathetic to the predominant forms and building shapes of the heritage context.
- The footprint of the new building should be consistent with the established pattern (e.g. detached or semi-detached).
- New buildings should avoid visual prominence.
- Upper storeys of new buildings should be:
 - » visually recessive from the principal frontages of an adjoining heritage building when viewed from the public realm.
 - » setback in alignment with the traversing roof ridgeline or apex point of neighbouring significant buildings where applicable, otherwise the upper storey component should be setback 5 metres minimum from the proposed front single storey wall plane.

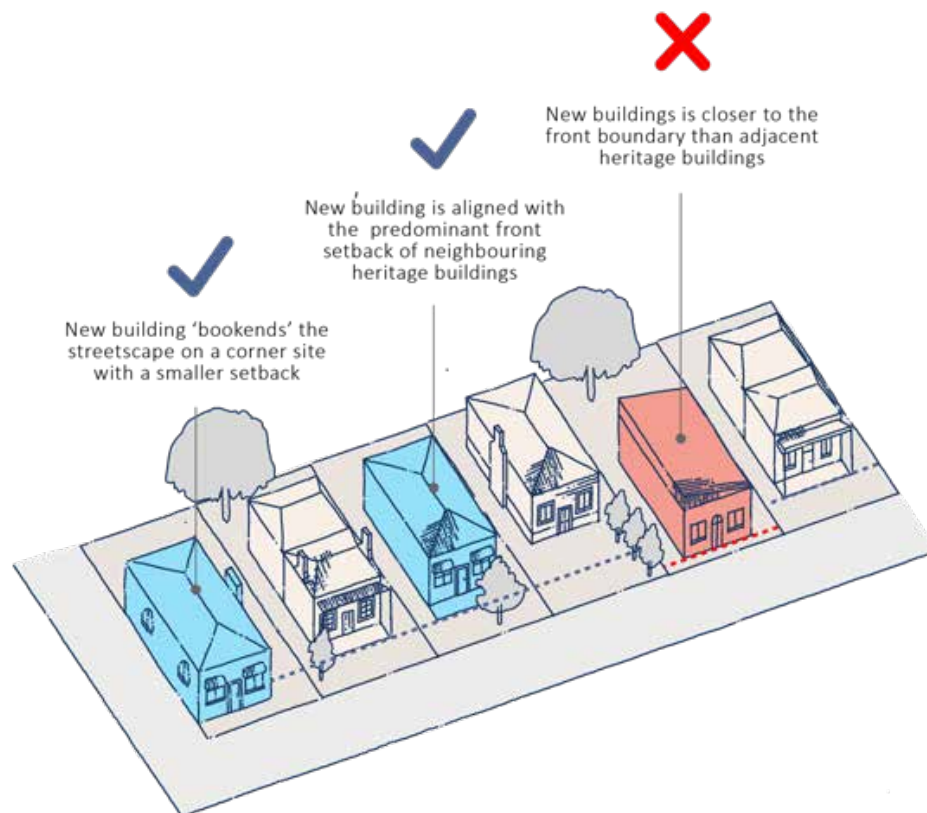


Figure 28 Setbacks of new buildings.

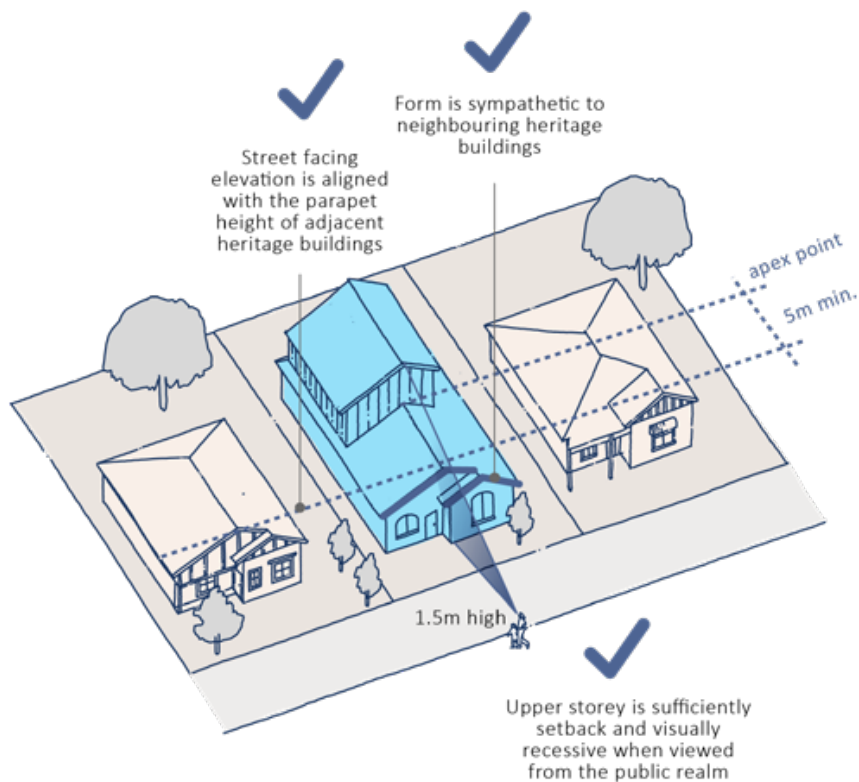


Figure 29 Height and form of new buildings

5.2 High density residential

Higher density residential and mixed-use developments

Higher density residential and mixed use development may be considered to address the critical demand for housing where it does not compromise the integrity of significant heritage settings.

Large individual heritage sites

- Ensure the retention and conservation of significant heritage assets on the site.
- Ensure any existing principal views from the public realm are retained and not diminished.
- Ensure that the setbacks, scale, and form of new development respects the visual strength and character of the heritage assets and does not overwhelm them.
- Encourage new development to be a contemporary interpretation of the heritage assets on the site where visually connected to the heritage assets on the site.
- On sites that are isolated within or next to heritage places, and do not face a heritage streetscape, there may be potential for development at a significantly larger scale than nearby heritage buildings, provided it responds appropriately to the surrounding context.
- Ensure any new development is setback, with the massing/volumes articulated to retain key views and that the new work does not become dominant focal points within the heritage area.
- Ensure that the new development is not visually overwhelming as a backdrop when viewed from the heritage streetscapes surrounding it. The height, scale and forms of new development should ensure minimal visibility from the public realm.
- Materials and finishes should be non-reflective, and their application should not replicate the neighbouring heritage buildings.
- Ensure vehicular access uses existing thoroughfares. Where this is not possible, proposed thoroughfares should be in locations that minimise adverse affect on neighbouring heritage places.

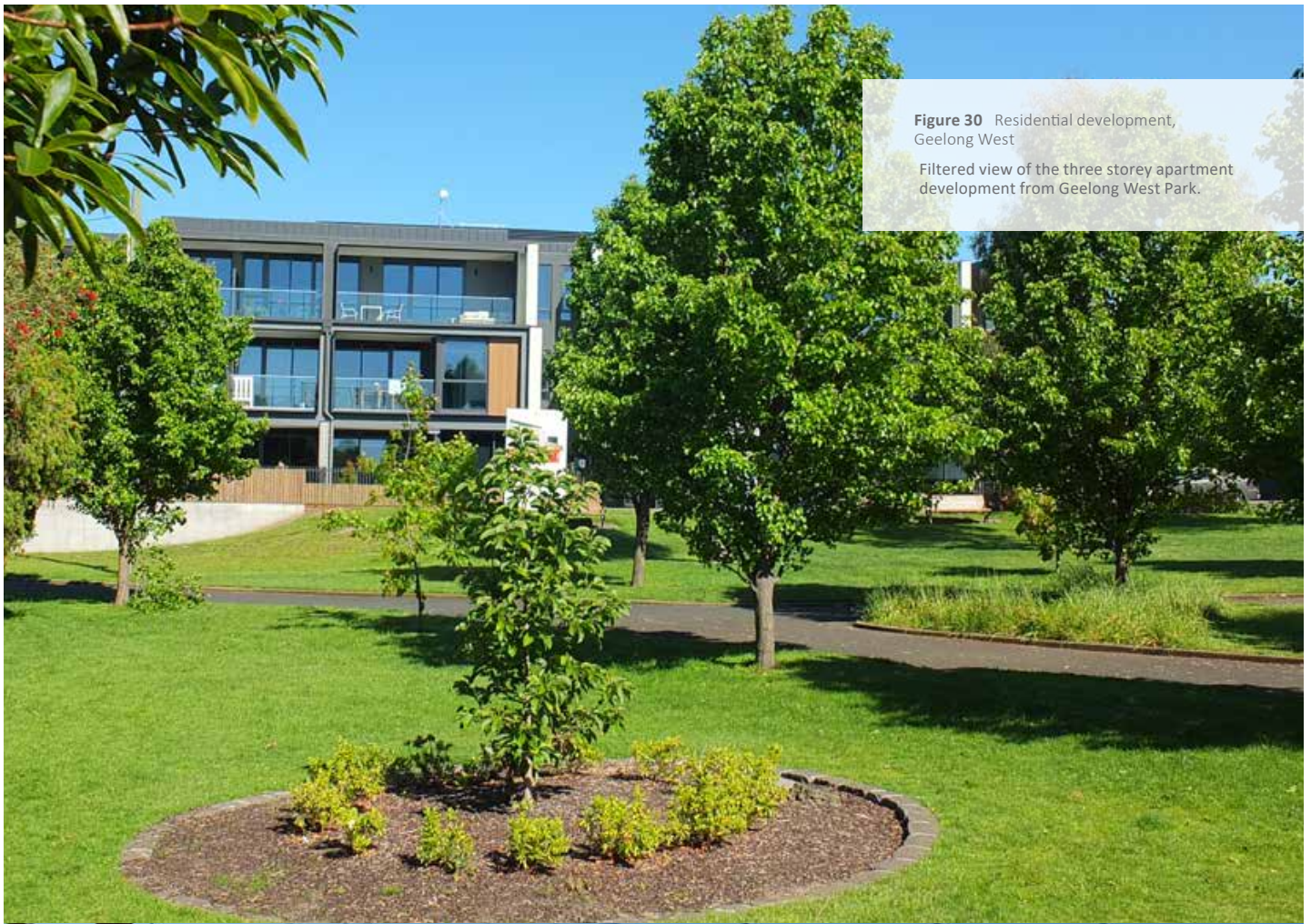


Figure 30 Residential development, Geelong West

Filtered view of the three storey apartment development from Geelong West Park.

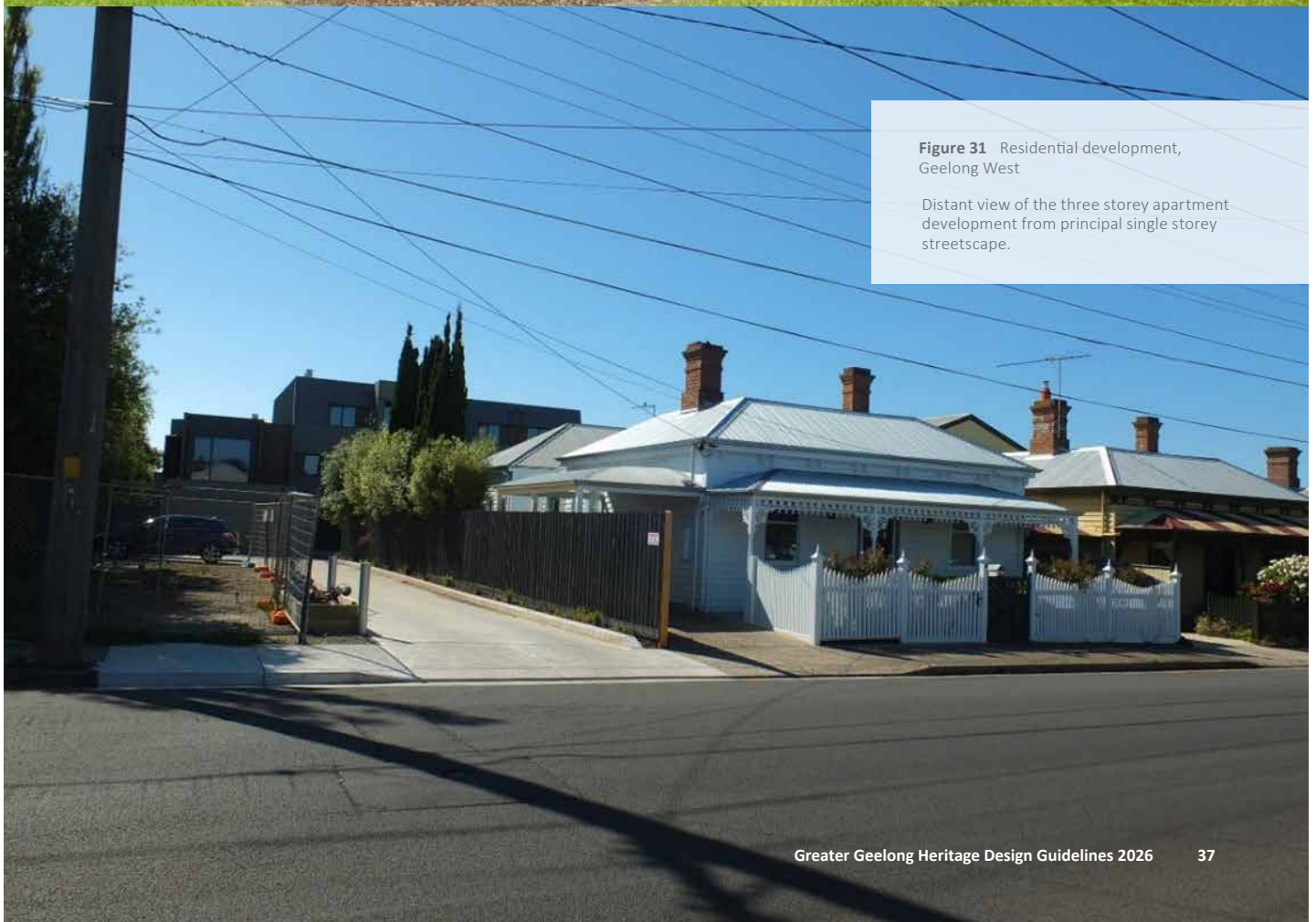


Figure 31 Residential development, Geelong West

Distant view of the three storey apartment development from principal single storey streetscape.

5.3 Commercial

Commercial infill developments

New commercial developments within a heritage context require careful attention to how the building presents to the street, particularly its elevation, height variation, fenestration, and architectural detailing, to ensure it integrates sensitively with adjacent heritage buildings. Additional consideration is also needed for taller elements, such as towers, especially where they are permitted under non-heritage planning controls.

New commercial buildings

- Ensure that the street facade of the new building aligns with the front elevations of neighbouring heritage buildings.
- The street wall height (podium) of the new building should align with the height, proportion, and façade articulation of neighbouring significant heritage buildings.
- Ensure that the detailing of the street façade is an innovative interpretation of the fenestration, wall and parapet of neighbouring significant heritage buildings. Replication of heritage details should be avoided.
- Upper floors should:
 - » be set back from the street wall height by at least 6 metres.
 - » respect the architectural expression and rhythm of the frontage of neighbouring heritage buildings.
 - » not overhang the airspace of adjoining heritage buildings.
- The materiality and proportions of the new building must not visually overwhelm neighbouring heritage buildings.
- New buildings should maintain the prominence of neighbouring heritage buildings without visually overwhelming them.

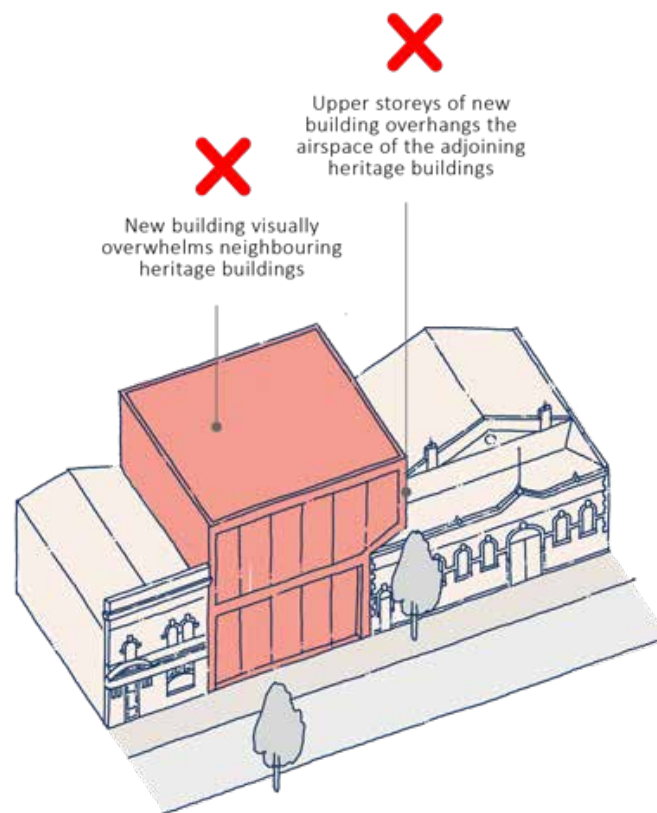


Figure 32 New commercial buildings.

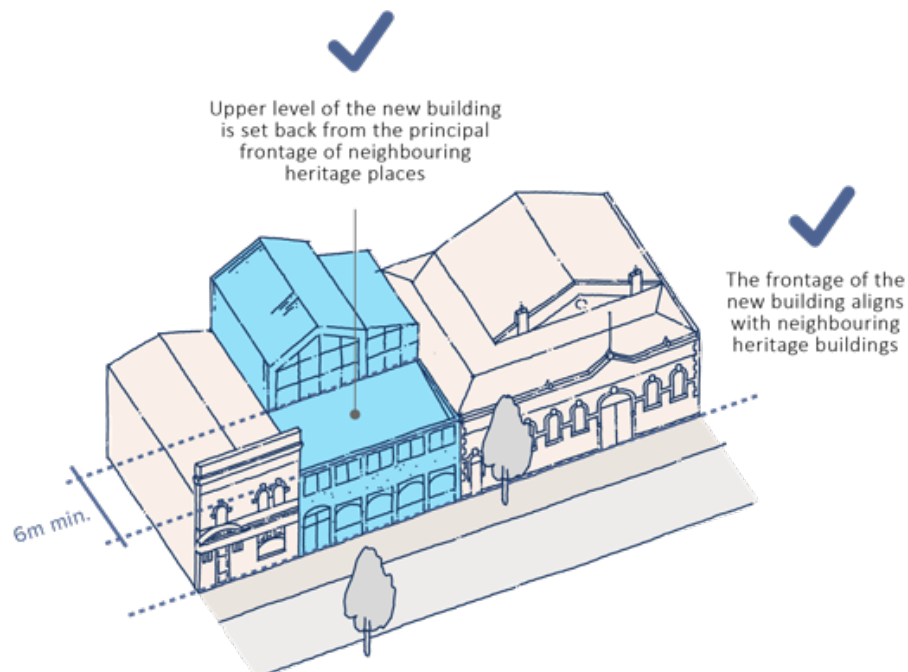


Figure 33 New commercial buildings.

Verandahs

- Verandahs may be considered to new buildings where they form a significant part of the character and appearance of neighbouring heritage buildings.
- Innovative design solutions and contemporary interpretation of verandahs on neighbouring heritage buildings are encouraged.
- Replication of original verandahs are discouraged.

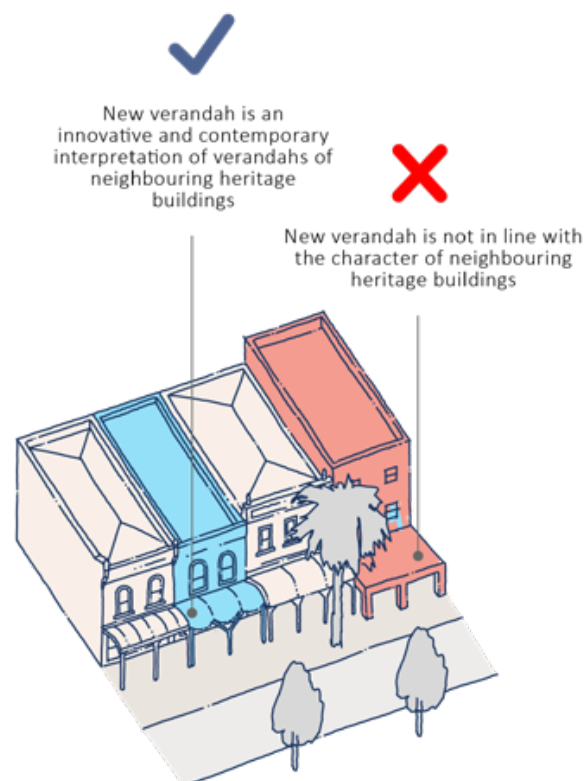


Figure 34 New commercial buildings with verandahs.

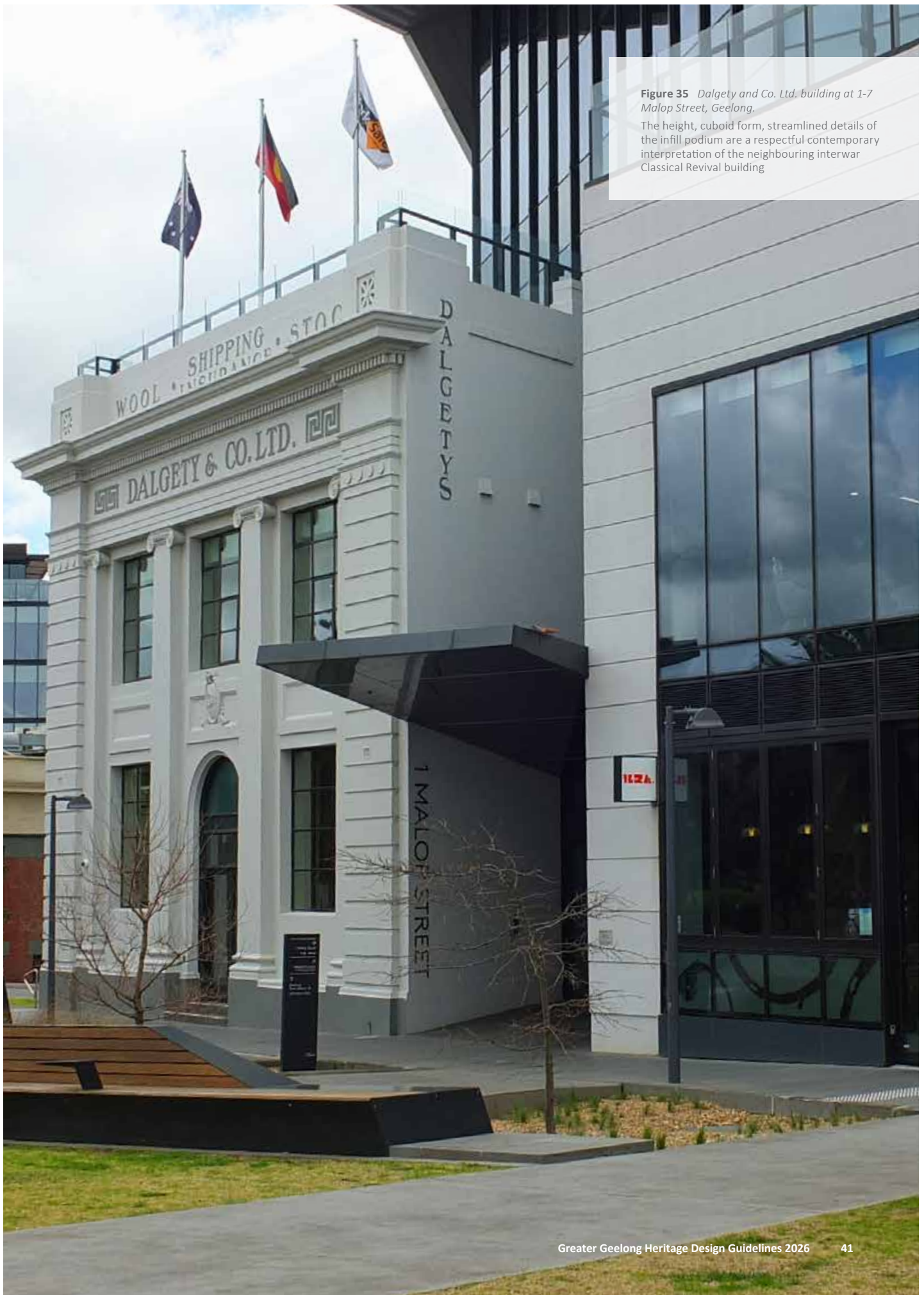
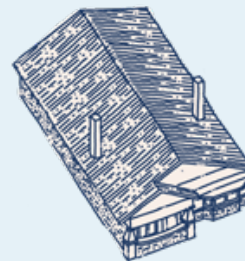


Figure 35 Dalgety and Co. Ltd. building at 1-7 Malop Street, Geelong.

The height, cuboid form, streamlined details of the infill podium are a respectful contemporary interpretation of the neighbouring interwar Classical Revival building

6. Exterior finishes

Treating heritage buildings with new finishes requires careful consideration of existing finishes, appropriate paint types, and colour schemes that respect the building's significance. Surface finishes, including original paint, render, or brickwork, often contribute to the historical significance of a place.



It is important to assess whether existing finishes are original and should be retained, or if early finishes could be revealed or reproduced to enhance heritage value.

Colour schemes for heritage buildings should respond to the visual characteristics and appearance of the heritage place. A variety of colours or tones should be used to pick out details such as window frames, doors and verandah fretwork.

New additions and buildings in Heritage Overlays should use materials and colours that complement the heritage character of the area.

This includes using appropriate materials, forms, and colours that are sympathetic to the surrounding heritage context. For example a dark metal wall cladding or dark or face brickwork may be visually prominent when set in a streetscape with predominantly light weatherboard clad buildings.

Painting schemes for new buildings should be carefully considered to ensure they do not detract from the heritage values.

Colour schemes for new work should be muted to mitigate visual dominance which can occur from using strongly contrasting colours or bright tones and colours.

Exterior finishes to heritage buildings

- Determine if existing paint is original, introduced, or needs to be removed or reproduced.
- Choose paints and finishes that are compatible with the building's materials and historical period.
- Prioritise breathable, vapour-permeable paints for rendered surfaces for heritage buildings.
- Retain original colour scheme wherever possible.
- Use colour schemes that reflect the architectural style and era of the building and highlight architectural details such as architraves, window frames, sashes, doors, verandahs or eaves detailing with traditional colour contrasts.
- Alternatively, apply contemporary colour in a traditional way such as contrasting the colour between painted walls and painted details.
- Avoid painting previously unpainted surfaces.
- When removing introduced paint, use only approved poultices that do not damage the underlying material.
- Avoid abrasive methods such as sandblasting, which can cause irreversible harm.



Figure 36 Geelong Covent Garden, Moorabool Street, Geelong, showing introduced overpainting to the facade and the introduced shopfronts and verandah.

Identifying original finishes

Information about original or historically significant finishes may require specialist expertise. Historic photographs, paint scrapes and heritage colour swatches in local paint shops are some sources that may be useful.



Figure 37 Geelong Covent Garden, Moorabool Street, Geelong, showing the exterior as largely originally intended. The overpainting was removed by approved poultice method, leaving the surface of the brickwork and tiles undamaged.

Exterior finishes to new buildings and additions

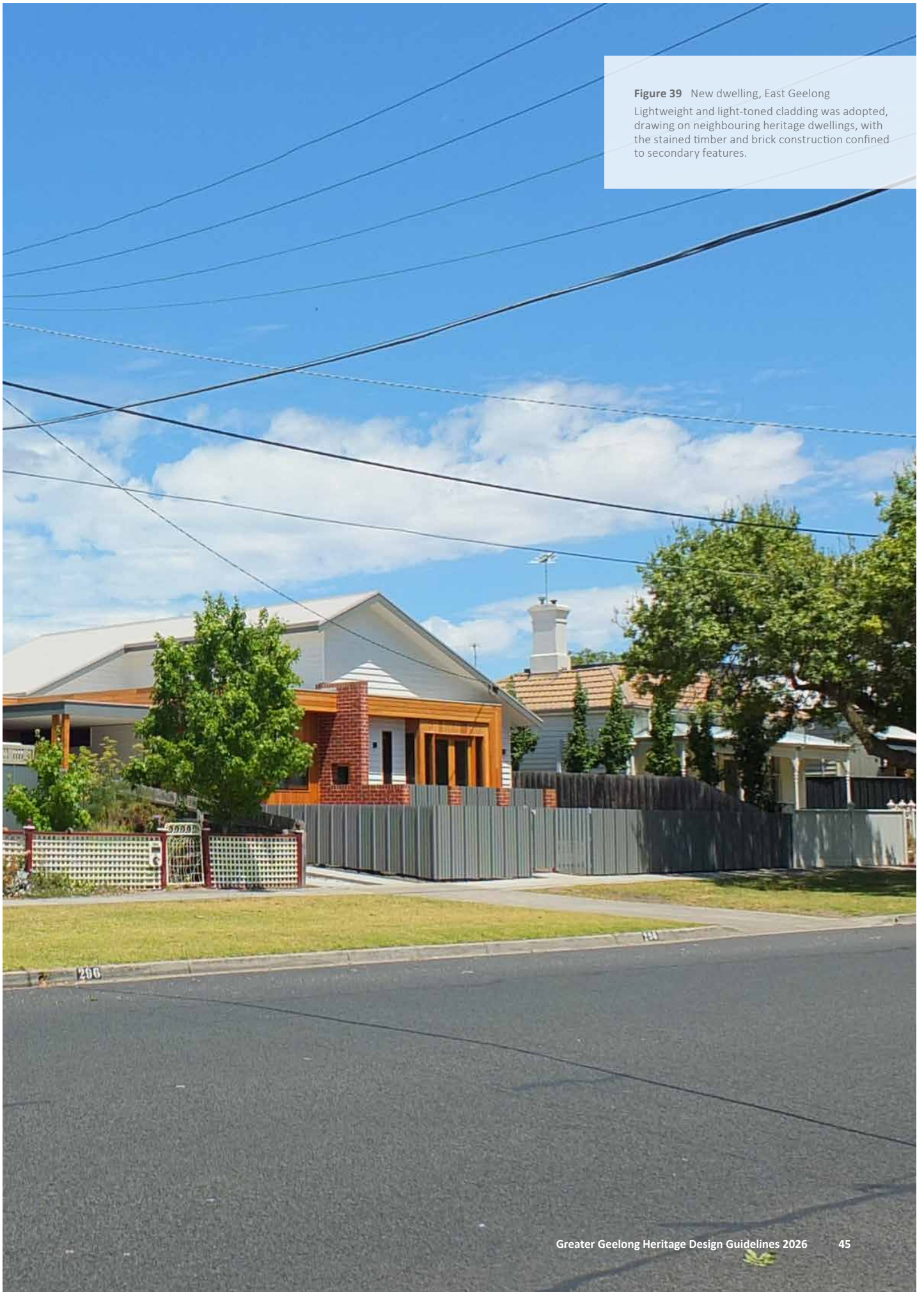
- Select materials and finishes that harmonise with those of the heritage building and area. This may involve the use of weatherboard profile and rendered masonry for walls where timber buildings predominate in the streetscape.
- Consideration may be given to other lightweight wall claddings that are not visually prominent and therefore do not undermine the significance of the heritage place.
- For roof cladding ensure that the pattern and material is respectful to the heritage building and/or the heritage place. Traditionally corrugated profile sheet metal roofs, and galvanised steel predominated. Today the more common equivalent is Zinalume® which is not particularly compatible with galvanised steel and remains highly reflective for a longer time period. Colorbond®, which is a pre-finished coating, may be a suitable alternative.
- For new work exposed to public view, contrast roof and wall construction, with metal cladding limited to roofs.
- Apply simple colour schemes for new work utilizing muted tones and colours without replicating historic schemes.



Figure 38 Streetscape, East Geelong. A Victorian dwelling (left) with a new Zinalume® roof and a Late Victorian dwelling (right) with a new galvanised steel roof.

Figure 39 New dwelling, East Geelong

Lightweight and light-toned cladding was adopted, drawing on neighbouring heritage dwellings, with the stained timber and brick construction confined to secondary features.



7. Vehicle access & accommodation

In many 19th and early 20th century heritage areas, vehicle crossovers are not traditional street elements as most residential subdivisions before World War One did not plan for front vehicular access. Lanes were commonly provided to give rear access. Even in the 1920s, garaging was usually situated at the rear to accommodate the growing popularisation of the motor car.

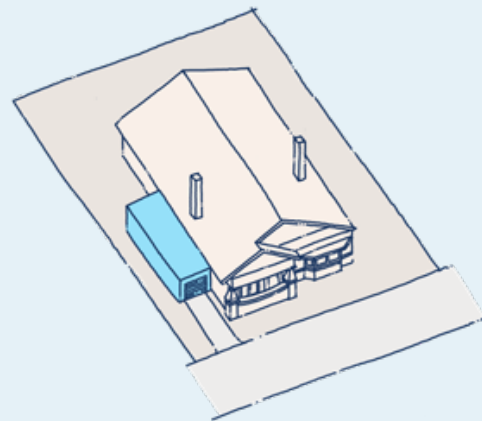


Figure 40 Dwelling, Drumcondra. A recessive garage to a dwelling.

New crossovers and driveways

- Avoid new crossovers and driveways to heritage buildings, particularly in streetscapes where there are few or no crossovers.
- Where required, ensure new crossovers and driveways are highly recessive, utilising existing driveways or rear lanes where possible.
- Avoid multiple crossovers to a property where this will undermine the existing setting.
- A new cross-over should be limited to a single vehicle width.
- Double vehicle driveways should be splayed to a single vehicle width at the front property boundary.
- Retain existing intact and significant kerbs and channels.
- New driveways and crossovers should be positioned to avoid loss of significant features such as original fences and trees.

Crossover and driveway materials and finishes

- Most driveways and crossovers in Greater Geelong are of concrete construction. To avoid visual prominence the concrete may require colouring in a muted tone.
- The pavement material and finish for the cross-over should be based on historical precedents where applicable or drawn from the prevailing crossover paving finish in the street.
- The finish of a new driveway should enhance the setting of the property, and so the finish will depend on the significant character of the setting.

Kerbs and channels

- Retain intact bluestone kerbs and channels.
- Replace missing bluestones to match existing in colour and profile.
- For altered streetscapes of bluestone kerbs and channels (those under 70% intactness), the existing construction and appearance may be simulated. This may be achieved through the use of Run-of-Mill (ROM) bluestone pitchers measuring 300 x 2125 x 150mm, together with grey coloured concrete trays and bases. Concrete trays and bases are to include chamfered corners and are to be constructed to a total width of 500 mm.

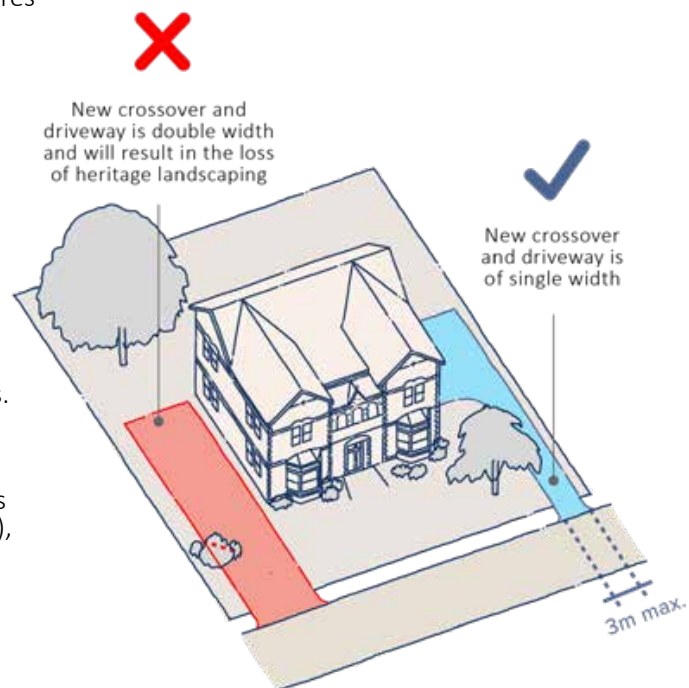


Figure 41 New crossovers and driveways.

Vehicle accommodation to heritage places

- Where possible, new carports and garages should be located at the rear of the property.
- Avoid locating new garages, carports or uncovered parking spaces either fully or partially within the front setbacks of heritage buildings.
- New garages and carports should not visually dominate or obscure heritage buildings when viewed from the public realm.
- Side located carports and garages should be setback by at least one metre from the frontage of the heritage building on the site, or the frontage of the neighbouring heritage building, whichever is further from the street boundary.
- For corner sites, where a carport or garage is proposed to the secondary street it should be aligned with the side wall plane of the heritage building.
- Existing carports and garages should not form a basis for a new replacement carport or garage in the same front or forward location.
- New garages and carports should be recessive, and match prevailing proportions, heights and forms of the heritage building or streetscape.
- New garages and carports should complement, but not mimic, features of heritage buildings.
- Materials and finishes should respect but not replicate those of the heritage building. High-quality contemporary materials are encouraged if they are sympathetic in tone and texture.
- Ensure that the eaves of a heritage building are retained when a new garage or carpark is located to the side.

Vehicle accommodation to new dwellings

- A new garage or carport should not be a dominant feature as part of a new building.
- The detailing and appearance of a new garage should be integrated with the overall character of the principal elevation to avoid a blank garage wall face.

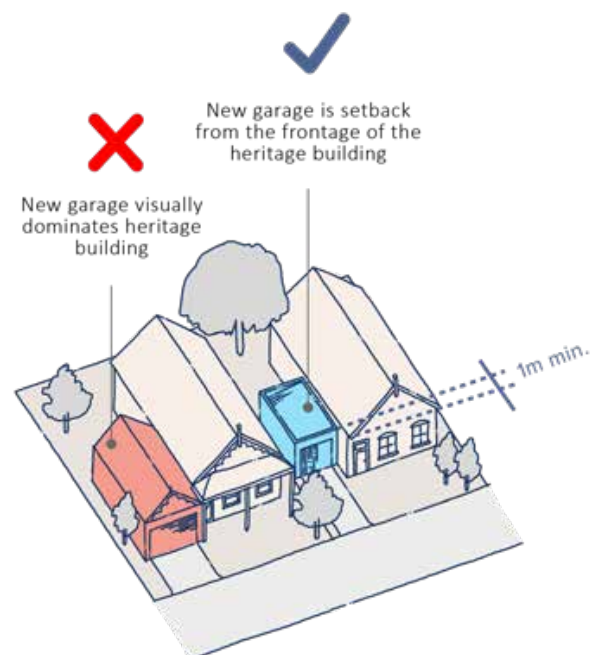


Figure 42 Vehicle accommodation setback from the heritage building front facade.

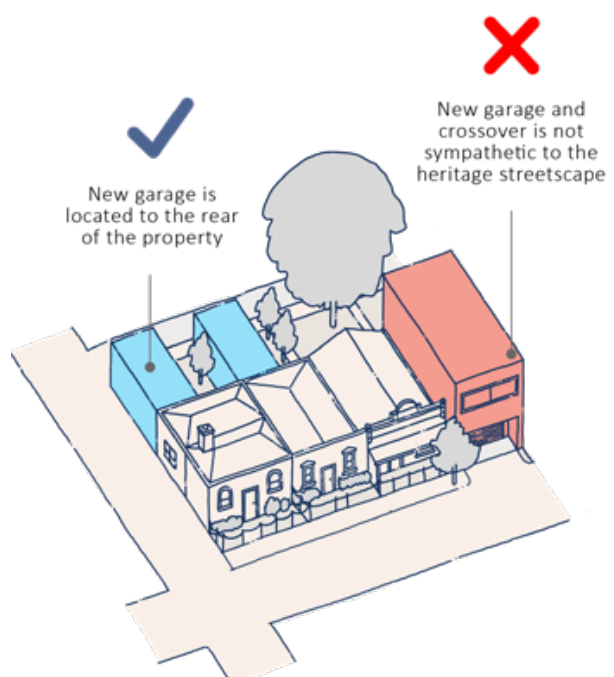


Figure 43 Vehicle accommodation to the rear of a heritage streetscape.

Figure 44 Dwelling, Geelong West
A recessive garage addition to a heritage dwelling.



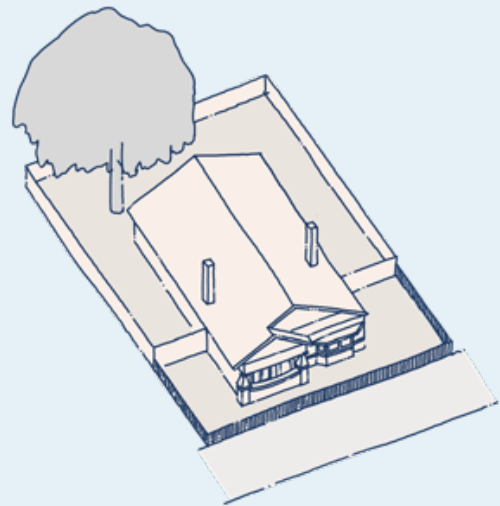
8. Settings

Conservation requires the retention of an appropriate setting. This includes retention of the visual and sensory setting, as well as the retention of spiritual and other cultural relationships that contribute to the cultural significance of the place.

New construction, demolition, intrusions or other changes which would adversely affect the setting or relationships are not appropriate.

– Burra Charter 2013: Article 8

Heritage landscapes cover a diversity of places from private domestic gardens to public landscaped settings, including carefully designed public parks and gardens and reserves. They may also include historic rural or industrial landscapes which can demonstrate early farming, cultivation approaches, mining or other industrial practices. These Guidelines focus on the private garden settings identified as significant to a heritage place. New fences and landscaping should respect and enhance the character of the heritage place, maintaining the integrity of the streetscape and the original architectural context.



New fences

- New fences should be sympathetic to the architectural style and era of the heritage place.
- The design, materials, height, scale, visual permeability and detailing of new fences should match or complement the prevailing character of heritage fences within the precinct.
- Solid, high, or visually obstructive fences are discouraged unless they are characteristic of the original precinct.
- Use traditional materials such as timber, cast iron, brick, rendered masonry, woven wire and chain mesh as appropriate to the heritage style and local context. Modern or non-traditional materials should be avoided unless justified by the specific heritage context.
- The height of the front fence is dependent on the era and scale of the property. Traditional suburban fence heights should typically not exceed 1.2 metres, unless there is a historical precedent in the precinct.
- Security gates and other intrusive elements should be avoided unless they can be integrated sensitively and are justified by the heritage context.

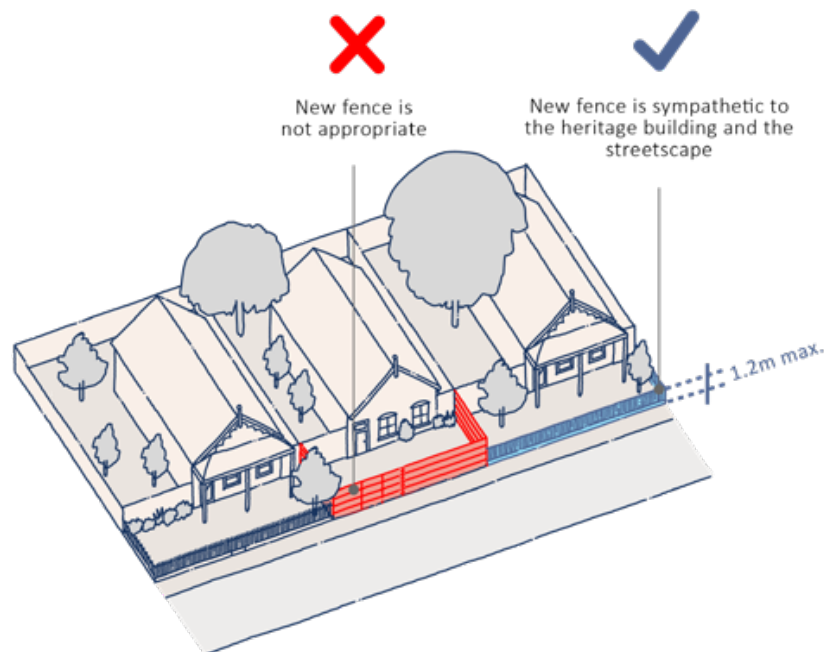


Figure 45 New fences.

Restored and reconstructed fences

- Original fences that contribute to the heritage significance should be preserved and, where necessary, restored using traditional materials and techniques.
- Where original fencing is damaged or missing, replacement sections should replicate the original design, materials, and detailing as closely as possible.
- If only part of an original fence remains new work should incorporate and respect these surviving elements.
- For heritage buildings, the reconstruction of a previous original front fence may be considered if this enhances the significance of the heritage place.
- The reconstruction should be based on historical and where applicable physical evidence.
- Where historical and physical evidence does not exist consider traditional fences of comparable heritage properties of similar design and construction.

Types of front fences

For the types of front fences that prevailed in Greater Geelong throughout the 19th and 20th centuries refer to **Appendix - Fence Styles**.



Figure 46 Dwelling and new front fence, East Geelong

The new visually permeable, capped timber picket front fence and gate is in keeping with the Edwardian character of the dwelling.

Heritage landscaping

- Retain original trees, hedges, garden beds, pathways, fences, and other landscape elements that are significant to the heritage character of the site. Their removal or significant alteration should only occur where absolutely necessary.
- Undertake regular maintenance of original landscape features, including trees, to preserve their condition and heritage value.
- Consider reinstating lost or altered heritage landscape features such as historic garden beds, paths, or boundary treatments.
- Ensure that new works, including paving or construction, do not damage the root systems of existing significant trees. A report from a qualified arborist should be obtained.

Application considerations

It is recognised that an application for a planning permit is limited to those few heritage places where tree controls apply. This section also gives informal guidance about managing heritage landscapes and new landscaping to heritage places.

New landscaping

- New landscaping and tree planting should be sympathetic to the historical character of the area. Use plant species, materials, and design styles that reflect or are compatible with the period and character of the heritage place.
- Avoid introducing large, dominant, or visually intrusive elements that detract from the heritage setting. New landscape features should be subordinate to the main heritage fabric.
- Where visible from the street or public spaces, new landscaping should enhance the visual quality and historical authenticity of the streetscape.
- New trees should be planted in locations that do not obscure significant views of heritage buildings or features, or compromise the integrity of original landscape layouts.

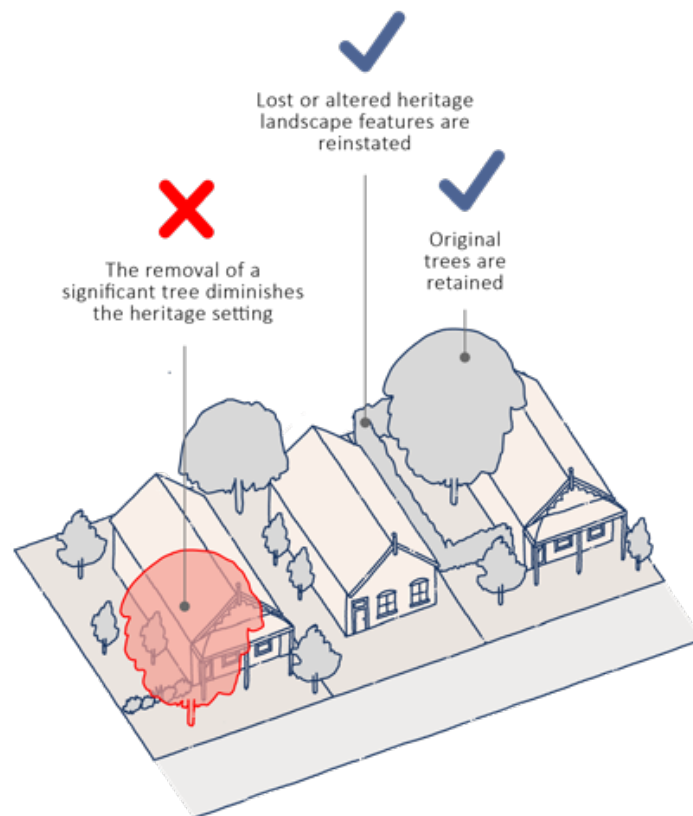
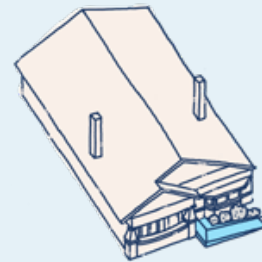


Figure 47 New and heritage landscaping.

9. Accessibility upgrades

The City of Greater Geelong advocates upgrades to heritage buildings to ensure dignified and equitable access for people with disabilities to and within the buildings, in line with the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) and relevant building codes, standards and regulations.

Any changes to a heritage building should also be respectful of the historic fabric and the historic character.



Accessibility upgrades

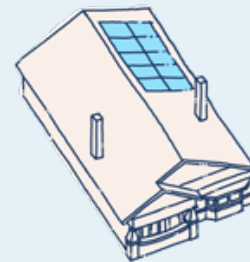
- Design new accessible features (ramps, lifts, accessible toilets) to be visually compatible with the heritage character.
- Use materials, forms, and details that respect the building's historic context by being streamlined in design and construction, and subtle in character.
- Upgrades to existing buildings should not involve the removal significant fabric.
- Ensure that upgrades do not visually overwhelm significant fabric or views.
- Where possible, make accessible upgrades reversible so that original fabric can be restored in the future without permanent damage.
- Where possible set access ramps away from significant walls to ensure the retention of existing subfloor ventilation. Drainage between the ramp and the wall might be required.
- Ensure that new accessible elements contribute positively to the streetscape and do not detract from the heritage significance or appearance of the precinct.



Figure 48 Former Shenton Methodist Church (now part of Geelong High School), Geelong. New ramp and stairs added for accessibility.

10. Sustainability

Retaining and reusing heritage buildings offers significant environmental benefits. The preservation of existing fabric of the heritage place: may reduce the carbon footprint, and avoid the loss of embodied energy that results from demolition and new construction.



Many heritage buildings can be upgraded to meet higher environmental standards without altering their historic features. Heritage places can also be adapted to include modern environmental features such as solar panels, insulation, draught-proofing, energy-efficient heating and hot water systems, water tanks, and high-performance glazing where appropriate.

Beyond energy savings, heritage buildings preserve traditional craftsmanship, materials, and techniques that reflect the values of an earlier time. They contribute to a sense of memory, identity, and place within the community, offering cultural continuity in a rapidly changing world. By valuing and adapting these spaces, we not only conserve resources but also celebrate the stories and skills embedded in our built environment.

To reduce the environmental impact of demolition and rebuild, consider:

- restoration and repair of fabric.
- appropriate adaption where a heritage place is no longer used for its original purpose.
- adapting the heritage building to be more energy efficient while retaining its heritage features.

Matters to consider, while ensuring works will not have any negative impact on significant fabric, include:

- controlling moisture.
- passive heating and cooling.
- updating existing heating systems.
- installing insulation.
- installing double or secondary glazing to windows (depending on the significance of the existing window glazing).
- installing shading devices to windows.
- installing solar panels.

Solar panels and heritage

Solar panels require careful consideration about their placement to ensure there are no heritage impacts on the character of the building. Where possible, rear roof faces are the best heritage outcome.

Solar panels

- Placement on front roofs should be avoided where possible, with alternatives explored. Installations on outbuildings such as rear garages and sheds should be considered as alternatives.
- On side roofs the panels should be as recessive from the front as possible.
- Solar panels should be framed by, and not extend beyond the roof ridgelines.
- Solar panel installations should not involve structural change to the roof.
- Solar panels should be installed flush to the roof face where they are visible from the public realm.

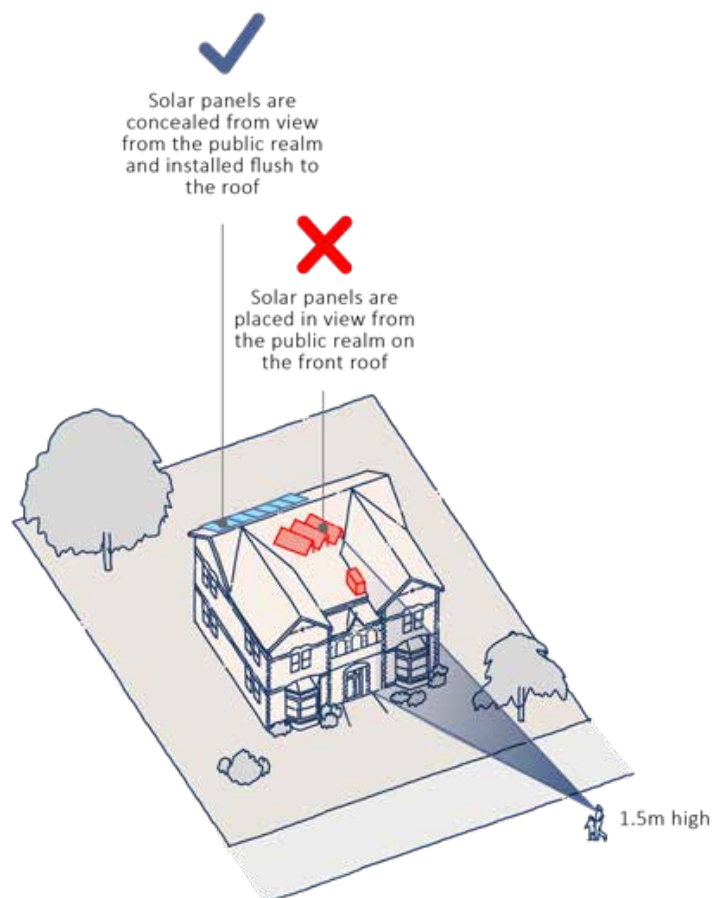


Figure 49 New solar panels.

11. Subdivision & consolidation

Cultural significance means aesthetic, historic, scientific, social or spiritual value for past, present or future generations.

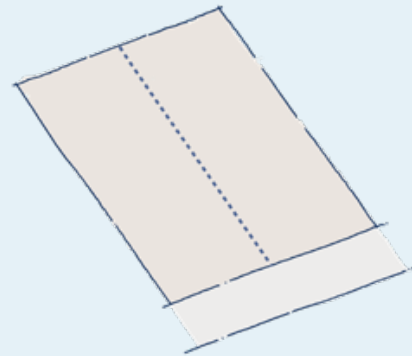
Cultural significance is embodied in the place itself, its fabric, setting, use, associations, meanings, records, related places and related objects.

Places may have a range of values for different individuals or groups.

– Burra Charter 2013: Article 1.2

Subdividing properties within a Heritage Overlay is a complex process that requires careful consideration of the existing heritage character. The primary goal is to conserve and enhance the cultural significance of heritage places while allowing for appropriate new development.

The significance of a heritage place is expressed in its original context and interrelationship between significant elements such as buildings, structures, fences, landscapes, and views.



Subdivision and consolidation

- Retain and protect buildings, landscape features, fences, and trees that contribute to the heritage value of the site on one title.
- Subdivision should not diminish the significance of heritage landscapes and gardens, or heritage buildings.
- Consolidation should reunite significant elements of a heritage place on one title.
- The interrelationship between the elements of significance should be maintained, including the visual setting and views of and between significant elements on the site, and views from the public realm.
- Subdivision should not be used as a justification for loss of heritage fabric.
- The subdivision of a significant heritage building should ensure that the significant exterior is retained as originally intended. Ensure that the exterior fabric forms Common Property so that it can be managed in a uniform way.

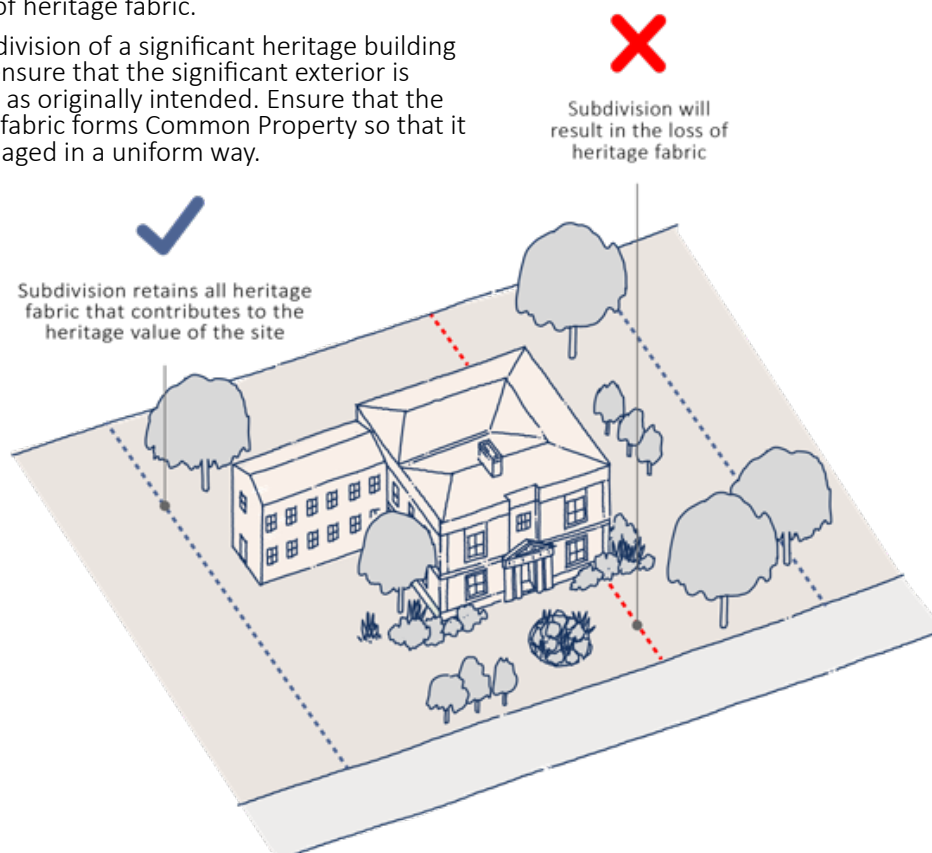


Figure 50 Subdivision and consolidation.

Heritage subdivision patterns

- Where original or historic boundaries exist, they should be used.
- Subdivided lots should reflect the prevailing subdivision pattern of the heritage area.
- Very narrow allotments that vary from the prevailing allotment pattern should be avoided.
- Rear subdivisions may ensure the retention of the existing heritage character as viewed from the public realm.

Airspace above heritage

- Avoid subdividing airspace above heritage buildings for the purpose of development (such as cantilevering a development over a heritage building from the side or rear as part of the proposed subdivision).

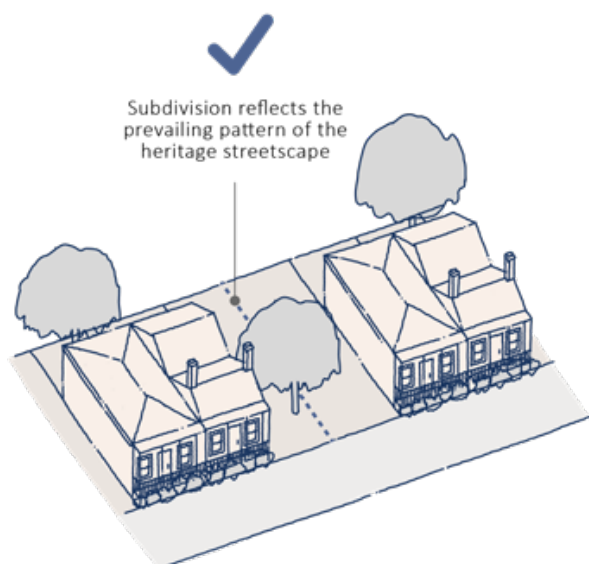


Figure 51 Heritage subdivision patterns.

Application considerations

A conservation management plan (prepared by a suitably qualified heritage consultant and in accordance with the Australia ICOMOS Burra Charter) should precede a major development and subdivision of a large or complex site.

For a major subdivision, meaningful conservation of the heritage place should form a tangible outcome of the proposal.

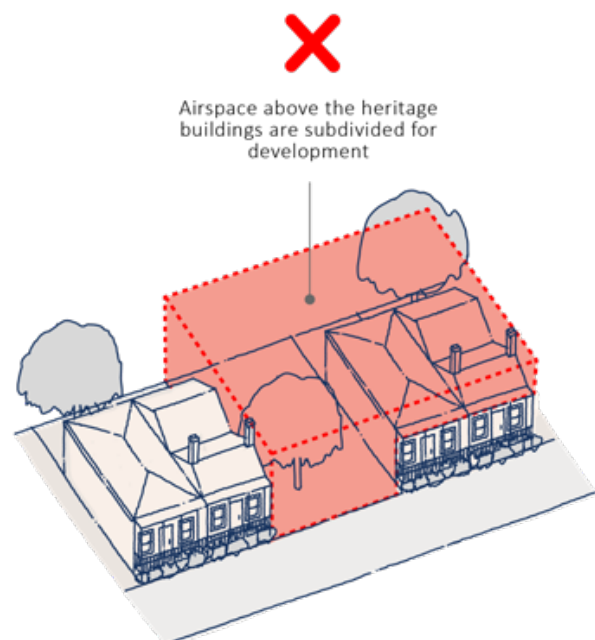


Figure 52 Subdivision of airspace above heritage.

Appendices

Architectural styles

The architectural style of a heritage building is understood through interpretation of its characteristics.

The following information has been adapted from Recognising Heritage Styles, Planning Institute of Australia, Planet Program by Dr. David Rowe.

Most heritage buildings are often defined by their architectural style which can express:

- Aesthetic/design ideas of a particular architect, designer, or owner.
- Functional role.
- Social influences.
- Historical associations.
- Technological developments and achievements.
- Local environmental conditions.

Characteristics of architectural style may include:

- Building composition (the articulation of the parts of a building).
- Shape and form.
- Scale.
- Structure.
- Construction materials.
- Details.
- Colours (exterior and interior).
- Textures (exterior and interior).
- Decoration.

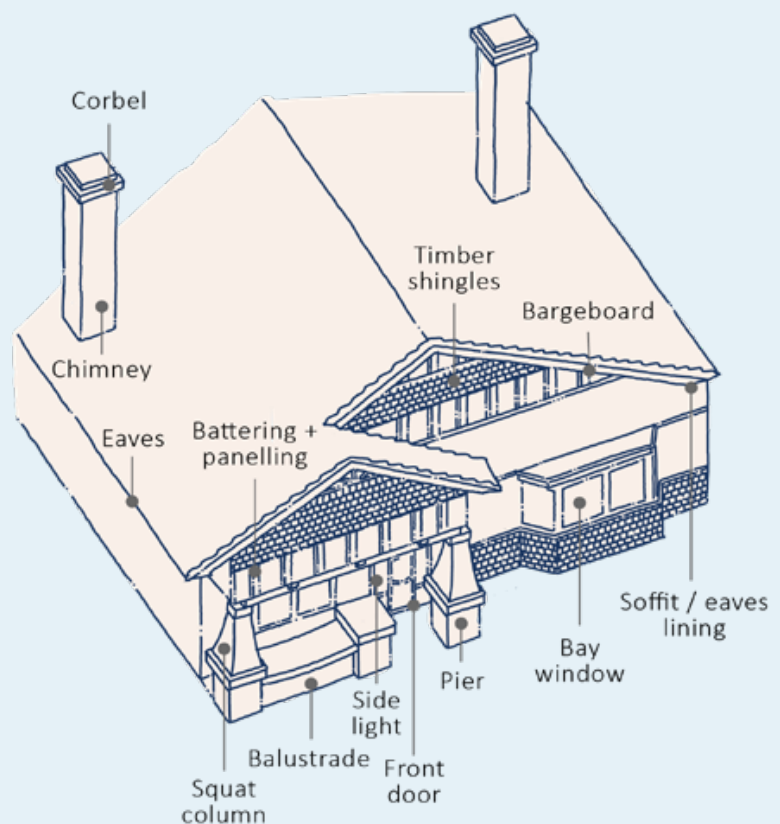


Figure 53 Characteristics of a heritage dwelling.

Georgian

The Georgian style was the basis for most architecture in Australia from 1788 until the mid-19th century. The style reached Geelong through architects including Charles Laing.



Figure 54 *Lunan, Drumcondra* (source: City of Greater Geelong).

Key Characteristics:

- Symmetry and rectangular form.
- Broad medium-pitched roof forms, with hipped roofs being most common.
- Simple Chimneys.
- Verandahs under main roof.
- Modest eaves or roofs concealed by parapets.
- Human Scale (not monumental).
- Smooth textured exposed masonry or rendered walls. Also, timber clad walls of vertical planks or slabs.
- Timber roof shingles, Morewood & Rogers galvanised roof tiles, slate or corrugated galvanised steel roof cladding.
- Rectangular, timber framed multi-paned casement or double hung windows.
- Panelled timber front door with fanlight or transom light.
- Classical detailing including portico, pediment and/or pilasters, often highlighting the main entrance.
- Quoinwork on building corners.

Early Victorian

Early Victorian is a generic term applied to cottages commonly built in the earliest parts of Geelong and suburbs following Colonisation until the mid 19th century. Symmetrical in composition, they take on a broad number of Georgian features, often in a humble and vernacular way.



Figure 55 Early Victorian dwelling, Geelong West, 2008.

Key Characteristics:

- Symmetrical and simple front facades.
- Hipped or gabled roof forms, often of 30 degree pitch.
- Front projecting verandahs with skillion, ogee or concave profiles.
- Simple and limited (if any) iron lacework or timber valances to timber verandah columns.
- Ogee or half round gutters with circular downpipes.
- Rectangular timber framed double hung windows (single windows).
- Central timber framed front doorways with four panelled doors, commonly with highlight above.
- Predominantly simple chimneys.
- Slate or galvanised corrugated steel roof cladding.
- Square or beaded edged timber weatherboard wall cladding or face brick, stone or rendered wall construction. Rendered wall construction may feature ruled ashlar markings (a smooth rendered wall with lines simulating blockwork).
- Decorative timber joinery or rendered mouldings to openings.

Mid and Late Victorian

From the 1860s, building materials such as bricks, cast iron and window glazing became more freely available. The possibility of using and enhancing a building with exposed multi-coloured brickwork, in conjunction with a graceful array of iron lacework resulted from the advances in technology and industrial processes.



Figure 56 *Corona, Newtown.*

Key characteristics:

- Symmetrical facades.
- Hipped or gabled roof forms with a pitch of 30 degrees.
- Front verandahs in skillion, ogee, concave, convex and bullnosed forms (the bullnosed forms were typically Late Victorian).
- Slate or galvanised corrugated steel roof cladding.
- Ogee form or half round gutters.
- Square edged or beaded timber weatherboard wall cladding, polychrome brick wall construction or rendered wall construction.
- Rectangular timber framed double hung windows, including front tripartite windows (windows with flanking narrow sidelights).
- Central timber framed front doorways with four panelled timber doors and sidelights and highlights.
- Decorative timber or rendered joinery (moulded window and door architraves).
- Decorative timber eaves brackets, often with panelling and paterae between.
- Complex and decorative chimneys rendered or polychrome brickwork (mid Victorian).
- Face red brick chimneys, often with strapped and/or corbelled tops (late Victorian).
- Sometimes decorative cast iron roof ridge ornamentation & finials.
- Cast iron or timber verandah columns adorned with cast iron valances and brackets.
- Cast iron palisade fences (often for more substantial, brick houses) and timber picket fences.
- Timber picket fences (often for modestly scaled timber houses).

Victorian Italianate

Italian landscape and architecture had a large influence on late 18th and early 19th century design. In the early 1800s, Pattern Books spread the styles that were to have a considerable influence on the development of both substantial mansions and more modest examples of the style. These houses took on Gothic-like asymmetrical compositions, with a projecting hipped or gabled roof or faceted bay and flanking front verandah.



Figure 57 Dwelling, Geelong.

Key characteristics:

- Asymmetrical front facades (or symmetrical compositions with a major asymmetrical element such as a tower or projecting bay).
- Towers, often square and either with pyramidal roofs or flat roofs with parapets.
- Projecting faceted bays.
- Hipped or gabled roof forms of medium pitch clad in slate or galvanised corrugated steel.
- Ogee or half round gutters.
- Polychrome brick wall construction, stone wall construction or smooth rendered brick which may feature ruled ashlar markings. Regional examples were also commonly constructed of horizontal timber weatherboards.
- Skillion, concave, convex or arcaded verandahs or colonnaded loggias.
- Architectural detailing following Mid-Late Victorian styles.
- Timber framed double hung windows, arranged singularly or in projecting faceted bays, and often full length.
- Four or six paneled timber front doors with sidelights and highlights.
- Decorative detailing including quoinwork and Classical elements (including window pediments).
- Polychrome brick or rendered chimneys with decorative tops.
- Cast iron palisade fences or timber picket fences.

Victorian Gothic

Gothic architecture was one of the most important and enduring architectural styles of the 19th century. Domestic architecture saw a holistic approach to attractive settings of buildings and landscapes, a recurring element being the small picturesque Gothic house.



Figure 58 Hawthorne, Newtown.

Key characteristics:

- Asymmetrical compositions, often with projecting front gable with bay window.
- Steeply pitched gable roof forms having decorative timber bargeboards.
- Slate or galvanised corrugated steel roof cladding.
- Projecting gabled dormers in main roof forms.
- Brick, stone or rendered masonry wall construction.
- Quoining to masonry walls.
- Pointed arched or Tudor arched openings.
- Square headed window openings with label moulds above.
- Timber framed double hung or casement windows, commonly multi-paned.
- Medieval chimneys, being elongated and solid and multi-faceted.
- Timber finials and pendants in the gable ends.
- Decorative timber bargeboards in the gable ends.
- Projecting faceted bay windows and oriel windows.
- Projecting skillion or concave verandahs with simple timber or cast iron verandah valances and brackets.
- Timber picket fences.

Victorian Boom

The economic boom of the 1870s and 1880s brought about by the gold rushes of previous years centred mainly on large Australian towns and cities which flowed into a lavish “boom” style architecture which reached its most flamboyant heights in “Marvellous Melbourne”.



Figure 59 *Miharo, Newtown.*

Key characteristics:

- Asymmetrical front facades (or symmetrical compositions with a major asymmetrical element such as a tower or projecting bay).
- Towers, often square with elaborate parapets or projecting faceted bays.
- Complex hipped or gabled roof forms of medium pitch clad in slate or galvanised corrugated steel.
- Ogee or half round gutters.
- Elaborate rendered brick chimneys.
- Six panelled timber doors with sidelights and highlights having decorative etched red and blue glazing.
- Smooth rendered wall construction.
- Skillion, concave or convex verandahs or arcaded or colonnaded loggias.
- Lavish stuccoed ornamentation on parapets and verandahs, or loggias, including Classical elements, orbs and urns, and/or cast iron verandah valances, brackets, valances and columns.
- Elaborately stuccoed chimneys.
- Highly elaborate cast iron palisade fences.

Queen Anne

The Queen Anne style was characterised by the return of some of the vernacular stylistic ideals of earlier English domestic architecture, which was inspired by the Arts and Crafts Movement. Locally, in spite of the style's name, the Queen Anne Revival had only a passing resemblance to the classical English red brick style.



Figure 61 Pevensey House, Geelong.

Key characteristics:

- Asymmetrical compositions.
- Complex hipped and gabled roof forms clad in Marseilles terra cotta tiles, or galvanised corrugated steel.
- Terra cotta roof ridge decoration and terra cotta finials.
- Unpainted red brick wall construction, often relieved with roughcast wall planes (under eaves or in gable ends).
- Bowed projecting bay windows.
- Oval or round windows.
- Timber framed, casement or double hung windows with leadlight highlights, sometimes with segmentally arched heads.
- Oriel windows.
- Brick mouldings;
- Dominant face red brick chimneys, commonly strapped with multi-corbelled tops and terra cotta pots, or with rendered tops.
- Corner towers with conical or pyramidal roofs.
- Decorative timber fretwork, brackets and posts to verandahs.
- Timber shingling.

Federation

The Federation Villa combined the characteristics of Queen Anne, with other stylistic influences of the period, including Art Nouveau and Arts and Crafts design, as well as addressing local climatic conditions as advocated by the architects of the 1880s. Art Nouveau appeared in Federation style houses in window glazing, carvings, verandah details and especially in furniture and fittings in the form of stylized tulip motifs and often Australian flora and fauna.



Figure 62 Dwelling, Geelong (source: City of Greater Geelong).

Key characteristics:

- Horizontal emphasis on sheltering, projecting complex hipped and gabled roof forms which was based on the forms of the Australian Colonial Homestead.
- Terra cotta roof tiles. Regional variations included galvanised corrugated steel roof cladding (sometimes painted red) or slate.
- Asymmetrical and three-dimensional composition of the overall form of the building (not just the street elevation). The most common composition was a broad recessive hipped roof with projecting front and side gables linked by a return verandah. Other roof forms may include gambrel roofs.
- Corner or diagonal emphasis (chamfered building corner, verandah accentuation, diagonal roof feature).
- Dominant strapped brick chimneys with corbelled tops and terra cotta pots, or with rendered tops and bases.
- Decorative ridge cappings and finials.
- Attic balconies and dormers.
- Return verandahs (incorporated as part of the main roof or as separate roofs), with decorative timber fretwork and valances often incorporating stylized Tulip motifs or similar details, and timber posts (square, chamfered or turned).
- Rectangular timber framed, double hung or casement windows, often paired or in banks of three, sometimes arranged in projecting rectangular or bowed bays in gable ends and under verandah corners.
- Panelled front doors.
- Decorative timber joinery and eaves brackets.
- Rough cast areas on walls or as gable infill with decorative timber joinery.
- Small round windows.
- Window hoods supported by decorative timber brackets;
- Leadlighting in upper lights of windows, doors and sidelights, often with Australian motifs (Kangaroos, Kookaburras, etc.).
- Face red brick wall construction accentuated by rendered horizontal bands.
- Rounded timber picket or capped timber picket fences, sometimes with detailing to match the detailing of the house (ie. Verandah valance). Other fences include timber post and woven wire.

Edwardian

Edwardian styled house is less elaborate and complex than the Federation Villa. These houses in Geelong typically have a single decorative street façade and are more two dimensional in overall composition.



Figure 63 Dwelling, Geelong West.

Key characteristics:

- Asymmetrical compositions, with a recessive hipped or gabled roof form, and a gable and front verandah that projects towards the street. Alternatively, broad hipped, gabled or gambrel roof forms.
- Galvanised corrugated steel roof cladding (sometimes slate).
- Strapped and/or corbelled brick chimneys (pressed red brick chimneys were common) with terra cotta pots.
- Timber or masonry walls.
- Skillion, convex or bullnosed verandahs at the front. Alternatively, the front verandah may be an extension of the main roof.
- Decorative timber verandah valance fretwork and brackets.
- Rectangular timber framed double hung windows (sometimes with highlights).
- Four panelled front doors, commonly with highlight and sidelights.
- Timber joinery and roughcast gable infill.
- Timber window hoods.
- Timber eaves brackets with paneling and paterae between.
- Rounded timber picket or capped timber picket fences, sometimes with detailing to match the detailing of the house (ie. Verandah valance). Other fences include timber post and woven wire.

Interwar Bungalow

The interwar Californian Bungalow style primarily has its origins in American Bungalows that promoted an idealistic, outdoors-oriented relaxed lifestyle, as identified in the low-pitched roofs with broad eaves, sleep-outs, pergolas and breezeways. During the 1920s, the Australian version became largely standardized, being largely constructed in brick in Melbourne, but often in timber weatherboards in regional cities and towns.



Figure 64 Dwelling, Geelong.

Key characteristics:

- Low-pitched gable hipped or jerkin head roof forms.
- Galvanised corrugated steel or terra cotta tile roof cladding.
- Street-facing gable
- Taper-cut barge board
- Gable ventilator
- Projecting faceted bay windows.
- Timber framed double hung windows, arranged singularly, in pairs or in banks of three.
- Shingling, especially in the gable and around the bay window
- Wide eaves often with exposed timber rafters.
- Plain rectangular red brick chimneys with soldier course cappings or simple projecting brick cappings.
- Brick, timber weatherboard or roughcast wall construction.
- Broad gabled or flat roofed verandahs supported either grouped or singular posts (mainly of timber construction), concrete columns or solid piers. The posts, columns and piers were often supported by face or rendered brick pedestals. Some bungalows are supported by pylons of roughcast render. Verandah variations included flat roofed porches, including projecting front porches supported by columns.
- Flat timber picket, capped timber picket, timber post and woven wire or low solid brick front fences, or fences with brick piers having geometric trussed steel panels between, or timber post and cyclone wire fences with timber cappings.

Moderne

The interwar period also heralded the rise of an architecture that departed from past styles and emphasised 'functionalism' and clean lines, epitomizing a radical progressive image. The non-conformist streamlined buildings featured asymmetrical masses of simple geometrical shapes with horizontal banded 'ribbon' windows that terminated into round bays, with solid parapets or parapets defined by steel tubing that resembled ocean liners than suburban houses.



Figure 65 Dwelling, Hamlyn Heights (source: City of Greater Geelong).

Key characteristics:

- Asymmetrical massing with the emphasis on horizontal lines broken by occasional vertical motifs including chimneys or stairwells.
- Low pitched hipped roof forms clad in tiles.
- Plain projecting eaves or solid or tubular steel parapets.
- Streamlined horizontal bands of windows.
- Chevron motif (inverted V pattern) – Art Deco detailing.
- Applied, stylized high-relief Art Deco motifs.
- Stepped and rounded non-functional architectural elements (Art Deco).
- Large areas of glazed windows, often featuring curved glazing in building corners or projecting bays, or more conservatively, square corner windows.
- Low solid brick front fences, or fences with brick piers and geometric steel trussed panels.

Late-Interwar and Post-war Bungalows

The immediate years after the Second World War from 1945 witnessed shortages in construction materials and skilled labour. Local Government regulations were tightened for domestic building, whereby minimum occupancy, room sizes and overall allotment areas were prescribed. This caused a shrinkage of creative house designs and subsequently a decrease in design quality.



Figure 66 Dwelling, Geelong (source: City of Greater Geelong).

Key characteristics:

- Asymmetrical compositions, often with an emphasis on horizontal lines through the projecting eaves, banks of windows, and flat roofed porches.
- Low pitched hipped and gabled roof forms.
- Brick veneer wall construction or sometimes timber weatherboard cladding.
- Concrete tiled roof cladding, or for timber dwellings, sometimes galvanised corrugated steel painted red or green.
- Broad plain eaves.
- Timber or metal framed double hung windows, often arranged in pairs or in banks of three at the front. The windows were often larger than those of Bungalows of the 1920s and early 1930s.
- Plain brick chimneys.
- Projecting flat roofed porches.
- Low solid brick front fences, or fences with brick piers and geometric steel trussed panels.

Postwar Modernist

A more creative response to the postwar housing boom celebrated open-planned living, eschewing the compartmentalized approach of earlier years with an absence of hall ways, combined living and dining rooms, and floor to ceiling windows to bring the outside within.



Figure 67 Dwelling, Hamlyn Heights.

Key characteristics:

- Open floor plans, with combined living and dining areas (sometimes with the living area sunken).
- Shallow-pitched gabled roof forms, hipped roof forms, flat roofs and butterfly roofs.
- Tiled or sheet metal roof cladding.
- Brick veneer and timber wall cladding.
- Floor to ceiling timber framed windows.
- Feature crazy stone chimneys and base walls.
- Terraces with deliberate landscape connection between the inside and outside.
- Integrated carports.

Fence styles

Under Clause 43.01 (the Heritage Overlay) of the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme, a planning permit is required to construct a fence if visible from a street (other than a lane) or public park.

Fences should be designed and constructed in a way that is sympathetic to the character of the heritage place.

This section provides guidance on the basic architectural styles for properties in Greater Geelong, and the traditional types of front fencing applicable to that style or era.

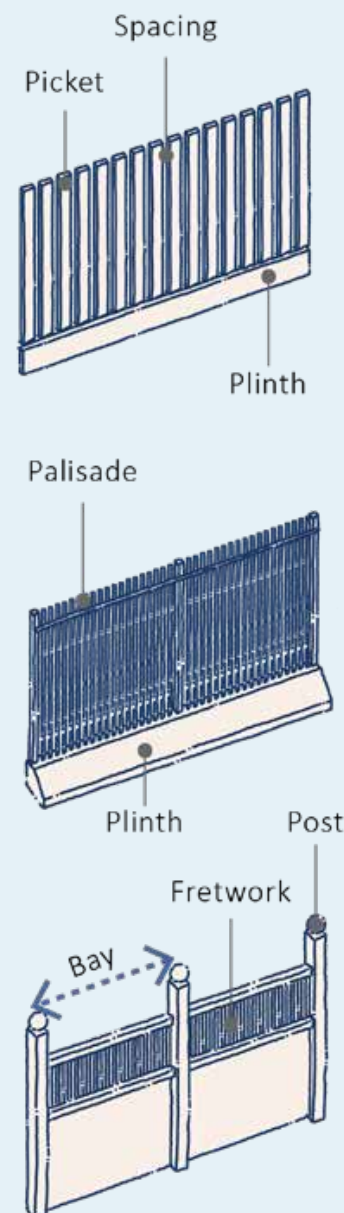


Figure 68 Illustration of the standard elements of a fence construction

Victorian dwellings

Pointed timber pickets

Pointed timber picket fences are commonly associated with Early, Mid and Late Victorian styled dwellings, built from the mid 19th century until c.1900, although variations in picket fencing continued into the early 20th century. Mid and some late 19th century picket heads were rudimentary, mainly being V-shaped or sometimes flat.

From the 1860s there were a number of more decorative picket heads available. The picket detail design was usually governed by the era of the fence construction as much as the simplicity or elaboration of the dwelling or building.

Spacings between the pickets varied between 25 and 50mm. Sometimes smaller pickets were added between the primary pickets for additional screening and decoration. Occasionally there are concerns about the potential for vandalism and the pickets being removed.

In these cases, hoop iron can be attached along the front of the pickets (where the pickets are attached to the rails).

Picket fences were constructed with or without a timber plinth. Where plinths were constructed, they were usually within the range of 140-190mm in height. Masonry bases are sometimes sought for fence reconstructions and new fences given raised garden beds behind. Any masonry plinths should not be visually dominant and they should be in proportion with the overall fence design (being no more 1-2 courses in height).

Posts were usually expressed (slightly projecting from the fence bays) and sometimes there were less decorative and smaller intermediate posts. The posts were capped in a range of ways depending on the era and elaboration of the fence design: from pointed and rounded cappings, to projecting moulded timber cappings, timber orbs or cast iron cappings.

Gates were either of a picket design similar to the fence bays or different timber designs often with timber base panelling to emphasise the entry point. In most situations, these fences were no higher than 1200-1300mm.



Figure 69 Victorian dwelling with pointed timber picket fence, expressed posts with decorative cappings and timber gate. Source: Emerald Museum.



Figure 70 Late Victorian styled brick dwelling with pointed timber picket fence.



Figure 71 Unpainted timber picket fence with hoop iron used to reinforce the pickets

Cast iron palisade

Cast iron palisade fences were common from the 1860s because iron foundries had been established which gave greater access to this material. These types of fences are mainly associated with substantial masonry (face brick, stone or rendered) mid and late Victorian and Victorian Italianate dwellings. While new cast iron palisade fences are often proposed, the lack of an existing cast iron fence may be an indicator that the original fence was of timber construction. A lack of cast iron palisade fences in the area might further suggest that they were not a traditional feature.

They commonly featured masonry plinths (usually one-two courses high with a smooth finished or rendered capping).

In some cases, substantial cast iron or masonry (stone or rendered) posts were constructed that emphasised gate openings and property corners. They were often crowned with decorative cast iron cappings, orbs or urns.

For the fence bays, there was a range of palisade heads, from simple to more decorative. Sometimes, a particular palisade head was common to an area due to the popularity and/or proximity of the iron foundry.

Gates also matched the design and construction of the fence.

The height of these fences varied, from 1200-1300 mm for modest Victorian dwellings, to approximately 1800 mm for two storey brick dwellings on larger allotments.



Figure 72 Substantial late Victorian brick dwelling with iron palisade fence having cast iron piers and bluestone plinths.

Federation & Edwardian dwellings

Pointed timber pickets

Pointed timber picket fences continued to prevail for some Federation and Edwardian dwellings in the very early 20th century. In addition to pointed pickets, rounded and other picket heads were usually associated with Federation and Edwardian styled dwellings.

Spacings between the pickets varied between 25 and 50mm. Sometimes smaller pickets were added between the primary pickets for additional screening and decoration.

Picket fences were constructed with or without a timber plinth. Where plinths were constructed, they were usually within the range of 140-190mm in height. Masonry bases are sometimes sought for fence reconstructions and new fences given raised garden beds behind. Any masonry plinths should not be visually dominant and they should be in proportion with the overall fence design (being no more 1-2 courses in height).

Posts were usually expressed (slightly projecting from the fence bays) and sometimes there were less decorative and smaller intermediate posts. The posts were capped in a range of ways depending on the era and elaboration of the fence design: from pointed and rounded cappings, to projecting moulded timber cappings, timber orbs or cast iron cappings.

Gates were either of a picket design similar to the fence bays or different timber designs often with timber base panelling to emphasise the entry point.



Figure 73 Edwardian dwelling with pointed timber picket fence. Source: News of the Week, 1919.



Figure 74 Rounded timber picket fence to a Federation era dwelling.

Flat timber pickets

Sometimes associated with Federation and Edwardian styled dwellings are rudimentary versions of flat timber.

Picket spacings were around 25mm and the pickets tended to be wider for interwar properties. A timber plinth traditionally formed the base to these types of fences, being approximately 140 – 190mm in height.

Gates often matched the flat timber picket design of the fence, or were of varying timber design or of scrolled metal and wire construction.



Figure 75 Flat timber fence to an Edwardian era dwelling.

Picket fences with fretwork cappings

Sometimes associated with Federation and Edwardian styled dwellings are rudimentary versions of flat timber.

Picket spacings were around 25mm and the pickets tended to be wider for interwar properties. A timber plinth traditionally formed the base to these types of fences, being approximately 140 – 190mm in height.

Gates often matched the flat timber picket design of the fence, or were of varying timber design or of scrolled metal and wire construction.



Figure 76 Details of Federation era picket fence with fretwork capping.

Picket fences with simple cappings

Like the flat timber picket fence, simply-capped timber picket fences were most common during the Federation and interwar eras. Sometimes, cut-out decorations defined some of the Federation era pickets (this decoration was taken from the verandah valance of the dwelling where applicable).

Timber plinths formed the base construction to a height between 140 and 190mm. Expressed timber posts projected beyond the timber capping, being finished in a range of designs. With all timber picket fences before World War 2, the pickets were arranged vertically.

Picket spacings were usually around 25mm.

Gates were usually of similar design and construction as the fence bays, or were a panelled timber gate having an open fretwork upper panel. Sometimes they were of scrolled metal and wire construction, or were of varying timber design or of scrolled metal and wire construction.

Ripple iron and timber fretwork

Sometimes associated with Federation and Edwardian styled dwellings are rudimentary versions of flat timber.

Picket spacings were around 25mm and the pickets tended to be wider for interwar properties. A timber plinth traditionally formed the base to these types of fences, being approximately 140 – 190mm in height.

Gates often matched the flat timber picket design of the fence, or were of varying timber design or of scrolled metal and wire construction.



Figure 77 Edwardian styled dwelling having a timber picket fence with a simple capping.



Figure 78 Detail of Federation era ripple iron and timber fretwork fence, with scrolled metal and wire vehicular and pedestrian gates.

Woven wire

In 1899, the Cyclone Woven Wire Fence and Gate Company commenced the production of woven wire. For some Federation and Edwardian styled houses, woven wire was used in conjunction with timber posts, rails and plinths, or more substantial masonry piers and plinths, reflecting the design, construction and proportions of the property.

Gates were tubular steel and scrolled metal with woven wire infill.



Figure 79 Capped timber post and woven wire fence. Source: News of the Week, 1916.



Figure 80 More substantial woven wire fence to large property with rendered piers and brick plinths.

Interwar dwellings

Flat timber pickets

Some interwar Bungalow styled dwellings traditionally featured wide flat timber picket fences. The picket spacings and construction of a plinth and gate details were similar to the flat timber picket fences built during the Federation era.



Figure 81 Flat timber picket fence to an interwar bungalow styled dwelling.

Capped timber pickets

Like some Federation styled dwellings, capped timber picket fences up to a height of 1300mm were a feature of interwar Bungalow styled dwellings.



Figure 82 Capped timber picket fence to an interwar bungalow styled dwelling.

Woven wire

The timber post and rail and woven wire fences built towards the later period of Federation styled dwellings were also popular for interwar bungalow styled dwellings.



Figure 83 Timber post and rail, and woven wire fence to an interwar bungalow styled dwelling.

Chain mesh

From 1914, chain wire mesh was available. Also known as Cyclone wire, fences with this type of mesh design became popular during the interwar period. They were often capped with timber cappings, with low timber plinths and rudimentary, expressed square timber posts.

Gates were usually of open, geometric steel design.



Figure 84 Interwar bungalow styled dwelling with a capped timber post and chain mesh front fence having open geometric steel gate.

Low solid masonry

Another popular early 20th century fence type, including for some interwar bungalow styled dwellings, was solid brick fences. These fences still allowed views to the front garden. The designs of solid fences varied depending on whether they were built in the early or later interwar period. Some early interwar era fences reflected the design and construction of the dwelling in some way (such as the balustrade curve of the verandah).

Gates were often open steel with geometric patterns.

The overall height of these types of fences was usually between 600 and 1000mm.



Figure 85 Interwar solid brick fence, being sufficiently low not to obstruct the view to the front garden.

Modern and post war bungalow

Low solid masonry

Common for Modern and postwar bungalow styled dwellings were solid brick fences. They were usually simple in design.

Gates were often open steel with geometric patterns.

The overall height of these types of fences was usually between 600 and 1000mm.



Figure 86 Low solid brick fence to late interwar dwelling.

Brick piers with open geometric steel trussed panels

A variation on the low late interwar era solid brick fence was a fence with brick piers and plinths and open geometric steel trussed panels.

The gates were often open steel, having geometric patterns that reflected the design of the open steel trussed panels.

These fences usually ranged between 600 and 1000mm in height.



Figure 87 Low solid brick fence with open bays with trussed geometric panels.

Horizontal paling fences

Horizontal timber paling fences featured as the front boundary to some properties after World War 2 and particularly from the 1950s.

They were usually no higher than 1000-1200mm and the palings were set in front of the posts (either timber or tubular steel).

The spacings between the palings were usually around 25mm.



Figure 88 Horizontal timber paling fence to postwar bungalow. Source: Lorraine Huddle.

No fencing

Properties of postwar Modern designed after World War 2 and particularly from the 1950s may not have been bound by a front fence. Landscape treatments often formed the main feature to the front setting.

Other considerations

Fence heights

For most new fences in heritage areas the proposed height should generally be between 1200 and 1300mm.

For interwar and postwar era solid brick fences and retaining walls, the proposed height should generally be between 600 and 1000mm.

High solid fences limit social and visual interaction and are not a traditional fence type in most residential heritage areas. No matter how well-articulated these high walls might be designed, they are usually visually intrusive in the streetscape.

Arguments are often used that a high solid masonry fence may mitigate traffic noise but this is not the case as noise may penetrate from the sides and reverberate within the front setback. Dense planting (such as hedges) behind front fences may provide some sound isolation, but more effective methods of noise insulation include secondary glazing (or double glazing where windows have no heritage value) and air ventilation systems that limit noise ingress.

High fences may be valid in contexts where high solid fences form the significance of the heritage place. These places may include early masonry walls to convent, orphanage, religious, prison and industrial sites, for example. Where high and solid fences represent part of the significant setting of the place, a new fence should be no higher than existing fencing, and be a contemporary interpretation to allow a subtle distinction between the old and the new. The new fencing should not separate significant buildings, diminish the setting or obscure significant views from and within the site.

Higher fences may be possible if:

- The heritage place has individual significance and is contextually larger in scale (both in terms of the setting and building sizes), the fence therefore being in proportion to the larger scale.
- The new fence is a reconstruction of an earlier fence based on historical evidence.
- The prevailing traditional fence heights in the streetscape (for places in heritage areas) are higher.



Figure 89 Introduced high front fence inappropriately obscures traditional views to the front of the heritage dwelling.

Sloping sites

Where front fences are proposed for sloping boundaries, they should be stepped or follow the footpath gradient. Fencing that extends across the frontage at the one level on sloping sites have the potential to create visual dominance as the new fence at the lower end of the site will be much higher.



Figure 90 Fence stepped along slope of boundary.



Figure 91 Fence following gradient of boundary slope.

Sloping sites

From the Federation era, hedges were used to provide greater height and privacy. No planning permit is required to grow a hedge.



Figure 92 Hedge forming front boundary.

Definitions

Adaptation	changing a place to suit the existing use or a proposed use.
Associations	mean the connections that exist between people and a place.
Australia ICOMOS, The Burra Charter, 2013	provides best practice guidance for the conservation and management of places of cultural heritage significance (cultural heritage places). The Charter sets a standard of practice for those who provide advice, make decisions about, or undertake works to places of cultural significance, including owners, managers and custodians.
Building	includes— (a) a structure and part of a building or a structure; and (b) fences, walls, out-buildings, service installations and other appurtenances of a building; and (c) a boat or a pontoon which is permanently moored or fixed to land.
Bulk	building volume.
Character	the combination of the particular characteristics or qualities of a place.
Conservation	means all the processes of looking after a place so as to retain its cultural significance.
Cultural Significance	means aesthetic, historic, scientific, social or spiritual value for past, present or future generations. Cultural significance is embodied in the place itself, its fabric, setting, use, associations, meanings, records, related places and related objects. Places may have a range of values for different individuals or groups.
Curtilage	enclosed or designated area of land immediately surrounding a dwelling and its yard and outbuildings.
Development	includes — (a) the construction or exterior alteration or exterior decoration of a building; and (b) the demolition or removal of a building or works; and (c) the construction or carrying out of works; and the subdivision or consolidation of land, including buildings or airspace; and (d) the placing or relocation of a building or works on land; and (e) the construction or putting up for display of signs or hoardings.
Fabric	means all the physical material of the place including elements, fixtures.
Form	means that overall shape and volume of a building and the arrangement of its parts.
Grain	means the pattern of the arrangement and size of buildings on their lots and the subdivision pattern. This pattern or arrangement contributes to the texture of an area. Fine grain is the quality or fine texture resulting from small and frequent subdivisions.

Heritage Asset

A building asset, including land, which is irreplaceable because of its unique historical, cultural or environmental attributes, and which is required by regulation to be preserved or maintained in perpetuity.

Heritage Building

means a building which is a place, or forms part of a place, that has been given heritage protection under a planning scheme. Includes both Significant and Contributory buildings.

Heritage Context

The specific character, quality, physical, historical and social characteristics of a building's setting. Depending on the nature of the proposal, the context could be as small as a suburban street or as large as a whole town.

Heritage Place

is an individual site that has heritage value- these types of heritage places can be a building, structure, fence, bridge, cultural landscape (such as a botanic garden, park, avenue of honour, ruin, monument or cemetery).

is an area (known as a precinct) that contains a group of buildings, landscapes, etc., such as a historical town, suburb, smaller residential area or large complex site.

Heritage Overlay

Places with heritage significance to a local area are protected by a Heritage Overlay. A Heritage Overlay is part of a local planning scheme. The purpose of the Heritage Overlay is given as Clause 43.01 of the Planning Scheme and there is a Schedule to the Heritage Overlay which lists the heritage places with Heritage Overlays.

Heritage Significance

Heritage significance is the reason the heritage place is important (see '**Cultural Significance**').

Heritage Significance Criteria

For a place to be included in the Heritage Overlay it must meet at least one of the following assessment criteria:

- Criterion A: Importance to the course, or pattern, of our cultural history.
- Criterion B: Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of our cultural history.
- Criterion C: Potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of our cultural history.
- Criterion D: Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural places or objects.
- Criterion E: Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics.
- Criterion F: Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period.
- Criterion G: Strong or special association with a particular present-day community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons.
- Criterion H: Special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in our history.

Historic Character	The combination of particular characteristics or special qualities of a place related to its period or style of construction.
Infill	In the context of these guidelines, infill means a new building in an established and valued historic context. Good infill is building that is sympathetic to the surrounding buildings and historic context and creates new structures that enhance and complement the existing urban, suburban or rural character. Infill proposals require an evidence-based design approach where the setbacks, form, height, proportions and details are drawn from those heritage buildings that constitute the significance of the heritage place but in a creative (rather than imitative) way.
Integrity	How intact the building is; how much of the historic or original fabric a heritage building retains.
Interpretation	means all the ways of presenting the cultural significance of a place.
Land	Includes — (a) buildings and other structures permanently fixed to land; and (b) land covered with water; and (c) any estate, interest, easement, servitude, privilege or right in or over land.
Maintenance	means the continuous protective care of a place, and its setting. Maintenance is to be distinguished from repair which involves restoration or reconstruction.
Massing	The size and volume of a building.
Meanings	denote what a place signifies, indicates, evokes or expresses to people
Muted Tones and Colours	Muted colours are soft and gentle, not bright and strong. They are greyed or dulled and have a low saturation. The opposite of a muted colour is a vivid or saturated colour.
Place	means a geographically defined area. It may include elements, objects, spaces and views. Place may have tangible and intangible dimensions.
Preservation	means maintaining a place in its existing state and retarding deterioration.

Reconstruction	means returning a place to a known earlier state and is distinguished from restoration by the introduction of new material.
Restoration	means returning a place to a known earlier state by removing accretions or by reassembling existing elements without the introduction of new material.
Scale	relationship of parts of a building to the whole, or of a building to its surroundings.
Setback	required minimum distance from the property boundary line at ground level or at prescribed heights.
Setting	means the immediate and extended environment of a place that is part of or contributes to its cultural significance and distinctive character.
Statutory Heritage Listings	Legislative protection of heritage places derives from Federal, State and Local Governments. Most commonly, places of State Significance are included in the Victorian Heritage Register under the Victorian Heritage Act. Places of regional, local and contributory significance are included as Heritage Overlays in the Planning Scheme under the Planning and Environment Act.
Tree Control	Refer to Planning Practice Note 1: Applying the Heritage Overlay . Definition for a tree control or group of trees specified in the State of Significance or Heritage Study Citation.
Use	in the context of these Guidelines use means the functions of a place, including the activities and traditional and customary practices that may occur at the place or are dependent on the place. Compatible use means a use which respects the cultural significance of a place. Such a use involves no, or minimal, impact on cultural significance.
Vehicle Crossover	also known as a vehicle crossing in the Road Management Act, a vehicle crossing is a connection in the road reserve between a road and a property boundary.
Works	includes any change to the natural or existing condition or topography of land including the removal, destruction or lopping of trees and the removal of vegetation or topsoil.

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2.5. Future Library Service Delivery Model

Source: City Life
Executive Director: Anthony Basford

Purpose

1. To seek Council direction regarding future membership of a Geelong Regional Library Corporation shared service model for the future delivery of the City's library services.

Background

2. Council is required to consider this matter due to the State Government change in the Local Government Act 2020 (Vic) (the Act) that requires regional library corporations to transition to alternative governance arrangements by 1 July 2031.
3. The City of Greater Geelong is currently a member of the Geelong Regional Library Corporation (GRLC) for the delivery of library services and has been a member since GRLC's formal establishment in 1997.
4. The GRLC is made up of five Member Councils: The City of Greater Geelong, Surf Coast Shire Council, Golden Plains Shire Council, the Borough of Queenscliffe and Colac Otway Shire Council (joined in 2021).
5. The GRLC library network is made up of 20 library facilities (15 in Greater Geelong) with a floor area of approx. 18,662sqm plus three mobile services making it the largest library corporation in Victoria.
6. In late 2023 the GRLC Board undertook a review of future governance arrangements to understand options available to the Member Councils and GRLC Board. The review assessed GRLC governance and operational efficiency.
7. On the 15 February 2024 the GRLC Board endorsed a company limited by guarantee model as its preferred future structure.
8. In July 2024, all Member Councils of GRLC including the City of Greater Geelong resolved the following:

"That Council:

- 1. Notes that the Local Government Act 2020 requires regional library corporations to transition to a new enterprise model by 30 June 2031.*
- 2. Notes that the Geelong Regional Library Corporation at its 15 February 2024 board meeting, endorsed a Company Limited by Guarantee as its preferred future enterprise model to enable project scoping, transition planning, and costing in preparation for member Council decisions.*
- 3. Requests that Geelong Regional Library Corporation prepare a transition report for formal consideration by Geelong Regional Library Corporation member Councils at a future council meeting that:*

3.1. Sets out future governance arrangements and indicative cost impacts for members Councils for delivery of library services under the new enterprise model; and

3.2. Seeks formal approval to transition to the new enterprise model.”

9. Considerable work has been undertaken by the GRLC Board, executive and staff, the Executive Steering Committee made up of Directors/General Managers from each Member Council, City of Greater Geelong staff, consultants and other expertise to meet the requirements set out in the resolution of July 2024.
10. Two GRLC Board workshops have been held to unpack the proposed model, build understanding, acknowledge areas of mutual agreement and areas requiring further work. These workshops were attended by Councillor representatives to the GRLC Board, Chief Executive Officers and Directors/General Managers of Member Councils.

Key Matters

11. Regardless of the preferred library services delivery model, a range of matters must be considered including protection of Council assets and heritage collections, management of workforce transition and industrial relations obligations, establishment of service standards and accountability mechanisms, minimisation of financial and operational transition risk, and development of a financial framework to ensure equitable distribution of member council contributions ensuring sustainable service costs and long-term financial planning for members, in addition to a clear strategic direction for future library services.
12. The GRLC run library services network achieves strong community satisfaction outcomes through the annual Community Satisfaction Survey and is consistently among the City's highest-performing services from a community rated perspective. (Community Satisfaction Results 2025, 2024 and 2023).
13. Public Library Victoria (PLV) report annually on the performance of libraries across the State. Through the PLV metrics GRLC has consistently been ranked as one of the highest performing library services in Victoria.
14. Despite the high community satisfaction and PLV performance measures, a number of issues have been identified with the current operating arrangements, including:
 - 14.1. Limited Council control over library operations and strategic direction;
 - 14.2. Poor overarching governance documentation (ie an outdated library agreement);
 - 14.3. An absence of service level agreements and accountability mechanisms;
 - 14.4. Limited visibility of the City's circa \$16m investment in library services, limited community awareness of Council's funding role and minimal acknowledgement of Member Councils in libraries or promotional material.
 - 14.5. Duplication between Council and GRLC corporate functions and community programs; and
 - 14.6. No clearly defined Council strategy or policy direction for library services.

15. The requirement to transition to a new operating model provides an opportunity for Member Councils of GRLC to review the current arrangements and address any concerns or issues, and ensure all items outlined in item 14 are addressed as part of the transition.
16. To support Councillors to make this decision, Officers have undertaken a range of activities and analysis to inform the recommendations outlined in this report and presented these through a number of briefings and updates to Councillors.
17. As part of this work a consultant was engaged by the City. Their analysis resulted in the identification of three potential future operating models:
 - 17.1. **Option 1** – GRLC 2.0: Transition to a new Company Limited by Guarantee while maintaining a shared service with regional partners.
 - 17.2. **Option 2** – In-House (CoGG Only): Withdraw from GRLC and establish a fully internal library service for Greater Geelong.
 - 17.3. **Option 3** – In-House (CoGG + Regional): CoGG withdraws from GRLC and offers to provide library services as a shared service provider to regional councils.
18. In summary the consultant's report key findings were:
 - 18.1. The three options are **Financially Comparable** over a 10-year period.
 - 18.2. **Performance and Satisfaction:** GRLC is generally an effective and efficient provider; however, strategic misalignment, ambiguous governance roles, and weak relationship were identified.
 - 18.3. **Governance Deficiencies:** Inconsistent policy integration, unclear service standards, and tension between Member Councils and the Corporation.
 - 18.4. **Risk and Transition:** All options carry a level of industrial, legal, financial and reputational risks that need to be managed.
 - 18.5. **Community and Regional Impact:** Libraries serve as critical social infrastructure and need to be managed with care and clear communication.
19. In addition to the work undertaken by the consultant, further analysis was undertaken internally as well as additional advice sought on asset management, industrial relations and service level agreements. The pros and cons of each option were assessed by officers with this information being provided to Councillors. The internal assessment was informed by sector knowledge, commercial analysis, financial modelling, and sector benchmarking.
20. The GRLC is the largest library service in the State. Finding suitable independent comparative / benchmarking data was difficult. Based on the available data, internal analysis identified that the cost to deliver by GRLC is higher than the State average on a per capita basis compared to a number of other current service models adopted by other Councils including in house, company or shared service.
21. Transition to an alternate operating model is likely to result in financial impact for the City, particularly relating to workforce transition, governance establishment and service transition costs. It is likely if option 2 or 3 were pursued that the costs of a transition

and continuing to support the current operating model until exit will increase costs in short to medium term before any efficiencies are realised.

22. This report is seeking a decision of Council in relation to membership of a future regional shared service model for delivery of library services. The report is **not** seeking adoption of any of the supporting documentation listed below. Further work on these documents is required and will come to Council for consideration in late 2026/early 2027 should the recommendation within this report be supported.
 - 22.1. A **Constitution** for the governance of the new company that will delivery library services on behalf of Member Councils;
 - 22.2. A **Library Partnership Agreement** outlining the arrangements of the partnership between the Member Councils and the new Company including financial modelling with regards to member contribution structure and requirements;
 - 22.3. **Lease, Licence or Management Agreements** for use of library facilities and asset use; and
 - 22.4. A **Service Level Agreement** being the agreement between the company and individual Member Councils regarding what is expected for the investment provided.
23. At the time of writing this report, no Member Council has resolved to enter into the new shared service arrangement; however, a number have indicated verbally their intention to do so.
24. There are several factors driving the need for this decision now, including:
 - 24.1. The 2031 deadline;
 - 24.2. Current Councillor knowledge and awareness;
 - 24.3. The limited time post the 2028 Council elections to wind up the GRLC;
 - 24.4. Interest from other Member Councils to confirm their future library service delivery arrangements; and
 - 24.5. Focusing City resources into an agreed way forward.

Recommendation

That Council:

- 1. Notes the requirement under the Local Government Act 2020 (Vic) section 330 for library Corporations to be wound up by 1 July 2031;**
- 2. Notes the analysis and review work undertaken including findings by both the City and the Geelong Regional Library Corporation;**
- 3. Commits the City of Greater Geelong to ‘Option 1: Transition to a new Company Limited by Guarantee while maintaining a shared service with regional partners’, for the delivery of library services with its current partner the Geelong Regional Library Corporation;**
- 4. Notes that the issues outlined in this report with the current library services delivery model will be addressed in any future arrangements;**
- 5. Authorises the Chief Executive Officer or their delegate to undertake activities with Geelong Regional Library Corporation and other Member Councils that progress the formation of regional shared service model;**
- 6. Notes a further report will be presented to adopt the governance arrangements and documentation for Option 1; and**
- 7. Endorses the development of a City of Greater Geelong position paper that outlines Council’s strategic objectives for library services.**

Financial Sustainability

25. Council invests more than \$16m per year into library services through direct allocation of funds to GRLC to deliver library services, payment of cleaning and utility costs, and support operational costs to run Western Heights library. The 2025-26 financial year allocation to libraries as a percentage of total budget is approx. 3%.
26. The State Government public library recurrent grant has remained unchanged since 2019. Despite promises to lift the grant and review the funding formula this has not occurred. This has resulted in costs shifting the bulk of library operational costs onto local government.
27. The total asset value of the City's library facilities is \$126m with an annual depreciation value of \$1.6m in 2025-26.
28. GRLC have advised that the current regional model (option 1) currently spreads a range of costs across the network that would otherwise have to be covered by each individual Council, as well as increasing the buying power in relation to books, library management systems and other materials. Option 3 would also spread these service costs.
29. The GRLC Annual Report 2024/25 indicates that "Library funding per capita from Member Councils" at \$46.55 is higher than the State average per capita cost at \$33.81 (2023/24 figure due to timing). It should be noted that this financial period included the opening of the Biyal-a Armstrong Creek library.
30. Internal analysis has suggested that there are likely to be savings in the medium to longer term should Council adopt Option 3; however, higher short term costs are possible due to IR and service requirements.
31. The review work undertaken by GRLC has identified that further work is required in relation to ensuring the contribution by all Member Councils reflects an appropriate sharing of regional costs. This work is continuing and is required regardless of the need to transition.

Community Engagement

32. No direct community engagement has taken place at this point as the recommended model does not propose any change to service levels, only a different overarching governance model.

Social Equity and Sustainability

33. Libraries are a core component of local community infrastructure, providing free and equitable access to resources, spaces and services that support learning, participation and wellbeing.
34. GRLC have advised that on average there are:
 - 34.1. 120,000 visits across the library network
 - 34.2. 242,000 loans, including: 195,000 physical loans and 47,000 digital loans
 - 34.3. 20,000 Wi-Fi sessions, supporting digital access and connectivity

35. This approximately equates to:
 - 35.1. 1.4 million visits annually
 - 35.2. 2.9 million total loans annually
36. GRLC also maintains a strong and active membership base of over 118,000 members, representing approximately 30% of the regional population.
37. As noted in the GRLC Annual Report 2024/25 libraries play an important role in social equity through program such as:
 - 37.1. Diverse collections: Curating materials that represent various cultures, languages, and perspectives;
 - 37.2. Ensuring resources cater to different ages, abilities, and interests;
 - 37.3. Inclusive programming: Developing programs and events that celebrate diversity and the needs of all community members;
 - 37.4. Staff training: Ongoing training on diversity, equity, and inclusion to promote cultural competency, unconscious bias awareness, trauma-informed practices, and inclusive customer service;
 - 37.5. Community engagement: Seeking input from diverse community groups;
 - 37.6. Accessible services: Ensuring our libraries are physically accessible to everyone;
 - 37.7. Inclusive policies: Developing and enforcing policies that promote inclusivity; and
 - 37.8. Representation: Promote diversity in staff and leadership.

Gender Equality – Gender+ Impact Assessment

38. A Gender Impact Assessment has been completed based on the officer recommendation.
39. Should Council adopt a different library service delivery model a further Gender Impact Assessment will be completed.

Relevant Law/Policy/Legal Implications

40. The Local Government Act 2020 (Vic) section 330 requires regional library corporations to be wound up by 1 July 2031 in line with requirements of the Local Government Act 1989 (Vic).
41. Should Council proceed as recommended, consideration will need to be given to Council's Procurement Policy and requirements under the Local Government Act 2020 (Vic).

Alignment to Council Plan and Vision

42. This report aligns with the Council Plan 2025-29 strategic priority:
Governance and Integrity

43. 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

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

Risk Assessment and Risk Appetite Statement

45. Council’s strategic commitment “to advance community outcomes for a thriving Greater Geelong” necessitates that it accepts some risks that accompany growth, sustainability and innovation, that are proportionate with the potential reward.
46. The delivery of library services can be assessed against:
- 46.1. *“To ensure efficient and effective delivery of services that meets the needs of the community”* as outlined in Councils risk appetite statement. Council seeks a **“Balanced”** approach when considering *“Managing in-house operations versus contracting out services and maintaining control.”*, *“Managing financial capacity versus community needs and expectations.”* and *“Ensuring efficient operations without compromising community satisfaction.”*; and
- 46.2. *“To ensure Councils’ finances are sustainably managed to fund the continual delivery of BAU operations and strategic projects, so that Council can achieve its internal and external objectives”*. Council seeks a **Cautious** approach when considering *“Balancing financial flexibility with affordability and the need to meet growing community expectations.”*.

Environmental Sustainability

47. Not applicable for this report.

Attachments

Nil

2.6. Proposal to declare Denny's Place, Geelong to be a public road

Source: City Infrastructure
Executive Director: James Stirton

Purpose

1. To seek approval to initiate the statutory procedures under sections 207A and 223 of the *Local Government Act 1989* to declare Denny's Place, Geelong as a public road under section 204(1) of the Act, as shown in **Attachment 1 – Land Area**.

Background

2. The State Government (Minister for Planning) acquired a property at 28 Malop St Geelong as part of the Revitalising Central Geelong Partnership and has built an extension of the laneway known as Dennys Place to create a connection through to Malop St, Geelong. The works were funded as part of the Geelong City Deal, with an agreement that at completion of the laneway breakthrough, the lane and associated infrastructure would be transferred to the City's ownership.
3. To satisfy the State Government Land Policy it is required that the land become a Road vested to the City of Greater Geelong

Key Matters

4. The creation of a laneway between Malop St and Dennys Pl was identified in the Central Geelong Action Plan and further detailed in the Laneways Action Plan in 2018.
5. The laneway was delivered through the Revitalising Central Geelong Partnership and funded through the Geelong City Deal
6. The laneway was created through the purchase of 28 Malop St, Geelong and demolition of the front and rear walls of the building.
7. The City is currently managing the laneway under a licence entered into with the State Minister for Planning in 2024.
8. There is an obligation within the Geelong City Deal and laneways strategy to transfer ownership of the laneway and associated infrastructure from the State to Council.
9. The Road Management Act 2004 provides the framework for initiating the transfer of ownership in compliance with the State's Land Policy.
10. Council has the authority to declare Denny's Place as a public road under section 204(1) of the *Local Government Act 1989*. Under clause 1(5) of Schedule 5 of the Road Management Act 2004, public highways within the municipality vest in Council.
11. Prior to resolving to declare Denny's Place a public road, a submission hearing process in accordance with section 223 of the *Local Government Act 1989* is required.

12. The submission hearing process will provide the opportunity for the public to make written submissions and if they wish, to present their submission to a Submissions Review Panel.
13. Council will receive a further report with the outcomes of the submission hearing process, which it will consider when determining whether to declare Denny's Place as a public road.

Recommendation

That Council:

1. **Endorses the undertaking of a community engagement process, including the issue of a public notice and the invitation of submissions in accordance with section 223 of the *Local Government Act 1989*, regarding Council's intention to declare Denny's Place, Geelong as a public road.**
2. **Appoints a Submissions Review Panel to hear from any person who wishes to appear, either in person or by representation, in support of their submission; and**
3. **Notes that a further report will be presented to Council to consider the outcome of the submissions hearing process.**

Financial Sustainability

14. This project has been delivered as part of the Revitalising Central Geelong Partnership with funding made available through the Geelong City Deal.
15. As part of the agreement associated with the implementation of this project the State Government requires the land to be transferred to the City with all assets in the laneway to come under the ownership of the City
16. Costs associated with the transfer of land and ongoing upkeep of all assets are to be borne by the City.
17. The project delivers economic activation of the Little Malop St precinct.

Community Engagement

18. Community engagement will be undertaken on the Have Your Say page and a notice published in the local newspaper.
19. In accordance with section 223 of the *Local Government Act 1989*, any person may make a written submission on the proposal to declare Denny's Place a public road. A submitter may also request to appear in person, or be represented, in support of their submission at a hearing.
20. Council will be provided with the outcome of community engagement and minutes of a Submissions Review Panel Hearing.

Social Equity and Sustainability

21. Declaring Denny's Place a public road will support equitable access to pedestrians from Malop Street to Denny's Place and onto Little Malop Street. This will ensure the infrastructure is available for community use as intended without reliance on informal or uncertain access arrangements. Formal vesting also supports clarity of responsibility for maintenance and safety, contributing to a consistent and inclusive public realm.

Gender Equality – Gender+ Impact Assessment

22. An assessment was not completed on the proposed road declaration as it does not relate to the criteria of when an assessment is required, being an existing or developing service, program or policy.

Relevant Law/Policy/Legal Implications

23. Section 204(1) of the *Local Government Act 1989* gives Council the power to declare the laneway a public road.
24. Section 207(a) of the *Local Government Act 1989* provides the right for any person to make a submission in accordance with section 223 on the proposed exercise of the power under section 204.
25. Council is required to authorise the issue of public notice in accordance with section 223 of the *Local Government Act 1989*.
26. Declaring the laneway as a public road will vest in Council under section 11 of the *Road Management Act 2004*. This enables Council to manage, maintain and regulate

the road in accordance with its statutory powers, duties and functions under the relevant legislation.

Alignment to Council Plan and Vision

27. This report aligns with the Council Plan 2025-29 strategic priority:
Core and Critical Infrastructure
28. This report aligns with the Community led 30-year Vision, “Greater Geelong: A Clever and Creative Future” community aspiration:
A destination that attracts local and international visitors.
An inclusive, diverse, healthy and socially connected community.

Conflict of Interest

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

Risk Assessment and Risk Appetite Statement

30. The proposal to declare Denny’s Place a public road aligns with Council’s Risk Appetite by applying a compliant and transparent statutory process, while maintaining low financial, operations and community risk, and strong governance controls.

Environmental Sustainability

31. The proposed declaration of Denny’s Place, Geelong as a public road is not expected to result in any significant adverse environmental impacts. The laneway supports the efficient and safe movement of pedestrians from Malop Street through to Little Malop Street.

Attachments

1. Land Area Attachment 1 D26 221763 [2.6.1 - 1 page]

Attachment 1

Land Area – 28 Malop Street, Geelong



2.7. 2026-27 Budget - Typographical Corrections

Source: Corporate Services
Executive Director: Troy Edwards

Purpose

1. To correct the amount declared to be raised by the Waste Management Charges for the 2026-27 Budget.
2. To correct the Long Day Care and Occasional Care fees listed in Appendix 4 - Fees and Charges Schedule of the 2026-27 Budget.

Background

3. On 23 June 2026 Council adopted the 2026-27 Budget and declared the rates and charges for the 2026-27 financial year.
4. Council officers have subsequently identified typographical errors in the Council resolution relating to the Waste Management Charge amount and in the Long Day Care and Occasional Care fees listed in the Fees and Charges Schedule.
5. The amount in the Council resolution for the Waste Management Charge was incorrectly stated as \$78,780,733 instead of \$73,780,733. The total amount of rates and charges declared by Council (\$350,870,024) and the amount declared for General Rates (\$277,089,291) were correct.
6. The correct Waste Management Charge amount of \$73,780,733 was included in the 2026-27 Declaration of Rates and Charges attached to the Council report considered at the 23 June 2026 Council meeting.
7. The amounts for Long Day Care and Occasional Care in the Fees and Charges Schedule appendix of the budget attached to the Council report were incorrectly stated as:
 - 7.1. Long Day Care per hour \$24.00 instead of \$25.00
 - 7.2. Long Day Care per day \$168.00 instead of \$172.50
 - 7.3. Long Day Care per week \$783.00 instead of \$802.50
 - 7.4. Occasional Care one-hour session \$23.00 instead of \$24.00
 - 7.5. Occasional Care two-hour session \$47.00 instead of \$48.00
 - 7.6. Occasional Care five-hour session \$101.00 instead of \$104.00

Key Matters

8. The proposed corrections do not alter the 2026-2027 Budget adopted by Council.
9. The total amount of rates and charges declared by Council (\$350,870,024) remains unchanged.

10. The proposed corrections ensure the Council resolution aligns with the adopted Budget and Declaration of Rates and Charges.
11. The proposed corrections support Council's commitment to good governance and compliance with the *Local Government Act 2020*.

Recommendation

That Council:

1. **Notes that the resolution passed by Council on 23 June 2026 contained a typographical error in relation to the declared Waste Management Charge.**
2. **Declares the correct amount intended to be raised by the Waste Management Charge for the period 1 July 2026 – 30 June 2027 is \$73,780,733.**
3. **Notes that the correct Waste Management Charge of \$73,780,733 was stated correctly in the 2026-27 Budget and Declaration of Rates and Charges attachments adopted at the 23 June 2026 council meeting.**
4. **Confirms that the total amount of rates and charges declared by Council of \$350,870,024, including General Rates of \$277,089,291, remains unchanged**
5. **Notes the fees for Long Day Care and Occasional Care in the Fees and Charges outlined in Appendix 4 of the 2026-27 budget contained typographical errors.**
6. **Approves the fees for Long Day Care and Occasional Care are:**
 - 6.1. Long Day Care per hour \$25.00
 - 6.2. Long Day Care per day \$172.50
 - 6.3. Long Day Care per week \$802.50
 - 6.4. Occasional Care one hour session \$24.00
 - 6.5. Occasional Care two hour session \$48.00
 - 6.6. Occasional Care five hour session \$104.00
7. **Authorises the Chief Executive Officer or delegate to update the Fees and Charges Appendix of the 2026-27 budget to incorporate the corrections outlined in point 6 of this resolution.**
8. **Notes these corrections do not alter/change the adopted 2026-27 budget.**

Financial Sustainability

12. There are no direct financial sustainability considerations relating to this report, as the proposed changes seek to correct typographical errors only, and do not alter the income budget and overall financial position of the adopted 2026-2027 Budget.

Community Engagement

13. No further community engagement is required, as the correct waste management charge figure has been included in all the relevant adopted budget documents, and the total amount of rates and charges declared by Council (\$350,870,024) remains unchanged.

Social Equity and Sustainability

14. There are no social equity or sustainability issues arising from this report.

Gender Equality – Gender+ Impact Assessment

15. A Gender Impact Assessment (GIA) was not undertaken for this report as it does not meet the requirements of the Gender Equality Act 2020. The report does not involve new or reviewed policies, programs or services, and it does not have a direct or significant impact on the public, as this report seeks to correct a typographical error.

Relevant Law/Policy/Legal Implications

16. The Council resolution is operative act of the declaring the rates and charges. It is important that the figures outlined in the resolution of Council, and the adopted budget documents align.
17. Correcting the typographical errors through a public Council resolution promotes transparency and good governance.

Alignment to Council Plan and Vision

18. This report aligns with the Council Plan 2025-29 strategic priority:
Governance and Integrity
19. 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.
Development and implementation of sustainable solutions.

Conflict of Interest

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

Risk Assessment and Risk Appetite Statement

21. If the errors are not corrected, there is a risk of inconsistency and uncertainty in relation to the adopted 2026-27 Budget, the Declaration of Rates and Charges and the Fees and Charges Schedule.

22. Council has no appetite for decisions that compromise the integrity and good governance of Council. The proposed corrections support transparency, accountability and good governance.

Environmental Sustainability

23. There are no environmental sustainability impacts arising from this report.

Attachments

Nil

2.8. Councillor Appointments to Committees

Source: Corporate Services
Executive Director: Troy Edwards

Purpose

1. To adopt the amendments to Councillor Committee appointments (**Attachment 1**).

Background

2. In accordance with section 63 of the Local Government Act 2020 (the Act), Council must appoint at least two Councillors as committee members to a Delegated Committee, one of which must be appointed by the Mayor or Council as Chair.
3. In accordance with section 65 of the Act, Council can appoint as many members as considered necessary to the Community Asset Committee. The Bellarine Arts Centre Community Asset Committee (Potato Shed) - Terms of Reference reflect the Joint User Agreement which states that the committee will consist of two representatives of Council (one of which is a Councillor as Chair).
4. The Mayor retains overall responsibility as spokesperson for the Council as required by the Act.
5. On 18 November 2024 Councillors were formally sworn into office and commenced the new Councillor term.
6. On 10 December 2024 Council resolved to appoint Councillors to the position of Chair and Deputy Chair for relevant committees and appointed Councillors to various Committees.

Key Matters

7. The alignment of advisory committees with the Council Plan is critical, as it provides a clear strategic framework, guides decision-making, and ensures that committee activities effectively support Council priorities and community outcomes
8. This report proposes one amendment to the current Councillor Committee appointments, relating to the Councillor appointment to the Audit and Risk Committee highlighted in Attachment 1.
9. In order to maintain consistency of appointments with the Mayoral term, the date of a full review of the appointments will remain unchanged, as scheduled for November 2026.

Recommendation

That Council approves the amendments to the Councillor Committee appointments (Attachment 1).

Financial Sustainability

10. Implementing the new Council Plan aligned committees is expected to reduce resource requirements and associated costs of committee management, while not adopting the model may result in ongoing financial impacts due to inefficiencies and duplicated effort.

Community Engagement

11. The appointments to Advisory Committees are considered effective mechanisms for ensuring Council remains aware of community needs and priorities.
12. Chairs, Deputy Chairs, and Councillor representatives on Advisory Committees provide an important link between the community and Council, particularly on matters of strategic focus. These appointments strengthen community engagement, support informed decision-making, and help ensure that diverse perspectives are reflected in Council's work.
13. Outcomes of the amended Councillor appointments will be communicated to all relevant stakeholders.

Social Equity and Sustainability

14. The amendments ensure Council's alignment to existing terms of reference documents, which enables Council to respond to social needs through targeted Advisory Committees reference groups.

Gender Equality – Gender+ Impact Assessment

15. A Gender Impact Assessment (GIA) was not undertaken for this report as it does not meet the requirements of the *Gender Equality Act 2020*. The report does not involve new or reviewed policies, programs or services.

Relevant Law/Policy/Legal Implications

16. Sections 63 and 65 of the Act allow for the appointment of Councillors to Delegated Committees and Community Asset Committees.

Alignment to Council Plan and Vision

17. This report aligns with the Council Plan 2025-29 strategic priority:
Governance and Integrity
18. 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

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

Risk Assessment and Risk Appetite Statement

20. There are no risk assessments or considerations arising from this report.

21. Council has a cautious appetite for regulatory, legal and governance requirements. The recommendation of this report aligns with Council's risk appetite statement as it reflects transparency, accountability and protects public trust while aligning with Council policies and decision-making frameworks.

Environmental Sustainability

22. The adoption of the changes supports the Council's ongoing commitments to environmental objectives.

Attachments

1. Councillor Appointments to Committees July 2026 [2.8.1 - 1 page]

COMMITTEE	TYPE	REPRESENTATIVE(S)	COMMENTS	Council Plan Objective Alignment
Geelong Major Events Delegated Committee	Delegated Committee (Section 63)	Cr A Katos (Chair) Cr E Wilkinson Cr E Kontelj Cr T Sullivan		Economic Development
Planning Committee	Delegated Committee (Section 63)	Cr A Katos (Chair) Cr T Sullivan (Alt) All Councillors		Core and Critical Infrastructure
Bellarine Arts Centre Community Asset Committee	Community Asset Committee (Section 65)	Cr R Story (Chair) Cr E Wilkinson (Alt)		Economic Development
Disability, Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee	Advisory Committee of Council	Cr A Aitken (Chair) Cr E Wilkinson (Alt)		Healthy and Caring Community
Audit and Risk Committee	Advisory Committee of Council	Cr S Kontelj (Mayor) Cr R Story	Mayoral duties Independent member appointed as Chair in line Audit and Risk Committee Charter	Governance and Integrity
CEO Employment and Remuneration Committee	Advisory Committee of Council	Cr S Kontelj (Mayor) Cr E Kontelj (Deputy Mayor) Cr A Aitken Cr M Cadwell Cr T Sullivan Cr E Wilkinson	Independent member appointed as Chair in line with the CEO Employment and Remuneration Committee Terms of Reference	Governance and Integrity
Environment and Circular Economy Advisory Committee	Advisory Committee of Council	Cr E Wilkinson (Chair) Cr R Story (Alt) Cr E Sinclair (Alt)		Environment and Circular Economy
Geelong Heritage Advisory Committee	Advisory Committee of Council	Cr R Story (Chair) Cr C Burson (Alt)		Heritage and Culture
Women in Community Life Advisory Committee	Advisory Committee of Council	Cr M Cadwell (Chair) Cr E Sinclair (Alt)		Healthy and Caring Community
LGBTQIA+ Advisory Committee	Advisory Committee of Council	Cr E Sinclair (Chair) Cr M Cadwell (Alt)		Healthy and Caring Community
Kilangitj Aboriginal Advisory Committee	Advisory Committee of Council	Cr S Kontelj (Chair)(Mayor)		Heritage and Culture
Aged Care Advisory Committee	Advisory Committee of Council	Cr R Story (Chair) Cr E Wilkinson Cr E Sinclair Cr C Burson		Governance and Integrity
Submissions Review Panel	Advisory Committee of Council	Cr S Kontelj (Chair)(Mayor) All Councillors		Governance and Integrity
Association of Bayside Municipalities	External	Cr R Story Cr E Wilkinson (Alt)		*Multiple Objectives
Geelong Art Gallery	External	Cr E Kontelj		Heritage and Culture
Geelong Heritage Collection Advisory Committee	External	Cr R Story		Heritage and Culture
G21 Geelong Region Alliance	External	Cr S Kontelj (Mayor)		*Multiple Objectives
Municipal Association of Victoria	External	Cr M Cadwell Cr E Sinclair (Alt)		*Multiple Objectives
Regional Capitals Australia	External	Cr S Kontelj (Mayor) Cr T Sullivan (Alt)	Mayoral duties Cr Sullivan added as an alternate	*Multiple Objectives
Regional Cities Victoria	External	Cr S Kontelj (Mayor) Cr T Sullivan (Alt)	Mayoral duties Cr Sullivan added as an alternate	*Multiple Objectives
Tourism Greater Geelong and The Bellarine Inc	External	Cr T Sullivan		Economic Development

3. RECORD OF INFORMAL MEETINGS OF COUNCILLORS

Source: Corporate Services

Executive Director: Troy Edwards

Summary

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.

Recommendation

That Council receive the summary of the informal meetings of Councillors for the period 28 July 2026.

**INFORMAL MEETINGS OF COUNCILLORS
(Council Meeting 28 July 2026)**

Informal Meeting Details	Councillor Attendance/Apology	Officer Attendance	Agenda Items	Conflict of Interest Disclosures
Health Portfolio Meeting 12 June 2026	Cr R Story	A Basford (EXEC DIR) P Newton (MGR) L Demajo (MGR) F Ballard (MGR)	Topics: • Updates from Community Care, Children and Family Services, Community Strengthening and Community Safety & Regulation	• Nil
Sports & Recreation Portfolio Meeting 24 June 2026	Cr E Kontelj Cr A Aitken	A Basford (EXEC DIR) A Higgs(MGR) A Locke (MGR) S Rindel (SNR OFFICER) E Chapman (OFFICER)	Topics: • Presentation on SSL Pathways Program • Myers Reserve - Vandalism and Security • Policy for Shipping Containers on Sports Reserves • 25/26 Sports Lighting Projects • SRV 2026 Grant Program	• Nil

Informal Meeting Details	Councillor Attendance/Apology	Officer Attendance	Agenda Items	Conflict of Interest Disclosures
Additional Briefing 25 June 2026	Cr E Kontelj	A Basford (EXEC DIR) J Randles (A EXEC DIR) <i>External Representatives from Geelong Rangers Soccer Club & Bell Post Hill Football & Netball Club</i>	Topics: Myers Reserve Masterplan	Nil
Additional Briefing 29 June 2026	Cr A Aitken Cr E Kontelj	A Wastie (CEO) A Basford (EXEC DIR) A Higgs (MGR) P Cotter (COORD) E Chapman (OFFICER)	Topics: Corio Bay Sports Club	Nil
Strategic Session 7 July 2026	Cr S Kontelj Cr E Kontelj Cr C Burson Cr A Katos Cr E Sinclair Cr M Cadwell Cr R Nelson Cr R Story Cr T Sullivan Cr A Aitken <i>Apologies: Cr E Wilkinson Cr E Sinclair</i>	A Wastie (CEO) T Edwards (EXEC DIR) A Basford (EXEC DIR) J Stirton (EXEC DIR) A Martin (CHIEF) S Beck (A/MGR) D Pangrazio (OFFICER) K Shearer (COORD) P Smith (COORD)	Presentations: - Advocacy Packs - Northern Western Growth Areas Strategic Assessment - Sports Needs Analysis - Regional Renewable Organics Network Update	Nil

Informal Meeting Details	Councillor Attendance/Apology	Officer Attendance	Agenda Items	Conflict of Interest Disclosures
Additional Briefing 7 July 2026	Cr M Cadwell Cr S Kontelj Cr R Story	A Basford (EXEC DIR) A Higger (Officer) A Stebbing (Officer) D Dowling (Officer)	Topics Discussion related to the future membership of a Geelong Regional Library Corporation shared service model for the future delivery of the City's library services.	Nil
Councillor Briefing 14 July 2026	Cr S Kontelj Cr E Kontelj Cr C Burson Cr A Katos Cr A Aitken Cr E Sinclair Cr M Cadwell Cr R Nelson Cr R Story Cr T Sullivan <i>Apologies:</i> Cr E Wilkinson	A Wastie (CEO) T Edwards (EXEC DIR) A Basford (EXEC DIR) J Stirton (EXEC DIR) J Randles (A/EXEC DIR) A Martin (CHIEF) S Beck (MGR) T Booth (Officer) P Mercurio (Officer) J Spittle (COORD) J van Slageren (MGR) T Mordaunt (Officer) S Priestly (MGR) R Hill (COORD) T Webb (COORD)	Presentations: - Draft Urban Forest Strategy: Healthy Country 2026-36 - Plan for Nature 2026-36 - Draft Public Tree Management Workshop (Part 2) - Audit and Risk Committee Chair Update Reports: - Adoption of Planning Scheme Amendment C484ggee - Heritage Design Guidelines - Environment Strategy Highlights Report 2025-26 - Draft Urban Forest Strategy: Healthy Country 2026-2036 - Geelong Plan for Nature 2026-36 - Future GRLC Operational Model - Proposal to declare Denny's Place, Geelong to be a public road - Budget – Typographical Corrections - Councillor Appointment to Committees - Audit and Risk Committee - June Meeting Minutes, Strategic Internal Audit Plan and Activity Report June 2026 (Confidential)	Nil

4. CONFIDENTIAL

Council will close the meeting to the public in accordance with the provision of section 66(2) of the *Local Government Act 2020* to consider the following list of items.

4.1. Audit and Risk Committee - June Meeting Minutes, Strategic Internal Audit Plan and Activity Report June 2026 (Confidential)

CONFIDENTIAL

Recommendation

That Council consider this report at the conclusion of the meeting as it is designated confidential by the Chief Executive Officer pursuant to sections 3(1) and 66 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 of the sensitive and varied nature of the information received and considered by the Audit & Risk Committee from time-to-time which can pertain to external stakeholders also.