



# We appreciate your feedback on the draft Green Wedge Management Plan

**BULLETIN 6 - November 2019**

Following an extensive community consultation process, Council adopted the Green Wedge Management Plan at the Ordinary Meeting of Council on 26 November 2019.

The new plan will provide direction for the management of the green wedge over the next decade. It includes a vision, principles, goals, objectives and key actions.

Preparation of the plan has been informed by extensive community engagement over the past 18 months.

In the initial stages of community engagement more, than 1000 contributions were received. An independent panel also provided recommendations to Council.

More recently, Council received 746 submissions in response to the draft GWMP during the six-week community consultation period from 1 July to 11 August 2019. Council's Future Nillumbik Committee also heard 80 verbal submissions on 10 and 11 September.

While there have been divergent views on how the green wedge should be managed, one thing is clear – our community is passionate about this unique landscape in which we live, work and visit.

We appreciate everyone's feedback and have listened to what you have to say.

We have taken the information you provided us to help further shape the final GWMP.

This bulletin outlines the key changes we have made to the GWMP in response to your feedback.

We thank you again for your participation in this project, sharing your ideas and knowledge over the past 18 months as we have sought to develop this important plan that will guide the future of the Green Wedge.

Visit [participate.nillumbik.vic.gov.au/gwmp](https://participate.nillumbik.vic.gov.au/gwmp) for all the information about this important plan.

# An overview of key changes

## to the Green Wedge Management Plan in response to community feedback

Eleven key themes were identified in the submissions and covered:

- Planning and regulation
- Environment and conservation
- Detail and structure of the draft
- Climate change mitigation
- Process for developing the GWMP
- Agriculture; Economic activity
- Bushfire mitigation
- Traditional owners
- Equine; and
- Prioritising people.

The following tables outlines key themes that emerged from the public submission on the draft Green Wedge Management Plan and the key revisions made in response to these submissions.



Submission Themes	Key revisions made
<p><b>1: Planning and regulation</b></p> <p>533 people raised concerns, for and against, with aspects of planning and regulation. In particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 147 submitters mentioned the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) and an overwhelming majority were in favour of retaining the current alignment. However 14 submitters questioned the challenges of having a 'hard' edge and suggested the concept of buffer zones to be introduced on the edge of the UGB. The issue of anomalies (land parcels some believe should be included in the UGB) was also raised.</li> <li>• 178 submitters mentioned zones, 146 submitters wanted the current zones retained with the conservation element of the Rural Conservation Zone (RCZ) highlighted in many submissions. A significant number of these submitters also 5 indicated that the RCZ should be retained in favour over the Green Wedge Zone (GWZ).</li> <li>• 32 submitters want the zoning restriction and permit requirements to be removed or reduced. Many of these submitters supported the idea of changing the RCZ to GWZ</li> <li>• 161 submitters did not want more residential development in the Green Wedge, including on the periphery of the townships</li> <li>• A minority want reference to lot size removed from consideration in developing vacant rural lots.</li> <li>• 24 submitters want more residential development, including the option to subdivide</li> <li>• 33 submitters want less regulation</li> <li>• 47 submitters want the right to rebuild their home after bushfire without the need for a planning permit.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthened statements that the UGB is fixed and cannot be changed without the approval of the government and the Parliament.</li> <li>• Added Council support for the current UGB. (Goal 5 - land use planning).</li> </ul> <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• References to buffer zones and the related actions deleted.</li> </ul> <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Township boundaries are established by the UGB.</li> <li>• Council supports the current UGB.</li> <li>• Strengthen the identities of the townships through place making (as defined).</li> </ul> <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• References to small lots removed.</li> <li>• Encourage and facilitate consolidation and amalgamation of vacant lots by landowners.</li> </ul> <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reference to prohibited uses in relation to adaptive uses for heritage places deleted.</li> </ul> <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commitment to a facilitated and expedited processing of fire re-construction applications and advocacy to government to amend the State planning scheme to extend the current exemptions applying to reconstruction after the 2009 bushfires to all future bush fires.</li> <li>• Bushfire defined as per the State Bushfire Plan 2014.</li> </ul>

Submission Themes	Key revisions made
<p><b>2: Environment and conservation</b></p> <p>523 submitters want the draft GWMP to prioritise the protection and enhancement of the environmental aspects of the Green Wedge.</p> <p>In particular a strong emphasis was put on more detail aimed at safeguarding and protecting biodiversity. Also mentioned was the need for education about conserving the environment and the importance of stewardship, protecting water resources and vegetation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce and reinforce biodiversity and landscape detail within the vision and principles.</li> <li>• Include statement from Council Plan that “Council will ensure that the natural environment is preserved and nurtured for current and future generations”.</li> <li>• Generally apply an approach to common rather than balanced objectives, except where that is needed for operational reasons.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Change the order of the goals to put “safe and healthy environments” second.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Added text describing the biodiversity of the Shire, its key species and Council’s management actions.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Added detail and revised the key actions specifically addressing the safeguarding and protection of biodiversity and the use of off-sets.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Added stress on the importance of effectively managing pests in the environment in collaboration with adjoining Councils and agencies at the landscape scale.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The scope of former key move 5 reduced to the creation of a data base over time to support management action.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Action changed to “Consider impacts on the landscape when determining rural development applications under the planning scheme.”</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Added Council’s existing integrated water management strategy, the Victorian Government’s Yarra River strategy and comments from Melbourne Water.</li> </ul>



Submission Themes	Key revisions made
<p><b>3: Detail and structure of the draft</b></p> <p>463 submitters want more detailed actions, particularly in relation to environmental conservation and protection, biodiversity and climate change. Some of these submitters criticised the amount of introductory material and were confused by the purpose and intention of the Five Key Moves. Of this group:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 49 submitters want strengthened implementation measures</li> <li>• A number of group submissions provided qualified support for key moves 1, 3 and 4</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clarified that this is a high-level document that will be supported by annual implementation plans and other Council strategies.</li> <li>• Added a summary of all existing Council strategies referenced in the draft as an appendix.</li> <li>• Clarified that the focus of the GWMP is the Green wedge but that it also refers to the three townships as service and gateway centres.</li> <li>• Combined the vision and principles and increased the prominence of what the community values.</li> <li>• Clarified the relationship of the GWMP to the planning scheme and added maps showing the existing zones, ESO and BMO as an appendix.</li> <li>• Moved “key data”, “the Victorian Government’s planning framework” and “how this plan was created” to appendices.</li> <li>• Changed the title “Rural Living” to “Living in the Green Wedge”, referenced the lifestyle categories created by the Dept. of Primary Industries as an illustration of the range of rural activities and clarified the source of information for the rural land uses map as being valuations data.</li> <li>• Under the “Responsible Leadership” goal, included new key actions relating to the development of performance measures, accountability and resourcing and executive monitoring of the plan’s implementation.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced introductory material</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deleted reference to “Keymoves” and retained 1, 3 and 4 as key actions.</li> </ul>



Submission Themes	Key revisions made
<p><b>4: Climate change mitigation</b></p> <p>333 submitters want a strong overall focus on mitigation of climate change in addition to adaptation in the GWMP.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expanded section on climate change to include a rationale for mitigation and the role of vegetation and soils for carbon sequestration. Referenced the current climate action plan.</li> <li>• Included actions to support the management and rejuvenation of soils.</li> <li>• Included cross-reference to water security.</li> </ul>

Submission Themes	Key revisions made
<p><b>5: Process for developing the GWMP</b></p> <p>308 submitters commented on the process for developing the GWMP:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 184 submitters were critical of the process (in particular: no stakeholder steering committee was created, all community panel recommendations should have been accepted, claimed insufficient recognition of community feedback on the environment, and the minority panel report should not have been recognised)</li> <li>• 18 submitters were supportive of the process of creating the plan</li> <li>• 106 submitters sought clarification on aspects of the plan.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revised introduction refers to background material stored in the Participate Nillumbik web site.</li> <li>• Emphasis on collaborative leadership.</li> </ul>



Submission Themes	Key revisions made
<b>6: Agriculture</b> 224 submitters generally want agriculture to be consistent with environmental conservation. In particular: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 89 submitters indicated their support for sustainable and regenerative agriculture</li> <li>• 120 submitters wanted the retention of the conservation focus and the permit requirements for farming activity within the RCZ</li> <li>• 6 submitters indicated that there should be less planning regulation in the RCZ</li> <li>• Concern with changing the RCZ zone to GWZ zone because it may allow agriculture uses that might have an impact on the environment and local amenity</li> <li>• Concern that allowing farming to occur on 'cleared land' within the RCZ without the need for planning permits will lead to poor environmental outcomes</li> <li>• Support for local food production and food security</li> <li>• Some criticism of prioritising agriculture because it was claimed that the soil is of poor quality.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthened references to the interdependence of sustainable agriculture and environmental conservation.</li> <li>• Included references to the importance of soil conservation and regeneration.</li> <li>• Include support for sustainable and regenerative agriculture.</li> <li>• Included text to support diversification of non-farm income.</li> <li>• Emphasise the need for research on the future of agriculture in Nillumbik. Limited actions to advocacy to Government that it alter planning and other controls in support of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a right-to-farm on pre-existing cleared agricultural land in the RCZ with decision guidelines to avoid damage to surrounding properties or environment.</li> <li>• supplementary rural business activities</li> <li>• small-scale and productive hobby farming.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Submission Themes	Key revisions made
<b>7: Economic activity</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 91 submitters wanted less economic focus</li> <li>• 36 submitters expressed concern about increased tourism</li> <li>• 35 submitters provided support for sustainable economic growth consistent with green wedge values</li> <li>• 11 submitters supported tourism.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthened references to supporting the types of business that "contribute to the values of the green wedge".</li> <li>• Goal statement expanded to include the qualifier, "consistent with our green wedge vision".</li> <li>• Reduced introduction.</li> </ul>

Submission Themes	Key revisions made
<b>8: Bushfire mitigation</b> 124 submitters made reference to bushfire mitigation and recognised that it was important to address in the GWMP and through the newly adopted Bush Fire Mitigation Strategy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updated reference and commitment to the final bushfire mitigation strategy.</li> <li>• Deleted the Bushfire Occurrence Map as it is repeated in the Bushfire Mitigation Strategy.</li> </ul>

Submission Themes	Key revisions made
<p><b>9: Traditional owners</b></p> <p>114 submitters supported respect for traditional owner knowledge and cultural heritage.</p> <p>The Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation wrote in their submission: “The Elders are happy with the consultation that has occurred with Gail and Julieanne, and have no extra comments to make on the Green Wedge Management Plan. My one note is that the Wurundjeri Corporation name needs to be updated within the document”.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updated the name of the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation.</li> <li>• Acknowledged in the principles that the area of the current Shire of Nillumbik is land of the Wurundjeri – willam clan of the Woi-wurrung speaking people</li> </ul>

Submission Themes	Key revisions made
<p><b>10: Equine</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 68 submitters had reservations about the impact of keeping horses or other hard hoofed animals and potential damage to the environment</li> <li>• 23 submitters expressed support for keeping of horses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Changed action to prepare a <i>Equine in Nillumbik</i>.</li> <li>• Included support for responsible keeping and riding of horses in a manner consistent with environmental protection.</li> </ul>

Submission Themes	Key revisions made
<p><b>11: Prioritising people</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 90 submitters want greater recognition of landowners’ contributions, responsibilities and rights</li> <li>• 30 submitters want greater social focus (including health and wellbeing)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acknowledged the differences of opinion within the community in the introduction.</li> <li>• Clarified the Green Wedge Conversations proposal by reference to the St Andrews and Melbourne Conversations.</li> <li>• Wherever consolidation of lots is referred to, include the qualification that it will be encouraged and facilitated.</li> </ul>

#### Need more information?

Participate Nillumbik is the one-stop-shop for the Green Wedge Management Plan review. You can provide input, and access information and key dates and register to keep up to date with the project at [participate.nillumbik.vic.gov.au/gwmp](https://participate.nillumbik.vic.gov.au/gwmp). For further details about the project or to opt out email [gwmp@nillumbik.vic.gov.au](mailto:gwmp@nillumbik.vic.gov.au) or call 9433 3134.



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