

Green Wedge

MANAGEMENT PLAN

BULLETIN 1 - MARCH 2018



Nillumbik Shire Council is asking the community to help it prepare a new Green Wedge Management Plan to guide the future of our iconic rural areas, the 'Green Wedge', which covers some 91 per cent of the Shire.

A primary question will guide the preparation of the new Plan, which is: 'What is the best way for us to manage Nillumbik's Green Wedge, now and in the future?'

A review about people, experiences and wide community engagement

Council is using a collaborative community focused process to prepare the new plan.

To gain diverse opinions and experiences we intend to engage with the people that truly matter – the people that live in and around, manage, own property, run businesses, invest, care for, or simply enjoy the green wedge.

By adopting this approach, we believe we can develop a plan that will be relevant to the often-varied needs of our different communities and users to ensure a vibrant living and breathing Green Wedge for current and future generations.

Everybody will have an opportunity to participate in the broad community engagement stage, which will include community workshops and stakeholder sessions along with other ways of allowing people to make their views known.

Diversity and breadth of opinion and experience, positive or negative, will be vital inputs to the success of subsequent stages.

A Community Panel – everyday people

The centrepiece of the review will be the establishment of a completely independent 'Community Panel'. The panel will be formed of 40 randomly selected everyday members from the municipality.

The panel will sit for up to five days to hear about and consider the many issues impacting the management of the green wedge – as identified by the wider community and stakeholder consultation stage. The issues will generally fall under the categories of social, economic and environmental matters. However the panel can expect to deliberate and make recommendations on a range of relevant matters.

The panel will be asked to prepare a final report and recommendations for action to Council that will directly inform and influence the preparation of the final Green Wedge Management Plan and its implementation.

Council has provided the following commitment to the future panel:

"Council will carefully consider all the recommendations of the Community Panel. Council will provide a response to all the recommendations, and where any recommendations are only partly adopted or not adopted, Council will provide their reasoning for this."

Achieving a consensus of opinion

The panel process will build a broad understanding and appreciation of Green Wedge management issues among its members. The panel will only make recommendations for action to Council when it has reached 80 per cent consensus on any issue. This is a high bar – but will ensure any recommendations are robustly and fully considered, balanced, reasonable and fair.

Community panels are being increasingly used because they are independent to an administration and require everyday people to reach consensus on matters affecting fellow citizens.

Once Council has received and considered the panel's recommendations a new Green Wedge Management Plan will be prepared. The draft plan will be released for broad community consultation to 'check-in' and make changes to ensure we have got it right.

The process will not end with the preparation of the plan. Implementation and commitment to actioning it will be an ongoing process over its lifetime.

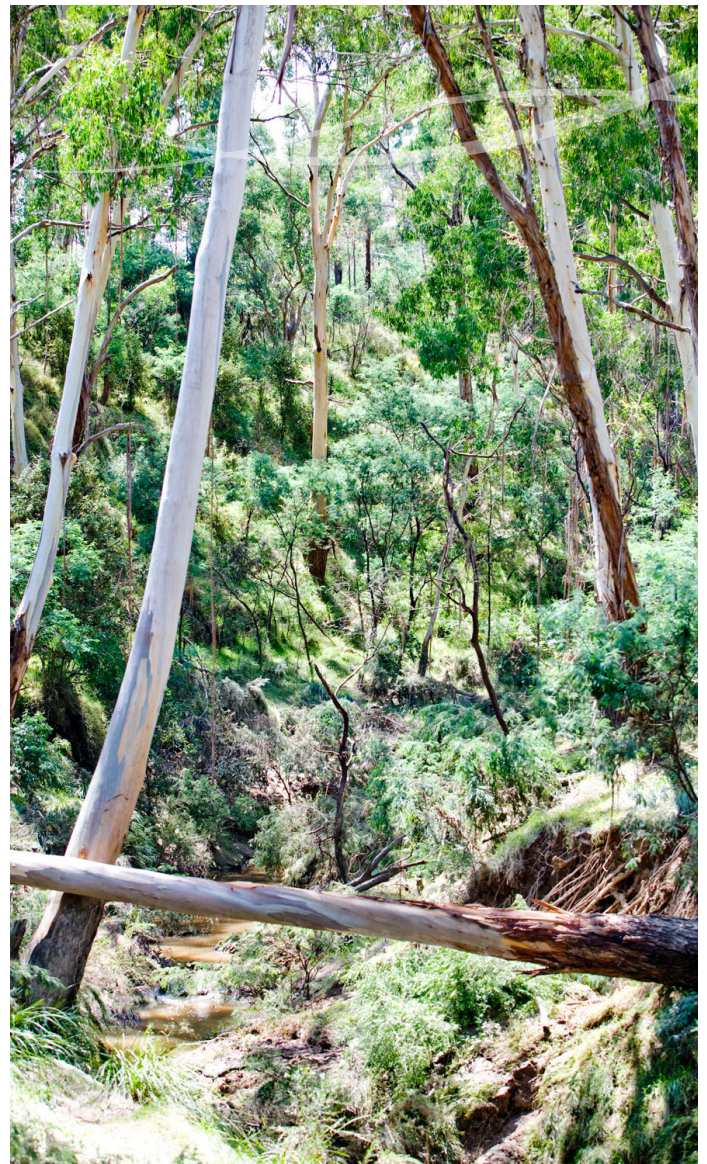
Why prepare a new plan?

The Victorian State Government expects each of metropolitan Melbourne's green wedge councils to prepare a Green Wedge Management Plan and review it on a regular basis.

Council made a commitment to review the 2010-2025 Nillumbik Green Wedge Management Plan when it was elected in 2017. This is our opportunity to prepare a plan that is relevant to our unique circumstances and to guide our Shire's future.

Council wants to ensure that a plan to manage the Green Wedge is in place that recognises the diverse communities that exist within it and to acknowledge the very real day-to-day issues that people experience as they live, work and play in our rural areas.

Our green wedge, like every rural area, has to be



relevant to our modern lives and create a living, breathing rural area that is dynamic, vibrant, prosperous and adaptable to meet changing needs. The plan will be for the future as well as the here and now.

When

Public engagement and consultation will begin shortly. It is anticipated that a new Green Wedge Management Plan will take until early 2019 to be formally adopted.

The key steps in the process are outlined on page 3.

MAY 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community engagement plan design workshop Stakeholder forum Wider community engagement commences
JUNE 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wider community engagement activities Panel recruitment commences (independent of Council)
JULY 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wider community engagement concludes
AUGUST 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Panel meet and greet Panel day 1
SEPTEMBER 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Panel day 2 and 3
OCTOBER 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Panel day 4, and 5 if required Mayor and Councillors receive panel recommendations report on final panel day Panel report officially accepted at Ordinary Council Meeting
NOVEMBER 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council to consider and endorse response to panel recommendations Council to consider draft GWMP for public consultation
DECEMBER 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public consultation on draft GWMP commences Consultation will run for three months
FEBRUARY/ MARCH 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consultation closes Future Nillumbik Committee - Council considers community submissions
APRIL 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek to adopt final GWMP

Need more information?

Read on. The following pages provide an overview about the Green Wedge and why a plan is prepared to guide its management.

More detailed and technical information will be released at the key steps outlined above.

History of Metropolitan Melbourne's Green Wedges

Melbourne's Green Wedges and peri-urban areas are the non-urban areas outside Melbourne's urban growth boundary. Green Wedges have long been identified as a key part of Melbourne's famed 'liveability'.

Green Wedge areas were first set aside in the 1970's to conserve rural activities and significant natural features and resources between the growth areas of metropolitan Melbourne as they spread out along major road and rail links.

Green Wedge land has been defined under the Planning and Environment Act 1987 since 2002. New planning zones and stronger regulations were also introduced at this time to better control the subdivision and use of green wedge land.

There are 12 designated Green Wedge areas within the 17 metropolitan-fringe local government areas.¹

Plan Melbourne, the State's Metropolitan Planning Strategy, states that 'Green Wedge Management Plans must be in place to support achievement of desired green wedge outcomes'². The key task of a Green Wedge Management Plan is to articulate the type, scale and form of change in the green wedge and how those changes will be managed and facilitated³.

"Green Wedges, like any other place are dynamic and constantly evolving. Changes identified through the preparations of a Green Wedge Management Plan may embrace new productive land uses, investments and developments consistent with state policies for green wedges, environmental enhancements and sustainable resource management"⁴.

¹ Green Wedge Policy and Strategy

² Plan Melbourne Page 89

³ Preparing a Green Wedge Management Plan Planning Practice Note 31

⁴ Preparing a Green Wedge Management Plan Planning Practice Note 31

The Nillumbik Green Wedge

The Nillumbik Shire Green Wedge is on Melbourne's north-east fringe, 25 km from the city's central business district and plays a central role in the shire's appeal as a desirable place to live.

The area, known as Nillumbik Shire is the traditional land of the Wurundjeri-willam clan of the Woiwurrung speaking people, with archaeological sites, scarred trees and artefact scatters evidencing their footprint.

At the formation of the Shire of Nillumbik in 1995, the newly constituted Council commissioned the preparation of a long-term strategic vision for the community – '*Nillumbik 2020: A Preferred Future*' (Ellyard, 1997).

The document addressed many topics, however, a consistent theme from the shire's inception has been the importance of the 'country/bush environment in close proximity to a major city'; 'trees, space, clean air'; 'character and tradition'; 'attractive townships'; 'rustic atmosphere'.

The community's desire to see the semi-rural character of the municipality maintained has remained constant over the past 20 years.

This is evident in each iteration of the Council Plan with goals to the effect of: 'To conserve the natural and built environments' (*Council Plan 1999-2002*) – through to: 'The community values and wants to enhance the Green Wedge with its history and diversity its open spaces, bushland environment and artistic heritage' (*Council Plan 2017-2021*).



While the whole of Nillumbik is referred to as the 'Green Wedge Shire', in land use planning terms, green wedge land is defined as being outside the urban growth boundary.





The Nillumbik Green Wedge - what is it?

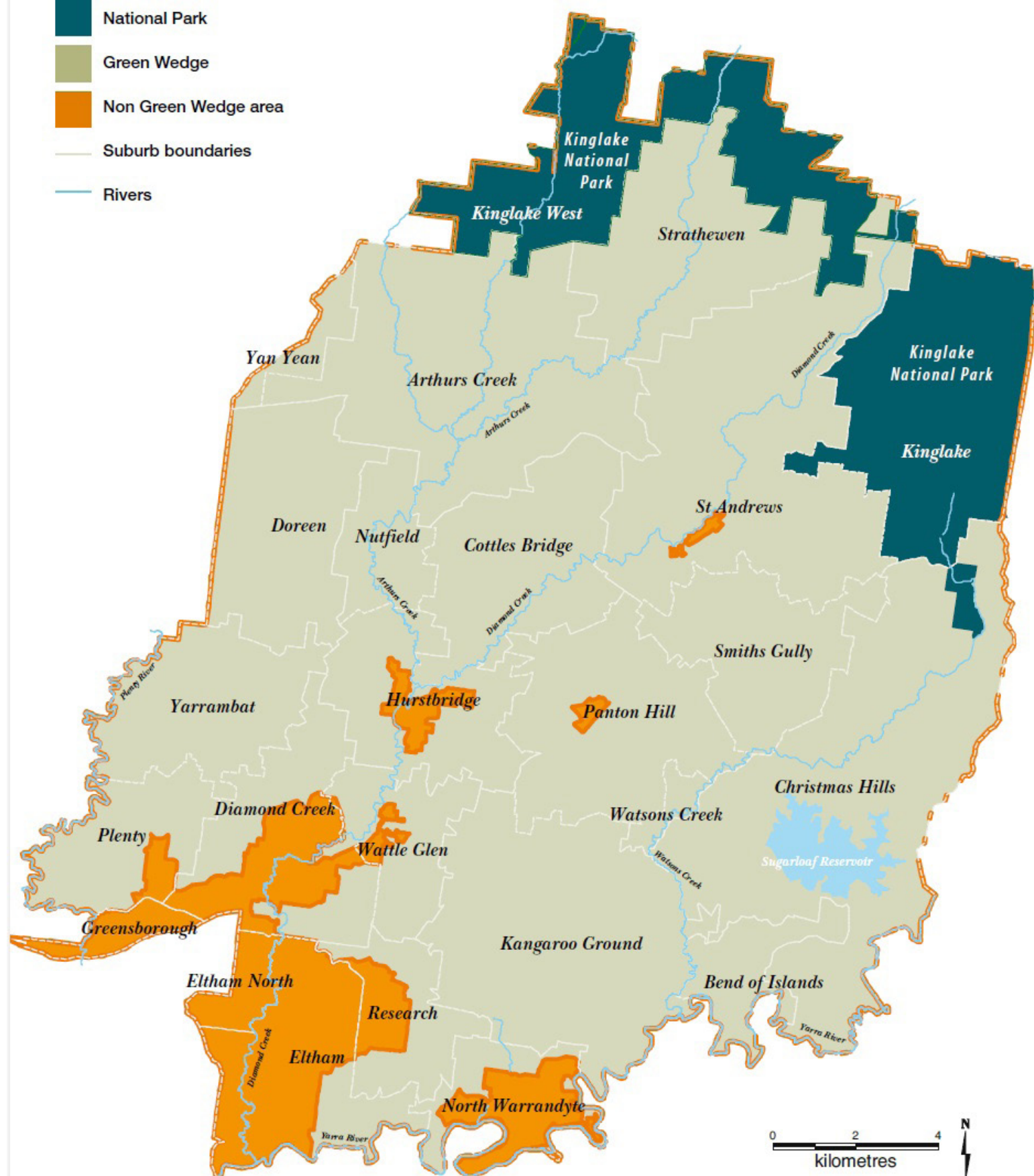
In summary, the Nillumbik Green Wedge:

- Covers 91 per cent of the total area of the Shire;
- 79 per cent of it is privately owned;
- 13,000 people (one fifth of our population) reside in Nillumbik's Green Wedge.
- 43 per cent of the land is identified as having environmental values (habitat, flora etc). Generally these are identified by zones or overlays in the Nillumbik Planning Scheme to manage their use and environmental value.

Kinglake National Park, reserves and bushland, together with lifestyle properties, hobby farms, orchards, wineries and broad acre farms all make up this unique landscape.



-  National Park
-  Green Wedge
-  Non Green Wedge area
-  Suburb boundaries
-  Rivers



Issues and options in the management of the Nillumbik Green Wedge

The issues in managing Nillumbik's green wedge are complex and highly interconnected. The broad community engagement will allow everybody in the community to raise their issues, ideas and thoughts about green wedge management.

Topics that will likely be explored include (but are not limited to) agriculture, biodiversity, bushfire management, economic development and sustainability, landscape and open space, rural living, population and demographics, settlements, local infrastructure, diverse communities, social and community needs, recreation and cultural heritage.

What's next?

We will undertake this review in four-stages, starting with a community engagement plan that will identify how to connect with hard-to-reach audiences. This will involve Council, independent consultants and the community working collaboratively. At key milestones we will again come back to the wider community to seek feedback.

Selection of community panel

To ensure the panel's diversity, invitations will be randomly sent to 10,000 residents and ratepayers across the municipality. Nominees will be independently filtered to ensure a representative cross-section of ages, genders and geographic locations.

Community participation experts, Mosaic Lab, have been engaged to ensure the independence of the community panel and to facilitate a series of panel sessions. These are expected to be held over four to five days and community members are welcome to observe the panel during its sittings.

The community panel will make a series of recommendations for Council's consideration.

Finally, prior to the new plan being adopted, the community will once again be able to have its say when over a three-month period from December to February 2019 we again ask for your views.

Regular updates will be provided via Council's website and to interested stakeholders.

Sources of information

Council will now embark on the preparation of a more detailed background paper and a series of information sheets to support the first key stages of the public engagement process.

These will be made available via our website at: participate.nillumbik.vic.gov.au/gwmp

Comments or suggestions about matters that you would like to see addressed in the background paper or in future forums are always welcome via:

participate.nillumbik.vic.gov.au/gwmp or email gwmp@nillumbik.vic.gov.au

Other helpful resources:

- Current Green Wedge Management Plan for Nillumbik
- State Government Planning Practice Note 31 - Preparing a Green Wedge Management Plan
- Policy and Strategy on Green Wedges

