

Draft for Consultation: Green Wedge Management Plan

June 2019

DRAFT FOR CONSULTATION

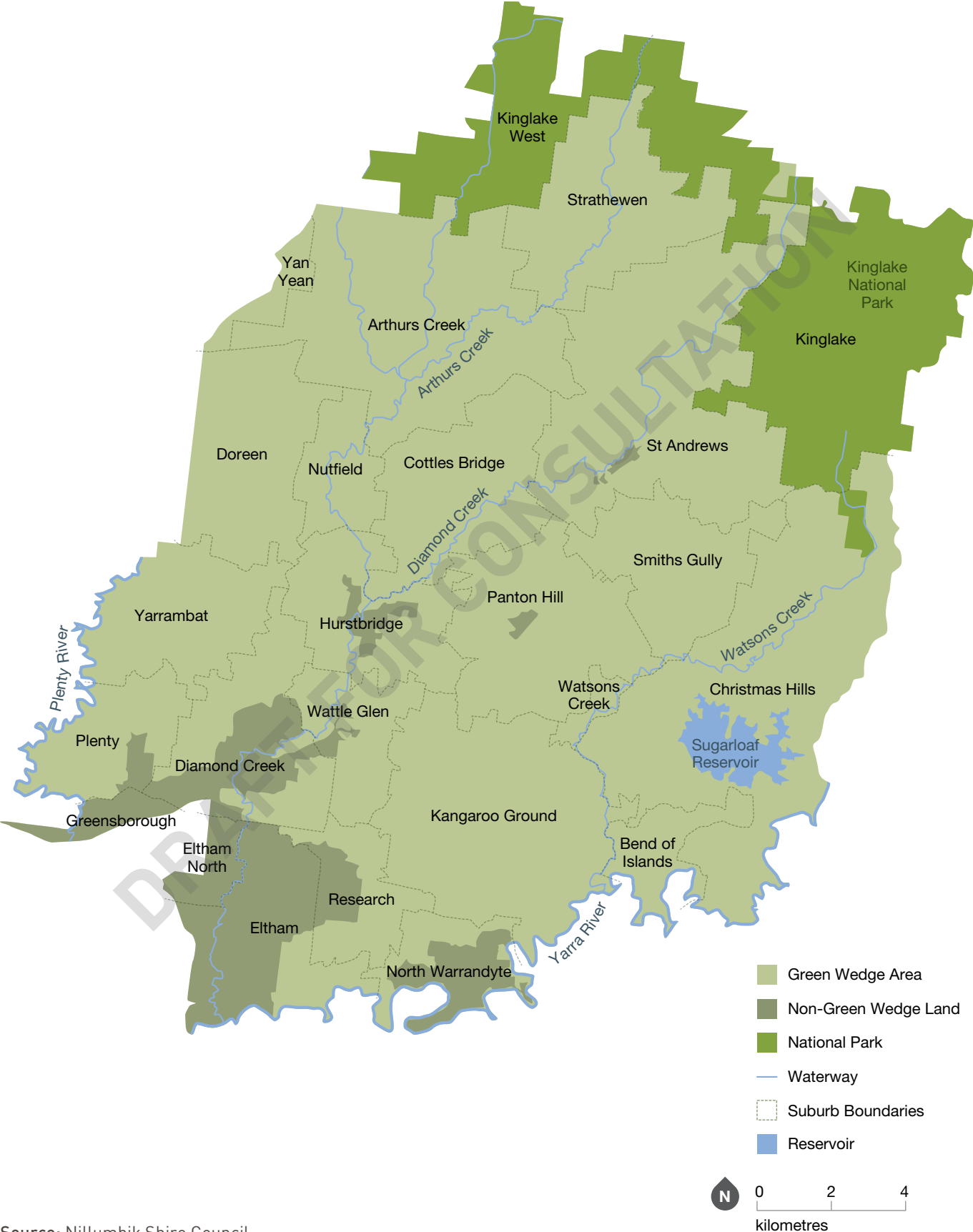


Acknowledgement of traditional owners
Nillumbik Shire Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri people who are the Traditional Custodians of Land known today as Nillumbik. We pay respect to the Elders both past and present and extend that respect to other Indigenous Australians.

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Nillumbik's Green Wedge



Source: Nillumbik Shire Council

A vision for Nillumbik's green wedge

'Management of the Nillumbik green wedge will lead the way in supporting a vibrant, resilient, connected and diverse community; living in the landscape to enhance the environmental, social and economic sustainability of the Shire.'

Harnessing the shared values of our community and supporting their commitment to managing the green wedge will be the key objective over the 10 year lifetime of this plan.

Nillumbik's green wedge and rural character contribute to the shire being one of Australia's most attractive and liveable places. Human activity has shaped our landscapes and the green wedge will continue to support a range of existing and future uses. It will continue to thrive and evolve as a place to live, work and play.

Nillumbik's green wedge will be maintained and enhanced through continued application of the urban growth boundary and decision making that reflects its roles as a place for agriculture, recreation, nature conservation, tourism and rural living. This will ensure the rural character, values, landscapes, townships, natural environments and lifestyles that are so cherished, are identified, preserved and enhanced. The management of risk from bushfire and adapting to climate change are also priorities.

Opportunities to grow agriculture, tourism, recreation and local jobs and services will be actively sought in a sensitive manner to create greater economic vitality and jobs for our community, foster new skills and build local capability. Our rural townships of Hurstbridge, St Andrews and Panton Hill will be the primary focus for local economic activity in the green wedge. Environment or nature based opportunities will also be encouraged where they demonstrate environmental, social and economic benefits.

Social and community challenges will be addressed through meaningful collaboration and engagement. Building community resilience, sharing knowledge and resources, planning for emergency management, supporting ageing in place, and increasing rural transport and accessibility will be achieved through positive relationships. We will embrace relevant new technologies to improve people's lives and achieve enhanced social equity by promoting greater connectivity, learning, sharing of ideas and helping people to come together. Our reputation in arts and culture will continue to grow by supporting our passionate community who draw inspiration from our rural landscapes. Supporting healthy and active lifestyles through increased opportunities for recreation and enjoyment of the outdoors will continue to be a key focus for enhancing our wellbeing.

All of this will be achieved in a responsible, collaborative and balanced way. This will ensure that the environmental, social and economic sustainability of the Shire achieves balanced outcomes and a positive future for our people, place and community.

Introduction



Since its formulation as the Shire of Nillumbik in 1994, the values of the rural landscape - our green wedge - as a place to live, work or visit have grown in importance for the identity of the shire and its diverse communities. The inherent values and management of the landscape however date back thousands of years, under the stewardship of the Wurundjeri-willam clan of the Woi wurrung speaking people and territory. The Wurundjeri people lived in the landscape, managing and cultivating grazing land for food, and harvesting materials.

Today, Nillumbik is one of 12 green wedges around metropolitan Melbourne. Green wedges are established and protected under the Victorian Government's legislative and policy framework. The government asks all green wedge councils to prepare and regularly review a green wedge management plan to identify a vision, objectives and actions for the sustainable use and development of each green wedge.

This draft is intended to be Nillumbik's second Green Wedge Management Plan. It builds on and replaces the first plan adopted by Council in 2010. It forms part of Council's suite of strategic policies and will act as a coordinating plan to align future green wedge strategy and policy and to guide funding, resourcing and service delivery. Once approved, it will be supported by an annual action plan, including regular monitoring and evaluation.

This plan has been produced as a result of a major public review conducted by Council in 2018, involving engagement with over 1000 people. This included the deliberations and advice of a community panel formed from 40 citizens of the shire who volunteered their time to consider the engagement feedback, understand the current metropolitan and local planning context and the progress of the earlier plan, hear from experts and provide recommendations to Council on the best way to manage the Nillumbik green wedge now and into the future. The panel provided recommendations to which Council provided formal responses, mostly either in support or support-in-principle. In addition, Council received a separate minority report from five panel members which has also been considered in the preparation of this plan.

This draft plan is consistent with the Victorian Government's metropolitan plan, *Plan Melbourne 2017-2050* and adopts the goals of the Shire's *Council Plan 2017-2021 - Living in the Landscape* vision for Nillumbik to become Australia's most liveable shire with:

- engaged, connected communities
- active and creative people
- safe and healthy environments
- a prosperous economy and
- responsible leadership.

All of this information has formed the basis for drafting this new plan for public consultation.

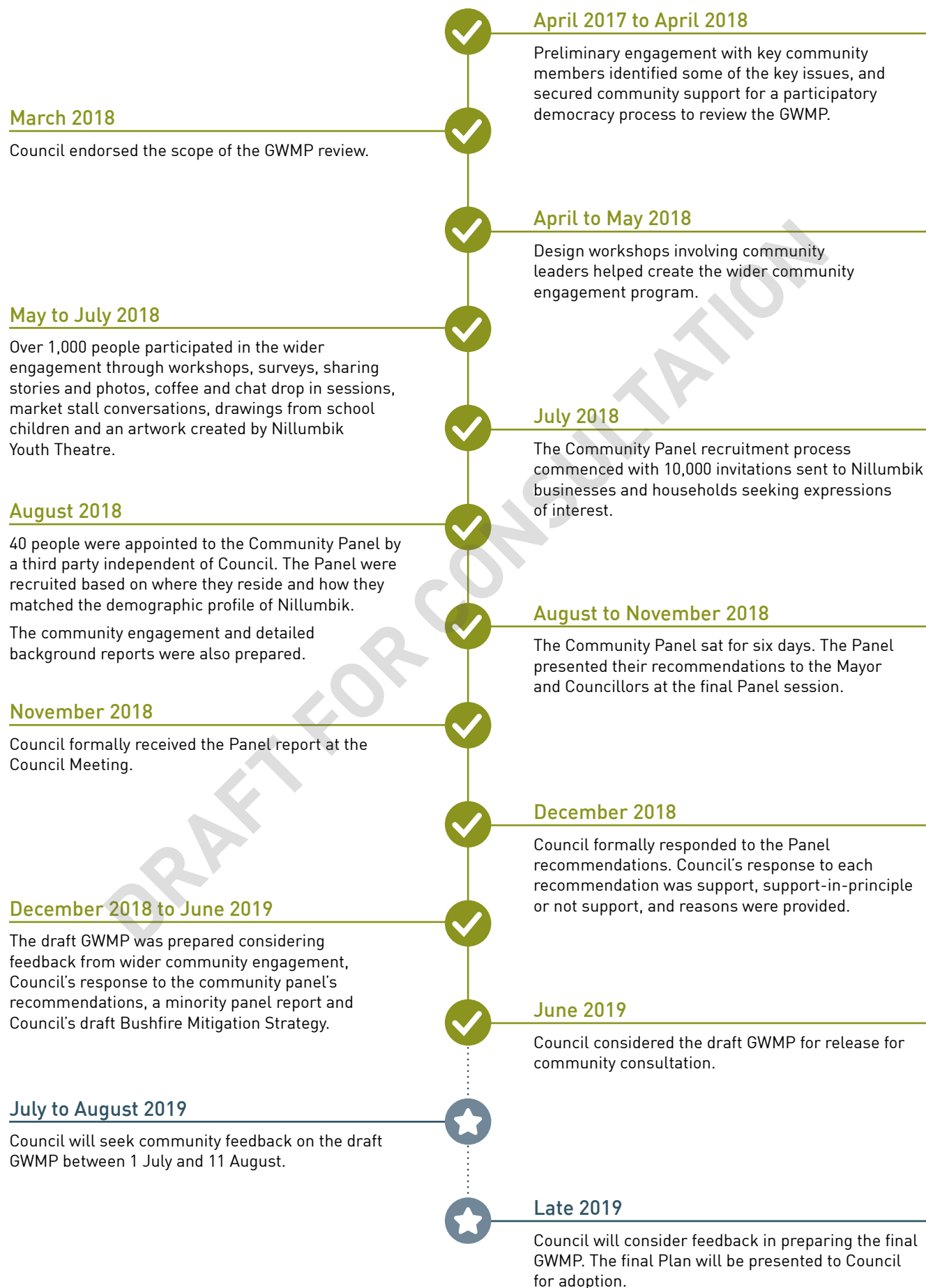
As much as possible, this plan has been designed to be aligned with Council's shire-wide policies and its Council Plan so that investment attraction, resource allocation, advocacy, implementation and reporting against it are part of core business for Council.

It is intended that this plan provide direction over the next decade, with priorities determined every four years through the preparation of the Council Plan and prior to the four-yearly review of the Nillumbik Planning Scheme. It includes:

- principles that informed the creation of this plan and will guide how it is to be implemented
- goals that describe desired overall outcomes for the community
- objectives that describe what is to be achieved in support of the goals and
- key actions to effect change in the direction of the objectives.

This plan will inform future versions of the Council Plan, Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan and Municipal Strategic Statement. Its objectives will also inform key shire-wide strategies such those relating to economic development, housing, agriculture, positive ageing, bushfire mitigation, arts and culture, biodiversity, climate change adaptation and recreation.

How this plan was created



The Victorian Government's planning framework for green wedges

Since 1971, green wedges have become a key state government tool for managing metropolitan Melbourne's growth. Unlike other rural municipalities across Victoria, green wedges directly interface with Melbourne's urban areas. Typically they faced the greatest pressure for change and growth as a consequence of this immediate proximity.

The establishment of the urban growth boundary responded to these pressures by setting a limit to the metropolitan urban area. In turn, this defined the green wedges. Supporting legislation has also removed the potential for incremental change to occur to the boundary, which has had the effect of providing stronger delineation between urban and rural areas.

Since 2002, the following steps have been put in place by state governments to provide more protection and planning for Melbourne's green wedges and to create more consistent outcomes around Melbourne's edges:

- **Legislation:** regulations requiring ratification by both Houses of the Victorian Parliament for planning scheme amendments that alter the urban growth boundary or green wedge subdivision controls.
- **Strategy:** *Plan Melbourne 2017-2050* is the Victorian Government's strategy for the development of metropolitan Melbourne and specifies desired planning outcomes for green wedges.
- **Core planning provisions** for metropolitan green wedge land in every planning scheme. These set out prohibited land uses and subdivision provisions.
- **Green wedge zones**, which primarily include the Green Wedge Zone, the Green Wedge A Zone and the Rural Conservation Zone.
- **Green wedge management plans** – requested of Councils by the Victorian Government. They are council-adopted strategies that identify a vision, objectives and actions for the sustainable use and development of each green wedge.

The role of this plan is to direct local management and policy development. It is not a statutory document and does not override the legislative and statutory controls administered under various Acts of Parliament. Key state government policies referenced in this plan include:

- *The Victorian Planning Provisions* and the *State's Planning Policy Framework*.
- *Building Code of Australia*
- *Plan Melbourne 2017-2050* (see Appendix 1).
- *Protecting Victoria's Environment – Biodiversity 2037*.
- *Victoria's Climate Change Framework and Climate Change Adaptation Plan 2017-2020*.
- *Water for Victoria, 2016 and Integrated Water Management Framework, 2017*.
- *Victorian Government Priority industries and sectors*, Dept. of Jobs, Precincts and Regions, 2019
- *Supporting Victoria's Agriculture*, Agriculture Victoria.
- *Victorian Visitor Economy Strategy, 2016*.
- *Community Resilience Framework for Emergency Management*, Emergency Management Victoria.

Many of these have funding, education and capacity building streams that will require Council to be organised and engaged in strategic partnerships at regional or sectoral level to realise outcomes that benefit our shire and our community.



Melbourne's 12 Green Wedges – Plan Melbourne 2017-2050. As replicated from Plan Melbourne.

Managing what is valuable to us

The Nillumbik green wedge is highly valued locally and regionally because of its natural beauty, rolling hills, varied landscapes, steep escarpments, water courses, agriculture, rural living, biodiversity and open space. Our people value the rural lifestyle that the landscape offers them as a tranquil place to live, the productive ability of the green wedge and its overall contribution to health and well-being.

The green wedge covers approximately 40,000 hectares and is home to 13,000 rural residents in a range of diverse communities. Rural landowners work to manage their properties, visitors enjoy what the area has to offer and volunteers contribute to its on-going sustainability. Its communities are supported by urban

areas including Diamond Creek and Eltham, the three main rural townships of Hurstbridge, St. Andrews and Pantom Hill and a number of other small rural settlements that provide local facilities and act as focal points for community activities. The green wedge contains a number of uses, including agriculture, conservation, tourism and rural living.

Climate change will challenge the Nillumbik community with more frequent and more intense weather events. This will result in drought, heatwaves, bushfires and other events impacting on human and animal health and wellbeing and challenge our communities and the services that support sustainability. To start to address these new and changing risks, community programs that focus on community resilience and local solutions will be required.

Managing the landscape to mitigate bushfire risk, promote agriculture and tourism and retain biodiversity values and rural living is challenging and requires balancing what can be competing objectives. Our communities also point to and recognise the continued influences on our rural areas such as proximity to urban Melbourne, population growth and an ageing population, land pricing, the ability to provide services and infrastructure, rural land management, the difficulty of managing land in close proximity to the urban growth boundary, transport and the regulatory framework.

The extensive community engagement conducted in 2018 revealed, in summary:

What people like about the green wedge:

- *Space, peace, wellbeing –particularly how the green wedge made people feel, with appreciation of views and fresh air and the less stressful environment.*
- *Environment, biodiversity, plants and animals – the importance of the natural environment for plants and animals as well as humans.*
- *Community.*
- *Recreation and leisure activities.*
- *Lifestyle.*
- *Rural living.*

What the opportunities are:

- *Utilising the green wedge for health and wellbeing services and industries and the opportunities provided by the environment to improve human health and wellbeing.*
- *Improving infrastructure to encourage people to visit the green wedge and to assist the local community in day to day activities.*
- *Community building to leverage the community strengths and work with existing groups to develop a shared understanding of living in the green wedge.*
- *Sustainable tourism opportunities to encourage people to visit or enjoy the green wedge and local towns.*
- *Environmental protection to protect the green wedge for future generations.*

And the challenges:

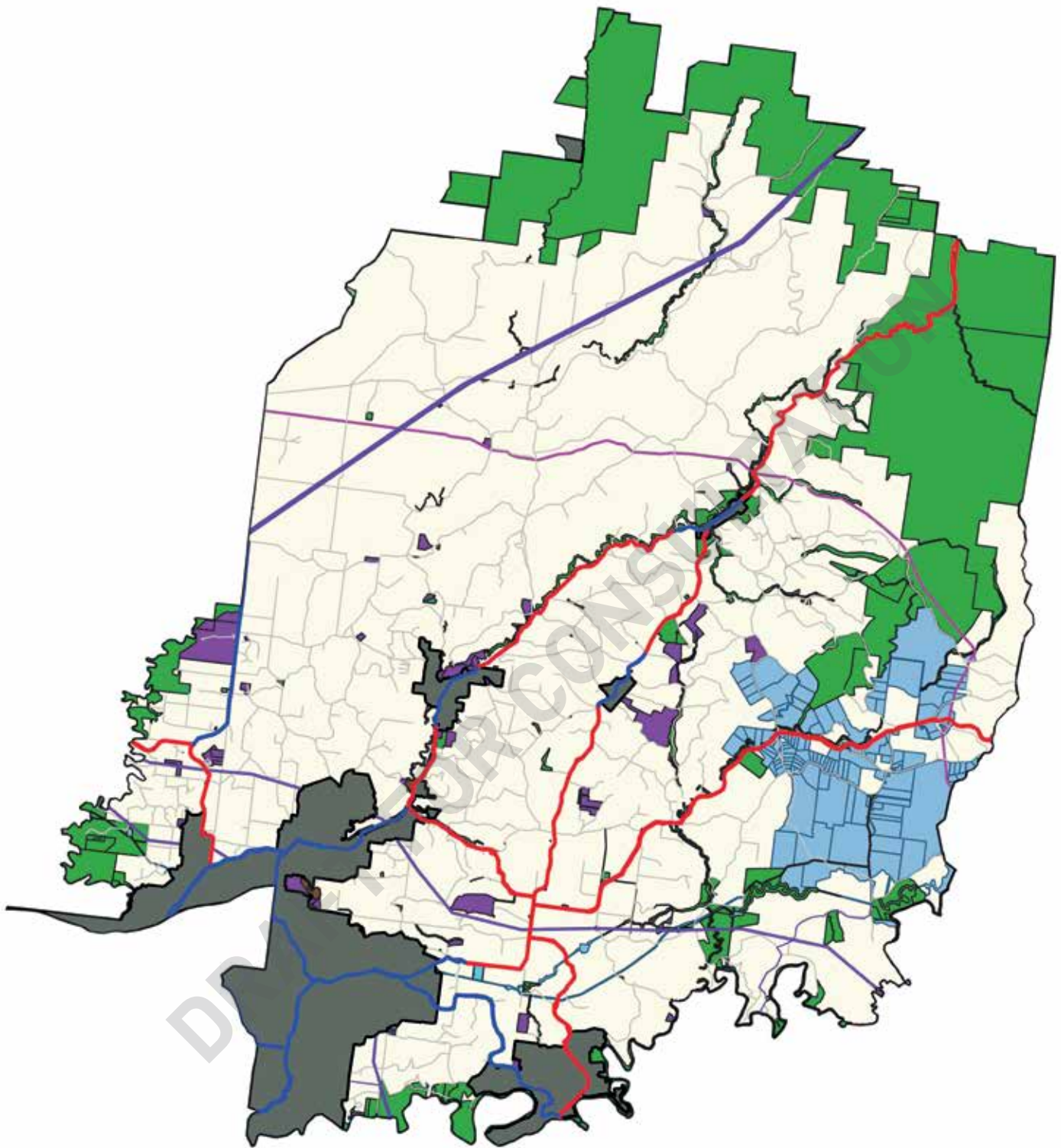
- *Concerns that the population will be increased and the area over developed.*
- *Transport issues, particularly poor quality and congested roads and lack of good public transport, safe cycling and horse-riding options.*
- *The risk of bushfires and the need to manage land to reduce its impacts.*
- *Avoiding a reduction in the quality of the land through poor management, development or neglect.*
- *Costs for individuals living in the green wedge and the importance of finding funding options from other levels of governments, to reduce the financial pressure on local residents of maintaining the green wedge.*
- *Finding the balance between people and the environment and between different groups, such as farmers, conservationists and recreational users.*
- *Difficult, costly and time intensive and unfair planning processes were considered a challenge by some respondents.*

Community engagement set out to try and find consensus on the best way to manage the green wedge, recognising that most of it is in private ownership. What has been revealed is reasonable consensus on what needs to be managed, the capability of the community and a desire for more inclusive approaches to bring people together around action.

The new plan proposes to move the balance of local management approaches more towards leadership and empowerment to achieve its objectives. Essential characteristics of leadership include sharing of a vision, motivating and serving people, empathy, creativity, team building and continuous improvement. Key to implementing this plan will be Council supporting the ability of people to cooperate and share knowledge.

Council will take the lead in this new approach and invest in new ways of working as well as adapt its existing businesses to be more customer-responsive. The key moves on page thirteen are intended to achieve the community panel's recommendations on multiple fronts and present an opportunity for the state government to contribute to green wedge management. They are organisational changes for the long-term to build and share knowledge and to be present and useful within the community.

Ownership of the Green Wedge



- | | |
|---|------------------------------|
| VicRoads responsible for maintaining entire road | Crown Land |
| VicRoads maintains pavement, Nillumbik Shire Council maintains roadside | AusNet Land |
| Nillumbik Shire Council maintains entire road | VicTrack Land |
| High voltage overhead powerlines | VicRoads Land |
| Gas pipeline | Nillumbik Shire Council Land |
| | Melbourne Water Land |
| | Yarra Valley Water Land |
| | Private Land |

Five key moves for the shire

1. Create a comprehensive landowners' information and support service for land use and management, including annual reporting on trends and outcomes. Seek on-going government funding to support the service.
2. Implement a whole of organisation approach to community resilience addressing climate change, emergency management and a range of matters in an integrated manner. This will include robust conversations on the natural environment and biodiversity values, bushfire risk reduction, economic development, agriculture, economic and community rebuilding post events, human health, well-being and safety and water catchment planning.
3. Create a *Green Wedge Conversations* program to provide local communities with a forum to discuss resilience, leadership, knowledge-transfer and cooperation between people involved with land management, agriculture, nature conservation, public land management and bushfire mitigation and management. Seek on-going government funding assistance to support the program.
4. Create a comprehensive planning and place management service for the townships to strengthen their identities and attractiveness as service, population, tourism, community and cultural centres.
5. Undertake stocktakes of environmental assets and agricultural activity and practices, including hobby farming, that need to be protected for the future and the pests that need to be managed by sourcing information from formal research bodies and landowners. Seek government funding assistance to establish and maintain this data base into the future for landowner information, program prioritisation and policy development.

Funding and resourcing of green wedge management

Resourcing at both state and local level for green wedge management remains a challenge. Much is implied in many of the key state frameworks and strategies in terms of resourcing, education and partnerships with local councils and communities. Nillumbik, as a relatively small population in a metropolitan context and with limited resources, welcomes state funding support and wants to take greater advantage of government funding programs. Council also recognises that it needs to work smarter with existing resources. It can do this by ensuring key priorities are identified in areas where there is the greatest consensus to support outcomes or change. Resources can then be matched accordingly.

As Nillumbik Shire Council is considered an interface local government area, it is eligible for *Growing Suburbs* funding but is not eligible for many funding opportunities realised by other areas of the state that are classified as rural.

On the other hand, whilst the state government recognises the value that the green wedge brings to the metropolitan area, the community of Nillumbik has to manage the external demands of a rapidly growing population in the adjacent northern growth area and its role as one of Melbourne's rural recreational and leisure areas.

It is therefore essential that funding options be sourced from other levels of government, to support the efforts of local ratepayers to maintain the green wedge.

Implementation plans will be considered as part of Council's annual budget. They will need to be pragmatic and acknowledge the range of financial constraints that apply to Council across its entire servicing and operational budgets.

Managing our green wedge – Plan on a page

Vision – ‘Management of the Nillumbik Green Wedge will lead the way in supporting a vibrant, resilient, connected and diverse community, living in the landscape to enhance the environmental, social and economic sustainability of the Shire.’

The five goals for managing our green wedge are



Engaged, connected communities



Active and creative people



Safe and healthy environments



A prosperous economy



Responsible leadership

Principles: What drives management of the Green Wedge

- Leadership
- Aboriginal Voice
- A whole of Shire approach and recognition of Nillumbik’s relationship to Metropolitan Melbourne
- Manage change for future benefit
- Collaboration and connectedness
- Celebrate, appreciate and enjoy local identity and the landscape
- Social equity
- Safety, wellbeing and resilience
- Conserve and enhance our heritage
- Sustainability and the precautionary principle

How we will support delivery of the Plan: Five key moves

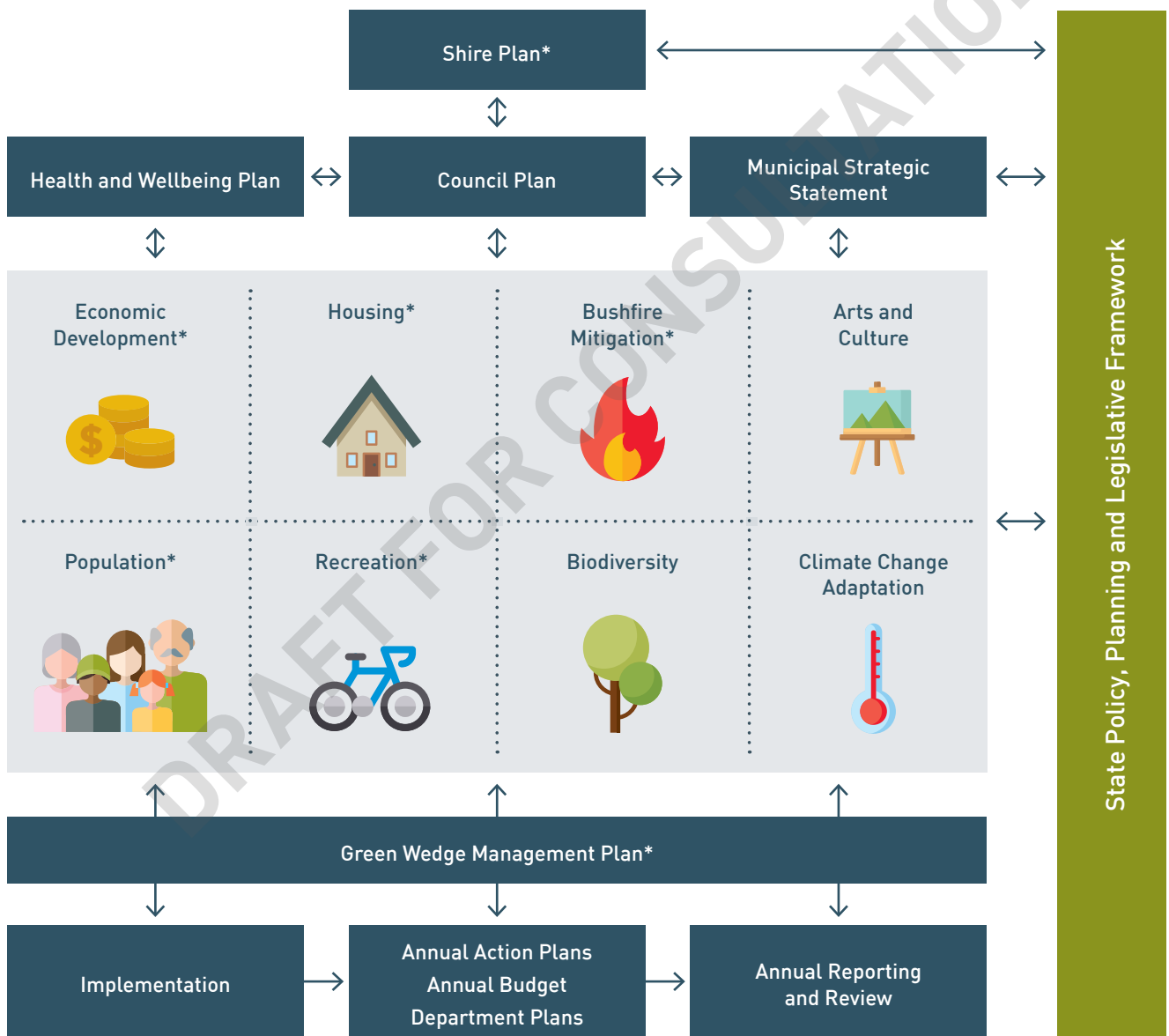
1. A comprehensive landowners’ information and support service.
2. A whole of organisation approach to community resilience.
3. A *Green Wedge Conversations* program.
4. A comprehensive planning and place management service for the townships.
5. Stocktakes of environmental assets and agricultural practices.



How the GWMP relates to council policy and strategy

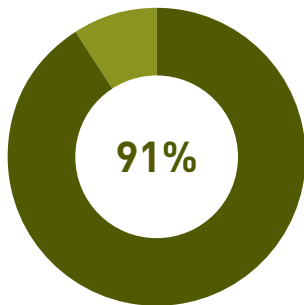
The Green Wedge Management Plan (GWMP) will inform future versions of the Council Plan, Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan and Municipal Strategic Statement.

It will also inform key shire-wide strategies such as economic development, housing, positive ageing, bushfire mitigation, arts and culture, biodiversity, climate change adaptation and recreation.

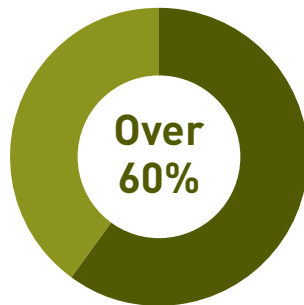


*Under development or review

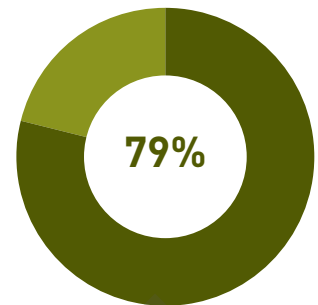
The green wedge key data



of total shire
(39,600 hectares)



of the green wedge is covered by an environmental significance overlay



private ownership

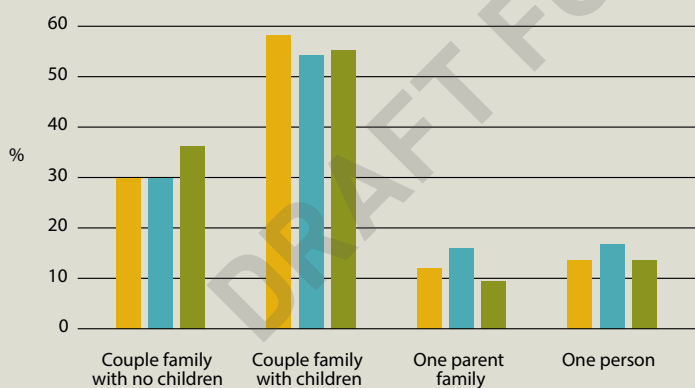


Home to **1/4** of the shire's population (15,665 people)

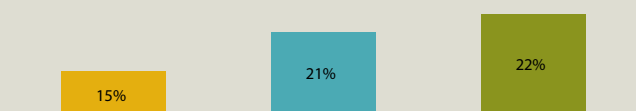


Diverse mix of recreation including golf, sailing, archery, bushwalking, football, cricket, soccer, mountain bike riding, equestrian & motor sports

Household composition



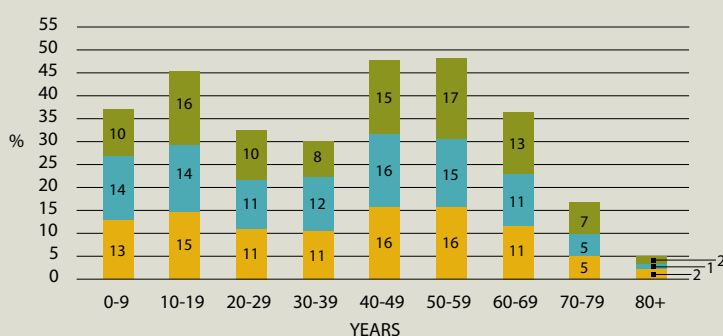
Volunteering



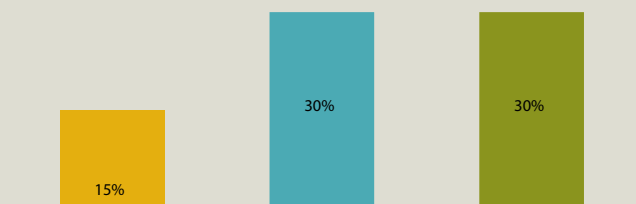
How many provide unpaid assistance



How old are we?



How many residents travel more than 30km to work



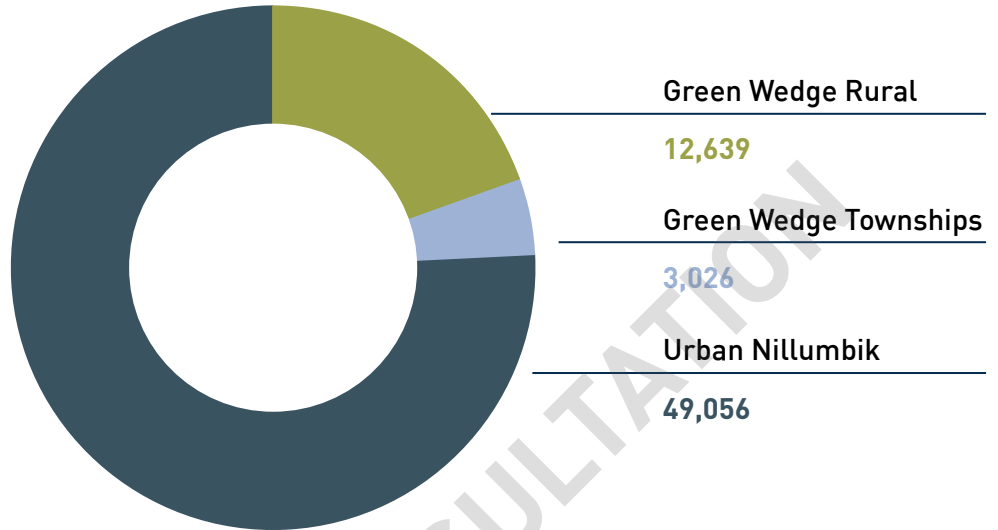
LEGEND

Urban Nillumbik Green Wedge Township Green Wedge Rural

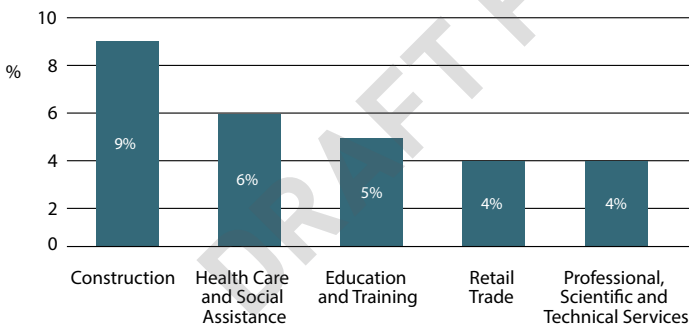
Living in the green wedge

Estimated Residential Population of Nillumbik, by area of residence, 2017

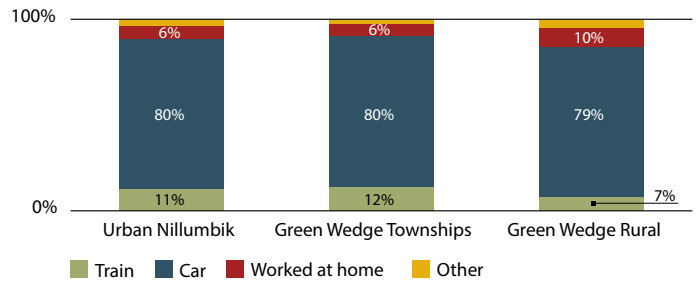
Sources: ABS 3101.0 and ABS 3218.0 Regional Population Growth, Australia, 2016-17 (SA1)



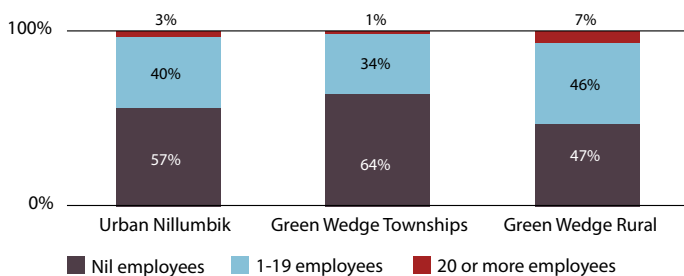
Top industries of employment of green wedge and rural town residents



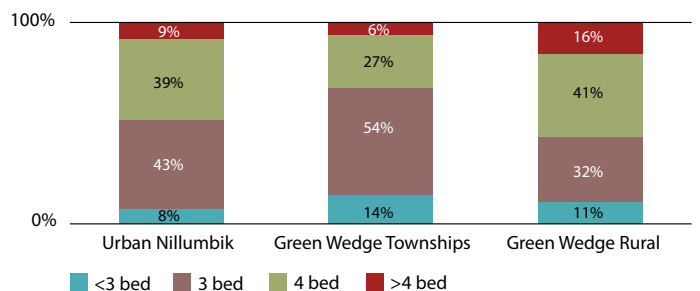
How we travel to work



How many people our businesses employ



How big our homes are



Principles



The following principles informed the creation of this plan. They update the guiding principles of the first Green Wedge Management Plan to include the recommendations of the community panel and Council's values. They will inform how the goals, objectives and key actions are to be implemented and to inform any new actions that are contemplated subsequent to the finalisation of this plan.

Leadership

Council's leadership will demonstrate its values of:

- **respect:** we actively listen and encourage all views, respecting our peers, our community and the environment
- **collaboration:** we are one team working effectively, we willingly share our knowledge and time to achieve successful outcomes
- **integrity:** we are accountable, genuine and transparent in our actions and decisions
- **adaptability:** we are responsive, agile and creative
- **community:** we build strong relationships that benefit our community and customers.

Aboriginal voice

We have much to learn from our first peoples, particularly about caring for country.

A whole of shire approach and recognition of Nillumbik's relationship to Metropolitan Melbourne

Urban and green wedge areas within the Shire are co-dependent, the green wedge's overall planning is controlled by the state government and its residents are valued for their management of rural land that benefits metropolitan Melbourne.

Manage change for future benefit

The green wedge is a changing environment and home to many people. Change will be managed to conserve its values and with a focus on long-term stewardship.

Collaboration and connectedness

Partnership between Council, community, landowners and stakeholders is critical to the management of the green wedge recognising the dependencies between Nillumbik's communities, communities in metropolitan Melbourne and other levels of government.

Celebrate, appreciate and enjoy local identity and the landscape

The special nature of the green wedge and the diverse identities of its communities are to be embraced.

Social equity

Balance diverse social needs, differing personal needs and variable access to services.

Safety, wellbeing and resilience

A commitment to build collective capability to plan for, respond to and better manage and adapt to shocks and stresses such as climate change, bushfire, an ageing population and transport restrictions.

Conserve and enhance our heritage

The green wedge environment and cultural heritage are irreplaceable resources for the local and metropolitan community that need to be conserved and enhanced.

Sustainability and the precautionary principle

Solutions to problems need to be tailored to meet Nillumbik's unique social, economic and environmental needs now and into the future. We need to anticipate and avoid any actions that may cause serious or irreversible harm to the environment and the people who live within it.

Goals, objectives and key actions



Goal 1: Engaged connected communities

A place where communities and ideas thrive, underpinned by trust, confidence and continuous learning.

People are the lifeblood of any community and play the most important role of all in caring and looking after our green wedge. It is the people that own the majority of the land. It is the people who manage our beautiful landscapes and risk their lives to protect us. It is the people who volunteer, participate and engage in public life. It is the children that will contribute to our future and the elderly who pass on their wisdom and our history. It is the people who stand up and respond in adversity and it is the vulnerable people we look out for together. It is the people that invest their money in their homes and businesses, that connect socially and drive our togetherness, that farm the land, that visit our businesses, that run our clubs, that sometimes just seek a simple life or who just want to enjoy their home with their families.

Emergency Management Victoria's *Community Resilience Framework* captures the importance of people in community life:

Volunteers and volunteering are integral to Victorian community life. This is especially evident in emergency management, where trained and committed volunteers deliver services across the State on a daily basis. "Ordinary" people have long been willing to come together during tough times to pitch in and help affected communities.

Council's *Council Plan 2017-2021* emphasises:

- improved engagement and communications
- building community resilience
- lifelong learning
- ensuring community infrastructure responds to community needs
- strengthen social inclusion; build social capital and connection within our communities and
- ensure that community services and programs respond to current and emerging needs.

The community engagement process that has supported the preparation of this plan has revealed a range of common values among our people. At the highest level, all value the sense of community, the landscapes, open space, nature and rural character that defines much of Nillumbik's green wedge. The same process also revealed our people have a healthy range of divergent views in certain areas. To make progress and come together, we can focus on shared priorities. Where we share differing views but common objectives is an opportunity for progress. Where very different views remain, it is important that we continue to respect and understand these differences, listen to everyone and facilitate conversations in an attempt to resolve them or, at the very least, have a shared understanding.

Critical to the success of this plan will be enabling our people to take greater shared responsibility for the future of our green wedge. We can build greater capacity and capability in our people across the shire through:

- better education and awareness programs
- facilitation through regulatory processes
- information gathering and sharing
- continuing and improving volunteer support programs
- more conversations
- celebrating and promoting our achievements
- brokering opportunities with state government and its agencies to leverage change, be it finance, resourcing or strategy.

Population, settlements and local services

How and where Nillumbik might manage change and land uses, including housing or economic development, is an important issue for green wedge management and how people continue to live in it, experience it and thrive.

Nillumbik is undergoing limited population growth; growing annually by only 0.4 per cent compared to an average 2.4 per cent growth rate across metropolitan Melbourne. It is however, experiencing the impacts of proximity to population growth in the adjacent northern growth corridor, particularly in relation to demands on community infrastructure and the transport network.

It is also an ageing population with a median age of 44 years for people in the rural areas compared to 40 years in the urban areas of Nillumbik and 36 years across metropolitan Melbourne. Across the shire, the numbers of people aged over 50 years are expected to increase from one-in-five in 2016 to one-in-three by 2036.



The engagement revealed a growing need to find ways to support ageing people to continue to live on and manage their land. Locating aged care services within the townships, helping people to access online government services and supporting community transport are all practical supports. Help with the manual effort of maintaining land could be coordinated by Council through volunteer and community groups.

The state government has set clear boundaries between urban Melbourne and the green wedges. Unlike all other planning controls in Victoria, the urban growth boundary and minimum subdivision sizes in the green wedge cannot change without the approval of the Victorian Parliament so any change will not occur without the strong direction of the government of the day. Outside of the major townships, housing is limited to one dwelling per allotment (plus a dependant person's unit) but is not always possible because the size and location of many smaller allotments will not allow compliance with state planning requirements to manage bushfire risk, retain vegetation, manage effluent or protect agricultural uses. Consolidation of lots is likely to become increasingly necessary to assemble sufficient land to manage all of the requirements for a new dwelling.

It is likely that much of shire's population growth needs to be concentrated in and around Eltham and Diamond Creek. Within the green wedge, only small incremental changes in population are anticipated.

A hierarchy of gathering places act as focal points for our rural communities and provide different levels of local service provision. Diamond Creek and Eltham, the townships of Hurstbridge, St. Andrews and Pantom Hill, the smaller centres at Yarrambat and Kangaroo Ground and district based public facilities such as schools, halls and stores all support the rural communities.

Previous plans have sought to concentrate any new housing within the townships to avoid rural conflicts but the formal township boundaries are also constrained and development within them has been limited until sewerage services become available. These constraints may have to be re-examined, subject to state government support, to enable their roles as social, economic and service centres for the green wedge to accommodate incremental growth and support housing diversity for young and elderly people. Each township would benefit from place-based community engagement and an up-to-date vision and action plan.

State government planning policy expects each municipality to prepare well considered strategies to implement government growth policy. Council has identified that a new housing strategy is required for the whole of the shire. The development of a small number of related key Council strategies, including economic development and community infrastructure, will combine to inform an integrated approach toward settlement planning.

Rural living

Rural living in Nillumbik means 13,000 people living in the green wedge and its townships. Opportunities also exist to run local home-based businesses, enjoy hobby farming and be part of local community life.

There are responsibilities and costs that come with rural life; including property and land management, often doing without the utility services enjoyed by urban residents and bushfire mitigation and preparedness. Our residents have high regard for the natural environment and the rural lifestyle that the landscape provides and invest in its management.

There is a strong state planning policy framework that applies to rural living, including:

- protection of human life from bushfire being the top priority
- protection of agriculture and prevention of the loss of agricultural land to other land uses
- preference for residential development to be in existing urban settlements which can better service people's needs
- ensuring no 'net loss' to biodiversity as a result of the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation – meaning land can't be readily cleared (without off-setting) and
- prioritisation of conserving and enhancing the landscape ahead of residential development in the Rural Conservation Zone that applies to much of the shire.

The complexity of this regulatory and planning approval system brings challenges that Council needs to help the community to navigate through the provision of information.

The engagement revealed general concerns with aspects of the state government's planning framework relating to the uncertain use of small rural lots, the balancing of bushfire safety requirements and native vegetation objectives and restrictions on the ability to accommodate different family generations on rural allotments. Localised concerns were also raised expressing frustrations with living and managing rural lands on the border of the urban growth boundary, particularly around Diamond Creek. Difficulties with trespass, rubbish dumping and dust from heavily used unsealed roads were all raised as symptoms of being abruptly adjacent to fully urbanised land. These conditions are, by contrast, improved on the edge of Eltham where a buffer zone is built into the urban area itself.

A particular issue of concern for rural residents is having the ability to rebuild their home if it has been lost to fire or other disasters. Under the planning scheme, this will require a planning permit for development. Council supports the premise that people should be able to rebuild, but the planning and building controls are in place so that the design and siting of replacement buildings reduce future risks to the occupants, not repeat them. This may mean that another location on the property is a better option to address fire risk.

The broader social considerations relevant to rural living also need to be better addressed. This includes how we house our ageing population and better enable people to age in the community where they have lived for many years – the ability to move into appropriate accommodation within the local area to remain close to family, friends and established community networks. Rural living also provides challenges about how we continue to service and support rural communities, including transport and accessibility and the provision of community facilities.

Transport and accessibility

The rural community experiences challenges of access and mobility, particularly for isolated children, young and elderly people. Accessibility can have a range of health and wellbeing impacts, including access to employment or how socially connected people are. Surveys that supported the development of Council's *Health and Wellbeing Plan 2017-2021* and the community engagement that informed this plan both revealed relatively low resident satisfaction with public transport in the green wedge.

Council will continue to advocate strongly for improved public transport, including growing the range of community bus services. Opportunities may emerge through technology platforms to provide more choice and accessibility to transport solutions. The sharing economy continues to grow and the ability to reach more people with innovative solutions might enable transport to be delivered more efficiently by on-demand booking systems integrated into the broader transport network.

The bicycle and shared trail networks, footpaths and bus stops, are also important for mobility and accessibility within the green wedge.

Council implements a municipal road management plan. Higher use and higher maintenance roads are prioritised for sealing, which is considered to be of environmental benefit to reduce dust, silt and debris run-off into waterways. This can be a significant problem in the peri-urban area where rural unsealed roads are heavily used as if they are suburban roads. Council will look at ways to extend engagement with user communities about its road program, noting that not all roads should or will be sealed. Sometimes it may be beneficial for a road to be unsealed to prevent additional but non-essential vehicle movements, keep speeds low or provide for horse riding. Routine management of roadsides must continuously strike a balance between safety and environmental considerations.

Objectives

- 01.1 Enable our people to take greater shared responsibility for the future of our green wedge.
- 01.2 Encourage, support, promote and celebrate the roles that landowners and volunteers play in the management of the green wedge.
- 01.3 Support community facilities in the green wedge.
- 01.4 Work with local communities to articulate a vision and develop plans appropriate to their scale and capacity for Hurstbridge, St Andrews and Panton Hill as green wedge service centres and visitor gateways. Where possible, encourage housing diversity to enable ageing in place. Align future development with environmentally sensitive design principles and ensure that future development emphasises each town's unique characteristics.
- 01.5 Recognise the limits on housing development in the rural areas.
- 01.6 Better support the ageing population of the green wedge to age in place with its benefits to retaining local knowledge, community cohesiveness, engagement and involvement in local groups.
- 01.7 Facilitate linked public, community and shared transport options connected to the existing railway network and destinations within the green wedge.

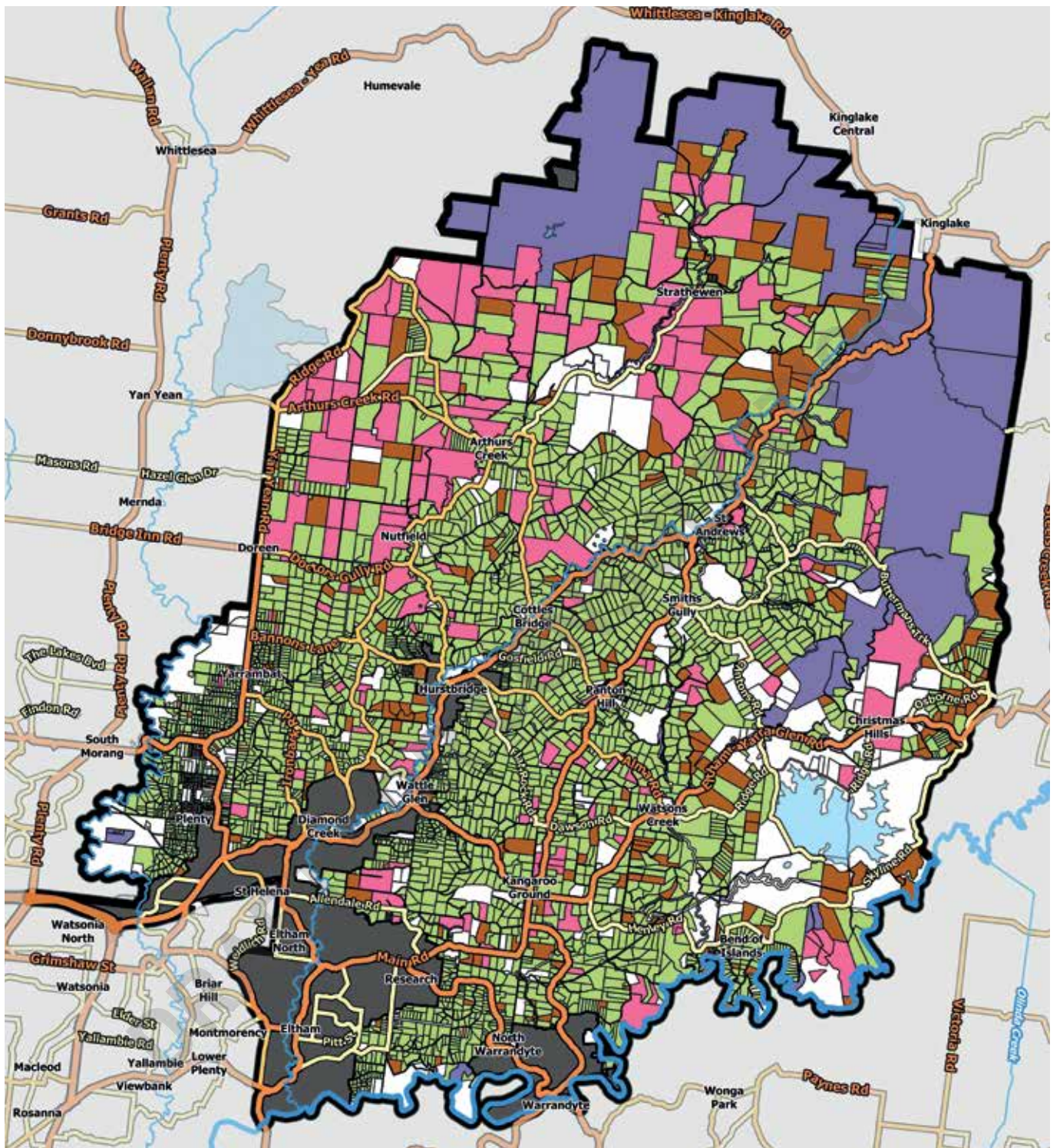
Key actions

- A1.1 Create a *Green Wedge Conversations* program to provide local communities with a forum to discuss resilience, leadership, knowledge-transfer and cooperation between people involved with land management, agriculture, nature conservation, public land management and bushfire mitigation and management. Seek on-going government funding assistance to support the program.
- A1.2 Implement Council's *Nillumbik Volunteer Development Strategy 2015-2020*.

- A1.3 Develop and manage community infrastructure for the green wedge as part of the Shire's overall approach to service and asset management planning.
- A1.4 Better utilise multi-use community spaces to create community hubs in the townships.
- A1.5 Create a comprehensive planning and place management service for the townships to strengthen their identities and attractiveness as service, population, tourism, community and cultural centres.
- A1.6 Investigate options for consolidation and amalgamation of small rural lots that are not capable of supporting a dwelling in their current configuration. Where appropriate and with owner consent, consider government purchase of such lots where they are adjacent to public land.
- A1.7 Review the impacts of proximity to urban communities on rural land adjoining the urban area and investigate options to maintain the amenity and productivity of those areas.
- A1.8 Encourage the location of aged care services within the townships and programs to facilitate people ageing in the community where they have lived for many years. Encourage volunteer and community groups to support ageing landowners with land management, where needed. Implement Council's *Positive Ageing Strategy*.
- A1.9 Advocate for improved public transport, traffic management and reduced road congestion.
- A1.10 Advocate for improved internet access and mobile phone coverage to support the ability to create application based services such as ride sharing and on-call transport.
- A1.11 Undertake seasonal review of road conditions to improve management and review the road sealing program to ensure high use roads are prioritised.



Rural Land Uses



- Rural Land Use Category**
- Rural Resident
 - Vacant Resident
 - Agricultural
 - Conservation and Recreation
 - Other Land Uses

- Administrative boundaries**
- Nillumbik Shire Boundary

- Green Wedge Status**
- Outside Green Wedge Area

- Watercourse**
- Hierarchy: High
 - Hierarchy: Medium

- Major water bodies**
- Reservoirs

- Roadways**
- Freeway
 - Highway
 - Arterial
 - Sub Arterial
 - Collector

Goal 2: Active and creative people

Active lifestyles and artistic expression are fostered through participation and innovation.

Health and wellbeing is linked strongly to the natural attributes of our environment. Green space is an important determinant of health, not just because it enables physical activity but also because it has been shown to promote higher levels of mental wellbeing and social connectedness. Our community places significant value on open space and recreation.

Council's *Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan 2017-2021* emphasises the importance of encouraging active living and enhancing mental wellbeing as two of its seven priorities and specifies strategies to advance these priorities, particularly in relation to participation, physical exercise and accessibility.

Recreation

Bushwalking, horse riding, cycling, land care as well as visitation of public reserves and national parks are key activities. The primary use of public land in the green wedge is for community recreation, public infrastructure (e.g. Sugarloaf Reservoir) and nature conservation.

Recreation opportunities within green space are an important factor in strengthening and maintaining healthy communities. Sport and active recreation brings people together and builds community cohesion. The green wedge is home to certain recreation facilities that are not found elsewhere in Nillumbik or the northern region of Melbourne. These contribute to tourism and include the Rob Roy Hill Climb, sailing at Sugarloaf Reservoir, the Yarrambat Park Golf Course, Ponyland and mountain biking. People in the green wedge also benefit from the major sports and recreation facilities in Diamond Creek, Eltham and Greensborough.

The rural trails in Nillumbik enable people to be physically active and enjoy a variety of recreation opportunities in natural and cultural landscapes. Implementing Council's *Nillumbik Trails Strategy 2011* has and will continue to be important for delivering many of the social, health, environmental and economic objectives of this plan.

Nillumbik's trails are also part of an integrated Regional Trail Network across Melbourne's northern suburbs that showcases the region's diverse natural and cultural heritage, provide for a range of recreation interests, connect people to places and contribute to community wellbeing.

There are, however, broken links in the network. There is significant potential to further improve the connectivity, attractiveness and local, regional and national visitor numbers to the area by extending the network across the Shire, with improved connections to neighbouring municipalities and beyond to the Melbourne CBD.

A current signature project is the long-standing extension to the Diamond Creek Trail from Diamond Creek to Hurstbridge. The extension will be through scenic green wedge land and will make Wattle Glen and Hurstbridge destinations reachable by Melbourne's metropolitan bicycle network. Planning is also underway for an extension of the Aqueduct Trail into the Yarra Ranges Shire Council, which will then connect the northern and eastern metropolitan Melbourne regions and, potentially, into the national trail northward.

Council's *Open Space Strategy 2005* guides the provision of open space, particularly active recreation reserves for local communities. It provides an inventory of open space, an analysis of community open space requirements and recommendations for acquisition of land to provide open space, development of existing open space and the types of facilities required.



Conserving and celebrating our cultural heritage

The landscapes and townships in our green wedge contain a rich and diverse cultural heritage. This heritage helps us to understand the social, economic and environmental forces, people and events that have shaped our community, and contributed to a sense of identity. For the Aboriginal community especially, it is a living connection to culture and country.

In the past, cultural heritage places mostly referred to historic buildings or structures. Today, what we think of as heritage has expanded to include places with spiritual or social value, scientific, industrial, architectural or technological importance, public art, parks, gardens, trees and so forth. It also includes elements such as stories, traditions and memories that are associated with places, events or people.

There are various regulatory frameworks at local, state, national and international levels for both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal cultural heritage protection. Heritage places receive statutory protection at the local level through the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* or at the state level through the *Heritage Act 2017* and the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2016*. Council works closely with the traditional owners, the Wurundjeri, especially in relation to managing culturally sensitive landscapes.

Council has a heritage strategy and the ongoing support and involvement from within the community is vital. Nillumbik is fortunate to have a network of historical societies, friendship groups, and passionate individuals that help look after our heritage.

Places in Nillumbik that have been found to be of local heritage significance are covered by a heritage overlay in the planning scheme. This serves as a tool for guiding, rather than preventing, change and can provide access to practical support and recognition of their owners' role in safeguarding heritage for future generations.

Special aspects of Nillumbik's living heritage are its deep and long-standing connections to the arts and its tradition of mud brick and rammed earth buildings throughout the green wedge. Council's *Arts and Cultural Plan 2018-2022* prioritises public participation in the arts and the growth of cultural industries. Unfortunately the tradition of mud brick building has fallen away in recent years. Its value lies not only in its aesthetics, sustainability and connection to the land but it is also something that owner-builders can do. Revival and promotion of the techniques is one way to accentuate Nillumbik's uniqueness.

Objectives

- O2.1 Encourage active living and enhanced mental wellbeing.
- O2.2 Provide a diversity of open spaces with a range of high quality regional, district and neighbourhood parks linked by a network of trails.
- O2.3 Complete the trail network for walking, cycling and horse riding in Nillumbik, connecting to the regional trails network covering neighbouring municipalities.
- O2.4 Support, celebrate and enable public access to Nillumbik's rich tradition of local artists and makers.
- O2.5 Work with Heritage Victoria, the Wurundjeri Land Council and other government agencies to support local heritage protection.
- O2.6 Ensure that council owned heritage places are accessible and sustainable and make better use of our heritage assets to support cultural tourism initiatives and leverage further economic benefits for green wedge communities.

Key actions

- A2.1 Implement the *Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan 2017-2021*
- A2.2 Review and update the *Nillumbik Open Space Strategy and Recreation Strategy*.
- A2.3 Implement the *Nillumbik Trails Strategy 2011*.
- A2.4 Implement the *Nillumbik Arts and Cultural Plan 2018-2022*.
- A2.5 Investigate the establishment of a regional art gallery.
- A2.6 Develop and implement a heritage interpretation plan.
- A2.7 Use the *Nillumbik Planning Scheme* as a positive means to encourage heritage conservation and management, including support of adaptive reuse of heritage places and allowing prohibited uses, if they help support the conservation of a heritage place and are in line with planning policy objectives.

Nillumbik's trails network



Goal 3: Safe and healthy environments

Healthy and safe communities enjoy living in our iconic green wedge environment.

Environmental conservation

Our natural environment is vitally important to the identity of our shire and encompasses much of what we value and appreciate about it.

It includes indigenous vegetation and waterways which provide habitat for native wildlife and the treed landscape character that is synonymous with Nillumbik.

Our natural environment also provides significant health and wellbeing value to our residents and visitors through access to nature, recreation, open spaces, fresh clean air and water and it provides livelihoods. Our natural environment is productive and sustains many of our rural businesses including agriculture, agribusiness, viticulture and tourism ventures – which in turn rely on a healthy ecosystem to thrive.

Furthermore, as it is an environment that is bushfire prone, risks to human life and the environment constantly need to be actively considered and managed.

Fortunately, our people are some of Melbourne's most passionate, informed and engaged about maintaining and enhancing our natural environment. Many are making daily choices to help create a sustainable world, emerging citizen science opportunities are harnessing community-driven action, and we have committed landowners, Friends groups and Landcare groups.

As a result, localised sustainable land management and biodiversity successes are occurring and should be celebrated and built upon, notwithstanding the broader processes that contribute to an incremental decline in biodiversity across Victoria. These include clearing, climate change, pest plants and animals, erosion, altered water quality and flows and bushfire.

Since 2012 Council has implemented \$1.2 million worth of grant-funded investment into biodiversity conservation projects in partnership with Landcare Victoria, Parks Victoria, Melbourne Water, state government departments, the Royal Botanic Gardens and neighbouring councils.

At both state and federal government levels, recognition of the importance of protecting, conserving and enhancing biodiversity and natural values is captured by a strong integrated framework of legislation and strategy.

For example, the State's *Planning Policy Framework* requires that there is no net loss to biodiversity as a result of the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation and the Victorian Government's draft Deer Management Strategy is providing a new way of thinking to guide how this pest species can be managed.

Highly relevant is the Victorian Government's *Biodiversity Strategy 2037* which sets out the roadmap to stop the decline of our biodiversity and achieve overall biodiversity improvement over the next 20 years.

It acknowledges that native plants and animals have intrinsic value but that there is also a need for balanced outcomes. Maintaining a healthy natural environment is vital but creates a complex challenge to find the right balance between protection and how we use land.

The above speaks to the challenges that face Nillumbik's natural environment. It is a cherished resource, one that must support a variety of outcomes that include the conservation of our native plants and animals and productivity, tourism, liveability and health and wellbeing.

Looking forward, effective management of our natural environment is needed to give us the best chance of having a healthy environment to benefit our generation and future generations. Central to this will be promoting and supporting environmental care and stewardship by:

- helping all residents of our Nillumbik community connect with nature – and helping them to act to understand how to conserve our natural environment
- assisting our private landowners in best-practice land management, acknowledging that they own the majority of land and vegetation in the green wedge and
- enhancing our decision support data, tools and advocacy to deliver strategically planned and cost-effective programs that help our ecosystems continue to function at a landscape scale, protect indigenous plants and animals, water flows and groundwater, mitigate and adapt to challenges such as bushfire, salinity, erosion, flooding and climate change, improve local land productivity and conserve cultural heritage values.

Adapting to a changing climate and our bushfire prone environment

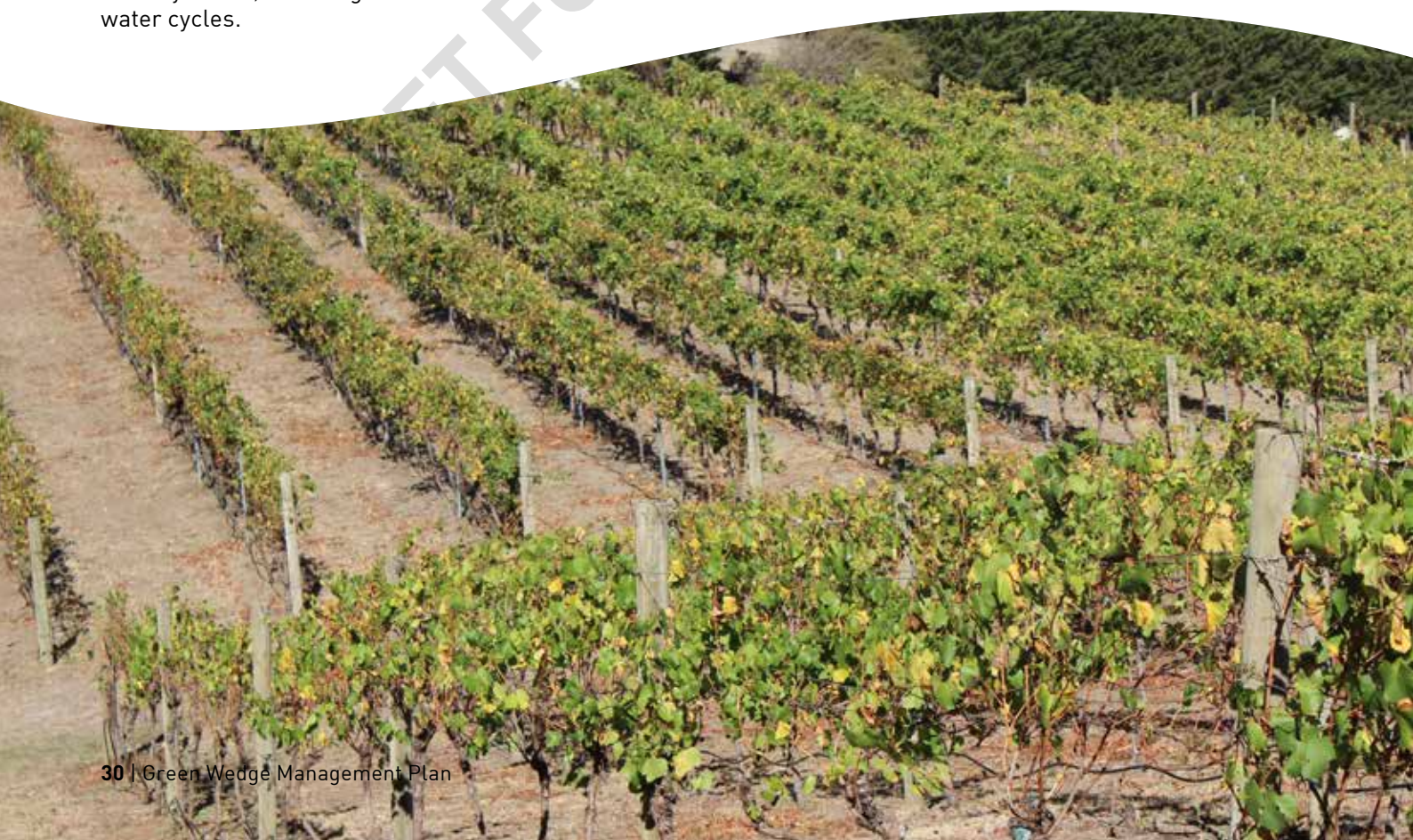
Victoria is becoming hotter and drier, facing more periods of extreme heat and drought, reductions in annual rainfall and increases in intense rainfall events. Extreme weather events such as bushfire and flooding are becoming more frequent and severe. The impacts of climate change that run throughout our ecosystem are broad and include biodiversity, the water cycle, agricultural productivity and human health, safety and wellbeing. It also impacts upon economic performance, tourism and the need for more sophisticated emergency management strategies to prepare and respond to increased frequency of natural events. The Nillumbik community is acutely sensitive to the impacts of climate change and mindful of the need to work collaboratively both locally and broadly to harness best practice for change. Balancing environmental protection and preparedness for bushfire will continue to present a challenge within Nillumbik's landscape.

The Victorian Government has put in place a new *Climate Change Act 2017*, established the *Victorian Climate Change Framework* and released *Victoria's Climate Change Adaptation Plan 2017-2020*. It will lead and broker regional and local response to climate change, including research and new partnership agreements with local government. It will include help to build community capacity and encourage adaptation actions across all policy areas including health and human services, emergency management, the natural environment, water, the built environment and our economy. From 2020 the Victorian Government will produce adaptation actions plans for 'core systems', including the natural environment and water cycles.

A vital part of this strategic framework for Nillumbik relates to community resilience and our preparedness and response, on many fronts, to natural events. Our biggest natural threat within the green wedge is bushfire and it extends beyond our boundaries. Community engagement participants repeatedly expressed concern over the balancing of vegetation protection with the management of fuel loads. Many did not know what to do or were concerned that their neighbours were not doing what they were doing. This is a significant point of tension within the community.

The *Community Resilience Framework for Emergency Management* prepared by Emergency Management Victoria puts community at the centre of all emergency management and highlights the need and importance of planning for resilience, not just planning for disaster. It sets out seven resilience characteristics that emergency managers should aim to strengthen and encourage in communities:

- safe and well
- connected, inclusive and empowered
- dynamic and diverse local economy
- sustainable built and natural environment
- culturally rich and vibrant
- democratic and engaged
- reflective and aware.



These are the same characteristics that this plan is striving for and present an opportunity for us to think differently about green wedge management. This will require an integrated approach to the major land use issues in the green wedge that reflects a need to be adaptive yet balanced in the outcomes we want to achieve.

Victoria's climate change adaptation plan aligns closely with the community resilience framework in terms of community enablement. It recognises that *climate change risks are most effectively addressed by those who are directly affected. In practice, this means that businesses and individuals are often best placed to manage risks to private assets and infrastructure.*

Enabling our people and our communities to fully understand, engage with and take ownership of strategies that help to create resilient communities will be a key objective for much of Council's future policy and implementation work in the green wedge. The *St. Andrews Conversation* pilot, focusing on community resilience, was a good example of the type of engagement, listening and learning that will help to broker positive change where it matters most.

The Victorian Government continues to reform its strategies to reduce the risk of bushfire under its *Safer Together* approach. This has focussed on risk reduction on public land and is intended to extend to fuel management on private land. This is likely to see the community presented with options for a private land vegetation management strategy for the metropolitan region. It is unclear what this might mean from a future implementation perspective, which illustrates the need for Council to maintain an agile strategy.

Council will need to ensure it takes advantage of the significant state-led emphasis in this policy and implementation area. It must collaborate with state government, its agencies and bring together key stakeholders to build community capacity and leverage opportunities to put in place a best practice approach to climate change and build an integrated community resilience strategy.

The *Nillumbik Bushfire Mitigation Strategy* is in final development and will cover private and public land bushfire mitigation, building stronger and more resilient communities and working to strengthen the ability of agencies to deliver coordinated bushfire mitigation programs. The strategy will be underpinned by community-centric outcomes, including shared responsibility, shared obligation and building strong relationships with agencies.

Landscape and open space

The landscape and open space character of Nillumbik's green wedge carry cultural and environmental values which are regarded as one of its most valuable features. Our community has told us that it values the sense of openness, fresh air and the health and wellbeing it creates. It has also said that it values the visibility of the night sky and that lighting needs to be controlled to minimise its spill into the night time amenity of the landscape.

Nillumbik is a landscape that has and continues to be influenced by human activity and elements that include those of traditional owners and their land management techniques and post-contact history including farming, viticulture and gold mining. The landscape also provides other benefits, such as opportunities for local businesses to promote themselves, create local jobs and to enhance our visitor economy. The Victorian Government's *Biodiversity Strategy* states that

'the natural environment is Victoria's biggest tourist attraction, contributing billions of dollars to the economy each year.'

It also recognises the need to manage uses such as tourism *'to ensure that sensitive areas do not receive too many visitors and that such areas are well managed and resilient'*.

State green wedge policies contained in *Plan Melbourne 2017-2050* and the *Victorian Planning Provisions* recognise the benefits of protecting areas of landscape value and that new uses and developments need to be sensitively managed to ensure that they are sympathetic in character and scale with their surroundings.

Water supply catchments

Water for Victoria, the state government's water plan provides a framework to strengthen water security for communities, protect jobs and agriculture, recognise Aboriginal water values and improve environmental health with a vision that *water is fundamental to our communities. We will manage water to support a healthy environment, a prosperous economy and thriving communities, now and into the future.*

It is supported by Victoria's *Integrated Water Management Framework* which states that the best approach to integrated water cycle management is a collaborative approach to planning that brings together organisations that influence all elements of the water cycle, including waterways and bays, wastewater management, alternative and potable water supply, stormwater management and water treatment.

The Yarra River, Plenty River, Diamond Creek, Arthurs Creek and Watsons Creek, along with their feeders and overland flow paths, form Nillumbik's natural and complex water cycle system.

An important role of Nillumbik's green wedge is to manage and protect these catchments for:

- local users of water for agriculture, environmental conservation, rural living and fire-fighting
- Sugarloaf Reservoir, a key state asset nestled in Christmas Hills that has been supplying water to metropolitan Melbourne since 1981 and the
- Yarra River and coastal ecosystems of Port Phillip.

Streamflow has reduced by approximately fifty per cent over the last two decades making critical the task of managing and protecting groundwater and surface waterways to sustain and protect water quality from the negative impacts of sedimentation, reduced flows, effluent and other water pollution. Alternatives such as well-located storage of water collected from mains supplies, roof tops or sources of recycled water to support agriculture, fire-fighting and rural living will become more important in the future.

A key issue to protect water quality is the management of domestic wastewater. With the exception of parts of Hurstbridge and Doreen, the green wedge does not have reticulated sewerage and relies upon onsite treatment of effluent. Council's *Domestic Wastewater Management Plan 2019* sets out how this situation will be managed and the prospects for extension of the sewerage system.

A collaborative approach is required across a number of key policy areas to ensure we remain liveable, safe, resilient, economically viable and capable of meeting the challenges of climate change. Our ecosystem and the liveability of the green wedge depends upon maintaining water supply to support every aspect of our natural environment.

Objectives

- 03.1 Identify, protect and enhance valuable biodiversity and habitats.
- 03.2 Enhance community understanding, resilience and adaptability for the impacts of climate change and a bushfire prone environment.
- 03.3 Reduce the number and impact of bushfire incidents.
- 03.4 Create a community focussed approach to bushfire, a coordinated approach between key agencies and the communities of Nillumbik and ensure strong advocacy in relation to bushfire and bushfire risk.

03.5 Conserve the bush and rural landscapes to maintain the natural beauty of the green wedge.

03.6 Support Melbourne Water and the Catchment Management Authority to improve stream condition, water flows, water quality and catchment quality.

Key actions

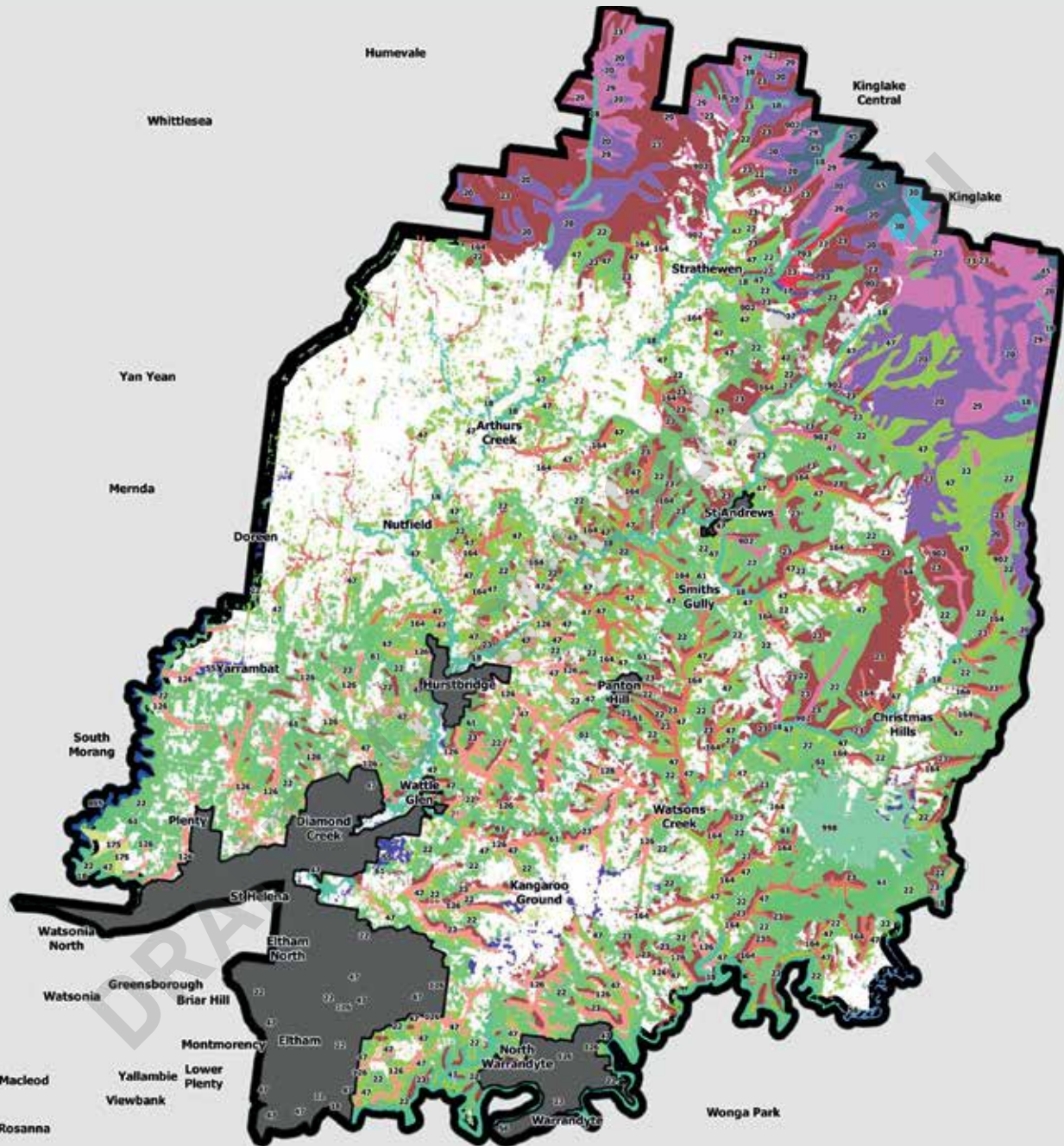
- A3.1 Undertake stocktakes of environmental assets and agricultural activity and practices, including hobby farming, that need to be protected for the future and the pests that need to be managed by sourcing information from formal research bodies and landowners. Seek government funding assistance to establish and maintain this data base into the future for landowner information, program prioritisation and policy development.
- A3.2 Subject to the findings of the data base described by A3.1, review the Environmental Significance Overlay in the Nillumbik Planning Scheme.
- A3.3 Implement a whole of organisation approach to community resilience addressing climate change, emergency management and a range of matters in an integrated manner. This will include robust conversations on the natural environment and biodiversity values, bushfire risk reduction, economic development, agriculture, economic and community rebuilding post events, human health, well-being and safety and water catchment planning.
- A3.4 Increase and prioritise Council's focus on feral animal and pest plant species reduction, education and programs on private and public land.
- A3.5 In partnership with relevant government agencies, encourage biodiversity conservation and responsible land management on public and private land by:
 - implementing Council's *Biodiversity Strategy 2012; Roadside Management Plan and Invasive Species Action Plan 2015*
 - supporting Landcare and Friends groups
 - providing an advisory service for land management
 - providing rebates for Trust for Nature covenanted land and agriculture with a land management plan
 - delivering Council's land management incentive program and other conservation protection projects
 - administering state planning policies that apply to native vegetation and
 - delivering targeted environment and sustainability education experiences.



- A3.6 In conjunction with key stakeholders, review Council's approach to climate change to develop a best practice response. This will incorporate our statutory requirements and respond to all key state government frameworks but will need to remain agile and adaptive to changing policy settings. It will adopt an integrated approach that brings together the key local issues that have been identified in every goal in this plan. This will result in either:
- an updated climate change action plan and/or
 - a new climate change and community resilience strategic framework built from a local context that recognises the unique features of our communities, its landscapes and natural environment. It will be informed by appropriate evidence, independent expertise and strong community participation.
- A3.7 Finalise and implement Council's draft *Bushfire Mitigation Strategy 2019-23*.
- A3.8 Advocate for improved mobile and broadband connectivity to help improve the ability to communicate information and improve community safety, particularly to those most vulnerable during extreme weather events.
- A3.9 As part of a future review of the Nillumbik Planning Scheme consider identified landscape character and quality through the current policies and overlays that apply.
- A3.10 Consider, through development approvals and management of Council property, the limitation of light spill not directly associated with safety or community activity to reduce impacts on nocturnal animals and the night time amenity of the landscape.
- A3.11 Investigate opportunities to support community-based renewable energy solutions.
- A3.12 Promote water sensitive design, balance amenity uses of our waterways with environmental considerations and balance demand for private use of water flows through extraction and diversion with broader community and environmental considerations.
- A3.13 Finalise and implement Council's *Domestic Waste Water Management Plan 2019*.

Modelled ecological Vegetation Class (2005)

The EVC map has been produced by DELWP and is widely accepted across the industry for use covering all of Victoria. As it is modelled data, there are times when checking on the ground shows the Ecological Vegetation Class may be something different to what has been mapped. Given the scale of the mapping it is inevitable there will be inaccuracies from time to time.



Green Wedge Status

Urban or township areas

Modelled EVC (2005)

- 0017 – Riparian Scrub Swampy Riparian Woodland Complex
- 0018 – Riparian Forest
- 0020 – Healthy Dry Forest
- 0022 – Grassy Dry Forest
- 0023 – Herb-rich Foothill Forest
- 0029 – Damp Forest

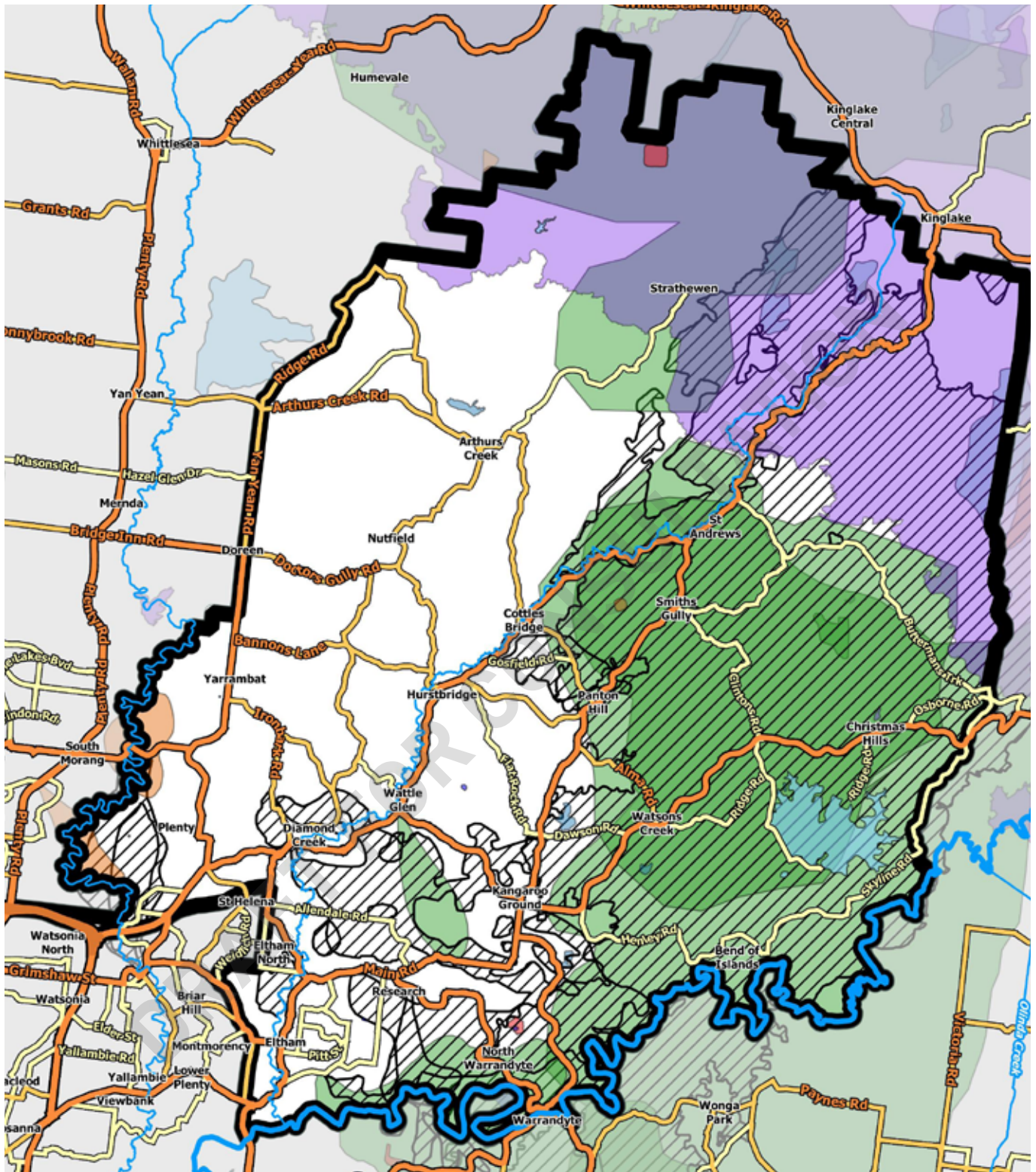
- 0030 – Wet Forest
- 0045 – Shrubby Foothill Forest
- 0047 – Valley Grassy Forest
- 0053 – Swamp Scrub
- 0055 – Plains Grassy Woodland
- 0056 – Floodplain Riparian Woodland
- 0061 – Box Ironbark Forest
- 0074 – Wetland Formation
- 0126 – Swampy Riparian Complex
- 0164 – Creekline Herb-rich Woodland

- 0175 – Grassy Woodland
- 0793 – Damp Healthy Woodland
- 0895 – Escarpment Shrubland
- 0902 – Gully Woodland
- 0993 – Bare Rock Ground
- 0998 – Water Body Man-made

Administrative Boundaries

□ Nillumbik Shire Boundary

Bushfire Occurrence



- Bushfire Occurrence**
- Year 1927–1950
 - Year 1951–1960
 - Year 1961–1970
 - Year 1971–1980
 - Year 1981–1990
 - Year 1991–2000
 - Year 2001–2010
 - Year 2011–2016

- Administrative boundaries**
- Nillumbik Shire Boundary

- Watercourse**
- Hierarchy: High
 - Hierarchy: Medium

- Major water bodies**
- Reservoirs

- Roadways**
- Freeway
 - Highway
 - Arterial
 - Sub Arterial
 - Collector

Source: DELWP

Goal 4: A prosperous economy

A strong local economy that supports business, growth, jobs and community wealth.

Council, in partnership with the Victorian Government, plays an important role in facilitating economic growth within the municipality.

The purpose of economic development at a local government level is to build up the capacity of a local area to improve its economic future and the quality of life for all. It is a process by which public, business and non-government sector partners work collectively to create better conditions for economic growth and employment generation. Specifically:

- supporting and promoting growth within the existing business base
- promoting growth by attracting new investment and businesses and
- facilitating liveability and sustainable communities.

The Victorian Government rates Victoria as well positioned for sustained growth over the medium-term because of its diverse strengths: world-class education institutions, a culturally diverse population, strong technological capability, a positive business environment, quality infrastructure, transport services, productive land, significant natural resources and environmental heritage, as well as its proximity to emerging markets.

The extended period of sustained growth experienced in Victoria provides favourable economic conditions for Nillumbik. Given the current conditions, we are well placed to experience business, industry and employment growth in the short to medium term.

The vision for Victoria's economy is a competitive, sustainable and productive economy that contributes to a prosperous and inclusive society, with a mission to get our economy and society working together for the benefit of all Victorians – by creating more jobs for more people, connecting people and businesses, and maintaining Victoria's envied reputation for liveability now and for the future.

The Nillumbik economy continues to transition from a traditional rural and gold mining past into one that is heavily influenced by proximity to metropolitan Melbourne.

Three of the 11 priority sectors for the Victorian Government are relevant to Nillumbik and its broader region:

- food and fibre
- professional services and
- the visitor economy.

The Nillumbik economy is unique, given the limited supply of land zoned for employment, the absence of big business and large land areas of green wedge. The local economy is predominantly driven by public sector, professional service and population-led service industries.

Given the presence of agriculture and horticulture in the green wedge, there is an opportunity to contribute to the growing demand for food across domestic and international markets through improved economic productivity and supply chain efficiencies and to create job opportunities for residents.

In support of these opportunities Council and its partners will focus on providing businesses with access to the policy framework and required infrastructure and services to enable them to operate effectively and productively, as well as to capitalise on technological opportunities.

Agriculture

Approximately one-fifth of the shire is used for agriculture. The principal products are beef cattle, orchard fruit, grapes, horses and hay, although there are also a wide range of other farm products including sheep, pigs, goats, alpacas, horses (primarily for recreation), egg production, flowers, honey, citrus and mushrooms. Supply to metropolitan markets is augmented by local farmers markets and trading in hay to support livestock.

There is an opportunity to more productively utilise land in Nillumbik's green wedge to supply Melbourne's growing demand for food and to provide residents with a variety of new employment opportunities. With the establishment of stronger local supply chains, use of technology and motivated landowners, growing produce for Melbourne will ensure farming in the green wedge is protected and enhanced.

One of the barriers to food production is being able to move product to market efficiently. The small scale production that can occur in Nillumbik is not of a scale that suits the large wholesale market or supermarkets. However strengthening the supply chain between Nillumbik food producers and food retailers could provide new opportunities for food production.

The close proximity of the Melbourne Market in Epping presents opportunities for our current and future producers, particularly given the growing importance placed on fresh and sustainable production.

Hobby and small scale agricultural production is an important community activity in the green wedge. This is supported by local farmers markets and activities that encourage 'food exchanges'.

These kinds of enterprises are an important part of the future for our green wedge for community connectedness, the well-being of residents and to ensure a method of sustainable living and low food miles, reducing the impact of transport and large scale growing on the environment.

Local agriculture is also of value to the functioning of the green wedge itself, which in the case of Nillumbik is a mosaic of farming, nature conservation, townships and rural living. This value should also be protected for its contribution not only to the overall agricultural objective for green wedges but also metropolitan objectives for tourism, landscape and cultural heritage. This means that agriculture needs to co-exist comfortably with nature conservation. For example, livestock should not be grazed where they might damage areas with high biodiversity values.

This also means that the land available for soil-based agriculture needs to be protected for the future, that farming is able to take place without unnecessary interference, that the possibility of diversification into related activities, such as tourism is allowed and that the emergence of non-soil based agriculture can be made possible.

Equine

By definition, the keeping or breeding of horses is considered an agricultural use in the planning scheme. In the Nillumbik green wedge it is primarily for recreation that, in turn contributes to the local economy by supporting specialist local businesses and farms.

Equine-related employment and business activities currently in the green wedge include agistment, breeding, horse float repairs, riding schools, stock and feed sales, pasture management, and equine health services.

In terms of recreation, equestrian activities have long been part of the history and culture of the shire. Those activities include competition, events and trail riding, one of the top 10 most popular recreational activities in Nillumbik.

Council is developing a plan to recognise and support the sustainable management of the equine community in the green wedge.

The visitor economy

The *Victorian Visitor Economy Strategy 2016* is the Victorian Government's long term tourism plan. It provides an overarching framework that defines tourism's importance to many parts of our local economies and is supported by a broad state policy framework, including green wedge policy.

The shire's close proximity to Melbourne, its place within the Yarra Valley and Dandenong Ranges region and its tourism strengths in nature based assets, agriculture/horticulture and arts and culture provide opportunity to attract an increase in visitors.

Sustainable tourism is a significant opportunity and will be an ongoing objective for the green wedge.

To grow and maximise the benefits derived from the visitor economy, strategies will support the need for new and diversified accommodation investment and development of new visitor experiences that are able to be managed appropriately in the green wedge environment and the townships.



Council's *Nillumbik Destination Management Plan 2015*, identified opportunities to capitalise on these opportunities with many of the strategies remaining relevant, for example:

- nature based tourism
- arts, heritage and cultural tourism
- agribusiness and wineries
- outdoor recreation
- family product
- accommodation and
- events.

Council has aligned its tourism work with Yarra Ranges Tourism as a mechanism for cooperation, efficiency and recognition by state government.

Professional services

There is a shortfall in suitable local jobs for the highly skilled and qualified professional workforce that lives in Nillumbik. Encouraging growth in these sectors in the townships will provide much needed employment opportunities for residents wanting to work closer to home and ensure that the economic health of the community is on a positive trajectory.

Home-based business

There are a notable number. Given the ability to work remotely, with the right level of support and infrastructure, the number of home-based businesses in the green wedge is expected to increase in the future.

Melbourne is known as the start-up capital of Australia as it is home to over 170 co-working spaces across the metropolitan area. Co-working spaces provide the critical support infrastructure and services often required for businesses in their infancy to grow and mature and to support collaboration, openness, knowledge sharing, innovation, and the user experience.

Internet and mobile access

Local businesses have highlighted that existing internet speed and connections and mobile phone access are issues in the green wedge. For businesses to operate effectively, they must have reliable access to these enabling services and infrastructure. They are also necessary to ensure safety within a fire prone environment (see also goal three).

Objectives

- 04.1 Encourage investment to improve the economy and create local employment while at the same time preserving the green wedge.
- 04.2 Encourage sustainable, diversified and productive agriculture, access to markets and the right to farm.
- 04.3 Recognise the contribution of hobby (or small-scale) farming in the green wedge with supportive policy put in place.
- 04.4 Recognise and support the sustainable management of the equine community in the green wedge.
- 04.5 Encourage growth in the visitor economy through regional promotion and facilitation of new visitor experiences consistent with Nillumbik's economic, social and environmental characteristics.
- 04.6 Encourage growth in professional services and home-based business.
- 04.7 Encourage government to make reliable mobile phone and internet access available across the Shire.



Key actions

- A4.1 Finalise and implement a new *Nillumbik Economic Development Strategy*.
- A4.2 Engage with and support the existing business base across the shire to promote local economic growth.
- A4.3 Undertake stocktakes of environmental assets and agricultural activity and practices, including hobby farming, that need to be protected for the future and the pests that need to be managed by sourcing information from formal research bodies and landowners. Seek government funding assistance to establish and maintain this data base into the future for landowner information, program prioritisation and policy development.
- A4.4 To ensure that land remains available for agriculture, use the Nillumbik planning scheme to encourage consolidation of smaller agricultural lots in common ownership and discourage the further fragmentation of agricultural lands.
- A4.5 Continue to apply the sustainable agricultural rate rebate and the primary producer rate rebate.
- A4.6 Consider policy and land use options to allow agricultural enterprises to diversify income sources by supporting complementary activities such as farm gate sales, events, education and accommodation.
- A4.7 Continue to support sustainable land and animal management and access to markets by providing education programs, promotion, events and innovative partnership solutions.
- A4.8 Advocate to the Victorian Government that:
- planning and other controls be altered to allow landholders a right to farm on pre-existing cleared agricultural land and be able to adapt to changing agricultural practice
 - the support and promotion of supplementary rural business activities such as farm gate sales, farm stays and other low environmental amenity impact enterprises which are consistent with green wedge values need to be prioritised and
 - the role of hobby farms be defined, recognised and policy and program be developed to support sustainable land management and agriculture at their scale.
- A4.9 Finalise and implement a new *Nillumbik Equine Strategy*.
- A4.10 Review and update Council's *Destination Management Plan* to:
- improve awareness of the benefits of cycle tourism and mapping information
 - invest in digital interpretation of heritage, cultural and natural assets
 - develop tourism through trail investment
 - develop festivals and an events attractions plan
 - build on the arts and cultural product through development of curated content and packaging
 - add to the food and wine offerings by facilitating diversity of product and infrastructure
 - manage and avoid detrimental impacts on sensitive environmental areas
 - increase strategic marketing and promotion and
 - improve and develop products suited to family experiences.
- A4.11 Create an investment attraction plan and investigate innovative land use solutions to attract professional services to locate within the townships of the green wedge.
- A4.12 Identify and document areas of low mobile and internet connectivity and black spots. Identify opportunities to rectify areas affected.
- A4.13 Analyse the needs of home based business and identify the barriers to growth.
- A4.14 Understand the demand for co-working spaces in Nillumbik and facilitate the needs of home based business through township and activity centre plans and community hubs.

Goal 5: Responsible leadership

Collaborative and consultative leadership that builds trust and makes the best use of available resources to the benefit of all in the pursuit of excellence.

Governance and engagement

Management of the green wedge is a shared responsibility. Much of what we do and how we do it sits within a state regulatory and planning framework. Council administers issues associated with the use of land and land management on a day-to-day basis. The Victorian Government coordinates broader policy reform across multiple departments and agencies. Landowners, including state agencies, live within this policy framework and business must engage with it.

The extensive community engagement conducted in 2018 to inform this plan revealed that in many cases, a major issue of concern to the community is whether this framework is being properly implemented and how.

The engagement revealed strongly held and polarised views about the value of regulation and enforcement as a way of achieving management objectives. Many who argued for more regulation and enforcement wanted to be reassured that the rural areas would not be urbanised or over-developed. Those who were concerned with over-regulation and enforcement were concerned with unreasonable intrusion into everyday life and disempowerment. Some want certainty about their future in a challenging natural environment. Many respondents also raised concerns about community disharmony and conflict, often over this issue of regulation.

The reality is that nearly the entire legislative and regulatory framework is established by the Victorian Government and is not likely to change significantly or quickly.

Nonetheless, regulation and enforcement is sometimes required and is one way of achieving objectives, but is not necessarily the most sustainable way. As techniques they lie at one end of a spectrum. At other end are education, awareness, facilitation and ultimately empowerment. All techniques have their place but this plan envisages putting more emphasis towards the empowering end of the spectrum.

The review set out to try and find consensus on the best way to manage the green wedge, recognising that most of it is in private ownership. What has been revealed is reasonable consensus on what needs to be managed, the capability of the community and a desire for more inclusive approaches to bring people together around action.

Our greatest opportunity for better management and governance of the green wedge appears to rest in better humanising our approach. Places are created by people and are strengthened when people regard themselves as belonging to their local neighbourhood and enjoying their environment and amenity. Providing people with knowledge, skills and an understanding of roles and responsibilities will require strong leadership from Council. We need to provide encouragement and motivation and facilitate a better shared understanding of the complex and often disputed issues.

Land use planning

Zoning of land through the planning scheme is one way of implementing the goals and objectives of this plan.

The Victorian Government currently provides three zones for general use in green wedges, the Rural Conservation Zone (RCZ), the Green Wedge Zone (GWZ) and the Green Wedge A Zone (GWAZ). The great majority of the privately-owned land in the Nillumbik green wedge is zoned RCZ. A much smaller area in the north-west corner of the Shire is zoned GWZ and a Special Use Zone applies to the Bend of Isles. The GWAZ (which aims to protect existing residential amenity) is not used in Nillumbik.

Public use zones are currently and appropriately applied to public land in the green wedge.

Further examination is warranted to determine whether the current application of the zones to private land hinders any of the objectives of this plan, particularly in relation to the promotion of agriculture and tourism, the consolidation of population around townships and the management of the rural areas on the fringe of the Urban Growth Boundary.

The GWZ promotes agriculture and tourism and appears to work well in its current location. Similarly, the Special Use Zone that applies to the Bend of Isles is long-established and works well for its community.

The RCZ is intended to support conservation and should be applied to land for which that is the primary purpose. However its current application across large parts of the shire means that land already cleared for agriculture cannot be used for that purpose without a planning permit. This is an inhibitor to this plan's objectives to promote the right to farm and the tourism allowed in conjunction with farming.

The Victorian Government is currently reviewing the impact of planning controls on strategic agriculture in Melbourne's green wedges and peri-urban areas.

The content of the RCZ can only be changed by the state government so the options available to Council to effect change are either advocacy for change to the zone or to consider publicly exhibiting a planning scheme amendment to re-zone those parts of the RCZ that are used for agriculture. Like any other planning scheme amendment, any proposal to re-zone would require extensive preparatory research and consultation, the approval of the Minister for Planning to exhibit it publicly, consideration of submissions by an independent planning panel and final adoption by the Council and approval by the Minister.

Advocacy

As a small shire we need to be pragmatic and conscious of our own resources in how we prioritise and make best use of them in response to genuine needs. Increased Victorian Government activity and frameworks also provide opportunities we should pursue for increased education, support, funding and local capacity building.

Council and its administration have a vital role ahead of it in terms of working with the Victorian Government, its departments and agencies and other key stakeholders to deliver strong local leadership and outcomes for our green wedge and its people. Partnerships and an integrated approach to developing and delivering key Council strategies will be required to better enable our community to manage and enjoy the green wedge.

Objectives

- 05.1 Recognise and support landowners' maintaining land in the green wedge with up-to-date information.
- 05.2 Take a joined up approach to working with the community to help it balance and cope with the competing demands of living and working in our green wedge.
- 05.3 Support community strengthening through sharing its knowledge and capabilities.
- 05.4 Clearly articulate and support the future of our green wedge townships.
- 05.5 Work with the Victorian Government to ensure that the Nillumbik planning scheme supports the principles, goals and objectives of this plan.
- 05.6 Enhance and update Council's knowledge base to support informed management of critical issues in our green wedge.
- 05.7 Keep the community appraised of and represent its interests in government policy reforms affecting our green wedge.
- 05.8 Attract external funding for green wedge management.

Key actions

- A5.1 Create a comprehensive landowners information and support service for land use and management, including annual reporting on trends and outcomes. Seek on-going government funding to support the service.
- A5.2 Implement a whole of organisation approach to community resilience addressing climate change, emergency management and a range of matters in an integrated manner. This will include robust conversations on the natural environment and biodiversity values, bushfire risk reduction, economic development, agriculture, economic and community rebuilding post events, human health, well-being and safety and water catchment planning.
- A5.3 Create a *Green Wedge Conversations* program to provide local communities with a forum to discuss resilience, leadership, knowledge-transfer and cooperation between people involved with land management, agriculture, nature conservation, public land management and bushfire mitigation and management. Seek on-going government funding assistance to support the program
- A5.4 Create a comprehensive planning and place management service for the townships to strengthen their identities and attractiveness as service, population, tourism, community and cultural centres.
- A5.5 Undertake stocktakes of environmental assets and agricultural activity and practices, including hobby farming, that need to be protected for the future and the pests that need to be managed by sourcing information from formal research bodies and landowners. Seek government funding assistance to establish and maintain this data base into the future for landowner information, program prioritisation and policy development.
- A5.6 Consider reviewing the current application of zoning controls in the green wedge to better reflect the actual use of land.
- A5.7 Consider reviewing the potential range of land uses that could assist owners to be better manage rural land that abuts the Urban Growth Boundary.
- A5.8 Advocate Council's position on all government policy reform affecting the Shire, including reform of green wedge policy and planning provisions.
- A5.9 Identify and pursue all funding opportunities from government, philanthropy and corporations to support implementation of this plan.

Monitoring and evaluation



This plan is intended to be one of the most important in Council's strategic planning hierarchy and will be intrinsic to its way of doing business rather than standalone as yet another plan competing for resources.

It is intended that it provide direction over the next decade, with priorities determined every four years through the preparation of the Council Plan and prior to the four-yearly review of the Nillumbik Planning Scheme.

Council's standing advisory committees are an important conduit of information between Council and the community. They will have the plan built into their charters for advice to Council and be asked contribute to the delivery of the five key moves.

Annual implementation plans will be prepared and reported on through Council's annual planning, budgeting and reporting processes. Expenditure and activity associated with this plan will be tagged in Council's public budget and performance statements against the plan's objectives will inform the community on its progress.

The same objectives and performance measures will need to be incorporated into future versions of other key shire-wide strategies to ensure that that the plan remains central over the coming years to the overall work of the Shire.

For the Council administration, it will inform its service and business planning and become a strong influencer in the work it does and how it does it.

It will also inform key shire-wide strategies such as those relating to advocacy, economic development, housing, positive ageing, bushfire mitigation, arts and culture, biodiversity, climate change adaptation and recreation.

DRAFT FOR CONSULTATION

Appendix 1: *Plan Melbourne 2017-2050*

Desired planning outcomes for green wedges and peri-urban areas

Environmental and biodiversity assets

Protect and enhance environmental and biodiversity assets, such as coastal areas, wetlands, rivers and creeks, forests and grasslands. Key features of international and national significance include Ramsar-listed wetlands (Westernport, Edithvale–Seaford wetlands, Port Phillip Bay [Western Shoreline] and Bellarine Peninsula), the Western Grassland Reserve, the UNESCO Mornington Peninsula and Westernport Biosphere Reserve, and a range of national and state parks.

Maintain and enhance the diversity of indigenous flora and fauna habitats and species and achieve a net gain in the quantity and quality of native vegetation.

Population, settlements and local infrastructure

Plan and manage sustainable urban growth that is concentrated in and around major towns within Melbourne's peri-urban area so as to provide employment, infrastructure, services and community facilities to new and established urban areas in an equitable manner. Manage the growth and sustainable development of green wedge townships and settlements, having regard for their distinct character and environmental and servicing constraints. Create socially sustainable communities and support an active community working towards reducing greenhouse gases and responding to climate change. Protect and enhance the existing character, presentation and form of towns, including their main road entrances.

Water supply catchments

Manage and protect catchments (including Special Water Supply Catchments), groundwater, water infrastructure and storages, and waterways to improve water quality, protect the environment and provide a reliable and secure water supply. Minimise any negative impacts from sedimentation or water pollution on the Port Phillip and Western Port coastal ecosystems.

Cultural heritage

Provide for the protection and management of sites of Aboriginal and post-European settlement cultural heritage to ensure that links with the past are preserved for present and future generations to appreciate. A wide range of cultural-heritage assets are found in buildings, structures, scattered relics, trees and gardens, landscapes and geological formations, archaeological and fossil sites and areas associated with historical events.

Landscape and open space

Protect significant views, maintain non-urban breaks between urban areas and conserve the cultural significance, tourism appeal and character of scenic rural landscapes.

Mineral, stone and sand resources

Protect designated mineral resource areas such as the coal reserves in central and western Gippsland. Protect sand and stone resources for future extraction to ensure a continuous supply of construction material.

Natural hazards

Avoid development in areas that are subject to high risk from bushfire or flooding and inundation so as to minimise potential risk to life, property and the environment. Recognise, understand and prepare for the projected impacts of climate change and rising sea levels.

Avoid significant land disturbance, reduce the occurrence and impact of soil erosion and salinity and manage potentially contaminated land.

State-significant infrastructure

Protect regionally significant assets such as metropolitan landfills (for example, Clayton South and Wollert), wastewater management facilities (for example, Eastern and Western Treatment Plants), industrial areas and related odour and safety buffers (for example, Dandenong South), airports and flightpaths (Melbourne, Avalon and Moorabbin), and ports (Port of Hastings). Provide opportunities for renewable energy generation.

Agricultural land

Protect agricultural land from incompatible uses, maintain farm size, promote the continuation of farming and provide a secure long term future for productive and sustainable agriculture.

Economy

Maintain a strong, dynamic economy and employment base by building on the comparative advantages in agriculture, timber, transport, tourism, education, manufacturing, the service industry and commerce

Recreation

Provide land for a range of open space functions to meet community needs for active and passive recreation and for protection of the environment. State and metropolitan parks provide a focus for a range of recreation opportunities...

Tourism

Facilitate sustainable year round tourism, and new tourism development (including diverse attractions, accommodation and eating establishments) that maintains the integrity of the natural environment, provides social benefits for communities and visitors and contributes to local economies.

Rural living

Manage rural living to prevent negative impacts on agriculture, biodiversity and landscape values.

Transport and Accessibility

Provide a high-quality road and rail transport network with a range of sustainable, efficient, accessible and affordable transport options that readily connect neighbourhoods, workplaces, community facilities, services and enable people to participate in community life. Facilitate improvements to transport networks and facilities that support tourism, such as airports.

Planning and governance

Facilitate integrated and balanced forward planning, involving all agencies, and having regard to the needs and aspirations of current and future generations.

Nillumbik Shire Council

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Consultation process for the draft Green Wedge Management Plan 2019

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bulletin no.5 to be distributed. The bulletin will outline the process to date and feedback opportunities on the Draft GWMP
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members of the community are invited to give their feedback on the Draft GWMP between Monday 1 July and Sunday 11 August 2019
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online submission form on Participate Nillumbik
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hard copy submission forms available at Hurstbridge Community Hub, Eltham Community and Reception Centre, Diamond Valley and Eltham Library or at Council's offices
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written submission can be made until 11.59pm on Sunday 11 August 2019 and will be considered by Council in September, prior to finalisation and adoption
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Four Information Sessions to talk through the draft Plan and promote opportunity to provide feedback
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion at relevant Council and community events and in Council and community publications
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance and/or updates to Council Advisory Groups
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offering to attend any community group meetings to provide information and promote opportunity to provide feedback
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email to distribution list and community stakeholders
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Posters, postcards, Bulletin No.5 and hard copy feedback forms will be placed around the Shire advertising Information sessions and how to provide feedback
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social media notifications e.g. Facebook, Twitter and Linked In
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback from the community will be summarised into a Future Nillumbik Committee meeting report scheduled for 10 September 2019
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submissions heard at Future Nillumbik Committee meeting on 10 September 2019

Key inputs to the draft Green Wedge Management Plan

Nillumbik Green Wedge Management Plan Community Engagement Report, Wayfarer Consulting, August 2018 (also some additional references to responses included in the Community Engagement Verbatim Report).	Recommendations of the Community Panel majority report, Nov 2018	Council's response to the recommendations of the Community Panel majority report, Dec 2018	Recommendations of a minority report by five community panel members, April 2019	Other relevant Council Policies	Objectives and strategies of the existing GWMP 2010-2015	Remaining actions from the existing GWMP 2010-2025 - sourced from an officer review and update of GWMP implementation plans, 2018	How these inputs are responded to in the draft GWMP June 2019
	<p>The existing plan It should serve as a base from which to prepare an updated plan, and any actions that are yet to be completed should be carried over, unless specifically contradicted by our recommendations.</p>	<p>Note - Council notes the Panel's advice that the existing plan should serve as a base for preparing the new draft plan but reserves its right to improve clarity and efficiency, remove redundant or duplicated clauses and fill-in any gaps.</p>					<p>A number of actions in the existing GWMP have been completed, abandoned or re-interpreted in other ways. The remaining ones are included in this table. Many of these are replaced at a higher level in the new plan and made consistent with current Council policies and plans. The structure of the draft plan is different to the existing one to remove duplication, reduce the number of layers, include more discussion under headings generally in line with the desired planning outcomes for green wedges expressed in the state government's Plan Melbourne and to better align it with the current Council Plan (the original was aligned with the Council Plan of 2009-13).</p>
<p>Key Findings <i>What I like about the green wedge:</i> Space, peace, healthy 'feel', freedom Natural environment Community Recreation and leisure activities, Lifestyle Urban/ rural living, Access to services Mental health and wellbeing/ respite from the urban environment Village-rural community idyllic lifestyle <i>What are the opportunities for the green wedge?:</i> Health and wellbeing services and industries Improve infrastructure. Community building Sustainable tourism Environmental Protection <i>What are the challenges of living, working and visiting the green wedge?:</i> Over development and over population Transport issues The risk of bushfire Environmental degradation Costs for individuals Finding the balance between people and the environment and between different groups Difficult, costly and time intensive and unfair planning processes. <i>What are the challenges the green wedge will face in the future?:</i> As above with the addition of: The possible lack of job and business opportunities. Climate change and the associated risks such as bushfire, lack of water and environmental damage.</p>	<p>Vision Management of the Nillumbik green wedge will lead the way in supporting a vibrant, resilient, connected and diverse community, living with the landscape to enhance the environmental, social and economic sustainability of the Shire.</p>	<p>Support - Council supports the Panel's vision with the alteration of "living in the landscape" rather than "with the landscape" so as to be consistent with its Council Plan. Council notes that the vision does not need to be time limited as it reflects an ongoing approach to good and comprehensive management.</p>	<p>Vision Our vision is of a safe, peaceful, prosperous countryside, where landowners and land managers are supported to manage an economically, ecologically and socially sustainable and healthy environment for people to live in and visit.</p> <p>Values</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Leadership: Lead by example. 2. Collaboration: Committed teams – one vision. 3. Fairness: Equitable and practicable solutions. 4. Engagement: Work closely with our community and stakeholders. 5. Innovation: Identify opportunity, nurture ideas and act. 6. Excellence: Positive attitude, strive for success. 7. Communication: Consistent, concise and timely. 8. Respect: Respect each other and our stakeholders. <p>Objectives</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Bushfire risk to be mitigated from extreme to moderate/medium. 2. Community health and wellbeing outcomes are known and are comparable with other green wedges areas. 3. Land owner and manager roles and efforts are acknowledged and valued. 4. Economic Operation and land holding asset performance is comparable with other green wedge areas and broader metropolitan Melbourne. 5. Areas of high value biodiversity are identified protected and conserved. 	<p>Council Plan 2017-21 Vision: Nillumbik is Australia's most liveable Shire</p> <p>Council Plan 2017-21 Goals: Engaged, connected communities: A place where communities and ideas thrive, underpinned by trust, confidence and continuous learning. Active and creative people: Active lifestyles and artistic expression are fostered through participation and innovation. Safe and healthy environments: Healthy and safe communities enjoy living in our iconic green wedge environment. A prosperous economy: A strong local economy that supports business growth, jobs and community wealth. Responsible leadership: Collaborative and consultative leadership that builds trust and makes the best use of available</p>			<p>The vision identified by the majority panel report and supported by Council with one modification, has been included in the draft plan with further elaboration that takes a human-centric and triple bottom line view, stressing collaboration and engagement and acknowledging the need to manage risk. The elaboration picks up some of the sentiments in the minority report alternative vision. Engaged and connected communities are addressed in goal one and safety in goal three.</p> <p>Council's adopted values of respect, collaboration, integrity, adaptability and community have been included in the principles of the draft plan under the heading of leadership.</p> <p>The draft plan adopts the five goals of the Council Plan as its high level objectives so as to ensure that the GWMP is fully integrated with Council's planning budgeting and reporting cycle. Objectives are included under each of the five goals, including bushfire mitigation, health and wellbeing and economic development. The draft emphasises a people centric approach throughout and has a number of actions intended to provide support for landowners specifically.</p> <p>Under the heading of managing what is valuable to us in the introduction, the draft plan directly references the key findings of the community engagement report.</p> <p>The principles (see below) include the Shire of Nillumbik's values.</p> <p>Minority report objectives 1 and 4 are not considered to be feasible because of Nillumbik's characteristics and the variation between Melbourne's various green wedges.</p>

Nillumbik Green Wedge Management Plan Community Engagement Report, Wayfarer Consulting, August 2018 (also some additional references to responses included in the Community Engagement Verbatim Report).	Recommendations of the Community Panel majority report, Nov 2018	Council's response to the recommendations of the Community Panel majority report, Dec 2018	Recommendations of a minority report by five community panel members, April 2019	Other relevant Council Policies	Objectives and strategies of the existing GWMP 2010-2015	Remaining actions from the existing GWMP 2010-2025 - sourced from an officer review and update of GWMP implementation plans, 2018	How these inputs are responded to in the draft GWMP June 2019
				resources to the benefit of all in the pursuit of excellence. The Shire of Nillumbik's values Respect Collaboration Integrity Adaptability Community			
	<p>Principles The Panel reviewed the current principles guiding the green wedge Management Plan. All remain relevant. The green wedge Management Panel identified several other principles that the plan must address:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Focus on the future: there is a danger that short-term pragmatics compromise our stewardship responsibilities. Council and stakeholders must assume responsibility for a focus on the long term, because of the precautionary principle and the need to respect future generations. 2. Indigenous voice: we have much to learn from our First Peoples, particularly about caring for country. 3. Whole of Shire approach: the green wedge is a whole of shire responsibility; both urban and rural areas are co-dependent and should have a voice about the green wedge future. 4. Relationship to Metropolitan Melbourne: Nillumbik's role as the green wedge Shire has increased significance, as 	<p>Support-in-principle - Council takes the Panel's advice that the principles in the existing plan remain relevant and that four other principles should be incorporated. Council also believes that a new principle relating to safety, well-being and resilience needs to be added to be consistent with the vision and the meanings of each principle need to be further clarified. Keeping the list at ten principles (with explanatory notes) is also desirable. With some careful rationalisation, it should be possible to incorporate and clarify all of these sentiments.</p>	<p>Principles</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Keeping people, property and resources safe is the first priority of government. 2. Wellbeing of landowners and managers is vital for the Nillumbik green wedge to be sustainable. 3. Connectedness between landowners and land managers of the Nillumbik green wedge, council and the broader community is crucial to effective management of the green wedge. 4. The social, economic and environmental aspects of the Nillumbik green wedge are mutually supporting. 5. Council leadership facilitates implementation of the plan. 6. It is important to continue to learn from local indigenous people about caring for each other and country. 7. Coordination of risk mitigation activities cross agencies and property boundaries is to be encouraged. 8. Conservation of high-value biodiversity is a priority on public and private lands across the green wedge. 9. Respect and acknowledgement that the green wedge is a home for some, and a visiting place for many others. 10. The co-dependence across Nillumbik urban and rural communities is based on mutually acknowledged benefit. 11. Council systems should be streamlined and cost effective. 12. Regulation is acknowledged to be an imperfect method of influencing behaviour. 13. Regulation should be kept to a minimum and only introduced when essential for the safety of the Nillumbik green wedge residents, assets and high value biodiversity resources. 14. Regulations should be clear and comprehensible. 15. Regulations should be enforceable. 16. The cost of permits should be 	<p>Draft Bushfire Mitigation Strategy: Operating principles Protection of human life Balancing environmental protection with bushfire risk Shared responsibility Reducing managing and modifying fuels</p>	<p>Guiding Principles Collaboration Sustainability: social, environmental, economic Leadership Connectedness Conserve and enhance Embrace change Social equity Celebrate local identity Precautionary principle (anticipate the possibility of detrimental social, health or environmental outcomes of any action and act to avoid serious or irreversible harm) Appreciation and enjoyment</p> <p>Strategies: Manage the Nillumbik Green Wedge in accordance with the GWMP and its guiding principles.</p>		<p>The draft plan combines the ten principles of the existing GWMP, the additional four identified by the majority report, the health and wellbeing principle required by Council, the minority report's references to safety and the role of landowners and the Shire of Nillumbik's values into a new set of 10 principles and explanatory statements. The operating principles of the draft Bushfire Mitigation Strategy are consistent with those in the draft plan referring to a whole-of-shire approach; collaboration & connectedness; safety, wellbeing and resilience; and sustainability and the precautionary principle.</p> <p>principles: Leadership Aboriginal voice A whole of shire approach and recognition of Nillumbik's relationship to Metropolitan Melbourne Manage change for future benefit Collaboration and connectedness Celebrate, appreciate and enjoy local identity and the landscape Social equity Safety, wellbeing and resilience Conserve and enhance our heritage Sustainability and the precautionary principle</p>

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	Melbourne expands within the urban growth boundaries. Nillumbik's role in protecting biodiversity and natural landscape must be supported.		kept to a minimum. 17. Decisions will be made using an objective evidence-based approach recognising that the community's goals are best served when scientific evidence is used rigorously and comprehensively to inform decisions.				
			Rigorous scientific evidence to support plan priorities Where this report provides no direction on an issue council believes should be prioritised in the Nillumbik green wedge Management Plan, council should refer to the Objectives and Principles sections of this report. These should be used to guide the assessment of established, credible, current, independent, relevant evidence to inform and address the issue.				The draft plan applies the approach recommended by the minority report to the purpose of the principles (see above).
<p>Bushfire The threat of bushfire was cited regularly as a specific challenge for people living in the green wedge. Issues related to bushfire preparation and management were also raised. Managing pressures of maintaining the bush feel of the green wedge while making it safe from bushfire was a common theme. Other respondents were concerned about regulations preventing them from making their properties safe from bushfire threat. Comments relating to bushfires indicated a general concern over the potential for bushfire and the threat to life, property and the environment, along with some concerns over the capacity for landowners to sufficiently prepare for bushfire.</p>	<p>Bushfire preparedness, mitigation and management 1. Encourage and support the use of, and further research into the impacts of, indigenous cool burning practices for ecological management and fuel reduction. 2. Promote and support community education that provides a clear understanding of risks, action, obligations and opportunities to protect people and property. This includes consideration of fire bunkers where appropriate, community safe areas, etc. 3. Council collaborate with all levels of government and residents to mitigate the risk of bushfire and resultant impacts on residents, assets and resources in the green wedge. 4. Ensure the Municipal Fire</p>	<p>Support - Council supports the Panel's recommendations and its positioning of bushfire preparedness, mitigation and management as an overarching issue for management of the green wedge. Council has statutory responsibilities in this area and is committed to developing a comprehensive fire mitigation strategy and expects this work to be completed in 2019.</p>	<p>Bushfire preparedness, mitigation and management 1. Encourage and support the use of, further research into, and trials of indigenous fire stick burning for ecological management and fuel reduction. 2. Promote and support community information providing an understanding of risk, actions, obligations and opportunities to protect people and property, including fire bunkers where appropriate, community safe areas, fuel reduction on a landscape level, and other options. 3. Council work in partnership with all levels of government and emergency services and residents and land owners to mitigate the risk of bushfire and resultant impacts on residents, assets, resources and biodiversity in the green wedge. 4. Council improve the management of the roadside fuel load, advocating for the Shire with VicRoads as necessary.</p> <p>Climate change 3. Council work with agencies, land owners and land managers to prioritize mitigating the risk of bushfire from severe to moderate.</p>	<p>Draft Bushfire Mitigation Strategy 2019-23: Strategic Priorities Reduce the number and impact of bushfire incidents Creating a community focussed approach to bushfire Creating a coordinated approach between key agencies and the communities of Nillumbik Shire Council Ensuring strong advocacy</p>		<p>Investigate opportunities to conduct ecological burns on private and public land. Encourage the use of sustainable and bushfire resistant design, materials and energy sources. Review vegetation controls, fuel modification practices and fire protection in the context of climate change, Victorian Government policy changes and the outcomes of the Royal Commission into the February 2009 bushfires and the latest scientific research. In partnership with the CFA, provide support for community fireguard groups and other community education initiatives. Regularly review the Municipal Fire Prevention Plan and facilitate increased opportunities for community education and bushfire preparedness in the green wedge.</p>	<p>The strategic priorities of the draft Bushfire Mitigation Strategy are repeated in the draft GWMP as objectives under Goal 3 with the key action being to implement the Bushfire Management Strategy. This also replaces, at a higher level, all of the individual remaining actions from the existing GWMP.</p> <p>O3.3 Reduce the number and impact of bushfire incidents. O3.4 Create a community focussed approach to bushfire, a coordinated approach between key agencies and the communities of Nillumbik and ensure strong advocacy in relation to bushfire and bushfire risk. A3.7 Finalise and implement Council's draft Bushfire Mitigation Strategy 2019-23. O3.2 Enhance community understanding, resilience and adaptability for the impacts of climate change and a bushfire prone environment. A1.1 Create a Green Wedge Conversations program and facilitate local communities to develop resilience, leadership, knowledge-transfer and cooperation between people involved with land management, agriculture, nature conservation, public land management and bushfire mitigation and management. Seek on-going government funding assistance to support the program. A3.3 Implement a whole of organisation approach to community resilience addressing climate change, emergency management and a range of matters in an integrated manner. This will include difficult conversations on the natural environment and biodiversity values, bushfire risk reduction, economic development, agriculture, economic and community rebuilding post events, human health, well-being and safety and water catchment planning.</p>

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	Prevention Plan is up to date, appropriate and compliant with Bushfire Royal Commission recommendations.						
<p>Governance issues</p> <p>Managing competing interests was cited as a challenge. These competing interests included business, tourism, nature, environment, people and development. Some respondents indicated there was an opportunity to balance competing needs. These needs were between the environment and people, as well as particular groups of people such as farmers, horse riders and environmentalists.</p> <p>Other environmental challenges related to the challenge of managing the green wedge for the needs of people and the environment, and the difficulty in getting the balance right. The problem of land not being managed appropriately and the difficulty that regulation placed on landowners and the rights of owners to manage their land as they consider appropriate were also raised. There were a number of responses relating to community. Some indicated a dislike or distrust of other community members while others were more positive about how the community worked together and coexisted. Some concerns related to changes in the community and community expectations. A range of challenges relating to community were cited including changes to the community, a lack of community interaction and a lack of shared values. Some respondents had challenges with individual people or neighbours. Many respondents indicated an opportunity to improve planning processes. Comments indicated that the current process was confusing and subject to time delays and high costs</p>	<p>Strengthened governance for the green wedge Management Plan</p> <p>Governance of the GWMP should be strengthened through:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Commit to establish a GWMP advisory committee. Subsuming these responsibilities within Environment and Sustainability Committee has led to a reduced focus on monitoring GWMP implementation. 2. Publish an annual budget statement relating to the GWMP about resource allocation and actual expenditure in each financial year, and reasons for variation. This should be accompanied by an annual statement of performance against GWMP performance indicators. 	<p>Partially support - Council supports part 2 of the Panel's recommendation and commits to regular reporting against the new GWMP when it is adopted. Council believes that this will assist overall management and transparency to the community. Council's capacity to differentiate its financial reports between urban and non-urban areas will be enhanced in the next few years. Council does not wholly support part 1 because it believes that it would be more consistent with the Panel's "whole-of-shire" principle to refer the relevant parts of the new GWMP to the specialist municipality-wide committees advising Council on emergency management, economic, social and environmental issues. This will ensure that Council receives advice that is well-informed and relevant to the whole community.</p>	<p>Strengthening governance of the green wedge Management Plan</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Council report progress on implementing the green wedge management plan to the community every two years. 2. Engage the Nillumbik green wedge community in the implementation of the plan by establishing a Nillumbik green wedge Advisory Committee comprised of landowners and managers of the green wedge to assist council in prioritising and implementing recommendations. 		<p>Objectives:</p> <p>Implement the Nillumbik Green Wedge Management Plan. Work collaboratively and transparently with community and stakeholders to find the best ways in which to deliver the GWMP.</p>	<p>Undertake four-yearly reviews of the GWMP and report on its implementation annually. The first review to take place after publication of the Royal Commission report into the February 2009 bushfires. Establish an expert committee to advise on green wedge funding and undertake investigations into a new possible governance arrangement. Consider an advisory group to assist in implementing the GWMP. Advocate to the Victorian Government for interface councils to be eligible for rural and regional funding programs.</p>	<p>Council's response (which addresses both the majority and minority reports) is incorporated into the monitoring and evaluation chapter of the draft plan. This, together with the section entitled Funding and resourcing of green wedge management, also replaces, at a higher level, all of the individual remaining actions from the existing GWMP.</p> <p>O5.2 Take a joined up approach to working with the community to help it balance and cope with the competing demands of living and working in our green wedge.</p> <p>A5.2 Implement a whole of organisation approach to community resilience addressing climate change, emergency management and a range of matters in an integrated manner. This will include difficult conversations on the natural environment and biodiversity values, bushfire risk reduction, economic development, agriculture, economic and community rebuilding post events, human health, well-being and safety and water catchment planning.</p> <p>O5.3 Support community strengthening through sharing its knowledge and capabilities.</p> <p>A5.3 Create a Green Wedge Conversations program and facilitate local communities to develop resilience, leadership, knowledge-transfer and cooperation between people involved with land management, agriculture, nature conservation, public land management and bushfire mitigation and management. Seek on-going government funding assistance to support the program.</p> <p>O5.6 Enhance and update Council's knowledge base to support informed management of critical issues in our green wedge.</p> <p>A5.5 Undertake stocktakes of environmental assets and agricultural activity and practices, including hobby farming, that need to be protected for the future and pests that need to be managed by sourcing information from formal research bodies and landowners. Seek government funding assistance to establish and maintain this data base into the future for landowner information, program prioritisation and policy development.</p>
<p>Costs</p> <p>The cost of living and maintaining the green wedge was cited as a challenge. This related to personal finances and the capacity of Nillumbik Council and residents to fund the green wedge. Issues relating to the cost of living in the green wedge were cited as key challenges. Key costs related to rates, housing, transport and access to services. Some respondents linked the cost of living to the need to find additional ways to fund the green wedge including assistance from other levels of government or increasing the rate base.</p>	<p>Lobby state government for green wedge funding</p> <p>Lobby the State Government to be recognised as a semi-rural Shire and for increased funding to support the management of the green wedge.</p>	<p>Support - Council supports the Panel's recommendation as well as continuing to seek funding from relevant state and national government programs that apply to metropolitan areas.</p>	<p>Nillumbik's economic sustainability</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lobby the Victorian government for recognition that the rural part of the shire should receive an increased grant funding allowance to support the management of Nillumbik's green wedge. 2. Consider amalgamation with one or more adjoining shires in order to enjoy the benefits of a large rate base that Nillumbik, as a shire with a relatively small, mostly urban population and mostly rural land mass, cannot currently claim. 			<p>Advocate to the state government for increased support for land management, advice and financial resources. Advocate to the Victorian Government for research into the community's awareness of green wedges and the willingness of the wider community to support them financially. Lobby Victorian Government for an increase in funding for the rural sectors of the Shire.</p>	<p>The need for government funding is addressed in the draft plan in the Introduction.</p> <p>These also replace, at a higher level, all of the remaining actions from the existing GWMP. Council amalgamation, as recommended by the minority report, is beyond the scope of this plan.</p> <p>O5.8 Attract external funding for green wedge management.</p> <p>A5.1 Create a comprehensive landowners information and support service for land use and management, including annual reporting on trends and outcomes. Seek on-going government funding to support the service.</p> <p>A5.3 Create a Green Wedge Conversations program</p>

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							and facilitate local communities to develop resilience, leadership, knowledge-transfer and cooperation between people involved with land management, agriculture, nature conservation, public land management and bushfire mitigation and management. Seek on-going government funding assistance to support the program. A5.5 Undertake stocktakes of environmental assets and agricultural activity and practices, including hobby farming, that need to be protected for the future and pests that need to be managed by sourcing information from formal research bodies and landowners. Seek government funding assistance to establish and maintain this data base into the future for landowner information, program prioritisation and policy development. A5.9 Identify and pursue all funding opportunities from government, philanthropy and corporations to support implementation of this plan.
<p>Environment The environment including plants, animals and the bush was also considered important by respondents from all engagement activities. The challenge to manage the environment and concerns over environmental damage were cited as a challenge. It was suggested that there are opportunities to use the natural assets of the green wedge to educate residents and the wider community around a number of topics including the environment and sustainability. The green wedge was seen as a place where people could experience or be educated on practical environmental sustainability. The need to protect the environment and its biodiversity was often mentioned in conjunction with the theme of 'keep it as it is'. While this is strictly not an opportunity a number of respondents provided it as an answer to this question. Respondents indicated the opportunity for Nillumbik and the green wedge to promote itself as a leader in sustainability with the potential to educate communities and other organisations in sustainability. Some respondents suggested that Nillumbik should be a leader in sustainability and environmental protection. Some suggested that Nillumbik could help promote and educate other councils and individuals on sustainability.</p>	<p>Biodiversity 1. Develop a broad-scale land management plan to undertake regular review of biodiversity values to protect and enhance remnant vegetation, water resources, fauna and flora, and habitat corridors, and to guide landholders on biodiversity management practices. 2. Review the placement of the Environmental Significance Overlays on private land, and appropriately fill schedules to ensure all areas of significant biodiversity are protected. These reviews should be conducted by appropriately qualified independent contractors. 3. Review Nillumbik Biodiversity Strategy to bring into line with recently revised state environment policy.</p>	<p>Support-in-principle - Council agrees that it is necessary to update the on-ground evidence of biodiversity assets to ensure that what is valuable is as accurately identified as possible. Council also recognises that the localised statutory controls that protect these assets may also have to be altered to ensure they are well directed in light of up-to-date evidence and changed state environment policy. Council notes that these are expensive and lengthy pieces of research and may need the financial and technical assistance of other levels of government and research institutions. An additional land management plan as suggested by the Panel is not needed.</p>	<p>Biodiversity 1. Council advocate for Victorian and/or Commonwealth government funding of university research study of biodiversity at green wedge sites 25 years post NEROC. Research to be published in peer reviewed journals and repeated using the same research methodology every 10 years. 2. Published research of high value biodiversity sites be used in conjunction with a social, economic and environmental impact assessments in the Nillumbik green wedge to inform land management planning, and the Nillumbik Planning Scheme. 3. Council to work with landowners and land managers to consider appropriate actions necessary to protect and conserve sites identified as having high value biodiversity in the Nillumbik green wedge.</p>	<p>Biodiversity Strategy 2012</p>	<p>Objectives: Protect and enhance remnant vegetation. Protect and enhance sites of faunal and habitat significance and strategic habitat links. Strategies: Identify and manage biodiversity at a landscape scale for conservation. Support the participation of rural landholders and communities in conserving biodiversity. Pursue the protection and restoration of significant sites and wildlife corridors.</p>	<p>Seek partnerships with and involve neighbouring municipalities and agencies in land and biodiversity management. Investigate the extension of the Trust for Nature Covenants in the green wedge areas. Investigate the feasibility of pursuing Habitat 141-type initiatives which reconnect landscapes over a large geographic area. In priority areas for biodiversity, investigate applying permit conditions to require land management plans. Provide increased support for vegetation management on Council controlled, as well as private, land in the green wedge.</p>	<p>O3.1 Identify, protect and enhance valuable biodiversity and habitats. A3.1 Undertake stocktakes of environmental assets and agricultural activity and practices, including hobby farming, that need to be protected for the future and pests that need to be managed by sourcing information from formal research bodies and landowners. Seek government funding assistance to establish and maintain this data base into the future for landowner information, program prioritisation and policy development. A3.5 In partnership with relevant government agencies, encourage biodiversity conservation and responsible land management on public and private land by: • implementing Council's Biodiversity Strategy 2012; Roadside Management Plan and Invasive Species Action Plan 2015 • supporting Landcare and Friends groups • providing an advisory service for land management • providing rebates for Trust for Nature covenanted land and agriculture with a land management plan • delivering Council's land management incentive program and other conservation protection projects • administering state planning policies that apply to native vegetation and • delivering targeted environment and sustainability education experiences. Working at the landscape scale is referenced in the narrative on pages 30-31 under the heading of "Environmental conservation".</p>

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<p>Environmental protection Environmental protection continued as a theme with a particular focus on how this could be done. Although this is not strictly an opportunity a number of respondents provided it as a response to this question.</p>	<p>Planning scheme, environmental overlays and rural considerations for GW zones Give priority to evaluating current overlays (ESO & SLO) and schedules for applicability to actual on ground conditions i.e. flora and fauna, land usage & purposes, historical uses, environmental characteristics, for conformity to green wedge Management Plan objectives. Ensure that all assessment and investigative works are undertaken by independent experts Where overlays currently apply, actions of landowners that lead to degradation of environmental values should be addressed by Council officers.</p>	<p>Support - This recommendation is supported.</p>	<p>Council planning overlays 1. Review existing vegetation overlays with the view of ensuring that areas where evidence shows high value biodiversity are appropriately protected and conserved, within the footprint of the overlay, and areas where evidence shows they do not contain high value biodiversity are not burdened by irrelevant regulation. 2. Ensure that green wedge landowners and managers, regardless of the value of biodiversity on their land, are aware of how to enter into a Trust for Nature Agreement if they should choose to. 3. Council and landowners and managers consider alternatives to the imposition of regulation as an effective land management tool to provide for the sustainability of the Nillumbik green wedge.</p>		<p>Strategies: Conserve biodiversity through implementing sustainable land use planning and encouraging sustainable land management.</p>		<p>A3.2 Subject to the findings of the data base described by A3.1, review the Environmental Significance Overlay in the Nillumbik Planning Scheme.</p>
<p>Environmental degradation Concerns over the environment were raised. These particularly related to the current state of the environment. Some respondents believed that the environment was not being well managed and indicated issues related to weeds and feral and other animals (such as kangaroos). There were concerns relating to environmental degradation. These were varied and included wild and feral animals, weed species, pollution and rubbish, and the loss of tree canopy.</p>	<p>Feral animals and pest species Increase and prioritise the focus on feral animal and pest species reduction programs, and measure their effectiveness, in conjunction with other councils and State Government.</p>	<p>Support - Council recognises the importance to the community of controlling feral animals and pest species and will work with relevant agencies to expand information and incentives that support and engage landowners and managers, as well as managing land under its direct control.</p>	<p>Invasive animals, weeds and pests 1. Increase and prioritise the focus on pest animal and weed reduction programs in conjunction with other councils, Nillumbik green wedge residents, land owners, interested communities and the Victorian Government. Biodiversity (cont.) 4. With land owners and land managers, council revises and executes the full funding and implementation of weed and pest management plans across public and private lands in the Nillumbik green wedge.</p>	<p>Invasive Species Action Plan 2015</p>	<p>Objectives: Achieve sustainable land management. Strategies: Minimise the impact of pest plants and animals.</p>	<p>Implement the Weed Action Plan 2008. Work with Victorian Government agencies such as Melbourne Water, in coordinating pest plant and animal programs. Implement the Nillumbik Rabbit Action Plan. Investigate the development of a policy to restrict planting of environmental weeds within bushland environments. Continue to investigate and implement improvements to weed and feral animal control programs. Advocate to Victorian Government to conduct Starling and Indian Myna control programs.</p>	<p>A3.4 Increase and prioritise Council's focus on feral animal and pest plant species reduction, education and programs on private and public land. A3.5 In partnership with relevant government agencies, encourage biodiversity conservation and responsible land management on public and private land by: • implementing Council's Biodiversity Strategy 2012; Roadside Management Plan and Invasive Species Action Plan 2015 • supporting Landcare and Friends groups • providing an advisory service for land management • providing rebates for Trust for Nature covenanted land and agriculture with a land management plan • delivering Council's land management incentive program and other conservation protection projects • administering state planning policies that apply to native vegetation and • delivering targeted environment and sustainability education experiences. Reference to current plans such as the Invasive Species Action Plan 2015 replaces, at a high level, all of the individual remaining actions from the existing GWMP.</p>

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<p>Open space The most cited response from all engagement activities indicated the appreciation of the green wedge for the space, peace and healthy feel. The lifestyle outlined included the space and access to land and the community spirit. There was a strong focus on maintaining the green wedge. This included managing it to protect the environment, recognising the responsibility of current generations to keep the green wedge intact, and the understanding that if it is lost it could never be replaced.</p>	<p>Conserving the landscape 1. Conserve and enhance bush and rural landscapes to maintain the natural beauty of the green wedge. 2. Complete an assessment of the green wedge Landscape Character and implement planning controls and other recommendations arising from this study.</p>	<p>Support-in-principle - Council agrees that the natural beauty of the green wedge and its bush and rural landscapes are important values to be conserved. At this point Council is not sure that the action described in point 2 is the only way to do this and will want a range of planning actions investigated, including better use of the current planning scheme.</p>			<p>Objectives: Conserve the landscapes of the Green Wedge for aesthetic, environmental and cultural values. Strategies: Identify, document and protect the character of the diverse landscapes of the Nillumbik Green Wedge.</p>		<p>O3.5 Conserve the bush and rural landscapes to maintain the natural beauty of the green wedge. A3.9 As part of a future review of the Nillumbik Planning Scheme consider identified landscape character and quality through the current policies and overlays that apply. The value of the landscape is discussed in the narrative on page 32 under the heading of "Landscape and open space".</p>
<p>Climate Change Climate change was cited as a challenge in itself and also relating to other challenges such as bushfire, damage to the local environment and water supply.</p>	<p>Responding to the challenge of climate change That Council develop action plans, within the next 3 years, for the mitigation and adaptation to climate change in its many dimensions.</p>	<p>Support - Council has its Climate Change Action Plan 2016-2020 in place with actions aimed at reducing council and community emissions. Council recognises that further work will be required to fully understand and commit to the adaptation actions necessary to respond to a changing climate that is expected to be drier overall and subject to more frequent extreme weather events.</p>	<p>Climate change (cont.) 1. Council investigate the impact of climate change on the Nillumbik green wedge communities, assets, resources and biodiversity.</p>		<p>Strategies: Adopt best practice on a local basis to address climate change.</p>	<p>Implement the Climate Change Action Plan. Undertake appropriate monitoring of impacts of climate change, especially on land capability and water resources and assist the agricultural sector to adapt where necessary. Develop and implement programs to support community resilience and adaptation to the social, health and community impact of climate change.</p>	<p>Goal three discusses the need to adapt to a changing climate and a bushfire prone environment. O3.2 Enhance community understanding, resilience and adaptability for the impacts of climate change and a bushfire prone environment. A3.3 Implement a whole of organisation approach to community resilience addressing climate change, emergency management and a range of matters in an integrated manner. This will include difficult conversations on the natural environment and biodiversity values, bushfire risk reduction, economic development, agriculture, economic and community rebuilding post events, human health, well-being and safety and water catchment planning. A3.6 In conjunction with key stakeholders, review Council's approach to climate change to develop a best practice response. This will incorporate our statutory requirements and respond to all key state government frameworks but will need to remain agile and adaptive to changing policy settings. It will adopt an integrated approach that brings together the key local issues that have been identified in every goal in this plan. This will result in either: • an updated climate change action plan and/or • a new climate change and community resilience strategic framework built from a local context that recognises the unique features of our communities, its landscapes and natural environment. It will be informed by appropriate evidence, independent expertise and strong community participation.</p>

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<p>Services The general lack of services or poor functioning services was cited as a challenge. This included telecommunications, recreational infrastructure and basic services such as water and sewage.</p>	<p>Water planning Increase priority from medium to high of existing GWMP actions to improve water conservation (supply, use, recycling). Better protect stream flows in the green wedge by ensuring the construction of new dams on private property takes into account water conservation and sustainability.</p>	<p>Support - In supporting this recommendation, Council notes that some detailed matters (e.g. bores and extraction licences) are regulated by other water authorities. Council also notes (consistent with its response to recommendation 7) that management of water in the landscape will become more important as the climate dries.</p>	<p>Climate change (cont.) 2. Council investigate the best ways to provide water security for residents in the Nillumbik green wedge.</p> <p>Housing development 4. Consideration of rural and un-serviced conditions in all permit applications, which provide for water collection so as to protect residents from risk and harm (tanks and dams as of right).</p>	<p>Domestic Wastewater Management Plan 2019</p>	<p>Objectives: Protect and enhance catchments and manage water responsibly.</p> <p>Strategies: Ensure land use and development is addressed in the context of its potential effect on the wider catchment.</p>	<p>Investigate the appropriateness of further water extraction and diversion including dams and bores, given the incremental impact on environmental flows in waterways with reduced rainfall and climate change impacts. Work with Melbourne Water to improve water conservation (supply, use, recycling) in all spheres of human activity. Implement the Nillumbik Sustainable Water Management Plan (replaced by Melbourne Water's Integrated Water Management Strategy. Utilise water sensitive urban design in developments where this is possible.</p>	<p>The issue of water security and management is discussed in the narrative on page 32-33 under the heading of "Water supply and catchments".</p> <p>O3.6 Support Melbourne Water and the Catchment Management Authority to improve stream condition, water flows, water quality and catchment quality.</p> <p>A3.3 Implement a whole of organisation approach to community resilience addressing climate change, emergency management and a range of matters in an integrated manner. This will include difficult conversations on the natural environment and biodiversity values, bushfire risk reduction, economic development, agriculture, economic and community rebuilding post events, human health, well-being and safety and water catchment planning.</p> <p>A3.7 Promote water sensitive design, balance amenity uses of our waterways with environmental considerations and balance demand for private use of water flows through extraction and diversion with broader community and environmental considerations.</p> <p>A3.8 Finalise and implement Council's Domestic Waste Water Management Plan 2019.</p>
	<p>Light pollution Manage light pollution in the green wedge so that visibility of the night sky is enhanced and to minimise adverse effects on nocturnal native animals.</p>	<p>Support-in-principle - Council agrees that managing light pollution is a desirable objective but safety concerns and community activity also need to be taken into account. Sufficient techniques exist to ensure that lighting is directed to where it is needed with minimised overspill and glare where it may cause environmental degradation or nuisance. Council commits to managing light pollution on its own properties and use current planning controls to achieve appropriate outcomes elsewhere.</p>	<p>Amenity and safety 1. Ensure that Nillumbik green wedge community amenity and safety is supported when considering permit applications. 2. Educate residents about the benefits of darkness for some local wildlife and encourage them to turn off unnecessary lighting and use smart lights as far as possible</p>				<p>The value of the night sky is discussed in the narrative on page 32 under the heading of "Landscape and open space".</p> <p>A3.5 Consider, through development approvals and management of Council property, the limitation of light spill not directly associated with safety or community activity to reduce impacts on nocturnal animals and the night time amenity of the landscape.</p>
	<p>Right of tenure Provide clear guidelines on use rights for ALL lots. The Shire Council to be responsible for education and updating new and existing landowners.</p>	<p>Support - Council recognises that the provision of accurate, up-to-date and understandable land use planning information is critical for landowners and the efficient functioning of the Shire. Whilst this happens now through a variety of channels, Council will look for ways to make this better for the community.</p>	<p>Addressing Risk in Zones and Schedules 1. Restructure zones and schedules so that zones imposed over areas are consistent with the settlement patterns of landholdings within them to rectify the housing security and right of tenure risks in the Nillumbik green wedge.</p>		<p>Strategies: Increase opportunities to understand the Nillumbik Green Wedge.</p>		<p>Goal 5 discusses the need to better inform and work with landowners.</p> <p>O5.1 Recognise and support landowners maintaining land in the green wedge with up-to-date information.</p> <p>A5.1 Create a comprehensive landowners information and support service for land use and management, including annual reporting on trends and outcomes. Seek on-going government funding to support the service.</p>

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			<p>Addressing Risk in Zones and Schedules (cont.) 2. Investigate and review the current planning zones and schedules to ascertain whether the purposes of the Nillumbik green wedge are adequately supported by the current regimen of zoning and schedules, and whether areas and residents of the Nillumbik green wedge would be better served by Rural Activity Zone, Rural Living Zone, Rural Conservation Zone, green wedge Zone, green wedge Zone A, Farming Zone, or other zones with accompanying schedules that recognise and accommodate the diversity of activities and land sizes across the Nillumbik green wedge.</p>				<p>O5.5 Work with the Victorian Government to ensure that the Nillumbik planning scheme supports the principles, goals and objectives of this plan. A5.6 Consider reviewing the current application of zoning controls in the green wedge to better reflect the actual use of land.</p>
	<p>Renewable energy Investigate opportunities to support community-based, distributed, clean energy solutions (from Glossop report). Council to consider developing an Energy Plan.</p>	<p>Support - Council is already investigating the feasibility of large scale solar and is working with Clean Energy Nillumbik to progress renewable energy generation and development of an energy plan</p>	<p>Renewable energy 1. Investigate opportunities to support community based, distributed, clean energy solutions. 2. Council investigate the development of an Energy Strategy and Plan.</p>		<p>Strategies: Support renewable energy initiatives in Nillumbik Green Wedge and township communities.</p>	<p>Investigate the applicability to Nillumbik of renewable energy initiatives such as the Hepburn Springs Project and Bendigo solar city project.</p>	<p>A3.6 Investigate opportunities to support community-based renewable energy solutions.</p>

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<p>Access to Services Easy access to a range of services such as public transport, shops and education was something people liked about the green wedge. The importance of the community, the friendliness, shared understanding and 'village feel' of the area.</p>	<p>Township plans Articulate a vision and develop a plan for each green wedge township, which will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Be a vibrant and attractive gateway to the green wedge for visitors. 2. Provide support and essential services for green wedge residents. 3. Ensure that future development is in line with environmentally sensitive design principles. 4. Ensure that future development emphasises each town's unique characteristics and remains within existing township boundaries. 5. Increase the range of housing diversity to service the needs of visitors and specific community requirements, e.g. "aging in place". 	<p>Support - Council agrees that the townships are very important to the functioning of the green wedge and are important places where many of our community live, work and visit. Council agrees that forward plans are necessary and the Panel's five points of direction are a good starting point for discussion with each town community. Council is already committed to reviewing or preparing a variety of township strategies for St Andrews, Hurstbridge, Wattle Glen, Yarrambat, Kangaroo Ground, Panton Hill and Research.</p>	<p>Township plans Articulate a vision and develop a plan for each Nillumbik green wedge Township (Panton Hill, Wattle Glen, Hurstbridge, St Andrews and others) in partnership with local communities, that will help it to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Be a gateway to the Nillumbik green wedge for visitors; 2. Embed Environmentally Sensitive Design Principles; 3. Ensure future development is in keeping with the vision and plan for each township; and 4. Increase housing diversity. 		<p>Objectives: Improve the economic viability of the Nillumbik Green Wedge and its townships and settlements: Hurstbridge, Panton Hill, St Andrews, Yarrambat, Arthurs Creek and Kangaroo Ground. Maintain non-urban breaks between existing urban areas and townships. Strategies: Achieve economic development in townships of St Andrews, Hurstbridge and Panton Hill and in the Green Wedge, in keeping with township structure plans.</p>	<p>Undertake township strategies for St Andrews, Panton Hill, Kangaroo Ground, Yarrambat, Arthurs Creek, Christmas Hills and Strathewen. As each strategy is completed, a series of recommendations will be made in relation to the planning provisions for each area, to give effect to the desired outcomes for each township. Review planning policies in order to encourage increased diversity of housing in green wedge townships of Hurstbridge, Panton Hill and St Andrews and the settlements of Kangaroo Ground, Yarrambat and Arthurs Creek to accommodate a range of household sizes. This is in line with existing structure plans or, where they do not exist, involves producing them in consultation with the community. Develop design policies for the green wedge townships of Hurstbridge, Panton Hill, St Andrews and settlements of Kangaroo Ground, Yarrambat and Arthurs Creek.</p>	<p>O1.4 Work with local communities to articulate a vision and develop plans appropriate to their scale and capacity for Hurstbridge, St Andrews and Panton Hill as green wedge service centres and visitor gateways. Where possible, encourage housing diversity to enable ageing in place. Align future development with environmentally sensitive design principles and ensure that future development emphasises each town's unique characteristics. A1.5 Create a comprehensive planning and place management service for the townships to strengthen their identities and attractiveness as service, population, tourism, community and cultural centres. A1.4 Better utilise multi-use community spaces to create community hubs in the townships. A1.8 Encourage the location of aged care services within the townships and programs to facilitate people ageing in the community where they have lived for many years. Encourage volunteer and community groups to support aging landowners with land management, where needed. Implement Council's Positive Ageing Strategy.</p>

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<p>Development</p> <p>The issue of development is a consistent theme throughout the consultation. In terms of the environmental challenge, development, particularly related to population growth, was considered a particular threat to the environment of the green wedge.</p> <p>The pressure of development and the impacts on infrastructure, people and the environment was the most commonly cited challenge.</p> <p>Over development of the green wedge in terms of housing growth and business growth was cited as a challenge, particularly large business or tourist development and activities.</p> <p>Development, over development (as described by respondents), particularly related to population growth was a common theme. Pressure from developers and Melbourne's growing population was also mentioned. Some respondents commented on the pressure on infrastructure and green space as a result of this development.</p> <p>Development and population growth was the most cited response. Most comments were general in nature indicating a desire to resist development. Some comments indicated a concern over the impact of general population growth on the green wedge. A few comments related to concerns over subdividing bush blocks and incremental population growth. A few respondents indicated a concern that Council was pro development and would weaken existing controls.</p> <p>Over development (as described by respondents) was the most commonly cited response. Predominantly this was housing and large developments. There were a very limited number of responses relating to 'inappropriate' business and tourism developments that was out of keeping with the area.</p> <p>The (future) challenge of over development (as described by respondents) was the most often cited response. This included generic comments related to over development as well as concerns about the watering down or changing of current regulations.</p> <p>Specific responses from the Community Engagement Verbatim Report included descriptions of and concerns with the difficulties of managing rural land on the fringe of the urban growth boundary.</p>	<p>Housing development - setting the limits</p> <p>Articulate a vision and develop a plan for each green wedge township, which will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Advocate to maintain current Urban Growth Boundary (i.e. hard boundary) 2. Monitor and regularly review existing overlays and zones. 3. Require environmentally sustainable design and construction techniques in new developments to work in harmony with nature and fit the character of the town in green wedge townships (Panton Hill, Hurstbridge and St. Andrews) 4. Maintain consistent transparency about policy intent and approach to development outcomes within the green wedge 	<p>Support-in-principle -</p> <p>Council intends to produce a whole-of-shire housing strategy to holistically consider the strategic housing needs of the municipality. Council currently advocates maintaining the existing urban growth boundary and is obliged under the Planning and Environment Act 1987 to regularly review its planning scheme. Encourage environmentally sustainable design through the planning controls for the townships but if it is to require it, that will require a planning scheme amendment.</p>	<p>Housing development (cont.)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Council and the community advocate for maintaining the current Urban Growth Boundary. 2. Council continue to advocate for limiting the use of the Nillumbik green wedge for future further major Melbourne Infrastructure. 3. Better provision in the Nillumbik green wedge for ageing in place and multi-generational site occupancy in areas covered by Bushfire Management Overlay. 		<p>Objectives:</p> <p>Provide for housing and a population which meets the social and economic aims of the Green Wedge and its townships without compromising environmental, landscape or neighbourhood character values or undermining agricultural viability.</p> <p>Strategies:</p> <p>Encourage a diversity of housing types in townships of St Andrews, Hurstbridge, Panton Hill and settlements of Kangaroo Ground, Yarrambat and Arthurs Creek to provide for smaller household sizes and ageing in communities. Support the placement of the Urban Growth Boundary in accordance with Victorian Government policy. Encourage high quality development that achieves the preferred character for rural and urban landscapes.</p>	<p>Prepare a land use framework for settlement to be incorporated into the Nillumbik Planning Scheme. This will include detailed mapping of locations where housing will be encouraged and discouraged and include details of permitted and prohibited uses.</p>	<p>O1.5 Recognise the limits on housing development in the rural areas.</p> <p>The role of the Urban Growth Boundary are described in the narrative on pages 22-23 under the heading of "Population, settlements and local services". No particular action is recommended because the objective is governed by State planning policy.</p> <p>O5.5 Work with the Victorian Government to ensure that the Nillumbik planning scheme supports the principles, goals and objectives of this plan.</p> <p>A5.6 Consider reviewing the current application of zoning controls in the green wedge to better reflect the actual use of land.</p> <p>O5.4 Clearly articulate and support the future of our green wedge townships.</p> <p>O1.4 Work with local communities to articulate a vision and develop plans appropriate to their scale and capacity for Hurstbridge, St Andrews and Panton Hill as green wedge service centres and visitor gateways. Where possible, encourage housing diversity to enable ageing in place. Align future development with environmentally sensitive design principles and ensure that future development emphasises each town's unique characteristics.</p> <p>A1.5 Create a comprehensive planning and place management service for the townships to strengthen their identities and attractiveness as service, population, tourism, community and cultural centres.</p> <p>O5.7 Keep the community appraised of and represent its interests in government policy reforms affecting our green wedge.</p> <p>A5.8 Advocate Council's position on all government policy reform affecting the Shire, including reform of green wedge policy and planning provisions. Particular issues relating to rural living are discussed in the narrative on pages 23-24 under the heading of "Rural Living", including concerns with rural land management on the fringe of the Urban Growth boundary, raised in the community engagement. In response to this particular issue, the following action is recommended.</p> <p>A1.7 Review the impacts of proximity to urban communities on rural land adjoining the urban area and investigate options to maintain the amenity and productivity of those areas.</p> <p>A5.7 Consider reviewing the potential range of land uses that could assist owners to be better manage rural land that abuts the Urban Growth Boundary.</p>

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	<p>Small lots 1. Maintain current Local Planning Policy which governs building on small lots (e.g. RCZ3 <8ha) with a view to its increased enforcement 2. Investigate the feasibility of a buy-back/consolidation scheme in which vacant small lots are purchased by State or Council and resold where they can be amalgamated into adjoining land. Where not possible, encourage neighbouring property owners to do so</p>	<p>Not support/support-in-principle - Council does not support part 1 of the Panel's recommendation. The Local Planning Policy (Residential Use and Development on Small Lots in green wedge Areas) expired on 30 November 2009 and cannot be revived without a new planning scheme amendment. Current planning controls require decisions be made one-by-one on how lots are used according to their land capability and risk. Council supports part 2 in principle and will investigate options for encouraging consolidation and amalgamation of lots smaller than the minimum subdivision size, where it is desirable to do so. The assistance of the State will be required if this process is to included public acquisition.</p>	<p>Housing development (cont.) 5. Lobby the Victorian government to provide that vacant green wedge landholdings are able to be developed for rural residential use or purchased by government for a capital sum negotiated by the land owner and to be maintained by the owner (government) in a pest and weed free bushfire safe state in perpetuity.</p>		<p>Strategies: Discourage further rural residential development of undersized allotments in the Green Wedge. Discourage rural residential and small lot development on rural land. Discourage further residential development of under-sized allotments in the Green Wedge.</p>		<p>This issue is described in the narrative on page 23 under the heading of "Population, settlements and local services". O1.5 Recognise the limits on housing development in the rural areas. A1.6 Investigate options for consolidation and amalgamation of small rural lots that are not capable of supporting a dwelling in their current configuration. Where appropriate and with owner consent, consider government purchase of such lots where they are adjacent to public land.</p>
	<p>Right to rebuild Residents should have a right to rebuild on existing structure footprints subject to overlays and building permit approvals. This recommendation refers to rebuilding on lots that are below the zone minimum subdivision size.</p>	<p>Support-in-principle - Council supports the Panel's underlying premise that people should have the opportunity to rebuild on their property if they have unfortunately lost their home due to fire or other disasters. However, as the Panel rightly notes this is and needs to be subject to overlays and building approval considerations, including BAL requirements, so that the design and siting of replacement buildings reduce future risks to occupants, not repeat them. This applies regardless of lot size and may mean that another location on the property is a better option to deal with fire risk. Under the present planning controls created by the State,</p>					<p>O1.5 Recognise the limits on housing development in the rural areas. This issue is explained in line with the Council response in the narrative on pages 23-24 under the heading of "Rural Living". No specific action is needed.</p>

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		rights to re-use land for its previous purpose remain after the destructive event but planning and building permits are required to enable development. Council is a responsible planning authority and cannot provide a guarantee about its statutory response in advance of any application process. Therefore the ability to rebuild is a qualified "right". Change to a full "right" would require Victorian Government action.					
<p>Regulation The number and types of regulations that must be adhered to was cited as a challenge. These included how land could be managed, and issues relating to building additional homes on allotments. The most commonly cited regulatory challenge related to over regulation (as defined by the respondent) and planning issues. This included the time and cost of obtaining permits and the volume of regulation related to living and running businesses in the green wedge. Over regulation was cited as a future challenge. The difficulties of running a business or maintaining land within current or future regulations was raised. One of the challenges cited was regulation and protection for the green wedge. This related to the need to maintain or increase current protection and the fear of future weakening of protections. Some respondents indicated that there were not sufficient regulations or they were not adequately enforced to protect the green wedge. Respondents indicated that working with Council particularly in relation to planning issues was a challenge with complex and time consuming processes. Some respondents indicated a lack of faith in Council process and councillors.</p>	<p>Regulation, enforceability and cost To support a better relationship between landowners and council staff, education and mediation should be preferred to regulation. Council should be more aware of the cost of these regulations, and should strongly endeavour to lower the cost and therefore the barriers to the planning system. Council regulations should be as far as possible 1. Practicable 2. Enforceable 3. Fair and reasonable in cost 4. Necessary</p>	<p>Partially support - Council agrees with the Panel's underlying premise but notes that planning fees and policy settings are largely set by the State. Council has and will continue to advocate for a simplified planning scheme.</p>	<p>Regulation, enforceability and cost 1. Bureaucracy be reduced as far as possible. 2. Eliminate the cost of permitting linked to essential services and safety (e.g. water tanks). 3. Eliminate the cost of permitting to replace like for like. 4. No requirement of permit reports when council intends to site validate (eliminate duplication). 5. Permit applications only be required by council when they are necessary to ensure adherence to the building code. 6. The offset scheme removes financial penalties, and limits permit conditions to the no-net loss principle. 7. Discontinue regulation that imposes penalty payments for replacement of vegetation with no market based mathematical formula</p>				<p>An approach to regulation is discussed in the narrative on page 41 under the heading of "Governance and engagement".</p>

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<p>Access Respondents indicated they enjoyed the easy access to a range of activities including horse riding, cycling, bushwalking, sports and other activities such as visiting wineries and markets. Respondents indicated that improving facilities and infrastructure would encourage visitors into the green wedge and improve conditions for residents. The types of infrastructure mentioned included transport, cultural and recreation facilities such as horse trails, walking and cycling tracks.</p>	<p>Develop trail network Complete a purpose built trail network for walking, cycling and horse riding within the next 5 years. Refer to Recreation Trails Strategy (2001) and points 10.1-10.4 & PC 8.3 of current GWMP.</p>	<p>Support-in-principle - Council supports the Panel's objective of completing the trail network but cannot commit at this stage to the Panel's proposed timeframe.</p>	<p>Mixed use trails 1. Renew the Recreation Trails Strategy to integrate with the Yarra Ranges Trails Strategy and ensure walking, cycling and horse riding is incorporated in all public destination and circuit trails across the Nillumbik green wedge. 2. Continue to advocate with Melbourne Water and Parks Victoria for mixed use access to trails to link to broader trail networks. 3. Consult with Yarra Ranges regarding linking the trails in Nillumbik with those in Yarra Ranges to create a combined network of trails.</p>	<p>Nillumbik Trails Strategy 2011 Open Space Strategy 2005</p>	<p>Strategies: Promote and expand passive recreation opportunities.</p>	<p>Implement Nillumbik Shire Council's Recreation Trails Strategy (2001) with emphasis on the extension to the Diamond Creek Trail, Pipeline Trail (Allendale to Diamond Creek-Hurstbridge Road) and the Wattle Glen to Kinglake Trail. Continue investigation into the proposed Maroondah Aqueduct Trail as an opportunity to create an iconic recreation and tourism opportunity for Melbourne. Implement Nillumbik Shire Council's Open Space Strategy (2005) with particular emphasis on rural open spaces and on the development of trails networks. Include investigation of the feasibility of a park and ride scheme linked to the trails network.</p>	<p>O2.1 Encourage active living and enhanced mental wellbeing. O2.2 Provide a diversity of open spaces with a range of high quality regional, district and neighbourhood parks linked by a network of trails. O2.3 Complete the trail network for walking, cycling and horse riding in Nillumbik, connecting to the regional trails network covering neighbouring municipalities. A2.2 Review and update the Nillumbik Open Space Strategy and Recreation Strategy. A2.3 Implement the Nillumbik Trails Strategy 2011.</p>
<p>Community development Community development and supporting existing groups was seen as a key opportunity. Many respondents indicated that there was already a strong community and this could be built on and utilised more widely.</p>	<p>Volunteers Council should continue to encourage, support, promote and celebrate volunteering that assists the Nillumbik Shire to manage the green wedge.</p>	<p>Support - Council's support for volunteering within the community is committed in the Council Plan 2017-2021, Nillumbik Health and Wellbeing Plan 2017-2021 and Nillumbik Volunteer Development Strategy 2015-2020.</p>	<p>Volunteers 1. Continue to encourage, support, promote and celebrate volunteering in the Nillumbik green wedge, and investigate opportunities for volunteers to assist to manage the Nillumbik green wedge. 2. Investigate innovative green wedge management volunteering programs, adopt a road for road side reserve fuel management, community road side management, and others that assist to manage the green wedge, protect high value biodiversity and provide for the safety of residents, land owners, assets, resources and high value biodiversity assets.</p>	<p>Nillumbik Volunteer Development Strategy 2015-20</p>	<p>Strategies: Support volunteering.</p>	<p>Implement existing land care programs e.g. community rabbit control, school environmental education. Promote the involvement of Nillumbik communities in Landcare and 'Friends of' groups.</p>	<p>O1.2 Encourage, support, promote and celebrate the roles that landowners and volunteers play in the management of the green wedge. A1.2 Implement Council's Nillumbik Volunteer Development Strategy 2015-2020.</p>

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<p>Aged care Some respondents believed there were opportunities to put more than one house on a block. One respondent also suggested there was an opportunity to build an aged care facility.</p>	<p>Ageing population / Community health 1. Better support the ageing population of Nillumbik, specifically those living within the green wedge. Options should include the need for aged care services within green wedge townships, and programs & services to facilitate people ageing in the community where they have lived for many years. Review current progress against action items in the Positive Ageing Strategy and continue to work with community to implement. 2. Provide support for ageing landholders to maintain the biodiverse qualities of their land.</p>	<p>Support/Support-in-principle - Council Council supports part 1 of the Panel's recommendation and will consider the specific needs of ageing green wedge residents in forming its positive ageing strategy and housing strategy in 2019. Council is also currently consulting the community on Ageing Well in Nillumbik, covering community transport, social isolation and accessing Australian Government services through its myagedcare portal. Council supports-in-principle part 2 of the Panel's recommendation but does not envisage implementation of this recommendation to be direct service delivery. Alternatively, assistance with health and well-being, land management and bushfire preparedness could be supported through the promotion of volunteer and community groups.</p>	<p>Ageing population and community health Support the ageing population of the Nillumbik green wedge by investigating how best to assist elderly Nillumbik green wedge residents to: 1. Maintain their properties in bushfire prepared state; 2. Gain access to services and supports to support their health and wellbeing; 3. Implement the Positive Ageing Strategy; and 4. Encourage multi-generational land occupancy so that people can remain on their properties safely for as long as possible</p>				<p>O1.6 Better support the ageing population of the green wedge to age in place with its benefits to retaining local knowledge, community cohesiveness, engagement and involvement in local groups. A1.8 Encourage the location of aged care services within the townships and programs to facilitate people ageing in the community where they have lived for many years. Encourage volunteer and community groups to support aging landowners with land management, where needed. Implement Council's Positive Ageing Strategy.</p>
			<p>Mental health and wellbeing of Nillumbik green wedge communities 1. In recognition of higher levels of distress and mental illness in Nillumbik green wedge communities, council work with local mental health, drug and alcohol service providers to improve pathways to service access.</p>	<p>Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan 2017-21</p>			<p>O2.1 Encourage active living and enhanced mental wellbeing. A2.1 Implement the Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan 2017-2021</p>
<p>Services The general lack of services or poor functioning services was cited as a challenge. This included telecommunications, recreational infrastructure and basic services such as water and sewage. The importance of the community, the friendliness, shared understanding and 'village feel' of the area.</p>	<p>Supporting community facilities in the green wedge Develop and better utilize existing multi-use community spaces in green wedge townships and identify possible gaps in terms of services and infrastructure.</p>	<p>Support-in-principle - Council Council will consider this recommendation as part of its on-going service, community infrastructure and asset management planning. Implementation will be subject to resources and physical constraints</p>	<p>Community facilities in the Nillumbik green wedge 1. Work in collaboration with agency and service providers to maximise the utilisation of valuable community assets in the Nillumbik green wedge and ensure they are maintained in good condition for public use.</p>		<p>Objectives: Work towards creating socially sustainable communities. Strategies: Encourage actions that contribute to sustainable communities including local food production, transport and social connectedness.</p>		<p>O1.3 Support community facilities in the green wedge. A1.3 Develop and manage community infrastructure for the green wedge as part of the Shire's overall approach to service and asset management planning. A1.4 Better utilise multi-use community spaces to create community hubs in the townships.</p>

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<p>Activities More activities such as arts and sporting events were cited by some respondents as an opportunity.</p> <p>Other responses from the Community Engagement Verbatim Report included a need to better recognise cultural heritage and to make efforts to revive the industry of mud-brick building.</p>	<p>Cultural development Support the creation of a high quality, regional art gallery, supporting the artists of the Nillumbik green wedge which in turn support the importance of cultural heritage and sense of place and wellbeing.</p>	<p>Support-in-principle - Council's full support for the recommendation will be subject to Council's feasibility study into a regional art gallery, the results of which are expected in the near future.</p>	<p>Community facilities in the Nillumbik green wedge (cont.) 2. Support the creation of a high-quality regional gallery to showcase Nillumbik green wedge artists and promote the importance of local cultural heritage, support our sense of place and wellbeing, and create economic prosperity in the local arts communities.</p>	<p>Nillumbik Arts and Cultural Plan 2018-22</p>	<p>Objectives: Conserve local arts, heritage, culture and township/settlement character. Strategies: Identify and conserve the cultural heritage of the Nillumbik Green Wedge.</p>	<p>Promote the use of traditional construction techniques and styles e.g. mud brick and rammed earth in support of the traditional 'Nillumbik style'.</p>	<p>O2.4 Support, celebrate and enable public access to Nillumbik's rich tradition of local artists and makers. A2.4 Implement the Nillumbik Arts and Cultural Plan 2018-2022. A2.5 Investigate the establishment of a regional art gallery. O2.5 Work with Heritage Victoria, the Wurundjeri Land Council and other government agencies to support local heritage protection. O2.6 Ensure that council owned heritage places are accessible and sustainable and make better use of our heritage assets to support cultural tourism initiatives and leverage further economic benefits for green wedge communities. A2.6 Develop and implement a heritage interpretation plan. A2.7 Use the Nillumbik Planning Scheme as a positive means to encourage heritage conservation and management, including support of adaptive reuse of heritage places and allowing prohibited uses, if they help support the conservation of a heritage place and are in line with planning policy objectives. Mud brick building is discussed in the narrative on page 28 under the heading of "Conserving and celebrating our cultural heritage".</p>
<p>Services The general lack of services or poor functioning services was cited as a challenge. This included telecommunications, recreational infrastructure and basic services such as water and sewage.</p>	<p>Internet connectivity Continue lobbying government/NBN Co. to prioritise the green wedge in providing internet connectivity to particularly support landowners, services and local businesses, and providing enhanced mobile phone coverage.</p>	<p>Support - Council agrees with the Panel recommendation that internet and mobile phone connectivity is vital to the community and will work with government and telecommunications providers to overcome identified black spot areas.</p>	<p>Internet connectivity 1. Continue to lobby government to prioritise Nillumbik internet connectivity to support land owners, emergency services, services and business.</p>			<p>As part of the Economic Development Strategy, consider opportunities for enterprises that embrace the principles of 'intelligent communities'. These communities use high speed broadband to support local enterprises that may have national and international impact.</p>	<p>O4.7 Encourage government to make reliable mobile phone and internet access available across the Shire. A4.12 Identify and document areas of low mobile and internet connectivity and black spots. Identify opportunities to rectify areas affected. A1.10 Advocate for improved internet access and mobile phone coverage to support the ability to create application based services such as ride sharing and on-call transport. A3.8 Advocate for improved mobile and broadband connectivity to help improve the ability to communicate information and improve community safety, particularly to those most vulnerable during extreme weather events.</p>

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<p>Business and employment The lack of both business and employment opportunities was considered a challenge. Removing the impediments to business and job growth was considered important by some. The types of potential business suggested varied from small specialist businesses to agriculture to tourism. The challenge of lack of business and job growth was cited. This related to all forms of business including agriculture and tourism. A number of respondents indicated the opportunity to build on existing and develop new small business. These included traditional business such as agriculture and newer business such as food production and other artisan businesses.</p>	<p>Rural business activities Support and promote supplementary rural business activities such as farm gate sales, farm stays, and other low environmental and amenity impact enterprise which are consistent with green wedge values.</p>	<p>Support - Council will give this recommendation high priority in forming its new economic development strategy in 2019 and notes that this may require some future planning scheme changes.</p>	<p>Commerce 1. Seek a clear understanding of the economy of the Nillumbik green wedge and its relationship to the rest of the Shire in order to be able to ensure decisions and actions promote the health of the local economy, including protecting the asset value of green wedge land. 4. Identify small scale business types consistent with agricultural, environmental and tourism pursuits, currently excluded by the "in conjunction" test. Council partners with local Chambers of Commerce and green wedge communities to investigate the viability of these business types. Where economic, social and environmental analysis supports the benefits of these business types, council should consider advocating the Victorian government for the "in conjunction" clause to be accordingly modified. 6. Business types should be consistent with the rural nature of the green wedge. Businesses not in keeping with the peaceful bucolic character of the green wedge should not be supported.</p>		<p>Strategies: Prioritise expansion in the following identified business sectors: homebased business and services to business in the Green Wedge.</p>	<p>As part of the Economic Development Strategy, promote home-based business and services to business which are compatible with amenity of green wedge areas. Review the current planning scheme to facilitate increased business opportunities in the green wedge which are compatible with green wedge values. This includes clarifying the full extent of 'in conjunction use'; investigation into whether rural zones in addition to the Rural Conservation and green wedge Zones are needed in the green wedge to broaden the range of uses permitted and investigation of the intensity of permitted uses in the existing zones around townships.</p>	<p>O4.1 Encourage investment to improve the economy and create local employment while at the same time preserving the green wedge. A4.1 Finalise and implement a new Nillumbik Economic Development Strategy. A4.2 Engage with and support the existing business base across the shire to promote local economic growth. O4.6 Encourage growth in professional services and home-based business. A4.11 Create an investment attraction plan and investigate innovative land use solutions to attract professional services to locate within the townships of the green wedge. A4.13 Analyse the needs of home based business and identify the barriers to growth. A4.14 Understand the demand for co-working spaces in Nillumbik and facilitate the needs of home based business through township and activity centre plans and community hubs.</p>
	<p>Right to farm green wedge landholders should be able to exercise their 'right to farm' on pre-existing cleared agricultural land. Discourage bush block conversion to agricultural or pastoral use, or any other use that would otherwise degrade/impact vegetation and biodiversity values.</p>	<p>Support/Partially support - Council supports part 1 of the Panel's recommendation. Right-to-farm will be considered as part of Council's new economic development strategy and Council looks forward to State planning reform in this direction. Council does not fully support part 2 of the recommendation because of its absoluteness. Such matters are subject to planning controls and decision-making.</p>	<p>Addressing risk in zones and schedules (cont.) 3. Recognising that low density hobby farming is one of the primary uses and purposes of the green wedge, advocate for the as-of-right grazing of livestock on both green wedge and Rural Conservation zones and consider the removal of animal exclusions and limitations in current zones and schedules.</p>			<p>Develop a pilot program to address the potential conflicts between farmers and non-agricultural residents of the rural areas. This should consider a country-code type approach combined with welcoming people into the area and done in conjunction with real estate agents.</p>	<p>O4.2 Encourage sustainable, diversified and productive agriculture, access to markets and the right to farm. A4.8 Advocate to the Victorian Government that: • planning and other controls be altered to allow landholders a right to farm on pre-existing cleared agricultural land and be able to adapt to changing agricultural practice • the support and promotion of supplementary rural business activities such as farm gate sales, farm stays and other low environmental amenity impact enterprises which are consistent with green wedge values need to be prioritised and • the role of hobby farms be defined, recognised and policy and program be developed to support sustainable land management and agriculture at their scale. O5.5 Work with the Victorian Government to ensure that the Nillumbik planning scheme supports the principles, goals and objectives of this plan. A5.6 Consider reviewing the current application of zoning controls in the green wedge to better reflect the actual use of land.</p>
	<p>Regulation regarding grazing Hoofed grazing domestic animals to be restricted to grazing/agricultural private land-holdings appropriate for livestock or properties with low biodiversity values. Grazing to be under guidance and</p>	<p>Partially support - Council agrees with the Panel's underlying premise that the grazing of hoofed domestic animals needs to be managed responsibly, ideally on land suitable for grazing and not in places with fragile high biodiversity values. Council also recognises that the keeping of</p>					<p>The need for agriculture to co-exist with nature conservation is discussed in the narrative on page 38 under the heading of "Agriculture".</p>

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	education of a vegetation management plan, which will be enforceable.	livestock is an important part of the rural life of the shire and many people do exercise responsible animal management. Consistent with a number of other Panel recommendations, Council prefers to invest in information and support for responsible animal ownership and land management by landowners in preference to increasing regulation and policing.					
<p>Business and employment The lack of both business and employment opportunities was considered a challenge. Removing the impediments to business and job growth was considered important by some. The types of potential business suggested varied from small specialist businesses to <u>agriculture</u> to tourism. The challenge of lack of business and job growth was cited. This related to all forms of business including <u>agriculture</u> and tourism. A number of respondents indicated the opportunity to build on existing and develop new small business. These included traditional business such as <u>agriculture</u> and newer business such as food production and other artisan businesses.</p>	<p>Agriculture A. Further fragmentation of agricultural lands to be discouraged, and consolidation of smaller lots in single ownership encouraged - council to facilitate consolidation of titles at zero cost to affected landholders. B. Identify opportunities to support community sustainable agriculture (as recommended in previous GWMP Action 7.1, P.48) C. Any proposal to change land use should demonstrate that the land is fit for purpose for the new use by preparation of a land management plan</p>	<p>Partially support/Support-in-principle /Support - Council partially supports part A of the Panel's recommendation to discourage fragmentation of agricultural lands and to encourage consolidation of smaller lots in single ownership. Council can facilitate this through the planning scheme but does not see its role as being to cover the costs of consolidation of titles. Council supports-in-principle part B of the Panel's recommendation but also wishes to encourage sustainable agriculture in general and leave open the opportunity for new forms of practice. Council supports part C of the Panel's recommendation as it is already common practice as part of the planning permit application process.</p>	<p>Agriculture 1. Further fragmentation of land holdings across the Nillumbik green wedge not be encouraged, except to provide for reduction of bushfire risk and the protection of people, assets, resources and high value biodiversity. 3. Support the equine enthusiast community. Commerce (cont.) 2. Investigate opportunities to expand agriculture sector commercial opportunities such as farm stays, bed and breakfast facilities, restaurants, wineries, agistment, small scale intensive primary production, fresh produce and other cottage industries. 5. Acknowledge the benefit to the economy that hobby farms and horse agistment properties provide and encourage horse riding amenities, promoting the expansion of this existing green wedge role.</p>		<p>Objectives: Ensure that agriculture remains technically viable in the Green Wedge. Strategies: Retain existing agricultural land for soil-based agricultural production. Discourage fragmentation of existing agricultural land.</p>	<p>Investigate how incentives can be used to ensure property rating does not over-ride the agricultural value of land. Investigate the best ways in which to provide an advisory service to farmers on business opportunities and to farmers and major land owners on land use and land management including whole farm and landscape scale management. Investigate and implement opportunities to support new, economically viable, agricultural opportunities in the green wedge. Advocate to the Victorian Government for support for agricultural enterprises. Investigate funding for development of a brand and marketing strategy aimed at attracting growers and visitors to the region. This is allied to the sustainable tourism plan action. Seek funding and commission an update to the 1998 Land Capability Study. Identify opportunities to support community sustainable agriculture. Support programs that reduce food and shopping miles.</p>	<p>O4.2 Encourage sustainable, diversified and productive agriculture, access to markets and the right to farm. A4.3 Undertake stocktakes of environmental assets and agricultural activity and practices, including hobby farming, that need to be protected for the future and pests that need to be managed by sourcing information from formal research bodies and landowners. Seek government funding assistance to establish and maintain this data base into the future for landowner information, program prioritisation and policy development. A4.4 To ensure that land remains available for agriculture, use the Nillumbik planning scheme to encourage consolidation of smaller agricultural lots in common ownership and discourage the further fragmentation of agricultural lands. A4.5 Continue to apply the sustainable agricultural rate rebate and the primary producer rate rebate. A4.6 Consider policy and land use options to allow agricultural enterprises to diversify income sources by supporting complementary activities such as farm gate sales, events, education and accommodation. A4.7 Continue to support sustainable land and animal management and access to markets by providing education programs, promotion, events and innovative partnership solutions. O4.4 Recognise and support the sustainable management of the equine community in the green wedge. A4.9 Finalise and implement a new Nillumbik Equine Strategy.</p>

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	<p>Hobby farms To recognise the contribution well managed "hobby farms"* can make to the beauty and biodiversity of Nillumbik and that they form a significant part of the green wedge. Hobby farmers should be required to maintain their land using sustainable land management practices.</p>	<p>Support - Council supports the essence of the Panel's recommendation in that it is time to define and recognise the role of hobby farms within Nillumbik and that policy and program development is necessary to support and encourage sustainable land management and agriculture at their scale.</p>	<p>Agriculture (cont.) 2. Encourage hobby farms and rural residential living in the Nillumbik green wedge, recognising that they enhance community safety and improve biodiversity outcomes.</p> <p>Commerce (cont.) 5. Acknowledge the benefit to the economy that hobby farms and horse agistment properties provide and encourage horse riding amenities, promoting the expansion of this existing green wedge role.</p>		<p>Strategies: Support agriculture in all its forms whether it is broadacre or hobby farming.</p>		<p>O4.3 Recognise the contribution of hobby (or small-scale) farming in the green wedge with supportive policy put in place. A4.8 Advocate to the Victorian Government that: • planning and other controls be altered to allow landholders a right to farm on pre-existing cleared agricultural land and be able to adapt to changing agricultural practice • the support and promotion of supplementary rural business activities such as farm gate sales, farm stays and other low environmental amenity impact enterprises which are consistent with green wedge values need to be prioritised and • the role of hobby farms be defined, recognised and policy and program be developed to support sustainable land management and agriculture at their scale.</p>
<p>Tourism The opportunities to promote sustainable and boutique tourism was considered by many respondents to be an excellent use of the green wedge. The opportunity to promote tourism within the green wedge was a commonly cited idea. The particular areas of tourism mentioned include artisan food, sustainability, and health and wellbeing. Respondents to the survey indicated that they believed there were opportunities to use the green wedge to promote personal health, wellbeing and environmental understanding by linking people to nature. Respondents indicated that improving facilities and infrastructure would encourage visitors into the green wedge and improve conditions for residents. The types of infrastructure mentioned included transport, cultural and recreation facilities such as horse trails, walking and cycling tracks.</p>	<p>Tourism We recommend that council refer to the existing management plan, specifically points 3.1, 4.1, 5.1 & 5.2 (economy actions). We also recommend that council aim to implement "destination points" within the Shire to capture 'through traffic' where possible. We would also like council to regularly maintain and/or upgrade the existing tourist destinations, such as Watsons Creek Indigenous Trail.</p>	<p>Support-in-principle - Council agrees that tourism is a very important opportunity for the green wedge will take this recommendation into account when forming its economic development strategy in 2019.</p>	<p>Commerce (cont.) 3. Evaluate the performance of the Artisan Hills Strategy with a view to its improvement and expansion.</p>	<p>Nillumbik Destination Management Plan 2015</p>	<p>Objectives: Expand tourism opportunities compatible with the Green Wedge, in Green Wedge townships and in identified Green Wedge locations (these will be identified in the proposed land use framework). Strategies: Support only low impact sustainable tourism in the Green Wedge. Provide information about what types of tourism business can be established in the Green Wedge and where. Provide for land uses that encourage expanded, compatible, tourism activity in the Green Wedge and its townships in keeping with township structure plans.</p>	<p>Prepare a land use framework for tourism to be incorporated into the Nillumbik Planning Scheme. This will include detailed mapping of locations where tourism will be encouraged and discouraged and will include details of permitted and prohibited uses. It will also include the number, type and location. Assess the current level of tourism-related accommodation provision in the green wedge – number of beds, location etc. If a shortfall is indicated e.g. camping, youth hostel...pursue opportunities to increase appropriate tourism-related accommodation in identified green wedge locations. Explore models for 'ecotourism' or back-to-nature tourism, including Italy for its agritourism. Investigate the viability of a visitor centre which provides information about what to see and do in the area.</p>	<p>O4.5 Encourage growth in the visitor economy through regional promotion and facilitation of new visitor experiences consistent with Nillumbik's economic, social and environmental characteristics. A4.10 Review and update Council's Destination Management Plan to: • improve awareness of the benefits of cycle tourism and mapping information • invest in digital interpretation of heritage, cultural and natural assets • develop tourism through trail investment • develop festivals and an events attractions plan • build on the arts and cultural product through development of curated content and packaging • add to the food and wine offerings by facilitating diversity of product and infrastructure • manage and avoid detrimental on sensitive environmental areas • increase strategic marketing and promotion and • improve and develop products suited to family experiences.</p>

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	<p>Recognition & support for landowners maintaining land Improve communication between council and landowners in the green wedge with respect to their rights & responsibilities for land management, and the support & services available to them. This information should be provided in a clear concise and accessible manner. Develop an online portal providing a user friendly one-stop-shop for everything a landowner need to know about a property.</p>	<p>Support - Council values landowners as its citizens and for their fundamental role in managing the green wedge and recognises that enhanced information sharing is very important. Whilst supporting the recommendation Council does not subscribe to some of the language used in the Panel's rationale that refers to misinformation or ignorance amongst landowners.</p>	<p>Support owners and managers of Nillumbik green wedge land 1. Improve communications between council and Nillumbik green wedge land owners and managers. 2. Ensure Nillumbik green wedge grant opportunities are available and accessible to all Nillumbik green wedge land owners. 3. Encourage community input to Nillumbik green wedge issues in the form of personal effect statements.</p>		<p>Strategies: Support the participation of rural landholders and communities in conserving biodiversity.</p>	<p>Provide an advisory service for land management which is targeted to areas of identified need. Investigate the effectiveness of enforcement. Develop a model pilot of sustainable practice/whole farm planning as a beacon-type project based on existing DPI pilots (investigate environmental management systems with farmers). Implement education programs for sustainable land management including horse, cattle and alpaca grazing. Continue to provide incentives and grants for re-planting vegetation and rehabilitation.</p>	<p>O1.1 Enable our people to take greater shared responsibility for the future of our green wedge. O1.2 Encourage, support, promote and celebrate the roles that landowners and volunteers play in the management of the green wedge. O5.1 Recognise and support landowners maintaining land in the green wedge with up-to-date information. A5.1 Create a comprehensive landowners information and support service for land use and management, including annual reporting on trends and outcomes. Seek on-going government funding to support the service. A5.3 Create a Green Wedge Conversations program and facilitate local communities to develop resilience, leadership, knowledge-transfer and cooperation between people involved with land management, agriculture, nature conservation, public land management and bushfire mitigation and management. Seek on-going government funding assistance to support the program. A5.5 Undertake stocktakes of environmental assets and agricultural activity and practices, including hobby farming, that need to be protected for the future and pests that need to be managed by sourcing information from formal research bodies and landowners. Seek government funding assistance to establish and maintain this data base into the future for landowner information, program prioritisation and policy development.</p>
<p>Travel and Transport The most cited response to the current social challenges was related to travel and transport. This included the <u>quality of roads</u>, congestion and poor public transport services and difficulties parking at train stations. Travel and transport was the most commonly cited social challenge for the future, particularly poor public transport and <u>road infrastructure</u> that was not able to cope with population growth and was congested and poorly maintained.</p>	<p>Improved road management Undertake seasonal review of road conditions to improve management, and review current Road Sealing Program to ensure high use roads are prioritised.</p>	<p>Support - Council agrees that many roads will remain unsealed and Council's road inspection frequency and works are contained within its municipal road management plan. Higher use and higher maintenance roads are prioritised for sealing which is considered to be of environmental benefit to reduce dust, silt and debris run-off into waterways. Council will look at ways to extend engagement with user communities and notes that roadside management is equally important for safety and environmental management reasons.</p>	<p>Road management 1. Improve the condition and safety of public roads in the Nillumbik green wedge. 2. Prioritise roadside fuel reduction rural roads to reduce bushfire risk. 3. Monitor and report on the implementation of the Road Management Plan. 4. Review the current road sealing program and ensure the sealing of roads is prioritised to reduce run-off from dirt roads to minimise silt, debris and pollution in water courses. 5. Advocate for a roundabout to be constructed by Vic Roads on the intersection of the Kangaroo Ground-St Andrews Road and the Kangaroo Ground-Wattle Glen Road. 6. Council consult with the residents on their attitudes and preferences regarding unsealed roads.</p>				<p>Road management issues are discussed in the narrative on page 24 under the heading of "Transport and accessibility". A1.11 Undertake seasonal review of road conditions to improve management and review the road sealing program to ensure high use roads are prioritised.</p>

Nillumbik Green Wedge Management Plan Community Engagement Report, Wayfarer Consulting, August 2018 (also some additional references to responses included in the Community Engagement Verbatim Report).	Recommendations of the Community Panel majority report, Nov 2018	Council's response to the recommendations of the Community Panel majority report, Dec 2018	Recommendations of a minority report by five community panel members, April 2019	Other relevant Council Policies	Objectives and strategies of the existing GWMP 2010-2015	Remaining actions from the existing GWMP 2010-2025 - sourced from an officer review and update of GWMP implementation plans, 2018	How these inputs are responded to in the draft GWMP June 2019
<p>Travel and Transport Easy access to Melbourne, its services, job opportunities and facilities was considered important. Issues relating to transport included road congestion, lack of public transport and the frequency of public transport services. The most cited response to the current social challenges was related to travel and transport. This included the quality of roads, congestion and poor public transport services and difficulties parking at train stations. Travel and transport was the most commonly cited social challenge for the future, particularly poor public transport and road infrastructure that was not able to cope with population growth and was congested and poorly maintained.</p>	<p>Public transport and related infrastructure Improve public transport options within the green wedge.</p>	<p>Support - Council supports the Panel's recommendation and consistent with the Council Plan, will advocate for enhanced community transport and public transport in remote areas.</p>			<p>Objectives: Promote improved access to the Green Wedge. Strategies: Support alternative forms of transport to the private, driver-only, car.</p>	<p>Work with communities to seek opportunities for expanding transport connections including carpooling, buses and park and ride schemes. Advocate for more accessible public transport systems, particularly those recommended in the Victorian Government's North East Integrated Transport Systems Strategy 2007 and Meeting our Transport Challenges (2006) as related to the green wedge. Expand and improve the safety of off-road bicycle routes and walking paths in the green wedge, particularly those linking townships and tourism destinations and strategic public transport systems. In particular, consider connections with Whittlesea's path networks providing car-free east-west links. Investigate the feasibility of introducing park and ride areas which link public transport to destinations within the green wedge e.g. recreation trails, shops, markets and other tourism and recreation opportunities.</p>	<p>Public transport issues are discussed in the narrative on page 24 under the heading of "Transport and accessibility". O1.7 Facilitate linked public, community and shared transport options connected to the existing railway network and destinations within the green wedge. A1.9 Advocate for improved public transport, traffic management and reduced road congestion. A1.10 Advocate for improved internet access and mobile phone coverage to support the ability to create application based services such as ride sharing and on-call transport.</p>
	<p>Green wedge management authority Advocate for the establishment of a body that provides expert advice and support to both state and local government on green wedge issues.</p>	<p>Not support - Council does not support this recommendation because the creation of a state based authority would result in less local control and the ability to respond to our community.</p>					<p>Not included in line with Council response.</p>
						<p>Actively promote the brand and lifestyle of the Nillumbik green wedge.</p>	<p>Not included.</p>

How this plan was created

