Western Port Green Wedge Management Plan

16 April 2019
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Green wedges are the non-urban areas of metropolitan Melbourne that are situated outside the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB). The Western Port Green Wedge is one of the 12 green wedges that surround Melbourne.

Casey’s portion of the Western Port Green Wedge is home to around 11,000 people, is approximately 130 square kilometres in area, and encompasses the southern, mostly rural, part of the City between the southern extent of Casey’s Urban Growth Boundary and Western Port Bay. It includes a mix of land uses, such as agriculture, horse and greyhound training, cultural heritage sites, parks, biodiversity conservation areas, townships, and rural lifestyle lots.

The key attributes and values of the Casey Western Port Green Wedge include its nationally significant indigenous biodiversity, its high value agricultural land, its rural townships and coastal settlements, and its great potential for tourism.

Being located at the edge of the urban area of Casey creates some inherent pressures for change in the Green Wedge. The significant environmental value of sites such as the internationally recognised Ramsar wetlands and important agricultural and horticultural areas can be in tension against the ongoing demand for new urban development, rural lifestyle living, hobby farms, and other uses.

The Casey Western Port Green Wedge Management Plan is a strategic land use plan that will guide the planning and management of the Green Wedge over the next 20 years. It provides objectives and strategies based on clear evidence and extensive community consultation that will assist Council in setting priorities and making decisions about the future of the Green Wedge.

The City of Casey has engaged stakeholders from across the community, business, and government in an in-depth multi-year consultation process to develop the vision, objectives, and strategies contained in this Management Plan.

The Management Plan is structured around theme-based and precinct-based strategic directions. These directions consider issues such as:

» Aboriginal and post-contact Heritage
» The Green Wedge’s unique landscape, scenic quality, and environmental significance
» Promoting tourism and recreational land uses
» The versatility of soils in the Green Wedge and the capability of the land for farming
» Integrated Water Management, groundwater, septic tanks, and sewage
» How to maintain a thriving agriculture and horticulture industry
» Preparing for the projected impacts of climate change
» Parameters on urban development in the Green Wedge and the review of the impacts, costs, and constraints on urban development
» Providing a sustainable and permanent edge to the urban-rural interface
» Accommodating major infrastructure within the Green Wedge

The Management Plan will be delivered through an Implementation Plan that outlines specific actions and a timeline to complete them.
1. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS
The City of Casey respectfully acknowledges that the land subject to this Green Wedge Management Plan is a part of the traditional land of the Mayone buluk and Yallock balug clans of the Boon Wurrung people and the Wurundjeri Baluk and Bulug willam clans of the Woi Wurrung people who form part of the Kulin Nation.

The City of Casey acknowledges the work undertaken and the support provided by the Cardinia Shire Council through the process leading to the Western Port Green Wedge Management Plan Issues and Discussion Paper (October 2011) and the Draft Western Port Green Wedge Management Plan (December 2014).

2. PURPOSE
The Casey Western Port Green Wedge Management Plan is a strategic land use plan that will guide the planning of the southern primarily rural areas of the City of Casey over the next 20 years.

The City of Casey’s area of the Western Port Green Wedge is home to around 11,000 people. Over half live in the Green Wedge’s five townships; the remainder reside on rural properties used for purposes including agriculture and residential-rural lifestyle.
3. VISION

3.1 VISION FOR THE CASEY WESTERN PORT GREEN WEDGE

The Casey Western Port Green Wedge will be a permanent green and rural area and will remain an internationally significant biodiversity habitat. Its agricultural industry will be strengthened, and it will become a truly innovative and productive farming district for the long-term food security of Victoria.

The Green Wedge will provide for rural lifestyle opportunities for residents and will be home to small, clearly defined settlements that have a strong identity and provide jobs and services for the local community.

The local economy will be driven by its agriculture, and by an emerging tourism and recreation industry based on cycling and walking trails, food, education, and the Western Port coast.

Best practice integrated water management will lead to improved water quality and water use with improved ecological conditions in Western Port Bay.

Local biodiversity will be protected, as will habitats for threatened species.

The Western Port Green Wedge will be the permanent edge to Melbourne’s South East and the urban interface will be designed and managed to achieve this vision.

This Vision for the Western Port Green Wedge was developed through extensive stakeholder consultation and engagement undertaken as part of the development of the Western Port Green Wedge Discussion Paper, the exhibition of the draft Western Port Green Wedge Management Plan in 2015, the exhibition of the Casey Western Port Green Wedge Management Plan in 2018 and in ongoing dialogue with the community.

The stakeholder consultation and engagement on the vision included:

» Aboriginal traditional owners
» the Western Port Green Wedge’s community
» Local, State and Federal Government agencies
» utility and service providers
» environmental groups
» resident associations
» Victorian Farmers Federation.

Working farm / Source: Krutop Images, 2014
3.2 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Western Port Green Wedge has a range of local, regional and internationally significant assets that need to be protected and enhanced.

The Casey Western Port Green Wedge, with its abuttal to the south east edge of Melbourne, is likely to continue to experience pressure for urban development and associated urban growth interface issues. The Casey Western Port Green Wedge Management Plan aims to balance the competing interests of urban expansion with the need to preserve green areas.

Planning and management decisions which relate to land within the Green Wedge need to have regard to the Casey Western Port Green Wedge vision, guiding principles, and relevant theme-based strategic directions as set out in Section 11, and to the location specific Precinct-based Strategic Directions set out in Section 12.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Guiding Principles for the Casey Western Port Green Wedge</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Agriculture and horticulture will be encouraged and protected. Decisions on proposals for other types of land use and development will have regard to the primacy of agriculture and horticulture.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Local and State Infrastructure should respond to the key values of the Western Port Green Wedge, and any potential impacts on the values of the Green Wedge should be minimised and mitigated, while taking into account the needs of the local community.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Land uses should be located as directed by the Precinct-based Strategic Directions set out in Section 12.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Sites of environmental significance, including Ramsar wetlands and the habitat of noted fauna such as the Southern Brown Bandicoot and the Growling Grass Frog, will be protected and enhanced and their contribution to the biodiversity of the Western Port Green Wedge will be recognised in decision-making.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Sites of cultural heritage will be identified and protected and their contribution to the identity and history of the Western Port Green Wedge will be recognised in decision-making.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. The economic and social benefits of existing and planned tourism and recreation assets will be protected and promoted through integrated planning mechanisms.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
4. BACKGROUND

4.1 GREEN WEDGES
The non-urban areas of metropolitan Melbourne that are situated outside of the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) are known as green wedges.

There are 12 designated green wedges that collectively form a ring around Melbourne’s metropolitan area.

The Western Port Green Wedge is the southeastern-most of these green wedges. Map 1 shows the Western Port Green Wedge in its context with the other green wedges.

4.2 GREEN WEDGE MANAGEMENT PLANS
In recognition of the substantial variation in the land and conditions of each green wedge, a requirement for Councils to prepare Green Wedge Management Plans was introduced by the State Government.

A Green Wedge Management Plan (GWMP) is a Council-adopted strategy that identifies a vision, objectives and actions for the sustainable development of each green wedge.

The Plan identifies the values and features of the green wedge, the preferred future land use, environmental and natural resources that should be protected, and the needs of the local community.

Green Wedge Management Plans articulate the type, scale and form of change in a green wedge and how those changes will be managed and facilitated.

Map 1: Melbourne’s Green Wedges
Source: State Government of Victoria, 2013
4.3 LAND USES IN GREEN WEDGES

Each green wedge is unique in terms of their characteristics, appearance and the uses undertaken within them. The green wedges are host to a mix of land uses that include:

- agriculture, horse and greyhound training
- fisheries
- quarries
- cultural heritage sites
- major infrastructure that support urban areas such as airports and water treatment facilities
- biodiversity conservation areas
- water catchments that provide water quality benefits for a growing population.

All of these land uses are vital to the functioning of metropolitan Melbourne and regional Victoria.

About one third of the total Green Wedge area is public land, including parks, reserves and water catchments, contributing significantly to Melbourne’s open space network and providing opportunities for tourism and recreation.

Townships and rural lifestyle lots are also situated in the green wedges.

Green wedge landscapes range from coastal landscapes, to the flat open basalt plains of the west and to the highly scenic landscapes in the Dandenong Ranges.
### Table 1: Timeline – Casey Western Port Green Wedge Management Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>The Victorian Government contributed funds to the City of Casey and the Cardinia Shire Council for the preparation of a joint Management Plan for the Western Port Green Wedge.</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 2010</td>
<td>Council resolved to support the preparation of the Management Plan.</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 2011</td>
<td>Draft Discussion Paper noted by Council.</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 2011</td>
<td>Preparation of draft Western Port Green Wedge Management Plan commences.</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 2012</td>
<td>City of Casey and the Cardinia Shire Council place the project on hold pending the provision of greater clarity around Plan Melbourne and its implementation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 2015</td>
<td>Draft Western Port Green Wedge Management Plan (December 2014) placed on public exhibition.</td>
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<tr>
<td>July-August 2015</td>
<td>Community meetings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 2015</td>
<td>State Government and Agency workshops.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 2016</td>
<td>Cardinia Shire Council withdraws from its project partnership with the City of Casey due to a divergence with our respective strategic directions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 2016</td>
<td>Community meetings at Devon Meadows and Pearcedale.</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 2017</td>
<td>Draft Plan amended, reported to Council and placed on public exhibition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 2019</td>
<td>Draft Plan further amended and reported back to Council for adoption.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>Commence implementation of the Management Plan.</td>
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</table>
4.5 THE WESTERN PORT GREEN WEDGE

The Western Port Green Wedge has an area of approximately 746 square kilometres, of which around 130 square kilometres is situated within approximately 746 square kilometres, of within the City of Casey.

Within the City of Casey, the Western Port Green Wedge includes the townships and localities of:

- Cranbourne South
- Devon Meadows
- Pearcedale
- Blind Bight
- Cannons Creek
- Warneet
- Tooradin.

While the City of Casey has prepared this Management Plan to have a particular emphasis on those parts of the Green Wedge that are within its municipal area, areas of common interest with the Cardinia Shire Council remain, including the purpose of the Green Wedge, primary industry, biodiversity protection and enhancement of the natural environment such as the Ramsar wetlands.

The Management Plan will facilitate the relationship required for the City of Casey and the Cardinia Shire Council to work together in pursuit of these shared interests.

Map 2: Western Port Green Wedge
Source: DELWP, 2014
5. SCOPE

The Western Port Green Wedge has an internationally-recognised environment, fertile soils, established equestrian, agriculture and horticulture industries, ready access to water and an extensive transportation network connecting farmers with nearby local markets and to ports for interstate or overseas markets. These attributes cumulatively create the area’s enormous, largely latent economic potential.

The Western Port Green Wedge Management Plan identifies strategies that aim to realise that potential, which will have positive flow-on effects for the local economy, employment and the vibrancy of its settlements.
6. COUNCIL PLAN 2017-2021

The Council Plan 2017-2021 outlines Strategic Objectives that Council will work to achieve across many areas including the environment, infrastructure, the local economy, services, and community wellbeing.

Each year, Council prepares an Annual Council Plan and progress on this plan is reported to the community every quarter. Following on from the success of the Council Plan 2013-2017 and continuing the sentiments outlined in the Casey C21 Long-Term Vision originally set in 2002, Council is working towards making the City of Casey Australia’s most livable city.

The long-term vision for the City of Casey, through Casey C21 is:

- A city where everyone can work locally, travel conveniently, and access all the services they need.
- A city with state-of-the-art facilities for the arts, education, sports and leisure.
- A city where everyone belongs to a vibrant, safe and connected community, based on mutual respect and understanding.
- A city where the built and natural environments are complimentary, clean and enjoyable.

The Council Plan outlines the way the City of Casey will work towards achieving Council’s Vision for the future during the period 2017-2021.

Two relevant key directions (Strategic Objectives) are identified in the Council Plan that aim to realise this vision. These are:

A city that sustainably plans and manages growth while protecting its diverse landscape.

Casey’s ‘city living, country feel’ is important to community members. As Casey rapidly grows and changes it is important that its green and natural spaces are protected and enhanced, and that all environments, natural, urban, industrial or commercial, are clean and healthy.

A thriving economy with local jobs, investment, and new industries.

Council will facilitate and support job creation, particularly in new and emerging industries, through partnerships and city planning. It is a priority for the Council that the number of local jobs increases to reduce the high number of people who must leave the municipality for work every day.

The Casey Western Port Green Wedge Management Plan will contribute to the realisation of these Strategic Objectives by implementing actions which aim to support the lifestyle and economic wellbeing of its local community, protect its heritage and improve its biodiversity and environmental assets.
The boundaries of the Western Port Green Wedge coincide with the Western Port coastline and include the low lying former Koo Wee Rup and Dalmore Swamps which once formed the largest swamp in Victoria, as well as pockets of more elevated land to the north.

The Koo Wee Rup Swamp (which was wholly situated within the Shire of Cardinia) consisted dominantly of permanently inundated reeds and rushes. The coastal Dalmore Swamp (which was located on land now shared between the City of Casey and the Shire of Cardinia) featured dense scrub and Swamp Paperbark.

These swamps created a natural barrier between Melbourne and Western Gippsland.

### 7.1 Indigenous Cultural Heritage

The Western Port area is a part of the traditional country of the Mayone buluk and Yallock balug clans of the Boon Wurrung people and the Wurundjeri Baluk and Bulug willam clan of the Woi Wurrung people.1

Over tens of thousands of years, the ancestors of these groups experienced extremes of environmental fluctuation from volcanic eruption, the ice age (during which sea levels dropped and dry land extended to Tasmania creating the Bassian Plain; a vast grassland and hunting territory) and then climatic warming (when the Bassian Plain was inundated) leading to the creation of Bass Strait and Western Port as they are presently seen.

The Boon Wurrung and the Woi Wurrung people are part of the broader alliance of the Kulin Nation, which also includes the Watha Wurrung, the Djaja Wurrung and the Taung Wurrung People.

The Boon Wurrung, with their hunter/gatherer lifestyle followed traditional routes along the coast, creeks and riversides. Some of these routes were mapped by William Thomas, who had been appointed Assistant Protector of the Aborigines in 1837 by Baron Glenelg, the British Secretary of State for the Colonies.

Upon his arrival in Victoria, the Chief Protector, George Augustus Robinson, allocated William Thomas the Port Phillip, Western Port and Gippsland districts, which includes the entirety of the Western Port Green Wedge. He travelled extensively with the Aboriginal Peoples of these districts including ‘the sea coast from Western Port to Port Phillip’, drawing a map in 1840 that showed some of these journeys.

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One of these tracks passed around the eastern side of the Western Port study area from Gippsland, linking up with well-established trails through the Berwick and Pakenham areas to Dandenong. Another track along the western side of the Bay passed near the Tooradin area before joining the track to Dandenong.

The Boon Wurrung and the Woi Wurrung intermarried and traded, moving freely (in accordance with mutually understood protocols) across each other’s territories. Their contact was so frequent and so amicable, according to some observers, that boundaries between them may not necessarily have been rigidly defined.

Their movements were seasonal. During summer months they travelled along major streams, fishing for eels and hunting and snaring game such as kangaroos, wallabies, possums, wombats and emus. They gathered plant foods such as murnong (also known as the yam daisy), ate swamp-dwelling plants like the roots of rushes, and collected wild honey. In the cooler months the Boon Wurrung moved inland seeking shelter. They gathered the pith of tree ferns and fished Cardinia Creek.

The land was well watered and was managed to provide plentiful food resources and shelter for its numerous inhabitants for over 40 millennia. In common with the practice of Aboriginal people throughout Australia, they skillfully used fire to clear forest areas into patchwork patterns to foster new plant growth; particularly grasses to attract game and to promote the growth of herbs, tubers, native fruits and nuts to balance their diet and to forestall bushfire conflagration.

The Kulin had a rich spiritual life that centred on connections with Bunjil, the spirit who created the land, their custodianship and protection of the land and with the rhythms of the seasons. They created sites that contain important evidence of a distant past and to which they attribute spiritual meaning.

Most of the Green Wedge has not been surveyed in any detail to establish the extent of Aboriginal archaeological values remaining there. Further research is required to clearly identify Aboriginal heritage values in the study area and this will be an Action of the Management Plan.
7.2 EUROPEAN SETTLEMENT

Permanent European settlement of the area now known as the Western Port Green Wedge occurred progressively from the 1830’s, ending the traditional lifestyle of its Aboriginal peoples. They lost access to traditional lands and waterways, hunting grounds were reduced and traditional food sources disappeared. Hunger, conflict, and the introduction of new diseases, to which the Aboriginal People had no immunity, led to a rapid decline of their population and the loss of their lands.

The relationship between the natural environment in the Western Port area and human activity changed from one of harmony to one of seemingly constant struggle as Europeans sought to change the land to fit their purposes by removing vegetation, draining it and opening it up for agricultural production and passage through to eastern Gippsland.

Typical early uses included fishing, grazing and farming. However, farming was hindered by the dense vegetation, the threat of flooding and the extensive swamps.

Settlements such as Tooradin were established to provide for the provision of essential services and supplies. From its earliest days Tooradin has had a strong fishing and tourism focus and it once marketed itself as a “sportsman’s paradise”.

In the 1870’s the Lands Department decided to clear and to drain the Koo Wee Rup and Dalmore Swamps so that the district, containing rich peaty soils, could be farmed. These drainage schemes also affected land located in what became the City of Casey, particularly in the Tooradin area.

The Koo Wee Rup Drainage Committee was formed to oversee the process. The main channel connecting the Cardinia Creek and several smaller drains was excavated from 1876 using shovels and wheelbarrows, but these initial efforts proved unsuccessful and major floods still occurred.
The drainage system was extended from 1889 with the construction of the Bunyip Main Drain to channel the Bunyip River through to the Western Port Coast. The first village settlement was then built but flooding occurred again in 1893 prompting further widening and deepening of the main drain.

Drainage works were completed by 1897, but later bushfires caused the underlying peat to catch fire and burn beneath the surface for several months.

The new drainage system and droughts then led to the soil shrinking and compacting with the land surface dropping.

A major flood in 1900 caused damage to crops and livestock and a new round of widening and extension of the drainage system took place as a result. Nevertheless, the area was proving to be fertile land for horticulture and in the early 1900s it was the potato growing capital of Victoria.

Around this time, there was extensive clearance of the hills to the north of the Koo Wee Rup Swamp.

This in turn led to erosion of the drains because of the increased runoff, and sedimentation in the lower parts of the system.

In 1917 the Koo Wee Rup Flood Protection District, now administered by Southern Rural Water, was proclaimed to oversee an improved drainage system for the whole area, which was affected by severe flooding again in 1911. The needs of World War I promoted vegetable growing in the area and later led to land subdivision for the creation of small holdings for returned soldiers (“soldier settlements”).

Major floods in 1923 and 1924 and the gigantic flood of 1934 caused significant damage and the latter made over 1,000 people homeless.

A Royal Commission was set up in 1936 to produce an improved scheme with new levees, the removal of sediment, and a further extension of the system. Only minor flooding occurred after this time and the construction of the Tarago Reservoir in 1969 also enabled better downstream flood control.

By the time of World War II potato growing in the area had become less profitable due to market fluctuations, and the area then became the prime supplier of Melbourne’s milk and vegetables. Through the 1950s and 1960s this trend was accelerated by an influx of growers who were forced out of Melbourne’s traditional market gardens in Dingley and Oakleigh by urban expansion. Potatoes again took over as the dominant land use replacing dairying, which moved further out to Gippsland.

New sources of water were needed to provide for this expansion and a permit system was introduced in the 1950s to regulate farmers’ capacity to pump water directly from the main drain.

Groundwater began being extracted from the sub-ground aquifers from 1922 for stock and domestic requirements. This process went unchecked until water levels in the aquifers had dropped by 15m and in the 1967/68 drought, they fell below pumping levels, meaning no water could be extracted.

The area was declared a Groundwater Conservation Area in 1971, which meant that the rate and volume of ground water being extracted from it was controlled and that new bores were prohibited in some areas.
8. PRESSURES FOR CHANGE

If the Western Port Green Wedge has a history of struggle between the natural environment and human activity, the future is also set to be a balancing act.

The Western Port Green Wedge has many significant environmental values, the most prominent being the internationally recognised Ramsar wetlands, while also being a very important agricultural and horticultural area.

The natural environment will continue to pose challenges as the predicted impacts of climate change - such as more frequent inundation, increased storm events, bushfires and necessary changes to crop species - come to the fore. These events will create pressure on the environmental, horticultural and agricultural values of the area.

Concurrently, as Melbourne’s population continues to grow, there will be inevitable urban pressures and demands on the Western Port Green Wedge.

There is likely to be continued pressure to expand the UGB to accommodate new urban development, along with pressure for it to accommodate rural living, hobby farms and other uses that may compromise the potential productivity of the land.

There is also likely to be pressure for the Green Wedge to accommodate State infrastructure to support metropolitan Melbourne.

Current and forecast pressures on the Western Port Green Wedge are described in more detail in Section 11.
9. ATTRIBUTES AND VALUES OF THE CASEY WESTERN PORT GREEN WEDGE

9.1 FLORA & FAUNA

The Green Wedge is home to nationally significant indigenous biodiversity such as the threatened Southern Brown Bandicoot, Swamp Skink, Common Long-necked Turtle and Growling Grass Frog.

A large portion of the Western Port coast was designated a wetland of international importance under the Ramsar Convention in 1982, meaning that its wetlands, remnant native vegetation, open rural landscapes and other natural assets were protected. These areas play a significant role in making Melbourne a livable City and therefore should be preserved and enhanced.

9.2 AGRICULTURE

The majority of the Western Port Green Wedge is used for agricultural purposes such as market gardening, poultry and beef farming, and horse and greyhound keeping, breeding and training.

It has some of the most productive soils in Victoria and the region is considered an important supplier of vegetables, milk, chickens and eggs for Victoria.

A large proportion of Victoria’s asparagus, leafy greens, celery, leeks, herbs, silver beet, radishes, and spring onions are grown within the Western Port Green Wedge and are supplied for local and global consumption.

The Green Wedge also accommodates other rural land uses such as boarding catteries and kennels, and hobby farms.
9.3 TOWNSHIPS

Within the City of Casey, the Western Port Green Wedge contains the rural township of Pearcedale, the coastal township of Tooradin and the coastal settlements of Blind Blight, Warneet and Cannons Creek.

These Townships have an important role within the Western Port Green Wedge, providing opportunities for City of Casey residents and visitors to experience township living, and for the provision of local services, schools, employment and leisure.

9.4 TOURISM

The Casey Western Port Green Wedge has a number of existing tourist attractions such as the Pearcedale Moonlit Sanctuary, boating, fishing, equestrian and walking trails and the Ramsar wetlands.

There is significant potential for further tourism opportunities in the Green Wedge, particularly increased food-based tourism and eco-tourism.
10. COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

10.1 WESTERN PORT GREEN WEDGE MANAGEMENT PLAN DISCUSSION PAPER

Engagement activities undertaken in the preparation of the Western Port Green Wedge Management Plan Discussion Paper (October 2011) were designed to examine the key challenges and opportunities for the Green Wedge, to identify a vision for it and to explore potential actions for the Western Port Green Wedge Management Plan.

Feedback collected during the exhibition of the Discussion Paper informed the content of the draft Western Port Green Wedge Management Plan, December 2014.

A report summarising the feedback from the Discussion Paper’s community consultation is available separately.

Table 2: Community consultation - key findings on the Western Port Green Wedge Management Plan Discussion Paper

| Heritage                  | Support for Aboriginal heritage to be highlighted in the Green Wedge Management Plan. |
|                          | Others felt that heritage generally should be stronger and that more effort could be made to celebrate the history of the Koo Wee Rup swamp and its settlements. |
| Water Management         | Flooding seen as a major concern for the Green Wedge and many linked this to runoff from new development and hard surfaces in the catchment areas. |
|                          | Water-sensitive urban design (WSUD) was advocated to reduce the severity of flooding along with an integrated approach to water management. The impacts of runoff on Western Port’s sea grass and saltmarsh ecosystems were a concern for some respondents. |
|                          | The need to address rising sea levels was raised with suggestions to restrict inappropriate development and to promote re-vegetation along the coast. |
| Landscape features and rural amenity | Opportunities for a rural lifestyle in the area are valued - people have chosen to live in the Green Wedge as they believe it is protected from urban expansion and they want it maintained as a rural area. |
| Uncertainty              | Concerns raised around the future of the UGB and uncertainty about whether there would be further changes and therefore if it can be regarded as the permanent edge to Melbourne. |
|                          | Scepticism about how a Management Plan can be effective if the UGB continues to change. |
### Agriculture
- Agriculture was identified as a primary value and a key asset needing protection.
- Need for clear zoning based on land capability, soil and commodity studies
- Need for improved management of farms, including incentives for farmers to stay on the land and to improve farming practices.
- Need for better management of interface between residential and farming areas into the future.
- Key challenge is managing succession planning for ageing farmers. Potentially need greater flexibility for farmers to subdivide or to undertake complementary activities such as farm gate sales or food tourism.
- Key opportunity in improved marketing of the Bunyip Food Belt brand.

### Recreation and Tourism
- Key opportunity for leisure and tourism that complements the Green Wedge to improve the local economy (for example, educational tourism, agricultural schools, tourism connected to local produce, and eco-tourism along the coast).
- Support for a walking track along the Western Port coast although some concern about its impact on the Ramsar wetlands and its practicability.
- Support for rail trails and equestrian trails if they can be put in place without threatening local habitats, and particular support was given to a bicycle trail along the South Gippsland rail easement.

### Biodiversity
- Biodiversity identified as a valuable asset, particularly the internationally-recognised Ramsar wetlands and endangered species such as the Southern Brown Bandicoot.
- Potential strategies included building on the bio-links programs with incentives to re-vegetate or help improve them.
- Suggestions included developing bio-links from Cranbourne Botanic Gardens south to the coast as well as east to Bayles to help protect native flora and fauna.
- Specific comments regarding the alignment of some bio-links and also concerns regarding how these had been identified and whether they would be effective.
- An integrated approach to ensure that agriculture and water management helps to improve habitats for valued species was also supported.

### Urban Development Pressure
- Widespread opposition to further subdivision in the Green Wedge.
- Seventy-two submissions explicitly opposed subdivision and advocated for the UGB to be the permanent edge to Melbourne, and there were also two petitions with 70 signatures opposing subdivision.
- Some submissions suggested that infill development could be encouraged in small settlements to make them more viable and others felt that a buffer zone between agricultural and residential areas could minimise conflict and that rural living could act as this buffer.
- Future growth at the Port of Hastings was highlighted along with the impact this will have on freight movement and travel patterns across the area.
In 2015, the City of Casey received over 160 community submissions in response to the exhibition of the Draft Western Port Green Wedge Management Plan (December 2014).

Community consultation meetings were held within the Green Wedge at community halls located in Pearcedale, Tooradin, Devon Meadows and Blind Bight.

The content of the submissions confirmed much of the Discussion Paper’s findings. However an important variation related to land subdivision.

This particularly affected the rural residential areas of Cranbourne South, Devon Meadows and Pearcedale where strong lobbying occurred in favour of the subdivision of land into lots varying in size between 0.2 hectares and two hectares, which is smaller than is presently permitted by the Casey Planning Scheme. A number of submissions were also received from the owners of Green Wedge zoned land around the Pearcedale Township advocating that the Township be expanded to include their land.

Submissions opposing more intense subdivision were received from property owners in Cranbourne South, Devon Meadows and Pearcedale. These submissions were made on grounds that the current balance of agriculture and rural living should be maintained, the eco-system should be protected and that there is no strategic case to subdivide, only an economic one.

Submissions were also received from: the State Government through the Office of Aboriginal Affairs and the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning; Bass Coast Shire; South Gippsland Shire; Mornington Peninsula Shire; Frankston City Council; Melbourne Water; Southern Rural Water; Port Phillip & Western Port Catchment Management Authority; Natural Resources Conservation League of Victoria; Western Port Biosphere Reserve and the Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria, Cranbourne.

The submissions are summarised in Table 3.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3: Community consultation - key findings on the draft Western Port Green Wedge Management Plan (December 2014)</th>
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**Subdivision**
Proposal: subdivide land into lots varying in area between 0.2 hectares and 2 hectares

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pro-subdivision</th>
<th>Anti-subdivision</th>
<th>Victorian Government, Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>98 submissions and four petitions</strong></td>
<td><strong>27 submissions</strong></td>
<td>The Department advised that it has no plans to support any planning scheme amendment proposals that seek to expand the UGB, increase the subdivision potential of green wedge land or lead to the development of small inappropriate lots in the green wedges.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Submissions received primarily from the Cranbourne South, Devon Meadows and Pearcedale South areas.

**Reasons provided:**

» Farming is not sustainable on the existing lots which have an area of 10 hectares and under.
» Ease property maintenance (commonly because of the age of owners).
» Subdivision would provide owners with financial stability.
» The area is close to the UGB and to reticulated services.
» Subdivision would create a buffer between urban development and the Green Wedge.
» Small lots would ease maintenance of vegetation.

» No strategic case to subdivide, only economic.
» The current balance of agriculture and rural living should be maintained.
» The eco-system should be protected.

The Government is therefore unlikely to support proposals to allow the further subdivision of green wedge land or to expand township boundaries.

Subsequently, in February 2019, the State Government again advised the City of Casey that it has no plans to increase the subdivision potential of the Green Wedge for smaller lots.
### Table 3: Community consultation - key findings on the draft Western Port Green Wedge Management Plan (December 2014)

**Expansion of Pearcedale Township**

Proposal: Pearcedale Township should be enlarged to include green wedge zoned land that abuts its current boundary by rezoning it to the General Residential Zone to enable its subdivision into urban densities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pro</th>
<th>Anti</th>
<th>Victorian Government, Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>6 submissions</strong></td>
<td><strong>7 submissions</strong></td>
<td>The Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning advised that it is unlikely to support proposals to allow the further subdivision of green wedge land or to expand township boundaries.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Justification provided:**

**Pro**
- A logical township boundary would be established.
- There is a lack of vacant residential lots within the existing township boundaries.

**Anti**
- Flora and fauna should be protected.
- The Green Wedge should be protected from further urban expansion.
- Pearcedale’s infrastructure could not cope with further development.
- The Green Wedge offers a certain lifestyle that would be lost through further subdivision.
Biodiversity

» The potential for east-west and north-south bio-links should be explored, including possible locations for them.

» The Plan should include the role of healthy ecosystems in supporting agriculture and the need to manage the impacts of agriculture on environmental values.

» There should be a stronger focus on the protection of remnant native vegetation and the management of natural ecosystems in the form of pest animal management, the control of environmental weeds and scientifically based fire management.

Agriculture

» The objective to maintain a thriving agricultural industry in the Green Wedge, with a focus on horticulture and farming to service local and export markets is supported by water supply agencies.

Water management

Most of the study area covers the Koo Wee Rup Water Supply Protection Area (Groundwater) and therefore it is important that the plan recognises this important water resource, its users and the current irrigated agriculture development. Southern Rural Water (SRW) has been working towards ensuring that additional water is available for agricultural production.

SRW has ongoing support for maintaining and increasing the State’s food bowl production.

Management strategies for the Koo Wee Rup Water Supply Protection Area (WSPA) include working within the approved Groundwater Management Plan for the WSPA and, as a priority, working with license holders to encourage water trading. References to and aspects of the Groundwater Management Plan for the WSPA should be mentioned in the Green Wedge Management Plan.

Heritage

The Office of Aboriginal Affairs advised that whilst archaeological sites of ‘very high scientific significance’ may occur in the Cardinia Creek corridor this is actually quite unlikely. There is generally a decrease in site density and size further south along the (itinerant) creek corridor. Given the swampy nature of the study area, the largest most significant sites found to date have been on elevated land on the swamp periphery (south of Pakenham). However, it would be unwise to pre-empt the significance of sites anywhere in the study area.
10.3 DEVON MEADOWS AND PEARCEDALE PUBLIC MEETINGS – JULY 2016

Council resolved to hold these public meetings after it received separate petitions from members of the Devon Meadows and Pearcedale communities.

The petitions called for (respectively):

» Devon Meadows: Council to amend the Draft Western Port Green Wedge Management Plan (December 2014) to create a transitional zone to allow for rural residential properties of one to two hectares in Precinct 2. The petition noted that this would address an identified shortage of rural residential lifestyle lots, specifically for horse trainers, trades and small trade and logistics businesses.

» Pearcedale: Council to reject the proposal under the Draft Western Port Green Wedge Management Plan (December 2014) to classify the area around Pearcedale as Precinct 1 (Intensive Agriculture and Food Production), and that an amended Management Plan be prepared to account for the economically viable current land usage by residents (largely as equine lifestyle), and to allow for further land development with smaller rural lots being permitted between Pearcedale Township and agricultural areas to its east.

Devon Meadows Public Meeting
The Devon Meadows public meeting was held on the evening of Thursday 16 June 2016. Forty-five people were in attendance, coming mainly from Devon Meadows and Cranbourne South.

Land subdivision was the key matter discussed by participants at the meeting.

Those in favour of further subdivision justified it as follows:

» Financial security.

» Changing needs; as people age they say it becomes more difficult for them to maintain larger lots.

» Recognition that Devon Meadows has historically had smaller lots than other areas within the Green Wedge.

Those who opposed further subdivision justified it as follows:

» Concern that smaller lots and a larger population in the area may lead to complaints related to the conduct of existing business or leisure activities being undertaken there.

Pearcedale Public Meeting
The Pearcedale public meeting was held on the evening of Thursday 23 June 2016. Ninety-eight people were in attendance, coming mainly from Pearcedale, Langwarrin South and Cranbourne South.

There were mixed views expressed at the meeting on the issue of subdivision, however the majority of attendees appeared to support some form of increased subdivision.

The following points highlight the main issues raised:

» Support for subdivision was most often based on economic grounds, in particular that more housing lots are needed to provide for a bigger population, which would support the continued economic viability of the Pearcedale Township and its environs.

» Concern was also expressed that the proposal under the Draft Western Port Green Wedge Management Plan (December 2014) to include rural land surrounding Pearcedale Township within Precinct 1 (Agriculture and Food Production) could constrain existing uses undertaken there (such as horse training) and could also reduce land values.

» Concerns were raised by some participants that subdivision would adversely impact the rural character of Pearcedale and that existing infrastructure could not support a larger population.
10.4 DRAFT CASEY WESTERN PORT GREEN WEDGE MANAGEMENT PLAN JUNE 2017

Council placed the Plan on public exhibition for three months between 15 September 2017 and 22 December 2017. 263 submissions were received.

The following table summarises the submissions key messages and the frequency of their expression, according to the geographic area. As most submissions were directed at the draft Management Plan’s proposals for subdivision in certain locations within the Green Wedge, the table indicates the position taken by the submitters regarding that matter:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Locality</th>
<th>Pro-subdivision</th>
<th>Anti-subdivision</th>
<th>Advice only</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Individual letter</td>
<td>Signed a pro-forma letter</td>
<td>Petition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blind Bight</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cannons Creek</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clyde</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cranbourne South</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1 (55 signatures)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Devon Meadows</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiveways</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pearcedale (rural)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pearcedale (Township)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tooradin (rural)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tooradin (Village)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warneet</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other – MP’s</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other – non Green Wedge residents</td>
<td>4 6</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Referral Authorities</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>34</strong></td>
<td><strong>161</strong></td>
<td><strong>63</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This table indicates that there is a strong preference for further subdivision in the rural areas of Pearcedale and Cranbourne South. The pro-forma letter in Pearcedale’s rural area requests Council to intensify subdivision there down to a minimum area of two hectares. This is half again in size of what had been proposed in the draft Management Plan, which recommended a minimum subdivision area of four hectares. The Casey Planning Scheme currently applies a minimum subdivision area of eight hectares in that location.

The reasons provided by submitters in support of further subdivision are summarised below:

» It would help meet the future needs of horse and greyhound trainers in the racing industry, and help meet equine lifestyle, and rural residential lifestyle demand, for small rural character lots close to the Pearcedale township;

» It would complement the balance between the environment, economic viability and growth, and measured strategic planning, and provides a good balance between these three issues, without changing the rural character of the Pearcedale area.

» It would allow for the provision of more trees and will maintain the rural and agricultural character of the area with features including rural fencing.

The reasons provided by submitters in opposition to further subdivision are summarised below:

Conversely, submissions lodged by residents of Pearcedale Township, Tooradin Village and residents outside of the Casey Western Port Green opposed any proposal to intensify subdivision in the Green Wedge. Submissions received from residents of the coastal villages, particularly Tooradin Village and Cannons Creek, opposed further subdivision in the Green Wedge on the following basis:

» The Green Wedge should be protected for food security, flora and fauna.

» Rates are too high for farming land.

» Roads are at capacity.

» Housing should be built on less fertile land.

» The areas proposed for smaller subdivisions (for ‘lifestyle living’) are adjacent to the northern coast of Western Port Bay with its nature reserves, Ramsar Reserve and Marine National Parks. Population increases in these areas would lead to increased drainage and a greater amount of pollution entering Western Port Bay. It would also put increased pressure on the wild life corridors proposed to facilitate the movement of birds and other wild life between areas such as the Cranbourne Gardens and the Langwarrin Nature Reserve to and from the coastal reserves.

Advice received from the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) states:

“There are a number of strategies and actions in the draft Management Plan which are inconsistent with policies in Plan Melbourne 2017-2050, and as such would be unlikely to receive support from the State Government. These include:

» proposals to allow the further subdivision of green wedge land;

» the potential expansion of township boundaries.

The advice also notes that “These proposals also conflict with State Planning Policy Framework Clause 11.06-7 (Green Wedges) and the planning provisions (Clause 57 Metropolitan Green Wedge Land). It is a requirement that Green Wedge Management Plans are consistent with State government policies and strategies, as outlined in Practice Note 31 – Preparing a Green Wedge Management Plan (June 2015).”
11. STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

11.1 ABORIGINAL AND POST-CONTACT HERITAGE

11.1.1 Background and Context
The Western Port Green Wedge has a rich history. As set out in Section 9.1 (Land Use History), the Boon Wurrung and Woi Wurrung people have an ancient association with the land, hunting and gathering along the coast and in the Koo Wee Rup and Dalmore swamps, and camping in the nearby higher ground.

Many cultural heritage sites have been identified around those former swamps and along the Western Port Coast where there are shell middens and artifact scatters.

In more recent times, foods, drainage, reclamation and resettlement schemes have transformed the land. Many heritage properties remain in the area, serving as reminders of early European settlement.

The consultation undertaken in developing the Discussion Paper and through the exhibition of the draft Management Plan confirmed the value of the Green Wedge’s indigenous and post-contact heritage. There were also representations that more effort should be made to maintain, enhance and celebrate the historical features of the Koo Wee Rup and Dalmore Swamps, settlements such as Tooradin and Pearcedale, as well as the coastal villages of Blind Bight, Warneet and Cannons Creek.

While there are already measures in place to protect and celebrate the land’s history through the Casey Planning Scheme and local initiatives, there are opportunities to expand efforts concerning the heritage of the Green Wedge.

11.1.2 Objective
Identify and protect the Aboriginal cultural heritage and post-contact heritage of the Western Port Green Wedge and celebrate and promote this history.

11.1.3 Strategies
- Promote greater community knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal cultural heritage in the Western Port area.
- Promote greater community awareness and appreciation of the post-contact history and settlement of the Western Port Green Wedge.
- Investigate the development of local heritage trails and the identification and interpretation of sites of historical significance.
11.2 LANDSCAPE

11.2.1 Background and Context
The Green Wedge has a unique landscape and scenic quality, stemming from its pre-European form. It is dominated by the former Dalmore and Koo Wee Rup swamps with pockets of more elevated land to the north, and the subsequent historical layers of settlement and drainage, which continue to affect the landscape.

The Cardinia Creek and other creek corridors are key landscape assets and features of the Green Wedge. These waterways hold significant areas of remnant vegetation that play an important role in protecting biodiversity in the Green Wedge. While creeks have been modified as part of the drainage of the swamps, they remain as important markers of the history of the area.

Although some areas already have planning controls in place to protect the landscape (such as the Significant Landscape Overlay for the Casey Coast and the Environmental Significance Overlay for the Casey Coast and Cranbourne South), most of the Green Wedge has not yet been considered for geo-heritage protection, particularly with regard to its Aboriginal traditional usage and spiritual association.

A comprehensive geomorphological review of the Green Wedge, considering its geo-heritage, will provide context for a survey of its Aboriginal heritage and of changes made to the land form during the post-contact period, and will also provide information in support of any planning scheme amendment to protect any geo-heritage sites that it identifies.

11.2.2 Objective
Protect and enhance the Western Port Green Wedge’s unique and attractive landscapes and landforms.

11.2.3 Strategies
Assess landscape and geo-heritage values and ensure that appropriate controls are in place through the Casey Planning Scheme to protect them.

See related Action No. 1 in Section 11.3.4, which will help implement this strategy.
11.3 ENVIRONMENTAL SIGNIFICANCE

11.3.1 Background and context

Habitat corridors aim to create a healthy landscape that protects important habitats and to help restore a sustainable environment through better management of land, waterways and native vegetation.

This may be achieved through a program of re-vegetation and land management, which aims to link habitats or to improve "connectivity", using core areas of native vegetation and natural ecosystems.

Potential locations for habitat corridors are shown on Map 3, which includes identified areas of biodiversity significance.

The City of Casey has based its biodiversity planning on the development of habitat corridors and "biozones" that are proposed in the Revegetation Strategy. The Strategy has a strong focus on enhancement and protection of biodiversity.

The Green Wedge Management Plan and the State Government’s Sub-Regional Strategies for the Southern Brown Bandicoot and the Growling Grass Frog provide an opportunity to update and better integrate biodiversity planning for the Western Port Green Wedge.

Habitats that have been ranked for their ecological significance should be incorporated into the planning of the Green Wedge, especially those of national and international significance.

11.3.2 Objective

Protect and enhance biodiversity and habitats within the Green Wedge, especially for rare or endangered fora and fauna.

11.3.3 Strategies

- Identify and protect fauna and fora and habitats of local, state, national and international importance.
- Develop a coordinated approach to biodiversity planning that considers and resolves the priorities, especially with respect to habitat connectivity.

11.3.4 Specific actions

- Action 1: Undertake a review of environmental and landscape protection controls (such as the ESO and SLO) within the Casey Western Port Green Wedge and implement change where appropriate. The review should include an investigation of appropriate landscape protection controls for geo-heritage sites. Implement such changes as part of broader periodic Planning Scheme updates such as the Planning Policy Framework translation.
Map 3: Habitat Areas and Biodiversity
11.4 TOURISM AND RECREATIONAL LAND USES

11.4.1 Background and Context
The Western Port Green Wedge has a diverse range of land uses, unique attractions and a rich history providing the potential for a vibrant tourism and recreation industry.

The Discussion Paper considered a number of attractions that could be used to promote a local tourism industry and to enhance recreation opportunities for the local and broader community.

Although the tourism offer is modest at present, several opportunities have been identified that may be developed and promoted to support local agriculture, generate employment opportunities, enhance the area’s biodiversity, and create recreation opportunities for local residents.

The public consultation generally supported these opportunities but with reservations about impacts on biodiversity in terms of recreation along the Western Port Coast and in areas with high biodiversity value.

A rail trail along the former South Gippsland railway reserve between Clyde and Lang Lang and through Koo Wee Rup would be an invaluable recreation resource for the local and wider community.

This concept has significant support from agencies and from the community and is supported by this Plan. It would need to be subject to a full master plan for the entire route which would consider how best to accommodate the needs of other users such as walkers and equestrians, and how best to protect the habitat requirements of the Growling Grass Frog and the Southern Brown Bandicoot.

There has been support for a Casey Coastal Trail from the local community and through studies such as the Casey C21 Strategy and the Casey Coastal Strategy process.

The Trail could provide for cyclists and walkers, connecting the coastal settlements of Warneet, Blind Bight, Cannons Creek and Tooradin and potentially Pearcedale.

There are a number of environmental and land ownership issues confronting such a trail, including climate change, the risk of coastal inundation, and the highly sensitive environments along the coast that would likely trigger the need for an Environmental Effects Statement and a referral to the Federal Government under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Act 1999.

The Western Port Green Wedge has scope to build a successful tourism industry based on its fresh and healthy local produce, taking advantage of its accessibility to potential customers and tourists located in the growing metropolitan area.

Community markets and the regional produce directory already help this profile, but a further initiative would be to develop a Bunyip Food Trail linking local and regional food outlets such as farm sales and specialist local food shops.

The food trail could help market local produce such as asparagus, other vegetables, fruit, wine, and even fish and other seafood from Western Port Bay.

11.4.2 Objective
Develop and promote opportunities for recreation and tourism that are linked to local strengths including food, trails, Western Port Bay and education.
11.4.3 Strategies

» Support and promote a local tourism industry based on the strengths and assets of the Green Wedge.

» Develop parkland and a network of walking and cycling trails to provide recreation opportunities for local residents and for visitors from further afield.

11.4.4 Specific Actions

» Action 2: Investigate construction of a Western Port trail that would create a continuous walking and/or cycling route around Western Port.

» Action 3: Prepare a Master Plan for the construction of a rail trail along the former South Gippsland railway reserve between Clyde and Lang Lang and through Koo Wee Rup.

» Action 4: Prepare a Tooradin Village Foreshore Master Plan to assist with the development of tourism attractions for the area.

» Action 5: Investigate opportunities for additional parkland (for passive and active use, including equestrian facilities) in the Western Port Green Wedge for residents and for visitors from further afield.
11.5 SOILS AND LAND CAPABILITY

11.5.1 Background and context

Soil is a finite natural resource and therefore sustainable management and planning is required to maintain it as a valuable resource for the future.

The majority of soils within the Green Wedge are recognised for their productivity and capability for horticulture and agriculture, and for their role in maintaining and supporting biodiversity.

Research was commissioned through the State Government to investigate and map the soil capabilities of land in the Western Port Green Wedge. The research found four types of soil groupings, of which two are relevant to the City of Casey:

1. Western Area: around Pearcedale and Devon Meadows

The western area consists of sandy soils or sandy over clay subsoil. These lighter soils can be worked for most of the year, but they require a reliable water supply and an external nutrient supply.

2. Central Area: around Koo Wee Rup, Tooradin, Iona and Bayles

The central area consists of the foodplains and peaty swamps of the Western Port Basin. Most of this area consists of clays with limited drainage as well as the peaty soils, which are cultivated for asparagus and other forms of horticulture. Despite their qualities for specialised crops, in general these soils are not as resilient as the sandy soils of the west.

The capability of these soils for agricultural production was then assessed, taking account of soil qualities, topography, drainage and climate.

The results of this assessment, a Land Versatility Analysis, is included as Map 4 and shows that the whole Green Wedge is at least moderately suitable for growing a range of agricultural commodities, and that much of the area has very high versatility (that is, it has capacity to sustain multiple agricultural uses).

This flexibility will increase in value as the progressive impacts of climate change and higher temperatures are felt in the coming decades. The versatile soils will allow for changes in farming practice with respect to crops and plant varieties.

The land versatility map should be used to guide the formulation of planning controls that reflect the suitability of different parts of the area for different agricultural uses and practices. This process could include a review of the existing Green Wedge Zones to develop more comprehensive and customised controls to reflect the capability of these soils.
Map 4: Agricultural Biophysical Land Versatility Regions

*Data source: Digitised from the Department of Environment and Primary Industries: Agricultural Biophysical Land Versatility Regions map (2011)*
Coastal Acid Sulphate Soils

A further important consideration is the potential occurrence of Coastal Acid Sulphate Soils in some of the low-lying coastal areas of the Western Port Green Wedge.

Coastal Acid Sulphate Soils are naturally occurring soils that contain iron sulphides, which when disturbed and exposed to air can oxidise and result in sulphuric acid. Sulphuric acid can mobilise heavy metals that exist in soil such as iron, aluminium and arsenic, which can have serious detrimental effects, including:

- acidification and deoxygenation of water and soil, leading to compromised fresh surface and ground water potability and soil fertility
- deoxygenation of soil
- fish kills
- corrosion of metals.

The potential extent of Coastal Acid Sulphate Soils in the Western Port Green Wedge is detailed in Map 5.

It is important that activities that may disturb Coastal Acid Sulphate Soils (such as agricultural works involving drainage, infrastructure works, development, and the extractive industry) are avoided or carefully managed in areas that have been identified as potentially containing Coastal Acid Sulphate Soils.

11.5.2 Objective

Recognise the versatility of soils in the Western Port Green Wedge and protect and enhance the capability to support productive farming and biodiversity.

11.5.3 Strategies

- Ensure that Green Wedge soils and their versatility are recognised as a finite resource and are protected accordingly.
- Develop a sustainable planning and management framework for food production, agriculture and other uses of Green Wedge soils.

11.5.4 Actions

- Support natural systems by ensuring salinity and discharge of nutrients are managed, including through the use of management plans.
- Ensure that Coastal Acid Sulphate Soils are managed to avoid detrimental impacts on the environment, biodiversity and the community.
Map 5: Coastal Acid Sulphate Soils
11.6 INTEGRATED WATER MANAGEMENT

11.6.1 Background and Context

The management of water is a critical issue in the Green Wedge. The way water is used and managed is central to the success of the agricultural industry and to the enhancement of the internationally significant environment of Western Port Bay and its coastal hinterland.

Prior to European settlement the Koo Wee Rup and Dalmore swamps combined to be Victoria’s largest swamp. Although the land containing these swamps was reclaimed and drained last century, water systems in the Green Wedge still reflect that history.

The network of drains is part of the landscape and the area still floods at regular intervals.

Planning controls are in place to restrict opportunities for development in areas that are prone to flooding, but potential problems lie upstream in the catchment, in areas that are now being released for urban development or have been cleared for timber production and cultivation.

Further problems that have been identified include the generally “poor” water quality of local streams, high levels of sediment that are entering the Bay from local watercourses, and the severe ecological stress that this is imposing on Western Port’s sensitive ecosystem with its internationally protected wetlands.

It was noted in the Discussion Paper that the quality of all four water catchments in the Western Port Green Wedge are rated as “poor” by Melbourne Water’s Regional River Health Strategy 2007, and that this compares unfavourably with the condition of other parts of the Port Phillip and Western Port catchment.

The Healthy Waterways Strategy defines Melbourne Water’s role, in partnership with the community, its customers and stakeholders, in managing rivers, estuaries and wetlands in the Port Phillip and Western Port region.

The Strategy sets 20-year strategic priorities, focusing on environmental improvements to creek and wetland systems to improve the habitat for native fora and fauna including platypus, fish, lizard, frog and bird species.

The City of Casey with Melbourne Water has prepared and adopted an Integrated Water Management Plan, which aims to create a Water Efficient City and to deliver the following outcomes:

» Avoid potable (drinking) water use and cost, where possible.
» Use and manage water resources as fit for purpose.
» Create a City that is resilient to food, drought and other water threats to the environment.
» Protect and improve the health of waterways and bays.
» Ensure Council and stakeholders comply with legislation.
» Prioritise investment in integrated water management that achieves the greatest benefits for the economy, environment and community.
» Enhance community and economic well-being.

Flooding and a range of other water management issues were identified through the Plan and it was concluded that they should be integrated with land use planning for the area. This concept was widely supported throughout public consultation.

Key water management agencies (Melbourne Water, South East Water, Southern Rural Water, Port Phillip and Western Port Catchment Management Authority) are working together with the City of Casey and Cardinia Shire Council to improve water quality and food management to mitigate the impact of sedimentation and pollution on Western Port.
The catchments of the Cardinia Creek, Dalmore Outfalls and the Bunyip/Tarago River will be the focus of a regional Integrated Water Management Plan, which will investigate water sensitive urban design opportunities and how to capture and treat storm water runoff to augment water supplies.

11.6.2 Objectives

» Develop a regional integrated approach to water management that reduces the risks of flooding, erosion, sedimentation and groundwater depletion, and that improves water quality.

» Improve water quality and catchment quality in the Green Wedge water courses.

» Reduce the risk and severity of flooding in the Green Wedge and recognise the challenges posed by a changing climate.

» Minimise any negative impacts from sedimentation and septic system or storm water pollution on the Western Port Bay ecosystem.

11.6.3 Strategy

» Support initiatives aimed at improving water management for the Western Port Green Wedge.

11.6.4 Specific Actions

» **Action 7:** Continue to maximise Integrated Water Management opportunities and fit-for-purpose water use in the Green Wedge and Western Port Catchment.

11.7 GROUNDWATER

11.7.1 Background and Context

Groundwater is a significant source of water for the rural sector, and numerous irrigation and stock groundwater licenses have been issued in the Green Wedge.

Bore licenses are issued by Southern Rural Water and are regulated under the Water Act 1989. The level of extraction from many sites has already exceeded recharge rate and drought has also prompted Southern Rural Water to restrict the number of new bores.

11.7.2 Objective

Recognise the role groundwater plays in the Casey Western Port Green Wedge and protect and enhance its capability to support productive farming.

11.7.3 Strategies

» Ensure that high quality groundwater in the Casey Western Port Green Wedge is recognised as a finite resource that plays a significant role in the maintenance of the economic strength of the agriculture industry.

» Encourage the use of alternative water supply systems to reduce reliance on groundwater.

» Develop a sustainable planning and management framework for food production, agriculture and other uses within the Green Wedge.

» Support natural systems by ensuring salinity and discharge of nutrients are managed, including through the use of management plans.
11.8 SEPTICS AND SEWAGE

11.8.1 Background and Context

Except for land that is situated within the Casey Western Port Green Wedge’s townships (all of which are connected to sewer), the Western Port Green Wedge is wholly dependent upon on-site septic tank systems for domestic wastewater disposal.

It is inevitable that a percentage of these septic tank systems will fail because of inadequate maintenance or poor initial design, and that sewage effluent will be discharged into the water system.

Therefore Council, with the Environmental Protection Authority, should monitor E. coli and nutrient levels relating to the waters of Western Port Bay and its Catchment, and roll out an information program to residents advising them of the need to maintain their septic tank systems.

11.8.2 Objective

Ensure that farm and domestic wastewater systems (both septic and sewer) are designed and maintained to protect the sensitive Western Port environment, including that of the Ramsar wetlands.

11.9 AGRICULTURE AND HORTICULTURE

11.9.1 Background and Context

The Casey Western Port Green Wedge is a highly productive agricultural area. It has a range of versatile soil types, access to water, close proximity to ports, airports, markets and a workforce, and it continues to play a vital role in feeding both Victoria’s population and export markets.

Its strategic importance as a food supply source for the metropolitan area is predicted to increase over time as Melbourne grows and rainfall patterns change. It is particularly likely given the increasing uncertainty over rainfall and water allocations to Australia’s traditional food bowl; the Murray Darling Basin.

Given its long-term strategic value to Melbourne and to agriculture, the Green Wedge should be recognised as an area of strategic farming importance for Melbourne and every effort should be made to protect it for that purpose.

Accordingly, Council will advocate to the State Government that the significance of the area is formally recognised through a Statement of Planning Policy for the Western Port Green Wedge, to be included in the State Planning Policy Framework, the Metropolitan Planning Strategy and any other relevant documents.

This Statement should reflect the vision for the Green Wedge and the primacy of agriculture and horticulture in the area and Precinct One in particular.

In addition, the relevant local planning provisions in the Casey Planning Scheme will be reviewed and, if necessary, revised to ensure the protection of agriculture and rural-based activities.

The State Government is in the process of identifying Strategic Agricultural Lands in all green wedge and peri-urban areas surrounding Melbourne. That project generally aligns with the objectives of this Management Plan to protect and maintain agricultural lands in the Western Port Green Wedge. Council supports and welcomes this regional approach to the designation and protection of Strategic Agricultural Lands.

11.9.2 Objective

Maintain a thriving agricultural and horticultural industry in the Casey Western Port Green Wedge with a focus on horticulture and farming to service local and export markets.
11.9.3 Strategies

- Secure a robust long-term planning framework that recognises the value of the Casey Western Port Green Wedge for agriculture.
- Strengthen the long-term viability of farming in the Casey Western Port Green Wedge and enhance its productivity and competitive position.
- Support local agriculture by promoting and marketing the quality of local produce.
- Improve community access to nutritious, healthy and affordable local produce.
- Promote sustainable land and farm management across the Casey Western Port Green Wedge.

11.9.4 Specific Actions

- Action 8: Advocate for access to Class A recycled water to support agriculture and horticulture in the Casey Western Port Green Wedge.
11.10 CLIMATE CHANGE

11.10.1 Background and Context

It is generally accepted that worlds climate is changing. In Melbourne, temperatures are estimated to rise by 1.5-3.0 degrees by 2070 and average rainfall is estimated to drop by 5-20 per cent, with an increased incidence of extreme rainfall events.

Climate change poses risks to all societies and in some respects the Western Port Green Wedge is particularly vulnerable.

Western Port has a low-lying coastline that is susceptible to rising sea levels and storm surges, and its agricultural production will also be at risk due to impacts from more extreme weather events.

As northern Victoria becomes hotter and drier, secure water for the Western Port region will become of fundamental importance to Victoria’s food production.

State Government research described in Section 7.5 (Soils and Land Capability) examined the impacts of rising temperatures and reduced rainfall on existing and potential agricultural products in the Western Port Green Wedge.

Five varieties of vegetables and herbs were tested, as well as two types of fruit and a pasture grass (perennial rye grass). Land suitability for growing these “commodities” within the Green Wedge was tested for the years 2030, 2050, and 2070 as detailed in Table 3.

The table shows that in all cases, the land suitability for growing these commodities declined from their current “high” rating to a “moderate” rating. Some commodities were affected more than others - especially fruit and rye grass - although the current commodity strengths in herbs and vegetables generally held up well.

Table 5: Land suitability for commodities with predicted climate change

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>COMMODITY</th>
<th>% CHANGE FROM HIGH TO MODERATE SUITABILITY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2030</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Asparagus</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Brassicas (e.g. Broccoli)</td>
<td>-31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Celery</td>
<td>+11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Herbs</td>
<td>-12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Leeks</td>
<td>-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Apples</td>
<td>-40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Kiwi Fruit</td>
<td>-57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Rye Grass</td>
<td>+1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It should be emphasised that although the land suitability for all tested commodities decreased from a high rating, in no case did the rating drop below a moderate rating. This means that with appropriate management measures, all farmland in the Green Wedge will remain suitable for agriculture and horticulture.

The findings from the research will be useful to local farmers and rural producers to inform their decision making and succession planning, and should be the subject of an education and information program to assist the rural community.

**Regional Approach to Climate Change**

The South East Councils Climate Change Alliance (SECCCA) is a network of Councils that are situated around the Western Port region and has been operating since 2004. SECCCA's regional projects investigate coastal and human settlement planning in a time of climate change.

The City of Casey and the Cardinia Shire Council are members of this regional alliance and continue to support it in relation to monitoring climate change and advising on any mitigation and adaptation strategies relevant to the Green Wedge.

**11.10.2 Objective**

Recognise, understand and prepare for the projected impacts of climate change on the Casey Western Port Green Wedge.

**11.10.3 Strategies**

- Undertake research on a regular basis to assess and plan for the impacts of climate change on the Casey Western Port Green Wedge.
- Develop policies to manage and adapt to the projected impacts of climate change on the Casey Western Port Green Wedge.
- Promote greater understanding and awareness of the projected impacts of climate change on the Casey Western Port Green Wedge.

**11.10.4 Specific Actions**

- **Action 9:** Develop Council Policy on climate change including background research, investigation of the Casey context and Policy adoption.
11.11 URBAN DEVELOPMENT

11.11.1 Background and Context

Although predominately rural, the Casey Western Port Green Wedge is home to around 11,000 residents, most of whom live in one or other of the five small settlements of Pearcedale, Blind Bight, Cannons Creek, Warneet and Tooradin.

Being located on the edge of the metropolitan area, there are significant pressures exerted on the planning of the Green Wedge to accommodate new areas for housing.

This pressure is coming from several directions, including discussions over continued expansion of Melbourne’s UGB; expanding existing settlements within the Green Wedge; establishing Schools and Places of Worship; and further subdividing rural land for rural living and hobby farms.

State Government Policy

The State Government has advised that the Western Port Green Wedge should remain as a rural Green Wedge. The State Government has no plans to increase the subdivision potential of the Green Wedge for smaller lots and any further urban development within the Green Wedge should be strictly limited.

Township Strategies

A policy of “limited growth” should be pursued for the townships of Pearcedale and Tooradin, which could allow for some increased densities and minor infill development in appropriate locations within their current boundaries.

A policy of “strict containment” will be pursued for the small coastal settlements of Warneet, Cannons Creek and Blind Bight, meaning no further development or subdivision will be permitted unless there are exceptional circumstances, due to concerns related to servicing and bushfire.

11.11.2 Rural Living and Subdivision

It is recognised that extensive subdivision for rural living occurred in the Cranbourne South, Devon Meadows and Pearcedale areas (located to the west of the South Gippsland Highway) prior to the introduction of Green Wedge Zones on 24 November 2003.

A review of planning scheme provisions within the Casey Western Port Green Wedge revealed that the various Green Wedge Zone and Green Wedge A Zone Schedules applying to these areas set minimum lot sizes which in many cases are larger than those that actually exist there.

Consultation undertaken as part of the exhibition of the draft Western Port Green Wedge Management Plan in 2015 and again in 2017 revealed that interest remains in these areas for additional subdivision to create smaller lots. However, this interest must be balanced against the need to protect the Green Wedge’s biodiversity (flora and fauna) and to ensure bushfire safety.

These matters are recognised in the Casey Planning Scheme through the application of the Environmental Significance Overlay and the Bushfire Management Overlay over much of Cranbourne South and Pearcedale which effectively quarantine this area from more intense subdivision.

The draft Management Plan exhibited in 2017 proposed that the minimum subdivision size in Cranbourne South and Devon Meadows (Precinct 2) be set at one hectare. A minimum lot size of four hectares was proposed for the rural areas of Pearcedale (Precinct 3).

In considering the implications of these proposed subdivision sizes, Council commissioned independent expert reports to be prepared regarding Roads and Traffic, Water Management, Bushfire Planning and Biodiversity. The conclusions of these reports are summarized in the following section:
11.11.3 Independent Reports

Roads and Traffic
The Roads and Traffic Report, prepared by GTA Consultants, estimated that the cost for road duplication and traffic management infrastructure across Precincts 2 to 5 would be $38 - $47 million at the subdivision levels that were proposed.

Water Management
The Water Management report, prepared by Engeny, advised that:

» Increased development would impact all elements of the water cycle within the Green Wedge

» Development would have a negative impact on the natural flow regime of the Green Wedge’s catchment.

» Relatively minor increases in flood level would be expected due to development which could be managed, subject to agreement by Melbourne Water.

» Runoff volumes and the frequency of flows would increase, however impact could be reduced through the use of water tanks for potable water and increasing the capacity of waterways to cater for more frequent flows and increased water volume - however the impact would not be eliminated.

» Increasing capacity of waterways is unlikely to be feasible due to the impact on their ecological health.

» Some mitigation of flooding and increased runoff could be achievable through:
  - maximising the use of rainwater tanks for potable water supply.
  - minimising direct hydraulic connections.
Bushfire Planning and Biodiversity

The Bushfire Planning report, prepared by Bushfire Planning, revealed that Precinct 2 and Precinct 3 would require extensive intervention (vegetation clearance) to create the low-fuel environment within which more intense development could be acceptable.

However, such intervention would be inconsistent with Clause 13.05 of the Casey Planning Scheme which provides direction on situations where bushfire and high biodiversity conservation values correlate:

Clause 13.05 requires planning (at State and Local Government level) to:

Ensure settlement growth and development approvals can implement bushfire protection measures without unacceptable biodiversity impacts by discouraging settlement growth and development in bushfire affected areas that are of high biodiversity conservation value.

The majority of Cranbourne South, Devon Meadows and Pearcedale’s rural areas all have been identified as possessing high biodiversity conservation values. These values would be lost should subdivision at the levels proposed be implemented.

The Biodiversity Impact Assessment, prepared by Practical Ecology, revealed that valuable habitat is situated in wider areas than currently protected by the Environmental Significance Overlay, including within Pearcedale and Devon Meadows. More intense subdivision would cause loss of this habitat and should not be supported. A Planning Scheme Amendment to apply a suitable Planning Scheme Overlay to protect this habitat shall be an Action under this Management Plan.

Accordingly, it is concluded that further subdivision as had been proposed should not proceed.
11.11.4 URBAN-RURAL INTERFACE

With the intention to create a permanent edge to metropolitan growth in Melbourne’s southeast, it is proposed to design a clearly recognisable urban-rural interface.

The Discussion Paper described wooden fences along the back of residential suburbs as a traditional approach, but other more visually interesting alternatives are also possible. For instance, local streets could demarcate the edge with housing on one side and open fields and farmland on the other. Alternatively, houses could be designed with an outlook on rural vistas instead of turning their backs on this outlook.

The urban edge could also be planned and used for walking and equestrian trails, with a landscaped buffer between housing and farmland to reduce tensions between farming practices and residential amenity.

With this sort of design approach, the interface could be recognised as an attractive and meaningful permanent edge to the city, rather than a temporary boundary before the next extension to the UGB. This approach may also help reduce bushfire impacts on the urban area.

The development of such interfaces would require financial and land contributions. Opportunities may exist to secure such contributions through potential subdivision or infrastructure projects.

A study would be needed to identify those parts of the UGB that already have an adequate natural definition for this urban edge, such as the Cardinia Creek, and other areas that would need to be treated as a priority. It would be part of the brief for this study to identify priority areas for design treatment.

Map 6 shows planning zones and settlements within the Western Port Green Wedge.

11.11.5 General Stores

Two general stores trade in the Casey Western Port Green Wedge, located in Cranbourne South and Devon Meadows. These General Stores service the needs of the rural communities that surround them and passing trade, including tourists.

It is understood that the general stores operate with existing use rights as they commenced trading prior to the introduction of the Green Wedge Zone, which prohibits retail premises.

Demand for their services may increase in future as a result of an increased population and visitation within the Green Wedge. This may result in a commercial case being made to intensify or expand these General Stores.

There is a need to provide a strategic approach to plan for these General Stores. Any strategy would have to be consistent with Council’s Activity Centres Strategy. Potentially, this may lead to site specific Planning Scheme Amendments to legitimise them and to provide for their orderly planning.
Map 6: Settlements and Planning Zones
11.11.6 Objective
Protect the Green Wedge from urban development, except for those developments that complement its primary values of agriculture, biodiversity, maintenance of viable settlements, and tourism.

11.11.7 Strategies
« Protect the values and assets of the Green Wedge by preventing further encroachment and intrusions into the Casey Western Port Green Wedge by urban development.
« Allow only “limited growth” for Casey Western Port Green Wedge settlements within their current boundaries, except for the coastal villages of Cannon’s Creek, Warneet, and Blind Bight where a “strict containment” policy would apply.
« Plan for ecological or farm-based tourism by identifying suitable areas for accommodation (not caravan parks).

11.11.8 Specific Actions
« Action 10: Prepare a design framework that will provide for a sustainable and permanent edge to the urban-rural interface.
« Action 11: Review the Non-Agricultural Uses in Green Wedge Areas Local Planning Policy for consistency with this Management Plan and the Activity Centres Strategy and amend the Policy as appropriate. Implement such changes as part of broader periodic Planning Scheme updates such as the Planning Policy Framework translation.

11.12 INFRASTRUCTURE

11.12.1 Background and Context
The Western Port Green Wedge accommodates local and State level infrastructure that serves both the local community and metropolitan Melbourne.

During community consultation, it was widely recognised that there will be ongoing pressures to accommodate more infrastructure within the Green Wedge. This could include gas and water infrastructure, racetracks, sewage treatment plants and the other infrastructure necessary for a metropolitan population, as well as accommodating mining and extractive industry.

Some of the existing and proposed infrastructure activities accommodated within the Western Port Green Wedge are shown in Map 7.

The accommodation of infrastructure in the Green Wedge is seen as a legitimate, necessary and appropriate use of Green Wedge land that significantly benefits the wider community.

However, large-scale infrastructure could have negative impacts on this document’s vision that the Western Port Green Wedge be “a permanent green and rural area” with an internationally significant biodiversity habitat and an innovative and productive agricultural industry.

Two examples were cited in the Discussion Paper to demonstrate this dilemma:
« The proposal for storm water retarding basins in the Clyde area to accommodate the recent expansion of the Urban Growth Boundary.
« The Koo Wee Rup Bypass proposals and the Wonthaggi Desalination Pipeline that cross through key parts of the Western Port Green Wedge.
As set out in the Guiding Principles (Section 3), proposals for local and State infrastructure should respond to the key values of the Western Port Green Wedge, and any potential impacts on the values of the Green Wedge should be minimised and mitigated, while considering the needs of the local community.

**Transport**

Examples of future transport infrastructure projects to be carried out within the Green Wedge might include: major rail or road infrastructure associated with the development of the Port of Hastings; a future airport in Melbourne’s outer southeast area (within the Shire of Cardinia); and transport needs associated with the ongoing pressures for expansion of the UGB. Additionally, further subdivision of land within the Green Wedge may generate a need to seal rural streets.

**“Net Community Benefit”**

There is Federal and State legislation in place, the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (national) and the Environment Effects Act 1978 (Victoria), which require an environmental assessment to be undertaken for projects that may have significant effects on the environment.

This process would be applied to such projects in the Casey Western Port Green Wedge and is endorsed through this Management Plan. Such a process should ensure that there is a “net community benefit” in terms of social, economic and environmental benefits that outweighs any negative impacts.

**11.12.2 Objective**

Recognise the impacts of major new infrastructure on the Green Wedge, identify strategies to minimise any adverse impacts and identify benefits that can be secured to enhance the Green Wedge.

**11.12.3 Strategies**

- Advocate that proposals for new urban infrastructure in the Casey Western Port Green Wedge be required to demonstrate that they would be of net community benefit.
- Investigate how new infrastructure proposals can be implemented so that they enhance and build on the assets and values of the Western Port Green Wedge.
- Advocate that the proposed Crib Point to Pakenham Gas Pipeline project minimises any adverse impacts on agricultural uses in the Western Port Green Wedge.

**11.12.4 Specific Actions**

- **Action 12**: Advocate for the development of an airport for Melbourne’s South East region and for the expansion of the Port of Hastings.
Map 7: Infrastructure and Extractive Industries
12. PRECINCT-BASED STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

The Casey Western Port Green Wedge is a large land area with a variety of land uses. It has been recognised that identifying precincts according to land use is beneficial, as it allows for the provision of more specific strategic direction for future land use and management.

The following sections provide a specific vision, objectives, strategies and actions for each precinct, as defined by the maps and accompanying descriptions. It should be noted that the directions outlined in Section 11 (Theme-based Strategic Directions) also apply to these areas.

The precincts, including potential Planning Scheme amendments regarding their zoning, are detailed in Map 8.
12. PRECINCT-BASED STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

1. INTENSIVE HORTICULTURE AND FOOD PRODUCTION
2. URBAN GROWTH BOUNDARY AND ENVIRONMENT
3. RURAL LIVING AND AGRICULTURE
4. PEARCEDALE TOWNSHIP
5. THE COAST

Map 8: Casey Western Port Green Wedge Precincts
City of Casey 2016
12.1 PRECINCT 1

12.1.1 Land Area

The Casey Western Port Green Wedge Horticulture and Food Production Precinct identifies land that is suitable for these primary uses due to its highly versatile fertile soils, larger lot sizes and ready access to water supply, along with its strategic location near the Melbourne market, export points, the transport network, and urban services.

12.1.2 Vision

The Casey Agriculture and Horticulture Precinct will be the hub of agriculture within the Green Wedge, taking advantage of its highly versatile soils and excellent access to water.

Land within the precinct will be prioritised for agricultural use, and opportunities for new, innovative or more intensive soil-based agriculture will be supported to ensure that the rich agricultural potential of the precinct is realised.

Opportunities for linking the community with the local agricultural industry will be identified and promoted to help build up food-based tourism within the precinct.

12.1.3 Future Directions/Preferred Land Uses

» Agriculture and soil-based horticulture to be the primary activities.

» Subsidiary tourism-related activity, including farm gate sales of crops and goods produced in situ, cellar door sales and ancillary farm stay accommodation will be supported.

» Discourage non-rural uses such as primary and secondary schools and Places of Worship.

See corresponding Action No. 6 in Section 11.5.3, which will help implement the strategic directions of Precinct 1.
1

CASEY HORTICULTURE AND FOOD PRODUCTION PRECINCT

Map 9: Casey Horticulture and Food Production Precinct
City of Casey 2016
12.2 PRECINCT 2

12.2.1 Vision

The Casey Urban Growth Boundary Interface Precinct will help protect the Western Port Green Wedge from the impacts of urban development and further urban expansion.

The Precinct will be managed to ensure that the current UGB is defensible in the long term and by providing a clear edge to metropolitan urban growth.

The Precinct has the opportunity to “showcase” environmental living in Melbourne’s South East by taking advantage of, and building on, its remnant indigenous flora and fauna, and its close proximity to the Royal Botanic Gardens, Cranbourne and the Western Port coast.

Planning for the Precinct will also take advantage of the close relationship that exists between agriculture (including horse breeding and training) and its productive soils.

12.2.2 Future Directions/Preferred Land Uses

The Casey Urban Growth Boundary Interface and Environment Precinct will:

» provide a permanent edge to metropolitan Melbourne

» maintain its rural character

» provide a transitional area leading to the Casey Rural Living and Agriculture Precinct and to the Casey Horticulture and Food Production Precinct

» provide a preferred location for non-rural uses such as primary and secondary schools and Places of Worship, specifically within the area bounded by Cranbourne-Frankston Road, Pearcedale Road and Browns Road, subject to strategic justification.

» protect and enhance native vegetation cover to provide habitat and movement corridors for native fauna, having regard to bushfire management issues.

» continue to be a location for animal breeding and training for the horse racing industry.

» offer a location for environmentally sustainable agriculture and horticulture.

» discourage the location of urban infrastructure therein without strategic and environmental justification proving that it could support the Precinct’s vision.

The Casey Urban Growth Boundary Interface and Environment Precinct is detailed by Map 10.

See related Actions 10 and 11 in Section 11.11.8, which will help implement the future directions of Precinct 2.
Map 10: Casey Urban Growth Boundary Interface and Environment Precinct
City of Casey 2016
12.3 PRECINCT 3

12.3.1 Vision
The Casey Rural Living and Agriculture Production Precinct will facilitate a combination of rural living and agriculture. This is made possible by its location bordering both the Urban Growth Boundary Interface and Environment Precinct and the Western Port Coast Precinct, and the fact that it contains a substantial area of productive soils and existing horse and greyhound training industries.

Strategies to encourage the Precinct’s re-vegetation to benefit native fauna and to provide a green outlook for residents will also be implemented.

12.3.2 Future Directions/Preferred Land Uses
The Casey Rural Living and Agricultural Production Precinct will:

» discourage non-rural uses such as primary and secondary schools and Places of Worship.
» retain its rural character.
» protect and enhance its native vegetation cover to provide habitat and movement corridors for native fauna, having regard to bushfire management issues.
» encourage the use of its versatile soils for environmentally sensitive agriculture.
» encourage animal breeding and training for the greyhound and horse racing industries.

The Casey Rural Living and Agricultural Production Precinct is detailed by Map 11.
3

CASEY RURAL LIVING AND AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION PRECINCT

Map 11: Casey Rural Living and Agricultural Production Precinct
City of Casey 2016

Potential subdivision for equine specific uses - subject to further investigation.
12.4 PRECINCT 4

12.4.1 Vision
The Pearcedale Township will continue to be the commercial and residential hub of the southwest portion of the Western Port Green Wedge and will be planned to avoid inappropriate development.

Any intensification of the development pattern of the Township, must be strategically justified through the preparation of a Pearcedale Township Plan, and must be proven not to detrimentally impact the surrounding Casey Rural Living and Agricultural Production Precinct, the capacity of existing infrastructure systems or on the environmentally sensitive environment of the Western Port Green Wedge.

12.4.2 Future Direction and Preferred Land Uses
The rural residential character of Pearcedale Township will be retained.

12.4.3 Specific Actions

» Action 13: Develop a Pearcedale Township Plan to define and protect its character, to manage further subdivision within its current boundaries, to determine appropriate development form and density.
Map 12: Pearcedale Township Precinct
City of Casey 2016
12.5 PRECINCT 5

12.5.1 Land Area
The Casey Western Port Green Wedge Coast Precinct is made up of two different land areas: the coast and its rural hinterland; and the coastal villages of Tooradin, Blind Bight, Cannons Creek and Warneet.

These two areas are addressed separately.

12.5.2 The Coast and Rural Hinterland

12.5.2.1 Vision
The Western Port Green Wedge Coast and Rural Hinterland will be maintained and enhanced.

The ecological values and environmental sensitivity of this land will be recognised, including the internationally significant Ramsar wetlands that play a vital role as a highly functioning ecosystem.

12.5.2.2 Future Direction and Preferred Land Uses

» Encourage horticulture and agriculture on condition that it is undertaken in an environmentally sensitive manner, addresses constraints imposed by predicted climate change and resulting changed physical conditions and circumstances, and is conducted on land which is located outside of environmentally sensitive coastal areas and outside of land containing coastal acid sulphate soils.

» Encourage tourism related use and development subject to demonstration that it would be environmentally sensitive and safe, including consideration of predicted climate change and resulting changed physical conditions and circumstances.

» Protect and enhance biodiversity.

» Further subdivision of land outside of the coastal villages will not be supported for reasons related to the protection of the area’s bush character, protection of the Ramsar wetlands, lack of services, and predicted climate change issues including sea level rise, storm surges and increased bush fire risk.

» Discourage non-rural uses such as primary and secondary schools and Places of Worship.
Map 13: Coast Precinct
City of Casey 2016
12.5.3 The Coastal Villages

12.5.3.1 Vision
Communities within and outside of the Precinct’s coastal villages will be sustainable, safe, peaceful and well-connected.

They will live in harmony with the environment.

12.5.3.2 Future Directions/Preferred Land Uses

» The existing residential and bush character of the coastal villages will be maintained.

» Expansion and intensification of the coastal villages will be resisted for reasons related to the protection of their existing built character and subdivision patterns, servicing constraints and climate change issues including sea level rise, storm surges and increased bushfire risk.

» Biodiversity in the coastal villages will be enhanced.

» No further growth will be supported for the villages of Cannons Creek, Blind Bight and Warneet due to infrastructure and environmental constraints.

» Tooradin may have limited growth opportunities within its current boundaries. Any future growth will be subject to a Township Plan.

12.5.4 Specific Actions

» Action 14: Prepare a Township Plan for Tooradin Village after completion of Action 9 to develop a Council policy on Climate Change.
13. IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING AND REVIEW

13.1 MONITORING AND REVIEW

The Casey Western Port Green Wedge Management Plan identifies a series of specific actions that need to be implemented.

The actions are listed in Table 5 - Implementation Plan. The Implementation Group includes:

» Casey City Council (Convener)
» Cardinia Shire Council
» Frankston City Council
» Mornington Peninsula Shire Council
» Department of Environment, Land, Water & Planning
» Melbourne Water
» Port Phillip and Western Port Catchment Management Authority
» Southern Rural Water

The Implementation Group will provide for a partnership approach toward the implementation of the Western Port Green Wedge Management Plan, would have responsibility for monitoring and overseeing its progress and assigning priorities for it.

A Biannual Report on progress against the Green Wedge Management Plan would be reported to the Implementation Group, and there should be arrangements to review the Management Plan over four-year cycles.

As part of this process, a limited number of key indicators of Green Wedge “health” would be identified and would form the basis for monitoring and the Biannual Report.

13.1.1 Objective

Ensure that arrangements are in place to resource, implement and monitor progress on the Casey Green Wedge Management Plan.

13.1.2 Strategies

» Ensure that appropriate governance arrangements are put in place to monitor and progress the Casey Western Port Green Wedge Management Plan.

» Ensure that there are clear lines of responsibility and accountability to implement the Casey Western Port Green Wedge Management Plan.

» Ensure that progress on the Casey Western Port Green Wedge Management Plan is monitored, timely, accurate and appropriate, and that it is subject to review on a regular basis.

13.1.3 Specific Actions

» Action 15: Monitor and oversee progress on the Casey Western Port Green Wedge Management Plan.

13.2 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The timeline for implementation is classified as follows:

» Immediate: six to eighteen months
» Short: eighteen months to five years
» Medium: five to ten years
» Long: ten to twenty years
» On-going: throughout life of the Plan
### Table 6: Implementation Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Lead Agency</th>
<th>Supporting Agencies</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Undertake a review of environmental and landscape protection controls (such as the ESO and SLO) within the Casey Western Port Green Wedge and implement change where appropriate. The review should include an investigation of appropriate landscape protection controls for geo-heritage sites. Implement such changes as part of broader periodic Planning Scheme updates such as the Planning Policy Framework translation.</td>
<td>Casey CC</td>
<td>DELWP</td>
<td>Immediate</td>
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### Table 6: Implementation Plan continued...

#### TOURISM AND RECREATIONAL LAND USES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Supporting Agencies</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Investigate the construction of a Western Port trail for a continuous walking and/or cycling route around Western Port.</td>
<td>Casey CC</td>
<td>Cardinia SC, Parks Victoria' DELWP; Mornington Peninsula &amp; Western Port Biosphere Reserve Foundation (Biosphere); Melbourne Water; relevant private land owners</td>
<td>Short</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Prepare a Master Plan for the construction of a rail trail along the former South Gippsland railway reserve between Clyde and Lang Lang and through Koo Wee Rup.</td>
<td>South Gippsland Shire Council</td>
<td>Casey CC; Cardinia CC; Parks Victoria; DELWP</td>
<td>Short</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Prepare a Tooradin Village Foreshore Master Plan to assist with the development of tourism attractions for the area.</td>
<td>Casey CC</td>
<td>DELWP</td>
<td>Short</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Investigate opportunities for additional parkland (for passive and active use, including equestrian facilities) in the Western Port Green Wedge for residents and for visitors from further afield.</td>
<td>Casey CC</td>
<td>DELWP</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
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### SOIL AND LAND CAPABILITY

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>DELWP</td>
<td>Casey CC; VFF; Local producers</td>
<td>Immediate</td>
<td>Protection of Casey’s agriculture</td>
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</table>

**Action:** Recognise the versatility of soils in the Casey Western Port Green Wedge and their capability to support productive farming and biodiversity through appropriate controls in the Casey Planning Scheme. Support a regional approach to this work.

### INTEGRATED WATER MANAGEMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
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<th>Supporting Agencies</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Casey CC</td>
<td>Melbourne Water; Southern Rural Water</td>
<td>Short</td>
<td>Facilitate access to Class A recycled water</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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**Action:** Continue to maximise Integrated Water Management opportunities and fit-for-purpose water use.

### AGRICULTURE AND HORTICULTURE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Lead Agency</th>
<th>Supporting Agencies</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Casey CC</td>
<td>Melbourne Water; South East Water</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Facilitate access to Class A recycled water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Action:** Advocate for access to Class A recycled water to support agriculture and horticulture in the Casey Western Port Green Wedge.
### Table 6: Implementation Plan continued...

#### CLIMATE CHANGE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Lead Agency</th>
<th>Supporting Agencies</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Develop Council Policy on climate change including background research, investigation of the Casey context and Policy adoption.</td>
<td>Casey CC</td>
<td>SECCCA, DELWP</td>
<td>Short</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### URBAN DEVELOPMENT

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Action</th>
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<th>Supporting Agencies</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Prepare a design framework that will provide for a sustainable and permanent edge to the urban-rural interface.</td>
<td>Casey CC</td>
<td>DELWP; Victorian Planning Authority</td>
<td>Immediate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Review the Non-Agricultural Uses in Green Wedge Areas Local Planning Policy for consistency with this Management Plan and the Activity Centres Strategy and amend the Policy as appropriate. Implement such changes as part of broader periodic Planning Scheme updates such as the Planning Policy Framework translation.</td>
<td>Casey CC</td>
<td>DELWP</td>
<td>Short</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### INFRASTRUCTURE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Lead Agency</th>
<th>Supporting Agencies</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Advocate for the development of an airport for Melbourne’s South East region and for the expansion of the Port of Hastings.</td>
<td>Casey CC</td>
<td>Cardinia SC</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### PRECINCT 4: Pearcedale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
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<th>Supporting Agencies</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Develop a Pearcedale Township Plan to define and protect its character, to manage further subdivision within its current boundaries, to determine appropriate development form and density.</td>
<td>Casey CC</td>
<td>DELWP</td>
<td>Short</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### PRECINCT 5: Coast Precinct

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
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<th>Supporting Agencies</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Prepare a Township Plan for Tooradin Village after completion of Action 9 to develop a Council policy on Climate Change.</td>
<td>Casey CC</td>
<td>DELWP</td>
<td>Short</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING AND REVIEW

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Lead Agency</th>
<th>Supporting Agencies</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Monitor and oversee progress on the Casey Western Port Green Wedge Management Plan.</td>
<td>Casey CC</td>
<td>DELWP</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
14. ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATES

It is recognised that from time to time circumstances may change, leading to the need for minor administrative changes to this document. Where an update does not materially alter this document, such a change may be made administratively.

Examples include a change to the name of a Council department, a change to the name of a Federal or State Government department, and a minor update to legislation that does not have a material impact. However, any change or update that materially alters this document must be by resolution of Council.

15. REVIEW

The next review of this document is scheduled for completion by 30 April 2023.
GLOSSARY

Council
Means Casey City Council, being a body corporate constituted as a municipal Council under the Local Government Act 1989.

Councillors
The individuals holding the office of a member of Casey City Council.

Council officer
The Chief Executive Officer and staff of Council appointed by the Chief Executive Officer.

Agriculture
Land used to:
- propagate, cultivate or harvest plants, including cereals, flowers, fruit, seeds, trees, turf, and vegetables;
- keep, breed, board, or train animals, including livestock, and birds; or
- propagate, cultivate, rear, or harvest living resources of the sea or inland waters.

Biodiversity
The variety of all life forms, the different plants, animals and microorganisms, the genes they contain and the ecosystems of which they form a part.

Climate change
A long-term change in the Earth’s climate, especially a change due to an increase in the average atmospheric temperature.

Food security
A state when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences to enjoy an active and healthy life.
Green Wedge
The open landscapes around Melbourne’s outskirts originally set aside in the 1970s to conserve rural activities and significant natural features from Melbourne’s outward growth.

Green wedges are defined in the Planning and Environment Act 1987 as land outside the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB), as described in a metropolitan fringe local government planning scheme.

Horticulture
Land used to propagate, cultivate, or harvest flowers, fruit, vegetables, vines, or the like.

Integrated Water Management
A strategy that co-ordinates all facets of the water cycle - water supply, sewage management, water treatment and storm water management.

Land capability
An assessment and classification system that describes the suitability of soils for most kinds of field crops.

Land versatility
The capacity of the land to sustain multiple agricultural uses. This can refer to land that is considered biophysically suitable for agriculture production. Land designated as high value, or biophysically suitable, has the benefit of requiring fewer inputs such as water and nutrients.

Non-soil based agriculture
Agricultural activities that do not involve the ground soil, such as food production using greenhouses or hydroponics.

Ramsar Convention
An intergovernmental treaty that provides the framework for national action and international cooperation for the conservation and wise use of wetlands and their resources.

Soil based agriculture
Agricultural activities that utilise and rely on the natural ground soil.

Threatened species
Any species that is likely to become threatened with extinction within the foreseeable future throughout all or a significant portion of its range. These species include species listed in the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (Commonwealth), the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988 (Victoria) and the threatened species advisory lists maintained by the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning.

Urban Growth Boundary (UGB)
Introduced in 2002, the UGB demarks the current geographic limit for the future urban area of Melbourne. Green Wedges are located outside of the UGB.
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Blind Bight / Source: Krutop Images, 2014
APPENDIX ONE

STATE AND LOCAL POLICY FRAMEWORK

State and local planning policies provide the strategic context for the Management Plan

PLAN MELBOURNE METROPOLITAN PLANNING STRATEGY

Plan Melbourne 2017-2050 is the Metropolitan Planning Strategy for Melbourne and sets the vision for and guides Melbourne’s growth through to the year 2050.

The Plan identifies the importance of retaining green wedges and locks in a permanent UGB around Melbourne in order to protect the values of non-urban land, including agriculture and agribusiness, biodiversity, recreation and open space, tourism, heritage and landscape conservation.

The Plan also provides a clear policy direction for long-term development options, the protection of the values of non-urban land, and the provision of opportunities for productive agricultural land and landscapes.

STATE PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

The State Planning Policy Framework (SPPF) sets out general principles and policies for land use and development planning for Victoria.

Clause 9 of the SPPF requires planning and responsible authorities to consider and apply Plan Melbourne: Metropolitan Planning Strategy where relevant.

The directions of the SPPF are reflected in policies contained in the State section of the Casey Planning Scheme.

Key issues relevant to the Western Port Green Wedge include:

» the proposed South East Airport

» the potential expansion of the Port of Hastings

» requirements for transport infrastructure

» upgrades and the growth of townships within the Green Wedge.

The overarching policy on green wedges is applied by Clause 11.06-7 of the Casey Planning Scheme, which sets the objective to protect the green wedges of metropolitan Melbourne from inappropriate development.

Strategies which support this objective include:

» Ensure strategic planning and land management of each green wedge area to promote and encourage its key features and related values.

» Support development in the green wedge that provides for environmental, economic and social benefits.

» Consolidate new residential development within existing settlements and in locations where planned services are available and green wedge area values can be protected.

» Plan and protect major state infrastructure and resource assets that serve the wider Victorian community, such as airports and ports with their associated access corridors, water supply dams and water catchments and waste management and recycling facilities.

» Protecting important productive agricultural areas such as Werribee South, the Maribyrnong River flats, the Yarra Valley, Westernport and the Mornington Peninsula.

» Support existing and potential agribusiness activities, forestry, food production and tourism.
» Protect areas of environmental, landscape and scenic value such as biodiversity assets, national and state parks, Ramsar wetlands and coastal areas.

» Protect significant resources of stone, sand and other mineral resources for extraction purposes.

» Provide opportunities for renewable energy generation.

**Environment and Landscapes**

Clause 12 – Environmental and Landscape Values seeks to protect the health of ecological systems and the biodiversity they support (including ecosystems, habitats, species and genetic diversity) and conserve areas with identified environmental and landscape values.

**Clause 12.01-1 – Protection of biodiversity** seeks to assist the protection and conservation of Victoria’s biodiversity, including important habitat for Victoria’s flora and fauna and other strategically valuable biodiversity sites.

**Clause 12.01-2 - Native vegetation management** seeks to ensure that permitted clearing of native vegetation results in no net loss in the contribution made by native vegetation to Victoria’s biodiversity.

**Clause 12.02 – Coastal Areas** seeks to enhance and encourage the sustainable use of coastal areas.

**Clause 12.02 – Coastal Areas** seeks to enhance and encourage the sustainable use of coastal areas.

**Clause 12.04 - Environmentally sensitive areas** seeks to protect and conserve environmentally sensitive areas.

**Clause 12.04-2 - Landscapes** seeks to protect landscapes and significant open spaces that contribute to character, identity and sustainable environments.

**Clause 13 – Environmental Risks** addresses bushfire, climate change impacts, coastal inundation and erosion.

**Natural Resource Management**

**Clause 14 – Natural Resource Management** seeks to assist in the conservation and wise use of natural resources including energy, water, land, stone and minerals to support both environmental quality and sustainable development.

**Clause 14.01-1 – Protection of agricultural land** has the objective to protect productive farmland that is of strategic significance in the local or regional context.

**Clause 14.01-2 – Sustainable Agricultural Land** encourages sustainable agricultural land use.

**Clause 14.02-2 - Water** has the objective to assist the protection and, where possible, restoration of catchments, waterways, water bodies, groundwater, and the marine environment.
LOCAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

The City of Casey’s Local Planning Policy Framework provides a local and regional strategic context for the Green Wedge Management Plan through the following policies:

Environment

Clause 21.04 – Environment seeks to protect and significantly restore Casey’s built and natural environments and biological diversity, recognising their fundamental importance in achieving a healthy environment and way of life for current and future generations.

Economic Development

Clause 21.05 – Economic Development seeks to build upon Casey’s significant regional competitive advantages, which, if properly managed and sustained, will provide positive social, economic and environmental outcomes for the City.

These advantages include significant population and housing growth, a regional CBD at Fountain Gate-Narre Warren, tertiary education facilities, potential for the development of a strong commercial sector, tourism and eco-tourism opportunities, a productive and diverse rural sector, a strong equine sector, extractive industrial resources, and locational advantages as a gateway to Gippsland and to the Melbourne metropolitan area.

Casey Coast

Clause 21.12 – Casey Coast recognises that this is an internationally significant area that is noted for its environmental attributes, particularly biodiversity, and which provides a wide range of habitats including salt marshes, mangroves, inter-tidal mudflats and seagrass beds for coastal plants and animals.

It also recognises the coast’s sustainable farming industry and the four coastal villages. Tooradin will be a busy recreation and eco-tourism centre servicing the Casey coastal communities and its visitors, in contrast to the smaller, serene villages of Warneet, Blind Bight and Cannons Creek. The vision for the Casey coastal villages is one of sustainable, safe, peaceful, well-connected communities living in harmony with the environment.

Casey Farm

Clause 21.13 - Casey Farm recognises the municipality’s unique, diverse mix of quality farm land with intensive agricultural activity, large-lot rural-residential and village living, with mixed rural pursuits, as well as genuine rural activities and businesses. It also recognises that much of the intensive agricultural area in the Farm has been earmarked for urban development by the State Government.

Core objectives for this area include:

- The need to manage Casey’s rural areas so that the “right to farm” is protected as a primary long-term planning objective.
- The development of an understanding within the community of rural land use and business management issues to facilitate the long-term economic, social and environmental sustainability of the Casey Farm area.
- To allow for equine- and dog-related activities to flourish in appropriate areas by providing planning certainty and protection from conflicting activities.
- To protect and enhance the qualities, and sense of place, of the townships, villages and rural lifestyle communities of Pearcedale, Cranbourne South and Devon Meadows.
- To improve waterway and environmental management so as to improve the quality of water entering Western Port.
- To provide an extensive and safe trail network.

Non-Agricultural Uses in Green Wedge Areas

Clause 22.08 - Non-Agricultural Uses in Green Wedge Areas is used to protect Casey’s ‘Green Wedge’ land from ad hoc and inappropriate development.
PLANNING SCHEME ZONES, OVERLAYS AND PARTICULAR PROVISIONS

ZONES

Green Wedge Zone
The purpose of the Green Wedge Zone is to recognise and protect non-urban land outside the UGB in the Melbourne metropolitan area for its agricultural, environmental, historic, landscape or recreational values, or mineral and stone resources.

Green Wedge A Zone
The Green Wedge A Zone provides opportunity for most agricultural uses and limits non-rural uses to those that support agriculture and tourism, provided that the amenity of residential living is protected.

The Zone seeks to protect and enhance biodiversity, natural resources, scenic landscapes and heritage values, and to promote sustainable land management. It also provides the opportunity for limited residential development subject to a permit and applies a minimum lot size of eight hectares unless an alternative is specified in a schedule to it.

Rural Conservation Zone
The Rural Conservation Zone applies to the Casey Coast. It is designed to protect and enhance the natural environment for its historic, archaeological, scientific, landscape, faunal habitat and cultural values.

Agriculture is allowed provided it is consistent with the environmental and landscape values of the area. This zone applies a minimum lot size of 40 hectares unless an alternative is specified in a schedule to it.

Township Zone
The Township Zone is applied to the coastal villages Blind Bight, Warneet and Cannons Creek. It is designed to provide for residential development and a range of commercial, industrial and other uses appropriate for small towns.

General Residential Zone
The General Residential Zone is applied to urban land within Pearcedale Township and Tooradin Village.

Commercial 1 Zone
The Commercial 1 Zone is applied to commercial areas within Pearcedale Township and Tooradin Village.

Industrial 1 Zone
The Industrial 1 Zone is applied within part of Tooradin Village, providing an employment node for it.

OVERLAYS

Environmental Significance Overlay (Schedule 1)
This Overlay applies to the Western Port coast and its hinterland, which are noted for their ecological diversity in terms of terrestrial and marine species, some of which are protected by international agreements to which Australia is a party. These species occupy a wide range of habitats including salt marshes, mangroves, intertidal mudflats and seagrass beds.

Environmental Significance Overlay (Schedule 4)
This Overlay applies to the area known as the “Cranbourne South Conservation Area” which is noted for its undulating landscape and its remnant woodland vegetation that provides a natural vegetation link and wildlife corridor extending from the urban areas of Cranbourne, particularly the Royal Botanic Gardens, Cranbourne, to Western Port Bay.
Heritage Overlay
This purpose of this Overlay is to conserve and enhance heritage places of natural or cultural significance; to conserve and enhance [those/the] elements that contribute to the significance of heritage places; and to ensure that development does not adversely affect the significance of heritage places. It is applied to specific land parcels within the Green Wedge.

Significant Landscape Overlay (Schedule 2)
This Overlay applies to the Western Port coastal area, which is one of 42 sites deemed to be a Wetland of International Significance in Australia. The Western Port coastal landscape is ecologically diverse, supporting a variety of fauna and flora species.

Land Subject to Inundation Overlay
This Overlay is applied extensively throughout the Green Wedge, particularly affecting the coastal areas through to Clyde. It identifies land in any food storage or food fringe area affected by the 1 in 100 year flood or any other area determined by the Flood Plain Management Authority, Melbourne Water.

Public Acquisition Overlay
This Overlay is applied to land located in Clyde, to the immediate east of the UGB, to set it aside for the development of a drainage retention area associated with future urban development.

Bushfire Management Overlay
This Overlay is applied to land located in Cranbourne South. Its purpose is to ensure that the development of land prioritises the protection of human life and strengthens community resilience to bushfire; to identify areas where the bushfire hazard warrants bushfire protection measures to be implemented; and to ensure development is only permitted where the risk to life and property from bushfire can be reduced to an acceptable level.

PARTICULAR PROVISIONS
Clause 57 – Metropolitan Green Wedge Land
This Clause applies to land that is situated outside of the UGB (unless otherwise specified). Its purpose is to protect metropolitan green wedge land from uses and development that would diminish its agricultural, environmental, cultural heritage, conservation, landscape, natural resource or recreation values.

PRACTICE NOTES
The Victorian Government has a series of practice notes on the operation of the Victorian Planning Provisions. Practice Note 31 provides direction on preparing a Green Wedge Management Plan, outlining the general requirements that should be met in the preparation of the document.

The Casey Western Port Green Wedge Management Plan has been prepared in general consistency with these requirements.
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