

4.4 Issues

The main issues requiring action in order to ensure the interface between urban and rural communities and the Whittlesea Green Wedge are defined and planned to reduce conflict are:

- The development of guidance on innovative treatments of edge conditions
- Clearly defined boundaries that preserve the integrity of both rural and urban areas which encourage appropriate diversification and further investment within these areas
- Guidance on buffer opportunities to create green breaks between settlements
- Development of effective partnership arrangements between residents, Council and developers, that seek to implement effective change management strategies.

This is not an exhaustive list, but rather an overview of the current key areas.

4.5 Planning Provisions

To date, the non-urban areas of the municipality have experienced pressures from a variety of sources such as urban expansion and small rural subdivision. Recent clarification of the UGB extension may help alleviate some of these pressures in the short to medium term as it provides certainty for non-urban landowners to invest in agricultural enterprises and provides incentives for farmers to practice good land management. However, the matter of appropriately managing and maintaining the areas of essentially green agricultural land which are now located within the UGB and which will not be developed for the next

10 to 20 years must be addressed through both statutory and non statutory policy frameworks.

4.6 Planning Guidelines

Within the context of the broader green wedge values, the following provides a guide for Council in its decision making regarding boundaries and buffers:

- A clearly defined boundary should be introduced around Whittlesea Township. This boundary should be established in consultation with the local community and preserve the integrity of productive rural land whilst providing a long term approach to defining urban areas in accordance with Council and State Government policies.
- Innovative treatment of 'edge properties' should be encouraged and supported in order to maintain effective land stewardship practices.
- Promote and encourage options for 'farming nature' on properties located within green breaks that contain significant ecosystems and habitats as part of farm diversification initiatives.
- Newly designated urban land should have effective change management strategies in place that seek to develop partnerships between developers, Council, new and existing residents. Sharing of experiences should be encouraged and could involve activities such as urban school students 'being a farmer for a day' to increase tolerance and understanding.

4.7 Actions

Refer to Part 3: Action Plan for the full range of actions proposed to sustain the Whittlesea Green Wedge into the future.

In summary, key actions proposed include:

- Investigate innovative options that support sustainable land use and management, especially at the urban-rural interface
- Undertake a review of the Whittlesea Township Local Structure Plan with an emphasis on defining the township boundary and addressing interface issues between urban and rural areas.



LAND

1. Rural Productivity and Agribusiness
2. Rural Land Stewardship
3. Landscape Qualities and Rural Design
4. Boundaries and Buffers
- 5. Extractive Industry**

5.1 Objective

The objective for this sub-theme is:

Extractive Industry objective

To ensure the needs of extractive industries are identified and protected in the context of broader green wedge values.

The need for extractive industries to be located close to existing and proposed markets is to be balanced with other competing needs, including the protection of areas of environmental significance and landscape amenity.

5.2 Features and Values

Extractive industry provides valuable economic benefits for the municipality, having a number of associated economic investment and indirect employment benefits.

5.2.1 Current Extractive Operations

Extractive industries are important to the municipality's economy. The majority of the City of Whittlesea's extractive industry operations are now located within the newly designated urban areas. Of the current Work Authorities, two are partly located within the Whittlesea Green Wedge (refer to Map 14).

Clause 74 of the Victorian Planning Provisions defines extractive industry as *land used for the extraction or removal of stone from land for commercial use, or to use the stone for building construction, road or manufacturing works.*

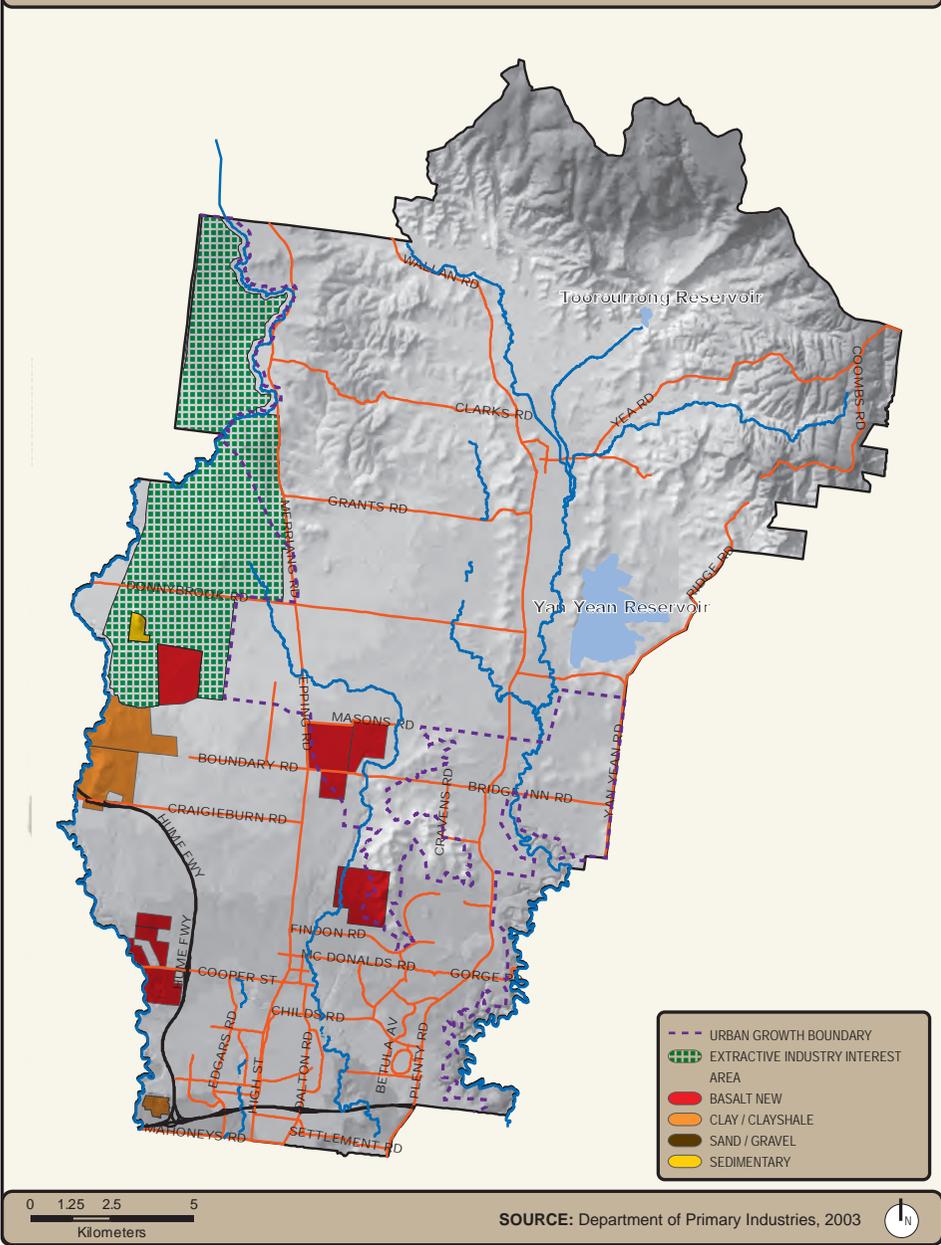
Stone is taken to encompass at its broadest sense, sand, clay, rock and gravel. This also refers to the treatment of stone or the manufacture of bricks, tiles, pottery, cement products on or adjacent to the land from which the stone is extracted.

Extractive industry can have significant impacts on the landform, air quality, biodiversity and water resources. In order to safeguard the amenity and environment of the surrounding land, it is necessary to ensure an appropriate separation distance, or buffer, between extractive industry operations and sensitive uses on nearby land.

New extractive industries are required to own a clearly defined buffer area which is appropriate to the nature of the operations (DSE 2006a). Many operators commenced in the municipality before this requirement came into effect and may rely on adjacent green wedge land for these buffers.



MAP 14 DISTRIBUTION OF EXTRACTIVE INDUSTRY WORK AUTHORITIES



5.3 What the Community is Saying

Consultation was undertaken with residents and community groups through a series of community forums and supplemented by workshops with government departments and agencies with an interest in the Whittlesea Green Wedge.

Despite the range of opinions expressed, a common thread can be drawn from the feedback received:

- **Locate extractive industries in areas of low environmental significance and manage buffer zones for conservation purposes.** Networks between extractive industries and Council are encouraged to satisfy other green wedge objectives such as environmental protection and community liveability.

Refer to the *Community Views Final Report* for a detailed summary of community responses relating to the ten green wedge sub themes.



5.4 Issues

The main areas requiring action in order to protect and balance the need for existing and proposed extractive industry operations within the Whittlesea Green Wedge are:

- Increased emphasis to be placed on networking with extractive industry operators in order to achieve reasonable green wedge outcomes from these sites
- Concern over the unknown effects of quarry operations on local hydrology (i.e. changes to ground water quality and supply as accessed by bores on adjoining farming enterprises)

This is not an exhaustive list, but rather an overview of the current key areas requiring action.

5.5 Planning Provisions

An extractive industry is not a prohibited use in the green wedge zones (GWZ and GWAZ). Through the State Planning Policy Framework of the Victorian Planning Provisions, the Minister has directed that an extractive industry cannot be prohibited within the green wedge zones and is subject to a planning permit process.

Specific zones within the Whittlesea Planning Scheme that are relevant to extractive industry operations include:

- *Special Use Zone (Schedule 4)* which has the purpose of providing for the use and development of land for extractive industry. This zone also aims to encourage land management practice and rehabilitation that minimises adverse impact on the use and development of nearby land.

5.6 Planning Guidelines

Within the context of broader green wedge values, the following provides a guide for Council in its decision making regarding extractive industry operations:

- The need for extractive industries to be located close to *market sources* is to be balanced with other needs, including the protection of areas of environmental significance and landscape amenity. Increased emphasis should be placed on developing networks with operators in order to achieve reasonable green wedge outcomes for these sites.
- Due to community concern over the unknown effects of quarry operations on local *ground water supply*, any new extractive industry operation should be encouraged to put in place all reasonable efforts to reduce the use of surface and ground water in extractive activities.

- Ensure that the required rehabilitation of extractive industry sites achieves environmental, community and economic benefits which are integrated with the surrounding area.

5.7 Actions

Refer to Part 3: Action Plan for the full range of actions proposed to sustain the Whittlesea Green Wedge into the future.

In summary, key actions proposed include:

- Consolidate knowledge of current extractive industry operations and potential impacts on green wedge values
- Strengthen networks between all stakeholders to foster open discussion of issues and opportunities for extractive industry operations.

