

Middle Yarra River Corridor Study

RECOMMENDATIONS REPORT
OCTOBER 2016

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2016



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Acknowledgements

Traditional Owners

The Victorian Government proudly acknowledges Victoria’s Aboriginal community and their rich culture and pays respect to their Elders past and present.

This study acknowledges that the Birrarung (Yarra River) flows through the traditional land of the Wurundjeri people with the waterway, its natural landscape and key features having social, cultural and spiritual significance.

Project Participants

The Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning would like to thank all who have provided their input throughout this, and past local and regional studies. This appreciation is extended to the many heritage, cultural, community, planning, environmental, landcare groups and friends of the Yarra River who have contributed their information, knowledge, views and time over the life of this, and past studies.

This study recognises the contribution of Jennifer Lardner who was a key project member who passed away in 2015. Jennifer’s contribution was invaluable.

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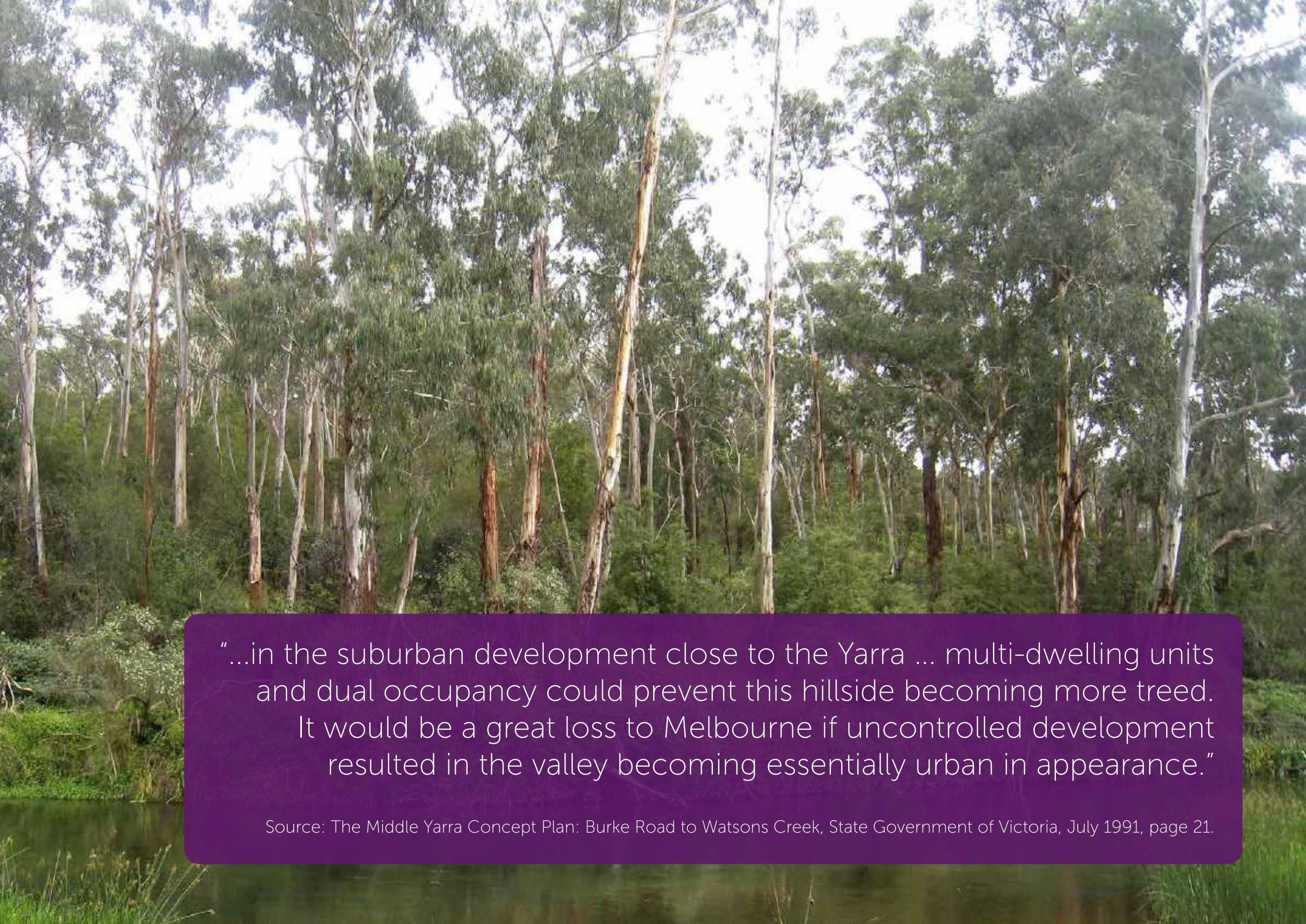
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"...in the suburban development close to the Yarra ... multi-dwelling units and dual occupancy could prevent this hillside becoming more treed. It would be a great loss to Melbourne if uncontrolled development resulted in the valley becoming essentially urban in appearance."

Source: The Middle Yarra Concept Plan: Burke Road to Watsons Creek, State Government of Victoria, July 1991, page 21.

1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the Study

Waterways make a significant contribution to Melbourne’s landscape and liveability. Melbourne’s two main rivers are the Yarra and the Maribyrnong. The Victorian Government is committed to protecting both the Yarra and Maribyrnong Rivers from inappropriate development and safeguarding public access.

The Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) commissioned this study of the Middle Yarra River corridor to better understand and assess the need for new or amended planning controls and design guidelines for land in proximity to the Yarra River between Burke Road and Warrandyte.

The objective of this study is to achieve consistent development outcomes along the Middle Yarra River to ensure that further development does not encroach on the river’s landscape, environmental, aesthetic, cultural and recreational values. Importantly, the study focusses on management of the interface between public and private land along the corridor.

The Middle Yarra River Corridor Study is being prepared in partnership with Banyule City Council, Manningham City Council, Shire of Nillumbik and Melbourne Water. A range of stakeholders, including local community groups, have been consulted in the development of the study to better understand the river’s values and the preferred outcomes for this landscape.

Project Partners

Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning

Banyule City Council

Manningham City Council

Shire of Nillumbik

Melbourne Water

1.2 Study Products

This Report

This report is the third of four key outputs for the Middle Yarra River Corridor Study. The full suite of documents to be prepared is depicted in the diagram opposite.

This report outlines a brief history of planning for the Yarra River, documents the values of the Middle Yarra River corridor, and defines a series of river interface character types and important views within the study area.

It also includes detailed analysis of the Middle Yarra River corridor which underpins the proposed guidelines and controls.

The report concludes with the proposed implementation of the study, including planning scheme changes. This section outlines the objectives, controls and guidelines proposed to protect the river environs and guide development into the future.

The Municipal Toolkits to assist Councils to implement this study contain detailed planning scheme recommendations by municipality.



1.3 Study Area

Broad Context

The study area, known as the 'Middle Yarra River corridor', is located between Burke Road (Ivanhoe) and Warrandyte. It includes parts of three municipalities: Banyule, Nillumbik and Manningham, and contains substantial areas of public open space managed by Parks Victoria.

The study area:

- Extends eastward from the Banyule municipal boundary at the Darebin Creek (on the northern side of the river), and the Manningham municipal boundary at the Yarra River in Buleen (on the southern side of the river) - through to Blue Tongue Bend in the Warrandyte State Park.
- Includes the open space corridor that surrounds the river, and its urban and suburban interface.
- Includes all land adjacent to the Middle Yarra River open space corridor, including both public and private land.

The study includes consideration of land west of Burke Road (within the City of Banyule) including material prepared as part of the *Review of Policies and Controls for the Yarra River Corridor: Punt Road to Burke Road* (Planisphere, June 2005).

Primary Focus

The extent of the study area has been further informed by:

- a primary focus on land within 500 metres from the banks of the Yarra River, which was assessed in detail as part of the field survey work, which will include the interface of public and private land;
- a one kilometre area of interest from the banks of the Yarra River to provide a broader context;
- the topographical character of the surrounding landscape, including consideration of land up to the 'crest' of the surrounding hill slopes;
- the visibility of land and development from publicly accessible locations including the Main Yarra Trail, other walking trails, bridges, areas of open space, main road corridors, and the river itself;
- identified important views and viewsheds; and,
- the location and extent of existing zones and overlays in the relevant planning schemes.

These defining elements are illustrated on the Study Area Map on the following page.





LEGEND

- Local Government Boundaries
- Parks Victoria Managed Land
- Open Space
- ~ Yarra River
- ~ Study Area (Primary Focus) 500m from the banks of the Yarra River
- ~ Study Area (Broader Context) 1km from the banks of the Yarra River

MIDDLE YARRA RIVER CORRIDOR STUDY

STUDY AREA



1.4 Study Process & Approach

Study Process

Preparation of this report has involved a review of background documents, together with the relevant planning schemes, VCAT decisions and Planning Panel reports. Analysis of GIS information and photography (including aerial photography) has also informed the contents of this report, together with a detailed field survey, undertaken over the course of three days, including one full day on foot/ bicycles.

The process consisted of an assessment of the river corridor's:

- landscape character
- key views
- values
- threats and pressures
- existing policy and controls.

The study process was undertaken as four key stages. A summary of each stage is outlined as follows:

Stage 1: Project Inception

The preparation of the detailed program to complete the study was undertaken in this stage. This included the public engagement and consultation program and resolution of the study area boundary. A community bulletin was circulated to Councils for distribution and listed on the DELWP (DTPLI) website.

Stage 2: Background Review & Analysis

Background research and investigation work was undertaken in this stage to define issues and opportunities for the study area. This included a detailed site survey and a review of all relevant concept plans, background documents and current planning scheme policies and controls.

Stage 3: Community Engagement

A targeted consultation was carried out in this stage, including a drop-in session. A second community bulletin was also circulated to Councils for distribution and listed on the DELWP (DTPLI) website.

Stage 4: Implementation Recommendations

Final recommendations, design guidelines and draft of proposed planning controls for each Council was completed in this stage. This report outlines the key findings of the study.

Design Principles

Siting, massing and design of development needs to take account of the particular characteristics of the Yarra River corridor as a sub-area. While the method for this study focussed on visual assessment of the landscape, it used a holistic approach to consider all the area's values, including aesthetic values (both visual and non-visual), historic, environmental, scientific, social and other values.

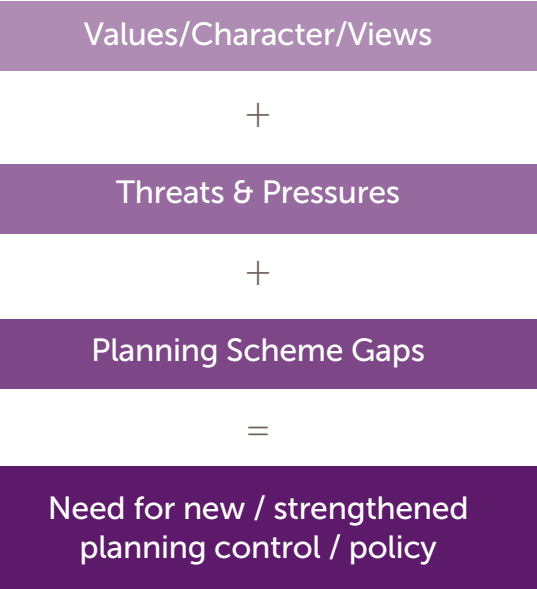
The following design principles, which have been applied in previous studies for the Yarra River and successfully tested in appeals tribunal hearings, have underpinned the approach to this study:

- The Yarra River is valued and appreciated as much for the vegetation and parkland that dominate its corridor as for the presence of the waterbody itself
- The topographical character of the Yarra River is easily diminished by larger scale development sited too close to its banks
- There are a number of distinct river interface character types, i.e. areas of varying topographical, landscape and built form character, through which the Yarra River passes, each of which warrants a tailored policy approach
- Strong built form controls are likely to be necessary for sections of the river corridor, in order to maintain and enhance its valued qualities. Analysis of existing built form controls shows where these may need to be strengthened in some locations.

Approach

The approach adopted by this study to determine whether new or strengthened policy and controls are required for this section of the Yarra River can be summarised simply as:

- Understanding the values, character and views of the river
- Identifying the threats and pressures to these
- Examining the current approach to managing development and protecting vegetation in the study area, principally through the planning scheme, in order to determine the gaps in statutory controls
- Recommending ways in which these controls could be strengthened to protect the identified values, character and views.



1.5 Consultation, Engagement & Community Values

Consultation & Engagement Goals

A consultation and engagement strategy was developed at the start of the project, setting out the means of obtaining feedback from stakeholders at each project stage.

The goals of the consultation and engagement strategy were to:

- Achieve a partnership approach to the preparation and implementation of all study products with all participating councils and Melbourne Water.
- Obtain the views of key community and stakeholder groups and other parties who have an interest in protecting the future of the Yarra River.
- Provide an opportunity for any interested party to have a say and/or keep informed as part of this study.
- Use information and feedback received through direct consultation to inform the development of the study recommendations.

Project Stakeholders

There are many people who have an interest in this project, for a wide range of reasons. The consultation and engagement strategy identified two key stakeholder groups - 'internal stakeholders' and 'external stakeholders'.

The strategy provided various opportunities for ongoing dialogue with both stakeholder groups. All stakeholders have been given the opportunity to share and articulate their vision for the area and to help shape recommendations for future controls and guidelines along the Middle Yarra River corridor.

Internal Stakeholders

The internal stakeholder group comprised key governing bodies and agencies including the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, Parks Victoria, Melbourne Water and the three municipalities within the study area of Banyule City Council, the City of Manningham and the Shire of Nillumbik.

Internal stakeholders own and/or manage a large portion of the land in the study area. They are also involved in administering existing planning controls and guidelines, and any future controls or guidelines the project recommends.

These stakeholders have provided direct advice and input throughout the study, through a Project Reference Group which met at each project milestone. Individual meetings and contact has also been made with these stakeholders as required throughout the project.

External Stakeholders

External stakeholders include the multitude of people in the community who value the river and live or work in, or visit, the study area. This includes Councillors, sporting and recreation clubs, community groups, schools, businesses and the general community who use the river's open spaces and waterway.

Given that the planning controls and guidelines recommended in this project may have an impact on external stakeholders, opportunities to inform and consult with external stakeholders have been provided throughout the decision-making process.

It is envisaged that direct engagement with potentially affected residents and landowners (based on potential new or amended planning controls) will occur during the standard planning scheme amendment process prescribed under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* post completion of this study. This will provide affected parties the opportunities to have their views considered and heard via an independent panel.

Consultation & Engagement Program

Consultation and engagement included:

- Project website providing an overview of the project with links to latest outputs
- Three Community Bulletins distributed at each project milestone, providing updates and seeking feedback from the community
- Email and distribution list assembled for direct mail to interested parties
- Meetings of the Project Reference Group at each project stage
- Phase one consultation comprising a community 'drop-in session' held in November 2013 at Westerfolds Park, which provided an informal setting for people to meet with the project team and Council representatives to discuss their ideas, concerns or aspirations for the study area
- Ongoing direct phone or email contact with stakeholders as required
- Phase two consultation upon preparation of the Draft Recommendations Report, which included distribution of a Community Bulletin, information on the DTPLI website and consultation at the local level undertaken by Councils.

Community Bulletins & website



Stakeholder Perspectives on the Middle Yarra

During the Stage 2 response period, submissions were received from a range of stakeholders, including the Yarra Riverkeepers, flora and fauna interest groups, community associations, resident groups and individuals.

A feedback form was prepared for the Stage 2 response period, which included questions to assist people in thinking about different aspects of the Middle Yarra:

1. What do you consider to be the main pressures and issues facing the Middle Yarra River corridor?
2. What do you value most about the Middle Yarra River corridor?
3. How can these values be better protected and enhanced?
4. A feature, place or view along the river corridor that you consider to be significant, scenic or beautiful?

Not all submitters responded to each question and an opportunity to provide other comments was also provided on the feedback form.

Submissions received were varied, with the majority of submitters providing detailed feedback on what they value most about the Middle Yarra River corridor.

A summary of key consultation outcomes indicates the values held for the river, concerns about its future and places along the corridor that are considered to be of significance.

Issues & Pressures

- Development close to the river edge and dominant built form
- Over-development near the river spoiling views and ambience of the river corridor
- Litter and pollution
- Water quality reduction
- Pest plants (weeds) and animals (rabbits and foxes)
- Inadequate funding for parks management

Values

There were many aspects of the river corridor in which submitters valued. In particular these included:

- The special river corridor ambience and aesthetic
- Its role as a refuge for indigenous plants and animals
- The open space and recreation areas long the corridor
- Native trees and animals.

Protection & Management

There was strong support for improved management and protection of the Middle Yarra River corridor and a number of detailed submissions outlined ways in which protection could be enhanced, including:

- Stricter controls for the protection of native vegetation and animals
- Further revegetation work
- Better management
- Increased funding for the Middle Yarra River corridor
- Implementation of built form development guidelines
- Improved planning controls.

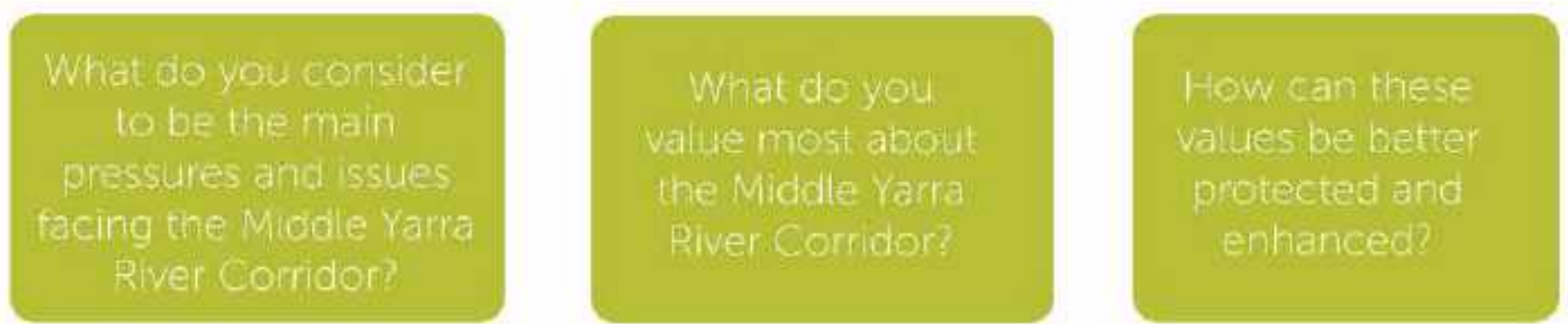
Special Places

A number of specific places along the Middle Yarra River corridor were mentioned as having special value or significance to submitters:

- Longridge Park
- Sweeneys Flats
- Candlebark Park
- Murundaka Park
- Banyule Flats Reserve
- Warringal Parklands, including Sils Bend
- Yarra Flats, Bolin Bolin Billabong
- Wilson's Reserve
- Westerfolds Park
- Pound Bend
- Tikalara Park
- Petty's Orchard
- The Warrandyte township.

Other Issues

Other specific issues were raised by many submitters ranging from wildlife protection, lot size controls and further protection against inappropriate development.



1.6 Key Relevant Studies for the Yarra River Corridor

Several key studies have been undertaken in relation to development along the Yarra River corridor in general, and provide the background to this project.

Plan Melbourne: Metropolitan Planning Strategy (2013)

On 9 October 2013, the Premier, Minister for Planning and Minister for Transport launched Plan Melbourne, a 50 year planning strategy for metropolitan Melbourne.

Melbourne has some 7000 kilometres of waterways within its metropolitan boundaries which form an essential component of the city's open space network. They provide a sense of place and important habitat for maintaining biodiversity. The rivers and creeks of Port Phillip Bay and Western Port are popular recreational destinations for residents and tourists, with around 90 million visits each year.

The Plan recognises the need to continue to protect Melbourne's open space waterway corridors from inappropriate development to ensure that these significant values provided to Melbourne and its residents are maintained and enhanced over time. (Initiatives 4.2.4, 5.2.2 and 5.6.2).

The Plan will seek to use the model approach being prepared by the recent planning controls implemented by the Middle Yarra Study and recent work prepared for the Lower Yarra River and the Maribyrnong River, in partnership with local governments and key stakeholders to prepare to implement planning controls to protect Melbourne's metropolitan waterway corridors.

The Plan identifies the need for this initiative to be completed in the short term (next four years) led by the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning has been tasked with leading this important initiative.

For further information about Plan Melbourne visit www.planmelbourne.vic.gov.au.

Review of Policies & Controls for the Yarra River Corridor: Punt Road to Burke Road (2005)

The State Government Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) commissioned Planisphere to review the policies and controls for development within the lower Yarra River in 2005.

The Study applied the principles of landscape protection to the lower Yarra River by assessing the river's values, distinguishing river interface types and identifying planning objectives that are relevant to this section of the river. Recommendations to protect and enhance the valued qualities of the corridor were made. This included non-statutory recommendations such as public land management and improved access, as well as a range of overlay controls in specific locations, including the Design and Development Overlay, Environmental Significance Overlay and the Significant Landscape Overlay.

The Department of Planning and Community Development (DPCD) undertook a follow-up project to implement the 2005 DSE report in 2010. This included consultation with Councils and development of draft planning scheme changes for the four municipalities, including overlays. The Middle Yarra Review project is a continuation of the work done in 2005.

Middle Yarra Concept Plan - Burke Road to Watsons Creek (1991 & 1993)

This plan was commissioned by the MMBW in 1991 and completed by Melbourne Parks and Waterways in 1993. The plan focused on a similar area to this project and addressed the protection of recreation, landscape and environmental values. It recommended a range of implementation measures including public land management and planning scheme controls through the creation of Streamside Environment Areas, Floodway Management Areas, Yarra Valley Backdrop Areas, Yarra Viewshed Areas.

Waterway Management Reports

A number of reports have been completed to address issues of waterway management along the river corridor generally. These studies include:

- Healthy Waterways Strategy (2013) by Melbourne Water. This has specific reference to the Yarra River and provides a range of management actions.
- A Cleaner Yarra River and Port Phillip Bay – A Plan of Action (2012) by the Office of Living. This report specifically focuses on the Yarra River and provides a framework for State Government action.
- Port Phillip and Westernport Regional River Health Strategy (2005) by Melbourne Water includes directions for the Yarra River catchment.
- Guidelines for Development in Floodprone Areas (2005) by Melbourne Water provides guidelines for building siting and landscaping.
- Yarra Catchment Action Plan (1999) by Yarra Care, DNRE.

Archaeological surveys

Archaeological surveys have been undertaken for the river corridor within the Plenty Valley. These studies are referenced in the Banyule Planning Scheme and include:

- Lower Plenty River Archaeological Survey (1991) by MMBW.
- The Plenty Valley Corridor: The Archaeological Survey of Aboriginal Sites (1989) by Isabel Ellender for Ministry for Planning & Environment.
- The Plenty Valley Corridor: The Archaeological Survey of Historic Sites (1989) by Fiona Weaver for Ministry for Planning & Environment.



Plan Melbourne: Metropolitan Planning Strategy (2013)



Review of Policies & Controls for the Yarra River Corridor: Punt Road to Burke Road (2005)

1.7 Evolution of Controls relating to the Yarra River Corridor

Recognition of the environmental, recreational, landscape and aesthetic values of the Yarra River corridor have been evolving over the last 30 years.

The Middle Yarra Study allows a new shared vision for the Middle Yarra to be developed with the community, by all of those who manage the water and land of the river corridor.

Over the course of its history, the Yarra River corridor has faced various development pressures and threats to its landscape and environment. Formerly this was due to the location of industry or agriculture along the river's edge. From the second half of the twentieth century, the river's attractiveness for residential and commercial use also began to cause concern.

Earlier planning studies for the Yarra focussed primarily on environmental and recreational values – similarly to other river corridors that were the subject of studies by the then Melbourne Metropolitan Board of Works (MMBW).

Creation of continuous corridors of open space and trail networks was a particular priority, and the MMBW began the process of reserving open space along the Yarra in the 1950s. This was the first step in addressing decades of environmental degradation along the river. The fact that government and agencies have continued to implement these recommendations to the present day attests to the continuing relevance of these studies.

Public interest in environmental issues emerged strongly in the 1970s through organisations such as the Save the Yarra League, that campaigned for the preservation of the Yarra Valley. A Statement of Planning Policy issued in 1971 which set out conservation and recreation as planning objectives, was a landmark in the process of preserving the Yarra.

In 1980 the Age newspaper launched a public campaign to 'Give the Yarra a Go'. This led to the preparation of the first comprehensive plan for a major section of the river - Planning Opportunities along the Lower Yarra River from Punt Road to Dights Falls (1983).

Others plans for the Yarra River corridor soon followed: Concept Plan Lower Yarra River (Punt Road to Dights Falls)

(1986), Lower Yarra River Landscape Guidelines (1988), Lower Yarra River Urban Design Guidelines (1992) and the Middle Yarra Concept Plan - Dights Falls to Burke Road (1990) and Burke Road to Watsons Creek (1993).

Recognition of the landscape significance of the Yarra River was more implicit than explicit in the original planning studies. Policies to protect the landscape values of the river have been evolving since the 1980s, reflecting the gradual emergence of accepted techniques for evaluating and protecting landscapes generally over the last 10-20 years in Victoria. Through consideration of landscape values, the later studies offer a more holistic view of the river corridor.

Significant milestones in the evolution of landscape protection in Victoria since the 1980s have included National Trust recognition of significant landscapes, the introduction by Councils of special zones to protect areas of landscape significance (e.g. Blackburn Lake area) and the inclusion in the Victoria Planning Provisions in the late 1990s of the Significant Landscape Overlay and Environmental Significance Overlay.

Since the early 2000s, assessment of landscape values at a regional scale has been progressed by the State Government's studies for coastal and rural areas of Victoria. These studies represent a further advance in the methodology for evaluation of landscapes and a wider appreciation of the importance of their protection and management among the community, planning profession and government.

The Middle Yarra Review provides an opportunity to examine the range of issues relating to the protection and management of the river corridor and its wider setting. The project will see an updated shared vision for the Middle Yarra developed with the community, by all of those who manage the water and land of the river corridor.

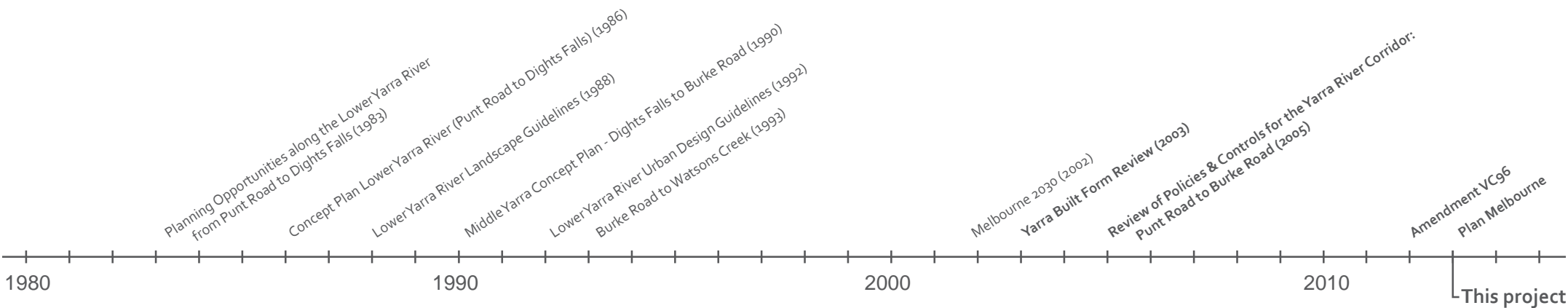


Yarra Falls, Collingwood, 1918

Source: www.aboriginalhistoryofyarra.com.au



Mat Golding, The Age Newspaper October 2012



A timeline showing the various policies developed for the Yarra River corridor since the 1980s

1.8 New Directions for the Yarra River

The Victorian Government has established a program of activity aimed at protecting the long term interests of the Yarra River. Commencement of the program was announced in August 2015 by the Minister for Planning.

The program is focused on establishing a dedicated Yarra River Trust and managing development impacts in the short term through implementing stronger planning policy and planning controls for areas along the Yarra River under immediate pressure from development.

Establishing the Yarra River Trust

The Victorian Government has committed to protecting Melbourne's iconic Yarra River from inappropriate development and promoting its amenity and significance by establishing legislation and a dedicated trust.

A Ministerial Advisory Committee was announced on 15 December 2015. The Committee is focused on providing advice to government on the role and responsibility of a future dedicated Trust and the form of legislative instruments required for it to be established.

The Committee will commence work in 2016 with the first step being preparation of a discussion paper to determine the river's long term needs, with advice to Government in late 2016 and a potential Trust established in 2017. The Committee will consult all stakeholders and the community throughout this process.

Implementing Stronger Policy and Planning Controls

The Victorian Government recognises that development pressures will continue in the short to medium term until a trust is formed. To support effective decision making along the Yarra River while the above investigations progress, the Minister for Planning has approved a program that focuses on strengthening existing planning policy as it relates to the Yarra River. This includes finalising a range of studies (including this study) and implementing their recommendations via suite of consistent planning controls within the Yarra River corridor between Richmond and Warrandyte – an area under the greatest pressure from urban development.

Strengthening State Planning Policy

On 12 August 2015, the Minister for Planning hosted a roundtable forum with council mayors and heads of Melbourne Water, Parks Victoria and the Port Phillip Catchment Management Authority, to outline the proposed actions the Victorian Government is taking to strengthen existing planning policy and controls for the Yarra River.

Councils and authorities were invited to collaborate with the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning in developing more effective and consistent planning controls for the Yarra between Richmond and Warrandyte.

On 17 September 2015, the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning hosted a workshop of senior planning practitioners from all councils, Melbourne Water, Parks Victoria and the Port Phillip Catchment Management Authority to discuss the components of a strengthened state planning policy, and to discuss the potential form and content of model planning controls. The feedback received through this workshop has been used to inform the development of strengthened State planning policy and input into the preparation of model planning controls for discussion and application within the Yarra River corridor, between Richmond and Warrandyte.

On 21 December 2015, Amendment VC121 was gazetted giving effect to a strengthened 'River corridor' and a new 'Yarra River Protection' sub-policy within the State Planning Policy Framework. The new 'Yarra River Protection' policy provides a strengthened basis and rationale for the protection of the whole of the Yarra River corridor to inform decision making.

Preparing Consistent Planning Controls: Richmond to Warrandyte

The Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning is progressing a program to finalise a number of studies and implement new and/or reformed planning controls for the Yarra River corridor between Richmond and Warrandyte. The program includes steps to:

- Finalise the Middle Yarra River Study Recommendations and complete associated municipal toolkits for Banyule, Manningham and Nillumbik councils;
- Review planning controls implemented in the City of Boroondara under VC96 and strengthened those controls with appropriate setback distances;
- Implement the strategic findings of the City of Yarra's 'Yarra River Strategy'; and
- Prepare planning controls for areas adjacent to the Yarra River within the City of Stonnington

The Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning is working in partnership with all councils to finalise the above work and progress a planning scheme amendment to implement agreed controls.

2. Values of the Middle Yarra River Corridor

2.1 THE VISION

“The Middle Yarra River will offer a variety of natural landscape settings and experiences in which its topography, banks and a continuous tree canopy are the dominant features in views of the river corridor.”

2.2 The River's Significance

Waterways play an important role in many aspects of daily life. They provide the foundation of complex ecosystems and support the region's productivity. They are also strongly linked to our sense of wellbeing as places of gathering, recreation and contemplation and popular recreational destinations for residents and tourists. Waterways are highly valued for their ecological importance, and provide water for drinking, industry and agriculture as well as critical ecosystem services such as nutrient cycling.¹

The Yarra River and its corridor is recognised in State policy as a significant open space, recreation, aesthetic, conservation and tourism asset for Metropolitan Melbourne.

As indicated above, its significance is linked to a wide range of values, which can be grouped under the following themes discussed in this section of the report:

- Environment & Biodiversity
- Character & Amenity
- Heritage
- Open Space, Recreation & Access

A statement of significance has been prepared to encapsulate the values of the Yarra River corridor, taking into consideration the corridor's significance within its broader context. This was used to inform the corridor's vision for the future set out opposite at 2.1.

"The Yarra River and the landscape through which it passes have metropolitan significance as an environmental, aesthetic, cultural, recreation and tourism asset. The river corridor links parklands and reserves into a near-continuous vegetated landscape experience that provides a highly valued, secluded, natural environment, enjoyed by local and metropolitan communities."

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

1

Melbourne Water, Healthy Waterways Strategy, 2013

2.3 Geographical Context

The Yarra River, and its corridor, is a significant natural asset and forms an integral component of the fabric of metropolitan Melbourne. From its upper reaches located in the Yarra Ranges National Park, the Yarra River meanders 242 km through the forested hills surrounding Warburton, the flat open farmlands abutting Woori Yallock, the undulating slopes of the Yarra Valley wine region, and the broad floodplains around Yarra Glen. The river enters Melbourne's suburbs at Warrandyte where adjoining parklands and reserves contribute to the character and amenity of the corridor. As the river approaches inner Melbourne, it heads south from Fairfield, making a sharp turn to the west before passing along the southern side of the Melbourne CBD. The river then flows out towards Port Phillip Bay through the Port of Melbourne and Hobsons Bay.



2.4 Topography

The changing topography of the Yarra River corridor is a defining feature of its character. This map illustrates how land rises gradually up from the river flats in the west to the high ground in Warrandyte at the east of the study area. A number of natural geological and geomorphological features occur throughout the Middle Yarra River corridor, particularly where urbanisation has not intruded to the river banks. As the river winds its way through Melbourne its highly vegetated naturalistic landscape corridor forms a backdrop to surrounding suburbs, helping to define the identity of the northern and north-eastern suburbs of Melbourne.



LEGEND

- Local Government Boundaries
- Yarra River
- Study Area (Primary Focus)
- Study Area (Broader Context)
- Topographical High Points (within and near the study area)

MIDDLE YARRA RIVER CORRIDOR STUDY

TOPOGRAPHICAL MAP



2.5 Environment & Biodiversity

The Yarra River corridor contains some of the most valuable flora, fauna, geological and geomorphological assets in metropolitan Melbourne. Indigenous vegetation and remnant riparian vegetation provide an important habitat for native fauna, nurture fragile flora species, contribute to the protection of water quality and flow regimes, and add to amenity/social values of the river corridor.

The Interim Biogeographic Regionalisation for Australia (IBRA) developed by the Australian Government Department of the Environment is endorsed by all levels of government as a key tool for identifying land for conservation under Australia’s Strategy for the National Reserve System 2009-2030. The latest version, IBRA7, classifies Australia’s landscapes into 89 large geographically distinct bioregions based on common climate, geology, landform, native vegetation and species information¹.

The Middle Yarra River corridor falls within the *Highlands – Southern Fall* Bioregion. The dominant ecological vegetation classes include Riparian Scrubs or Swampy Scrubs and Woodlands along the river corridor, and Dry Forests surrounding the river on both the low and high altitudes. The lower reaches to the west of the study area are dominated by Riverine Grassy Woodlands and Plains Woodland and Forests. These are illustrated on the map on the following page.

A large proportion of the study area contains vegetation classes classified as endangered or vulnerable, as shown on the map on page 21. Over 600 flora species have been recorded along the river corridor, including four of National significance².

While Riparian plant communities are adapted to respond to natural disruptions from flooding and erosion, ongoing effort is required to balance destructive impacts from the surrounding city, including invasions of weeds, litter, urban development, and wear from recreational activities.

These vegetation communities provide habitat for an extensive variety of reptile, fish, amphibian, and mammal species. Over 230 fauna species have been recorded within the Middle Yarra River corridor, including 11 of National significance³. The river itself is home to significant fauna species including the threatened Australian grayling and Australian mudfish, while vegetation communities along the river provide habitat for birds, including six species of migratory birds of international importance. Other animals that live along the banks include echidnas, platypus, koalas, possums, sugar gliders, kangaroos and bats.



Source: Planisphere

1 Australia’s Bioregion Framework, accessed from: <http://www.environment.gov.au/topics/land/nrs/science-maps-and-data/ibra/australias-bioregion-framework>

2 Yarra Valley Parklands Management Plan, 2002

3 Yarra Valley Parklands Management Plan, 2002

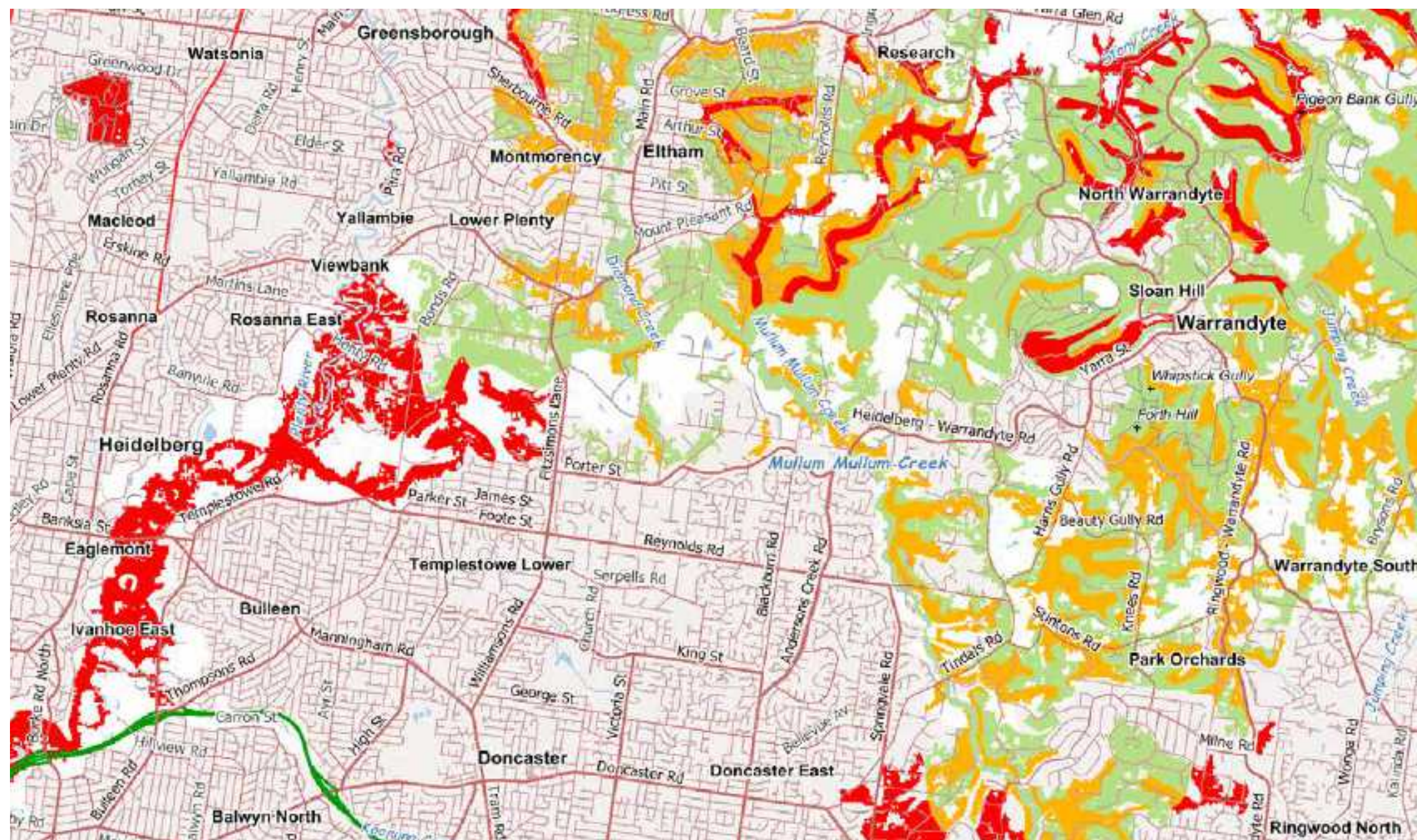


- LEGEND**
- Dry Forests - Exposed and/or lower altitude
 - Dry Forests - Sheltered and/or higher altitude
 - Riparian Scrubs or Swampy Scrubs and Woodlands
 - Riparian Forests or Woodlands
 - Plains Woodlands and Forests
 - Riverine Grassy Woodlands and Forests
 - Herb-rich Woodlands
 - Wetlands

Map source: Department of Environment and Primary Industries, 2007

MIDDLE YARRA RIVER CORRIDOR STUDY

ECOLOGICAL VEGETATION CLASSES



LEGEND

- Endangered
- Vulnerable
- Least Concern

Map source: Department of Environment and Primary Industries, 2007

MIDDLE YARRA RIVER CORRIDOR STUDY

CONSERVATION OF STATUS OF ECOLOGICAL VEGETATION CLASSES

2.6 Character & Amenity

The Melbourne Water 2012 Community Perceptions Survey identified that 95% of people consider waterways as ‘very important’ to Greater Melbourne’s overall liveability.

Urban & Landscape Character

The general value ascribed to the Yarra’s ‘natural’ landscape character, despite the obvious presence of buildings, rebuilt river banks, power lines, and so on, relies heavily on indigenous vegetation. According to the 2003 *City of Yarra Built Form Review*:

Most people ... experience the river corridor not from the river and its banks, but from vantage points outside the corridor, or as they drive across the river on a bridge. What they see (or expect to see) is a line of trees, a heavily vegetated river corridor. They will rarely see the water itself, except perhaps as a glimpse amongst the trees. The expression of the river corridor as a corridor of vegetation, particularly of canopy trees, is most important.

This heavily vegetated river corridor underpins the distinctive character of surrounding suburbs including Ivanhoe, Bulleen, Viewbank, Templestowe, Heidelberg, Lower Plenty, Eltham and Warrandyte.

The Middle Yarra River corridor contains a variety of natural and modified landscapes, including bush, open pastoral land, rivers, billabongs and floodplains. While parts of the study area are dominated by natural landscapes, a river valley’s character is also shaped by, and reveals the character of, the land it passes through. So inevitably a river passing through an urban area will be shaped by, and reveal aspects of, the urban character. Similarly a river passing through a more isolated rural area will be shaped by its surrounding rural landscapes¹.

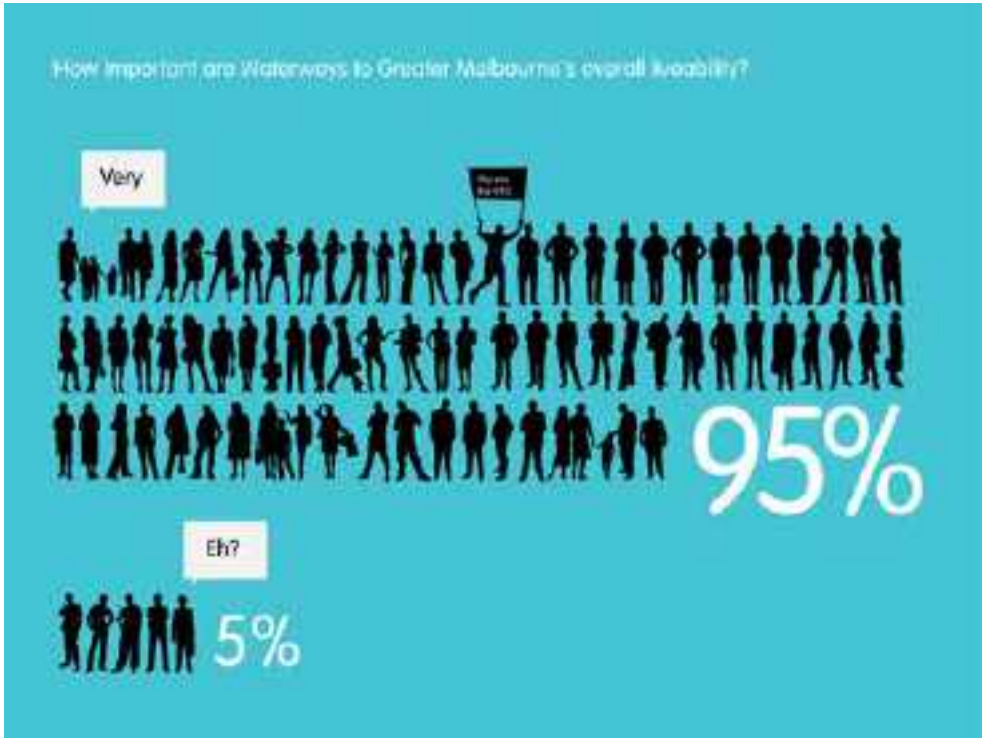
The character of the river corridor often differs from one side of the river to the other largely because of the areas topography, and history of development/land use.

Within the Middle Yarra River corridor, these variations in character are described by the six ‘river interface character types’ ascribed to the study area (refer to Chapter 3 for detail).

Amenity

The extent of the remnant bushland and ‘leafy’ environment that provides habitat for wildlife and a secluded, peaceful haven for visitors, is a highly valued and unique asset contributing to the character and amenity of Melbourne’s northern and eastern suburbs.

The heavily vegetated river corridor provides a significant setting and backdrop for surrounding suburbs and activity centres as far out as Box Hill. Indeed, many real estate agents market the river’s ‘green-treed corridor’ as a point of difference to attract investment.



Source: Melbourne Water Community Perceptions Survey, 2012

1 Review of Policies & Controls for the Yarra River Corridor, 2005

2.7 Cultural Heritage

The Yarra River has been the ‘lifeblood’ of the region for tens of thousands of years. Over the last two centuries, it has played a pivotal role in the development of Melbourne. The landscapes that we see and experience today have been shaped by human values of the river over time.

Cultural heritage elements, which show the history of human interaction with the landscape, occur throughout the Middle Yarra River corridor and include features of European and Aboriginal heritage significance.

The river flows through Wurundjeri Country, part of the East Kulin Nation, and is known as Birrarung, meaning ‘place of mists and shadows’. For at least thirty thousand years prior to European settlement, it was the lifeblood of the community; an abundant source of fresh water, food and resources, and a focal point of daily existence. Spiritually, the river is a dreaming path and a point of deep connection to the land, and prior to European settlement, clans followed its course and camped on its banks throughout the year.

While the available data on Aboriginal cultural heritage values is varied, scatters of stone artefacts, tools, and river red gum scars provide clues of an association with the river over a long period of time. Today, Aboriginal cultural heritage values are particularly associated with the waterway itself, and areas of natural landscapes which remain undeveloped. Key landscape features such as river confluences with its tributaries, including the Darebin, Merri and Diamond Creeks, high points, and the Bolin Bolin Billabong, were important meeting places with other clans of the Kulin Nation and also have a high value for Aboriginal communities.

The discovery of the Yarra, and its fresh water, was crucial to the founding and subsequent development of Melbourne. The first European to appreciate the pristine beauty of the meandering waterway was Charles Grimes, Acting Surveyor General of New South Wales. During his exploration in 1803 he named it ‘Freshwater River’, with another member of the party, James Flemming, declaring it to be “*the most eligible place for a settlement that I have seen*”.

On the banks of the Yarra on 8 June, 1835 John Batman enacted his now infamous purchase of 600,000 acres of land with the local Kulin clans. Three months later, huts were constructed near the site of the present day Immigration Museum.

The river was the lifeblood for the fledgling colony, providing water, fertile land for farming and access. However, over the subsequent decades its role and value changed dramatically - it was a ready-made sewer and it gave early industries the water necessary in their processes. After a steady deterioration in water quality during the 19th century, measures have been undertaken over recent decades to clean up the river.

Features and places of European heritage value occur throughout the study area, including a number of homesteads, estates and architecturally significant buildings dating back to 1839. Most notably, Viewbank Homestead in Viewbank (circa 1839), Charterisville in Ivanhoe (circa 1840), Pontville Homestead in Templestowe (circa 1843), Banyule Homestead

in Heidelberg (circa 1846) and the Mount Eagle and Glenard Estates designed by Walter Burley Griffin in 1914 and 1915, respectively.

In addition, the study area contains a number of more modern places of heritage significance including Naughton House and Rifle Factory in Wrandyite (circa 1946) and Snelleman House in East Ivanhoe (circa 1954). Sites such as Petty’s Orchard and the Pound Bend Tunnel also provide an important reflection of the area’s history and past land uses.

The history and significance of the Middle Yarra River corridor also has strong associations with the visual arts – the river and its surrounding landscapes providing the main source of inspiration for Australian impressionist ‘Heidelberg School’ artists of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, whose works were mostly painted in the Heidelberg area. Particular sites of significance include the Montsalvat artist’s colony in Eltham (circa 1934) and Heide II Park & Art Gallery in Bulleen (circa 1965), which continue to attract visitors from Victoria, interstate and overseas.

All of the sites listed above have been classified as heritage places of State significance and are listed on the Victorian Heritage Register.

The Yarra River, between Warburton and Wrandyite is listed as a Victorian Heritage River, under the Heritage Rivers Act 1992. There is strong support among the community for this listing to be extended further west into the study area.

Information Sources:

Yarra Riverkeeper Association [online] <http://www.yarrariver.org.au/>

Parks Victoria Parknotes: Yarra River Visitors Guide [online] <http://parkweb.vic.gov.au/>

Melbourne Water *History of the Yarra River* [online] Available at: <http://www.melbournewater.com.au/aboutus/historyandheritage/History-of-our-rivers-and-creeks/Pages/History-of-the-Yarra-River.aspx>

Yarra River Business Association [online] <http://www.yarrariver.info/history/>

Victorian Heritage Register [online] <http://vhd.heritagecouncil.vic.gov.au/>

Review of Policies & Controls for the Yarra River Corridor, 2005

Yarra Valley Parklands Management Plan, 2002

Middle Yarra Concept Plan, Burke Road to Watsons Creek, 1993



An artist's impression of Batman's treaty with the local Kulin clans in 1835



Banyule Homestead in Heidelberg (circa 1846)



Arthur Streeton's 'Still glides the stream and shall forever glide', painted in 1890. Streeton has captured the Yarra River below Eaglemont as it slowly meanders through the river flats. Beyond the river is the Bolin Bolin Billabong and distant mountains.

2.8 Open Space, Recreation & Access

The Middle Yarra River corridor is one of the most visited areas of regional open space in Melbourne, attracting over one million visits per year¹. The diverse range of landscapes offer a wide variety of recreational pursuits, providing health and wellbeing and social benefits for a broad cross-section of the community.

Open spaces associated with the Yarra River represent the largest and most important resource of parklands and green spaces in inner Melbourne, particularly in the more built-up areas, where the density of development is such that access to open space is limited. These areas of public parkland and open space are vital in contributing to the health and wellbeing of the community and the character of the local and regional landscape.

The Middle Yarra River open space corridor is readily accessible to a large proportion of Melbourne's population, particularly for those located in the inner northern and eastern suburbs. Furthermore, wider metropolitan access to the southern section of the corridor has been improved in recent years, with the development of EastLink and its associated bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure.

The Middle Yarra River corridor comprises a series of regionally significant parks and reserves that extend along the Yarra River for approximately 16km, from Ivanhoe to Warrandyte. Parklands and open space within the study area include land managed by Parks Victoria, local government, VicRoads, Melbourne Water and private land owners.

The Main Yarra Trail traverses the study area for 18 kilometres from Burke Road in Ivanhoe to the confluence of the Mullum Mullum Creek with the Yarra River in Templestowe. From this point on, it continues as the Mullum Mullum Trail to Park Road in Donvale and will connect to the Eastlink Trail in 2017. This linear trail network connects the Middle Yarra River corridor to other areas of open space, schools, surrounding suburbs and the city; offering urban dwellers ready access to a unique naturalistic setting to enjoy their daily commute and other recreational pursuits.

A central objective of previous strategic planning of the river corridor has been to 'develop a continuous linear trail network for non-motorised movement within the area, which will link with areas of open space upstream and downstream and facilitate cross-valley movement' (1985 *Lower Yarra River Development Plan*, and repeated in later plans including *Linking People and Spaces*, 2002). While this has been largely successful with the development of the Main Yarra Trail and associated links, the linear trail network currently terminates at Tikalara Park in Templestowe. From this point on, the valued seclusion of sections of the corridor, and environmental constraints, may warrant no further development of formal trails along the Yarra River if an alternative road reserve route is available.

The open space corridor varies in width from substantial parklands, to narrow linear reserves at the river's edge. Sports fields, playgrounds and golf courses dominate the lower reaches between Burke Road and Birrarung Park. The middle section of the corridor is primarily being utilised as a linear park, which occasionally opens out to substantial areas of

parkland (e.g. Westerfolds Park) available for informal active and passive recreation. Further upstream the Main Yarra Trail terminates and public access to the open space corridor becomes more limited due to the presence of private property, golf courses or public institutions. As a result, some sections of the corridor are accessible only via the river itself (by non-motorised water craft such as canoes or kayaks due to its shallow depth). This contributes to the highly valued sense of isolation and seclusion in these parts.

A number of recreational facilities such as barbeques, picnic shelters, fishing jetties, viewing platforms and boardwalks, are provided at various locations along the rivers banks.

Increasing investment in public facilities, including recreation and tourism facilities (e.g. Heide Gallery in Bulleen, wetlands in Heidelberg, boardwalk infrastructure along the Main Yarra Trail etc.), continues to progressively improve the range of facilities and access options within the river corridor.

The cultural and environmental significance of many of these spaces is also recognised by heritage or environmental controls over buildings or structures within these spaces, the river banks, significant trees or the parklands themselves.

Key open space and recreation features along the river corridor are shown on the map on the following page. This includes the river's parklands, walking trails, key public recreation nodes and facilities, and main access points. This network of features offers a wide range of economic, health and wellbeing, and social benefits for a broad cross-section of the community.



Warringal Parklands regional family playground in Heidelberg



A section of the Main Yarra Trail near Templestowe

2.9 Threats & Pressures

Threats to Built Form Character

Potential threats to the character of built form throughout the study area include:

- Built form that is highly visible along the ridgeline/skyline and surrounding hillslopes, as viewed from the Yarra River corridor and areas of public open space;
- Bulky, heavily massed buildings;
- Bold, bright colours and reflective finishes on buildings;
- Large surface areas of white/off-white/light shades of colour;
- Built form that is not substantially screened by vegetation;
- Built form that does not respect the preferred building height for the area;
- Built form that does not respect the heritage values of the local area;
- High, solid fencing or gates; and
- Signage that is out of scale or character with the landscape.

Threats to Landscape Character

Potential threats to the landscape character of the study area include:

- Removal of significant indigenous vegetation;
- Loss of mature vegetation and canopy trees;
- Lack of vegetation/ landscaping;
- Built form that penetrates the predominant tree canopy height;
- Excessive disturbance to existing topography caused by cut and fill;
- Large areas of hard paved surfaces, including driveways and car parking areas; and
- Proliferation of weeds.

Other Threats

A number of other threats are relevant to the study area, but are more appropriately addressed at a whole of catchment level or through another policy mechanism, and as such are not addressed in detail in this report. These threats include issues relating to water quality, flooding, bushfires, vegetation protection and management, litter, and control of environmental weeds and pests.



All buildings visible from the river have the potential to impact upon its character, values and visual amenity. Buildings that are located atop ridgelines or finished in light coloured materials are particularly visible, even at a distance.

In some places fencing provides a poor interface with the Yarra River corridor and views from the Main Yarra Trail

3. River Interface Character Types Analysis

3.1 Middle Yarra River Interface Character Types

Analysis of the landscape river interface character types within the Middle Yarra Corridor is the first step in understanding how the river’s environment and landscape can be protected and managed into the future.

Introduction

The landscape, topographic and built form character of the Middle Yarra River corridor has been documented through research, field surveys and analysis of mapping data and aerial photography.

The study area has been divided into six ‘river interface character types’ based on areas of common landscape, built form and topographical characteristics. In some cases, a particular river interface character type may occur more than once, in a separate geographical location. The six different river interface character types, illustrated on the map on the following page, include:

- Type 1: Leafy Suburban
- Type 2: Bush Residential
- Type 3: Rural Environment
- Type 4: Warrandyte Township
- Type 5: Parklands and Recreation
- Type 6: Yarra River Conservation

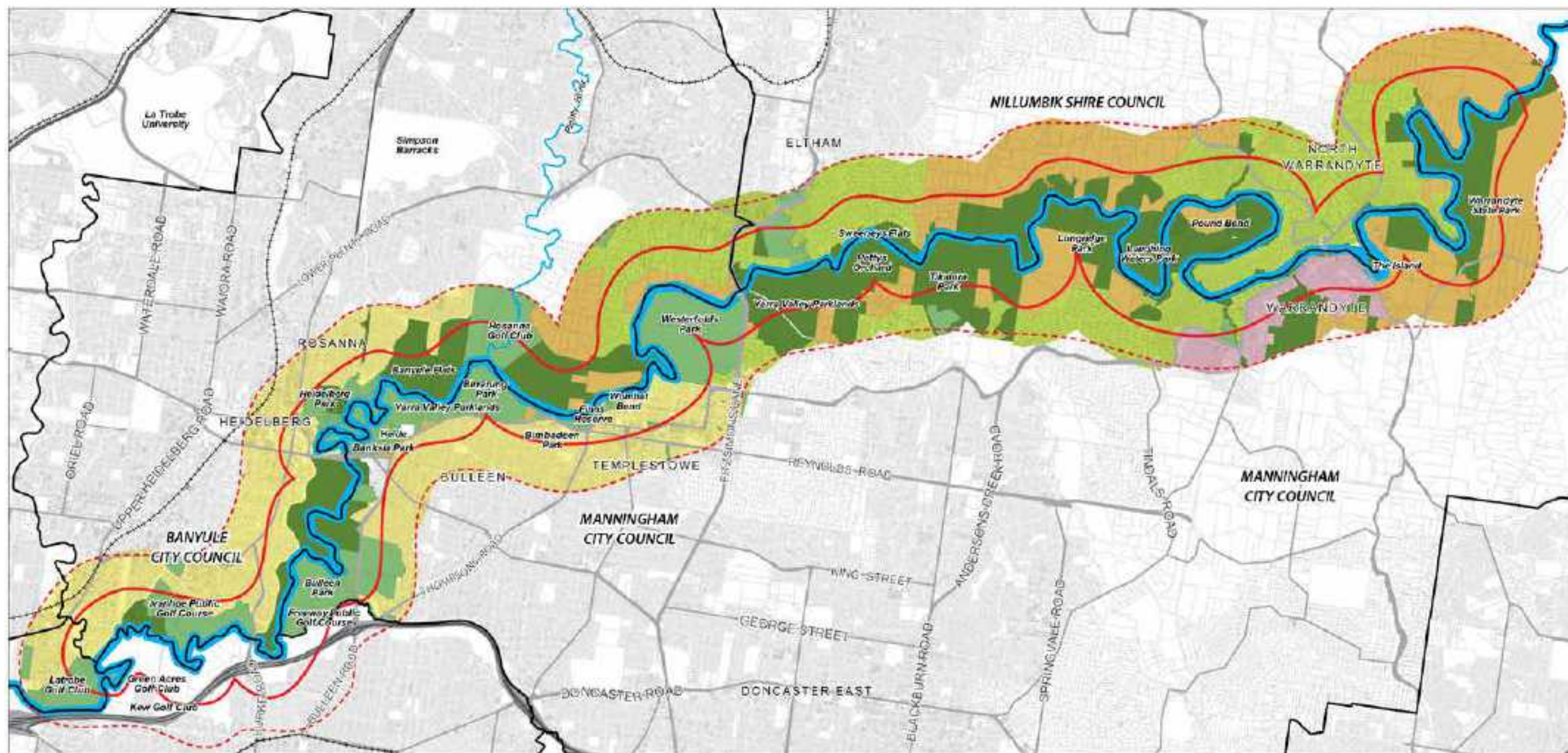
The characteristics of each type are outlined in detail, and address the following specific elements:

- Key Features
- Topographic & Landscape Character
- Land Use & Built Form
- Pattern of Viewing
- Other Values
- Potential Threats to Values
- Current Management

This chapter identifies a number of issues that can be addressed through the planning scheme which include:

- Maintaining vegetation as the dominant visual element in all parts of the river corridor.
- Buildings, structures or fencing that are visible from the river which can have an impact upon its landscape character and environment. This is a key consideration where developable land is located near or adjacent to the river environment.
- Where buildings, structures or fencing are visible from the river, ensuring they are designed to be ‘immersed’ within the landscape.
- Ensuring that the design principles for the Middle Yarra River corridor as a whole landscape are consistent across each municipality and implemented through the three planning schemes as relevant to that area.
- Ensuring that the approach to management of public land is also consistent with the overall vision for the Middle Yarra corridor.

This analysis informs the desired siting and design outcomes for new buildings, structures and fencing (e.g. setbacks, height, site coverage etc.) that are discussed in the following chapters.



LEGEND

- Local Government Boundaries
- Yarra River
- Other Waterways
- Study Area (Primary Focus)
- Study Area (Broader Context)

Character Types

- River Interface Character Type 1: Leafy Suburban
- River Interface Character Type 2: Bush Residential
- River Interface Character Type 3: Rural Environment
- River Interface Character Type 4: Warrandyte Townships
- River Interface Character Type 5: Parks and Recreation
- River Interface Character Type 6: Yarra River Conservation

MIDDLE YARRA RIVER CORRIDOR STUDY RIVER INTERFACE CHARACTER TYPES



3.2 River Interface Character Type 1: Leafy Suburban



The Leafy Suburban river interface character type comprises established residential neighbourhoods away from the river's edge, beyond the buffer of open parklands that surround this part of the Yarra corridor.

The Leafy Suburban river interface character type forms a continuation of the area identified in the Yarra River Review 2005 that included residential neighbourhoods within Kew, Ivanhoe, Alphington and Fairfield. These areas have a distinctively well-treed character, which complements the landscape character of the river corridor.

The Leafy Suburban river interface character type includes areas to the north and south of the river, extending for some distance beyond the immediate interface with the river's edge or parklands. North of the river are the neighbourhoods, within the City of Banyule, Ivanhoe, Heidelberg and Viewbank, . South of the river, it includes residential neighbourhoods of Bulleen and Templestowe within the City of Manningham.



Key Features

Key features of the Leafy Suburban river interface character type include:

- Established residential neighbourhoods, mostly located immediately beyond the parklands and recreation areas along the river corridor
- Mature trees and understorey planting throughout private and public land (of exotic and native species), which creates a consistent tree canopy throughout each neighbourhood - described as the 'Yarra Backdrop Areas' in the Middle Yarra Concept Plan (1990)
- Single dwellings, one-two storey in scale, set spaciouly apart
- Flat topography of the Yarra River flats, rising up to higher ground beyond
- Main Yarra Trail providing access along the northern side of the river, limited trail access on the southern side
- Adjacent to formal and informal parklands, recreation and sports grounds, picnic areas along the river
- Areas of undeveloped land used for horse agistment.

Topography & Landscape

The Leafy Suburban river interface character type lies on higher ground beyond the river flats, which extend for some distance

on either side from the river corridor and comprise the buffer of parkland and recreational areas. This includes the prominent ridgelines and hilltops to the north of the river of Ivanhoe, Eaglemont and Heidelberg, Mount Eagle being a prominent hilltop that is close to the river, and south of the river, the elevated land in Bulleen and Templestowe.

Within the eastern part of Templestowe, the Leafy Suburban river interface character type extends close to the river corridor where the river's edge is formed by higher ground.

Gardens within the Leafy Suburban areas are generally formally planted with exotic or native species. Canopy trees and understorey landscaping have matured to form a consistent and distinctive vegetative character within the streetscapes and neighbourhoods. Within the older neighbourhoods of Ivanhoe, Heidelberg, Rosanna and Viewbank, the vegetative and landscape character is particularly strong.

The tree canopy of the Leafy Suburban areas sits above the rooftops to form an almost continuous backdrop of vegetation to immediate and longer range views from the river. The cumulative effect of this planting is most evident along the ridgelines of the hills forming the river valley, which are highly visible in the wider area and form a distant skyline of vegetation.

Land Use & Built Form

Both built form and vegetation are the main visual elements of the Leafy Suburban river interface character type. Land is predominantly used for private dwellings. Buildings are single or double storey and set mostly within formal streetscapes.

Mostly, buildings are only visible from the river corridor across the parkland or cleared pastoral land of the floodplain, stepping up the hillslope to the ridgeline. However, on the higher ground of Templestowe, built form close to the river's edge is more evident.

While some dwellings are of a reasonably large scale, their location at some distance from the river means that they do not visually intrude upon the river corridor itself. In some instances, use of stark colours or reflective materials are highly visible and incongruous with the more natural, undeveloped character of the bushland and parkland areas. In particular, the use of white, lighter colours or blue finishes, particularly when located below the skyline, are visually intrusive in this setting.

Building siting and design within many parts of these areas has assisted in the emergence of the highly vegetated character. This includes a low site coverage allowing space for new planting, retention of existing trees and building height retained below the height of the predominant tree canopy.

The built-up character of the Leafy Suburban areas forms an edge to the more open and naturalistic setting of the Parklands and Recreation river interface character type. It is important that new buildings are designed to sit comfortably within

the wider riverside setting in terms of their form, scale and detailed design, and most importantly, their contribution to strengthening of the tree canopy.

Pattern of Viewing

The Leafy Suburban river interface character type is mostly experienced via the Main Yarra Trail and the extensive network of open spaces and recreation areas along this part of the river corridor. Direct access to the river is also provided by many roads. Some roads offer views to the river flats, such as The Boulevard in Ivanhoe.

Other Values

Other values associated with this landscape include:

- The Yarra Valley is the traditional land of the Wurundjeri people. The waterway and surrounding land continues to hold a high value to Aboriginal people today.
- Upon European settlement, this part of the Yarra began a long history of farming, grazing and orcharding.
- Landscape, vegetation and environmental values are recognised and protected through the application of local Planning Scheme overlays.
- The iconic art deco 'Riverside Estate' of North Balwyn is protected through the Heritage Overlay within the City of Boroondara.
- In Ivanhoe, State heritage listed subdivisions by Walter Burley and Marion Mahoney Griffin sought to emulate the landscape and urban design of the English Garden City movement. Views from these areas to the vegetation of the river corridor are protected.

Potential Threats to Values

Key threats to this section of the river corridor relate mostly to the siting and design of buildings. Given the openness of the Yarra River flats, built form is particularly visible on the surrounding hillslopes and ridgelines. Existing issues include the use of light materials, colours and finishes below the skyline, as well as buildings that protrude above the predominant tree canopy height. The trend for larger homes and subdivision can exacerbate these issues.

Current Management

Land within this river interface character type is zoned Residential 1 or Residential 3, which applies to large areas of Bulleen and Templestowe. Within the Residential 3 zone building height is restricted to 9m or 10m on a sloping site. A range of overlay controls apply to precincts and selected sites on both sides of the river.

3.3 River Interface Character Type 2: Bush Residential



The Bush Residential river interface character type comprises low density residential areas within parts of Templestowe, Lower Plenty, Eltham, North Warrandyte and Warrandyte that have a distinctly bushy and ‘natural’ character.

The Bush Residential river interface character type features a strong landscape setting of tall native canopy tree cover, where buildings are nestled into the hilly topography and bushy environment.

Some parts of the Bush Residential river interface character type are located adjacent to the river corridor, while others are set back behind parkland or bush conservation areas. While these residential areas are of varying development densities, they all have a consistent naturalistic landscape quality.

Key Features

Key features of the Bush Residential river interface character type include:

- Spacious character, varied or hilly topography and the bushy, native landscape of the wider Yarra River environs
- Mature native trees and understorey planting throughout private and public land which creates a consistent tree canopy and native vegetation theme throughout each neighbourhood
- Established residential neighbourhoods with large lots and a low density of development
- Single dwellings, one or two storey in scale, some being large and solid in appearance, others constructed in muted tones that complement the environment
- Views to Mt Dandenong and the Yarra Ranges from elevated points of North Warrandyte
- Main Yarra Trail and other local trail networks providing river access
- Adjacent to informal parklands and bush conservation areas along the river.

Topography & Landscape

The Bush Residential river interface character type features varied topography. While many sections very hilly there are also areas adjoining sections of river flats.



This character type has a distinctive spacious character, particularly closer to the river corridor. The highly vegetated landscape features narrow, often steep, winding roads. Buildings are nestled or hidden amongst the tall tree canopy. There is a distinctively naturalistic landscape character of remnant vegetation and indigenous or native planting. It is essential that this planting theme is maintained.

Groups of large old River Red Gums define the character of some areas such as Fitzsimons Lane and Porter Street. Parts of this area are on highly elevated ground, offering views across to Mt Dandenong and the Yarra Ranges.

Land Use & Built Form

Many buildings are sensitively designed to sit comfortably within this naturalistic landscape setting. Frequently, buildings appear ‘immersed’ within the bushy, hilly environment, due to their low profile and use of muted, natural tones. Occasionally, buildings have a more solid appearance, constructed of brick and with garages fronting the street.

From most parts of the river corridor, buildings within this river interface character type are not visible, or only distant roof forms can be seen. In most locations, there is a buffer area of parkland or conservation area from the river itself. In some locations properties have direct frontage to the river, and the design of buildings on these sites will be a critical consideration.

Building siting and design within many parts of these areas has assisted in the emergence of the highly vegetated character. This includes a low site coverage allowing space for new planting, retention of existing trees and building height retained below the height of the predominant tree canopy.

Buildings on the elevated northern bank of the river in North Warrandyte are visible from the town, with houses nestled among the dense vegetation and perched up on the ridgeline. Buildings are also located on the ridgeline opposite the Warrandyte State Park, east of the town centre, and are visible from viewing locations within the park.

Pattern of Viewing

The Bush Residential river interface character type is experienced via the Main Yarra Trail, and the extensive network of parkland and conservation areas along this part of the river corridor. In some locations, direct access to the river is also provided by local roads and informal tracks.

As mentioned above, parts of this area are on highly elevated ground, offering long range views across to Mt Dandenong and the Yarra Ranges.

Other Values

Other values associated with this landscape include:

- The Yarra Valley is the traditional land of the Wurundjeri people. The waterway and surrounding land continues to hold a high value to Aboriginal people today.
- Upon European settlement, this part of the Yarra began a long history of farming, grazing and orcharding.
- Landscape, vegetation, environmental and cultural heritage values are recognised and protected through the application of local Planning Scheme overlays.

Potential Threats to Values

Within this river interface character type, it is particularly important that built form is designed to remain visually recessive to the dominant landscape character. Key threats to this section of the river corridor relate mostly to the potential loss of mature vegetation and canopy trees. Existing threats include buildings and streetscape treatments with an ‘urban’ style appearance, including bulky, heavily massed buildings, formal garden landscaping, exotic vegetation and large areas of hard paved surfaces including driveways and car parking areas. High, solid fencing is also a potential threat to the existing character of this river interface character type in particular.

Current Management

Residential areas within this character type are zoned Low Density Residential Zone. A range of overlay controls apply to precincts and selected sites on both sides of the river.

3.4 River Interface Character Type 3: Rural Environment



The Rural Environment river interface character type comprises low density rural residential and conservation areas within Lower Plenty, Eltham, Warrandyte and North Warrandyte. They have a predominantly rural character and strong landscape setting.



The Rural Environment river interface character type is located directly adjacent to the bush conservation areas of the river corridor. With a low density of development, hilly topography and many mature, native canopy trees, this area has a strong naturalistic landscape character.

Key Features

Key features of the Rural Environment river interface character type include:

- Spacious character, hilly topography and the bushy, native landscape of the wider Yarra River environs
- Low density rural residential and large 'lifestyle' properties
- Areas of cleared pastoral land, as well as areas of heavy native vegetation with mature native trees and understorey planting
- Main Yarra Trail providing access along the northern and parts of the southern sides of the river
- Adjacent to extensive bush conservation areas along the river and Warrandyte State Park.

Topography & Landscape

The Rural Environment river interface character type features varied topography. While many sections very hilly there are also areas adjoining sections of river flats.

This river interface character type has a distinctive spacious character, particularly closer to the river corridor. The highly vegetated landscape features narrow, often steep, winding

roads. There is a distinctively naturalistic landscape character of remnant vegetation and endemic or native planting. While buildings are sometimes large in scale, they are generally of a low profile and nestled among the tall tree canopy. It is essential that this planting theme is maintained.

Land Use & Built Form

There is a range of building styles within this river interface character type. Many dwellings are of a low profile and constructed of natural, muted tones, thereby appearing to be immersed within the landscape. Occasional large 'lifestyle' properties are more visible within the landscape, due to their scale and the colour or reflectivity of their materials. Development also includes rural structures and horse ménages. While some lots front directly onto the river corridor, mostly buildings are obscured from view from the river corridor.

Overall, the low density of development allows for the landscape character to be the dominant visual element.

Pattern of Viewing

The Rural Environment river interface character type is mostly experienced via local roads that wind their way around the hilly topography and down to the river. There are also sections of the river accessed by the Main Yarra Trail, and the extensive network of parkland and conservation areas along this part of the river corridor. Direct access to the river and the Warrandyte State Park is also provided by many roads and informal tracks through driving through these areas.

Other Values

Other values associated with this landscape include:

- The Yarra Valley is the traditional land of the Wurundjeri people. The waterway and surrounding land continues to hold a high value to Aboriginal people today.
- Upon European settlement, this part of the Yarra began a long history of farming and grazing.
- Areas around Warrandyte have been shaped by the gold rush history.
- Landscape, vegetation, environmental and cultural

heritage values are recognised and protected through the application of local Planning Scheme overlays.

Potential Threats to Values

Within this river interface character type, the scale, siting and detailed design of buildings and infrastructure is a key consideration. This includes new dwellings, sheds, barns, orchard netting or horse ménages etc. While productive rural landscapes and associated buildings and structures are an important part of the character of rural areas, if poorly designed or located they can potentially detract from this valued character.

This is of particular importance for buildings or structures on higher ground that are visible across the low lying open spaces, or upon ridgelines that are visible within the wider area. Muted colours and tones that help to minimise the visual presence of buildings and structures will be preferred. High, solid fencing or gates is also a potential threat to the existing character of this river interface character type.

Current Management

Land within this river interface character type is included within the Rural Conservation Zone. A range of overlay controls apply to precincts and selected sites on both sides of the river.

3.5 River Interface Character Type 4: Warrandyte Township



The Warrandyte Township river interface character type comprises the historic town centre of Warrandyte and surrounding residential areas, on the southern banks of the river.

As a historic township established on the river's edge during the 1850s gold rush, Warrandyte is now a place where the river within its metropolitan setting once again has an urban, built-up interface. The natural bush environment, winding roads and characterful buildings of Warrandyte create a unique environment that is a popular tourist destination. The surrounding neighbourhoods have a strong landscape setting of a tall native canopy tree cover, where buildings are nestled into the hilly topography and bushy environment. The Warrandyte State Park surrounds the township to the east and west.

Key Features

Key features of the Warrandyte Township river interface character type include:

- Hilly topography and the bushy, native landscape of the wider Yarra River environs
- Established residential neighbourhoods at varying densities, ranging from typical suburban densities to large residential allotments
- Many dwellings, one or two storey in scale, sensitively designed to appear 'immersed' within the surrounding bush environment and follow the contour of the land
- Historic Warrandyte township with heritage and character buildings that have direct river frontage
- The Warrandyte State Park which surrounds the township, including Pound Bend
- Shared trail networks providing river access and busy linked open spaces along the river's edge.

Topography & Landscape

The Warrandyte Township river interface character type features varied topography. While many sections very hilly there are also areas adjoining sections of river flats.

This river interface character type has a distinctive bushy character throughout, and particularly closer to the river corridor. The highly vegetated landscape features narrow, often steep, winding roads. Buildings are nestled or hidden amongst the tall tree canopy. There is a distinctively naturalistic landscape character of remnant vegetation and endemic or native planting. It is essential that this planting theme is maintained.

Land Use & Built Form

The main street of Warrandyte (Yarra Street) has a semi-rural village character, within a highly vegetated landscape setting. The river corridor runs alongside the main street and is a key aspect of the town's character. Properties on the northern side of the street form the interface with the river and its network of open spaces. There are many car parks along the river's edge in the commercial areas.

Building styles along the main street are varied. There are many Victorian era buildings, which are an integral part of Warrandyte's character. A number of contemporary buildings employ bright colours which should be avoided. Dark red, dark green and pale yellow work well in the main street. The new Warrandyte Community Centre is a great example of contextually responsive design and sets a useful precedent for the area, with use of natural materials and muted colours.

Within residential neighbourhoods, many buildings are sensitively designed to sit comfortably within this naturalistic landscape setting. Frequently, buildings appear 'immersed' within the bushy, hilly environment, due to their low profile and use of muted, natural tones.

Occasionally, buildings have a more solid appearance, constructed of brick and with garages fronting the street. This type of development is out of character and should be avoided. In some locations properties have direct frontage to the river, and the design of buildings on these sites will be a critical consideration.

Building siting and design has assisted in the retention of the area's highly vegetated character. This includes a low site coverage allowing space for new planting, retention of existing trees and building height retained below the height of the predominant tree canopy.

Pattern of Viewing

The Warrandyte Township river interface character type is experienced via the main through roads, local road network, the many shared trails and the extensive network of parkland, conservation areas and recreation spaces along this part of the river corridor. In the Warrandyte township, Yarra Street and Everard Drive run directly alongside the river's edge and the river can be seen when travelling by car. In other locations, direct access to the river is also provided by local roads and informal tracks.

Other Values

Other values associated with this landscape include:

- The Yarra Valley is the traditional land of the Wurundjeri people. The waterway and surrounding land continues to hold a high value to Aboriginal people today.

- Upon European settlement, this part of the Yarra began a long history of farming, grazing and orcharding.
- Warrandyte was the scene of the first gold discovery in Victoria, in 1851. The historic Warrandyte township is a popular visitor destination.
- Landscape, vegetation, environmental and cultural heritage values are recognised and protected through the application of local Planning Scheme overlays.

Potential Threats to Values

Within this river interface character type, it is particularly important that built form is designed to remain visually recessive to the dominant topographic and landscape character. Key threats relate mostly to the over-development of lots and potential loss of mature vegetation and canopy trees as a result.

Significant potential threats relate to buildings and streetscape treatments with an 'urban' style appearance, such as: bulky, heavily massed buildings; the use of bright colours and materials; painting of brick or stonework; formal landscaping with extensive lawns and exotic vegetation; large areas of hard paved surfaces including driveways and car parking areas; high, solid fencing and gates.

In the town centre, buildings should protect the strong heritage and character values. The interface of commercial areas, recreation areas and car parks near the river is also a key factor for consideration. Areas for public space or events need to be preserved as a part of the town's character.

Signage is also an important consideration within the streetscape, including advertising and directional signage. Adequate information must be provided for visitors to Warrandyte, while ensuring that signs reflect the semi-rural character.

The potential visibility of buildings on the northern banks of the river, due to vegetation removal or bulky, inappropriate design, is a key consideration.

Current Management

Residential areas within this river interface character type are zoned Residential 1 and Commercial 1. A range of overlay controls apply to precincts and selected sites on both sides of the river.

3.6 River Interface Character Type 5: Parklands & Recreation



The Parklands & Recreation river interface character type comprises the extensive network of open spaces and recreation reserves along the river's edge, which are located within the western half of the study area, from Burke Road to Eltham.

The Parklands & Recreation river interface character type comprises the many formalised open spaces and recreation reserves that lie on the flat land of the river's floodplain, and follow the river corridor within its broader suburban setting. They provide an invaluable buffer of landscape and vegetation to the residential areas of the Leafy Suburban river interface character type (and in some instances Bush Residential river interface character type) that lie beyond the riverside open spaces.

Key Features

Key features of the Parklands & Recreation river interface character type include:

- Flat topography of the river's floodplains, with many wetlands and billabongs
- Locally and regionally significant open space network of formalised open spaces and recreation facilities including golf courses, sports ovals (both private and public access), picnic areas and playgrounds
- Main Yarra Trail providing access along the northern and parts of the southern sides of the river
- Heide Museum of Modern Art and surrounding parklands
- Landscape and vegetation buffer between river corridor and residential areas beyond.

Topography & Landscape

The Parklands and Recreation river interface character type features flat topography alongside the river banks, being located within the river's floodplains which are unsuited for development. For areas within this river interface character type further beyond, the topography is undulating.

Many parts of this river interface character type comprise

formally designed open spaces, for active or passive recreation. Some places comprise land formerly used for farming. These areas are all well-vegetated with mature trees, however the river environs do not have a naturalistic character.

In other parts, the river interface character type has a distinctly more naturalistic, bushy character, where the parklands are informally designed, or feature areas of wilderness. This includes Westerfolds Park and Birrarung Park. There are also a number of large wetland areas, some of which are ephemeral and only fill after periods of rain.

Land Use & Built Form

Buildings and structures within this river interface character type are those ancillary to the recreational role of the spaces, such as amenity blocks, sports ground buildings or seating and high chain wire fencing. There are also playgrounds and picnic ground structures such as seats and shelters. The buildings and structures are generally well-designed and suited to the recreational role of these spaces.

The Heide Museum complex features a number of architecturally significant buildings set within formally designed gardens parklands. In Westerfolds Park, the 'Manor' is a historic landmark.

In some locations buildings within the adjacent residential areas on higher ground are visible across parklands or through vegetation.

Pattern of Viewing

The Parklands and Recreation river interface character type is experienced via the Main Yarra Trail, and other connecting trails or pathways throughout the open spaces. There is also vehicular access to the recreation reserves.

Other Values

Other values associated with this landscape include:

- The Yarra Valley is the traditional land of the Wurundjeri people. The waterway and surround land continues to hold a high value to Aboriginal people today.
- Upon European settlement, this part of the Yarra began a long history of farming and grazing.
- This section of the Yarra corridor is classified as 'Riparian Floodplain Woodland' and 'Grassy Woodlands' and features River Red Gum and Manna Gum wetlands.
- While significant clearing of vegetation has resulted in loss

of habitat, these parts of the river corridor are still home to a wide range of flora and fauna. This includes insects, birds, frogs, wombats and platypus.

- Wetland areas in particular support a high diversity of species, including wetland birds. Westerfolds Park is home to a population of Eastern Grey Kangaroos.
- This part of the Yarra River, including Heide, was a popular location for artists of the Heidelberg School, and the artist's trail provides interpretive signage and images of paintings.
- The recreational, environmental and cultural attractions of the Parklands and Recreation river interface character type are of high local and regional significance to the people of Melbourne.
- Environmental and cultural heritage values are recognised and protected through the application of local Planning Scheme overlays.
- Banyule Council is currently pursuing a State heritage register listing for Warringal Parklands.

Potential Threats to Values

As public parklands, there is limited new development occurring in this river interface character type. However, new buildings or structures associated with its recreational function could potentially form a threat to its character through inappropriate scale or detailed design. Public land managers must ensure that buildings and structures are designed to remain visually recessive to vegetation, and, where visible from the river's edge, designed to complement the naturalistic environment of the river corridor.

Environmental management issues could also affect the character of this river interface character type, particularly the issue of weed infestation. Development outside of the river interface character type within adjoining built-up areas could potentially affect the naturalistic character of these riverside spaces.

Current Management

Land within this river interface character type is mostly included in the Public Parks and Recreation Zone. There are small areas within the Urban Floodway Zone. A range of overlay controls apply to precincts and selected sites on both sides of the river. Management plans also apply to some public parks.

3.7 River Interface Character Type 6: Yarra River Conservation



The Yarra River Conservation river interface character type comprises the many discrete areas of bushland or conservation reserves along the river's edge, which are located throughout the study area.

The Yarra River Conservation river interface character type includes all land zoned within the Public Conservation and Resource Zone that is set aside for retention as bushland or wetlands. These areas are located at various points along the length of the Middle Yarra Corridor where the river is retained in its most natural setting. Most are accessible to the public as parklands or designated State Parks. They provide an invaluable habitat for the range of flora and fauna along the river's course, and are also a heavily landscaped buffer to residential areas beyond.

Key Features

Key features of the Yarra River Conservation river interface character type include:

- Flat topography of the river's floodplains, with many wetlands and billabongs, rising to the steep river banks at Eltham and Warrandyte
- Locally and regionally significant open space network of parklands and conservation areas
- Important habitat areas for numerous of flora and fauna species
- Discreet and minimal visitor facilities such as picnic areas and amenities
- Main Yarra Trail providing access along the northern and parts of the southern sides of the river
- Landscape and vegetation buffer between river corridor and residential areas beyond.

Topography & Landscape

The Yarra River Conservation river interface character type features flat topography around the river's floodplains in the western and central part of the study area, with many wetlands and billabongs. The topography rises towards Eltham and

Warrandyte, where the river banks are steep and the corridor more enclosed. For areas within this river interface character type further beyond the river, the topography is undulating.

This river interface character type comprises areas of natural bush and wilderness, some of which are included in parklands such as the Banyule Flats, Tikalara Park, Sweeny Flats and Yarra Valley Parklands. In the east is the Warrandyte State Park. These areas are all well-vegetated with mature trees, and the river environs have a distinctly naturalistic character. Around Warrandyte, heavy vegetation clearing during the gold mining days means that vegetation is relatively young.

Land Use & Built Form

There are limited buildings and structures within this river interface character type, which are those ancillary to the recreational role of the spaces, such as informal picnic grounds and amenity blocks.

In some locations buildings within the adjacent residential areas on higher ground are visible across parklands or through vegetation.

Pattern of Viewing

The Yarra River Conservation river interface character type is experienced via the Main Yarra Trail in the western part of the study area. Towards the east there is no continuous trail network. There is vehicular access to the conservation reserves and walking trails within the reserves.

Other Values

Other values associated with this landscape include:

- The Yarra Valley is the traditional land of the Wurundjeri people. The waterway and surround land continues to hold a high value to Aboriginal people today.
- Upon European settlement, this part of the Yarra began a long history of farming and grazing.
- The western section of the Yarra corridor within the study area is classified as 'Riparian Floodplain Woodland' and 'Grassy Woodlands' and features River Red Gum and Manna Gum wetlands.
- Around Warrandyte, there is a variety of eucalypts present, including Red Box, Red Stringybark and Longleaf Box which dominate the hill tops. Large Manna Gums line the river. There is also a diversity of mid-storey and ground

storey plants.

- These parts of the river corridor are home to a wide range of flora and fauna. This includes insects, birds, frogs, wombats and platypus.
- Wetland areas in particular support a high diversity of species, including wetland birds.
- The recreational, environmental and cultural attractions of the Yarra River Conservation river interface character type are of high local and regional significance to the people of Melbourne and recognised and protected through the application of local Planning Scheme overlays.
- Banyule Council is currently pursuing a State heritage register listing for Banyule Flats.

Potential Threats to Values

As conservation areas under public management, there is limited new development occurring in this river interface character type. However, new buildings or structures associated with its recreational function could potentially form a threat to its character through inappropriate scale or detailed design. Public land managers must ensure that buildings and structures are designed to remain visually recessive to vegetation, and sited away from the river's edge.

Environmental management issues could also affect this river interface character type, particularly the issue of weed infestation. Development outside of the river interface character type within adjoining built-up areas this is highly visible from the river could potentially affect the naturalistic character of these riverside spaces.

Current Management

Land within this river interface character type is mostly included in the Public Conservation and Resource Zone. Management plans will also apply to public parks. A range of overlay controls apply to precincts and selected sites on both sides of the river.

4. Views Analysis

4.1 Viewing the Middle Yarra River Corridor

The way in which people experience and enjoy the Yarra River and its environs is intrinsically linked to how they view it. The visual connection of the viewer with the river - the water, the river banks and surrounding environment - informs their values and, further to that, their opinions about how those values should be protected and managed.

Introduction

This chapter provides an analysis of key views within the Middle Yarra River corridor, as another way of understanding the value of the river corridor and how people experience this environment.

The Middle Yarra River and its open space corridor are experienced from a variety of different locations including:

- from the river itself;
- from the network of trails within the corridor (e.g. bike and pedestrian paths);
- from key public use areas (e.g. picnic grounds and BBQ areas);
- from broader open space areas within the river valley (e.g. sports fields and parklands);
- from river crossings (e.g. road and pedestrian bridges);
- from roads within or adjacent to the river corridor;
- from topographic high points around the river corridor; and
- from outside the corridor - distant elevated views from surrounding areas where the river provides a 'green-treed' backdrop.

Views are sensitive to changes within the natural and built environment of a landscape such as the Yarra River corridor. It is important to note that the clearest view of the riverside is often experienced from the opposite bank. This presents a particular challenge when considering planning controls as municipal legislative boundaries generally change at the centre of the river corridor. This Study presents the opportunity to apply a holistic approach across the municipalities within the study area to consider the impact that development is having on the river corridor.

Views Analysis

Many of the views within the corridor are dynamic, i.e. they are not from a specific view point but are experienced while moving on or adjacent to the river from a boat, bike or while walking.

There are also a number of designated or promoted viewing locations within the Middle Yarra River corridor, including the rapids observation point at Westerfolds Park and the viewing platform near Fitzsimons Lane. Nine key locations from which the river is viewed have been documented as part of this study. These view points have been chosen as they:

- are accessible by the public;
- are located on public land;
- are in more heavily used or trafficked areas;
- provide a view or views that are potentially exemplary, iconic or scarce within the Middle Yarra River corridor context.

The following elements have been considered and assessed as part of the views analysis:

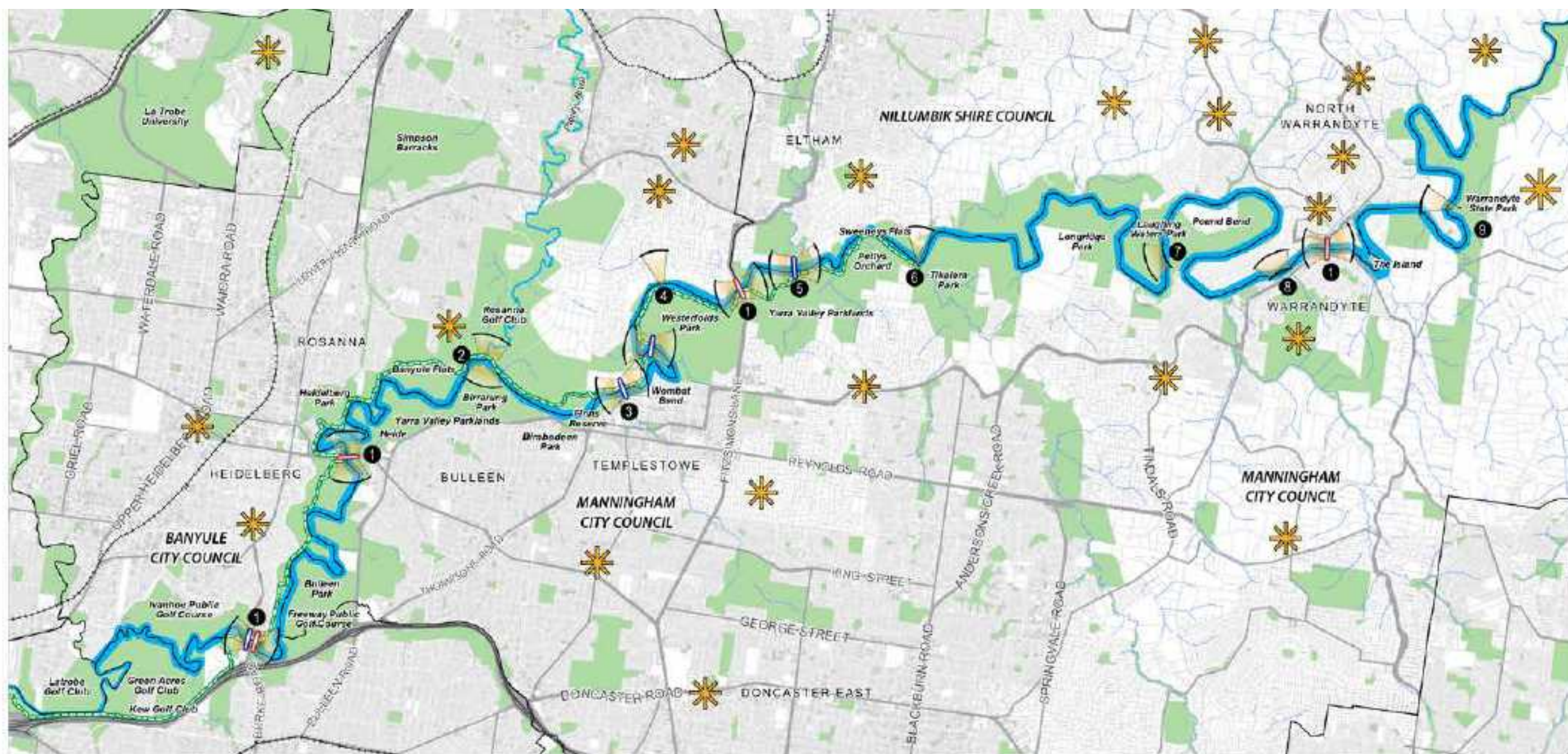
- location and accessibility;
- visual description, including its structure or composition and aesthetic qualities;
- significance of the view;
- threats to the valued qualities of the view; and
- implications for planning controls, in relation to protection of the view itself and/or development considerations that may be more widely applied to the river corridor.

General Terms

View: A sight or prospect of some landscape or scene.

Panorama: An unobstructed view or prospect over a wide area, often in many directions.

Vista: A view or prospect, especially one that is framed and seen through a narrow avenue or passage.



LEGEND

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| Local Government Boundaries | Main Yarra Trail |
| Yarra River | Vehicular Bridges |
| Other Waterways | Pedestrian Bridges |
| Public Open Space | Topographical High Points |
| | Key Views |

Key Viewing Locations

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1 Road Bridge Crossing Points | 6 Mullum Mullum Creek Viewing Platform |
| 2 Yarra River & Plenty River Confluence | 7 Warrandyte State Park: Pound Bend |
| 3 Suspension Bridge, Firms Reserve | 8 Warrandyte Town Centre |
| 4 Rapids Observation Point, Westerfolds Park | 9 Warrandyte State Park: Jumping Creek Reserve |
| 5 Pedestrian Bridge to Diamond Creek Trail | |

MIDDLE YARRA RIVER CORRIDOR STUDY

KEY VIEWING LOCATIONS



4.2 Dynamic Views

Location and Accessibility

The Main Yarra Trail provides a shared pedestrian and bicycle access along most of the river corridor in the study area, up to its end in Tikalara Park. Other local trail networks connect to the Main Yarra Trail and there is also a network of trails through the Warrandyte township and State Parks. These trails provide many different opportunities to view the river and experience the landscape of the wider river corridor. They are heavily used and a major recreational resource for metropolitan Melbourne. It is important to note that the clearest view of the riverside is often experienced from the opposite bank.

The river is also experienced by boat; the shallow depth of the Middle Yarra only allows for canoeing, kayaking or rafting, all of which are popular activities. Although fewer people experience the river in this way, it is perhaps the most significant viewing opportunity, where the river in its most natural state can be experienced and the most isolated locations explored. While this study did not include a survey of the river by boat, the significance of this viewing experience has also been taken into consideration.

There are also a few places to experience the river by car. This includes The Boulevard in Ivanhoe, several roads in Warrandyte and the four vehicle bridge crossings.

Description

Experiencing the journey of the river's course, as described at the start of this Section, one can see how its landscape gradually transitions from its suburban setting into a more natural state (if travelling upstream away from the city). The topography rises up from the expansive river flats and floodplains around Kew and Bulleen, through to the elevated areas of Warrandyte, where the river banks form a distinct vegetated edge and backdrop to the corridor. The vegetation changes too as one moves along from the heavy River Red Gum forests to lighter forests dominated by Manna Gums.

The Main Yarra Trail provides an immense variety of spatial experiences along the river's course. The trail moves through floodplains, parklands, conservation areas, former pastoral land, swamps and woodlands. At times the river can only be seen through a screen of vegetation, or the trail is diverted away from the river; other times the trail follows the river banks directly. Bridge crossings open up panoramic views of the river corridor in both directions.

Significance

The range of landscapes and environments accessed along the river trails offer an exemplary viewing experience, of high

regional significance. It is rare for a river in a metropolitan context to be almost entirely accessible by way of shared trails through linked open spaces, within a corridor setting that has, for the most, retained its highly naturalistic character.

Threats

Given the proximity of developable land to the river corridor in many locations, buildings or structures could potentially be visible from the river. Design and development must be managed to maintain the different landscapes and environments of the river. In particular, the protection of remnant vegetation, planting of new indigenous species and management of weeds is of high priority.

Planning Implications

On the whole, for all sections of the river, buildings, structures and fencing must be scaled, sited and designed to respect this sensitive environment and maintain the dominance of vegetation along the river corridor.



Example of visible housing, as viewed from the Main Yarra Trail.



4.3 Viewing Location 1: Road Bridge Crossings

Location and Accessibility

There are four road bridge crossings of the Middle Yarra: Burke Road, Kew; Banksia Street, Heidelberg; Fitzsimons Lane, Templestowe; Kangaroo Ground-Warrandyte Road, Warrandyte. These crossing points provide views of the wider river corridor setting within its suburban environment and, if travelling by car, a glimpse of the river itself. The road bridge views are also experienced by pedestrians as key crossing points between the parklands and trails on either side of the river.

Description

The elevated vantage point of the road bridges offers views of the river valley and its heavily vegetated corridor within its busy suburban settings.

At Burke Road, Banksia Street and Fitzsimons Lane, the network of open spaces that lie on the flatter topography of the river's floodplains creates a wide, vegetated corridor. Driving along these roads, the brief encounter of the natural environment of the river corridor forms a distinct contrast with adjoining built-up areas.

At Warrandyte, the steeper banks of the river create a narrower bridge crossing. In addition, the bushy environment of Warrandyte means that this sense of contrast in landscape around the river crossing is not as distinct as the other bridge locations.

At all bridges, views along the river itself, upstream and downstream, are framed by the dense screen of tall eucalypts that line its banks. From these elevated points, longer-range views of the river are afforded than on the trails at the river's edge. The views extend into the distance as river winds along its course in both directions.

Glimpses of the open spaces and parklands that lie beyond the river floodplains can be seen through the heavy vegetation of the low lying land along its banks.

These are busy and noisy arterial roads (Kangaroo Ground-Warrandyte Road to a lesser extent), and the bridge crossing through the heavily treed river corridor and the momentary glimpse of the water provide a distinctive break in these suburban settings.

Significance

The road bridges offer the opportunity to view the river from an elevated point. The momentary immersion in the naturalistic environment of the river corridor is a distinctive contrast with the surrounding activity.

Threats

At Burke Road, Banksia Street and Warrandyte, commercial, industrial or residential zoned are in close proximity to the river corridor, and development could potentially be visible from the bridge, despite the heavy screen of riverside vegetation in these locations.

The river corridor immediately adjoining Fitzsimons Lane is included within public open space, and the higher ground to the north is zoned for low density residential or rural conservation. There is limited threat of development impacting on this viewing experience.

Planning Implications

Buildings, structures and fencing must be scaled, sited and designed to respect this sensitive environment and maintain the dominance of vegetation along the river corridor.

In some cases, performance standards, such as building heights, setbacks or site coverage controls may be required to manage the impact of development within high priority areas adjacent to the river corridor. Specific recommendations will be developed during the subsequent stage of the project.



Example of visible commercial development and car parking areas



4.4 View Point 2: Pedestrian Bridge, Yarra River & Plenty River Confluence

Location and Accessibility

A timber bridge crossing along the Main Yarra Trail provides an opportunity to view the point of confluence of the Yarra River and Plenty River.

Description

From the elevated vantage point of the pedestrian bridge, immediate range views are afforded of the Plenty River corridor as it flows into the Yarra.

Both river corridors are heavily treed with mature eucalypts, including River Red Gums and Manna Gums, as well as dense understory vegetation. While the topography is flat in this location, the heavy vegetation of the river corridors limits the range of viewing.

Longer-range glimpses of nearby open spaces and parklands that lie beyond on the flat topography of the river's floodplains can be seen along the pathway in the westerly direction. The Rosanna Golf Course is to the north-east, and the brightness of the greens can also be seen through the trees, contrasting with the muted grey-green of the native vegetation.

Given the enclosed nature of this view and the extensive parklands surrounding this location, there are no visible buildings beyond the screen of vegetation.

This is a busy part of the Main Yarra Trail and its is well used by walkers and cyclists of all ages and abilities. Here the Main Yarra Trail connects to the Plenty River Trail and residential areas to the north of the river.

Significance

This point of confluence of the two rivers is a significant location along the corridor, and traditionally it was an important meeting place for the Wurundjeri people.

The enclosed nature of this part of the journey contrasts with the expanse of parklands to the west of the bridge, and the openness of the trail alongside the river corridor further east.

Threats

Most land surrounding this viewing location is zoned for public use and unlikely to be developed. The Golf Course is zoned Special Use. Any additional buildings, structures or recreational infrastructure that are highly visible due to their scale or colour would threaten the significance of this viewing location. Removal of vegetation and weed proliferation is also a potential threat.

Planning Implications

Buildings, structures and fencing must be scaled, sited and designed to respect this sensitive environment and maintain the dominance of vegetation along the river corridor.

In some cases, performance standards such as building heights, setbacks or site coverage controls may be required to manage the impact of development within high priority areas adjacent to the river corridor. Specific recommendations will be developed during the subsequent stage of the project.



Rosanna Golf Course is visible beyond the surrounding vegetation.



4.5 View Point 3: Suspension Bridge, Finns Reserve, Templestowe

Location and Accessibility

The suspension bridge near Finns Reserve in Templestowe provides access to the Main Yarra Trail. It is a popular crossing point for pedestrians and cyclists, and an opportunity to view the river for the many visitors to the Wombat Bend All Abilities Playspace.

Description

The suspension bridge provides a 360 degree panoramic view of the river and its environs.

This includes an immediate view of the river's meandering course as it disappears around another bend, both upstream and downstream. In this part of the Yarra, the river banks rise gently and are heavily vegetated with mature, tall eucalypts and undergrowth. Upstream from the bridge the waters are calm; downstream, on the other side of the bridge, a series of large boulders in the river bed make the waters swirl and churn.

The southern banks rise to flat topography which extends for a considerable distance and provides for formal parklands with playgrounds and amenities, and these can be glimpsed through the heavy riverbank vegetation. Just beyond the northern banks, the topography rises up more sharply and there are no views beyond this crestline.

From the elevated point of the bridge, the rooftops of houses on distant ridgelines upstream and downstream can be seen.

With the many people crossing the river here, the suspension bridge is a busy spot in the river's course. However, the vantage point of the bridge also reveals the real nature of the river as it would be experienced upon the water. Despite the activity, there is a strong sense of calm and tranquillity. The river within its natural environment is the presiding experience, and the distant buildings or activity are secondary elements.

Significance

The suspension bridge is an iconic and exemplary viewing experience of the Middle Yarra. The bridge itself is a beautiful sculptural element; the views from the bridge are highly characteristic of the river in its bushy, suburban setting. The bridge is one of the few opportunities for the visitor to experience the river itself (without travelling on the water), rather than from the banks.

Threats

The river at this point is generally buffered by land zoned for public use, or not directly visible from the bridge. However,

buildings within residentially zoned land may be visible in the distance. Buildings that are highly visible due to their height or colour would threaten the significance of this view. Removal of vegetation is also a potential threat.

Planning Implications

Buildings, structures and fencing must be scaled, sited and designed to respect this sensitive environment and maintain the dominance of vegetation along the river corridor.

In some cases, performance standards such as building heights, setbacks or site coverage controls may be required to manage the impact of development within high priority areas adjacent to the river corridor. Specific recommendations will be developed during the subsequent stage of the project.



A highly visible dwelling, located east of the suspension bridge.



View Point 4: Rapids Observation Point, Westerfolds Park

Location and Accessibility

The rapids observation point at Westerfolds Park is a popular spot for walkers and cyclists to stop and take a break, and see the rapids below.

Description

The observation point provides an immediate range view of the rapids which are formed by a series of large boulders that lie across the riverbed.

The sight and sound of the moving, crashing water and the pedestrian and bike traffic of the pathway create a high energy location. There is a small paved area with seating and information signage.

The view is limited to the immediate foreground of the river across to the northern bank; there is only a limited view of the river corridor in either direction from this point.

The river banks in this location rise gently on either side. The bank on the northern side has a slightly higher elevation and is covered in heavy bush. Land on the northern bank is zoned Rural Conservation and there is minimal development, with no visible buildings.

Exemplary, Iconic or Scarce

The rapids observation point is a distinctive viewing experience of the Main Yarra Trail.

Threats

The river at this point is buffered by land zoned for public use on the southern side. On the northern side, within the rural conservation zone, buildings that are visible from this point could potentially be constructed.

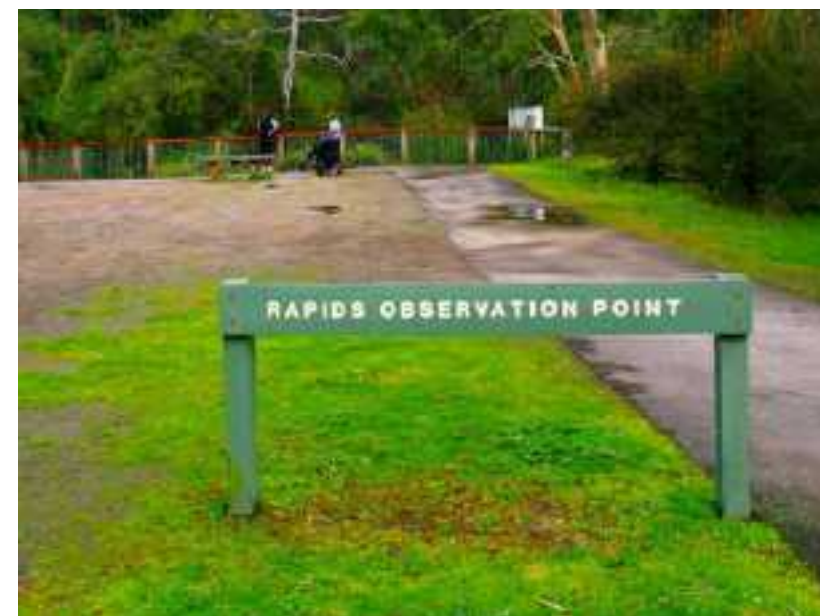
Planning Implications

Buildings, structures and fencing (within the park and on the opposite bank) must be scaled, sited and designed to respect this sensitive environment and maintain the dominance of vegetation along the river corridor.

In some cases, performance standards such as building heights, setbacks or site coverage controls may be required to manage the impact of development within high priority areas adjacent to the river corridor. Specific recommendations will be developed during the subsequent stage of the project.



Example of highly visible built form, located west of the viewing platform.



View Point 5: Pedestrian Bridge to Diamond Creek Trail

Location and Accessibility

The pedestrian bridge from the Main Yarra Trail to the Diamond Creek Trail provides another opportunity for elevated, longer range views of the river corridor. The bridge is located just west of the confluence with the Diamond Creek at Eltham. Like other parts of the trail network, it is heavily used by pedestrians and cyclists.

Description

The bridge provides a 360 degree panoramic view of the river and its environs.

A longer-range view of the river is afforded here, being in a relatively straight stretch of its course. In this part of the Yarra, the river banks rise gently and are heavily vegetated with mature, tall eucalypts and undergrowth. Land flattens out into the surrounding parkland on either side of the river.

On the northern side, expansive grassed verges of residential properties and the former Leinster Farm which have a formal landscape quality are visible through the riverbank trees. On the southern side, Candlebark Park is natural and bushy.

There are no buildings visible from the bridge. At this point the river is wide and the waters are calm. This is a peaceful setting.

Significance

The Diamond Creek pedestrian bridge is a unique viewing experience of the Middle Yarra. The views from the bridge are highly characteristic of the river in its bushy, outer suburban setting. The bridge is one of the few opportunities for the visitor to experience the river itself (without travelling on the water), rather than from the banks.

Threats

Land on the northern banks is zoned Low Density Residential and properties have direct frontage to the river. The scale and siting of development here is critical to the retention of the river's landscape setting. Buildings that are highly visible due to their height or colour would threaten the significance of this view.

On the southern side, land is included in the Public Conservation and Resource Zone and subject to public land management strategies.

Removal of vegetation, planting of exotic species or proliferation of weeds are also potential threats.

Planning Implications

Buildings, structures and fencing must be scaled, sited and designed to respect this sensitive environment and maintain the natural, undeveloped character of the riverbanks and the dominance of vegetation along the river corridor.

In some cases, performance standards such as building heights, setbacks or site coverage controls may be required to manage the impact of development within high priority areas adjacent to the river corridor. Specific recommendations will be developed during the subsequent stage of the project.



A visible dwelling, located north of the pedestrian bridge.



View Point 6: Mullum Mullum Creek Viewing Platform

Location and Accessibility

A timber viewing platform on the Main Yarra Trail offers an opportunity to view the point of confluence of the Yarra River and Mullum Mullum Creek.

Description

The Main Yarra Trail winds past the elevated ground of Petty's Orchard and gently down the river banks to this point, where an expansive view of the confluence with the Mullum Mullum Creek opens up.

Beyond this point is Tikalara Park, located on the floodplains of the Mullum Mullum Creek.

Immediate range views are afforded of the Mullum Mullum Creek and the Yarra downstream; the view upstream of the Yarra is longer in range, until the river takes its next bend.

Both corridors are heavily treed with mature eucalypts, including River Red Gums and Manna Gums, as well as dense understory vegetation. The vegetation screens views to land beyond the banks and there is no development visible from this point.

This is a less trafficked part of the Main Yarra Trail and a tranquil environment.

Significance

The confluence is another special place in the river's journey, the name Tikalara meaning 'meeting place' in the Wurundjeri language.

The expansive nature of this part of the journey contrasts with the sense of enclosure of the trail that accesses this point.

Threats

Land surrounding this viewing location is zoned Public Conservation and Resource Zone or Rural Conservation Zone. Any additional buildings, structures or recreational infrastructure that are highly visible due to their scale or colour would threaten the significance of this viewing location. Removal of vegetation, planting of exotic species and weed proliferation are also potential threats.

Planning Implications

Buildings, structures and fencing must be scaled, sited and designed to respect this sensitive environment and maintain the dominance of vegetation along the river corridor.

In some cases, performance standards such as building heights, setbacks or site coverage controls may be required to manage the impact of development within high priority areas adjacent to the river corridor. Specific recommendations will be developed during the subsequent stage of the project.



Historic dwelling, located east of the viewing platform.



View Point 7: Warrandyte State Park, Pound Bend

Location and Accessibility

The Pound Bend tunnel is located within the western section of the Warrandyte State Park. The park is accessed by car and includes a viewing platform at the tunnel, walking tracks, picnic areas and information. This is a popular visitor destination.

Description

Pound Bend forms a significant deviation in the river's course, where the river turns back on itself. The tunnel was constructed in 1870 by the Evelyn Gold Mining Company to improve the prospect of alluvial gold mining in the area from which the water was diverted.

Today, Pound Bend is a popular visitor destination where the river in a relatively natural state can be appreciated, as well as the impact of Warrandyte's gold mining heritage upon the surrounding environment.

The viewing platform offers a view of the tunnel and a short range vista downstream to the next bend in the river's course. Walking trails in the park also offer numerous short distance views. In this section of the river, the banks rise up gently from the water's edge and are heavily covered with tall eucalypts and dense scrub. Due to the deforestation that occurred during the gold rush era, the vegetation is relatively young. The water of the open section of the river is calm. At the tunnel opening, the diverted water flows quickly over rocks, creating a small rapid.

At the point of the tunnel, no buildings on the other side of the river are visible. From other parts of the park there are occasional buildings or structures such as radio towers visible in the distance.

Located away from roads and traffic noise, the Warrandyte State Park offers peaceful viewing experiences of the river.

Significance

The Pound Bend tunnel is a unique part of the Yarra, and a rare glimpse into the rich gold mining heritage of the area. Other views in the State Park offer a rare immersion into the river environment in a relatively natural state, within the context of the outer suburban setting of Warrandyte.

Threats

The Warrandyte State Park and land on the other side of the river to the west are offered protection through their inclusion in the PCRZ and designation as a State Park. Land over the

river to the north and east are zoned LDRZ. Development in these areas has had a minimal impact upon the State Park to date, however, it is possible that future buildings or structures could be visible from this location, despite the heavy screen of riverside vegetation. Buildings that are highly visible due to their height or colour would threaten the significance of views from the State Park. Removal of vegetation is also a potential threat.

Planning Implications

Buildings, structures and fencing within the State Park and adjoining LDRZ areas must be scaled, sited and designed to respect this sensitive environment and maintain the dominance of vegetation along the river corridor.

In some cases, performance standards such as building heights, setbacks or site coverage controls may be required to manage the impact of development within high priority areas adjacent to the river corridor. Specific recommendations will be developed during the subsequent stage of the project.



Pound Bend viewing platform and walking trails

View Point 8: Warrandyte Town Centre

Location and Accessibility

There are numerous views of the river corridor within the Warrandyte township setting. Views are available when travelling through the township along the Ringwood-Warrandyte Road, which runs parallel to the river and offers views of the water through the heavily treed banks. Everard Drive to the west of the town also offers dynamic, panoramic views of the river by car. The extensive network of trails on the river's southern edge offer numerous short range views of the river for pedestrians and cyclists. Crossing the river at the Kangaroo Ground-Warrandyte Road bridge, for both cars and pedestrians, reveals a wide, relatively long range panoramic view of the river corridor.

Description

Views along the river, upstream and downstream, are framed by the dense screen of tall eucalypts that line its banks. On the southern bank, views include the buildings of the township and outlying residential areas, the busy trails and riverside activity. On the northern side the heavily treed banks rise up steeply to a high ridgeline and form a distinctive backdrop to the town. Outside of the town centre of Warrandyte, the northern banks are free from visible buildings. Within the town centre, buildings can be seen nestled among the trees of these northern banks and are constructed along the ridgeline.

The trails along the river's southern banks, from this low point at the water's edge, are short in range as the river winds along its course in both directions. From here, river access can be gained for boating or swimming. A network of parklands and shared trails extend along the rivers southern banks. Within the town centre of Warrandyte, there are also formally designed recreation areas and playgrounds. Shops and cafés back onto the riverside spaces, and there are also a number of car parks on the river's edge.

From the roads that run parallel to the river at a higher elevation, glimpses of longer range views along the river's corridor are afforded through the heavy vegetation along its banks.

The elevated vantage point of the Kangaroo Ground-Warrandyte Road bridge offers panoramic, longer range views of the river corridor, township buildings and activity of the wider setting. These views are framed by the extensive tree canopy on either side of the river. This point also provides a clear and expansive view the water itself, which flows calmly downstream until rapids form over rock formations near the base of the bridge.

Significance

The views of the river afforded throughout Warrandyte are an iconic and intrinsic part of the township's character and essential to the township's value as a visitor destination. The strong historical connections of the river to the development of Warrandyte can be appreciated as a part of these viewing experiences.

This is a rare opportunity to witness the river in a relatively naturalistic setting, from numerous vantage points. At the same time, Warrandyte is the only location on the river corridor where urban development meets the river, outside of inner Melbourne.

Threats

Given the proximity of commercial and residential zoned land to the river corridor, a lot of buildings are visible from the river corridor. Buildings are generally well designed and respectful of this sensitive environment in terms of their height and detailed design. However, there are several instances of inappropriate use of colours or materials that should be avoided in the future.

Threats to these views include inappropriate development (in terms of scale, form or detailed design), vegetation removal and excessive alteration of the natural topography through cut and fill.

Planning Implications

Buildings, structures and fencing must be scaled, sited and designed to respect this sensitive environment and maintain the dominance of vegetation along the river corridor and the historic townscape setting.



A visible dwelling, located high up on the northern banks of the Yarra River.



View Point 9: Warrandyte State Park, Jumping Creek Reserve

Location and Accessibility

Jumping Creek Reserve, part of the eastern section of the Warrandyte State Park, is accessed by car and includes a viewing platform, walking tracks, picnic areas and information.

Description

The viewing platform and walking trails offer numerous short ranges vistas upstream and downstream along the river to the next bend in its course. In this section of the river, the banks rise gently up from the water's eastern edge and more sharply from the western edge. The river banks are heavily covered with tall eucalypts and dense scrub. On the facing ridgeline to the west, the low profile of houses can be seen. While these are of dark colours or muted tones, and set low into the ridgeline, their presence diminishes from the sense of remoteness that would otherwise be experienced in this place.

Located away from roads and traffic noise, and with a lower visitor presence than other sections of the Warrandyte State Park, Jumping Creek Reserve offers peaceful viewing experiences of the river in a relatively natural environment.

Significance

Views from Jumping Creek Reserve offer a rare immersion into the river environment in a relatively natural state, away from the activity of the Warrandyte township.

Threats

As part of the Warrandyte State Park, the reserve is offered protection through inclusion in the PCRZ and designation as a State Park. Land over the river to the west is zoned LDRZ or RCZ. Development in these areas could be visible from this location, particularly if located on the ridgeline, despite the heavy screen of riverside vegetation. Buildings that are highly visible due to their height or colour would threaten the significance of views from the State Park. Removal of vegetation is also a potential threat.

Planning Implications

Buildings, structures and fencing within the State Park and public properties on the other side of the river must be scaled, sited and designed to respect this sensitive environment and maintain the dominance of vegetation along the river corridor.



Examples of visible rooftops, located west of the reserve, above, and the views from viewing platform and walking trails, right.



5. Managing Development

5.1 Introduction

A consistent, corridor approach to managing the impact of built form and vegetation removal is critical to long term protection of the Yarra River.

Overview

This chapter draws from the research and analysis of earlier chapters to provide study-wide recommendations to strengthen the management of development within the landscape corridor of the Yarra River.

This chapter includes:

- An outline of the segments within the river corridor which help define the spatial extent for where strengthened planning controls may be applied.
- Recommended planning controls for consistent application throughout the Yarra River corridor.
- The general form and content that will inform the development of new and/or amended planning controls.
- Criteria for determining locally tailored mandatory height and setback requirements.

Chapter 6 'Recommendations' provides area specific detail outlining how the above is applied within respective planning schemes. Municipal Toolkits provide a summary of recommendations for each planning scheme and include the detailed analysis of each area where mandatory planning controls are proposed.

Areas Recommended for Management

An overview of the general area recommended for improved management via strengthened planning controls is shown on the map on the following page.

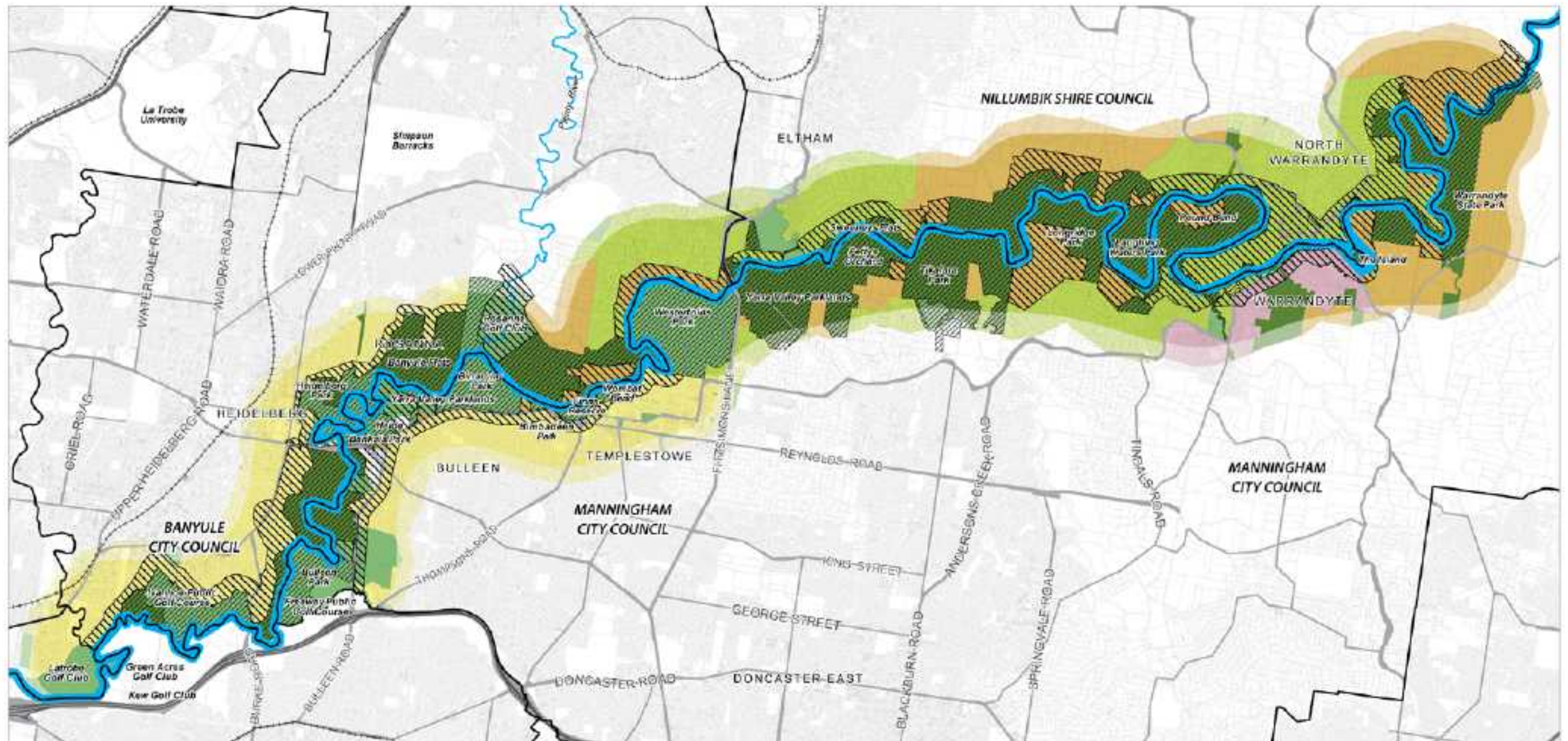
These areas comprise the following landscape segments (which are explained in detail in section 5.2):

1. The "Waterway Corridor" which comprises the river's immediate natural environment;
2. The "River Experience Corridor" encompassing the places where the river can be experienced from its banks and trails; and
3. The "Landscape Setting Corridor" taking in the wider landscape setting beyond, in some locations.

Recommended Planning Control Approach

The following planning controls are recommended to be applied within the Middle Yarra Corridor:

- Council to consider updating the Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS) to include the content and outcomes of this study as part of a future review of the Local Planning Policy Framework.
- Apply the Design and Development Overlay (DDO) to private land adjacent to, or within close proximity to, the Yarra River, establishing mandatory building heights and setbacks from the river's edge, as well as other detailed discretionary design requirements.
- Apply the Significant Landscape Overlay (SLO) to land adjoining the river, to capture an area approximate to the recommended area of management, establishing consistent landscape, vegetation and other management requirements.
- Include a requirement within the proposed DDO or SLO for Melbourne Water to be the 'Recommending referral authority' for limited classes of development applications within a prescribed distance of the Yarra River.
- Consider the application of the Incorporated Plan Overlay (IPO) or the Development Plan Overlay (DPO) to public land or major development sites, requiring the completion of a master plan prior to approving new development.



LEGEND

- Local Government Boundaries
- ~ Yarra River
- ~ Other Waterways
- Area where management of the River Corridor is recommended:
- Private Land
- Public Land

Character Types

- River Interface Character Type 1: Leafy Suburban
- River Interface Character Type 2: Bush Residential
- River Interface Character Type 3: Rural Environment
- River Interface Character Type 4: Warrandyte Township
- River Interface Character Type 5: Parks and Recreation
- River Interface Character Type 6: Yarra River Conservation

MIDDLE YARRA RIVER CORRIDOR STUDY AREAS RECOMMENDED FOR MANAGEMENT



5.2 Defining River Corridor Areas for Planning

Overview

Areas recommended for strengthened planning control management within the Middle Yarra River corridor have been determined based on an assessment of their relationship to the river corridor segments of the Waterway Corridor, River Experience Corridor or Landscape Setting Corridor, shown in Figure 1.

Detailed cross-sectional diagrams (Chapter 6) have been prepared in different locations to explore the relationship of the topography, existing development, vegetation cover and other characteristics within the river's immediate and wider landscape to inform the application of planning controls.

This analysis helps to understand how the river and its surrounding landscape vary along its course, at different distances from the river, and what management strategies might be required to achieve the vision and objectives for the study area.

Waterway Corridor

The Waterway Corridor comprises the river itself, its banks and the immediate environment.

In the Middle Yarra River, the direct river frontage is dominated by a naturalistic vegetation cover appropriate to a riverine environment, whether or not it is strictly 'natural' in the sense of being indigenous and self-seeded. The riverbanks, with their tree cover and understorey vegetation, frame and enclose the waterway to the extent that, when canoeing down the river, a sense of remoteness from urban activities can be achieved. Maintaining this vegetated corridor has been, and should remain, a prime objective of land management throughout the corridor.

For the length of the Waterway Corridor, State policy requires a vegetated buffer zone of 30 metres to be provided along each side of the river, which is outlined in Clause 12.05 'Yarra River Protection' and Clause 14.02-1 'Catchment planning & management' of the State Planning Policy Framework. Other policies and controls are also in place to protect the river's landscape and environmental values, discussed further in Section 5.4. A coordinated approach to the management of the Waterway Corridor is required in the future, including the setting of mandatory building setback and height controls.

River Experience Corridor

The River Experience Corridor comprises the fore- and middle-ground landscape that is viewed or experienced from the river, the Main Yarra trail and the adjoining parklands.

The River Experience Corridor comprises the fore and middle ground landscape that is viewed or experienced from the river, the Main Yarra Trail and the adjoining parklands.

The viewshed of Main Yarra Trail is particularly important because of the popularity of walking or cycling along the river. It differs from the waterway view shed to the extent that the trail is located at varying distances from the river with the river itself often not visible from the trail.

Because the experience of moving along the river and the trail is dynamic, the viewshed also is dynamic. At some locations on the trail, foreground vegetation obscures the horizon; at others there are open views. Even where this wider landscape is mostly obscured by foreground vegetation, progressive and intermittent glimpses of the wider landscape can be obtained from the trail. A photograph from a static viewpoint 'proving' that something is not visible behind the trees can be misleading in this respect.

When walking or cycling along the trail, or visiting the many areas of parkland, the experience is generally one of a naturalistically vegetated corridor. The success of this experience rests on the extent to which one feels enveloped in a continuous corridor of vegetation, a retreat from the hard surfaces and bustle of urban life. In reality, urban activity and development are often closer than one might expect, and urban reality breaks into the experience from time-to-time, such as when a major road crosses the corridor along its journey.

Clause 12.05, 'Yarra River Protection', acknowledges the need to protect the intrinsic value of the river's naturalistic setting, the importance of this environment in preserving the river's sense of place and landscape identity, and its recreational and environmental values. The Policy requires visual intrusion of built form within the river's environment to be minimised.

A key challenge of this study has been to document the qualities of the River Experience Corridor, and to propose measures that will protect and strengthen them. A number of management measures, such as setback lines, maximum building heights, vegetation protection, and siting and design guidance are needed to achieve this.

Currently, a range of discretionary statutory controls relate to the River Experience Corridor, or in some locations, none at all. A coordinated consistent approach to planning control management across the River Experience Corridor is required, which should also include mandatory controls elements.

Landscape Setting Corridor

The Landscape Setting Corridor comprises the wider setting of the river corridor, defined by the ridgelines or skyline at the extremity of the viewshed and beyond.

In simple terms this refers to the horizon visible from the Main Yarra trail or the Yarra River itself. Where the horizon is close in (up to 300-500m), it is likely also to be the edge of the River Experience Corridor. In some areas the horizon is part of Melbourne's developed suburban area, in others it is public land.

In the Landscape Setting Corridor, the presence of tree cover is important; even in the developed areas, tree cover is usually dominant over roofs filtering distant views of built form. An aim of this study is to retain and (where necessary) strengthen canopy tree cover throughout the Landscape Setting Corridor.

This study is therefore concerned with the extent to which planning scheme controls allow scope for tree retention and planting in residential or urban areas visible from the river corridor. This concern is not new, as the following quote from the Middle Yarra concept plans from the early 1990s makes clear:

"Even in established suburban areas, change could adversely affect the valley. An example is the suburb of Eaglemont, which overlooks Yarra Flats. Some of the hillside has been gardened since the 1840s and some very old trees, both indigenous and exotic, remain. Generally, the hillside presents a well-treed appearance from the park, an effect that could be lost if multi-dwelling units or dual occupancy became widespread."

Similarly in the suburban development close to the Yarra alongside Templestowe Road, multi-dwelling units and dual occupancy [inappropriate development in the 1993 report] could prevent this hillside becoming more treed. It would be a great loss to Melbourne if uncontrolled development resulted in the valley becoming essentially urban in appearance."

Source: The Middle Yarra Concept Plan: Burke Road to Watsons Creek, State Government of Victoria, July 1991, page 21. Also quoted in The Middle Yarra Concept Plan: Burke Road to Watsons Creek, Melbourne Parks & Waterways, December 1993, page 19.

The Middle Yarra Concept Plan resulted in a range of overlay controls being applied to the Landscape Setting Corridor, such as the Significant Landscape Overlay controls in Banyule and the Environmental Significance Overlay in Manningham and Nillumbik. Careful consideration needs to be given in determining the appropriateness of the extent of these controls and identifying if any gaps exist in their coverage by those or like controls.

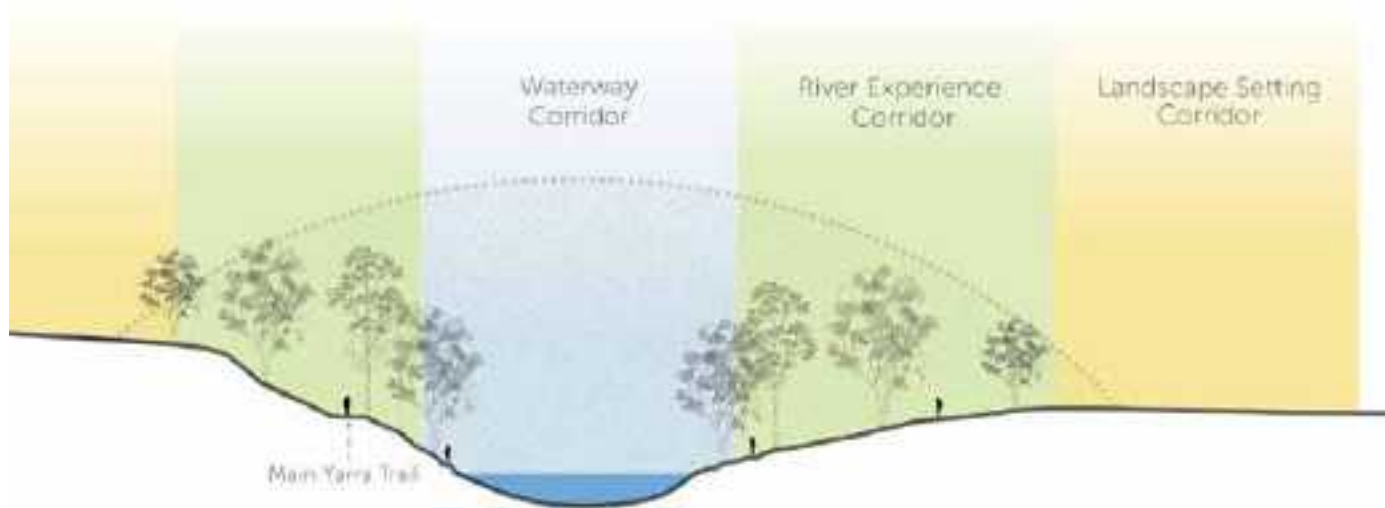


Figure 1: River Corridor Areas

5.3 Applying Consistent Overlay Controls

The Victorian Planning Provisions offer a number of options for statutory implementation. The findings of this study will be implemented through a suite of overlay controls that manage built form, landscape and environmental values.

Overview

The management of built form and its interaction with the landscape characteristics and values of the Yarra River reside in the application of appropriate ‘overlay’ controls within various planning schemes. The operation of these overlay controls need to work with the existing land use zones.

An analysis of existing planning controls has been undertaken across the Lower Yarra segment (Richmond to Fairfield) and the Middle Yarra segment (Ivanhoe to Warrandyte) to inform consideration of how consistent planning controls could be applied for the entire Yarra River corridor.

The following is an overview of planning controls within the Middle Yarra River corridor and the recommended provisions to address identified gaps.

Existing Zones and Overlays

An overview of the three planning schemes in the Middle Yarra study area, outlining the application of zone and overlay controls within each municipality, is detailed in **Appendix A**, and illustrated in map form in **Appendix B**.

Zones

Throughout the study area, a variety of land use planning zones apply to the Yarra River corridor.

The Public Park and Recreation Zone (PPRZ) and the Public Conservation and Resource Zone (PCRZ) are generally used for a variety of Crown land reservations throughout the corridor.

Private land within the corridor is in the form of residential or rural type zones. Between Ivanhoe and Templestowe, private land within the corridor is dominated by the Neighbourhood Residential Zone, with the occasional areas of Commercial or Industrial zoned land. Between Lower Plenty and Warrandyte, private land within the corridor is dominated by a mix of Low Density Residential Zone and Rural Conservation Zone.

Recent changes introduced via new format residential zones has broadened the ability for a Planning Authority to vary a number of ResCode standards to suit the design requirements of a particular area, including controls on building height, setbacks, site coverage, permeability and landscaping. Within the General and Neighbourhood Residential Zones, these can be expressed as mandatory requirements. The Neighbourhood Residential Zone also allows for a minimum lot size and maximum number of dwellings per lot to be set.

The Low Density Residential Zone and Rural Conservation Zone both enable minimum lot sizes to be set and allow only one dwelling per lot. The Rural Conservation Zone also requires consideration of environmental issues.

The application of the Neighbourhood Residential Zone has assisted in managing development pressures within the river’s residential backdrop. Large areas of Banyule and Manningham within the River Experience and Landscape Setting Corridors are subject to mandatory maximum building heights of between 8m-10m through the residential zone schedules.

Overlay Controls

The river corridor’s natural environment, which encompasses its landscape, topography and vegetation, is currently protected through a mixture of overlay controls. The following are specific to the Yarra River and its immediate environs:

Banyule

- ESO1 ‘Yarra River, Plenty River & Darebin Creek’
- SLO1 ‘Watercourse Environs’
- SLO2 ‘Yarra Valley Landscape Area’

Manningham

- ESO1 ‘Yarra River Environs’

Nillumbik

- ESO2 ‘Yarra River Environs’

These controls also interact with a range of other planning controls which manage separate development issues, including:

- protecting heritage values
- managing the impact of floods
- broad scale vegetation and biodiversity protection.

Control Gaps

The different ESO and SLO controls across the three council areas of the Middle Yarra present a varying set of objectives, permit triggers and decision guidelines. This has the potential to lead to inconsistent outcomes within the corridor.

Consistent planning controls are required across the corridor to achieve a holistic approach to managing development within the river’s landscape, as envisaged by this study.

The Middle Yarra River corridor (unlike the lower Yarra River corridor between Richmond and Fairfield), has no ‘Yarra River’ specific Design and Development Overlay controls managing the siting and design of development within close proximity to the river.

As Melbourne continues to grow, increasing development pressure will be placed on land within the Middle Yarra River corridor. This study recommends stronger built form controls be applied now, to avert the potential for inappropriate development to occur in the future.

ESO or SLO

The question of which is the most appropriate planning scheme tool - the Significant Landscape Overlay (SLO) or the Environmental Significance Overlay (ESO) - has been a point of discussion for some time.

The primary purpose of applying either overlay control relates to the need to protect the appearance of the landscape and maintain its environmental integrity, both of which have vegetation management as their focus.

Planning Practice Note No.7 ‘Vegetation Protection in Urban Areas’ provides some direction on the application of both the ESO and the SLO. Practice Note No.7 suggests the application of the ESO and SLO within the following circumstances related to vegetation protection:

- Where there are environmental constraints on development, or where other important ecological values are identified such as coastal or riparian habitat, the use of an ESO may be appropriate. This overlay is usually applied if vegetation protection is part of a wider objective to protect the environmental significance of an area.
- The ESO may contain requirements for the construction of buildings and the carrying out of works as well as fence construction. It can also include requirements for subdivision and exemptions for the removal of vegetation.
- Where there is a need to identify, conserve and enhance the character of significant landscapes, the SLO may be used to protect vegetation in terms of its aesthetic or visual importance in the broader landscape and where vegetation is identified as an important contributor to the character of an area.
- The SLO may contain requirements for the construction of buildings and the carrying out of works as well as fence construction. A schedule must specify a permit requirement for the removal of vegetation.

Mandatory or Discretionary Provisions

Planning Practice Note 59 (June 2015) supports the use and application of mandatory provisions where there may be strong heritage value, character themes or a sensitive environmental location that require protection from inappropriate development and certainty of outcome through the setting mandatory requirements.

To this point, planning controls that have been applied through the different planning schemes within the river corridor between Richmond and Warrandyte have been general and discretionary in form, aimed at achieving appropriate development outcomes at a site by site basis on merit.

Over time the generic nature of these discretionary requirements has led to a number of negative outcomes with development encroaching on the Yarra River and its environs. The impact of this encroachment is most evident within the Richmond to Fairfield segment of the Yarra River corridor.

While there are limited instances of inappropriate development within the Middle Yarra River corridor, the potential future threat of inappropriate development remains while these inconsistent and discretionary ESO/SLO controls continue to apply.

This study proposes the introduction of targeted mandatory controls to ensure that the highly valued natural landscape and environment features of the Yarra River corridor are retained for the benefit of all Melbournians, now and into the future. It is proposed that the following built form aspects be set as mandatory provisions:

- overshadowing by new development of the banks and waters of the Yarra River;
- setting of maximum building heights for a given area measured from natural ground level; and
- setting a minimum building setback line from the Yarra River.

The above mandatory requirements should be consistently represented and applied throughout the corridor. These will be complemented by discretionary requirements that relate to the appearance of buildings and works within the viewshed of the Yarra River. This will provide clarity and certainty at the river’s edge, while allowing for a performance based approach for built form outcomes in its broader landscape setting.

These aspects, in addition to protecting vegetation, and other matters such as careful management of the impacts of landscaping or earthworks, are key to ensuring the long term protection of today’s landscape values within the Yarra River corridor.

Recommended Planning Controls

Principles for Applying New Controls

In reviewing and recommending changes to the application of planning controls across the entire study area, the following principles have been used:

- Controls should focus on the holistic protection of landscape values and the broader environmental values that have been identified in this and past studies.
- Controls should be based on managing development outcomes within the existing, underlying land use zone context.
- Content of controls should provide clear direction for development by including carefully crafted objectives, permit requirements and decision guidelines.
- Controls should be able to be applied consistently across all planning schemes to ensure the protection of overarching Yarra River values.
- Controls should present clear and consistent mandatory elements that are definable and measurable, and allow sufficient scope for other discretionary, performance based built form outcomes where appropriate.
- Controls should be able to be tailored to respond to the different local landscape characteristics and their interface with existing developed areas.
- Any tailoring of planning controls should be limited and not undermine the overall strategic intent or create inconsistency with broader planning control application.

Significant Landscape Overlay

The SLO is the preferred planning scheme tool to be applied to protect the broad landscape values of the Yarra River corridor.

The SLO is preferred over the ESO as it primarily designed to manage holistic landscape values and significance by protecting vegetation and guiding built form outcomes within significant landscapes – a core element of this study.

The SLO allows for a statement of landscape significance to be included which sets out the values of the landscape. This is supported by clear objectives and decision guidelines, which are discretionary, to guide appropriate development outcomes across a broad area that includes both private and public land.

The SLO should be applied from the centreline of the Yarra River with its landward extent (ranging from around 100m to 400m) defined approximately by the start of the ‘Landscape Setting Corridor’, as identified by this study.

The SLO will work to complement the application of the proposed DDO which will contain mandatory requirements and provide greater certainty and direction for development of private land within close proximity to the Yarra River.

With regard to existing planning controls within relevant planning schemes, it is proposed that Banyule Planning Scheme SLO1 and SLO2 be combined into a single SLO schedule taking into account its confluence with both the Plenty River and Darebin Creek. It is proposed that Nillumbik ESO1 and Manningham ESO2 be converted to a new SLO control.

The proposed SLO control should be consistent across all three municipal planning schemes and provide local tailoring where appropriate within the ‘Statement of nature and key elements of landscape’ and the ‘Landscape character objectives to be achieved’.

Design and Development Overlay

The Design and Development Overlay (DDO) is the preferred planning scheme tool to be applied to specific areas of private land located within the ‘Waterway Corridor’ and ‘River Experience Corridor’ areas defined by this study.

The DDO control boundaries have been determined on an area by area basis with detailed assessment of the landscape characteristics and its susceptibility to being impacted by development. The details for each DDO area are contained within the municipal toolkits.

The DDO provides a high degree of flexibility in setting desired built form outcomes, in particular, establishing the maximum building height and minimum setback from the river’s edge, expressed as mandatory requirements. As the DDO cannot manage landscape, environmental and vegetation matters it is to be used in tandem with the SLO.

As a general rule, the DDO has not been applied to areas of public land as this study has not undertaken a detailed analysis of current and/or potential development opportunities to support the justification for mandatory planning provisions.

In a limited number of situations, the proposed DDO has been applied to areas of public land for the following reasons:

- Where public land forms a small spatial buffer between the Yarra River and private land;
- Where it helps clarify the spatial intent and application of the DDO; and
- Where ownership of land is in question and is zoned within a public zone.

Incorporated / Development Plan Overlay

In instances where significant development of an area, or development on public land is proposed, this study recommends that a Master Plan be prepared and implemented into a relevant planning scheme via either an Incorporated Plan Overlay (IPO) or a Development Plan Overlay (DPO), to complement existing controls.

The IPO and DPO are flexible tools that can be used to implement a plan to guide the future use and development of land identified in a strategic document. The IPO and DPO have two key purposes:

- to identify areas that require the planning of future land use or development to be shown on a plan before a permit can be granted; and
- to exempt a planning permit application from notice and review if it is generally in accordance with an approved plan.

An amendment to the relevant planning scheme would be required to implement either overlay option. This process would allow for appropriate input from the community and other interested parties.

Environmental Significance Overlay

The outcomes from this study have been based on a comprehensive assessment of landscape character, views and values which make up the Lower and Middle Yarra River corridor, to determine an area of significance for the application of amended and/or new planning controls. This study has utilised broad scale Ecological Vegetation Class and Biodiversity and Habitat mapping where it exists (mapped at a regional scale), to inform overall landscape assessment.

Ideally, the application of an Environmental Significance Overlay (ESO) should be based on a scientific assessment of environmental values such as the location and type of remnant riparian and other indigenous vegetation, which may include biodiversity and habitat assessment within the Yarra River corridor. The application of the ESO in this instance should be strategically applied to capture an appropriate area where those values have been identified and require ongoing protection.

To this end, such a study has not been undertaken to the whole of the Yarra River to support application of a specifically tailored and applied ESO. It is suggested that Melbourne Water in their capacity as manager of waterway health for the Yarra River progress a future study.

There is potential for such a process to consider the current Banyule ESO1 ‘Yarra River, Plenty River & Darebin Creek’ or the proposed Nillumbik ESO4 ‘Waterways’ (Amendment C101) as guides to implementing a more defined ESO control.

On this basis it is proposed that Manningham’s ESO1 ‘Yarra River Environs’ and Nillumbik’s ESO2 ‘Yarra River Environs’ be updated and converted to the Significant Landscape Overlay (SLO). The current drafting of these controls have a strong ‘landscape’ orientation, making the SLO a more appropriate tool.

Major Development Sites and Development on Public Land

Major Development Sites

A limited number of major development sites exist, of varying size and potential, within the Yarra River corridor between Richmond and Warrandyte. Each site has the potential to significantly change the use and development fabric of land within a given area and in turn has the potential to contribute positively to its relationship and interface with the Yarra River.

To this end, this study has not sought to assess the future development potential of these sites. An assessment of the potential for development based on the current underlying planning zone conditions has been undertaken and recommendations provided, where relevant, aimed at reducing potential impact of development within the Yarra River corridor under current arrangements.

Any proposed future change to the use and development composition of such sites is best undertaken in a comprehensive manner where the merits of a proposal are considered holistically, taking into account the principles and objectives outlined within this study and other studies as appropriate.

Any future development outcome should ideally be explored through a Master Plan exercise, with the outcome implemented via an appropriate rezoning process and/or application of an IPO or DPO.

Public Land

Public land within the context of the Yarra River corridor generally comprises:

- Crown land;
- Land vested in or owned by a minister, government department, public authority or municipal council; or
- Land otherwise used for public purpose.

A general rule applied through all planning schemes is that a public land manager should be able to use and develop public land for a purpose relative to the reservation of that land and the particular statutory charter of the land manager under its governing legislation.

This study recognizes that all public land adjacent to the Yarra River is significant and is the prime contributor to the overall landscape significance setting of the broader corridor, regardless of whether that land has been set aside for conservation values, recreational values, or other public benefit reason.

The purpose of this Study has been to assess the need for new or amended planning controls for private land in proximity to the Yarra River with a focus on managing the interface between public and private land.

Generally, a decision about whether to apply an overlay to public land will depend on the nature of the overlay and the land management legislation of the public land manager. Given the level of investigation, this Study does not recommend the application of the DDO over public land, but does support applying the SLO irrespective of land tenure.

The application of the DDO in this study is based on a detailed analysis of the development potential of land under a current zone and its potential for impact on the landscape significance of the Yarra River. This detailed assessment has lead to the need to establish mandatory heights, setbacks and other requirements to manage potential development impacts effectively. The numerous reservations of public land and potential development associated with its reservation status within the Yarra river corridor is difficult to assess and therefore the ability to determine appropriate mandatory requirements to support application of a DDO.

The proposed SLO is considered more appropriate in this instance as it provides for appropriate discretionary requirements for future development to be considered where a permit may be triggered under the relevant zone. These can be assessed against the principles and objectives of the Study and other elements of a planning scheme.

Should any future development be proposed for a segement of public land, this study recommends a master plan type exercise be prepared with the outcome potentially implemented via the application of an IPO or DPO.

Notice and Referral of Applications under both DDO and SLO

It is proposed that referral of applications be provided to ensure a range of issues regarding the health and amenity of the Yarra River are considered as part of any decision to develop land within either the proposed DDO and SLO controls.

Melbourne Water

Melbourne Water has responsibility for managing a broad range of water related functions under the Water Act 1989, as they relate to the Yarra River. At present, the planning scheme identifies a statutory referral role where one of a number of flood overlays and/or the Urban Floodway Zone applies to land or the waterway within the Yarra River corridor.

However, not all land adjacent to, or with direct access to the Yarra River is flood affected to generate a referral under clause 66 of the relevant planning scheme. Depending on the location, type or extent of proposed buildings and/or works, there may be potential for impacts on the health and waterway values of the Yarra River and its immediate environs which could include:

- impacts of erosion and sediment run-off either during or after construction;
- impacts of stormwater from hard stand areas within close proximity to the Yarra River;
- construction of buildings within the root zone of indigenous and riparian vegetation;
- removal and inappropriate replacement of riparian vegetation; and/or
- changes to topography of land and bank stability which may arise from inappropriately sited development, cut and fill or other landscape works.

This study proposes that Melbourne Water be considered a “Recommending referral authority” under section 55 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987. This referral should be limited to an area within 50 to 100 metres of the Yarra River.

In the first instance, the proposed referral should be included within the proposed Design and Development Overlay given the potential for development on private property and the close proximity of these properties to the Yarra River. There may be potential to extend this referral to the SLO to capture all land within the same distance parameters as mentioned above.

The proposed referral would require a specific reference at Clause 66.04 of the planning scheme linked to either the DDO or SLO. This approach will ensure that all relevant matters relating to an application’s impact on the health and amenity of the river is considered holistically, in addition to flooding issues, and that

appropriate advice is provided to the Responsible Authority to allow it to make an informed decision.

Parks Victoria and/or Public Land Manager

Significant areas of public land within the Yarra River corridor share property boundaries with private land.

It is proposed that notice of an application under section 52(1) (c) of the Planning Environment Act 1987 be considered for applications for buildings and works where private land abuts public land.

Notice to the public land manager under either the proposed DDO or SLO is encouraged at the discretion of the Responsible Authority.

Adjoining Local Government

The Yarra River forms a municipal and planning scheme boundary for all areas between Richmond and Warrandyte.

Development proposed on one side of the river may be visible from the opposite bank within an adjoining municipality. Consideration could be given to providing notice of an application under section 52 (1)(c) of the Planning Environment Act 1987 to the adjoining municipality at the discretion of the Responsible Authority.

Such notice could be limited to major development proposals where there may be potential visual impacts from the opposing banks.

5.4 Planning Control Form and Content

Planning provisions to protect the Yarra River were first drafted 30 years ago. In that period, objectives and guidelines have evolved to respond to changing circumstances and the increasing sophistication of planning schemes.

This study seeks to build on the evolution of past studies and concept plans, retaining tried and tested policy, and making changes where they are needed and clearly justified.

This has included a systematic documentation and review of previous and existing Yarra River planning policies, strategies, overlay controls, VCAT and Planning Panel decisions and recommendations.

The following presents a synthesised set of objectives and decision guidelines that preserve the best of established policy, adapted to respond to particular issues identified within the Middle Yarra River corridor. These will be used to inform the development of new and/or amended overlay controls proposed by this study.

Objectives

Landscape and Environmental Values

- Protect and enhance the environmental, aesthetic, cultural, recreation and tourism values of the Yarra River corridor.
- Maintain the sense of seclusion that the Yarra River corridor provides.
- Protect sites and features of pre and post contact cultural heritage significance.
- Retain native vegetation, particularly established vegetation, mature vegetation and canopy trees on both public and private land along the Yarra River corridor.
- Retain and restore a continuous corridor of native vegetation along the waterway to provide for the movement of fauna, to enhance water quality and to contribute to the natural aesthetic of the river.
- Protect, rehabilitate and expand the Yarra River's corridor of riparian and indigenous vegetation using local indigenous species.
- Protect and enhance both terrestrial and aquatic habitat to allow the movement of wildlife within the Yarra River corridor.
- Minimise the impacts of introduced flora and fauna on indigenous species.
- Protect exotic vegetation which has heritage value or contributes to local landscape significance.
- Increase native vegetation cover throughout the Yarra River corridor.

Protecting Views

- Protect and enhance the vegetation dominated views of the Yarra River corridor, particularly from public areas such as roads, paths, bridge crossings and open space reserves.

- Protect and enhance the skyline vista when viewed from the Yarra River, its banks, adjacent parks and trails, and scenic viewpoints within the valley.
- Ensure buildings and other structures on visible hill slopes and skylines are subordinate to vegetation and views of development from the Yarra River are filtered through trees.
- Minimise the visual intrusion of development, particularly when viewed from public areas adjacent to the river, including the Main Yarra Trail, and the river itself.
- Ensure public views of buildings are filtered through vegetation and trees.

Built Form Siting and Design

- Ensure buildings are set back from the Yarra River and adjacent public open space.
- Ensure the height of buildings is set below the predominant tree canopy.
- Avoid light spill and overshadowing on the banks and water of the Yarra River, and its adjacent public open space.
- Site and design development so that it responds sensitively to the topographical and landscape character of the Yarra River corridor.
- Ensure that subdivision, lot layout and building development addresses the river appropriately and provides a positive interface with the open space along the Yarra River corridor.
- Ensure sufficient space is provided for the planting and growth of vegetation, including large canopy trees, in new development.
- Ensure buildings are appropriately scaled with elevations that are presented at a variety of heights and stepped back from the Yarra River.
- Ensure all development is designed with all external colours and finishes that are sympathetic to the natural landscape character setting.
- Ensure that development is designed to the highest architectural standards and that the treatment of all elevations and external finishes demonstrates a well-considered contextual response.
- Ensure external building materials and design details complement the landscape and built form character of the area.
- Avoid development within identified setbacks to protect and enhance the riparian zone.
- Provide adequate spacing between buildings to maintain and create views to the Yarra River and its corridor.
- Minimise impervious surfaces to allow for the filtration of water and retention and establishment of vegetation.

- Ensure fencing in close proximity to the Yarra River does not create contrast with its landscape setting.

River Health & Conservation

- Ensure that all buildings and works are set back from the river's edge.
- Protect natural landforms, natural stream geomorphology and geological formations of the Yarra River corridor, where practical.
- Protect and enhance the health of the Yarra River including water quality (inclusive of runoff) in stream and streamside habitats, geological features and indigenous riparian vegetation.
- Recognise the function of the Yarra River as part of a natural and urban drainage system.
- Ensure development does not compromise bank stability or result in increased erosion.
- Ensure development results in no net increase in the rate or quantity of stormwater, sediment or other pollutants entering watercourses or wetlands.
- Protect and strengthen the function of the open space corridor as a wildlife corridor.
- Protect and enhance habitats, including aquatic habitats, along the Yarra River corridor.
- Ensure development does not impede the river's natural watercourse character and floodplain capacity.
- Minimise the impacts of introduced flora and fauna on indigenous species and the potential for pest flora and fauna infestation in the Yarra River corridor.

Public Open Space & Access

- Protect and enhance the amenity of public areas.
- Provide attractive environments that are conducive to a range of tourism and recreational activities.
- Maintain and enhance public access to and throughout the Yarra River corridor including access to the river itself and shared use of water access locations.
- Maintain and improve linear public open space and pathways along the Yarra River corridor, connecting existing and proposed open space areas upstream and downstream of the Middle Yarra River.
- Ensure commercial or intensive recreational facility development is located near other commercial or recreation uses to retain some secluded areas free from activity.
- Ensure the design of sporting and recreational structures complies with all other design and development objectives.

Permit Requirements

DDO Requirements

A permit should be required for all buildings, works and subdivision within the proposed DDO. A requirement for a permit should be extended to the construction of a swimming pool or tennis court associated with a dwelling.

It is proposed to include overshadowing requirements as a mandatory provision so that all new buildings will not cast any additional shadow over the banks and waters of the Yarra River, measured during the winter solstice (22 June).

Overshadowing of public open space during spring/autumn equinox period should be discouraged. Given the close proximity of private land to public open space it is recommended that this requirement be discretionary with any overshadowing assessed on a case by case basis, on merit.

It is proposed that all building heights and setbacks be expressed as mandatory requirements specific to each identified area.

Where existing buildings (partially or wholly) are located within a mandatory setback distance the following mandatory requirements should be placed on any application to partially or completely replace an existing building:

- the height of the proposed building is consistent with the height specified for the area;
- the proposed building does not reduce the existing setback of the previous building; and
- the footprint of the proposed building is limited to the current gross floor area.

Discretion should be afforded to the Responsible Authority to allow for a re-orientation of a building's footprint to encourage an increased setback to be achieved and a better outcome from a visual impact perspective.

A permit should be required to construct a fence, within identified setback areas, with an exemption provided for simple rural post and wire, and timber rail type fencing. Where a permit is required, key considerations should include the height of the fence, its visual permeability and use of materials to avoid contrast with its local environment.

Site area coverage provisions should be included to limit built form and hard stand areas in a residential area as a discretionary requirement. This is to ensure that:

- the bulk and massing of hard stand areas and built form does not dominate the visual appearance of a particular area;
- unnecessary storm water run off is reduced; and
- retention and expansion of vegetated areas is encouraged.

A discretionary provision regarding the selection of building materials should be included to the effect that materials utilise non-reflective colours and finishes to avoid contrast with the surrounding landscape.

Appropriate consideration will need to be given to the potential impact future development associated with subdivision may create from the perspective of the Yarra River environs. No requirements are proposed to be specified in this instance as this study has not recommended minimum subdivision levels. The option to explore minimum subdivision levels is best investigated by relevant Councils using the broader strategic land use planning objectives of this study.

SLO Requirements

The proposed SLO schedule includes a statement which outlines the significance of the Yarra River at both the State, regional and local level, structured in the following way:

- Sets out a statement outlining the importance of the Yarra River at whole of river perspective;
- Sets out the landscape, environmental, cultural and social values of the Yarra River; and
- Provides an overview of the landscape values relevant to the spatial extent of the SLO within a particular municipal area.

The head provision of the SLO allows for limited permit requirement inclusions and the noting of exemptions from a planning permit. Within this context the following should be considered:

- Requirement to remove, destroy or lop native vegetation with a limited exemption for removal of exotic species of limited height and width.
- Exemption from a permit to construct a dwelling less than 6 metres in height above natural ground level.
- Requirement to construct a fence within 30 metres of the banks of the Yarra River with an exemption for post and wire, or post and rail construction.
- Requirement to construct / undertake buildings and works associated with a bicycle or shared pathway with appropriate exemptions for municipal or public authorities.

As the application of the SLO will affect both private and public land, it is proposed that an exemption be included for municipal and or public authorities who may be conducting waterway, stream or other type of works which are aimed at ensuring the ongoing health of the waterway environment.

Application Requirements

It is proposed that applications be accompanied by key information which will assist the Responsible Authority in making an informed assessment of a proposal.

Information that should be provided for an application will be based on the type of buildings and works proposed with any requirement at the discretion of the Responsible Authority. This should include:

- A written assessment demonstrating how the proposal meets the objectives and requirements of the DDO/SLO.
- The need for shadow diagrams or schedule of materials and finishes.
- A survey plan, prepared and certified by a suitably qualified surveyor accurately showing the location of proposed buildings and works measured to Australian Height Datum from natural ground level.
- A landscape plan which outlines the location, species type and quantity of vegetation to be removed, and any replacement vegetation, supported by a suitably qualified arborist's report.
- How any earthworks and their impacts will be managed and what protections are to be provided regarding run off or to prevent erosion when close to the river's bank.
- A survey plan, prepared and certified by a suitably qualified surveyor accurately showing proposed buildings and works both against proposed mandatory height and setbacks measured to Australian Height Datum measured from natural ground level.
- A visual impact assessment which may comprise cross-sectional diagrams, photo montages or a view shed analysis from agreed publicly accessible viewing points.

Decision Guidelines

Decision guidelines are used to inform the assessment of planning permit applications. They could include the following considerations to determine whether the objectives are being met.

Landscape and Environmental values

- The reasons for removing vegetation and whether there are other alternative options which do not require its removal.
- The effect of the removal of vegetation on the natural landscape character, habitat protection, wildlife movement and long term viability of remnant and revegetated areas.
- Whether sufficient vegetation and canopy trees of appropriate species are to be planted to replace the removal of the existing vegetation and mature canopy trees.

- Whether the location and extent of the buildings or works encroaches into the critical root zone of mature canopy trees.
- The ability for proposed vegetation species to be matched to the local plant communities.
- Whether mature, dead and dying native vegetation should be maintained as habitat for native fauna or removed to avoid a risk or safety hazard.
- Whether the spacing between buildings allows for the planting of appropriate vegetation and canopy trees to filter views of the development.
- The extent to which screening of existing and proposed buildings, structures and areas of hard surfacing contain appropriately scaled informal landscaping, suitable to the indigenous landscape character of the river corridor, particularly when visible from the waterway, Main Yarra Trail and areas of public open space.
- Whether the existing and proposed vegetation fronting the Yarra River will filter the majority views of the proposed development.

Protecting Views

- The visibility of any proposed buildings and works when viewed from the Yarra River and adjacent public open space, bicycle and shared paths and bridge crossings.
- Whether sufficient space is provided in front of and between buildings to allow for the planting and growth of vegetation, including large canopy trees.
- Whether the siting of buildings and works avoids the removal of existing riparian vegetation.
- Whether any earthworks will affect public views of the river corridor.

Built Form Siting and Design

- Whether the scale, form, siting and design of new buildings, including materials, colours and finishes, are sensitively integrated with the natural landscape setting of the river corridor.
- Whether buildings will protrude above the predominant tree canopy of a given area.
- The impact of any overshadowing by development:
 - on the banks of the Yarra River between 11:00am and 2:00pm on 22 June; and
 - on public open space between 11:00am and 2:00pm on 22 September.
- Whether any additional overshadowing of public open space can be avoided by redesigning or relocating a proposed building, or part thereof.

- Whether siting of proposed buildings impacts the river's natural flood and water course characteristics.
- Whether any proposed garages and outbuildings ancillary to a dwelling are integrated into the overall design to minimise the appearance of built form impacting public views of the river corridor.
- Whether building elevations and podium levels need to be stepped back in keeping with the topography and natural landscape character of the Yarra River.
- Whether the location, bulk, outline and appearance of any proposed building or works are in keeping with or enhance the natural landscape character and appearance of the Yarra River.
- The need for additional landscaping or new vegetation screening to filter views of proposed buildings and works.
- The appropriateness of proposed materials and finishes for any proposed buildings and works.
- The need to minimise impervious surfaces to allow for filtration of water and retention and establishment of indigenous vegetation and canopy trees.
- The need to limit areas, (including tennis courts and swimming pools) and other impervious surfaces within the minimum setback distance specified in Table 1 of this schedule to allow for replanting and vegetation growth.
- Whether adequate spacing is provided between buildings to maintain and create views to the Yarra River and its corridor.
- Whether fences provided along the river frontage property boundary are low, visually permeable, and finished with tones and colours that blend in with its vegetated landscape setting.
- That views of development from the Yarra River and adjacent public open space, bicycle and shared paths and bridge crossings are minimised.
- The need for litter or gross pollutant traps at entry points to drains that serve large developments known to generate litter and sediment.

Public Open Space & Access

- Whether the location of boating infrastructure is consistent with the *Guidelines for Approval of Jetties 2011 Melbourne Water*, any requirements, plans or guidelines prepared by Parks Victoria or other public land manager.
- Whether bicycle and shared paths are well located, avoid unnecessary earthworks and vegetation removal and have good visibility to help increase safety for users.
- Whether private development results in the loss of, or creates inappropriate access to the Yarra River and its parklands.
- Whether opportunities exist to co-locate new buildings with existing buildings on public land, particularly at the banks of the Yarra River.

River Health & Conservation

- Whether any proposed earthworks and changes in the topography of the river corridor will detrimentally impact its local natural landscape character and environmental values.
- Whether fencing allows for the free movement of wildlife, minimises visual intrusion and limits impact on watercourse characteristics.
- Whether buildings and works are sufficiently set back from the banks of the Yarra River to ensure that:
 - The river's natural flood and water course characteristics is not impacted.
 - The topography of the river and its banks are maintained as the dominant feature in the public views of the river corridor.
 - The existing riparian vegetation is protected and enhanced.

5.5 Establishing Mandatory Building Heights and Setbacks

Establishing mandatory heights and setbacks, tailored to suit the local landscape characteristics and context of an area, is critical to protecting the Yarra River corridor.

Overview

Determining appropriate building heights and setbacks within each part of the study area has been based upon two foundation principles of:

- a. Protection of the riparian zone - the ‘waterway corridor’, which is the river’s immediate environment; and
- b. Siting and designing built form that so the topography, naturalistic landscape character, waterway scale and sense of seclusion of the ‘river experience corridor’ - the area within which the river is experienced from its banks and trails - is protected.

Other design parameters that also play a role in determining the interaction of built form within its landscape include setbacks from parklands and conservation areas, protection from overshadowing, site coverage, permeability and landscaping.

Chapter 6 ‘Recommendations’ sets out the strategic intent of these design parameters for each part of the study area. The Municipal Toolkits provide the local level detailed analysis and recommendations for areas of private land adjoining and within close proximity to the river.

Waterway Corridor

Protection of the riparian zone

The State Planning Policy Framework at Clause 14.02-1 ‘Catchment planning and management’ identifies the need to:

“Retain natural drainage corridors with vegetated buffer zones at least 30m wide along each side of a waterway to maintain the natural drainage function, stream habitat and wildlife corridors and landscape values, to minimise erosion of stream banks and verges and to reduce polluted surface runoff from adjacent land uses.”

Melbourne Water guidelines encourage the establishment of a viable riparian vegetated environment to maintain healthy waterways. The guidelines include:

- *Waterway Corridors – Guidelines for greenfield development areas within the Port Phillip and Westernport Region 2013*, Melbourne Water
- *Constructed Waterways Framework, 2009*, Melbourne Water

River Experience Corridor

Siting built form that so the topography, naturalistic landscape character, waterway scale and sense of seclusion of the river are protected

Different building heights and setbacks will be appropriate in order to achieve the above principle, depending on the location and context.

Clause 12.05-2 ‘Yarra River protection policy’ forms the basis for considering the interaction of built form and landscape along the river experience corridor, and includes the strategies of:

Maintain a sense of place and landscape identity by:

- Retaining a dominant and consistent tree canopy along the river corridor and within its broader landscape setting.
- *Ensuring that the appearance of development is subordinate to the local landscape setting, with any views of development being filtered through vegetation.*

Ensure that development is designed and sited to maintain and enhance the river’s secluded and natural environment by:

- *Minimising the visual intrusion of development when viewed from major roads, bridge crossings, public open space, recreation trails and the river itself.*
- *Ensuring that the siting and design of buildings avoid contrast with the local natural landscape and environmental character.*
- *Ensuring building height is below the natural tree canopy and all development is set back a minimum of 30 metres, or greater, from the banks of the river.*

Appropriate building heights and additional setbacks have been determined for each section of the Yarra River based on the assessment criteria detailed on the following page. The criteria includes consideration of the exiting landscape character and the future landscape directions for each part of the river.

The proposed building heights and setback distances allow an appropriate level of development to occur, reflecting the strategic direction of the underlying zoning.

A ‘mandatory height’ and a ‘mandatory minimum setback line’ has been recommended for each area within close proximity to and/ or with direct frontage to the Yarra River.

Where existing development is located within the mandatory minimum setback line, allowance should be provided for appropriately designed and suitably scaled replacement of that existing building. Preferably, replacement buildings should be sited behind the identified setback line where it can be achieved.

Works should ideally be set back the same distance as buildings unless they are water dependant or required for river access, such as paths for pedestrians or cyclists, boat infrastructure and viewing platforms. Given the complexity surrounding this aspect, discretion should be afforded the Responsible Authority preferably with referral advice from Melbourne Water.

Criteria for Determining Building Setbacks & Heights

Existing Landscape Character

Criteria	Matters for Consideration
Natural landscape character	<div>The key aspects of the river’s natural landscape character, as defined by:</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The topography and gradient of the land• The vegetation cover of the river’s edge, banks and adjoining land• The formation of the river’s course and how this affects visibility of the river from viewing locations
Pattern of viewing	<div>How the river corridor landscape is viewed e.g. from recreation trails, parkland or bridge crossings, or only from the river itself</div>
Interaction of built form & landscape	<div>The existing pattern of development and the level of visibility of built form from viewing locations</div> <div>Whether existing development shows a consistent setback pattern and, if so, whether this pattern is appropriate and should be reinforced</div> <div>The extent to which views of a natural landscape horizon or skyline might be interrupted by buildings</div>

Future Landscape Directions

Criteria	Matters for Consideration
Strategic context	<div>How the strategic intent of the underlying zoning, overlay controls or policy may influence the level of development that could occur</div>
Desired outcomes	<div>Strategic objectives for future development in relation to the valued landscape character</div>

Recommendations

Criteria	Matters for Consideration
Setback reference point	<div>Ability to measure a setback through alignment with a property boundary to allow ease of administration in preparing and assessing development proposals</div>
Existing development	<div>Existing building heights, siting and setback patterns from the river</div> <div>Depth of sites fronting the river</div> <div>Street frontage setback requirements of sites adjoining the river and how this might influence building siting</div>
Recommended maximum building height	<div>Recommended overall maximum building height to ensure development reflects established landscape character and desired outcomes</div>
Recommended minimum building setbacks	<div>Recommended minimum setback from setback reference point - either represented as a numerical distance or through a contour reference</div> <div>Whether a property has sufficient depth to accommodate a reasonable level of development in view of the preferred setback from the river</div>

The Middle Yarra Context

Within the study area, the Yarra River retains a strong naturalistic landscape character. The corridor comprises extensive areas of suburban or low density residential development with pockets of rural land use, set among extensive public open spaces, parklands and conservation areas. Throughout most of the corridor:

- vegetation and topography are the dominant visual elements of the river, its banks and wider landscape setting
- the skyline, as viewed from the waterway, the river banks and trails or adjoining parklands, is defined by the tree canopy
- dense vegetation lines the river’s banks and screens views to buildings; while buildings are sometimes partly visible, the strong vegetation screen ensures they remain visually recessive.

Built form that is highly visible and dominant occurs in several locations, due to a number of factors including:

- buildings are set up on the higher ground of an escarpment
- buildings are set close to the rivers edge
- there is minimal tree canopy within the building setback to screen views
- high scale development extends above the line of the tree canopy.

The Yarra River is a unique asset to Melbourne as a near-continuous landscape corridor. However, there are also several locations where clusters of urban activity and built form are highly visible from the river. These clusters serve as ‘punctuation points’ along the river corridor, which is otherwise defined by its extensive vegetation and tree canopy cover rather than built form.

Within the Middle Yarra River corridor these ‘punctuation points’ include the Warrandyte Town Centre and the clustering of development on both sides of the river at Heidelberg and Bulleen.

Further towards the city centre there are a greater number of ‘punctuation points’ that comprise more intense built form within the landscape of the corridor as it becomes more urbanised, such as those at Abbotsford, Cremorne and South Yarra.

Figure 2 below shows how the built form analysis criteria can be applied ‘on the ground’ and through the application of permit requirements within the relevant overlay control. The naturalistic landscape character of the ‘waterway corridor’ and ‘river experience corridor’ are protected from the visual intrusion of built form along the river banks through establishing appropriate mandatory height and setback controls to respond to the river’s character in each location.

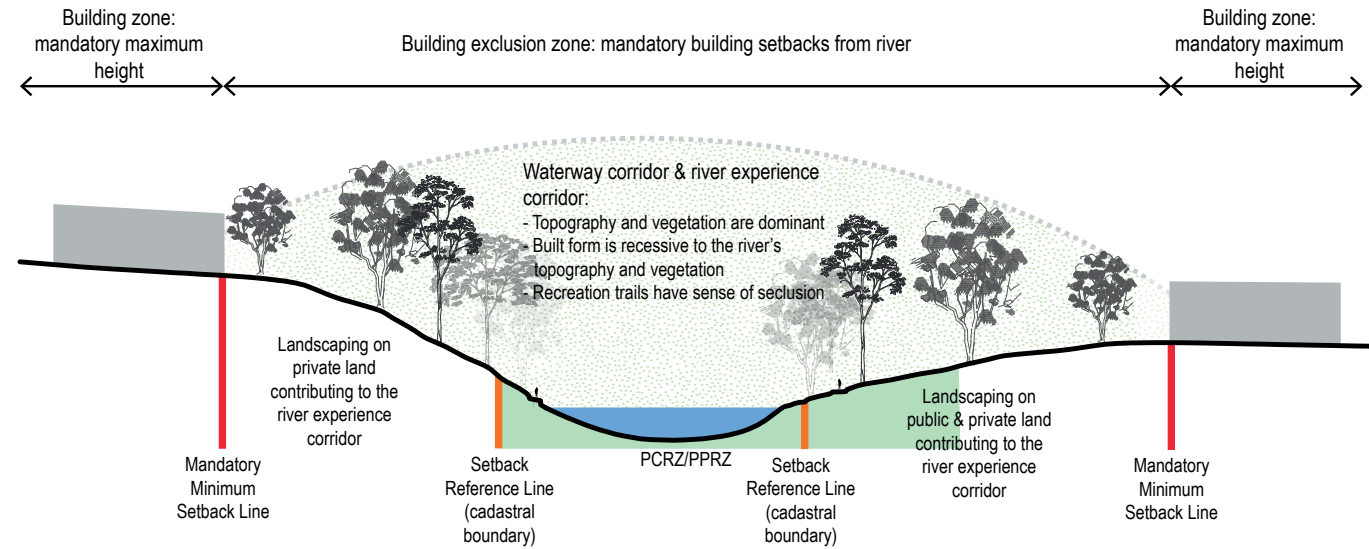


Figure 2: Defining Building Height & Setbacks

Building Setbacks

A range of building setback distances are recommended for private land within the study area, which are detailed in general in Chapter 6 and assessed in more detail within each Municipal Toolkit. These setbacks have been determined based on the ‘Criteria for determining Building Setbacks and Heights’ outlined on the previous page.

Given the strong naturalistic character of the Yarra River corridor throughout most of the study area, in all instances, the greatest setback distance reasonably possible has been recommended. This approach aims to limit evidence of further development directly along or visible from the Yarra River, including both the waterway itself and public land adjoining the river.

Defining Building Setbacks

A mandatory minimum setback line has been applied to all private land abutting or with direct access to the Yarra River. The minimum mandatory setback line is defined as either a:

- consistent parallel distance, measured horizontally from the identified setback reference line; and/or
- a specific contour level measured to Australian Height Datum standards.

This is measured from the ‘setback reference line’ which relates to the closest cadastral/property boundary to the river’s edge, for ease of reference and administration. The minimum setback line and the setback reference line are illustrated in Figure 3.

In some circumstances the use of both a parallel distance and a contour level are proposed to provide a more naturalistic setback outcome. In these instances the application of a “which ever is greater” test will apply.

A range of options have been considered in determining how to measure setback distances. This approach has been found to be the most transparent and easily applied from a statutory planning perspective. Both forms of setback distances can be measured by a suitably qualified surveyor and shown on certified survey plans.

It is important to note that the all proposed setbacks are a minimum behind which all new buildings must be sited. There may be other site specific factors which might require a greater setback to be achieved as determined by the responsible authority.

These may include, but are not limited to:

- A site’s exposure to flood, bushfire, landslip and other risk factors.
- Additional street and/or side boundary setbacks required by other parts of the planning scheme (such as amenity or neighbourhood character provisions).
- The need to locate a building behind a more defined vegetation line or the need to protect existing vegetation.
- Other site specific issues such as the topographic nature of the site, ability to dispose of waste water etc.

There are limited circumstances where new buildings would be acceptable within a minimum mandatory setback line. In some instances there may be existing buildings or works which are either partially or wholly located within the mandatory minimum setback area.

In these discreet circumstances the responsible authority, via the planning permit application process, will be provided limited discretion to consider:

- Replacement, alterations and additions to existing buildings partially or wholly within the minimum mandatory setback line; and
- Applications to construct a swimming pool, tennis court, outbuildings and other ‘works’ such as landscaping or earthworks.

Any proposed replacement, alteration and/or addition to an existing building must not:

- Exceed the maximum building height specified in the planning control;
- Reduce the existing setback of the building from the Yarra River; and
- Increase the existing gross floor area of the existing building.

Some discretion should be afforded the Responsible Authority to consider the potential for an existing building within the setback area to be re-orientated, whereby an increased setback or a better outcome from a visual impact perspective may be achieved.

In these instances, an applicant should be required to justify why any proposed buildings and works cannot be relocated behind the mandatory minimum setback line.

This approach provides fairness for existing land holders while delivering long term benefits for the management and protection of landscape character and amenity values of the Yarra River corridor.

Other Options

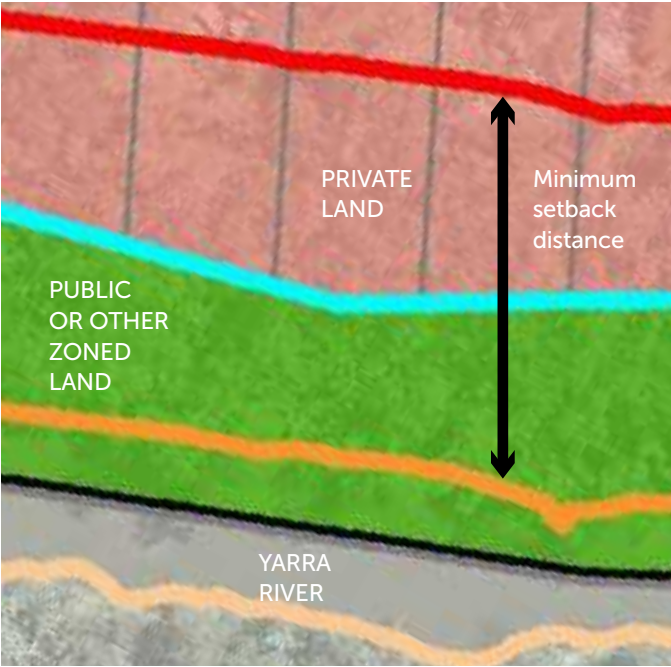
A number of different options for defining a minimum setback line and the setback reference line have been considered in the process of preparing the Inner-Middle Yarra River studies. These include:

- ‘Top of bank’. This is commonly used by Melbourne Water as a reference point, but is difficult to accurately reference in an overlay control schedule. Additionally, references associated with the river’s topographic features may change over time.
- ‘Break of slope’ or ‘crestline’, which is the point at which the river’s topography flattens out away from the bank. While this approach allows the control to be adjusted to reflect topographic variations, it is difficult for the line to be accurately referenced in a statutory context. Additionally, in some locations, there is no clear break of slope to be defined.

Figure 3: Measuring Building Setbacks

Example 1

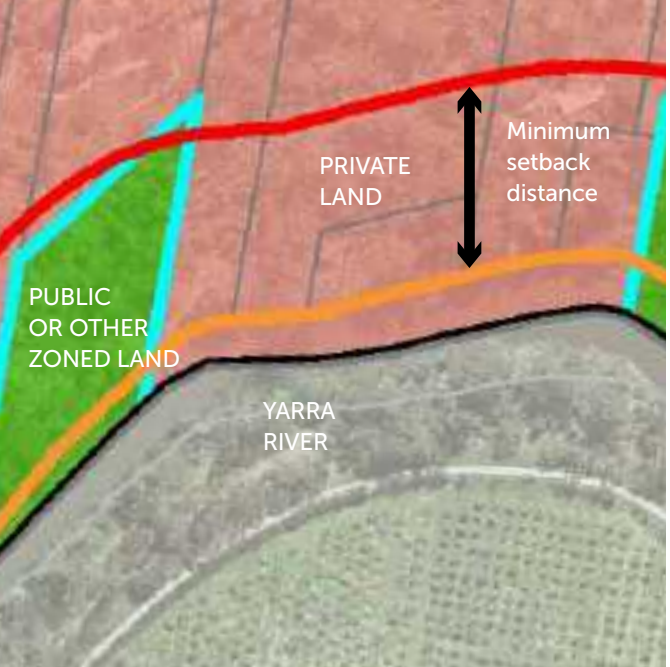
Public land separates private land from the Yarra River. Setback assessment includes all public land and private land from the closest cadastral boundary to the river’s edge.



- Setback Reference Line: established from the closest cadastral (property) boundary to the Yarra River
- Mandatory Minimum Setback Line: may be measured perpendicular to the Setback Reference Line or may be a contour reference

Example 2

Private land title extends to the edge or into the Yarra River. Setback assessment includes all land (and water as required) from the closest cadastral boundary from the river’s edge



Building Heights

Existing Statutory Context

A range of building height controls apply to different parts of the Middle Yarra River study area, as either discretionary or mandatory provisions, either through zone or overlay controls. Existing height controls include:

- General Residential Zone (GRZ) schedules which apply discretionary or mandatory controls ranging from 9m-13.5m
- Neighbourhood Residential Zone (NRZ) which applies a 8m (9m on a sloping site) mandatory control
- Residential Growth Zones (RGZ) within Bulleen and Heidelberg which sets a discretionary height limit of 13.5m
- Other zones apply to extensive parts of the study area and do not specify height controls, including the Low Density Residential Zone (LDRZ), Rural Conservation Zone (RCZ), Urban Floodway Zone (UFZ), Special Use Zone (SUZ), Public Use Zone (PUZ) or Industrial Zone (INZ) (applies to a small area in Bulleen)
- The Heritage Overlay (HO) applies to various sites and precincts close to the river and while it does not set a specific height limit, could serve to restrict building heights if heritage conservation values are impacted
- The Design and Development Overlay (DDO) sets discretionary height controls for areas within Templestowe, Warrandyte and Heidelberg.

Unlike the Lower Yarra River corridor, there is no specific DDO relating to the river within the Middle Yarra corridor. Most of the height controls that exist within the study area are implemented through the underlying land use zone or overlay controls.

The most extensive area of mandatory height control currently applied is through the NRZ, to approximately half of all private land within the study area.

Approach

This study has made recommendations on preferred building heights for each part of the study area, based on the 'Criteria for determining Building Setbacks and Heights' outlined previously.

Current height controls applying to each part of the study area have been assessed to determine how they are effective in protecting the river's landscape values to achieve the objective of Clause 12.05-2 'Yarra River Protection' in the State Planning Policy Framework.

Clause 12.05-2 emphasises maintaining a dominant tree canopy and visually subordinate development within a naturalistic landscape setting. The landscape character assessment and views analysis undertaken as part of this study has shown that the predominant building form within the Middle Yarra River corridor comprises low-rise residential buildings of between 1-2 storeys. This reflects the pattern of development on private land being mostly low density residential or rural residential in form.

On this basis, for the majority of the Middle Yarra River corridor, a maximum building height of 8m (9m for a sloping site) is proposed. This proposed height:

- equates to the typical height of a suburban residential or rural structure within the corridor;
- ensures that future built form will sit well below the tree canopy; and
- is consistent with the existing height controls of the NRZ and some areas of GRZ within the study area.

Sloping site allowances have been recommended for proposed building heights at or below 9m for residential areas across the corridor from Richmond to Warrandyte. A sloping site allowance is not recommended above this height, as this allowance should be considered within the overall mandatory height set out in the schedule to the DDO.

Within the Middle Yarra River corridor, only one location supports a variation to this scale of height. This is at Heidelberg (at the southern end of the Activity Centre) and Bulleen (the Greenaway Street precinct), an area which acts as a 'punctuation point' where intense development activity is clustered on both sides of the river.

The other 'punctuation point' within the Middle Yarra River corridor, the Warrandyte Town Centre, has a historically low scale of development already set at a two storey maximum. This area is well protected through the application of the 'Warrandyte Township Precinct' Heritage Overlay control, and a corresponding Design and Development Overlay effectively limiting the height of new development.

Lower scale buildings are recommended within areas used for parklands and recreational pursuits such as golf courses, of up to 6m. These areas represent the most naturalistic pockets of landscape along the river and it is essential that built form remain visually unobtrusive.

Measuring Building Height & Setbacks

The measurement of building height based on natural ground level is an important component in ensuring overall building height remains within mandatory limits set by relevant planning controls. Using different measures may lead to development being much taller than anticipated, inappropriately impacting the Yarra River corridor.

Both the Victoria Planning Provisions and the Building Code of Australia use 'natural ground level' as a standard approach to measuring the proposed height of all built form.

'Natural ground level' is the ground level of a site before any works (such as filling and/or excavating) are undertaken to alter the naturally occurring contours of the land, based on Australian Height Datum standards.

The Victorian Building Authority's *Practice Note No.47* should be consulted if clarification is needed to define natural ground level in instances where it is difficult to ascertain, such as where cut and fill or other earthworks have previously been undertaken.

Building setback distances are measured from the setback reference line, on the horizontal, as shown in Figure 4 below.

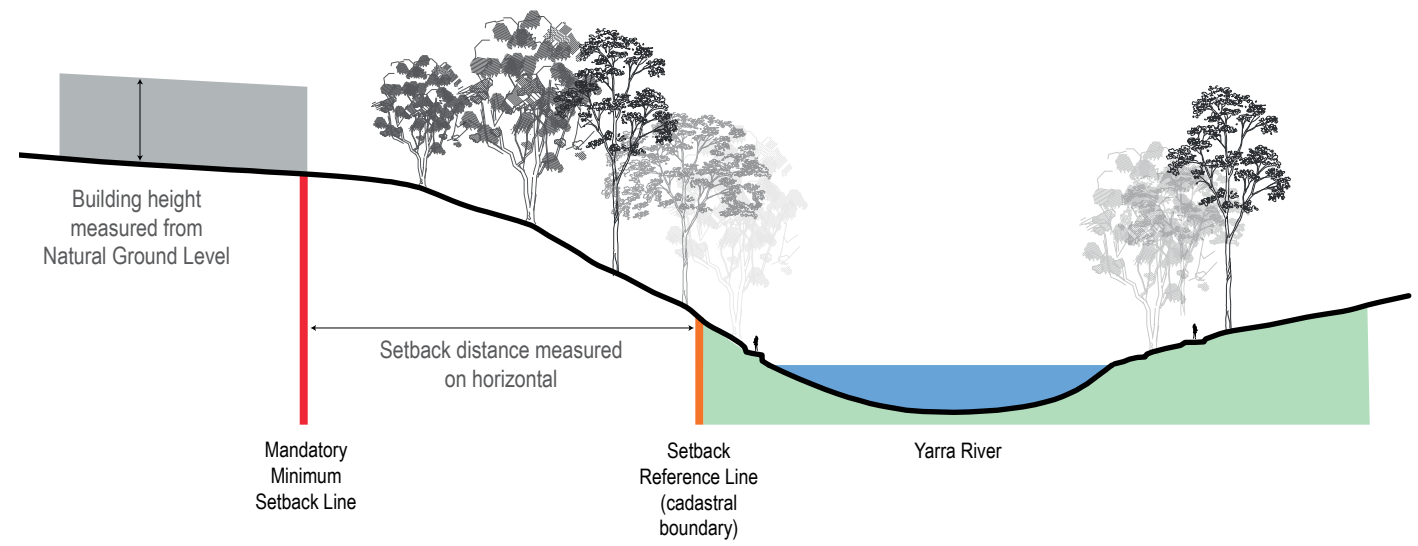


Figure 4: Measuring Building Heights & Setbacks

6. Recommendations

6.1 Introduction

Chapter 6 compiles the findings of the report spatially, by way of four sub-areas along the river’s course that have similar characteristics.

For each sub-area, all of the elements of the river - its values, character and views - are considered holistically. This ensures a coordinated approach to future management recommendations in each part of the river corridor.

The River Corridor Journey

The journey upstream along the Middle Yarra River corridor begins in river flats backed by leafy suburbs, and ends in tree-covered slopes that can feel remote from human habitation.

Travelling upstream from the western edge of the study area at Burke Road to Warrandyte State Park in the east, the river winds through landscapes that gradually transition from suburban to rural, and topography that gradually becomes more enclosed and steeper. In some parts of the river corridor there is heavy vegetation cover, while in other places the landscape is more open.

In many locations, the river corridor is predominantly a naturalistic environment, with little or no visible evidence of buildings and structures. In other places residential suburbs and manicured recreational spaces adjoin the river corridor, though the river itself maintains its meandering course through a naturalistic bushland.

Recommendations

This chapter focusses on recommendations for the management of private land, where development is most likely and can potentially have the greatest impact upon the river’s immediate and broader landscape setting.

Further analysis has been undertaken within each sub-area to inform recommendations for design and development controls. This includes existing patterns of lot size, site coverage, permeability, building height and vegetation cover.

Design and development controls are provided for the various River Interface Character Types within each sub-area.

The existing suite of statutory controls applying to each part of the river has been considered, and recommendations are made for additional new controls or review of existing controls.

Sub-Areas

The journey along the Middle Yarra has been translated as four sub-areas, shown on the map opposite.

For each sub-area, recommendations are based upon an understanding of the values, character and key views of the river in that location.

Detailed cross-sectional analysis is used to show the typical experience of the river and its surrounding environment in each sub-area, exploring the relationship of the river’s natural landscape elements such as riverbank topography and vegetation, with existing and future built form.

The four sub-areas are:

1. Willsmere Park to Finns Reserve Suspension Bridge

Includes the river flats and surrounding recreation spaces, with suburban areas evident in the distance.

2. Finns Reserve Suspension Bridge to Mullum Mullum Creek

The confluence of the Yarra River and Mullum Mullum Creek confluence, where the topography begins to rise, and the riverside spaces become more natural and isolated in character, with distant suburban areas less evident or having a very bushy character.

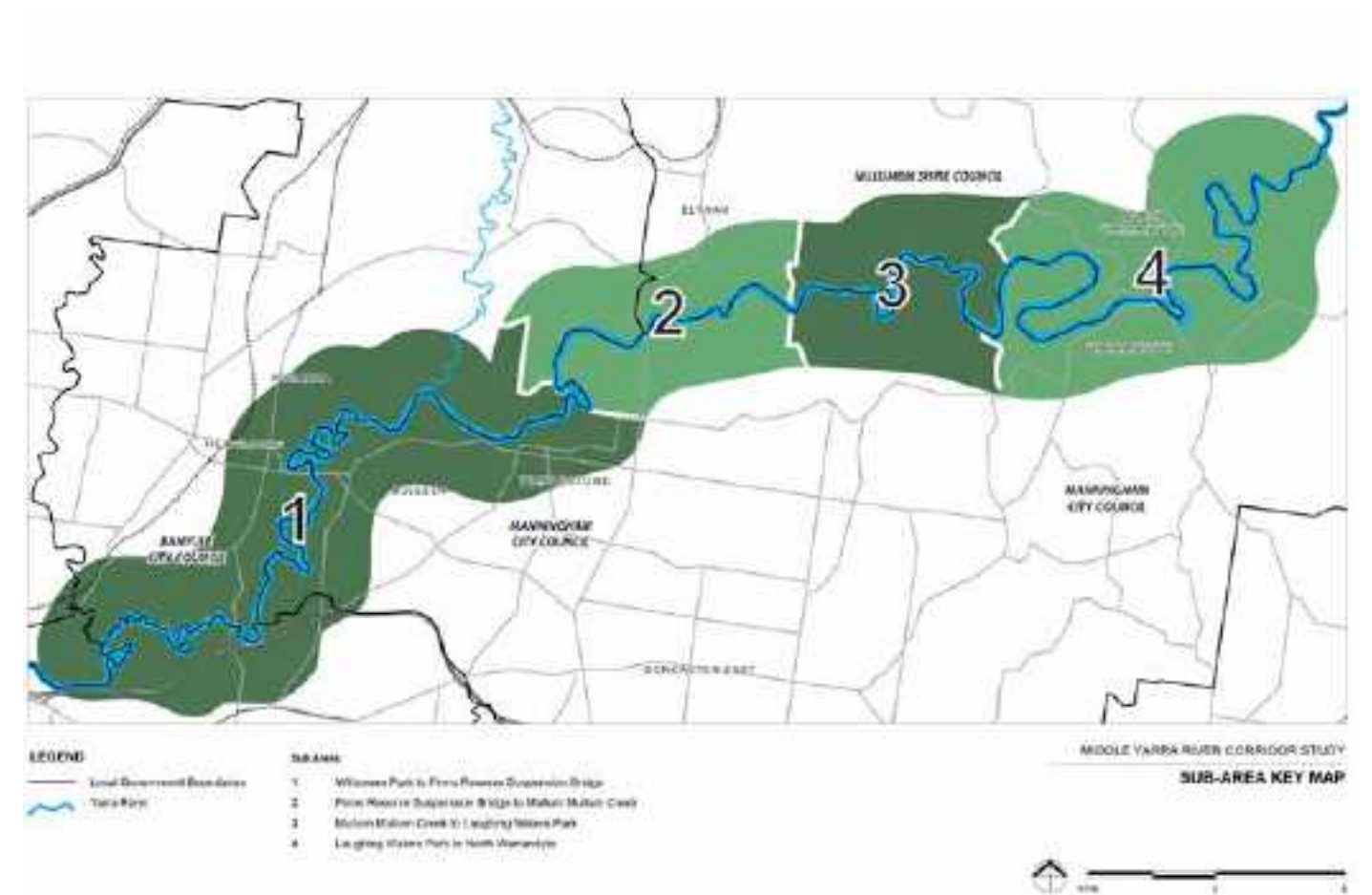
3. Mullum Mullum Creek to Laughing Waters Park

The river corridor begins to narrow, the topography rises further and the corridor becomes more rural and isolated.

4. Laughing Waters Park to North Warrandyte

The river corridor becomes narrow and steep. River has a strongly natural and bush setting. Includes the historic township of Warrandyte, and the more rural and isolated areas further upstream.

6.2 Sub-areas



6.3 Sub-area 1: Willsmere Park to Finns Reserve Suspension Bridge

Values, Character & Pattern of Viewing

This western section of the study area features the expansive floodplains of the Yarra Flats. The low-lying land extends either side of the river, creating billabongs and wetlands along the river's course.

Previously used for farming by European settlers, this part of the river now comprises an extensive corridor network of formalised open spaces, including golf courses, sporting ovals, playgrounds and picnic areas. These spaces are linked by shared trails which connect to the Main Yarra Trail on the northern bank.

Beyond this buffer of open space adjoining the Yarra River are suburban neighbourhoods, set on higher ground. In many locations houses are visible adjoining the parkland or in the distance, stepping up the hillslope to the ridgeline beyond.

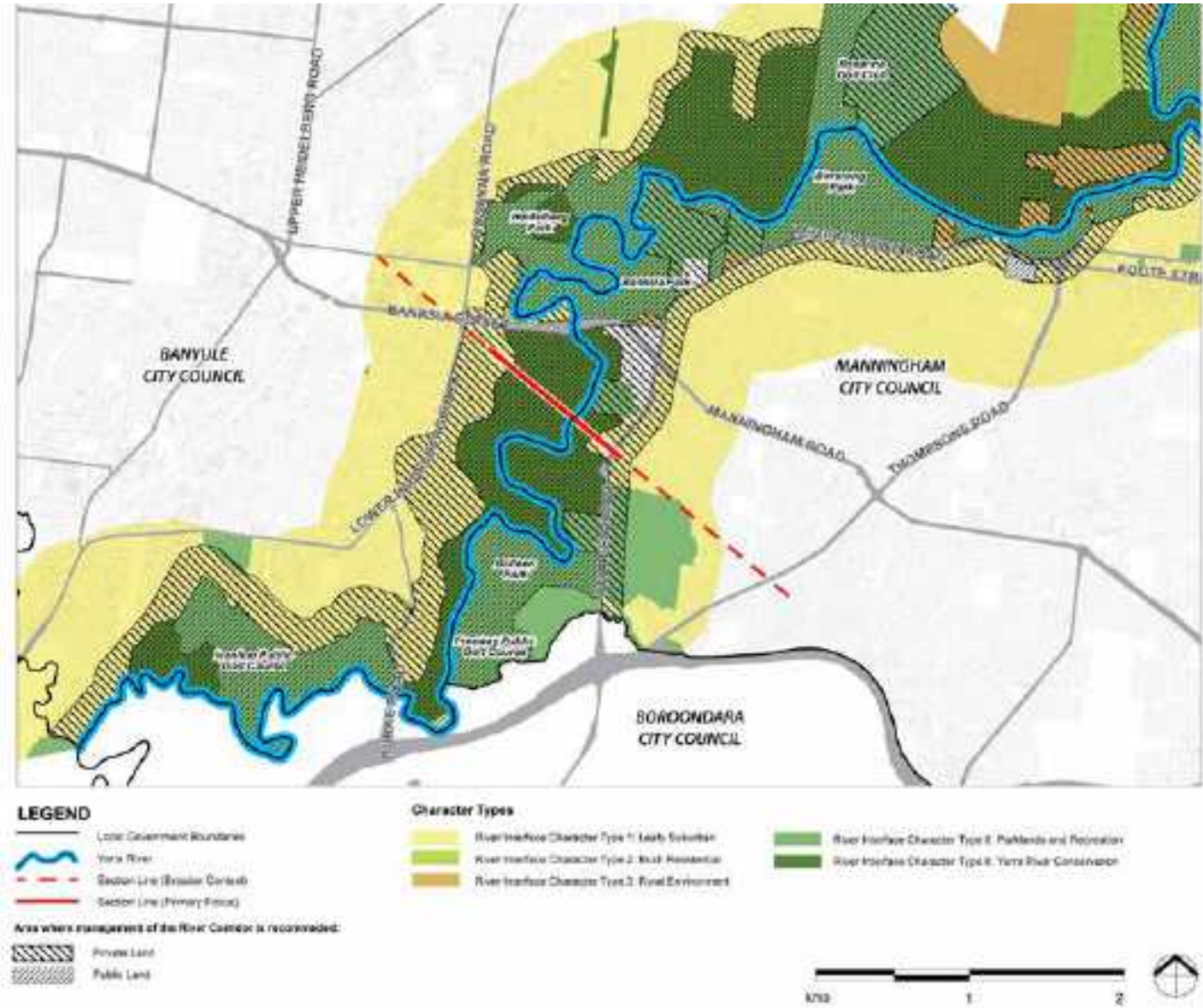
In some places the river and Main Yarra Trail are more isolated, with only occasional rooftops visible through the tree canopy, as a reminder that suburbia exists beyond the river corridor.

Alongside the river itself are dense stands of native vegetation, as well as the formal planting of the parkland areas. Many of the suburban neighbourhoods beyond support a strong tree canopy which softens views to buildings in the distance.

The River Interface Character Types within this sub-area described in Chapter 3 are:

Parklands and Recreation River Interface (PPRZ)	Formal open spaces for active and passive recreation
Yarra River Conservation River Interface (PCRZ)	Parkland and conservation areas with a natural character and limited recreation facilities
Leafy Suburban River Interface (NRZ, GRZ, RGZ, UFZ, C1Z, IN1Z, SUZ)	Residential areas adjoining river corridor and open spaces
Rural Environment River Interface (RCZ)	Small pockets of rural land in Templestowe and Lower Plenty

Important viewpoints within this sub-area, described in Chapter 4, are the Main Yarra Trail, road bridge crossings and the high point at Lower Plenty.



Cross-Sectional Analysis

Landscape Setting Corridor

The aerial photo opposite and accompanying cross-sections on the following page show the river’s setting through the Banyule and Bulleen River Flats.

In this sub-area the river meanders through a broad floodplain, most of which is public parkland with varying degrees of tree cover.

Adjoining residential areas are located on the higher ground that borders the floodplain, and mostly located away from the river’s edge. These ‘backdrop’ areas are visible from each side of the river over long distances.

As the cross-section diagrams illustrate, the topography rises very gradually back from the floodplain to a horizon of low hills. In one sense these represent the outer limits of the river corridor’s viewshed. In practical terms the full extent of this viewshed is only occasionally apparent because of intervening vegetation.

River Experience Corridor

The Main Yarra Trail is generally located close to the edge of the floodplain, some considerable distance from the waterway, often close to the adjoining residential area.

For users of the trail, the Yarra River corridor experience through much of this sub-area depends less on the presence of the waterway, and more on:

- The sense of passing through a continuously vegetated open space corridor
- Built form being subordinate to vegetation, and being well set back from the trail.

Waterway Corridor

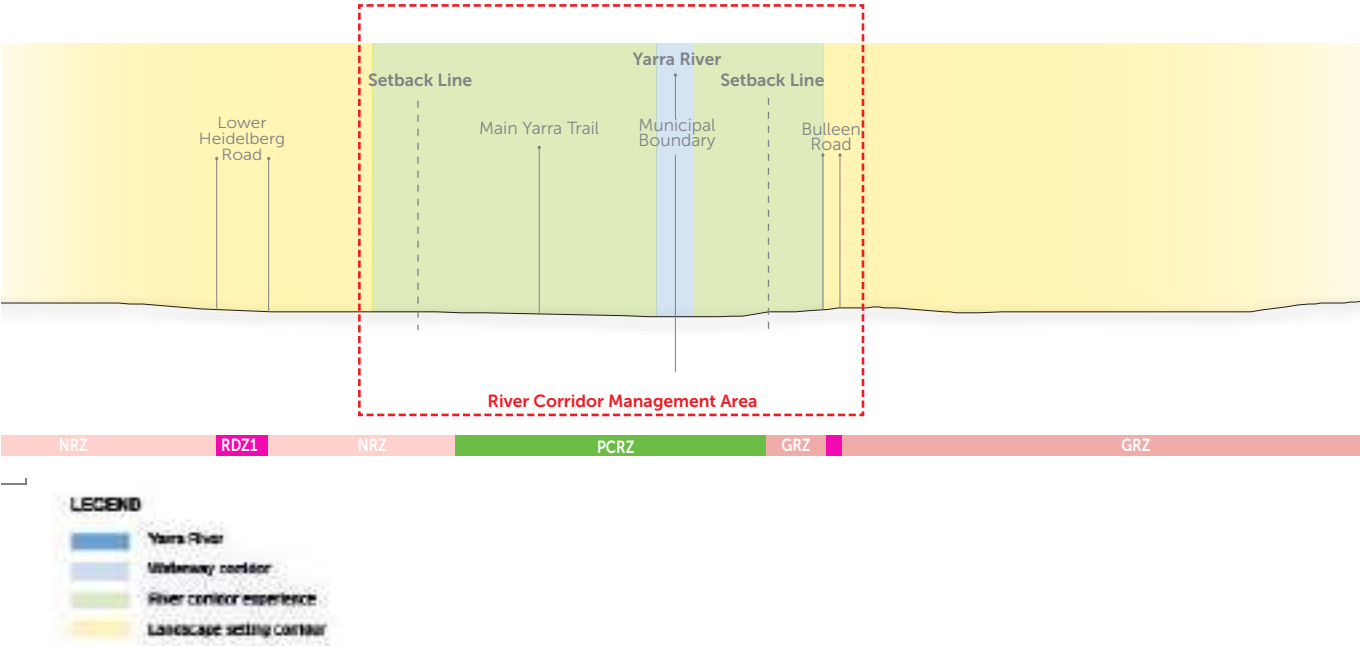
For the waterway itself, maintenance of a continuous corridor of indigenous vegetation is the most important objective.

As can be seen in the aerial image, in some locations development or activity is located near to the water’s edge.

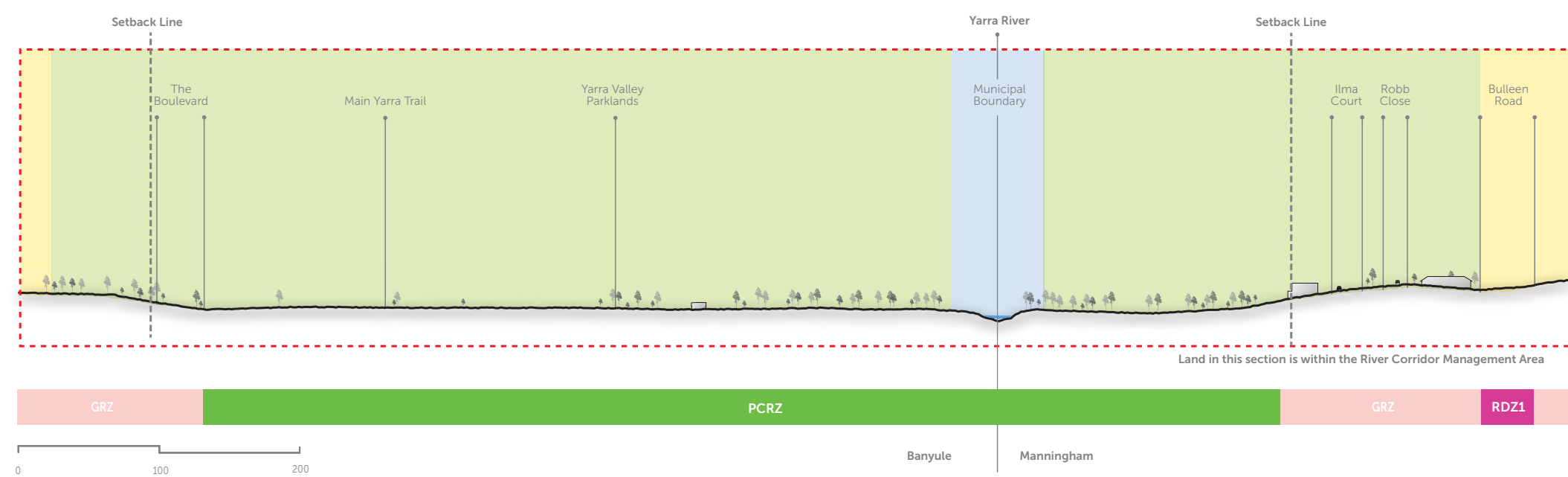
Aerial of Cross-Section Area



Context Section



Section 1



River Corridor Management

Management of land in the river corridor is needed for both public and private land.

This is most critical in the Waterway Corridor and River Experience Corridor, shown on the map opposite as the 'area recommended for management'. In some locations, a buffer area extending into the Landscape Setting Corridor is also recommended for management, where there is a sensitive interface with the riverside spaces or parkland.

The recommended area of management for both public and private land is shown on the map and is also illustrated in the cross-section diagrams.

The sections show the setback line for development. No development will be permitted between the river and the setback line.

Managing Public Land

Strategies for managing public land in this sub-area:

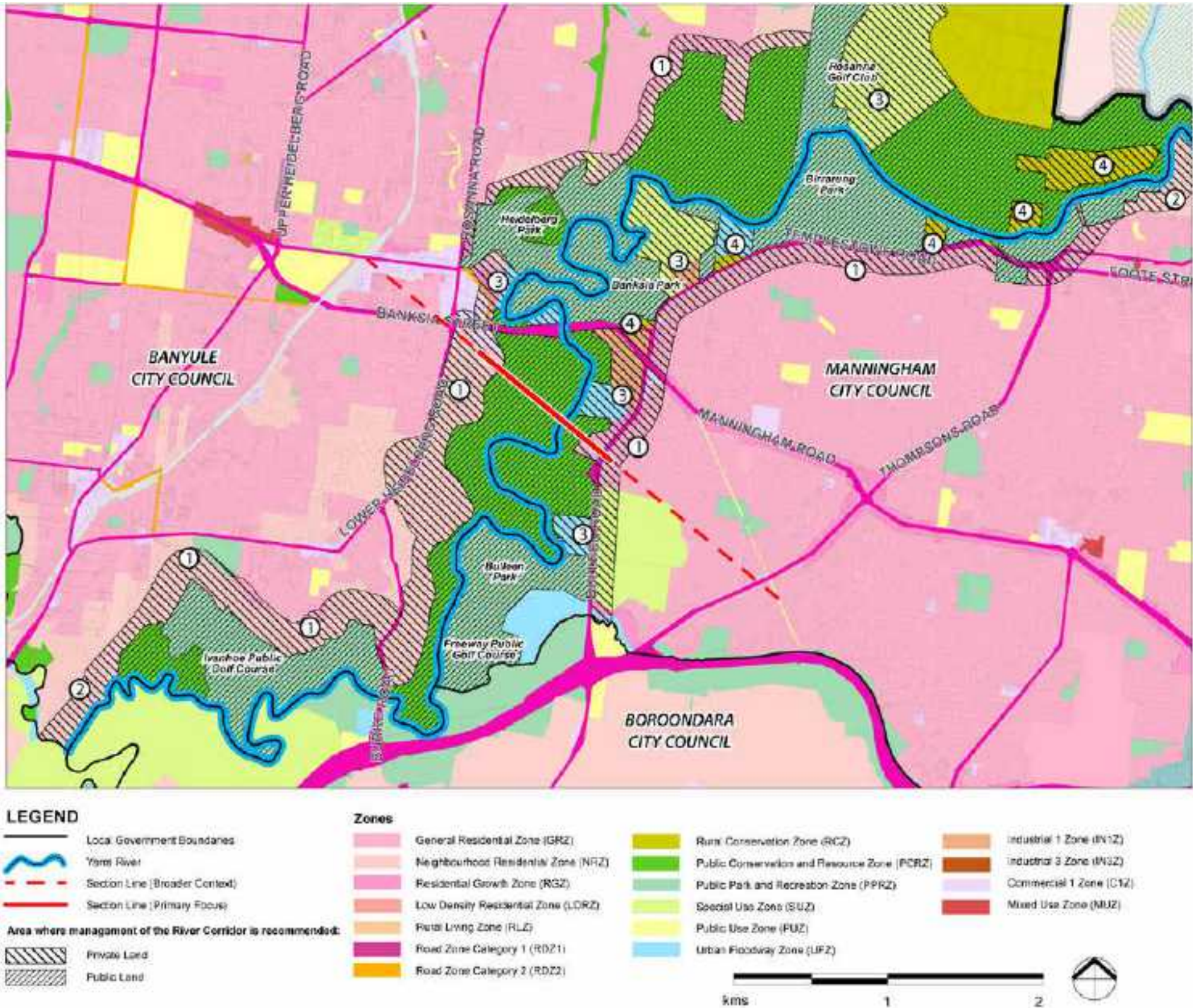
- Support the role of the many formalised open spaces as highly valued places for active and passive recreation.
- Design buildings and structures that are visible from the river and the Main Yarra Trail as distinctive features of these spaces that respond to the sensitivity of the riverside landscape and environment.
- Retain conservation areas as undeveloped, naturalistic open spaces to maintain the variety of experiences and the integrity of the riverside landscape and environment.

Managing Private Land

Strategies for managing private land in this sub-area:

- Recognise that buildings and structures will be occasionally be visible from the river within this sub-area, given the proximity of active land uses along the river's edge
- Ensure that where built form is visible from the river, parklands or the Main Yarra Trail, it is carefully designed to complement the character of the river corridor and maintain the visual dominance of the tree canopy as the backdrop to the wider riverside landscape
- Retain the pockets of rural land that exist along the river corridor, and their undeveloped character.

Development outcomes and requirements are detailed for each Character Type in the following table.



Map Ref	River Interface Character Type & Location	Current Controls	Desired Outcome	Recommended Development Requirements & Guidelines	Recommended Extent of Planning Control Area	Recommended Planning Controls
1	Leafy Suburban - adjoining riverside parkland in Ivanhoe, Heidelberg, Rosanna, Viewbank, Bulleen and Templestowe	<p>Banyule</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Neighbourhood Residential Zone adjoining riverside parklands General Residential Zone further away from river Small areas of Residential Growth Zone along main roads and around activity centres Clause 22.02 Residential Neighbourhood Character Policy applies to all residential land Vegetation Protection Overlay Schedule 3 Eaglemont, Ivanhoe East & Ivanhoe Area Environmental Significance Overlay Schedule 1 Yarra River, Plenty River and Darebin Creek Significant Landscape Overlay Schedule 1 Watercourse Environs Significant Landscape Overlay Schedule 2 Watercourse Area Design and Development Overlay Schedule 5 Heidelberg Specialised & Major Activity Centres Land Subject to Inundation Overlay Heritage Overlay applied to individual sites and precincts <p>Manningham</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> General Residential Zone applies to most areas Small areas of Residential Growth Zone along main roads and near activity centres Heritage Overlay applied to individual sites and precincts 	<p>Views across residential neighbourhoods surrounding the river corridor are dominated by tree canopy</p> <p>Buildings are sensitively designed and sited to complement the river corridor's heavily treed landscape setting</p> <p>Strong landscaped edge to riverside parklands and conservation areas to screen views to buildings</p>	<p>Maximum building height of 8m to retain building height lower than tree canopy (9m on a sloping site)</p> <p>Maximum site coverage of 40% and minimum permeability of 30% to support landscape character (or other similar requirements as suited to local neighbourhood character)</p> <p>Permit required to remove established trees</p> <p>Planting of locally indigenous vegetation encouraged</p>	<p>Adjoins riverside parkland and extends 100-200m into residential areas, depending on street and site layout</p> <p>Extends east/south of Bulleen and Templestowe Roads into adjoining residential area for a distance of approximately 100m, depending on street and site layout</p>	<p>Banyule</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Merge existing SLO 1 & 2 into a single SLO control and apply it to all land to the centreline of the Yarra River Maintain ESO1, VPO 3 & 5, Neighbourhood Character Policy and residential zone schedules to provide protection for vegetation and management of development relating to the broader river landscape setting Maintain existing DDO5 to provide appropriate interface design measures for land adjoining the river corridor within the Heidelberg Activity Centre <p>Manningham</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Replace ESO1 'Yarra River Environs' with a new SLO and map to existing ESO1 extent Consider mapping new SLO to the eastern side of Bulleen Road and the southern side of Templestowe Road to strengthen the landscape buffer between the riverside parklands and established residential areas As an alternative approach, consider applying the NRZ to these residential areas with development controls that assist in strengthening the landscape quality
2	Leafy Suburban - adjoining river in Ivanhoe and Templestowe	<p>Banyule</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Neighbourhood Residential Zone adjoining river Environmental Significance Overlay Schedule 1 Yarra River, Plenty River and Darebin Creek Land Subject to Inundation Overlay <p>Manningham</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Neighbourhood Residential Zone schedule 1 Design and Development Overlay Schedule 4 Templestowe Environmental Residential Area Environmental Significance Overlay Schedule 1 Yarra River Environs Environmental Significance Overlay Schedule 5 Environmentally Significant Urban Areas 	<p>Visibility of buildings from the river, adjoining parkland, the Main Yarra Trail and the opposite bank is minimised</p> <p>Strong landscaped edge to river and adjoining open spaces to screen views to buildings is maintained</p> <p>Further encroachment of built form into the river corridor is avoided</p> <p>Tree canopy is retained and enhanced as the dominant visual element in the landscape</p> <p>Established pattern of building setbacks that reflect the topography of the floodplain is maintained</p>	<p>Maximum building height of 8m to retain building height lower than tree canopy (9m on a sloping site)</p> <p>Maximum site coverage of 40% and minimum permeability of 30% to support landscape character (or other similar requirements as suited to local neighbourhood character)</p> <p>Investigate applying a minimum building setback of 30m-40m for properties abutting the Yarra River</p> <p>Consider applying an appropriate setback from the Darebin Creek</p>	<p>Extends approximately 200m from property boundary at the river frontage, depending on street and site layout</p>	<p>Banyule</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Merge existing SLO 1 & 2 into a single SLO control and apply it to all land up to the centreline of the Yarra River Apply new DDO to NRZ adjoining river in Ivanhoe that sets mandatory setback from the river and height controls <p>Manningham</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Replace ESO1 'Yarra River Environs' with a new SLO and map to existing ESO1 extent Apply new DDO to private land to private land abutting the Yarra River at Templestowe (consider overlap with DDO4)

Map Ref	River Interface Character Type & Location	Current Controls	Desired Outcome	Recommended Development Requirements & Guidelines	Recommended Extent of Planning Control Area	Recommended Planning Controls
3	Leafy Suburban - non-residential land uses	<p>Banyule</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commercial 1 Zone, General Residential & Neighbourhood Residential Zones, Special Use Zone, Urban Floodway Zone Vegetation Protection Overlay Schedule 5 Substantial Tree Protection Area Environmental Significance Overlay Schedule 1 Yarra River, Plenty River and Darebin Creek; Schedule 4 Significant Trees and Areas of Vegetation Significant Landscape Overlay Schedule 1 Watercourse Environs Design and Development Overlay Schedule 5 Heidelberg Specialised & Major Activity Centres Land Subject to Inundation Overlay Heritage Overlay applied to individual sites and precincts <p>Manningham</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Industrial 1 Zone, Special Use Zone, Urban Floodway Zone, Rural Conservation, Residential Growth Zone, General Residential Zone Environmental Significance Overlay Schedule 1 Yarra River Environs; Schedule 2 Sites of Biological Significance; Schedule 3 Buffer Conservation Areas Supporting Sites of Biological Significance Land Subject to Inundation Overlay Heritage Overlay applied to individual sites and precincts 	<p>Visibility of buildings from the river, adjoining parkland, the Main Yarra Trail and the opposite bank is minimised</p> <p>Strong landscaped edge to river, trails and open spaces to screen views to buildings is maintained</p> <p>Further encroachment of built form into the river corridor is avoided</p> <p>Tree canopy is retained and enhanced as the dominant visual element in the landscape</p> <p>Landscape environment of the river corridor parkland is enhanced, where buildings are well screened by vegetation</p> <p>Topography of the river's floodplains is reflected in siting new development</p> <p>Rural, bush landscape quality maintained, where this is part of the existing character</p>	<p>Investigate area specific mandatory height controls relative to the underlying land use zone to ensure built form is lower than tree canopy</p> <p>Permit required to remove established trees</p> <p>Planting of locally indigenous vegetation encouraged, where possible and practical</p> <p>Investigate minimum building setback requirements relative to site-specific requirements, responding to topography and location of existing buildings on each site</p>	<p>Entire area of site with river frontage or close to riverside parklands included</p> <p>Adjoins Banyule DDO5 for Heidelberg Activity Centre</p>	<p>Banyule</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Merge existing SLO 1 & 2 into a single SLO control and apply it to all land up to the centerline of the Yarra River Maintain existing DDO5 to provide appropriate interface design measures for land adjoining the river corridor within the Heidelberg Activity Centre Apply new DDO to land outside existing Banyule DDO5 and to SUZ of Rosanna Golf Club that sets that sets a mandatory setback from the river and mandatory height control <p>Manningham</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Replace ESO1 'Yarra River Environs' with a new SLO and map to existing ESO1 extent Apply new DDO to land in the following zones that sets a mandatory setback from the river and mandatory site specific height control: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Industrial 1 Zone Special Use Zone Urban Floodway Zone Residential Growth Zone General Residential Zone
4	Rural Environment - adjoining or near river in Bulleen, Templestowe and Lower Plenty	<p>Banyule</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rural Conservation Zone Environmental Significance Overlay Schedule 1 Yarra River, Plenty River and Darebin Creek Significant Landscape Overlay Schedule 1 Watercourse Environs, Vegetation Protection Overlay 1 Plenty River East Area Heritage Overlay applied to individual sites and precincts <p>Manningham</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rural Conservation Zone Schedule 1 Urban Floodway Zone Environmental Significance Overlay Schedule 1 Yarra River Environs; Schedule 2 Sites of Biological Significance; Schedule 3 Buffer Conservation Areas Supporting Sites of Biological Significance Land Subject to Inundation Overlay Heritage Overlay applied to individual sites and precincts 	<p>Semi-rural, bush landscape quality is maintained</p> <p>Visibility of buildings from the river, adjoining parkland and the opposite bank is minimised</p> <p>Strong landscaped edge to river, trails and open spaces to screen views to buildings is maintained</p> <p>Further encroachment of built form into the river corridor is avoided</p> <p>Tree canopy is retained and enhanced as the dominant visual element in the landscape</p>	<p>Maximum building height of 8m to retain building height lower than tree canopy (9m on a sloping site)</p> <p>Permit required to remove established trees</p> <p>Planting of locally indigenous vegetation encouraged, where possible and practical</p> <p>Minimum building setback of 40-100m from the property boundary fronting the river, responding to topography and location of existing buildings</p> <p>Prevent further subdivision on properties abutting the river frontage</p>	<p>Extends approximately 250m from property boundary fronting the river, depending on street and site layout</p>	<p>Banyule</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Merge existing SLO 1 & 2 into a single SLO control and apply it to all land to the centerline of the Yarra River Apply a new DDO that sets a mandatory setback from the river and mandatory 8m height control (9m on a sloping site) for land within the RCZ Investigate the need to apply a new minimum lot size of 8ha for properties abutting river, through a new or amended schedule to the RCZ <p>Manningham</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Replace ESO1 'Yarra River Environs' with a new SLO and map to existing ESO1 extent Maintain the minimum 40ha lot size of RCZ1 Apply a new DDO that sets a mandatory setback from the river and mandatory height control

6.4 Sub-area 2: Finns Reserve to Mullum Mullum Creek

Values, Character & Pattern of Viewing

Moving north-east along the Middle Yarra River corridor from the Finns Reserve Suspension Bridge, the character of the river corridor becomes more natural and bushy. Towards Westerfolds Park, the topography rises up and the river banks become steeper. Here the river corridor becomes an enclosed space, in contrast to the wide river flats downstream.

The significant open space of Westerfolds Park on the southern side of the river has a distinctively more naturalistic character to the more formalised open spaces downstream. On the opposite banks to Westerfolds is a large extent of rural land, and buildings on the northern side are mostly not visible from the river corridor.

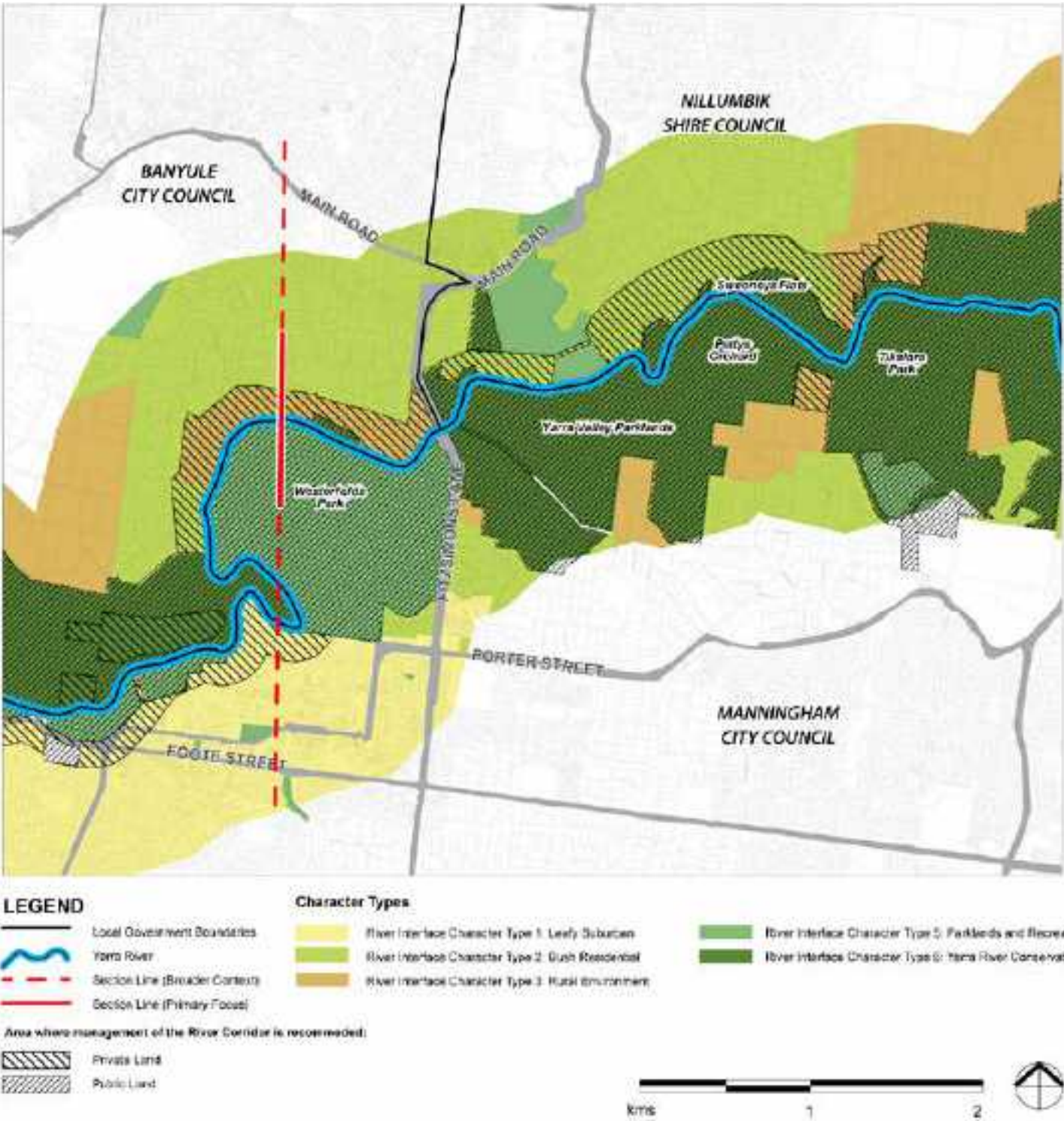
Upstream from Fitzsimons Lane the river corridor becomes even more isolated and its environment increasingly natural in character. While in some places houses are still visible in the distance, the river corridor feels tranquil, quiet and secluded.

This section of the river has a strong native tree canopy and well vegetated river banks. Extensive parklands on the southern side provide a substantial buffer to development beyond. While the northern side has residential areas in close proximity to the river, these areas have an established bushy character, in keeping with the landscape of the broader river corridor.

The River Interface Character Types within this sub-area described in Chapter 3 are:

Parklands and Recreation River Interface (PPRZ)	Formal open spaces for active and passive recreation adjoining the river
Yarra River Conservation River Interface (PCRZ)	Parkland and conservation areas adjoining the river with a natural character and limited recreation facilities
Bush Residential River Interface (LDRZ)	Low density residential areas adjoining the river or open spaces in Lower Plenty and Eltham
Rural Environment River Interface (RCZ)	Rural land in Templestowe and Lower Plenty

Important viewpoints within this sub-area, described in Chapter 4, are the Main Yarra Trail, road bridge crossings and the high point at Lower Plenty.



Cross-Sectional Analysis

Landscape Setting Corridor

The aerial photo opposite and accompanying cross-sections on the following page show the river’s landscape setting as it winds around Westerfolds Park.

In this sub-area the topography of wider environment is more undulating, and the river banks rise up. This creates a more enclosed space along the river corridor.

The steep river banks to the north are heavily vegetated, with open, rural areas and low density residential development beyond. More densely developed residential areas adjoin to the north, and support a strong tree canopy. Buildings are mostly located well beyond the crestline and are not visible from the southern banks.

Westerfolds Park to the south is an open, natural space along the river’s journey, and a buffer to residential areas beyond.

River Experience Corridor

The Main Yarra Trail is located alongside the southern edge of the river, passing through Westerfolds Park. For users of the trail, the Yarra River Experience Corridor through much of this sub-area depends less on the presence of the waterway, and more on:

- The sense of passing through a continuously vegetated open space corridor
- Built form on the northern banks of the river being largely obscured from view.

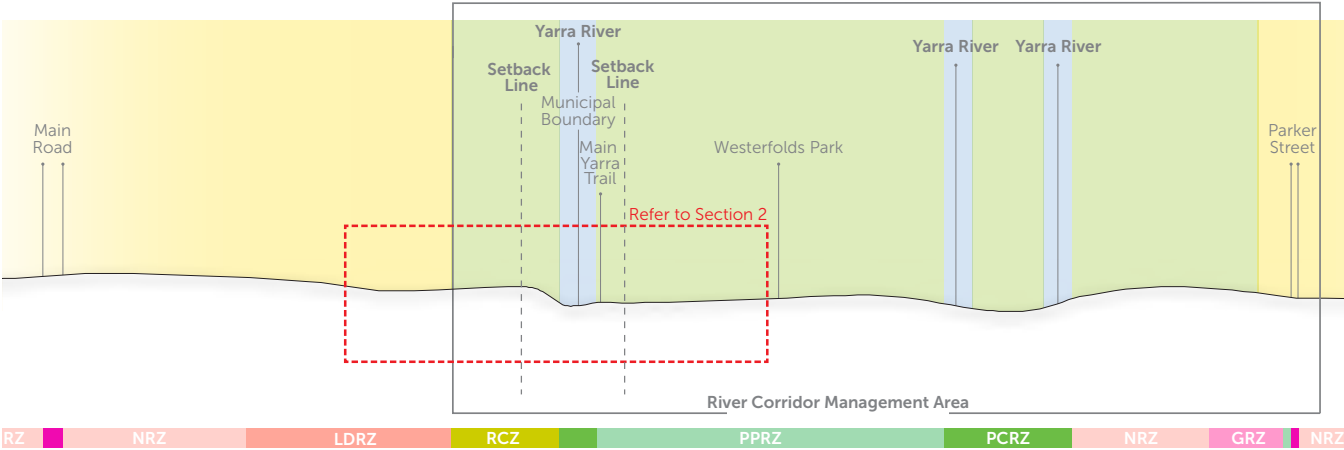
Waterway Corridor

For the waterway itself, maintenance of a continuous corridor of indigenous vegetation is the most important objective.

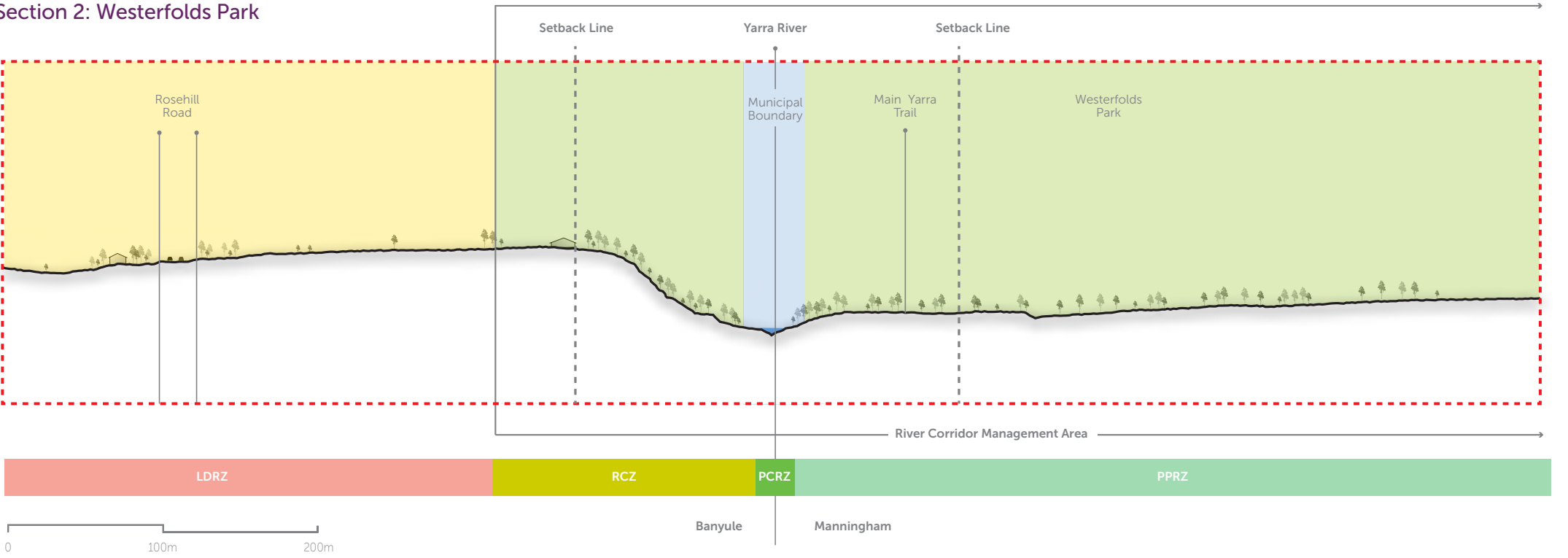
In this location, there is minimal development or activity located near to the water’s edge.



Context Section



Section 2: Westerfolds Park



River Corridor Management

Management of land in the river corridor is needed for both public and private land.

This is most critical in the Waterway Corridor and River Experience Corridor, shown on the map opposite as the 'area recommended for management'. In some locations, a buffer area extending into the Landscape Setting Corridor is also recommended for management, where there is a sensitive interface with the riverside spaces or parkland.

The recommended area of management for both public and private land is shown on the map and is also illustrated in the cross-section diagrams.

The sections show the setback line for development. No development will be permitted between the river and the setback line.

Managing Public Land

Strategies for managing public land in this sub-area:

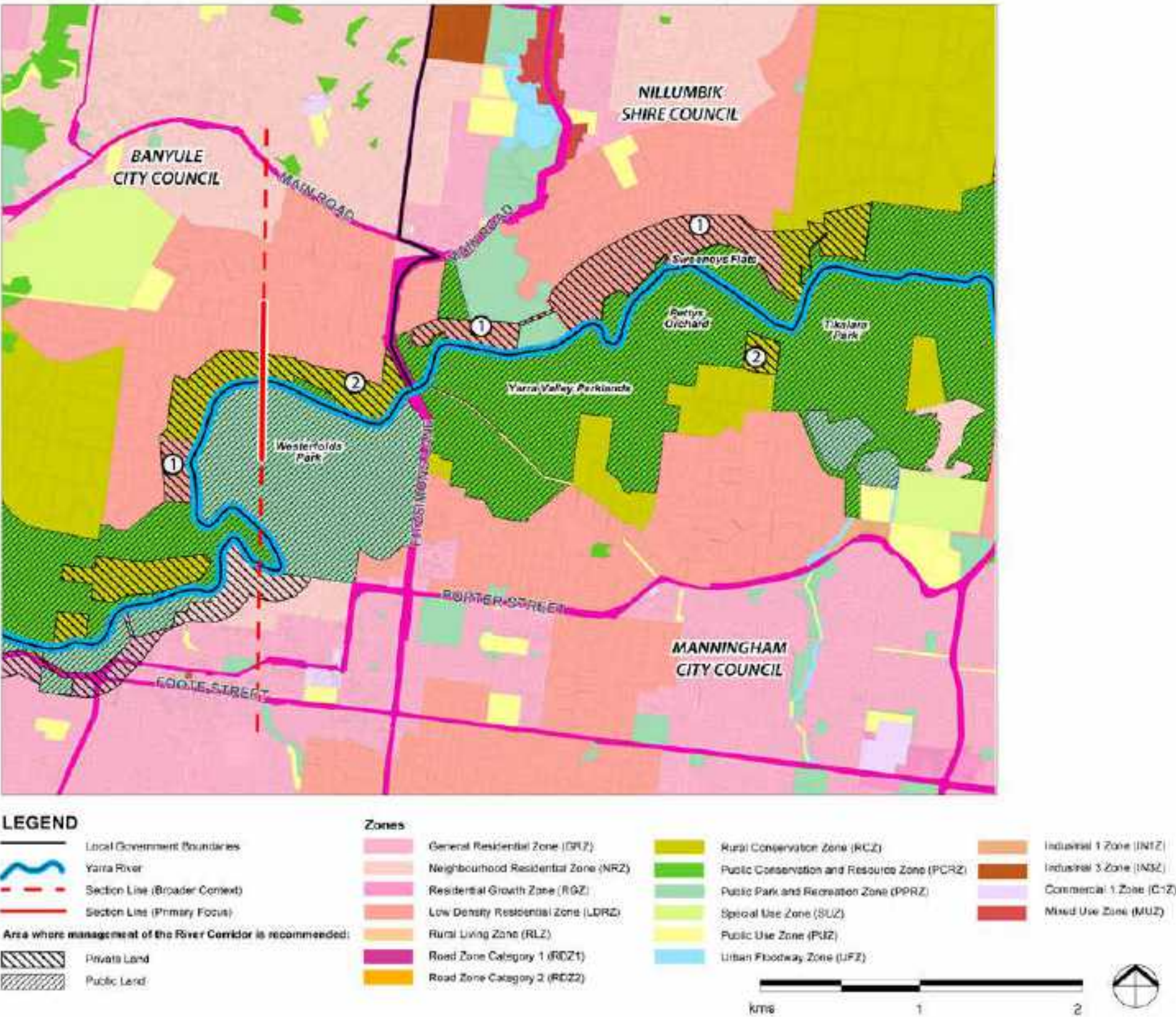
- Retain conservation areas as undeveloped, naturalistic open spaces to maintain the variety of experiences and the integrity of the riverside landscape and environment
- Do not locate buildings so that they are visible from the river
- Ensure riverside infrastructure (such as walkways, river access points) are designed as distinctive features that respond to the sensitivity of the riverside landscape and environment.

Managing Private Land

Strategies for managing private land in this sub-area:

- Retain the extensive areas of low density and rural land that exist along the river corridor in this sub-area, and their undeveloped character
- Minimise the visibility of buildings and structures from the river
- Ensure that where built form is visible from the river, parklands or the Main Yarra Trail, it is carefully designed to complement the character of the river corridor and maintain the visual dominance of the tree canopy as the backdrop to the wider riverside landscape.

Development outcomes and requirements are detailed for each Character Type in the following table.



Map Ref	River Interface Character Type & Location	Current Zoning	Desired Outcome	Recommended Development Requirements & Guidelines	Recommended Extent of Planning Control Area	Recommended Planning Controls
1	Bush Residential - adjoining river in Lower Plenty and Eltham	<p>Banyule</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low Density Residential Zone Vegetation Protection Overlay Schedule 1 Plenty River East Area Environmental Significance Overlay Schedule 1 Yarra River, Plenty River and Darebin Creek Significant Landscape Overlay Schedule 1 Watercourse Environs Land Subject to Inundation Overlay Heritage Overlay applied to individual sites and precincts <p>Nillumbik</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low Density Residential Zone Environmental Significance Overlay Schedule 1 Sites Of Faunal And Habitat Significance Environmental Significance Overlay Schedule 2 Yarra River Environs Significant Landscape Overlay Schedule 2 Bush and Semi-Bush Residential Areas Land Subject to Inundation Overlay Heritage Overlay sites HO83, HO7 Wildfire Management Overlay 	<p>Low density, bush character is maintained</p> <p>Visibility of buildings from the river, adjoining parkland and the opposite bank is minimised or avoided where possible</p> <p>Strong landscaped edge to the river and open spaces to screen views to buildings is maintained</p> <p>Further encroachment of built form into the river corridor is avoided</p> <p>Tree canopy is retained and enhanced as dominant visual element in the landscape</p>	<p>Maximum building height of 8m to retain building height lower than tree canopy (9m on a sloping site)</p> <p>Permit required to remove established trees</p> <p>Planting of locally indigenous vegetation encouraged</p> <p>Minimum building setback of between 70m-80m from the property boundary fronting the river, responding to topography and location of existing buildings</p> <p>Minimum lot size should be increased to prevent further subdivision of land abutting the river</p>	Adjoins river's edge and extends 200-350m from the property boundary fronting the river into residential areas, depending on street and site layout	<p>Banyule</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Merge existing SLO 1 & 2 into a single SLO control and apply it to all land to the centreline of the Yarra River Maintain existing ESO1 and VPO1 to provide vegetation protection in the river corridor Apply new DDO that sets a mandatory setback from the river and mandatory height control Maintain the 0.4ha minimum lot size of the LDRZ Schedule <p>Nillumbik</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Replace ESO2 'Yarra River Environs' with a new SLO and extend spatial coverage to provide vegetation and landscape protection specifically relating to river corridor environment Maintain existing ESO1, SLO2 to provide vegetation protection in the broader river corridor Apply new DDO that sets a mandatory setback from the river and mandatory height control Maintain the 0.4ha minimum lot size of the LDRZ Schedule
2	Rural Environment - Lower Plenty (adjoining river) and Templestowe	<p>Banyule</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rural Conservation Zone Vegetation Protection Overlay Schedule 1 Plenty River East Area Environmental Significance Overlay Schedule 1 Yarra River, Plenty River and Darebin Creek Significant Landscape Overlay Schedule 1 Watercourse Environs Land Subject to Inundation Overlay Heritage Overlay applied to individual sites and precincts <p>Manningham</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rural Conservation Zone Schedule 1 Environmental Significance Overlay Schedule 1 Yarra River Environs Environmental Significance Overlay Schedule 3 Buffer Conservation Areas Supporting Sites of Biological Significance 	<p>Rural, bush character is maintained</p> <p>Visibility of buildings from the river, adjoining parkland and the opposite bank is minimised or avoided where possible</p> <p>Strong landscaped edge to river and adjoining open spaces to screen views to buildings is maintained</p> <p>Further encroachment of built form into the river corridor is avoided</p> <p>Tree canopy is retained and enhanced as the dominant visual element in the landscape</p>	<p>Maximum building height of 8m to retain building height lower than tree canopy (9m on a sloping site)</p> <p>Permit required to remove established trees</p> <p>Planting of locally indigenous vegetation encouraged, where possible and practical</p> <p>Minimum building setback of 80m from the property boundary fronting the river, responding to topography and location of existing buildings</p> <p>Minimum lot size increased to prevent further subdivision of land abutting the river where required</p>	Adjoins river's edge and extends approximately 200-350m from the property boundary fronting the river into rural land, depending on street and site layout	<p>Banyule</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Merge existing SLO 1 & 2 into a single SLO control and apply it to all land to the centreline of the Yarra River Maintain existing ESO1 and VPO1 to provide vegetation protection in the river corridor Apply new DDO that sets a mandatory setback from the river and mandatory height control Investigate the need to apply a new minimum lot size of 8ha for properties abutting river, through a new or amended schedule to the RCZ <p>Manningham</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Replace ESO1 'Yarra River Environs' with a new SLO and map to existing ESO1 extent Apply a new DDO that sets a mandatory setback from the river and mandatory height control Maintain the 40ha minimum lot size of the RCZ1 Schedule

6.5 Sub-area 3: Mullum Mullum Creek to Laughing Waters Park

Values, Character & Pattern of Viewing

Further upstream, the confluence of the Yarra River and Mullum Mullum Creek at Sweeneys Lane marks the diversion of the Main Yarra Trail to the south.

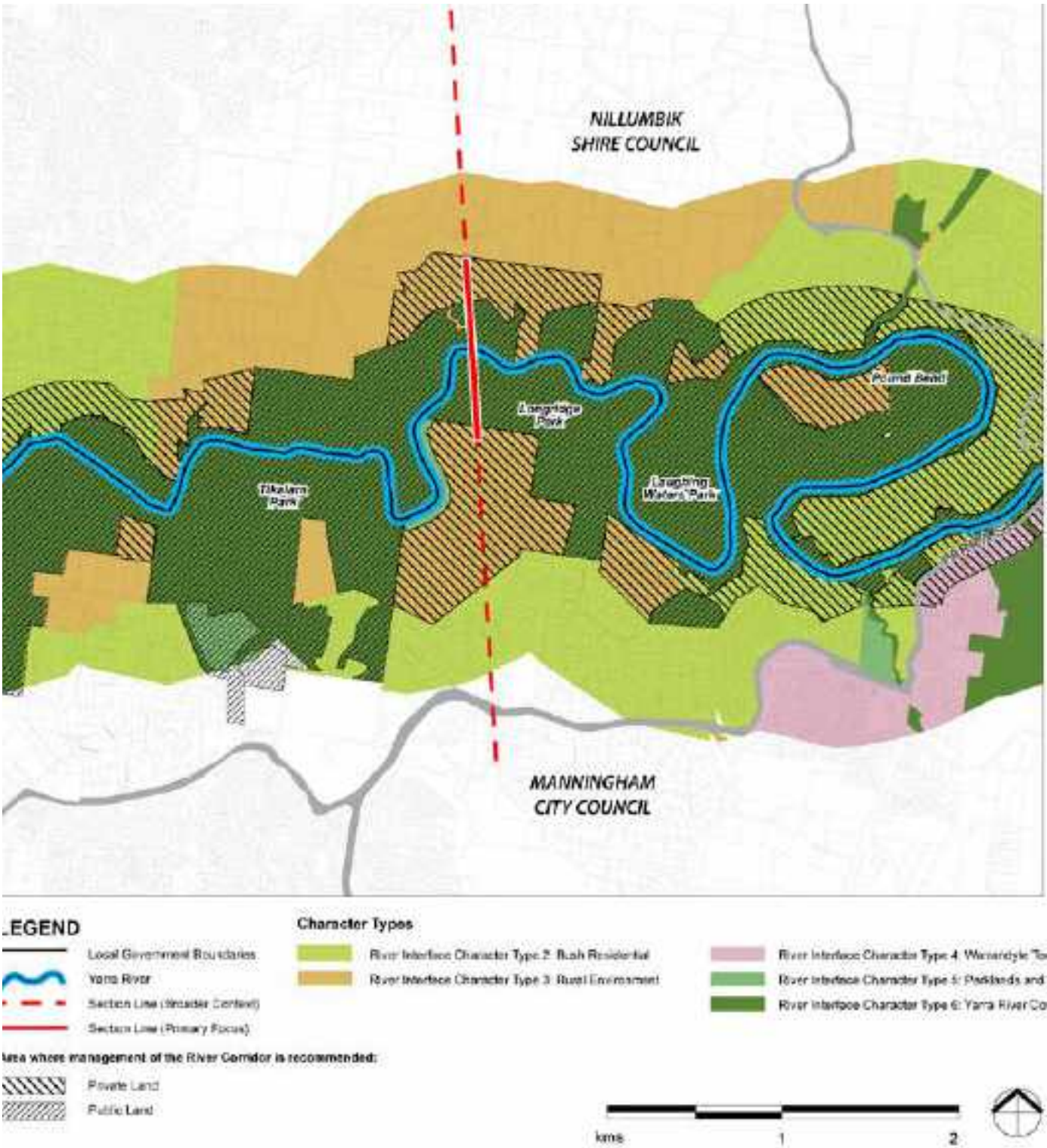
From this point on, the trail continues through Tikalara Park as the Mullum Mullum Trail to Heidelberg-Warrandyte Road. As a result, public access within this section of the Yarra River corridor becomes more limited, with some sections of the corridor accessible only via private property or by the river itself (by non-motorised water craft such as canoes or kayaks: due to its shallow depth). This contributes to the highly valued sense of isolation and seclusion in these parts, where it feels like ‘another world’ that is far removed from the more built-up areas downstream.

Open spaces along the river’s edge are densely vegetated conservation areas. The topography continues to rise and the river corridor becomes more enclosed. Only the occasional building can be seen in the distance through the trees or high up on the distant ridgelines.

The River Interface Character Types within this sub-area described in Chapter 3 are:

Yarra River Conservation River Interface (PCRZ)	Parkland and conservation areas adjoining the river with a natural character and limited recreation facilities
Rural Environment River Interface (RCZ)	Rural land in Templestowe and Warrandyte

Important viewpoints within this sub-area, described in Chapter 4, are the Main Yarra and Mullum Mullum Creek Trails, the road bridge crossing and viewpoints within the conservation areas.



Cross-Sectional Analysis

Landscape Setting Corridor

The aerial photo opposite and accompanying cross-sections on the following page show the river’s landscape setting as it winds around the Warrandyte State Park and Longridge Park.

In this sub-area the topography of wider environment is undulating, and the river banks are rising up from the landscape downstream. This creates a more enclosed space along the river corridor.

North and south of the river are heavily vegetated conservation areas, with sparsely developed rural land beyond. Buildings are mostly located well beyond the river’s edge.

The lack of visible buildings or activity and the heavy vegetation cover create the strongly isolated character of this sub-area.

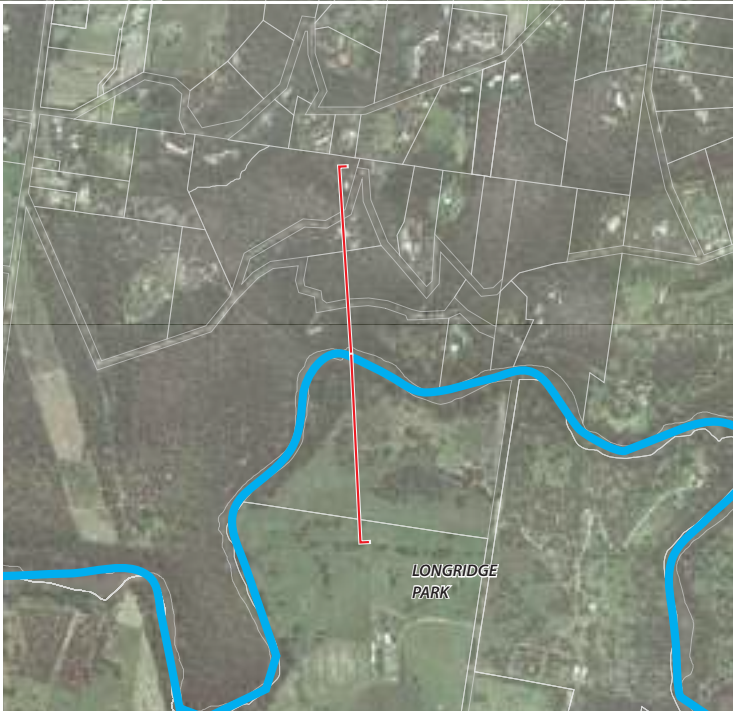
River Experience Corridor

This part of the river is accessed by trails through conservation areas, where they exist. In this section of the study area, the most complete experience of the river is from the water.

The Yarra River Experience Corridor through much of this sub-area depends upon maintaining the sense of isolation and immersion in the river’s natural environment.

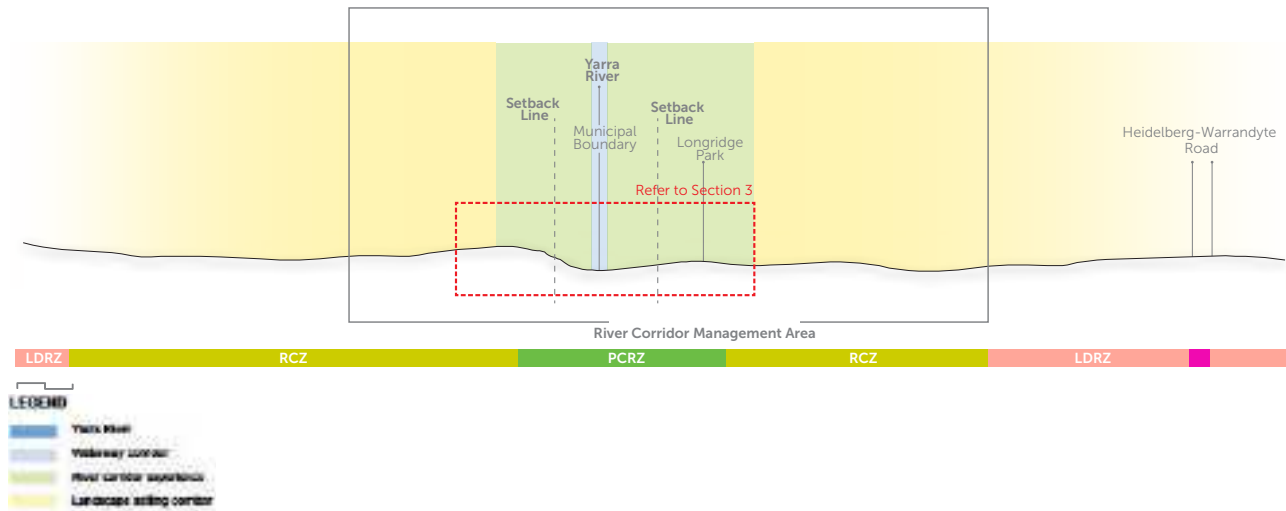
Waterway Corridor

For the waterway itself, maintenance of a continuous corridor of indigenous vegetation is the most important objective.

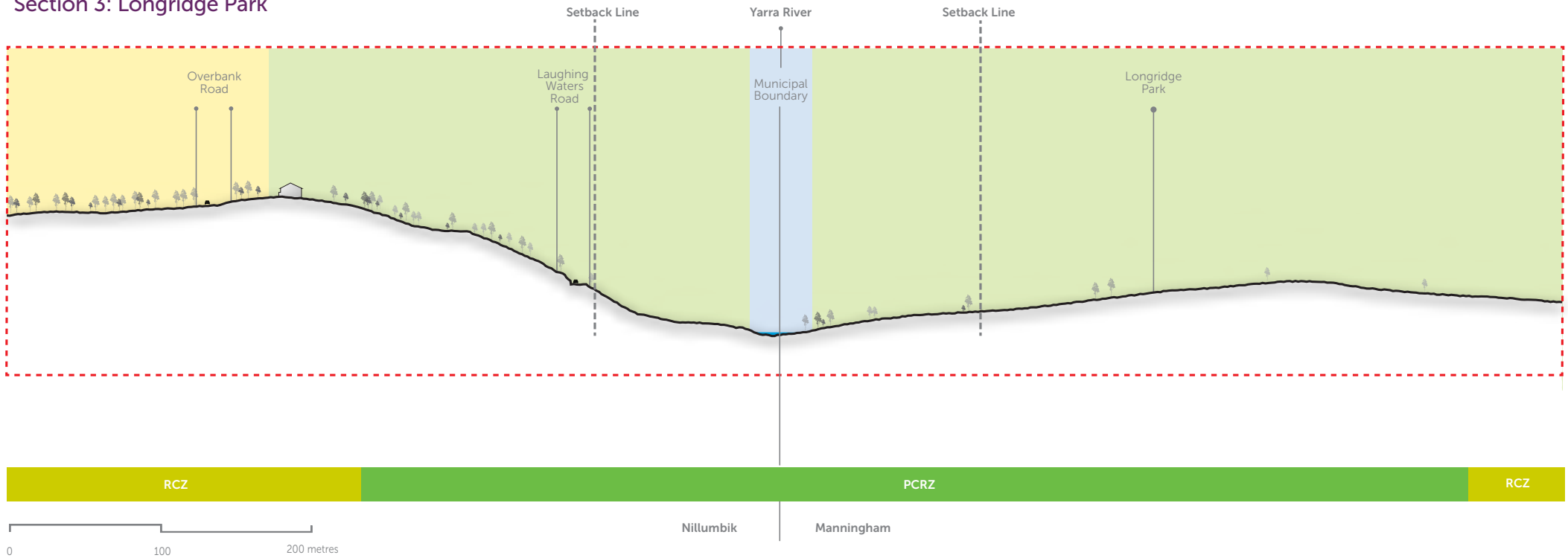


LEGEND
Yarra River
Section Line

Context Section



Section 3: Longridge Park



River Corridor Management

Management of land in the river corridor is needed for both public and private land.

This is most critical in the Waterway Corridor and River Experience Corridor, shown on the map opposite as the 'area recommended for management'. In some locations, a buffer area extending into the Landscape Setting Corridor is also recommended for management, where there is a sensitive interface with the riverside spaces or parkland.

The recommended area of management for both public and private land is shown on the map and is also illustrated in the cross-section diagrams.

The sections show the setback line for development. No development will be permitted between the river and the setback line.

Managing Public Land

Strategies for managing public land in this sub-area:

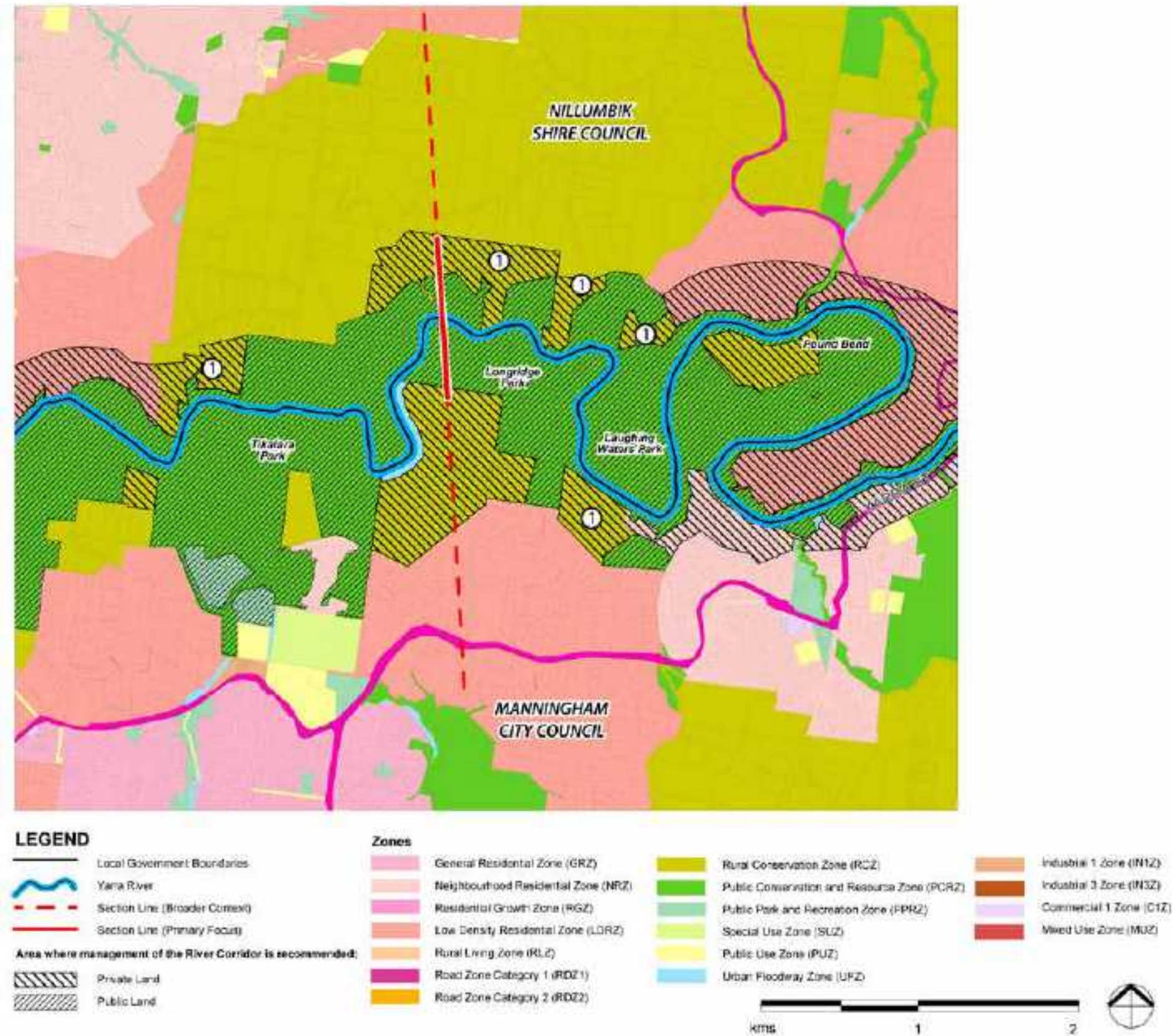
- Maintain conservation areas as undeveloped, naturalistic open spaces that support the sense of remoteness and isolation of the river in this sub-area
- Do not locate buildings so that they are visible from the river
- Minimise riverside infrastructure (such as walkways, river access points) and ensure they are designed as distinctive features that respond to the sensitivity of the riverside landscape and environment.

Managing Private Land

Strategies for managing private land in this sub-area:

- Retain the extensive areas of rural land that exist along the river corridor in this sub-area, and its undeveloped character
- Minimise the visibility of buildings and structures from the river
- Ensure that where built form is visible from the river, parklands or trails, it is carefully designed to complement the character of the river corridor and maintain the visual dominance of the heavy riparian vegetation along the corridor.

Development outcomes and requirements are detailed for each Character Type in the following table.



Map Ref	River Interface Character Type & Location	Current Zoning	Desired Outcome	Recommended Development Requirements & Guidelines	Recommended Extent of Planning Control Area	Recommended Planning Controls
1	Rural Environment - Templestowe and Warrandyte	<p>Nillumbik</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rural Conservation Zone Schedules 3&4 Environmental Significance Overlay Schedule 1 Sites Of Faunal And Habitat Significance Environmental Significance Overlay Schedule 2 Yarra River Environs Significant Landscape Overlay Schedule 2 Bush and Semi-Bush Residential Areas (part) Land Subject to Inundation Overlay Heritage Overlay sites HO32, HO167, HO158, HO111 Wildfire Management Overlay <p>Manningham</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rural Conservation Zone Schedule 4 Environmental Significance Overlay Schedule 1 Yarra River Environs Environmental Significance Overlay Schedule 2 Sites of Biological Significance Environmental Significance Overlay Schedule 3 Buffer Conservation Areas Supporting Sites of Biological Significance Significant Landscape Overlay Schedule 1 Significant Low Density Residential Landscape Areas Land Subject to Inundation Overlay Heritage Overlay sites HO85&86, HO18, HO1, HO2, HO141 Wildfire Management Overlay 	<p>Rural, bush character is maintained</p> <p>Visibility of buildings from the river, adjoining parkland and the opposite bank is minimised or avoided where possible</p> <p>Strong landscaped edge to river and adjoining open spaces to screen views to buildings is maintained</p> <p>Further encroachment of built form into the river corridor is avoided</p> <p>Tree canopy is retained and enhanced as the dominant visual element in the landscape</p>	<p>Maximum building height of 8m to retain building height lower than tree canopy (9m on a sloping site)</p> <p>Permit required to remove established trees</p> <p>Planting of locally indigenous vegetation encouraged, where possible and practical</p> <p>Minimum building setback of 70m-100m from the property boundary fronting the river, responding to topography and location of existing buildings</p> <p>Minimum lot size as per existing zone requirements</p>	<p>Adjoins river's edge and extends approximately 250-400m from the property boundary fronting the river into rural land, depending on street and site layout, due to extensive lot sizes</p>	<p>Nillumbik</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Replace ESO2 'Yarra River Environs' with a new SLO and extend spatial coverage to provide vegetation and landscape protection specifically relating to the river corridor environment Maintain existing SLO2 to provide vegetation protection in the broader river corridor Apply new DDO that sets a mandatory setback from the river and mandatory height control Maintain minimum 8ha lot size of RCZ3 and minimum 40ha lot size of RCZ4 <p>Manningham</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Replace ESO1 'Yarra River Environs' with a new SLO and map to existing ESO1 extent Apply a new DDO that sets a mandatory setback from the river and mandatory height control Maintain existing ESO2, ESO3, SLO1 to provide vegetation protection in the river corridor Apply new DDO that sets a mandatory setback from the river and mandatory height control Maintain the 40ha minimum lot size of the RCZ1 Schedule

6.6 Sub-area 4: Laughing Waters Park to North Warrandyte

Values, Character & Pattern of Viewing

Pound Bend is a popular place for people to experience the river. As a part of the Warrandyte State Park, there are picnic facilities and walking trails along the river's edge.

As the River curves back around on itself, urban development once again directly meets the river's edge - for the first time since its inner urban context. Here, the historic buildings and bushy setting of the Warrandyte township create a unique character.

To the north of the Yarra River, topography rises up quickly to form high ridgelines above the Warrandyte township. The steep riverbanks in this section are densely vegetated, creating a scenic backdrop to the township. Buildings are visible perched atop this ridgeline amongst the trees. Opposite the heart of the township, these buildings are quite distinct.

To the south of the Yarra River, residential development surrounding the Warrandyte township continues up the hillslopes, immersing itself within the bushy surrounds.

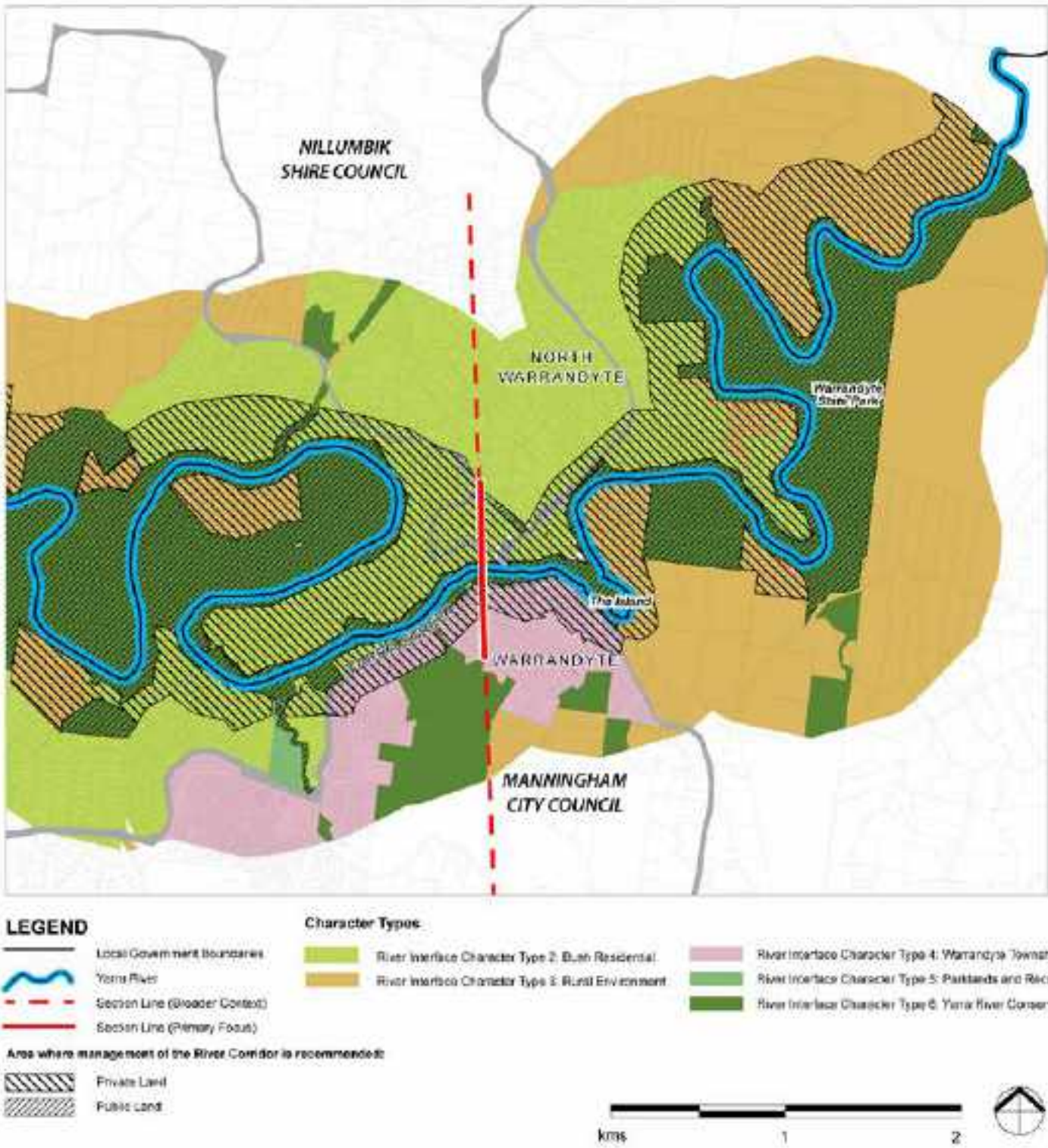
East of Warrandyte, the river meanders back into the dense bushland and isolated surrounds of the Warrandyte State Park. Access to the river is again more limited, and mostly available from walking tracks and viewing platforms within the park.

The river again has a secluded and natural character. Houses on the hillslopes on the opposite bank are generally not visible from areas accessible to the public.

The River Interface Character Types within this sub-area described in Chapter 3 are:

Yarra River Conservation River Interface (PCRZ)	Parkland and conservation areas adjoining the river with a natural character and limited recreation facilities
Rural Environment River Interface (RCZ)	Large areas of low density residential or rural land in Warrandyte and North Warrandyte
Bush Residential River Interface (LDRZ)	Adjoining low density residential areas of North Warrandyte and standard density residential areas of Warrandyte in bushy surrounds
Warrandyte Township River Interface (R1, C1)	Commercial town centre and surrounding residential areas of Warrandyte

Important viewpoints within this sub-area, described in Chapter 4, are the Main Yarra and Mullum Mullum Creek Trails, the road bridge crossing and viewpoints within the State Park.



Cross-Sectional Analysis

Landscape Setting Corridor

The aerial photos opposite and accompanying cross-sections on the following pages show the river’s landscape setting as it winds around the Warrandyte State Park, Pound Bend and the Warrandyte township.

In this sub-area the topography of wider environment is distinctly hilly and reaches the highest ground in the study area.

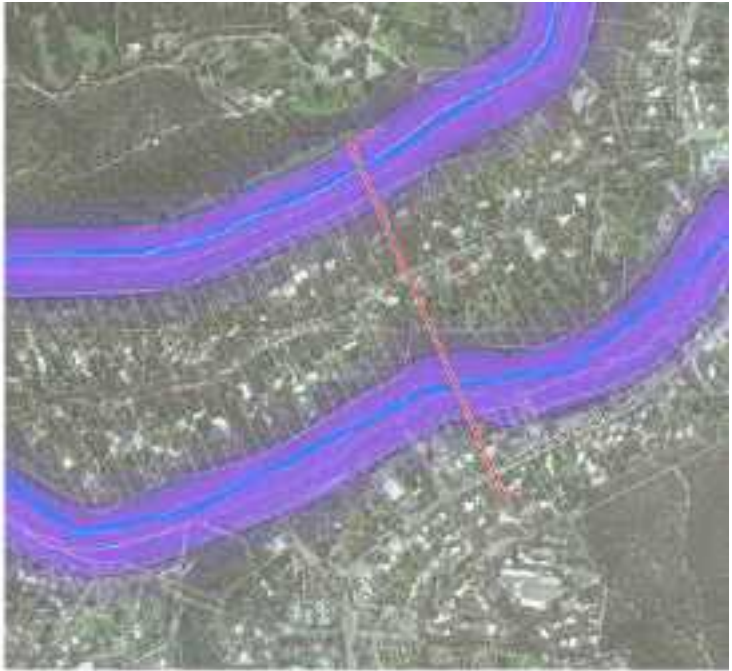
The river banks continue to rise up from the landscape downstream. This creates the sense of the river being an enclosed space.

North and south of the river are heavily vegetated residential areas, both low and standard density. Conservation areas are interspersed throughout this sub-area.

In many locations buildings are clearly visible at the river’s edge. In residential areas they are screened by vegetation.

In the Warrandyte township, buildings and recreational structures meet the river’s edge directly, forming a hard urban edge.

The image on the left (section 4) shows how the tight bends in the river’s course create ‘peninsulas’ of elevated land with buildings perched along the narrow ridge. This occurs in several locations in Warrandyte. The narrow width of these areas sometimes pushes development closer to the river’s edge and increases its visibility.



River Experience Corridor

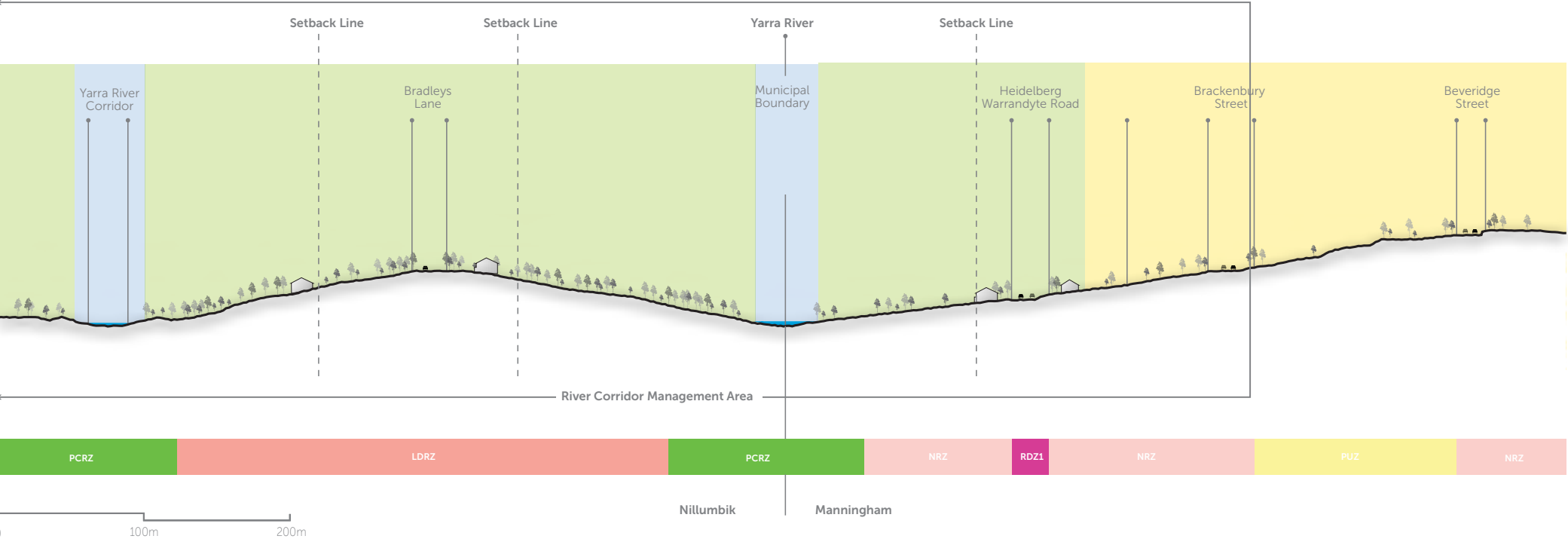
This part of the river is accessed by trails through conservation areas and along the southern banks of the river in the Warrandyte town centre.

The Yarra River Experience Corridor through much of this sub-area depends upon maintaining the sense of a heavily bushy environment that supports development and close human interaction with the river, in a manner that is sensitive to its landscape and environmental qualities.

Waterway Corridor

For the waterway itself, maintenance of a continuous corridor of indigenous vegetation is the most important objective.

Section 4: Warrandyte, Bradleys Lane

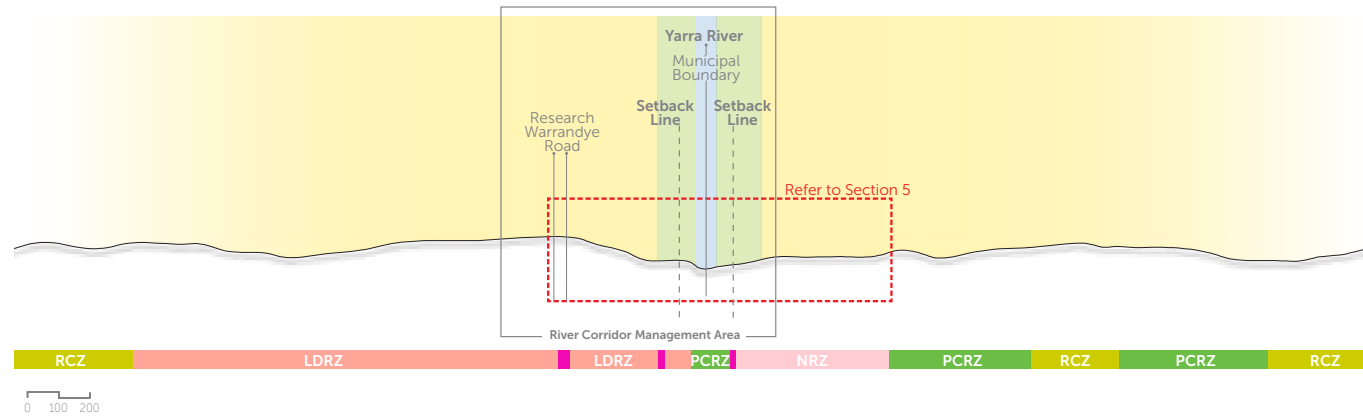




LEGEND
 Yarra River
 Section Line

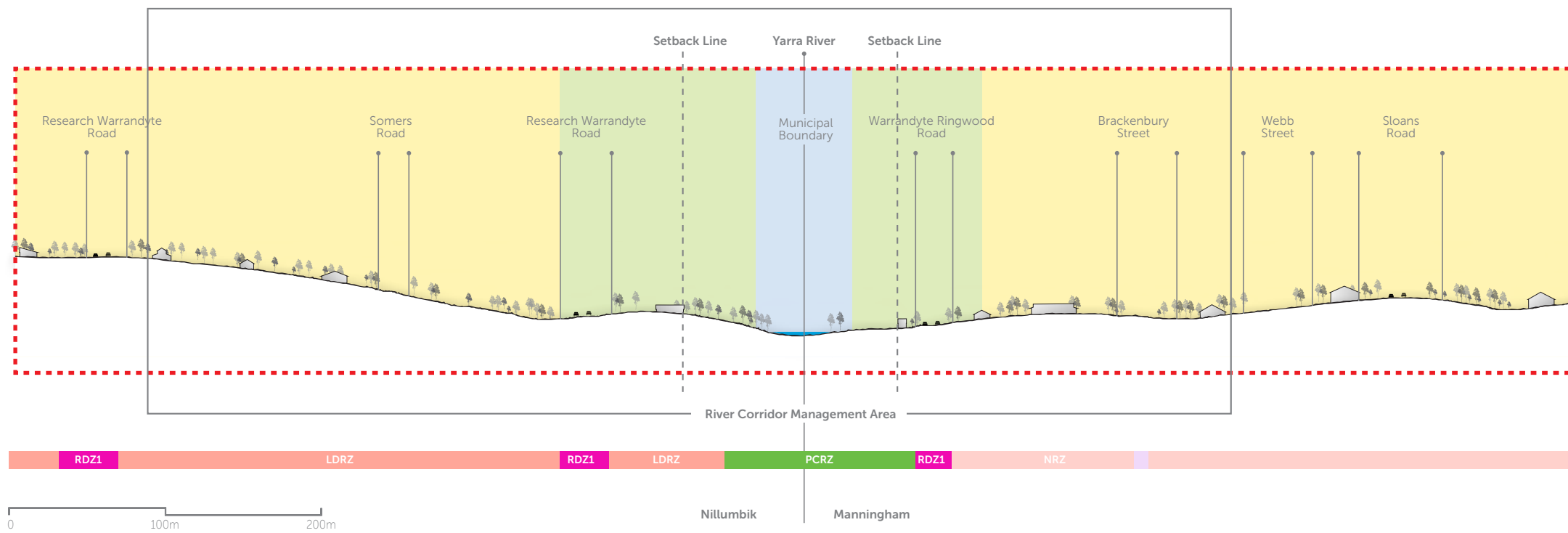


Context Section



LEGEND
 Yarra River
 Wetland corridor
 River corridor setback
 Landmark setting setback

Section 5: Warrandyte Town Centre



River Corridor Management

Management of land in the river corridor is needed for both public and private land.

This is most critical in the Waterway Corridor and River Experience Corridor, shown on the map opposite as the 'area recommended for management'. In some locations, a buffer area extending into the Landscape Setting Corridor is also recommended for management, where there is a sensitive interface with the riverside spaces or parkland.

The recommended area of management for both public and private land is shown on the map and is also illustrated in the cross-section diagrams. The sections show the setback line for development. No development will be permitted between the river and the setback line.

Managing Public Land

Strategies for managing public land in the Warrandyte township: this sub-area:

- Support the role of the formalised open spaces in Warrandyte township as highly valued places for active and passive recreation
- Design buildings and structures in this location as distinctive features respond to the sensitivity of the riverside landscape and environment.

Strategies for managing other public land in this sub-area:

- Maintain conservation areas as undeveloped, naturalistic open spaces that support the sense of remoteness and isolation of the river in this sub-area
- Do not locate buildings so that they are visible from the river
- Minimise riverside infrastructure (such as walkways, river access points) and ensure they are designed as distinctive features that respond to the sensitivity of the riverside landscape and environment.

Managing Private Land

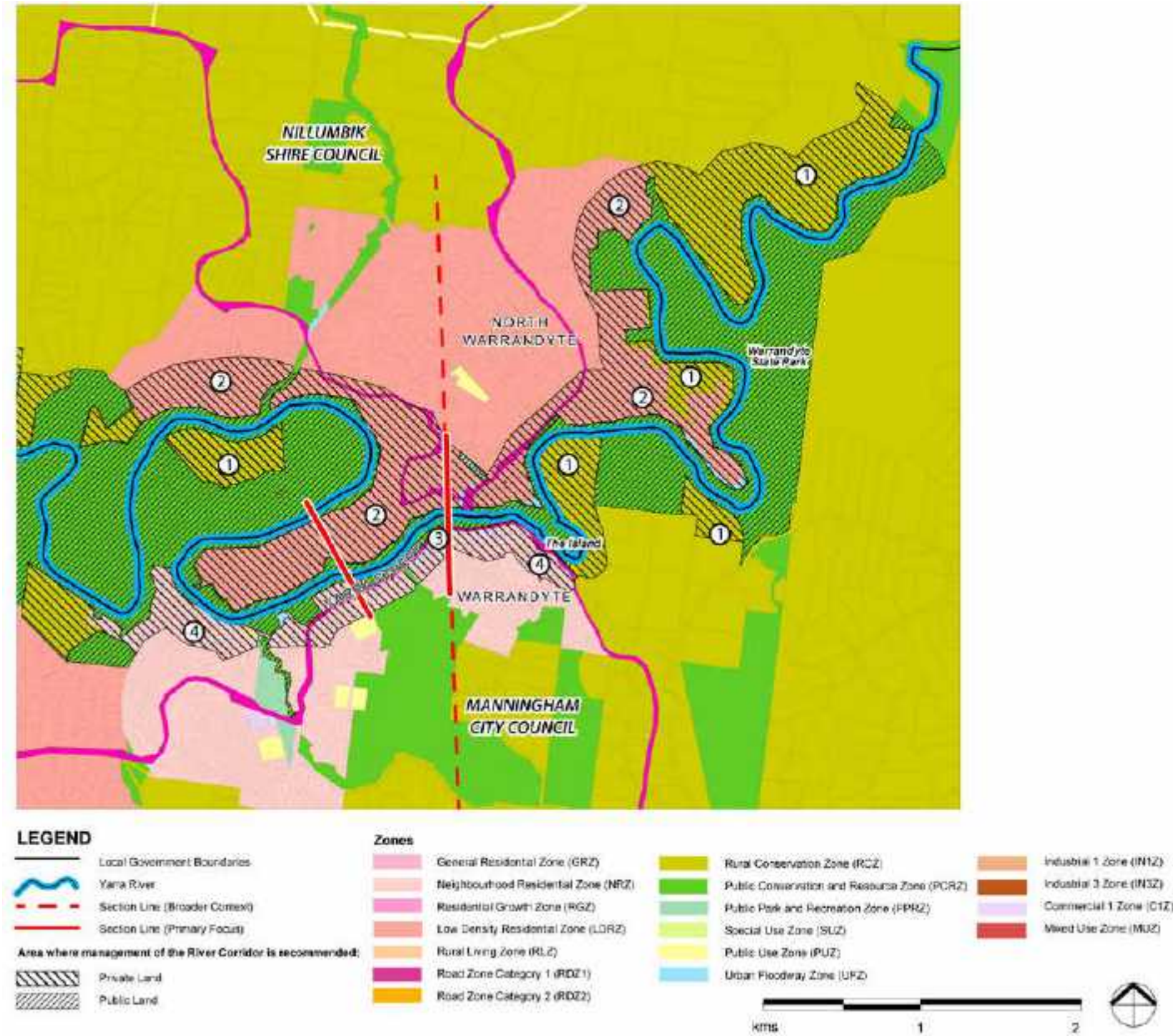
Strategies for managing private land in the Warrandyte township this sub-area:

- Ensure that development is carefully designed to complement the character of the river corridor and the historic township setting
- Maintain the visual dominance of the heavy riparian vegetation along the river.

Strategies for managing other private land in this sub-area:

- Retain the extensive areas of rural and low density residential land that exist along the river corridor, and its predominantly undeveloped character outside of the Warrandyte township
- Minimise the visibility of buildings and structures from the river.

Development outcomes and requirements are detailed for each Character Type in the following table.



Map Ref	River Interface Character Type & Location	Current Zoning	Desired Outcome	Recommended Development Requirements & Guidelines	Recommended Extent of Planning Control Area	Recommended Planning Controls
1	Rural Environment - Templestowe and Warrandyte	<p>Nillumbik</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rural Conservation Zone Schedules 3&4 Environmental Significance Overlay Schedule 1 Sites Of Faunal And Habitat Significance Environmental Significance Overlay Schedule 2 Yarra River Environs Significant Landscape Overlay Schedule 2 Bush and Semi-Bush Residential Areas (part) Land Subject to Inundation Overlay Heritage Overlay applied to individual sites Wildfire Management Overlay <p>Manningham</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rural Conservation Zone Schedules 1, 2, 3 & 5 Environmental Significance Overlay Schedule 1 Yarra River Environs Environmental Significance Overlay Schedule 2 Sites of Biological Significance Environmental Significance Overlay Schedule 3 Buffer Conservation Areas Supporting Sites of Biological Significance Environmental Significance Overlay Schedule 5 Environmentally Significant Urban Areas Land Subject to Inundation Overlay Heritage Overlay applied to individual sites Wildfire Management Overlay 	<p>Rural, bush character is maintained</p> <p>Visibility of buildings from the river, adjoining parkland and the opposite bank is minimised or avoided where possible</p> <p>Strong landscaped edge to river and adjoining open spaces to screen views to buildings is maintained</p> <p>Further encroachment of built form into the river corridor is avoided</p> <p>Tree canopy is retained and enhanced as the dominant visual element in the landscape</p>	<p>Maximum building height of 8m to retain building height lower than tree canopy (9m on a sloping site)</p> <p>Permit required to remove established trees</p> <p>Planting of locally indigenous vegetation encouraged, where possible and practical</p> <p>Minimum building setback of between 80m-120m from the property boundary fronting the river, responding to topography and location of existing buildings</p> <p>Minimum lot size as per existing zone requirements</p>	<p>Adjoins river's edge and extends approximately 250-400m from the property boundary fronting the river into rural land, depending on street and site layout, due to extensive lot sizes</p>	<p>Nillumbik</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Replace ESO2 'Yarra River Environs' with a new SLO and extend spatial coverage to provide vegetation and landscape protection specifically relating to the river corridor environment Maintain existing SLO2 to provide vegetation protection in the broader river corridor Apply new DDO that sets a mandatory setback from the river and mandatory height control. Maintain minimum 8ha lot size of RCZ3 and minimum 40ha lot size of RCZ4. <p>Manningham</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Replace ESO1 'Yarra River Environs' with a new SLO and map to existing ESO1 extent Maintain existing ESO2,3&5 to provide vegetation protection in the broader river corridor Apply new DDO that sets a mandatory setback from the river and mandatory height control Maintain the existing minimum lot sizes of the RCZ Schedules (RCZ1 - 40ha, RCZ2 - 4ha, RCZ3 - 8ha, RCZ4 - 40ha)

Map Ref	River Interface Character Type & Location	Current Zoning	Desired Outcome	Recommended Development Requirements & Guidelines	Recommended Extent of Planning Control Area	Recommended Planning Controls
2	Bush Residential - adjoining river in North Warrandyte	Nillumbik <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low Density Residential Zone Overlay controls as listed on previous page 	<p>Low density, bush character is maintained</p> <p>Visibility of buildings from the river and the opposite bank (including the Warrandyte State Park and township) is minimised</p> <p>Strong landscaped edge to the river and open spaces to screen views to buildings is maintained</p> <p>Further encroachment of built form into the river corridor is avoided</p> <p>Tree canopy is retained and enhanced as dominant visual element in the landscape</p>	<p>Maximum building height of 8m to retain building height lower than tree canopy (9m on a sloping site)</p> <p>Permit required to remove established trees</p> <p>Planting of locally indigenous vegetation encouraged</p> <p>Minimum building setback of 50m-80m from the property boundary fronting the river, responding to topography and location of existing buildings</p> <p>Minimum lot size as per existing zone requirements</p>	Adjoins river's edge and extends 200-350m from the property boundary fronting the river into residential areas, depending on street and site layout	Nillumbik <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Replace ESO2 'Yarra River Environs' with a new SLO and extend spatial coverage to provide vegetation and landscape protection specifically relating to river corridor environment Maintain existing SLO2 to provide vegetation protection in the broader river corridor Apply new DDO that sets a mandatory setback from the river and mandatory 8m height control (9m on a sloping site) Maintain the 0.4ha minimum lot size of the LDRZ Schedule
3	Warrandyte Township - north of Yarra Street/Everard Drive	Manningham <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Neighbourhood Residential Zone Public Conservation & Resource Zone Special Use Zone Urban Floodway Zone Environmental Significance Overlay Schedules 1, 2, 3 & 5 Heritage Overlay applied to individual sites and Warrandyte Township Heritage Precinct (HO191) Other overlay controls as listed on previous page 	<p>Heritage township setting is enhanced through protection of historic buildings and well designed new buildings that complement Warrandyte's distinctive historic and landscape quality</p> <p>Strong landscaped edge to the river and open spaces to screen views to buildings is maintained</p> <p>Further encroachment of built form into the river corridor is avoided</p> <p>Tree canopy is retained and enhanced as dominant visual element in the landscape</p>	<p>Maximum building height of 8m to retain building height lower than tree canopy (9m on a sloping site)</p> <p>Permit required to remove established trees</p> <p>Planting of locally indigenous vegetation encouraged</p> <p>Minimum building setback of 30m from the property boundary fronting the river, responding to topography and location of existing buildings</p> <p>Building design, form and siting of the Warrandyte Township Heritage Guidelines to apply</p> <p>High architectural quality for new buildings essential, and consideration given to the appearance of buildings from all viewing locations including the river, walking trails and northern banks</p>	Applies to land zoned NRZ on the north side of Yarra Street/Everard Drive	Manningham <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Replace ESO1 'Yarra River Environs' with a new SLO and map to existing ESO1 extent Maintain existing ESO2,3&5 to provide vegetation protection in the river corridor Apply new DDO that sets a mandatory setback from the river and mandatory height control (working in conjunction with DDO3 and the requirements of the Warrandyte Township Heritage Guidelines)
4	Warrandyte Township - south of Yarra Street/Everard Drive	Manningham <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Neighbourhood Residential Zone Commercial 1 Zone Environmental Significance Overlay Schedules 2, 3 & 5 Design And Development Overlay Schedule 3 Warrandyte Environmental Residential Area Heritage Overlay applied to individual sites and Warrandyte Township Heritage Precinct (HO191) Other overlay controls as listed on previous page 	<p>Heritage township setting is enhanced through protection of historic buildings and well designed new buildings that complement Warrandyte's distinctive historic and landscape quality</p> <p>Natural, bush residential environment is maintained</p> <p>Buildings visible from the river are well screened with native vegetation and designed to complement the landscape quality</p>	<p>Existing requirements of DDO3 Warrandyte Environmental Residential Area to apply</p> <p>This includes maximum site coverage of 25%, minimum permeability of 50%, maximum building height of 8m, setbacks from side and rear boundaries</p> <p>Permit required to remove established trees</p> <p>Planting of locally indigenous vegetation encouraged</p> <p>Minimum lot size as per existing DDO3 requirements</p>	Adjoins river's edge and extends 100-250m from the property boundary fronting the river into residential areas, depending on street and site layout	Manningham <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain existing ESO2,3&5 to provide vegetation protection in the river corridor DDO3 and the requirements of the Warrandyte Township Heritage Guidelines to manage built form

6.7 Other Recommendations

Overview

Through the development of this study a number of other initiatives to enhance, protect and manage the Middle Yarra study area have become evident. They have been suggested by the project team, Council representatives and the community.

These initiatives lie outside of the built form recommendations that will be implemented through the planning scheme. They could be pursued through further strategic work or a range of non-statutory actions.

Public Access

Further work should review existing gaps in public access to the Yarra River in a number of locations through the study area. For example, the continuation of the Main Yarra Trail into Warrandyte is an opportunity for investigation, or provision of an expanded network of trails on the opposite side of the bank to the Main Yarra Trail.

This investigation should consider the options for public ownership or control to ensure path access and landscape improvements. These include the Public Acquisition Overlay (PAO) and / or open space land contribution under Clause 52.01 of the Planning Scheme. The strategic justification and funding for creating these links should be part of future open space planning by local and State agencies.

Open Space & Landscaping

A coordinated approach to the ongoing management and design of public open space within the Yarra River corridor is an important consideration.

While there is a distinct range of public spaces within the Middle Yarra study area, each with different functions and management, a consistent approach should nonetheless be taken to protection of landscape and environmental values across public space. This study recommends that Councils consider the application of the DPO to open spaces, so that masterplanned approach can be taken to their future design and development.

In addition, a corridor-wide strategic landscape framework is required to set criteria and guidelines for planting and design within each section of the river, to appropriately reflect the desired landscape character. These would provide a basis for coordinated action by relevant authorities and land owners, for both public and private land, to ensure a consistent landscape theme is achieved along the corridor.

Floodway Management

A number of submissions have highlighted the need to consider the relationship of floodway management within the context of protecting river values.

This could include preparation of Floodway Management Plans that incorporate consideration of landscape or environmental values.

Additionally, it has been suggested that a review of the Land Subject to Inundation Overlay is required to ensure that flood level data is up to date and publicly available.

Minimum Lot Sizes

The issue of setting a minimum lot sizes along the river to limit further subdivision was raised in community feedback. This has been suggested for consideration for rural land in Lower Plenty, but there may also be potential to apply this approach in other places as well.

Determining appropriate minimum lot sizes would require a comprehensive review of a range of considerations such as land use and productivity, developability, environmental issues and other site constraints.

This level of detailed investigation is outside the scope of this study. It is, however, an option that Councils may wish to pursue in the future.

Protecting Environmental Significance

This study has utilised regional scale Ecological Vegetation Class mapping to assist in gaining an understanding of the landscape. In undertaking this study it has been clear that understanding local environmental matters is critical to ensuring protection of existing habitat and riparian vegetation.

Ideally, the application of a future Environmental Significance Overlay (ESO) within the Yarra River corridor should be progressed based on a scientific assessment of environmental values, such as the location and type of remnant riparian and other indigenous vegetation, biodiversity and habitat. The ESO should be strategically applied to capture an appropriate area where environmental values exist and require ongoing protection.

It is suggested that Melbourne Water in their capacity as manager of waterway health for the Yarra River could progress such a study. There is potential for such a process to consider the current Banyule ESO1 'Yarra River, Plenty River & Darebin Creek' or the proposed Nillumbik ESO4 'Waterways' (Amendment C101) as guides to implementing a more defined ESO control for the Yarra River.

Cultural Heritage Values

The landscape of the study area tells the story of human interaction with the river over time. It is important that the history of the river is shared and celebrated and, where appropriate, reflected in its landscape today.

The Wurundjeri people have a strong spiritual connection with the river, which they know as 'Birrarung', through both tangible and intangible cultural values of the river's landscape. There is currently very little information and data contained within the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Register about Aboriginal heritage sites along the Yarra River. Available studies are archeologically based, focussing only on tangible heritage elements, and now some 30 years old. Their coverage is also limited to small segments of the river.

Significant sites of the post-settlement history of the river are generally well represented through the application of the Heritage Overlay. However, there are numerous stories of how the river has shaped the formation of Melbourne and the suburbs through which it flows, which could be expressed in the river's landscape and spaces.

Developing an in-depth understanding of both the tangible and intangible cultural heritage values of the river is an important part of its protection. A holistic study of the river's cultural heritage, Aboriginal and post-contact, is required to ensure that all aspects of the river's diverse heritage can be appreciated.

A cultural heritage assessment of the river should identify significant sites or areas along its course where there are opportunities for heritage interpretation and expression of cultural values. This could be achieved through a range of means including place naming, display information, landscape design and planting selection, sound or visual art installations, or the use of spaces for particular cultural events, for example.

Appendix A: Existing Planning Policy & Controls

General Planning Policy & Controls for the Yarra River Corridor

Planning Scheme policy and controls apply to the entire Yarra River corridor at the State level.

In addition, the Planning Schemes of each municipality adjoining the river manages development at the local level.

Melbourne Water, Parks Victoria and the Department of Sustainability and Environment are responsible for management of open spaces alongside the river and issues of water quality.

Overview

The planning schemes for each municipality along the Yarra River include policy and controls for the river and its environs. Key policy and controls that apply are:

- State Planning Policy at Clause 11.04-8 River Corridors
- Policies regarding the river in the Municipal Strategic Statement or Local policies of each planning scheme
- A range of urban, rural and public zones that relate to uses or development along the river
- A range of overlay controls that relate to specific management issues for landscape, environment, flooding and built form, and providing for public acquisition.

The policy and controls that apply to land in the Yarra corridor generally are detailed here. An overview of how they apply to the three municipalities within the Middle Yarra Study area then follows.

State Planning Policy Framework

In 2012, Amendment VC96 introduced a specific State policy on River Corridors to the State Planning Policy Framework (SPPF), at Clause 11.04-8. This clause aimed to ‘protect and enhance the significant river corridors of Metropolitan Melbourne’.

On 21 December 2015, Amendment VC121 was gazetted giving effect to a strengthened River Corridors policy and a new ‘Yarra River Protection’ sub-policy within the State Planning Policy Framework. The new ‘Yarra River Protection’ policy provides a strengthened basis and rationale for the protection of the whole of the Yarra River corridor to inform decision making.

The new ‘Yarra River Protection’ policy provides a strengthened basis and rationale for the protection of the whole of the Yarra River corridor to inform decision making. The new policy clearly states the river’s significance and importance through a ‘statement of significance’ objective and the body of the policy structured around four key strategic policy principles and strategies to achieve the objective.

The new ‘River corridor’ policy has been relocated from its previous location at Clause 11 (Settlements) to Clause 12 (Environment and landscape values) supporting a refocusing of the State’s planning policy away from development within an urban setting, to one focused on protecting and enhancing its environmental and landscape setting. The new Yarra River protection policy is found at Clause 12.05 of the SPPF. The following is an extract:

Yarra River protection

Objective

Maintain and enhance the natural landscape character of the Yarra River corridor in which the topography, waterway, banks and tree canopy are dominant features providing a highly valued, secluded, natural environment for the enjoyment of the public.

Strategies

Strengthen the river’s natural environment, heritage and overall health by:

- *Protecting the river’s riparian vegetation, natural riverbank topography and flood management capacity.*
- *Ensuring development does not increase the rate or quantity of stormwater, sediment or other pollutants entering the river.*
- *Protecting and enhancing both terrestrial and aquatic habitats and their linkages along the river corridor.*

Maintain a sense of place and landscape identity by:

- *Retaining a dominant and consistent tree canopy along the river corridor and within its broader landscape setting.*
- *Ensuring that the appearance of development is subordinate to the local landscape setting, with any views of development being filtered through vegetation.*

Retain and enhance people’s enjoyment of the river and its environment by:

- *Planning for the river and its environs as a recreation and tourism resource.*
- *Ensuring linkages and public access to the river and its parklands are maintained, enhanced and new links created where appropriate.*
- *Avoiding overshadowing of the river, its banks and adjacent public open space to ensure that the amenity of the public realm is maintained year round.*

Ensure that development is designed and sited to maintain and enhance the river’s secluded and natural environment by:

- *Minimising the visual intrusion of development when viewed from major roads, bridge crossings, public open space, recreation trails and the river itself.*
- *Ensuring that the siting and design of buildings avoid contrast with the local natural landscape and environmental character.*
- *Ensuring building height is below the natural tree canopy and all development is set back a minimum of 30 metres, or greater, from the banks of the river.*

This amendment strengthened policy at the State level for the Yarra River, adding to policy at Clause 11.04-7 which identifies the river as a significant asset and Clause 11.03-1 which encourages public accessibility along waterways.

Another key policy in the SPPF that affects built form along the Yarra River is Clause 14.02-1 Catchment planning and management which specifies:

- *Retain natural drainage corridors with vegetated buffer zones at least 30m wide along each side of a waterway to maintain the natural drainage function, stream habitat and wildlife corridors and landscape values, to minimise erosion of stream banks and verges and to reduce polluted surface run-off from adjacent land uses.*

Local Planning Policy Framework

The Yarra River generally is identified as a key feature for municipalities in their the Municipal Strategic Statements (MSS), as an important environmental and recreational asset with landscape significance. An example of this is Manningham City Council’s Clause 21.07 Green Wedge & Yarra River Corridor and the City of Yarra’s Clause 21.07-2 Yarra River, Merri Creek & Darebin Creek.

Zones

A wide range of urban, rural and public uses zones apply along the Yarra River corridor which set out controls regarding the use or development of land. The zones that apply to the Study area are described in broad terms below. This should be read in conjunction with the zones map provided in *Appendix B: Planning Scheme Maps*. More detail regarding each zone can be found within the review of the individual municipalities policy and controls, provided within this Appendix.

Public Park & Recreation Zone & Public Conservation & Resource Zone

The Public Park and Recreation Zone (PPRZ) and Public Conservation and Resource Zone (PCRZ) relate to public land, and have been applied to large sections of the Yarra River corridor. The PPRZ recognises areas of public recreation and open space and protects areas of significance. The PCRZ focuses on the protection and conservation of the environment.

Land within the PPRZ is generally managed by Council, Parks Victoria, or a committee of management on behalf of the Crown. Land within the PCRZ is generally managed by Parks Victoria.

While many uses are allowed within these zones as of right, activities and development is usually limited by the statutory obligations of public land managers, the requirements of other relevant Acts and the zone controls. Important environmental assets, as well as recreational assets on the land, are also protected and enhanced for these reasons.

General Planning Policy & Controls for the Yarra River Corridor cont...

Residential Zones

In July 2014 new format residential zones replaced all Residential 1, 2 and 3 Zones in Victoria.

The new zones essentially seek to encourage varying levels of housing density and dwelling types across residential areas. They allow for schedules to be introduced that tailor development outcomes for different areas. Schedules can specify outcomes such as building height, setbacks, landscaping and site coverage.

The new residential zones are:

- Residential Growth Zone, which provides for housing growth by a mix of housing types that includes medium to higher density housing. This zone has a discretionary height limit of 13.5 metres, unless otherwise specified in a schedule.
- General Residential Zone, which will allow modest housing growth and housing diversity that respects the character of the neighbourhood. The discretionary 9 metre height limit of ResCode applies (or 10 metres on a sloping site) unless otherwise specified in a schedule.
- Neighbourhood Residential Zone, which restricts housing growth in areas identified for urban preservation. This zone has a 8 metres mandatory height limit (9 metres on a sloping site) and a maximum of two dwellings per lot, except where otherwise specified in the zone schedule.

The introduction and application of the new residential zones provides a timely opportunity for each council to consider which areas of the municipality have the greatest capacity to accommodate housing growth and change and to identify those locations with particular neighbourhood character, heritage and environmental values or poor amenity where future growth should be limited.

Much of the residential hinterland within the western section of the study area is located within the General Residential Zone. Areas close to the river in Ivanhoe and Warrandyte are included in the Neighbourhood Residential Zone. There are small pockets of land around activity centres within the Residential Growth Zone.

All residential zones trigger a permit to construct more than one dwelling built on a lot. The zones refer to ResCode (Clauses 54 and 55) which provides specific benchmarks for heights, setbacks and site coverage. The setbacks requirements of ResCode relate to neighbourhood character and restrict the extent of walls on boundaries for amenity purposes; it is not possible to consider river frontage setbacks under ResCode.

Low Density Residential Zone

The Low Density Residential Zone (LDRZ) provides for residential use within a low density environment. It restricts land use to two dwellings per lot and provides a standard minimum subdivision area of 0.2 hectares (with connected reticulated sewerage) and 0.4 hectares (without), however, this can be varied. There are large areas of LDRZ within the river’s hinterland in Lower Plenty, Eltham, Templestowe and Warrandyte.

Rural Conservation Zone

The Rural Conservation Zone (RCZ) provides for rural land uses compatible with the protection of the natural environment. A minimum lot size can be specified.

The State Government’s zone reform program has seen changes to RCZ provisions allowing opportunities to re-subdivide land and fewer permit requirements in relation to commercial activity and construction of buildings.

Special Use Zone

The Special Use Zone (SUZ) applies to small sections adjoining the river corridor, particularly within the western half of the Study area. The purpose of the Special Use Zone (SUZ) is to recognise or provide for the use and development of land for specific purposes. Examples uses include private education centres, golf courses, sports grounds and utility and service installations.

Urban Floodway Zone

The Urban Floodway Zone (UFZ) is applied to small, discreet areas of the river corridor to allow for the free passage and storage of water. It is a highly restrictive control and prevents subdivision except where it will not result in an increase in the number or the creation of new lots entirely within the zone.

Overlays

Overlay controls located along the Yarra River typically implement a specific policy direction. They provide a permit trigger for particular uses or development, and may specify built form outcomes. Looking at the broader river corridor, including urban areas, the overlay controls in operation are described below. This should be read in conjunction with the various overlay maps provided in *Appendix A: Planning Scheme Maps*. More detail regarding each overlay can be

found within the review of the individual municipalities policy and controls, provided within this chapter.

Design & Development Overlay

The purpose of the Design & Development Overlay (DDO) is to identify areas which are affected by specific requirements relating to the design and built form of new development. This has been applied along sections of the Yarra River to manage built form that interfaces with the river.

Significant Landscape Overlay

The Significant Landscape Overlay identifies, conserves and enhances the character of significant landscapes. It has been applied along some sections of the Yarra River to protect the corridor’s landscape.

Environmental Significance Overlay

The Environmental Significance Overlay (ESO) aims to identify areas where development of land may be affected by environmental constraints and where identified environmental values need to be protected. The ESO is commonly applied along the Yarra River to areas of particular environmental significance.

Vegetation Protection Overlay

The Vegetation Protection Overlay (VPO) aims to protect vegetation, particularly native and significant vegetation. The VPO has been applied in some areas along the Yarra River to protect vegetation.

Heritage Overlay

The Heritage Overlay (HO) aims to conserve and enhance heritage places of natural or cultural significance. The overlay protects sites, built form and vegetation of heritage significance. This generally applies to specific properties along the river, affecting buildings sited along the river, bridges or gardens and structures in open space. It may also be applied to sites of Aboriginal cultural heritage.

Land Subject to Inundation Overlay

The Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO) applies to land located within the 1 to 100 year flood storage

or flood fringe areas. The purpose of this overlay is to ensure that development maintains the free passage and temporary storage of floodwaters, minimises flood damage, is compatible with the flood hazard and local drainage conditions, and will not cause any significant rise in flood level or flow velocity.

City of Banyule: Key Studies & Reports

Strategic Direction for Lower Plenty

Banyule City Council is progressing development of strategic direction for an area of land in Lower Plenty within the Low Density Residential Zone, through the recently completed Neighbourhood Character Strategy. The preferred future character of Lower Plenty is a low density neighbourhood within the Yarra River corridor, within a well treed landscape. Council is undertaking this work to support a continued minimum lot size for the area of 0.4ha, in view of the reduced minimum lot size allowance under the reformed zones.

Policy for Environmentally Efficient Design

Planning Scheme Amendment C73 proposes the introduction of this policy which includes guidelines for buildings and works to mitigate downstream impacts on waterways, particularly the Yarra River.

Warringal Parklands & Banyule Flats Cultural Heritage Assessment & Management Plan (Underway)

This ongoing study is investigating two significant Aboriginal cultural heritage sites adjacent to the Yarra River. Commissioned in 2012, it aims to provide Council with information to ensure appropriate future management of the Warringal Parklands and Banyule Flats.

Work to date suggests that that parklands and flats have State heritage significance for inclusion on the Victorian Heritage Register because of their association with the important artistic and cultural traditions for the Heidelberg School of artists who drew inspiration from the landscape setting within the river valley.

Heritage Strategy (2013)

The Heritage Strategy reviewed the Heritage Overlay in the Banyule Planning Scheme and informed planning scheme amendments C77 and C64. This has resulted in an expanded Heritage Overlay and a new Local Planning Policy for Cultural Heritage Conservation. Sites within the river valley are included in these provisions.

Yarra Flats Impressionist Lab (gallery) (2012)

Banyule City Council is proposing to develop a new cultural facility within Yarra Flats Park which is one of three projects being proposed as part of the Preliminary Yarra Flats Park Concept Plan developed by Parks Victoria. This document provides information about the Impressionist Lab (gallery).

Neighbourhood Character Strategy (2012)

The Neighbourhood Character Strategy has recently been introduced to the planning scheme with a new Local Planning Policy for Residential Neighbourhood Character. It documents the physical features of Banyule’s residential areas and describes the preferred neighbourhood character for each precinct.

A number of neighbourhood character precincts lie adjacent to the Yarra River corridor: Garden suburban 1, Garden Suburban 2, Garden Suburban 5 and Bush Woodland 2. Design guidelines have been set out for each area, which include how built form should respond to the riverside environment. The Strategy has recently been implemented through Amendment C68, with inclusion of the Neighbourhood Character Policy at Clause 22.02.

Landscape Assessment for Significant Ridgelines in Banyule (2012)

This Study identifies the significant ridgelines within the municipality, and was prepared in support of the Neighbourhood Character Strategy. Three significant ridgelines were identified, which are formed around the geography of the river corridors and valleys.

A view-shed analysis was undertaken that includes land outside Banyule and the Yarra River Corridor with Banyule. The Study assesses the existing and potential impact of development upon these ridgelines and makes recommendations for their protection.

Heidelberg Structure Plan (2010)

The Structure Plan has been included into the Banyule Planning Scheme, with changes to the MSS (Local Places) and a new DDO. The DDO includes design guidance for managing the built form interface between the activity centre and the river.

Aboriginal Heritage Study (1999)

This study investigated the location of pre-European Aboriginal archaeology within the City of Banyule. It focused particularly on areas along the Yarra and Plenty River and Darebin Creek.

The Study sets out key recommendations for the protection of Aboriginal archaeological sites through planning scheme controls.

Warringal Parklands Landscape Masterplan (1994)

This plan outlined the existing and preferred landscape character for the Warringal Park site. Recognising its value and significance, the plan detailed concepts for specific areas of improvement within the park.



Banyule Planning Scheme: Policy & Controls

Municipal Strategic Statement

Banyule City Council recognises in the MSS the importance of the Yarra River as a recreational and environmental resource and as a place of notable natural and cultural heritage.

The MSS recognises the influence of the built form on the natural environment and has objectives to protect and enhance the value of the Yarra River and its adjoining parkland environment. Particularly, its vision is to contribute to the aesthetic and environmental attributes of the Yarra River Corridor.

The Municipal Profile at Clause 21.01 includes reference to the significance of the Yarra River valley and vegetation corridor to Banyule.

Clause 21.05 ‘Natural Environment’, identifies the important role of Banyule’s natural environment and the function it plays within the municipality. Objective 2 aims to protect and enhance the natural values of waterways and wetlands through rehabilitation, buffering from development and appropriate management of stormwater run-off. These goals will be achieved through the implementation of the appropriate zones and overlays.

The MSS lists a number of reference documents. Of particular relevance are:

- Middle Yarra River Concept Plan, Dights Falls to Burke Road (1990)
- The Middle Yarra Concept Plan – Burke Road to Watsons Creek (1993)
- Banyule Environment Policy and Strategy: Protecting and Enhancing our Local Environment (1997)
- Banyule City Council Annual State of the Environment Report
- Yarra River Action Plan (2006).

Local Planning Policy

The Neighbourhood Character Policy at Clause 22.02 includes specific direction for residential areas in adjoining the Yarra River corridor and its floodplains. This relates to maintenance of the low density environment of areas around Lower Plenty, protection of the tree canopy and native vegetation environment, designing buildings to reflect the undulating topography (where a feature of the area), and encouraging the use of natural or muted tones in new development. The Policy has been recently updated to include specific requirements for each of the new residential zones within each neighbourhood character precinct.

The Cultural Heritage Conservation Policy at Clause 22.06 relates to many sites within the Yarra River Corridor. Clause 22.06 outlines the policy basis and objectives for cultural heritage sites controlled by a Heritage Overlay. It sets out detailed policies and objectives which aim to conserve heritage places and control new and existing development in areas of heritage and cultural significance.

Zones

Zones that apply to the Study area within Banyule City Council are described below. A zoning map is provided in *Appendix B: Planning Scheme Maps*.

Public Parks & Recreation Zone (PPRZ)

This zone covers large areas of public land along or near the Yarra River, including the Ivanhoe Golf Course, Heidelberg Park and Cricket Ground and parklands in Lower Plenty. Together with land included in the PCRZ, the PPRZ provides an almost continual buffer of highly vegetated parkland along the river (at varying widths). There are no specific siting or design requirements in this zone.

Public Conservation & Resource Zone (PCRZ)

The PCRZ is the most prevalent zone along the Yarra River, covering large segments of the river corridor along the boundary of the municipality. It includes the major open spaces of the Yarra Valley Parklands, the Banyule Flats Reserve and the Warringal Parklands. There are no specific siting or design requirements in this zone.

Special Use Zone (SUZ)

The SUZ is applied to the Rosanna Golf Course, which has a small area of interface with the river. The Schedule to the zone (SUZ1) identifies the land as private sports grounds with the purpose of ensuring orderly and proper use and development that does not detract from the amenity of the surrounding neighbourhood. There are no specific siting or design requirements in this zone.

Rural Conservation Zone (RCZ)

The RCZ applies to parts of Lower Plenty and Viewbank. There is a small part of the zone intersecting the river. The schedule to this zone highlights the environmental values of land in close proximity to the Yarra River. The schedule limits the minimum subdivision area to 2ha. Broad decision guidelines require consideration of environmental and landscape values and the impact of new development upon vistas.

Neighbourhood Residential Zone (NRZ)

The NRZ is applied to areas immediately adjoining the riverside parklands of Ivanhoe, Eaglemont, Rosanna and Viewbank, including those areas within the Significant Landscape Overlay.

A maximum of two dwellings per lot may be constructed and a mandatory height limit of 8m (9m on a sloping site) applies. The schedule to the NRZ implements a permit requirement for dwellings on a lot less than 500m².

General Residential Zone (GRZ)

Areas of the GRZ stretch beyond the NRZ into the river’s wider hinterland, through the suburbs of Ivanhoe, Heidelberg, Rosanna and Viewbank.

These areas are mostly included within schedule 2 to the GRZ: Incremental areas (GRZ2) which stipulates a requirement of a maximum 40% site coverage and for 1 tree to be provided per 400m², including 1 large tree in the front setback. Building height requirements of ResCode apply (discretionary 9m height limit or 10m on a sloping site).

Several small areas are included in schedule 1 to the GRZ: Accessible areas (GRZ1) which triggers a permit for a single dwelling on a lot greater than 300m², has the requirement of 1 large tree in the front setback, and applies the discretionary building height requirements of ResCode.

Residential Growth Zone (RGZ)

The RGZ is applied to residential areas around the Heidelberg Activity Centre. The discretionary height limit of 13.5m applies.

Low Density Residential Zone (LDRZ)

The LDRZ is applied to land in Lower Plenty, which interfaces the river and extends to the north-eastern corner of the municipality, close to the boundary. The schedule sets the minimum lot size at 0.4ha and Council is currently undertaking strategic justification work to apply this requirement to the new format zone schedule. Decision guidelines for subdivision make reference to landscape values, but there are no specific requirements for building heights, setbacks or site coverage.

Urban Floodway Zone (UFZ)

Two small areas of UFZ are located in Heidelberg, including a nursery on Banksia Street and low density residential sites nearby, adjoining the riverside the parkland. Use and development of land is limited in this zone and comprehensive review of how it might be affected by flooding is required.

Commercial 1 Zone (C1Z)

A small part of commercial land within in the Heidelberg Activity Centre is included in the study area, which allows a

Banyule Planning Scheme: Policy & Controls cont...

wide range of commercial and mixed use development, many of which do not require a planning permit.

Overlays

Overlays that apply to the Study area within Banyule City Council are described below. A set of overlay maps are provided in Appendix B: Planning Scheme Maps.

ESO1: Yarra River, Plenty River & Darebin Creek

The Environmental Significance Overlay Schedule 1 applies to the slopes and environs close to the river’s edge. The Overlay aims to enhance the conservation and maintenance of the streamside environment and minimise the loss of vegetation along the river’s edge. It requires a permit to remove, lop or prune any significant vegetation, and to construct a fence or a building over 4.5m in height. Decision guidelines include consideration of the visual amenity of the natural and landscaped character of the area and a minimum requirement of 50% site permeability.

The Overlay makes reference to a number of documents including:

- The Middle Yarra River Concept Plan - Dights Falls to Burke Road, August (1990)
- Middle Yarra Concept Plan - Burke Road to Watsons Creek (1991)
- An Inventory of Sites of Environmental Significance in the City of Banyule and Adjoining Areas, Banyule City Council, September (1995)
- Wildlife Corridor Program, Banyule City Council, (2000).

ESO4: Significant Trees & Areas of Vegetation

The Environmental Significance Overlay Schedule 4 aims to protect and enhance trees and areas of vegetation that are significant within the municipality. There are numerous sites near to the river corridor included within ESO4. The Overlay requires a permit to remove, lop or prune any significant vegetation. ESO4 is not specific to vegetation around the river. The table within the schedule lists specific locations of significant vegetation.

Reference is made to:

- City of Banyule – Significant Trees and Vegetation Study (March 2000)
- Banyule City Council Significant Trees and Vegetation

Register

- National Trust (Victoria) Significant Trees Register.

SLO1: Watercourse Environs

The Significant Landscape Overlay Schedule 1 relates to the wider river environment, beyond the extent of ESO1 which follows the river’s edge. It is located to the east of Burke Road and up to the eastern municipal boundary.

The overlay aims to protect watercourses and their immediate environs from inappropriate development that detracts from the appearance of the area. It aims to maintain a vegetation screen for views to and from the river. A permit is required for a building with a wall over 8 metres or any other part over 12 metres, and to remove native vegetation or exotic trees.

The decision guidelines include ensuring that buildings or works are in keeping with the character of the area and protecting vistas from the river, nearby streets, adjoining open spaces or prominent scenic viewpoints. A minimum requirement of 50% site permeability applies and buildings when viewed from the river or on ridgetops must be totally screened by vegetation. There are no building height or setback requirements.

SLO2: Yarra Valley Landscape Area

The Significant Landscape Overlay Schedule 2 relates to the wider river environment, mostly west of Burke Road, beyond the extent of ESO1.

This overlay aims to protect views into and out of significantly identified areas within the municipality, particularly from ridgetops. It requires a permit for buildings over 6 metres in height. Specifically it also gives direction to enhance the views and retain a sense of remoteness in the valleys of the watercourse.

Similar decision guidelines to SLO2 apply. There are no building height or setback requirements.

The Overlay makes particular reference to the Middle Yarra Concept Plan (1990) with the objective of encouraging development that is consistent with the recommendations outlined in the Concept Plan.

VPO1: Plenty River East Area

The Vegetation Protection Overlay Schedule 1 applies to land east of the Plenty River, in Lower Plenty. The purpose of

the overlay is to conserve the existing pattern of vegetation, landscape quality and ecosystems within the area, which is subject to ongoing development. A permit is required to remove, lop or destroy native vegetation.

The overlay makes reference to a number of documents including the Wildlife Corridor Program, Banyule City Council (2000).

VPO3: Eaglemont, Ivanhoe East & Ivanhoe

The Vegetation Protection Overlay Schedule 3 applies to the garden suburban neighbourhoods within this area identified in the Neighbourhood Character Strategy. The purpose of the overlay is to protect the contribution that trees make to neighbourhood character, local identity and habitat links, particularly in relation to the Yarra River valley and wildlife corridor. A permit is required to remove, lop or destroy trees over a specified height and size.

VPO5: Substantial Tree Protection Area

The Vegetation Protection Overlay Schedule 5 applies to the garden court and garden suburban neighbourhoods identified in the Neighbourhood Character Strategy. This includes an extensive part of the City’s residential neighbourhoods. The purpose of the overlay is to protect the contribution that trees make to neighbourhood character, local identity and habitat links. A permit is required to remove, lop or destroy trees over a specified height and size.

DDO5: Heidelberg Specialised & Major Activity Centres

The general purpose of DDO5 is to promote development that positively contributes to the built form and the public realm. Specifically relating to the Yarra River, one of the objectives aims to provide consistent building setbacks along Burgundy Street, Hawdon Street and Cape Street in order to retain valued views to the Yarra River Corridor. For sites directly adjoining the riverside parklands a maximum height of 10m applies.

DDO8: Plenty River East Neighbourhood Character

This DDO applies to residential neighbourhoods to the north-east of the Yarra and Plenty Rivers confluence. The purpose of DDO8 is to ensure that buildings do not penetrate the

tree canopy, retain the area’s heavily vegetated character and maintain the spaciousness and bush character of front gardens. A permit is required for buildings over 8 meters in height or within the dripline of a tree protected under a VPO or ESO, or to construct a fence. No building height or setback requirements are stipulated.

Land Subject to Inundation Overlay

The LSIO is applied along the length of the Yarra River within Banyule, to the parklands and the adjoining residential interface beyond. A permit is required for specified buildings and works and for subdivision. No building height, setbacks or site coverage requirements are stipulated.

Heritage Overlay

There are a number of identified sites, including buildings and open spaces, with heritage overlays throughout the municipality which are concentrated along the river. Significant sites include the Yarra Flats (HO134), Wilson Reserve (HO167), Chelsworth Park (HO168), the Banyule Homestead (HO13) and the Viewbank Homestead (HO).

Manningham City Council: Key Studies & Reports

Open Space Strategy (2014)

This strategy is a 10-year plan that sets out priorities and guidelines for the protection, development and use of all public open space in the municipality. The vision is for an accessible and well connected open space network that supports a healthy community and environment by valuing, expanding and enhancing the open space network. The strategy includes a comprehensive inventory and analysis of open space across the municipality.

Healthy Habitats - Bushland Management Strategy for Council Managed Land (2012)

The purpose of this strategy is to outline a strategic approach for the planning and delivery of bush land management within the municipality. The Strategy is underpinned by four key objectives: to maintain and restore ecological processes, to manage and minimise threatening processes, to improve habitat and to protect threatened species.

The Strategy puts forward an extensive list of long term and short term recommendations aimed at achieving the four key objectives. In addition, it supplements the recommendations with a number of practical implementation methods.

Development Guide for Areas of Environmental & Landscape Significance (2011)

This guide provides existing and potential property owners a clear understanding, in 'user-friendly' language, of what Council expects and what information is required for planning permit applications in Manningham's areas of environmental and landscape significance. In particular, the Guide requires and encourages:

- Co-ordinated site planning for all development features to achieve an integrated outcome for a site;
- Avoiding and minimising the removal of, or adverse impacts upon, native vegetation;
- An approach to development with techniques to minimise the need for, and extent of, earthworks that preserve and enhance natural drainage lines and waterways;
- Building forms that respect and are responsive to the landscape; and
- Environmentally sustainable designs and developments.

Green Wedge Action Plan 2020 (2011)

The Green Wedge Action Plan provides a strategic framework for the future management of the Green Wedge and is underpinned by the 2004 Green Wedge Strategy. It documents a number of land use controls and objectives,

giving direction to partner with other agencies to manage and preserve Green Wedge areas. The Plan recognises the Manningham Green Wedge as a part of the larger Yarra Valley corridor. It includes actions for management of the environmental, landscape and recreational attributes of the river corridor.

Manningham Active for Life Recreation Strategy (2011)

This Strategy was developed to guide recreation provision in Manningham up to 2025. It aims to broadly address the recreation and cultural wellbeing needs of the community.

Key objectives of the Strategy are to increase the participation in recreation, ensure the community has a diverse range of recreational choices, provide excellent places for people to recreate and to inspire people to recreate.

This strategy complements a number of other public health and cultural community strategies.

Wildlife Movement & Habitat Needs in Manningham (2009)

Arising from recommendation A75 of Manningham City Council's Green Wedge Strategy (2004), this study explores opportunities for improving existing habitat corridors for wildlife within the municipality.

The study developed new methods of research which found a number of factors influencing wildlife corridors, such as the maintenance of native tree cover, the need for re-vegetation in key habitat areas, the use of local indigenous plant species and encouraging the community to use native plants. The Study also identified a number of ways in which the Planning Scheme could contribute to the protection of habitat corridors through the use of the Environmental Significance Overlay. Amendment C54 (2013) saw the inclusion of this study as a reference document in the Manningham Planning Scheme.

Warrandyte Township Heritage Guidelines (2007)

The Warrandyte Township Heritage Guidelines were prepared to assist with the ongoing conservation and protection of the heritage values of the Warrandyte Township Heritage Precinct. The Precinct comprises residential, civic and commercial buildings, as well as parkland and open space in the township. Parts 1-7 of the Guidelines are incorporated in the Manningham Planning Scheme.

Yarra Street Warrandyte Urban Design Framework (2005)

This urban design framework provides strategic planning direction and policy support to manage change within the Warrandyte town centre. Specifically the Yarra Street Precinct has been identified as having significant cultural and heritage values and is also a major tourist attraction. The Framework identifies the core values of the precinct and provides strategies and objectives to minimise any future threats. With a review every five years, the Framework provides a long term vision for the future of the township.

Manningham Green Wedge Strategy (2004)

This Strategy guides planning, use and management of non-urban areas within Manningham. It contains long term visions for the future and includes reference to the cultural, environmental and landscape issues of the Yarra River corridor, for both public and private land. In particular, it emphasises the application of the Rural Conservation Zone.

Manningham (Biosites) Sites of Biological Significance Review (2004)

This review is a culmination of a number of studies initiated in 1992 aimed at defining, classifying and describing all areas of biological or biodiversity significance with the municipality.

The Biosites Review was divided into three phases which included a detailed survey of remnant indigenous vegetation, the collation of existing and new biological information and a formal identification and classification of all Biosites. By way of Amendment C54 (2013), this study is now a reference document in the Manningham Planning Scheme.

Yarra Valley Backdrop Policy (1993)

The Yarra Valley Backdrop Policy was included in the former Doncaster and Templestowe Planning Scheme. The Policy aimed to protect areas along rivers from visual intrusion, encourage development in keeping with the river's character, protect vistas from the river and parklands and protect habitat. Importantly, it also aimed to protect and enhance 'a sense of remoteness' in the Yarra Valley. The Policy implemented the 1993 Middle Yarra Concept Plan.

A permit was required to construct a building with a wall over 8 metres or any other part over 12 metres. It has now been replaced by the ESO1: Yarra River Environs.



Manningham Planning Scheme: Policy & Controls

Municipal Strategic Statement

Manningham City Council’s MSS makes numerous references to the Yarra River Corridor and the Green Wedge as key focus areas within the municipality. They are highly valued as places of open space and recreation, for their cultural and heritage significance, as tourism attractors, and for their environment, landscapes and visual interest.

Clause 21.02 ‘Municipal profile’ refers to the Yarra River catchment as a major resource within the region. Clause 21.02-12 ‘The natural environment and biodiversity’ makes particular reference to the environmental and landscape significance of the Yarra River corridor and its desirability as a location for semi-rural living.

Clause 21.03 ‘Yarra River environs’ documents the Council’s commitment to protecting and managing the Yarra River and its environs. It recognises the need for future management of waterways within Manningham by strengthening biodiversity and ecological features.

Clause 21.05 ‘Residential’ recognises the need to site and design development near to, or visible from, the river corridor in a sensitive manner. Clause 21.06 ‘Low density’ recognises the importance of maintaining low density areas around the river corridor to protecting its landscape and environment.

Clause 21.07 ‘Green wedge and Yarra River corridor’ provides key strategic directions to protect the river’s landscape and environment. It identifies one of the key challenges for future management is in balancing the competing interests between the use of land for rural living, agricultural pursuits and biodiversity protection.

Clause 21.07 also lists a number of influences relating to the future use and development along the river corridor including housing, subdivision, built form and landscape character, environmental issues and economic development. Objectives and strategies for the Yarra River Corridor in relation to these issues include:

- Ensure housing development along the Yarra River corridor responds appropriately to the existing social, cultural and environmental conditions
- Ensure siting and design of housing and development responds to site constraints including slope, waterways and wildfire risk and minimises impacts on environmental features
- Discourage fragmentation of land along the River corridor
- Protect and enhance native vegetation, wetland, stream and waterway environments to conserve soils, retain wildlife habitat and create natural corridors for wildlife movement.

In addition to these strategies, Clause 21.07 also includes an extensive list of reference documents which are incorporated into the Scheme and provide further strategic directions for the management of the river environment:

- Development Guide for Areas of Environmental and Landscape Significance (2011)
- Green Wedge Action Plan 2020 (2011)
- Wildlife Movement and Habitat Needs in Manningham (2009)
- Manningham Green Wedge Strategy (2004)
- Manningham (Biosites) Sites of Biological Significance Review (2004)
- The Middle Yarra Concept Plan - Burke Road to Watsons Creek (1993).

Clause 21.12 ‘Infrastructure’ includes objectives and strategies to maintain flood flow of the Yarra and its tributaries and manage the urban stormwater system.

Clause 21.13 ‘Open space and tourism’ refers to the linked open spaces and shared trails along the river and their recreational and tourism value.

Local Planning Policy

The local planning policies set out a number of objectives for the protection and management of native vegetation and cultural heritage that relate to the Yarra River corridor.

The local planning policies reinforce the strategies and objectives of the MSS which aim to protect, conserve and enhance the biodiversity values of the municipality, including native and indigenous species of flora and fauna and the habitats in which they are located.

The Clause 22.03 Cultural Heritage Policy includes policy objectives to manage and protect places of aesthetic, historical, scientific, architectural and social significance. The policy assists in the administration of the Heritage Overlay, which applies to numerous sites along the river corridor.

Clause 22.07 Outdoor advertising signs policy includes direction for the design and siting of signage near to the river environment.

Clause 22.15 Dwellings in the General Residential Zone, Schedule 1, implements neighbourhood character objectives which include the protection and enhancement of the tree canopy.

Zones

Zones that apply to the Study area within Manningham City Council are described below. A zoning map is provided in *Appendix B: Planning Scheme Maps*.

Public Park and Recreation Zone (PPRZ)

The PPRZ applies to large areas of open space along the river corridor, including Bulleen Park, Banksia Park, Birrarung Park, Westerfolds Park and the golf courses. Together with land included in the PCRZ, the PPRZ provides an extensive buffer of highly vegetated parkland along the river (at varying widths). There are no specific siting or design requirements in this zone.

Public Conservation and Resource Zone (PCRZ)

The PCRZ applies to large areas of parkland along the river within Templestowe and Warrandyte, including Yarra Valley Parklands, Tikalara Park, and the Warrandyte State Park. The PCRZ is interspersed with land included in the RCZ which complements the rural and bushy character of these open spaces. There are no specific siting or design requirements in this zone.

Rural Conservation Zone (RCZ)

The RCZ applies to parts of Templestowe and large areas of Warrandyte. A number of schedules apply to land zoned RCZ throughout the municipality.

RCZ1 applies to parts of Templestowe and Warrandyte near to the river. It aims to conserve land to ensure that the use and development is compatible with adjoining land zoned PPRZ and PCRZ. In particular, land management policies are targeted at preserving native flora and fauna within open space that adjoins the Yarra River. It sets a minimum subdivision area of 40ha.

RCZ3 applies to parts of Templestowe and Warrandyte further afield from the river, as well as areas in Warrandyte near the river. RCZ3 also aims at protecting existing landscape character and quality by enhancing sustainable management policies. It sets a minimum subdivision area of 8ha.

Broad decision guidelines require consideration of environmental and landscape values and the impact of new development upon vistas.

Special Use Zone (SUZ)

The SUZ is applied to the site of the Yarra Valley Country Club in Bulleen. Specifically the schedule to the zone sets aside this land for private education centres, golf courses and sports grounds, in keeping with the amenity and character of the surrounding neighbourhood.

Neighbourhood Residential Zone (NRZ)

The NRZ is applied to residential areas in Templestowe and Warrandyte adjoining the river (Schedule 1 Residential areas with predominant landscape features or lower housing densities).

A maximum of two dwellings per lot may be constructed and a mandatory height limit of 8m (9m on a sloping site) applies. The schedule to the NRZ implements a permit requirement for dwellings on a lot less than 500m².

General Residential Zone (GRZ)

Other residential land in the study area, within Bulleen and Templestowe, is mostly zoned GRZ, with three schedules applied.

GRZ1 (Residential areas removed from activity centres and main roads) requires a permit for a single dwelling on a lot greater than 500m², implements minimum private open space requirements and sets a mandatory height limit of 9m (10m on a sloping site). As noted, Local Policy at Clause 22.15 implements landscaping requirements for medium density development.

GRZ2 (Residential areas surrounding activity centres and along main roads, subprecincts A & B) and GRZ3 (Post 1975 residential areas) both require a permit for a single dwelling on a lot greater than 500m² and apply the discretionary height limits of ResCode. Clause 21.05 of the MSS (Residential) states that GRZ2 areas are suited for a greater level of growth and change, while the GRZ3 areas will support an incremental level of change.

Residential Growth Zone (RGZ)

RGZ2 (Residential areas along main roads, precinct 2) is applied to land west of Bulleen Road and along Manningham Road. The discretionary height limit of 13.5m applies. Clause 21.05 of the MSS (Residential) envisages a substantial level of change in this zone with these areas being a focus for higher density developments.

Low Density Residential Zone (LDRZ)

The LDRZ is applied to land in Templestowe and Warrandyte, which interfaces with the riverside parkland and conservation areas. The schedule to the zone sets the minimum lot size at 0.4ha. Decision guidelines for subdivision make reference to landscape values, but there are no specific requirements for building heights, setbacks or site coverage.

Urban Floodway Zone (UFZ)

Three discreet areas of UFZ are situated along the western boundary of the municipality in Bulleen, within the parkland areas along the river. They include the Carey Grammar sports ground, Bulleen Golf Driving Range and the Veneto Club. There is also one small area of UFZ in Warrandyte within riverside parkland west of Longridge Farm.

Use and development of land is limited in this zone and comprehensive review of how it might be affected by flooding is required.

Industrial 1 Zone (IN1Z)

A small industrial precinct and a large individual site located near the river in Bulleen are included in the Industrial 1 Zone.

The IN1Z provides for a range of industrial and commercial uses, which have been recently expanded with the zone reform program to include unlimited office floorspace, small supermarkets and associated retail shops.

Commercial 1 Zone (C1Z)

The retail and commercial part of Warrandyte Township is included in the C1Z. The reformed C1Z allows a wide range of commercial and mixed use development, and many land uses no do not require a planning permit.

Overlays

Overlays that apply to the Study area within Manningham City Council are described below. A set of overlay maps are provided in *Appendix B: Planning Scheme Maps*.

ESO1: Yarra River Environs

The Environmental Significance Overlay Schedule 1 relates to the Yarra River Environs and applies to all areas specifically along the Yarra River. It includes land within the PCRZ and RCZ, and an area of Residential 1 land adjoining the river in Templestowe.

Permits are required for specified buildings, works and vegetation removal. There are a number of important environmental objectives which include:

- Protect areas along the Yarra River from any development that may damage the environmental features of the River
- Conserve water quality and capacity
- Protect vistas, sense of remoteness, indigenous vegetation and wildlife habitats throughout the corridor
- Protect the sensitive ecosystem and enhance the ecological features of the River corridor.

Decision guidelines relate to the height and character of new development and using vegetation to screen views of development from the river. Additionally, reference is made to the Middle Yarra Concept Plan - Burke Road to Watsons Creek (1993) with the strategic aim of encouraging development that is consistent with the recommendations highlighted in this report.

ESO2: Sites of Biological Significance

The Environmental Significance Overlay Schedule 2 identifies sites that have been assessed as the most intact and significant areas of indigenous vegetation within Manningham, in line with the Manningham City Council Sites of (Biological) Significance Review (2004).

This ESO is focused primarily around protecting vegetation and preventing the removal of native vegetation, however broadly it also recognises the Yarra River as a key habitat corridor for native and indigenous flora with the need to protect natural resources, waterways, ecological processes and ecosystem services. Permits are required for specified buildings, works and vegetation removal.

Decision guidelines relate to the character of new development and protection of vegetation.

ESO3: Buffer Conservation Area Supporting Sites of Biological Significance

In accordance with the Manningham City Council Sites of (Biological) Significance Review (2004), the Environmental Significance Overlay Schedule 3 recognises the buffer habitat and buffer conservation areas which support sites of biological significance.

In particular, its purpose is to ensure development occurs outside appropriate buffer distances from key natural and ecological features including waterways. Permits are required for specified buildings and works, including buildings over 8m, and for removal of native vegetation.

ESO4: Sites of Biological Significance and Buffer Conservation Areas In Low Density Residential Areas

Similarly to ESO3, the Environmental Significance Overlay Schedule 4 relates to preserving the buffer areas of sites with ecological value and significance in low density residential areas. It emphasises the need for appropriate management of environmental and landscape values of areas in which the the built form should seek to be subordinate to the landscape.

It further recognises the need to maintain the ‘treed’ characteristic of residential areas, whilst also softening the edge of developments by providing shrub cover and canopy tress along the boundaries. Permits are required for specified buildings, works and vegetation removal.

ESO5: Environmentally Significant Urban Areas

The Environmental Significance Overlay 5 is applied to residential areas in Warrandyte. It aims to protect and conserve core and buffer conservation areas that are located within residential zones. It also aims to ensure that development responds to the area’s environmental and landscape characteristics, including topography and waterways. Specifically, it includes an objective to minimise the visual impacts of development on the Yarra River, its banks and nearby parkland. Permits are required for specified buildings, works and vegetation removal.

SLO1: Significant Low Density Residential Landscape Areas

The Significant Landscape Overlay Schedule 1 protects selected low density areas identified as having particular visual, landscape and environmental values. The SLO1 encourages development that is in keeping with the vegetated character of the area, in addition to being sympathetic with the existing built form.

Development must respond to the area’s landscape and environmental characteristics, which include topography, vegetation and waterways, however, it does not make specific mention of the Yarra River. Permits are required for specified buildings, works and vegetation removal.

SLO3: The Domain Significant Landscape Area

The Significant Landscape Overlay Schedule 3 applies to a small residential area within a unique natural setting, which it seeks to protect and maintain. Permits are required for specified buildings, works and vegetation removal, including a building over 8m.

SLO5: Watercourse Areas

The Significant Landscape Overlay Schedule 5 applies to the river and creek areas of Manningham. It seeks to protect the visual, landscape, environmental and heritage values and in particular recognise the unique landscape qualities these areas bring to the municipality. It identifies watercourse areas as significant due to their topography, site layout, vegetation cover and botanical significance in addition to the natural character and panoramic views, which provide a break between the natural and built environments.

The objective of the SLO5 is to ensure that the visual impacts of development are minimised by only allowing that development is in keeping with the character of the surrounding area. Permits are required for specified buildings, works and vegetation removal.

SLO6: Low Density Residential Significant Pine and Cypress Tree Theme Areas

The Significant Landscape Overlay Schedule 6 applies to selected residential areas, small parts of which are located within the broader Study area in Templestowe. It seeks to protect historic stands of monterey pine and cypress trees which were planted as windbreaks around original farm properties. These trees have a strong cultural connection to the area, and form a distinctive part of its landscape character.

The objectives of SLO6 include ensuring development responds to the area’s built form, landscape and environmental characteristics, including vegetation, topography, waterways and cultural heritage elements. Permits are required for specified buildings, works and vegetation removal.

VPO2: Templestowe Vegetation Protection Area and VPO5: Significant Exotic, Native and Indigenous Vegetation

These two Vegetation Protection Overlays include discreet areas within the wider river setting that contain significant vegetation. The purpose of the VPOs is to retain this vegetation and landscape quality. Permit requirements relate to exotic and native vegetation removal.

DDO3: Warrandyte Environmental Residential Area

The objective of DDO3 is to maintain and enhance the unique bushland and low-density character of the residential areas of Warrandyte, which lie near or immediately adjacent to the river.

Objectives focus on maintaining the vegetated dominated features, vistas and bushland character. Permit requirements apply to buildings, works, fences and subdivision. There are particular guidelines in relation to responding to topography.

DDO3 specifies a minimum lot size of 750m² and allows only one dwelling per site. A permit is not required to construct a building under 8m, with a site coverage of less than 25% and a site permeability of 50%, among other conditions. For proposals that do require a permit, there are no minimum standards in relation to building height, site coverage, permeability or setbacks. There are no design objectives or requirements specific to the Yarra River.

DDO3 adjoins the Heritage Overlay precinct of the Warrandyte Township's commercial areas.

DDO4: Templestowe Environmental Residential Area

DDO4 applies to a neighbourhood in Templestowe which adjoins the river. It aims to maintain the bushland qualities of the area by ensuring that development is subordinate to existing environmental features. Permit requirements apply to buildings, works, fences and subdivision. A minimum lot size of 650m² and an allowance of only one dwelling per lot apply.

A permit is not required to construct a building under 8m, with a site coverage of less than 35% and a site permeability of 50%, among other conditions. For proposals that do require a permit, there are no minimum standards in relation to building height, site coverage, permeability or setbacks. There are no design objectives or requirements specific to the Yarra River.

DDO8-1: Residential Areas Surrounding Activity Centres And Along Main Roads

DDO8 aims to increase residential densities and provide a range of housing types around activity centres and along main roads. It encourages a high standard of design outcomes which respond sensitively to their context, while providing an increase in development opportunity.

DDO8-1 applies to land zoned Residential Growth Zone Schedule 2 (RGZ2) on the west side of Bulleen Road immediately adjacent to land zoned Urban Floodway Zone.

DDO8-1 specifies a range of discretionary heights: for lot sizes greater than 1,800m² a maximum of 11m applies; for lots less than 1,800m² a maximum of 9m applies (10m on a sloping site).

Land Subject to Inundation Overlay

The LSIO is applied along the length of the Yarra River within Manningham. A permit is required for specified buildings and works and for subdivision. No building height, setbacks or site coverage requirements are stipulated.

Heritage Overlay

There are a number of significant sites within the City of Manningham along the Yarra River that have a Heritage Overlay. These vary according to feature, with some sites comprising of environmental features such as swamps or trees and others physical buildings. Other significant sites include Bolin Swamp (HO30), Petty & Austins Orchards (HO114) and a number of archaeological sites (covered by HO1 and HO2).

The commercial area of Warrandyte is included within a precinct overlay (HO191) and also includes many site specific overlays. The 'Warrandyte Township Heritage Guidelines' are an incorporated document applied to assess planning permit applications within the Warrandyte Township Heritage Precinct.

Nillumbik Shire Council: Key Studies & Reports

Nillumbik Green Wedge Management Plan (2011)

Adopted by Council in 2010, the purpose of The Plan is to secure the sustainable future management of the Nillumbik Green Wedge. It identifies special values of the Green Wedge and sets objectives for the protection of key environmental features including a vision for the preferred future land use. The Plan also outlines a number of measures including changes to local planning policy, land use frameworks and education programs, advocating for the increased cooperation and integration with other agencies.

The Plan was prepared with the guidance of the Department of Sustainability and Environment’s practice note ‘Preparing a Green Wedge Management Plan’ (August 2005).

Shire of Nillumbik Neighbourhood Character Study (2000) and Residential Design Guidelines (2001, amended 2003)

The Neighbourhood Character Study was completed in 2000 and introduced to the planning scheme through the Local Planning Policy for Neighbourhood Character at Clause 22.

The Neighbourhood Character Study documents the physical features of the Shire’s residential areas and describes the preferred neighbourhood character for each precinct. Parts of the Bush Precinct are located alongside or near the Yarra River. Design guidelines for this area include how built form should respond to the riverside environment. Significant Landscape Overlays (Schedules 2 and 3) have been introduced to implement these design requirements.

Shire of Nillumbik Landscape Character Assessment (2009)

The Landscape Character Assessment was undertaken to evaluate the role and character of the Green Wedge, or non-urban, areas of the Shire. It provides guidance in relation to the design, siting and style of new development so that the existing character and visual amenity of the Green Wedge is preserved and strengthened.

The broader Yarra River corridor is noted as a highly valued landscape in the Shire, due to its high ecological, scenic and tourism value. It is included within the ‘River Interface’ character area, for which a preferred character statement and design guidelines have been prepared.

Streamside Environment Policy (1997)

This policy was formerly included in the Nillumbik Planning Scheme. It broadly aimed at protecting areas along watercourses from development that may impact on the visual, conservation, ecological and recreational capacities of the natural environment. It included requirements in relation to subdivision, building siting and design and vegetation removal. It has since been replaced by the provisions of ESO2 and ESO4.



Nillumbik Planning Scheme: Policy & Controls

Municipal Strategic Statement

Nillumbik Shire Council recognises through its MSS the important role the Council plays in the region’s biodiversity. It recognises that there are a number of key environmental assets throughout the municipality including the Yarra River system, which provide for social, recreational and cultural pursuits. It also identifies an ongoing commitment to regional objectives for integrated catchment management, including direction by the Yarra Catchment Action Plan published by Yarra Care (1996).

Clause 21.02 ‘Municipal overview & regional context’ and Clause 21.03 ‘Municipal profile & key influences’ refer to the importance of the river to the geographic, the environmental, historic conservation and landscape context of the Shire of Nillumbik.

Clause 21.03-3 ‘Environment, conservation and landscape’ notes the Yarra River corridor and its tributaries as sites of particular environmental, heritage, recreational and tourism value. It recognises that the water quality of waterways within the Shire is generally poor and in decline, due to development influences which have impacted on their habitat and general health. This includes unsustainable land management practices, excessive vegetation clearance and poor management of storm water in urban areas. It also identifies issues of flooding as an important strategic consideration, particularly along the Yarra River from Kangaroo Ground to Eltham.

Clause 21.03-5 ‘Infrastructure’ notes the significance of the river corridor as a major open space network.

The key strategic goals and the vision for the Shire are outlined in Clause 21.04 ‘Vision – strategic framework’, and can be summarised as follows:

- Retaining and enhancing networks of habitat links along the waterways
- Retain natural and cultural heritage
- Preserve the natural environment and the rural characteristic which contributes to the identity of the Shire
- Enhance the aesthetic qualities of the urban and rural environment, responding appropriately to existing land form, landscapes and vegetation.

In addition, the MSS makes reference to the following relevant documents:

- Middle Yarra Concept Plan, Burke Road to Watsons Creek (1991)
- Yarra Catchment Action Plan (1999).

Local Planning Policy

The local planning polices that are relevant to the Yarra River corridor recognise the unique characteristic of of the landscape, and the picturesque views that can be experienced from the elevated ridgelines toward the river.

The MSS identified a number of issues associated with water management within the Shire which are addressed throughout the local planning policies, including:

- Clause 22.03 Residential Use and Development on Small Lots in Green Wedge Areas.
- Clause 22.05 Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Policy.
- Clause 22.12 Neighbourhood Character Policy.

General objectives evident in Local Policies include:

- Encouraging appropriate and respectful siting and design of dwellings in areas that may be impacted by erosion, flooding and environmental degradation.
- Maintaining a strong tree canopy and native planting across the municipality.
- Managing drainage and effluent with reference to the Nillumbik Siting and Design Guidelines for Environmentally Sensitive Areas.
- Ensuring new uses and developments do not detract from sites and features of Aboriginal cultural heritage including areas along the Yarra River.

Zones

Zones that apply to the Study area within Nillumbik Shire Council are described below. A zoning map is provided in *Appendix B: Planning Scheme Maps*.

Low Density Residential Zone (LDRZ)

Areas of LDRZ land are located along the Yarra River corridor itself or adjoining Conservation Areas at Eltham and North Warrandyte.

The Low Density Residential Zone (LDRZ) provides for residential use within a low density environment. The standard LDRZ provisions restrict land use to two dwellings per lot and provide a minimum subdivision area of 0.2 hectares (with connected reticulated sewerage) and 0.4 hectares (without). However, the Schedule to the LDRZ in Nillumbik applies a minimum lot size of 0.4ha. Decision guidelines include consideration of the protection of the natural environment and character of the area.

Rural Conservation Zone (RCZ)

A large segment of continuous RCZ is distributed throughout the Shire, intersecting at certain points along the rivers edge.

The RCZ includes broad decision guidelines requiring consideration of environmental and landscape values and the impact of new development upon vistas.

Most of the RCZ land within the study area is included in Schedule 3, which applies to land not directly abutting the river corridor. It specifies a minimum lot size of 8ha.

All land adjoining the river is included in Schedule 4 to the RCZ. This has a specific aim of conserving the rural character and the environmental and landscape values of the Yarra River. It applies a minimum lot size of 40ha.

General Residential Zone (GRZ) & Neighbourhood Residential Zone (NRZ)

Areas of GRZ (Schedule 1 General residential areas) and NRZ (Schedule 7 Nillumbik neighbourhood residential areas) stretch beyond the river environs through the suburbs of Eltham.

GRZ1 requires a permit for a single dwelling on a lot greater than 500m² and applies the discretionary height limit of ResCode (9m or 10m on a sloping site).

NRZ7 applies a maximum of two dwellings per lot and a mandatory height limit of 8m (9m on a sloping site) applies.

Public Conservation and Resource Zone (PCRZ)

The PCRZ covers a large portion of land along the Yarra River corridor, beginning in the most south-western point of the boundary, following the course of the River. The PCRZ provides an almost continual buffer of highly vegetated, undeveloped land long the river (at varying widths). It includes public reserves such as Sweeny Flats and the Warrandyte State Park. There are no specific siting or design requirements in this zone.

Public Park and Recreation Zone (PPRZ)

There is only one small section of PPRZ which directly interfaces with the Yarra River, at Leinster Farm, located in the south-western corner of the municipal boundary. There are no specific siting or design requirements in this zone.

Overlays

Overlays that apply to the Study area within Nillumbik Shire City Council are described below. A set of overlay maps are provided in *Appendix B: Planning Scheme Maps*.

ESO1: Sites of Faunal and Habitat Significance

Environmental Significance Overlay Schedule 1 identifies strategies and objectives for protecting sites of faunal and habitat significance. It is applied to numerous areas in the Shire, including river corridors. Within the Study area, it is applied along the broader river environment within Eltham and Warrandyte. Reference is made to Sites of Faunal and Habitat Significance in North East Melbourne (1997) as the guiding document for informing the strategic policy objectives.

Permit requirements relate to buildings, works, fences and vegetation removal and decision guidelines focus on the protection of vegetation in relation to faunal habitat. Decision guidelines relate to general consideration of native vegetation and habitat value. There are no detailed siting and design provisions.

ESO2: Yarra River Environs

The Environmental Significance Overlay Schedule 2 is applied to land immediately adjoining the Yarra River. In most locations it is applied to public land within the PCRZ, however several sites within the RCZ are also included in ESO2.

This ESO recognises the Yarra River and its environs as one of the most important natural assets of Melbourne and of significant landscape character within the Shire. It further identifies the role of the Yarra River in providing key views throughout the Shire, attracting residents and visitors.

The aims of ESO2 include protection of habitat corridors, enhancement of views to and from the river to minimise visual intrusion and retention of the sense of remoteness along the river corridor. Permit requirements relate to buildings, works, fences and vegetation removal. Decision guidelines include consideration of the environmental aspects of the river, waterway health and conservation, the landform of the riverbanks and the visual impact of new development. There are specific requirements relating to site coverage and excavation.

ESO4: Waterways

The Environmental Significance Overlay Schedule 4 relates to waterways throughout the Shire. Within the Study area it applies to land immediately adjoining Diamond Creek and Watsons Creek, which meet the Yarra in Eltham and Kangaroo Ground respectively. The objectives to be achieved are similar to those of ESO2 and include protection of habitat, water quality and views. Permit requirements relate to vegetation removal, buildings over 6 metres and specified types of fences.

SLO2: Bush and Semi-Bush Residential Areas

The Significant Landscape Overlay Schedule 2 is applied to parts of Eltham and North Warrandyte located within the Yarra River environs.

The SLO implements the Neighbourhood Character Study which aims to retain the distinctive ‘bushland setting’ or ‘bush garden character’ of these areas, as well as their environmental values. New housing must be sensitively sited and designed, and respond to the landscape and topographic character. Permits are required for specified buildings, works, vegetation removal and fencing.

SLO2 includes brief decision guidelines relating to the role of vegetation in contributing to the character of the area. There are no specified building heights, setbacks or site coverage requirements.

Land Subject to Inundation Overlay

The LSIO is applied along the length of the Yarra River within Manningham. A permit is required for specified buildings and works and for subdivision. No building height, setbacks or site coverage requirements are stipulated.

Heritage Overlay

There are a number of individual sites within the Heritage Overlay along the Yarra River.

VCAT & Planning Panel Decision Findings

Public Land Management

The extensive areas of public land and Crown land within the Study area are subject to individual public land management plans. These are administered by the relevant authority, which may include Melbourne Water, Parks Victoria or DSE.

In most instances, for development on public land which is consistent with the relevant management plan and the zone provisions, a permit is not required. Generally overlay controls are not applied to public land.

Given the sensitive nature of the public land of the river corridor, the issue of whether additional planning scheme controls apply to public land is an important consideration.

Key VCAT Cases & Planning Scheme Amendments

A number of decisions by the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) and Panels regarding planning scheme amendments have been considered in relation to the study. These cases will assist in understanding existing practices regarding the issues associated with development along rivers and aim to achieve best practice through learnings. The following VCAT cases and amendments have been identified as relevant:

- Stonnington Planning Scheme Amendment C155 which updates DDO3 which provides built form controls along the Yarra River
- Fisher Parade, Ascot Vale proposal fronting the Maribyrnong River
- Buckingham Drive, Heidelberg proposal adjacent to the Banyule Creek, near its confluence with the Yarra River
- Coppin Grove, Hawthorn proposal of residential dwellings fronting the Yarra River
- State & Boroondara Planning Scheme Amendment VC96 which provided State policy for river corridors and implemented interim ESO & DDO controls (with a mandatory height limit) along Boroondara’s section of the Yarra River
- Manningham Planning Scheme Amendment C54 which, among other changes, updated policy and controls protecting the environmental significance of the Yarra River
- Honeywell large scale, mixed use proposal on Victoria Street at a key site along the City of Yarra’s section of the Yarra River
- Yarra Street, Warrandyte proposal for advertising signage at a site fronting the Yarra River

While some of these decisions are concerned with the Maribyrnong River and other sections of the Yarra River and its tributaries, they are of relevance to the future management and

planning of the Middle Yarra River section.

Stonnington Amendment C155 (Underway)

Amendment C155 to the Stonnington Planning Scheme updates Stonnington DDO3 which applies along the Yarra River. While supporting the intent and scope of the revised DDO, the Panel did not support the full extent of the proposed mandatory height controls.

The Panel found that it is impossible to identify a maximum height for universal application where there are major variations in topography and viewpoints from site to site. This outcome demonstrates the challenges of setting specific development controls across a complex environment, such as the river corridor.

The Panel also concluded that the Melbourne High School site should be included in the DDO area. The Panel recognised that while the site is exempt from Planning Scheme control, it is appropriate for Council to provide guidance for development and seek to influence a site’s development. This outcome is of relevance to the many sites within public control across the Middle Yarra Study area.

Fisher Parade Proposal (2013)

This controversial VCAT case¹ related to Council’s failure to make a decision regarding a four storey building along the Maribyrnong River.

In this case, Melbourne Water raised concerns about the interface of the development to the river, acknowledging that the proposed 12m set back was not sufficient. They suggested that a 20m set back (at a minimum) from the river should be imposed to allow for riparian planting and allow access for the appropriate management of the waterway system.

Although the provisions of Clause 14.02 ‘Water’ specify a 30m vegetated buffer zone from waterways, Melbourne Water was willing to compromise with the provision of a 20m buffer.

VCAT believed that the 20m buffer was arbitrarily appointed and called for a redesign of the whole development to interface more appropriately with the river. It also highlighted that Clause 14.02 is not a planning scheme control, rather it sits within a State policy context.

VCAT suggested an alignment of the Planning Scheme with the Water Act (1989) to allow for more consistent decision outcomes. Additionally it called for a systematic process to notify referral authorities when there are cases involving developments

1 BMG Architects v Moonee Valley CC [25 September 2013], VCAT reference number P3563/2012

within proximity to a river bank. VCAT deemed the development inappropriate given its context and relationship to the river.

Buckingham Drive Proposal (2013)

Situated in close proximity to the heritage protected Banyule Flats with views to the Yarra River Corridor, this proposal involved the development and subdivision of three dwellings and removal of native vegetation. It was initially refused by Council and subsequently appealed at VCAT².

The site fronts Banyule Creek and is subject to a number of overlays including Banyule ESO4, SLO1 and HO13. Alongside the numerous statutory controls, the site is also constrained by its geographic and environmental context.

VCAT acknowledged that while the subject site was appropriate for more intensive development, it also presented a number of difficulties in regard to its physical and strategic context. Primarily it did not respond to its immediate surroundings especially in addressing the interface with the river corridor. Furthermore it had the potential for the development to be observed from long-range views, given its prominent location on the top of an escarpment.

Strategic considerations were balanced between development opportunities and environmental values. It was ruled that the proposed development was not located within an area that supported urban consolidation. Instead a restrained approach was required to ensure that core environmental values are maximised. VCAT contended that a better outcome would involve a reduced set back from the escarpment boundary and suitable landscaping to reduce visual bulk. On this basis, the decision of the Council was upheld and no permit was granted.

Coppin Grove Proposal & Amendment VC96 (2013)

In 2013, a VCAT case³ was held regarding a proposal for three dwellings fronting the Yarra River in the backyard of 12 Coppin Grove, Hawthorn.

During the VCAT hearing, Amendment VC96 was gazetted to introduce State policy on River Corridors, at Clause 11.04-8. This clause aims to ‘protect and enhance the significant river corridors of Metropolitan Melbourne’. It also introduced mandatory controls into the Boroondara Planning Scheme. These changes were based on the ‘*Review of Policy and Controls for the Yarra River Corridor*’ report by DSE (2005), and

2 Banyule Management Pty Ltd v Banyule CC [23 September 2013], VCAT reference number P3243/2012

3 Watkins v Boroondara CC (includes Summary)(Red Dot) [2013] VCAT 824 (10 May 2013), VCAT reference number P1904/2012

reflected the additional work undertaken by DPCD in 2010. The 2005 DSE report is now a State level reference document.

VC96 introduced a DDO and an amended ESO as interim provisions to the Boroondara Planning Scheme. The DDO refers to the objectives and guidelines of ESO1. It includes a 9 metre height permit trigger and a mandatory height control of 9 metres in most instances, or up to 12 metres where Melbourne Water requires additional elevation for floodway management purposes. The ESO provides detailed policy for the corridor.

In response to Amendment VC96, revised plans were prepared, reducing the number of proposed dwellings to two and reducing the height to comply with the new DDO height control of 9 metres.

However, the Tribunal refused the revised proposal, concluding that the scale, mass and appearance of the revised proposal was visually intrusive rather than subordinate to landscaping and the extent of earthworks excessive, and that it was not consistent with the new State policy.

The Tribunal found that the interim DDO and ESO controls were not clearly worded and did not adequately reflect the intention of their objectives, nor the State policy.

Manningham Amendment C54 (2013)

Amendment C54 to the Manningham Planning Scheme implemented the findings and recommendations from a number of studies and strategies endorsed by Council included them in the Planning Scheme as reference documents. These included the Manningham Biosites: Sites of (Biological) Significance Review 2004, Wildlife Movement and Habitat Needs 2009, Locally Threatened Plants in Manningham 2010 and the Manningham Monterey Pine and Cypress Tree Assessment 2003.

The key purpose of this amendment was to rationalise the number of overlays applying to individual properties to ensure that planning provisions provide a greater certainty and more consistent decision making outcomes. This included deleting VPOs and SLOs for replacement with new and introduced ESOs, SLOs and DDOs along and in close proximity to the Yarra River. Other relevant changes included:

- Clause 22.02 Indigenous Flora & Fauna Policy replaced by Native Vegetation Policy and adapted State policy of achieving native vegetation net gain to local circumstances.
- Amended ESO1 Yarra River Environs to include a list of weed species exempt from permit requirements.
- New ESO2 Sites of Biological Significance to apply to core conservation areas which applies along a large section of the Yarra River.

VCAT & Planning Panel Decision Findings cont...

- New ESO3 to apply to buffer conservation areas which are located within the Yarra River corridor.
- Amended DDO3 Warrandyte Environmental Residential Area, which is in close proximity to the Yarra River, to include buildings and works requirements previously included in the now deleted SLO3.
- Amended Schedule to Clause 52.17 to exempt particular vegetation species from permit requirements.

The panel was complimentary in acknowledging Council’s approach to the protection and conservation of biodiversity within the municipality and greatly supported the amendment.

Honeywell Proposal (2010)

In 2010, a VCAT case⁴ was held in response to opposition regarding Council’s decision to approve a large scale, mixed use development consisting of three towers ranging from nine to eleven storeys adjacent to the Yarra River. The site was subject to interim DDO4 of the Yarra Planning Scheme which introduced discretionary height limits.

The Tribunal found this DDO, which expired in 2011, to be unclear and ineffective. The Tribunal approved the proposal, which breached the preferred maximum height limits, as it was considered to be consistent with State and local policy.

The Tribunal commented that the DDO was not clearly worded and that the built form parameters specified by its controls did not reflect its objectives.

Yarra Street Proposal (2005)

This VCAT case⁵ relates to Council’s refusal to grant a permit for retrospective approval of five advertising signs for a café/ art gallery. The site backs onto the Yarra River with a 10m slope from Yarra Street down to the river. The site is affected by an HO and an ESO and land to the north of the site falls within the PCRZ.

Council ruled that the proposed number of signs was excessive and not in keeping with the high amenity value of the surrounding area. It also noted the signs did not respect the heritage or natural environment and adversely affected the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

VCAT also deemed the five signs to be excessive, however granted permission for two signs on the Yarra Street frontage. The other existing signs facing the Yarra River were required to be removed.

4 Colquhoun & Ors v Yarra CC [2010] VCAT 1710, VCAT reference numbers P1204/2010, P1340/2010, P1345/2010

5 Turnbull v City of Manningham [21 April 2005], VCAT reference P3614/2004

Research-Warrandyte Road Proposal (2004)

This VCAT case involved the review of three separate applications for:

- The construction of a new access way off Research-Warrandyte Road to service properties at 246-252 Research-Warrandyte Road
- Removal of two native trees and minor alterations and extensions to an existing dwelling at 248 Research-Warrandyte Road
- Subdivision / realignment of two existing lots where an existing dwelling slightly straddles an adjoining lot boundary (248-250 Research-Warrandyte Road)

The key issue that relates to the river corridor considered by the Tribunal was whether the additions and alterations to the existing dwelling adversely impact on the vegetation around the dwelling and the visual outlook of the Yarra River Valley escarpment. It was found that the proposed additions would not be clearly visible from the Research-Warrandyte road near the site and when viewed from the other side of the Yarra River Valley would be acceptable in the context of other dwellings nestled within the existing vegetation. The Tribunal noted that future development of adjoining lots will need to consider the visual impact along the escarpment quite carefully.

Osborne Road Proposal (2003 & 2004)

38 Osborne Road, Warrandyte, a large site fronting the Yarra River, has been subject to two separate VCAT cases⁶⁷ which both sought to subdivide the site in two. The site which is 8,136sqm is zoned Low Density Residential (for the majority of the site) with a minimum 0.4ha subdivision control.

In the first case, the appeal was called to review Council’s decision to refuse the proposal of a two lot subdivision. The Tribunal recognised that this subdivision control leads to an expectation that the site can be subdivided into two 0.4ha lots and that the construction of a dwelling in the street with ancillary clearance of vegetation inevitably involves a fair loss of vegetation as has occurred throughout the street. The proposal was found to have an unacceptable loss of native vegetation. The Tribunal concluded that the proposed subdivision alignment and location of the house / domestic / effluent zones were not sympathetic enough to the objectives of significant landscape and environmental qualities, particularly in relation to the protection of native vegetation.

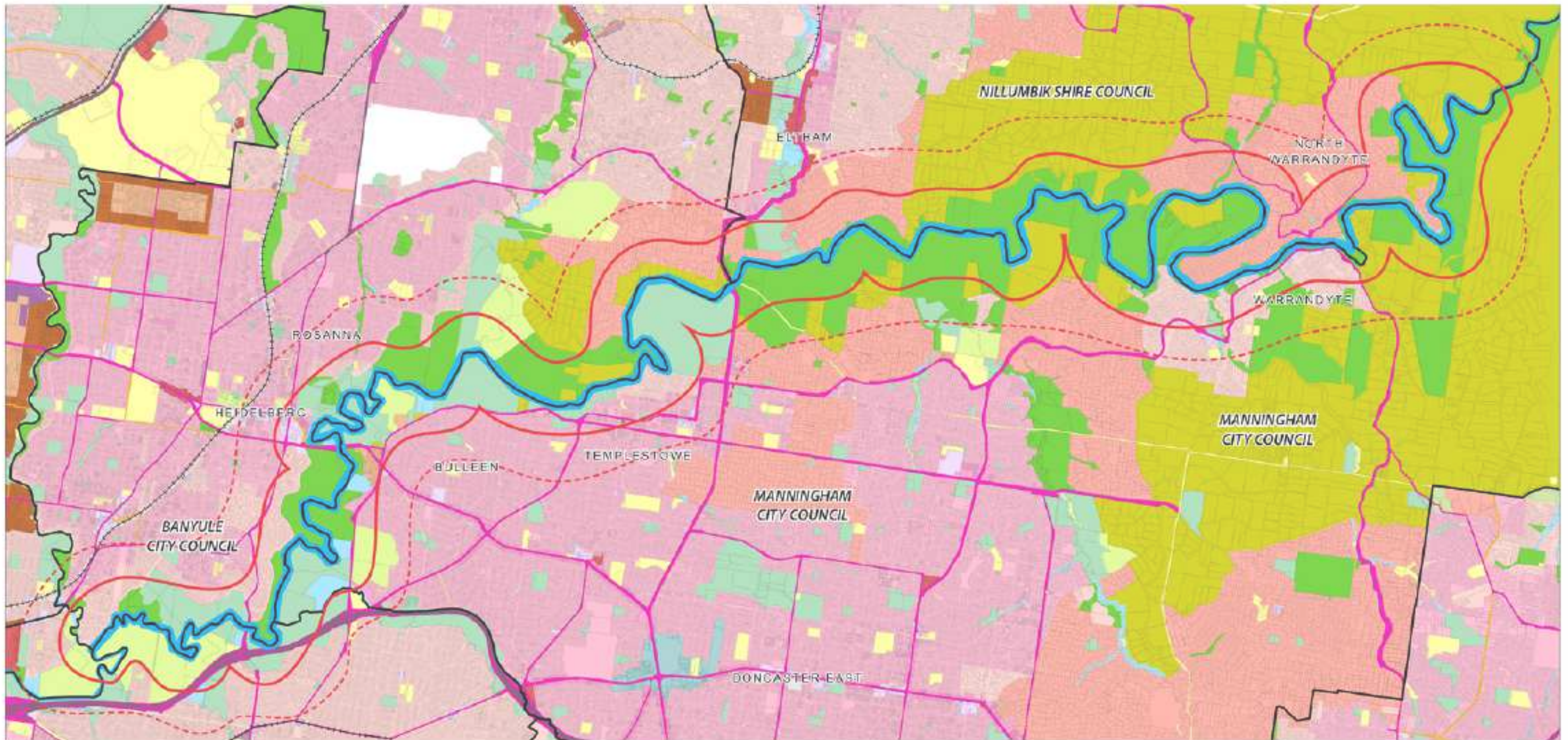
In the second case, a permit for a two lot subdivision with two double storey dwellings and vegetation removal was approved

6 Waldman v Nillumbik SC [2004] VCAT 2422, VCAT reference P1302/2004

7 Murphy & Assoc v Nillumbik SC [2003] VCAT 814, VCAT reference P2392/2002

by the Tribunal with a lengthy set of conditions, overturning Council’s refusal. The Tribunal noted the precarious nature of balancing policy in coming to this decision: taking into consideration significant flora and fauna habitat link of the land, its zoning for residential purposes, the conflict of vegetation retention needed against the need to secure fire safety by fuel reduction. The proposal was considered a vast improvement from the first case and to have taken heed to that decision. It has reduced and minimise the loss of vegetation with the dwellings, both modest in footprint, located on the most disturbed area of the site. It also demonstrated the viability of the Net Gain principle and included a land management plan and a section 173 agreement.

Appendix B: Planning Scheme Maps



LEGEND

- Local Government Boundaries
- ~ Yarra River
- ~ Study Area (Primary Focus)
- ~ Study Area (Broader Context)

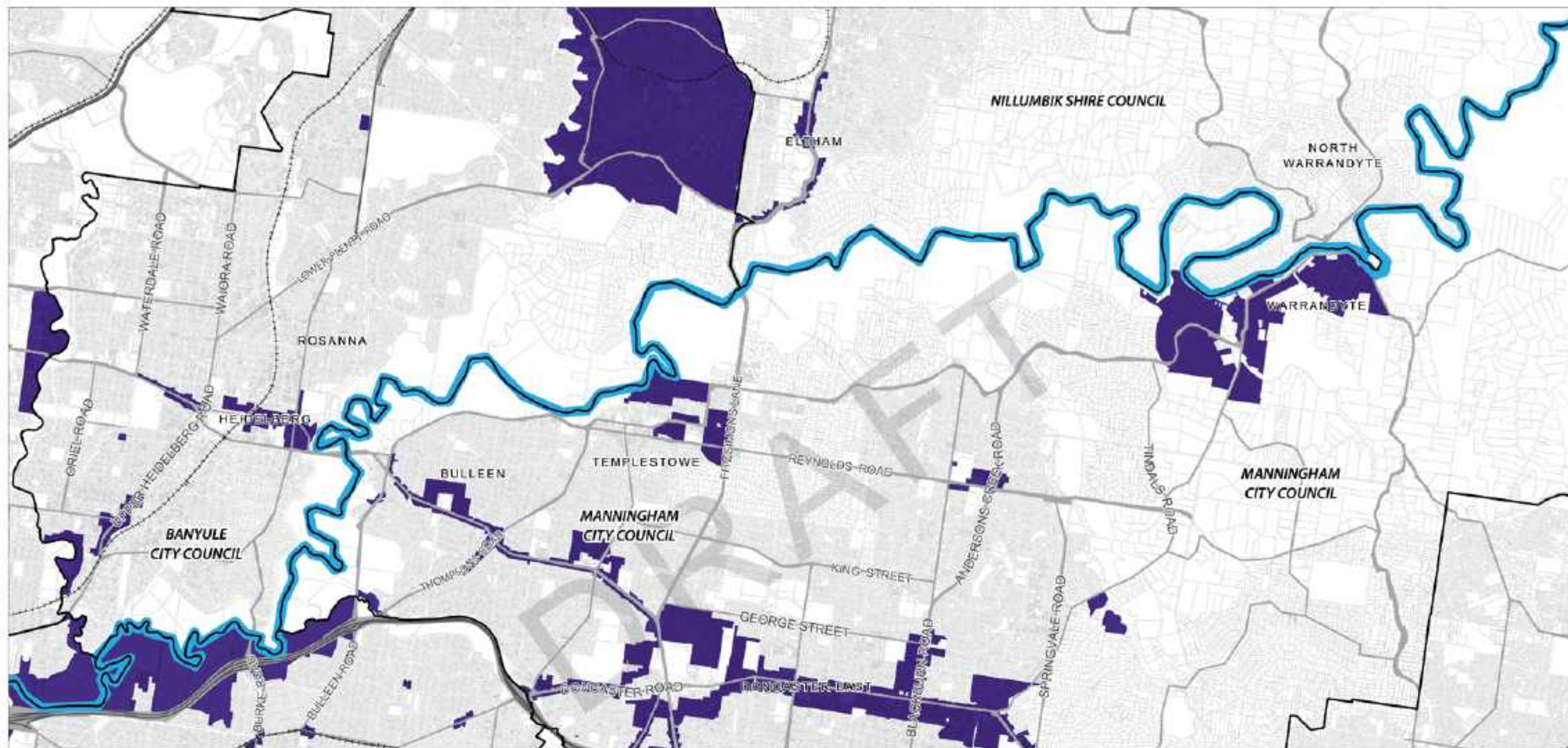
Zones

- | | | | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------|
| General Residential Zone | Rural Conservation Zone | Industrial 1 Zone | Road Zone Category 1 |
| Neighbourhood Residential Zone | Public Conservation and Resource Zone | Industrial 3 Zone | Road Zone Category 2 |
| Residential Growth Zone | Public Park and Recreation Zone | Commercial 1 Zone | Public Use Zone - Transport |
| Low Density Residential Zone | Special Use Zone | Commercial 2 Zone | Commonwealth Land |
| Rural Living Zone | Public Use Zone | Mixed Use Zone | |
| | Urban Floodway Zone | | |

MIDDLE YARRA RIVER CORRIDOR STUDY

EXISTING ZONES



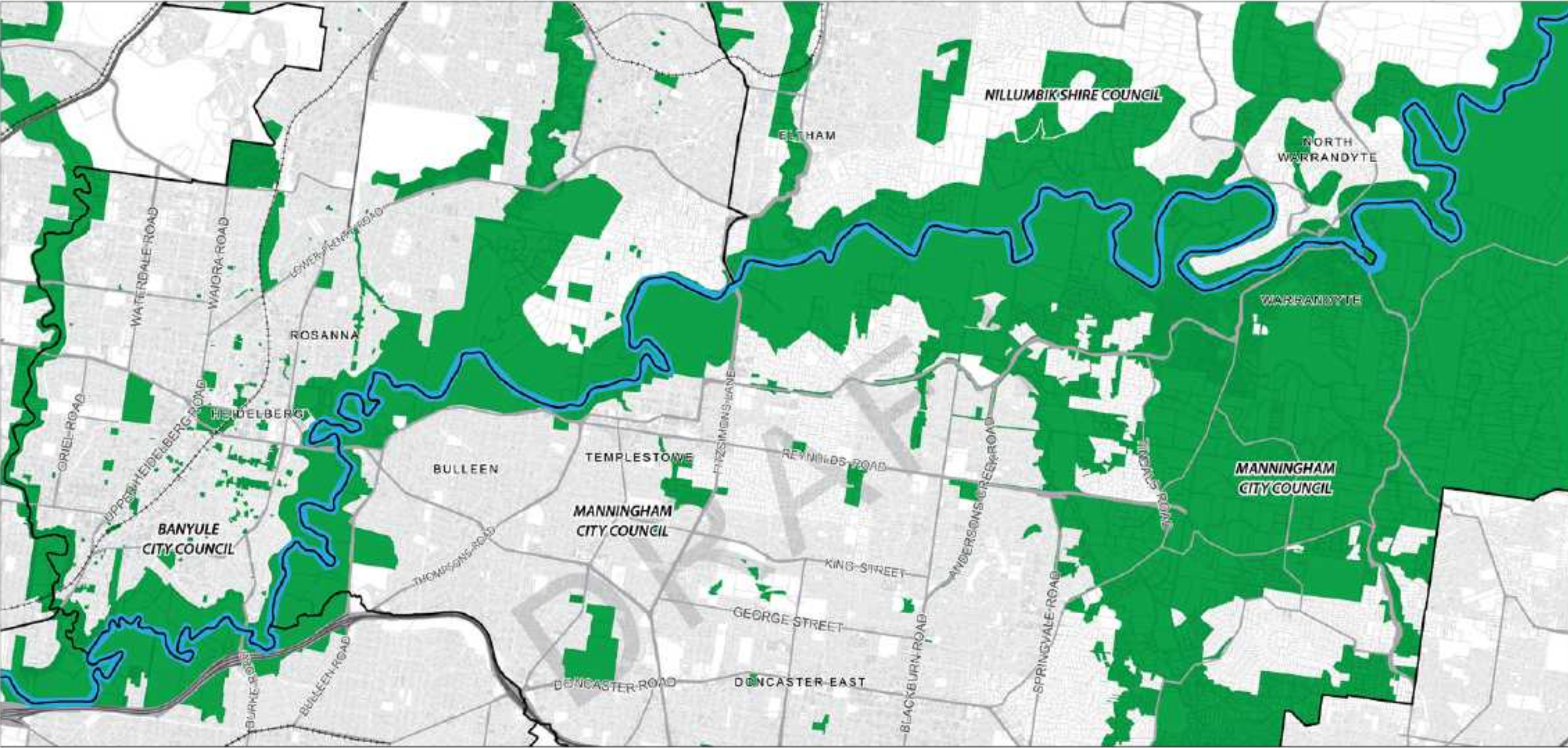


LEGEND

- Local Government Boundaries
- Yarra River
- Design and Development Overlay (DDO)

MIDDLE YARRA RIVER CORRIDOR STUDY DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT OVERLAY



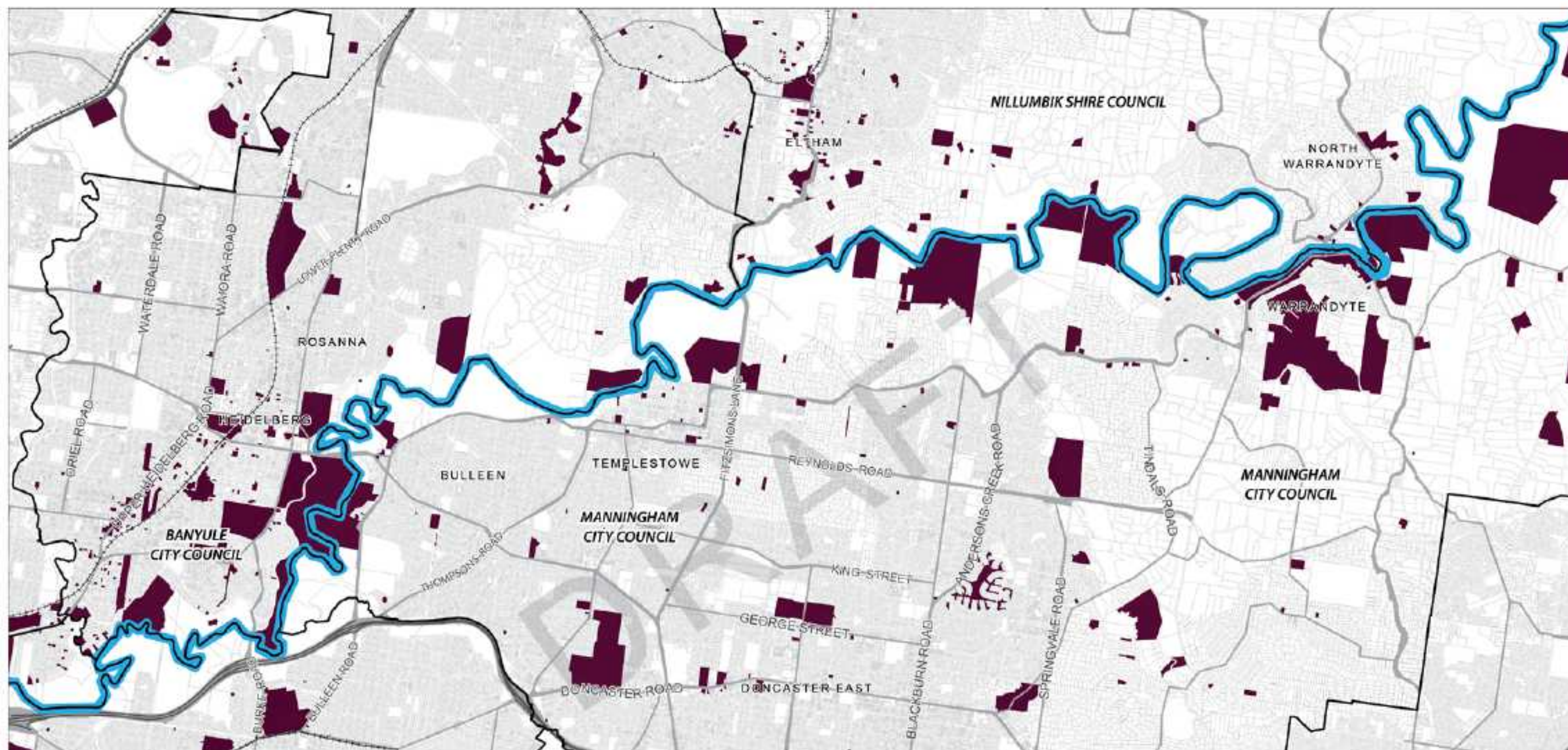


LEGEND

- Local Government Boundaries
- Yarra River
- Environmental Significance Overlay (ESO)

MIDDLE YARRA RIVER CORRIDOR STUDY
ENVIRONMENTAL SIGNIFICANCE OVERLAY





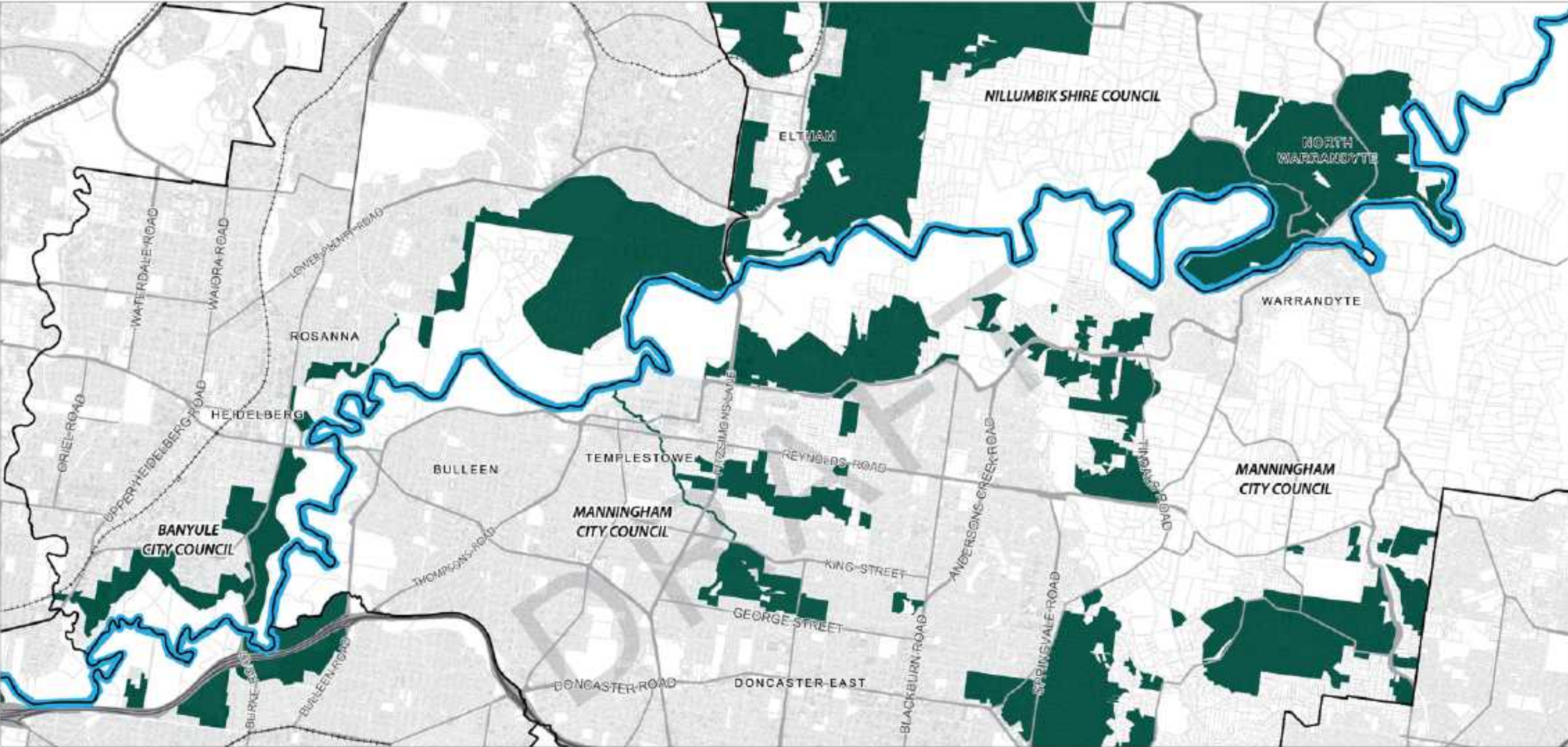
LEGEND

- Local Government Boundaries
- Yarra River
- Heritage Overlay (HO)

MIDDLE YARRA RIVER CORRIDOR STUDY

HERITAGE OVERLAY



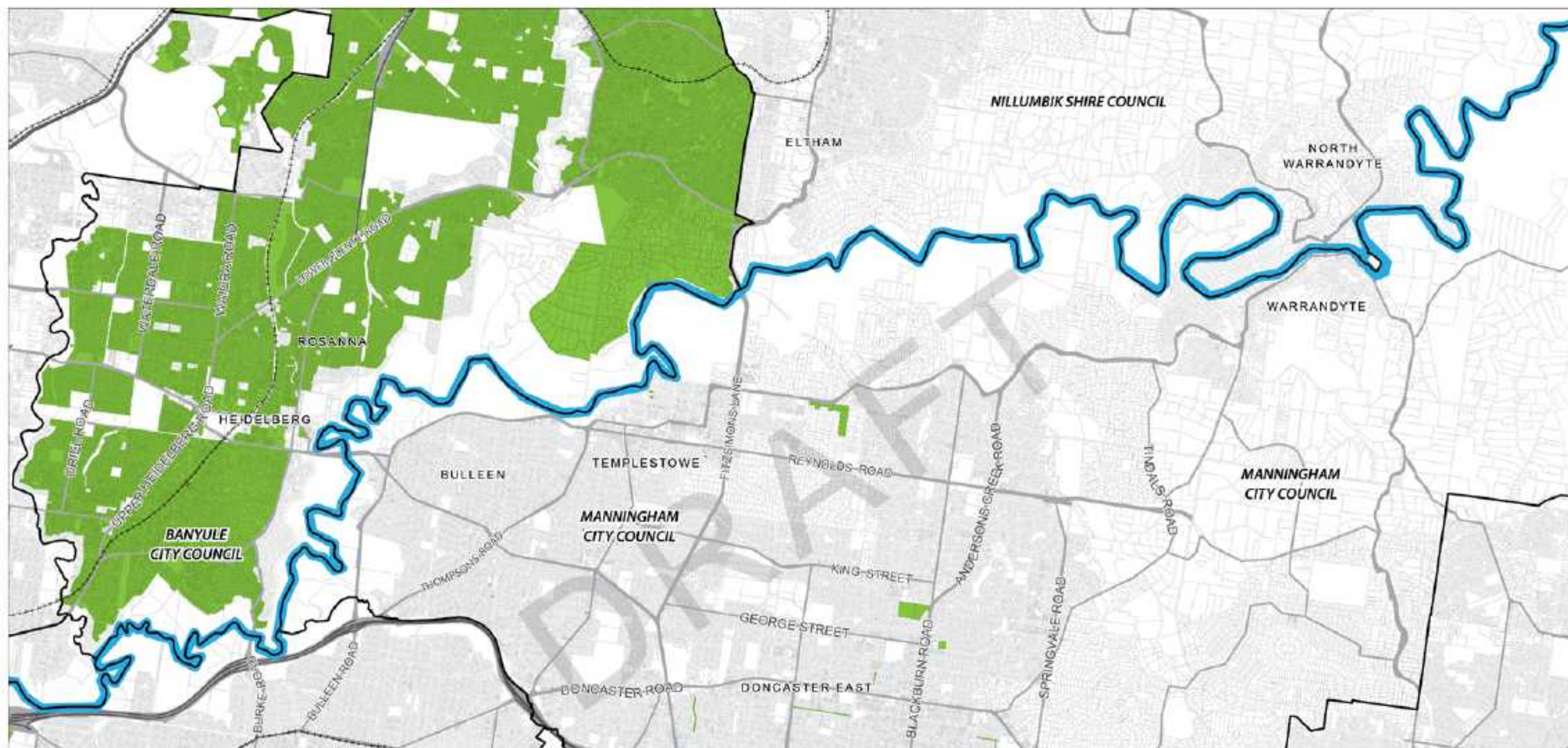


LEGEND


- Local Government Boundaries
- Yarra River
- Significant Landscape Overlay (SLO)

MIDDLE YARRA RIVER CORRIDOR STUDY
SIGNIFICANT LANDSCAPE OVERLAY





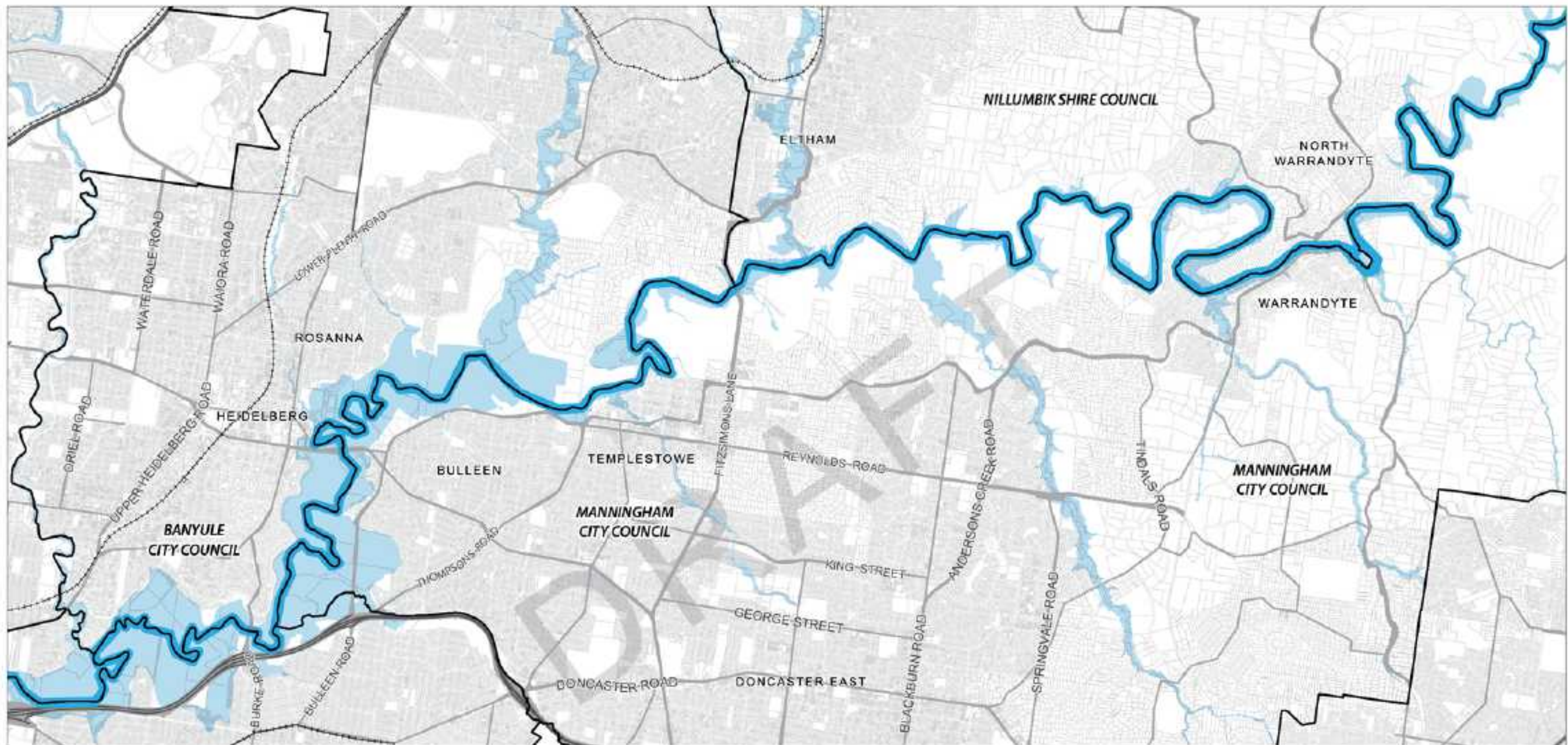
LEGEND

-  Local Government Boundaries
-  Yarra River
-  Vegetation Protection Overlay (VPO)




MIDDLE YARRA RIVER CORRIDOR STUDY

VEGETATION PROTECTION OVERLAY





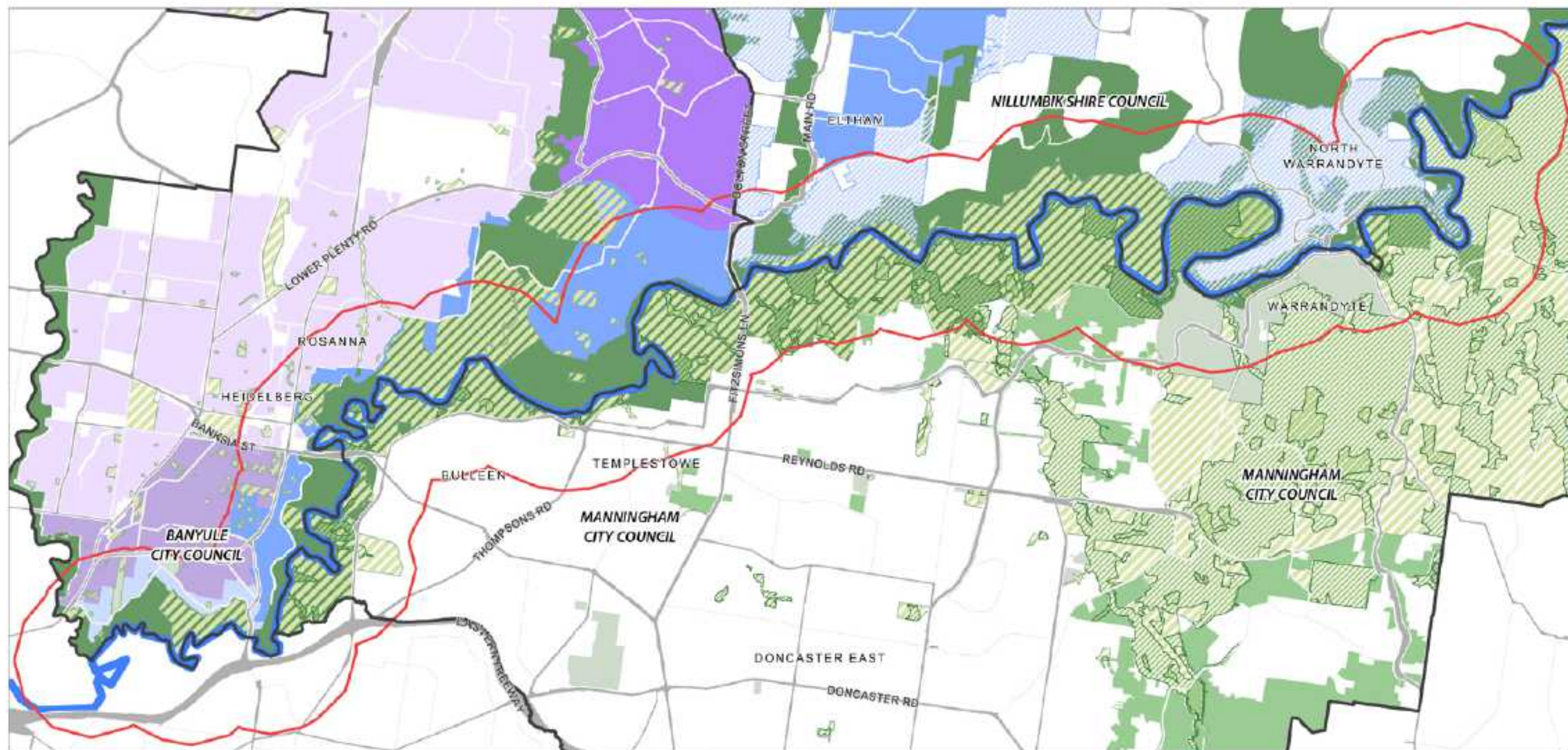
LEGEND

-  Local Government Boundaries
-  Yarra River
-  Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO)

MIDDLE YARRA RIVER CORRIDOR STUDY

LAND SUBJECT TO INUNDATION OVERLAY





LEGEND

- Local Government Boundaries
- Yarra River
- 1km Investigation Area

Banyule City Council

- Environmental Significance Overlay Schedule 1
- Environmental Significance Overlay Schedule 4
- Significant Landscape Overlay 1
- Environmental Significance Overlay Schedule 4
- Vegetation Protection Overlay 1
- Vegetation Protection Overlay 3
- Vegetation Protection Overlay 5

Manningham City Council

- Environmental Significance Overlay Schedule 1
- Environmental Significance Overlay Schedule 2
- Environmental Significance Overlay Schedule 3
- Environmental Significance Overlay Schedule 4
- Environmental Significance Overlay Schedule 5

Nillumbik City Council

- Environmental Significance Overlay Schedule 1
- Environmental Significance Overlay Schedule 2
- Significant Landscape Overlay 2
- Significant Landscape Overlay 3

MIDDLE YARRA RIVER CORRIDOR STUDY

VEGETATION & LANDSCAPE PROTECTION MAP

Summary of Vegetation & Landscape Overlay Controls



Appendix C: Guidelines for Development

Guidelines for Development within the Middle Yarra River Corridor

The following guidelines have been derived from a review of previous policy documents relating to the Yarra River corridor and further developed through the analysis and field work undertaken during this study. They implement the objectives that have been established and respond to the corridor’s threats and pressures. The majority of guidelines are recommended for inclusion in the proposed overlay controls.

Vegetation & Landscaping

Retain native vegetation, particularly established vegetation, mature vegetation and canopy trees on both public and private land along the Yarra River corridor.

Avoid vegetation removal wherever possible, including mature, dead and dying vegetation that provides habitat for significant fauna, except where risk or safety hazard requires removal.

Replace environmental weeds with indigenous vegetation.

When removing weeds for replacement with indigenous species, avoid erosion and design and phase the removal and the replacement planting so as to maintain adequate screening of buildings and works in the river interface.

Encourage the gradual phasing out of exotic vegetation and replacement with indigenous species, except where exotic vegetation:

- has recognised heritage or landscape significance;
- provides for recreation activities (for example, grasses for ovals); or
- is non-invasive and located outside the riparian zone and contributes to neighbourhood character objectives.

Provide permeable surfaces and minimise site coverage, to allow for water absorption and to support vegetation.

Provide adequate separation between any new development and the river frontage property boundary to allow sufficient space for the planting of indigenous vegetation, including canopy trees.

Screen existing and new buildings, structures and areas of hard surfacing with appropriately scaled informal landscaping, suitable to the indigenous landscape character of the river corridor, particularly when visible from the waterway, Main Yarra Trail and areas of public open space.

Ensure fences provided along the river frontage property boundary are low where practical, visually permeable, and finished with tones and colours that blend into the vegetation.

Avoid high, solid fencing that encloses and conceals the river frontage property boundary.

Where retaining walls are required, materials and facings should complement the landscape setting and be softened with appropriate screen planting.

Where terracing is required, it should be constructed of natural materials that complement the riverine environment, and landscaped with appropriate indigenous species.

Provide a landscaping plan to accompany any application for new development that demonstrates:

- protection and enhancement of the river corridor’s vegetation dominant character;
- how erosion will be controlled;
- how ground disturbance will be minimised;
- how stability will be managed or improved;
- protection and rehabilitation of natural landforms;
- how the rate and quality of stormwater leaving a property will be controlled and pollutants filtered;
- the identification and protection of any significant vegetation;
- use of locally indigenous vegetation, including the replacement of any environmental weeds; and,
- use of appropriate approaches to ground preparation and vegetation retention and planting.

Built Form & Development

Siting, Height & Form

Relate the siting, scale, bulk and massing of development to the width and scale of the waterway and river banks.

Set back buildings from the river edge property boundary. Minimum setbacks for most private and some public land are specified in the Municipal Toolkits, a key output of this study.

Avoid buildings, including fences, in the riparian vegetation corridor.

Demonstrate that structures which must be located in the riparian corridor (such as paths, jetties, boat ramps and mooring facilities) do not cause adverse impacts including:

- disturbing remnant indigenous vegetation;
- detracting from the landscape character of the corridor; or,
- reduced enjoyment of users of the river and river corridor.

New buildings must not exceed 8 metres in height unless the slope of the natural ground level at any cross section wider than 8 metres of the site of the building is 2.5 degrees or more, in which case the height of the building must not exceed 9 metres.

Orientate buildings toward the river corridor, where appropriate.

Ensure that the siting of new development provides separation between buildings, to allow for views of the river landscape from public areas, including nearby streets.

The siting and massing of buildings should avoid obscuring views of the river corridor from public areas such as the Main Yarra Trail, public parks, bridge crossings and scenic viewpoints.

Materials & Design Detail

Design buildings, including advertising signage, jetties, boat ramps and mooring facilities, to minimise visual intrusion into the landscape.

Utilise materials, colours and finishes that complement those occurring naturally in the area e.g. dark, muted colours and matt finishes, and lighter colours above the skyline.

Use non-reflective materials and finishes which reduce distant visibility.

Avoid visually dominant, sheer and unarticulated elevations.

Blank walls should be avoided for façades fronting the river. Consideration should be given to providing balconies or other design features, which break up the surface and provide visual interest.

Lighting incorporated into new development should use a white based light source. Yellow coloured lighting is discouraged.

Lighting should be designed to minimise light spill.

Light fittings and bases should be muted natural colours, and be finished with graffiti proof paint.

Car Parking Design

Car parking areas should incorporate a water detention system to limit runoff.

Car parking areas should be located away from the river frontage, and should not be visible from the river frontage.

Accessways and car parking areas should have permeable surfaces.

Boat Infrastructure

Boat infrastructure should be sited, designed and constructed according to Melbourne Water’s *Guidelines for Approval of Jetties* (2011).

New jetties, boat ramps and mooring facilities should be avoided.

Jetties, boat ramps and mooring facilities must not require the removal or destruction of any indigenous vegetation.

Boat infrastructure should be designed and sited to enhance the natural landscape character of the immediate riverside environs.

Boat infrastructure should enhance the enjoyment of all users of the river and the Yarra River corridor and avoid detracting from other users access to the river.

Boat infrastucture should be designed and constructed in a manner that avoids destabilisation of the waterway bed and bank stability.

Boat infrastructure should minimise intrusion into the waterway and be constructed of durable timber or concrete in natural, muted colours.

Boat landings should be located parallel to the water’s edge.

River Health & Conservation

Ensure no further fill of flood-prone land.

Minimise cut and fill of embankments.

Avoid major earthworks.

Avoid development on land at risk of flooding or in proximity to the river.

Control development to minimise erosion potential and adverse impacts on river bank stability.

Provide stormwater management plans for large developments.

Ensure that development, including the planting or removal of vegetation, does not adversely impact the environmental values of the river corridor through:

- erosion;
- pollution of the local and regional waterways via the stormwater systems; and
- ground disturbance and instability of the natural landform.

Protect and manage areas surrounding sites of known environmental or cultural heritage significance in a manner which enhances significance and, on public land, provides opportunities for education and interpretation.

Avoid disturbance of sites known or likely to contain Aboriginal cultural heritage.

Ensure development avoids or minimises impacts that may degrade sites of environmental or cultural heritage significance.

Open Space, Amenity & Access

Shared paths should be sited, designed and constructed according to Melbourne Water’s *Shared Pathways Guidelines* (2009).

Develop and maintain shared bicycle / pedestrian trails along the river bank, subject to standards for flood protection and objectives for the protection of sites of environmental or cultural heritage significance.

Provide and maintain shared trails that do not adversely affect the ability of waterways, drains and floodways to convey flood flows.

Provide appropriate directional signage and signage informing path users of upcoming potential hazards throughout the trail network.

Develop and maintain a hierarchy of trails which includes unsealed, pedestrian-only paths, particularly on public parkland.

Consider visitor experience and public safety in public access areas and trails.

Ensure that development provides passive surveillance of public areas.

Ensure development maintains sunlight to public spaces and does not increase overshadowing of the river and the Main Yarra Trail.

Other

The views of public authorities on use and development must be obtained as appropriate (e.g. Melbourne Water, Parks Victoria etc.).

Ensure structure planning of nearby activity centres considers the impacts of development and landscaping on the river corridor.