

WHITTLESEA
GREEN WEDGE
MANAGEMENT PLAN
2011-2021





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Adopted by City of Whittlesea Council
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**City of Whittlesea
Strategic Planning and Design**

Additional copies of this document are available from the City of Whittlesea on 9217 2346 or from Council's website at www.whittlesea.vic.gov.au

The City of Whittlesea would like to thank all the individuals and organisations who took the time to contribute ideas on what they value and where improvements should be made to the management of the Whittlesea Green Wedge.

Graphics

This page: Sustainable Living Festival
Transition Towns 2009



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The *Whittlesea Green Wedge Management Plan* has been developed to meet Victorian Government requirements associated with State planning policy for green wedges. This plan has been jointly funded by the Department of Planning and Community Development and the City of Whittlesea.

The Management Plan aims to provide a framework to sustain the non-urban areas of the City of Whittlesea into the future.

What is a Green Wedge?

The green wedge concept was officially adopted as planning policy in 1968 and introduced into the planning blueprint for Melbourne by the Melbourne Board of Works in 1971. These non-urban areas were to contain the majority of agricultural resources, water storage catchments, significant landscapes, flora and fauna, and heritage places. The vision for these green wedge areas was to protect distinctive features, provide open space and act as the lungs of Melbourne.

In 2002, the previous Victorian Labor Government released its strategy for sustainable growth, Melbourne 2030 (DOI 2002). This strategy formally defined the green wedges, putting policies in place to protect these valuable areas and identifying 12 green wedge areas across 17 municipal councils. Green wedge land was defined in legislation for the first time and specific planning controls were introduced to protect green wedge land. In order to achieve sustainable management outcomes within these areas, each Local Government is required to develop a management plan for its respective green wedge area.

What is a Green Wedge Management Plan?

A Green Wedge Management Plan is a strategy, adopted by the respective Local Council that identifies a vision, objectives and actions for the sustainable management of each green wedge area. It is not within the scope of the Management Plan to change existing zones or overlay controls, however the plan does promote a range of uses consistent with existing zoning provisions.

The Management Plan identifies the values and features of the green wedge, the areas that should be protected and maintained and the current issues and proposed opportunities for action. A Green Wedge Management Plan incorporates the views of the local community and should identify actions that go beyond traditional land use planning tools.

Why is a Green Wedge Management Plan necessary?

Located approximately 20 kilometres north-east of Melbourne CBD, the City of Whittlesea is predominantly rural, despite its designation as a growth municipality. Until recently, the Green Wedge covered an area of 38,300 hectares, however State Government has included 6,570 hectares of green wedge land within an expanded Urban Growth Boundary (UGB).

A Green Wedge Management Plan is necessary to provide a framework for sustaining these non-urban areas into the future. The Management Plan will strive to promote and encourage diversity.

The Management Plan will also provide an opportunity for a whole of government

approach, in partnership with landholders and local community groups, to prepare and implement a plan that reflects the wider context of sustainable land use. *The Whittlesea Green Wedge Management Plan* can be considered a mini 'Community Plan' for the non-urban areas of the City of Whittlesea as it recommends actions across all six *Community Plan* directions.

Community Engagement

The *Whittlesea Green Wedge Management Plan* has been developed in conjunction with the community, government and organisations over a two and a half year period.

The Management Plan is informed by community opinion, reflects Council policies, and satisfies the green wedge objectives of the Victorian Government.

The plan is a reflection of current views and opinions. It strives to highlight what people value and are concerned about, while at the same time suggesting actions aimed at ensuring special characteristics are enhanced and preserved.

Any proposed changes to the Whittlesea Planning Scheme undertaken as an action of this Management Plan, will be placed on public exhibition as part of the usual planning scheme amendment process, creating further formal opportunity for stakeholder and community input.

Management Plan Layout

The *Whittlesea Green Wedge Management Plan* has been divided into three parts:

- Part 1: Background
- Part 2: Themes
- Part 3: Action Plan

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Four Theme Approach

In order to best reflect the full range of management considerations, Part 2 of this plan has been grouped into the four themes of the *Port Phillip and Western Port Regional Catchment Strategy* (PPWCMA 2004) – Land, Biodiversity, Water and People. This approach creates a commonality of purpose and presents the findings in a straightforward manner.

Within each of the four themes, a number of sub-themes are included. These ten sub-themes are indicative of the range of local features and values associated with the Whittlesea Green Wedge.

The ten sub-themes of the Management Plan are as follows:

LAND

1. Rural productivity and agribusiness
2. Rural land stewardship
3. Landscape qualities and rural design
4. Boundaries and buffers
5. Extractive industry

BIODIVERSITY

6. Flora, fauna and habitat

WATER

7. Waterways and catchments

PEOPLE

8. Communities and settlements
9. Tourism and recreation
10. Heritage and culture

Each sub-theme includes an objective, describes features and values, specifies community views, and identifies key issues and future directions.

Implementing the Management Plan

The success of the *Whittlesea Green Wedge Management Plan* is dependant upon collaboration between Local Government, State Government Departments, Federal Government, agencies, organisations and the community.

This Management Plan identifies eighty two specific actions identified within the ten sub-themes.

The recommended implementation actions have been developed through consultation, current best practice, reference group meetings, and relevant Council strategies, workshops with government departments, agencies, and organisations with an interest in green wedge matters.

These actions are prioritised in the following manner:

- Short term priority (1-3 years)
- Medium term priority (4-7 years)
- Longer term priority (8-10 years)

Short term actions are those most likely to deliver key sustainable outcomes for our green wedge area. They may also be actions that are relatively simple to instigate. Medium term and long term actions are those that are less urgent, or rely on a range of stakeholders and multiple steps before implementation can occur.

These actions represent a range of scales. Fine scale initiatives are specific and achievable at the local level. Local Government scale actions require coordination from one department within Council to drive the delivery of initiatives across Council departments.

State Government scale initiatives require Council to demonstrate leadership in facilitating the big picture green wedge outcomes. This includes those green wedge issues that are common across all green wedges.

Most actions in the communication, networking and expansion of existing program topics may be delivered from existing resources and commitments, including proposed changes to the Whittlesea Planning Scheme. Many of the new initiatives are unfunded. Council will actively investigate opportunities for funding and delivery from a range of sources.

Monitoring and Review

This Management Plan has the capacity to guide a whole-of-Government approach to the coordination and implementation of actions across a ten year period. A five year review of the Management Plan will enable the relevancy and the success of the plan in achieving the vision to be reviewed.

Additionally, it is Council's intention to release a three and seven year report, based on an annual report to Council on the progress of implementation.

Associated Documents

The Green Wedge Management Plan comprises of three documents:

1. *Whittlesea Green Wedge Management Plan 2011-2021*
2. *Whittlesea Green Wedge Management Plan 2011-2021: Community Views Final Report*
3. *Whittlesea Green Wedge Management Plan 2011-2021: Summary Fact Sheets*

