

HUME CITY COUNCIL

Rural Strategy

March 2022

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ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF TRADITIONAL OWNERS

Hume City Council recognises the rich Aboriginal heritage within the municipality and acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, which includes the Gunung-Willam-Balluk clan, as the Traditional Custodians of this land. Council embraces Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' living cultures as a vital part of Australia's identity and recognises, celebrates and pays respect to the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Elders past, present and future.

Contents

- 1. Introduction 4**
 - 1.1 The Strategy area 9
- 2. Vision 11**
- Strategic Themes 13**
- 3. Maintain Hume’s strategic role 15**
 - 3.1 Protect the curfew free operation of Melbourne Airport.....17
 - 3.2 Protect the rural areas from subdivision and changes to the urban growth boundary 20
 - 3.3 Protect and enhance natural and cultural values and respond to natural hazards..... 23
- 4. Foster Opportunities 29**
 - 4.1 Support agriculture and good land management outcomes31
 - 4.2 Strengthen the Visitor Economy34
- 5. Manage Change..... 39**
 - 5.1 Foster timely and participative road and infrastructure priorities..... 40
 - 5.2 Manage development and discretionary uses..... 44
 - 5.3 Manage the impacts of extractive and waste management industries47
- Appendices..... 50**
 - Appendix 1: Consultation and Project Stages51
 - Appendix 2: Guidance for planning permit applications 52
 - Appendix 3: Directions and Actions from the Strategy 57

0.1 Introduction

Hume's rural areas are highly diverse comprising larger farming land particularly in the north as well as pockets of lifestyle subdivisions of the late 20th century spread throughout. The landscape varies from flat open plains punctuated by volcanic cones to wide creek corridors cut through the area.

A diverse community live, own and work on land within Hume's rural areas. This diversity brings different expectations, ideas and aspirations for how land can be used and what might be possible into the future.

There are farmers with generations of history as well as new residents. Some live on the land to farm it, pursue hobby farming or horse keeping opportunities while others simply enjoy the space and amenity of the rural areas. Others own land but live outside the rural areas - these landowners may rent or lease their land to others to manage for agricultural and other economic pursuits or hold on to the land with expectations they seek to realise in the future. All these players are caretakers of the land with an equal responsibility to manage it.

The significant role the rural areas play in protecting the curfew free status of Melbourne Airport distinguishes Hume's green wedge. Whilst other green wedges are protected primarily for significant biodiversity, landscape or agricultural values, protecting the airport is the primary role of our green wedge.

A second important and unique role is to maintain a non-urban/rural break around Sunbury and keep it separate from Melbourne and nearby regional townships. This physical separation of Sunbury from Melbourne is a critical part of the character and identity of Sunbury that is valued highly by the Sunbury community.

We understand the importance of these roles for the State and the local community but also recognise that for many landowners in Hume's rural areas, these roles present significant challenges. These challenges are particularly acute for those landowners with land unsuited to agriculture and for landowners that are trying to manage their properties in their leisure time.



A separate background paper sits outside of the Strategy and incorporates detailed context information and findings from previous stages of the project. This work informed discussions with the community and the preparation of the final Strategy. The further detail in the Background Paper provides the basis for the Strategy's Vision and Directions.

Community feedback during each stage of the project demonstrated the strong emotional attachment many in the rural community have to their properties and to the rural areas, and a desire from many to continue to stay on the land.

Feedback also highlighted that while different parts of the rural areas are impacted by their own individual issues, there are interconnected challenges that are felt throughout the rural areas. These are represented in Figure 2 and stem from two important challenges for Hume's rural areas:

- a recent history of continued expansion of the urban growth boundary by State Government planning policy.
- limited and declining viability for agricultural uses on many properties.

These challenges then create a further set of related issues of speculative land banking, absentee landowners, poor land management and uncertain conditions for investment.

Climate change, an ageing rural population and a declining sense of community are compounded by these challenges.

The complex and interconnected nature of these challenges require a holistic strategy and coordinated response.



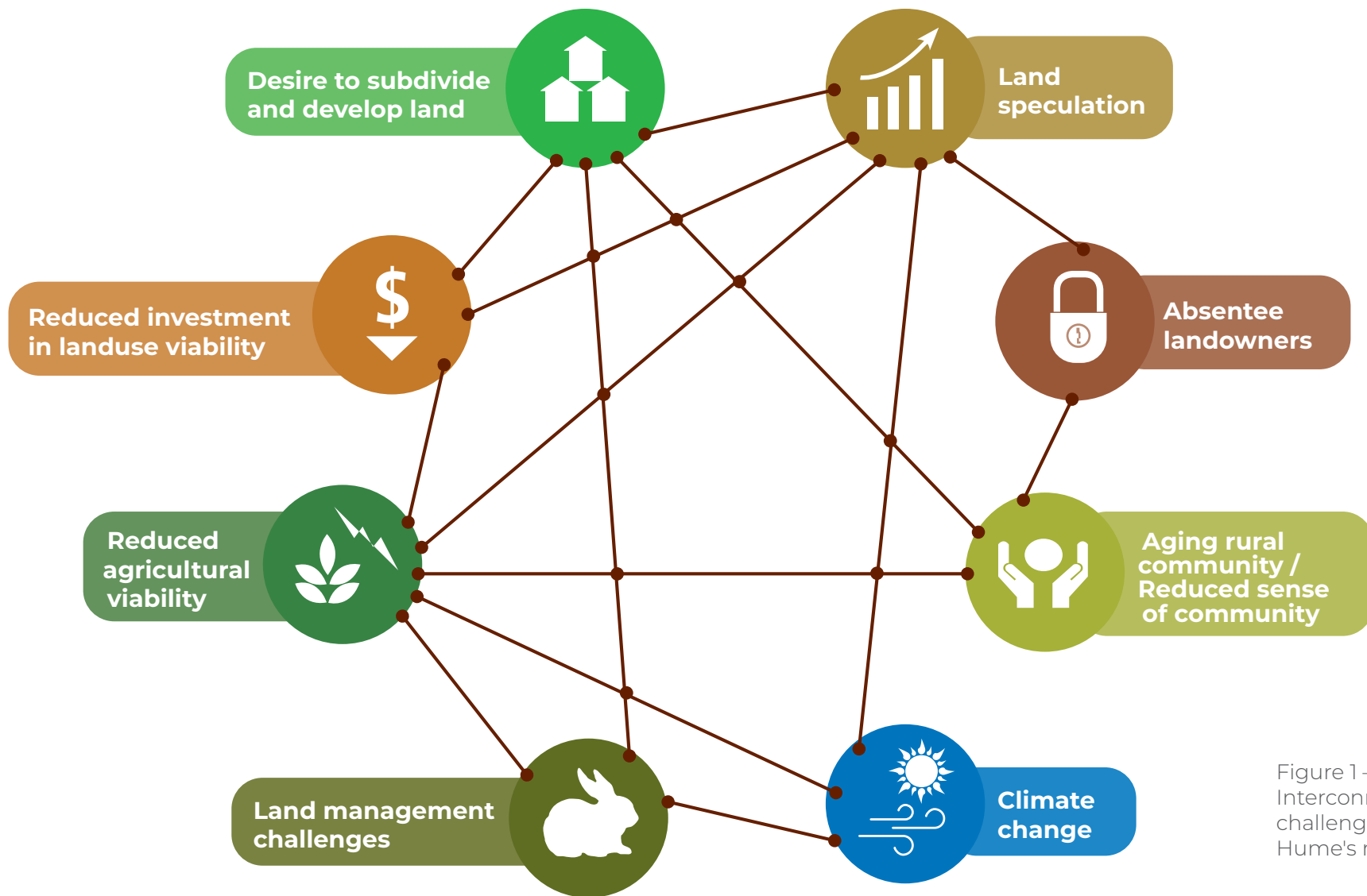


Figure 1 – Interconnected challenges in Hume's rural areas

We have investigated the opportunities that might exist in the rural areas now and into the future to enable current and future rural landowners to stay on the land, diversity how rural land is used to generate an income, and to protect and celebrate the values and qualities of the rural areas.

The Rural Strategy provides an integrated framework to realise a positive Vision that will support the community to manage their land; explore new land use opportunities; engage with each other and other stakeholders; and to have certainty about the future of the rural areas.



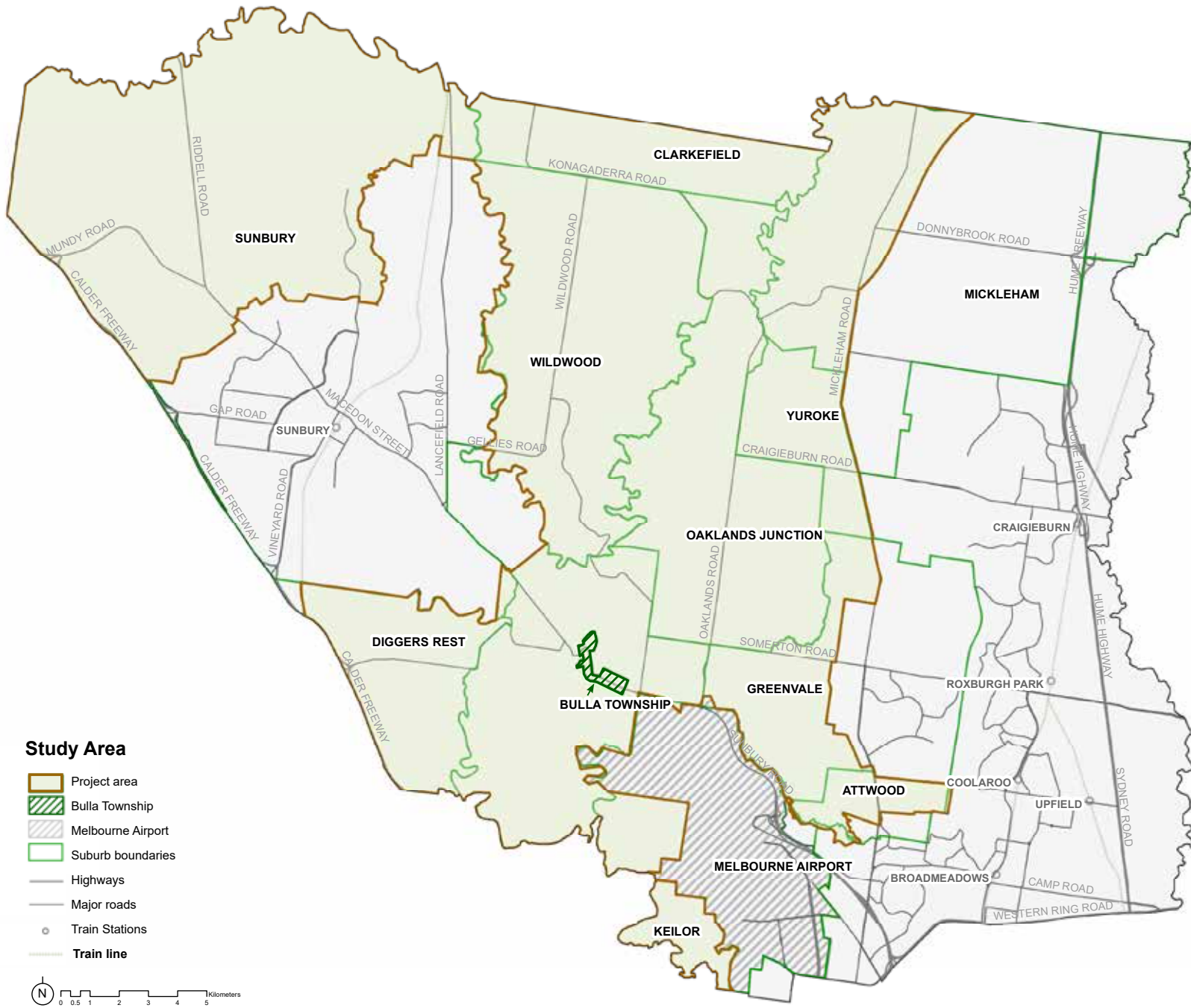


Figure 1 – Study Area

1.1 The Strategy area

The Strategy area applies to all land outside the urban growth boundary in Hume, as well as Bulla Township (refer Figure 1). This area has been designated as the Sunbury Green Wedge under Green Wedge legislation. The area is therefore predominantly zoned Green Wedge, but also includes small areas of Green Wedge A Zone (semi-rural), Special Use Zone (i.e. quarries) and Township Zone (Bulla township).

Encompassing over 250 square kilometres, Hume's rural area represents a diverse community and land uses.

The northern extents of Hume's rural areas have larger lots and grazing continues throughout this area. Areas north of Sunbury also enjoy richer soil and attractive vistas to the Macedon Ranges to the north and local volcanic cones rising from the flat plains. In Oaklands Junction, broadacre grazing is most prevalent and deep layers of subsurface basalt are identified within an Extractive Industry Interest Area flagging potential opportunities to quarry this resource in the future.

Pockets of smaller lots (smaller than 10 hectares) are scattered throughout the rural areas¹ with significant concentrations south of Sunbury in Diggers Rest and to the west of Mickleham Road. Even smaller lots less than 5 hectares are north of Sunbury along Racecourse Road, in Oaklands Park estate and east of Bulla township.

The township of Bulla represents a small, isolated pocket of existing urban development surrounded by the Green Wedge Zone. Bulla's future will be impacted by its interface with the rural area and relationship to the proposed Outer Metropolitan Ring Road, Bulla Bypass and the Melbourne Airport are pertinent. The township of Bulla has been included in the scope as there is currently a lack of policy direction for it.

Proximity to Melbourne Airport is a key feature of the rural areas. Large parts of the rural areas are affected by State and Federal regulations that protect the curfew free operation of Melbourne Airport.



¹The Inter Urban Break north of Mount Ridley Road in Mickleham contains low density residential development and contributes to the diversity of lots and living options in Hume. Some of the support and engagement programs discussed in this Strategy are relevant to the Inter Urban Break, although its strategic direction is incorporated in statutory policy at Clause 21 of the Hume Planning Scheme.



0.2 Vision

Hume's green wedge will be appreciated by residents, landowners and visitors for its spaciousness and convenience to metropolitan Melbourne. Its role will continue to protect the airport and provide rural separation from urban areas while embracing opportunities to celebrate its environment and landscape values in traditional rural and lifestyle uses alongside emerging tourism and hospitality activities that consolidate the green wedge as a valued place to live, visit and work.

We will achieve this Vision through:

Certainty

on the future planning for the rural areas, particularly future urban development and subdivision, to assist the rural community invest in their land with a greater level of confidence.



Support

to help enable landowners to continue to pursue current activities, diversify into new activities, maximise opportunities associated with a growing urban population, and to effectively manage land.



Engagement

to inform the rural community of potential future changes and to grow community connectedness and capacity to realise future opportunities and manage challenges.



To achieve the Vision we will

- Maintain the urban growth boundary and subdivision rules.
- Support a wide range of economic opportunities that complement the rural areas.
- Support rural landowners and land managers as the caretakers of the land.
- Recognise environmental and landscape values in the planning scheme.
- Manage local roads to keep them safe for rural traffic and encourage State Government investment in road upgrades for metropolitan traffic

Across 3 themes for the green wedge that

1. Recognise its roles
2. Foster its opportunities
3. Manage change



Strategic Themes

This Strategy recognizes the challenges being experienced in the rural areas. It sets out strategies for how we can address these challenges and embrace opportunities for the future. The Directions and Strategies in this section are grouped into three key themes for the future of the rural areas:



Maintain Hume's strategic role.



Fostering opportunities.



Managing change.



3. Maintain Hume's strategic role

Hume's rural areas play unique and significant roles for Victoria.

The three chapters in this section focus on the area's role in:



Protecting the curfew free operation of Melbourne Airport



Protect the rural qualities and opportunities in Hume by maintaining the diverse lot sizes and urban growth boundary.



Maintain important natural and cultural values.





3.1 Protect the curfew free operation of Melbourne Airport.

Melbourne airport curfew free status and safe operations will continue to be protected and the rural community will be engaged where major changes are proposed to the airport.

A key role of Hume's rural areas is to protect the role Melbourne Airport plays as a State significant hub for transport, freight, tourism and jobs. The Airport is also one of the State's largest employment destinations, both within the Airport itself and for related industries across Hume who employ a high percentage of Hume residents. Given this, protecting Melbourne Airport as a piece of State-significant infrastructure is recognised at both State² and local government levels.

Part of the significance of Melbourne Airport is that it can operate flights throughout both day and night, unlike Sydney's Kingsford Smith Airport which is restricted by a night time curfew.

The Melbourne Airport Masterplan 2018³ shows that a large proportion of the rural areas are, or will be, impacted by aircraft noise (see Figure 3). Flights are directed over these rural areas where they impact less people and so they can avoid more populated urban area. Land use is carefully managed to minimize the number of people affected by the airport operations.

The role that Hume's rural areas play in protecting the curfew free operation of Airport is to constrain potential land uses and development that might occur on the doorstep of the Airport. Aircraft noise is a consideration for the use and development of sites, particularly for noise sensitive uses. More than a quarter of the rural areas are within the Melbourne Airport Environs Overlay controls under the Hume Planning Scheme and a further 15% are affected by N70 noise contours. In addition, most of Hume's rural areas are affected by one form of safeguarding consideration under the National Airports Safeguarding Framework (NASF) guidelines such as height limitations, lighting and glare and public safety.

Hume's rural community are aware that they have a role to play in protecting the airport operations. It is important for the rural community to be kept informed of any potential changes to Melbourne Airport or the planning controls that protect it.

In turn, Melbourne Airport are also encouraged to explore opportunities for engaging with and supporting their rural neighbours.



²Plan Melbourne 2017-50

³The Masterplan will be updated in 2021/22 to reflect a change to the preferred third runway alignment from east-west to north-south. The Masterplan will be updated on a regular basis and should be referred to for current noise contours.

Directions

- D1. Provide for the curfew free operation of Melbourne Airport.
- D2. Support engagement with the rural community as the airport operations and protections change.

Key actions

- A1. Ensure planning controls on land in Hume's rural areas continue to limit land uses sensitive to aircraft noise.
- A2. Consider the protection of the Melbourne Airport in the assessment of major development proposals and Council strategies.
- A3. Advocate for affected members of the rural community to be consulted on airport planning, operations and major developments that may impact them.

What outcomes will be achieved?

- Development proposals are compatible with Melbourne Airport's operation.
- Development and activities in the green wedge limit their impact on the operations and curfew free status of Melbourne Airport.
- Community is aware of impacts from airport operations and how this may impact them.



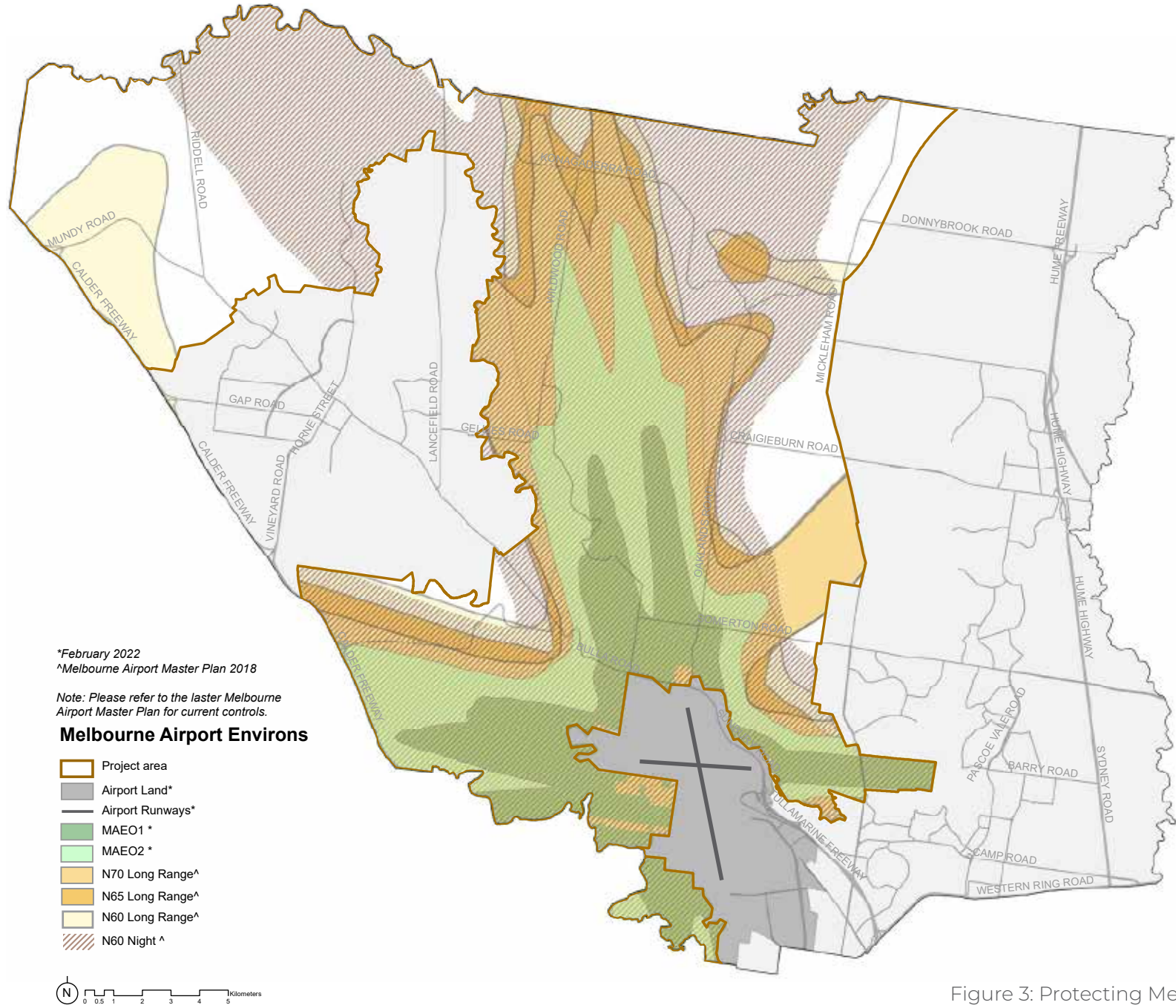


Figure 3: Protecting Melbourne Airport



3.2 Protect the rural areas from subdivision and changes to the urban growth boundary

Preserve the rural qualities of Hume by maintaining existing subdivision controls and urban growth boundary.

The State Government has committed to fixing the urban growth boundary. Plan Melbourne 2017-2050 confirmed that the existing boundary has adequate supply for at least the next 20 years as well as an abundance of urban renewal areas to meet future housing needs. Plan Melbourne also requires employment land for the coming decades to be catered for within the urban growth boundary.

The green wedge subdivision controls and the urban growth boundary work together to contain the urban extent of Melbourne. The urban growth boundary limits the expansion of urban development while the green wedge controls manage minimum lot sizes for subdivision and land use within the rural areas.

Allowing for smaller lots sizes and for Hume's rural areas to be included within the urban growth boundary has been identified by some rural landowners as a solution to the challenges of land management and poor financial returns from agriculture.

Feedback from the community suggested that smaller lots would improve land management and landowner's ability to look after their properties. However, in Hume examples of good land management is seen on both small and large lots. Good land management outcomes depend on the resources, capability, attitude, interest and understanding of landowners and land managers. The condition and terrain of the land and land management on neighbouring properties also influence land management outcomes. A connection to smaller lot sizes and improved land management hasn't been identified.

In the Hume context, incremental changes to the urban growth boundary in 2005, 2010 and again in 2012 fostered land speculation and rising land values and made many landowners reluctant to invest in their property. The uncertain urban growth boundary has undermined

the long-term rural value of the land and exacerbated the existing challenges of land management and agricultural viability.

By committing to a fixed urban growth boundary and maintaining subdivision rules, landowners and land managers will have greater certainty to invest time and money into the maintenance of their land.

Additionally, maintaining current subdivision rules protects the diversity of lot sizes in Hume that creates the varied rural community of landowners and residents (refer Figure 4). The different lot sizes offer the community a range of property sizes to live on and enjoy, or to explore an agriculture, hobby farm or other allowable land use opportunities.

We want landowners to be confident to explore new land uses allowed within the Green Wedge Zone, without concern that this expenditure will be wasted by sudden changes to minimum lot sizes and subdivision controls.

This Direction provides certainty for landowners and land managers regarding what to expect in the coming decades. Over time, the confusion and uncertainty created by recent changes to the urban growth boundaries may be alleviated.

Directions

- D3. Provide certainty on the urban growth boundary.
- D4. Maintain separation between Sunbury and other urban settlements.
- D5. Support a diversity of lot sizes in the rural areas by maintaining the current subdivision controls.

Key actions

- A4. Support the current urban growth boundary and subdivision controls applying to the rural areas.
- A5. Support the State Government to monitor the need for housing and employment land in Hume and the northern regions of metropolitan Melbourne to limit land speculation.
- A6. Support the continued use of the rural areas for economic opportunities, including agriculture.

What outcomes will be achieved?

- Landowners can confidently invest in land management and business investment.
- A range of lot sizes will continue to be available for agriculture, lifestyle and hobby farm activities and other land use opportunities.
- Land can be bought and sold with greater certainty that it will remain in the green wedge.
- Sunbury township will maintain a unique and separate identity from metropolitan Melbourne.



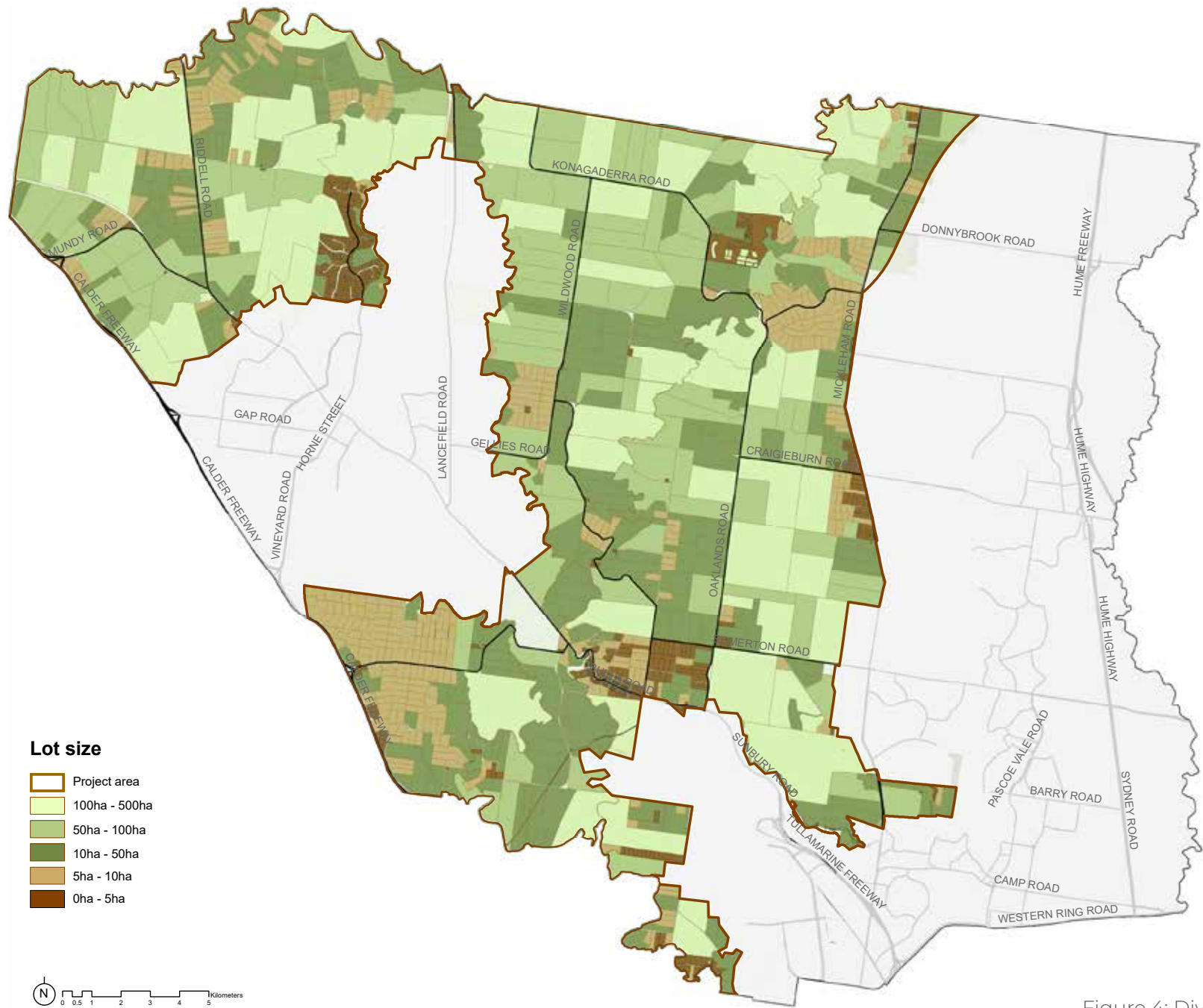


Figure 4: Diversity of Lot Sizes



3.3 Protect and enhance natural and cultural values and respond to natural hazards

Natural and cultural values will be protected and celebrated while risks to the environment from development and climate change will be mitigated.

Natural and cultural values are important to the sense of place experienced in Hume and protecting these values is an integral role of the green wedges.

Hume's ecosystems, of grassy woodlands, grasslands, waterway and escarpment vegetation, create a rich and diverse biodiversity. More than 70 reserves are managed by Council and provide opportunities to protect and enhance biodiversity values. Council also works with landowners to fund biodiversity projects on private land through grant programs. Investing in the management and protection of natural features will ensure they continue to be appreciated by residents and visitors including.

For fauna species, many habitat areas have been fragmented by rural and urban development in the past. Fragmentation and loss of habitat can limit the ability of species to move between habitat areas and ultimately is a significant threat to ongoing survival of local species. Avoidance or mitigation of habitat fragmentation will be used as a guiding principle in the design of development and infrastructure projects. Council will employ this principle in its own projects and in the assessment of State and proponent led projects.

The dramatic landscape setting of the rural areas includes wide valleys, volcanic cones and scattered woodlands set within a context of open grassland plains. Under existing planning scheme controls many of these areas are protected for their environmental values but not for their landscape significance (under the Environmental Significance Overlay). A review of existing planning controls will be undertaken to ensure that protection appropriately recognises and manages both environmental and landscape values. This review will provide a basis for managing any impacts of use and development on both landscape value and environmental significance.

Impacts of climate change in Hume's rural areas will see an increase of hotter and drier weather conditions, less overall rainfall and an increase in frequency and intensity of extreme weather events. Impacts from these changes may include bush fires, heat waves, droughts and floods. It will exacerbate many of the current challenges confronting the rural community, such as issues of water scarcity contributing to the decline in the viability of conventional agriculture, loss of biodiversity, deterioration of waterways and increases in the areas prone to erosion. Council will provide leadership in climate preparedness and building resilience in the rural community.

Immediately north-west of Sunbury township, a combination of soil types and topography has resulted in erosion. In this area erosion affects sloping land (rill erosion), creek lines and is also found below ground in tunnels. These factors limit access and land use opportunities. To recognise these issues and manage risk of erosion, landslip and other land degradation processes planning controls will be introduced to identify areas of risk.

We recognise the rich Aboriginal heritage within the municipality and the importance of ensuring Aboriginal heritage and culture is embraced and protected. Hume's rural areas have been relatively undisturbed by intensive cropping practices and maintain many natural features that are likely to retain significant surface and subsurface Aboriginal cultural heritage. The Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Register identifies and manages the protection of over 200 places of Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Sensitivity in Hume's rural areas, generally located along creek corridors.

A rich and diverse post-contact heritage is also evident in bridges, homes, and agricultural buildings like wineries and flour mills. Protection and maintenance of heritage structures is important to maintain their contribution to the history and interest of the rural areas. Their potential to be reused will be encouraged, including for tourism and hospitality to increase public access and awareness to sites of pre- and post-contact cultural heritage.

Planning Scheme Overlay controls for Vegetation Protection and Environmental Significance identify and protect some natural and cultural values. Other landscape values have been identified as part of this study and will be protected by updates to the Hume Planning Scheme (shown as Areas of Identified Natural and Cultural Values in Figure 5). Importantly, Box 1 provides details of how Natural Systems may provide opportunities for hospitality and tourism uses in Hume's rural areas.



Directions

- D6. To protect and enhance biodiversity and native vegetation.
- D7. To ensure development and land use does not adversely impact on scenic, environmental or cultural values.
- D8. To protect and promote aesthetic, natural and culturally significant values.
- D9. To respond to the challenges of climate change.
- D10. To identify and manage erosion and potential erosion risk.

Key actions

- A7. Develop policy to protect and enhance biodiversity values in Council projects and decisions.
- A8. Introduce the Erosion Management Overlay on land identified as having erosion risk.
- A9. Upgrade overlay controls to appropriately manage the aesthetic, natural and culturally significant values in the rural areas.
- A10. Identify and consider cultural heritage values early in the development of design outcomes for Council projects.
- A11. Assess habitat connectivity needs in the rural areas and develop a strategic approach to enhance connectivity and mitigate risk of habitat fragmentation.
- A12. Implement and review Management Plans for all Council conservation reserves.
- A13. Assist landowners to protect and enhance biodiversity values on private land.

- A14. Support and encourage climate change adaption in rural areas and foster community resilience with information and support.
- A15. Require land use and development proposals to sensitively respond to scenic, environmental and cultural values.
- A16. Maximise the tourism opportunities provided by the aesthetic, natural and culturally significant values of the rural areas.

What outcomes will be achieved?

- Continued protection of cultural heritage, landscape and biodiversity values for generations into the future.
- Visitors will come to the area to enjoy its natural and cultural features.
- Development, road upgrades and major infrastructure projects will incorporate design solutions enabling native animals to continue move through the landscape. For example, fauna road crossing initiatives will make roads safer for road users and native animals.
- Waterways will be protected from adverse impacts of development on erosion.
- Council and the community recognize and work together in response to the impacts of climate change.
- Legislation and planning controls will identify landscape and cultural values
- Local biodiversity will be enhanced on public and private land through Council management and grants programs.

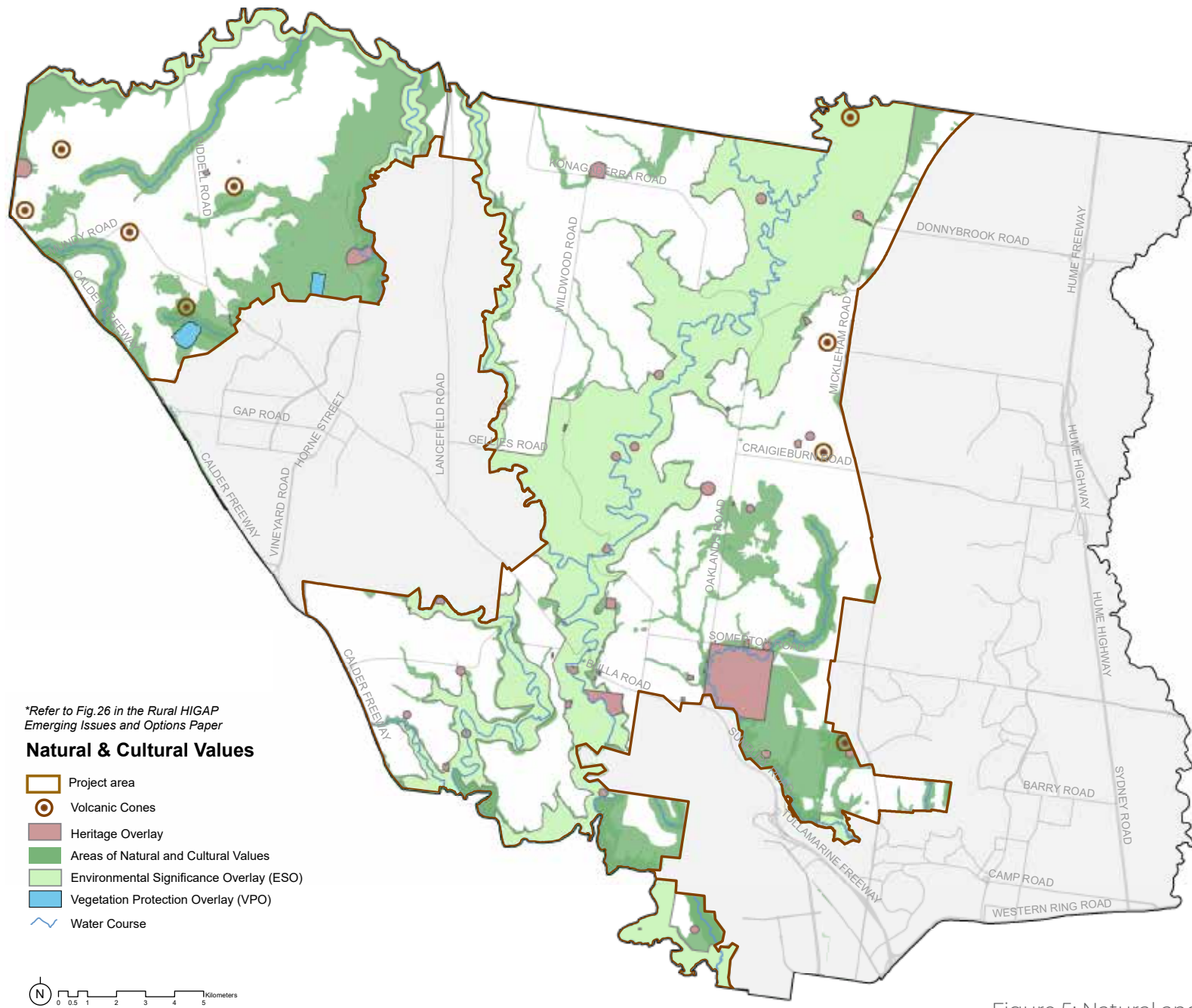


Figure 5: Natural and Cultural Values

Box 8: Tourism and Hospitality Uses in the Green Wedge Zone

Many parts of Hume's rural areas have a great potential to provide tourism and ecotourism facilities. They may have picturesque views of valleys or volcanic cones; be located on a regularly used road; include a hidden valley with dramatic boulders and overhanging gum trees; or have historic or biodiversity importance.

Some rural landowners indicated to us that accommodation or other tourist facilities are not allowed. Whilst, this may be correct in some cases, Council believes there are more opportunities for investment and development of visitor experiences than the community understands.

Under the Hume Planning Scheme, Function Centres, Group Accommodation, Residential Hotel and Restaurant may be allowed where they operate in conjunction with Agriculture, **Natural systems**, Outdoor recreation facility, Rural industry or Winery. The multi-purpose winery, function centre and restaurant operations at the Marnong Estate and Arundel Farm Estate are successful examples of these opportunities. These operations have relied on winery operations to allow their tourism and hospitality uses under the Green Wedge Zone controls.

On non-agricultural properties other opportunities may be available without agriculture or winery uses but where Natural systems feature on the land.

Natural systems are a land use term that is defined under the Hume Planning Scheme as:

Land in substantially its natural state which is used to maintain ecological systems, or to preserve an area of historic, scientific, aesthetic, or cultural significance (Clause 73.03).

Figure 12 identifies many of the known ecological, historic, aesthetic or cultural values in the rural areas that may provide opportunities for tourist related uses. Importantly, the balance between the values

present and the scale and potential impacts of any use will influence what may be possible. A use relying on **Natural Systems** should benefit the Natural Systems for example by bringing environmental benefits, protecting cultural features and increasing awareness of aesthetic values.

An application proposing a use in conjunction with **Natural Systems** must apply implement the purposes and decision guidelines of the Green Wedge Zone, any applicable overlays and any other planning scheme controls that apply to the land (State and Local Policy, Clause 51.02 Metropolitan Green Wedge Land: Core Planning Provisions and 64.02). A land use in conjunction with natural systems will be tested against Clause 64.02 that requires:

- An essential association between the two uses; and
- A genuine, close and continuing functional relationship in its operation with the other use.

Guiding case law on these questions includes *Jinalec Park Pty Ltd v Mornington Peninsula SC* [2007] VCAT 1238; *Dandenong Ranges Steiner School v Cardinia Shire Council (Red Dot)* [2005] VCAT 1152; *Boucher & Anor v Dandenong Ranges Steiner School Inc & Ors* [2005] VSC 400; *Brumbys Road Investments Pty Ltd v Manningham CC* [2018] VCAT 449.





4. Foster Opportunities

Hume's rural areas have a great mix of land uses ranging from agricultural, rural residential lifestyle, environmental and hospitality and tourism activities. This section explores the opportunities to enhance the diversity and opportunities for income generating uses that appreciate the cultural and landscape values of the area.

The focus of the two chapters in this section is on opportunities for:



Agricultural initiatives and land management outcomes, including securing access to water resources



Growth of the tourism and recreation sector





4.1 Support agriculture and good land management outcomes

Maintain opportunities for agriculture and improve land management across the rural areas.

Agriculture

Recent commitments by the State Government have sought greater protections for the Green Wedges. The State Government's draft Discussion Paper on the Planning for Green Wedges and Agricultural Land released in November 2020 placed a strong emphasis on the agricultural roles of the green wedges as important for future food security.

Hume has a long history of agriculture with European settlement in the early 1840s establishing broad acre grazing and cropping. A small area of rich alluvial river flats in the Keilor was also established early on with market gardens and over time a number of small vineyards were planted in Hume's rural areas.

In the last 30 years there has been a significant decline in farming activities exacerbated by the millennium drought and social changes.

Community feedback has highlighted the challenges for with agriculture based on cropping and grazing. Key challenges to include poor soils; limited water availability; property size profiles being either too large or too small; and increasing vulnerability to pest plant and animal invasion.

Looking forward Hume's agricultural role is facing significant challenges and shifts as primary producers confront a range of issues including:

- climate change reducing secure access to water and requiring imported feed.
- generational change with younger generations less likely to work on family farms.
- globalisation changing certainty of product demand.

Agriculture is supported as a primary role for Melbourne's green wedges in State policy and will continue to have a role in Hume's rural areas. This Strategy supports agricultural land uses while recognizing that farming in Hume will continue to be challenging and is not the primary role for Hume's green wedges as discussed in Chapter 3. We will continue to relay this position to State Government and seek policy and support that reflects the challenges and needs of Hume's rural areas.

In this context, Council supports rural land holders to carry out agriculture including exploring alternative and new agricultural methods. Grant programs are available to assist with land management and education programs support continued farming and information sharing. Council's Resource magazine provides information on emerging opportunities, current trends and local issues.

Being close to city and regional consumers, offers opportunities for agricultural producers to use adaptive marketing practices by selling direct to market, Community Supported Agriculture (CSA), farmers markets and direct produce orders from restaurants. Council provides support for local businesses with regular training and network events.

Viable agriculture will remain the highest priority land use and proposals that may negatively impact agriculture shouldn't be supported. As the agent of change, new uses must manage the impact of changes on their neighbourhood. They must ensure existing agricultural operations are not negatively impacted by noise and traffic and that the expectations created by the new use is compatible with nearby agriculture. For example, agricultural machinery sometimes operates from dawn to dusk during harvest and can be used under lights after dark which could be incompatible with an adjacent accommodation or hospitality use.

Water

Sustainable land uses in the rural areas rely on consistent access to water. Low rainfall is one of the challenges for viable farming in Hume. Access to water has become increasingly critical in the last 20 years with periods of drought and changing rainfall patterns.

Recycled water or harvested stormwater may provide opportunities in the future however there is currently no certainty where it may be made available, nor when this could occur. Horticulture in the rich alluvial soils in the Keilor Market Garden area has been undermined by unreliable water access. Access to water for this area and protection from development that could undermine its long-term productivity will be a priority for this area.

We will continue to encourage water authorities and State government agencies to explore opportunities to provide affordable recycled water or harvested stormwater to the rural areas. In the short term, Council's efforts will focus on advocating and supporting opportunities for rural landowners to tap into potential recycled water pipeline projects such as:

- a pipeline from Sunbury Recycled Water Plant to Melbourne Airport.
- a pipeline to follow the OMR alignment (when road construction is carried out) either bringing recycled water from eastern urban catchments and/or from Sunbury Recycled Water Plant.
- Stormwater harvesting from Sunbury and the urban areas east of Mickleham Road.

Land Management

- Good land management is important for all landowners. Not only is it the legal responsibility of landowners, it is important to:
 - prevent infestation and spread of weeds on property and neighbouring land
 - manage pest animals and soil erosion.
 - promote livestock health and maintain land values for economic benefits.
 - promote waterway health and biodiversity values.
 - reduce bushfire risk.

Rural landowners and land managers in Hume are well supported with Council programs and rebates and grants that incentivise land management on private land. Dedicated Council staff coordinate education programs (workshops and field days) and release the quarterly Re-source publication to keep the community informed about agricultural land use opportunities, encourage sustainable land use practices and good land management.

Poor land management can impact neighbouring properties with weed seed spreading through the region and moving across property boundaries in the wind and along waterways is a major threat to landscape health. Managing poor land management through regulatory compliance will be explored to encourage all landowners to address pest plant and animal issues.

Good land management will foster the many reasons for living in Hume's rural areas including the non-financial benefits acknowledged in a 2017 survey of Hume's rural residents:

- enjoyment of rural vistas
- clean air and a quiet environment
- proximity of wildlife and nature
- opportunity for biodiversity stewardship
- 'country community feel'.

Directions

- D11. To support the continuation and expansion of existing agricultural land uses.
- D12. To advocate for exploration of opportunities for recycled water, stormwater harvesting and new and innovative agriculture uses and practices.
- D13. To support and enable responsible management on all rural land

Key actions

- A17. Maintain rural landowner engagement activities to support good land management and agricultural knowledge and opportunities.
- A18. Encourage landowners to work with neighbours in improving broadscale land management and channeling the benefits of effective collaboration.
- A19. Commence a weed compliance program that requires control of noxious weeds on poorly managed properties.
- A20. Provide agriculture and land management programs to educate and support rural landowners.
- A21. Provide support and information suitable for agricultural land users.
- A22. Offer courses throughout the year on business planning; financial management and tax; and marketing available to all Hume businesses, including agricultural businesses.
- A23. Encourage water authorities to increase incentives for sustainable water use from surface water, waterways, recycled water and harvested stormwater to provide secure water supply and maintain and improve the flow rates of natural waterways.
- A24. Encourage water authorities and Government agencies to explore opportunities to provide affordable recycled water or harvested stormwater to the rural areas.

What outcomes will be achieved?

- Landowners will have access to financial support and information to better utilise and manage their land
- The rural community will have regular opportunities to learn, share information and connect
- Weed infestations will be reduced assisting land management and improving the appearance of the local landscape.
- Some landowners may have access to alternative water sources.





4.2 Strengthen the Visitor Economy

Encourage tourism, recreation and hospitality uses that celebrate and enhance the unique character of Hume's rural areas.

Tourism and Hospitality

Hume's rural areas are highly accessible to the growing urban populations of Sunbury, the Hume Growth Corridor and metropolitan Melbourne. There are also potential benefits for rural tourism and recreation operations from proximity to the Airport and its national and international visitors. This provides potential for tourism and hospitality opportunities, especially uses less suited to urban areas.

Tourism and hospitality uses have potential as alternative business opportunities to agriculture and can add to the role the rural areas play. Sensitive siting, design and management will be important to enhance the role of the rural areas whilst respecting its landscape and cultural values. Larger scale facilities are preferred in prominent locations on key roads. A sealed road should serve uses that generate regular traffic volumes. Detailed guidance is provided in Appendix xx to guide proposals in the rural areas.

Established tourism and hospitality uses demonstrated the potential of Hume's rural areas:

- Living Legends, Arundel Farm Estate, Marnong Estate and the Black Horse hotel provide function and restaurant facilities.
- Family attractions include Animal Land children's farm, Living Legends homestead and tours, Bulla model railway, Bulla Market and Marnong Farmers Market.
- Accommodation is available at Black Horse motel, Marnong Estate and bed and breakfasts throughout the rural areas.

Bulla township has a pleasant village scale with heritage features and existing recreation areas that attract regular visitors and has potential to grow as a desirable destination for urban day trippers. Currently, the significant traffic volumes through the township limit opportunities to leverage these attractions. New hospitality and retail businesses are encouraged in Bulla township to better serve the local and regional community and provide a hub for local tourism, particularly when after a bypass is delivered.

The rural areas north of Sunbury also have valuable attributes for tourism:

- They feature attractive landscapes such as uninterrupted views of Jacksons Creek, vistas to several volcanic cones and the Macedon Ranges.
- They aren't constrained by Melbourne Airport protections, unlike other parts of rural Hume.
- There are larger properties that enable a range of tourism and hospitality uses to operate in conjunction with agriculture.

Council is supportive of landowners in exploring opportunities for tourism and hospitality at a policy level. Council also has responsibility to consider individual proposals under relevant legislation. Currently, the State's Green Wedge controls set limitations that require tourism and hospitality uses to both:

- operate in conjunction with nominated land uses, specifically Agriculture, Natural systems, Outdoor recreation facility, Rural industry or Winery; and
- operate on a lot of at least 40 hectares in area or smaller where the schedule allows lots less than 40 hectares.

These controls limit tourism opportunities for some landowners in the Hume context, particularly given that agricultural viability is marginal.. We will encourage State Government to replace the restrictive conditions

in the Green Wedge zones with merit-based considerations that better support the individual opportunities of the different green wedges.

In particular, we will encourage the State Government to consider greater flexibility in Hume on the limits on lot size and in conjunction with requirements associated with tourism uses.

Recreation

The natural features and landscape views and vistas within the rural areas provide opportunities to attract visitors for short trips and outdoor recreation.

A scenic and heritage driving trail could be developed based along the viewing corridors and vistas in Figure 6. This would leverage existing attractions such as Woodlands Historic Park, valley vistas and aircraft viewing sites.

In the longer term the rural areas present opportunities for expanded recreational walking and cycling trails, including in and around Bulla township. Once recreational trail projects along Jacksons Creek in Sunbury and Merri Creek are complete, we will consider opportunities to create recreational trails along creek frontages through the rural areas along with public facilities on Council's land.

We will also encourage State Government to accommodate the safety of all road users, including cyclists, in major road projects to support the appeal of the rural areas for these users.

State Government Support

State Government support for tourism in Victoria is based on defined tourism regions. Hume is contained within the metropolitan Melbourne tourist region where funding, marketing and networking opportunities is focused primarily on inner-city Melbourne. This is unlike the

Mornington Peninsula and Nillumbik/Yarra Ranges green wedges that have dedicated, regional tourism boards advocating for funding, coordinating marketing and other tourism initiatives. This means that there is a gap in support for the green wedge areas north and west of Melbourne. This gap coincides with where most urban growth has occurred over the last 15 years and where a new market for local tourism now lives. The significant changes within and surrounding these green wedges justify a dedicated tourism body that will both support emerging opportunities and widely promote the regions to visitors.

We will continue to advocate to the State Government to reassess the structure of their tourism support organisations and address the gaps for the Hume area.



Directions

- D14. To foster a stronger visitor economy that responds to the unique character and values of the rural areas.
- D15. To encourage the exploration of tourism, hospitality and recreation opportunities on public and private land.
- D16. To support existing and new tourism, hospitality and recreation operations.

Key actions

- A25. Support tourism, hospitality and recreation uses where they do not adversely impact on the natural and cultural environment or the visual amenity of the area.
- A26. Direct larger scale tourism, hospitality and recreation uses to locations on major arterial roads.
- A27. Improve landowner awareness of the potential for tourism and related activities through events and through case study articles in Council documents.
- A28. Advocate for changes to the Victoria Planning Provisions to reduce the restrictions on tourism, hospitality and related business uses in Hume's Green Wedge controls.
- A29. Explore the feasibility of developing small scale recreation, visitor roadside trails and lookout points.
- A30. Explore how public land in rural areas can be enhanced to support public use and access, including the potential for recreation trails along creeks in the longer term.
- A31. Advocate to the State Government for a coordinated regional approach for tourism in Hume's green wedge.

- A32. Provide user friendly guidance on planning controls affecting the rural areas and increase landowner awareness of the potential for tourism and related activities.

What outcomes will be achieved?

- Hume will be a recognized tourism region well known for a diverse tourism, hospitality and recreation activities.
- Landowners will have greater opportunities and clarity to invest in businesses attracting visitors.
- Nearby urban residents will regularly visit and enjoy the openness and attractions of the area.
- Tourism opportunities from proximity to the airport will be pursued.



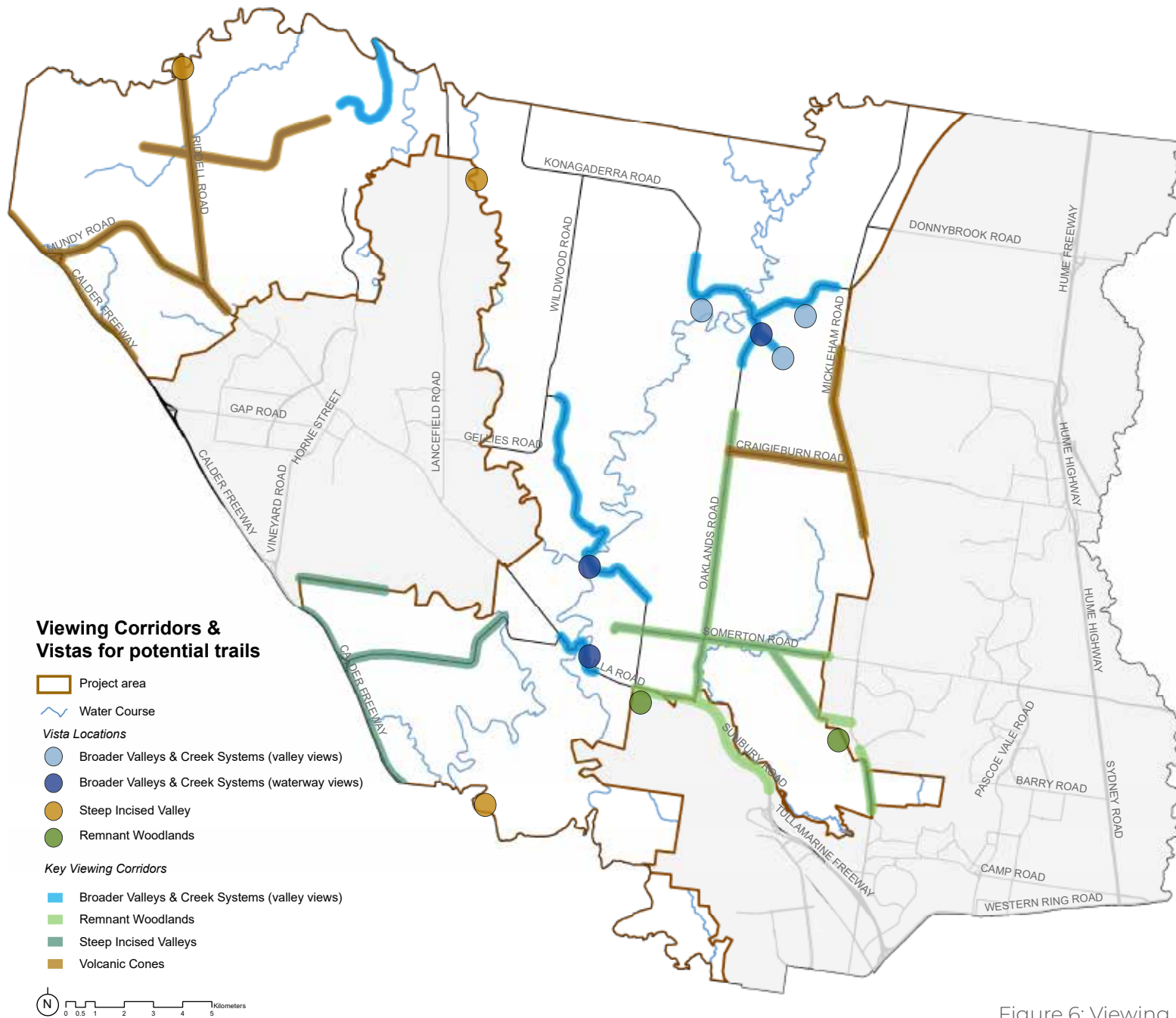


Figure 6: Viewing Corridors and Vistas



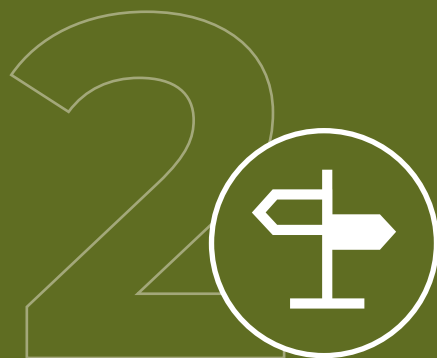
5. Manage Change

Hume's green wedges provide an important role in servicing the growing urban areas with regional transport infrastructure, building resources and waste facilities. Their proximity to metropolitan Melbourne also creates pressure to accommodate uses more suited to urban areas. This section provides guidance to protect the important role of the rural areas and manage pressure from incremental change.

The three chapters in this section:



Support the timely provision of transport infrastructure and the community's role in new infrastructure proposals



Provide guidance to ensure land uses support the rural areas



Protect areas of extractive resources and recommends buffers for existing quarries and landfill operations.



5.1 Foster timely and participative road and infrastructure priorities

Involve the community in State Government projects and deliver necessary transport infrastructure to manage Melbourne's urban growth and its impact on the rural road network.

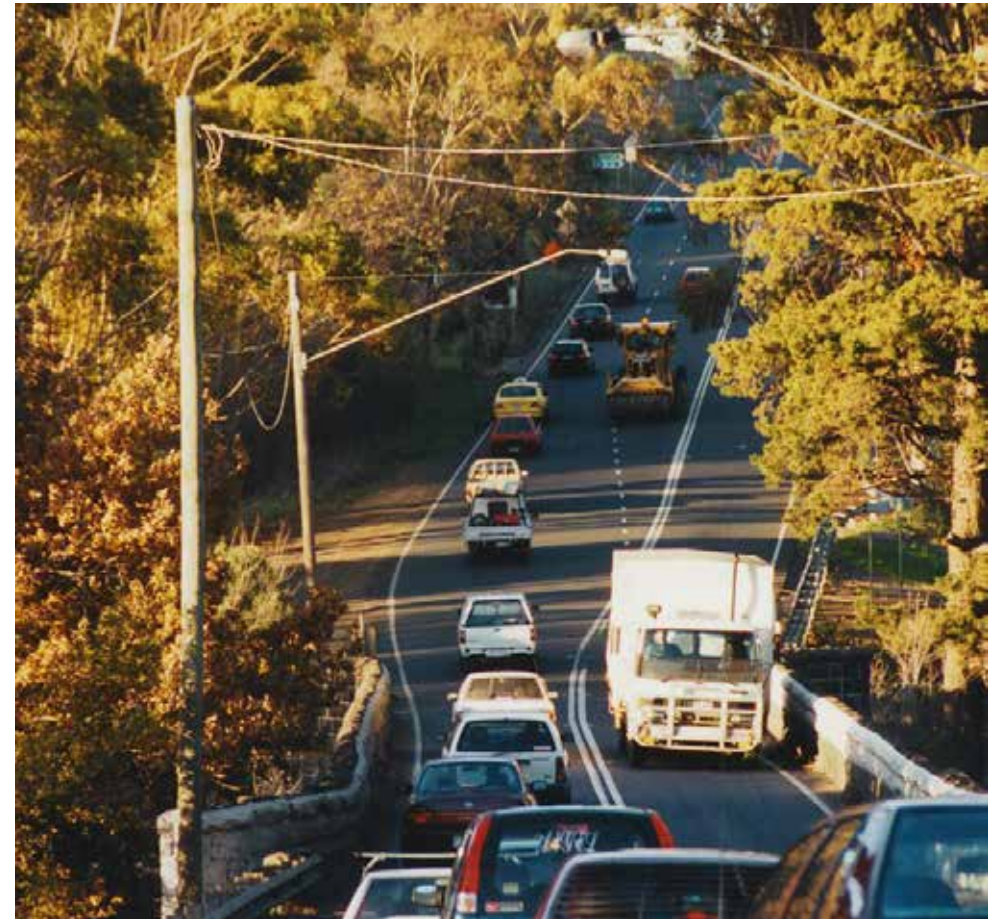
As the rural areas are surrounded by growing urban development, they are often seen as the default location for major new road and infrastructure projects servicing Melbourne.

The urban growth of metropolitan Melbourne will increase pressure on the rural road network and conflict between different road users. Recent traffic modelling estimated the impact of urban growth on the rural road network concluding that the road network within the rural areas is currently appropriate to support the rural and nearby communities despite the increase in road users from growing urban areas. In the long term however, this will be dependent on the timely upgrade of existing major and arterial roads and development of proposed major road projects in both the rural and urban areas. Delay in delivering transport projects for urban communities could create a burden on the rural road network.

We will continue to advocate for the timely upgrade and delivery of necessary road infrastructure to manage Melbourne's urban growth and its impact on the rural road network. Three vital road projects are the duplication of Mickleham Road and Sunbury Road and delivery of the Bulla Bypass.

The convenience of locating urban infrastructure in the rural areas must come with an awareness of the rural community that is being impacted. Rural landowners and businesses face considerable uncertainty for the future of their land as their properties become layered with different overlays and easements for future roads, pipelines and other infrastructure. The timing, exact alignment and requirements for compulsorily acquiring land for many of these proposed infrastructure projects are often unknown creating further uncertainty.

Any decision making by the State Government and infrastructure providers must include meaningful consultation and consideration of the community who will be directly and indirectly affected by these projects, as well as ongoing communication throughout the life of these projects.



Directions

- D17. To ensure the safety, amenity and efficiency of local roads for all road users and community.
- D18. To facilitate and encourage the timely delivery of transport projects and upgrades.
- D19. To manage the impact of major transport and infrastructure projects on rural landowners and businesses.

Key actions

- A33. Advocate for the timely delivery of major road and transport infrastructure in rural areas to minimise traffic on local rural roads.
- A34. Advocate that major transport and infrastructure projects prioritise consultation with affected landowners throughout all stages from site scoping, to design and through the construction.

What outcomes will be achieved?

- Most through traffic in the rural areas will use main roads and traffic volumes on local roads will not exceed road capacity limits.
- The community will be aware of major proposals and have opportunities to have a say.



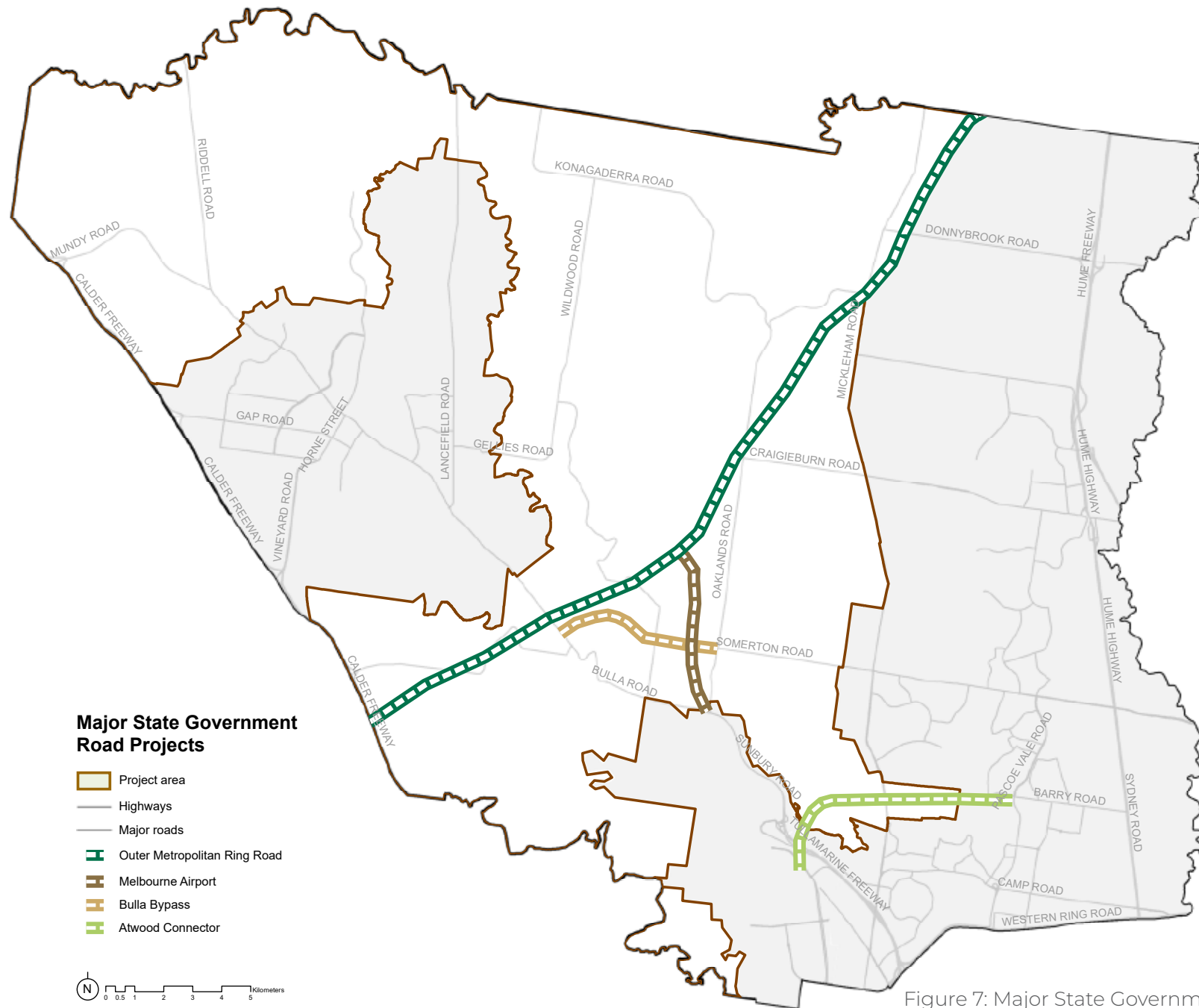


Figure 7: Major State Government Road Projects





5.2 Manage development and discretionary uses

Provide decision making guidance for development and discretionary use proposals.

The primary land use roles for Hume's green wedge include agriculture, tourism, natural and cultural heritage management, extractive industries and waste management as well as rural lifestyle living. There are also a large number and wide variety of uses (known as discretionary uses) that may be allowed under the green wedge controls subject to planning approval.

Unlike the primary uses, discretionary uses must demonstrate a need to locate in the green wedge and that they are suitable in the context of policy objectives, zone controls and the local context including amenity of residential properties. Allowable uses in the Green Wedge fall into two categories:

1. Uses that have a clear and direct relationship to nearby agriculture or natural and cultural heritage.
2. Uses that are essential for urban development but cannot locate in urban areas for amenity and other reasons (such as airports, schools, quarries, waste treatment plants, landfills and reservoirs).

Close proximity to the workforce and residents of urban areas combined with much cheaper land makes the green wedges attractive and accessible for urban uses. However, allowing urban uses can undermine the primary roles and opportunities of the green wedges and can cause conflict with farming and lifestyle uses.

Given this, discretionary uses must have a clear need and relationship with the green wedge. Generally, they will not be appropriate if they are able to locate on suitably zoned urban land and will not enhance the primary roles of the green wedge associated with rural land use, rural diversification, natural resource management, natural or cultural heritage management, recreation or tourism. Industrial uses are not generally compatible with these roles and should locate within urban land zoned for industrial use.

Guidance for use and development proposals that require a planning permit under the Green Wedge is provided in appendix 2. This guidance aims to assist the careful balancing of the impacts of use and development on the rural areas in Council's decision making, such as conflict with existing rural land uses; significant environmental changes and impacts; increased traffic movement; and specifically for Hume, impacts to the operation of Melbourne Airport and its flightpaths.

There is an appreciation that independent school providers and religious organisations have challenges finding suitable urban land near to where their communities live.

Whilst these uses are best located in urban areas to best serve their communities, proposals inside the green wedge are preferred in locations adjacent to the Urban Growth Boundary and with access to arterial or declared roads for schools and places of worship given the significant traffic impacts of these uses. These uses are generally not appropriate for land within the Melbourne Airport Environs Overlays due to the noise impacts (refer to detailed guidance at Appendix 2).

As the urban areas develop and new communities move in impacts on adjoining rural land can include: waste dumping, including from the construction phase of urban development; management pressure to protect urban areas from bushfire risk; the spread of weeds and invasive plant species; livestock loss from stray dogs; trespass and theft. These are more likely to occur when there is no road or open space area providing a 'break' between urban and rural areas. Urban development should be planned to minimize these potential impacts on the green wedge. A road or open space interface is preferred within the urban growth boundary. More detailed guidance for the urban-rural interface is provided in Appendix 2.

As residents move in they are able to access a range of free services including hard waste collection from the home or tip vouchers; Hume Clean Days for free drop-off of some large household items and e-waste at resource and recovery centres; and tree and garden mulch days.

Directions

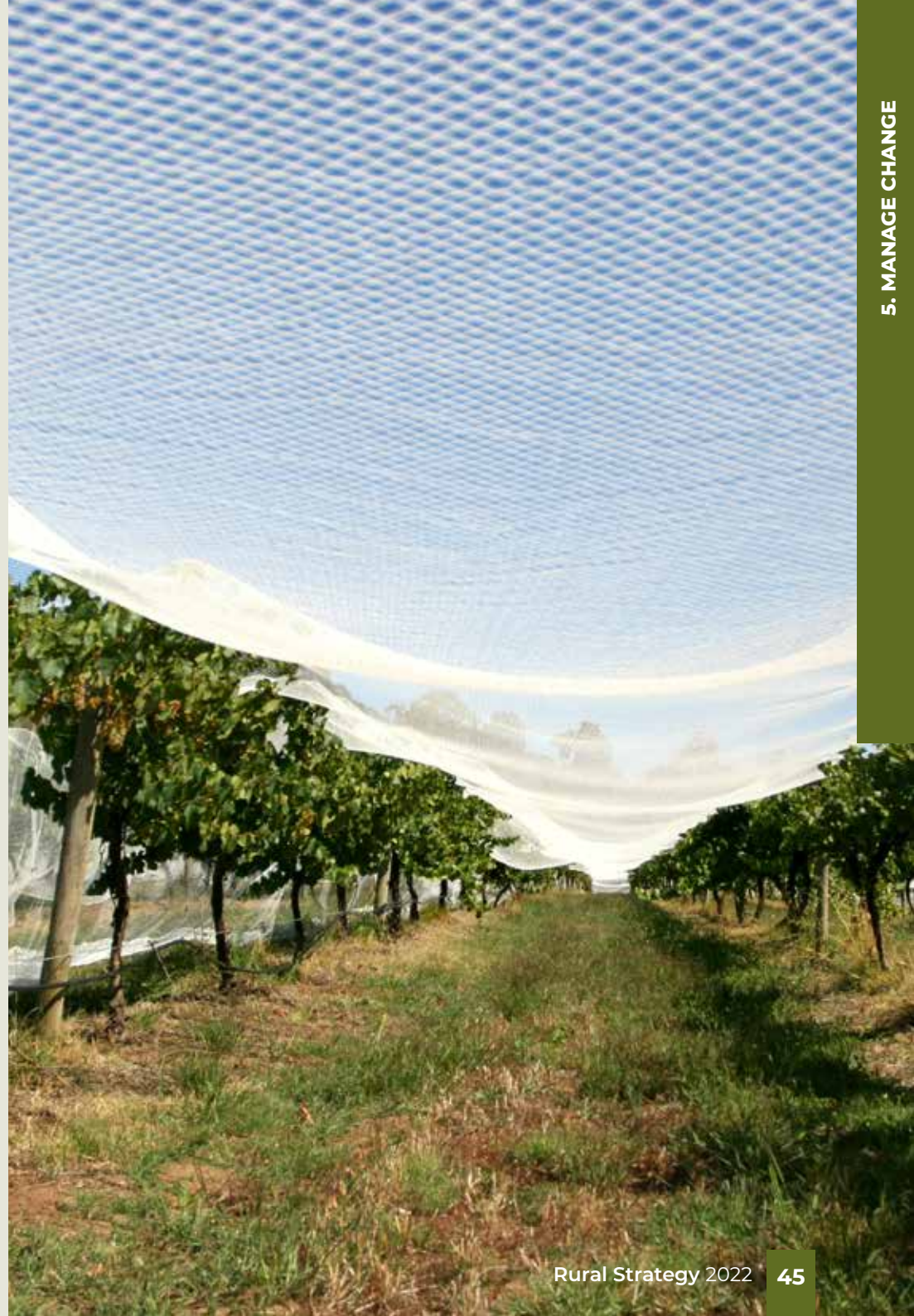
- D20. To ensure proposed land uses are compatible with the Vision for the Hume's rural areas.
- D21. To guide the location and considerations for discretionary uses.
- D22. To limit the impacts on the rural interface from the encroachment of urban development.

Key actions

- A35. Consider how Council can support and assist rural landowners manage the impacts of encroaching urban development
- A36. Translate the Strategy into a Green Wedge Management Plan to align with State Government expectations and clarify implementation of the Strategy's actions.
- A37. Assess land use and development proposals against the Hume Planning Scheme and this Rural Strategy including its Vision and guidance at Appendix 2.
- A38. Apply agent of change principles to ensure that impacts on existing uses and residents are considered and appropriately managed.
- A39. Protect the amenity and values of the rural areas from inappropriate land use and development within the rural areas and on adjacent urban land.

What outcomes will be achieved?

- The Rural Strategy and Green Wedge Management Plan will be used by Council and the community to guide outcomes for Hume's rural areas.
- New land use and development will be required to protect the amenity in recognition of their role as the agent of change.
- Where new development is allowed it will have minimal visual impact on the surrounding areas and be designed to enhance the rural character of the area.
- A road or open space interface will be provided on the urban/rural interface to delineate the urban growth boundary.



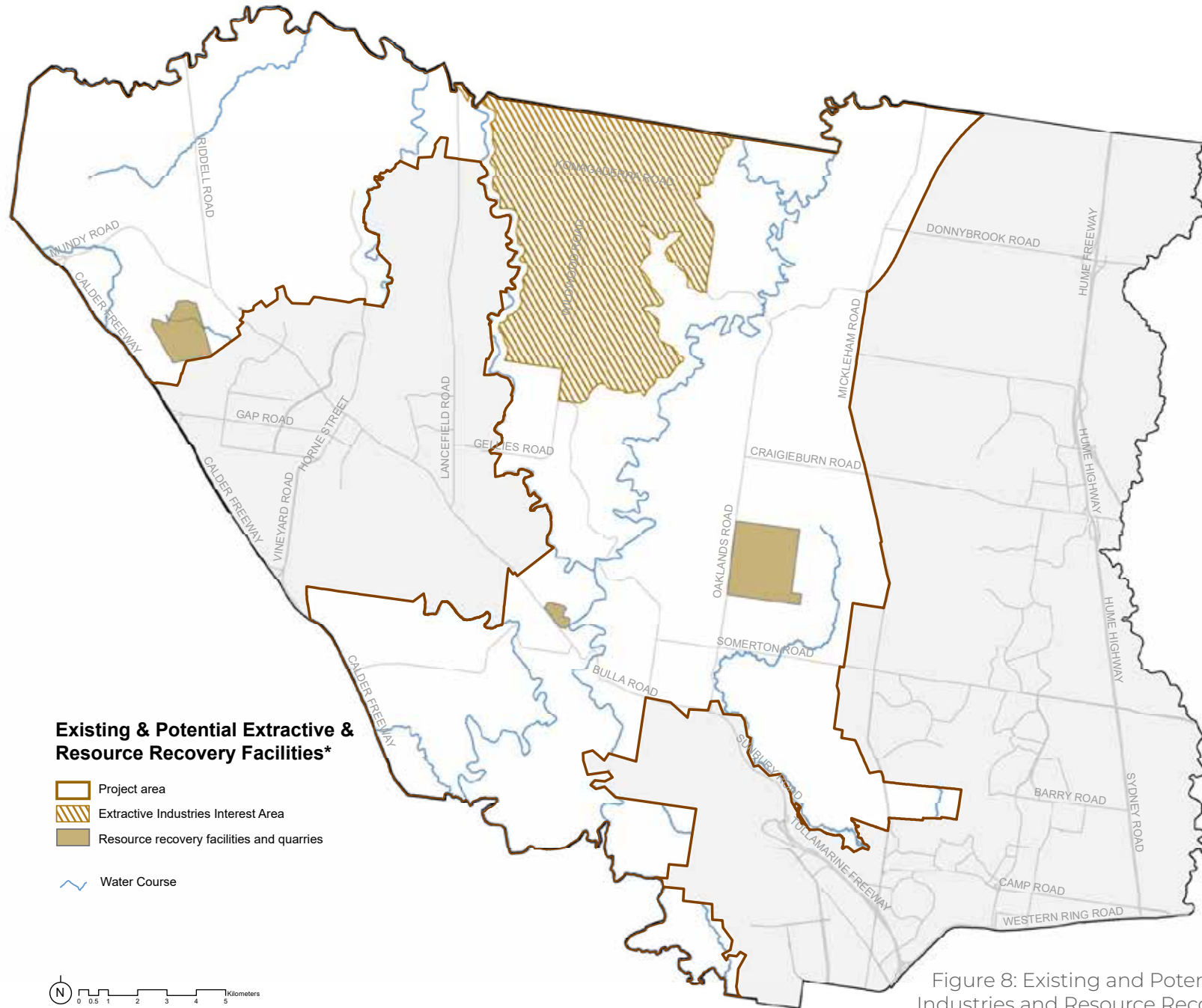


Figure 8: Existing and Potential Extractive Industries and Resource Recovery Facilities



5.3 Manage the impacts of extractive and waste management industries

Manage approvals and introduce statutory buffers around quarries and waste facilities.

Melbourne's green wedges are recognized for their role in providing significant state and regional infrastructure. As well as a role in protecting the airport, Hume's green wedge has a role in accommodating waste and resource recovery and extractive industries (quarries). Large areas of Wildwood and Clarkefield have been identified as an Extractive Industry Interest Area (EIIA) with potential for quarrying the thick layer of basalt and hard rock in the future. Figure 7 identifies existing operations and the EII area.

These are important uses providing essential services of locally sourced quarried materials for construction projects and sites for waste disposal and recycling for nearby metropolitan and regional areas. Their establishment in the rural areas service Melbourne's growing urban communities while ensuring that the noise, smell and other amenity impacts affect a minimal number of people.

The ongoing operation of quarries and waste facilities will continue to be a priority for the rural areas. The need to introduce Buffer Area Overlays will be explored to prevent incompatible land uses and manage compatible activities within the buffer area. Identification and protection of buffer areas is necessary to balance the operation of these facilities while protecting the community from exposure to amenity impacts.

The rural areas are sometimes seen as a convenient option for illegal waste dumping, particularly natural excavated virgin fill materials from urban development and household waste. Dumping of household and construction waste has a negative impact on the environment and appearance of rural areas. Free at-home hard waste collection is offered to Hume residents to discourage waste dumping and illegal waste dumping is enforced under the Environment Protection Act.

This soil, rock, clay and other materials excavated during the construction of housing and other development projects (natural excavated virgin fill) is often dumped without approval on roadsides, in public reserves, and on private properties. The impact of fill material dumping includes an increased risk of erosion; destruction of native vegetation and faunal habitats; visual impacts; and degradation of waterway health (from illegally spreading the fill over large areas within creeks and waterways).

Several sites are lawfully receiving and managing natural excavated virgin fill material under existing approvals. There will continue to be a need to manage the intake of excess soil from housing developments in the future and proposals will be considered under Appendix 2, particularly how impacts on biodiversity, waterways and visual context can be minimised.

Directions

- D23. To protect the role of the rural areas in the provision of waste services and extractive materials.
- D24. To minimise illegal dumping of waste and natural excavated virgin fill materials.

Key actions

- A40. Implement buffer controls for waste and extractive industry sites.
- A41. Manage appropriate locations for natural excavated virgin fill materials from urban development.

What outcomes will be achieved?

- Areas around waste and extractive industry sites will be managed to avoid conflict.
- Clean fill will be disposed of in concentrated, strategic locations so that adverse impacts are managed.







Appendix 1: Consultation and Project Stages

In developing the Rural Strategy, Council has undertaken consultation with the community at each stage of the project, as shown in Figure 8.

All landowners and residents within Hume's rural areas and other interested parties were invited to have their say.

In July 2017, Stage 1 involved a voluntary community survey that provided initial feedback that then informed an Emerging Issues and Options Paper for Hume's rural areas. The survey was posted out to all landowners and occupiers of land in the Study area.

Stage 2, in August 2018, allowed for public feedback on the Emerging Issues and Options Paper.

For Stage 3, following the release of the Draft Rural Strategy in March 2020, the community were invited to attend information sessions. Due to COVID-19 these sessions were delayed until March 2021. These sessions allowed the community to discuss the Draft Rural Strategy with council officers in person. The community were also invited to make a formal submission to the Draft Rural Strategy.



Figure 8: Project stages of community and stakeholder engagement

Appendix 2: Guidance for planning permit applications

Guidance for Planning Proposals

These guidelines are intended to assist applicants and council with new land use and development proposals in the rural areas supporting streamlined and consistent decision making. They expand on controls in the planning scheme being closely based on the purposes and decision guidelines of the Green Wedge Zones and Clause 65 of the Hume Planning Scheme.

They assist in

- balancing the purposes of the Green Wedge with the pressures they experience from proximity to metropolitan Melbourne.
- Guiding the response of use and development outcomes to the Hume's landscape features
- Balancing the impact of new uses and development on surrounding activity
- Managing the infrastructure requirements of development
- Guiding preferred outcomes for schools and places of worship
- Managing the abrupt transition at the interface between urban development and rural areas

The guidelines are presented in five chapters addressing:

1. Land use
2. Design and Siting of use and development
3. Car parking and access, waste management and signage
4. Schools and Places of Worship
5. Urban development at the UGB interface

Element 1 – Land use

Objectives

- To consolidate land uses and retain opportunities for agricultural uses.
- To manage the impact of aircraft noise on noise sensitive land uses.
- To maintain the open, rural landscape character.

Guidelines

Ultimate use

- G 1. Provide details of the ultimate intended scale and mix of uses for the entire site.
- G 2. Cluster activities and associated buildings and works.

Land use with the MAEO and N-contours

- G 3. Locate noise sensitive uses (such as accommodation, place of assembly, place of worship, schools) outside of areas in the MAEO and noise contours where possible.
- G 4. Within the MAEO and the N-contours, mitigate noise impacts on noise sensitive uses.

Tip: It is recommended that early engagement with Melbourne Airport be initiated for noise sensitive development within the MAEO and N-contour boundaries.

Element 2 – Siting use and development

Objectives

- To protect the operation of existing agricultural uses, including animal husbandry.
- To contain the visual impact of new land use and development.
- To consolidate land uses and retain opportunities for agricultural uses.
- To manage the impact of aircraft noise on noise sensitive land uses.
- To maintain the open, rural landscape character.
- To protect visually, historically and environmentally sensitive environments from development.
- To limit the visual impacts of land use, development and works from public vantage points.
- To protect the amenity of rural landowners and residents.
- To meet the waste needs of land use without causing adverse amenity impacts.
- To protect and enhance the environmental values of the local area with indigenous and habitat rich landscaping.

Guidelines

- G 5. Locate land uses and development on sites with the following visual attributes in preference order:
- a. Sites on the immediate edge of the urban area where established road reserve landscaping and topographical features screen or limit views to the facility from public vantage points (roads and public reserves) and creek environs.
 - b. Sites on the immediate edge of the urban area where property landscaping screens or limits views to the facility from public vantage points (roads and public reserves) and creek environs.

G 6. Access should be provided from a continuous network of roads with a minimum seal width of seven metres and the road must be constructed to a standard suitable for the project traffic volumes. In no case should a use be allowed on a local road that would increase traffic volumes to over 3000 vehicles per day based on the cumulative traffic projections of existing and proposed uses.

G 7. Site and design buildings, car parking, vehicle access and driveways and other infrastructure to:

- a. avoid a prominent intrusion in the horizon line by siting the highest point of buildings below ridgelines and break of slopes of volcanic cones and hillsides.
- b. be setback from property boundaries and dwellings on adjacent properties to conceal visual bulk from roads, public land and adjoining properties
- c. be setback from natural features including native vegetation, waterways and habitat of native fauna species to minimize environmental impacts.
- d. be designed and sited to maintain the open views and minimize visual intrusions on the landscape with particular attention to the sensitive landscape contexts of Hume's rural areas.

G8. Manage visual impact by

- a. building design that minimizes visual bulk (for example siting, height, site coverage)
- b. utilising muted colours and discrete materials (avoid reflective, bright and contrasting elements)
- c. reflecting rural character rather than urban building typologies
- d. utilising flatter sites to minimize cutting into slopes.

- G 9. Construct all buildings and works outside of:
- hilltops and areas of steep topography.
 - creek environs and interface with a creek environs.
 - areas identified with high natural or cultural values.

Protecting external amenity

- G 10. Locate activities on sites of sufficient scale to mitigate the noise and light spill impacts on adjoining properties and native fauna habitat through setbacks and buffers within the site.
- G 11. Mitigate impacts on adjoining agricultural operations including with regard to the needs of animals keeping.
- G 12. Demonstrate that noise impacts will meet the relevant Environment Protection Regulations and not cause unreasonable or aggravated noise.
- G 13. Design and site external lighting and sited to manage visibility from adjoining properties and impacts on native fauna.

Landscaping and habitat

- G 14. Protect existing vegetation and habitat in the design and siting of any new development, road crossings and driveways.
- G 15. Avoid or mitigate impacts on habitat fragmentation of development.
- G 16. Reflect and enhance the natural environment and habitat of indigenous plants and animals in the design of landscaping .
- G 17. Use indigenous vegetation species in landscaping to screen buildings. (Landscaping as a means of providing screening should not be viewed as a simple solution to proposals for buildings in prominent locations, especially in areas not already supported by areas of existing vegetation screening.)

Fencing and entrance features

- G 18. Scale fencing and property entrance features that compliments the character of the rural environment.
- G 19. Use open style rural fencing on the boundaries of properties.
- G 20. Use a style, scale and materials for boundary fencing that is rural in nature with a high degree of visual permeability into the site.
- G 21. Security fencing should be located internal to the site and minimized to contain only those elements of the land warranting high levels of protection.

Element 3 – Car parking and access, waste management and signage

Objectives

- To maintain the open, rural landscape character.
- To protect visually, historically and environmentally sensitive environments from development.
- To limit the visual impacts of land use, development and works from public vantage points.
- To protect the amenity of rural landowners and residents.
- To meet the waste needs of land use without causing adverse amenity impacts.
- To protect and enhance the environmental values of the local area with indigenous and habitat rich landscaping.

Guidelines

Car parking and internal access

- G 22. Provide all car parking requirements on site for the ultimate intended scale and mix of uses (without relying on on-street parking).
- G 23. Conceal car parking areas, including overflow car parking areas, from public vantage points and adjacent properties. Tip – Manage views of car parking with generous setbacks from road boundaries and landscaping (however not solely landscape screening).

Managing waste

- G 24. Provide waste and recycling facilities adequate for all on site activities.
- G 25. Position waste storage areas out of view of the public
- G 26. Design and locate waste facilities to contain odour.

- G 27. Site parking areas to minimize amenity impacts on adjoining properties with effective setbacks and siting at the rear of the site and development.
- G 28. Site and design vehicle access to minimize visual intrusion on the landscape with appropriate surface materials (to blend with adjacent ground colours), tree planting compatible with the local environment and character and be designed to minimize visibility, such as minimizing the length of driveways, the need for earth forming and the visual impact on sloping land.
- G 29. For large car parking requirements, split up areas for car parking areas.
- G 30. Use permeable surfaces for car parking associated with overflow/special events.
- G 31. Minimize and consolidate access points onto public roads, where practicable.

Signage

- G 32. Locate signage within 10 metres of the road boundary of a property.
- G 33. Scale and design signage for identification based on the nature of the business rather than for business promotion. If
- G 34. Where a sign is illuminated, lighting should be external and baffled.

Element 4 – Schools and Places of Worship

Schools and place of worship (land used for religious activities) uses can be allowed under the Green Wedge Zone. These uses generally serve urban communities and are ideally located inside the urban growth boundary where access to active and public transport options are available. It is appreciated that independent school providers and religious organisations are looking for sites within the Green Wedge as suitable urban land is very challenging. Where schools or places of worship seek sites within the Green Wedge the following objectives and guidelines will be used.

Objective

To encourage Schools and Places of Worship in locations proximate to urban communities and on roads with capacity for existing and projected traffic volumes.

Guidelines

- G 35. Locate Schools and Places of Worship in Hume's rural areas on (in order of preference):
- a. a declared arterial road on the immediate edge of the urban growth boundary
 - b. a declared arterial road
 - c. a local road within 1km by road of a declared road and with a fully sealed lane width in each direction (minimum 7 metres wide)
- G 36. These uses are discouraged in locations that do not have these transport attributes and will generally not be supported under the Melbourne Airport Environs Overlay.

Note: Proposals will also be assessed under other relevant guidance in this Appendix.

Element 5 – Urban development at the UGB Interface

This interface of the green wedge and urban growth boundary interface is the gateway to Melbourne's metropolitan areas. Appropriate subdivision and development outcomes within the UGB should manage this interface to reduce the abrupt transition between the contrasting rural and urban contexts.

A hard paved road surface within urban development at the interface mitigates some of the risks on the rural areas, for example visibility from public streets will deter trespassing and waste dumping; a paved road and drainage will reduce the spread of invasive species.

Objective

To limit the impacts of urban development adjoining the UGB on adjacent rural land.

Guidelines

- G 37. Provide a public road or public open space (linear paths, wetlands and drainage assets) at the interface of the green wedge and urban growth boundary interface.
- G 38. Avoid backs of urban properties at the interface with the green wedge, particularly where they will have high visibility from existing rural roads/urban gateways.

Appendix 3: Directions and Actions from the Strategy

Directions

Strategic Theme 1: Maintain Hume's Strategic role

- D1. Provide for the curfew free operation of Melbourne Airport.
- D2. Support engagement with the rural community as the airport operations and protections change.
- D3. Provide certainty on the urban growth boundary.
- D4. Maintain separation between Sunbury and other urban settlements.
- D5. Support a diversity of lot sizes in the rural areas by maintaining the current subdivision controls.
- D6. To protect and enhance biodiversity and native vegetation.
- D7. To ensure development and land use does not adversely impact on scenic, environmental or cultural values.
- D8. To protect and promote aesthetic, natural and culturally significant values.
- D9. To respond to the challenges of climate change.
- D10. To identify and manage erosion and potential erosion risk.

Strategic Theme 2: Foster opportunities

- D11. To support the continuation and expansion of existing agricultural land uses.
- D12. To advocate for exploration of opportunities for recycled water, stormwater harvesting and new and innovative agriculture uses and practices.
- D13. To support and enable responsible management on all rural land

- D14. To foster a stronger visitor economy that responds to the unique character and values of the rural areas.
- D15. To encourage the exploration of tourism, hospitality and recreation opportunities on public and private land.

Strategic Theme 3: Manage change

- D16. To support existing and new tourism, hospitality and recreation operations.
- D17. To ensure the safety, amenity and efficiency of local roads for all road users and community.
- D18. To facilitate and encourage the timely delivery of transport projects and upgrades.
- D19. To manage the impact of major transport and infrastructure projects on rural landowners and businesses.
- D20. To ensure proposed land uses are compatible with the Vision for the Hume's rural areas.
- D21. To guide the location and considerations for discretionary uses.
- D22. To limit the impacts on the rural interface from the encroachment of urban development.
- D23. To protect the role of the rural areas in the provision of waste services and extractive materials.
- D24. To minimise illegal dumping of waste and natural excavated virgin fill materials.

Actions

Strategic Theme 1: Maintain Hume's Strategic role

- A1. Ensure planning controls on land in Hume's rural areas continue to limit land uses sensitive to aircraft noise.
- A2. Consider the protection of the Melbourne Airport in the assessment of major development proposals and Council strategies.
- A3. Advocate for affected members of the rural community to be consulted on airport planning, operations and major developments that may impact them.
- A4. Support the current urban growth boundary and subdivision controls applying to the rural areas.
- A5. Support the State Government to monitor the need for housing and employment land in Hume and the northern regions of metropolitan Melbourne to limit land speculation.
- A6. Support the continued use of the rural areas for economic opportunities, including agriculture.
- A7. Develop policy to protect and enhance biodiversity values in Council projects and decisions.
- A8. Introduce the Erosion Management Overlay on land identified as having erosion risk.
- A9. Upgrade overlay controls to appropriately manage the aesthetic, natural and culturally significant values in the rural areas.
- A10. Identify and consider cultural heritage values early in the development of design outcomes for Council projects.
- A11. Assess habitat connectivity needs in the rural areas and develop a strategic approach to enhance connectivity and mitigate risk of habitat fragmentation.

- A12. Implement and review Management Plans for all Council conservation reserves.
- A13. Assist landowners to protect and enhance biodiversity values on private land.
- A14. Support and encourage climate change adaption in rural areas and foster community resilience with information and support.
- A15. Require land use and development proposals to sensitively respond to scenic, environmental and cultural values.
- A16. Maximise the tourism opportunities provided by the aesthetic, natural and culturally significant values of the rural areas.

Strategic Theme 2: Foster opportunities

- A17. Maintain rural landowner engagement activities to support good land management and agricultural knowledge and opportunities.
- A18. Encourage landowners to work with neighbours in improving broadscale land management and channeling the benefits of effective collaboration.
- A19. Commence a weed compliance program that requires control of noxious weeds on poorly managed properties.
- A20. Provide agriculture and land management programs to educate and support rural landowners.
- A21. Provide support and information suitable for agricultural land users.
- A22. Offer courses throughout the year on business planning; financial management and tax; and marketing available to all Hume businesses, including agricultural businesses.

- A23. Encourage water authorities to increase incentives for sustainable water use from surface water, waterways, recycled water and harvested stormwater to provide secure water supply and maintain and improve the flow rates of natural waterways.
- A24. Encourage water authorities and Government agencies to explore opportunities to provide affordable recycled water or harvested stormwater to the rural areas.
- A25. Support tourism, hospitality and recreation uses where they do not adversely impact on the natural and cultural environment or the visual amenity of the area.
- A26. Direct larger scale tourism, hospitality and recreation uses to locations on major arterial roads.
- A27. Improve landowner awareness of the potential for tourism and related activities through events and through case study articles in Council documents.
- A28. Advocate for changes to the Victoria Planning Provisions to reduce the restrictions on tourism, hospitality and related business uses in Hume's Green Wedge controls.
- A29. Explore the feasibility of developing small scale recreation, visitor roadside trails and lookout points.
- A30. Explore how public land in rural areas can be enhanced to support public use and access, including the potential for recreation trails along creeks in the longer term.
- A31. Advocate to the State Government for a coordinated regional approach for tourism in Hume's green wedge.

Strategic Theme 3: Manage change

- A32. Provide user friendly guidance on planning controls affecting the rural areas and increase landowner awareness of the potential for tourism and related activities.
- A33. Advocate for the timely delivery of major road and transport infrastructure in rural areas to minimise traffic on local rural roads.
- A34. Advocate that major transport and infrastructure projects prioritise consultation with affected landowners throughout all stages from site scoping to detailed design.
- A35. Consider how Council can support and assist rural landowners manage the impacts of encroaching urban development
- A36. Translate the Strategy into a Green Wedge Management Plan to align with State Government expectations and clarify implementation of the Strategy's actions.
- A37. Assess land use and development proposals against the Hume Planning Scheme and this Rural Strategy including its Vision and guidance at Appendix 2.
- A38. Apply agent of change principles to ensure that impacts on existing uses and residents are considered and appropriately managed.
- A39. Protect the amenity and values of the rural areas from inappropriate land use and development within the rural areas and on adjacent urban land.
- A40. Implement buffer controls for waste and extractive industry sites.
- A41. Manage appropriate locations for natural excavated virgin fill materials from urban development.

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