

PSP 1070

# Wollert

Precinct Structure Plan

C187

## Amendment to the Whittlesea Planning Scheme

Panel Hearing  
Commencing 7 December 2015  
Heard at Melbourne

November 2015

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# PART A

## Introduction & amendment overview

## 1. Introduction

This submission is made on behalf of the Metropolitan Planning Authority (MPA), formerly the Growth Areas Authority (GAA). This submission is provided to the Panel on Monday 23 November 2015, two weeks in advance of the commencement of the hearing, at the request of the Panel.

The MPA is the Planning Authority for Amendment C187 to the *Whittlesea Planning Scheme* (the Amendment).

The Amendment has been prepared by the MPA with the support of City of Whittlesea (CoW), stakeholders, landowners, and government agencies.

## 2. Preliminary matters – Panel directions

### 2.1. Formal response to all submissions

A summary of unresolved submissions accompanies this submission, which details the matters which the MPA consider to be outstanding and require referral to the Panel. A list of changes is also provided which sets out the MPA's position in response to the matters raised by the submissions and what changes are intended to be made to the documents to address these issues.

A copy of the table responding to the unresolved matters raised by submissions can be found at Appendix 1. The list of changes table can be found at Appendix 2 with a copy of the proposed track changes to the planning scheme ordinance at Appendix 3 and Explanatory Report at Appendix 4.

Any subsequent communications between the MPA and stakeholders since circulation of this Part A statement will be addressed on day 1 of the Panel hearing.

### 2.2. Proposed changes to documents table

If required, any further changes to the documents from what is circulated on the 27th October will be tabled on day 1 of the Panel Hearing.

## 3. Whole of Government Position

The position presented by the MPA in this submission represents a whole of government submission. The MPA received submissions from a number of State government agencies and departments, and the following submission represents the agreed position of the following:

- Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning
- Melbourne Water
- VicRoads
- Public Transport Victoria
- Metropolitan Waste and Resource Recovery Group
- Country Fire Authority.

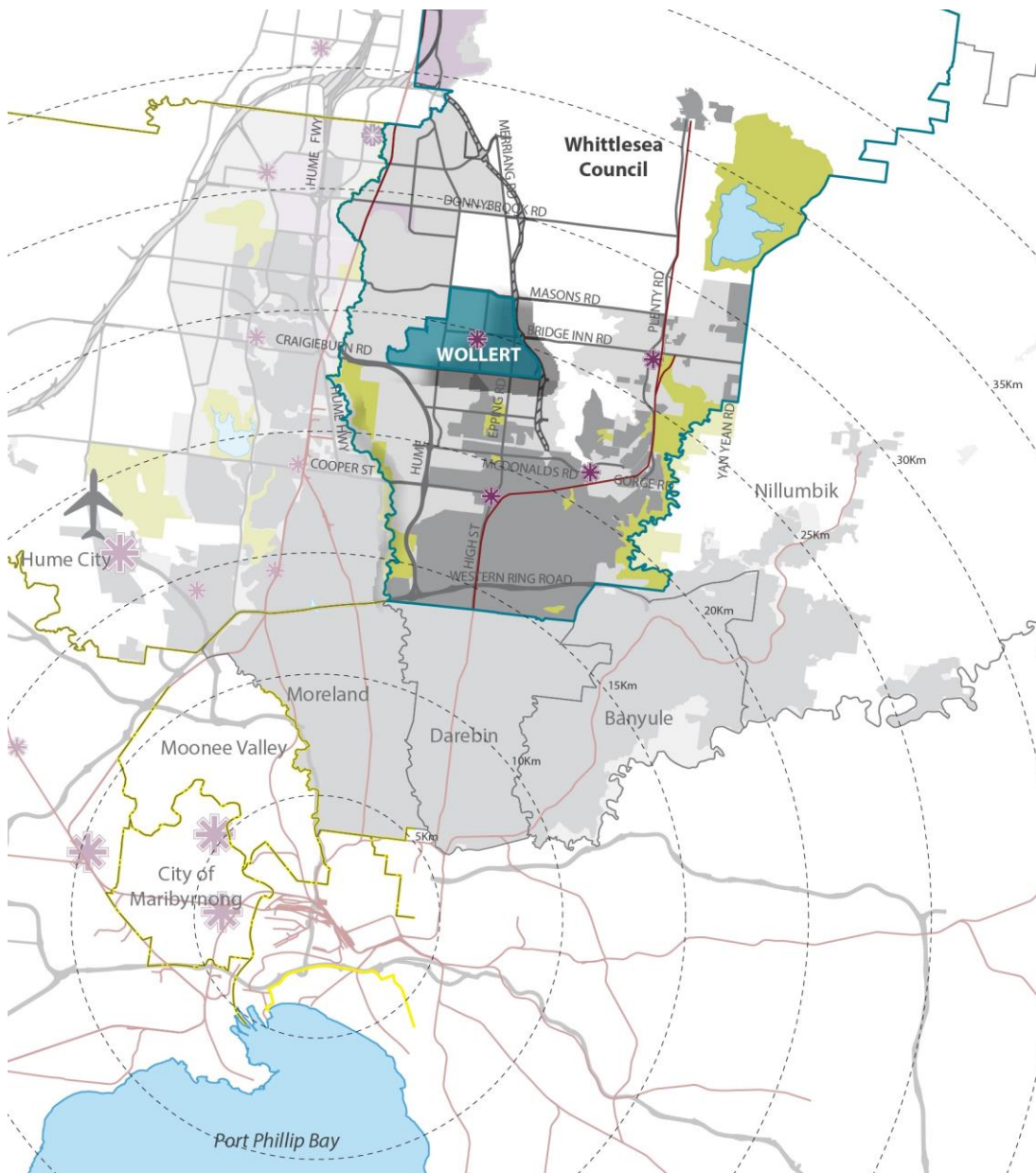
While a formal submission was not made by the Environment Protection Authority (EPA), the MPA has consulted with the EPA on relevant issues, particularly in relation to the landfill and quarry buffer requirements.

MPA also appears on behalf of the above State government departments and agencies at the Panel hearing.

## 4. Local Context

Located in Wollert, the precinct covers an area of approximately 1434 hectares of land as illustrated in the Figure 1.

The precinct is bound by Craigieburn Road to the south, Summerhill Road to the north, Curly Sedge Creek to the west and the future E6 road reservation to the east.



**Figure 1** Regional Context Plan

#### 4.1. Surrounding land use and development

The Wollert precinct is immediately north of the existing Epping North growth area. The Northern Quarries investigation area exists to the west, the existing Wollert landfill and quarry to the east and areas beyond the Urban Growth Boundary to the north that includes an investigation area for the Grassy Woodland Reserve.

#### 4.2. Freeway and arterial road network

Craigieburn Road is a declared arterial road providing city-bound access from the Wollert Precinct to the Craigieburn Bypass to the west. Epping Road, also a declared arterial road, provides north-south access within the precinct and to adjoining areas, being Epping to the south and Donnybrook to the north. VicRoads is the coordinating road authority responsible for further upgrades of Craigieburn and Epping Roads, including future road widening and intersection delivery.

#### 4.3. Future E6 reservation

The reservation for the proposed E6 (currently covered by a Public Acquisition Overlay) forms the eastern edge of the Wollert precinct. It is proposed that the E6 will provide north-south connections to the South Morang Major Activity Centre and further south to the Metropolitan Ring Road in the south. The proposed alignment will also provide a connection with the Hume Freeway to the north. Provision has been preserved in the E6 reservation for a number of potential interchanges including at Findon Road, Craigieburn Road and Bridge Inn/Boundary Road.

#### 4.4. Rail services and bus network

Fixed rail public transport is available several kilometres south of the Wollert Precinct at Epping on the South Morang line and west of the precinct at Craigieburn. A high capacity public transport corridor reservation extends from Lalor Station (also on the South Morang train line) northwards to Craigieburn Road East. The PSP proposes an extension of this reservation to be extended northwards to the south of the Wollert Major Town Centre. This extension is endorsed by Public Transport Victoria, City of Whittlesea and the landowner. The exact nature of public transport provided and timing of provision for this higher capacity public transport infrastructure are yet to be determined, however it is noted that the reservation has been designed to accommodate rail services. In the short to medium term, this corridor has the potential to be utilised for Bus Rapid Transit services, as envisaged in the North Growth Corridor Plan.

Currently, no bus routes service the area in which the precinct is located. However the provision of a future bus capable road network is proposed as part of the Wollert PSP.

#### 4.5. Open space

Once developed, the Wollert PSP will include a significant quantity of open space including local parks, and sporting reserves. These facilities will accommodate the delivery of sports such as Australian Rules, cricket, soccer, netball, tennis as well as multipurpose indoor and outdoor facilities. The local

parks have been nominated to serve their local catchment and preserve River Red Gums and/or stony knolls where possible. Additionally, two high pressure gas pipeline easements and a high voltage electricity transmission easement provide opportunities for additional green linkages within the precinct. Open spaces have been located such that they provide an integrated and accessible network, linked by pedestrian and cycling paths.

## 5. Framework for Growth Area Development

Growth area planning is guided by a hierarchy of plans prepared by state and local governments at a municipal or precinct level. The hierarchy of plans provide the framework for growth area planning and development and seek to achieve the objectives of the *State Planning Policy Framework*.

### 5.1. Background

The Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) designates the long-term limits of urban development and where non-urban values and land uses should prevail in metropolitan Melbourne.

The UGB first came into effect in 2002 in conjunction with the release of *Melbourne 2030*. This plan established the long term plan for land within the UGB, including the intention to review the boundary at an appropriate time in the future.

The initiative of *Melbourne at 5 Million* in 2008 and the subsequent *Delivering Melbourne's Newest Sustainable Communities Program Report 2009* facilitated the expansion of the UGB in 2010. It was at this time that the land which forms the Wollert precinct was brought into the UGB.

Work on Melbourne's Growth Corridor Plans began in 2011, with consultation at the end of the same year. These plans were formally approved by the Minister of Planning in mid-2012. These are discussed in more detail below.

### 5.2. Growth Corridor Plans: Managing Melbourne's Growth

The *Growth Corridor Plans: Managing Melbourne's Growth* (GCP) are high level integrated land use and transport plans that provide a strategy for the development of Melbourne's growth corridors over the next thirty to forty years.

These plans will guide the delivery of key housing, employment and transport infrastructure and open space in Melbourne's newest metropolitan suburbs.

The GCP identifies:

- the long term pattern of land use and development
- committed transport networks as well as network options for investigation
- committed regional open space networks as well as investigation sites
- opportunities for creating green corridors.

The GCP informs the development and review of local planning schemes and the preparation of future strategies, structure plans and other planning tools. They also provide a strategic basis for infrastructure and service planning as well as sequencing of land release.

The preparation of PSPs is the primary vehicle for the implementation of the GCP.

The North Growth Corridor Plan covers Melbourne's northern corridor and includes large areas of the CoW, Hume City Council and Mitchell Shire Council.

The North Growth Corridor Plan outlines key existing and future infrastructure items in direct proximity to the precinct that will provide direct or flow-on benefits to future residents in the area, including:

- Roads and public transport
  - The Melbourne-Sydney rail line will act as an integral part of the Northern Growth Corridor with development opportunities focused around this asset
  - The high capacity public transport corridor will be extended from Lalor station, providing connection to the south
  - Outer Metropolitan Ring road
  - The Hume Freeway
- Community, health and education facilities
  - La Trobe University and RMIT at Bundoora, Kagan Institute at Broadmeadows and Craigieburn and NMIT at Epping and Greensborough will provide the northern corridor with post compulsory education opportunities
  - Health Services – The Northern Hospital, Bundoora Extended Care Centre, Broadmeadows Health Service, Craigieburn Health Service and PANCH Community Health Service
  - The Austin Hospital
  - Northern Hospital at Epping and Kilmore and District Hospital currently being expanded
  - Primary, secondary and tertiary health services provided by the Northern Hospital, Epping and development of super clinics at Wallan and South Morang
  - Donnybrook and Mickleham town centres will provide comprehensive and specialist education health and community facilities
- Employment
  - Broadmeadows Central Activities Area is expected to be the primary regional centre of the North Corridor, complemented by Epping primary town centre and a new principal town centre at Donnybrook as well as a network of existing and planning major town centres across the corridor
  - New major town centres are identified at Mickleham, West Beveridge, Wollert and Mernda

- Industrial precincts at Mickleham and Donnybrook Road
- Open space and biodiversity
  - Protection of the Merri Creek via the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy
  - Metropolitan Trail Network.

The approved North Growth Corridor Plan identifies the Wollert Precinct as primarily residential, with an area of employment land along Epping Road, adjacent to the existing Wollert Quarry and Landfill. Additionally, three areas are nominated as having 'Biodiversity values' in the south-western portion of the precinct. Conservation Area 34 has subsequently been identified as no longer requiring preservation for the Growling Grass Frog. This is discussed in more detail in section 5.3.6 below.

### 5.3. Melbourne Strategic Assessment and Biodiversity Conservation Strategy

#### 5.3.1. Melbourne's Strategic Assessment (MSA)

In June 2009, the Victorian and Commonwealth governments agreed to undertake a strategic assessment of the Victorian Government's urban development program *Delivering Melbourne's Newest Sustainable Communities*

The program involves urban development in four growth corridors and in 28 existing urban precincts, as well as the development of a Regional Rail Link Corridor between Werribee and Deer Park and the Outer Metropolitan Ring/E6 Transport Corridor.

The areas included in the program and covered by the MSA are:

- Areas added to the Urban Growth Boundary by planning scheme amendment VC68 (the 2010 Urban Growth Boundary) – this includes the Wollert precinct
- Areas in the Outer Metropolitan Ring/E6 Transport Corridor and the Regional Rail Link corridor
- Areas in the existing 28 urban precincts within the 2005 Urban Growth Boundary.

The Melbourne Strategic Assessment (MSA) evaluated the impacts of the Victorian Government's urban development program for Melbourne on matters of national environmental significance (MNES) protected under the Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act). It also establishes conservation measures to mitigate these impacts. The MSA required the Victorian Government to make commitments to the Commonwealth Government in relation to conservation outcomes and measures to protect these MNES, which are outlined in *Delivering Melbourne's Newest Sustainable Communities Program Report 1* (the Program Report).

A copy of the Commonwealth notice to endorse the program to revise the Melbourne Urban Growth Boundary as signed in February 2010 can be found at Appendix 6.

### 5.3.2. Biodiversity Conservation Strategy

The MSA included a commitment to prepare the *Biodiversity Conservation Strategy for Melbourne's Growth Corridors* (BCS), which describes the overarching strategy for the protection of biodiversity within Melbourne's growth corridors.

The BCS was approved by the Commonwealth Minister for the Environment in 2013 and finalises the planning for biodiversity under the Melbourne Strategic Assessment.

The BCS sets out the conservation measures required for Victoria to satisfy the commitments made to the Commonwealth Government under the MSA and meet State requirements for biodiversity under Victorian planning schemes. These conservation measures will be funded using a cost recovery model.

The purpose of the BCS is to:

- Inform and Guide the preparation of the Growth Corridor Plans
- Outline how the conservation outcomes for MNES in the Program Report will be achieved spatially within the growth corridors and how impact on the matters will be mitigated
- Identify land within the growth corridors that is required to be protected due to the sub-regional species strategies and the prescriptions for matters of national environmental significance
- Identify how areas set aside for conservation purposes will be managed
- Identify how mitigation measures will be implemented.

Essentially, the BCS identifies those MNES that must be protected and conserved and those areas that can be removed to enable the urban expansion of Melbourne. With regard to the Wollert precinct all areas can be developed for urban purposes with the exception of Conservation Areas 31 and 32.

### 5.3.3. Time Stamping Native Vegetation

The time-stamping project captured and "time-stamped" native vegetation information to establish a native vegetation dataset and maps showing the type, extent and condition of all native vegetation in the growth corridors. This information has been used, along with information on threatened species habitat from the conservation strategies, to calculate habitat compensation obligations and native vegetation offsets for urban development.

The time-stamping data applies to the four growth corridors in the expanded 2010 Urban Growth Boundary and 16 of the existing 28 urban precincts in the 2005 Urban Growth Boundary covered by the BCS.

The Victorian Government undertook extensive consultation as part of the time-stamping project; providing opportunities for landowners to review the Department of Environment Land Water and Planning's (DELWP) understanding of the native vegetation on their property and submit changes for consideration.

The report *Time-stamping native vegetation data – Public Consultation 2010 – 12 Final Report* (May 2013) outlines the growth corridor native vegetation survey, the public consultation process and explains how the data set was finalised.

#### **5.3.4. Habitat Compensation**

The habitat compensation scheme provides enables collection of offsets for the removal of native vegetation and loss of habitat for threatened species protected under the EPBC Act on land developed for urban uses within Melbourne’s growth corridors.

The introduction of a flat fee for native vegetation removal and loss of habitat for threatened species affected by urban development in Melbourne’s growth corridors provides a streamlined and consistent offset framework for landowners to make informed decisions about the costs of development. It also means that landowners can meet their offset obligations with an in-lieu payment and will not be required to undertake assessments or enter into negotiations. The availability of staged fee payments acknowledges the scale and sequencing of development in the growth corridors and responds to the request from industry for this flexible payment option to be made available.

The document named *Habitat Compensation under the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy August 2011* provides further details of the cost recovery model, the required fees and the obligations and means by which the habitat compensation system operates.

#### **5.3.5. Commonwealth Approval for Urban Development for North Corridor under the MSA**

On 5 September 2013 the Commonwealth Minister for the Environment approved all actions associated with urban development in the northern growth corridor as described in the BCS. Importantly this approval was issued subject to conditions. Condition 4 of the approval are pertinent to Conservation Areas 31 and 32, which allows for the boundary of the conservation area to be refined and altered with the approval from the Commonwealth Minister for the Environment.

The approval for urban development can be found at Appendix 7.

### **5.4. Biodiversity Conservation Strategy Matters Specific to the Wollert Precinct**

#### **5.4.1. Conservation Areas**

The Wollert precinct contains Conservation Area 31 and part of Conservation Area 32 as per the BCS which seeks to protect nationally significant biodiversity values.

The table on page 111 of the BCS describes Conservation Area 31 (see Figure 2). The key rationale for the protection of the area is to protect Grassy Eucalypt Woodland within a practically manageable area. The conservation area contributes to the target to protect 80 per cent of all Grassy Eucalypt Woodland within the 2010 UGB. The BCS also allows for the possibility of reviewing the boundary of Conservation Area 31 at the precinct structure planning stage if necessary.

## Conservation area 31, Northern Growth Corridor: Craigieburn Road (East), Wollert

Total area and boundary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; 29.75 hectares</li> <li>&gt; Boundary is shown in Figure 47</li> </ul> <p>Note: Further planning work in this area may require the conservation area boundary to be reviewed at the precinct structure planning stage</p>
Management category	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Nature conservation</li> </ul>
Key rationale for protection of area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Protects Grassy Eucalypt Woodland within a practically manageable area</li> </ul>
Biodiversity values of national significance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Grassy Eucalypt Woodland</li> </ul>
Biodiversity values of state significance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Western Basalt Plains (River Red Gum) Grassy Woodland Floristic Community 55-04</li> </ul>
Contribution of area to achievement of conservation outcomes in the program report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Contributes to the target to protect 80 per cent of all Grassy Eucalypt Woodland within the 2010 Urban Growth Boundary</li> </ul>
Further actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Review conservation area boundary at the precinct structure planning stage if necessary. Any revised conservation area: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– should generally be similar to that shown in the BCS</li> <li>– must protect Grassy Eucalypt Woodland as mapped in the BCS (see Figures 19 and 20) and/or as defined under the <i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i></li> <li>– must protect populations and high quality habitat of any other matters of national environmental significance</li> <li>– must be to the satisfaction of DEPI</li> </ul> </li> <li>&gt; Protect conservation area through the following actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– apply appropriate planning provisions to the land depending on the circumstances (may include a Rural Conservation Zone, an Environmental Significance Overlay or another statutory mechanism) to be determined by the State Minister for Planning</li> <li>– prepare conservation management plan and ensure planning provisions for implementation and funding are in place</li> <li>– establish management agreements with landowners under section 69 of the <i>Conservation Forests and Lands Act 1987</i> and/or transfer land to Crown where an appropriate public land manager is available</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Reference: See Appendix 3; DSE (2011c)

### Figure 2 Conservation Area 31, Northern Growth Corridor: Craigieburn Road (East), Wollert

The table on page 112 of the BCS describes Conservation Area 32 (see Figure 3). The key rationale for the protection of the area is to protect native grassland that contains a range of biodiversity values of national significance, particularly Natural Temperate Grassland, Striped Legless Lizard and populations of Curly Sedge. The BCS also allows for the possibility of reviewing the boundary of Conservation Area 32 at the precinct structure planning stage if necessary.

### Conservation area 32, Northern Growth Corridor: Craigieburn Road (West), Wollert

Total area and boundary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; 154.64 hectares</li> <li>&gt; Boundary is shown in Figure 47</li> </ul> <p>Note: Further planning work in this area may require the conservation area boundary to be reviewed at the precinct structure planning stage</p>
Management category	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Nature conservation</li> </ul>
Key rationale for protection of area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Protects native grassland that contains a range of biodiversity values of national significance within a practically manageable area</li> </ul>
Biodiversity values of national significance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Natural Temperate Grassland</li> <li>&gt; Curly Sedge population within high quality habitat</li> <li>&gt; Striped Legless Lizard habitat</li> <li>&gt; Matted Flax-lily population (not confirmed) within high quality habitat</li> <li>&gt; Habitat for Plains-wanderer</li> </ul>
Biodiversity values of state significance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Western (Basalt) Plains Grasslands Community</li> <li>&gt; Curly Sedge</li> <li>&gt; Striped Legless Lizard habitat</li> <li>&gt; Plains-wanderer habitat</li> <li>&gt; Tough Scurf-pea</li> </ul>
Contribution of area to achievement of conservation outcomes in the program report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Establishes a small conservation area within the growth corridors to protect Natural Temperate Grassland</li> <li>&gt; Contributes to ensuring sustainable populations of Striped Legless Lizard</li> <li>&gt; Contributes to ensuring no substantial negative change to known populations of Curly Sedge</li> </ul>
Further actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Review conservation area boundary at the precinct structure planning stage if necessary. Any revised conservation area:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– should generally be similar to that shown in the BCS</li> <li>– must protect populations and high quality habitat of matters of national environmental significance</li> <li>– must be to the satisfaction of DEPI</li> </ul> </li> <li>&gt; Protect conservation area through the following actions:</li> <li>&gt; apply appropriate planning provisions to the land depending on the circumstances (may include a Rural Conservation Zone, an Environmental Significance Overlay or another statutory mechanism) to be determined by the State Minister for Planning             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– prepare conservation management plan and ensure planning provisions for implementation and funding are in place</li> <li>– establish management agreements with landowners under section 69 of the <i>Conservation Forests and Lands Act 1987</i> and/or transfer land to Crown where an appropriate public land manager is available</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Reference: DSE (2011c)

### Figure 3 Conservation Area 32, Northern Growth Corridor, Craigieburn Road (West), Wollert

A copy of Figures 47 – *Conservation area 31, Craigieburn Road (East), Wollert; Conservation area 32, Craigieburn Road (West), Wollert* of the BCS can also be found at Appendix 8.

The BCS identifies Conservation Area 34 along Edgars Creek for the protection of the Growling Grass Frog. A subsequent independent review of the area however, found there was a low likelihood that individuals would colonise Conservation Area 34 following a decrease in the local source population. The review was initiated due to improper process having been followed during the finalisation of the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy and Sub-regional Species Strategy for the Growling Grass Frog. On this basis DELWP accepted the review's recommendation that the conservation area be removed from this location and this decision was subsequently supported by the Commonwealth Department of the Environment.

The approval of the change to the boundary of Conservation Area 34 can be found at Appendix 9.

#### **5.4.2. Conservation Area Boundary Reviews**

The BCS identifies further actions in relation to Conservation Areas 31 and 32 and the capacity to review conservation area boundaries at the precinct structure planning stage if necessary (see Figure 2 and Figure 3). Guidance is provided when making changes to the boundaries of Conservation Area in the working document *Guidance Note: Implementing the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy for Melbourne's Growth Corridors* (Guidance Note). As Conservation Areas 31 and 32 fall within the Nature Conservation category, an application must be made to and approved by DELWP before being forwarded to the Commonwealth Minister for the Environment for approval.

DELWP is currently considering changes to Conservation Areas 31 and 32 to ensure they accurately reflect the conservation values on the ground. These reviews have been informed by flora and fauna site assessments, completed in accordance with DELWP's requirements.

Providing the boundary changes receive Commonwealth approval prior to finalization of the PSP, the Future Urban Structure and associated plans, land budget and DCP will be amended to reflect any changes to the area of developable land within the precinct. The changes under consideration are minor in scale and will not unduly influence the need for facilities, services or other demands.

#### **5.4.3. Local Conservation Reserves**

In addition to Conservation Areas 31 and 32 identified in the BCS, the Wollert PSP identifies six local conservation reserves that are intended to protect values of biodiversity, landscape, cultural and historic heritage. They have also been located to connect with the broader open space and biodiversity conservation network.

Under the Commonwealth approvals for urban development in Melbourne's Growth corridors (see Appendix 7), habitat compensation fees are applicable for areas not identified as Conservation Areas in the BCS. However, the Section 5 of the Guidance Note specifies that native vegetation and habitat proposed to be retained outside conservation areas may be exempt from offset fees providing a number of criteria are met.

At present, the Local Conservation Reserves proposed in the PSP cannot be considered retained according to the criteria set out in the Guidance Note. DELWP is considering a revision of the Guidance Note that would allow the Local Conservation Reserves to be considered retained and therefore exempt from offset payments. The MPA is awaiting advice from DELWP in relation to this

issue. Provided the status of the Local Conservation Reserves is confirmed prior to the finalisation of the PSP, the document, plans and ordinances will be revised to reflect any change in status.

#### **5.4.4.Scattered Trees**

Habitat compensation fees are required for scattered trees outside conservation areas identified in the BCS unless they are deemed by DELWP to be 'retained' in accordance with the criteria set out in the Guidance Note.

The CoW made an application to DELWP on 8 October 2014 to have tree retention standards recognised as providing appropriate level of protection to be considered retained. DELWP considered the application against the decision guidelines outlined in the Guidance Note and determined that the adoption of the CoW's standards are likely to provide equal or greater protection of scattered trees to the criteria in the Guidance Note. Consequently, trees that are retained in accordance with the CoW's tree retention standards will not be liable for offset payments.

A copy of DELWP's approval of CoW's tree protection standards is provided in Appendix 10.

#### **5.4.5.Vearings Road Upgrade within Conservation Area 31**

An application was made to upgrade Vearings Road to a sealed road within Conservation Area 31. DELWP assessed the proposal against condition 2 of the Commonwealth's 2013 Part 10 approval, which regulates urban development in the growth corridors under the EPBC Act. To inform the assessment, DELWP used the decision guidelines outlined in Guidance Note.

DELWP's assessment determined a referral to the Commonwealth Minister for the Environment was not required as there will be no net loss of habitat for a MNES.

DELWP agreed to the upgrade of Vearings Road under the Melbourne Strategic Assessment program provided the construction occurs:

- Within the construction footprint provided as part of the application
- In accordance with an Environmental Management Plan endorsed by DELWP prior to the commencement of works.

Habitat compensation obligations payable for the proposed development.

A copy of DELWP's approval to upgrade Vearings Road is provided in Appendix 11.

## **5.5. Plan Melbourne**

*Plan Melbourne: Metropolitan Planning Strategy*, an adopted government policy document released by the Victorian Government in May 2014, outlines the provision of necessary infrastructure and support for development proposed by the North Growth Corridor Plan as part of its discussion regarding Melbourne's Northern Subregion.

## 5.6. Ministerial Directions

The Amendment complies with the Ministerial Directions applicable to the Amendment including:

### 5.7. Ministerial Direction 11, Strategic Assessment of Amendments

The Amendment has been strategically assessed in accordance with the assessment criteria set out in *Ministerial Direction 11*.

The Amendment will implement the objectives of planning in Victoria by providing for the fair, orderly, economic and sustainable use of land identified for urban purposes.

The Amendment has addressed environmental effects, as the pattern of land use and development was guided by studies of the area relating to flora and fauna, flooding and drainage.

The Amendment has addressed social and economic effects. It is expected to have a positive social and economic effect through the provision of additional housing and community facilities, as well as the creation of local employment opportunities.

### 5.8. Ministerial Direction 12, Urban Growth Areas

This Direction applies to the preparation of any planning scheme amendment that provides for the incorporation of a PSP in the scheme or the introduction of, or changes to, provisions in a schedule to the Urban Growth Zone (UGZ). Therefore, the Direction applies to the Amendment.

The Direction provides that the Amendment must implement the *Growth Area Corridor Plan* relevant to the land and must be in accordance with applicable *Precinct Structure Plan Guidelines*.

### 5.9. Precinct Structure Plan Guidelines and the Urban Growth Zone

On 7 October 2009 the Minister for Planning launched the *Precinct Structure Planning Guidelines*. These Guidelines replace the draft 2006 version and provide a tool for designing and delivering better quality communities in growth areas. They set out the key objectives of growth area planning and include a step by step guide on how to achieve the identified objectives.

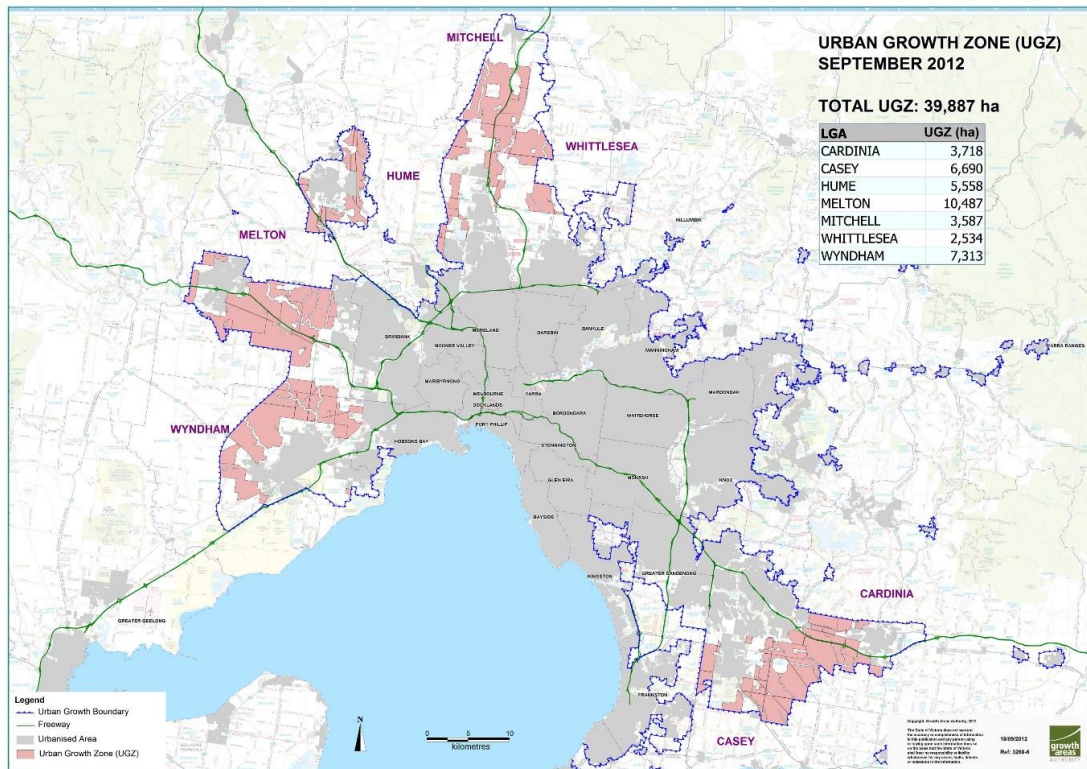
The overarching objectives for PSPs are set out in the guidelines.

They are to:

- Establish a sense of place and community
- Create greater housing choice diversity and affordable places to live
- Create highly accessible and vibrant activity centres
- Provide local employment and business activity
- Provide better transport choices
- Respond to climate change and increase environmental sustainability

- Deliver accessible, integrated and adaptable community infrastructure.

The UGZ applies to land that has been identified for future urban development within the UGB (Figure 4). The UGZ sits within the suite of zones within the *Victorian Planning Provisions*. It has been specifically designed to implement an incorporated PSP and ensure that future development accords with the approved PSP.



**Figure 4 Urban Growth Zone Areas, MPA (formerly Growth Areas Authority)**

The UGZ includes two parts:

1. Part A - Applies to land when no PSP applies; and
2. Part B – Applies to land when a PSP applies.

The land subject to this amendment is included within a PSP and as such Part B of the UGZ will be applicable once the amendment is completed. The UGZ includes zone provisions which seek to provide certainty about the nature of future development, streamline the approval process and ensure that permits for development accord with the incorporated PSP.

A schedule to the Urban Growth Zone is drafted for each PSP area and can include requirements for land use, buildings and works, application/advertising requirements, decision guidelines and any other conditions/requirements.

The UGZ Schedule for Amendment C187 to the *Whittlesea Planning Scheme* has been designed to ascribe a suite of Victoria Planning Provision zones to guide future use and development of the site through the specification of conditions and requirements for permits. The design of the zone promotes consistency in the manner in which planning authorities deal with land use issues and ensures that the zone implements the State Planning Policy Framework.

The UGZ Schedule 5 for Wollert and the Development Contribution Plan Overlay (DCPO) Schedule 16 have been prepared for these amendments. They have been structured in such a way that the ultimate translation to conventional Victorian Planning Provision zones can occur in a timely and efficient manner once the land has been developed.

The DCPO implements the relevant Development Contributions Plan (DCP) related to the development of a precinct, a document that sets out the requirements for infrastructure funding across the precinct.

A copy of the latest version of the UGZ schedule can be found with other amended Ordinances at Appendix 3.

## 5.10. State Planning Policy Framework

The *State Planning Policy Framework* (SPPF) ensures that the objectives of section 4 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* are implemented through appropriate land use development by addressing environmental, social and economic factors to achieve sustainable development.

The relevant clauses and provisions of the SPPF are:

- Clause 11 – Settlement
- Clause 12 – Environment and Landscape Values
- Clause 15 – Built Environment and Heritage
- Clause 16 – Housing
- Clause 18 – Transport
- Clause 19 – Infrastructure.

The Amendment achieves the objectives of the above clauses by:

- Providing a plan for the zoned land suitable for housing, commercial, recreation, open space and council infrastructure opportunities
- Planning for accessibility via a range of transport nodes to key destinations in the surrounding neighbourhoods such as the existing Donnybrook train station
- Facilitating development of a range of housing densities that will cater to a range of household types and income levels
- Responding to the environmental qualities of the site through the retention and enhancement of the Merri Creek with surrounding pedestrian and bike path linkages.

## 6. Background Documents

The Amendment is supported by a number of background and environmental reports.

The following reports were commissioned throughout the stages of the PSP:

- Wollert DCP Land Assessment, Urbis, 2015

- Wollert and Quarry Hills Social and Community Infrastructure Assessment, ASR Research, 2012
- Adverse Amenity Impact Assessment, Broiler Farm, Wollert Precinct, GHD, 2014
- Wollert Visual Character Assessment, City of Whittlesea, 2014
- Aboriginal and Historical Heritage Assessment, Ecology and Heritage Partners, 2014
- Arboricultural Assessment, Treelogic, 2012
- Northern Growth Corridor 2046 Strategic Transport Model, SKM, 2012
- Activity Centre and Employment Analysis, Essential Economics, 2012
- Revised Integrated Water Management Strategy, Spirre, 2014
- Phase 1 Catchment Analysis and Integrated Water Management Strategy, CPG Australia, 2012
- Utilities Infrastructure Servicing Assessment, CPG Australia, 2012
- Phase 1 Environmental Site Contamination Assessment, Cardno Lane Piper, 2012
- Hanson Landfill and Quarry Risk Assessment, Golder Associates, 2012
- Transport Infrastructure Functional Design and Cost Estimates, Cardno Lane Piper, 2014.

These background studies informed the pre-planning of the PSP.

Copies of these reports have been previously provided to Planning Panels Victoria and have been available to all parties and the public on the MPA website as they have become available, prior to the formal exhibition process.

## 7. Wollert Vision and Plan

### 7.1. Vision

Embracing natural and cultural heritage features, Wollert will be a self-sustaining community. The precinct will be defined by its urban villages, each providing a focal point for surrounding neighbourhoods, strong green networks will provide connectivity and recreation opportunities.

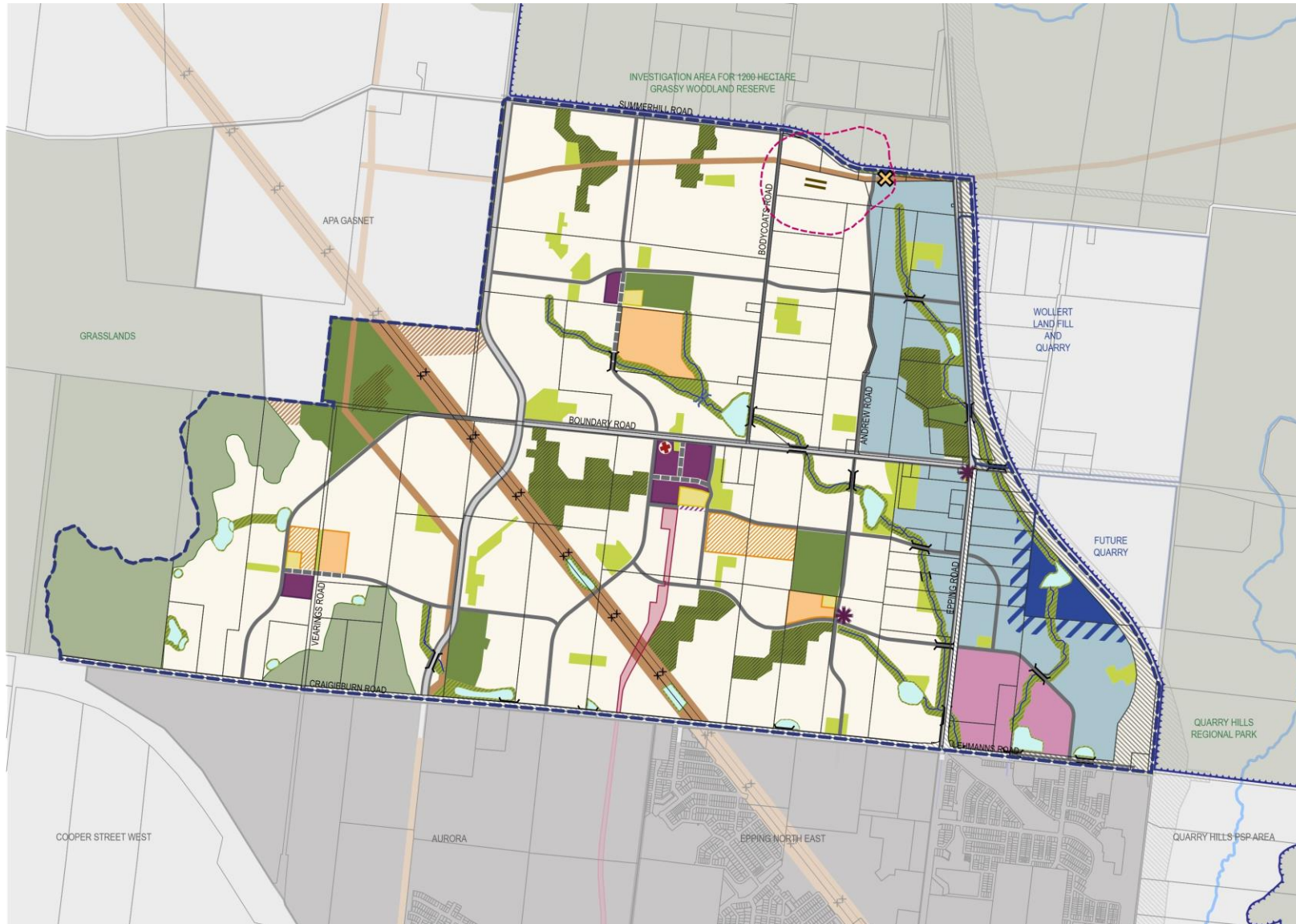
Development in Wollert will incorporate existing significant River Red Gums, waterways, stony rises and other cultural heritage features. Residential and commercial developments will actively incorporate these features into the urban environment to provide people with diverse environments with their own distinctive character. A range of lot sizes and housing types will encourage diverse residential neighbourhoods and provide housing choice and a sense of identity for future communities. Comfortable, sustainable buildings and infrastructure will provide high quality living for residents.

Integrating retail, commercial, education and other community facilities within one Major Town Centre and two Local Town Centres will create convenient and vibrant hubs. Each centre will have its own distinct character, incorporating existing natural features to create unique places for people to gather.

The PSP will provide the opportunity to deliver strong and diverse employment uses within the precinct which, over time, will deliver local jobs and provide separation of the residential areas from the existing landfill and existing and proposed quarries to the east of the Precinct.

The development will facilitate the future delivery of an integrated public transport network. The opportunity to provide high-capacity public transport into the Precinct in the future has been protected through the extension of the Epping North Public Transport corridor. A strong network of off-street walkways and cycle paths along creek corridors, utilities easements and proposed green links will provide a choice of active travel options in an attractive and safe environment, helping to deliver a healthy and connected community.

The Future Urban Structure is shown on the following page with a commentary on its key elements.



**Figure 5** Wollert Future Urban Structure Plan

## 7.2. Description of the Plan

### 7.2.1. Land Use

Of the 931 hectares of net developable area, 764 hectares (82%) is proposed for residential development with 167 hectares (18%) for industrial and restricted retail in the east of the precinct. The residential area is defined by its town centres, each providing a focal point for surrounding neighbourhoods. Strong green networks will provide connectivity and recreation opportunities. The employment area to the east of the precinct is anticipated to yield approximately 8,000 new jobs. It will have good exposure to Epping and Craigieburn Roads and ultimately to the E6.

Development in Wollert is proposed to incorporate existing significant River Red Gum trees, waterways, stony rises and other cultural heritage features which will provide place making opportunities. The residential and commercial developments will actively incorporate these features into the urban environment to provide people with diverse environments, each with their own distinctive character. A range of lot sizes and housing types will encourage diverse residential neighbourhoods and provide housing choice and a sense of identity for future communities.

### 7.2.2. Town Centres and Housing

The Wollert PSP integrates retail, commercial, education and other community facilities within one Major Town Centre, two Local/Neighbourhood Town Centres and a Local Convenience Centre to create convenient and vibrant hubs. In general, the PSP encourages higher residential densities in proximity to the proposed town centres and for comparatively lower residential densities throughout the remainder of the precinct. Overall, diversity in housing types is encouraged to meet the likely needs of the future community.

Each of the town centres has been designed to include a range of future retail and community facilities and help to generate local employment opportunities:

- The Major Town Centre includes provision for two full line supermarkets, a discount department store and a variety of speciality retail. Land that can accommodate the future development of an integrated community facility with space for aquatics, library services and community meeting spaces, aged and youth services and a skate park has also been included within the centre. This town centre also nominates land for an emergency services precinct, office space and a public transport hub.
- The Western Town Centre contains provision for a supermarket and specialty retail / office spaces. It also includes provision for a community centre that is co-located with a future Government primary school and Non-Government primary school.
- The Northern Town Centre includes a supermarket and specialty retail / office space with provision for a future Government P-12 School, community centre and sports facility (designed to fit three rectangular pitches that suit soccer, hockey, rugby, lacrosse etc.) and an associated pavilion.
- The Eastern Convenience Centre is co-located with a future community centre, Government primary school, sports reserve (designed to facilitate two full sized ovals, four netball courts, cricket nets and an associated pavilion).

### **7.2.3. Transport Network**

The PSP aims to facilitate the future delivery of an integrated public transport network. The opportunity to provide high-capacity public transport into the Precinct in the future has been protected through the extension of the Epping North Public Transport Corridor. The proposed Transport Corridor and station interchange provides an opportunity to develop a highly diverse range of mixed use housing options within, and around, the Major Town Centre.

A road hierarchy has been developed based on the framework in the Northern Growth Corridor Plan which identifies an arterial grid based network. Summerhill Road, Boundary Road, Epping Road, Koukoura Drive and Craigieburn Road have been identified as potential future arterial roads. These have been planned to cater for the interim and ultimate need with land being secured to enable duplication (or in the case of Craigieburn Road, triplication) when required. A distributed connector and key local road network will support the arterial roads and help to provide choices for road users and reduce congestion. The E6 corridor is preserved within the plan and the connecting arterial roads will provide up to three future interchanges. The implementation, timing and staging of the E6 is a VicRoads responsibility.

A network of off-street walkways and cycle paths along creek corridors, utilities easements and proposed green links will provide a choice of active travel options. This will help to deliver a healthy and connected community. These connections are nominated to be delivered by developers at the time of development.

### **7.2.4. Community Infrastructure**

The PSP and DCP have planned for a series of community centres within the precinct to provide a range of local services to support the future residential population. The types of facilities that are distributed across the precinct will include:

- Maternal and child health
- Kindergarten
- Youth spaces
- Seniors services
- Library
- Space for non-government organisations
- Community health providers and community meeting spaces.

### **7.2.5. Open Space**

Local parks and sporting reserves are distributed throughout the precinct, with the aim of all residents being within a 400 m catchment of open space. Where possible, they have been located along spines of existing encumbered utilities easements, waterways, local conservation reserves and State conservation areas, to create a comprehensively connected network.

Provision for a series of sporting reserves and local parks have been identified in the precinct and can accommodate the delivery sports such as Australian Rules, cricket, soccer, netball, tennis,

multipurpose grounds and multipurpose indoor facilities. The local parks have been nominated to serve their local catchment and preserve River Red Gums and/or stony knolls where possible.

### **7.2.6. Integrated Water Management**

The PSP has been developed with a strong focus on water retention and water sensitive design. Water treatment is proposed to occur at various points along waterways, with additional water treatment assets. Open space reserves have been located to take advantage of opportunities to harvest stormwater where possible and all homes will have access to recycled water for irrigation purposes.

### **7.2.7. Heritage**

Within the Wollert precinct, the waterways and adjacent land are identified as areas of cultural heritage sensitivity under the *Aboriginal Heritage Regulations 2007*. Additionally, 15 Aboriginal Places were recorded during a field assessment, including stone artefacts and a scar tree. Previous archaeological assessments show that areas of archaeological sites are most likely distributed on stony rises. Many stony rises are to be retained within the precinct, where they can be accommodated within compatible land uses, such as open space.

Historic heritage places have also been protected within the PSP. The area contains a large extent of dry stone walls as a marker of the historical farming uses of the land. The dry stone walls have local heritage significance and are protected within the Planning Scheme.

The PSP aims to retain significant dry stone walls in areas with compatible land uses such as road reserves, open space and within subdivision layouts. Many of the proposed road cross sections in the PSP seek to incorporate these features by minimising vehicle crossovers in sensitive locations and open space areas have been designed to incorporate these features where possible.

Two sites within the precinct are covered by a Heritage Overlay (HO41 & HO51) and are proposed to be incorporated into the future urban structure to continue the heritage protection of these sites. Other areas of historic value have been identified in the PSP. A Heritage Conservation Management Plan will be required to be submitted as part of an application that includes a heritage significant site to ensure values are incorporated into any proposed development or subdivision.

### **7.2.8. Existing Quarry and Utilities**

The Wollert PSP area directly abuts Epping Road, which separates the precinct from the State-significant Wollert Landfill and Quarry. The eastern edge of the PSP area has been identified for employment uses, to capitalise on proximity to the proposed E6, and to also provide a suitable land use buffer between residential and landfill and quarrying activities. A built form restriction has also been identified to respond to the potential off site impact associated with the Hanson Quarry whilst the quarry is active.

The APA Gas-Net site is located to the northwest of the precinct. An existing gas compressor station is located at the confluence of the high voltage transmission lines and high pressure gas pipeline, which supplies gas to the eastern sea board of Australia. The site has also been identified as the site of a future gas-fired power station and additional compressor station. There is no approval in place to construct or operate such a facility; however the land use plan has identified buffers that respond to

initial impact assessments. The buffer area associated with the APA site encumbers the land within the Wollert precinct.

## 8. The Amendment

Amendment C187 proposes to make a number of changes to the planning scheme to facilitate the development and use of land within the Wollert PSP area.

More specifically, the amendment proposes the following changes to the Whittlesea Planning Scheme:

- Amend Clause 21.11-1 Transport to include a reference to Wollert
- Amend Clause 22.10 River Red Gum Protection Policy to include a reference to Wollert
- Insert Clause 32.07 Residential Growth Zone into the Whittlesea Planning Scheme
- Insert Schedule 5 to Clause 37.07 Urban Growth Zone (UGZ) into the Whittlesea Planning Scheme and apply the UGZ Schedule 5 (UGZ5) to part of the land within the amendment area
- Rezone land from Urban Growth Zone to UGZ Schedule 5 (UGZ5) to part of the land within the amendment area
- Rezone land from Rural Conservation Zone (RCZ) to UGZ Schedule 5 (UGZ5) to part of the land within the amendment area
- Rezone land from Urban Growth Zone (UGZ) to Rural Conservation Zone (RCZ) to the conservation areas within the amendment area
- Rezone land from Urban Floodway Zone (UFZ) to UGZ Schedule 5 (UGZ5) to part of the land within the amendment area
- Rezone land from Farming Zone (FZ) to UGZ Schedule 5 (UGZ5) to part of the land within the amendment area
- Insert Schedule 10 to Clause 37.01 Special Use Zone (SUZ) into the Whittlesea Planning Scheme and apply the SUZ Schedule 10 (SUZ10) to the transmission line easement within the amendment area
- Rezone land from Farming Zone (FZ) to Special Use Zone Schedule 10 (SUZ10) to the transmission line easement within the amendment area
- Delete Environmental Significance Overlay Schedule 1 (ESO1), Schedule 4 (ESO4) and Schedule 5 (ESO5) from land within the amendment area
- Insert a new Schedule 4 to Clause 43.03 Incorporated Plan Overlay (IPO4) to apply to the local conservation reserves in the amendment area
- Insert a new Schedule 5 to Clause 43.03 Incorporated Plan Overlay (IPO5) to apply to the Nature Conservation areas in the amendment area
- Apply Clause 44.04 Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO) to part of the land within the amendment area
- Apply Clause 45.01 Public Acquisition Overlay 2 (PAO2) to Craigieburn Road, part of Epping Road and part of Lehmanns Road

- Insert a new Schedule 16 to Clause 45.06 Development Contributions Plan Overlay (DCPO) to apply to land in the amendment area
- Amend the Schedule to Clause 52.01 to provide for passive open space contributions for land within the amendment area
- Amend the Schedule to Clause 52.17 to identify native vegetation exempt from requiring a planning permit
- Amend the Schedule to Clause 61.03 to update planning scheme maps
- Amend the Schedule to Clause 66.04 to require referrals for planning permit applications in the Wollert Major Town Centre to the Growth Areas Authority and the 'construction restrictions apply' area to the Secretary to the Department administering the *Mineral Resources (Sustainable Development) Act 1990*
- Amend the Schedule to Clause 81.01 to include the new incorporated document titled "Wollert Precinct Structure Plan, April 2015" and "Wollert Development Contributions Plan, April 2015"
- Amends the Schedule to Clause 94 and Clause 95 to include VicSmart provisions for buildings and works, car parking and signage in relation to industrial areas.

## 9. Consultation

The MPA has consulted appropriately with Council, relevant stakeholders, the landowners during the preparation of the Wollert PSP.

### 9.1. Consultation and Exhibition

Consultation has been ongoing during the preparation of the PSP, consultation and exhibition periods.

Interaction with Government agencies such as Melbourne Water, DELWP, Yarra Valley Water and VicRoads has been ongoing throughout the PSP process.

Consultation with land owners has been ongoing during the preparation of the PSP.

Consultation and exhibition periods enabled Council, the landowners, developers, Government agencies, Prescribed Ministers, and other stakeholders to provide comment on the PSP and amendment documentation.

Table 1 provides a timeline of consultation events undertaken over the development of the Wollert PSP.

**Table 1 Wollert PSP consultation details**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Event</b>
August - September 2012	Consultation on background reports
19 February 2013	Informal consultation commences – distribution of draft FUS
22 March 2013	Informal consultation concludes – 10 submissions received
19 December 2014	Agency consultation period begins
2 February 2015	Agency consultation period concludes – 8 submissions received
26 February 2015	Landowner update – update re agency consultation and distribution of draft FUS
28 April 2015	Newspaper advertisement appears in Whittlesea Leader and North Central Review
29 April 2015	Circulation of Newsletter – Exhibition details and amended FUS (see Appendix 12)
30 April 2015	Gazette Notice appears in Government Gazette Formal Exhibition period begins
15 May 2015	Public information session - Wollert Community Centre, 525 Epping Road, Wollert
1 June 2015	Formal Exhibition Period Concludes – 22 submissions received.

This consultation has enabled the PSP to be a comprehensive amendment that seeks to balance the interests of all stakeholders.



Wollert Precinct Structure Plan - Amendment to the Whittlesea Planning Scheme  
November 2015

