

GREEN WEDGE MANAGEMENT PLAN REVIEW

FINDINGS FROM STAGE 1 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT 2021



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Introduction



Over May and June 2021, Council invited the community to help shape the vision for the City of Whittlesea's Green Wedge areas over the next ten years.

More than 60% of the City of Whittlesea is Green Wedge land, defined as rural or non-urban land non-urban land which is located within metropolitan Melbourne that is protected from urban development.

Every Council with Green Wedge areas is required to have a plan to manage these areas. The Green Wedge Management Plan Review will inform the development of a new 2022 – 2032 Green Wedge Management Plan (GWMP), which will replace the current GWMP.

More than 100 people participated in the Stage 1 Community Engagement, giving Council a valuable insight into the community's priorities.

This report shares what the community told us, examining findings as they relate to the Whittlesea 2040's Goals. These results will inform the development of the Draft GWMP which the community will be invited to comment on as part of the Stage 2 Community Engagement in 2022.

At a Glance: Summary of Engagement

Stage 1 of the Community Engagement for this project started on 17 May and closed on 19 July 2021

This summary outlines some of the key themes that emerged through the Stage 1 Engagement and will help inform the Draft GWMP which will inform how the City of Whittlesea's Green Wedge areas are managed over the next ten years.

The conversations we had were centred around the four Whittlesea 2040 goals; Connected Community, Liveable Neighbourhoods, Strong Local Economy, and Sustainable Environment.

There will be further opportunity to comment as part of the Stage 2 Community Engagement on the Draft GWMP 2022 – 2032, before it is finalised.

What did we ask?

Questions we asked during the Engagement included what you value the most about Whittlesea's Green Wedge areas, what themes you want to see included in the vision for the GWMP 2022 – 2036, and what opportunities exist to help achieve this vision.



110

responses were received to the survey 'Shape the future of our Green Wedge'



15

written submissions were received from the community and key stakeholders



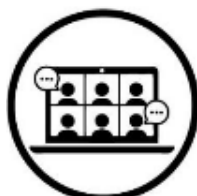
28

people spoke with us at drop in sessions held in Mernda and Whittlesea townships



11

people attended a face to face information and Q&A session



46

people registered for our two online information and Q&A sessions



81

people responded to questions regarding the Green Wedge that were included in the Council Plan 2021 – 2025 survey



104

people or groups registered their interest in the project

How we engaged

The Engagement period ran between 17 May to 19 July 2021. Over 100 survey responses were received to our online survey. We held three drop in sessions at locations across the City of Whittlesea, two online information sessions, and one face to face information session.

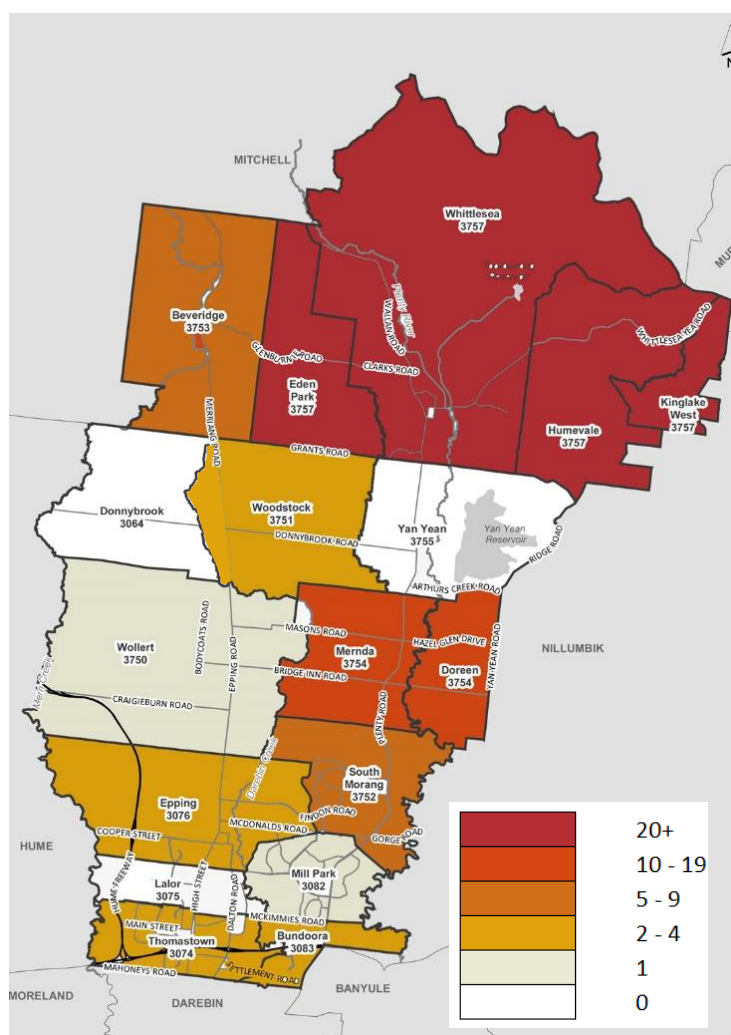
As Government restrictions were introduced during the Engagement period, we were not able to hold all of the events that had been planned. We adapted to this by extending the Engagement period by a further four weeks, running an additional online information session, and inviting those who had expressed interest in the Engagement to contact us by phone and using the online options available.

Who did we hear from?

Survey responses were received from people across the City of Whittlesea, neighbouring municipalities and other parts of the metropolitan area, including Local Government Areas which also have Green Wedges. 88% of responses came from within the City of Whittlesea, and 12% were from outside the municipality, with approximately half of responses coming from within the Green Wedge.

Of those who did not live within the Green Wedge, the most common connection people had to the Green Wedge was that they visited for recreation or exercise.

The age of respondents was more heavily weighted towards older groups, with people under the age of 35 making up only 17% of respondents, compared with those aged 35-49, who made up 36% of respondents.

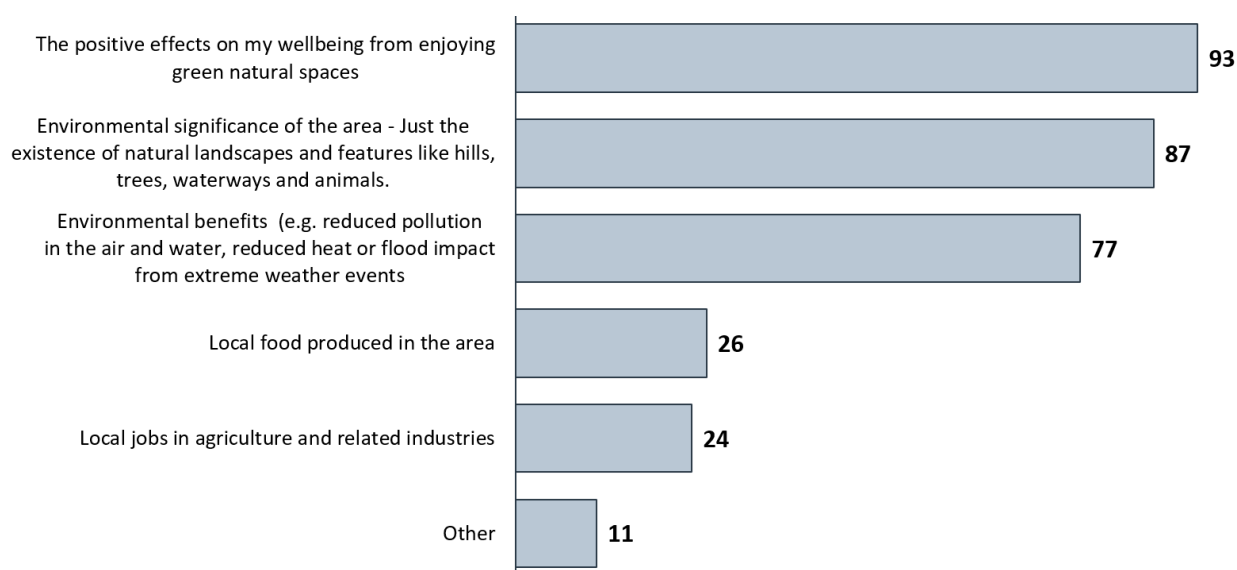


What values and themes did you ask to see reflected?

The 'Shape the future of our Green Wedge' online survey commenced by inviting the community to tell us which Green Wedge attributes they valued the most, and which themes they wanted to see included in the final Vision for the GWMP.

What you said you valued the most

Respondents were invited to select their top three Green Wedge attributes or aspects. As indicated in the chart below, most respondents value the wellbeing benefits of green natural spaces and the natural environment that the Green Wedge provides.



Common themes you said you wanted to see covered in the Vision Statement

- Enhance and protect biodiversity
- Protect natural assets / resources
- Encourage and support innovative and sustainable land management practice
- Protect and enhance rural character and landscape
- Protect and promote the rich Aboriginal and post contact heritage within the Green Wedge
- Protect Green Wedge from urban encroachment
- Connect people to natural areas through the provision of walking trails and bicycle paths and other facilities
- Educate and provide support to residents and visitors in caring for and respecting the Green Wedge
- Support farming and food production
- More trees

In Detail: Community Engagement Activities and Findings

Stage 1 of the GWMP Community Engagement period ran between 17 May to 19 July 2021.

The feedback received during the initial Engagement will inform the Draft GWMP 2022 – 2032. There will be further opportunity to comment on the Draft GWMP before it is finalised, as part of the Stage 2 Community Engagement.

How we engaged

Engage Website

The Community Engagement went live on 17 May 2021, marked by the publication of the *Whittlesea Green Wedge Management Plan Review* page on Council's *Engage* website at:

<https://engage.whittlesea.vic.gov.au/green-wedge>

Information provided on the website included the following:

- Overview of the project
- Timeline
- Map of the Green Wedge area
- Contact details and how to participate
- FAQs
- Schedule of events
- Documents for download:
 - *Discussion Paper: 'Shaping the Future of Your Green Wedge'*
 - *Project Overview*
 - *GWMP Review – Issues and Opportunities*
- Online survey

Mail out

A mail out pack was sent to 1,545 addresses belonging to residents, land owners and organisations within the Green Wedge, and eight agribusinesses within the City of Whittlesea.

The mail out consisted of a map of the Green Wedge area, a fact sheet, and a letter informing the community of the review with information on how they could participate.

Shaping the future of your Green Wedge – Discussion Paper

As part of the Stage 1 Community Engagement, a discussion paper titled *Shaping the future of your Green Wedge* was released to guide the conversation. The purpose of the discussion paper was to inform the community and other stakeholders about the GWMP Review project and more broadly about the Whittlesea Green Wedge; to generate and collect feedback on the identified opportunities for the sustainable management of Whittlesea's Green Wedge areas, and to inform the development of the vision and priorities for the new GWMP 2022-32.

The community was invited to make written submissions in response to the discussion paper.

Social Media

The community Engagement was promoted on social media platforms of Twitter, LinkedIn and Facebook.

Video

A video was produced to promote the review, in which Council Administrator Lydia Wilson and local beef cattle farmer Judy Clements spoke of the importance of Whittlesea's Green Wedge areas. The video can be viewed at the link below.

<https://fb.watch/6h5PwVqjiN/>

Plenty Valley FM

Senior Strategic Planner and project manager of the Green Wedge Management Plan Review, Lingna Zhang was interviewed on Plenty Valley FM on 6 July 2021 to inform the community about the project.

Engagement survey

An Engagement survey on the *Shaping the future of your Green Wedge – Discussion Paper* was posted to the project page on Council's Engage website. The survey invited feedback on what the community valued in our Green Wedge areas, what themes they wanted to see covered in the ten year plan, and what opportunities existed.

103 responses were received to the online survey which was a great response from the community, suggesting a strong interest in the Green Wedge. In addition, seven responses were received to a shorter paper version of the survey distributed at our face to face Engagement events.

Let's Talk: Community Engagement 2021 survey

Between February and April 2021 Council undertook the *Let's Talk* community Engagement program as part of a range of activities to inform the Council's four year plan.

Structured around the Whittlesea 2040's four goals, the Council Plan represents Council's commitment over the next four years.

The Green Wedge project team had the opportunity to include two Green Wedge related questions in the 'Let's Talk: Community Engagement 2021' Council Plan survey. The survey asked people what their connection was, and what they valued most about Whittlesea's Green Wedge areas.

By participating in a whole of Council survey, the Green Wedge project was able to reach a broader audience, receiving a total of 81 responses.

Rural News

Rural News is a quarterly newsletter which is distributed to landowners in the Green Wedge area who owns properties greater than 2ha and reaches approximately 900 landholders in total. An information sheet was published in Volume 27 – Autumn 2021 of the newsletter to inform the community about the project.

Online Information session with Q&A

46 people registered for two online information and Q & A sessions. The online events were held between 12 – 1 pm on Tuesday 2 June and Wednesday 15 June 2021.

Face to face Information session with Q&A

A face to information session with Q&A was held on 15 July 2021 at the Whittlesea Community Activity Centre. Eleven people attended the information session.

Drop in sessions

Whittlesea Township (Community Council Forum Event) – 1 March 2021

The first community Engagement event was a GWMP stall held alongside other Council project stalls for the Community Council Forum; an in-person community event held as part of the 'Let's Talk' Community Engagement program. The event was designed to offer an opportunity for the community to meet with Administrators and Council staff to talk about where Council should focus its efforts when preparing the Council Plan.

The project team held a stall alongside others, and provided fact sheets and other information to members of the public about the upcoming Engagement period.

By participating in this whole of Council event, the GWMP team were able to promote the upcoming Engagement period to a greater number of people. We met with approximately 15 people who approached us about the project throughout the afternoon.

Mernda Shopping Centre (Council Plan Event) – 15 March 2021

As with the Council Forum event, the second drop in session, which was held at Mernda Shopping Centre involved pairing up with the Community Engagement team who were holding a drop in session for the 'Let's Talk' Community Engagement. We spoke with approximately 12 people about the project.

Whittlesea Township (Green Wedge Event) – 15 July 2021

The final drop in session was held at Whittlesea Community Activity Centre, following an information and Q&A session. Eleven people attended the Q&A session, while one person met with us during the drop in period that we held afterwards.

Meeting with Agribusiness Community Reference Group

A meeting with five people who run agribusinesses in the Green Wedge took place at Whittlesea Community Activity Centre on 15 July 2021. The meeting was attended by Council's Senior Strategic Planner, Lingna Zhang and Agribusiness Officer Rikki Keys.

Written submissions

Eight written submissions were received from community members, and seven were received from the following key stake holders:

- Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions
- Department of Transport

- Hume City Council
- Melbourne Water
- Environment Protection Authority
- Nillumbik City Council
- Darebin Creek Management Committee
- Hanson Heidelberg Cement Group

What you told us

This section provides a summary of what our community told us. It presents the feedback we received from the *Let's talk* community survey and the *Shape the future of our Green Wedge* survey. It also outlines some of the common themes and opportunities identified for further examination in the Draft GWMP. The conversations we had were centred around the four Whittlesea 2040 goals; Connected Community, Liveable Neighbourhoods, Strong Local Economy, and Sustainable Environment.



Survey response

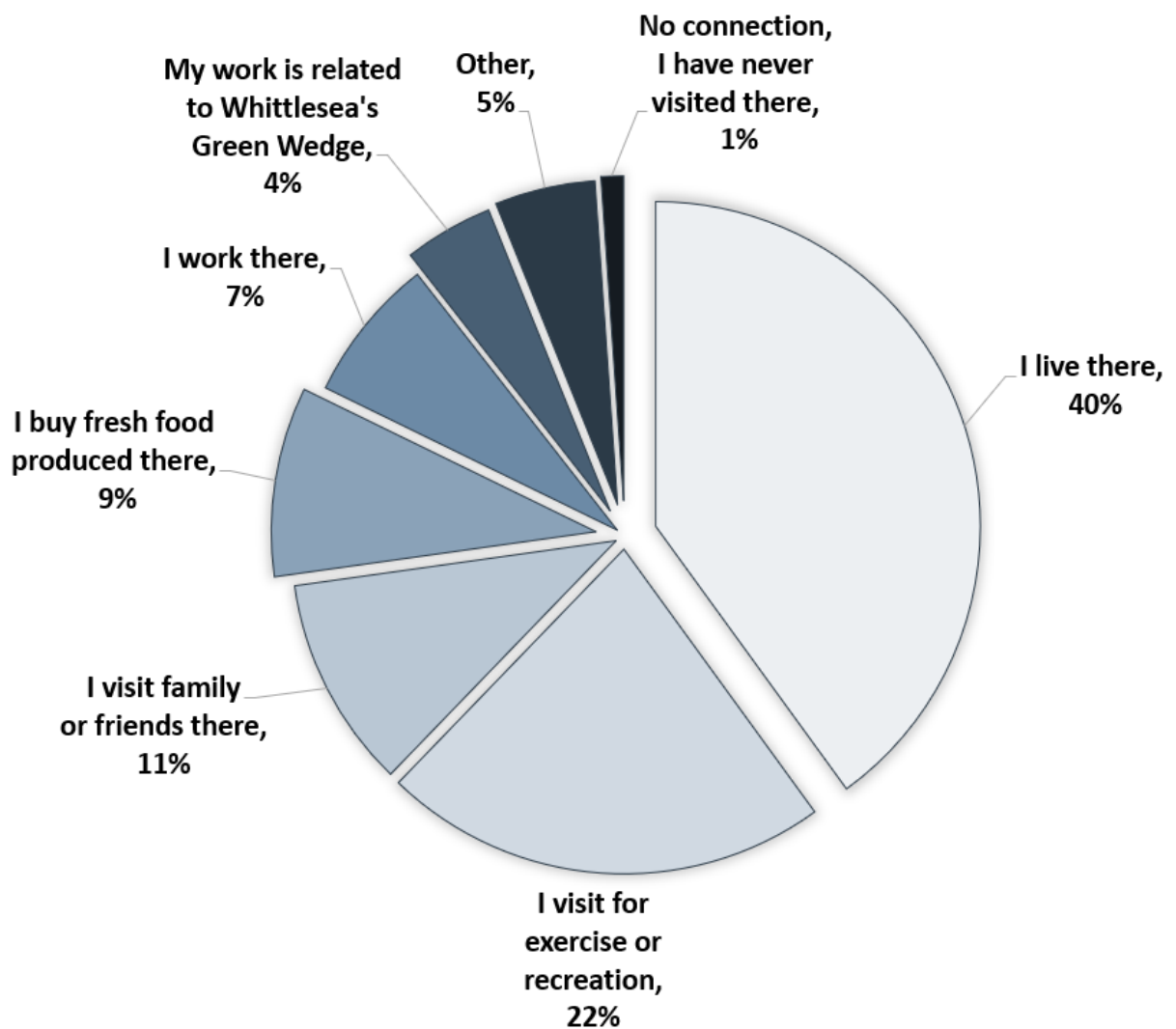
Overview

103 responses were received to the online survey, with an additional 7 hard copy responses to the survey.

The survey asked the community to tell us what mattered most to them in the Green Wedge, what themes they wanted to see covered in the Green Wedge Management Plan, and invited them to state what opportunities existed for the Green Wedge as it related to the four Whittlesea 2040 goals.

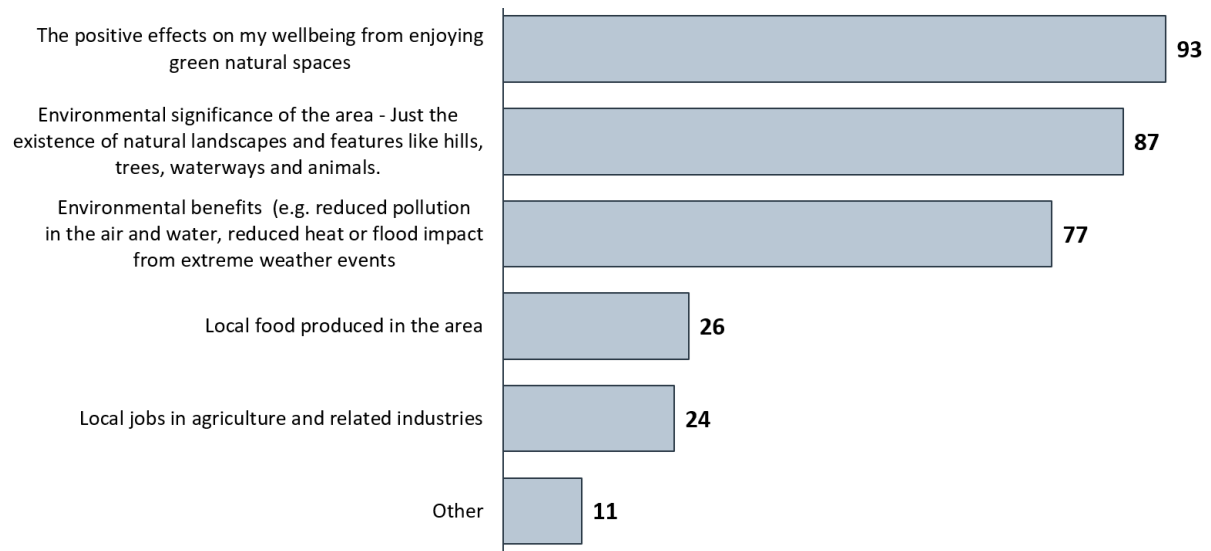
Survey Questions

What is your current connection to the Green Wedge?



Of those who selected 'other' more than half of respondents indicated they were either land owners, prospective land owners, or representatives of land owners, while others said they lived nearby.

What aspects do you value the most about the City of Whittlesea's Green Wedge?



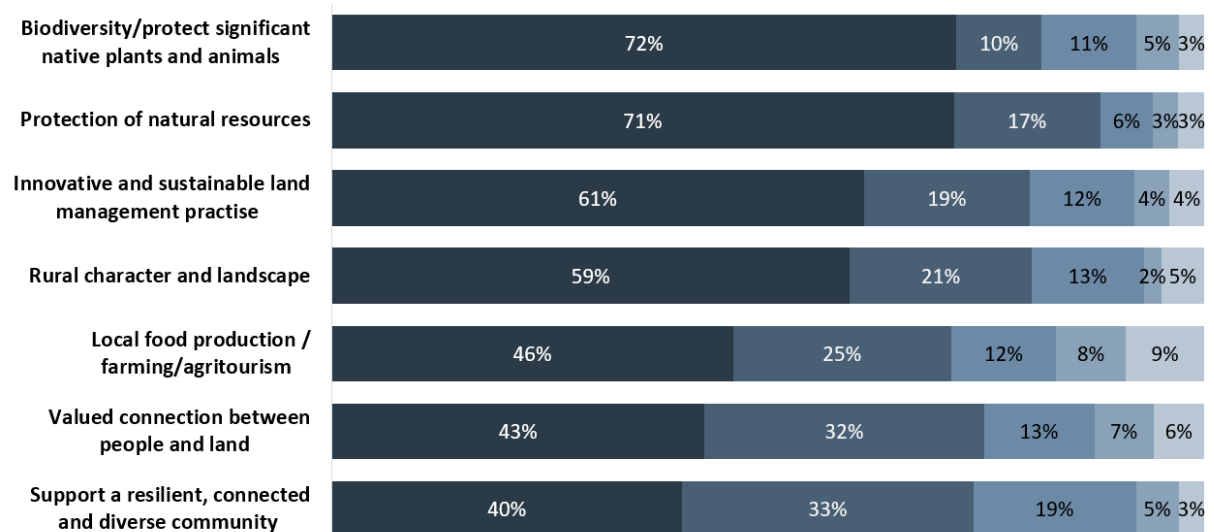
The above chart presents the response to the question: *What aspects do you value the most about the City of Whittlesea's Green Wedge?* 109 people responded to this question, and were invited to select their top three Green Wedge attributes or aspects.

The wellbeing benefits of green natural spaces, and the natural environment were valued by significantly more respondents compared with food production and associated employment. Of those who selected 'other,' reasons given included cultural or spiritual connection to land, business opportunities, and an overall appreciation of being able to live in an area that is less populated.

How would you like to see the following themes reflected in the vision for our Green Wedge?

Respondents were invited to rank the importance of various themes, from 'Not at all important' through to 'Very important.'

■ Very Important ■ Important ■ Moderately important ■ Of little importance ■ Not at all important



Of all the themes listed, *biodiversity/protect significant native plants and animals*, and *protection of natural resources* had the highest percentage of respondents selecting 'very important,' at 72% and 71% respectively, while *support a resilient, connected and diverse community* attracted the least, at 40%. *Local food production / farming / agritourism* attracted the highest percentage of people choosing 'not at all important, at 9%.'

Are there any other themes you would like to see reflected in the vision for our Green Wedge?

Many respondents expressed concerns around urban encroachment on the Green Wedge, while others favoured further urban development. A number of respondents spoke of a need to do more about feral animals and invasive species, their impact on habitat and biodiversity, and the need to ensure habitats for wildlife are linked to allow movement from area to area.

Respondents also said they wanted to see a greater focus on Indigenous and farming heritage, and finding ways for the community to connect better to natural areas and open spaces in the Green Wedge.

Infrastructure

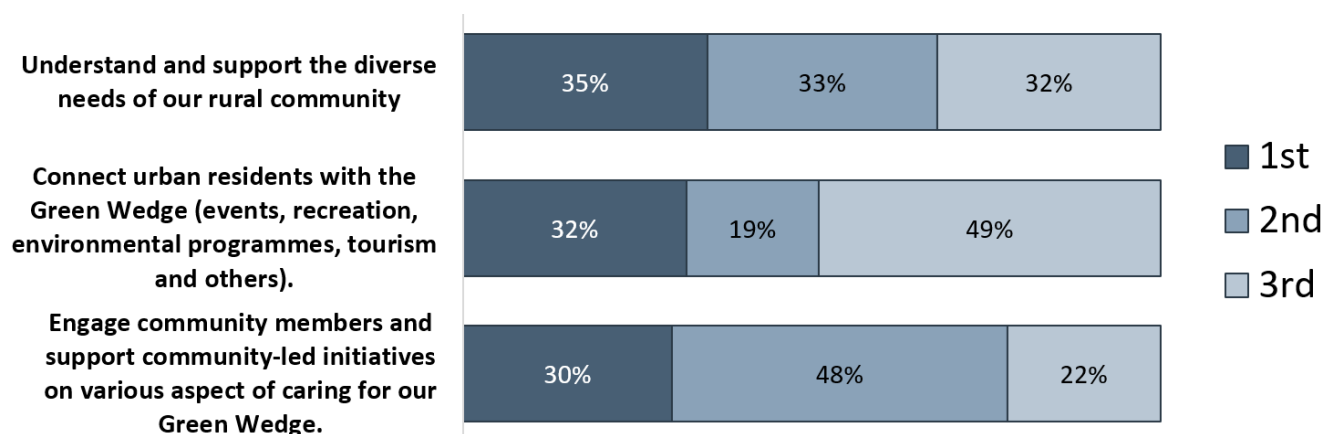
Sustainability

I would like to see indigenous themes

Connected Community

Rank the following opportunities about creating connected community in our Green Wedge

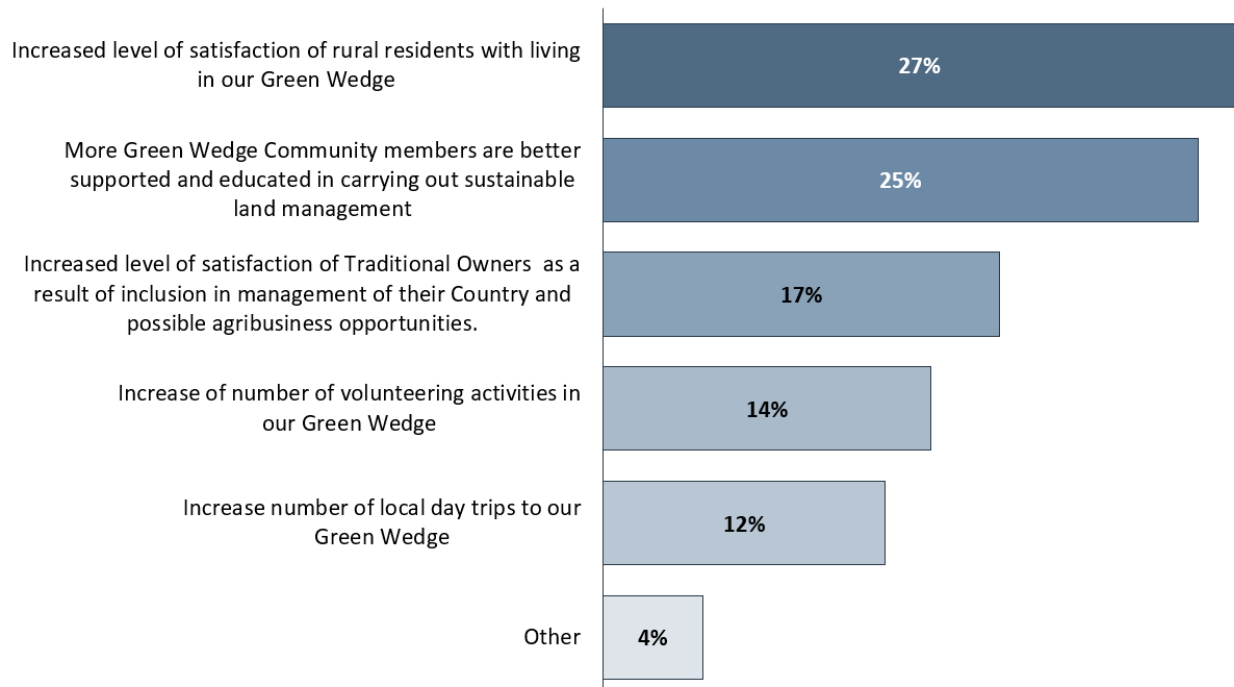
Respondents were presented with three opportunities, which they were invited to rank in order of importance.



There was a fairly even distribution (30 - 35%) across each opportunity listed in terms of what ranked highest, although 48% ranked engaging community and support community-led initiatives in caring for our Green Wedge 2nd highest. Notably, however, almost half of respondents (49%) ranked connecting urban residents with the Green Wedge through events, recreation, environmental programs, tourism lowest.

Respondents were invited to suggest any further opportunities to achieve connected communities in the Green Wedge. Suggestions received included making efforts to attract visitors to the Green Wedge by providing more trails and bike paths and promoting sites of Indigenous and post contact sites of significance through the provision of heritage markers. However one respondent also warned that too much tourism could work negatively against the goal of creating a connected community. Two respondents also spoke in favour of allowing more urban development, however, the overwhelming sentiment was in favour of preserving the Green Wedge and protecting it from urban encroachment.

Which of the following statements indicate that a connected Green Wedge community has been achieved?

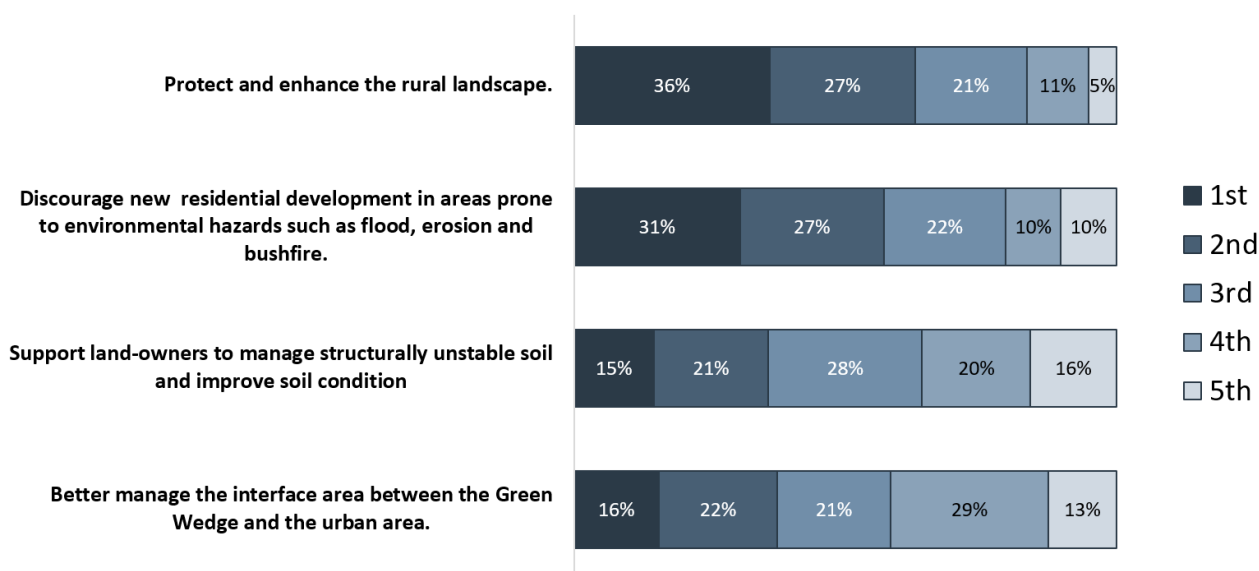


Of those who chose 'other' the majority of comments emphasised the need to prioritise biodiversity, and mitigate the impact of clearing, urban encroachment and weeds. Other comments emphasised the need to make the Green wedge more attractive to visitors.

Liveable Neighbourhoods

Rank the importance of the following opportunities about a liveable neighbourhood in the Green Wedge

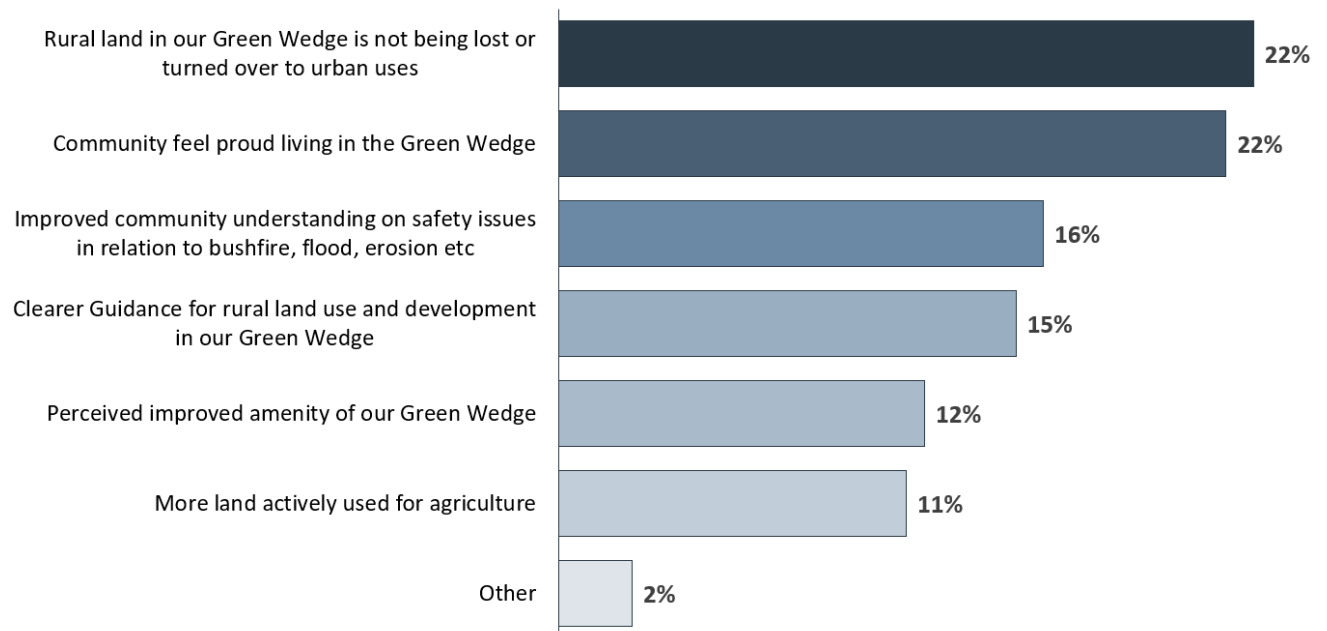
Respondents were presented with four opportunities relating to liveable neighbourhoods in the Green Wedge and were invited to rank them in order of importance.



The chart indicates that protecting and enhancing the Green Wedge, and discouraging new development in areas prone to environmental hazards such as flood, erosion and bushfire were considered to be the most important opportunities.

Respondents were also invited to suggest other opportunities for achieving liveable neighbourhoods within the Green Wedge. Suggestions included land management around the rural – urban interface to protect homes from bushfire, flood and erosion, greater flexibility in how people can use their land, investment in amenities within townships, and improved roads and public transport. Overwhelmingly, the sentiment was in favour of protecting the Green Wedge from urban encroachment, and the prioritisation of biodiversity conservation, including through the provision of education in sustainable farming and land management.

Which of the following statements indicate that a liveable neighbourhood in the Green Wedge community has been achieved?



Of those who selected 'other,' suggestions for making the Green Wedge more liveable included better provision of well maintained and accessible amenities and infrastructure for people visiting parks and reserves within the Green Wedge.

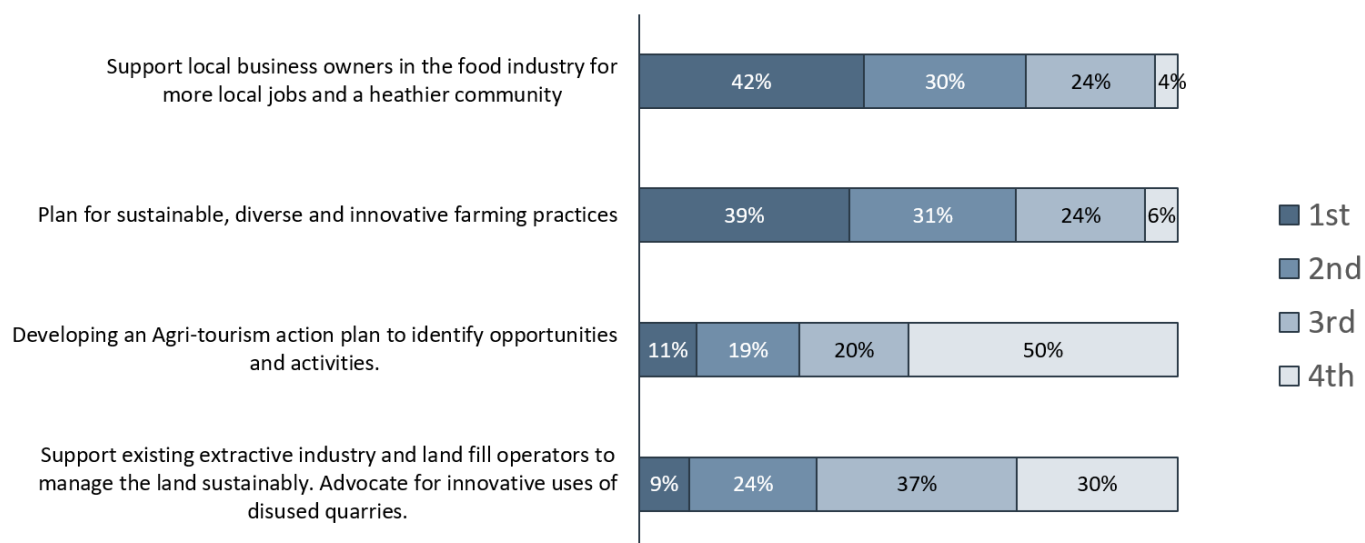
Ensure seamless integration between rural and urban landscapes whereby larger native trees and plants in rural settings merge into parklands with smaller native plants and before becoming urban settings

I would find my Green Wedge area more liveable if people were not be able to hunt and shoot native wildlife in the zone within the zone

Make the town of Whittlesea worth visiting not just a drive through

Strong local economy

Please rate the importance of the following opportunities about a strong local economy in the Green Wedge.



Respondents were presented with four opportunities to create a strong local economy in the Green Wedge, and invited to rank them in order of importance.

The chart shows that a higher percentage of respondents thought supporting local business owners in the food industry, and sustainable farm practices were ranked more highly than agri-tourism or supporting the extractive industry.

What are some of the key things Council can do to realise these opportunities?

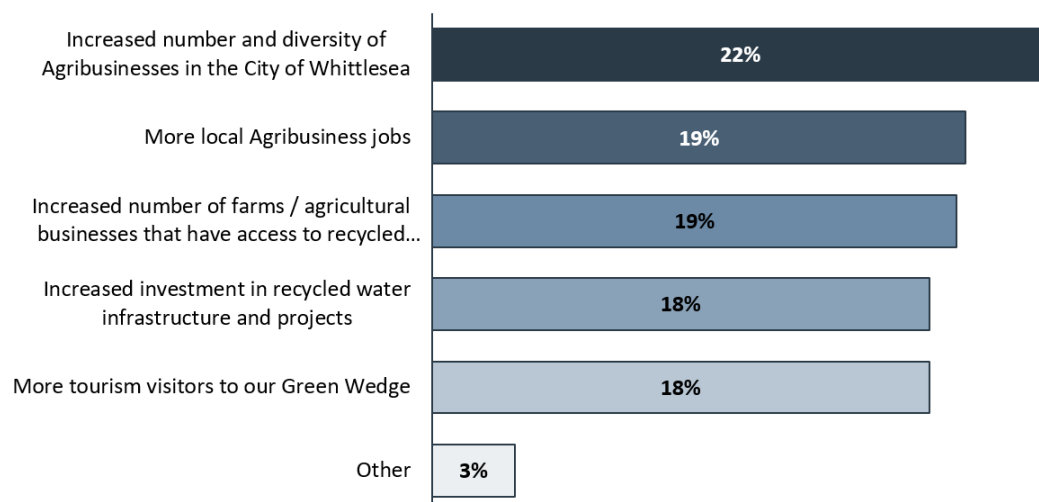
Suggestions included greater involvement from Council; both in listening to land owners, and providing education to assist land owners to make farming more economically viable as well as sustainable.

Develop an economic development plan with a focus on creating a vibrant a Whittlesea [township] CBD with a focus on foodie destinations and family friendly areas in and around the

Greater support for innovative land use for value maximisation. Reduced focus on livestock, more focus on high value sustainable crops

Sponsor of events similar to Hanging Rock

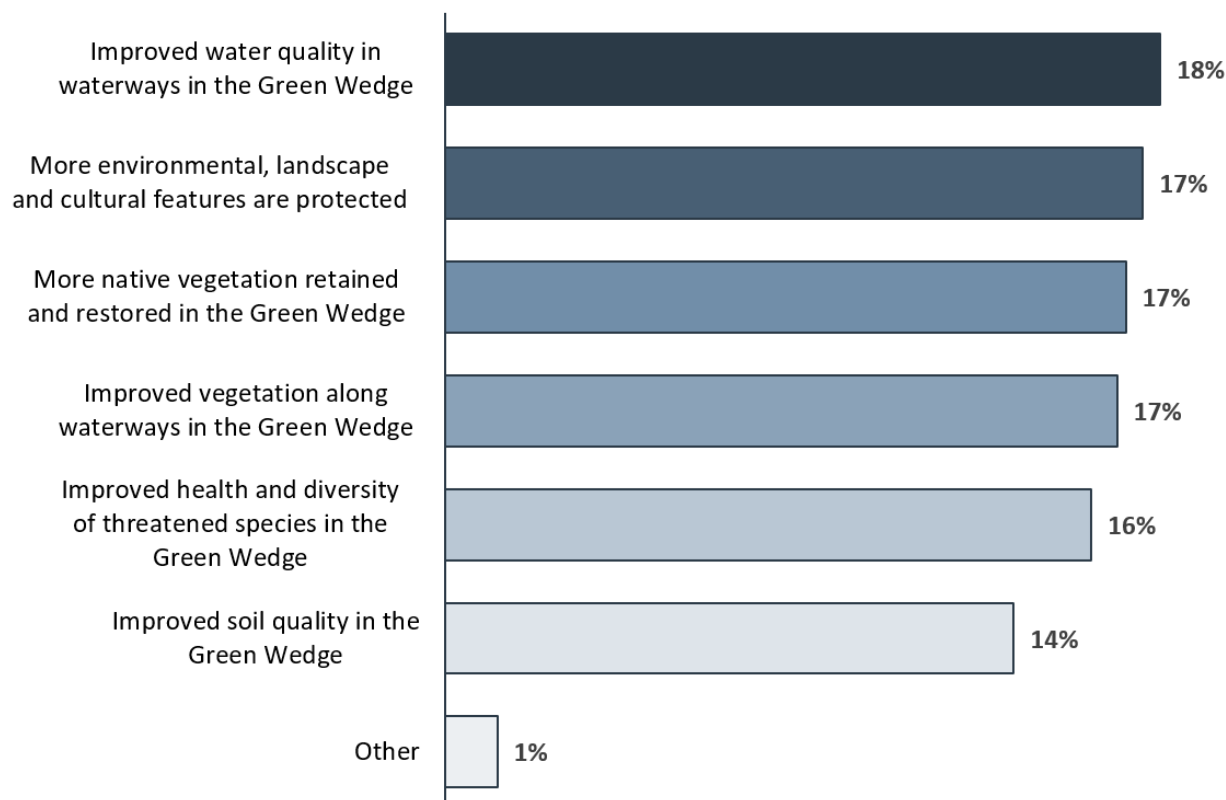
Which of the following statements indicate that a strong local economy in the Green Wedge community has been achieved?



Of those who selected 'other,' responses included infrastructure provision, and an increase in a broad range of business activities and job opportunities in areas such as land management, local goods and services, and healthcare.

Sustainable Environment

Which of the following statements indicate that a sustainable environment in the Green Wedge community has been achieved?



Those who selected 'other,' included statements around providing better protection of and data on trees in the area, and action taken on feral animals to protect wildlife.

What are some of the key things Council can do to realise these opportunities?

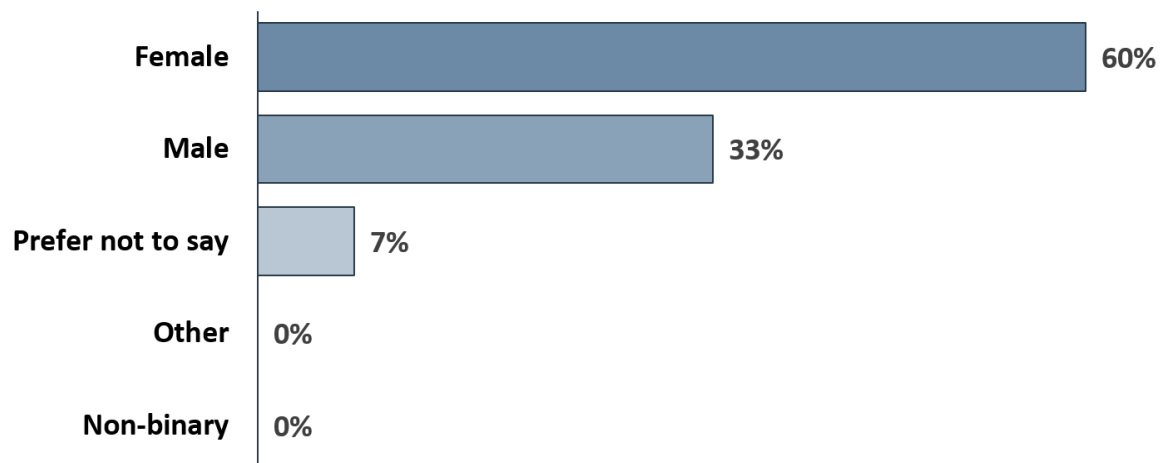
Having a Green Wedge zone in such close proximity to Melbourne creates significant opportunity for the development of an ecotourism industry that would serve to support employment and raise awareness for the diverse flora and fauna that exists in the area

Implement a cat curfew

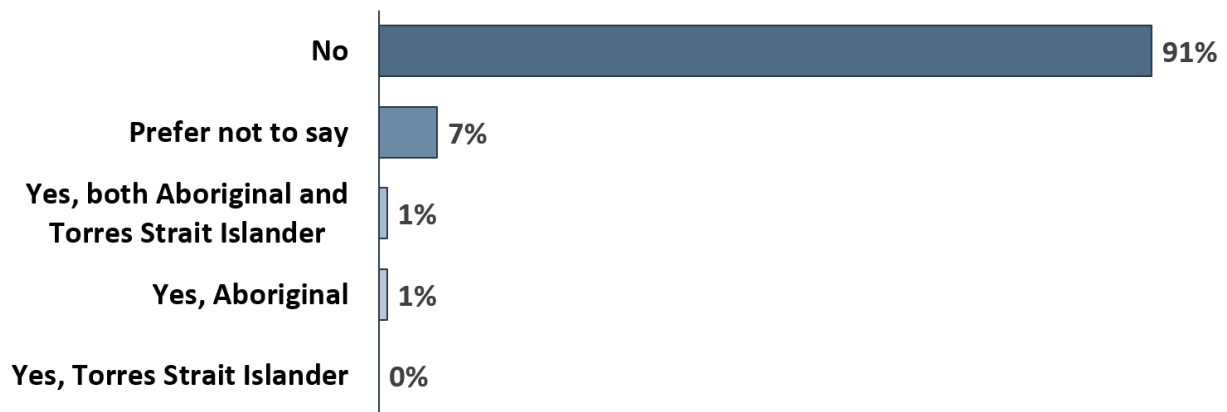
Plant more trees. Create access and walking paths along creeks and rivers

Demographics

Do you identify as



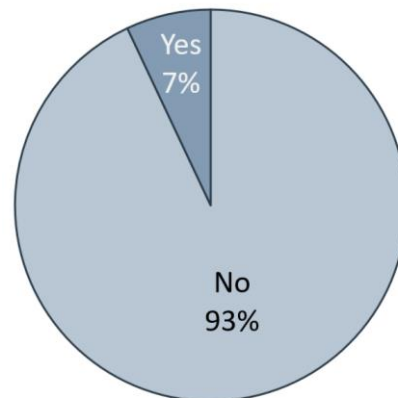
Do you identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander?



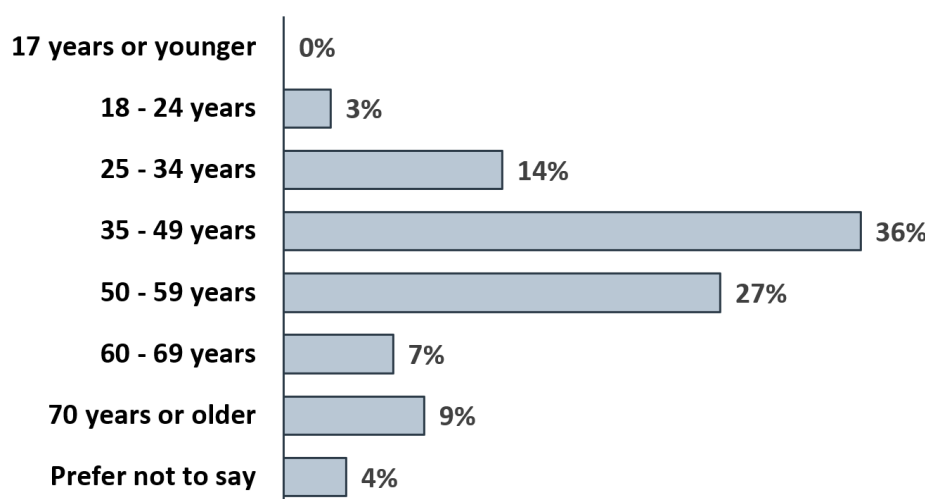
Do you prefer to speak a language other than English at home?

The majority of respondents answered 'no', while one answered 'prefer not to say' and each of the following languages received one response.

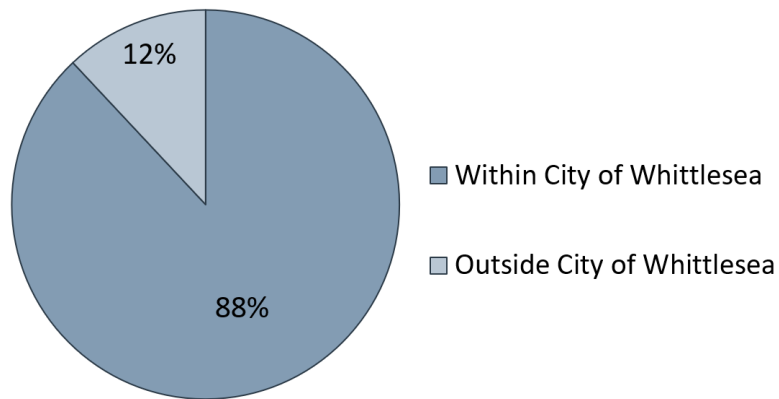
- Nepali (1)
- Mandarin (1)
- Punjabi (1)
- Macedonian (1)
- Italian Arabic (1)



What is your age?



Postcode

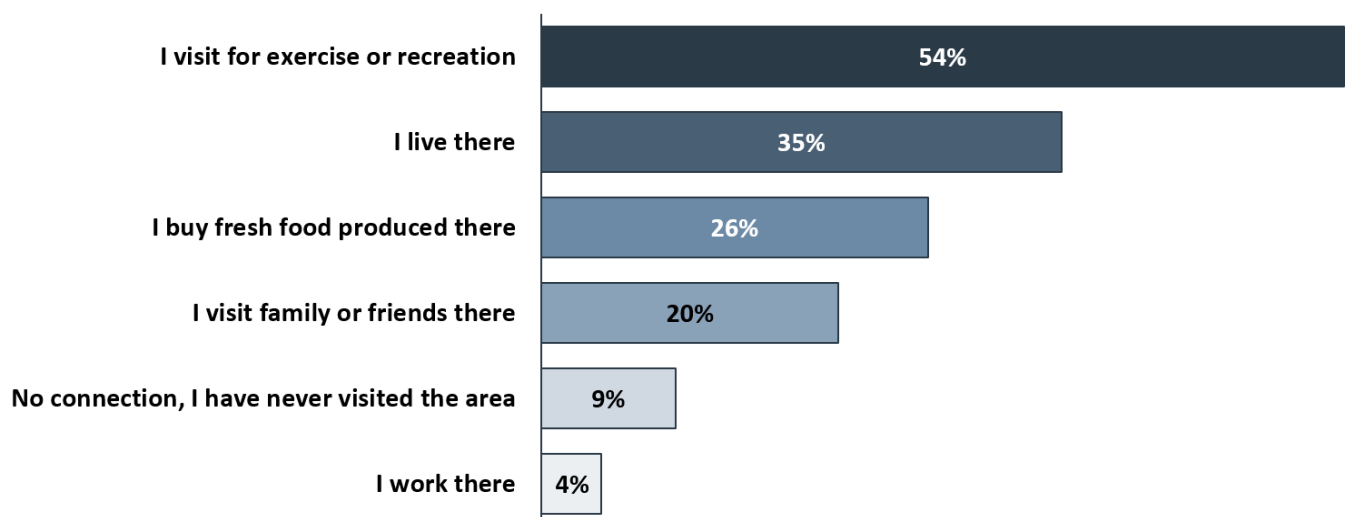


Responses by postcode	
Postcode	Responses
3757	45%
3754	19%
3752	7%
3753	6%
3076	3%
3074	2%
3083	2%
3751	2%
3764	2%
3000	1%
3016	1%
3071	1%
3082	1%
3084	1%
3099	1%
3138	1%
3163	1%
3429	1%
3750	1%
3759	1%
3760	1%

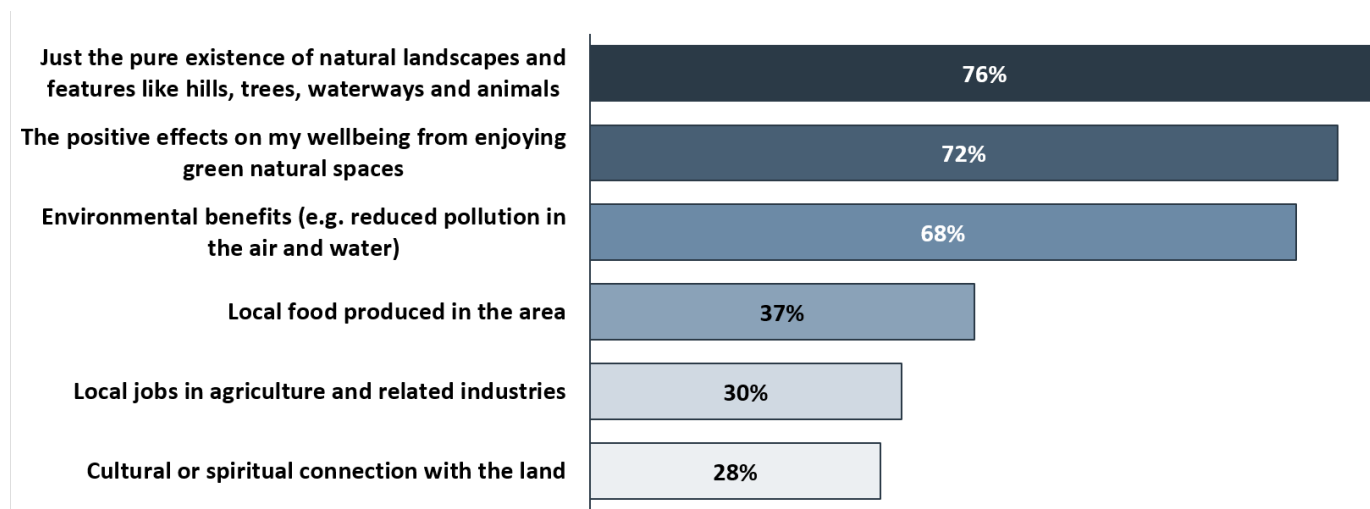
Let's Talk: Community Survey (Council Plan) response

Two questions relating to the Green Wedge were included in the whole of Council 'Let's Talk' Community Survey.

'Let's Talk' Question 1: How the community connects with the Green Wedge



‘Let’s Talk’ Question 2: What the community values most about the Green Wedge areas



Competing ideas arising from the Engagement process

A range of different and sometimes competing views were shared during the Engagement period. While the overwhelming majority of respondents emphasised the importance of biodiversity, and expressed strong support for protecting the Green Wedge from urban encroachment, there were also community members who put more value on rural living, and expressed that they wanted to see an expansion of opportunities to develop and live within the Green Wedge, and for infrastructure and services to be provided to support this.

The competing views were most prominent in Eden Park, which is affected by the Restructure Overlay. While some landowners expressed the desire for Council to relax restrictions on development, others made it clear they wanted to protect the remnant vegetation and did not wish to see it re-zoned for residential development or farming.

There were also competing views relating to land on the urban/rural interface. While there was agreement by many about the negative impact land speculation was having on these areas, in contributing to neglect and underutilisation of Green Wedge land, some participants believed a solution to this was to allow smaller lots, arguing that small rural living properties would be better managed than larger properties. Others opposed this, on the basis that this would make the land less financially viable for farmers.

It is important to note that any decisions made at the local level as part of the Whittlesea GWMP must be in line with the existing Victorian legislative and policy framework. The State Government’s aim is to protect metropolitan Green Wedge land from land uses and development that could diminish its agricultural, environmental, cultural heritage, conservation, landscape, natural resource or recreation values.

There is opportunity for Council to work with the community to build community awareness about the purpose of the Green Wedge, and to manage expectations around how land may be used and developed.

Opportunities identified for achieving our vision for the Green Wedge

The Engagement process was aimed at finding out what the community valued, what themes they wanted to see reflected in the vision for the GWMP, and ultimately to identify opportunities of achieving this vision. The opportunities identified are reflected under the four Whittlesea 2040 Goals; *Connected Community*, *Liveable Neighbourhoods*, *Strong Local Economy*, and *Sustainable Environment*.

Connected Community

Opportunities identified for creating a connected community included:

- Understand and support the diverse needs of our rural community
- Listen to landowners and residents to benefit from local knowledge
- Greater focus on protection of places of indigenous significance, and incorporation of Indigenous knowledge into how the Green Wedge is managed
- Upskill the community and providing education on important issues relating to the Green Wedge

Liveable Neighbourhoods

Opportunities identified for creating Liveable Neighbourhoods included:

- Protect and enhance the rural landscape
- Discourage new residential development in areas prone to environmental hazards such as flood, erosion and bushfire
- Support good land management on the urban / rural fringe, and discourage the underutilisation and neglect of land that is often associated with land speculation.
- Partner with other Councils, government, and organisations who share a common interest in managing green wedge areas

Strong Local Economy

Opportunities identified for creating a Strong Local Economy included:

- Support local business owners in the food industry for more local jobs and a healthier community
- Offer greater flexibility for producers in how they use their land to carry out diverse, value added, and innovative farming practices
- Increase opportunities for people to buy local produce, e.g. by supporting farmers markets
- Explore opportunities for tourism in the rural areas; from agricultural tourism to recreational activities
- Review Council incentives to better support agribusiness

Sustainable Environment

The City of Whittlesea recently endorsed three strategies to safeguard a sustainable environment. A list of opportunities was already identified in the context of Green Wedge management. The GWMP Engagement has identified the following additional opportunities:

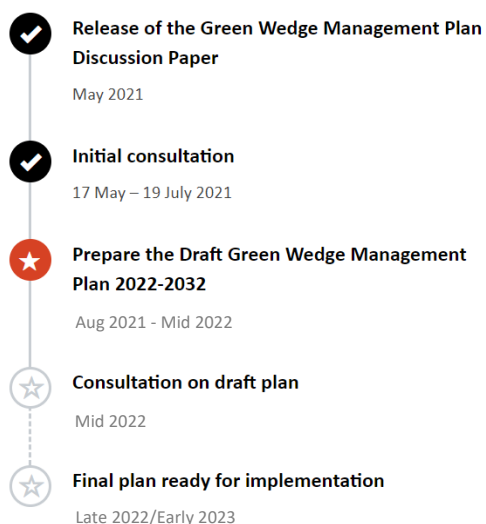
- Partner with field experts to support and provide education in sustainable agriculture and land management practices, soil quality and ecology
- Protect and plant more trees in Green Wedge and grow the significant tree registry
- Work with the State Government to ensure the Urban Growth Boundary stays intact
- Assist landowners, residents and environmental groups to deal with erosion, provide re-vegetation and weed control, and improve the quality of the natural waterways.

- Improve the management and protection of biodiversity
- Support local agriculture and improve water management
- Our residents and our environment benefit from a diverse, colourful and healthy City Forest

Next Steps

The feedback received during the initial Engagement with the community and key stakeholders will inform the Green Wedge Management Plan 2022 – 2023. There will be further opportunity to comment before the plan is finalised.

To stay up to date on the project, go to <https://engage.whittlesea.vic.gov.au/green-wedge> or email Strategic.Planning@whittlesea.vic.gov.au



APPENDICES



Appendix 1. Short version of the GWMP Survey (paper version used at Engagement events)

Shaping the future of your Green Wedge - Discussion Paper Engagement Survey for 15 July 2021

This survey seeks to capture what you value most about the Green Wedge and how you think Council could better manage this area. Council will consider all thoughts and ideas as it prepares a draft Green Wedge Management Plan for final community Engagement later this year.

If you have any queries, please contact Lingna Zhang, Senior Strategic Planner by phone on 9217 2083 or email Lingna.zhang@whittlesea.vic.gov.au.

If you would like assistance completing this survey in another language, please call our free telephone interpreter service on 131 450.

Thank you for sharing your views with us.

Privacy Statement

Your response to this survey will be confidential to the City of Whittlesea. We will not identify you by the answers you provide in the survey, nor will your answers be linked to your identity. Your participation is voluntary and the completion of this survey implies your consent to participate. Any personal information you may provide will not be disclosed to any other organisation. The City of Whittlesea will protect your information in accordance with the principles in the [Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014](#). Read Council's [full Privacy Statement on our website](#).

Q | What is your current connection to our Green Wedge?

Please select all that apply.

- ☐ I am a farmer in the green wedge area
- ☐ I live in the Green Wedge
- ☐ I visit for exercise or recreation
- ☐ I visit family or friends there
- ☐ I buy fresh food produced there
- ☐ I work there
- ☐ My work is related to Whittlesea's Green Wedge
- ☐ No connection, I have never visited the area

Other: Please specify _____

Q | Please leave us your email or contact detail if you would like to be updated on the Green Wedge Management Plan Review Project

Q | What aspects do you value the most about the City of Whittlesea's Green Wedge?

Please choose your top 3

- ☐ The positive effects on my wellbeing from enjoying green natural spaces
- ☐ Local jobs in agriculture and related industries
- ☐ Local food produced in the area
- ☐ Environmental benefits (e.g. reduced pollution in the air and water, reduced heat or flood impact from extreme weather events)
- ☐ Cultural or spiritual connection with the land
- ☐ Environmental significance of the area - Just the existence of natural landscapes and features like hills, trees, waterways and animals.
- ☐

Other: Please specify _____

Q | How important are the following themes for the Green Wedge areas?

Please rank level of importance for each theme.

	Not at all important	Low importance	Neutral	Somewhat important	Very important
Valued connection between people and land	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Biodiversity/protect significant native plants and animals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Local food production / farming/agritourism	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rural character and landscape	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Innovative and sustainable land management practise	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Protection of natural resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Support a resilient, connected and diverse community	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Connections to the rest of the Metropolitan Melbourne	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

What other themes are important for the Green Wedge areas?

Please specify _____

Connected Community

Q | Please rate the importance of the following statements about creating connected community in our Green Wedge areas (3- being most important, 1 being least important)

Importance scale	Statements
	Understand and support the diverse needs of our rural community
	Engage community members and support community-led initiatives on various aspect of caring for our Green Wedge.
	Connect urban residents with the Green Wedge (events, recreation, environmental programmes, tourism and others).

Q | What are some of the key things Council can do to realise these opportunities?

Q | Which of the following statements indicate that a connected Green Wedge community has been achieved?

Please select all that apply

Connected Community Indicators	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Increased level of satisfaction of rural residents with living in our Green Wedge	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">More Green Wedge Community members are better supported and educated in carrying out sustainable land management.	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Increase no. of local day trip to our Green Wedge	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Increase of no. of volunteering activities in our Green Wedge	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Increased level of satisfaction of Traditional Custodians as a result of inclusion in management of their Country and possible agribusiness opportunities.	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Increased Traditional owner participation in environmental decision making, eco-tourism business ventures, cultural burning etc.	<input type="checkbox"/>

Other, please specify _____

Liveable Neighbourhood

Q | Please rate the importance of the following statements about a liveable neighbourhood in the Green Wedge areas. (3- being most important, 1 being least important)

Importance scale	Statements
	Protect and enhance rural landscape.
	Discourage new residential development in areas prone to environmental hazards such as flood, erosion, bushfire.
	Support land-owners to manage structurally unstable soil and improve soil condition
	Better manage the interface area between the Green Wedge and urban area, including discouraging land speculation.
	Finalise and implement the new Whittlesea Township Strategy

Q | What are some of the key things Council can do to realise these opportunities?

Q | Which of the following statements indicate that a liveable neighbourhood in the Green Wedge community has been achieved?

Please select all that apply

Liveable Neighbourhood Indicators	
• Perceived improved amenity of our Green Wedge.	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Clearer Guidance for rural land use and development in our Green Wedge	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Improved community understanding on safety issues in relation to bushfire, flood, erosion etc.	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Rural land in our Green Wedge is not being lost or turned over to accommodate urban uses	<input type="checkbox"/>
• More land actively used for agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Community feel proud living in the Green Wedge.	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q | Please share any other ideas about a liveable neighbourhood in the Green Wedge areas.

Please specify _____

Strong Local Economy

Q | Please rate the importance of the following statements about a strong local economy in the Green Wedge areas. (3- being most important, 1 being least important)

Importance rating (As above)	Statements
	Support local business owners in the food industry for local jobs and healthier community.
	Plan for sustainable, diverse and innovative farming practices
	Developing an Agri-tourism action plan to identify opportunities and activities.
	Support existing extractive industry and land fill operators to manage the land sustainably. Advocate for innovative uses of disused quarries.

Q | What are some of the key things Council can do to realise these opportunities?

Q | Which of the following statements indicate that a strong local economy in the Green Wedge community has been achieved?

Please select all that apply

Strong Local Economy Indicators	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased number and diversity of Agribusinesses in the City of Whittlesea 	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More local Agribusiness jobs 	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More tourism visitors to our Green Wedge 	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased number of farms/agricultural businesses that have access to recycled water for irrigation 	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased investment in recycled water infrastructure and project 	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q | Please share any other ideas about a strong local economy in the Green Wedge areas.

Please specify _____

Sustainable Environment

Q | City of Whittlesea has recently endorsed three strategies to safeguard a sustainable environment. The following opportunities were identified:

1. **Improve the management and protection of biodiversity**
2. **Support local agriculture and improve water management**
3. **Our residents and our environment benefit from a diverse, colourful, and healthy City Forest**

Please share any other ideas about a sustainable environment in the Green Wedge area.

Please specify _____

Q | What are some of the key things Council can do to realise these opportunities?

Q | Which of the following statements indicate that a sustainable environment in the Green Wedge community has been achieved? *Please select all that apply*

Please select all that apply

Sustainable Environment Indicators	
• More environmental, landscape and cultural features are protected.	<input type="checkbox"/>
• More native vegetation retained and restored in the Green Wedge.	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Improved health and diversity of threatened species in the Green Wedge.	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Improved water quality in waterways in the Green Wedge.	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Improved vegetation along waterways in the Green Wedge.	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Improved soil quality in the Green Wedge	<input type="checkbox"/>

Other, please specify _____

Appendix 2. Online Survey

The following survey was published on the Engage Whittlesea Web page

Shape the future of our Green Wedge - Discussion Paper Consultation Survey

The survey should take approximately 10 minutes to complete.

If you have any queries, please contact Lingna Zhang, Senior Strategic Planner by phone on 9217 2083 or email Lingna.zhang@whittlesea.vic.gov.au.

If you would like assistance completing this survey in another language, please call our free telephone interpreter service on 131 450.

Privacy Statement

Your response to this survey will be confidential to the City of Whittlesea. We will not identify you by the answers you provide in the survey, nor will your answers be linked to your identity. Your participation is voluntary and the completion of this survey implies your consent to participate. Any personal information you may provide will not be disclosed to any other organisation. The City of Whittlesea will protect your information in accordance with the principles in the [Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014](#). Read Council's full [Privacy Statement](#) on our website.

Next

Connection, Value and Vision of the Green Wedge.

The following questions will help us understand your connection to and what you value most about the Green Wedge in the City of Whittlesea.

Next

What is your current connection to the Green Wedge?

Select all that apply

- ☐ I live there
- ☐ I visit for exercise or recreation
- ☐ I visit family or friends there
- ☐ I buy fresh food produced there
- ☐ I work there
- ☐ My work is related to Whittlesea's Green Wedge
- ☐ No connection, I have never visited there
- ☐ Other (please specify)

Next

What aspects do you value the most about the City of Whittlesea's Green Wedge?

Select your top 3.

- ☐ The positive effects on my wellbeing from enjoying green natural spaces
- ☐ Local jobs in agriculture and related industries
- ☐ Local food produced in the area
- ☐ Environmental benefits (e.g. reduced pollution in the air and water, reduced heat or flood impact from extreme weather events)
- ☐ Environmental significance of the area - Just the existence of natural landscapes and features like hills, trees, waterways and animals.
- ☐ Other (please specify)

Next

How would you like to see the following themes reflected in the vision for our Green Wedge?

Please rate the level of importance for each theme

	Not at all important	Of little importance	Moderately important	Important	Very Important
Valued connection between people and land	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Biodiversity/protect significant native plants and animals	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Local food production / farming/agritourism	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Rural character and landscape	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Innovative and sustainable land management practise	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Protection of natural resources	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Support a resilient, connected and diverse community	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Connections to the rest of the Metropolitan Melbourne	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Next

Are there any other themes you would like to see reflected in the vision for our Green Wedge?

Type your answer here...

You have 255 characters left

Next

Connected Community

The following questions are about the opportunities and indicators for a Connected Community in the Green Wedge.

Next

Please rank the following opportunities about creating connected community in our Green Wedge.

Please click and drag across in order of importance, top one being more important.

<div>Understand and support the diverse needs of our rural community</div> <div>Engage community members and support community-led initiatives on various aspect of caring for our Green Wedge.</div> <div>Connect urban residents with the Green Wedge (events, recreation, environmental programmes, tourism and others).</div>	
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Next

What further comments do you have about these proposed opportunities?

Type your answer here...

Next

What are some of the key things Council can do to realise these opportunities?

Type your answer here...

Next

Which of the following statements indicate that a connected Green Wedge community has been achieved?

Please select all that apply

- ☐ Increased level of satisfaction of rural residents with living in our Green Wedge
- ☐ More Green Wedge Community members are better supported and educated in carrying out sustainable land management
- ☐ Increase number of local day trips to our Green Wedge
- ☐ Increase of number of volunteering activities in our Green Wedge
- ☐ Increased level of satisfaction of Traditional Owners as a result of inclusion in management of their Country and possible agribusiness opportunities.
- ☐ Other (please specify)

Next

Liveable Neighborhood

The following questions are about the opportunities and indicators for a liveable neighborhood in the Green Wedge.

Next

Please rank the importance of the following opportunities about a liveable neighbourhood in the Green Wedge.

Please click and drag across in order of importance, top one being more important.

<div>Protect and enhance the rural landscape.</div> <div>Discourage new residential development in areas prone to environmental hazards such as flood, erosion and bushfire.</div> <div>Support land-owners to manage structurally unstable soil and improve soil condition</div> <div>Better manage the interface area between the Green Wedge and the urban area.</div> <div>Finalise and implement the new Whittlesea Township Strategy</div>	
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Next

What further comments do you have about these proposed opportunities?

Type your answer here...

Next

What are some of the key things Council can do to realise these opportunities?

Type your answer here...

Next

Which of the following statements indicate that a liveable neighbourhood in the Green Wedge community has been achieved?

Please select all that apply

- ☐ Clearer Guidance for rural land use and development in our Green Wedge
- ☐ Perceived improved amenity of our Green Wedge.
- ☐ Improved community understanding on safety issues in relation to bushfire, flood, erosion etc.
- ☐ Rural land in our Green Wedge is not being lost or turned over to urban uses
- ☐ More land actively used for agriculture
- ☐ Community feel proud living in the Green Wedge.
- ☐ Other (please specify)

Next

Strong Local Economy

The following questions are about the opportunities and indicators for a Strong Local Economy in the Green Wedge.

Next

Please rate the importance of the following opportunities about a strong local economy in the Green Wedge.

Please click and drag across in order of importance, top one being more important.

Support local business owners in the food industry for more local jobs and a healthier community.

Plan for sustainable, diverse and innovative farming practices

Developing an Agri-tourism action plan to identify opportunities and activities.

Support existing extractive industry and land fill operators to manage the land sustainably. Advocate for innovative uses of disused quarries.

Next

What further comments do you have about these proposed opportunities?

Type your answer here...

Next

What are some of the key things Council can do to realise these opportunities?

Type your answer here...

Next

Which of the following statements indicate that a strong local economy in the Green Wedge community has been achieved?

Please select all that apply

- ☐ Increased number and diversity of Agribusinesses in the City of Whittlesea
- ☐ More local Agribusiness jobs
- ☐ More tourism visitors to our Green Wedge
- ☐ Increased number of farms/agricultural businesses that have access to recycled water for irrigation
- ☐ Increased investment in recycled water infrastructure and projects
- ☐ Other (please specify)

Next

Sustainable Environment

City of Whittlesea has recently endorsed three strategies to safeguard a sustainable environment. The following opportunities were identified in the context of the Green Wedge Management:

- **Improve the management and protection of biodiversity**
- **Support local agriculture and improve water management**
- **Our residents and our environment benefit from a diverse, colourful, and healthy City Forest**

Next

Please share any other ideas about a sustainable environment in the Green Wedge.

Type your answer here...

Next

Which of the following statements indicate that a sustainable environment in the Green Wedge community has been achieved?

Please select all that apply

- ☐ More environmental, landscape and cultural features are protected .
- ☐ More native vegetation retained and restored in the Green Wedge.
- ☐ Improved health and diversity of threatened species in the Green Wedge.
- ☐ Improved water quality in waterways in the Green Wedge.
- ☐ Improved vegetation along waterways in the Green Wedge.
- ☐ Improved soil quality in the Green Wedge
- ☐ Other (please specify)

Next

Demographics

Please answer the following questions to help us understand who we are reaching in the community.

Next

Do you identify as

Please select from the drop down list

Female

Male

Non-binary

Prefer not to say

Other

Do you identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander?

Please select from the drop down list

Yes, Aboriginal

Yes, Torres Strait Islander

Yes, both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

No

Prefer not to say

Do you prefer to speak a language other than English at home?

No

Yes, please specify

What is your age?

Please select from drop down list

17 years or younger

18 - 24 years

25 - 34 years

35 - 49 years

50 - 59 years

60 - 69 years

70 years or older

Prefer not to say

Postcode

Type your answer here...

You have 4 characters left

Next

If you would like to receive updates regarding this project please provide your email address.

You will only be contacted in relation to the Green Wedge Management Plan Review Project.

Type your answer here...

Next

Appendix 3. Let's Talk: Community Survey

(The extract below is from the 'Let's Talk: Community Engagement 2021' report on findings from Engagement activities).

Community focus: Green Wedge

81 people gave their views about the future direction of the Green Wedge Strategy.

The Green wedge is the non-urban land that surrounds the outward growth of suburbs in the City of Whittlesea.

The community connects with our City's 'green wedge' for a diverse range of reasons. These include:

Priorities	% of respondents
I visit for exercise or recreation	54%
I live there	35%
I buy fresh food produced there	26%
I visit family or friends there	20%
No connection, I have never visited the area	9%
I work there	4%

We asked the community what they value most about the 'green wedge' parts of the City.

**People could select multiple priorities*

	% of respondents
Just the pure existence of natural landscapes and features like hills, trees, waterways and animals	76%
The positive effects on my wellbeing from enjoying green natural spaces	72%
Environmental benefits (e.g. reduced pollution in the air and water)	68%
Local food produced in the area	37%
Local jobs in agriculture and related industries	30%
Cultural or spiritual connection with the land	28%

