

# Planning for Melbourne's Green Wedges and Agricultural Land – Key options

## Fact sheet 4

This fact sheet sets out options to respond to the challenges we face in our green wedges and agricultural land within 100 km of Melbourne. These options have been guided by four key principles:

### Principle 1

The proposed options should be consistent with the desired planning outcomes for Melbourne's green wedges and agricultural land as outlined in Plan Melbourne.

### Principle 2

The proposed options should recognise and strengthen agriculture as one of the primary land uses in Melbourne's green wedge and peri-urban areas.

### Principle 3

The proposed options should respond to pressure from urban and incompatible land uses that threaten green wedge values and productivity of Melbourne's agricultural land.

### Principle 4

The proposed options should ensure that applications to develop or change the use of land addresses public and natural interests and respects the roles and values of green wedge and peri-urban areas.

For a comprehensive discussion of the challenges and all proposed options, please refer to the consultation paper: *Planning for Melbourne's Green Wedges and Agricultural Land*. Below is an outline of some of the key options contained in the consultation paper.

## Key options

### Legislation

Building on existing legislation for Melbourne's green wedges, and strengthen the legislative framework to:

- require parliamentary ratification for proposals to subdivide land into more lots or smaller lots than currently provided for in the planning scheme for land in the Farming Zone and Rural Activity Zone within 100km of Melbourne;
- introduce right-to-farm legislation, including agent of change measures, to protect lawful agricultural uses;
- introduce a vision, objectives and regional policy for green wedges in legislation;
- strengthen requirements for preparation, review and ministerial approval of Green Wedge Management Plans (GWMPs) through legislation.

### State and Regional Policy

Strengthen existing state planning policy to:

- ensure all agricultural land is protected;

- encourage land uses that have limited reliance on soil to be located in areas where soil-based agriculture is likely to be constrained;
- clearly articulate preferred outcomes for Melbourne's green wedges;
- safeguard land with potential for future growth in irrigated agriculture, based on alternative water use.

Introduce new regional planning policy to improve protection of Melbourne's green wedges and agricultural land by:

- supporting greater resilience of Melbourne's food bowl;
- encouraging opportunities for growth;
- supporting establishment and expansion of infrastructure;
- recognising the economic contribution of Melbourne's agricultural land;
- Introducing regional policy directions for Melbourne's green wedges.

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### Key options cont.

#### Zones and Overlays

##### Subdivision and dwellings

Reduce the subdivision potential of Melbourne's agricultural land by:

- amending the subdivision provision of the Farming Zone and Rural Activity Zone to prohibit the creation of a lot for an existing dwelling that is smaller than the minimum lot size.

Better control dwellings in Melbourne's agricultural areas by:

- making dwellings a permit required use in the Farming Zone;
- introducing decision guidelines for dwellings in the Green Wedge Zone and Green Wedge A Zone;
- requiring applications for dwellings in the Green Wedge Zone and Green Wedge A Zone to be accompanied by a written statement addressing the decision guidelines.

##### Water supply and irrigation areas

Future-proof Melbourne's food bowl by:

- introducing a new overlay designed to protect food-producing areas with access to secure water supply and irrigation infrastructure;
- establishing a process to determine where the new overlay should be applied.

##### Schools and places of worship

For land within metropolitan Melbourne outside of the the Urban Growth Boundary, insert the following conditions of use for new primary and secondary schools and places of worship in the Green Wedge Zone, Green Wedge A Zone, Rural Conservation Zone and Clause 51.02:

- must be located on land adjacent to the urban growth boundary and adjoin, or have access to, a road in a Road Zone;
- prohibit new schools and places of worship in areas subject to the Bushfire Management Overlay.

#### Design of development in green wedges

Introduce design objectives and requirements to improve development outcomes in green wedge areas. This can be implemented by:

- specifying maximum site coverage, setbacks and building heights in a schedule to the green wedge zones;
- introducing a new particular provision in the planning schemes;
- developing a new planning practice note;
- updating the form and structure of Green Wedge Management Plans to include issues such as setbacks, siting and site coverage to be determined at a local level, or
- adjusting the decision guidelines (General Issues and Design and Siting) in Green Wedge zones to introduce application requirements for development.

#### Planning guidance

Improve planning practice guidance, by:

- developing a practice note for Melbourne's agricultural areas to provide guidance on how to interpret decision guidelines in the zones, and guide assessment of discretionary (permit required) land uses;
- reviewing Planning Practice Note 31 to improve the form, structure and content of Green Wedge Management Plans;
- providing guidance for planning at the urban/rural interface;
- introducing the ability to apply other rural zones more suited to the roles and land conditions of particular locations (provided the minimum green wedge subdivision provisions are retained);
- establishing an agricultural referral or expert advisory service to support decision makers.

### Have your say

You are invited to consider the challenges and opportunities raised in the consultation paper and provide feedback on the proposed planning system changes by making a submission.

**Submissions can be made online at**  
<https://engage.vic.gov.au/gwal>

For any questions or assistance please contact  
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