

05 February 2021



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Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning
8 Nicholson St, Melbourne VIC 3000

Via: <https://engage.vic.gov.au/gwal-consultation-materials-submission-forms>

To whom it may concern,

SUBMISSION TO: Planning for Melbourne's Green Wedges and Agricultural Land

The Committee for Geelong ("CfG") provides strategic leadership and influence to leverage the economic and social prosperity of our city-region. An independent, non-partisan, membership-based, not for profit organisation, the CfG works collaboratively with an authoritative group of stakeholders and influencers to design Geelong's best future.

The CfG has consulted with its members and have formed a position.

With these principles in mind, the Committee for Geelong submits the following:

The Green Wedges and Agricultural Land Consultation Paper (May 2020) applies to the green wedge and peri-urban area 100km from Melbourne. This includes the Geelong region.

We understand the purpose of this document to protect agricultural areas from 'overdevelopment' and support agricultural land uses, but it does not sufficiently address economic and social objectives which are vital for job creation and investment in Victoria.

We do not believe this policy should be supported in isolation and key strategies, including the Victorian Government's Visitor Economy Strategy and objectives of the *Planning and Environment Act 1974* objectives to 'balance the present and future interests of all Victorians'.

Green Break

The Committee for Geelong supports the retention of a non-urban break between Melbourne and Geelong. Geelong, as Victoria's second city, has its own identity and it is important that there is no contiguous development between Wyndham and Geelong.

However, the CfG supports appropriately scaled and clustered development within the western area, particularly around Avalon Airport.

Tourism Land Uses

It is appreciated that there is increased pressure on agriculture land from more intensive development however each proposal should be independently assessed as the environmental, economic, landscape and land viability issues vary across the area.

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The proposed changes to update the policy framework 'to ensure that all agricultural land is protected' is unjustified and will compromise tourism opportunities in the region.

Tourism is an important part of the G21 Region economy and recommendations in the Consultation Paper are likely to restrict future tourism opportunities in rural areas, including appropriate sited non-agricultural land uses, eco-tourism and agri-tourism.

We strongly support existing non-agricultural uses which make a positive contribution in our region. It is important that any planning changes do not compromise these uses.

There is a particular focus in the Consultation Paper to preserve the agricultural land use and it is proposed to change farm gate sales requirements to allow sales with 5km of the use. We request that this should be modified to support sale of produce within the region which ultimately supports great collaboration, employment and investment.

We request that there is further consultation with the proposed changes and welcome the opportunity to brief our members of this strategic project.

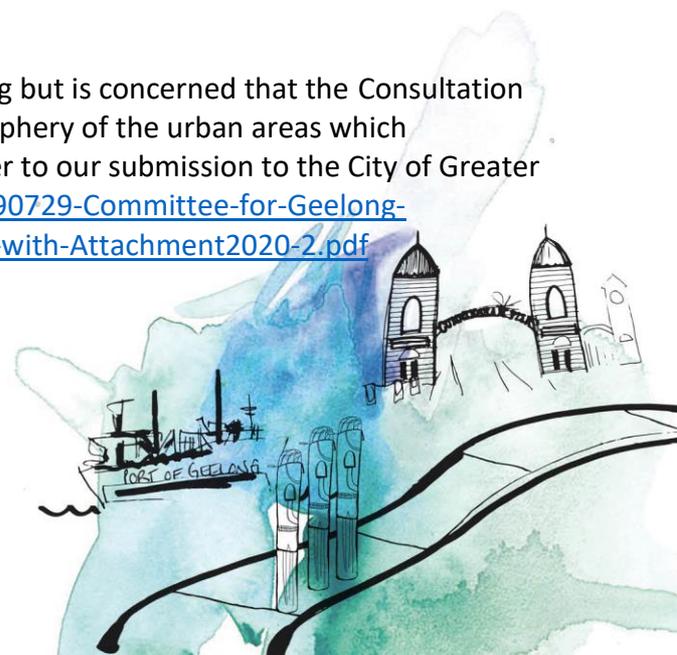
Urban development

Geelong is a Gateway city and experiencing rapid population growth. Please refer to our published research in Australia's Gateway Cities – Gateways to Growth report here: [Australias-Gateway-Cities-Report-and-Appendices.pdf \(gatewaycitiesalliance.com.au\)](http://gatewaycitiesalliance.com.au).

The recent planning for the Northern and Western Growth Areas plans to accommodate additional greenfield housing. The additional population is also planned to be accommodated in the established urban areas.

The CfG supports balanced and sustainable growth of Geelong but is concerned that the Consultation Paper will limit future development opportunities on the periphery of the urban areas which contributes to housing diversity and affordability. Please refer to our submission to the City of Greater Geelong's draft Settlement Strategy and C395 consultation [190729-Committee-for-Geelong-submission-Amendment-C395-Settlement-Strategy-For-Web-with-Attachment2020-2.pdf](#)

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We accept that it is important to retain productive agricultural land however over time there has been significant fragmentation and low yield which may support non-agricultural development, such as residential and commercial development. The proposed blanket approach to protecting agricultural land is not supported.

We thank you for the opportunity to provide you with this feedback. If you have any questions, please contact me via jennifer.cromarty@committeeforgeelong.com.au or call our office on (03) 5227 8075.

Kind Regards

Jennifer Cromarty
CEO, Committee for Geelong

