

PUBLIC SUBMISSIONS ON MELBOURNE 2030 AUDIT

Due 24th September 2007

Submission by The Rate Payers of Werribee South Inc ----- 20th September 2007

This submission is made after reviewing the recently completed Draft Werribee South Green Wedge Policy and Management Plan as a precursor to the Wyndham City Council proposed Amendment C93 to the Wyndham Planning Scheme.

We believe The Draft has been prepared under The Planning and Environment (Metropolitan Green Wedge Protection) Act 2003 which sets procedures for planning scheme amendments affecting green wedge land.

The Draft document is a useful and detailed statistical document of the areas assets and how they are interrelated however, it does not address the viability of farming in the Werribee Irrigation District (WID) which is central to ensuring continuation of the sustainability of significant agricultural/horticultural activities by the local landholders/farming community.

The Plan indicates what needs to be done to manage and use those assets on a sustainable and intergrated way without any specific government commitment to ensure that all the natural and built resources will be available and appropriate for the designated land use.

Any Plan supporting agricultural production without a specific commitment to secure the quantity, quality and price of fit for purpose water supply including providing a sustainable delivery infrastructure, leaves the farmers in a vulnerable position where they could lose their hard earned reputation for all year round quality produce and devastate agricultural output.

The Government with the rollout of Melbourne 2030 and Green Wedges has added to the demand for 'sustainability'. The economic impacts of a Government building some piece of infrastructure are clearly known. They add to demand and it is apparent now that infrastructure now needs to be expanded and improved if recycled water is to used for agriculture production in the WID.

The activities, livelihoods and lifestyles of the areas rural and urban residents, depend on the sustainability of the farmers who generate an important vegetable production industry.

Our specific comments on the Green Wedge Policy and Management Plan are:

- It continues the physical and social exclusion and disengagement of local constituents which we believe restricts local economic development and presents negative social and economic impacts on the area; because of lack of basic needs and services like community facilities, access to full suite of utilities like natural gas and mains sewage, which results in diminished well being and opportunity for this area. It does not address the economic and social needs of the landowners.
- It is discriminatory and further erodes property rights
- It is an exercise in keeping land for public good/benefit at existing land owners expense. Where is equity/fair go? Any fair minded government would choose to support agriculture because it's not just another economic activity. Agriculture plays a part in conserving the environment, in food safety and in animal welfare and all the taxpayers should pay for these extra functions the farmers perform and bring to our society. It clearly does not promote market based mechanisms that reward landholders providing environmental services.
- It condemns the (WID) to strict continuation of current activities without any commitment to secure the resources (fit for purposes water supply) and committed infrastructure (sustainable delivery system and extension of natural gas, mains sewage) to support the designated land use regime and the township of Werribee South. Victoria needs increased infrastructure spending to deliver long term gain to the economy.
- Does not measure the impact of the proposed Werribee Plains Vision activities in the neighbouring Green Wedge on agricultural sustainability in the WID
- Does not allow every land holder to separate his personal assets (principal place of residence) from his business assets (working farm holding) and thereby assist with succession and retirement planning etc.
- Does not provide for the WID to grow in size or replace land lost to facilities like the proposed Marina or say any future foreshore land acquisition.
- Does not address the need to define who bears any liability of any agronomic and environmental impacts of recycled water given its current salinity level.
- Does not help the landowners; or the local Council for that matter, to take advantage and/or capture the spending capacity of the 700,000/800,000 plus tourist traffic that visit the Special Use Tourist Precinct of Point Cook and

Werribee South. The total lack of facilities immediately outside of the Tourist Precinct to capture this potential spend is an indictment on past and present elected representatives use of land use zoning.

- Does not detail the planning that needs to be done to manage public access and use of the assets of the Port Phillip foreshore; which is in part within the WID, in a sustainable and intergrated way to meet the expected recreational activity needs based on Melbourne 2030 growth projections for the North/Western corridor.
- Fails to align Council Rating policy with the designated land use of the WID. Consequently all rural holdings are rated on the General Rate. This is clearly not consistent or supportive of the designated land use.
- It fails to address the ways the rural communities can share equally in the wealth of this State. In this country it is thought it dosen't matter where you come from as long as you roll up your sleeves and contribute you can share in the common wealth.
- It does not acknowledge that there are real consequences into the future in the failure of this Plan.

The Rate Payers of Werribee South Inc.

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