



# Future Directions Plan


Quarry Hills Parkland



Wurundjeri  
Woi-wurrung  
Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation



**City of  
Whittlesea**



*bunjil nganga*  
by Ash Firebrace  
Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung artist  
2022

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## Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners

We recognise the rich Aboriginal heritage of this Country and acknowledge the Wurundjeri Willum Clan and Taungurung People as the Traditional Owners of lands within the City of Whittlesea. The Quarry Hills Parklands sits within the lands of the Wurundjeri Willum Clan.



## Introduction

### A new parkland

Quarry Hills Parkland known as *bunjil nganga cultural landscape* by the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people, is the site of the proposed 1100 hectare regional parkland, extending the 400 hectares that currently make up the parkland.

The proposed parkland centres around a wish-bone shaped rise and extends along the upper reaches of the Darebin Creek. From the crest of the hills, extensive views take in Country from Mount Martha to the Great Dividing Range and west to Mount Macedon.

The parkland will protect significant ecological and cultural values and provide significant open space for both the growing population of the City of Whittlesea and for visitors across greater Melbourne.

A place for deep connection to Country, the parkland will be managed through traditional Caring for Country practices, and rehabilitation practices through partnerships with the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation, the City of Whittlesea and the community.

Healthy Country is vital for healthy people, and this key intention underpins the vision of this plan.

The Quarry Hills Parkland will help to deliver the City of Whittlesea 2040 Goals and Victoria's vision of a quality open space network as set out in the *Open Space for Everyone Strategy 2021* (DEECA).



## Role of the Future Directions Plan

This *Quarry Hills Parkland Future Directions Plan* will guide the ultimate development and delivery of the parkland.

A cultural values study has been undertaken by the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation on behalf of Traditional Owners, the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people and this has helped shape the parkland plan, laying the foundations for the legacy of the parkland for generations to come. The key recommendations are outlined in the objectives section below.

Consultation with Traditional Owners, the community and stakeholders has informed the key values and intent of the plan.

The plan sets a vision and objectives for the parkland, and strategic future direction statements to guide its ongoing landscape and infrastructure development, eco-tourism opportunities and economic sustainability.

The vision and objectives are articulated through the key themes of people, place, environment and economy. Each theme has associated principles that are informed by the values and significance of the landscape, Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people and broader community feedback.

## Drivers for change

The key drivers for the expansion of the parkland identified by the City of Whittlesea include:

- Protection and enhancement of natural systems
- Improve community health and well-being
- Protection and enhancement of cultural values
- Aboriginal reconciliation and treaty
- Climate change mitigation
- Distribution and access to open space
- Fiscal challenges and rate capping
- Population growth.

The principles uphold the long-term lens that has seen Council set out to protect and enhance this unique open space for the community.

The plan appreciates that opportunities must be aligned with the vision and balance the ongoing and increasing operational management costs of the parkland.

Through the planning scheme and partnerships, Council will deliver an ultimate parkland of 1100 hectares, to be achieved by 2040. Map 1 shows the proposed extent.

The plan forms the basis for more detailed implementation and master planning as set out in the implementation section.

The Plan has been developed by the City of Whittlesea in partnership with the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation. The project is an initiative of the Victorian Government's Suburban Parks Program.

LEFT  
Granite rock commonly found in sections of the parklands



## Objectives of the plan

The objectives of the Plan have been developed to articulate the key outcomes of the vision. They are:

- The creation of 1100 hectares of parkland which will be valued for its ancient and ongoing Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung connection and the opportunities for exchange of knowledge.
- Council commit to enabling self-determination for Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung, to return cultural practices on Country, to Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung.
- Quarry Hills Parkland will be regenerated to ecological health and vitality, to underpin health and well-being of the community.
- Quarry Hills Parkland will provide rich cultural and landscape experiences for the community, a place for exploration, reconciliation, healing and learning.
- A developed governance model where Council and Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung are partners in the future direction of the parkland.
- Work in partnership with local Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal community members to care for, activate and enhance community experience of the parkland and environment.

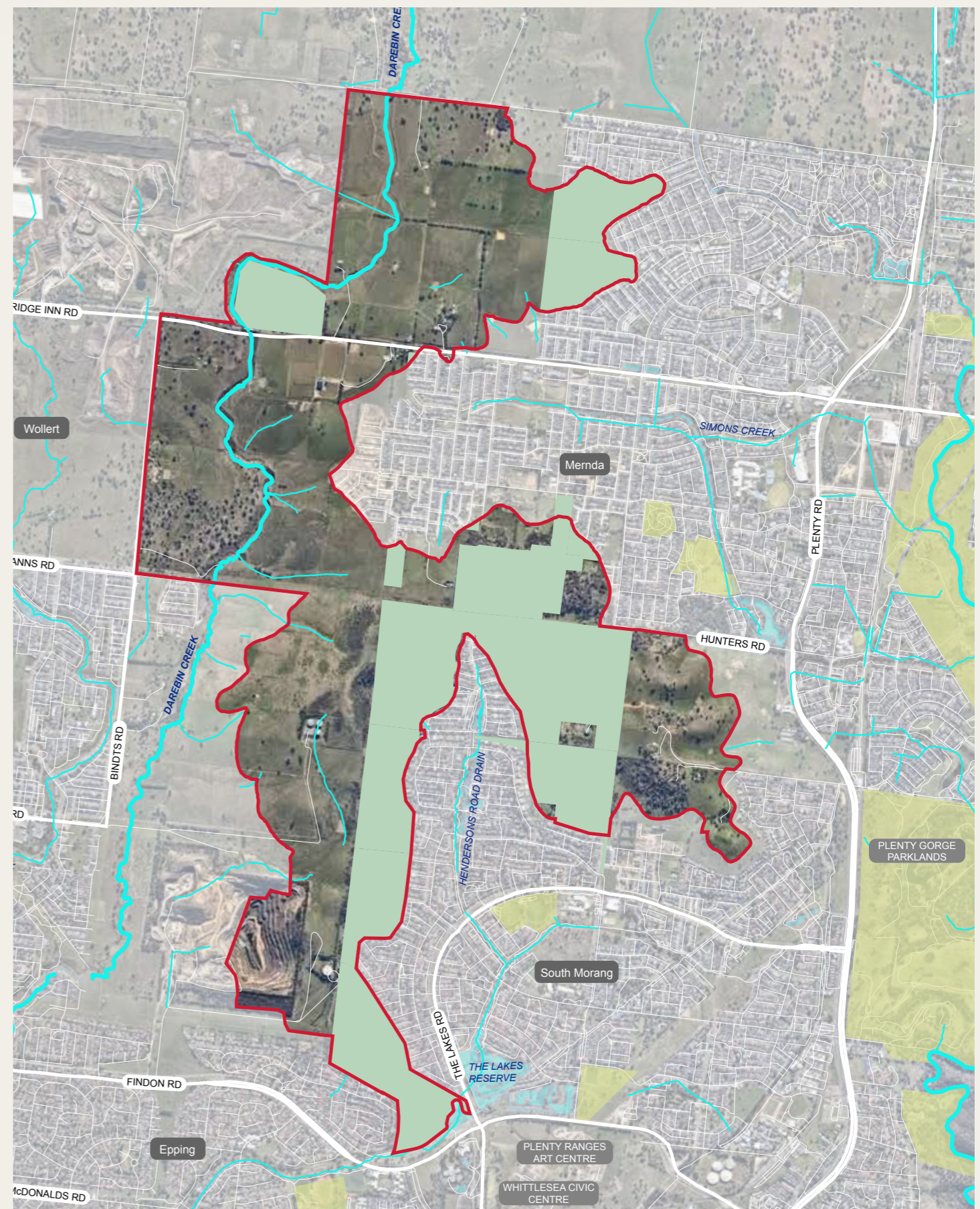
## bunjil nganga Woi-wurrung Cultural Values Study objectives

A Cultural Values Study has been undertaken to provide a cultural framework and key objectives for the development of the plan.

Seven objectives for managing Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung cultural values and embedding Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung perspectives into the parklands have been identified through consultation with the project participants.

The Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung objectives have been included in this plan. They are:

- Tangible cultural heritage management and protection.
- Protect aesthetic and natural attributes of infrastructure.
- Caring for Country.
- Planning controls to conserve and enhance the cultural landscape.
- Supporting cultural practice.
- Involvement in decision making.
- Interpretation.



MAP 1 The current and proposed parkland

### LEGEND

- Current Parklands (Council owned and managed)
- Existing parks and open spaces
- Watercourse
- Proposed Parklands (this Plan)



## History and heritage

### Traditional Owners

The custodians and Traditional Owners of the South Morang area prior to European settlement were the Wurundjeri Willam patriline of the Wurundjeri Balug clan. The clan belonged to the Woi-wurrung language group of the Kulin nation.

Water courses such as Darebin Creek provided an important source of fresh water, fish, eels, bird life and plant resources, while the adjacent grasslands and woodlands provided habitat for larger game species and vegetable foods such as the yam daisy or murrnong.

The study area contains various archaeological sites, particularly along Darebin Creek between Bridge Inn Road and Harvest Home Road.

### European settlement

European settlement commenced in 1836 with squatters moving into the area for cattle and sheep grazing. From 1843, some squatting runs were subdivided into smaller farms of 640 acres. Cropping and meat production to service the north-eastern gold fields gave way to dairying, wood-cutting and other pursuits after 1865.

Post-European settlement structures of interest include bluestone houses and stone outbuildings and numerous dry-stone walls. The image on the previous page shows a historic dairy building on the eastern boundary of the parkland.

The original bluestone/reinforced concrete bridge over Darebin Creek at Bridge Inn Road has heritage listing; a new bridge has been built on the southern side to allow the road to by-pass the heritage bridge.

The parkland contains several properties along Bindts Road connected with early German settlers. The area south of Bridge Inn Road was the site of the 640 acre "Separation" subdivision (c. 1892) but few traces of this remain.

Further east, the view from Hunter's Lane across the basalt plains to the Plenty and Eastern Ranges, "studded with ancient River Red Gums", was described by Meredith Gould (1990) as the best pastoral landscape left in the immediate vicinity of Melbourne.

The area has been associated with landscape painters since the earliest colonial days, including the Heidelberg School (Arthur Streeton), John Rowell, Max Middleton, Arnold Shore, William Frater, Kenneth Jack, Len Annois, Fred Williams and John Borrock.

### Historic sites

Heritage sites within the parkland of significant historical interest include Goadby Lodge and Sea View Park, both of which were owned by the Popple family from 1852-1963. Goadby Lodge was a weatherboard homestead comprising of ten rooms but is now only indicated by the remaining granite base walls. Sea View Lodge originally sat on 320 acres of land and comprises of a two cypress pines and a degraded granite building.

LEFT  
Historic dairy on the eastern  
boundary, surrounded by thick grass  
and vegetation facing east.  
From CHMP#17456  
(Photo: J. Richmond 12/02/2021)

## Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung values

As part of the development of the plan, a *bunjil nganga Woi-wurrung Cultural Values Study (2022) (CVS)* was developed by Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation (WWCHAC) to provide a framework for the future directions of the parkland. The CVS is a comprehensive review of the landscape, the heritage and historically significant sites, the Woi-wurrung context, the Woi-wurrung cultural significance and Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung perspective. The outcome of the report is a series of objectives and actions, which helped shape the plan.

The following excerpts of the CVS are from the Woi-wurrung cultural significance and Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung perspective section of the report. They articulate the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung findings and values which are critical to understand and influence the principles of the plan.

The Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people are the custodians of the bunjil nganga (Quarry Hills Parkland) cultural landscape and hold the generationally conferred responsibility of caring for this place to ensure seasonal maintenance of the right ecology, habitats for totemic and creation ancestors and restoration of the landscape traditionally managed by Woi-wurrung people.

The parkland and surrounding area remain a significant area of living cultural heritage, and provides valuable habitat for a diverse range of native animals and plants central to Wurundjeri cosmology. Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people have a cultural obligation and a cultural right to care for Country. Healthy Country is linked to healthy people and it is therefore necessary to return the management of Wurundjeri Country to the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people.

### Trees and woodlands

It was clear during on-Country visits and workshops that trees, regardless of age and whether or not they had scars, hold a range of cultural values. The health of trees is connected to the health of Country. Trees also provide an important connection to Country. All trees in the Parkland should be protected for wildlife with existing trees to be mapped, and new plantings encouraged especially river red gums.



### Ridgeline

The geological formation of bunjil nganga (Quarry Hills Parkland) informs its ecological and cultural story. The peaks and granite limited tree species, growth and stability in many areas, and the low-lying floodplains were important for food and other resources and activities. The peaks stretch around a large semi ellipse/horseshoe shaped ridge, allowing Woi-wurrung people to move along the ridge in accordance with the seasons, burning practices and trade routes whilst looking over the floodplains and the wider expanse of Woi-wurrung Country. This large, horseshoe shaped ridge that dominates bunjil nganga (Quarry Hills Parkland) holds significant cultural values.

### Darebin Creek

Darebin Creek is an important waterway in the area and was discussed during the on-Country visits and workshops. During an inspection of one spot near Bindts Road it was clear that the creek was not healthy. The land around it was polluted with dumped rubbish and landfill and a representative noted that trees were needed for the protection of the creek and that 'if it wasn't for the trees here on this site, the Darebin Creek would seem no more than a little drain with junk in it.' They also discussed the old water levels being much higher in this spot and that before European settlement Darebin Creek would have flowed all year but now it is seasonal.

Discussion was had with City of Whittlesea staff and Darebin Creek Management Committee. It was found that many of the WWCHAC aspirations for work to restore and manage the creek were shared. One point made was that there needed to be a wildlife corridor established and maintained along the creek.

LEFT  
Uncle Tony Garvey at a River Red Gum, CVS 2022

### Stony Rises

The WWCHAC representatives and others visited the large stony rise near Bindts Rd, Wollert. Stony rises are considered important locations as they were used by Woi-wurrung people in their every-day lives. This is clear from the artefacts that are consistently located on them. Protection of this and other stony rises were discussed. WWCHAC is aware that the City of Whittlesea is working with WWCHAC to map and protect the considerable number of stony rises in the City of Whittlesea.

### Grinding stone and sitting stone

While driving to the crest of the ridge, a WWCHAC representative spotted a rock outcrop that they thought could include something of interest. On closer inspection the outcrop contained a grinding stone and a nearby sitting stone. (See image on page 10). It was recommended that a parkwide surface level archeological survey be undertaken to identify and protect other significant artefacts in the bunjil nganga (Quarry Hills Parkland) cultural landscape.

### WWCHAC on Country

WWCHAC representative suggested that WWCHAC be given special camping rights to bunjil nganga (Quarry Hills Parkland). The area would be used for cultural practices and would be very beneficial to the Wurundjeri community. The location should not be near a public thoroughfare and should be chosen through consultation between WWCHAC and the City of Whittlesea. It was decided that there should not be one specific area but that WWCHAC be able to choose areas and be given private access for activities, as requested. It is recommended that WWCHAC's Narrap Unit provide land management works to protect, manage and restore Country.



### Aboriginal Gathering Place

At an on-Country visit, local Aboriginal community leader, Karen Bryant Gunditjmarra, from the Whittlesea Aboriginal Gathering Place Advisory Group spoke to WWCHAC representatives. Karen provided context to the advocacy of the Aboriginal Gathering Place, expressing the voices of Aboriginal people living in Whittlesea and nearby areas, have long sought a place of belonging, a place to share knowledge, create and leave artwork, have indoor and outdoor places, and welcome people into the area.

### Dardi Munwurro (Aboriginal men's group area)

Dardi Munwurro uses a small area on the edge of bunjil nganga (Quarry Hills Parkland). There is a permanent firepit with seating at the site. While in bunjil nganga (Quarry Hills Parkland), the group visited the area where an Aboriginal men's group has been meeting and conducting a range of activities designed to strengthen Aboriginal men's connections to Country and develop skills. WWCHAC support this activity and wanted to see it supported to continue.

### Granite Hills Play space

At the beginning of the first on-Country, the proposed location for the Granite Hills play space was visited and the site and plans were discussed. It was made clear by the WWCHAC representatives that there were benefits to having a play space. One request was to 'bring Wurundjeri culture into the future play space.'

### Yarra Valley Water tank

The water tank and land around it are owned and managed by Yarra Valley Water. A vantage point to the water tank was visited for the purpose of discussing the tank and gain recommendations. While there the maintenance of the land was discussed as well as the impact of the tank visually. It was agreed by WWCHAC representatives that it would be good for the water tank to be covered in art with a traditional/cultural focus.

### Soaring Shelter, Landing Shelter and Eagle Lookout

As stops were made at these points on the ridge it was clear to WWCHAC representatives how useful they were as shelters and that the designs were in line with Woi-wurrung cultural values. There was some suggestion of having more shelter so they could be used in all weathers and some seating. At Eagle Lookout it was noted that the information on the boulder only related to the City of Whittlesea. It was a recommendation that there should be an adjacent one that should talk of Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung culture and history.

LEFT  
Thane Gannaway Garvey and Jayden Garvey inspecting a grinding stone, from CVS 2022



ABOVE  
bunjil Shelter at Eagle Lookout, Quarry Hills Parkland

## Cultural Values Study recommendations

The Cultural Values Study makes specific recommendations organised into objectives and actions. There are seven objectives and thirty-two actions. All actions and objectives have been incorporated into the key strategies and actions of this plan. The seven objectives outlined in the CVS are:

### Objective 1: Tangible cultural heritage management and protection

bunjil nganga (Quarry Hills Parkland) is believed to hold an extensive presence of archaeological artefacts. A complete assessment of extent, nature and significance of Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Material (ACHM) has not been documented for bunjil nganga (Quarry Hills Parkland). It is essential that this be assessed to: register previously unidentified ACHM on the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Register; avoid future impact from parkland infrastructure; and reflect accurate cultural heritage sensitivity mapping.

### Objective 2: Protect aesthetic and natural attributes of infrastructure

bunjil nganga (Quarry Hills Parkland) is significant to Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people, including the diverse landscape features of the granite peaks, basalt plains, stony rises, ridgeline, Darebin Creek, floodplains, and Grassy Eucalypt Woodlands. Along with preserved ecological biodiversity, this landscape represents ancestral and present-day Woi-wurrung Country.

The Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung community find spiritual meaning within Country that embodies the living spaces of their ancestors and which provides a conceptual link to the traditional Country of their people.

The Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Elders and representatives would like the public to enjoy bunjil nganga (Quarry Hills Parkland). They need to work with land managers to ensure that walking and driving tracks, lookouts and other visitor attractions support, and do not damage, the significant aesthetic and natural attributes of their ancestral place.

### Objective 3: Caring for Country

For the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung community, both cultural significance and accordance with their traditions is sustained through the renewal of customary practices on Country and ensuring the generational conferral of this knowledge. The Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people are the custodians of the bunjil nganga (Quarry Hills Parkland) cultural landscape and hold the responsibility of caring for this place to ensure seasonal maintenance of the right ecology, habitats for totemic and creation ancestors and restoration of the landscape traditionally managed by Woi-wurrung people.

### Objective 4: Planning controls to conserve and enhance the cultural landscape

The bunjil nganga (Quarry Hills Parkland) cultural landscape is valued in its entirety for the spiritual, archaeological, historical, ecological and living connections it provides the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung community. Adjacent areas to bunjil nganga (Quarry Hills Parkland) are being developed. It is important that this development is not undertaken in a way that compromises the cultural landscape.

### Objective 5: Supporting cultural practice

The Woi-wurrung people have been the owners and custodians of the land known as bunjil nganga (Quarry Hills Parkland) for at least 65,000+ years.

For the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung community, significance is sustained through the renewal of customary practices and ensuring the generational conferral of knowledge. This is achieved in many ways, including Caring for Country, undertaking archaeological assessments, walking Country, knowledge sharing and celebrations that include private ceremonies and on-Country cultural activities.

Sharing and growing cultural knowledge for Aboriginal people living on Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Country is supported. bunjil nganga (Quarry Hills Parkland) already provides a valuable space for Aboriginal youth to enjoy as part of their experience with Dardi Munwarro (located on the northern edge of bunjil nganga (Quarry Hills Parkland)). WWCHAC support and encourage this activity. Similarly, the proposed Aboriginal

Gathering Place will be a future location for the broader Aboriginal community to meet, share knowledge, belong and celebrate culture. The importance of supported and safe spaces for the Aboriginal community is recognised and bunjil nganga (Quarry Hills Parkland) can provide the space and conditions for these activities and should continue to and take opportunities for further activities.

### Objective 6: Involvement in decision making

Recognition and protection of the bunjil nganga (Quarry Hills Parkland) cultural landscape must be integrated into relevant policies and regulations to ensure adequate protection and cultural respect for the bunjil nganga (Quarry Hills Parkland) area. To ensure this is done to the satisfaction of WWCHAC, representatives should be included in decision making in relation to bunjil nganga (Quarry Hills Parkland) from now.

### Objective 7: Interpretation

It is recommended that the use of Woi-wurrung artwork and cultural design elements be reflected in any future buildings, works and infrastructure design in the parkland. Opportunities include more bunjil shelters, Woi-wurrung artwork on the large water tanks, design and interpretive signage built into the upcoming regional play space and proposed buildings such as the proposed Aboriginal Gathering Place. A consistent signage strategy will enhance public knowledge of the cultural importance and sensitivity of bunjil nganga (Quarry Hills Parkland) and the bunjil nganga (Quarry Hills Parkland) cultural landscape. The image above shows a shelter designed with bunjil as the central interpretation theme.





## Environmental values

Quarry Hills Parkland has been created to preserve and enhance its natural and environmental values. The importance of the environmental values has been demonstrated through consultation on this plan, and through broader community engagement.

The City of Whittlesea has a distinct natural character that is meaningful to the community with a rural landscape and mature River Red Gums protected throughout the suburbs. Furthermore, the importance of protecting natural environment to preserve heritage and cultural values, and have a positive climate impact, is imperative to the community.

The key environmental values of the parkland highlighted include:

- Ecosystem services
- Waterways including the Darebin Creek and other drainage lines that extend from the parkland
- Significant biodiversity and ecology, with potential for the site to be regenerated to ecological health
- Significant topography and view lines that extend for tens of kilometres
- The role that the parkland plays in creating and connecting a large continuous open space corridor
- Unique geology and ancient Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung quarry sites
- Experience of seasonality.

### Geology, topography, views, valleys and flats

The geology and topography of the parkland characterises the unique landscape as described below. These qualities are essential when highlighting the parkland as a regional destination.

The formation of the Quarry Hills terrain is distinctive. The surrounding flatter areas are basalt, and the wish-bone shaped hills are sandstone, as shown in Map 3. This creates an area that is unique for its steep terrain and varied ecology. The flat areas of the parkland relate to the Darebin Creek corridor and the significant Grassy Eucalypt Forest which give way to the open hill top areas.

Key qualities include:

- The hill tops provide vantage points for spectacular views across Melbourne and the Great Dividing Range
- Some of the steep areas have rare and threatened species of flora and fauna
- The ascent and geology of the hill tops are unique with granite outcrops featuring on the slopes
- The steep climb is desirable for those looking for a physical challenge, with a great reward at the top
- The topography is undulating and the hills form the shape of a wishbone, creating long trails to explore with differing aspects, views and vegetation
- The southern valley is nestled within the wish-bone shaped rise and has a local and enclosed feel
- The northeast valley is flanked by broader hillsides with views towards the Great Dividing Range. It has a distinct bushland character
- The Darebin Creek flats are a unique area of the parkland, with different vegetation and edges. There is opportunity for development of the riparian ecosystem, and connection to an extensive trail and creek network.

### Ecosystem services

Ecosystem services are provided to the wider area including cleaning of air and water, and cooling effects from vegetation.

In particular trees play a significant role in ecosystem services, offering both value to humans and to local animals and insects that depend on them as a source of food and shelter.

The woodlands have a variety of tree species and ages, and the tree canopy can be extended through urban areas, creating a wider network of canopy and biodiversity.

The parkland is a refuge for seeds, insects, birds, mammals, fish and reptiles, all critical to the health of the local ecosystem.

## Waterways

Darebin Creek begins in Melbourne's northern outskirts and travels through both rural and urban/industrial areas, draining into the Yarra River in the inner north-eastern suburbs of Melbourne. The creek has been heavily modified by past use however continues to support some threatened flora and fauna species, including the Growling Grass Frog.

Darebin Creek runs through the northern sections of Quarry Hills Parkland between Masons Road in the north to Lehmanns Road to the south. The creek continues to flow west of the parkland in an approximate southerly direction before heading west of the Boral Quarries site.

The realisation of the 1,100 ha parkland will contain approximately 5 km or 10 per cent of the entire creek length. The expansion to include the Darebin Creek corridor includes new landform and associated vegetation communities.

For ecological restoration the corridor provides:

- Significant areas of remnant Grassy Eucalypt Woodland
- Numerous stony rises interspersed with secondary watercourses and depressions. These landforms are considered to constitute high conservation value
- Derived grassland retaining a significant seedbank of red gums and potentially of indigenous ground cover species
- An existing population of Growling Grass Frog linked to the larger population in the Hanson Quarry and Landfill areas.

The *Healthy Waterways Strategy 2018-28* by Melbourne Water sets a long-term vision for managing the health of rivers, wetlands and estuaries in the Port Phillip and Westernport region, in order to protect and improve their value to the community. Darebin Creek scores lowly in a number of key areas such as frog and platypus health. Consequently, a vital goal of the plan is the strategy's aims to improve the ecological health of the creek.

The Darebin Creek Management Committee are actively involved in contributing to this plan and are a key stakeholder in helping to deliver the *Healthy Waterways Strategy* and this plan's vision.

## Biodiversity and ecology

Located within the Victorian Plains and Central Victorian Uplands bioregions, Quarry Hills Parkland supported a number of vegetation types prior to European settlement. The vast majority of this vegetation has now been cleared for agricultural purposes, with remnants of these vegetation communities persisting in small and fragmented areas.

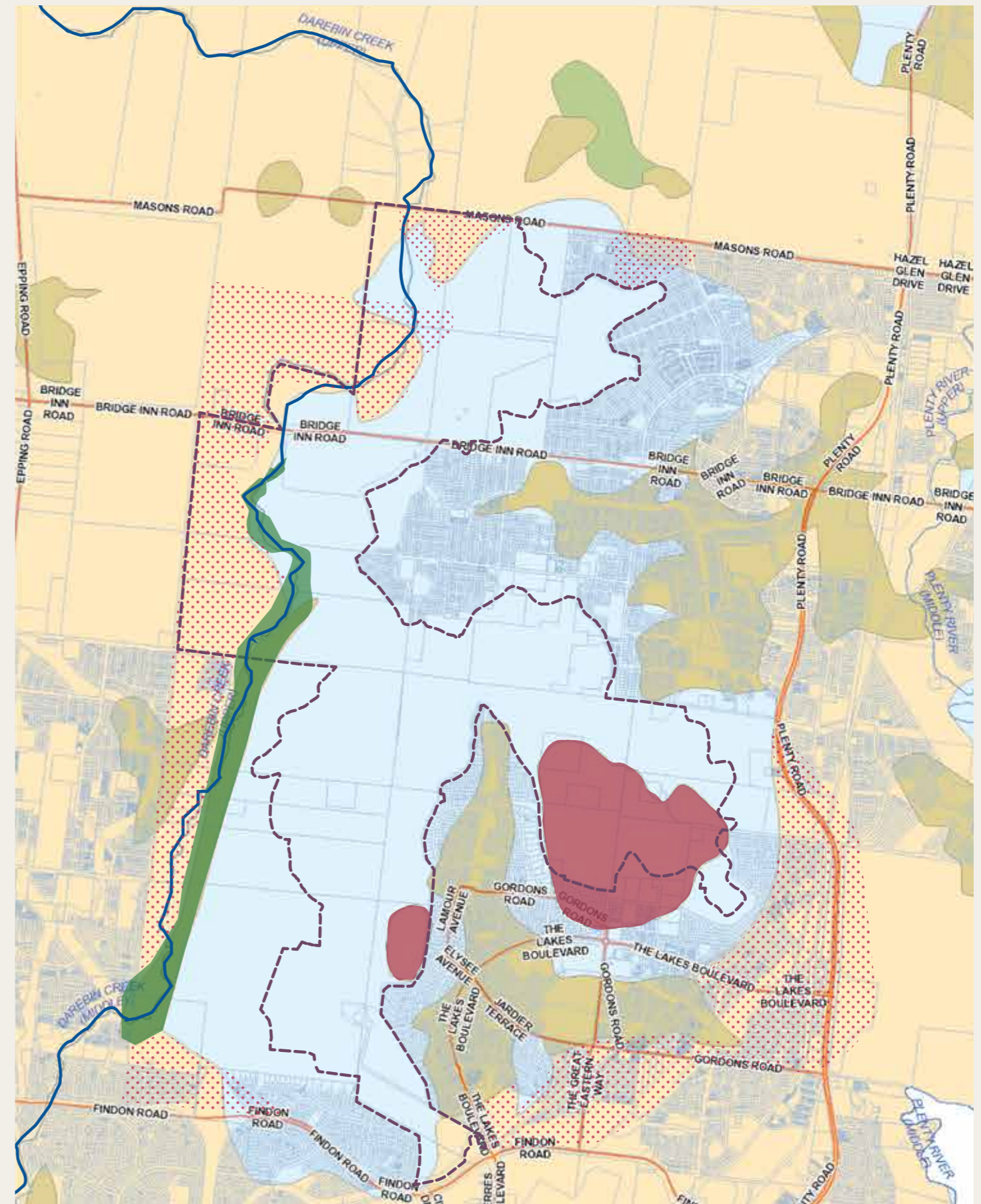
A number of surveys have been undertaken across the site, and the City of Whittlesea have been actively managing vegetation across the parkland.

Remnant trees and vegetation areas, together with a number of threatened species have been identified throughout the parkland. In addition, a number of habitats have been identified for reptiles, frogs, invertebrates and other native fauna.



ABOVE

Granite Hills Dam (City of Whittlesea)



MAP 2 Geology the Quarry Hills Parkland area

<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color: #c00000; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Morang Granodiorite	<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color: #add8e6; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Fluvial: "gully" alluvium, colluvium: gravel, sand, silt	<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color: #add8e6; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Marine: siltstone, minor sandstone	<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color: #008000; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Rivers and creeks
<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color: #ffa500; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Basalt, minor scoria and ash: tholeiitic to alkaline	<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color: #ffa500; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Fluvial: alluvium, gravel, sand, silt	<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color: #add8e6; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Marine: siltstone, sandstone, thin bedded	<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color: #008000; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Alluvium (Darebin Creek)
<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color: #ffa500; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Extrusive: tholeiitic and minor alkaline basalts	<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color: #ffa500; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Fluvial: gravel, sand, silt	<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color: #add8e6; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Marine: siltstone, thin bedded sandstone	<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; border: 1px dashed black;"></span> Olivine basalt
	<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color: #add8e6; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Marine: sandstone, thick to thin bedded, siltstone, minor conglomerate	<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color: #90ee90; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Paludal: lagoon and swamp deposits: silt, clay	<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; border: 1px solid black;"></span> Quarry Hills Parklands
			<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; border: 2px solid black;"></span> Primary Arterial
			<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; border: 2px dashed black;"></span> Secondary Arterial

## Community and visitor values

### Sense of place and identity

Open spaces contribute to a sense of place and local identity and are important factors in feeling connected to places where we live and work. The parkland provides a strong local landmark for surrounding communities, both as a visual setting due to the rising hills, and as an accessible destination for people to walk, play and meet in.

There is opportunity to further strengthen the character, accessibility and use of the parkland, which will promote and enhance a local sense of place and identity.

The parkland can also provide a regional attraction for the greater municipality, and provide a unique destination for those further away.

### Health and well-being

Access to natural spaces provides health and well-being benefits that include physical health through exercise, social health through opportunities to connect with people and mental health through exposure to nature.

The parkland is a critical asset for the community to enjoy a healthy natural space, through a range of experiences and activities including walking, hiking, play and creative expression.

### Community connection

Open spaces offer an important setting for community connection. Opportunities include an informal meeting place for walking, picnicking or places for more structured activities. Organised events and programs can also be part of a park, offering broader opportunities for engaging in open spaces.

Community stewardship, connection to Country and other activities such as tree planting days and community engagements are opportunities to gather and enhance custodianship of the parkland and offer provide opportunities for community connection.

### Liveability

*Whittlesea 2040 – a place for all*, is the long-term vision for the City of Whittlesea, and lists four goals that will help achieve the vision. One of these goals, Liveable Neighbourhoods, includes the following key directions: smart, connected transport and well-designed neighbourhoods with vibrant town centres.

The parkland is an important piece in the neighbourhood puzzle, connecting neighbourhoods and regional centres, and adding to the vibrancy of the municipality. Liveability can be achieved through:

- Education and interpretation
- Accessible spaces and places
- High quality infrastructure
- Connections to active transport
- High quality design and maintenance
- Conservation, protection and enhancement of environment and cultural areas.

### Visitor experiences

Understanding visitor experiences is crucial in the design and development of parks. Quarry Hills Parkland has been earmarked due to its high cultural and natural values. Therefore, the visitor experience needs to be tailored to maximise these values, to ensure a genuine experience that will be an ongoing drawcard. Rich experiences that reflect and enable these values can include:

- Ensuring accessibility
- Meaningful parkland interpretation
- Public art
- Cultural activities sites and spaces
- Environmental education
- Varied and healthy environment
- Seasonal activity
- Gathering places.

### Play

Play is the way in which any person can experience open space. Play can be walking through a sensory garden, challenging yourself to hike or run up a steep hill or observing small details at a rest stop. Play can also be broadened to absorb other experiences such as art and interpretation trails, education and learning experiences. Play is a way in which we experience and are enriched in our environments and is a fundamental aspect in designing and understanding the parkland.

Play is critical for the development of children's physical, social, mental, emotive and creative skills. Play spaces can come in many varied forms including structured, age specific playgrounds, nature play and engagement with natural surroundings.

Playgrounds, or play activities in nature are key drivers for visitation to parks. Granite Hills Community Park will provide a major playground for the parkland. Other types of integrated play, appropriate to the values of the parkland can be investigated in more detailed master plan opportunities.

As the development of the parkland progresses to detailed design, rich and varied experiences in the landscape should be explored, that cater to a wide range of abilities.

### Cultural and creative expression

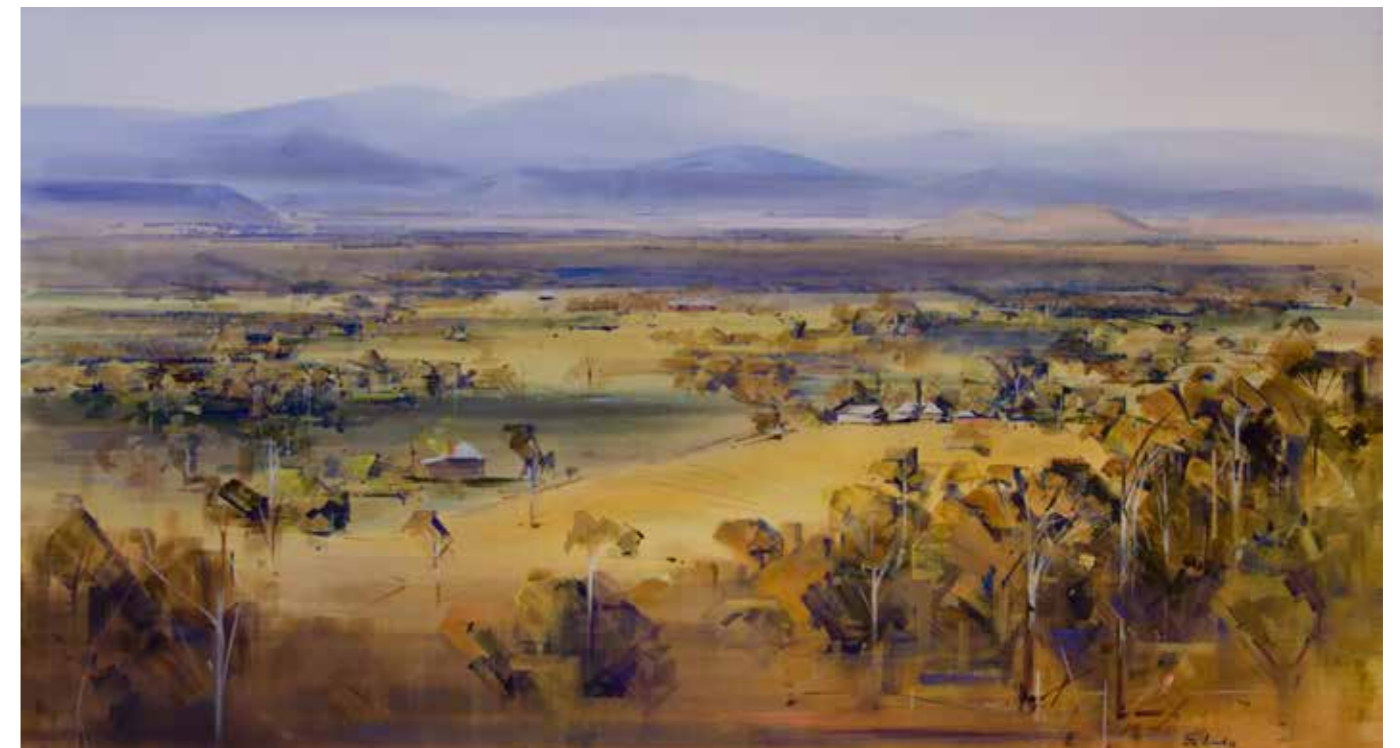
Creative expression is an important part of our culture. The arts are diverse and can include music, dance, sculpture, drawings and many other forms. The arts have a unique way of bringing people together to celebrate, provide contrasting points of view, express and reveal meaning in objects and places and provide exciting and vibrant experiences.

Festivals and events mark seasons, important cultural days and other ways of celebrating and coming together. The parkland has opportunity to host different types of festivals and events that can support the intrinsic values of the parkland and community. There is opportunity to extend and focus on existing infrastructure including the proposed Granite Hills Park, Habitat House / Aboriginal Gathering Place. Other events such as night walks, interpretation trails and seasonal events can also be considered.

Artists help to shine a light on contemporary expression and subjects, and can further our experience, perspectives and connection with place. Celebrated Australian artist John Borraack recognised both in Australia and internationally has lived with the Quarry Hills on his doorstep for 63 years. His work is held in State and Regional galleries across Australia, from the NGV to Darwin, and in many private and corporate collections both here and overseas. Although he has spent extensive periods painting in Europe and America, and his lifetime exploring coastal, remote and wilderness landscapes the length and breadth of Australia, the Mernda landscape has remained the focus of his artistic practice.

The Quarry Hills quality of light and its commanding panoramas is one of the reasons he chose to live in Mernda. It has been a compelling and formative influence on his work. He discovered the magic and space of Australian distance – the effect of light, atmosphere and structural form in panoramic landscape. From any slope or hill, this whole scene is enhanced by the slightest elevation. Small farm buildings contribute to the immensity and the scale of it all, while the trees lead the eye into the sphere of shimmering distances and details. At Quarry Hills, poetry of light and poetry of place coalesce.

The image below is a watercolour by John Borraack, painted from Quarry Hills, looking to the north-east.



ABOVE  
Painting *Extensive August Landscape from Quarry Hills, Mernda*.  
John Borraack 1988, Watercolour on Paper, Mounted, 102 x 152 cm



ABOVE  
View of Granite Hills Dam, Quarry Hills Parkland (City of Whittlesea)

## Community infrastructure and visitor facilities (places)

### Access

Quarry Hills Parkland is located along the Darebin Creek Corridor. It is part of a larger green wedge system, linking agricultural areas to the north.

The parkland has opportunity to be well connected via active transport linkages along adjoining and nearby minor creek catchments, linking to the Plenty River and Merri Creek systems. Further opportunities can be found through street networks and power easements.

Access to the immediate area of the parkland is somewhat limited by the surrounding local street network. The parkland will benefit from regional entry points that come off major roads, and an understanding and improvement in the local public transport network.

### Public transport

There are local bus networks that access all sides of the parkland. Small changes to these routes could accommodate multiple stops at key entries to the parkland. The Mernda Railway Corridor runs along the eastern side of the parkland, curving around the Council buildings to the south. The rail line at South Morang Station is approximately 760m from the Findon Road interface and at Mernda approximately 3.5km along Bridge Inn Road.

### Path network

The City of Whittlesea is currently revisiting the strategic planning of its trail and pathway networks. This plan recommends that detailed planning is undertaken to strengthen the local network, allowing maximum connectivity to the local and municipal networks, enabling maximum passive connectivity to the parkland. This includes upgrading of regional connections such as the planned strategic cycling corridors proposed along Bridge Inn Road and Epping Road.

### Granite Hills Community Park

Granite Hills Community Park is set out to be a major community park and has received \$2.5 million from the Victorian Government's Growing Suburbs Fund.

A draft concept plan has been prepared by Rush Wright Associates and is proceeding to community engagement. The proposed community park has a strong natural landscape character, with elevated views and a diverse range of unstructured recreational activities.

The concept plan addresses the vision established in the *2019 Landscape Master Plan*, delivering:

- Improving public access and use of the parkland
- Provision of iconic regional level park and playground facilities
- Increasing public use and perception of the parkland
- Protection and enhancement of existing parkland biodiversity and cultural heritage values.

### Habitat House

The parkland also includes a large shed dubbed 'Habitat House', which is utilised by the City of Whittlesea for extremely popular environmental and nature-based programs, including planting days with the community and partner organisations.

### Aboriginal Gathering Place

Quarry Hills Parkland has one residential property on site which is currently vacant and is the proposed location for the Aboriginal Gathering Place. The property at 45 Regent Street, Mernda, is leased by the Dardi Munwurro who run Aboriginal Men's Programs from the property.



ABOVE  
Eagle lookout/shelter, Quarry Hills Parkland (City of Whittlesea)

### Foothills Park

Foothills Park is a small local open space accessed via a steep unsealed path from Longwood Drive and Findon Road. Picnic and barbecue facilities are orientated to take advantage of views towards Hendersons Creek Wetland. There is no public car parking on the site and the circuitous road network used to access the site make further development of this area difficult.

(Thompson Berrill Landscape Design P/L, 2019)

### Topaz Grove, South Morang

Topaz Grove currently provides unsealed walking access up a steep slope and into the Granite Hills section of the parkland. There is also an unsealed path link to Lionsgate Park with connections through to Hendersons Creek Linear Park. There are no drinking fountains or toilet facilities in the parkland.

(Thompson Berrill Landscape Design P/L, 2019)

### Eagle Lookout

Eagle Lookout, located high above the Swamp Gully car park, provides expansive views east. Landing Shelter and Soaring Shelter are silhouetted on the horizon and provide elevated views west. These lookout points are accessed via a steep unsealed walking track along the western ridgeline.

(Thompson Berrill Landscape Design P/L, 2019)

### Swamp Gully car park

Swamp Gully car park provides the only existing public parking within the parkland. Accessed from Gravelier Way, South Morang the car park is located at the base of a steep escarpment and provides restricted public access into the parkland via a gated system. The car park has poor passive surveillance and the steep topography, lack of all ability access and circuitous road network used to access the site make further development of this site difficult.

(Thompson Berrill Landscape Design P/L, 2019)

### Recreation and leisure

The parkland has been determined a regional park due to its environmental and cultural significance.

Appropriate major facilities and uses to be provided at a state/regional scale include:

- Barbecue and picnic facilities, including access to water, shelters, seating etc
- Exercise and fitness considerations – these could be spaces, trails or associated with other types of community facilities
- Provision of spaces for festivals and events – already under provision through the Granite Hills Park proposal
- Unstructured recreational uses, such as large open grassy areas – noting, these should not undermine significant environmental areas
- Path networks.

Appropriate major facilities and uses to be considered at a municipal scale include:

- Major playground – underway through the Granite Hills Park proposal.

Leisure pursuits are a key element in designing and imagining opportunities in a park. The parkland already boasts amazing views marked by three bespoke shelters. These shelters are reached through gravel trails. Other trails provide a walking circuit for the parkland.

In addition, there is opportunity to make other types of connections such as trails, habitat corridors, canopy coverage and through waterways, to other state significant parklands such as Plenty Gorge Park, Craigieburn Grassland Nature Conservation Reserve, Merri Creek, Darebin Creek and Plenty River.

### Parkland management and operations

Within the parkland, the City of Whittlesea currently oversee 400ha of existing owned space, which is managed by Council's Conservation Management Team for biodiversity, passive recreation and community safety. Other areas of the parkland are leased out or remain in private ownership with agreements to include additional land into the parkland in future years.

The Conservation Management Team has been restoring areas of the parkland with help from the community to improve habitat connectivity for local fauna and flora.

The growing partnership with WWCHAC and the Narrap team at the parkland will allow for ongoing works on Country to be done in culturally appropriate ways, and provide a strong basis for returning Country to traditional land management practices.

### Operations

Operations and maintenance is a key factor in the planning and design of the future parkland. Consideration will need to be given to:

- Conservation management
- Types of management activities with future development
- Maintenance vehicle access
- CFA and indigenous vegetation burning requirements
- Ongoing bushfire prevention programs
- Emergency management and access requirements.

Future access requirements for maintenance of:

- Paths and drainage
- Vegetation
- Services and infrastructure such as drinking fountains, lighting and power
- Community infrastructure
- Active recreation equipment.

### Levels of service

In addition to the existing vegetation, trails and shelters, Council will need to invest maintenance and management to match the proposed asset investments and programs and work closely with partners to enable new activities and practices.



ABOVE  
Path network near Meridian Drive entry, South Morang



## Consultation and partnership

**This plan has been developed in partnership with the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people, key stakeholders and the community. The partnership with Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people, through the WWCHAC, has been documented in the Woi-wurrung values section of this report.**

Consultation for this plan has been undertaken in two phases. The first phase included working with focus groups and key stakeholders to test the emerging themes and understand key issues.

The second phase was general consultation where feedback was received on the draft plan.

The outcomes of the overall consultation show broad community and stakeholder support for the plan. This is in all areas, including support for the vision, objectives, themes and strategies.

The main feedback received centres around strengthening the proposition of the natural environment and people's connection to it, and ensuring that it remains a free community asset.

This plan has been refined to ensure that key values, opportunities and issues have been addressed and have further strengthened and shaped the final outcome.

The findings of the consultation are summarised below.

### Early thematic and issue development

To aid the early development of the plan, preceding consultation by Council was carefully examined to understand key issues and emerging themes with regard to open space.

This consultation included the Granite Hills Community Consultation (2022), Quarry Hills Landscape Master Plan (2017) and the Municipal Wide Open Space survey (2013).

The following elements were identified as important:

- Play and play spaces
- Environments encouraging wildlife
- Tree planting
- Base infrastructure including public toilets, shelters with tables and seats, walking trails and paths and drinking fountains.

Key activities identified as desired in open space include:

- Views and vistas
- Walking
- Dog walking
- Exercising
- Fitness equipment
- Birdlife – watching
- Cycling.

Desirable characteristics include:

- Access – close to home
- Natural character – bushland environment
- Open space – peaceful/quiet
- No motorcycles
- Vegetation – more smaller plants/native grasses required.

### Focus group engagement

In the first phase of consultation, undertaken during September 2022, focus groups and stakeholders were invited to express their thoughts on both open space generally, and on the parkland specifically. The engagement activities included:

- Informing the stakeholders about the background information and the importance of Quarry Hills Parkland as a regional park and place
- Communicating the purpose and importance of the Future Directions Plan
- Hearing from Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Elders about the cultural values of the parkland
- To express values, issues, opportunities of the Quarry Hills Parkland
- Key sentiments and ideas in developing a vision and future direction statements for the Quarry Hills Parkland.



ABOVE  
Parkland entry at Gravelier Way, South Morang

## Feedback

A Quarry Hills Parkland Future Directions Plan Engagement Findings Report (September 2022) has been developed which details the engagement activities, findings and recommendations (Refer Appendix B). A summary of the findings include:

### Values

- Uniqueness
- Diverse habitats
- Intactness of the indigenous flora and fauna.
- Habitat quality and landscape
- Natural resource
- Community connection to nature
- Cultural values and respecting the cultural protocols
- Catering to all users and abilities
- Protection of conservation values
- Protection of sacred sites.

### Issues

- Limited connectivity with private ownership along the Darebin Creek corridor disconnecting the parkland
- Limited access and usable spaces due to steepness
- Limited access from the surrounding area
- Lack of signage leading to the park
- Missing links.

### Opportunities

- Support community connection and stewardship of the park
- Recognition and acknowledgement of Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung culture
- Develop the Quarry Hills Parkland as a tourism destination
- Provide opportunities for social enterprise and local jobs, including new initiatives such as indigenous nurseries with indigenous plants and medicinal plants
- Events and activities including guided walks along the peaks, bush kinder and/or bush playgroup, walking groups, citizen science opportunities such as bird watching days, fauna and flora counts, annual events and local clean up events.

### Vision

The key ideas to establish a legacy or objectives included:

- Development of Darebin Creek
- Prioritisation of land assembly along the waterways (Darebin Creek)
- Celebrate the history of re-vegetation and restoration
- Ecological restoration
- Establish a friends group with ongoing connection caring for the parkland
- Highlighting the partnership and work with Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung
- Increase Traditional Owner presence on site.

## Consultation on the Draft Quarry Hills Parkland Future Direction Plan

The second phase of consultation, undertaken from December 2022 to January 2023, involved broader community consultation on the *Draft Quarry Hills Parkland Future Directions Plan*. This consultation was undertaken through an online survey and at six pop-up consultation activities.

A *Quarry Hills Regional Parkland Future Directions Plan Phase 2 Participation and Engagement Findings Report (January 2023)* has been developed, detailing the engagement activities, findings and recommendations (Refer Appendix B).

The key findings from the consultation are summarised below.

### General feedback

The majority of the feedback reflected support for the plan's vision and future direction statements, however, feedback also reflected the need for simplicity.

Darebin Creek Management Committee provided detailed feedback on the plan. The overall feedback included the following statements of support:

"DCMC congratulates City of Whittlesea on the Future Directions Plan for Quarry Hills Regional Parkland. With a time-horizon of almost 18 years and a highly ambitious acquisition target of 1,100 ha, this is necessarily a high-level strategic document."

"DCMC strongly support developing precinct master plans for Quarry Hills Regional Parklands once a consistent, over-arching plan is agreed. Treating the parkland as a series of connected precincts allows the unique features of these to be identified and managed."

The Committee also highlight opportunities for the future of the park, including:

"DCMC believe the Darebin Creek precinct of the parkland has great potential to provide a different visitor experience and an opportunity for community participation in ecological restoration."

### The key recommendations from all consultations have been addressed in the plan. These include:

- Ensure that objectives of the *Biodiversity Conservation Strategy* and *Strategy for establishing a Grassy Eucalypt Woodland Protected Area* are considered
- Develop the Quarry Hills Parkland as a key tourism, educational and training destination
- Support cultural practices
- Enhance the bunjil nganga (Quarry Hills Parkland) cultural landscape
- Protect aesthetic and natural attributes of infrastructure
- Ensure that events and activities that support community connection are considered
- Increase and identify broader connectivity to the parkland through public transport and better connections from major roads
- Identify future infrastructure and maintenance processes
- Prioritise ecological health of the parkland
- Ensure that the principles and intent of the park is not eroded through development and economic aspirations
- Clarify the recommendations around economic sustainability and maintain free access to the parkland
- Raise the profile of the cultural landscape and heritage of the parkland
- Acknowledge cultural diversity in the community
- Improve the safety, infrastructure and amenity of the parkland.

# The plan

The draft *Quarry Hills Parkland Future Directions Plan* has been developed following critical review of strategic documents, plans and assessments, site analysis, community and stakeholder consultation and collaboration with the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people and stakeholder feedback.

The main body of the plan articulates the vision and objectives for the Quarry Hills Parkland. To achieve this vision and deliver the objectives, four future direction statements have been formed to guide long term and consistent delivery of the plan. These statements and corresponding themes have been shaped by the Cultural Values Study and aligned to the *Whittlesea 2040: A place for all* goals as illustrated in the diagram below.

Each of the future direction statements are supported by principles and strategies. Principles provide high level guidance on the intention of each theme, with the strategies being key actions to deliver the plan.

The table below illustrates the relationship between the vision, objectives and themes. They are described as:

**Vision** – crafted from the background analysis, research and consultation.

**Objectives** – name the enduring legacy that the plan aims to achieve.

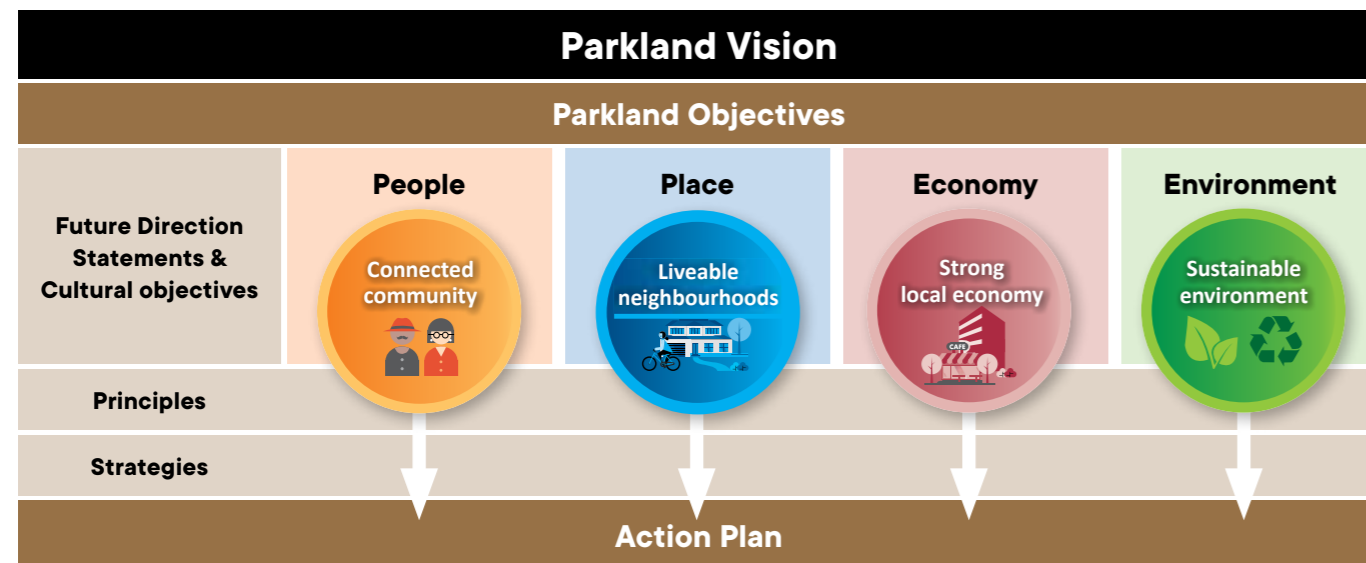
**Future direction statements** – establish the long-term intention of the plan.

**Principles** – articulate the intention of each theme.

**Strategies** – name key actions to deliver the plan.



ABOVE  
Whittlesea 2040: A place for all – goals



ABOVE  
Diagram showing the relationship between the vision, objectives and themes

## Vision

The vision for the parkland is:

Quarry Hills Parkland is a rich and inspiring destination of unique natural and cultural landscapes, valued for the ecological, spiritual, historical and living connections it provides to Aboriginal people and the broader community.

Quarry Hills Parkland is a place of active reconciliation, storytelling and healing, where community can explore and celebrate the unique cultural and ecological significance of the landscape and Aboriginal people can practice connection to Country.

Quarry Hills Parkland is a special place of recreation, protection and renewal, a place to learn, explore culture, art and environment, and to connect with the exceptional natural and curated features of the parkland for all generations to come.

## Objectives

The objectives to deliver the vision are:

- The creation of 1100 hectares of parkland which will be valued for its ancient and ongoing Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung connection and the opportunities for exchange of knowledge.
- Council commit to enabling self-determination for Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung, to return cultural practices on Country, to Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung.
- Quarry Hills Parkland will be regenerated to ecological health and vitality, to underpin health and well-being of the community.
- Quarry Hills Parkland will provide rich cultural, and landscape experiences for the community, a place for exploration, reconciliation healing and learning.
- A developed governance model where Council and Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung are partners in the future direction of the parkland.
- Work in partnership with local Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal community members to care for, activate and enhance community experience of the parkland and environment.

## Future direction statements

The outcomes of the vision are articulated through the future direction statements below:

### People

Quarry Hills Parkland will be a destination for connection to nature, a place to experience rich cultural and community activities, explore, play and learn, and a place of well-being and healing.

### Place

Quarry Hills Parkland will provide gateways and warm welcomes into the parkland, connecting seamlessly into its surroundings, through the creation of green healthy links to other landscapes and the regional trail network.

### Economy

Quarry Hills Parkland will be economically sustainable and contribute to the local economy. Drawing on its unique natural and cultural values, it will become a place of learning and a destination, attracting people from across Melbourne.

### Environment

Quarry Hills Parkland will be regenerated to ecological health. The Darebin Creek and other waterways, rich and varied geological formations, topography, increased woodland forest, outstanding viewpoints and significant biodiversity flora and fauna will be connected and cared for.





## People

### Future direction statement

Quarry Hills Parkland will be a destination for connection to nature, a place to experience rich cultural and community activities, explore, play and learn, and a place of well-being and healing.

### Goal 1 – Connected community

- A socially cohesive community
- A healthy and safe community
- A participating community

### Key principles

- Nurture and raise the cultural value of the parkland
- Invest in the health and well-being of the community
- Instil a strong sense of place and character to underpin the value of Quarry Hills Parkland within the community
- Avoid inappropriate infrastructure and development that erodes the Quarry Hills Parkland values
- Ensure that the parkland is managed as a safe landscape for the local community
- Consider all ages and abilities.

**Goal 1 – Connected community**

- A socially cohesive community
- A healthy and safe community
- A participating community



**Key strategies**

**PP1** Establish Caring for Country principles in collaboration with the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people, which will guide place planning, management and a staged approach to ecological management

- Development and endorsement of *Caring for Country Management Plan* in collaboration with Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people
- Advocate for DECCA to investigate the areas of GEW which overlap the Quarry Hills investigation areas
- Set aside protected space for Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung cultural practices, in collaboration with the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people
- Development of key areas to be defined through the Caring for Country principles and including identified key precincts: Darebin Creek Flats, Northern Hills, The Saddle, Eastern Ranges, Western Ranges and Quarry Sub-zone.
- From the CVS – Objective 3: Caring for Country:
  - 3.1 City of Whittlesea and DECCA to engage with Narrap Unit
  - 3.2 Support Narrap Unit capacity
  - 3.3 Ease approvals to Care for Country
  - 3.4 Conduct ecology survey
  - 3.5 Map and protect trees
  - 3.6 Implement wildlife corridor by continuing the improvements along the Darebin Creek linked to GEW
  - 3.7 Improve vehicle tracks
  - 3.8 Plant appropriate native species
  - 3.9 Acquire additional land
  - 3.10 Protect and enhance Darebin Creek
  - 3.11 Rehabilitate and maintain polluted and mismanaged area
  - 3.12 Quarry to reduce risk and rehabilitate Country.

**Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung cultural objectives**

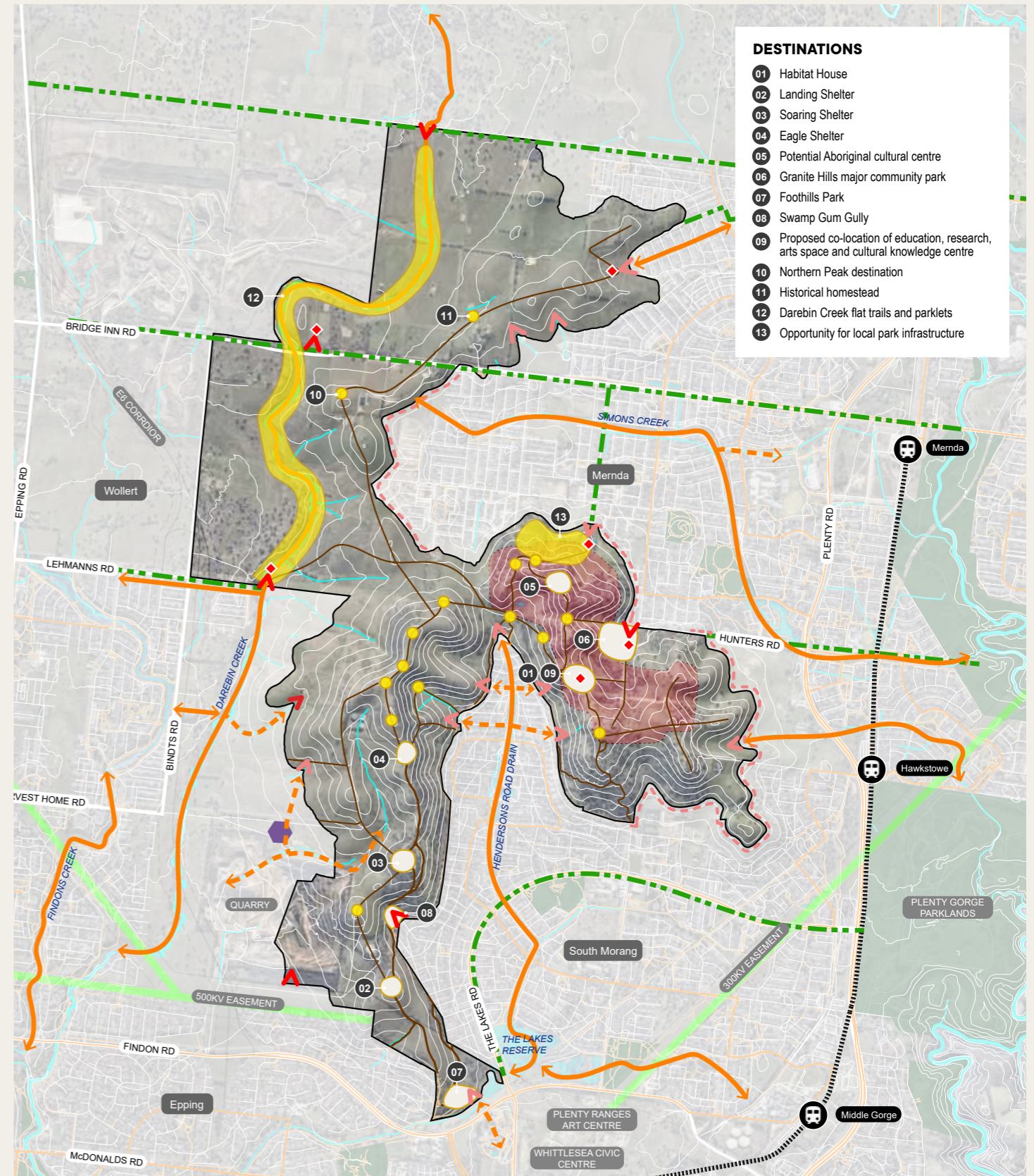
**Caring for Country** – ensuring generational transfer of knowledge and responsibility of caring for this place.

**Supporting cultural practice** – the importance of supported and safe spaces for the Aboriginal community is recognised and Quarry Hills Parkland can provide the space and conditions for these activities and should continue to and take opportunities for further activities.

**Interpretation** – it is recommended that the use of Woi-wurrung artwork and cultural design elements be reflected in any future buildings, works and infrastructure design in the parkland.

**PP2** Celebrate the establishment of a regional parkland through Traditional Owners place naming

- Use the name bunjil nganga for Quarry Hills Parkland to acknowledge Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung custodianship and enhance public knowledge of the importance of the parkland.
- Enact Geographical Place Naming Process and Aboriginal place naming rules.



MAP 3 The above map identifies the key strategies detailed in the future direction statement for people.

**PP3** In collaboration with the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people, develop a cultural investment strategy for the parkland to enhance community knowledge which will:

- Celebrate and raise awareness of Aboriginal cultural heritage. Develop interpretation as part of a holistic parkland strategy.
- Consider the role and form that recent art, culture and history plays through public art, education and interpretation at the parkland.
- Consider and develop learning and knowledge sharing opportunities.
- From the CVS – Objective 5: Supporting cultural practice, and Objective 7: Interpretation:
  - 5.1 Facilitate and support WWCHAC use of chosen areas
  - 5.2 Use Woi-wurrung language where possible
  - 5.3 Acknowledge Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung as Traditional Owners
  - 5.4 Include WWCHAC in Aboriginal Gathering Place
  - 7.1 Install consistent interpretive signage in collaboration with WWCHAC
  - 7.2 Co-develop signage with WWCHAC
  - 7.3 Use Woi-wurrung art and design.

**PP4** Develop an approach to stewardship of the parkland that encourages and fosters collaboration and community participation

- Develop activities, events and volunteer programs which strengthen connection to nature and provide opportunities to experience and educate rich cultural and community activities.

**PP5** Ensure the parkland welcomes people of all cultures and abilities by providing appropriate infrastructure and amenities

- Provide amenities such as toilets, drinking fountains and other infrastructure that supports the diversity of the community
- Provide signage and other infrastructure that acknowledges and make interpretation and use of the parkland accessible to the diverse City of Whittlesea community.





## Place

### Future direction statement

Quarry Hills Parkland will provide gateways and warm welcomes into the parkland, connecting seamlessly into its surroundings, through the creation of green healthy links to other landscapes and the regional trail network.

### Goal 2 – Liveable neighbourhoods

- Smart, connected transport network
- Well-designed neighbourhoods and vibrant town centres
- Housing for diverse needs

### Key principles

- Prioritise cultural heritage protection of the parklands and consider all development of the parkland through a cultural heritage sensitive lens.
- Embrace a design-led approach specific to place and precinct, which explores opportunities of place characteristics, site analysis and human experiences.
- Prioritise infrastructure and facility planning to maximise regional visitation.
- Consider actions and development of the parkland with a long-term lens.
- Prioritise accessibility and connectivity to the Quarry Hills Parkland through active transport network development.

**Goal 2 – Liveable neighbourhoods**

- Smart, connected transport network
- Well-designed neighbourhoods and vibrant town centres
- Housing for diverse needs



**Key strategies**

- P1** From the CVS – Objective 1: Tangible cultural heritage management and protection:
- 1.1 Archaeological survey
  - 1.2 Register bunjil nganga as an ACHP
  - 1.3 Voluntary CHMPs
  - 1.4 Record and register the grinding and sitting stones.
- P2** Develop specific design guidance for Quarry Hills Parkland that has a principled approach encompassing design excellence and excellence in sustainability
- Develop a *Design and Sustainability Excellence Manual* that includes values, principles, best practice standards and technical standards for design and construction. Include details of approvals and processes and the governance model of the parkland. The manual should be governed by the *Caring for Country Management Plan* and include base parkland infrastructure such as path materials, way-finding signage, seating, etc.
  - Include evaluations of infrastructure and utilities approvals.
  - From the CVS – Objective 2: Protect aesthetic and natural attributes of infrastructure:
    - 2.1 Construct low impact infrastructure.
    - 2.2 Collaborate with WWCHAC on infrastructure.
- P3** Develop a *Stakeholder Advocacy Plan* with tiered approach to governance and partnerships
- Include design responses and outcomes for future projects such as the E6 and road duplications
  - Partnership opportunities with universities and educational programs
  - Partnership opportunities to manage maintenance and other programs.
- P4** Develop precinct master plans for Quarry Hills Parkland
- Develop a series of welcoming gateways and entry points to the parkland to facilitate regional, municipal and neighbourhood movement.
  - Explore existing and redundant utility infrastructure and decommission and remove to improve amenity.
  - Consider impacts and opportunities of major developments including the Boral Quarry site and E6 Freeway.

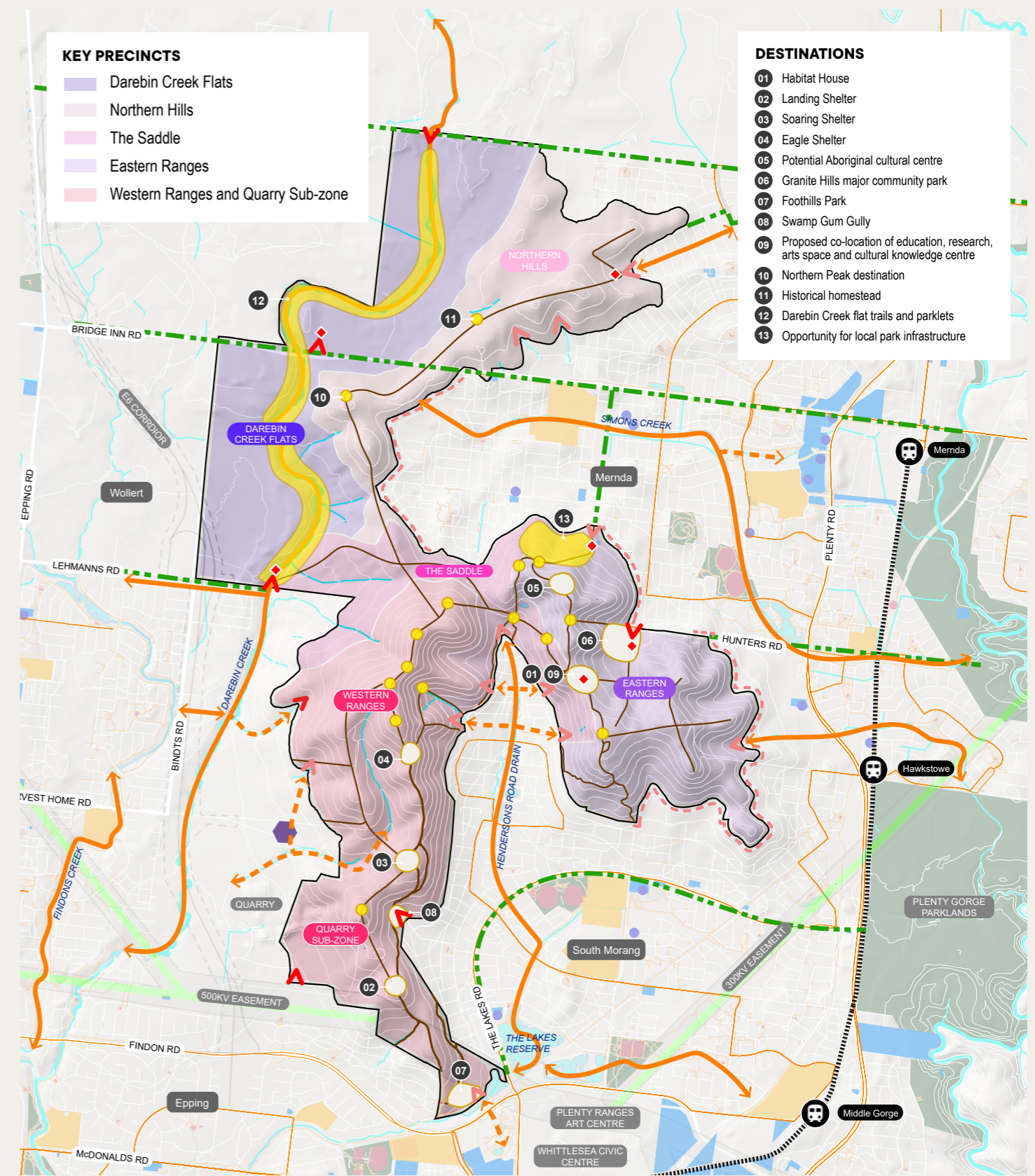
## Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung cultural objectives

Tangible cultural heritage management and protection – understand and protect extensive archaeological artefacts.

Protect aesthetic and natural attributes of infrastructure – visitor attractions should support, and not damage, significant aesthetic and natural attributes of Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung’s ancestral place.

- Develop a series of walking trails/distinct places that explore varied landscapes and geomorphology of the parkland, notably peaks and views, art and cultural trails and a varied range of challenges to cater for different abilities and experiences.
- Provide a range of experiences for immersion in nature and culture.
- Provide a range of opportunities for community connection.
- Develop an accessibility strategy that provides key experiences for all user types, where possible within the landscape settings.

- P5** Enable municipal and neighbourhood movement
- Create regional and local connections to the parkland through expansion of Council’s shared user trails, improvements in green links, street and path networks. Invest in regional trail connections to Plenty River Trail and explore possible connections to Merri Creek.
  - Develop a regional and parkland specific way-finding and signage strategy.



MAP 4 The above map identifies the key strategies detailed in the future directions statement for place. This map also shows the five distinct precincts within the parkland.

**LEGEND**

— QHRP boundary	..... Railway line	◀ Municipal park entry point
— Existing trail and path network (outside of Parklands)	— Bus route	◀ Neighbourhood park entry point
■ Education zone	■ QH PSP "Village Town Centre"	◀ Local park entry point
■ Commercial zone and shops	— Proposed trail and path network	--- Local street interface entry to Park
■ Sports facility	↔ Established priority parkland connections	◆ Proposed key Park amenity locations
■ Existing parks and open space	↔ Proposed priority parkland connections	□ Established destinations
■ Watercourse	— Path and biodiversity opportunity to be explored with partners	■ Proposed destinations
		— Proposed "Green Street" locations



## Economy

### Future direction statement

Quarry Hills Parkland will be economically sustainable and contribute to the local economy. Drawing on its unique natural and cultural values, it will become a place of learning and a destination, attracting people from across Melbourne.

### Goal 3 – Strong local economy

- Increased local employment
- Education opportunities for all
- Successful, innovative local business

### Key principles

- Develop Quarry Hills Parkland as a key tourism, education and training destination through celebration and recognition of its cultural and natural values.
- Safeguard economic sustainability of the parkland through partnerships, to ensure the long term environmental and cultural legacy Quarry Hills Parkland provides for the community.
- Support the local economy by attracting visitors and investment to the area through high quality development of Quarry Hills Parkland.
- Support economic sustainability of Quarry Hills Parkland by investing in existing infrastructure to enhance its accessibility beyond the immediate surrounds.

**Goal 3 – Strong local economy**

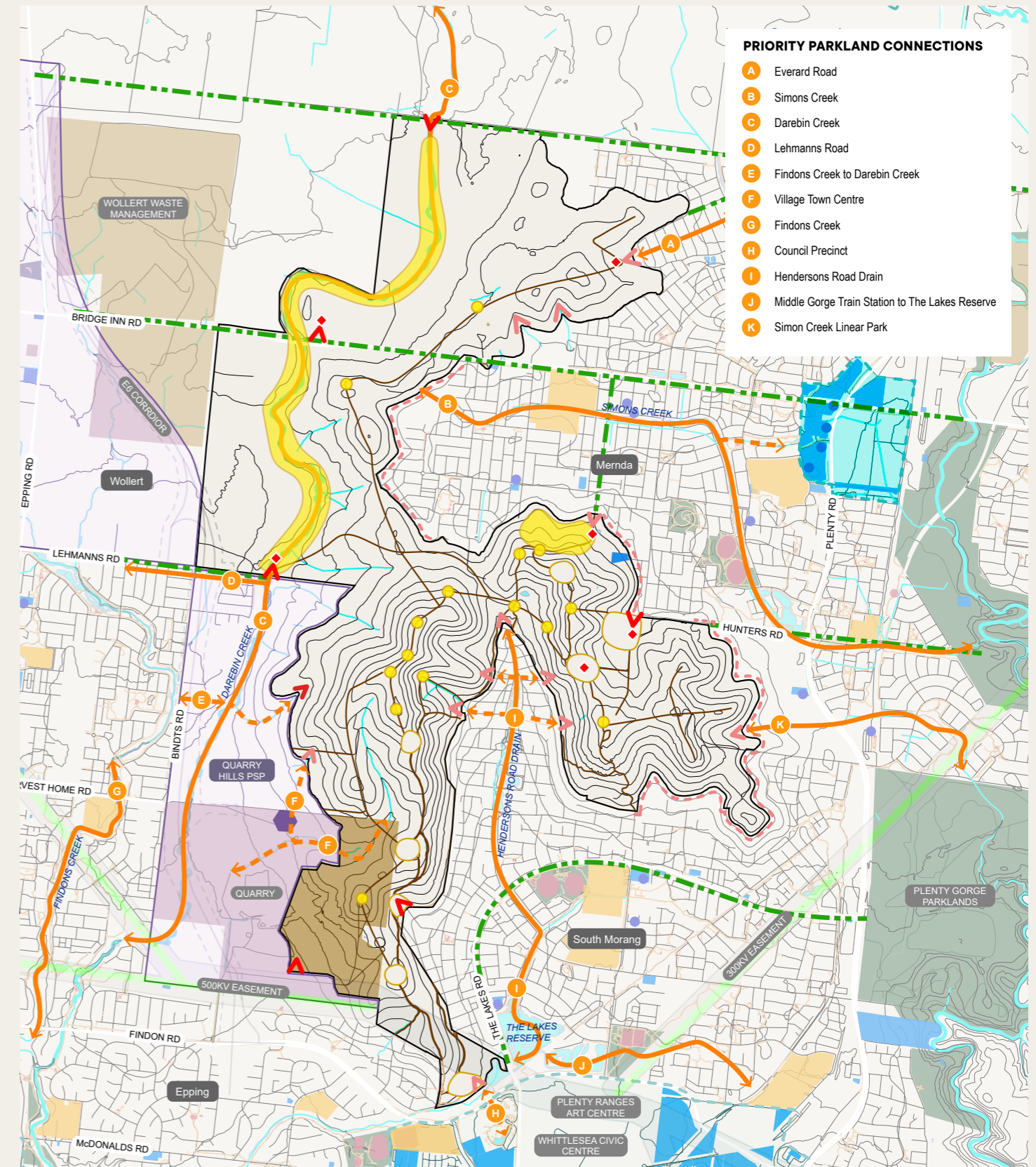
- Increased local employment
- Education opportunities for all
- Successful, innovative local business



**Key strategies**

- E1** Maintain Quarry Hills Parkland as a free and accessible space for the community
- E2** Co-locate educational, research and arts space(s) to facilitate exchange of knowledge, and the development of partnerships
  - Investigate opportunities for training investment which align with Caring for Country practice
  - Develop community education activities and programs.
- E3** Develop appropriate infrastructure to support longer stays within the parkland
  - Coordinate research and analysis between the development of the *Whittlesea Destination Plan* and the *Precinct master plan*
  - Explore how smart technology can be utilised in all aspects of parkland management and tourism, including guided interpretation and digital signage.
- E4** Create an *Economic advocacy, funding and partnerships plan* to support the economic sustainability of Quarry Hills Parkland.
  - Develop appropriate funding models for Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation involvement in decision making and parkland management
  - Develop a priority area/activity in the *Whittlesea Destination Plan* to encourage further investment in tourism

- Evaluate and identify commercial opportunities and prepare business case that contribute to increased visitation and enhance the parkland and surrounds
- Promote Quarry Hills Parkland as a key community/ regional asset to be cherished and explored
- Identify opportunities that contribute to increased visitation and enhance the parkland and surrounds.
- E5** Develop an *Arts and Culture Framework* for the parkland to ensure appropriate programs, infrastructure and operations are supported
  - Develop a program of annual events specific to the parkland
  - Integrate key actions from the *Investment Attraction Strategy*, including digital infrastructure
  - Include storytelling and artists work in public art, interpretation and wayfinding.
- E6** Prioritise investment in municipal parkland development for the community
  - Review management and monitor a range of external contributions including in-kind supports towards Quarry Hills Parkland.
- E7** Prioritise sustainable transport connections between Quarry Hills Parkland and the regional and local shared pathway network which considers surrounding business and tourism
  - Review existing transport connections between Quarry Hills Parkland and surrounding activity centres.



MAP 5 The above map identifies the key strategies detailed in the future directions statement for economy.

**LEGEND**

— QHRP boundary	■ Sports facility	— Path and biodiversity opportunity to be explored with partners
— Existing trail and path network (outside of Parklands)	■ Existing parks and open space	◀ Municipal park entry point
■ Education zone	— Watercourse	◀ Neighbourhood park entry point
■ Commercial zone and shops	■ Precinct Structure Plan (PSP)	◀ Local park entry point
■ Activity zone precinct	■ Quarry Hills PSP "Village Town Centre"	--- Local street interface entry to Parklands
■ Comprehensize development zone precinct	— Proposed trail and path network	◆ Proposed key Parklands amenity locations
■ Industrial zone	↔ Established priority parkland connections	■ Established destinations
	↔ Proposed priority parkland connections	■ Proposed destinations
		— Proposed 'Green Street' locations



## Environment

### Future direction statement

Quarry Hills Parkland will be regenerated to ecological health. The Darebin Creek and other waterways, rich and varied geological formations, topography, increased woodland forest, outstanding viewpoints and significant biodiversity flora and fauna will be connected and cared for.

### Goal 4 – Sustainable environment

- Valued natural landscapes and biodiversity
- Climate ready
- Leaders in clean, sustainable living

### Key principles

- Regenerate Quarry Hills Parkland to a high quality, healthy ecosystem
- Build a Caring for Country approach to management of the parkland in collaboration with Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung to enhance and maintain Quarry Hills Parkland.
- Protect and enhance greater biodiversity outcomes for the city and community through connection into larger environmental corridors.



**Goal 4 – Sustainable environment**

- Valued natural landscapes and biodiversity
- Climate ready
- Leaders in clean, sustainable living



**Key strategies**

**SE1** Protection, enhancement and further expansion of areas with remnant and threatened species

- Protect, maintain and enhance threatened species, in particular creating habitat corridors of grassland and grassy woodland areas on Darebin Creek, maintaining large trees which are important habitat for arboreal mammals, bats, birds, and retaining rocky knolls which provide habitat for threatened reptiles and amphibians
- Determine the location and extent of Grassy Eucalypt Woodland areas across all areas of the parkland via survey. If Grassy Eucalypt Woodland is identified, Grassy Eucalypt Woodland Protected Area offsets should be investigated in conjunction with DEECA.

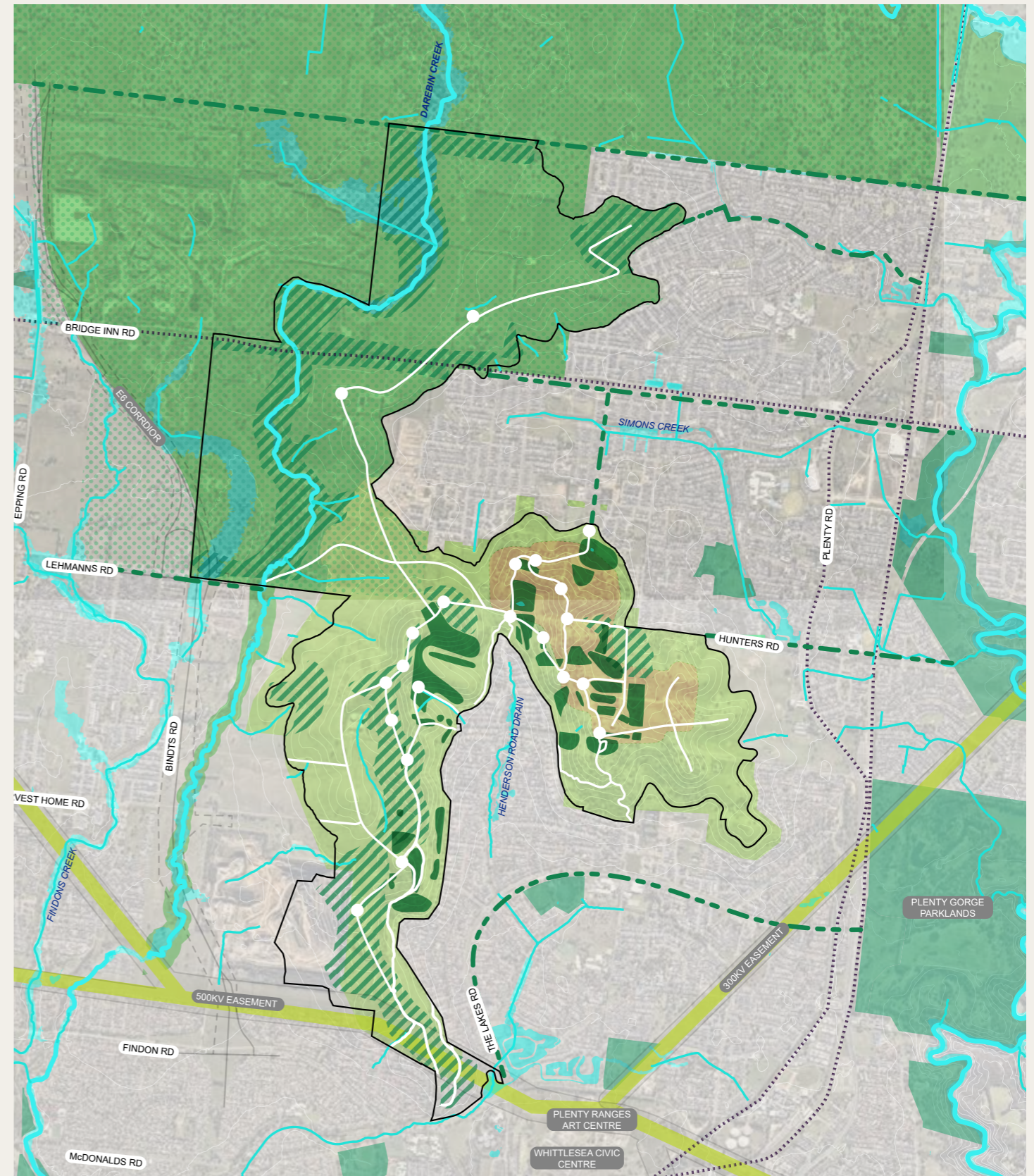
**SE2** Regenerate the ecological health of Quarry Hills Parkland through ongoing conservation and restorative management of landscapes and development of key areas.

- Undertake ecological assessment of the parkland to understand investment opportunities and potential through precinct design and Caring for Country planning

- Restoration of Darebin Creek and other drainage lines – maintain and improve existing vegetation along the Darebin Creek habitat corridor to create a habitat corridor linking north south. In particular, protect and create high quality habitat for the Growling Grass Frog which is known to occur along the creek. Revegetation of the creek will create habitat for other threatened species
- Create high quality water environments through performance targets.

**SE3** Creation of parkland and regional biodiversity and fauna corridors

- Investigate opportunities for habitat linkages north and other habitat corridors in the region, including along Plenty River, noting that Plenty Road, Mernda rail line, Hawkstowe Station and residential homes present large barriers to wildlife and the implementation of wildlife crossing structures
- Invest in regional / macro ecosystem services, such as tree canopy coverage as part of the *City Forest Strategy*
- Development of a *Fauna Management Plan* that extends into the broader habitat corridors.



MAP 6 The above map identifies the key strategies detailed in the future directions statement for Environment.

**LEGEND**

- |                                    |  |                         |
|------------------------------------|--|-------------------------|
| — QHRP boundary                    | Investigation area for Grassy Eucalypt Woodland              | Green Streets           |
| Watercourse                        | Major barriers   | Established vegetation  |
| Flooding 1:100 year                | Proposed destinations  | Priority planting areas |
| Environmental Significance Overlay | Trail and path network                                       |                         |
| Significant Landscape Overlay      | Opportunity for biodiversity connections through partnership |                         |
| Existing parks and open spaces     | Cultural practice  |                         |



# Implementation

## Governance

### Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung cultural objectives

Partnering with Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation is required to achieve the outcomes of the *Quarry Hills Parkland Future Directions Plan*.

To achieve consensus on the future directions of the parkland, its ongoing management and achievement of strategic and community aspirations Council commit to a partnership model with WWCHAC to be adopted through the *Governance Plan* to participate in the process. It is recommended that a partnership model be adopted through the *Governance Plan* to manage consultation and decision making.

This commitment is further underscored through the following cultural objectives including:

- Planning controls to conserve and enhance the cultural landscape – it is important that this development is not undertaken in a way that compromises the cultural landscape.
- Supporting cultural practice – the importance of supported and safe spaces or the Aboriginal community is recognised and Quarry Hills Parkland can provide the space and conditions for these activities and should continue to and take opportunities for further activities.
- Involvement in decision making – WWCHAC representatives should be included in decision making in relation to Quarry Hills Parkland from now.

### Land ownership

The ongoing governance and management of the Quarry Hills Parkland is the responsibility of the landowner, the City of Whittlesea. However, actual land ownership is broader, and numerous properties will remain within the parkland even when private land acquisition is complete.

Yarra Valley Water, the Department of Defence and Boral Quarry (for the next 40 years) will continue to own land within the Quarry Hills Parkland and the resolution of interface treatments and roles and responsibilities for management will require collaboration with these landowners to determine the best design solution for the Quarry Hills Parkland and the community it serves.

Additionally, the involvement of Melbourne Water (control of creek bed and bank) is likely to increase as Darebin Creek transitions from privately owned land to publicly owned land with Council management of this asset anticipated. A stronger relationship will evolve with the restoration of parts of Darebin Creek taking place through the adjoining development of the Quarry Hills PSP and setting the expectations around restoration work within the parkland.

To continue consolidation of the parkland property, a *Park Assemblage Program* will be developed to ensure active progression of parkland assemblage seeking assistance from DEECA and VPA where this is related to developable land and PSPs. Council will continue to negotiate directly with private landowners along the Quarry Hills Parkland eastern boundary where urban land exists for future development and could facilitate additional land transfers into the parkland.

## Management

To reinforce a community and partnership approach with Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung, an ongoing Quarry Hills Parkland Advisory Group should be established. The Advisory Group would play a part in a transitional approach to land management for the parkland should Council participate in Treaty reconciliation.

The Advisory Group establishment would assist with transparency in the process and establish community relationships contributing to ongoing management and in-kind support and investment in the parkland. Acknowledgment of existing community support should be reciprocated through the partnership approach and into the ultimate governance and land management of the Quarry Hills Parkland into the future, as Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Country.

## Maintenance

As detailed in the parkland management and operations section, Council currently manage the existing Quarry Hills Parkland through the Conservation Team. The key assets managed include vegetation, trails and shelters. Additionally, numerous community programs such as tree planting days and collaboration with other stakeholders and partners have also been undertaken.

The City of Whittlesea will partner with WWCHAC to protect and manage the cultural heritage assets of the parkland, to ensure adequate protections and cultural respect are provided during parkland development.

As the parkland is expanded and new investment and Caring for Country practices conducted, the maintenance and operations of the parkland will need to be heavily invested in to provide ongoing asset protection and enhancement.

## Levels of service and asset management

Within the parkland a series of new destinations, trails, base infrastructure, entries and planting will be planned and built.

The City of Whittlesea will need to develop a companion *Asset Management Plan* for the parkland that identifies each asset type and level of service, commensurate with the *Parks and Open Space Asset Management Plan* and the proposed *Design and Sustainability Guidelines* developed for the parkland.

Any future buildings will also need coordination with the City of Whittlesea's property functions and management.

Granite Hills Community Park is underway and designated as a municipal level open space and playground.

Other types of new assets such as digital infrastructure and public art will also need to be included in the *Asset Management Plan*.

## Vegetation management

Council has significantly invested in the rehabilitation of vegetation across the parkland. The plan recommends a range of new places, investment in rehabilitation of the landscape, enabling traditional Caring for Country practices together with investment in new partnerships and more detailed site investigations and assessments. These initiatives will be steered by the proposed *Design and Sustainability Guidelines* and detailed through the *Precinct Plans* as part of the *Action Plan*.

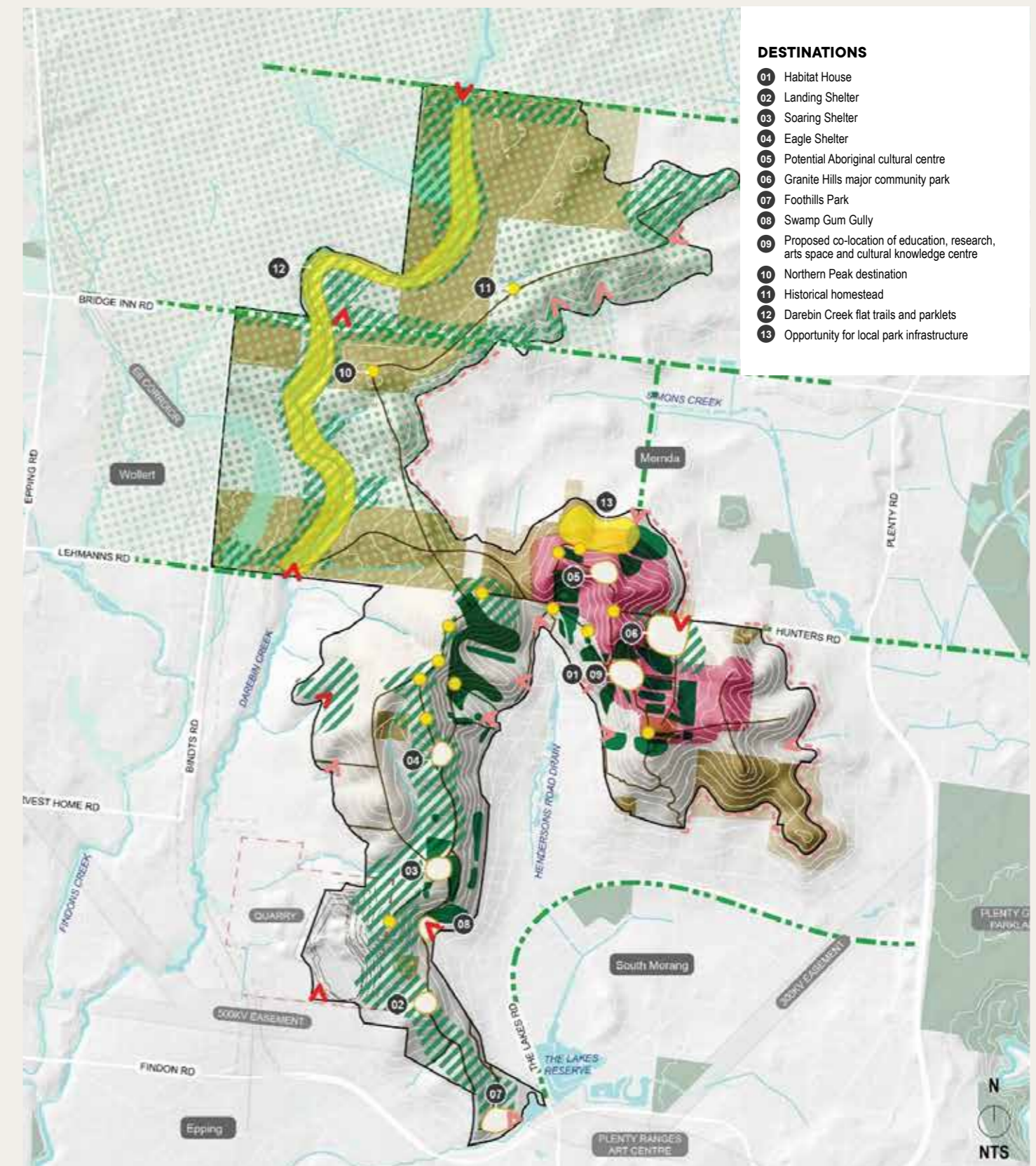
In development of the *Precinct Plans* key stakeholders require consulting to ensure that adequate systems are in place for bushfire prevention programs, emergency and maintenance access requirements, monitoring of wildlife and cultural and historic assets.

## Operations

Council manages and facilitates a range of programs such as tree planting days and tours. As the parkland develops a range of new programs and users will need to be managed and coordinated.

As part of the governance structure and advisory committees associated with the parkland, these programs and events will need to have holistic management to ensure they follow the established values and principles for the parkland and adhere to the *Quarry Hills Parkland Design and Sustainability Guidelines*.

Provision for program funding and resourcing will need to be coordinated across the management, infrastructure and maintenance teams to ensure sustainable and appropriate investment and enjoyment of the parkland.



MAP 7 The above map identifies the key strategies detailed in the governance and management section.

### LEGEND

- QHP boundary
- Existing parks and open space
- Watercourse – Priority planting and weed management area
- Flood zone management area
- Land currently managed by others
- Cultural practice
- Investigation area for Grassy Eucalypt Woodland - Potential landscape remediation and enhance area
- Established vegetation management
- Priority revegetation zone
- Proposed trail and path network
- Proposed 'Green Street' locations
- Municipal Park entry point
- Neighbourhood Park entry point
- Local Park entry point
- Local street interface entry to Park
- Proposed key Park amenity locations
- Infrastructure maintenance - Level of service TBD
- Proposed destinations

## Key strategies

Key strategies and actions will need to be developed to provide guidance for the governance and management of the parkland. These include:

- Establish a focused Quarry Hills Parkland Place Manager role accountable for partnerships and implementation of the Future Directions Plan
  - Recruit to Quarry Hills Parkland Place Manager role, responsible for partnerships, place management, ranger responsibilities and the implementation of the Future Directions Plan.
- Develop a *Governance Plan* that manages consultation and decision making
  - Establish a Quarry Hills Parkland Advisory Group to manage and direct the development of the parkland, Treaty reconciliation and in-kind support and investment in the parkland
  - Maintain ongoing relationships with land holders and key stakeholders
  - From the CVS – Objective 6: Involvement in decision making:
    - 6.1 Facilitate and support equal partnership until handover
    - 6.2 Facilitate and support joint management
    - 6.3 Facilitate and support WWCHAC to engage with planning.
- Consolidate parkland property
  - Develop a *Park Assemblage Program* with priority areas to define park growth and staging
  - Seek assistance from DEECA and the VPA with developable land and the PSP
  - Negotiate directly with private landholders along the parkland’s eastern boundary to facilitate additional land transfers.
- Invest in the ongoing maintenance, protection, safety and operations of the parkland through the *Caring for Country Management Plan*
  - Develop a *Quarry Hills Parkland Asset Management Plan*
  - Develop precinct master plans to ensure bushfire prevention programs, emergency management and maintenance access etc are considered and detailed.
- From the CVS – Objective 4: Planning controls to conserve and enhance the cultural landscape:
  - 4.1 Resource WWCHAC to review development
  - 4.2 Produce report on protective criteria
  - 4.3 Review and implement planning controls.

## Priorities and staging

Strategies and actions have been co-created with the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation, to establish an action plan for implementation.

Given the vision and objectives of the plan to establish a new partnership approach with the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung and for the parkland to be developed

through a *Caring for Country Management Plan*, it is essential that the governance, protections, investigations and strategic actions be undertaken as the first priority.

These will lay the foundations for holistic, integrated development of the parkland that is responsive to the bunjil nganga (Quarry Hills Parkland) cultural landscape and broader Quarry Hills Parkland values and principles.



ABOVE  
Action plan prioritisation sequence



Wurundjeri  
Woi-wurrung  
Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation



Environment,  
Land, Water  
and Planning



City of  
Whittlesea