



**HAVE
YOUR SAY**

Healesville Freeway Reservation and Surrounds

Share your feedback on the future of Knox’s green and rural areas.

Have your say on how we protect and enhance five precincts that have environmental and landscape significance in Knox.

This fact sheet summarises PRECINCT 4 - Healesville Freeway Reservation and Surrounds in the draft [Green Areas and Rural Strategy](#). We prepared the Strategy in response to what we heard from community feedback in March - April 2020.

Have your say on this draft Strategy by Sunday 12 December 2021.

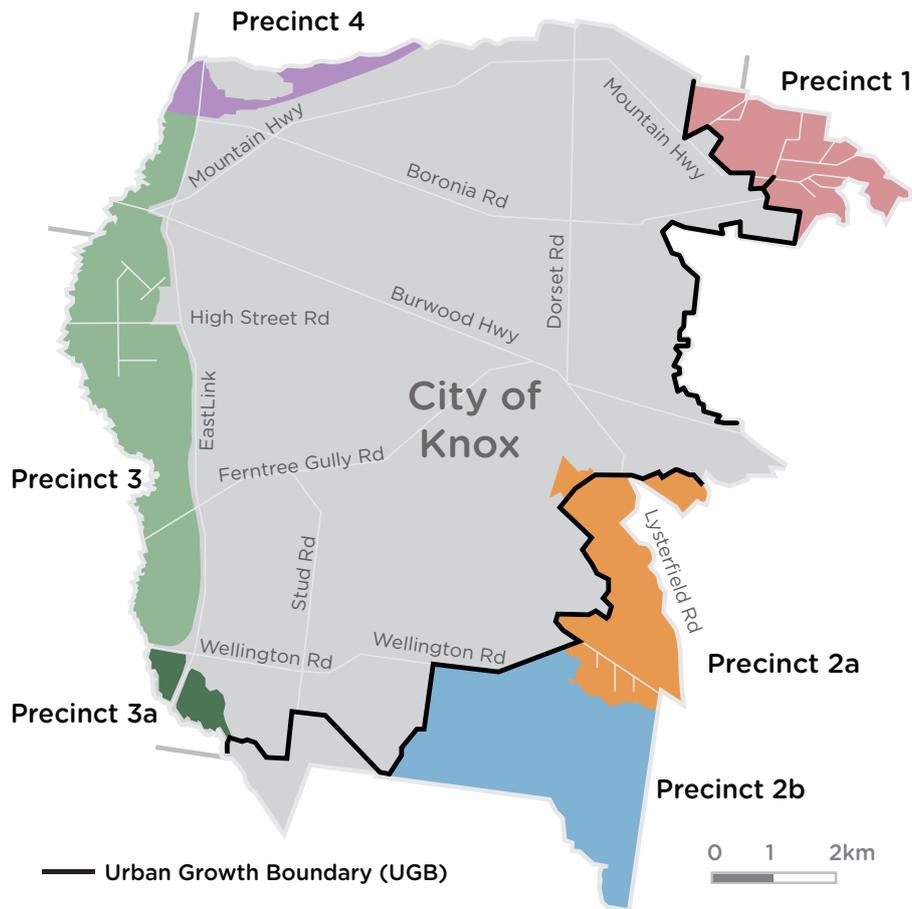
View the draft Green Areas and Rural Strategy and share your feedback at haveyoursay.knox.vic.gov.au/gars

ABOUT THE DRAFT GREEN AREAS & RURAL STRATEGY

The draft Strategy sets out the land usage directions for the next 20 years. This is your chance to have your say on the vision and actions, for the following precincts:

- Precinct 1:** The Basin Rural Landscape
- Precinct 2a:** Lysterfield Valley and Hills
- Precinct 2b:** Lysterfield Quarries and Surrounds
- Precinct 3 & 3a:** Dandenong Creek Valley
- Precinct 4:** Healesville Freeway Reservation and Surrounds

KNOX GREEN & RURAL PRECINCTS



Values

These precincts contain some of the most important bushland, green wedge, open space and rural landscapes in Knox.

Environmental and social values of the precincts include:

- Waterways and native vegetation
- Habitat for wildlife species
- Floodplains to help manage stormwater and prevent flooding
- Cultural heritage sites
- Nature-based recreation and leisure areas
- Scenic landscapes
- Health and wellbeing benefits of open space
- Avoiding intense development in bushfire prone areas
- Preventing an urban heat island effect through vegetation cover

Challenges

Emerging challenges that these green areas and rural spaces face include:

- Climate change and more extreme weather events
- Inappropriate subdivision or development that impact the environmental and social values
- Intense or high impact uses that change local character
- Loss of agricultural land
- Incremental loss of vegetation, biodiversity and wildlife connectivity
- Urban encroachment into floodplains which results in increased flood risk in urban areas
- Degradation of waterway health and habitat values
- Limited understanding of cultural heritage values
- Threats to the rural and natural character
- Loss of significant views and natural landscape

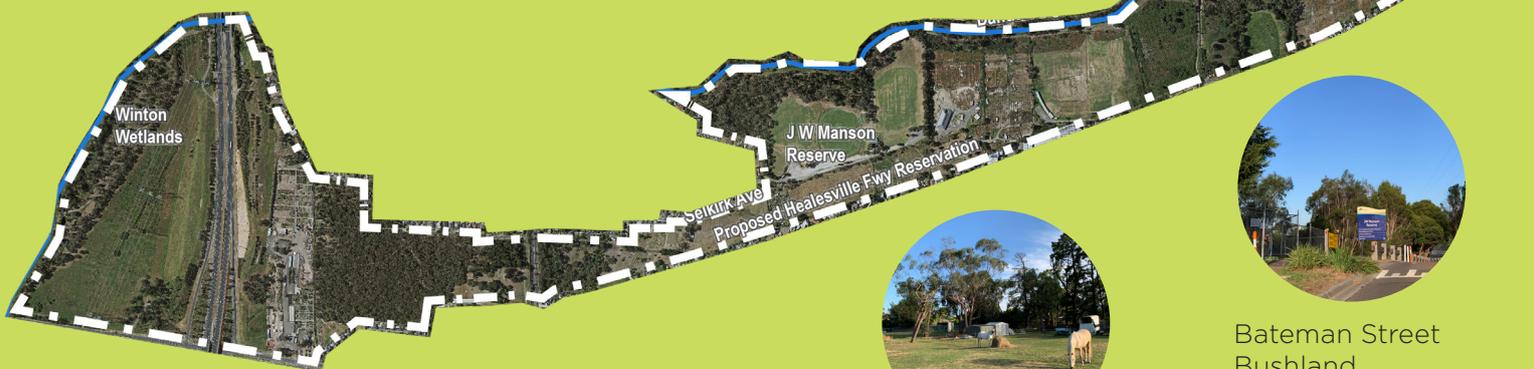
ABOUT HEALESVILLE FREEWAY RESERVATION AND SURROUNDS

This precinct contains a corridor of land set aside for possible extension of the Healesville Freeway to connect to EastLink. This includes Bateman Street Bushland which contains one of the largest and most intact areas of endangered Valley Heathy Forest in the Melbourne region. Wildlife is frequently seen in this area and the Winton Wetlands which could be affected by future road works. This precinct requires careful protection in case of future road construction to protect wildlife from traffic.

The Healesville Freeway Reservation has been maintained by VicRoads with no timelines for design or construction. Depending on VicRoad's future decision about this reservation, there are two different scenarios for this precinct - a "Road Scenario" and a "No-Road Scenario".

This precinct has potential for nature-based health activities, open air sports and recreation, bush playgroups and community gardens. The surrounding residential communities can benefit from improved access to recreational values in this precinct.

What makes this precinct unique?



Land to the north of the Healesville Freeway reservation, including Manson Reserve and the golf driving range have a key role in the storage and retention of flooding from the Dandenong Creek.



Future land use within this precinct depends largely upon the future of the Healesville Freeway reservation.



Bateman Street Bushland provides excellent nature-based recreation and opportunities for the surrounding residential areas.



Land fragmentation and lack of long term certainty has resulted in short term uses and the precinct is generally considered under-utilised.



The Dandenong Creek and its 200m buffer zone have significant biodiversity values, with great opportunities to improve habitat through revegetation and provide additional passive recreation.



Land use in this precinct is affected by significant constraints related to flooding and bushfire.



A VISION FOR HEALESVILLE FREEWAY RESERVATION AND SURROUNDS

Feedback from the community in early 2020 helped to shape the vision for this area:

Road Scenario: *“The future Healesville Freeway extension will be sensitive and responsive to the Dandenong Creek ecological and waterway corridor, seeking opportunities for water and habitat enhancements, while supporting the open space and recreational uses.”*

No Road Scenario: *“The precinct will provide an integrated high quality open space and parkland corridor with complementary uses which protect and enhance native vegetation, wildlife connectivity and waterway health.”*

Objectives for this precinct:

We have identified several objectives to help achieve the vision:

- To protect and enhance biodiversity and wildlife connectivity.
- To protect and increase tree and vegetation canopy cover.
- To improve waterway health and flood management.
- To protect and enhance local character and landscape values.
- To identify, protect, celebrate and promote the heritage values and history, including Indigenous cultural heritage and post-contact heritage.
- To recognise and protect the values of Knox Green Wedges
- To ensure land uses are carefully located and managed to be consistent with the values and functions of the Study Area.
- To facilitate connectivity and safe movement for all users.



A summary
of proposed actions for
this precinct are provided
in the following pages.

View the draft
Green Areas and
Rural Strategy at

haveyoursay.knox.vic.gov.au/gars

PRECINCT 4: Healsesville Freeway Reservation and Surrounds

Theme 1: Ecology

Objective:

To enhance and protect biodiversity and wildlife connectivity

- 1 Continue to apply the Environmental Significance Overlay 2 in this area to protect native vegetation and habitat values.
- 2 Acknowledge the role of the Dandenong Creek corridor and previous investments in bushland restoration along the creek in wildlife movement within the broader region.
- 3 Prohibit development within the Melbourne Water's Core Riparian Zone and the adjacent vegetation buffers.
- 4 Investigate ways to achieve an ecologically sensitive development approach to new development and the construction of linear infrastructure (e.g. roads, bridges) across the precinct.
- 5 Reduce the wildlife barrier effects of EastLink over the Dandenong Creek corridor in accordance with the recommendations of Appendix 1 to the Green Areas and Rural Strategy.
- 6 Review the Vegetation Protection Overlay in this precinct to ensure it covers all the intended vegetation.
- 7 If a new road is needed, advocate for an underpass design to protect Bateman Street bushland.
- 8 If a new road is needed, minimise the risk that cars pose to wildlife from the future freeway by providing adequate buffer areas.
- 9 If a new road is needed, ensure design and construction near Winton Wetlands is sensitive to the ecological values of this wetland and minimises wildlife exposure to works or traffic.
- 10 If no new road is needed, protect the Bateman Street Bushland and other Sites of Biological Significance and enhance their environmental and passive recreation values.
- 11 If no new road is needed, support future uses of the reservation corridor that can protect and enhance the ecological values.
- 12 If no new road is needed, investigate the Road Zone land at Winton Wetlands which is within 200m of the Creek for possible rezoning to Public Conservation and Resource Zone to protect habitat values and support revegetation.

Objective:

To improve waterway health and flood management

- 13 Any development or addition of impervious surfaces (surfaces that allow little or no stormwater infiltration into the ground) in the flood affected area (1% AEP level) needs to include adequate studies and plans to demonstrate how flooding can be managed by Water Sensitive Urban Design.

PRECINCT 4: Healsesville Freeway Reservation and Surrounds

Theme 2: Landscape & Character

Objective:

To protect and enhance local character and landscape values

- 14 Review the Scheme provisions for opportunities to reflect the findings of the Green Areas and Rural Strategy Landscape and Character Study.
- 15 Ensure future development fits the character of the area, celebrates the natural/leafy character and provides opportunities for views to the vegetated areas.

Objective:

To recognise, protect and promote existing heritage

- 16 Ensure the community is consulted on any proposals relating to the Aboriginal Sites and Areas of Cultural Sensitivity.
- 17 Review the places of heritage significance in accordance with the recommendations from the Knox Rural Heritage Report.



PRECINCT 4: Healesville Freeway Reservation and Surrounds

Theme 3: Land Use & Access

Objective:

To ensure land uses are carefully located and managed to be consistent with the values and functions of the Study Area

- 18 Advocate for VicRoads to review the traffic network to understand if the Healesville Freeway Reservation in Knox is needed.
- 19 If the road is needed, ensure the existing recreational values of the existing open space and trails are preserved.
- 20 If the road is not needed, remove the Public Acquisition Overlay from Bateman Street Bushland and rezone to Public Conservation and Resource Zone for conservation purposes.
- 21 comprehensive planning for the precinct to:
 - a) Consolidate land with possible amalgamation and rationalisation of zoning along the reservation.
 - b) Expand and upgrade the existing open space to create a high quality active and passive open space corridor.
 - c) Improve vehicular access and walking/cycling connectivity, making the open space corridor more accessible to the surrounding community.
 - d) Investigate opportunities for other compatible uses of the open space, including café/restaurant or mixed use development, subject to flood mitigation investigations.
 - e) Enhance the environmental values associated with the creek.
 - f) Incorporate water into the design, through a water sensitive design approach with potential swales integrated with the open space.

Objective:

To facilitate connectivity and safe movement for all users

- 22 Support the Principal Bicycle Network proposals within this precinct.
- 23 Support continuous shared bicycle and pedestrian trail movement and linkages to Dandenong Creek Trail and the Whitehorse section of Healesville Freeway Reserve.
- 24 If a new road is needed, ensure the future Healesville Freeway extension does not present an urban barrier but helps to improve access to Manson Reserve, the Dandenong Creek Trail and other recreational opportunities in the area.
- 25 If a new road is not needed, improve vehicular access to the open space as part of comprehensive planning. Access could be through the industrial area on Mountain Highway to avoid more traffic on the residential streets to the west. Shared bicycle and pedestrian paths will be provided to this residential area as well as the Dandenong Creek Trail. Alternatively, a part of the Healesville Reservation can be used to create a new access road with a shared bicycle and pedestrian path connecting this area to Wantirna Road.