



PART E

DRAFT PUBLIC LAND USE RECOMMENDATIONS

One of the usual outcomes of VEAC investigations is recommendations for public land use within the investigation area. While not the major focus of the investigation, this part contains a small number of draft public land use recommendations for the Metropolitan Melbourne Investigation area.

10

DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

Public land within the investigation area is described in chapter 4. Section 4.5, in particular, describes the current uses and extent of public land within each of the major public land use categories developed by VEAC and its predecessors.

As discussed in chapter 4, some public land may not have a legal or formal reservation in place which reflects the accepted current use for particular sites. This chapter includes general recommendations that, if approved by government, will formally confirm existing public land uses across the investigation area as depicted on map A, and provide a framework for the management of land for which changes to land use are recommended.

This chapter also includes specific recommendations for changes to land use categories for a small number of sites to enhance the protection of biodiversity, and a further small number of specific recommendations relating to the continued management by Melbourne Water of freehold land with biodiversity values.

Comment is invited on all draft recommendations outlined below.

10.1 General recommendations

This section contains draft general recommendations for relevant land use categories to confirm existing public land use across the investigation area. General recommendations are only included where it is probable that there is land in this category not covered by approved Land Conservation Council (LCC) recommendations from the previous Melbourne investigations (see section 4.3). General recommendations are included in this chapter for the following land use categories:

- ▶ nature conservation reserves and private protected areas
- ▶ regional parks, including metropolitan parks
- ▶ natural features reserves
- ▶ coastal reserves
- ▶ water production areas
- ▶ historic and cultural features reserves
- ▶ community use areas
- ▶ services and utilities areas.

The general recommendations for the coastal park land use category are included later in the chapter as they relate only to the area recommended to be established as the Point Cook Coastal Park.

These recommendations will provide a consistent set of management objectives and provisions that can be applied to guide future management for the land assigned to the category. They will also provide a legal or formal mechanism which reflects the accepted current public land use for particular sites. This mechanism is appropriate, for instance, where obsolete historic reservations are in place (such as 19th century stock watering reserves or church reserves), or where the land is no longer required for its original purpose.

Nature conservation reserve and private protected area

In the investigation area, nature conservation reserves are mostly small areas set aside to conserve rare or threatened species, significant plant associations or communities, or valuable habitat for populations of significant fauna.

Trust for Nature conservation land is the only freehold public land in the investigation area currently included in a protected area category (see appendix 5). Freehold properties in the National Reserve System are generally categorised as private protected areas, and VEAC has adopted this term for Trust for Nature's freehold land. Trust for Nature owned private protected areas are generally managed in a manner consistent with nature conservation reserves, although public access may not be as readily available as it is for most Crown land nature conservation reserves.

DRAFT RECOMMENDATION

General recommendations for nature conservation reserves and Trust for Nature private protected areas

B That nature conservation reserves, and private protected areas according to their specific values, as shown on map A and listed in appendix 5 be used to:

- (a) conserve and protect species, communities or habitats of indigenous animals and plants
- (b) provide for educational and scientific study if consistent with (a) above; and
- (c) provide for recreation by small numbers of people, if consistent with (a) above;

and:

(d) the following activities generally be permitted:

- (i) bushwalking, nature observation, heritage appreciation, picnicking
- (ii) car touring, including four wheel driving, on formed roads and tracks
- (iii) for Crown land, apiculture on existing licensed sites, subject to the outcome of scientific research into the ecological impacts of this industry, and management requirements
- (iv) for Crown land, exploration and mining for minerals and searching for and extraction of stone resources subject to the consent of the Crown land Minister under the relevant legislation;

and:

(e) the following activities not be permitted:

- (i) grazing of domestic stock (see note 2 below)
- (ii) harvesting of forest products
- (iii) hunting and use of firearms (see note 3 below)
- (iv) solid fuel fires at any time of year
- (v) dogwalking
- (vi) horseriding;

and:

- (f) for Crown land, if not already appropriately reserved, these areas be permanently reserved under the *Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978* (see note 4); or
- (g) Trust for Nature properties continue to be managed in accordance with the above and, should these areas no longer be required by Trust For Nature, that the areas be transferred to the Crown and reserved for conservation purposes under the *Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978*.

Notes:

1. The above management objectives and land use recommendations are those that generally apply for the land use category. Exceptions to these may apply to specific reserves in special circumstances.
2. Grazing may be contracted for ecological or management purposes such as targeted weed control.
3. Hunting and the use of firearms may be authorised as part of a pest animal control program.
4. Langwarrin Flora and Fauna Reserve is to remain on Schedule Three of the *National Parks Act 1975*.

Regional park

Regional parks are set aside primarily to provide informal recreation for large numbers of people in natural or semi-natural surroundings. Across metropolitan Melbourne this category also includes areas identified as metropolitan parks (see table 4.5) and encompass areas with a broad range of landscape types and recreational uses. For example, camping and horseriding is generally permitted

in those regional parks outside the residential area, such as Kurth Kiln and Lysterfield regional parks. In some inner metropolitan parks, visitor centres may include picnic facilities with electric barbeques and children's playgrounds, and landscapes may be highly modified to provide for more intensive recreation activities including sporting fields.

DRAFT RECOMMENDATION

General recommendations for regional parks, including metropolitan parks

C That regional parks and metropolitan parks as shown on map A be used to:

- (a) provide for informal recreation associated with enjoyment of natural or semi-natural surroundings by large numbers of people
- (b) conserve and protect natural landscapes and scenic values
- (c) conserve and protect biodiversity to the extent that is consistent with (a) above; and
- (d) protect significant cultural and historic sites and places, including Aboriginal cultural sites and places;

and:

(e) the following activities generally be permitted:

- (i) bushwalking, nature observation, heritage appreciation, picnicking, recreational fishing
- (ii) camping
- (iii) dogwalking and camping with dogs (see note 1, right)
- (iv) car touring, including four wheel driving, on formed roads and tracks
- (v) mountain bike and trailbike riding on formed roads and tracks
- (vi) horseriding on formed roads and tracks and overnight camping with horses
- (vii) apiculture
- (viii) metal detecting, prospecting, and
- (ix) research, subject to permit;

and:

(f) the following activities not be permitted:

- (i) harvesting of forest products (see notes 2 and 3)
- (ii) grazing by domestic stock (see note 4)
- (iii) hunting and use of firearms (see note 5 below), and

(g) subject to clearly defined, transparent and scientifically supported ecological objectives, park managers may undertake adaptive management to restore ecosystems or to return them to a condition more closely resembling their natural condition;

(h) unused road reserves be added to adjoining parks where appropriate;

(i) a management plan be prepared for each park in partnership with key user groups, local authorities and the community;

and:

(j) if not already appropriately reserved, these areas be permanently reserved under the *Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978* for the purpose of regional park (see note 7 below).

Notes:

1. Dogs must be on a leash in some areas as zoned in management plans.
2. Collection of firewood for campfires is permitted as zoned in management plans.
3. Ecological thinning may be permitted where required for ecological management purposes.
4. Grazing may be contracted for ecological or management purposes such as targeted weed control.
5. Hunting and the use of firearms may be authorised as part of a pest animal control program.
6. Implementation of recommendations and land management should allow flexibility for minor boundary adjustments.
7. Lysterfield Park and Woodlands Historic Park are to remain on Schedule Three of the *National Parks Act 1975*.

Natural features reserve

Natural features reserves are areas with a variety of natural values worthy of protection, including scenic areas, bushland, lakes, rivers and streams, geological and geomorphological features. Those natural features reserves considered protected areas are listed in appendix 5. This public land use category includes areas of public authority land, particularly along stream frontages and wetlands.

DRAFT RECOMMENDATION

General recommendations for natural features reserves

E That the natural features reserves as shown on map A, according to their specific characteristics:

(a) be used to:

- (i) protect natural features and values
- (ii) protect and restore areas with remnant vegetation or habitat value and conserve native flora and fauna
- (iii) protect water quality where appropriate
- (iv) provide protection for historic and Aboriginal cultural heritage features, values and sites
- (v) provide opportunities for education and recreation, including hunting where specified below, at levels consistent with (i) to (iv) above
- (vi) maintain scenic features and the character and quality of the local landscapes
- (vii) preserve features of geological or geomorphological interest;

and:

- (b) timber harvesting not be permitted
- (c) exploration for minerals be permitted, and mining, subject to decisions on particular cases
- (d) prospecting and apiculture generally be permitted
- (e) domestic stock grazing not be permitted in bushland, scenic and streamside areas (see note 1)
- (f) unused road reserves adjoining natural features reserves be added to those reserves where appropriate ecological or recreational values are identified; and
- (g) for Crown land, if not already appropriately reserved, these areas be permanently reserved under the *Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978*; or
- (h) public authority land be managed in accordance with the above.

Notes:

1. Grazing may be contracted for ecological or management purposes such as targeted weed control.
2. Existing wildlife areas continue to be used in accordance with the natural features reserve general recommendations, and for public recreation (including hunting in season as specified by the land manager) and education, where this does not conflict with the primary objective.

Coastal reserve

Coastal reserves are areas of public land set aside on the coast primarily for public recreation, education and conservation of natural environments.

DRAFT RECOMMENDATION

General recommendations for coastal reserves

F That coastal reserves shown on map A be used to:

- (a) provide opportunities for informal recreation for large numbers of people, and also for recreation related to enjoying and understanding nature;
- (b) protect and conserve natural coastal landscapes, ecosystems and significant geomorphological, archaeological and historical features for public enjoyment and inspiration and for education and scientific study;
- (c) ensure the protection and conservation of important aquatic and terrestrial fauna and flora;
- (d) provide opportunities for fishing and facilities for boating, together with the necessary navigation aids; and:
- (e) these areas, if not already appropriately reserved, be permanently reserved under the *Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978*.

Note:

The above management objectives are those that generally apply to most coastal reserves. Exceptions may apply to specific reserves in special circumstances.

Water production areas

Water production areas provide for both the collection of water and the storage of water derived from a catchment, and include distribution and holding facilities such as storage tanks and channels. This public land use category includes substantial areas of public authority land such as Cardinia, Sugarloaf, Greenvale, Melton, and Djerriwarrh water supply reservoirs.

DRAFT RECOMMENDATION

General recommendations for water production areas

G That water production areas; storage areas, diversion works and associated facilities; protective buffer zones around diversion works and storages where defined in a special area plan; and any other public land considered necessary, as shown on map A be:

- (a) used for water supply purposes;
- (b) other activities be permitted by the water supply authority after consultation with the Department of Sustainability and Environment, and other relevant agencies, and where consistent with (a) including:
 - (i) recreation, nature observation, heritage appreciation, picnicking, bushwalking (see note 1)
 - (ii) apiculture;
- and:
- (c) the following activities generally not be permitted:
 - (i) grazing by domestic stock (see note 3 below)
 - (ii) harvesting of forest products
 - (iii) hunting and use of firearms (see note 4 below)
 - (iv) dogwalking
 - (v) horseriding;

and:

- (d) natural and cultural heritage values be protected; and
- (e) for Crown land, if not already appropriately reserved, these areas be permanently reserved under the *Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978* for water supply purposes and be managed by the appropriate water supply authority; or
- (f) public authority land be managed in accordance with the above.

Notes:

1. Some large water storage areas not primarily used for domestic water supply are also used for water-based recreation. This may continue except where it results in deteriorating water quality.
2. The above management objectives are those that generally apply. Exceptions may apply to specific reserves in special circumstances.
3. Grazing may be contracted for ecological or management purposes such as targeted weed control.
4. Hunting and use of firearms may be allowed as part of a pest animal control program.

Historic and cultural features reserves

Historic and cultural features reserves are established primarily to protect places with highly significant historical or cultural values. Two small areas of public authority land comprising less than 0.5 hectares in total are included here (see table 4.4).

DRAFT RECOMMENDATION

General recommendations for historic and cultural features reserves

H That historic and cultural features reserves as shown on map A, according to their specific characteristics, be used to:

- (a) protect historic and cultural heritage values, features and sites (Aboriginal and non-Indigenous)
- (b) provide opportunities for:
 - (i) education and passive recreation such as picnicking, walking and, where relevant, fishing
 - (ii) more intensive recreation such as camping where specified by the land manager and compatible with (a); and
- (c) protect areas with remnant natural vegetation or habitat value;

and that:

- (d) timber harvesting not be permitted
- (e) low impact exploration for minerals be permitted, and mining, subject to consideration of the impact on values in (a) for each application or case
- (f) prospecting and apiculture generally be permitted
- (g) grazing not be permitted (see note 2); and
- (h) for Crown land, if not already appropriately reserved, these areas be permanently reserved under the *Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978*; or
- (i) public authority land be managed in accordance with the above.

Notes:

1. Where appropriate, a committee of management may be appointed or continue to manage community use areas in accordance with the general recommendations H.
2. Grazing may be contracted for ecological or management purposes such as targeted weed control.

Community use areas

Community use areas are mainly used for education, recreation or other specific community purposes. They include recreation areas, parklands and gardens, reservoir parks and buildings in public use, such as schools, libraries and halls. Some of these areas also contain significant natural values.

DRAFT RECOMMENDATION

General recommendations for community use areas

- I** That community use areas as shown on map A, according to their specific characteristics, be used for recreation, parklands and gardens, reservoir parks, buildings for community purposes and education; and
- (a) appropriate facilities be provided
 - (b) schools, public halls, kindergartens, libraries, museums and other similar areas be used for education, recreation where appropriate, and public enjoyment
 - (c) parklands and gardens be used as botanic and other gardens, community parkland or ornamental plantations
 - (d) where relevant, and where compatible with the above, features of cultural significance, natural surroundings and the local character and quality of the landscape be maintained or restored
 - (e) harvesting of forest products, hunting, and 'stone' extraction as defined in the *Extractive Industries Development Act 1995*, not be permitted; and
 - (f) Crown land, not already appropriately reserved, be reserved under the *Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978*; or
 - (g) public authority land be managed in accordance with the above.

Note:

Where appropriate, a committee of management may be appointed or continue to manage community use areas in accordance with the general recommendation I.

Services and utilities areas

This category includes utilities located on public land such as transport, communications, hospitals, cemeteries, water, sewerage, waste disposal, electricity and gas and other services. There are substantial areas of public authority land and unparcellised Government road reserves included in this public land use category.

DRAFT RECOMMENDATION

General recommendations for services and utilities areas

- J** That reserves and easements for public services and utilities such as transport, electricity and gas, communications, cemeteries, water and sewerage be used for those purposes; and that
- (a) new services, or utility sites and easements or lines, not be sited in or across reference areas, and wherever possible not be sited in or across national, state or other parks or nature conservation reserves
 - (b) railway lines, roadsides and other service and utility sites be managed to protect natural values including remnant vegetation and habitat, as far as practical
 - (c) organisations responsible for services and utilities management conserve and protect indigenous flora and fauna communities and habitat, as part of management plans/ planning; and
 - (d) should a public land area or building and site used for service or utility purposes no longer be required for its primary designated use, it be assessed for its natural, recreational and cultural heritage values, and capability for other public uses.

Notes:

1. While DSE, VicRoads and municipalities are commonly responsible for road reserve management, many unused roads are licensed to adjoining landholders. Roads and unused road reserves may not be distinguishable on map A.
2. There are numerous cemeteries across the investigation area that contain remnant natural vegetation. These should be managed to protect this vegetation where it does not interfere with the primary objective of the cemetery.

Uncategorised public land

Uncategorised public land is a broad category for which no specific public use is recommended. Land in this category has no clear primary use and, subject to assessment of any public land attributes present on the site, may be either assigned to an appropriate land manager or disposed of through sale.

Uncategorised public land is discussed in detail in chapter 9.

10.2 Recommendations to enhance the protection of biodiversity on public land

The draft recommendations below were developed by considering those areas of native vegetation containing threatened Ecological Vegetation Classes (EVCs or native vegetation communities used as surrogates for ecosystems) and records of threatened species of flora and fauna on Crown and public authority land outside existing protected areas (see chapter 8 for a discussion of protected areas). Particular attention was given to vegetation communities present in the investigation area that are under-represented in protected areas across each bioregion*. In practical terms, national representation targets cannot be achieved for some EVCs, even with the inclusion of all remaining examples in protected areas – there may simply be too little land available for acquisition. The ability of public land to provide for a broad range of community uses and services was also considered important in the highly urbanised areas of metropolitan Melbourne; this reduces the number of sites available for reclassification to a protected area category with biodiversity protection as the primary objective.

VEAC also considered the following factors:

- ▶ the representation of EVCs in protected areas across the bioregion (not only within the investigation area)
- ▶ the occurrences of EVCs in the investigation area (some EVCs had only minor occurrences within the investigation area)
- ▶ the presence of rare or threatened species and/or communities, or whether an area provides critical habitat for large numbers of a particular species (for example, migratory birds)
- ▶ site condition, with a focus on areas in natural or near-natural condition with a low level of disturbance
- ▶ well-connected areas of high quality habitat and smaller areas connecting larger habitat patches (for example, road reserves)
- ▶ the presence of a high diversity of species or communities
- ▶ the 'significance' of an area (for example, areas of national importance such as wetlands).

*The Highlands-Northern Fall bioregion is not included because of the small area within the investigation area and because the relevant EVCs are well represented.

10.2.1 ADDITIONS TO PROTECTED AREAS

This section contains a small number of draft recommendations for the addition of Crown land to Victoria's protected areas system.

A summary of these draft land use recommendation is provided below.

Additions to Kinglake National Park

- ▶ Yan Yean Reservoir and surrounds
- ▶ reserved Crown land adjoining the park.

The proposed additions to Kinglake National Park are described in draft recommendations A1 and shown in figure 10.1.

Additions to Bunyip State Park

- ▶ four Crown allotments adjacent to the park
- ▶ an adjacent unused road reserve.

The proposed additions to Bunyip State Park are described in draft recommendation A2 and shown in figure 10.2.

Creation of Point Cook Coastal Park

- ▶ existing Point Cook Coastal Park and Cheetham Wetlands
- ▶ Truganina Wetland and the adjoining section of Altona Coastal Foreshore Reserve.

The proposed creation of Point Cook Coastal Park is described in draft recommendation A3 and shown in figure 10.3.

Creation of the Bandicoot Corner Bushland Area

- ▶ reserving the unreserved Crown land parcel containing the area known locally as 'Bandicoot Corner'.

The proposed creation of the Bandicoot Corner Bushland Area is described in draft recommendation E1, and shown in figure 10.4.

More detailed descriptions of the location, biodiversity values and current uses of these areas are provided below.

COMMENTS INVITED

The addition of these four areas to the protected areas system would result in only minor changes to their use and management. It would, however, increase the recognition of the biodiversity values of these sites and ensure the management of these values into the future.

A1 Proposed additions to Kinglake National Park

Yan Yean Reservoir and surrounds

The Yan Yean Reservoir and surrounds are located on 2,791 hectares of Crown land near Yan Yean in Melbourne's north-east. The area includes the 81 hectare Sherwin Ranges southern buffer, which is permanently reserved for water supply, but is no longer required by Melbourne Water for water supply purposes. Note that the existing Yan Yean Reservoir Park and water treatment infrastructure and related areas are not included in the proposed addition to Kinglake National Park.

The Yan Yean Reservoir is used by Melbourne Water to supply water to parts of Melbourne. The reservoir and surrounds are a 'closed catchment' and public access is restricted. VEAC considers that current controls on access to the catchment area should continue for the purposes of protecting water quality.

In addition to protecting water quality, the closed nature of the catchment has protected its biodiversity values. The catchment contains two reference areas.

The Yan Yean Reservoir and surrounds fall within two bioregions – the Victorian Volcanic Plain bioregion in the south and Highlands-Southern Fall in the north. The area contains a large area of high quality remnant vegetation, with forest communities occurring at higher elevations and woodland communities at lower elevations to the south. Large areas of threatened plains grassy woodland (endangered) and valley grassy forest (vulnerable) are present. The remainder contains non-threatened grassy dry forest and shrubby foothill forest, riparian forest and grassy woodland communities.

Threatened flora recorded within the reservoir surrounds include the large-fruited groundsel *Senecio macrocarpus* (nationally vulnerable, considered endangered in Victoria and listed under the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988*), matted flax lily *Dianella amoena* (endangered nationally, considered endangered in Victoria and listed under the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988*), purple diuris *Diuris punctata* var. *punctata* (considered vulnerable in Victoria and listed under the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988*) and clover glycine (vulnerable nationally, considered vulnerable in Victoria and listed under the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988*). Threatened fauna such as powerful owl *Ninox strenua* and brush-tailed phascogale *Phascogale tapoatafa* (both considered vulnerable in Victoria and listed under the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988*) are also present.

Council considers that a management agreement between DSE and Melbourne Water can be established, similar to those that have been successfully employed in other water supply catchments within national parks (for example, in the Yarra Ranges and Great Otway national parks). This agreement would ensure that the land is managed to maintain water quality and protect water resources, as well as to conserve biodiversity.

Sherwin Ranges northern buffer

The 136 hectare Sherwin Ranges northern buffer is a long, narrow site that lies adjacent to the southern boundary of the Wallaby Creek designated water supply catchment area in the Kinglake National Park, near Kinglake West. This area is Crown land permanently reserved for water supply. As with the Sherwin Ranges southern buffer, Melbourne Water no longer requires the buffer for water supply purposes.

The vegetation at this site was burnt during the 2009 Victorian bushfires. The site contained heathy dry forest and herb-rich foothill forest communities (both non-threatened). Threatened fauna species such as barking owl *Ninox connivens* (considered endangered in Victoria and listed under the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988*), powerful owl and brush-tailed phascogale have been recorded in the vicinity.

The Sherwin Ranges northern buffer is contiguous with Kinglake National Park. The inclusion of this area in Kinglake National Park will provide an opportunity to protect an area of high natural values and provide a consistent management approach for public land contiguous with the park.

DRAFT RECOMMENDATION

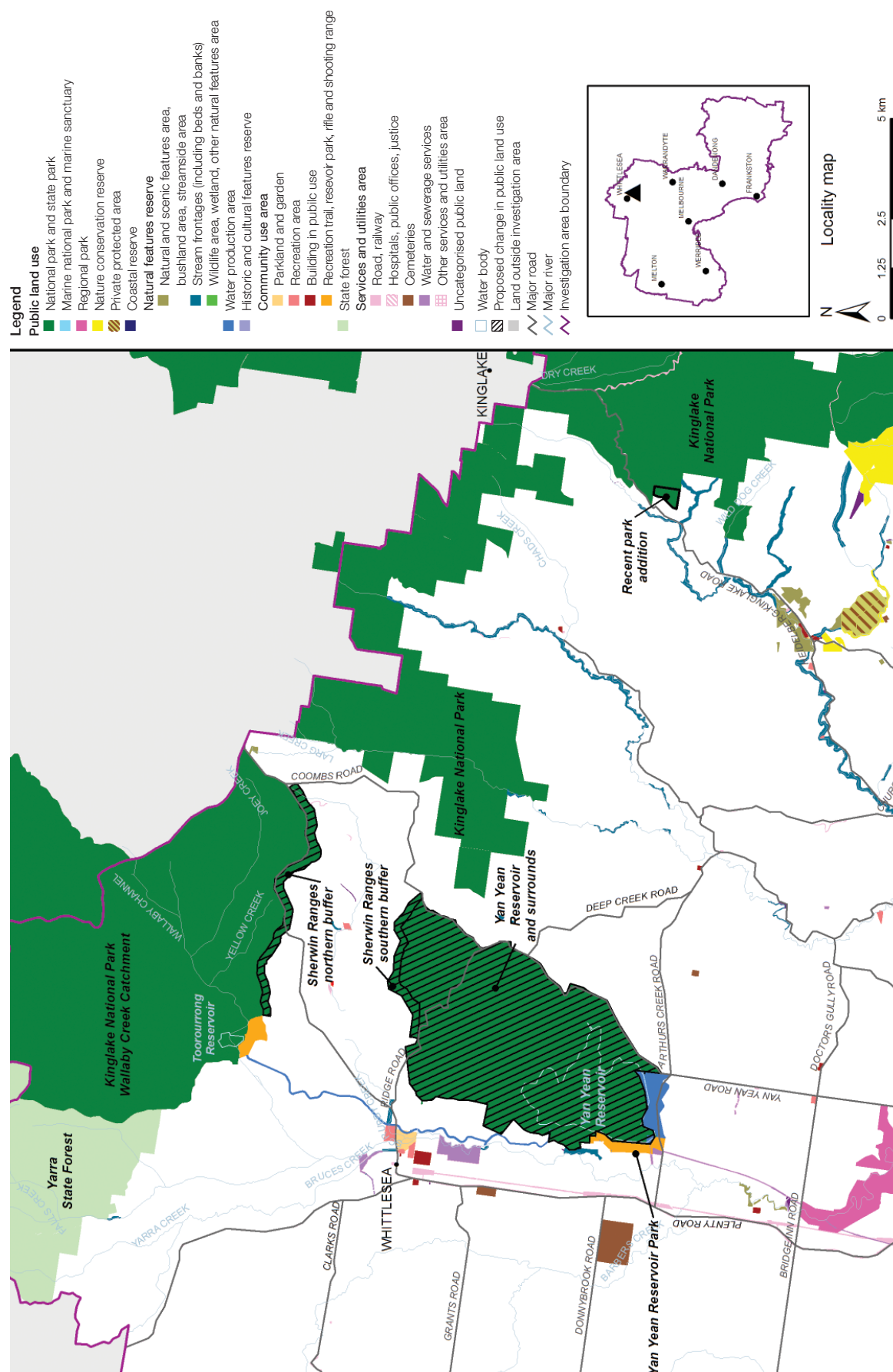
A1 Additions to Kinglake National Park

- The area of 2,927 hectares, shown hatched on figure 10.1, be added to Kinglake National Park under the *National Parks Act 1975*; and
- a management agreement be established under section 321 of the *National Parks Act 1975* for the area shown on figure 10.1 as Yan Yean Reservoir and surrounds; and
- Melbourne Water continues to manage all infrastructure associated with the Yan Yean Reservoir and water treatment facilities.

Note:

Implementation should allow flexibility for boundary adjustments. VEAC notes that Ridge Road and Coombs Road are to be excluded from the national park.

Figure 10.1
Proposed additions to Kinglake National Park



A2 Proposed additions to Bunyip State Park

Crown land - Tonimbuk

These proposed additions consist of four unreserved Crown land allotments that vary in size from one to 24 hectares and total approximately 50 hectares. The site is located adjacent to the southern boundary of Bunyip State Park, near the township of Tonimbuk in Melbourne's outer east. The blocks are currently managed by the Department of Sustainability and Environment.

These areas contain vegetation communities such as damp heathy woodland and lowland forest. Threatened fauna such as sooty owl *Tyto tenebricosa* (considered vulnerable in Victoria and listed under the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988*) have also been recorded in the vicinity.

These sites are contiguous with Bunyip State Park, providing good connectivity for flora and fauna. The eastern sections are located close to the re-establishment program aviaries for the threatened helmeted honeyeater *Lichenostomus melanops cassidix* (nationally endangered, considered critically endangered in Victoria and listed under the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988*), while the western section of the site provides a link with helmeted honeyeater habitat.

The addition of these areas to Bunyip State Park will help to secure protection of the adjoining helmeted honeyeater habitat, and allow for a consistent management approach for public land contiguous with Bunyip State Park.

Annual grazing licences are issued on two of the Crown allotments. Council considers that these licences may continue with special conditions consistent with the one remaining grazing licence in a nearby area of the existing Bunyip State Park.

Unused road

This roughly three hectare unused Government road is located west of the township of Tonimbuk. It is a long, narrow site contiguous with the park.

The road easement contains high quality remnant shrubby foothill forest and damp forest vegetation community. Threatened fauna such as sooty owl have been recorded directly south of this site.

DRAFT RECOMMENDATION

A2 Additions to Bunyip State Park

- (a) The area of 52.5 hectares, shown hatched in figure 10.2, be added to Bunyip State Park under the *National Parks Act 1975*; and
- (b) grazing licences on the proposed additions may only be reissued to the current licensees in accordance with special conditions applied to the grazing licence in the existing Bunyip State Park.

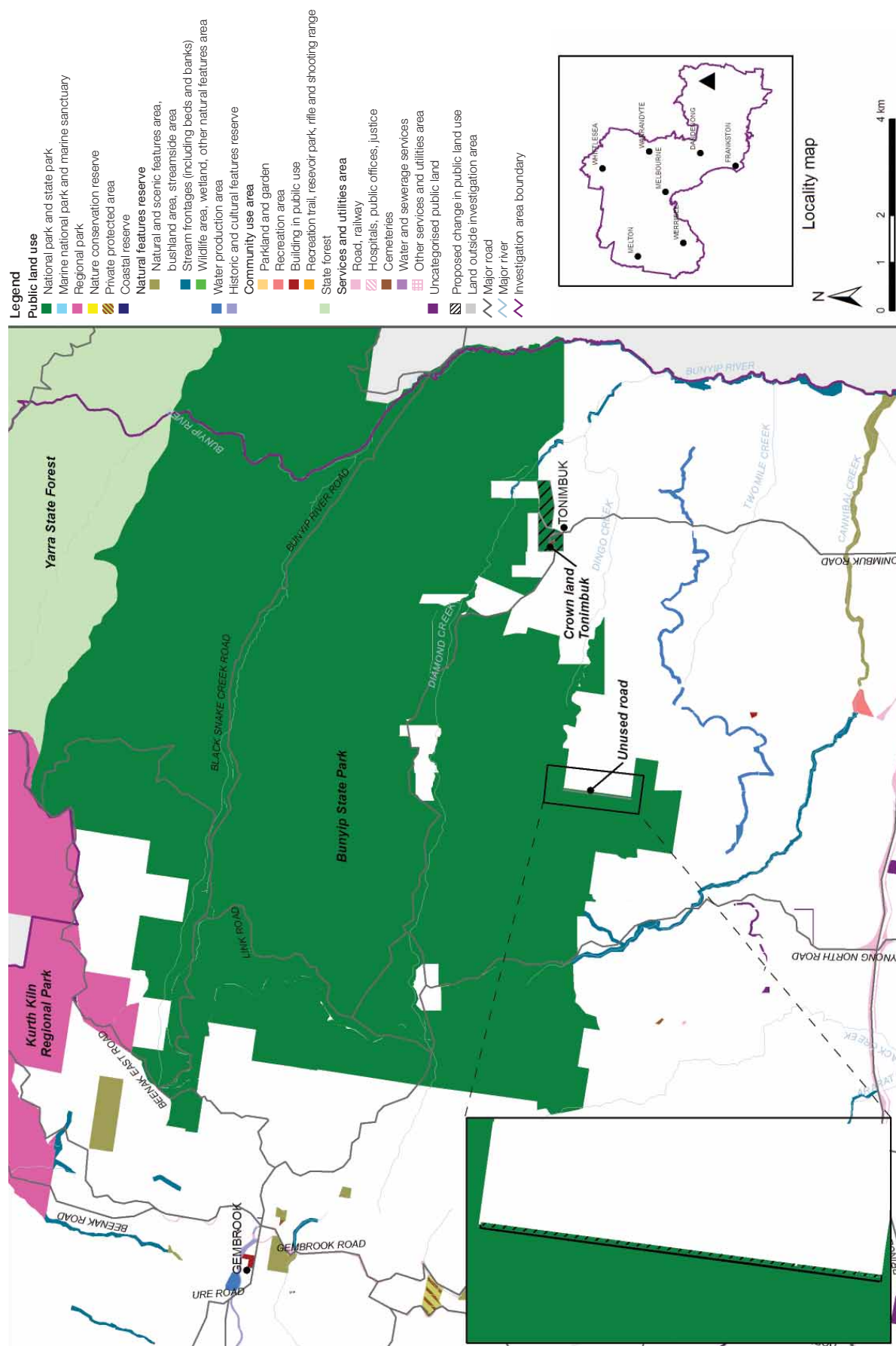
A3 Proposed Point Cook Coastal Park

The existing Point Cook Coastal Park, Cheetham Wetlands, Truganina Wetland and the adjoining section of the Altona Foreshore Reserve are located on Crown land near Point Cook, west of Melbourne. They are contiguous areas, forming a large block of 955 hectares along the coast. Point Cook Coastal Park and Cheetham Wetlands abut the Point Cooke Marine Sanctuary. Truganina Wetland was formerly part of the Cheetham saltworks.

The sites contain a range of threatened vegetation communities such as coastal saltmarsh, plains grassland, aquatic herbland and coastal alkaline scrub. It provides habitat for threatened flora such as tough scurf-pea *Cullen tenax* (considered endangered in Victoria and listed under the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988*), button wrinklewort *Rutidosis leptorhynchoides* (nationally endangered, considered endangered in Victoria and listed under the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988*) and orchids such as small golden moth *Diuris basaltica* (nationally endangered, considered vulnerable in Victoria and listed under the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988*), fragrant leek-orchid *Prasophyllum suaveolens* (nationally endangered, considered endangered in Victoria and listed under the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988*) and swamp diuris *Diuris palustris* (considered vulnerable in Victoria and listed under the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988*).

The sites support numerous shorebirds and migratory wading birds of international and national importance, with more than 200 bird species recorded. Cheetham Wetlands provides one of the remaining wintering sites for the critically endangered orange-bellied parrot *Neophema chrysogaster*. It also provides habitat for the threatened striped legless lizard *Delma impar* (nationally vulnerable, considered endangered in Victoria and listed under the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988*) and yellow sedge-skipper butterfly *Hesperilla flavesceus flavesceus* (also known as Altona skipper butterfly considered vulnerable in

Figure 10.2
Proposed additions to Bunyip State Park



Victoria and listed under the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988*). A section of Cheetham Wetlands forms part of the Port Phillip Bay (western shoreline) and Bellarine Peninsula Ramsar site. It is listed under the Ramsar convention in recognition of its high value as habitat for waterbirds.

The existing Point Cook Coastal Park, Cheetham Wetland and the adjoining section of the Altona Foreshore Reserve are currently temporarily reserved under the *Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978*, while Truganina Wetland is located on unreserved Crown land. Establishing these

areas as one coastal park under Schedule Three of the *National Parks Act 1975* acknowledges the important natural values of each site and protects them for future generations. Council considers that there will be no changes to current recreational and community uses of these areas.

'Point Cooke' was named after First Mate John M Cooke. The geographic feature of the point, marine reserve and subsequent marine sanctuary retain this original spelling. 'Point Cook' is used for the coastal park and township.

DRAFT RECOMMENDATION

A3 Point Cook Coastal Park

The area of 955.3 hectares, shown hatched in figure 10.3 (i.e. Point Cook Coastal Park, Cheetham Wetlands, Truganina Wetland and adjoining section of Altona Foreshore Reserve):

(a) be used to:

- (i) conserve, protect and re-establish indigenous flora, fauna and natural ecosystems in the park
- (ii) preserve and protect features in the park of archaeological, historical, ecological, scenic, geological or other scientific interest
- (iii) provide opportunities for recreation and education associated with the enjoyment and understanding of natural environments;

and:

(b) features listed below be specifically protected:

- (i) the diverse flora and fauna associated with the threatened grasslands, saltmarsh and wetlands throughout the park, notably migratory wader bird species
- (ii) saltmarsh and lagoons comprising Truganina wetlands and Cheetham wetlands between Laverton Creek and Point Cooke (locality)
- (iii) fauna associated with the beach and intertidal environments adjoining Point Cooke Marine Sanctuary

and:

(c) the following activities be generally permitted:

- (i) bushwalking, nature observation, heritage appreciation, picnicking, recreational fishing (see note 1)
- (ii) bike riding on formed roads and tracks
- (iii) research, subject to permit;

(d) the following activities not be permitted:

- (i) harvesting of forest products, including firewood collection
- (ii) grazing by domestic stock
- (iii) hunting and use of firearms
- (iv) burning solid fuel fires during the high fire danger period;

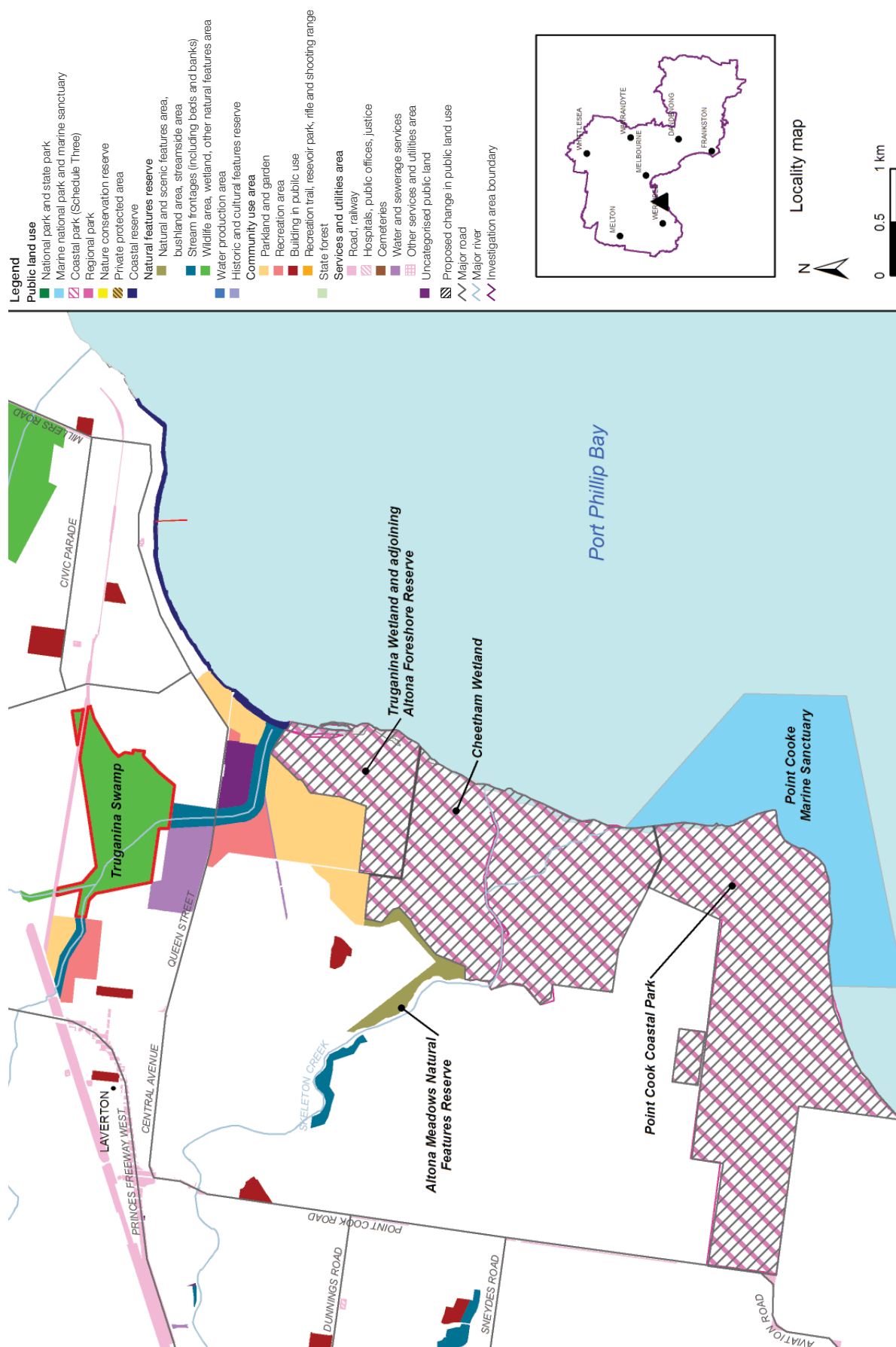
and:

(e) the area be established under Schedule Three of the *National Parks Act 1975*.

Notes:

1. On-leash dog walking is to be managed to ensure that the environmental values of the park are not compromised and is to be limited to areas specified in the management plan for the park.
2. The seaward boundaries of the Crown land reserves are not aligned with the current coastline and should be redefined when establishing the coastal park.

Figure 10.3
Proposed Point Cook Coastal Park and Truganina Swamp, Altona



E1 Proposed Bandicoot Corner Bushland Area

This 12.5 hectare site of unreserved Crown land contains the area known locally as 'Bandicoot Corner' because of the presence of the nationally vulnerable southern brown bandicoot *Isodon obesulus obesulus*. It adjoins the undeveloped Bayles Recreation Reserve on the Koo-wee-rup-Longwarry Road and the Yallock Outfall Drain (figure 10.4).

This proposed bushland area contains remnants of once more extensive vegetation including threatened riparian woodland and swamp scrub vegetation communities of the former Koo-wee-rup Swamp in the Gippsland Plain bioregion. The growling grass frog *Litoria raniformis* (nationally vulnerable, considered endangered in Victoria and listed under the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988*) has been recorded in nearby Yallock Creek.

The Cardinia Environment Coalition currently manages approximately 2.5 hectares of the proposed Bandicoot Corner Bushland Area under licence for conservation purposes and informally manages some adjoining areas. About 5.5 hectares comprising the eastern part of the proposed bushland area is largely cleared and licensed annually for grazing.

DRAFT RECOMMENDATION

E1 Bandicoot Corner Bushland Area

- (a) The area of 12.5 hectares, shown hatched in figure 10.4, be reserved as a natural features reserve – bushland area under the *Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978* and used in accordance with the natural features reserves general recommendation E; and
- (b) Cardinia Environment Coalition be appointed as committee of management for the reserve.

10.2.2 MANAGING PUBLIC AUTHORITY LAND FOR THE PROTECTION OF BIODIVERSITY VALUES

Melbourne Water manages a number of significant wetlands for flood management and other purposes. The three areas of public land discussed below have high biodiversity values and are currently managed by Melbourne Water to protect and enhance these values. Most of the areas are owned by Melbourne Water as freehold land.

It is proposed that Melbourne Water continue to manage Ryans Swamp, Truganina Swamp and the Edithvale-Seafood Wetlands. Consideration should be given to establishing formal agreements (such as those made under section 69 of the *Conservation, Forests and Lands Act 1987*) for their management, use, development and conservation in order to secure the biodiversity values of the sites for future generations.

In the event that Melbourne Water no longer requires these areas, they should be transferred to the Crown and appropriately reserved under the *Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978* for conservation purposes.

Edithvale-Seafood Wetlands also contain small areas of Crown land. Draft recommendations for these areas of Crown land are included below.

Figure 10.4
Proposed Bandicoot Corner Bushland Area



Ryans Swamp and surrounds, Western Treatment Plant

Ryans Swamp is an intermittent shallow freshwater marsh located in the northern part of the Western Treatment Plant at Werribee, which is owned and managed by Melbourne Water. Ryans Swamp and the surrounding grasslands are covered by a BioSite of approximately 59 hectares, within a larger block of about 191 hectares. This larger block is bound by the Princes Freeway to the north, Little River to the west and south. An internal access track (Murtcaim Road) traverses the southern section of the site.

The swamp contains, and is surrounded by, patches of threatened vegetation communities such as plains sedgy wetland, plains grassy woodland and plains grassland.

Ryans Swamp supports a large population and diversity of waterbird species when flooded, including many rare or threatened species. This area provides habitat for threatened species growling grass frog and striped legless lizard.

Ryans Swamp is located within the Port Phillip Bay (Western Shoreline) and Bellarine Peninsula Ramsar site.

DRAFT RECOMMENDATION

Ryans Swamp and surrounds

- (a) Melbourne Water continues to manage the 191 hectare block containing Ryans Swamp and surrounds, as shown within the red boundary on figure 10.5, to protect and enhance its biodiversity values; and
- (b) Melbourne Water considers the establishment of an agreement, such as those provided for under section 69 of the *Conservation, Forests and Lands Act 1987*, for the management, use, and conservation of the area; and
- (c) should Melbourne Water no longer require Ryans Swamp and surrounds, the area be transferred to the Crown and reserved for conservation purposes under the *Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978*.

Truganina Swamp, Altona

Truganina Swamp is a 100 hectare semi-natural wetland located on land owned by Melbourne Water near Altona.

The swamp contains areas of the threatened coastal saltmarsh vegetation community, and provides important habitat for a range of migratory waders and water birds. Tidal sections of Laverton Creek are frequented by a number of migratory waders and terns and larger wading birds (such as the threatened great egret *Ardea alba*, considered vulnerable in Victoria and listed under the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988*) and little egret *Egretta garzetta* (considered endangered in Victoria and listed under the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988*). Concentrations of migratory waders such as sharp-tailed sandpiper *Calidris acuminata* are found on the edge of the ponds during the annual summer residence. The threatened Lewin's rail *Lewinia pectoralis* (considered vulnerable in Victoria and listed under the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988*) has been recorded breeding at this site.

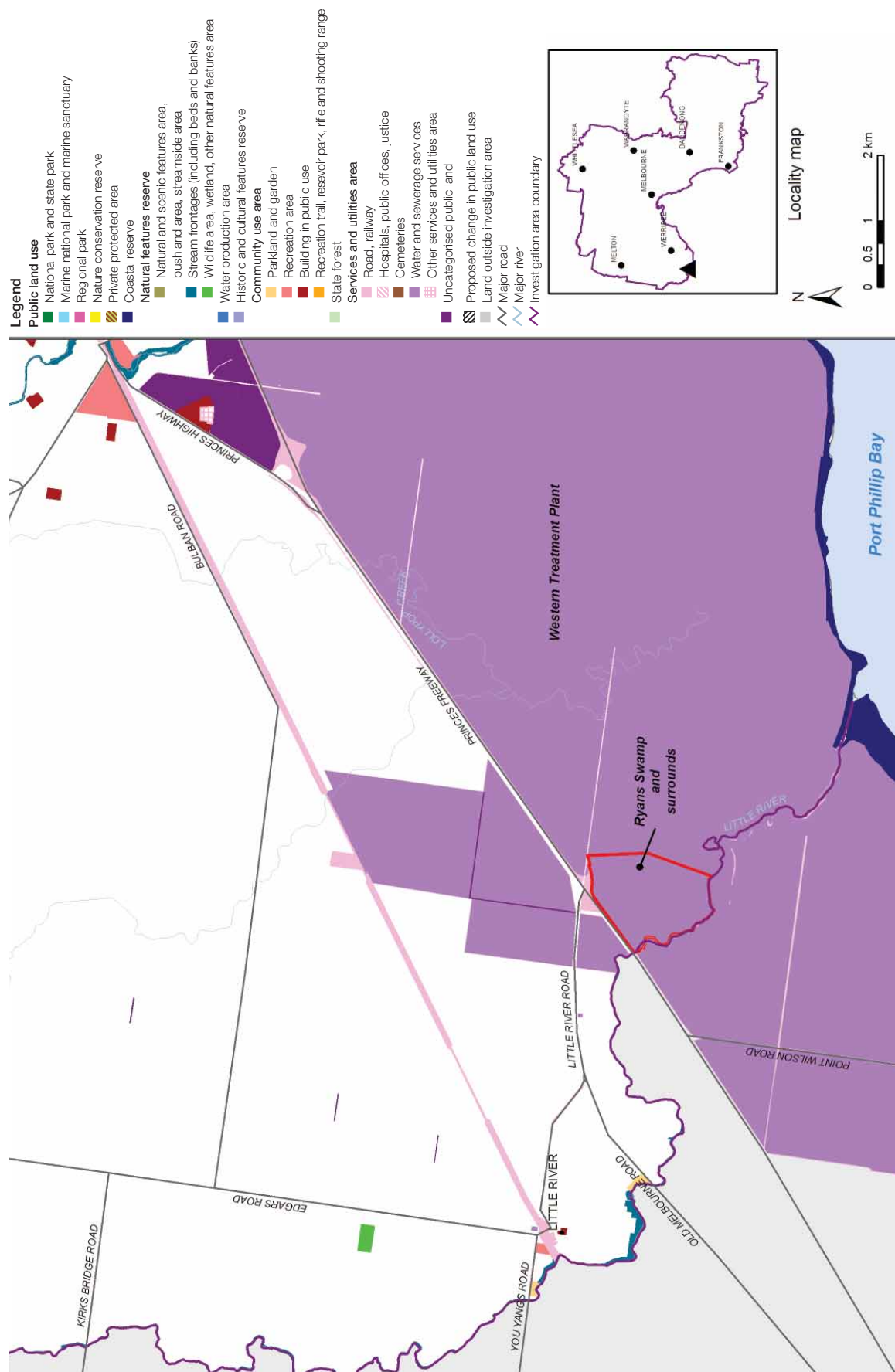
Vegetation adjacent to the swamp provides habitat for the yellow sedge-skipper butterfly (Altona skipper butterfly). Sites at Altona such as Truganina Swamp are considered key conservation sites for this species within the investigation area.

DRAFT RECOMMENDATION

Truganina Swamp

- (a) Melbourne Water continues to manage the 100 hectares comprising Truganina Swamp, as shown within the red boundary on figure 10.3, to protect and enhance biodiversity values; and
- (b) Melbourne Water considers the establishment of an agreement, such as those provided for under section 69 of the *Conservation, Forests and Lands Act 1987*, for the management, use, and conservation of the area; and
- (c) should Melbourne Water no longer require Truganina Swamp, the area be transferred to the Crown and reserved for conservation purposes under the *Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978*.

Figure 10.5
 Ryans Swamp and surrounds, Western Treatment Plant



Edithvale-Seafood Wetlands

The Edithvale and Seafood Wetlands are two freshwater wetlands located in Melbourne's south-east.

Edithvale Wetlands is located on 107 hectares of Melbourne Water freehold land and a small area of 5.2 hectares of Crown land.

Seafood Wetlands is located mostly on 78 hectares of Melbourne Water freehold land. Approximately 21 hectares is located on reserved Crown land (Seafood Wetlands Reserve) and four hectares of other Crown land. City of Frankston owned land (not considered public land under the VEAC Act) makes up the remainder of the wetland.

Combined, the Edithvale-Seafood Wetlands are recognised for their high waterbird diversity and numbers and for supporting threatened species. While these wetlands contain limited remnant vegetation, shallow freshwater marshes and reed beds continue to provide important habitat with over 190 bird species and 25 migratory bird species recorded. Importantly, these sites also regularly support populations of the Australasian bittern *Botaurus poiciloptilus* (considered endangered in Victoria and listed under the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988*) and more than one per cent of the East Asian-Australian flyway population of the migratory sharp-tailed sandpiper.

Edithvale-Seafood Wetlands are internationally recognised as a wetland of importance under the Ramsar convention. The two wetlands, along with Melbourne Water freehold land at Centre Swamp in Chelsea, are the last remains of Carrum Carrum Swamp; a shallow freshwater marsh that was largely drained following European settlement. The draft recommendations describe both Melbourne Water and Crown land within the Ramsar wetland boundary. They do not apply to Centre Swamp at Chelsea.

DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

Edithvale-Seafood Wetlands

- (a) That Melbourne Water continues to manage Edithvale-Seafood Wetlands to protect and enhance their biodiversity values; and
- (b) Melbourne Water considers the establishment of an agreement, such as those provided for under section 69 of the *Conservation, Forests and Lands Act 1987*, for the management, use, and conservation of the area; and
- (c) should Melbourne Water no longer require the areas within the red boundaries on figures 10.6 and 10.7, that these areas be transferred to the Crown and reserved for conservation purposes under the *Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978*.

DRAFT RECOMMENDATION

Edithvale Wetland

E2

The area of 5.2 hectares of Crown land, shown hatched on figure 10.6, be reserved for conservation purposes under the *Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978* and used in accordance with natural features reserves general recommendation E.

Seafood Wetland

E3

The area of 4 hectares of Crown land at Seafood Wetland, shown hatched on figure 10.7 be added to the existing natural features reserve-bushland area (Seafood Wetland Reserve) under the *Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978*.

Figure 10.6
Edithvale Wetland



Figure 10.7
Seaford Wetland

