

Sparrovale Wetlands Master Plan

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION REPORT

Prepared by

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for

City of Greater Geelong

27 April 2021

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Disclaimer

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REV	DATE	AMENDMENT
C	27/04/2021	Revised draft with Council comments
B	10/11/2020	Revised draft with written submissions
A	13/08/2020	Draft for comment

1. Consultation Process

1.1 Summary of the Community consultation

Engagement with key stakeholder groups has been undertaken over the past two years culminating with an eight-week community consultation period from May to August 2020. The project has been promoted through several different activities, including:

- Seven face to face meetings with the Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation (including two site visits).
- 3,200 Have Your Say postcards were letter dropped throughout the Armstrong Creek postcode.
- A video promoting the project and the opportunity to contribute to the master plan was placed on Facebook and Instagram which generated over 25,000 views, 93 shares and 479 reactions on Facebook and 1,411 views on Instagram.
- An advertisement was placed in the Armstrong Creek Times on the 2 July, 2020.
- An article about the Sparrovale wetlands and master plan featured in the April edition of the City's Community News. Other media releases included Geelong Advertiser 11/05/2020 and Surfcoast Times 28/05/2020.
- A total of 42 surveys were completed (actual number received was 45 with one submission repeated 4 times) along with nine detailed written responses emailed directly to the project officer by the closing date of 13/07/2020. The responses have been summarised below.
- Six presentations have been given to interested community groups and agencies.
- Copies of a series of four Sparrovale values plans were provided to developer sales offices for distribution.
- One community guided tour occurred in September 2019.

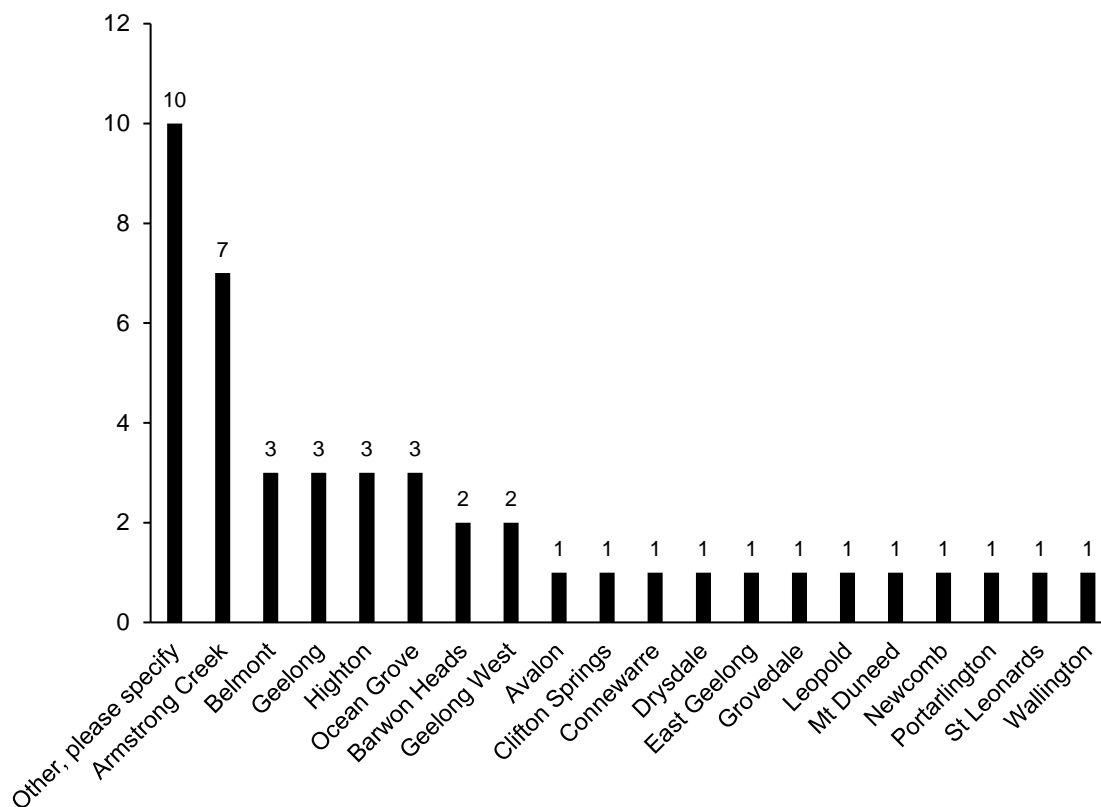
1.2 What we asked

Community members were invited to complete questions on-line, or in hard copy format where requested, that focused on what they value, see as a threat and ideas for protection as well as their future aspirations for the Sparrovale Wetlands Reserve. Space was also provided for information about anything that may have been missed. The questions included:

- Where do you live?
- What do you like about the vision outlined for the site?
- These are the key goals listed in the master plan. What do you believe are the three most important?
- What do you like about each of the stages in the Implementation Plan?
- In your opinion, is there anything that can be improved? Have we missed anything?
- Please tell us what opportunities you see for the site?
- Any other comments/ideas?

1.3 Summary of What You Said

Where do you live? If you live outside of the Geelong region, please specify where.

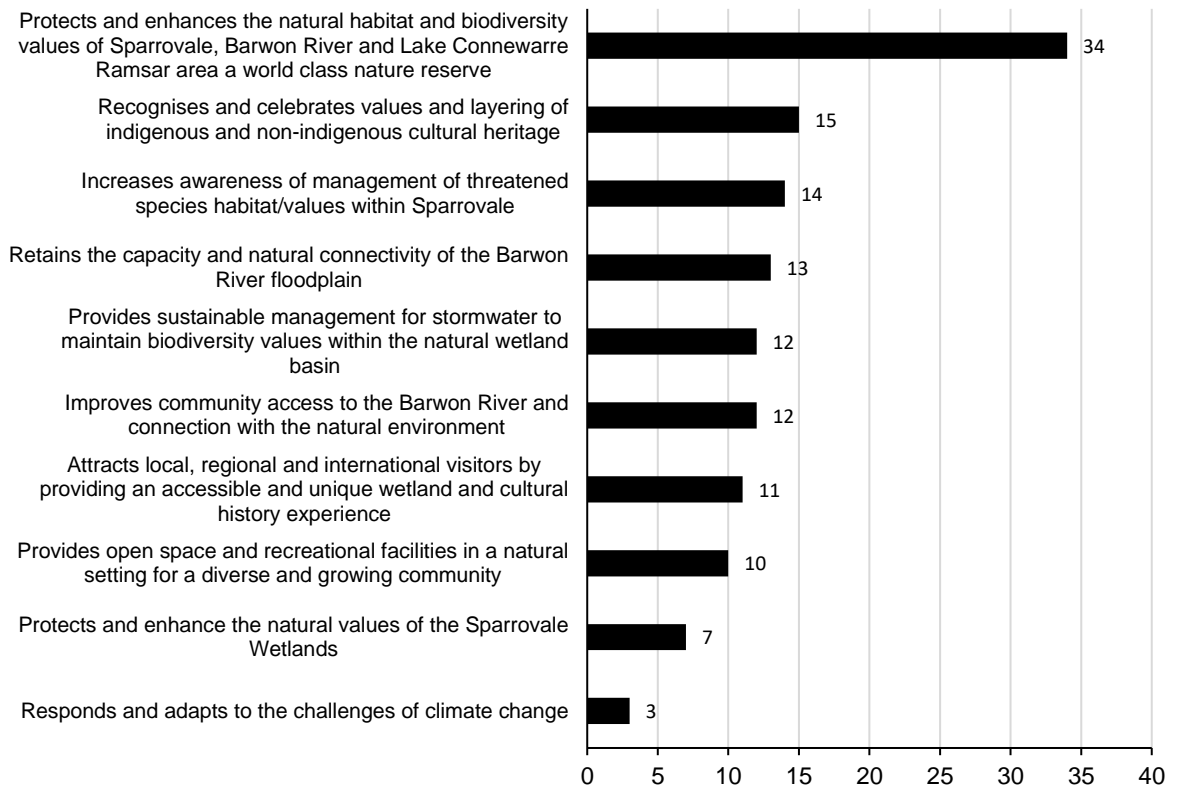


If you live outside of the Geelong region, please specify where.

10 valid responses received (11 responses did not answer the question)

- La Trobe Valley (4 responses)
- Charlemont (2 response)
- Birregurra (1 response)
- Macleod (1 response)
- Melbourne - Western Suburbs (1 response)
- Snake Valley (1 response)

Most important key goals in the Master Plan



Summary of Common Themes

Cultural Heritage

- Management Partnership with Wadawurrung important (1)
- Consider re-naming of precinct with Aboriginal values (1)
- Opportunity to educate public about Aboriginal Heritage. Important. (1)

Historical Heritage

- Need to retain former Railway line and racecourse (4)
- Need to reference stables (1)

Flora

- Revegetation in areas which have become degraded (2)
- Removal of pest flora and fauna (1)
- Will community have opportunity to be involved in planting/works? (1)

Fauna

- Requires world class advice to inform establishment and ongoing management (1)
- Boating on the river must be strictly controlled to protect wildlife (1)
- Nominate Sparrovale Wetland to be included in the RAMSAR area (1)

Flooding and Drainage

- Maximise efficiency in managing water/run-off (2)
- Not sure about releasing storm water into Lake Connewarre as this is a saline lake (1)
- Lack of detail about hydrological management (1)

- Wetland design must have best practice design (1)

Recreation

- Duck/quail shooting have no place in the proposed/planned wetland (15)
- Support increased connectivity and access (3)
- Like to see dedicated bike area (2)
- Potential safety risks to people when hunters are shooting (1)
- Bushwalking/bird watching section too short (1)
- Caution re disturbance to birds on Connewarre Delta (1)
- How will this affect the future of Field and Game (1)
- Priority to be given to design the trail from Geelong along time river (1)
- Like to see more recreational area (1)
- Like to see duck hunters areas increased into Sparrovale Wetlands (1)
- There should be good grounds for hunting (1)
- Like to see dog friendly areas (1)
- Like to see boardwalks and all weather walks (1)
- Priority to introduce walking paths (1)
- Limit cycling access (1)

Commercial

- Introduction of wetland will present risks to the eel fishery (3)
- Grazing regimes must be managed/informed by environmental guidelines (2)
- Use of farming area to educate sustainable farming in Stage 2 is good (1)
- Phasing out grazing and extending vegetation is supported (1)
- Further grazing not supported (1)

Other items

- Should not be sold, leased or entrusted to Geelong Field & Game (4)
- Need to carefully consider effectiveness of tower (3)
- What provisions are being made to ensure safety of people during duck season (2)
- Support interpretation centre to provide appreciation and knowledge of wetland (1)
- Reasonable vision (1)
- Grazing regimes need to be managed/informed (1)
- Any given trial must be carefully considered as it may open up sensitive areas (1)
- Support long terms economic viability (1)
- Rubbish/litter management maybe a challenge (1)
- View mound design misses' opportunities of wet habitat close to tower for observations (1)
- Access tracks need to be carefully considered (1)
- Caution of trails being open up to cyclist and motorbikes (1)
- Walking path should be relocated away from sensitive areas (1)
- What is the plant to protect residents? (1)
- Include public transport into site so does not and clog car park (1)

2. Response to feedback on the Draft Master Plan

The following summarises the relevant key topics raised in community consultation on the Draft Master Plan as displayed for comment. The number of respondents for each topic, including those received via the website, via e-mail, at the drop-in session and walk around, are noted in brackets where more than one person commented. Where comments have been supplied by the same person via multiple platforms (website/letter/email) 1 response is recorded per topic rather than per platform. The response column outlines the proposed recommendation for changes to the plan for consideration in finalisation of the Master Plan.

No.	COMMENT	RESPONSE
1. CULTURAL HERITAGE		
1.1	Consider renaming of precinct in consultation with the Wadawurrung.	This is a key recommendation of the plan. <i>Recommendation</i> No change to plan
1.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity to educate public about Aboriginal Heritage is important • Include interpretive signage for Wadawurrung/plant/animals (2 responses) 	Interpretive signage and visitor information will be an important part of the visitor experience and will also be a focus of the long term development of a visitor interpretation centre. <i>Recommendation</i> No change to plan
1.3	A management partnership with the Wadawurrung Traditional Owner Aboriginal Corporation should be a central part of this plan. The Wadawurrung should be involved with management decisions around environmental protection and monitoring activities. Consider Aboriginal employment opportunities. Aboriginal values should be embedded in biodiversity planning and management. (3)	A management partnership with the Wadawurrung Traditional Owner Aboriginal Corporation has been discussed as part of the consultation on the draft Master Plan. <i>Recommendation</i> Expand on this recommendation to reflect current discussions between Council and the Wadawurrung.
1.4	Recognise and celebrate values and layering of indigenous and non-indigenous cultural heritage. What does layering mean? If there is no good reason for having these words, they should be removed.	The plan seeks to recognise that the history of Sparrovale is complex. While a key objective is to restore and protect the natural values of this section of the Barwon River floodplain and estuary consistent with historical indigenous cultural and environmental values the means by which this will be achieved will rely heavily on the subsequent layers of historical modification of the floodplain and

No.	COMMENT	RESPONSE
		<p>waterway from works associated with the Geelong Harbour Trust and the historic farming enterprises at this site.</p> <p><i>Recommendation</i> Change wording from layering to overlap.</p>
2. HISTORICAL HERITAGE		
2.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two original <i>Sparrovale Farm</i> buildings, the Manager's House and the Stables, can be conserved in situ to become on-site visitor information centres to provide maps, factual details and long-term interpretation. These three places were part of the Geelong Harbour Trust Commissioners experimental farm named <i>Sparrovale</i> and are listed in the <i>Greater Geelong Outer Areas Heritage Study 1998-2000</i> by Lorraine Huddle and David Rowe, as of regional significance and recommended to be under the heritage overlay. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Stables 103 Sparrovale Rd Marshall, recommended REGIONAL. ○ Silo ruins 103 Sparrovale Rd Marshall, recommended REGIONAL. ○ Manager's House 103 Sparrovale Rd Marshall, recommended REGIONAL. ○ The silos were built to the specifications of civil engineer, later Sir, John Monash. • Three identified heritage places exist in the north-west area of the Sparrovale Wetland Master Plan Figure 12 map but are not mentioned. • Concerned that greater effort should be made to retain and enhance evidence of the former railway line connection to and site of former racecourse • Unclear what is proposed in the area of the railway line and old racecourse • Concerned that more 'cultural heritage values' are more indigenous heritage and trees at the expense of other heritage items - the railway and racecourse (3 Responses) 	<p>These sites are located outside of the Master Plan study area and are currently included in areas which are proposed for future residential development. While these historic sites are referenced in the report and will be included in the interpretive information developed for the area, they will provide unsuitable for reuse as an interpretation centre for the new wetlands as they have no direct views to the wetlands and river and will be surrounded by new houses.</p> <p>The Master Plan recommends investigation of potential relocation of the stables to the new Horseshoe Bend Park (which may be possible) but the decision to retain or remove these heritage sites is outside the scope of the Master Plan and is subject to a separate planning process.</p> <p><i>Recommendation</i> Note location of the Managers house, stables and silo ruins and train lines on Figure 12 which also includes reference to the former Geelong Racecourse and other infrastructure associated with the Geelong Harbour Trust and Farm.</p>
3. FLORA		
3.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revegetation in areas where vegetation has been degraded/removed. 	<p>The environmental rehabilitation of the Sparrovale site will mainly focus on</p>

No.	COMMENT	RESPONSE
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revegetation works should involve Corangamite Catchment Management Authority (PV) and Corangamite Catchment Management Authority (CCMA) to ensure the works are carried out successfully with use of only indigenous species • Revegetation works could continue into Phase 3 - to replace any failed plantings, remove guards that have been outgrown, turn into litter, and to plant more understory or saltmarsh species that could fill in gaps. • Removal of pest flora • It should be ensured that Moonahs and other species characteristic of the local type of Coastal Alkaline Shrubland are included in the mix of plant species to be planted Prepare a Vegetation Plan. GEC wishes to propose that the area of land classified as a Plains Grassy Woodland (EVC 55) is consider for the establishment of Bellarine Yellow Gum Woodland Park. The losses and destruction within the urban developments in the Bellarine have been disastrous for the survival of <i>Leucoxydon bellarinensis</i> (a listed species) and associated woodlands. If EVC 55 and park to be established with Yellow Gums and habitat species, this would be a fantastic opportunity to restore the species in a public land and park setting. 	<p>protecting existing areas of indigenous vegetation assisting the natural regeneration and expansion of these communities with targeted weed control, pulse grazing and hydrologic management to maintain and enhance biodiversity values.</p> <p>New planting works will be undertaken in partnership with the Corangamite Catchment Management Authority (CCMA) and Parks Victoria (PV) and will initially focus on reinstatement of indigenous overstorey canopy cover where this is unlikely to recover without planting. Seed sourced from existing remnant indigenous overstorey trees on the site and nearby will be used to grow new trees and shrubs which will be planted in accordance with Ecological Vegetation Class (EVC) benchmarks and to suit the modified hydraulic conditions at Sparrovale.</p> <p>New planting will target riparian areas along the Barwon River where native vegetation has been removed and areas of modified/disturbed slightly raised land along existing tracks and channels which will favour the sustainable establishment of indigenous trees including Moonah and Bellarine Yellow Gum.</p> <p>The revegetation program will also be guided by ongoing ecological assessment and review of habitat and biodiversity values as a key component of adaptive management for the site.</p> <p><u>Recommendation</u> <i>No change to plan.</i></p>
3.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Figure 7: what is the Ecological Vegetation Class (EVC) or group of EVCs for Hospital Swamp? It's arguably brackish rather than saline as shown by the domination of Common Rush and sedges (<i>Schoenoplectus</i> species). 	<p>Hospital Swamp is part of the Lake Connewarre State Game Reserve and is not part of the master plan area.</p> <p>The wetland Ecological Vegetation Class for Baensch's wetland would be Aquatic hermland and Tall marsh. The whole area including Hospital Swamp</p>

No.	COMMENT	RESPONSE
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Why Baensch's Swamp not assigned an EVC? Was it too hard for the ecological consultants? It would be useful to float the likelihood of Coastal Alkaline Woodland (i.e. Moonah dominated woodland fringing much of the drier wetland area, above the level of River Red Gum dominated vegetation. Getting these vegetation types right will be very important to inform revegetation efforts detailed in the plan. 	<p>was mapped in saltmarsh and Brackish lignum swamp. This was part of Boon et al Temperate Coastal Saltmarsh of SE Australia project.</p> <p><u>Recommendation</u> Add – Brackish to saline ecology note on Figure 7. The wetland EVC areas near Baensch's Lane wetland is Aquatic herbland and Tall marsh. The whole area, including Hospital Swamp, was mapped in 2010 as a combination of Wet saltmarsh, Coastal tussock saltmarsh and Brackish lignum swamp.</p>
3.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a mention in Section 4.2.2 of native grasslands but where are these? They certainly aren't mapped or mentioned in terms of an EVC. If they do occur in the Southern Deviation Channel area, the Barwon Link trail should not be built here to avoid loss of native vegetation 	<p>The grassland areas located in the vicinity of the Southern Deviation Channel and in the Red Gum area near Sparrovale Road and are protected by an existing Vegetation Protection Overlay (VPO).</p> <p>Establishment of the new channel and the future Barwon River trail will seek to minimise impacts on ecological and cultural heritage values through careful selection of trail routes and sustainable design of infrastructure in this area and is the subject of a separate planning process and delivery by the developer.</p> <p><u>Recommendation</u> Add – grassland reference to VPO in Figure 7</p>
3.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Like the idea of using the community to engage them in planting days Will the community have the opportunity to participate in planting/works to speed up completion of works. 	<p>Community planting days will provide a valuable tool in both timely implementation of management actions and to build upon local community ownership and appreciation of the site's history and environmental values. All works will be undertaken using plant stock grown from locally sourced seed with experienced supervisors on hand to ensure works are consistent with the designated EVC and ecological objectives.</p> <p><u>Recommendation</u> No change to plan</p>

No.	COMMENT	RESPONSE
4.	FAUNA	
4.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritise removal of pest fauna (including Deer) <i>(2 Responses)</i> • Remove reference to of this deer as species as they are a feral and should be removed from the site. The presence of this species is a threatening process to the long-term viability of the site. 	<p>Removal of pest fauna including deer is a priority.</p> <p><i>Recommendation</i> <i>No change to plan</i></p>
4.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boating on the river must be strictly controlled to protect wildlife. • No need for boating access from Geelong to Barwon Heads. • Would like to see signage on-water when kayaking to point out landmarks, flora, fauna etc 	<p>There are sections of Crown land frontage along the river and boating use on the Barwon River is managed by Corangamite Catchment Management Authority. Geelong Water Ski Club currently has almost exclusive use of the Barwon River between Boundary Road and Coppards Road, north of Sparrovale wetlands. There are no plans to extend access for powered craft into this section of the river.</p> <p>The Barwon River Parklands Strategy and South West Regional Trails Strategies recommend investigation for establishment of a canoe/kayak link between Geelong and Barwon Heads. The Barwon River can already be used for canoeing and kayaking however the restriction to access under the Aqueduct and the drop at the lower breakwater limit use and Lake Connewarre is also difficult to negotiate with shallow tidal conditions suited to only the most experienced of users. As there is no public vehicle access to the Barwon River at Sparrovale and therefore there are no launching spots proposed no significant increases in canoe/kayaking use are expected in the short/medium term with assessment to be coordinated with other significant reference sites such as Cheetham, Aqueduct Parkland and Point Henry and under consideration.</p> <p><i>Recommendation</i> <i>No change to plan</i></p>

No.	COMMENT	RESPONSE
4.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nominate Sparrovale Wetland to be included in the RAMSAR area 	<p>The inclusion of Sparrovale with the Port Phillip (Western Shoreline) and Bellarine Peninsula Ramsar Area is expected to occur in time.</p> <p><u>Recommendation</u> No change to plan.</p>
4.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For a wetland site to be “World Class” it must have best practice design of ponds for maximising potential for waterbirds, migratory birds, brogas, frogs etc with scientifically based hydrology, water levels etc If the Sparrovale wetlands are to be preserved and enhanced, as world class wetland, then there needs to be world class planning to ensure minimum disturbance to feeding/roosting birds and maximum efficiency in managing and using the water/runoff from adjoining peri-urban/suburban areas. It must be considered as an amazing opportunity to create world class wetland not as a management solution for storm-water run-off from flood-prone land that is being reclaimed as extensive residential areas. Plan and implement earthworks to create habitat for threatened species such as Australian Bittern (e.g. vegetated edges to deeper water channels), Growling Grass Frog (i.e. deeper ephemeral pools that remain inundated from winter to late summer) and for breeding waterbirds (i.e. islands). There should also be clear and careful management of the site to provide extensive habitat for crakes and rails and the Australian Painted-snipe. Also consideration needs to be given to habitat for the Glossy Grass Skink. In addition, water level management must a key factor. Also, the impacts of current runoff into Hospital Swamp are eutrophication and toxicity from peri-urban/suburban runoff, and loss of ability to control water levels for migratory shorebirds. It seems there is significant mention of management of stormwater from new residential estates to the south and west and north of the 	<p>Implementation of an approved water management regime and monitoring via an adaptive management plan are key requirements under the <i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i> (EPBC) permit.</p> <p>The precautionary principle applies to implementation of changes at Sparrovale. After evaluation, the initial program of works for establishment of the new water quality treatment wetlands has been approved and implemented. These changes have focused on best practice water quality treatment for incoming stormwater from new development areas and establishment of new water level and hydraulic control infrastructure to enable adaptive management within the main wetland.</p> <p>The changes in hydrology, water quality and habitat arising from the staged expansion of the residential area and impacts of climate change will be carefully monitored and evaluated to inform adaptive management actions for the wetlands.</p> <p>Preparation and implementation of management plans for areas of environmental significance will be ongoing in response to monitoring and will operate in parallel with the implementation of the Master Plan.</p> <p><u>Recommendation</u> Include action to liaise stakeholders regarding ongoing monitoring of vegetation, hydrologic and ecological changes.</p>

No.	COMMENT	RESPONSE
	<p>site, but very little mention of specifically filtering this water as it works through the Lake Connewarre system.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has Council consulted on these works? And with whom? Otherwise, it seems as if we are being asked to comment on a plan which fundamental works are already being undertaken. 	<p><i>Include additional information in the Master Plan regarding the monitoring and process for evaluation and implementation of adaptive management actions arising from existing technical reports.</i></p>
4.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are more than 6 species of birds using the site which are listed as threatened at the national and/or state level, plus fish and plants. • Waterbirds section needs to be improved - including, especially, migratory shorebirds - Red-necked Stint, Sharp-tailed Sandpiper and the critically endangered Curlew Sandpiper. • Sparrovale will be/should be a very important area for various cryptic crane and rail species ranging from the rare Lewin's Rail to the uncommon Buff-banded Rail. • Should also be mention of Water Rat (Rakali) and Swamp Rat. 	<p>Species listed in the draft Master Plan were summarised from the actual Ramsar listing only. The increased and ongoing monitoring at Sparrovale has led to increased identification of significant species which need to be added.</p> <p><u>Recommendation</u> <i>Expand the fauna section to include additional information from more recent assessments and additional information provided by the Geelong Field Naturalists.</i></p>
4.6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to wetlands by the public must be carefully considered to prevent disturbance to the wildlife. • Install signage informing people not to feed the wildlife, particularly waterbirds, to avoid wildlife illness. • Increases awareness of management of threatened species habitat/values within Sparrovale. Increases awareness for whom? Local residents, national/international visitors, 	<p>There is no unsupervised public access to the wetlands proposed in Phase 1 of the Master Plan. This is to enable completion of construction works (in progress) and further monitoring of changes in vegetation, hydrology and habitat values before any further significant changes are made on site. The proposed public access as outlined in the Master Plan will be subject to ongoing evaluation as part of this process. Ensuring visitor awareness of these values and their role in protecting them when visiting the site has been identified as a high priority in the Master Plan</p> <p><u>Recommendation</u> <i>No change to plan.</i></p>
4.7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Given the wetlands drying cycle is intended to be annual, there is obviously a risk of fish kills, especially within a system that holds European Carp. Suggest that the logistics of 	<p>This risk has been addressed in the management plan and will be informed by ongoing monitoring.</p> <p><u>Recommendation</u> <i>No change to plan.</i></p>

No.	COMMENT	RESPONSE
	access involved in cleaning up after a significant fish kill be considered.	
5.	FLOODING AND DRAINAGE	
5.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great investment by CoGG just a pity it was purchased for storm water management of the adjacent housing development and not for the great opportunity to develop and enhance the wetlands. • Area should be managed as a wetland rather than a way to dispose of stormwater • Stormwater must be filtered to a high standard to prevent toxic substances entering the wetlands. • Sensible to have stormwater runoff used in an environmentally friendly way and providing a floodplain • The area needs to be a big as possible for water runoff (2 responses) • Concerned about lack of detail regarding hydrological management – passively allowing fields to flood seems like a missed opportunity to use water inflows and to create pools and islands for threatened species and environmental education outcomes (2 Responses) 	<p>The purchase of the Sparrovale and Cold Winds properties is aimed at both protecting the existing environmentally significant ecology within Hospital Swamp and Lake Connemurra through best practice stormwater management and stormwater as well as restoring and expanding the biodiversity values of the entire Barwon River floodplain and estuary.</p> <p>The presence of significant existing indigenous vegetation within Sparrovale means that options to complete additional earthworks is limited. Instead, the wetland design has focused on water level control infrastructure in support of the existing system of channels and levees. This will enable flexible adaptive management to protect and enhance ecological values in response to both the increasing volume of stormwater discharge as the residential development continues to expand and to meet the challenges associated with climate change and increasingly variable rainfall patterns.</p> <p><i><u>Recommendation</u></i> <i>No change to plan.</i></p>
5.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “A key requirement for drainage management is the protection of the Saline Wetlands at Hospital Swamp. The Southern Deviation Channel will be constructed to divert urban stormwater freshwater flows over summer to the Sparrovale Wetlands to maintain the existing saline ecology in Hospital Swamp.” This gives the impression that Hospital Swamp is a saline system when it would have to be fresh (when full in the main ponds) but changing to brackish or possibly saline (i.e. approaching the salinity of sea water or mixed estuarine water as in the Barwon estuary up to the main part of Lake 	<p>The ecology in Hospital Swamp is brackish and complex in nature. Simplified wording was used in the Master Plan to make it easier for the community to understand the basic concepts involved.</p> <p>More detail on processes involved is available in the ecological technical reports which could be made available.</p> <p><i><u>Recommendation</u></i> <i>Amend wording to brackish wetlands and include more detail on the processes involved in the report.</i></p>

No.	COMMENT	RESPONSE
	<p>Connewarre). The term used in the report, "Saline Wetlands", is not part of any formal wetland or salinity classification of which we know.</p>	
5.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concerned about stormwater runoff into a saline lake, and the effect this would have on fishing opportunities 	<p>Protection of the existing ecology at Hospital Swamp and Lake Connewarre is a key requirement of the southern deviation channel works.</p> <p><u>Recommendation</u> No change to plan</p>
5.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the levee bank to be lowered, and if so by how much and what would be the river height required to breach the bank? 	<p>The draft plan recommends liaison with Parks Victoria to lower and strengthen the southern levee bank using material from either the Sparrovale Road wetland bund or South Deviation Channel construction works. Formalise a new spillway point closer to the Groves Road end to restrict high risk access along the levee during Barwon River floods.</p> <p>The assessment and confirmation of the preferred levee height will be guided by technical engineering assessment which will look at the strength of the existing levee (last breached in 1995), public safety and the preferred flooding and hydraulic management of the upstream and downstream floodplain</p> <p><u>Recommendation</u> No change to plan</p>
5.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assets built within the floodplain will need to be designed / modelled to ensure they present no risk to the storage capacity, conveyance and connectivity needs of the system. The environmental needs should not be undermined by community convenience. The cost of maintaining assets impacted by flooding also needs to be factored in. 	<p>The design and siting for new assets built within the Sparrovale Wetland and broader Barwon River Floodplain are subject to assessment and approval by the Corangamite Catchment Management Authority as floodplain manager to ensure they present no risk to the storage capacity, conveyance and connectivity needs of the system. The entire Sparrovale wetland site is located within the floodplain and design of new recreational infrastructure such as paths, bridges and other facilities within the site must consider the</p>

No.	COMMENT	RESPONSE
		<p>impacts of flooding on public safety, and the durability and sustainability of these facilities when inundated. Refer Section 4.1</p> <p><i>Recommendation</i> <i>No change to plan</i></p>
6. RECREATION		
6.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There should be no duck (or quail) shooting in the wetlands (or adjoining areas). • Prohibit duck shooting in an area immediately adjacent to a RAMSAR wetland area to ensure its protection. • Plan should emphatically state that shooting of all waterbirds will be banned. <i>(9 responses)</i> • This will provide a boost to hunter tourism (\$400M annually), hunters care about wetlands and contribute their own money towards rehabilitation as evidenced by Geelong Field and Games work at Lake Connewarre. <i>(2 Responses)</i> • Duck and quail shooting are not compatible with encouraging people to enjoy this vast expanse for passive recreation to the point where it will be unusable, and in fact illegal (in line with current legislation), if duck shooting is to be permitted, at certain times of day/year. • Please include duck hunters, Lake Connewarre Stage Game Reserve is one of the best in Victoria. Please expand this to the Sparrovale Wetlands. • Hunting should be allowed in the area to manage pests such as foxes and feral cats and being a threat to the birdlife and other native animal as well as invasive animals such as rabbits. • Will there be access for duck shooters from Hospital Swamp and Sparrovale, it is a public and animal safety issue. At present duck shooters can use the levee bank to shoot from. How can Council stop this occurring? Don't think enough risk management has been 	<p>The Lake Connewarre State Game Reserve is managed by Parks Victoria (PV) and forms the eastern boundary of the new Sparrovale Wetlands Park. Despite the Lake Connewarre State Game Reserve Ramsar status it also hosts recreational hunting activities and is part of the duck season which extends from March to June depending on seasonal conditions. Quail hunting is also held at the between April to June</p> <p>Approx. 2km of the north bank Barwon River frontage adjoining Sparrovale is also Crown Land managed by Parks Victoria. There is currently no public access to Sparrovale from the west and access to the southern section of the main levee bank, directly adjoining to State Game reserve is completed from the south via Baensch's Lane.</p> <p>Hunting is not proposed on Council owned and managed land at Sparrovale Wetlands. The draft plan also does not propose any changes to the Lake Connewarre State Game Reserve which will continue to be used for hunting under existing agreements unless altered by the Stage Government.</p> <p>Public access into the new Sparrovale Wetlands Park will be via two controlled at the entry points from Groves Road and Brearleys Lane.</p> <p><i>Recommendation</i> <i>The management of the interface between the new Council managed</i></p>

No.	COMMENT	RESPONSE
	<p>done around the issue of duck and deer shooters in the State Game Reserve.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please explain how the duck shooting on Lake Connewarre fits in with the plan for eco-tourism and public safety. • Please explain how this plan will affect duck hunting within the state game reserve. • It is clear that you haven't considered the legal implications of the Wildlife Act State Game Reserve Regulations and they could potentially impact users of Sparrovale. • CoGG must advocate for a re-classification of the State Game Reserve of the benefits of Sparrovale can never be realised. • Duck and quail shooting are not compatible with encouraging people to enjoy this vast expanse for passive recreation to the point where it will be unusable, and in fact illegal (in line with current legislation), if duck shooting is to be permitted, at certain times of day/year. • GEC is gravely concerned and totally opposed to any requests for the Sparrovale land being used by, leased or sold to the Field and Game Association or to any other group, or for use by any shooters or hunters. GEC is opposed to the current shooting season on all of the Bellarine wetlands listed for hunting and believes that it is an unacceptable and unethical activity which should not be supported and, in the future, will be recognised and banned. • Any argument that these groups make nest boxes and re-vegetate public land gives them the right to kill native wildlife for sport is unreasonable and should not be considered. • Hunters contribute to and have an interest in wetland conservation through rehabilitation, e.g., Geelong Field and Game's restoration of the Connawarre wetlands. Please acknowledge their contribution. • Concern over safety of those who visit the area during duck season. 	<p><i>Sparrovale Wetlands Park and the Lake Connewarre State Game Reserve during duck season will be consistent with other similar City of Greater Geelong Council managed public open space areas around the lake as follows:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>There will be a signed and clearly identified boundary established between the new Council managed wetlands park and the State Game Reserve.</i> • <i>Signage will clearly indicate that there is to be no shooting on or over Council land and this will be enforced as with other regulations during duck and quail season.</i> • <i>There will be no access through the new Sparrovale wetlands park to the State Game Reserve for the purposes of hunting or recovery of injured birds.</i> • <i>Evaluation of these public safety measures will be reviewed over duck and quail season prior to the new wetland park being opened to the public.</i> • <i>City of Greater Geelong will also seek to review and refine management of the new wetland park interface responsibilities with the CCMA via a separate management agreement.</i> • <i>City of Greater Geelong will engage contractors as needed to control feral animals.</i> • <i>City of Greater Geelong does not intend to sell or lease any part of Sparrovale for hunting purposes.</i>

No.	COMMENT	RESPONSE
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concern over safety of those who visit the area during duck season. Consider delineation of the space. • Consider delineation of space for legal reasons during duck season. • Concern of the impacts of noise and from shooting season on ambiance. • Concerns of the impacts of violence of hunting on children. 	
6.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bush Walking/Bird Watching This section is disproportionately short compared to the following section on duck hunting considering that bush / birds / nature is expected to become a key attractor, whereas duck shooting won't be allowed on-site!! • The walking tracks will not be accessible in some areas during duck season as legislated by law • Consider past and current not just future users (i.e., duck hunters and fishers) 	<p>Walking and bird watching will be key values of the new Sparrovale Wetlands Park when opened to the public however there is also significant interest in the proposed approach to management of the park in relation to duck hunting and the interface to the State Game Reserve.</p> <p><u>Recommendation</u> No change to plan – refer Item 6.1 of this report.</p>
6.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would like to see a dedicated bike area including motorbike facilities, given Breakwater and Barabool Hills have been removed 	<p>The delicate wetlands ecology and lack of passive surveillance at the site mean it is unsuitable for establishment of a mountain bike or motorbike facility.</p> <p><u>Recommendation</u> No change to plan</p>
6.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to prioritise the trail from Geelong along the river. Safe and beautiful ways to travel on foot and bike should be priority for locals and tourists. • Introduce the walking paths sooner. • We are supportive of the path/trail network outlined in the draft master plan. The envisaged Barwon River Shared Trail is an exciting opportunity to extend the region's shared path network and give residents and visitors the opportunity to enjoy, explore and travel through the area. • Would like to see bike paths as much as possible around the wetland system • Bike path/walking trail required from Barwon Heads, along the Barwon River, through the new wetlands and over the old aqueduct to get people active, off the main roads and provide an experience destination. • Connect Barwon River trail back to Geelong 	<p>The Barwon River Trail will eventually form the key access and spine for visitor use into the new parkland area. While areas north of the Sparrovale wetlands currently remain in private ownership eventually the Barwon River trail will extend south from Belmont Common in Geelong along the river into the new open space at Armstrong Creek and Sparrovale to improve two-way off road recreational access</p> <p>Longer term with completion of the future ring road bridge crossing there will also be opportunities to connect to the trail to the existing Bellarine Rail Trail.</p> <p>Sparrovale Wetlands Park is however subject to flooding and while walking access closer to the river can be achieved using existing maintenance</p>

No.	COMMENT	RESPONSE
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep cycling and walking paths separate. Regarding any "River Trail" this must be <u>very</u> carefully considered and thought through so as not to 'open up" sensitive areas of the river and Sparrovale and the Lake Connewarre system to disturbances and abuse with easy access to being afforded to walkers and dogs and bikes etc 	<p>access tracks these remote tracks are unsuitable for use as the Barwon River Trail which will need to be located closer to residential areas along the eastern boundary.</p> <p>The draft plan indicates that the Barwon River Trail will utilise the former Sparrovale Road when closed, ensuring protection of existing trees and will then use the road reserves at Harriott Road and Groves Road which will also eventually be closed and replaced with new roads, above the flood line to service the new residential areas. Following construction of the proposed southern deviation channel the trail will eventually extend through to Armstrong Creek and back to Barwon Heads Road.</p> <p>Gates can also be added on the channel crossings to further restrict access to the conservation zones to help maintain the buffer to the state game reserve.</p> <p><i><u>Recommendation</u></i> <i>No change to plan</i></p>
6.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall Site Walking Loop Each of these access tracks need to be very carefully considered with consideration of disturbance to feeding/roosting birds. Need to consider the impact of people, vehicles and dogs on various birds - dogs must not be allowed into the main wetland, and even the presence of people might be too much disturbance for species such as Brolga. Before any public access is considered, and definitely before any paths or trails are proposed, CoGG needs to determine its objectives for attracting birds for both conservation and amenity/education/tourism, and design safe science-based buffer distances. The part of the main wetland walking loop along the ex-levee is a problem for disturbance to wildlife and unregulated access to the far western wetland of 	<p>The existing unsealed vehicle tracks established by previous landowners as part of farm management will form the basis for future maintenance vehicle access. This network will also form a secondary walking trail network for public access to the Barwon River and a series of loops and circuits around new wetlands and larger space areas.</p> <p>The size and arrangements of the main wetland and restriction on access points mean that access to the Barwon River and more sensitive bird habitat areas will require visitors to walk several kilometres. This requirement will assist in discouraging some anti-social use and will provide numerous opportunities to improve visitor awareness of the ecological values and sensitivities of the areas</p>

No.	COMMENT	RESPONSE
	<p>Hospital Swamp. While giving good, elevated views of this wetland, the approaches to the wetland from the levee are very open and would be very tempting for people and dogs to access this area. A wide band of screening vegetation such as the Tangled Lignum already growing there, and robust fencing would be very suitable to discourage access to the swamp. This would have to require assistance to Parks Victoria as the planting area could only be in the game reserve. As further complementary action, PV should also facilitate more revegetation here to alleviate the effects of illegal livestock grazing and feral deer impacts.</p>	<p>they are walking into before they reach them.</p> <p>Use of buffer planting to screen approaches to and on the levee and any requirements on further restriction of public access if required for significant species during sensitive breeding season etc. will be informed by ongoing monitoring and review.</p> <p><u>Recommendation</u> <i>No change to plan</i></p>
6.6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will there be plans to have signage explaining the wildlife, birds and native flora that visitors may expect to see? Especially along any walking trails. Will there be any bird-watching hides or raised boardwalks along any sections of the wetlands to enable people to interact with the environment more closely? • The widespread use of paths for bikes, dogs, runners in other important Barwon river park/ands does not result in environmental awareness or protection. Dogs off lead are not controllable and birdlife is chased. Dog owners frequently do not abide by any established rules. Experience proves that signs and notified requirements have no effect nor does the prospect of a fine. 	<p>Yes, interpretive signage and use of birdhides (in line with the restrictions on building within the flood overlay) will be a key part of the ultimate visitor experience. The above will be informed by ongoing monitoring and review as the wetland park establishes.</p> <p>Public access is not proposed until phase 2 and even then, access to more sensitive areas will be on a restricted basis until appropriate controls are in place. The limited number of access points will assist in control of public access.</p> <p><u>Recommendation</u> <i>No change to plan</i></p>
6.7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need additional recreation areas • Retain as much open space as possible for community use. • Would like to see a dog friendly area where you can take dogs on leash but have boardwalks and paths you can use. 	<p>The western side of the new wetlands park adjoining Sparrovale Road will provide for passive recreational use as it is located adjoining a new play space, picnic area and the Barwon River Trail link.</p> <p><u>Recommendation</u> <i>Dog on lead use could be considered in this section of the park while dog access to more sensitive bird habitat areas will need to be fully restricted.</i></p>

No.	COMMENT	RESPONSE
6.8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What sort of playground is planned? Many of them these days are plastic and generic. A more 'adventure playground' style area would be a big drawcard for families to the area and also could be created in a more natural style to blend with the environment rather than garishly sitting within it. • Could the 'family friendly' area that includes the playground also contain a small area for local community gardens? • Horseshoe Bend Precinct Regional Park (Glenlee Estate) - GFNC believe there is a need to re-assess the use of the term 'regional park' here, which is 2ha in area, since the Victorian Environmental Assessment Council uses the term for areas of 100,000ha or more: HTTP://www.veac.vic.gov.au/investigation/statewide-assessment-of-public-land . 	<p>The Sparrovale Wetlands are part of the Barwon River floodplain and subject to flooding and are not suitable for a play space or community gardens.</p> <p>The design for the municipal park and play space is being developed through a separate process in accordance with the requirements of the Precinct Structure Plan. This park will include a play space and may have capacity to include a community garden</p> <p><i><u>Recommendation</u></i> <i>Amend note to current park designation as – Municipal and include more detail around facilities to be provided in the municipal park if the design has progressed for this area.</i></p>
6.9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site tours and planting days Fishing competitions Bird watching tours Guided walking tours with members Partnering with education sectors such as Schools/Universities Who will do the partnering in this particular instance? • Could there be the opportunity for small school groups and scout groups etc. to camp in an area overnight to study astronomy, or birdwatch at sunrise or study weather patterns etc? 	<p>City of Greater Geelong will seek to partner with local community organisations in promotion of events at the site, especially in the initial phase when public access will be restricted.</p> <p>All activities will be subject to supervision and the need to adhere to strict environmental management controls which will be developed as ongoing monitoring of ecological values continues.</p> <p><i><u>Recommendation</u></i> <i>No change to plan.</i></p>
6.10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As the existing landowner we support the provision of a lookout point to the north of Groves Rd and the establishment of direct road access to it from Barwon Heads Road. To maximise tourism opportunities and connectivity, we suggest that vehicle access to the lookout / interpretation centre should be provided via a loop road and recommend that the master plan is revised to include this. The loop road could tie-in to the road network 	<p>Groves Road is low lying and subject to flooding. The road will ultimately be replaced by another new road to be established as part of the future residential development. When this occurs the existing Groves Road will be closed and will become the Barwon River Trail route.</p> <p>The adoption of a new loop road with direct connection to Barwon Heads Road is the preferred arrangement for the ultimate connection to the</p>

No.	COMMENT	RESPONSE
	<p>approved under the Harriot subdivision permit.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Close Groves Road to cars. 	<p>proposed lookout point and future visitor centre as shown in the Master Plan.</p> <p>The subdivision of adjoining land is subject to a separate planning process and this will determine the ultimate new road alignment.</p> <p><i>Recommendation</i> <i>No change to plan.</i></p>
7.	ZONING AND OVERLAYS	
7.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The area covering the levee and Baensch's Swamp should be rezoned to the same as that of Hospital Swamp or the future Sparrovale wetlands (as PCRZ) for consistency. The current zoning of "Farming" is clearly inappropriate. • As these farm land blocks are already established, what is the meaning of typical treatments & longer blocks rather than retaining walls? Is there to be some type of rezoning? • What type of restrictions would be considered? • We support a development interface that respects and responds to the environmental attributes of the future wetland reserve and maximises open space links and passive surveillance. We are currently working with a variety of Council units to develop an understanding of how Phase 2 of Harriott can be designed to ensure a sympathetic development interface. • Phase 1 (2019-2022) actions of the draft master plan include the preparation of design guidelines for the farming zones adjoining the wetland reserve. We believe the master plan should contemplate changing the zoning of the land at the interface with Sparrovale 	<p>The Sparrovale Wetlands area is currently zoned as Farming Zone (FZ) under the Greater Geelong Planning Scheme. The proposed Draft Master Plan vision is to transform the area into a publicly accessible space and a conservation reserve, this change of use will need a Planning Scheme Amendment to rezone the area to Public Conservation and Resource Zone (PCRZ). Areas between the new Sparrovale Parkland (PAO12) and the Urban Growth Area (UGA) boundary which are located below the Q100 flood level are subject to a Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO) and will also need to be ultimately rezoned or retain the existing Farming Zone.</p> <p>The retention of a Farming Zone may not be the best fit for land between the applied General Residential Zone 1 (GRZ1) land and the wetland as right uses in the FZ encompass various forms of animal husbandry (including grazing animal production, poultry farming and racing dog husbandry) and crop raising. These types of rural and agricultural uses have the potential to be incompatible with both wetland values and adjoining residential areas. Further, agricultural practices and products have the potential to cause off-site impacts on nearby land and waterbodies that could also undermine the environmental and landscape amenity values at Sparrovale.</p>

No.	COMMENT	RESPONSE
		<p>There is too much land in this zone to consider acquisition over and above the existing open space areas set aside in the PSP given capital and ongoing maintenance costs.</p> <p>The draft plan recommends preparation of design guidelines for the farming zones adjoining the wetland reserve to address potential issues and to achieve an improved interface between the new residential areas and the wetlands. Council discussions with adjoining landholders have been ongoing. Key issues/opportunities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Floodplain management and impacts on developable area • Public access and passive surveillance • Revegetation and enhancing biodiversity values • Fire management <p><i>Recommendation</i> <i>Review current status of discussions between City of Greater Geelong Planning and landholders and consider options including re zoning the land to maximise land use compatibility and facilitate an improved interface outcomes.</i></p>
8. COMMERCIAL		
8.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Phase 3 would like to see the grazing land used for creation of a native grassland with indigenous grasses and herbaceous plants. • Could some of the land in the grazing area be set aside for a small community farm/agricultural area. • Licensed farm should be monitored re the over use of fertilisers that could impact the quality of the water runoff into the wetland with could impact the natural values. • Strict environmental guidelines should be implemented to provide guidance and follow up compliance. Where are the environmental standards in this lease-back? Supervision/oversight and 	<p>The northern section of the Sparrovale wetland site is less subject to flooding and will continue to remain as viable farming land right up until full development in the stormwater catchment area is completed.</p> <p>A mixed farming licence agreement has been agreed for 70 hectares of the site on an annual basis with the option for periodic grazing when agreed for areas of the site if needed to control pasture grass which otherwise may need to be slashed/mown by Council to address fire risk over summer.</p>

No.	COMMENT	RESPONSE
	<p>accountability is required, and grazing regimes need to be managed and informed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any grazing must follow appropriate environmental guidelines as per reference in GFNC Phase 1 comments. It is appropriate for farming land to be leased to the former owners, but GEC requests that areas are required to be farmed with the best management grazing and farming practices for maximum wildlife habitat. These requirements must be included in any lease. It is important that the current grazing use is not permitted to merge into any long term leases or alienation of the land, either for farming or recreation activities. 	<p>Continued grazing/cropping of these areas by the Perkins Family will remain the most cost-effective and least risk land management approach given they have been managing the same land in a similar way for over 50 years. This approach will also allow Council to maintain the status quo while resources are focused on areas with higher environmental value and/or more urgent weed threats.</p> <p>Longer term as more urban stormwater is diverted to the wetlands the extent and duration of inundation will increase and viability and environmental impact of continued agricultural use in its current form will need to be reviewed.</p> <p>This re renewal of the annual licence agreement is part of the existing site environmental review process and is subject to ongoing monitoring. The ultimate approach to land restoration in this area will be informed by several years of monitoring across the entire site to ensure an ecologically balanced and sustainable approach.</p> <p><u>Recommendation</u> <i>No change to plan</i></p>
8.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are five areas of water allocated to commercial eel fishing within the Barwon River system; Lake Connewarre, Hospital Swamp, Reedy Lake, The Barwon River from the mouth at Lake Connewarre to the Grab hole drain, and the Barwon River from the Grab hole drain to the upper limit of Queens Park. These waters are currently divided between 3 License holders, but allocated waters are transferable between License holders, so a possibility exists that the region could have between 1 to 5 license holders in the future. The best outcome for eel fishermen in this scenario would be to have access to the Sparrovale wetlands in-order to fish for the recruited eels before the 	<p>The Sparrovale Wetlands Master Plan does not alter the rights of existing eel fishing licence holders.</p> <p>People can apply to access City land by completing an Access over Council Land form for approval if they meet the conditions required.</p> <p>Potential for commercial eel fishers to access the Sparrovale Wetlands to fish for eels before the wetland dries is subject to the same Federal and State Government environmental permit requirements as other activities.</p> <p>Applicants will need to supply their own environmental management plan demonstrating to the satisfaction Council, Federal and State</p>

No.	COMMENT	RESPONSE
	<p>wetland dries. I'd note here that a number of Ramsar wetlands within Victoria are actively fished by professional eel fishermen, this activity doesn't risk the Ramsar value of the wetland.</p> <p>Alternatively, as feeding eels "tend" to move during the evening, restricting the hours that the outflow is opened, may limit the impact on the viability of in-system licenses.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Access to the Lower Breakwater</u> The section of water below the Lower breakwater is historically fished during the eel migration run which occurs during Summer and Autumn months. Vehicle access to the lower breakwater was historically granted to fishermen by the Sparrovale owners, this access significantly reduces the additional risks that migration run fishing causes. My hope is that vehicle access to the lower breakwater would be facilitated by the City of Greater Geelong. 	<p>government authorities how the proposed commercial fishing will be undertaken safely without impacting on environmental and cultural heritage values.</p> <p>Public vehicle access will not be permitted through the park or to the lower breakwater.</p> <p><u>Recommendation</u> <i>Amend the report to indicate three rather than two licence holders for the Barwon River through Geelong.</i></p>
9. OTHER		
9.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide public transport to this area to reduce the traffic loads on parking 	<p>Public transport links to the site will be developed as the Armstrong Creek residential area expands.</p> <p><u>Recommendation</u> <i>No change to plan</i></p>
9.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide rubbish facilities to avoid littering. • Rubbish/litter management may be a challenge when paths open to public 	<p>The remote nature of the site and current lack of passive surveillance will mean that installation of rubbish bins will likely attract dumping. This combined with threats from windblown litter from adjoining development areas are a significant threat to the Sparrovale Wetlands and Lake Connewarre system.</p> <p>The preferred approach will be to adopt a take in/take out approach to litter, apply similar to that used in National and State Parks.</p> <p>Longer term when more formal visitor facilities are established at the site additional rubbish and recycling bins may be needed.</p>

No.	COMMENT	RESPONSE
		<p><i>Recommendation</i> <i>No change to plan</i></p>
9.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The wetland centre should be a sustainable and climate adaptable building for synergy, to attract visitors, and as an example/showcase of current sustainable building techniques. • Consider Sparrovale as an opportunity for eco-tourism and education on Australian wildlife. • Investigate establishment of a regional wetland interpretation centre and iconic wetland lookout structure to promote tourism, eco-tourism and wide recognition of the wetlands and Lake Connewarre Ramsar area. • Plan to build structures using recycled materials or as carbon-neutral. • These spaces are important for the community. Please make the entire Lake Connewarre system a natural wetland experience centre • Preserve wetland and promote an economic stimulus to the community through hunter tourism • So much land has been lost to homes and development, I think it is highly important for Council to protect as much land as possible and provide the opportunity for our citizens to engage in the natural environment for both physical and mental wellbeing (I am a nurse at work and wildlife rescuer in my downtime). These spaces are so important for the people of Geelong. I wish Council could make the entire Lake Connewarre system a natural wetland experience centre. • Regarding any tower Experience of similar towers elsewhere in Australia and the world suggests that earthworks might be needed immediately around the tower so that the immediate vicinity retains wetland values during dry periods. In fact the outcomes and effectiveness of similar towers in Australia and across the world need to be thoroughly considered before this was seriously advanced as a feature of Sparrovale. 	<p>Initial visitor facilities including such as picnic and toilet facilities, play spaces and additional car parking will be provided at the new Horseshoe Bend Precinct Municipal Park on Sparrovale Road. Unfortunately while this site has good views to the new constructed wetland and walking links to the western side of the wetland it provides limited views or access to the main wetland, Barwon River and Lake Connewarre system minimising potential capacity for this area to be used for wetland interpretation.</p> <p>The ultimate plan is to establish the main visitor facility nearer the end of Groves Road as this area provides the best views out over the main wetland and the Lake Connewarre system and is the closest location to the Barwon River. Initial works will involve a small lookout area providing elevated views out over the main wetland. This site will also provide the set off point for visitors undertaking longer walks around the main wetland and over to the Barwon River.</p> <p>Longer term as the adjoining residential development expands and nears completion a new direct boulevard road link from Barwon Heads Road and services will eventually be provided to this location. At this time the establishment of a wetland visitor node with café and education and interpretation centre could be further considered. At this stage the site will have direct access for passing tourism traffic on Barwon Heads Road and the Surf Coast Highway.</p> <p>This development will however take many years to become financially viable. An option to fast track the establishment of the site as a regional</p>

No.	COMMENT	RESPONSE
		<p>visitor destination could include development of an iconic wetland lookout structure to expand on the initial viewing mound. An iconic architectural lookout tower at this point, visible from Barwon Heads Road could assist in generating additional visitor traffic to support longer term establishment of a dedicated wetlands visitor centre with café and expanded picnic facilities to support longer stay visitation in the area.</p> <p>Given the environmental focus and function of any new facility in this location adoption of ESD principles and the highest level of building standards will be expected. However at this stage the visitor centre and potential lookout tower are preliminary ideas to assist long term planning for the area and to promote community discussion. As will all major public infrastructure any future proposal will be subject to a more rigorous cost benefit analysis before progressing to the design phase.</p> <p><i><u>Recommendation</u></i> <i>No change to plan</i></p>
9.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There seems a clear and obvious opportunity here for an Environmental Management Advisory Group to be established to guide the finalisation and implementation of the Management Plans. • We strongly support monitoring and review of ecological and environmental data to inform adaptive management in the study area and surrounds. • Is there a way to increase the engagement of local residents and community groups through the area for example through citizen science programs where people may assist with not just planting trees but maintaining an area, or helping to monitor water quality? Or algal presence? Or assist with local bird counts? 	<p>As a new open space area there is no existing stakeholder group other than the current Project Working Group who have overseen the development of the Master Plan.</p> <p>The City is a member of the Lower Barwon Wetlands Community Advisory Group which includes a lot of interested groups/stakeholders. However, establishment of a Friends group would also provide a lot of on-site opportunities for local people to become involved. Some monitoring activities will be conducive to citizen science.</p> <p>The establishment of a broader stakeholder group to help build community ownership of the site.</p>

No.	COMMENT	RESPONSE
		<p><i><u>Recommendation</u></i> <i>Investigate opportunities to establish a broader stakeholder advisory group with community representatives.</i></p>
9.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Furthermore, the City of Greater Geelong was urged to ensure that there is sufficient and consistent recurrent funding for the maintenance and management of this wonderful natural resource well into the future! 	<p>Ongoing maintenance and management of such a large new area of public land is expensive. Therefore, the draft plan seeks to clearly articulate a staged development framework to retain and protect existing environmental values while minimising new land asset and management costs.</p> <p><i><u>Recommendation</u></i> <i>No change to plan</i></p>

3 Next Steps

The Sparrovale Wetlands Master Plan is expected to go to Council for endorsement in the second half of 2021. Works to construct the stormwater wetlands and associated infrastructure will be finalised in 2021, with the reserve to begin a staged opening to the public during 2022-23. Wadawurrung Traditional Owners have provided an indigenous co-name for the reserve and a smoking ceremony to celebrate the new reserve and a new beginning for the land will occur before the end of 2021.