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CONTEXT

Covering an area of 396.79 square kilometres, the City of Casey has a population of 369,453 (ABS 2021 Census) and is located in Melbourne's south-east region. Casey forms part of the Casey-Cardinia Growth Area and is characterised by five distinctive geographical regions:

- **Established Areas** : The residential and commercial part of Casey, which follows the Princes Highway and South Gippsland Highway corridors.
- **Growth Areas** : The urban growth area; characterised by strong building activity and rapid population growth.
- **Casey Foothills** : The foothills of the Dandenong Ranges; including areas used for grazing, horse agistment and passive recreation, with some rural-residential and village locales. It also contains part of the Southern Ranges Green Wedge.
- **Casey Farm** : Areas to the south of Casey outside the Urban Growth Boundary. Mainly used for market gardening, flower growing and grazing. It also contains part of the Western Port Green Wedge.
- **Casey Coast** : The Western Port coastal environs located in the southern part of the Western Port Green Wedge, with extensive and internationally significant coastal reserves that also form a link between the popular tourist destinations of the Mornington Peninsula and Phillip Island.

Prior to European settlement, the Boonwurrung and Bunurong peoples were the traditional inhabitants of the Casey area. As a result, several indigenous sites of significance are located throughout the municipality, particularly within coastal areas and near creeks and waterholes.

Like many of metropolitan Melbourne's outer municipalities, Casey is experiencing significant growth and development pressure. New housing is the major growth catalyst which will benefit over time from major new and upgraded transport and other infrastructure.

Pressures brought about by rapid urban development mean that careful consideration needs to be given to the protection of Casey's resources, natural ecosystems and heritage places (pre and post contact). Included are the Western Port coastal environs listed under the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, the Cranbourne Gardens and Churchill National Park. Most of these areas fall within the Southern Ranges, Western Port and South East Green Wedges that are set out under Plan Melbourne.

Casey's local economy has significant regional competitive advantages including significant population and housing growth, a Metropolitan Activity Centre at Fountain Gate-Narre Warren CBD, tertiary education facilities, potential for the development of a strong commercial sector, tourism and eco-tourism opportunities, a productive and diverse rural sector, a strong equine sector, extractive industrial resources, and locational advantages as a gateway to Gippsland and to the Melbourne metropolitan area.

Regional context plan

