



ALTERNATIVE AGRICULTURAL LAND USE OPTIONS:



GEMBROOK - MELBOURNE'S BEST-KEPT SECRET:

**A vibrant semi-rural growth area
or
A hidden gem?**

August 2004

Report prepared for Cardinia Shire Council
& Gembrook Rural Review Working Group



“Gembrook – Melbourne’s Best-Kept Secret: A vibrant semi-rural growth area or A hidden gem?”

Disclaimer...

CAS Agribusiness Services Pty Ltd in preparing this report advises that the views expressed and conclusions reached are those of the author and not necessarily those of the stakeholders consulted. CAS and Cardinia Shire Council shall not be responsible in any way whatsoever, to any person or organization that relies in whole or in part on the contents and recommendations of this report. CAS and Cardinia Shire Council disclaim all liability for any errors, losses or other consequences, which may arise from reliance on any information or analysis of views contained in this report.

Cardinia Shire Council contact details:

Philip Walton
Municipal Offices
Henty Way
Pakenham
PO Box 7
Pakenham
VIC 3810
Ph: 0359-45 4222
Website: www.cardinia.vic.gov.au

Researcher/author contact details:

Ralph Cadman
CAS Agribusiness Services Pty Ltd
PO Box 409
Black Rock
VIC 3193
Ph: 03-9589 3235
Email: ralphcadman@optusnet.com.au

Photographs: Provided by CAS Agribusiness Services © and Truleen Alpaca Stud

Contents...

<i>Acknowledgements</i>	3
Executive summary	4
Project background	6
Recommendations	7
Community vision of the future agricultural landscape of Gembrook	9
Present land use activities of Gembrook potato growers	9
Future land use plans of Gembrook potato growers	9
Land use capabilities	10
Agricultural land use activities in Cardinia Shire	11
Future land use options	11
Interest by outside investors in the area	13
Gembrook property values	13
Strengths & weaknesses of Gembrook’s agricultural land use capabilities	14
Likely land use outcomes	14
Future land use scenarios	15
Local agricultural case studies	16
Other regional case studies	16
Community commitment to change?	17
Community support & collaboration	17
Conclusions	18
<i>Attachments</i>	23
- <i>Gembrook agricultural land use options, opportunities & ratings</i>	23
- <i>Specific details of key land use options (broad-acre)</i>	25
- <i>Specific details of key land use options (small scale, niche options)</i>	27
- <i>Local agricultural land use case studies</i>	30
- <i>Implementation flow chart – Gembrook’s agricultural & lifestyle land use options</i>	35
- <i>Sources of funding, information, support & collaboration</i>	37
- <i>Stakeholder consultation</i>	40
- <i>References</i>	42

Acknowledgements...

The author wishes to thank the many alternative agricultural land use farmers, potato growers and associated stakeholders who agreed to be interviewed and gave freely of their time, knowledge and opinions concerning alternative agricultural land use options for the Gembrook area.

Special thanks go to:

- Department of Sustainability and Environment for project funding;
- Phil Walton, Cardinia Shire Council for project management;
- Bruce Turner, Phoenix Facilitation for project facilitation; and
- Gembrook Rural Review Working Group for their support and guidance on community consultation and overall project direction

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY...

THE RESTRUCTURING of Gembrook's rural economy over the next five to ten years following the eventual decline of the local potato industry, will either see a rapid conversion from potatoes to a diverse mix of new sustainable agriculture industries and lifestyle farms; or alternatively, see ex-potato properties fall into disrepair, reverting back to the bush and weeds, as aging ex-growers continue to hang onto their properties in the hope of being able to subdivide them, or sell them for higher prices.

A survey of potato growers' attitudes to future land use indicated that 30 percent are likely to hang onto their properties into retirement, and a further 60 percent are undecided on whether to leave or wait until they can subdivide.

The community's ability to get these properties onto the market as quickly as possible will govern the speed of land use change in the area.

Stage 2 of the Gembrook Rural Review has identified fifteen potential industries that could eventually replace potatoes. These could be categorised into broad-acre and small intensive niche industries, lifestyle farms and associated tourism based businesses. Gembrook's natural resource capabilities are its excellent soils, high rainfall, plentiful irrigation reserves, cheap land and its natural scenic beauty. All of the nominated industries are suited to the area.

The key agricultural land use options that were identified were: cattle, forestry saw logs, forestry wood pulp, commercial and recreational horses, and field nurseries. While smaller scale niche land use options included: blue berries and raspberries, native flowers, green tea, boutique wineries and vineyards. Lifestyle businesses included: environmental tourism, general tourism, lifestyle farms, and businesses.

Many of the thirty-five minor options that were considered, should not be dismissed out of hand, because 'success in small niche rural businesses is more about the individual investors technical, business and marketing skills, rather than resource capabilities.'

A number of outside companies are interested in exploring development opportunities in the area. How the investment attraction process is managed will be critical to the success of attracting new investors. The following types of companies have expressed interest in the area: carbon trading, field nursery, green tea, and timber plantation companies. General industry expressions of interest have come from the commercial and recreational horse industry, and Monbulk/Silvan horticulturalists (field and container nursery, cut flower and berry industries).

To assist the community achieve its landscape vision for the area. It will be important to find ways of accessing public and private funds to implement sustainable landscape, environment and biodiversity improvements in the area.

The issue of community commitment to the process of implementing alternative agricultural land use development is of concern to the consultant. The important question for the community, is who has the time and commitment to drive these changes? It will be important for the community to identify and recruit dedicated 'champions' from it's own ranks, to make the recommendations of this report happen. In the absence of such commitment, it may be appropriate for the community to consider other ways of stimulating broader community interest and commitment to sustainable agricultural land use and development. Such an outcome might be able to be achieved through some form of community 'capacity building' program.

Although investors have been identified with interests in agricultural and environmental land use at Gembrook. The process of bringing an Investment Reference Group together, developing an investment attraction strategy, promoting the area, and working with potential investors to get their final commitment to investing in the area, will be a difficult one. In lieu of finding community leaders who are prepared to drive this process, it may be important for the Cardinia Shire Council to consider continuing to provide services that will facilitate this process. Two important positions that the council could assist in filling, that may help the community implement sustainable change and investment are those of a fulltime Landcare Coordinator for Gembrook, and a Sustainable Agribusiness Officer with the council's Economic Development Unit, who could assist with facilitating alternative agricultural land use development across the Shire.

All proposed initiatives including commercial agriculture, lifestyle businesses, lifestyle farms and environmental programs will need to be guided by planning strategies that focus on the long term sustainability of business, the environment and the community. These plans should be written to reflect the core needs and values of the Gembrook community.

Dieldrin remains an important barrier to attracting new industries and companies to the area. These companies are primarily concerned about food safety in crops grown on dieldrin-contaminated soils.

It will be important for local rural industries to form close ties with DPI in order to encourage collaboration in developing: safe management practices for crops and animals grown and raised on these soils, and to develop accurate maps and records of contaminated sites, as well as keeping abreast of the latest research and technology on soil remediation.

Potatoes are likely to continue to be grown in the area for many years. Remaining growers should be assisted in their efforts to improve farm viability, while every effort should be made to keep Moraitis Fresh and Red Gem Growers and Packers actively involved in packing and even growing potatoes in the area.

For potato growers leaving the industry, assistance should be provided with succession, financial, retirement and estate planning. Other assistance should be given to these growers to help get their properties onto the market as quickly as possible in order to hasten the restructuring of the local rural economy.

Present Green Wedge planning regulations do not entirely encourage flexible land use options for the Gembrook area. Minimum subdivision regulations (15 hectares) mean that in some cases available agricultural properties are too big for the needs of many intensely managed rural businesses (nurseries and cut flowers) and lifestyle farms. It is crucial that Green Wedge agricultural zone regulations are flexible enough to encourage productive, sustainable farm use, as well as the maintenance of high landscape values. In the case of Gembrook, the one-size fits all minimum subdivision model is not flexible enough to fit the future sustainable land use capabilities and options for the area.

In summary, if Gembrook wants to achieve its stated 'visions for the future', it cannot remain an isolated community – it will need to open itself up to new investment, new residents and new ideas. This report has identified a number of potential alternative land use options and investors that could be attracted to the area. The community has the choice of pursuing these options or disregarding them. Should it choose to embrace them, it then opens up a range of possibilities that could lead to Gembrook becoming 'a vibrant semi-rural growth area.' And if it chooses not to take them up, then it is likely to remain a 'hidden gem' and remain 'Melbourne's best kept secret.' ■

Project background...

Stage 1 of the Gembrook Rural Review project assessed the future sustainability of the potato industry and associated farm enterprises in the Gembrook area.

As a result of this review, it was decided by the Gembrook Rural Review Group (GRR) that the potato industry would commence winding down in the next five to ten years as growers retired from the industry. This would result in the potato industry ceasing to be the predominant agricultural industry in the area.

In Stage 2 of the project, the community group decided to concentrate its' efforts on identifying future land use options for the area, and identifying and recommending strategies that would lead to successful, sustainable land use development. As part of Stage 2, the group also decided to assist retiring potato growers with timely advice on succession, financial, retirement and estate planning.

Aims of Project:

- Complete a land and resource capability review of the area (soil, water, slopes, and climate)
- Identify:
 - viable alternative agricultural land use options that match local land and resource capabilities;
 - existing agricultural and lifestyle enterprises that are successful examples or case studies of alternative land use in the Gembrook area;
 - potential investors who might invest in alternative agricultural land use in the area; and
 - sources of funds to assist land use change.
- Arrange retirement assistance advice for potato growers planning to retire from the industry

Project Methodology:

The project was commenced on May 10, 2004. One hundred and twenty eight stakeholders were interviewed or consulted about alternative land use options. These stakeholders represented thirty-five categories of agricultural businesses, industry, service support groups, government, and the community (Table 1).

Potato growers and their families were also personally interviewed using a structured survey format, while other stakeholders were interviewed either on the telephone or face-to-face using an open ended, qualitative survey technique.

Table 1: Stakeholder Interview Categories...

Industry Sector/Companies	No.	Industry Sector/Companies	No.
Agribusiness Forums	1	Native grasses	1
Alpaca	2	Nursery	6
Aquaculture	1	Nuts	2
Cardinia Shire Council	9	Olives	2
Cherry	1	Pome & stone fruit	1
Distillation	3	Poppy	1
DPI	14	Potato growers (Gembrook)	12
DSE	3	Potato processing	1
Environment	5	Pyrethrum	1
EPA	3	Real estate	4
Flowers	5	Rubus & blue berries	3
Forestry	7	Strawberry	3
Ginseng	2	Tourism	2
Green tea	2	University	2
Horse	7	Water	3
Landcare	4	Wineries & vineyards (boutique)	3
Local government	8	Wineries (large scale)	3
Mint oil	1		

Recommendations...

Recommended Actions:

The following recommendations consolidate preliminary recommendations made by the project consultant to the Gembrook Rural Review Group to support the redevelopment of the agricultural resource base of Gembrook and ensure a sustainable future for the area.

They have been developed from specialist research and stakeholder discussions that have taken place as part of the Gembrook Rural Review since late 2003.

The final recommendation, actions and responsibilities for implementing them are the result of detailed deliberations between the Gembrook Rural Review Group, the project manager, projects funding agency, project facilitator and the technical consultant.

(CSC - Cardinia Shire Council, VFF - Victorian Farmers' Federation, CEC - Cardinia Environment Coalition, GRR - Gembrook Rural Review), CSI – Community Strengthening Initiative

Theme	Actions	Responsibility
1. Attracting new industries, companies and lifestyle investors to the area...		
Promote new productive land use opportunities...	Hold a 'Gembrook Rural Expo' to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> promote the most promising new land use opportunities to local landowners and real estate agents <input type="checkbox"/> farm tour to showcase local examples of small, innovative lifestyle and farm business operations that already show what is possible in the area 	Township Committee, CSC Economic Development Unit, DPI, VFF Gembrook Yvonne Bennett organising real estate briefing as part of the Expo Sponsorship from a local industry
	Establish a clearinghouse for information on the most promising new land use opportunities and local contacts who can help provide links to new industries	VFF Gembrook, CSC Economic Development Unit
	Form an Investment Reference Group (including local real estate agents recruited at the Expo and/or a separate briefing, and Monash University's Faculty of Marketing & Tourism, Berwick) to help develop an investment attraction plan for the area, and help broker land sales or leases with interested investors	CSC Economic Development Unit
	Ascertain Moraitis Fresh and Red Gem Growers and Packers future commitments and plans in the area	CSC Economic Development Unit
Address soil constraints...	Advocate, at the Federal level with candidates from all political parties, for the VFF's proposal to control PCN-affected properties and free up markets for non-affected properties	VFF Potato Growers' Council, CSC, DPI
	Produce a 'Living with Dieldrin' brochure that clarifies the standards that apply to different types of land use – to reassure lifestyle landowners and commercial agricultural investors that there are no risks to human health or food safety threats with Gembrook soils	DPI, EPA
	Host research trials of ways to break down dieldrin in the soil (bio-remediation) by DPI Rutherglen and Ovens	DPI, VFF, CSC Economic Development and Environment units
	Support establishment trials and/or track the latest developments in research on dieldrin uptake in green tea and other crops that are suited to Gembrook	DPI, VFF, CSC
	Take up the offer from DPI (Box Hill, Ellenbank and Wangaratta) of advice and assistance for property owners wanting to use dieldrin-affected properties for grazing cattle . Could involve a 'refresher' seminar on DPI property management plans for interested landowners	VFF, landowners, DPI
Review planning framework...	Recommend to the Minister for Planning a review by DSE of the planning framework for Gembrook so that investment in new, more intensive agricultural enterprises can be encouraged, and innovations in land management (such as the share farm model) can be trialed	GRR working group, CSC, local MP (Tammy Lobarto)
Provide resources...	Appoint an Sustainable Agribusiness Officer to support all the above actions (with Cadman Agribusiness Services retained as a source of advice and information in the interim)	CSC

2. Assisting potato growers to make decisions about their future...		
Research alternative markets...	Arrange a visit by growers' representatives to Greenlands Holdings, Ballarat, to look at a new, long-life processing technology for Sebago potatoes and to hear how local fresh market growers have managed problems similar to Gembrook's	VFF Growers' Council
Innovative marketing strategies...	Develop innovative marketing and promotions strategies to market waste over-run potatoes from packing sheds. Seek academic and student involvement from Monash – Berwick, and Cadman Agribusiness Services	VFF Growers' Council
Provide succession and retirement planning advice...	Centrelink and Rural Finance (FarmBi\$) to run separate briefings and advisory sessions for retiring potato growers to raise awareness of options and advice available to retiring potato growers on succession, financial, retirement and estate planning	CSC Economic Development and Community Services, VFF Gembrook
3. Enhancing environmental and landscape values...		
Increase Landcare involvement...	Seek funding for a Landcare Coordinator for Gembrook catchment (options include: applying for a grant from the Catchment Mgmt Authority, or influencing the CMA's Regional Capital Investment Plan via a submission on the Regional Catchment Strategy)	David Nickell, Meinhard Holtz, Merle Mathisen, CSC Environment Unit, St John's Hill Landcare group (Cockatoo), CEC
Promote land rehabilitation...	Continue to track the State Government's proposed land rehabilitation initiatives (Bush Tender and Land Stewardship programs) and assess the potential viability of their implementation in Gembrook	CSC Environment Unit, CEC
	Pursue mechanisms to attract investment in revegetation and other rehabilitation initiatives such as Greenfleet and Melbourne Water	CSC Environment and Economic Development Units
	Hold ' Gembrook Environmental Showcase ' forum and farm visits to: <input type="checkbox"/> showcase local farmer success stories and new developments associated with sustainable land management, and environmental landscape improvement.	David Nickell, Meinhard Holtz, Merle Mathisen, CSC Environment Unit, St John's Hill Landcare group (Cockatoo), CEC
4. Building the capacity of the local community to influence, and make the most of, future changes in the area...		
Provide for elderly living...	Facilitate the establishment of accommodation for older people in Gembrook to support retiring farmers who wish to leave their land without leaving the area and community	CSC Community Services
Strengthen tourism potential...	Develop a comprehensive, professional tourism strategy for Gembrook including marketing and promotions plan. Seek academic and student involvement (from Monash – Berwick, Swinburne – Lilydale, TAFE – Gippsland) in: <input type="checkbox"/> surveying tourists about why they visit Gembrook and how they found out about the area <input type="checkbox"/> advising how to make the most of one of Gembrook's key selling points – "Gembrook: a place to walk" <input type="checkbox"/> providing marketing/design and business development advice to individual businesses	Township/Tourism Committee, CSC Economic Development Unit, Cardinia Tourism Network
	Prioritise the works required to support the ' walking theme ' – path improvements etc	Township/Tourism Committee
	Provide input to the Bunyip State Park Recreation Framework (Parks Victoria regional planning initiative – currently 19 issues papers available for comment)	Township/Tourism Committee, Friends of Bunyip State Park
	Continue to work with and support the local recreational horse industry	CSC Economic Development Unit
Begin Community Strengthening Initiative (CSI)...	Commence the deferred CSI initiative as a means of gaining wider involvement in, and building on, the outcomes of the Rural Review	Township Committee, CSC Community Services

Community vision of the future agricultural landscape of Gembrook...

In March 2004, a general meeting of Gembrook community participants painted a clear picture of how they saw the future vision of the area.

From a landscape perspective, people wanted the area to 'maintain its rural beauty and bush feel, but with more trees'. The farming community would be much more diverse, with 'well run family and new lifestyle farms, with horse properties eventually replacing potato farms'. It was also envisioned that tourism would play a more substantial role in the economy, linking rural activities with local landscape values.

The inconsistency of this vision was that while many in the community wanted to see improvements to community services, they still wanted to see Gembrook retain its quiet rural charm, and not experience an influx of new residence and development in the area.

Present land use activities of Gembrook potato growers...

Of the twelve remaining potato-growing families in the area, eleven growers have freehold rights to 1,028 hectares of land (one potato growing family mainly leases land). Farm sizes range from 21 to over 51 hectares in size. The eleven farms comprise 34 titles ranging in size from under 1 to over 51 hectares in area.

The following tables provide a picture of the amount of new agricultural land that might come onto the market if potato growers were to commence leaving the industry and selling up.

Table 2: Gembrook potato production statistics – 2003 to 2004...

Total Area Planted	Area in Fallow or Pasture	Total Area Freehold Farms	Total Area Leased
353 ha.	778 ha.	1,028 ha.	282 ha.

Table 3: Sizes & number of freehold titles on Gembrook potato farms – 2003 to 2004...

	<1-5 ha.	6-10 ha.	11-20 ha.	21-30 ha.	31-40 ha.	41-50 ha.	> 51 ha.	Total No. Farms & Titles
Size of Farms				2			9	11
No. of Titles	7	2	4	6	4	6	5	34

Future land use plans of Gembrook potato growers...

Most of the present generation of growers intend retiring in the next five to ten years.

It appears that most properties are still in the ownership of the present generation. The continued existence of the new generation of growers remains precarious due to low profitability of most enterprises, with families 'living from year-to-year.' Nearly fifty percent of the new generation of growers have to resort to part-time work to survive.

Forty percent of older growers would leave the land if they could sub-divide.

One of the twelve remaining potato-growing families has decided to leave the industry at the end of the last season (2003/2004).

Only two older growers intend leaving their farms, most 'will hang on to their properties in retirement while continuing to grow a few potatoes and run a few cattle' (see Table 4).

Table 4: Potato growers - future property ownership intentions – 2003/2004...

	Living From Year-to- Year	Intend Leaving Industry	Would Leave the Industry if Could Subdivide	If Cannot Subdivide Will Hang on Into Retirement	Enjoy the Industry - Will Continue Working In It
Present Generation	3	2	5	4	3
New Generation	6	5	4	4	3

All growers said that they refuse to sell or 'give away their properties at present low land prices'.

Where growers do not sell their properties, they believe that they may eventually become 'run down and over grown with weeds and over run by foxes and rabbits.'

In cases where growers retire and remain on the land. Their children (the new generation of potato growers), who are already struggling to survive, will be forced to financially maintain their aging parents, because they are ineligible to receive pensions

due to the asset value of their properties (Table 5).

According to the Victorian Department of Primary Industry (DPI), similar situations are occurring in all farming communities across rural Victoria.

Deteriorating maintenance of old potato properties could lead to declining property values and the eventual forced sale of degraded properties on the low-budget lifestyle farm market, where unplanned ad-hoc agricultural land use would be the outcome.

In this scenario, Gembrook could deteriorate to an environmental and social welfare basket-case.

Table 5: Gembrook potato growers – age & employment profiles – 2003 to 2004...

	20-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	61-70	Total No.	Employed Full Time	Employed Part Time
Present Generation			1	3	8	12	8	4
New Generation	3	8	4			15	8	7

Land use capabilities...

Available Land:

The Gembrook horticultural area comprises 3,763 hectares of mixed cleared agriculture land, and pockets of remanent and regenerated native forests and scrub.

Soils:

The area predominantly comprises rich volcanic soils that are capable of growing a wide range of temperate fruit, vegetables and ornamental crops.

Gentle crests and slopes found on the tops of ridges are the preferred sites for all forms of mixed horticulture (Tve1 and Tvf1). According to a 1996, DPI land capability study (MacMillan et al, 1996), approximately 1,000 hectares of land is available for these purposes. This is comparable to the area of freehold land owned by local potato growers.

Preferred soils for mixed horticultural production in these areas are moderately deep, tertiary red volcanic soils (Tve1 and Tvf1).

Land suitable for livestock and forestry enterprises are moderate to steep sloping soils (Tvd1, Tvc1 and Tvb1).

Topography & Slope:

Elevation of the main horticultural production area is approximately 300 to 400 metres above sea level. Approximately 27 percent of the area has slopes suitable for mixed horticultural production, and remaining sloping country is suitable for pasture, grazing, forestry production and other broad-acre crops.

Climate:

The areas climate is mild, but can be cool and wet in early spring during the critical flowering, fruit set and sizing periods of stone and pome fruit.

Estimated temperatures are two to three degrees cooler than Melbourne with mean maximum daily temperatures of 25C⁰ in January and 11C⁰ in July, and a mean minimum daily temperature of 9.5C⁰ in January and 2.8C⁰ in July.

Abundant rainfall does not limit the growing season of plants in any month, but cool temperatures may reduce growth in winter.

The area is subject to periodic hailstorms in early summer, prior to, and during the harvest of stone fruits, berries and flower crops.

Rainfall:

Average annual rainfall at the closest weather station (Cardinia Reservoir) is 1,011.4mm, with the highest rainfall occurring in October with a minor peak in December.

Table 6: Average Annual Rainfall (mm) – Melbourne Water - Cardinia Reservoir (32 year average)...

Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Average Annual Total
66.0	56.3	62.2	85.3	88.9	90.6	87.9	95.8	103.1	104.2	86.2	92.1	1,011.4

Water Catchments:

The Gembrook catchment is primarily part of the Yarra and greater Port Phillip catchments.

Irrigation Water:

The Gembrook Catchment (including the Cockatoo and Shepherd Creek) has ninety-three licences with a total extraction limit of 2,374 ML, or an average of 25.5 ML per licence.

Agricultural land use activities in Cardinia Shire...

A recent agricultural audit of the value of agricultural activities in the Cardinia Shire identified the following sectors in order of importance:

Table 7: Value of agriculture – Cardinia Shire audit (2004)...

Order of Importance	Activity	Value \$M
1	Chicken meat	33.9
2	Milk	34.8
3	Asparagus	29.4
4	Beef	19.9
5	Potatoes	18.6
6	Cut Flowers	6.7
7	Apples	6.3
8	Pasture cut for hay	5.8
9	Berries	2.9
10	Nursery	2.9
11	Cultivated turf	2.8
12	Eggs	1.2
Total value:		\$54.1M

The main industries in the Gembrook area are ware potatoes, beef cattle, cut flowers, pasture, berries and nurseries.

Future land use options...

Rating the Potential Success of Future Agricultural Land Use Options:

Detail discussions were held with members of the Gembrook Rural Review Group, and a range of industry leaders, farm and tourist business operators to help identify potential agricultural options that would be suitable for the Gembrook area. Various options were evaluated against key criteria that industry considered important for assessing their eventual ratings (see Attachment 1).

Various options were considered and rated accordingly:

- Rating 1 Highest rating** - Land use options with the greatest potential for success. A lower risk option with a greater certainty for successfully achieving desired outcomes (market, economic, business and lifestyle)
- Rating 2 Medium rating** - Land use options with potential for success. A medium risk option with some certainty of achieving desired outcomes
- Rating 3 Lowest rating** - Land use options with less potential for success. A higher risk option with some uncertainty about achieving desired outcomes

Land Use Options With Potential for Success:

From the fifty land use options that were identified and considered, thirteen achieved the highest rating of one, in the three land use categories of broad-acre, small-scale niche and lifestyle farm business options. Another two options that are very interesting and have potential for success, but with some issues of concern were categorised as 'wild card' options with ratings of two.

Table 8: RATING 1 - Broad-acre options with the greatest potential for success...

Agricultural & Business Options	Rating	Optimum Property Sizes (ha)	Agricultural & Business Options	Rating	Optimum Property Sizes (ha)
Cattle ★	2	> 10	Horses – recreational	1	> 8
Forestry - saw logs	1	> 16	Nursery – field	1	> 40
Forestry - wood pulp	1	> 100			
Horses - commercial	1	> 30			

★ Wild card options with chances of success reliant on specific conditions or circumstances

Table 9: RATING 1 - Small-scale niche options with the greatest potential for success...

Agricultural & Business Options	Rating	Optimum Property Sizes (ha)	Agricultural & Business Options	Rating	Optimum Property Sizes (ha)
Blue berries	1	> 4	Raspberries	1	> 4
Flowers – natives	1	> 6	Boutique wineries & vineyards ★	1	> 2
Green tea ★	2	4 - 8			

★ Wild card options with chances of success reliant on specific conditions or circumstances

Table 10: RATING 1 - Lifestyle businesses & farm options with greatest potential for success...

Agricultural & Business Options	Ratings	Optimum Property Sizes (ha)	Agricultural & Business Options	Rating	Optimum Property Sizes (ha)
Environmental tourism	1	N/A	Lifestyle farms	1	2 - 8
General tourism	1	N/A	Lifestyle businesses	1	N/A

N/A – Not necessarily applicable to land size

Land Use Options With Less Potential for Success:

The lowest rating land use options (2 and 3) generally were associated with higher levels of risk, which could act as barriers to achieving desired business outcomes. However, it must be pointed out that it is not impossible to be successful in these agricultural businesses. The main reasons for their lower ratings were due to the level of risk, degree of specialist technical skills needed, lower market opportunities, and higher entry costs associated with these industries.

Agricultural and lifestyle farm options with less potential for success are as follows:

Table 11: RATINGS 2 & 3 - Other options considered with less potential for success...

Agricultural & Business Options	Rating	Optimum Property Sizes (ha)	Agricultural & Business Options	Rating	Optimum Property Sizes (ha)
Adventure tourism	2	N/A	Olives – oil	3	> 16
Alpacas – stud stock	2	> 6	Olives – pickling	3	> 4
Alpacas – f bre	2	> 6	Ostriches & emus	3	> 8
Apples & pears	3	> 16	Poppies	3	> 10
Aquaculture - trout & native fish	3	> 4	Potatoes –	2	> 120
B & B's	2	N/A	agribusiness ★	3	> 2
Black walnut timber	3	> 8	Poultry – free range meat	3	> 2
Buck wheat	3	> 16	Poultry – free range eggs	3	> 10
Cherries	3	> 12	Pyrethrum	3	> 20
Firewood timber	2	> 10	Sheep & goat meat	3	> 20
Flowers – traditional	3	> 4	Sheep & goat wool & f bre	3	> 12
Game birds	3	> 2	Stone fruit	3	> 2
Ginseng	3	> 1	Strawberries	3	> 20
Glass & plastic houses	2	> 2	Vegetables	3	N/A
Hay & fodder	2	> 2	Vodka distillery	3	> 16
Hazelnuts	3	> 8	Wine grapes (large scale)		
Mint Oil	3	> 40			
Native grasses	3	> 2			
Nursery – containers	2	> 4			
Nuts – chestnuts & walnuts	3	> 16			

★ Wild card options with chances of success reliant on specific conditions or circumstances

N/A – Not necessarily applicable to land size

Definitions of Lifestyle Farms & Lifestyle Businesses:

Lifestyle farms are considered to be hobby type farms where owners are either employed full-time or part-time on the farm. In many cases, these farmers have retired onto the land to enjoy the rural lifestyle, treating their farms purely as hobbies.

Most of these farms are smaller than the average commercial farm. Some make sufficient income to meet the Australian Taxation Offices minimum earning capacity criteria that gives them eligibility to claim expenses, losses and depreciation as legal taxation deductions. While others operate at a loss and are farms in name alone. Many part-time lifestyle farmers subsidise their farming activities or hobbies from full-time off-farm incomes. DPI considers subsidised lifestyle farms as legitimate farms in their own right. In many communities off-farm subsidies bring considerable wealth into the wider rural community.

Lifestyle businesses in the case of Gembrook could be those directly associated with, and supporting tourism businesses eg. agri-tourism, environment tourism and rural

recreation tourism. Examples of these lifestyle businesses include: farm food processors (wine, cheese, canneries, etc); fresh fruit and vegetable packers and farm gate sales; farm and B&B accommodation; food and horse trail operators; craft makers and retailers; environmental tour operators and volunteer tree planting groups; off-road motor cycle and four wheel drive tours; and outdoor adventure operators.

Specific Information Concerning Key Land Use Options:

Information has been provided in Attachment 2, concerning specific considerations for the key broad-acre and small-scale land use options, concerning: the general suitability of the option to the area; market potential; key requirements; the strengths and weakness of the area; opportunities; threats; general considerations; and potential investors.

More specific technical information and benefit cost and cash flow economic analysis of these options has not been made available in this report. For those who are interest, this information is generally available from specific rural industry websites, the Rural Industry Research and Development Corporation, (RIRDC) or from the following reports (see References):

Options for Change: New ideas for Australian farmers. By Richard Meredith. A RIRDC publication, and

Don't Dream It: Do it! Making money from new farm ideas. By Greg Cahill. A RIRDC publication.

Interest by outside investors in the area...

While some existing potato growers have expressed some interest in becoming involved with the new land use options. It has been generally acknowledged by growers and other members of the community, that because of the age of potato growers and the high entry cost of some of these new agricultural options, that it would not be likely that many potato growers would participate in new agricultural developments.

It is more likely that these growers would gradually sell their properties as outside interest in their properties increased and land values improved.

Discussions with agricultural investors and industry representatives indicated firm interest in looking at the potential of the area. Specific interest was shown by companies from the following industry sectors:

- Forestry and timber
- Carbon trading
- Field nursery
- Green tea

Expressions of general interest were shown by the following industries:

- Monbulk horticulturalists (field and container nurseries, cut flowers and berries)
- Commercial and recreational horse industry

Monbulk/Silvan horticulturalists are rapidly being priced out of the area by lifestyle farmers and are looking for areas of similar, but cheaper land to expand their operations. Gembrook has very similar soils and climate to Monbulk/Silvan and is well suited for growing similar crops.

Real estate agents experienced in land sales in the agriculture, lifestyle and the recreational horse sectors have all expressed interest in assisting the Gembrook Rural Review Group attract future investors to the area.

Gembrook property values...

Property Values:

Very few commercial agricultural properties have been on the market in recent years in the Gembrook area. It is for this reason that the real estate industry has had difficulty in establish fair and reasonable valuations for local properties.

Local real estate agents advise that land values for such properties are lower than in other intensive horticultural production areas such as Monbulk/Silvan. It is estimated that property values in Gembrook are at least half that of Monbulk/Silvan and in some cases even less.

The following is an example of recent Gembrook property valuations:

- 40-hectare agricultural property (no home) - \$7,380 to \$9,880/ha.
- 16-hectare lifestyle farm (no home) - \$21,610/ha.

In comparison, commercial agricultural land values in the Silvan area are estimated by local real estate agents to be approximately \$24,700 to \$37,050/ha. The explanation for the difference in land values is that Monbulk/Silvan does not have the “stigma of dieldrin”, and is a regional horticultural service centre.

Strengths & weaknesses of Gembrook’s agricultural land use capabilities...

Conversations with key players in the agricultural, tourism, environment and real estate sectors identified the following key strengths and weaknesses of the area.

Key Strengths of Gembrook:

- It is ‘Melbourne’s best kept secret’
- It’s closeness, yet it’s isolation from the crowded city and other regional centres
- Close to Melbourne and its key services (45 minutes from the CBD)
- Natural beauty and unique landscape
- Biodiversity of native flora and fauna
- Mild temperatures, high rainfall and rich soils
- Cheap land (half to less than of comparable land at Monbulk/Silvan)
- Puffing Billy is a major tourist attraction
- Horses – close to major training facilities at Cranbourne and Pakenham
- Access for commercial and lifestyle farmers to Cardinia Farmers Market

Key Weaknesses of Gembrook:

- Steep sloping land
- Strong winds on ridges
- Occasional cool wet weather during flowering, fruit set and harvest
- Some potato soils are infected with PCN
- Most potato soils are also contaminated with dieldrin
- Gembrook has an image problem due to dieldrin – ‘dieldrin phobia’
- Lack of major horticultural services and infrastructure (cool stores, light and heavy transport, agricultural chemicals and equipment suppliers, technical services, wholesale and export distributors). Monbulk the main service centre is 40 minutes roundtrip away
- Rough unpaved roads cause transport damage to sensitive crops and injury to livestock
- Rough unpaved roads discourage visits by some city tourist
- Shortage of skilled harvest and general agricultural labour
- ‘Gradual disappearance of native fauna’
- Tourism – ‘lack of quality restaurants’
- ‘Melbourne’s best-kept secret’ – the area is not well known to tourists or investors
- Gradual encroachment by the city
- Because it is an urban–rural interface area, it pays higher city prices for services

Likely land use outcomes...

Not all potato farmers are expected to cease growing potatoes. One scenario is that once growers commence retiring from the industry, that existing packers might become growers in their own right, either buying or leasing retired potato properties and employing some of the original farmers, as managers of these new properties.

In the future, a single agricultural industry such as potatoes will no longer dominate the area. The new agricultural economy is likely to comprise a diverse mix of small and large agricultural, tourism and environmental businesses (see Attachment 4).

Lifestyle farms and associated tourism businesses are expected to dominate the rural mix. These businesses will predominantly service the agricultural and environmental tourism industries. The main customers of these tourism businesses will be weekend day-trippers, overnight visitors, and increasingly, weekday visits by retired baby boomers from the city.

New agricultural investment is expected to come from totally new industries and agricultural businesses from adjoining areas such as Monbulk and Silvan. Lifestyle investors will come from the city and existing lifestyle farms that are being overtaken by urban development around Cranbourne, Berwick, Officer and Pakenham.

Some larger agricultural industries such as commercial horses, forestry, green tea, and

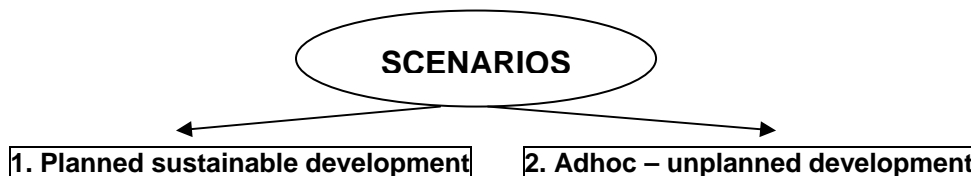
mint oils may eventually take over from potatoes.

In the future, rural-urban interface economies will no longer be based on agriculture alone. New and evolving economies like Gembrook will primarily be based on service industries supporting lifestyle farms, tourism, and the recreational needs of city visitors and newcomers looking to experience country living, in close proximity to the city.

Increasing attention will also be given to sustaining and improving existing landscape values in the area. It is expected that the community vision of 'more trees in the local environment' will come about through community initiatives to restore biodiversity, remanent vegetation, restoration of vegetation along local streams, as well as reduction of erosion of steep slopes and resulting sedimentation of streams.

Future land use scenarios...

Gembrook is faced with two likely agricultural land use scenarios in the future. They are planned sustainable development or adhoc, unplanned development.



Sustainable Land Use & Landscape Outcomes:

Redevelopment of the agricultural resource base of Gembrook should be facilitated through the implementation of a community endorsed strategic plan (Gembrook Township Strategy).

Development of both commercial agriculture and lifestyle properties should address sustainable planning guidelines that aim to maintain and enhance the natural beauty and ascetics of the area.

Present Green Wedge planning regulations do not entirely encourage flexible land use options for the Gembrook area. Minimum subdivision regulations (15 hectares) mean that available agricultural properties are too big for the needs of many intensely managed rural businesses (nurseries and cut flowers) and lifestyle farms.

It is crucial that Green Wedge agricultural zone regulations are flexible enough to encourage productive, sustainable farm use, as well as the maintenance of high landscape values.

Unplanned Landscape Outcomes:

Delayed departure of older growers from the potato industry is likely to result in the following:

- A slow down in the introduction of economic and environmentally sustainable land use investment
- Lead to the decline of existing farm values and resources
- Lead to the further decline in general property values
- Run down properties are likely to 'return to the bush, weeds and vermin'
- Accelerating the decline of community infrastructure and services
- Eventually force the sale of degraded potato farms onto the low-budget lifestyle farm market
- Unplanned ad-hoc development
- Dominance of less viable and environmentally questionable land use options and practices

Sustainable Land Use Challenges:

With over two-thirds of Gembrook's potato property titles being over 20 hectares in size, limitations on subdivisional properties sizes are expected to limit the potential for investment in sustainable land development in the area. It widely agreed by stakeholders that the optimum size of lifestyle farms are 2 to 4 hectares, the minimum size for environmentally sustainable lifestyle farms for horses are 8 hectares, and intensive commercial horticultural properties (flowers and nurseries), similar to those found around Monbulk/Silvan are 4 to 8 hectares.

Where the minimum size of lifestyle properties is limited to 15 hectares, then management difficulties such as the high cost of controlling and managing environmental weeds on steep slopes will become a major issue. In these situations, land owners are

faced with the options of buying: expensive low profile four-wheel drive tractors, slashing and spray equipment at an approximate new price of \$80,000 to \$90,000; employ weed control contractors; control the weeds as best as they can; or letting weeds run wild and face the possibility of being fined.

If land use in the area is likely to be a diverse mix of lifestyle and tourism orientated businesses, then building regulations will also need to be flexible enough to accommodate the needs of these businesses.

Local agricultural case studies...

Already there is a rich mix of diverse agricultural businesses in Gembrook.

In order to better understand what is possible in the future, the Gembrook Rural Review Group asked that this report briefly identify, describe and report on the activities of successful, existing alternative agricultural businesses in the area.

The report looked at nine local businesses involved in aquaculture, container, field and advanced trees nurseries, traditional and native flowers, commercial horses, alpacas and ginseng. This review of local businesses case studies briefly considered the background of these businesses, why the owners got into them, the advantage of Gembrook as a business centre, things to look out for, and some of their secrets to success (see Attachment 3).

Other regional case studies...

How have other regions responded to the problem of soils contaminated by organo-chlorine chemicals such as dieldrin?

Agriculture in the Alpine Shire has faced similar problems as Gembrook. The northeast Victorian river valleys of the King, Ovens and Kiewa have been the centres of tobacco production for the last fifty years. Both potatoes and tobacco come from the same plant family and face similar high pest and disease pressures. In the past the technical answer to pests control in tobacco was dieldrin. As a result, both areas have faced similar problems with dieldrin soil contamination.

Over the last twenty years, tobacco production in Australia has been in decline, resulting in growers actively seeking out and introducing to the region many new alternative agricultural land use options. The following list provides an overview of agricultural land use in the Alpine Shire.

Agricultural land use in the Alpine Shire (2004)...

Timber:	Horticulture:
Hardwood	Apples
Softwood	Chestnuts
Specialist timbers	Citrus
	Flowers
Livestock:	Green tea
Alpaca	Hazelnuts
Aquaculture	Hops
Beef	Kiwifruit
Dairy	Mint & peppermint
Deer	Olives
Emus	Pasture seed
Honey	Rubus
Horses	Summer fruits
Sheep	Tobacco
Worms	Vegetables
	Walnuts
Grain & pasture:	Wine
Cereals	
Hay	
Pasture & lawn seed	

Dieldrin & Food Crops:

Whether dieldrin is actually taken up in plant tissue is scientifically still an unanswered question. This of course is an important question for growers and food processors when considering whether it is safe to grow new low growing food and beverage crops on dieldrin contaminated soils. Pot trial research on a number of these crops is presently being undertaken by the DPI at Myrtleford to examine this question.

Other Soil Decontamination Possibilities:

New research is presently being considered by DPI into the use of new bioremediation

technology to dislodge and breakdown dieldrin in the soil. This technology involves the application of special soil amendment chemicals that detaches dieldrin from clay particles in soil, exposing it to soil microbes that eventually render it harmless.

DPI is interested in expanding field trials to Gembrook if research funding is successful.

**Community
commitment to
change?**

As the report's name suggests, Gembrook is not well recognised or known outside the immediate area. But for those who are familiar with its scenic and environmental beauty and its' strong community values – it is considered as 'Melbourne's best kept secret.'

This in itself is an advantage and a disadvantage to the community. It is an advantage in that it retains its quiet isolation and it's Australia idyll ambiance. However, on the downside, the lack of development in the area means that if a major rural industry, such as potatoes goes into decline, then the town and its' surrounding residents begin to suffer economically and socially from declining community services and resources.

Some community members have spoken about a desire to keep the area the way it is, yet wanting community services upgraded at the same time. Others are concerned about an influx of newcomers and outside investment, and question the appropriateness of new land use options. The challenge for the community is whether they want Gembrook to become 'a vibrant semi-rural growth area' or remain the 'hidden gem'? Growth of course will involve changing community attitudes and values, which will also bring with it, improved community services, employment and general progress.

It is apparent that sustainable develop of the area is more likely to be driven by newcomers to the area. Attracting new investment means having a broad community plan that involves close collaborating with other outside support agencies and companies.

Although there are many organizations and agencies out there who are willing to provide support and funding for special business, environment and community building activities (see Attachment 5); the question for the community is, who in the community is going to drive alternative agricultural land use change and investment attraction activities?

The community has a small number of dedicated volunteers. However, to successfully achieve the desired outcomes of the 'community vision'. A larger pool of community volunteers will need to be recruited with skills specific to achieving these ends. Council demographic statistics indicate that there is a small but significant core of trained professionals within the Gembrook community. It will be important for the community to identify them and attempt to recruit them from their ranks eg. retired professionals.

In the case where community specialist volunteers cannot be found, then it may be the role of the Cardinia Shire Council in the short term, to provide some of this assistance. Two permanent positions that the council may be able to assist the Gembrook community with are the appointment of a Sustainable Agribusiness Officer to the Economic Development unit of council, and the appointment of an independent, fulltime Landcare Coordinator to the Gembrook catchment area. Both positions would greatly assist the community implement many of the recommendations from this report.

Community Capacity Building:

If the community is uncertain about its capacity to achieve its 'vision of the future', then it may need further assistance in firstly, understanding its own strengths, and secondly, learning how to develop community skills in achieving what it sees as its core needs.

This may be able to be achieved by accessing previously available 'community capacity building' funds, that might help the community gain confidence in its capacity to independently implement some of these recommendations.

**Community support &
collaboration...**

It is apparent that there is an extensive support base available for the community to obtain information, funds and collaboration on various projects (see Attachment 5).

Important groups that should be accessed for support are:

- DPI - technical, quarantine, dieldrin, private forestry, other new land use options and agribusiness etc.
- DSE – environmental and community projects
- Monash University, Faculty of Marketing and Tourism (Berwick) – innovative

- marketing programs, regional development and tourism
- Gippsland Agribusiness Forum at Bairnsdale – represents various agricultural communities in Gippsland (including Gembrook and Cardinia Shire). With access to special DPI – Agribusiness Initiative funds for regional development initiatives
- City based volunteer tree groups
- Greenfleet – carbon trading and environmental tree planting

Conclusions...

The following conclusions have been drawn from detailed interviews and discussions with over 120 stakeholders from Gembrook and surrounding communities, farmers, growers, agribusiness, industry, local, state and federal government agencies and the real estate industry.

A Rich & Diverse Community:

Gembrook is a rich and diverse rural community. As well as larger mainstream agricultural enterprises, there are a mix of small successful niche businesses, groups and individuals who are quietly achieving excellent things in agriculture, tourism, the environment, and in the wider community.

Land Use Capabilities:

The climate and soils of Gembrook are more than suited to a range of potential land use options that have been considered for the area.

Land Use Options:

The study examined fifty land use options. Fifteen of these have been identified and rated as having potential, and another thirty-five as having less potential.

To summarise, there are no potential stand out 'silver bullet' industries that are likely to make significant contributions to the agricultural economy of Gembrook in their own right. However, there are some industries that represent opportunities for existing and new landholders.

Agricultural land use options...

Broad-acre options include: cattle, forestry saw logs, forestry wood pulp, commercial and recreational horses, and field nurseries. Smaller scale niche land use options include: blue berries and raspberries, native flowers, green tea, boutique wineries and vineyards. Lifestyle businesses include: environmental tourism, general tourism, lifestyle farms, and businesses.

Many of the minor options that have been considered, should not be dismissed out of hand, because 'success in small niche rural businesses is more about the individual investors technical, business and marketing skills, rather than resource capabilities.'

Associated with the various opportunities that have been identified are a number of investors who are interested in investing in the area, and others, if they were aware of the potential of the area, could be convinced to consider investing in property and relocating to Gembrook.

Environmental land use options...

While commercial agricultural and lifestyle farms are vital considerations in future land use development. The wish by the community to retain and enhance the natural beauty of the area can be achieved through improved environmental land use, as well. A number of important opportunities have been identified for landholders and the community to access funds and assistance from government and the private sector to improve the environment, biodiversity, and in many cases make profits from investment in environmental improvements.

What will the new rural economy of Gembrook look like?

When new agricultural land development take place in Gembrook, it is likely to be a diverse mix of businesses such as: environmental, recreational and general tourism, lifestyle farms, and new home based and lifestyle businesses. These businesses will blend in with existing and new agricultural land use developments.

Lifestyle businesses such as tourism should be considered as legitimate and substantial contributors to the local economy and the broader wellbeing of the area.

Showcasing what success looks like...

For existing growers in the Gembrook area who are yet to be convinced about various

alternative agricultural land use options, it would be possible to run a local forum on the subject, with invited specialist presenting facts and figures on new investment options. Such a forum would also assist in promoting the investment capabilities of the area to the visiting speakers.

This forum could then be followed up with a series of organised farm visits by people considering new land use options, to successful local farm businesses and associated tourism enterprises that are already involved in alternative sustainable agricultural land use.

A similar environmental forum and farm visits could be organised to showcase local farmer success stories and new developments associated with sustainable land management, and environmental landscape improvement.

Dominos & Successful Land Use Development:

It has been said by a number of stakeholders that the general success of alternative land use development in Gembrook will follow once a few conspicuous examples of new industries begin to appear in the rural landscape. When this occurs, business and community confidence will grow – then the domino effect will take place.

Challenges & Questions for the Gembrook Community:

If the only agenda for the Gembrook Rural Review was the subdivision of rural land – then the take home message to all community stakeholders is...**that land subdivision of less than 15 hectares is neither a consideration or a possibility under Green Wedge planning regulations.** Any hope that government will amend these regulations in the near future should be immediately dismissed. The governments' intentions on these regulations will not be compromised.

This being the case, the challenge for the Gembrook Rural Review Group is to creatively manage this reality by moving on, and trying to achieve future prosperity for the community and the area through development of other alternative agricultural land use options.

Where new land use opportunities exist, the important question is, does the community want to embrace them?

If the answer is yes – how can this be done? Who are the community champions who are going to make this happen?

Has the community got a strategy to successfully manage these challenges from a township as well as a broader agricultural land use perspective?

In order to successfully take advantage of these opportunities and to tackle these challenges, the community needs to recruit more dedicated leaders and volunteers to help drive the change. It will be important that this group has a mixture of skills and capabilities that should include people who are passionate and have new ideas, people who can think out side the square, business professionals, entrepreneurs, motivators, leaders, and most importantly planners and doers.

Much of this volunteer skill base already exists in the community. The challenge will be, how to identify it and recruit it.

If Gembrook wants to achieve its stated 'visions for the future', it cannot remain an isolated community – it will need to open itself up to new investment, new residents and new ideas.

Should it choose not to embrace sustainable agricultural development, then it runs the risk of remaining a 'hidden gem' and remaining 'Melbourne's best kept secret.'

Getting a Helping Hand – Networks, Collaborators & Funding:

The future of Gembrook will be essentially tied in with other neighbouring communities, industries, business and government. For Gembrook to move ahead and become a 'vibrant semi-rural growth area,' the need for collaboration with other key stakeholders will be an essential ingredient for future success.

There are many groups out there who are available and dedicated to assisting or

partnering the Gembrook Rural Review Group, the community, industry groups, and individual businesses (see Attachment 5).

These groups have connections, access to funds, and the power to change things for the better. It will be vital for the future success of this project, for the community to take advantage of this assistance.

A few examples of areas where other collaborators could assist the Gembrook Rural Review Group are:

Dieldrin...

- DPI - opportunities to running bio-remediation trails on contaminated land
- DPI - assessing existing trials on the uptake of dieldrin in new crops
- DPI – commissioning new trials to assess dieldrin uptake in new crops at Gembrook
- DPI - best practice workshops for managing cattle on contaminated pastures
- DPI & EPA – development of ‘Living with Dieldrin’ manual for the general community

Investment attraction...

Local real estate agents are interested in working with representatives of the Gembrook Rural Review Group and the Cardinia Shire Councils, Economic Development Unit to help develop and implement an investment attraction plan for Gembrook.

Marketing & tourism strategies...

Monash University (Business & Tourism Faculty) at Berwick is prepared to offer the support of under-graduate and post-graduate students to assist with the development of marketing and promotions plans and strategies to assist the Gembrook Rural Review Group and local agricultural and tourist businesses.

Potato industry wind down...

The Cardinia Shire Council's, Community Services Unit, Centrelink and Rural Finance could be approached to assist with running a forum on succession, financial, retirement and estate planning for retiring potato growers.

Community collaboration model...

An example of community collaboration in action has been the formation of the Centre for Agriculture & Business in the Shire of Yarra Ranges. This group formulated an initiative with the help of the Shire's economic development unit to advance the substantial economic opportunities that have developed out of tourism and agribusiness in the Yarra Valley. This group jointly represents the community, tourism, farming and agricultural businesses in the Yarra Valley and in the Dandenong Ranges (Monbulk/Silvan). The Centre collaborates very closely and effectively with Swinburne University of Technology (Lilydale), the Shire of Yarra Ranges and DPI; by jointly utilising the combined resources of academics, students, DPI, and council to undertake research, fund projects and generally lobby on its behalf.

The consultant believes that a similar model of collaboration could be developed between the Gembrook community, agricultural businesses, Cardinia Shire Council, Monash University (Berwick) and DPI to advance the causes of Gembrook's rural community and that of the Cardinia Shire in general.

Support services for Gembrook community...

In lieu of finding community leaders that are initially prepared to drive change, it will be important for the Cardinia Shire Council, to continue to provide services that facilitate the adoption of new land use options in the Gembrook area, on behalf of the community.

Two key positions that the council could assist in filling are, those of a fulltime, externally funded Landcare Coordinator at Gembrook, and a Sustainable Agribusiness Officer who could be attached to the Cardinia Shire Council's, Economic Development Unit. This position would be very similar to one at the Shire of Yarra Ranges. Such an appointment would help coordinate investment attraction, and facilitate new business and community opportunities, and acted as an interface between council, government agencies, the rural community, and agribusiness interests across the Shire.

Planning & Coordinating Land Use Options:

All proposed initiatives involving alternative land use development should be guided by planning strategies that focus on the long-term sustainability of agricultural businesses, the environment and the community. These plans should be written to reflect the core

needs and values of the Gembrook community.

Establishing a Market for Rural Properties in Gembrook:

Because most potato growers will be retiring from the industry in the next five to ten years, new land use development opportunities are more likely to be taken up by new investors to the area, rather than the asset rich and capital poor, new generation of potato growers.

Potatoes growers presently own over one thousand hectares of high quality farming land. In order to hasten restructuring of the rural economy, it will be important to get as much of this land onto the market as soon as possible. The problem here is that growers are not prepared to sell their land at present prices. However, if prices were better, they have said that they would consider putting some of this land onto the market.

Unfortunately, very little agricultural land has been on the market in the last few years. This has meant that it has been difficult for the real estate industry to establish the true market values of local agricultural properties.

In order to establish fair market prices for properties, it will be important to promote to a wider group of potential buyers, the capabilities of land in the area. This of course will mean the area will need to be promoted to potential investors through promotional articles in agricultural industry newsletters, lifestyle and real estate publications, and through other forms of investment attraction promotion. Hence the need for some form of real estate reference group to liaise and work with Cardinia Shire Council to develop an investment attraction plan for the area.

Property Size & the Sustainable Agricultural Land Use Debate:

While the State Government is holding firm on it's decision to restrict Green Wedge subdivisions to a minimum of fifteen hectares. It is important that discussion continues between the community, and local and state governments about optimum property sizes for sustainable agricultural land use.

In order to maintain and encourage sustainable agricultural land use in the Gembrook Green Wedge planning zone, it is important to consider the optimum size of properties for various land use options.

The challenge for future land use in the area will be the level of regulation on the minimum area of land necessary for conducting sustainable agricultural operations, and associated regulatory controls governing purpose-built buildings on rural properties used for intensive horticulture and agriculture production, and for tourism.

Existing agricultural property sizes are generally too big for many of the proposed land use options. As an example, preferred lifestyle farm sizes range from 2 to 4 hectares, while more intensive horticultural property requirements by potential investors (nurseries and flowers) from the Monbulk/Silvan area are reported to be from 4 to 8 hectares. The minimum fifteen-hectare subdivision regulation imposed by Green Wedge in many cases will restrict conversion to new sustainable land use options.

Larger and more unmanageable sized lifestyle farms (15 hectares and over) could be expected to pose serious challenges for attaining the desired goal of sustainable land use management in Green Wedge communities. Problems that are expected to crop up are difficulties in successfully managing prohibited weeds, vermin and environmental issues on larger properties.

What needs to be considered by all authorities in the sustainable land use debate is the need for greater planning flexibility around the issue of minimum subdivisional property sizes. Serious considerations needs to be given to community values and preferences concerning future land use, as well as matching proposed development with local land use capabilities. In the case of Gembrook, the one-size fits all minimum subdivisional model will not in most cases fit the future sustainable land use capabilities of the area.

Reducing Industry & Community Concerns About Dieldrin:

Dieldrin remains an important barrier to some agricultural businesses being attracted to the area. These companies are primarily concerned about food safety issues that may be associated with food crops grown on dieldrin-contaminated soils eg. cosmetic, food oils and beverage crops.

If commercial and lifestyle investors are to be attracted to the area, they must be made to feel confident that dieldrin is not an important food, or personal safety issue in the area. It will be important to assure them that local soils can be safely managed and 'lived with.' The proposed development of promotional literature giving directions to new residents and investors on 'Living With Dieldrin' will be an important initiative in resolving concerns and attracting new residents and investors to the area.

Some confusion still seems to exist amongst some district cattle farmers about methods of managing cattle and optimising returns on contaminated pastures. It is suggested that DPI should seriously consider conducting refresher courses for potato growers and local cattle farmers on best practice management of cattle on these pastures.

It will be important for industry to form close ties with DPI to: encourage collaboration in developing safe management practices for crops and livestock that are produced and run on these soils; develop accurate mapping methodologies and transparent records that document contaminated and non contaminated sites; as well encouraging industry support for future research trials on soil remediation in the Gembrook area. ■

ATTACHMENTS...

Attachment 1: GEMBROOK AGRICULTURAL LAND USE OPTIONS, OPPORTUNITIES & RATINGS (2004)...

Broad-acre options with potential for success...																				
	RATING	Market	Econ. Return	Entry Costs	General Suitability	Climate & Soil	Land Prices	Min. Land Area	Broad Acre	Niche	Full Time	Part Time	Dieldrin	PCN	Regs.	Man. Skills	Labour Require	Comm. Issues	Enviro. Issues	Tour. Links
Cattle ★	2	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	>10	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	X	✓	X	X	✓
Firewood – Timber	2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	>10	✓	✓	X	✓	X	X	✓	X	X	✓	✓	✓
Forestry – Saw Logs	1	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	X	>16	✓	✓	X	✓	X	X	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓
Forestry – Wood Pulp	1	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	X	>100	✓	X	X	✓	X	X	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	X
Hay & Fodder	2	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	>2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	X	X	X	X	X
Horses - Commercial	1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	>30	✓	X	✓	X	X	X	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓
Horses - Recreational	1	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	>8	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	X	✓	X	X	X	✓	✓
Potatoes – Agribus. ★	2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	>120	✓	X	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		X
Nursery – Field	1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	>40	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	X	✓
Small-scale niche options with potential for success...																				
Alpacas – Stud Stock	2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	>6	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	X	X	✓	X	X	X	✓
Alpacas – Fibre	2	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	X	>6	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	X	X	✓	X	X	X	✓
Blue Berries	1	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	X	>4	X	✓	✓	✓	X	X	X	X	✓	X	X	✓
Flowers – Natives	1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	>6	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	X	X	✓	✓	X	X	✓
Glass & Plastic Houses	2	✓	✓	✓	X	X	✓	>2	X	✓	✓	X	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Green Tea ★	2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	>4	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	X	X	X	X	X	X	✓
Nursery – Containers	2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	>4	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	X	✓
Raspberries	1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	>4	X	✓	X	✓	X	X	X	X	✓	X	X	✓
Vineyards & Winery ★	1	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	>2	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	X	✓	✓	✓	X	X	✓
Lifestyle businesses & lifestyle farm options with potential for success...																				
Adventure Tourism	2	✓	?	✓	?	X	✓	N/A	✓	X	✓	X	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
B & B's	2	✓	?	✓	✓	✓	X	N/A	X	✓	✓	✓	X	X	✓	✓	✓	X	X	✓
Environmental Tourism	1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	N/A	X	✓	✓	✓	X	X	✓	✓	X	X	✓	✓
General Tourism	1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	N/A	X	✓	✓	✓	X	X	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓
Lifestyle Farms	1	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	X	2 - 8	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	X	X	✓	✓

Lifestyle Businesses	1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	2-8	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓
Other options considered with less potential for success... - 23 -																					
	RATING	Market	Econ. Return	Entry Costs	General Suitability	Climate & Soil	Land Prices	Min. Land Area	Broad Acre	Niche	Full Time	Part Time	Dieldrin	PCN	Regs.	Man. Skills	Labour Require	Comm. Issues	Enviro. Issues	Tour. Links	
Apples & Pears	3	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	>16	✓	X	✓	X	X	X	X	✓	✓	X	X	✓	
Aquaculture – Trout & Native	3	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	>4	X	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Black Walnut Timber	3	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	>8	✓	✓	X	✓	X	X	X	✓	X	X	X	✓	
Buck Wheat	3	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	X	>16	✓	✓	X	✓	X	X	X	✓	X	X	X	X	
Cherries	3	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	>12	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	X	X	✓	✓	X	X	✓	
Flowers – Traditional	3	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	>4	✓	✓	✓	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	X	✓	
Game Birds	3	✓	✓	X	X	X	✓	>2	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	X	X	✓		✓	
Ginseng	3	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	>1	x	✓	✓	✓	x	x	X	✓	x	x			
Mint Oil	3	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	>40	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	X	X	X	X	X	X	✓	
Native Grasses	3	✓	X	X	✓	✓	X	>2	X	✓	X	✓	X	X	X	✓	X	X	X		
Nuts – Chestnuts, Walnuts	3	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	>16	✓	✓	X	✓	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	✓	
Hazelnuts	3	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	>8	X	✓	X	✓	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	✓	
Olives – Oil	3	✓	X	✓	?	✓	✓	>16	✓	✓	X	✓	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	✓	
Olives – Pickling	3	✓	X	✓	?	✓	✓	>4	✓	✓	X	✓	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	✓	
Ostriches & Emus	3	X	X	X	X	X	X	?	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	X	✓	X	X	X	X	✓	
Poppies	3	X	X	X	✓	✓	✓	>10	✓	X	X	✓	✓	X	✓	X	X	✓	✓	X	
Poultry – Free Range Meat	3	✓	✓	X	X	X	X	>2	X	✓	X	✓	✓	X	✓	X	X	X	X	✓	
Poultry – Free Range Eggs	3	✓	✓	X	X	X	X	>2	X	✓	X	✓	✓	X	✓	X	X	X	X	✓	
Pyrethrum	3	X	X	X	✓	✓	✓	>10	✓	X	X	✓	✓	X	✓	X	X	X	X	✓	
Sheep & Goat Meat	3	✓	✓	X	X	✓	✓	>20	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	X	X	✓	✓	
Sheep & Goat wool & Fibre	3	X	X	X	X	✓	✓	>20	✓	X	✓	✓	X	X	X	✓	X	X	X	✓	
Stone Fruit	3	X	X	✓	X	X	✓	>12	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	X	X	✓	✓	X	X	✓	
Strawberries	3	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	>2	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	X	X	✓	✓	X	X	✓	
Vegetables	3	X	X	✓	X	X	✓	>20	✓	X	✓	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	X	✓	
Vodka Distillery	3	✓	X	✓	X	X	X	N/A	X	✓	✓	X	X	X	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	
Wine Grapes	3	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	>16	✓	✓	X	✓	X	X	X	✓	✓	X	X	✓	

Ratings...

1. Lower risk option with some certainty of successfully achieving desired market, economic, business and lifestyle outcomes
2. Reasonably certain land use or enterprise option
3. Some risk and uncertainty associated with land use or enterprise option

✓ - Category meets specific land use requirements **Or** Category assessment is an issue **Or** Category must be considered
 X – Category does not meets specific land use requirements **Or** Category assessment is not an issue **Or** Category does not need to be considered

Warning...
 There are risks associated with all the above options. They must be assessed according to independent economic risk analysis, business plan strategies and general property management plans

★ - Wildcard opportunities with chances of success reliant on specific conditions or circumstances

N/A – Not necessarily applicable to land size

- 24 -

ATTACHMENT 2:

SPECIFIC DETAILS OF KEY LAND USE OPTIONS (BROAD-ACRE)...

1. Cattle...

RATING 2 ★

<p>General suitability to area: Cattle have long been part of the potato enterprise mix at Gembrook. Cattle do very well on local pastures, however, there are major management issues concerning the uptake of dieldrin by cattle grazed on old potato ground. Dieldrin is metabolised into the fatty tissue of cattle and is considered a human health risk if cattle are not decontaminated. The potential of contaminated meat getting into the export food chain represents a major threat to Australia's billion-dollar beef export industry.</p> <p>Markets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Gembrook cattle can be sold on domestic and export markets under strict management protocols regulating production and sale (National Organo-chlorine Residue Management Plan) <input type="checkbox"/> Cattle can be bred and sold for fattening out of the district. <p>Key requirements & information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Gembrook cattle must be managed and sold according to management protocols administered by industry and DPI <p>Strengths of area & industry:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent climate and soils for high quality improved pasture production <input type="checkbox"/> Local potato growers have long experience with cattle production and management <input type="checkbox"/> Cattle are easy to manage on small and larger acreages <p>Weaknesses of area & industry:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Dieldrin soil contamination on most potato farms <input type="checkbox"/> Dieldrin is persistent in soils over long periods of time <input type="checkbox"/> Cattle from area cannot be sold directly for slaughter they must be decontaminated on clean pastures (NORM protocols) <input type="checkbox"/> Farmers need extra clean ground to decontaminate cattle 	<p>Opportunities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Production of stud cattle (regulated under NORM protocols) <input type="checkbox"/> Production of exotic breeds for stud purposes eg. miniature Highland cattle and Dexters <input type="checkbox"/> Ultra-mini feed lots for production of high value meat eg. Wagyu cattle <input type="checkbox"/> Local industry to work with DPI on local dieldrin bio-remediation trials <input type="checkbox"/> Existing cattle farmers may profit from refresher training on best practice cattle management on contaminated soils <input type="checkbox"/> Development of 'Living With Dieldrin' publication <p>Threats:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> If farmers do not follow management protocols <input type="checkbox"/> Lifestyle farmers represent a problems in managing dieldrin regulations <p>Considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Optimum property size over 10 hectares <input type="checkbox"/> Close working relationship with DPI <input type="checkbox"/> Development of 'Living With Dieldrin' publication <input type="checkbox"/> Formation of a rural real estate consultative group to formulate strategies to attract investment to the area <p>Commercial investment interests:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Existing potato growers <input type="checkbox"/> Lifestyle farmers <input type="checkbox"/> Rural and city real estate agents <p>★ <i>Wild card option with chances of success reliant on specific conditions or circumstances</i></p>
---	--

2. Farm Forestry Hardwood Saw Logs...

RATING 1

<p>General suitability to area: High rainfall and deep fertile soils are well suited to native hardwood species.</p> <p>Markets: There is increasing world demand for high quality hardwood timber. Australia is a large importer of this timber from overseas.</p> <p>Increasing environmental sensitivities to harvesting of old growth forests are and will result in further government closures of many traditional sources of supply of sawlogs. This situation is forcing forestry companies to increasingly rely on plantation supplies. Timber companies are now looking for potential plantation land to provide future supplies of quality hardwood timber.</p> <p>Key requirements & information: Suitable areas of land for plantations – over 16 hectares for farm forestry lots and over 40 hectares for company operations.</p> <p>Tenure arrangements are in the form of: out right ownership, lease, or lease/share investment.</p> <p>Suitable native species for Gembrook area (Brock, 2004): Silver Wattle (<i>Acacia dealbata</i>); Black Wattle (<i>Acacia mearnsii</i>); Blackwood (<i>Acacia melanoxylon</i>); Black She-oak (<i>Allocasuarina littoralis</i>); Brown Stringy Bark (<i>Eucalyptus baxteri</i>); Mountain Grey Gum (<i>E. cypellocarpa</i>); Broad Leaved Peppermint (<i>E. dives</i>); White Stringy Bark (<i>E. globoidea</i>); Yellow Stringy Bark (<i>E. muellerana</i>); Messmate (<i>E. obliqua</i>); Swamp Gum (<i>E. ovata</i>); Narrow Leaved Peppermint (<i>E. radiata</i>); Mountain Ash (<i>E. regnans</i>); Silver Top Ash (<i>E. eeberi</i>); and Manna gum, ribbon gum, white gum (<i>E. viminialis</i>).</p> <p>Suitable exotic species for Gembrook area: Northern Californian Black walnut (<i>Juglans hindsii</i>) and Eastern Californian Black</p>	<p>walnut (<i>Juglans nigra</i>).</p> <p>Strengths of area & industry:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent climate and soils for tree production <p>Weaknesses of area & industry:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Long term investment period – 20 to 30 years <input type="checkbox"/> Problems associated with single specie or monoculture plantings <input type="checkbox"/> Plantations are subject to council planning regulations <p>Opportunities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Provides alternative land use options for ex-potato growers <input type="checkbox"/> Ascetics - landscape beautification <input type="checkbox"/> Fits the future landscape amenity visions of the community <input type="checkbox"/> Improves local conservation and biodiversity values <input type="checkbox"/> Provides employment and boosts local economy <p>Threats:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Prone to wild fires <input type="checkbox"/> Challenges the values of the community whose families settled and cleared the original forests of Gembrook <input type="checkbox"/> Community attitudes to plantations as viable land use option <p>Considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Optimum property size over 16 hectares <input type="checkbox"/> The highest returns are for hardwood species <input type="checkbox"/> Plantations must be in close proximity to processing mills <input type="checkbox"/> Rural economies solely based on plantation timber production can result in social isolation tensions in some communities eg. Western District <p>Commercial investment interests:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Gippsland Private Forestry Inc., Bairnsdale <input type="checkbox"/> Hancocks Victorian Plantations Pty Ltd, Merrivale <input type="checkbox"/> Midway Pty Ltd, North Shore
--	---

RATING 1

3. Farm Forestry Hardwood Wood Pulp...

<p>General suitability to area: High rainfall and deep fertile soils are well suited to native hardwood species.</p> <p>Markets: There is increasing demand for hardwood wood chips for paper, particleboard and composite timber products in Australia and overseas.</p> <p>Similar environmental and supply access issues to saw log industry, with companies looking for land to grow and supply their future demand for wood pulp.</p> <p>Key requirements & information: Suitable areas of land for plantations – over 100 hectares for farm forestry and company operations.</p> <p>Tenure issues similar to saw logs.</p> <p>Preferred native species are Blue Gum (<i>Eucalyptus globulus</i>), Shining Gum (<i>E. nitens</i>) and radiata pine (<i>Pinus radiata</i>) as an exotic specie.</p> <p>Blue and Shining gums can be expected to be harvested within 15 years and radiata within 30 years, with gums providing double the return of softwood pine.</p> <p>Strengths of area & industry:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent climate and soils for tree production 	<p>Weaknesses of area & industry:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Negative impact on biodiversity especially with radiata pine <input type="checkbox"/> Long term investment with radiata (30 years) <input type="checkbox"/> Plantations are subject to council planning regulations <p>Opportunities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Provides alternative land use options for ex-potato growers and their families <input type="checkbox"/> Softens visual landscape impact <input type="checkbox"/> Partially satisfies future landscape values <input type="checkbox"/> Partially satisfies local conservation and biodiversity values <input type="checkbox"/> Provides employment and boost to local economy <p>Threats:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Prone to wild fires <input type="checkbox"/> Challenges community values of older farmers <input type="checkbox"/> Community resistance to single species wood chip plantations <input type="checkbox"/> Community attitudes to plantations as viable land use option <p>Considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Optimum property size over 100 hectares <input type="checkbox"/> Plantations must be in close proximity to processing mills <input type="checkbox"/> Rural economies solely based on plantation timber production can result in social isolation tensions in some communities eg. Western District <p>Commercial investment interests:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Gippsland Private Forestry Inc., Bairnsdale <input type="checkbox"/> Hancocks Victorian Plantations Pty Ltd, Merrivale <input type="checkbox"/> Midway Pty Ltd, North Shore
---	---

RATING 1

4. Field Nurseries...

<p>General suitability to area: An ideal environment with good soils and mild, cool climate for production of bare rooted deciduous fruit, ornamental trees, and advanced bare rooted trees and shrubs for the landscape industry and councils.</p> <p>Markets: The market remains stable with strong demand resulting from the residential housing boom and the consequential demand for advanced trees by the landscape industry.</p> <p>Demand remains strong for products from field nurseries with access to the latest fruit and ornamental varieties from Plant Breeders Rights breeding programs.</p> <p>Key requirements & information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Large areas of land that can be rotated (over 40 hectares) <input type="checkbox"/> Access to sites that are not prone to excessive winds <input type="checkbox"/> Good water supply <p>Strengths of area & industry:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Soils and climate <input type="checkbox"/> Large areas of available land at reasonable prices (half that of Monbulk/Silvan) <p>Weaknesses of area & industry:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Wind damage on ridges <input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty getting reliable farm labour at Gembrook 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Lacks reliable horticultural industry infrastructure and services <p>Opportunities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Could become another horticultural centre like Monbulk/Silvan <input type="checkbox"/> 'Opportunity to get in on the ground floor in Gembrook' (large areas of reasonably priced land) <input type="checkbox"/> Provides employment and boost to local economy <p>Threats:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Escalating land prices caused by influx of lifestyle farms <input type="checkbox"/> Conflict with lifestyle farmers over 'right to farm' issues <p>Considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Optimum property size over 40 hectares <input type="checkbox"/> PCN is not an issue – industry is already addressing DPI management and handling protocols <input type="checkbox"/> Formation of a rural real estate consultative group to formulate strategies to attract investment to the area <p>Commercial investment interests:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Increasing interest from Monbulk/Silvan growers who are being priced out by lifestyle farms <input type="checkbox"/> Gembrook is close enough to their home operations base at Monbulk/Silvan (40 minute round trip) <input type="checkbox"/> Attract nursery investment through promotions of the area in industry publications <input type="checkbox"/> Rural and city real estate agents
---	--

5. Horses (commercial and recreational)...

RATING 1

<p>General suitability to area: Excellent climate for pasture growth. Steeper slopes not an impediment to horses, unless paddock sizes are too small.</p> <p>Markets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The local recreational horse industry in the Hills is estimated by the sector to be worth \$3M (compared to estimated gross value of Gembrook's potato industry of \$1.7M (2003-2004)) <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial thoroughbred industry based around Cranbourne is valued at \$70M <input type="checkbox"/> A large thoroughbred industry is based around Cranbourne and Pakenham race courses <input type="checkbox"/> Significant potential for Gembrook to have a large commercial and recreational horse industry <p>Key requirements & information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Close collaboration between industry and local councils (Cardinia, Casey and Yarra Ranges) <input type="checkbox"/> Lifestyle farms need a minimum of 8 hectares to run horses <input type="checkbox"/> Stud and commercial horse properties require 20 to 40 hectares <input type="checkbox"/> Sustainable horses properties require at least 40% of available land to be rested at any one time <p>Strengths of area & industry:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Climate and pastures <input type="checkbox"/> Availability of large areas of reasonably priced land <input type="checkbox"/> Slopes are not a problem for horses, unless paddock sizes are too small <input type="checkbox"/> Horses are not troubled by the local dielidrin situation <input type="checkbox"/> Natural beauty and accessibility of area attractive to day riders <input type="checkbox"/> Proximity to large city based horse enthusiast population <input type="checkbox"/> Close proximity to major thoroughbred centres at Cranbourne and Pakenham race tracks <input type="checkbox"/> Strong, vocal industry groups (SEVEN and local associations) <p>Weaknesses of area & industry:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Contribute to local soil erosion problems on trails <input type="checkbox"/> Poorly maintained local roads cause injury and stress problems with horses transported in floats 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Road safety dangers associated with existing district trails <p>Opportunities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Potentially a valuable industry for area (commercial, recreational and tourism) <input type="checkbox"/> Could be come 'a major commercial and recreational horse area' <input type="checkbox"/> Networks of day trails linking other adjacent councils trails <input type="checkbox"/> Attract recreational horse owners and extensive support industry to the area; stud farms (thoroughbred and other breeds); commercial agistment, training, resting/spelling; horse tourism, including recreational day riders, and associated B&B's <input type="checkbox"/> Spin-offs from a proposed South Eastern Equestrian Complex (similar to Werribee) could help see Gembrook become a significant player in the local horse industry <p>Threats:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Misinformation about environmental weeds being spread by horses <input type="checkbox"/> Problems associated with erosion damage <input type="checkbox"/> Cost of public liability insurance for horse tourism operators <input type="checkbox"/> Adhoc, unplanned development of industry around low budget lifestyle farms <input type="checkbox"/> Animal welfare issues on lifestyle farms <p>Considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Optimum property size over 30 ha. (commercial) and over 8 ha. (recreational) <input type="checkbox"/> Formation of industry and council consultative group to advance equine development and investment issues <input type="checkbox"/> Upgrade and expand trails networks, parking and corralling facilities to attract day trippers and horse tourists to the area <input type="checkbox"/> Formation of a rural real estate consultative group to formulate strategies to attract investment to the area <p>Commercial investment interests:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Attract equine investment through promotions of the area in industry publications <input type="checkbox"/> Rural and city real estate agents
--	---

SPECIFIC DETAILS OF KEY LAND USE OPTIONS (SMALL SCALE NICHE OPTIONS)...

1. Blue Berries & Raspberries...

RATING 1

<p>General suitability to area: The local climate and soils are well suited to these crops. Even though soils are deep, they are low in nutrients and organic matter. Sometime wet springs and summer can cause problems with fungal diseases.</p> <p>Markets: There is still a strong market for blue berries and raspberries. The market for blueberries has not been fully exploited with 20% of population yet to try them.</p> <p>Pick your-own are a popular, low cost outlet for berries in the area.</p> <p>Local berries are marketed from early December until early May.</p> <p>Key requirements & information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Large dependable harvest labour force <input type="checkbox"/> Cool storage facilities <input type="checkbox"/> Close proximity to refrigerated transport <input type="checkbox"/> Good water supply <p>Strengths of area & industry:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Climate and soils <p>Weaknesses of area & industry:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Subject to weather damage at flowering and harvest <input type="checkbox"/> Very sensitive to post harvest damage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Transport damage over rough local roads <input type="checkbox"/> Blue berries take up to five years to come into full production <p>Opportunities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Pick your-own <input type="checkbox"/> Markets linked to tourism and food trails <input type="checkbox"/> Future production in plastic or glass houses could extend season and reduce weather damage <input type="checkbox"/> Can be grown as a small scale lifestyle crop <p>Threats:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Root rot disease (<i>Phytophthora cinnamomi</i>) <input type="checkbox"/> Shortage of harvest labour <p>Considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Optimum property size over 4 hectares <input type="checkbox"/> Labour availability <input type="checkbox"/> Marketing strategies <input type="checkbox"/> Formation of a rural real estate consultative group to formulate strategies to attract investment to the area <p>Commercial investment interests:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Attract berry investment through promotions of the area in industry publications <input type="checkbox"/> Rural and city real estate agents
--	---

2. Boutique Wineries & Vineyards...

RATING 1 ★

<p>General suitability to area: The area is a climatically marginal for wine grapes. In most cases soils are too fertile for premium quality wine grapes. Site selection for vineyards in the area needs to be on marginal, less fertile soil types. Selections of northeast facing slopes are also preferable to ensure grapes reach full maturity.</p> <p>Markets: Even though national and world wine markets are presently over supplied. Opportunities exist for small local boutique vineyards and wineries that are focused on food tourism and specialty distribution outlets.</p> <p>Key requirements & information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Cellar door outlets should be closely aligned with other district wineries and regional wine and food trails, as well as restaurants and retailers specialising in local brand sales <input type="checkbox"/> Specialise in the high quality end of the market (more than \$20 per bottle) <input type="checkbox"/> Aim to produce uniquely Cardinia Ranges style of quality wine <input type="checkbox"/> Diversified property income – additional off farm income as well as other agricultural and tourism sidelines <input type="checkbox"/> Crop yields must be minimised to achieve quality <p>Strengths of area & industry:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> High quality wine district – specialising in highly sought after varietal wines such as: Chardonnay, Sauvignon blanc and Pinot noir <input type="checkbox"/> Close to the large Melbourne weekend cellar door, tourist market <input type="checkbox"/> Strategically positioned between the Mornington Peninsula and Yarra Valley wine regions <p>Weaknesses of area & industry:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> A marginal wine producing area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> High cost of establishing small vineyards (\$22,000 per hectare) and boutique wineries (approximately \$1M – for a 100 tonne capacity winery) <input type="checkbox"/> Substantial off-farm income and investment subsidies needed <input type="checkbox"/> Long breakeven time for investment <input type="checkbox"/> Investing in an oversupplied market <input type="checkbox"/> Heavy regulation – planning, environment and food safety <p>Opportunities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> There is a growing local tourism market based on time rich, cashed up, city based, retired baby boomers <input type="checkbox"/> Associated week-day tourism from retirees <p>Threats:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Ongoing down turn in the industry <input type="checkbox"/> Failure to establish and promote the reputation of the area as a unified and unique region in its own right <p>Considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Optimum property size over 2 hectares <input type="checkbox"/> Most of the major boutique wineries have been funded by off-farm investment capital provided by owners from the health and engineering professions. <input type="checkbox"/> Formation of a rural real estate consultative group to formulate strategies to attract investment to the area <p>Commercial investment interests:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Rural and city real estate agents <input type="checkbox"/> Retiring professional baby boomers <input type="checkbox"/> Attract boutique wine investment through promotions of the area in industry publications <p>★ <i>Wild card options with chances of success reliant on specific conditions or circumstances</i></p>
--	---

3. Green Tea...

RATING 2 ★

<p>General suitability to area: Well suited to the red volcanic soils and high rainfall of Gembrook. Green tea (<i>Camellia sinensis</i>) grows best in southeastern Japan in areas with rainfall over 1,000mm per year (similar to Gembrook). Ornamental camellia, a similar species to commercial green tea, grows prolifically in the Dandenong Ranges, as is evidenced in local gardens and at the National Rhododendron Gardens at Olinda.</p> <p>Markets: There is increasing demand for green tea around the world since its consumption has been linked with its reported ability to reduce the risk of cancer.</p> <p>Production of green tea in the Ovens and Kiewa Valleys of north-eastern Victoria is expected to fill some of the demand for 10,000 to 15,000 tonnes of tea per year by a large Japanese beverage company.</p> <p>This company is looking to source increasing supplies from north-east Victoria over the next 10 years. The company has also indicated that in the future it will be looking at other supply regions, as well.</p> <p>Key requirements & information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Fertile, deep soils and high natural rainfall. <input type="checkbox"/> Preferable for production sites to be within two hours distance from the processing plant to ensure that leaves are processed within two hours of harvest <p>Strengths of area & industry:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Local climate and soils are almost perfect for green tea growing <input type="checkbox"/> Presently being grown in the north-east by ex-tobacco growers and beef farmers – potential growers in Gembrook come from similar backgrounds <input type="checkbox"/> Company has built up good relationships with its' growers 	<p>Weaknesses of area & industry:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Too far from its new processing plant and technical resource base at Wangaratta <input type="checkbox"/> Gembrook would have to be assessed for its suitability by the company, which might take some time <input type="checkbox"/> Its introduction to Gembrook would require that new post harvest storage and transport technology would have to be developed <p>Opportunities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> An industry that offers some potential for Gembrook as a suitable alternative to potatoes <input type="checkbox"/> Joint post harvest research which may solve the transport problem is presently being proposed by the company and DPI <input type="checkbox"/> Old tobacco soils in the north-east have similar dieltrin contamination problems <input type="checkbox"/> The company has expressed interest in visiting Gembrook to look at the area and speak with local farmers and council <p>Threats:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The company may have concerns about dieltrin contamination <input type="checkbox"/> Complications in north-east Victoria might distract company's expansion plans <p>Considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Optimum property size between 4 and 8 hectares <input type="checkbox"/> Serious efforts would need to be made by CSC Economic Development Unit to attract this company to Gembrook <input type="checkbox"/> Alpine Shire spent many years attracting this investment to the region <p>Commercial investment interests:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Ito En Australia Pty Ltd <p>★ <i>Wild card option with chances of success reliant on specific conditions or circumstances</i></p>
--	--

RATING 1

4. Native Flowers...

<p>General suitability to area: Suited to soils and climate, although access during wet winters can be difficult on hilly country. Availability of irrigation water is a critical factor in maximising production of quality blooms.</p> <p>Markets: The national flower market for flowers in general is over supplied and returns are either static or have fallen. Export of native flowers such, as proteas are the only market bright spot. Industry is going through major restructuring period. Concentration of production and marketing power is occurring, with fewer, larger operators.</p> <p>Flower varieties follow fashion trends and because of this, success requires that producers keep up with the latest in new flower varieties by constantly planting the latest varieties from Plant Breeders Rights programs.</p> <p>Production of proteas in Gembrook runs for ten months from October.</p> <p>Key requirements & information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Access to an adequate supply of irrigation water <input type="checkbox"/> Ownership and keeping up with the latest plant varieties <input type="checkbox"/> Cool storage facilities <input type="checkbox"/> Close proximity to refrigerated transport to market <p>Strengths of area & industry:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Climate and soils 	<p>Weaknesses of area & industry:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Shortage of a large dependable labour force <input type="checkbox"/> Distance from range of horticultural support services eg. Silvan/Monbulk <p>Opportunities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Establish a native flower industry in the area to share resources and services <p>Threats:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Shortage of labour <input type="checkbox"/> Conflict with lifestyle farmers over 'right to farm' issues <input type="checkbox"/> Growing Chinese production and threats of cheap imports <p>Considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Optimum property size over 6 hectares <input type="checkbox"/> Attraction of flower growers to area to establish critical mass and support services <input type="checkbox"/> Formation of a rural real estate consultative group to formulate strategies to attract investment to the area from Monbu k/Silvan <p>Commercial investment interests:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Rural and city real estate agents <input type="checkbox"/> Attract flower investment through promotions of the area in industry publications
---	--

ATTACHMENT 3:

LOCAL AGRICULTURAL LAND USE CASE STUDIES...

The Gembrook area has a wealth of small and large agricultural and lifestyle businesses that successfully embrace a number of agricultural land use options. These businesses range from successful broad-acre cattle grazing, commercial and recreational horse enterprises, smaller scale nursery, flower and pick-your-own berry farms, boutique wineries, recreational fishing and traditional tourist and recreational B&B's, and arts and craft businesses.

The following nine case studies provide a snap shot of some of these agricultural and tourist businesses:

AQUACULTURE – Trout & Native Fish

RATING 3

Australian Rainbow Trout Farm, Macclesfield...



Background:

The Australian Rainbow Trout Farm was started 50 years ago and is situated in a picturesque bush setting beside the Woori Yallock Creek.

The farm is primarily a tourist attraction, hosting over 20,000 visitors a year. It provides a 'guaranteed fishing experience' for mainly city people. The farm comprises trout breeding and rearing ponds, two large natural fishing dams (one dedicated to fly fishing), one hectare of native foliage plants, picnic and BBQ facilities for visitors, and a menagerie of tame birds for children to feed. It also breeds and sells trout fingerlings for stocking farm dams.

Why he got into this business?

- The present manager took over from his parents after working and living on the farm for years and falling in love with fish farming and the environment
- He had a passion to make the business work
- He failed to see the challenge of 'spending a lifetime as a chartered accountant'

Advantages of the Gembrook area:

- The general area is a major weekend tourist destination for Melbourne people heading up to the Dandenong Ranges, Yarra Valley and Warburton
- The areas natural beauty is a big asset

Things to look out for in this business:

- You need a constant supply of fresh flowing water
- You need a very detailed technical knowledge of aquaculture

His secrets of success:

- Developing a diverse business (tourism, dam stocking and foliage plants)
- Self sufficiency and control of the supply of fish stocks
- Focusing the advertising dollar on a well researched and proven customer base
- 'Learning to negotiate the land mines of local, state and federal government departments' (ten separate departments and regulations to deal with)

CONTAINER NURSERIES

RATING 2

Wardales Nursery, Gembrook...



Background:

Wardales is a semi-advanced container tree and shrub nursery that has been in business for 10 years in a picturesque, forested site on the northern edge of the Bunyip State Forest.

Why I got into this business?

- "I was wanting to get into my own nursery business when this bargain basement nursery site came on to the market"

- ❑ Even though the site was isolated it was a lifestyle decision that justified our decision

Advantages of the Gembrook area:

- ❑ Apart from lifestyle, there actually aren't many for nurseries trying get a quick turn around of plants
- ❑ This particular site is cold and plant growth is slow (8 months growth a year) compared to Mornington Peninsula (10-11 months growth)
- ❑ Deciduous plants harden up well and get good early autumn colored leaves

Things to look out for in this business:

- ❑ Gembrook is a bit hilly and windy for container plant nurseries – ground should preferably be flat
- ❑ Good, qualified labour is very hard to come by in Gembrook

Our secrets to success:

- ❑ It is in 'our efficiency and marketing'
- ❑ 'We employ automated irrigation and low management and maintenance systems to make work easier and cheaper'

FIELD NURSERIES

RATING 1

Monbulk Rose Farm, Gembrook...



Background:

Rosebrook Estate is a Gembrook based field nursery of Monbulk Rose Farm, a wholesale producer of bush and standard roses, and landscaping scrubs. The proprietor needed a new site where he could rotate nursery production around. The Gembrook branch of the business was set up two years ago.

Advantages of the Gembrook area:

- ❑ We are very happy with extending our operation to Gembrook – it offered us a number of technical and business advantages
 - ❑ 'We bought at Gembrook because the land was good value for money'
 - ❑ Soils and climate are similar to Monbulk
- ❑ We have access to a good water supply
 - ❑ We were being forced out of lease land at Monbulk/Silvan because of escalating prices and pressure from lifestyle farms
 - ❑ Gembrook is also close to our home base at Monbulk

ADVANCED TREE NURSERIES

RATING 1

Timbertop Advanced Trees, Gembrook...



Background:

Moved to the area from Silvan six years ago because there were 'larger areas of cheap land available at Gembrook.' Timbertop produces large advanced deciduous and evergreen container grown trees for the landscape and council trade on a 16-hectare nursery site.

Advantages of the Gembrook area:

- ❑ Cheap land
- ❑ Excellent deep soil for growing advanced bare rooted stocks

Things to look out for in this business:

- ❑ Gembrook is a too windy for container plants – you need to select protected sites
- ❑ Labour is hard to come by in Gembrook
- ❑ Gembrook lacks essential horticultural services that can be found in intensive production centre like Monbulk/Silvan

Our secret to success:

- ❑ We are hands on owner operators

NATIVE FLOWERS

RATING 1

Ausflora Pacific, Gembrook...



Background:

Ausflora Pacific is one of the world's largest protea farms. It started in Gembrook in 1980 as a 120-hectare corporate investment business. Ausflora Pacific has been under new management since 1989. It is a business that supplies proteas flowers to domestic and export markets, as well as nursery plants. Ausflora Pacific retains its market dominance by growing only the latest blooms. It also breeds new varieties that bring premium prices in the market.

Ausflora Pacific became a household name during the Sydney Olympics where it was the sole supplier of Waratah flowers for the victory bouquets presented to winning athletes.

Advantages of the Gembrook area:

- ❑ Proteas are suited to the soils and climate of the area and produce flowers for ten months of the year

Things to look out for in this business:

- ❑ It takes four years for plants to reach full production
- ❑ The Australian market for flowers is presently over supplied and prices are depressed
- ❑ The only growth in the flower market is in native flowers for export

Our secrets to success:

- ❑ 'Quality and consistency'
- ❑ 'Keeping a breast of market trends with the latest blooms'

TRADITIONAL FLOWERS

RATING 3

Scalora Flowers, Gembrook...



Background:

Jess and Lucia Scalora were once potato growers. Following a major tractor accident in 1996, Jess was literally thrown out of work. Lucia decided that to survive they had to do something different. Two years previously, Lucia began growing gerberas as a hobby and all of a sudden they were forced to turn her hobby into a business to survive.

Now Lucia and Jess are successful, full time gerbera flowers growers and marketers with five large controlled atmosphere greenhouses.

Advantages of the Gembrook area:

- ❑ Gembrook does not have any special advantages for them, other than it is their home

Things to look out for in this business:

- ❑ Greenhouses are an expensive investments
- ❑ Because they are an intensive production system, a lot of technical knowledge has to be learnt to successfully manage greenhouses and the crop
- ❑ Growing gerberas in greenhouses in a cool climate is expensive because greenhouse temperatures have to be maintained 24 hours a day with gas heating
- ❑ Because there is no mains gas passing the farm, it has to be trucked in every week

Our secrets to success:

- ❑ It has taken 'persistence and determination to build up our gerbera business from scratch'
- ❑ The secret to success in flowers is consistency and quality
- ❑ Marketing and 'good customer service' are also important success factors – they directly supply some of the best florists in the Melbourne CBD and adjoining high income suburbs

HORSES - Commercial

RATING 1

Emerald Valley Farm, Emerald...



Background:

Emerald Valley Farm is a forty-hectare, five star equine tourism facility. It is 'Australia's home of the Tennessee Walking Horse.' The Tennessee Walking Horse is regarded as the world's most comfortable pleasure horse. It is a stud facility with twenty-six Tennessee Walking Horses, including five stallions, agistment paddocks, and a large indoor training and performance arena, as well as five star self contained accommodation for visiting horse enthusiasts.

Emerald Valley Farms could be described as the centrepiece of future equine industry developments in the Hills district of Cardinia Shire.

Advantages of the Gembrook area:

- ❑ The 'scenic beauty of the Hills and the wealth of tourist attractions' in the area is an important feature for potential investors in equine tourism to consider
- ❑ The 'climate and soils are ideal for pasture production'
- ❑ It has the potential for becoming the 'the recreational horse centre of Melbourne' with extensive interconnected networks of horse trails for visiting riders
- ❑ Easy access from all of metropolitan Melbourne
- ❑ Its proximity to major thoroughbred equestrian facilities at Cranbourne and Pakenham

ALPACAS – Stud Animals & Fibre

RATING 2

Truleen Downs Alpaca Stud, Toomuc Valley...



Background:

Truleen Downs is a multi-dimensional lifestyle business revolving around alpacas. The operators have been involved with the alpaca industry for 14 years. Truleen Downs is an alpaca stud, agistment property, alpaca tourism, merchandising and training facility (alpaca husbandry and fleece spinning), as well as a B&B. The stud's owners are active members of the Toomuc Valley Tourism Group, which enthusiastically promotes the mini-gourmet, deli trail attractions and produce of all tourist destinations in the Valley.

Why we got into this business?

- ❑ Mainly because 'we have a love and passion for working with animals'
- ❑ Wanted to get away from 'the pace of city living' for a less demanding and relaxing rural lifestyle business

Advantages of the Gembrook area:

Even though they have been keeping a few steps ahead of the relentless suburban sprawl over the years, they now feel that they have now settled down far enough away from suburbia in the scenic Toomuc Valley.

Things to look out for in this business:

- ❑ 'To make a living from a lifestyle business you need to have a number of income streams'
- ❑ The 'alpaca industry is still in its infancy in Australia' – it is expected to become a commercial fleece industry by 2012
- ❑ Stocking rates in this area are about seven head per hectare (similar to sheep)
- ❑ 'To earn a viable income from fleece, a farm would need to run at least 200 head of alpacas'

Our secrets to success:

- ❑ Being flexible and prepared to take on a number of rural enterprises at the same time
- ❑ Collaborating closely with neighbouring tourist businesses
- ❑ Having 'a passion and love for what we do'

Fred's Ginseng Products, Gembrook...



Background:

Tucked away in the depth of the forest to the east of Gembrook is a small emerging infant industry called ginseng. Ginseng is an important medicinal herb that is native to Korea, China and the east coast of the USA. Ginseng has had a long history of use as a therapeutic medicinal product in eastern medicine.

It is either grown from seed in the open under heavy shade cover, using intensive production methods, or under more natural conditions on a shaded forest floor under majestic eucalypts trees, as is the case at Fred and Charlene Hosemans property.

Grown under natural conditions, ginseng normally takes seven to eight years to grow from to harvested, while under intensive production, it takes only three to four years. The naturally grown root is less productive and brings higher prices than roots grown under intensive production. There are five known ginseng growers in the Gembrook area.

The Hosemans have progressed from growing ginseng to actually manufacturing a cosmetic product from plants grown on their Gembrook property. Fred and Charlene are about to launch a new ginseng cream on to the local health products market in September. The product will be marketed for its attributes as a cream that hydrates, soothes and protects skin that has been exposed to adverse conditions.

Fred and Charlene are also experimenting with growing a range of other unusual niche medicinal plants on their property.

Advantages of the Gembrook area:

'Gembrook is regarded as one of the best climates in Australia for growing ginseng.' The local forest environment is ideal for the production of the natural product.

Things to look out for in this business:

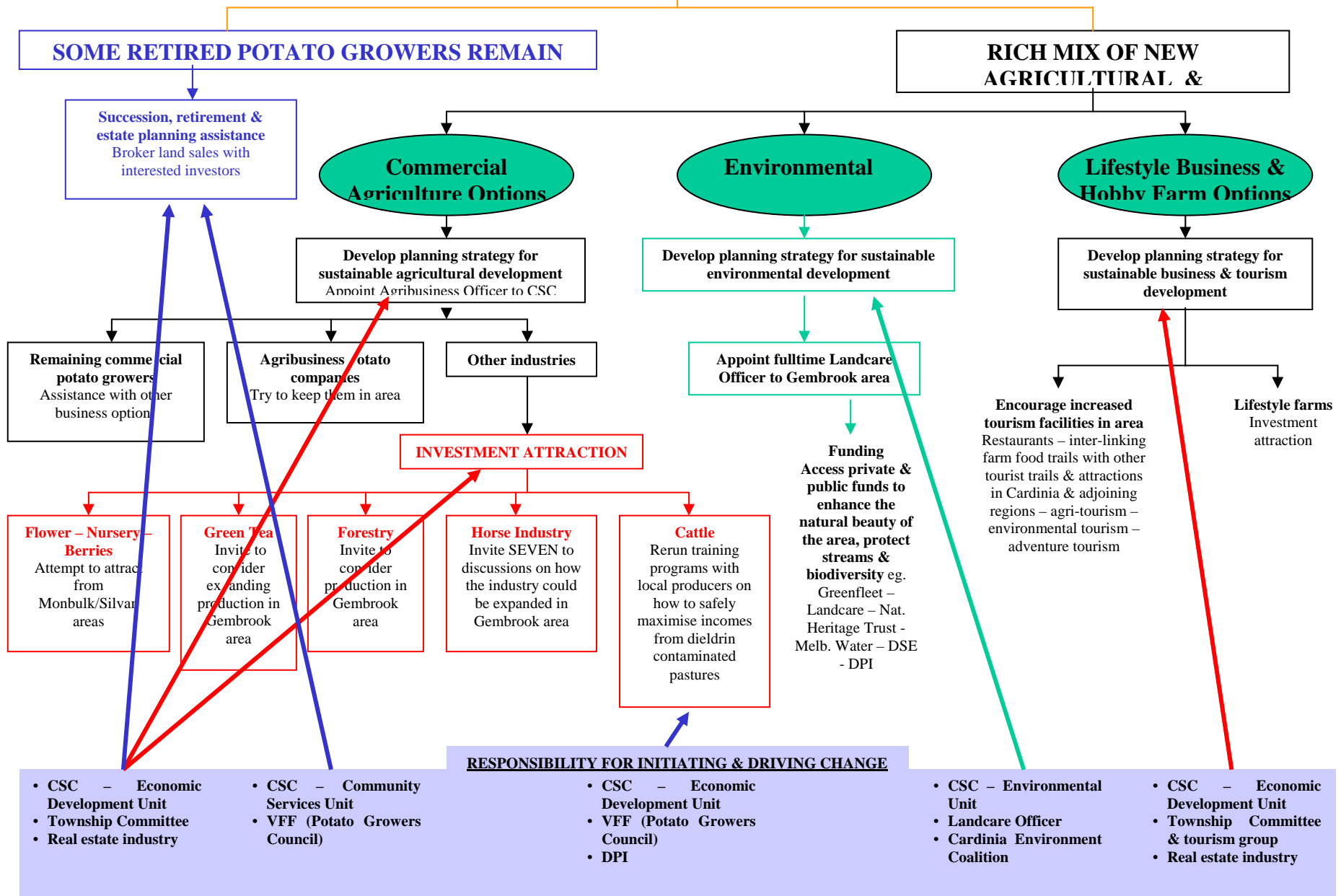
- ❑ It is still an infant industry and there is still a lot to learn about growing and marketing the crop
- ❑ 'Don't get too carried away with the hype of get rich quick corporate investment schemes'
- ❑ 'Getting into the manufacture and marketing of products with medicinal features is difficult, because it can get tied up with pharmaceutical registration complications'

The secret to our success:

Take is easy, don't rush into it, and learn as much as possible about the crop before going into production.



IMPLEMENTATION FLOW CHART – GEMBROOK’S AGRICULTURAL & LIFESTYLE LAND



ATTACHMENT 5:

SOURCES OF FUNDING, INFORMATION, SUPPORT & COLLABORATION...

FUNDING	INFORMATION, SUPPORT & COLLABORATION
1. ECONOMIC SERVICES...	
Dieldrin... <input type="checkbox"/> DPI – Box Hill, Ellinbank, Wangaratta, Ovens and Rutherglen <input type="checkbox"/> Environment Protection Authority <input type="checkbox"/> Horticultural Australia Limited <input type="checkbox"/> Rural Industries Research & Services Corporation	<input type="checkbox"/> Cardinia Shire Council – Community Services, Economic & Environment Units <input type="checkbox"/> DPI – Box Hill, Ellinbank, Wangaratta, Ovens and Rutherglen <input type="checkbox"/> Environment Protection Authority <input type="checkbox"/> Local government departments – Alpine, Indigo & Yarra Ranges <input type="checkbox"/> Victorian Potato Growers Council
Fish... <input type="checkbox"/> Department of Agriculture Fisheries & Forestry <input type="checkbox"/> Fisheries Research & Development Corporation <input type="checkbox"/> National Heritage Trust <input type="checkbox"/> Rural Industries Research & Development Corporation	<input type="checkbox"/> DPI – Queenscliff
Food... <input type="checkbox"/> DPI – Agribusiness Initiative <input type="checkbox"/> DSE – Regional Planning <input type="checkbox"/> Gippsland Agribusiness Forum <input type="checkbox"/> Regional Development Victoria (Food Group)	<input type="checkbox"/> Cardinia Shire Council – Economic Development Unit <input type="checkbox"/> DPI – Agr business Initiative & Bendigo <input type="checkbox"/> Gippsland Agr business Forum <input type="checkbox"/> Local government departments – Alpine, Bass, Casey, Indigo & Yarra Ranges <input type="checkbox"/> Monash University – Faculty of Marketing & Tourism <input type="checkbox"/> Regional Development Victoria - Regional Industries Division (Food Group)
Forestry... <input type="checkbox"/> Australian Green House Office <input type="checkbox"/> Cooperative Research Centres <input type="checkbox"/> Department of Agriculture Fisheries & Forestry <input type="checkbox"/> Environment Australia <input type="checkbox"/> Gippsland Agribusiness Forum <input type="checkbox"/> Greenfleet Australia <input type="checkbox"/> Land Protection Incentive Scheme <input type="checkbox"/> Rural Industries Research & Development Corporation	<input type="checkbox"/> Australian Paper Plantations <input type="checkbox"/> Cardinia Shire Council – Economic Development Unit <input type="checkbox"/> DPI – Box Hill <input type="checkbox"/> DSE – Melbourne <input type="checkbox"/> Gippsland Agribusiness Forum <input type="checkbox"/> Gippsland Private Forestry Inc. <input type="checkbox"/> Greenfleet Australia <input type="checkbox"/> Local government departments – Alpine, Bass, Casey, Indigo & Yarra Ranges <input type="checkbox"/> Midway Pty Ltd
Horses & other livestock... <input type="checkbox"/> Rural Industries Research & Development Corporation	<input type="checkbox"/> Australian Alpaca Association <input type="checkbox"/> South East Victoria Equestrian Network (SEVEN) <input type="checkbox"/> Cardinia Shire Council – Economic, Environment & Parks & Recreation Units <input type="checkbox"/> City of Casey – Parks & Recreation Unit <input type="checkbox"/> Cockatoo Pony Club <input type="checkbox"/> Gembrook Adult Riding Club <input type="checkbox"/> Local government departments – Alpine, Bass, Casey, Indigo & Yarra Ranges <input type="checkbox"/> Macclesfield Adult Riding Club <input type="checkbox"/> Macclesfield Pony Club <input type="checkbox"/> Various cattle stud breed societies
Horticulture (General)... <input type="checkbox"/> AusIndustry – Innovation Access Program <input type="checkbox"/> Department of Agriculture Fisheries & Forestry <input type="checkbox"/> Gippsland Agribusiness Forum <input type="checkbox"/> Grape & Wine Research & Development Corporation <input type="checkbox"/> Horticultural Australia Limited <input type="checkbox"/> Rural Finance Commission – FarmBi\$ <input type="checkbox"/> Rural Industries Research & Development Corporation	<input type="checkbox"/> Australian Blueberry Growers Association <input type="checkbox"/> Australian Green Tea Growers Assoc. <input type="checkbox"/> Cardinia Shire Council – Economic Development Unit <input type="checkbox"/> DPI – Bendigo, Box Hill, Knoxfield & Ovens <input type="checkbox"/> Gippsland Agr business Forum <input type="checkbox"/> Gippsland Olive Growers Assoc. <input type="checkbox"/> Ito En <input type="checkbox"/> Local government departments – Alpine, Bass, Casey, Indigo & Yarra Ranges <input type="checkbox"/> Mornington Peninsula Olive Assoc. <input type="checkbox"/> Nursery Garden Industry Victoria <input type="checkbox"/> Rural Finance Commission – FarmBi\$ <input type="checkbox"/> VFF - Flower, Blue Berry, Potato, Rubus & Strawberry groups <input type="checkbox"/> Victorian Cherry Growers Assoc. <input type="checkbox"/> Victorian Strawberry Growers Assoc. <input type="checkbox"/> Victorian Wine Industry Assoc.
Horticulture (Potatoes)... <input type="checkbox"/> AusIndustry – Innovation Access Program <input type="checkbox"/> Australian Potato Industry Council <input type="checkbox"/> AUSVEG <input type="checkbox"/> Horticultural Australia Limited <input type="checkbox"/> Rural Finance Commission – FarmBu\$ <input type="checkbox"/> Rural Industries Research & Development Corporation	<input type="checkbox"/> Cardinia Shire Council – Economic Development Unit <input type="checkbox"/> Greenland Holdings <input type="checkbox"/> Monash University – Faculty of Marketing & Tourism, Berwick <input type="checkbox"/> Moraitis Fresh <input type="checkbox"/> Red Gem Growers and Packers <input type="checkbox"/> VFF (Potato Growers Group) <input type="checkbox"/> Victorian Potato Growers Council

<p>Investment attraction...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> DPI – Agribusiness Initiative <input type="checkbox"/> Gippsland Agribusiness Forum <input type="checkbox"/> Regional Development Victoria 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Cardinia Shire Council – Community Services, Economic Development & Environment Units <input type="checkbox"/> Department of Innovation Industry & Regional Development – Business & Industry Assistance Programs <input type="checkbox"/> DPI – Agr business Initiative <input type="checkbox"/> Gippsland Agr business Forum <input type="checkbox"/> Local government departments – Alpine, Bass, Casey, Indigo & Yarra Ranges <input type="checkbox"/> Regional Development Victoria <input type="checkbox"/> Barry Plant Real Estate <input type="checkbox"/> Bell Real Estate <input type="checkbox"/> Frank Facey Real Estate <input type="checkbox"/> Gerard Collins Real Estate <input type="checkbox"/> Jacobs & Lowe Real Estate <input type="checkbox"/> Ray White Real Estate
<p>Meat...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Department of Agriculture Fisheries & Forestry <input type="checkbox"/> Gippsland Agribusiness Forum <input type="checkbox"/> Meat and Livestock Australia <input type="checkbox"/> Rural Finance Commission – FarmBi\$ <input type="checkbox"/> Rural Industries Research & Development Corporation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Cardinia Shire Council – Economic Development Unit <input type="checkbox"/> DPI – Box Hill, Ellinbank, Wangaratta, and Rutherglen <input type="checkbox"/> Environment Protection Authority <input type="checkbox"/> Gippsland Agr business Forum <input type="checkbox"/> Local government departments – Alpine, Bass, Casey, Indigo & Yarra Ranges <input type="checkbox"/> Rural Finance Commission – FarmBi\$ <input type="checkbox"/> Various cattle, boar goat, sheep & breed societies
<p>New industries...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Department of Agriculture Fisheries & Forestry <input type="checkbox"/> Rural Industries Research & Development Corporation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Australian Ginseng Growers Association - Gembrook <input type="checkbox"/> Cardinia Shire Council – Economic Development Unit <input type="checkbox"/> DPI – Bendigo
<p>New product development...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Department of Agriculture Fisheries & Forestry <input type="checkbox"/> Horticultural Australia Limited <input type="checkbox"/> Rural Industries Research & Development Corporation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Cardinia Shire Council – Economic Development Unit <input type="checkbox"/> DPI – Bendigo, Box Hill, Knoxfield & Ovens
<p>Potato cyst nematode (PCN)...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Australian Potato Industry Council <input type="checkbox"/> AUSVEG <input type="checkbox"/> Horticultural Australia Limited 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Cardinia Shire Council – Community Services, Economic & Environment Units <input type="checkbox"/> DPI – Plant Standards <input type="checkbox"/> Victorian Potato Growers Council
<p>Post harvest...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Department of Agriculture Fisheries & Forestry <input type="checkbox"/> Rural Industries Research & Development Corporation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> DPI – Knoxfield & Queenscliff
<p>Regional & economic development...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> AusIndustry – Innovation Access Program <input type="checkbox"/> AUSTRADE <input type="checkbox"/> Department of Agriculture Fisheries & Forestry <input type="checkbox"/> Department of Infrastructure <input type="checkbox"/> Department of Innovation Industry & Regional Development – Business & Industry Assistance Programs <input type="checkbox"/> DPI – Agr business Initiative <input type="checkbox"/> DSE – Regional Planning <input type="checkbox"/> Gippsland Agr business Forum <input type="checkbox"/> Regional Development Victoria <input type="checkbox"/> Rural Communities Program <input type="checkbox"/> Rural Industries Research & Development Corporation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Australian Green Tea Growers Assoc. <input type="checkbox"/> Cardinia Shire Council – Community Services, Economic Development and Environment Units <input type="checkbox"/> DPI – Bendigo, Box Hill, Knoxfield & Ovens <input type="checkbox"/> Gippsland Agr business Forum <input type="checkbox"/> Gippsland Olive Growers Assoc. <input type="checkbox"/> Gippsland Private Forestry Inc. <input type="checkbox"/> Ito En Australia Pty Ltd <input type="checkbox"/> Local government departments – Alpine, Bass, Casey, Indigo & Yarra Ranges <input type="checkbox"/> Mornington Peninsula Olive Assoc. <input type="checkbox"/> Nursery Garden Industry Victoria <input type="checkbox"/> VFF - Flower, Blue Berry, Potato, Rubus & Strawberry groups <input type="checkbox"/> Victorian Cherry Growers Assoc. <input type="checkbox"/> Victorian Strawberry Growers Assoc. <input type="checkbox"/> Victorian Wine Industry Assoc.
<p>Tourism...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Tourism Victoria <input type="checkbox"/> Monash University – Faculty of Marketing & Tourism, Berwick <input type="checkbox"/> Parks Victoria 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Cardinia Shire Council – Tourism Unit <input type="checkbox"/> Cardinia Ranges Vignerons Association <input type="checkbox"/> Cardinia Tourism Network <input type="checkbox"/> Dandenong Ranges Tourism <input type="checkbox"/> Friends of Bunyip State Park <input type="checkbox"/> Gateway to Gippsland Food & Wine Network <input type="checkbox"/> Local government departments – Alpine, Bass, Casey, Indigo & Yarra Ranges <input type="checkbox"/> Monash University – Faculty of Marketing & Tourism, Berwick <input type="checkbox"/> Parks Victoria <input type="checkbox"/> Puffing Billy Country Tourism <input type="checkbox"/> Toomuc Valley Tourist Operators Group <input type="checkbox"/> Yarra Valley Regional Tourism Association
<p>2. ENVIRONMENT...</p>	
<p>Biodiversity...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Catchment Management Authorities <input type="checkbox"/> Cooperative Research Centres <input type="checkbox"/> Department of Agriculture Fisheries & Forestry <input type="checkbox"/> Environment Australia <input type="checkbox"/> Ian Potter Foundation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Cardinia Environment Coalition <input type="checkbox"/> Cardinia Shire Council – Environment Unit <input type="checkbox"/> Catchment Management Authorities <input type="checkbox"/> DPI & DSE – Box Hill <input type="checkbox"/> Landcare

<input type="checkbox"/> Melbourne Water <input type="checkbox"/> National Heritage Trust	<input type="checkbox"/> Melbourne Water <input type="checkbox"/> Peppermint Ridge Farm <input type="checkbox"/> St John's Hill Landcare Group
Environment... <input type="checkbox"/> Australian Biological Resources Study <input type="checkbox"/> Australian Green House Office <input type="checkbox"/> Catchment Management Authorities <input type="checkbox"/> Cooperative Research Centres <input type="checkbox"/> Department of Agriculture Fisheries & Forestry <input type="checkbox"/> Earthwatch <input type="checkbox"/> Environment Australia <input type="checkbox"/> Environment Protection Authority <input type="checkbox"/> Fisheries Research & Development Corporation <input type="checkbox"/> Ian Potter Foundation <input type="checkbox"/> Land & Water Resources Research & Development Corporation <input type="checkbox"/> Landcare Australia <input type="checkbox"/> Melbourne Water <input type="checkbox"/> National Heritage Trust <input type="checkbox"/> SouthCorp	<input type="checkbox"/> Cardinia Environment Coalition <input type="checkbox"/> Cardinia Shire Council – Environment Unit <input type="checkbox"/> Catchment Management Authorities <input type="checkbox"/> DPI & DSE – Box Hill <input type="checkbox"/> Landcare <input type="checkbox"/> Local government departments – Alpine, Bass, Casey, Indigo & Yarra Ranges <input type="checkbox"/> Melbourne Water <input type="checkbox"/> Peppermint Ridge Farm <input type="checkbox"/> St John's Hill Landcare Group
Water... <input type="checkbox"/> Catchment Management Authorities <input type="checkbox"/> Department of Agriculture Fisheries & Forestry <input type="checkbox"/> Environment Australia <input type="checkbox"/> Melbourne Water <input type="checkbox"/> National Heritage Trust <input type="checkbox"/> Rural Industries Research & Development Corporation	<input type="checkbox"/> DPI & DSE – Box Hill <input type="checkbox"/> Melbourne Water
3. COMMUNITY CAPACITY BUILDING...	
Leadership... <input type="checkbox"/> Australian Rural Leadership Foundation <input type="checkbox"/> Australian Women in Agriculture <input type="checkbox"/> Department of Agriculture Fisheries & Forestry <input type="checkbox"/> Department of Community Services <input type="checkbox"/> Foundation of Australian Agricultural Women <input type="checkbox"/> Queen's Trust for Young Australians	<input type="checkbox"/> Australian Rural Leadership Foundation <input type="checkbox"/> Cardinia Shire Council – Community Services Unit <input type="checkbox"/> DPI – Bendigo, Box Hill & Melbourne <input type="checkbox"/> Rural Finance Commission – FarmBu\$
Potato industry wind down & adjustment... <input type="checkbox"/> AusIndustry – Innovation Access Program <input type="checkbox"/> Centerlink – Farm Help <input type="checkbox"/> Department of Community Services <input type="checkbox"/> Rural Finance Commission – FarmBi\$	<input type="checkbox"/> AusIndustry – Innovation Access Program <input type="checkbox"/> Cardinia Shire Council – Community Services Unit <input type="checkbox"/> Centerlink – Farm Help <input type="checkbox"/> Greenlands Holdings <input type="checkbox"/> Local government departments – Alpine, Bass, Casey & Yarra Ranges <input type="checkbox"/> Monash University – Faculty of Marketing, Berwick <input type="checkbox"/> Rural Finance Commission – FarmBu\$
Professional development... <input type="checkbox"/> AusIndustry – Innovation Access Program <input type="checkbox"/> AUSTRADE <input type="checkbox"/> Australian Rural Leadership Foundation <input type="checkbox"/> Australian Women in Agriculture <input type="checkbox"/> Department of Agriculture Fisheries & Forestry <input type="checkbox"/> Department of Community Services <input type="checkbox"/> Department of Industry Science Resources <input type="checkbox"/> Foundation of Australian Agricultural Women <input type="checkbox"/> Horticultural Australia Limited <input type="checkbox"/> Queen's Trust for Young Australians <input type="checkbox"/> Rural Industries Research & Development Corporation	<input type="checkbox"/> Australian Rural Leadership Foundation <input type="checkbox"/> Cardinia Shire Council – Community Services Unit <input type="checkbox"/> DPI – Bendigo, Box Hill & Melbourne <input type="checkbox"/> Rural Finance Commission – FarmBu\$
Rural communities... <input type="checkbox"/> Australian Women in Agriculture <input type="checkbox"/> Department of Health & Aging <input type="checkbox"/> Department of Agriculture Fisheries & Forestry <input type="checkbox"/> Department of Community Services <input type="checkbox"/> Department of Infrastructure <input type="checkbox"/> Foundation of Australian Agricultural Women <input type="checkbox"/> Regional Development Victoria <input type="checkbox"/> Rural Communities Program <input type="checkbox"/> Work safe	<input type="checkbox"/> Cardinia Shire Council – Community Services Unit <input type="checkbox"/> Centerlink – Farm Help <input type="checkbox"/> DPI – Benalla, Bendigo & Box Hill <input type="checkbox"/> Local government departments – Alpine, Bass, Casey, Indigo & Yarra Ranges
Women... <input type="checkbox"/> Australian Rural Leadership Foundation <input type="checkbox"/> Australian Women in Agriculture <input type="checkbox"/> Commonwealth Department of Health & Aged Care <input type="checkbox"/> Department of Agriculture Fisheries & Forestry <input type="checkbox"/> Department of Community Services <input type="checkbox"/> Foundation of Australian Agricultural Women <input type="checkbox"/> Horticultural Australia Limited <input type="checkbox"/> Rural Industries Research & Development Corporation <input type="checkbox"/> Westpac Banking Corporation	<input type="checkbox"/> Australian Rural Leadership Foundation <input type="checkbox"/> Cardinia Shire Council – Community Services Unit <input type="checkbox"/> DPI – Bendigo, Box Hill & Melbourne

ATTACHMENT 6:

STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION...

ACIL Australia Pty Ltd. Hawthorn – Business consulting

Alpine Shire. Bright - Local government (Tourism and Economic Development)

AusFlora. Gembrook – Native flowers

Aussie Growers Fruit Pty Ltd. Silvan. Processed strawberries and jams

Australian Forest Growers. ACT. National forestry association

Australian Ginseng Growers Association. Gembrook - Ginseng

Australian Green Tea Growers Association. Wodonga – Industry association

Australian Mint Oils & Flavours Pty Ltd. Tullamarine - Mint oil processing

Australian Rainbow Trout Farm. Macclesfield – Recreational fishery and hatchery

Bakery Hill Single Malt Whisky Distillery. Bayswater - Vodka, gin and whisky distillers

Bass Coast Shire Council. Wonthaggi – Local government (Economic Development)

Bell Real Estate. Emerald – Real estate

Botanical Resources Australia. Sandy Bay, Tasmania - Pyrethrum processor

Cannibal Creek Vineyards & Winery. Tynong North – Vineyard and winery

Cardinia Shire Council. Pakenham – Local government (planning, economic development, environment & recreation)

Chestnut Hill Vineyard. Mt Burnett - Vineyard, winery, chestnuts and truffles

De Bortolli Wines Pty Ltd. Dixons Creek – Wine making

DPI-Victoria. Bendigo District Centre - Future family farms project

DPI-Victoria. Benalla - Community relationships

DPI-Victoria. Box Hill - Forestry

DPI-Victoria. Box Hill. Regional marketing.

DSE-Victoria. Box Hill - Landscape and biodiversity

DPI-Victoria. Veterinary Centre, Ellinbank – Animal health

DPI-Victoria. Wangaratta & Myrtleford - Animal health and dieltrin research

EPA Victoria – state Government environmental protection and sustainable development

Emerald Valley Farm – Walking Horses. Emerald - Tennessee walking horses, breeding, training and B&B's

Equestrian Federation of Australia (Victorian Branch). Werribee – Horse industry peak body

Fleming's Nurseries Pty Ltd. Monbulk - Nursery

Friends of Gembrook Bushland Park. Gembrook - Environment

Gembrook Fruits. Gembrook – Blue berry and bramble grower

Gembrook Hill Vineyard. Gembrook - Vineyard and winery

Gembrook Tourism Association. Gembrook - Tourism

Gembrook Township Committee. Gembrook – Local traders, business & community development

Gippsland Agribusiness Forum. Bairnsdale - Local government (Agribusiness)

Gippsland Private Forestry Inc. Bairnsdale. – Forestry industry peak body

Gippsland Olive Growers Association Inc. Yarram - Olives

Glaxosmithkline Australia. Boronia - Poppy processor

Greenfleet Australia. Koonwarra – Environment, carbon trading and forestry

Green Lands Holdings Proprietary Ltd. Ballarat – Potato processing

Green Triangle Rural Plantations Committee. Mt Gambier - Local government (Economic Development)

Hancocks Victorian Plantations Pty Ltd. Merrivale - Timber, paper and forestry

Indigo Way Services. Yackandandah - Local government (Regional Planning)

Institute for Horticultural Development. DPI-Victoria. Knoxfield - Post harvest green tea research

Ito En Australia Pty Ltd. Thornton - Green tea processor

Jacobs & Lowe Pty Ltd. Mornington – Real estate

Limbic Wines. Pakenham Upper – Vineyards and winery

Melbourne Water. Melbourne - Irrigation supply and diversions

Midway Pty Ltd. North Shore – Timber and forestry

Monash University (Faculty of Business & Economics). Frankston – Marketing and wine

Monash University (Faculty of Tourism). Berwick Campus - Rural tourism

Monbulk Rose Farm. Monbulk - Nursery

Nursery Garden Industry Victoria. East Malvern – Nursery peak industry body

Oberne Park. Gembrook. Horse agistment

Orchardists & Fruit Cool Store Assoc and YV Fruits. Knoxfield. – Fruit industry peak body

Ovens Research Station. DPI-Victoria, Myrtleford - Green tea and dieldrin research.

Peppermint Ridge Farm. Tynong North – Environmental education

Puffing Billy Railway - Tourism

Ray White Real Estate. Monbulk – Real estate

Regional Development Victoria. Melbourne. State Government food and beverage services

Roslyn Farms. Gembrook and Koo Wee Rup - Daffodil flower and bulb grower

Rutherglen Research Station. DPI-Victoria - Rutherglen small family farm project and soils research

Scalora's Flowers. Gembrook – Traditional flowers (gerberas)

Shire of Southern Grampians. - Local government (Regional Development and Tourism)

Shire of Yarra Ranges. Lilydale - Local government (Economic Development)

Southcorp Wines Pty Ltd. Coldstream Hills – Wine making

South East Victoria Equine Network (SEVEN) Inc. Dandenong – Regional horse industry peak body

Southern Rural Water. Maffra - Irrigation supply and licensing

St John's Hill Landcare Group – Environment and conservation

Tasmania Distillery. Cambridge, Tasmania – Whisky distillation

The Big Berry. Hoddles Creek – Rubus and blue berries

The Tree Project. Melbourne - Volunteer, tree growers and planters

Timbertop Advanced Trees. Gembrook – Advanced field nurseryman

Truleen Downs Alpaca Stud. Toomuc Valley - Alpcas

Victorian Farmers Federation (Flower Growers Group). Melbourne - Flower industry peak body

Victorian Farmers Federation (Rubus and blue berries). Knoxfield – Rubus industry peak body

Victorian Farmers Federation (Strawberry Industry). Melbourne – Strawberry industry peak body

van der Holst Bulbs. Monbulk – Flowers and bulbs

Victorian Cherry Association. Seville – Cherry industry peak body

Victorian Strawberry Growers Association. Emerald – Strawberry industry peak body

Wardales Nursery. Gembrook – Container nursery

Yarra Catchment Landcare & Ragwort Control Group. Gembrook - Landcare

REFERENCES...

- Anderson G & Brock G** (2004). *Plantations for Greenhouse*. Department of Primary Industry. Technical Note.
- Barr N** (2001). *Relating to Natural Resource Management (Part 1)*. Australians & Natural Resource Management 2002 – Australian Farmers.
- Brock G & Cotter D** (2004). *Farm Forestry Species for the Cardinia Shire*. Department of Primary Industry. Technical Note, ISSN 1329-8062.
- Brown P** (2001). *Vegetable Processing Capabilities: A review of the vegetable processing industry in relation to current and projected supply chain capacity in Victoria*. A report prepared for the Cardinia Shire Council.
- Cadman R** (2004). *The Future of the Gembrook Potato Industry & Other Land Use Implications: A commitment to the next generation?* A report prepared for the Cardinia Shire Council and the Gembrook Rural Review Working Group. March.
- Cahill G** (1993). *Don't Dream It Do It: Making money from new farm ideas*. Daratech, East Melbourne.
- Cardinia Shire Council** (2003). *Gembrook Rural Review: Community workshop*. Workshop notes. December 9th
- Department of Human Services** (2002). *Arsenic and Health: Are you living in an area with mine tailings?* Public information pamphlet.
- DSE** (2004). *Bush Tender Trial*. Website: www.nre.vic.gov.au.
- DSE** (2003). *Land Stewardship: Duty of Care – An Instrument for Increasing the Effectiveness of Catchment Management*. A community discussion paper.
- DSE** (2003). *Land Stewardship: Ecosystem Services Through Land Stewardship Practices – Issues & options*. A community discussion paper.
- DSE** (2003). *Land Stewardship: Environmental Management Systems – The role of EMS in the emerging Land Stewardship concept*. A community discussion paper.
- DSE** (2003). *Land Stewardship: Landholder Perspectives on Sustainable Land Management*. A community discussion paper.
- DSE** (2003). *Land Stewardship: Private Investor Needs for Land Stewardship Investment*. A community discussion paper.
- DSE** (2003). *Land Stewardship: Environmental Management Systems – The role of EMS in the emerging Land Stewardship concept*. A community discussion paper.
- DSE** (2003). *Land Stewardship: Market-like Policy Options*. A community discussion paper.
- MacMillan M et al** (1996). *A Land Capability Study of the Shire of Cardinia*. Department of Natural Resources & Environment. Centre for Land Protection Research, Bendigo.
- Meridith R** (2003). *Options for Change: New ideas for Australian farmers*. RIRDC Publications.
- Parker G** (1995). *Forest to Farming: Gembrook an early history*. JDP Consultancy, Box Hill South.
- Parliament of Australia** (2000). *Retirement Assistance for Farmers Scheme Extension Bill 2000*. Website: www.aph.gov.au/library/pubs/db/2000.
- Person W S** (1994). *American Ginseng: Green gold*. Bright Mountain Books, Asheville, North Carolina. Revised edition.
- Pickersgill B** (2004). *Casey & Cardinia Regional Agricultural Audit & Action Framework*. Report prepared by the City of Casey and Cardinia Shire Council. February.
- Pickersgill B** (2003). *Focus on Farming: Regional agribusiness workshop*. Report prepared by the City of Casey and Cardinia Shire Council. October 15.
- Swinburne University of Technology** (2002). *Farming Real Estate? Challenges and opportunities for Agribusiness on the Urban Fringe – Yarra Valley Region*. A report prepared for the Centre for Agriculture & Business Yarra Valley and Shire of Yarra Ranges.