

**21.09**19/01/2006  
VC37**PROTECTION OF LAND AND WATER RESOURCES****Overview**

The Central Goldfields Shire is situated in the Loddon dry land catchment and is part of the wider Avoca Loddon-Campaspe catchment.

The Regional Catchment Strategy prepared by the North Central Catchment Management Authority aims to achieve integrated catchment management through its programs of biodiversity protection, salinity, waterways and water resources, soil health, pest plants and animals, and regional development.

With a significant area of the Shire situated in the catchment of the Tullaroop and Laanecoorie Reservoirs, the planning scheme must address the need for sustainable land management in water supply catchment areas. Part of the catchment for Lake Cairn Curran is situated to the east of the Shire.

Water quality in the Loddon catchment is a priority issue. The Loddon Catchment Water Quality Strategy advances proposals for reducing the incidence of algal blooms and improving the water quality of the Loddon river. A Loddon Campaspe River Management Authority is proposed to be established under the auspice of the North Central Catchment Management Authority.

Forests and bushland areas in the Shire are a major feature and provide a forest setting for urban areas, most notably Maryborough.

Parks and Reserves within the area are renowned for wildflowers in spring, and are popular areas for bird-watching, tourism and passive recreation such as picnicking and camping. Significant active uses of state forest, not usually catered for in Parks and Reserves include car rallies, horse riding, hunting, four wheel driving, domestic firewood collection and fossicking.

The availability of better biodiversity information and mapping will improve the planning scheme and place council in a more informed position to make decisions in relation to land use and development proposals that may have an impact on biodiversity resources.

Protecting remaining vegetation, encouraging revegetation and preventing degradation of State forests will conserve habitats and significantly reduce the threat of extinction of plants and animals.

**Issues**

- Water supply catchments of Tullaroop and Laanecoorie Reservoir need to be protected to safeguard water quality.
- Retention of native vegetation and establishment of links to larger blocks of remnant vegetation is identified as a high priority for the Goldfields Bioregion in both the North Central Vegetation Strategy and the Victorian Biodiversity Strategy.
- Box ironbark forests in the shire are a major environmental asset and resource. Of particular concern is the loss of flora and fauna habitats in these forests and across the landscape, particularly on freehold land.
- Maryborough is almost entirely surrounded by bushland which provides a protective natural greenbelt. These natural resources have been identified in the Maryborough Bushland Conservation Study (Hogan 1993).
- Potential for land use conflict at the interface of public and private land where forested public land is adjacent to urban areas.
- Significant areas of the shire have been identified as being of moderate or high fire risk. Appropriate risk management measures need to be introduced.

## **Objective 1**

Maintain and protect water quality and quantity in the Loddon and Avoca catchments.

### **Strategies**

- Ensure the use and development of land protects the water quality of the Loddon and Avoca Rivers and Bet Bet Creek waterway systems.
- Protect the environs and water catchments of Tullaroop and Laanecoorie reservoirs and Lake Cairn Curran.
- Minimise the potential impact of existing and new developments to cause water pollution, land degradation, and risk of salinity and erosion.
- Ensure that method and location of effluent disposal systems in unsewered areas minimise the risk of pollution to watercourses and that efficiency of effluent disposal systems is monitored at regular intervals.
- Promote water conservation practice in mining, industry and agriculture and wastewater management.
- Encourage sewerage and waste pre-treatment and innovative recycling and co-generation techniques within industries.

## **Objective 2**

Ensure land capability supports land use and development proposals, particularly in environmental risk areas.

### **Strategies**

- Ensure land capability is taken into account in the assessment of land use and development proposals.
- Ensure environmental management plans are prepared as part of planning permit applications where land is susceptible to degradation, requires native vegetation removal or contains environmental features.
- Ensure appropriate effluent disposal systems are suitably located in circumstances where sewerage is not available and that systems are monitored at regular intervals.
- Implement the Victorian Biodiversity Strategy (1998), North Central Regional Catchment Strategy, Loddon Catchment Salinity Management Plan, Maryborough Bushland Study (1993) and relevant water quality, flood management and other relevant natural resource strategies.
- Protect property and life from the risk of flooding and identify flood prone areas.
- Identify potential to link the shire's natural resource base with ecological sustainable development opportunities.
- Implement adopted flood mitigation studies.
- Further identify areas where bushfire behaviour is likely to pose a significant threat to life and property.
- Assist in the implementation of the North Central Catchment Management Strategy by addressing Strategy programs such as biodiversity protection, salinity, waterways and water resources, and soil health.

### **Objective 3**

Enhance, protect and augment remnant vegetation and wildlife corridors on freehold land, roads, streams, railways and other public land.

### **Strategies**

- Encourage the establishment of buffer areas and adequate setback distances on freehold land as a means to enhance and protect significant vegetation on all land tenures.
- Consider extension of the Vegetation Protection Overlay to flora and fauna reserves and extensive bushland around Maryborough in the first review of the Planning Scheme.
- Encourage the use incentives to support and facilitate retention of stands of native vegetation on private land.
- Ensure that land use and development proposals are consistent with regional vegetation plans.
- Encourage retention of remnant vegetation and habitat corridors and areas for Victorian Rare and Threatened Flora and Fauna Species.
- Assist, in association with relevant organisations, with the formulation of a major environmental education program to increase recognition of the need to protect Box Ironbark forests.
- Encourage and provide support for the implementation of recommendations of the Environment Conservation Council Study of the Box-Ironbark Ecosystem (when released).
- Assist in the implementation of the developing Regional Catchment Strategy by addressing Strategy programs such as biodiversity protection, salinity, waterways and water resources, and soil health.

### **Implementation**

These strategies will be implemented by:

- Application of Environmental Significance Overlays to cover the Loddon River, major creeks in the shire, water supply catchment areas and other areas identified as having environmental significance.
- Application of Salinity Management Overlay to cover areas identified as being of salinity risk including areas north and east of Bealiba, west of Dunolly, north of Maryborough, north and east of Timor, and in the south of the shire in the Talbot district.
- Application of the Erosion Management Overlay to areas identified in previous rural land mapping and land capability studies.
- Application of Land Subject To Inundation Overlay for areas adjacent the Avoca River and Bet Bet and McCallums Creeks.
- Inclusion of the Tullaroop Roadside Conservation Assessment in the Vegetation Protection Overlay.
- Inclusion of relevant salinity and nutrient catchment management plans as reference documents in the planning scheme.
- Application of Wildfire Management Overlays for areas identified as being of high fire risk hazard when appropriate mapping becomes available.

- Application of Public Conservation and Resource Zone for Council owned or managed flora and fauna reserves.
- Use of Vegetation Protection Overlays based on information contained in the Central Goldfields Biodiversity Components maps and facilitate, in consultation with the Department of Natural Resources and Environment, production of more accurate remnant vegetation maps.
- Use of a Box Ironbark Forest Local Policy to encourage no net loss of Box Ironbark forests and ensure proposals are consistent with regional vegetation plans.
- Inclusion of the following documents as reference documents:
  - DNRE Selected Biodiversity Components - LGA Central Goldfields.
  - Maryborough Roadside Management Plan.
  - Planning Conditions and Guidelines for Subdivision CFA 1991.
  - North Central Vegetation Strategy.
  - North Central Regional Catchment Strategy.
  - Maryborough Bushland Study (1993).
  - Agenda for Action - Nature Conservation in the Avoca-Loddon-Campaspe Region.
  - Paddys Ranges State Park – Draft Management Plan.
  - Avoca-Loddon-Campaspe Regional Landcare Plan.
  - Loddon Catchment Salinity Management Plan.
  - Assessment of Roadside Conservation Values in the Shire of Tullaroop.

#### **Undertaking further strategic work**

- Compile a remnant vegetation inventory for significant sites on freehold land.
- Complete a Roadside Management Plan for the Shire and implement local and regional roadside conservation strategies.
- Undertake, in association with the Department of Natural Resources and Environment, land capability studies for rural areas of the shire that have not previously been the subject of a study and detailed mapping for specific crops eg olives and grapes.
- Develop and resource the Box Ironbark Eco Tourism and Environmental Education and Research Centre at the Goldfields Reservoir site.