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**ENVIRONMENT**

**Overview**

The City of Casey contains natural places of State, national and international significance, including the Western Port coastal and marine environment, the Cardinia Creek Valley, Barnbam Swamp, the Royal Botanic Gardens Cranbourne, and the Police Paddocks/Churchill National Park/Lysterfield Lake environs. In addition, there are clusters of remnant vegetation and associated wildlife, and Casey's local waterways, wetlands, estuaries and creek systems.

The direction for Council's environmental stewardship responsibilities into the future is twofold: to restore and enhance the natural environment. Restoring biodiversity is recognised as a fundamental national and international planning agenda.

The challenge is to realise the goals of the restoration and ongoing enhancement of Casey's environmental assets within the framework of the City's continuing rapid development. Casey is in a position to dramatically alter the way things are done to the benefit of future generations, given improved environmental techniques, the community's willingness to respond to environmental issues, and the incorporation of environmentally sustainable design into all subdivision and development planning.

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**Objective 1**

*To protect and significantly restore Casey's biological diversity, recognising its fundamental importance in achieving a healthy environment and way of life for current and future generations.*

**Strategies**

**Biodiversity**

- Strategy 1.1 Realise a net gain in the extent and quality of native vegetation.
- Strategy 1.2 Identify, protect and preserve sites of significant vegetation and habitat for native flora and fauna, including remnant local indigenous vegetation.
- Strategy 1.3 Minimise the loss of remnant vegetation that has intrinsic habitat value.
- Strategy 1.4 Restore bushland and habitat back into the suburban and rural areas of Casey by providing for significant new planting and facilitating the natural regeneration and retention of existing vegetation, as far as practicable.
- Strategy 1.5 Create and maintain strategic habitat links.
- Strategy 1.6 Maintain and enhance roadside vegetation.
- Strategy 1.7 Identify and protect identified significant landscapes, including the Casey Foothills, Western Port coast, Cardinia Creek environs and Berwick Village environs.
- Strategy 1.8 Protect sites of geological and geomorphological significance, including those based on soil types, or coastal or waterway features, having regard to those identified in the study, *Sites of Geological and Geomorphological Significance in the Westernport Bay Catchment*.
- Strategy 1.9 Recognise, protect and enhance the areas of biodiversity significance within the following areas of Casey, as identified in the *City of Casey Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy*:
  - Harkaway and Cardinia Creek Valley.
  - Churchill National Park and surrounds.
  - Royal Botanic Gardens Cranbourne and immediate surrounds.
  - Cranbourne South and Pearcedale.
  - Cannons Creek, Warneet, Blind Bight and Tooradin and their environs.
- Strategy 1.10 Where creek corridors and biolinks exist, extend and improve these environmental habitats through encouraging regeneration and revegetation using indigenous vegetation.

**Western Port coast**

- Strategy 1.11 Protect and preserve the Western Port coast from the impacts of climate change.
- Strategy 1.12 Identify, protect and preserve sites of significant vegetation and habitat (including riparian and inter-tidal environments) for native flora and fauna.
- Strategy 1.13 Provide strong regulatory protection for Western Port's natural places to minimise further loss of natural values.

### Cardinia Creek Valley

- Strategy 1.14 Provide strong regulatory protection for Cardinia Creek Valley's natural places to minimise further loss of natural values.
- Strategy 1.15 Encourage the development of the Cardinia Creek Parklands as a major inter-suburban break and passive parkland.
- Strategy 1.16 Create and maintain habitat links through the Cardinia Creek Valley, having regard to those identified in the *Casey Revegetation Strategy*.

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### Objective 2

*To progressively improve the health of Casey's built and natural environments through ecologically sustainable land use and development practices.*

#### Strategies

##### Catchment management

- Strategy 2.1 Provide a strategic approach to catchment management through sustainable water and land management practices and by ensuring beneficial uses are protected and managed.
- Strategy 2.2 Maximise opportunities for wastewater re-use and recycling.
- Strategy 2.3 Minimise the risk to life and property from flood waters, having regard to the impacts of climate change in coastal areas.
- Strategy 2.4 Retain waterway capacity to enable them to perform their natural functions.
- Strategy 2.5 Protect riparian zones along waterways from degradation.
- Strategy 2.6 Ensure land use changes do not contribute to increased salinity of land or water.
- Strategy 2.7 Ensure water-sensitive urban design initiatives are incorporated into the design and construction of all subdivision and development in Casey.
- Strategy 2.8 Enhance local open space, waterways and environmental outcomes by adopting 'best practice' stormwater management practices.

##### Air and noise

- Strategy 2.9 Contribute to better air quality in Casey through integrated transport and land use planning.
- Strategy 2.10 Manage land use zoning and development to minimise the potential for land use conflicts.

##### Sustainable development

- Strategy 2.11 Provide for effective and coordinated waste management that accords with the *Metropolitan Waste and Resource Recovery Strategic Plan*.
- Strategy 2.12 Reduce the reliance on non-renewable resources and reduce the production of green house gases for all new development through:
  - Energy-efficient building siting, design and lighting.
  - The use of recycled and/or environmentally-friendly materials in the building process.
  - The incorporation of on-site water collection and water re-use/recycling initiatives within all developments.
  - Waste minimisation, including reduction of waste produced, encouraging waste re-use/recycling initiatives, and improved waste disposal methods.
  - The incorporation of best practice environmentally sustainable design principles and techniques into the design, construction and operation stages of all developments.
- Strategy 2.13 Manage Casey's suburban structure to create a more efficient suburban form, with improved accessibility, greater reliance on public transport and pedestrian/cycling networks, and energy-efficient subdivision design.
- Strategy 2.14 Embrace new green technologies which lead to improved energy efficiency and environmentally sustainable outcomes.

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### Implementation

These strategies will be implemented by the following measures:

### Policy guidelines

- Using the Stormwater Policy at Clause 22.05 to manage stormwater quality and to recognise the important environmental, amenity, economic, hydraulic and cultural values of Casey's waterways.
- Protecting and restoring Casey's native vegetation cover by assessing applications for the removal of native vegetation in accordance with the *Port Phillip and Western Port Native Vegetation Plan*.
- Ensuring the new development of land not connected to reticulated sewerage meets the *Guidelines for Environmental Management, Code of Practice – Onsite Wastewater Management*.
- Ensuring offset planting required under the *Permitted clearing of native vegetation - Biodiversity assessment guidelines* is of the same or similar vegetation type and is provided in Casey in close proximity to the site of vegetation loss, as far as practicable.

### Application of zones and overlays

- Applying the Rural Conservation Zone to protect and conserve the sensitive coastal areas under private ownership.
- Applying the Public Conservation and Resource Zone to protect and conserve the natural environment of areas under public ownership.
- Applying the Urban Floodway Zone to protect identified waterways and drainage courses from inappropriate development that may be detrimental to water quality and impede overland flow paths.
- Applying the Environmental Significance Overlay to areas of identified environmental significance, including significant trees, the coastal environs and sites of geological and geomorphological significance.
- Applying the Vegetation Protection Overlay to protect areas of significant vegetation.
- Applying the Significant Landscape Overlay to conserve and enhance areas of identified landscape character and value in the Casey Foothills, Western Port coast, Cardinia Creek and Berwick Village areas.
- Applying the Land Subject to Inundation Overlay to land affected by flooding along open watercourses, by tidal inundation and storm surge, and by flooding as a result of poor surface drainage.
- Applying the Special Building Overlay to land affected by overland flows in storm events that exceed the capacity of the underground drainage systems.
- Applying the Environmental Audit Overlay to ensure that sensitive uses are not significantly adversely affected by potentially contaminated land.

### Further strategic work and other actions

- Undertaking a detailed program of further strategic work and other actions set out in the *Casey C21 Strategy*.
- Providing environmental education to the community on appropriate plant species, weed removal and on the provision and protection of wildlife habitat.
- Encouraging the voluntary placement of conservation covenants on private land containing significant native vegetation.
- Supporting community projects consistent with the principles of revegetation.
- Investigate the need and appropriate location for a regional retarding basin in consultation with Melbourne Water.

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**Reference documents**

*Casey C21: A vision for our future*, City of Casey, 2002.

*Casey C21: Building a Great City*, City of Casey, 2011.

*Casey Revegetation Strategy*, City of Casey, 2009.

*Casey Significant Tree Strategy (incorporating the Significant Tree Register)*, City of Casey, 2014.

*City of Casey Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy*, Ecology Australia Pty Ltd, 2003.

*City of Casey Conservation Strategy*, City of Casey, in association with Environment Link Pty Ltd, 2002.

*City of Casey Greenhouse Strategy – Local Action Plan*, City of Casey, 2002.

*City of Casey Stormwater Management Plan*, City of Casey, in association with Kellogg Brown & Root Pty Ltd, 2004.

*Council Plan 2013-2017*, City of Casey, 2015.

*Metropolitan Waste and Resource Recovery Strategic Plan*, Sustainability Victoria, 2009.

*Port Phillip and Western Port Native Vegetation Plan*, Port Phillip and Westernport Catchment Management Authority, 2006.

*Port Phillip and Western Port Regional Catchment Strategy 2004-2009*, Port Phillip and Westernport Catchment Management Authority, 2004.

*Port Phillip and Western Port Regional River Health Strategy*, Melbourne Water Corporation, 2007.

*Sites of Geological and Geomorphological Significance in the Westernport Bay Catchment*, N.J. Rosengren et al, Department of Conservation Forests and Lands, 1984.

*Waste Management Strategy 2010-2014*, City of Casey, 2010.