



The cover features a collage of three images: a close-up of a brown and white speckled bird with a yellow beak and legs in the top left; a landscape with a river reflecting a forest of tall trees in the middle; and a man in a blue shirt and hat standing in a field of yellow flowers, throwing his hat in the air in the bottom right. A large green diagonal shape separates the top and bottom sections.

Environment Strategy

2022 - 2026

A young Indigenous Australian child is the central focus, crouching on a green lawn. The child has white body paint applied to their face, arms, and legs, and wears a headdress made of dried grass and feathers. In the background, another person is partially visible, wearing a black garment with a red and yellow patterned band. The scene is set outdoors during the day.

Acknowledgement of Country

The municipal area of Campaspe lies within the traditional lands of the Yorta Yorta, Dja Dja Wurrung and Taungurung peoples.

Council acknowledges their unique cultural heritage, and pays our respect to their ancestors, descendants and emerging leaders as the Traditional Owners of this Country.

We acknowledge their living culture and unique role in the life of this region.

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Summary

Vision

Our places are vibrant and sustainable, our people are strong and supportive.

The Environment Strategy 2022-2026

- Describes the environmental programs that Council engages in and aligns with Victorian Government direction
- Specifies Council's legal obligation with respect to environmental management
- Documents Council's commitment to voluntary environmental management (discretionary activities)
- Identifies opportunities for Council to partner with organisations to achieve environmental benefits together.

The details of Council's responsibilities and actions are expressed across four themes. These are summarised here with their performance indicators:

Conservation

Refer page 16 for details

Performance indicators:

- An increase in the number of community groups/schools that participate in the National Tree Day program. In 2021-2022, four community groups and two schools participated in National Tree Day plantings.
- Roadside Weeds and Pests Program Control Plan prepared in accordance with requirements of the Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994 and Local Government Victoria.
- Continue to increase native vegetation cover through the Rural Tree Scheme and Council plantings.

Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation

Refer page 19 for details

Performance indicators:

- Council develops a Corporate Emissions Reduction Plan which sets target emission goals to reach net-zero emissions by 2035.
- Development of Environmental Sustainable Design (ESD) Guidelines. Once adopted, ESD Guidelines are to be applied to all (100%) of Council projects.

Community Engagement and Partnerships

Refer page 22 for details

Performance indicators:

- Actions listed in the Domestic Wastewater Management Plan are completed or ongoing.
- Actions listed in WickED Action Plan are completed or ongoing.
- Updated Arbovirus and Mosquito Management Plan which includes the spread of Japanese encephalitis virus (JEV) from Papua New Guinea and northern Australia.
- Implementation of Open Space Strategy 2022-2032.

Council's Responsibilities

Refer page 24 for details

Performance indicators:

- Council does not commit any breaches of environmental legislation.
- All events held on Council owned or Council managed land meet the requirement of the Events Guide.



Gunbower Lions Park

Council

The Environment Strategy 2022-2026 will guide Council in setting environmental policies and determining roles, responsibilities, and priorities for implementation. The implementation will be set each year through an operational Action Plan.

Campaspe Shire Council is committed to the environment with a strategic direction of resilient, protected and healthy natural environment. Council shall lead by its own example in all processes and practices.

The Environment Strategy 2022-2026 builds on the work of the previous Environment Strategy 2018-2022. The Strategy:

- Describes the environmental programs that Council engages in and aligns with Victorian Government direction
- Specifies Council's legal obligation with respect to environmental management
- Documents Council's commitment to voluntary environmental management (discretionary activities)
- Identifies opportunities for Council to partner with organisations to achieve environmental benefits together.

Council's Priorities

Resilient protected and healthy natural environment.

The Council Plan 2021-2025 has three strategic directions for the environment:

- Well managed resources for a sustainable future
- Sustainable water and energy use
- Protected natural environment

This Strategy will focus on the strategic objectives for a resilient protected and healthy natural environment of sustainable land, water and energy use and protected natural environment. The third strategic objective, well managed resources for a sustainable future is acknowledged in this Strategy and addressed in the Waste Management Strategy 2018-2023.

A protected and healthy natural environment and sustainable practices



We understand the role of the natural environment as a base for a healthy community. This means active management and protection where needed, ensuring healthy waterways, well managed forests and roadsides, for future generations especially in light of changing climate. Importantly, our future is one where we use energy and water efficiently and cleanly, and where farmers use their land sustainably. We use Indigenous knowledge and land management practices to manage our natural environment.

Internal Context

The Environment Strategy 2022-2026 aligns with Federal and State legislation, supporting policies, strategies and plans as well as Council policies and plans, including the Council Plan 2021-2025. The connections between the Environment Strategy and key Council strategies and plans are shown in figure 1.

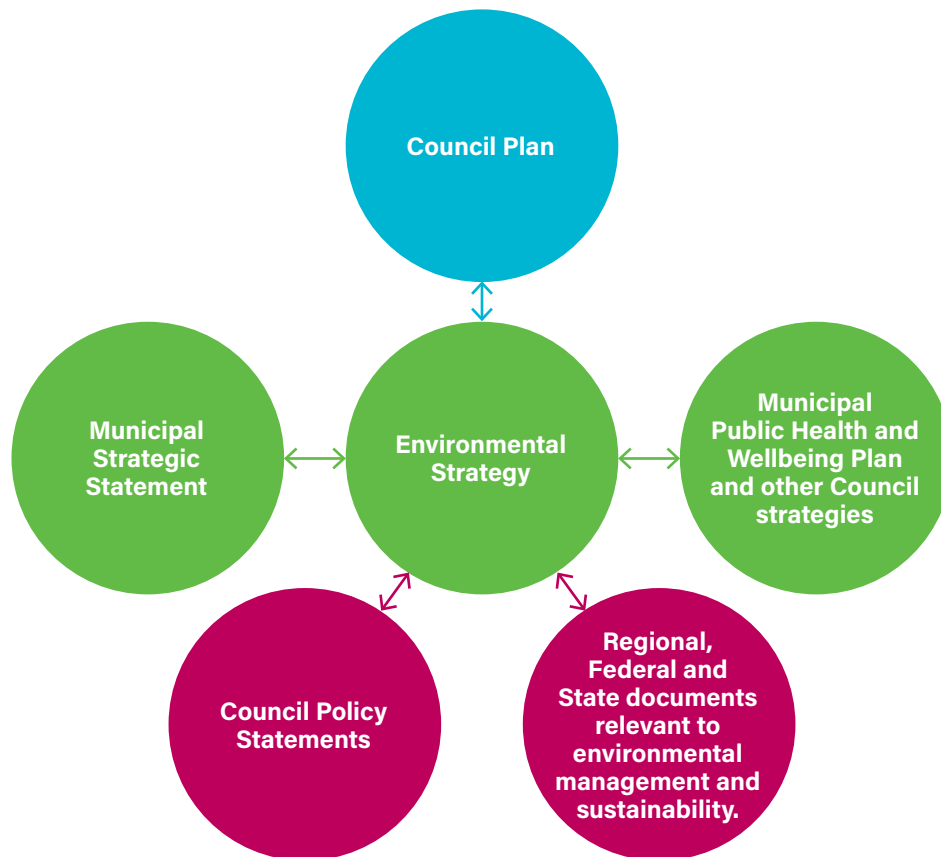


Figure 1: Relationship between Environment Strategy and other key documents.

Funding for the implementation of the Environment Strategy will be sought internally (funding through the Council budget process) and externally through grants and partnerships with Federal and Victorian Government and other community organisations. While all environmental projects listed must be feasible, there are no guarantees of funding.

The Environment Strategy 2022-2026 provides an overview of the environment of the Shire, Campaspe's natural assets and environmental challenges. Council's responsibilities and actions are expressed across four themes:

1. **Conservation**
2. **Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation**
3. **Community Engagement and Partnerships**
4. **Council's Responsibilities**

Each theme is described by, policy position, policy rationale, long-term aim, performance indicators and example actions. The policy position includes Council's position on the theme along with a list of legislated responsibilities (Council must do) and discretionary responses (Council chooses to do).

The details of the themes are underpinned by Federal and State legislation, regulations, policies, strategies and plans.

Example actions for each theme are suggested activities to be undertaken and are not a comprehensive list of actions Council will fund or complete each year. For the full list of actions and estimated timelines, refer to the annual Environment Strategy Action Plan.



Environmental

Campaspe's Natural Assets

The Shire of Campaspe is located in north central Victoria, approximately 180km north of Melbourne and covers an area approximately 4,500 square kilometres. The Shire has a population estimated at 38,358, which 2.4% of our population are Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, maintaining their ancient and special connection to Country which we as a community value and are working better to understand.

Campaspe's municipal boundary falls within the traditional lands of the Dja Dja Wurrung, Taungurung and Yorta Yorta Peoples being the Traditional Owners. The Traditional Owners have lived on our traditional lands and cared for our country for thousands of years. Traditional Owners are recognised managers of natural and cultural resources.

Close to 70% of the population lives in the two large and growing towns of Echuca and Kyabram. We also have mid-sized towns that are important hubs for social connection, service and commercial provision. The economy is driven by agriculture, food production and healthcare sectors whilst tourism plays a strong role in Echuca Moama and the Murray River is recognised as among the state's key tourism destinations.

Figure 2 shows the area and location of the Shire of Campaspe, with the Murray River forming the northern boundary, while the Goulburn River forms the eastern boundary and the western boundary is defined by the Bendigo Creek and Kow (Ghow) Swamp. The Campaspe River is the other major river of the shire, meeting the Murray River at Echuca.

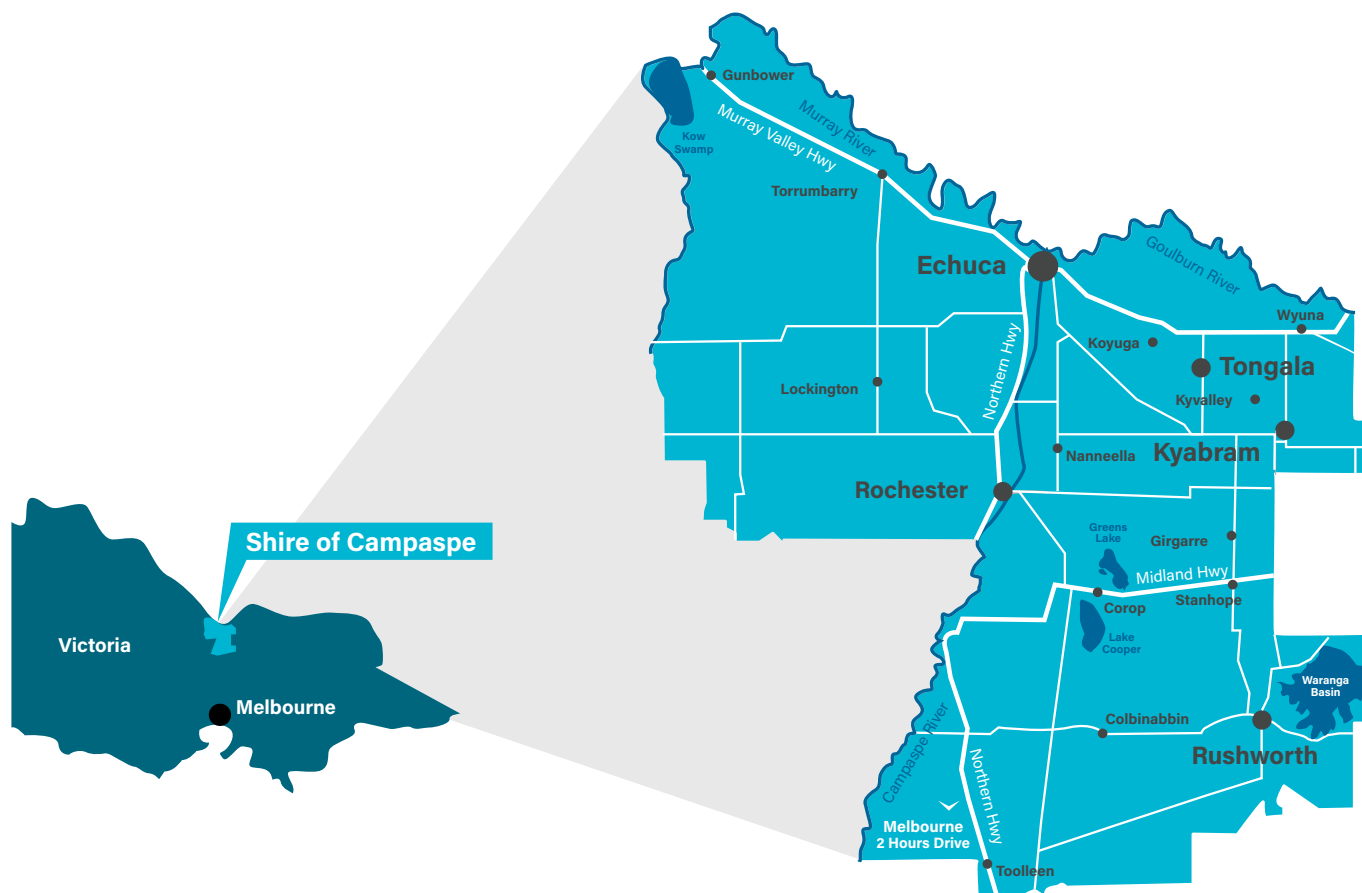


Figure 2: Area and location of the Shire of Campaspe

The Shire is characterised by a flat landscape that slopes to the north. There is variation in vegetation types across the plains and river valleys, from plains grasslands to woodlands to river red gum floodplains which provide habitat for native fauna including mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, fish and invertebrates. The majority of land (86%) is privately owned and managed by property owners and occupiers with 12% reserved as Crown Land (that is state parks, reserves and national parks) and just under 2% in road reserves. Of this land, only 2.2% is owned or managed by the Campaspe Shire Council.

While the land across the Shire has been significantly modified as a result of agriculture and irrigation, there is approximately 10% of the natural environment remaining. The significance and importance of these natural areas has been recognised by the Federal and Victorian Government through the development of state and national parks as well as programs targeting the conservation of threatened species.

Since 2001 there has been significant additions to the National Park estate and recommendations for the management of Crown Land through the investigations conducted by the Victorian Environment Assessment Council (and predecessor Environment Conservation Council) which includes:

- **Box-Ironbark Forests & Woodlands Investigation 2001** which established the Whroo Nature Conservation Reserve and land tenure changes to the Box-Ironbark forest around the Rushworth area. Rushworth area, to protect native fauna and flora.
- **River Red Gum Forests Investigation 2008** saw the establishment of Gunbower National Park, Lower Goulburn National Park and Murray River Park as well as the expansion of Terrick Terrick National Park to include the Patho West Grassland; Terrick East Grassland; Tomara Gilgai Grassland; Roslynmead North Grassland; Roslynmead South Grassland; Roslynmead East Grassland; Meadows Grassland; Torrumbarry Grassland; Kotta Grassland; Pinegrove Grassland; Wanurp Grassland; and Canegrass Grassland. Banyule Forest is to become part of the Echuca Historic and Cultural Features Reserve.
- **Remnant Native Vegetation Investigation 2011** made recommendations for land management and recognition of the importance that road reserves play in connecting remnant vegetation and habitats.

The reservation of these national parks is to protect and enhance the native flora and fauna that exists in our region, these diverse habitats are home to many rare and threatened species. These rare and threatened species also exist on private property, with many landholders

working with Trust for Nature to covenant their property to protect this biodiversity for the future. Landholders on the Patho Plains look after the largest populations of the Plains Wanderers (*Pedionomus torquatus*) and significant habitat of the Northern Plains Grassland.

At least 48 native flora species and 46 native fauna species that are listed as threatened species are known to occur in the Shire of Campaspe. These threatened species occur across all land tenures, both Crown Land and private freehold. Some of the species of significance include:

- Spiny Rice-flower (*Pimelea spinescens* subsp. *spinescens*) has a category of threat of critically endangered under Federal legislation

Spiny Rice-flower

Across the Patho Plains, DELWP monitors 27 sites of Spiny Rice-flower. Of these 27 sites, 25 are located on roadsides within the Shire of Campaspe.

This makes Campaspe Shire Council the land manager of the most sites of Spiny Rice-flower in Northern Victoria.



- Red Swainson-pea (*Swainsona plaiotropis*), Slender Swainson-pea (*Swainsona murrayana*) and Silky Swainson-pea (*Swainsona sericea*) are all endangered in Victoria
- Weeping Myall (*Acacia pendula*) is assessed as critically endangered in Victoria
- Murray Cod (*Maccullochella peelii*) is endangered in Victoria
- Squirrel Glider (*Petaurus norfolcensis*) is listed as vulnerable in Victoria
- Bush Stone-curlew (*Burhinus grallarius*) is assessed as critically endangered in Victoria
- Golden Sun Moth (*Synemon plana*) is listed as vulnerable in Victoria.
- Stiff Groundsel (*Senecio behrianus*) is critically endangered in Victoria and endangered under Federal legislation.

Vegetation types, known as Ecological Vegetation Classes (EVCs) can also be listed as threatened. Within the Shire EVC 803 Plains Woodland, EVC 132 Plains Woodland and EVC 276 Plains Grassland/Plains Grassy Woodland/Gilgai Wetland Mosaic are three of the EVCs which are endangered. All land managers have an obligation to protect these rare vegetation types.

Plains Wanderer – a critically endangered Australian Icon.

There's no other bird like it in the world, they are the sole member of an ancient avian family the *Pedionomidae*. In a study assessing evolutionary distinctness and extinction risk, the Plains-wanderers were ranked number one in the world out of 9,983 bird species.

Plains-wanderers are critically endangered and under imminent threat of extinction with numbers in the wild estimated at 250-1000 and 95% of native grasslands that provide their habitat has been lost to cultivation and urban development.

What's being done?

Government, non-government groups and private landholders are working together to create suitable habitat and increase the populations of birds through captive breeding program.

There are many partners involved in the conservation efforts to protect the Plains-wanderers and increase their population in the wild, including the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, Parks Victoria, Trust for Nature, Zoos Victoria, North Central Catchment Management Authority, Campaspe Shire Council, Northern Plains Conservation Management Network, universities and private landholders.

Programs include Plains for Wanderers, funded by the Australian Government's National Landcare Program, Zoos Victoria's captive breeding program, Victorian Government's Biodiversity On-ground Action Icon Species program and grassland management as part of Biodiversity Response Planning. Many of these programs include citizen science with survey assistance from interested landholders and the community.



Photo by John Childs

Challenges

To protect and enhance the natural environment of Campaspe Shire, there are range of challenges that need to be addressed by Council and the community. The key challenges are described below.

Climate Change

The Campaspe Shire is part of the Loddon Mallee Region that has already become warmer and drier, a climate trend that is likely to continue into the future. Since 1950, the changes in the temperature in the Loddon Mallee region has increased 1.2-1.4°C and annual rainfall decline between 100-200mm. Figure 3 shows the changes across the region.

Changes in the Loddon Mallee region since 1950

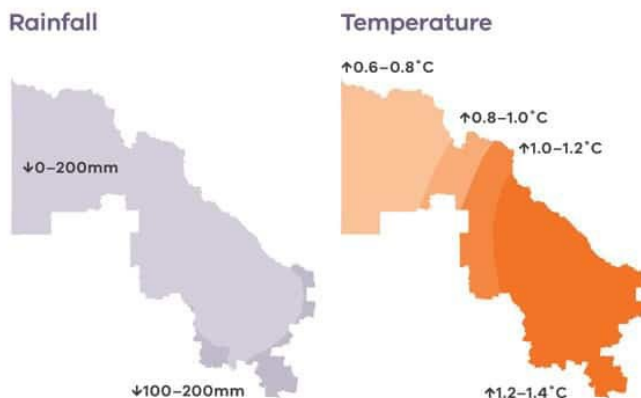


Figure 3. Source: Local climate update Loddon Mallee 2019

The observed changes reported for the Loddon Mallee region in Loddon Mallee Climate Ready Plan (DELWP, 2021) are:

- Longer harsher fire seasons and bushfire smoke (air pollution)
- Seasonal changes
- Changed rainfall patterns and drought
- Extreme heat events
- Storms/extreme rainfall and flooding
- Ecological changes (including pest incursions).

It is important that we continue to take action to adapt to the challenges of climate change as well as reduce our greenhouse gas emissions to mitigate the impacts of climate change.

Without further reductions to greenhouse gas emission, by the 2050s, Loddon Campaspe can expect a warmer and drier climate, as suggested in Figure 4. This local scale climate projection data was developed the Victorian Government and CSIRO as part of the Local climate update – Loddon Mallee (DELWP, 2020).

Anyone under the age of 23 who has always lived in Victoria has never experienced a year of below-average temperature

Climate represents the long-term average weather conditions experienced in a location. Climate is what you expect, but weather is what you get.

Victoria's Climate Science Report 2019.

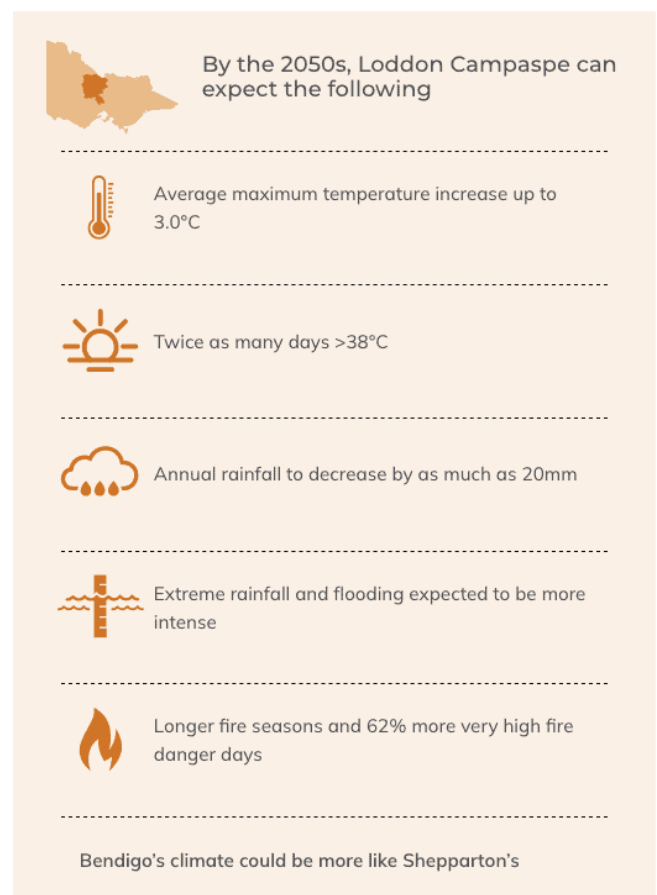


Figure 4. Local scale climate projections for the Loddon Campaspe region. Source: Local climate update Loddon Mallee 2019

Adapting to climate change now will reduce future costs and ensure our community's long-term prosperity. Mitigation is critical to avoid catastrophic climate change. However, even with the strictest cuts to carbon emissions, some climate change is unavoidable. Adaptation is key to responding to these unavoidable changes.

The Natural Environment Climate Change Adaptation Action Plan 2022-2026 (DELWP, 2022) provides examples of actions that provide mitigation, while other actions assist with adaptation. Actions such as conserving water and restoring native vegetation provide both mitigation and adaptation. Example actions are shown in Figure 5.

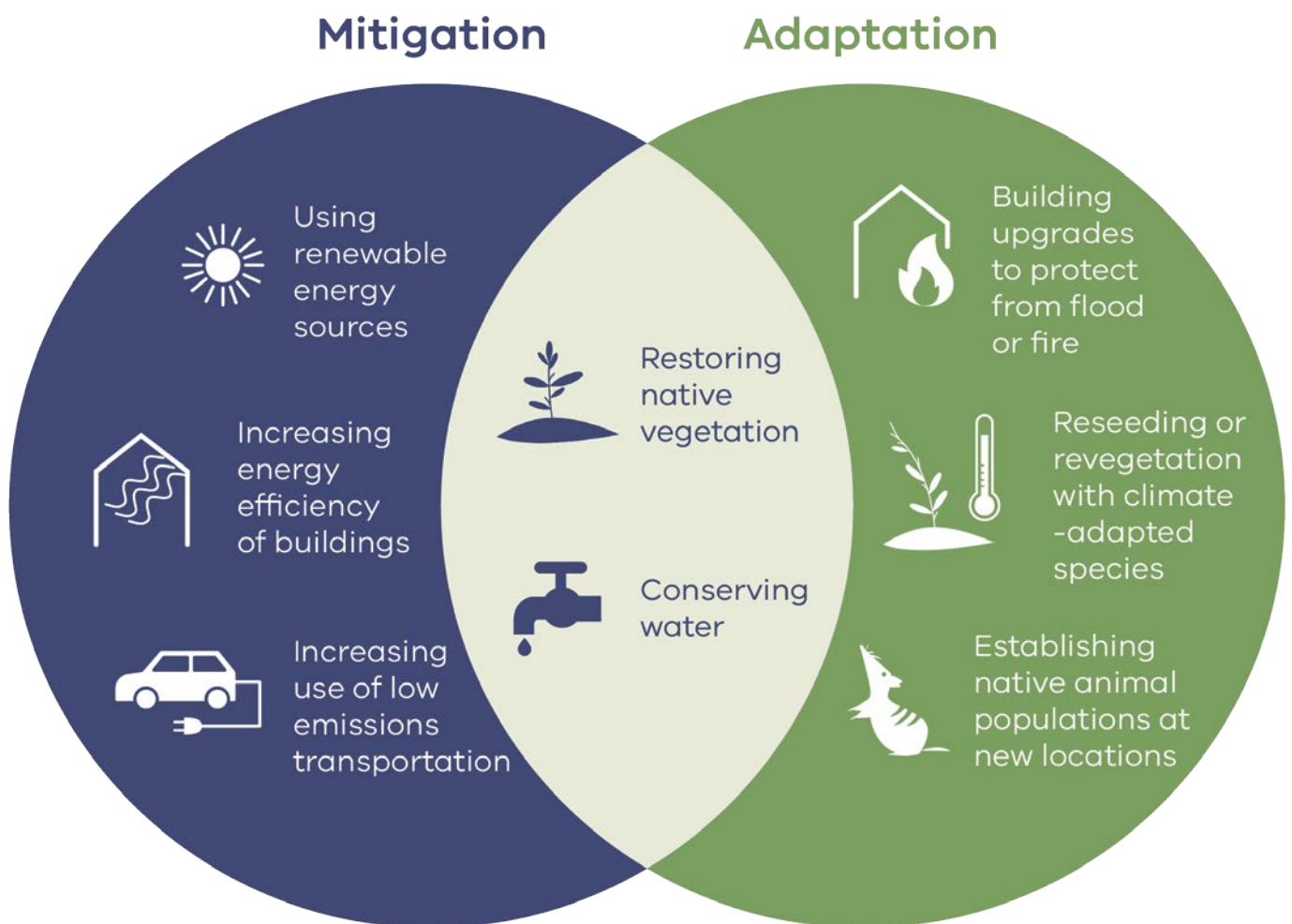


Figure 5. Source: Natural Environment Climate Change Adaptation Action Plan 2022-2026, DELWP

Council has made significant changes in reducing greenhouse gas emissions through:

- Implementation of Watts Working Better Street Lighting Project, reducing power usage by 40% and reducing greenhouse gas emissions annually by 665 tonnes of CO₂-e
- Reducing waste to landfill through introduction of garden organics service across the Shire and increasing recycling opportunities in public spaces
- Installation of 100kW of solar on Echuca Library
- Installation of 60kW of solar and 30kW battery storage at Echuca Basketball Stadium, with the stadium supplying 95% of its own power
- Inclusion of hybrid vehicles into Council fleet
- Participation in the Victorian Energy Collaboration, a project to deliver 100% renewable power to 46 Victorian Councils, preventing 260,000 tonnes of CO₂-e from entering our atmosphere every year – Australia's largest single emissions reduction (mitigation) project by local government.



Echuca Stadium

The Climate Council's report, **Uninsurable nation: Australia's most climate-vulnerable places** (Climate Council, 2022), outlines the top 20 most at-risk Federal electorates to climate change-related extreme weather events. The metric used for the ranking is the percentage of 'high risk' properties in each electorate across Australia. The ranking used a timeframe of 2030 for comparing climate risks with a high emissions scenario. The total risks from hazards that significantly impact buildings were considered: bushfires, riverine flooding, extreme wind, coastal inundation and surface water flooding.

The number 1 most at-risk Federal electorate by 2030 is Nicholls (Victoria) which covers the Local Government Areas (LGAs) of Campaspe, Greater Shepparton, Moira and parts of Strathbogie and Mitchell. Nicholls received top ranking with 26.5% of properties will be uninsurable by 2030 and the rate as high as 56% of properties for Greater Shepparton. **'While climate change affects all Australians, the risks are not shared equally. In the most extreme instances, areas may become uninhabitable'** (Climate Council, 2022). Insurance will be increasingly unaffordable or unavailable in large parts of Australia due to worsening extreme weather. The availability of affordable insurance is paramount to the safety and well-being of communities, as well the broader economic resilience of Australia.

Pest Plants and Animals

Pest plants (weeds) and animals are a threat to biodiversity and agricultural production in the Shire. The Centre for Invasive Species Solutions has found that the average cost of weeds in Australia is \$4.8 billion dollars from weed control costs and production losses (McLeod, 2018). Overall, the costs of weeds has increased 20% since the last economic impact report from 15 years ago (McLeod, 2018).

Under the Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994 landowners are responsible for the management of pest plants and animals on their property. All landowners have a responsibility to eradicate regionally prohibited weeds, prevent the growth and spread of regionally controlled weeds, and prevent the spread of established pest animals.

Council is responsible for the management of pest plants and animals on the land that it owns or manages. The responsibility for the management of weeds on roadsides is the land manager. Council has developed a Roadside Weed and Rabbit Control Plan. This plan is implemented with funds provided by Local Government Victoria under the Roadside Weeds and Pest Program. By reducing noxious weeds across the Shire, the threat to biodiversity and native vegetation quality, agricultural production, landscape values, waterway habitats and amenity is reduced.

Environmental weeds are weeds that threaten natural ecosystems. They are capable of invading plant communities and out-competing native species and can pose a problem such as Gazania (Gazania spp) growing over grasslands.

Campaspe Shire Council weed management on roadsides from October 2020 to December 2021 included treatment of:

- 711 Blackberry sites across 366km of roadside
- 1,378 Briar Roses treated across 949km of roadside
- 41 sites of Artichoke Thistle across 100km of roadside
- 2,422 African Boxthorns were treated across 1,282km of roadside
- 26 sites of Prickly Pear across 59km of roadside was treated
- 77 sites of Paterson's Curse were treated over 142km of roadside
- 120 plants of Bridal Creeper were treated across 230km of roadside
- 362 sites of Horehound across 728km of roadside was treated
- 55 sites of Silverleaf Nightshade was treated across 118km of roadside, predominantly across the Patho Plains.

Ongoing Loss of Habitat

The Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services has identified changes in land and sea use as the top key driver of biodiversity loss. Loss of habitat occurs through; the loss of native vegetation (amplified when it includes old hollow-bearing trees); poor natural regeneration, changes to riverflows, wetlands and floodplains; removal of woody debris and changes to fire frequency and intensity.

Native vegetation extent is mapped by the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) and defined as vegetation extent. The following map, figure 6, indicates the vegetation extent across the Campaspe Shire, covering both the Goulburn Broken Catchment and North Central Catchment as of 2017. DELWP has provided Native Vegetation Regulation Extent (2017) Dataset from the Victorian Government Directory to produce this map. This is the most up to date mapping available from DELWP.

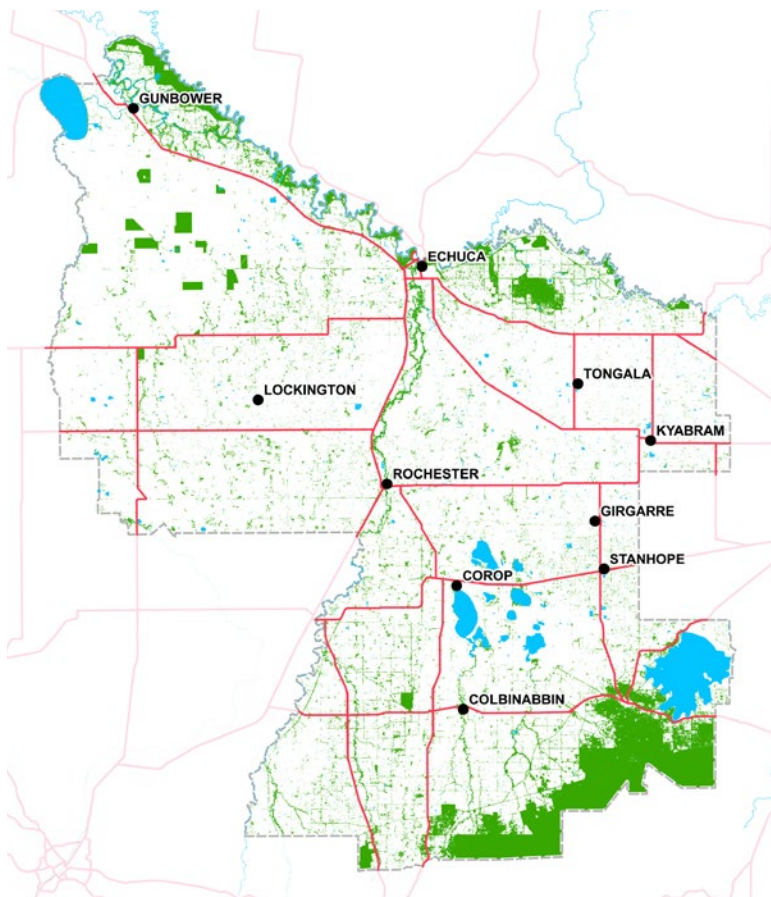


Figure 6. Map of native vegetation cover for the Shire. Map of native vegetation cover for the Shire, data layer Native Vegetation Regulation Extent 2017 from Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning.

The loss of habitat not only reduces the native flora present but reduces the fauna it can support. Habitat fragmentation is listed as a threatening process for fauna in Victoria under the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988. More than 2,000 species, communities and threats are listed under the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988.

While large-scale clearing of native vegetation no longer occurs in the Shire, continued incremental losses have adverse consequences for biodiversity and the functioning of ecosystems. This impact is significant

across agricultural landscapes where there is little remaining native vegetation. The impact is intensified when small remnant patches of northern plains grassland are ploughed.

'Cleaning up' of roadsides and remnant areas also leads to incremental loss of native vegetation as logs, branches and litter provide important habitat for both flora and fauna. The loss of isolated paddock trees due to burning of crop paddocks also leads to incremental loss of biodiversity in the Shire.

Managing Water Quantity and Quality

Managing water quantity and quality is an ongoing challenge for many stakeholders across the Shire and the region. Council has responsibilities for urban stormwater, for statutory planning processes for development and wastewater as well as Council's own water use (potable and raw).

Integrated Water Management (IWM) is the term used to describe the collaborative approach to planning and managing all elements of the water cycle, including delivery of water, wastewater and stormwater management contribute to water security, public and environmental health and urban amenity. In 2020 Council completed Planning for future water management: Campaspe Integrated Water Management (IWM) Strategy to provide a long-term pathway for dealing with water-related challenges in a collaborative, integrated manner for the benefit of the Shire's communities.

The management of stormwater is important to urban communities to avoid risks posed to water quality by minimising the impacts of flow, sediment, nutrients, pathogens, toxicants, litter and pollutants in surface water.

Water security for the agricultural sector remains a key issue through access to water, water quality and the price involved. The separation of land and water entitlements has resulted in water trading which influences local water availability and price. The delivery of water for agriculture, industry and towns can be managed for a positive impact on the environment, providing environmental benefits as it flows through the system. This is managed by the water authorities with input from the Catchment Management Authorities.

Torrumbarry Weir



Aquatic Reserve, Echuca



Conservation

Key Terms

Biodiversity – biodiversity encompasses all components of the living world; the number and variety of plants, animals and other living things across land, rivers, coast and ocean. It includes the diversity of their genetic information, the habitats and ecosystems within which they live, and their connections with other life forms and the natural world.

Native vegetation – plants indigenous to the area including trees, shrubs, herbs and grasses.

Noxious weeds – certain plants that are declared under the Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994. Landholders have an obligation to treat noxious weeds according to their classified category.

Policy Position

Council acknowledges:

- The significant environments and landscapes across the Shire, from the Box-Ironbark Forests of the south to the woodlands, waterways (rivers, tributaries and wetlands) and Northern Plains Grasslands of the floodplain, to the Murray River to the north.
- The importance of effective management of public land, including road reserves, bushland reserves, parks and recreation spaces.
- The importance of planning to protect native vegetation in areas subject to land use change, including future industrial, residential areas and road reserves.
- The importance of integrated water management in Council's roles as a land manager, responsible authority and infrastructure manager.
- The importance of pest animal and weed control, on the land Council manages as well as supporting the community to address this issue.
- The connection to country and the management of country by Traditional Owners, Dja Dja Wurrung, Taungurung and Yorta Yorta Peoples. The application of traditional knowledge to natural resource management improves sustainable environmental and cultural outcomes.
- The importance of private landholders to conservation in the shire, particularly for Northern Plains Grasslands.
- That voluntary conservation covenants are currently the most effective long-term protection of biodiversity on private land.

Council must:

- Implement Council's legislative and policy responsibilities to protect the health of ecological systems.
- Ensure that Council's actions and land management practices incorporate appropriate biodiversity conservation measures and lead by example.
- Support the implementation of the Goulburn Broken Regional Catchment Strategy and North Central Catchment Management Strategy and their sub-strategies.

- Prepare and publish a Roadside Weed and Pest Animal Management Plan in accordance with the Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994 and Roadside Weeds and Pests Program of Local Government Victoria.
- Meet the obligations of the Environment Protection Act 2017 including the general environment duty to reduce the risk of harm from your activities: to human health and the environment; from pollution or waste.
- Apply the no net loss objective of the native vegetation removal regulations, by applying the three-step hierarchy of avoid, minimise and offset to Council's own projects and as statutory authority under the Planning and Environment Act 1987.
- As a public authority, Council has obligations to consider potential biodiversity impacts when exercising our functions, under Section 4B of the Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1998.

Council chooses to:

- Deliver the Rural Tree Scheme by assisting rural landholders to increase the native plants in the landscape, which assists biodiversity conservation on private land.
- Undertake an advocacy role to support the community to manage Queensland Fruit Fly.
- Advocate for the community on new and emerging environmental issues.
- Support Clean Up Australia Day to raise awareness and reduce littering in our community.
- Support community groups to undertake environmental projects with financial support from various grant programs.
- Collaborate with partners to implement actions.
- Support Kyabram Fauna Park acknowledging their role in conservation and water management for the town of Kyabram. The Park's wetlands form part of Kyabram's stormwater catchment system, filtering water, slowing the flow to the Goulburn River system and reducing flash flooding in the Kyabram township.



Conservation

Policy Rationale

Council recognises:

- The need for a healthier environment for current and future generations.
- The importance of healthy catchment and waterways.
- The presence of threatened species, at least 48 flora species and 46 fauna species that are listed under Federal and State legislation.
- The need to partner with lead agencies to address emergencies, floods, fires, and storms as directed by the Northern Victorian Integrated Municipal Emergency Management Plan: Campaspe 2018.

The application of legislation including:

- Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994.
- Planning and Environment Act 1987.
- Environmental Protection Act 2017 and Environment Protection Regulations 2021.
- Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988 and Flora and Fauna Guarantee Amendment Act 2019.
- Wildlife Act 1975.

- Fisheries Act 1995.
- Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999.
- Water Act 1989.

The application of strategies and guides:

- Protecting Victoria's Environment – Biodiversity 2037.
 - And implementation through Biodiversity Response Planning.
- Campaspe Roadside Conservation Strategy.
- Landscape Plan Guide for Developments in Campaspe Shire Council, City of Greater Shepparton and Moira Shire Council.
- River Red Gum Parks Management Plan, Parks Victoria July 2018.
- Goulburn Broken Regional Catchment Strategy 2021-2027 and North Central Catchment Strategy 2021-2027.

Long-term Aims

- To protect, manage and restore native vegetation habitats, including grasslands and wetland vegetation.
- To increase the extent and quality of native vegetation and biodiversity across the Shire.
- Support the availability of water for the environment, agriculture and industry.

Performance Indicators

- An increase in the number of community groups/schools that participate in the National Tree Day program. In 2021-2022, four community groups and two schools participated in National Tree Day plantings.
- Roadside Weeds and Pests Program Control Plan prepared in accordance with requirements of the Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994 and Local Government Victoria.
- Continue to increase native vegetation cover through the Rural Tree Scheme and Council plantings.



Conservation

Example Actions

- Continue to contribute to the operating and maintenance costs of salinity control works to GBCMA on behalf of the Murray Darling Basin Commission.
- Implement the Roadside Weeds & Pests Program Control Plan.
- Continue to deliver on legislated roles in planning and land use management and continue to lead by example as a land manager, controlling noxious weeds and implementing best practice for land management.
- Provide ongoing training for Council staff on awareness and best management practice for native vegetation and weed management.
- Develop and adopt the Urban Tree Management Plan.
- Continue the Rural Tree Scheme to support rural landholders to increase biodiversity through the purchase of plants.
- Participate in the Goulburn Murray Valley Regional Fruit Fly Program.
- Review the Domestic Wastewater Management Plan in line with EPA Act changes.



Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation



Key Terms

Adaptation – is action taken to prepare for actual or expected changes in the climate, in order to minimise harm, act on opportunities or cope with the consequences (Climate Change Act 2017).

Climate change – means a change of climate which is attributed directly or indirectly to human activity that alters the composition of the global atmosphere and which is in addition to natural climate variability observed over comparable time periods (Climate Change Act 2017).

Mitigation – measures taken to reduce adverse effects on the environment and/or manage associated risks. In the context of climate change, it generally refers to human inventions that reduce the sources of greenhouse gases (DELWP, 2017).

Policy Position

Council acknowledges:

- The impacts of climate change influence the resilience and success of the community, business, industry and the environment.
- Extreme weather events have already impacted our communities and services, and these are predicted to become more frequent. Since the 1950s our climate has become warmer and drier.
- Natural disasters are increasing in frequency and severity as a result of the changing climate.
- The community wants action taken to reduce the impacts of climate change.

Council must:

- Responsibly manage energy and water consumption with the aim of increasing efficiency which reduces costs and impacts on the environment.
- Must promote the economic, social and environmental sustainability of the municipal district, including mitigation and planning for climate change risks.
- Prepare a Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan with consideration of climate change.
- Incorporate consideration of climate change and relevant state and national plans into strategic planning. The long-term adverse consequences of climate change for future generations are incorporated into Council planning, decisions and actions.

Council chooses to:

- Lead by example in responding and adapting to climate change.
- Support community, business and industry to respond to the impacts of a changing climate.
- Adopt, support and promote sustainable and affordable energy options.
- Continue to partner with other agencies, government departments, businesses and the community to share knowledge and explore funding opportunities to adapt and mitigate the impacts of climate change.
- Support commercial and residential building owners to access finance (Environmental Upgrade Finance (EUF)) for sustainability or climate adaptation upgrades to existing commercial and residential buildings.

Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation



Policy Rationale

Australian Government signed the Paris Agreement at United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, which aims to limit an increase in global temperatures to “well below” 2°C (aspirational goal of 1.5°).

- Australian Government greenhouse gas emission reduction targets are:
 - 26 to 28% below 2005 levels by 2030
 - Net-zero emission by 2050.

The Climate Change Act 2017 provides Victoria with the legislative foundation to manage climate change risks, maximise the opportunities that arise from action and drive our transition to a climate resilient community and economy with net-zero emissions by 2050.

- The Act requires the development of a Climate Change Strategy every five years and Adaptation Action Plans for key systems that are vulnerable to the impacts of climate change.
- Victoria's Climate Change Strategy (DELWP, 2021a) states the Victorian Government targets to reach net-zero emissions by 2050, based on 2005 level emissions:
 - 28% to 33% by 2025
 - 45% to 50% by 2030.

- Victoria's Climate Change Strategy sets out the Victorian Government's actions to reduce emissions by:
 - A clean energy economy, building greener homes and buildings, transformation of the electricity system.
 - Decarbonising gas use, including switching to electricity and developing the renewable hydrogen industry.
 - Transitioning to more zero emissions vehicles.
 - Researching and piloting new solutions for agriculture.
 - Community investment in renewable energy.
- The Adaptation Action Plans have been developed for each of the seven systems: natural environment, water cycle, built environment, education and training, health and human services, primary production and transport.
- The Act provides the option for local government to make a pledge, to make a statement in respect of reductions in greenhouse gas emissions.
- The Loddon Mallee Climate Ready Plan is a five-year plan with a place-based approach that aims to strengthen capacity on local communities and empower them to work together in response to local challenges that can't be addressed at the state-wide level.

The planning system in Victoria sets out some of the accountabilities and opportunities in relation to local climate change adaptation, as land use planning plays a key role in managing responses to climate risks and natural hazards including bushfires, flooding, heatwaves, sea-level rise and storm surges (DELWP, 2020a).

Long-term Aims

- Support community, business and industry to respond to the impacts of a changing climate.
- Achieve net-zero greenhouse gas emissions for Council operations by 2035.
- Adapt to the effects of climate change.
- Farmers and land managers care for their land to enable agricultural productivity with environmental benefits.

Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation



Performance Indicators

- Council develops a Corporate Emissions Reduction Plan which sets target emission goals to reach net-zero emissions by 2035.
- Development of Environmental Sustainable Design (ESD) Guidelines. Once adopted, ESD Guidelines are to be applied to all (100%) of Council projects.

Example Actions

- Develop a Corporate Emissions Reduction Plan which sets target emission goals to reach net-zero emissions by 2035.
- Develop greenhouse gas emissions reporting for Council's emission tailored to local government, utilising the Local Government Energy Saver Program organisational carbon accounting tool and Azility data.
- Promote and support community access to energy efficiency and greenhouse gas emission reductions education and initiatives.
- Collaborate with other local governments and agencies via the Goulburn Murray Climate Alliance to leverage grant funding and partnerships for climate change related projects and initiatives.
- Support businesses and homeowners to access Environmental Upgrade Funding for upgrades that improve sustainability or climate adaptation to existing commercial and residential buildings.
- Review climate change risks to local government are being addressed through planning, project management and asset management.
- Investigate the inclusion of 'green' fleet options into Council's fleet, with fit for purpose options for passenger fleet and alternatives for heavy vehicles.
- Advocate for support for a hydrogen business plan for Campaspe to explore hydrogen use throughout the region.
- Increase the average star rating for new Council buildings.
- Extend Council's advocacy for building a grid that supports renewables. Including support for the community with gas reliability and security for commercial and residential uses during the transition from fossil fuels to renewable energy.

Community Engagement and Partnerships



Policy Position

Council acknowledges:

- Partnering with other agencies, government departments, businesses, industry bodies and the community to deliver projects and solutions to challenges faced.
- Supporting community groups, the link between a healthy environment and the health of the general population.
- Council works in partnership with the community to achieve a healthy natural environment.

Council must:

- Partner with other agencies and government departments to deliver their plans and comply with legislation.
- Councils are constituted as representative bodies that are accountable, transparent, collaborative, efficient and engaged with their communities.
- Collaborate with other councils and governments and statutory bodies.

Council chooses to:

- Strengthen the relationship with Traditional Owners and continue to work together on natural resource management programs with each Traditional Owner enterprise, Djandak, Taungurung Caring for Country and Woka Walla.
- Support Landcare in the Shire through the Campaspe Shire Landcare Steering Committee.
- Support the Municipal Catchment Coordinator role in collaboration with the Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority, Moira Shire and Greater Shepparton City Council.
- Be a member of the Goulburn Murray Climate Alliance.
- Support the outcomes of the Place Based Plans and Township Facility Plans through Community Development Officers to ensure local aspirations are managed in partnership with Council's financial restraints.
- Support Kyabram Fauna Park acknowledging their role in conservation and water management for the town of Kyabram.
- Continue to strengthen strong local networks and support communities to leverage off existing ties their neighbourhoods. Increase local knowledge sharing about local climate impacts and adaptation solutions.

Policy Rationale

Council recognises:

- Council has obligations under the Local Government Act 2020 to adopt and maintain a community engagement policy. Campaspe Shire Council, Policy 59 - Community Engagement.
- The best partnerships occur when Council engages with a wide range of stakeholders, looking for common ground and joint outcomes using combined resources.
- Partnerships are important for environmental benefits to occur across the landscape and catchment.
- The significance of engagement through Building the Case for Waste, Resource Recovery and Waste Strategy 2018-23 and Waste and Environment Behaviour Change Program 2019-2024, WickED – Waste in Campaspe – Know. Educate. Do.
- Protecting Victoria's Environment – Biodiversity 2037.
- Arbovirus and Mosquito Management Plan 2017-20.
- Domestic Wastewater Management Plan 2015-18.
- Biodiversity 2037 goal of (1) Victorians value nature which includes communities volunteering to improve environmental outcomes.

Community Engagement and Partnerships



Long-term Aims

- The whole community is connecting with nature.
- The community is engaged in the decisions that affect them and the environment.
- Protection of our natural environment and delivery of programs and services to support a connected and healthy community.
- Landscape – sustainable communities supported by clean air, water, land and biodiversity.
- To protect and improve water quality and river health.

Performance Indicators

- Actions listed in the Domestic Wastewater Management Plan are completed or ongoing.
- Actions listed in WickED Action Plan are completed or ongoing.
- Updated Arbovirus and Mosquito Management Plan which includes the spread of Japanese encephalitis virus (JEV) from Papua New Guinea and northern Australia.
- Implementation of Open Space Strategy 2022-2032.

Example Actions

- Review the Domestic Wastewater Management Plan in line with the EPA Act changes.
- Complete the actions listed in the action plan for Building the Case for Waste, Resource Recovery and Waste Strategy.
- Continue to support Campaspe Landcare Steering Committee.
- Participate in state-wide Victorian Arbovirus Disease Control Program, managing waterways and environments to minimise mosquitoes.
- The community development team continue to engage with the community to develop Place Based Plans and Township Facility Plans that reflect the communities priorities while improving environmental outcomes.
- Continue partnerships with agencies, departments and community groups including (but not limited to) Northern Plains Conservation Management Network, Caring for the Campaspe Reference Group, Municipal Catchment Coordinator Reference Group, Goulburn Broken Local Government Biodiversity Reference Group, Integrated Water Management Forums, Campaspe Environmental Water Advisory Group, Goulburn Murray Valley Regional Fruit Fly Program and Goulburn Murray Climate Alliance.
- Continue partnership with NCCMA on the Plains for Wanderer project, including representation on the Plains for Wanderer Project Working Group.
- Encourage community citizen science programs to support monitoring and community capacity building and awareness.

Council's Responsibilities



Policy Position

Council acknowledges:

- The Shire has been inherited from previous generations with outstanding environmental, social and economic attributes. Council is committed to passing on the Shire to the next generation in as good (or better) condition as when inherited.
- The importance of Council as a leader in environmental decision-making and activities.
- Supporting the circular economy, to reduce the environmental impacts of production and consumption, while enabling economic growth through productive use of natural resources. Council has two roles in the circular economy, one to provide municipal residual waste and municipal recycling services and a second as a purchaser of products and materials.
- Amenity refers to the pleasant aspects of a place which contribute to its overall character, and in the environment has a wider application which includes a physical component (which could include character and appearance of building and works), quality infrastructure and absence of noise, unsightliness or offensive odours.

Council must:

- Comply with legislative requirements relevant to environmental sustainability, including:
 - Environment Protection Act 2017 and general environment duty (GED) to reduce the risk of harm from your activities: to human health and the environment; from pollution or waste.
 - Local Government Act 2020.
 - Circular Economy (Waste Reduction and Recycling) Act 2021.
 - Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008.
 - Water Act 1989.
 - Crown Land Reserves Act 1978.
 - Legislation listed under conservation theme (page 17)
- Implement and enforce legislation that is delegated to Council by Victorian Government agencies, Environmental Protection Authority (EPA), Sustainability Victoria and Department of Health.
- Integrate environmental sustainability across all areas of Council, in decision making and project management.
- Implement Council's Waste Wise Events Guide.
- Implement Council's Waste and Environment Behaviour Change Program 2019-2024.

Council chooses to:

- Commit to environmentally sustainable procurement.
- Investigate the use of recycled materials in Council projects.
- Support community groups to undertake projects to benefit our local environment and reduce the impacts of climate change through the Community Grants program.

Council's Responsibilities



Policy Rationale

Council recognises:

- The application of the triple bottom line, accounting to deliver environmental, social and economic benefits.
- The importance of good governance.

Long-term Aims

- Promote and aid Victoria's transition to a circular economy.
- The protection and enhancement of the amenity and environment of the municipality.

Performance Indicators

- Council does not commit any breaches of environmental legislation.
- All events held on Council owned or Council managed land meet the minimum requirement of the Waste Wise Events Guide.

Example Actions

- Apply the Landscape Plan Guide for Development in Campaspe Shire Council, City of Greater Shepparton and Moira Shire Council for Council projects and encourage its use in the wider community.
- Application of fit for purpose green purchasing.
- Continued application of Local Law No 8 to protect and maintain the amenity of the Shire.



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