Ordinary Meeting of Council

26 June 2024

UNDER SEPARATE COVER ATTACHMENTS

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QUEANBEYAN-PALERANG REGIONAL COUNCIL

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ITEM 9.2 POST EXHIBITION REPORT- ROADSIDE VEGETATION MANAGEMENT PLAN AND POLICY

ATTACHMENT 1 DRAFT ROADSIDE VEGETATION MANAGEMENT POLICY

Draft Roadside Vegetation Management Policy

Date policy was adopted:		**GM Signature and date**
Resolution number:		
Next Policy review date:		
Reference number:		
Strategic Pillar		
Responsible Branch		DD/MM/YYYY

qprc.nsw.gov.au

1 OUTCOMES

1.1 Queanbeyan Palerang Regional Council recognises the importance of a safe and accessible road network, and the need to appropriately maintain roads as a critical community asset.

1.2 Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council additionally recognises the importance of the environmental and social benefits provided by road verge ecosystems and is committed to managing this resource sustainably and practically.

1.3 The policy aims to balance the competing needs of roads, road safety and road infrastructure with the ongoing conservation of roadside verges and reserves, particularly in areas identified as high conservation value.

2 POLICY

2.1 Road verges are key parts of our natural ecosystem, often providing intact native habitat and containing vulnerable species or key conservation hotspots. Council is committed to protecting these valuable ecosystems and complying with various State and Commonwealth Legislation relating to Roadside Vegetation Management.

2.2 The disturbed nature of road verges puts these environments under sustained threats from road use activities. Council will mitigate these threats through compliance with its Roadside Vegetation Management Plan (RVMP).

3 SCOPE OF THE POLICY

3.1 This policy applies to all Council staff and contractors who work in road or road reserve management, particularly staff under the Infrastructure Services and Development and Environment portfolios.

4 DEFINITIONS

Council means Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council
Road means any public road in the QPRC LGA for which QPRC is a roads authority under the Roads Act 1993.
Road Reserve means to the section of land between the road's edge and the fence-line of adjacent properties. Where no fence exists, this is the demarcated property boundary on planning maps.
The Road Reserve also includes components of the road formation that are critical to maintaining a safe and trafficable road network. These include but are not limited to:

a) Road Shoulder
b) Road Verge
c) Road Drainage
d) Road Cut and Fill Batters

Road Work Activity means to any action that applies to the use of roads including construction, maintenance or survey work
RVMP means QPRC's Roadside Vegetation Management Plan.
Road Worker means any QPRC employee or contractor who conducts work on roads or road reserves and/or conducts planning or surveying work that involves roads or road reserves.

5 LEGISLATIVE OBLIGATIONS AND/OR RELEVANT STANDARDS

5.1 Roads Act 1993 defines the authority QPRC has over roads in the LGA
Part 1 Sec. 7 - Roads Authorities

> *(4) The council of a local government area is the roads authority for all public roads within the area, other than—*
>
> > *(a) any freeway or Crown road, and*
> >
> > *(b) any public road for which some other public authority is declared by the regulations to be the roads authority.*

5.2 *Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016*
5.3 *Biosecurity Act 2015*
5.4 *Crown Lands Management Act 2016*
5.5 *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*
5.6 *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*
5.7 *Fisheries Management Act 1994*
5.8 *Heritage Act 1997*
5.9 *Local Government Act 1993*
5.10 *Local Land Services Act 2013*
5.11 *National Parks and Wildlife Act*
5.12 *Rural Fires Act 1997*
5.13 P*rotection of the Environment Operations Act 1997*
5.14 *State Environmental Planning Policy (Transport and Infrastructure) 2021*
5.15 *State Environmental Planning Policy (Biodiversity and Conservation) 2021*
5.16 *Water Management Act 2000*
5.17 *Austroads Design Guidelines*
5.18 *DPIE SOS Hygiene Guidelines to protect priority biodiversity areas in NSW from Phytophthora cinnamomi, myrtle rust, amphibian chytrid fungus and invasive plants.*
5.19 *DPIE Threatened Species of Roadsides and TSRs in the Queanbeyan Palerang Regional Council.*
5.20 *QPRC's Roadside Vegetation Management Plan* is the plan supported by this policy.

6 CONTENT

6.1 Roadside Vegetation Plan

6.1.1 QPRC will implement a RVMP for use by all Road Workers. This plan is to inform all road-related works, and will:

i) identify legislative requirements for road reserve management.
ii) categorise road reserves by their environmental features.
iii) provide guidelines which must be adhered to while working on roadsides.
iv) provide a Management Action Plan that will inform all road related work.

6.1.2 The RVMP will be provided to all Team Leaders, Program Coordinators, Managers and other relevant staff related to road management.
6.1.3 All on-the-ground staff will be provided with either the RVMP or a simplified Standard Operating Procedures
6.1.4 The RVMP should be consulted during the planning phase of any Road Use Activity
6.1.5 The RVMP should be consulted when any Road Use Activity deviates from the work plan or does not require a work plan.
6.1.6 The guidelines in the RVMP must be followed by all Road Workers.

6.2 Roadside Environment Markers

6.2.1 QPRC will install roadside markers to identify all sites that contain threatened or endangered vegetation

6.2.2 These roadside markers will be discrete so to not capture unwanted public attention and traffic to the sites.

6.2.3 These roadside markers will indicate to all road workers to stop all work and consult the RVMP for site-specific guidelines.

6.3 Employee Training

6.3.1 All Road Workers will receive training specific to the RVMP

6.3.2 This training will cover:

i) The importance of roadside vegetation management.
ii) How to navigate and use the RVMP for practical road reserve maintenance.
iii) How to identify roadside markers

6.4 Hygiene Protocols

6.4.1 QPRC will prepare hygiene protocols for plant, equipment, vehicles and clothing used in Road Use Activities as required by site conditions.

7 REVIEW

7.1 This policy will be reviewed every four years or earlier as necessary if:

a) legislation requires it, or
b) Council's functions, structure or activities change, or
c) The is significant change to road reserves in the LGA

QUEANBEYAN-PALERANG REGIONAL COUNCIL

Council Meeting Attachment

26 JUNE 2024

ITEM 9.2 POST EXHIBITION REPORT- ROADSIDE VEGETATION MANAGEMENT PLAN AND POLICY

ATTACHMENT 2 DRAFT ROADSIDE VEGETATION MANAGEMENT PLAN

Roadside Vegetation Management Plan

for Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council

Ref: Doc Set ID

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Abbreviations

Abbreviations	Definitions
LLS	Local Land Services
TSR	Travelling Stock Route
HVC	High Value Conservation area
MVC	Medium Value Conservation area
LVC	Low Value Conservation area
SM	Special Management area
QPRC	Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council
OEH	(NSW) Office of Environment and Heritage
DPE (formerly DPIE)	(NSW) Department of Planning and Environment (formally Department of Planning, Industry and the Environment). Some documents will be referenced with DPIE as the documentation was prepared prior to the name change.
NPWS	National Parks and Wildlife Service
KTP	Key Threatening Processes
RMCC	Road Management Council Contracts
TfNSW	Transport for NSW
RVMP	Roadside Vegetation Management Plan (this document)
BHP	Biosecurity Hygiene Protocol
REF	Review of Environmental Factors
TSR	Travelling Stock Route
BC Act	*Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016*
EPBC ACT	*Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*
EP&A Act	*Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*
EP&A Regulation	*Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021*
LLS Act	*Local Land Services Act 2013*
NPW Act	*National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974*
SEPPT&I	*State Environmental Planning Policy (Transport and Infrastructure) 2021*
SEPPB&C	*State Environmental Planning Policy (Biodiversity and Conservation) 2021*

1 – Introduction

1.1 – Vision

The Roadside Vegetation Management Plan aligns with two of the Strategic Goals of the QPRC Community Strategic Plan:

- *Our transport network and infrastructure is safe, supports a zero emissions target and allows for ease of movement throughout Queanbeyan-Palerang and across the ACT border and region.*

- *Our land, vegetation and waterways are managed in an integrated and sustainable manner.*

The vision of the Roadside Vegetation Management Plan is for a roadside environment where safety and usability are paramount, and that also:

- maintains ecological communities and processes,
- provides environmental services in the immediate roadside environment and beyond,
- provides amenity for motorists and adjacent landholders, and
- provides a sense of local place and identity.

1.2 – Background

Road verges across QPRC are key parts of our natural ecosystem, and often contain the last examples of intact native habitats in heavily used agricultural or urban areas. Many road verges are key biodiversity and conservation hotspots, and often contain endangered or vulnerable species. Because they are very narrow and run adjacent to roads, they are threatened by human disturbance as we build, use, and maintain roads. They also often support other infrastructure including electricity, water, sewer, gas, telecommunications, and other utilities.

We must balance the competing needs of roads and road infrastructure with the ongoing conservation of roadside verges and reserves. This roadside vegetation is managed as part of the routine work expected of a local government, and the RVMP acts to guide future road related construction and maintenance. In doing so, it builds upon previous management plans, including in the *Tallaganda Shire Council Roadside Management Plan, 1997*

Some of QPRC's roadside vegetation was surveyed and assessed in 2017-2019 as part of the Council Roadside Reserves project, funded by the NSW Environmental Trust via Local

Government NSW (LGNSW). The threatened species of the roadsides in QPRC were mapped in 2020 and 2021 by DPIE. This mapping and reporting feeds into existing and ongoing in-house vegetation mapping and monitoring and informs this plan. Future mapping will be conducted to cover more of the LGA and adapt to changing environmental and road conditions. This should be treated as a living document, and the newest relevant maps should be relied on. This RVMP will feed into a more concise field guide, including Standard Operating Procedures for staff to use on the ground. Training will be provided to transport staff as required.

1.3 – Objectives

The RVMP aims to protect, maintain, improve, extend, or enhance roadside vegetation by:

- enhancing safe function of the road,
- protecting biodiversity values of ecological communities - particularly aiming to prevent biodiversity loss and protect vulnerable or endangered species,
- protecting cultural and heritage assets,
- creating and maintaining fauna corridors between remnant vegetation,
- improving the visual amenity of QPRC roadsides,
- protecting water quality and minimise the impact road systems have on water ways,
- minimising erosion caused by road use or road maintenance activities and the subsequent topsoil loss and sedimentation build-up,
- minimising the incidence of wildlife collisions,
- reducing the spread of weeds, pathogens, and other disease vectors,
- preventing or minimising run-off pollution from the road into surrounding habitats,
- minimising maintenance costs,
- limiting the risk and impact of fires, and
- preventing any other unnecessary impact to road verges or the surrounding ecosystems.

Captains Flat Road, Carwoola displaying roadside vegetation with high ecological value.

2 – Values of Roadside Vegetation

Properly maintained Roadside vegetation has significant benefits to the environment, the community, and the economy. Road reserves constitute a significant amount of land – almost 6% of land across NSW is a road reserve. That means that the benefits of well-maintained road reserves are very important and have impacts far beyond the boundaries of the reserves. These benefits are briefly discussed below.

2.1 – Biodiversity and Cultural Conservation

Roadside reserves can act as key biodiversity hotspots and wildlife corridors when properly protected and maintained. QPRC's roadsides contain Endangered and Critically Endangered Ecological Communities, and several threatened flora and fauna species, and often act as key habitats. In rare cases, most or all individuals within a population occur along roadsides. Roadside reserves also act as key wildlife corridors that act to connect larger areas of natural bushland, making them key to increasing genetic diversity and population spread. Poorly maintained road reserves can prevent genetic movement and create genetic bottlenecks. Road reserves can also act as key seed supply sites for planting and revegetation projects.

Roadsides often contain items of historical indigenous or non-indigenous items. This can include cultural heritage items like middens, scarred trees and rock engravings, and European heritage items like historic road markers, historic roads, or historic bridges or culverts. These items should be conserved using proper road reserve management to minimise the impact of road use activities.

2.2 – Weed Management

As road reserves are disturbed environments with constant vehicular movement, they can spread of weeds. Weeds thrive in disturbed areas and can spread weeds quickly and easily. Maintaining road reserves in good conditions can reduce the spread and increase in density of weeds throughout the council area by limiting the area of exposed areas prone to infestation. This prevents the weeds from proliferating through the LGA.

2.3 – Waterway, Catchment and Soil Health

Properly maintained roadside vegetation acts to mitigate the impacts of road construction, use and management. It acts to filter runoff contaminated from road use activities, slows water flows and wind movement to prevent erosion and sedimentation problems, reduces soil salinity, and binds the soil to further prevent erosion and soil loss. This acts as a buffer to surrounding ecosystems, protecting

water catchments and wetlands from contamination or sedimentation.

2.4 – Economic and social benefits

Roadside Vegetation has several knock-on social and economic benefits. They provide a buffer zone for agricultural and environmental land, reducing the potential for weed or pollutant spread while also acting as a windbreak and shade for livestock. The provide an avenue for moving stock between paddocks or properties, while also offering areas for agistment in times of drought. They can also offer habitat for pollinator or pest control species, further aiding neighbouring agricultural properties. Roadside vegetation also provides aesthetic and amenity values to the communities using the road and provides shade and heat mitigation to pedestrians. This improves the usability of roadsides for recreational purposes like walking, horse riding, and cycling.

2.5 – Reduction in Maintenance Costs

Native roadside vegetation has practical maintenance and economic benefits. Due to the unique properties of most native plants, they require no supplementary watering or care, and native grasses require less frequent or no mowing. Native grasses also produce a relatively lower fuel low compared to exotic grasses and are less palatable to grazing animals than exotic counterparts which reduces the probability of a vehicle collision. Maintaining roadside vegetation in a healthy state also reduces the maintenance required on roads by preventing erosion and associated land slips and undermining which may interfere with the function of the road while also reducing damage associated with bushfire and tree fall.

3 – Roadside Vegetation and the Law

The **NSW *Roads Act 1993*** (subsequently referred to as "the Roads Act") sets out the legal framework for the classification and management of roads within NSW. The Roads Act also regulates the maintenance, usage and construction of public roads. The Roads Act categorises public roads as State, Regional or Local Roads and defines the responsibilities related to each road category.

Transport for NSW (TfNSW) is responsible for state roads, has power to delegate control of State Roads to councils, making council a road authority for relevant roads. Additionally, local councils have contractual responsibility for managing the footpaths and road reserves on State roads (excluding freeways). This is contracted through Road Management Council Contracts (RMCCs) and is administered through TfNSW. Councils are responsible for maintaining and managing Regional and Local roads (aided by funding contributions from TfNSW) and responsible for managing these roads to certain specifications. The specification most relevant to this report is *Transport for NSW (TfNSW) QA Specification G36: Environmental Protection.*

The Roads Act and relevant specifications should be referred to prior to any major works being conducted. Some parts of the Roads Act enable road authorities to undertake certain necessary works by bypassing other legislation – this includes some emergency works, some works relating to road construction, and the removal of trees that impede the safe use of a road. This legislation should be checked prior to conducting works.

Other legislation and policies relevant to Road Vegetation Management are outlined in Table 1 below. Please note that legislation and policy are subject to ongoing review and change and this table should be treated as a guide only. Legislation is listed in alphabetical order, and no precedence is given to any legislation unless indicated. Where legislation is quoted directly, this legislation may change over time and should be checked prior to relying on this table. If listed legislation has been repealed or replaced by newer legislation, disregard the repealed legislation, and adhere to the replacement legislation.

3.1 – Legislation and Policies

Table 1: Legislation and policies relevant to Road Vegetation Management

Legislation/Policy	Description	Application to Road Reserve Management
Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016 (BC Act)	Defines and lists endangered ecological communities, threatened species, and key threatening processes. The Act also identifies offences and legislates penalties for acts that negatively impact biodiversity.	This Act should be used in conjunction with the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act (EP&A Act)(discussed below). Activities outlined the EP&A Act must additionally be assessed for significant biodiversity impacts (clearing or prescribed impacts) on threatened species or ecological communities under the Biosecurity Act. This Act should also be referred to prior to any major works being conducted, and a Biodiversity Development Assessment Report or other relevant assessment or works specified in the Act.
Biosecurity Act 2015	If a weed poses a biosecurity risk in a particular area, but is not the subject of any specific legislation, the general biosecurity duty would apply to manage that weed or prevent its spread.	Roads are considered high risk pathways for the introduction of new or emerging weeds and pathogens.
Crown Lands Management Act 2016	Crown Roads (or 'paper roads') were established during colonisation of NSW and are typically part of the state's public road network.	The NSW Crown lands manages Crown roads under the NSW Roads Act 1993.
Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act)	Commonwealth legislation that protects matters of national environmental significance, which includes EPBC listed threatened ecological communities and species. As Commonwealth Legislation, it supersedes any contradictory State Legislation.	Roadside construction and management should avoid or minimise impacts to federally listed species or ecological communities or other matters of significance. Where impacts are unavoidable, an environmental impact statement must be prepared by a qualified ecologist. If impacts are assessed as significant, the proposal is referred to the Commonwealth to determine whether it is a Controlled Action, which requires approval under Chapter 6 Part 9 of the Act.

Roadside Vegetation Management Plan

Legislation/Policy	Description	Application to Road Reserve Management
Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (EP&A) Supplemented by *Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021(*EP&A Regulation)	Principal state planning legislation. The EP&A Act provides the statutory basis for environmental assessment of development, together with State Environmental Planning Policies (SEPPs) and Local Environment Plans (LEPs). Use in conjunction with the Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016	Act dictates when permission must be sort before undertaking works, considering a range of environmental impacts including impacting threatened species or their habitats, threatened ecosystems, or reduction of recreational, aesthetic, economic or scientific values etc. It also legislates when an Environmental Impact Assessment is required and how and when permission must be sort prior to works commencing.
Fisheries Management Act 1994	Protects marine and riparian vegetation, fish, and other aquatic life and vegetation.	Relevant for any work that requires dredging, reclamation of land, excavation of a bed or a bank, or obstructing fish passage (bridges or crossings). These activities required a permit or consultation. Most important reference point is Part 7 of the Act, Protection of Aquatic Habitats.
Heritage Act 1997	Specifies the processes for protecting items or places of State and Local Heritage Significance (historical, scientific, cultural, social, archaeological, architectural, natural or aesthetic).	Approval is required when conducting any works on a heritage place listed on the State Heritage Register (or covered by an interim order), and for excavation which may disturb an archaeological relic.
Local Government Act 1993	Councils are considered Road Authorities under the Roads Act 1993, and the construction and maintenance of all roads other than freeways and state highways is a basic function of Council.	Council constructs and maintains all relevant roads in the QPRC local government area, and additionally may provide these services under contract to the Transport for NSW for state roads.
Local Land Services Act 2013 (LLS Act)	LLS is responsible for the management and delivery of local land services to ensure the proper management of natural resources.	Responsible for stock (grazing and droving) permits along roadsides, which require consent from Council for Council roads.

Roadside Vegetation Management Plan

Legislation/Policy	Description	Application to Road Reserve Management
National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974 (NPW Act)	Establishes oversight councils and creates provisions for the protection of conservation or cultural features including biodiversity conservation, indigenous heritage conservation, and European heritage conservation.	Administers indigenous Australian heritage impact permits and interim protection orders.
Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997	Protect and restore the environment particularly in relation to pollution mitigation	Licence required for construction of roads that require the extraction or processing of 50,000 tonnes of material or more, or the construction of roads of 4 lanes or more. Construction includes both the initial construction, plus the widening or rerouting of existing road. It does not refer to other maintenance or repair work. Any work with the potential to cause pollution, erosion or sedimentation must comply with requirements of this Act.
Rural Fires Act 1997	Bushfire prevention and management.	Local government has the responsibility to take all practical steps to minimise the occurrence of or spread of bushfires on all managed roads of all classification types. Require assessment as part of the development application process, or where council activities place temporary works depots (including fuel storage) in bushfire prone lands. Further operational requirements during periods of Total Fire Ban.
State Environmental Planning Policy (Transport and Infrastructure) 2021(SEPPT&I)	Provides planning framework for infrastructure in NSW, including what activities required consent, or are prohibited.	Refer to Division 17: Roads and Traffic

Roadside Vegetation Management Plan

Legislation/Policy	Description	Application to Road Reserve Management
State Environmental Planning Policy (Biodiversity and Conservation) 2021(SEPPB&C)	Provides planning framework for infrastructure in NSW with a focus on biodiversity and conservation. A significant part of the policy applies to Koala habitat and is relevant to QPRC roadsides	Refer to Chapters 3 and 4 of the policy regarding Koala Habitat protection for relevant land areas. This will likely consolidate into one chapter in the future as policy changes are amalgamated for different areas. Also refer to Chapter 13 of the policy: Strategic Conservation Planning.
Water Management Act 2000 (WM Act) Supplemented by Water Management (General) Regulation 2018	Dictates the sustainable management of water sources in NSW.	Under Section 41 of the Water Management (General) Regulation 2018, public authorities are exempted the usual requirement to obtain a Controlled Activity Approval for works on the waterfront (defined as any area within 40 metres from the top of the bank of any river, lake or other water source. Activities that interfere with groundwater aquifers – specifically the extraction of sand or road base – must obtain approval.

3.2 – Exemptions or Approvals Required for Works

Table 2: Exemptions or Approvals

Activity	Requirements	
	Exemptions	Permits/Approvals
Road Construction or Widening	N/A	Preparation of a Review of Environmental Factors (REF) under the *EP&A Regulation 2021* prior to work being conducted.
		Consider opting into the Biodiversity Offsets Scheme under BC ACT 2016, especially for high conservation value roadsides where significant impacts are likely.
		Refer for approval any activity that may have Significant Impacts to Matters of National Environmental Significance under *EPBC Act 1999*
		Conduct assessment into likelihood of Koala Habitat on sites with area greater than 1ha under *(SEPPB&C) 2021*
Vegetation Maintenance Works	Permitted under s.88 of the Roads Act: *"A roads authority may, despite any other Act or law to the contrary, remove or lop any tree or other vegetation that is overhanging a public road if, in its opinion, it is necessary to do so for the purpose of carrying out road work or removing a traffic hazard."*	Refer for approval any activity that may have Significant Impacts to Matters of National Environmental Significance under *EPBC Act 1999*
		Conduct assessment into likelihood of Koala Habitat on sites with area greater than 1ha under *(SEPPB&C) 2021*
Works within 40 metres of a riverbank or other water course	Under Section 41 of the Water Management (General) Regulation 2018, public authorities are exempted the usual requirement to obtain a Controlled Activity Approval for works on the waterfront (defined as any area within 40 metres from the top of the bank of any river, lake or other water source.	Activities that interfere with groundwater aquifers – specifically the extraction of sand or road base – must obtain approval.
		Refer for approval any activity that may have Significant Impacts to Matters of National Environmental Significance under *EPBC Act 1999*

Roadside Vegetation Management Plan

Activity	Requirements	
	Exemptions	Permits/Approvals
Working within waterways	Vegetation maintenance works as dictated above.	Permit required for any dredging, reclamation of land, excavation of any riverbed or bank, or any works that may interfere with fish passage under the *Fisheries Management Act 1994*
	Weed control to meet General Biosecurity Duty under the Biosecurity Act (2015)	Refer for approval any activity that may have Significant Impacts to Matters of National Environmental Significance under *EPBC Act 1999*
		Refer for development consent any activity that an Environmental Planning Instrument specifies requiring consent under Part 4 of the *EP&A Act (1979)*
Weed management	Weed control to meet General Biosecurity Duty under the Biosecurity Act (2015)	Permit required to move or otherwise deal in Prohibited Matter
Fire management	Exemptions may be given for works by authorised officers or fire authorities, if it follows an approved bush fire management plan, if an there is an active bushfire hazard reduction certificate, or if there is a bush fire code applying to the area.	Permit required for any burning activities including hazard reduction burns under RFC Act (1997)
Installation of fence lines and signage.	Exempt development under Schedule 1 of *SEPPT&I (2021)*	Approval required if carried out in the critical habitat of an endangered species or community under the *EP&A Act (1979)*
Installing sediment and erosion control	Exemption for roads are maintained in accordance with the principles of erosion and sediment control documented in relevant guidelines (e.g. Landcom 2004 – 'Blue Book', OEH 2012 – Erosion and sediment control on unsealed roads).	N/A
Emergency works	Where works are specified as exempt development in the *SEPPT&I (2021)*	Approvals required for any works not specified as exempt under development in the *SEPPT&I (2021)*

4 – Roadside Vegetation Classifications

Roadside vegetation can be broken into four different classifications of conservation value, based on the existing ecosystem features, particularly remnant trees. There are three typical classifications that use a “traffic light” system. This includes High Value Conservation areas (in red), Medium Value Conservation areas (in orange) and Low Value Conservation areas (in green).

This colour coded system can be implemented in road maps to inform how works are carried out on any section of road. As may be expected, there are higher levels of care required for red roads, and which decreases as you move through the traffic light system.

The final category of roadside are Special Management areas. These sites typically contain threatened or endangered species of flora, the habitat for threatened or endangered species of fauna, significant cultural or heritage items, or an infestation of a weed or pathogen that needs specific management requirements. These sites are treated as High Value Conservation Areas, but also have additional rules or requirements that go beyond this rating. No work should be conducted on any of these sites without consultation with the Standard operating procedures.

4.1 – High Conservation Value (HCV)

HCV roadsides often contain one or more of the threatened ecological communities (TEC) or records of threatened plants or animals. HCV roadsides can also include non-TEC plant community types where vegetation is relatively undisturbed, where vegetation structure and layers are intact, and where there is relatively little evidence of disturbance or weed invasion. A roadside that contains several large trees (typically with a trunk diameter of more than 1 metre for eucalyptus species), and lots of shrubs or native grasses underneath with very little sign of clearing or weed infestation is usually classified as HCV. QPRC also contains some of the most significant grassy ecosystems in the state. A roadside without trees but full of native grasses with minimal weed infestations may also be classified as HCV. If you are unsure, please contact environmental staff for advice.

This example of Box-Gum Woodland EEC on Gidleigh Lane has mature and regenerating trees, a diverse understorey, with tree hollows, fallen timber and leaf litter providing habitat for a range of native animals.

4.2 – Medium Conservation Value (MCV)

MCV roadsides are typically somewhat disturbed, with one or more layers of vegetation modified or absent. They provide less diverse habitat and may have a moderate level of weed invasion. These areas support fewer and less specialised native animal species, and are more likely to be populated by opportunistic and sometimes aggressive bird species, both native and exotic (e.g. noisy miners, currawongs, starlings, Indian mynahs), and other pest animals. A roadside that contains large, hollow bearing trees but with very limited native shrubs and understorey is a good example of this category. Another example would be native shrubs and grasses, lacking large trees and containing a moderate level of weed infestation.

This example of a MCV roadside: Tableland Dry Sclerophyll Forest remnant located on Cooma Road has a fairly intact overstorey, but few shrubs, and largely native understorey with weed incursions.

4.3 – Low Conservation Value (LCV)

LCV roadsides are highly disturbed with little to no intact native vegetation. It may contain individual or isolated clumps of native trees or shrubs with a weedy understorey. While this provides some minimal resources for native animals, it is of little conservation or habitat value. They are often areas managed through routine slashing or spraying, often heavily grazed or cleared, often erosion due to vegetation loss, and the area often contains significant roadkill drawn by the green pick offered by weedy grasses.

The photo shows a classic example of a LCV roadside, this one taken on Captains Flat Road. Note the absence of mature native trees or shrubs, sparse weedy grass cover, and exposed dirt.

4.4 – Special Management Area (SM)

Some roadside verges in QPRC contain vegetation or features that require special management plans or practises. This is typically because the roadside verge contains endangered or critically endangered species, because the roadside contains new and potentially damaging weed or pathogen species, or because the site contains cultural or heritage items that must be protected. No work is to be conducted on these sites without prior approval, and works should always follow the required guidelines for each site. In general, these sites will follow the same rules as HCV sites. However, these sites will have extra guidelines specific to what is present on the site. Check Appendix 1 for details.

Sites will be marked on both sides of the road, and at either end of the SM area. This is to be fully implemented within 12 months of this RVMP being implemented. Supervisors should be aware of the location of these sites and discuss guidelines with staff prior to sending them into these locations. If roads staff or contractors find a marker during the course of works, works should immediately cease and the site should be reported to their supervisor. Maps of these sites are available online through Intramaps and these sites are included as Appendix 1 of this report. If staff find these signs on a road reserve, they should stop work and refer back to their team leader or supervisor.

The Bombay Bossiaea is a vulnerable species that occurs only in the QPRC area. The population is confined to a stretch of the Shoalhaven River that includes the Bombay Road crossing. This is considered a SM site.

5 – Managing Key Threatening processes

Key Threatening Processes (KTPs) are processes or activities that may have adverse impacts on threatened species or ecosystems, or that may make non-threatened species or ecosystems become threatened. They are defined and listed under legislation under both state and commonwealth legislation in the BC and EPBC Acts respectively. Any KTPs related to road construction, use or management must be considered and mitigated.

The NSW BC Act (2016) defines KTPs in Division 5 of the Act as:

> *(1) A threatening process is eligible to be listed as a **key threatening process** if, in the opinion of the Scientific Committee—*
>
> *(a) it adversely affects threatened species or ecological communities, or*
>
> *(b) it could cause species or ecological communities that are not threatened to become threatened.*

The Commonwealth EPBC Act (1999) defines KTPs in Part 13 of the Act as:

> *(3) A process is a **threatening process** if it threatens, or may threaten, the survival, abundance or evolutionary development of a native species or ecological community.*
>
> *(4) A threatening process is eligible to be treated as a key threatening process if:*
>
> *(a) it could cause a native species or an ecological community to become eligible for listing in any category, other than conservation dependent; or*
>
> *(b) it could cause a listed threatened species or a listed threatened ecological community to become eligible to be listed in another category representing a higher degree of endangerment; or*
>
> *(c) it adversely affects 2 or more listed threatened species (other than conservation dependent species) or 2 or more listed threatened ecological communities.*

Both State and Commonwealth legislation list the KTPs legislated within each piece of legislation. As the definitions are similar between legislation, and the legislations share many almost identical KTPs, we will discuss the implications to road management in one joint section. Those KTPs relevant to road management are listed in the table below, and will be discussed in more detail later in the section. The KTPs will be listed verbatim in the table below, and grouped into a section with other relevant KTPs. Refer to listed KTPs in their official format for more details.

Please note that KTPs under the BC Act are at the NSW level, and KTPs under the EPBC Act are at the Commonwealth level.

Table 6 – List of KTPs

KTP	Act	Notes	Combined Title
Alteration to the natural flow regimes of rivers and streams and their floodplains and wetlands	BC Act	This refers to reducing or increasing flows, changing the characteristics of major flow events, changing surface or subsurface water levels, etc.	Impacts to Watercourses, Floodplains, and Wetlands
Aggressive exclusion of birds from potential woodland and forest habitat by over-abundant noisy	EPBC Act	Noisy Miners are native birds which thrive in fragmented woodland habitats, and thrive on woodland edges (like	Habitat Invasion by Noisy Miners

miners (*Manorina melanocephala*)		roads). They are known for aggressively excluding native birds from this habitat.	
Aggressive exclusion of birds from woodland and forest habitat by abundant Noisy Miners *Manorina melanocephala.*	BC Act		
Bushrock removal	BC Act	This refers to the removal of natural surface deposits of rocks from native areas. This removes habitat and other ecosystem requirements from threatened native species in QPRC	Habitat Destruction
Removal of dead wood and dead trees	BC Act	This refers to the removal of forest and woodland waste for road beautification, firewood collection, mulching, removal of dead trees etc. This removes habitat and also disrupts many ecosystem processes.	
Loss of Hollow-bearing Trees	BC Act	Tree hollows are cavities formed in the trunk or branches of living or dead trees. They are most common in older trees, and are integral habitat for many threatened species.	
Clearing of Native Vegetation	BC Act	The removal of native trees and vegetation, particularly established ecosystems	Clearing of Native Vegetation
Land Clearance	EPBC Act		
Dieback caused by the root-rot fungus (Phytophthora cinnamomi)	EPBC Act	*Phytophthora cinnamomi* is a plant pathogen that can cause disease, death and species extinction in susceptible plants. It is impossible to eradicate once present, and road management exercises can spread it.	Plant and Animal Diseases
Infection of native plants by Phytophthora cinnamomi	BC Act		
Infection of amphibians with chytrid fungus resulting in chytridiomycosis	EPBC Act	Disease that is potentially fatal to all native amphibians, can be exacerbated by poor environmental conditions and spread by road work activities.	
Infection of frogs by amphibian chytrid causing the disease chytridiomycosis	BC Act		
Infection by Psittacine circoviral (beak and feather) disease affecting endangered psittacine species and populations	BC Act	Beak and feather disease impacts all species of parrot. Birds are at high risk in fragmented habitat that increases the likelihood of sequential use of nest sites. Impacts birds in QPRC including swift parrots.	
Psittacine Circoviral (beak and feather) Disease affecting endangered psittacine species	EPBC Act		

Invasion and establishment of exotic vines and scramblers	BC Act	Includes many vine and scrambler weeds already found in or with potential to spread in QPRC.	Weed Infestation
Invasion and establishment of Scotch Broom (Cytisus scoparius)	BC Act	Scotch Broom is already present in QPRC, including on roadsides.	
Invasion of native plant communities by exotic perennial grasses	BC Act	QPRC contains some of the most important grassland habitats in the state, and roadsides are prone to exotic grass invasion.	
Loss and degradation of native plant and animal habitat by invasion of escaped garden plants, including aquatic plants	EPBC Act BC Act	Identical wording for both KTP titles. Any non-native plants that may invade roadsides.	
Loss and/or degradation of sites used for hill-topping by butterflies	BC Act	Damage to hilltop habitat used by certain species of butterfly for mating etc	Loss and/or degradation of sites used for hill-topping by butterflies

5.1 – Impact to Watercourses, Floodplains, and Wetlands

Several road construction and maintenance issues can have significant impacts on water systems that alter the natural flow regimes in some way. This leads to a reduction in viable riparian or wetland habitats, can contribute to species becoming endangered or extinct, proliferation of weeds and pest animals, and reduces the ability of humans to utilise water resources. There are many road processes that can have this impact:

- The construction of crossing points can often permanently slow and periodically stop the natural flow of water.
- Crossing points and structures like causeways, pipes, or culverts, can prevent fish passage, isolating populations and preventing genetic flow.
- Larger crossing points can also cause damming of flood debris, further blocking waterways.
- Roads prevent groundwater absorption, and act to increase the volume and speed of water runoff. This causes erosion and sedimentation further downstream, particularly if drainage water from roads ends up in rivers or wetlands. This can compound with pollution from road use and construction.
- Construction of drainage points on roads can alter water regimes to create wetlands where none exists, or alter existing wetlands from intermittent to permanent inundation.

Many of these issues are commonplace in road design and will exist on historic roads throughout the LGA. There will exist budget and practicality issues that will prevent these issues being fully mitigated. Future road construction and management activities should mitigate this KTP, and problematic areas should have mitigating works undertaken as allowed by budget.

Guidelines to Minimise Impact to Watercourses, Floodplains, and Wetlands:

- do not establish stockpile or dump sites,
- minimise disturbance and only conduct works that are necessary to the function of the road or health of the roadside verge,
- install erosion buffers and netting during work process to avoid topsoil loss,
- install proper drainage on roadsides to prevent erosion and to minimise soil pollution,
- divert drains away from wetland or low-lying areas,
- capture silt by silt traps, sediment fencing, barriers, sedimentation ponds or retarding basins and maintain these structures regularly,
- never remove vegetation or use herbicides to maintain drains: this produces bare soil, increases erosion,
- use energy dissipating structures at drain outlets and disperse flows onto adjacent areas with good vegetation to increase filtration and prevent ponding, and

- when constructing or upgrading water crossings, always install bridges where possible. Where bridges are not possible, use culverts with multiple large pipes or box-shaped cells to allow normal water flow and prevent hinderance to fish movements. Where culverts are not possible, use a ford with adequate depth to allow regular water flow. If a causeway must be used, construct a fish passage to allow circumvention of the causeway.

5.2 – Habitat Invasion by Noisy Miners

Noisy Miners (*Manorina melanocephala*) are a native species of honeyeater that prefers fragmented and open forest landscapes. While it is a native, it has benefited from land clearance activities associated with human use, including agriculture, urbanisation and road construction. Where they have fragmented habitat, they form groups of several hundred birds, and aggressively physically attack and drive away other bird species. This can result in Noisy Miners being the only bird species in an ecosystem. Where woodlands are large and established, Noisy Miners typically do not penetrate more that 300 metres beyond the fragmented border. This means that roads act as a prime location for Noisy Miners to spread and occupy surrounding woodlands. In areas where roads intersect large areas of healthy forest or bushland, maintaining healthy road verges can prevent the establishment or reduce the impact of Noisy Miners.

Please Note: Noisy Miners are a native species, and direct action or harm against the species is illegal in most cases and is not endorsed by this document.

Guidelines to Minimise Habitat Invasion by Noisy Miners:

- apply these guidelines to any roadside that borders large, healthy forest or woodland ecosystems and list these roadsides as HCV,
- maintain existing roadside vegetation in situ, only removing what is necessary for safe function of the road,
- avoid earthmoving works close to larger trees or protected shrubs to prevent damage to roots or other plant structures,
- protect understory vegetation,
- prevent animals from grazing these roadsides,
- treat exotic grasses and revegetate with native grass seeds,
- conduct revegetation exercises where possible, preferably to link scattered areas of HCV,
- construct guard rails or barriers to protect key vegetation, and
- replace disturbed or destroyed vegetation with similar vegetation.

5.3 – Habitat Destruction

Roadside maintenance and construction often result in the destruction of key habitat features integral to the functioning of the ecosystem. This can include the removal of bush rocks or dead wood, or the removal of larger hollow-bearing trees.

Bush rock is the natural surface deposits of rock in the natural landscape and serves many purposes – it provides habitat for plants and animals, while also providing shelter for small animals from the elements and predators, providing a safe place to find food. They enable animals to hide from bushfires. They provide basking sites and egg-laying sites for reptiles. Bush rocks also inhibit soil erosion, retain soil stability, reducing the intensity of fires, and preserves soil moisture. Dead wood provides very similar benefits – the hollow or decay wood provides very good habitat, while maintaining soil health. Decaying wood also provides habitat for key decomposers and returns nutrients to the soil.

Removal of bushrock and dead wood can result in the localised extinction of animal and plant species. It can also prevent animal species from travelling along the road reserves to increase genetic spread. This also has macro and micro impacts on soil health, which can have much larger impacts on the wider ecosystem.

Tree hollows are cavities formed in the trunk or branches of living or dead trees. They are usually formed as a result of wind breakage, lightning strike or fire, or as a result of termite, insect or fungal attack. They usually only occur in very large, old trees (over 100 years old). Hollows vary in size, and provide key habitat and nesting sites for a very large number of birds, mammals, reptiles and insects. They also provide key foraging and shelter benefits. Many native animals depend on these tree hollows for the survival of individuals and the proliferation of the species. The loss of hollow-bearing habitat trees are a key limiting factor in the conservation of many threatened species.

Guidelines to Minimise Habitat Destruction:

- identify and mark hollow-bearing trees and key ecosystem features, avoid damaging or removing these features during works process,
- avoid earthmoving works close to old growth trees to prevent root damage,
- use the three-cut pruning method on older trees to avoid bark damage/entry of pests and pathogens
- clearly mark extent of works and do not impact native vegetation or ecosystem features beyond this,
- do not park vehicles or plant on established ecosystem features,
- retain habitat features wherever possible (this includes hollow-bearing trees, rocks, fallen timber, leaf and bark litter. Do not “tidy up” by removing site features, and
- manage removed vegetation by mulching or chipping small branches and spreading thinly over exposed soil. Larger branches and trees can be left in situ on site wherever possible.

5.4 – Clearing of Native Vegetation

Clearing native vegetation is one of the most immediate and impactful impacts that road use activities has on biological diversity. Even clearing very small areas (less than two hectares) can have significant impacts on biological diversity. This not only impacts the flora that is cleared, but also the animals and other life that require the support of these plants to survive. This can result in:

- localised or species-level extinctions, additionally a loss of local genotypes,
- fragmentation of woodland and forest habitat which reduces the ability of plants and animals to interact over larger distances. This can limit the interactions within and between species necessary for survival and repopulation – including breeding, pollination, seed dispersal, genetic dispersal, etc, and can lead to significant inbreeding problems,
- expansion of dryland salinity and rising of groundwater (which adds to the impact roadsides have on water systems),
- increased habitat for invasive or unwanted species, and
- loss of leaf litter and dead wood drops, which subsequently impacts soil biota and moisture.

The clearing of native vegetation must be minimised during road construction, maintenance and use activities. Roadside vegetation acts as important habitat, but also acts to reduce the fragmentation of larger pockets of habitat.

Guidelines to Reduce the Clearance of Native Vegetation:

- maintain existing roadside vegetation in situ, only removing what is necessary for safe function of the road,
- clearly mark any vegetation that must be removed on site maps and directly on site,
- do not dump spoil or stockpiles on native vegetation. Remove spoil and stockpiles already in HCVs. Spoil should be immediately removed from site,
- clearly mark extent of works and do not impact native vegetation beyond this,
- conduct native revegetation on edges of HCV areas to act as a buffer, and conduct revegetation to bridge scattered areas of HCV where possible,
- conduct revegetation after completion of works,
- no side arm or flat deck slashing of native vegetation beyond the table drain. Minimise or eliminate mowing wherever possible,
- no scalping or groundcover removal without remedial native revegetation to follow,
- avoid grading beyond existing road shoulder except where required for drainage or water management purposes, and
- do not park plant or equipment on native vegetation.

5.5 – Plant and Animal Diseases

Road use activities can spread or exacerbate animal and plant diseases. In many cases, the movement of road plant and material can spread disease vectors from one area to another. Furthermore, certain practises associated with road maintenance or construction can make plants or animals more susceptible to disease. Three diseases have KTPs that are relevant to road construction activities, however the proper prevention protocols discussed below should be applied to all sites and all diseases, irrespective of assessed threat level.

Phytophthora cinnamomi is potentially one of the worst and most well known plant diseases present in Australia. It is a soil-borne pathogen that spreads in plant roots in warm and moist conditions. It is most widespread in coastal forests, but also occurs at much higher elevations with confirmed sites in the ACT. It can cause dieback or be fatal to susceptible species. Some susceptible plants will have no symptoms at all, which can make it difficult to identify sites infected with this pathogen. This pathogen can spread through surface water and sub-surface water and thrives in wet conditions. This can make roadsides prime locations for the pathogen to spread – particularly if runoff is poorly managed – due to the water collecting and pooling on the sides of roads. It can be easily spread through vehicles and equipment contaminated with soil.

Chytridiomycosis is a fatal disease of amphibians caused by a fungus called *Batrachochytrium dendrobatidis.* It produces waterborne zoospores viable for over 24 hours. It is almost always fatal to amphibians once infected. While it typically spreads through closer individual contact in water, it can also spread through transportation of infected materials or individuals. Poor hygiene on road plant working in wet areas can result in the spread of zoospores in water or other medium (or even live or dead frogs) between sites.

Psittacine circoviral diseases (PCD) is a disease of parrots and related species. Also known as beak and feather disease, it causes distinctive feather loss and beak deformities and is often fatal. This disease can spread between birds, or from prolonged contact with infected nesting material. Removal of wood and nest materials from site can spread this disease to other locations by introducing a disease vector, while a reduction in available nest sites can make this disease more likely to spread within the local population as more birds are forced to use the same nesting sites.

Guidelines to Mitigate Plant and Animal Diseases:

- all workers to follow the Saving Our Species Hygiene Guidelines found at https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/-/media/OEH/Corporate-Site/Documents/Animals-and-plants/Wildlife-management/saving-our-species-hygiene-guidelines-200164.pdf
- all workers to follow QPRC's Biosecurity Hygiene Protocol (BHP) once implemented
- do not translocate wood, nesting materials, water or soil between sites,
- arrive clean, leave clean – wash all tools, plant, vehicles, equipment, and clothes before and after working on a site,
- report any signs of plant or animal disease to the Development and Environment team and discontinue work until further instructions are given,
- follow above guidelines in sections 5.1, 5.3, and 5.4 to prevent pooling of water on road verges and to prevent damage to native vegetation and habitats (preventing stress to organisms and overcrowding),
- and obtain soil, gravel and mulch from clean sites.

5.6 – Weed Infestation

Weeds thrive on soil and environmental disturbance and are readily spread through soil and vehicle movements. This makes road verges High Risk Pathways. Council has a *general biosecurity duty* to prevent the establishment of priority weeds, and to eradicate or control infestations of priority weeds. QPRC has several weeds that are covered by KTPs on a state level, and any exotic plant spread is covered by KTPs on a state and federal level. Additionally, QPRC has many priority weeds to manage on roadsides and council lands. Weeds covered by KTPs are briefly discussed below, while a list of Priority Weeds and Weeds to Watch can be found in Appendix 3.

Invasive and spread of exotic garden plants is a significant environmental problem across Australia, with roadsides being particularly susceptible to encroachment from garden plants. As a vast majority of urban and semi-urban gardens have direct road frontage, exotic plants can spread naturally with intervention. Furthermore, the general public can knowingly and unknowingly spread exotic plants through vehicle or clothing contamination, transport of plants or plant materials between properties, and through illegal dumping. This makes roads a significant vector for the spread of exotic plants. Road reserves can act as a significant buffer for other native vegetation if managed correctly.

Guidelines for Minimising the Impact and Spread of Weed Infestations:

- all workers to follow the Saving Our Species Hygiene Guidelines found at https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/-/media/OEH/Corporate-Site/Documents/Animals-and-plants/Wildlife-management/saving-our-species-hygiene-guidelines-200164.pdf
- all workers to follow QPRC's BHP once implemented,
- do not translocate water or soil between sites,
- arrive clean, leave clean – wash all tools, plant, vehicles, equipment and clothes before and after working on a site,
- rotate herbicide usage where possible to prevent build-up of resistance,
- plant a buffer zone of sacrificial vegetation to protect natural roadside vegetation from weed spread and herbicide use,
- minimise soil disturbance and vegetation removal to limit weed invasion potential after works are conducted,
- minimise exposed earth by revegetating as required,
- schedule works to avoid seeding times of priority weeds – consult Weed Biosecurity staff for details as needed,
- start working in areas with lower levels of weed infestation, and work towards the most heavily infested areas,
- obtain soil, gravel and mulch from weed free sites,
- dispose of any weed matter likely to seed or re-shoot – this includes flowering plants, woody material from some species, etc – consult Weed Biosecurity staff,

- conduct periodic roadside weed inspections to identify any new or developing incursions, and
- increase frequency of weed inspections on roadsides after disturbance, roadworks or fire.

Notes on Weed Management and Clearance Techniques

It is always preferable to control weeds when they are young, prior to flowering and seeding. Manual removal methods are typically better that chemical treatments, however on larger-scale infestations (or for larger weed plants), chemical treatment is more cost effective and practical. There are some scenarios where weed treatment in not advised. This is typically where the weed treatment will cause more harm than good (such as low-priority weeds in an area of high erosion), or LCV roadsides with low priority weeds – weed treatment without proper revegetation on such sites may cause larger issues like erosion and top soil loss.

Best practice control methods should always be used. Refer Biosecurity team.

5.7 – Loss and/or degradation of sites used for hill-topping by butterflies

Hill-topping is a complex behaviour in butterflies that is integral to mating. Many butterfly species are obligate hill-toppers (they must do this to successfully mate) and tend to congregate on hilltops or ridges higher than the surrounding environment. Disturbance of plants or the topography of hill-top or slopes can have a negative impact on butterfly populations.

Guidelines to Prevent Loss/Degradation to Hill-topping Sites:

- Adhere to above guidelines in section 5.3 and 5.4.
- Revegetate hilltop roadsides that have been significantly degraded.
- Monitor butterfly population levels in key sites before, during and after works are conducted.

6 – Other Threatening Processes

6.1 – Firewood Collection

Firewood collection by the public poses a threat to roadside ecosystem health – it removes key habitat and removes soil nutrients and soil biota. It is prohibited to remove firewood from roadsides across QPRC, however the scale of QPRCs roadsides make enforcement unfeasible. There are several methods we can utilise to minimise firewood removal damage:

- community education through social and traditional medias aimed at behaviour change delivered through autumn and winter for maximum impact,
- community education through letterbox drops in key locations through autumn and winter,
- educational signage on roadsides installed permanently, and
- installation of cameras for enforcement in key areas including SC areas that have been impacted by firewood removal.

6.2 – Littering and Illegal Dumping

Littering and illegal dumping is a significant problem across all roadsides. Similar to firewood collection, this act is illegal but difficult to enforce. This can destroy natural habitat, kill native vegetation, and is a hazard to native fauna who may eat or get injured/trapped in the waste. The methods to control this are similar to firewood collection, however with more controls. These include:

- community education through social and traditional medias aimed at behaviour change delivered,
- community education through letterbox drops in key locations,
- engage with Utilities – Waste Operations team to investigate and prosecute illegal dumping,
- continue to work with report a litterer program,
- make waste disposal centres accessible and ensure bins are present at problem areas,
- educational signage on roadsides installed permanently, and
- installation of cameras for enforcement in key areas including Special Conservation areas that have been subject to illegal dumping.

6.3 – Erosion and Top-Soil Loss

Erosion and topsoil loss is a common problem on roadsides. Road use activities and the physical changes required for road drainage can create significant erosion issues. This can cause a number of significant issues including loss of nutrients and soil from the site, pollution into surrounding areas including waterways, salinity dumping into surrounding ecosystems, loss of soil forming chasms and potential undermining of road structures and spread of weed seeds in soil medium. This can be easily controlled in several ways:

- minimise disturbance or destruction of groundcover vegetation during works process,
- minimise scope of works process and only impact the minimum area,
- revegetation with native grass seeds or suitable alternative following works,
- install erosion buffers and barriers during works and revegetation period,
- maintain vegetation in drainage lines,
- maintain ecosystem features like rocks, fallen logs and leaf litter,
- minimise blanket spraying, revegetate after significant spray works, and
- minimise storing stockpiles or spoil on roadsides.

7 – Community Interests

The Queanbeyan-Palerang Community Strategic Plan 2042 highlights that a significant number of residents (14.8%) cite the region's natural environment as a key motivating factor for living in the region, while also citing that improvements could be made to our green spaces and our infrastructure. Environmental sustainability is a key concern of QPRC residents, and 13.8% identified this as our major ongoing challenge. The community is strongly invested in the green spaces of QPRC, and our road reserves are a key feature of the region's natural areas. Our road reserves provide several services that benefit the wider community, and these ecosystem services must be protected in any RVMP. These values are discussed briefly in the table below.

Table 7 – List of Community Interests

Type of Value	Value	Community Benefit
Environmental	Seed source	Allows local providence of seeds for community parks and gardens plantings.
	Wildlife habitat	Protects fauna valued by local community, recreational benefits including birdwatching and bushwalking.
	Weed Suppression	Prevents weeds from spreading throughout region, buffers farms and private property from infestation.
	Water filtration/ erosion control	Protects soil quality on farms and private property, protects water inputs into catchments and farm water sources.
Heritage	Indigenous heritage items	Protection of items or sites that are significant to persons or cultures.
	European heritage items	Protection of items or sites that are significant to persons or cultures.
Recreation	Scenic amenity	Provides visually appealing view to community during driving or recreational activities
	Shade and privacy	Provides privacy barrier from road to properties, shades road and road verges for recreation and driving.
	Recreational pursuits	Enables or enhances pursuits like cycling, horse riding, walking, photography, and bird watching.
Commercial	Agricultural benefits	Supports farms by suppressing weeds, preventing erosion and filtering water (above). Provides access for TSRs, roadside grazing, movement between paddocks, and beekeeping.
	Tourism	Enhances QPRC region as an area worth visiting due to visual amenities, prompts people to stop and enjoy area.

8 – Road Reserve Tree Management and Removal

Managing and potential removal of native trees in road reserves is a complex environmental and legislative decision where competing needs must be considered. Environmentally, native trees would typically not be removed unless they are hindering environmental health – this can happen when large trees are too close together or are blocking out endangered or critically endangered species. From the consideration of safe use and maintenance of the road, or the practical management of road reserves, vegetation may have to be removed. This section briefly covers tree removal from a legislative and environmental perspective to provide clarity.

8.1 – Tree removal from roadsides

As a Roads Authority for most of the non-freeway roads in the LGA, QPRC has specific authority regarding roadside tree removal under the *Roads Act* of 1993 (The Act). Under section 88 of the Act:

"*A roads authority may, despite any other Act or law to the contrary, remove or lop any tree or other vegetation that is on or overhanging a public road if, in its opinion, it is necessary to do so for the purpose of carrying out road work or removing a traffic hazard.*"

This gives QPRC broad ability to remove or lop any tree or other vegetation that is necessary for road work or removing a traffic hazard. In determining if a tree removal is necessary, several factors can be considered:

- the tree is likely to obstruct or cause impact a typical vehicle (including trucks) in normal use of the road,
- the tree is dead or damaged and is likely to fall or drop branches on the road,
- the tree provides a dangerous visual obstruction and prevents clear view along the road especially at intersections,
- the tree is likely to force pedestrians or cyclists into an active traffic lane, and
- the tree is directly obstructing necessary road construction, widening or maintenance or maintenance works and there is no practical way to conduct the works without tree felling.

9 – Management Action Plan

9.1 – Actions Relating to Legislative Requirements for Road Construction and Widening:

Action	Priority	Timing	Responsibility
Where proposed work occurs in HCV or MCV areas, consider opting into the Biodiversity Offsets Scheme under the *BC Act 2016.* This requires an accredited assessor to prepare a Biodiversity Development Assessment outlining measures to avoid, minimise or offset biodiversity impacts.	High	As required – especially for major works	Infrastructure Services Transport
Develop set of Standard operating procedures (SOPs) outlining measures to be taken to avoid or minimise biodiversity or other environmental impacts.	High	Within 12 months of RVMP being adopted	Infrastructure Services Transport
Undertake survey of roads not currently assessed for conservation values using the Local Government NSW Rapid Assessment Methodology. (https://lgnsw.org.au/Public/Public/Policy/REM-pages/RAM.aspx)	High	Completed within 4 years of RVMP being adopted	Infrastructure Services Transport and related assessors
Conduct internal training on identifying when a road related activity requires assessment or permission, particularly the REF, and how to conduct an REF using the template.	High	Rolled out to current staff within 12 months of RVMP being adopted. Continued annually or as required	Infrastructure Services Transport.
Prepare REF specific to Road Construction and Widening Works	High	Within 12 months of RVMP being adopted.	Infrastructure Services Transport

9.2 – Actions Relating to other Legislative Requirements such as Weed Management, Bushfire Management, etc.

Action	Priority	Timing	Responsibility
Conduct internal training on works that may require approval under legislation, so staff are able to identify and obtain approval as required	High	Ongoing	Infrastructure Services Transport.
Infrastructure Services Transport section staff from manger, coordinator and team leaders to undertake training in Council Roadside Reserves Training modules provided online by Local Government NSW. (https://lgnsw.org.au/Public/Public/Policy/REM-pages/CRR_training.aspx)		Rolled out to current and future staff within 12 months of RVMP being adopted.	Infrastructure Services Transport.
Identify and mapping of priority biosecurity control sites (weeds, pathogens), communication of target sites to appropriate staff for site management.	High	Ongoing	Biosecurity team
Surveillance and control of priority biosecurity weeds adequate to meet General Biosecurity Duty	High	Ongoing	Biosecurity team
Surveillance and reporting of any new weed infestations.	High	Ongoing	Biosecurity team
Prepare a BHP to be used by council staff and contractors working on roadsides. BHP should be based on the Hygiene Guidelines produced for the Saving Our Species program by Department of Planning and the Environment. Staff to receive adequate resources and training to work under these guidelines.	High	Ongoing	Infrastructure Services Transport and Biosecurity team
Prepare a roadside Fire Management Plan. Conduct regular bush fire management practises including hazard reduction activities.	High	Ongoing	Infrastructure Services Transport
Identify sections of road suitable and safe for roadside grazing and TSRs	Medium	As required	Infrastructure Services Transport and Biosecurity team

9.3 – Actions Required to Minimise Impacts of Threatening Processes

Action	Priority	Timing	Responsibility
Develop guidelines to manage KTPs identified in road use and management. These guidelines to be implemented during all road construction or maintenance planning and operations.	High	Within 12 months of RVMP being adopted	Infrastructure Services Transport
Incorporate known environmental information into Council's mapping and QPRC's asset system. Load field tables with information and mapping for use in field.	High	Ongoing	Biosecurity team
Implement a community education program that informs the public of the values of roadside vegetation and discourages damaging activities like firewood collection, littering, verge clearance, etc.	High	To begin within 12 months of RVMP being adopted.	Infrastructure Services Transport
Create effective reporting mechanism for public to identify new threats, safety issues or other road management issues	High	To begin within 12 months of RVMP being adopted.	Infrastructure Services Transport

9.4 – Actions Required to Better Manage SM, HCV and MCV sites

Action	Priority	Timing	Responsibility
Install road markers to identify sections of road evaluated as SM or HCV.	High	Within 2 years of this RVMP being adopted.	Infrastructure Services Transport
Install road markers to identify sections of road evaluated as MCV	Medium	Within 5 years of RVMP being adopted.	Infrastructure Services Transport
Conduct surveys in HCV or near known threatened species to determine if threatened species are present in these areas. Update mapping and conservation values as required	High	Ongoing – Intramaps as of 2019, linking to asset system as of 2020.	Infrastructure Services Transport, Biosecurity team and related assessors
Refer to guidelines listed in Chapter 4 when conducting road or roadside vegetation works on any roadside that isn't SM.	High	Ongoing	Infrastructure Services Transport
Refer to guidelines listed in Appendix One when conducting works on signposted SM areas.	High	Ongoing	Infrastructure Services Transport
Conduct weed mapping of roadsides to better inform roadside vegetation management and identify developing weed issues.	High	Annual	Biosecurity team
Conduct a Roadside Assessment Form prior to undertaking major works on an unclassified roadside.	High	As required	Infrastructure Services Transport, related assessors

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Appendix One – List of Special Management Areas

This appendix relates to the SM areas discussed in 4.4. These guidelines should be accessed prior to any work being conducted on the site. These sites are mapped on QPRC's IntraMaps overlay – in the Environmental Module under the Roadside Threatened Species layer. These sites are subject to change and may grow or shrink over time. Up-to-date mapping information and on-the-ground observations should be observed prior to works. Further sites may be mapped in the future.

The IntraMaps figure above shows the roadside mapping of the Bombay Bossiaea. The figure below shows one section of the roadside Black Gum population.

Appendix Two – Threatened and Endangered Flora, Fauna and Ecosystems of QPRC

Appendix Two lists the threatened and endangered flora, fauna and ecosystems found in QPRC. This list is not exhaustive and may become out-of-date as classifications change. Please refer to up-to-date resources as needed.

Threatened Ecological Communities in QPRC

Ecological Community	Commonwealth Listing	NSW Listing
Araluen Scarp Grassy Forest in the South East Corner Bioregion	N/A	Endangered
Dry Rainforest of the South East Forests in the South East Corner Bioregion	N/A	Endangered
Lowland Grassy Woodland in the South East Corner Bioregion	Critically Endangered	Endangered
Montane Peatlands & Swamps of the New England Tableland, North Coast, Sydney Basin, SE Corner, SE Highlands and Alps bioregions	Endangered	Endangered
Natural Temperate Grassland of the South Eastern Highlands Bioregion	Critically Endangered	N/A
Tableland basalt forest in the Sydney and South Eastern Highlands bioregions (equivalent to EPBC Upland Basalt Eucalypt Forests)	Critically Endangered	Endangered
Werriwa Tableland Cool Temperate Grassy Woodland in the South Eastern Highlands and South East Corner Bioregions'	Critically Endangered	Endangered
Monaro Tableland Cool Temperate Grassy Woodland in the South Eastern Highlands Bioregion	Critically Endangered	Endangered
White Box - Yellow Box – Blakely's Red Gum Grassy Woodland and derived natural temperate grassland	Critically Endangered	Endangered

Threatened Fauna of QPRC

For a list of threatened fauna and flora visit the NSW Bionet Atlas website and undertake a search (https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/topics/animals-and-plants/biodiversity/nsw-bionet/about-bionet-atlas).

Data limitations: Data in the BioNet Atlas is extensive, but nevertheless patchy. Please review the data limitation information on NSW Bionet atlas website.

Data covers all areas of NSW but will not provide information on the full distribution of a species. The BioNet Atlas is not a comprehensive inventory of all species, nor of all locations of species in NSW. Except in areas where detailed survey information has been incorporated into the database, the search results for a particular area are based on a mix of reported sightings. For example, sightings often follow patterns of human movement, such as along roads.

Appendix Three – Priority Weeds in QPRC

The Southeast Regional Strategic Weed Management Plan focuses on managing weeds to improve the region's biosecurity. This plan details priorities of weed management to protect the Southeast region's environment, economy, and community from the negative impacts of weeds, strengthening the sustainability of the region's natural environment, primary industries, and local communities.

The South East Regional Strategic Weed Management Plan 2023-2027 can found at https://www.lls.nsw.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0006/722706/South-East-Regional-Strategic-Weed-Management-Plan-2023-2027.pdf

QUEANBEYAN-PALERANG REGIONAL COUNCIL

Council Meeting Attachment

26 JUNE 2024

ITEM 9.2 POST EXHIBITION REPORT- ROADSIDE VEGETATION MANAGEMENT PLAN AND POLICY

ATTACHMENT 3 POST EXHIBITION - SUBMISSIONS RECEIVED

Post Exhibitions – Submissions Received

Roadside Vegetation Management Policy and Plan

Submission 1	In driving around Wamboin and Bywong, it is impossible not to notice (1) an assortment of weeds and tall grasses along the roadways and (2) crumbling pavement on the edges of the roadways. It seems as though the roads are NARROWER than they were just a few years ago, leading to the concern of many motorists about being forced off the paved roadway by traffic coming the other direction and perhaps of then losing control of their vehicle. It would be wonderful if the roads could be widened by about a meter on either side by (1) removing the collection of weeds and grasses and (2) paving or at least putting gravel in a one-meter strip to separate the road from grassland on either side. Several years ago the QPRC used to SPRAY weeds along the roadways, which apparently some environmentalists objected to, but it did keep the weeds down. Now we see tall grasses and even such weeds as St Johns wort, which we are supposed to control on our own properties, growing with abandon along the roadways. Many of us control the grasses and weeds where our properties adjoin the roads, but not everyone does. Please get rid of the weeds, but also if you can do anything to make the roadways safer by widening them, you may save the lives of residents or visitors. Thank you.
Submission 2	I am all for retaining native vegetation, great and responsible idea. However it is really important to have a noxious weed control programme in place with performance measures, targets and accountability. Too often landholders take action to manage pest species whilst council does nothing on adjacent council land. Also weed control should use eco-herbicides wherever possible - think of the effect on catchments and worker safety.
Submission 3	This is of course critical to preserving what is left of the endangered ecosystems within our local area. There must be a real commitment and culture change within Council's engineering department if this is to be achieved. It is imperative that anew position be created in the roads/engineering department to oversee all road works in the shire that could endanger ecosystems that need to be protected. leaving this to the existing staff is not good enough and will result in more of the same.
Submission 4	Yes - I support the management policy and plan, but putting markers to note areas of higher value won't make any difference if Council doesn't do something to maintain those. Here in Greenleigh we have many native herbs on the roadside but Council weed managers have done nothing to attack the weeds including blue and white daisies, St John's Wort and agapanthus on the verge (some planted by residents or allowed to escape there). I have written to Council twice about this and there has been no action (at least, not as far as I can tell). There needs to be a procedure to check verges and apply herbicide as required to those weeds and garden escapees in order to retain and maintain native plants on the roadside verges where there are also houses along the roads.

Ref: Doc Set ID

Post Exhibition- Submissions- Roadside Vegetation Management Policy

Submission 5	I write to ask if some suitable signage could be erected along Macs Reef Rd to ask drivers to slow down because of the risk of hitting a kangaroo. Currently, and especially around sunrise and sunset, there are kangaroos that venture from the side of the road, often almost immediately in front of vehicles, which results in an accident. I know this from recent personal experience. Driving at a reduced speed and keeping a careful lookout, especially around dawn and dusk, is one way of dealing with this problem. Drivers who tail gate others driving at a reduced and flash headlights/sound horns only exacerbate the problem. Some suitably worded signage at both ends of Macs Reef Road would greatly assist.
Submission 6	The roadside policy should have a section on mowing and spraying of weeds in rural areas for safety reasons and not just be based on little critters and native plants. I really appreciate council sending rural residents letters and having council inspections on private properties telling what weeds we have and that we have to control them. Very hipocritical considering the large quantities of St Johns wart on Old Cooma Road as this moment. The previous council also mowed 2 strips wide of the verge using contractors at least twice a year. This now stops at Googong. The residents south of Googong have to contend with roos and wombats hidden in the verge on the side of Old Cooma Road. I have previously sent requests to council to no avail. Maybe council should get back to its basic priorities such as roads, rubbish, water and sewerage instead of focusing on environmental, indigenous and multicultural items. Please feel free to ring me at any time if you need further clarification.
Submission 7	It should be acknowledged that the primary purpose of roads is to allow safe access for vehicles to proceed along them to properties. Thus any policy affecting roads should not derogate from this purpose. It has become apparent that since the amalgamations of the Tallaganda Shire Council the new Councils have carried out less and less maintenance of roadsides allowing roads to be effectively narrowed by vegetation growth, filled with weeds particularly blackberries, broom and serrated tussock and with tree branches being allowed to overhang the road. This company has a both side road frontage of about 2 km to the Budawang Road since 1974 and from a road which allowed 2 vehicles to easily pass and with good visibility it has become a dangerous road where 2 vehicles cannot pass without one stopping and dangerous visibility. It is now particularly dangerous for trucking live stock.

Post Exhibition- Submissions- Roadside Vegetation Management Policy

	Despite complaints to Council these problems have not been fixed. On the few occasions when the road has been graded no work has been done to maintain its width despite greatly increased traffic flow with many house approvals in the area. This is typical of many roads in the Braidwood area. The claims of biodiversity loss are more an excuse to save money than genuine in rural areas as the area involved in the verge is insignificant when surrounded by rural or lifestyle properties. It is not comparable to the loss of human life or personal injury. Roads no longer provide a containment line for fires and now the verges in fact allow a conduit for fires to easily spread to adjoining properties despite any containment lines or firebreaks an individual property owner creates. (as evidenced in recent bushfires). With 'narrowed' roads, verges are also more accessible for the creation of fires. Wildlife collisions are increased by the vegetation on the verges as drivers have less time to react and the verges often encourage vermin like rabbits (which council does nothing about). Development Contributions used to be used for proper access roads and verges and this does not appear to now be the case. The Draft Roadside Vegetation Policy and Plan should allow for the primary purpose of ensuring that Traffic can pass each other safely along the road, weeds are eliminated and the vegetation controlled to limit fire and wildlife collision risks.
Submission 8	I have read the 3 documents provided. I understand the road side classification system, but cant seem to locate where to find maps of where these classifications are identified. I travel along the Captains Flat Road every day and it constantly worries me that there is no verge management on that road. There are weeds running wild, the grass is almost as tall as my car, there is nowhere for me to pull over if I get a flat tyre or have an accident because the grass and weeds come all the way to the side of the road, which means I'm in danger and become a danger to other road users. There is a fire hazard and if we have a fire again like there was several year ago at the Carwoola Fires, we at Captains Flat could become cut off because the grass is so close to the road, our escape route would be cut off. I can't see that captured in the Vegetation Management Policy and Plan anywhere clearly. While I understand and appreciate the need for biodiversity management I think it needs to be better captured in the Policy and Plan, the need for Fire Protection on major egress Roads for isolated and locations like Captains Flat that can be easily cut off without proper Verge Management.

Post Exhibition- Submissions- Roadside Vegetation Management Policy

Submission 9	While we agree with and appreciate the definition of MCV, the importance of large trees in maintaining ecological function in degraded landscapes should not be understated. 4.4 Special Management Area This is an excellent idea and a great resource to accompany links between environmental planning and road maintenance staff. It is noted that many threatened roadside plants are not included in this, and the links between environmental planning and roadside maintenance staff should be a key component of this RVMP. DCCEEW are aware of several previous cases of miscommunication within QPRC in leading to significant impacts on threatened plants in the QPRC area, despite information being provided by DCCEEW that would have prevented these events from occurring. 5.2 Noisy Miners With respect to actions to reduce impacts and incursions of Noisy Miners, we consider retention and revegetation of dense shrubs, particularly prickly non-nectar producing (e.g. wattles, Bursaria) to be the best options. 5.5 Plant and Animal Diseases Phytophthora cinnamomi is present in numerous locations in the QPRC area, and is spread by a range of soil-moving vectors including road plant. We suggest that the 'arrive clean, leave clean' principles be strengthened to articulate the need to thoroughly wash the undercarriage and inside wheelbases etc. of road plant to avoid inconspicuous soil transfer. 5.6 Weed Infestation (notes on weed management and clearance techniques) We recommend that review of NSW BioNet data (for example the SEED BioNet Species Sightings page) and NatureMapr (until this is combined with BioNet) be undertaken prior to weed treatment, and appropriate controls be put in place prior to implementing weed control programs on each roadside. Weed management is generally encouraged around threatened plant populations, but should be done with increased sensitivity. 9.1 Management Action Plan DCCEEW would like the opportunity to review the Standard Operating Procedures once developed, to ensure that our collective knowledge of threatened species and ecological community identification and management can assist QPRC in successfully implementing the RVMP. We can also provide field resources to accompany QPRC staff to review proposed roadworks with potential

	threatened species issues where resources are available (perhaps looking at several sites as part of a systematic trip). 9.2 Actions related to other legislative requirements… DCCEEW would like the support QPRC as needed in identifying sections of road suitable for roadside grazing through consideration of timing, impacts and benefits on threatened species and ecological communities. Appendix 2 In the Threatened Ecological Communities in QPRC, replace 'Tableland Snow Gum….' with 'Werriwa Tableland Cool Temperate Grassy Woodland in the South Eastern Highlands and South East Corner Bioregions' and 'Monaro Tableland Cool Temperate Grassy Woodland in the South Eastern Highlands Bioregion' CEECs. These have replaced the former listing and are both likely present in the QPRC area.
Submission 10	Weeds need to be controlled, especially St John's Wart which is slowly creeping into the Braidwood area
Submission 11	My submission is to place at the centre of the policy safe escape routes in times of bushfire. Carwoola roads currently do not meet this criterion and adequate clearance policies and distancing from vegetation are needed, irrespective of the other much more speculative demands in the documentation.
Submission 12	Yes, I will be submitting a detailed response separately by email. Does one really need to be a registered user and sign in to comment (as would seem to be the case when viewing these documents) on policies that affect all residents? This seems a little off-putting, and downright impossible if one is not online.
Submission 13	The qprc's road side management is extremely poor, to non existent and requires very real attention. The amount of weeds on the road side is appalling. There needs to be action in a timely manner. The hole of councils and management is poor in all areas. The qprc's road side management is extremely poor, to non existent and requires very real attention. The amount of weeds on the road side is appalling. There needs to be action in a timely manner. The hole of councils and management is poor in all areas.
Submission 14	There is a disappointing lack of focus on roadside weed management considering the vast spread of noxious weeds since the 2019 bushfires in particular. These include Broome , Patterons Curse and St Johns Wort to name a few. It makes it almost impossible for landowners to control weeds on their own properties when nothing is done to control weeds adjacent to their properties on the road frontage. I think more focus needs to be given to a weed management plan. The current policy and plan is extremely lacking.
Submission 15	Hello thank you for this opportunity. I am a property owner in the Palerang district and one of the most significant expense on my property is weed control. We run a small

Post Exhibition- Submissions- Roadside Vegetation Management Policy

	cattle stud and ensure we have sufficient nature grasses for our cattle to graze. With the threat of weeds and not controlled we limit our holding as useful grazing property and stock. We are aware a lot is brought onto our property via us bringing in bales of hay from other areas, the wind, birdlife and neighbours not controlling weeds. However over the past 3 years we have had no need to buy in hay due to plenty of grass, however the weeds are certainly a major problem we seem to continually deal with. Over the past few years we have noticed more and more weeds along the verges and the obviously lack of presence and control from Council to control these. The only real control have have witnessed along these roads is to control grasses and weeds close to the road. This is definitely not sufficient to eradicate weeds and stop them from spreading, not only along the roads but further afield via wind, wildlife, vehicles etc. especially on major roads. Our small road where I am located the verges are full of weeds and quite dangerous ones that can cause major concerns to landholders and the stock as it can be spred rapidly and would be quite dangerous if swallowed. A major upgrade of the councils weed spraying is urgently needed .
Submission 16	Roadside vegetation should not encroach upon the road shoulder, creating a pinch point which reduces the safe passage of a cyclist and a motor vehicle passing the legal distance.
Submission 17	I am at Currawang. I and many others in the area are wanting roadside vegetation managed a lot better than what it is. I recently put in a request to have a gumtree removed that fell on and broke my fence, and which obstructs my view to oncoming traffic. It needs to be cut down along with other trees that are on a lean. We constantly have wattles falling on the road and locals need to remove them. Also we have so many kangaroos, wild deer, and wombats out here and the thick roadside vegetation makes it impossible to see them. Given this area is 'bushy' it will only take one idiot to throw out a cigarette button or glass bottle and the place will be on fire. Many people here are isolated bush blocks. People also walk Lucky Paas Road and I ride my horse up here. With the thick grass and vegetation, this creates a haven for snakes. I've nearly stood on 2 tiger snakes stepping off the road. If I ride my horse and a car comes, I can't get off the road to be safe. I also have two young children who will no doubt be riding their bikes up the road in years to come. Start clearing roadside vegetation please. For safety sake!
Submission 18	I there a plan to remove any vegetation mainly Sifton bush from Birriwa Road also some clearing to make visiblity to traffic ,horses etc
Submission 19	Submission Road side Vegetation Management Plan It is disappointing that your main emphasis is not on road safety and reducing weeds but on saving vegetation. Surely saving peoples lives is more important than saving vegetation. Besides the vegetation within the first five metres of the road would not contain any threatened species as the sides of the roads previously have

	been kept bare through either a grader or through spraying. These methods did keep people safe. Road side verges should be clear of any vegetation for at least five metres on either side of the road to allow safety for motorists, truck drivers and cyclists. The road side vegetation at present especially along the southern end of Cooma road is a hazard as the regrowth is hindering line of sight as the trees grow through the guard rail and out onto the road not allowing clear line of sight and forcing motorists and trucks to move to the middle of the road to avoid the vegetation. The road is too narrow anyway since the guard rail was replaced after the fire and no two cars or trucks can safely pass each other. Then add the dangerous roadside vegetation encroaching onto the road and you have a disaster waiting to happen. The Management Plan does not explain what you are exactly going to do except a few more surveys which wont improve the state of the roadsides or the vegetation; and train staff which again wont help the state of your verges or roads. The management Plan needs to be consistent throughout the Council area. If you cant include the following simple four point plan to the whole of the council area at least apply it to areas of agricultural significance or to make it easier for you any land that is zoned RU1. What needs to happen is a simple four point plan 1) Keep people safe - clear at least five metres on either side of the road so motorists don't hit trees and cars/trucks have somewhere to go when the road is too narrow to pass or oncoming traffic is travelling in the middle of the road or overtaking in an unsafe way (eg Canberra drivers and tourists not experienced with rural roads.) We have already had too many accidents (and fatalities) where motorists have hit trees or rolled a vehicle then hit a tree. 2) Keep regrowth trees out of drains and any vegetation along the side of the road back a minimum of five metres through spraying with a herbicide that has a residual in it that hinders growth for at least 9 to 12 months. This will eventually be a cost effective method as the vegetation will slowly become reduced after a few years. (Ie stopping the need to employ expensive tree mulching equipment that has to be regularly completed) A suggested product is Weedstop. 3) Manage your weeds along the roadside by spraying the five metres. By spraying the edges of the roadside verges you are controlling your weeds that are brought in the gravel you use on the gravel roads, car tyres or the agrigate (stones) when you tar the roads. Spraying with an appropriate spray will sterilise the ground for up to 9 months which in turn would reduce the cost of controlling your weeds. (Let's face it the St John's wort on the sides of the roads around Queanbeyan and Captains Flat is the biggest environmental weed problem you have and we in the southern part

	of the council area do not want the spread of St Johns wort to enter our area.) 4) Protect your asset ie the roadway by keeping the verges of the road side bare earthed. This will see the water being able to run off the road when it rains as opposed to streaming down the actual road on the sides because the water cannot escape off the road because there is too much vegetation growing along and in the tar to allow the water to get away as it used to be able to do when the verges were bare earthed. I'm not sure if you realise the damage the streaming water does along the road seeing it cant get away, you see the constant water running along the tar erodes the tar making the edges fall away or cause deep gutters when the water can finally get off the road. The water also seeps under the tar at the edges causing the tar to prematurely break off, narrowing the road then of course the grass, weeds and vegetation grow not only right next to the tar but in some cases up through the tar. Continual cars driving on the road cause the tar where the vegetation has grown through the tar, a small hole becomes a bigger hole becomes a pothole and needs repairing. By lookijg after your asset in the first place the need for continual repairs will be reduced even if only slightly your asset will be viable for a little longer. This buffer will also have the benefit of not only stopping the spread of weeds but also provide a man made fire break in times of bush fires. Surely this will no doubt protect your vegetation further away from the road from bush fires stared from the side of the road and protect the vegetation that you want to save from the infestation of weeds. If you don't do something you are going to lose all the vegetation that you want to save as the weeds will eventually choke out your other vegetation. These four points are not rocket science just practical ways that can protect the roads, protect us as farmers from the infestation of weeds, protect every motorist from the danger of hitting trees or being able to actually see the road ahead (Cooma Road near Pikes Saddle and beyond to Council boundary with Cooma Shire) and hopefully reduces your costs into the future because we all know we are paying exorbitant rates for very little service in farming areas.
Submission 20	Yes
Submission 21	ENCROACHING VEGETATION ON NARROW UNSEALED ROADS IN QPRC • Narrow unsealed roads need a 'no vegetation buffer zone' to allow the safe passage of traffic and eliminate the problem of restricting space to pull over when meeting oncoming traffic. The encroaching vegetation prevents a clear line of sight on blind corners. • In the burnt areas in the southern region of the Shire there has been an explosion of regrowth creating a thicket of Black Wattles and numerous species of weeds suffocating the road, this has led to a significant increase in the road kill of native animals. It's also a critical danger to road users to travel without the risk of an accident from having to swerve around vegetation, being pushed into the path of an oncoming vehicle and the heightened risk of hitting and killing a wallaby or other native animal is of concern.

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	As local residents and regular road users we have certainly noticed an increase in deaths since the space between the bush and the road verge has become so restricted from the thick vegetation immediately on the road side. FIRE HAZARD • Thick bush right up to the roadsides is narrowing road corridors creating a dangerous situation in the event of a bush fire emergency. Compromising access, in turn, endangering residents and emergency responders. This also applies to ambulance access. ROADSIDE SPRAYING • The spraying of roadsides must be undertaken by educated and experienced professionals of reputable quality. Please take this example below of sheer negligence into consideration. My partner and I witnessed an incident of appalling misuse of chemicals on the unsealed section of Araluen Road some time back by a council employed contractor. 2 young ladies were pink from top to toe. They were absolutely doused in chemical, vertically spraying about 20 foot into the air, in the rain with chemical run off visible on the road which was running straight into the Araluen Creek. On speaking to them they had no idea what they were doing, they had bare minimal PPE. They couldn't even identify a plant of significance. I spoke to your office regarding this incident but received no feedback. I should have called the EPA. Please be sure to include strict guidelines for spray contractors to eliminate this kind of incident from occurring. • QPRC must check on spray contractors to be sure they are proceeding with due diligence, with knowledge, care and understanding of the local environment and the safety of their own workers and the general public. A bit of common sense would be great. • Blackberries, Lovegrass, St Johns Wort, Privet, Tree of Heaven and Tussock all out of control on Council road verges. How will Council deal with this 'weed backlog'? You're not setting a good example council, you come onto private property and do weed inspections to make landholders comply with weed control, when you have the biggest weed problem of all, how ironic. • Use alternative techniques such as flail mowing and some good old fashioned physical scrubbing to deal with encroaching vegetation on rural road sides. For example the unsealed section of Araluen Road which has become a dangerous, narrow, overgrown and compromised dirt track through the bush requires physical action. Thanks for the opportunity to pass comments on the management of roadside vegetation. Hoping the public's consultation is taken into consideration when preparing your plan. The Shire has so many varied roadside environs that Councils approach will not be a one size fits all and must be adaptable to suit the different areas.
Submission 22	Dear Council,

Post Exhibition- Submissions- Roadside Vegetation Management Policy

	I applaud your efforts to implement a Draft roadside vegetation management policy and plan, especially given recent disasters in our area, such as the Council's destruction of heritage Snow gums along Reidsdale Road, and the complete lack of ecosystem-sensitive weed management in the Reidsdale area. As a relatively new resident of Queanbeyan Palerang, I recognise my lack of experience and knowledge of how to manage shared ecosystems (roads, farms, reserves). I am battling weed infestation on my property, and have been largely successful, using non-chemical means (digging out, planting of replacement species, slashing, soil improvement and constant vigilance). Serrated Tussock, Scotch thistle, Fleabane, St John's Wort and Broom — almost conquered. Blackberry and Ailanthus reduction underway. I'm grateful for actual repairs to Reidsdale Road surface, and Council's always prompt removal of fallen trees that might block access to and from our area. It will help a great deal if I can trust Council to have a sensitive, coordinated and timely approach to other aspects of managing the roads in our area. Recent repairs to the roadside drainage systems (a much needed initiative) resulted in just the roadside disturbance the RVMP talks about, which created an unprecedented outburst of Scotch Thistle on the verges. I dug out more than 500 of them because recent roadside management by council had given me no reason to trust what weed-management contractors might do with poisons in this planned water-drainage area, putting nearby watercourses and wildlife at risk, if I called for some assistance. The RVMP gives me some hope that you will coordinate the goals and efforts of Local Land Services (who have some great community engagement strategies) and roadside management, to link wildlife corridors and maintain/enhance the natural beauty of our area, and protect our local species. (Enhanced road safety is of course an understood primary goal.) Knowing how hard LLS works to inspire landholders in beneficial practices — such as planting paddock trees — and then seeing what happened on the Reidsdale Road, to trees that were surely part of providing habitat, shade etc; which were no threat to drainage or road repairs and have been part of the landscape for decades, was completely shocking and nonsensical. The LVMP must address such disparities of approach and the actions of disinterested contracted operators. I'm glad you're talking about training workers. But I'm concerned that without shared objectives, without roadside-management teams that understand the impacts — positive and negative — they can have on our environment, nothing good and cohesive will be achieved.

	There is a wealth of environmental knowledge among the residents and LLS people in our community. Communication between groups and coordination of efforts could make the LVMP a great success to the benefit of our landscape, native species and the people who enjoy them. In a perfect world, Council-hired operatives would be fully onboard with the LVMP. They would be held to account for their actions, how much they charge, their use of chemicals. I could ring Council confident of receiving knowledgeable and environmentally sensitive assistance in co-managing verges and their impact on my property, as well as those downstream, down wind and down the road. My plea is that you put effort not just into a good plan, but into getting those who carry it out to have some skin in the game, or at least some motivation and understanding of how to bring about overall positive outcomes. Environmental custodianship can't be set and forget. That's how we get entrenched rorting of systems, and a business-as-usual approach. But if we can initiate a process of thoughtful coordinated action, constant monitoring of outcomes, dissemination of learnings, and adjusting as we go ... we stand a chance of doing some good. Thank you for all the effort that went into the LVMP. I hope to be part of making it work.
Submission 23	I am writing to provide feedback on the QPRC Draft Roadside Vegetation Management Policy and Plan, drawing upon my 25 years of experience in ecological and environmental survey, and particularly during my tenure at the former Palerang Council. Additionally, I was involved in projects "Native Vegetation of Areas Subject to Development Pressures in Palerang Council with OEH" June 2014, and piloting the "Traffic Light" colour-coded system used for classifying conservation areas (High Conservation Value in red, Medium Conservation Value in orange, Low Conservation Value in green) and Special Management (SM Areas) in Palerang Council in 2014. Draft Roadside Vegetation Management Policy • The Policy should align with the outcomes and actions from the finalised RVMP. • Ensure consistency between policy actions/outcomes and the current actions in the Draft RVMP. Draft Roadside Vegetation Management Plan For clarity in this submission, I will refer to the proposed QPRC Rapid Roadside Vegetation Assessment as the "Traffic Light" assessment. There are approximately 1500 km of road (Plumb, 2024), with the majority of roads within QPRC that are yet to be assessed using the methodology. Summary of Key Recommendations: 1. Describe and outline the Vegetation Assessment methodology

	• If the Vegetation Assessment methodology is based on the Cooma-Monaro Shire Council rather than the NSW Government Council Roadside Reserves Project Rapid Assessment Methodology then describe why it is different, detail the methodology and name it accordingly. • Incorporate features other than vegetation into assessment such as: ◦ Threatened Ecological Communities and Koala Habitat Assessment ◦ Aboriginal heritage ◦ Non-indigenous heritage ◦ Exotic trees and plants of significance ◦ Watercourses, wetlands, floodplains ◦ Special soil areas (such as salinity or highly dispersive soil management areas) ◦ Bushrock and other important habitat features such as fallen tree hollows 2. Implement QPRC Rapid Roadside Vegetation "Traffic Light" Assessment: • Roll out a Rapid Roadside Vegetation"Traffic Light"Assessment for sampling remnant vegetation on roadsides that are not yet surveyed. • Add the findings to the "Traffic Light" GIS layer of roadside vegetation. 3. Enhance Accessibility to GIS Layer: • Incorporate relevant GIS layers and assess using "Traffic Light" methodology for all features • Ensure the GIS layer is readily available to all staff and managers involved in activities affecting roadside vegetation, including Weeds and Transport. • Prioritise accessibility for the Transport Department, with a focus on Maintenance teams. 4. Introduce Interim Assessment in Unmapped Areas: • Develop an interim assessment for areas lacking comprehensive mapping data. • Empower staff, particularly in Maintenance and Weeds, to make informed decisions based on the Interim Assessment. 5. Provide Comprehensive Training: • Conduct training sessions for staff and managers on utilising the GIS layer and Interim Assessment • Include specific training on the Roadside Vegetation Management Policy and Plan to ensure consistency in decision-making across the organisation. By implementing these recommendations, Council can establish a robust system for roadside vegetation management that combines effective mapping techniques, accessibility for decision- makers, and

	comprehensive training for staff, contributing to a more sustainable and ecologically informed approach. Potential Additions to the Plan: Please consider adding these sections to the Plan: • Adaptive Management Strategies: Consider including a section that outlines strategies for adapting the management plan based on ongoing assessments and changing conditions. This includes a plan for implementing the Rapid Assessment "Traffic Light" methodology and interim assessment while vegetation data is being collected • Monitoring and Evaluation Section: Consider adding a section outlining how the effectiveness of the Roadside Vegetation Management Plan will be monitored and evaluated over time. • Community Engagement Section: While community interests are mentioned, a dedicated section on how the community will be engaged throughout the implementation of the plan could be beneficial. SPECIFIC SECTION COMMENTS: 1 – Introduction The vision and objectives outlined in the draft are commendable. However, I would like to emphasise the importance of adding to the Background the insights gained from previous reports, data collection, survey and vegetation mapping carried out by OEH, Palerang Council, Tallaganda Shire Council and the Tallaganda Roadside Management Plan Steering Committee. In 1996, when the Council was considerably smaller, an engaged Tallaganda Roadside Management Plan Steering Committee actively devoted time to the management of roadside vegetation. During that period, the Council acknowledged the significance of allocating dedicated staff and time to address the costs, resource implications, and the overall importance of maintaining roadside vegetation. The present-day scenario similarly demands comparable resources for effective implementation, necessitating dedicated positions to uphold these critical efforts. 2 – Values of Roadside Vegetation 2.2 – Biodiversity and Cultural Conservation Additional information on the range of vegetation communities, threatened species and their habitats is required. Threatened Ecological Communities QPRC sits within both the South East Corner and South Eastern Highlands Interim Biogeographic Regionalisation of Australia Region (IBRA Region). There are seven key Threatened Ecological Communities identified both in the state of New South Wales and at the federal level, and likely to be more. These communities should be given priority for mapping as part of the plan's implementation. It is crucial to promptly integrate any available data from Environment NSW, including Threatened Ecological Community mapping, as well

	as information obtained from state vegetation mapping projects, into the "Traffic Light" Vegetation Layer. The distribution and condition of numerous Threatened Ecological Communities (TECs) within the QPRC (Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council) Local Government Area are insufficiently documented. For example, an instance of this is the presence of the Critically Endangered Robertson Basalt Tall Open-forest remnants located in small patches in the far east of the LGA. These remnants are currently unmapped in the Saving our Species (SOS) program and have not been incorporated into any existing vegetation mapping initiatives. This vegetation community predominantly exists on private land and roadsides. Rapid Assessment has the potential to map these crucial remnants, contributing to the identification and appropriate management of these ecologically significant areas. It is important to note that this would need to be carried out by appropriately trained staff as many TEC's may not have a tree layer present and are therefore unrecognisable using GIS desktop assessment. List Known TEC's (NSW and Federal) in QPRC. List not exhaustive. NSW TEC Name (Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016 (BC Act) Federal TEC Name (EPBC Act) Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 Location in QPRC Araluen Scarp Grassy Forest in the South East Corner Bioregion Araluen Scarp Grassy Forest Araluen between Majors Creek and the Valley Dry Rainforest of the South East Forests in the South East Corner Bioregion N/A Araluen Valley and edge of Monga Monaro Tableland Cool Temperate Grassy Woodland in the South Eastern Highlands Bioregion Natural Temperate Grassland of the South Eastern Highlands The majority of current records of Monaro Tableland Cool Temperate Grassy Woodland occur in the Southern Tablelands of New South Wales (NSW) between Captains Flat in the north and Bombala in the south Montane Peatlands and Swamps of the New England Tableland, NSW North Coast, Sydney Basin, South East Corner, South Eastern Highlands, and Australian Alps bioregions Small pockets of perched swamps and wetlands may occur in QPRC area Robertson Basalt Tall Open-forest in the Sydney Basin and South Eastern Highlands Bioregions Upland Basalt Eucalypt Forests of the Sydney Basin Bioregion Small remnants in Charleys Forest, Mongarlowe, Nerriga towards Sassafras and possibly Monga Tableland Basalt Forest in the Sydney Basin and South Eastern Highlands Bioregions Small remnants around Mongarlowe, Nerriga Road, Charleys Forest Werriwa Tablelands Cool Temperate Grassy Woodland in the South Eastern Highlands and South East Corner Bioregions The majority of records of WTCTGW occur in the Southern Tablelands of New South Wales (NSW) on the eastern fall of the

	Great Dividing Range between Golspie in the north and Majors Creek in the south. White Box-Yellow Box-Blakely's Red Gum Grassy Woodland and Derived Native Grassland White Box - Yellow Box - Blakely's Red Gum Grassy Woodland and Derived Native Grassland in the NSW North Coast, New England Tableland, Nandewar, Brigalow Belt South, Sydney Basin, South Eastern Highlands, NSW South Western Slopes, South East Corner, and Riverina Bioregions An aggregation of Grassy Woodlands (sensu Keith 2004) occurring on the tablelands and western slopes of the Great Dividing Range from the Darling Downs in southern Queensland south to central Victoria. In New South Wales, the community corresponds broadly with Keith's (2004) Western Slopes Grassy Woodlands, Southern Tableland Grassy Woodlands and New England Grassy Woodlands classes. Koala Habitat Protection SEPP. In adherence to the Koala Habitat Protection State Environmental Planning Policy (SEPP) regulations, it is imperative to integrate specific considerations for potential Koala habitat within the QPRC Roadside Vegetation Management Policy and Plan. Applicability of Koala SEPP Regulations: 1. The Koala SEPP 2020 is applicable to Land zones RU1, RU2, and RU3. 2. For all remaining zones, the Koala SEPP 2021 is to be enforced. Council holds the responsibility of determining whether a particular piece of land they may impact during Road Use Activity may serve as potential Koala habitat. Key Considerations: 1. Land Zoning Criteria: • Identify areas falling under Land zones RU1, RU2, and RU3, and apply the guidelines outlined in the Koala SEPP 2020. • For all other zones, follow the provisions stipulated in the Koala SEPP 2021. 2. Koala Habitat Assessment: • Establish a robust framework for assessing whether a particular area qualifies as potential Koala habitat. • Consider factors such as vegetation type, tree canopy coverage, and food source availability. • Incorporate the definition of core koala habitat, emphasising the significance of highly suitable habitat. • Define highly suitable habitat as areas where 15% or more of the total number of trees within any Plant Community Type (PCT) are regionally relevant species listed in Schedule 2 of the SEPP. Schedule 2 Feed tree species Clause 4 Scientific Name Common Name Eucalyptus tereticornis Forest red gum Eucalyptus microcorys Tallowwood Eucalyptus punctata Grey Gum

	Eucalyptus viminalis Ribbon or manna gum Eucalyptus camaldulensis River red gum Eucalyptus haemastoma Broad leaved scribbly gum Eucalyptus signata Scribbly gum Eucalyptus albens White box Eucalyptus populnea Bimble box or poplar box Eucalyptus robusta Swamp mahogany Integration into Roadside Vegetation Management: 1. Mapping and Classification: • Include a specific layer in the GIS mapping system that highlights potential Koala habitat areas. • Classify these areas according to the "Traffic Light" system for better management. 2. Incorporation into Assessment Methodology: • Modify the Rapid Roadside Vegetation "Traffic Light" Assessment to encompass Koala habitat considerations. • Ensure that the assessment methodology aligns with the criteria outlined in the Koala SEPP regulations. 3. Public Awareness and Education: • Develop and implement educational initiatives for Council staff regarding the identification and protection of potential Koala habitat. • Engage in public awareness campaigns to inform the community about the significance of Koala habitat conservation. Reporting and Compliance: 1. Regular Reporting: • Establish a reporting mechanism to update the Council and relevant authorities (particularly the Saving Our Species SOS program Environment NSW) on the status of potential Koala habitat areas. • Ensure transparency in the decision-making process. 2. Compliance Measures: • Implement measures to ensure that any roadside management activities comply with the stipulations of the Koala SEPP regulations. • Regularly review and update the Roadside Vegetation Management Policy and Plan to align with evolving legislative requirements. By integrating the Koala Habitat Protection SEPP into the Roadside Vegetation Management Policy and Plan, the Council demonstrates its commitment to the conservation of Koala habitat. This proactive approach aligns with broader environmental preservation goals and ensures compliance with relevant legislation. Cultural Conservation The section on "Cultural conservation" should separate to the Biodiversity section (2.2). It is recommended that this paper be submitted to the NSW Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Advisory Committee for their input and insights on how the Council should

	approach the assessment and education of indigenous cultural heritage within roadside teams. This aspect should ideally be incorporated into a distinct QPRC Policy dedicated to the identification, assessment, and protection of Aboriginal cultural heritage. The policy should encompass heritage impact permit processes and the formulation of management plans for sites. Priority consideration should be given to roadsides where known or potential heritage sites exist, with established heritage management plans. There is potential for integrating this information into the "Traffic Light" system to ensure the inadvertent damage to heritage and cultural items is minimised. Similarly, for non-indigenous items, it is advisable to refer this paper to Council's Heritage Advisory Committee. Their guidance will be valuable in incorporating best management practices for the identification, recording, and maintenance of heritage on roadsides. This collaboration can help ensure a comprehensive approach to managing both indigenous and non-indigenous heritage elements within the roadside context. 2.3 – Weed Management In the context of weed management, the significance lies in the effectiveness of the management approach, aiming to both maintain and enhance the quality of roadside vegetation. The "Traffic Light" methodology offers the opportunity to actively identify new and emerging weeds while integrating Special Management areas. Establishing a continuous feedback loop into the "Traffic Light" GIS layer becomes crucial for aligning management goals with on-ground realities, considering the dynamic nature of seasonal weed disturbances and the shifting presence of weeds across the landscape. 2.4 – Waterway, Catchment and Soil Health Sensitive waterway, catchment, and soil areas should be identified as part of the rapid assessment and included in the relevant categories. This inclusion will enhance the plan's effectiveness in addressing and preserving areas crucial for waterway health, catchment management, and soil conservation. 4 – Roadside Vegetation Classifications The "Traffic Light" system serves as a cost-effective mapping technique, employing vehicle-based surveys and tapping into botanical expertise within the organisation. Its success lies in efficiently mapping conservation areas, accurately identifying High, Medium, and Low Conservation Value areas, along with Special Management Areas. Since 2014, the GIS layer has undergone continuous evolution, incorporating additional layers such as NSW and Federal threatened species data and further roadside vegetation assessments conducted by Mary Appleby and Neville Plumb.

	Continued funding and prioritisation for roadside vegetation mapping are crucial. I strongly recommend the ongoing utilisation of this vehicle-based technique, supported by the necessary expertise. This ensures the accuracy and relevance of the mapping system, aligning with successful practices from the past and contributing to the longevity and effectiveness of the Roadside Vegetation Management Policy and Plan. Incorporating other data mentioned in this draft plan: ◦ Aboriginal heritage ◦ Non-indigenous heritage ◦ Exotic trees and plants of significance ◦ Watercourses, wetlands, floodplains ◦ Special soil areas (such as salinity or highly dispersive soil management areas) ◦ Bushrock and other important habitat features such as fallen tree hollows ◦ Koala habitat areas. Metadata: Ensure thorough recording of metadata to provide a clear understanding of the data source and the corresponding year. Interim Training Plan for Roadside Mapping without "Traffic Light" Data: In instances where roadside mapping lacks "Traffic Light" data, an interim training plan is essential to ensure that all Council staff involved in roadside management possess adequate training. This is crucial for staff to independently make red/orange/green light decisions and understand what is ecologically appropriate. A crucial aspect of this plan is the accessibility of the three-tiered "Traffic Light" mapping for road and weed crews on the ground. In instances where mapping is unavailable, empowering the crews to utilise the interim assessment methodology for identifying the quality of roadside vegetation is essential. Additionally, equipping the teams with knowledge of native species that may resemble the target weeds can aid in reducing unintended impact. To maintain consistency, all road and weed officers and managers should undergo training in the program. For example, a grader driver tasked with grading an area of roadside vegetation may encounter an unfamiliar woody shrub in bloom while placing a new turnout for drainage. In such cases, the driver should be empowered to access the GIS layer on the intranet road mapping software. If the vegetation is not yet mapped, the driver should be able to make a rapid assessment using simple interim assessment which can be developed - possibly in the form of a flow chart. Interim Training Components: 1. GIS Layer Access: Provide training on accessing the GIS layer through intranet road mapping software.

	2. Identification Skills: Equip staff with the skills to identify common roadside vegetation and assess its ecological significance. 3. Rapid Assessment Guidelines: Develop interim guidelines in the form of a flow chart, enabling staff to make informed decisions in the absence of complete mapping data. 4. Threatened Species Awareness: Include training modules on recognising and reporting threatened species sightings. Benefits of Interim Training: • Empower Decision-Making: Enable staff to make timely and informed decisions based on ecological considerations. • Efficient Resource Allocation: Ensure efficient use of resources by avoiding unnecessary delays in roadside management activities. • Consistency in Decision-Making: Promote consistent decision-making across various roles involved in roadside management. I strongly recommend the integration of an interim training plan into the Roadside Vegetation Management Policy and Plan. This initiative aims to bridge the gap in mapping data and empower Council staff to actively contribute to ecological conservation efforts. The training program will not only enhance the staff's understanding of roadside vegetation but also: • establish a foundation for wider feedback mechanisms, • enhance the identification of weed spread and the identification of new and emerging weed species. This proactive approach ensures that Council staff are well-equipped to make informed decisions, and potential for a more effective and collaborative approach to roadside vegetation management. 5 – Managing Key Threatening Processes & 6 – Other Threatening Processes Placement of Key Threatening Processes (KTPs) in an Appendix: Considering the diverse nature and varying degrees of influence that Key Threatening Processes (KTPs) can have, the detailed list of KTPs could be included in an appendix in a tabulated form. This approach could enhance the clarity and accessibility of the information, making it easier for stakeholders to reference. This is because the high variation of exemptions and approvals required for works, coupled with the diverse range of KTPs, and whether they legally apply or not can make regulatory adherence challenging. Placing the detailed information in an appendix allows for easy reference without cluttering the main body of the document. I noted that some KTP's are absent from the list, including Anthropogenic climate change. The list should be updated and tabulated in the Appendix cross referenced with common Road Use Activity that relate to each KTP and potential amelioration or avoidance strategies. In its place I propose a chapter focused on: Road Use Activity (RUA):

	Road Use Activity means to any action that applies to the use of roads including construction, maintenance, vehicular use, and pedestrian use. This chapter applies all RUA that are likely to impact Roadside Vegetation and other special values. This is not exhaustive but rather focuses on the Activities likely to impact roadside vegetation. A list of Road Use Activities (RUAs) that are likely to impact roadside vegetation and other special values includes: (with some example ACTIONS which could be linked to the ACTION tables in CHAPTER 9) 1. Construction Activities: • Road construction projects • Bridge construction • Culvert installation • Overpass construction 2. Maintenance Activities: • Routine road maintenance • Repairs and patching • Vegetation trimming and clearing • Grading and resurfacing ACTION: • Evaluate the practices employed by the Transport Department during roadworks and construction and maintenance. • Examine the potential disruption to roadside vegetation and habitat caused by heavy machinery and excavation. • Assess environmental engineering solutions to roadside maintenance for sensitive areas • Examine routine vegetation maintenance practices, such lopping and trittering, and their impact on roadside ecosystems. • Evaluate the consistency of maintenance practices across different road classifications. 3. Weed Spraying Program: • Herbicide application such as spot spray and/or boom spray of: • Triclopyr & Picloram • Fluoropropanate • Metsulfuron Methyl • Metsulfuron • Glyphosate Bioactive ACTION : • Review the Council's approach to managing invasive species along road verges. • Evaluate strategies for preventing the spread of invasive plants and their impact on native flora. • Identify and evaluate the effectiveness of the Council's weed spraying program. • Assess the impact of herbicide use on roadside vegetation, including potential harm to native species.

	• Investigate and explore cost-effective alternatives to herbicide applications, prioritising environmentally sustainable weed management practices. 4. Vehicular Use: • Regular vehicular traffic • Heavy truck traffic • Off-road vehicle use • Traffic associated with events or gatherings 5. Pedestrian Use: • Foot traffic along roadsides • Pedestrian events or races • Hiking and recreational walking 6. Utility Installations: • Installation of utility poles • Underground utility installations • Utility maintenance activities 7. Landscaping and Beautification: • Planting of roadside trees and plants • Landscaping projects • Beautification efforts 8. Drainage and Stormwater Management: • Installation of drainage systems • Stormwater management projects • Flood prevention measures 9. Waste Management: • Collection and disposal activities • Waste facility access and maintenance • Litter and debris removal 10. Pedestrian Infrastructure: • Installation of sidewalks and walkways • Construction of pedestrian crossings • Street furniture installations 11. Special Events: • Parades and processions • Roadside festivals and events • Temporary structures for events 12. Roadside Clearing and Expansion: • Expansion of roadways • Clearing for new road infrastructure • Widening of existing roads ACTION: • Scrutinise the criteria and frequency of roadside clearing and vegetation removal.

	• Assess the impact on biodiversity and habitat loss resulting from road expansion and infrastructure projects. • Evaluate and address the impact of illegal firewood collection, unauthorised clearing, and other activities beyond Council's control, yet managed by the Council. • Consider the implications of dumping and littering on roadside vegetation and biodiversity conservation. • Bushfires and Fire - Highlighting the impact of wildfires on the region, especially during the 2019-2020 events, is crucial for the Roadside Vegetation Management Policy and Plan. Wildfires not only directly affect roadside vegetation but also contribute to increased weed proliferation, reduced biodiversity, and heightened importance of maintaining intact roadside vegetation. Emphasising the need for proactive measures to mitigate the impact of wildfires on road reserves and implementing strategies for post-fire rehabilitation should be integral components of the plan. This list is not exhaustive, and the significance of each RUA may vary based on factors such as location, scale, and the specific characteristics of the roadside environment. The impact of each RUA requires assessment based on the “Traffic Light” categories and assessment. This approach allows for a focused analysis of the specific actions and programs that directly impact roadside vegetation, offering a practical perspective on the Council's role in vegetation management. 7 – Community Interests The information provided in the report is comprehensive, emphasising the community's strong interest in the natural environment and the significance of road reserves. Additions could include: • Community Engagement Programs: Outline any community engagement programs or initiatives aimed at involving residents in roadside vegetation management decisions. Highlight instances where community input has influenced the planning and execution of these activities. • Education and Awareness: Discuss any ongoing efforts to educate the community about the importance of roadside vegetation, biodiversity, and the role of road reserves in providing ecosystem services. This could include workshops, awareness campaigns, or educational materials distributed to residents. For example, the Palerang Council Oallen Road Roadside Vegetation Implementation Project– was chosen for a series of case studies - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K2SHBo0a6Dg • Collaborative Projects: Mention any collaborative projects between the council and local community groups aimed at enhancing or conserving roadside vegetation. Showcase examples of successful partnerships that have positively impacted the region's natural environment.

Post Exhibition- Submissions- Roadside Vegetation Management Policy

	• Feedback Mechanisms: Highlight mechanisms in place for residents to provide feedback or suggestions regarding roadside vegetation management. This could include online platforms, public forums, or surveys that allow the community to actively participate in decision-making processes. 8 – Road Reserve Tree Management and Removal 8.1 – Tree removal from roadsides Clear guidelines on tree management are crucial. Consistent approach that adequately assesses the environmental considerations is the minimal baseline. 9 – Management Action Plan • Each action should be numbered for ease of transferring these targets to the appropriate department within Council. Each Action should be linked with a section in the body of the plan. 9.1 Actions Relating to Legislative Requirements for Road Construction and Widening • Number each Action • Action 3 should align the Methodology with the one chosen to be adopted as part of this plan. This could potentially be the QPRC Rapid Roadside Vegetation "Traffic Light" Assessment • An REF should be undertaken by suitably qualified environmental professional within the organisation. 9.2 Actions Relating to other Legislative Requirements such as Weed Management, Bushfire Management, etc. • Name the Action Table specifically without "etc" for clarity • agree with the Actions. Ensure that there is suitable pathway for all of the mapping and identification and surveillance actions to provide feedback into the "Traffic Light" GIS Layer 9.3 - Actions Required to Minimise Impacts of Threatening Processes • Rename this Actions Required to Minimise Impacts of Road Use Activities (RUAs) • Place the Actions Required to Minimise Impacts of Threatening Processes relating to KTPs into KTP table in Appendix. Draw out any RUA relating to QPRC and ensure actions are discussed in main body of report and included in Chapter 9. 9.4 – Actions Required to Better Manage SM, HCV and MCV sites Assessing environmental solutions for roadside maintenance in sensitive areas involves considering methods that minimise ecological impact while effectively addressing maintenance needs. Many of these options would be outcomes from describing the impacts in the new section proposed for the Plan entitled "Road Use Activity (RUA)." This will better inform the actions required to manage the SM, HCV and MCV sites. There is so much potential for environmental engineering solutions. Many of these can be part of state government grant funded projects that will have positive environmental benefit. Here are some ideas: 1. Vegetation Management Options:

	• Implement and train staff (Weed and Maintenance crews) in the "Traffic Light" roadside vegetation management plans prioritising sensitive areas, considering the ecological value of the roadside vegetation. • Implement selective pruning, lopping and trimming and trittering techniques to maintain road safety while minimising disruption to the natural habitat. • Understanding of heavy machinery use in sensitive areas and techniques that can minimise disturbance while carrying out road maintenance and roadworks 2. Erosion Control Measures: • Integrate erosion control measures to prevent soil erosion in sensitive areas. • Use erosion control blankets, check dams, jute roll and other sustainable techniques to protect water quality in adjacent water bodies. 3. Innovative Roadside Design: • Explore innovative roadside designs that incorporate eco-friendly materials and promote natural drainage patterns. • Use permeable surfaces and green infrastructure to reduce runoff and minimise soil disturbance. 4. Wildlife Crossings: • Look at potential for locations to install wildlife crossings, such as causeways, underpasses and culverts to facilitate the movement of wildlife across roads safely. • Implement fencing to guide animals towards designated crossing points. 5. Low-Impact Maintenance Equipment: • Invest in low-impact maintenance equipment to minimise soil compaction and disturbance. • Consider using electric or hybrid vehicles for maintenance tasks to reduce emissions and noise pollution. 6. Integrated Pest Management: • Adopt Integrated Pest Management (IPM) strategies to control weeds and pests without causing harm to the surrounding ecosystem. • Prioritise biological control methods and targeted herbicide applications. 7. Remote Sensing and Monitoring: • Utilise remote sensing technologies to monitor roadside vegetation health and identify areas that require attention. • Implement a real-time monitoring system to promptly address issues and reduce the need for frequent on-site inspections. 8. Community Engagement:

	• Engage with the local community to raise awareness about the importance of roadside conservation. • Encourage community involvement in monitoring and reporting issues related to roadside vegetation. 9. Adaptive Management Strategies: • Develop adaptive management strategies that allow for flexibility in responding to changing environmental conditions. • Regularly review and update maintenance practices based on feedback, monitoring data, and emerging technologies. 10. Training Programs for Staff: • Provide comprehensive training programs for maintenance staff, emphasising the importance of environmentally sensitive roadside management. • Equip staff with the knowledge and skills to implement sustainable practices in their daily maintenance tasks. Summaries of all actions should be placed into the Policy Document. APPENDIX: • Appendix 2 ◦ TEC table should be in the main body of the report ⬭ ◦ Links to Bionet Atlas, as well as iNaturali and Canberra Nature Map https://canberra.naturemapr.org/ are also important resources that can be reviewed • **Add an Appendix** of **Key Threatening Processes** • **Add an Appendix** relating to **Koala Habitat Protection SEPP.** • **Add an Appendix** Listing metadata incorporated into the "Traffic Light" Intranet GIS layer
Submission 24	Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the Draft Documents QPRC Roadside Vegetation Management Policy and QPRC Draft Roadside Vegetation Management Plan. This otherwise excellent documents are seriously deficient because they fail to adequately address the important role of roadside vegetation management in reducing the possible adverse impacts of road obstruction in the event of a bushfire. Changes are recommended to address these deficiencies. Brief Preamble and Rationale QPRC encompasses areas of very high to extreme bushfire risk. Bushfires can seriously damage the local ecology, and destroy native fauna and flora including vulnerable and endangered species. Bushfires additionally pose a risk to human life, to property to

	infrastructure and to the social and psychological well-being of QPRC residents. The number and local intensity of bushfires appear to be increasing due to a number of factors which are difficult to control. Bushfires constitute a major treat to the quality of life and the natural environment of the QPRC area. Whereas much of the Roadside vegetation Management Plan deals with continuing and 'normal state' issues such as conservation and enhancement of the natural environment, facilitating transportation and road safety, reducing bushfire risk requires consideration of the impact of occasional upset conditions which have possible catastrophic consequences. Reducing bushfire risk currently requires early evacuation of vulnerable residents, followed by firefighting by local firefighters and as necessary additional reinforcements of firefighters and accompanying firefighting equipment. These actions all require unimpeded road access, at least through key roads to and from the affected areas. Australian experience has shown the dramatic and tragic consequences when key access roads have been blocked by fallen roadside vegetation. The QPRC roadside vegetation plan needs to incorporate management of roadside vegetation to help ensure continued access through key local arterial roads in highly bushfire prone areas. Policy Recommended changes Amend 2.1 (added text in bold) to read Road verges are key parts of our natural ecosystem, often providing intact native habitat and containing vulnerable species or key conservation hotspots. Road verges may also reduce or increase bushfire risks to people and environments. Council is committed to protecting these valuable ecosystems and complying with various State and Commonwealth Legislation relating to Roadside Vegetation Management Amend 6.2.1(added text in bold) to read QPRC will install roadside markers to identify all sites that contain threatened or endangered vegetation and sites requiring extreme bushfire risk abatement Plan 1.1 Vision Add bullet point Mitigates risk in environmental disasters such as bushfires 1.2 Background Add to first paragraph Vegetation on road verges can greatly increase the risk to endangered flora and fauna species and to community residents, property, and firefighters especially through road obstruction during emergencies such as bushfires. 1.3 Objectives Add Objective Minimise road obstructions during bushfire events 2.1 Road Safety

Post Exhibition- Submissions- Roadside Vegetation Management Policy

	Add wording (suggested addition in bold) Roadside vegetation can have significant benefits for road safety – it can reduce environmental impacts like sun glare and heavy winds, aid drivers to visually define corners, reduce headlight glare, and provides a frangible barrier which acts to slow vehicles and reducing the probability or severity of impacts. Roadside vegetation needs to be appropriately managed to maintain these benefits – otherwise it will become detrimental to road safety by reducing visibility and sightlines, providing a solid impact for errant cars, and increasing the likelihood of road obstructions (like fallen trees or dropped branches) including during extreme events such as bushfires. 4.4 Special Management Area Add Wording (suggested addition in bold) Some roadside verges in QPRC contain vegetation or features that require special management plans or practices. This is typically because the roadside verge contains endangered or critically endangered species, because the roadside contains new and potentially damaging weed or pathogen species, because the condition of the roadside constitutes an extreme risk during a bushfire event, or because the site contains cultural or heritage items that must be protected. No work is to be conducted on these sites without prior approval, and works should always follow the required guidelines for each site. In general, these sites will follow the same rules as HCV sites. However, these sites will have extra guidelines specific to what is present on the site. Check Appendix 1 for details Sections 5 and 6. Key threatening Processes and Other Threatening Processes I submit that the threat of critical road closure during a bushfire is associated with a possible cascade of catastrophic events. Some are ecological, impeding access to firefighting and conservation assets can leads to extreme risk of loss of natural resources including vulnerable and endangered species, areas of high conservation value and areas of high cultural and historic value. There are associated extreme risks to human life and property. If it were to be determined that bushfires could not be classified as Key Threatening Processes under constraints imposed by the various applicable Commonwealth and State legislation then they should be included as Other Threatening Processes. Although normal road safety itself is an object of the roadside vegetation management plan an effective program to manage the risk during bushfires will require a number of additional steps and practices. Accordingly. a section should be added under 5 or 6 to address roadside risk reduction where key roads in highly bushfire prone areas are assessed as potentially posing serious risk during bushfires. A risk assessment should be made in these situations. Conditions which should be addressed in the risk assessment and proposed risk abatement should include such practices as: • Setback distances for trees, shrubs and flammable vegetation

	• Removal of trunks, limbs or branches capable of falling and obstructing the road • Removal of dead wood, dead trees and other fuel sources proximate to the road • Installation of fire-resistant structures above or below the road to facilitate passage of endangered species if necessary. Detailed plans and wording for the section might best be developed in consultation with appropriate bodies and experts. 7. Community Interests Reduction in the impacts of bushfires should be added as a community interest, especially for those in bushfire prone areas. 9. Management Action Plan Add Action. Identify and map road conditions for key access roads in bushfire prone areas posing a high risk of blockage during bush fire events, with preparation of risk management plans. Timing Within 12 months of RVMP being adopted Responsibility Infrastructure management. Transport Illustrative Example The two photographs below, taken on January 30, 2024, provide an example of a key QPRC road which needs assessment as a key access road in a bushfire prone area which poses a high risk of roadside vegetation causing road blockage during a bush-fire event. They illustrate the current state of the main and only sealed road linking Mongarlowe and Braidwood. Observe the trees at the edge of the road, numerous trunks and branches sloping into and across the road, significant branches over the road, and the large amount of fuel available in the case of a bushfire. In a bushfire road blockage at these sites would constitute a threat to life, property, flora, fauna, the ecology of the area and the social wellbeing of residents in the area that would depend on this road for egress and access both of residents and of firefighting support and reinforcement.
Submission 25	My concern as a resident adjacent to the Kings Highway at 5231, 2.7km from Bungendore is the amount of plastic and paper escaping from under the covers of the Rubbish trucks travelling from Canberra/ Queanbeyan to the Woodlawn tip. I have had an incident where a sheet of plastic blown in high winds landed against a yard fence and spooked a contained horse into a fence. I am always finding chewed plastic in paddocks. It is a disgrace the amount of plastic hanging off fences along the highway.

QUEANBEYAN-PALERANG REGIONAL COUNCIL

Council Meeting Attachment

26 JUNE 2024

ITEM 9.3 DRAFT CLIMATE CHANGE RESILIENCE POLICY

ATTACHMENT 1 DRAFT CLIMATE CHANGE RESILIENCE POLICY

Draft-Climate Change Resilience Policy

Date policy was adopted:		**GM Signature and date**
Resolution number:		
Next Policy review date:		
Reference number:		
Strategic Pillar		
Responsible Branch		DD/MM/YYYY

qprc.nsw.gov.au

1 OUTCOMES

1.1 To establish Council's commitment to becoming climate resilient through understanding, mitigating, and adapting to the risks and impacts of variable and climate changes (such as increased number of days of high-intensity rainfall and extreme heat) and moving towards a more sustainable and resilient future, particularly in protecting assets (asset resilience), service delivery and community (community resilience).

1.2 Climate Change is causing significant and ongoing impacts on the natural and built environment, with increasing frequency and intensity of extreme weather events. This policy establishes QPRC's commitment to adapting our operations and decision-making processes to build resilience against these impacts.

1.3 This policy serves as an overarching framework for climate change mitigation and adaptation across all QPRC climate change and sustainability policies and strategies. It complements existing efforts by providing a structured approach to identify vulnerabilities, prioritise actions, and mainstream adaptation into everyday Council functions.

2 POLICY

2.1 Climate change impacts all areas of Council's business and therefore needs to be an integral part of its decision-making processes.

2.2 Climate change governance will include:

- Executive level support and leadership in the promotion and understanding of climate resilience, effectively increasing climate resilience maturity.
- Integration into the overarching organisational strategy.
- Fostering Collaboration both internally and externally.
- Understanding of Climate-related impacts.
- Climate-related risk identification and assessment.
- Commitment to continual improvement.

2.3 The development (or integration) of strategies, plans, policies and procedures to mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climatic changes, ensuring holistic consideration of organisational climate-related risks.

2.4 The ongoing work of the internal coordination working group across Council services which addresses climate change resilience.

2.5 Make use of the best information available in reviewing benchmarks that measure or estimate future effects of climatic changes and incorporate this understanding into all aspects of its strategy setting, project management and day-to-day operations.

2.6 Promotion of internal and external collaboration with other Councils and government agencies for information sharing and collective efforts in mitigating and adapting to climate change.

2.7 Periodic Introduction, review and updating of policies to incorporate mitigation and adaptation aspects in response to climatic change impacts.

2.8 Integration of Sustainability planning into response strategies for climate change.

2.9 Acknowledges the long-term objectives of the NSW State Government in achieving net-zero emissions by 2050.

3 SCOPE OF THE POLICY

3.1 This Policy applies to Council Operations under the Council's direct control.

4 DEFINITIONS

4.1 Council official — includes Councillors, Council staff, administrators, Council committee members and delegates of Council.
4.2 Climate – average weather conditions over a long period (30 Years)
4.3 Climate change – long-term shifts in temperature and weather patterns that are either natural or driven by human activities.
4.4 Mitigation strategies – refers to the global effort to reduce human influence on climate through the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.
4.5 Climate adaptation – actions to adjust systems to anticipate and respond to the climate and its effects.
4.6 Climate resilience – involves both mitigation and adaptation.

5 LEGISLATIVE OBLIGATIONS AND/OR RELEVANT STANDARDS

- Clean Energy Act 2011
- Climate Change (Net Zero Future) Act 2023
- Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999
- National Greenhouse and Energy Reporting Act 2007
- Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979
- Local Government Act 1993
- Biodiversity Conservation Action 2016
- QPRC Enterprise Risk Management Policy
- QPRC's Climate Change Action Plan: Council Operations 2020-2030
- QPRC's Operations Sustainability Policy
- QPRC's Sustainable Design for Council Building
- QPRC's Sustainable Procurement and Contracts Policy
- QPRC's Public Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Policy

6 CONTENT

6.1 In implementing this policy Council will undertake the following:

- Commit to becoming a climate-adapted organisation by proactively integrating climate change considerations into all aspects of Council's operation.
- Undertake assessments to identify Council's exposure to climate-related risks.
- Embed Climate Change mitigation, adaptation and resilience considerations into Council's corporate governance documents relating to financial planning, asset management, strategic planning and disaster management.
- Develop a Climate Change Resilience Strategy (and associated implementation plans) that identifies outcomes, timeframes, responsible parties, and actions to mitigate, adapt and build resilience to a variable and changing climate aligned to Council's Principles and Sustainability.

- Develop and implement training programs to equip staff across all departments with the knowledge and skills to understand and integrate Climate Change mitigation, adaptation and resilience into their work.
- Report on our progress and performance in identifying and implementing change-related mitigation, adaptation and resilience-building actions.

7 REVIEW

7.1 This policy will be reviewed every four years or earlier as necessary if:

a) legislation requires it, or

b) Council's functions, structure or activities change.

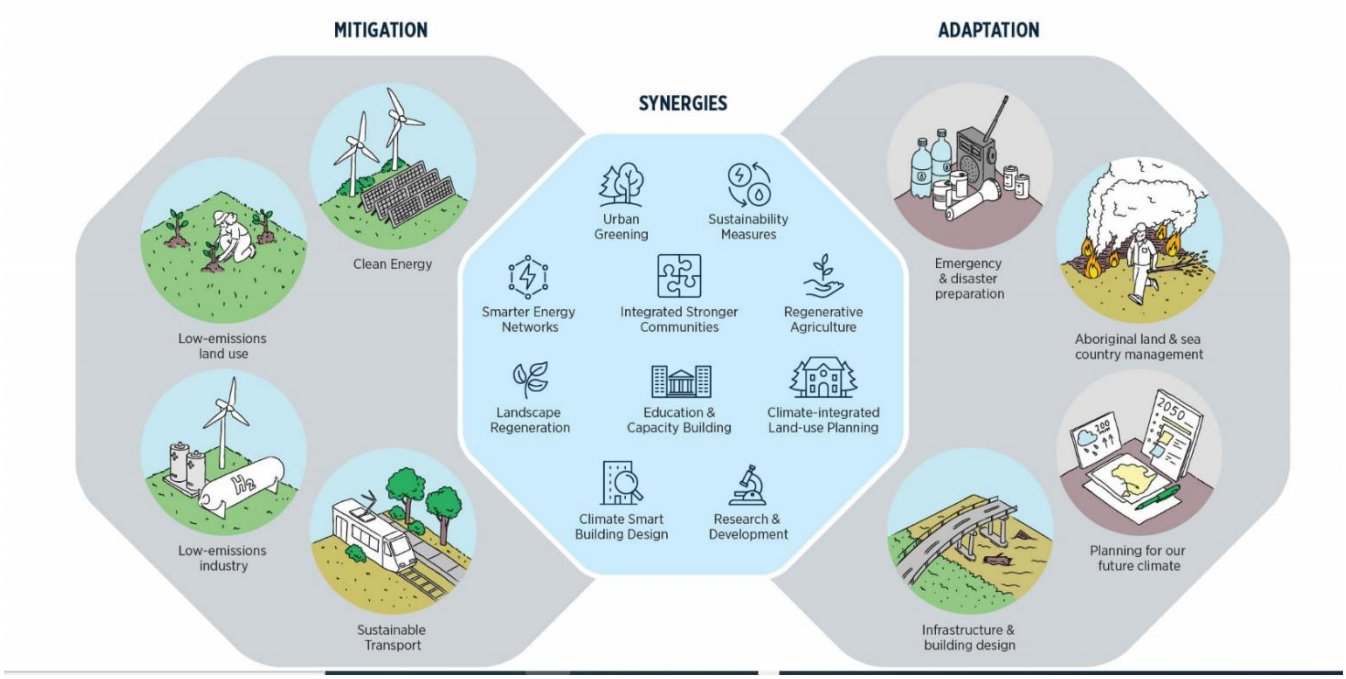
QUEANBEYAN-PALERANG REGIONAL COUNCIL

Council Meeting Attachment

26 JUNE 2024

ITEM 9.3 DRAFT CLIMATE CHANGE RESILIENCE POLICY

ATTACHMENT 2 MITIGATION VS ADAPTAION


MITIGATION
ADAPTATION
SYNERGIES
Clean Energy
Low-emissions land use
Low-emissions industry
Sustainable Transport
Urban Greening
Sustainability Measures
Smarter Energy Networks
Integrated Stronger Communities
Regenerative Agriculture
Landscape Regeneration
Education & Capacity Building
Climate-integrated Land-use Planning
Climate Smart Building Design
Research & Development
Emergency & disaster preparation
Aboriginal land & sea country management
Planning for our future climate
Infrastructure & building design

QUEANBEYAN-PALERANG REGIONAL COUNCIL

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26 JUNE 2024

ITEM 9.4 AMENDED - QPRC PUBLIC ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING INFRASTRUCTURE POLICY

ATTACHMENT 1 AMENDED-QPRC PUBLIC ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING INFRASTRUCTURE POLICY

Amended- QPRC Public Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Policy

Date policy was adopted:		**General Manager Signature and Date**
Resolution number:		
Next Policy review date:		
Reference number:		
Strategic Pillar	Development & Environment	
Responsible Branch	Natural Landscape and Health	DD/MM/YYYY

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1 OUTCOMES

1.1 Enables EV charging infrastructure on public land that integrates effectively with the transport network and local environment.
1.2 Increases the availability of EV charging infrastructure to support growth in the uptake of electric vehicles.
1.3 Supports Council in achieving several United Nations Sustainable Development Goals as identified in the Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council (QPRC) Community Strategic Plan.

2 POLICY

2.1 Council supports the installation of EV charging on public land for public use.
2.2 EV charging infrastructure must meet the conditions and requirements set out in the policy.
2.3 EV charging infrastructure providers using public land must enter into a formal agreement with Council prior to installation.
2.4 Deliver 100 public EV chargers within the QPRC LGA by 2030.

3 SCOPE OF THE POLICY

3.1 Applies to all publicly accessible EV charging infrastructure installed on public land by third-party private operators that are:
1. Intended for use by the public
2. Intended for charging EVs and other transport modes, such as bicycles, taxis, and new freight and public transport solutions.

3.2 Provides the overriding direction for the provision, installation, commissioning, management, maintenance, decommissioning, and allocation of public EV charging infrastructure across Queanbeyan-Palerang for residents, businesses, and visitors.
3.3 Does not apply to:
1. EV charging stations on private land.
2. Non-community EV charging stations on Council land (such as those dedicated to Council fleet vehicles or staff charging).

4 DEFINITIONS

4.1 **QPRC** means Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council.
4.2 **Council** means Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council.
4.3 **EV** means Electric Vehicle.
4.4 **EOI** means Expression of Interest
4.5 ***United Nationals Sustainable Development Goals*** are a collection of 17 interlinked global goals designed to be a blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all.
4.6 **LGA** means Local Government Area.
4.7 **Public land** is defined as any land including a public reserve vested in or under the control of the Council, for this policy this does not include:
a) A common, or
b) A regional park under the National Parks and Wildlife Act,1974.
c) Public land that is not normally accessed by the public such as water and sewer facilities
d) Public land where operational needs are not compatible with public EV charging such as water facilities.

5 LEGISLATIVE OBLIGATIONS AND/OR RELEVANT STANDARDS

5.1 The erection of an electric vehicle charger is considered exempt development under the State Environment Planning Policy (Transport and Infrastructure) 2021 if the erection of the charger complies with section 2.20 (general requirements for exempt development) and the charger:

a) is for the private non-commercial use of an owner or occupier of the premises where it is erected, or

b) is located in compliance with AS/NZS 60079.10.1, *Explosive gas atmospheres* in an existing:

(1) car park, or
(2) bus dept, or
(3) road maintenance depot, or
(4) service station, highway service centre, or car washing facility

5.2 QPRC Community Strategic Plan 2042.

5.3 Local Government Act 1993.

6 CONTENT

6.1 Council will consider locations that are in strategic and/or tourism destinations for EV charging infrastructure. Council will consider a site on the following factors:

- There must be existing and/or potential demand for EV charging.
- That any site considered for the provision of EV charging infrastructure is in a desirable location for the user to stop, spend time in the area, or use local amenities.
- A safe location for access to the proposed charging infrastructure.
- Access to a suitable power supply.
- Environmental constraints, characteristics, and amenities have been considered.
- The land is public, as defined in this policy.
- Electric vehicle charging stations are permissible under the relevant legislation at the proposed location.
- The land has a reasonable connection to the wider road network.
- The facility has a reasonable connection to the water network or water supplies for fire management purposes.
- The facility is safe with adequate lighting, and pedestrian, vehicle, and bicycle access is available at all times of day and night.
- The facility is compliant with relevant Australian standards and road design guidelines.
- The facility is compliant with relevant Australian standards and regulations for workplace health and safety and road design guidelines. Charging station hardware must be located a safe distance away from hazards (e.g. dangerous goods and fuels).
- Car parking for EV charging must permit both front to kerb and rear to kerb parking.
- Charging stations are capable of being used by all battery electric vehicles sold in Australia.

6.2 Council will consider third-party provider infrastructure installed, operated, maintained, and decommissioned for the provision of EV charging on public land at no cost to the Council. EV charging infrastructure providers using public land must enter into a formal agreement with Council.

6.3 Council may install, operate, and maintain public EV charging stations on public land until they are transferred to a third-party operator under a formal lease agreement.

6.4 EV charging infrastructure must meet the conditions and requirements set out in this Policy and the QPRC Public EV Charging Plan.

6.5 The QPRC Public EV Charging Plan identifies proposed locations for EV charging infrastructure within the Queanbeyan-Palerang Local Government Area to 2030. The Plan also provides for the number of chargers and charging levels for each site.

6.6 General Manager has the delegated authority to sign off on any EV charging infrastructure lease or license agreement on the provision that it meets the conditions and requirements set out in this Policy and the QPRC Public EV Charging Plan.

7 TARGET

7.1 The following public EV charging infrastructure target is set and will be reported biennially.

Target	Related SDGs
Deliver 100 electric vehicle chargers on public land for public use by 2030 (Council or third-party installed), including: • 18 level 3 chargers • 82 level 2 chargers	

8 REVIEW

8.1 This policy will be reviewed every four years or earlier as necessary if:

a) legislation requires it, or

b) Council's functions, structure, or activities change

QUEANBEYAN-PALERANG REGIONAL COUNCIL

Council Meeting Attachment

26 JUNE 2024

ITEM 9.4 AMENDED - QPRC PUBLIC ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING INFRASTRUCTURE POLICY

ATTACHMENT 2 CHANGES IN QPRC PUBLIC ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING INFRASTRUCTURE POLICY

Changes in QPRC public Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Policy

Changes in Policy after Internal staff consultation	
Sections	**QPRC Public Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Policy**
6.2	Existing policy: Council will consider third-party provider infrastructure installed, operated, maintained, and decommissioned for the provision of EV charging on public land at no cost to the Council. EV charging infrastructure providers using public land must enter into a formal agreement with Council **prior to installation**. Removed '**prior to installation'** and rewritten following staff recommendation. EV charging infrastructure providers using public land must enter into a formal agreement with Council.
6.3	Council decided to consider both third-party providers and Council-installed infrastructure for the provision of EV charging on public land. Council-installed EV Charging stations will be transferred over to a third-party operator to own, operate, and maintain. Council will operate and maintain EV charging stations until it is sold/transferred to the third-party operator. Added: 'Council may install, operate, and maintain public EV charging stations on public land until they are sold to a third-party operator under a formal lease agreement.'
6.4	Originally 6.3, moved to 6.4.
6.5	Originally 6.4, moved to 6.5.
6.6	Originally 6.5, moved to 6.6