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2. INTRODUCTION

Councils are responsible for the majority of the road reserves in their municipality and therefore must manage each road and adjoining roadside in an appropriate manner.

Road reserves were initially established to provide access and a route from one place to another, but have since evolved to cover a range of other activities. Service corridors for gas, electricity, drainage, sewage and communications are usually located on roadsides, and roadsides also play an important role in minimising the risk and impact of fires.

With the advent and recognition of the conservation movement, many roadsides are now highly valued for their remnant vegetation and contribution towards flora and fauna conservation, especially when the native vegetation on adjacent private land has been cleared. As a consequence, remnant vegetation has become an important environmental asset. Protecting and enhancing this asset while maintaining the other functions of roadsides can be a difficult task.

The Roadside Management Plan has been prepared as a document for consultation with relevant Government Authorities, interested parties and the community. The plan addresses issues involved in roadside management throughout the Shire and establishes policies and procedures to deal with issues as they arise in the future.

This Plan covers all local roads throughout the rural area of Southern Grampians Shire. Urban roads unless specifically identified have not been considered. VicRoads, as the responsible authority for State highways, freeways and tourist roads and declared arterial roads has its own management programs.

The plan will remain the responsibility of Council to manage, implement and review as deemed necessary.
3. **BACKGROUND**

The history of roadside management planning for the Southern Grampians Shire Council relates to the work of the former Shire of Wannon which now comprises the western sector of the municipality.

The Shire of Wannon Roadside Management Strategy which was based upon surveys in 1975 and 1986 by A C Beauglehole, J Stuwe in 1985 and the Department Conservation, Forests & Lands was adopted in 1989 and provides a successful model which has achieved local support.

The former Shire of Dundas’ approach was, however, to erect signage designating areas of significance. These included portions of the Strathkellar, Victoria Valley and Wannon - Nigretta Falls Roads, Henty Highway at Cavendish, Glendinning Road towards Rocklands and Twomeys Bridge Road at Yatchaw.

The Southern Grampians Shire Council commenced work on a new plan in 1995 by the commencement of the Roadside Assessment Study which has covered 2,176 kilometres of roads which excludes all highways and tourist roads.

In addition to the Shire of Wannon Plan, a number of more recent Local Government plans across the State have been considered in conjunction with the Victorian Roadside Conservation Advisory Committee's (VRCAC) Roadside Management Planning Kit.

4. **CATEGORISATION OF ROADS**

There is often confusion about the status and responsibility for management of roads. Legislation in the State of Victoria defines the status of particular roads and the organisation responsible for management.

The following road categories are recognised:

*Declared Roads*
State highways, main roads, and some tourist roads have been defined as forming the 'declared road' network. Southern Grampians Shire has 263 kilometres of State highways managed by VicRoads.

*Local Roads:*
All roads managed by the municipality may be categorised as unclassified roads.
Unclassified Roads:

Roads which are not declared or proclaimed under the provisions of the Transport Act 1983 are referred to as unclassified roads. These roads are the responsibility of Council. Unused roads are a component of unclassified roads and encompass those roads which have never been or are no longer used for transportation purposes. These roads are managed by DSE and most are licensed to adjacent landholders.

5. LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

Legislation sets out responsibility for roads and roadsides. The responsible agencies are as follows:

VicRoads

VicRoads is recognised as the relevant agency to manage the declared roads, freeways, highways, main roads, tourist roads and some forest roads and is responsible for:

- maintenance
- fire prevention and control
- eradication of Regionally Prohibited Weeds and control of Regionally Controlled Weeds and Established Pest Animals on 'Declared Roads'

In some cases VicRoads has transferred the responsibility for managing the main road network to local government.

Catchment Management Authority

The Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994 identifies a number of objectives relating to integrated catchment management. The Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority was formed in 1997 and has implemented a number of plans & reviews in relation to native vegetation management, including roadside management. The CMA is a referral agency for works relating to native vegetation, but do not make decisions with regard to management actions on roadsides. Plans and Reviews relevant to roadside management are:

- GHCMA Habitat Network Action Plan
- Native Vegetation Plan 2004
- Condition of Biodiversity Values on Roadsides in South-West Victoria
Local Government

Councillors are responsible for roadside management on:

- all unclassified roads except declared roads
- arterial roads where they operate under contract for VicRoads.

For Southern Grampians Shire Council this amounts to a responsibility for the management of a total length of 2,686* kilometres across the Shire.

* as per 2006 survey

Local Government also has the capacity to create local laws for a range of activities on roads and is the Responsible Planning authority for the removal of native vegetation.  
As Land Manager, the Municipality is responsible for the control of Regionally Prohibited Weeds and Regionally Controlled Weeds and Established Pest Animals on roadsides under its management.

Department of Sustainability and Environment

The Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) is responsible for:

- as a referral agency for the removal of native vegetation
- licensing for firewood collection on roads

Department of Primary Industries

A biosecurity approach to weed management recognises that all land managers and many agencies have a key role in weed management. Government does not own the problem of weed management but will continue to work with the community to share the responsibility for solutions. This approach is reflective of DPI’s strategic investment priority of assisting the community to make informed decisions.

CFA

All roadside fire prevention works must be in accordance with the Municipal Fire Prevention Plan and the CFA Roadside Fire management guidelines.

Other

There are also numerous Federal and State Laws which provide a regulatory basis for managing roadside vegetation. Legislation may sometimes place conflicting demands on the management of roadside remnants. Management responsible for roadsides needs to be aware of and understand legislation as each Law regulates the type of activity that can occur on Roadsides. A summary of major legislation and policies is shown in Attachment 1.
Plans and guidelines applicable to roadsides e.g. Municipal Fire Prevention Plans, local conservation strategies, Local Laws and Local Government Planning schemes must also be taken into account. A summary of local strategies is shown in Attachment 2.

In addition to the conservation values of the roadsides there is also a complex and sometimes conflicting web of road uses and issues, of land management and landscape values, community relationships and economics that make the development of a Roadside Management Plan essential.

6. DEFINITIONS

It is necessary to define common terms used in roadside management such as road reserve, formation and roadside (or road verge). The definitions are as follows:

**Road Reserve**

The Road Reserve is the total strip of land reserved for transportation purposes comprising the road formation and the roadside. It usually has a clearly defined boundary (e.g. a fence), but in some situations, (e.g. in forests or arid agricultural areas) the boundary may not be easily identifiable.

**Formation**

The Formation includes the trafficable area, road shoulders and drainage lines.

**Roadside (or road verge)**

The roadside is the strip of land between the road formation and the boundary of the adjacent property. Roadsides are usually located on either side of the road formation and are referred to as verges.

Road reserves were originally intended to provide access to homestead and farm properties and for the movement of people and goods. There are however a variety of additional important functions required of road reserves. Accommodating these activities and uses and achieving consensus presents a challenge for management.

Some of the additional activities and uses of Roadsides include:

- sites for remnant vegetation and threatened flora and fauna
- habitats for native fauna and flora
- corridors to enable movement of fauna
- service corridors for gas, electricity, water, sewage, telecommunications
- fire prevention and suppression
- rest areas for motorists
ROADSIDE MANAGEMENT PLAN

- stockpile sites
- paths or footways for pedestrians, bicycles and other users
- horse trails
- safety buffer zones for errant vehicles
- historic, cultural or archaeological sites
- haymaking and grazing (subject to Council approval)
- movement of livestock.

Native Vegetation
Native vegetation means the plants that are indigenous to Victoria including trees, shrubs, herbs and grasses. Indigenous vegetation being indigenous to local provenance.

7. OBJECTIVES OF ROADSIDE MANAGEMENT PLAN

Roadside management planning is undertaken within the context of a set of objectives. These objectives can be simplified as - Infrastructure Provision, Fire Prevention, Conservation, Land Care, Culture and Recreation.

The conservation of native vegetation is one of the key underpinnings in the development of a roadside management plan. Strategic and site-specific planning is necessary for the long term protection of remnant vegetation on rural roads and the maintenance of the functional roles of roads and roadsides.

The objectives of the Southern Grampians Shire Council Roadside Management Plan are as follows:

Protect:
- indigenous vegetation
- rare or threatened flora or fauna
- cultural or heritage assets

Enhance
- indigenous vegetation communities
- fauna habitats and corridors

Maintain:
- safe functioning of the road
- indigenous vegetation communities
- fauna habitats and corridors
- visual amenity and landscape qualities
- water quality

Minimise:
- land degradation
- spread of weeds and vermin
- spread of soil borne pathogens
- risk and impact of fire
- site specific conflicts
- maintenance costs
- disturbance during installation and maintenance of service assets
- threats to community assets from fire
A Roadside Management Plan is a document which provides a framework for the management of roadsides. The success of the plan will be judged by the degree to which it influences decision making and the implementation of those decisions.

The benefits of roadside management planning are many and varied and incorporate economic, social and environmental issues. In order to achieve this outcome, the planning process must identify: -agreed objectives; desired outcomes which protect and enhance those values; issues which are a threat to those objectives; strategies and actions devised to achieve the desired outcomes i.e. to maintain the objectives.

8. ROLE OF VICTORIAN ROADSIDES CONSERVATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Victorian Roadsides Conservation Advisory Committee (VRCAC) was established in 1975 to provide a forum for government, agency and community organisations involved in natural resource management on linear reserves. It became a Ministerial Advisory Committee in 1995. The work of the committee is recognised nationally for its innovative and practical advice to government and the community.

9. ROADSIDE ASSESSMENT

In accordance with the importance placed on the conservation value of Roadside Reserves, an assessment involving 2,176 kilometres of road within the Shire has been undertaken utilising the VRCAC Assessment Sheet (as shown in Attachment 3). Highways and tourist roads have not been included.

The assessment of conservation value has been based upon the following criteria:

- proportion of native vegetation, weed cover, habitat potential,
- site disturbance, width of road reserve and presence of threatened species, and communities.

These items have been ranked in terms of high conservation value on an area map. Roads with medium conservation value have been identified during the assessment process for the purposes of potential future enhancement. The total road length for each category is as follows:

- High - 419 kms
- Medium - 874 kms
- Low - 883 kms

A summary of the Assessment Report is shown in Attachment 4. Individual worksheets have been completed by Council and provide the basis for the Report.

The definitions for High, Medium, and Low Conservation Value are as follows:
**High Conservation Value**
The vegetation is near to its natural condition comprised predominantly of indigenous vegetation with few introduced species. All natural occurring storeys are present (and may include ground cover, shrub layer and tree canopy) with evidence of rare, vulnerable, significant flora or fauna species or remnant vegetation not common locally.

**Medium Conservation Value**
The vegetation is in a semi-natural condition comprised predominantly of indigenous vegetation with a moderate cover of introduced species. One or more storeys of vegetation may be missing from a multi-story EVC. Wildlife habitat may be present or could be enhanced.

**Low Conservation Value**
The area is degraded or substantially modified with little or no indigenous vegetation and a dense cover of introduced species. Wildlife habitats are non-existent or small.

- DSE Biodiversity mapping must be taken into consideration.
- A re-assessment of conservation status on roads having had any significant changes should be completed on an ongoing basis, preferably every 5 years.

10. **GUIDELINES AND STRATEGIES**

The Guidelines and Strategies Section has been divided into five parts based upon the objectives which underpin roadside management planning. These objectives were earlier identified as:

* Infrastructure Provision
* Fire Prevention
* Conservation
* Landcare
* Culture & Recreation

Each objective will be considered in conjunction with a set of guidelines. From these guidelines, detailed policies have been developed.

An Operations Manual will be developed for the purpose of informing Council staff and Contractors regarding the appropriate techniques to ensure compliance with the policies.
10.1 Infrastructure Provision

10.1.1. Road Maintenance

Council has responsibility for the care and management of all declared main and local roads within the municipality.

(i) Table drains will be constructed and maintained to reduce water velocity and run off and to prevent water from flooding the road and roadsides within acceptable limits for the road classification.

(ii) Table drains will be maintained to reduce the incursion of inappropriate vegetation with due regard to significant vegetation.

(iii) Native vegetation will be avoided when locating or maintaining drain 'cut off' points where practicable.

(iv) Vehicles and machinery will be parked in low conservation areas, wayside stops and suitably identified areas or on private property.

(v) Machine turning points will not occur in areas of indigenous vegetation.

(vi) Machinery will be operated within the road formation where possible.

(vii) An appropriate size of machinery will be selected to minimise impact on the site.

(viii) Where machinery must be serviced on a roadside, care will be taken to ensure that no spillage results.

(ix) Hygienic procedures will be adopted when works are undertaken in all areas in order to minimise the spread of weeds and pathogens.

(x) Dump sites. Refer to 10.1.6

(xi) VicRoads Code of Practice should be considered when working on VicRoads managed roads.

10.1.2. Road Construction

Council has the responsibility for the construction of all local roads and generally undertakes main road works on behalf of VicRoads.

(i) A planning permit is required to remove, destroy or lop indigenous vegetation including grasslands for road construction works. A permit may also be required under an overlay such as Environmental Significance Overlay, Vegetation Protection Overlay, Significant Landscape Overlay, Heritage Overlay, Salinity Management Overlay, Erosion Management Overlay or Public Acquisition Overlay.
(ii) Consultation with DSE and the community will be undertaken prior to the preparation of detailed designs when it is likely that native vegetation will be affected.

(iii) Road design shall ensure the minimum vegetation loss within the appropriate road design standards.

(iv) The boundary for a works area will be clearly defined prior to the commencement of any work.

(v) Any siltation from a work site shall be strictly controlled.

(vi) Where a new road is to be constructed or realigned, preference shall be given to placing the carriageway to one side of the road reserve after due consideration to the vegetation.

(vii) Vegetation removed during roadworks shall be the minimum required.

(viii) Council may permit the salvage of native ground flora not required for re-establishment at the roadwork site. Where possible the harvesting of native grasses from proposed works sites may also be permitted.

(ix) Debris from roadworks such as rocks, branches etc. should be removed quickly to prevent fire hazards and hindrances to other works.

(x) Disposal of spoil should be to an acceptable location in a Low Conservation Value area.

(xi) 'Where roadside clearing takes place, the timber can be either a nuisance or an asset depending upon location and the nature of the cut timber. If logs have been cut and the area is High or Medium conservation significance, then, where possible, they should remain in situ for wildlife habitat. If vegetation cut is more in the nature of leaves and prunings, then they should not be pushed onto the roadside where they can create a fire hazard, but rather heaped and burnt on areas of Low conservation significance or otherwise disposed of.

(xii) Trees or shrubs with trunks greater than 100mm in diameter should not be retained or planted close to a traffic lane. The safe distance shall depend on the design of the road and likelihood of vehicles leaving the carriageway. Specific "safe distances" shall be to the satisfaction of the Council and shall be specified for various categories of roads.

(xiii) Trees overhanging the roads provide an attractive canopy effect. However where limbs over roads are dangerous they should be removed. Correct pruning is preferable to removing the tree altogether. Where continual pruning would be required, removal of problem trees and their replacement by smaller species or ones which do not shed limbs may be desirable. Any new plantings should comply with the DSE policy on revegetation.

(xiv) Following roadwork completion the disturbed areas shall be revegetated as soon as possible.

(xv) Dumps of road making material. Refer to 10.1.6
10.1.3. Installation & Maintenance of Services

Services should preferably be placed in cleared private land however, many Utility Service Providers have located or wish to locate infrastructure on road reserves.

(i) A Council planning permit is required when vegetation is to be removed during installation of new services unless an exemption has been obtained.

(ii) Services should be confined to Low Conservation Value roadsides wherever possible.

(iii) Utility Service Providers will be requested to consider the following options when planning routes or maintenance activities:-

- Undergrounding
- Sharing trenches
- Using aerial bundled cables
- Utilising private land

(iv) In the event that it is proposed to remove vegetation, the Utility Service Provider(s) will consult with affected landholders and local interest groups.

(v) The Code of Practice for Powerline Clearance (Vegetation) 1996 which outlines the minimum removal of vegetation to maintain clearance zones around powerlines shall be strictly adhered to.

10.1.4. Vegetation and Timber Removal

Vegetation and Timber removal may be necessary however strict controls are required.

(i) All works proposals to remove, destroy or lop indigenous vegetation on roadsides not exempt under the Native Vegetation Clearance Controls (Planning and Environment Act 1987) will require a Council planning permit.

(ii) Consultation with DSE prior to the forwarding of a permit application to Council is required.

(iii) All proposals shall ensure that the removal of indigenous vegetation necessary to undertake required works is kept to a minimum.

(iv) Dead trees and limbs provide a useful habitat for wildlife and should be retained unless they pose a significant hazard. When removal is desired, Council approval shall be required.
(v) Removal of seeds, cuttings and whole plants from roadsides is prohibited unless permission is granted by Council. If the species involved is protected flora, a FFG permit is required from DSE.

(vi) The salvage of native ground flora from sites which will be disturbed by road construction is encouraged. In general, however, permission to remove whole plants from roadsides will not be granted.

10.1.5. Firewood Collection, Timber & Seed Harvesting

Firewood collection, timber and seed harvesting from roadsides requires careful management.

(i) Firewood collection, timber and seed harvesting is prohibited unless a Permit is obtained from DSE.

(ii) Permits for the collection of firewood on roadsides with a High or Medium Conservation Value will not be granted.

(iii) DSE will be strongly encouraged to only issue firewood collection Permits for the collection of fallen (i.e. not standing) timber taking account of the wildlife habitat value (as shown on the VRCAC listing in Attachment 4).

10.1.6. Stockpiles, Dump Sites and Waste Management

When undertaking roadworks, stockpiles and dump sites require management.

(i) Stockpile or dump sites should only be located at designated strategic locations which are not High or Medium Conservation Value roadsides or on drainage lines, floodways and culvert areas. Selection of these sites shall also take into account the visual amenity and landscape value.

(ii) All statutory authorities and contractors will be required to use the designated sites, the boundaries of which shall be clearly marked.

(iii) Existing stockpile sites located on High or Medium Conservation Value roadsides shall not be enlarged and where practicable their usage will be discontinued.

(iv) Damage to trees and other native vegetation shall be avoided when managing stockpiles or dump sites. Extension of the site into indigenous vegetation areas shall also be avoided.

(v) Weeds shall be controlled before stockpiling materials on a new site.

(vi) Stockpile or dump sites will be monitored for weed growth and pathogens with the application of controls when necessary.
10.2 FIRE PREVENTION

Council has responsibilities and obligations regarding fire management on roadsides.

(i) All fire prevention works on roadsides will be undertaken only in accordance with the Municipal Fire Prevention Plan.

(ii) The Municipal Fire Prevention Plan will recognise and consider the implications of the designated conservation values assigned to roadsides and wildlife corridors when determining strategic firebreaks.

(iii) Consultation with the CFA and DSE will occur on an annual basis to monitor and evaluate fire prevention works to assess the effectiveness in relation to conservation and fire management objectives.

(iv) Fire Prevention works on High Conservation Value roads should wherever possible be contained within the area between the shoulder of the road and the table drain, or where there is no clearly defined table drain should not extend any more than two metres from the road shoulder except for burning.

(v) The Municipal Fire Prevention Plan shall recognise the need to protect native vegetation during fuel reduction burns. eg. allow time adequate for seed set.

(vi) The use of herbicides for fire prevention shall only be permitted in accordance with the Municipal Fire Prevention Plan.

(vii) Ploughing of firebreaks (3 metres only as close to fenceline as possible) on road reserves is prohibited except where approval has previously been provided in accordance with the Municipal Fire Prevention Plan.

(viii) Grazing on roadsides is prohibited, except with permission in writing from the Council and such permission will only be granted as a fire prevention measure where it can be demonstrated that no other fire prevention works would be suitable or feasible*.

* Refer Community Local Law No. 4
10.3 CONSERVATION

Roadside reserves are significant as habitats and for their remnant plant and animal communities.

10.3.1. Regeneration

(i) Indigenous vegetation shall be protected and efforts made to promote its regeneration.

(ii) Disturbed sites shall be allowed to regenerate by seed germination or by suckering in preference to revegetation i.e. tree planting to ensure that local species are conserved.

(iii) As grazing, slashing, ploughing or broad-scale application of herbicide can destroy young regenerating plants these techniques should be avoided.

10.3.2. Vegetation Communities

(i) Areas of remnant vegetation shall be protected and enhanced. eg. by burning.

(ii) Grasslands shall not be restored with trees and shrubs unless ecologically justified and approved by DSE.

(iii) The GHCMA has developed a Habitat Network Action Plan, which indentifies important linkages that can be made throughout the landscape to facilitate the dispersal of native plants and animals.

10.3.3. Wetlands

(i) Wetlands areas shall be protected and enhanced.

(ii) Artificial wetland areas on roadsides shall be retained if they do not have a detrimental affect on flora and fauna.

(iii) DSE must be consulted prior to undertaking any works which would change a natural wetland area.

10.3.4. Threatened or significant Flora & Fauna & Communities

(i) Council shall maintain a register of High, Medium and Low Value roadside locations. It is appropriate that these classifications will be reviewed where necessary.

(ii) The register shall be referred to when planning any roadside works programs.

(iii) The register shall be available to all relevant agencies or parties.

(iv) The plains grasslands have been listed as a threatened community under the EPBC Act 1999.
10.3.5. Wildlife Habitat

(i) Priority for restoration or revegetation programs may be granted to roadsides which contribute to the formation of strategic wildlife corridors.

(ii) All habitat components shall be retained (unless they pose a significant hazard as specified by the Municipal Fire Prevention Plan).

(iii) Dead trees or limbs containing hollows (which have fallen naturally) shall be retained or moved to another site to provide a habitat.

(iv) DSE shall be consulted when a threatened or significant species of fauna is located on a roadside to determine the best method of management.

10.3.6. Roadside Marking of Special Environmental Areas to assist with Good Operational Outcomes.

(i) Sites identified by environmental markers shall be monitored and the management reviewed on a regular basis in conjunction with DSE and other relevant parties.

10.3.7. Pests Plant and Animal

(i) The method of weed control on High or Medium Conservation Value roadsides shall be approved by Council/DSE.

(ii) Slashing to control exotic plants should be carried out at a time specified by Council on advice of DSE especially avoiding areas of regenerating indigenous vegetation. Advice will be sought from DSE.

(iii) Environmental weeds on High or Medium Conservation Value roadsides should be controlled. Planning will be undertaken in conjunction with adjacent landholders and DSE.

(iv) Only non-residual herbicides will be used to control weeds on roadsides unless dealing with some noxious and environmental weeds. Advice to be sought from DSE.

(v) Control of animal pests on High or Medium Conservation Value roadsides will be undertaken in a manner which causes the least disturbance to the indigenous vegetation. Planning will be undertaken in conjunction with adjacent landholders.
10.4 HABITAT NETWORKS

As well as providing immediate conservation benefits, roadside vegetation also provides vital strategic links for the whole region. Large blocks of native habitat eg. the Grampians, are largely cut off from other vegetated areas by cleared farmland and there is limited opportunity for movement and adaptation of plant and animal communities. The need for connection, adaptation and movement is becoming more pressing as climate change influences the region.

In order to better meet this need, the RMP and associated map of High, Medium and Low conservation value roadsides will be reviewed, and where necessary, amended, to ensure the inclusion of:

- Habitat Networks – the objectives of a habitat network are to: maintain, improve and extend the landscape linkages throughout the region through the maintenance, improvement and development of habitat corridors, stepping stones and mosaics; and
- Strategic vegetation corridors linking major environments in this bioregion and beyond (particular attention to be paid to actual and potential north-south corridors)

10.4.1. Rehabilitation and Revegetation Programs

(i) Consultation with DSE will be undertaken prior to commencing any revegetation works.

(ii) Plans for rehabilitation or revegetation on roadsides must be detailed for Council consideration to ensure:

- compliance with Council's Roadside Management Plan;
- compatibility with any current or future service provision;
- all services are clearly marked and identified on the ground;
- weed control is appropriate to the site;
- correct indigenous vegetation is being used;
- responsibility for maintenance of the revegetation is achievable;
- the long term maintenance of the site has been adequately considered;
- roadside maintenance and road safety is not affected; and
- avoid conflict with fire prevention measures
- there is no adverse effect on native vegetation

Only non-residual herbicides will be used to control weeds on roadsides unless dealing with some noxious and environmental weeds.

(iii) Control of animal pests on High Conservation Value roadsides will be undertaken in a manner which causes the least disturbance to the indigenous vegetation. Planning will be undertaken in conjunction with adjacent land holders.
(iv) Plans for revegetation works will be referred to all relevant agencies to ascertain compliance with relevant Codes of Practice.
(v) Indigenous vegetation shall be left to regenerate on roadsides.

10.4.2. Farming and Associated Activities

(i) All works on roadsides are prohibited except with Council approval.
(ii) Cropping of roadsides is prohibited.
(iii) Grazing on roadsides is prohibited except in accordance with 10.2 (viii).
(iv) Farm irrigation water must be prevented from flowing onto roadsides.
(v) The discharge of water from sub-soil drainage systems onto road reserves is prohibited except with Council approval.

10.4.3. Movement of Livestock

(i) Council’s Community Local Law No. 4 of 2005 provides for the control of livestock travelling along Council managed roads within the Shire.
(ii) A permit from Council is required to drive livestock on a journey of more than 24 hours duration. Permits may be issued only in respect of applications which provide a genuine destination and clearly demonstrate why it is necessary and/or desirable to drive livestock along Council managed roads.
(iii) Every permit shall specify the route to be followed and the duration of the permit. When assessing applications for permits and determining the route to be taken, consideration shall be given to the environmental impact on roadsides.
(iv) Permits to drive livestock along roads identified as containing areas of High or Medium Conservation Value will only be granted where there is no reasonably suitable alternative and shall be subject to direct supervision by an authorised officer of the Council.

10.5 CULTURE & RECREATIONAL VALUE

Roadsides may be recognised for their cultural and recreational values.

10.5.1. Wayside Stops

(i) When determining the location of wayside stops, Council shall encourage consideration of the natural, scenic, cultural or historic features associated with the roadside.
(ii) No wayside stops will be located on High Conservation Value roadsides. It is Council’s aim to promote the location of new wayside stops on sites which will have a minimal impact on the surroundings i.e. preferably Low Conservation Value roadsides already cleared of vegetation.
(iii) Consultation with the community, DSE, road design engineers and any other relevant parties will be undertaken in relation to High or Medium Conservation Value roadsides.

(iv) Council shall require that wayside stops are maintained to avoid fire risk.

10.5.2. Horse Riding

(i) Commercial trail ride operators and pony clubs wishing to use roadsides must consult with Council.

(ii) Trail rides along High Conservation Value roadsides will be strongly discouraged.

10.5.3. State Forests, National Parks and Reserves

(i) DSE, Parks Victoria and interested community groups will be consulted prior to undertaking works on roadsides which abut or which are located in Public Reserves.

10.5.4. Significant Landscapes, Trees and Sites

(i) A register detailing significant landscapes, trees and sites of heritage or cultural value will be developed.

(ii) ESO, Landscape Overlays & Vegetation Protection Overlays will be consulted when planning roadside works.

11. IMPLEMENTATION AND ONGOING REVIEW

A Roadside Management Advisory Committee shall be established to make recommendations to Council regarding the implementation, monitoring and review of the Plan.

This Committee shall comprise the following representatives which shall operate in accordance with a Terms of Reference (Refer to Section 15):

* Chairperson - Councillor Southern Grampians Shire Council
* Department of Sustainability & Environment nominee
* Country Fire Authority Area Manager (or nominee)
* Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority nominee
* Southern Grampians Shire Council, Director, Physical Services
* Southern Grampians Shire Council, Environmental Control Officer
* One conservation interest group representative
* One landholder representative nominated by Victorian Farmers Federation
* VicRoads Representative
12. ATTACHMENTS

1. Major Legislation
2. Local Strategies
3. VRCAC Assessment Sheet
ATTACHMENT 1

SUMMARY OF MAJOR LEGISLATION AND POLICIES

Victoria's Biodiversity Strategy (1997)
The Strategy is comprised of three documents which outline the Victorian Government's Strategy for conserving biodiversity in the State.

The third part "Directions in Management" provides details of the biodiversity in each of Victoria's bioregions and outlines the management responses required to protect, enhance and restore them.

The Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988, aims to ensure that Victoria's flora and fauna can survive, flourish and retain their potential for evolutionary development in the wild. It places a responsibility on Government, business organisations and the community to act in such a way so as to conserve Victoria's flora and fauna and their genetic diversity.

Local Government Act (1989)
Under Section 203, Local Government is responsible for the care and management of roads. Councils have power to create certain local laws relating to roadsides.

Country Fire Authority Act (1958)
Under Section 43(1), every Local Government and Public Authority is to take all practicable steps to prevent the occurrence of fires on, and to minimise the danger of the spread of fire on or from any land, highway, road, street, land or thoroughfare under its control or management.

Forests Act (1958)
Council has control and management of all trees, saplings, shrubs undergrowth and timber in or upon any road (except which passes through or is within any State Forest or is between and adjoining any State Forest) under the care and management of Council.

Catchment and Land Protection Act (1994)
A landowner must take all reasonable steps to prevent the spread of weeds and pest animals on a roadside that adjoins the landowner's land.

Conservation, Forests and Land Act (1987)
Prior to works which may disturb crucial habitat, a plan of works must be submitted to the Secretary of the Department of Sustainability & Environment.

Crown Land (Reserves) Act (1978)
Gives Crown ownership rights over vegetation on roadsides.

Environmental Protection Act (1970)
Provides for the control of polluted runoff.

Land Act (1958)
Allows prosecution for removal of timber from roadsides.
State Electricity Commission Act (1958)
A "Code of Practice for Powerline Clearing" and a Powerline Clearing Consultative Committee (1996) has been established to advise on issues relating to tree clearance. Special arrangements can be made to specify variation of the normal provisions of the Code.

Transport Act (1983)
VicRoads is responsible for the management of "Declared Roads".

Planning and Environment Act (1987)
Sets guidelines for the removal of native vegetation from roadsides under the Native Vegetation Retention Controls.

Servicing Acts
Servicing Acts authorise servicing agencies to locate assets on roadsides and provides right of access for maintenance works.

Commonwealth - Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999

DSE - Victoria’s Native Vegetation Management: A Framework for Action 2002

National Trust (Victoria)
Register of Significant Trees (awareness raising and hopefully protection, but not statutory)
ATTACHMENT 2

LOCAL STRATEGIES

The following are local level strategies which influence the policy environment in which the Roadside Management Plan will operate.

(i) **SOUTHERN GRAMPIANS SHIRE COUNCIL CORPORATE PLAN**

The Southern Grampians Shire Council Corporate Plan for 2005 - 2009 has as its vision:

A municipality characterised by the people’s love for community, the land and the quality of life for existing and new residents.

(ii) **SOUTHERN GRAMPIANS PLANNING SCHEME**

The Scheme has a Local Provision policy which states that the significance of roadside conservation areas, stands of native vegetation, remnant grass areas and identified canoe trees will be considered.

(iii) **MUNICIPAL FIRE PREVENTION PLAN**

The Municipal Fire Prevention Plan is revised annually.

The aim of the Municipal Fire Prevention Plan is to define the areas of risk and set out measures by which areas can be protected and to identify the arrangements which have been developed to limit the occurrence of wildfire and to protect all life, property and community assets.

(iv) **SOUTHERN GRAMPIANS SHIRE COUNCIL LOCAL LAWS**

Council’s Local Laws
Community Local Law No. 4 of 2005
(Relevant Clause: 12 Driving Livestock & Clause: 12A Roadside Grazing).

(v) **CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY**

The Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994 identifies.....ten catchment management regions in Victoria. The Glenelg Hopkins CMA has implemented a number of plans and reviews in relation to native vegetation management, including roadside management. The CMA is a referral agency for works relating to native vegetation, but do not make decisions with regard to management actions on roadsides. Plans and Reviews relevant to roadside management are:

- Glenelg Hopkins CMA Habitat Action Plan

(vi) **NATIVE VEGETATION PLAN 2004**

Our primary goal is to protect, enhance and increase indigenous vegetation on public and private land within the Glenelg Hopkins region.

This Native Vegetation Plan will therefore aim to achieve a reversal, across the entire landscape, of the long-term decline in the extent and quality of native vegetation, leading to a Net Gain in native vegetation communities within the region. Because this Plan is framed with multiple outcomes in mind, additional goals include:

- Enhancement of biodiversity
- Improved land and water quality
- Amelioration of the impact of climate change.
(vii) **CONDITION of BIODIVERSITY VALUES on ROADSIDES in S/W VICTORIA**

This report details the findings of a review of the condition of biodiversity values on roadsides and rail reserves in south-west Victoria, commissioned by the Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority (GHCMA) and Corangamite Catchment Management Authority (CCMA).

For roadsides and rail reserves in south-west Victoria, the objectives defined in the Project Brief are:

- Identify, collate and review any available evidence on biodiversity condition change.
- Identify and review stakeholder opinion on biodiversity condition change.
- Identify where possible the causes of biodiversity condition change.
- Identify opportunities to improve the protection of biodiversity values.
- Identify opportunities to improve the monitoring of biodiversity values.

This review has been undertaken for roadsides and rail reserves across the CCMA and GHCMA regions and areas of remnant Victorian Volcanic Plains (VVP) extending outside the CMA regions.
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#### Key to Conservation Values

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<thead>
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#### Scale Map of Road Reserves

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25
1. POLICY STATEMENT

The purpose of this policy is to outline Council’s approach to conservation on roadsides within the framework of the Roadside Management Plan.

2. POLICY APPLICATION

2.1 The Roadside Management Plan assigns High, Medium and Low Conservation Values to roadsides across the Shire.

2.2 High and medium Conservation Value roadsides are valued as habitats and for their remnant plant communities.

2.3 Council shall maintain a register of High, Medium and Low Conservation Value roadsides. The register shall be referred to when planning any roadside works programs.

2.4 The Plan specifically addresses issues such as regeneration, vegetation communities, wetlands, wildlife habitats, roadside marking of Special Environmental Areas and Plants and Animal Pests.

2.5 The Council Roadside Management Advisory Committee’s role is to make recommendations to Council regarding the implementation, monitoring and review of the Roadside Management Plan.

END OF POLICY NO.063
1. POLICY STATEMENT

The purpose of this Policy is to outline Council’s approach to the provision of utility services within the framework of the Roadside Management Plan.

2. POLICY APPLICATION

2.1 The Code of Practice for Powerline Clearance (Vegetation) 1996 which outlines the minimum removal of vegetation to maintain clearance zones around powerlines should be strictly adhered to.

2.2 A Council Planning Permit is required when vegetation is to be removed during installation of new services unless an exemption has been obtained.

2.3 Services should be confined to Low Conservation Value roadsides wherever possible.

2.4 In the event that it is proposed to remove vegetation, the Utility Service provider(s) will consult with affected landholders and local interest groups.

2.5 The Council Roadside Management Advisory Committee’s role is to make recommendations to Council regarding the implementation, monitoring and review of the Roadside Management Plan.

END OF POLICY NO.064
1. POLICY STATEMENT

The purpose of this Policy is to outline Council’s approach to fire prevention on roadsides within the framework of the Roadside Management Plan.

2. POLICY APPLICATION

2.1 All fire prevention works on roadsides must be undertaken in accordance with the Municipal Fire Prevention Plan.

2.2 The Municipal Fire Prevention Plan will recognise and consider the implications of the Roadside Management Plan’s designated conservation values assigned to roadsides and wildlife corridors when determining strategic firebreaks.

2.3 Ploughing of firebreaks on road reserves is prohibited except where approval has previously been provided in accordance with the Municipal Fire Prevention Plan.

2.4 Grazing on roadsides is prohibited unless a permit has been obtained from the Council and a person has been able to demonstrate that the fire prevention works satisfy the requirements of the Roadside Grazing Policy.

2.5 The use of herbicides for fire prevention will only be permitted in accordance with the Municipal Fire Prevention Plan.

2.6 The Council Roadside Management Advisory Committee’s role is to make recommendations to Council regarding the implementation, monitoring and review of the Roadside Management Plan.

END OF POLICY NO.065
1. POLICY STATEMENT

The purpose of this Policy is to outline Council’s approach to road construction within the framework of the Roadside Management Plan.

2. POLICY APPLICATION

2.1 A Council Planning permit is required to remove native vegetation for road construction works.

2.2 Consultation with Department of Sustainability & Environment and the community will be undertaken prior to the preparation of detailed designs when it is likely that native vegetation will be effected.

2.3 Road design shall ensure the minimum vegetation loss within appropriate road design standards.

2.4 Where a new road is to be constructed or re-aligned, preference shall be given to placing the carriageway to one side of the road reserve after due consideration to the vegetation.

2.5 Vegetation removed during road works shall be the minimum required.

2.6 Following roadwork completion, the disturbed areas shall be revegetated as soon as possible.

2.7 The Roadside Management Plan outlines the management of disposal of spoil, debris from roadworks, salvage of native ground flora, trees or shrubs greater than 75mm in diameter.

2.8 The Council Roadside Management Advisory Committee’s role is to make recommendations to Council regarding the implementation, monitoring and review of the Roadside Management Plan.

END OF POLICY NO.066
1. POLICY STATEMENT

The purpose of this Policy is to outline Council’s approach to timber removal within the framework of the Roadside Management Plan.

2. POLICY APPLICATION

2.1 Firewood collection, timber and seed harvesting is prohibited unless a permit is obtained from Department of Sustainability & Environment (DSE).

2.2 DSE will be strongly encouraged not to grant permits for the collection of firewood on roadsides with a High Conservation Value.

2.3 DSE will be strongly encouraged to only issue firewood collection permits for the collection of fallen timber (ie. not standing) timber taking account of the wildlife habitat value as detailed in the VRCAC Assessment Report (attachment to Roadside Management Plan).

2.4 The Council Roadside Management Advisory Committee’s role is to make recommendations to Council regarding the implementation, monitoring and review of the Roadside Management Plan.

END OF POLICY NO.067
1. POLICY STATEMENT

The purpose of this Policy is to outline Council’s approach to roadside grazing within the framework of the Roadside Management Plan and the Community Local Law No.4.

2. POLICY APPLICATION

2.1 This policy applies to roadside grazing and does not apply to moving livestock between farming properties or droving livestock.

2.2 Grazing on roadsides is prohibited unless a permit is granted by Council under the Community Local Law No. 4 and only if the applicant can demonstrate that:

- grazing is to be undertaken as a fire prevention measure;
- grazing for fire prevention is necessary; and
- that other fire prevention measures, such as burning of roadside vegetation is suitable or feasible.

2.3 Grazing livestock for fire prevention works on roadsides must be undertaken accordance with the Municipal Fire Prevention Plan.

2.4 Grazing livestock must be undertaken in accordance with any conditions on a permit, including limitations on the hours that grazing can be done, signage required for safety purposes and adequate supervision.

2.5 The Council Roadside Management Advisory Committee’s role is to make recommendations to Council regarding the implementation, monitoring and review of the Roadside Management Plan.
In this Policy:

“Grazing” – means holding livestock for a period of time or restraining them in one area to allow them to feed on vegetation on a roadside or on a reserve, as distinct from droving or moving livestock.

“Moving livestock” – means the individual or regular movement of livestock from one property to another where the properties concerned are occupied by the one farming enterprise and the movement cannot be achieved by using internal gates or laneways. Moving livestock is recognised as being a part of the day to day operation of a farming business. However, moving livestock within the meaning of this Policy is not considered to occur where travel is not achieved by the most direct route between the properties and the livestock are travelling at a rate where they are obviously grazing.

END OF POLICY NO.068
1. POLICY STATEMENT

The purpose of this Policy is to outline Council’s approach to the movement of livestock within the framework of the Roadside Management Plan.

2. POLICY APPLICATION

2.1 Council’s Community Local Law No.4 of 2005 provides for the control of livestock travelling along Council managed roads within the Shire.

2.2 A permit from Council is required to drive livestock on a journey of more than 24 hours duration. Permits may be issued only in respect of applications which provide a genuine destination and clearly demonstrate why it is necessary and/or desirable to drive livestock along Council managed roads.

2.3 Every permit shall specify the route to be followed and the duration of the permit. When assessing applications for permits and determining the route to be taken, consideration shall be given to the environmental impact on roadsides.

2.4 Permits to drive livestock along roads identified as containing areas of High Conservation Value will only be granted where there is no reasonably suitable alternative and shall be subject to direct supervision by an authorised officer of the Council.

2.5 The Council Roadside Management Advisory Committee’s role is to make recommendations to Council regarding the implementation, monitoring and review of the Roadside Management Plan.

END OF POLICY NO.069
1. POLICY STATEMENT

The purpose of this policy is to outline Council’s approach to the removal of sand and gravel from roadsides within the framework of the Roadside Management Plan.

2. POLICY APPLICATION

2.1 Material will not be extracted from the road reserves without first obtaining the necessary approvals

2.2 The Council Roadside Management Advisory Committee’s role is to make recommendations to Council regarding the implementation, monitoring and review of the Roadside Management Plan.

END OF POLICY NO.070
1. POLICY STATEMENT

The purpose of this policy is to provide for revegetation on road reserves which are degraded and/or require enhancement.

2. POLICY APPLICATION

2.1 Any roadside plantings shall complement existing environmental vegetation controls.

2.2 Care should be taken to ensure that species selection, siting and planting configurations are appropriate and will not:

(i) significantly add to summer fuel loads;
(ii) interfere with utility services;
(iii) affect road maintenance;
(iv) reduce road safety
(v) conflict with other fire prevention measures;
(vi) cause degradation of native grasslands and native ground flora.

2.3 The Roadside Advisory Committee will be requested to advise Council on collection, storage and sowing of seed or propagation materials of native grassland species.

2.4 Persons or organisations wishing to plant indigenous vegetation on roadsides are required to make written application.

2.5 The Director, Physical Services is authorised to issue permits for roadside vegetation planting in accordance with this policy.

END OF POLICY NO.071
1. POLICY STATEMENT

The aim of this Policy is to provide for the clearing of vegetation along fence lines along the road reserve.

2. POLICY APPLICATION

2.1 Landowners who wish to clear vegetation along fence lines are required to make written application to Council.

2.2 The clearing along road reserves is limited to the minimum required area, not exceeding one (1) metre from the boundary subject to:

(i) an on-site inspection by an authorised Council officer.

(ii) all material resulting from such clearing shall be disposed of by the landowner on their property.

2.3 The Director, Physical Services is authorised to issue permits for the clearance of fence lines in accordance with this policy.

2.4 Fallen Timber - Where the fallen timber is remnant vegetation, Council accepts no responsibility to remove the vegetation or repair fence lines.

2.5 Council should inform any applicant of the interest of the Department of Sustainability and Environment in vegetation removal.

END OF POLICY NO.072
14. TERMS OF REFERENCE

1.1 Advisory Committee Charter

The Advisory Committee shall:

- act as an Advisory Committee to Council on all matters relating to the Council's Roadside Management Plan.

- seek to present recommendations regarding the Roadside Management Plan which reflect the diversity of opinion and perspective regarding the issues identified in the Plan.

In this role, the Committee shall:

- make recommendations on the implementation, monitoring and review of the Roadside Management Plan.

- With Council's approval, conduct a review of the existing roadside assessments and the inclusion of those roadsides not listed.

- promote the implementation of the Plan as a relevant policy document of Council.

1.2 Committee Status

The Committee is an advisory committee of Council and is not legally constituted.

2. Membership

Members of the Committee shall be appointed by the Council. The composition of the Committee shall be in accordance with the Roadside Management Plan.

2.1 Membership Categories

The membership of the committee shall be as follows:

- Chairperson - Councillor Southern Grampians Shire Council
- Department of Sustainability & Environment nominee
- Country Fire Authority Area Manager (or nominee)
- Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority nominee
- Southern Grampians Shire Council, Director, Physical Services
- Southern Grampians Shire Council, Environmental Control Officer
- One conservation interest group representative
- One landholder representative nominated by Victorian Farmers Federation
- VicRoads South Western Victoria, Environmental Officer
2.2 Appointment of Members

Members are appointed by Council. Nominations shall be invited from relevant organisations and groups. Council will select and appoint members to the Advisory Committee.

2.3 Term of Appointment

The term of appointment shall be for two years. Members may seek reappointment.

2.4 Conflict of Interest

Members have a responsibility to declare any conflict or potential conflict between their business or professional interests, and their roles as members of the Advisory Committee. The meeting shall then determine if and how the member may participate in deliberations.

2.5 Inability to attend

All Committee members are requested to nominate one deputy who shall replace official member when unable to attend.

2.6 Resignation

Resignations shall be submitted in writing to the Chair of the Advisory Committee.

3. Committee Procedures

3.1 Meetings

- meetings shall be closed, unless otherwise decided by the Committee. For example, committees may choose to have guests make presentations to them.

- the frequency, location and dates for Committees meetings shall be determined by the Committee.

3.2 Decision-Making

The Committee shall aim to operate on a consensus model of decision-making. In the event of a vote occurring and that vote being tied, the Chairperson shall have a casting vote. Decisions of the Committee shall be reported by the Director Services to Council.
3.3 Quorum

The Committee has a membership of nine. A quorum shall consist of a majority of the current members.

4. The Chairperson

4.1 Chair

The Chairperson shall be the Councillor appointed by Council to the Advisory Committee.

The Chairperson shall chair all meetings of the Advisory Committee. A Deputy Chair shall chair meetings when the Chair is unable to.

4.2 Operation of Meetings

The Chairperson is responsible for ensuring that the Advisory Committee operates in an effective manner within the Terms of Reference. The Chair shall endeavour to ensure that all members have a fair and reasonable opportunity to present their views.

5. Relationship with Council

5.1 Administrative Support

The Council, Councillor, Director Physical Services and the Environmental Control Officer, shall ensure adequate administrative and technical resources are available to the Committee so as to:

- record and distribute minutes of meetings;
- provide advice, support and information to the Chair and Committee members;
- prepare and table documentation; and
- conduct correspondence on behalf of the Committee.

6. Reporting

6.1 Reporting to Council

All recommendations of the Committee shall be reported by the Director Physical Services to Council.
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