

Devonport Weed Strategy

2012-2016



The City with Spirit

ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT

The City of Devonport Strategic Plan 2009-2030 presents the community's vision, desired goals and outcomes for the City and the strategies Council will implement to achieve these.

One of the key goals for the City is 'Living lightly on our environment' in which 'sustainability is promoted and integrated across all sectors'. Two strategies that are relevant to the development of this Weed Strategy (the Strategy) are:

- 1.2.1 Support the conservation and maintenance of biodiversity corridors including coastal landscapes and preserve areas of remnant vegetation; and
- 1.2.2 Undertake projects that protect and enhance our rivers and beaches in partnership with the community and relevant agencies.

The Devonport Weed Strategy 2012 -2016 sets out proposed actions, undertaken by the Devonport City Council in partnership with a range of organisations, agencies and community groups to contribute to a more sustainable community. The Strategy reflects the work undertaken by the Devonport Weed Strategy Working group in reviewing the original five-year strategy released in 2005. The Strategy will be reviewed again in 2016.

Devonport Strategic Plan 2009-2030 Goal 1. Living Lightly on the Environment

A healthy environment means a healthy community. Respecting and valuing our natural environment by reducing negative impacts on it will make sure we have the best chance of social, economic and environmental health and well being. It will also ensure future generations can enjoy the beauty, bounty and benefits of our rivers, beaches, rich agricultural land and coastal landscapes.

Part of learning to live lightly on our environment will require planned management of energy, air, water and waste particularly in relation to the global issues of climate change and reducing traditional energy sources.

Devonport can lead with vision and integrity in this area by integrating sustainability into all activities. (Tasmania Together Strategic Plan Linkage - Goals 11 & 12).

WHAT WE MEAN BY WEED MANAGEMENT

What is a Weed?

For the purpose of this Strategy, a weed is

A plant which has, or has the potential to have, a detrimental effect on economic, social or conservation values¹.

This Strategy addresses all terrestrial (agricultural and environmental) and freshwater weed species.

¹ As adopted in the Cradle Coast Regional Weed Management Strategy and Tasmania's Weed Strategy.



Impact of Weeds

All Australians are directly or indirectly impacted by weeds. Weeds threaten conservation values by changing natural ecosystems, altering river systems and displacing native plant and animal species by competing for space, nutrients and sunlight.

Weeds affect the agricultural industry reducing farm and forest productivity by competing with crops, contaminating produce, harming livestock and can affect operation of farm machinery.

Weeds can affect human health with some species causing respiratory problems and skin irritation and some are poisonous.

The economic impact of managing weeds is significant. A 2004 study² estimates the annual costs of control and losses in output to the Australian agricultural sector is \$3.9 billion. In Tasmania the annual cost of weeds to pastures and field crops is estimated at \$58 million³. Across the country, the cost of control in national parks and other natural areas is \$20 million and costs for public land managers including local government is \$80 million. If there were no weeds agricultural producers and consumers would benefit through reduced costs and taxpayers funds could be redirected elsewhere.

Legislative and Policy Framework

The *Weed Management Act 1999* and associated regulations underpins the strategic approach to weed management in Tasmania. The Act outlines the legal process of declaring a weed species, including the development of weed management plans for each declared weed species. The Act further includes infringement mechanisms for breaches of the Act and appointment of weed inspectors to ensure compliance with the Act. Currently there are two weed inspectors in Devonport, being an officer of the Devonport City Council and from the Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and the Environment (DPIPWE).

The Weed Management Act together with the *Plant Quarantine Act 1997* are two of several Acts that regulate quarantine approaches to protect and where possible, extends the State's disease free status.

There are also a number of key weed policies that guide pest plant management efforts including:

- Australian Weed Strategy including listing of Weeds of National Significance
- WeedPlan – Tasmania's Weed Strategy
- Cradle Coast Regional Weed Management Strategy

² J. Sindenab, R. Jonesbc, S.Hesterba, D.Odomba, C.Kalischda, R.Jamese and O.Cacho, 2004, *The economic impact of weeds in Australia*, CRC for Australian Weed Management Technical Series no. 8.

³ J. Ireson, J. Davies, D. Friend, R. Holloway, W. Chatterton, E. Van Putten and R. McFadyen, 2007, *Weeds of pastures and field crops in Tasmania: economic impacts and biological control*, CRC for Australian Weed Management Technical Series no. 13.

- Devonport Weed Strategy
- Local site specific action plans, eg Lillico Beach Conservation Area

The Devonport Weed Strategy aligns with relevant objectives outlined in national, state and regional weed strategies.

Weeds of Devonport

As of August 2011, Tasmania has 116 plant species declared under the Weed Management Act 1999, with 26 declared species known to be present in Devonport, of which includes five Weeds of National Significance: crack willow, blackberry, gorse, bridal creeper, and boneseed. A number of non-declared weed species and environmental weeds are also considered when prioritising actions for management. Some of which include sweet pittosporum, sea spurge, polygala, hawthorn and maple (sycamore).

A full list of known weed species in Devonport, with links to control methods can be found on Council's website www.devonport.tas.gov.au

Principles of Weed Management

The Devonport Weeds Strategy is based on the following principles adapted from regional, state and national strategies.

1. Weed management is an essential and integral part of the sustainable management of natural resources and requires an integrated, multidisciplinary approach.
2. Prevention and early intervention, including controlling outlying areas first, are the most cost-effective techniques for managing weeds.
3. The primary responsibility for weed management rests with landholders/land managers, but collective action is necessary where the problem transcends the capacity of the individual landholder/land manager to address it adequately.
4. Successful weed management requires a coordinated approach that involves all levels of government in establishing appropriate legislative, coordination and capacity building frameworks in partnership with industry, business, landholders and the community.
5. A continuous and long-term commitment and efficient use of resources is necessary for successful weed management.



Roles and Responsibilities

As described above, the collaborative efforts of landowners, broader community, regional bodies, industry, local, state and federal government can result in successful weed management. This is especially the case when each sector's roles and responsibilities are understood and embraced. For instance, Council plays a number of roles in managing weeds:

- **Information provider** - Council shares outcomes of projects and assists with information exchange and promotion.
- **Advocate** – Council advocates for environmental issues of importance to rate payers and the wider community.
- **Regulator/Planner** – Council promotes weed management through the Weed Management Act (for example, by ensuring that declared weeds are managed appropriately) and through planning policy (for example development and implementation of this Strategy).
- **Owner** - as the owner and manager of public land Council has an important investment in and impact on weed management.
- **Facilitator** - Council facilitates initiatives to improve weed management by providing advice, co-ordinating and supporting effort and bringing together stakeholders (e.g. supporting activities of the Friends of Don Reserve, Mersey Estuary Group, Mersey NRM).

For further information of various weed managers roles and responsibilities refer to Council's website.

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS 2012 - 2016

The aim of weed management in Devonport to 2016 is:

To minimise the economic, environmental and social impacts of existing, new and emerging weeds in Devonport through coordination, cooperation and commitment from weed managers and the community.

It is envisioned that this will be achieved by undertaking a variety of actions grouped under three key directions:

1. **Community Awareness, Education, and Participation**
2. **Weed Hygiene and Containment**
3. **Weed Control, Monitoring, and Coordination**

An action plan has been developed around these three directions with the following components.

Component	Description
Desired Outcome	The change that must occur to reach the strategic direction and overall aim of the Strategy
Action	The activity or output to be undertaken
Responsibility	The unit in Devonport City Council that will lead the action – also lists key potential partners
Priority	<p>Actions assessed using two criteria:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Level of strategic impact (considering cost savings, efficiencies, risk of not doing) 2. Ease of implementation (considering time, resources, complexity) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High: Critical importance, high impact, easy to more challenging to implement • Medium: Complimentary to existing services, medium impact, easy – challenging to implement • Low: Limited impact, easy-difficult to implement
Timing	Preferred financial year in which the action will commence
Resources Required	<p>The level of existing or additional human or financial resources required. Existing operational refers to inclusion in operational budget. Future operational allocation would require consideration in future budgets. Includes costs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low (<\$5000), • Medium (\$5,000 – \$20,000) • High (>\$20,000). <p>Actions with initial high costs are expected to reduce costs in the long-term.</p>
Performance Measures	How the desired outcome will be monitored and measured

The action plan will be integrated into Council's corporate annual planning process, monitored regularly by Council officers and reviewed annually by the Devonport Weed Strategy working group.

ACTION PLAN

1. Strategic Direction: Community Awareness, Education, and Participation

Desired Outcome:

- Increased knowledge, skills, participation and commitment to weed management by general public, schools, community organisations and business

Action	Responsibility	Priority	Timing	Resources Required
Support the establishment of local groups and schools adopting an area to assist with weed control and mapping on Council managed land	Sustainable Communities In partnerships with schools, community groups, CCNRM, DPIPWE	High	2012-13	Existing operational Low cost
Investigate the establishment of a pilot project to develop a weed identification and mapping application for mobile phones	Sustainable Communities In partnership with tertiary sector, DPIPWE	High	2012-13	Grant opportunity Low cost to investigate
Support hands-on awareness programs such as Arbour week and activities with schools	Sustainable Communities In partnership with Tasmanian Arboretum, community groups, business	Medium	Annual	Existing operational Financial contribution to Tasmanian Arboretum Low cost
Integrate information into Council's new resident's kit	Sustainable Communities	Medium	2011-12	Existing operational Low cost
Maintain public awareness of identification, current projects and control of weeds in local publications, DCC website and social media	Sustainable Communities Communications	Medium	2012-13	Existing operational Low cost
Develop and deliver incentive based programs	Sustainable Communities In partnership with CCNRM , nursery and garden industry	Medium	2013-14	Existing operational Low cost



Action	Responsibility	Priority	Timing	Resources Required
Develop programs to engage new groups not previously involved in weed activities	Sustainable Communities	Medium	2013-14	Existing operational Low cost

Performance Measures:

- 10% increase from 2011 in community members, schools and groups participating in awareness activities by 2016
- Number of reports received from community regarding weed incursions

2. Strategic Direction: Weed Hygiene and Containment

Desired Outcome:

- Prevent the establishment and spread of new weed incursions.

Action	Responsibility	Priority	Timing	Resourcing
Consider use of clean materials in sensitive areas; where required, specify/assess quarries for weeds & phytophthora	Sustainable Communities Operations In partnership with CCNRM, DPIPWE, Forestry Tas, Mineral Resources Tasmania	High	2011-12	Existing operational Low cost
Increase the extent of hygiene practices, including wash down procedures, into DCC contract processes and operations to ensure that works and maintenance activities minimise the risk of weed spread into new or sensitive areas	Operations City Infrastructure	High	2012-13	Existing operational Low cost
Investigate incentives to address illegal dumping of garden waste	Operations In partnership with CCNRM	Medium	2012-13	Future operational allocation Low cost to investigate
Encourage alternatives to planting, selling and buying weedy or potential weed species	Sustainable Communities In partnership with CCNRM, nursery and garden industry	Medium	2012-13	Existing operational Grant opportunity Low cost

Action	Responsibility	Priority	Timing	Resourcing
Investigate and advocate for the establishment of wash down and other cleaning facilities in strategic locations	Sustainable Communities In partnership with state government, Tas Ports, transport companies	Low	2013-14	Existing operational No cost to investigate High cost to establish


Performance Measures:

- Improvements in weed hygiene practices of Council
- Decrease in reports of illegal dumping of garden waste

3. Strategic Direction: Weed Control, Monitoring, and Coordination**Desired Outcomes:**

- Improve health of terrestrial and freshwater ecosystems including reduction in flood damage and erosion
- A reduction in the impact of existing weeds
- Coordinated approach to managing the impact of weeds

Action	Responsibility	Priority	Timing	Resourcing
Develop and implement annual plan for the control of priority weeds	Sustainable Communities Operations	High	Annual	Existing operational High cost Grant opportunity
Progressively remove willows and revegetate riparian zones along the Don River	Sustainable Communities In partnership with private landholders, Fisheries, Crown Land Services, community groups, Mersey NRM, employment agencies (work experience such as Green Jobs Corps)	High	2011-2014	Existing operational Low cost In-kind labour from private landholder, schools, Mersey NRM Subsidised through grant funds



Action	Responsibility	Priority	Timing	Resourcing
Participate in the Cradle Coast regional weed mapping program, mapping priority weeds and sites and integrating information with Tasmania's Natural Values Atlas	Sustainable Communities In partnership with CCNRM	High	2011-12 then annual update	Existing operational Low cost
Actively participate in Cradle Coast Regional Weeds Advisory Group and Municipal Officers meeting, including development of partnership projects	Sustainable Communities In partnership with DPIPWE, CCNRM, neighbouring Councils	Medium	Ongoing	Existing operational Low cost
Target identified priority weeds in road reserves as part of the roadside maintenance weed spraying program	City Infrastructure	Medium	2012-13	Future operational allocation Medium cost
Promote the development of environmental projects as part of Council's community small grants program	Sustainable Communities	Low	2011	Existing operational Low cost
Develop inventory of equipment available for groups to undertake weed control	Sustainable Communities In partnership with CCNRM	Low	2013	Existing operational Low cost

Performance Measures:

- Weed management actions prioritised and undertaken within budget restrictions or as funds become available for greatest impact
- Priority and new weed infestations mapped regularly to monitor physical assessment of the size and spread or reduction of infestations
- Reduction in priority weeds in road reserves
- Resources shared across community to undertake weed control in an efficient and effective manner
- Increase in environmental project submissions as part of Councils community small grants program