



Weed Management Strategy 2025-2040

DRAFT SUMMARY FOR CONSULTATION



Summary

Aim:

Implement a weed strategy and associated action plan across the Sorell municipality that works together with all relevant community, industry and government stakeholders to reduce the economic, social and ecological impact of weeds.

The Strategy delivers an overarching framework to guide strategic, cost effective, cross-tenure, collaborative weed management within the Sorell municipality over the next 15 years.

Implementation of the Strategy will protect and enhance the environmental condition and agricultural productivity of the Sorell municipality.

In addition, the Strategy provides a framework to enable Council, local communities including volunteer community groups, the agricultural sector and other land managers to work in partnership to identify, prioritise and co-invest to improve the management of highly invasive weeds. By improving communication and strengthening partnerships, collaborative, cross tenure, longer-term and more cost effective weed management outcomes can be achieved across the Sorell municipality.

Key elements of the Strategy

- A prioritised Weed Strategy Action Plan for the next 15 years, including timelines and budgets.
- Roles and responsibilities of Council, land managers, volunteer community groups and other stakeholders in implementing the Weed Strategy Action Plan.
- Five yearly review and evaluation of the effectiveness of the Weed Strategy Action Plan.
- Prioritisation of weeds based on their distribution, impact and spread. Priority ratings are based on the following principles:
 - 1: Highest Priority – declared weeds or newly introduced “alert list” weeds with a restricted distribution requiring a rapid response, biannual control aimed at eradication in first 5 to 7 years.
 - 2: High Priority – declared weeds with a limited distribution, eradicate where feasible or quarantine within the next 15 years.
 - 3: Moderate Priority – declared weeds and certain Sorell Local List (SLL) weeds requiring strategic control, eradicate isolated infestations and contain wider infestations to ensure no further spread within the next 15 years.
 - 4: Low Priority – declared weeds and certain SLL weeds with widespread distribution, control and containment for asset-based protection within the next 10 to 15 years (assets include EPBC Act 1999 Protected Matters, Tasmanian Reserve Estate land excluding FPPF, State and Council Reserves, threatened species/vegetation communities, covenanted and Class 2 and 3 agricultural land).
- Priority Weed Action Plans developed for each of the Priority 1 to 4 weeds within the next five years.
- Identification of Council resources including staff, equipment, and annual budget for Strategy implementation.
- Measures to prevent the spread of weeds, such as hygiene and biosecurity.
- Education and awareness campaigns for the community and stakeholders on the importance of weed management and how they can help.
- Weed and hygiene training workshops to improve Council staff and community group skills to support effective, longer-term integrated weed management.
- Safe Operating Procedures for roadside weed management.

Weeds in Sorell

Over 370 introduced plants have been recorded within the Sorell municipality¹. Some weed species are widespread, while others are more recent arrivals with small populations that are of more limited threat to environmental, economic and social values.

Of the declared weeds listed under the *Tasmanian Biosecurity Regulations 2022*, 36 are present within the Sorell municipality, and 11 of these are also listed as Weeds of National Significance (WONS). Some weed species are widespread, while others are more recent arrivals with small populations that are of more limited threat to environmental, economic and social values.

Agricultural land

- Priority to protect Class 3 land

¹ Based on weeds data collated from Sorell Council, North Barker database and Natural Values Atlas (as at 14th April 2025).

Sorell's natural values

TOTAL AREA OF LGA

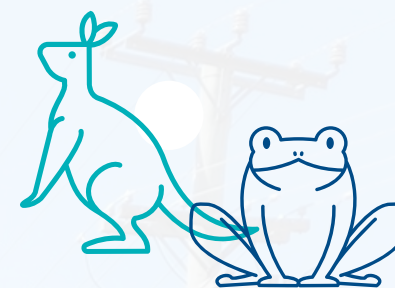
583 km²

58,300 ha



FAUNA SPECIES

1242⁺



More than 1242 Fauna - 39 Species under EPBC 1999, 38 species under TSPA 1995

FLORA SPECIES

1363⁺



More than 1363 Flora - 8 Species under EPBC Act 1999, 51 species under TSPA Act 1995

OPEN SPACE

84.33

ha (total)



WETLAND OF INTERNATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE (RAMSAR SITE)

1

3,334 ha



Pitt Water-Orielton Lagoon

THREATENED VEGETATION COMMUNITIES

6222

ha (total)



10 under NCA 2002

CONSERVATION COVENANTS ON PRIVATE LAND

2045

ha (total)



43 Covenants covering 46 properties

OBJECTIVE 1 — Strategic Planning



Challenges:

- Lack of strategic planning.
- Weed species are not prioritised.
- Current approach to weed management is ad-hoc and reactionary



Vision:

- To prioritise weeds, identify infestation areas and prepare individual Priority Weed Action Plans to strategically implement cost effective weed management based on the limited resources available within Sorell municipality.



Strategic Objectives/Actions:

- Prioritise weeds and set clear actions for each species based on their priority rating.
- Develop Weed Action Plans for high priority weeds.
- Eradicate localised declared weeds at the early stage of invasion.
- Protect high value assets e.g.: Pitt Water-Orielton Ramsar site, State and Council Reserves, threatened species/vegetation communities, covenanted and priority agricultural land.



OBJECTIVE 2 — Stakeholder engagement and partnership



Challenges:

- Lack of engagement and collaboration with stakeholders across tenures within the municipality and adjoining municipalities.
- Weeds know no boundaries.
- 84% of land within the municipality is private land.
- Lack of Council and other resources to better support landholders and volunteer community groups.



Vision:

- To provide opportunities to develop collaborative and cooperative partnerships between local communities, government and other stakeholders to effectively manage weeds across the Sorell municipality.



Strategic Objectives/Actions:

- Create a Sorell Weed Action Group as a sub group of the NRM Committee comprising representatives from the community, Local and State Government and GBEs, industry and other land managers.
- Foster cooperative and collaborative cross-tenure projects to support the development of a shared responsibility toward weed management across the municipality.
- Investigate further opportunities to apply for external grants and projects that can be shared across land tenures e.g. Weeds Action Fund.



OBJECTIVE 3 — Community Education and Awareness



Challenges:

- Lack of knowledge about weed species and techniques.
- Dumping of garden waste.
- Lack of understanding around the impact's weeds have on our environment.



Vision:

- To ensure effective and meaningful communication and advocacy for weed management within Sorell municipality.



Strategic Objectives/Actions:

- Develop a Weed Communications Strategy to increase community understanding of and participation in weed management.
- Implement community engagement and education projects to raise awareness of weeds and how to manage them promoting a “shared responsibility”. Examples may include “weed of the month” or weeds brochure or weed article with quarterly rates notice.
- Ensure Council's website and social media pages contain and are updated with relevant weed information including weed projects, landholder incentives and available support.



OBJECTIVE 4 —

Best Practice Integrated Weed Management



Challenges:

- Ongoing annual need for training of Council staff and depot crew.
- Lack of consistency and use of best practice weed management methods in different situations.
- Inappropriate work methods can increase the spread of high priority weeds.



Vision:

- To ensure Council, contractors, community groups and land managers employ best practice integrated weed management.



Strategic Objectives/Actions:

- Identify training requirements and statutory HSE obligations for volunteers using herbicides on Council land.
- Ensure Council weed management practices and operations follow best practice.
- ChemCert Accreditation (AQF2 or equivalent) training for Council staff.
- ChemCert Accreditation (AQF2) to apply S5 Herbicides for selected volunteers in each community group doing weed control works.
- Support biological control programmes and trials and identify opportunities to coordinate with other traditional means of control.
- Implement equipment and weed control protocols and processes to guide hygiene practices across the region.
- Develop a work protocol for contractors.
- Establish IWM training programs for stakeholders across the municipality.



OBJECTIVE 5 — Risk Management



Challenges:

- Capturing up-to-date weed data and controlling new infestations early.
- Resources required to enforce and monitor hygiene and weed management at high-risk entry sites (e.g.: developments and waste disposal facilities).
- Understanding how climate change is affecting weed species invasiveness and distribution.



Vision:

To minimise and manage risks including:

- preventing new weed infestations from becoming established within the Sorell municipality.
- protecting council assets from weeds within Sorell municipality.
- effectively control and contain site specific weeds during the application process for new development and subdivisions.
- emerging weed issues, changes to invasiveness potential and climate change.



Strategic Objectives/Actions:

- Develop a process for recording and identifying new weed species.
- Develop a weed alert protocol with Biosecurity Tasmania that includes a process for alerting the community and includes measures such as rapid response procedure for removal when new high-risk weeds are identified within the municipality.
- Incorporate weed and hygiene management plans into the planning and development application process (permit condition) for new subdivisions.
- Conduct regular audits and inspections of development and waste disposal sites (high risk entry sites for new infestations).
- Ensure Sorell Council has adequate resources to appoint a minimum of two Weed Officers under the Biosecurity Act 2019.
- Review implications from climate change to profile weed threats in Sorell.



OBJECTIVE 6 — Monitoring and Review



Challenges:

- Ensuring actions and weed priorities stay relevant.
- Managing weed data from numerous different sources.
- Having adequate resources to implement the Sorell Weed Strategy 15-year Action Plan and review every 5 years.



Vision:

- To monitor, evaluate and improve procedures and activities undertaken in the process of implementing the Sorell Weed Management Strategy.



Strategic Objectives/Actions:

- Review strategy every five years and redraft the Weed Strategy Action Table as needed.
- Coordinate weed management data and report on annual weed management activity undertaken by Sorell Council, community working groups and other parties.



