

Hi Cathrine, Jennifer and Peter

I'm pleased to say that Council's Climate Change Strategy was adopted at Tuesday night's Meeting of Council.

You can view the final documents here:

- [Climate Change Strategy](#)
- [Action Plan 2023/2024](#)

Thank you again for the submission that CFNC put forward. I have made some notes in red below to let you know how your points have been considered.

1. Regarding the opportunity outlined in Pillar 1 that Council "can build climate-resilient physical structures...", CFNC recommends that protecting the Botanical Gardens and Campbell's Creek from repeated extensive and expensive damage from future flooding should be a priority. Damage to the Gardens and further downstream would be ameliorated by restoring, with native species, the flat grassland west of Barkers Creek with properly designed overflow channels to allow absorption of flood waters as naturally as possible. **I have put this idea to our Engineering team for consideration.**
2. CFNC has a particular interest in, and is very supportive of, Pillar 2, which addresses the need to protect and enhance the natural environment.
  - a. Because Council is not directly responsible for many of the waterways, catchment areas and forests in the shire, it is crucial that it works with the agencies and levels of government that do have this responsibility, to ensure that management practices are coordinated and deliver positive outcomes to the natural environment. CFNC recommends that a commitment to work with other agencies and levels of government is made explicit in the Strategy. **Good point, we have made this more explicit. Thank you.**
  - b. CFNC is very supportive of the need to deploy DJAARA's cultural burning practices to heal and manage the environment. Too often we have seen hot burns that damage and sometimes destroy rare plants and ultimately lead to an increase in fuel load. This is an example of management practices not necessarily the immediate responsibility of Council, but where Council could work with other agencies for a better outcome. **Council is exploring cultural burning opportunities on council-managed land.**
  - c. CFNC recommends that Council uses its influence and exercises its own responsibilities to avoid clearing native forests; **Council's Engineering staff aim to avoid and minimise tree removal and reduce the footprint for all capital works projects. In the Strategy, Goal 3 action area 3, and Goal 4 action area 2 respond to this concern.**
  - d. CFNC recommends that management of roadsides, which may include slashing, burning and dangerous tree mitigation, should be undertaken with best practice conservation management in mind, so that these fragile remnant natural environments and plant and wildlife corridors are protected. An emphasis on the control and removal of woody weeds such as gorse, blackberry, broom and pampas grass, along with the control of the grass Phalaris, would do much to reduce fire hazard while improving the conservation value of roadside corridors. **Yes, this is a very important area. Council's**

Natural Environment Officer is currently creating an updated Roadside Conservation Management Plan which will help to regulate Council's work on roadsides.

3. CFNC notes that there are a number of links between the goals and actions included in the Strategy. As a result, coordinated policy actions across all areas of Council's work is essential. This will require changes in current policy and practice.

a. For example, concurrent with actions to plant trees and maintain and increase the resilience of Council's natural resources (Goal 3), new housing developments see existing trees removed, closely spaced houses with black roofs and minimal garden areas for "Planting trees to help cool our homes and townships" (Pillar 2 Opportunity). We have an internal Climate Change Leadership Group, made up of managers and coordinators from across Council. This group will oversee delivery of the climate strategy, and works to embed our climate response across the organisation, so that we can make sure council actions complement each other. Council is also reviewing all of its plans of strategies to make sure they align.

4. Regarding Goal 2 and Goal 6, which we strongly support – , "We transition in a just and equitable way to a zero emissions shire" and "Our shire is zero waste and has a resilient, circular economy – CFNC recommends that Council should:

a. provide incentives and assistance for households and businesses to use more renewable energy sources and improvements to home insulation At this point Council can't provide financial incentives, but Goal 1 Action Area 2 is about communicating climate change and opportunities for our communities to take action. We will highlight opportunities that we are aware of for households.

b. minimise waste to landfill through the better recycling facilities. Council is currently developing its new Waste Management Strategy, which will be up on the [Shape platform](#) for comment soon.

Thank you again for your contributions. They helped us to create a stronger, more considered strategy.

Please let me know if you would like to discuss any of the above.

Best wishes,

Mel

**Melanie Marshall | Climate Change Coordinator | Mount Alexander Shire Council**

Days of work: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and alternate Tuesdays.

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