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Vision for Werribee Plains

WERRIBEE PLAINS REGIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY FRAMEWORK

BUSINESS PLAN
(last updated 6/07/10)

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[The Werribee Plains Regional Environmental Sustainability Framework was completed and released in March 2010 and this document is a Business Plan for the implementation of the Framework. It is a 'live document' and iteratively updated.]

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1. BUSINESS PLAN

1.1. PURPOSE

The purpose of the project is to implement the Werribee Plains Regional Environmental Sustainability Framework to achieve:

- **Prioritised investment** for environmental sustainability.
- **On-going networks and governance** to implement the RESF on a self-funded basis across the Werribee plains
- **Sponsorship and other sources of revenue** to replace the DSE-Vision for Werribee Plains funding at the end of Year 1.
- **Measures, indicators and reporting** format that meets the needs of local governments and related stakeholders across the region.
- **A risk management plan** to protect the integrity and continuity of the RESF and its implementation across the Werribee Plains
- **The first annual report** of the RESF in a format consistent with the needs of local government across the region, and the contribution of the respective Councils to improving environmental sustainability.

1.2. COLLABORATIVE ACTION

Overall this business plan is aimed at facilitating a collaborative regional approach to:

- Implementing actions to achieve improved water, energy and natural environment outcomes.
- Supporting achieving the Victorian Government aspirations through the Vision for Werribee Plains for the region to be a leader in environmentally sustainable development.
- Working with municipalities in the Werribee Plains to derive the benefits from the application of a suite of common measurable regional indicators for environmental sustainability.
- Increasing awareness and participation of the community in achieving environmental sustainability.
- Increasing involvement of the residential building and travel non-residential, waste, industry, freight and agriculture sectors in actions to achieve environmental sustainability.

1.3. KEY AUDIENCE

The audience for the project is as follows;

- Councillors and CEOs of LGs in the Metro West
- Board of LeadWest
- Federal RDA Committee for Metro West and DIIRD
- Secretary, DSE
- Minister for Water
- Minister for Environment and Climate Change
- Project Manager for Stage 2 of the Vision for Werribee Plains
- Community organisations

1.4. STAKEHOLDERS

Stakeholders to be consulted include;

- CEO and Board of LeadWest.
- CEOs and/or Managers of Sustainability of Councils in the Werribee Plains region – Brimbank, Maribyrnong, Hobsons Bay, Wyndham, Melton, Moorabool, Geelong.
- CEOs and/or Manager of Sustainability of Moonee Valley City Council as member of LeadWest.
- Regional bodies working towards achieving environmental sustainability (eg WAGA).
- Community stakeholders providing their expertise and experience to the planning and implementation of actions through projects.
- Stakeholders that generate useful data sets to support the RESF eg water authorities, state government departments.
- Agencies who may provide sponsorship – cash and in-kind.
- Industry stakeholders involved in addressing barriers to change and the planning and implementation of projects.
- Tertiary institutions (eg Victoria University) and industry bodies able to provide research and technical expertise to investigating the application of existing and emerging technologies to achieving environmentally sustainable outcomes.

1.5. APPROACH

This business plan for the framework has a focus on a project operating structure to place the emphasis on action for the implementation. It will build on projects already funded under the Vision for Werribee Plains (V4WP) Grants Program.

In accord with the purpose of the project, the key elements of the Business Plan are:

- Identification and prioritisation of regional environmental sustainability projects.
- Working in participation with key stakeholders to develop partnerships.
- Establishment of ongoing governance and funding arrangements.
- Development of regional indicators and reporting.

Stakeholder involvement is an integral part of the development and implementation of the projects. A significant number of stakeholders were involved in the preparation of the different components of the framework and it is imperative that these stakeholders continue to be engaged and new stakeholders encouraged to participate in the new projects.

The process of the project development for water, energy and natural environment will provide the major relevant and practical vehicle for seeking stakeholder involvement, pursuing funding sources and the identification of regional indicators for reporting.

The detail of the development of each of these key elements is presented in the following chapters of the Business Plan.

1.6. PROJECT GOVERNANCE

The oversight of this project is vested with DSE.

There is a Reference Group for the project that comprises the Sustainability Managers for the participating municipalities, unless otherwise delegated.

1.7. SCHEDULE

The schedule for the major milestones is provided below..

Task	May 10	June 10	July 10	Aug 10	Sept 10	Oct 10	Nov 10	Dec 10	Jan 11	Feb 11	March 11
Approval of Terms of Reference and appointment of Project Manager	Completed										
Work Plan completed and signed off	Completed										
Agreement on projects for V4WP grants program (Aug)		Completed									
Submission of projects (V4WP Aug call)			In progress								
Agreement on LGs project measure, indicators and reporting.				Scheduled							
Agreement on projects for V4WP grants program (EOIs) and other sources				Scheduled							
Submission of projects (V4WP Nov)						Scheduled					
Draft Annual Report for Year 1						Scheduled					
Agreement on projects for V4WP grants program and other funding sources							Scheduled				
Submission of projects for V4WP (Feb)								Scheduled			
Funding Plan for Year 2 with written commitments								Scheduled			
Final Annual Report for Year 1									Scheduled		
Agreement on projects for V4WP grants program (May) and other sources										Scheduled	
Evaluation & final project report & handover to ongoing management group											Scheduled

	Scheduled
	In progress
	Completed

2. PRIORITY REGIONAL PROJECTS

2.1. TWO FOLD APPROACH

There will be a two fold approach to regional project development;

- Development and implementation of collaborative regional projects for water, energy and natural environment in 2010/11, including project bids for the Vision for Werribee Plains Grants Program; and
- Preparation of collaborative regional project bids for water, energy and natural environment for funding beginning in 2011/12 seeking funding from Local, State and National Governments and industry.

It is recognised that WAGA has a range of activities at various stages of development and implementation and these, as largely reflected in the Energy Research Report, will provide the starting point for identifying projects for Energy.

2.1.1. Project criteria

The final decision on the projects will be influenced by a range of factors which will include:

- Alignment with proposed actions from Framework reports.
The starting point for the development of the priority projects for water, energy and natural environment is the respective research reports. These reports specify a range of actions and the alignment with these actions needs to be reviewed for consideration of priority determination for regional projects. It is recognised that this is a starting point and that actions will be added over time to the Framework.
- Evidence of capacity to significantly impact on the specific outcomes for water, energy or natural environment.

This is essentially self explanatory but the selection of projects does need to explicitly show the expected impact and credible supporting evidence. The various research reports were very much designed as providing substantiated justification for bids to potential external funding organisations for projects in 2011/12.

- Opportunities for collaboration between municipalities.
The initial regional projects for 2010/11 will need to be built on opportunities and funding in existing programs for collaborative action across two or more of the municipalities that provide opportunities for benefits from sharing of resources in terms of expertise and savings from economies of scale and shared operational arrangements.
For projects for implementation in 2011/12, external funding will be sought from State and Australia Government and any other potential sources of funding both in actual allocations and in-kind.
- The nature of the barriers to change, feasibility of solutions and timeframes
The barriers to change may be at a national, state or regional level. Solutions will range from proven and readily implementable to emerging and subject to analysis of feasibility. The initial choice in the first year of implementation needs to include projects where substantial progress is likely to be able to be demonstrated in 2010/11.

2.1.2. Proposed tasks

The proposed sequence of tasks is generic to water, energy and natural environment. In the case of energy, these tasks are already substantially being done by WAGA.

The proposed sequence of tasks has been detailed in Attachment 1A.

2.1.3. Project application

The process for applying for funding under the Vision for Werribee Plains Grants Program includes as the first step the completion of an Expression of Interest Form.

For the regional projects for the implementation of the Regional Environmental Sustainability Framework additional information being sought is outlined in Attachment 1B.

3. NATURAL ENVIRONMENT OUTCOME

3.1. INITIAL FOCUS

In addressing the major outcome of Natural Environment in the preparation of the Werribee Plains RESF, biodiversity and specifically the issue of connectivity was chosen as the initial focus because of its major role in protecting long-term resilience of biodiversity to climate change.

A research report was commissioned by the Australian Conservation Foundation and undertaken by Greening Australia for the preparation of the Framework, and the study was released in March 2010 at a Community Forum for the launch of the Framework.

The Research Study identified four major types of connectivity:

- The waterways and protection and enhancement of the riparian and instream corridors;
- Between major grassland reserves;
- Along the coastal zone; and
- Along roadside reserves.

The report emphasised that “None of these types of connectivity are to be viewed in isolation as the total biodiversity mosaic and the associated ecological processes are essential in the long-term to protecting and enhancing the viability of biological assets and the pressures of fragmentation and ensuring resilience to climate change.”

The feedback from stakeholders strongly indicated that waterways are seen as a primary form of biodiversity connectivity in the Werribee Plains region.

A series of goals have been developed to assist in achieving regional connectivity:

- Provide ecological connection across the Werribee Plains
- Assist in protection and rehabilitation of existing riparian remnant vegetation
- Increase the area for riparian vegetation along the region’s waterways in a way which will increase local biodiversity connectivity.

Coastal connectivity was also highlighted to protect and expand the connectivity along the Werribee Plains coastline.

In the development of actions for connectivity to protect, enhance and restore biodiversity values and natural processes, the actions will have implications for both:

- Management by individual property owners of existing land use; and
- Planning for future land use and development.

A diversity of activities are currently being developed by local governments and agencies in working with existing property owners to promote the sound management of the natural resources of land, water and vegetation that underpin environmental sustainability. Greening Australia identified over 45 different existing programs and projects in reviewing current activity on connectivity in the Werribee Plains area. This included 18 specifically for Waterways.

Future land use and development is the subject of the Victorian Planning process and is implemented through Municipal Planning Schemes.

In proposing actions for the future, the initial focus is on the issue of connectivity and waterways.

3.2. PROPOSED ACTIONS

A number of actions were recommended from the report and these are presented in Attachment 2.

4. WATER OUTCOME

4.1. INITIAL FOCUS

In addressing the major outcome of Water in the preparation of the Werribee Plains RESF, urban water was chosen as the initial focus..

A research report was commissioned by the Australian Conservation Foundation to undertake physical and economic modelling of water demand and supply for new suburban developments. The report entitled *Werribee Plains: Urban Water Management – WaterCycle and Economic Modelling* was released in 2008 and is available on the ACF website.

A further research project was commissioned by the ACF to provide an evaluation of the market, institutional and policy barriers to the adoption of sustainable water solutions. This report entitled *Werribee Plains: Urban Waters – Reducing potable water use*. It was released in March 2010 and is available on the ACF website.

Water consumption figures provided from the *Werribee Plains: Urban Waters – Reducing potable water use* (source URS 2008) are:

Sector	ML / year	% total annual use
Household - indoor	2,616 ML / year (supplied to 14,600 households, including around 500 apartments)	71%
Household - outdoor	665 ML / year	18%
Commercial	206 ML / year	6%
Public open space	128 ML / per year	3%
Industry	57 ML / year	2%
TOTAL	3,673 ML / year	

The dominance of the residential sector (89%) is the reason for the initial focus in this area. The importance of the issue of residential wastewater use is highlighted by the existence of major designated urban growth areas in the Werribee Plains and the projected high levels of new housing.

These regional figures provide the existing business-in-usual scenario for 2008. The figures do not provide a projected scenario for future levels of sustainable potable water consumption. The Victorian Government has a target of 25% reduction by 2015 and 30% by 2020. It is not clear what this mean in terms of quantified water consumption.

The water saving technologies listed in the *Werribee Plains: Urban Waters – Reducing potable water use* are:

- Water Saving Devices (eg showerheads, toilets, clothes washers, dishwashers, taps, garden watering).
- Rainwater tanks.
- Storm Water Harvesting.
- Household greywater recycling.
- Third-pipe water recycling.
- Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD).

4.2. PROPOSED ACTIONS

Recommended actions, from the Framework, for delivering sustainable water solutions at the household, precinct and regional scale are summarised in Attachment 3.

5. ENERGY OUTCOME

5.1. INITIAL FOCUS

Two major priority areas were chosen for energy:

- Development of an overall strategy to achieve zero net emissions; and
- Reducing Green House Gas emissions by reducing car dependency.

5.1.1. Strategy to achieve zero net emissions

The purpose of this research study was to provide the eight municipal councils in the western metropolitan area with a strategic plan to achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2020.

This study:

- Quantified the total greenhouse emissions by sector for each of the municipal councils in the study area for 2006, and projected to 2020.
- Identified the priority sectors and provided a series of policy and program solutions for achieving zero net emissions
- Identified ways to monitor progress towards achieving zero net emissions by 2020.

In the preparation of the Framework the role of WAGA was well recognised and the energy component and accompanying research study was carried out as a joint partnership with WAGA.

5.1.2. Reducing Green House Gas emissions by cars

The Werribee Plains is typical of the peri-urban areas of most Australian cities in being highly dependent on the car, that is, its urban design has evolved around car transport.

The purpose of this research study was to examine how effective the planning and implementation of urban development in the peri-urban areas of the Werribee Plains is at providing the built form to support reducing car dependency. This initial focus on urban design in the growth areas is because the growth area structure planning is in full swing and is an essential step for strategic planning in all growth areas to ensure that urban design planning addresses the issue of reducing car dependency.

5.2. PROPOSED ACTIONS

Recommended actions, from the Framework, for delivering sustainable energy solutions are contained in the report Werribee Plains: Energy Research Study – Towards Zero Net Emissions (March 2010). These proposed actions are currently being reviewed by WAGA to identify priority projects.

6. STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT

In the last eighteen months groups of key stakeholders have been involved in the development of each of the research reports. It is important that these stakeholders continue to be provided the opportunity to engage in the implementation of the Framework.

There is also a need to broaden the opportunity for involvement as the research report stakeholder groups were a specialised group comprising individuals and organisations with a specific responsibility for or substantial existing experience in the respective research areas.

The projects will all be designed to identify key stakeholders that want to be involved in each of the three outcome areas.

7. FUTURE GOVERNANCE AND FUNDING PLAN

The Framework proposes a governance model to maximise investment in environmental sustainability in the western Melbourne metropolitan area by all tiers of government, industry and the community.

The Vision is to:

Lead strategic partnerships to facilitate real improvements in environmental sustainability in Melbourne's west.

The Mission is the:

Development of partnerships to support canvas and represent member agencies and the community in the achievement of environmental sustainability outcomes through collaborative regional projects.

The operational structure is project based.

The Framework is being implemented under the aegis of LeadWest, a regional organisation which has as its objective:

"...to foster and undertake actions that will support, sustainable growth and regional development of Melbourne's western region. To this end it aims to build on the existing social, economic and environmental capacity of the region and to plan and create a sustainable future for the well being of the communities of the region.

Under the current arrangements the implementation is initially to be led by a team comprising local government environment sustainability officers, and state and regional organisation as appropriate to the outcomes of water, energy and natural environment. The team is supported by an Executive Officer (part-time) whose role it is to manage, coordinate and facilitate:

- the development of a business plan for a regional environmental sustainability program (based on the Regional Sustainability Framework) ;
- collaborative project planning and delivery; and
- preparation of an annual regional environmental sustainability report card based on an agreed suite of indicators for reporting to government and the community.

In terms of governance arrangements for the energy outcome and immediate implementation of the Framework, the Executive Officer for the Framework will work in collaboration with WAGA to optimise the planning and implementation of regional energy projects. WAGA is a body well accepted by local government for the development of energy related issues in western Melbourne and part of a network of similar organisations and directly borders the Northern Alliance for Greenhouse Action (NAGA) which shares many similar issues and experiences. These various Alliances have a strong relationship with State Government.

8. REGIONAL INDICATORS AND REPORTING

8.1. INTERMEDIATE TERM OUTCOMES

The indicators we will be applying are to monitor the achievement of **intermediate term outcomes** that can be measured on an annual basis and probably reviewed on a 3-5 year time scale. There will need to be a clear relationship between the intermediate and long term outcomes. One example of an intermediate outcome for the reduction in total potable water consumption could be the number of residences installing rainwater tanks. The **assumption** is that the installation of rainwater tanks will reduce potable water use. These assumptions need to be explicit and able to be tested over time.

8.2. PROJECT BASED APPROACH

It is proposed that the indicators will be developed for each project and that a common suite of immediate indicators will be developed for water, energy and the natural environment.

8.3. REPORTING

'Report Cards' are increasingly being developed as a means of reporting to the community. It is intended to look at the approaches currently being adopted and examine how they might relate to the needs for Werribee Plains.

An example of the Report Card approach pertinent to the nature of this project is the 'Natural Resources Report Card' prepared by the Gippsland Integrated Natural Resources Forum. Information on this Report Card can be found at www.ginrf.org.au. This Forum has a wide membership including Australian, State and extensive Local Government representation, research organisations, catchment management authorities and a broad range of regional organisations. Annual Report Cards since 2005 are available on the website.

APPENDIX 1

1A: PRIORITY REGIONAL PROJECTS – TASKS

TASK	DESCRIPTION	TIMELINES
1	<p>IDENTIFICATION OF POTENTIAL PRIORITY REGIONAL PROJECTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare a priority listing of projects with support documentation. • A project analysis will be produced for each project and include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A state of the Goal including how it will contribute to the specific outcome. ○ Identification of the barriers to change. ○ Potential solutions and feasibility ○ The priority actions and why. ○ The budget ○ Regional indicators and reporting arrangements • Identify key stakeholders group to form the project task groups. <p>Executive Officer to visit each of seven municipalities and other key stakeholders to meet to discuss the opportunities for collaborative regional projects.</p>	Commence May 2010 and ongoing
2	<p>STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION PROCESS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish stakeholder reference email groups. • These groups based on their collection expertise and experience will act as a sounding board for development of proposed priority projects. 	June - July 2010
3	<p>FINALISATION OF REGIONAL PRIORITY PROJECTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final selection of the proposed priority project(s) for submission to the V4WP Grants Program (in accord with the quarterly deadlines) and other identified funding sources. • This will be done by the Executive Officer in conjunction with the Reference Group. 	July 2010 October 2010 January 2011 March 2011
4	<p>PROJECT REPORTING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indicators will be identified as part of the individual project development process and it is proposed that these will be incorporated in existing local government reporting processes. 	

1B: ADDITIONAL REGIONAL PROJECT INFORMATION

Augmentation to the Vision for Werribee Plains Grants Program EOI Form.

Framework outcomes being addressed: Water, Energy or Natural Environment and the type of change being targeted

(The project should address only one outcome and if more than outcome is proposed to be addressed there must be a separate project for each outcome)

How does the project align with the implementation of the Framework actions?

What are the project outputs

(the outputs are to be specific and measurable works or other activities clearly linked to achieving the nominated outcomes and will provide the source of the annual indicators for reporting on the progress of the project to funders and the community)

Brief 'stand alone' project summary

APPENDIX 2

PROPOSED FRAMEWORK BIODIVERSITY ACTIONS

FOCUS	ACTION	PROPONENT / PARTNERS	TIMING
General	Formation of Werribee Plains regional environmental task group	Municipal environment officers	2010
Waterway corridors	Prepare an application for Werribee River for Caring for Our Country	Greening Australia, in conjunction with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Municipal Councils • Community groups 	Deadline for application 15 April 2010
	Investigate planning tools for protection of waterway corridors for future land use and development.	Municipal strategic planners Municipal environment officers	2010 / 2011
	Development of local connectivity pathways	<u>Existing activity</u> City of Brimbank	2010
Coastal Corridors		<u>Existing activity</u> Parks Victoria Hobson's Bay Wyndham City of Greater Geelong Melbourne Water	
Grasslands Connectivity	Grassland connectivity issues to be reviewed.	Municipal environment officers DSE	
Roadsides	Roadsides connectivity issues to be reviewed.	Municipal environment officers	

APPENDIX 3

PROPOSED FRAMEWORK WATER ACTIONS

Household Scale	Responsible Agency
Collect baseline data for the number and size of rainwater tanks installed in new and existing houses, and whether they are connected to laundry/toilet	Bureau of Meteorology/ABS
Increase financial incentives (such as rebates) for household rainwater tanks	Dept Sustainability and Environment
Bulk purchase schemes for household water saving technologies eg. dual flush toilets	Water businesses and municipalities
Precinct Scale	
Promote case studies of best practice precinct scale storm water harvesting and recycling projects to councils and developers	Dept Sustainability and Environment, Sustainability Victoria,
Develop the business case for stormwater harvesting and recycling including the economic value of social benefits such as maintenance of sporting fields, food security, reduced heat stress, and garden amenity.	Department of Sustainability and Environment, and Water businesses
Regional Scale	
Establish potable and non potable supply goals for the next 50 years based on projections for urban expansion for the municipalities in the Werribee Plains region.	Department of Sustainability and Environment, Water businesses and municipalities
Establish a regional network of local government officers working on sustainable water solutions including recycling, storm water harvesting, and water sensitive urban design. Similar to the Regional Waste Management Groups, and the Alliance for Greenhouse Action model, such a network focused on water could support information sharing on technical and planning issues, economies of scale for research and project development, as well as professional development opportunities.	Municipalities
Development of a financial incentive for water saving technology funded through water supply charges.	Essential Services Commission and Water businesses