

Roadside Weeds and Pests Program Control Plan 2023-2026

1: **Council Name:** Moorabool Shire Council

2: **Contact Details:**

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3: Regional context of noxious weed and pest animal management:

Outline the regional perspective by briefly provide a summary of noxious weed and pest animal management on council managed roadsides in your municipality.

Moorabool Shire covers 2110 square kilometres and is located on the western urban/rural fringe of the Melbourne metropolitan area, extending to the outskirts of Ballarat to the west. The Shire is characterised by its distinctive rural landscapes which comprise a diversity of ranges, plains, ancient gorges, and areas of intensive horticulture. Agriculture is the major sector in Moorabool's economy and contributes to the rural landscape setting that typifies the Shire.

The environmental assets (including the Brisbane Ranges National Park, Lerderderg State Park, Werribee Gorge State Park, Wombat State Forest, and Long Forest Nature Conservation Reserve), as well significant waterways and landscapes, contribute to the Shire's numerous places of natural and cultural heritage significance.

Moorabool Shire Council is responsible for the management of over 1,440km of local road network (Moorabool Shire Council Road Management Plan 2021-2025). Maintaining this road network and its associated roadside vegetation is a significant task, requiring dedicated project management, site monitoring and significant annual financial investment. Moorabool is dedicated to managing weed infestations on council managed land and committed to the early prevention and control of weed species newly identified in the area. Undertaking weed control activities is an important part of Council's role as a land steward, and a major investment in protecting the Shire's significant agricultural and environmental assets.

For many years, Moorabool Shire has implemented programs to limit the spread and reduce infestations of declared weeds and established pest animals, through both past Federal and State Government funding initiatives. This RWPP Control Plan is the continuation of Council's commitment to effective weed control. It will provide a 3-year action plan for ongoing weed control activities throughout Moorabool Shires road network. It also presents a range of opportunities to improve the efficiency of Council's roadside maintenances in order to achieve effective control of some of the Shire's most damaging weed and pest animal species.

4: Community Consultation:

Briefly describe how council stays informed of community priorities for weed and rabbit management. Examples may include public meetings, feedback/comment via council website, meetings with relevant groups, recording of correspondence.

It is expected that prior to drafting the plan, council will have notified the community that a plan is to be prepared and views are invited on what the plan should address. Views from the community should be considered.

Moorabool Shire Council's 3-year RWPP Control Plan is based on, and an extension of, previous Roadside Action Plans. At the inception of these plans, significant stakeholder engagement was undertaken to determine a list of priority species and actions. This feedback led into the development of the initial control programs for roadside gorse, serrated tussock and rabbits; species which remain the major targets of this current plan.

In the development of the Moorabool Shire Council's RWPP Control Plan, further stakeholder engagement was undertaken with stakeholders via the Moorabool Environment and Sustainability Advisory Committee (MESAC). Further discussions were also held with the facilitators of Moorabool's Landcare groups/network. Engagement with these stakeholders included reviewing data related to the success/failures of previous programs and discussions regarding potential alterations to the plan.

It is important that the actions undertaken from this plan are transparent and accessible for the public, in line with the appropriate use of public funds. Therefore, alongside this plan beginning in 2024/2025 financial year, an annual report listing the roadsides treated and the total length of works achieved in the previous financial year will be generated and made available on the council website.

5: Stakeholder Consultation:

List key stakeholders who have been consulted in the development of this plan.

- Moorabool Landcare Network
- Moorabool Environment and Sustainability Advisory Committee (MESAC)
- Individual Landcare Groups
- Landholders
- Council staff and Councillors

6: Relevant Policies, Strategies and Submissions:

List policies, strategies, and submissions relevant to this plan (State, regional, and local).

- Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994 (CaLP Act)
- Catchment and Land Protection Regulations 2012 (CaLP Regulations)
- Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006
- Biological Control Act 1986
- Agricultural and Veterinary Chemicals Code Act 1994
- Agricultural and Veterinary Chemicals (Control of Use) Regulations 2007
- Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978
- Dangerous Goods Act 1985
- Conservation, Forests and Lands Act 1987
- Environment Protection Act 2017
- Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988
- Road Management Act 2004
- Road Safety Act 1986
- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004
- Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act)
- Relevant Codes of Practice
- Moorabool Shire Council Road Management Plan 2021-2025
- Moorabool Shire Council Sustainable Environment Strategy 2016-2026

7: Objectives of the Plan:

Provide a general overview of council's objectives, activities, outputs and expected outcomes, ensuring that investment of RWPP funds will be aligned to:

- *treating 'regionally prohibited weeds' on municipal rural roadsides;*
- *controlling and preventing the spread of 'regionally controlled weeds' and the control of rabbits on municipal rural roadsides that align with DJPR compliance project areas and/or support community-led weed and pest control activities;*
- *follow-up treatment works for projects funded in councils' previous roadside weeds and pests control plans;*
- *control activities for 'regionally controlled weeds' and rabbits on municipal rural roadsides that support other investment for integrated landscape protection projects or address community concerns.*
- *control activities for 'restricted weeds' on municipal rural roadsides where there has been demonstrated widespread community concern;*
- *undertaking planning, mapping, and community consultation for the control of 'regionally prohibited weeds', 'regionally controlled weeds' and 'restricted weeds'*

Moorabool Shire Council's RWPP Control Plan aims to undertake effective and proactive management of invasive species on Council managed roadsides across the Shire in order to protect environmental, agricultural and community values. To achieve this goal, investment of funds will be prioritised towards:

- Treatment for the eradication of 'Regionally Prohibited' weed infestations (i.e., caltrop, khaki weed)
- Treatment for the containment or reduction in area of infestations of 'Regionally Controlled' weeds and control of rabbits on roadsides within Moorabool Shire – aligned to Agriculture Victoria (i.e., serrated tussock, gorse, blackberry)
- Support the integration of an 'Emerging Weeds' program (i.e., Spanish heath)
- Supporting the coordination of investment in weed and pest control projects by the local community and other key stakeholders
- Contributing to other previous investment and follow-up treatment in the control of 'Regionally Controlled' and 'Regionally Prohibited' pest plants and animals
- Protect identified assets such as the Brisbane Ranges National Park, Werribee Gorge State Park, Lerderderg State Park, Wombat State Park, Long Forest Conservation Reserve, Lal Lal Falls Reserve, and significant roadside vegetation under threat from weed invasion on Council owned and managed roadsides.
- Addressing control measures for declared restricted weeds on roadsides causing concern to the Shire's community (i.e., Chilean Needle Grass and Bridal Creeper)
- Maintaining up to date records of the location and spread of 'Regionally Prohibited', 'Regionally Controlled' and 'Restricted' weeds on roadsides within Moorabool Shire via community consultation and mapping

8: Term of the Plan:

Provide the timeframe for the plan.

The plan will run for a maximum three year period to 30 June 2026.

9: Full time equivalent (FTE) resourcing:

Provide an estimate of the full time equivalent (FTE) number of staff and contractors who will be working on achieving control plan outcomes. Include both office and field based staff and contractors.

MSC Staff: 1 FTE

Contractors: unknown

10: Target Species:

List the species that will be targeted during the duration of this control plan; e.g.

Serrated tussock
programs

Nassella trichotoma

Regionally Prohibited Weed

1

To support Agriculture Victoria compliance

Common Name	Scientific Name	CaLP Act Classification	Priority Rating 1 highest - 4 lowest	Reason for Management
Serrated Tussock	<i>Nassella trichotoma</i>	Regionally Controlled Weed	1	Containment
Rabbit	<i>Oryctolagus cuniculus</i>	Established Pest Animal	1	Reduction of rabbit harbour plant species (i.e., blackberry) on roadsides to reduce rabbit population
Gorse/Furze	<i>Ulex europaeus</i>	Regionally Controlled Weed	2	Reduction of existing infestations with ongoing control at low densities
Caltrop	<i>Tribulus terrestris</i>	Regionally Prohibited Weed	2	Eradication
Khaki Weed	<i>Alternanthera pungens</i>	Regionally Prohibited Weed	2	Eradication
Blackberry	<i>Rubus fruticosus</i>	Regionally Controlled Weed	3	Reduction of existing infestations with ongoing control at low densities

Spanish Heath	<i>Erica lusitanica</i>	Environmental Weed	4	Minimise the establishment of emerging weeds
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11: Control Measures and Target Roadsides:

List the control measures and target roadsides; eg.

Serrated tussock **Spot spray application of a registered herbicide in accordance with the product label** **Smith Road, Smithville** **5km** **Feb – Oct**

Common Name	Control Measures	Location of Proposed Works	Estimated Length of Roadside to be Treated Annually	Approximate Annual Timing of Treatment
	To be based on accepted best practice management of the target species	Location of proposed works should be specified, and a map where possible should accompany the plan	Km = length of road along which both sides are treated. Where only one side is treated halve the figure	
Serrated Tussock	Spot spray application of a registered herbicide in accordance with the product label	See attached map	384km	Apr-June & Sept-Oct
Rabbit	Harbour removal Warren destruction Warren fumigation	See attached map	Determined annually	Jan-June Feb-April April
Gorse/Furze	Spot spray application of a registered herbicide in	See attached maps	115km	October – March

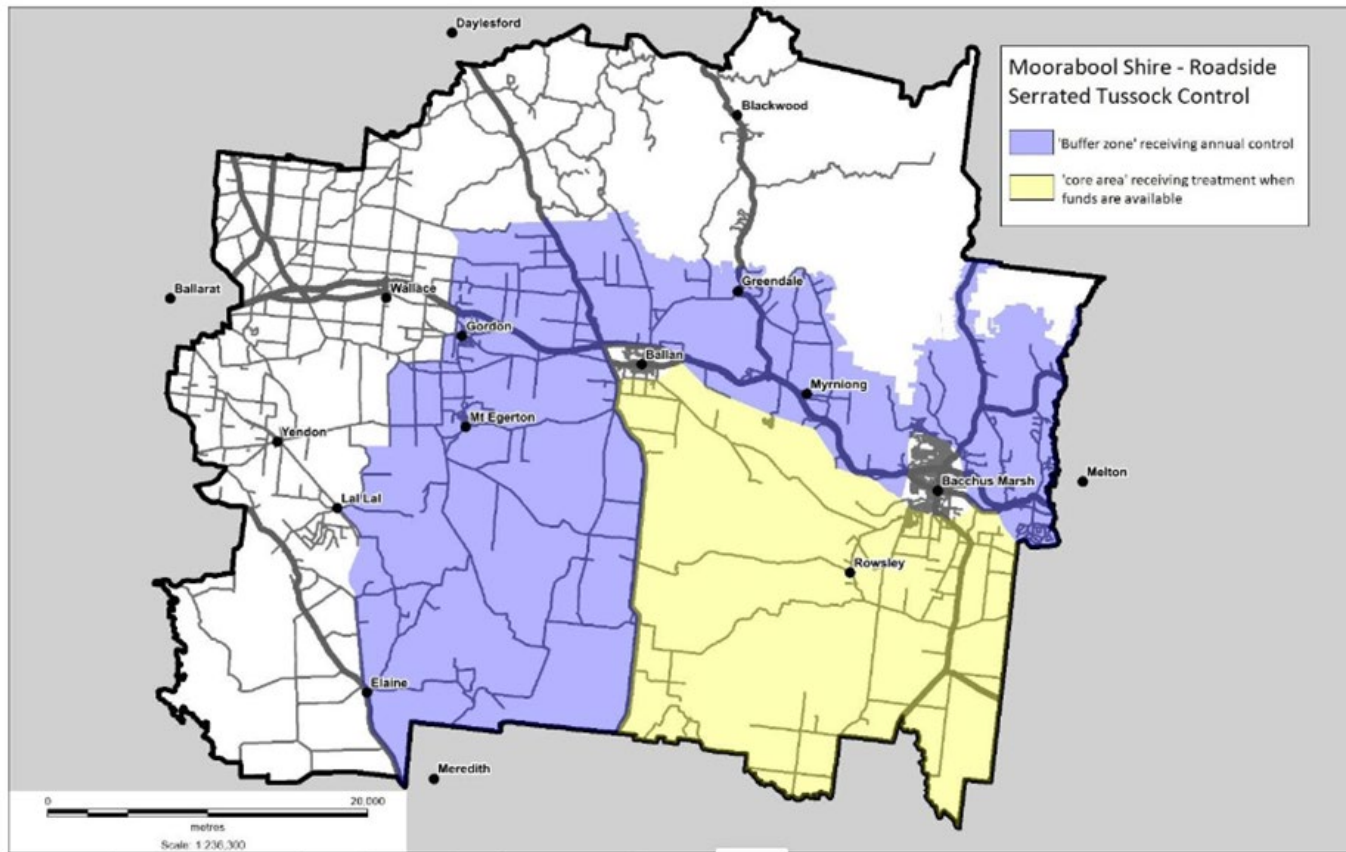
	accordance with the product label			
Caltrop	Spot spray application of a registered herbicide on maintenance runs	See attached map	10km x 5 annual treatments	December-March
Khaki Weed	Spot spray application of a registered herbicide on maintenance runs	See attached map	10km x 5 annual treatment	Oct-March
Blackberry	Herbicide application Mechanical removal	See attached map	Determined annually	December-March March-May

12: Maps:

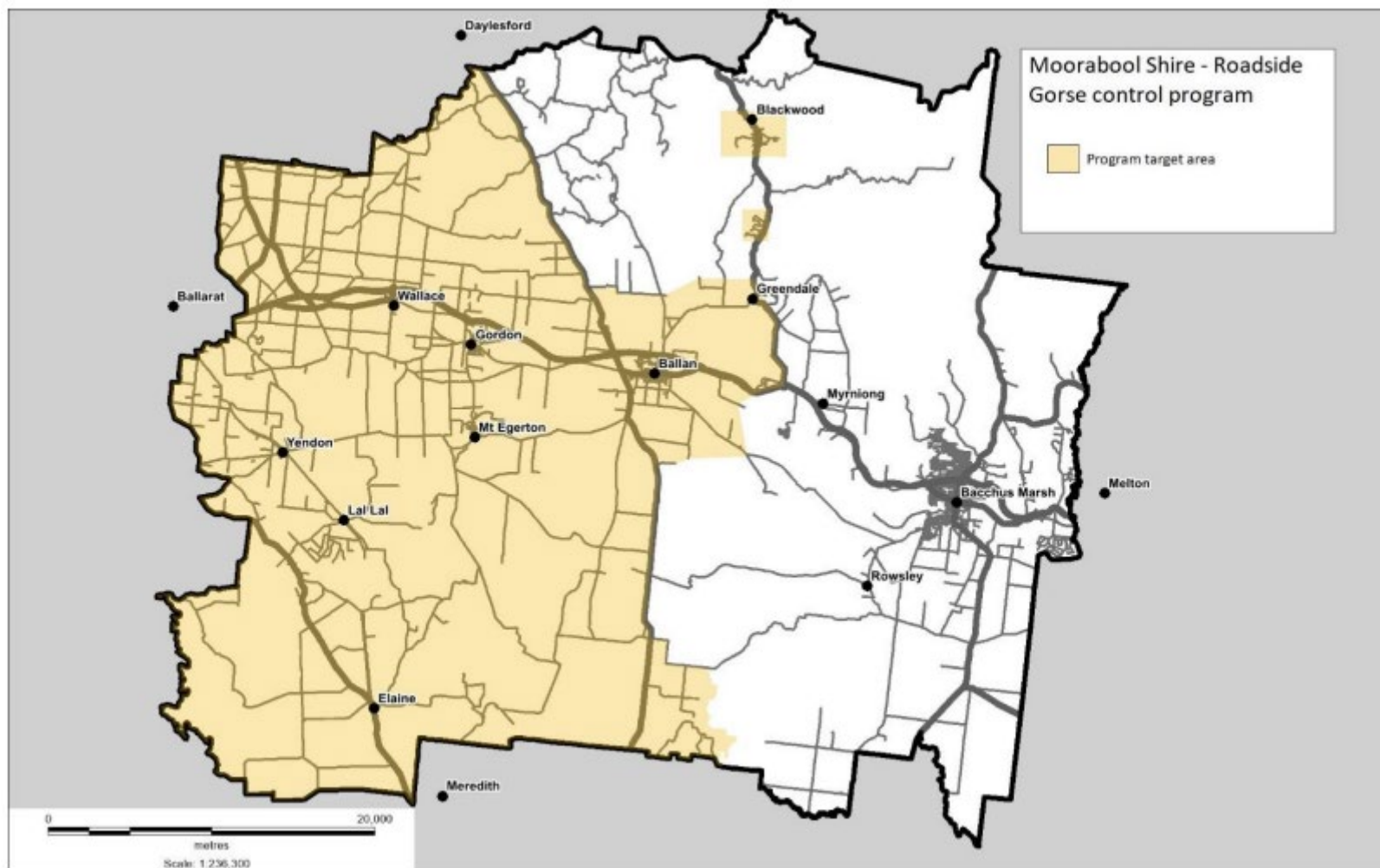
Provide the following maps to support the control plan information:

- ***Map 1 Proposed location of control works.***
- ***Map 2 Known infestations of Regionally Prohibited Weeds, Regionally Controlled Weeds, established pest animals and Restricted Weeds.***

Serrated Tussock Infestations – Map 1

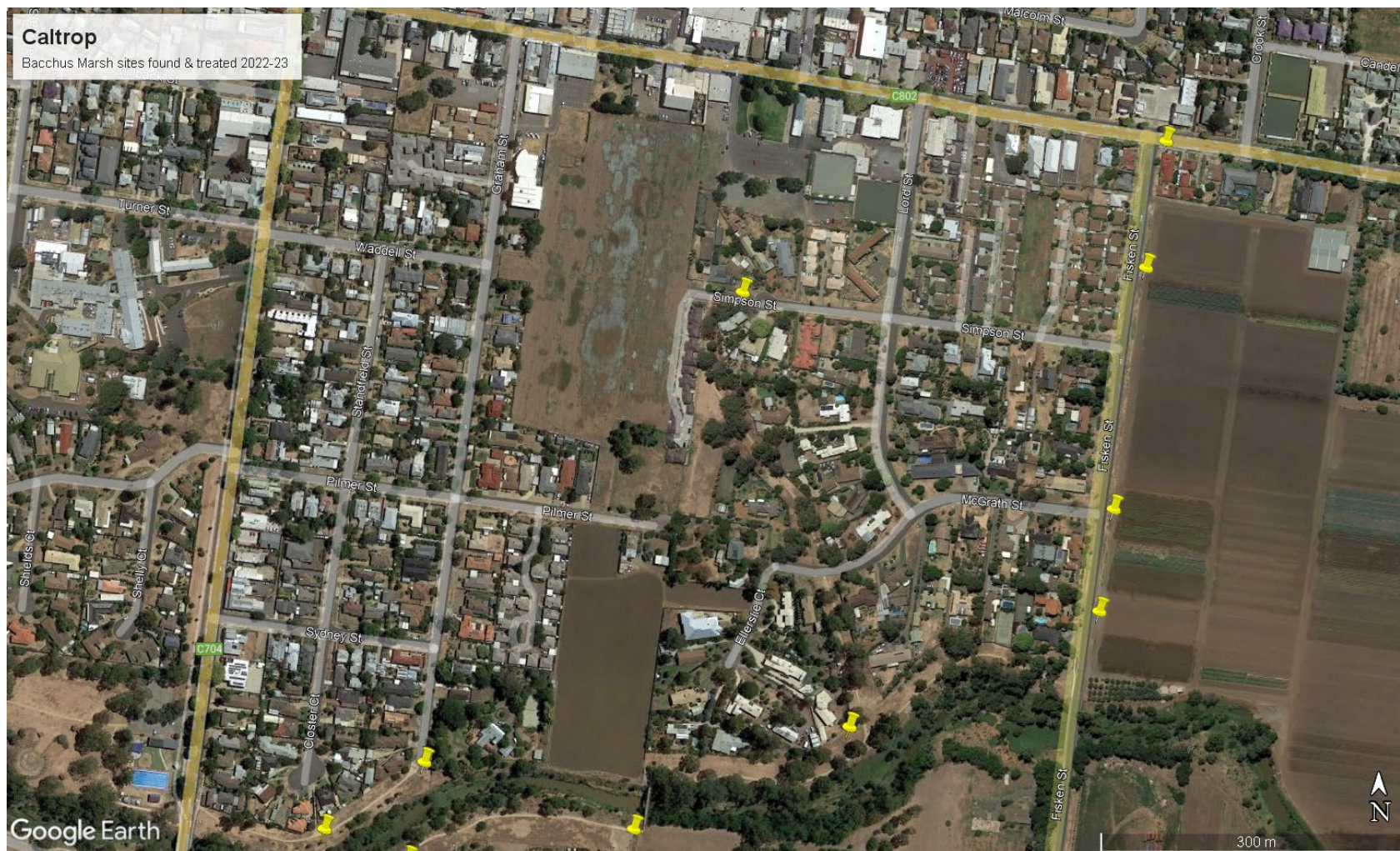


Gorse Infestations – Map 1



Caltrop Infestations – Map 1

Bacchus Marsh



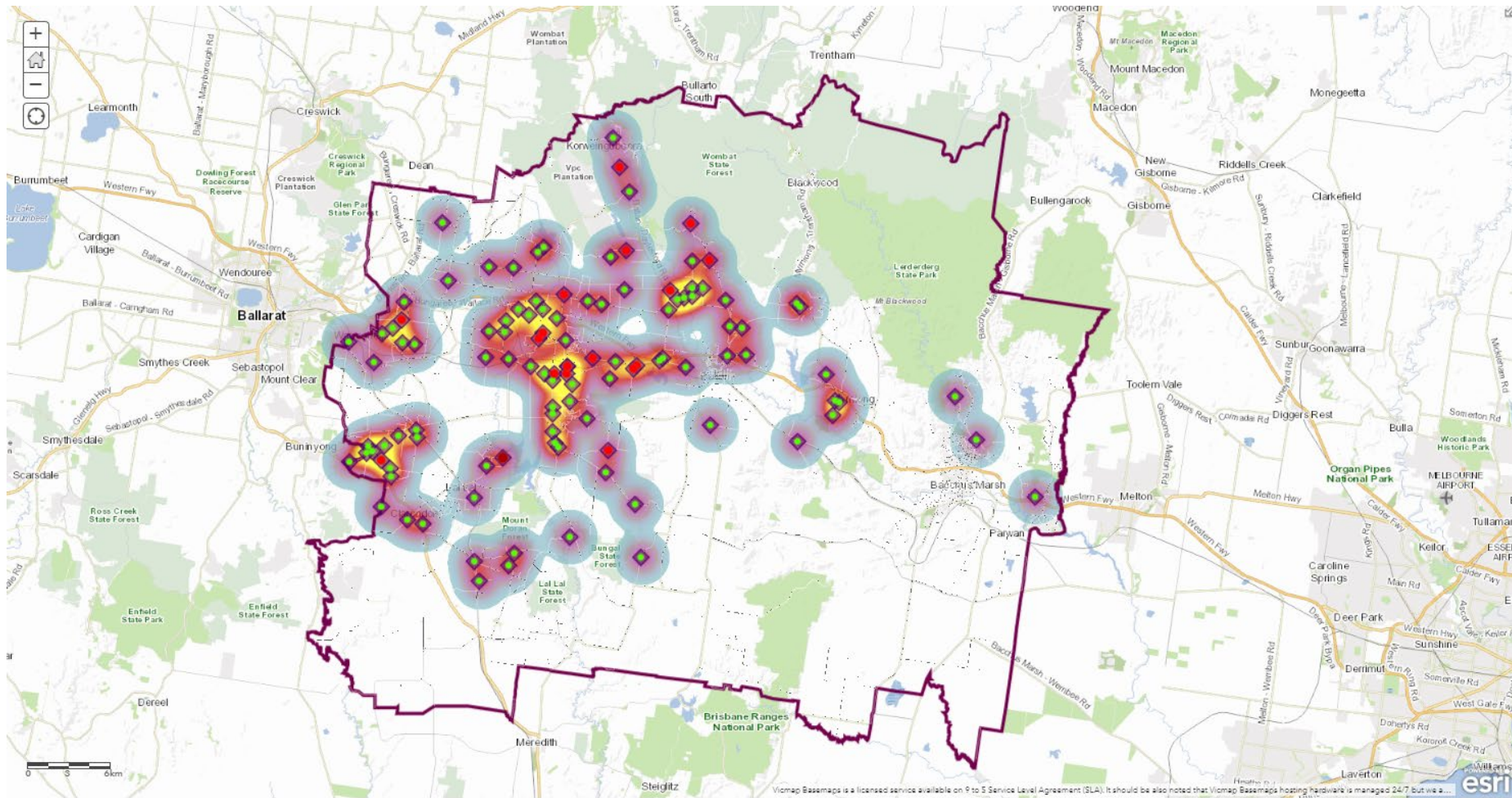
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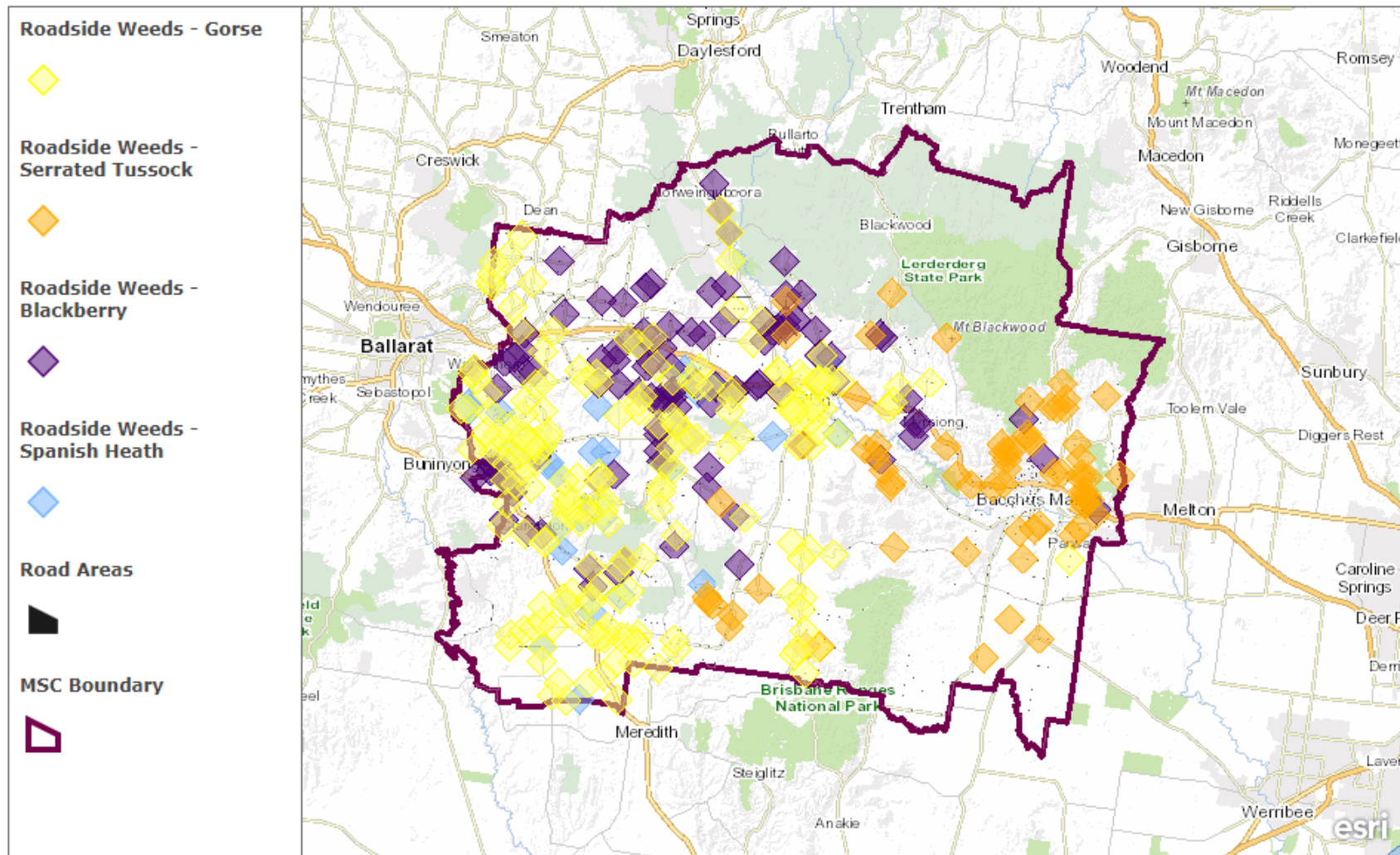
Khaki Weed Infestations – Map 1



Blackberry Infestations – Map 1



Map 2: Known infestations of Regionally Prohibited Weeds, Regionally Controlled Weeds, established pest animals and Restricted Weeds



13: Declarations:

Council will:

- Publish this approved plan (or approved variation to this plan if relevant) on its website within 28 days of approval and ensure copies are available for public inspection at Council's office(s). Any personal information contained in the control plan should be redacted prior to publishing. The signatures on the approved control plan may also be redacted prior to publishing.
- Coordinate the implementation of this plan on council managed roadsides in accordance with the investment principles stated in this plan and the control measures specified.
- Implement best practice weed hygiene principles and protocols.
- Maintain accurate records sufficient to provide evidence that the plan has been carried out and provide these on request.
- Obtain approval from Agriculture Victoria before substantially modifying or varying the plan.
- Carefully consider any proposals from Agriculture Victoria to modify or vary the plan in response to changed circumstances.

Council Declaration

I declare that I am an authorised representative and the information given on this form is complete and correct

Key Council Contact Name: Caroline Rantall

Date: 30/11/2023

Signature:



Council CEO Name: Derek Madden

Date: 15 December 2023

Signature:



Agriculture Victoria Endorsement

I declare that I am an authorised representative and that this plan has been reviewed and aligns with eligible activities.

Agriculture Victoria Regional Biosecurity Manager – Plants, Chemicals and Invasives

Name: Dallas GOODING

Date: 28/12/2023

Signature: 