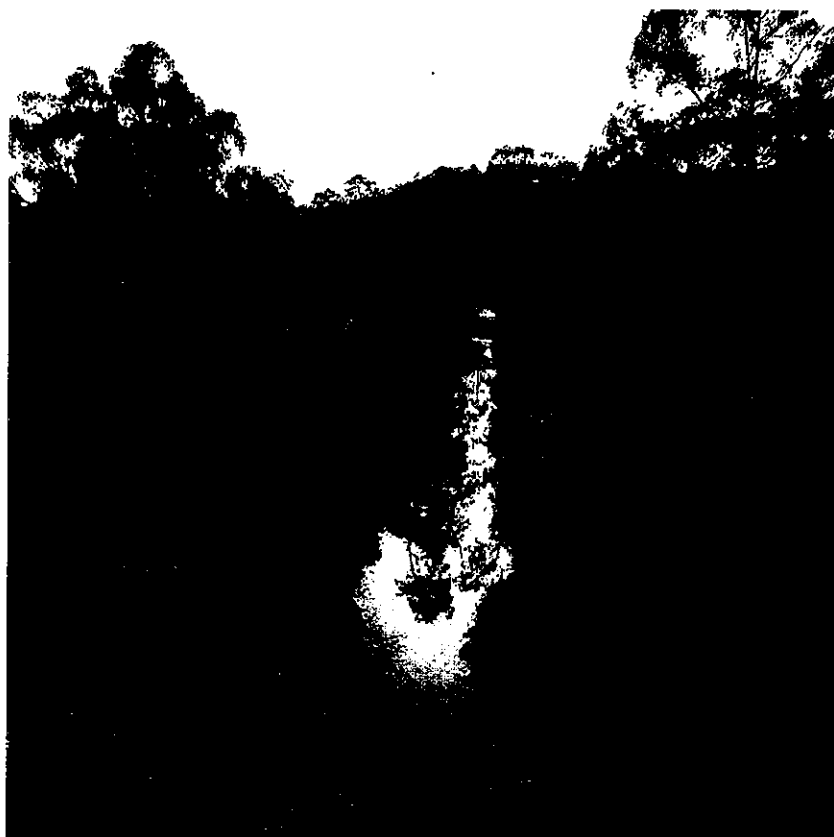




MELBOURNE
Parks & Waterways

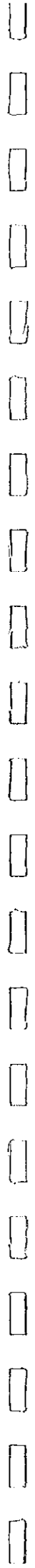
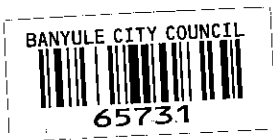
LOWER PLENTY RIVER CONCEPT PLAN

OCTOBER 1994



MAROONDAH PIPE TRACK
TO YARRA RIVER

PRESCRIPTION DOCUMENT



FOREWORD

This is the final concept plan for the Lower Plenty River.

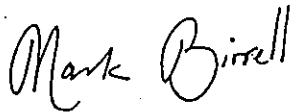
The Lower Plenty River valley spans the area between two of Melbourne's major parklands — the Yarra Valley Parklands and the proposed Plenty Gorge Parklands.

In line with the goals of the Melbourne Parks and Waterways Program, the Lower Plenty River Concept Plan builds on the existing open space, parks and waterway by connecting and expanding the present network of pathways and trails, and developing flora and stream rehabilitation initiatives to create an enhanced 'green corridor'. Not only will this benefit the many and diverse users of the valley, but in time it will lead to an improvement in the river environment.

Historically, management of the Lower Plenty River valley has been left to the individual efforts of councils, Melbourne Water and other public and private land owners. This concept plan sets out a broader co-ordinated planning and management approach. A key facet of this approach has been the development of a 'vision' for the future of the valley, and directions concerning the management and use of the valley to achieve this vision.

I would like to thank members of the local community for their input to date, Melbourne Parks and Waterways staff for their role of co-ordinating the development of the concept plan, the local councils of Eltham, Heidelberg and Diamond Valley, and other contributors.

A co-operative partnership is needed to successfully implement the concept plan, and to respond to the key directions and strategies. I urge you to read the plan and become involved in the enhancement of this important river valley.



Mark Birrell
Minister for Conservation and Environment

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This concept plan has been prepared by a project team within the Planning and Environment Division of Melbourne Parks and Waterways. This team comprised Brett Cheatley, Malcolm Warren and Ian Womersley.

The project was overseen by a steering committee made up of representatives from the agencies involved:

Richard Allen, Gary Bartlett, Elizabeth Jacka	Shire of Eltham
Andrew Widdicombe	Shire of Diamond Valley
David Thomas, Andrew Lacey, Rachel Naylor	City of Heidelberg
Nick Ronan, Gordon Davies	Melbourne Water - Yarra Region
Greg Ryan	Community representative
Brian Waters	Environment Protection Authority
Alan Webster	Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
Anne Batson, Noel Eltringham	Department of Planning and Development

After the exhibition of the draft concept plan, Andrew Widdicombe (now of Melbourne Parks and Waterways), co-ordinated the statutory approval process of the plan. Bernard Collins assisted with the editing of the final document.

The assistance of members of the committee and many other individuals and organisations involved in the preparation of this concept plan is gratefully acknowledged.

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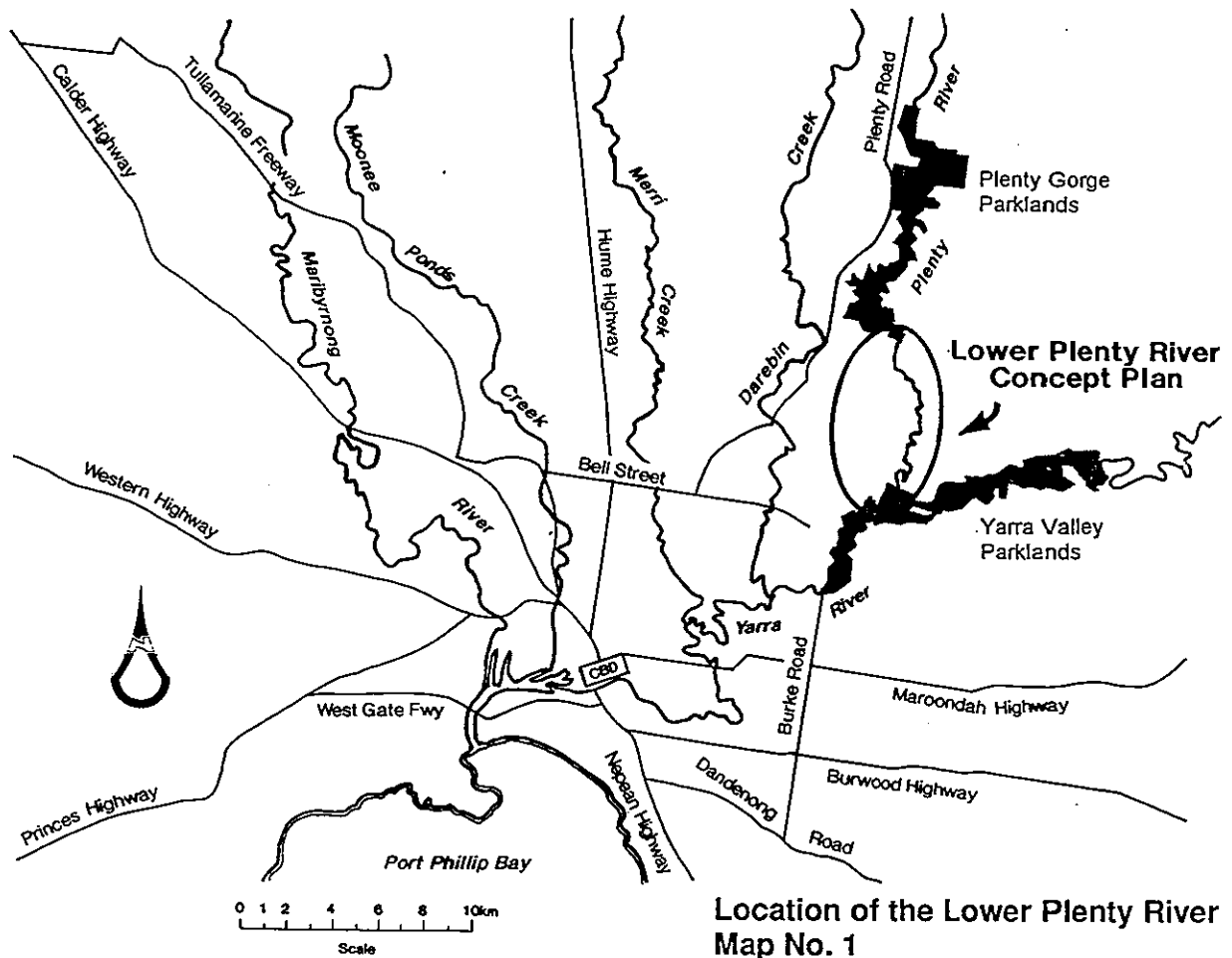
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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE LOWER PLENTY

- The Plenty River is a major tributary of the Yarra River, draining a basin of some 399 square kilometres to the north of Melbourne. The lower reaches of the basin at Greensborough are extensively urbanised with some industrial development.
- Once described by surveyor Joseph Gellibrand early last century as 'the only stream except the River Barwon deserving the name of river', and by John Batman as 'a beautiful stream', the Plenty has undergone dramatic changes in flow, water quality and vegetation cover due to settlement.
- The Plenty River is part of the territory of the Wurundjeri tribe of Aborigines and retains many elements of cultural significance. European historical features are also scattered through the study area.
- The Lower Plenty forms an important open space linkage both as a flora and fauna corridor and user connection between two of Melbourne's largest parks — the Yarra Valley Parklands and the proposed Plenty Gorge Parklands (see map below). This plan supports the State Government's Melbourne Parks and Waterways Program which emphasises a linked system of linear parklands and recreational paths for pedestrians and cyclists and the protection and enhancement of indigenous flora and fauna, and scenic and cultural features.



1.2 STUDY BACKGROUND

- The concept plan was initiated as part of *Melbourne's Waterways Program* which was aimed at rejuvenating and improving Melbourne's waterways. The plan was completed under the Melbourne Parks and Waterways Program.
- The study was co-ordinated by Melbourne Water in association with a steering committee comprising representatives from the then Department of Planning and Housing, the then Department of Conservation and Environment, Environment Protection Authority, City of Heidelberg, the Shires of Eltham and Diamond Valley, and the community.
- Public input was actively sought through the release in February 1991 of a draft **Resource and Issues** document which summarised the findings of several studies including a visual analysis, vegetation report and archaeological survey. A comprehensive survey of local residents was also conducted.
- In July 1992 a draft concept plan was released for public exhibition. The plan outlined in detail the proposals for the management and protection of the Lower Plenty River area. Three associated Planning Scheme Amendments were also exhibited which proposed to introduce:-
 - various rezonings to privately-owned land and Public Open Space Reservations to complement the aims and strategies of the concept plan; and
 - two overlay controls over the majority of the study area to allow for the management of the Floodway Area and the protection of the Streamside Environment.
- In July 1993 an independent panel heard submissions on the proposed planning scheme Amendments and submitted its report and recommendations one month later. The panel recommended that minor adjustments be made to the concept plan and Amendments as suggested by Melbourne Parks and Waterways. The final draft was approved by the Board of Melbourne Water in September 1993.

1.3 THE CONCEPT PLAN VISION AND STRUCTURE

A concept plan describes broadly how an area is to be planned, developed and managed to meet recreation and landscape objectives, and to protect natural resources and cultural heritage.

The vision developed in this concept plan is:

- To provide an enhanced linear parkland and nature corridor linkage between the Yarra Valley Park and proposed Plenty Gorge Parklands based on the need to:
 - protect and enhance the valley's natural and cultural assets;
 - provide for increased community use and enjoyment;
 - create improved pedestrian and cyclist movement through the corridor, and access to the river; and
 - provide an enhanced flora and fauna corridor.

The concept plan consists of two separate documents:

- The **Prescription Document** details the directions and specific prescriptions for development and management, including the agencies responsible for undertaking works and approving subsequent actions.
- The **Resource Document** of five chapters, outlines the background of the plan, identifying the important resource value of the area, issues and community perceptions.

1.4 KEY DIRECTIONS AND STRATEGIES

Conservation of resources

- Rehabilitate and conserve indigenous flora and fauna involving removal of invasive weeds and replanting of indigenous species, and programs to increase indigenous fauna populations.
- Enhance the immediate river environment involving removal of willow trees from the bed and banks, litter removal and control, and programs to improve water quality and flow.
- Ensure programs do not prejudice sound drainage principles and flood management.
- Introduce strategies to protect and enhance scenic and cultural values.

Visitor demand and use

- Provide a continuous linear trail system along the entire length of the Lower Plenty River involving new and upgraded paths and river crossings, to improve pedestrian and cyclist movement and access.
- Develop greater opportunities for community use and enjoyment of the Lower Plenty River and adjoining open space, involving the creation of informal recreational opportunities in a variety of settings, and continuation of active recreation opportunities on established public and private facilities.

Land utilisation and control

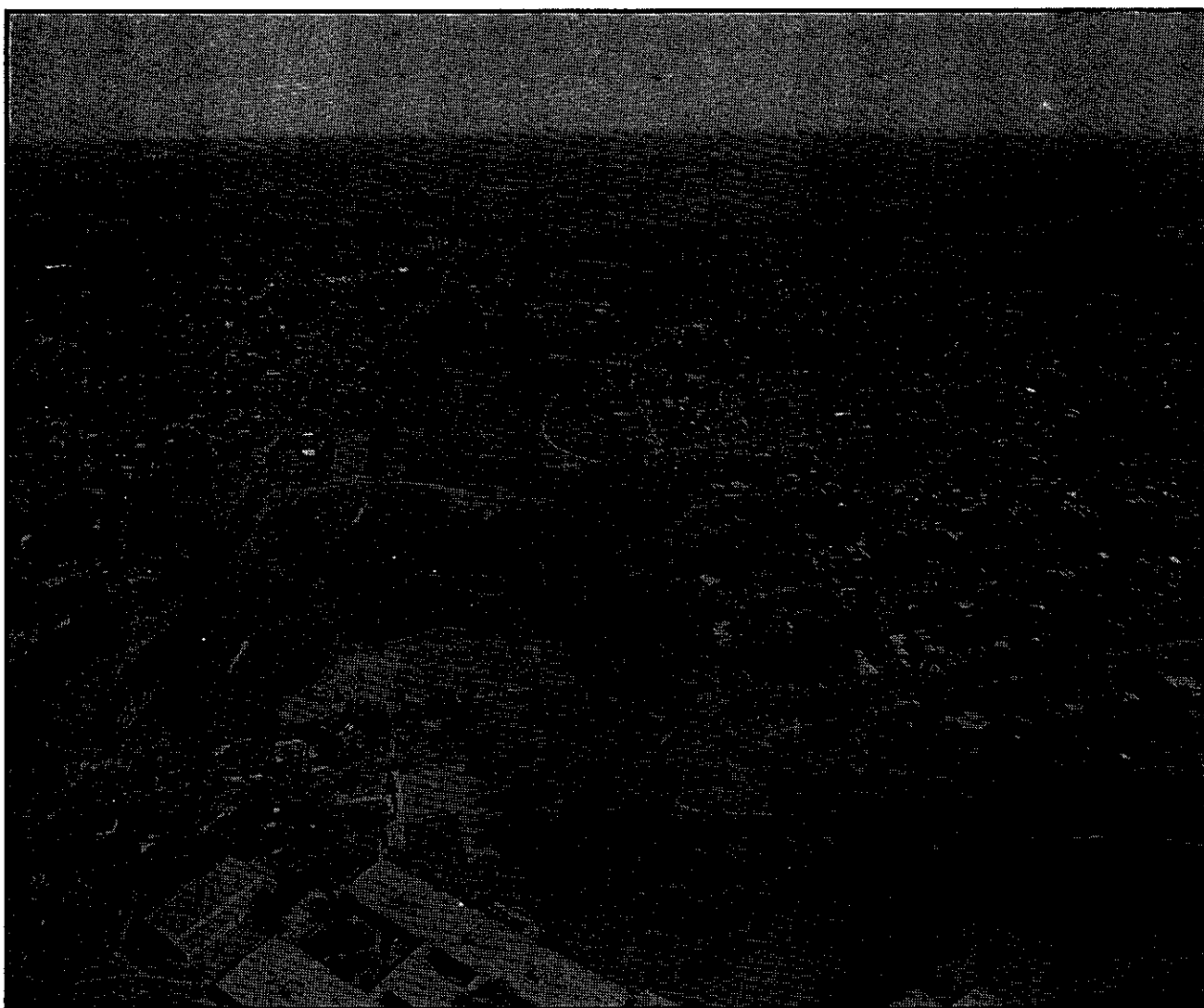
- Establish a program of priority land purchases and rezoning to create a continuous open space reservation extending along the river from the Yarra Valley Parklands to the proposed Plenty Gorge Parklands.
- Introduce overlay planning controls to protect and enhance the valley's indigenous flora as well as important scenic values.
- Ensure the protection of the valley's land and amenity by educating the public regarding State Environment Protection Policies that cover air and water quality and noise.

Management

- Establish a Lower Plenty River Co-ordinating Committee to initiate and implement the management prescriptions and key strategies outlined in the concept plan.

1.5 IMPLEMENTATION, PRIORITIES AND MONITORING

- This concept plan is binding on local and State Government departments and private landowners within the plan area.
- Successful implementation of the plan will require:
 - the establishment of a Lower Plenty River Co-ordinating Committee;
 - an understanding of and commitment to the concept plan strategies and prescriptions from all responsible authorities; and
 - a strategically-phased approach to works and funding.
- Priorities for works must be consistent with the key directions referred to above.
- Monitoring of the concept plan will require regular review of operational performance in relation to the concept plan objectives.



**Aerial view of the Lower Plenty River -
Montmorency Secondary College and Montmorency Park in the foreground**

2 INTRODUCTION

This introduction presents the context of the Lower Plenty River Concept Plan, its objectives and processes involved in its formulation.

The Lower Plenty River Concept Plan was initiated under the Melbourne Waterways Program and is now being released as part of the Melbourne Parks and Waterways program.

2.1 MELBOURNE'S WATERWAYS PROGRAM

Rejuvenating and improving Melbourne's waterways is a key objective of the previous government's State Conservation Strategy. Melbourne's Waterways Program, co-ordinated by the Board of Works (now Melbourne Water) and the then Department of Planning and Housing was designed to achieve this objective. The program was initiated in November 1988 with the release of a pamphlet entitled *Reviving our Waterways*. This pamphlet outlined that as a necessary first step, the waterways program would focus on the development of a concept plan for each waterway.

A concept plan provides an agreed strategic framework for the future development and use of the urban waterway and environs so that natural and cultural resources are protected. A concept plan describes how an area can be planned and managed to develop recreational and aesthetic potentials without degrading inherent natural and cultural resources. A concept plan provides a statutory basis for future development work. The plan also develops prescriptions for implementation and, together with planning controls, forms a guide for the management of the river and its environs.

Concept planning for all of Melbourne's waterways is now well advanced. The following plans have been completed:

- Lower Yarra River Concept Plan (Spencer Street to Punt Road) (MMBW 1981)
- Upper Yarra River Management Strategy (UYVDRA 1984)
- Lower Yarra River Concept Plan (Punt Road to Dight's Falls) (MPE 1986).
- Lower Maribyrnong River Concept Plan (MPE 1986)
- Upper Maribyrnong River Concept Plan (Railway Trestle Bridge to Organ Pipes National Park), (MW)
- Middle Yarra Concept Plan (Dight's Falls to Burke Road) (MPE 1990)
- Middle Yarra Concept Plan (Burke Road to Watsons Creek), (OOE 1993)

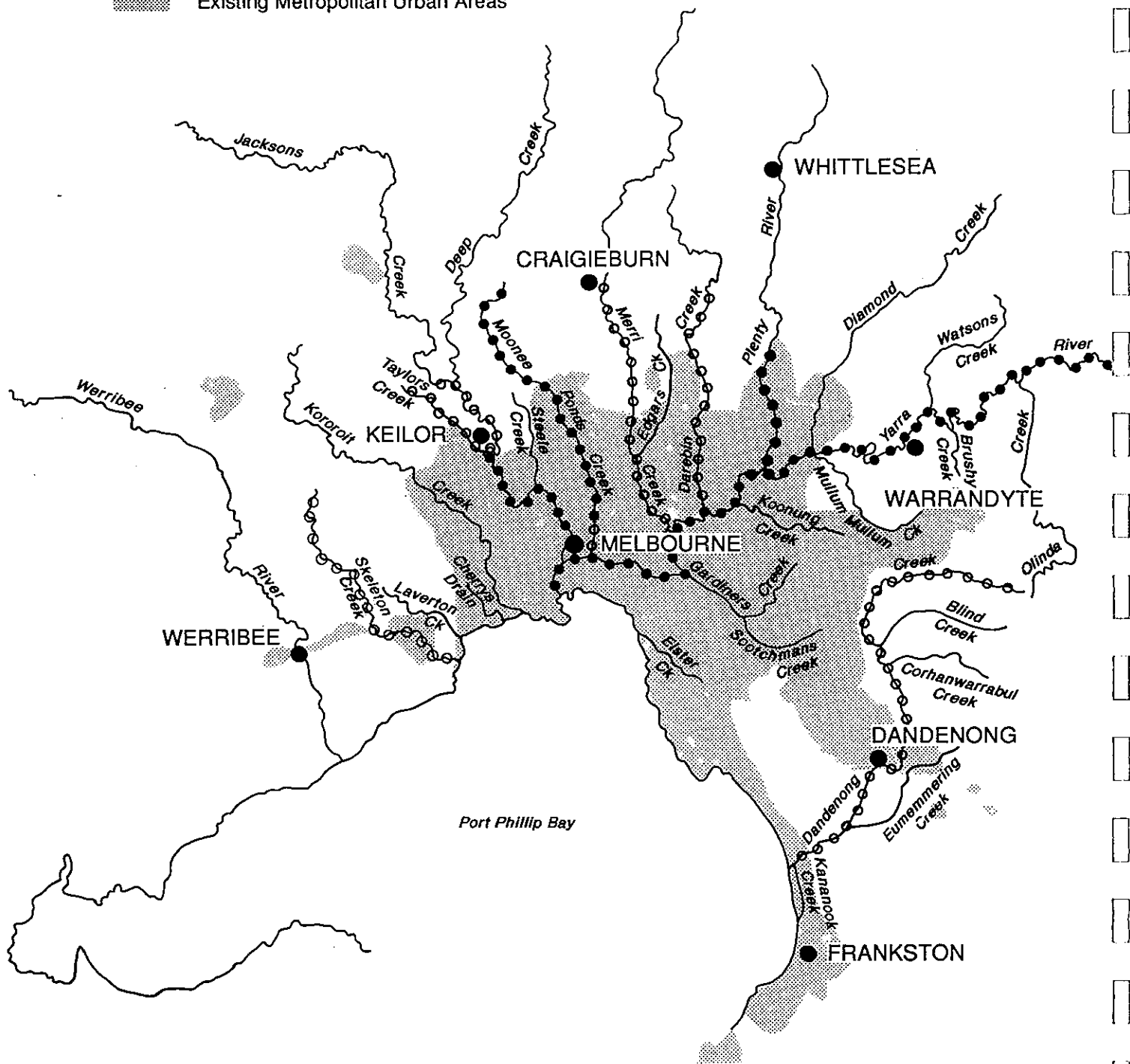
The concept planning process is progressively being extended to tributaries of the Yarra River and other waterways (refer to Map 2).

2.2 MELBOURNE PARKS AND WATERWAYS PROGRAM

The Melbourne Parks and Waterways Program, which was released in January 1993, refined the philosophies of the previous State Government's Open Space 2000 Program by:

- integrating the activities of the various authorities responsible for open space management;
- ensuring that there is a more equitable distribution of funds for regionally-significant open space within the metropolitan area;

- ● ● Concept plans completed
- ○ ○ Concept plans in progress
- Existing Metropolitan Urban Areas



0 5 10 15 20km

Scale

WATERWAY CONCEPT PLANS

Map No. 2

- reinforcing the high profile given to the role of community participation in planning, implementation and management of open space; and
- creating a new enterprise within Melbourne Water called Melbourne Parks and Waterways to link directly the strategic planning of the metropolitan open space network to the major funding source for its improvement.

The program recognises the intrinsic values of waterways and emphasises their critical role in linking important components of Melbourne's open space network. A key feature of the program is the aim to facilitate effective co-ordination and implementation of strategies for the protection, conservation, enhancement, usage and management of these waterways and the adjoining stream frontages. These green corridors play an important part in flora and fauna habitat conservation and protection, off-road pedestrian and bicycle access, passive and active recreation, the protection of notable landscape, cultural and heritage features, education and interpretation.

The program identifies the need to redress existing problems resulting from poor management and/or development practices, to gain a better understanding of the community's needs and expectations and to develop appropriate delivery of community education and activity programs. It also sets the framework for the funding of open space planning, the provision of facilities and infrastructure and also for the acquisition of land and/or management rights. This will be achieved through Regional Open Space Plans which are currently being prepared for each region of the Greater Melbourne Area. These plans will identify existing open space in each region and suggest possible extra links and form the basis for funding of the development of Melbourne's open space system under the Parks and Waterways Program.

2.3 LEGISLATION AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

The Lower Plenty River Concept Plan is being prepared within a broad policy context that complements a number of Government policy initiatives. Prior to 1985, concept plans were proclaimed under the *Yarra Development Act 1981*. From July 1985 most of the provisions of the *Yarra Development Act 1981* were transferred to the *Town and Country Planning Act* and the 30m boundaries of the *Yarra Development Act 1981* were abolished. This meant that a concept plan could be prepared for any area adjoining the Yarra or Maribyrnong Rivers. In February 1988, the *Town and Country Planning Act* was repealed and the *Planning and Environment Act* came into operation. The Act had been assented to on May 27, 1987. There is no reference to concept plans in the Act, but it gives the Minister for Planning the power to prepare plans, including concept plans for waterways.

The Waterways Program which outlines a program for the development of concept plans for all of Melbourne's waterways, was announced by the Victorian Government in November 1988.

There are a number of Victorian Government statutes, policies and initiatives aside from the 'Waterways Program' and *Open Space 2000* program into which this concept plan dovetails. These include:

- State Conservation Strategy.
- Economic Strategy.
- Social Justice Strategy.
- *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act*.
- *Litter Act*.
- *Environment Protection Act*.
- State Environment Protection Policies — SEPPs (Waters of Victoria, Waters of the Yarra River and Tributaries, The Air, Environment and Control of Noise).

The concept plan has been prepared within this broad policy context. Some of these policies act as general guidelines while others, such as SEPPs, set standards which are mandatory in terms of compliance and implementation.

Overall, these Government policies emphasise the great importance placed on Melbourne's waterways by the people of Victoria, and the importance of preserving and enhancing the natural and cultural resources associated with these waterways.

2.4 LOWER PLENTY CONCEPT PLAN STUDY AREA

This concept plan encompasses the Lower Plenty River and its environs from the Maroondah Pipetrack in Greensborough in the north to the Plenty's confluence with the Yarra River in the south. The concept plan area is situated within the Shires of Eltham and Diamond Valley and the City of Heidelberg.

In a regional context, the study area forms an important link between major open space areas associated with the Yarra Valley Parklands and the proposed Plenty Gorge Parklands. The study area acts as a wildlife corridor and an important local open space recreational resource.

The study area boundary has been drawn to incorporate all public land and privately-owned properties with a river frontage, most of which are reserved as proposed Public Open Space, land zoned Special Use 1 or Secondary School, and a strip of the residential, industrial and business areas adjoining the zones which immediately relate to uses along the river (refer to Map 3).

The study area for the Lower Plenty River Concept Plan overlaps with the *Middle Yarra (Stage 2) Concept Plan* study area south of Martins Lane-Rosehill Road. Management areas and the principles of overlay controls remain consistent for the two plans.

Much of the land in the study area is owned and managed by public authorities, and includes land managed by Melbourne Water and parklands/reserves managed by municipalities. The privately-owned Rosanna and Heidelberg Golf Courses are also significant land holdings.

To protect the visual and natural amenity of the Lower Plenty River and its surrounding 'viewshed', complementary planning controls have been included within the concept plan. This 'viewshed' extends beyond the boundary of the study area and includes land extending into residential areas of the three municipalities.

Planning controls associated with the concept plan are restricted to the municipalities of Eltham, Diamond Valley and Heidelberg. Due to the overlap between the Lower Plenty and Middle Yarra concept plan study areas, planning controls established for the Lower Plenty will not include those areas already covered by the Middle Yarra controls.

2.6 THE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE PLAN

The aims of the Lower Plenty River Concept Plan are:

- To set out a program of prescribed actions for the future development and management of the Lower Plenty River and its adjacent open space in order to protect and enhance the valley's natural and cultural assets while providing for community use and enjoyment; and
- To produce a usable and accessible document that is incorporated into the Planning Scheme.

More specifically the objectives include:

- To provide diverse recreational opportunities and experiences along the Lower Plenty River in a variety of settings.
- To facilitate pedestrian and cyclist movement along and across the Plenty River valley through the provision of a network of pathways and river crossings.
- To protect and conserve the natural and cultural resources of the valley.

- To prevent or discourage activities that might cause unacceptable levels of air, noise and water pollution.
- To provide responsible authorities with a basis for establishing development and management priorities and standards.
- To protect and enhance critical landscape features that impact visually on the river and its adjoining open space.
- To prepare a program of priority land purchases should land become available for open space and to secure funding commitments to meet these requirements.
- To ensure that recommendations relating to the river will not prejudice sound drainage principles and flood management.
- To introduce overlay planning controls in order to enhance the amenity of the river and its surrounding residential, commercial and industrial land uses.
- To identify and meet community needs and encourage community participation in planning and management.

The concept plan will work on two levels: by providing preferred development directions based on management areas, and by making site-specific recommendations.

2.7 THE PLAN'S DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION

The concept plan began as a vision for the future of the Lower Plenty — to provide an enhanced linear parkland and nature corridor linkage between the Yarra Valley Parklands and the proposed Plenty Gorge Parklands.

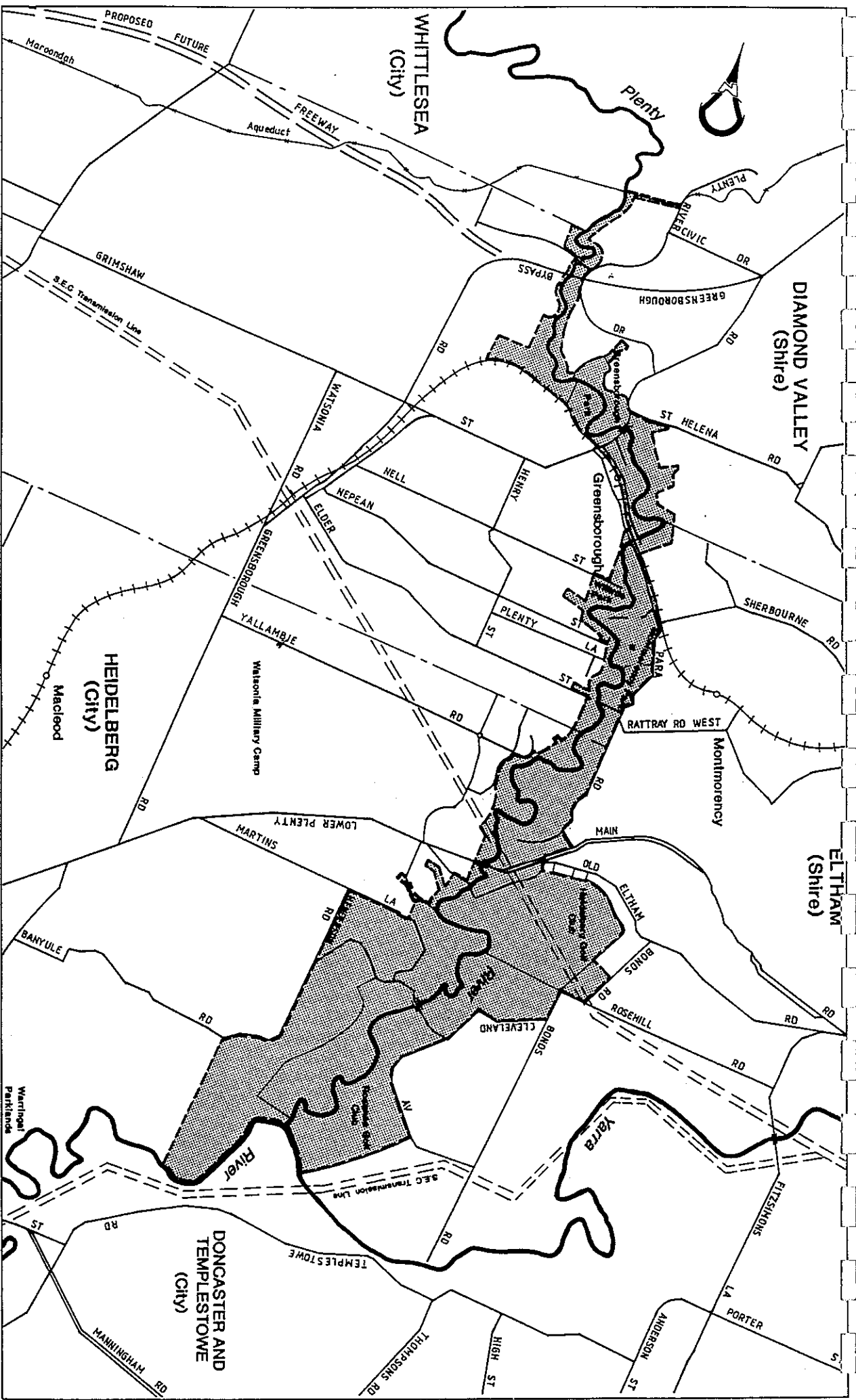
The plan was prepared by Melbourne Water in liaison with a Steering Committee with representation from the Shires of Eltham and Diamond Valley and the City of Heidelberg, the then Department of Conservation and Environment, the then Department of Planning and Housing, the Environment Protection Authority, and the community.

The planning team drew on published material and input from community groups, individuals and the organisations listed above. A visual resource study, a vegetation study, a local community survey and an archaeological survey were commissioned for this concept plan, and are published as separate supporting documents. A *Resource Description and Issues* document was also published.

Community involvement and input was sought through the release of the *Resource Description and Issues* document described above and subsequent submissions, local newspapers, the survey of local residents and explanatory leaflets circulated throughout the area.

To translate the vision for the concept plan into action the plan works on two levels. Chapter 3 provides broad concept policies to guide development of the river and its adjacent open space. Chapter 4 outlines management prescriptions for the protection and enhancement of the river valley and makes recommendations for the management of specific sites.

The success of any plan depends on how it will be put into action. The steering committee represents agencies who are committed to both the vision and actions embodied in this plan. Chapter 5 looks in more detail at how the plan is to be implemented and Chapter 6 details the statutory controls required for implementation.



STUDY AREA



Scale 1:25 000

Open Space Planning Division

Map No. 3

LOWER PLENTY RIVER
CONCEPT PLAN

Study Area

3 THE CONCEPT PLAN - MANAGEMENT AREAS AND KEY STRATEGIES

This chapter deals with the broad ideals of the vision for the future of the Lower Plenty River. It firstly designates concept plan management areas throughout the Lower Plenty and establishes management policies for the future development of these areas along the river corridor. Secondly, the chapter describes key strategies for the concept plan that relate to initiatives for the whole river. Map 4 shows the management areas and key strategies for the study area.

3.1 THE CONCEPT PLAN – MANAGEMENT AREAS

The management areas developed for the Lower Plenty River and adjacent open space reflect current use or recommended future use. They guide development and maintenance of separate areas that share certain characteristics, for example sports grounds.

The nine management areas are grouped into three categories, reflecting the primary purpose of each area:

Conservation Management Areas

- Bushland Conservation
- Riparian Conservation
- Heritage Conservation
- Rural Conservation

Recreation Management Areas

- Dispersed Informal Recreation
- Intensive Informal Recreation
- Organised Activities

Non-Park Management Areas

- Public Facilities/Utilities
- Private Development

CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT AREAS

1. Bushland Conservation

Bushland Conservation applies to areas of remnant indigenous bushland vegetation with significant conservation values. These are valuable as wildlife habitat, for scientific study, education, low-key recreation and landscape quality.

Primary Purpose

To maintain natural and semi-natural bushland environments by protecting and enhancing remnant indigenous vegetation.

Management Policies

- Conserve existing indigenous vegetation and reinforce it with planting of indigenous species. Temporary fencing may be necessary to allow regeneration.
- Control pest plants and animals, erosion and drainage.
- Protect sites of historic, archaeological or cultural significance.
- Protect residential areas from bushfires occurring within parkland.
- Control access by humans and domestic animals to sensitive areas to minimise damage to native vegetation or wildlife.
- Restrict development to trails and signs that harmonise with the bushland environment.
- Provide for low-impact, passive recreation which is compatible with conservation and encourages an appreciation of nature.

2. Riparian Conservation

Riparian Conservation applies to the Plenty River, its tributaries and their immediate environs within the study area. These environments are highly valued for nature conservation, as wildlife corridors, for scientific study, education, aesthetic qualities and for a range of recreational activities. The width of the riparian conservation area generally extends at least 15 metres either side of the watercourse.

Primary Purpose

To protect and enhance indigenous riparian vegetation and associated wetlands, water quality and landscape values.

Management Policies

- Conserve existing indigenous riparian and wetland vegetation and reinforce with new plantings of indigenous species.
- Undertake river maintenance works in a way which enhances rather than destroys wildlife habitat. Where possible, willow removal and bank stabilisation works should not destroy native fish habitat; logs and snags should be left.
- Ensure management programs do not prejudice sound drainage principles and flood management.
- Manage waterways and their environs to maintain water quality consistent with EPA objectives and to meet flood control objectives. Devise strategies to limit the extent of litter entering the stream.
- Restrict land-based access along the riparian strip to pedestrians, except on trails specially designated for cyclists.
- Provide for low-intensity, passive recreation which is compatible with conservation and encourages an appreciation of the river environs.

3. Heritage Conservation

Heritage Conservation applies to semi-natural or modified rural landscapes with significant historical value that relate to either Aboriginal or European contact. These areas often contain culturally significant wetlands or billabongs, which are also important for nature conservation, landscape, scientific study, education and low-impact recreation.

Primary Purpose

To protect and enhance historic landscapes and particular sites with archaeological or historical significance, while recognising any nature conservation values.

Management Policies

- Protect and enhance landscapes and features of historic, archaeological or scientific significance.
- Conserve and enhance existing indigenous vegetation, wetlands and billabongs, and reinforce with new plantings of indigenous species.
- Restrict grazing to areas away from wetlands.
- Restrict human access to sensitive wetlands or archaeological sites where necessary, to prevent degradation.
- Ensure built facilities are designed to harmonise with historic landscapes.
- Restrict vehicle access to peripheral areas only and access by cyclists or equestrians to designated areas.
- Provide for passive recreation and interpretation compatible with heritage and nature conservation, and encourage an appreciation of nature, Aboriginal and European history and rural landscapes.

4. Rural Conservation

Rural Conservation applies to land which has largely been cleared and supports viable agricultural activities such as horticulture, grazing and orchards. The maintenance of these activities is considered an option as they add variety to the landscape and provide for community education.

Primary Purpose

To facilitate the maintenance of rural activities and rural landscapes.

Management Policies

- Ensure rural activities do not damage any remaining indigenous vegetation, wetlands or other sites of significance.
- Encourage built facilities that harmonise with the landscape.
- Restrict human access to the extent necessary to protect the viability of the rural activities.
- Provide for passive recreation, appropriate interpretation and education, which are compatible with the area's management, and encourage an appreciation of agricultural industries, rural landscapes and historical background.

RECREATION MANAGEMENT AREAS

5. Dispersed Informal Recreation

Dispersed Informal Recreation applies to semi-natural areas of open space which generally have scattered remnant vegetation. They provide a suitable environment for low-intensity recreation which allows for conservation of significant natural and historical features.

Primary Purpose

To provide for low-intensity recreation in a semi-natural setting.

Management Policies

- Protect and enhance all indigenous remnant vegetation, as well as exotic trees (excluding noxious and environmental weeds) of landscape or historical value.
- Protect and enhance features of historic, archaeological or cultural significance.
- Provide for park interpretation and education. Users should only encounter low to moderate numbers of other people. Intrusion of sights and sounds of human activity should be kept to a minimum.
- Minimise the construction of facilities. Any that are necessary should harmonise with the landscape.
- Restrict vehicular access to peripheries only, and access by cyclists or equestrians to designated paths.
- Provide for passive recreation, concentrating on the appreciation of semi-natural environments, and other features of conservation value.

6. Intensive Informal Recreation

Intensive Informal Recreation applies to parkland environments with scattered native or exotic trees and shrubs. These areas play an important role in catering for large numbers of visitors and a wide variety of activities.

Primary Purpose

To provide for a wide range of recreational activities catering for relatively large numbers of people in a pleasant semi-natural parkland setting.

Management Policies

- Protect and enhance any significant vegetation, landscapes, historical, archaeological or cultural features.
- Provide opportunities for park interpretation and education programs and define areas for large groups to congregate.
- Provide facilities and other conveniences or comforts in a way which is sensitive to the landscape. Commercial activities relating to the parks may be appropriate in some areas.
- Provide internal access which caters for pedestrian, bicycles and the disabled.
- Provide for passive recreation concentrating on the appreciation of parkland environments and facilities catering for a range of recreation opportunities including picnicking and other family gatherings.

7. Organised Activities

Organised Activities refers to existing areas used for outdoor formal sporting activities such as golf, tennis, football and cricket, or other group activities such as orienteering or environmental education.

Primary Purpose

To cater for organised sporting and group recreational activities.

Management Policies

- Define areas suitable for team or individual sports, recreational and educational activities for groups.
- Protect significant vegetation, landscapes, historical archaeological and cultural features.
- Encourage sensitive facility design and siting, appropriate screening and vegetation which blends with the surrounding landscape.
- Cater for informal recreation wherever possible.
- Minimise impact of noise on surrounding areas.
- Provide for active recreation relating to exercise, fitness and team participation incorporating spectator involvement and group affiliation.

NON-PARK MANAGEMENT AREAS

8. Public Facilities/Utilities

Public Facilities refer to land used by Commonwealth, State or local government agencies which is generally not accessible unless special arrangements are made.

Primary Purpose

To cater for existing public agency activities without compromising the landscape and conservation values of the Plenty River valley.

Management Policies

- Encourage screen planting with suitable species and landscaping to help integrate these uses with the surrounding parks and bushland.
- Preserve features of nature conservation, historic, archaeological or cultural significance.
- Ensure that the scale and style of any new buildings or structures complement the landscape.

9. Private Development

Private Development applies to residential, industrial and commercial properties which are not accessible to the general public.

Primary Purpose

To cater for existing private residential, industrial and commercial properties located within the primary study area.

Management Policies

- Encourage land owners to establish indigenous or other appropriate plant species on their properties to screen buildings, provide wildlife habitats and generally complement the Plenty River valley environment. Suitable guidelines should be prepared to assist these land owners.

- Ensure, through the implementation of suitable planning controls, that buildings and works do not severely conflict with the Plenty River valley landscape and that existing bushland is preserved.

3.2 THE CONCEPT PLAN – KEY STRATEGIES

These strategies stem from the vision statement for the concept plan and are a direct response to the overall objectives of the plan.

Conservation of Resources

Protection of indigenous flora and fauna and their habitats, enhancement of rivers, and protection of scenic and cultural features are all areas emphasised by the Melbourne Parks and Waterways Program. In line with this program, a key strategy for this concept plan is the **creation of a corridor of indigenous vegetation along the Lower Plenty linking Yarra Valley Parklands in the south with the proposed Plenty Gorge Parklands in the north.**

This will involve the need to:

- Rehabilitate and conserve the indigenous flora and fauna involving removal of invasive weeds and replanting of indigenous species, and programs to increase indigenous fauna populations.
- Enhance the immediate river environment involving removal of willow trees from the bed and banks, litter removal and control, and programs to improve water quality and flow.
- Ensure programs do not prejudice sound drainage principles and flood management.
- Introduce strategies to protect and enhance scenic and cultural values.

Visitor Demand and Use

The Melbourne Parks and Waterways Program places emphasis on a linked system of recreational paths for pedestrians and cyclists. In addition, the *Local Community Survey* for the Lower Plenty highlighted the need for more walking tracks and bicycle paths. In line with these views, a key strategy for this concept plan is to **improve pedestrian and cyclist movement through the river corridor and access to the river.** This will involve the need to:

- Provide a continuous linear trail system along the entire length of the Lower Plenty with new and upgraded paths and river crossings.
- Develop greater opportunities for community use and enjoyment of the Lower Plenty and adjoining open space involving the creation of informal recreational opportunities in a variety of settings and continuation of active recreation opportunities on established public and private facilities.

Land Utilisation and Control

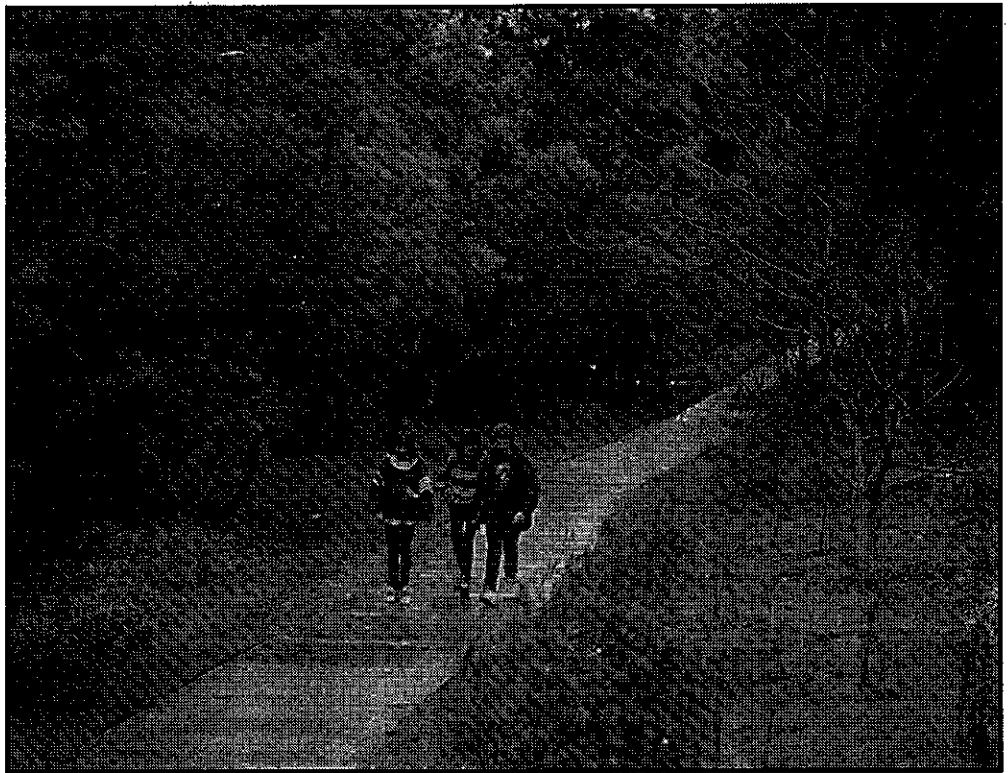
Current land use, zoning and controls strongly affect the success of the preceding strategies outlined for this concept plan. Along the length of the Lower Plenty anomalies to continuous open space provision exist, and in some areas controls are not sufficient to protect and enhance indigenous flora. In line with these issues, a key strategy of this concept plan is to **introduce programs to overcome current deficiencies in indigenous flora control and land ownership.** This will involve the need to:

- Establish a program of priority land purchases to create a continuous open space reservation along the river extending from the Yarra Valley Parklands to the proposed Plenty Gorge Parklands.
- Introduce overlay planning controls to protect and enhance the valley's indigenous flora as well as important scenic values (for details see Chapter 5 – Implementation).

- Ensure the protection of the valley's land and amenity by educating the public regarding *State Environment Protection Policies* that cover air and water quality and noise.

Management

Chapter 4 of this report deals with the specific management prescriptions associated with the issues of concern along the Lower Plenty. The responsibility for seeing that these prescriptions are implemented varies according to the nature of the prescription. However, it is a key strategy of this concept plan to establish a **Lower Plenty River Co-ordinating Committee** to initiate and oversee plan implementation. The committee will consist of representatives from the three local government areas involved, Melbourne Water, the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, and the community.



Shared footway north of Poulter Reserve

VISITOR DEMAND AND USE

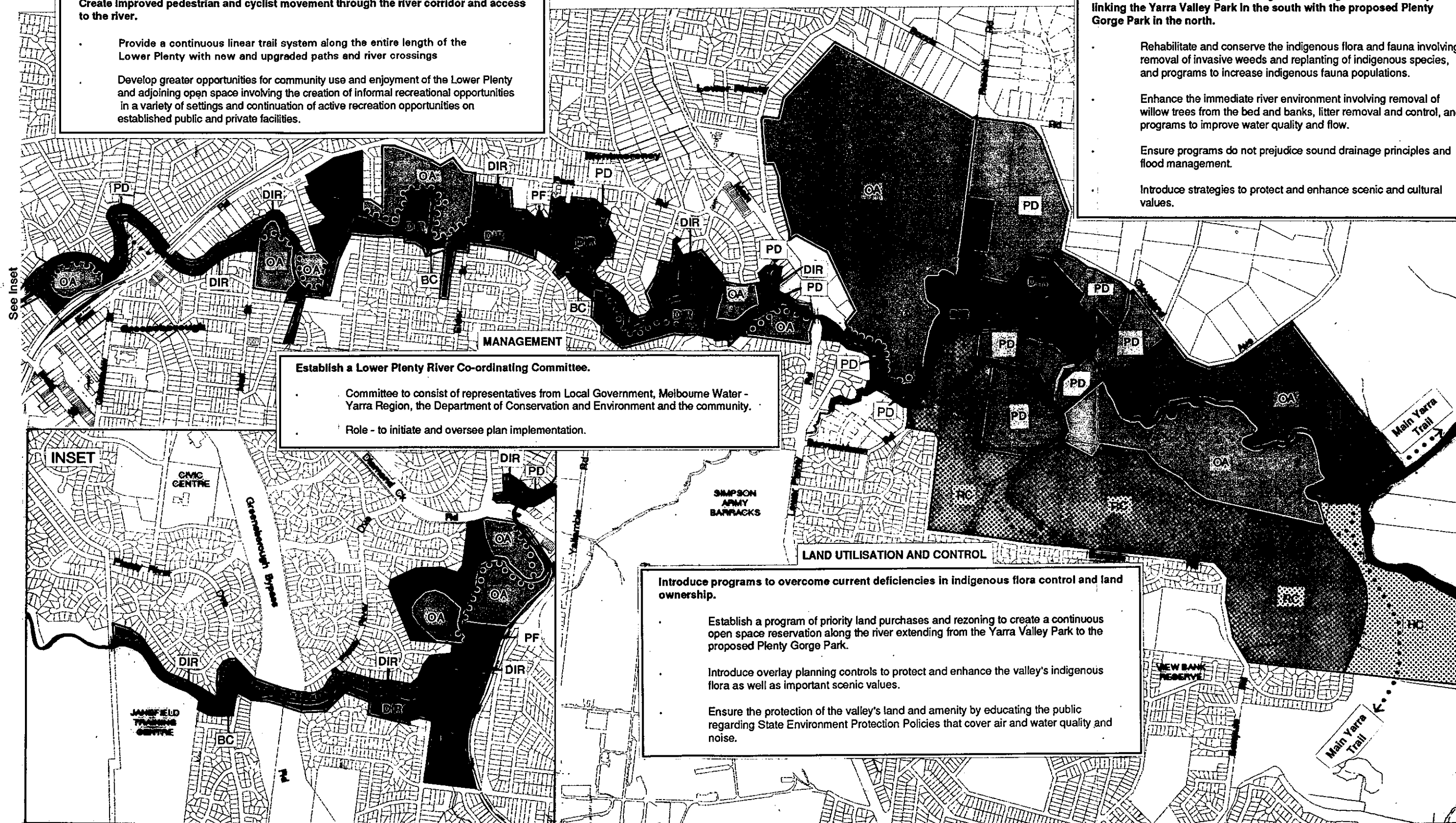
Create improved pedestrian and cyclist movement through the river corridor and access to the river.

- Provide a continuous linear trail system along the entire length of the Lower Plenty with new and upgraded paths and river crossings
- Develop greater opportunities for community use and enjoyment of the Lower Plenty and adjoining open space involving the creation of informal recreational opportunities in a variety of settings and continuation of active recreation opportunities on established public and private facilities.

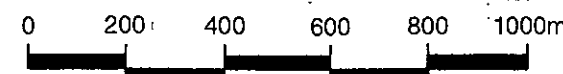
CONSERVATION OF RESOURCES

Create a corridor of indigenous vegetation along the Lower Plenty linking the Yarra Valley Park in the south with the proposed Plenty Gorge Park in the north.

- Rehabilitate and conserve the indigenous flora and fauna involving removal of invasive weeds and replanting of indigenous species, and programs to increase indigenous fauna populations.
- Enhance the immediate river environment involving removal of willow trees from the bed and banks, litter removal and control, and programs to improve water quality and flow.
- Ensure programs do not prejudice sound drainage principles and flood management.
- Introduce strategies to protect and enhance scenic and cultural values.



- | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Dispersed Informal Recreation | Public Facilities |
| Organised Activities | Private Development |
| Intensive Informal Recreation | Heritage Conservation |
| Bushland Conservation | Plenty River Trail |



Scale 1:15 000

CONCEPT PLAN MANAGEMENT AREAS AND KEY STRATEGIES

4 MANAGEMENT PRESCRIPTIONS

The *Resource Document* of this concept plan provides a detailed description of the Lower Plenty River's resources including its natural and built environment and the river's heritage. The document also highlights the most significant management issues, and issues considered most important to the local residents.

The purpose of this chapter is to provide the planning response to these issues. The issues are arranged under the following major categories:

- 4.1 Managing flora and fauna
- 4.2 Managing the river
- 4.3 Managing cultural and visual resources
- 4.4 Managing user demand
- 4.5 Managing land use and public utilities

The following format has been developed to set out the management prescriptions for these issues. The prescriptions follow a brief discussion of the category of issues and a set of objectives. The management prescriptions then describe the works and activities required for each issue, and are denoted by a priority and a responsibility.

Priority

- A statement which emphasises the timing or sequence of actions. It is illustrated by the following descriptions:

- | | |
|-----------|---|
| High | Proposed and implemented as soon as possible (printed in bold)
— within 1-2 years. |
| Medium | Proposed for action generally after high priority actions have been completed — within 3-5 years. |
| Low | Less urgent but important actions — within 5-10 years, depending on resource availability. |
| Ongoing | An action which requires the continued attention of management staff. |
| As needed | An action or issue to be addressed when the relevant situation arises. |

Responsibility

- A statement which indicates the agency responsible for implementing the prescription.
- The Lower Plenty River Co-ordinating Committee is to be formed as a key strategy of this concept plan.

Section 4.6 presents strip maps of the study area and the planning response in terms of prescriptions for issues that are site-specific.

4.1 MANAGING FLORA AND FAUNA

Vegetation

Along the Lower Plenty River the remnant indigenous vegetation is largely restricted to the riparian strip and steep escarpment areas, often as isolated populations or amongst stands of exotic species. The remnant communities include open-forest, low open woodland, shrubland, grassland, and a single fern gully.

Urban development, invasion by introduced species and the indiscriminate removal of indigenous vegetation have depleted indigenous habitats.

Willow trees dominate the banks of the Lower Plenty River for much of its length. Melbourne Water has a policy to remove willows, primarily aimed at eliminating the problem of flow obstruction created by this tree species. Willows also have a deleterious impact on the natural environment by rapidly and comprehensively colonising an area to the virtual exclusion of other species.

In addition, weeds such as blackberry, hawthorn, Montpellier broom and many others have colonised the banks and adjoining areas along the river at the expense of indigenous species.

The visual analysis and archaeological survey have identified several areas of culturally significant vegetation. These include indigenous species used by Aboriginal people, and exotic species incorporated into the environment as a consequence of European settlement.

Several areas along the Lower Plenty have a high fire hazard rating. This rating is brought about by various factors including limited access particularly to the riparian vegetation on the western side of the river and steep slopes. A fire prevention plan has been developed for the study area upstream from the bridge in Main Street, Greensborough.

Conservation values can be protected by other means. The protection of the indigenous vegetation can be achieved in a number of ways. These range from gaining public ownership of property in cases where public access is required, through to zoning controls over private property where public access is not required.

Fauna

The status of native fauna populations within the Lower Plenty River study area is not fully known and further surveying is desirable.

Exotic animals such as rabbits, hares, foxes, dogs, cats, Indian mynahs, and introduced fish often endanger native animal populations. Rabbits and hares remove ground cover while foxes, dogs and cats prey on native fauna. Other exotic species, such as blackbirds, are likely vectors for the spread of weeds, whereas the aggression of Indian mynahs for nesting sites and territory leads to some native birds seeking habitat elsewhere. In the river itself, some introduced fish such as roach, prey upon the native species.

In addition, roads and railways create barriers to the movement of fauna.

Objectives

- To protect, enhance and manage significant or restricted indigenous floral communities and ensure their long-term viability, diversity and survival.
- To protect, enhance and manage significant or restricted fauna populations (aquatic, terrestrial and avifauna) and their habitats to ensure long-term viability, diversity and survival.
- To control and wherever possible eradicate willow and other noxious and environmental weed species.

- To control and wherever possible eradicate pest animals within the study area.
- To provide a continuous riparian strip of indigenous vegetation between Yarra Valley Parklands and the proposed Plenty Gorge Parklands.
- To control the movement of unrestrained domestic animals.
- To provide appropriate education regarding controls and interpretation of significant flora.
- To ensure a well co-ordinated fire management program to reduce high fire hazard and decrease risk to the general public while giving due consideration to the protection of biologically and culturally significant indigenous flora and fauna species.

Priority	Prescription
High	<p>Prepare and implement a vegetation management plan, identifying species, populations and communities of biological and cultural significance. A vegetation management plan should include a weed control strategy and a revegetation program.</p> <p>The weed control strategy will address:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. eradication of willows along the riparian strip; ii. control or where possible eradication of other species considered as weeds; iii. pest control/eradication, site rehabilitation and revegetation; and iv. monitoring of weed spread and effectiveness of control measures. <p>Responsibility: Lower Plenty River Co-ordinating Committee.</p>
High	<p>Prepare and implement a landscape master plan for the streamside parklands, taking into account the strategies and issues identified in this concept plan.</p> <p>Responsibility: Lower Plenty River Co-ordinating Committee.</p>
High	<p>Negotiate Conservation Covenants or Registered Agreements for management of riparian flora on privately-owned properties or steep land not required for public open space.</p> <p>Responsibility: Melbourne Water, councils, DCNR.</p>
Medium	<p>Evaluate the need to control weeds (predominantly blackberries) through the Rosanna Golf Course taking into account bank stability and the importance of this area as a fauna habitat.</p> <p>Responsibility: Rosanna Golf Club; Melbourne Water — Yarra Region.</p>
Ongoing	<p>Undertake indigenous replacement planting programs, involving the local community on council-owned and Melbourne Water-owned land to enhance habitat and to screen recreational facilities and adjoining users.</p> <p>Responsibility: Lower Plenty River Co-ordinating Committee.</p>
Ongoing	<p>Ensure that works proposals for paths, etc. consider the significant vegetation and provide appropriate protection.</p> <p>Responsibility: Lower Plenty River Co-ordinating Committee.</p>

High	<p>Enforce tree removal controls of the Lower Plenty Streamside Environment overlay planning control.</p> <p>Responsibility: Council town planning departments.</p>
High	<p>Conduct a detailed fauna study including investigations into the status of species within the study area. The study should identify areas of significant habitat value and those requiring enhancement.</p> <p>Responsibility: Lower Plenty River Co-ordinating Committee.</p>
High	<p>Develop a fauna protection strategy based on the recommendations of the detailed fauna survey and incorporate this with the vegetation management strategy.</p> <p>Responsibility: Lower Plenty River Co-ordinating Committee.</p>
Ongoing	<p>Provide zoological advice on habitat enhancement measures to management agencies.</p> <p>Responsibility: Department of Conservation & Natural Resources.</p>
Ongoing	<p>Identify pest animals and develop control strategies using humane eradication methods.</p> <p>Responsibility: Department of Conservation & Natural Resources</p>
Medium	<p>Evaluate and enforce council laws pertaining to dogs off leashes.</p> <p>Responsibility: Council local laws departments.</p>
High	<p>Undertake a comprehensive community education program involving liaison with conservation and interest groups and the local community to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. communicate the vegetation enhancement objectives and the importance of the riparian environment; ii. organise planting activities; iii. increase public awareness of impact of dumping garden refuse; and iv. increase public awareness of the effect of unrestrained pets on native fauna. <p>Responsibility: Councils.</p>
High	<p>Inform private property owners with land in the study area regarding the benefits of selecting indigenous plants and retaining trees.</p> <p>Responsibility: Councils.</p>
Ongoing	<p>Erect temporary barriers at sites of habitat enhancement with information explaining the necessity for exclusion.</p> <p>Responsibility: Councils and Melbourne Water — Yarra Region.</p>
High	<p>Prepare a fire prevention plan for the entire length of Lower Plenty River to include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. a strategy to improve access and vehicle movement along the valley and mapping of access points; ii. identification of high fire hazard areas; iii. fuel clearance sympathetic to conservation and cultural aspects of the study area; and iv. a clear definition of boundaries and responsibilities of agencies involved.

	<p>Responsibility: Council Fire Prevention Officers — Country Fire Authority (CFA) and Melbourne Fire Brigade (MFB).</p>
Medium	<p>Fire Prevention Officer or equivalent to liaise with residents adjacent to the study area concerning their fire potential minimisation responsibilities.</p> <p>Responsibility: Councils and CFA/MFB.</p>
Medium	<p>Implement a fire management plan for Yarra Valley Parklands. The fire management plan should consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. protection of assets of the area from wildfire; ii. reduction of the incidence of wildfire; iii. restriction of spread of wildfire; and iv. safety of personnel during wildfire. <p>Responsibility: Melbourne Parks and Waterways.</p>
Ongoing	<p>Identify and notate specific locations for fire access and maintenance purposes throughout the study area.</p> <p>Responsibility: Melbourne Water, councils, MFB.</p>
Ongoing	<p>SEC line clearance should be consistent with the code of practice.</p> <p>Responsibility: SEC, council parks departments.</p>
Ongoing	<p>The Public Transport Corporation may continue vegetation clearance which is in accordance with schedule 3(2) of the <i>Transport Act</i> . Where such vegetation is on privately-owned land or land owned by another government agency, the PTC would (except in cases of emergency) consult with the land owner prior to any such work being undertaken.</p> <p>Responsibility: Public Transport Corporation.</p>

4.2 MANAGING THE RIVER

Only minor areas of the river have a 'natural' appearance and are unaffected by weed growth (including willows), litter and pollution. A co-ordinated approach to the removal of major weed infestations and replanting with indigenous species will reinforce the river as a worthy feature. The many factors involved in river management include:

Water quality

Water quality in the Lower Plenty has been described by the EPA as 'relatively poor'. Several factors including stormwater discharge, low summer flows and high nutrient load entering upstream at Whittlesea influence water quality. In addition, turbidity and sedimentation result from construction sites and uncontrolled land use within the valley. The EPA has concluded that 'it is unlikely that the condition of the Plenty River will substantially improve without a reduction in nutrient trends'.

Melbourne Water is currently developing a sewerage and drainage strategy embracing the concept of total catchment management to accommodate urban development in the Plenty Valley. As part of the assessment and strategy process, the potential effects of discharge water quality on downstream ecosystems will be evaluated.

Water quality and stream litter were identified in the survey of the local community as the two most significant issues requiring immediate attention.

Stream litter and illegal dumping

Water-borne litter strewn along the river and banks seriously influences public perception of the river as a feature of significance. The recreation potential of parkland is also adversely affected by the illegal dumping of household and garden refuse, earth fill and building rubble.

Catchment hydrology, urban runoff, stormwater and drains

Tributary watercourses and underground drains entering the river contribute significantly to flows in the river, particularly immediately following rain. Their base level flows are limited, and at times may carry high pollution loads. Stormwater drainage from the adjoining urban areas discharges into the river. The structural condition and appearance of some of the points of discharge must be improved.

Flood mitigation

The nature of the Plenty River catchment provides for the rapid passage of flood waters through the system; hence flooding is a potential problem. A drainage strategy is currently being prepared to assess the implications of the urbanisation of the Plenty Growth Corridor. This strategy will identify means to retard flood flows so that no additional downstream areas are flooded.

Protection and enhancement of the river bank

Bank erosion is not a widespread problem through the study area. However, small areas need attention to halt active erosion processes.

The potential exists for increased erosion resulting from greater public use of the river bank, willow removal and weed eradication. The effect of these activities will need close monitoring to ensure that further river bank erosion is not initiated.

The rocky escarpments along some river bank sections are not well recognised as features of considerable interest and importance in their current condition. Unrestricted access and runoff are degrading these features and the associated vegetation. Rampant weed growth has encroached on many of the rocky escarpments, shrouding their features.

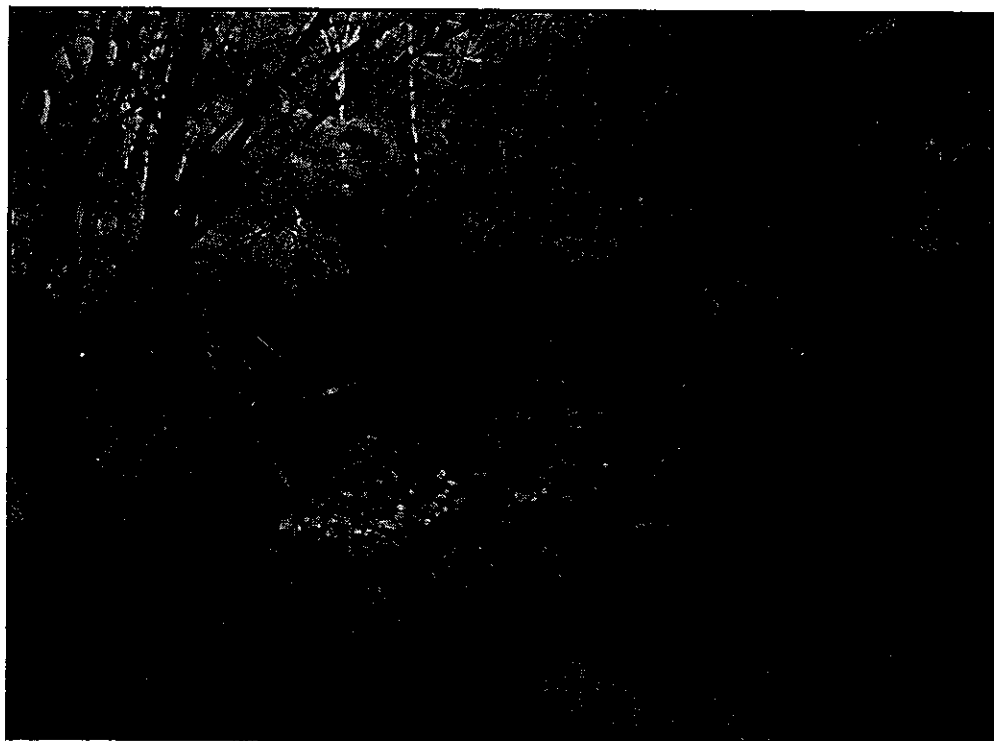
Objectives

- To improve the quality of water and flow of the Plenty River as well as the quality of water inputs from drains and tributaries.
- To restore instream environments and maintain ecological systems.
- To enhance the appearance and perception of the river as an attraction in its own right.
- To develop a program of river rehabilitation that concentrates on litter and the need to reduce litter levels instream.
- To halt the practice of illegal dumping along river banks.
- To improve the condition and appearance of stormwater drain outlets at the point of discharge into the river.
- To manage a waterway through the open space corridor with suitable characteristics to allow the satisfactory passage of a 1% flood.
- To contribute to river management strategies upstream of the study area.
- To minimise the effects of erosion and other activities and structures that cause destabilisation of the river bank.
- To recognise, protect and enhance the river escarpments as interesting geological features and important or significant habitats.
- To increase public awareness of and to educate the public regarding litter, illegal dumping and factors influencing river quality.
- To encourage community 'ownership' of the river through education and participation in enhancement programs.

Priority	Prescription
Medium	Implement final recommendations of Scrubby Creek and Whittlesea sewerage studies.
	Responsibility: Melbourne Water — Yarra Region.
Medium	Install aeration/riffle flow weirs at suitable locations along the river.
	Responsibility: Melbourne Water — Yarra Region.
High	Survey the study area for unlicensed discharges and illegal connections to the stormwater system.
	Responsibility: Melbourne Water — Yarra Region and Environment Protection Authority (EPA).
Ongoing	Implement State Environment Protection Policy requirements and monitor the water quality of the river, tributaries and drains.
	Responsibility: EPA, Melbourne Water, Melbourne Parks and Waterways, councils.
Ongoing	Increase monitoring and enforcement of the Litter Act.
	Responsibility: EPA, council and Melbourne Water Enforcement Officers.

High	Install litter traps on major stormwater drains following monitoring of discharge and liaise with councils on street cleaning techniques.
	Responsibility: Councils, Melbourne Water.
High	Increase signage and monitoring/enforcement of council local-laws prohibiting littering and illegal dumping in parks and reserves. Clean up sites of illegal dumping.
	Responsibility: Councils local laws department and parks/lands department.
Medium	Develop strategies for litter collection in open space areas adjoining the river.
	Responsibility: Councils local laws department and parks/lands department.
High	Remove debris (including litter/snags) which impedes stream flow being careful not to remove snags that are important for stream habitats.
	Responsibility: Melbourne Water — Yarra Region, council parks departments.
High	Speed up progress of willow removal program to improve stream flow and to remove branches that act as litter traps. Establish replacement planting using indigenous species.
	Responsibility: Melbourne Water — Yarra Region.
High	Implement the recommendations of the Sewerage and Drainage Strategy for the Plenty Valley.
	Responsibility: Melbourne Water.
High	Investigate flow rates of the Plenty River and review all diversion permits. Include an investigation of effects of different flow rates on river ecology.
	Responsibility: Melbourne Water.
Medium	Enhance the appearance and condition of all drainage discharge points and reinstate the river bank.
	Responsibility: Council parks/engineering departments; Melbourne Water — Yarra Region.
Ongoing	Improve the maintenance of tributary watercourses and associated reserves and encourage public use by providing connecting trails.
	Responsibility: Council parks/engineering departments and Melbourne Water — Yarra Region.
Ongoing	Use planning scheme controls and permit conditions to minimise the effect of runoff from all development proposals on reserves and private land close to the river.
	Responsibility: Council town planning departments.
Medium	Assess in detail the active processes and stability of the river bank and rehabilitate areas of active bank erosion using 'soft engineering' solutions. Divert surface runoff which is causing erosion.

	Responsibility: Melbourne Water — Yarra Region.
Ongoing	Ensure control of sediment runoff from construction sites and new developments. Refer to EPA publication No. 275.
	Responsibility: Councils; Melbourne Water.
Medium	Investigate the promotion of rainwater tanks to catch 'drainage' water from domestic homes for use on urban gardens and the feasibility of small retarding basins.
	Responsibility: Council engineering, parks and health departments.
Ongoing	Monitor the effects of weed control programs on the stability of the river banks.
	Responsibility: Melbourne Water — Yarra Region; council parks departments.
Ongoing	Discourage access and uses which are leading to the onset of erosion.
	Responsibility: Melbourne Water — Yarra Region; council parks departments.
Medium	Enhance rocky escarpments by removing shrouding weed growth and graffiti, and protect areas suffering from misuse by fencing them off.
	Responsibility: Melbourne Water — Yarra Region; council parks departments.
Ongoing	Develop and implement a program to educate the public on their contribution to litter and poor quality drainage inputs.
	Responsibility: Melbourne Water; councils.
Ongoing	Encourage the involvement of the public in 'Litter Blitz', 'clean-up' campaigns and planting programs.
	Responsibility: Melbourne Water; council parks departments.



Litter and willows are two management issues addressed in this concept plan

4.3 MANAGING CULTURAL AND VISUAL FEATURES

Two supporting studies were conducted in the development of this concept plan – a visual analysis and an archaeological survey. Both made recommendations for management prescriptions.

Visual amenity

The visual analysis for the Lower Plenty River identified many critical features that should be protected and many features requiring visual or environmental enhancement.

Archaeological values

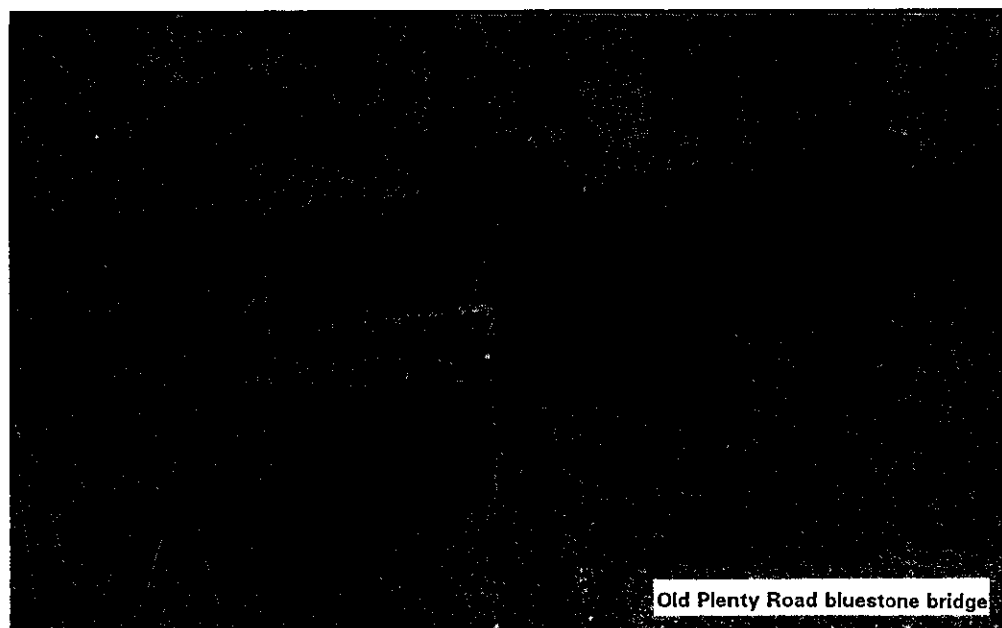
The archaeological survey for the Lower Plenty River identified many sites of archaeological and historical significance requiring protection. These included Aboriginal archaeological sites such as scar trees and artefact scatters, as well as European sites of significance such as historical vegetation, bridges and homestead sites.

Objectives

- To protect and enhance the visual amenity of the Lower Plenty River environs.
- To protect and enhance Aboriginal and European archaeological sites of significance within the Lower Plenty River Concept Plan study area.

Priority	Prescriptions
High	<p>Oversee the implementation and monitoring of the Lower Plenty Streamside Environment overlay planning controls which require permits for tree removal in neighbouring viewsheds, and set guidelines for building and works (for details of controls see Chapter 6).</p> <p>Responsibility: Council town planning departments.</p>
High	<p>Organise screening of buildings/structures in open space areas with indigenous vegetation.</p> <p>Responsibility: Council parks departments.</p>
High	<p>Prepare 'Siting and Design Guidelines' for the development of private land adjoining the streamside parkland.</p> <p>Responsibility: Council town planning departments.</p>
Ongoing	<p>Liaise with managing authorities and land owners on methods to ameliorate visual impact of their developments.</p> <p>Responsibility: Council town planning departments.</p>
Ongoing	<p>Ensure that trail design and development considers sites of visual amenity and the protection and interpretation of sites of archaeological significance.</p> <p>Responsibility: Councils parks and engineering departments; Melbourne Parks and Waterways and Melbourne Water — Yarra Region.</p>

- High** **Review the recommendations of the archaeological survey conducted by Weaver (1990) and liaise with other land management agencies to develop a program for implementation of the recommendations of the archaeological survey.**
- Responsibility:** **Aboriginal Affairs Victoria (AAV), council parks and town planning departments, Melbourne Water.**
Lead Agency —AAV
- High** **Notify land management agencies and land owners of significant sites and their responsibilities.**
- Responsibility:** **AAV**
- High** **Ensure that the importance of historical vegetation and significant exotic species are recognised in an overall vegetation management plan.**
- Responsibility:** **Lower Plenty River Co-ordinating Committee**
- Ongoing** **Provide sympathetic and sensitive management of all culturally significant species, including those considered to be pest plants in other areas of the Lower Plenty Valley.**
- Responsibility:** **Council parks departments; Melbourne Water — Yarra Region.**
- High** **Adopt the Melbourne Water policy on sites of Aboriginal and cultural significance to prioritise works relating to the protection of sites on Melbourne Water-owned land.**
- Responsibility:** **Melbourne Water — Yarra Region.**
- High** **Develop and implement a community education strategy to educate the public on:**
i. the need for and details of overlay controls; and
ii. the importance of visual amenity and sites of archaeological significance.
- Responsibility:** **Council town planning departments.**
- Ongoing** **Interpret sites of visual and archaeological significance. Archaeological sites to be interpreted according to AAV guidelines.**
- Responsibility:** **Council parks departments; Melbourne Water — Yarra Region, and AAV.**



4.4 MANAGING USER DEMAND

Melbourne's waterways such as the Lower Plenty River are a valuable resource for education and interpretation. At present the Lower Plenty River seems incidental to the open space corridor rather than the focus. A broader perception of the river valley is required with the emphasis on the river and riparian environment. Given the urban surrounds, the Lower Plenty River has the potential to be developed for environmental appreciation and passive recreation rather than being a forgotten backwater.

Education and Interpretation

Some local schools already use the area as an outdoor classroom. Nevertheless, the potential exists for greater use of the river and its adjoining open space for environmental education and interpretation.

Recreation

The *Local Community and User Survey* of the Lower Plenty River highlighted several popular activities that require development or enhancement of facilities. Walking tracks, bicycle paths, picnic areas and playgrounds were all high on the list of user demands. The enhancement of the natural environment as a high priority resulted in a low demand for further development of formal recreation facilities. The river flats of the Lower Plenty are already highly developed with formal recreation facilities.

To allow for the usage and the enjoyment of the park by the wider community it is important that certain recreational activities which are outside the aims and objectives of the concept plan be discouraged such as the riding of motor bikes on trails.

The present trail system along the Lower Plenty is disjointed and standards vary from 2m-wide granitic sand paths to 1m-wide concrete. No path exists along some sections of the river due to problems with access; also river crossings will be required at certain locations to link the various sections into a continuous path system.

Access and circulation

Many parts of the study area are difficult to get to by car, bike or on foot, or remain in private ownership. These include areas such as the reserve below the Janefield property, the river verge around Barongarook Court, the west side of the river north of Kalparrin Gardens, the west side of the river below Old Lower Plenty Road and the river through and adjacent to the Rosanna and Heidelberg Golf Courses respectively. The lack of a continuous linear trail impedes circulation in and around the river and its environs.

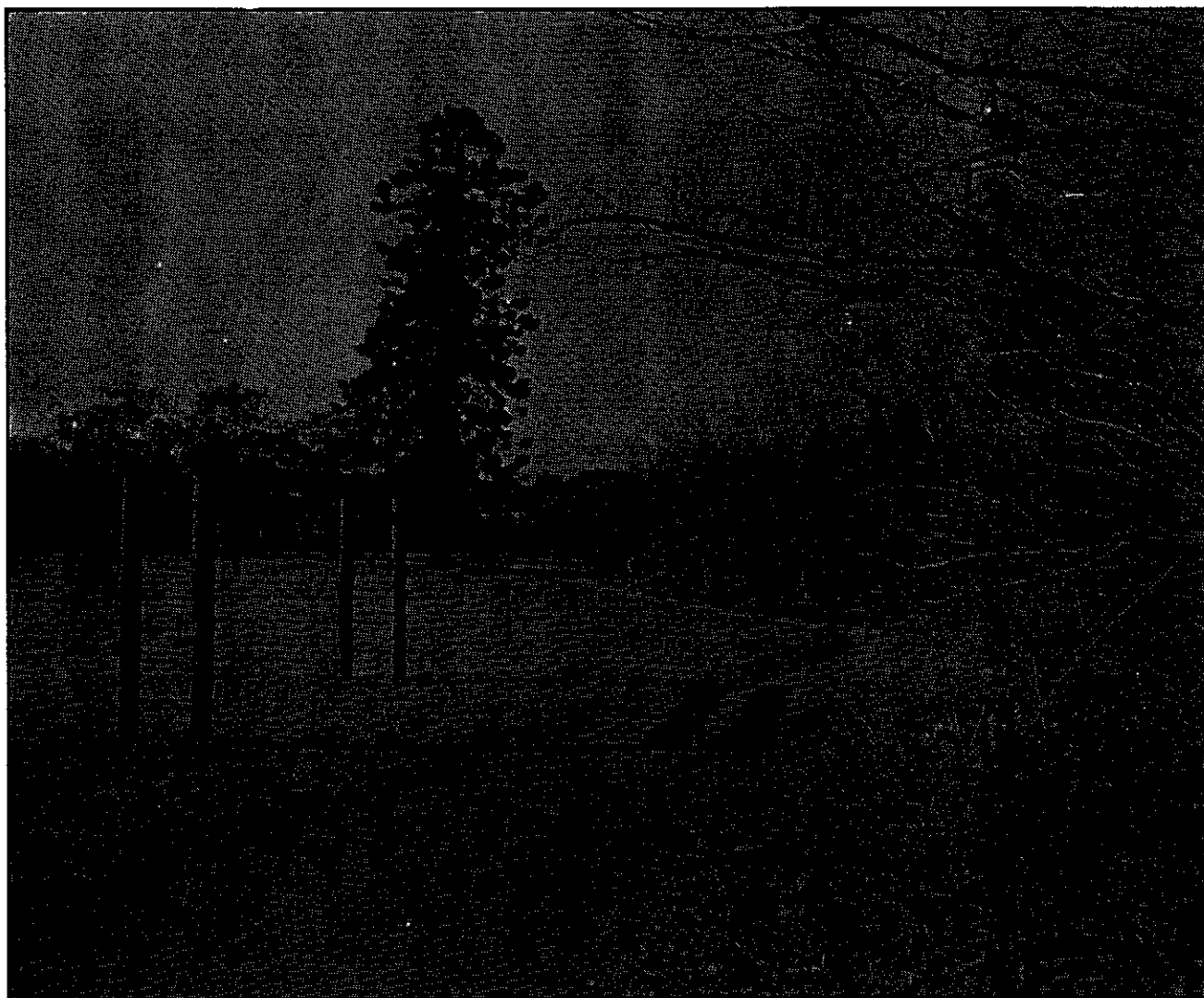
Objectives

- To create greater public awareness of the attributes of the Lower Plenty River and enable the public to better understand the river and its environs.
- To provide orientation and information facilities, educational and interpretative materials and maintain a range of visitor experiences to increase enjoyment and impart the natural and cultural messages of the Lower Plenty area.
- To encourage teaching institutions to use the environmental education opportunities within the study area.
- To increase public awareness of the recreation facilities along the open space corridor and provide for greater use for passive recreation such as walking and cycling.
- To facilitate efficient bicycle and pedestrian movement for the entire length of the river valley.

- To communicate information gathered from community surveying to planning authorities with responsibilities in the study area.
- To improve access to the river and along the open space corridor in areas where access is difficult, without threatening ecological values.
- To facilitate adequate infrastructure to cope with vehicle traffic in areas of the river corridor yet to be developed.

Priority	Prescriptions
High	<p>Design and implement an environmental education and interpretative program for the Lower Plenty River and its adjoining open space to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. basic interpretative signs for the areas natural and cultural features; ii. local media promotion; iii. establishment of educational and community group contact; and iv. development of materials and strategies to achieve the objectives outlined above. <p>Responsibility: Melbourne Water — Yarra Region and the Lower Plenty River Co-ordinating Committee.</p>
High	<p>Establish a bikeplan committee consisting of Melbourne Water and council planners to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. oversee the development of a continuous linear trail along the Plenty River from the Yarra Trail in the south to the Maroondah aqueduct in the north; ii. ensure that all new sections of the trail network comply with design standards established by the Victorian Bicycle Safety Council; iii. investigate and resolve future of bike path/access and use of the Old Plenty Road and Maroondah Pipetrack bridges to create linear trail crossings; iv. improve signs along the river to assist orientation; v. acquire the land needed for the trail alignment; vi. ensure that path planning and construction considers environmental impact particularly with respect to significant vegetation; and vii. erect signage at strategic locations along the trail network advising that the riding of motor bikes throughout the study area is prohibited. <p>Responsibility: Lower Plenty River Co-ordinating Committee.</p>
High	<p>Repair and re-align existing paths where damage affects safety of users.</p> <p>Responsibility: Council parks departments.</p>
Ongoing	<p>Provide findings of community surveys to local managing authorities to improve planning for open space adjoining the river.</p> <p>Responsibility: Melbourne Water — Parks and Open Space Customer Research Manager</p>
Medium	<p>Develop plans for additional playgrounds and picnic areas in open space areas adjoining the river as a response to community demand. Natural and cultural features must be protected in planning.</p> <p>Responsibility: Council parks departments.</p>

- Ongoing** Liaise with Vic Roads regarding monitoring of traffic volumes and monitor council road traffic volumes within the study area to improve circulation and traffic flow throughout the area.
- Responsibility:** Council engineering departments.
- High** **Investigate issues of personal safety along the waterway and develop a strategy to improve public perceptions of safety.**
- Responsibility:** **Lower Plenty River Co-ordinating Committee**



Walking/cycling paths and other recreation facilities are features of the Lower Plenty.

4.5 MANAGING LAND USE AND PUBLIC UTILITIES

Due to the heavily urbanised nature of the hinterland of the Lower Plenty River, several issues arise concerning land use and responsibilities of land management agencies in the area.

Public and private transport facilities

Public transport to the Lower Plenty River environs is very good, with trains, trams and buses servicing the river hinterland. Furthermore, future PTC plans will improve access. Private traffic volumes may well lead to congestion while car parking for park visitors is restricted in some areas including the west side and lower third of the river valley.

Noise from industry and transport

High levels of noise result from industrial activities adjacent to the river around Simms Road/George Court. Noise from transport including major roads, railway and aeroplane flight paths are also issues affecting the river environs and adjacent residential areas.

Public ownership/access to river

Opportunities for linear access along both banks of the river through the study area are restricted by land in private ownership extending to the river, and in other cases by landform barriers. Public ownership of all sections of river frontage is not immediately required for access but in the long term is desirable to enable continuity of open space maintenance standards.

Existing zoning implications

The open space corridor is adjoined by a number of planning scheme zones which currently do not include specific conditions to control the appearance of development in residential or industrial areas, or protection of trees. Development permits are issued by each municipality administering its own (Local) Planning Scheme.

Pipetracks and easements

The Melbourne Water pipetrack crossing the northern area of the open space corridor provides an opportunity for secondary pathways linking the adjoining neighbourhoods to the main open space areas. Overhead power line easements, on the other hand, are visually dominating; this detracts from the visual experience of the open space, and also restricts tree planting, which limits the landscaping options.

Lower Plenty Purification Plant site

The treatment plant site is reserved as Public Purpose 18 (Eltham Planning Scheme) and is surplus to Melbourne Water requirements. Open space opportunities and land requirements need to be determined to secure a reserve of suitable area, including the full length of river frontage.

Public buildings, parks and reserves and facilities (including toilet blocks and signs)

Facilities (including toilet blocks and signs) have a visual impact on the open space character of the river valley and siting is often inappropriate. Consistency of standards, screening and appropriate siting would improve the situation. Separate responsibilities for management of parks and reserves result in differing mowing regimes which may influence visual amenity and vegetation communities near the river verge. Native grasses are endangered.

Objectives

- To promote the use of public transport facilities and liaise with relevant authorities regarding all proposals for upgrading roads and bridges.

- To ameliorate the impact of noise from transport and industry within the river valley and adjacent environs.
- To create a continuous open space corridor along the length of the river through a program of prioritised land acquisition, or access agreement.
- To ensure adjacent land uses are controlled in order to enhance the visual and natural amenity of the river valley and appropriate and consistent zoning is applied to adjacent land uses.
- To recognise the opportunities provided by the Melbourne Water pipetracks and seek to ameliorate the visual impact of works and structures on easements.
- To consider all opportunities for open space use of the treatment plant site.
- To ameliorate the visual impact of public buildings, recreation pavilions and toilet blocks.
- To manage parks and open space to enhance the indigenous nature of the vegetation adjacent to the river and protect native grassland communities on the river verge.
- To ensure clear division of responsibilities for all agencies with responsibility for land protection.

Priority	Prescription
Ongoing	Promote the use of public transport in all education and information material for the linear parkland and concept plan. Responsibility: Metropolitan Transit Authority; Melbourne Water.
Ongoing	Melbourne Water to be made a referral authority for all proposals to upgrade roads and bridges within the Floodway Management Area. Responsibility: Council town planning departments.
Ongoing	Provide appropriate fencing between public and private land in accordance with guidelines adopted by council. Responsibility: Melbourne Water, Council parks, town planning and engineering departments.
Ongoing	Monitor existing noise emissions from industries along the river and ensure compliance with State Environment Protection Policy — N1 — Control of Noise from commerce, industry and trade. Responsibility: Environment Protection Authority.
Ongoing	Monitor and maintain noise level objectives specified for new and improved roads in the study area (arterial roads, freeways and existing roads which are widened by two or more lanes). Liaise with local municipalities and community groups regarding noise levels and their impact on small areas of open space. Responsibility: Vic Roads.
High	Prepare a program of priority land purchases to complete the open space linkages; liaise with landholders and remove obstructions that restrict public access to public-owned land. Responsibility: Melbourne Water and councils

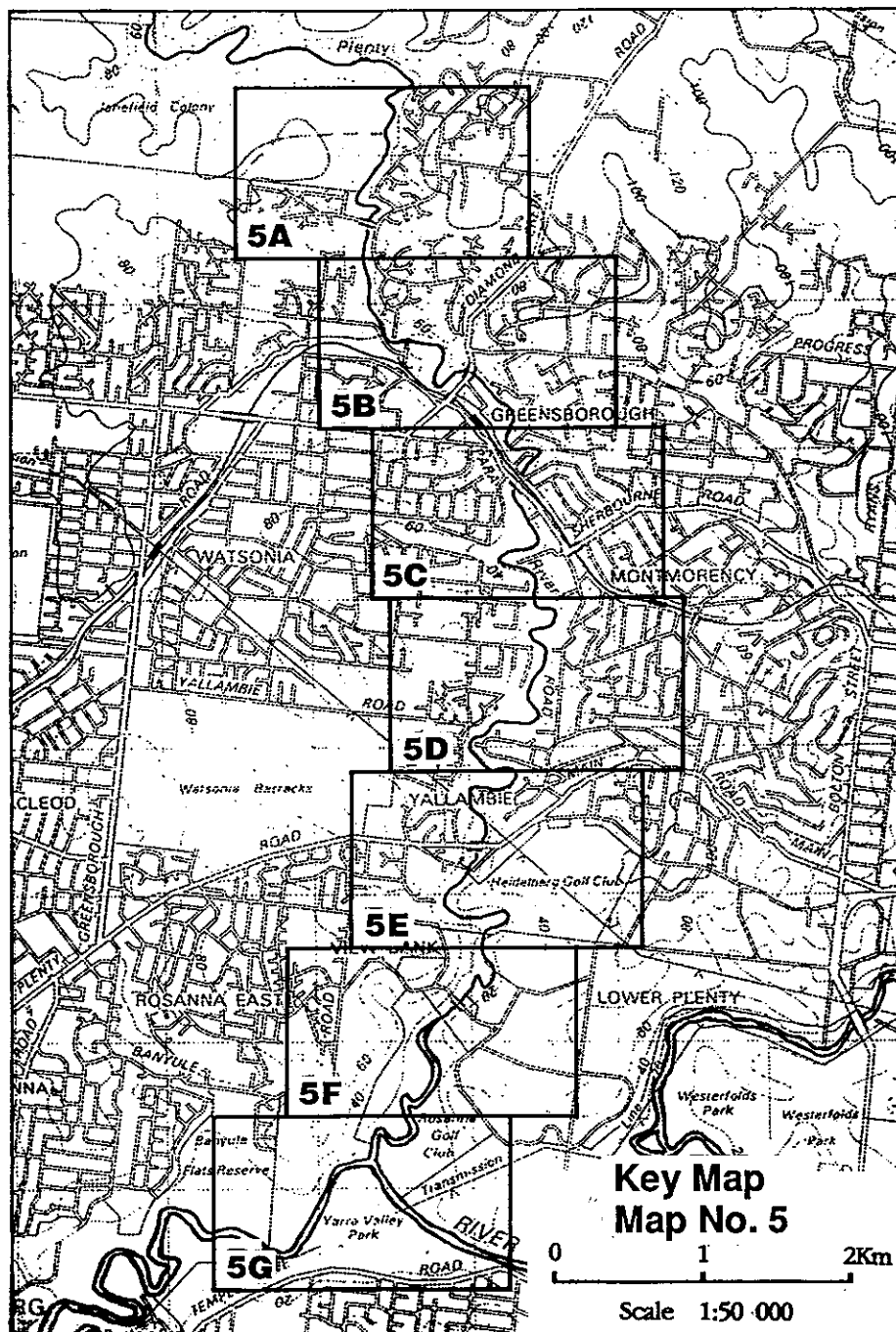
- High** Evaluate the zoning along the river to apply appropriate zoning to all existing areas of open space and areas to be acquired in the future, and evaluate zoning outside the open space areas relating to their appropriateness to land use in the valley.
- Responsibility:** Council town planning departments.
- High** Implement the controls and guidelines associated with overlay planning controls. Use education programs to increase public awareness, understanding and acceptance of the controls.
- Responsibility:** Council town planning departments.
- Ongoing** Prepare planting schemes within SEC code of practice for easements to ameliorate visual impact and ensure future works along easements for additional services keep impact to a minimum.
- Responsibility:** SEC/Gas & Fuel Corporation; council parks departments.
- High** Prepare planting programs utilising community groups to screen public buildings, recreation facilities and toilet blocks.
- Responsibility:** Council parks departments.
- High** Evaluate parks and open space management techniques in light of relative importance of indigenous species and native grasses.
- Responsibility:** Lower Plenty River Co-ordinating Committee.
- High** Ensure that an appropriate open space boundary is incorporated in redevelopment options for the Lower Plenty River treatment plant site to include the entire river frontage.
- Responsibility:** Melbourne Water and Eltham Council.

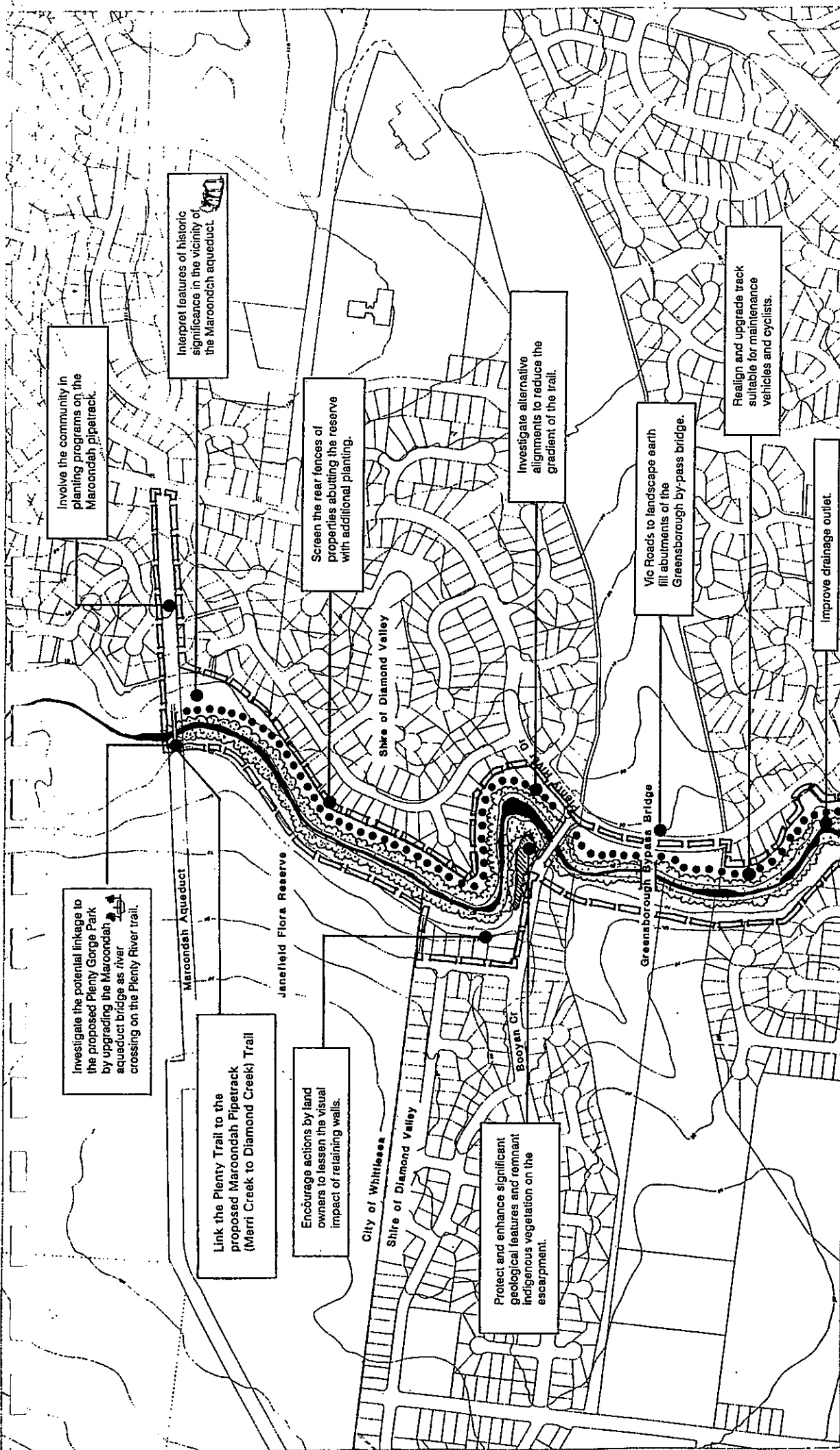
4.6 SITE PRESCRIPTIONS

This section presents seven maps covering the Lower Plenty River Concept Plan study area, showing site prescriptions for future development to enhance the river environment and recommendations for the protection of existing conditions.

The maps represent the practical on-site planning response to the issues raised in earlier sections. They are a blueprint for any future development and enhancement of the river and its surrounding environments.

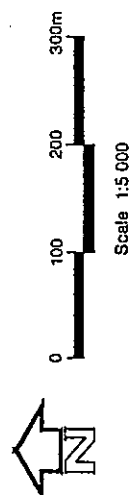
The key map below illustrates the division of the study area and a common legend appears for all maps. It is assumed that in all of the sites with a river frontage, a strip along the river averaging fifteen metres on both banks is zoned Riparian Conservation.



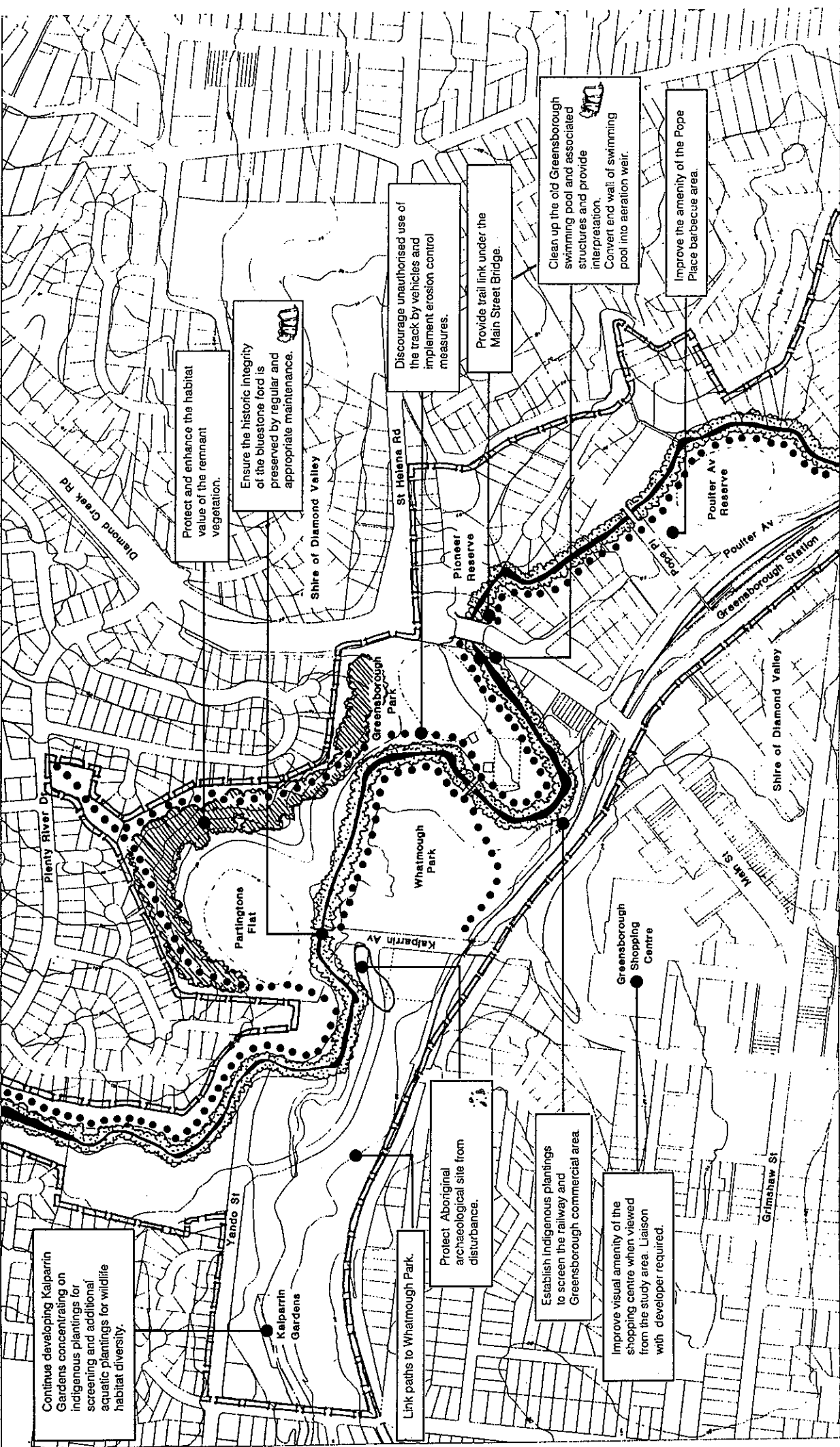


LOWER PLENTY RIVER CONCEPT PLAN

Site Prescriptions



- Concept Plan Boundary
- Existing trail - to conform to standard for main trail.
- Proposed trail
- Existing river crossing
- Proposed river crossing
- Proposed land acquisition
- Riparian zone - control weeds, remove willows & plant indigenous species.
- Remnant vegetation - control weeds, plant indigenous species.
- Archaeological site
- Scar tree
- Historic site

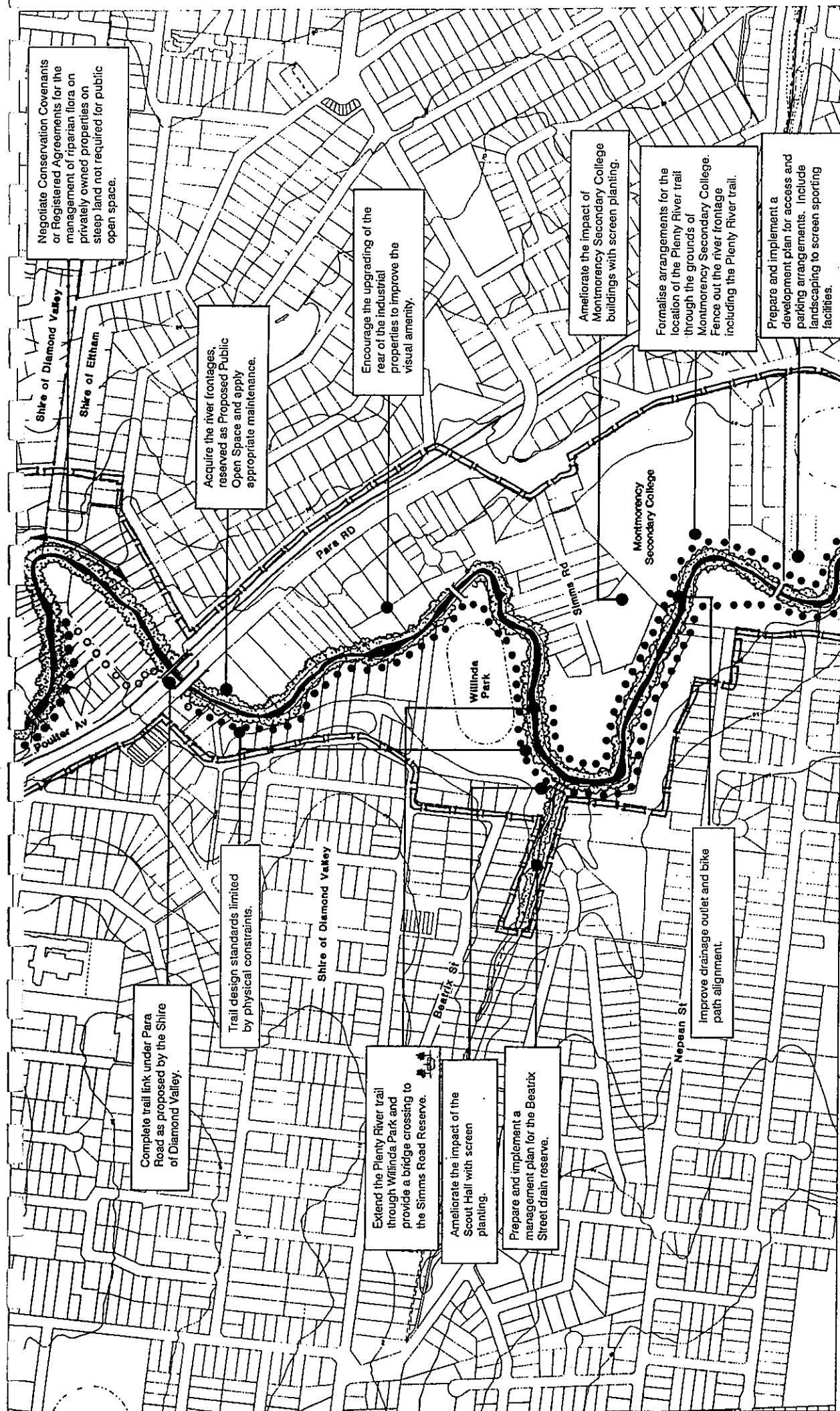


LOWER PLENTY RIVER CONCEPT PLAN

Site Prescriptions

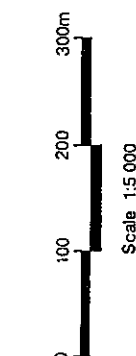


- Concept Plan Boundary
- Existing trail - to conform to standard for main trail.
- Proposed trail
- Existing river crossing
- Proposed river crossing
- Riparian zone - control weeds, remove willows & plant indigenous species.
- Remnant vegetation - control weeds, plant indigenous species.
- Aboriginal archaeological site
- Scar tree
- site

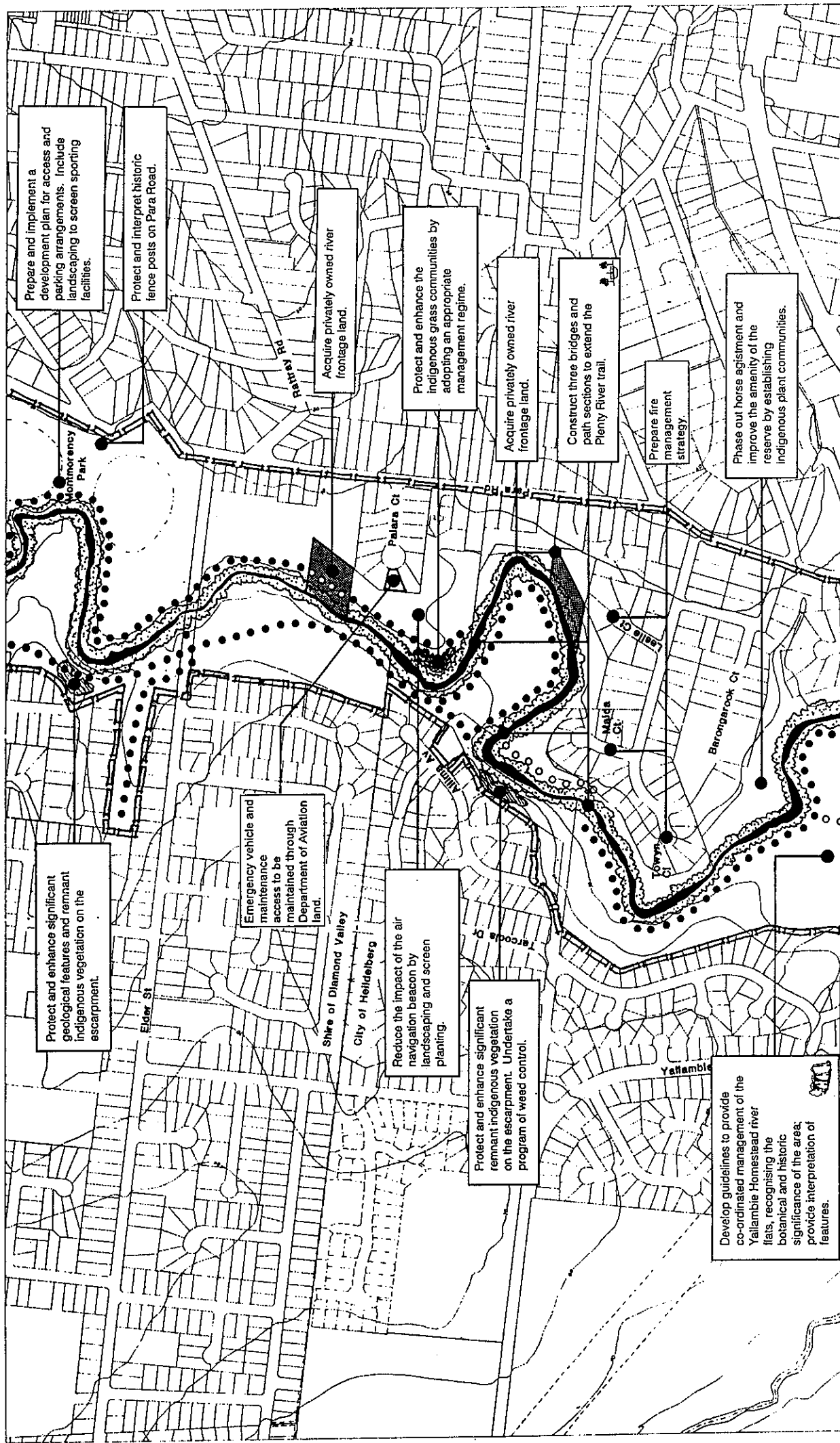


LOWER PLENTY RIVER CONCEPT PLAN

Site Prescriptions



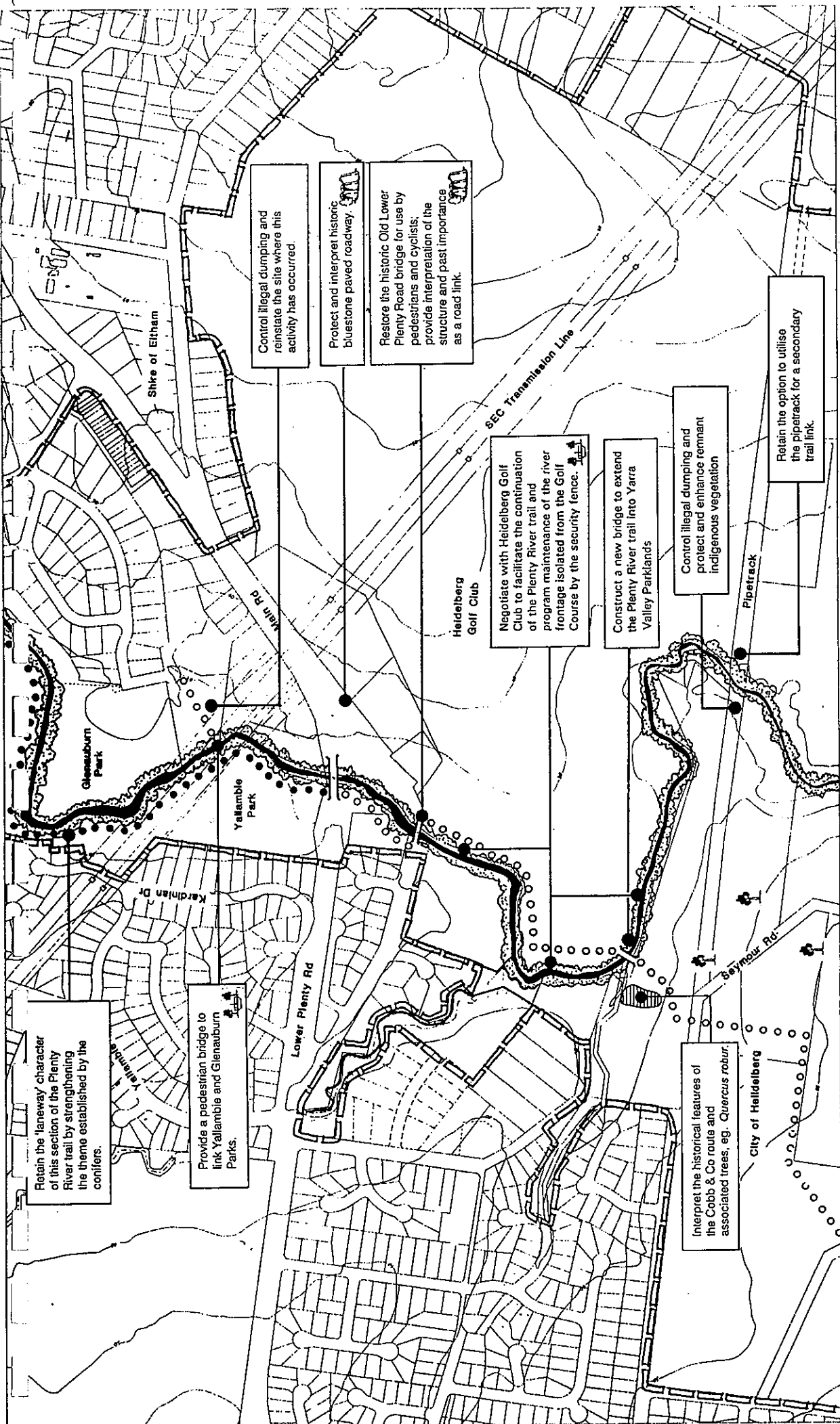
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|--|---|--|---|
| | Concept Plan Boundary | | Riparian zone - control weeds, remove willows & plant indigenous species. |
| | Existing trail - to conform to standard for main trail. | | Remnant vegetation - control weeds, plant indigenous species. |
| | Proposed trail | | archaeological site |
| | Existing river crossing | | Scar tree |
| | Proposed river crossing | | Historic site |
| | Proposed land acquisition | | |



LOWER PLENTY RIVER CONCEPT PLAN

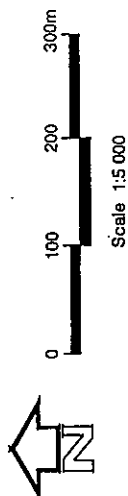
Site Prescriptions

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|--|---|--|---|
| | Concept Plan Boundary | | Riparian zone - control weeds, remove willows & plant indigenous species. |
| | Existing trail - to conform to standard for main trail. | | Remnant vegetation - control weeds, plant indigenous species. |
| | Proposed trail | | archaeological site |
| | Existing river crossing | | Scar tree |
| | Proposed river crossing | | site |
| | Proposed road access | | |

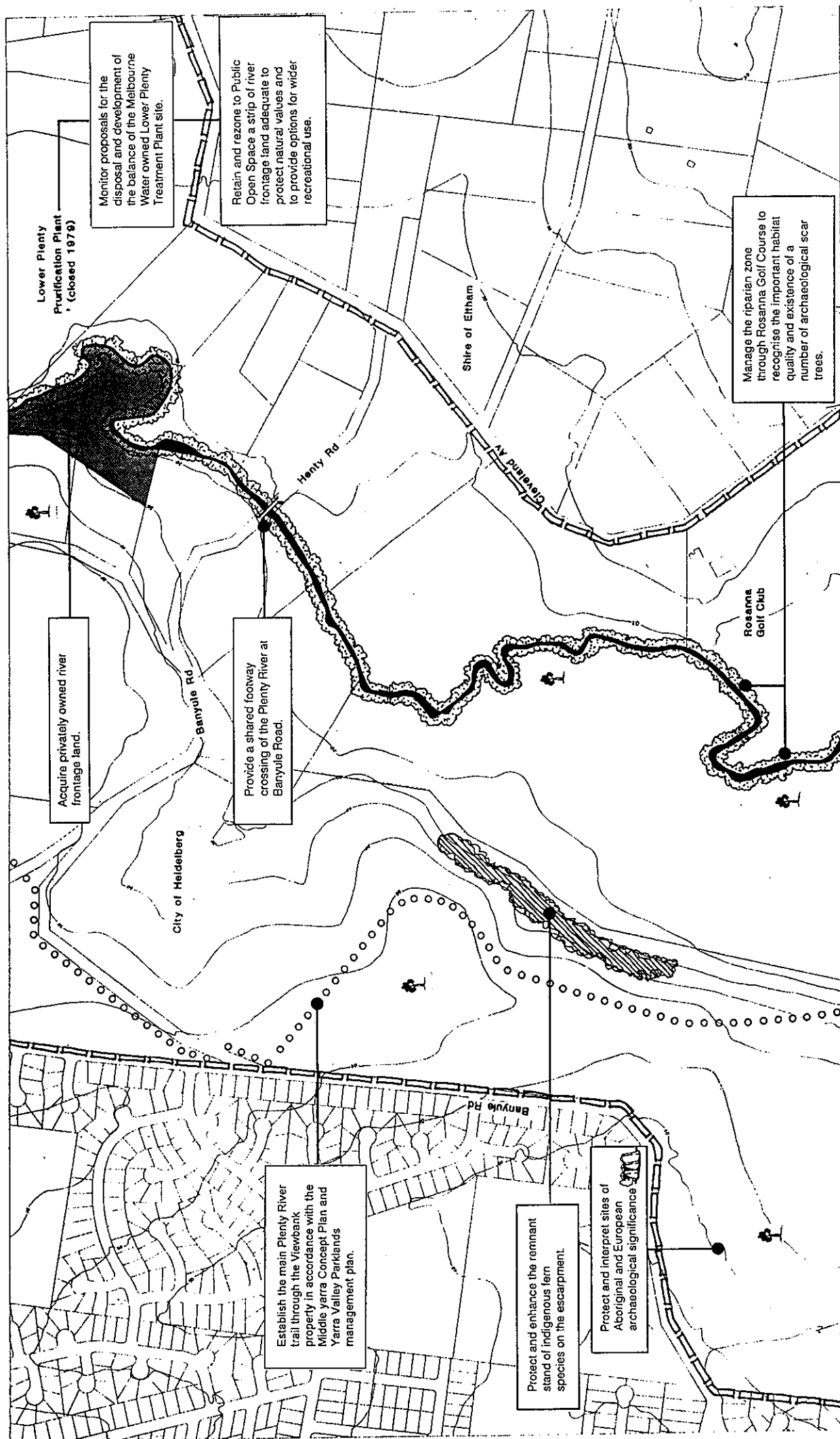


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Site Prescriptions

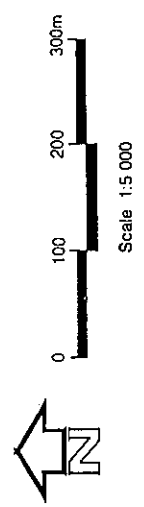


- Concept Plan Boundary
- Existing trail - to conform to standard for main trail.
- Proposed trail
- Existing river crossing
- Proposed river crossing
- Proposed land acquisition
- Riparian zone - control weeds, remove willows & plant indigenous species.
- Remnant vegetation - control weeds, plant indigenous species.
- archaeological site
- Scar tree
- Historic site

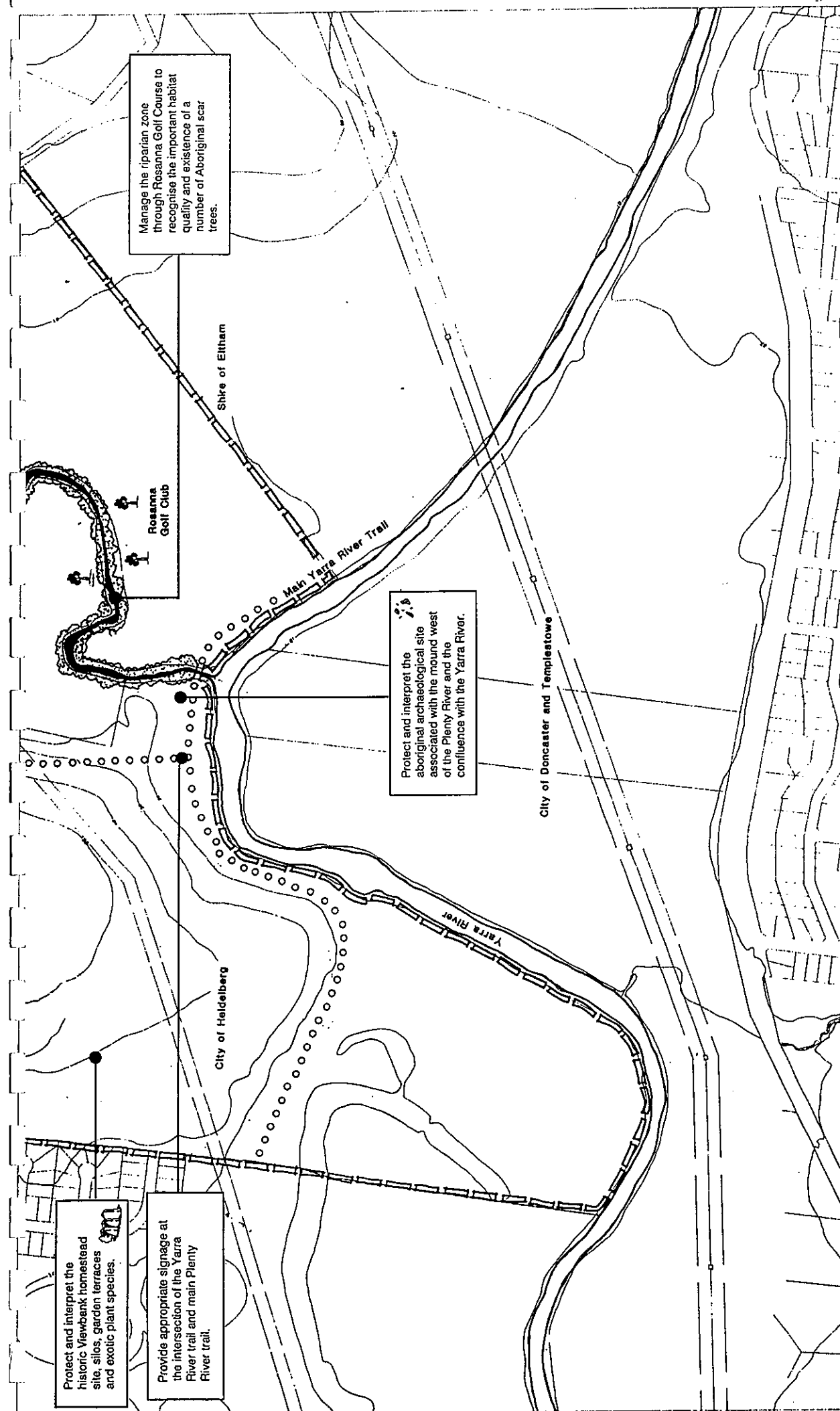


LOWER PLENTY RIVER CONCEPT PLAN

Site Prescriptions



- | | | | |
|--|---|--|---|
| | Concept Plan Boundary | | Riparian zone - control weeds, remove willows & plant indigenous species. |
| | Existing trail - to conform to standard for main trail. | | Remnant vegetation - control weeds, plant indigenous species. |
| | Proposed trail | | archaeological site |
| | Existing river crossing | | Scar tree |
| | Proposed river crossing | | Historic site |
| | Proposed land acquisition | | |



- | | | | |
|--|---|--|---|
| | Concept Plan Boundary | | Riparian zone - control weeds, remove willows & plant indigenous species. |
| | Existing trail - to conform to standard for main trail. | | Remnant vegetation - control weeds, plant indigenous species. |
| | Proposed trail | | archaeological site |
| | Existing river crossing | | Scar tree |
| | Proposed river crossing | | Historic site |
| | Proposed land acquisition | | |



Shared footpath in the vicinity of Yallambie Park

5 IMPLEMENTATION

This chapter deals with ways of implementing the concept plan through the co-ordinated activities of various agencies.

5.1 MANAGEMENT/MAINTENANCE RESPONSIBILITIES

At present the river corridor land is in both public and private ownership. Public land is owned by Melbourne Water, Melbourne Parks and Waterways and local councils. River corridor land is managed by:

- **Melbourne Parks and Waterways** manages areas of the valley in the Yarra Valley Parklands and small isolated parcels upstream.
- **Melbourne Water** has responsibility for the maintenance of the river system for flood mitigation and drainage, sewerage and water supply reticulation, and planning for the regional open space needs of the community.
- **Local government** manages reserves and land adjacent to the river as indicated on Map 5 in the *Resource Document*. As councils are major landowners within the river corridor, their land management practices will be particularly important. The concept plan study area encompasses three municipalities, each responsible for administering its planning scheme, local recreation developments, local drainage and maintenance works, and local roads.

Each council is responsible for considering planning applications which may affect the river and its tributaries and therefore councils will play a most important part in ensuring the implementation of this concept plan. Councils also have important powers in that they have the ability to prepare amendments to their local planning schemes. The implications of this are that councils will need to ensure that all proposed applications and amendments are in accordance with the concept plan.

Other authorities/agencies with specific management and maintenance responsibility for the river valley include the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Environment Protection Authority, Metropolitan Fire Brigade, Country Fire Authority, Vic Roads and the State Electricity Commission. Appendix A provides an outline of the responsibilities of Government agencies for river-related matters.

5.2 AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES FOR CONCEPT PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

The most urgent priorities for action for the Lower Plenty are:

- to establish a continuous open space system extending from the Yarra Valley Parklands to the proposed Plenty Gorge Parklands;
- to provide a continuous linear trail system along the entire length of the Lower Plenty involving new and upgraded paths and river crossings;
- to rehabilitate and conserve indigenous riparian vegetation involving removal of invasive exotic species and planting of indigenous species;
- to rehabilitate and continue to manage the river itself involving litter removal and control, and programs to improve water quality; and
- to create informal recreational opportunities for walking, cycling, and generally observing birds, plants and animals.

The successful implementation of the concept plan will depend on the co-ordination of the activities of the various State and local Government agencies and community groups. While the **Lower Plenty River Co-ordinating Committee** will have a direct mandate to co-ordinate the implementation of the key prescriptions/actions of the concept plan, all agencies should review Chapter 4 and develop programs for the staged implementation of prescriptions/actions according to priorities identified.

5.3 COMMUNITY INFORMATION AND INVOLVEMENT

The community has contributed significantly to the concept planning process with 500 local resident surveys returned (see summary in Chapter 5 of the *Resource Document*), and several individual submissions made concerning the release of the *Resource Document*. Community responses have been used in the design of the prescriptions for implementation in this concept plan and it is evident from the actions above that the community will play a significant role in river rehabilitation through local government and Melbourne Water programs.

There are various community groups operating within the study area. These groups are non-government, non-profit organisations established to meet important local and social needs. Groups such as the Lower Plenty River Support Group and the Warringal Conservation Society, although having no direct management role, provide an important resource and community interface which is vital to the implementation of the concept plan.

5.4 STATUTORY CONTROLS

The study area is covered by the local planning schemes of the City of Heidelberg and the Shires of Eltham and Diamond Valley. Each of these councils is the responsible authority for its scheme, and the Minister for Planning is the ultimate planning authority for the Melbourne Metropolitan Region.

A range of zones cover the study area from Residential and Industrial to Conservation A zones, and Public Open Space and Proposed Public Open Space reservations which dominate much of the land along the river. Zoning in some areas limited the development of a continuous open space corridor. However, recently some zone boundaries in the concept plan area were amended to be consistent with the plan.

The creation of a continuous open space corridor is a major objective of this concept plan and is the thrust of many of the management prescriptions.

In order to create continuous open space with linear access along the river valley, a number of parcels of land need to be acquired, leased or management/access rights negotiated. Chapter 6 outlines the land to be acquired and rezonings necessary to complete the open space corridor. **Appendix B** outlines the options available for management or acquisition of open space.

The overlay controls outlined in Chapter 6 are designed to ensure that future development is consistent with the objectives of the concept plan. In addition, the concept plan itself has been incorporated into the relevant local planning schemes by reference, as has been the practice with previous Yarra and Maribyrnong concept plans. This means that all policies and prescriptions contained in earlier sections have statutory support.

5.5 COST AND FUNDING

In an endeavour to arrive at an indicative cost for the concept plan, costs have been applied to the plan's key strategies. This does not include costs associated with staff time for participation in the Lower Plenty River Co-ordinating Committee or the costs associated with many individual prescriptions identified in Chapter 4. These will need to be costed by the responsible agencies.

- River rehabilitation and vegetation management
 - to include maintenance and enhancement of all existing indigenous vegetation (including native grasslands), litter control, willow removal, weed eradication, and all new planting to be implemented. This needs to be viewed as part of a co-ordinated program of maintenance for the entire length of the Plenty River.

The likely indicative cost is \$1,900,000.

- Trail development
 - to include primary trail construction, bridges for river crossings and upgrading of existing paths.

The likely indicative cost is \$900,000.

- Land acquisition
 - to include purchase of land identified for open space to create a continuous open space linkage along the waterway.

The likely indicative cost is \$250,000.

Total: \$3,050,000.

Total concept plan costs will be in the order of \$3.5 to 4 million over several years with the addition of costing for other key prescriptions.

Funding

Funding is critical to the successful implementation of the concept plan.

Each of the main agencies (MW, MPW, DCNR and local government) that manage and control public land have base level funds to undertake the day-to-day maintenance of their land.

Funds for implementing the actions and ideas for development outlined in the concept plan report will be in order of \$3.5 to 4 million and will need to be staged over many years to suit the available budgets of the responsible agencies.

Development proposals of local significance should be included on the works programs of the relevant agencies and budgeted accordingly.

Other Potential Sources of Funding

Many State and Commonwealth Government departments have programs that provide grants to organisations for purposes which are consistent with the program priorities of the particular department.

The potential source of funds will vary and will be dependent on the nature of the proposed project. For grants that require a dollar for dollar match by local government, availability may be dependent on local government funds.

Funding for the recommendations of this plan should be discussed with Melbourne Parks and Waterways Program staff and can be sought from various sources including:

- the Melbourne Parks and Waterways Program;
- local government and the Federal Government;
- Department of Conservation and Natural Resources; and
- organisations such as Greening Australia.

5.6 MONITORING PROGRAM

A monitoring program is required to monitor both the effectiveness of the implementation of the concept plan and to identify any changes in the environmental quality of the Lower Plenty River. The objectives of the monitoring program will be to:

1. monitor the implementation of the agreed actions and attainment of the overall objectives of the concept plan;
2. monitor changes and long term trends in environmental conditions; and
3. regularly report on the monitoring program.

The achievement of each of these objectives is discussed below.

OBJECTIVE 1

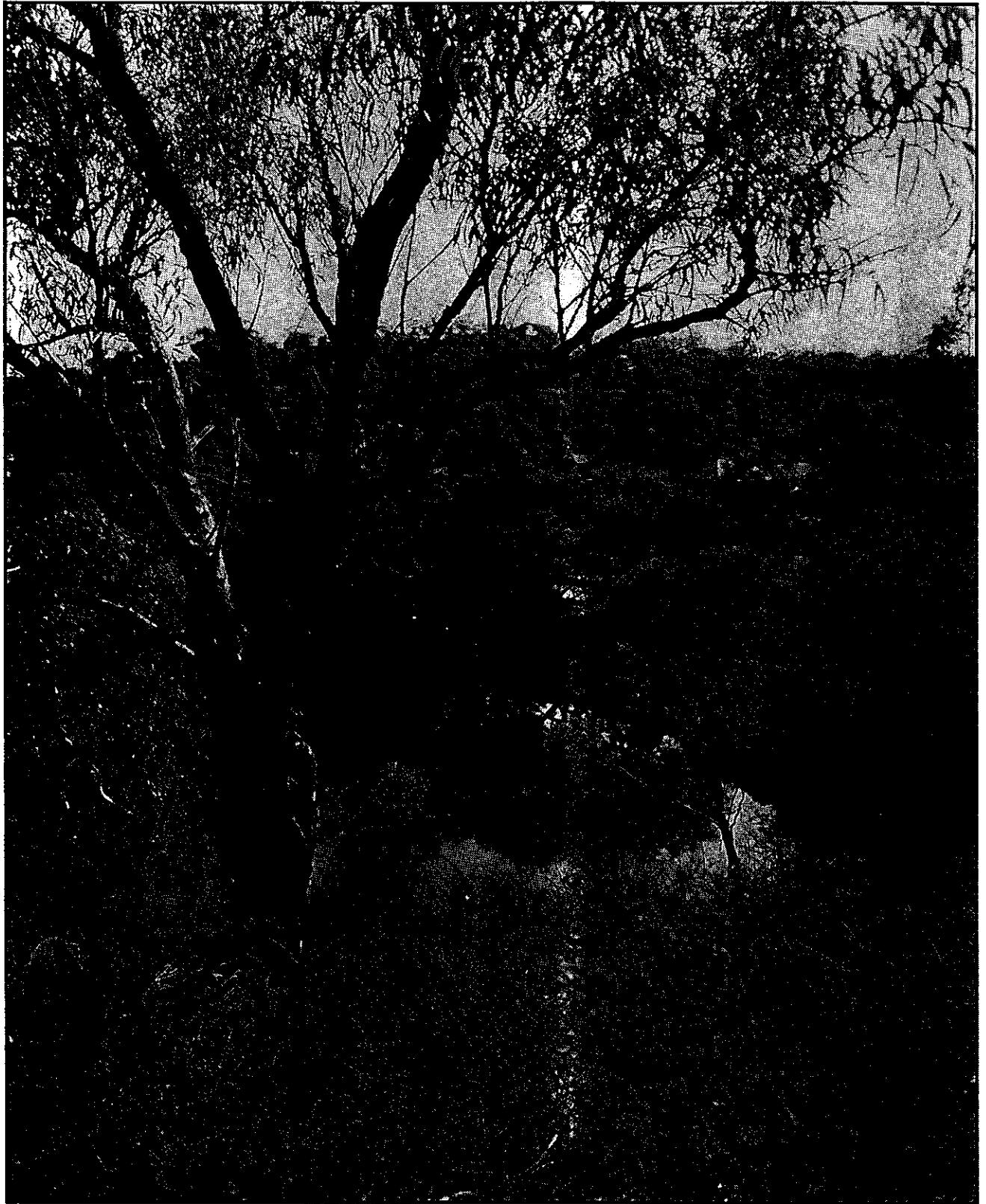
To achieve the first objective requires identification of the relevant agencies and programming of the actions that are the agency's responsibility. It would be appropriate for this task to be undertaken by a co-ordinating group. It is suggested that this co-ordinating group be the Lower Plenty River Co-ordinating Committee which is to be established as one of the key strategies of the concept plan.

OBJECTIVE 2

Several issues have been highlighted in the concept plan as cause for concern. By using key indicators, changes and long term trends in environmental conditions related to these issues may be monitored. Key indicators provide a measure of the condition of specific features in the system and also signal broad environmental changes. The issues and key indicators requiring monitoring should be an initial task of the Lower Plenty River Co-ordinating Committee. The baseline data for many of these issues has already been collected for the concept plan. To ensure uniformity in data collection, the monitoring program should consider the guidelines as outlined in *State of the Environment Report, 1988 for Victoria's Inland Waters* (Office of the Commissioner for the Environment).

OBJECTIVE 3

The progress of the plan's implementation and the results of environmental monitoring should be published regularly, for example every twelve months and be made available for public viewing to ensure that the community is fully informed of this implementation and the changing environmental conditions. Such reporting must be in a form that is useful and concise. It would be suitable for the co-ordinating committee to prepare such a report.



The vegetation of the Lower Plenty provides a visual buffer to the urban environment.

6 PLANNING SCHEME AMENDMENTS AND PROPERTY ACQUISITIONS

Amendments to the local sections of the Heidelberg, Eltham and Diamond Valley planning schemes have been approved which:

- Formally incorporate the concept plan into each planning scheme to give statutory force to the management policies and prescriptions contained in the document.
- Introduce overlay controls, as an addition to existing zone controls, to regulate the future use and development of private land within the concept plan area in a manner consistent with the management objectives and prescriptions of the plan.
- Introduce various rezonings to:
 - provide for the negotiated acquisition by public authorities (councils, Melbourne Water, Melbourne Parks and Waterways of parcels of privately-owned land which are required to complete a linear open space corridor along the Lower Plenty; and
 - correctly reflect the public ownership status of land which has been previously acquired along the river.

6.1 OVERLAY CONTROLS

Two overlay controls have been introduced to complement the concept plan and to assist the regulation of the use and development of the Lower Plenty Region. They are:

- Floodway Management Areas; and
- Streamside Environment Areas.

The boundaries of these overlay control areas are shown on Map 6.

Floodway Management Areas

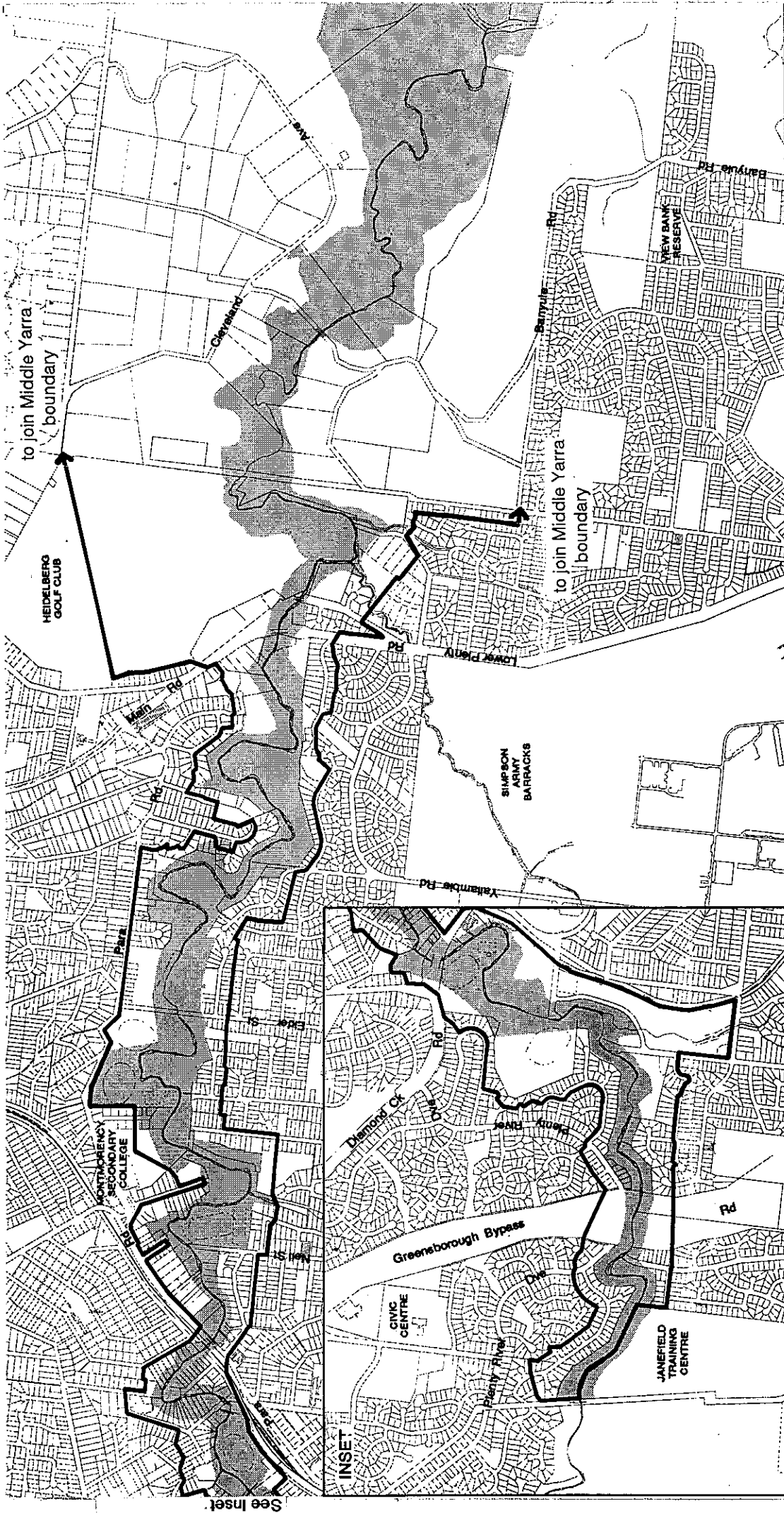
The Floodway Management Area aims to ensure that the floodplain of the Lower Plenty is protected from inappropriate forms of development and to minimise the potential effects of flooding on people and property.

The basis and nature of the Floodway Management control for the entire concept plan is consistent with the controls for the Middle Yarra.

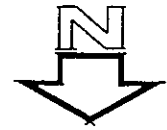
The specific objectives of the overlay control are:

- To provide for appropriate drainage and floodway management of Streamside and Floodway areas.
- To restrict development of land subject to flooding.

The controls require:



LOWER PLENTY RIVER CONCEPT PLAN



— Lower Plenty River Streamside
Environment Overlay control boundary.
(For greater detail see Planning
Scheme Amendments)

■ Floodway Management Areas

Map No. 6

- A permit to construct a building or to carry out works, with the exception of repairs and routine maintenance, and works undertaken by a public authority in relation to the provision of essential services and flood control.
- Referral of permit applications to Melbourne Water.

The controls also include guidelines for the consideration of permit applications by the Responsible Authority.

Streamside Environment Areas

This overlay control aims to protect the visual and natural qualities of the Lower Plenty and its environs.

The controls are based on the recommendations of the Lower Plenty River Visual Analysis, and recommendations of a working group comprising representatives of the three councils and the former Department of Planning and Housing.

The specific objectives of the overlay control are:

- To protect areas along the river from development that may damage the streamside environment as a visual, conservation, ecological and recreation resource.
- To promote the conservation and maintenance of the streamside environment as a visual, conservation, ecological and recreation resource.
- To protect and enhance the skyline when viewed from the river, its banks and adjoining open space.
- To encourage development in keeping with the character and appearance of the streamside environment.
- To protect areas along the river from visual intrusion caused by the inappropriate siting or appearance of buildings and works.
- To retain and enhance the 'greenery' of the area by encouraging the screening of buildings adjacent to the river and adjoining parkland.
- To encourage the extension of continuous indigenous vegetation along river and creek banks in order to provide corridors for the movement of wildlife.
- To enhance water quality and water course capacity to enable appropriate beneficial land use and water-based activities to be undertaken.
- To encourage the restoration and regeneration of degraded areas of the streamside environment.
- To encourage development to be consistent with any approved concept plan for the area.

The controls require:

- A permit to construct a building or carry out works with the exception of:
 - buildings and works in a residential zone if they are 6 metres or less above ground level;
 - repairs and routine maintenance to buildings and works;
 - works undertaken by a public authority in the provision of essential services and flood control; or
 - roadworks and associated street furniture.

- A permit to remove, destroy or lop native vegetation and exotic trees with specific exceptions.
- A permit to subdivide land.
- Referral of all permit applications for certain buildings and works and applications for the subdivision of areas greater than 5 hectares to the Aboriginal Affairs Victoria.

The controls also include guidelines for the consideration of permit applications by the Responsible Authority.

6.2 REZONINGS AND OWNERSHIP ADJUSTMENTS

Several rezonings to the planning scheme to implement aspects of the concept plan and adjust existing zonings were undertaken. These fell into two categories:

- Privately-owned land rezoned to Proposed Public Open Space (PPOS) and to be acquired by public authorities over time by negotiation; and
- Publicly-owned land which was inappropriately zoned was rezoned to Existing Public Open Space (POS) to correctly reflect its ownership status and use.

There are also several parcels of privately-owned land which are already zoned PPOS for which no rezonings are proposed, but which are intended to be acquired by public authorities over time by negotiation.

Details of all of these proposals are provided in the following sections. Their general location is shown on maps 5A to 5G and on the relevant maps in each Planning Scheme.

POS Rezoning of Existing Publicly-owned Land

The following land parcels which are owned by public authorities have been rezoned to POS to correctly reflect their ownership status and use. These included:

- Various parcels formerly zoned PPOS in Heidelberg, Eltham and Diamond Valley;
- Jedem Close drainage reserve, Heidelberg;
- Land north of Yando Street, Diamond Valley;
- Land at the rear of residential properties east of Poulter Avenue, west of Bicton Street and east of Patterson Crescent, Diamond Valley;
- Land north of Nepean Street, and at the rear of residential properties east of Baird Street, Diamond Valley;
- Land on the south side of Dobson Road, Eltham.

Privately-owned PPOS Zoned Land Proposed to be Acquired

The following privately-owned land parcels which are already zoned PPOS are proposed to be acquired by public authorities over time by negotiation, to provide a continuous linear open space link:

- Part of numbers 9-15 Main Road Lower Plenty (proposed motel site);
- The sewerage, drainage and recreation easement west of the industrial area in Para Road, Eltham;
- The sewerage, drainage and recreation easement adjacent to Paragrene Court, Eltham.

6.3 FUTURE PLANNING SCHEME AMENDMENTS

Rezoning

The following rezonings would contribute to the completion of a continuous open space link along the river but are not adequately defined proposals at this stage to be included in planning scheme amendments. These rezonings could be included in subsequent amendments following further discussion/negotiation.

- The disused Melbourne Water Purification Plant site in Cleveland Avenue/Bonds Road, Eltham may be suitable for development as a high quality, low density residential estate, provided provision is made for public access on the eastern bank of the river with suitable areas of public open space in accordance with the objectives of the Lower Plenty River Concept Plan.
- The Service Business Zone located north of The Circuit and the railway line in Greensborough, Diamond Valley is separated from the Greensborough Shopping Centre and is adjacent to existing parkland along the river. A desirable option could be to include the land in a PPOS reservation, to encourage the gradual relocation of existing businesses to the shopping centre, and allow the expansion of the parkland close to all of the central services and major transport links. The likely constraints on the proposal include the cost, the expected opposition from property owners and the potential conflict with the Greensborough District Centre Structure Plan.
- A proportion of the PPOS reservation covering Lot 2 LP 63327, 71-73 Para Road, Eltham has been acquired by the Council and should be considered for rezoning to POS at the appropriate time. The balance of the PPOS reservation is occupied by a substantial new dwelling which was recently approved. The appropriate zoning of this portion of the PPOS reservation needs to be resolved.
- Arrangements are underway to transfer a portion of the Montmorency Secondary College river frontage land from the Ministry of Education to the Shire of Eltham. Rezoning of this portion of the land to POS should be undertaken when this transfer is completed.

Controls

Site-specific controls could be considered for the protection of sites and features of archaeological, historical, cultural and scientific interest which have been identified within the concept plan area. These controls would reinforce the general management policies and prescriptions included in the concept plan (which are to be incorporated into each scheme), and the provisions of the proposed Streamside Environment Areas overlay.

However, for various reasons, it would be premature to include controls in the proposed amendments at this stage.

- A shire-wide conservation study is currently underway in Eltham which will result in a proposed amendment to include additional sites and features within existing scheme controls of this type. It is considered more appropriate for the sites and features within the concept plan area to be dealt with in the context of this study and amendment.
- Controls of this type do not presently exist in the Diamond Valley Scheme. It is considered more appropriate for sites and features within the concept plan area to be considered in conjunction with the introduction of broader shire-wide controls.
- Controls presently exist in the Heidelberg Scheme, but further consideration needs to be given to broadening their scope.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Government authorities with responsibilities for river-related matters for the Lower Plenty

APPENDIX B

Options for control of open space

APPENDIX A **GOVERNMENT AUTHORITIES WITH RESPONSIBILITIES FOR RIVER** **-RELATED MATTERS FOR THE LOWER PLENTY**

Authority	Division	Responsibilities	Acts/policies
Department of Conservation and Natural Resources	Regional Management (Melbourne Region)	■ responsible for implementing policies and programs in the Melbourne Region as indicated below	<i>Conservation Forests and Lands Act 1987</i>
	Fisheries	■ for developing strategies for the conservation and protection of fish populations and their environments	<i>Fisheries Act 1958</i>
	Land Protection	■ for protection of public and private land from problem plants, animals and insects	<i>Vermin and Noxious Weeds Act 1958</i>
		■ conservation of soil and trees growing on private land	<i>Soil Conservation and Land Utilisation Act 1958</i>
		■ technical advice and assistance to land managers and the public	Decade of Landcare Tree Victoria Program
	National Parks and Public land	■ monitor the management of parks and reserves designated under the Act	<i>National Parks Act 1975</i> <i>Crown Land Reserves Act 1978</i>
Office of the Environment *** Reporting to the Minister for Conservation and Environment	Flora and Fauna Division	■ for improving the conservation status of threatened flora and fauna and ecological communities	<i>Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988</i>
		■ for the conservation of wildlife on public and private land	<i>Wildlife Act 1975</i>
Office of the Environment *** Reporting to the Minister for Conservation and Environment	Environment	■ administers programs promoting conservation and protection of the environment	State Conservation Strategy 1987

Authority	Division	Responsibilities	Acts/policies
Aboriginal Affairs Victoria *reporting to the Minister for Conservation and Environment		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ ensure the preservation and protection of site of importance associated with Aboriginal history and culture, and early European settlement 	<i>Archaeological and Aboriginal Relics Preservation Act 1972</i> <i>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Heritage Protection Act 1984</i>
Melbourne Water *reporting to the Minister for Water Resources	Yarra Region	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ for the bed and banks of watercourses within the metropolitan drainage boundary 	<i>MMBW Act 1958</i> <i>Drainage of Land Act 1975</i>
Melbourne Parks and Waterways *reporting to the Minister for Conservation and Environment	Parks and Waterways Program and Parks Division	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ development of an integrated parkland system for the Greater Melbourne area ■ management of Yarra Valley Parklands 	MOs Plan Yarra Valley Park Management Plan
Department of Planning and Development	Regional Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ for all planning matters associated with statutory and strategic land use 	<i>Planning and Environment Act 1987</i>
	Growth Areas and Metropolitan Fringe Branch and Heritage Branch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ for the supervision of studies into the impact of development proposals of the environment 	Metropolitan Strategy 1987 Native Vegetation Control
Historic Buildings Council *(statutory authority under DPD)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ protection of Victoria's built heritage 	<i>Historic Buildings Act 1981</i>
Environment Protection Authority *(statutory authority reporting to the Minister for Conservation and Environment)	Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ prevention and control of noise, land, air and water pollution 	State Environment Protection Policies
	Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ development of policies and standards for protection and improvement of the environment 	<i>Environment Protection Act 1970</i> <i>Litter Act</i>

Authority	Division	Responsibilities	Acts/policies
Victorian Conservation Trust	Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ allows for conservation covenants over private property 	<i>Victorian Conservation Trust Act 1972</i>
Metropolitan Fire Brigade		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ fire prevention and control 	
Country Fire Authority		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ fire prevention and control 	
Vic Roads		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ traffic noise policy ■ roadside management/maintenance and bridge construction 	
State Electricity Commission		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ management of transmission line easements over river valleys 	
Local government		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ refer to discussion on page 47 	

APPENDIX B

OPTIONS FOR CONTROL OF OPEN SPACE

Open space may be acquired and/or managed by:

1. Reservation of land for public open space and the purchase of the land by the public authority responsible for establishing the open space system;
2. Where land development is consistent with the concept plan, appropriate rezoning could be allowed with subsequent transfer of identified open space to the responsible authority. The Melbourne Open Space Plan states that "...transferring these linear open spaces to public ownership at the time of subdivision will also be sought.";
3. Agreement with private land owners regarding the use of their land; or
4. Conservation Covenants or Registered Agreements.

Although covenants are voluntary agreements, the terms they contain can nevertheless be comprehensive and cover such matters as land management, the keeping of animals, buildings to be erected, vehicle access and vegetation removal. It is possible to control all activities which may damage or destroy the natural attributes of the land. Conservation covenants attached to the land are binding on the owners once approved by the Minister for Planning. Officers of the Victorian Conservation Trust have the ability to enter the land with permission to check its condition. Enquiries about conservation covenants should be directed to the Trust.

Registered agreements can be entered into between the property owner, a responsible authority and any other body, such as either Melbourne Water or Melbourne Parks and Waterways. Such agreements are normally entered into under Section 173 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and become binding under Section 181 of that act. The agreement is attached as a binding covenant to the title of the land.

