Yarrawonga Weir (Victorian foreshores of Lake Mulwala) Recreational Area Management Plan

August 2025



Goulburn-Murray WATER

Document Ref: #A5444728

Contents

Acknowledgement to Country	3
About Goulburn-Murray Water (GMW)	4
Introduction	5
Recreational Area Management Plans	5
About Yarrawonga Weir (Lake Mulwala)	7
Objectives of the plan	8
Consultation	9
Location	12
Facilities available	12
Recreational activities	13
Set aside areas	16
Register of set aside areas	19
Prohibited areas	22
Temporary closures	22
Events and permits	23
Land and development opportunities	24
Occupation Licences	24
Compliance and enforcement	24
Operations and maintenance	25
Water quality management	27
Implementation plan	28

Tables

Table 1	GMW Recreational Area Activities	13
Table 2	Set aside areas	19
Table 3	Implementation plan	28

Cover Image: Courtesy of Murray Regional Tourism

Acknowledgement to Country

Goulburn-Murray Water recognises Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the First Peoples of Australia and the proud representatives of the world's oldest, living culture.

We respectfully acknowledge Elders past, present and emerging as the Traditional Custodians of the land and waters and the rich cultural connections First Peoples have across our region.

We commit to building meaningful partnerships that create value for Traditional Owners and Aboriginal communities through genuine engagement and collaboration.

We recognise the Yorta Yorta Nation Aboriginal Corporation as the Registered Aboriginal Party within the Yarrawonga Weir (Lake Mulwala) region and acknowledge their rights as the Traditional Owners of land and waters, as outlined in their Agreements with the State of Victoria.

About Goulburn-Murray Water (GMW)

GMW is Australia's largest rural water provider, managing the storage, delivery and drainage systems for 70 per cent of Victoria's stored water resources, 50 per cent of Victoria's underground water supplies and 35 per cent of Victoria's unregulated water resources.

GMW services a region of 68,000 square kilometres, bordered by the Great Dividing Range to the south, the River Murray to the north and stretching from Corryong in the east to Nyah in the west.

Recreational areas managed by GMW are popular destinations for local communities and Victorian and interstate visitors to connect with water and the natural environment, to undertake a variety of recreational activities. Since 2021, an average of almost 2.5 million people visit determined recreational areas managed by GMW each year.

GMW plays a crucial role in managing the Victorian recreational areas at Yarrawonga Weir (Lake Mulwala). The development of the Yarrawonga Weir (Victorian foreshores of Lake Mulwala) Recreational Area Management Plan (the plan) aims to balance the needs of GMW customers, the environment and recreational opportunities.

Introduction

The purpose of the Yarrawonga Weir (Victorian foreshores of Lake Mulwala) Recreational Area Management Plan (the plan) is to provide clear operational guidelines for managing recreational activities on the Victorian foreshore of Lake Mulwala while minimising impacts on water quality, the environment, cultural heritage values, and GMW assets and operations.

The plan provides a comprehensive and practical framework for GMW to manage recreational activities on the Victorian foreshores of Lake Mulwala in a way that aims to protect the natural environment, maintain water quality, provide opportunity for Cultural Practices for Traditional Owners, and support the safe enjoyment by visitors.

Key values referenced in the development of the plan include:

- Environmental protection
- Recreational opportunities
- Cultural heritage
- Economic benefits, and
- Community engagement.

The plan details permitted recreational activities, management objectives, designated set-aside areas to balance use and conservation, and highlights the variety of stakeholders involved in the management of the Victorian public recreation areas of Lake Mulwala. It references the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action's (DEECA) guidance materials to ensure sustainable use and the protection of water resources.

Recreational Area Management Plans

The *Water (Recreational Area) Regulations* 2023 (the regulations) apply to approximately 40 water storages across Victoria. These storages have been determined as recreational areas by the Minister for Water in accordance with section 122ZA of the *Water Act* 1989.

The regulations provide for the control, management and use of recreational areas and for infringement offences and penalties. These infringement penalties were not available in the superseded Model By-Law: Recreational Areas 2012. The regulations came into operation in August 2023, replacing GMW's Recreational Area By-Law. A key feature of the regulations is the requirement for water corporations to develop management plans for recreational areas under their jurisdiction.

The plan explains how the Victorian public recreation areas of Lake Mulwala are operationally managed under the *Water (Recreational Area) Regulations* 2023. While it is not a strategic planning

document, GMW supports and partners with agencies, councils, Traditional Owners and community groups on projects that support health, wellbeing and liveability, boost tourism and contribute to regional economic growth through improved recreational opportunities.

Water corporations are legally obligated to uphold commitments outlined under *the Traditional Owner Settlement Act* 2010 and the *Native Title Act* 1993. These obligations include actively working in partnership with the relevant Traditional Owner groups to ensure culturally appropriate and equitable outcomes.

This plan acknowledges and values the principals of self-determination and the cultural and decision-making protocols of the Yorta Yorta Nation Aboriginal Corporation and recognise that these lie outside Western governance frameworks.

For further information on the *Water (Recreational Area) Regulations* 2023 visit:

www.water.vic.gov.au/our-programs/recreational-values-of-victorias-water/recreational-area-regulations

In addition to the regulations, GMW manages the recreational use of this storage in accordance with:

- *Water Act* 1989
- *Marine Safety Act* 2010
- *Safe Drinking Water Act* 2003.

The plan serves as a guiding operational document for GMW, local communities, and stakeholders in managing recreational activities on the Victorian foreshore of Lake Mulwala. It provides clear guidelines and actions to enable the sustainable use of the recreational areas while protecting natural and cultural values.

It is intended to be a living document, to be reviewed and updated when appropriate based on the monitoring of recreational activities and in consultation with key stakeholders.

Monitoring and evaluation

The plan will be reviewed every 10 years, or sooner as needed, to assess its effectiveness and make necessary adjustments. This review process will involve:

- Traditional Owner engagement and an open feedback process based on the principles of self-determination
- Monitoring and evaluation: regularly monitoring the impact of recreational activities on the environment and water quality
- Regulatory compliance: ensuring compliance with DEECA's guidelines and other relevant regulations
- Community feedback: gathering input from local residents, recreational users, local government authorities, special interest groups and other key stakeholders.

About Yarrawonga Weir (Lake Mulwala)

Yarrawonga Weir is situated on the lands of the Yorta Yorta people and is located on the Murray River between the towns of Yarrawonga in Victoria and Mulwala in New South Wales.

The weir raises the level of the Murray River and has resulted in the water storage Lake Mulwala. Construction of the weir and offtakes took four years and was completed in 1939. The dam comprises a seven (7) metre high and 343 metre long embankment. The hydro-electric facility began operating in 1994 and has a maximum capacity of approximately 9.6 MW. In 1994, a fish lift was constructed adjacent to the power station to allow fish to travel upstream of the weir.

Lake Mulwala has a capacity of 117,500 ML. Water is released into the Yarrawonga Main Channel on the south side of the Murray River and the Mulwala Canal to the north. These two channels receive 1,900 GL per year on average, which equates to 17 per cent of the total Murray River flow.

GMW manages its own land along the foreshore and lakebed on the Victorian side of the state border, which runs approximately through the middle of the lake from east to west. This includes managing moorings and structures attached to this land. GMW also operates Yarrawonga Weir on behalf of the Murray-Darling Basin Authority (MDBA).

Transport for New South Wales (NSW) is responsible for waterway management and the NSW Department of Primary Industries is responsible for managing fishing across the entire lake.

Lake Mulwala is a popular fishing, boating, and picnicking location that attracts many visitors, benefitting the local economy. The lake helps to promote physical health and social interaction, with access to natural spaces to spend quality time and take part in recreational activities. Public areas provide facilities for day visitors including toilets, boat ramps, playground, and picnic and barbecue facilities. GMW manages eight boat ramps and two recreational areas along the Victorian foreshore of Lake Mulwala.

The eight boat ramps managed by GMW are:

- Bank Street and River Road (Yarrawonga)
- Hogans Road, Campbellfield Drive and Fenwick Place (Woodlands)
- Paisley Street, Pike Street and Majors Creek (Bundalong).

The recreational areas managed by GMW are:

- Majors Creek Recreation Area
- Weir Recreation Area.

Other recreational areas along the Victorian foreshore of Lake Mulwala are managed and maintained by Moira Shire Council. Structures on GMW land along the foreshore are managed under GMW occupational licences.

Objectives of the plan

The objectives of this management plan for the Victorian recreational areas of Lake Mulwala are to:

- Protect the land, services and facilities in the area
- Protect and maintain water quality in waterways in the area
- Conserve and preserve flora, fauna and habitat in the area, including the biodiversity of that flora, fauna and habitat
- Protect the health and safety of visitors to the area
- Promote the enjoyment and recreation of visitors to the area
- Continue the ongoing enjoyment of Yarrawonga Weir (Lake Mulwala) by ensuring leases and licences for boating clubs, sailing clubs and other appropriate organisations delivering recreational facilities to the community are maintained and reviewed regularly
- Protect and promote Aboriginal cultural heritage and Aboriginal intangible heritage in the area
- Protect and promote any other heritage features in the area
- Facilitate the participation of Traditional Owner groups in the management of that area, including in accordance with any agreements under the *Traditional Owner Settlement Act* 2010 that apply to the area
- Ensure that the area is managed and used in a way that respects and upholds the rights and aspirations of Traditional Owner groups who have a connection to the area.

Consultation

The Yarrawonga Weir (Lake Mulwala) Recreational Area Management Plan has been developed to align with the guidance provided by DEECA in accordance with the regulations. A formalised consultation and engagement framework was imbedded in the development of the plan.

The following consultation activities were undertaken in 2024/25 to support the development of the plan:

- Consultation opportunities were promoted widely, including via GMW social media posts, media releases, the GMW website and targeted mailing lists to notify stakeholders and encourage participation and feedback on the draft plan.
- Interviews with partner agencies including Moira Shire, Indigo Shire, Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority (CMA), Victorian Fisheries Authority, and Better Boating Victoria
- Traditional Owner consultation that was determined in partnership with representatives of Yorta Yorta Nation Aboriginal Corporation as the Registered Aboriginal Party (RAP)
- Feedback was encouraged via GMW's dedicated online engagement portal yoursay@gmw. Opportunities to provide input to the draft plans included a values-based questionnaire and the ability to download and comment on the draft plans
- A summary of the feedback received was published on GMW's yoursay@gmw portal, highlighting the key themes and how this feedback has been incorporated into the plans.

What we heard

GMW engaged through face-to-face gatherings, one-on-one discussions and an online survey to understand people's connections to the land and water, personal experiences, and what they valued most about accessing Yarrawonga Weir (Lake Mulwala) for recreational purposes.

We met on-Country at Waranga Basin with representatives from Yorta Yorta Nation Aboriginal Corporation to share knowledge and identify opportunities to support Traditional Owner values, priorities and aspirations in the management of recreational areas.

The consultation highlighted that Yarrawonga Weir (Lake Mulwala) is hugely important to the local community and provides a wide range of cultural, lifestyle, health, environmental and economic benefits and contributes to the community's sense of place.

It provides an opportunity to connect to Country and draws visitors year-round. It was acknowledged that at times this results in surges in population especially on weekends. It contributes to the regional economy and serves as a multi-generational recreation destination.

Key value themes include:

- Strengthening Social Bonds: Spending time with family and friends (and in many cases with dogs), sharing experiences across generations, and celebrating family events fosters strong social connections. These activities help build a sense of community, reduce feelings of isolation, and create a supportive network.
- Promoting Lifelong Learning: Learning new skills and teaching the next generation encourages personal growth and development. This benefits individuals and enriches the community by fostering a culture of knowledge sharing and continuous improvement.
- Enhancing Mental Health: Quality time spent relaxing and escaping day-to-day pressures helps reduce stress and anxiety. Recreational activities provide a much-needed break from routine, contributing to improved mental health and overall wellbeing.
- Preserving Cultural Heritage: Participating in Cultural traditions and celebrating heritage strengthens Cultural identity and pride. It can support diversity and understanding within the community, fostering a more inclusive environment.
- Encouraging Physical Activity: Engaging in outdoor activities like walking, cycling, and water sports promotes physical health. Regular physical activity contributes to maintaining a healthy lifestyle and preventing chronic diseases.
- Fostering a Connection to Nature: Getting back to nature and basics helps individuals appreciate and protect the environment. This connection can lead to more sustainable practices and a greater sense of environmental awareness in the community.
- Creating Lasting Memories: Making memories through shared experiences enhances the quality of life. These memories contribute to a sense of belonging and continuity, enriching the community's collective history.
- Supporting Local Economy: Recreational activities attract visitors and boost local businesses, contributing to the local economy.

Key themes from engagement with Yorta Yorta include:

This plan has been developed in full recognition and support of Traditional Owner rights to self-determination and in accordance with agreements under the *Traditional Owner Settlement Act* 2010 and the *Native Title Act* 1993. It welcomes input outside Western frameworks, respecting the time and decision-making processes of the RAP.

Key themes identified in recognition of the Yorta Yorta Whole-of-Country Plan include:

- Opportunities for cultural recognition and education at recreational areas: This may include welcome and interpretive signage to be developed in consultation and approved by Yorta Yorta.
- Self-Determination and Governance: the importance of community-led decision-making.
- Environmental Stewardship: Advocating for the restoration and sustainable management of waterways, wetlands, and biodiversity.
- Cultural Heritage Protection: the need for safeguarding sacred sites, ancestral stories, and traditional knowledge systems, including language, ceremony, and ecological practices.
- Healing and Connection: emphasising the central importance of Cultural practices to healing Country and strengthening community identity.

A review of the plan can be initiated by the RAP at any time under the regulations.

Location

Yarrawonga Weir is situated on the traditional lands of the Yorta Yorta people, on the Murray River. It is between the nearby towns of Yarrawonga in Victoria and Mulwala in New South Wales. The weir forms Lake Mulwala to the east.



Figure 1 Yarrawonga Weir (Lake Mulwala) location map

Facilities available

The following facilities are available at the Victorian foreshore recreational areas of Lake Mulwala, with locations shown in **Error! Reference source not found.**.



Figure 2 Facilities

Visitors are encouraged to observe all signs and directions, and check GMW's website for up-to-date information on the Victorian foreshore recreational areas of Lake Mulwala prior to visiting at:

www.gmwater.com.au/water-operations/storages/murray/yarrawongaweir

For information on all ability facilities, please refer to the GMW website at:

www.gmwater.com.au/recreation/all-ability-facilities

Recreational activities

Public recreational areas managed by GMW are popular places for visitors to connect with water and the natural environment, and to undertake a variety of recreational activities. GMW places the highest priority on safety at the storages we manage.

The below table summarises the activities permitted at the Victorian foreshore recreation areas of Lake Mulwala, any conditions that apply and links for further information.

Table 1 GMW Recreational Area Activities

Activity	Permitted ✓ or Prohibited X	Notes
Fishing	✓	Permits, bag limits and seasonal restrictions apply. For more information visit **www.vfa.vic.gov.au** (Victoria) or **www.dpi.nsw.giv.au/fishing** (NSW)
Boating	✓	Speed and safety restrictions, and zones must be adhered to. Other restrictions may apply. Visit **Boating and marine | NSW Government** for more information.
Water skiing	✓	For licence and registration requirements see **Maritime licences | NSW Government**.
Houseboats	X	Houseboats are not permitted on Lake Mulwala.
Canoeing/ kayaking	✓	Safety requirements, including capacity limits must be adhered to.
Camping/ caravaning	X*	Camping/caravaning is prohibited on the Victorian foreshores of Lake Mulwala. Camping/caravaning is prohibited in GMW public recreation areas, foreshore or lakebed areas. *Camping/caravaning is available on the NSW side of Lake Mulwala in caravan parks and designated NSW National Parks & Wildlife Service campgrounds. Visit **www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/camping-and-accommodation/campgrounds/mulwala-campgrounds** for more information.
Campfires	X	Campfires are not permitted in GMW public recreation areas, foreshore or lakebed areas. No wood collection is permitted within GMW public recreation areas, foreshore or lakebed areas.
Picnic & barbequing	✓*	No wood fire barbeques are to be lit. *On declared days of Total Fire Ban all solid fuel barbeques, portable gas appliances and kerosene lanterns are prohibited. Electric barbeques are available at some locations.
Dogs	✓*	Dogs must be on a lead or under effective control at all times. Please clean up after your pets. Handlers are to be aware of Blue-green Algae and the risk to skin/health - water access should be managed accordingly. GMW will review localised access if issues arise. *Dogs and cats aren't permitted in Yarrawonga Regional Park (**www.parks.vic.gov.au**)

Activity	Permitted ✓ or Prohibited X	Notes
Drone flights	X*	*Conditional - permits can be obtained, please contact GMW for more information. Drone safety rules must be adhered to. For more information visit www.casa.gov.au
Bathing/ washing	X	Cleaning agents such as soap, shampoo, conditioner, toothpaste or detergent are not to be used in or near the lake.
Vehicles and trailbikes	X	Vehicles and trail bikes are only allowed on public roads above full supply level within the recreation areas and are not permitted on the exposed areas of the shores or the lakebed. All vehicles must be roadworthy, registered and users must be licensed. Road rules must be obeyed at all times.
Hunting	X	Hunting is not permitted at Yarrawonga Weir or on the Victorian foreshores of Lake Mulwala.
Prospecting, fossicking or digging	X	The removal of rocks, material or vegetation is prohibited within GMW public recreation areas.
Events	✓*	An events permit may be required. For more information, please see the 'Events and Permits' section or visit www.gmwater.com.au/recreation/event-permits

Caring for the environment

Lake Mulwala is a beautiful natural resource. To help care for the environment so that it can be enjoyed now and into the future, visitors are requested to follow a few simple steps:

- Take out your rubbish. The dumping of rubbish is prohibited and penalties apply, please take all your rubbish with you when you leave. Please consider the environment when disposing of litter. For nearby transfer stations refer to:

  www.moira.vic.gov.au/Residents/Environment/The-world-of-waste/Resource-Recovery-Centres

  www.indigoshire.vic.gov.au/Residents/My-Property/Bins-rubbish-and-recycling/Transfer-Stations
- Don't interfere with animals or their habitats, and don't feed them
- Keep to four (4) knots (under Transport for NSW navigation regulations for all Lake Mulwala waters) within 50 m of shore as boat wash can cause erosion (even in higher speed zones)
- Keep the waterway healthy by not using cleaning agents such as soap, toothpaste, shampoo, conditioner or detergent in or near the lake. They break the surface tension of the water, which reduces the oxygen levels in the water, causing harm to fish and other forms of aquatic life.
- Protect the biodiversity at Lake Mulwala. The removal of flora or fauna from GMW's public recreation areas is prohibited. Don't remove or bring in any vegetation (including harvesting of wood).

Water safety

GMW places the highest priority on safety at the storages we manage. Ensuring personal safety and adhering to posted guidance can help prevent accidents and ensure a safer experience for everyone.

Water safety messages are communicated via GMW's Water Smarts campaign and are distributed via social media, in print at the recreational areas we manage and on the GMW website.

Key themes are aimed at educating recreational users and reducing risk taking behaviours and include:

- Speed
- Lifejackets
- Boating alone
- Checking conditions
- Hazard awareness
- Consumption of alcohol, and
- Diving.

Swimming

GMW storages are not patrolled by lifeguards nor contain rescue equipment, therefore swimming is not recommended due to safety concerns.

However, it is recognised that some visitors may still engage in this activity. Visitors are encouraged to wear life jackets, not swim alone and should make themselves aware of the local dangers and risks, such as submerged objects, varying water depths and water temperature, before entering the water.

Boating safety

Transport for NSW is the boating authority for the waters of Lake Mulwala. When using the waterway, boaters need to be aware of the signage, zoning and buoyage rules in place.

For more information on the rules and guidelines in place for Lake Mulwala visit:
www.nsw.gov.au/driving-boating-and-transport/boating-and-marine



Figure 3 Yarrawonga Weir (Victorian foreshores of Lake Mulwala) Recreational Area map

Managing Yarrawonga Weir (Victorian foreshores of Lake Mulwala)

Recreational Area

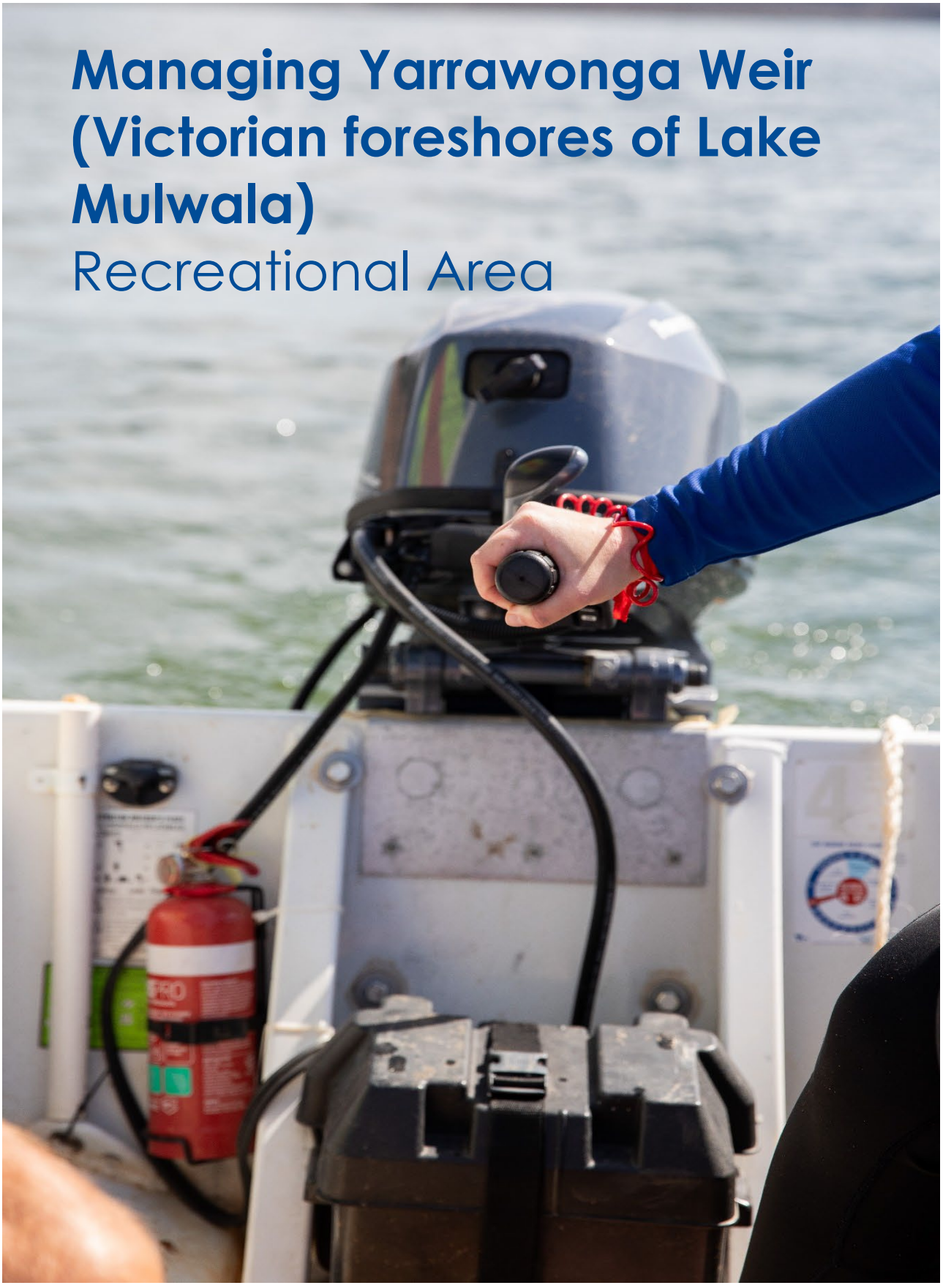


Image credit: Gab Connole

Set aside areas

To accommodate the diverse range of recreational activities that occur at Yarrawonga Weir (Lake Mulwala), GMW may use 'set aside areas' to enable flexible or tailored management of the area under the regulations while ensuring the health, safety and enjoyment of visitors.

The regulations outline that a set aside area may:

- Apply to the whole of the recreational area or a specified area
- Apply on specified days, times or periods
- Apply to a class of person, vehicle, vessel or aircraft
- Specify any conditions which must be carried out for certain activities.

Set aside areas enable the safe operation of the water storage, ensuring that water quality is maintained, on-water recreation (under Transport for NSW Waterways Regulations) can occur safely, and that conflicting or complementary recreational activities are well managed. Set aside areas for Yarrawonga Weir and the Victorian foreshores of Lake Mulwala are summarised in Table 2.

Occupation agreements for lease holders such as club sites or grazing licences may also have restrictions or conditions for public access subject to the terms of that agreement.

Publishing a determination of a set aside area

A determination of a set aside area will be published on the GMW website and there will also be signs and notices placed on-site.

It is an offence not to comply with the conditions of determinations in set aside areas. If GMW revokes or amends a set aside area, any previous sign or notice that has been displayed under the regulations must be removed or amended to reflect the revocation or amendment.

Signage for set aside areas

Signs or notices will:

- Be displayed in a manner that is likely to be seen by any person affected by the determination
- Indicate the area that is temporarily closed or set aside by the determination
- Where applicable, state the activities that are prohibited, restricted or permitted by the determination and any conditions specified in the determination.

Register of set aside areas

A record of the set aside areas at Yarrawonga Weir and the Victorian foreshores of Lake Mulwala is outlined in Table 2.

Table 2 Set aside areas

Regulation		Basis	Purpose of set aside area	Set aside area	Times or periods
14 (1)(b)	Prohibited or restricted access	(r.30(1))	Prohibited access for public safety (operational area)	• Within 200 m downstream of the weir structure • Upstream between the weir structure and the railway bridge • Weir structure and associated road • GMW Yarrawonga office depot • In the vicinity of the irrigation regulator at the entrance to the Yarrawonga Main Channel	Always
14 (1)(b)	Prohibited or restricted access	(r.30(1))	Prohibited access for public safety	All watercraft/vessels prohibited areas: • Within 200 m downstream of the weir structure • Upstream between the weir structure and the railway bridge	Always
14 (2)(h)	Areas where dogs are permitted	(r.56 (2))	Specify the area where dogs are allowed to enhance the enjoyment of the visitors to the recreational area	All areas excluding prohibited/restricted access areas	Always
14 (2)(d)	Areas for operating BBQs or fireplaces	(r.43(3))	Specify an area where BBQs are permitted	Public BBQ areas at: • Yarrawonga Foreshore Reserve • Pasley Street Boat Ramp • Hogans Road Boat Ramp • Majors Creek Rec Area	Always

Regulation		Basis	Purpose of set aside area	Set aside area	Times or periods
14 (2)(d)	Areas for operating BBQs or fireplaces	(r.43(3))	Specify an area where fireplaces are permitted	None	Always
14 (2)(e)	Areas where campfires are permitted	(r.44(2))	Specify an area where campfires are permitted	None	Always
14 (2)(j)	Areas where livestock is permitted	(r.62(2))	Specify areas where livestock is permitted	Livestock is permitted in areas where a grazing licence is held	Always
14 (2)(k)	Areas where fishing is prohibited	(r.72(2))	Specify area where fishing is prohibited	The following areas: • Within 200 m downstream of the weir structure • Upstream between the weir structure and the railway bridge • In the vicinity of the irrigation regulator at the entrance to the Yarrawonga Main Channel	Always
14 (2)(l)	Areas where swimming is prohibited	(r.73(3))	Specify an area where swimming is prohibited	The following areas: • Within 200 m downstream of the weir structure • Upstream between the weir structure and the railway bridge • In the vicinity of the irrigation regulator at the entrance to the Yarrawonga Main Channel	Always
14 (2)(m)	Areas where camping is permitted	(r.74(3))	Specify where camping is permitted	None	Always
14 (2)(p)	Areas where vehicles, vessels and aircraft are permitted	(r.79(3))	Specify an area where vessels are permitted	All areas except prohibited areas: • Within 200 m downstream of the weir structure • Upstream between the weir structure and the railway bridge In the vicinity of the irrigation regulator at the entrance to the Yarrawonga Main Channel.	Always

Regulation		Basis	Purpose of set aside area	Set aside area	Times or periods
14 (2)(p)	Areas where vehicles, vessels and aircraft are permitted	(r.79(3))	Specify an area where vehicles are permitted	Designated parking areas and public roadways only. Vehicles are not permitted on exposed areas, foreshores or lakebed.	Always
14 (2)(s)	Areas where vessels, or classes of vessels may be used	(r.86(2))	Specify area where vessels may be used	All areas except prohibited areas: • Within 200 m downstream of the weir structure • Upstream between the weir structure and the railway bridge • In the vicinity of the irrigation regulator at the entrance to the Yarrawonga Main Channel. And opposite the Yarrawonga Rowing Club along Botts Road, as indicated by buoys and signage.	Always
14 (3)(b)	Prohibited or restricted access *(Access by arrangement only).*	N/A	Continue the ongoing enjoyment of the recreational area by ensuring leases and licences delivering recreational facilities to the community are maintained.	All leased and licenced areas for caravan parks, marinas, clubs and other appropriate organisations.	Always

Prohibited areas

Access is prohibited at all times at the following areas to protect the water supply infrastructure and to minimise risks to public safety:

- Within 200 m downstream of the weir structure
- Upstream between the weir structure and the railway bridge
- Weir structure and associated road
- GMW Yarrawonga office depot
- In the vicinity of irrigation regulator at entrance to the Yarrawonga Main Channel

All watercraft/vessels are also prohibited immediately upstream and downstream of the weir on the Murray River, as indicated by buoys and signage. This, as with all waterway management, is the responsibility of Transport for NSW to enforce.

Temporary closures

Temporary closures of GMW recreational areas may occur on occasion as outlined in the regulations.

A temporary closure will primarily occur to:

- Support the safe management of events such as floods and fires
- Allow for operational maintenance works to take place
- Allow for Cultural Heritage investigations to take place if required
- Manage amenities and access during periods of low water levels
- Manage safety during periods of high water levels
- Rationalise maintenance requirements during times of low visitation
- Manage safety during water quality events such as algal blooms.

In the event of an immediate temporary closure, GMW will:

- Publish the determination of a temporary closure on the GMW website and promote it through social media
- Where possible, display signs or notices on-site providing details of the temporary closure determination
- Publish a notification on the GMW website.

All other temporary closures will be communicated with impacted parties a minimum of two weeks prior to the closure.

Events and permits

GMW storages and waterways are a great place to host personal, community or commercial events.

GMW manages events and permits for Yarrawonga Weir and some of the Victorian lands of Lake Mulwala only. Moira Shire Council manages event permits for the Main Foreshore at Yarrawonga and the Yacht Club, Rowing Club and Hogans Road recreational areas.

All on-water activities and events are permitted through Transport for NSW.

An application for a GMW event permit must be submitted to GMW no more than 12 months prior to the proposed event date. The timeframe for approving an event permit can vary, but we recommend applying for your permit at least 90 days before the event. This will ensure that all appropriate arrangements have been considered prior to your event such as details of communications, relevant permits, and risk management. Incomplete information will delay this process.

An event permit application form must be submitted to GMW for any event including but not limited to:

- An organised entertainment, sporting or recreation event or show
- A rally
- An organised boating event or regatta (Victorian land-based component only – on-water activities must be submitted to Transport for NSW)
- A festival, tour, fete or public meeting
- A demonstration, training class or similar event
- A wedding or similar ceremony
- A private function of 30 or more people.

GMW's Event Permits Policy and Procedure recognises the differing requirements and responsibilities associated with standard and commercial events to allow for better decision making, outcomes and pricing which is reflective of the proposed event. A Commercial Pricing Strategy will be developed in 2026-27.

For more information and to apply for an event permit, visit:

www.gmwater.com.au/recreation/event-permits

Land and development opportunities

GMW regularly reviews opportunities to maximise its landholdings. This is generally by way of leasing, licensing or transfer where the land is deemed surplus to operational needs.

From time-to-time GMW will release an Expression of Interest (EOI) for targeted parcels or proposed commercial activities on land and/or on water. Anyone wishing to register for upcoming opportunities can do so by submitting their interest via our dedicated procurement website at **https://app.eprocure.com.au/gmwater/home/public**

Selecting “Classification” then “Property and Realty Services”.

For further assistance please contact Property Services on 1300 013 357 or e-mail **eoi@gmwater.com.au**

Occupation Licences

In areas around some of the GMW storages, GMW may allow structures and activities that require an Occupational Licence to be obtained from GMW.

Adjoining landowners may apply for an Occupation Licence to construct and/or keep privately owned structures for recreational purposes on foreshore land owned or managed by GMW. In some areas there may also be an opportunity to apply for an Occupation Licence to graze livestock or seek formal access over GMW-owned or managed land.

For more information and to apply for an Occupational Licence, visit the Occupation Licences page on GMW’s website at **www.gmwater.com.au**

Compliance and enforcement

The *Water (Recreational Area) Regulations* 2023 introduced the ability for GMW to issue Penalty Infringement Notices (PINs) for offences under the regulations.

Water corporations can issue infringement penalties to users undertaking activities that are in breach of the regulations. These include activities that may risk land and water services, water quality, the environment, or the health, safety and enjoyment of other users within a recreational area.

Operations and maintenance

Water supply operations and infrastructure

GMW harvests and stores water entitlements for its customers in accordance with the requirements set out in the *Water Act* 1989.

In addition to flows passing to the Murray River downstream, water is diverted to the Yarrawonga Main Channel on the south side of the Murray River and the Mulwala Canal to the north.

The Yarrawonga Main Channel provides irrigation water to the Murray Valley Irrigation Area and has a capacity of 3,100 ML/day.

The Mulwala Canal supplies the Berriquin, Denimein, Deniboota and Wakool irrigation districts in southern New South Wales and has a capacity of 10,000 ML/day.

GMW also delivers water for the Victorian and Commonwealth Environmental Water Holders who make decisions about watering sites with the aim of maintaining healthy environments.

Further information on the operations of Yarrawonga Weir (Lake Mulwala) can be found on the GMW and MDBA websites:

www.gmwater.com.au/water-operations/storages/murray/yarrawongaweir

www.mdba.gov.au/water-management/infrastructure/weirs-and-locks/yarrawonga-weir

Maintenance of water supply and hydro-electric infrastructure (where applicable) at GMW-operated storages is primarily undertaken by GMW storage operations staff. Maintenance activities include:

- Regular inspection of all water supply infrastructure
- Operation and maintenance of key outlet works
- Aquatic weed control
- Perimeter land management – erosion control and tree management.

Recreational facilities and assets

Recreational facilities and assets include but are not limited to toilet amenities, boat ramps, public access tracks, barbeques, and picnic furniture.

GMW has developed internal Operation and Maintenance (O&M) Manuals for recreation and land assets at each water storage. The O&M manuals include a description of each recreation and land asset, the associated standard operating and maintenance procedures and a maintenance schedule for storage staff to follow.

GMW storage staff undertake regular patrols and maintenance programs of GMW's public recreation areas as part of their O&M processes. The manuals and patrols support the management and reliability of GMW's recreational assets, ensuring they are reliable, operational, and safe for public use, and enable monitoring for environmental impacts such as rubbish dumping.

Vegetation management is undertaken through local maintenance programs by both GMW staff and trained arborists as necessary. If visitors have any concerns they are encouraged to contact GMW to report an issue.

A comprehensive internal review of these manuals is completed at least every five years to ensure their accuracy. The review enables our staff to safely and effectively perform maintenance activities, train new staff and continuously improve our recreation and land asset standards for the public.

Land that is occupied under licence or lease arrangements is required to be maintained in accordance with maintenance obligations detailed in lease/licence agreements.

Areas of public access may be restricted under an occupation agreement, subject to the conditions of that agreement.

Environment

GMW does not have a direct role in the management of invasive flora and fauna but actively supports and partners with the Murray CMA, the Goulburn-Broken CMA, the NSW Department of Primary Industries and the Yorta Yorta Nation Aboriginal Corporation to deliver programs aimed at managing invasive species.

Water quality management

Water Quality Monitoring Program

The Major Storages Water Quality Monitoring Program involves the monitoring of water quality in 14 of GMW's major water storages including Yarrawonga Weir (Lake Mulwala).

Specific objectives for the program are to:

- Provide an overview of the current and historic water quality in GMW's storages
- Examine water quality and assess compliance with guideline values recommended in current state and national guidance
- Identify water quality status and trends so that future management practices have the potential to improve water quality within the storages
- Examine blue-green algae events (particularly the number of warnings issued) and identify trends so that future management practices have the potential to limit the risk of blue-green algae.

Further details of water quality management at GMW storages can be viewed here:

www.gmwater.com.au/water-operations/water-quality

Blue green algae

GMW is responsible for the management of blue-green algal blooms within our storages, irrigation channels and drains. GMW regularly monitors and inspects water bodies within our area of operation for blue-green algae.

Find out more about our blue green algae warnings here:

www.gmwater.com.au/water-operations/bga

Wastewater management

Wastewater includes all septic tank effluent and sullage water. Untreated wastewater can transmit pathogens and viruses as well as nutrients, salts and heavy metals to the lake if not managed properly.

Any leased sites must comply with lease agreement obligations and Environmental Protection Authority guidelines. This requires all effluent/sullage from ablution blocks on leased land to be connected to an approved wastewater system in accordance with current standards and guidance.

Implementation plan

Table 3 provides a summary of the measures to be implemented to meet the objectives of this management plan.

Table 3 Implementation plan

Objective	Actions to meet objectives	Implementation timeframe	Responsibility
Protect the land, services and facilities in the area	Maintenance of facilities in accordance with O&M Manuals	Ongoing	GMW
	Development of Recreational Area Future Service Approach (inc service standards)	2025–2026	
Protect and maintain water quality in waterways in the area	Water Quality Monitoring Program	Ongoing	GMW
	Blue green algae monitoring and reporting of warnings	Ongoing	
	Signage and public education on practices to minimise impact to water quality	Ongoing	
Conserve and preserve flora, fauna and habitat in the area, including the biodiversity of that flora, fauna and habitat	Facilitate delivery of water for the environment to support Victorian and Commonwealth Environmental Water Holders who make decisions about watering sites with the aim of maintaining healthy environments	Ongoing	GMW
	Signage and education to ensure visitors are aware of making their responsibilities to protect environment when using storages, including respecting GMW bylaws and taking their rubbish with them	Ongoing	
	Water Quality Monitoring Program	Ongoing	
	Flora and fauna - Investigate opportunities to collaborate with Traditional Owners and relevant agencies to protect and re-establish native flora and fauna habitats, including native fish species and bird life. This could include management of erosion, developing lists of culturally significant plant species, organising community planting days, establishment of or exclusion and revegetation zones. This could also be achieved through education and signage.	Short to medium team priority (2025-2030) transitioning to business as usual operations (BAU)	GMW in collaboration with the Yorta Yorta Nation Aboriginal Corporation, Murray CMA, Goulburn-Broken CMA, and other agencies
Protect the health and safety of visitors to the area	Implementation of set aside areas	Ongoing	GMW
	Water safety program	Ongoing	
	Public information and signage	Ongoing	
Promote the enjoyment and recreation of visitors to the area	Public information and signage	Ongoing	GMW
	Maintenance of facilities in accordance with O&M Manuals	Ongoing	
	Commercial Pricing Strategy	2026-2027	
	Accessibility – investigate opportunities to establish areas with all abilities access that allow all community members, particularly elders, people with reduced mobility using mobility aids including wheelchairs and walkers, and parents with prams, to access and experience the waters edge.	Ongoing in line with GMW's recreational investment prioritisation framework	GMW
Protect and promote Aboriginal cultural heritage and Aboriginal intangible heritage in the area	**Signage** – Co-design and develop culturally relevant signage for recreational areas that share information about Traditional Owner people, history, stories and cultural significance.	Short to medium team priority (2025-2030) transitioning to business as usual operations (BAU)	GMW in collaboration with the Yorta Yorta Nation Aboriginal Corporation
	Language – Collaborate with Traditional Owners to understand traditional names and translations. Display naming on signage and other public communications.	Short to medium term priority (2025-2030)	
	Education/preventing misuse - Investigate ways to improve signage or install barriers to ensure use of designated parking areas and to minimise off road driving and pollution, to preserve and protect the natural environment and remaining cultural heritage.	Medium term priority (2025-2030) transitioning to business as usual operations (BAU)	

Objective	Actions to meet objectives	Implementation timeframe	Responsibility
	Website/social media - Develop communications to share knowledge/stories or remind visitors to respect Country. Ensure all information on GMW website is reviewed and updated.	Short term priority (2025-2026) transitioning to business as usual operations (BAU)	
Facilitate the participation of Traditional Owner groups in the management of that area, including in accordance with any agreements under the *Traditional Owner Settlement Act* 2010 that apply to the area	To be investigated through future discussions with the Yorta Yorta Nation Aboriginal Corporation.		GMW/ Yorta Yorta Nation Aboriginal Corporation
Ensure that the area is managed and used in a way that respects and upholds the rights and aspirations of Traditional Owner groups who have a connection to the area			
Protect and promote other heritage features in the area	GMW recognise and respect the importance of protecting and promoting existing post-contact heritage places within our recreation areas. Ongoing management of such sites will be undertaken in line with the relevant historic heritage legislation and data sets including: • World Heritage List • National Heritage List • Commonwealth Heritage List • Register of the National Estate (non-statutory) • National Trust • Victorian Heritage Register • Victorian Heritage List • Local Planning Scheme Heritage Overlays	Ongoing	GMW