



Recreation Area Management Plan

Barkers Creek, Malmsbury,
Lauriston and Upper Coliban
Reservoirs

July 2022

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1 Introduction

This management plan informs how Coliban Water maintains the effective function of the Barkers Creek, Upper Coliban, Lauriston and Malmsbury Reservoirs as water supply storages whilst facilitating recreational access. Three of these four reservoirs store raw water that is subsequently treated to a drinking water standard for supply to northern and central Victorian communities.

This management plan provides advice with respect to making these reservoirs safe and enjoyable places for all visitors undertaking permitted activities within the designated recreation areas and continuing their function as a valued community asset.

1.1 Context

Land based recreation has always been a valued activity at all four storages with fishing, walking and passive recreational opportunities available.

Coliban Water's *Strategy 2030* has four strategic directions, the fourth of which is based around green and active communities. Water underpins liveability and Coliban Water plays an active role in providing active green spaces.

The relevant outcomes of Strategic Direction 4 are:

- Community objectives for water recreation are well understood.
- Coliban Water assets contribute to recreational values.

This Strategic Direction calls for five actions, two of which relate to recreation at reservoirs:

- Identify key assets with recreational value and maintain and promote their use
- Ensure assets support recreational activities

1.2 Background

Coliban Water owns and manages several reservoirs that are used as raw water storages for the supply of safe drinking water to surrounding communities. The primary purpose of these reservoirs is to ensure that sufficient water is available to meet community needs, and that the quality of this water is maintained, so as to minimise public health risks and treatment costs.

These reservoirs also act as valuable habitat for wildlife and native vegetation, and are important refuges for biodiversity in a time of climate change.

Rich in cultural heritage, the reservoirs are also culturally important for the Dja Dja Wurrung people and it is important that their rights and enduring relationships with the area is recognised.

The *Drinking Water Storages and Land Management Plan 2014-2019* developed for the Coliban River Storages (Upper Coliban, Lauriston and Malmsbury), recognised the storages as valued community assets for a range of reasons, including recreation and liveability, as well as the importance of managing land based activities to maintain these values for future visitors and generations. These same values are also applicable to Barkers Creek Reservoir, and all four reservoirs are now accessible to the community for on-water recreation.

The above functions of the reservoirs are undertaken within the context of:

- Maintaining good relationships with neighbouring properties.
- Protecting cultural heritage.
- Recognition of the rights of the Dja Dja Wurrung people, and their enduring relationship with the area.

Recreational access to reservoirs has a positive societal impact through benefits to the health and wellbeing of the visitors and local community.

Whilst Coliban Water owns or manages the land around Barkers Creek, Malmsbury and Upper Coliban Reservoirs most of the land surrounding Lauriston Reservoir is under private ownership. Coliban Water

maintains a strong focus on working cooperatively with all adjoining landowners to achieve raw water quality protection at the storages.

This management plan provides a framework to ensure that visitors to these reservoirs have a positive experience, whilst at the same time not negatively impacting on the primary functions of these reservoirs, their own health and wellbeing, or that of the community.

1.3 Management Plan Objectives

- Minimise risks to public health by protecting water quality and the wellbeing of visitors
- Minimise damage to the natural environment
- Prevent harm to the cultural heritage around the reservoirs
- Maximise opportunities to promote healthy communities and regional economic prosperity through recreational activities and liveability values.

1.4 Other Documentation

Coliban Water has prepared a number of other documents to assist in management of the recreational areas, including By-laws for recreational areas and procedures for patrols, reservoir closure and recording of prohibited activities, to name a few.

2 Scope of On-Water and Land Based Recreation

2.1 Location

Recreational activities are allowed within designated areas at the four reservoirs:

- Upper Coliban
- Lauriston
- Malmsbury
- Barkers Creek

Recreation can only occur within designated areas (Appendix A), as declared by the Minister for Water under section 122ZA of the *Water Act 1989*.

Recreation and access is prohibited within some areas of the declared recreational areas to protect visitor safety, ecological or cultural values and /or operational assets. The prohibited areas (areas where access and recreational activities are not permitted) within the declared recreational area are shown in Appendix B.

2.1.1 Understanding Coliban Water land at the Reservoirs

Visitors should be aware that whilst most of Coliban Water's land is clearly defined by fencing at Barkers Creek, Upper Coliban and Malmsbury Reservoirs; the boundary is not as clearly defined at Lauriston Reservoir. In this location much of the adjoining land is under private ownership and unfenced.

Access to adjoining freehold land is not permitted and landowners may ask you to leave their property if you are on their land. If in doubt, please remain on Coliban Water land where the boundary is clearly identifiable.

In all cases, please be considerate of adjoining landowners, and respectful of private property. Coliban Water relies on its good relationship with adjoining landowners to protect water quality and the values of these storages for the community.

2.2 Consumption of alcohol or drugs

Coliban Water is committed to community safety and being a good neighbour. While the consumption of alcohol is permitted at our reservoirs, the *Marine Safety Act 2010* and the *Road Safety Act 1986* legislate the requirements for the required blood alcohol concentration when driving. We encourage the public while visiting our recreational area's to be responsible and to be aware of others, include landowners, when consuming alcohol.

The consumption of drugs is not permitted in any location within the reservoirs.

2.3 Preparation prior to visiting our reservoirs

Prior to visiting our reservoirs, it is important that visitors check our website for the latest information regarding reservoir levels and conditions. The website will be maintained with the latest information.

To protect the water quality in our reservoirs, we request that on-water users clean their vessels (either wash or air clean) prior to visiting our reservoirs. This is to prevent the spread of contaminants such as blue green algae and exotic weeds from one water body to another.

2.4 Activities

This section outlines the rules for the various recreational activities at the four locations. Activities prohibited generally pose the greatest risk to water quality, the environment, and cultural heritage as well as safety risks to other visitors or staff. Any type of activity that is not listed in this section should be considered as prohibited.

Visitors need to follow any instructions indicated on the signage in and around the recreation areas.

Note removal, damage or harm to native flora, fauna and / or cultural heritage is prohibited.

Table 1 summarises a large range of possible recreational activities at the four locations and a summary of their applicability or conditions.

Table 1: Scope of recreation activities.

Activity		Permitted (✓) / Prohibited (✗)	Upper Coliban	Lauriston	Malmsbury	Barkers Creek
	Boating (electric)	✓	Conditional. Entry and exit only from the designated launch points. Visitors must carry their boat to the water and they cannot be dragged. Boats cannot be launched directly from a car or trailer at Lauriston or Malmsbury Reservoirs. Boats can be launched at the designated boat ramps at Upper Coliban and Barkers Creek Reservoirs. The person limit for a vessel as per the vessel design limit (as easily identified or as displayed by the Australian Build Plate) or a maximum of two people, if no limit is displayed or is not easily identified. Maximum speed 5 knots. All on-water recreational activities are restricted to daylight hours only.			
	Boating (liquid fuel)	✓	Conditional. The engine must be removed, if the boat is to be permitted in the water. Engines are not permitted in the recreation area.			Engines are permitted to remain on the vessel but may not be operated
	Bush walking	✓	Permitted.			
	Dogs	✓	Conditional. All dogs must be on a leash at all times and must not enter the water body. Any dog faeces deposited by the dog must be picked and removed.			

Activity		Permitted (✓) / Prohibited (✗)	Upper Coliban	Lauriston	Malmsbury	Barkers Creek
	Fishing	✓	Permitted (both shoreline and on-water).			
	Paddle craft	✓	Conditional. Kayaks, canoes and small portable craft (car toppers) with electric motors. Entry and exit only from the designated launch points. Visitors must carry their boat to the water and they cannot be dragged. The person limit for a vessel as per the vessel design limit (as easily identified or as displayed by the Australian Build Plate) or a maximum of two people, if no limit is displayed or is not easily identified. Maximum speed 5 knots.			
	Picnic and BBQ	✓	Conditional. Designated areas only. Refer to signage on site.			
	Toilets	✓	Conditional. The use or disposal of soap, detergent or similar in the reservoir, or on land below the water supply level mark, is prohibited. No toileting activities within 100m of the water mark. If toileting activities do occur above the 100m mark, any faeces must be buried to a minimum depth of 20cm.			
	Inflatable craft	✓	Conditional. Only inflatable vessels that are fitted with a capacity plate in compliance with the requirements of the Australian Builders Plate Standard or ISO 6185 or ABYC H-28 shall be permitted for use for on-water activities.			
	4WD	✗	Prohibited. Vehicles must remain on designated access tracks and in car parking areas			
	Camping	✗	Prohibited. There are no designated areas for fires or camping.			
	Fossicking or digging	✗	Prohibited.			
	Horse riding	✗	Prohibited			
	Hunting	✗	Prohibited. The possession, carrying of, or use of a firearm, bow, crossbow, spear, spear gun, trap, snare or net (that is not designed for fishing) is prohibited.			
	Mountain biking	✗	Prohibited			
	Open fire	✗	Prohibited. There are no designated areas for fires or camping.			

Activity		Permitted (✓) / Prohibited (✗)	Upper Coliban	Lauriston	Malmsbury	Barkers Creek
	Sailing	✗	Prohibited.			
	Swimming	✗	Prohibited. Includes wading in water, except when launching, or alighting from, permitted water vessels or if fishing, or in the event of an on-water emergency. Inflatable water equipment are prohibited.			
	Water skiing	✗	Prohibited.			

2.5 Known hazards

Coliban Water has conducted an assessment to understand the hazards to the public around our reservoirs. Signs have been erected on site to identify these hazards. Where possible, Coliban Water has implemented controls to reduce the hazards.

Known hazards include slips, trips, falls, fire, snakes, spiders, stinging insects and drowning.

It should be noted that entry into the water is taken at a person's own risk because of possible dangers including:

- possible strong and fast water currents can occur without warning;
- possible strong and fast undercurrents can occur near or around dam walls, intake pipes and water channel intakes;
- exposed falls and high drops from dams and overflow races;
- presence of submerged objects and variable water depths;
- possible presence of algal blooms;
- possible presence of e-coli and other contaminants from stormwater run-off;
- possible presence of cold water, which may result in hypothermia;
- no lifesaving, emergency or other rescue equipment or service being available or provided by Coliban Water; and
- possible strong, uneven and unpredictable wave patterns that can be caused by changes in wind direction, speed and strength.

2.6 Traditional Owner agreed activities

Under the *Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010*, Natural Resources Agreements provide information about the activities that are allowable for Traditional Owners. In general, allowable activities include fishing and the taking of wildlife, the harvesting and collection of flora, fish and forest produce (including firewood).

2.7 Activities requiring a permit

The By-laws refer to activities that require a permit. Coliban Water will not issue a permit for the following activities:

- Events
- Commercial activities
- Advertising
- Erecting structures
- Horses or horse riding
- Removal of firewood

2.8 Reservoir Closure

Triggers for the closure (partially or fully) of a Reservoir or a Recreation Area may include, but are not limited to:

- Reservoir Trigger levels being reached
- Maintenance activities
- Damage to infrastructure
- Flood
- Wildfire
- Planned burn
- Emergency incidents
- Extreme weather forecast (e.g. Code Red Day; flood or severe rain or wind event warning)
- Chemical spill / leak
- Biological (sewage) spill / leak
- Water quality incidents
- Authorised events

Refer to the Closure of a Recreation Area procedure for details.

3 Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 Waterway manager

Marine Safety Victoria is the waterway manager under the *Marine Safety Act 2010*.

3.2 Authorised Water Officers

Authorised Water Officers assist visitors to ensure their activities are satisfying, safe and sustainable. Nominated Coliban Water employees are Authorised Water Officers under the *Water Act 1989*.

The tasks of the Authorised Water Officers are to:

- Communicate with
- Engage with and
- Educate

visitors during their time at a recreational areas to provide a satisfying, safe and sustainable experience.

Authorised Water Officers will also report on the level of activity at each reservoir, including prohibited activities and offences.

Refer to the *Recreation Area Patrol* procedure for further information.

4 Operation and Maintenance

The reservoirs are active work sites on which regular operation and maintenance activities are performed.

The primary role of Coliban Water's Reservoir Officers is to manage and maintain the operations of the reservoirs. These employees also undertake patrols, surveillance and monitoring of the recreation areas (including weekend surveillance).

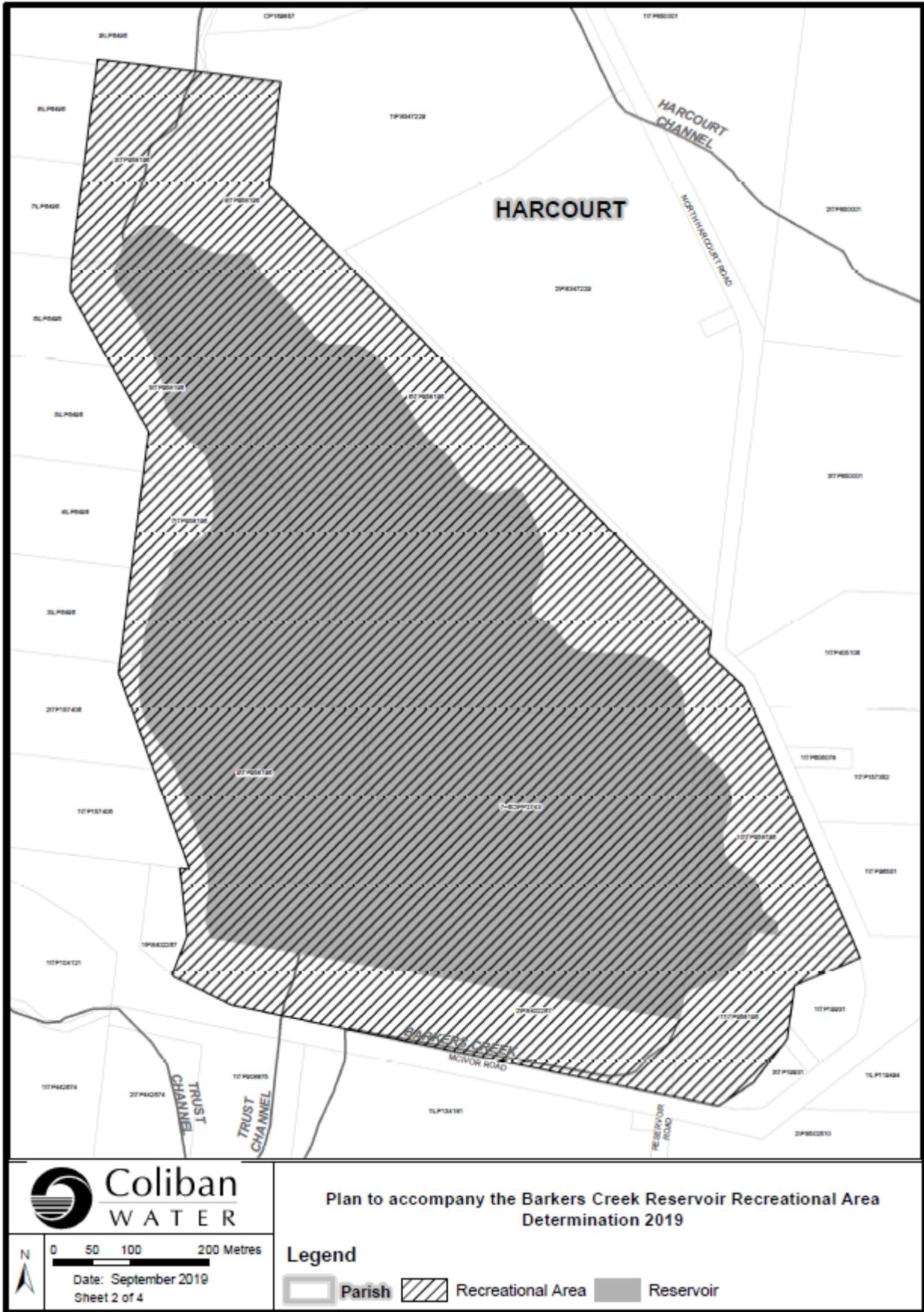
Our reservoirs are operated with the focus on public and dam safety, water security and water quality, before permitting on-water recreation at these locations.

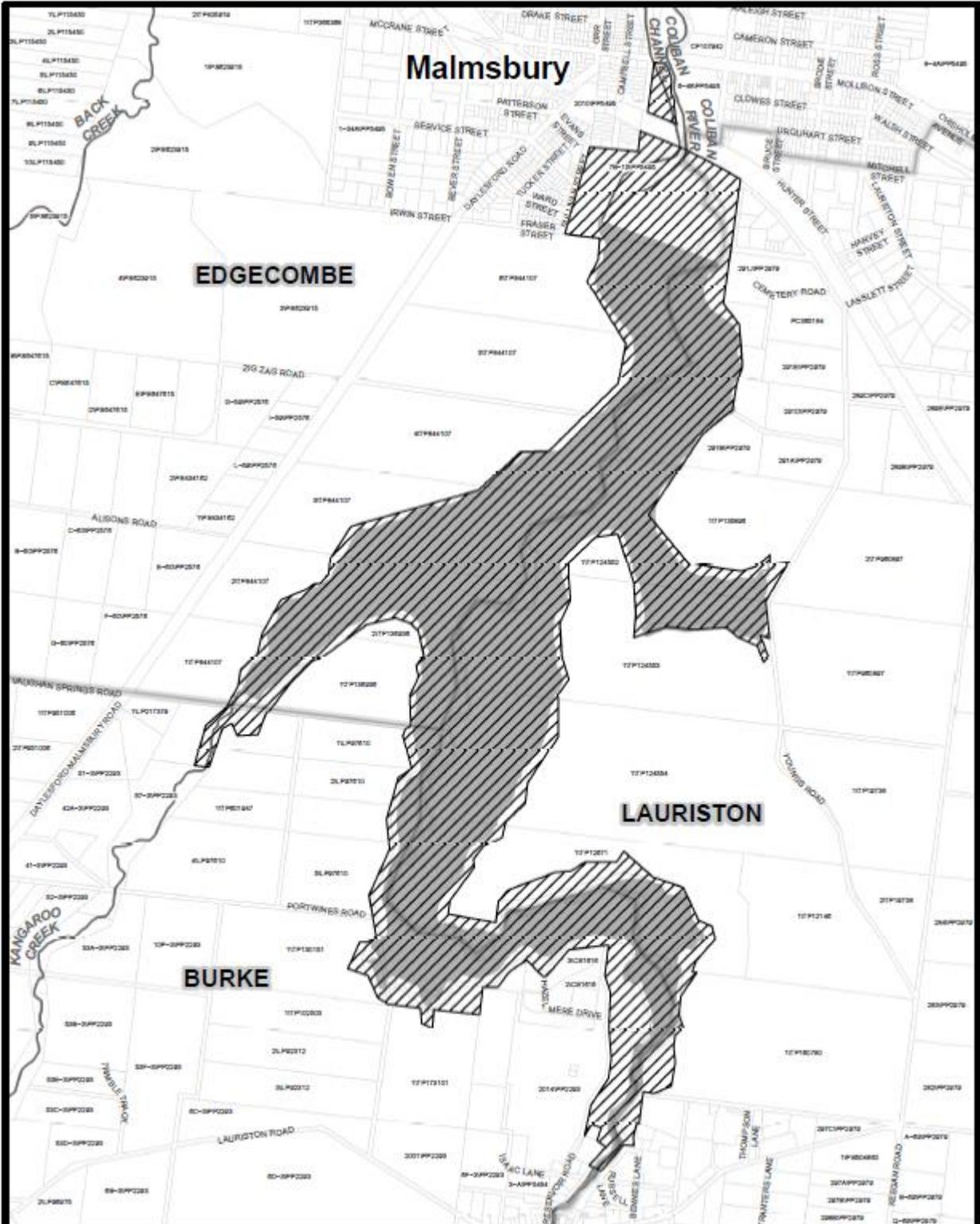
4.1 Surveillance Camera

Each of the designated access points will be monitored with 24/7 surveillance cameras.



Appendix A - Declared Recreational Area Maps






Coliban
WATER

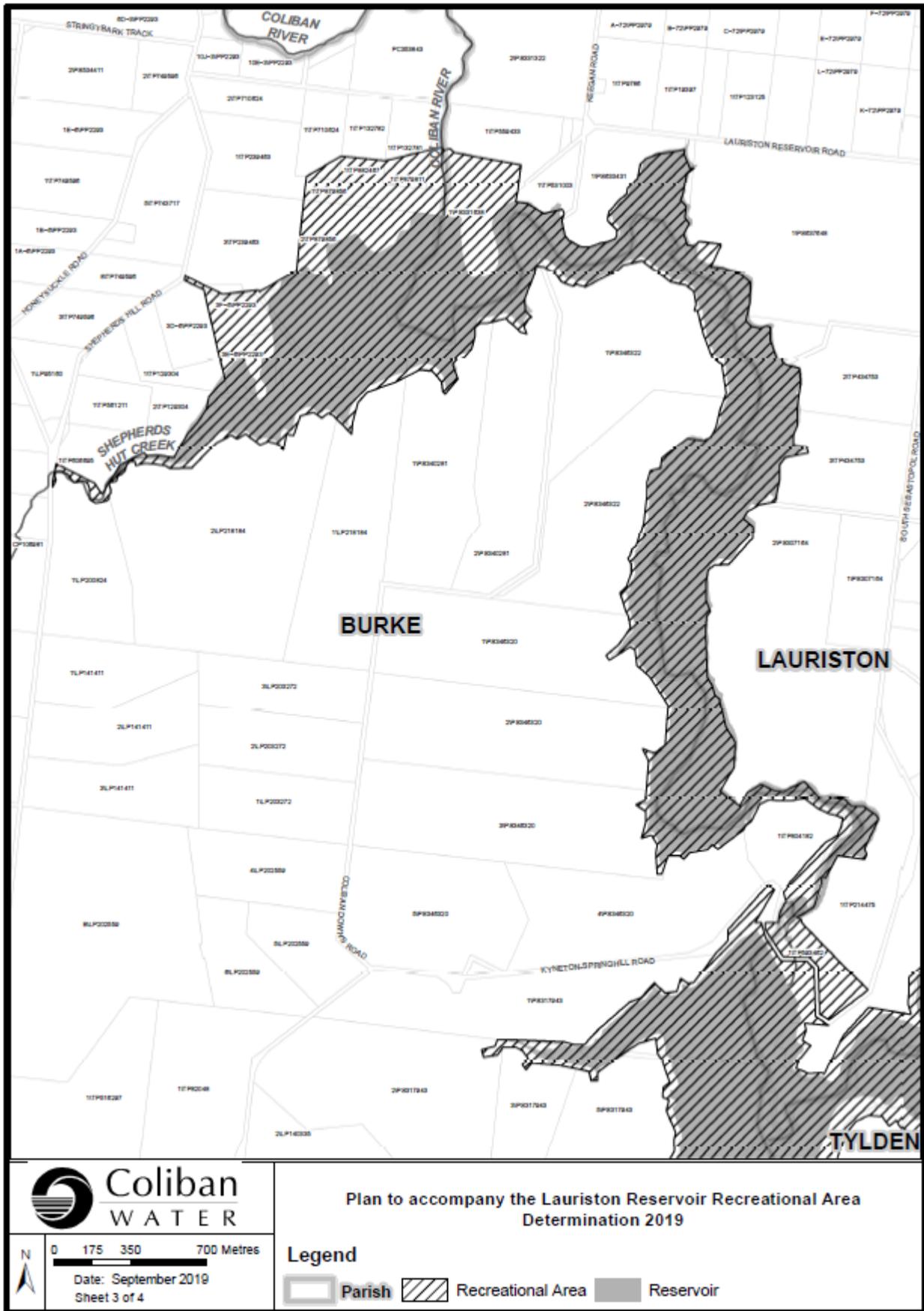
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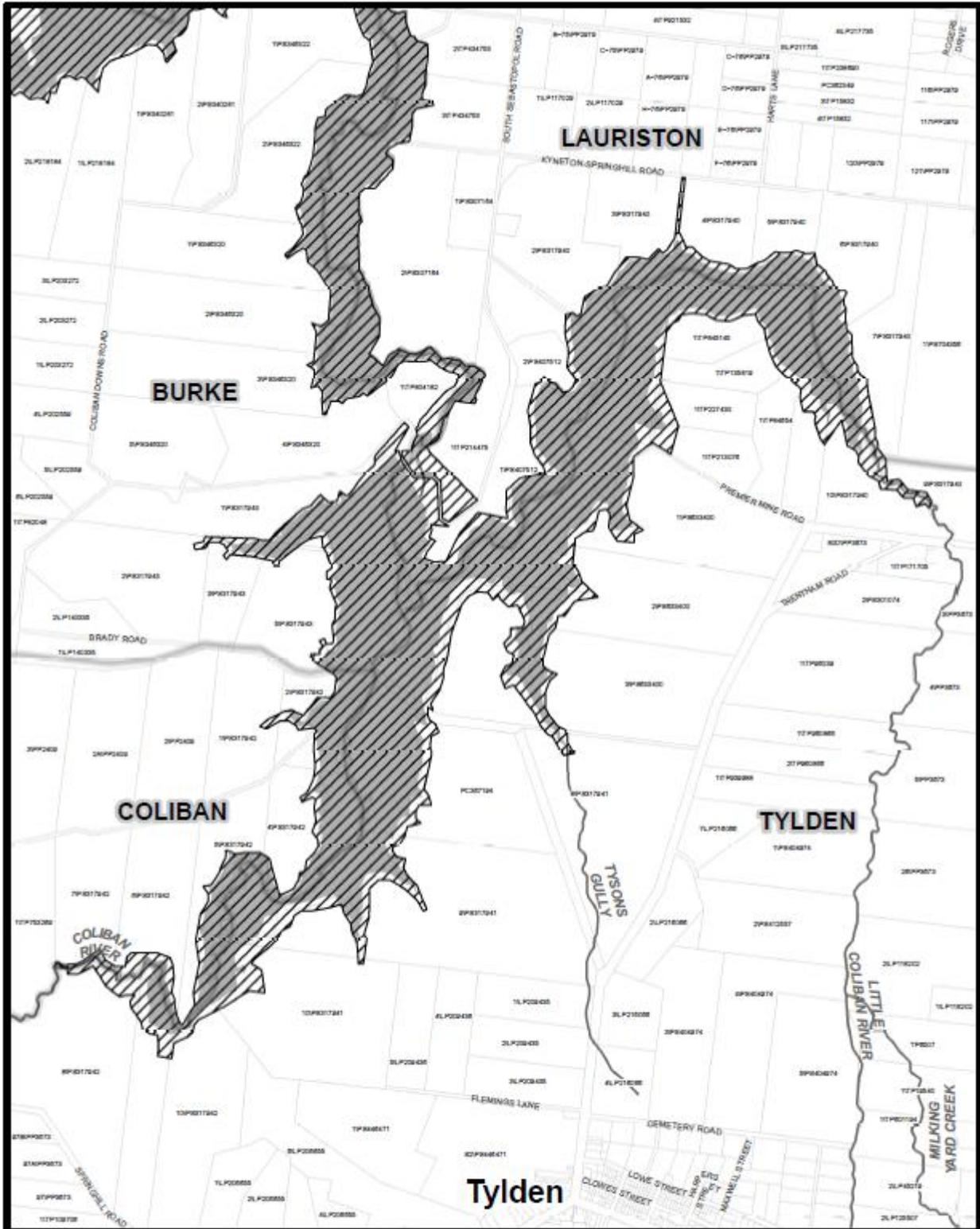
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Sheet 1 of 4

Plan to accompany the Malmsbury Reservoir Recreational Area Determination 2019

Legend

-  Parish
-  Recreational Area
-  Reservoir





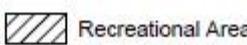

Coliban
WATER

0 250 500 1,000 Metres

Date: September 2019
Sheet 4 of 4

Plan to accompany the Upper Coliban Reservoir Recreational Area Determination 2019

Legend

-  Parish
-  Recreational Area
-  Reservoir

Appendix B - Reservoir Permitted & Prohibited Zone



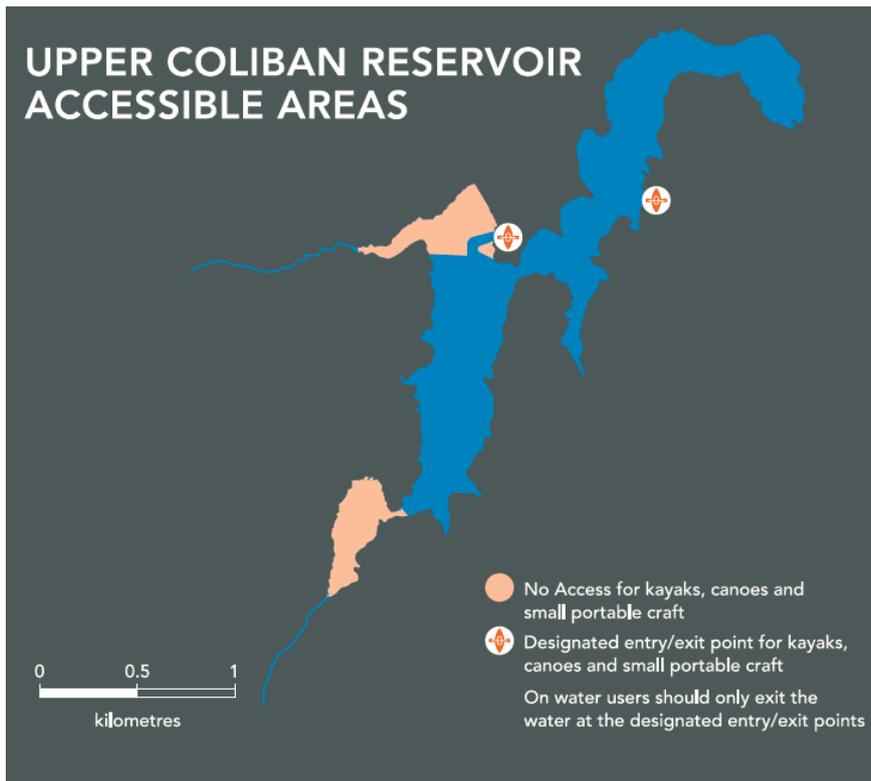
Barkers Creek Reservoir

Mclvor Road

Harcourt North

36°58'10.2"S 144°16'36.9"E

Upper Coliban



Upper Coliban Reservoir

Kyneton-Springhill Road
Kyneton

37°17'11.5"S 144°23'53.2"E

Premier Mine Road
Kyneton

37°17'01.4"S 144°24'44.6"E

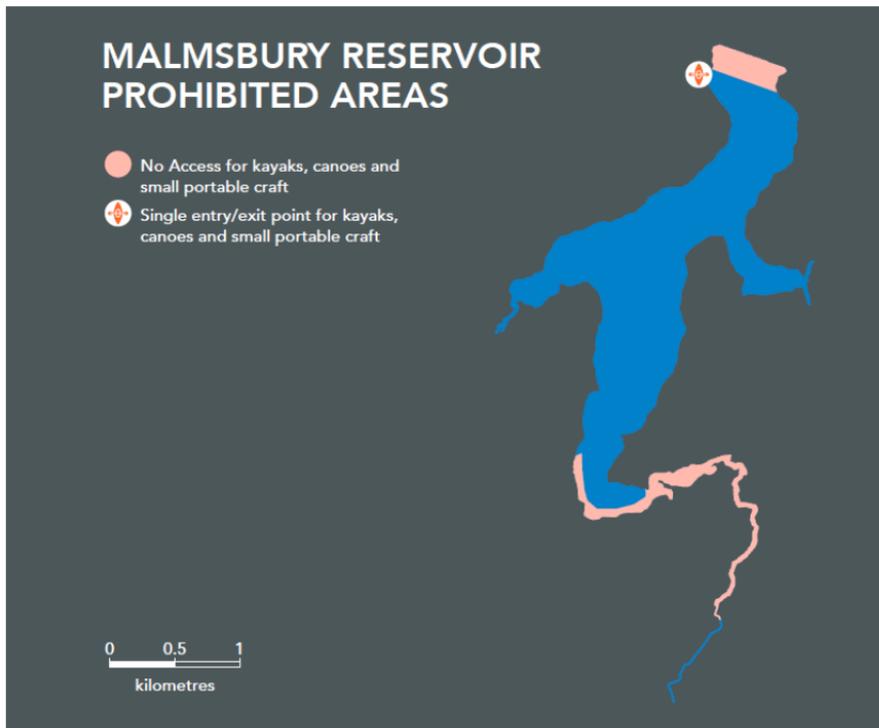
Lauriston



Lauriston Reservoir
Entry via Keegan Road or
Lauriston Reservoir Road
Lauriston

37°15'13.4"S 144°22'53.1"E

Malmsbury



Malmsbury Reservoir
10 Sullivan Street
Malmsbury

37°11'41.1"S 144°22'24.5"E