



PORT STEPHENS
COUNCIL

Biosecurity Management Plan

2025

This document provides guidance for the management of Biosecurity matters within the Port Stephens Local Government Area.

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Version History

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1	February 2025	Port Stephens Council	

Disclaimer: The information contained in this publication is based on knowledge and understanding at the time of writing. However, because of advances in knowledge, users are reminded of the need to ensure that information upon which they rely is up to date and to check currency of the information with Council's Environmental Operations Team or the user's independent adviser.

1. Introduction

Biosecurity involves the protection of the environment, the economy and the community from the negative impacts of pest animals, diseases, weeds and contaminants. Australia is free of many pests and diseases that occur in other countries but with increases in population, trade and travel, there is an increased biosecurity risk. The impacts from the spread of pests and diseases can be serious, in NSW weeds alone are estimated to cost over \$1.6 billion annually.

The NSW *Biosecurity Act 2015* (the Act) regulates biosecurity matters according to the risk they pose to the environment, the economy and community. Under the Act, everyone in NSW, including Council, has a shared responsibility or “general biosecurity duty” to prevent, eliminate or minimise a biosecurity risk so far as is reasonably practicable. This document provides for the management of biosecurity matters within the Port Stephens Local Government Area (LGA) under the Act and associated legislative framework.

1.1 OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this management plan are to:

- Provide an understanding of Council’s biosecurity duties under the Act including responsibilities as a Local Control Authority.
- Outline Council’s approach and funding mechanisms for the delivery of its duties.
- Ensure alignment with Hunter Regional Pest Animal Management Plan and Hunter Regional Strategic Weed Management Plan.
- Outline Council’s General Biosecurity Duty as a component of Natural Area Management

1.2 THE PORT STEPHENS ENVIRONMENT

The Port Stephens LGA covers an area of 858.5 square kilometres with a population of approximately 75,276 people at the 2021 census. It is a diverse region, comprised of natural features including bushland, rivers, wetlands and coastal areas as well as agricultural, urban and peri-urban areas. The majority of residential, commercial and industrial areas occur in the east of the LGA with the majority of land in the west of the LGA used for agriculture.

Port Stephens has a range of unique biosecurity challenges including the presence of 50 priority weed species (Appendix 2), has significant infestations of the control order species Chinese Violet (*Asystasia gangetica subspecies micrantha*) and is susceptible to new biosecurity risks due to the high movement of people into the LGA for work and travel. The Hunter, Paterson and Williams Rivers run through the LGA and are under threat from aquatic weeds. The region is also home to a number of threatened species and endangered ecological communities (EECs) that require protection under State and/or Federal Government legislation.

Management of biosecurity matters in Port Stephens is essential for maintaining a healthy natural environment that continues to provide essential environmental services, including clean air and water, while supporting the ecological, cultural, recreational, economic and aesthetic values that our community relies upon.

1.3 KEY TERMS

Asset Based Protection: To reduce the impact of widespread pest animals on key assets with high economic, environmental, and social value.

Authorised Officer: An authorised officer is a person that has been authorised under the Act to manage biosecurity risk by performing certain functions, such as investigating, monitoring and enforcing compliance with the Act.

Biosecurity: Protecting the environment, the economy and the community from the negative impacts of pest animals, diseases and weeds.

Containment: To prevent the spread of pest animal species onto other parts of the state or region

Core Infestation: Core sites of pest species managed under the containment phase. Management aims to prevent spread of these species from core infestation to uninvaded surrounding areas also known as exclusion zones.

Eradication: To permanently remove the species from the state or region and to develop actions to prevent its re-establishment.

General Biosecurity Duty: The shared responsibility under the Biosecurity Act (2015), of all people in NSW, to prevent, eliminate or minimise a biosecurity risk so far as is reasonably practicable. This duty cannot be transferred to another person.

Local Control Authority: The Council of a local government area is authorised under the Biosecurity Act (2015) to carry out weed control functions on land in that area. See Section 3.1.

Pest: A plant or animal (other than a human) that has an adverse effect on, or is suspected of having an adverse effect on, the environment, the economy or the community.

Pest animal: Non-native animals that cause damage to the environment, the economy or the community through predation, competition, damage to infrastructure, crops or plants, the spread of diseases or by posing a safety risk to people.

Prevention: To prevent the pest animal species arriving and establishing in the region causing adverse impacts on the environment, society and the economy.

Weed: Plants (foreign to the region) that are unwanted in a given situation and which usually have detectable negative environmental, economic or community impacts.

2. Policy and Legislative Framework

This Biosecurity Management Plan has been developed in reference to the NSW Biosecurity Legislative Framework, regional strategic plans and relevant Council Policies.

2.1 PORT STEPHENS COUNCIL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

Ongoing management of biosecurity matters in the LGA is in alignment with the Port Stephens Council Environmental Policy. The policy outlines Council's commitment to achieving a great lifestyle in a treasured environment so that current and future generations can enjoy, and benefit from, a healthy natural environment. It commits Council to maintaining a healthy natural environment, aligning with the principles of Ecological Sustainable Development (ESD), meeting all statutory requirements under environmental legislation, minimising adverse impacts on the natural environment, and maintaining and improving the natural environment of Port Stephens.

2.2 NSW BIOSECURITY ACT 2015

The primary objective of the Act is to provide a framework for the prevention, elimination and minimisation of biosecurity risks. The Act establishes a shared general biosecurity duty (GBD) among government, industry and the community on all lands in NSW. The Act prohibits some high-risk activities and materials and contains a general obligation for all to be aware of their surroundings and take action to prevent the introduction and spread of pest animals, diseases, weeds and contaminants. The Act also places restrictions on the buying and selling of certain animals and plants.

People are expected to understand the biosecurity risks associated with the day-to-day activities related to their work and hobbies. Potential biosecurity risks must be identified and if required, managed to mitigate the risk. Biosecurity duties cannot be transferred to another person. Biosecurity duties can apply to more than one person in relation to the same biosecurity risk, for example, both the landowner and manager may be responsible for managing a particular biosecurity risk on a property. Council has a number of obligations under the Act as a landowner, land manager and Local Control Authority (LCA) as detailed in Section 3.

3.3 ALIGNMENT WITH OTHER PLANS AND DOCUMENTS

In addition to the Act, this Biosecurity Management Plan aligns with a range of other legislation, regulations and plans including but not limited to:

- Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act).
- Biodiversity Conservation Act 2015 (BC Act).
- Hunter Regional Strategic Weed Management Plan.
- Hunter Regional Pest Animal Management Plan.

- Port Stephens Community Strategic Plan (CSP).

Further details regarding the content of the documents and their relevance to biosecurity management in Port Stephens can be found in Appendix 1.

3. Council Roles and Responsibilities

Council has multiple roles and responsibilities in managing biosecurity risk within the LGA. Council has a GBD as a landowner and manager, and all Council staff have a GBD when undertaking their work. Council also has delegated weed control functions under Section 371 of the Biosecurity Act as a Local Control Authority (LCA) for Weeds. Under the Act, Council has both LCA and GBD as described below:

3.1 COUNCIL AS A LOCAL CONTROL AUTHORITY

Council is appointed as the LCA in the Port Stephens LGA for the regulation of weeds in accordance with the NSW Biosecurity Act. Under the Act an LCA has the following functions:

- the prevention, elimination, minimisation and management of the biosecurity risk posed or likely to be posed by weeds,
- to develop, implement, coordinate and review weed control programs,
- to inspect land in connection with its functions under the Act,
- to keep records about the exercise of their functions under the Act,
- to report to the Secretary about the exercise of their functions under the Act.

As an LCA for the regulation of weeds, Council is to:

- Administer the NSW Biosecurity Act 2015 and associated regulations in relation to weeds for Port Stephens LGA.
- Monitor and ensure compliance with biosecurity obligations among residents, businesses, and other stakeholders.
- Conduct regular inspections to ensure alignment with state and regional biosecurity strategies and plans.
- Take compliance action as necessary in accordance with the Act and PSC Compliance Policy.
- Conduct public awareness campaigns on biosecurity responsibilities and best practices.
- Provide training and resources to help stakeholders understand biosecurity regulations.
- Monitoring of prohibited activity including online sale of “plants that must not or should not to be sold in NSW”, prohibited matter and prohibitions on dealing (a list of plants that “must not be sold” is found in appendix 4).

Council is not the Authority for the regulation of pest animals, that function is held by the Local Land Services (LLS) for established pest animals and the Department of

Primary Industries (DPI) for new incursions. Members of the public are recommended to contact Hunter LLS for specific enquires regarding pest animal management on private land.

3.2 COUNCIL AS A LAND MANAGER (GBD)

Council is responsible for managing risks related to all biosecurity matters on lands it owns or manages, including any weeds or pest animals. As a landowner/manager Council has a GBD requires Council to, so far as is reasonably practicable, prevent, eliminate, minimise and manage the biosecurity risk posed or likely to be posed by pest animals and weeds on their lands. Council's Asset Managers are responsible for ensuring the actions are undertaken on land they manage in order to comply with the GDB under the Act. Council asset owners engage the Environmental Operations Team for advice and management of Biosecurity risks on their land. Biosecurity management programs can be implemented through Service Level Agreements (SLA) between Council Asset Managers and the Environmental Operations Team.

KEY WORDS:

Prevention - to prevent the pest animal species arriving and establishing in the region causing adverse impacts on the environment, society and the economy.

Eradication - to permanently remove the species from the state or region and to develop actions to prevent its re-establishment.

Containment - to prevent the spread of pest animal species onto other parts of the state or region

Asset Based Protection - to reduce the impact of widespread pest animals on key assets with high economic, environmental, and social value

Actions for Prevention, Eradication and Containment of pest animals and weeds on Council owned or managed land include:

- Destruction of infestations.
- Targeted inspection and treatment programs on Council owned or managed land.
- Reporting and mapping of identified infestations, as found.
- Promoting and training best practice weed hygiene procedures to operational staff.
- Control action is taken as required on Council owned and managed land (Section 5 details types of actions taken and how Council prioritises works).

Actions for Asset Based Protection of pest animals and weeds on Council owned or managed land include:

- Development and implementation of a Natural Areas Management Plan that targets key threatening processes as identified in the NSW Biodiversity Conservation Act (Appendix 4) having regard to a cost benefit analysis and available funding.
- Limited treatment of Asset Based Protection categorised weeds within roads, rivers and parks using funding by the asset owner as available.
- Management of pest animals on Council owned and managed land occurs as required, in response to customer enquires (CRMs) and as funding becomes available. Natural area pest management is funded through the Natural Systems - bushland budget. Pest management on operational and community land (other than natural areas) occurs as requested by, and is funded by, the respective asset owners.
- A pest management program is conducted on a quarterly basis on sporting fields and is funded by the asset owners.

3.3 AUTHORISED OFFICERS AND COMPLIANCE MATTERS

Council has appointed Authorised Officers (Biosecurity Officers). Authorised Officers have powers under the Act for weed related matters that include:

- Powers of entry to premises.
- Information gathering.
- Investigation, compliance and risk management functions.
- Duty to inspect public and private lands on a risk-based system for Priority Weeds, or where there is a significant suspected or known breach of the Biosecurity Act 2015.

Council's Biosecurity Officers carry out compliance actions in accordance with the Port Stephens Council Compliance Policy. The level of compliance issued is dependent on the details and severity of the matter, and is at the discretion of the Officer. Compliance actions can range from warnings and cost recovery to on the spot fines, or where the risk is significant, a biosecurity direction which legally requires a person to take the specified actions, or acceptance by an Authorised Officer of a biosecurity undertaking from a landholder. State issued Biosecurity Control Orders and Biosecurity Zones may include compliance requirements from Authorised Officers where there is a failure to comply with the required action.

3.4 ISSUING OF BIOSECURITY PERMITS AND WEED MANAGEMENT ADVICE

Council offers site inspections and advice for members of the public and Council staff regarding the management of weeds, including steps to reduce potential incursion of new weeds at a project site or development. A Weed Management Plan may be recommended to support the management of any priority weeds or key threatening processes.

Council may assist with the ongoing management of high priority weeds located on site under a fee for service arrangement, subject to resourcing availability.

There may be circumstances where a necessary project activity, such as removal of soil from a site contaminated with a priority weed, contravenes the Act. Under these circumstances Council may be able to issue a Biosecurity Permit to satisfy the requirements under the Act. Permit fees apply as per Council's fees and charges.

4. Management of Biosecurity in Port Stephens

Council's Biosecurity Officers are responsible for the management of weed related Biosecurity matters. As the Authority, officers undertake an ongoing program of works that includes inspections and treatments, prioritised based on risk, impact and resourcing.

4.1 BIOSECURITY RISK ASSESSMENT

Biosecurity matters are regulated under the Act according to the risk they pose to the environment, community and economy. Biosecurity matters that pose the highest level of risk and have the feasibility of being controlled are called 'priority pests and weeds'. A current list of priority pest animals and weeds found in Port Stephens can be found in Appendix 2 and 3.

The Generalised Invasion Curve

Priority pests and weeds in NSW are managed in accordance with the generalised invasion curve detailed in Figure 1.

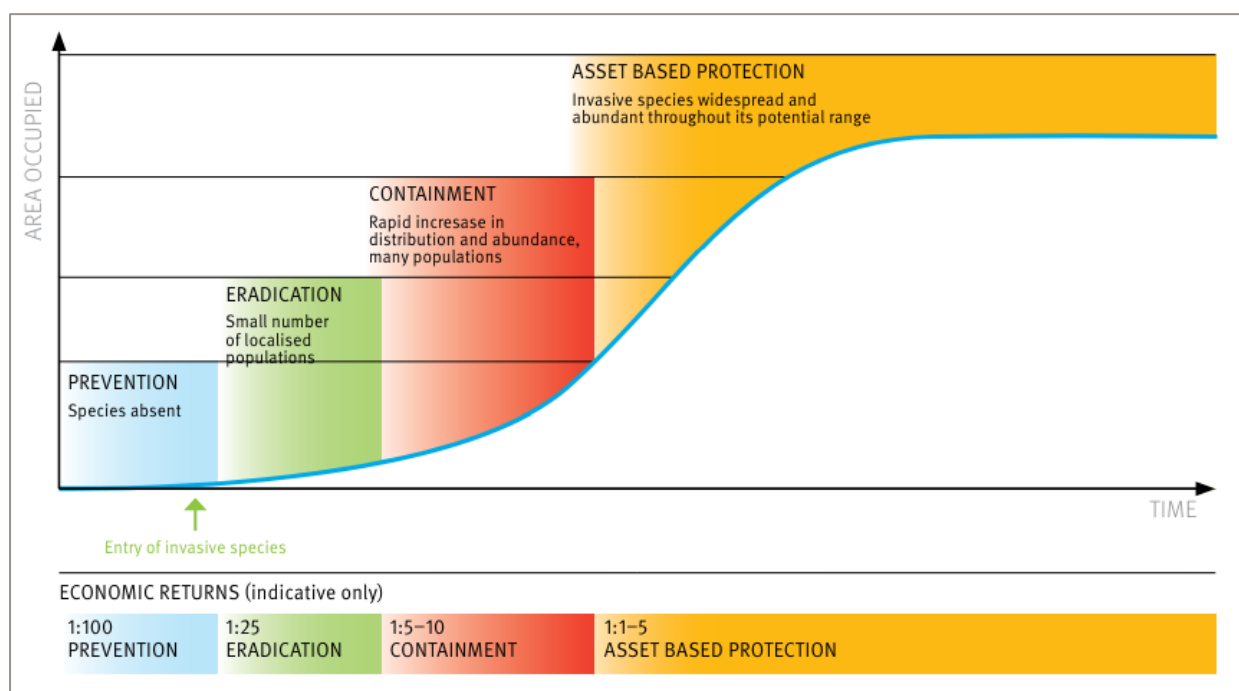


Figure 1: Generalised Invasion Curve showing actions appropriate to each stage.

The Generalised Invasion Curve shows four phases of invasion for weeds and pests and the corresponding management strategies, emphasizing cost-effectiveness of intervention at the different phases. Standard focus and actions for each phase are detailed in Table 1.

Table 1: Standard focus and actions for each phase of the Generalised Invasion Curve.

Phase	Stage (When)	Focus (What)	Action (How)
Prevention	Before the introduction of a weed or pest.	Prevent entry and establishment.	Implement strict biosecurity measures, monitoring, and public awareness campaigns.
Eradication	Initial establishment of a weed or pest, but populations are still small and localized.	Detect and eradicate early incursions.	Conduct regular monitoring, educate staff and community members for early identification, and initiate rapid response plans.
Containment	Weed or pest populations are spreading but still containable.	Prevent further spread and reduce population size.	Implement targeted control measures, establish buffer zones, and coordinate efforts across regions.
Asset Based Protection	Weed or pest is widespread and eradication is no longer feasible.	Protect high-value assets and manage impacts.	Prioritise areas for control, use integrated pest management strategies, and focus on reducing impacts on key assets.

4.2 PRIORITISATION OF ACTIVITIES

Council's biosecurity management program is reliant on limited funding and resourcing that must be prioritised to achieve the best outcomes. Both the Hunter Regional Strategic Weed Management Plan and Hunter Pest Animal Management Plan utilise the four phases under the Generalised Invasion Curve as management categories that can be used to mitigate and minimise the impact of pests and weeds. Council follows these methods to prioritise the allocation of its funding and resources, and to align with these regional plans. The actions undertaken for each Phase are detailed below:

Prevention Phase

In this phase, potential pests and weeds are not yet present in the LGA. Any species managed under this phase are classified as prohibited matter. Efforts focus on preventing the introduction and establishment of any new pests or weeds. This category is the most cost-effective for managing weeds. Parthenium Weed (*Parthenium hysterophorus*) and Cane Toads (*Rhinella marina*) are examples of weed and pest animal species managed under this category in Port Stephens.

In the prevention phase, so far as is reasonably practicable, Council should mitigate the risk of the pest or weed being introduced to land under its ownership or management in accordance with the Hunter Regional Pest Animal and Weed Management Plans.

Anyone who deals with prohibited matter, or a carrier of prohibited matter, is guilty of an offence under the Act. A person who becomes aware of a prohibited matter must immediately report it to NSW Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) (see appendix 4 for contact details). An emergency response will then be initiated and Council will assist with the response. Compliance action can be taken including the issuing of on the spot fines.

The NSW State Government may provide funds for new incursions of Prohibited matter, Control order or biosecurity zone species. LCAs have to apply to DPIRD for these funds. Control works are funded under this funding source.

Actions for Council:

- Compliance in accordance with the Act and Council's Compliance Policy.
- Promote best hygiene practices among residents, businesses, and visitors.
- Develop public awareness campaigns on biosecurity risks and prevention methods.
- Utilise best hygiene practices for Council operations.
- Collaborate with regional and state authorities to ensure cohesive biosecurity measures.

Eradication Phase

When pests or weeds are detected early, before they become widespread, eradication from the LGA is possible. This phase involves identifying and completely removing all individuals of the invasive species from the LGA. Under this phase, so far as is reasonably practicable, Council should eradicate the pest animal or weed from the land under its ownership or management, and should keep it free of the pest animal or weed in accordance with the Hunter Regional Pest Animal and Weeds Management Plans.

There are currently 16 species of weeds managed under this phase in Port Stephens including Groundsel Bush (*Baccharis halimifolia*) and Hygrophila (*Hygrophila costata*).

The NSW State Government provides funding through the Weeds Biosecurity Fund for to LCAs for weed management actions under this phase, however very limited funds are provided for actual control

Actions for Council:

- Compliance in accordance with the Act and Council's Compliance Policy.

- Conduct up to 4 field inspections in high-risk sites and areas to detect early incursions as indicated in the Regional Inspection Plan.
- Educate staff and community volunteers to identify, treat and report potential biosecurity threats.
- Develop and maintain an up-to-date rapid response plan.
- Engage with local stakeholders to ensure quick and coordinated responses.
- Conduct annual education campaign on individual eradicate species.

Control Orders:

A Control Order can be made under the Act by the Minister (or delegate) if necessary to prevent, eliminate, minimise or manage a biosecurity risk or impact. If a Control Order exists this order must be followed specifically, as detailed in the Order. There is currently an eradication Control Order for Chinese Violet (*Asystasia gangetica subspecies micrantha*) in Port Stephens (Appendix 5). There are other species in NSW under Control Orders that are not currently present in Port Stephens, however if these species become present in the future, Council will also be obligated to follow the Control Orders for these species.

Containment Phase

If eradication is not feasible in a section of the region or the LGA, and the pest animal or weed population is spreading, containment actions are implemented to prevent further spread and contain the pest animal or weed within a certain area (core infestation) and limit its impact and spread to other areas (exclusion zones). There are 14 weed species managed under this category in Port Stephens including African Olive (*Olea europaea subsp. cuspidata*). Feral Deer (*Cervidae spp.*) and feral horses (*Equus caballus*) are also managed under this category.

Limited NSW Governmental State funding is provided for this phase.

Actions for Council:

- Implement targeted control measures in areas where pest animals (on council owned/managed land) or weeds have been detected.
- Establish buffer zones around infested areas to prevent further spread.
- Coordinate with neighbouring Councils and regional bodies for a unified containment strategy.
- Monitor and evaluate containment efforts regularly to ensure effectiveness.
- Engage with local landholders and communities to support containment activities.
- Conduct annual inspections of buffer zones and containment areas.
- Perform annual audits of containment efforts and adjust practices as needed.
- Compliance in accordance with the Act and Council's Compliance Policy.
- Education campaigns as needed and where funding permits.

Biosecurity Security Zones:

A Biosecurity Zone may be placed over a specific geographic area where certain actions are required to manage a key biosecurity risk or impact long term. The size of the zone can vary from the whole state, to a defined part of the state, a group of neighbouring properties or an individual property. Prevention, elimination or minimisation actions may be required within the zone, and specified actions must be followed within the zone.

Biosecurity Zones are used when complete eradication is not feasible, but the risk is still high and requires regulatory actions for ongoing management. Biosecurity Zones may also be used where different management actions are needed in different parts of NSW, such as to account for different environmental conditions.

Three species in Port Stephens LGA are managed under a Biosecurity Zone, Alligator Weed (*Alternanthera philoxeroides*), Water Hyacinth (*Eichhornia crassipes*) and Bitou Bush (*Chrysanthemoides monilifera subsp. rotundata*).

Asset Based Protection and Control Phase

Once pest animals or weeds are widespread, focus shifts to protecting specific assets (e.g., agricultural land or natural ecosystems) from the impact of the invasive species. This involves managing the pest animal or weed to reduce its impact and spread in critical areas. There are currently 19 weed species managed under this phase including Lantana (*Lantana camara*) and Blackberry (*Rubus fruticosus*), common vertebrate pest animals including Foxes (*Vulpes vulpes*) and Rabbits (*Oryctolagus cuniculus*) are also managed under this phase.

There is very limited funding and focus from the NSW State Government on weeds in this category. LLS can provide advice to landholders for management of pest animals under this phase. Council is committed to managing these pest animals and weeds on land it owns and manages as funding is available or as requested through Councils customer request management (CRM) process and deemed appropriate.

Actions for Council:

- Identify and prioritize high-value assets (natural reserves, agricultural areas, urban environments) for protection.
- Develop and implement Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Strategies which detail actions to be taken for effective ongoing management of widespread weeds within the LGA and pest animals on Council land tailored to local conditions.
- Focus control efforts on reducing the impact of pest animals (on Council owned/managed land) and weeds on key assets.
- Utilise and promote sustainable land management practices among landholders and community members.

- Regularly review and adapt long-term management plans based on monitoring and evaluation data.
- Conduct annual assessments of high-value assets for pest animals (on Council owned/managed land) and weed impacts.
- Review and update IPM strategies annually.

4.3 WEED MANAGEMENT IN PORT STEPHENS

Council's Weed Management Program is focused on carrying out its duties as an LCA for weeds under the Act which includes:

- Undertaking mandatory inspections and treatment programs under the Control Order for Chinese Violet.
- Responding to community requests through Council's Customer Request Management (CRM) process, and
- The management of priority weeds in natural areas and Council owned or managed lands.
- Undertaking inspection programs
- Conducting education campaigns on weed identification and management.

Priority Weeds

The NSW State Government provides a list of priority weeds identified to have a medium to high biosecurity risk to the state. Priority weeds are regulated through prohibited matter, Control Orders, Biosecurity Zones and/or other mandatory measures. Council manages priority weeds in accordance with the phases and actions detailed in Section 5.2. Council has a list of priority weeds found in Port Stephens and the associated management phases for each species (Appendix 2).

Weed Inspection and Treatment Programs

Council undertakes an inspection program of known infestations or sites to satisfy its obligations as a LCA. Council has a planned inspection program based on target species or areas, and any mandatory requirements of Control Orders. Council also undertakes ad-hoc inspections after notification of a potential biosecurity matter through Council's CRM process, or other mechanism including mandatory requests from the DPI.

Council will conduct treatment programs where required, often at the same time as an inspection. There are a range of treatments that can be used to manage weeds and the method and timing used is dependent on the weed species, size of the infestation and other factors assessed by the Biosecurity Officer. For example, an individual plant may be managed by hand pulling the plant from the ground as soon as it is located, while a larger infestation may require chemical treatment that must be conducted at certain times of the year. Council can assist landholders and

managers with information regarding timing and methods for treating weeds on their land.

4.4 PEST ANIMAL MANAGEMENT IN PORT STEPHENS

As Council is not the Authority for pest animals in the LGA, Council is focused on the management of pest animals on lands it owns or manages, based on the availability of funding. Biosecurity Officers will undertake inspections on Council owned and managed lands if requested through Council's CRM process, or at the request of the Asset Manager. They will also respond to any urgent biosecurity risks, such as prohibited matters, on private or public land that are reported to Council.

Note: Cats are managed under the Companion Animals Act (1998), not the Biosecurity Act (2015). Information regarding responsible pet ownership, including the benefits of keeping cats contained, is located on Council's Website.

Hunter LLS (see Appendix 4 for contact details) provide advice regarding the management of pest animals. A list of vertebrate pest animals found in Port Stephens can be found in Appendix 3.

4.5 BIOSECURITY FUNDING

There are three main mechanisms for funding the management of pests and weeds in Port Stephens:

1. Council budget,
2. Weed Biosecurity Fund (previously Weed Action Plan), and
3. Other external funding sources (such as grants).

External sources make up over 70% of Council's biosecurity funding. Regardless of the availability of external funding, Council must carry out LCA duties and the management of biosecurity on land it owns and manages, as failure of individuals or organisations to undertake biosecurity duties is an offence under the Act.

Council Budgets

Council has a Natural Areas budget that provides for works to be carried out in Natural Areas that Council owns or manages. This funding is variable and not only for biosecurity activities, but all environmental protection and restoration works on those lands. The funding is allocated using Council's Bushland Assessment Tool (BAT), which prioritises areas and actions to be undertaken based on condition. The majority of the funding from the Natural Areas budget goes towards weed management, with a small portion of funding utilised for pest animal management on Council lands.

Management of pest animals and weeds in parks, road reserves, sporting facilities or other Council operational/community lands are funded by the asset owner.

Weeds Biosecurity Funding

The Weed Biosecurity Fund (WBF) (previously the Weed Action Plan or WAP) has been used to support Council to carry out its LCA duties as required under the Act. In accordance with the Act, Council can employ staff or contractors as Authorised Officers to carry out activities associated with LCA duties within the LGA. The State Government provides the WBF funding through an annual grant process to support these activities, with funding split across the four goals of the program:

- Goal 1 – Exclude (Prevention)
- Goal 2 – Eradicate or Contain
- Goal 3 – Effectively Manage (Asset Based Protection)
- Goal 4 – Capacity Building

Council utilises WBF funding to assist agencies in the coordinated management of priority weeds on their lands.

Other External Funding Sources

Council relies heavily on funding provided through external grants. The Local Land Services Strategic Weed Grant Program or other similar programs from LLS allows Council to manage weeds that may be of higher priority for environment or community of Port Stephens.

For work on Crown Lands which Council manage, Council applies for funding through the Crown Reserves Improvement Fund (CRIF). These competitive grant processes must be applied for each year. These grants are often used for creating targeted programs for containment, or asset based protection weeds control that are particularly affecting local community members e.g. Blackberry, Lantana and African Olive.

4.6 OTHER BIOSECURITY MATTERS

Diseases and contaminants are managed by the NSW Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development. Council is responsible for management of these biosecurity risks on land it owns or manages, and must report any matters of concern. Biosecurity Officers provide resourcing of staff when required during emergency management undertaken by other agencies e.g. during the Varroa Mite outbreak and cane toad occurrences.

Appendix 1: Legislation, Regulations and Plans Relevant to the Management of Biosecurity in Port Stephens.

In addition to the Biosecurity Act 2015, this Biosecurity Management Plan aligns with the documents detailed below:

Item	Description
Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act)	Australia's main national environmental legislation providing protection and management of nationally and internationally important environmental matters. Identifies risks to these protected matters, including key threatening processes such as competition, habitat loss and land degradation by invasive species (Appendix 3).
Local Land Services Act 2013 (LLS Act)	Describes the functions of the Local Land Services in NSW, including as a Local Control Authority for pest animal management under the Biosecurity Act. Guides land management on rural land including natural resource management, farm forestry, agriculture and biosecurity.
Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016 (BC Act)	NSW State Government's main Environmental Legislation, providing protection and management of State Significant environmental entities.
NSW Biosecurity Regulation 2017	Outlines specific management and reporting requirements for individual diseases, pest animals and weed species. Details established Biosecurity Zones in NSW and conditions for Biosecurity Registration and Permits.
NSW Biosecurity and Food Safety Strategy 2022-2030	Sets the direction for management of animal and plant pests, diseases and weeds in NSW. Focuses on prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery.
NSW Invasive Species Plan 2023-2028	Targets the management of invasive species including roles and responsibilities. Emphasizes early detection, rapid response, and effective management strategies. Has 4 goals; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Exclude -Eradicate or contain -Effectively manage -Build capacity and capability Outcomes and strategies under each goal drive prioritisation of funding from the Weeds Biosecurity Fund.

Item	Description
Hunter Region Strategic Weed Management Plan	<p>Provides regional guidance on managing priority weeds in the Hunter.</p> <p>Aligns with the Biosecurity Act, local government responsibilities and other Hunter Regional Plans.</p> <p>Emphasises prevention and containment to reduce spread of weeds.</p> <p>Adopts best practice weed control methods.</p>
Hunter Region Strategic Pest Animal Management Plan	<p>Provides guidance on managing pest animals in the Hunter Region to reduce the impact on the environment, agriculture, and communities.</p> <p>Identifies priority pest animal species for the Hunter Region.</p> <p>Utilises an integrated pest management approach combining various control methods and a collaborative cross-border approach.</p>
Port Stephens Community Strategic Plan 2022 to 2032 (CSP)	<p>Captures the aspirations and priorities of the Port Stephens community under four key focus areas: our community, our place, our council and our environment.</p> <p>The aspiration is for a healthy and dynamic environment that supports biodiversity and is resilient to environmental risks, natural hazards and climate change.</p>

Appendix 2: Priority Weeds of Port Stephens

Priority weeds of Port Stephens and associated management phase and status in LGA current as of March 2025.

Species (Common Name)	Species (Botanical Name)	Management phase*	Status in LGA (noting focus area by suburb)
African Olive	<i>Olea europaea subsp. cuspidata</i>	Containment	Core infestations in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Osterley - Hinton - Wallalong - Woodville. Eradicate in all suburbs outside of core infestations.
Alligator Weed	<i>Alternanthera philoxeroides</i>	Containment	Core infestations in riparian/wetland areas in whole of Port Stephens.
Asparagus Fern	<i>Asparagus sp.</i>	Containment	Eradicate
Bitou Bush	<i>Chrysanthemoides monilifera subsp. rotundata</i>	Asset based protection (within 10km of Coast) Containment (outside of 10km of Coast)	Eradicate in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Heatherbrae - Raymond Terrace - Medowie - Swan Bay - Karuah - Twelve Mile Creek - Ferodale - Balickera - Eagleton - Kings Hill - Nelsons Plains - Osterley - Hinton - Glen Oak - Wallalong - Woodville - Butterwick - Brandy Hill - Seaham - East Seaham - Woodville - Butterwick - Duns Creek
Blackberry	<i>Rubus fruticosus</i>	Asset based protection	Monitor and treat as necessary.

Species (Common Name)	Species (Botanical Name)	Management phase*	Status in LGA (noting focus area by suburb)
Black Locust	<i>Robinia pseudoacacia</i>	Containment	Eradicate in areas outside of CBD's.
Bridal Creeper	<i>Asparagus asparagoides</i>	Containment	Eradicate
Broad Leaf Pepper Tree	<i>Schinus terebinthifolia</i>	Eradication	Monitor and treat as necessary.
Cabomba	<i>Cabomba caroliniana</i>	Eradication	Monitor and treat as necessary.
Camphor Laurel	<i>Cinnamomum camphora</i>	Asset based protection	Monitor and treat as necessary.
Cape Broom	<i>Genista monspessulana</i>	Eradication	Monitor and treat as necessary.
Cat's Claw Creeper	<i>Dolichandra unguis-cati</i>	Asset based protection	Monitor and treat as necessary.
Chinese Violet	<i>Asystasia gangetica</i>	Eradication (Control Order)	Monitor and treat as necessary.
Chinese Tallow	<i>Triadica sebifera</i>	Containment	Eradicate in areas outside of CBDs.
Climbing Asparagus	<i>Asparagus africanus</i>	Eradicate	Monitor and treat as necessary.
Coolatai Grass	<i>Hyparrhenia hirta</i>	Asset based protection	Monitor and treat as necessary.
Coral Creeper	<i>Barleria repens</i>	Eradication	Monitor and treat as necessary.
Crofton Weed	<i>Ageratina adenophora</i>	Asset based protection	Monitor and treat as necessary.
Frogbit	<i>Limnobium laevigatum</i>	Prevention	Monitor and treat as necessary.
Galenia	<i>Galenia pubescens</i>	Containment	Core infestations - Heatherbrae - Anna Bay Eradicate in all suburbs outside of core infestations.
Giant Parramatta Grass	<i>Sporobolus fertilis</i>	Asset based protection	Monitor and treat as necessary.
Giant Reed	<i>Arundo donax</i>	Asset based protection	Monitor and treat as necessary.
Glory Lily	<i>Gloriosa superba</i>	Eradication	Monitor and treat as necessary.

Species (Common Name)	Species (Botanical Name)	Management phase*	Status in LGA (noting focus area by suburb)
Green Cestrum	<i>Cestrum parqui</i>	Asset based protection	Monitor and treat as necessary.
Ground Asparagus	<i>Asparagus aethiopicus</i>	Asset based protection	Monitor and treat as necessary.
Groundsel Bush	<i>Baccharis halimifolia</i>	Eradication	Monitor and treat as necessary.
Hygrophila	<i>Hygrophila costata</i>	Eradication	Monitor and treat as necessary.
Kidney-leaf Mud Plantain	<i>Heteranthera reniformis</i>	Eradication	Monitor and treat as necessary.
Lantana	<i>Lantana camara</i>	Asset based protection	Monitor and treat as necessary.
Long-leaf Willow Primrose	<i>Ludwigia longifolia</i>	Asset based protection	Monitor and treat as necessary.
Ludwigia	<i>Ludwigia peruviana</i>	Eradication	Monitor and treat as necessary.
Madeira Vine	<i>Anredera cordifolia</i>	Asset based protection	Monitor and treat as necessary.
Mother-of-millions	<i>Bryophyllum sp.</i>	Asset based protection	Monitor and treat as necessary.
Morning Glory	<i>Ipomea sp.</i>	Asset based protection	Monitor and treat as necessary.
Pampas Grass	<i>Cortaderia sp.</i>	Containment	Core infestations in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tomago - Heatherbrae - Williamtown - Twelve Mile Creek - Karuah Eradicate in all suburbs outside of core infestations.
Paterson's Curse	<i>Echium plantagineum</i>	Containment	Core infestations in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Raymond Terrace - Williamtown Eradicate in all suburbs outside of core infestations.
Privet	<i>Privet sp.</i>	Asset based protection	Monitor and treat as necessary.
Rattlepod	<i>Crotalaria beddomeana</i>	Eradication	Monitor and treat as necessary.
Sagittaria	<i>Sagittaria platyphylla</i>	Asset based protection	Monitor and treat as necessary.

Species (Common Name)	Species (Botanical Name)	Management phase*	Status in LGA (noting focus area by suburb)
Salvinia	<i>Salvinia molesta</i>	Containment	Core infestation in: - Whole of Port Stephens. - Less than 10 sites.
Scotch Broom	<i>Cytisus scoparius</i> <i>subsp. scoparius</i>	Containment	No known sites. Eradicate in: - Whole of Port Stephens.
Sea Spurge	<i>Euphorbia paralias</i>	Eradication	Known sites at: - Boat Harbour - Fingal Bay - One Mile
Senegal Tea Plant	<i>Gymnocoronis</i> <i>spilanthoides</i>	Eradication	No known sites – present in neighbouring LGAs.
Opuntia sp.	<i>Opuntia sp.</i>	Asset based protection	Monitor and treat as necessary.
St. John's wort	<i>Hypericum</i> <i>perforatum</i>	Containment	Core infestations in: - Medowie - Karuah - Twelve Mile Creek Eradicate in all suburbs outside of core infestations.
Sticky nightshade	<i>Solanum</i> <i>sisymbriifolium</i>	Eradication	Core infestations in: - Campvale - Tomago - Nelsons Plains
Tree of Heaven	<i>Ailanthus altissima</i>	Eradication	Monitor and treat as necessary.
Water hyacinth	<i>Eichhornia crassipes</i>	Containment	Core infestations in: Whole of Port Stephens
Water lettuce	<i>Pistia stratiotes</i>	Eradication	No known sites – present in neighbouring LGAs.

* As identified in Hunter Regional Strategic Weed Management Plan

Appendix 3: Vertebrate Pest species of Port Stephens

Vertebrate pest species in Port Stephens and associated management phase.

Species (Common Name)	Species (Botanical Name)	Management phase
American Corn Snake	<i>Pantherophis guttatus</i>	Prevention
Cane Toad	<i>Rhinella marina</i>	Prevention
Red-eared Slider Turtle	<i>Trachemys scripta elegans</i>	Prevention
Asian Black Spined Toad	<i>Duttaphrynus melanostictus</i>	Prevention
Californian King Snake	<i>Lampropeltis californiae</i>	Prevention
Rabbits	<i>Oryctolagus cuniculus</i>	Asset based protection
Wild Dogs	<i>Canis familiaris</i>	Asset based protection
Feral Pigs	<i>Sus scrofa</i>	Asset based protection
Foxes	<i>Vulpes vulpes</i>	Asset based protection
Feral Deer	<i>Cervidae spp.</i>	Containment
Cats*	<i>Felis catus</i>	Asset based protection
Horses	<i>Equus caballus</i>	Containment
Goats	<i>Capra hircus</i>	Asset based protection
Feral Birds	<i>Various Spp.</i>	Asset based protection
Introduced Fish Species.	<i>Various Spp.</i>	No Action for Council – <u>See DPI website for more information</u>

All native birds, reptiles, amphibians and mammals (except the dingo) are protected in New South Wales by the Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016 and must not be harmed, harassed, or impacted without appropriate licensing or permits. This includes:

- Kangaroos (*Macropus sp.*)
- Flying Foxes (*Pteropus sp.*)
- Sulphur-crested Cockatoos (*Cacatua galerita*)
- Australian White Ibis (*Threskiornis Molucca*)

* In NSW domestic cats are subject to the Companion Animals Act 1998 which currently prohibits Councils from being able to implement cat containment and curfews. Council provides information to the community regarding the benefits of keeping cats contained through its website. Hunter LLS can provide advice regarding feral cat control.

Appendix 4: Resources and Important Contacts

Resource	Link
NSW Biosecurity Act, 2015	https://legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/act-2015-024
Hunter Regional Strategic Weed Management Plan 2023-2027	https://www.ils.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0010/806509/Hunter-Regional-Strategic-Weed-Management-Plan-2023-2027.pdf
Hunter Regional Strategic Pest Animal Management Plan 2018 – 2023	https://www.ils.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/820795/Hunter-Pest-Plan.pdf
Decontamination of vehicles and equipment guide	https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=iNLi2nrIrXM
Port Stephens Council Priority Weeds List	https://www.portstephens.nsw.gov.au/environment/weeds/priority-weeds
Plants that Must Not be Sold Anywhere in NSW	https://weeds.dpi.nsw.gov.au/WeedListPublics/CategoryResults?showImages=True&categoryId=15&pageTitle=Plants%20that%20must%20not%20be%20sold%20anywhere%20in%20NSW
Key Threatening Processes in the EPBC Act	https://www.environment.gov.au/cgi-bin/sprat/public/publicgetkeythreats.pl
Key Threatening Processes in the NSW BC Act	https://legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/act-2016-063#sch.4
Port Stephens Council Biosecurity Permit Application	https://forms.portstephens.nsw.gov.au/RunForm.aspx?formId=2434
Guide to Developing a Weed Management Plan	https://www.portstephens.nsw.gov.au/development/strategies-and-planning-guides/development-control-plan
Hunter Local Land Services	admin.hunter@ils.nsw.gov.au
NSW DPI Biosecurity General Inquiries	1800 680 244 or quarantine@dpi.nsw.gov.au
Aquatic pests and Diseases	https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/dpi/bfs/aquatic-biosecurity/aquatic-pests-and-diseases

Appendix 5: Control Order for Chinese Violet in Port Stephens

Biosecurity (Chinese violet) Control Order 2024

under the

Biosecurity Act 2015

I, Scott Charlton, Chief Invasive Species Officer, as authorised by the Minister under section 78 of the *Biosecurity Act 2015* (the Act), make the following control order under section 62 of the Act.

Dated 25 June 2024



SCOTT CHARLTON
Chief Invasive Species Officer
Department of Primary Industries
Department of Regional NSW

Part 1 Preliminary

1 Name of control order

This control order is the *Biosecurity (Chinese Violet) Control Order 2024*.

2 Commencement and duration [s 63(e) and 66(1)]

- (1) This control order commences 1 July 2024.
- (2) The control order has effect until 30 June 2029.

3 Biosecurity matter and biosecurity risk [s 63(a)]

- (1) The biosecurity matter which is the subject of this control order is the weed Chinese violet.
- (2) The biosecurity risk that is the subject of this control order is the risk of an adverse effect on the economy, environment and the community that arises from the presence and spread of the weed Chinese violet in New South Wales.

4 Grounds for order [s 62]

The basis for reasonably believing that this control order is necessary to prevent,

eliminate, minimise or manage the biosecurity risk arising from Chinese violet is:

- (1) Chinese violet is a fast-growing perennial creeper that forms sprawling mats that can smother and outcompete native plants, reduce food and shelter for native animals, compete with crops (e.g. soybeans, vegetables, tea trees and cut flowers), and smother garden plants and lawns.
- (2) The control measures contained in this control order are required to assist in preventing the spread of Chinese violet and to eradicate, minimise, and manage the biosecurity impact that Chinese violet has in the Chinese Violet Control Zone.

5 Control zone [s 63(b) and 67]

- (1) The control zone to which control measures are required to be implemented under this control order is the whole of the State of New South Wales.
- (2) The control zone is called the *Chinese Violet Control Zone*.

6 Revocation

The Biosecurity (Chinese Violet) Control Order 2019 dated 20 May 2019 and published in the NSW Government Gazette No 53 on 24 May 2019, at <https://legislation.nsw.gov.au/gazette>, is revoked.

7 Definitions

In this control order:

Chinese violet means the weed *Asystasia gangetica* species complex whether whole or in part, and whether alive or dead.

Chinese Violet Control Zone – see clause 5.

new infestation has the same meaning as in Part 5 of the Regulation.

the Act means the *Biosecurity Act 2015*.

the Regulation means the *Biosecurity Regulation 2017*.

Part 2 Control measures – in the Chinese Violet Control Zone [s 68, s 69]

8 Control measures – owner and occupiers of land

- (1) The owner or occupier of land in the Chinese Violet Control Zone on which there is an infestation of Chinese violet must notify the local control authority for the area as soon as practicable of the following information:
 - (a) the person's full name and contact details, including a telephone number,
 - (b) the address of the land, including the lot and deposited plan number and the property identification code for the land (if these are known), and

- (c) any other information that is reasonably requested by the local control authority.
- (2) The owner or occupier of the land must ensure that the land is kept free of Chinese violet by destroying all Chinese violet on the land as soon as is reasonably practicable. This requirement applies to any new infestation as well as any subsequent generations of Chinese violet on that land.
- (3) The owner or occupier does not need to comply with (1)(a) above if they know that notification of the infestation on the land has already been given to the local control authority for the area.

9 Control measure – persons moving Chinese violet and carriers of Chinese violet (excluding a human)

- (1) This clause applies to any land in the Chinese Violet Control Zone on which Chinese violet is present or is likely to be present.
- (2) Before moving Chinese violet or a carrier of Chinese violet (excluding a human) to another property, a person must notify the local control authority for the area in which that other property is located of the following information:
 - (a) the person's full name and contact details, and
 - (b) the addresses of the land the Chinese violet is coming from and going to, including the lot and deposited plan number and the property identification code for the land (if these are known).
- (3) A person who deals with a carrier of Chinese violet (excluding a human) on land to which this clause applies, must take all reasonable steps to ensure that the carrier is not moved from the land with any Chinese violet on it, attached to it, or contained in it, before the carrier is moved from the land.
- (4) A person who moves Chinese violet or a carrier of Chinese violet (excluding a human) does not need to comply with subclause (1) if they know that notification of the movement has already been given to the local control authority.

Note. Examples of when Chinese violet or a carrier of Chinese violet (excluding a human) may need to be moved include, but are not limited to, the movement of vehicles, soil, or livestock as well as movement of Chinese violet for disposal.



PORT STEPHENS
COUNCIL