

PROPOSED RECOMMENDATIONS

STRADBROKE

**LAND CONSERVATION COUNCIL, VICTORIA
MELBOURNE, AUGUST, 1977**

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GOVERNMENT OF VICTORIA

LAND CONSERVATION COUNCIL

464 ST. KILDA ROAD, MELBOURNE, VICTORIA, 3004

PROPOSED RECOMMENDATIONS

STRADBROKE AREA

These Recommendations are published to allow all who are interested the opportunity to comment by making written submissions to the Land Conservation Council.

All such submissions must reach the Secretary no later than Monday, October 24 1977.

These submissions will be considered by the Council before Final Recommendations are made on the use of the Stradbroke area.


I. KUNARATNAM
Secretary
Land Conservation Council

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RECOMMENDATIONS

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Map A

INTRODUCTION

The Land Conservation Council, Victoria, established by the *Land Conservation Act* 1970, carries out investigations and makes recommendations to the Minister for Conservation on the balanced use of public land throughout the State.

In February 1977 the Land Conservation Council was directed to make an investigation of the Stradbroke area according to the following Order in Council:

"Where it is provided in Section 8 of the *Land Conservation Act* 1970, that where the Governor in Council is of the opinion that an investigation and recommendation of the Land Conservation Council in relation to any particular district or area of Victoria is necessary or expedient and the said Council may be required to make such investigation and recommendation within such time as fixed by the Governor in Council.

Now therefore, His Excellency, the Governor of the State of Victoria, by and with the advice of the Executive Council thereof, hereby requires the Land Conservation Council to make an investigation to determine in relation to all public land within the hatched area on the plan hereunder (the Stradbroke area) whether suitable land exists for alienation for private forestry purposes and to make a recommendation by the First day of February 1978."

Procedure

The proposed recommendations for the Stradbroke area comprise the second publication in a three-part process. The first - a factual report describing the resources and forms of land use in the area - was published on June 1st

1977. In the following 60 days the Council received 68 written submissions on the future of the land from the general public and interested organizations. After considering the submissions and visiting the Stradbroke area, the Council has proposed these recommendations.

Copies are available to the general public and are automatically distributed to those who made submissions.

Publication of these recommendations will be followed by another 60-day period during which the Council invites further submissions. All these submissions will be carefully considered and the Council will then make its final recommendations to the Minister for Conservation.

A. SOFTWOOD PRODUCTION

Council studied the South Gippsland area, district 1, and made its recommendations in 1973. Subsequently the government has requested Council to reconsider the Stradbroke area of that district with particular reference to its suitability for softwood production.

With the exception of areas rated Improved Site Quality III and IV-V, land at Stradbroke generally has a relatively low capability for softwood production. Council, while recognizing that a large majority of the submissions did not favour alienation for softwood production, believes that a small area could be used for private forestry purposes. This area of 670 ha, with apparently lower conservation and recreation values, is located in the north-west of Stradbroke, outside the boundary of the economic coal reserves and adjacent to existing private plantations. Council understands that this land, although only rated Improved Site Quality VI, would be suitable for private forestry purposes.

An important factor influencing the Council's present proposal is the possibility that the area indicated above will be greatly changed by the fire-control measures needed to protect future coal open cuts to the south. Council notes the result of the bush fires at Yallourn in 1944, during which the brown coal open cut ignited.

Leasehold of the land is preferred to freehold because of possible compensation problems should the land be required by the State in the future. Any lease must take into account the importance of the area for fire protection. Council points out that the coal resource does extend under this area, but that economic recovery is not considered possible at present.

Council now seeks further comment on the use of this 670 ha, as well as the recommendations for other areas

at Stradbroke before making its final recommendations to government.

The remaining 5,900 ha is recommended to be uncommitted land and will be considered in connection with the South Gippsland district 2 area. This was incorporated in Council's final recommendations for South Gippsland area, district 1.

Recommendation

A1 That the area shown on the map, being 670 ha west of Toms Cap Road and adjacent to allotments 1f, 1e, 121, 12g, and 29f, Parish of Willung, is suitable for private forestry and could be leased for that purpose.

Note: The proposed route of Loy Yang--Bass Strait waste-water outfall passes through this land. Provision for an easement to allow the construction and maintenance of the pipeline has been allowed for in the area calculation.

B. UNCOMMITTED LAND

In the previous chapter, Council has referred to land that could be leased for softwood production and proposes that the remainder of the Stradbroke area be uncommitted land. This uncommitted land includes an area overlying the economic coal reserves and areas containing significant conservation values. It is proposed that specific recommendations for these latter areas should await the investigation of public land in South Gippsland area, district 2.

Proved resources of brown coal occur beneath Stradbroke and the public land to the south. These resources have been identified and measured by exploratory drilling and geological assessment, and include reserves (hatched on the map) that are considered to be economically recoverable using current extraction methods.

Although no proposals have been formulated for the development of these reserves, their potential for future extraction must be recognized. The Stradbroke coal resource is being investigated in accordance with the government's Statement of Planning Policy No. 9, which is concerned with the brown coal deposits of Central Gippsland. The coal reserves will be protected by suitable legislation to ensure they remain available for extraction in the future. Council believes that this land should be uncommitted until the government has determined plans for development of these reserves.

Council realizes that future investigations and improved recovery techniques may subsequently extend the area of public land from which brown coal can be economically extracted. At such time, the use of the overlying and adjacent public land will need to be reviewed.

The remaining land, outside the boundary of the economic coal reserves and excluding the area referred to in the softwood production chapter, is also recommended to be

uncommitted.

Within this land, Council has identified a number of regions with high nature conservation values. They include the fresh-water swamps, the silver-leaf stringybark forest, and the narrow-leaf peppermint--manna gum forest of the Stradbroke land system. The diversity of vegetation types provides a range of animal habitats, including those required by the New Holland mouse.

Toms Cap in the south-west is an important historical landmark, being the point from which Angus McMillan sighted Corner Inlet in 1841, on his fourth and successful attempt to reach the Gippsland coast.

Recommendations

B1 That the area of 5,900 ha shown on the map be used to:

(a) maintain the capability of the land to meet future demands, in particular the capability for extraction of coal, nature conservation, and recreation

(b) produce those goods and services required by the community, such as forest produce

that

(c) in parts of the area overlying the coal reserves the land management authorities endeavour to provide a series of tracks for trail-bike-riding and horse-riding

that

(d) the removal of sands and gravels for road-making materials be confined where possible to areas overlying the coal reserves

that

- (e) military training should be confined, where possible, to land overlying the coal reserves

that

- (f) the special features and values that occur on uncommitted land adjacent to the coal reserves and listed below be protected:

- * the diversity of vegetation and swamp communities in the eastern portion of the area (prescriptions for fuel-reduction burning should be formulated by the Forests Commission in conjunction with the Fisheries and Wildlife Division to ensure that the habitat for the New Holland mouse is maintained)
- * the open forest association of narrow-leaf peppermint and manna gum that occurs on the Stradbroke land system adjacent to freehold land in the north
- * the scenic and historic qualities of Toms Cap and the surrounding land

and that the land be Crown land withheld from sale and be protected forest under the provisions of the *Forests Act 1958*.

C. RECREATION

Recreational use is currently low and includes some pleasure driving, picnicking, horse-riding, and nature study. The roads are occasionally used for car rallies; and Toms Cap - besides being a relatively popular look-out point - is used by local historical societies.

Because considerable areas of Stradbroke overlie coal reserves, Council has recommended that for the time being these areas be uncommitted land. As portions of the area will eventually be mined, Council believes that some of this uncommitted land could be suitable for recreational activities that in general are difficult to accommodate on public land - for example, trail-bike-riding. Consequently, Council suggests that the land management authorities should endeavour to locate an area within which trails for horse-riding and trail-bike-riding could be established.

Recommendations

- C1 That the public land continue to be available for the range of recreational activities normally associated with the public land in this area.

- C2 That the Forests Commission, the Department of Crown Lands and Survey, and the Soil Conservation Authority investigate the uncommitted land overlying the coal reserves with a view to providing some tracks for trail-bike-riding and horse-riding.

Note: Basin Swamp and Black Swamp adjacent to the Old Rosedale Road should be protected from potentially damaging situations.

D. UTILITIES AND SURVEY

The trigonometrical station at Toms Cap - the only utility currently occupying public land in the Stradbroke area - is one of the most important stations in South Gippsland.

It is not possible to provide for future public land requirements for survey and utilities in the absence of firm planning proposals. The use of land for these purposes will need to be considered when definite proposals have been formulated for particular projects. The various recommendations in the report are not intended to preclude such use of the land, and would be subject to review at the appropriate time.

Council believes that government agencies concerned with provision and installation of communication equipment, transmission lines, pumped storage sites, power stations, pipelines, roads, etc. should be requested to submit to the Council during the early planning stages any major proposals that would involve occupation agreements or the setting aside of sites on public land. This would assist in achieving co-ordinated planning, and perhaps avoid the necessity for costly re-surveys.

Council notes that the Latrobe Valley Water and Sewerage Board is currently planning the route location of a wastewater outfall from the Latrobe Valley to Bass Strait. The proposed pipeline will pass through the northern edge of the Stradbroke area, requiring a narrow easement adjacent to the existing road alignment.

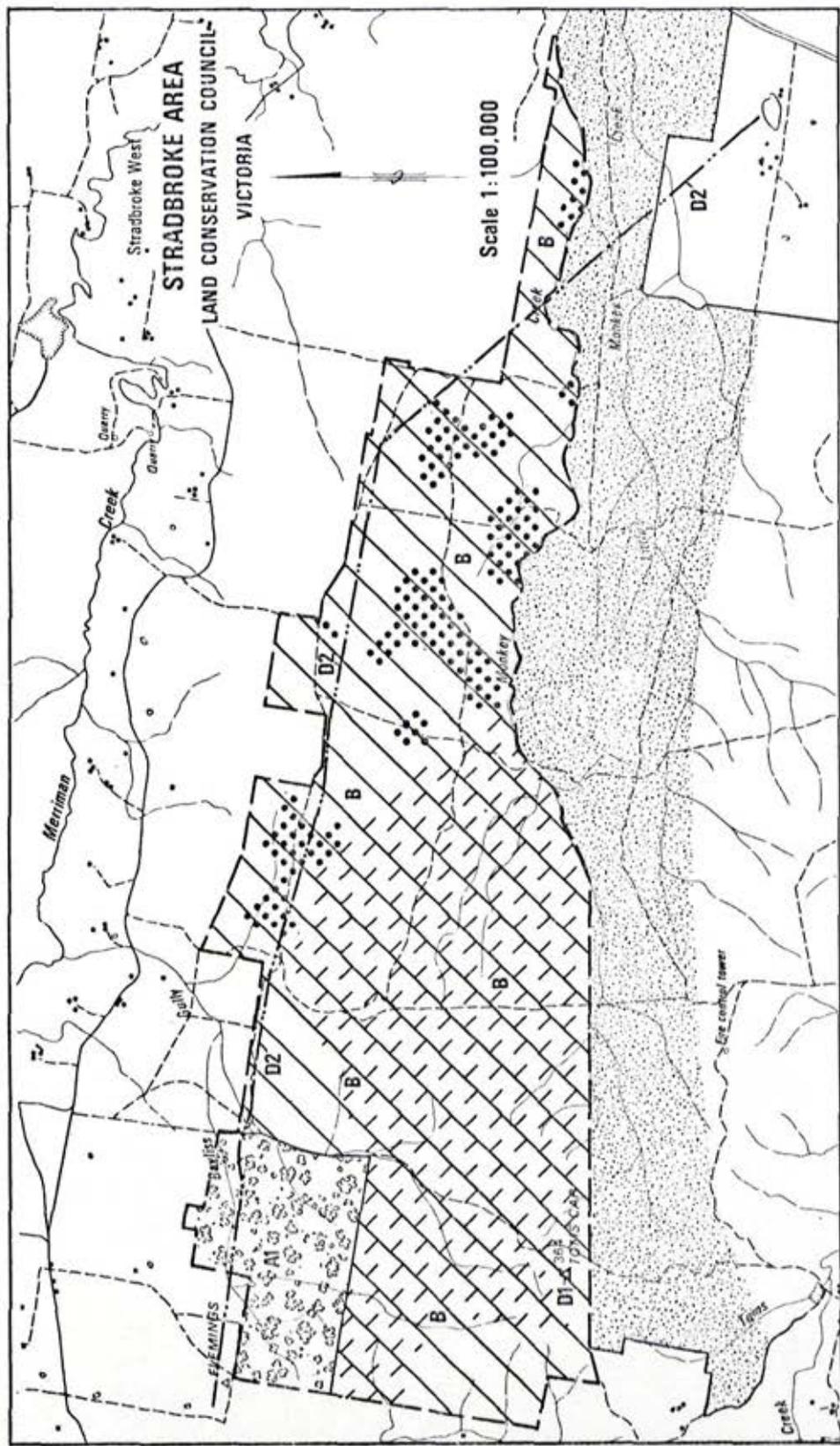
Recommendations

- D1 That the Department of Crown Lands and Survey have the right to occupy a minimum area around Toms Cap trigonometrical station and maintain lines of sight.

The Council recognizes the necessity to reserve sites for future new trigonometrical stations.

D2 That new roads, powerlines, pipelines, and other utilities be planned to minimize disturbance to public land and protect the values associated with this land, that they not be sited on public land without the agreement of the managing authority, and that new pipelines and power lines follow existing easements if possible.

PROPOSED RECOMMENDATIONS



	A1 Area that could be leased for private forestry purposes
	B Uncommitted land Indication of areas with important conservation values Economic coal reserves
	D1 Toms Cap trigonometrical station
	D2 Proposed Loy Yang-Bass Strait wastewater pipeline
	Public land in South Gippsland area district 2

--- BOUNDARY OF STRADBROKE AREA