

21.05 NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

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This clause provides local content to support Clause 14 (Natural Resource Management) of the State Planning Policy Framework.

This clause implements the following core themes of the Council Plan:

- *The strength and diversity of the agricultural sector. (p. 9)*
- *Develop water sensitive urban design. (p. 17)*

Specific references to individual towns are also included in Clause 21.09 (Local Areas).

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Agriculture

Irrigated primary production and the processing of that product underpin the economy of the municipality and the region. The level of production is nationally important and the region is responsible for significant parts of the nation's milk production, deciduous canned fruit production, stone fruit crop and tomato processing production.

It is increasingly evident that prospective agricultural investment is jeopardised, deterred, or lost by land use and development that has the potential to compromise the scale and location of such investment. In particular, agricultural investment is far less likely where the ownership of land is fragmented with housing dispersed throughout. To address this, a Regional Rural Land Use Strategy (2008) identified various categories of farming areas, and recommended different subdivision and minimum lot size provisions for dwellings in each category. Important principles arising from the strategy that have been applied in the rural areas are:

- The minimum subdivision size is always to be less than or equal to the minimum dwelling size in order to avoid expectations and perceptions that there will be an automatic entitlement to erect a dwelling on all newly created lots in the Farming Zone.
- Small lot subdivisions should not create any additional entitlements for a dwelling, nor should they create an opportunity for a dwelling without a planning permit.
- Unplanned rural living should not displace agriculture or prevent flexibility for farm businesses.

The farming area categories are as follows:

- **Growth and Consolidation areas**, being areas for growth and expansion of existing farm businesses and for new investment. The minimum subdivision size in these areas has been set at 60 hectares, and a dwelling needs a planning permit on all land less than 80 hectares in area.
- **Niche areas**, being those areas with productive potential based on existing lot configuration, and opportunities for smaller scale and specialised agriculture. The minimum subdivision size in these areas has been set at 40 hectares, and a dwelling needs a planning permit on all land less than 40 hectares in area.

Intensive animal and intensive agricultural industries are important to the shire, such as feed lots, piggeries, aquaculture, dog breeding, and poultry farms. Council considers it important that appropriate buffer areas are established and performance requirements are set for intensive activities.

Council also acknowledges that some intensive agricultural uses are not suited to irrigated areas. On that basis, a preferred area for the siting and operation of such activities has been identified in the west of the shire in a dryland area around the Patho Plains where some activities that are not reliant upon large volumes of water are encouraged to be established.

Objective 1

To ensure that agriculture is and remains the major economic driver in the region.

Strategies

- 1.1 Facilitate growth of existing farm businesses.
- 1.2 Facilitate growth of new agricultural investment.
- 1.3 Identify 'growth' and 'niche' areas.
- 1.4 Encourage growth and expansion of existing farm businesses and new investment in 'growth' areas.
- 1.5 Encourage opportunities for smaller scale, specialised agriculture in 'niche' areas.
- 1.6 Discourage land uses that have the potential to compromise agricultural investment.
- 1.7 Encourage and promote regenerative agriculture, especially in areas affected by land degradation.

Objective 2

To identify a preferred area for intensive agricultural activities.

Strategies

- 2.1 Minimise the off-site amenity and environmental effects of intensive agricultural industries.
- 2.2 Promote the Patho Plains as the preferred area for the siting and operation of intensive agricultural activities.
- 2.3 Establish appropriate buffer areas and performance requirements for intensive activities such as waste water facilities, feed lots, piggeries, dairies, dog breeding and poultry farms.
- 2.4 Ensure the appropriate siting and operation of intensive agricultural activities so as to negate off-site negative impacts and give accessibility to required infrastructure.
- 2.5 Restrict intensive animal husbandry, other than dairying, on irrigated land.

Objective 3

To ensure that use and development does not pose a threat to the sustainable productive capacity of the shire's agriculture economic base.

Strategies

- 3.1 Ensure that new uses and developments:
 - Are located on land that has the capability to sustain the development;
 - Do not impact on significant native vegetation or habitat;
 - Include appropriate revegetation and tree planting programs;

- Do not impact on adjoining environmentally sensitive areas;
 - Minimise the prospects for soil erosion;
 - Locate land-based effluent disposal systems in appropriate locations, having regard to relevant Salinity Management Plans, Nutrient Management Plans and any guidelines for the protection of water quality.
- 3.2 Encourage the reduction of industrial waste, and its recycling, including nutrient enriched waste from agricultural enterprises.
- 3.3 Encourage proposals which incorporate sound carbon storage principles, including retention of remnant native vegetation, revegetation and tree planting.
- 3.4 Ensure chemical and fuel storage and stormwater drainage from intensive farming enterprises protect environmental values.
- 3.5 Promote the installation of reticulated sewerage schemes (with consideration of the various options available) in unsewered townships.
- 3.6 Promote the installation of improved septic tank systems and alternative waste treatment systems (e.g. composting toilets) in areas where sewerage is not available.

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Sustainable development uses the principles of integrated water management, which has three aims: reduce reliance on potable water supplies; reduce the amount of wastewater and stormwater generated; and improve water quality in water catchment ecosystems. Water conservation practices reduce water use and therefore wastewater generation. In addition, wastewater and stormwater can be harvested and treated for reuse as a substitute for potable water currently used for domestic purposes and irrigation. Wastewater and stormwater that is not reused is treated to reduce pollutant loads entering water catchment ecosystems.

A key challenge identified in 'Campaspe: Our Future' is access to water. Water for agricultural purposes has become less available, and water affordability is a continuing challenge. The Murray Darling Basin Plan limits the amount of water available for irrigation so that it can be allocated for environmental purposes, and climate in southern Australia is predicted to become dryer.

An issue of emerging importance is the pressure to develop land adjacent to Waranga Basin for agricultural purposes where there is a lack of controls in place to enforce appropriate buffer distances between agricultural activity and the basin. High use of fertilisers, pesticides and herbicides may have a detrimental impact on the quality of water in the basin. Any abutting development should not detrimentally impact on the management, use and water quality of Waranga Basin.

Objective 4

To ensure that the quality, quantity and availability of water is maintained.

Strategies

- 4.1 Ensure any new use or development does not cause water pollution or land degradation.
- 4.2 Ensure that development proposals do not detrimentally impact on the quantity and quality of surface water, groundwater or infrastructure such as dams, irrigation channels and drainage systems.

- 4.3 Protect the health of waterways, wetlands and floodplain areas of environmental significance.
- 4.4 Encourage agriculture and other industries to conserve and minimise waste.
- 4.5 Encourage development on land abutting Waranga Basin or any watercourses or waterways to make provision for vegetated riparian buffer zones along foreshores and stream banks, to improve water quality, local amenity and biodiversity values.
- 4.6 Address water availability at the subdivision stage (or earlier), including the expected water (dam) needs of new subdivisions, rather than at development stage when water availability may be more problematic.
- 4.7 Ensure that development meets the quality and quantity requirements of Goulburn-Murray Water.
- 4.8 Avoid proposals for rural residential development with a reliance on irrigation water supply, especially where the infrastructure is at risk of being rationalised as a result of urban encroachment.
- 4.9 Encourage sustainable water use and re-use in residential development and subdivision.

Objective 5

To encourage environmentally responsible effluent disposal techniques.

Strategies

- 5.1 Implement sustainable water use plans.
- 5.2 Protect surface waters and ground waters in the Loddon, Campaspe and Goulburn catchments from stormwater pollutants and impacts of peak stormwater flows.
- 5.3 Ensure effective design and construction of wetlands and stormwater pollutant traps.
- 5.4 Implement relevant Environment Protection Authority requirements in areas where provision of reticulated services is not practical.
- 5.5 Minimise stormwater pollutants and peak stormwater flows at the source in accordance with best practice performance objectives.

Objective 6

To protect and improve water quality and river health.

Strategies

- 6.1 Improve the balance between multiple uses of groundwater and surface water.
- 6.2 Provide buffers to waterways to maintain water quality.
- 6.3 Encourage water sensitive urban design principles in all developments, including stormwater re-use.
- 6.4 Maintain community wetlands and infrastructure (such as gross pollutant traps) in urban areas.

- 6.5 Protect and enhance waterway corridors through use of water sensitive urban design, appropriate plantings and land management.

Objective 7

To reduce corporate and community water use.

Strategies

- 7.1 Promote water re-use, water conservation and similar actions to maximise the amount of water available for river health and human use.
- 7.2 Promote the use of recycled water for industrial, agricultural and domestic use.

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Implementation

The strategies in relation to natural resource management will be implemented through the planning scheme by:

Policy guidelines

- When deciding on applications for use and development that may impact on natural resource management, considering, as appropriate:
 - Using local policy at Clause 22.01 Agricultural Policy to determine appropriate rural subdivision and rural dwelling outcomes.
 - Using local policy at Clause 22.04 Non-agricultural Uses in the Farming Zone Policy to guide decisions on a variety of non-agricultural uses within the rural areas of the municipality.
 - Using local policy at Clause 22.06 Rural Activity Zone Policy to ensure appropriate land use outcomes in the Rural Activity Zone.
 - The need to require applications to include a land capability assessment to assist in the assessment of proposals so as to determine the site's suitability for land based effluent treatment and disposal, and to provide detailed design and management recommendations including an evaluation of alternative options where conventional systems will not work.

Application of zones and overlays

- Applying the Low Density Residential Zone to the outskirts of Echuca, Kyabram and Rochester.
- Applying the Farming Zone, Schedule 1 to the 'growth/consolidation' areas to implement the Regional Rural Land Use Strategy (RRLUS).
- Applying the Farming Zone, Schedule 2 to the 'niche' areas to implement the RRLUS.
- Applying the Rural Activity Zone to areas along the Murray River corridor to support rural based tourism.
- Applying the Rural Living Zone to rural areas primarily containing residential uses.
- Applying the Public Conservation and Resource Zone to Crown land, river frontages and state forests.

- Applying the Public Park and Recreation Zone to public open space areas managed by Council.
- Applying the Public Use Zone to other Council owned land.
- Applying the Urban Floodway Zone to land identified by the relevant catchment management authority as waterways and major flood paths within urban areas.
- Applying the Environmental Significance Overlay, Schedule 1 to land along the Murray River corridor to protect the biodiversity, ecological and cultural values of the waterway.
- Applying the Development Plan Overlay, Schedule 6 to land affected by low density residential development.
- Applying the Development Plan Overlay, Schedule 7 to land affected by the Wharparilla Drive West Development Plan.
- Applying the Floodway Overlay to land affected by waterways and major flood paths.
- Applying the Land Subject to Inundation Overlay to areas within the 1 per cent annual exceedance probability flood event.

Further strategic work

- Developing a Small Towns Strategy to identify growth opportunities for small towns.
- Investigating the inclusion of a setback for development from waterways in all zones, in order to adequately protect and enhance waterways.
- Considering mechanisms to ensure that relevant applications adjoining the Waranga Basin are referred to the Goulburn-Murray Rural Water Corporation is referred.
- Investigating the application of the Rural Conservation Zone, Vegetation Protection Overlay or the Environmental Significance Overlay to native grassland with a biodiversity risk of high.
- Investigating the appropriate buffer treatment around intensive agriculture at Patho Plains, including an Environmental Significance Overlay or Design and Development Overlay.
- Investigating the potential for land use conflict between intensive animal industries and native grasslands on the Patho Plains.
- Reviewing the policy settings around native vegetation precincts and offsets, given the new state government native vegetation policies.
- Reviewing policy based around the new rural zones, especially the array of discretionary uses in the Farming Zone and Rural Activity Zone.
- Considering the use of the Rural Conservation Zone (RCZ) to protect wetlands and waterways of national significance from inappropriate use and development.

Reference documents

Guidelines for the Protection of Water Quality, North East Planning Referrals Committee, 2000

Goulburn Broken Regional Catchment Strategy, Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority, 2013-2019

Campaspe, Greater Shepparton and Moira Regional Rural Land Use Strategy, 2008

Regional Rural Land Use Strategy Implementation, 2010

Earthworks Controls in the Shire of Campaspe, City of Greater Shepparton and Moira Shire, 2010

Campaspe Stormwater Management Plan, Shire of Campaspe, 2001

Council Plan 2013-2017