

22.08 NON-AGRICULTURAL USES IN GREEN WEDGE AREAS POLICY

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Where the policy applies

This policy applies to all land in a Green Wedge, Green Wedge A and Rural Conservation Zone, where a permit is required to establish a non-agricultural use. A “non-agricultural use” is a use that does not fall within the definition of ‘Agriculture’ in Clause 74.

22.08-1 Policy basis

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The Green Wedge areas of Casey comprise the rural areas outside the Urban Growth Boundary, which include most land in the Casey Farm, Casey Coast and Casey Foothills community areas set out in the Casey C21: A vision for our future strategy. These areas make a valuable contribution to the identity and prosperity of Casey. They provide important resources for agriculture, as well as for other non-urban purposes such as recreation and tourism. In these areas, care must be taken in selecting, siting and developing non-agricultural uses to avoid the loss of valuable agricultural land and any adverse impacts on landscape/environmental qualities.

These areas are also experiencing increased pressure to accommodate urban-type uses, for which suitable sites are becoming increasingly difficult to find within the Urban Growth Boundary due to their land requirements. Such uses include places of worship and the like, together with industrial-type uses such as transport terminals, vehicle stores/depots and the like.

The State Planning Policy Framework and Municipal Strategic Statement state that ‘green wedge’ areas should be protected and conserved, so that the land is not eroded or prejudiced by inappropriate uses and developments. Proper management is critical in order to ensure the continued sustainability of these areas.

22.08-2 Policy objectives

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- To discourage the intrusion of urban-type uses into Green Wedge areas.
- To ensure that non-agricultural development provides a positive contribution to the character and appearance of Green Wedge areas.
- To ensure that new buildings and alterations to existing buildings do not detract from the landscape and scenic values of Green Wedge areas.
- To ensure that non-agricultural uses do not adversely affect or prejudice the operation of existing and/or future agricultural activities.
- To ensure that non-agricultural uses do not have an adverse impact on areas of high environmental or natural resource value.
- To avoid creating clusters of non-agricultural activity, unless such activity is located adjacent to, or on the periphery of, an urban or township area.
- To ensure that, where appropriate, non-agricultural uses are sensitively integrated into the surrounding area.
- To reduce car dependency in Casey by consolidating non-agricultural uses in urban and township areas.
- To encourage the retention of existing agricultural land uses within Green Wedge areas.

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Policy

It is policy that:

- Non-agricultural uses not be supported if the use would result in the loss of agricultural land, be visually intrusive, or detrimentally affect the amenity of nearby residents or the environmental or natural resource values of the area.
- Industrial/warehouse-type uses, except those defined as either ‘Rural industry’ or ‘Rural store’ in Clause 74 or where there is a clear link between the proposed industrial activity and agricultural production, not be located in Green Wedge areas.
- Green Wedge areas be used predominantly for sustainable agricultural production and related purposes.
- Non-agricultural uses, except those uses that operate in conjunction with related agricultural activities on the land, be located adjacent or close to urban or township areas to reduce car dependency and maximise accessibility to public transport.
- Non-agricultural uses, except those uses that operate in conjunction with related agricultural activities on the land, be located along sealed roads that are capable of carrying anticipated traffic volumes and are designated public transport routes, such as arterial or collector roads.
- Non-agricultural uses not adversely impact on productive agricultural land or on existing agricultural activities on nearby land.
- Non-agricultural uses be required to result in a net benefit and convenience to the local community.
- The scale, design and appearance of any new buildings associated with a non-agricultural use be complementary to the character and function of the surrounding area.
- Non-agricultural uses/developments be designed, constructed and operated in a manner that causes minimal loss of amenity, privacy and convenience to people living in nearby dwellings, having regard to traffic, car parking, access, built form and overall site layout.
- A master plan defining the parameters of future development be required to be submitted with a planning application in circumstances where less than 50 per cent of a site is proposed to be developed for a non-agricultural use (inclusive of associated car parking), or the balance of the site is of an area that has the potential to accommodate a significant expansion of the use.
- A land management plan, prepared by a suitably qualified professional, be required to be submitted with a planning application in circumstances where a site that is currently used for, or has the capability of being used for, productive agricultural purposes is proposed to be developed in part for a non-agricultural use, to ensure that:
 - The balance of the site can still be used in a productive and sustainable manner.
 - Where relevant, the non-agricultural use will support the retention of existing and/or future agricultural activities on the land.
- New development be required to connect to reticulated water, sewerage, power and stormwater, where available.

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Performance standards

It is policy that proposals are assessed against the following performance standards, as appropriate:

- The design and appearance of all buildings and works should be low-impact, having regard to the surrounding rural environment.
- The site should be located adjacent to an urban or township area and on or close to a designated public transport route (except where the non-agricultural use would operate in conjunction with existing agricultural activities on the land).
- The site should abut or have direct access to an arterial road to minimise traffic impacts on the surrounding rural environment (except where the non-agricultural use would operate in conjunction with existing agricultural activities on the land).
- Hours of operation should be restricted to maintain the amenity of any nearby dwellings.
- The site should be landscaped to minimise the visual impact of the development on the rural landscape.
- The site should have convenient and practicable access to reticulated services (except where the non-agricultural use would operate in conjunction with existing agricultural activities on the land).

22.08-5 Decision guidelines

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Before deciding on an application, it is policy that the responsible authority considers:

- Whether the proposal would compromise the existing or future use of the site for productive agricultural purposes.
- The impact of the proposal on the landscape and environmental values of the site and the surrounding area.
- The impact of the proposal on the amenity of nearby residential uses.
- The impact of the proposal on the continued operation of existing agricultural activities on nearby land.
- The proximity of the site to an urban or township area and a designated public transport route (except where the non-agricultural use would operate in conjunction with existing agricultural activities on the land).
- Whether the proposal could reasonably be located on a site within the Urban Growth Boundary (except where the non-agricultural use would operate in conjunction with existing agricultural activities on the land).
- Whether the proposal would support the retention of existing and/or future agricultural activities on the land.

22.08-6 Policy reference

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Casey C21: A vision for our future, City of Casey, 2002.