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C215**DEVELOPMENT AT THE URBAN - FOREST INTERFACE POLICY**

This policy applies to land in the General Residential Zone, Low Density Residential Zone and proposed new development areas that abuts forested areas.

Policy basis

The MSS (at Clause 21.05) notes the existence of the areas in and around Bendigo as having ecological significance which provide environmental and economic benefits, and which make an important contribution to the city's unique character. Mechanisms are needed to address the urban-forest interface principally by way of a 'buffer zone' and building setbacks.

This policy sets minimum standards to be applied to residential development that abuts both public and privately owned forest. Higher standards may be required depending on the circumstances. In relation to public land as a matter of principle all buffers are to be provided on privately owned land.

Objective

To ensure residential development protects and maintains the environmental values of adjoining forested areas surrounding Bendigo.

Policy

It is policy to: -

Public forest and private forest– all areas

- Ensure street lighting is fitted with cut-off luminaries to prevent emissions of direct light into the Crown land.
- Ensure a 1.8 metre high solid panel fence is required with galvanised rabbit mesh buried in the ground to create a rabbit and dog barrier, where there is no intervening road reserve.
- Ensure a 5-metre setback is required for a road pavement from the forest boundary.
- Require a vegetation management plan for new subdivisions that indicates:
 - The number and location of trees and other native vegetation to be retained;
 - Details as to how these trees will be protected during construction;
 - Planting locations, species mix, planting density of new plantings;
 - A maintenance schedule that ensures all plants are establish and survive for at least three (3) years;
 - All street tree plantings are to be of locally indigenous species. The planting of exotic flora is strongly discouraged; Seed collection, vegetative propagation and/or transplanting of indigenous vegetation is to be encouraged; and
 - Areas of native vegetation be retained where practicable.
- Generally discourage stormwater discharge onto public land. Where unavoidable, require a stormwater management plan to be prepared in accordance with CSIRO guidelines and incorporate water sensitive urban design principles.

Public forest – all areas

- Ensure a 1.2-metre “farm” style mesh fence with a continuous top rail and galvanised rabbit mesh buried in the ground to create a rabbit and dog barrier is required for fencing of the forest boundary where there is road reserve between the forest and residential development.
- Site accessways to Crown land at locations satisfactory to the public land manager and designed to prevent access by motorcycles and the like.

Public forest – existing General Residential Zone or Low Density Residential Zone

- Ensure a 30-metre buffer is provided from habitable buildings to the forest boundary. A road reserve may be included within the buffer. Planting of the buffer will be based on the Ecological Vegetation Class (EVC), but will not include trees.
- Ensure subdivision applications include:
 - Subdivision design based upon consultation with the public land manager;
 - The development of biolinks to link critical vegetation;
 - Building envelopes;
 - All utility services to be placed underground in common trenches;
 - A fire management plan, which addresses issues such as access for emergency vehicles and fire hazard reduction;
 - Higher density lots in areas that have previously been disturbed and undisturbed areas left as open space, where appropriate;
 - EVC mapping where applicable and the protection of areas of very high, high and medium conservation significance vegetation from residential development.

Public forest – proposed new development areas

- Consider applying a Design and Development Overlay to public forest – proposed new development areas, which at a minimum addresses:
 - The protection of areas that have a Strategic Biodiversity Score of 0.41 and above ;
 - The subdivision design in consultation with the adjoining public land manager;
 - The development of biolinks to link critical vegetation;
 - The provision of building envelopes;
 - The placement of all utility services under ground in common trenches;
 - The preparation of a fire management plan, which includes issues such access for emergency vehicles and fire hazard reduction; and
 - Higher density lots in areas that have been previously disturbed and undisturbed areas left as public open space, where appropriate.

Private forest - (areas that have a Strategic Biodiversity Score of 0.41 or above) – existing General Residential Zone and Low Density Residential Zone

- Ensure a 30-metre buffer is provided from habitable buildings to the forest boundary. A road reserve may be included within the buffer. Planting of the buffer will be based on the EVC.
- Ensure subdivision applications include, as appropriate:
 - The development of biolinks to link critical vegetation;
 - Building envelopes;

- Dwellings to be constructed of materials that are sympathetic with adjoining forest (ie muted tones, etc);
- A fire management plan, which addresses issues such access for emergency vehicles and fire hazard reduction;
- Higher density lots in areas that have been previously disturbed and undisturbed areas left as public open space, here appropriate; and
- EVC mapping where applicable and the protection of areas of very high, high and medium conservation significance vegetation from residential development.

Private forest (areas of very high, high and medium conservation significance vegetation) – proposed new development areas

- Discourage new residential areas that abut private forest unless it can be demonstrated that an appropriate management regime can be introduced that will produce a positive environmental outcome for the private forest.
- Consider applying a Design and Development Overlay to private forest – proposed new development areas, which at a minimum addresses:
 - The protection of areas that have a Strategic Biodiversity Score of 0.41 and above;
 - The development of biolinks to link critical vegetation;
 - The provision of building envelopes;
 - The placement of all utility services under ground in common trenches;
 - The preparation of a fire management plan, which includes issues such access for emergency vehicles and fire hazard reduction; and
 - Higher density lots in areas that have been previously disturbed and undisturbed areas left as public open space or covenanted private forest, where appropriate.