

21.0624/02/2011
C96**OPEN SPACE AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENT**

This section covers natural environment under the themes of:

- Open space
- Watercourses, wetlands and habitats
- Non-urban (Inclusive of Green wedge)

Environmental issues - Open space and natural areas in Greater Dandenong have significant ecological value and include bush areas, public parks and reserves, roadside and railway corridors and undeveloped areas, many of which provide habitat for flora and fauna. These areas need to be preserved and enhanced.

Greater Dandenong needs to work with other levels of Government and agencies to ensure consolidation and improvement to the quality of the open space system and to integrate them with corridors of natural interest and significance.

The River Red Gum is an important tree species and has historic value as a local native species used extensively in the past by both Aboriginal people and the European settlers.

The vast majority of indigenous flora and fauna has been significantly depleted through clearing for agricultural, industrial and residential development purposes. The remaining scattered trees and other remnant vegetation are considered to be of local conservation significance.

Waterways in Greater Dandenong are important for their conservation, regional drainage, flood management and water quality functions. The Dandenong Creek flood plain plays a vital role in controlling the flood waters of Dandenong Creek. It also plays an increasingly important role in stormwater treatment, conservation of wetlands, remnant habitat areas and provides an opportunity for re-vegetation in open space areas and passive recreation.

The challenge is to effectively manage Greater Dandenong's natural assets.

Economic issues - High quality open spaces and natural areas are vital if Greater Dandenong is to attract visitors, new residents and businesses who are seeking better environments and workplaces.

Social issues - Greater Dandenong has close to the metropolitan average of open space per head of population. However, an uneven distribution of open spaces in the municipality has led to poor access to this important amenity in parts of the municipality.

Improved access to high quality open space for recreation and sporting activities as well as enjoyment of the natural environment fosters social interaction, high quality community life and contributes to the health and well being of the residents.

Improving public spaces with landscaping, public art and other facilities will give meaning to these places.

21.06-124/02/2011
C96**Open space****Objective****1. To provide high quality open spaces and recreation facilities****Strategies**

1.1 Require as appropriate open spaces that:

- Provide appropriate facilities that meet the needs of the diverse community.

- Provide for a range of passive, active and structured recreational pursuits.
 - Maximise passive surveillance from surrounding residential, commercial and/or industrial areas to promote community safety.
 - Ensure that private open space areas are well-designed and are of a sufficient size, shape and configuration to best meet private and communal open space needs.
- 1.2 Assess the need for additional open space facilities when considering changes to use, development and subdivision proposals.
 - 1.3 Encourage the protection and enhancement of significant vegetation on properties abutting public open spaces.

Objective

2. To ensure equitable provision and access to open space

Strategies

- 2.1 Encourage the provision of open space in business and industrial areas.
- 2.2 Ensure that open space networks are within acceptable walking distance of urban residential areas.
- 2.3 Require major urban development projects to incorporate landscaped pedestrian and bicycle paths as links to open space and the broader path and open space network.
- 2.4 Encourage infill developments to provide for access to open space.

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Watercourses, wetlands and habitats

Objective

1. To protect and improve the habitat, vegetation, soil, water and visual qualities of waterways and wetlands.

Strategies

- 1.1 Ensure that existing drainage and over land flow corridors within new developments create a network of wetlands incorporating indigenous flora and fauna and linked open space corridors that filter and improve water quality from urban and rural run-off before entering Port Phillip Bay.
- 1.2 Ensure residential, commercial and industrial development adopts best practice approach to stormwater treatment and management.
- 1.3 Ensure that development adjacent to open space and along watercourses, addresses but does not dominate, the waterway or open space.
- 1.4 Encourage major land uses to contribute towards improvement of watercourses and open spaces in their areas and to integrate landscaping within their properties with adjoining public open spaces.

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Non-Urban (Inclusive of Green wedge)

Objective

- 1. To ensure use and development protect and reinforce the existing rural landscape typology**

Strategies

- 1.1 Ensure developments have low visual impact and respect the rural character of the surroundings.

Objective

- 2. To protect and restore the ecological functions and values of the non-urban area.**

Strategies

- 2.1 Ensure land is developed and managed in keeping with ecologically sustainable development principles.
- 2.2 Encourage the regeneration, repair or creation of wetlands and flora and fauna habitats.

Objective

- 3. To ensure that the design, appearance and construction of all development responds positively to the existing rural landscape and typology.**

Strategies

- 3.1 Require that all development protects visual corridors along major arterial roads.
- 3.2 Require that all development protects and improves the vistas of rural landscape.

Implementation

These strategies will be implemented by:

Policy and exercise of discretion

- Application of the “Chain of Parks” policy at Clause 22.01 to manage land identified in the Sandbelt Open Space Project Development Plan (Melbourne Parks and Waterways 1994).
- Application of the “Green Wedge Local Planning Policy” at Clause 22.02 to guide development and use in the non-urban area.
- Implementation of the Springvale Activity Centre Structure Plan (April 2010), Greater Dandenong Council.
- Application of the Residential Development and Neighbourhood Character Policy at Clause 22.09.

Zones and overlays

- Inclusion of the assets of public authorities in the Public Use Zone.
- Inclusion of the Abbots Road woodland area and the plains grassland area at the south-east corner of the Public Transport Corporation property in Greens Road in the Environmental Significance Overlay.
- Inclusion, in appropriate overlays, areas of significant vegetation and landscape quality in the non-urban zones.

Further strategic work

- Preparation of master plans, in consultation with other responsible agencies, for major open space areas including, but not restricted to:
 - Chain of Parks (former Springvale landfill sites).
 - Tattersson Park.
 - The Keysborough South wetlands.
 - The Dandenong Creek floodplain.
- Preparation of an Open Space Strategy for Greater Dandenong.
- Preparing a Flood Plains Development Strategy.
- Review of the Green Wedge Policy.
- Preparing Green Wedge Management Plan
- Revise the Chain of Parks Policy, including the identification, definition and role of 'Enterprise Sites'.

Other actions

- Implement the recommendations of the Play Ground Strategy and Action Plan, 2004.
- Encourage open space in areas identified as having a deficiency, through shared use of school facilities, enlarging existing parks and providing links to other open space.
- Ensure accessibility to all open spaces and waterways to all residents and visitors to the municipality.
- Provide walking and cycling tracks in neighbourhood parks and other parks including sign posting as appropriate.
- Design and develop open spaces in a co-ordinated fashion by developing master plans and concept plans in accordance with Council's Open space strategy.

Improve the quality of the overall open space system by:

- Ensuring provision of facilities for the comfort and enjoyment of all age groups particularly the elderly.
- Ensuring the provision of meeting places.
- Ensuring easy and safe access from the surrounding areas.

Strategic Open Space Framework

