

21.04 ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE

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This clause provides local content to support clause 12 (Environmental and landscape values) and clause 14 (Natural resource management).

21.04-1 Key Issues

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The key planning issues and challenges relating to the environment include:

- Protecting native vegetation and biodiversity
- Improving water management for natural features
- Managing use and development along the Murray River corridor
- Protection of pre- and post-contact historic sites and places of local significance

An overview of these issues and challenges are described below.

21.04-2 Native vegetation and natural features

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Overview

Abundant natural features and bioregions play an important role in supporting native flora and fauna, and providing wetland habitat for migratory birds, breeding habitat for Murray Cod, providing aesthetic values and supporting recreational activities. The key biodiversity assets include:

- Barmah (RAMSAR wetland);
- Barmah National Park;
- Broken Boosey State Park;
- Nationally listed fauna (Superb Parrot) and State listed species (Grey-Crowned Babbler, Bush Stone-Curlew, Yarran Wattle).

Many of the sites and the native species that they support are significant and require management to conserve their values. These sites are sensitive to modifications in land use, waterway management actions, flooding, and drainage and catchment management. The quality and extent of native vegetation is an indicator of catchment health. The major vegetation types are severely depleted. Most of what remains is within roadside reserves, along the rivers and streams, on public land and as small patches on private land. This vegetation provides key habitats for threatened species and also provides important ecosystem services. Much of this native vegetation is protected within a number of existing legislative Acts and State policies. The Lower Ovens River, downstream of Wangaratta, is a declared Heritage River under the Heritage Rivers Act 1992.

Objective 1

To maintain and enhance the biodiversity of native flora and fauna communities.

Strategies

- Strategy 1.1 Encourage native vegetation plantings to assist in the stabilisation or reduction of groundwater levels, greenhouse gas abatement and enhancement of biodiversity.
- Strategy 1.2 Apply the 'no net loss' principle to the assessment of applications involving the removal of native vegetation.
- Strategy 1.3 Encourage landowners to retain native vegetation or, if clearance is unavoidable, seek to minimise clearance.

21.04-3 River and water management14/12/2017
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The NSW *Regional Environment Plan No. 2 – Riverine Land 2009* and the *Murray Shire Local Environmental Plan 2011* identified the Murray River as an asset of National and State significance. The Murray River and its environs serve a variety of environmental, economic, social, and recreational and tourist functions. It is a common strategy, at all levels of government, that the Murray River and its environs be maintained and enhanced. All waterways, including the Broken River, Lower Goulburn River, Broken-Boosey Creek and Nine Mile Creek form a vital part of the Murray Darling Basin.

A co-ordinated and co-operative approach to planning and management of the River corridor is required to protect its significant values; and to prevent conflict arising from agricultural development, urban development, tourism and recreation development along the waterway and on adjoining land.

While Moira is heavily dependent on the irrigated agriculture industry, Council recognises that the supply of water for irrigation is finite. Efficient irrigation management is needed to minimise water use, reduce infiltration to the water table and potential downstream impacts from drainage (e.g. nutrients, water quality and increased flows, loss of flood storage, loss of wetlands and biodiversity). More efficient water use has the potential to make additional water available for expansion of irrigation enterprises on suitable land and to also provide additional flows for the environment. The *Northern Victorian Irrigation Renewal Project* and the *Connections project* are important State-level steps to improve rural water efficiency. Coordinated management of the available land and water resource represents one of the major land use challenges facing Council and the region. Council acknowledges that changes in land form and farm drainage schemes in the irrigated and dryland areas have the potential to cause adverse impacts downstream. There is a need to encourage on-farm practices that exploit rainfall more effectively while ensuring that this action does not result in adverse impacts on river health.

The Murray River provides an urban water supply for many towns and settlements. Improving water quality is an important goal.

Objective 1

To protect the environs of the Murray River recognising its importance for nature conservation, flooding, economic development, recreation and tourism.

Strategies

- Strategy 1.1 Promote consistent planning and management along the Murray River corridor.
- Strategy 1.2 Prevent the loss of riparian flora and fauna, biodiversity, habitat and wetland environments.
- Strategy 1.3 Protect the values and role of the Murray River reserves and other public land as floodplains and as buffer areas for nutrients and other pollutants.
- Strategy 1.4 Restrict inappropriate use and development on land adjoining and near the Murray River.
- Strategy 1.5 Ensure that buildings are sited a sufficient distance from the Murray River outside of areas subject to flooding.

Objective 2

To maintain and enhance river health.

Strategies

- Strategy 2.1 Protect and enhance the biodiversity, ecological, and cultural values of the waterway.
- Strategy 2.2 Prevent use and development of land adjoining the river from degrading water quality.
- Strategy 2.3 Promote consistent planning and management along the River corridor.

Strategy 2.4 Prevent the loss of riparian flora and fauna, biodiversity, habitat and wetland environments.

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Heritage

Overview

Moira has an abundance of natural, cultural and historically significant sites. Many of these have been recognised by local historic societies, interest groups and the Yorta Yorta Aboriginal community.

Objective 1

To conserve and protect sites and places of historic significance.

Strategies

Strategy 1.1 Identify sites and places of heritage significance.

Strategy 1.2 Ensure use and development of heritage sites and places is sympathetic to the heritage fabric.

Objective 2

To conserve and protect Aboriginal sites and places of cultural heritage significance.

Strategy

Strategy 2.1 Liaise with the local Aboriginal community and identify areas and sites of cultural sensitivity.

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Further strategic work

- Implement the Heritage Study 2007 in the planning scheme
- Prepare the Yarrawonga Drainage Study

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Implementation

Zones and Overlays

- Apply the Public Park and Recreation Zone and Public Conservation and Resource Zone to the natural assets and areas of natural significance
- Apply the *Significant Landscape Overlay* to areas around Lake Mulwala to protect the landscape value of the area
- Apply the *Heritage Overlay* to sites of identified significance
- Apply the *Environmental Significance Overlay* to the Murray River Corridor to protect and enhance the biodiversity, ecological and cultural values of the waterway

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Reference documents

- *Shepparton Irrigation Region Surface Drainage Strategy 1995*
- *Goulburn Broken Regional Catchment Strategy 2013-2017*
- *North East Regional Catchment Strategy 2011-2013*
- *Earthworks Controls in the Shire of Campaspe, City of Greater Shepparton and Moira Shire, August 2010*
- *North East Planning Referrals Committee Guidelines for the Protection of Water Quality (May 2016)*
- *Yarrawonga to Bundalong Foreshore Management Plan 2008*
- *Goulburn Broken Biodiversity Strategy 2016*