

22.1525/01/2006
C83**LANDSCAPE PROTECTION AND BROILER FARMS**

This policy applies to all land within the Green Wedge Zone and Farming Zone.

22.15-119/01/2006
VC37**Policy basis**

Broiler farming is a significant land use on the Mornington Peninsula with over 90 established broiler farms. There is a continuing demand for farm expansion and new farm development on the Peninsula, due to established patterns of production between farmer/growers and processing companies and the relatively mild climate. The Victorian Code for Broiler Farms provides a framework for the assessment of new farm proposals and the expansion of existing farms and addresses the major issues associated with the potential offsite impacts.

However, further critical considerations regarding broiler farming development on the Peninsula relate to landscape protection objectives. Many areas on the Peninsula have significant landscape values that would be undermined by the establishment of broiler sheds. Even with extensive landscaping, the scale of broiler sheds is inevitably intrusive, particularly in open rural and coastal landscapes, and in areas of high exposure, such as the Arthurs Seat escarpment and southern slopes.

The strategy that was implemented by the Western Port Regional Planning Authority (WPRPA) through the Conservation Plan for the Southern Mornington Peninsula, was to exclude broiler farm development from certain critical landscape areas, while allowing applications for the establishment of new broiler farms elsewhere on the Peninsula.

The WPRPA recognised that some sites for broiler farms could be found in most land units, but that in practice it is almost impossible to achieve an adequate degree of control over the establishment of broiler farms through the exercise of discretion on a site by site basis. In position papers, the Authority noted that:

“Each individual development generally has only minor adverse impact. Since incremental disamenity is small it is difficult to substantiate why any particular operation should be refused. A refusal is additionally difficult to defend because of comparisons. This leads to accusations of favouritism and arbitrariness. The practical difficulties are compounded because the environmental factors may take on different weights in different but similar decisions regarding development. In view of these difficulties and the opportunities that are provided for future poultry development it is felt that a real measure of landscape protection will be possible only by the exercise of prohibition in certain land units.”

The landscapes of the Peninsula are a valuable recreational and economic resource and the potential impact of broiler farming is such that a precautionary approach is warranted – in this case through the exclusion of this form development from a number of land units. This approach is also relevant to other forms of intensive agriculture, egg production farms and rural industry, that involve buildings of a similar scale.

22.15-210/08/2006
C68(Part 1)**Objectives**

- To implement a strategic approach to the location of new broiler farms which includes appropriate recognition of the landscape and recreational values of the Mornington Peninsula.
- To protect sensitive landscape areas from intrusive development.
- To ensure that proposed broiler farms produce no adverse impact on landscape values.

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Policy

- A landscape plan, prepared by a properly qualified person, must accompany any application for a broiler farm and must provide for adequate screening of the development and the enhancement of the landscape of the area.
- The site of a proposed broiler farm should not be located on land shown on the planning scheme maps as being within any of the following schedules to the Environmental Significance Overlay:
 - Northern Mosaic – in the area between Golf Links Road and Baxter Tooradin Road, Baxter, north of the Baxter Tooradin Road, Baxter or west of the Moorooduc Road, Baxter.
 - Moorooduc Plain and Balcombe Valley – in the area west of Moorooduc Road, Moorooduc or north of the Baxter Tooradin Road, Baxter.
 - South East Peninsula.
 - South East Basalt Slopes.
 - Southern Basalt Slopes.
 - Kangerong Basin.
 - Arthurs Seat Escarpment.
 - Arthurs Seat Southern Slopes.

In the case of an application to extend an existing broiler farm, a variation to the above requirements may be approved provided the responsible authority is satisfied that:

- There will be no significant effect on the landscape quality or environmental values of the area.
- The proposed extensions incorporate actions to address any outstanding concerns regarding the design, landscaping of the farm.

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Decision guidelines

Before deciding on an application for use or development of land for the purpose of broiler farming the responsible authority must consider, as appropriate:

- The proximity of other broiler farms or other poultry farms, the intensity of their development and the cumulative impact of these developments on the landscape of the area.
- The existing subdivision pattern in the vicinity of the proposed broiler farm site and the potential for additional housing.
- The effect on the landscape quality of the locality and the need for a landscape impact assessment by a properly qualified person.
- The ability to screen the development by means of landscaping and the proposals contained in the landscape plan.
- In the case of an existing broiler farm, the ability lessen visual impact by :
 - Upgrading the condition of existing buildings.
 - The provision of landscape screening.
 - Whether the buildings are capable of being operated in an efficient manner, which does not generate adverse off site effects.