

21.03 ENVIRONMENTAL AND LANDSCAPE VALUES

16/08/2018
C75

This Clause provides local content to support Clause 12 Environment and landscape values of the State Planning Policy Framework.

21.03-1 Biodiversity

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Context and issues

- Native vegetation is a critical part of biodiversity and environmental health. The incremental loss of native vegetation, on both public and private land, makes the conservation of remaining vegetation very important. The extent of native vegetation has declined on private land, primarily from agricultural, residential and other urban pressures and development.
- Weed invasion, human and stock access, agricultural inputs and inappropriate management have reduced the biodiversity value of remnant native vegetation
- Roadsides are often the only remaining areas of native vegetation in cleared farming areas.
- Wetlands are scattered throughout the municipality, primarily on the floodplains of the Ovens River and King River. Wetlands comprise an important part of the natural environment.

Objectives and strategies

Objective 1 To recognise, protect and enhance biodiversity values, ecosystem health and remnant vegetation, including scattered trees, roadsides, native grasslands and wetlands.

Strategy 1.1 Create a healthy, diverse and resilient environment.

Strategy 1.2 Conserve the natural landscape.

Strategy 1.3 Support responsible use of natural resources.

Strategy 1.4 Protect natural resource areas.

Strategy 1.5 Avoid development on natural hazard areas.

Strategy 1.6 Protect wetlands on private land.

Strategy 1.7 Protect remnant paddock trees.

Strategy 1.8 Facilitate re-establishment and regeneration of native vegetation.

Objective 2 To protect existing, and create viable new, habitat corridors.

Strategy 2.1 Facilitate bio-corridors between areas of remnant native vegetation

Strategy 2.2 Protect biodiversity values and remnant vegetation on roadsides.

Strategy 2.3 Protect habitat corridors.

Implementation

Policy Guidelines

- Design and construct subdivision and development proposals on a land capability basis to identify, protect and enhance existing native vegetation through selecting building and works sites to avoid the clearance of native vegetation.
- Require all land use and development proposals affecting native vegetation to fully document the presence and significance of native vegetation and avoid any adverse impacts on biodiversity values, particularly the clearance of native vegetation.

21.03-2 Significant environments and landscapes16/08/2018
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All buildings or works on or near significant ridgelines, escarpments or hilltops.

Context and issues

- Ridgelines, escarpments and hilly areas and other significant landscapes form an important part of the rural environment and backdrops to large, elevated areas of public land. The rural landscape of the municipality is an important natural asset that requires protection from inappropriate land use and development.
- The Warby Ranges are a prominent and significant feature in the northwest of the municipality that forms a major part of the area's landscape character.
- The Warby Ranges dominate the landscape to the north of the Hume Freeway and from Wangaratta, and can be seen from many areas of the municipality.
- Inappropriately sited and designed development or building materials can compromise rural landscapes, visual amenity and tourism significance.

Objectives and strategies**Objective 1 To protect the landscape and scenic quality of highly visible elevated areas.**

Strategy 1.1 Avoid 'skyline' development, or development which, though location or design, would break the line and form of the natural landscape.

Strategy 1.2 Avoid development on ridgelines, escarpments, hilltops, or on other visually prominent land features.

Strategy 1.3 Limit development on or near prominent ridgelines, escarpments and hilltops, or on or near other visually prominent land features.

Strategy 1.4 Require development proximate to prominent ridgelines, escarpments and hilltops to be designed so the profile of the building or work reflects the landform on which it is sited.

Objective 2 To protect landscape and biodiversity values of the steep vegetated private land in the Warby Ranges.

Strategy 2.1 Require development siting, design and building materials on the steep vegetated private land in the Warby Ranges to maintain landscape and biodiversity values.

Strategy 2.2 Design development to minimise the requirement for earthworks and removal of vegetation.

Implementation**Policy guidelines**

- Protect significant landscapes, ridgelines, escarpments and hilltops through the sensitive siting and design of buildings and use of muted tone building materials and colours.
- Consider the landscape and scenic quality of highly visible elevated areas in the assessment of applications.

21.03-3 Rivers16/08/2018
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- The municipality has major river systems of the Ovens and King Rivers, comprising significant ecological corridors and major floodplain systems.

- Water quality can be protected and enhanced through the retention and re-establishment of riparian vegetation.
- The Ovens River riverine corridor is an important ecological resource that runs through the Wangaratta urban area. This corridor is being progressively developed for walking and bicycle trails.
- Part of the Ovens River is classified as a 'heritage river' under the *Heritage Rivers Act 1992* due to its cultural and historic significance. There are particular building setbacks and land management requirements for heritage rivers.

Objectives and strategies

Objective 1 To protect and enhance working waterways that support healthy ecosystems and allow for sustainable community use.

- Strategy 1.1 Protect water quality through the provision of riparian buffers to retain and re-establish riparian vegetation.
- Strategy 1.2 Avoid development within specified setbacks from rivers and waterways.
- Strategy 1.3 Improve water quality through the provision of riparian buffers to retain and re-establish riparian vegetation
- Strategy 1.4 Protect high priority waterways identified in the *North East River Health Strategy 2004*
- Strategy 1.5 Protect heritage rivers and adjacent land from use and development that would compromise the cultural and historic significance of the rivers

Implementation

Policy Guidelines

- In evaluating an application for use or development of land adjoining the part of the Ovens River that is listed as a heritage river in Schedule 1 to the *Heritage Rivers Act 1992*, (shown on the settlement framework) have regard to:
 - The likely effect of the proposed land use or development on the heritage river.
 - Whether any permit conditions should be applied to protect the values of the heritage river.
 - The *Water Quality Guidelines for Northeastern Victoria*.

Further strategic work

- Encourage the North East Catchment Management Authority to prepare a planning strategy and policy for Heritage Rivers and the protection, use and development of land adjacent to them.