

**21.07 ENVIRONMENTAL RISK**11/05/2017  
C197

The City of Whittlesea is characterised by its expanding urban areas and urban-rural fringe, with well over half of the municipality being rural. Rural areas support various farming enterprises, lifestyle properties, water supply catchments, extractive industry, conservation areas and tourist attractions.

Historically poor land management activities have contributed to land degradation and as a result increased environmental risks. Key areas contributing to land management issues include:

- the removal of native vegetation, increased salinity and soil erosion impacts, particularly around local waterways,
- bushfires impacts,
- weeds and animal pests spreading and impacting on native vegetation and farm pastures,
- climate change impacts,
- overstocking resulting soil compaction, erosion and run-off, dry-land salinity, loss of vegetation, loss of soil moisture and carbon and reduced water quality, and
- urban development pressures on rural land, and illegal vegetation removal, rock removal, or land filling.

Council aims to maintain and improve rural land health and minimise environmental risk.

**21.07-1 Floodplains**11/05/2017  
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No Content

**21.07-2 Erosion and Landslip**11/05/2017  
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No Content

**21.07-3 Salinity**11/05/2017  
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No Content

**21.07-4 Bushfire**11/05/2017  
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Whittlesea encompasses areas of significant bushfire risk, particularly in the northern part of the municipality. It has been impacted by bushfire in the past and these risks need to be appropriately managed into the future.

**Objective 1: To assist in strengthening community resilience to bushfire and minimise environmental impacts.**

Strategy 1.1 Consider the following principles for development in areas at risk of bushfire:

- direct development to locations of lower bushfire risk.
- avoid development in locations of extreme bushfire risk.

Strategy 1.2 Avoid development in areas where planned bushfire protection measures may be incompatible with other environmental objectives.

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**Environmental Degradation**

Urban development, agricultural activities, land use change and development and poor land management practices can lead to:

- Soil erosion and deposition
- Soil degradation- increased salinity and loss of soil structure
- Ecosystem change
- Degradation, loss of native vegetation, loss of biodiversity
- Soil contamination.

These activities can lead to diminished land productivity and a reduced capacity of the land to maintain important ecosystem services.

**Objective 1: To maintain and improve rural land health and productivity**

Strategy 1.1 Encourage sustainable land management including managing livestock, weed and animal pests, retention of native vegetation.

Strategy 1.2 Mitigate against salinity and soil erosion caused by vegetation removal, rock removal, overgrazing or land filling.

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**Implementation**

**Reference Documents**

- *Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2012-2022*
- *Green Wedge Management Plan 2011-2021*
- *Municipal Fire Management Plan (City of Whittlesea 2012-2015)*