

21.06

10/09/2015
C84

ENVIRONMENTAL RISKS

This clause provides local content to support Clause 13 of the State Planning Policy Framework.

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Overview

Climate change resulting in more extreme weather events will exacerbate the present threats to the Shire from flooding, wildfire and drought. The application of the precautionary principle and the requirement for risk assessments to be undertaken may be appropriate in managing present and future land use and development to minimise adverse impacts of climate change. The precautionary principle will be applied when assessing applications for change of use and for significant developments in rural areas.

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Soil degradation and contamination

Overview and key issues

The Macedon Ranges Shire soils are diverse in character and there are areas of soil erosion and salinity which affect both agriculture and the natural environment.

Alluvial soils are often highly fertile, particularly if the deposited material is derived from basaltic weathering residues. The colluvial and alluvial materials range from sands and gravels to silts to clays and have highly variable engineering and agricultural properties. The colluvial soils are typically highly dispersive and prone to erosion. Alluvial soils dominate the major drainage lines, particularly around Lancefield and Woodend.

As there are few flat areas close to the watertable, salinity is not a major threat to land. Nevertheless, the downstream effects must be considered. Half the Shire is situated in the Murray-Darling Basin, so land use here affects salinity on the broad flat plains to the north.

Soil erosion results in loss of the soil as well as increased turbidity in waterways and transport of nutrients downstream.

Objective 1

To avoid significant land disturbance.

Strategies

- Strategy 1.1 Ensure waste water management systems are only located on land with appropriate capability.
- Strategy 1.2 Avoid development on slopes over 20 per cent or land subject to subsidence or landslip.
- Strategy 1.3 Ensure any development of land on slopes of over 20 per cent minimises soil disturbance and vegetation removal.
- Strategy 1.4 Ensure that new dams do not add to environmental and landscape degradation issues.

Objective 2

To reduce the occurrence and impact of soil erosion and salinity in the Shire and the region.

Strategies

- Strategy 2.1 Promote the use of deep rooted species in the revegetation of areas, including recharge areas, where appropriate.
- Strategy 2.2 Promote the planting of vegetation windbreaks to reduce wind erosion.
- Strategy 2.3 Promote the fencing of waterways to avoid erosion from animal activities.
- Strategy 2.4 Encourage the use of appropriate erosion control techniques and measures.
- Strategy 2.5 Ensure development does not add to existing issues in the plains to the north of the Shire.

Objective 3

To ensure potentially contaminated land is appropriately managed.

Strategies

- Strategy 3.1 Ensure land use and development on potentially contaminated land is consistent with Ministerial Direction No. 1 and treated appropriately.
- Strategy 3.2 Ensure sensitive land uses are not located on contaminated land.

Application requirements

An application to use, develop or subdivide land must be accompanied by the following information where the responsible authority considers that erosion risk may exist:

- A land capability assessment of the site, prepared by an appropriately experienced or qualified land management specialist, identifying those areas which may be subject to erosion and how development, including, access and servicing, will be located and managed to prevent erosion or landslip.
- A detailed environmental management plan, which includes proposal for the ongoing maintenance of soil stability.

Decision guidelines

When deciding on an application to use, develop or subdivide land, the responsible authority may consider, as appropriate:

- Whether to impose conditions for land at risk from erosion requiring works to be undertaken to minimise this risk, such as revegetation of gullies and steep slopes.
- Land capability studies and the advice of any relevant land management agency.

Specific implementation

- Apply the Salinity Management Overlay to facilitate stabilisation and encourage revegetation in areas affected by salinity.
- Apply the Erosion Management Overlay to minimise land disturbance and inappropriate development in areas prone to erosion, landslip or other land degradation processes.
- Apply the Environmental Audit Overlay to recognise and control land contamination issues.
- Apply Clause 22.02 (Dams) to prevent construction of dams in environmentally sensitive areas when considering an application to construct a dam or carry out works to a dam.

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Bushfire

Overview

The Macedon Ranges Shire is at high risk of bushfire, as identified in the 2009 Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission Final Report. This risk is greatest in the forest and ranges areas and may also be significant in grasslands areas. The forest and ranges areas are also popular for rural residential development. Poor access in and out of high bushfire risk areas makes these areas particularly hazardous.

Objective 1

To prioritise fire risk in planning decisions, avoid increasing bushfire risk and minimise exposure of people to bushfire risk.

Strategies

- Strategy 1.1 Prioritise fire risk as a critical consideration.
- Strategy 1.2 Use a risk management framework when considering fire risk.

Objective 2

To ensure that where development opportunities already exist, development in rural areas and on the fringes of urban areas is sited and designed to minimise risk from bushfire.

Strategies

- Strategy 2.1 Direct residential development opportunities to parts of settlements where the threat to people and property from fire is limited.
- Strategy 2.2 Ensure development is sited to avoid steep slopes, highly vegetated areas and other areas identified as being at high risk from bushfire.
- Strategy 2.3 Ensure access to properties in areas considered to be at high risk from bushfire is sited and designed to provide for safe egress and ingress of residents and emergency vehicles.

Decision guidelines

When deciding on an application for residential development or development designed to provide temporary accommodation or facilities used by significant numbers of people, the following matters may be considered, as appropriate:

- The needs and requirements of the municipal fire prevention plan and the Country Fire Authority.
- The cumulative effect of uses and development in the area.
- Whether residential development in areas without reticulated water supply has provided a static water supply in accordance with Clause 53.02 for fire fighting purposes. These supplies must be fitted with suitable fittings and couplings to enable Country Fire Authority connection and use.

Specific implementation

- Apply the Bushfire Management Overlay to manage bushfire risk.

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Flooding

Overview

Some areas of the Shire are subject to periodic flooding, particularly the immediate environs of Five Mile Creek and Slatey Creek through Woodend and Jackson's Creek through Gisborne, and Riddells Creek. Flooding can impact negatively upon land use and development, however it also has positive environmental impacts. Floodways should be retained and protected for their role in conveying floodwater. A regular wetting regime provided by land prone to flooding is critical in maintaining wetlands and improving the quality of riparian vegetation. Planning can minimise long-term risks of damage from flooding by planning and developing properties, buildings and structures so that they are safe from potential flooding without compromising the safety of other properties.

Objective 1

To ensure the future use and development of land prone to flooding minimises the consequences of inundation.

Strategies

- Strategy 1.1 Discourage new use and development on land prone to flooding.
- Strategy 1.2 Ensure that appropriate drainage and flood protection standards are met in use and development.
- Strategy 1.3 Require development to appropriately respond to flood mapping.

Objective 2

To maintain the role of floodways in the environment.

Strategy

Strategy 2.1 Ensure the natural drainage functions are retained in the development of land for residential purposes.

Specific implementation

- Apply the Environmental Significance Overlay to low-lying land unsuitable for development that requires on-site effluent disposal north of Lancefield (ESO1).
- Apply the Land Subject to Inundation Overlay or other appropriate flood overlays to manage flood risk.

Further strategic work

- Undertake studies to further identify areas subject to flooding and areas subject to poor drainage and prepare revised planning controls as needed.

Reference documents

Kyneton Land Capability Study, 1996

Romsey Land Capability Study, 1994

Woodend Drainage Study, 1997

Woodend Land Capability Study, 1992

Requirements for Water Supplies and Access for Subdivisions in Residential 1 and 2 and Township Zones, CFA, March 2007

Municipal Fire Management Plan 2012-2015