

21.06 OUR NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

This Clause provides local content to support Clause 12 (Environmental and Landscape Values), Clause 13 (Environmental Risks), Clause 14 (Natural Resources –part) of the State Planning Policy Framework.

Overview

The Buloke Shire Council faces environmental challenges such as wind erosion, salinity and floodplains. These challenges cause environmental degradation and impact on natural resources including agricultural land as well as impacting on life, property and community infrastructure. The need to plan appropriately for the environmental management of risks is critical to the Councils ability to respond to emerging impacts

The natural environment of the Buloke Shire is highly modified as a result of settlement and agriculture. The environment has many aspects of significance which need to be protected, for example remnant vegetation along roadsides, watercourses and rivers, and significant wetlands such as Lake Buloke, Lake Tyrell and the Wooroonook Lakes.

Key Issues

- How to protect biodiversity, native vegetation and natural landscape values in Buloke Shire.
- Environmental degradation – How to minimise and reverse the effects
- Climate change – How to mitigate risk and adapt to climate change

Objective 1

To conserve remnant native vegetation and protect biodiversity throughout Buloke Shire.

Strategies

- Prevent native vegetation removal and promote native revegetation where practicable.
- Protect remnant native vegetation where it exists along roadsides and waterways.
- Encourage the protection and enhancement of remnant vegetation through the development of linkages between existing areas, and by requiring proposals to retain and enhance vegetation where appropriate.
- Regulate droving of livestock and manage road works to prevent areas of remnant vegetation being compromised.

Objective 2

To conserve the environmental value of the waterways and wetlands, including those at Lake Buloke, Lake Tyrell and the Wooroonook Lakes.

Strategies

- Prevent inappropriate vegetation removal, waste water disposal and earthworks that negatively affect waterways and wetlands.
- Promote the use of existing serviced areas for new development and discourage expansion into areas of environmental sensitivity.
- Educate the community on the environmental sensitivity of land as an important economic and environmental resource which requires protection and careful management.
- Discourage the removal of native vegetation from waterways
- The precautionary principle will be used for all use and developments with unknown impacts
- Incorporate CMA strategies that mitigate adverse impacts on waterways and wetlands into statutory and strategic planning considerations.

FLOODPLAINS

Objective 1

To ensure that new use and developments do not compromise the health of the catchment, a natural resource base.

Strategies

- Manage activities on floodplains to maintain natural flows.
- Accurately map floodwater regularly to ensure appropriate application of zones and overlays.
- Educate the shire population about artificial barriers to natural water flows and their consequences
- Maintain rural flows and natural conditions within waterways where possible.
- Identify and implement coordinated land use strategies to deal with flood control.

WILDFIRE PROTECTION

Objective 1

To identify areas of wildfire risk and address issues of development with regard to that risk.

Strategies

- Ensure that development applications meet the Country Fire Authorities guidelines.
- Ensure native and remnant vegetation are within the Department of Environment and Primary Industries guidelines for permissible volume or offsets are set.
- Minimise the threat and potential impact of bushfires throughout the shire through land use management.

SALINITY

Objective 1

To reduce the impact of salinity on development, rivers, soil, groundwater and areas of environmental significance.

Strategies

- Discourage development in areas identified as subject to high levels of salinity unless a salinity management plan is prepared.
- Manage the identified high recharge areas in the Shire with stringent planning controls.
- Promote vegetation retention in high recharge areas and salinity tolerant vegetation in new developments.
- Provide information on best practice land management to reduce impacts of salinity

WATERWAY MANAGEMENT

Objective 1

To recognise the contribution waterways make to the economy along with natural fauna and flora.

Strategies

- Educate the Shire population about the economic value of health waterways.

Implementation

These strategies will be implemented by:

The use of policy and the exercise of discretion

- Encourage planning permit applications that accommodate the management of land and water, and the enhancement of vegetation.
- Requiring detailed site analysis to assess environmental impacts and land suitability for particular permit applications.
- Encourage proposals for land use and development which incorporate measures to minimise the impact on remnant vegetation, including dead and hollow bearing trees.
- Encourage proposals that provide areas of open space directly adjacent to existing vegetation or areas of public land.
- High value remnant vegetation, including a broad vegetation type, ecological vegetation class of floristic community or sub-community which is classified as depleted, rare or endangered, should not be cleared.
- Council will consider the advice of the Department of Environment and Primary Industries and the relevant Catchment Management Authority where sites include remnant vegetation, including grasslands and wetlands.
- Applications for land use and development should demonstrate consistency with applicable regional vegetation plans and the vegetation and habitat recommendations of catchment-based strategies.
- Should the land be identified to contain the habitat of a Victorian Rare and Threatened flora or fauna species the responsible authority should request the advice of the Department of Environment and Primary Industries to determine whether and under what conditions the proposed development should proceed.
- High priority should be placed upon retaining remnant vegetation and habitat corridors in areas identified as habitat for Victorian Rare and Threatened Flora or Fauna species.
- Approaches such as fencing pockets of remnant vegetation or providing vegetation corridors between pockets of remnant vegetation should be considered as requirements on permits where appropriate.
- Using the Catchment Management Strategy to promote integrated farm management and environmental protection, promoting vegetation and habitat enhancement, appropriate water use and the protection of waterways.
- Encourage applications that accommodate the management of land and water, and the enhancement of vegetation.
- Preventing earthworks that result in inappropriate concentrations of floodwater, or directs water from a natural path to an area that would not otherwise experience flooding.

By applying Zones and Overlays

- Environmental Significance Overlay (ESO1) to waterways in the Shire to prevent inappropriate vegetation removal, waste water disposal and land forming.
- Vegetation Protection Overlay (VPO1) to roadsides of identified significance to maintain habitat and promote vegetation linkages.
- Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO) to areas identified as being subject to flooding to prevent inappropriate rural, residential or industrial development that may have impacts on water quality.
- Floodway Overlay (FO) to areas identified as being highly subject to flooding to prevent inappropriate rural, residential or industrial development that may have impact on water quality and flows.
- Urban Floodway Zone (UFZ) to areas identified as being highly subject to flooding to prevent any development and protect lives and infrastructure.

Further strategic work

- In conjunction with adjoining local governments, the Department of Environment and Primary Industries and Catchment Management Authorities, identify areas subject to flooding, saline discharge and groundwater recharge areas.

- Implement the Buloke Shire Roadside Management Guidelines to identify practices to minimise disturbance to roadside vegetation.
- Establish appropriate stock routes that minimise environmental impacts.
- In collaboration with other governmental departments, identify areas subject to salinity.
- Amendment to remove sections of the Environmental Significance 2 Overlay from the Buloke Planning Scheme as a consequence of the pipeline and decommissioning of channels

Other Actions

- In collaboration with the Environmental Officer undertake to produce information sheets for farmers regarding land use planning and environmental risks.