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INTENSIVE AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY

This policy applies to the areas defined as A and B in the schedule to the Rural Zone.

Policy Basis

The major component of the Shire's economy is based on the agricultural sector. Intensive and diversified agricultural activities will be supported on allotments larger than 20 hectares where it can be demonstrated that the agricultural activity will add-value to the Shire's local economy and will not lead to the fragmentation of rural land for non agricultural purposes.

Objectives

To encourage traditional and emerging intensive agricultural activities and practices that:

- Are ecologically sustainable.
- Incorporate best practice management principles.
- Introduce diversity and productivity improvements.
- Assist in the development of value-adding enterprises.

Policy

Subdivision

It is policy that an application for the subdivision of land for intensive agricultural development under this policy must be accompanied by a report prepared by a suitably qualified person.

The report should explain and address the following:

1. General considerations

- The relationship of the use, development or subdivision of the land to agricultural land use, agricultural diversification and natural resource management.
- The availability of infrastructure external to the site, such as roads and electricity, and its capacity and ability to support the development.
- Impact of internal infrastructure such as access roads and the connection of services such as electricity, on loss of native vegetation.

2. Agricultural considerations

- Farm size and the capability of the site to support continuous and sustainable farm management practices of appropriate farming systems.
- Agricultural characteristics and development trends of the existing or proposed industry.
- Existing and proposed agricultural infrastructure.
- Location of agricultural land use and compatibility with adjoining agricultural land uses.

3. Site constraints

- That the site is able to accommodate the proposed land use.
- Site quality attributes such as soil type, soil fertility, soil structure, soil permeability, aspect, contour and drainage patterns.
- Site characteristics such as soil erosion susceptibility, existing vegetation and habitat.
- Proximity to any proclaimed water catchment area.
- Areas subject to flooding.
- Areas of fire hazard.
- Salinity discharge and recharge areas.

4. Economic considerations

- A description of the facilities and improvements intended, their location, phasing over time and capital cost.
- The development of a whole farm plan that clearly demonstrates how the enterprise will be developed and operated. The whole farm plan must be of a high standard and guidance can be obtained from The Victorian Department of Agriculture publication A Whole Farm Plan For Your Property.
- Describe the product and intended marketing arrangements. This should be described in terms of size of industry serviced, reliability of markets and whether any contractual arrangements have been negotiated.

Dwellings

It is policy that:

- An application for the dwelling should demonstrate that it is required to enable daily management and operation of the rural use of the land.
- No dwelling may be developed on the subject land without the approval, by the responsible authority, of a the whole farm plan.
- No dwelling may be approved unless rural infrastructure, associated with the intended agricultural use for the land, has been provided.
- Dwellings will not be supported in areas where road networks and access is not of a high standard.
- Any proposed development will be required to provide a waste management plan demonstrating how effluent will be retained and treated on-site, including any nutrients and waste derived from the agricultural activities.
- Development should be located to minimise visual intrusion on the landscape.
- The proposed development takes into consideration existing road and infrastructure availability.

Reference

Victorian Department of Agriculture, “A Whole Farm Plan For Your Property”