

## ENVIRONMENTAL AND LANDSCAPE VALUES

Planning should help to protect the health of ecological systems and the biodiversity they support (including ecosystems, habitats, species and genetic diversity) and conserve areas with identified environmental and landscape values.

Planning must implement environmental principles for ecologically sustainable development that have been established by international and national agreements. Foremost amongst the national agreements is the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Environment, which sets out key principles for environmental policy in Australia. Other agreements include the National Strategy for Ecologically Sustainable Development, National Greenhouse Strategy, the National Water Quality Management Strategy, the National Strategy for the Conservation of Australia's Biological Diversity, the National Forest Policy Statement and National Environment Protection Measures.

Planning should protect sites and features of nature conservation, biodiversity, geological or landscape value.

### 12.01

12/12/2017  
VC138

### Biodiversity

#### 12.01-1

12/12/2017  
VC138

#### Protection of biodiversity

##### Objective

To assist the protection and conservation of Victoria's biodiversity.

##### Strategies

Use biodiversity information to identify important areas of biodiversity, including key habitat for rare or threatened species and communities, and strategically valuable biodiversity sites.

Use strategic planning as the primary planning tool for the protection and conservation of Victoria's biodiversity, particularly those areas identified as important.

Planning should:

- Avoid and minimise impacts of land use and development on important areas of biodiversity, including consideration of:
  - Cumulative impacts.
  - Fragmentation of habitat.
  - The spread of pest plants, animals and pathogens into natural ecosystems.
- Consider impacts of any change in land-use or development that may affect the biodiversity value of national parks and conservation reserves or nationally and internationally significant sites including wetlands and wetland wildlife habitat designated under the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance (the Ramsar Convention), and sites utilised by species listed under the Japan-Australia Migratory Birds Agreement (JAMBA), the China-Australia Migratory Birds Agreement (CAMBA), or the Republic of Korea-Australia Migratory Bird Agreement (ROKAMBA).
- Assist in the identification, protection and management of important areas of biodiversity.
- Assist in the re-establishment of links between important areas of biodiversity.

Ensure that decision making takes into account the impacts of land use and development on Victoria's high value biodiversity.

### **Policy guidelines**

Planning must consider as relevant:

- *Protecting Victoria's Environment – Biodiversity 2037* (Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, 2017).
- *Guidelines for the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation* (Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, 2017).
- Any applicable biodiversity strategies, including the relevant Regional Catchment Strategy (prepared under Part 4 of the *Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994*).
- Statewide biodiversity information maintained by the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning.

## **12.01-2**

12/12/2017  
VC138

### **Native vegetation management**

#### **Objective**

To ensure that there is no net loss to biodiversity as a result of the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation.

#### **Strategies**

When making decisions about proposals that involve, or will lead to, the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation, apply the three step approach in accordance with the *Guidelines for the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation* (Department of Environment, Land Water and Planning, 2017):

1. Avoid the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation.
2. Minimise impacts from the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation that cannot be avoided.
3. Provide an offset to compensate for the biodiversity impact from the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation.

### **Policy guidelines**

Planning must consider as relevant:

- *Guidelines for the removal, destruction or lopping of native vegetation* (Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, 2017).
- *Assessor's handbook – applications to remove, destroy or lop native vegetation* (Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning).
- Statewide biodiversity information maintained by the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning.

## 12.02 Coastal areas

04/02/2016  
VC127

### 12.02-1 Protection of coastal areas

04/02/2016  
VC127

#### Objective

To recognise and enhance the value of the coastal areas to the community and ensure sustainable use of natural coastal resources.

#### Strategies

Coordinated land use and planning with the requirements of the *Coastal Management Act 1995* to:

- Provide clear direction for the future sustainable use of the coast, including the marine environment, for recreation, conservation, tourism, commerce and similar uses in appropriate areas.
- Protect and maintain areas of environmental significance.
- Identify suitable areas and opportunities for improved facilities.

Apply the hierarchy of principles for coastal planning and management as set out in the Victorian Coastal Strategy 2014, which are:

Principle 1: Ensure the protection of significant environmental and cultural values.

Principle 2: Undertake integrated planning and provide clear direction for the future.

Principle 3: Ensure the sustainable use of natural coastal resources.

Principle 4: Ensure development on the coast is located within existing modified and resilient environments where the demand for development is evident and any impacts can be managed sustainably.

#### Policy guidelines

Planning must consider as relevant:

- *The Victorian Coastal Strategy* (Victorian Coastal Council, 2014).

### 12.02-2 Appropriate development of coastal areas

04/02/2016  
VC127

#### Objective

To ensure development conserves, protects and seeks to enhance coastal biodiversity and ecological values.

#### Strategies

Ensure development is sensitively sited and designed and respects the character of coastal settlements.

Encourage revegetation of cleared land abutting coastal reserves.

Maintain the natural drainage patterns, water quality and biodiversity within and adjacent to coastal estuaries, wetlands and waterways.

Avoid disturbance of coastal acid sulfate soils.

Protect cultural heritage places, including Aboriginal places, archaeological sites and historic shipwrecks.

## Policy guidelines

Planning must consider as relevant:

- *The Victorian Coastal Strategy* (Victorian Coastal Council, 2014).
- *The Coastal Spaces Landscape Assessment Study* (Department of Sustainability and Environment, 2006).
- Any relevant coastal action plan or management plan approved under the *Coastal Management Act 1995* or *National Parks Act 1975*.

### 12.02-3

04/02/2016  
VC127

## Coastal Crown land

### Objective

To achieve development that provides an environmental, social and economic balance.

### Strategies

Ensure that use and development on or adjacent to coastal foreshore Crown land:

- Maintains safe, equitable public access and improves public benefit whilst protecting local environmental and social values.
- Demonstrates need and coastal dependency.
- Is located within a defined activity or recreation node.

## Policy guidelines

Planning must consider as relevant:

- *The Victorian Coastal Strategy* (Victorian Coastal Council, 2014).
- The purpose for which land is reserved under the *Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978*.
- Any relevant coastal action plan or management plan approved under the *Coastal Management Act 1995* or *National Parks Act 1975*.

### 12.02-4

04/02/2016  
VC127

## Coastal tourism

### Objective

To encourage suitably located and designed coastal and marine tourism opportunities.

### Strategies

Ensure that a diverse range of accommodation options and coastal experience are maintained and provided for and that sites and facilities are accessible to all.

Ensure tourism developments demonstrate a tourist accommodation need and support a nature based approach within non-urban areas.

Ensure developments are of an appropriate scale, use and intensity relative to its location and minimises impacts on the surrounding natural visual, environmental and coastal character.

## Policy guidelines

Planning must consider as relevant:

- *The Victorian Coastal Strategy* (Victorian Coastal Council, 2014).
- *The Coastal Spaces Landscape Assessment Study* (Department of Sustainability and Environment, 2006).

12.02-5

04/02/2016  
VC127

## Bays

### Objective

To improve the environmental health of the bays and their catchments.

### Strategies

Reduce major environmental pressures associated with urban growth and development within catchments of Port Phillip Bay and Western Port by:

- Requiring growth area planning to protect significant natural assets.
- Improving the quality of stormwater entering waterways, particularly that emanating from construction sites and road development.

Improve waterway management arrangements for the whole of the Port Phillip Bay and Western Port catchments.

Protect coastal and foreshore environments and improve public access and recreation facilities around Port Phillip Bay and Western Port by:

- Requiring coastal planning and management to be consistent with the Victorian Coastal Strategy 2014.
- Managing privately owned foreshore consistently with the adjoining public land.

## Policy guidelines

Planning must consider as relevant:

- *Port Phillip and Westernport Regional Catchment Strategy* (Port Phillip Regional Catchment and Land Protection Board, 1997).

12.02-6

04/02/2016  
VC127

## The Great Ocean Road region

### Objective

To manage the sustainable development of the Great Ocean Road region.

### Strategies

Protect public land and parks and identified significant landscapes.

Ensure development responds to the identified landscape character of the area.

Manage the impact of development on catchments and coastal areas.

Manage the impact of development on the environmental and cultural values of the area.

Manage the growth of towns by:

- Respecting the character of coastal towns and promoting best practice design for new development.

- Directing urban growth to strategically identified areas.

Improve the management of access and transport by:

- Managing the Great Ocean Road for tourism and regional access.
- Enhancing the safety and travelling experience of the Great Ocean Road.
- Improving the safety and operational performance of the inland routes from the Princes Highway to the Great Ocean Road.
- Providing travel choices to and within the region.

Encourage sustainable tourism and resource use by:

- Developing a network of tourism opportunities throughout the region.
- Supporting tourism activities that provide environmental, economic and social benefits.
- Supporting the land use and transport needs of key regional industries including tourism.
- Using natural resources with care.

### **Policy guidelines**

Planning must consider as relevant:

- *The Victorian Coastal Strategy* (Victorian Coastal Council, 2014).
- *The Great Ocean Road Landscape Assessment Study* (Department of Sustainability and Environment, 2004).
- *The Great Ocean Road Region - A Land Use and Transport Strategy* (Department of Sustainability and Environment, 2004).

### **12.03**

04/02/2016  
VC127

### **Alpine areas**

### **12.03-1**

29/10/2015  
VC101

### **Framework for planning alpine resorts**

#### **Objective**

To provide a framework for the planning of the alpine resorts.

#### **Strategies**

Ensure that the sustainable long term planning and management of Victoria's six alpine resorts - Falls Creek, Lake Mountain, Mount Baw Baw, Mount Buller, Mount Hotham and Mount Stirling – is consistent with the strategic directions contained within the *Alpine Resorts Strategic Plan* (State Government of Victoria, Alpine Resorts Co-ordinating Council, 2012).

Develop, monitor and regularly review the Alpine Resort Environmental Management Plans and Comprehensive Development Plans for each alpine resort, recognising their unique characteristics, constraints and opportunities. In doing so, the distinct environments, infrastructure needs and capabilities to support different activities of each alpine resort and other alpine areas should be considered.

Maintain a close working relationship with Alpine Resort Management Boards recognising that ongoing implementation of approved plans and management of developments is crucial to the effective operation of the alpine resorts and protection of alpine resources.

**Sustainable development in alpine areas****Objective**

To facilitate sustainable use and development of Alpine areas for year round use and activity.

**Strategies**

Protect and manage significant environmental features and ecosystems, taking into account the sensitive and fragile nature of the alpine environment.

Ensure that there is a mixture of uses and developments to cater for users of the alpine areas in all seasons.

Provide for the development of consolidated alpine villages, including a diverse range of employment, social and economic opportunities.

Ensure that proposals for use and development are generally in accordance with any approved Comprehensive Development Plan and comply with any approved Alpine Resort Environmental Management Plan.

Encourage best practice for low impact and environmentally sensitive management that minimise disturbance of indigenous flora and fauna and sensitive landscape in both construction and operation of all developments.

Encourage best practice in design that responds to the alpine character of the area.

Ensure heritage places are protected and conserved, including Aboriginal cultural heritage and post contact heritage places relating to including mining, logging, grazing and recreation activities.

Ensure that increases in skier, pedestrian and vehicular activity in the resorts do not compromise public safety or the accessibility and capacity of skifields, services, commercial activity and development of trailheads.

Promote development for active recreation solely at Falls Creek, Lake Mountain, Mt Buffalo, Mt Baw Baw, Mt Buller and Mt Hotham.

Promote intensive residential and commercial development at Falls Creek, Mt Baw Baw, Mt Buller and Mt Hotham.

Maintain Mt Stirling as an all season nature based tourist, recreational and educational resource.

**Policy guidelines**

Planning must consider as relevant:

- Any relevant State Environment Protection Policy.
- *Alpine Resorts Strategic Plan* (State Government of Victoria, Alpine Resorts Co-ordinating Council, 2012)
- Any relevant approved Land Conservation Council or Environment Conservation Council recommendations.
- The Memorandum of Understanding in relation to the Co-operative Management of the Australian Alps National Parks, agreed to by the member states and territories of Victoria, Australian Capital Territory and New South Wales.
- Any approved management plans and guidelines endorsed by the Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Water.

## **12.04 Significant environments and landscapes**

20/09/2010  
VC71

### **12.04-1 Environmentally sensitive areas**

20/09/2010  
VC71

#### **Objective**

To protect and conserve environmentally sensitive areas.

#### **Strategies**

Protect environmentally sensitive areas with significant recreational value such as the Dandenong and Macedon Ranges, the Upper Yarra Valley, Western Port and Port Phillip Bays and their foreshores, the Mornington Peninsula, the Yarra and Maribyrnong Rivers and the Merri Creek, the Grampians, the Gippsland Lakes and its foreshore, the coastal areas and their foreshores and the Alpine areas as well as nominated urban conservation areas, historic buildings and precincts from development which would diminish their environmental conservation or recreation values.

### **12.04-2 Landscapes**

20/09/2010  
VC71

#### **Objective**

To protect landscapes and significant open spaces that contribute to character, identity and sustainable environments.

#### **Strategies**

Ensure sensitive landscape areas such as the bays and coastlines are protected and that new development does not detract from their natural quality.

Improve the landscape qualities, open space linkages and environmental performance in green wedges and conservation areas and non-urban areas.

Recognise the natural landscape for its aesthetic value and as a fully functioning system.

Ensure natural key features are protected and enhanced.

## **12.05 Rivers**

31/03/2017  
VC134

### **12.05-1 River corridors**

21/12/2015  
VC121

#### **Objective**

To protect and enhance the significant river corridors of metropolitan Melbourne.

#### **Strategies**

Ensure strategic planning and land management for all river corridors protects their environmental, cultural and landscape values.

Ensure development responds to and respects the significant environmental, conservation, cultural, aesthetic, open space, recreation and tourism assets of all river corridors.

Ensure new development is sensitively designed and sited to maintain and enhance environmental assets, significant views and the landscapes along all river corridors.

Ensure development does not compromise bank stability, increase erosion or impact on a river's natural capacity to manage flood flow.

## Policy guidelines

Planning must consider as relevant:

- *Guidelines for Approval of Jetties 2011*, Melbourne Water
- *Healthy Waterways Strategy 2013*, Melbourne Water
- Maribyrnong River – Vision for Recreational and Tourism Development (Melbourne Parks and Waterways, 1996)
- *Maribyrnong River Valley Design Guidelines 2010*, Department of Planning and Community Development

### 12.05-2

31/03/2017  
VC134

## Yarra River protection

### Objective

Maintain and enhance the natural landscape character of the Yarra River corridor in which the topography, waterway, banks and tree canopy are dominant features providing a highly valued, secluded, natural environment for the enjoyment of the public.

### Strategies

Strengthen the river's natural environment, heritage and overall health by:

- Protecting the river's riparian vegetation, natural riverbank topography and flood management capacity.
- Ensuring development does not increase the rate or quantity of stormwater, sediment or other pollutants entering the river.
- Protecting and enhancing both terrestrial and aquatic habitats and their linkages along the river corridor.

Maintain a sense of place and landscape identity by:

- Retaining a dominant and consistent tree canopy along the river corridor and within its broader landscape setting.
- Ensuring that the appearance of development is subordinate to the local landscape setting, with any views of development being filtered through vegetation.

Retain and enhance people's enjoyment of the river and its environment by:

- Planning for the river and its environs as a recreation and tourism resource.
- Ensuring linkages and public access to the river and its parklands are maintained, enhanced and new links created where appropriate.
- Avoiding overshadowing of the river, its banks and adjacent public open space to ensure that the amenity of the public realm is maintained year round.

Ensure that development is designed and sited to maintain and enhance the river's secluded and natural environment by:

- Minimising the visual intrusion of development when viewed from major roads, bridge crossings, public open space, recreation trails and the river itself.
- Ensuring that the siting and design of buildings avoid contrast with the local natural landscape and environmental character.
- Ensuring building height is below the natural tree canopy and all development is set back a minimum of 30 metres, or greater, from the banks of the river.

## **Policy guidelines**

Planning must consider as relevant:

- *Middle Yarra River Corridor Study - Recommendations Report* (Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, October 2016).
- *Lower Yarra River Corridor Study - Recommendations Report* (Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, November 2016).