

21.02 SUSTAINABLE SETTLEMENT

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This clause provides local content to support Clause 11 (Settlement) of the State Planning Policy Framework.

Specific references to individual towns are also included in Clause 21.03 (Local Area Plans) and references to environmental policy are also included at Clause 21.04.

Overview

The population of the Shire is estimated to be 9,500. In 2011, 19.3% of the population was aged 14 and under, 13.3% of the population was aged 15-24, 13.8% was aged 25-34, 14.3% was aged 35-44, 13.7% was aged 45-54, 11.6% was aged 55-64, 7.6% was aged 65-74, 4.5% was aged 75-84, 1.9% was aged over 85. In 2011, there were 5,025 dwellings in the Shire.

The majority of the Shire is used for a variety of agricultural enterprises and supported by four major towns: Euroa, Nagambie, Avenel and Violet Town, three small settlements, Longwood, Strathbogie and Ruffy and many other scattered historic small settlements.

The Shire has a large potential to attract 'tree changers' for rural living, given the close proximity to Melbourne and regional centres and is easily accessed via the Hume Freeway, Goulburn Valley Highway, North East Railway Line and Goulburn Valley Rail network. These assets make the Shire attractive to sustainable industry and tourism investment.

Strathbogie Shire is home to the third largest airport in rural Victoria; Mangalore Airport. This creates national and international links for the Shire and increases the capacity to be home to export and import enterprises.

Key Issues

- Management of and control of issues relating to flooding.
- Provision of reticulated services to growing settlements.
- Potential threat to life and property from bushfire.
- Potential impacts of climate change.
- Pressure to develop farming land for rural residential use.
- Protection of views and vistas across the landscape of the Shire's natural features.
- Drainage infrastructure requiring renewal.
- Limited public transport to provide connectivity between municipal settlements and adjoining regional centres and townships.
- Limited accommodation for visitors throughout the Municipality.

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Objective

To have consistent planning across the Municipality that individually represents and respects the natural and built environment.

Strategies

- Ensure the most recent flood information is included in the Planning Scheme.

- Encourage development that considers environmentally sustainable practices; including but not limited to:
 - passive solar design
 - water sensitive urban design
 - water tanks
 - accessibility of pedestrian and bicycle traffic to and from public transport
 - public open space and local retail and neighbourhood services
 - solar street lighting
 - grey water systems
- Ensure residential development can be appropriately serviced and is developed considering good design principles.
- Encourage industrial development in appropriate zones.
- Retain areas of high quality rural land for farming and agricultural purposes.
- Provide rural and low density residential zoned land in appropriate locations.
- Protect views and vistas of the Shire's natural features.
- Ensure public land is contained within appropriate public zones.

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Small Settlements

Overview

Strathbogie Shire has many small settlements including; Graytown, Kirwan's Bridge, Goulburn Weir, Miepoll and Boho South.

Objective

To preserve and protect appropriate small community settlements.

Strategies

- Ensure appropriate controls are applied to small settlements.
- Provide rural living opportunities in appropriate locations.
- Encourage on-site waste water treatment plants or small settlement waste treatment schemes.

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Rural Residential

Overview

Strathbogie Shire is well positioned to accommodate rural residential development. Towns such as Avenel and Euroa are located proximate to the Hume Freeway and North East Railway Line, which provide convenient transport links to Melbourne and other regional centres.

The Council is keen to ensure that the demand for low density residential and rural living development can be met through the supply of land in appropriate locations.

The town structure plans and Strathbogie Shire Rural Residential Strategy (2004) identifies land for further investigation. These investigations will consider environmental constraints such as flooding, topography, significant vegetation as well as site suitability and potential land use conflicts. In areas where reticulated services are not available, consideration will be given to the site's suitability for effluent treatment and disposal.

The Council recognises that urban expansion into agricultural areas can result in conflict at the urban/rural interface and will require 'buffers' to protect the amenity of residents and also protect agricultural operations on adjoining land.

For potential rural living land, diversity and flexibility of lot sizes is important to minimise sprawl. Factors influencing desirable lot size should include the existing character and density and land capability.

Objective

To promote the Strathbogie Shire as a sustainable rural living destination whilst minimising impact on productive agricultural land and/or the natural environment.

Strategies

- Investigate the potential to provide for rural residential use at the locations shown on the Structure Plans and in the Strathbogie Shire Rural Residential Strategy.
- Prevent rural residential subdivision in areas that would result in a loss of productive agricultural land or create expectation of subdivision of adjoining rural land, or encircle townships so as to prejudice their future urban growth opportunities.
- Approve land for rural residential development or small town expansion only where it is supported by a supply and demand analysis, a Land Capability Assessment and analysis against the Department of Transport, Planning and Local Infrastructure Practice Note 37: Rural Residential Development.
- Protect the amenity of rural residential land by discouraging uses with the potential to create a nuisance.
- Ensure that rural residential developments provide a buffer to existing agricultural uses.
- Ensure rural residential development protects existing visual and environmental qualities of the area, such as: landscape, water quality, native vegetation, habitat and biodiversity.
- Ensure rural residential development does not increase the impacts of the risks and effects of flooding, erosion, salinity or bushfire.
- Ensure rural residential development can be efficiently serviced by social and physical infrastructure.

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Rural Zones

Overview

Approximately 230,000 hectares of land is farmed in the Strathbogie Shire, supporting around 700 farming enterprises. The predominant agricultural activities are livestock grazing and broadacre. There has been a recent emergence of other agricultural pursuits such as intensive animal husbandry, horticulture and equine industry.

The Shire is recognised as a preferred location for horse breeding due to its climate and access to Melbourne, Sydney and other regional centres. Important local infrastructure and services are also key drivers of this industry in the area.

Objective

To protect and maintain established farming areas.

To ensure suitable land is available to provide for emerging rural enterprises, e.g. intensive animal husbandry, horticulture and equine industry.

Strategies

- Limit inappropriate uses within farming areas, including dwellings not required to support an agricultural use.
- Support existing and new rural industries and tourism activities.
- Protect the Costa Exchange facility at 347 Zanelli Road and 1932 Dargalong Road Nagambie from the encroachment of sensitive uses that might impact on the current operation or future expansion of the facility.

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Small Crown Allotment Consolidation

Overview

Within the Farming Zone there are many small crown allotments. Council continues to experience demand for development of dwellings on these lots which do not meet the primary purposes of the Farming Zone.

Objective

To prevent the further proliferation of dwellings on small crown allotments in the Farming Zone.

Strategies

- Discourage the use of small crown allotments in the Farming Zone for a dwelling except where it is possible to consolidate a number of lots before the construction of a dwelling.
- Encourage consolidation of small rural lots.

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Building Material – Muted Tones

Overview

The Shire has significant natural landscapes and views which provide an important asset, and opportunity for tourism and economic development. Buildings can be intrusive in this type of environment if constructed of materials which are not sympathetic to the surrounding environment.

Objective

To ensure that all structures blend in with the surrounding environment and that the aesthetic amenity of the area is preserved and/or enhanced.

Strategies

- Require the use of buildings materials and colours which are in context with the surrounding environment.
- Ensure significant landscapes and vistas are protected by applying appropriate Overlay/s.

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Implementation

Policy Guidelines

- Where relevant, require applicants to demonstrate consideration of good development principles such as passive solar design, water sensitive urban design, connection to walking tracks, bicycle routes and public open space.
- Require any application to use land for a dwelling in the Farming Zone to be accompanied by a land ownership plan showing all land in the same ownership.
- Include a condition on planning permits for use of land for a dwelling on small crown allotments requiring consolidation with other contiguous land within the same ownership.
- Require the external cladding of all buildings within the Shire to be of a muted tone except in the following instances:
 - Where the clear majority of existing buildings constructed on the site have external cladding of material consistent with that being sought.
 - In rural zones where the buildings are not readily visible from the roads, public land or adjoining properties.
 - Where the colour of the building material minimises the visual intrusion of structures in any area by use of colours which are sympathetic to the site and surrounding environs.
- Require all new buildings to have external finishes that are non-reflective, whereby the cladding has:
 - A surface finish from factory, or by other means, in a muted tone;
 - Screening by vegetation to form an effective visual buffer from adjoining land and/or roadways or any other public space.
- Should an applicant wish to paint the cladding in a muted tone, or screen plant in accordance with the policy, work must be completed within 3 months of the completion date of the building.

Scheme Implementation

- Prepare a Schedule to the Erosion Management Overlay providing an exemption for minor buildings and works where the Erosion Management Overlay is the only permit trigger.
- Implement the recommendations of the Sustainable Land Use Strategy (2010), to protect agricultural land in accordance with Council's resolution.

- Apply appropriate overlays to new land released for urban and rural residential development to ensure good design principles and environmental sustainability.
- Provide industrial zoned land throughout the shire, generally in accordance with the Strathbogie Shire Industrial Land Study (2008).
- Provide zoned rural residential land in appropriate locations throughout the Shire using the relevant recommendations of the Strathbogie Shire Rural Residential Strategy 2004, Town Structure Plans and the Development Plan Report: Euroa and Avenel Rural Residential Development (2010) as a guide.
- Complete the Strathbogie Shire Heritage Study and implement relevant recommendations.
- Apply appropriate public zone to publicly owned land.
- Apply the Rural Activity Zone or other appropriate zones to support tourism in the Nagambie area.
- Investigate the application of the Restructure Overlay where appropriate.
- Rezone land, identified as Lovers Hill in Avenel from Farming Zone to Rural Living Zone and apply a Development Plan Overlay and Vegetation Protection Overlay.

Other Actions of Council

- Investigate the opportunity for community infrastructure at Kirwan's Bridge, Graytown and Goulburn Weir.
- Investigate provision of services to Kirwan's Bridge.
- Prepare an application check list/fact sheet for the use of muted tones.
- Prepare an application checklist for developments on small lots in the Farming Zone.

Future Strategic Work

- Investigate the implementation of an appropriate overlay over prominent ridgelines to protect the views and vistas of the Municipality.
- Investigate appropriate planning controls for existing small settlement patterns.
- Investigate an appropriate planning tool to support the equine industry in the Strathbogie Shire.
- Investigate (in association with Costa Exchange) whether an overlay or some other planning scheme provision should be applied in the vicinity of the Costa Exchange facility at 347 Zanelli Road and 1934 Dargalong Road Nagambie to protect it from the encroachment of sensitive uses that might impact on the current operation or future expansion of the facility.
- Investigate rural living opportunities in Euroa, Violet Town, Nagambie, Longwood and Strathbogie.