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INTEGRATED RECREATIONAL AND RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT IN RURAL AREAS

This policy applies to all land in the Green Wedge Zone and Farming Zone and, where relevant, the Comprehensive Development Zone.

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Policy basis

The Municipal Strategic Statement recognises a tension between the provisions for subdivision in rural areas, which aim to prevent further fragmentation of land in rural areas and the recreational role of the Peninsula, with the associated demand for recreational facilities and accommodation. Both of these roles are considered within a framework of environmental sustainability and the cultural values of the Peninsula's landscapes. Balancing these competing claims and interests is a critical task of strategic planning.

It is considered that recreational demands on the Peninsula can be managed by emphasising the experience of outdoor and unstructured recreation and activities that promote an understanding of, cultivate an interest in or are directly associated with rural pursuits, the land or coastal environments in their natural state. Although the Peninsula attracts many millions of visitors and has extensive areas consisting substantially of seasonal holiday homes, these established patterns can be managed within the existing resource base. Similarly where new recreational facilities are proposed which are viable due on the basis of an existing recreational demand, then the provision of some visitor accommodation is seen to add value to the recreational function of the development. However, if residential development itself becomes the dominant element, with recreational facilities seen as dependent on the development of housing or as ancillary, incidental or separable from the accommodation, then the development moves from a recreational market base to a residential market base and there is little inherent distinction between such development and the establishment of new residential enclaves on an adhoc basis in the rural area.

Accordingly, it is considered appropriate to provide policy guidelines for the consideration of development proposals that include both recreational and residential components

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Objectives

- To maintain the long term recreational role of the Mornington Peninsula and to prevent defacto urban or rural residential encroachment into rural areas.
- To maintain permanent non urban areas of high landscape value for a variety of recreational activities and experiences.
- To support sustainable agricultural use of rural land.
- To prevent the establishment of use and development which would reduce the distinctive character of the Peninsula's rural landscapes.
- To support the establishment of facilities which emphasise outdoor and unstructured recreation, especially recreational activities that promote understanding of, cultivate an interest in or are directly associated with rural pursuits the land or coastal environments in their natural state.
- To recognise recreation and tourist facilities of State significance.
- To control building and subdivision densities in areas of scenic landscape value or environmental sensitivity.

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Policy

It is policy that:

- Recreational developments that incorporate accommodation should be considered in terms of the policy on Commercial and Industrial Uses in Rural Areas and particularly should be established on lots of an adequate size to avoid apparent encroachment of buildings and works in the rural landscape. Generally this will require a lot of the minimum area specified for the zone.
- The area of the site occupied by buildings and works associated with a recreational use should generally not exceed ten percent of the site area, although this will depend on the nature of the facilities eg golf courses, recreational gardens or maze areas may be more extensive without adverse environmental or landscape impact.
- Where residential, commercial or subdivisional components are included in a recreational development, they will be required to demonstrate that:
 - The recreational elements are of overriding state significance.
 - The recreational component remains the dominant element of the project.
 - The development meets appropriate locational and development design criteria, including access to or the provision of infrastructure services to prevent adverse environmental impacts on surface waters and ground water.
 - Development will not result in apparent urban encroachment.

In this context, a site development density of no more one dwelling for every 8 hectares of site area, and located so as to occupy no more than ten percent of the site, may be considered as an indicator of the residential lot density that may be considered by the responsible authority, subject to the planning scheme amendment process.

- This is an indicative guideline only and a site analysis and design response, addressing the objectives of this policy, and including future management arrangements to ensure an ongoing relationship between the residential accommodation and the recreational facilities, will be required as part of any such proposal.