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C40**SITING AND DESIGN POLICY FOR BUILDINGS AND WORKS IN NON-URBAN AREAS.**

This policy applies to the Green Wedge Zone, Rural Conservation Zone, Lot 8 in PS415064K in the Special Use Zone - Schedule 1 and also the Low Density Residential Zone in North Warrandyte.

Policy Basis

A significant element of the unique character of the Shire of Nillumbik is its highly attractive landscapes and picturesque views from and of the many valleys and elevated ridge lines. These landscape vistas are highly valued by the community and visitors to Nillumbik and inappropriate design and siting of buildings (including dwellings, sheds, poles, signage and other structures) compromises the integrity of these features.

The need to protect habitat links and minimise fire and flood risk and erosion are also important considerations in the determination of siting buildings and works in rural areas. These and off-site considerations (such as ensuring that effluent does not enter watercourses) at the planning stage benefit future occupants of land and the environmental integrity of the area.

Sustainable energy usage in house siting, irrespective of whether a dwelling is situated in a rural or urban location, is also important.

Objectives

- To encourage the appropriate and respectful siting and design of dwellings and other buildings in rural areas to minimise landscape and habitat impacts, avoid erosion, areas liable to flooding and other off-site effects and best prepare for potential fire risk.
- To encourage the appropriate and respectful siting and design of structures, such as signage and poles, in rural areas to minimise landscape and habitat impacts.
- To encourage appropriate and respectful works in rural areas to minimise landscape and habitat impacts, avoid erosion and mitigate threats posed by flooding and other off-site impacts.
- To ensure the promotion of energy efficiency is not restricted to and concentrated in urban areas.

Policy

It is policy that:

Landscape and amenity

- The siting of buildings (including dwellings, sheds, utility services and other structures) on hill-tops and/or ridge-lines should be avoided and will be discouraged. Buildings on hill-tops/ridge-lines should only be considered when it can be demonstrated that a building will be sited and designed so that it will be adequately screened from other properties and roads so not to be prominent in the landscape.
- Buildings should be located wholly below the alignment of ridgelines to ensure silhouetting against the skyline does not occur and to allow buildings to blend into the natural landscape with the elevated ridgeline providing the appropriate backdrop.
- Building numbers should be limited and the consolidation of buildings (including outbuildings) will be supported and will be encouraged, to reduce the visual impact of buildings on the landscape.

- The use of reflective building materials such as zincalume in areas where a proposed building would be clearly visible from other properties or roads will not be supported.
- The use of muted tones on external surfaces will be supported while the use of bright or contrasting colours will not be supported in areas clearly visible from other properties or roads.
- Landscaping using indigenous vegetation species will be encouraged as appropriate to screen buildings. Landscaping, as a means of providing a screening, should not be viewed as a simple solution to proposals for buildings in prominent locations, especially in areas not already supported by areas of existing vegetation screening.
- Telecommunication facilities (especially towers/poles) which are usually proposed to be located in prominent locations should be screened wherever possible. Telecommunication carriers and their representatives are strongly encouraged to meet with the responsible authority to discuss potential sites for the installation of facilities before embarking on formal lodgement of applications. Telecommunication carriers and their representatives are also strongly encouraged to submit detailed information about identified potential sites (at least three sites if possible) prior to meeting with the responsible authority. Assessments should be undertaken of the possible effects on flora and fauna for areas which are identified for their landscape and/or environment significance.
- Undergrounding of services, such as power, will be encouraged to minimise visual impact in rural areas.
- Dwelling envelopes should be designated for properties where they will ensure that building occurs on favourable sites, and conversely building does not occur on sites which would be prejudicial to landscape values.

Vegetation and habitat

- Buildings, earthworks (including internal roads and dams) and utility services should be located to ensure minimal impact on native vegetation (especially vegetation identified as being part of a strategic habitat link or identified as being environmentally significant) and the topography of the area.
- The impacts which the construction of dams may have down-slope to flora, fauna and watercourses (natural flow) will be considered.
- Routes for the undergrounding of services, such as electricity, should have regard for existing native vegetation so to minimise the need for the removal of, or damage to native vegetation.
- Dwelling envelopes should be designated for properties where they will ensure that building occurs on favourable sites, and conversely building does not occur on sites which would be prejudicial to environment values.

Earthworks and erosion

- Earthworks should not increase the potential for erosion.
- Building profile and form should respond to the topography on which the building is sited and the need for cut and fill should be minimised.
- Internal roads should follow contours to minimise the potential for erosion and to support the landscape vista of rural areas. They should also be designed to minimise the impact caused by run-off.
- Dams should not be sited in significant gullies/tributaries.
- Dams should be located so that there are sufficient areas for spillways to contain overflow on-site.

Fire and flood

- In considering landscaping to screen developments and in preparing landscape designs, consideration will be given to minimising fire risk.
- In regards to proposed development in flood prone areas, all potential detrimental environmental effects need to be addressed and the importation of fill in an attempt to raise the natural level of the land is inappropriate and will not be supported.

Energy efficiency

- Dwellings will be encouraged to have living areas located on the north facing side to provide for a northerly aspect.
- Dwellings designs should achieve a 4 or 5 star energy rating, and the use of Energy Efficiency Victoria's Home Energy Rating Scheme and energy rating software will also be encouraged.
- Greater use of renewable energy resources such as solar, wind and water and a reduction of the reliance on non-renewable resources such as fossil fuels will be encouraged.

Drainage and effluent

- In the event that there is no underground Council drainage system servicing a lot, roof drainage should be absorbed on-site. If a proper drainage system is later provided to the site, a permanent sealed drain should replace the on-site absorption system.
- For developments containing toilets, showers, washing facilities and/or the like, effluent disposal envelopes should be nominated to provide sufficient areas for the containment on-site of effluent/sullage disposal generated on-site. Applications which propose effluent disposal fields and systems which are unlikely to contain effluent/sullage onsite or ensure effluent/sullage does not enter watercourses will not be supported or otherwise require modifications. Consideration will also be given to the locations of effluent disposal fields in relation to stormwater drainage areas.

Other

- The 'Nillumbik Siting and Design Guidelines - Environmentally Sensitive Areas' will be considered for proposals as appropriate (many policy statements above – including erosion, fire and flood, indigenous vegetation, and impacts on waterways – are addressed in this guideline).

Policy References

- Nillumbik Siting and Design Guidelines – Environmentally Sensitive Areas
- Nillumbik Septic Tank Conditions & Specifications Guide
- Shire of Nillumbik - Drainage to Unserviced Allotments
- A Code of Practice for Telecommunications Facilities in Victoria