

21.1015/06/2017
C66(Part 1)**ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT AND HERITAGE****Context:**

Native vegetation is a critical part of biodiversity and environmental health. The extent of native vegetation has declined on private land, primarily from agricultural, residential and other urban pressures and development. Weed invasion, human and stock access, agricultural inputs and inappropriate management have reduced the biodiversity value of remnant native vegetation. The *Victorian Native Vegetation Framework* is a statewide framework for the protection of native vegetation and implementation of 'net gain' principles.

The municipality has major river systems of the Ovens and King Rivers, comprising significant ecological corridors and major floodplain systems. The *North East Regional Catchment Management Strategy 2013* provides a framework for catchment protection in the region, using a 'triple bottom line' approach to achieve environmental, social and economic outcomes. Catchment and waterway objectives are assisted by the North East River Health Strategy 2004 and the document *Guidelines for the Protection of Water Quality (North East Planning Referrals Committee 2001)* as amended.

The Ovens River riverine corridor is an important ecological resource that runs through the Wangaratta urban area. This corridor is being progressively developed for walking and bicycle trails.

Natural resources and hazards need to be considered in land use planning. Resources include areas of remnant native vegetation, wetlands, significant landscapes and areas of general environmental significance, with hazards including bushfire, erosion hazard, salinity and groundwater contamination. The *Hume Regional Bushfire Planning Assessment, 2012* and the *Glenrowan Bushfire Assessment, January, 2014* assist in identifying measures to manage bushfire hazard and reduce the risks to life and property.

The natural and built heritage of the municipality has scientific, aesthetic, architectural, cultural, historical and social significance. Some heritage buildings are listed in the Victorian Heritage Register as buildings of state significance. The National Trust has classified landscapes in the municipality. The *Rural City of Wangaratta Heritage Study, Urban Heritage Precincts June 2000, Rural City of Wangaratta Heritage Study Review (Part 1) and Urban Precincts 2011 Volume 1: Urban Precincts, 2013 and Volume 2: Rural Places, 2013 and Rural City of Wangaratta Heritage Review, April 2016* identifies the historical context of the municipality and the local significance of heritage buildings and sites.

Issues:***Environmental management:******Native vegetation and biodiversity:***

- The re-establishment of native vegetation and biodiversity values is essential, notably on private land
- The incremental loss of native vegetation makes the conservation of remaining vegetation very important. Remnant vegetation on private land mostly comprises scattered paddock trees.
- Roadsides are often the only remaining areas of native vegetation in cleared farming areas. *The Rural City of Wangaratta Roadside Conservation Management Plan, 2014* identifies the conservation significance of all roadsides in the municipality.
- Subdivision and development proposals in both rural and urban areas need to be designed and constructed on a land capability basis to identify, protect and enhance existing native vegetation
- Protection of native vegetation and bushfire risks are competing issues in the management of the natural environment.

Catchment, waterways and water supply:

- Protection of water quality is a major issue for waterways and water storages, particularly when used for human consumption. Water quality can be compromised through inappropriate works or location of buildings and effluent disposal systems.
- Water quality can be protected and enhanced through the retention and re-establishment of riparian vegetation
- Groundwater is an important environmental and economic resource. This resource can be compromised through overuse, effluent disposal systems and other urban and agricultural drainage and effluent.
- Flooding is a major land use issue in the municipality, which has the major floodplain systems of the Ovens River and King River
- Wetlands are scattered throughout the municipality, primarily on the floodplains of the Ovens River and King River. Wetlands comprise an important part of the natural environment.
- Part of the Ovens River is classified as a 'heritage river' under the *Heritage Rivers Act 1992* due to its cultural and historic significance. There are particular building setbacks and land management requirements for heritage rivers.
- Rural development and rural living proposals are usually supplied with some form of rural water supply. There can be a large cumulative effect on the overall catchment yield from rural and rural living developments. Coordination is required with water authorities to provide the integrated assessment of rural water supply through sources such as dams, bores and aquifers.

Other environmental issues:

- Ridgelines, escarpments and hilly areas and other significant landscapes form an important part of the rural environment and backdrops to large, elevated areas of public land. Inappropriately sited and designed development or building materials can compromise rural landscape, visual amenity and tourism significance. Landscapes identified as vulnerable to change include the King Valley and Glenrowan Gap areas.
- The Warby Ranges are a prominent and significant feature in the northwest of the municipality that forms a major part of the area's landscape character. The ranges dominate the landscape to the north of the Hume Freeway and from Wangaratta, and can be seen from many areas of the municipality.
- Lack of reticulated sewerage and water in rural townships can affect the quality of groundwater. Reticulated sewerage options should be actively pursued for rural towns. Groundwater quality can be particularly affected in townships where water supply is partly sourced from groundwater supplies, an example being Milawa.
- A Domestic Wastewater Management Plan is required to manage effluent disposal systems in all areas without reticulated sewerage
- Careful design, siting and construction of buildings and works is required to minimise environmental impacts. The municipal Stormwater Management Strategy will provide for the design and management of stormwater flow and quality in urban areas.
- There is a need to encourage water reuse and recycling, in conjunction with North East Region Water Corporation.
- Use of clean, green energy and the reduction of potential greenhouse gas emissions will enhance the municipality's image as a livable and environmentally sustainable area to live and work

Heritage:

- Heritage places can include buildings, sites, trees and aboriginal cultural sites. Heritage places contribute to lifestyle, cultural richness and economic prosperity.
- The *Glenrowan Masterplan 2002* establishes the land use and cultural context and directions for Glenrowan with a significant part of the town's character and appeal being its historical role with the Kelly gang

Strategic directions:

Environmental management:

Native vegetation and biodiversity:

- Implement 'net gain' goals for native vegetation and the recovery of threatened species and communities through the application of the *Victorian Native Vegetation Framework*
- Recognise, protect and enhance biodiversity values, ecosystem health and remnant vegetation, including scattered trees, roadsides and native grasslands
- Increase biodiversity values through the re-establishment and regeneration of native vegetation, provision of bio-corridors between areas of remnant native vegetation and protection of remnant paddock trees
- Recognise, protect and enhance biodiversity values and remnant vegetation on roadsides, including specific planning protection of roadsides designated as 'high' conservation significance under the *Rural City of Wangaratta Roadside Conservation Management Plan, 2014*
- Ensure all land use and development proposals affecting native vegetation fully document the presence and significance of native vegetation and avoid any adverse impacts on biodiversity values, particularly the clearance of native vegetation
- Design and construct subdivision and development proposals on a land capability basis to identify, protect and enhance existing native vegetation through selecting building and works sites to avoid the clearance of native vegetation

Catchment, waterways and water supply:

- Ensure the protection of water quality through the implementation of the *Guidelines for the Protection of Water Quality (North East Planning Referrals Committee 2001)* as amended, including protection of riparian environments and the provision of adequate setbacks for buildings and development from waterways, water storages and Heritage Rivers
- Protect and enhance water quality through the provision of riparian buffers to retain and re-establish riparian vegetation
- Protect and enhance high priority waterways identified in the *North East River Waterway Strategy 2014*
- Ensure sustainable, high quality water supply to promote healthy ecosystems in conjunction with land use and development
- Protect groundwater quality from effluent disposal systems and other urban and agricultural uses, particularly in the rural townships of Milawa and Oxley
- Recognise and protect the natural functions of floodplains and the need to restrict subdivision, buildings and works in floodplains in accordance with flood hazard
- Ensure all land use and development proposals within the Ovens Rural Floodplain has regard to the recommendations and mitigation measures contained within the *Flood Study and Preparation of a Floodplain Management*

Plan for the Ovens Floodplain Between Whorouly and Wangaratta Report, July 2003

- Protect heritage rivers and adjacent land from use and development that would compromise the cultural and historic significance of the rivers

Ensure all land use and development proposals within the King River Floodplain and tributaries has regard to the recommendations and mitigation measures contained within the King River Rural Floodplain Study September 2004 and King River Tributaries Flood Mapping Study December 2004.

- Provide healthy working waterways that support healthy ecosystems and sustainable community use

Other environmental issues and directions:

- Recognise and protect natural resource and natural hazard areas, including wetlands on private land
- Recognise and protect significant landscapes, ridgelines, escarpments and hilltops through the sensitive siting and design of buildings and use of muted tone building materials and colours
- Protect the landscape and biodiversity values of steep, vegetated private land in the Warby Ranges from inappropriate development siting, design and building materials
- Protect the landscape and scenic values of the King Valley area from inappropriate development siting, design and building materials
- Protect the landscape and scenic values of the Glenrowan Gap from inappropriate development siting, design and building materials
- Guide the assessment, prioritisation and ongoing management of effluent disposal systems in all areas without reticulated sewerage through a Municipal Onsite Wastewater Management Plan
- Ensure integrated and sustainable stormwater management and water use in urban areas through a Stormwater Management Strategy, application of water sensitive urban design principles and encouragement of water reuse and recycling
- Enhance the municipality's image as a livable and environmentally sustainable area through the reduction of potential greenhouse gas emissions in planning for future land use and development
- Support activities that deal with degradation of the environmental and agricultural value of land
- Recognise the clean and green reputation of the municipality
- Enhance the natural environment, improve visual amenity, provide habitat corridors and provide strategic tree planting
- Avoid degradation of environmental or agricultural values caused by detrimental effects of land development, such as erosion, salinity and acidity
- Advocate for the minimisation of waste and litter, the responsible disposal of residual waste and litter free landscapes and environments
- Promote the responsible use of resources, particularly water and energy
- Avoid development in areas with high bushfire risk.
- Apply the Bushfire Management Overlay to areas that are identified as high bushfire hazard and risk (and meet the criteria for mapping the BMO).
- Avoid buildings, works and development that requires clearing of native vegetation to achieve the required bushfire attack levels (BAL) for the class of construction.

- Avoid buildings, works and development that requires clearing of native vegetation to establish defensible space distances.
- Apply design techniques (for example perimeter roads, vegetation management, appropriate BAL construction standards), to reduce potential impacts of bushfire hazard and risk.

Heritage:

- Value, protect and celebrate environmental and cultural heritage
- Protect and enhance the scientific, aesthetic, architectural, cultural, historical and social significance of heritage buildings, sites and precincts
- Encourage the retention and incorporation of heritage fabric in new development
- Protect and enhance the heritage and cultural significance of the Glenrowan township, in accordance with the Glenrowan Masterplan 2002, including undertaking a detailed design for the sensitive and appropriate re-establishment of the Kelly Gang Siege Site

Other relevant strategies and policies:

The following issues and clauses are relevant to this strategic direction:

- Urban design and development in the Wangaratta Central Activities Area:
- Refer to Clause 21.06 Urban Development and Central Activities Area
- General Township and Rural Township issues:
- Refer to Clause 21.07 Townships and Rural Townships
- Landscape significance in the Glenrowan township:
- Refer to Clause 21.07 Townships and Rural Townships
- Drainage and reticulated water and sewerage in rural townships:
 - Refer to Clause 21.11 Infrastructure and Community

The following policies are relevant to this strategic direction:

- 22.06-1 *Effluent disposal and water quality*
- 22.06-2 *Ridgelines, escarpments and hilltops*
- 22.06-3 *Heritage places and precincts*
- 22.09 *Public Open Space Contributions*

Further work:

- In conjunction with the natural resource management agencies, continue to upgrade natural resource and hazard mapping and planning controls in the planning scheme
- In conjunction with the North East Catchment Management Authority, undertake further flood studies to inform future flood management plans for the Ovens Rural Floodplain area and the King River Floodplain area and tributaries
- Encourage Goulburn Murray Water, the North East Region Water Corporation and the Environment Protection Authority to monitor groundwater, particularly in the rural townships of Milawa and Oxley
- Complete a comprehensive Domestic Wastewater Management Plan to investigate on-site wastewater management issues in rural townships
- Encourage North East Region Water Corporation to provide incentives and education for water reuse and recycling
- Undertake a detailed design for the reestablishment of the Kelly Gang Siege Site in Glenrowan in accordance with the *Glenrowan Masterplan 2002*
- Encourage the North East Catchment Management Authority to prepare a planning strategy and policy for Heritage Rivers and the protection, use and development of land adjacent to them

- In conjunction with the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning undertake a review of Crown land zonings to identify lands with environmental values and correct zoning anomalies to accurately reflect the public land use and management
- Undertake a Heritage Study to evaluate the significance of places removed from existing heritage precincts, which may have merit and local significance worthy of an individual listing
- Undertake further work to investigate the appropriate use of other planning controls (for example the Neighbourhood Character Overlay and Design and Development Overlay) to assist the townships of Springhurst and Eldorado to retain their significant heritage character
- In conjunction with the Country Fire Authority, undertake further studies to inform schedules to the BMO in accordance with the *Glenrowan Bushfire Assessment, January 2014*.