THE FARM

21.07-1 Context

The Farm is located to the south of the municipality and consists of the areas around Clyde, Cranbourne South, Devon Meadows, Five Ways, Junction Village and Pearcedale. The terrain is generally flat and areas near Clyde are poorly drained. Much of the area in The Farm falls within the Western Port catchment.

The areas generally to the north of Tooradin and around Clyde contain high quality, versatile agricultural soils. The high quality soils are an important economic resource because of their high productive capacity and their proximity to metropolitan markets. The soils should be protected because inappropriate subdivision will cause already small land holdings to be further fragmented, thereby undermining their long term viability.

The Farm is mainly used for agricultural purposes such as beef cattle and vegetable and flower growing. Much of the produce is sold in metropolitan Melbourne. Other rural activities include poultry farming, horse racing and agistment, animal boarding and dog breeding. The agricultural output of these activities makes a significant contribution to the local and metropolitan economy.

The Farm is also used for rural residential purposes, especially in and around the settlements of Pearcedale, Clyde and Devon Meadows. The land to the west of Devon Meadows contains extensive areas of native vegetation. There are several quarry sites also in this area.

South Gippsland Highway is the main traffic thoroughfare in this Region. It is notably used by tourists on their way to Phillip Island. However, Western Port Highway is also an important north-south connector and it provides the municipality’s primary link to the deep water port at Hastings and the Mornington Peninsula.

The Farm is being threatened by incremental subdivision, rural residential development and non-horticultural activities.

21.07-2 Objectives, strategies and implementation

Objectives

- To consolidate urban development within the boundaries of existing rural settlements and planned commercial nodes.
- To retain quality land for intensive agriculture and ensure the viability and prosperity of agricultural activities is not compromised.
- To encourage the innovative use of farming land so that the use does not degrade the land’s landscape qualities, reduce its long term availability for agricultural use or lower water quality in Western Port and promote and facilitate the development of farming systems which are environmentally sustainable, as well as being technically and economically robust.
- To maintain a non-urban buffer to Western Port and a continuation of the South East Non-Urban “Wedge”.
- To ensure the impact of all activities on the Western Port catchment are minimised and/or contribute to an improvement to the environment and meet the objectives of EPA’s various State Environment Protection Policies (SEPP’s), government approved catchment management strategies and local water quality action plans.
To ensure the protection and enhancement of remnant native vegetation, the Royal Botanic Gardens, Cranbourne, rural landscapes (particularly along and adjacent to main roads) and creation of wildlife corridors.

Strategies

- Retain or reinforce existing subdivision controls for farming zones. Discourage repeated excisions that have the potential to reduce the productive capacity of rural properties.
- Allow rural residential subdivision where the criteria specified in Minister’s Direction No. 6 have been satisfied, a holistic approach to land use management is taken and where existing agricultural activities will not be compromised.
- Safeguard the natural resource through encouraging and assisting sustainable farm practices.
- Promote and encourage the continued increase in the technical and economic efficiency of intensive irrigated and dry land farming systems.
- Promote and facilitate the opportunity for value adding within the regional economy.
- Apply land capability as the basis for rural zones.
- Examine strategies for the after use of exhausted quarries.
- For all rural settlements, consolidate urban development, and provide defensible urban boundaries and a clear demarcation between urban and non-urban areas.
- Discourage the establishment of unwanted urban land uses.
- Encourage intensive farming uses at established locations including dog breeding and keeping at Devon Meadows and Pearcedale and horse stabling adjacent to the Cranbourne Racing Complex.
- Discourage commercial development at inappropriate locations along Western Port Highway, South Gippsland Highway and other main roads.
- Encourage tourist development at appropriate locations along the South Gippsland Highway.
- Retain or reinforce native vegetation removal controls, especially for areas with significant tracts of remnant vegetation.
- Encourage revegetation of open spaces, parks and watercourses, to create wildlife corridors.
- Ensure that Casey’s rural land is not eroded or prejudiced by inappropriate development, particularly developments that do not need to be located in a rural area.

Implementation

These strategies will be implemented by:

Use of policy

- Using Rural Subdivision Policy to preserve valuable agricultural land (Clause 22.06).
- Using Intensive Agricultural Uses Policy to encourage and support intensive farming activities, including dog breeding, boarding and training in Pearcedale and Devon Meadows (Intensive Agricultural Uses Policy, Clause 22.10).
Uses Poultry and Broiler Farming Policy to guide the use and development of poultry and broiler farms (Clause 22.12).

Uses Extractive Industry Policy to have regard to the proximity of proposed development to existing extractive industries to protect the continued operation of these industries and any future use of these sites for waste disposal (Clause 22.13).

Uses Non-Agricultural Uses In Green Wedge Areas Policy to protect Casey’s ‘green wedge’ land from ad hoc and inappropriate development (Clause 22.21).

**Application of zones and overlays**

- Applying the Rural Zone to The Farm areas of Casey to ensure the effective use of available land resources.
- Applying the Rural Living Zone to those parts of The Farm already developed for those purposes.
- Applying the Environmental Rural Zone to protect rural areas of environmental significance and ensure appropriate land use management practices are employed.
- Maintaining minimum lot sizes in the Schedule to the Rural, Environmental Rural and Rural Living Zones to maintain the viability of rural industry.

**Further strategic work**

- Developing a Strategy for the area of The Farm north and east of South Gippsland Highway.
- Developing strategies for ensuring the development and management of the dog breeding, boarding and working areas and the equine industry.
- Identifying land within the Kooweerup Flood Mitigation District and Devon Meadows/Cannons Creek Drainage Strategy Area subject to inundation/flooding as the basis for the introduction of a Land Subject to Inundation Overlay.

**Other actions**

- Implementing Council’s Roadside Management Plan.
- Reviewing Council’s planting list for the area in consultation with the Royal Botanic Gardens, Cranbourne and preparing a landscaping guide.
- Preparing educational material for landholders regarding environmental and cultural values and management issues for the area.