22.02 ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Catchment Management and Landcare

This policy applies to the use and development of land within the Rural Zones.

Policy Basis

The long term sustainable care and management of the City’s natural resource base is critical for the continued economic development of the City and the protection of the environmental assets.

The use and development of land in rural areas needs to be carefully managed to ensure that agricultural capacity of land within the regional catchment is not marginalised. This policy supports the key actions outlined in the North East Regional Catchment strategy and ensures the views of Department of Natural Resources and Environment and North East Catchment Management Authority are taken into account for the use and development of sensitive land.

Objectives

- To support and encourage a total catchment management approach to natural resources.
- To assist in the implementation of the North East regional catchment strategy.
- To utilise the principles of Landcare when considering applications to use and develop land.
- To facilitate the rectification of land degradation and the improvement of agricultural land.
- To encourage the preparation of Farm Management or Whole Farm Plans as the basis of rural land management.
- To ensure that changes to the use of land do not prejudice the continued production and operation of the agricultural capacity of land.

Implementation

It is policy that:

- The views of the Department of Natural Resources and Environment and the North East Catchment Management Authority be sought where changes to the use of land and proposals for new development are considered to be incompatible with the North East Regional Catchment Strategy.
- The development of land in agricultural areas be in accordance with whole farm management plans.
- Applicants will be required to demonstrate that the objectives of the policy have been considered and that management plans have been prepared to rectify any land management issues.
- Development (particularly dwellings) will have regard to any siting and design guidelines adopted by the responsible authority.
- Conditions on permits will be applied to ensure the prevention of soil degradation or the implementation of works to rectify land degradation.

Site Analysis

- When planning any subdivision, use, development or works on land within the Rural Zones, it is important to clearly establish the boundaries of the land, preferably from a certified plan of subdivision or copy of title to identify features such as:
  - property fences.
  - electricity and other service easements.
  - unmade roads.
  - races, watercourses, etc.
- Applicants submit a base plan identifying contours, creeks, gullies, drainage lines, rock outcrops, roads, existing buildings, vegetation, views, ridge lines, adjoining landuses etc.

Subdivision and Development Principles

Access and Roads

- All weather access roads and driveways should follow contours if possible to avoid excessive cut and fill and potential erosion problems.
- Road design proposals avoid long dead-end roads.
- New tracks or roads are designed and constructed to avoid sedimentation and runoff to streams.