Native Vegetation Controls, Biodiversity, Implementing Catchment Strategies and Planning Schemes in a Strategic and Coordinated Manner

- “Ecology Adviser” positions based on the heritage adviser model
- Combined amendments for CMA Bio maps and regions
- Review exemptions
- Specifics on grassland controls
- Constant data updates at all levels including website and notes for new landowners
- Practice notes
- Increase numbers on ‘on ground’ DSE staff in regions
- Dedicated regional enforcement officer position

Preparing a Rural Strategy what do we know what we need to know? How do the new Farming and Rural Activities Zones work?

- Need for a state wide rural strategy and rural strategic framework
  - A state strategy (real agriculture)
  - A framework Council’s can work within on an individual/regional basis, Framework to address:
    - Agricultural economy
    - Biodiversity
    - Social – rural communities
    - Old and inappropriate subdivisions
    - Review long term implications of Farming Zone
    - Nexus between rural housing and subdivision
- Resources for rural strategic planning
  - State financial assistance ($ for $) will enable all Councils to be brought into the process
- Information sharing between state agencies and Local Government
  - Key data from DSE and DPI
  - Local government to be ‘plugged into’ state information resources.
Referral Authorities – effective strategies for a better system

- Mandatory pre-application consultation with referral authorities
- Educate applicants to understand process
- Review standard conditions for 2 lot subdivisions
  - Applicants are confused and it results in more work
  - Does not work in rural areas (ie sewerage)
- Plans for Certification
  - Plans submitted must have easements indicated
  - If easements are not known wait until they are and then submit.
- Pre-application – improved efficiency
  - Depends on information provided and how well the applicant manages the process
- Audit/Monitoring fee
  - Ensures permit conditions are complied with
- Statement of Compliance for all permits – prior to certificate of occupancy

Community Consultation – what works and doesn’t work

- More information/education of planning process needed
  - Guidelines for consultation process (prepared by PIA or MAV?)
  - Simple flowchart
- Promotion of the general objectives of planning
  - Publicity/positive side of planning

Houses in Rural Zones. Is there scope to provide for Rural Living? Managing existing small lots in rural areas, excisions and rural subdivision

- Mixed Messages
  - DSE out of sync with reality – needs clarity on how to deal with this.
  - Lack of data/information
  - Lack of available information
- Rural strategies vital – rural Council’s need funding
- Ministerial Direction No. 6 – assumptions/criteria/review?
- What are we trying to protect? – need for Council’s to be clear
- Water supply capacity
  - Supply to rural houses
  - Impact on catchments
- Policy too general for the variety of situations (diversity)
- Protecting landscape or agricultural land?
- Planning policy & decision makers
- Conflicting policy – needs flexibility

Managing the urban rural fringe, ‘nuisance’ uses, conflicts between residential and farming uses

- Limited tools available, such as what the VPP’s offer to manage the interface
- Need state strategy
- Review SPP to ensure a regional focus
- UGB – will only work if there is a tool with weight similar to the powers of the Melbourne UGB.
• Better resources for State Government Regional Offices and increased access/communication between State Government and Regional Councils/Regional DSE

Integrating planning with local and regional economic strategies

• Time taken from strategy development to gazettal need to be shortened to be responsive and effective
• Economic analysis needs to be input into strategic planning work
• Sound strategic land use planning important to achieve economic developments in a collaborative effort (both Council’s and stakeholders)
• Environmental and social issues should be seen as opportunities not constraints in economic development especially small towns
• Planning around economic development needs to take a long term view (not 3-5 years)
• Resources need to be allocated to monitoring and maintaining of data base that provide economic information,

ResCode does it work in country towns, multi unit development, residential development strategies, neighbourhood character

• Neighbourhood character is too subjective
• Recognition needs that change has to happen – in practice note
• Lack of infrastructure supporting higher density development (Gisborne)
• Freeze development until key infrastructure in place (Peterborough)
• Neighbourhood character over lay “should go” – provides little real control development.
• Bendigo – advantage in conserving heritage.
• Design and Development Overlays
• Used by Ballarat
• Triggers permits
• Successful in addressing neighbourhood character
• Moyn SC experience – difficult in getting through
• Experience – standards of ResCode often unrealistic(?) for Provincial City Residential Areas
• Bare minimum of private “open space” on sites (3 metres wide).
• Recommend variations to ResCode – allow higher densities near activity centres
• ResCode provisions creating conflict (lowest common denominator)
• Level of information received with applications is often very poor
• Port Fairy experience
• Recognise local conditions – there needs to be a little more flexibility
• Resourcing problems –strategic work needs to be done
• Time constraints in assessing applications against ResCode.
• Fees – too low
• Key Issues
  1. Character
  2. Strategies
  3. Time taken to prepare strategies and try variations, understanding ResCode
  4. Resourcing, infrastructure, greater power to State Government, structure plans
  5. Lack of understanding of ResCode by applications
  6. Need rural ResCode
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