

## Development in Rural Areas

### Protecting our rural landscape

The beauty of our landscape and the picturesque views throughout the municipality form a significant element of the unique character of Murrindindi. We need to protect this and ensure that it is not compromised by inappropriate design or siting of buildings or other structures. We also need to protect our native vegetation and minimise the risk of fire, flood and erosion.

### Zonings which allow you to live in a rural setting

Land in the Rural Living Zone and the Low Density Residential Zone is for people who wish to live in a rural environment, without necessarily farming the land. Land in the Farming Zone is primarily for farming.

We know the planning controls for construction of dwellings and other structures in rural zones are very complex and substantial penalties may apply for illegal buildings, works, or removal or destruction of vegetation, so please check with us before you purchase land or plan your building project. We also don't want you to be disappointed if your plans are not able to be approved because they don't comply with the controls in our planning scheme. Contact us on (03) 5772 0317 or [planning@murrindindi.vic.gov.au](mailto:planning@murrindindi.vic.gov.au) and make an appointment to discuss your ideas with a planning officer before you put the work into preparing an application.

### Use of land in the Farming Zone

In Murrindindi we aim to protect productive agricultural land for agricultural use. Our planning controls and permit processes seek to ensure that subdivision of rural land does not reduce agricultural use.

In farming areas, a planning permit may be required to:

- subdivide land
- construct a building
- carry out works, including earthworks, which change the rate of flow or the discharge point of water across a property boundary
- remove, lop or destroy native vegetation
- operate a business other than a farming enterprise

The minimum subdivision size permitted in the Farming Zone is 40 hectares.

## **New dwellings on existing vacant lots under the minimum lot size**

We need to manage the construction of dwellings in rural areas to protect and facilitate agricultural activity and to retain our attractive rural landscape and environment, so you will need a planning permit if you wish to build a house on an existing vacant lot of less than 40 hectares in the Farming Zone.

Dwellings will only be permitted in the Farming Zone where they are required for the management of the land and will not impact on the right to farm.

Infrastructure and services for residents that are taken for granted in townships may not be possible in rural areas and this may be an issue for you. Also there is greater potential for problems with noise, odour, chemical sprays, and domestic pets worrying stock if you live in a farming area.

## **Factors to consider in a planning permit application**

To construct a dwelling in the Farming Zone you will need to provide:

- a road that can provide access to emergency vehicles and two wheel drive vehicles year round (an 'all weather road')
- appropriate effluent disposal
- sufficient water supply for domestic and fire fighting purposes
- an appropriate power supply

When preparing an application for a dwelling in the Farming Zone the following will need to be demonstrated:

- The dwelling has been designed and sited effectively to reinforce the agricultural value of surrounding land
- The dwelling is reasonably required for the operation of the agricultural activity conducted on the land
- The design and siting limit the impact on watercourses and native vegetation

## **Checklist for planning application**

To assist you with preparing an application for a planning permit, a *Planning Application Checklist* is available on our website at [www.murrindindi.vic.gov.au](http://www.murrindindi.vic.gov.au). Alternatively, please feel free to contact our Planning Unit on (03) 5772 0317 or [planning@murrindindi.vic.gov.au](mailto:planning@murrindindi.vic.gov.au) to obtain a copy.

*This information sheet is to be used as a general guide only. Council has made all reasonable effort to ensure the information provided in this sheet is true and accurate. However, we recommend that you seek professional advice before acting or making decisions on the basis of this information. For any questions or clarification, please contact Council's Planning Unit on (03) 5772 0317.*