



Dwellings and Subdivisions in the Farming Zone

Why do we manage housing in farming areas?

Land in the Farming Zone is primarily intended for farming and agricultural activities, including sustainable land management practices. Dwellings, particularly those used for 'lifestyle' purposes conflict with farming activities (e.g. noise, odour, spray drift, dust) and can often impact upon or restrict the expansion or intensification of legitimate agricultural activities on adjoining farms.

Subdivisions in farming areas usually result in fragmentation of land and smaller, less productive and ultimately less viable farms. Economies of scale are reduced and agricultural production is usually diminished. Small farms invariably become unviable and revert to non-farming 'lifestyle' properties.

To protect rural land for farming, new dwellings, subdivisions or re-subdivisions in the Farming Zone must genuinely support an agricultural activity on the land in order to be supported. It is important for Council to preserve productive farming areas for future generations and ensure that agricultural land is not lost forever through inappropriate subdivision or development.

Dwellings on lots that are less than 40ha within the Farming Zone are discouraged. Approval is typically only possible where a house is genuinely required to support the agricultural activities undertaken on the land.

On small farms (less than 40 hectares), a Farm Plan will be required with an application to outline how the agricultural activity will be conducted and operate. The Farm Plan should establish why the dwelling or subdivision is required to support farming.

Lodging an application

The following is the minimum information requirements for an application for a dwelling or subdivision in the Farming Zone:

- Form**
Completed application form - see Council's website
- Fees**
Application fee – see Council's website
- Title**
Full copy of property title, no more than 3 months old, including any restrictions, covenants or agreements
- Site plans**
(scaled and fully dimensioned) showing:
 - Topography/contours
 - Existing and proposed buildings and structures including fencing
 - The location of existing buildings and type of uses on adjacent properties
 - Existing vegetation and any vegetation to be removed
 - Dams/watercourses, effluent fields, vehicle accessways and crossovers;
 - Setbacks of all buildings and works from boundaries and other features on site
- Floor plans and elevations**
(scaled and fully dimensioned) of the proposed dwelling including external colours and materials.
- Report**
A written response to the mandatory requirements at Clause 35.07-2 and 35.07-5 of the Wangaratta Planning Scheme
- Farm plan**
Written details of the proposed farming/agricultural activity including a Whole Farm Plan.

Applications are decided on the current planning regulations, so even if there is a historic precedence in your area, new dwelling applications may not be approved.

Other considerations

Other things like Bushfire, Flooding, native vegetation, land contamination, cultural heritage, erosion, and salinity can also affect your property and may need to be assessed in your application.

If you are purchasing a property with the intention of building or subdividing, it's a good idea to seek independent legal and planning advice.

Contact Us

Pre-application meetings are a good way to discuss the application prior to lodging. This process can inform you of any potential issues with the proposal and possible solutions to avoid unnecessary delays. These discussions are indicative only and do not constitute any formal approval. To arrange a pre-application meeting, please contact Council's Planning Department on (03) 5722 0888.

Need more Information?

Applying for a Planning Permit

A guide on the planning permit process

www.planning.vic.gov.au/guides-and-resources/guides/all-guides/applying-for-a-planning-permit

Zones and Overlays – VicPlan

State Government software to help you determine what zones and overlays impact your property

www.mapshare.vic.gov.au/vicplan/

Wangaratta Planning Scheme

www.planning-schemes.app.planning.vic.gov.au/Wangaratta/ordnance

Agricultural Policies include:

- 02.03-4 Natural resource management – Agriculture
- 14.01-1S Protection of agricultural land
- 14.01-1L Dwellings and Subdivisions in rural areas
- 14.01-2S and 14.01-2L Sustainable agricultural land use

Titles – Landata

www.landata.online/

First Peoples State Relations

Cultural Heritage Management Plans

www.firstpeoplesrelations.vic.gov.au/cultural-heritage-management-plans

VCAT decisions on rurally zoned land

www.agriculture.vic.gov.au/farm-management/planning-and-farm-development/vcat-updates

Agriculture Victoria eGuides Planning and Farm Development

<https://agriculture.vic.gov.au/farm-management/planning-and-farm-development/eguides-planning-and-farm-development>