

22.0319/01/2006
VC37**DAMS**

This policy applies to all land within the Shire.

Policy Basis

This policy:

- Applies the protection of catchments, waterways and groundwater SPPF objective clause 15.01 to local circumstances.
- Builds on the MSS objectives in clause 21.09 relating to the protection of surface and groundwater quality.

The water resources of the Shire are finite. A critical issue in Hepburn is the ongoing maintenance and enhancement of the quality and quantity of the Shire's water supplies and watercourses.

Damming of watercourses and the capture of overland flow is an important aspect of land and water management. The issue of water availability to downstream users needs to be planned and regulated to catchment capacity that ensures supplies for productive agricultural enterprises, domestic purposes and environmental flows. The construction of dams also needs to be undertaken in a safe and efficient manner.

Objectives

- To guarantee water supply for domestic purposes and stock.
- To maintain environmental flows where dams may be constructed.
- To ensure that water is available for productive agricultural uses through the management and planning of dams.
- To ensure the construction of dams is undertaken in a safe and efficient manner.

Policy*Exercising Discretion*

Where a permit is required for dam construction, it is policy to:

- Require a report from the applicant showing that an assessment has been undertaken of the level of available water resources in the relevant local catchment and that the proposed storage of water is sustainable given existing and proposed utilisation.
- Require a report from the applicant showing the specifications of the dam prepared by a suitably qualified person and that the construction is to be undertaken by a suitably qualified person.
- Require comment from the relevant water authority on:
 - the impact on existing land and water management practices and the capacity to improve current water management practices;
 - the existing level of utilisation of the water yield from the respective catchment;
 - the impact on downstream users both locally and regionally in terms of water availability and safety;
 - the environmental impact on natural stream flows and river systems;

- the extent of soil and native vegetation removal required.

Decision Guidelines

It is policy that the responsible authority consider as appropriate:

- Any relevant floodplain management strategy.
- Any comments from the relevant water authority or relevant land manager.

Reference Documents

Draft Loddon Catchment Water Quality Strategy