

# Local Planning Policy

## Tree Farms and Plantation Projects

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### Policy Aim

To assist the Shire of Koorda (“**the Shire**”) in determining applications for a tree farm or carbon sequestration plantation project by setting out matters to have regard for when assessing a Development Application.

To provide proponents of tree farms or carbon sequestration plantation projects with guidelines for the matters to be addressed, and likely conditions, to assist with the preparation and lodgment of a DA for a tree farm and carbon sequestration.

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### Legislative Basis

The Policy applies to the development of a tree farm or carbon sequestration plantation in the area covered by the Shire of Koorda, Local Planning Scheme No.3.

Planning and Development (Local Planning Schemes) Regulations 2015 Schedule 2, Part 2, Div. 2, allow a local government to prepare a local planning policy and outlines the statutory procedure for making such a policy.

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### Objective

The Policy is established in good faith with the following objectives:

- To encourage the integration of tree farms and plantations with existing agricultural uses as complementary but integrated with cropping, grazing, and food production.
  - To support a DA that actively integrates a tree farm or plantation with the existing predominant agricultural activity.
  - To protect and enhance native vegetation, wetlands and water courses and assist in the reduction of salinity, waterlogging and erosion.
  - To minimise the potential for any loss of population through the use of the entire lot area for a tree farm or plantation, particularly business models involving absent landlords.
  - To achieve tree farm layouts and amenities so as not to compromise;
    - the fire safety of the local community,
    - the biodiversity conservation and management of the land or adjacent land,
    - the road safety of the community from any increased large fauna and vermin populations.
  - To reduce the potential for future financial impact on the local government and community due to an abandoned plantation caused by a business collapse or similar.
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### Policy

The policy sets out considerations for the local government in determining a DA for a tree farm or carbon sequestration project, and requirements of the local government for any proponent of a tree farm or carbon sequestration project.

### Council Considerations

In determining any Development Application for a tree farm or carbon sequestration plantation project, the local government will consider:

- The impact of the proposed project on existing residential populations within 5km of a townsite exceeding 100 hectares.
- Extent to which the DA integrates with and retains the predominant use of the land for cropping, grazing, and food production.
- Impact of the proposed DA on existing native vegetation, wetlands and water courses and the potential to assist in the reduction of salinity, waterlogging and erosion.

- Impact of the proposed DA on Aboriginal cultural considerations and efforts made to identify and clarify any potential impacts.
- Potential impact on the population by the project being applied to the entire land area, particularly regarding carbon sequestration projects.
- Potential impact on the population of the shire by the project failing to retain existing (or having existed up to 12 months prior to the application) habitable buildings and the extent to which they are to be offered for lease as part of the DA.
- Completion and provision by the project proponents of a Bushfire Management Plan with mitigation strategies to the satisfaction of the shire and Chief Bushfire Control Officer.
- Installation and type of fencing to the external boundary of the plantation area to limit the potential road risk to the community from increased numbers of large fauna and vermin.
- Extent to which harvesting activities could impact existing infrastructure particularly regarding the shire road network in excess of existing agricultural activities.
- Extent to which harvest activities would create increased waste impacts on the shire and waste disposal facilities and the project proponents mitigating management plan.
- Provision of commitment and detailed analysis by the project proponent to facilitate a shire managed Rehabilitation and Contingency Trust Fund, which should be considered critical for carbon sequestration plantation projects.

Approval of any tree farm or carbon sequestration project will be bound by:

- Under Clause 60, Schedule 2, Part 2 of the *Planning and Development (Local Planning Schemes) Regulations 2015* all development requires approval of the local government, unless specifically exempted under Clause 61.
- A DA is required for any tree farm (involving intensive planting in blocks more than one hectare).
- The Scheme contains statutory requirements, and this Policy expands on and complements the Scheme requirements.

### **Proponent Requirements**

A tree farm or carbon sequestration plantation project within the Shire of Koorda will address the following issues as part of any DA application:

- Provide the local government with a detailed **Bushfire Management Plan** including a schedule of works to create and maintain fire breaks and other mitigation requirements to the satisfaction of the local government, the local government's Chief Bushfire Control Officer and Department of Fire and Emergency Services.
- Prior to any planting, **construct fences** on all external boundaries of the plantation area fencing to be completed to a height of no less than 1.8m and of sufficient composition to prevent access by large fauna and vermin (predominately kangaroos and rabbits). These fences are to be maintained by the proponent with faults and failures that are identified by the local government to be remedied within 28 days of notice.
- Fund a **Rehabilitation and Contingency Trust Fund** to be held, invested and managed by the local government based on the rehabilitation requirements of the said development should the proponent be unable to meet these obligations during or at the termination of the operation or business entity. The quantum of the required fund to be proposed with detailed analysis by the project proponents and subject to local government agreement.
- Provide a comprehensive **Plantation Management Plan** and **Plantation Design Plan** in accordance with the Code of Practice for Timber Plantations in Western Australia and written commitment to adhere to the principles and parameters outlined in the code.
- Provide a **Harvest Management Plan** to include proposed harvesting periods and timing and to include details of proposed disposal of waste materials, transport management and road access, particularly Restricted Access Vehicle requirements.
- Provide detailed analysis of the potential **environmental impact** of the proposed project including the impact on flora, fauna, soil and water sources and benefits to soil erosion and salt reduction.

Wherever possible, and known, the local government should provide proponents of tree farm or carbon sequestration planation projects a copy of this policy and requirements prior to their making a formal DA.

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### **Related Documents (Legislation/Local Law/Policy/Procedure/Delegation)**

*Planning and Development (Local Planning Schemes) Regulations 2015*

Shire of Koorda, Local Planning Scheme No.3

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### **Review History**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Council Resolution</b>	<b>Description of review/amendment</b>
18/06/2025	RES: 040625	V1.0. Endorsed by Council for advertising.

