

Tree Plantation Policy

This Local Planning Policy has been adopted in accordance with the *Planning and Development (Local Planning Schemes) Regulations 2015, Division 2 – Local Planning Policies* and applies to the Shire of Boyup Brook.

This policy applies to an application for a 'Plantation' in the 'Rural' Zone.

Policy Basis

Broad scale tree plantations have potential to cause severe adverse social and economic impacts to the Boyup Brook community.

This policy is aimed at providing additional guidance to the Shire and applicants in determining the suitability of proposals for tree farming or plantations in the Shire of Boyup Brook.

A Plantation: is a stand of trees of ten hectares or larger that has been established by sowing or planting of either native or exotic tree species selected and managed intensively for their commercial and/or environmental benefits. A plantation includes roads, maintenance tracks and firebreaks.

Policy Objectives

1. The overarching goal is to protect the use of land for broad-acre agriculture (farms engaged in the production of crops or the grazing of livestock for meat or wool, or other forms of intensive agriculture that provides for establishment of local jobs and industries), to ensure the Environmental, Social and Economic benefits for Boyup Brook and the State economy are protected.
2. To ensure that Boyup Brooks economic and social wellbeing are not jeopardised by loss of population caused by the introduction of large-scale plantations.
3. To protect broad-acre agriculture and ultimately benefits for Boyup Brook, this policy seeks to ensure that plantations and tree plantings are integrated into farming operations and expresses a presumption against establishment of whole farm tree plantations that result in loss of the types of broad-acre farming practices outlined in Policy Objective 1.
4. To provide opportunities for tree plantings to be integrated with farming operations and promote plantations and other tree crops where the area of planting is 20ha or less and sufficient space is to be made available between planting areas to enable broadacre farming to occur.
5. To avoid unacceptable risk to the Boyup Brook community from fire developing in plantations.
6. To ensure that plantations are provided with onsite rapid deployment fire mitigation and suppression measures and have adequate fire mitigation and suppression response measures available within the district to control fire and prevent the spread of fire to areas outside of the plantation area.

Policy Position

1. Rural zoned land in the Shire of Boyup Brook is considered a priority area for broad-acre farming.
2. Development Approval is required prior to establishing a plantation of more than 20ha on land zoned Rural or where the total area of the plantation on a property is more than 10% of the effective arable area.
3. This policy expresses a presumption against establishment of whole farm tree plantations that result in loss of broad-acre farming practices, particularly where this may result in the loss of farming families and existing on farm local employment from the Shire.

4. This policy supports the establishment of plantations that are integrated into farming operations and are less than 10% of the effective arable area of the farming property and where the plantation areas are 20ha or less whilst ensuring sufficient land is made available for broad-acre farm operations.
5. Where the total area of plantation blocks exceeds 140ha (i.e., more than 7 X 20ha plantation blocks), an approved fire unit manned by suitably trained personnel, is to be stationed on the property named on the Development Approval for firefighting purposes.
6. The location of plantations shall ensure the protection of remnant vegetation and prevent spread of seedlings outside of the plantation area.
7. Plantations shall be designed in such a way to prevent the increase of a bushfire threat to the locality.
8. A 100m setback between the plantation and an existing or approved habitable building must be maintained unless the building has been constructed to an appropriate higher standard.
9. Fire breaks must be maintained in line with the Annual Fire Break Notice developed by the Shire of Boyup Brook which may be varied from time to time.
10. A minimum of 50,000 litres of water must be permanently available on site at accessible locations for initial use during fire response.
11. Plantations adjacent to water courses to control salinity levels or to rehabilitate degraded areas are encouraged.

Application requirements

An application for a plantation in a rural area must be accompanied by the following information, as appropriate:

1. A report explaining the proposal and how it addresses this policy, including an economic and social impact statement including the number of local jobs that will be lost or created.
2. The location, size and species of plantation area or areas where multiple planting areas are proposed.
3. A report showing the areas to be maintained for crops and grazing of domestic animals on pastures and detailing the broadacre farming operations that will continue.
4. Existing dwellings and other structures, and intent for use if this is proposed to change.
5. A fire management plan that details:
 - a) the fire response personnel and equipment available on site for firefighting during the high fire risk season;
 - b) access and egress routes;
 - c) additional fire resources that are available and equipped for plantation fires including response times for these resources;
 - d) the location and size of the proposed plantation(s) in relation to adjacent plantations;
 - e) location of any dwellings and other buildings;
 - f) an evacuation plan for workers or residents on the property;
 - g) fire break design and maintenance schedules; and

- h) water sources on site that are exclusively reserved for firefighting.
6. Any other matter relevant to the site and environment.
 7. Road access and traffic management measures to minimise damage to the local road network and to ensure safety requirements are met, particularly during planting and harvesting of the plantation(s).
 8. The design, planting, maintenance, harvesting and post-harvesting land management of the tree plantation shall be carried out in accordance with the *Code of Practice for Timber Plantations in Western Australia* and the *2011 FESA Guidelines for Plantation Fire Protection*, or any documents superseding them, to the satisfaction of the Shire of Boyup Brook.

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