



LOCAL PLANNING POLICY: TREE FARMS

PURPOSE

To provide a guide for considering applications for planning approval involving Tree Farms.

AUTHORITY TO PREPARE AND ADOPT A PLANNING POLICY

Clause 4 of Schedule 2, Part 2 of the *Planning and Development (Local Planning Schemes) Regulations 2015* enables a Local Government to prepare and adopt Local Planning Policies.

This policy supersedes Shire of Beverley Town Planning Policy No. 9 – Tree Crops which is hereby revoked.

OBJECTIVE

The objectives of this Local Planning Policy are to:

- Achieve a consistent efficient and equitable system for assessing and approving tree farm applications;
- Encourage tree farm developers to adhere to industry guidelines and standards as specified in relevant codes of practice and other documents; and
- Identify specific issues that the Shire wish to see addressed in the planning and development of tree farms.

Any tree farm development shall not be justification for an application for subdivision nor any proposed tree farming or an approved application for tree farming on any land be deemed a precursor to subdivision.

A body of legislation, policy and guidelines relevant to tree crops already exists and a range of government agencies and other stakeholders are involved in regulating and managing tree farming issues.

This policy aims to be consistent and complementary with existing regulations and not to place additional undue burden on landowners and investors wishing to pursue tree farm development.

BACKGROUND

Tree farms have the potential to become an important land use in medium to low rainfall agricultural areas in Western Australia. Landholders and private investors are looking to capitalise on emerging opportunities for farm forestry in these regions, diversify income streams and to gain the on-farm environmental benefits that integrated tree farms can provide. Given the increasing opportunities and interest in tree farm development, it is important for the Shire to ensure these are adequately addressed in the local planning framework.



DEFINITIONS

APPLICANT

An Applicant is defined as the person or entity (e.g. company or organisation) responsible for management of the tree crop. The Applicant does not have to be the owner of the trees or the land on which trees are planted (e.g. the Applicant could be a third party management agency). The Applicant is responsible for ensuring adherence to this policy and other relevant legislation and regulations.

TREE FARM

The Shire of Beverley Local Planning Scheme No. 3 (LPS 3) defines a Tree Farm as follows:

Means land used commercially for tree production where trees are planted in blocks of more than one hectare, including land in respect of which a carbon right is registered under the Carbon Rights Act section 5.

A *Tree Farm* Land Use is a discretionary Land Use in the *Rural* Zone in Zoning Table 3 of LPS 3.

LANDOWNER

A Landowner is defined as the person or entity that holds the title to the land.

MANAGEMENT PLAN

Provides details of the way in which a tree farm will be developed and managed, and aims to demonstrate the means by which the principles of environmental care, cultural and fire management objectives are achieved.

A MANAGEMENT PLAN INCLUDES THE FOLLOWING COMPONENTS:

- Establishment plan;
- Plantation Management plan; and
- Fire Management plan.

CODE OF PRACTICE

The *Code of Practice for Timber Plantations in Western Australia 2006*, produced by Forest Industries Federation WA, Forest Products Commission Australian Forest Growers, or as revised, shall apply.

GUIDELINES FOR PLANTATION FIRE PROTECTION

The *Guidelines for Plantation Fire Protection 2001*, produced by Fire and Emergency Services Authority WA, or as revised, shall apply.

AREAS OF APPLICATION

This policy applies to land zoned '*Rural*' in the Shire of Beverley Local Planning Schemes No.3.

APPLICATION AND APPROVAL REQUIREMENTS

WHEN IS AN APPLICATION REQUIRED?

A Tree Farm Development Application must be submitted and approved prior to the commencement of development.



An application is required for all tree farm developments greater than 1 hectares in size.

TREE FARM DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

In addition to Shire requirements for Development Applications, a Tree Farm Development Application is to contain the following three parts:

a) Registration - which must contain the following information:

- Title details of the subject land;
- Name of the Landowner(s);
- Name of the Applicant (tree farm manager);
- Address and contact details of the Applicant;
- Area (hectares) to be planted and species to be planted; and
- Signatures of the Applicant and the Landowner(s).

b) Management Plan:

- A checklist of information that should be included in a Management Plan is provided in Attachment 2. The checklist is based on the guidelines in the Code of Practice.
- The Management Plan must address the policy measures described in Section 6 of this Policy.

c) Map - which should show the following:

- Location of tree crops;
- Access roads;
- Structures and buildings;
- Natural features including native vegetation and water courses; and
- Other relevant information such as hazards or significant features.

Modification to Tree Farm Development Application

An Applicant with an existing Tree Farm Development Application approval may modify the existing application, including the addition of new tree plantation areas or expansion of existing tree plantation areas. Additional areas of tree plantations may therefore be managed under existing Management Plans, without the need for the Applicant to prepare a new Management Plan for every new tree plantation development. However the Applicant must ensure that the management measures in an existing Management Plan are relevant to new tree plantation areas and the sites on which they will be developed, and meet the requirements of this policy.

If this is not the case the Applicant is required to submit a modified or new Management Plan.

If an Applicant transfer management responsibilities to another organisation they are required to notify the Shire and provide details of the new managing entity.



ADDITIONAL POLICY MEASURES

The following policy measures must be addressed in the Management Plan.

GENERAL TREE FARM MANAGEMENT

The Shire encourages all tree farm developments to be undertaken with appropriate consideration to the specifications and guidelines in the *Code of Practice and Guidelines for Plantation Fire Protection*.

The *Code of Practice* provides management goals and operational guidelines to tree farm managers to “ensure tree crop operations in WA are conducted in a manner that is in accordance with accepted principles for good plantation management, while recognising that a primary aim of tree crops is to be economically competitive and sustainable”.

ACCESS ROADS

When planning tree farm developments, Applicants should consider how tree plantations will be accessed for management, harvesting and removal of products (if applicable). Potential access roads should be identified on the Map.

The harvest and haulage of tree farm products results in ‘wear and tear’ of roads and other transport infrastructure and the Shire is seeking to minimise adverse effects on local roads within its control.

FIRE MANAGEMENT

A fire management plan must be included as part of the overall Management Plan (see Attachment 2).

Any Fire Management Plan must be consistent with *Guidelines for Plantation Fire Protection 2001*, produced by Fire and Emergency Services Authority WA, or as revised. Should the Fire Management Plan not be consistent with the guidelines then the application will normally be refused.



Attachment 1 Tree Farm Development Application Registration Form

SECTION 1 – NEW APPLICATION OR MODIFICATION

Select one of the following:

- New Tree Farm Development Application
(Complete all Sections except Section 6)
- Modification to existing Tree Farm Development Application
(Complete all Sections except Section 5)

SECTION 2 – APPLICANT DETAILS

Name of Applicant _____
(Company or individual): _____

Name of contact person: _____

Address: _____

Tel: _____

Fax: _____

SECTION 3 – LANDOWNER DETAILS (If multiple Landowners provide details of additional Landowners on page 3)

Tick if AS ABOVE or complete

Name of Landowner: _____

Address: _____

Tel: _____

Fax: _____

SECTION 4 – LAND TITLE

Title details of the land on which trees will be planted

(If multiple titles, specify the area to be planted on each title):



COMPLETE IF NEW APPLICATION

SECTION 5 – TREE FARM INFORMATION (NEW APPLICATIONS ONLY)

Total area to be planted _____
 (hectares): _____

Species to be planted _____
 (and area of each): _____

Proposed planting _____
 dates: _____

Management Plan attached Tick applicable box
 Yes plan is attached
 No plan is not attached

Map attached Tick applicable box
 Yes plan is attached
 No plan is not attached

Note: a Management Plan and a Map are prerequisites for approval of a new Tree Farm Development Application

COMPLETE IF APPLICATION MODIFICATION

SECTION 6 – TREE FARM INFORMATION (Modifications only).

Complete relevant sections

Reason for modification _____
 (e.g. new or changed tree plantation area) _____

Additional area to be planted (hectares): _____

Species to be planted: _____

Proposed planting _____
 dates: _____

Management Plan attached Tick applicable box
 Yes plan is attached
 No plan is not attached

Map attached Tick applicable box
 Yes plan is attached
 No plan is not attached

Note: Previously approved Management Plans and Maps may be used for modification if relevant.

If no, provide reference to relevant Management Plan and/or Map

Signature of Applicant: _____

Print Name: _____

Date: _____

Signature of Landowner: _____
 (if landowner is not Applicant)

Print Name: _____

Date: _____

SHIRE USE ONLY

Application received on: _____	Reasons for non approval _____
Application reviewed by _____	Advice provided to Applicant on: _____
Approved/Not approved _____	Tree crop register updated on: _____



ADDITIONAL LANDOWNERS

LANDOWNER 2

Name of Landowner: _____

Address: _____

Land Title: _____

Tel: _____

Fax: _____

LANDOWNER 3

Name of Landowner: _____

Address: _____

Land Title: _____

Tel: _____

Fax: _____

LANDOWNER 4

Name of Landowner: _____

Address: _____

Land Title: _____

Tel: _____

Fax: _____

LANDOWNER 2

Signature of Applicant: _____

Print Name: _____ Date: _____

LANDOWNER 3

Signature of Applicant: _____

Print Name: _____ Date: _____

LANDOWNER 4

Signature of Applicant: _____

Print Name: _____ Date: _____



Attachment 2 Tree Farm Development Application Management Plan Checklist

TREE FARM DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION

MANAGEMENT PLAN CHECKLIST

The following is provided as a checklist of information recommended to be included in a tree farm Management Plan. It is based on the guidelines in the *Code of Practice for Timber Plantations in Western Australia* and provides a reference to the relevant sections of the Code of Practice where relevant.

ESTABLISHMENT PLAN Section in Code of Practice

This should outline the following topics and how they will be managed:

- Areas of native vegetation 4.3
- Management and protection, including setback distances, of watercourses, wetlands, reservoirs and significant features 4.3
- Setback distances to structures, dwellings and gazetted infrastructure
(Note: The Guidelines for Plantation Fire Protection recommend a setback distance of 50 metres.)
- Areas to be planted and size of compartments
(The Guidelines for Plantation Fire Protection contain guidelines on compartment size.) 4.5, 4.7.6
- Access and firebreaks

Also refer to the *Guidelines for Plantation Fire Protection*

- Species to be planted 4.6.2
- Direction of planting lines in relation to contours and natural drainage 4.6.3
- Soil preparation methods 4.6.3
- Pest and weed control methods/prescription,
(including control of declared animals and plants) 4.6.5 –
- Planting methods/prescription 4.6.7
- Fertilising methods/prescription 4.6.4
- 4.6.4

MAINTENANCE PLAN

This should outline the activities to be conducted during the tree plantation rotation and how they will be managed

- Pest and weed control methods/prescription, including control of declared animals and plants 4.6.5 –
- 4.6.7
- Grazing strategy 4.7.6
- 4.6.4
- Fertilising methods/prescription 4.6.9
- 4.5, 4.7.6
- Pruning and thinning regimes
-
- Access and firebreak maintenance
-

FIRE MANAGEMENT PLAN

This should contain the following details:

- Contact names and telephone numbers
- Names and addresses of local fire control bodies
- Map or details of access roads, firebreaks, water points etc.
Note: this information may be included on the main Map that forms part of the Tree Farm Development Application



- Location of firefighting equipment, including details of cooperative arrangements
- Specific measures to protect services e.g. power lines and gas supplies, or surrounding values (if relevant)

Refer to Guidelines for Plantation Fire Protection