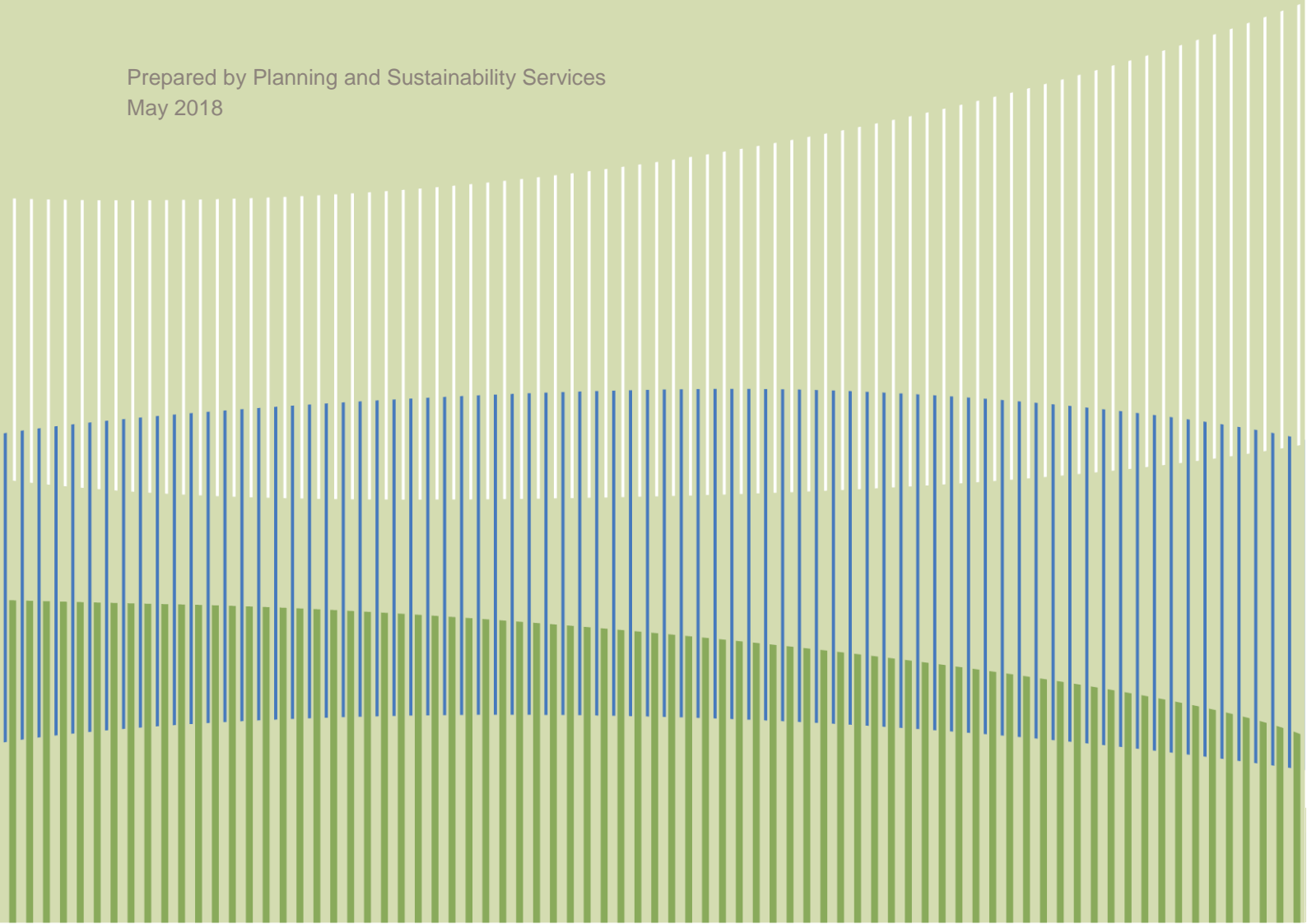


Local Planning Policy

Rural Workers' Dwellings

Prepared by Planning and Sustainability Services
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Background

Rural enterprise is a key economic activity and employer within the Shire. It is sometimes necessary or desirable to the carrying out of a rural enterprise to have employees living onsite. This is normally where the scale and nature of the rural enterprise routinely requires this and where it would be impractical for employees to travel to the property outside normal working hours. Provision for onsite accommodation can also help to attract and retain rural workers in the locality by providing an affordable housing option and reducing the costs associated with travel to work. It can also help landowners maximise the productive capacity of their land.

Additional dwellings in rural areas can however detract from the productive use of rural land by creating land use conflicts, which can undermine the objectives of the rural zone. Additional dwellings can also inflate rural property values making it more difficult for other rural producers to purchase land to start or expand rural activities. They also have the potential to create pressure for subdivision and can adversely impact on the landscape character, amenity and environmental values of the Shire's rural areas.

The policy therefore seeks to facilitate proposals for genuine rural workers dwellings in cases where the need for such dwellings can be established and in a manner that avoids as far as practical land use conflict, minimises the impacts on the environment, character and amenity of the Shire's rural areas and the risk of incremental subdivision of land.

Application/Definition

This policy applies to proposals for Rural Workers Dwellings within the 'Rural' and 'Farmlet' zoned properties within the Shire.

A 'Rural Workers Dwelling' means a dwelling which is located upon land on which there is already erected a single house, where:

1. The dwelling is occupied by persons engaged in intensive agriculture, rural industry, rural pursuit, stables or winery on the same land;
2. Only one such dwelling is located on a lot, and all applications for additional dwellings are dealt with on an individual basis via a report to committee and Council; and
3. All such dwellings are located within close proximity to the existing single house and share all services where practical.

Planning Approval Requirements

All proposals for Rural Workers' Dwellings require the Planning Approval of the Shire prior to the commencement of construction.

Applicants will need to clearly demonstrate that their proposal meets all of the objectives and requirements of this policy. Applications must also meet any other requirement of the Shire's planning framework that may be applicable for a particular site under a Town Planning Scheme or any applicable Outline Development Plan, Structure Plan, Local Planning Policy or Detailed Area Plan.

Objectives

The objectives of this policy are to:

1. Make provision for genuine Rural Workers Dwellings in circumstances where it can be demonstrated that it is necessary or desirable to the carrying out of a rural enterprise to have employees living onsite;
2. Ensure that the development of Rural Workers Dwellings do not encourage the future subdivision of land;
3. Ensure that Rural Workers Dwellings do not prejudice the agricultural use of land or result in land use conflicts; and

4. Ensure that Rural Workers Dwellings are sited, designed and scaled in a manner that respects the rural landscape character of the area and does not have a detrimental impact upon the environmental attributes and amenity of the area.

Requirements

General

A single house must have already been established on the land or be intended to be established on the land at the same time as the Rural Workers Dwelling.

The Rural Workers Dwelling must only be occupied by a person or persons employed or otherwise engaged in activities associated with an intensive agriculture, rural industry, rural pursuit, stables or winery on the land.

Only one Rural Workers Dwelling may be located on a lot, or up to two such dwellings where the lot has an area of at least 75 hectares.

Demonstrated Need

To ensure that an application to construct and use a Rural Workers Dwelling is not simply an application for an impermissible second dwelling by another name, the Shire must be satisfied in each case that the intentions of the landowner are genuine and the need for the dwelling is capable of being maintained for a reasonable period of time.

It must also be demonstrated that it is necessary or desirable for the operation of the rural use that a worker or workers reside on the property for the duration of their employment, in addition to the persons occupying the single house on the lot.

Approval will only be granted on the basis that of conditions requiring that:

- a) The Rural Workers Dwelling is not occupied should the use of the land for the purpose for which it was constructed cease for a period of more than six months; and
- b) A suitable notification being lodged on the title of the property to ensure any prospective landowners are aware of the occupation requirements of the Rural Workers Dwelling.

If the Shire approves a Rural Workers Dwelling, that approval shall not be taken to be support in any way for the future subdivision or strata subdivision of the lot or provision of separate certificates of title in respect of the two dwellings on the lot.

Siting and Design

The Rural Workers Dwelling should be sited to minimise impact on the landscape and environment and wherever possible form part of an existing group of buildings to which it relates. Either isolated or visually prominent locations should be avoided. Special consideration should be given for the relationship between the new dwelling and existing rural buildings, trees and other landscape features.

The Rural Workers Dwelling should share the same road access and power services, unless it can be demonstrated that this is impractical or undesirable in a particular instance.



The Rural Workers Dwellings should also be sited in a manner that minimises the impact on the suitability of the land to be used for rural purposes, is separated from potentially conflicting land uses, such as stables, intensive livestock operations or livestock yards, on either the subject land or adjacent land.

Administration

Directorate		Officer Title	
Planning and Sustainability		Director Planning and Sustainability	
Version	Decision to Advertise	Decision to Adopt/Amend	Current Status
1	OCM10/088 – 27/5/2010	OCM10/213 – 28/10/2010	Adopted

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