

Objective

The City of Mandurah (the 'City') recognises the importance of managing local bushland habitats and ecological corridors for tangible conservation outcomes. Mandurah is home to many different significant conservation species and communities that rely on remnant bushland parcels under the management of the City for their continued existence. Many of these species are embedded in our day-to-day lives and contribute to our connection with environment as well as our sense of place and identity.

This policy seeks to:

- guide the City in delivering conservation and biodiversity benefits that go beyond those achieved through existing planning and development mechanisms,
- ensure City activity is conducted within Commonwealth and State environmental legislation and regulatory requirements,
- protect priority conservation assets from competing land uses and practices.

Statement

The scope of this policy is for Bushland and native vegetation under the management control of the City.

Bushland is defined as:

Land on which there is vegetation which is either a remainder of the natural vegetation of the land or, if altered, is still representative of the structure and floristics of the natural vegetation

Native vegetation is defined as:

Indigenous aquatic or terrestrial vegetation, including revegetated and dead vegetation.

The City will implement and maintain the following measures to achieve the objectives of this policy:

1. Identification, Prioritisation and Protection of Ecological Values in Bushland

The City will actively assess the ecological values of local vegetation and natural areas to inform decision-making processes and ensure that the planning and placement of future infrastructure, including community facilities, recreational spaces, and landscaping align with the preservation of significant environmental values and minimise adverse ecological impacts.

This assessment will be undertaken through the development, review and implementation of key planning instruments, including but not limited to:

- **Biodiversity Plan** (previously referred to as Biodiversity Strategy) – to identify, map, and manage significant flora and fauna habitats and vegetation communities.
- **Bushland Management Plans** – to continually measure bushland condition and identify priority restoration and bushland maintenance actions at the bushland reserve level

Further plans will be developed to protect and enhance habitats for native wildlife, especially threatened or locally significant species and to ensure connectivity between habitat patches and prevent fragmentation through urban development.

Areas identified as having high ecological value will be designated primarily for conservation purposes. All land uses and activities permitted within these areas should be compatible with conservation objectives. Proposed land uses not compatible with protecting ecological values will be

deemed non-conforming and should not be permitted. Existing activities and infrastructure should be adjusted or modified to minimise ongoing ecological impacts through the implementation of Bushland Management Plans.

The City does not support the use of bushland under its management for private purposes. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Clearing to reduce Bushfire Attack Levels (BAL) on adjacent development sites that is beyond works permitted under the provisions of the *Bush Fires Act 1954*
- facilitating access to adjacent properties. Unauthorised private use of, or encroachment onto, bushland reserves will be actively addressed and removed.

To ensure the long-term protection of sites with high ecological value, the City will use statutory planning and land tenure mechanisms, such as seeking management orders for public land designated for conservation and placing a notification on the title of freehold land acquired for conservation purposes.

2. Management of Vegetation on City Property

The City may be required to clear native vegetation on land it manages for purposes such as infrastructure provision or bushfire risk mitigation. These activities may be subject to approval under Commonwealth and State legislation. Approval processes are proponent-led, and failure to obtain the necessary approvals may result in significant penalties and reputational damage.

To guide decision-making on whether an approval is required, all City-led activities involving vegetation clearing must comply with operational procedures in line with relevant Commonwealth and State environmental legislation and regulations.

Environmental offsets may be required as a condition of vegetation clearing approvals. The City will identify potential future projects that may necessitate clearing approvals and associated offsets. Land identified for future offset requirements will be reserved and managed to ensure its suitability for offset provision.

3. Bushland Acquisitions

Land will be acquired by the City for bushland conservation where it supports biodiversity, strengthens ecological connectivity, protects significant habitat, or aligns with strategic environmental planning. The City's Bushland Protection Plan provides the framework for this process, encompassing the following components:

- **Identification of Suitable Acquisitions**
The Plan identifies and conducts preliminary assessments of land parcels considered appropriate for conservation acquisition, based on strategic priorities and ecological significance.
- **Acquisition Criteria**
The Plan contains a defined set of ecological and strategic factors to assess the suitability of land for acquisition.
- **Acquisition Mechanisms**
The Plan identifies the range of procedurally acceptable methods through which land may be acquired, including purchase, donation, land exchange and developer contributions or offsets.
- **Integration into Conservation Estate**
The Plan outlines the process for formal incorporation of acquired land into the City's

conservation estate to ensure ongoing protection and management in accordance with the requirements outlined within this policy.

The Bushland Protection Plan will be periodically reviewed at a maximum of five yearly intervals to ensure it remains aligned with current environmental priorities, strategic planning frameworks and relevant legislative requirements.

To support bushland acquisitions, the City has established a Bushland and Environmental Protection Reserve Fund. The purpose of the fund is to support activities for the protection of bushland and environmentally sensitive sites within the City, including acquiring land parcels with high-ecological value, and capital works that provide benefits in relation to environmental restoration. An annual allocation of \$200,000 will be made to the Bushland and Environmental Protection Reserve, up to a capped balance of \$2 million.

4. Environmental Management Fund

The City will establish and maintain an annual Environmental Management Fund through its annual operating budgeting process to support the ongoing conservation, restoration, and management of land acquired for bushland conservation, as well as other priority bushland areas under its stewardship.

An annual allocation of \$300,000 will be made to the Environmental Management Fund which will be used to support:

- High-impact ecological restoration, with a focus on the City's bushland acquisitions.
- Targeted rehabilitation projects aligned with the strategic objectives of programs and plans identified in this policy.
- Conservation initiatives supporting the long-term protection of significant flora and fauna species.
- Activities that enhance ecological connectivity and maintain critical habitat for native biodiversity.

Legislative Context

Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016 (WA)

Biodiversity Conservation Regulations 2018

Biosecurity and Agriculture Management Act 2007 (WA)

Bush Fires Act 1954

Environmental Offsets Act 2014 (WA)

Environmental Protection Act 1986 (WA)

Environmental Protection & Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999

Local Government Act 1995

Planning and Development Act 2005

Related Documents

- *City of Mandurah Environment Strategy*
- *City of Mandurah Property Strategy*
- *City of Mandurah Environmental Planning Strategy 2023-2033*
- *City of Mandurah Bushfire Risk Management Plan*
- *Biodiversity Strategy*

Bushland Conservation and Management Policy

POL-EVM 07



- *Environmental Planning Framework (Clearing Permits and Environmental Offsets)*
 - *Approved Operating Procedure – Native Vegetation Clearing Referrals*
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Responsible Directorate: Built & Natural Environment

Responsible Department: Natural Environment

Reviewer: Executive Manager Natural Environment

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Amendments			
Version #	Council Approval Date and Reference	Date Document In force	Date Document Ceased
2	Minute G.57/2/12	29/02/2012	24/07/2015
3	Minute G.26/3/15	25/02/2015	23/07/2019
4	Minute G.12/7/19	23/07/2019	22/07/2025
5	Council Meeting 22/7/25 - Minute G.4/07/25	23/07/2025	