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VC166**RESOURCE EXPLORATION AND EXTRACTION - GIPPSLAND COAL RESOURCE****Policy application**

This policy applies to the land identified as protected coal resource areas and coal buffers as shown on the Gippsland Coalfields Policy Area map. The protected coal resource areas are indicated in the planning scheme as either Special Use Zone or State Resource Overlay. The coal buffers are indicated in the planning scheme as an Environmental Significance Overlay.

Objective

To protect the Gippsland brown coal resource and associated buffer areas.

Coal resource strategies

Ensure the extraction and use of coal is the primary planning consideration in protected coal resource areas.

Minimise the social and environmental impact of coal development.

Encourage land uses that do not impede coal development in the protected coal resource areas.

Use the following categorisations to identify the location and staging of when the coal resource may be used:

- Category A coal fields – first stage for coal development.
- Category B coal fields – second stage for coal development.
- Category C coal fields – third stage for coal development.
- Uncategorised coal fields – allocated for development at any time.

Ensure coal excavations, overburden dumps and other associated developments are planned, managed and progressively rehabilitated to facilitate the highest practicable future use.

Provide for use and development in coal resource areas identified on the Gippsland Coalfields Policy Area map that does not compromise the existing and future use of the coal resource.

Manage land in the coal resource areas to mutually protect urban amenity and coal resource development.

Discourage non-coal related land use or development in coal resource areas that would be costly or difficult to remove.

Prevent established towns and urban areas from being subject to coal mining, and direct urban growth away from coal resource areas.

Protect and maintain main transport corridors.

Ensure coal resource development complements and integrates with water supply and river systems and underground waters.

Minimise fire risk to open cuts, coal related industries and storage of coal.

Ensure that timber production maximises effective fire protection for the coal resource.

Encourage grazing, animal production and other rural land uses.

Encourage existing uses on coal resource areas to continue until such time as the land is required for coal winning or processing.

Discourage the encroachment of incompatible use or development on coal resource areas.

Ensure that coal excavations, overburden dumps and other associated developments are planned, managed and progressively rehabilitated to facilitate the highest practicable future use.

Discourage uses that could prejudice the winning or processing of the protected coal resource, including:

- Urban uses.
- Non-coal related industrial uses.
- Major overburden dumps.
- Rural living and rural residential uses.
- Commercial uses.

Coal buffer strategies

Maintain adequate buffer widths, based on:

- Buffer areas that extend for 750(+ or -75) metres from any urban settlement boundary to the perimeter of a 250 metre wide coal operational area.
- The total separation area between an urban settlement boundary and the crest of any future open cut development should not be less than 1 kilometre in width.

Separate existing and future coal related development from urban settlement and main transport corridors within the buffer areas.

Maintain buffers that protect urban areas and main transport corridors from the adverse effects of existing and potential coal-related industry, energy generation and mining.

Maintain buffers that protect coal resource areas and associated development from encroachment by adjacent urban areas.

Provide buffers between existing and proposed urban zones and coal resource areas that reduce the likely effects of earth subsidence, noise emission, dust, fire hazard and visual intrusion.

Protect coal buffers from inappropriate use and development within the buffer.

Encourage high amenity and low intensity uses such as farming and broad scale recreation within buffer areas.

Discourage incompatible use and development within buffer areas, including:

- Residential including rural living.
- Commercial.
- Industrial unless ancillary to coal development and within 250 metres of the coalfield side of the buffer.

Design development in buffer areas to minimise the potential impact from coal mining activity such as earth subsidence, noise, dust, fire hazard and visual intrusion through, for example, landscaping, building design and orientation.

Ensure the management, use or development of land in buffer areas minimises the potential fire risk to open cut mining.

Coal resource policy guidelines

Consider as relevant:

- The broader social and economic context and the physical resources of the region when planning for the management of land overlying the coal resource, to maximise community wellbeing for the region.
- Places of recognised value for nature conservation, recreation, tourism and landscape quality in planning for coal resource development.

VICTORIA PLANNING PROVISIONS

- Temporary use or development in the coal resource areas that will not compromise the development of the coal resource, having regard to the following factors:
 - When the land is expected to be required for development of the coal resource.
 - The nature and scale of the use or development.
 - The relationship between the proposed use or development and development of the coal resource.
 - Whether the proposed use or development can be located elsewhere.
 - Protection of the coal resource area from fire.
 - The financial or social cost of removal of the use or development.

Coal buffer policy guidelines

Consider as relevant:

- Discouraging the subdivision of land to create lots of less than one hectare.
- Discouraging the subdivision of land that would create average lot densities of more than one lot per 10 hectares.
- Discouraging the construction of a house on a lot of less than one hectare created prior to 13 April 1988.
- Ensuring that rural living within the buffer is within 200 metres of the nearest urban side of the buffer area boundary.
- Discouraging the construction of a house more than 200 metres from the nearest urban side of the urban buffer unless:
 - the land is vacant;
 - the land existed as a separate lot prior to 13 April 1988;
 - there are no suitable building sites within 200 metres of the nearest urban side of the urban buffer boundary.

