

Revegetation in the Rural Residential Zone

Local Planning Policy

VERSION 2

June 2016

town planning services

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1.0 CITATION

This is a local planning policy prepared under the *Planning and Development (Local Planning Schemes) Regulations 2015* and the City of Greater Geraldton Local Planning Scheme No. 1 ('the Scheme'). It may be cited as the *Revegetation in the Rural Residential Zone local planning policy*.

The local government may prepare a local planning policy in respect of any matter related to the planning and development of the Scheme area. In making a determination under the Scheme the local government must have regard to each relevant local planning policy to the extent that the policy is consistent with the Scheme.

2.0 BACKGROUND

The Geraldton area is included in one of only 34 global biodiversity hotspots (being both very high biodiversity value, yet also under significant threat) and is one of only 15 national biodiversity hotspots. The Geraldton region supports a very high level of biodiversity but is also under significant threat from clearing, fragmentation and degradation. Less than 18% of pre-European extent of native vegetation remains in the area, and nearly half of that may be lost through planned developments.

In November 2013, the City adopted the Local Biodiversity Strategy (LBS). The LBS was developed on the basis of detailed spatial and technical information contained within the *Geraldton Regional Flora and Vegetation Survey* and the *Geraldton Regional Conservation Report*, together with significant community consultation and agency input. The LBS provides a prioritised list of natural areas for conservation action and highlights the need for innovative planning outcomes, greater private land owner conservation and increased community involvement.

The Scheme has the specific objective for the Rural Residential zone to improve environmental and biodiversity outcomes through the protection and enhancement of remnant vegetation. It also has specific clauses requiring revegetation in the Rural Residential zone.

3.0 OBJECTIVES

- a) To assist in achieving the goals from the Local Biodiversity Strategy.
- b) To clarify the scheme requirements for revegetation in the Rural Residential zone.
- c) To specify the minimum standards for revegetation.

4.0 POLICY MEASURES

4.1 Species / Planting Density

- 4.1.1 The species list attached (refer to Figure 1) details some of the more appropriate species for use in revegetation works in the Geraldton urban area. The *Geraldton Regional Flora and Vegetation Survey* can provide further guidance on the most appropriate species for particular sites.

- 4.1.2 A selection of local provenance trees, shrubs and ground covers appropriate for the site (as guided by Figure 1 and the *Geraldton Regional Flora and Vegetation Survey*), should be planted with a minimum of 10 different species (overall) to be used.
- 4.1.3 The ratio of trees to shrubs should ideally be 1:5 (that is, for every one tree, plant 5 shrubs).
- 4.1.4 Local provenance seedlings should be planted at a density of 1 per m² to out-compete weeds, and allow for a percentage of failures. For example, 400 seedlings are required for an area of 400m². When planting, the species should be mixed for diversification.
- 4.1.5 When planting in creeks or drainage lines, rushes and sedges should be planted within the seasonally inundated zone of the waterway.
- 4.1.6 The remnant vegetation nearby is a good source of local provenance seed. With the appropriate licence, this can be collected and given to a nursery to grow for you, or you can grow seedlings yourself.
- 4.1.7 Be specific with your grower nursery. Don't accept "substitutes", as these are often inappropriate for the area and/or the site you are revegetating. They also may not be approved by the City.
- 4.1.8 Ensure that local provenance seedlings sourced are appropriate for the site conditions (e.g. soil type, landscape considerations). Local provenance seedlings achieve higher survival rates and contribute to local biodiversity outcomes.
- 4.1.9 A watering program of the seedlings should occur during the first summer of the revegetation project to help maximise survival rates.
- 4.2 Cash-in-Lieu
- 4.2.1 In these instances the City may accept a cash contribution in lieu of revegetation. The *Local Government Biodiversity Guidelines for the Perth Metropolitan Region* (June 2004) provided estimates of the costs associated with undertaking certain management activities. To reconstruct, 'upland' areas (including weed control, seedling establishment, plant guards, watering in and replacement plantings over a 5 year period) is estimated to cost \$10.50/m². This is the figure used for calculating the cash-in-lieu contribution and may be revised from time to time by the City.
- 4.2.2 Monies collected will be held in trust for use in achieving biodiversity outcomes within the locality with a focus on establishing and maintaining the 'Ecological Linkages' as per Figure 7 *Remnant vegetation categorised by conservation significance and ecological linkages* in the Local Biodiversity Strategy (refer to Figure 2).

4.3 Bonding of Works

4.3.1 The City may accept the bonding of revegetation works (in full or in part) and the amount shall be equivalent to the cash-in-lieu figure as per clause 4.2.2.

4.3.2 In order to release bonded monies, the City must be satisfied that the revegetation works have been established and maintained on-site. Generally this can only be fully evidenced 3 years after the initial revegetation works have been planted.

4.3.3 Figure 3 is an example only of how works can be bonded with a progressive release of bonding monies over a 3 year period. This template should be adjusted according to site specific conditions and works and be approved by both the proponent and the City when lodging bond monies.

4.4 Pre-subdivision Works

4.4.1 In some instances landowners may wish to undertake revegetation works well in advance of any subdivision / development. In these instances it is appropriate that the works are 'credited' to the land.

4.4.2 Should landowners wish to pursue this option they should contact the City and prepare a local development plan to ensure the City has a record of the works so that they can be 'credited' to the land in the future.

4.5 Alternatives to Revegetation

In some areas better biodiversity outcomes may be achieved through alternatives to revegetation such as weed or pest management. This should be discussed and approved by the City prior to any works being undertaken.

4.6 Subdivision Clearance

In order to obtain subdivision clearance for a relevant condition, there are 3 options:

- a) Undertake works in accordance with clause 4.1;
- b) Pay cash-in-lieu in accordance with clause 4.2; or
- c) Lodge a bond in accordance with clause 4.3.

4.7 Deepdale Structure Plan

For land contained in the *Deepdale Structure Plan* area there is NO requirement for revegetation at either the subdivision or development stage. This is in recognition of the land given up for, and the works undertaken on, the Chapman River foreshore reserve.

4.8 Waggrakine Rural Residential Structure Plan

Revegetation requirements are specified in the *Waggrakine Rural-Residential Structure Plan*.

4.9 Other Rural Residential Areas

- 4.9.1 In other Rural Residential areas, at the subdivision stage, the local government will request that a minimum of 3% of the lot area be revegetated with a combination of trees, shrubs and ground covers consistent with the indigenous plant communities of the *Geraldton Regional Flora and Vegetation Survey* (this is in addition to existing vegetation).
- 4.9.2 The preference is for cash-in-lieu in these areas rather than on-ground works.
- 4.9.3 Where there is existing remnant vegetation on-site, the 3% figure may be reduced to either 1% or 2% where a vegetation survey is provided that can classify the vegetation condition as either 'good', 'very good' or 'excellent' (reduced to 1%) or 'degraded' or 'completely degraded' (reduced to 2%) in accordance with the methodology used for the *Geraldton Regional Flora and Vegetation Survey*.

5.0 DEFINITIONS

Biodiversity means the variety of life forms, the different plants, animals and micro-organisms, the genes they contain, and the ecosystems of which they form part. Biodiversity is usually considered at three levels: genetic diversity; species diversity; and ecosystem diversity.

Figure 1 – Species list.

Trees and Tall Shrubs (over 2m tall at maturity)

Species	Common name	Type
<i>Banksia prinotes</i>	Acorn Banksia	Tree
<i>Acacia rostellifera</i>	Summer-scented Wattle	Tall shrub
<i>Acacia saligna</i>	Orange Wattle	Tall shrub
<i>Acacia scirpifolia</i>		Tall shrub
<i>Banksia attenuata</i>	Slender Banksia	Tall shrub
<i>Banksia sessilis</i> var. <i>falbellifolia</i>	Parrot bush	Tall shrub
<i>Grevillea candelabroides</i>		Tall shrub
<i>Grevillea argyrophylla</i>	Silvery-leaved Grevillea	Tall shrub
<i>Melaleuca depressa</i>		Tall shrub
<i>Melaleuca megacephala</i>	Snotty gobbles	Tall shrub

Understorey – Shrubs/ Climbers/ Herbs

Species	Common name	Type
<i>Acacia spathulifolia</i>	Shrubby Riceflower	Mid shrub
<i>Acanthocarpus preissii</i>	Prickle Lily	Herbs
<i>Allocasuarina campestris</i>	Pebble Bush	Mid shrub
<i>Austrostipa elegantissima</i>	Elegant Spear-grass	Grasses
<i>Clematicissus angustissima</i>		Climber
<i>Comesperma scoparium</i>	Broom Milkwort	Low shrub
<i>Dianella revoluta</i>	Blueberry Lily	Herbs
<i>Dioscorea hastifolia</i>	Native yam	Climber
<i>Grevillea biternata</i>		Mid shrub
<i>Guichenotia ledifolia</i>		Mid shrub
<i>Hibbertia crassifolia</i>		Low shrubs
<i>Hibbertia hypericoides</i>	Yellow Buttercups	Low shrubs
<i>Melaleuca depressa</i>		Mid shrub
<i>Persoonia hexagona</i>	Snottygobble	Mid shrub
<i>Pimelea microcephala</i> subsp. <i>microcephala</i>	Shrubby Riceflower	Mid shrub
<i>Stylobasium spathulatum</i>	Pebble Bush	Mid shrub

Figure 2 – Remnant vegetation categorised by conservation significance and ecological linkages. (Source: Local Biodiversity Strategy, Figure 7).

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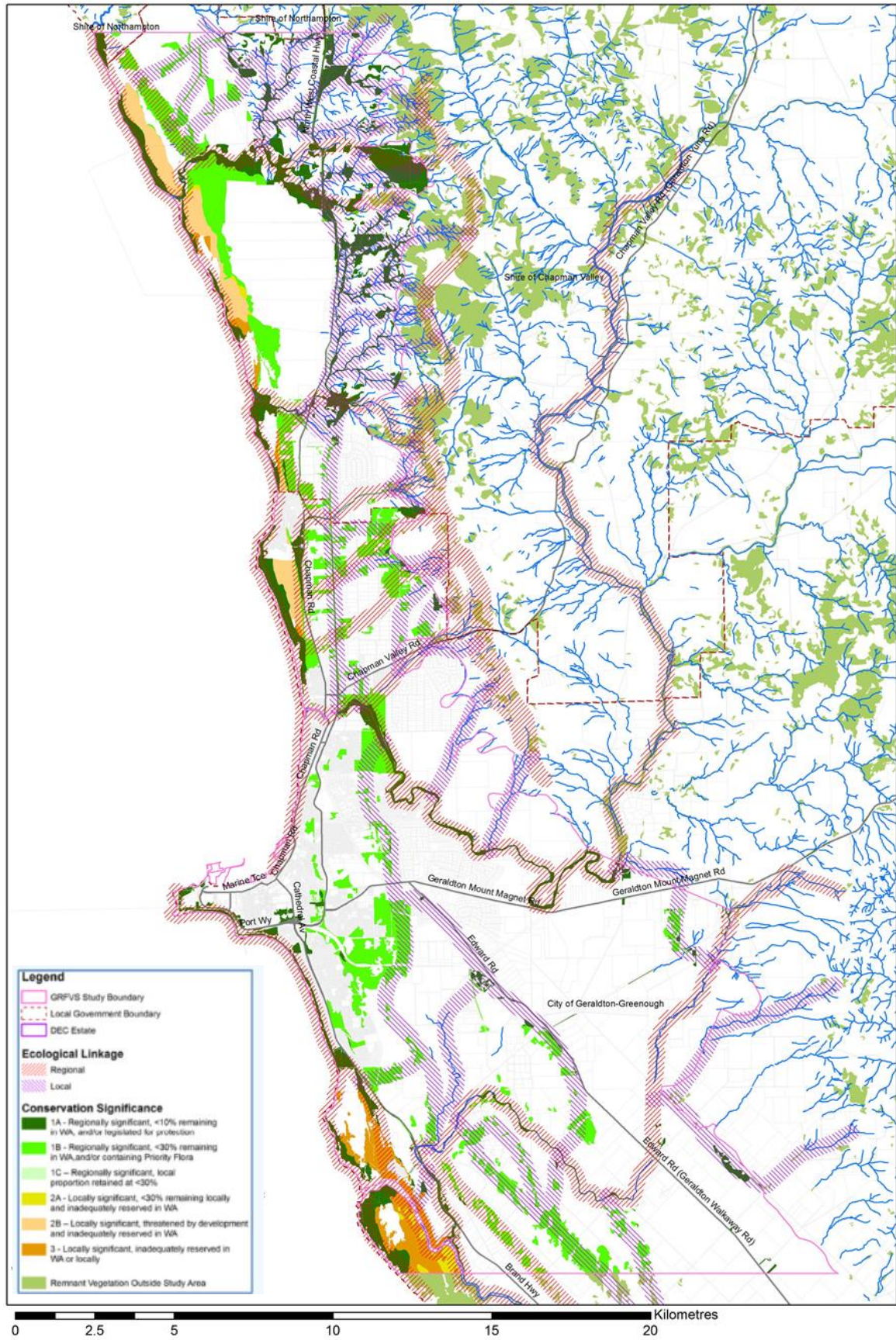


Figure 3 – Example of bonded works.

Activity Type	Specific Works	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Fencing	Stock proof fencing around existing vegetation and revegetation areas.	◆		
Rabbit control	Pindone applied 3 times a week for 'x' weeks. Rodenator contractor engaged.	◆	◆	◆
Revegetation	Revegetation of 'x' area. Site chosen to provide best linkages to remnant vegetation. Site deep ripped prior to planting. Plantings guarded and watered. Infill planting in Years 2 and 3.	◆	◆	◆
Weed control	'x' plants of African Boxthorn removed via cut/paint method. Follow up spraying in Years 2 and 3.	◆	◆	◆
Other restoration works	Native seed collected and directed seeded over 'x' area. Brushing technique applied to 'x' area.		◆	
Building envelope / exclusion area	Building envelope (or exclusion area) chosen for 'best fit' to reduce impact on vegetation.	◆		
% of bond released per year upon approval of works.		X %	Y %	100 %
\$ amount of bond released.		\$ X	\$ Y	\$ Total

PLEASE NOTE: This is an example only and proponents are encouraged to discuss the site specific requirements of each lot prior to undertaking any works.