

IMAP Action 9.3

Water Sensitive Urban Design

Background and Context

1. What is the objective of IMAP Action 9.3 Water Sensitive Urban Design?

IMAP Item 9.3 seeks the widespread implementation of 'water sensitive urban design' (WSUD) practices in the region as a means of improving catchment water quality and aquatic habitats.

The project scope, as approved by the IMAP Implementation Committee is to:

Develop a regional approach and strategy to achieve water sensitive urban design including:

- advocating for, and designing, a common Local Planning Scheme Policy outlining requirements for developments to treat stormwater quality and flow, reduce wastewater and conserve potable water;
- sharing WSUD tools that help protect catchment hydrology and water quality, particularly aquatic habitats by reducing the impact of urban development;
- advocating relevant stakeholders for WSUD information, education and professional development opportunities.

The development of a Local Planning Policy is a key part of the scope of the project.

2. Why is the group seeking Local Planning Policy amendments for all IMAP Councils?

The Victorian Planning Provisions require incorporation of WSUD when a subdivision permit is issued (clause 56), however there is a gap in the planning system for supporting the application of WSUD in existing and small-scale developments not requiring subdivision.

Ideally this gap would be addressed in the State section of the planning scheme. However, the Department of Planning and Community Development (DPCD) consider that WSUD in built up inner areas should be addressed in the upcoming review of the five-star energy provisions in the Building Code of Australia (BCA) which are due to be expanded to cover water in approximately December 2010.

IMAP considers that the uncertainty and delay in relying on BCA provisions is not reflective of the rapid industry and local government progress in achieving WSUD outcomes on the ground and has proposed a Ministerial 20(4) amendment to require WSUD to be addressed on development sites. This 20(4) amendment would have a sunset clause stating that the provision is to be revoked at such time the BCA addresses WSUD.

The Ministerial Amendment has been drafted and was considered by the IMAP Implementation Committee in August 2008. It was resolved to undertake a brief assessment of the policy, as a first step in jointly requesting a Ministerial planning scheme amendment.

The key reference document of the planning policy is the *Water Sensitive Urban Design Guidelines, Melbourne Water, 2008*.

3. What do the proposed Water Sensitive Urban Design Guidelines 2008 cover?

The proposed Local Planning Policy refers to the IMAP-wide *Water Sensitive Urban Design Guidelines 2008* which have been developed in concert with IMAP councils and Melbourne Water.

The IMAP-wide *WSUD Guidelines 2008* are an update and expansion of the existing City of Melbourne and City of Yarra *WSUD Guidelines*.

All IMAP Council's have been working together to develop these Guidelines which will be updated to include advancements in technology, design and case studies. They will also

incorporate new management tools including decision-making guidelines, stormwater targets, risk management and carbon-sensitive calculators. The *WSUD Guidelines* will be web-based.

4. What is the involvement of relevant State agencies in developing the WSUD Guidelines?

Melbourne Water has been an active partner in the IMAP WSUD working group.

Melbourne Water are leaders in the WSUD field, and have agreed to fund the development of the *WSUD Guidelines* for the IMAP region. It was quickly determined that the *WSUD Guidelines* are a useful tool for greater Melbourne, and as such they are being designed to accommodate this role. This will be useful in helping to achieve consistency in the communication and implementation of WSUD.

The IMAP WSUD working group has also involved the active involvement of City of Maribyrnong and City of Bayside, which reflects the broader value of the proposed *WSUD Guidelines*.

5. What is the process for requesting the Ministerial Amendment?

The following process of implementation is recommended:

1. Trial the proposed policy through City of Port Phillip statutory planners – late February 2009 (Completed).
2. Undertake a single workshop with statutory planners, and other interested council staff, from the four IMAP councils to test the requirements and process of the policy and consider their feedback - early March 2009 (Completed)
3. Complete an assessment of the trial to consider any required amendments (Completed).
4. Provide 'briefing to IMAP Implementation Committee about the trial and assessment of the draft local planning policy (May 2009).
5. Provide an IMAP deputisation to Sue Wilkinson, Director State Planning Services DPCD to discuss the proposed amendment and request her support.
6. IMAP Implementation Committee to submit the amendment to the Minister for his action.