

Development Planning Guideline

8. Environmental Management of Flora, Fauna and Marine

1. Guideline Objectives

The objective of this Environmental Management of Flora, Fauna and Marine Guideline is to:

- (a) Ensure that any development that occurs on or within the Wadjemup / Rottnest Island Reserve protects and enhances existing native ecosystems and encourages rich and native biodiversity
- (b) Minimise the impact of development on Rottnest Island's natural environment
- (c) Ensure that proposed developments are undertaken in accordance with the approved Environmental Management Plan
- (d) Provide a set of environmental performance criteria for all proposed developments to be assessed against.

2. Scope

This Guideline and any associated procedures and forms applies to an application for development approval.

3. Environmental Impact Assessment

An Environmental Impact Assessment is to be conducted for all substantial development applications to ascertain the impact of the proposed development on the island's natural environment.

The Environmental Impact Assessment must identify all potential environmental issues.

The Environmental Impact Assessment should be undertaken by a suitably qualified environmental professional on behalf of the developer, at the developer's expense, and submitted with the development application.

Rottnest Island Authority's (RIA) Environmental Management branch is to be consulted as part of any Environmental Impact Assessment process.

4. Environmental Management Plan

RIA will require an Environmental Management Plan to be drafted and presented where, in the opinion of the RIA, the proposed development will have a significant impact on the island's natural environment.

The Environmental Management Plan must address all issues identified in the Environmental Impact Assessment.

RIA may require an Environmental Management Plan to be submitted as part of a Development Application or as a condition of development approval.

The Environmental Management Plan is to contain the following information:

- (a) How the landscape and amenity of the area will be protected
- (b) How the land will be maintained and managed to achieve sustainable environmental outcomes over the long term
- (c) How nutrient inputs to the land and exports from the land from the development will be controlled and reduced if applicable
- (d) How the provision of habitat for flora and fauna on and around the development site will be enhanced if applicable
- (e) How wetlands and remnant vegetation will be protected and rehabilitated if applicable
- (f) A waste strategy drawing on the applicable references in the proposed or approved waste management plan

5. Environmental Offsets

Environmental offsets aim to ensure that significant and unavoidable adverse environmental impacts are counterbalanced by a positive environmental gain, with an aspirational goal of achieving a net environmental benefit.

In view of RIA's commitment to sustainability, it has the potential to be a useful management tool – enabling development to occur, but not at the expense of the environment.

It is important to recognise that environmental offsets represent a last line of defence for the environment, being used only when all other options to avoid and mitigate environmental impacts have been considered and exhausted.

Any environmental offsets proposed by a developer to facilitate a development are to be in accordance with the Environment Protection Authority's relevant guidance statement relating to environmental offsets.

6. Referral of Proposals to the Environmental Protection Authority

RIA is recognised as a decision making authority under the *Environmental Protection Act 1986*.

Under Section 38 of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986*, the RIA is required to refer proposals to the Environmental Protection Authority where the matter is considered to be a 'significant proposal', that is if the proposal were implemented it would have a significant effect on the environment.

7. Decision making criteria

In assessing a development application for a development within or adjacent to any natural area (terrestrial or marine) RIA will consider as appropriate:

- (a) The potential impacts on any significant vegetation with conservation value during the anticipated phases of development including construction and subsequent on-going use
- (b) The reason for removing any vegetation and the practicality of any alternative options which do not require removal of native vegetation or other habitat components or would reduce the loss of natural area/habitat. Where alternatives exist which do not require the loss of native vegetation or other habitat values, these alternatives will be favoured

- (c) The results of any flora and fauna survey and assessment of the biological values of the land and consideration of whether the survey and assessment have been adequately completed under appropriate seasonal conditions and by suitably qualified personnel
- (d) Whether the flora and fauna of the area are to be adequately protected and their sustainability and long-term conservation ensured
- (e) Whether appropriate management practices are proposed, including the control of environmental weeds, pollutants and access
- (f) The contribution of the proposal towards the ecological restoration of any remnant vegetation and habitat, or the potential of the proposal to reduce the capability for ecological restoration of the site.

8. Flora

Indigenous vegetation on Rottnest Island is of great significance due to its intrinsic habitat and visual landscape values and is to be retained and enhanced as part of a development.

Indigenous vegetation is not to be removed from the island to facilitate development unless it can be clearly demonstrated to the satisfaction of RIA that such removal will not adversely impact on the environmental integrity of the island. If any vegetation removal is approved by RIA, it may require offset planting to be undertaken by the developer.

The planting of environmental weeds will not be approved.

Applicants for buildings and works are encouraged to develop proposals which result in a net increase of indigenous vegetation.

The use of pesticides, herbicides, and artificial fertilisers is to be minimised. This can be achieved through choice of landscaping and physical termite barriers for example. Developers are to consult with RIA's Environment Management section with regards to this.

Developers are to include bushfire mitigation and management planning and take appropriate management actions, as determined by RIA.

All landscaping is to comply with the requirements of the Development Planning Guideline Number 3, Sustainable Development Guideline 3.3, Landscaping.

Protection of flora during construction including significant trees is to be undertaken in accordance with RIA's Construction Management Guideline Development Planning Guideline 10 and in consultation with RIA's Environment Management section.

9. Fauna

Development is to have no impact on land and marine habitats for native species, with a particular focus on threatened or endangered species.

RIA may require the Developer to prepare for approval a pest management strategy. All measures contained within the approved pest management strategy are to be implemented by the Developer.

Development on the island is to limit fencing and other structures that restrict safe fauna movement.

The approved development will satisfy an approach to minimised light and noise pollution and any noise and light will be directed away from fauna habitat areas.

Ecological corridors linking vegetated and open space areas are to be retained and enhanced where possible to the satisfaction of RIA.

Where applicable, a thorough ecological fauna survey in accordance with Environment Protection Authority standards is to be conducted prior to development to ascertain biodiversity and populations of vulnerable or threatened species. Development will be designed to facilitate the preservation of such species where identified.

Protection of fauna during construction is to be undertaken in accordance with the RIA's Construction Management Guideline and in consultation with RIA's Environment Management section.

10. Marine Environment

Developments proposed for the marine reserve are to be low impact, minimising environmental damage during construction and ensuring the design will not create environmental damage when subsequently used for ongoing operations.

Design is to demonstrate minimal shading of seagrass meadows and sediment suspension.

11. Roles and Responsibilities

All RIA Officers, including Board members, are responsible for ensuring regard is had to this guideline in the planning, design, location, assessment, and determination of a development proposal upon the island where development approval is required.

The following RIA roles have specific responsibilities for ensuring conformance with this guideline:

- **Director Contracts and Planning**

Ensuring that this Guideline applies to the planning, design, location, assessment or determination of a development proposal upon the island where the proposal requires development approval.

Development Planning Team

Assessment of an Application for Development Approval against provisions 3 to 10 of this Guideline.

12. Statutory Compliance and Relevant Documentation

This Guideline reflects the following requirements:

- Section 13 (1) of the *Rottnest Island Authority Act 1987*
- *Environmental Protection Act 1986*

The powers and functions afforded by the relevant legislation applicable to this Guideline are detailed in RIA's Schedule of Delegations and Authorisations, under section 70, or regulation 55 of the *Rottnest Island Regulations 1988*.

13. Effective Date

This Guideline is effective from 1 July 2024.

14. Review Period

This Guideline is to be reviewed every three years.

15. Custodian

The Director of Contracts and Planning is responsible for the development and maintenance of this Guideline.

16. Authorisation

This Guideline details Rottnest Island Authority's requirements to be addressed in an Application for Development Approval for development deemed likely to adversely or detrimentally impact the island's natural environment.

17. Guideline Revision

Rev	Revision Description	Revision by	Date	Page
1	Reformatting this Guideline	Development Planning	20 December 2021	All
2	Reformatting this Guideline	Corporate Communications	July 2024	All