

1. What is the Conservation Zone Initiative?

Conservation zoning allows landowners with areas of high conservation value to receive reductions in Council rates. The initiative has been established by Council to reward landowners who have retained and maintained bushland and wetland. Council recognises that nature conservation on private land is essential to maintaining the quality of life all residents of the Shire and Serpentine River catchment.

To be eligible, landowners must demonstrate to Council that their bush land and/or wetland area is of high conservation value by meeting the criteria outlined below. All or portions of properties can be zoned conservation.

2. What are the benefits of being in the Conservation Zone?

Areas zoned Conservation in the Town Planning Scheme are rated at half the rate of Rural Zoned land (i.e. 50% rate reduction) where the original zoning of the land is Rural. Where original zoning is not Rural, rate relief will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

Landowners with areas of high conservation value can seek advice on environmental planning and management from the Shire Environmental Officer and the Serpentine-Jarrahdale Community Landcare Centre.

3. How do I rezone my property to Conservation Zone?

Areas eligible to enter into the Conservation Zone can be nominated by the landowner or by Council. Landowners must state in writing that they agree to rezone their land and Council must establish that the land meets the criteria for conservation zoning before the formal process of rezoning can proceed.

The formal rezoning process involves changing the zone name and provisions for that land within the Town Planning Scheme from the previous zone type to the new zoning of Conservation. (e.g. Rural to Conservation). Council may consider covering the cost of rezoning fees and associated advertising and will provide other assistance where possible.

The rezoning process requires the preparation of a Town Planning Scheme amendment report and an environmental management plan which documents both what is on the land and what management practices are to be used by the owner to protect these environmental values. A template for environmental management plans can be obtained from the Shire Environmental Officer. Council staff will provide advice in relation to the preparation of an environmental management plan.

The Town Planning Scheme amendment report and environmental management plan are considered by the Shire and the Western Australian Planning Commission before being approved by both the Shire and the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure.

Once the land is rezoned, Shire staff and the Community Landcare Centre may provide advice on the implementation of the environmental management plan.

When the land is sold, new owners may be able to make variations to the environmental management plan. However, because the conservation zoning remains, changes will only be permitted if they ensure the site's continued protection.

4. Criteria for Selection of High Conservation Areas

These criteria have been developed to guide the selection of bushland and wetland areas which are eligible for Conservation Zoning.

Contact Us

Enquiries

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In Person

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Open Monday to Friday 8.30am-5pm (closed public holidays)



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Condition – the area and its vegetation are in a relatively undisturbed condition, Considerations include: weed impact, fire history and past land uses.

Representation – the level of protection provided to the natural communities present in the subject land within reserves and covenanted private lands elsewhere.

Adequacy – the likelihood that natural communities and processes will be able to sustain themselves. Considerations include the size of the conservation area (usually needs to be greater than 10 hectare), its area to perimeter ratio and intensity of management that is being committed.

Landowner commitment and ability – the landowner must demonstrate intent, commitment and ability to conserve the environmental values on the subject land.

Special consideration may be given to areas which contain:

- * 'threatened ecological communities';
- * rare or restricted plant species or ecological communities;
- * breeding habitat for Declared Rare or Priority Listed Fauna; and
- * important wildlife corridors between other areas of conservation value.

5. Town Planning Scheme text related to Conservation Zone

The provisions within the Town Planning Scheme relating to the Conservation Zone are attached below:

- Shire of Serpentine-Jarrahdale Town Planning Scheme No. 2

5.14 Conservation Zone

5.14.1 The purpose and intent of the Conservation Zone is described within the Council's Rural Strategy as amended and adopted by Council and the State Planning commission dated April 1994.

5.14.2 A Conservation zone is intended to identify land that has a high conservation significance which includes private land with large stands of relatively intact remnant vegetation, all recognised wetlands of significance and some areas covered by the Department of Environmental Protection System 6 recommendations.

5.14.3 The private lands identified for conservation in the rural strategy are not intended for acquisition by the Council or State Government Agencies. Rather the general aim is to encourage and make it easier for landowners to protect and manage the conservation values present.

5.14.4 Before including land within the Conservation Zone Council will require the owners of the land to prepare a submission in support of its inclusion and any submission shall include those matters set down in sub-clause 5.9.3 of this Scheme.

5.14.5 A description of the land included in the Conservation Zone together with the uses permitted and any special provisions relating to the land are set out in Appendix 4D. Such uses will generally be in accordance with the Rural Zone uses but will depend upon site survey and reference to land capability and other planning data.

Land uses selected will be on the basis that they will not conflict with, or they will contribute to the significance of conservation values present.

5.14.6 In addition to the provisions contained in Appendix 4D and other such provisions of the Scheme as may affect it any land which is included in the Conservation Zone shall be subject to the following conditions:

- (a) The relevant guidelines contained within the Council Planning Guidelines for Nutrient Management dated May 1994 (as amended) shall apply to the use and development of land.



- (b) A management plan for each Conservation Zone shall be drafted to Council's satisfaction by the landowner with input from other relevant organisations and the landowner's consultant where necessary.
- (c) The management plan shall establish the limits for land use and criteria that any development will have to satisfy. The plan will form the basis for site management and future management decisions.
- (d) The management plan shall, as appropriate, identify setbacks, buffer zones, and the required conservation management practices and other measures as deemed necessary to achieve a satisfactory standard of protection relative to the significance of conservation values present.

5.14.7 The implementation of a management plan by the landowner is a means of longer-term protection for the site and will be accompanied by a reduced Council rating on the land.

The incentives for these conservation measures will be a reduction in the general rural rate which shall be set at 50% unless otherwise amended by Council.

6. Further information

For further information about the Conservation Zoning initiative contact the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale, Environmental Officer on 9526 1111, write to 6 Paterson Street Mundijong WA 6123 or forward an Email to info@sjshire.wa.gov.au.

The information contained here is a guide only. It is recommended that the advice and assistance of the Planning Services Team be sought in conjunction with any enquiries concerning the use of land within the Shire. Before undertaking any development, please discuss your intentions with Council. If you need to make an application your time and money can be saved if you are thoroughly prepared.