

9. ECO-INFO – DAMS FACT SHEET

Edited 19/12/01

WHEN IS CONSENT REQUIRED?

Council consent is required for construction of all dams unless exempt under the provisions of Development Control Plan No 72, Farm Dams and Rural Earthworks.

This means that a development application must be submitted to Council before earthworks commence.

In addition, a licence and/or permit from the Department of Land and Water Conservation may be required for dams:

- sited on 'rivers'; and/or
- used for irrigation (no minimum capacity); and/or
- used for stock and domestic purposes - 7 megaL;
- larger than 5,000 cubic metres; and/or
- a wall height more than 4 metres.

WHAT SHOULD I LOOK FOR WHEN CHOOSING A DAM SITE?

When choosing a dam site, you should consider the following:

- A gully or depression generally provides excellent storage to excavation ratio.
- Steep sites (steeper than 15 per cent slope) do not usually provide enough suitable soil material to build a satisfactory wall.
- Rock, sand, gravel and soils prone to tunnelling failure are generally unsuitable, unless specialised construction techniques are used.
- The site of the catchment must be considered when planning dam capacity and spillway size. In large catchments, it may be difficult to locate and maintain an effective spillway.
- Dam spillways must be located and designed to handle major storm flows safely and ensure surplus water flows return to normal flowlines without causing erosion.
- Clearance from property boundaries to ensure maintenance and minimise impacts.

WHAT INFORMATION DO I NEED WITH MY APPLICATION?

Council's standard development application form must be completed, together with four (4) copies of the following information:

- Statement of Environmental Effects describing the dam, its purpose, and its potential impact upon the environment.
- Confirmation of the catchment size, volume, flow system and subsoil type, source, storage.
- Scaled plan by a development consultant detailing the dam dimensions, batters and cross sections and location in relation to adjoining properties.
- Geotechnical Report by a chartered Engineer to confirm method of construction, compaction and stability may be required.
- Landscape plan by a Landscape Architect including tree protection and tree replenishment schemes may be required.
- Sediment and erosion control plan for the clearing, construction and maintenance periods.

IS THERE A PREFERRED CONSTRUCTION METHOD?

Yes, to prevent damage to your property during the building of your dam, Council recommends the following:

- Clear topsoil and stockpile below the wall.
- Carefully remove pervious material from under a dam wall.
- Build the wall layer by layer. Spread clay evenly in layers no greater than 10cm to obtain compaction. Do not dump or spill material over the dam wall.
- No logs, large rocks or trees to be left in the constructed wall.
- Natural vegetation below the spillway and on the inflow areas must not be disturbed by machinery or livestock.
- All excavation, as far as possible, to be within areas covered by stored water.

- At least one metre of freeboard is required. Freeboard is the height from top water level to the top of the wall.
- Stockpiled topsoil to be spread onto the dam wall and seeded immediately to promote revegetation.

It should be noted, if you wish to build a large dam, Council recommends obtaining suitable advice from the Department of Land and Water Conservation.

IS THERE A NEED TO DISCUSS THE APPLICATION WITH A COUNCIL OFFICER?

Yes. Prior to formally submitting your development application and accompanying information to Council, it is necessary to make an appointment for a formal pre-lodgement meeting with a Development Officer.

To make an appointment, please contact the Duty Town Planner at the Customer Service Centre.

This pre-lodgement meeting will allow your application to be checked prior to lodgement and thereby ensure all relevant information is being provided to enable Council to determine the development application.

FEES

Submission of the development application must be accompanied by the appropriate development application fee. A schedule of fees can be obtained from Council's Customer Service Centre.

DISCLAIMER

This fact sheet provides a summary of some of the issues concerning dams and is a condensed version of Development Control Plan No, Farm Dams and Rural Earthworks.

FURTHER ENQUIRIES?

If you are unsure, please ask - time spent early may avoid delays later.

Should you have any further enquiries, please contact the Customer Service Centre.