

Decision Process for Stormwater Management in WA (DoE and SRT, 2005)

1. Stormwater management systems shall be designed in accordance with the objectives, principles and delivery approach outlined in the *Stormwater Management Manual for Western Australia* (DoE, 2004). This includes: minimising risk to public health and amenity; protecting the built environment from flooding and waterlogging; implementing systems that are economically viable in the long term; and ensuring that social, aesthetic and cultural values are maintained.
2. Prior to design, developers shall consult with the Department of Environment (DoE), local government authorities and other relevant stakeholders. Maintenance requirements should be considered at this stage.
3. Adequate field investigations shall be undertaken to determine the appropriate hydrologic regime for the site and potential site constraints, such as contaminated sites, acid sulfate soils or highly elevated nutrient levels in groundwater. Baseline and/or ongoing monitoring of groundwater and surface water quality and quantity may be required.
4. Stormwater management systems may be subject to additional design and performance criteria if they have the potential to impact on sensitive receiving environments. Sensitive receiving environments include (but are not limited to) conservation areas or reserves, wetlands and waterways with conservation values, Waterways Management Areas, the Swan River Trust Management Area, Environmental Protection Policy areas, and some areas of native vegetation. Sensitive native vegetation includes (but is not limited to) Declared Rare Flora, Priority Species, Threatened Ecological Communities, Threatened Fauna Habitat and vegetation identified in *Bush Forever* (WAPC, 2000), including vegetation located east of the Southern River Vegetation Complex on the Swan Coastal Plain.

Water quantity management

1. Is the proposal completely or partly within a known contaminated site (i.e. a contaminated site listed on the contaminated sites register, or identified through adequate field investigations) or high acid sulfate soil risk area?
2. Does the soil or groundwater contain *highly elevated* nutrient levels? A definition for highly elevated nutrient levels has not been provided, as nutrient breakthrough is highly variable and is dependent on the soil type (e.g. organic, clay and iron oxyhydroxide content) and local wetting and drying cycles.

Avoid mobilisation or disturbance of the in-situ contaminants

If yes to question 1 - seek further advice from the DoE.

If yes to question 2 - consult with the DoE about best management practices to minimise nutrient leaching through the soil profile (i.e. structural and non-structural controls suitable to the site conditions).

Yes (to either question)

No (most situations)

1. Maintain the pre-development hydrologic regime and meet the ecological water requirements of the receiving environment.
2. Hydraulic requirements shall be determined by ecosystem requirements and the hydrologic form of the local and downstream environment. Physical survey measurements and a biological survey should be undertaken.
3. Hydrologic and hydraulic analyses, modelling and design shall incorporate the recommendations and methodology of *Australian Rainfall and Runoff, A Guide to Flood Estimation* (IEA, 2001).
4. The effective imperviousness of a development shall be minimised. The process for achieving this is outlined below:

Less than and up to 1 year ARI events

Generally, rainfall from 1 year average recurrence interval (ARI) events should be retained or detained on-site (i.e. as high in the catchment and as close to the source as possible), unless it can be clearly demonstrated that achievement of this objective is impractical due to site conditions.

Generally, for detention systems, preserve the pre-development 1 year ARI peak discharge rate. Use best management practices (structural and non-structural) to treat water quality.

Greater than 1 year and up to 100 year ARI events

Mitigate runoff from constructed impervious areas for greater than 1 year ARI events, in landscaped retention or detention areas in public open space or linear multiple use corridors. Any overflow of runoff towards waterways and wetlands shall be by overland flow paths across vegetated surfaces.

Design for greater than 1 year and less than 10 year ARI events

Minor system conveyance (i.e. swales and pipes).

Design for 10 year to 100 year ARI events

Major system conveyance (i.e. via overland flow).

Water quality management

1. On-site field investigations are required to determine the appropriate water quality management measures for the site, including consideration of potential pathways of nutrients towards receiving water bodies. Receiving water bodies are defined as waterways, wetlands, coastal marine areas and groundwater aquifers.
2. The components of the water quality treatment train must be designed so that their combined effect meets the water quality management objectives as specified in the relevant regional water quality management targets (e.g. local government stormwater management plans, the Regional Natural Resource Management Strategy, *Swan-Canning Cleanup Program Action Plan* (SRT, 1999) and the *Environmental Protection (Peel Inlet-Harvey Estuary) Policy 1992* (EPA, 1992)). The requirements for demonstration of compliance shall depend upon the scale of the proposed land development. Demonstration of compliance may be achieved by the use of appropriate assessment methods, to the satisfaction of DoE.

Protect waterways and wetlands

1. Retain and restore waterways and wetlands. For waterways, the approach should be consistent with the *River Restoration Manual* (WRC, 1999-2003), *Draft Waterways WA - A Policy for Statewide Management of Waterways in Western Australia* (WRC, 2000), *Foreshore Policy 1 - Identifying the Foreshore Area* (WRC, 2002) and, in the Swan and Canning Catchments, the *Environmental Protection (Swan and Canning Rivers) Policy 1998* (EPA, 1998). For wetlands, the approach should be consistent with the *Environmental Protection of Wetlands Position Statement No. 4* (EPA, 2004) and the *Wetlands Conservation Policy for WA* (Government of WA, 1997). On the Swan Coastal Plain, the approach to managing wetlands should also be consistent with the *Environmental Protection (Swan Coastal Plain Lakes) Policy, 1992* (EPA, 1992) and the *Position Statement: Wetlands* (WRC, 2001).
2. There shall be no new constructed stormwater infrastructure within Conservation category wetlands and their buffers, or other conservation value wetlands and their buffers, or within a waterway foreshore area (e.g. no pipes or constructed channels within these wetlands and their buffers, or within waterway foreshore areas), unless authorised by the DoE or the Environmental Protection Authority. For Resource Enhancement and Multiple Use category wetlands, stormwater management shall be consistent with the objectives outlined in the *Position Statement: Wetlands* (WRC, 2001).
3. The creation of artificial lakes or permanent open water bodies generally will not be supported when they involve the artificial exposure of groundwater (e.g. through excavation, or lined lakes that require groundwater to maintain water levels in summer) or the modification of a wetland type (e.g. converting a dampland into a lake). Where water conservation (e.g. summer water supply) and environmental and health concerns (e.g. hydrology, water quality, mosquitoes, midges, algal blooms, acid sulfate soils and iron monosulfide minerals) can be adequately demonstrated to be addressed through design and maintenance, consideration may be given to the creation of artificial lakes/ponds. Seasonal wet infiltration areas or approved constructed waterways (i.e. ephemeral 'Living Streams') are preferred options.

Management of groundwater levels

1. Any proposals to control the seasonal or long-term maximum groundwater levels through a Controlled Groundwater Level (CGL) approach shall demonstrate through adequate field investigations, to the satisfaction of the Department of Environment, that local and regional environmental impacts are adequately managed.
2. The CGL may be defined as the controlled (i.e. modified) groundwater level (measured in metres Australian Height Datum) at which the DoE will permit drainage inverts to be set. The CGL must be based on local and regional environmental water requirements, determined in accordance with the *Environmental Water Provisions Policy for Western Australia* (WRC, 2000) and the *Urban Development and Determination of Ecological Water Requirements of Groundwater Dependent Ecosystems* (DoE, in preparation).
3. Where appropriate, field investigations must be undertaken to identify acid sulfate soils (ASS). Any reduction in groundwater level should not expose ASS to the air, as this may cause groundwater contamination. Refer to the ASS Guideline Series, including *Identification and Investigation of Acid Sulfate Soils* (DoE, 2004). If field investigations identify ASS, seek further advice from DoE.

References and further reading

Australian and New Zealand Environment and Conservation Council (ANZECC) and Agriculture and Resource Management Council of Australia and New Zealand (ARMCANZ) 2000, *Australian Guidelines for Urban Stormwater Management*, National Water Quality Management Strategy.

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Government of Western Australia 1997, *Wetlands Conservation Policy for Western Australia*. Copies may be viewed at the Department of Environment library, telephone (08) 9278 0300.

Institution of Engineers Australia 2001, *Australian Rainfall & Runoff - A Guide to Flood Estimation* (Revised Edition), D. H. Pilgrim (Ed.).

Institution of Engineers Australia 2003, *Australian Runoff Quality* (Draft), Australian Runoff Quality Symposium, June 2003. Available via <www.arq.org.au>.

Swan River Trust 1999, *Swan - Canning Cleanup Program Action Plan - An Action Plan to Clean Up the Swan-Canning Rivers and Estuary*, Swan River Trust, Western Australia. Available via <www.swanrivertrust.wa.gov.au> or by telephoning (08) 9278 0900.

Water and Rivers Commission 2000, *Draft Waterways WA - A Policy for Statewide Management of Waterways in Western Australia*, Statewide Policy No. 4, Water and Rivers Commission, Western Australia. Available via <waterways.environment.wa.gov.au> or by telephoning (08) 9278 0300.

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