



Dark Sky Policy

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Responsible Officer	Director Development and Environmental Services
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Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to confirm Mid Murray Council's commitment to encouraging and preserving the natural dark skies in the area known as the "River Murray Dark Sky Reserve".

Along with the Light Management Plan, this Policy's objective is to ensure that the River Murray Dark Sky Reserve satisfies the criteria set by the International Dark Sky Association ensuring its promotion and longevity.

Policy

Mid Murray Council acknowledges the uniqueness and importance of the Dark Sky Reserve and aims to preserve, protect and enhance the night sky within the defined area. The distinctive and exclusive opportunities resulting from a formal internationally recognised Dark Sky Reserve, including the promotion of the Mid Murray District overall is supported and encouraged.

Council supports measures described within the Light Management Plan to ensure that the already naturally dark sky in the scoped area is not only protected, but also further enhanced through various approaches including lighting education programs and reducing the number of lights and modifications to existing outdoor light fittings and globes.

The primary aims of this Policy are:

- 1) To raise community awareness of the River Murray Dark Sky Reserve and seek their assistance and support in maintaining the Dark Sky
- 2) To ensure that Council, other Government bodies and private landholders within the scoped area understand the importance and value they provide through their assistance in preserving, enhancing and promoting the Dark Sky Reserve
- 3) To promote the River Murray Dark Sky Reserve as part of Council's economic development and tourism plan, with the aim to attract tourists from around the world
- 4) To provide guidance and education to all occupiers, both individuals and organisations, within the scoped area on how best to undertake development and operate their sites without negatively impacting the Dark Sky Reserve.
- 5) To continue to actively engage with local residents in the surrounding towns and areas of the River Murray Dark Sky Reserve, providing advice and guidance on good lighting practices that are Dark Sky compliant. In particular this is required to ensure that no lighting is to be projected directly into the Dark Sky Reserve.
- 6) This Policy and associated Light Management Plan should in no way endanger human safety, road traffic or farm livestock by restrictive lighting practices

Mid Murray Council recognises its statutory role relating to development and that the associated design elements must align with Council's Development Plan, the Building Code of Australia and relevant Australian Standards. This Policy may also be used to frame future statutory planning policy.

So far as reasonably practicable and to ensure compliance with the overarching guidelines of the International Dark Sky Association, the following criteria shall be met by any new developments within the scoped area:



- 1) Lighting plans must be provided with any new Development Applications that will lead to the development of new external lighting, or is a development of a commercial nature, within the River Murray Dark Sky Reserve
- 2) Assessment against the table/matrix detailing appropriate lighting types, levels and locations when considering new Development Applications, and when renewing/replacing lighting
- 3) No lighting shall be directed towards the sky (unless required for safety reasons), and all proposed outdoor lighting must be of a design that minimises light spill

Mid Murray Council commits to ensuring Dark Sky appropriate lighting will be designed/located accordingly when renewing/replacing Council owned/operated lighting within the scoped area

Scope

The scope of the River Murray Dark Sky Reserve includes the geographical area covering a tract of land from the base of the Eastern Mount Lofty Ranges near Cambrai (Meldanda Reserve) in the Murraylands of South Australia, heading north-west and west towards the Murray River.

Policy Responsibility

The Director Development and Environmental Services is responsible for ensuring the proper operation of this Policy.

Availability/Accessibility

This Policy and Council's Fees and Charges Register are available to be downloaded free of charge from Council's website: www.mid-murray.sa.gov.au.

This Policy is available for inspection at Council's principal office during ordinary business hours. Hard copies, for a fee in accordance with Council's schedule of Fees and Charges can be provided upon request.

Legislative Framework / Other References

Development Act 1993

Mid Murray Council Development Plan Light Management Plan



Document History

This Policy shall be reviewed at least every four (4) years or more frequently if legislation or Council requires.

Version	Adopted	Minute No	Description of Change
1	8 May 2018	20421/1	Policy adopted

