

# Policy

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**Title:** **Community Requests for Council to Purchase Land**

**Category:** **Environment, Planning and Development Control**

**Date Last Adopted:** 7 March 2016

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## 1. Objectives

This policy was developed to allow for the objective consideration of the issues relevant to the Council deciding whether or not to purchase land following a community request.

## 2. Background

The Council is receiving an increasing number of requests from the community for the Council to purchase land.

This Policy was prepared as a result of these requests and to allow for the objective consideration of the issues relevant to the Council deciding whether or not to purchase land following a community request.

This policy covers the issues that the Council should take into account when receiving a request to purchase land.

## 3. Policy

The Council will consider the following issues when deciding whether or not to purchase land following a community request:

### 1. STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS

- (i) Has the property been identified for possible purchase in any of Council's strategies, such as the Draft Council Land Review 2008, or other Council strategic or operational documents?
- (ii) What is the demand/need for this acquisition?

- (a) What is the proximity of the location of the property to other Council land holdings and recreational and open space infrastructure or services ?

## 2. **FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

- (i) What is the total acquisition cost for the property?
- (ii) What improvements (and associated costs) are required to upgrade the property to ensure appropriateness and safety for community usage?
- (iii) What are the annual maintenance costs for the property?
- (iv) Does the Council have available funds for the purchase of the land?
- (v) If no to (iv) above, what other sources of funds, if any, exist to enable the purchase of the land, such as Commonwealth and State funding, community or other funds?

## 3. **RISK ASSESSMENT**

Are there any identified risks that might pose a danger or expose the Council to potential liability when utilised by the community.

## 4. **ASSESSMENT OF VALUES**

### (i) Environmental Values

Does the property have any environmental values?, such as:

- (a) biodiversity values including habitat values, native vegetation communities and threatened flora and fauna;
- (b) Catchment values such as improved protection of creek or rivulet corridors;
- (c) landscape values including landscapes of local and regional significance.

### (ii) Heritage Values

Does the property have any environmental values?, such as:

- (a) Cultural heritage values – including historic and Aboriginal heritage values.

### (iii) Open Space and Recreational Values

- (a) Does the property have any recreational attributes that will benefit the community?
  - (b) Will the property add benefit to the Council's current reserve system by providing additional recreational and open space links or necessary buffers from adjacent developments?
  - (c) Is the property generally accessible to the community?
  - (d) Is the property's location appropriate for the development of community facilities (e.g. tracks and trails, playground, picnic and barbeque area or other recreational infrastructure)?
  - (e) Will the expected recreational use of the site meet a current or likely future community demand that is not currently or not likely to be met within the local area?
- (iv) Community Values
- (a) What is the level of community interest in the Council purchasing the property (street, local, suburban, wider community)?
  - (b) Is the purchase of this property likely to adversely impact on the amenity of the neighbourhood to an unreasonable degree (eg through the impact of increased vehicle movements, noise, anti-social behaviour)?
- (v) Community Contribution
- (a) Is the community prepared to assist the Council in purchasing the land (direct financial contribution, provision of time or resources, separate rate, etc) and, if so, to what level?

## 5. PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

- (i) Can the property be protected by existing planning scheme controls or by a public open space contribution through subdivision?
- (ii) Is the loss of this land going to diminish the opportunity for improved urban consolidation and development?

## 6. OTHER

Are there any other special attributes that require the property to be in public ownership?

## 4. Legislation, Terminology and References

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| <b>Responsible Officer:</b>                 | Director Corporate Services |
| <b>Policy first adopted by the Council:</b> | 9/10/2006                   |
| <b>History</b>                              |                             |
| Amended by Council                          | 28/5/2007                   |
| Annual Policy Review                        | 7/3/2016                    |
| <b>Next Review Date:</b>                    | March 2017                  |