

Policy

Title: Community Requests for Council to Purchase Land

Category: Environment, Planning and Development Control

Date Last Adopted: 23 November 2020

1. Objectives

To allow for the objective consideration of issues relevant to the Council when deciding whether to purchase land following a community request to do so.

2. Background

The Council has received a number of requests from the community asking that the Council purchase particular parcels of land.

This policy was prepared as a result of those requests to address the issues the Council should consider when reviewing 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:

STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS

- (a) 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?
- (b) What is the demand/need for this acquisition?
 - (i) What is the proximity of the property to other Council land holdings and recreational and open space infrastructure or services?

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- (c) What is the total acquisition cost for the property?
- (d) What improvements (and associated costs) are required to upgrade the property to ensure it is appropriate and safe for community use?
- (e) What are, or would be, the annual maintenance costs of the property?
- (f) Does the Council have funds available for the purchase of the land?
- (g) If item 2(iv) is answered in the negative, what other sources of funds (if any) exist to enable the purchase of the land, such as Commonwealth or State funding, community funding or other funds?

RISK ASSESSMENT

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

ASSESSMENT OF VALUES

- (h) Environmental values - does the property have any environmental values?
Including:
 - (i) biodiversity values, including habitat values, native vegetation communities and threatened flora and fauna;
 - (ii) catchment values, such as improved protection of creek or rivulet corridors; and
 - (iii) landscape values, including landscapes of local and regional significance.
- (i) heritage values - does the property have any environmental values? Including: cultural heritage values (for example, historic and Aboriginal heritage values).
- (j) open space and recreational values. Including consideration of:
 - (i) does the property have any recreational attributes that will benefit the community?
 - (ii) will the property benefit the Council's current reserve system by providing additional recreational and open space links or necessary buffers from adjacent developments?
 - (iii) is the property generally accessible to the community?
- (k) is the property's location appropriate for the development of community facilities (for example, tracks and trails, playground, picnic and barbeque area or other recreational infrastructure)?
- (l) Will the expected recreational use of the site meet a current or likely future community demand that is not, or is unlikely to be otherwise, met within the local area?
- (m) community values. Including consideration of:

- (i) What is the level of community interest in the Council purchasing the property? For example, is the interest held by those people in a street, the local area to the property, suburban, or the wider community?
- (ii) Is the purchase of the property likely to adversely impact the amenity of the neighbourhood to an unreasonable degree? For example, through the impact of increased vehicle movements, noise, anti-social behaviour.
- (n) community contribution - Including consideration of whether the community is prepared to assist the Council in buying the land (direct financial contribution, provision of time or resources, separate rate, etc.), and if so, to what extent?

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

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

OTHER

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

4. Legislation, Terminology and References

Responsible Officer:	Director Thriving Capital
Policy first adopted by the Council:	09/10/2006
History	
Amended by Council	28/05/2007
Annual Policy Review	07/03/2016
Amended by Council	23/09/2019
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