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**Acquisition & Development of Community Purpose Sites Policy**

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<i>Policy Owner:</i>	Community Development Directorate
<i>Distribution:</i>	All Employees
<i>Implementation:</i>	12 December 2006
<i>Scheduled Review:</i>	December 2008

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**Objective**

To provide a guiding philosophy and framework for evaluating the allocation of proposed community purpose sites and considering the development of existing community purpose sites.

**Statement**

This policy relates to the need for the feasibility of local community facilities to be justified prior to development. Rather than relying upon prescriptive standards, or conversely developing facilities in a haphazard manner, this policy prescribes clear guidelines for assessing the suitability of site allocation and the subsequent development of community facilities. The substantial financial demands of the City's rapid urban growth and the significance of social infrastructure to ensure a healthy community highlights the importance of implementing clear planning principles.

**Purpose**

The purpose of the policy is to:

1. provide a framework and set of guidelines to assess the proposed location of community purpose sites within draft district and local structure plans to ensure maximum benefit to the local community.
2. provide benchmark criteria to ascertain the feasibility, required catchment area, purpose, funding, development timeframe and design of future community facilities.

**Definition/s**

For the purposes of this policy the following definitions are applicable:

1. *Community Purpose Site* - is land made available free of cost to local government by subdividers of residential land for the specific development of local community infrastructure.
2. *Community Infrastructure* - refers to buildings and associated amenities that are in public places and enhance community interaction.
3. *Community Centre* - is a public building that increases opportunities for positive interaction and cooperation amongst the local community through flexible design and management principles that support the provision of affordable, sustainable and equitable recreational, health, educational and social services.

**Principles for Assessment**

The implementation of development criteria supports the notion that the community should not suffer as a result of inadequately located or designed community purpose sites. The principle objective is to ensure that adequate sites are available to meet local needs for community services and facilities in appropriate and accessible locations.

The rapid level of growth and revitalisation throughout the City requires community facility development criteria to be implemented in five stages:

1. Initial Site Assessment
2. Smart Growth Policy Assessment
3. Facility Needs Assessment
4. Facility Feasibility Study
5. Strategic Assessment

### **Initial Site Assessment**

In order for the allocation or development of a community purpose site to be considered the location and suitability of a site must be investigated utilising the following site assessment criteria. Inadequate adherence to the following criteria will diminish the justification of any given site for infrastructure development:

- Allocation of at least one site per 10,000 - 15,000 residents based on the projected residential capacity of any given structure plan area.
- Located on or near public transport routes, at a minimum, any proposed facility must be within 250 metres of a bus/train stop.
- Located within or near neighbourhood/local/district/regional centres and/or public open space, in a position that is relatively central to the proposed long-term catchment.
- Clustered with compatible facilities to form vibrant, frequently visited precincts.
- Located within 1 kilometre of a major arterial road.
- Located off major roads and having safe crossing points in close vicinity to ensure safe access
- Located within 1 kilometre of a government primary/high school
- Located a minimum of 2 kilometres from any other community facility, unless such a facility is considered to offer complementary services
- Located adjacent to or a maximum of 500 metres from public open space (passive or active)
- Site location should take into account future facility design issues to ensure compliance with CEPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) principles relating to sightlines, lighting, surveillance and isolation issues, entrapment spots, movement predictors, signage, landuse and activity mix, landscaping and fencing.
- Explanation of the site in terms of purpose, benefit to urban structure, surrounding housing densities and accessibility to likely users within structure plan submission.

### **Smart Growth Policy Assessment**

The second stage of assessing the suitability of a community purpose site for development must involve a direct assessment of the site utilising the City's Smart Growth Strategy. This provides a range of options for the assessment of urban growth management including the Smart Growth Assessment Tool, Local Planning Policy and Community Development Strategy. The implementation of these tools during the assessment of a community purpose site will ensure an integrated approach to facility sustainability:

#### ***Smart Growth Assessment Tool (SGAT)***

The SGAT allows developers and the City to consistently assess the performance of structure plans against the City's Smart Growth Strategy.

Specifically, the Smart Growth principles relating to ‘Effective Use of Land & Infrastructure’ (Principle 2) and Identity, Equity & Inclusiveness (Principle 4) refer directly to the provision and development of community facilities.

### ***Community Development Strategy***

Wanneroo LIFEstyles brings together the community focused elements of the City’s Strategic Plan and Smart Growth Strategy to form guiding principles and practical applications required to achieve more for the local population. The strategy is linked to the City’s internal strategies, however, an important objective is to encourage all stakeholders involved in our community to assess and evaluate their potential impact. As a result, a series of simple checklists have been established to assist in this process formulated around specific target groups and key development stages. The implementation of these checklists to assess a proposed community facility is vital to gain input from key stakeholders such as community members, service providers, government agencies, internal staff and elected members. In addition, during the preparation of structure plans there are five checklists specifically relevant for developers. The site allocation and development criteria insists these checklists are submitted during the structure planning process to ensure community infrastructure is appropriately planned and located.

### **Facility Needs Assessment**

Upon satisfactory adherence to initial site assessment criteria and the City’s Smart Growth strategies the implementation of a detailed Facility Needs Assessment is the next stage in considering the suitability of a community purpose site for development. The needs assessment will comprehensively test whether a new facility at any given location is justified and also provide clear direction with regard to the most appropriate scope, scale and components of a proposed facility. The implementation of a facility needs assessment must incorporate the following elements to adequately investigate the sustainability of a community purpose site:

- Adherence to the Department of Sport & Recreation Facility Needs Assessment Guidelines
- Projected population trigger of 10,000 - 15,000 people for each allocated community purpose site
- Investigation of the existing and planned future facilities and services within the catchment
- Analysis of current and future needs and trends within the local population relating to community facilities
- Community consultation with residents and service providers
- An assessment of how the local community will use the site and surrounding area, the community aspirations for the site and the local neighbourhood
- Determination of facility need based on analysis and synthesis of the information gathered, and identification of duplications and gaps in provision

### **Facility Feasibility Study**

The finalisation of a Needs Assessment Report will present findings on the needs of the community, results of community consultation and whether a continuation of the facility planning process is justified. The expressed need, viability and sustainability of a community facility will initiate the implementation of a facility feasibility study.

The study should critically assess a proposal to develop a facility and make an informed decision whether to proceed with any given project. The study is a means to an end, that end being a detailed report determining recommendations in relation to concept design, draft management plan, location rationale, capital costs, operating income and expenditure, staging alternatives and the overall justification of the project. The implementation of a feasibility study must incorporate the following elements to adequately address the justification of community facility development:

- Adherence to the Department of Sport & Recreation Feasibility Study Guidelines
- Demonstrated demand within the catchment projected 10 to 15 years based on community profile including social and demographic trends
- Suitability of site for community facilities utilising *site assessment criteria*
- Analysis of the suitability of site for proposed uses
- Analysis of usage rates at existing facilities proving to be viable (to enable this the City must adopt a systematic approach to tracking facility usage levels to ensure facilities are meeting perceived community needs)
- Investigation of options for multipurpose use, shared-use and collocation options
- Completion of a preliminary traffic and parking assessment
- Development of a draft management plan
- Completion of the City's Community Development Strategy checklists relevant to internal staff, community members, community groups, service providers, government agencies and developers.

### **Strategic Assessment**

The final development criteria stage, and a key supporting element to the feasibility study is ensuring that facility development meets the City's corporate vision, goals and principles. The following guidelines must be satisfactorily addressed in order for a proposed facility to proceed:

#### ***Policy***

How does the facility adhere to the goal of 'Healthy Communities' within the City's Strategic Plan?

How does the facility adhere to relevant City of Wanneroo policies relating to the planning, funding and construction of community infrastructure?

How does the facility adhere to the key principles of the City's Smart Growth Policy?

How does the facility link to specific Community Development action plans and strategies?

#### ***Economic***

How will the capital costs of the facility be raised?

Does the project warrant inclusion within the City of Wanneroo Forward Capital Works Budget?

How much will the facility cost to build and operate?

How will the facility contribute to employment within the City of Wanneroo?

How will the facility bring new money into the City of Wanneroo?

Who are the partners in the project?

Does the project comply with relevant grant funding guidelines?

Who will and how will the facility be managed?

### ***Social***

How does it contribute to the social fabric of the City of Wanneroo?

How does it relate to the culture and history of the City of Wanneroo?

How does the facility take into consideration social and leisure trends?

Who will share the use of the facility?

How does it involve the broader community?

How does it contribute to the creation of a vibrant community precinct?

### ***Environmental***

How does the facility relate to environmental best practice with regard to being waterwise, energy efficient and so on?

Is it possible to share or upgrade an existing building?

Does it enrich the natural environment?

Does it raise environmental awareness?

### ***Development Applications***

In the event that a proposed site/facility meets the relevant ‘principles for assessment’ it should not be assumed that this approves the development. A development application and any required building licence application may still be required to be lodged and approved in the normal manner.

### **Responsibility for Implementation**

Director Community Development

### **Other Related Policies**

Pre-Funding of Community Infrastructure

Centres Policy

Key Access – Community/Leisure Buildings

Naming of Council Facilities

Facility and Reserve Hire and Use

Local Planning Policy – Smart Growth