

Local Planning Policy

POL-C-090 Keeping of Livestock

1. Purpose

To specify Council's policy in regards to the keeping of livestock.

This policy applies to all development applications for the keeping of livestock that constitute a Rural Pursuit as defined in Schedule 1 of Local Planning Scheme No. 17 (as amended).

2. Definitions

AGWA Guidelines -Refers to the publication titled 'Stocking Rate Guidelines for Rural Small Holdings - Swan Coast Plain and Darling Scarp, Agriculture Western Australia'.

Base stocking rate – is the number of stock that can consistently be kept on a piece of pasture all year round with minor additional feed and without causing environmental degradation.

Rural Pursuit - means the use of land for any of the purposes set out hereunder and shall include such buildings normally associated therewith:

- a) the growing of vegetables, fruit, cereals or food crops;
- b) the rearing or agistment of sheep, cattle, horses, goats or beasts of burden;
- c) DELETED BY AMEND 27 - GG 28/10/88
- d) the growing of crops or pasture for grazing or seed production;
- e) the sale of produce grown solely on the said land;

but does not include the following except as approved by Council;

- i. the keeping of pigs;
- ii. poultry farming;
- iii. the processing, treatment or packing of produce;
- iv. the breeding, rearing or boarding of domestic pets;

Stable – means any land, building or other structure used for the housing, keeping and feeding of horses, asses and mules.

Watercourse – means a river, stream or creek as depicted on the attached Plans.

3. Objectives

To ensure that livestock keeping is undertaken in a sustainable manner;

To ensure that the keeping of livestock does not have a significant negative impact on the natural environment;

To ensure that the keeping of livestock does not impact detrimentally on the amenity of adjoining landowners.

4. Rationale

The keeping of livestock on smaller rural landholdings is a popular activity throughout much of the rural areas of the City of Swan. The City recognises that the majority of landowners manage their properties in a sustainable manner. However, the keeping of livestock on smaller rural properties requires a higher level of management than broad acre farming due to the often higher density of animals and closer

proximity of neighbouring landowners which results in a higher potential for both environmental and amenity impacts.

The City recognises that unsustainable land management practices often lead to land degradation problems such as soil erosion, dust nuisance, odour, water pollution and damage to vegetation.

The AGWA guidelines have been used as the basis for this policy. These guidelines provide a scientifically sound and practical means by which the appropriate stocking rate for land within the Swan Coastal Plain and Darling Scarp can be determined, and provide guidelines for the assessment of applications for the stocking of land.

The AGWA guidelines identify ten different land units (based on soil type) within the Swan Coastal Plain and Darling Scarp, and prescribe a base stocking rate that is appropriate within each of these units. The AGWA guidelines also provide a conversion table to determine how many of each type of animal is able to be supported in a given area of land.

Calculation of the base stocking rate is based on the area of cleared pasture available for stock and not upon the lot size. The base stocking rate may be supplemented with additional animal husbandry and land management measures, which may allow additional stock to be kept in certain situations.

The provisions of the AGWA guidelines have been overridden for the purposes of this policy in one significant aspect. The AGWA guidelines specify one base stocking rate for dry (rain fed only) pasture and another one for irrigated pasture. However, as irrigating pasture constitutes a significant pasture management intervention, and due to the much higher density of animals able to be supported on irrigated land, it is deemed appropriate to consider all applications that exceed the base stocking rate for dry pasture in the same manner. Therefore where pasture is to be irrigated and the base stocking rate (based on dry pasture) is to be exceeded, a property management plan will need to be submitted.

The Scheme classifies the keeping of livestock within the use class of "rural pursuit", which is an activity that is only permissible on rural zoned land. The scheme states (Clause 8.3.6.1) that the keeping of livestock requires planning approval where it is proposed to keep livestock in a manner contrary to the recommendations of the Department of Agriculture. This scheme clause is interpreted in this policy as meaning that planning approval is required where it is proposed to keep livestock above the base (dry) stocking rate.

It is noted that in certain circumstances approval may be required from state government agencies, particularly for intensive livestock keeping.

5. Policy

5.1 AGWA guidelines

Council recognises the potential negative impact that the keeping of livestock can have on the environment and on local amenity, primarily through the stocking of land in an unsustainable manner.

The number of animals an area of land is capable of supporting in a sustainable manner is known as the base stocking rate. The base stocking rate is determined by taking into account available pasture area, animal type and land capability as outlined in the Agriculture Western Australia document titled 'Stocking Rate Guidelines for Rural Small Holdings - Swan Coastal Plain and Darling Scarp' (AGWA Guidelines).

While the AGWA Guidelines specify one base stocking rate for dry pastures and one for irrigated pastures, for the purposes of this policy the calculation of the base stocking rate is limited to dry pastures (reliant on rainfall only). Proposals for livestock keeping on irrigated pastures will be treated in the manner outlined in Section 3.2 below (except where the base stocking rate for dry land is not exceeded).

Council will generally only approve the keeping of livestock in a manner that is consistent with the AGWA Guidelines.

5.2 Applications exceeding base stocking rate

Council will only approve applications for the keeping of livestock in excess of the base stocking rate, where applicants submit a property management plan which demonstrates that pasture improvement, farm planning, nutrient and waste management methods recommended by the AGWA Guidelines are to be implemented.

Appendix 1 lists the information that must be provided in a property management plan submitted with any application to keep stock in excess of the base stocking rate.

Where it is proposed to keep livestock in excess of the base stocking rate, the following measures should be incorporated into a property management plan (where applicable):

- Drainage management practices that prevent direct runoff to watercourses or dams;
- Yards or pens should be sheeted with compacted soil, sand or sawdust if located on clay soils and should be regularly cleaned;
- Adequately fenced vegetation belts capable of effectively separating environmental features such as watercourses, from areas of intensive stocking;
- Manure should be regularly collected;
- Supplementary feeding as a means of reducing grazing pressure.

5.3 Applications exceeding base stocking rate

Areas of remnant vegetation, wetlands and watercourses should be fenced to exclude livestock.

Special management techniques may be required for the keeping of livestock within Public Drinking Water Source Areas and within 200 metres of Conservation Category Wetlands and Resource Enhancement Category Wetlands in accordance with any requirements specified by the Department of Environment.

For the purposes of establishing effective buffer areas, the keeping of livestock, including the development of stables, and all facilities associated with livestock keeping (eg. exercise areas, watering troughs, feed stockpiles, and storage of manure, compost and wood waste) should be located a minimum of:

- 50 metres from the banks of permanent watercourses; and
- 30 metres from the banks of ephemeral watercourses and all wetlands.

Where an applicant proposes to keep livestock within any of the buffer areas specified in this section, comments may be sought from the Department of Environment or other agencies as deemed appropriate.

5.4 Amenity considerations

Where stables or other structures are proposed to be constructed for the housing of livestock, they must be located and managed so as not to detrimentally impact on the amenity of neighbouring residences.

5.5 Advertising

Where in the opinion of the Chief Executive Officer, the proposal has the potential to impact upon the amenity of surrounding landowners, comments shall be sought from adjoining landowners for a period of 21 days. Advertising is to be in the form of letters to property owners located within 200 metres of the subject property boundary.

It is suggested that the applicant/landowner discuss their proposal, prior to lodging an application, with any potentially impacted neighbouring property owners.

In addition to the proposal being referred to nearby landowners, it may be referred to the local catchment group, Land Conservation District Committee or other relevant interest group.

Where livestock keeping is deemed to have a potentially high impact, is located within a public drinking water source area, within a proclaimed surface water area, or is located within 200 metres from a Conservation Category Wetland, it shall be referred to the Department of Environment and any other relevant State Government agencies prior to consideration by Council.

6. Relevant scheme provisions

The following provisions of Local Planning Scheme No. 17 are relevant to this policy:

- 8.2.1.9m) General Development Conditions Applicable to all Special Rural Zones
- 8.2.2.2b) Swan Valley Rural Zone
- 8.3.6 Keeping of Livestock
- Appendix 7 Special Rural Zones

Appendix 1: Information required for applications where the base stocking rate is exceeded

Property Management Plan:

Site plan of property at a reasonable scale indicating:

- Location of pasture areas, stables and yard areas/ arenas
- Fencing (including fencing of environmentally sensitive areas)
- Watercourses, wetlands, dams and areas prone to waterlogging
- Existing vegetation
- Manure storage/composting area

A written statement shall be provided that addresses the following (where applicable):

- The number and type of stock
- Stabling practices
- Collection, storage and disposal of manure, including fly management and odour control Nutrient management plan
- Pasture management techniques including, type and condition of pasture, rotation of pasture.
- Irrigation
- Fertiliser application rates
- Dust control
- Weed control
- Water availability & use
- Soil type

Document control

Document approvals:			
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2.	10 September 2014		
3.	14 March 2018		
4.	17 March 2021		
5.	14 June 2023		
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Compliance requirements:			
Legislation:	Planning and Development (Local Planning Schemes) Regulations 2015		
Industry:			
Organisational:	City's Local Planning Scheme No. 17 Delegated Authority - 27 Statutory Planning		
Strategic Community Plan:	B1 Planned and facilitated growth		