



Local planning policy supporting document

Local planning policy – A guide to assist development of a local planning policy for new developments and public open space.

30 June 2011

This document is a collection of Local Government (LG) issues and solutions captured through the Waterwise Council program. It is supplementary information that may be used to assist with the development of local planning policies (LPP).

What is a local planning policy

Local planning policy can articulate a Council's position on the planning, provision, location, design, development and maintenance of Public Open Space (POS). It should be considered by proponents and council in the assessment of:

- structure and area plans
- subdivision and development applications.

Why develop a local planning policy

Water for POS needs to be considered prior to subdivision so a water source can be secured and space set aside for any infrastructure necessary (e.g. water treatment plants, pipes, pumps etc).

Local governments (LGs) are currently the only planning bodies capable of formulating West Australian Planning Commission (WAPC) supported public open space policies outlining the requirements for water sensitive design in POS.

Appropriately sized, located and designed POS is instrumental in delivering a number of benefits. Local planning policy for new developments will:

- ensure that POS is delivered to optimise community benefit
- ensure best financial outcomes for Local governments
- prevent LGs from inheriting a park using excessive amounts of water
- ensure environmental outcomes by improving water efficiency
- provide local interpretation of the WAPC Liveable Neighbourhoods Policy.

Issues to address in local planning policy

- Ensure all water sources and the POS design elements are sustainable in the long term
- If groundwater will be used:
 - Secure groundwater licence
 - transfer of water entitlement to the LG at handover
 - clarity on who will pay the transfer fee
 - all bores fitted with a Department of Water approved flow meter at time of installation
 - meter readings recorded monthly, to demonstrate use is within licence.

- Long-term maintenance costs
 - Scheme water supply is a two year temporary arrangement subject to sprinkler bans and ongoing cost of water.
- Variety in POS design.
- Park sizing e.g. pocket parks versus spaces for sporting use.
- Incorporation of bushland and Water Sensitive Urban Design (e.g. drainage) into the POS.
- Consider where irrigated areas can be avoided.
- Irrigation of low use, high aesthetic areas vs. high use functional areas.
- POS design fits with Water Sensitive Urban Design.
- If a new groundwater allocation is not available the options are to either trade (buy) water or develop a non-drinking water source. The local planning policy should clearly state who will pay if water is traded.
- If non-drinking water source, consider proximity to source i.e. treated waste water plants.

Basic requirements

- Retain low water use plantings (local, native species) grouped according to water requirements (hydrozone) and nutrient requirements.
- Mulched garden beds and soil amendments to improve water retention
- Water meter to measure both water flow rate and cumulative volume. A meter with a flow rate output signal that can link to the controller will help detect leaks and manage water use.
- System design for high distribution uniformity.
- Commercial quality components, valves, emitters, and controller.
- Hydrozones for areas with different water or scheduling requirements:
 - Drip/micro-irrigation zones have lower evaporative water losses.
 - Drip/micro-irrigation require longer run times at lower pressure.
 - Consider differing plant water requirements and root zone depths and use separate drip/micro-irrigation zones where practical.
- Layout of emitters to eliminate overspray.
- Emitter precipitation rate less than the infiltration rate of the soil.
- Monthly water budget based on:
 - Plant type and microclimate factors for each hydrozone.
 - Water holding capacity of the soil.
 - The effective root zone depth of the crop.
- Rain shutoff device to stop irrigation during and directly after significant rain.
- Soil moisture sensors in the plant root zone to assist irrigation scheduling decisions.
- Low trajectory sprinkler nozzles to mitigate the effects of wind.

Requirements for handover

- Developer to provide a site map showing the location of each point of connection, meter, backflow prevention device, controller, station/zone valves, and area served by each valve.
- Verify that the controller is operating properly.
- Verify that sensors are working properly and are calibrated.
- Verify that emitters are properly adjusted.
- Repair or replace broken hardware; restore the system to its design.
- Test all repairs.
- Complete a full audit to ensure the system is working efficiently with the desired distribution uniformity and precipitation rate.