

EXE 022: PUBLIC LAND ASSET STRATEGY

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Objective

This Policy provides a framework to guide Council in the effective management of its land and property assets with the view to increasing the future economic capacity of the Shire of Esperance and assisting the delivery of Objectives outlined in the Strategic Community Plan.

Specifically the Shire's land and property assets will be used to achieve the following:

- The delivery of strategic projects as identified in the Strategic Community Plan;
- The facilitation of environmental, economic and social benefits to the Community;
- The stimulation and regeneration of areas within the Shire of Esperance;
- Where appropriate enable the adoption of a commercial approach to the management of land and property assets capable of producing a recurrent income; and
- Development of non-operational land and property assets that will facilitate additional income streams for the Council.

Definitions

In applying the Scope and Principles of this Policy, the Council will categorise all land and property assets in accordance with the following established Definitions for the purpose of consistency, risk management and performance outcomes.

Surplus properties	Surplus properties are considered to be of no benefit to either the community through the delivery of services or to the Shire as part of a more strategic land holding, part of a land bank of property assets or for any other purpose. i.e. surplus to requirements.
Civic properties	Civic properties are used for the delivery of services provided by the Shire to the Community. These properties differentiate from Public Open Space and Other Reserves in that they may be held in freehold title by the Council.
Commercial properties	Commercial properties are held by the Shire purely for the commercial return provided through the lease of the property to other entities. Such properties are not anticipated to provide services to the community but will yield an appropriate rate of return (on the capital value of the property) as a commercial proposition subject to appropriate levels of risk as determined by the Council.

Investment properties	Investment properties differ from Commercial Properties in that they have the potential to contribute towards the achievement of broader planning, social or strategic objectives of the Shire. Whilst such properties may include a commercial undertaking, subject to a commercial agreement between a third party and the Council, the purpose of the Shire's ownership of the property is as a contributory factor towards other outcomes rather than purely for commercial returns on the property investment. i.e. Urban Renewal Projects.
Residential properties	Residential properties are designed to provide residential facilities only. Such properties may be provided directly by the Shire to the end user, or as part of an agreement with another agency or residential service provider.
Utility properties	Utility properties are used to deliver utility services such as drainage or other key utility functions. The delivery of utility services should be subject to review to ensure that the location from which the service is being delivered is suitable, the need for the utility service can be validated and the tenure of the property does not result in the Shire having a significant value of freehold assets set aside for such uses with little opportunity to realise the value of these assets at any time in the future.
Public Open Space and Other Reserves	Public Open Space and others reserved properties are most often held as reserves vested in the care, control and management of the Shire. Such properties may provide an active service but may also include properties that have little activation but provide other tangible community benefits through environmental protection or community recreational amenity.

Principles

The Council will manage its property assets with the view to:

- Increasing the Shire's social, economic and environmental sustainability;
- Increasing the Shire's financial capacity;
- Providing essential services and facilities; and
- Developing an investment portfolio capable of providing income generation.

Use of proceeds

- The proceeds from the effective management of Council land and property assets are to be used in the delivery of essential services, facilities and projects which provide for a community benefit.
- The allocation of such proceeds will have due regard to the Council's Strategic Community Plan, Corporate Business Plan, Long Term Financial Plan and relevant council Policies.
- The Council will consider the use of funds in the development of its land and property assets where an appropriate community, social, environmental or economic benefits can be demonstrated.

- The proceeds derived from the application of this Policy will be allocated in accordance with the prevailing Financial Management Policies of the Council and in accordance with any Reserve Fund established for that purpose.

Policy

In applying this Policy, the Council will:

- Ensure all statutory and applicable governance requirements required by the Local Government Act 1995, associated Regulations and any other applicable legislation are adhered to.
- Ensure that this Policy complies with all other relevant Council Policies and practices.
- Ensure that suitable community engagement is undertaken as a fundamental component of any proposal to dispose of land and property assets in accordance with the Local Government Act 1995.

Acquisition and Disposal of Land and Property Assets

The Council will only consider the acquisition and disposal of land after the following steps have been taken:

- A thorough analysis of applicable financial, social and/or environmental benefits, undertaken in accordance with the established Procedure or any other endorsed template or methodology.
- Consideration has been given to the disposal of land and property by means of auction, tender or private treaty dependent upon the specific circumstances of the proposed disposal and in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 1995.
- The acquisition or disposal follows a strategic approach to all land and property assets owned or controlled by the Shire of Esperance in preference to considering properties only on a case by case basis.
- Appropriate risk management strategies have been applied in accordance with any adopted Risk Management Policy.

Performance Management

The Council will give consideration to the establishment of a Business Plan and specific performance management indicators to guide its property asset development.

Such performance management indicators will provide the means by which the performance of land and property assets can be monitored and reported to the community and will enable the Council to consider acquisitions and disposals of land and property assets cognisant of these indicators and the benefit or dis-benefit such acquisitions and disposals may generate.

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