

Policy Type	Corporate
Function	Development and Building Controls
Policy Owner	Manager Planning and Development
Policy Contact	Manager Planning and Development
Effective Date	1 January 2026

## Purpose

This policy provides the framework for an incentive program where Council may provide financial assistance to attract and retain business investment in the region.

## Policy Statement

Council is committed to supporting a sustainable and growing economy by encouraging new development within the Burdekin Shire. It recognises, however, that the cost of undertaking development in the Shire must be regionally competitive if that investment is to be secured. One way of enhancing that competitiveness is to reduce the cost of infrastructure charges levied on new development.

This policy supports the intent of the Burdekin Shire Council (Council) Corporate Plan 2025-2030 to foster business growth and innovation, promote workforce development, attract investment, diversify the economy and increase housing availability, density and affordability in our region.

The purpose of this policy is to establish a consistent, equitable and transparent process to assess incentive applications made for, and reductions in fees and charges associated with, development.

## Incentive Program and Scope

Council has established the Economic Stimulus Policy (the program) to provide the community and developers with the opportunity to apply for an incentive.

Applications made under this policy are assessed on merit, considering the eligibility criteria and available funds. Nothing in the policy shall imply or suggest that Council is under any obligation to provide any incentive to any applicant.

To encourage new development in the Shire, Council will consider waiving infrastructure charges for development that uses capacity within existing trunk infrastructure networks.

The program will be administered and reported on conjunctly by Economic Development and Planning and Development.

## Implementation

### Application

An application for a waiver of infrastructure charges must be made to Council in writing and:

- Demonstrate compliance with the eligibility criteria;
- Demonstrate an economic benefit to the Shire in terms of sustained jobs, housing, or construction impact; and
- Identify the applicant/proponent consultant team and provide appropriate plans of development.

The application may be made to Council at the same time as the development application, but not after the infrastructure charge has already been paid.

### Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible for a waiver of infrastructure charges, a development must comply with all of the following criteria:

- The development must not require the provision of extra trunk infrastructure at Council's cost;
- The development must be development to which infrastructure charges apply pursuant to Council's infrastructure charges resolution;
- The development must not be development which is included in the ineligible development list included in the relevant section of this Policy; and
- The development must be completed within 24 months of the granting of a development permit.

### Ineligible Development

The following is a list of development which is ineligible for a waiver of infrastructure charges under this Policy:

- Development which was approved before the commencement of the Policy.
- Renewable Energy Facility.
- Solar Farm.
- Wind Farm.
- Wind Turbine.
- Battery Storage Facility.
- Subdivision of land within the Rural zone to create agricultural lots less than 30 hectares.

### Preferred Development Types

The following is a list of development which is preferred development to be assessed on application for the waiver or part waiver of infrastructure charges under this Policy:

- Subdivision of residential zoned land resulting in additional residential allotments or dwelling units;
- Development that promotes commercial and industry natured development;
- Development of a Retirement Facility;
- Development that promotes tourism within the Shire;
- Development which creates employment opportunities for residents of the Shire; and
- Development which reuses existing buildings within the central business districts of Ayr and Home Hill.

### Assessment

It is at the absolute discretion of Council whether a waiver is granted for a particular development and the amount of the fees or charges that are waived; however Council will give preference to development listed in preferred development types of this Policy.

There is no right of appeal should Council in its discretion decide not to grant a waiver in whole or in part.

### Decision

An applicant who has lodged an application for a waiver of charges will be advised in writing of Council's decision in relation to their request.

If Council agrees to waive fees or charges, the amount agreed to be waived will be subtracted from the applicable adopted fee or charge for the development in accordance with Council's adopted Fees and Charges or adopted Infrastructure Charges Resolution.

## Pre lodgement Advice

Applicants may request a formalised eligibility assessment of their proposed development for an incentive under this policy. This process is separate from any development application and can be lodged at any time. A project's eligibility will be assessed based on the information provided by the applicant. The applicant must provide general information which can address the relevant criteria.

For example:

- Information about the proposed development, including location and land use; and
- Estimate of the capital investment and construction costs.

Based on the information provided at the time of assessment, written notification will be issued to the applicant advising whether:

- The proposed development meets the relevant criteria for an incentive under the policy, including the specific incentive that may be offered and any other conditions; or
- The development does not qualify and the reasons for this assessment.
- Note: Any significant alternations to the development design (i.e. changes to gross floor area may affect infrastructure charges) may subsequently affect the proposal's eligibility and new advice should be sought.
- All applications seeking a grant are presented to a Council Meeting for decision, which may deviate from the officer's recommendation.

The applicant agrees to allow Council to use any non-commercial information to promote the program.

## Assessment and Approval of Applications

Applications are to be made using the approved form with all mandatory parts completed and supporting documentation attached.

Council officers are authorised to determine the administrative process and assess all applications for an incentive.

All applications must be approved by Council resolution.

Where an application does not meet the assessment criteria, Council at its discretion may approve the application by resolution.

## Conditions of Approval

- A letter of acceptance detailing the conditions of approval and payment process will be issued.
- The land use must commence by the date specified in the letter of acceptance (which will generally be two (2) years from the resolution date for approval of the incentive).
- A request for an extension to the timeframe will only be considered if it is submitted prior to the deadline and can demonstrate that substantial efforts have been made to action the development approval prior to the deadline. For example, 75% or more of the construction activities have been completed.
- Approval for an extension request will be at the sole discretion of Council.

- Applicants must be fully compliant with all conditions of the associated development approval permit, prior to making a request to claim an approved incentive. Council officers will inspect the premises and issue a Development Compliance Letter (prepared at no cost to the applicant) to confirm compliance.
- Release of the agreed incentive will not occur until full compliance is achieved.
- The reimbursement of assessment fees and/or infrastructure charges rebate will be made to the applicant's nominated bank account upon issue of a Development Compliance Letter stating that all conditions of approval have been fulfilled.

## Exceptions

As outlined above in relevant sections.

## Risk Management

### Compliance and Review

This Policy will be reviewed when any of the following occur:

- a) The related legislation or governing documents are amended or replaced; or
- b) Other circumstances as determined by resolution of Council.

### Conflict of Interest

To ensure an accountable and transparent assessment process is maintained, all Council officers and elected members assessing incentive requests must declare any perceived or potential conflict of interest before the assessment process commences. This may include personal connections with any applicant or personal involvement with any organisation. Anyone having a conflict of interest should not debate, be involved in any discussions, or vote on any matter relating to the specific application.

### Reporting

A quarterly report detailing the disbursement of funding across all incentives will be provided to Councillors through the operational plan reporting process.

## Legislation

*Local Government Act 2009*

*Local Government Regulation 2012*

*Planning Act 2016*

*Planning Regulation 2017*

## Definitions and Abbreviations

To assist with interpretation, the following definitions apply:

Applicant	means a person who makes a formal application to Council for an incentive.
Planning Scheme	Burdekin Shire Council Planning Scheme 2022 (Planning Scheme)
Corporate Plan	Burdekin Shire Council Corporate Plan 2025-2030
Council	means Burdekin Shire Council
Deadline or timeframe	means the date by which the applicant is expected to have actioned the development approval associated with their incentive and are operational. This date will be noted in the letter of acceptance.
GST	means Australia’s Goods and Services Tax.
Resolution	means a proposal put forward to Council at a duly convened Council meeting and is accepted by majority of a quorum of Council and is entered into the official record of the meetings of Council.

## Related Documents

Reference Number	Document Title
<a href="#">BSC Planning Scheme</a>	Burdekin Shire Council 2022 Planning Scheme
<a href="#">BSC Charges Resolution</a>	Burdekin Shire Council Charges Resolution (No.2) 2018
<a href="#">BSC Corporate Plan</a>	Burdekin Shire Council Corporate Plan 2025-2030

## Document History and Version Control

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