

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is the promotion and creation of investment, as an essential element of encouraging development in the Whitsunday Regional Council (WRC) area.

The WRC is committed to promoting and encouraging employment generating business activity in the Region by providing subsidised infrastructure charges where appropriate, as an incentive for development.

Scope

This policy identifies the circumstances where the WRC, at its absolute discretion, may agree to provide a discount to infrastructure charges levied against development.

The scope of this policy applies to development undertaken in accordance with the Whitsunday Planning Scheme 2017 (the Scheme) and discounts may be applied to infrastructure charges levied under the Infrastructure Charges Resolution (No. 1 of 2019) (ICR).

This policy applies to a development approval issued on or after the date this policy takes effect (the Effective Date).

Policy Statement

1. How discounts will be applied

In order to obtain a discount, development activity must:

- i. be for an applicable use, specified in Table 1 - Applicable Uses;
- ii. must address the assessment criteria, as specified in Table 2 - Assessment Criteria; and
- iii. must be made in accordance with Section 5 of this policy.

This policy is a merit based incentive program competing for an annual capped budget of up to \$100,000 each financial year. Applications will be assessed on their capacity to deliver outcomes for the Whitsunday economy. Incentive amounts will be determined at the absolute discretion of Council, based on the benefits to the Region, business case (if required) and available incentives budget.

2. Applicable discount

Where development is deemed to meet the policy's Assessment Criteria specified in Table 2 of Section 4, up to a 50% discount may be applied, at Council's absolute discretion, to the Infrastructure Charges Notice(ICN), in accordance with Section 5.

3. Applicable types of development

This policy only applies to the Applicable Uses specified in Column 2 of Table 1.

Development Incentive Policy

Development Services - Strategic Planning

DEVE_01

Table 1 - Applicable Uses

Column 1 Development Category	Column 2 Applicable Uses, as defined by the Whitsunday Planning Scheme 2017
Commercial (bulk goods)	Agricultural supplies store; Bulk landscape supplies; Garden centre; Hardware and trade supplies; Outdoor sales; and Showroom.
Commercial (retail)	Food and drink outlet; Service station; Shop; and Shopping centre.
Commercial (office)	Office; and Sales office.
Educational facility	Child care centre; Community care centre; and Educational establishment.
Entertainment	Hotel (non-residential component); Nightclub entertainment facility; and Theatre.
Recreation activities	Indoor sport and recreation; Outdoor sport and recreation; and Environment facility
Industry	Low impact industry; Marine industry; Medium impact industry; Research and technology industry; Rural industry; and Warehouse.
High impact industry	High impact industry; and Special industry
High impact rural	Aquaculture (cultivating in a confined area aquatic animals or plants for sale); Intensive animal industry; Intensive horticulture; Wholesale nursery; and Winery.
Essential services	Health care services; Hospital; Residential care facility; and Veterinary services.
Other uses	Air service; Animal keeping; Extractive industry; Port services; and Tourist attraction.

4. Assessment Criteria

In order to demonstrate that development is consistent with the purpose of this policy and obtain an infrastructure charges discount, it is necessary to address the relevant Assessment Criteria specified in Table 2.

Table 2: Assessment Criteria

Assessment criteria		Measure of compliance
Development must address AC1 to AC8.		
Development addresses AC1 to AC7 where relevant		
AC1	Proposed development is for a business activity new to the Region.	Development does not currently operate within the WRC Local Government Area.
AC2	Development is a diversification of a particular use that introduces new and innovative technologies or products into the market place.	Development is undertaken to accommodate a new service or product not previously provided within the Region.
AC3	Proposed development supports significant new export opportunities, inter-regionally, inter-state or overseas.	- Development utilises a product from existing or developing supply chains within the Region, for export out of the Region; and - Direct exports out of the Region, as a result of the development, will exceed \$100,000 in product value annually.
AC4	Where the proposed development involves the expansion of an existing business, it must be demonstrated that the expansion represents significant growth in local supply or manufacturing supply chains.	- Development results in a minimum 50% increase of the gross floor area of the existing Business or Industry activity; - Development represents a 50% growth in the existing Business or Industry, local product or service supply; - Development involves a 50% increase in manufacturing inputs supplying the business.
AC5	Involves the establishment of land-based tourism businesses that will provide products and services to attract visitors to the Region, excluding accommodation activities.	Development provides new land-based tourism products predominately for use by visitors to the Region, such as a Theatre, Tourist attraction, tourism in a Rural area, Sport and recreation facilities or Environment facilities. (Incentive does not apply to Accommodation aspect of development).
AC6	Involves the development of new manufacturing industry, which supports the Mining, Marine, Transport or Construction industries.	Development involves the creation of new Metal Product Manufacturing, Basic Chemical, Cleaning & Polymer Manufacturing and Transport Equipment & Parts Manufacturing;
AC7	Involves the development of new scientific, education or professional services, supporting environmental research, mining, agriculture or construction industries.	Development involves the creation of a new purpose-built research or education facility supporting environmental research, agriculture, marine, mining or construction industries;

5. Application for Development Incentive Procedure

Applying for a development incentives policy discount involves:

Step 1: Development incentives policy discount application process

A development incentives policy discount application must be lodged in conjunction with the associated Material Change of Use (MCU) or building works application and include:

- i. confirmation that the proposed development is an applicable use identified in Table 1; and
- ii. a statement of how the proposed development addresses the assessment criteria identified in Table 2. Where demonstrating compliance an applicant may choose to provide a detailed business case, including:
 - a. Executive summary;
 - b. Project vision and objectives;
 - c. Market assessment, including:
 - i. Local, Regional, State or International opportunities and how the development addresses market need; and
 - ii. Possible market threats and competitors;
 - d. Market, operational and business expansion risks and methods of mitigating risks;
 - e. Detailed strategy for implementation (3-year Business plan), including:
 - i. Description of proposed activities, costings and timings;
 - ii. Projected incomes and expenditures; and
 - f. Concluding statement with reference to assessment criteria.

WRC will undertake an assessment of the application for discount and, at the time of issue of an MCU decision notice, advise what discount, if any, is agreed. This will be at Council's absolute discretion. Where an application for discount is applicable, the ICN, provided as part of the decision notice, will identify the discounted infrastructure charges applicable prior to the incentive expiry date and the full infrastructure charges applicable to the development payable.

Step 2: Applying the development incentives policy discount process

To apply the discount to an ICN, prior to the commencement of the use and payment of infrastructure charges, the applicant must submit the following information to Council:

- i. a copy of the relevant decision notice, incorporating the ICN;
- ii. Where applicable, a copy of the Certificate of Classification for building works associated with the material change of use; and
- iii. a written statement confirming that the MCU will commence its use prior to the incentive expiry date.

Subsequent to the acceptance of this documentation, the discounted infrastructure charges must be paid in full, prior to the incentive expiry date and the commencement of the use. Failure to pay the discounted ICN prior to the incentives expiry date and the commencement of the use will result in a reinstatement of the full infrastructure charges.

Internal actions

Upon payment of an applicable discounted infrastructure charge by the applicant, funds from the Development Incentives Policy budget must be transferred directly into the trunk infrastructure account to reimburse the shortfall.

When preparing Infrastructure Charges Notice subject to this policy, the following condition shall be inserted:

- (a) "Failure to commence the use and pay the discounted ICN prior to the incentive expiry date (*insertdate*) will result in a reinstatement of the full infrastructure charges."

Applicable Legislation

Unless otherwise specified in this document, terminology referenced in this policy is in accordance with:

Planning Act 2016

Planning Regulation 2017

Definitions

Unless otherwise specified in this document, terminology referenced in this policy is in accordance with:

The Planning Act 2016 - Schedule 2;

The Planning Regulation 2017 - Schedule 24; and

The Whitsunday Planning Scheme 2017 - Schedule 1

CEO refers to the Chief Executive Officer of the Whitsunday Regional Council appointed in accordance with the Local Government Act 2009.

Council refers to the Whitsunday Regional Council

Employee refers to any employee, contractor, volunteer etc. of the Council

Incentive expiry date is the date identified on the ICN and must be two (2) years after the issue date of the original ICN, regardless of any amended ICN being issued.

Related Documents

Infrastructure Charges Resolution (No. 1 of 2019)

Human Rights Compatibility Statement

This Policy has been assessed as compatible with the Human Rights protected under the *Human Rights Act 2019*.

COUNCIL POLICY			
Date Adopted by Council	13 August 2019	Council Resolution	2019/08/13.17
Effective Date	13 August 2019	Next Review Date	13 August 2022
Responsible Officer(s)	Strategic Planning	Revokes	Economic Development Incentives Policy (adopted 24 June 2015)
Public Consultation: Yes / No			