

RURAL ROAD NETWORK POLICY

COMMUNITY POLICY



1 Scope

This policy applies to the opening of previously unrecognised and unconstructed rural roads and the upgrading of existing rural roads identified on Rockhampton Regional Council's Road Register and under the jurisdiction of Council.

This policy does not apply to development works approved under the *Planning Act 2016* or other legislation that requires the approval of works within the Council Road Reserve.

2 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a consistent and transparent assessment of the opening of unconstructed rural roads, upgrading of rural roads to a higher standard and intermittent sealing of unsealed roads.

3 Related Documents

3.1 Primary

Nil

3.2 Secondary

Human Rights Act 2019

Local Government Act 2009

Local Law No. 1 (Administration) 2011

Planning Act 2016

Subordinate Local Law No. 1.1 (Alteration or Improvement to Local Government Controlled Areas and Roads) 2011

Subordinate Local Law No. 1.16 (Carrying Out Works on a Road or Interfering with a Road or its Operation) 2011

Transport Infrastructure Act 1994

Design Standards for Rural Roads Guideline

Roads Asset Management Plan

Road Register

Road Reserve Works Permit

Road Reserve Works Permit Application Form

Rural Road Network Procedure

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4 Definitions

To assist in interpretation, the following definitions apply:

AADT	Annual Average Daily Traffic
Council	Rockhampton Regional Council
Driveway Access	A property access point constructed between a Council maintained road and the property boundary.
Habitable Dwelling	A building or structure which has been approved for use as a habitable building or structure.
Higher Standard	Improvement in the level of service of a road.
Property	A collection of parcels of rural land, typified by having adjacent boundaries or that would be adjacent but for a road or other public reserve and operated collectively for farming or primary production.
Property Road	A road constructed beyond the point adjacent to the nearest property boundary of the property and only servicing that property.
Region	Rockhampton Regional Area defined by the Local Government Areas of Queensland.
Road	As defined in section 59(2) of the <i>Local Government Act 2009</i> .
Road Register	A register of roads containing details as listed in section 74 of the <i>Local Government Act 2009</i> .
Rural Road	A road classified as either a Rural arterial, rural major collector, rural minor collector or rural access road in Council's adopted Road Hierarchy.
Unconstructed Road	A dedicated road reserve that does not contain a road recognised in Council's Road Register as a Council owned road.
Unsealed Road	A road that has no bitumen based or concrete sealed surface.

5 Policy Statement

Under the *Local Government Act 2009*, Council has the power to construct, maintain and improve roads under Council's jurisdiction. The *Local Government Act 2009* does not impose an obligation on Council to construct roads nor maintain roads that Council has not accepted as part of Council's road network. Council's road network is captured in Council's Road Register as Council owned roads.

Council recognises the importance of the development and ongoing maintenance of the rural road network and the reliance on the rural road network by the community for its social, economic and environmental wellbeing. Council's Road Register identifies Council owned roads that Council has committed to maintain. Council's Roads Asset Management Plan identifies the maintenance standard or levels of service that the rural road network will be maintained to at current funding levels.

In order to maintain the rural road network in a sustainable manner, Council must manage the expansion of the rural road network or increases in level of service on the rural road network in a prudent manner.

Council is committed to planning its own road upgrade works and assessing requests in accordance with this policy and the Rural Road Network Procedure for the opening of unconstructed roads or upgrading of the rural road network to ensure a consistent and transparent manner whilst taking into consideration the adopted levels of service for the road network and Council's budgetary limitations.

5.1 Opening of Unconstructed Roads at the Applicant's Cost

From time to time, Council receives requests to open and construct unconstructed roads. This includes the expansion or extension of an existing Council owned road past the limits identified in the Council's Road Register.

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The principal purpose of Council's rural road network is to provide road access to properties containing habitable dwellings to a defined standard and level of service.

Road access is generally provided to a point adjacent to the nearest property boundary of the applicant's property.

Roads constructed beyond the point adjacent to the nearest property boundary of the applicant's property and only servicing that property will be considered property roads. Property roads are considered private roads and the construction and maintenance of a property road is the responsibility of the property owner.

Property access constructed between a Council maintained road and the property boundary will be considered a driveway access. The construction and maintenance of a driveway access is the responsibility of the property owner.

Council's own planning does not include the opening of unconstructed roads in the rural road network.

Council considers requests to open an unconstructed road at the applicant's cost where no alternate access already exists and it is unlikely to have a detrimental impact on operations of the road network.

The following assessment criteria is considered for the opening of unconstructed rural roads and if approved, will determine the design standard to be applied:

- (a) Whether there is an occupied habitable dwelling on the property;
- (b) Whether legal and practical access is available via another constructed road;
- (c) Whether the road could be constructed to the standard required in the Design Standards for Rural Roads Guideline without any significant environmental impacts;
- (d) Whether the opening of a road (particularly a connecting road) may lead to undesirable effects on the road network which may require the proposed road be constructed now or in the future to a higher standard than originally anticipated;
- (e) Whether there are any further legal or statutory obligations, including native title, cultural heritage and environmental obligations required to be met prior to opening of the road; and
- (f) Any other site specific issues that might arise from works at that site.

Requests to open an unconstructed road at the applicant's cost must be approved by the General Manager Regional Services or Manager Civil Operations. Where approval to open an unconstructed road at the applicant's cost is provided, the applicant is required to apply for and obtain a Road Reserve Works Permit from Council by submitting a Road Reserve Works Permit Application Form prior to commencement of the works.

Once the opening of the road has been completed and accepted by Council, the opened section of road, is added to the Council Road Register as a Council owned road and Council assumes maintenance and renewal responsibilities to the point nominated by Council.

Council may consider the opening of a road beyond the point adjacent to the nearest property boundary of the applicant's property at the applicant's cost however these roads are considered property roads or driveway accesses with maintenance and renewal of the property road or driveway access being the responsibility of the property owner.

Requests to open an Unconstructed Road at the applicant's cost as a property road or driveway must be approved by the General Manager Regional Services or Manager Civil Operations. Where approval to open an unconstructed road at the applicant's cost as a property road or driveway access is provided, the applicant is required to apply for and obtain a Road Reserve Works Permit from Council by submitting a Road Reserve Works Permit Application Form prior to commencement of the initial construction works and for maintenance activities thereafter.

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5.2 Upgrading Rural Roads to a Higher Standard at Council's Cost

From time to time, Council receives requests to upgrade rural roads to a higher standard. These requests are generally seeking the upgrading of an unsealed road to a higher standard unsealed road or to a sealed road.

Council's own planning will concentrate on upgrading unsealed rural roads carrying greater than 150 vehicles per day (AADT). Roads carrying lower traffic volumes may be considered for upgrading where exceptional circumstances exist.

Assessment of requests for the upgrading of a rural road to a higher standard will consider the following standard assessment criteria:

- (a) The traffic volume, mix and proportion of heavy vehicles utilising the road;
- (b) The strategic significance of the road in supporting industries within the Region;
- (c) The additional maintenance and renewal costs associated with the upgrade;
- (d) The geometric standard of the existing road and any road related safety issues;
- (e) The potential for inundation or drainage issues associated with the road; and
- (f) Any other site specific issues that may arise from works at the site.

Where the assessment indicates that an upgrade to a higher standard is warranted, Council determines the design standard to be applied and lists the upgrade works for consideration in a future capital works program.

Where a determination is made that an upgrade to a higher standard is not warranted, the road remains at its current standard.

5.3 Upgrading Rural Roads to a Higher Standard at the Applicant's Cost

Council may consider requests to upgrade rural roads to a higher standard at the applicant's cost where it is unlikely to have a detrimental impact on operations of the road network. Council considers the standard assessment criteria in paragraph 5.2 for the upgrading of a rural road and determines the design standard to be applied.

Requests to upgrade a rural road to a higher standard at the applicant's cost must be approved by the General Manager Regional Services or Manager Civil Operations. The applicant is required to apply for and obtain a Road Reserve Works Permit from Council by submitting a Road Reserve Works Permit Application Form prior to commencement of the works.

Council will maintain or renew the road to its upgraded standard for the duration that the upgraded standard of road is required.

Should the road no longer be required to be maintained or renewed to the upgraded standard, Council decides whether to revert the road to its normal operational standard or not.

5.4 Intermittent (Dust) Sealing of Unsealed Rural Roads at the Applicant's Cost

From time to time, Council receives requests to provide intermittent sealing of unsealed rural roads in order to minimise the effect of dust on habitable dwellings in close proximity to the unsealed road.

Council does not include intermittent dust sealing in Council's planned works for upgrading of the rural road network.

Council considers requests to provide intermittent sealing of unsealed rural roads at the applicant's cost where it is unlikely to have a detrimental impact on operations of the road network.

The following assessment criteria for the intermittent dust sealing of an unsealed rural road is considered and if the request is approved, determines the design standard to be applied:

- (a) The traffic volume and proportion of heavy vehicles utilising the road;
- (b) The proximity of the habitable dwelling to the road and the direction of prevailing winds;
- (c) The geometric and constructed standard of the existing road and any road related safety issues;

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- (d) The operating speed environment of the road; and
- (e) Any other site specific issues that might arise from works at that site.

Requests to provide intermittent sealing of an unsealed rural road at the applicant's cost must be approved by the General Manager Regional Services or Manager Civil Operations. The applicant is required to apply for and obtain a Road Reserve Works Permit from Council by submitting a Road Reserve Works Permit Application Form prior to commencement of the works.

Council will fund the maintenance and renewal of the intermittent seal for the duration that the intermittent seal is required.

Should the intermittent seal no longer be required, Council decides whether to revert the road to its normal operational standard or not.

6 Review Timelines

This policy is reviewed when any of the following occur:

- (a) The related information is amended or replaced; or
- (b) Other circumstances as determined from time to time by the Council.

7 Document Management

Sponsor	Chief Executive Officer
Business Owner	General Manager Regional Services
Policy Owner	Manager Civil Operations
Policy Quality Control	Legal and Governance



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