

2.20 TELECOMMUNICATIONS ANTENNAE

(ADOPTED 1999)

1. INTRODUCTION

Under the Town Planning Scheme, telecommunications infrastructure is a prohibited form of development in the Residential, Residential/Commercial and Medical zones but is a discretionary use in the commercial zones. Such infrastructure may also be considered on reserved land, including Town Reserves, Regional Reserves and Road Reserves.

Telecommunications infrastructure means any part of infrastructure of a telecommunications network and includes any line, equipment, apparatus, tower, antenna, tunnel, duct, hole, pit or other structure used, or for use, in or in connection with a telecommunications network.

Many of these works are clearly of no particular concern to the general public, and need only be coordinated with regard to issues such as traffic management and road/footpath maintenance. On the other hand, there are examples of infrastructure which may be of concern to the community, and which has the potential for significant impact on amenity.

Procedures have been established under the Telecommunications Act 1997, for infrastructure providers to consult with affected persons and agencies, including the Council, prior to the erection and/or installation of certain types of infrastructure, and these are set out in the Telecommunications Code of Practice 1997. The Code recognises the importance of local government input into the decision making process and provides an opportunity for Councils to guide the development of telecommunications infrastructure so as to minimise the impact of such facilities.

The Telecommunications Act is also supplemented by the Telecommunications (Low Impact Facilities) Determination 1997, which defines those classes of telecommunications infrastructure, which are considered to have minimal impact. These vary according to the zone in which the infrastructure is proposed, so that a particular activity that might be classed as low impact in one zone, may not be a low impact facility in another zone. The order of sensitivity of the zones ranges from areas of environmental significance having the highest sensitivity, through residential, commercial and industrial with rural zones having the lowest sensitivity.

2. AIM

The aim of this policy is to provide guidance to telecommunication service providers concerning the installation of infrastructure and to facilitate the provision of telecommunication services to the community.

3. POLICY

3.1 The installation of low impact facilities as defined under Part 3 of the Telecommunications (Low Impact Facilities) Determination 1997, is deemed to be a minor form of development and is exempt under Commonwealth legislation from the requirement to obtain the Council's planning approval. Such facilities are classified by reference to the zone in which they are proposed, but in any case do not include the following:

designated overhead lines, a tower that is not attached to a building, a tower attached to a building and more than 5 metres high; or an extension to any existing tower, if the extension is more than 5 metres high.

3.2 Where a telecommunications service provider proposes to develop infrastructure other than that listed in policy 1 above, and involves the erection of structures such as towers or pylons, applicants shall be required to address the following criteria, which shall be the basis for the Council's assessment:

- (a) The availability of existing structures which may be suitable to accommodate the communications infrastructure, whether belonging to the proponent, another service provider or other person;
- (b) The need to minimise any impact of the amenity of the locality, taking into consideration the visibility of the structure from any residential area or public place and any natural environmental or conservation values;
- (c) The design and colour of the proposed structure and its relationship with the adjacent environment;
- (d) The intensity and wavelength of any transmission and its relationship to the Australian Standards applicable to emission of electromagnetic radiation;
- (e) The nature of adjacent land uses and the existing or likely future occupancy of adjacent sites, with reference to the levels of exposure to electromagnetic radiation likely to be experienced and the susceptibility of persons exposed;
- (f) Any direct benefits to the community which are likely to accrue from the proposed works, including improved quality of telecommunications signals and expansion of access to information sources;
- (g) Any comments received in response to the notification of the proposal in accordance with Policy 2.3 *Public Notification and Advertising Procedures* or such other notification, which may be required in accordance with the Telecommunications Code of Practice.

- 3.3** In general the Council will not support the erection of tower structures for the transmission of telecommunication signals in the immediate vicinity of any residential site, school, pre-school, kindergarten or health clinic which is used on a regular basis.
- 3.4** In general the Council will not support the erection of telecommunication towers other than those involving a single pole and with a maximum height of 20 metres above natural ground level if free standing, or 10 metres above the roof of a commercial or industrial building if erected on the roof of such a building.
- 3.5** Preference will be given to infrastructure which is integrated with building structures rather than free standing structures, and consideration should be given by proponents to the use of design and colour to minimise the visual impact of facilities.
- 3.6** Council will not support the use of existing overhead electricity poles for the support of overhead telecommunication cabling, but will support and facilitate the undergrounding of existing electricity supplies in association with telecommunication lines.