Local Planning Policy 2.3

Workforce Accommodation

VERSION 3

February 2026

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Version	Adoption	Comment
1	14 August 2007 Council Item DS022	Draft.
1	23 October 2007 Council Item DS075	Final.
1	1 July 2011 Council Item SC001	Final – Readopted under the new City of Greater Geraldton.
2	23 February 2016 Council Item DRS245	Final – No objections received during advertising.
3	TBC	Updated to reflect current planning framework.

PO Box 101 Geraldton WA 6531
Geraldton Civic Centre T 08 9956 6600 F 08 9956 6674
Mullewa Office T 08 9956 6643 F 08 9961 1206
E council@cgg.wa.gov.au W www.cgg.wa.gov.au
ABN 55 907 677 173

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1.0 CITATION

This is a local planning policy prepared under the *Planning and Development (Local Planning Schemes) Regulations 2015* and the City of Greater Geraldton Local Planning Scheme No. 1 ('the Scheme'). It may be cited as *Local Planning Policy No. 2.3 Workforce Accommodation.*

2.0 INTRODUCTION

An essential component of several industry sectors is the ability to attract and accommodate a workforce such as for the resources, tourism, construction and agricultural industries.

This policy is particularly concerned with addressing planning requirements associated with accommodation for construction and operational projects that typically employ fly-in, fly-out workforces that are associated with the large-scale mining, resource and infrastructure sectors.

The recent history of new projects in the Geraldton area and the Mid West region is dominated by the emergence of mining. Taking into account patterns of fly-in, fly-out employment within mining, it is recognised that the initial construction workforce for mining projects may not directly translate into workers permanently residing within Geraldton. In the interests of ensuring industries are able to efficiently attract and retain labour to undertake construction projects, there are merits behind a workforce being temporarily housed close to the construction site itself, but isolated from existing population centres.

The Local Planning Strategy aims for sustainable population growth to primarily focus on the Geraldton Urban Growth Boundary area and the regional townsites of Mullewa and Walkaway. The local government recognises the importance of long-term or operational workforce in mining and other industry sectors to be located within existing settlements such as Geraldton, Mullewa and Walkaway. These population centres are capable of providing appropriate community infrastructure and services.

In recognition that the development of Workforce Accommodation is a complex issue, influenced by a range of global and national factors, the State Government, via the Western Australian Planning Commission (WAPC), has prepared a Position Statement: Workforce Accommodation (January 2018) (the Position Statement) to provide guidance for local governments and decision makers. The Position Statement outlines the role of local governments in setting the planning framework to guide the location of workforce accommodation and the role for decision makers in considering applications under the *Planning and Development Act 2005* (the Act). The Position Statement notes that the Mining Act 1978 and State Agreement Acts can vary the requirements of the Act.

The Position Statement notes:

> *'Where practicable, workforce accommodation should be provided in established towns, in locations suitable to its context, to facilitate their ongoing sustainability. Planning and development of workforce accommodation should be consistent with local planning strategies and schemes, except where the Mining Act 1978 and State Agreement Acts prevail.'*

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3.0 APPLICABLE DEVELOPMENT

Under the provisions of the Scheme, Workforce Accommodation is an 'A' use in the Residential, Rural and Tourism zones meaning the use is permissible following consultation with adjoining and/or affected landowners. This policy guides assessment of all proposals for:

- new Workforce Accommodation facilities;
- additions and alterations to existing Workforce Accommodation facilities; and
- changes to the operational scope including additional extension of time requests.

This LPP should be read in conjunction with the Scheme, the Planning and Development (Local Planning Schemes) Regulations 2015 and any other relevant planning documents including the Position Statement: Workforce Accommodation (WAPC, January 2018).

As outlined in the Position Statement, the Planning and Development Act 2005 establishes a general requirement for all development to obtain approval through a development application made under a planning scheme. However, the jurisdictions of the Mining Act 1978 and State Agreement Acts can vary the application of the Planning and Development Act 2005. This policy may be used by the local government to guide comments on Crown land dealings or proposals for the grant of a mining tenement under the Mining Act or State Agreement Acts.

4.0 PLANNING POLICY

The objectives of this LPP are:

a) To encourage high quality, aesthetically pleasing built form outcomes and associated landscaping, which responds to the local planning framework and integrates with the surrounding development.

b) To guide the information required in support of development applications for Workforce Accommodation.

c) To encourage an environmentally sustainable design response which facilitates a transition from workforce accommodation to a quality residential or short-stay accommodation rather than requiring demolition at the end of the life of the project.

d) To provide a flexible approach for the establishment of Workforce Accommodation that is demonstrated to meet the temporary needs of a specific industry related project and is considered to be appropriate from a social, environmental, cultural and economic perspective.

e) To allow for Workforce Accommodation associated with the construction / maintenance / shut-down to be temporarily provided on land within the City of Greater Geraldton and located in proximity to sites for major projects.

f) To encourage Workforce Accommodation for permanent operational workforce to be located within the Geraldton Urban Growth Boundary area or the regional townsites of Mullewa or Walkaway and discourage them from rural land.

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5.0 DEVELOPMENT REQUIREMENTS

5.1 Interpretation of Construction and Operational Workforce

This policy recognises there are two types of workforce accommodation as outlined below and the needs of both types are different.

5.1.1 Construction workforce is to be interpreted where a significant number of construction staff may be required to be brought into the locality for undertaking the construction phase of the project or during maintenance shut-downs, outside of what would otherwise be considered the operational phase of the project.

5.1.2 Operational workforce is to be interpreted as the more permanent staff that are required to operate the facility or project inclusive of support staff such as catering, cleaners, medical staff and the like.

5.2 Location

5.2.1 Construction related Workforce Accommodation is considered to be suitable for locations within 50km or a 30 minute drive to the relevant project site. Within rural areas the local government preference is the establishment of Workforce Accommodation to be located in close proximity, or on land directly associated with, the relevant project or development to which it supports.

5.2.2 Operational related Workforce Accommodation is encouraged to be located within the existing settlements of the Geraldton Urban Growth Boundary area and the regional townsites of Mullewa and Walkaway where practical.

5.3 Rural Zone

Workforce Accommodation should be developed in a manner that meets the objectives and site development requirements for the Rural zone in the Scheme. In addition, the proposed Workforce Accommodation should avoid:

a) Land containing remnant vegetation. The local government may consider developments on sites in proximity to remnant vegetation where bushfire management requirements are addressed, and where clearing of vegetation is avoided or minimised through revegetation of other portions of the site.

b) Land located within Special Control Areas in the Scheme.

c) Land containing significant deposits of basic raw materials.

d) Detrimental impact upon the character and amenity of adjoining land.

5.4 Tourism Zone

Workforce Accommodation should be developed in a manner that meets the objectives and site development requirements for the Tourism zone in the Scheme. In addition, the proposed Workforce Accommodation should:

a) Consider the compatibility of the use with existing operational tourism uses on the site or the future intended use of the site for tourism uses.

b) Be designed in a manner that would facilitate a transition from workforce accommodation to a quality short-stay accommodation alternative.

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5.5 Residential Zone

Workforce Accommodation should be developed in a manner that meets the objectives and site development requirements for the Residential zone in the Scheme and the relevant provisions of the Residential Design Codes Volumes 1 and 2 (as appropriate) including street setbacks, side setbacks, building height, solar access, landscaping and open space. In addition, the design of the proposed Workforce Accommodation should:

a) Respect the character of the area having regard to residential density, building scale, built form and boundary setbacks.

b) Ensure the external appearance of the development is consistent and compatible with surrounding uses. Where possible colours, materials and architectural design features used to identify the character of the area should be incorporated into the external appearance of the development.

c) Incorporate landscaping to integrate the development with the streetscape, to screen areas of car parking, and to compliment the character and amenity of the residential area.

d) Facilitate a transition from workforce accommodation to a suitable alternative land use at the appropriate time.

5.6 Duration of Development Approval

5.6.1 Development approvals for Workforce Accommodation are generally subject to a temporary approval of up to 5 years. The specific time limit however will have regard to the purpose of the Workforce Accommodation (construction or operational staff) and it should not be assumed that a 5 year period will be granted in all cases.

5.6.2 In considering the period of time for which a development approval is granted, the local government will consider the timeframe of the work the accommodation is associated with, the timeframe requested by the applicant and the tenure arrangements for the land (e.g. period of lease over Crown land).

6.0 ACCOMPANYING MATERIAL

Applications should be supported with a management statement and/or information detailing how the proposed location is appropriate. Information provided would generally include:

a) An overall description of the proposal including;

i. the site, including the site layout;

ii. the location of the worksite(s) to be served by the proposed workforce accommodation;

iii. demonstrate access to existing community infrastructure and services (such as roads, power, water, sewerage, telecommunications).

iv. an estimated length of time the worksite will be operational for;

v. an estimated number of workers;

vi. breakdown of roles and length of stay;

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vii. if the proposal accommodates workers from other sites/companies;

viii. details of any on site amenities to be provided; and

ix. an overview of site operations.

b) Demonstration of the appropriateness of the site's location and the compatibility of Workforce Accommodation with adjoining / nearby uses including:

i. Suitable information to demonstrate sufficient on-site parking for the number of accommodation units provided.

ii. Specific measures should be identified to manage impacts on neighbouring amenity, such as traffic movement and noise generated by the use.

iii. Demonstrate how the layout and arrangement of the use, minimises the impacts of noise and headlight glare of vehicles to bedrooms and major habitable rooms of adjacent or neighbouring dwellings.

iv. Information regarding management including how the premises will generally operate on a day-to-day basis (including confirming arrangements for waste management).

c) Provide details regarding the management and decommissioning/rehabilitation (as required) of the site for the eventual removal of the Workforce Accommodation development and return of the land to its original state (or next intended state of land use / development).

7.0 CONSULTATION

Workforce accommodation is an 'A' use, meaning advertising of the proposal is required prior to a determination being made. The extent of consultation with the affected landowners is at the City's discretion depending on the likely impacts of the proposal.

8.0 DEFINITIONS

Refer to the City's Local Planning Scheme No. 1, or the Planning and Development (Local Planning Schemes) Regulations 2015, the Residential Design Codes Volumes 1 and 2 for relevant definitions.

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