

## 4.16 FRACKING

### SUSTAINABILITY THEME

Governance

### OBJECTIVES

This policy will guide any decisions or activities by, or on behalf of the City of Greater Geraldton regarding onshore petroleum activities within the City.

### POLICY STATEMENT

The City does not support the use of unconventional hydraulic fracturing “fracking” (either coal or shale or other) in any areas contained within its boundaries, or in any place from where its town water is drawn.

### POLICY DETAILS

1. In respect to current and future proposals for on-shore petroleum or other extractive industries, Council will;
  - 1.1. Effectively consult communities within the City regarding any decisions on onshore petroleum developments and represent the concerns and interests of these communities in decision-making on all matters relating to these developments;
  - 1.2. Support and advocate for the rights of communities and residents within the City to clean water, clean air, and enjoyment of land without pollution or nuisance;
  - 1.3. Support and advocate for the existing economic land-uses within the City (including pastoral, agricultural and horticultural, fishing and tourism businesses) to continue to operate unhindered by impacts of petroleum or resource extraction industries;
  - 1.4. Ensure that the protection of the health of communities and the protection of groundwater resources is afforded the highest priority in decision-making by the City; and
  - 1.5. Work to ensure that any petroleum or mineral resource projects in the City provide benefit to our community, and individuals within the community where appropriate.
2. To be supported by the City, onshore petroleum exploration and development must;
  - 2.1. Undertake thorough community consultation and achieve demonstrated broad community support for development;
  - 2.2. Maintain and protect the amenity and character of the City, its existing communities, land-uses and natural environment;
  - 2.3. Have undergone thorough and independent assessment of environmental, health, agricultural and socio-economic impacts (including cumulative impacts) by the EPA, Department of Health and other relevant agencies;
  - 2.4. Ensure zero impact on groundwater resources used for drinking, agriculture or other existing uses, including the catchment and recharge areas for these resources;

- 2.5. Ensure zero impact on the health of communities or individuals within the City;
- 2.6. Provide full transparency to the community regarding all environmental compliance and monitoring data, including air quality and groundwater monitoring results, chemicals used, and any other relevant information which must be disclosed in a timely way;
- 2.7. Accept a 'presumption of liability' for any groundwater pollution that is detected in the vicinity of petroleum operations and which can reasonable be associated with those operations;
- 2.8. Provide guarantees of full reparation and remediation of groundwater, land, infrastructure, public health or other unplanned impacts that arise from the development; and
- 2.9. Ensure that the impacts on City Council infrastructure are adequately compensated for in the immediate and future life of that asset, and that the full costs are recovered for any additional infrastructure required.

The City will not provide any assistance or support to proponents or other parties (including the State Government) who seek to undertake or promote petroleum activities within the City that do not meet these standards.

### KEY TERM DEFINITION

**Hydraulic fracturing**, also commonly referred to as fracking, is a method used by the oil and gas industry to increase the rate and total amount of oil and gas extracted from reservoirs. Source: CSIRO Website.

### ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Any proposal for fracking within the City of Greater Geraldton boundaries will be referred to the Council.

### WORKPLACE INFORMATION

In 2017, the WA Government constituted an independent scientific panel under section 25 of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986*, to undertake and report on an inquiry into the effects of the fracking process on the Western Australian environment. The background and issues paper, the final report (*Independent Scientific Panel Inquiry into Hydraulic Fracture Stimulation in Western Australia – Final report to the Western Australian Government – September 2018*) and its Appendices, and associated information papers, are in the public domain and may be accessed online at: [www.frackinginquiry.wa.gov.au](http://www.frackinginquiry.wa.gov.au)

### POLICY ADMINISTRATION

Directorate		Officer	Review Cycle	Next Due
Corporate and Commercial Services		Manager Corporate Services	Biennial	2021
Version	Decision Reference	Synopsis		
1.		Draft policy		