

Title	Landowner Biodiversity Conservation Grant Program
Policy Number (Governance Purpose)	AEW5



Policy Type

Council

Policy Purpose

To provide financial support and deliver environmental education to local landowners with the intent to provide assistance with conservation and enhancement of natural bushland and wetland areas on privately owned land.

Policy Statement

As a consequence of urbanisation, local bushland has become fragmented and is increasingly under threat from a variety of causes that contribute to its degradation and overall loss of biodiversity.

Privately owned bushland is therefore an important resource, forming part of ecological corridors and bushland linkages for the migration of wildlife. Ecological corridors and linkages provide habitat and safe passage for fauna, which aids in maintaining or enhancing genetic diversity and protects biodiversity.

In recognition of the importance of conserving natural bushland and wetland areas on privately owned land, the Council will provide up to \$3,000 per lot to eligible landowners. Landowners are eligible to lodge an application for each round of funding provided previous grants have been acquitted.

Conditions of Approval

Landowners need to submit an application prior to the end of October and may be awarded a grant if they meet the eligible criteria.

Groups or individuals that are subject to an active compliance investigation or prosecution involving the City of Cockburn will not be considered.

Funds will not be provided to assist with complying with a pre-existing planning or environmental approval.

The City of Cockburn Town Planning Scheme provisions state that no vegetation on a lot in the 'Rural' or 'Resource' Zone can be removed without approval. If any un-approved clearing is found on a relevant property, the landowner may be ineligible to receive the grant during a current, or future grant round.

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Grant Conditions

All successful applicants are required to:

1. Complete and sign a Voluntary Management Agreement and Conditions of Funding form, which includes a commitment to manage the grant funded activities/outcomes for a minimum of 3 years (for example revegetation must be watered and weeded for a minimum 3 years to ensure survivability);
2. Complete a Statement by Supplier form or provide an ABN. This will avoid withholding tax being deducted from the grant;
3. Attend a minimum of one half-day environmental management workshop hosted by the City and;
4. Submit an Acquittal Report by 30th September the following year.

Allocation of Grants

Applications for grants will be evaluated and awarded:

1. In order of merit until the annual funding allocation is exhausted. Preference is given to properties with larger remnant bushland or wetland areas that are of good biodiversity value. Smaller areas will be considered if they are linked to adjoining properties or green corridors, or if the conservation value of the area in question is extremely high.
2. A new applicant will be given preference over an applicant that has previously received funding in consecutive years.

Acquittal of Grants

Grant recipients shall be required to complete and submit an Acquittal Report to the delegated officer by 30th September the following year, confirming that funds have been expended in accordance with the Voluntary Management Agreement and Conditions of Funding.

Supporting Documentation

1. Brochure
2. Voluntary Management Agreement and Conditions of Funding Form
3. Application Form (integrated into SmartyGrants)
4. Property Eligibility Checklist Form (integrated into SmartyGrants)
5. Final Report Acquittal Form (integrated into SmartyGrants)

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Strategic Link:	Natural Area Management Strategy
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