



Contribution for Sealing of Unsealed (Gravel) Roads Policy

Policy, General Manager’s Directive, Procedure, Procedural Guideline, Work Instruction	Policy (External)
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Linkage to Our Community Vision	3 Places For People
Objective	3.3 We are connected and able to move around in a safe, accessible, affordable, healthy and environmentally friendly way
Strategy	2.4.3 We have the programs, services and infrastructure to ensure a safe and healthy community



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1. Purpose

This Policy allows Council to accept voluntary monetary contributions from property owners/residents to self-fund the sealing of unsealed (gravel) roads, subject to the rules and conditions outlined within this Policy.

2. Scope of Policy

This Policy applies to all Council maintained unsealed roads within Bellingen Shire Council and is available to all property owners/residents.

3. Definitions

Council	Bellingen Shire Council
Unsealed (Gravel) Road	An unsealed (gravel) road is a dedicated road that has been formed and surfaced with imported gravel material from a quarry or a stream bed
Sealing	<p>There are a variety of sealing techniques which may be applied to an existing road formation that has been prepared to a minimum standard as determined by Council (including pavement and drainage works)</p> <p>High traffic volume roads will require a more robust level of seal design whilst low traffic volume roads may have a simplified seal design to mitigate the impacts of dust on amenity, improve environmental outcomes and/or offer maintenance savings</p> <p>Sealing works are a risk-based solution for locations in consideration of traffic volumes, freight impacts, terrain, road geometry and environmental factors. Under the Policy Council would look to implement the most cost-effective seal solution suited to the specific location sufficient, to avoid an early failure of the seal technique that is applied</p>

4. Related Documentation

As a minimum, this document should be read in conjunction with:

- Roads Act 1993



5. Background

Council has 194 km of unsealed roads (2020) within the Local Government Area.

Currently, Council's emphasis on asset management is the maintenance and renewal of its existing asset base. Although Council has a process for determination and validation of the highest priority unsealed roads and endeavours to seek funding opportunity to have unsealed roads upgraded, this only allows for a small percentage of those roads being sealed as part of a rolling programme. Therefore, Council recognises property owners or residents with this Policy, who may want to supplement, what Council can achieve within existing financial and resource constraints.

Council has undertaken trials of alternate sealing techniques within the Shire to allow for consideration of more cost-effective options for sealing of lower volume roads.

Council recognises that residents living in houses located along unsealed roads in the Shire may prefer the section of roadway within the immediate vicinity of their house to be sealed to minimise the impact of dust from traffic movements on the amenity of their property and particularly their place of residence.

On this basis, Council is willing to consider voluntary contributions to self-fund the sealing of unsealed (gravel) roads within certain parameters.

6. Policy

This *Contribution for Sealing of Unsealed (Gravel) Roads Policy* details the procedures and conditions under which Council would accept voluntary contributions to seal an unsealed (gravel) section of public road.

7. Procedures

The following procedures will be followed in the implementation of this Policy.

7.1 Road Condition and Restrictions

- a) Council will assess the suitability of gravel road segments on a merit basis for suitability undertake sealing works.
- b) Sealing works will need to include formation reconstruction, pavement reconstruction and drainage reconstruction, where necessary.
- c) Sealing of isolated segments of unsealed (gravel) road (for example not being continuous with the existing sealed road network) is not permitted by this policy as it results in the ad hoc sealing of Council's road network. However, exceptions to this provision will be referred to Council for review where it is considered by the General Manager that such an exception is reasonable in the circumstances.
- d) Sealing of longer length of unsealed (gravel) roads may be achieved by a group of residents cooperatively working together. For example, this may apply to residents living on a gravel lane. However, the gravel lane will need to link to a sealed road.
- e) Council will manage the works. A contractor working directly for the property owner is not permitted.



- f) The discretion to reject or accept a contribution resides with the General Manager or delegate.

7.2 Costs

- a) The voluntary self-funded seal cost will include the sealing works as well as formation reconstruction, pavement reconstruction and drainage reconstruction, where considered necessary.
- b) Council will provide a cost estimate for the works prior to commencement detailing the maximum cost.
- c) Council's cost estimate will be calculated using all appropriate overhead costs (i.e. oncosts) however, Council will not seek a profit from the delivery of the sealing works.
- d) Generally, Council will not make any contribution to the works, nor will it accept any offer that is conditional on Council contributing. However, if an allocation has been provided for in the current capital budget or if alternative funding becomes available, Council may co-contribute to extend the length of sealing works. Due to funding constraints, Council's co-contribution may impact its decision making regarding the process.
- e) The priority decisions of Council's works programme will be made without regard to the potential or otherwise of a contribution under this Policy.
- f) Where a group of residents are cooperatively working together, the distribution of costs must be negotiated between the residents. Council will not coordinate the negotiations.

7.3 Schedule

- a) A proposed schedule for the works will be provided with the cost estimate.
- b) The voluntary self-funded sealing works, if approved, will be included in Council's works program to suit resources and programming.
- c) The voluntary self-funded sealing works will not take priority over existing public works programmes.
- d) Sealing works are generally undertaken during the summer periods, when warmer weather is experienced which is conducive to performing such works.

7.4 Condition and Obligations

- a) Council accepts the voluntary self-funded sealing contribution without any preferential maintenance commitment, or obligation, in favour of the completed sealing works.
- b) Council will take ownership of the completed sealing works and manage the improved road asset in accordance with Council's existing programs and practices.



- c) The voluntary self-funded contributor/s will not have any authority or exercise any rights over the works by Council during or after construction.
- d) Payment for cost of the works will be made prior to commencement of works, and will be based on the cost estimate provided. Final costs shall be reconciled at completion of the works but will not exceed the maximum costs provided. As necessary, Council will adjust payment within 30 days of notification of final costs.
- e) Prior to Council undertaking the work, it will be necessary for the landholder(s) to sign and execute an Agreement prepared by Council confirming the conditions and obligations of this Policy.
- f) Acceptance of a contribution does not imply acceptance by Council of the work as satisfying any existing or future condition of development consent.

8. Appeal/Objections Process

Determination of appeals or objections shall be at the sole discretion of the General Manager or delegate.

9. Review

This Policy is to be reviewed every four years.

10. Attachments

Nil