



Ashfield Council

Sustainable Ashfield: An Ecologically Sustainable Development (ESD) Policy

April 2003

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This policy will be reviewed triennially by: Planning and Environment

Next review date: 2014



Title:	Sustainable Ashfield: An ecologically sustainable Development (ESD) policy
Summary:	A statement of principles for Ashfield Council supporting ecological sustainable development.
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Applicable Delegation of Authority:	
Related Ashfield Council Policy:	
Related Ashfield Council Procedure:	



Policy Background

Ecological Sustainable Development is a requirement for Councils under the Local Government Act 1993 [S7 (e), S8] and is also covered under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979. An extract from the Local Government Act is provided as Schedule 1 to this policy.

Policy Purpose

This policy establishes the key ESD principles under which Ashfield Council will exercise its powers for the benefit of the local community.

Policy Objectives

The objectives of this Policy are:

- To show Council's commitment to ESD.
- To develop a comprehensive response to the environmental issues addressed in the Ashfield Council State of the Environment Report.
- To provide a coordinated framework for implementing ESD, building on Council's existing environmental programs.
- To assist in the review and update of Council's Management Plan.
- To gain effective community input into the development and implementation of environmental policies and programs.
- To provide leadership by incorporating environmental policies and strategies for Council's own operations.

Implementation and access

The following principles will help Council implement this Policy.

Principle 1: Council will seek to be recognised as an organisation that shows leadership in the area of ESD by establishing and maintaining high environmental standards for its own operations.

Principle 2: Council will devote resources to educating and informing the Ashfield community as to how individuals and organisations can contribute to ESD in Ashfield.

Principle 3: Where necessary Council will use its powers to regulate local development so as to contribute to ESD.

Principle 4: Council will seek effective community input into the development of environmental policies and programs, and seek to work cooperatively with community groups that are actively involved in local environmental initiatives.

Principle 5: Council will continue to incorporate into its annual Management Plan initiatives that will contribute to improving the environment in Ashfield.



Principle 6 Council will give priority to those local programs and activities, which contribute best to achieving national priorities for improvement of the environment.

Principle 7 Council will play an active role in regional environmental initiatives.

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Schedule 1

Extract from the Dictionary from the Local Government Act 1993

principles of ecologically sustainable development means the following statements of principle:

Ecologically sustainable development requires the effective integration of economic and environmental considerations in decision-making processes. Ecologically sustainable development can be achieved through the implementation of the following principles and programs:

- (a) the precautionary principle—namely, that if there are threats of serious or irreversible environmental damage, lack of full scientific certainty should not be used as a reason for postponing measures to prevent environmental degradation.

In the application of the precautionary principle, public and private decisions should be guided by:

- (i) careful evaluation to avoid, wherever practicable, serious or irreversible damage to the environment, and
 - (ii) an assessment of the risk-weighted consequences of various options,
- (b) inter-generational equity—namely, that the present generation should ensure that the health, diversity and productivity of the environment is maintained or enhanced for the benefit of future generations,
 - (c) conservation of biological diversity and ecological integrity—namely, that conservation of biological diversity and ecological integrity should be a fundamental consideration,
 - (d) improved valuation, pricing and incentive mechanisms—namely, that environmental factors should be included in the valuation of assets and services, such as:
 - (i) polluter pays—that is, those who generate pollution and waste should bear the cost of containment, avoidance or abatement,
 - (ii) the users of goods and services should pay prices based on the full life cycle of costs of providing goods and services, including the use of natural resources and assets and the ultimate disposal of any waste,
 - (iii) environmental goals, having been established, should be pursued in the most cost effective way, by establishing incentive structures, including market mechanisms, that enable those best placed to maximise benefits or minimise costs to develop their own solutions and responses to environmental problems.