
POLICY NAME: **Depasturing Stock on Town Common Reserves Policy**

POLICY NUMBER: **CS004**

ADOPTED: **19 March 2025**

POLICY OWNER **District Managers**

PURPOSE: To provide a framework for the operation and management of stock being depastured on town common reserves across the region.

1 SCOPE

This policy governs the depasturage and movement of horses and cattle on the Alpha, Aramac, Barcaldine, Muttaborra and Jericho town common reserves as follows:

Alpha	Lots 3, 6 & 8 on SP136857, Lot 7 on SP175997, Lot 129 on BEL12415 & Lot 1 on SP110098
Jericho	Lot 51 on MX116, Lot 40 on MX97 & Lot 6 on SP223522
Barcaldine	Lots 1-4 on SP243965
Aramac	Lot 47 on RY169, Lots 1, 2 & 3 on SP259525
Muttaborra	Lot 55 on CM174 & Lot 34 on CM128

2 POLICY OBJECTIVE

The objective of this Policy is to ensure that a consistent approach is undertaken by Council staff regarding the management of town common reserves for the purposes of stock being depastured.

3 HEAD OF POWER

Local Government Act 2009 (Qld)

Land Act 2009

Stock Route Management Act 2002

4 POLICY STATEMENT

4.1 Depasturing Eligibility

1. All stock must be the bona-fide property of the applicant. Owners of cattle must be the legitimate owners and cannot be agisting cattle for other residents/relatives or individuals.
2. The applicant may only depasture stock on the nearest town common reserve to where they reside.
3. The applicant must reside within a designated town area and not own or lease grazing land that has as a carrying capacity of more than the specific town common limits being applied for.
4. The applicant must have resided in the Barcaldine Regional Council area continuously for a period of one year prior to the date of application.
5. The applicant must advise the Chief Executive Officer in writing within 7 days of any change to their circumstances including residency status.
6. Any applicant having overdue Council debts (over 30 days) for any purpose at the time of an application shall have the application refused until such time as the overdue debts are paid in full.
7. Only cattle and horses are permitted to be depastured on town reserves (no small animals are allowed – sheep, goats etc.)
8. Cattle must be clearly branded with a brand registered in the applicant's name and cattle ear tagged with an identification number.
9. Clear photos must be provided annually by the applicant for all horses approved to depasture on a town common reserve.
10. Stallions and rigs are not permitted on any town common reserve.

4.2 Operational Considerations

1. Each community shall establish a Town Reserve Management Committee consisting of reserve stock owners to manage stock on the town common reserve in consultation with the relevant Rural Lands Officer.
2. Any additional management guidelines recommended by the Management Committee must be approved by the Chief Executive Officer.
3. The maximum number of stock that may be depastured by each applicant shall be determined by the Council but at no time shall exceed the maximum carrying capacity of each town reserve. The maximum carrying capacity (cattle and horses) of each reserve shall be:
 - i. Aramac: 467 head;
 - ii. Muttaborra: 378 head;
 - iii. Barcaldine: 240 head;
 - iv. Alpha: 130 head; and

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v. Jericho: 302 head.

4. The maximum stocking rate shall be:

Aramac:	20 cattle and 5 horses per household;
Muttaborra:	30 cattle and 5 horses per household;
Barcaldine:	Total of 8 head (cattle and horses) per household;
Alpha:	Total of 20 head (cattle and horses) per household; and
Jericho:	Total of 20 head (cattle and horses) per household.

5. If the Chief Executive Officer determines that any town reserve is suffering from overgrazing, drought or any condition prejudicial to the continued wellbeing of the reserve stock depasture, then the stocking rate may be reduced. The Chief Executive Officer shall issue a destocking notice to all permit holders to reduce numbers to a level determined acceptable by the Chief Executive Officer.
6. Steers are to be removed from the town common reserve at each muster before the stock has reached the age of twelve months, at the discretion of the Rural Lands Officer.
7. Bulls may be permitted on the town common reserve as determined by the Chief Executive Officer on the advice of the relevant Management Committee.
8. Funds raised from the bull levy (Aramac area) and sale of old bulls are to be used for the purchase of replacement bulls at no additional cost to Council.
9. Uncontrollable stock as determined by the Rural Lands Officer or Management Committee will be required to be removed from the town reserve.
10. Diseased, maimed, aged or poor stock will not be permitted on the reserve and must be removed by the owner.
11. Failure to observe all conditions contained in the permit shall result in immediate cancellation of any approval previously granted.
12. Persons who no longer reside in the township will be required to remove all stock within 3 months.
13. All cattle are to have a NLIS (National Livestock Identification System) ear tag prior to being placed on a town common reserve. A list of NLIS tag numbers is to be provided to Council with the application. Proof of the applicants RBE (Registered

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Biosecurity Entity) is required before cattle/horses are approved for access to a town common reserve.

14. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that all NLIS transfers on and off the town common reserves are completed correctly. National Vendor Declaration (NVD) and a copy of the NLIS transfer must be provided to the Rural Lands Officer upon receipt of cattle accessing the town common reserve. All relevant information will be retained in accordance with Council's record keeping requirements.
15. No stock is to be removed, mustered, tagged, branded or interfered with in any way on any common. Failure to observe this condition shall result in immediate cancellation of agistment rights. Any discrepancies will be resolved by the relevant District Manager.
16. It is the responsibility of the applicant to provide supplementary information if requested to allow the appropriate consideration of the application.
17. All calves under six months of age (and over 3 weeks of age) must be castrated, branded and tagged. Pain relief is not mandatory if cattle are less than six (6) months old, or less than twelve (12) months old and castrated or dehorned at their first yarding.
18. Mismothered/unmothered calves will be issued with a number tag at the time of branding and will be released into the mob until the next muster and if the owner is found, the owner will receive ownership of the said beast. Further observation in the paddock will determine the mother of said calf, and the calves number is recorded for the next muster to be assigned to the owner.
19. Any misbranded calves must be reported to the Rural Lands Officer at the time and the Rural Lands Officer and said owner of the mis-branded calves will document an agreement to return calves to the rightful owner.
20. When mothering up at a town common reserve muster, one owner or the owner's representative must be present with the Rural Lands Officer at the time of mothering up for identification and lawful purposes: When mothering up, the calf must suck cow, cow must sniff calf, and cow must not forcefully kick calf away. Cow and calf must be able to pleasantly stand in yard together without being chased away.
21. It is a requirement that the owner or a representative from each household is present while drafting to ensure there are no discrepancies. If the owner or owner's

representative is unable to attend the muster, they must provide written instructions to the Rural Lands Officer to process the calves in their absence.

4.3 Muster

1. A stock muster will be carried out every six months by the Management Committee in consultation with the Rural Lands Officer.
2. If Council carries out the six-monthly muster (not including a compliance muster), the cost will be charged to each owner on a per head basis at the date of the muster.
3. Council may at any time and for any reason conduct a compliance muster of a town common reserve.
4. Stock owners wishing to muster on a town common reserve, for any reason, must firstly obtain a permit from the Chief Executive Officer and give at least 5 days' notice to all stock owners.
5. It is an express condition of the permit that all stock being mustered must be mustered to the designated or other Council approved yards i.e. Council trucking yards in Aramac, the dip yards in Muttaborra, the saleyards in Barcaldine, the dip yards in Alpha and the pound yards in Jericho.
6. The Management Committee via the Rural Lands Officer shall report to the Chief Executive Officer full details of stock movements, stock owners and stock numbers at the conclusion of each muster.

4.4 Permits

1. The Chief Executive Officer will issue a permit to depasture stock to a successful applicant.
2. The Chief Executive Officer reserves the right to refuse an application for a permit or to cancel any current permit for any reason including for non-payment of overdue debts to Council or for non-compliance with this Policy.
3. Stock shall not be placed on the town reserve before a permit in the prescribed form has been approved or without the permission of the Chief Executive Officer.
4. Stock shall become eligible for a permit upon reaching the age of six months. The Rural Lands Officer or a representative appointed by the Chief Executive Officer will be the sole judge of age and their determination of the ages will be final.

5. Applications for a permit and fees for depasturage will not be accepted once a Council sponsored muster has commenced and non-acceptance will continue until such time as the muster is finalized.
6. Permits authorised by the Chief Executive Officer will be the only recognised form of authority to depasture stock.

4.5 Fees

1. Town common reserve agistment fees shall be determined and adopted annually.
2. Council will issue an invoice for agistment fees at the start of each quarter (1 January, 1 April, 1 July, 1 October). All fees must be paid by the due date.
3. If a stock owner has fees outstanding at the time of a muster, the stock will not be allowed to return to the town common reserve.
4. In the case of stock being depastured for the first time, fees will apply from the beginning of the quarter in which a permit has been approved.
5. A bull levy shall apply to all female cattle over 12 months of age on the Aramac town common reserve and be charged each quarter in advance.
6. All town common reserve agistment fees shall still be payable in respect to stock for which no permit has been approved.

4.6 Responsibility and Liability

1. Stock depastured on the town common reserve are the sole responsibility of the owner. Council will not be held responsible for any loss of stock, or any damage or loss caused by stock.
2. Council is not responsible for stock entering the road reserve.
3. The welfare of all stock on the town reserve is the responsibility of the owner.

5 ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

Biosecurity Management Plan.

Stock Route Management Plan.