

## Report It allows the community to assist in reporting sediment loss

In 2010, the Town of Cambridge introduced a new community feedback initiative called *Report It*, whereby residents are able to inform the Town of Cambridge of issues of concern they observe in their neighbourhood or local area, including those related to construction sites such as dust, sand drift and sediment loss from building sites.

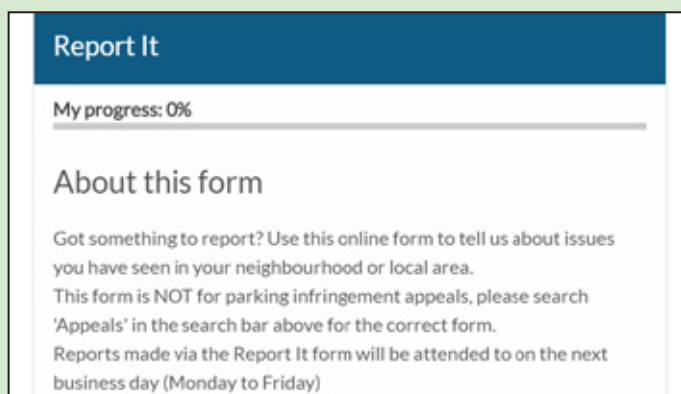
*Report It* was introduced by the Town as a simple way for residents to report issues online, which was also reportable in terms of quantity. Having documented records also allows the Town of Cambridge to be more accountable with their responses. This in turn reduces the number of calls received where residents claim to have reported the issue previously with no action resulting.

In 2018/2019, the Town received 725 *Report It* cases across the entire organisation.

Submissions can be made online and complaints regarding erosion or sediment are managed by the Town's Compliance Department who investigate the complaint and, if need be, determine the actions required to ensure the building site is compliant.

*Report It* is easy to manage. The online form sends a summary of the matter to the Town's Records Team, who then distribute it through their Records Management System Workflow to the correct team for action. The Team then record the action and complete the task, and the action is available to anyone to review down the track. The form is short and succinct, with the ability to upload photos, which makes it a really useful tool.

There is no cost for *Report It* as it is simply an online form embedded in the Town of Cambridge's website – which makes it very cost effective!



**Report It**

My progress: 0%

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### About this form

Got something to report? Use this online form to tell us about issues you have seen in your neighbourhood or local area.

This form is NOT for parking infringement appeals, please search 'Appeals' in the search bar above for the correct form.

Reports made via the Report It form will be attended to on the next business day (Monday to Friday)

Online reporting allows the community to participate in identifying potential sediment issues.



To effectively capture sediment, geotextile material needs to be secured to the perimeter fence at a minimum height of 600mm

## Demonstrating leadership - an estimated 98% compliance rate!

98% of building sites in the Town of Cambridge are estimated to be compliant with the Town's Local Law for managing sediment loss from building sites, as based on Local Government Officers' visual observations. Only 1-5 complaints are received each year relating to sediment loss from building sites.

## Our success factors for preventing and managing sediment loss from building, subdivision and construction sites

The high levels of compliance with the Town's regulations and conditions for preventing and managing soil erosion, surface runoff, sand drift and dust can be attributed to:

1. Implementation of a comprehensive suite of tools to prevent and manage sediment loss.
2. Being proactive in assisting builders and developers to understand and fulfil their obligations.
3. Responding to community concerns.
4. Investment in infrastructure to capture sediment.

## Effective enforcement

Non-compliance with the Town of Cambridge's Local Law is identified by:

- Scheduled monitoring of building sites;
- Responding to complaints received;
- Local Government Officers observance; and
- Responding to incidences that are self-reported by offenders.

## The sediment that got away

If there is runoff from sand from building sites, it is collected in a drainage pit, or series of drainage pits. If the sand goes any further, it ends up in a sump, which the Town of Cambridge cleans out each year to remove sediment and all debris. This debris is then recycled. Unfortunately, this means that increasing infrastructure maintenance costs are an issue for the Town of Cambridge.

## A tool box full of tools

The Town of Cambridge utilises a comprehensive suite of tools to prevent and manage sediment loss from building sites, including State Law, Local Laws, planning schemes, policies, plans, guidelines and permits. The Town of Cambridge is also proactive in assisting builders and developers to understand and fulfil their obligations.

Section 3.25 of the *Local Government Act 1995* authorises the Town of Cambridge to issue a notice requesting steps be taken to minimise or prevent sand drift if, in the Town's opinion, it will adversely affect other properties. Where dust control creates a problem for adjacent residents and developments, the Town of Cambridge can implement *Schedule 3.1 in reference to schedule 9.1 clause 12 (wind erosion and sand drift)* of the *Local Government Act 1995* to address this issue.

The Town's *Private Property Local Law 2016* provides for the regulation and management of matters affecting private property, which includes building site considerations such as sand drift and dust control and considers the containment of rainwater and stormwater, which is not permitted to discharge onto, or run-off the site. Approval is required to store building materials on the verge, with special provision being made for the abatement of sand drift and dust.

Specifically, sand and/or dust must not be released or escape or cause a nuisance, whether by means of wind, water or any other cause. Works or activities involving the clearing, excavation or filling of any land or premises, and having the potential to cause sand drift and/or dust release from the land or premises, must when requested by the local government, submit an application for approval of a *Sand Management Plan* and/or *Dust Management Plan*, and obtain written approval of such plan before the commencement of any such works or activities. Conditions regarding the control of dust and/or sand on the premises may be imposed. Sediment loss, sand drift and dust from building sites is also dealt with under a 'nuisance' type provision.

The Town of Cambridge Town Planning Scheme No. 1 sets out the way land is to be used and developed, classifies areas for land use and includes provisions to coordinate infrastructure and development within the local government area. (Note that The Town has recently prepared a Draft Local Planning Strategy to provide strategic direction for future town planning and development, and the review of Town of Cambridge Town Planning Scheme No.1).

The Town of Cambridge's *Dust Suppression at Demolition Sites* policy provides for the regulation and management of dust from private properties causing a nuisance to nearby residents.

The Town of Cambridge's *Local Planning Policy 5.7 Construction Management Plans* provide for the regulation and management of large demolition and construction sites in the Town, to reduce their impact on the surrounding area.

The Town of Cambridge refers land developers to the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage, West Australian Planning Commission and Institute of Public Works Engineering Australasia's *Local Government Guidelines for Subdivisional Development 2017*. These guidelines state that details of sediment and erosion control, dust and sand drift control measures to be adopted during the construction of subdivisions are included in their specification. They also state that the measures in relation to dust are to be in accordance with *A guideline for managing the impacts of dust and associated contaminants from land development sites, contaminated sites remediation and other related activities* (Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions, March, 2011).

## The key reason for high levels of compliance

Non-compliances are handled by firstly issuing a formal written warning and then by issuing an infringement notice or verbal direction to offender to address the non-compliance.

If an offence is committed when works generate sand and/or dust escaping from the land or lot or which causes a nuisance, works must immediately cease until the non-compliance is rectified. "Nuisance" is established by observation or reporting and by LGOs looking for sand on the road or in the drains and for obvious erosion from site.

The Town of Cambridge's Local Law includes a provision to allow the issue of infringement notices for offences related to sediment loss from building sites. In the Town of Cambridge's experience, their infringement of a minimum of \$500 (liable upon conviction to a penalty of not less than \$500 and not exceeding \$5,000 and, if the offence is a continuing offence, a maximum daily penalty of \$500) is sufficient to act as a deterrent to potential offenders.

## Helping builders and developers to help themselves

The Town of Cambridge works hard to assist builders to prevent sediment loss from building sites happening in the first instance by providing builders with a copy of their *Sand Drift Prevention and Sediment Control Guidelines*. Developers can refer to the Town of Cambridge's *Construction Management Plan Guidelines*.

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This case study has been developed as part of the Sediment Task Force Project which is sponsored by:



Department of Biodiversity,  
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