

Informal GIPA Applications

Under the Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 or GIPA Act, you are able to request access to information and documents held by Council. This fact sheet provides answers to our most frequently asked questions relating to informal GIPA applications.

Do I need a formal or informal GIPA application?

For most enquiries, an informal GIPA application will be sufficient. Council usually requires a **formal GIPA application** to be lodged if:

- You are requesting another person's **personal information** (e.g. complainant's details)
- You are requesting information relating to an **insurance claim**
- Your request will involve retrieval of a **large number of documents or files** (five files or more).
- You are requesting information relating to **Companion Animals**.

The most common types of information requested through informal applications are:

- **Development application** files (plans, consent notices, final inspections)
- Postal addresses of **adjoining owners** in order to address **boundary fencing** issues, or other **safety issues** such as overhanging trees.

How do I lodge an informal application?

Complete Council's **informal GIPA application form**. Please include the following:

- **Your contact details** (postal address, phone number, email address)
- **As much detail as possible** regarding the information you are requesting
- **Property address or application number** that the information relates to (if relevant)

- Any **personal factors** relevant to the application, such as **why you are requesting the information**
- **Nominate how you would like to access the information**
- **Nominate how you would like to pay the processing fee** (if required)

How do I access the information?

The following options are available to access the information:

- **Inspection of the documents at Council offices (by appointment only):** You can **make an appointment** with the Governance Officer to view the relevant files and documents during Council's opening hours (Mon – Fri 8.30am – 5pm). This inspection is **free of charge**. During the inspection, you can **request copies of individual documents** from the file, which will be **posted or emailed to you at a later date**, subject to Council's **processing fees**.
- **Receive hard copies or electronic copies of documents:** Copies of documents can be supplied to you, subject to the **processing fees** outlined over the page.

How long will my application take to process?

The GIPA Act does not specify a time frame for informal requests. We aim to process all informal applications within **10 working days**. However, applications involving research or retrieval of a number of files may take longer. If your application is unlikely to be completed within 10 working days, we will negotiate with you.

All applications requiring **retrieval of DA files** will take **at least two days**, due to the requirement for files to be ordered and transported from Council's offsite storage. There is **no urgency fee** to reduce the processing time of an application.

What are the processing fees?

There is **no application fee** to lodge an informal application. Once the information has been identified, you may also **inspect available documents at Council offices** free of charge.

If your request requires files to be ordered from an **offsite storage facility**, you will need to pay the **archival retrieval fee**, which is **\$11.70 per file**. Most of Council's building and development files from prior to 2008 are stored at the Government Records Repository at Kingswood.

Copies of documents supplied by **post, collection, or email** incur the following fees per page:

Page size	
A4	\$0.90
A4 (colour)	\$2.10
A3	\$1.80
A3 (colour)	\$4.25
A2	\$4.80
A2 (colour)	\$4.95
A1	\$9.00
A1 (colour)	\$9.25

You may also request a copy of **all documents loaded onto a CD**, for a **charge of \$42.10**. For applications containing many large plans, this option will often be cheaper than hard or email copies.

Due to **email size restrictions**, we may be unable to send large quantities of documents via email.

How do I pay the processing fees?

The following payment options are available:

- **Credit card over the phone (preferred):** Once the information is ready to be released, Council's Customer Service department can contact you to take payment over the phone. The documents and receipt will be posted or emailed to you as soon as possible once payment is received.

- **Pay in person at Council offices:** You can pay with cash or card at Council's Customer Service Counter. If you are paying by this method, please contact the Governance Officer to ensure that the documents are available to be collected.

What if the information I requested could not be located?

If Council is unable to locate the information you have requested, you will be informed in writing. If the information is likely to be held by **another government agency or organisation**, we will **provide contact information** for that agency.

Further information

[Hawkesbury City Council website Access to Information page](#)

Information and Privacy Commissioner website:
<http://www.ipc.nsw.gov.au/>

Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009:
http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/nsw/consol_act/giaa2009368/

Contact Council's Governance Officer on **4560 4444** or email council@hawkesbury.nsw.gov.au



This document contains important information. If you do not understand it, contact the Telephone Interpreter Service on 131 450.



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