

# Fact Sheet

## Earthworks

(Also known as operational works, filling and excavation)

Earthworks are a vital aspect of development in Ipswich. To ensure earthworks activities take place in a safe and environmentally friendly manner, Ipswich City Council has guidelines to ensure the site and surrounding properties (including land and water) are not adversely affected.

A development application is required for this type of work. If required you can contact council to utilise the services of a Town Planner to help with your application. More information is available at [Ipswich.qld.gov.au](http://Ipswich.qld.gov.au) under Business, Development.

The below information outlines how earthworks activities in Ipswich are governed by a specific Earthworks Code. To help you determine if the code applies to your activity, we have provided a quick reference tool revealing which earthworks practices are exempt according to Ipswich City Council's Planning Scheme.

### Earthworks Code

A copy of Part 12, Division 15 – Earthworks Code from Ipswich City Council's Planning Scheme is available at [Ipswich.qld.gov.au](http://Ipswich.qld.gov.au) by selecting Development.i under the Online Services section.

The code seeks the following outcomes:

- No adverse impact to adjoining properties
- No adverse impact on flooding of upstream, downstream and adjoining land
- No adverse effect on the visual character and amenity of the site and surrounding area
- No adverse impact to infrastructure or public utilities easements
- Maintaining (where possible) of natural landforms and drainage lines
- Land and water not contaminated
- A stable site
- Appropriate site access provided from the road reserve to existing or future building envelopes
- No environmental harm or nuisance created by air pollutants, noise or significant vegetation removal

### Exempt Earthworks

Below are the criteria for exempt Earthworks as stated in Schedule 8 (Exempt Earthworks) in the Ipswich City Council Planning Scheme.

To be exempt, Earthworks must meet all of the following criteria:

- (a) do not comprise more than 1,000m<sup>2</sup> in area
- (b) do not exceed an average depth of 500mm
- (c) do not exceed a maximum depth of 800mm
- (d) do not involve earth batters with a slope greater than 1 in 8
- (e) do not interfere with the natural flow of stormwater
- (f) are not undertaken in a natural gully or overland flow path or below the adopted flood level
- (g) are not undertaken within a public utilities easement
- (h) are not within 3m of an adjoining property
- (i) involve fill material which is clean, dry, solid, inert material
- (j) are not within 3m of a Local Government infrastructure item

If your Earthworks fail to meet any of the above criteria, you are required to obtain an Operational Works Permit from council's Planning and Development Department.

## Unsuitable Materials For Fill

Materials that are considered to be unsuitable for use as fill include:

- (a) organic soils such as many topsoils, severely root-affected subsoils and peat
- (b) materials contaminated through past site usage which may contain toxic substances or soluble compounds harmful to water supply or agriculture
- (c) materials containing substances which can be dissolved or leached out in the presence of moisture (e.g. gypsum) or which undergo volume change or loss of strength when disturbed and exposed to moisture (e.g. some shales and sandstones), unless these matters are specifically addressed in the design
- (d) silts or materials that have the deleterious engineering properties of silt
- (e) other materials with properties that are unsuitable for the forming of structural fill
- (f) fill which contains wood, metal, plastic, boulders or other material that may decompose or cause the creation of voids

## More information

For more information contact council on (07) 3810 6666 or visit [ipswich.qld.gov.au](http://ipswich.qld.gov.au).