Social Impact Assessment Policy

for development applications

November 1999

The City of
Newcastle

About the Social Impact Assessment Policy for Development Applications

This Policy is a guide to help all concerned consider the social impacts of development proposals. The policy should be read in conjunction with **the DA Guide which summarises when a proponent should address social impacts in a development application.**

The aim of the policy is to facilitate the preparation and assessment of development applications with respect to social considerations in the interests of the developer, the broader community and the future of Newcastle.

Newcastle City Council has a statutory obligation under Section 79C of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act to include consideration of social impacts of development proposals where relevant in determining a development application.

Contact Person:

If you are not clear as to whether your development should consider social impacts, or the level of assessment required, don't hesitate to contact: **Council's Manager of Development and Building Services on (02) 4974 2793**

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Abbreviations

DA   development application
DCP   development control plan
EIS   environmental impact
       statement
LEP   local environmental plan
SEE   statement of environmental
       effects
SIA   social impact assessment
SIC   social impact comment
SIS   social impact statement
TOR   terms of reference

1 Introduction

1.1 Background to the preparation of the DCP

In 1992 Newcastle City Council established the *Social Impact Consultative Panel*. It provides advice to Council on the potential social impacts of a range of issues, policies and actions in the city.

In 1997 the Panel investigated various models for conducting social impact assessment (SIA) for new development. At this time Council was requesting that SIA be carried out for developments where significant social impacts were anticipated. The Panel was also involved in policy development, such as the Code for the Regulation of Brothels and Other Sex Industry Establishments.

Social impact assessments have been commissioned for the Honeysuckle and Steel River developments, the proposed closure of Newcastle Hospital, information technology, and Council's rating policy. Council has requested SIAs for a methadone clinic, a tavern, and rezoning proposals.

In 1998, the Social Impact Consultative Panel established a subcommittee to consider tools to assist in the assessment of social impacts. One of these tools was a Development Control Plan (DCP).

In mid-1998, consultations were conducted with peak development industry organisations, council staff, councillors, community groups, the hotel industry, and the Social Impact Consultative Panel. This provided input into the preparation of a draft DCP.

Through ongoing discussion with the relevant stakeholders it was agreed to trial the Draft DCP as a Policy for the first twelve months. Implementation of the policy will be reviewed after twelve months, when it will be decided whether the document will remain in policy form, or if it should be formally adopted as a DCP.

1.2 Vision and desired outcomes

Newcastle's vision for the future is to achieve long term growth and revitalisation as an ecologically sustainable city. The *Newcastle Urban Strategy (1998)* and the City-wide *Newcastle Local Environmental Plan 1987* aim to achieve a balanced planning framework which gives equal emphasis to social, cultural, economic, ecological and environmental consequences of decisions and actions by Councils, other organisations, and individuals.

This Social Impact Assessment Policy for Development Applications is set against a background of ecologically sustainable development strategies. SIA cannot be viewed in isolation from the broader ecological systems in which people live. The principle of inter-generational equity is particularly relevant for SIA.

Newcastle City Council's vision is:

Newcastle will become a model sustainable city of the 21st Century with:
- **a fair go for people**
- **access for people**
- **employment for people**
- **places for people**
- **a better environment**

The general objective for this Social Impact Assessment Policy for Development Applications is to ensure that, where relevant, social considerations are an integral part of the development assessment system.

In order to realise this objective the Policy seeks to:

- Indicate which development applications should include comment regarding social impacts or a detailed social impact statement;
- Provide clear guidelines as to how social impact assessments should be conducted;
- Enhance consistency, certainty and transparency in Council's assessment of the social impact of development proposals;
- Ensure that the process of assessing social impact has statutory legitimacy;
- Assist Council staff to improve their understanding and assessment of social issues relating to development applications.

1.3 Adoption date

The Social Impact Assessment Policy for Development Applications was adopted by Council on July 1999 and becomes operational on ## November, 1999.

1.4 Land to which the policy applies

This Policy covers all land within the Newcastle Local Government Area.

1.5 Relationship to the NSW Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979

This Policy relates to 'local development', 'integrated development' and 'designated development' as defined in the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979.

Section 79C(1) of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act specifies the matters councils should take into consideration when assessing development applications. Councils have discretion to decide which matters are relevant development proposals.

One of the heads of consideration Councils are to take into account in evaluating development applications is:

The likely impacts of that development, including environmental impacts on both the natural and built environments and social and economic impacts in the locality (Section 79C(1)(b)).

This Policy provides guidance for assessing the social impacts of development in a locality.

1.6 Relationship to other Council plans and policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Newcastle Local Environmental Plan. This is the principal planning instrument governing development within the Newcastle Local Government Area.

Applicants should seek advice from Council as to DCPs or Council Codes and Policies that may be relevant to a specific development application.

There are a number of Council codes and policies that relate to social impacts. These include the *Code for*

the Regulation of Brothels and Other Sex Industry Establishments (DCP No.46) and the *Newcastle Mixed Use Compatibility DCP* (DCP No. 47) Where applicable, these should be consulted in conjunction with this policy.

1.7 Section 94 contributions

Section 94 Contributions Plans set out circumstances where Council may levy a contribution towards the capital cost of community facilities (such as roads, open space, and community centres). These plans have assessed the impact of various forms of development on the future demand for these services. The full details of how contributions are calculated, the formulae used and capital works programs are contained in the Contributions Plans.

Developments that are nominated in these Contributions Plans would be expected to make payment towards these services in the manner specified. **The social impact assessments made under this policy will not alter the provisions of these Contributions Plans. Only in very exceptional cases for complex major developments, a special Contributions Plan may need to be made relating to the unique demands of that development.**

1.8 Public Notification and Dispute Resolution

Various types of development applications are publicly notified to enable interested and affected persons to submit comments to Council. The submission period is generally 14 days, but in some circumstances it may be 30 days (Cl.65(7) Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 1994). Council

notifies the applicant of the date when the application is placed on public exhibition or is advertised.

Newcastle is a leader in the mediation of disputes involving development proposals. The *Dispute Resolution Policy* provides a framework for the resolution of disputes which may arise between an applicant and another party affected by the development proposal. This may involve a mediation process prior to the application being formally considered by Council.

The preparation of a SIS or the social impact component of a SEE is not designed to replace the mediation program. SIA is not a conflict resolution tool. However, the process of assessing social impacts may bring to the fore major differences of opinion about a proposal early in the process. This may signal the need to address their issues.

1.9 Structure of the Policy

There are six main sections to the Policy. These cover the procedure for assessing social impacts.

Definitions and principles. This section gives a contemporary definition of social impacts, outlines principles, explains the concept of social impact management, and addresses the relationship of social impacts to other types of impact.

Role of main parties. This section explains the roles of Council, the applicant and the community in the process of assessing social impacts.

Is a social impact assessment required? This section outlines the two levels of assessment provided for in this policy. It will inform applicants about what level of assessment is

necessary for their proposal – **the inclusion of a SIC in the SEE or the preparation of a SIS**. It clarifies when no social impact assessment is required.

Social Impact Comment (SIC) in the Statement of Environmental Effects. This section explains what is required when including a social impact comment in the SEE.

Social Impact Statement (SIS). This section explains what is required in the preparation of a Social Impact Statement to accompany a DA. It outlines the steps involved in the preaparation of a SIS commencing with the initial contact with Council to the final document.

Guidance Notes. These notes accompany the policy. They provide information on useful social impact scoping questions for preparing the social impact comment; guidance notes for preparing Social Impact Statements; and guidance notes for evaluating social impact assessments. Details of *data sources* and *useful references* are given in the appendices.

1.10 Requirements for submission of a development application

Applicants should consult Council's *DA Guide* to obtain details of all the requirements for submitting a development application to Council. For complex proposals, the applicant is encouraged to seek an early pre-DA meeting with Council's development officers to ensure that all relevant aspects are properly addressed.

2 Definitions and Principles

2.1 Definition of social impact

There are many definitions *of social impact.* A contemporary definition (Armour 1992) defines social impacts as changes that occur in:

- People's *way of life* (how they live, work, play and interact with one another on a day-to-day basis);
- Their *culture* (shared beliefs, customs and values); and
- Their *community* (its cohesion, stability, character, services and facilities).

These changes may involve significant impacts experienced by people as a result of development.

2.2 Key principles of assessing social impacts

To achieve a useful and appropriate framework for assessing social impacts, a number of key principles are important.

Minimum necessary information. This is relevant for all levels of assessment. **The purpose of assessing social impacts is to provide focussed relevant details on the significant or problematic impacts.** The minimum necessary information needs to be provided to ensure an adequate assessment. An encyclopaedic approach is not encouraged.

Positive as well as negative impacts. When assessing social impacts, **it is essential to consider the positive social aspects of developments as well as any negatives.**

Participation. When assessing social impacts the focus is on impacts on people. **Persons and groups that may be affected by the proposal should be consulted. It is best to do this as early as possible in the process.**

Comprehensive participation processes will generally only be required for the preparation of Social Impact Statements even for minor developments, though it is a good idea to contact neighbours to enquire how they may be affected.

Participation is a means of gaining information about the potential impacts of a proposal. It should not be seen as a process for gaining consent from the affected community.

Practical and action focussed. When assessing social impacts it is essential to consider how the social effects of change can best be managed. Any assessment needs to be action focussed and practical.

The applicant should incorporate practical measures that will enhance the positive impacts, may improve the development and limit any possible negative social impacts.

Council may need to consider conditions of consent where impacts have not been adequately addressed in the development application. Amendments to proposed plans may be required during the assessment process or under the conditions of consent.

Inter-generational equity. When

measuring social impacts consideration should be given to the effects of the development on present and future generations. It should ensure that the health, diversity and productivity of the environment is maintained or enhanced for the benefit of present and future generations.

2.3 Relationship with other impact categories

It is difficult to neatly compartmentalise social impacts from other types of impact. The Environmental Planning and Assessment Act is structured so that all impacts are considered as an integrated assessment. Environmental impacts usually have social dimensions, such as with traffic, odour and noise impacts. Social impacts may have economic consequences, such as increased crime in a neighbourhood causing businesses to move away.

A social impact assessment conducted under this policy should not duplicate other issues being addressed in a Statement of Environmental Effects. The *DA Guide* lists the other categories of issues to be considered.

Human activities typically have impacts on natural or built systems and therefore the environment is facing increased ecological pressure. If ecologically sustainable development is to be achieved social, ecological, and economic benefits need to be delivered to individuals and communities for both the present and the future.

3 Role of Council, the applicant and the community

The major players in social impact assessment of development proposals are the Council, the applicant and the community. Each has a clear role.

3.1 Role of Council

The elected Council, either directly or by delegation, is the decision-making body. It is required to evaluate all the potential environmental impacts of a development, including social impacts, and determine whether the application should receive development consent under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979.

The role of Council or its officers acting under delegated authority is to be satisfied that the social impacts of a development have been reasonably addressed in accordance with the Act and having regard to this policy. **They should also evaluate whether the social benefits out-weigh any social negatives. This final determination must be made having regard to all the merits of the particular proposal, not just the social aspects.**

The role of *Council officers* otherwise is to provide guidance on the process of preparing a SEE or a SIS under this policy. **Council staff may request further information from an applicant if the information submitted appears to be inadequate.** Finally, in cases requiring determination by the Council, Council officers will prepare a report on the application recommending whether a development should be approved, approved subject to compliance with conditions of consent, or refused.

3.2 Role of the applicant

The main role of the *applicant* is to prepare the required SEE or SIS as appropriate. Depending on the level of social impact assessment required, an applicant may seek expert advice from a social impact practitioner in preparing either the SEE or the SIS.

It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that any possible social impacts of a proposal have been fully and adequately addressed in the SEE or SIS. This will help prevent delays in processing the application due to the necessity for Council officers to request additional information in order to enable a proposal to be properly assessed.

3.3 Role of the community

The *community's* role is to provide comment on the DA including the SIS or the SIC in the SEE. For proposals only requiring a SIC in the SEE this input will usually be confined to making written submissions on applications in response to public notification procedures.

For proposals requiring a SIS more participation may be required from groups or individuals in the community. This may involve contributing to the community focus meeting.

3.4 Role of government agencies

State *government agencies* may be able to assist applicants with specific advice or information regarding a development. In the case of Integrated Development under S.91 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979, **certain government agencies will have a designated licensing or approval role (see Guidance Notes).**

The Department of Urban Affairs and Planning has a central role in the assessment of 'designated development' and applications made under the State Environmental Planning Policy No 34. *EIS Guidelines* have been produced for various categories of development to assist both project design and assessment of impacts.

Depending on the circumstances of the proposal, applicants or Council staff may seek specific advice from a government agency on a development. For instance, the Department of Community Services may advise on the observed impacts of group homes for people with a disability. The NSW Department of Health may provide health data relevant to a proposal or expert advice on health risks. Such advice may be relevant for the social impact component of either the SEE or the SIS.

4 Is a social impact assessment required?

4.1   When is a Social Impact Assessment Required?

If the answer to any of the following questions is YES or POSSIBLY, the issue will need to be appropriately addressed in the Statement of Environmental Effects:

- Will the proposal be likely to give rise to a significant increase or reduction in the number of persons on the site?

- Will the proposal disadvantage or benefit any particular social group?

- Will the proposal be likely to give rise to an increase or decrease in employment opportunities in the locality?

- Will the proposal have a significant impact on the existing housing stock in the locality, particularly low-rental housing?

- Will the proposal impact upon existing community meeting places or give rise to an increased demand for community facilities or services in the locality?

- Will on-site support services be required?

- Will the proposal be likely to give rise to increased conflict in the community or adversely impact upon community identity?

- Will the proposal be likely to enhance or detract from the cultural life of the community?

- Will the proposal create areas of insecurity or risk for occupants or pedestrians within or adjacent to the development?

- Will the proposal be likely to give rise to increased community concern regarding public safety?

In the case of the majority of proposals, it is expected that any social impact will be able to be adequately addressed by means of an appropriate comment or comments in the Statement of Environmental Effects, with a full Social Impact Statement only required in the case of major projects which are out of character within the existing urban context, involve an increased risk to public safety or are likely to threaten the existing sense of community identity and cohesiveness. *Eg a major new public transport facility, retail complex, hospital, institution, rehabilitation centre, industrial development, entertainment facility or housing project.*

4.2 When is no social impact assessment required?

Not all developments will require a social impact assessment. Consideration of social impacts is not required for exempt or complying development or for any other minor or small scale proposals which are not likely to have any social impacts. Enquire from the customer enquiry counter if uncertain in this regard. (Refer to DA Guide)

4.3 Two levels of assessment

There are two levels of assessment. for developments that require social impacts to be considered. They are:

- Social Impact Comment (SIC) in the *Statement of Environmental Effects* (SEE).
- Social Impact Statement (SIS) either included in the *Statement of Environmental Effects* (or as a stand alone document).

The first is a basic level of assessment the second is a more in-depth assessment. In both cases, **only social impacts relevant to the proposal need be considered.**

4.4 When is a Social Impact Comment in the Statement of Environmental Effects required?

Subject to the DA guide checklist a Social Impact Comment is required in the Statement of Environmental Effects for the following types of developments, unless listed as exempt or complying development or development subject to clause 4.4.

- Residential – more than 3 proposed dwellings on a single allotment.
- Childcare (caring for more than 7 children), educational establishments, community and health facilities, group homes, places of public worship.
- Business/industrial development
- Recreation, entertainment, sex industry and tourist development.
- Expand or change of non conforming "existing" use.
- Demolition of a building.
- Advertising hoarding.
- Land subdivision (where no DCP applies).
- Strata subdivision of low cost rental accommodation (SEPP 10).

4.5 When is a Social Impact Statement required?

A Social Impact Statement will only be required in the case of major projects which are likely to have a significant impact because they are:
- out of character within the existing urban context;
- involve an increased risk to public safety; or
- likely to threaten the existing sense of community identity or cohesiveness.

Examples of these projects may include: major public transport facilities; a major new retail complex, hospital, institution, rehabilitation centre; industrial development; entertainment facility; or housing project.

Final determination as to whether a SIS will be required in support of a DA

should be made in consultation with Council's Development and Environment Division.

4.6 Rezoning Land

Rezoning requires amendment to the Local Environmental Plan. Council may require a SIC in the SEE or a SIS to accompany a proposal to rezone land.

4.7 Applications that require an Environmental Impact Statement

For "Designated Development" applicants should contact the Assessments Branch of the NSW Department of Urban Affairs and Planning (Sydney) as early as possible. Alternatively, applicants can contact the Hunter regional office of the Department of Urban Affairs and Planning (Newcastle).

For developments under State Environmental Planning Policy No.34 (SEPP 34), applicants should contact the Major Development Unit of the NSW Department of Urban Affairs and Planning (Sydney) or the Hunter regional office.

Specialist guidance and procedures apply in both these situations. For SEPP 34 developments, the Minister for Urban Affairs and Planning is normally the consent authority, not the Council.

5. Social Impact Comment in the Statement of Environmental Effects

5.1 The Statement of Environmental Effects

All development applications require a *Statement of Environmental Effects* (SEE), unless the proposal will have only a negligible impact. These latter categories of development are listed in Council's *DA Guide*.

The *Statement of Environmental Effects* is a succinct document outlining the likely impacts of the proposal. It should also indicate measures to mitigate these impacts.

The *DA Guide* provides guidance on how to prepare the SEE. The information in this policy is to assist with preparing the parts of the SEE dealing with social effects. Applicants should consult the *DA Guide* as well as this policy in order to ensure an adequate SEE is prepared.

5.2 Purpose of the Social Impact Comment in the Statement of Environmental Effects

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The Social Impact Comment:

- **Should provide information on social impacts, where relevant.**
- Should be included in the Statement of Environmental Effects accompanying a DA.
- Is a basic assessment of social impacts.
- Is not intended to be onerous. In most cases it **may only require 1 or 2 paragraphs.**
- Will not entail complex community consultation procedures.
- Will only require consultation with neighbours and key stakeholders
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- where appropriate.
- Is able to be prepared by a non-specialist person
- Includes reference to any how positive social impacts and how they can be maximised
- Describes how any potential negative social impacts are to be minimised in the interests of both the occupants/users of the development and the wider community.

5.3 Social Impact matrix

There are a number of different social impacts that may occur as a result of a development. These are listed in the box below:

Impacts categories:

- Access (disabled) and mobility,
- Accommodation and housing,
- Community services and facilities,
- Community structure (severance, cohesion and identity),
- Crime and public safety,
- Culture and community values,
- Employment,
- Health,
- Interaction between new development and the existing community,
- Local economic effects,
- Needs of social groups (women, aged, persons with a disability, children, youth, ethnic groups, indigenous),
- Population change (size and characteristics),
- Recreation facilities,
- Risk perception in community,
- Social equity (displacement, needs of disadvantaged groups).

The *Social Impact Matrix* (see next page) gives guidance as to what types of impacts should be considered for broad categories of development. **This is intended to guide applicants as to what types of impacts to pay special attention to.**

Even if an impact category is indicated in the matrix, each proposal will be different. The purpose of the matrix is to focus the SEE. In some cases, impacts highlighted in the matrix may not be relevant.

If an impact category has been highlighted in the matrix for the development type, the corresponding set of *scoping questions* should be consulted. (See Guidance Notes)

5.4 What to put in the social impact comment.

The *DA Guide* should guide the overall preparation of the SEE.

Some of the possible social impacts may be able to be dealt with briefly. Where significant impacts are identified, more information is generally required. Applicants should indicate how they intend to mitigate any negative impacts that are foreseen.

For each potential positive and negative impact, the SEE should address the nature and extent of the impact:

- How significant is it (major, minor)?
- What is the extent of the impact (geography, time)?
- Who may be affected by it (groups, communities)?
- What may be done to maximize/limit or eliminate the impact (mitigation measures or changes to design)?

Every attempt should be made to fully cover significant impacts. Council may request additional information to enable it to properly assess the proposal. Presenting all relevant details will avoid delays.

Hints for the preparation of the social impact comment
- Identify the impact categories using the social impact matrix.   - Think carefully about your development proposal – especially its interaction with the adjoining area.   - Think about the people who live locally – what are their characteristics and their social values.   - Read through the relevant scoping questions in the guide – make notes about how some of these may apply to your development.   - Highlight what data you might need to collect.   - Provide written comment for each relevant impact category - use the text of the scoping questions as a guide if necessary.   - Insert data when appropriate to back-up or explain your views about the likely positive and negative impacts.   - Make a summary of the positive and negative impacts. The use of a table or diagram might assist in presentation. Identify the most significant impacts.   - Finally, if there are any significant negative social impacts, show how these can be minimised.   - Remember – it is better to address negatives and demonstrate that they have been appropriately dealt with.

See separate file for Matrix.

												IMPACT CATEGORY
												SOCIAL IMAPCTS
X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X	Access and mobility (People with a disability)
X	X	X	X					X		X	X	Accommodation and housing
X	X	X	X	X	X		X			X	X	Community services and facilities
X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X		Community structure (severance, cohesion, identity)
X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		Community and public safety
X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		Cultural and community values
X	X	X	X									Health
X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X		Interaction between development and existing community
X	X			X	X		X			X	X	Needs of social groups[1]
X		X	X				X			X		Population change (size and characteristics)
X	X	X	X		X		X			X		Recreation and leisure facilities
X		X	X		X		X					Risk perception in the community
X												Social equity (displacement, disadvantaged groups)
												ECONOMIC IMPACTS
X	X	X	X	X			X	X				Employment
X	X	X	X	X			X	X	X			Local economic effects
X		X	X				X	X	X	X	X	Property values

Column headers (left to right): Residential; new medium and large scale | Childcare, Education, health, group homes, and places of worship | Business/Industrial: new major addition | Business/Industrial: change of use | Retail development, service centres | Recreation, entertainment, tourist, sex industry | Heritage item, conservation area | Expand or change existing use | Demolish building | Advertising sign | Land Subdivision | Strata subdivision

X : Indicates that the impact category should be considered (consult the appropriate scoping question)

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[1] Children, youth, aged, families, persons with a disability, Ethnic, and Indigenous persons.

6 Social Impact Statement (SIS)

6.1 Social Impact Statements

The Social Impact Statement (SIS)

- Is only required in circumstances outlined in Section 4.4.
- Provide an in-depth analysis of social impacts in complex proposals where potential social impacts are possible.
- Is usually a stand-alone document accompanying a DA or included in a Statement of Environmental Effects
- Should involve input from Council staff at an early stage.
- Will usually require carefully planned community consultation.
- Should aim to involve all interested and affected parties.
- Should be prepared by a qualified social impact practitioner.
- Will describe the positive social impacts
- Will describe how any potential negative social impacts are minimised or mitigated in the interests of both the users of the project and the wider community.

6.2 Four step process for a Social Impact Statement

There are four main steps involved in the preparation of a Social Impact Statement (SIS). Sufficient time should be anticipated for the entire process.

Step 1. The applicant contacts Council to initiate discussion on the development proposal including the social impact assessment process and consults the Guidance Notes to gain a better understanding about what is likely to be required for a particular development assessment.

Step 2. The applicant hosts a pre-DA *community focus meeting.* This will involve the applicant, Council staff, key stakeholders, and interested government agencies including residents and other interested groups.

Step 3. The applicant prepares *terms of reference* (TOR) to guide the social impact study in consultation with Council.

Step 4 The applicant prepares the *Social Impact Statement.*

6.3 Step 1 – Initial contact with Council

The applicant should consult the Guidance Notes and contact the Manager of Development and Building Services at Newcastle Council as early as possible in the process of preparing a development application.

The applicant may wish to discuss the proposal in a pre-DA meeting with Council staff. The purpose of this preliminary phase is for the applicant to gain a fuller understanding of the social impact assessment process.

At this stage, Council officers will advise whether the applicant should engage an independent suitably qualified social impact practitioner to prepare the SIS.

6.4 Step 2 – Community focus meeting

Next, the applicant should, almost without exception, host a community focus meeting to scope the potential impact issues. Only in exceptional cases would it be necessary to hold further focus meetings.

The community focus meeting is <u>not</u> a public meeting. The applicant invites stakeholders on an invitation basis only.

Such stakeholders may include:
- Local resident group representatives;
- Staff from local voluntary or community service organisations;
- Officers from interested government agencies (eg NSW Health for a health related development);
- Relevant Council representatives;
- Other relevant stakeholders.

A facilitator appointed by the applicant will be responsible for facilitating the community focus meeting. The size of the focus meeting is best kept small. The number of participants will be dependent on the nature of the development.

The purpose of the meeting is to provide input into the issues that should be addressed in the SIS (Step 3). In essence it is a brainstorming exercise to scope the range of impacts that may occur. The social impact matrix categories from Section 5.3 can be used as a guide but should not limit the process. The facilitator should note any conflicts or differences of opinion between stakeholders.

It maybe appropriate to consider cumulative effects. Inter-generational equity issues may also be discussed at this stage.

It is important to bear in mind that the community focus meeting is <u>not</u> an exercise in mediation or conflict resolution. As discussed in section 1.8, mediation may occur as part of the application assessment process.

6.5 Step 3 – Terms of Reference

The terms of reference (TOR) is the key outcome of the community focus meeting. The facilitator will be responsible for the drafting the TOR which will identify the issues to be addressed in consultation with Council.

The TOR will provide provide guidance for the social impact practitioner engaged to carry out the study. The social impact practitioner should address the issues identified in the TOR as closely as possible.

Guide to Content of the Terms of Reference

- Key impact areas to be investigated.
- Focus impact issues (critical issues to be analysed in greatest depth).
- Cumulative effects issues, if relevant.
- Inter-generational equity.
- List of interested and affected parties (community, government, individuals).
- Consultation processes that should be used (eg surveys, public meetings, workshops, focus groups).
- Summary of key tasks.
- Time frame for the preparation of SIS.

6.6 Step 4 – Production of the Social Impact Statement

A qualified social impact practitioner should prepare the SIS. The progress of the study will largely be guided by the terms of reference developed in Step 3. The structure of a typical SIS is shown in the box below.

Structure of the Social Impact Statement

- Purpose of the social impact assessment.
- Terms of Reference.
- Process undertaken (including public consultation).
- Assessment of key social impacts.
- Assessment of other possible social impacts.
- Evaluation of significance and probability of occurrence.
- Consideration of possible measures for mitigating identified negative social impacts.
- Monitoring program (if necessary).
- Conclusions/recommendations.

The applicant should lodge the SIS with the completed development application. It may be a stand alone document or be included in the SEE.

Council staff will assess whether the SIS fulfils the criteria set out in the TOR. If it is deemed inadequate, the Council may request that further information or further consultation be conducted.

6.7 Use of Social Impact Practitioners

It is strongly advised that suitably qualified social impact practitioners be engaged to prepare Social Impact Statements. These should be persons with social science training and preferably experience in the field.

An experienced social impact practitioner is likely to be familiar with relevant data and comparative cases. This knowledge may be invaluable in identifying significant impacts that may not be immediately apparent to either the Council or the community.

There is no professional body for social impact practitioners in existence in Australia. Social impact practitioners may have diverse backgrounds and work in a wide range of settings. They include town planners, social planners, sociologists, and anthropologists.

Appendix A - Data sources

Main sources	
Newcastle City Council	- Social/community profiles and indicators - Cultural plan - State of the Environment Reports - Community services directory - Historical land use information - Development approval data - Rate information – number of dwellings, land use categories - Internet access at libraries
Australian Bureau of Statistics	- Census data (demographic, economic/employment, housing) - Census computer data products: CDATA, Cprofile, CLIB96 (check Newcastle Region Public Library and the University of Newcastle for availability) - Manufacturing and retail censuses - Building and construction data - Economic and employment/unemployment data - Social trends data - Disability data - Victims of crime survey - Health data - Tourism data
NSW Government Agencies *Note all NSW government agency web sites can be accessed from this homepage.*	
NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research (Attorney General's Department)	- Crime statistics for NSW and LGAs - Specialist crime data and comparative trend analysis
Department of Community Services	- Supported accommodation information - Child abuse and domestic violence statistics
Department of Education Training	Enrolments in government and private schools Enrolment of special groups (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders; Non-English Speaking Background students)
Department of Fair Trading	Rental Bond Board data (rents, type of dwellings)

Department of Housing	• Waiting list numbers • Client profiles • Housing stock information • Boarding house data
Transport Data Centre (Department of Transport)	• Passenger travel for all modes of transport (by traffic zones and statistical local areas) • Freight movement survey • Journey to work data • Information on future road and public transport networks
Department of Urban Affairs and Planning (including Housing Data and Analysis Service)	• Population projections (LGA and regions) • Demographic trend analyses • Urban Development Program (UDP) production data – new release areas • Metropolitan Urban Development Program (MUDP) production data – established areas • Employment Lands Development Program data • Housing data – quarterly *Rent and Sales Report* • Regional housing statistics and market analysis
NSW Health	• In-patient statistics (Casemix) • Community health data • Hospital facility data • Waiting list information • Range of health indicators (eg mortality data) • Alcohol and drug dependency data
Police Department	• Mapped crime data by local commands (available through local police stations) • Crime data • Annual customer satisfaction surveys (levels of reporting and police response)
Tourism New South Wales	• Visitor numbers (by country of origin) • Tourist expenditure data • Hotel/motel accommodation figures
Valuer General's Department	• Average house prices by type of dwelling and locality (based on a 'typical' sale not survey data)
Commonwealth Government Agencies	
Centerlink	• Number of persons on social security benefits (by postcode or region)
Department of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs	• DEETYA Small Area Labour Market Quarterly Statistics (unemployment rates, labour force data)
Non-Government Organisations	
Hunter Valley Research Foundation	• Demographic and economic data

Appendix B - Useful references

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