



Policy Name:	LPP20 Social Impact Assessment
File No:	LPP20 PS.TP
Policy Purpose:	Local Planning Policies are guidelines used to assist the Shire in making decisions under the Scheme. The Scheme prevails should there be any conflict between this Policy and the Scheme.
Principles / Framework:	Shire of Ashburton 10 Year Community Plan 2012-2022 Goal 04 – Distinctive and Well Served Places Objective 03 – Well Planned Towns
Application:	Town Planning Scheme No.7
Statutory Environment:	Shire of Ashburton Local Planning Scheme No.7 Planning & Development Act 2005
Minute Number:	13.11.75
Approval Date:	Adopted at the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 18 September 2013

1. SCOPE:

A Local Planning Policy is not part of the Scheme and does not bind the Shire in respect of any application for planning approval but the Shire is to have due regard to the provisions of the Policy and the objectives which the Policy is designed to achieve before making its determination.

Social Impact Assessment ('SIA') is the process of analysing, monitoring and managing the social consequences of development. A Social Impact Statement ('SIS') forms part of a SIA process and is a beneficial tool in discovering potential issues and informing the community in the decision making process.

Where land use proposals are subject to a requirement for community consultation the preparation of a SIS can serve to increase the flow of information to the community, Council and the proponent and assist in resolving issues of concern. The preparation of a SIS provides the community with an opportunity to identify, as part of the decision-making process, those local values that are worth protecting, the opportunities to maximise benefits and minimise negative impacts from a decision, and provide an avenue for benefits of local knowledge to be made available to the proponent.

The successful implementation of the SIA process recognises that social, environmental and economic impacts are inextricably linked. The SIA process also requires consideration of likely flow on and cumulative impacts arising from decisions made. The SIA process is also viewed as an opportunity for a proponent to identify how local community values have been taken into account, and generally to outline the potential costs and benefits of a proposal.

This Local Planning Policy requires a SIS to be prepared for all development proposals which are subject to a community consultation/advertising process, as well as rezoning proposals and strategic planning proposals (such as reports accompanying Development Plans etc).

It is the clear intention of the Shire that the SIS provides the information necessary to inform the public fully on proposals and reduce the potential for misunderstanding. The extent of information



required in any SIS and the method of engaging in community consultation will be directly proportionate to the extent of issues generated by the scale of the proposal.

2. OBJECTIVES:

The overriding intent of requiring a SIS is to assist in revealing issues relevant to land use planning decisions that in turn results in a more environmentally, economically and socially sustainable environment. This process seeks to promote community development, build capacity and develop social capital (social networks and trust). This objective is guided by both general objectives – being the overarching intent of the policy, and guiding principles – to which the SIS and community consultation shall have regard.

This policy seeks to provide:

- A framework for the identification of issues arising from development proposals that may impact on the social structure of the Shire.
- A consistent and thorough approach to the assessment of issues associated with proposals.
- A description of issues and means to address those issues for the consideration of the community and the Shire.
- Information and support for community input into the decision making process.
- Minimisation of negative impacts and maximisation of positive outcomes.
- Integration of expertise in the decision making process.
- The consideration of a wide range of issues that have social implications, including: infrastructure, resource issues (and access to those resources), heritage impacts, landform impacts, economic and fiscal impacts, community impacts, cultural impacts, indigenous rights impacts, demographic impacts, transport impacts and other relevant considerations.

3. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The preparation of a SIS and the fulfillment of this Policy shall take into account the principles of:

- Transparency/Honesty - The content and disclosure within a SIS should be accurate, truthful and based upon the highest degree of ethical and professional requirements.
- Precaution – Where potential issues of social impact are not fully certain, the lack of certainty should not be a reason for positive or negative consideration, rather the lack of certainty should guide the implementation of mitigation measures, monitoring and identification of requests for future information.
- Equity – Social impacts should not fall disproportionately on certain groups, particularly the disadvantaged or vulnerable such as the elderly, the economically disadvantaged, the young or those with special needs. In addition, costs should not be imposed on future generations or the environment.
- Polluter Pays – The full cost of avoiding or compensating social impacts should be borne by the proponent.
- Diversity – There are different interests, skills and values within a varied demographic within the community.
- Prevention – It is preferable to avoid negative social impacts than restoring or rectifying damage after an event.
- Health and Safety – The physical and social wellbeing and safety of all people should be considered when assessing the risk of accidents and the impact on health.
- Consultation - Consultation with potentially affected stakeholders, land owners/residents should commence at a very early stage in the development process.

4. APPLICATION OF THIS POLICY

A SIS is required for:

- All proposals for rezoning; or amending of the Scheme.
- All proposals for strategic level development planning, such as information supporting Development Guide Plans, Strategies, Structure Plans, Detailed Area Plans, Scheme review.



- Minor variations to DGPs, DAP's and structure plans will generally be exempt from the need to comply with the preparation of a SIS pursuant to this policy.

In relation to development applications, it should be noted that any use that is identified as a use that requires advertising pursuant to the Zoning Table of the Scheme (the Scheme) automatically requires advertising and therefore, the preparation of a SIS. Normally, such applications would require a SIS in the form included in Attachment 1.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Scheme and other Shire policies relating to development approval and is applicable in conjunction with any other requirement of Council for public consultation in regard to a development application. The Shire reserves the right to require the preparation of a SIS for any other development proposal where, due to its scale or nature, Council considers it appropriate.

5. INTERPRETATIONS

'Social Impact Assessment' ('SIA') – Includes the processes of analysing, monitoring and managing the intended and unintended social consequences, both positive and negative, of a land use planning decision to be made in respect of a particular development proposal and any social change process that results from that decision.

The primary purpose is to bring about better planning decisions and a more sustainable and equitable ecological and human environment.

'Social Impact Statement' ('SIS') – A statement prepared pursuant to the requirements of the provisions of this policy to provide information relevant to the SIA of a proposal and consequential planning decision.

6. SOCIAL IMPACT STATEMENT - PREPARATION

A Social Impact Statement shall be prepared to meet the following requirements:

- 6.1. The level of detail, consultation and investigation should relate directly to the scale of the development proposed and the extent of issues inherent in the consideration of the proposal.
- 6.2. Proposals that have the potential for significant social impacts will be required to be accompanied by a comprehensive SIS prepared on the basis of pre lodgement consultation and liaison with the local community and stakeholders consultation.
- 6.3. A SIS may be incorporated within information provided in support of a proposal, provided the scope of a SIS is completely addressed by a section dedicated specifically to this matter. Where a SIS is prepared as a stand-alone document, the replication of information may be required to ensure that the proposal, its context, and its potential impacts are fully described in the SIS.
- 6.4. Technical supporting information may be required to justify specific observations and information within an SIS. Impacts on traffic, noise, landform, vegetation, hydrology buffers and land capability are all examples of where technical supporting information may be required.
- 6.5. The following matters shall be addressed in a SIS, to the satisfaction of the Shire:
 - (a) Economic Impact
 - Employment opportunities and estimate of number of jobs that will be created directly and indirectly as a result of the proposal;
 - Income generation (short and long term);
 - Impact on the local economy; including the engagement of local labour, local goods and services in the proposal;
 - Provision of capital infrastructure; and
 - Provision of telecommunications and advanced technology.
 - (b) Social Impact
 - Benefits to existing community services;



- Impact on existing community facilities;
- Provision of affordable housing;
- Impact on quality of life;
- Provision of useable open space;
- Identify stakeholders, the consultation level required and possible strategies to engage community and maximise the informed debate on the proposal including an outline of the process for approval;
- Long term costs and benefits to the community;
- Requirements for additional facilities;
- Access to resources;
- Impact on community safety, security and social amenity;
- Noise and acoustic impacts (may require a separate technical report); and
- Visual Impact assessment impacts. (may require a separate technical report)

(c) Transport Issues

- Impact on local transport networks;
- Availability and use of public transport, walking, cycling trips;
- Impact on pedestrian/cycle networks; and
- Heavy vehicle movements and potential conflict.

(d) Ecological Impact

- Potential for pollution/contamination;
- Impact on greenhouse gas emissions - carbon footprint;
- Impact on biodiversity and ecological values, including hydrology;
- Impact on vegetation clearing;
- Fauna habitat impact;
- Buffers – either internal or external to the land;
- Service Corridors (including those of associated industries);
- Dust and air born particulate/odours (may require a separate technical report);
- Impact on potable water use (sustainable measures introduced?); and
- Impact on energy use (sustainable measures or initiatives introduced?).

(e) Cultural Impact

- Impact on local character, amenity and 'sense of place';
- Impact on historic and cultural landscapes;
- Form partnerships with community;
- Impact on attractions of the area; and
- Impact on places of heritage significance, both indigenous and post European settlement.

(f) Any other relevant considerations

- Construction impacts (short to medium term);
- Operational impacts (long term); and
- Likely flow on and cumulative impacts arising from the likely precedent a favourable planning decision may create.

7. STAKEHOLDERS AND COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

Consultation is required to meet the needs of the community based upon the principle that as the complexity and scale of proposals increases so does the community's need for constructive engagement in the planning process. A Social Impact Statement prepared in accordance with this policy shall address the following requirements:

7.1. Stakeholder and community consultation shall be the responsibility of the proponent in accordance with this policy, including the identification of key stakeholders and the expected methods of community consultation to be undertaken by the proponent.



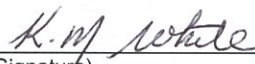
- 7.2. The Shire will be responsible for the statutory responsibility to advertise, inform and respond to submissions lodged during the formal advertising period. The Shire acknowledges submissions and informs submitters of the relevant process in respect to a final decision on the proposal. The Shire will make available a SIS prepared in support of a proposal and relevant associated documentation to whomever it is appropriate to consult in order to consider the proposal during formal advertising.
- 7.3. Following the conclusion of the advertising period the Shire may require further information or details to modify an SIS where any inconsistencies within the document have been highlighted, the accuracy of the original information is questionable or unclear or the statements made in the SIS are subjective and not verifiable based on acceptable technical or professional details. The Shire may highlight issues to the proponent as a result of submissions received, to which the proponent may be invited to respond.
- 7.4. The Shire strongly recommends that the proponent initiates constructive engagement between the applicant and the community/stakeholders before, during and after the formal advertising period for all levels of consultation.
- 7.5. In assessing the appropriateness of consultation methods for a proposal, due regard should be given to the likely social impacts and the methods to be adopted to reduce or resolve these social impacts including the level and type of consultation proposed by the applicant.

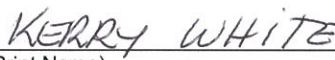
8. REFERENCE:

The Shire of Ashburton Town Planning Scheme No. 7 and the Planning & Development Act 2005.

9. RESPONSIBILITIES:

The Town Planning Department as per the Delegations Policy and Register and further authority is delegated to the Chief Executive Officer for the following:


(Signature)
Signed


(Print Name)
Shire President

Monitor and Review: Principal Town Planner

Last Review Date: Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 18 September 2013

Next Review Date: September 2017

This policy is to remain in force until otherwise determined by the Council or superseded.