

PURPOSE OF THIS POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to ensure social and health impacts are identified and considered in land use planning and policy decisions in the Wollondilly Shire.

Always read this policy in conjunction with the Related Procedures identified below.

Policy Statement

Planning and policy decisions shape the future of the Shire.

Impact assessment results in better decision making processes and better outcomes from decisions.

Economic and environmental impact assessments are well established processes in planning and are widely used.

A triple bottom line approach to planning decisions should also include social and health impact assessment in any impact assessment process.

Social and Health Impact Assessment (SHIA) refers to the assessment of the social and health consequences of a proposed future decision or action.

This policy considers social and health impact assessment as good assessment practice by planning practitioners and supports the positive outcomes this will have for the Wollondilly community into the future.

Scope

Officers, Consultants, Developers, Proponents

Related Procedures

- *Draft Social and Health Impact Assessment Guidelines (CM 11520#103)*

Related Documents

- *Development Assessment Procedure (CM 1157#183)*
- *Probity in Development Assessment – AP0073 (CM 8717#97)*
- *Planning Proposal Procedure Checklist*
- *The NSW Department of Planning and Environment (2018) “A guide to preparing local environmental plans”.*
- *The NSW Department of Planning and Environment (2018) “Planning Proposals – a guide to preparing planning proposals”*
- *Planning Proposal Policy – CP0038 (CM 2440#649)*
- *Interaction with Developers, Lobbyists & Submitters – GOV0071 (CM 2440#587)*
- *Wollondilly Social Planning Strategy, Volume 1 Implementation Plan*

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Health Assessment Protocol for Wollondilly Shire Council (CHETRE)</i> • <i>Memorandum of Understanding between South Western Sydney Local Health District and Wollondilly Shire Council (Health in Planning Partnership) 1 October 2018 – 30 September 2021</i> • <i>Wollondilly Council’s Community Strategic Plan - Create Wollondilly 2033</i>
Compliance Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979</i> • <i>The Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000</i> • <i>State Environmental Planning Policies (SEPPs)</i> • <i>Wollondilly Local Environmental Plan 2011</i>
Policy Owner	<p><i>Manager Sustainable Growth</i></p> <p><i>Manager Development Assessment</i></p> <p><i>Manager Community Outcomes</i></p>
Adoption Date	<i>18 May 2021</i>
Next Review Date	<i>May 2024 (Every 4 years in line with Council terms))</i>

1 BACKGROUND

1.1 **Clause 1.3 (b) of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 identified that one of the main objects of the Act is:**

(b) to facilitate ecologically sustainable development by integrating relevant economic, environmental and social considerations in decision-making about environmental planning and assessment.

1.2 Section 4.15 (1) (b) of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 sets out that in determining a development application an authority must take into consideration:

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

1.3 This policy views health as ‘not just the absence of disease or illness, but rather a ‘complete state of physical, mental and social wellbeing.’¹

1.4 This policy is based on the principles of social justice.

1.5 This policy supports Council’s commitment to ensuring the health and wellbeing of the community through healthy built environments and livable places.

1.6 The policy acknowledges that proposals for change have the potential to intentionally or unintentionally impact upon health through changes to the social, cultural or economic environment.

¹ World Health Organisation (WHO) (1946). Constitution of the World Health Organisation.
<https://apps.who.int/gb/bd/PDF/bd47/EN/constitution-en.pdf?ua=1>

- 1.7 The policy seeks to ensure that these impacts are considered thoroughly and equitably in Council’s land use planning decisions.
- 1.8 The identification and assessment of social and health considerations as a result of land use planning is the shared responsibility of Council, the applicant, government agencies and the community.

2 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Role	Responsibility
CEO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To promote and support policy
DIRECTOR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To promote and support policy
MANAGER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To oversee implementation of policy
STAFF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To implement and comply with policy
CONTRACTORS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To implement and comply with policy
DEVELOPERS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To comply with policy
PROONENTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To comply with policy
SOCIAL AND HEALTH IMPACT ASSESSMENT REFERRAL GROUP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To implement, provide training and advice and review policy

3 POLICY OBJECTIVES

- 3.1 Ensure that social and health impacts are considered in Council land use planning and policy decision-making processes.
- 3.2 Enhance consistency and transparency in Council’s assessment of the social and health impacts of new policies, plans, projects or proposed development.
- 3.3 Maximise positive social and health impacts and minimise negative social and health impacts from land-use plans and development, and new Council policies, plans, or projects.
- 3.4 Support the delivery of the Create Wollondilly Community Strategic Plan 2033 themes of sustainable and balanced growth, management and provision of infrastructure, caring for the environment, looking after the community and an efficient and effective Council.
- 3.5 Support the implementation of the Local Strategic Planning Statement.
- 3.6 Provide additional information and guidance to assist applicants in preparing social and health impact assessment.

4 PRINCIPLES

- 4.1 Impact assessment is an important part of land use planning and policy decision making processes.
- 4.2 Proposals for change which require an environmental or economic impact assessment also require a social and health impact assessment.
- 4.3 The World Health Organization refers to this as a 'social determinants of health' approach.
- 4.4 The social determinants of health include income, education, conditions of employment, social connectedness, physical activity, access to transport, access to appropriate housing, and access to food.
- 4.5 Community wellbeing is supported through:
 - Fostering social inclusion and cohesion
 - Facilitating accessibility and connectivity
 - Providing diverse and affordable living
 - Supporting education, lifelong learning and economic wellbeing, and
 - Creating health, safe and secure communities.
- 4.6 Health impacts are the potential effects a proposal may have on the health of a population and the distribution of those effects within the population.
- 4.7 Healthy built environments and livable places:
 - support and encourage physical activity
 - provide transport choice and accessibility
 - support access to employment and education opportunities
 - connect and integrate social services and physical infrastructure systems
 - provide diverse and affordable housing options
 - support social cohesion and equity
 - create desirable and attractive places with community identity and a sense of place
 - enable access to healthy food
 - provide a high-quality and safe public domain
 - provide opportunities for recreation, culture and entertainment
 - integrate the natural environment through green spaces and networks.
- 4.8 Social Impact Assessment (SIA) and Health Impact Assessment (HIA) have typically been approached as two separate processes, with the only significant difference being that SIA is generally undertaken by consultants on behalf of proponents, while HIA has generally been undertaken by interdisciplinary panels led by public health academics and community members.

- 4.9 The typical HIA process is Screening, Scoping, Identification, Assessment, Recommendations, Evaluation. SIA generally follows a similar pathway but is less formalised.
- 4.10 There are several levels of HIA, ranging from one-day desktop exercises to three-year comprehensive processes; the level is determined in the Scoping phase SIA is most often broken down into two levels: rapid/comment and comprehensive.
- 4.11 Social Impact Assessment (SIA) and Health Impact Assessment (HIA) both seek to predict and optimise the impacts of a proposal and are based on the social determinants of health.
- 4.12 SIA and HIA are essentially the same process, and are both highly adaptable according to scope.
- 4.13 This policy combines SIA and HIA into one standalone process for the review of land use planning and policy proposals.

5 APPLICABILITY

- 5.1 This policy applies to Council Policies, planning proposals, development applications and other documents as identified under 'Triggers' as defined below.
- 5.2 Where this Policy is inconsistent with statutory provisions or guidance documents prepared by the NSW State Government those provisions shall prevail.

6 DEFINITIONS

In this policy, words and phrases have the following meaning:

6.1 Social Planning

Social planning plays an essential role in creating liveable communities, a strong economy, activated places and social unity. Social planning involves planning for the needs and aspirations of people and communities through strategic policy and action, integrated with urban, peri-urban, regional and other planning activities.

6.2 Social Justice

Social Justice is based on the principles of equity, access, participation and rights, and aims to enhance community well-being and effectiveness through provision and implementation of services. This includes but is not limited to accessibility, sense of belonging and inclusion, cultural heritage, economic development and employment, health and wellbeing, safety, housing, participation, social infrastructure and social inclusion.

6.3 Social and Health Impact Assessment

The term Social and Health Impact Assessment (SHIA) refers to a process that seeks to identify, anticipate, understand and manage the social and health outcomes of a new development proposal, policy or plan that may impact on the health and wellbeing of the Wollondilly community. The fundamental objective of S&HIA is to ensure that development maximises positive impacts and minimises unplanned adversities for local people and communities.

6.4 Social and Health Impacts

Social and Health Impacts can be any of the following changes to an individual's or community's:

- way of life, and can include:
 - how they live, their access to housing, transport
 - how they work, their access to employment, working conditions and/or practices
 - how they play, their access to recreation opportunities
 - how they interact with one another on a daily basis.
- community, including its composition, cohesion, character, how it functions and sense of place.
- access to and use of infrastructure, services and facilities, whether provided by local, state, or federal governments, or by for-profit or not-for-profit organisations or volunteer groups.
- culture, including shared beliefs, customs, values and stories, and connections to land, places, and buildings (including Aboriginal culture and connection to country)
- health and wellbeing, including physical and mental health.
- surroundings, including access to and use of ecosystem services, public safety and security, access to and use of the natural and built environment, and its aesthetic value and/or amenity.
- personal and property rights, including whether their economic livelihoods are affected, and whether they experience personal disadvantage or have their civil liberties affected.
- decision-making systems, particularly the extent to which they can have a say in decisions that affect their lives, and have access to complaint, remedy and grievance mechanisms.
- fears and aspirations related to one or a combination of the above, or about the future of their community.

These changes may lead to significant impacts (positive or negative) on community wellbeing, due to changes affecting:

- Demographic and population structure
- Healthy communities
- Social cohesion and sense of belonging
- Accommodation and housing
- Access and mobility
- Community Safety
- Access to employment and training
- Local economy
- Cultural and community significance
- Arts and creative activities
- Supportive communities and needs of specific population groups
- Participation in community life
- Amenity (pleasantness of place and surroundings).

6.5 Triggers to Social and Health Impact Assessment

- The submission of a development applications for specific development types.
- The development of new and amended strategic land use planning instruments.
- New and revised council policies, plans and projects that are likely to contribute to social change.

Assessment of social and health impacts will be carried out:

1. When Council is responsible for the assessment of the land use proposal.
2. When Council is commenting on an external policy, proposal or project.

Specific triggers for Social and Health Impact Assessment are outlined in the corresponding Social and Health Impact Assessment guidelines.

6.6 Type of Social and Health Impact Assessment

There are two levels of assessment associated with Social and Health Impact Assessment. These are:

6.6.1 **A Social and Health Impact Comment** is a scoping exercise that is required when the proposal is considered to have a minor to neutral impact. This type of assessment requires the completion of the Social and Health Impact Comment form only. A copy of this form is provided in the corresponding Social and Health Impact Assessment Guidelines.

6.6.2 **A Comprehensive Social and Health Impact Assessment Report** is required when the impact of a proposal is considered to have a moderate and above impact on the community. The need for a comprehensive assessment report is identified by development type or as result of completing the Social and Health Impact Matrix or the Social and Health Impact Comment Assessment Form. Both the Matrix and Assessment form are provided in the corresponding Social and Health Impact Assessment Guidelines.

6.7 Proposals for which Social and Health Impact Assessment is required

Requirements for Social and Health Impact Assessment for Wollondilly Shire Council are provided in the corresponding Social and Health Impact Assessment Guidelines.

6.8 Proposals that do not require a Social and Health Impact Assessment

Not all land use proposals and policies require a Social and Health Impact Assessment. These include minor and small scale proposals which are not likely to have any social and health impacts. Information on proposals that do not require assessment are outlined in the corresponding Social and Health Impact Assessment Guidelines.