



# HUME CITY COUNCIL FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS Social Impact Assessment Planning Policy and Guidelines

## What is the Social Impact Assessment Planning Policy and Guidelines (SIAPPG)?

The Social Impact Assessment Planning Policy and Guidelines (SIAPPG) provides a planning assessment framework for Council and prospective applicants.

The policy can assist applicants and the community identify and address the potential positive and negative social impacts of development, and consider informed planning proposals that have agreed measures in place to mitigate against adverse consequences of development.

## What is the purpose or benefit to the completion and submission of a Social Impact Comment or Social Impact Assessment with an Application for Planning Permit?

Council acknowledges that developments can impact upon communities and can result in changes to how people live, work and interact with each other, their culture, community and environment, and as well as their health and wellbeing.

These developments can also impact on people's fears and aspirations, including their perceptions about their personal safety in their home / neighbourhood.

By undertaking a Social Impact Comment or Social Impact Assessment, Council, the community and the applicant, can understand and manage the long-term effects of these changes to ensure the development of more sustainable communities in the longer term, and mitigate against any negative impacts.

## Does the SIAPPG apply to my Application for Planning Permit project proposal?

SIAPPG applies to the consideration of all the following application proposals:

- Child Care Centres
- Aged Care Centres / Residential Care Facilities / Supported Residential Care Services
- Retirement Villages
- Educational Facilities (non-government)
- Community Facilities (neighbourhood house, community health / medical clinic / centre / consulting rooms)
- Medical Consulting Facilities (health / medical / clinic / centre / consulting rooms etc.)
- Hostels (transitional, permanent, refuge, crisis accommodation)
- Multi-Unit Housing (including multistorey)
- Place of Assembly / Public Worship
- Community Facilities (youth centres, skate parks)
- Recreational Facilities / Social Facilities / Place of Assembly
- Brothels
- Hotels / Taverns and Registered Clubs
- Drug Rehabilitation / Counselling Services

Please turn over for more requirements

- Establishment of a new Major Health Service Facility / Hospital
- Displacement of affordable, permanent or short term residential accommodation
- Subdivision of land for residential purposes which are not included in, or part of a Council Development Contributions Plan or Section 173 Agreement
- Out of sequence community infrastructure development in growth area subdivisions
- Rezoning of Public Park and Recreation Zone (PPRZ)
- Increasing the bulk or intensification of facilities on land zoned PPRZ (e.g. construction of an additional sports / recreation pavilion or leisure facility can result in a significant number of people and vehicle traffic being generated for extended periods of times)
- Rezoning from industrial to residential use

If you are uncertain as to whether your development proposal triggers the need to complete a Social Impact Comment or Social Impact Assessment please refer to the Social Impact Assessment Planning Policy and Guidelines (6.5 Social Impact Comment / Social Impact Assessment - Criteria Tables).

## Who at Council can advise me about the (SIAPPG)?

A copy of the Social Impact Assessment Planning Policy and Guidelines can be obtained on the Statutory Planning Guidelines and Zoning page of our website. All queries / questions relating to the Social Impact Assessment Planning Policy and Guidelines should be directed to the Statutory Planning Department.

It would be advantageous for a prospective applicant to seek from the advice Statutory Planning Department as early as possible in the planning application process.

## What is the difference between a Social Impact Comment and Social Impact Assessment?

The Social Impact Comment is an initial and basic assessment that must provide sufficient information for Council to make a decision. The assessment, to be undertaken by the applicant, should not require specialist technical assistance to complete, although in some instances this may be preferable.

The Social Impact Assessment is an in-depth (comprehensive) assessment and it should be undertaken by a suitably qualified professional. It provides an in-depth analysis of social impacts for proposals where significant impacts are likely to occur.

## Is there a cost in completing and submitting a Social Impact Comment or Social Impact Assessment?

There is no cost in completing a Social Impact Comment or Social Impacts Assessment unless an applicant engages the services of a suitably qualified practitioner to undertake this task. Council is not responsible for costs associated with the completion of a Social Impact Comment or Social Impact Assessment.

There is no cost in submitting a Social Impact Comment or Social Impact Assessment to the Statutory Planning Department.

**Disclaimer:** Please note this checklist is for standard information required for lodgement. Additional information may be required by the assessing planning officer after registration.

## How much information is required when completing a Social Impact Comment or Social Impact Assessment?

A Social Impact Assessment Comment can be undertaken by the applicant and should not require specialist technical assistance to complete, although in some instances this may be preferable.

The Social Impact Assessment provides an in-depth analysis of social impacts for proposals where significant impacts are likely to occur and whilst Council does not have a preferred model to prepare and develop a Social Impact Assessment response, it is expected that the applicant will provide a thoroughly researched baseline.

## Who do I submit a completed Social Impact Comment or Social Impact Assessment submitted to?

A Social Impact Comment or Social Impact Assessment should be submitted at the Application for Planning Permit stage to the Statutory Planning Department by phone, email or in person. Their contact details can be found on the Statutory Planning Webpage.

## Am I compelled to complete and submit a Social Impact Comment or Social Impact Assessment?

Although the SIAPPG is not a statutory document it is a guideline to assist Council and applicants make consistent decisions as well as provide relevant and appropriate information for decision making. SIAPPG underpins better planning outcomes for communities in Hume City.

## What happens if my Application for Planning Permit triggers a Social Impact Comment or Social Impact Assessment and I choose not to submit a response with my Application?

Although completing a Social Impact Comment or Social Impact Assessment is not a statutory document it is a guideline to assist Council and the community identify and address the potential positive and negative social impacts of such developments resulting in well considered and informed planning proposals that have agreed measures in place to mitigate against adverse consequences.

Council encourages prospective applicants to review and use the Social Impact Assessment Planning Policy and Guidelines.

If an applicant decides not to submit a Social Impact Comment or Social Impact Assessment, Council will still be required to seek further information that will address the potential positive and negative impacts of the proposal.

**Disclaimer:** Please note this checklist is for standard information required for lodgement. Additional information may be required by the assessing planning officer after registration.

## **Will a Town Planning or Urban Context Report, or something similar, be a sufficient response instead of a Social Impact Comment or Social Impact Assessment?**

Unfortunately Town Planning and / or Urban Context Reports do not always fully address the issues identified in the Social Impact Assessment Planning Policy and Guidelines.

Prospective applicants are encouraged to respond to the Checklist as outlined in Section 10 - Social Impact Assessment Planning Policy and Guidelines. The Checklist has been developed to guide the assessment process.

## **Isn't the Social Impact Assessment Planning Policy and Guidelines creating an extra burden on applicants during the Application for Planning Permit stage?**

Undertaking a Social Impact Comment or Social Impact Assessment seeks to achieve improved outcomes and avoid adverse impacts such as foreseeable negative consequences arising from poorly informed or isolated planning and development applications, and as such, Council believes that the process can only improve the planning and development process.

**Disclaimer:** Please note this checklist is for standard information required for lodgement. Additional information may be required by the assessing planning officer after registration.