WAVERLEY SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT GUIDELINES 2022

Waverley Council acknowledge the Bidjigal and Gadigal people, who traditionally occupied the Sydney coast.

Waverley Council also acknowledge Aboriginal Elders past, present and emerging.

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PART A: INTRODUCTION

CONTEXT

The future vision for the Waverley LGA is embodied in its Community Strategic Plan 2018-2029 (CSP) and Local Strategic Planning Statement 2020-2036 (LSPS).

Some key goals of the CSP are to *"create a resilient, caring and cohesive community"* and to *"strengthen people's inclusion in community life, promote diversity and celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture past, present and future".* The LSPS includes a direction to be a *"city for people".*

Whilst **environmental** and **economic** impacts of a proposal must be assessed, in order to successfully achieve the goals of the CSP and the direction of the LSPS, social impacts must be properly considered as well in development and planning decisions. This can be done by way of undertaking a Social Impact Assessment (SIA).

Waverley Council is committed to the SIA process as a means of considering the potential social impacts of developments more comprehensively and consistently in planning and decision making. Not all development proposals will be required to provide an SIA because there are already development controls in Council's LEP and DCP that are designed to mitigate impacts.

Refer to Part B of this report for examples of desirable social outcomes.

SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Social Impact Assessments (SIA) are supposed to tell us *what* social impacts matter when it comes to proposed developments, *where* the impacts will be felt, by *whom* and *how*. SIA should also deal with *how* impacts will be managed, or, indeed, *if* they can be managed at all.

For example, SIAs can inform who and how people might be affected by a new boarding house nearby; if a new light rail corridor will benefit some whilst adversely impacting others; and what kinds of social benefits and impacts we can expect from a new school or hospital. It can provide information about the cumulative impacts of having many of the same types of developments in one area. Additionally it can indicate if there is a lack of certain types of uses (e.g. affordable housing or mechanics) in an area, where the loss of any more may not be in the public interest.

SIA provides an opportunity for the opinion of the local community to be considered in the DA assessment process. However, only justifed, concrete and evidence-based views surrounding likely effects of proposed develpment will be afforded weight in assessment.

KEY CONSIDERATION GROUPS

Given Waverley's diverse population, social impacts should be considered from the unique perspective of groups that makes up the larger community including those who are more vulnerable and/or minorities.

CUMULATIVE AND CONSEQUENTIAL IMPACTS

Social impacts can be cumulative, the result of more than one development or land use type in an area. This can become apparent over time, rather than being immediately perceptible or relatable to a specific development or development type.

An example being the difference between a quiet neighbourhood street with one boarding house which sits within the existing character and provides for housing diversity, versus a quiet neighbourhood street with 10 boarding houses that alters an established character and has the potential to cause ten times the impacts of one boarding house with increased noise and traffic.

An SIA can identify where an existing area may already effectively be saturated with a certain type of use (e.g. backpackers, pubs and clubs) and further instances will have a detrimental social impact on the neighbourhood.

The opposite may also be true. An SIA may identify where certain types of use are diminishing and are considered important to housing diversity and community satisfaction. For example, the loss of affordable housing or sporting and recreation land.

APPLICABLE DEVELOPMENT

An SIA will not be required for all development or land use types. It is not meant to be an onerous or unreasonable requirement on landowners. Development that may require a Social Impact Assessment will typically be:
- of a large and/or sensitive nature;
- in a sensitive or constrained setting; and/or
- likely to have an impact on the community that can't be mitigated by normal Development Application conditions.

Part C outlines a list of land uses which will require SIA. There may be instances where an SIA is not considered necessary in the circumstances of the particular case and others where the development is not in the table but the Council planners believe one should be supplied. The need for an SIA is up to the discretion of Council planners, based on the expected impact, scope and scale of development, and impact of similar development in the past.

SOCIAL IMPACT STATEMENT

A Social Impact Statement (SIS) is the name for the report assessing the social impacts of a Planning Proposal or Development Application.

An SIS is a comprehensive assessment typically required for developments where significant social impacts are anticipated. The SIS should form its own report and must be undertaken by someone with appropriate training and experience, particularly in using rigorous social science methodologies that are undertaken with public involvement.

Suitable persons will have a relevant tertiary qualification in social science, human geography or the like, have experience in community development (needs analysis, facility/service planning), in public participation, and in use of the types of statistical and qualitative information required for the SIS.

PART B: DESIRED SOCIAL OUTCOMES

Social impacts are a critical consideration when assessing the suitability of a proposal. Social impacts typically include changes to one or more of the following Social Impact categories. A list of desired social outcomes related to each social impact category is also provided. An SIS must demonstrate how the proposal achieves the desired social outcomes.

	Category description	Desired Social Outcome
Accessibility	Includes how people access and use infrastructure, services, and facilities, whether provided by a public, private or not-for-profit organisation, facilitating or hindering universal access principles, affordability.	Infrastructure, services and facilities are safe and affordable, facilitating autonomy and independence for all residents. Key services (healthcare, recreation, and shops) are nearby.
Accommodation	Includes affordable housing; displacement; housing choice, universal housing (housing for life).	Affordable housing and diverse housing mix options are available within accessible areas. Where a high number of small units are planned affordable collective washing and drying facilities are available onsite.
Community	Includes composition, cohesion, stability, character, how the community functions and people's sense of place.	A diverse and cohesive community composition with a sense of place and inclusion is provided.
Health and wellbeing	Includes physical, social, spiritual and mental health especially for people vulnerable to social exclusion or substantial change, psychological stress resulting from financial or other pressures, and changes to public health overall. Considers sense of belonging or being unwelcome; and social interaction/ isolation. Not merely the absence of disease or infirmity. Give consideration to creating or impacting spaces that enable people to recreate without having to enter a commercial premises.	The local area provides good access to facilities and activities promoting physical and mental, health & wellbeing and sense of belonging.
Safety & security	Includes graffiti, vandalism & property damage, offensive language & behaviour, safety of women, young people and homeless people, substance consumption or abuse, and truancy. Also includes perceptions about safety, fears about the future of their community, and aspirations for their future and the future of their children.	The NSW Government's Crime Prevention and the Assessment of Development Applications Guidelines are successfully implemented, with consideration of potentially vulnerable population groups.

Surroundings

Includes ecosystem services such as shade, pollution control, and erosion control, public safety and security, access to and use of the natural and built environment, and aesthetic value and amenity. The quality of the air and water people use, the availability and quality of the food they eat, the level of hazard or risk, dust and noise they are exposed to, the adequacy of sanitation, their physical safety, and their access to and control over resources.

All groups have equitable access to high quality and safe surroundings. The natural, built environment and overall amenity of space is improved.

Our Liveable Places Centres Strategy

Waverley's *Our Liveable Places Centres Strategy* provides a vision and place-based objectives for each business centre in the LGA which development providing an SIS in any centre should consider as additional desired social outcomes.

PART C: APPLICABLE DEVELOPMENT

GENERAL TRIGGERS

A Social Impact Assessment is required for **all proponent-lead Planning Proposals,** and Development Applications that involve the following:

- Loss of low-rental dwellings (see *State Environmental Planning Policy Housing 2021* for definition)
- Strata subdivision of 4 or more lots
- $10,000,000 or greater construction cost
- Gross Floor Area of 3,000sqm or greater (see *Waverley Local Environmental Plan* for definition)
- Reduction in dwelling numbers on site

TRIGGERS BY LAND USE

In addition to the General Triggers for a SIA, development that requires a Social Impact Statement based on land use is outlined in Table 1 below.

Table 1 - Land Uses requiring a SIA	
Land Use	**Threshold**
Shop top housing Residential flat buildings Build-to-Rent housing	SIS for more than 50 dwellings.
Boarding houses and hostels Co-living housing	SIS for new developments or major redevelopment.
Entertainment facilities	SIS for more than 100 persons.
Pubs, excluding a limited licence and a small bar. These are assessed in conjunction with local police.	SIS for new development.
Retail premises	SIS for more than 500sqm.
Tourist and visitor accommodation: • Backpackers' accommodation • Hotel or motel accommodation • Serviced apartments	SIS for new developments or major redevelopment.

PART D: SIA STRUCTURE

This Part details a recommended report structure and requirements for a typical Social Impact Assessment.

1. ASSESSMENT CATCHMENT

Identify and justify the physical catchment for the assessment. The area size will vary depending on the scale and nature of the project ranging from the individual street in which the development is proposed, to a wider area that has the same zoning. For example, if a new supermarket is proposed in an area where there are local small-scale suppliers of similar goods, the catchment should include these shops.

2. SOCIAL BASELINE

Identify a pre-development social baseline of the assessment area through a study describing the social context without the proposed development. It documents the existing social environment, conditions and trends relevant to the impacts identified.

The study is a benchmark against which direct, indirect and cumulative impacts can be predicted and analysed. Tailor the scope and content of the social baseline study to the project context using meaningful indicators and information.

Baseline data can be collected through primary research such as a representative survey from the community, and from secondary research using existing data sources such as the resources and references listed in **Part F** of these Guidelines, material from similar projects, published research, relevant local, State and Commonwealth strategic plans and policies, or the outcomes from previous community engagement.

The social baseline should at minimum consider:

Area Profile: What is the social, physical, cultural and economic profile? What is the current status of commercial variety and independence in the area?

Features: What features of the community, the

social locality, and/or the landscape do people value – from urban areas, the sense of community or the accessibility of services, to natural and diverse environments or quiet/vibrant neighbourhoods? How do these features influence local people's or businesses' way of life, health or wellbeing?

Other social baseline considerations may include:

First Nations: What Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community past, present and future significance does the assessment area hold?

Climate Change: The gradual rise in average temperature, reduced water availability and increased severity of storms experienced in Waverley due to Climate Change is resulting in less comfortable surroundings and a change in way of life (refer to *Social Impact Types*). Development should demonstrate resilience against these resultant social impacts and exhibit a design that provides social comfort and function in warmer decades to come without reliance on air-conditioning. Are there other prevalent Climate Change trends that produce social impacts in the assessment catchment?

Key Consideration Groups: How do the Key Consideration Groups currently sit within each Social Impact Type item goal? Refer to **Part B** for the Social Outcomes Matrix.

Vulnerable groups: What minority groups and vulnerable groups are present? What opportunities are present to increase their level of social inclusion, sense of belonging and cultural protection?

3. PREDICT AND ASSESS THE SOCIAL IMPACTS ON THE SOCIAL BASELINE

Critically assess the predicted impact of the development proposal against the social baseline. Describe and justify the methodologies used to predict and analyse social impacts, assumptions and projections as well as outcomes of the process. Consider the:

- Possible adverse social impacts; provide justification for why this is acceptable. How can the adverse impact be mitigated or removed? Although the project may deliver benefits in the longer term, how might the project be designed to avoid and minimise any short-term adverse impacts?
- Possible beneficial social impacts; provide a supported explanation for why this is produced. How can the possible impact be enhanced or introduced?
- Extent of the impact - immediate, longer term or cumulative; and
- Density and clustering of similar development.

Consider including a completed version of the **SIA Scoping Worksheet** provided in **Part G** of these Guidelines within the assessment.

4. MITIGATION MEASURES AND MONITORING VIA A PLAN OF MANAGEMENT (POM)

In order to mitigate negative social impacts and introduce and enhance beneficial ones identified within the Predict and Assess step, the proposal should be adjusted by way of design and/or operational improvement. Depending on the scale and controversy surrounding the proposal readjustment, additional community and stakeholder consultation may be required.

Developments with an SIS should establish a robust Plan of Management (POM) that clearly outlines potential real or perceived negative impacts and what measures will be incorporated to mitigate these.

Social impacts can be both positive and negative, and it may be possible to address any real or percieved negative impacts of a proposal by offering a community benefit or improvement within the POM that will reduce the negative impact. The following list provides some measures that can be considered to achieve a more positive social impact from a proposal, alongside those outlined as Desired Social Outcomes in **Part B**. Others not listed within Part B or below may also be considered by Council.

- Floor space, outdoor space, or a public facility for the purposes of a community use;
- Community development including financial & in-kind support for social, cultural or recreational initiatives such as public art, community safety, health & wellbeing projects, facilities/services or events for the general community or specific target groups, business development projects and the like; and
- Ongoing consultation & engagement.

Some of these can be designed into the development proposal or conditioned in the consent. Others may come within the ambit of a Voluntary Planning Agreement (s7.4 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*). An applicant may voluntarily offer to make a planning agreement with Council.

Inclusion of positive impacts or community benefit does not mean that a proposed development will automatically be approved by Council. Similarly, a proposal will not automatically be refused if there are perceived negative social impacts. However, Council will endeavour to ensure that negative impacts are reduced, and positive impacts are introduced or enhanced.

UN Sustainable Development Goal 11
The targets of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 11 are also considered to be desired social outcomes.

PART E: CONSULTATION

It is best practice to consult with the community, and at minimum must be done when required by Council.

The purpose of consultation is to obtain perspectives from the local community who may be adversely impacted by a development rather than from just the applicant's perspective.

Consultation should occur early enough to be meaningful, preferably before the preparation of any concept design.

Effective early and quality engagement with the community on significant or sensitive planning and development proposals enables proponents to understand key areas of interest during the early planning phases before plans are finalised and an application is officially lodged. This should reduce the risk of unexpected or surprise objections from community during the public exhibition and project determination phase. It can also lead to faster determinations, better planning outcomes and reduced community opposition.

Consultation should be conducted by a neutral third-party community engagement specialist or consultant. This person or group should complete a stakeholder map of key groups and individuals who might be affected by the development, including their likely or anticpated concerns/areas of interest so that engagement with the stakeholder can be tailored to their interests.

Consultation will depend on the type of development proposed and types of stakeholders involved, and may include the following methods:

• Survey
• Focus Group
• Workshop
• Public Information Session

These engagement methods should be reasonably promoted to ensure relevant community members are adequately notified and able to participate. Communications can include:

• Letterbox drop within a reasonable radius of proposed development
• Notification to precinct committee members
• Advertisement in local paper such as Wentworth Courier
• Notices in nearby businesses/community organisations

The *Engaging with Aboriginal Communities NSW Government Practice Note* can help to guide culturally sensitive and responsive consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as part of any SIA.

The information obtained from the consultation methods should actively and clearly inform changes to the proposal, however, only justified, concrete and rational views from stakeholders will be afforded weight.

Consultation should 'close the loop' by informing all participants of the outcome of their involvement and of the determination.

Refer to the *IAP2 Quality Assurance Standard for Community and Stakeholder Engagement* for best practice consultation.

PART F: RESOURCES & REFERENCES

In the preparation of a SIA, applicants may find it useful to draw upon some of Council's strategies and policies to help inform the Baseline section. The below is a non-exhaustive list of relevant documents available on Council's website.

Waverley Council
- Waverley Community Strategic Plan
- Waverley Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2017 - 2021
- Waverley Local Strategic Planning Statement
- Waverley Local Housing Strategy
- Waverley Our Liveable Places Centres Strategy
- Waverley Smart Cities Strategy
- Waverley Community Participation Plan
- Waverley Open Space and Recreation Strategy

Applicants may also wish to review simliar documents from neighbouring Woollahra and Randwick Councils, as well as the relevant Region and District Plan prepared by the NSW Government.

Other sources which may be of use to prepare a Baseline include:
- Australian Bureau of Statistics
- NSW Health Indicators
- Forecast population data (residents and workers)
- GIS / Google audits and mapping
- Arts National Participation Survey
- Aussports
- Greater Sydney Outdoors Survey
- Scanlon Social Cohesion Survey
- Heat Vulnerability Index and Climate Data
- BOSCAR

PART G: SIA SCOPING WORKSHEET

The below worksheet is provided to aid applicants in the preparation of an SIA, and to adequately present the full range of impacts to the community as part of any consultation program.

Consideration		Impact #1	Impact #2	Impact #3
What social impact categories could be affected?	*Refer to page 5. Create a new column for each.*			
Who are the individuals/groups who are expected to be affected?	*Use demographic information, consult with Council officers.*			
What are the likely positive outcomes?	*List all real and perceived positive outcomes of the development.*			
What are the likely negative impacts?	*List all real and perceived negative impacts of the development.*			
What concerns and /or aspirations have people expressed about the impact or outcome?	*Specify for each affected group and impact/ outcome.*			
What is the cumulative impact of this project?	*Identify potential cumulative impacts.*			
What is the duration, intensity, sensitivity and level of concern of the impact/s?	*Describe the likely impacts and outcomes in detail.*			
What methods and data sources will be used to investigate this impact?	*Detail how the SIA will be informed, and how the impact will be monitored over time.*			
What mitigation/enhancement measures have been implemented post-investigation?	*Describe any measures taken to ameliorate impacts.*			