



PARRAMATTA CITY COUNCIL SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT GUIDELINES

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This document has been developed by Parramatta City Council's Social Outcomes Team, with major input from Kate McCauley (Property Development Group) and support from the Land Use Planning Team and Development Services Unit. Parramatta City Council also acknowledges the contribution from Macquarie University.

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Background

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Background

1.1 Purpose and application of this document

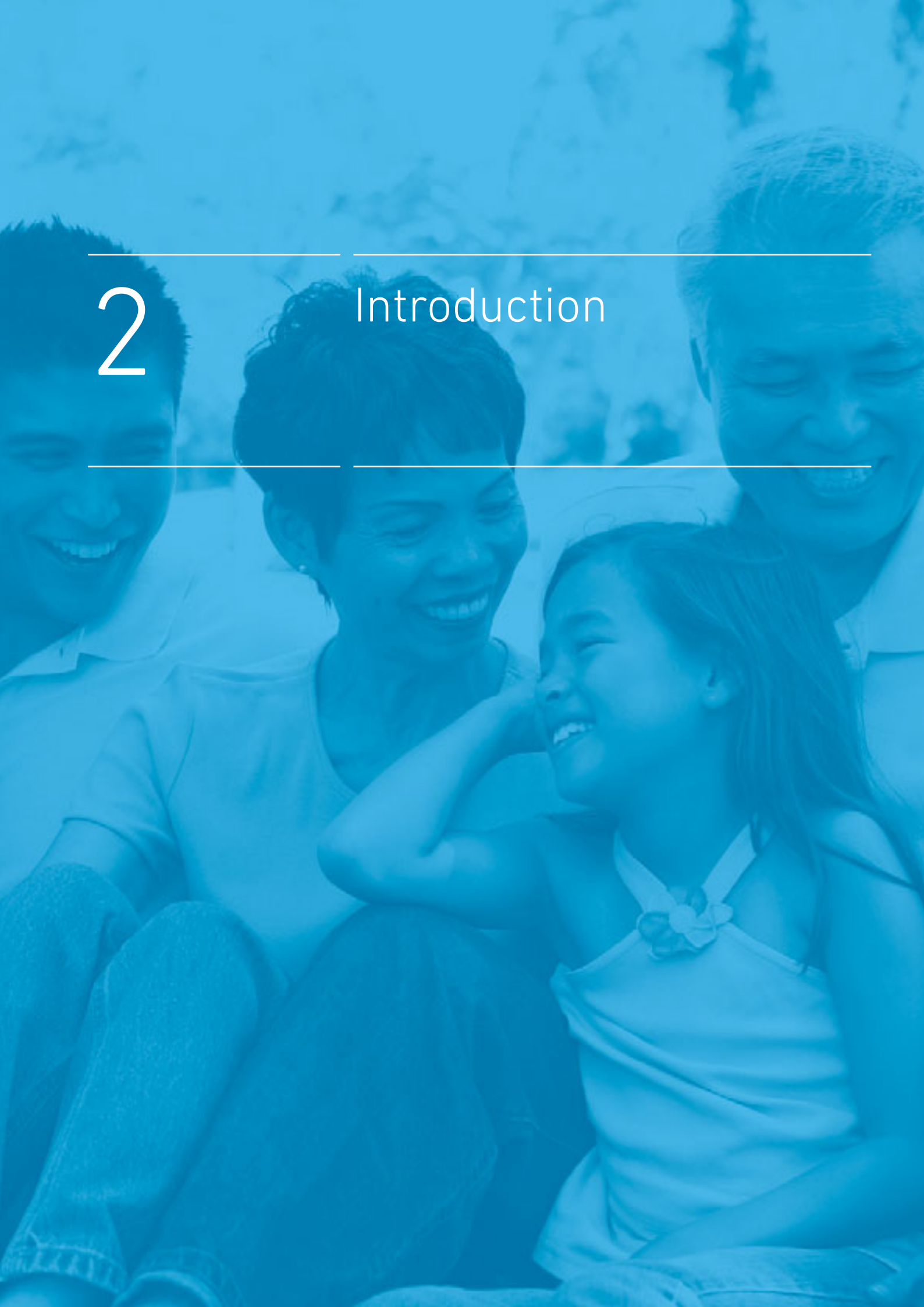
This document is relevant for any individual or organisation preparing a Development Application related to land or activity within the Parramatta Local Government Area (LGA).

It is a guide only and provides general information to aid individuals and organisations to understand:

- > What Social Impact Assessment is and its benefits
- > When a detailed Social Impact Assessment is required to be submitted as part of a Development Application, and
- > Suggestions on the content and process for completing and submitting a Social Impact Assessment to Parramatta City Council (PCC or Council).

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Introduction



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Introduction

2.1 Introduction

Council is committed to the process of Social Impact Assessment (SIA) as a means of considering social issues more comprehensively and consistently in its planning and decision making.

Demand for a greater focus on social impacts has been driven by:

- > A changing demographic profile and pressures arising from inner urban life and the growth and positioning of Parramatta as Sydney's second CBD
- > Increasing awareness of planning authorities to apply social criteria in making decisions about development and land use
- > Increasing emphasis by Council and the community on economic, social and environmental sustainability

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About Social Impact Assessments

A blue-tinted photograph of two people sitting on a grassy field, viewed from behind. They are looking towards a row of buildings in the distance. The image is used as a background for the page.

3

About Social Impact Assessments

3.1 Definitions

Impact assessment is a method for predicting and assessing the consequences of a proposed action or initiative before a decision is made.

Social Impact Assessment refers to the assessment of the social consequences of a proposed decision or action (such as development proposals, plans, policies, and projects) on affected groups of people and on their way of life, life chances, health, culture and capacity to sustain these.

For the purposes of these Guidelines, SIA process, Social Impact Assessment, Community Impact Assessment and Health Impact Assessment are taken to be interchangeable terms and to have a similar intent.

Social issues cover all aspects of human life including how we live, our culture, our community, our health and wellbeing and our aspirations.

Social impacts are a change to one or more of the following:

- > **People's way of life:** How they live, work, play and interact with one another day-to-day,
- > **Their culture:** Their shared beliefs, customs, values and language or dialect,
- > **Their community:** Its cohesion, stability, character, services and facilities,
- > **Their political systems:** The extent to which people are able to participate in decision-making that affects their lives, the level of democratisation that is taking place, and the resources provided for this purpose,
- > **The environment:** The quality of the air and water that 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;
- > **Health and wellbeing:** Health is a state of complete physical, mental, social and spiritual wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity,
- > **Personal and property rights:** Particularly whether people are economically affected, or experience personal disadvantage which may include a violation of their civil liberties, and
- > **Fears and aspirations:** Perceptions about safety, fears about the future of their community, and their aspirations for their future and the future of their children.

*(International Principles for Social Impact Assessment (May 2003),
International Association for Impact Assessment)*

3.2 Purpose of SIA

Having a process to include SIA as part of development applications allows Council to make decisions within its strategic planning systems with the view to create a cohesive, connected, caring, safe and equitable community. In particular it allows Council to:

- > Ensure social impacts are considered in Council decision making
- > Enhance consistency and transparency in Council's assessment of the social impacts of proposed development
- > Maximise positive social impacts and minimise negative social impacts of land use plans and development
- > Base Council decision making on developments that meet environmental, social and economic sustainability outcomes

3.3 Benefits of SIA

By incorporating SIA into Council's planning processes, the community stands to benefit through the following:

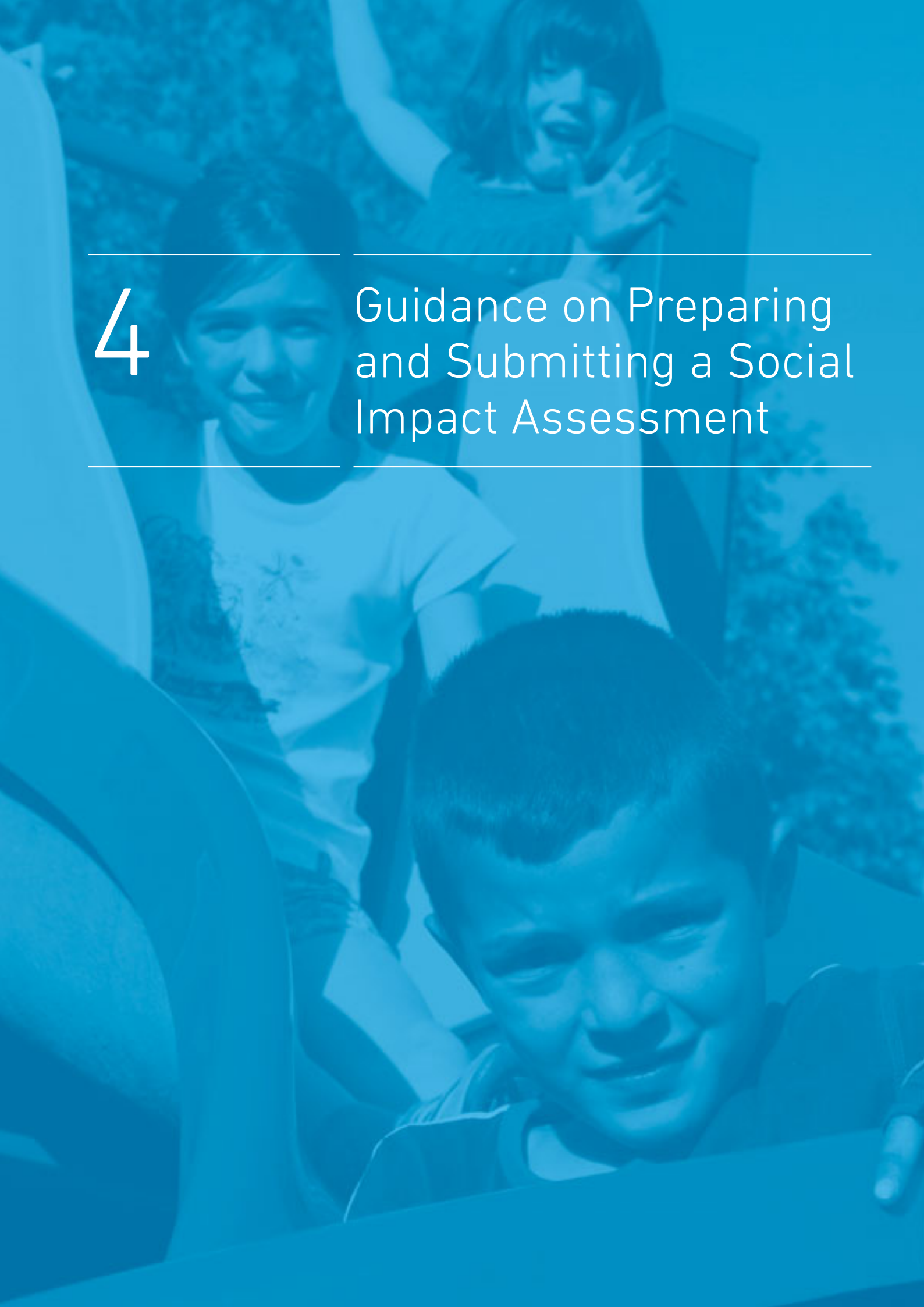
- > Optimising the social benefit of development activity
- > Ensuring community needs are met in an equitable and inclusive way and that the environmental, social and economic qualities of the local area are enhanced as a result of development activity
- > Facilitating better community engagement and community feedback, and
- > Creating opportunity for greater understanding of certain planned development activity within the community

3.4 SIA and Legislation

The social impacts of planned development activity are required to be addressed under Section 79(c) of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act (1979). In addition to this, Community Impact Statements are required under Section 48 of the Liquor Act (2007).

4

Guidance on Preparing and Submitting a Social Impact Assessment



4

Guidance on Preparing and Submitting a Social Impact Assessment

4.1 What type of development requires a SIA?

Under Section 79(c) of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act (1979), all social, environmental and economic impacts that are reasonably foreseeable are required to be considered and addressed as part of the planning process.

There are some types of development activity that are considered more likely to have greater or more significant social impacts than others. These more sensitive types of development require a detailed SIA.

The types of development or activity that require a SIA are listed in the table below. It is important to note that Table 1 provides general guidance only. Under the EP&A Act (1979), PCC has discretion to request a SIA for any Development Application if it believes that the proposed development is likely to result in significant social impacts.

Further clarification on the need to complete a SIA can be sort from Council's Duty Planner.

Table 1
Development Activity requiring a Social Impact Assessment

Type of Development	Size scale (trigger for SIA)	Notes
Residential		
Residential flat building	> 100 units	For projects located outside of CBD only
Affordable housing	> 20 units	Does not apply to secondary dwellings
Group Homes	All	
Social Housing	All	
Boarding houses	> 10 rooms	
Liquor and Gaming		
Extended trading hours, wholesale licence sale, liquor retail outlet and licensed restaurant	All	
Pubs (LEP definition) Bottle Shops/ Registered Club / Nightclub / Licence Public Entertainment Venue	All	
Gaming / poker machine licences	> 10 machines or licenses	

Table 1 (continued)
**Development Activity requiring
 a Social Impact Assessment**

Type of Development	Size scale (trigger for SIA)	Notes
Educational		
Educational Establishments	New or major expansions	Includes schools, TAFE, Universities
Religious Facilities		
Places of Public Worship	> 250 patrons	
Commerical		
Major Shopping Centre	New or expansion by 20,000 sqm	
Sex Services premises Restricted premises	All sex-service premises	
Transport		
Passenger transport Major public utility undertaking	Regional	SIA for responding to proponent applications and where PCC is not the consent authority
Health Services		
Health Services Facilities	New or major expansions	
Urban Development		
Planning proposals that seek major (major complexity) rezoning	All	
Recreation Facility	Major	

4.2 SIA Methodology and Report Content

The SIA process involves identifying, analysing, monitoring and managing the social consequences, both positive and negative, of a proposed decision or action (in this case a development proposal), and any social change processes invoked by them.

Council requires the SIA to be an effective tool to aid decision making and any assessment must therefore address the following:

- > Relevant policy and legislation and integrate policy priorities in the assessment
- > Acknowledgement of the makeup and values of local communities. That is, be informed by the things that are likely to impact on local community wellbeing
- > Identify impacts that are directly related to the proposed development (demonstrate the connection between the intervention and likely impact).

4.2 SIA Methodology and Report Content (continued)

A simple outline of the affected communities' demographics and key statistics will not satisfy as an SIA.

Specifically, it is recommended that SIA's prepared for a Development Application provide Council and the applicant with the following level of information and analysis:

Information	Details
Description	Description of the proposed development including geographic location
Demographics	Pre – change demographics of the suburb that the development is located in
Stakeholders	Description of the key stakeholders affected by the proposal. Consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – individuals and organisations – any specific communities of interest relevant to the area/ activity (e.g. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders)
Consultation Processes	Explanation of processes used to collect and consider feedback from key stakeholders
Proposed Changes	Identify the key changes (physical and demographic) likely to occur from the proposed development /activity
Probable Impacts	Analysis of how the proposed changes are likely to impact on key stakeholders. Give consideration to the following areas (pick those that are relevant): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Health – Housing – Earning ability – Safety – Neighbourhood identity – Belonging and connection to community – Access to and usage of community facilities and services – Social Equity (needs of disadvantaged groups / displacement etc) <p>See 4.4 and Appendix 1 and 2 for more information on scoping questions.</p>
Summary	Summary of report findings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Key changes as a result of the proposed development – Key probable positive impacts – Key probable negative impacts – Mitigation strategies / plan to manage the probable negative impacts
SIA Author	Description of the report author, their qualifications and capacity to complete the assessment

4.3

Who should conduct a SIA?

A SIA should be conducted by a suitably qualified person. Qualified practitioners include those that:

- > Have a social science background, training and/or extensive experience in the field of community needs analysis and community consultation, and
- > Are familiar with the types of information and may work in a range of fields including social planning, sociology, human geography, anthropology and town planning.

4.4

Data Sources and Data Collection

Collecting the right data is one of the most important processes in assessing social impacts. Tips for effective and accurate data collection are provided in Appendix 1. Suggested scoping questions to aid in the exploration of key social issues are provided in Appendix 2. Lastly, useful websites for data sources are provided in Appendix 3.

4.5

Process for submitting a SIA as part of a development application

Stage	Action
1	Applicant identifies that for their type of development Council requires a SIA (see Section 4.1)
2	Applicant completes the SIA in accordance with Council procedure and these guidelines. Council provides guidance to the applicant as required
3	The applicant submits the completed SIA with the development application in accordance with Council's requirements
4	Council evaluates and uses the SIA in considering the development application which it approves (with or without conditions of consent) or refuses
5	The social impacts and adherence to conditions of consent are monitored

4.6

The role of Council staff and Councillors in the SIA process

PCC staff will review the SIA report and consider the following:

- > The data / research validity
- > Whether the critical impacts have been satisfactorily identified
- > Whether the mitigation and monitoring measures are appropriate and support positive social outcomes for the community

PCC staff will prepare a report to Council on the planned development activity, including the social impacts, and identify any suggested Conditions of Consent for Council's consideration, as well as any gaps within the report.

Council will evaluate the SIA data as part of its consideration of the Development Application, which it will then decide to approve (with or without conditions of consent) or refuse.

5

Useful References and Contacts



5

Useful References and Contacts

5.1 References

Cox, G. and Miers, S. (1995) *Social Impact Assessment for Local Government: A Handbook for Councillors, Town Planners and Social Planners*, Local Government Shires Council of NSW (as attached)

Esteves, A M. and Franks, D. et al. (2012) "Social impact assessment: the state of the art." *Impact Assessment and Project Appraisal* 30(1)

Esteves, A M. and Vanclay, F. (2011) *Current issues and trends in social impact assessment. New Directions in Social Impact Assessment*. F. Vanclay and A. M. Esteves. Cheltenham,UK, Edward Elgar

Howitt, R. (2005) *The importance of process in social impact assessment: Ethics, methods and process for cross-cultural engagement*. *Ethics, Place & Environment: A Journal of Philosophy & Geography* 8(2)

Howitt, R. (2011) *Theoretical Foundations, New Directions in Social Impact Assessment: Conceptual and Methodological Advances*. F. Vanclay and A. M. Esteves. Cheltenham, UK, Edward Elgar

Mitheaux, A. (2010) *The role of social planning and social impact assessment in NSW coastal communities*, NSW Government

NSW Government (2007) *Liquor Act 2007*, NSW Government

NSW Government (2007) *Gaming Machines Act 2007*, NSW Government

NSW Government (1979) *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*, NSW Government: S79C Clause 1b

O'Faircheallaigh, C. (2010) "Public participation and environmental impact assessment: Purposes, implications, and lessons for public policy making." *Environmental impact assessment review* 30(1)

Planning Institute Australia (2009) *Planning Institute of Australia National Position Statement*

Vanclay, F. (2003) "International Principles for Social Impact Assessment" *Impact Assessment and Project Appraisal* 21(1): 7, www.iaia.org/iaia/wiki/sia.ashx

5.2 Contacts

Further information on Council's Development Application processes can be found at Parramatta City Council's Website - www.parracity.nsw.gov.au

OR

By contacting Council's Duty Planner by phone on (02) 9806 5000 or in person by attending the Customer Service Desk at Council's Administration Building, 30 Darcy Street Parramatta.

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Appendices



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Appendices

Appendix 1

Data Collection Tips

Appendix 2

Suggested SIA Scoping Questions

Appendix 3

Data Sources

Appendix 1

Data Collection Tips

Existing sources

- > Look at the social profile available from PCC
- > Identify social and economic issues relating to the locality
- > Check any relevant local survey work
- > Carry out a literature search
- > Consider PCC's cultural, economic, social and/or strategic plan (as appropriate)

Community engagement

- > Call for written submissions from the affected stakeholders
- > Document and address issues that are raised in public forums / workshops / meetings / display sessions / committees of PCC
- > Conduct survey/s of residents and affected stakeholders

Use multiple data sources

Using more than one data source can enhance validity of data. For instance, Census rental data can be used alongside the Department of Urban Affairs and Planning's Rent Report. A survey of local real estate agents may be a third source. This will strengthen the claims made in the SIA. This technique should be used to prepare SIS's for critical impact issues.

Obtaining primary data

Published data sources may not contain enough information for a thorough assessment. The social impact practitioner may have to obtain data directly from the community. This may be in the form of survey research, oral histories, informant interviews, focus groups or workshop material. Public participation in assessing social impacts is first and foremost a data collection tool. Options for primary data collection:

- > Public meetings
- > Community liaison groups
- > Open house / information centres
- > Workshops
- > Focus groups
- > Surveys
- > Telephone hotlines
- > Resident committees

- > Oral history collection
- > In-depth interviews
- > Key informant / community leader interviews

Survey work that is undertaken should not be focussed on questions such as “Do you support the development?” Surveys are easily biased. Surveys should focus on impact issues and community values.

The objectives of any consultation program will be diverse. One component is to inform the public of the nature of the development and information sharing is an important starting point. Consultation may be the only way to identify public concerns and gain an understanding of underlying community values. Gathering information from the public will be the chief objective. Ultimately, the entire process will improve decision-making and assist in obtaining better development.

Applicants and social impact practitioners should refer to this Guideline document prior to commencing any public participation.

Identify gaps in data

Often social impact assessment has to be finalised in the absence of relevant or necessary data. These gaps may be the result of the high costs of collecting the data, faults in published sources, or lack of comparative information. It is essential that these gaps in data are identified in the assessment and are not masked.

The significance of these data gaps needs to be evaluated when making the final recommendations. Two principles should be followed in making sense of data gaps.

Data gaps

Principle 1: identify likely social impacts rather than precisely quantifying the more obvious social impacts.

Principle 2: take a precautionary approach in reporting social impacts.

Social impacts are what managers have to manage. Any form of impact assessment is anticipatory. Lack of complete proof that impacts will occur should not deter measures to mitigate them. Preparedness may be a less costly procedure than fixing up the problem after the event.

Appendix 2

Suggested SIA

Scoping Questions

Access (disabled) and mobility

- > Does the development conform to the requirements of the Building Code of Australia and the Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992 in terms of disabled access?
- > Has the local Access Advisory Committee been consulted?
i.e. if it is a public facility or transport facility
- > Does the layout and the design provide easy access to the surrounding communities?

Accommodation and Housing

- > Will housing stock be increased or reduced?
- > Will the proposed housing stock be of local benefit i.e. affordable, consistent with local housing needs or local demand?
- > Are rents likely to change as a result of the development?

Community services and facilities

- > Will demand for community services and facilities increase?
- > Will on-site community facilities be required e.g. childcare in retail developments?
- > Will the development require on-site support services
- > Will local meeting places be affected e.g. shopping malls, local parks, street squares?

Community structure - severance, cohesion and identity

- > Will opportunities for individuals or groups to participate in the community increase or decrease?
- > Will the community's capacity to act cooperatively increase or decrease?
- > Will the development cause divisions within the community?
- > Will opportunities for social interaction increase or decrease?
- > Will the development physically separate homes, community facilities, educational institutions or aged persons' group residences from other parts of the community?
- > Can the separation be mitigated by changes in the design, construction or location of the development?
- > How does the development engender a sense of place?
- > Is this consistent with the existing community identity?
- > Does the development enhance the character of the locality?

- > Has the effect of aesthetic or visual impacts been considered?
 - > Does the development necessitate demolition of an area of community significance?
-

Crime and public safety

- > Are proposed entry/exit areas pedestrian pathways, and car parks safe and well lit, especially at night?
 - > Are surveillance systems necessary in association with the development e.g. windows overlooking car parks and open spaces, video camera systems?
 - > Are 'target hardening' measures necessary in association with the development e.g. security grills, alarms?
 - > Are any proposed common spaces 'defensible' – that is do they give the impression of being an integral part of the development?
 - > Does the development enable opportunities for active street level uses to be maximised?
 - > Does proposed landscaping allow for clear sight lines?
 - > If the development is a high-risk activity, have appropriate measures been taken to anticipate potential crime and to minimise opportunities for crime?
 - > If the development is a high-risk activity, have the local police and Neighbourhood watch groups been consulted and their views taken into account?
-

Culture and community values

- > Will the development alter or affect the cultural or religious values of the community, including minority groups?
 - > Will the development enhance or detract from the existing cultural heritage of the locality?
 - > Does the development encourage the acceptance of diversity of cultures and multiculturalism?
 - > Will the development enhance or detract from the cultural life of the community?
-

Employment

- > Does the development involve any new employment opportunities?
- > Will any proposed increase in jobs be suited to the needs of local people?
- > Will specialist skills or experience be necessary for the new jobs?
- > Will the diversity of job opportunities in the local area increase or decrease?

Health

- > Will there be an increase in demand for health services
 - > Will any on-site health issues be included e.g. occupational health and safety, transport accidents?
 - > Are there specific health impacts or risks associated with the development or activities occurring within it?
-

Interaction between new development and the existing community

- > Is the development a major industrial or commercial use in a primarily residential area?
 - > Is the new development likely to cause conflict with the surrounding community or adjacent land uses?
 - > Will the new development involve the introduction of a large non-resident workforce?
-

Needs of social groups

- > Does the development allow for modification to accommodate special needs groups?
 - > If the development is for a special needs group, have the wider societal benefits been considered?
 - > Does the development adequately address the needs of children and young people, whether seen as a direct user group or not?
 - > Are the needs of local people of Non-English speaking backgrounds relevant to the proposal?
 - > Do indigenous people have an interest in the proposal?
-

Population change - size and characteristics

- > How will the resident population change as a result of the development?
- > How will the workforce population change?
- > What are the likely characteristics and size of any user groups associated with the proposal?
- > Will the development result in a change in the number of tourists/visitors/shoppers?

Recreation facilities

- > Will an increase in demand for recreation facilities occur?
 - > Will on-site recreation facilities be necessary or desirable in association with the development?
 - > Will the amount or quality of open space be affected?
-

Risk perception in community

- > Is there a perception in the community that the development poses a health, environmental or social risk?
 - > What is the nature of the perceived risk?
 - > Will the risk of anti-social behaviour in the community reduce?
 - > Have the hazards or issues of concern been observed with other similar developments elsewhere?
 - > Is expert opinion required to establish the validity/extent of risk associated with the development?
-

Social equity - displacement, needs of disadvantaged groups

- > Will social groups who might otherwise be disadvantaged benefit from the development?
- > Will existing residents of the subject property be displaced by the development?
- > What are the characteristics of these displaced residents e.g. aged, mentally ill, young people, other at risk groups?
- > Will any groups in the community be disadvantaged by the development?

Appendix 3 Data Sources

Source	Data Available
Australian Government Agencies	
Australian Bureau of Statistics www.abs.gov.au	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Census data • 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
Centrelink centrelink.gov.au	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of persons on social security benefits
Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations deewr.gov.au	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DEEWR Small Area Labour Market Quarterly Statistics (unemployment rates, labour force data)
NSW Government Agencies	
All NSW Government agency websites can be accessed via: www.nsw.gov.au	
NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research (Attorney General's Department)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crime statistics for NSW and LGAs • Specialist crime data and comparative trend analysis
Department of Human Services (Community Services) community.nsw.gov.au	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supported accommodation information • Child abuse and domestic violence statistics • Childcare license information
Department of Education and Training det.nsw.edu.au	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enrolments in government and private schools • Enrolment of special groups (ATSI, non-English speakers)
NSW Office of Fair Trading fairtrading.nsw.gov.au	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rental bond board data (rents, types of dwellings)
Housing NSW housing.nsw.gov.au	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waiting list numbers • Client profiles • Housing Stock Information • Boarding House Data

Appendix 3 (continued)
Data Sources

Source	Data Available
NSW Government Agencies All NSW Government agency websites can be accessed via: www.nsw.gov.au	
Department of Transport transport.nsw.gov.au	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Passenger travel for all modes of transport • Freight movement survey • Journey to work data • Information on future road and public transport networks
Department of Planning and Infrastructure planning.nsw.gov.au	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Population projections • Demographic trend analysis • Urban Development Program production data – new release areas • Metropolitan Urban Development Program production data – established areas • Employment Lands Development Program data • Housing Data • Regional housing statistics and market analysis
NSW Health health.nsw.gov.au	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-patient statistics • Community health data • Hospital facility data • Waiting list information • Range of health indicators (e.g. mortality data) • Alcohol and drug dependency data
NSW Police Force police.nsw.gov.au	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mapped crime data by local areas commands • Crime data • Annual customer satisfaction surveys
Tourism NSW visitnsw.com	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visitor numbers (by country of origin) • Tourist expenditure data • Hotel/motel accommodation figures
NSW Lands and Property management Authority lands.nsw.gov.au/valuation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Average house prices by type of dwelling and locality

Appendix 3 (continued)
Data Sources

Source	Data Available
Parramatta Local Government Area All sites can be accessed via: www.parracity.nsw.gov.au	
Community Profile	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parramatta's key demographics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How many people live here - Who are we - What do we do - How do we live, etc.
Atlas.id	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thematic maps (as above)
Forecast.id	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forecasts of key demographics based on assumption and current data trends
Parramatta City Council Website	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated with relevant reports, publications, projects

For more information

This document has been prepared by Parramatta City Council's Social Outcomes Team, contactable on 02 9806 5000

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