



DUNGOG SHIRE COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION PLAN

AUGUST 2019

Dungog Shire Council



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INTRODUCTION

Dungog Shire Council has a responsibility to deliver the objectives of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (EP&A Act) and to promote orderly and economic land use, ecologically sustainable development and the facilitation of social and economic wellbeing.

Community participation is an important part of the planning process and the delivery of planning functions undertaken by Council.

“Community Participation” is the overarching term encompassing how Council will engage with the community in carrying out our work under the EP&A Act in regards to plan making and development decisions.

The community referred to in this plan comprises the residents of the Dungog Local Government Area (LGA), local community groups, special interest groups, Aboriginal communities, local businesses and other local government, state and commonwealth government agencies.

Community participation in the planning functions carried out by Council is integral to ensuring that the strategic direction of the LGA and development within it aligns with community vision and maintains local character. A sense of belonging, confidence, purpose, direction and understanding can be established through increased community participation ensuring the community feels empowered in its ability to be involved in planning matters.

Community participation is beneficial to Council because the sharing of knowledge, ideas and expertise can contribute in a very positive way to the planning matter in which the community is participating.



WHAT IS THE COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION PLAN?

The purpose of the Community Participation Plan (CPP) is to provide one single document that clearly outlines how Council will engage with the community and how the community can participate in the planning functions carried out by Council. The CPP clearly identifies the planning functions for which this plan is applicable, the mandatory timeframes for exhibition, the documents to be exhibited, Council's approach to community engagement and how the community can participate in these matters.

PLANNING FUNCTIONS CARRIED OUT BY COUNCIL

Council carries out two main planning functions for which this plan is applicable. These include strategic planning and the assessment of development applications.

Strategic planning is a key function carried out by Council wherein the planning focus is on the strategic direction of the LGA and the consideration of economic, social and environmental factors.

Strategic planning functions carried out by Council include planning proposals for amendments to the Local Environmental Plan (LEP), development control plans and contribution plans.

Assessments carried out by Council include development applications and amendments to development applications pursuant to section 4.15 and 4.55 of the EP&A Act.

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION OBJECTIVES

Council's community participation objectives are focused on the community engagement objectives in the Dungog Shire Council Community Strategic Plan 2020.

Transparency & Clarity

- Respect that the community has a right to be informed and do so with transparency and clarity
- Clearly state the purpose, intent and outcomes of the consultation in plain language
- Maintain transparency through all stages of the planning process in order to build trust
- Inform on how submissions will be considered, the outcomes and level of influence
- Clearly state the likely impacts of the proposal
- Enhance the level of community understanding and trust through transparency in all planning matters
- Increase awareness and overall participation

Accessible & Inclusive

- A diverse range of views will be sought from a range of stakeholders
- Utilise a range of materials and techniques for the delivery of information and methods of gathering feedback
- Council will work to remove any barriers for participation
- Exhibition material and the outcomes will be available in a range of formats
- Build the community's capacity to collaborate with Council and engage
- Ensure participation is as easy as possible and accessible for all stakeholders
- Actively seek feedback and collaboration with the community
- Council will aim

Relevant & Meaningful

- Ensure the purpose of the exhibition is relevant and meaningful
- The feedback collected by will be used in a relevant and meaningful way
- Provide meaningful opportunities for on going participation
- Encourage and foster meaningful partnerships and relationships with the community
- Have regard for the likely impact and influence of submissions and likely impact of development
- Targeted consultation will be delivered to ensure relevance and for highest impact
- Maintain a quality exhibition material, standards and levels of engagement
- Seek to build trust in partnerships and confidence in Councils commitment to community participation

COUNCIL'S APPROACH TO COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

It is important that Council encourage and facilitate open, inclusive, clear and accessible opportunities for the community to participate in planning matters.

In order to achieve this, Council's approach to community participation has been developed to ensure that proper consideration has been given to the views of the community and that the engagement process is straightforward and delivers good planning outcomes

Council approach to community participation

What	When	How
Inform		
Council will inform the community with clear, relevant and meaningful information. The information will be accessible, timely and inclusive.	The community will be informed at time of most influence. Sufficient time to make an informed submission will be given.	Public advertisements and notices, media releases, letters mailed out and Councils website.
Consult		
Council will consult the community to ascertain their feedback on and invite the community to provide their views and concerns on a proposal.	Council will consult with the community on a proposal or document seeking concerns, views and feedback, predominately through the exhibition period.	Public exhibition, drop in sessions, one-on-one by phone or email with relevant planning staff if necessary.
Engage		
Council will engage with the community and the key stakeholders identified for the planning matter.	When issues have been identified or there are projects that we know are contentious we will seek feedback	Workshops – feedback sessions, Q&A, presentations.
Collaborate		
Council will offer opportunities to collaborate with community in relevant planning matters.	When a proposal will heavily impact on the community & the concerns and views of the community are needed to shape a project.	Workshops - open discussion and working through ideas and issues.
Empower		
Council will aim to empower through notification of the determination of a planning matter and how their input affected the decision. Keeping them informed throughout the process to make sure the community feels involved and respected.	Throughout the community engagement process and at the end.	Update the website, notice of decisions on advertisements, letters to objectors

Depending on the planning matter that Council is seeking community participation in, will determine the level of impact that the consultation has on the community and the influence the community can have on that planning matter.

EXHIBITION OF PLANNING MATTERS

The key opportunity for the community to participate in the planning process is during the legislated exhibition period that is associated with strategic planning matters and development applications. The community can respond to the nature, scale, purpose and likely impact of the proposal, strategy or development application.

DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS REQUIRING PUBLIC EXHIBITION AND/OR NOTIFICATION

Development Applications to be advertised in the Local Newspaper	Development Applications that require Neighbour Notification by mail
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Subdivisions• Boundary Adjustments• Tourist Developments• New Commercial Developments• Development of Heritage Item or significant development within a conservation area• Medium Density Development• Dual Occupancy Development• Farm gate sales• Applications deemed by council to be of public interest or are contentious	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Subdivisions• Boundary Adjustments• Tourist Developments• Industrial• New Commercial Developments• Development of Heritage Item or significant development within a conservation area• Medium Density Development• Dual Occupancy Development• Farm gate sales• Applications that do not meet the setback requirements as specified in Councils DCP• Applications deemed by council to be of public interest or are contentious

At Council's discretion, additional development applications to those listed above may be notified if it is deemed that the development may have significant impacts regarding the following:

- The scale of development
- Traffic generation
- Social and Economic Impact
- Impact on Streetscape
- Environmental Impacts

SUBMISSIONS DURING THE EXHIBITION PERIOD

Submissions must be made to Council during the exhibition period must be made to Council in writing and be addressed to the General Manager.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

The minimum mandatory timeframes for public exhibition are identified in Schedule 1 of the EP&A Act and are as set out on the following page:

Mandatory exhibition timeframes for Plan Making (Schedule 1, Part 1, Division 1 (1) of the EP&A Act, 1979)	Minimum community participation requirement
Draft community participation plan	28 days
Draft local strategic planning statements	28 days
Planning proposals for local environmental plans subject to gateway determination	28 days or: a) If a different period of public exhibition is specified in the gateway determination for the proposal – the period so specified, or b) If the gateway determination specifies that no public exhibition is required because of the minor nature of the proposal – no public exhibition.
Draft Development Control Plans	28 days
Draft Contribution plans (including growth centres and planned precincts)	28 days

Mandatory exhibition timeframes for development assessment (Schedule 1, Part 1, Division 1 (1) of the EP&A Act 1979)	Minimum community participation requirement
Application for development consent (other than for complying development certificate for designated development or for state significant development)	a) If a different period of public exhibition is specified for the application in the relevant community participation plan – the period so specified, or b) If the community participation plan specifies that no public exhibition is required for the application no public exhibition.
Application for development consent for designated development	28 days
Application for the modification of a development consent that is required to be publically exhibited by the regulations	If an exhibition period is required, it is for the period so specified in this plan.
Environmental impact Statement obtained under Division 5.1	28 days

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Planning Term	Definition
Contributions Plan	A plan developed by Councils for the purpose of gaining financial contributions from new development towards the cost of new and upgraded public amenities and or services required to accommodate the new development
Designated Development	Designated development refers to developments that are high – impact developments (e.g. likely to generate pollution) or are located in or near an environmentally sensitive area.
Development Control Plan (DCP)	A plan that sets the parameters in which development is to be designed to that aligns with the LEP.
Gateway Determination	A gateway determination is issued following an assessment of the strategic merit of a proposal to amend or create an LEP that allows for the proposal to proceed to public exhibition
Local Environmental Plan (LEP)	An environmental Planning instrument developed by Council, a local Planning authority. An LEP sets out the planning framework for a local government area.





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