

WEDDIN SHIRE COUNCIL COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION PLAN



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Community participation in the planning system

What is community participation and why is it important?

Community participation is an overarching term covering how we engage the community in our work under the EP&A Act, including legislative reform, plan making and making decisions on proposed development. The level and extent of community participation will vary depending on the community, the scope of the proposal under consideration and the potential impact of the decision. The community includes anyone who is affected by the planning system and includes individuals, community groups, Aboriginal communities, peak bodies representing a range of interests, businesses, local government, and State and Commonwealth government agencies.

The community participation plan aims to:

- build community confidence in the planning system
- create a shared sense of purpose, direction and understanding of the need to manage growth and change, while preserving local character
- provide access to community knowledge, ideas and expertise

What is the purpose of our Community Participation Plan?

Weddin Shire Community Participation Plan (CPP) is designed to make participation in planning clearer for the Weddin community. It does this by setting out in one place how and when you can participate in the planning system, our functions and different types of proposals. This CPP also establishes our community participation objectives which we use to guide our approach to community engagement.

Policies	Council develops policies that shape interaction with the planning system. These may include policies on developments that require developer contributions or repayment schemes.
Plan Making	Strategic planning involves actions for communities which integrates social, environmental and economic factors with the Shires special attributes. These include Planning Proposals such as rezoning's, development control plans and growth plans.
Assessment	Councilor's in a Council Meeting, the General Manager and Director Environmental Services make decisions on a range of developments. When making decisions on these developments, Council considers whether the proposed development is in the public interest and complies with applicable legislation, policies and guidelines.

Who does this Community Participation Plan apply to?

Weddin Shire CPP is a requirement of the EP&A Act (see division 2.6 and Schedule 1 of the EP&A Act) and applies to the exercise of planning functions by the General Manager (and their delegates and nominees), when exercising consent authority functions on behalf of the Independent Planning Commission under section 4.6 of the EP&A Act as well as the planning functions undertaken by Council. The CPP will be reviewed on a periodic basis and does not apply to other NSW planning authorities.

Planning Function	Responsibility	Delegation
Strategic documents such as the Local Strategic Planning Statement and Community Participation Plan.	Endorsed by Council following a public exhibition period.	Director Environmental Services
Preparation of Local Environmental Plans and Development Control Plans	Endorsed by Council following a public exhibition period.	Director Environmental Services
Determination or modification of development applications.	Director Environmental Services on behalf of the General Manager	General Manager

Our approach to community participation

Council encourages open and inclusive opportunities for community participation in the planning system, planning functions and individual proposals. To achieve this, the engagement approach must be acknowledged being fair with proper and genuine consideration given to community views and concerns.

Table 3: Community participation approach

<i>What</i>	<i>When</i>	<i>How</i>
<i>Review all Development Applications to determine whether they should be placed on public exhibition in a timely manner.</i>	A decision as soon as practical after the application is lodged with Council to commence public exhibition and neighbor notification as appropriate.	<i>Stage 1: Inform</i> Advertisements in the local paper, letter mail outs, our website, social media announcements, emails, information sessions etc as deemed appropriate.

<i>Stage 2: Consult</i>		
<i>Consult with the community and invite them to provide their views and concerns on a development application or other planning function.</i>	During the public exhibition period, seek views and concerns.	Public exhibition, , one on one engagement, emails and phone calls as deemed appropriate.
<i>Stage 3: Consider</i>		
<i>Respond to the community's views by addressing concerns raised.</i>	In reaching a decision concerns will be considered, and outline how they have been addressed in the assessment.	Phone calls, emails, opportunities to speak at Council Meetings and targeted consultation as appropriate.
<i>Stage 4: Determination</i>		
<i>Notification of the community of decisions on proposals and detail how their views were considered in reaching the decision.</i>	In reaching a decision reasons for the decision and how community views were considered will be provided.	Updates to websites, publication of submission reports, letters to submitters. Council provides a "Reason for the Decision" on the consent for each Development Application.

The role of exhibitions in the planning system

Exhibitions

A key technique we use to encourage community participation is formal exhibitions. During an exhibition we make available relevant documents that may include a proposed development that we are seeking community input on. In reaching decisions on proposals that have been exhibited, the Council balance's a wide range of factors to ensure that decisions are in the public interest. This includes considering the objects of the EP&A Act, the strategic priorities of the Government, the community's input, the land use priorities identified in strategic plans and applicable policies and guidelines.

Exhibition timeframes

Mandatory minimum exhibition timeframes

Draft community participation plan	28 days
Draft regional strategic plans	45 days
Draft local strategic planning statements	28 days
Planning proposals for local environmental plans subject to a gateway determination	28 days or as specified by the gateway determination which may find, due to the minor nature of the proposal, that no public exhibition is required
Draft development control plans	28 days
Draft contribution plans	28 days
Application for development consent for designated development	28 days

In line with our community participation objectives. We generally exhibit documents related to the exercise of these functions and proposals for the timeframes described in the tables below:

Non-mandatory exhibition timeframes

Draft Legislation, regulation, policies and guidelines	28 days based on the urgency, scale and nature of the proposal
Application for development consent (other than for complying development certificate, for designated	14 days
Notification to all landowners considered to be impacted by the Development Application	14 days for Residential 28 days for Commercial
Application for modification of development consent that is required to be publicly exhibited by the regulations	In the same manner as the original development application unless varied.
Advertisement if deemed to be of significant public	14 days
Integrated and Advertised Development	28 days
State Environmental Planning Policies (SEPPs)	Discretionary based on the urgency, scale and nature of the proposal

Key points to note about public exhibitions

- A public authority is not required to make available for public inspection any part of an environmental impact statement whose publication would, in the opinion of the public authority, be contrary to the public interest because of its confidential nature or for any other reason.
- Timeframes are in calendar days and include weekends.
- If the exhibition period is due to close on a weekend or a public holiday, we may extend the exhibition to finish on the first available work day.
- The period between 20 December and 10 January (inclusive) is excluded from the calculation of a period of public exhibition.

Making a submission

It is important that submissions only contain information relevant to the development or planning proposal. Council officers are required to assess proposals on planning grounds identified in relevant legislation. Issues such as a moral objection, commercial competition or personal circumstance of an applicant or objector are excluded from Council's assessment. A submission must:

- Clearly identify the matter to which the submission relates
- State the grounds for any support or objection expressed in the submission
- Include appropriate contact details

Late submissions may be considered at Council's discretion up to a determination being made.