

Statutory guideline 04/14 – Making and amending local planning instruments

Communication Strategy

FACTSHEET

Background

In response to feedback from users of Statutory guideline 02/14—Making and amending local planning instruments (SG02/14) and changes within the *Sustainable Planning Act 2009* (SPA), improvements and changes have been made to the statutory guideline.

Statutory guideline 04/14—Making and amending local planning instruments (SG04/14) was released on 9 October 2014. This replaces SG02/14 which was released in June 2014. The statutory guideline is a procedural and best practice guideline of the process for:

- making or amending a planning scheme (including making or amending a local government infrastructure plan)
- making or amending a planning scheme policy
- making a temporary local planning instrument (TLPI).

What has changed?

While SG04/14 is not a significant rewrite of the previous version of the guideline, there is a new requirement for local governments to submit a communication strategy at the state interest review stage (in certain circumstances). Flexibility is provided

to each local government to determine the content of a communication strategy to meet this new requirement. This fact sheet provides additional guidance to local government in complying with Section 2.4A.1, Stage 1, Step 4.1(d)(ii) and Stage 2, Step 5.2(e) of SG04/14.

The communication activities to be implemented as part of the communication strategy are additional, and supplementary, to the public consultation which is otherwise required by SG04/14. Local governments should not rely upon this guidance for the purpose of deciding their course of action in particular cases. Local governments must rely upon their own judgment for that purpose and should take legal or other professional advice as appropriate.

Considerations for preparing & assessing a communication strategy

What is a significant change to the existing planning scheme provisions affecting a substantial number of properties?

A local government should approach this question in a similar manner to that way it should approach the question of whether changes to the proposed planning scheme result in the scheme being significantly different to the version released for public consultation for the purpose of step 7.3 in section 2.4A.1 of

SG04/14. Refer to the Editor's notes for Step 7 of SG04/14 for further guidance.

Essentially, what is required is an overall comparison to determine whether the changes make the proposed scheme or major amendment different from the existing planning scheme provisions. For example, significant changes to the strategic direction, zoning (i.e. down zoning, up zoning), overlays and/or code provisions (i.e. building heights) affecting substantial numbers of properties may be considered. It is not an investigation about whether a particular change may have an adverse impact on the particular interests of individuals.

Changes that affect suburb/s, township/s, precinct/s or a number of streets may be considered to be a substantial number of properties. Changes that affect individual properties or a few individual properties would not generally be considered to be significant changes affecting a substantial number of properties. However, in some circumstances, a change to an individual property may be a significant change affecting a substantial number of properties (e.g. a proposal to allow noxious industrial uses on a site surrounded by residential properties).

How to draw the attention of the community to the proposed changes?

Whether the proposed change affects the whole planning scheme area or just a part of it, should affect the medium through which the proposed change is publicised. In the former case, a notice in a newspaper circulating generally in the planning scheme area may be necessary. In the latter case, a notice in a locally circulated fact sheet might be sufficient. If a change is highly significant and affects a very large area, the following communication activities may be appropriate:

- community meetings
- information pop-up booths and static displays
- distribution of brochures, factsheets and flyers
- online property enquiry functions

- advertisements on local radio, television and/or social media.

Planning scheme mapping that highlights the locations to which the proposed change applies should be prepared. This mapping should form part of the communication strategy and communication materials used to assist in raising the awareness of the community about a proposed change.

How will the adequacy of the communication strategy be assessed?

The communication strategy must be adequate for the purpose of drawing the attention of the community, or the affected part of the community, to the purpose and general effect of the proposed change. The nature of the proposed change will affect the content, form and consultation approach identified in the communication strategy. As such, questions of fact and degree will be involved. Therefore, each communication strategy needs to be considered on its own merits. However at a minimum, the following elements will be considered:

- the scale of the change as a result of the proposed planning scheme or major amendment
- if the proposed change only relates to part of the local government area, the location to which the proposed change applies (i.e. affected area identified on a map)
- any consultation activities that have already occurred in developing the proposed planning scheme or major amendment
- a short description of what local government wishes to achieve during the consultation period
- a summary of proposed consultation activities including the identification of who will be consulted, communication medium, how information will be disseminated, timeline for implementation and what action the community can take during the consultation period.

Further information

Further fact sheets on related matters are available on the Department of Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning's [website](#).

More information can be obtained by contacting:

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