POLICY

ISAAC REGION
HELPING TO ENERGISE THE WORLD

SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY POLICY

APPROVALS

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CATEGORY	Community		
POLICY OWNER	Liveability and Sustainability		
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OBJECTIVE

To promote and apply a contemporary position on social sustainability in Council's dealings on major projects, regional investment and forward planning and delivery of works, services and infrastructure.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all IRC activities and services including elected members, employees, volunteers, contractors, departments, business units and service delivery units.

DEFINITIONS

TERM / ACRONYM	MEANING
Social Sustainability	The capacity and capability of communities to develop intergenerational net-positive social change and achieve social development objectives that are informed and underpinned by the broad and diverse premises of social equity and capital, wellbeing, and public participation.
	This concerns how the region's individuals and communities live with each other and set out to achieve the objectives of development models which they have chosen for themselves, also taking into account the physical boundaries of their places and planet earth as a whole. At a more operational level, social sustainability stems from actions in key thematic areas, encompassing the social realm of individuals and societies, which ranges from capacity building and skills development to environmental and spatial inequalities. In this sense, social sustainability blends traditional social policy areas and principles, such as equity and health, with emerging issues concerning participation, needs, social capital, the economy, the environment, and more recently, with the notions of happiness, wellbeing and quality of life.
Social Equity	Social equity is the economic, legal, environmental, and developmental rights of access to the collective resources of society with an all-encompassing effort by means of equal say and insight of all members of society to ensure the longevity of the collective resources and to enrich the individual lives of community members as indivisible, equal inter-respectively, and as mutually comparable pinnacles to the direction of

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	the community and individual members in respect of need and right to access and recognition.
Social Capital	The networks and reciprocal relationships which help people gain access to resources, information and support.
Public Participation (Community Engagement)	Any process that involves the community in problem-solving or decision-making and uses community input to make better decisions and refers to a broad range of practices characterised by two-way communication between council and the community affected by the issue.
Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)	An EIS is a tool used by government and regulatory authorities to assess and understand: • the current environment in the area of a major project • potential environmental, economic and social impacts of a major project • proponent proposals to avoid, minimise, mitigate and/or offset those potential impacts. An EIS is also used to consider alternative ways to carry out a major project in order to limit its impact. There are two types of EIS assessment processes in Queensland for major projects: • EIS under the *Environmental Protection Act 1994* • EIS under the *State Development and Public Works Organisation Act 1971*.
Social Impact Assessment (SIA)	The process of analysing, (predicting, evaluating, reflecting, monitoring) and managing the intended and unintended social consequences, both positive and negative, of planned interventions (policies, programs, plans, projects) and any social change processes invoked by those interventions so as to bring about a more sustainable and equitable biophysical and human environment.
Social Impacts	Any and all issues associated with a planned intervention which affect and are valued by people, directly or indirectly, including, but not limited to, people's way of life, their culture, their community, their political systems, their environment, their

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	health and wellbeing, their personal and property rights and fears and aspirations.
Social Infrastructure	The physical conditions, assets and attributes (built, natural and service based) which enable social capital development within communities and society.
Positive Sustainable Development	Sustainable development which projects a vibrant and living future and supports the ongoing probability of natural and social flourishing, vibrancy, resilience and adaptation.
Negative Sustainable Development	Sustainable development which seeks to just keep things going through negation; reducing the bad effects of previous rounds of development and enabling urban life to continue in a minimal sense.
Community Wellbeing	The combination of social, economic, environmental, cultural, and political conditions identified by individuals and their communities as essential for them to flourish and fulfil their potential.
Normative need	A definition of need postulated by experts, professionals and administrators. Here a desirable standard is laid down and compared with the standard that exists. If an individual or group falls short of this standard they are identified as being in need.
Felt need	Here need is equated with want. When assessing a service, the population is asked if they feel the need for it and the answer used to identify need.
Expressed need	Expressed need or demand is defined as the need of those people who demand a service.
Comparative need	By this definition a measure of need is obtained by studying the characteristics of a population in receipt of a service. If there are people with similar characteristics not in receipt of a service, they are identified as being in need.

POLICY STATEMENT

This policy confirms the commitment of Council to ensure implementation of standards of positive sustainable social development which promote increased wellbeing for the Isaac Region's communities.

Council seeks to address and overcome limitations within the current regulatory social impact assessment framework and apply the provisions of this policy within its own business and in engagement with major

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project proponents and regional investors to promote genuine sustainable social development within the Isaac Region.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The following principles apply to both Council's own operations and third-party actions influencing social sustainability within the Isaac Region including, but not limited to, those of major project proponents by way of the Queensland and Commonwealth government's environmental approvals process.

Council seeks to improve social sustainability outcomes for Isaac communities through:

- Adopting best practice definitions, goals and principles of social impact assessment as described by the International Association for Impact Assessment as the global leader in this field.

- Recognising the determinants of social sustainability and community wellbeing extend far beyond the narrow set of concerns prescribed by legislation.

- Prioritising positive sustainable development measures which align with a desired future in preference to negative sustainable development which seeks to just keep things going through negation; reducing the bad effects of previous rounds of development and enabling urban life to continue in a minimal sense.

- Avoiding narrow definitions of social infrastructure which lead to missed opportunities in developing social capital as a determinant of social sustainability.

- Enhancing planning approaches based on demographics and population projections with demand driven principled approaches tailored to the unique characteristics and circumstances of communities.

- Considering normative, felt, expressed and comparative definitions of need in prioritising and forward planning for infrastructure.

- Prioritising measures which address barriers that impact genuine choice for people to permanently reside in the Isaac Region.

- Supporting measures which add value or expand existing local collaborative programs improving social sustainability within the Isaac region in preference to multiple in-silo initiatives.

- Where possible countering political rhetoric which promotes the economic weight of the resource sector and justifies the negative social impacts which arise from the development of major projects.

Actions required to ensure compliance

- Development and delivery of an organisational education program on contemporary social development and sustainability, highlighting its broad-reaching effects on Council's activities

- Bi-yearly reporting to Council on operational implementation of the policy framework.

- Social Sustainability impacts considered in Council strategic planning and decision making.

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STAKEHOLDER	ACTION
COUNCILLORS	• Promote the policy framework and advocate for improved understanding of contemporary social sustainability concepts and practice when engaging with major project proponents, government representatives, social development organisations and peak bodies.
ELT	• Provide leadership and support to deliver policy outcomes across Council's services and works.
LIVEABILITY AND SUSTAINABILITY DEPARTMENT	• Subject matter expertise on the policy framework. • Delivery of subsequent plans, strategies and guidelines that deliver policy outcomes in major project assessment (for example – social infrastructure plans, social impact assessment guidelines, land use strategies, biodiversity strategies). • Lead internal engagement on policy framework and implementation pathways. • Implementation and monitoring of policy effectiveness within Council's assessment processes for major projects. • Monitoring and reporting on Council-wide implementation and effectiveness of the policy.
COUNCIL OFFICERS	• Consider provisions of the policy in operational and capital works planning and delivery. • Consider social sustainability impacts in development of Council recommendations and decisions. • Contribute with an informed perspective in assessment processes for major projects.

LEGISLATIONS AND RELATED GUIDELINES

• *Strong and Sustainable Resource Communities Act 2017*

• *Environmental Protection Act 1994*

• *State Development and Public Works Organisation Act 1971*

• *Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (Cwth.)*

• *Local Government Act 2009*

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- Queensland Government's Social Impact Assessment Guideline 2018
- Queensland Government's EIS Assessment Process Guideline
- IRC Planning Scheme

REFERENCES

ID	NAME
STAT-POL-058	Community Engagement Policy
DRAFT FRAMEWORK	Social Impact Assessment Framework
DRAFT STRATEGY	Isaac Regional Social Infrastructure Strategy
Definitions	Social Sustainability, adapted from: Calontonio, A., (2008) *Measuring Social Sustainability: Best Practice from Urban Renewal in the EU. Traditional and Emerging Prospects in Social Sustainability* Oxford Institute for Sustainable Development – International Land Markets Group.
Definitions	Social Equity, adapted from: Rhule, J., (2017) *What is social equity?* Project Human City, https://projecthumancity.com/2017/02/02/what-is-social-equity/
Definitions	Social Capital, adapted from: Klinenberg, E., (2002) *Heat Wave: A Social Autopsy of Disaster in Chicago.*
Definitions	Public Participation, adapted from: International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) https://iap2.org.au/
Definitions	Environmental Impact Assessment, adapted from: Queensland Government (2019) *About the EIS Process.* https://www.qld.gov.au/environment/pollution/management/eis-process/about-the-eis-process/types-of-eis (accessed 23 November 2020).
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	Klinenberg, E., (2018) *Palaces for the people – How Social Infrastructure can help fight inequality, polarisation and the decline of civil life.*
Definitions	Positive and negative sustainable development, adapted from: James, P., (2015) *Advances in Urban Sustainability: Urban Sustainability in Theory and Practice – Circles of Sustainability.*
Definitions	Community Wellbeing, adapted from: Wiseman, J. & Brasher, K., (2008) *Community Wellbeing in an Unwell World: Trends, Challenges and Possibilities* Journal of Public Health Policy, 29.
Definitions	Normative, felt, expressed and comparative need, adapted from: Bradshaw, J., (1972) *A Taxonomy of Social Need* in Cookson, R., Sainsbury, R., and Glendinning, C. *Jonathon Bradshaw on Social Policy: Selected writings 1972 – 2011.*

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