

**HOBSONS**  
**BAY CITY**  
COUNCIL



# **Social Impact Assessment guidelines**

## Licensed venues

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## **Acknowledgment of Country**

Council acknowledges the Bunurong People of the Kulin Nation as the Traditional Owners of these municipal lands and waterways, and pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

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## 1. Introduction

For many people alcohol is part of the Australian culture and drinking is often associated with socialising and relaxation. Although data shows a decline over time in alcohol consumption per capita nationally<sup>1</sup>, alcohol still has a significant impact on health and wellbeing. In Australia, alcohol consumption accounts for 4.5 per cent of the total burden of disease and is the fifth leading risk factor contributing to disease burden. Impacts include alcohol-related road traffic accidents, accidental poisoning, chronic liver disease, alcohol dependency and suicide and self-inflicted injury.<sup>2</sup> These impacts affect not only individuals but families and the wider community.

In the Western Metropolitan Region, over half the population have an increased risk of lifetime harm related to alcohol consumption (49 per cent of female residents, 64 per cent of male residents). In the context of short-term harm, in 2017-18 308 ambulance callouts related to alcohol intoxication were recorded in Hobsons Bay. As a rate per 100,000 residents, this was the second highest in the Western Metropolitan Region.<sup>3</sup>

Council's Minimising the Harm of Alcohol Policy Statement 2016 aims to mitigate the negative impacts of alcohol by adopting a harm minimisation approach, focusing on demand, supply and harm reduction.

Additionally, Section 52.27 of Council's Planning Scheme aims to ensure that licensed premises are situated in appropriate locations and the impact of licensed premises on the amenity of the surrounding area is considered in planning decisions.

To assist in the assessments of liquor license planning permit applications in relation to these policies and the planning scheme, Council requires applicants to submit a Social Impact Assessment (SIA). This process is consistent with the approach taken by the Victorian Commission for Gambling and Liquor Regulation (VCGLR) to assess liquor license applications.

## 2. What types of licenses require a Social Impact Assessment?

Social Impact Assessments are required for applications for venues with:

- packaged liquor licences with trading areas greater than 1000m<sup>2</sup>
- general licences (this license type allows for the supply of liquor for consumption both on and off the licensed premises; typically used for pubs, hotels and taverns)
- late night licences – general and on-premises

Social Impact Assessments for applications involving these liquor licence types **MUST** be prepared by a consultant with experience and expertise in preparing social impact assessments, at the applicant's expense. The report must address four key areas:

- **details** - information about the applicant, site and proposal, including relevant maps and plans

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<sup>1</sup> Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2021) Alcohol, tobacco & other drugs in Australia, AIHW, Australian Government, accessed 31 March 2022.

<sup>2</sup> Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2021) Australian Burden of Disease Study 2018: Interactive data on risk factor burden, AIHW, Australian Government, accessed 31 March 2022.

<sup>3</sup> Turning Point. (2019). Ambo-AODstats: Methods for Victorian Data Maps. Accessed March 2020 at [https://www.aodstats.org.au/docs/Ambo\\_AODstats\\_Methods.pdf](https://www.aodstats.org.au/docs/Ambo_AODstats_Methods.pdf)

- **context** – alignment with relevant state and local planning and policy frameworks, definition of an appropriate catchment area, analysis of relevant demographic data and indicators, and an overview of alcohol-related harm, other licensed venues and patron profiles
- **impacts**– a description and analysis of positive and negative impacts that may arise through the cumulative presence of licensed premises in a specified area, and other social and economic impacts of the proposal
- **conclusion** – a summary of the key social and economic impacts and enhancement/ mitigation measures, and a statement regarding the application’s overall net benefit/cost to the Hobsons Bay community

The SIA does not seek to duplicate work for applicants, and it is acknowledged that some of the required information may already be contained within an applicant’s planning report.

An applicant may therefore seek to prepare a SIA and only address specific matters not already covered in the planning report, referring to where the required information for the SIA is otherwise located. Alternatively, the required information for the SIA can be addressed within a specific section of the applicant’s planning report.

The specific requirements for an SIA are provided at Section 5, including the types of social and economic impacts that should be considered when planning and developing the report.

### 3. Purpose of these guidelines

These guidelines have been prepared to assist applicants and consultants in the preparation of a Social Impact Assessment for applications involving licensed venues and liquor licenses. An SIA ensures that social and economic impacts are considered as part of the planning process.

More specifically, an SIA aims to identify the extent to which an application:

- aligns with relevant planning and policy frameworks
- affects community health and wellbeing, particularly those communities with higher social and economic disadvantage
- will provide a net social and economic benefit or cost to the Hobsons Bay community

The process helps to identify, assess and manage social and economic impacts and to facilitate quality planning outcomes that are responsive to the needs of current and future residents, visitors and workers within Hobsons Bay.

### 4. Application and assessment process

The application and assessment process for a Social Impact Assessment occurs in four stages. The following description should be read in conjunction with the diagram at Figure 1 and Council’s ‘How the Planning Process Works’ diagram (see Appendix 1).

## **Stage 1: Pre-application advice**

The applicant is encouraged to meet with Council's Statutory Planning team to ensure their application includes all the information needed to resolve any potential issues. If the application triggers the need for a Social Impact Assessment, the applicant is then encouraged to meet with the Economic Development and Social Planning team (either in person or by telephone) to discuss and clarify a range of topics, including:

- the scope of the report, such as the types of impacts for consideration
- availability of research on the social and economic impacts of licensed venues and other local data related to the required information
- requirements and scope of community and stakeholder engagement

The applicant will also be provided with any other information Council deems worthy of consideration, which may include demographic data, key Council plans, strategies or research, and information about infrastructure and services within the catchment area.

## **Stage 2: Preparation and lodgement**

A suitably qualified consultant will prepare the Social Impact Assessment for lodgement with the application. If a Social Impact Assessment is required but not provided at this stage, applicants will be informed and advised to meet with the Economic Development and Social Planning team (if Stage One did not occur) and complete the report prior to the application being considered.

## **Stage 3: Review**

Council's Economic Development and Social Planning team will review the Social Impact Assessment. Written feedback will be provided to the Statutory Planning team for consideration in the detailed assessment of the application. A list of guiding questions used by Council officers in reviewing a Social Impact Assessment Report is provided at Appendix 2.

If a Social Impact Assessment does not include all information, impacts are missing, or Council considers that the impacts will be more significant than indicated in the report, Council may request further information by clearly identifying the areas for which there is some dispute on the extent or scope of impact. It should be noted that documents lodged at any stage of the application process may be made public as part of the advertising process.

## **Stage 4: Decision and further action**

Following the advertising period and detailed assessment, Council's Statutory Planning team will make a decision on the application under delegation or make recommendations to Council. Applicants will be informed by Council regarding the outcome of the application and any requirements associated with approval (or otherwise).

At this stage, agreement may be reached regarding the actioning of any SIA recommendations. These may require a range of responses from various stakeholders, including the applicant, Council, local business, and/or state and federal government agencies. Recommendations may also be formalised through one or more of the following options: planning scheme controls, planning permit conditions, developer contributions, Section 173 Agreement or another relevant mechanism.

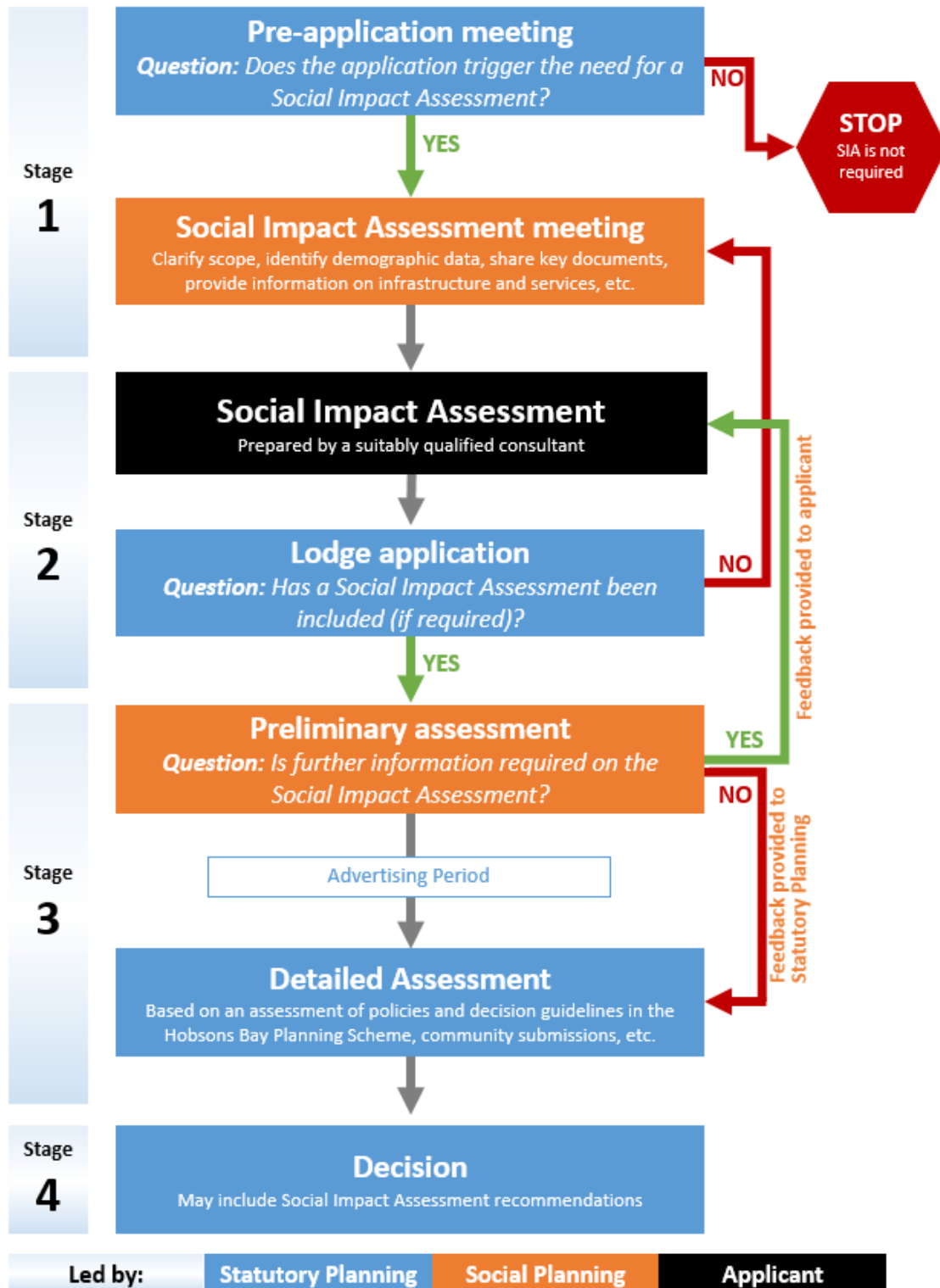


Figure 1: Social Impact Assessment Process

## 5. Social Impact Assessment: required information

To be completed if you are applying for a:

- Packaged liquor licences for premises with trading areas greater than 1000m<sup>2</sup>
- General licence
- Late night licence –General and On-premises

<p><b>Part One: Details</b></p> <p>This section seeks information about the applicant, site and liquor license proposal</p>	<p><b>Applicant</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• name, position, address and contact information of the person(s) making the application</li> <li>• name of company/organisation (if relevant)</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Site Details</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• street address</li> <li>• current uses of the site</li> <li>• land area</li> <li>• map indicating site, proposed red line, proposed indoor/outdoor seating arrangements, attached car parking and streets providing access/egress to the site</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Proposal details</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• license-type being applied for</li> <li>• nominee details</li> <li>• nature of business and purpose of liquor licence</li> <li>• trading hours</li> </ul> <p>For applications where alcohol will be consumed on premises:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• maximum patron capacity, including the number seated and standing patrons</li> <li>• any use of amplified music (other than background music) or entertainment (e.g. karaoke, live music) provide details of anticipated frequency, days and times of operation</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• availability of food options, number and tenure (e.g. full-time, part-time, casual) and type (e.g. bar staff, kitchen staff, retail staff, construction) of new or extended employment opportunities</li> <li>• relevant harm reduction measures, such as provision of free drinking water and display of signage advising patrons of free water availability</li> </ul>
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<p><b>Part Two: Context</b></p> <p>This section seeks a description and analysis of local demographic data.</p> <p><a href="#">Council's research and data page</a>, including Community Profile and Forecast, is a useful resource when developing an appropriate catchment and demographic profile.</p> <p>The Economic Development and Social Planning Team can assist with more specific data sources.</p>	<p><b>Demographic Profile</b></p> <p>Using a 1km catchment area as a basis, present an overview of current and forecast demographic data and indicators (with comparisons to Metropolitan Melbourne, where appropriate), including the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• population – municipal and neighbourhood totals, age profile by relevant service groups, cultural diversity data, e.g. language spoken, English proficiency, birthplace/ancestry</li> <li>• socio-economic, social and health indicators – these may include (but are not limited to) equivalised household income, housing/rental stress, labour force participation, reliance on income support, incidence of family violence and indicators of mental health</li> <li>• social Economic Index for Areas (SEIFA) Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage – provide latest data at municipal, neighbourhood and SA1 levels</li> <li>• alcohol-related health and social impacts, including rates of short and long term alcohol-related harm, such as ambulance call outs and hospitalisations; crime and police call outs, short health effects</li> </ul>
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### **Part Three: Impact Assessment**

This section seeks a description and analysis of all relevant economic and social impacts, both positive and negative. Assessment of impacts should be based upon considered data analysis (including material presented in Part Two) and credible findings in published literature, as well as community and stakeholder engagement and comparisons to similar venues.

This section should also describe any measures to mitigate negative impacts or enhance positive impacts. This may be presented as a mitigation/enhancement action plan describing the timing and responsibility for actions by the applicant and/or other stakeholders. The report should also include an analysis of cumulative impacts of the application with existing, proposed or pending licensed venues within the catchment area.

Finally, it should be noted that consideration of some economic and social impacts may require input from other suitably qualified practitioners or draw on the findings from other expert reports (expenditure reports, planning reports). Rather than repeat other experts' reports, the Social Impact Assessment should include a summary of the relevant impacts associated with each specialist area, as well as any relevant enhancement or mitigation strategies.

### **Cumulative Impact**

A cumulative impact refers to both positive and negative impacts that can result from clustering of licensed premises in a particular area. Potential cumulative impact from a cluster of licensed premises will vary between locations, depending on the mix and number of venues and whether the area is a destination for activities associated with the supply of alcohol.

The cumulative impact of licensed premises is referenced in the Victoria Planning Provisions at the decision guidelines of Clause 52.27 Licensed Premises and further details provided in [Planning Practice Note 61 – Licensed Premises: Assessing Community Impact](#). The relevant decision guideline requires a council to consider:

*The cumulative impact of any existing licensed premises and the proposed licensed premises on the amenity of the surrounding area.*

Please provide details on the following:

- proximity to sensitive community infrastructure, such as schools, childcare centres, medical centres, health and wellbeing services
- location of site in relation to designated dry areas in Hobsons Bay
- audit of other licensed premises within an 500m radius, by license type, including trading hours and an estimate of trading floor size
- any licensed premises with more than 200 patron capacity within a 500m radius
- any licensed venue open later than 11pm within a 500m radius

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Location and frequency of transport options within 500m of the site, including taxi ranks, train stations, bus stops, car parks and ability for ride-share services to pick up customers.</li> <li>• Proximity to gambling venues, such as TABs or venue with electronic gaming machines.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Social Impact</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• short-term health risks, including those related to intoxication and injury associated with intoxication, and how these will be mitigated</li> <li>• impacts on amenity and public enjoyment of the surrounding area, including litter and noise</li> <li>• gender Impacts, including the different ways women, men and gender non-binary people may be impacted</li> <li>• community safety issues, including traffic safety and safety in public places</li> <li>• potential impact on crime or safety in the area, and how these will be managed</li> </ul>
<p><b>Economic Impact</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• availability of employment and resulting economic opportunity</li> <li>• training and economic development opportunities</li> <li>• impact on existing businesses, including amenity impacts</li> </ul>

<p><b>Section 4: Conclusion</b></p> <p>This section seeks an overall conclusion on the social and economic impacts of the proposal</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a summary of the key social and economic impacts and enhancement/mitigation measures</li> <li>• a statement regarding the proposal's overall net benefit/cost to the community</li> <li>• how the proposal aligns with and supports the vision and relevant priorities within the Hobsons Bay 2030 Community Vision, making reference to the issues identified in the previous sections</li> </ul>
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## 6. More information

Please contact Council's Economic Development and Social Planning team on 1300 179 944 or at [socialplanning@hobsonsbay.vic.gov.au](mailto:socialplanning@hobsonsbay.vic.gov.au) for more information on Social Impact Assessments for licensed venue applications.

# Appendix 1: How the planning process works

## How the Planning Process Works

The *Planning and Environment Act 1987* sets out the legal process and procedures that must be followed in the planning process. The principal steps in the process are outlined here.



### Pre-Application Advice

Applicants are encouraged to have a pre-application meeting with Council planning officers before lodging to ensure their application has all the information officers need and to resolve any potential issues with their application. This will lead to a better quality application and a quicker assessment.



### Lodge Application

It is important that all the required information discussed in the pre-application meeting is submitted in the application and is of a high standard to avoid delays in the assessment.



### Preliminary Assessment

If insufficient detail is provided in the application, the Council planner will ask for additional information within 28 days of lodging the application. The assessment will be put on hold until that additional information has been received.



### Advertising Period

If the application has the potential to detrimentally impact another person, it will need to be advertised for a period of 14 days. If your application is advertised, any person may view the plans and supporting documents at Council and lodge an objection.



### Detailed Assessment

A detailed assessment is undertaken by the planner based on an assessment of the policies and decision guidelines in the Hobsons Bay Planning Scheme, the planning merits of any objections received and responses from any referral authorities such as VicRoads and Melbourne Water.



### Special Planning Committee (SPC)

If eight or more objections are received and are not resolved, the application is referred to the Special Planning Committee (SPC) which is chaired by councillors. Applicants and objectors are invited to attend and present at SPC.



### Amendment or change to the Permit

A request to amend the application during the assessment stage, or amend the permit after the decision can be made to Council. An amendment follows the same process as a new planning application, and an application will be advertised again if the amendment has the potential to detrimentally affect another person.



### Lodge Final Plans with Council

If a permit has conditions which require changes to the plans or additional information, updated plans and information must be submitted for final assessment and endorsement by Council.



### Appeal

Applicants or objectors can appeal Council's decision to VCAT. The Council, objectors and the applicant present their cases to VCAT at a formal hearing. Following the decision Council will be directed to issue a planning permit, or a refusal.



### Planning Permit

The planning permit authorises the use and development of land with conditions. The applicant has the ability to lodge an appeal against conditions to VCAT.



### Notice of Decision

If Council proposes to approve the application and objections have been received, a Notice of Decision to grant a permit is issued. This allows objectors 21 days to apply to the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) for an application for review. If no appeal is lodged, a planning permit is issued.



### Notice of Refusal

A notice of refusal includes the reasons why the proposal was refused. The applicant has the ability to lodge an appeal against the Notice of Refusal with VCAT.

**Decision**  
One of the following three decisions are made:

**Other Requirements:** Once you have planning approval, you may need other permits or licenses, such as a building permit, registration with Council's Public Health Unit or a liquor license. Please contact Council's customer service on **9932 1000** or email [customerservice@hobsonsbay.vic.gov.au](mailto:customerservice@hobsonsbay.vic.gov.au) for further information

**HOBSONS BAY LANGUAGE LINE** | **9932 1212**  
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## Appendix 2: Guiding questions for reviewing Social Impact Assessments

When reviewing Social Impact Assessments for applications involving licensed venues, Council officers will use the following questions to assess the report and determine whether further information is required.

### **Report and methods**

- Does the report identify all relevant social and economic impacts, including for disadvantaged groups?
- Does it address social and economic impacts, including cumulative impacts?
- Does it use robust and accurate social and economic baseline data (both qualitative and quantitative), including information provided by Council?
- Does it use data analysis, independent published research, and community and stakeholder engagement to inform assessments and determine appropriate mitigation/enhancement measures?
- Does it reflect the views and insights of potentially affected groups, as identified through community and stakeholder engagement?
- Does it describe and justify methods and assumptions used to define catchment area(s), undertake assessments and draw conclusions?

### **Impact mitigation measures**

- Does the report identify all potential enhancements and incorporate these into the application to maximise community outcomes?
- Does it identify all potential mitigation measures?
- Are mitigation measures practical, respectful, action-oriented, evidence-based and assigned to specific persons/groups/organisations to lead implementation?
- Could any mitigation measures cause unintended impacts in another location or in relation to another issue?
- Do mitigation measures need to be monitored and reviewed, and potentially adapted in the future to ensure they remain effective?