

Attachment A

**Updated Council-Related Development
Applications Policy**

Council-related Development Applications Policy

Purpose

The Council of the City of Sydney ~~Council~~ (the Council) operates as a consent authority and development regulator for most development within ~~the~~ our local government area. In some circumstances the Council is also the landowner of land to which an application relates, has given a grant to or has a commercial interest in the land they regulate. Where ~~Council~~ s ~~has~~ ve this dual role, a potential conflict can arise between their interests in the development and their duty as regulator.

This Policy explains how the Council will identify matters in which these potential conflicts arise and address them throughout the development process.

This Policy does not change the delegations in relation to which entity performs the role of consent authority for an application, unless a determination is made by the CEO, Executive Director City Planning Development & and Transport or Executive Manager Planning and Development to refer a matter to a particular consent authority following a risk assessment.

Preliminary

~~(1) Name of policy~~

~~This policy is the Council-related Development Applications Policy.~~

~~(2) Aim of policy~~

~~This policy aims to manage potential conflicts of interest and increase transparency at all stages of the development process for council-related development applications. Refer to Section (4) definitions.~~

~~(3) Scope~~

This policy applies to ~~C~~ council-related development as defined in the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (the Act). ~~Refer to Section (4) definitions.~~

This policy has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of s 66A of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021 (the Regulation) and the Council-related Development Application Conflict of Interest Guidelines issued by the Department of Planning and Environment Department Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (previously Department of Planning and Environment).

This policy does not apply to any works carried out under Part 5 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979.

This policy applies to development applications made on or after 3 April 2023.

(4) Definitions

In this policy:

Term	Meaning
Application	An application for consent under Part 4 of the Act to carry out development and includes an application to modify a development consent it does not include an application for a complying development certificate or any works carried out under Part 5 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979.
Council	City of Sydney Council
Council-related development application	<p>As defined in Sch 1 cl 9B of the Act:</p> <p><u>Council-related development application means a development application, for which a Council is the consent authority, that is</u></p> <p>==</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) <u>made by or on behalf of the Council, or</u> b) <u>for development on land, other than a public road within the meaning of the Local Government Act 1993</u> == <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) <u>(i) of which the Council is an owner, a lessee or a licensee, or</u> — (ii) otherwise vested in or under the control of the Council. <p>i)ii)</p>
Development process	Application, assessment, determination, and enforcement

Term	Meaning
<p>Excluded development <u>(this relates to Council related development applications, as defined, that are not required to have a specific management strategy to deal with potential conflicts)</u></p>	<p>Applications in which Council’s interest is related only to one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. commercial fit outs and minor changes to the building facade b. internal alterations or additions to buildings that are not a heritage item c. advertising signage on commercial property d. minor building structures projecting from a building facade over public land (such as awnings, verandas, bay windows, flagpoles, pipes, and services) e. development where the <u>City Council</u> might receive a small fee for the use of their land f. changes of use from one permitted use to another with no greater than minor impacts on the amenity of the surrounding area <u>g.</u> alteration or addition of minor structures in parks and other public places (such as shade structures in public playgrounds) <u>g-h.</u> <u>subdivision in accordance with an approved development.</u> <p>except applications which would limit existing free public access to public land (as defined in the Local Government Act 1993).</p>
<p>The Act</p>	<p><u>Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979</u></p>
<p>The Regulation</p>	<p><u>Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021</u></p>

A word or expression used in this policy has the same meaning as it has in the Act, and any instruments made under the Act unless it is otherwise defined in this policy.

Notes included in this policy do not form part of the policy.

Policy Statement

This policy aims to manage potential conflicts of interest and increase transparency at all stages of the development process for Council-related development applications.

Process for identifying and managing potential conflicts of interest

(5) Identifying whether a potential conflict of interest exists, assessment of level risk and determination of appropriate management controls – Council-related Development Applications

The provision of pre-DA advice prior to the lodgement of an application is a standard service provided by the Council when an applicant requests it. This may involve the provision of detailed written advice relating to a submitted proposal and may involve a meeting with the applicant. Any comments provided in writing or at a meeting are advisory only and do not bind the consent authority in its assessment or determination of a future application.

Where pre-DA advice is sought and given prior to the lodging of a Council-related development application, the issue of appropriate management controls should be considered by the Executive Manager Planning and Development (or delegate – Manager Planning Assessments or Area Planning Manager) and the proposed approach to addressing conflicts of interest recorded.

Where a preliminary meeting is held prior to the lodging of an application which may be council-related development, the matter should be referred to the Executive Manager Development (or delegate) and the issue of appropriate management controls should be an agenda item for discussion at the meeting, with the proposed approach recorded as part of the minutes of the meeting.

Preliminary meetings held prior to the lodgement of a development application are a standard service provided by the Council and any comments provided at such meetings are advisory only and do not bind the consent authority in its assessment or determination of a future application.

When a Council-related Development Application is received the Executive Manager Planning and Development (or delegate – Manager Planning Assessments or Area Planning Manager) is to:

- i. Development applications that are for council-related development are to be referred to the Executive Manager Development (or delegate) for an initial conflict of interest risk assessment and preparation of a management statement in accordance with the requirements of the Regulation.
- a) At the preliminary stage, the Executive Manager Development (or delegate) is to:
 - ii.i. assess whether the application is one in which a potential conflict of interest exists,
 - i. identify the phase(s) of the development process at which the identified conflict of interest arises,
 - iii.ii. assess the level of risk involved at each phase of the development process, determine what (if any) management controls should be implemented to address the identified conflict of interest (in each phase of the development process if necessary) having regard to any controls and strategies outlined in clause 6 of the policy, below.
 - iv.iii. document the proposed management approach for the proposal in a statement that is published on the NSW Planning Portal.

Council-related Development Applications are to be identified as either:

- i. Excluded Development-
- ii. Low-Risk development-
- iii. Medium-Risk development-
- iv. High-Risk development-

Where relevant a management statement in accordance with the requirements of the Regulation is to be prepared (n.b. the management statement for Excluded Development is that there are no specific management controls).

The Low, Medium and High-Risk categories for Council-related Development Applications are defined below:

Council-related development is to be assigned a level of risk in accordance with the following categories:

Low Risk

A low-risk Council-related DA is:

- a. Any application which would have been determined by the Local Planning Panel but for the fact that the Local Planning Panel has delegated its functions as consent authority to Council staff including:
 - (i) ~~(i)~~ Internal alternations and additions to heritage items,
 - (ii) Temporary installations of public art
 - (iii) Temporary events
 - (iv) Outdoor seating (no more than one objection)
 - (v) Works in public domain, construction of driveways, landscaping and the like (no more than one objection)
 - (vi) Placement or relocation of kiosks and other minor structures within the public domain (no more than one objection)
 - (vii) Installation of shade structures and play equipment (no more than one objection)
 - (viii) Installation of solar panels (no more than one objection)
 - (ix) Small scale alternations and additions to existing facilities (no more than one objection)
 - (x) Other small-scale development with a development cost of no more than \$100,000 (no more than one objection)
- b. Development, which is not excluded development, but which does not meet the Medium Risk or High Risk criteria as set out in this policy

Medium Risk

A medium-risk Council related DA is:

- a. Any application for which the Local Planning Panel is the consent authority
- ~~b. Any application in relation to which the Council has resolved to provide a grant~~
- ~~e.b.~~ Changes of use which have the capacity to create more than minor impacts on amenity.

High Risk

A high-risk Council-related DA is:

- a. Any application made by or on behalf of Council, or for development substantially on land owned or leased by Council, and for which the Central Sydney Planning Committee is the consent authority
- ~~b. Any matter which is assessed as being high risk by the CEO, Executive Director City Planning Development and Transport or on the recommendation of the Executive Manager Planning and Development, due to the particular circumstances of the~~
- ~~b.~~ application (for example, where there is a significant public interest due to the nature of the proposed development).

Where circumstances change throughout the assessment of an application (for example, where public submissions are received objecting to a proposal) ~~assessment staff will raise the matter with the Executive Manager Development, who may review~~ the management strategy in relation to the application will be reviewed by the Area Planning Manager, in consultation with the Manager Planning Assessments, the Executive Manager Planning and Development or Executive Director City Planning Development and Transport as appropriate, and must make any necessary adjustments determined as appropriate. Where a management strategy is updated in the course of assessment of an application, it will be updated in the Planning Portal.

~~(6)~~ Management controls and strategies – Council related Development Applications

For all applications which constitute Council-related development, staff will ensure that written records are kept of all communications between applicant staff and applicants' representatives (whether staff or external consultants). Substantial discussions should occur only in the context of a formal meeting and written records of such meetings are kept. Executive Directors are responsible for ensuring that staff follow strict communications protocols in relation to Council-related development.

In accordance with Sch 1 cl 9B of the Act and the City's Community Participation Plan, all ~~C~~Council-related ~~D~~development ~~A~~applications will be publicly exhibited for a minimum of 28 days. The management strategy will be publicly exhibited with the application and will remain publicly available on the NSW Planning Portal.

Council-related development applications are to be accompanied by either a management strategy statement, which explains how the Council will manage potential conflicts of interest, or a statement that the Council has no management strategy for the application.

The management strategy for excluded development is that no additional management controls need to be applied.

However, an application for excluded development may be subject to additional management controls where the CEO, Executive Director City Planning Development & Transport or the Executive Manager Planning and Development if more than one objection is received or where the CEO, on the recommendation of the Executive Manager Development, determines it is appropriate in the circumstances of the case.

For clarity, the ~~Regulation~~Regulation requires that applications for excluded development must only be accompanied by a statement that the ~~C~~Council has no management strategy for the application in accordance with this Policy.

The management strategy in relation to the assessment and determination of Council-related DAs applications for council-related development is to be in accordance with the level of risk identified under this Policy. In general, the following management strategies are to be implemented:

i) Excluded development.

No additional management controls need to be applied.

ii) Low Risk

Application assessed and determined by council staff under existing delegations, subject to any specific matters as set out in the management statement for the application.

iii) Medium risk

Application assessed by council staff and determined by the Local Planning Panel. It is noted that in exceptional circumstances it may be considered appropriate for these matters to be assessed by external ~~consultants~~consultants, and this will be specified in the management statement where applicable.

iv) High risk

Application assessed by external consultants, determined by the Central Sydney Planning Committee (or Local Planning Panel where appropriate).

Where a Council-related DA council-related development becomes the subject of any proceeding before the Land and Environment Court (for example, Class 1 merit review proceedings or Class 4 judicial review proceedings), external legal representatives and consultants will be engaged to conduct the matter on behalf of the City.

Other applications

Other development related applications (which are not defined as a Council-related Development Application), such as applications to modify a consent, or a development application for a development that is subject of a grant from Council, may from time to time raise issues with regards to an actual or perceived conflict of interest.

Conflicts in these cases will be addressed having regard to the same principles as those used in relation to Council-related Development Applications. Any management strategy for these applications will be considered on a case-by-case basis consistent with the approach outlined in this policy.

As the application is not a Council-related Development Application as defined, the management strategy is not required to be published on the Portal under the regulations, and the application will be notified in accordance with the requirements of Council's Community Participation Plan.

Management controls and strategies – certification and compliance

The management strategy in relation to the regulation of Council-related development (other than excluded development) is that all certification related to applications where the value of works exceeds \$2 million, including the issue of construction certificates and occupation certificates, will be undertaken by a private certifier.

The management strategy in relation to the undertaking of enforcement and compliance activities in relation to all Council-related development and all development on Council land is as follows:

- i. The Executive Manager Planning and Development will oversee all compliance and enforcement activities related to Council-related development and all development on Council land and will provide regular updates on these activities to the Executive.
- ii. Where a non-compliance is identified (for example, a breach of development consent conditions or a failure to comply with the terms of a development control order), the matter will be escalated to the Executive Director Legal and Governance for review and consideration of appropriate action. This may include engaging external consultants in order to undertake investigations and/or to peer review recommendations of Council staff. Non-compliances will be recorded in the City's Compliance Register until such time as the matter has been rectified.
- iii. Where a matter is considered a significant breach of any law, the non-compliance will be referred by the Executive Director Legal and Governance to the compliance staff of the Department of Planning and Environment for advice and action as appropriate.
- iii-iv. iv. Any instances of deliberate non-compliance by Council staff may be investigated and dealt with in accordance with the Code of Conduct, Disciplinary Procedure and/or action under relevant legislation if appropriate. Such matters will be referred to the appropriate independent authority or the Department of Planning and Environment if it is suspected that an offence has been committed.

~~e)v-~~ All legal proceedings in relation to enforcement and compliance matters for ~~C~~council-related development and activities on ~~C~~council land will be conducted by external legal providers, engaging third party consultants to provide expert advice if required.

Example template Management Strategy – Medium Risk matter

<p>Management Strategy – Pre DA</p>	<p>Potential conflict of interest reviewed and identified as Medium Risk. <u>Note:</u> Management strategy developed at time of DA lodgement recognising Local Planning Panel as Consent Authority</p>
<p>Management Strategy - Assessment</p>	<p>The Ccouncil is managing potential conflicts of interest in this matter as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The application will be referred to the Local Planning Panel to determine the development application. • Ccouncil development assessment staff not involved with preparing the application will assess the DA. • <u>Council development assessment</u> The staff will remain separated from the project team. • <u>Council dDevelopment assessment staff involved in the assessment of the DA and reviewing of the report to be presented to the Local Planning Panel, will complete a declaration confirming that they do not have a conflict of interest.</u> • <u>The management strategy will be amended if necessary if a change in circumstances occurs and/or where the CEO, Executive Director City Planning Development & Transport or the Executive Manager Planning and Development determines that it is appropriate to do so in the circumstances of the case.</u>
<p>Management strategy – Compliance / Enforcement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A private certifier will be engaged to undertake the certification for the development. • Any complaints and/or compliance activity will be referred to Executive Manager <u>Planning and</u> Development to confirm appropriate course of action and reported to CEO.
<p>Management Strategy – Pre DA</p>	<p>Potential conflict of interest reviewed and identified as Medium Risk. Management strategy developed at time of DA lodgement recognising Local Planning Panel as Consent Authority</p>

Contact

~~Anyone with concerns about council fulfilling its obligations should report their concerns to the council.~~

References

Laws and Standards

- Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979
- Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2021
- Local Government Act 1993
- Roads Act 1993
- Building and Development Certifiers Regulation 2020

Policies and Procedures

- Code of Conduct
- Compliance Policy
- Prosecution and Civil Enforcement Policy

Review period

This policy will be reviewed every two years.

Approval Status

City of Sydney Council approved this policy on ~~[date to be inserted]~~ **13 March 2023**.

Approval History

Stage	Date	Comment	TRIM Reference
Original Policy	13 March 2023	Developed in reference to requirements of s66A, EP&A Regulation 2021 and Council related Development Application Conflict of Interest Guidelines dated 28 Feb 2023 (Department of Planning and Environment).	2023/157016

Stage	Date	Comment	TRIM Reference
Review	[date to be inserted]	Original policy reviewed and updated to address matters that need to be clarified and to improve the operation of the policy. Updated policy developed in reference to requirements of s66A of the EP&A Regulation 2021 and Council related Development Application Conflict of Interest Guidelines dated 28 Feb 2023 (Department of Planning and Environment).	2024/536823

Stage	Date	Comment	TRIM Reference
Commence Review Date	[date to be inserted – 18 months from date of adoption]. 13 June 2024		
Approval Due Date	[date to be inserted – 24 months from date of adoption]. 13 March 2025		

Ownership and approval

Responsibility	Role
Author	Manager Planning Assessment – Planning Assessments
Owner	Manager Planning Assessment – Planning Assessments Executive Director City Planning Development and Transport
Endorser	City of Sydney Executive
Approver	City of Sydney Council