

# Local Strategic Planning Statements, Community Strategic Plans and the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework

September 2018

Each council in NSW prepares documents and policies that plan for the future strategic direction of their Local Government Area (LGA). These cover how they think the area will change and what their community will need.

The recent updates to the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act) introduced Local Strategic Planning Statements (LSPS). These statements set out the long-term vision for land use planning in the LGA, in response to broader priorities identified in the District and Regional Plans.

Another prominent strategic document is council's Community Strategic Plan (CSP), required under the *Local Government Act 1993* (LG Act). CSPs identify the priorities and aspirations of the community, and the broader strategic direction of the LGA.

CSPs are delivered and reported on using the Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) framework that is also a requirement of the LG Act.

The LSPS was designed to integrate with and complement these existing requirements for councils under the LG Act.

## What is the relationship between a Local Strategic Planning Statement and a Community Strategic Plan?

The LSPS focuses on the long-term vision and priorities for **land use** in the local area. As part of this, it helps to translate the vision and priorities expressed in the CSP, and other strategies, into specific land use planning actions for the LGA.

Council's CSP is required under the LG Act to have regard to economic, social, environmental and governance matters, and to identify the main priorities and aspirations of the community. These aspirations are then reflected in the council's suite of strategic plans – such as land use strategies, economic development strategies, cultural plans etc – and translated into specific actions in council's four-year delivery program and annual operational plan. Land use planning priorities can be identified through this process. These priorities can then be expressed in the LSPS and ultimately implemented through the Local Environmental Plan (LEP) and other mechanisms.

Section 3.9(2) of the EP&A Act requires a council's LSPS to include or identify the planning priorities for the area that are consistent with council's CSP and the actions required for achieving those planning priorities.

## What happens if the Local Strategic Planning Statement and Community Strategic Plan are inconsistent?

The two plans should not be inconsistent – although it should be recognised that the CSP generally takes a broader approach to place-making issues than the LSPS. It is not uncommon for communities to hold differing views on land use and local development.

There may be situations when councils are preparing their first LSPS and the current CSP does not align with the new LSPS priorities and actions. Councils will be able to align their CSP in future review cycles.

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Councils are required to take into consideration, relevant state, regional and district plans when preparing their CSP, so it is important to lead informed community discussion about these requirements when setting long term goals, strategies and actions in their CSPs and through the IP&R framework.

The CSP engagement process provides a pathway to address these views through informed community discussion and to negotiate how regional and district priorities can be translated into the local environment in a way that respects local identity and culture. Councils should work with their communities to help them understand how their broad aspirations for place-making, expressed in the CSP, can be reflected in the LSPS.

It is noted that in circumstances where the LSPS and the CSP don't align, the LSPS is to be given priority when undertaking a function under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*.

## What is the Integrated Planning and Reporting framework?

The Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) framework is the central planning framework for councils, required under the LG Act. It guides the way that councils make decisions, allocate resources and achieve their community's priorities. The IP&R framework recognises that council plans and policies should not exist in isolation and that they are inter-connected. This framework allows NSW councils to draw their various plans together, understand how they interact and get the maximum leverage from their efforts by planning holistically and sustainably for the future.

The framework also provides a clear line of accountability and community reporting. Each newly elected council prepares its Delivery Program – outlining its proposed actions for the term of office, to achieve the goals identified by the community in the CSP. Each council reports regularly to the community on its achievements against these goals.

## Can the Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) framework be used to monitor and report on a Local Strategic Planning Statement?

Under Section 3.9(2)(d) of the EP&A Act, an LSPS must identify how council will monitor and report on the implementation of its actions.

The EP&A Act requires the LSPS to include or identify the planning priorities for the area that are consistent with council's CSP. When the LSPS aligns with the CSP, councils can satisfy the LSPS's monitoring requirement by using the IP&R framework. To do this, the LSPS must identify that its priorities and actions will be monitored and reported on through the IP&R framework. This will help the community to understand how the two planning frameworks are aligned and how the LSPS is helping to achieve the goals of the CSP.

It is up to each council to determine its reporting regime. Should they choose to report using the IP&R framework, reporting is to occur in line with the requirements of IP&R.