

**FILE NO:** PSC2018-02573-007

**TITLE:** EXCEPTIONS TO DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

**POLICY OWNER:** GROUP MANAGER DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

**1. PURPOSE:**

1.1 The purpose of this Policy is to provide guidance on the application and administration of Clause 4.6 Exceptions to Development Standards in the *Port Stephens Local Environmental Plan 2013* (PSLEP).

**2. CONTEXT/BACKGROUND:**

2.1 Clause 4.6 Exceptions to Development Standards enables development standards such as minimum lot sizes, height and floor space ratio to be varied in certain circumstances. This clause is included in all local environmental planning instruments across NSW.

2.2 Clause 4.6 Exceptions to Development Standards aims to provide an appropriate degree of flexibility in applying development standards to achieve better outcomes for and from development in particular circumstances.

**3. SCOPE:**

3.1 This Policy applies to development applications in the Port Stephens local government area.

3.2 The Policy relates specifically to the following Council functions:

3.2.1 Assessment of development applications; and

3.2.2 Review of provisions in the PSLEP and strategic planning.

**4. DEFINITIONS:**

Development Application    An application for consent to carry out development, but does not include an application for a complying development certificate.

Development Consent        Approval to carry out development the subject of a development application.

**Development Standards** The *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* includes a legal definition of 'development standards' (See section 4).

Development standards are provisions in an environmental planning instrument that guide development to be carried out in accordance with particular requirements under certain circumstances. For example maximum building heights in residential areas, or minimum lot sizes for subdivision in rural areas.

Development standards are a means to achieve a particular environmental planning objectives in an area. Clause 4.6 of the PSLEP provides flexibility to allow planning objectives to be met by varying development standards in certain circumstances.

Clause 4.6 of the PSLEP applies when applications are made for exceptions to development standards.

**Environmental Planning Instrument** A legal instrument that guides development, such as a Local Environmental Plan (eg the PSLEP).

## **5. POLICY STATEMENT:**

- 5.1 This Policy sets out the processes that apply when development applications are lodged that seek to vary the development standards under Clause 4.6 of the PSLEP. Applicants are advised to refer to the Policy prior to lodging a development application that includes an application under Clause 4.6.
- 5.2 This Policy aims to create opportunities for greater transparency and community participation when decisions are made to vary development standards and to achieve better decision making through robust assessments. It seeks to ensure the assessment and administration of applications to vary development standards includes consideration of the principles established by the NSW Land and Environment Court and the strategic planning context.
- 5.3 This Policy adopts transparent reporting and other recommendations issued by the NSW Department of Planning and Environment and the NSW Independent Commission Against Corruption.
- 5.4 Council will implement the following actions:

- 5.4.1 Development applications that include a request under Clause 4.6 Exceptions to Development Standards of the PSLEP must be accompanied by the Clause 4.6 Application Form.
- 5.4.2 Council will exhibit the Clause 4.6 Application Form accompanying a development application when advertising or notifying an Application.
- 5.4.3 Development applications accompanied by a Clause 4.6 Application Form will be assessed in accordance with Varying Development Standards: A Guide (published August 2011 by the former NSW Department of Planning and Infrastructure).
- 5.4.4 Development applications which include a Clause 4.6 Application Form seeking to vary a development standard by greater than 10% will be determined by the Council.
- 5.4.5 Council will maintain a register of development consents that have included exceptions to development standards and the information will be made publicly available.
- 5.4.6 The Development Assessment and Compliance Team will refer development standards that are the subject of frequent development consents that include exceptions to development standards to the Strategic Planning Team for review. A review will be carried out to ensure the development standards in the PSLEP remain relevant to achieving the environmental planning objectives in an area.

## **6. POLICY RESPONSIBILITIES:**

- 6.1 Development Assessment and Compliance Team (development application assessment).
- 6.2 Strategic Planning Team (Policy review and local environmental plan review).

## **7. RELATED DOCUMENTS:**

- 7.1 Clause 4.6 Application Form.
- 7.2 *Port Stephens Local Environmental Plan 2013* (NSW).
- 7.3 *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (NSW).
- 7.4 Varying Development Standards: A Guide (Former NSW Department of Planning and Infrastructure).
- 7.5 NSW Department of Planning and Environment Circular PS 08-003 Variations to Development Standards.
- 7.6 NSW Department of Planning and Environment Circular PS 11-014 Reporting Variations to Development Standards.
- 7.7 NSW Department of Planning and Environment Circular PS 11-018 Monitoring and Reporting Variations to Development Standards.
- 7.8 Corruption Risks in NSW Development Approval Process: Position Paper (NSW Independent Commission Against Corruption).
- 7.9 Development Assessment Internal Audit Tool (NSW Independent Commission Against Corruption).
- 7.10 Port Stephens Council Discussion Paper – Progress of the Nelson Bay Town Centre & Foreshore Strategy.

**CONTROLLED DOCUMENT INFORMATION:**

This is a controlled document. Hardcopies of this document may not be the latest version. Before using this document, check it is the latest version; refer to Council's website <a href="http://www.portstephens.nsw.gov.au">www.portstephens.nsw.gov.au</a>			
<b>EDRMS container No</b>	PSC2018-02573-007	<b>EDRMS record No</b>	18/373335
<b>Audience</b>	Councillors, staff and the community		
<b>Process owner</b>	Group Manager Development Services		
<b>Author</b>	Strategic Planning Coordinator		
<b>Review timeframe</b>	Two years	<b>Next review date</b>	September 2020
<b>Adoption date</b>	25 September 2018		

**VERSION HISTORY:**

Version	Date	Author	Details	Minute No.
1.	25 September 2018	Strategic Planning Coordinator	First draft version placed on public exhibition in February 2018. Updated to new template to include paragraph numbering.  5.4.4 – Updated following public exhibition period.	095