

What is a Statement of Environmental Effects?

A Statement of Environmental Effects (SEE) is a written document that describes the proposed development and identifies any likely or potential impacts. A SEE should also explain how the development has been designed to comply with the Local Environmental Plan and Development Control Plan. A well prepared SEE will demonstrate the merits of the proposal.

What should a Statement of Environmental Effects include?

A SEE should address the matters outlined in this guide and where necessary include any specialist reports such as a bushfire report, acoustic report or traffic impact assessment. These documents can be included as part of the SEE or as appendices.

A Statement of Environmental Effects (SEE) must indicate the following:

- The likely environmental impacts of the development;
- How the environmental impacts of the development have been identified; and
- The steps that will be taken to protect the environment or to lessen the expected harm to the environment.

In addition to the above, a SEE should address the matters described below. The amount of information required will depend on the type and scale of your application and will include:

- A description of the site and surrounding locality
- Present and previous uses of the site
- Existing structures on the land
- A detailed description of the proposal
- Operational and management details

Council must consider a number of statutory matters when determining your application. These are outlined in Section 4.15 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* and include:

- The provisions of any environmental planning instrument (State Environmental Planning Policies (SEPPs), and Local Environmental Plans (LEPs));
- The provisions of any draft environmental planning instrument (that is or has been placed on public exhibition);
- Any Development Control Plans (DCPs);
- The likely impacts of the development (including environmental impacts on both the natural and built environments, and social and economic impacts in the locality);
- The suitability of the site for the development;
- Any submissions made; and
- The public interest.

Your SEE must address these matters (with the exception of any submissions made) so that Council and any other relevant authorities have the necessary information to assess your application. Your SEE should demonstrate that in designing your proposal, you have fully considered the site constraints and the applicable legislative provisions.

If you think something is not applicable to your application, please state why this is the case.

Note: Plans should be provided separately to the SEE.

If your proposal does not fall into the above categories, you will need to provide a greater level of information and additional clauses and requirements will be applicable.

Who can prepare a SEE?

Anyone can prepare a SEE. For larger, more complex applications, it is recommended a planning professional be engaged to assist in preparing the development application.

When do you need a SEE?

The Environmental Planning and Assessment (EP&A) Regulations 2000 specify that a development application must be accompanied by a SEE, no matter how minor the development proposal. Applications for Designated Development (listed in Schedule 3 of the EP&A Regulations 2000) require a greater level of rigor in the form of an Environmental Impact Statement. In general, designated development includes heavy industry with the potential to pollute, intensive livestock industries, extractive industries, mining operations, marinas and aircraft facilities.

Most development applications are for local development requiring only a SEE. Complying development does not require a SEE but does require a detailed description of the development. For more information regarding complying and exempt development, and whether it 2 applies to your development, please refer to the Department of Planning's NSW Housing Code website www.planning.nsw.gov.au/exemptandcomplying.

Council will not accept your development application without an adequate and legible SEE. A SEE that does not include the required information may cause delays in the processing of your application.

Further questions?

Contact Council's Duty Planner by phone on (02) 6578 7290 or call into Council's Administration Building on the corner Queens Street and Civic Avenue, Singleton for assistance between 8:30am and 12:30pm weekdays.

