



WORKFORCE ACCOMMODATION POLICY

POLICY NUMBER: LPP1

STATUTORY BACKGROUND

This policy is adopted under Part 2 of Schedule 2, of the *Planning and Development (Local Planning Schemes) Regulations 2015* which enables the City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder (the City) to prepare local planning policies for any matter related to the planning and development of the Scheme area. This policy may be cited as Local Planning Policy Workforce Accommodation.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the policy is to:

1. Provide guidance on the assessment of, and decision-making on, development applications for workforce accommodation; and
2. Manage the development of workforce accommodation with a longer-term aim to maximise the city's residential workforce and ensure that, where workforce accommodation is provided, it is designed appropriately and contributes to the City's vision to be a place people call home.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the policy are to:

1. Support fixed-duration major construction projects where it can be substantiated that employment and/or accommodation cannot be locally sourced;
2. Discourage the construction of work camps or short-stay facilities used only to accommodate fly-in-fly-out (FIFO) employees/contractors;
3. Achieve reciprocal benefits for the local community and business from an integrated workforce accommodation facility;
4. Provide guidance and performance criteria to enable the preparation of applications by proponents and the assessment of proposals by the City;
5. Enable occupants of the accommodation facility to integrate with the community, local businesses and City services;
6. Acknowledge that workforce accommodation is by nature a temporary land use and that planning controls will be used to limit the period of use;
7. Post the use period for a workforce accommodation facility; a new land use is pre-planned and transition occurs seamlessly and in a timely manner; and



8. Encourage permanent housing type for workforce accommodation within the residential and rural townsite zone.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER DOCUMENTS

This Local Planning Policy forms part of the City's local planning policy framework. Where this policy is inconsistent with the City's local planning scheme, the Local Planning Scheme prevails. Where this policy is inconsistent with an adopted local development plan, activity centre plan or structure plan, the adopted local development plan, activity centre plan or structure plan prevails.

This local planning policy is not part of the local planning scheme and does not bind the Council in respect of any application for development approval. However, the Council shall have due regard to the provisions of the policy and the objectives which the policy is designed to achieve before making its determination.

This policy revokes the former policy 'Local Planning Policy (LPP) 9 – Local Planning policy: LPP09 Workforce Accommodation'.

DEFINITIONS

CEO means the Chief Executive Officer of the City.

City means the City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder.

APPLICATION OF POLICY

This policy applies to all applications for planning approval for workforce accommodation on land in all zones and reserves within the City where the use is permitted under the town planning scheme. All applications for workforce accommodation must be presented to Council for consideration.

The policy also applies to requests to renew the approval for existing workforce accommodation facilities on time-limited approvals.

This policy provides further interpretation of the Local Planning Scheme No. 2 in terms of how the Council applies discretion to decision-making on applications for workforce accommodation in the City. The policy also provides guidance for the consideration of workforce accommodation proposals under other legislation referred to the City for comment.

The policy further aims to set out the information requirements and provisions to which the City shall have due regard to the assessment and determination of development applications

CONTEXT



The *State Planning Strategy 2050 (WAPC, 2014)* recognises that local governments are increasingly involved in providing a range of services and infrastructure to remote settlements.

For this to continue sustainably, funding and governance arrangements for municipal services may need to be reviewed.

Statement of *Planning Policy No.3 – Urban Growth and Settlement (WAPC, 2006)* seeks to promote a sustainable and well-planned pattern of settlement across the State, build on existing communities with established local and regional economies, and manage the growth and development of urban areas in response to the social and economic needs of the community, and in recognition of relevant community values.

The Goldfields-Esperance Regional Planning and Infrastructure Framework (WAPC, 2012) indicates the growth of the region's mining industry has heavily influenced infrastructure investment, population growth and the development of many of the region's settlements, and states that fly-in fly-out workforces help accommodate constantly changing labour requirements, particularly for specialist skills and during the construction stages of projects.

However, as those employment opportunities associated with the ongoing operations of resource projects are generally more long-term in nature, it would be preferable from a community-building perspective to increase the amount of mine workers living in the region.

The incorporation of workforce accommodation in a community is a complex issue. The resources sector and its peak bodies (i.e. the Chamber of Minerals and Energy) have a position that access to FIFO labour is an essential element of their operations. Local communities benefit from having workers and their families permanently located in their towns and can suffer negative impacts from a large FIFO presence.

It is acknowledged that the need for workforce accommodation is always changing.

Experience shows that workforce accommodation can be established quickly to accommodate sharp spikes in demand, but it should not be the preferred long-term strategy.

The supply of workforce accommodation needs to be properly managed. This in-principle position has implications for existing or proposed workforce accommodation developments.

The primary implications are that workforce accommodation should be subject to a time limited approval to allow for their need to be reviewed over time, and that any workforce accommodation proposal should be justified based on demonstrated need.

Four main categories of workforce accommodation can be identified. Each has different requirements for accommodation arising from a combination of the nature of their work, their work hours, shift roster, and the specific requirements of the project on which they are working.

1. Construction workforce and major projects – workforce scale is very large with extended work hours and a temporary workforce.



2. Construction workforce, general projects and sub-contractors - generally engaged for a relatively shorter timeframe, with variable shift patterns, and may seek accommodation in general market workforce accommodation facilities provided by independent operators.
3. Periodic maintenance shutdown and major projects - are characterised by very short term engagements of multi-skilled teams and extended shift patterns. The nature of the project task means that resource companies prefer control for the period of works with a preference for dedicated workforce accommodation facilities.
4. Operation workforce - are more likely than other categories to include long term FIFO arrangements and for some to have shorter shift rosters.

The Council's preference is for workers to be accommodated in more integrated forms of townsite-based accommodation wherever possible, preferably housing. Operational workers are employed on a long-term basis and, ideally from a local community perspective, these workers should be residential. There should at least be plans or options for these workers to transition to long term residential accommodation.

While Council's preference is clear, where FIFO operational workers are to be accommodated on a long-term basis, Council expects their accommodation to be

1. Of a high standard;
2. Suitably integrated with surrounding development and the community; and
3. Not a typical camp design or layout appropriate to an isolated/remote camp.

Integration can bring a range of advantages – to the community in the form of an increased population within commercial catchments with consequent commercial and social benefits – and to the FIFO workforce with opportunities for involvement in the wider community on a regular basis.

The objectives of this policy are consistent with the report on the Parliamentary enquiry into FIFO practices by the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Regional Australia which noted:

...the (FIFO) work practice is eroding the liveability of some regional communities to such an extent that it is increasingly removing the choice to 'live-in' rather than simply 'cash-in' and Policy makers must develop a policy mix that ensures the FIFO/DIDO (Drive-In Drive-Out) work practice does not become the dominant practice, as it could lead to a hollowing out of established regional towns, particularly those inland.

In light of the above, workforce accommodation must be managed carefully, with a long-term aim to minimise its use and maximise the residential workforce. This is a consistent approach for policy settings across all tiers of government in most, if not all, communities with a strong resource economy.

COUNCIL POSITION



The City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder's position on Workforce Accommodation is set out as follows:

1. The Council acknowledges the critical role Workforce Accommodation can play during the construction phase of major resource projects and to accommodate peak short-term workforce requirements associated with maintenance shutdowns;
2. The Council's preference is for operational workers to be based in the Kalgoorlie-Boulder townsite, and the City will work with industry and the State Government to pursue options to increase residential workforce numbers;
3. The Council's aspiration is for workforce accommodation to be met, as much as possible, through residential, hotel or motel accommodation;
4. The Council is committed to helping to grow and develop the local community and the local economy. Workforce accommodation facilities incur a relative loss of contribution to the community compared to a residential workforce;
5. It is Council's intention for all workforce accommodation to transition towards a residential workforce. Accordingly, workforce accommodation is approved on a temporary basis in all cases.
6. Only Workforce Accommodation developments that are sufficiently integrated into the community shall receive longer term approval provided they meet the requirements of this policy; and
7. The Council believes a community contribution should be made by Workforce Accommodation proponents at the time of initial approval as there is a relative loss of community service and benefit in approving workforce accommodations due to its association with FIFO working arrangements.

POLICY PROVISIONS

(Matters To Be Considered In Exercising Discretion)

1. Workforce Use Classification

- a. In considering a development as falling within the Workforce Accommodation definition the City will consider the merits of the proposal including site configuration, building form and design, floor layout and size; on-site amenity, parking, and landscaping, and specifically:
 - i. Proposals that comprise more than 60% room typologies, where the room size is 10m² or less (excluding bathrooms/ensuites) or 14m² in total size;
 - ii. Floor layout and site amenities (walkways, signage, landscaping and leisure/recreation spaces) and guest reception that do not include a mix of accommodation types catering for a range of short stay occupants including couples or families;
 - iii. Streetscape interface and guest parking locations and transport facilities; and
 - iv. Proposals that are predominantly for single occupant typology may be considered acknowledging their use as workforce accommodation.

2. Time Limited Approvals



Workforce Accommodation is by its definition a temporary land use and therefore, unless otherwise specified below, any planning approval will be time limited.

- a. Workforce accommodation deemed as lawful prior to the adoption of this policy will be subject to a time-limited planning approval if there is an increase in gross floor area or beds numbers;
- b. Planning approval will not exceed a period greater than ten (10) years. Any renewal or extension will require a further planning application to be lodged and be subject to the provisions of this policy;
- c. Proposals for development which seek timeframes exceeding ten (10) years are considered permanent development, and therefore the design and amenity must consist of fully self-contained dwellings, and reflecting a traditional residential layout;
- d. Workforce accommodation constructed to serve a specific project shall have time-limited planning approval generally in accordance with the project duration;
- e. Development applications are required to identify the period for which they are seeking planning approval;
- f. Twelve (12) months prior to the expiry of the planning approval the landowner must provide to the City for approval a site decommissioning program or a plan to transition to a permanent land use; and
- g. At the conclusion of the approved timeframe, the planning approval will expire.
 - i. **5-Year Term Proposal**

Applications for not longer than five (5) years, must comply with this policy, except with 2. h. ii. below.
 - ii. **10-Year Term Proposal**

Applications for term extensions longer than five (5) years, but not exceeding ten (10) years, must comply with the policy and will also be required to demonstrate the following:

 - (1) a balanced and diverse built form which will contribute to the development of an active and interesting public domain character;
 - (2) a contiguous, activated street frontage with high quality-built form, that is consistent with the desired character of the area, including;
 - (a) building wall heights above 2.4m
 - (b) roof pitch of 15 degrees minimum,
 - (c) associated landscaping with permeable front fencing
 - (3) room typologies to be above 14m² (including bathrooms/ensuites) in total size;
 - (4) support the zone objectives, future development of the area, following expiry of a workforce temporary approval, in terms of land development, built form or infrastructure outcomes, and/or permanent accommodation within a walkable catchment to community activities; and
 - (5) Demonstrate significant social and/or community outcomes above those associated with a five (5) year time limited approval.



3. Need

Proposals for new workforce accommodation facilities; requests to extend approval periods for existing workforce accommodation facilities; or proposals to increase the number of beds associated with existing facilities must be accompanied by information that demonstrates the need.

Major projects that require review of workforce demands should be the catalyst for review of workforce practices. The potential for existing settlements to accommodate workers should be considered as part of the workforce model for any such project. As such, the need for additional beds must be considered against the capacity of existing settlements to meet the accommodation needs. The following provisions guide how need will be assessed:

- a. A proponent of new workforce accommodation, or an increase in the number of beds for an existing facility must demonstrate a need for the development, as part of their proposal. The need for beds must be demonstrated in the context of workforce accommodation provision across the City and in regard to the industry demand;
- b. Proponents must demonstrate liaison with the City and the evaluation of options regarding capacity in local housing and land supply markets, prior to applying for workforce accommodation facilities associated with major projects;
- c. Assertions that there is adequate demand for workforce accommodation to support business investment which are not substantiated with demonstrable demand are not accepted as the basis for demonstrating need for new workforce accommodation;
- d. Advocating for new workforce accommodation in conjunction with a reduction of workforce accommodation beds elsewhere is insufficient in itself a justification for new workforce accommodation;
- e. Evidence of occupancy, contracts or bookings may contribute to the demonstration of demand for workforce accommodation; and
- f. Assessment of workforce accommodation proposals must consider the cumulative impacts of multiple workforce accommodation developments on the sustainability and liveability of affected towns and the City.

4. Location

Workforce accommodation facilities are to be suitably located to deliver the objectives of this policy. In determining a suitable location for development, the following should be considered:

- a. Accommodation at locations that lend themselves to community integration and utilisation of local businesses;
- b. If community integration is unachievable, the planning approval will be conditioned to leverage development contributions to reinvest in community infrastructure;
- c. Remote workforce accommodation camps are considered acceptable where it can be demonstrated that it is not feasible or practicable for workers to be based in the Kalgoorlie-Boulder townsite; and



- d. Evidence of engagement with neighbouring properties has been undertaken by the proponent prior to lodgement of a development application.

5. Design

The acceptability of workforce accommodation is dependent upon standards associated with the location for which it is intended, when proposed in an urban setting, a seamless integration of a workforce accommodation facility with its surrounds is the preferred outcome.

The standard of development must be commensurate to its location. In this regard, workforce accommodation within existing or proposed urban areas must consider the standard of development appropriate to its location in the design of the facility. Design of the facility and its infrastructure must be of high quality and demonstrable with best practice standards. Typical transportable workers camp buildings and layouts will not be considered favourable by Council.

Proposals must consider the compatibility of a use or development within its setting, including the matter of amenity, character, streetscape character, scale, and integration with established community. The development design provisions applicable to workforce accommodation to be incorporated and considered as part of applications include:

- a. The development form, bulk, scale and streetscape appearance that contributes to the amenity and desired character of the surrounding area
- b. Predominant building materials and features found in the locality that are incorporated into the design form and finishes.
- c. The building features and design to include wall height and roof pitch match's surrounding buildings and conforms with the desired character.
- d. Active building frontages positioned at the street front boundary, including building height and setbacks relative to the zone and scheme objectives.
- e. The primary street setback areas shall only be used for landscaping, parking and access, unless otherwise approved by the local government.
- f. Landscaping to be provided as a minimum 2m wide strip along the street frontage.
- g. The provision of awnings to accommodation units/pods entrances and walkways
- h. Front fences shall be visually permeable, and the design, height, colour and materials used should reflect the local character.
- i. Occupant and visitor car parking facilities must be located within the street setback.
- j. Signage and advertisement devices will not be supported, unless used for information or safety purposes.
- k. Adequate safe access is to be available for parking service and waste vehicles.

6. Communal facilities and amenities

- a. Adequate provision to be made for internal occupant amenities relative to the scale of the facility and the number of rooms/beds including outdoor landscape courtyard areas,



- b. Communal outdoor landscaped areas are to be provided for occupant amenity and use; the design is to include landscaped gardens, outdoor seating, lighting, shelter, and other amenities such as outdoor dining and BBQs, to support informal social use, interaction and wellbeing,
- c. The landscape gardens to utilise local plant species where possible and be regularly maintained to a high standard, and
- d. Communal leisure and recreation indoor and outdoor facilities for occupation amenity given the regularity and frequency and associated proposals of stay at the facility.

SOCIAL IMPACT AND COMMUNITY INTEGRATION

All workforce accommodation applications are required to be accompanied by a Social Impact Assessment and Social Impact Management Plan. If the Social Impact Management Plan does not include contributions*, then other management measures need to be considered as satisfactory for the purposes of offsetting any relative net loss in community service and benefit.

Measures to counterbalance any social impact need to be considered in the context of the broader community rather than the specific locality, and detail how the measures will offset the identified affect. Contributions should address the adverse cumulative impacts of workforce accommodation on current and future generations.

In considering applications for development approval, the community impacts associated with the development must be taken into consideration. Contributions may be in the form of:

- The ceding of land for an agreed public purpose;
- Construction of infrastructure works that are to be transferred to public authorities on completion;
- Monetary contributions to acquire land, community infrastructure and/or facilities; and
- Monetary contributions to Council programs and/or services.

In accordance with Schedule 2, Part 10, Clause 78 of the Planning and Development (Local Planning Schemes) Regulations 2015 the local government may enter into an agreement in respect of a matter relating to the Scheme with any owner, occupier, or other person having an interest in land affected by this Scheme.

All workforce accommodation development applications will be presented to Council for consideration. The report will include the Social Impact Assessment, Social Impact Management Plan, and agreed outcomes with the City in relation to any negotiated contributions.

*If a proponent does not believe a contribution is warranted, the Social Impact Management Plan needs to clearly articulate in detail, and based on evidence/commitments, the reasons why they believe a contribution is not warranted so this can be considered in determining the merits of the proposal. Council's position on the need for contributions is based on the adverse cumulative impacts of workforce accommodation developments on building sustainable local communities and local economies, not just the impact of an individual workforce on community facilities and infrastructure.



RELEVANT DOCUMENTS

State Planning Policies

- State Planning Framework Policy

Other legislative documents which have potential to influence applications:

- Health (Treatment of Sewage and Disposal of Effluent and Liquid Waste) Regulations 1974
- City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder - Health Local Law 2001
- Health Act 1911
- Health (Aquatic Facilities) Regulations 2007
- City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder Local Planning Strategy
- State Planning Strategy 2050 (2014)
- Goldfields Esperance Regional Planning and Infrastructure Framework (2015)

DOCUMENT CONTROL		
Responsible department	Development and Growth	
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