

# DRAFT Temporary Workforce Accommodation Policy

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# Table of Contents

1. Policy Objective and Scope ..... 3

2. Risks being assessed ..... 3

3. Definitions ..... 3

4. Policy Statements ..... 3

5. Roles, Responsibilities and Delegations..... 5

6. Dispute Resolution..... 5

7. Related Documents ..... 6

    Legislation and Guidelines ..... 6

    Policies and Procedures ..... 6

    Other Supporting Documents..... 6

8. Version History..... 6

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# 1. Policy Objective and Scope

The objective of this Policy is to outline the expectations of Council for any proposed Temporary Workforce Accommodation (TWA) within the Muswellbrook Shire Local Government Area. This includes all developments, regardless of sector, that involve or require the use of TWA to house a temporary workforce.

## 2. Risks being assessed

- Missed opportunities for urban growth and service integration.
- Infrastructure in remote areas may burden Council with long-term costs.
- Poorly managed on-site systems may create environmental issues.
- Social, health and wellbeing of TWA residents
- Reduced chance of transitioning workers into permanent residents.
- Wet mess facilities increase safety and behaviour risks.
- Self-contained TWAs not benefiting the local economy via no local procurement.
- Poor design and landscaping can affect worker / community views and satisfaction.

## 3. Definitions

In this Policy

| Term                              | Definition   |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Council                           | Muswellbrook Shire Council   |
| Temporary Workforce Accommodation | As defined in the 'Guidelines for Construction Workers Accommodation' (DPHI, Dec 2024) |

## 4. Policy Statements

Muswellbrook Shire Council supports TWA that delivers long-lasting benefits to the Shire. Through this Policy, Council will ensure TWAs integrate positively with existing communities and minimise adverse impacts on Council infrastructure and services

### 4.1 Location:

Council prefers TWA to be within or near existing urban areas and villages to ensure a positive and long-lasting legacy for these communities. This approach would:

- Allow infrastructure to be appropriately converted and used for future and permanent residential or visitor accommodation or employment generating activities;
- Allow for the natural expansion of urban areas and villages after decommissioning of accommodation;

- Ensure there are no unreasonable impacts to Council on extending infrastructure to service new development in non-serviced areas;
- allow workers to integrate into the community rather than being isolated in a rural area, which in turn may result in some of the temporary workforce becoming permanent residents;
- Allow a proportion of purchases to be made locally to benefit the community.

## **4.2 Infrastructure – Hard**

sewer, water, power, digital:

4.2.1 The preferred option is that infrastructure is provided by extension from existing serviced sites/areas and the infrastructure will remain for longer term community benefit (e.g. to enable standard subdivision of land, industrial development or provision of tourist and visitor accommodation) after the TWA use ceases;

4.2.2 If the preferred option cannot be delivered, the proponent will need to demonstrate how on-site water supply systems (including impact on council potable water processing capacity) and on-site sewerage will be managed.

4.2.3 TWA are to be designed to capture stormwater from hard stand areas and roof areas for use for non-potable purposes.

4.2.4 TWA are to incorporate on-site waste management system that separates waste into individual streams (e.g. general waste, cardboard/paper, food/organics, recyclables), with all waste to be transported to the Council-owned and operated waste facility in accordance with Council requirements;

4.2.5 TWA are to be provided with reliable internet connectivity to ensure that the temporary workforce remains connected with their families and communities, and thereby support their overall well-being;

## **4.3 Infrastructure – social, health and wellbeing**

4.3.1 ‘Dry mess’ facilities are supported to improve safety and encourage use of local hospitality venues.

4.3.2 ‘Wet mess’ will not be accepted by Council;

4.3.3 Kitchen supplies, equipment, materials, and food are to be procured from local suppliers;

4.3.4 Laundry services are to be procured from local suppliers

4.3.5 Agreements are to be made with local medical centres as preferred health care providers for TWA residents, to enable the medical centres to plan for increased staffing

4.3.6 Shuttle buses should be provided to transport workers between the TWA and work sites and between TWA and hospitality, recreation and health premises in nearby urban areas;

4.3.7 Partnerships are to be made with local recreation providers (e.g., tennis, basketball, and soccer facilities) and local businesses for access and memberships;

4.3.8 To encourage spending and integration into the local community, the following is not encouraged by Council as part of TWA unless the TWA is planned to become permanent residential or visitor accommodation:

- Recreation buildings; and
- Training rooms and gymnasiums.

#### 4.4 Other matters

4.4.1 TWA should include opportunities for sharing, re-use and/or repurposing of TWAs between projects and/or for legacy uses;

4.4.2 TWA should be designed to create an attractive village atmosphere, particularly where the TWA is intended to become permanent residential or visitor accommodation; and

4.4.3 Landscaping to achieve an appealing outlook for workers and the Muswellbrook community with the use of native species, sourced from local suppliers.

4.4.4 TWA should be designed to include passive energy principles, stormwater capture and other sustainable building design approaches.

4.4.5 Council may seek a Planning Agreement to offset the broader impacts from the development, including social programs, headworks (water and sewer), waste management, Rural Fire Service (RFS) support, and road maintenance or upgrades.

## 5. Roles, Responsibilities and Delegations

| Role                                 | Responsibility   |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| Council                              | Endorses the Policy and considers any substantial variations from the Policy.  |
| General Manager                      | Oversees implementation of the Policy and delegates responsibilities to relevant Staff as appropriate.   |
| Director of Planning and Environment | Ensures TWA proposals are considered in accordance with the Policy and relevant planning instruments.  |
| Development Coordinator              | Undertake the assessment of TWA-related local Development Applications, ensuring consistency with the Policy and relevant legislation.                             |
| Environmental Planning Officer       | Provides policy interpretation and updates the Policy as required.<br>Prepare responses to State Significant Development TWA applications in line with the Policy. |
| Infrastructure Team                  | Reviews servicing requirements for TWAs including road access, water, sewer, and drainage.   |
| Environmental Health Officer         | Reviews and assesses on-site sewage and waste management proposals for compliance with environmental health standards.   |

## 6. Dispute Resolution

The General Manager is the interpreter of this Policy and shall be the sole arbiter in respect to the application of this Policy.

# 7. Related Documents

## Legislation and Guidelines

- Guidelines for Construction Workers Accommodation (DPHI, Dec 2024)
- State Environmental Planning Policy (Housing) 2021
- NSW Work Health and Safety Act 2011

## Policies and Procedures

- Nil.

## Other Supporting Documents

- Muswellbrook Shire Council Community Strategic Plan
- Muswellbrook Shire Council Local Housing Strategy 2024
- On-Site Sewage Management Strategy

# 8. Version History

This section identifies authors who reviewed the Policy and the date that it became effective.

| V. | Date       | Modified by                          | Amendments/Previous adoption details |
|----|------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. | 24/04/2025 | Director of Environment and Planning | Draft Policy                         |

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