



CHANGES TO PUBLIC MEETINGS, HEARINGS DUE TO COVID-19 (CORONAVIRUS) GUIDANCE

19 March 2020

Due to the strict protocols in place around public gatherings and social distancing in response to the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic, the Independent Planning Commission NSW is introducing changes to its public meetings and public hearings, effective immediately and until further notice.

Public meetings

The Commission will not schedule new public meetings, and all planned public meetings will be cancelled to minimise risk to participants. Anyone who has registered to speak at an upcoming meeting will be contacted by the Commission to advise how they can have their say.

The Commission instead encourages interested individuals and groups to have their say on State significant development applications by way of written submission. Written submissions are weighted the same as spoken submissions and will be carefully considered by the Commission as part of its decision-making process.

Public hearings

The Commission has been asked by the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces to conduct public hearings in relation to the carrying out of three State significant development projects: Vickery Extension Project; Narrabri Gas; and McPhillamys Gold Mine.

The Commission is aware of the significant community interest in these projects and is committed to ensuring interested individuals and groups can have their say on issues important to them. We are also committed to ensuring these hearings are fair, open and transparent.

Public health and safety is our first and foremost priority. We will be guided by the latest advice from the Australian Department of Health and NSW Health in determining in what format our public hearings should proceed.

The Commission will examine all options, including the use of tele- and/or video-conferencing and live-streaming technologies; holding a hearing with a strict cap on participants; adopting social distancing measures; or a combination of the above.

Again, written submissions are weighed the same as spoken submissions and submissions from interested individuals and groups will be considered carefully by the Commission.

These are challenging times and the Commission appreciates your patience as it works through these issues. We will provide more information in due course.

(END OF STATEMENT)