



## Waverley Council

# Community Engagement Strategy 2017–2020

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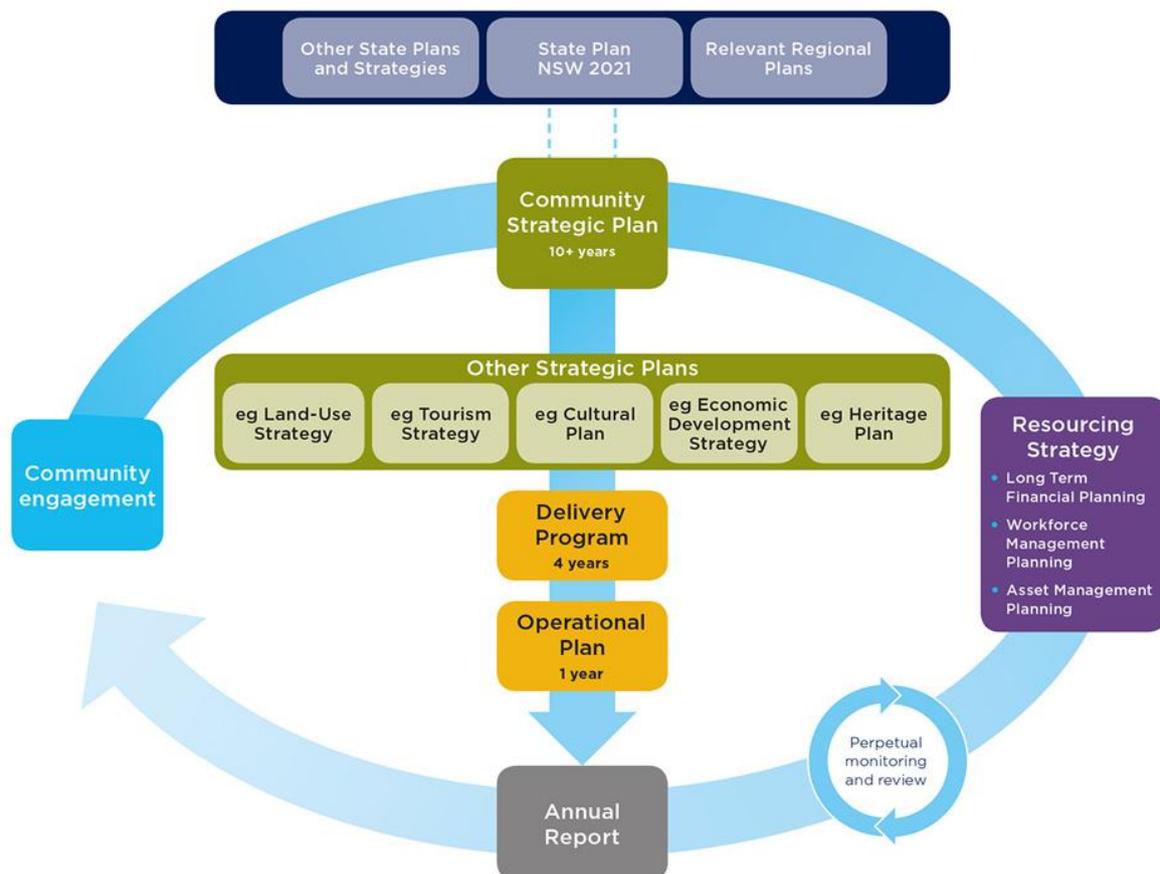
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## Introduction

The Local Government Act states that councils are required to establish and implement a Community Engagement Strategy to ensure the community are able to contribute to Council decision-making.

This Community Engagement Strategy was developed in accordance with Council's Integrated Planning and Reporting framework. The information received from the community will inform Council's key strategic documents as outlined below:



This strategy outlines the ways in which Council will receive input and involve the community in Council decision making, and ensure all stakeholders can have their say. This process expands Council's capacity to make well-informed and sustainable decisions that are acceptable to stakeholders.



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## Objectives

- To provide opportunities for our community to feedback on all strategies and plans developed by Council
- Create avenues for long term community engagement in Council decision making
- Enable the community to provide informed feedback and make informed decisions
- Build strong relationships between Council and the community

## Definitions

Community Refers to all stakeholders, audiences, community groups, businesses, other than Councillors and Council staff

## The purpose of this Strategy

Section 402A of the Local Government Act states:

A Council must establish and implement a strategy for engagement with the local community (called its Community Engagement Strategy) when developing its plan, policies and programs and for the purpose of determining its activities (other than routine administrative matters).

Council has a responsibility to work with our community to provide the services, infrastructure, programs and improvements they want and need. By working together, we can ensure we have agreed Council priorities.

As such, we need to ensure the following:

- The community has opportunity to provide input into decisions, plans and strategies
- Council is providing the services the community needs
- The community has avenues to be connected and involved in public life
- Council is able to work with the community to change behaviour (ie. sustainability)

In summary, community engagement is about decision making, relationship development and capacity building.

By incorporating a range of perspectives, we can create solutions that improve the quality of decision making and the sustainability of outcomes.



## Guiding Principles

### *Social Justice Principles*

Our strategy is guided by the principles of social justice, which are:

- **Equity**  
There should be fairness in the distribution of resources, particularly for those in need. Therefore, the planning process should take particular care to involve and protect the interests of people in vulnerable circumstances. The equity implications of proposed activities include the impact on community well-being as well as who pays and who benefits.
- **Access**  
All people should have fair access to economic resources, services, and rights essential to improving their quality of life. All residents should be able to get to and use public facilities and services regardless of their social and economic circumstances.
- **Participation**  
All people should have the maximum opportunity to genuinely participate in decisions which affect their lives. This involves a two way flow of views and information, generally with a focus on decision making.
- **Rights**  
Equality of rights should be established and promoted. Opportunities should be provided for positive participation to accommodate linguistic, cultural and religious diversity within the local government area. Discriminatory practices should be avoided and information should be provided to and collected from all sections of the community.

## Our Community

We have a responsibility for Council decision making to involve those who will be affected by the decision. Broadly, our community can be categorised as:

- ratepayers
- residents
- business owners
- visitors
- government agencies
- community/non-profit agencies

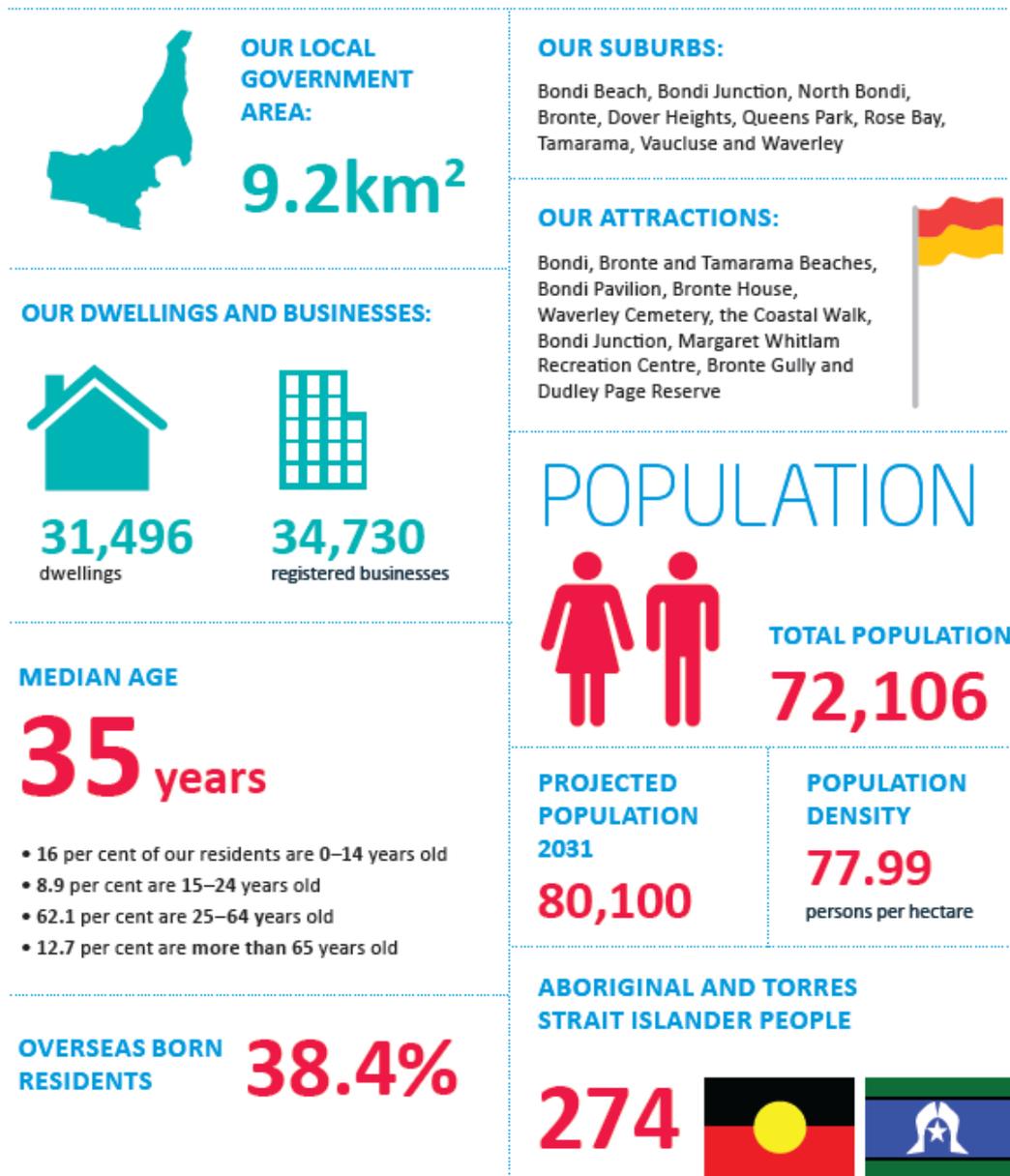
Within these groups, we have a diverse range of interests including, but not limited to arts, environment, sport, recreation, community services and schools.

For all Council consultations, we aim to target those community groups relevant to the project.

One of the important ways that Council engages with the community is through the Precincts and Combined Precincts Committee.

We will also ensure engagement activities are planned with consideration given to our community demographics (outlined below) as well as age, accessibility, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.

*2016 Community Demographics*





## LANGUAGES

68.8 per cent of us speak English at home while 25.7 per cent speak a language other than English

Russian is spoken by 2.2 per cent of our residents, 2.1 per cent speak Spanish, 1.9 per cent Portuguese, 1.8 per cent French and 1.7 per cent Italian

## EDUCATION

### NUMBER OF SCHOOLS

**17** (including both primary and secondary)

73 per cent of our residents aged over 15 years have completed year 12 schooling or equivalent

39.5 per cent of our residents aged over 15 years have a Bachelor or higher degree compared to 24.1 per cent for Greater Sydney

20 per cent of young people aged 15–24 years attended an educational institution including high school and/or a higher education facility, such as TAFE or university



### JEWISH COMMUNITY

Waverley's Jewish community of

**10,076**

residents makes up 15.1 percent of our total population

## HOUSING

### AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZE

 **2.3** people

## ECONOMY



**\$4.36 billion**  
gross regional product

More than  
**27,546**  
jobs in Waverley

### RENTING HOUSEHOLDS

**43%**

### MEDIAN WEEKLY RENT

**\$620**

### MEDIAN TOTAL INCOME/WEEK

for Waverley families in 2011 was

**\$2,300**

### SINGLE PERSON HOUSEHOLDS

**27.7%**



### HIGH EMPLOYMENT SECTORS

Retail trade, Healthcare and Social Assistance, Accommodation and Food Services, Education and Training, and Professional Scientific and Technical Services.

**79.9%** of Waverley properties are connected to the internet



## Implementation Avenues

Waverley Council follows the IAP2 model for community engagement. This can be summarised as follows:

<i>Level of engagement</i>	<i>Process</i>	<i>Example Methods</i>
<b>INFORM (Tell)</b> <b>2–6 weeks</b>	One-way communication providing balanced and objective information to assist understanding about something that is going to happen or has happened. This level of engagement does not allow for community input or feedback.	Letterbox drops Website updates Council page in the Wentworth Courier Media releases
<b>CONSULT (Check direction)</b> <b>6–10 weeks</b>	Two-way communications designed to obtain public feedback about ideas on rationale, alternatives and proposals to inform decision making	Surveys Have Your Say Days on-site Have Your Say Waverley website
<b>INVOLVE (Seek ideas)</b> <b>10–16 weeks</b>	Participatory process designed to help identify issues and views to ensure that concerns and aspirations are understood and considered prior to decision making.	Precinct Committee Meetings Design thinking workshops
<b>COLLABORATE (Work together)</b> <b>16+ weeks</b>	Working together to develop understanding of all issues and interests to work out alternatives and identify preferred solutions	Committees Meetings Site visits
<b>EMPOWER (community-led)</b> <b>Ongoing</b>	Providing opportunities and resources for communities to contribute to solutions by valuing local talents and skills and acknowledging their capacity to be decision-makers in their own lives.	Small Grants Program Community Gardens Blue Bondi Green

We will complement the current regime of engagement activities, including a range of existing advisory committees, and precinct groups.

Consultations will include both general and targeted engagement activities to ensure a mix of community members are reached and is representative of the Waverley community.

### *Office of Local Government considerations*

When planning community engagement, Council will also take into consideration best practice guidelines from the Office of Local Government, as follows:

- that the community engagement process engages other partners for the delivery of the Community Strategic Plan strategies. This may be state agencies, the business community, NGOs, community groups, or individuals. This might translate to community partners being

named in the Community Strategic Plan or as partners in the Delivery Program (with their agreement) as being responsible for specific actions or activities

- community engagement is undertaken so that participants have sufficient information to make informed input into the planning process. This may include the preparation of brief discussion papers or options papers that participants have access to prior to or during engagement activities
- providing opportunities for interested stakeholders and community members to be part of a prioritisation process – turning the long ‘wish list’ into a manageable shortlist
- community engagement activities provide opportunities for participants to understand the financial and other resource (asset/human) consequences of pursuing the short-listed ‘wishes’. It will also consider which other community partners may be responsible for delivery on the community’s goals.



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## Evaluation

Council will use a variety of methods to evaluate our engagement strategy. These include:

- Assessment of relevancy of engagement methods appropriate to the target group
- Verbal and written feedback from all stakeholders on the effectiveness of the engagement activities
- Participation levels in engagement activities (number of participants)
- Achieve the identified engagement objectives within this strategy
- Inclusive community representation
- Level of qualitative and quantitative information collected
- Periodic surveys to determine how we are tracking on reaching our vision, and community engagement techniques.

These evaluation results will be used to improve future engagement strategies and methods.

## Review

This Strategy will be reviewed as part of new iteration of the Waverley Community Plan in line with the legislative requirements. Next review scheduled for October 2020.