

Community Engagement Strategy 2023



WAVERLEY
COUNCIL

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Amendment Description	Establishment of this Community Engagement Strategy (CES)

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Acknowledgement of Country

Waverley Council acknowledges the Bidjigal, Birrabirragal and Gadigal people, who traditionally occupied the Sydney Coast, and we pay respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders both past and present.

Our vision for reconciliation is for Waverley to be a vibrant, resilient, caring, and inclusive community where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples:

- Practice and celebrate their culture and heritage proudly
- Are honoured for their survival and resilience, and supported to continue to overcome adversity
- Are respected and acknowledged as First Nations peoples with the right to determine their own futures

Council will continue to value and protect our environment with respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' intrinsic relationship with the land and waters.



1

The Community Engagement Strategy



The Community Engagement Strategy (CES) outlines how and when Waverley Council will engage on Council decision-making and projects, including strategic planning matters and development applications (DAs). It outlines principles, processes, and techniques for community engagement. The CES determines who Council will engage with, when Council will engage, and how Council will engage our community.

Community engagement and community voice is central to decision-making. The International Association for Public Participation principles

are embedded in the CES, and consultation will be central to the implementation of programs and projects. The communication channels used will continually be monitored and assessed for opportunities to improve and maintain two-way conversation.

The CES is a Council-adopted strategy prepared as a requirement under Section 402(A) of the Local Government Act 1993, the Integrated Planning & Reporting Framework, and it incorporates Council's Community Participation Plan, which is required under Division 2.6 and Schedule 1 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979.

What is community engagement and why is it important?

Community engagement is the process of involving the community in decisions that affect them and the direction of Council.

Community engagement:

- Builds community confidence in Council
- Provides multiple opportunities for community members to have a say in decisions that affect them
- Creates a shared sense of purpose, direction, and understanding of the need to deliver infrastructure and services
- Develops relationships and partnerships between Council and the community
- Leads to shared understanding of community needs, aspirations, and priorities

Statement of commitment

Waverley Council is committed to engaging with the community in an inclusive, transparent, and accountable way, to make fair and equitable decisions that reflect community needs.

Legislative requirements

Community engagement is required by State Government legislation, including the Local Government Act 1993 and the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979. Under Section 402(A) of the Local Government Act 1993:

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

The Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979 (EP&A Act) requires all planning authorities, including Council, to outline how and when the community will be engaged across planning functions like policy making and development assessment.

There are statutory timeframes for the public exhibition of planning related documents and applications including planning proposals, planning agreements, and development applications. This CES has been developed in accordance with the requirements under the EP&A Act.

Other legislation that requires Council to run community engagement include:



- Crown Lands Management Act 2016
- Roads Act 1993
- Multicultural NSW Act 2000
- Disability Inclusion Act 2014
- Children’s Guardian Act 2019

The Office of Local Government (OLG) has guidelines specifying the CES should be reviewed and adopted by council every four years. This document aligns with the OLG guidelines and standards.

Council’s use and exhibition of planning documents is consistent with section 10.14 of the EP&A Act.

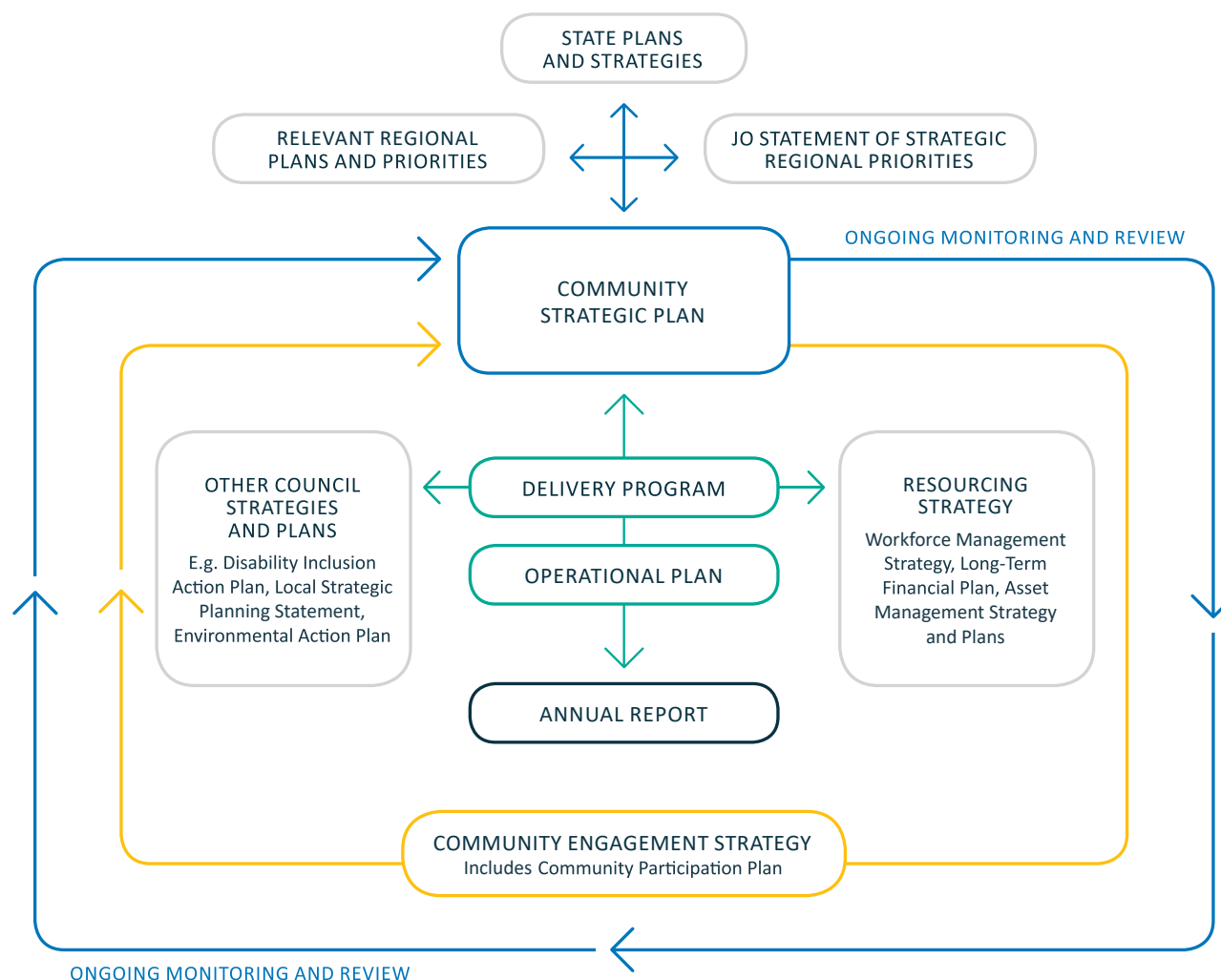
How this links to our strategic framework

All councils are required to have a Community Strategic Plan to set long-term goals and outcomes. This plan, along with a Long-term Financial Plan and Delivery Program, ensures local needs are met. These documents with other mechanisms, including a CES, make up the Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) framework.

This CES sits within Council's suite of strategic documents that include:

- Local Strategic Planning Statement (20 years)
- Community Strategic Plan (10 years)
- Delivery Program (4 years)
- Operational Plan (1 year)
- Resourcing Strategy

Figure 1: Integrated Planning and Reporting strategic framework





Reviewing the Community Engagement Strategy

The 2020 CES and 2019 CPP were developed following consultation with the Waverley community and Councillors. This CES is the combination of those two documents, created to streamline the information provided.

The draft CES was endorsed by Council for public exhibition on 16 May 2023.

The draft CES was publicly exhibited from 17 May 2023 to 14 June 2023.

The final version of this CES was adopted by Council on 18 July 2023 and came into effect on 21 August 2023.

It is due for review by March 2027.

Waverley Council's Community Engagement Principles

The CES has been developed using Council's Community Engagement Principles which came from consultation with the community, and the OLG identified social justice principles, which underpin Council strategies.

1. Build relationships

We will engage in an honest, open, and respectful way to build strong relationships and trust within our community.

2. Right to be involved

We believe that our community has a right to be involved in decisions that affect them. We are committed to ensuring those who are impacted by or have an interest in a decision or initiative of Council, have fair and equitable access to participate in the decision-making process.

3. Accessible and inclusive

Information and engagement activities will be offered in a range of formats to enable fair and equal access to participation.



4. Timely

We will engage early enough for participation to be meaningful. We will provide enough time for the community to provide input.

5. Tailored

We will use a range of engagement and communication methods that suit the purpose of the project to reach identified stakeholders. The level of influence of stakeholders and the community will be appropriate for the nature, complexity, and level of impact of the decision being made.

6. Transparent and accountable

We will provide all relevant information to ensure the community can participate in engagement activities in a meaningful way. We will report back to participants on how their input affected the final decision or outcome.

7. Representative

We will make every effort to notify stakeholders and the community of Council engagement to ensure a representative sample of the community is able to participate.

Social Justice Principles

Equity

There should be fairness in decision-making, prioritisation and allocation of resources, particularly for those in need. Everyone should have a fair opportunity to participate in the future of the community.

Access

Everyone should have fair access to services, resources, and opportunities to improve their quality of life.

Rights

Equal rights should be established and promoted, with opportunities provided for people from diverse linguistic, cultural, and religious backgrounds to participate in community life.

Participation

Everyone should have the maximum opportunity to genuinely participate in decisions which affect their lives.

2

Our community

Waverley facts



Population

68,605



32,769

Dwellings



17

Schools



34,000

Registered businesses

More than

29,460

jobs in Waverley



The people of Waverley



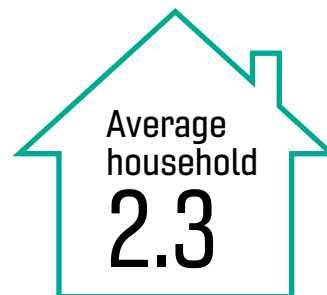
Median age

35YRS



16%

of residents
identify as Jewish



Average
household

2.3



29.9%

of households
are single people

47.1%
of residents are
overseas born



Top 5 countries:



UK



South Africa



New Zealand



Brazil



USA

27.2%

speak a language
other than English
at home

Top 5 Languages:



Spanish



Russian



French



Portuguese



Italian



24.4%

of households are
couples with children



Who do we engage with?

Identifying and understanding key stakeholders is vital to the community engagement process. Stakeholders are people who will be impacted by or have an interest in a decision. Council aims to reach those who are relevant to the project as well as the broader community wherever possible.

Stakeholders can be identified as place-based (located in a specific geographic area) such as a particular site, street, or neighbourhood. They may share a particular interest such as local businesses, or a similar characteristic, belief, or life experience such as young people, people living with a disability, or First Nations peoples. We also try to consider our future communities and those who can't represent themselves.

In seeking a range of perspectives, values, needs and ideas, our engagement process ensures that the community is informed about projects, plans and initiatives.

Our stakeholders

Our stakeholders include but are not limited to:

- Residents
- Ratepayers
- Councillors
- Interest groups
- Schools
- Council workers
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- Children, young people and families
- LGBTQIA+ community
- People with disability
- Older people
- Advisory and Precinct Committee members
- Culturally diverse community members
- State and federal members of parliament
- Chamber of Commerce
- NSW Government agencies
- Businesses



Internal and external committees and advisory committees

Council has a range of meeting and group structures to facilitate face to face engagement and ongoing collaboration on specific subject matters with both internal and external representatives.

This includes Advisory Committees, Precinct Committees and Have Your Say pop-ups. Waverley Council is also a member of multiple community and service provider forums.

Precinct Committees

Waverley Council has supported local Precinct Committees since 1987. Precincts are committees

of residents who meet regularly to discuss matters of concern in their local area. These meetings are typically held monthly or every second month and are run by a volunteer convenor elected by residents. Council supports Precincts by sharing information, providing funding, and responding to motions passed at their meetings.

Advisory and consultative committees

Council convenes and supports several advisory and consultative committees. These committees tackle broad local issues and provide a forum for discussion for Council representatives, local agencies, and community members.

These include:

- Access and Inclusion Advisory Panel
- Arts and Culture Advisory Committee
- Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee

- Housing Advisory Committee
- Multicultural Advisory Committee
- Public Art Committee
- Reconciliation Action Plan Committee
- Sustainability Expert Advisory Panel
- Waverley Cycling Advisory Committee

Council membership on external committees

There are Council representatives on the Eastern Regional LG Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Forum, the NSW Public Libraries Association, Waverley Traffic Committee, the Southern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils, and the Sydney Coastal Councils group.

Special committees

Council convenes a range of interest area, issue or project based special committees. Examples are the Waverley Innovation and Knowledge Hub Steering Group and the NIB Advisory Group.

External decision-making authorities

As required by the EP&A Act, Council supports the Sydney Eastern City Planning Panel and Waverley Local Planning Panel to make planning decisions in Waverley.

3

Barriers to participation



Council recognises that some people face barriers to participating. It is our responsibility to make the engagement process as accessible and inclusive as possible. We need to ensure that less powerful voices and groups are engaged and not marginalised.

We acknowledge that there are a range of factors that may affect an individual's ability to participate including:

- Lack of trust in government
- Language
- Digital literacy
- Location and accessibility
- Mental or physical health issues
- Physical or intellectual disability
- Time constraints

The actions in this strategy address and reduce some of the barriers, in order to make Council's engagement practices more accessible and inclusive.

4


Determining appropriate community engagement

Council activities can have potential, real, or perceived impacts which affect groups and individuals in different ways. Some projects and initiatives require more community input than others.

It is critical to develop a balanced approach between the demands for community consultation, time and resources available, significance of an issue for the community, and level of influence the community has on a decision.

Council uses the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) Spectrum of Public Participation to determine the level of engagement and the types of consultation activities that will be employed. We determine participation levels for each community engagement program so that both Council and the community clearly understand their roles and what Council will do with the feedback.

Figure 2: Public participation spectrum (adapted from IAP2 Public Participation Spectrum)



	Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Empower
Public participation goal	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision making in the hands of the public.
Promise to the public	"We will keep you informed."	"We will listen to and acknowledge your concerns."	"We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the decisions made."	"We will look to you for advice and innovation and incorporate this in decisions as much as possible."	"We will implement what you decide."



How do we engage?

The resources, time and depth of an engagement will depend on the level of impact and significance of an activity. Council will engage with the community when:

- The decision will impact on the social landscape, economy, or natural or built environment
- The community has shown an interest in consultation
- There are some variables in the project that the community could provide guidance on
- Council resolves to consult with the community
- There is a need or a statutory obligation to do so

When we don't consult

There are some instances where the community and stakeholders may not be involved in a decision-making process. This may include operational matters where public input is not able to influence an activity or where Council is legally or contractually obligated to take certain action. It may also include matters where consultation or research has already occurred, and further engagement is not considered necessary. Despite this, Council will keep the community informed wherever possible.

In designing and delivering community engagement, Council will ensure the selected process is fit for purpose and considers the level of impact of the project.

How does the community want to be engaged?

Our community has told us that they want opportunities to engage with Council decision-making, and ensure input is listened to and acted on where appropriate. They want the process to be clear and for Council to follow up after consultations (close the loop).

The community has requested a clear, simple and user-friendly Have Your Say platform (Waverley Council's online engagement portal) as well as in-person and email communication options.



To achieve this among other activities, Council will conduct the following face to face engagement with our community ([see section 7](#) for the full actions to improve community engagement):

- One pop-up Have Your Say Day in each Ward annually
- Workshops and information sessions held at Precinct Committee Meetings

The community has also asked for a clear explanation of the DA and Planning process and how they can better engage with private developers/proponents.

As a minimum, Council will implement the following (see [section 7](#) for actions to improve community engagement):

- Develop fact sheets for the community to explain the overall application submission process

Other engagement tactics used will depend on the project type and are detailed in our community engagement matrix in [section 4](#). These could include focus groups, workshops, and pop-ups.

External planning processes and decisions

The Department of Planning and Environment and other government agencies develop planning related policies and assess development applications that may affect the Waverley community. These include:

- New or amendments to existing State Environmental Planning Policies
- Assessment of State significant development, including new or alterations to existing educational institutions



For these external planning processes and decisions there is no requirement that Council carries out community engagement. However, we may choose to keep the community informed via our Have Your Say or newsletter updates.

Council will consider the level of impact when determining the engagement program.

Definition of higher impact

Matters that have a higher impact across the entire of Waverley Council area or on particular community groups, or that have the potential for high level interest or controversy, will be considered 'higher impact'. The consultation techniques will be more substantial. Examples include LGA-wide strategies or programs, Special Rate Variations, annual budgets and operational plans, and long-term planning policies.

Definition of lower impact

Matters that involve smaller changes or improvements at a localised level, which are deemed low risk, or are likely to have limited controversy will be considered 'lower impact'. Council will employ appropriate consultation techniques to communicate with those most affected. Examples include proposed upgrades to local parks, playgrounds and buildings, streetscape changes and local traffic matters.

It is important to note, there will be circumstances where Council may not be able to consult with the community, including when:

- The proposal does not require public exhibition or notification in accordance with legislation
- The community has already had input through prior engagement
- The replacement item is like for like, in the same location, and needs to be replaced quickly
- Council is responding to an emergency and immediate action is required to rectify an issue



Community engagement matrix

Project type	Impact	Suggested engagement level	Min. engagement period	Suggested communication	Suggested engagement activities
Council plans and strategies This includes non-legislated plans, policies, and strategies such as plans of management, studies, and informing strategies.	Higher impact	Consult Involve Collaborate	28 days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online engagement portal • Written notice • Site notice • Notification of impacted stakeholders • Exhibition of documents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written submissions • Online survey • Workshops • Pop-up stalls • Drop-in sessions • Webinar Q&A
	Lower impact	Inform Consult	28 days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online engagement portal • Notification of impacted stakeholders • Exhibition of documents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written submissions • Online survey

Project type	Impact	Suggested engagement level	Min. engagement period	Suggested communication	Suggested engagement activities
Infrastructure projects This includes Council construction or renewal of community facilities, buildings, parks, and playgrounds. <i>For projects with like for like replacements, community engagement will be project notification only.</i>	Higher impact	Consult Involve Collaborate	28 days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online engagement portal • Site notice • Notification of impacted stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written submissions • Online survey • Workshops • Pop-up stalls • Drop-in sessions • Specific precinct presentation
	Lower impact	Inform	28 days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online engagement portal • Notification of impacted stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written submissions • Online survey • Workshops • Pop-up stalls • Drop-in sessions • Specific precinct presentation
Community services This includes Council projects relating to Council service levels, change of use of a location, or introduction or modification to a Council supplied community service. For example, a change to waste collection frequency.	Higher impact	Consult Involve Collaborate	42 days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online engagement portal • Notification of impacted stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written submissions • Online survey • Workshops • Pop-up stalls • Precinct workshop
	Lower impact	Inform	28 days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online engagement portal • Notification of impacted stakeholders • Physical exhibition of documents in Council venues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Precinct workshop

Project type	Impact	Suggested engagement level	Min. engagement period	Suggested communication	Suggested engagement activities
Local transport and traffic matters This includes road closures, parking changes, and creation or amendment of Resident Parking Schemes.	Higher impact	Consult Involve Collaborate	28 days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online engagement portal • Site notice • Notification of impacted stakeholders • Reported to Traffic Committee (including publishing agenda and resolution online) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written submissions • Online survey
	Lower impact	Inform	–	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reported to Traffic Committee (including publishing agenda and resolution online) • Notification of impacted stakeholders 	–
Legislated plans and other matters For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Engagement Strategy • Planning proposals • Development control plans • Developer contribution plans • Planning agreements • Special actions • Local Strategic Planning Statement 	Higher impact (new documents)	Consult Involve Collaborate	42 days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online engagement portal • Written notice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written submissions • Online survey • Pop-up stalls • Drop-in sessions • Workshops • Specific precinct presentation • Online workshop opportunity (either precinct or separate)
	Lower impact (amendments to existing documents)	Inform Consult	28 days <i>VPA Letters of Offer to be exhibited for the same period of time as the DA</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online engagement portal • Notification of impacted stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written submissions

Project type	Impact	Suggested engagement level	Min. engagement period	Suggested communication	Suggested engagement activities
Development Applications (DAs) Local and Regional development applications, modification applications, and review applications that require approval.	Type A*	Inform	14 days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website notice • Written notice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written submissions
	Type B*	Consult	21 days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website notice • Written notice • Site notice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written submissions
	Type C*	Consult	28 days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website notice • Written notice • Site notice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written submissions
Applications for Designated Development	Higher impact	Inform Consult	28 days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website notice • Written notice 	–
Applications for Integrated or Threatened Species Development	Higher impact	Inform Consult	28 days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website notice • Written notice 	–
Environment impact statements obtained under Division 5.1	Higher impact	Inform Consult	30 days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website notice 	–

Notes and clarifications on the matrix:

- Timeframes are in calendar days and include weekends
- Notification of stakeholders means contacting them in a way we have identified they will be reached – e.g. via letter, email, phone call, business drop in, social media post or e-newsletter
- Some of the consultations may have multiple rounds of engagement
- If the exhibition period is due to close on a weekend or a public holiday, Council may extend the exhibition to finish on the first available workday
- The period between 20 December and 10 January (inclusive) is excluded from the calculation of a period of public exhibition. This timeframe is consistent with clause 16, Schedule 1 of the EP&A Act
- Where an Act or Regulation mandates a longer minimum exhibition period than listed in this policy, then the Act or Regulation will take precedence
- Council will consider all submissions received within the exhibition period. Late submissions will only be considered in extenuating circumstances, and at the discretion of the Council officer assessing the proposal
- Residential Parking Schemes are implemented if a majority of residents within a proposed area support its introduction
- Applications for State significant development and State significant infrastructure are exhibited by the NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment
- Exempt and complying development is separately defined under the Act and does not currently provide for community input. However, neighbours must be advised of certain complying developments in accordance with Clause 134 of the EP&A Regulation 2021

5

Requirements for notification for development related matters

This section details the consultation tools and techniques used for:

- Local and regional development applications
- Applications to modify an existing consent
- Applications to review a determination

The type of notification required for DAs depends on the land use zone as well as the type and scale of the development and varies depending on the proposed use. There are three types of public exhibition procedures with associated minimum mandatory notification and advertising requirements.

Types of development and notification

Type A – 14 days website and written notice

Applications that may impact adjoining/ neighbouring sites but are unlikely to have adverse impacts on the broader community. These applications require a written notice to be sent to specified persons likely to be affected as well as publishing on our website.

Type B – 21 days website, written notice, and a site notice

Applications that may have impacts on the broader community. These applications require written notices, a site notice, and website notice.

Type C – 28 days website, written notice, and site notice

Applications that may have impacts on the broader community and have a legislative requirement to be notified for 28 days. These applications require written notices and site notices. All council-related development applications need to be publicly exhibited for at least 28 days.



Development application advertising and notification requirements

Single/small-scale residential	
Dwelling houses and dual occupancies – alterations, additions, and new buildings, whether attached, semi-detached or detached	A
Multi-residential	
Alterations and additions to multi dwelling housing, mixed use development, residential flat buildings, shop top housing, seniors housing, or housing for people with a disability	A
New multi dwelling housing, mixed use development, residential flat buildings, shop top housing, seniors housing or housing for people with a disability	B

Commercial – accommodation	
Bed & breakfast establishment	A
Alterations and additions to boarding house/group home	A
New boarding house/group home	B
Alterations and additions to backpacker accommodation/hostel	A
New backpacker accommodation/hostel	B
Alterations and additions to hotel/motel/serviced apartment	A
New hotel/motel/serviced apartment	B
Commercial – retail (selling products)	
Footpath seating for restaurants/cafes and/or occupation of footpaths	A
Change of use	A
Alterations and additions to bulky goods premises	A
New bulky goods premises	B

Commercial – business (selling services)	
Childcare centre	A
Community facility	A
Educational establishment	A
Health consulting rooms	A
Home-based childcare	A
Home business/industry	A
Medical centre	A
Alterations and additions to function centre	A
New function centre	B
Alterations and additions to restricted premises	A
New restricted premises	B
Alterations and additions to sex services premises	A
New sex services premises	B

Heritage	
Heritage conservation areas or minor work to heritage listed sites – all categories of development except change of use and footpath seating	A
Heritage listed sites (excluding minor works) – all categories of development except change of use and footpath seating	B
Other	
Amended plans	A
Any building or activity which in opinion of Council would detrimentally affect owners or occupiers of nearby land	A
Signage	A
Subdivision (Torrens Title) and strata subdivision (except new buildings not yet occupied)	A
Alterations and additions to place of public worship	A
New place of public worship	B
Road reservation/widening	B
Council-related application	C
Designated development	C
Planning agreement	C
Integrated development	C



Exempt and complying developments

There are some types of works that require no approval or notification from Waverley Council. For more information, visit [Planning NSW](#).

These may include, but are not limited to:

- Exempt and complying applications like an internal fit out of a building in a business or industrial zone, or internal alterations to a dwelling or associated outbuilding (excluding heritage items)
- Property boundary adjustment
- Strata and/or stratum subdivision

- Applications that have insufficient information and are refused for that reason
- Tree works not affecting adjoining properties
- Any other development which in the opinion of a senior Council planning officer is of minimal environmental impact or ancillary in nature; and is not likely to result in any adverse impacts on the broader community or adjoining and neighbouring premises

6

Process to determine the extent of notification

This section details the procedures for written notices, published notices, and site notices for development-related matters.

Council will notify the community in line with the [community engagement matrix](#) when a DA is submitted and:

- The proposed development impacts: loss of views or privacy, overshadowing, noise generation, visual bulk, hours and type of use, traffic and parking impacts
- Any instance that the Council officer deems notification of a given DA is appropriate and required

Written notice procedures

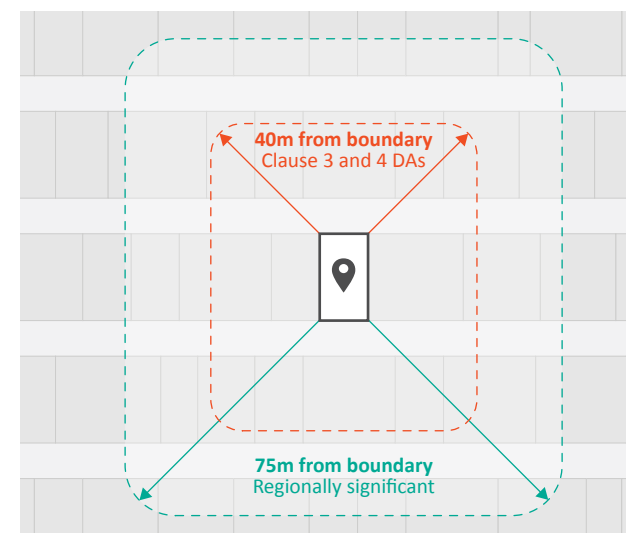
Written notice involves letters being sent by email or standard mail to all properties (owners and tenants), according to Council's records, affected by the proposal. In some cases, written notices will be sent to the owner/occupant of any other property that (in the opinion of the Council officer) may be affected by the proposal.

Council will provide written notification as soon as practicable after a development proposal is lodged. The notification period will start from the date stated in the written notice.

Extent of notification

When notification has been triggered, letters will be sent to owners and occupants of affected properties. Generally, the notification area is determined at the discretion of a Council Planning Officer, considering the nature and the likely impact of the proposal and includes affected adjoining or nearby properties.

In addition to these practices, for Development Applications that meet Clause 3 (Departure from development standards) or Clause 4 (Sensitive Development - except in cases where the Planning Officer deems the proposal to be 'minor works') of the [Local Planning Panels Direction](#), a 40m radius for notification area will typically be applied. A broader area may be notified if the Council Planning Officer recommends.



For Regionally Significant Development (i.e. development with a Capital Investment Value >\$30million), a 75m radius for notification will typically be applied. A wider area may be notified if the Council Planning Officer recommends.

If land is owned by more than one person, a written notice to one owner is taken to be a written notice to all the owners of that land.

The elected Councillors and the relevant local precinct committee are notified of all Advertised and Notified Development as per the [community engagement matrix](#).

When a development proposal is likely to affect owners of land outside the Waverley area, the Council will contact the neighbouring Council for details to send written notices out to these persons and occupants.

Returned written notices

Letters and emails notifying owners are sometimes returned to Council for various reasons including incorrect addresses. In these cases, Council will check its records and if an address needs correcting, will re-send the letter or email.

The public exhibition period will not be formally extended where a written notification is delayed in this manner. Council may, however, allow an extension of time to make a submission.



Website notice procedures

A website notice involves online publication of the development application. This is typically done on Council's website using the DA Tracker and on the NSW Government Planning Portal website. Council is no longer required to publish notices in newspapers.

Site notice procedures

For all developments that require a published site notice, Council will erect a site notice at the proposed development site. The site notice will provide a brief description of the proposal and

detail the notification end date. If Council is advised of a site notice being removed before the end of the notification period, Council will endeavour to install a replacement sign, however the public exhibition period will not be formally extended.

Additional public notice requirements

Part 3 Division 5 of the EP&A Regulation 2021 details additional requirements for public notification of designated development, nominated integrated development, threatened species development, and state significant development.

Amended applications (re-notification) procedures

A DA may be amended or varied by the applicant (with the agreement of Council officers) before the application is determined. For amendments prior to determination of an application, Council may renotify:

- Those who made submissions on the original application. Note: If the amendments have a lesser or the same effect as the original application (e.g. internal changes or external changes which cannot be seen from the correspondents' property) then re-notification is not required and submissions on the original application will be considered in the assessment
- Any other persons who own adjoining or neighbouring land (including those who were previously notified of the application) who may, in the opinion of Council, be further detrimentally affected by the proposed amendments

Modifications and reviews

Modifications of a development consent (other than minor modifications) – Council will notify those persons who were notified of the original development application and any other person who may be affected by the modification.

Reviews of determinations (e.g. refusal) – Council will notify any person who made a submission in respect to the original application.

Post-determination notification

All those that made a written submission in respect of a DA will be notified of Council's decision once that application has been determined. DAs can also be monitored on Council's DA Tracker, including access to the reasons for the decision and how community views were taken into consideration.

7

Actions to improve community engagement

This section outlines the steps Waverley Council will take to improve community engagement.

We have committed to the following:

1. Continual development of an organisational culture focused on best practice community engagement
2. Enhance systems and processes to enable best practice community engagement
3. Ensure those who are impacted by, or have an interest in, a decision or project of Council are provided with the opportunity to engage
4. Ensure our engagement practices are accessible and inclusive

1. Continual development of an organisational culture focused on best practice community engagement

Action	Timeframe	Responsible	Update 2022
1.1. Improve organisational understanding of engagement techniques from top-down, via the development of a training and development program for key staff across the organisation	Ongoing	Lead: Communications and Engagement Partner: Human Resources, Safety and Wellbeing	Ongoing – core teams have been trained in the rollout of the Engagement Policy and Strategy
1.2. Build on and promote the internal Community Engagement Guidelines and suite of tools and resources available	2022	Communications and Engagement	Complete 2022
1.3. Investigate the establishment of an internal engagement working group to share experiences, key learnings, and better involve staff in projects that they have useful knowledge on or are affected by	2023	Communications and Engagement	Ongoing
1.4. Develop checklist for staff to better plan engagement events and standardised tasks	Complete	Communications and Engagement	Complete 2022

2. Enhance systems and processes to enable best practice community engagement

Action	Timeframe	Responsible	Update 2022
2.1. Review and improve functionality, stability, and user experience of our community engagement website Have Your Say Waverley	2022	Communications and Engagement	Complete – new provider engaged
2.2. Create templates for consistent evaluation and for consultation findings to be shared amongst departments	2022	Information Management and Technology	Complete
2.3. Investigate feasibility of integration of useful engagement findings and database with existing/future CRM	2024	Lead: Communications and Engagement Partner: Customer Service, and other departments with engagement databases	
2.4. Establish major projects and engagement register to identify clashes and opportunities	2022	Communications and Engagement	Complete
2.5. Regularly review engagement methods with the community to measure satisfaction	Ongoing	Communications and Engagement Partner: Integrated Planning and Reporting	Ongoing – new Communication Engagement Strategy integrated with CPP for improved understanding
2.6. Develop and implement an organisation-wide system to plan and monitor key project milestones, such as internal stakeholder involvement, closing the loop, prescriptive necessary engagement actions for each type of project, and examples of risk assessments and engagement plans, to ensure consistent delivery on our promises to the public.	2023	Communications and Engagement	
2.7. Community Engagement Guidelines for Proponents for Sensitive or Controversial Projects made available to developers	2023	Communications and Engagement Strategic Planning	Ongoing – included in Appendix B
2.8. Report to Councillors, combined precincts and HYS enews subscribers on the engagement statistics (online, face to face, email submissions) of the people who have participated in consultations twice a year (in time for combined precinct meetings)	Ongoing	Communications and Engagement	

3. Ensure those who are impacted by, or have an interest in a Council project or decision of Council are provided with the opportunity to engage

Action	Timeframe	Responsible	Update 2022
3.1. Develop a schedule of at least one Have Your Say pop-up in each ward, in accessible and visible locations, including online and precinct meetings, to enable broad feedback on relevant projects and initiatives	Ongoing	Lead: Communications and Engagement Partner: Relevant project managers	
3.2. Explore different ways of engaging people online, including workshops and focus groups	Complete	Lead: Communications and Engagement Partner: Information Management and Technology	Complete – community is over saturated with online events after Covid-19. Need to do more of a mix of face to face and online.
3.3. Develop a minimum radius notification commitment for relevant projects	2022	Lead: Communications and Engagement Partner: Relevant project managers	Investigated for DA notification as part of CES and CPP review 2022
3.4. Investigate options to have a ‘close the loop’ community consultation process, where the community is asked their thoughts on the finished product/issues/the engagement process itself	2023	Communications and Engagement	Ongoing – new online engagement portal has functionality to do this
3.5. Develop fact sheets for the community to explain the overall DA submission process, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An approximate timeframe for the process • Opportunities for community to be involved or submit feedback 	2023	Strategic Planning	
3.6. Develop videos on ‘how to develop a good application’ for the community on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is a good application • How the process works • How to develop an effective submission to a proposal 	2023	Lead: Strategic Planning Support: Communications and Engagement and Community Planning Advocate in the General Manager’s Unit	



4. Ensure our engagement practices are accessible and inclusive

Action	Timeframe	Responsible	Update 2022
4.1. Build on existing relationships and strategies to engage our diverse community in all Council engagement, including older people, children and young people, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people e.g. Reconciliation Action Plan, Disability Inclusion Action Plan, Child Safe Policy	Ongoing	Lead: Community Programs Partner: Communications and Engagement	Ongoing – items in the DIAP and RAP have been incorporated into this document
4.2. Build capacity and a better understanding in the organisation of ways to be more accessible and inclusive in engagement practices, and ensure these practices are implemented across engagement projects	Ongoing	Lead: Communications and Engagement Partner: Community Programs	Ongoing
4.3. Support and enhance a targeted children and young people engagement plan to ensure policy decisions, programs, and services are appropriate, relevant, supported, and responsive to the needs of young people	2023	Lead: Community Programs Partner: Communications and Engagement	

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Reporting on engagement activities



Information collected through community engagement helps council officers and Councillors make decisions. It is also important that the community understands how their voice has been listened to and considered in decision-making.

Council will 'close the loop' with our community and inform them of the outcomes after we consult. Community engagement outcomes will be reported as part of Council's monitoring and reporting cycle.

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Evaluating Council's community engagement activities

The primary outcome of the Community Engagement Strategy is outlined in objective 3.1 of the Delivery Program 2022-26:

Create opportunities for the community to engage with council decision making, and ensure input is listened to and acted on where appropriate.

The relevant actions to ensure we reach this objective are:

- We will ensure those who are impacted by, or have an interest in a decision or initiative of Council have an opportunity to engage
- Ensure our engagement practices are accessible and inclusive
- Continual development of an organisational culture focused on best practice community engagement

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

- Assessment of engagement methods appropriate to stakeholders
- Verbal and written feedback from the community on the effectiveness of the engagement activities
- Participation levels in engagement activities (number of participants), considering the nature of the project
- Achievement of the actions within the Community Engagement Strategy
- Quality of response, in terms of relevance to project or project
- Inclusive community representation

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



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Appendices

Appendix A: Communication and engagement activities

Activity	Description
Advertising	A publicly displayed advertisement with information about a project or engagement opportunity.
Briefing	Presentations and discussions with community or stakeholder groups. This varies from informing to gathering feedback and ideas or presenting options.
Drop-in session	Spread over a longer time, community members can drop-in to meet and speak with Council staff about a project.
Workshop	A group discussion hosted by a facilitator about a specific topic. It is designed to allow for an open discussion that is guided by a series of questions or activities.
Interactive online tools	Activities on the Have Your Say Waverley website that the community can participate in, including ideas boards where participants can post an idea they have, and interactive maps where participants can identify a certain location in the LGA and provide feedback.
Meeting (e.g. Council Meetings, interagency meeting)	Small group facilitated conversations.
Newsletter/ Enewsletter	Can be designed to inform, seek feedback, to gather ideas, and to update the community on the engagement project and how community input has informed Council decision-making. Newsletters are hard copies either delivered to residents, handed out at Council events or drop-in sessions, or made available at Council venues. Enewsletters are sent via email to people who have subscribed to receive them.
Notification of impacted stakeholders	Refers to notifying people identified as potentially affected by a proposal. This can be done via multiple means including written notice, flyers, email, and site notices.
Online engagement portal	Refers to a website for sharing information and enabling participation. Council's online engagement portal is called Have Your Say Waverley: haveyoursay.waverley.nsw.gov.au
Online survey	Usually, a short survey with mostly quantitative questions that can be accessed via our online engagement portal.
Have Your Say pop-up	A pop-up stall usually about a specific project that may run for a couple of hours.

Appendix B: Proponent-led Waverley Community Engagement Guidelines

This section includes recommended actions to improve proponent-led community engagement in Waverley. Please note, this is not exhaustive, and proponents are encouraged to use the guidelines to prompt ideas and guide planning.

Potential applicants of proposals may be encouraged to undertake community engagement prior to making an application to Waverley Council. As part of this, proponents should submit a report to Council that outlines their engagement activities, a summary of the feedback received and how it has been addressed.

The early engagement and consultation for private sector proposals are the sole responsibility of the proponents.

Engaging early and upfront

Effective, early, and quality engagement with the community enables proponents to understand key areas of interest during the early planning phases. This is before plans are finalised and an application is lodged.

This can reduce the risk of unexpected or surprise objections from community during the public exhibition and project determination phase. It can also lead to faster determinations, better planning outcomes, and reduced community opposition.

While a proponent might choose to use innovative or creative ways to engage the community, it should be noted that effective community engagement does not need to be ground-breaking. Effective engagement simply means making a genuine effort to reach out, consider and engage all involved, to listen and to be open, responsive, and work together with the community to come up with effective solutions.

When a proposal has gone through quality community consultation before the application is lodged, community concerns about the proposal can be incorporated or addressed.

Planning your engagement

Step 1: Pre-DA or Pre-Planning Proposal

- Consult with the relevant team (whether DA or Planning) at Council to let them know you are considering running a community engagement program
- Engage a community engagement specialist to develop the strategy, facilitate, and provide an independent summary report with feedback as part of the application
- Complete a stakeholder map of key groups and individuals in the community who might be affected by the development (see [stakeholders](#)

[in section 2](#)) This should document their likely or anticipated concerns/areas of interest, a good place to start would be to talk with the relevant [Precinct Committee](#). It is important to engage the broader community to gain a balanced insight

- Design the consultation process with sufficient time and opportunities for the community to provide multiple rounds of feedback through a range of channels. Give the community time to distil what is being suggested and come back with thoughtful responses. Do not only give the minimum required time to comment on the DA
- Develop a tailored engagement approach for each stakeholder group, considering the most effective ways to engage each group (see [community engagement matrix in section 4](#) for guidance)
- Take community members on a journey to understand exactly what is planned, so when it is time to publicly exhibition of the application, the community understands exactly what is being proposed, the potential impacts, and the delivery timeline. Part of this process requires proponents to listen and give the community an opportunity to voice their concerns
- Develop a range of collateral for the project that is effective for the target group, informative (not just focusing on benefits and the 'sell'), and locally relevant. This might include architects or communication specialists designing specific information relevant to the local community

Engaging the community

The gold standard methods to engage stakeholders draws on the International Association of Public Participation's (IAP2) Engagement Spectrum. IAP2 is considered the best practice community engagement framework (see [IAP2 spectrum of public participation](#) in Community Engagement Strategy).

Ways to improve proponent-led community engagement:

- In all interactions, aim to genuinely understand the issues, be a good listener, respectful of other views and be open to amending your design or operations to address concerns and reflect community feedback. Once resolved, demonstrate how concerns have been addressed
- To genuinely address and remove opposition, prepare to engage with the community openly and honestly. Provide the community with factual and clear information about the project, including the why, what, when and how. Be ready to give facts, information, and educate the community about exactly what will be done so the affected residents feel that they are respected (and not talked down to). Do not try to 'sell' a pretty picture, focusing only on benefits and glossing over the details
- Consider how the community can actually influence the project design, construction method or plans, or operations after development e.g. engage the community in a design competition to choose their preferred

architect or give input into a noise management plan during construction. This can lead to increased buy-in and positive engagement with the community

- Organise a roundtable of residents who will be impacted, the proponent, and a Council representative. Depending on project size and length, this group might meet regularly prior to and during the DA process
- To lead the roundtable or community group, seek a neutral local community member (or an independent engagement consultant) who is trusted and respected. This role can speak to the community on their level and review the proponent application and resident submissions. Unlike the proponent who has a vested interest and wants to 'sell' the project, a neutral facilitator can ensure an honest and objective process where all voices are heard and have a genuine conversation with community to understand their concerns and facilitate a thoughtful and timely response
- Bring in senior project planners/design/construction subject matter experts to talk to community members. Senior roles have authority and knowledge about the project, understand the issues and can speak to community concerns in expert detail

Transparent reporting

Managing objections means listening and genuinely considering concerns and feedback, and determining how the design, construction methods,

operations of the development or other elements of the project can be adapted to address those concerns. Ways to do this include:

- Take the time to address concerns in the application documents
- Demonstrate in your application to Council how you have addressed these concerns either where they have been reconciled or where they are irreconcilable
- Ask for questions before each interaction with objectors and give the community plenty of time to give feedback, write concerns down, and articulate the concerns back to them. 'We hear you' and 'your concerns have been noted, this is the next step' should be your key messages
- Use a transparent process to file objections, keep objectors informed on progress of the project, and explain this clearly in your DA or planning proposal