



Community Engagement Strategy

2025-29

Includes the Community Engagement Framework and Community Participation Plan for Planning and Development Matters.





Acknowledgement of Country

Walawaani (welcome),

Shoalhaven City Council recognises the First Peoples of the Shoalhaven and their ongoing connection to culture and country. We acknowledge Aboriginal people as the Traditional Owners, Custodians and Lore Keepers of the world's oldest living culture and pay respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.

Walawaani njindiwan (safe journey to you all)

This acknowledgment includes Dhurga language. We recognise and understand that there are many diverse languages spoken within the Shoalhaven.

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Message from the Mayor

Community engagement and participation provides the foundation of our planning and decision-making process. It supports the development of policies, projects and services that reflect the values of local communities, as well as sharing information and building trust with Council.

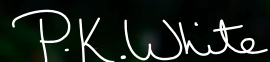
The Community Engagement Strategy 2025-29 provides the direction for all our community engagement activities and helps to determine how, when and with whom we engage. It sets out the organisation's structured approach to consultation and guides the planning of engagement activities to effectively involve community members.

This plan incorporates two key documents, the Community Engagement Strategy and Framework, which helps guide how we consult the community about all projects, and the Community Participation Plan for Planning and Development Matters (CPP), which outlines how we will engage with the community specifically about matters relating to Council's land use planning and development functions.

We value our communities and are committed to working collaboratively and transparently with residents to ensure we achieve balanced outcomes that reflect the wishes of all stakeholders across the Shoalhaven.

I am a passionate advocate for the community and believe strongly in ensuring they continue to have a voice in Council matters. I am delighted to present this strategy and look forward to working with my colleagues to see it implemented over the next four years.

Patricia White



Mayor, Shoalhaven



Chapter 1

Community Engagement *Strategy and Framework*



What is Community *Engagement*?

Community engagement, also known as public participation, is ensuring that the whole of community, is informed about matters affecting them and are provided with equal opportunities to provide feedback and inform decision making through consultation, participation and collaboration.



Why community engagement matters

- Allows the community to influence decisions that directly affect them.
- Helps Council make informed decisions based on the community's views and values.
- Builds shared ownership and accountability between Council and the community for decisions made.

What is the purpose of a Community Engagement Strategy?

- Provides direction for all our community engagement activities.
- Outlines who, when and how we will engage.
- Drives a coordinated, purposeful and effective community engagement approach.
- Ensures we deliver balanced outcomes that meet the needs of all stakeholders, whether they are impacted or simply interested.

What is the framework for?

- Details our process for engagement during projects and initiatives.
- Establishes a consistent approach and sets a standard for engagement activities.
- Defines stakeholder roles in Council's decision-making process.

Why do we need a Community Engagement Strategy?

Council is required to comply with various legislative requirements that determine when and how we should consult with the community.

Local Government Act 1993

Section 402 – Community Strategic Plan

Each local government area must have a Community Strategic Plan (CSP) that has been developed and approved by the Council. The CSP should reflect the community's main goals and ambitions for the future and look at least 10 years ahead.

Section 402A – Community Engagement Strategy

A council needs to create and follow a strategy (called its Community Engagement Strategy) to involve local people when developing its plans, policies, and programs. This is to help decide what actions it should take, except for routine administration tasks.

Section 406 – Integrated planning and reporting guidelines

Guidelines are set for Council to plan and report its activities in a coordinated way. They provide specific requirements for the preparation, development, consultation on and review of the contents for such documents as the Community Strategic Plan, Resourcing Strategy, Delivery Program, Operational Plan, Community Engagement Strategy, Annual Report and environmental reporting of a council.

Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979

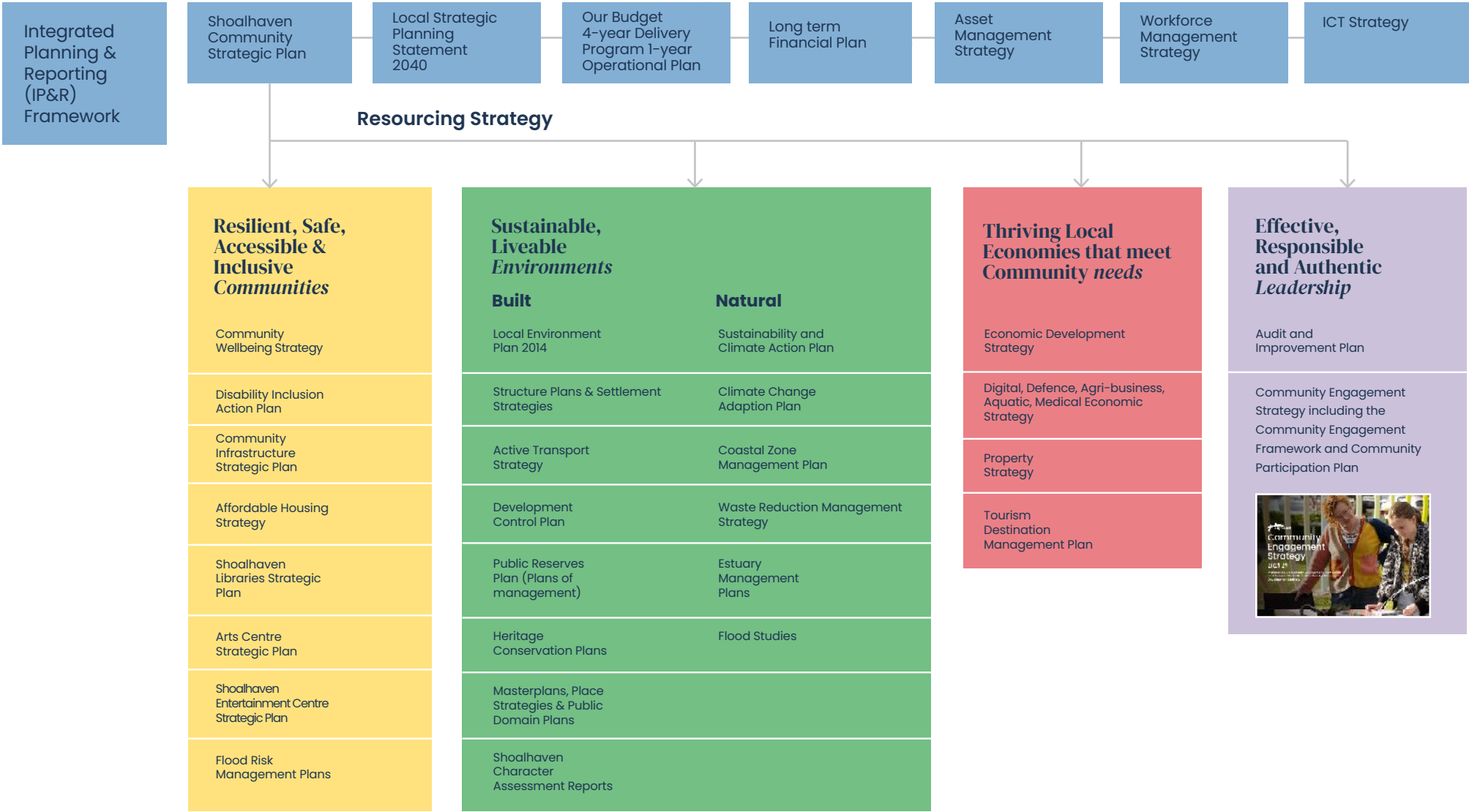
Division 2.6 – Community participation

Every planning group, like the Council, must involve the community when creating policies and evaluating them. This involves showing plans to the public for a certain amount of time, notifying the community about the plans, and explaining the reason behind any decisions.

In line with legislative requirements, Council has developed a Community Participation Plan that provides information on its development application (DA) notification requirements and community participation in other planning matters (chapter 2).



Council's strategic documents



This strategy and framework directly address community focus areas and strategies outlined in the Shoalhaven 2032 Community Strategic Plan.



Key Priority

- Inform and engage with the community about the decisions that affect their lives



Focus Areas

- Provide opportunities for the community to have genuine engagement on Council planning and decision making
- Provide clear, consistent, relevant and accessible information to the community



Delivery

- Provide engagement opportunities for the community both online and face to face
- Explain to our local community the impacts of strategic planning as required by legislation and ensure appropriate consultation is undertaken and information is available
- Continuous improvement of Council's website, social media and media content

How we developed the *framework*

This strategy and framework are informed by feedback from the community and Council workers.



Community Feedback

In March to May 2024, we engaged with more than 500 local community members through the following engagement activities:

- Face-to-face community pop-up kiosks
- An online and hard copy survey
- Workshops with Advisory Committees and Community Consultative Bodies
- Presentation to local community groups

This document also incorporates feedback received during consultation for the Community Engagement Strategy 2022-26 that related directly to a framework.



Input of Council representatives

A team of Council employees who frequently interact with the community and are passionate about community engagement offered insights and feedback on both current and future community engagement priorities and requirements.

Suggestions made by Councillors as part of this project have been incorporated and form part of the reasoning for some aspects including the need to report back and accessibility.

What we *heard*

"Host meetings in family friendly spaces"

"Regular catchups as people prefer a less formal approach"

"Select meeting times young people are likely to attend"

"Engage with us early in the process, not at the end"

"Community can engage by making deputations at Council meetings"

"Everyone is so busy. Bring your consultation to where we are, to make it easy"

"Students are probably more likely to participate if it's inside school instead of their own time"

"In-person support to complete surveys"

Our consultation *promise*

“

We are committed to encouraging effective and ongoing relationships with the community to provide meaningful opportunities for community participation.

”

Our approach to *engagement*

Everyone has a right to be informed and have an opportunity to participate and provide feedback about matters that affect them.

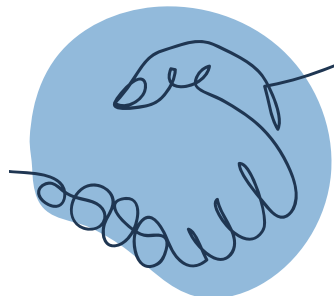
We aim to make our consultation activities and projects as accessible and inclusive as possible. We understand that community engagement is an ongoing conversation, and we will actively seek and provide opportunities for feedback on our initiatives and activities.

Council's Engagement Principles



Equity

We will apply fairness in decision making, prioritising and allocation of resources, particularly for those in need.



Participation

Everyone will be given genuine opportunities to participate in decisions which affect their lives.

Access

We will strive to provide fair access to services, resources and opportunities to improve the quality of life for all people.



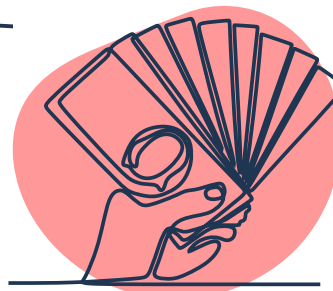
Rights

We will promote equal rights and provide opportunities for all people from all backgrounds.



Environmental

We will protect the natural, cultural and built heritage and work to decrease consumption of resources.

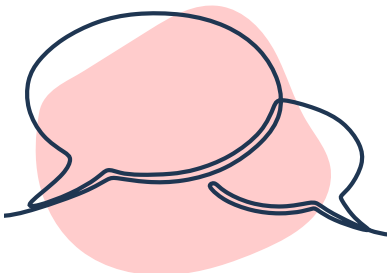


Economic

We will contribute to maintaining a strong and stable economy and ensure the delivery of infrastructure is financially sustainable.

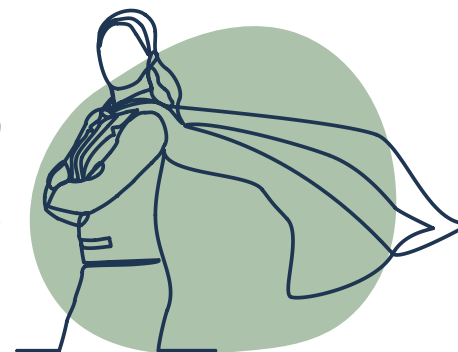
Social

We will strive towards everyone having access and equity to facilities and services.



Civic Leadership




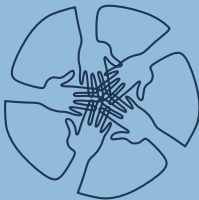

We will consider decision-making principles, levels of service and community consultation and participation.



Spectrum of engagement

Engaging with communities and stakeholders is done in a range of ways. Depending on the context, community engagement ranges from informing people about an activity, project or initiative that is already determined, through to enabling people to conduct projects themselves. This spectrum of engagement is known as the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) and is a best-practice model that labels each different engagement level of inform, consult, involve, collaborate and empower.

Shoalhaven City Council's framework for consultation.

	 Inform	 Consult	 Involve	 Collaborate	 Empower
Commitment to Community	We will keep you informed.	We will listen to you and acknowledge your concerns during the process.	We will share information, ideas and concerns with you, and take them into account when we make decisions.	We will aim to include you and incorporate your ideas in the decision-making process, as much as possible.	We will implement or support what you decide.
Community Role	Listen	Contribute	Participate	Partner	Partner or lead
Engagement Type	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Website updatesGet Involved news itemsLetterbox dropsSocial mediaCommunity Newsletter	<ul style="list-style-type: none">SurveysDrop-in sessionsSite visitsVoting	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Focus groupsCrowd sourcingGamification	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Advisory CommitteesSteering groupsWorkshops	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Citizens panelBallots
Example project	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Tree replacementReview of environmental factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none">45 Degree Rule ExemptionBay and Basin Boxing Club	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Bushcare Action PlanDesign process for Open Space	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Nowra Riverfront Activation (NRAT)Artie Smith Oval refurbishment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Grant funding deliveryConjola memorial project

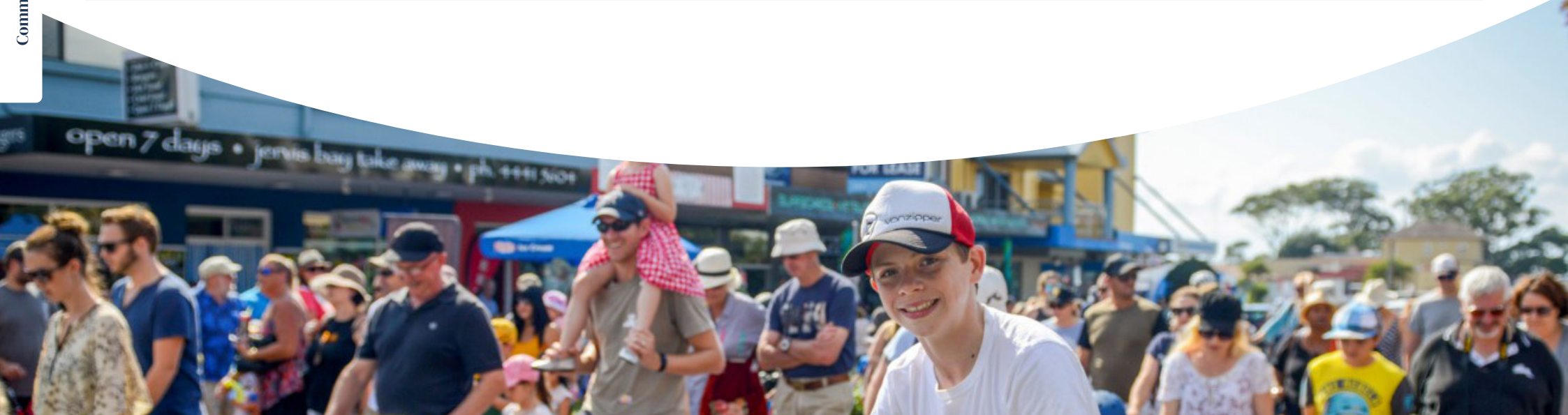
Increasing influence and impact of the decision

Roles and *responsibilities*

Various groups and teams within Council are responsible for the successful implementation of the Community Engagement Strategy and Framework. The next section outlines the responsibilities of these groups and teams.

Role	Responsibilities
<p>Councillors</p> <p>Shoalhaven City Council is made up of a Mayor and 12 Councillors – four Councillors representing each of our three wards.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the implementation of the Community Engagement Strategy and Framework. • Uphold Council's Engagement Principles. • Promote participation in engagement activities. • Consider engagement results when making decisions. • Follow the principles of our Community Engagement Strategy and Framework when consulting with key stakeholders.
<p>Media & Communications team</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the Community Engagement Strategy and use the Framework to deliver engagement activities for the organisation. • Uphold Council's Engagement Principles. • Support engagement activities for all staff. • Identify opportunities for improvements in our engagement practices. • Coordinate and maintain a calendar of community engagement activities being delivered by the organisation.
<p>Executive Management team</p> <p>Senior Leadership team</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the Community Engagement Strategy and Framework. • Ensure all employees use the framework when engaging the community. • Uphold Council's Engagement Principles. • Approve communications and engagement content in accordance with the strategy and framework. • Support Councillor understandings about the importance of appropriate Community Engagement activities.
<p>Shoalhaven City Council employees</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consult the Media & Communications team about the need for engagement before initiating work. • Work with the Media & Communications team to design a community engagement plan, in accordance with the strategy and framework, identifying key points of influence available to the community. • Uphold Council's Engagement Principles. • Allow enough time to develop and implement the engagement program. • Deliver engagement activities in accordance with strategy and framework. • Close the loop by documenting and reporting the findings to the Council and the community. • Undertake appropriate training to understand the IAP2 framework. • When engaging with the community, ensure a variety of diverse voices and engagement methods are used.

Role	Responsibilities
Advisory Committees Shoalhaven City Council has several committees made up of staff, Councillors, as well as external community members. They advise on the views, needs and interests of communities in the area. A full list can be found in Appendix A	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide advice to the Council based on personal and professional experience, in accordance with relevant Terms of Reference.• Build relationships between community members and Council.• Encourage participation in community engagement opportunities.• Share information among network groups.• Spokesperson for diverse groups.
Community Consultative Bodies (CCBs) CCBs are endorsed by the Council as the representatives for residents and ratepayers in a specific area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Disseminate information to the community.• Promote and facilitate discussion amongst the community.• Communicate shared and collective views of the community to Council.• Share community led plans with Council so they can be considered as part of Council’s overall engagement strategy in the corporate planning process.
Members of the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Seek out information and engagement opportunities via Council communication channels that interest or impact you.• Review materials of engagement programs to participate in.• Have an open mindset to diverse ideas and show respect to all participants involved.• Follow processes and time frames.• Understand that the outcome may not be as hoped.
External consultants	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Comply with all legislative requirements and adhere to this strategy and framework along with advice of Council Officers when delivering engagement activities on behalf of the Council.



Who we engage

We are a diverse city of unique townships, each filled with a life and character of their own. Our spectacular, varied natural landscapes nourish and define us as the resilient, connected community we are today.


We value our community and are dedicated to preserving the rich history and future of our beautiful and diverse coastal, foothill, escarpment, and plateau environments. The data on our community is from Australian Bureau of Statistics and Remplan.

It shows that our community is diverse and evolving quickly. Therefore, a uniform engagement approach won't be effective. We need to tailor our methods for each project to best meet the needs of our community.

Population
(ABS ERP 2022)
109,895
13.5% born overseas
8.1% need disability assistance

Average age
48 yrs
19.2% aged 0-17

Projected increase
+12,735
by 2031




36.1%
Population
of avg. age 60+

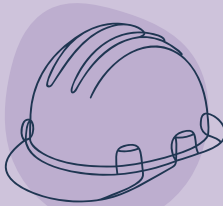
Current population forecasts indicate that the ageing population (65+) in the Shoalhaven will increase from 29679 (2021) to 33795 (2031). An increase of 4116 people or 14% increase. This is significant as it will impact service delivery and the way we have to engage with the broader community. This is an upward trend as numbers are expected to continue to increase.



6.5%
of the Shoalhaven's
population identify as
Aboriginal and Torres
Strait Islander



39.5%
Completed year 12
26.6% vocational education
15.8% university education



Jobs
41,571
48.8% in workforce
4.9% unemployed

Households

21%
made up of couples
with children


31% Couples without children
18% Older couples without children
28% Single person
10.3% Single parent

Single person households increasing from 12,908 in 2021 to 14,151 in 2031 – an increase of 1,243.

Total households

45,894

25.8% Mortgage
23.1% Renting
3.4% Social housing



429
Individuals homeless

An important part of the community engagement process includes identifying and understanding key stakeholders who will be impacted by or who have an interest in a decision.

We aim to reach as many people as possible across the community to ensure a broad range of views are heard.

We consult with internal stakeholders such as staff and Councillors, and externally with an extensive list of stakeholder groups below, depending on the scope of the project.

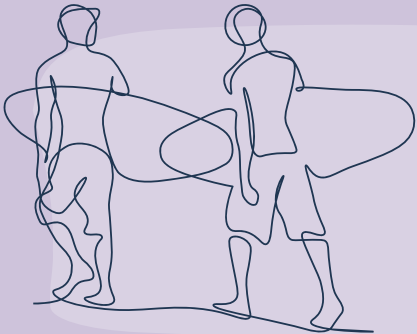
- Arts and culture community
- Business and industry
- Carers
- Committees (Appendix B)
- Chambers of commerce
- Community Consultative Bodies
- Children
- Community service providers
- Emergency services
- Environmental groups
- Families
- State and Federal departments
- Heritage groups
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex community
- State and Federal MPs
- Management committees
- Mayor and councillors
- Neighbouring councils or other local government organisations
- Not-for-profit organisations and groups
- People experiencing homelessness or risk of homelessness
- People from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- People with a disability
- Public transport user groups
- Ratepayers
- Residents
- Schools, education facilities and students
- Seniors/senior groups
- Service groups
- Shoalhaven City Council employees
- Sporting, leisure and recreational clubs and groups
- Students
- Users of Council facilities and services
- Visitors to the Shoalhaven
- Volunteers/volunteer organisations
- Young people
- Vulnerable people



What we engage our community on

There are a variety of projects that Council invites the community to provide their feedback on and share ideas for consideration.

During consultation in March to May 2024 we heard from 509 community members and some of our Advisory Committees about the topics they are most interested in engaging with, they said...



Youth

Environmental issues and recreational precincts.



People living with a disability

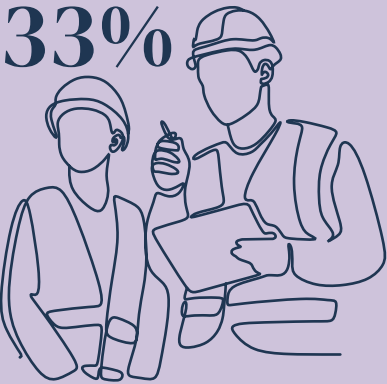
Facility design and infrastructure projects



Top community response

Local development planning and construction projects.

33%



Local development and construction projects

Roadworks



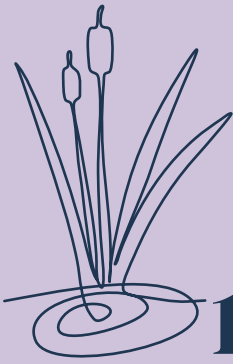
20%

Infrastructure projects

Heritage

Parks and Playgrounds

Sporting Facilities, including pools



18%

The environment, including coastal management

Animal welfare (pets and wildlife)

Bin collection, waste and recycling

Water and sewage



14%

Art and culture

Community wellbeing

Tourism, events and activities in the Shoalhaven

Libraries

Volunteering



14%

Reports and strategic documents

Policies and compliance

Council services and fees



How we engage

The ways we engage with people can greatly affect who can participate and how Council receives feedback from the community. Council is committed to providing a range of engagement methods for each project.

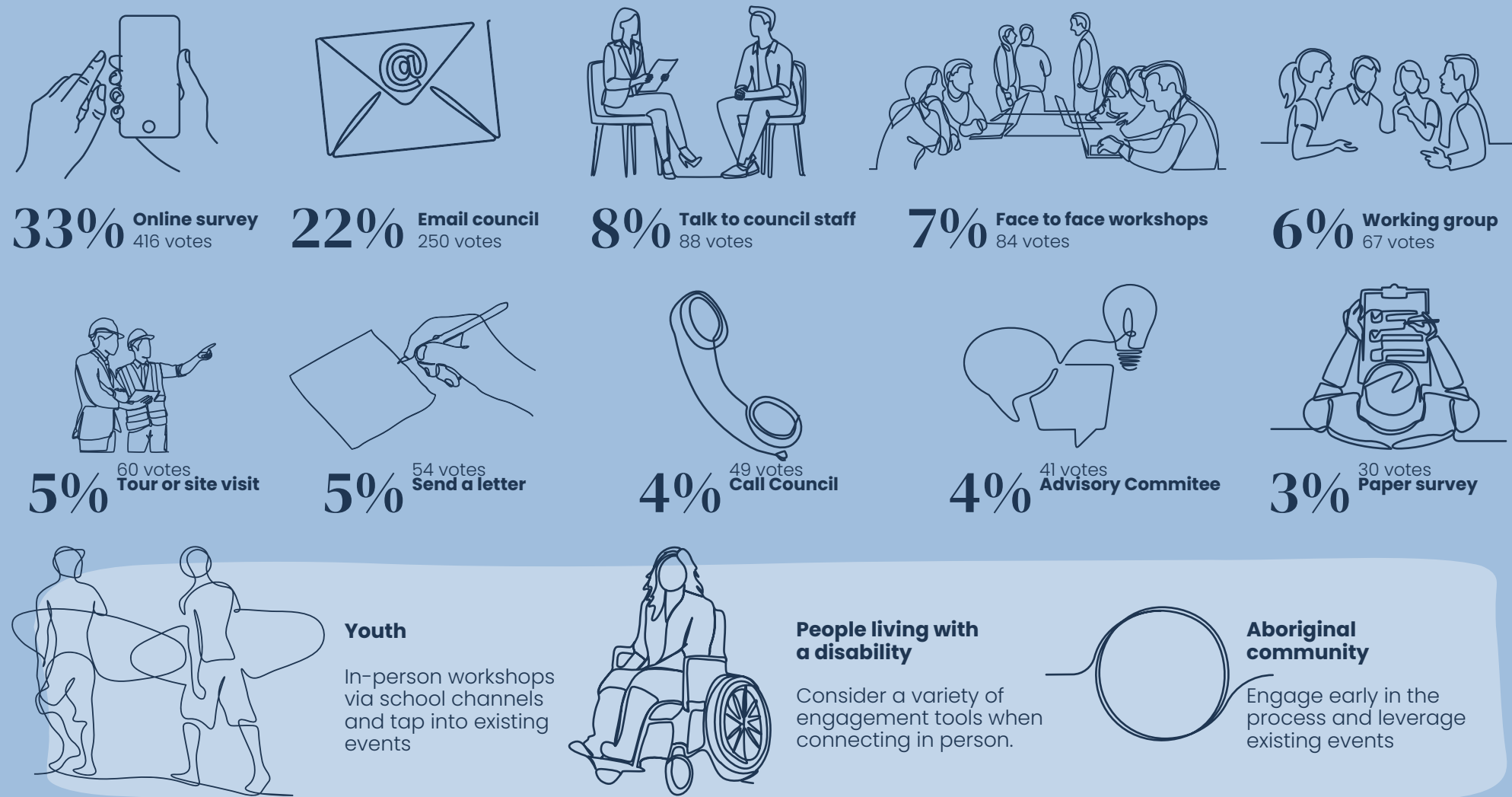
Council projects will use various engagement methods at different stages to best meet the needs of our community and project requirements. For instance, the Council might involve the community to gather ideas during the early stages of a design project, such as the concept design for a sporting facility, and then consult the community to finalise priorities and details.



Engagement *methods*

During the consultation phase of developing this document, we conducted an online survey, attended local village markets and consulted our Advisory Committees and heard the following top engagement methods.

Top 10 engagement methods the community wants Council to use include:



Survey respondents had the opportunity to vote in favour of multiple engagement methods.

What we *heard*

**"More short
and sharp
communications
through
communication
channels"**

**"Multi
deliverable
content
methods"**

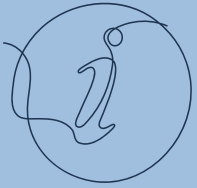
**"Local
community
groups are
powerful for
word of mouth"**

**"Spread
information about
consultation
opportunities
through schools."**

Our communications *promise*

“
We will actively
promote community
engagement activities
through a variety of
channels to reach
broad and target
audiences.
”

Examples of the type of engagement methods depending on the stakeholder's level of influence include:



Inform

- Website update
- Community newsletter
- Media release
- Social media
- On-site signage
- Letters
- Emails to key stakeholders
- Community Information Hubs



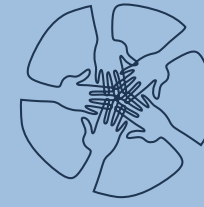
Consult

- Written submission
- Online engagement platform, Get Involved Survey (online or hard copy)
- Focus groups
- Public meetings
- Suggestion boards
- Interactive visual tools



Involve

- Crowd sourcing
- Gamification
- Drop-in sessions
- Site visits
- Voting
- Deliberative polling



Collaborate

- Deliberative forums
- Community panels
- Advisory Committee collaboration
- Workshops



Empower

- Working groups
- Citizens panel
- Ballot
- Co-design
- Delegated decision making



When we engage

Community engagement should occur at the planning stage of any project or initiative, when proposing a change in service, considering activities or infrastructure, addressing an issue that requires a decision, or when additional information or evidence is needed.

The timing of community engagement can vary between projects, depending on their complexity and nature. Often, community engagement may need to occur at multiple stages throughout a project.

Here are the main types of projects where we frequently seek community input.

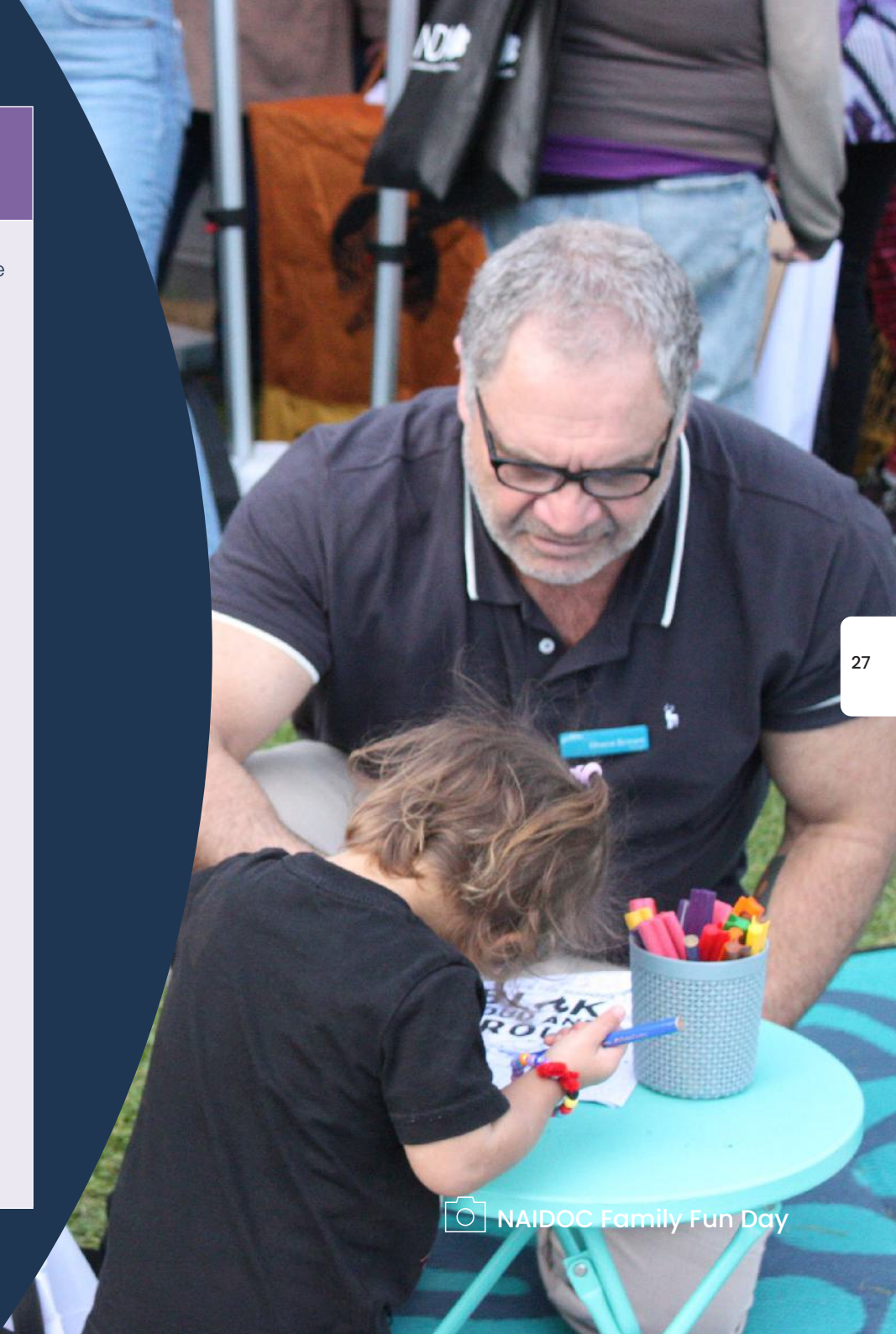
Planning related projects have specific exhibition timeframes which must be met; these are outlined in Council's Community Participation Plan (Chapter 2).

When	IPA2 engagement level	How	Minimum consultation/ exhibition period
Road maintenance (e.g. potholes and non-regulatory signage)	Inform	We will share information on activities and plans with immediately affected stakeholders so that they are advised of any upcoming works. Minimum notice method: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Notification flyer or letter to immediately affected stakeholders.	7 days' notice No notice for emergency works in some cases.
Non-routine road maintenance (e.g. Boardwalk update or footpath replacement)	Inform	We will share information on activities and plans with immediately affected stakeholders so that they are advised of any upcoming works. If major changes such as delays or impact to access occurs during the works, immediately affected stakeholders will be informed. Minimum notice method: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Notification flyer or letter to immediately affected stakeholders.	7 days' notice. Longer notice period considered for severely impacted residents or businesses. No notice for emergency works in some cases.

All consultation activities starting in December must continue until January 31st.

When	IPA2 engagement level	How	Minimum consultation/exhibition period
Traffic related projects – Level 1 (e.g., regulatory signage and line markings).	Inform – Consult	<p>Development Services conduct consultation as part of their development application (DA) process – refer to the Community Participation Plan in chapter 2</p> <p>We will share information on activities and plans with immediately affected stakeholders so that they are advised of any upcoming works.</p> <p>Minimum notice method:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notification flyer or letter to immediately affected stakeholders. 	<u>Inform</u> 7 days' notice
		<p>We will make every effort to inform stakeholders about opportunities to provide feedback and actively involve the community, ensuring that their priorities are considered in the decision-making process.</p> <p>Minimum consultation method:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notification flyer or letter to immediately affected stakeholders. • Email to relevant Community Consultative Bodies <p>We will recognise community views and concerns and ensure that where possible, these are reflected as inputs into Council's final decision.</p>	<u>Consult</u> 14 days' notice
Traffic related projects – Level 2 – where works impact access or result in a change of the environment and how it functions. (e.g., speed humps, traffic control devices, new lighting).	Inform – Consult	<p>We will share information on activities and plans with immediately affected stakeholders so that they are advised of any upcoming works.</p> <p>Minimum notice method:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notification flyer or letter to immediately affected stakeholders. 	<u>Inform</u> 7 days' notice
		<p>We will make every effort to inform stakeholders about opportunities to provide feedback and actively involve the community, ensuring that their priorities are considered in the decision-making process.</p> <p>Minimum consultation method:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notification flyer or letter to immediately affected stakeholders. • Email to relevant Community Consultative Bodies <p>We will recognise community views and concerns and ensure that where possible, these are reflected as inputs into Council's final decision.</p>	<u>Consult</u> 28 days' notice

When	IPA2 engagement level	How	Minimum consultation/ exhibition period
Planning phase – major capital works and placemaking projects (e.g., new or upgraded public spaces and facilities)	Consult – Involve	<p>We will make every effort to inform stakeholders about opportunities to provide feedback and actively involve the community, ensuring that their priorities are considered in the decision-making process.</p> <p>We will recognise community views and concerns and ensure that where possible, these are reflected as inputs into Council's final decision.</p> <p>At a minimum, feedback channel and notification methods include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Project page on Council's website• Online engagement via the Get Involved platform• Media release• Social media <p>If the project requires involvement from key stakeholders, we will work with community to ensure that concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives develop and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.</p>	<u>Consult</u> 28 days' notice



When	IPA2 engagement level	How	Minimum consultation/ exhibition period
Concept design phase – major capital works and placemaking projects (e.g., new or upgraded public spaces and facilities)	Consult – Empower	<p>We will make every effort to inform stakeholders about opportunities to provide feedback and actively involve the community, ensuring that their priorities are considered in the decision-making process.</p> <p>We will recognise community views and concerns and ensure that where possible, these are reflected as inputs into Council's final decision.</p> <p>At a minimum, feedback channel and notification methods include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Online engagement via the Get Involved platform• Media release• Social Media <p>If the project requires involvement from key stakeholders will work with community to ensure that concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives develop and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.</p> <p>If the project requires collaboration with key stakeholders, we will look to the community for advice and innovation in developing solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to maximum extent possible.</p> <p>Where appropriate, we will implement what you decide.</p>	<u>Consult</u> 28 days' notice
Implementation phase – major capital works and placemaking projects (e.g., new or upgraded public spaces and facilities)	Inform	<p>We will share information on activities and plans with immediately affected stakeholders so that they are advised of any upcoming works.</p> <p>If major changes such as delays or impact to access occurs during the works, immediately affected stakeholders will be informed.</p> <p>Minimum notice method:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Notification flyer or letter to immediately affected stakeholders.	<u>Inform</u> 7 days' notice

When	IPA2 engagement level	How	Minimum consultation/ exhibition period
Naming projects (e.g., building names, street names)	Consult - Collaborate	<p>We will make every effort to inform stakeholders about opportunities to provide feedback and actively involve the community, ensuring that their priorities are considered in the decision-making process.</p> <p>We will recognise community views and concerns and ensure that where possible, these are reflected as inputs into Council's final decision.</p> <p>At a minimum, feedback channel and notification methods include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online engagement via the Get Involved platform • Media release • Social media <p>If the project requires involvement from key stakeholders will work with community to ensure that concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives develop and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.</p> <p>If the project requires collaboration with key stakeholders, we will look to the community for advice and innovation in developing solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to maximum extent possible.</p>	<u>Consult</u> 28 days' notice
<p>Council's key plans and strategies (e.g., Community Strategic Plan and Disability Inclusion Action Plan)</p> <p>Council's Annual Operational Plan and Budget</p> <p>Council's other key policies (e.g., Access Areas for Dogs)</p>	Consult	<p>We will make every effort to inform stakeholders about opportunities to provide feedback and actively involve the community, ensuring that their priorities are considered in the decision-making process.</p> <p>We will recognise community views and concerns and ensure that where possible, these are reflected as inputs into Council's final decision.</p> <p>At a minimum, feedback channel and notification methods include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online engagement via the Get Involved platform • Media release • Social media 	<u>Consult</u> 28 days' notice

When	IPA2 engagement level	How	Minimum consultation/ exhibition period
Environmental projects and plans (e.g., Coastal Management Program (CMP) and Flood studies.	Consult – involve	<p>We will make every effort to inform stakeholders about opportunities to provide feedback and actively involve the community, ensuring that their priorities are considered in the decision-making process.</p> <p>We will recognise community views and concerns and ensure that where possible, these are reflected as inputs into Council's final decision.</p> <p>At a minimum, feedback channel and notification methods include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online engagement via the Get Involved platform • Media release • Social media <p>If the project requires involvement from key stakeholders will work with community to ensure that concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives develop and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshops with Coastal Management Program committees. 	<u>Consult</u> 28 days' notice



How engagement influences decision *making*

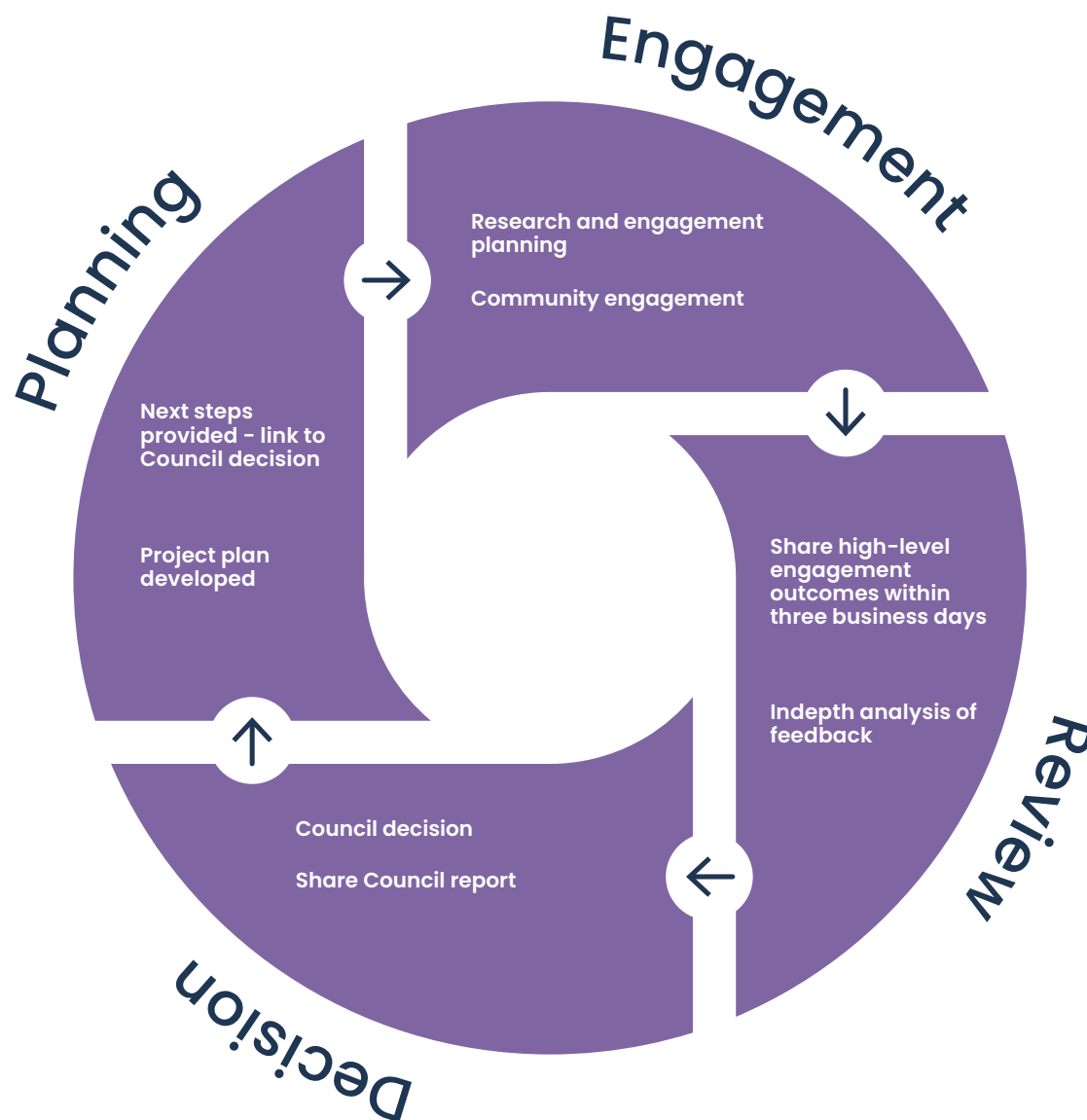
When a project has the potential to incorporate ideas and feedback into its decision-making process, community engagement becomes crucial. Effective community engagement ensures that the voices of those affected by the project are heard and considered, fostering a sense of ownership and trust among stakeholders.

Thorough planning is essential to identify which decisions require stakeholder feedback and to determine the extent to which this feedback can influence outcomes beyond regulatory and mandatory requirements.

If community feedback can indeed influence a decision, it is important to understand where each stakeholder falls on the IAP2 (International Association for Public Participation) spectrum. The IAP2 spectrum ranges from informing stakeholders to empowering them, with stages including consultation, involvement, and collaboration.

By carefully planning and understanding the dynamics of stakeholder influence, projects can effectively integrate community feedback, leading to more inclusive and accepted outcomes.

Our common process for involving community engagement in the decision-making process is illustrated in the adjacent diagram.



Project plan developed	<p>Define the project objectives and assess whether community engagement is necessary.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Identify who will be affected by the project. – Understand the size of the project's effects. – Gauge the level of interest and concern within the community.
Research and engagement planning	<p>Gain a deeper understanding of the project and identify the most effective strategy.</p> <p>The following considerations will be made during this phase.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Purpose, objectives and scope of community engagement. – Identify any non-negotiables. – What the community can influence or provide feedback on. – How feedback will be used to influence the outcome. – Who in the community Council will seek to engage with. – What type of engagement methods will be used. – When and where the engagement will take place.
Community engagement	<p>Promote the community engagement opportunity and capture feedback from the community and key stakeholder groups.</p> <p>During the delivery of engagement, we will consider the following to ensure engagement is genuine and respectful.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Activities are accessible and inclusive. – Clear about the purpose and level of influence. – We listen to the community. – Respect diverse views and experiences of our community. – Engagement plans are monitored, and changes are made if required.
Share high-level engagement outcomes within three business days	<p>Media and Communications team to share high-level engagement outcomes including the number of participants and key themes identified in the feedback.</p>
In depth analysis of feedback	<p>Feedback is collated and analysed. If required, changes are made to the project which reflect what has been heard.</p> <p>During this stage, a report is prepared for Council detailing the outcomes of the community engagement to inform the decision or draft document.</p>
Council decision	<p>A decision on the direction of a project is made during a Council meeting (if required).</p>
Share Council report	<p>Before the Council meeting, the report will be shared with engaged participants for review.</p>
Next steps provided – link to Council decision	<p>The Council will keep the community updated on how their input has shaped the project's direction and inform them of any upcoming steps.</p>



“
By carefully planning and understanding the dynamics of stakeholder influence, projects can effectively integrate community feedback, leading to more inclusive and accepted outcomes.
”

How we plan our *engagement*

Planning enables the Council to conduct engagement within the required timelines efficiently and allocate the necessary resources to the process.

Below are the key steps we follow to ensure comprehensive consideration has been taken to plan community engagement. We have provided an example to help explain how this process works.

- 1 Who are the key stakeholders?**
- 2 What is their level of interest in the project?**
- 3 How much will the decision impact them?**
- 4 What is their level of influence?**
- 5 Select the engagement method**
- 6 Communicate the engagement opportunities**
- 7 Conduct engagement with the stakeholder**
- 8 Provide feedback to the stakeholder**



Example engagement plan: Sporting facility design

1	Who are the key stakeholders? Who are the groups of people that will be impacted or are interested in this project?	Sporting clubs	Residents	Councillors	General community
2	What is their level of interest in the project? How much do they care about the project and the final decision?	High	Medium	High	Low
3	How much will the decision impact them? Will the decision change the way they live, work or play in the Shoalhaven?	High	Medium	Low	Low
4	What is their level of influence? A stakeholder's influence is accessed through their level of impact and interest in the project. This evaluation will help in identifying how stakeholders will interact with the project and what strategies should be used to engage them. Refer to Appendix B	Collaborate or empower	Involve	Involve	Consult
5	Select the engagement method. Based on their level of influence, choose the most appropriate engagement method to receive their input and feedback. Refer to pg 24.	Working group	Site visit	Workshop	Online survey
6	Communicate the engagement opportunities. Establishing clear and open lines of communication to share information and gather input.	Email to key contacts	Letterbox drop	Email invitation	Community newsletter Social media
7	Conduct engagement with the stakeholder. Actively seeking and recording feedback, concerns, and suggestions from stakeholders.	Regular meetings held at a local sporting facility and an independent facilitator will host.	Submit any feedback or suggestions via letter or email to Council.	Interactive workshops	Get Involved survey
8	Provide feedback to the stakeholder. Keeping stakeholders informed about how their input has influenced the project and any subsequent steps.	Email to key contacts	Letterbox drop	Councillor newsletter	Community newsletter Social media



What are we *measuring*?

We promise to keep monitoring and improving how we engage with communities to make sure we get the best possible results for everyone.

We will look at how well we are doing based on the parameters we have set out in this strategy document. This will help us understand how effective we are at getting the most appropriate communities interested and involved.

We want to continually improve how we consult with people, making sure our methods work well for our community. It's important for us to find out what needs to be better so we can achieve our goals and fulfill our community's hopes.



Here is a list of ways we are going to work towards achieving our goals.

Accessible information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use easy English. • Use various communication methods (e.g. printouts in libraries, radio ads, video, social media, website, media release etc.,). • Liaise directly with target audiences.
Accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate with the community in a timely manner. • Minimum seven days for informing community. • Minimum four weeks for consultation.
Diversity of voices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow sufficient time for consultation. • Ensure community consultation is considered at various stages of the project lifecycle. • Visible and accessible to the community via existing events, channels, networks etc. • Consider all viewpoints when making decisions.
Quality of data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will engage with all relevant target groups as outlined in the strategy.
Participation rates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide opportunities for stakeholders to share ideas with each other. • Be mindful of seasonal events and feedback expectations when developing an engagement timeframe.
Closing the loop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report back on engagement outcomes and outline how feedback will influence the final decision. • Respond to feedback and questions in a timely manner.
Open communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff to work with the Media & Communications team to establish a community engagement plan for projects. • Communicate how much influence the engagement process will have in the decision-making process. • Frequently check-in with the community/consultation participants to seek feedback on the consultation process.



Community engagement – Nowra

Ways to get *involved*

We value your feedback and encourage people in the community to share their thoughts on what the Council does and how it does it.

Our commitment to you

- Respond to phone messages within two days
- When you write to us via email or letter, we will respond within 28 days
- When you lodge a maintenance request online (Council's website) we will ensure that our system provide you with immediate acknowledgement of lodgement and we will respond within 28 days.

Vote at elections

Council elections are held every four years to elect representatives, known as Councillors. If you are a resident, it is compulsory to vote in local government elections.

Follow our social media pages

Facebook www.facebook.com/shoalhavencitycouncil

Instagram www.instagram.com/shoalhavencitycouncil/

Linkedin www.linkedin.com/company/shoalhaven-city-council



Subscribe to our 'In your neighbourhood' community newsletter



Visit our website



Provide general feedback via our online chat, email, phone, letter or in-person



Speak with a Councillor



Attend a Council meeting



Live stream a Council meeting



Participate in Council meetings



Read a Council meeting agenda and minutes



Become an Advisory Committee member



Participate in consultations via our engagement platform – Get Involved

Tiers of Engagement

Depending on a community member's interest levels, time available and willingness to participate, there are many ways to engage with Council.

Level 1

Keep me in the loop about projects Council is working on.



Inform

- Attend Council meetings
- Community newsletter
- Social media
- Website updates
- Community Information Hubs

Level 2

Occasional commitment depending on my interest level, time available and how much it's going to impact me.



Consult

- Survey
- Public meeting
- Suggestion board

Level 3

I have time and an invested interest in participating in decisions that impact me and my community.



Involve

- Deputation at a Council meeting
- Site visit



Collaborate

- Community Panels
- Be a part of an Advisory Committee



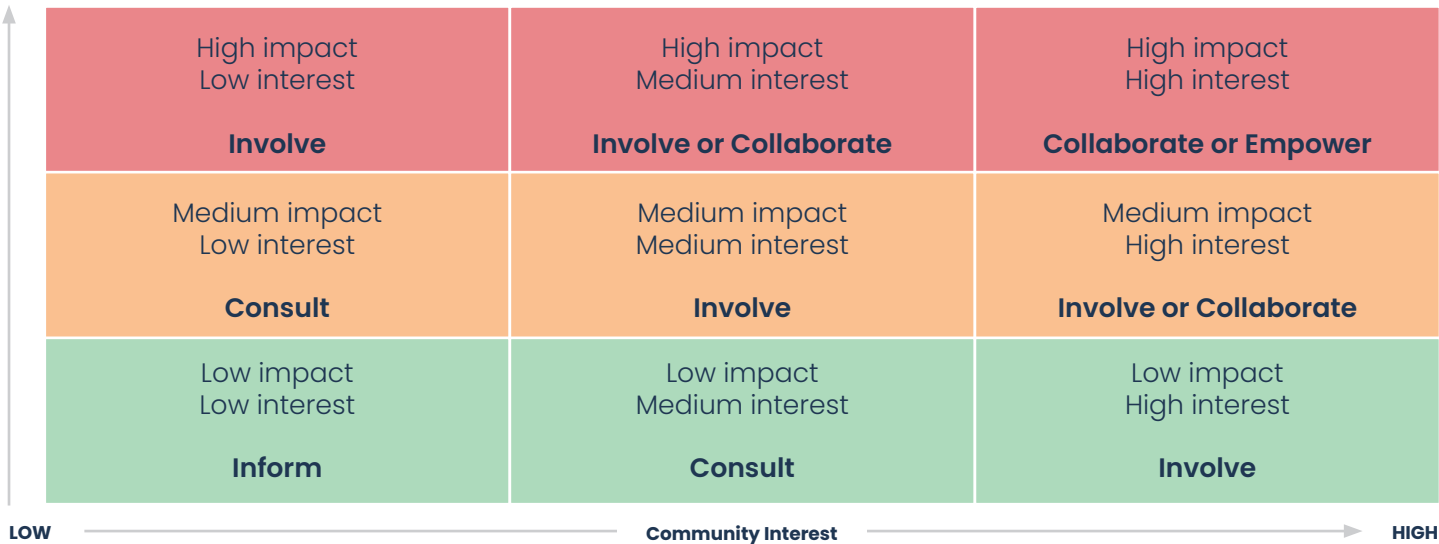
Empower

- Working group opportunities

Appendix A – Full list of committees

- Aboriginal Advisory Committee
- Arts Advisory Committee
- Coastal Management Program Advisory Committees
- Floodplain Risk Management Committees
- Homelessness Advisory Committee
- Inclusion & Access Advisory Committee
- Natural Area Volunteers Group
- Nowra CBD Revitalisation Strategy Committee

Appendix B – Engagement Matrix



Chapter 2

Community Participation Plan

for Planning and Development Matters
2025

Community Participation Plan

The Shoalhaven Community Participation Plan (CPP) outlines how Council will engage with the Shoalhaven community on matters relating to planning and development. The CPP also explains how we report and inform our community about planning and development decisions. The CPP applies the principles and approach of Council's broader Community Engagement Strategy (CES).

The Environmental Planning and Assessment (EP&A) Act 1979 requires all planning authorities, including local Councils, to prepare a CPP to outline how and when the community will be engaged on planning functions, such as policy making, strategic planning and development assessment. *The Environmental Planning and Assessment (EP&A) Act 1979* also sets minimum notification requirements for planning-related projects.



The Environmental Planning & Assessment (EP&A) Act 1979 – Principles of community participation

- The community has a right to be informed about planning matters that affect it.
- Planning authorities should encourage effective and on-going partnerships with the community to provide meaningful opportunities for community participation in planning.
- Planning information should be in plain language, easily accessible and in a form that facilitates community participation in planning.
- The community should be given opportunities to participate in strategic planning as early as possible to enable community views to be genuinely considered.
- Community participation should be inclusive and planning authorities should actively seek views that are representative of the community.
- Members of the community who are affected by proposed major development should be consulted by the proponent before an application for planning approval is made.
- Planning decisions should be made in an open and transparent way and the community should be provided with reasons for those decisions (including how community views have been taken into account).
- Community participation methods (and the reasons given for planning decisions) should be appropriate, having regard to the significance and likely impact of the proposed development.



When the Community Participation Plan *applies*

This CPP applies to the Shoalhaven Local Government Area (LGA) and planning functions under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment (EP&A) Act 1979*. It has been developed in accordance with the requirements of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment (EP&A) Act 1979* and the *Local Government Act 1993*, and specifically applies to:

- Plan making and Strategic Planning, including the preparation of Local Strategic Planning Statements (LSPS), amendments to the Shoalhaven Local Environmental Plan (LEP), Shoalhaven Development Control Plan (DCP), Contributions Plans for local infrastructure and other technical studies, strategies and policies.
- Development applications (DAs).

This CPP does not apply to planning and development matters that are assessed and determined by authorities other than Council. In this instance, the relevant authority's CPP applies.

This may include assessments and determinations made by the NSW Government or other authorities.

This CPP also **does not** apply to functions of Council that are not related to planning and development matters, or to exempt and complying development.

Planning Exhibition and Notification *requirements*

For the purposes of this CPP, the following descriptions apply:

- "Public Exhibition" means Council will formally exhibit draft plans, strategies, or development related matters and provide the community with the opportunity to view and comment.
- "Notification" means Council will send written notification to owners of land and relevant stakeholders that are potentially impacted by a planning or development related matter. For development applications (DAs), the level of notification, and the distance to which the notification applies, will vary depending on the type and scale of the development proposed, as detailed in Appendix B.

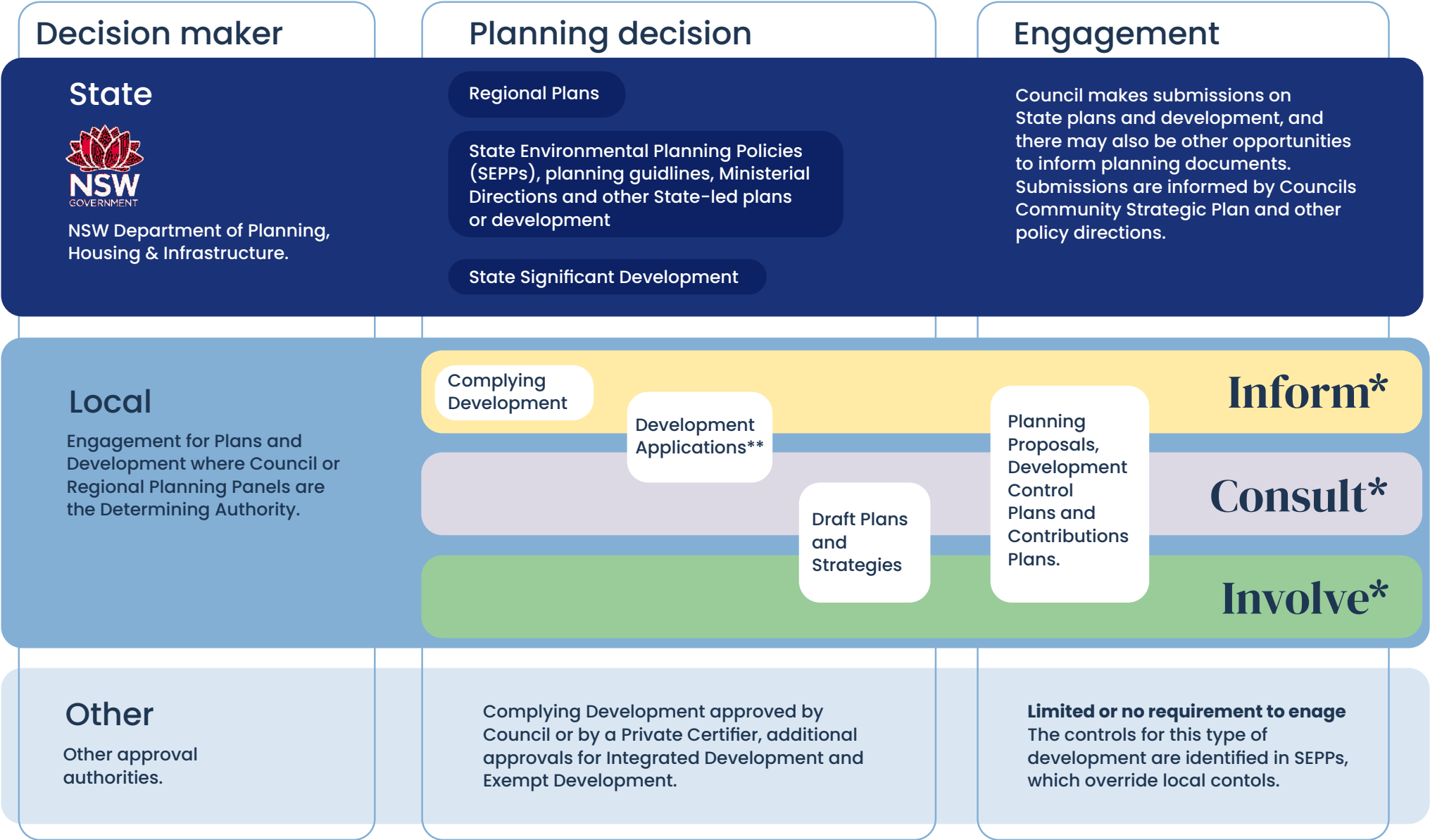
There are both mandatory and non-mandatory requirements that apply to public engagement and exhibition of a planning document or development application (DA).

1. The mandatory requirements legally safeguard the community's right to comment on planning that affects them.
2. The non-mandatory requirements reflect best practice in ensuring that the intention to actively involve the community in planning is honoured (for example, it may be worthwhile for Council to extend the notification distribution and/or exhibition timelines for projects of a sensitive or controversial nature to make sure everyone has a chance to be heard).

Public exhibition of draft planning documents requires a Council resolution before being released for comment.

The following graphic provides an overview of the levels of engagement that Council can provide for different types of planning and development matters. Council may consider more or less engagement as necessary, depending on the nature of the project or development.

Levels of *Engagement*



* These terms are from the IAP2 Participation Spectrum of the Community Engagement Strategy. The level of engagement will vary to suit each plan or development and the level of community interest.

** For some development types, notification or engagement may not be required. More information on these development types is provided in Appendix A.

Note: Council encourages developers and applicants to consult early when providing pre-lodgement advice on rezoning proposals and development applications.



Strategic planning *matters*

Table 1: Consultation timeframes for Strategic Planning matters

Planning document	Purpose of document	Minimum consultation/ exhibition period
Draft Community Participation Plans (CPP)	The CPP is designed to make participation in planning matters clearer for the community. It does this by setting out in one place how and when the community can participate in the planning system, Council functions, and different types of proposals	28 days
Draft Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS)	The LSPS is the key strategic document that identifies Shoalhaven’s land use planning challenges and opportunities. It sets out the related work that Council needs to do to identify and meet needs of the community over the next 15-20 years.	
Draft strategic land use studies or strategies	Documents that investigate the challenges and opportunities of managing various land uses and set long-term land use planning outcomes for a range of land use planning matters. This may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Housing Strategies• Employment Land Strategies• Rural Land Strategies• Settlement Strategies / Structure Plans• Affordable Housing Strategies	
Technical studies, policies and guidelines	Provides the technical evidence base or policy direction to be implemented in the Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS), Local Environmental Plan (LEP) or Development Control Plan (DCP)	

Planning document	Purpose of document	Minimum consultation/ exhibition period
Planning Proposals to amend Shoalhaven Local Environmental Plan (LEP) 2014	Shoalhaven LEP 2014 sets the overarching land use controls for Shoalhaven. Planning Proposals can: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amend land use planning controls • Reclassify Council-owned land • Make administrative changes to Shoalhaven LEP 2014. 	28 days, or as specified in the Gateway Determination
Draft Shoalhaven Development Control Plan (DCP) 2014	Shoalhaven DCP 2014 provides details, consideration and guidance for the assessment of development proposals.	28 days
Draft Contributions Plans	The Contributions Plan sets the amount and reasoning for local infrastructure contributions levied against developers to service new developments.	
Draft Voluntary Planning Agreement (VPA)	A VPA is an arrangement between a developer(s) and Council where the developer seeks to deliver a material public benefit (usually a monetary contribution or physical infrastructure). A VPA can be offered in connection with a planning proposal, development application (DA), modification of a development consent, or an application for complying development.	
Plans for urban renewal areas and masterplans	Plans for defined precincts that set a vision and overall plan to guide future development and positive outcomes for the community.	42 days
Re-exhibition of any matter referred to above		As per the original exhibition period

Notification and Public Exhibition requirements for *strategic planning matters*

The level of engagement on a draft strategic planning document will vary according to the nature and scale of the document. At a minimum, Council will:

- Provide written notice to affected landowners.
- Publish a Public Notice on Council's website.
- Provide written notice to relevant Community Consultative Bodies (CCBs) and Local Aboriginal Land Councils (LALCs).

Additional activities may include:

- Notification to peak representative bodies, Government Agencies and other key stakeholders.
- Online exhibition via Council's website and/or dedicated project webpage using the Get Involved platform.
- Media Release.
- Social media presence.
- Community information sessions.
- Report and/or presentation to relevant Community Consultative Bodies (CCBs), Committees of Council and/or peak representative bodies.

Where a draft proposal or strategy is likely to affect the broader community, additional residents and stakeholders may also be notified. Notification will be based on the data in Council's records at the time of notification. Changes to land ownership will not trigger renotification or re-exhibition. This shall be a due diligence requirement for an incoming purchaser.

Council will recognise community views and concerns and ensure that these are reflected as inputs into Council's final decision.

Council will ensure that reasons for decisions are provided in the Council Report or through the NSW Planning Portal, where relevant.



Development Assessment *matters*

All property owners who, in the opinion of Council, may be affected by a development proposal shall be notified in writing, in accordance with Appendix B – Community Consultation Matrix, or as considered appropriate by Council.

For the purposes of notification, property owners also include:

- Landowners who benefit from a right-of-carriageway (ROW), if deemed affected by the development, and
- Tenants of land owned by a public housing provider

In certain circumstances, Council may use its discretion to notify beyond the nominated buffer zones, or to notify relevant Community Consultative Bodies (CCBs) and/or Chambers of Commerce. There may also be other times that an application may be notified and exhibited, as detailed in Appendix C.

The extent of the notification process will be determined by a number of factors, including, but not limited to:

- The siting of the development and its proximity to boundaries.
- The design of the development, and in particular its height, bulk and scale and its relationship to the character of existing development in the vicinity and the streetscape.
- The use of proposed development and potential impacts on neighbouring properties, including overshadowing and amenity impacts.
- The views to and from adjoining land, and affecting view corridors.
- The potential impact of drainage of the site.
- Any relevant matter for consideration under Section 4.15 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment (EP&A) Act 1979*.
- The known level of community interest in a proposed development, at the discretion of Council.

Exempt and complying developments, and other development/activities considered minor in nature, are unlikely to adversely affect other property owners and will not be notified (see Appendix A).



An overview of the minimum exhibition and notification timeframes for different development types is provided in Table 2. These timeframes may be extended beyond the minimum timeframes stated, at the discretion of Council.

Table 2: Consultation timeframes for Development Matters

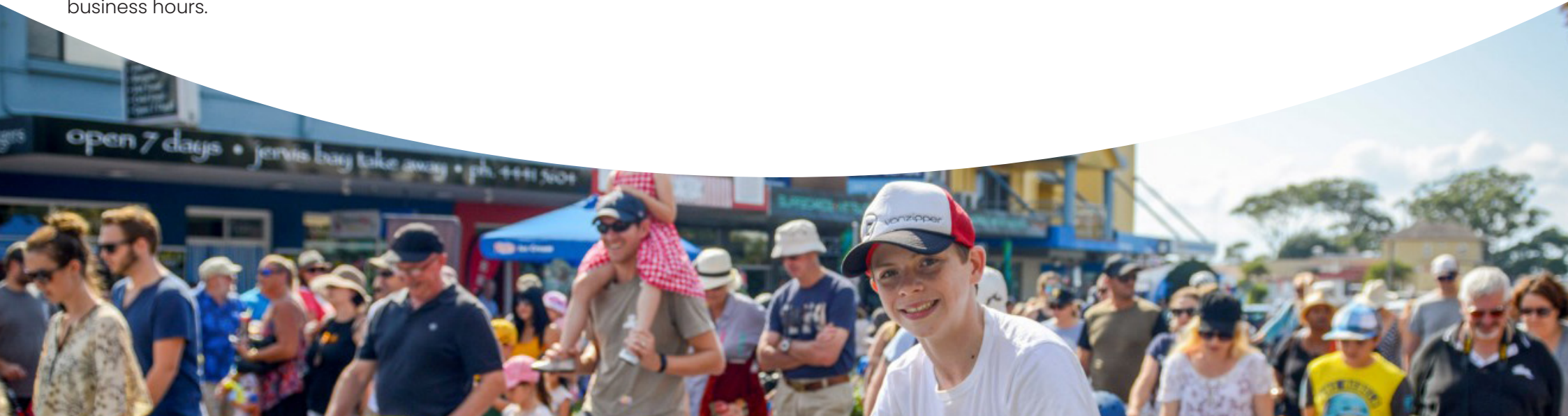
Development type	What it is	Minimum consultation/exhibition period
Exempt and Complying Development	<p>Development that does not require the lodgement of a development application (DA), or its assessment and determination by Council. Development of this nature can either be done without an assessment or approval process (as exempt development) or through a fast-track assessment process (as complying development).</p> <p>Further information on exempt or complying development is outlined at https://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/assess-and-regulate/development-assessment/planning-approval-pathways/complying-development.</p> <p>For development that qualifies as complying development, approval can be sought through Council or a suitably accredited Private Certifier.</p>	The period (if any) is determined by the person or body responsible for publicly exhibiting the application or matter.
Local Development Applications (DAs)	For development under Council's local planning controls including, but not limited to new dwellings and commercial, retail or industrial sites	14 days (can be reduced to 7 days in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of Council).
Regional Development Applications (DAs)	<p>Development referred to in the <i>Environmental Planning and Assessment (EP&A) Act 1979</i>, <i>Environmental Planning and Assessment (EP&A) Regulation 2021</i>, and Schedule 6 of State Environmental Planning Policy (Planning Systems) 2021.</p> <p>Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional development applications (DAs) are lodged, notified, and assessed by Council. Council's Section 4.15 assessment report will be forwarded to the NSW Southern Regional Planning Panel (SRPP) for consideration. A decision on the application will be made by the Southern Regional Planning Panel (SRPP). Council will then issue the consent or refusal and further notify the applicant and those who had made submissions of the Southern Regional Planning Panel's (SRPP) determination. 	30 days

Development type	What it is	Minimum consultation/exhibition period
Integrated Development	Development requiring approval under another Act or Regulation, in addition to the <i>Environmental Planning and Assessment (EP&A) Act 1979</i>	30 days
Nominated Integrated Development	Requires an additional approval under the following legislation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Heritage Act 1977</i> • <i>Water Management Act 2000</i>, or • <i>Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997</i> 	30 days
Designated Development	For development likely to have a higher impact, or that is located in or near environmentally sensitive areas	30 days
Environmental Impact Statements (EIS) obtained under Division 5.1 of the <i>Environmental Planning and Assessment (EP&A) Act 1979</i>	Supports certain development applications (DAs) by identifying and responding to any environmental impacts of the development.	28 days Council is not required to make available for public inspection any part of an EIS whose publication would, in the opinion of Council, be contrary to the public interest because of its confidential nature or for any other reason.
Development proposed to Impact Threatened Species	Development to which section 7.7(2) of the <i>Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016</i> or section 221ZW of the <i>Fisheries Management Act 1994</i> applies.	28 days
Category 1 Remediation works	Remediation works requiring consent are governed by State Environmental Planning Policy (SEPP) (Resilience and Hazards) 2021 (Chapter 4).	28 days
Re-exhibition of amended applications	For amendments made to development applications (DAs) under assessment, prior to determination.	The period (if any) determined by the person or body responsible for publicly exhibiting the application or matter.
Modification of development consents that are required to be notified and/or publicly exhibited	Modification of a development consent must take place in accordance with the <i>Environmental Planning & Assessment Regulation 2021</i> and/or at the discretion of Council.	14 days, or in accordance with the notification and/or exhibition requirements of the original application.

Development type	What it is	Minimum consultation/exhibition period
Council-related Development Applications (DAs)	<p>Development applications (DAs) for which Council is the consent authority that are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Made by or on behalf of the Council • For development on public land, other than a public road within the meaning of the <i>Local Government Act 1993</i>: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Of which Council is an owner, lessee or licensee, or o Otherwise vested in or under the control of the Council. <p>Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council development applications (DAs) must be accompanied by a statement explaining how Council will manage potential conflicts of interest, or if there is no management strategy, a statement to that effect. • Council development applications (DAs) must not be determined unless Council has an adopted conflict of interest policy and that council had regard to that policy. 	28 days

All local development applications (DAs) and regional development applications (DAs) are available for viewing on Council's DA Tracking website at: <https://www3.shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au/masterviewUI/modules/ApplicationMaster/Default.aspx>. Information about regional development applications (DAs) can also be found on the NSW Planning Portal at: <https://www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/planningpanels>.

Information about applications lodged prior to 1 January 2006 is available by contacting Council's Development Services on 1300 293 111 during business hours.



Notification and Public Exhibition requirements for *Development Assessment matters*

The level of notification and/or public exhibition requirements on a development application (DA) will vary according to the nature and scale of the development. For proposals that require notification, Council will, at a minimum:

- Provide written notice to landowners in accordance with Appendix B.
- Provide all relevant information on Council's website
- Make all relevant documents publicly available at Council's Administration Building.
- For certain development proposals, Public Notice will also be provided at the affected property.
- Where a proposed development is likely to affect the broader community, additional residents and stakeholders may also be notified.

It is noted that other legislation and/or environmental planning instruments (EPIs) set minimum notification and/or exhibition requirements. Where there is an inconsistency in exhibition timeframes between this CPP and any relevant legislation or environmental planning instrument (EPI), the longer period applies.

Development applications (DAs) will be notified after the registration of the application; however, such notification may be delayed if the application is incomplete, or insufficient supporting information has been provided.

Notes:

1. For privacy reasons, copies of residential floor plans or other sensitive uses cannot be made available without the written consent of the landowner or Applicant
2. Should an application require re-notification, this will be at the expense of the applicant in accordance with Council's Fees and Charges.



Who will be notified

In addition to the mandatory minimum requirements provided in this Plan, Council officers will determine what advertising and notification is appropriate, depending on significance and likely impact of a proposed development. Council may, at its discretion, choose to increase a notification area or use other methods to engage with the community.

Notification will be based on the data in Council's records at the time of notification. Changes to land ownership will not trigger renotification. This shall be a due diligence requirement for an incoming purchaser.

Form of Notice

Development application (DA) notification shall contain:

- An invitation to inspect the application
- The property description or address of the site affected by the application
- A description of the specific development for which approval is being sought
- The application reference number
- The name of the applicant
- Details of where the application can be inspected
- A note explaining that some documents relating to the application will be available on-line via Council's DA Tracking facility, and the progress of the application can be checked via this on-line link
- A statement that any person may make a submission in writing
- A statement that any submissions received will be made publicly available on-line; and
- The time within which written submissions will be received.

A sign may be erected to identify those sites the subject of a development application (DA) and/or tree removal application, if Council considers such a sign to be appropriate having regard to the nature of the application or the location of the site. Such consideration will have regard to Council's obligations under the *Environmental Planning & Assessment (EP&A) Act 1979* and the *Environmental Planning & Assessment Regulation 2021*.





How to have your say

You can share your ideas, concerns or support for a planning or development matter by making a written submission when the matter is on notification or public exhibition.



You may also make a deputation during a Council meeting or a verbal submission at any Public Hearing or Meeting, should any of these be held in relation to the matter.



Exhibition *timeframes*

Council will exhibit a draft proposal for the minimum timeframes set out in this CPP and any other relevant legislation or environmental planning instrument (EPI). Where there is an inconsistency in exhibition timeframes between this CPP and any relevant legislation or EPI, the longer period applies. Minimum exhibition periods identified in this CPP are in calendar days and include weekends and public holidays.

Extension of exhibition timeframes

An exhibition period may be extended beyond the minimum timeframes identified in the CPP if:

- The proposed changes may, in Council's opinion, generate adverse impacts, having regard to the environment, scale, and proposed location.
- An exhibition period ends on a weekday or public holiday. In this instance, the exhibition will end on the next business day.
- The proposed planning changes are complex or may affect a significant number of properties.
- Council decides to extend the exhibition period due to high levels of community interest.
- The exhibition occurs over the Christmas – New Year period. In this instance:
 - o The period between 20 December and 10 January (inclusive) will be excluded from the calculation of a period of public exhibition in accordance with the *Environmental Planning and Assessment (EP&A) Act 1979*
 - o For significant strategic planning documents, or development applications (DAs) that are:
 1. Classified as Level 3 or above*, and
 2. Placed on exhibition between the end of the first full week in December and 15 January, inclusive,
 the public exhibition and submissions period will be extended to 31 January, at a minimum.

*Refer to Table 2: Consultation for Development Matters and Appendix B: Community Consultation Matrix for Development Applications (DAs) for development categories.



Submissions



The community and other stakeholders may comment on a draft plan or proposed development by making a written submission when the matter is on public exhibition, or by making a verbal submission at a Public Hearing, if one is to be held. Anyone may make a submission regardless of whether they have received a notification letter.

Submissions must be made in writing and received by Council by the closing date. Written submissions can be made via:

- Post: The Chief Executive Officer Shoalhaven City Council PO Box 42, Nowra NSW 2541
- Email: council@shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au

In the interest of public transparency, any submission made on a local or regional development application (DA) will be made available in its entirety on Council's DA Tracking website. Submissions may also be made publicly available on the NSW Planning Portal. Submissions on other planning matters may also become public documents and may be viewed by other persons on request.

Submission Requirements for Development Applications (DAs)

Submissions must be lodged online via Council's e-property platform on Council's website.

Submissions should:

- Contain the name and email address of the person making the submission, to allow acknowledgement letters to be sent.
- Contain the development application (DA) number and address of the property that is the subject of the development proposal.
- Detail the submission's purpose and all reasons for the submission.
- Be restricted to environmental and planning matters relating to a development application (DA) and should not contain specific private, defamatory and risk to security information.
- State the reasons for the objection, if a submission is an objection to a development application (DA).

Anonymous submissions will not be accepted.

All persons who lodge a submission are required to declare any relevant political donations and/or gifts in accordance with Section 10.4(5) of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment (EP&A) Act 1979*.

Petitions and pre-printed form letters, which have been individually signed, will be considered but not formally acknowledged. Please refer to Council's guidance on how to prepare a petition to ensure it can be considered: <https://www.shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au/Council/About-Shoalhaven-City-Council/Petitions>



Submissions and personal information

Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009, Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 (NSW) and Privacy Commission's Guidelines 2020 apply to any personal information provided in a submission on a planning or development matter. A submitter's name and property address may not be redacted from submissions and may appear on Council's website, unless requested by the submitter and approved by Council.

In accordance with the *Environmental Planning & Assessment (EP&A) Act 1979* and related regulations, all submissions received by Council will be placed on the appropriate Council file and may be disclosed to Councillors, Council staff, planning consultants engaged by Council or member of the public on request.

Pursuant to the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009*, Council is obliged to allow inspection of its documents, including submissions received by Council.

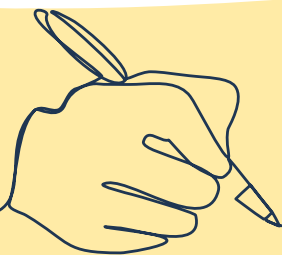
Public hearings

An independently chaired Public Hearing will be held in the following circumstances:

- For all planning proposals to reclassify Council-owned land
- At Council's discretion, should a submission be received from the community requesting a Public Hearing in relation to a draft planning proposal.

During a Public Hearing, you may make a verbal submission that will be recorded and reported to the consent authority in a Public Hearing Report, which will then be made publicly available. Should a Public Hearing be held, written notification of the date, time and location of the hearing will be provided to all submitters and also published on Council's website.

Response to submissions on Development Applications (DAs)



Submitters Briefing

Where Council has received numerous submissions objecting to a development proposal (including regional development applications (DAs)), a Submitters Briefing may be organised and the period for the making of submissions may be extended. Such decision is at the discretion of Director, City Development. The period extended for submissions must have regard to Council's obligation to finalise its assessment of the application.

A Submitters Briefing aims to provide a forum in which community members who have objected or raised concerns about a proposal, the Applicant and their representatives, Councillors and Council staff can meet to review and discuss the proposal. Council and the Applicant may deliver a short presentation on the matter, if required.

A Submitters Briefing is not a Public Meeting. Only those persons who have made submissions, the relevant Community Consultative Body (CCB), the Applicant and Councillors will be notified of the meeting. These meetings may be held via video conferencing or face to face at the discretion of Council.



Public Meetings

Where it is considered that a development proposal will generate significant community interest, Council may arrange a Public Meeting to enable:

- Details of the proposal to be more fully explained;
- Community concerns to be discussed; and
- Conflicts to be identified and possibly resolved.

Public Meetings generally are held following a Council resolution. Such meetings are attended by Councillors, Council staff, the Applicant and any interested parties.

Public Meetings will be notified on Council's website at least seven days prior to the meeting. Any person objecting to the development will be individually invited to attend the Public Meeting, and the relevant Community Consultative Body (CCB) will also be notified. Meetings may be held via video conferencing or face to face at the discretion of Council.

Where there is no Council resolution to hold a Public Meeting, the period extended for submissions must have regard to Council's obligation to finalise its assessment of the application



Mediation

In exceptional circumstances, mediation may be undertaken at the discretion of Council.



Administrative Requirements for Submitters Briefings and Public Meetings

Generally, for administrative purposes, a minimum of three weeks is required to organise a Submitters Briefing or Public Meeting.

The likely need for a Submitters Briefing or Public Meeting may be identified early in the process during pre-lodgement discussions or during the preliminary stages of development assessment. However, it is not always possible to identify the need for such meetings until the exhibition period has closed. Those matters which may influence the decision to convene a meeting are:

- Significant local response to the proposal
- The scale of the proposal
- Whether or not the proposal is consistent with surrounding development
- The environmental significance attributed to the site and its surrounds
- History of resident concerns regarding development issues in the locality.

Only one Submitters Briefing **or** one Public Meeting may be convened per application, if required. Council may convene a Submitters Briefing if considered appropriate. Public Meetings may be convened by the Mayor on behalf of Council.

Subject to the availability of the Mayor and Councillors, Submitters Briefings and Public Meetings will be arranged at a convenient time and location for the community and the Applicant. Video conferencing may also be available.



Deputations on Regional Development Applications (DAs)

Any deputation to Council on a regional development application (DA) will be a separate process to the assessment of the application under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment (EP&A) Act 1979*.

For certain matters, the Southern Regional Planning Panel (SRPP) may hold Public Meetings, which can be held in person, by video link or other electronic means.

Any person (individual or on behalf of a group) who made a submission during the public exhibition period may request to address the Southern Regional Planning Panel (SRPP), the independent body that determines regional development applications (DAs), during a Public Meeting. Requests can be made to the Southern Regional Planning Panel (SRPP) Secretariat prior to any meeting. Further information is available on the NSW Planning Portal at: <https://www.planningportal.nsw.gov.au/planningpanels>

Decision making

If this CPP requires a draft plan or development application (DA) to be publicly exhibited, a decision on the matter will not be made until after the conclusion of the exhibition period.

Council will review all submissions, and consider the issues raised within them, prior to making a decision on a draft plan or development application (DA). Depending on the number and nature of submissions received, it may be necessary for matters raised within the submissions to be reported to Council for consideration.

If the matter is going to be reported to Council, submitters will be notified of the anticipated meeting date. Council meetings are generally held in the Council Chambers at Council's Nowra Administration Building. Members of the public are welcome to attend, or watch the meetings via live stream at:

<https://www.shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au/Council/Council-meetings/Stream-a-Council-meeting>

Members of the public can present directly to Council by registering to make a deputation at a Council meeting where the planning or development matter is being reported. Applications to make a deputation can be made by completing the following form on Council's website:

<https://www.shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au/Services/Deputations>

or contacting Council's Governance Team on 1300 293 111.



Decisions on development *matters*

Southern Regional Planning Panel

The Southern Regional Planning Panel (SRPP) makes decisions in our community as required by the *Environmental Planning and Assessment (EP&A) Act 1979* and the Directions from the NSW Planning Minister.

Regional development applications (DAs) will be notified and exhibited for a minimum of 30 days, except where state legislation requires a longer notification period.

When Council notifies and exhibits a development application (DA) that is to be determined by the Southern Regional Planning Panel (SRPP), advice will be provided in any notification and exhibition material for the application. However, this may not always be the case as it can change during the assessment process. For example, if, during the assessment of a Regional DA, the application is amended to such an extent that it falls below the “threshold”, a written request must be sent to the SRPP by Council for the delegation to be returned. The SRPP will then provide a written response either agreeing or disagreeing with the return of the delegation.

The elected Council may also consider submissions relating to regional development applications (DAs) in a separate committee process and may wish to separately provide a report to the Southern Regional Planning Panel (SRPP) (separate from the Section 4.15 assessment reporting).

Elected Council

If a development application (DA) is listed for consideration, or “called in” by the elected Council due to high levels of community interest, notification of the Council meeting will be provided to the applicant and all persons who made a submission on the application. As reports to Council are sometimes prepared at short notice, notification may be made by letter, email or telephone according to the circumstances of the case.

When notification of development decisions is required

Council will notify the community of its decision on a development for the following:

- The determination of an application for development consent.
- The determination of an application for the modification of a development consent that was publicly exhibited.
- The granting of an approval, or the decision to carry out development, where an environmental impact statement was publicly exhibited under Division 5.1 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment (EP&A) Act 1979*.

This notification will appear on Council’s DA Tracking website:

<https://www3.shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au/masterviewUI/modules/ApplicationMaster/default.aspx?page=search>.

Such notification will include:

- The decision,
- The date of the decision,
- The reasons for the decision (having regard to any statutory requirements applying to the decision), and
- How community views were taken into account in making the decision.

Council will also notify those people who made a submission on a development application (DA) of their decision on the matter.



Community Participation Plan: Appendix A – Development not requiring notification and/or exhibition

Development	Requirement	
<p>Dwelling houses (including additions and ancillary structures)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Detached single storey dwelling house. Does not include second-hand dwellings, additional/secondary dwellings, managers' residences.Single storey additions/alterations to detached dwellings approved by Council.Single storey carports, garages and pergolas associated with a detached dwelling house approved by Council.Development ancillary or incidental to a detached dwelling house e.g., an outbuilding with a maximum area or 40m² or 5m in height. <p>Dual occupancy ancillary structures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Single storey carports, garages and pergolas associated with a dual occupancy (attached or detached) approved by Council.	Zone	Side/Rear Boundary Setback
	The setback from any side or rear boundary of the external wall of any structure is equal to, or greater than, the following: Refer also to Notes 1 and 2 below table.	
	RU1 Primary Production	20m
	RU2 Rural Landscape	20m
	RU4 Primary Production Small Lots	Lot size up to 1ha = 10m Lot size greater than 1ha = 20m
	RU5 Village	900mm
	R1 General Residential	900mm
	R2 Low Density Residential	Lot size up to 1999m ² = 900mm Lot size between 2000m ² –3999m ² = 5m Lot size 4000m ² or greater = 7.5m
	R3 Medium Density Residential	900mm
	R5 Large Lot Residential	Lot size up to 1ha = 10m Lot size greater than 1ha = 20m
	SP3 Tourist	Lot size up to 1999m ² = 900mm Lot size between 2000m ² –3999m ² = 5m Lot size 4000m ² or greater = 7.5m
	C2 Environmental Conservation	20m
	C3 Environmental Management	20m
	C4 Environmental Living	Lot size up to 1ha = 10m Lot size greater than 1ha = 20m
Development	Requirements	
Swimming Pools and Outdoor Spa Baths	<ul style="list-style-type: none">On lots over 2000m² if the pool or outdoor spa bath (with minimum 10m side and rear boundary setback), will be ordinarily ancillary to a dwelling occupied for private use only.	

Demolition (excluding Heritage Listed buildings)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Garages, carports, and outbuildings constructed after 1990. Garages, carports, and outbuildings constructed before 1990 provided asbestos is not one of the construction materials.
Industrial uses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minor additions in keeping with surrounding developments and the local environment Change of use First occupation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing approved use. Light Industry to Light Industry. No significant effect on the surrounding owners or the community.
Commercial Uses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minor additions in keeping with surround developments and the local environment Change of use First occupation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing approved use. No significant effect on the surrounding owners or the community.
Internal Alterations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internal alterations that will not have any impact beyond the property boundary.
Tree Removal Permit Applications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All applications other than those for any tree or stand of trees likely to have direct impact on amenity of adjoining residents.
Subdivision (unless Integrated Development) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minor boundary adjustments Strata subdivisions Community title subdivisions 2-lot subdivision for existing dual occupancy developments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not requiring physical works; and Notification has already been undertaken at the development application (DA) stage.
Advertising Signs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Applications which comply with Chapter G22: Advertising Signs and Structures of Shoalhaven DCP 2014.
Amendments to Development Application (DA) prior to determination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requested by Council following preliminary assessment Requested by State Government Agencies, e.g., Rural Fire Service (RFS) following preliminary assessment. Made in response to submissions, objecting to the proposal, received. Which are the result of conditions imposed on an application previously notified.
Construction Certificate, Occupation Certificate and Compliance Certificate Applications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Made under Part 6 of the <i>Environmental Planning and Assessment (EP&A) Act 1979</i>.
Exempt and Complying Developments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As prescribed in SEPP (Exempt and Complying Development Codes) 2008, Part 3 and Schedule 2 of Shoalhaven Local Environmental Plan (LEP) 2014 and as set out in Shoalhaven Development Control Plan (DCP) 2014.

Note 1: In the case of battle-axe allotments, the building meets the boundary setback requirements in relation to all boundaries (excluding the access handle).

Note 2: An allotment may be affected by a restriction-as-to-user under Section 88B of the *Conveyancing Act 1919* which defines a building envelope.



Community Participation Plan: Appendix B – Community Consultation Matrix for Development Applications (DAs)

Level of Community Consultation	Methods of Consultation	Issues to Consider when Determining Levels of Consultation	Examples – Depending on Particular Circumstances some Discretion will be used
Level 1: Neighbour notification within buffer of 25m in urban areas and 100m in rural areas to the development site.	Written notification to all property owners affected within buffer area.	Development: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• is of small to moderate scale• may impact on views or amenity of residents in the neighbourhood• may impact on the character of the neighbourhood; and• raises environmental issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ancillary residential development such as garages, carports, additions to existing dwelling-houses and swimming pools• additions to existing commercial or industrial premises• two-storey dwelling-houses• two-lot subdivisions other than the subdivision of existing dual occupancy developments• Bed & breakfast accommodation in an existing dwelling-house• dual occupancy development• development accessed by a right-of-carriageway• new retail, commercial and industrial activities• home activities with potential for external impacts; and• purpose-built bed & breakfast accommodation.
Level 2: Neighbour notification within buffer of 60m in urban areas and 200m in rural areas to the development site.	Written notification to all property owners affected within buffer area. Relevant CCBs and Chambers of Commerce may be notified if deemed necessary by the assessing officer.	Development: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• is of moderate scale and significance• may impact on views or amenity of residents in the local area• may have impacts concerning the local community; and• raises significant environmental issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• tourist development• medium density development up to and including 10 units• subdivisions of 3-10 lots• childcare centres; and• commercial and industrial proposals.

Level of Community Consultation	Methods of Consultation	Issues to Consider when Determining Levels of Consultation	Examples – Depending on Particular Circumstances some Discretion will be used
Level 3: Neighbour notification within buffer of 120m in urban areas and 500m in rural areas to the development site.	<p>Written notification to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All property owners affected within buffer area. Relevant CCBs and Chambers of Commerce notified. <p>Exhibition – Council Website.</p>	<p>Development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> is major raises major environmental issues; and may raise concerns for nearby residents, the wider community, and visitors to the area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> shopping centres medium density development in excess of 10 units subdivisions in excess of 10 lots icon sites major industrial developments major community projects, e.g., cultural centres; public swimming pools, sports facilities/ complexes any development of public open space in Council ownership or Crown Land where Council is Trust Manager large retail; and any development involving the sale of liquor or adult goods or services.

Note 1: Heritage Items – Partial or total demolition

An application for partial or total demolition of a building which is listed as an item of environmental heritage in Shoalhaven Local Environmental Plan (LEP) 2014 must be exhibited and notified for the number of days in relation to the Level of community consultation required in the above table (minimum period of 21 days).

Note 2: Applications which include a clause 4.6 Variation Request

Any development application (DA) that includes a 'request for variation' under Cl 4.6 of the relevant planning instrument must be notified for a minimum of 21 days or the minimum specified for the development type in the above table.

Note 3: Regional Development Applications

Regional development applications (DAs) will be notified and exhibited for a minimum period of thirty (30) days, except where state legislation requires a longer notification period. When we notify and exhibit an application for development which is to be determined by the Southern Regional Planning Panel (SRPP), we will let you know in our notification and exhibition material. However, this might not always be the case as it can change during the assessment process. Refer to page 63 for further information.

Note 4: Council Development Applications (DAs)

Council development applications (DAs) will be notified and exhibited for a minimum of 28 days.

Note 5: For the purposes of notification, property owners also include:

- Landowners who benefit from a right-of-carriageway (ROW), if deemed affected by the development, and
- Tenants of land owned by a public housing provider.



Community Participation Plan: Appendix C – Other development assessment exhibition and notification timeframes

Type of application for development	Number of days for exhibition or notification
Application for modification of development consent under section 4.55(1) of the <i>Environmental Planning and Assessment (EP&A) Act 1979</i> to correct a minor error, misdescription or miscalculation	Not required
Application for modification of development consent under section 4.55(1A) of the <i>Environmental Planning and Assessment (EP&A) Act 1979</i> involving minimal environmental impact will not be notified.	<p>Not required for applications including the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Minor modifications that do not materially change the external appearance of the development and will have no adverse impact on the amenity of adjoining properties.- Applications for deletion of conditions where the modification relates only to conditions of development consent; the grounds for modification are that the condition is unreasonable and/or inappropriate in the circumstances; the application is the first one made in relation to the development; and the application is received within 12 months of the endorsement date of the development consent.- Applications for an extension of time for an Advertising Sign.- Applications for an extension of time for a Home Activity, where there is no history of complaints in relation to that activity.- Applications for an extension of time for a Market, where there is no history of complaints in relation to that market. <p>All other section 4.55(1A) applications will follow the minimum days and method specific in Appendix B for the types of applications listed, except as provided by the <i>Environmental Planning and Assessment (EP&A) Act 1979</i> and <i>Environmental Planning and Assessment (EP&A) Regulation 2021</i>.</p>



All other modification of development proposals (section 4.55(2) and section 4.56 of the <i>Environmental Planning and Assessment (EP&A) Act 1979</i>	Notice of the proposed modification will be notified and/or exhibited in the same manner as the original development application (DA) was notified or exhibited (other than where the original consent was for Designated Development, State Significant Advertised Development, Integrated Development and any other advertised development where Council is not the consent authority, with the exception of the Land and Environment Court). Note: Any person that made a submission on the original application will be notified for modification of development consent under section 4.56 of the Act.
Application for review of determination	The same manner as the original development application (DA) was notified or exhibited.





Address all correspondence to:
The Chief Executive Officer
PO Box 42, Nowra NSW 2541
shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au/contact
1300 293 111