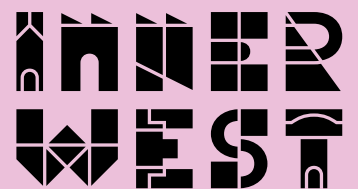




**Community Engagement
Strategy 2022–24**
Adopted December 2022



Inner West Council acknowledges the Gadigal and Wangal peoples of the Eora Nation, who are the traditional custodians of the lands in which the Inner West local government area is situated.

We celebrate the survival of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, heritage, beliefs and their relationship with the land and water. We acknowledge the continuing importance of this relationship to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples living today, despite the devastating impacts of European invasion. We express our sorrow for past injustices and support the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders to self determination.

Inner West Council understands our responsibilities and role in working with the Aboriginal community to promote cultural heritage and history, address areas of disadvantage, and protect and preserve the environment as well as sites of significance to Aboriginal peoples. In doing so, we acknowledge that Aboriginal cultures continue to strengthen and enrich our community.

Today, diverse groups of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples live and work across Inner West. We admire the resilience displayed in their significant achievements and in making immense contributions to both Council and the broader community.

Inner West Council is committed to embedding the values and perspectives of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to ensure we learn from the mistakes of our past and forge a positive future of long-lasting value built on mutual respect, equality and opportunity.



About this strategy

This document contains Council's:

- Community Engagement Strategy (Local Government Act s402)
- Community Participation Plan (Environmental Planning and Assessment Act Part 2 Division 2.6 Section 2.23)

Alternative formats

This document contains important information about Council's community engagement.

If you would like information supplied in another language or format, please contact us Monday to Friday, 9am-4pm via these free community services.

Free interpreter via TIS National: 13 14 50

Voice Relay: 1300 555 727

TTY: 133 677

SMS Relay: 0423 677 767

You will need to provide our contact number: 02 9392 5000

Community languages

Talk free with an interpreter call 131 450

Chinese Simplified	我们说普通话。如需免费传译服务，请致电131 450，然后请传译员致电 02 9392 5000 接通 Inner West市政府。
Traditional Chinese	我們能說您的語言。如需免費傳譯服務，請致電131 450，然後請傳譯員致電 02 9392 5000 接通 Inner West市政府。
Greek	Μιλάμε τη γλώσσα σας. Για να μιλήσετε δωρεάν σε διερμηνέα καλέστε το 131 450. Ζητήστε τους να καλέσουν το Δήμο Inner West Council στο 02 9392 5000.
Italian	Parliamo la vostra lingua. Per parlare gratuitamente con un interprete chiamate il numero 131 450. Chiedetegli di chiamare il Comune di Inner West al numero 02 9392 5000.
Vietnamese	Chúng tôi nói ngôn ngữ của quý vị. Muốn nói chuyện có thông dịch viên miễn phí, hãy gọi số 131 450. Yêu cầu họ gọi cho Hội đồng Thành phố Inner West qua số 02 9392 5000.

Contact us

innerwest.nsw.gov.au

Phone: 02 9392 5000 | Email: council@innerwest.nsw.gov.au

Facebook: [/innerwestcouncil](https://www.facebook.com/innerwestcouncil) | Twitter: [/IWCouncil](https://twitter.com/IWCouncil) | Instagram: [@innerwestcouncil](https://www.instagram.com/innerwestcouncil)

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Our vision

We are Inner West, land of the Gadigal and Wangal peoples, whose rich cultures, heritage and history we acknowledge and respect. We are defined by our diversity of people, places and ideas. We are an inclusive, vibrant, caring and progressive community where everyone is welcome, people and nature live in harmony, and creativity is a way of life.



Our purpose and values

Our purpose and values drive the culture of the organisation and our interactions with Inner West communities.

Our purpose

We are here to be of service to our local community and make the Inner West a great place to be.



Our values



Integrity

We are responsive, accountable and will follow through for each other and the community

We are transparent and open about the reasons for our decisions and actions

We create a safe and trusting environment by walking our talk

We are fair and ethical in everything we do

We do what we say we are going to do



Respect

We treat everyone equitably and fairly

We embrace diversity

We acknowledge and value the needs of everyone

We actively seek to listen and understand each other's point of view

We value our environment and always consider our impact

We value feedback from our community and will respond in a timely manner

We actively engage with and deliver for our community



Innovation

We foster creativity and the open exchange of ideas

We value and seek out new ways of doing things and explore opportunities

We pursue excellence in everything we do

We honour what we have while seeking to improve

We adapt and change creatively

We adapt our services for future generations



Compassion

We treat each other with care and keep each other safe

We approach each other and our community with empathy and ask how we can help

We acknowledge our differences and empower each other to succeed

We care about each other and our community's concerns

We nurture relationships and cultivate inclusiveness and unity

We proactively listen to, respond to and support each other



Collaboration

We evolve by working together and learning from each other

We grow by sharing our time and ideas

We celebrate each other's achievements

We work together to achieve our common purpose

Introduction

The community is at the heart of everything Council does. Council's commitment to engaging our community is embedded in our purpose, "We are here to be of service to our local community and make the Inner West a great place to be" and in our values of integrity, respect, collaboration, compassion and innovation.

Our community engagement provides opportunities for the Inner West's broad and diverse community to participate in and influence Council's decision-making, direction and activities.

We recognise that local knowledge, ideas and feedback from the community are essential to ensure Council's decisions and actions improve community wellbeing and long-term sustainability.

Community engagement is the basis for understanding decisions, sharing perspectives, improving outcomes and building trust between Council, the community, and other partners. It encourages open dialogue, ensures Council understands community needs and expectations, identifies critical issues and opportunities early and fosters local problem-solving.

Legislation

NSW Local Government Act: the purpose of the Community Engagement Strategy is to engage the local community when developing Council's plans, policies and programs, and in determining our activities. The Community Engagement Strategy is part of the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework which is described on the next page.

NSW Environmental Planning and Assessment Act: councils also prepare a Community Participation Plan which sets out public exhibition and notification requirements for land-use planning matters such as development applications. See Section 9.

Other legislation guides community engagement in specific circumstances.



The Inner West community has expressed a strong desire to shape the Inner West, as reflected in Outcome 5.1 of the Inner West Community Strategic Plan – Our Inner West 2036:

People are well-informed and actively engaged in local decision making and problem solving.

Principles of Engagement

Five core principles drive Council's approach to engaging the community. A principles-based approach recognises that we engage the community for a range of purposes and specific circumstances.

Authentic

We value local knowledge, ideas and feedback and encourage dialogue

We explain why we are engaging and how we will use community input

We provide adequate notice and time for community response

Planned

We engage as early as possible to identify critical issues and opportunities

We coordinate engagement to guard against 'engagement fatigue' where people feel over-consulted

Tailored

We use a range of tools and techniques appropriate to each engagement

We offer face-to-face and online opportunities

Inclusive

We recognise and value community diversity

We support participation e.g. community language translations, accessible venues and formats

Transparent

We provide clear and relevant information without jargon

We publish a summary of community feedback and how it was considered

We communicate a decision or outcome to people who participated in the process

The four social justice principles of access, equity, participation and rights also apply to all Council's planning and service delivery.



Local Democracy

Councillors

Council is governed by 15 elected representatives, called councillors. Inner West has five wards, each represented by three councillors.

Visit Council's website for a more detailed ward map.

The Mayor and Councillors represent the interests of the residents and ratepayers of the Inner West. Their role is defined by the NSW Local Government Act. They provide leadership and guidance to the community and encourage communication and engagement between Council and the community. They ensure the organisation is strategically heading towards the direction set by the Community Strategic Plan, determine Council's services and allocate funding.

Council complies with the Model Code of Conduct prescribed by NSW Office of Local Government.

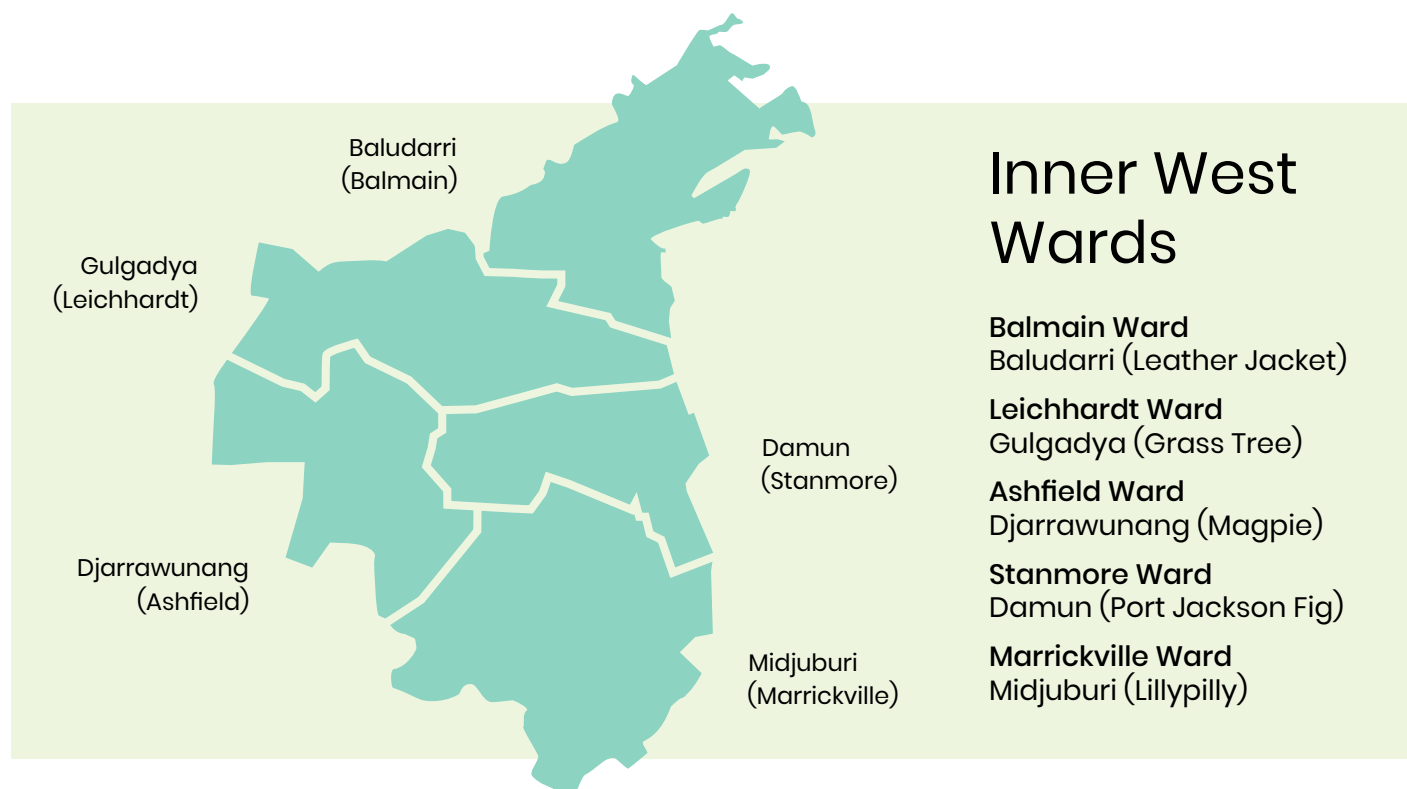
Council meets monthly to consider reports and make decisions, called Council resolutions. Community



Inner West's new councillors, elected in December 2021

engagement outcomes are often included in reports to support councillors' decision-making.

Community engagement is also used to inform Council's operations, such as service improvements, program evaluation and project implementation. It assists staff to understand local issues, needs and gaps.



Inner West Wards

Balmain Ward
Baludarra (Leather Jacket)

Leichhardt Ward
Gulgadya (Grass Tree)

Ashfield Ward
Djarrawunang (Magpie)

Stanmore Ward
Damun (Port Jackson Fig)

Marrickville Ward
Midjuburi (Lillypilly)

Who we engage

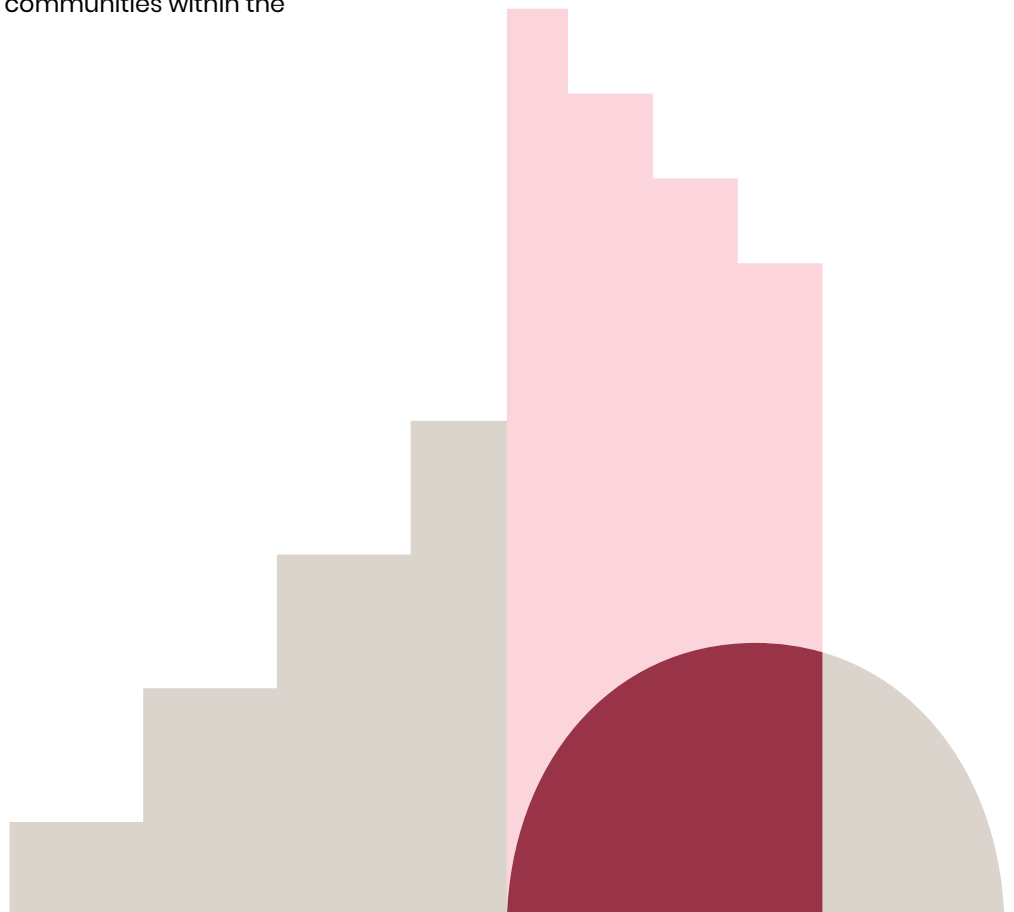
The Inner West is 35 km² and includes 24 suburbs from Birchgrove in the north, Newtown to the east, Tempe to the south and Croydon to the west. The Gadigal and Wangal peoples of the Eora Nation are the traditional custodians of the Inner West. The area is in close proximity to the Sydney CBD, and its thriving economic and cultural scene. The community enjoys excellent access to key services, employment opportunities, transport and cultural and recreational infrastructure.

The community is everyone who lives, works, plays, studies, conducts business, owns property, visits or uses the services, facilities and public spaces of the Inner West.

The community is not a singular entity but is made up of individuals and groups connected by geography, interest, identity, or affiliation.

Communities can be formal or informal.

People will be members of many communities within the Inner West.



Stakeholders

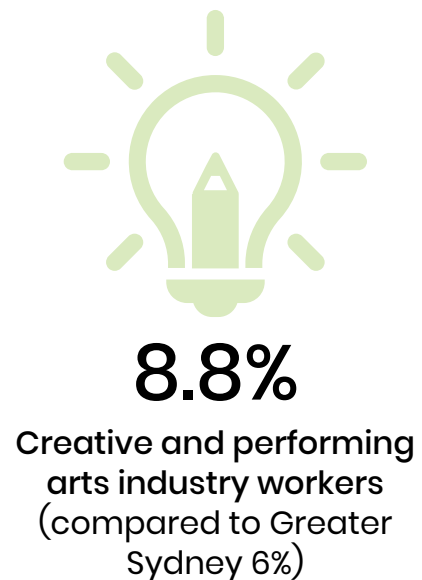
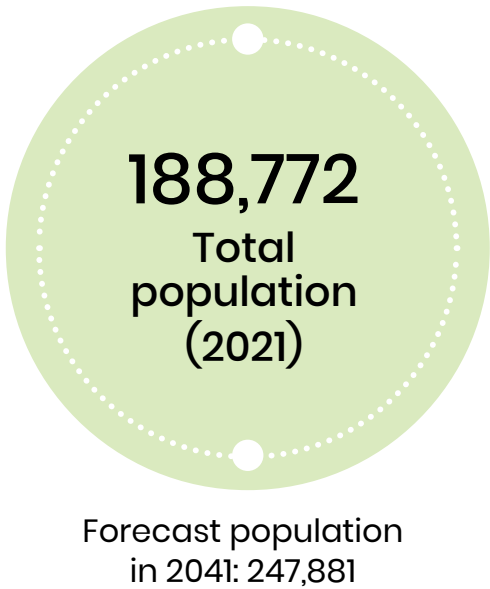
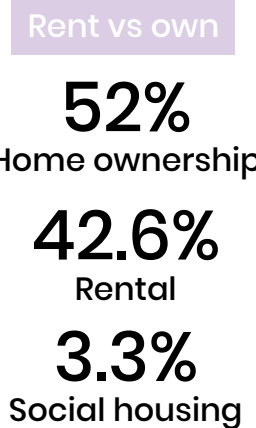
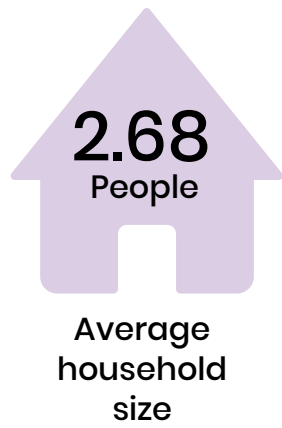
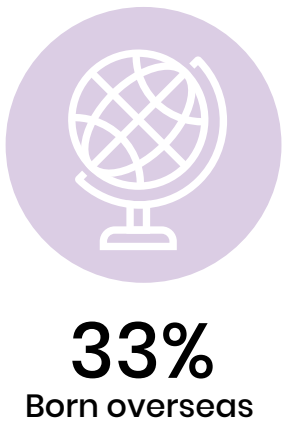
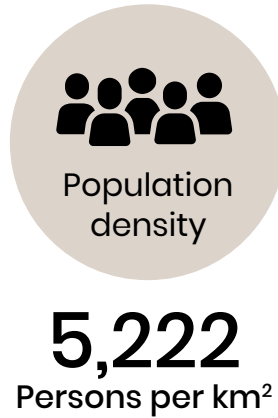
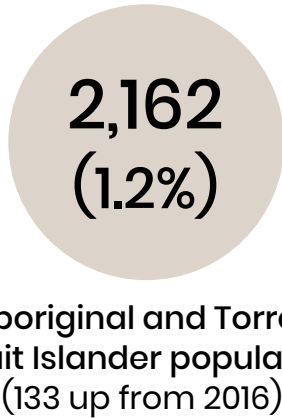
Council's community engagement will comprehensively identify stakeholders who may include individuals, groups or organisations who will be affected by or who have an interest in an area or will be affected by a decision and promote opportunities for participation to ensure a range of perspectives is heard, and the community's needs, values and expectations are represented.

Stakeholder groups who may be identified in a community engagement process include:



Residents	Future community	Internal stakeholders across Council's service units
Councillors	Cultural institutions and Neighborhoods Centres	Nongovernment organisations (NGOs) and service providers
Youth	Service/ facility users	Council's advisory committees and working groups
Interagencies	Seniors	Community groups
People from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds	Ratepayers	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
Schools and Childcare Centres	Children and families	LGBTIQ
State and Federal Government departments and agencies	People with a disability	Students
Other Councils	Business and Industry	Visitors
	People connected by a common interest or by a place	

Inner West community profile

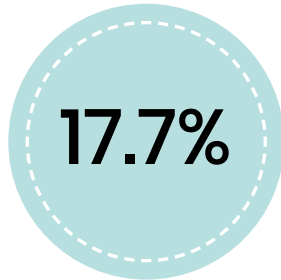




Volunteers

14.8%
compared to
11.6% in Greater
Sydney

Disability



of the Australian
population have disability

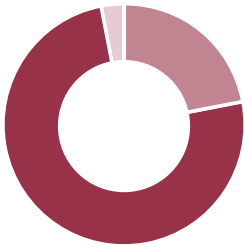
(Source: 2018 ABS Survey of
Disability, Ageing and Carers.)



48.2%
Tertiary
educated



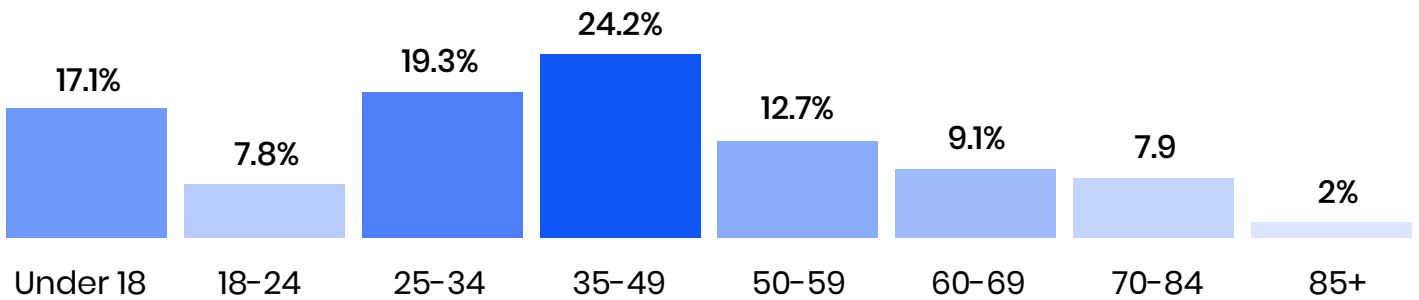
Inner West has over
20,000
local businesses
providing over
76,000
local jobs



Employment location:

- Work and live in the Inner West 22%
- Work outside the Inner West 75% (41.1% in City of Sydney)
- No fixed place of work 3%

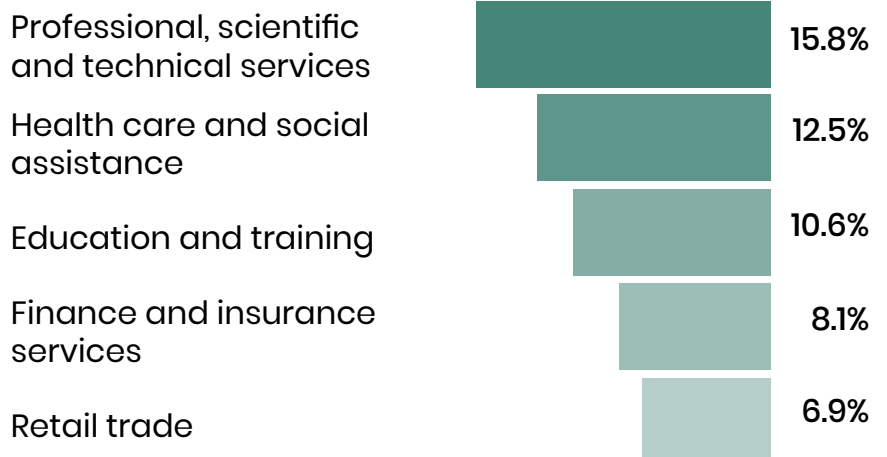
Age groups:



Top languages other than English spoken:

Mandarin	3.3%
Greek	2.7%
Italian	2.2%
Vietnamese	2%
Cantonese	1.9%
Spanish	1.5%
Arabic	1.2%
Nepali	1.1%
Portuguese	1.1%
Filipino/Tagalog	0.8%

Top industries





How we engage

Council engages the community and stakeholders through a range of methods, both online and face to face. Engagement can be about specific projects, or ongoing dialogue with key stakeholders, such as community groups, sporting groups, business and industry, State and Federal agencies, advisory groups and other partners.

Engagement program - ongoing

Local Matters Forums

A series of monthly, face-to-face forums where Ward Councillors and the executive staff of Council attend to listen to community ideas and concerns.

Your Say Inner West stalls

Stalls are held regularly at Council events and fortnightly in neighbourhoods across the Inner West.

Deliberative engagement

Many engagement processes target large numbers of people to participate and are often one-way e.g. surveys.

Deliberative engagement processes typically target a small, representative group who come together for a particular purpose, have time to consider in-depth information, participate in dialogue where evidence and perspectives are shared, and options considered and evaluated, before arriving at recommendations, often achieved through consensus.

Council has committed to incorporating deliberative engagement practices as part of our suite of techniques.

Examples include Council's Local Democracy Groups.

Council has also established a range of advisory groups that incorporate deliberative practices including working groups, reference groups and taskforces with community members. Examples include our Customer Service

committee, Pride Centre Reference Panel and Balmain Precinct working group. Opportunities to get involved are advertised through Council's communication channels.

Local Democracy Groups

Council maintains 13 Local Democracy Groups consisting of advisory committees and working groups.

Local Democracy Groups provide advice and input to support Council's decision-making and actions. Members, who are part of the Inner West community, volunteer their time to provide subject matter expertise and lived experience. The groups are facilitated by staff convenors, and Councillors often attend meetings.

All local democracy groups support the development and implementation of Council's key plans - the Community Strategic Plan and Delivery Program. Each local democracy group also has a specific purpose and policy challenges on which to deliberate.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Committee

Purpose

- assist Council with matters related to services, programs and activities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in the Inner West local government area
- provide feedback, guidance and recommendations to Council on specific issues, including strategic planning and policy
- contribute local knowledge regarding community impacts, emerging trends, opportunities and service gaps
- support the delivery of NAIDOC Week and Reconciliation Week activities/celebrations
- participate in the annual Local Government Aboriginal Network (LGAN) Conference

Policy challenges

1. How does the current Advisory Committee change to a 'Voice' to Council, based on the principles of the Uluru Statement from the Heart – Voice, Treaty, Truth?
2. Provide input and assistance in the development of Council's Anti-Racism Strategy, including identifying effective existing and potential strategies.

Access Advisory Committee

Purpose

- provide informed strategic advice to Council on the development, implementation, monitoring and review of key Council policies, the Inclusion Action Plan, strategies and major Council infrastructure
- promote understanding of the needs, rights and issues affecting people with disability
- advance the accessibility of the area and the inclusion of people with disability to participate fully in community life

Policy challenges

1. What strategies can be considered by local businesses and by Council to better support employment for people with disability?
2. How do we give life to the Disability Inclusion Action Plan?

Arts & Culture Advisory Committee

Purpose

- promote the thriving arts and culture in the area and ensure that creativity and culture are valued and celebrated
- facilitate partnerships that nurture creative initiatives, stimulate cultural economy, express cultural diversity, enhance public places and increase community connections
- Provide input on programs, projects and planning that support local creatives, cultural infrastructure, public art and community cultural development advocate for the role of local artists within the 'creative ecosystem' that is fundamental to the identity, liveability and wellbeing of residents

Policy challenges

1. How do we cut red tape from the arts sector to better enable creativity in the Inner West including Town Hall activities and creative spaces?
2. What elements of the plan resulting from the Arts Summit should be progressed by Council and how?

Social Strategy Advisory Committee

Purpose

- assist Council to develop its plans, policies, programs and services for people living in the Inner West
- advise on social inclusion matters across the Inner West community, integrating the consideration of social justice and inclusion into Council's everyday business
- advise, share information and facilitate partnerships that nurture cultural diversity, inclusion and community connections

Policy challenges

1. How do we improve Council communication and community engagement with residents?
2. How can we work with residents to build preparedness and social resilience in the face of emergencies and extreme weather events?

LGBTQ Working Group

Purpose

- to involve sexuality and gender diverse people including lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, asexual, agender, aromantic (LGBTQ) people and allies in issues that affect them.
- to provide sexuality and gender diverse people and allies with a forum to voice their ideas, concerns, needs, interests, and views to Inner West Council and hence the community.
- to provide an avenue for sexuality and gender diverse people and allies to plan and implement Inner West Council approved events and activities for sexuality people and allies
- to raise awareness in the community of the positive contributions that sexuality and gender diverse people make to community life.

- to provide sexuality and gender diverse people and allies with opportunities to learn and develop new skills and meet new people.
- to allow sexuality and gender diverse people and allies to have input into decision making processes of Inner West Council that impact upon the community as a whole.
- to provide information and advice to Inner West Council on behalf of LGBTQ people and allies and organisations that work with LGBTQ people.
- leading and engaging the Inner West community in projects that celebrate and affirm sexuality and gender diverse people

Policy challenges

1. How do we ensure the diverse community have spaces to connect and celebrate, including the Inner West Pride Centre?

Multicultural Advisory Committee

Purpose

- provide input into the development and implementation of programs and services that ensure equity of access for multicultural community members
- advocate on behalf of culturally and linguistically diverse communities
- ensure the voices of culturally and linguistically diverse communities are heard in Council's decision-making
- promote Council celebrations of culturally and linguistically diverse communities
- advise, share relevant information and facilitate partnerships that nurture cultural diversity and increase community connections

Policy challenges

1. Provide input and assistance in the development of Council's Anti-Racism Strategy, including identifying effective existing and potential strategies.
2. How do we encourage more members from our multicultural community to volunteer for our local education program to build awareness about the

Uluru Statement from the Heart and the upcoming Referendum on the Voice to Parliament?

Seniors Working Group

Purpose

- provide input into the development and implementation of programs and services that ensure equity of access for seniors and that are part of Council's Ageing Strategy and Action plan
- advocate on behalf of seniors and ensure the voices of seniors are heard in Council's decision-making
- advise, share relevant information on a changing demographic and support innovative opportunities to ensure the wellbeing of seniors
- work with Council's Healthy Ageing Team to support the delivery of initiatives such as Seniors' Festival, Dementia Awareness and other activities and projects

Policy challenges

1. How can we improve communication with older people to enhance their participation in the Inner West community, including the initiatives outlined in the Healthy Ageing Strategy?

Young Leaders Working Group

Purpose

- assist Council in ensuring that young people can contribute and engage towards thriving and wellbeing
- provide input into the development and implementation of programs and services that ensure equity of access for young people
- advocate on behalf of young people
- ensure the voices of young people are heard in Council's decision-making
- support the delivery of Youth Week celebrations

Policy challenges

1. How can we better support the Mental health and wellbeing of young people in the inner west?
2. How can Council engage with young people to develop initiatives for the Children and Youth Strategy?

Bicycle Working Group

Purpose

- assist Council in its development of strategy, policy and designs relating to the inner west bicycle network

Policy challenges

1. How do we achieve an equitable balance between kerbside parking and separated cycleways/bike parking?
 2. How do we make the Inner West the best LGA in NSW for people who want to ride and walk?
 3. How can IWC integrate its commitment to enhancing active transport in relevant infrastructure decisions?
-

Transport Advisory Committee

Purpose

To develop and provide input to:

- policies, strategies and plans for sustainable transport for a growing population and a changing environment;
- the development of a strategic approach to integrate transport, land use and community development to enhance liveability;
- implementation of transport planning and policy;
- the development of programs to achieve a balance between sustainable transport and the economic and social vitality of the Inner West LGA

Policy challenges

1. How do we help to improve air quality and reduce road noise in the LGA by facilitating the uptake of electric vehicles and by other measures, including providing electric vehicle charging for residents who do not have off-street parking?
2. Should IWC adopt targets for the percentage of trips by active and public transport, and if so, what should these be?

Planning and Heritage Advisory Committee

Purpose

- provide feedback and recommendations to Council on a range of strategic planning and heritage matters.
- provide input to the development of long-term strategic policies, strategies and plans including the local strategic planning statement, local character statements, and locality studies, housing strategy, local environmental plan and development control plans

Policy challenges

1. How do we provide for more housing and jobs that are supported by appropriate infrastructure in a way that achieves environmental outcomes and design excellence while protecting our heritage and employment lands?
-

Housing and Affordability Advisory Committee

Purpose

- monitor and promote the implementation of Council's Affordable Housing Policy and other relevant policies and plans related to affordable housing for very low, low and moderate income households, including essential workers, boarding house residents, homeless people and others experiencing housing stress
- serve as a resource for Council in relation to the housing market, trends and community impacts, including supporting access to and opportunities for affordable, sustainable and accessible housing options where relevant
- provide suggestions on improving the development of housing options that support the retention of a diverse and inclusive community and an accessible and sustainable place to live
- assist in the development of programs and initiatives to highlight the importance of housing to the wellbeing and dynamism of the community.

Policy Challenges

1. How can we increase social, community and affordable housing with good amenity, across the Inner West?

2. How do we deliver housing for key workers in the Inner West?

Environment Advisory Committee

Purpose

- provide input on the development and review of Council policy on local and regional strategic environment issues and projects
- provide input on long-term strategic policies and action plans on the environment including climate change, energy efficiency, waste reduction, sustainable development, biodiversity
- consider matters that impact on a sustainable environment and provide input to Council on strategic issues

Policy challenges

1. How do we support a network of green habitat for plants, micro-forests, trees and animals when we have limited open space?
2. How do we implement actions arising from the Electric Vehicle Encouragement Strategy?

Other committees and advisory bodies

Council has three statutory committees required by legislation, which include community representatives including:

Name of Committee	Purpose
Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee	The purpose of the Committee is to provide independent assurance and assistance to Inner West Council in the effective discharge of its responsibilities for financial reporting, risk management, internal controls, governance, improvement and internal and external audit.

Flood Management Advisory Committee

The Flood Management Advisory Committee assists Council in the preparation of floodplain management studies and plans for the Inner West LGA. The Committee acts as both a focus and forum for the discussion of technical, social, economic and environmental matters, and for the distillation of possibly differing viewpoints on these matters into a management plan.

Local Traffic Committee

The Local Traffic Committee is primarily a technical review and advisory committee which considers the technical merits of proposals and ensures that current technical guidelines are considered. It provides recommendations to Council on traffic and parking control matters and on the provision of traffic control facilities and prescribed traffic control devices for which Council has delegated authority. The Committee also advises on traffic matters arising from development applications.

Council is a member of several external committees including:

- ClubGrants
- Cooks River Alliance Board
- NSW Public Libraries Association
- Parramatta River Catchment Group
- Southern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils (SSROC)
- Sydney Airport Community Forum
- Sydney Eastern City Planning Panel
- Sydney Coastal Councils Group

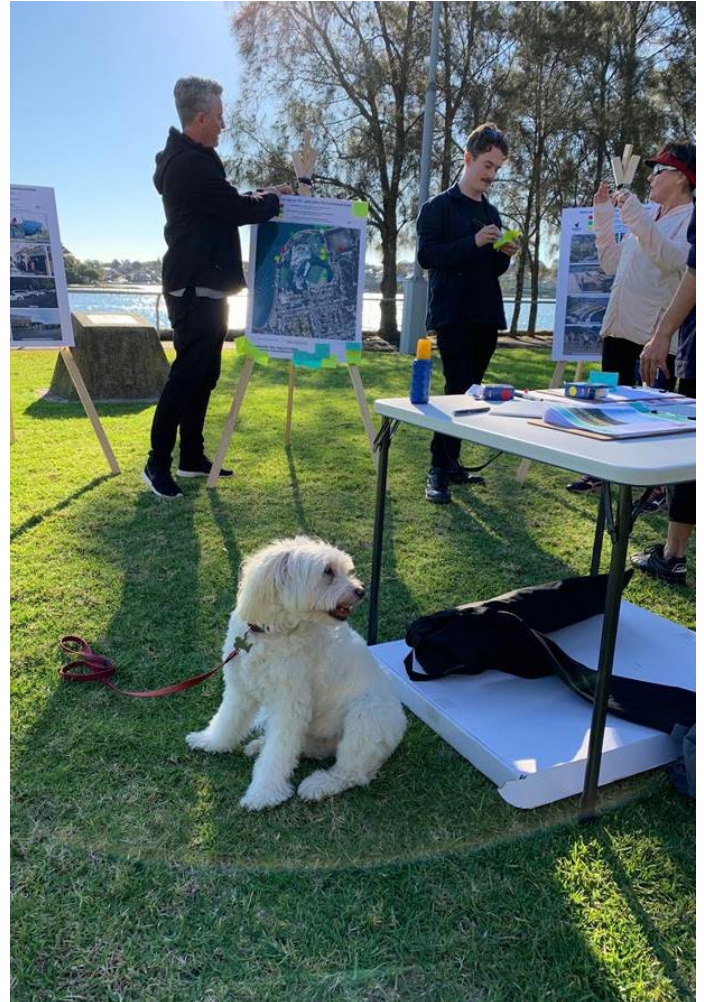
Project engagement

Council regularly invites community input on projects ranging from strategy development to park upgrades to planning for community services.

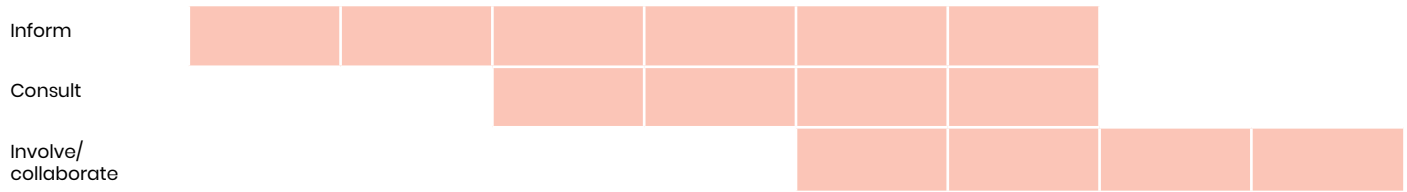
Your Say Inner West online engagement hub

An online engagement website (yoursay.innerwest.nsw.gov.au) hosts a range of projects enabling the community to participate in a time that suits them on a device of their choice. Tools include surveys, interactive maps, storytelling, forms, participatory budgeting, online discussions, virtual post-it notes and question and answer. We also host online webinars.

The following pages include a stakeholder and method matrix which shows the types of communication channels and techniques we use for various stakeholder groups, and case studies demonstrating recent community engagement examples.



Stakeholder and method matrix



	Inner West Council News, letterbox drop, flyers, newsletters, postcards, media releases	Letter by Australia Post / other delivery method	Websites E-news, digital boards, emails, social media	Pop-ups, events stalls, displays, door-knocking, on-site activities, drop-in sessions	Meetings, workshops, summits, roundtables, drop-in session	Surveys, interactive maps, webinars, submissions, phone lines, Q&A	Interviews, site tours, design charrettes, focus groups, workshops, world café, visioning	Deliberative democracy processes, co-design, action research, participatory budgeting, working groups
Residents	*	*	*	*	*	*		
Local Democracy Groups			*		*		*	*
Targeted stakeholders for particular engagement	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Community groups and organisations	*	*	*	*	*	*		
Service or facility users	*		*	*	*	*		*
Sporting clubs		*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Business and industry		*	*	*	*	*	*	
Interagencies, Non-government organisations and service providers		*	*		*	*		
School and education providers		*	*		*			
Other Councils		*	*		*			
Federal and State Government agencies		*	*		*			

Case Studies



Case study 1: Identifying a Vietnamese precinct - inclusive engagement with our diverse community

We engaged on naming a precinct in the Midjuburi (Marrickville) Ward to recognise the significant contribution of the Vietnamese community to the development of the character of Marrickville.

Community members could suggest an appropriate name and location for the precinct and indicate if they'd like to contribute to material in the local history collection.

We used a bi-lingual online feedback form on Your Say Inner West, held a workshop for the Vietnamese community with an accredited interpreter and held on-street conversations in the neighbourhood with bi-lingual staff and an interpreter. We partnered with organisations and businesses with direct links to the community to promote the consultation.

Overall 555 community responses were received, of

those who submitted online, over half used the translated survey. The bi-lingual online project page on Your Say Inner West received 1900 unique visits. Valuable insights were gathered through the 50 informal street chats.

The community clearly supported the name 'Little Vietnam' with 65% agreement. This name was considered neutral and inclusive of the experiences of all Vietnamese people, regardless of their background in the Northern, Central or Southern regions of Vietnam.

The name and precinct location were endorsed by Council and approval was received from the Geographical Names Board.

We sought advice from Vietnamese staff, community groups and the Consul General of Vietnam to ensure our methods and materials were culturally respectful and appropriate.



Case study 2: Developing the Cycling Strategy through interactive digital consultation

Cities and towns with high levels of bicycle riding enjoy a range of social, environmental and economic benefits. Bike riding is proven to provide significant health benefits, reduce traffic congestion, improve air quality and helps create more vibrant and inclusive neighbourhoods.

Council wants our community to reap these benefits by making cycling a low stress and convenient transport option for everyone. The cycling strategy brings together policy and actions to make it safer for people to get on their bikes.

We ran a cash-card prize draw, encouraging non-riders and others to take part and used digital mapping to crowdsource safety concerns.

Early engagement with Council's Bicycle Working Group and the local Bicycle User Groups (BUGs) informed our consultation approach.

As well as seasoned cyclists, it was vital to hear from those who want to ride but don't currently. We used digital mapping to crowdsource safety concerns in specific locations and held an online brainstorming forum.

People who use wheelchairs and other mobility devices welcomed the opportunity to provide their perspectives during one-on-one conversations, ensuring the Inner West bike network provides opportunity for increased mobility and participation.

We received 650 comments online via the Your Say Inner West interactive map and 427 survey responses from recreational riders, bike commuters, keen-to-be cyclists, non-riders and other road users. Many suggestions made were incorporated into the strategy.



Case study 3: Starting from scratch – engaging with children and adults on a new play space

Lewis Herman Reserve is a large parcel of land in Ashfield. With NSW Government funding, we were ready to turn it into a unique playful park. We had the opportunity to ensure every major decision in the design process for a new open space was informed by community feedback.

Engagement started with a blank page and the challenge to be creative. We held an onsite fun session, asking people of all ages ‘what will bring play, exploration and wonder to your day as you meet with friends and take a break?’. A graphic notetaker was on hand to sketch suggested ideas and people chose features they liked using sticky dots on illustrated boards.

We ran an onsite meeting with representatives of a nearby aged care community who brought ideas about features for all ages and abilities such as ping-pong tables, exercise equipment and inclusive sensory garden space.

During the design process we gathered comments through an online ideas wall at Your Say Inner West. Images could be included in these posts. All posted ideas were visible on the webpage and visitors could leave comments or votes on the posts. The number of votes on a post reflected its popularity.

On Your Say Inner West, 96 ideas were posted for Lewis Herman Reserve and over 500 visitors had a look online and provided comments and votes on the posts.

Children, adults and seniors directly shaped their community for many years to come by being part of this inclusive and creative process.

The concept design incorporated the community feedback to deliver nature play among the acacias, sensory garden, ping-pong, picnic shelter and lots of shady seating.

Case study 4: Working with community to create a 10 year plan – Leichhardt Park Plan of Management

Park plans of management are developed in consultation with everyone who uses them and lives nearby. The plan helps Council manage and improve the space over the next 10 years, adding capacity for sport and leisure, increasing public access and introducing best practice sustainable land and environment management.

At Leichhardt Park, our goal was to create a plan which got the right balance of sporting grounds, play areas and natural open spaces.

We started with early information for nearby residents and adjacent landowners, then followed up with two pop-up onsite consultation sessions – asking ‘what do you love about the area and what would you like to see improved?’.

Everyone was invited to provide input by post or online at Your Say Inner West.

Stakeholder workshops were held with park user groups, community organisations, schools and sporting clubs.

During this initial engagement stage, the feedback form online at Your Say Inner West received 1300 visitors and 250 participants took the time to provide valuable input.

The second engagement stage was a public exhibition of the draft plan. Given the high level of community interest, it was open for comment for two months. Over 130 contributors gave feedback. The public response was generally positive, with 70% of contributors supporting the plan subject to changes and 27% supporting the plan in its current form.

In response to this feedback, key updates and changes were incorporated in a new draft which was adopted by Council following public exhibition.



Specialist design consultants created an exciting and versatile concept design for the skate park, appealing to all ages and abilities. We sought feedback from future users to share their knowledge.

We also exhibited designs and costings for a synthetic turf sporting ground for community consideration.



Case study 5: Council supported citizen to citizen engagement – Uluru Statement From The Heart

In February 2022, the first act of the newly elected Council was to incorporate the Uluru Statement From The Heart into Council's Community Strategic Plan.

In September 2022 Council launched an important civic education campaign to train 1,000 volunteers in the Uluru Statement From The Heart and referendum.

Their mission will be to engage their friends and neighbours to build awareness of the upcoming

Referendum on the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice to Parliament.

To find the 1000 volunteers we advertised in Council's newsletter delivered to every household in the Inner West, e-news, and social media. We presented information online on Your Say Inner West along with a sign up form.

We hosted a meeting for the first 400 people to sign up at Marrickville Town Hall, where Prime Minister Anthony Albanese and Minister for Indigenous Australians Linda Burney attended to support Council's initiative.

This form of engagement empowers people to participate and make a difference. Through strengthening the volunteers' capacity, they can build understanding and empathy in their own communities

Evaluation

We will evaluate engagement practice to identify how well the objectives were met.

Evaluation will assist in:





- Reporting on outcomes
- Identifying gaps in data collections
- Learning what worked and what didn't
- Continuously improving processes

We collect data on indicators including reach and participation online and ask participants at engagement events to complete evaluation forms.

We also measure engagement in our representative, statistically valid community satisfaction survey. Resident perceptions of Council's community engagement have steadily improved: in 2021 the mean satisfaction rating was 3.75 (out of 5), slightly higher than 2018's mean of 3.72 and significantly higher than 3.52 in 2016. (Source: Micromex Community Satisfaction Survey, available on Council's website)

We will continue to refine how we evaluate engagement.

In 2022-24, we continue to inform and engage the communities of the Inner West through face to face and digital channels and methods.

Indicator	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
 Inner West Council website page views	4,742,000	5,734,909	6,745,641	6,082,624
 Inner West Council social media followers (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter)	27,281	34,757	47,555	54,041
 Your Say Inner West visits	58,400	104,900	94,300	61,700
 Your Say Inner West engagement projects	65	53	71	53

Priorities for 2022-24

Our priorities include:

1. Ensure Council is seen to be highly engaged with local communities

- Hold monthly Local Matters Forums and fortnightly Your Say customer service stalls across the Inner West
- Maximise face to face opportunities for community engagement
- Establish the community panel

2. Improve digital engagement through embedding new tools on Your Say Inner West and consider mandated registration

3. Incorporate deliberative engagement processes and strengthen Local Democracy Groups through deliberations on policy challenges

4. Hold a Citizen's Jury as a deliberative engagement process in 2023

5. Improve how we evaluate and measure community engagement

6. Improve presentation of engagement outcomes reporting to Council and the community



Community Participation Plan for land use planning matters

Community participation in Planning and Assessment

Recent reforms to the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* (EP&A Act) aim to increase community participation in environmental planning and assessment matters by making the process easier to understand.

This section outlines when and how Council will engage with the community and stakeholders around its planning decisions. It sets out the legislative requirements for minimum mandatory public exhibition periods for all of Council's planning functions, and notification requirements for development and related applications. It builds on the community engagement approach outlined elsewhere in this document and includes specific information about community participation in planning and development decisions in the Inner West. Where Council isn't the determining authority, the relevant authority's Community Participation Plan applies.

What is a public exhibition?

Public exhibition is a formal stage of engagement where documents are available for a specified period for the community to view and provide their feedback (called submissions), which is considered before a decision is made.

For planning matters, public exhibition usually includes:

- Description of what is being proposed
- Notifying individual land owners/occupiers
- Advertising/publishing the exhibition notice, including the timeframe, and how submissions can be made
- Displaying the documents for public view
- Publishing details on website

For development and related applications, public exhibition is known as notification.

Public exhibition periods

Public exhibition periods are in calendar days and include weekends. Council avoids where possible engaging with the community during periods of NSW Government school holidays, or if this is unavoidable, extends timelines where possible. At a minimum, the EP&A Act requires Council to extend public exhibitions or development and related application notifications which occur between 20 December and 10 January inclusive.

Table 1: Minimum mandatory public exhibition timeframes

Documents which Council will place on public exhibition (per Schedule 1 to the EP&A Act)	Minimum mandatory public exhibition timeframes
PLANNING DOCUMENTS	
Draft local strategic planning statements	28 days
Draft development control plans	28 days
Draft contributions plans for local infrastructure	28 days
Draft community participation plans	28 days
Planning proposals for local environment plans subject to a gateway determination	28 days or as specified by the gateway determination
DEVELOPMENT DOCUMENTS	
Application for development consent (other than for complying development certificate for designated development or for State significant development)	See notification process section below in Table 2
Application for development consent for designated development	28 days
Application for modification of development consent that is required to be publicly exhibited by the regulations	See notification process section below in Table 2
Environmental impact statements obtained under Division 5.1 of the Act	28 days
Draft voluntary planning agreements	28 days

Submissions

Submissions about a plan or application on public exhibition may be made during the specified period. Submissions may be made either online or by writing to Council and must include a name, address and preferably contact details. Submissions should include the reasons for support or opposition to the proposal. Submissions may be summarised for reporting and Council will not respond individually to submissions.

Council will not publish contact details in public reports, but submissions can be made publicly available under the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009*.

Council will advise people who made a submission in writing of the decision.

Any submission that uses a pro-forma template or is in the form of a petition will be considered as one submission and Council will respond to the head petitioner only (the first person that signs the petition unless otherwise advised). Multiple submissions made from the one property will be considered as one submission.

After the public exhibition/notification period closes, Council officers will review all submissions. For development matters, Council officers complete an assessment of the application and include a summary of submissions in the Development Assessment Report. For strategic planning matters, Council officers review the submissions and amend the draft plan if required. The number of submissions will be reported to the elected Council and a summary of engagement outcomes published on the website.

Decision making

Strategic plans are adopted by a resolution of the elected Council at a formal meeting. Planning proposals are determined by the relevant planning authority which may be Council, the Sydney Eastern City Planning Panel or Greater Sydney Commission or another authority appointed by the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces. Development applications can be determined by Council staff under delegation, the Inner West Local Planning Panel, or the Sydney Eastern City Planning Panel. Community feedback is one component of the information Council uses to make decisions. For more information about how development applications

are assessed, including minutes of the determination meeting, please visit Council's website.

Council will publish the reasons for decisions on development and related applications including:

- The decision
- The dates of the decision
- The reasons for the decision
- How community views were considered

Notification process for development applications

This section details how and when Council notifies the community about development applications received for the Inner West local government area. It replaces requirements formerly contained in the three legacy councils' development control plans. Specifically, it replaces the notification requirements for development applications and their associated applications contained in:

- Chapter B of the Comprehensive Inner West DCP 2016 for Ashbury, Ashfield, Croydon, Croydon Park, Haberfield, Hurlstone Park and Summer Hill (IWDCP 2016);
- Part A, Section 3 of the Leichhardt DCP 2013 (LDCP 2013); and
- Part 1.2 of the Marrickville DCP 2011 (MDCP 2011).

This section includes how development is categorised based on the extent of the likely impacts, identifies land owners/occupiers who will be notified and provides a consistent, transparent approach for community participation in development assessment across the Inner West local government area.

What applications are notified?

- Development applications listed in Table 2
- Modification of development consents under section 4.55 of the EP&A Act
- Review of determination under section 8.2 of the EP&A Act
- Building certificates for unauthorised works where the works undertaken would have required a development application or a section 4.55 (2)

What is not notified?

- Development which is exempt (some minor building renovations or works don't need approval). See Department of Planning, Industry and Environment website for details (planning.nsw.gov.au).
- Development deemed complying development under *State Environmental Planning Policy (Exempt and Complying Development Codes)*. This type of development requires a Complying Development Certificate (CDC) issued by Council or an accredited private certifier. Complying Development Certificates will be notified in accordance with Clause 130AB of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000*.

Who is notified?

Unless otherwise exempted by the EP&A Act, Council will notify:

- Owners/occupiers of land within the radius of the subject site as specified in Table 2
- Owners and occupiers of any neighbouring land which, in the opinion of Council, may be adversely affected by the development
- For notification relating to sites on the border of a local government area, Council will notify the adjoining council and residents in the vicinity of the development site, where, in the opinion of Council, properties in that local government area may be affected by a development application or planning proposal.

Council may extend the timeframe for submissions or notify other people or groups.

How we notify

A notification letter or email will be issued to all properties within the specified radius in Table 2 containing:

- Address of the development site
- Description of the proposed works
- Details of the notification period
- How to view the application
- Details on how to make a submission

A sign will be installed at the site visible and legible from the public domain on or before the start of the notification period, weather permitting. A photo will be taken of the notice. If Council is notified that the sign is removed or destroyed before the end of the notification period, the sign will be replaced.

The sign will contain:

- Address of the development site
- Description of the proposed works
- Notification period
- How to access the application
- How to make a submission

All notified applications will be published on Council's website for at least the notification period.

Types of development and notification requirements

There are four types of development types:

A - No notice required

B - Routine applications notified for 14 days

C - Higher impact applications notified for 21 days

D - Significant or major impact applications notified for 30 days

Table 2: Notification requirements for development and related applications:

<p>Development Type A</p> <p>Time/radius/method: No notification required</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal commercial/ industrial fit outs • Internal residential building works (excluding Heritage Items) • Strata Subdivisions for existing/ approved buildings (except affected by ARH SEPP) • Tree removal in Heritage Conservation Areas (excluding Heritage Items) • Amended plans with reduced impact • Signage with minimal impact • Demolition of minor or ancillary structures (excluding Heritage Items and within a Heritage Conservation Area) 	<p>Development Type C</p> <p>Time: 21 days. Radius: 50 metres (minimum 24 properties around the subject site will be notified regardless of the distance from the property).</p> <p>Method: Letters, website and sign</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residential Flat Buildings • Multi Dwelling housing • Shop top housing • Boarding Houses • New business/commercial/industrial development greater than 500sqm in area • Extension of late night trading hours for licensed premises • 24 hour trading • Childcare centres/ schools/ community centres • Change of use for non-residential uses in residential zone • Sex services and restricted premises • Applications involving Voluntary Planning Agreements • Hospitals • Residential Aged Care Facilities • New Place of Public Worship
<p>Development Type B</p> <p>Time: 14 days. Radius: 20 metres (minimum 10 properties around the subject site will be notified regardless of the distance from the property).</p> <p>Method: Letters, website and sign</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alterations and additions to dwelling houses • New dwellings including secondary dwellings • Demolition of a Heritage Item or within a Heritage Conservation Area • Total demolition of a dwelling or building (non-heritage) • Dual occupancies • Change of use • Heritage Item tree removals • Extension of trading hours • New business/commercial/industrial development less than 500sqm in area • Alterations and additions to business/commercial/ industrial development • Subdivision (including subdivision affected ARH SEPP) • Signage and advertising structures • Alterations and additions to Places of Public Worship 	<p>Development Type D</p> <p>Time: 30 days. Radius: 75 metres (minimum 24 properties around the subject site will be notified regardless of the distance from the property).</p> <p>Method: Letters, website, sign and publish</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development over \$30M • Major development applications, master plans, Development Control Plans • Designated, advertised or State significant <p>Note 1: Council has the discretion to alter any of the above for an application where the nature of the development, its location or the history of site development warrants it.</p> <p>Note 2: The radius is measured from all points on the boundary of the development site.</p>

Modifications, reviews and amendments

Section 4.55 of the EP&A Act makes provisions for a Council to accept applications to modify development consents. There are four types of Section 4.55 modifications, which will be notified in accordance with Table 3 below.

Section 8.2 of the EP&A Act makes provisions for a Council to accept applications to review Council determinations. These applications will be notified in accordance with Table 3 below.

Table 3: Notification requirements for modification applications made to Council

Modification Type	Notification Method
Section 4.55(1) Concerned with correcting minor errors, inaccurate description or mistaken calculations	Not required
Section 4.55(1A) Concerned with minor alterations involving minimal impact	May be notified at the total discretion of Council if Council is of the opinion that there may be implications for neighbouring amenity, streetscape, or local character
Section 4.55(2) All other modifications	Will be notified in the same manner as the original application
Section 4.56 Concerned with minor alterations involving minimal impact	Notified in the same manner as the original application and to all those who lodged a submission with respect to the original notification
Section 8.2	Notified in the same manner as the original application, regardless of whether there are amendments to the proposed development from that in the original Development Application

Amended plans and information

Where amended plans and/or information is received during the assessment process the application will be re-notified in the same manner as the original application and to those persons who lodged a submission about the original notification. However, notification of amendments is not required if the proposed amendments are:

- Considered to have the same or a lesser impact as the original application
- Submitted by the request of Council to address submissions or relevant controls
- Deemed to have no measurable adverse effect on adjoining properties.

Building Certificates

Building certificates for unauthorised works will be notified in the same manner as development and related applications where the works undertaken would have required a development application or a section 4.55 (2).

