



**Randwick City Council**

**Community Consultation  
Principles**

*and*

**Consultation Planning  
Guide**

Adopted 24 June 2008

Randwick City Council's

**Community Consultation  
Principles**

# Community Consultation Principles

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## What is Community Consultation?

Community consultation is:

- one of the ways that Randwick City Council engages the community
- part of the two way relationship where Council and the community exchange information and feedback on issues, and
- when Council uses active processes to involve the community and seek their views on a project, policy, issue, proposal or plan.

## Why does Randwick City Council undertake community consultation?

The community has insights, skills, knowledge and experience which are valued by Council. This community resource can be used to improve Council's outcomes. Effective community consultation enhances democratic processes, good decision making and good management.

## Relationship to the 20 year Randwick City Plan

Outcome 3: "An informed and engaged community" - our community participate in shaping our City.

## Our community includes:

- residents
- landowners
- business operators
- people working in the City
- visitors to the City
- users of Council services
- Council's advisory committees
- resident associations including precinct committees
- business associations including chambers of commerce
- service providers
- government agencies and statutory bodies
- local and regional associations and community organisations

## What are Council's principles for consultation?

The principles of community consultation practice are based on the values of integrity, customer focus, accountability, respect and excellence.

These values are demonstrated when consultation practice:

- develops out of a strong customer focus and a respect for the community that Council serves
- makes community the focus

- acknowledges the community's right to be advocates for what they want or need
- includes an awareness and understanding by staff of how Council actions impact on the community
- involves honest and straightforward dealing with the community
- provides accurate and timely information to the community
- includes a clear explanation of the decisions and actions of Council at all stages of the consultation process
- incorporates actively listening and acknowledgment of other points of view
- respects individual and cultural differences at all times.

### **When will Randwick City Council consult the community?**

Community consultation will take place:

- where community input can improve a project or enhance decision making
- to help identify community needs
- in response to expressions of community interest
- when Council resolves to consult the community
- when required by law or by agreement with a government agency or statutory body

### **How will the community consultation principles be implemented?**

Randwick City Council's Community Consultation Principles will be implemented through the Consultation Planning Guide, using consultation plans and strategies.

### **What are Randwick City Council's objectives for consultation practice?**

In consulting the community, Council acts to:

- make sustainable and improved decisions
- build positive relationships between Council and all sections of the community
- provide the community with the information needed to participate in a meaningful way, ensuring that all communications meet corporate communications standards
- explain clearly why community consultation is taking place and the decisions to be made
- inform the community of any limits to influence they will have on the decision, including information on any matters that are non-negotiable and why
- build on any previous relevant community consultations
- create community consultation processes so that the community can participate easily
- make best use of community expertise and diversity
- seek out and facilitate the involvement of those potentially affected by a decision
- create consultation processes that take into account any barriers to participation experienced by particular groups, with special attention given to the needs of

children, young people, women, older people, people with a disability, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, people from a culturally and linguistically diverse background, or other identified special needs groups

- help facilitate mutual understanding between groups and individuals with differing perspectives and interests
- develop processes to collect information on the broad spectrum of community views on an issue
- give feedback on how the community consultation informed Council's decisions, and
- explain the processes and outcomes of community consultations to Council's elected representatives.

### **Consultation principles and the development application process**

Consultations with regard to development applications are governed by Randwick City Council's Public Notifications DCP and legislative provisions. With regard to major developments with significant community interest community consultation may be considered in light of these Principles and Framework.

Randwick City Council's

**Community Consultation  
Planning Guide**

# Community Consultation Planning Guide

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## Effective consultations are:

- timely
- user friendly
- flexible
- responsive to community needs.

Decisions on how best to consult the Randwick City community on a particular issue will be based on Randwick City Council's Community Consultation Principles and Community Consultation Planning Guide.

## Consultation Planning Guide

A Consultation Planning Guide has been developed to assist staff in implementing Randwick Council's Community Consultation Principles. It is a dynamic document that will evolve over time taking into account community and organisational needs, emerging technologies and developing best practice.

The Consultation Planning Guide includes analytical tools for the use of Randwick Council staff in developing appropriate strategies for particular consultations.

The framework in the Planning Guide has been adapted from the model developed by the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2).

## Developing consultation plans and strategies

There are three steps for Council staff in consultation planning:

**Step 1:** Assess the level of impact the issue has on the community.

**Step 2:** Assess the level of community consultation to achieve a good project outcome.

**Step 3:** Decide on the community consultation strategies using the Consultation Planning Guide.

Impacts of a proposal on a community can be potential, real or perceived impacts. The impacts can be beneficial or negative. Impacts may also be different for different groups and individuals in a community.

Some proposals require more community input than others. There may be resource and time constraints on Randwick Council's consultation activities. It is critical to develop a balanced approach between the demands for community consultation, resources available, significance of an issue for the community and level of influence the community has on a decision.

Understanding by Randwick Council of the level and / or extent of the impact of a proposal can develop during the pre-consultation and consultation processes, and these cases may require a reconsideration and possible adjustment of the consultation strategies.

## STEP 1: Assessing the level of impact

Using the following matrix, the impact of a proposal on the community can be determined as one of the following:

1. City wide higher level
2. Local higher level
3. City wide lower level
4. Local lower level

**Table 1 – Level of Impact**

	City Wide Impact	Local Impact
Higher Level Impact	<p>The proposal will have a real or perceived impact across whole city <i>or</i> on a number of different parts of the city <i>or</i> on a number of different population groups across the City.</p> <p>It has the potential for one or more of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* creating community controversy and /or conflict</li> <li>* high level of community interest</li> <li>* impacting on Sydney regional or State strategies or directions.</li> </ul> <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Randwick City Plan</li> <li>• A major LEP review</li> <li>• Annual Management Plan</li> <li>• City wide DCPs eg Duel Occupancy DCP</li> <li>• City wide strategies and plans eg parking, heritage, recreation</li> <li>• Introduction of new community focus activity in response to major community issue such as the Bali commemorative ceremony.</li> </ul>	<p>The proposal will have a real or perceived impact on a particular locality <i>or</i> suburb <i>or</i> on a number of different parts of the city <i>or</i> on a particular population group.</p> <p>It has the potential to create community controversy at a local level and / or there is existing or potential high level of local community or sectional interest.</p> <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Town Centre plans</li> <li>• Town Centre upgrades</li> <li>• Masterplans for major parks and sporting fields</li> <li>• Addition or loss of a local service or facility</li> <li>• Upgrades to major parks or open space</li> <li>• Development of capital works proposals for local projects, such as sections of the Coastal Walkway.</li> </ul>



	<b>City Wide Impact</b>	<b>Local Impact</b>
<b>Lower Level Impact</b>	<p>Recurrent large scale programs and activities which impact across the city but which have a low potential for dispute or require relatively minor behaviour changes by residents. Low risk of controversy or conflict.</p> <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capital works program overall</li> <li>• Changes of location or hours of operation of a city wide service</li> <li>• Changes to current major community focus activities (Carols by candlelight, Bali commemoration)</li> <li>• Road sealing / footpath upgrade programs</li> </ul>	<p>Small change or improvement to service or facility at a local level. Low risk of controversy or conflict.</p> <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Naming of local facility</li> <li>• Local events / celebrations</li> <li>• Amendments to masterplans</li> <li>• Upgrades to neighbourhood parks and playgrounds</li> <li>• Local street upgrade</li> <li>• Specific events for local groups or special groups.</li> <li>• Local minor traffic proposals</li> </ul>

## STEP 2: Assessing the level of community participation

Having determined the level of impact, the next step is to determine the level of participation required to obtain the best outcome for the project. The best outcome includes community satisfaction with the scope and execution of the project and an understanding that community views have been considered in the outcome.

The level of consultation is related to, but not dependent on, the level of impact and will be determined as one of the following:

1. Inform
2. Consult
3. Involve
4. Partner

**Table 2: Level of Participation**

Level of Participation	Objective	Contract with the public (community)	Actions
<b>Inform</b>	To provide the public with balanced and objective information, to make them aware of and assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, and/or solutions.	To keep the public informed	Advise the community of a situation or proposal. Inform on a decision or direction. Provide advice on an issue. No response required from the public.
<b>Consult</b>	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives, and/or decisions.	To keep the public informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the final decision or outcome.	Research to identify appropriate stakeholders, individuals and/or groups and their needs or issues. Seek comment on proposal, action or issue. Seek feedback on service or facility. Request response, but limited opportunity for dialogue. Take account of consultation feedback in decision making.

<b>Level of Participation</b>	<b>Objective</b>	<b>Contract with the public (community)</b>	<b>Actions</b>
<b>Involve</b>	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public and private concerns are consistently understood and considered.	To work with the public and ensure that their concerns and issues are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	Involve the whole community or identified segments of the community in discussion or debate. Assist the development of informed input through briefing and information dissemination. Use participatory approach in meetings and forums. Involve the community at different stages of the planning process.
<b>Partner</b>	To partner with the public in each aspect of decision making including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To seek direct advice and innovation in formulating solutions and to incorporate community advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	Establish partnerships for involvement in decision making. Use participatory approach in meetings and forums. Establish mechanisms for ongoing involvement. Develop ways of keeping the community informed. Allocate clear responsibilities for achieving outcomes.

## **STEP 3: Deciding on the community consultation plans**

Randwick Council staff developing consultation strategies and plans need an awareness of the nature of the potential or perceived impact of the project or program on residents, businesses, and visitors, as well as the needs of the community and/or specific groups/areas affected by proposals. This awareness will inform the development of the type, intensity and timing of consultation activities.

This awareness may be the result of experience with previous projects, including previous consultations, or by developing pre-consultation processes. Pre-consultations are to be scaled to the project and may range from a few phone calls to a key community members or past participants to more elaborate means such as focus groups, open houses, interviews and meetings.

Randwick City Council's Planning Guide includes a Consultation Matrix to assist in the selecting appropriate strategies and developing consultation plans. As the levels in the Matrix are a hierarchy with cumulative actions, each level assumes the use of tools and actions from the preceding levels.

Different levels of consultation may also be required at different stages of a project. For example when a project has been developed through the "involving" level of consultation, there may be the need to engage at the "informing" level at later stages.

### **Legislative and policy requirements and constraints**

Particular projects may have consultation requirements or guidelines outside the Community Consultation Planning Guide.

These can include:

1. Legal requirements set out in legislation such as the *Local Government Act* and the *Environment Planning and Assessment Act*
2. Funding or partnership agreements with the Federal or State Government or their agencies, or with other local government bodies or independent bodies
3. Randwick City Council's Public Notification DCP or other plans, Council resolutions and policies
4. Decisions by Council on particular projects
5. Implementation of Council's regulatory activities
6. Situations where there may be significant privacy issues

In cases, where these legislative or other requirements or constraints have established the minimum consultation requirements, the project may be reviewed using Randwick Council's Principles and Consultation Planning Guide to provide best practice. In other words the requirements of external agencies for consultations should not be used as a reason to limit consultation with the community on a particular project.

### **Consultation Plans**

Consultation plans are action documents that guide staff in undertaking and reporting on community consultations. They set out strategies with timelines and activities aligned to the project timelines.

A Consultation Matrix has been developed to assist in the selecting appropriate strategies and developing consultation plans. The Consultation Matrix is also a dynamic document

that will evolve over time taking into account community and organisational needs, emerging technologies and developing best practice. Consultation plans including pre-consultation plans can be developed using the format in the consultation plan template.

Staff are encouraged to seek the involvement of the Communications Department early in the process of preparing consultation plans. The consultation plans will be audited for compliance with the Community Consultation Principles and Framework. For major initiatives, it is appropriate to seek the endorsement of the consultation plan by Council.

## Consultation Matrix

### 1. Informing

	City wide High Impact	Local High Impact	City wide Low Impact	Local Low Impact
Type of consultation				
Telephone contact	Consider	Consider	Consider	Consider
In person meeting	Consider	Consider	Consider	Consider
Response to correspondence	<b>Essential</b>	<b>Essential</b>	<b>Essential</b>	<b>Essential</b>
Pamphlet	Consider	Consider	Consider	Consider
Letter box drop	Consider	<b>Essential</b>	Consider	Consider
Item in Mayoral Column – local paper	Consider	Consider	Consider	Consider
Notice in Regarding Randwick – local paper	<b>Essential</b>	<b>Essential</b>	<b>Essential</b>	Consider
Notice in Randwick Community News	Consider	Consider	Consider	Consider
Media release	<b>Essential</b>	<b>Essential</b>	Consider	Consider
Site display	Consider	Consider	Consider	Consider
Displays in other locations	Consider	Consider	Consider	Consider
Web information	<b>Essential</b>	<b>Essential</b>	<b>Essential</b>	Consider
Information to precinct meetings	<b>Essential</b>	<b>Essential</b>	<b>Essential</b>	<b>Essential</b>

## 2. Informing and Consulting

	City wide	Local	City wide	Local
	High Impact	High Impact	Low Impact	Low Impact
Type of consultation				
Telephone contact	Consider	Consider	Consider	Consider
In person meeting	Consider	Consider	Consider	Consider
Response to correspondence	<b>Essential</b>	<b>Essential</b>	<b>Essential</b>	<b>Essential</b>
Pamphlet	Consider	Consider	Consider	Consider
Letter box drop	Consider	<b>Essential</b>	Consider	Consider
Item in Mayoral Column	Consider	Consider	Consider	Consider
Notice in Regarding Randwick – local paper	<b>Essential</b>	<b>Essential</b>	<b>Essential</b>	Consider
Notice in Randwick Community News	Consider	Consider	Consider	Consider
Media release	<b>Essential</b>	<b>Essential</b>	Consider	Consider
Site display	Consider	Consider	Consider	Consider
Displays in other locations	Consider	Consider	Consider	Consider
Web information	<b>Essential</b>	<b>Essential</b>	<b>Essential</b>	Consider
Information to precinct meetings	<b>Essential</b>	<b>Essential</b>	<b>Essential</b>	<b>Essential</b>
Suggestion box	Consider	Consider	Consider	Consider
Telephone survey	Consider	Consider	Consider	Consider
Written survey	Consider	Consider	Consider	Consider
Hotline/phone in	Consider	Consider	Consider	Consider
Letter to key stakeholder and resident groups inviting submissions	<b>Essential</b>	Consider	Consider	Consider
Develop database of those making submissions	<b>Essential</b>	<b>Essential</b>	<b>Essential</b>	<b>Essential</b>
Media release inviting submission	<b>Essential</b>	<b>Essential</b>	Consider	Consider
Interview with key individuals	Consider	Consider	Consider	Consider
Public exhibition	<b>Essential</b>	Consider	Consider	Consider
Focus Group Session	Consider	Consider	Consider	Consider
Briefing of relevant precinct meetings	Consider	<b>Essential</b>	Consider	Consider
Briefing of Precinct Coordination Committee	<b>Essential</b>	Consider	Consider	Consider
Residents' panel	Consider	Consider	Consider	Consider

### 3. Informing, Consulting and Involving

	City wide	Local	City wide	Local
	High Impact	High Impact	Low Impact	Low Impact
Type of consultation				
Telephone contact	Consider	Consider	Consider	Consider
In person meeting	Consider	Consider	Consider	Consider
Response to correspondence	<b>Essential</b>	<b>Essential</b>	<b>Essential</b>	<b>Essential</b>
Pamphlet	Consider	Consider	Consider	Consider
Letter box drop	Consider	<b>Essential</b>	Consider	Consider
Item in Mayoral Column – local paper	Consider	Consider	Consider	Consider
Notice in Regarding Randwick – local paper	<b>Essential</b>	<b>Essential</b>	<b>Essential</b>	Consider
Notice in Randwick Community News	Consider	Consider	Consider	Consider
Media release	<b>Essential</b>	<b>Essential</b>	Consider	Consider
Site display	Consider	Consider	Consider	Consider
Displays in other locations	Consider	Consider	Consider	Consider
Web information	<b>Essential</b>	<b>Essential</b>	<b>Essential</b>	Consider
Information to precinct committees	<b>Essential</b>	<b>Essential</b>	<b>Essential</b>	<b>Essential</b>
Suggestion box	Consider	Consider	Consider	Consider
Telephone survey	Consider	Consider	Consider	Consider
Written survey	Consider	Consider	Consider	Consider
Hotline/phone in	Consider	Consider	Consider	Consider
Letter to key stakeholder and resident groups inviting submissions	<b>Essential</b>	Consider	Consider	Consider
Develop database of those making submissions	<b>Essential</b>	<b>Essential</b>	<b>Essential</b>	<b>Essential</b>
Media release inviting submission	<b>Essential</b>	<b>Essential</b>	Consider	Consider
Interview with key individuals	Consider	Consider	Consider	Consider
Public exhibition	<b>Essential</b>	Consider	Consider	Consider
Focus Group Session	Consider	Consider	Consider	Consider
Briefing of relevant precinct meetings	Consider	<b>Essential</b>	Consider	Consider
Briefing of Precinct Coordination Committee	<b>Essential</b>	Consider	Consider	Consider
Residents' panel	Consider	Consider	Consider	Consider



Meeting with stakeholders groups/ user groups	<b>essential</b>	<b>essential</b>	Consider	Consider
Dedicated project email address	Consider	Consider	Consider	Consider
Workshop session	Consider	Consider	Consider	Consider
Community forum	Consider	Consider	Consider	Consider
Community debate	Consider	Consider	Consider	Consider
Public art session	Consider	Consider	Consider	Consider
Meeting by invitation	Consider	Consider	Consider	Consider
Site tour/meeting	Consider	Consider	Consider	Consider
Public meeting	Consider	Consider	Consider	Consider
Advisory Committee	Consider	Consider	Consider	Consider

#### 4. Informing, Consulting, Involving and Partnering

	City wide	Local	City wide	Local
	High Impact	High Impact	Low Impact	Low Impact
Type of consultation				
Telephone contact	Consider	Consider	Consider	Consider
In person meeting	Consider	Consider	Consider	Consider
Response to correspondence	<b>Essential</b>	<b>Essential</b>	<b>Essential</b>	<b>Essential</b>
Pamphlet	Consider	Consider	Consider	Consider
Letter box drop	Consider	<b>Essential</b>	Consider	Consider
Item in Mayoral Column – local paper	Consider	Consider	Consider	Consider
Notice in Regarding Randwick – local paper	<b>Essential</b>	<b>Essential</b>	<b>Essential</b>	Consider
Notice in Randwick Community News	Consider	Consider	Consider	Consider
Media release	<b>Essential</b>	<b>Essential</b>	Consider	Consider
Site display	Consider	Consider	Consider	Consider
Displays in other locations	Consider	Consider	Consider	Consider
Web information	<b>Essential</b>	<b>Essential</b>	<b>Essential</b>	Consider
Information to precinct committees	<b>Essential</b>	<b>Essential</b>	<b>Essential</b>	<b>Essential</b>
Suggestion box	Consider	Consider	Consider	Consider
Telephone survey	Consider	Consider	Consider	Consider
Written survey	Consider	Consider	Consider	Consider
Hotline/phone in	Consider	Consider	Consider	Consider
Letter to key stakeholder and resident groups inviting submissions	<b>Essential</b>	Consider	Consider	Consider
Develop database of those making submissions	<b>Essential</b>	<b>Essential</b>	<b>Essential</b>	<b>Essential</b>
Media release inviting submission	<b>Essential</b>	<b>Essential</b>	Consider	Consider
Interview with key individuals	Consider	Consider	Consider	Consider
Public exhibition	<b>Essential</b>	Consider	Consider	Consider
Focus Group Session	Consider	Consider	Consider	Consider
Briefing of relevant precinct meetings	Consider	<b>Essential</b>	Consider	Consider
Briefing of Precinct Coordination Committee	<b>Essential</b>	Consider	Consider	Consider
Residents' panel	Consider	Consider	Consider	Consider

Meeting with stakeholders groups/ user groups	<b>essential</b>	<b>essential</b>	Consider	Consider
Dedicated project email address	Consider	Consider	Consider	Consider
Workshop session	Consider	Consider	Consider	Consider
Community forum	Consider	Consider	Consider	Consider
Community debate	Consider	Consider	Consider	Consider
Public art session	Consider	Consider	Consider	Consider
Meeting by invitation	Consider	Consider	Consider	Consider
Site tour/meeting	Consider	Consider	Consider	Consider
Public meeting	Consider	Consider	Consider	Consider
Advisory Committee	Consider	Consider	Consider	Consider
Committee of management	Consider	Consider	Consider	Consider
Taskforce or working party	Consider	Consider	Consider	Consider
Joint venture	Consider	Consider	Consider	Consider
Series of workshops	Consider	Consider	Consider	Consider

# Consultation Plan template

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**Project:**

**File Reference:**

**Purpose of consultations:**

**Impact Level:**

1. City wide lower level
2. City wide higher level
3. Local higher level
4. Local lower level

**Level of consultation:**

1. Inform
2. Consult
3. Involve
4. Partner

**Stakeholder groups:**

**Council reports / resolutions:**

**Risks:**

***Consultation activities:***

Activity	Dates	Notes