



W A V E R L E Y  
C O U N C I L

## **FINANCE, OPERATIONS AND COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING**

A meeting of the FINANCE, OPERATIONS AND COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE will be held at the  
Boot Factory, Spring Street, Bondi Junction at:

**7.00 PM, TUESDAY 6 MAY 2025**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Emily Scott'.

Emily Scott  
**General Manager**

Waverley Council  
PO Box 9  
Bondi Junction NSW 1355  
DX 12006 Bondi Junction  
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## Delegations of the Finance, Operations and Community Services Committee

On 18 March 2025, Waverley Council delegated to the Finance, Operations and Community Services Committee the authority to determine any matter other than:

1. The matters in s 377(1) of the *Local Government Act 1993*, which are as follows:
  - (a) The appointment of a general manager.
  - (b) The making of a rate.
  - (c) A determination under section 549 as to the levying of a rate.
  - (d) The making of a charge.
  - (e) The fixing of a fee.
  - (f) The borrowing of money.
  - (g) The voting of money for expenditure on its works, services or operations.
  - (h) The compulsory acquisition, purchase, sale, exchange or surrender of any land or other property (but not including the sale of items of plant or equipment).
  - (i) The acceptance of tenders to provide services currently provided by members of staff of the council.
  - (j) The adoption of an operational plan under section 405.
  - (k) The adoption of a financial statement included in an annual financial report.
  - (l) A decision to classify or reclassify public land under Division 1 of Part 2 of Chapter 6.
  - (m) The fixing of an amount or rate for the carrying out by the council of work on private land.
  - (n) The decision to carry out work on private land for an amount that is less than the amount or rate fixed by the council for the carrying out of any such work.
  - (o) The review of a determination made by the council, and not by a delegate of the council, of an application for approval or an application that may be reviewed under section 82A of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*.
  - (p) The power of the council to authorise the use of reasonable force for the purpose of gaining entry to premises under section 194.
  - (q) A decision under section 356 to contribute money or otherwise grant financial assistance to persons.
  - (r) A decision under section 234 to grant leave of absence to the holder of a civic office.
  - (s) The making of an application, or the giving of a notice, to the Governor or Minister.
  - (t) This power of delegation.
  - (u) Any function under this or any other Act that is expressly required to be exercised by resolution of the council.



## **Statement of Ethical Obligations**

Councillors are reminded of their oath or affirmation of office made under section 233A of the Act and their obligations under Council's code of conduct to disclose and appropriately manage conflicts of interest.

## **Live Streaming of Meeting**

This meeting is streamed live via the internet and an audio-visual recording of the meeting will be publicly available on Council's website.

By attending this meeting, you consent to your image and/or voice being live streamed and publicly available.

## AGENDA

### PRAYER AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF INDIGENOUS HERITAGE

The Chair will read the following Opening Prayer and Acknowledgement of Indigenous Heritage:

*God, we pray for wisdom to govern with justice and equity. That we may see clearly and speak the truth and that we work together in harmony and mutual respect. May our actions demonstrate courage and leadership so that in all our works thy will be done. Amen.*

*Waverley Council respectfully acknowledges our Indigenous heritage and recognises the ongoing Aboriginal traditional custodianship of the land which forms our Local Government Area.*

#### 1. Apologies

#### 2. Declarations of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

#### 3. Addresses by Members of the Public

#### 4. Confirmation of Minutes

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#### 5. Reports

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FC/5.2/25.05	NSW Companion Animals Laws - Submission.....	62
FC/5.3/25.05	Pedestrian Crossings - Macpherson Street, Bronte, St Thomas Street, Bronte, and Warners Avenue, Bondi Beach .....	120

#### 6. Urgent Business

#### 7. Meeting Closure

## CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES FC/4.1/25.05



**Subject:** Confirmation of Minutes - Finance, Operations and Community Services Committee Meeting - 1 April 2025

**TRIM No:** A25/0080

**Manager:** Richard Coelho, Executive Manager, Governance

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### RECOMMENDATION:

That Council confirms the minutes of the Finance, Operations and Community Services Committee meeting held on 1 April 2025 as a true record of the proceedings of that meeting.

### Introduction/Background

The minutes of committee meetings must be confirmed at a subsequent meeting of the committee, in accordance with clause 20.23 of the Code of Meeting Practice.

### Attachments

1. Finance, Operations and Community Services Committee Meeting Minutes - 1 April 2025 .



**MINUTES OF THE FINANCE, OPERATIONS AND COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING  
HELD AT THE BOOT FACTORY, SPRING STREET, BONDI JUNCTION ON  
TUESDAY, 1 APRIL 2025**

**Present:**

Councillor Katherine Westwood (Chair)	Lawson Ward
Councillor Will Nemesh (Mayor)	Hunter Ward
Councillor Keri Spooner (Deputy Mayor)	Waverley Ward
Councillor Ludovico Fabiano	Waverley Ward
Councillor Dov Frazer	Hunter Ward
Councillor Steven Lewis	Hunter Ward
Councillor Paula Masselos	Lawson Ward
Councillor Margaret Merten	Bondi Ward
Councillor Joshua Spicer	Waverley Ward
Councillor Michelle Stephenson	Bondi Ward
Councillor Lauren Townsend	Lawson Ward
Councillor Dominic Wy Kanak	Bondi Ward

**Staff in attendance:**

Emily Scott	General Manager
Sharon Cassidy	Director, Assets and Operations
Tara Czinner	Director, Corporate Services
Fletcher Rayner	Director, Planning, Sustainability and Compliance
Ben Thompson	Director, Community, Culture and Customer Experience

*At the commencement of proceedings at 7.00 pm, those present were as listed above, with the exception of Cr Wy Kanak who arrived at 7.01 pm after the prayer and acknowledgement of Indigenous heritage, and Cr Lewis who arrived at 7.11 pm during item FC/5.4/25.04.*

*Crs Lewis, Masselos and Wy Kanak attended the meeting by audio-visual link.*

## PRAYER AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF INDIGENOUS HERITAGE

The Chair read the following Opening Prayer and Acknowledgement of Indigenous Heritage:

*God, we pray for wisdom to govern with justice and equity. That we may see clearly and speak the truth and that we work together in harmony and mutual respect. May our actions demonstrate courage and leadership so that in all our works thy will be done. Amen.*

*Waverley Council respectfully acknowledges our Indigenous heritage and recognises the ongoing Aboriginal traditional custodianship of the land which forms our local government area.*

### 1. Apologies

There were no apologies.

### 2. Declarations of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

The Chair called for declarations of interest and the following was received:

- 2.1 Cr Spicer declared a less than significant non-pecuniary interest in item FC/5.4/25.04 – Bondi Pavilion – Venue Hire Fee Review and informed the meeting that a family member has an interest in a company that occasionally hires a space at Bondi Pavilion.

### 3. Addresses by Members of the Public

There were no addresses by members of the public.

## ITEMS BY EXCEPTION

### MOTION / UNANIMOUS DECISION

Mover: Cr Westwood

Seconder: Cr Nemesh

That the recommendations for the following items be adopted as recommended in the business paper:

- |              |  |
|--------------|--|
| FC/4.1/25.04 | Confirmation of Minutes – Finance, Operations and Community Services Committee Meeting – 4 March 2025. |
| FC/5.1/25.04 | Multicultural Advisory Committee Meeting – 11 February 2025 – Minutes.                                 |
| FC/5.2/25.04 | Petitions Policy – Exhibition.   |
| FC/5.3/25.04 | Bondi Mermaid Public Artwork – Consultation Outcomes.  |
| FC/5.7/25.04 | Inquiry into Antisemitism in NSW – Submission.   |

FC/7.1/25.04      CONFIDENTIAL REPORT – Oxford Street Mall Markets – Licence – Exhibition.

#### 4. Confirmation of Minutes

**FC/4.1/25.04              Confirmation of Minutes - Finance, Operations and Community Services Committee Meeting - 4 March 2025 (A25/0080)**

**MOTION / UNANIMOUS DECISION**

Mover:      Cr Westwood

Seconder: Cr Nemesh

That Council confirms the minutes of the Finance, Operations and Community Services Committee meeting held on 4 March 2025 as a true record of the proceedings of that meeting.

#### 5. Reports

**FC/5.1/25.04              Multicultural Advisory Committee Meeting - 11 February 2025 - Minutes (A25/0221)**

**MOTION / UNANIMOUS DECISION**

Mover:      Cr Westwood

Seconder: Cr Nemesh

That Council notes the minutes of the Multicultural Advisory Committee meeting held on 11 February 2025 attached to the report.

**FC/5.2/25.04              Petitions Policy - Exhibition (SF25/1018)**

**MOTION / UNANIMOUS DECISION**

Mover:      Cr Westwood

Seconder: Cr Nemesh

That Council:

1. Publicly exhibits the draft Petitions Policy attached to the report for 28 days.
2. Officers prepare a report to Council following the exhibition period.

**FC/5.3/25.04              Bondi Mermaid Public Artwork - Consultation Outcomes (A23/0398)**

**MOTION / UNANIMOUS DECISION**

Mover:      Cr Westwood

Seconder: Cr Nemesh

That Council:

1. Does not commission a public artwork at Site 5 (Bondi Park) in the Public Art Masterplan at this time, in accordance with the recommendation of the Arts, Culture and Creativity Advisory Committee and in response to public feedback.

2. Progresses the commissioning of a public artwork at Site 6 (Clementson Park) in the Public Art Masterplan in future years.
3. Notes that current public art projects are being prioritised, including the Campbell Parade mosaic furniture seating restoration, the Westfield tragedy memorial public artwork and the Waverley-Woollahra joint public artwork.

**FC/5.4/25.04                      Bondi Pavilion - Venue Hire Fee Review (A25/0248)**

*Cr Spicer declared a less than significant non-pecuniary interest in this item and informed the meeting that a family member has an interest in a company that occasionally hires a space at Bondi Pavilion.*

**MOTION / DECISION**

Mover:        Cr Nemesh  
Seconder:    Cr Stephenson

That Council:

1. Notes the financial impact on Council of providing discounted venue hire of Bondi Pavilion for local residents and businesses, as set out in the report.
2. Maintains the current pricing policy for Bondi Pavilion venue hire.

**FC/5.5/25.04                      Birrell Street and Mackenzie Street Intersection, Bondi Junction - Road Safety Concerns (A03/0578)**

**MOTION / UNANIMOUS DECISION**

Mover:        Cr Westwood  
Seconder:    Cr Masselos

That Council:

1. Installs additional signage and line marking in Birrell Street and Mackenzie Street, Bondi Junction, to indicate the presence and increase the visibility of the cycleway to vehicles at the intersection of Birrell Street and Mackenzie Street.
2. Converts the parking space in Birrell Street adjacent to the eastbound lane and located immediately west of the Mackenzie Street intersection to motorcycle only parking.
3. Authorises the Executive Manager, Infrastructure Services, to implement further works or refinements in line with the findings of the road safety audit if on-site circumstances warrant changes.

**FC/5.6/25.04                      Petition - Basketball Hoop at Brae Street and Lugar Street Intersection, Bronte (A25/0066)****MOTION**

Mover:        Cr Townsend  
Seconded: Cr Stephenson

That Council:

1. Notes the petition opposing the removal of the basketball hoop at the intersection of Brae Street and Lugar Street, Bronte.
2. Removes the basketball hoop, as playing basketball on the road is illegal as per the *Road Rules 2014* (NSW) and poses a safety risk to players and drivers alike.
3. Investigates opportunities for a half-court in nearby parks.

**AMENDMENT**

Mover:        Cr Masselos  
Seconded: Cr Lewis

That clause 2 be amended to read as follows:

‘Removes the basketball hoop after a half-court in a nearby park has been built, as playing basketball on the road is illegal as per the *Road Rules 2014* (NSW) and poses a safety risk to players and drivers alike.’

THE AMENDMENT WAS PUT AND DECLARED LOST.

THE MOTION WAS THEN PUT AND DECLARED CARRIED.

**DECISION**

That Council:

1. Notes the petition opposing the removal of the basketball hoop at the intersection of Brae Street and Lugar Street, Bronte.
2. Removes the basketball hoop, as playing basketball on the road is illegal as per the *Road Rules 2014* (NSW) and poses a safety risk to players and drivers alike.
3. Investigates opportunities for a half-court in nearby parks.

*Cr Masselos requested that her vote against the motion be recorded in the minutes.*

**FC/5.7/25.04                      Inquiry into Antisemitism in NSW - Submission (A25/0307)****MOTION / UNANIMOUS DECISION**

Mover:        Cr Westwood  
Seconded: Cr Nemesh

That Council approves the submission to the NSW Legislative Council’s Inquiry into Antisemitism in NSW attached to the report (Attachment 1).



## 6. Urgent Business

There was no urgent business.

## 7. Closed Session

### FC/7.1/25.04                      **CONFIDENTIAL REPORT - Oxford Street Mall Markets - Licence - Exhibition (A19/0417)**

*Council dealt with this item in open session.*

#### **MOTION / UNANIMOUS DECISION**

Mover:        Cr Westwood

Seconder: Cr Nemesh

That Council:

1. Treats the report as confidential in accordance with section 11(3) of the *Local Government Act 1993*, as it relates to a matter specified in section 10A(2)(d)(i) of the *Local Government Act 1993*. The report contains commercial information of a confidential nature that would, if disclosed, prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied it.
2. In accordance with section 47A of the *Local Government Act 1993*, publicly notifies and exhibits for 28 days the proposal to grant a licence of up to five years for the operation of a market in Oxford Street Mall, Bondi Junction.
3. Officers prepare a report to Council following the exhibition period.

## 8. Meeting Closure

**THE MEETING CLOSED AT 7.28 PM.**

.....  
**SIGNED AND CONFIRMED**  
**CHAIR**  
**6 MAY 2025**

**REPORT**  
**FC/5.1/25.05**

**Subject:** Community Engagement Strategy - Exhibition

**TRIM No:** A24/0110

**Manager:** Adam Hassan, Executive Manager, Customer Experience and Communications

**Director:** Ben Thompson, Director, Community, Culture and Customer Experience

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**RECOMMENDATION:**

That Council:

1. Publicly exhibits the draft Community Engagement Strategy attached to the report (Attachment 1) for 28 days.
2. Officers prepare a report to Council following the exhibition period.

**1. Executive Summary**

In July 2023, Council adopted the current Community Engagement Strategy following public exhibition. In line with the requirement for Council to conduct a review and update under the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework, officers have tabled recommended changes to the strategy to be placed on public exhibition for consultation.

**2. Introduction/Background**

The Community Engagement Strategy was adopted by Council in August 2023 following public exhibition. This strategy was crafted with the overarching goal of fostering inclusive and accessible community engagement practices throughout our local government area.

Council officers have undertaken a review of the strategy and have formulated recommendations designed to enhance the strategy's impact and responsiveness to community expectations. It is proposed that these amendments to the strategy are placed on public exhibition for a 28 day consultation period.

This report outlines the recommendations derived from the review process, and underscores Council's ongoing commitment to robust community engagement.

**3. Relevant Council Resolutions**

Meeting and date	Item No.	Resolution
Council 18 July 2023	CM/7.6/23.07	That Council adopts the Community Engagement Policy and Strategy attached to the report.

#### **4. Discussion**

The Community Engagement Strategy with proposed amendments is attached to the report (Attachment 1). A summary of the proposed changes is also attached (Attachment 2).

#### **5. Financial Impact**

Nil.

#### **6. Risks/Issues**

Proposed amendments to the Community Engagement Strategy ensure alignment with current planning regulations and processes. Failure to endorse these updates presents a number of risks, including the potential for non-compliance with legislative requirements, increased exposure to third-party legal challenges (Class 4 appeals) and reputational impacts if Council is perceived as not keeping pace with industry standards. There is also a broader service delivery risk, as ambiguity in language and procedure may affect the community's understanding of Council's planning processes. The proposed amendments seek to address these concerns by improving clarity, updating terminology in line with industry practices, and providing greater certainty and transparency to the community.

Since the strategy was implemented, the strategy has served as a strong foundation to our engagement with the community. However, practical application has identified areas where refinement would support more consistent interpretation and delivery—particularly in the development assessment context. These issues have informed the recommended amendments, which are designed to enhance compliance, align with contemporary planning practices, and strengthen community confidence in Council's engagement processes.

#### **7. Attachments**

1. Draft Community Engagement Strategy [↓](#)
2. Summary of changes [↓](#) .

# Community Engagement Strategy



WAVERLEY  
COUNCIL



Amendment Number	0
Date of Adoption	18 July 2023
Date of Effect	21 August 2023
Amendment Description	Establishment of this Community Engagement Strategy (CES)

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## Acknowledgement of Country

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

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

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

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



## 1

# The Community Engagement Strategy



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

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

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

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

Waverley Council Community Engagement Strategy

## What is community engagement and why is it important?

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

Community engagement:

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

## Statement of commitment

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

## Legislative requirements

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

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

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

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

Other legislation that requires Council to run community engagement include:



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

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

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



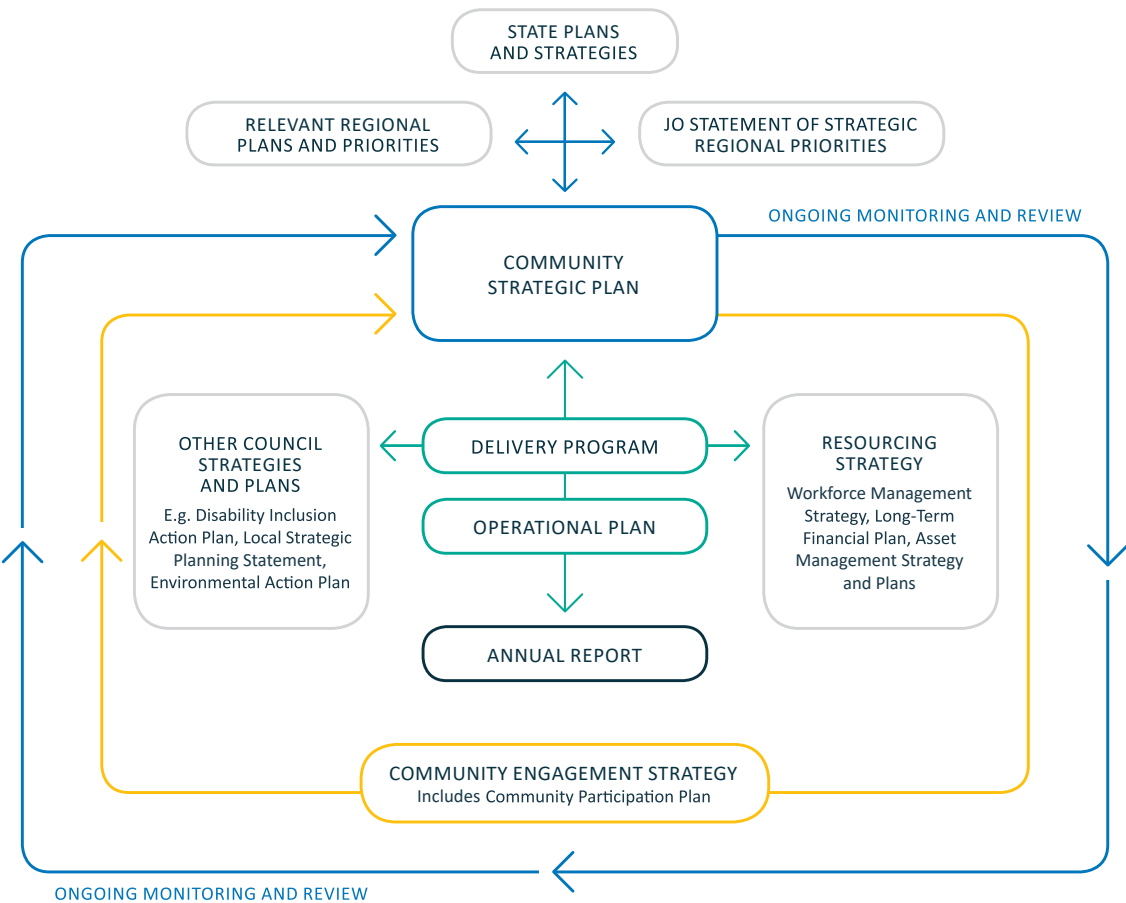
# How this links to our strategic framework

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

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

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

Figure 1: Integrated Planning and Reporting strategic framework





## Reviewing the Community Engagement Strategy

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

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

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

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

It is due for review by March 2027.

## Waverley Council's Community Engagement Principles

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

### 1. Build relationships

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

### 2. Right to be involved

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

### 3. Accessible and inclusive

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

Waverley Council Community Engagement Strategy



4. Timely

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

5. Tailored

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

6. Transparent and accountable

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

7. Representative

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

Social Justice Principles

Equity

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

Access

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

Rights

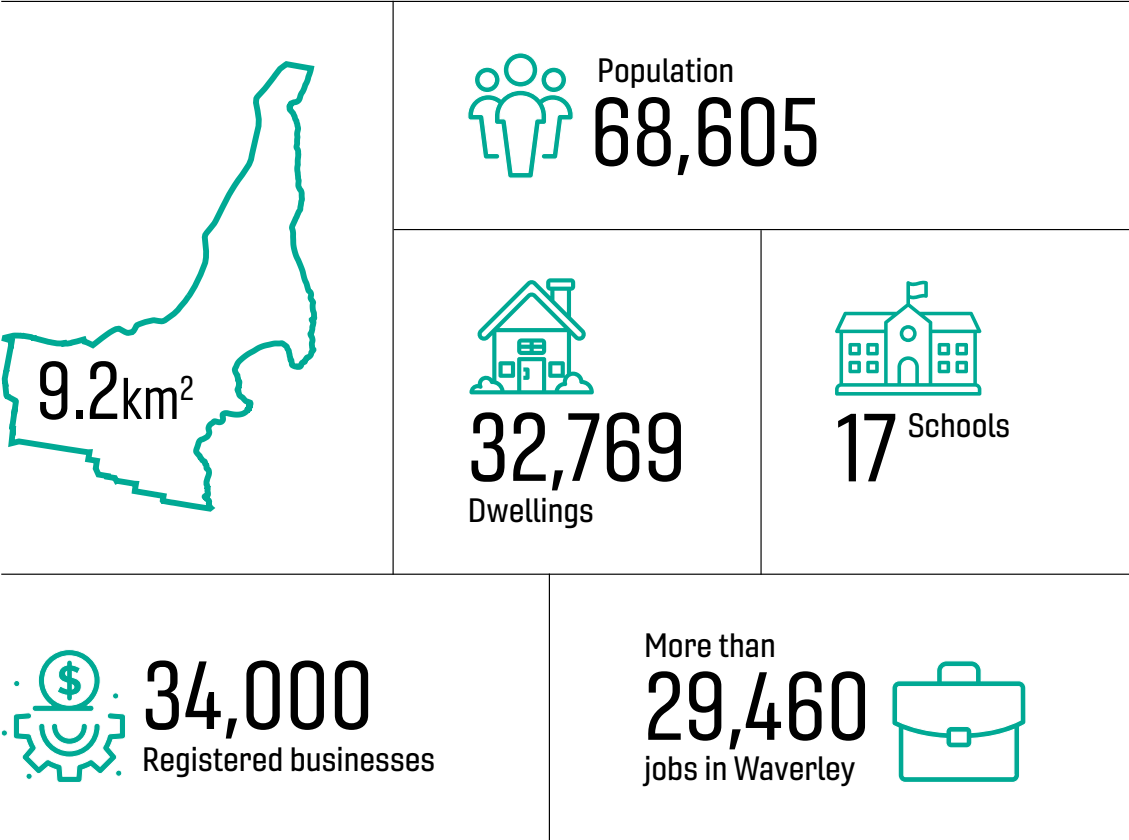
Equal rights should be established and promoted, with opportunities provided for people from diverse linguistic, cultural, and religious backgrounds to participate in community life.

Participation

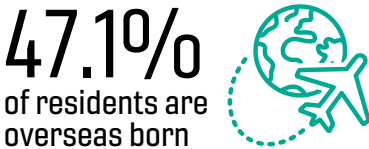
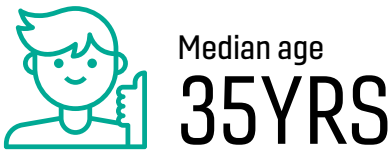
Everyone should have the maximum opportunity to genuinely participate in decisions which affect their lives.

2  
Our  
community

Waverley facts

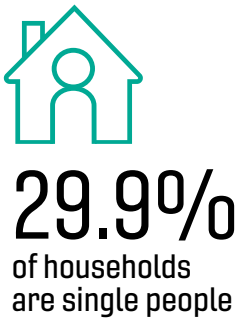
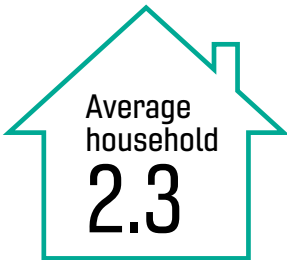
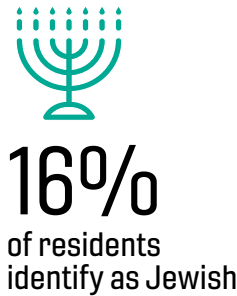


# The people of Waverley



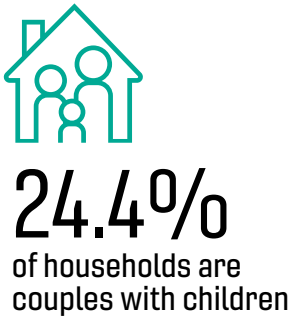
Top 5 countries:

- UK
- South Africa
- New Zealand
- Brazil
- USA



Top 5 Languages:

- Spanish
- Russian
- French
- Portuguese
- Italian







## Who do we engage with?

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

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

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

## Our stakeholders

Our stakeholders include but are not limited to:

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



## Internal and external committees and advisory committees

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

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

### Precinct Committees

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

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

### Advisory and consultative committees

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

These include:

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

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

### Council membership on external committees

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

### Special committees

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

### External decision-making authorities

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

# 3

## Barriers to participation



13

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

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

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

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

Waverley Council Community Engagement Strategy



# 4

## Determining appropriate community engagement

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

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

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

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

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



## How do we engage?

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

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

## When we don't consult

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

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

## How does the community want to be engaged?

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

## External planning processes and decisions

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

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





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

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

## Definition of higher impact

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

## Definition of lower impact

Matters that involve smaller changes or improvements at a localised level, which are deemed low risk, or are likely to not be contentious will be considered 'lower impact'. Council will employ appropriate consultation techniques to communicate with those most affected. Examples include proposed upgrades to local parks, playgrounds and buildings, streetscape changes and local traffic matters.

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

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



## Community engagement matrix

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

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

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



Project type	Impact	Suggested engagement level	Min. engagement period	Suggested communication	Suggested engagement activities
<b>Development Applications (DAs)</b>  Local and Regional development applications, modification applications, and review applications that require approval.	Type A*	Inform Consult	14 days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council website via DA Tracker</li> <li>• Notification letter of proposal</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notify application and invite submissions to proposal</li> </ul>
	Type B*	Inform Consult	21 days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council website via DA Tracker</li> <li>• Notification letter of proposal</li> <li>• Site notice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notify application and invite submissions to proposal</li> </ul>
	Type C*	Inform Consult	28 days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council website via DA Tracker</li> <li>• Notification letter of proposal</li> <li>• Site notice</li> <li>• Public exhibition on Councils website</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notify application and invite submissions to proposal during notification period</li> </ul>
<b>Applications for Designated Development</b>	Type C*	Inform Consult	28 days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council website via DA Tracker</li> <li>• Notification letter of proposal</li> <li>• Public exhibition on Councils website</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notify application and invite submissions to proposal during notification period</li> </ul>
<b>Applications for Integrated or Threatened Species Development</b>	Type C*	Inform Consult	28 days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council website via DA Tracker</li> <li>• Notification letter of proposal</li> <li>• Public exhibition on Councils website</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notify application and invite submissions to proposal during notification period</li> </ul>
<b>Environment impact statements obtained under Division 5.1</b>	Higher impact	Inform	30 days	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council website via DA Tracker</li> <li>• Public exhibition on Councils website</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notify application and invite submissions to proposal during notification period</li> </ul>

**Notes and clarifications on the matrix:**

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



# 5

## Requirements for notification for development related matters

This section details the consultation tools and techniques used for:

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

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

### Types of development and notification

#### Type A

Applications that may impact adjoining/ neighbouring sites but are unlikely to have impacts on the broader community. These applications require notification letter of proposal, site notice and can be viewed on Councils website via the DA Tracker

#### Type B

Applications that may have impacts on the broader community. These applications require notification letter of proposal, site notice and can be viewed on Council’s website via the DA Tracker.

#### Type C

Applications that may have impacts on the broader community and have a legislative requirement to be notified for 28 days. These applications require notification letter of proposal, site notice and to be publicly exhibited on Councils website. All council-related development applications need to be publicly exhibited for at least 28 days.





## Development application advertising and notification requirements

Single/small-scale residential	
Dwelling houses and dual occupancies – alterations, additions, and new buildings, whether attached, semi-detached or detached	A
Multi-residential	
Alterations and additions to multi dwelling housing, mixed use development, residential flat buildings, shop top housing, seniors housing, or housing for people with a disability	A
New multi dwelling housing, mixed use development, residential flat buildings, shop top housing, seniors housing or housing for people with a disability	B
Commercial – accommodation	
Bed & breakfast establishment	A
Alterations and additions to boarding house/group home	A
New boarding house/group home	B
Alterations and additions to backpacker accommodation/hostel	A
New backpacker accommodation/hostel	B
Alterations and additions to hotel/motel/serviced apartment	A
New hotel/motel/serviced apartment	B
Commercial – retail (selling products)	
Footpath seating for restaurants/cafes and/or occupation of footpaths	A
Change of use	A
Alterations and additions to bulky goods premises	A
New bulky goods premises	B
Commercial – business (selling services)	
Childcare centre	A
Community facility	A
Educational establishment	A
Health consulting rooms	A
Home-based childcare	A
Home business/industry	A
Medical centre	A
Alterations and additions to function centre	A
New function centre	B
Alterations and additions to restricted premises	A
New restricted premises	B
Alterations and additions to sex services premises	A
New sex services premises	B

**Heritage**

Heritage conservation areas or minor work to heritage listed sites – all categories of development except change of use and footpath seating	A
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Heritage listed sites (excluding minor works) – all categories of development except change of use and footpath seating	B
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**Other**

Amended plans*	A
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Any building or activity which in opinion of Council would detrimentally affect owners or occupiers of nearby land	A
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Signage	A
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Subdivision (Torrens Title) and strata subdivision (except new buildings not yet occupied)	A
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Alterations and additions to place of public worship	A
--	---

New place of public worship	B
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Road reservation/widening	B
---------------------------	---

Council-related application**	C
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Designated development	C
------------------------	---

Planning agreement (excludes 'letter of offers')	C
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Integrated development	C
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\*14 day notification type may be reduced if the amendments are deemed to be of 'minor impact' by an authorised Council officer.

\*\* 28 day notification type may not be required for modification applications made under section 4.55(1), or s4.55(1A) of the Act if in the opinion of an authorised Council officer, the proposed modifications are deemed to have no or minimal impact. A second sentence in the note can say that for modification applications made under section 4.55(2) of the Act for Council related applications, a Type A - 14 day notification type applies.

**Exempt and complying developments**

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

These may include, but are not limited to:

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

Note: The table in this section should only refer to Development applications (including Review applications and excluding Modification applications)



# 6

## Process to determine the extent of notification

This section details the procedures for notification of development related matters.

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

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

### Written notice procedures

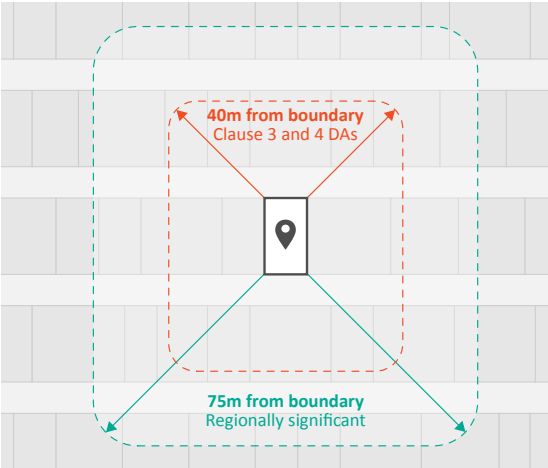
Written notice involves letters being sent by email or standard mail to all properties (owners and tenants), according to Council’s records, affected by the proposal. In some cases, written notices will be sent to the owner/occupant of any other property that (in the opinion of the Council officer) may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

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

### Extent of notification

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

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



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

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

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

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

## Returned written notices

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

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



## Website notice procedures

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

## Site notice procedures

For all developments that require a published site notice, Council will erect a site notice at the proposed development site. The site notice will provide a brief description of the proposal and detail the notification end date. If Council is advised

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

## Additional public notice requirements

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

## Amended applications (re-notification) procedures

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

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

## Modifications and reviews

Modifications of a development consent (other than minor modifications) – Council will notify all properties that are deemed to be affected by the proposed modification based on the opinion of an authorised Council officer.

Reviews of determinations (e.g. refusal) – Council will notify any person who made a submission in respect to the original application. Anyone who made a submission to the original application will be notified, or reasonable attempts will be made, by sending written notice to the last address known to Waverley Council of the submitter.

## Post-determination notification

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

	Modification and reviews	Post-determination notification
Section 4.55(1) Modification Applications	No notification required	No notification required
Section 4.55(1A) Modification Application	No notification required, unless there is an impact, and if so, a Type A - 14 day notification or reduced notification period based on the opinion of an authorised Council officer	No notification required, unless in the opinion of an authorised Council officer that may be an impact, then Type A notification to occur
Section 4.55(2) Modification Application	A minimum of Type A -14 day notification and/or dependent on scope of the modification and associated impact, either Type B or C based on type of development and to the discretion of an authorised Council officer	Type A notification as a minimum
Section 4.55(8) Modifications by the Court	A minimum of Type A - 14 day notification and/or dependent on scope of the modification and associated impact, either Type B or C based on type of development and to the discretion of an authorised Council officer	Type A notification as a minimum
Section 4.56 Modification Application	A minimum of Type A - 14 day notification and/or dependent on scope of the modification and associated impact, either Type B or C based on type of development and to the discretion of an authorised Council officer	Type A notification, as a minimum

7

Actions to improve community engagement

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

We have committed to the following:

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

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

Action	Timeframe	Responsible	Update 2024
1.1. Improve organisational understanding of engagement techniques from top-down, via the development of a training and development program for key staff across the organisation	Ongoing	Lead: Communications and Engagement  Partner: Human Resources, Safety and Wellbeing	Ongoing - Manager visited a variety of management team meetings articulating corporate comms and engagement techniques. Social PinPoint training package for improving engagement techniques includes regular training sessions available to teams and quarterly meetings to discuss features and troubleshoot issues
1.2. Build on and promote the internal Community Engagement Guidelines and suite of tools and resources available	2022	Communications and Engagement	Complete 2022
1.3. Investigate the establishment of an internal engagement working group to share experiences, key learnings, and better involve staff in projects that they have useful knowledge on or are affected by	Ongoing	Communications and Engagement	Ongoing - Project Control Group meetings held regularly for interdepartmental information sharing. Engagement team are involved with internal groups and events committee which evaluate engagement
1.4. Develop checklist for staff to better plan engagement events and standardised tasks	Complete	Communications and Engagement	Complete 2022



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

Action	Timeframe	Responsible	Update 2024
2.1. Review and improve functionality, stability, and user experience of our community engagement website Have Your Say Waverley	Completed 2022	Communications and Engagement	Complete - Continuously working with website developers to improve user journey and have gathered feedback from Council management on success
2.2. Create templates for consistent evaluation and for consultation findings to be shared amongst departments	2022	Information Management and Technology	Complete
2.3. Investigate feasibility of integration of useful engagement findings and database with existing/future CRM	Ongoing	Lead: Communications and Engagement  Partner: Customer Service, and other departments with engagement databases	Lack of centralised CRM as of 2023/24 period with investigation ongoing
2.4. Establish major projects and engagement register to identify clashes and opportunities	2022	Communications and Engagement	Complete
2.5. Regularly review engagement methods with the community to measure satisfaction	Underway	Communications and Engagement  Partner: Integrated Planning and Reporting	Underway – communications channels, Have Your Say platform, consultation reports and pop-ups used to evaluate effectiveness and outcomes of community interactions and expectations of projects.
2.6. Develop and implement an organisation-wide system to plan and monitor key project milestones, such as internal stakeholder involvement, closing the loop, prescriptive necessary engagement actions for each type of project, and examples of risk assessments and engagement plans, to ensure consistent delivery on our promises to the public.	Complete	Communications and Engagement	Completed - Engagement Plan templates developed. Consultation reports and close the loop process in place
2.7. <a href="#">Community Engagement Guidelines for Proponents for Sensitive or Controversial Projects</a> made available to developers	2025	Communications and Engagement  Strategic Planning	Ongoing – included in Appendix B
2.8. Report to Councillors, combined precincts and HYS enews subscribers on the engagement statistics (online, face to face, email submissions) of the people who have participated in consultations twice a year (in time for combined precinct meetings)	Underway	Communications and Engagement	Underway – engagement statistics report across Council projects developed twice annually

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

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Action	Timeframe	Responsible	Update 2024
3.1. Develop a schedule of at least one Have Your Say pop-up in each ward, in accessible and visible locations, including online and precinct meetings, to enable broad feedback on relevant projects and initiatives	Completed 2023	Lead: Communications and Engagement Partner: Relevant project managers	Completed – one pop-up per ward is delivered annually for wider feedback with collateral on hand for Have Your Say and Snap Send Solve platforms; across 2023-24 over 90 face to face discussions with community on Council projects, processes and service satisfaction
3.2. Explore different ways of engaging people online, including workshops and focus groups	Completed 2022	Lead: Communications and Engagement Partner: Information Management and Technology	Complete – community is over saturated with online events after Covid-19. Need to do more of a mix of face to face and online
3.3. Develop a minimum radius notification commitment for relevant projects	Completed 2023	Lead: Communications and Engagement Partner: Relevant project managers	Completed – 40m minimum notification radius established for most projects
3.4. Investigate options to have a 'close the loop' community consultation process, where the community is asked their thoughts on the finished product/issues/the engagement process itself	Completed 2024	Communications and Engagement	Completed – close the loop process involves emails to those who have lodged submissions, are a project follower or are on project stakeholder lists. Have Your Say platform has Council communications methods listed for community contact regarding consultation. Monthly Have Your Say emails directs receivers to provide feedback on the consultation process
3.5. Develop fact sheets for the community to explain the overall DA submission process, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An approximate timeframe for the process</li> <li>Opportunities for community to be involved or submit feedback</li> </ul>	Completed 2023	Strategic Planning	Complete – this has been actioned and satisfies the requirements
3.6. Develop videos on 'how to develop a good application' for the community on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What is a good application</li> <li>How the process works</li> <li>How to develop an effective submission to a proposal</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Lead: Strategic Planning Support: Communications and Engagement and Community Planning Advocate in the General Manager's Unit	Ongoing – have sought a formal cost estimate and projected timeline from the animation company producing the video

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4. Ensure our engagement practices are accessible and inclusive

Action	Timeframe	Responsible	Update 2022
4.1. Build on existing relationships and strategies to engage our diverse community in all Council engagement, including older people, children and young people, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people e.g. Reconciliation Action Plan, Disability Inclusion Action Plan, Child Safe Policy	Underway	Lead: Community Programs  Partner: Communications and Engagement	Underway - Multicultural Advisory Committee meets quarterly providing engagement platform and promote events, consultations and opportunities. Anti-racism campaign activities and connecting new young migrants to local information
4.2. Build capacity and a better understanding in the organisation of ways to be more accessible and inclusive in engagement practices, and ensure these practices are implemented across engagement projects	Underway	Lead: Communications and Engagement  Partner: Community Programs	Underway - delivery of Communication Supports Policy and conducted ethical storytelling training for Council staff (2023) and overhauled Language Assistance Program. Held mentor program at local college for jobseeker support and staff awareness. Stories of Lived Experience project provides insight to living with disability.
4.3. Support and enhance a targeted children and young people engagement plan to ensure policy decisions, programs, and services are appropriate, relevant, supported, and responsive to the needs of young people	Underway	Lead: Community Programs  Partner: Communications and Engagement	Underway - youth reference group Culture Waves created for diverse communities' awareness. 2023 youth summit recommendations endorsed by Council; 2024 summit scheduled. Change process to Youth Week program with youth group collaboration - for improving active participation

# 8

## Reporting on engagement activities



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

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

Waverley Council Community Engagement Strategy



# 9

## Evaluating Council's community engagement activities

The primary outcome of the Community Engagement Strategy is outlined in objective 3.1 of the Delivery Program 2022-26:  
Create opportunities for the community to engage with council decision making, and ensure input is listened to and acted on where appropriate.

The relevant actions to ensure we reach this objective are:

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

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

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

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



Waverley Council Community Engagement Strategy

# 10

## Appendices

### Appendix A: Communication and engagement activities

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

Waverley Council Community Engagement Strategy



## Appendix B: Proponent-led Waverley Community Engagement Guidelines

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

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

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

### Engaging early and upfront

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

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

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

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

### Planning your engagement

#### Step 1: Pre-DA or Pre-Planning Proposal

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

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

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

## Engaging the community

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

Ways to improve proponent-led community engagement:

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

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

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

## Transparent reporting

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

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

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

**ATTACHMENT 2 – Summary of Changes**

<b>Recommended Change (include "from" and "to")</b>	<b>Why</b>	<b>Section</b>	<b>Page No.</b>
Update all references of 'Department of Planning and Environment' to 'Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure'	They've restructured, so new name applies for State Government agency.	Throughout document	16, 21
Under definitions for higher impact and lower impact matters remove the word 'controversy' and replace with 'being contentious'.	Consistency with website terminology	4 First paragraph of Definition of higher impact and Definition of lower impact subheadings	17
Delete section in italics " <i>VPA Letters of Offer to be exhibited for the same period of time as the DA</i> ".	To reduce unnecessary delays in DA assessment processes because it is our understanding that VPA Letter of Offer do not need to be publicly exhibited under the EP&A Act, EP&A Regulations, VPA Practice Note or Waverley PA Policy. Such offers often occur towards the end of the DA assessment, so logistically this reference is impractical, as it will create delays for assessment timeframes. Rather, it is the actual VPA (not letter of offer) that will be exhibited at a later stage (often post DA consent) in accordance with the Regulations.	4 Community Engagement Matrix under Minimum engagement period for Legislated plans and other matters	20

<p>Change table categories as per the following:          Include "notify application and invite submissions to proposal" for 'Suggested engagement activities'          Include "Notification letter, documents available on DA Tracker on Councils website" under 'Suggested communication'.</p> <p>For Type C Impacts Designated development and Integrated development, these will also be publicly exhibited (via the 'Have Your Say' page) in addition to notification letter, documents available on DA Tracker on Councils website and site notice.          Suggested engagement activities for Type C to be "notify application and invite submissions to proposal during notification period".</p>	To ensure terminology is consistent with the rest of the document	4 Community Engagement Matrix under Development Applications Impacts	21
<p>'Impact' column in table:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Replace 'higher impact' to 'Type C' for applications for designated development.</li> </ul> <p>Replace 'higher impact' to 'Type C' for applications for integrated or threatened species development.</p>	Relevance and consistency of terminology	4 Community Engagement Matrix	21

<p>‘Suggested engagement level’ column in table:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- All items in table should read ‘inform’ and ‘consult’</li> </ul> <p>Exception is last line (environmental impact statements line) should read ‘inform’ only.</p>	Correction	4 Community Engagement Matrix	21
<p>‘Suggested communication’ column in table:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Website notice: correct to read ‘Council website via DA Tracker’</li> <li>- Written notice: correct to read ‘Notification letter of proposal’</li> </ul> <p>For the 3 x Type C rows– add ‘Public exhibition on Councils’ website into column</p>	Make clearer and consistent terminology throughout doc	4 Community Engagement Matrix	21
<p>In ‘suggested engagement activities’ column:</p> <p>Delete ‘written submissions’</p>	Once deleted, the new additional notes will override.	4 Community Engagement Matrix	21
<p>Include at end of introductory paragraph Section 5 "The classification of the three public exhibition procedures are outlined in the table below."</p>	To provide greater clarity of the document as the table is not mentioned in the preceding paragraph	5 Requirements for notification for development related matters	22
<p>"Website notice" should be removed from Type B - 21 day notification type.</p>	To use consistent terminology so as to avoid confusion and misinterpretation of requirements	5 Types of development and notification sub-heading	22



<p>In Type A part:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Relabel heading from '14days website and written notice' to 'Type A'.</li> <li>- Delete the word 'adverse'.</li> </ul> <p>Reword last sentence to: These applications require notification letter of proposal, site notice and can be viewed on Councils website via the DA Tracker</p>	<p>Repetitious and simpler. Text below speaks to the consultation. The terminology otherwise doesn't align with rest of document (i.e. inconsistent language)</p>	<p>5 Types of development and notification sub-heading</p>	<p>22</p>
<p>In Type B part:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Relabel heading from '21days website and written notice and site notice' to 'Type B'.</li> </ul> <p>Reword 2<sup>nd</sup> sentence to: These applications require notification letter of proposal, site notice and can be viewed on Councils website via the DA Tracker</p>	<p>Repetitious and simpler. Text below speaks to the consultation. The terminology otherwise doesn't align with rest of document (i.e. inconsistent language)</p>	<p>5 Types of development and notification sub-heading</p>	<p>22</p>
<p>In Type C part:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Relabel heading from '28 days website and written notice and site notice' to 'Type C'.</li> <li>- Reword 2<sup>nd</sup> sentence to: These applications require notification letter of proposal, site notice and to be publicly exhibited on Councils website.</li> </ul>	<p>Repetitious and simpler. Text below speaks to the consultation. The terminology otherwise doesn't align with rest of document (i.e. inconsistent language)</p>	<p>5 Types of development and notification sub-heading</p>	<p>22</p>
<p>Add an asterisk to 'Amended Plans' in the 'Other' table and note that the corresponding Type A - 14 day notification type may be reduced if the amendments are deemed to be of 'minor impact' by an authorised Council officer.</p>	<p>To provide flexibility in the renotification process for amended plans that are of a minor impact and to not delay the overall assessment timeframe</p>	<p>5 Development application advertising and notification requirements tables</p>	<p>24</p>

Add an asterisk to 'Council-related application' in the 'Other' table and note that the corresponding Type C - 28 day notification type may not be required for modification applications made under section 4.55(1), or s4.55(1A) of the Act if in the opinion of an authorised Council officer, the proposed modifications are deemed to have no or minimal impact. A second sentence in the note can say that for modification applications made under section 4.55(2) of the Act for Council related applications, a Type A - 14 day notification type applies.	To provide flexibility in the notification process to lessen the notification extent and duration for minor or other modifications to Council projects, particularly for modification applications resulting in no impact, and reduce delays in the overall assessment timeframe	5 Development application advertising and notification requirements tables	24
Include "(excludes 'letter of offers') to 'Planning Agreement' in the 'Other' table.	To reduce delays in the overall assessment timeframe as formal Planning Agreements are negotiated and publicly exhibited for 28 days post development consent and outside of the DA assessment process	5 Development application advertising and notification requirements tables	24
Remove all dot points except for the first one that directly relates to exempt and complying developments. All other points are irrelevant to exempt and complying developments.	To correct anomalies and avoid confusion of the definition of exempt and complying developments	5 Exempt and Complying Developments sub-heading	24
New note with **: This table in this section should only refer to Development applications (including Review applications and excluding Modification applications)	To reduce confusion	5 Exempt and Complying Developments sub-heading	24
Change first paragraph to 'this section details the procedures for notification of development related matters'.	For consistent terminology	6 Process to determine the extent of notification	25

Remove the wording "...and on the NSW Government Planning Portal." Replace with "...and on the online engagement portal."	The planning portal only identifies the DA and not the notification material and can be unreliable	6 Website notice procedures subheading	26
In paragraph 3, page 26: Change 'all advertised' to 'all publicly exhibited'	Terminology has changed in the Regs	6 Extent of notification subheading	26
In first dot point expand the 'lesser or the same effect' to "lesser or the same environmental impact.	For resident receiver clarification on the determination of the renotification process	6 Amended applications procedures subheading	27
Add a table of specific notification requirements for each type of modification application, such as: - Section 4.55(1) Modification Applications - No notification required - Section 4.55(1A) Modification Application - No notification required, unless there is an impact, and if so, a Type A - 14 day notification or reduced notification period based on the opinion of an authorised Council officer - Section 4.55(2) Modification Application - a minimum of Type A -14 day notification and/or dependent on scope of the modification and associated impact, either Type B or C based on type of development and to the discretion of an authorised Council officer. - Section 4.55(8) Modifications by the Court - a minimum of Type A - 14 day notification and/or dependent on scope of the modification and associated impact, either Type B or C based on type of development and to the discretion of an authorised Council officer. - Section 4.56 Modification Application - a minimum of Type A - 14 day notification and/or dependent on scope of the modification and associated impact, either Type B or C based on type of development and to the discretion of an authorised Council officer.	To provide flexibility and distinguish requirements applicable to various types of modification applications, as there are four types, and to be consistent with the EP&A Act and Regs. The intent is to reduce delays in the overall assessment timeframe and to avoid confusion and misinterpretation of requirements	5 Modification and Reviews subheading	27

Change wording from: "Council will notify those persons who were notified of the original development application and any other person who may be affected by the modification" To: "Council will notify all properties that are deemed to be affected by the proposed modification based on the opinion of an authorised Council officer".	To tailor the extent of properties to be notified based on the scope of modification and its associated impacts and reduce delays in the overall assessment timeframe and costs to customers	5 Modification and Reviews subheading	27
Post determination notification – change reference from ‘DA’ to ‘development related application’ (2 instances)	Ensure that all development related applications are included, not just DAs (i.e. Reviews, Modifications, Footpath Seating Applications)	6 Post determination subheading	27
Add the sentence "anyone who made a submission to the original application will be notified, or reasonable attempts will be made, by sending written notice to the last address known to Waverley Council of the submitter".	For resident clarification on the process of notification	6 Modification and reviews subheading	27
Under Amended applications heading, change first sentence, from ‘a DA’ to ‘An application’	Updated to apply to all amendments, no matter which type of application (DA or Mod)	6 Amended applications (re-notification) procedures subheading	27

<p>In new table to be added:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- s4.55 (1): no notification required</li> <li>- s4.55(1A): no notification required, unless in the opinion of an authorised Council officer that may be an impact, then Type A notification to occur.</li> <li>- update s4.55(2) section: Change to a 'Type A notification, as a minimum'. Delete the rest of text in this part.</li> <li>- S4.55(8): Type A notification as a minimum</li> <li>- update s4.56: Change to a 'Type A notification, as a minimum'. Delete the rest of text in this part.</li> </ul>	This is consistent with the CPP 2019	6 In new table preceding Post-determination notification	28
Change table heading 'Update 2022' to 'Update 2024'.	Update table information to relevant time period	7 Actions to improve community engagement table	29-32
Update Action Item 1.1 under 'Update' column to read "Ongoing - Manager visited a variety of management team meetings articulating corporate comms and engagement techniques. Social PinPoint training package for improving engagement techniques includes regular training sessions available to teams and quarterly meetings to discuss features and troubleshoot issues."	Update actions for the 2024 review	7 Actions to improve community engagement table	29
Update Action Item 1.3 under 'Timeframe' column to be "Ongoing". Update Action Item 1.3 under 'Update' column to read "Ongoing - Project Control Group meetings held regularly for interdepartmental information sharing. Engagement team are involved with internal groups and events committee which evaluate engagement."	Update actions and status for the 2024 review	7 Actions to improve community engagement table	29



Update Action Item 2.1 under 'Timeframe' column to be "Completed 2022". Update Action Item 2.1 under 'Update' column to read "Complete - Continuously working with website developers to improve user journey and have gathered feedback from Council management on success."	Update actions and status for the 2024 review	7 Actions to improve community engagement table	30
Update Action Item 2.3 under 'Timeframe' column to be "Ongoing". Update Action Item 2.3 under 'Update' column to read "Lack of centralised CRM as of 2023/24 period with investigation ongoing."	Update actions and status for the 2024 review	7 Actions to improve community engagement table	30
Update Action Item 2.5 under 'Timeframe' column to be "Underway". Update Action Item 2.5 under 'Update' column to read "Underway – communications channels, Have Your Say platform, consultation reports and pop-ups used to evaluate effectiveness and outcomes of community interactions and expectations of projects."	Update actions and status for the 2024 review	7 Actions to improve community engagement table	30
Update Action Item 2.6 under 'Timeframe' column to be "Complete". Update Action Item 2.6 under 'Update' column to read "Completed - Engagement Plan templates developed. Consultation reports and close the loop process in place."	Update actions and status for the 2024 review	7 Actions to improve community engagement table	30
Update Action Item 2.7 under 'Timeframe' column to be "2025".	Update status for the 2024 review	7 Actions to improve community engagement table	30

Update Action Item 2.8 under 'Timeframe' column to be "Underway". Update Action Item 2.8 under 'Update' column to read "Underway – engagement statistics report across Council projects developed twice annually."	Update status and actions for the 2024 review	7 Actions to improve community engagement table	30
Update Action Item 3.1 under 'Timeframe' column to be "Completed 2023". Update Action Item 3.1 under 'Update' column to read "Completed – one pop-up per ward is delivered annually for wider feedback with collateral on hand for Have Your Say and Snap Send Solve platforms; across 2023-24 over 90 face to face discussions with community on Council projects, processes and service satisfaction."	Update actions and status for the 2024 review	7 Actions to improve community engagement table	31
Update Action Item 3.2 under 'Update' column to read "Completed 2022."	Update actions for the 2024 review	7 Actions to improve community engagement table	31
Update Action Item 3.3 under 'Timeframe' column to be "Completed 2023". Update Action Item 3.3 under 'Update' column to read "Completed – 40m minimum notification radius established for most projects."	Update actions and status for the 2024 review	7 Actions to improve community engagement table	31
Update Action Item 3.4 under 'Timeframe' column to be "Completed 2024". Update Action Item 3.4 under 'Update' column to read "Completed – close the loop process involves emails to those who have lodged submissions, are a project follower or are on project stakeholder lists. Have Your Say platform has Council communications methods listed for community contact regarding consultation. Monthly Have Your Say emails directs receivers to provide feedback on the consultation process."	Update actions and status for the 2024 review	7 Actions to improve community engagement table	31

Update Action Item 3.5 under 'Timeframe' column to be "Completed 2023". Update Action Item 3.5 under 'Update' column to read "Complete – this has been actioned and satisfies the requirements."	Update actions and status for the 2024 review	7 Actions to improve community engagement table	31
Update Action Item 3.6 under 'Timeframe' column to be "Ongoing". Update Action Item 3.6 under 'Update' column to read "Ongoing – have sought a formal cost estimate and projected timeline from the animation company producing the video."	Update actions and status for the 2024 review	7 Actions to improve community engagement table	31
Update Action Item 4.1 under 'Timeframe' column to be "Underway". Update Action Item 4.1 under 'Update' column to read "Underway - Multicultural Advisory Committee meets quarterly providing engagement platform and promote events, consultations and opportunities. Anti-racism campaign activities and connecting new young migrants to local information."	Update actions and status for the 2024 review	7 Actions to improve community engagement table	32
Update Action Item 4.2 under 'Timeframe' column to be "Underway". Update Action Item 4.2 under 'Update' column to read "Underway - delivery of Communication Supports Policy and conducted ethical storytelling training for Council staff (2023) and overhauled Language Assistance Program. Held mentor program at local college for jobseeker support and staff awareness. Stories of Lived Experience project provides insight to living with disability."	Update actions and status for the 2024 review	7 Actions to improve community engagement table	32
Update Action Item 4.3 under 'Timeframe' column to be "Underway". Update Action Item 4.3 under 'Update' column to read "Underway - youth reference group Culture Waves created for diverse communities' awareness. 2023 youth summit recommendations endorsed by Council; 2024 summit scheduled. Change process to Youth Week program with youth group collaboration - for improving active participation."	Update actions and status for the 2024 review	7 Actions to improve community engagement table	32

**REPORT**  
**FC/5.2/25.05**

**Subject:** NSW Companion Animals Laws - Submission

**TRIM No:** A06/0149

**Manager:** Sunil Kushor, Executive Manager, Compliance

**Director:** Fletcher Rayner, Director, Planning, Sustainability and Compliance

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**RECOMMENDATION:**

That Council approves the submission to the Office of Local Government attached to the report (Attachment 1) on the review of the *Companion Animals Act 1998*.

**1. Executive Summary**

This report seeks Council's approval of a submission to the Office of Local Government (OLG) on the review of the *Companion Animals Act 1998* by addressing the discussion paper issued in February 2025.

**2. Introduction/Background**

The *Companion Animals Act 1998* is under review by the NSW Government to ensure it continues to promote responsible pet ownership and public safety. OLG released a discussion paper in early 2025 (Attachment 2), seeking feedback on key themes, including responsible ownership, compliance and enforcement, dangerous dogs, and stray animal management.

**3. Relevant Council Resolutions**

Nil.

**4. Discussion**

The attached submission is based on the operational experience of the Compliance team and responds to all relevant questions posed in the discussion paper.

Local councils are pivotal to the success of the *Companion Animals Act 1998* and are responsible for the frontline management of companion animals, including:

- Enforcing leash laws, registration, microchipping, and nuisance provisions.
- Investigating dog attacks and managing dangerous and restricted dogs.
- Providing and managing pound and shelter services for lost or surrendered animals.
- Educating the community on responsible pet ownership.
- Facilitating rehoming and desexing programs to reduce stray animal populations.
- Protecting public amenity and safety in shared spaces such as parks and beaches.

In the context of a resident population of 72,857 people and 29,050 households, Waverley has registrations of 9,588 dogs and 4,152 cats, and these numbers are increasing year-on-year.

The review of the Act provides an important opportunity to strengthen the legislative, compliance, and education frameworks that support councils in delivering these functions effectively.

The attached submission reflects operational challenges and strategic opportunities, including:

- Supporting responsible ownership – Endorses a legislative shift from punitive enforcement to proactive education and incentives, without diminishing compliance capabilities.
- Improving enforcement tools – Clearer legal powers for authorised officers, standardised enforcement guidelines across councils, stronger penalties for repeat offenders and legal protections for enforcement staff.
- Population and welfare measures – Strengthened cat containment provisions, subsidised desexing, tighter breeder regulation and improved rehoming practices to reduce the number of stray and surrendered animals.
- Community and system improvements – Advocates for statewide education campaigns, more consistent inter-council messaging, enhancements to the NSW Pet Registry and better resourcing to support local enforcement.

The submission also draws attention to systemic barriers such as the affordability of pet care, housing insecurity for pet owners and inconsistent application of the Act across jurisdictions.

## **5. Financial Impact**

There are no immediate financial implications in approving the submission. However, many of the recommendations, if adopted, would support funding arrangements and cost-sharing models to relieve financial pressure on local government in managing companion animals.

## **6. Risks/Issues**

Without reform, current gaps in the *Companion Animals Act* may continue to limit the role of local government to effectively manage risks and public safety. This submission reflects operational experience of officers and is not intended to reflect the wider views of the community, who may make their own submission.

## **7. Attachments**

1. Submission [↓](#)
2. OLG - Review of the NSW Companion Animals Laws - Discussion Paper - February 2025 [↓](#) .





## Review of the NSW Companion Animals Laws

# Review of the NSW Companion Animals Laws – Submission on the Discussion Paper

### What is this all about?

The NSW Government made a commitment to review the *Companion Animals Act 1998* (CA Act).

The CA Act is the legislative framework for the management of pet cats and dogs in NSW. It legislates the identification and registration requirements of companion animals and the duties and responsibilities of their owners, with the principal object being to 'provide for the effective and appropriate care and management of companion animals'.

As part of this review, the Office of Local Government (OLG) is gathering feedback on the emerging trends and issues involved in animal care and management. This is an opportunity for your input to inform future amendments to the CA Act.

It is intended that this review will ensure the legislation effectively enhances responsible pet ownership across NSW, ensuring the well-being of pets and the safety of our communities.

### Who are we seeking feedback from?

Many households, communities, and institutions across NSW play a key role in animal management and ownership. If you are part of one of the following groups, we encourage you to make a submission:

- Councils
- Pet owners
- Breeders
- Industry / advocacy organisation
- Veterinarians
- Authorised identifiers
- Rehoming organisation / rescue groups
- NSW State Government agencies
- Individual members of the public

### What are you being asked to do?

OLG has prepared a Discussion Paper outlining the key focus areas of the review. We are seeking your input on these matters through the questions below.

When providing your feedback, we encourage you to keep responses outcomes focused. There is no need to suggest draft wording or clauses for the legislation.

Note: organisations with multiple teams or individuals contributing responses may wish to save a shared copy of this form and make one submission on behalf of the organisation.

Instructions on submitting your feedback are included at the end of this form.

Not all questions need to be answered.



## Review of the NSW Companion Animals Laws – Submission on the Discussion Paper

### Information of privacy and confidentiality

When you give us your feedback, OLG will be collecting some personal information about you, in particular:

- your name
- your email address
- any personal information you decide to put in the additional comment's fields.

All feedback received through this consultation process may be made **publicly available**. Please let us know below if you **do not want** your name and personal details published.

As part of the consultation process, we may need to share your information with people outside OLG, including other public authorities and government agencies. We may also use your email to send you notifications about further feedback opportunities or the outcome of the consultation.

There may also be circumstances when OLG is required by law to release information (for example, in accordance with the requirements of the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009*). There is a privacy policy located on OLG's website that explains how some data is automatically collected (such as your internet protocol (IP) address) whenever you visit OLG's website. The link to that policy is <http://www.olg.nsw.gov.au/privacy>.

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## Review of the NSW Companion Animals Laws – Submission on the Discussion Paper

**Provide your feedback below.**

Your Details	
Question	Response
I would like my name and personal details to be treated as confidential:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, please keep my details confidential. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> I consent to my details being shared
Name	Sunil Kushor
Name of Organisation (If applicable)	Waverley Council
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Review of the NSW Companion Animals Laws – Submission on the Discussion Paper

Your Details

Which of the following best describes you?

☒ Council Metro

☐ Council Metro- fringe

☐ Council Regional

☐ Council Rural

☐ County council

☐ Joint Organisation/Regional Organisation of Councils

☐ Pet owner

☐ Breeder

☐ Industry / advocacy organisation

☐ Member of the public

☐ Veterinarian

☐ Authorised identifier.

☐ Rehoming organisation / rescue group

☐ NSW State Government agency

☐ Other



## Review of the NSW Companion Animals Laws – Submission on the Discussion Paper

### 1. Strategic framework for encouraging responsible ownership of companion animals (see Part 1 of the Discussion Paper for background information)

Question	Response
<b>Do you support the CA Act being amended to focus more on encouraging responsible pet ownership outcomes over strict compliance processes?</b>	<p>Waverley Council supports a stronger focus on encouraging responsible pet ownership outcomes, provided it is balanced with effective compliance where needed. In our experience, purely punitive or process-driven approaches have limitations: they can strain community relationships and may not address root causes of irresponsible ownership. Emphasising education and positive outcomes can foster a cooperative spirit among pet owners. For example, Waverley Council has found that public education campaigns, clear signage, and Ranger engagement in parks and public spaces encourage better behaviour over time, complementing our enforcement efforts.</p> <p>However, a shift toward responsible ownership outcomes should not come at the expense of accountability. Council believes the Act can explicitly promote education and incentive-based measures (such as training discounts or recognition for compliant owners) in tandem with enforcement. In Waverley, we have implemented both: our rangers frequently provide verbal warnings and educational brochures to first-time offenders (e.g. off-leash dogs in on-leash areas) to encourage correct behaviour, but we also issue fines for repeated or serious violations. This balanced approach aligns with the proposed focus on responsible ownership outcomes, as it seeks to change owner behaviour proactively rather than simply punish after the fact.</p> <p>In summary, Waverley Council would welcome amendments that embed responsible pet ownership as a key objective of the Act. Clear legislative support for education programs, training for pet owners, and community awareness campaigns would empower councils to guide owners toward better practices. Over time, we anticipate this will reduce non-compliance incidents. Our local trends already suggest this is possible: after intensified community engagement in late 2023, incidents of dogs off-leash in prohibited places dropped in 2024 (from 270 incidents in 2023 down to 149 in 2024, as recorded by Waverley Council). This indicates that focusing on outcomes (through education and warnings) alongside enforcement can improve behaviour. Waverley Council supports amending the Act to formally recognise and encourage such strategies</p>





## Review of the NSW Companion Animals Laws – Submission on the Discussion Paper

### **How can responsible pet ownership education be used to manage menacing or dangerous dogs?**

Education is a critical tool in preventing dog aggression and managing dogs that have been declared menacing or dangerous. Waverley Council's experience is that many dog attacks or threats in our area stem from owners' lack of understanding of dog behaviour, inadequate training, or complacency. To address this, the Act should strengthen requirements and opportunities for owner education, particularly for those with high-risk dogs.

Key ways education can help manage menacing/dangerous dogs include:

- **Mandatory Training Programs:** Require owners of dogs declared menacing or dangerous to undergo an accredited training or dog handling course. This ensures owners learn about dog behaviour, control techniques, and their legal responsibilities. For instance, if a dog is declared menacing after a biting incident, the owner could be required to attend a responsible ownership workshop as part of the control order. Such education can correct negligent habits and is more effective long-term than a fine alone.
- **Public Awareness Campaigns:** Broader education for all dog owners about early warning signs of aggression and proper socialisation can prevent incidents. Waverley Council has observed that many serious dog incidents were preceded by minor signs (e.g. uncontrolled rushing or minor nips) that owners missed or did not address. A state-led campaign (through media, vets, and council communications) highlighting how to raise a well-socialised dog and the importance of obedience training would help reduce the emergence of dangerous dogs. Education should also cover specific obligations for owners of menacing/dangerous dogs – such as secure fencing, muzzling in public, and supervision – so that owners understand these are essential safety measures, not just legal hoops.
- **Targeted Community Outreach:** Councils could partner with expert dog trainers or animal behaviourists to hold local workshops in areas with higher incidents of dog aggression. In Waverley, we could, for example, host "Responsible Dog Owner" seminars at off-leash parks or community centres, where owners learn techniques to manage strong or reactive dogs. This peer and expert learning environment encourage owners to take proactive steps before their dog's behaviour escalates. It also humanises Rangers' role – our Officers sometimes join these events to explain the consequences of non-compliance (like what a "dangerous dog" declaration entails), which often motivates owners to take training seriously. State funding for these types of activities is required.



## Review of the NSW Companion Animals Laws – Submission on the Discussion Paper

### 1. Strategic framework for encouraging responsible ownership of companion animals (see Part 1 of the Discussion Paper for background information)

- Educational Conditions in Control Orders: When Council issues a Menacing or Dangerous Dog Order, the legislation could explicitly allow including an education condition (e.g. "Owner must complete an approved dog handling course within 3 months"). Currently, our ability to ensure owners improve their knowledge is indirect. If backed by the Act, such conditions would standardise this practice across NSW and reinforce that managing a dangerous dog is an active, ongoing responsibility.

By embedding education into the management of high-risk dogs, we aim to prevent tragedies. Recent coronial inquests into fatal dog attacks highlight that enforcement alone is not enough – owners must be reached before incidents escalate. Waverley Council believes educated owners are more likely to contain and properly control their pets, reducing the need for punitive measures. Education, therefore, should be both a preventive measure (to reduce the number of dogs becoming dangerous) and a remedial measure (to correct behaviour of owners whose dogs have been declared menacing or dangerous).



## Review of the NSW Companion Animals Laws – Submission on the Discussion Paper

**How could the legislation be improved to motivate better dog owner behaviour and encourage owners to manage their dogs more responsibly? (For example, what does responsible dog control in public look like?)**

Improving dog owner behaviour requires a combination of clear legal standards, meaningful penalties for bad behaviour, and incentives for good behaviour. From Waverley Council's perspective, several legislative improvements could motivate owners to be more responsible with their dogs:

- **Clarify and Reinforce "Effective Control" Requirements:** The Act should explicitly define what "responsible dog control in public" entails. In practical terms, this means a dog is on a leash always held by a capable person in public areas (except designated off-leash zones), and that the person can restrain the dog if it lunges or tries to bolt. Responsible control also includes preventing the dog from approaching or harassing other people or animals without consent. While these expectations are understood, clearer wording in legislation (and associated guidelines) would remove ambiguity. Waverley Council Rangers often encounter owners who believe voice control is sufficient; the law should make it plain that a physical leash is required in public spaces (outside off-leash parks) and even specify leash length or other standards for busy urban areas. Having uniform expectations state-wide will help us educate and enforce – owners who visit from other council areas will know the rules are the same in Waverley.
- **Graduated Penalties and Deterrents:** To strongly motivate better behaviour, penalties for repeated offences should escalate. Currently, an owner who repeatedly allows their dog to roam off-leash or in prohibited places faces the same fine each time, which some are willing to absorb. If legislation introduced higher fines or other consequences (such as mandatory court appearance) for second or third offences, it would send a clear message. For example, Waverley Council data shows 555 incidents of dogs off-leash in public places were recorded from 2022 to March 2025 – a number that suggests some owners habitually flout the rules. Increasing the fine for a second offence (and beyond) would curb recidivism. In addition, the Act could empower councils to issue "Notice to Attend Training" for resistant owners as an alternative to just fines – ensuring they correct their behaviour.
- **Positive Incentives in the Registration System:** Legislation could incorporate incentives for demonstrably responsible owners. For instance, discounted registration fees or one-off rebates could be offered to owners who complete approved dog obedience courses or who maintain a history of no offences over several years. This would encourage initiative-taking training and compliance. Waverley Council already gives a discount on lifetime registration for desexed dogs. Similarly, a "responsible owner" status could be considered.



## Review of the NSW Companion Animals Laws – Submission on the Discussion Paper

### 1. Strategic framework for encouraging responsible ownership of companion animals (see Part 1 of the Discussion Paper for background information)

Though this might require administrative development, it underscores that good behaviour is valued.

- **Public Education Backed by Law:** The Act should mandate or strongly encourage state-wide education initiatives (in schools, community centres, vet clinics) about dog owner responsibilities. While not a direct legal penalty or incentive, embedding education in the legislative framework (for example, requiring the Office of Local Government to run annual responsible ownership campaigns) creates a culture that motivates compliance. Responsible dog control in public – such as always carrying waste bags and immediately cleaning up after a dog – should be second nature to owners. Education can make socially unacceptable behaviours (like leaving dog waste or letting a dog jump on strangers) as stigmatised as drink-driving, thereby motivating owners to comply out of social pressure and knowledge, not just fear of fines.

In describing “what responsible dog control in public looks like,” Waverley Council emphasises: a dog on leash by a person aged 16 or over (as required by current law), the person attentive and not distracted (e.g., not on their phone while the dog wanders), the dog walking calmly without interfering with others, and all waste promptly picked up. Legislation can support this vision by requiring owners to carry means to always collect dog droppings (as some other states do) and by continuing to designate adequate off-leash areas so that obedient dogs can exercise freely in appropriate settings. Responsible behaviour should be convenient and clearly legal, whereas irresponsible behaviour (off-leash in undesignated areas, failure to pick up waste, allowing dogs to harass or jump) should be met with swift consequences. Strengthening the Act in the ways outlined above will motivate owners toward the desired behaviour through a mix of clarity, deterrence, and encouragement.



## Review of the NSW Companion Animals Laws – Submission on the Discussion Paper

**How could the legislation be improved to motivate better cat owner behaviour and encourage owners to manage their cats more responsibly? (For example, cat containment)**

Cats present different challenges than dogs, and current legislation is limited regarding cat management. Waverley Council believes that to encourage responsible cat ownership, the Act should be updated with provisions that address cat containment, desexing, and reducing nuisance. Key improvements could include:

- **Cat Containment Laws:** No concern is raised with regard to introducing or enabling cat containment requirements, at least during night hours or in defined areas. Responsible cat management means keeping cats from roaming freely, both for the cat's safety and to protect wildlife. While some NSW councils have voluntarily introduced night-time cat curfews or "cats indoors" policies, there is no statewide mandate. The Act could empower councils to declare certain zones (particularly near sensitive wildlife habitats) as cat containment areas, or the State could set a uniform standard (e.g. cats must be confined to their property between sunset and sunrise). This would send a clear message that allowing cats to wander is no longer acceptable. In Waverley's urban environment, free-roaming cats often become lost or injured and can cause disputes between neighbours (for example, entering others' properties or preying on birds in backyard aviaries). Requiring containment or at least giving councils the explicit power to require it, would motivate owners to invest in cat enclosures or keep cats indoors, aligning with responsible ownership. Public education should accompany this change, highlighting that indoor cats live longer, healthier lives on average and pose less risk to native fauna.
- **Mandatory Desexing (or Stronger Incentives to Desex):** Uncontrolled breeding of cats is a major contributor to stray and unwanted cat populations. Legislation could require cats to be desexed by a certain age (say 4 or 6 months) unless the owner is a licensed breeder. Some NSW jurisdictions have taken steps in this direction through higher registration fees and annual permits for undesexed cats. For example, by expanding the annual permit system such that owning an undesexed cat without breeding authorisation becomes significantly more costly and administratively burdensome. This effectively nudges owners toward desexing. Additionally, state-funded, or subsidised desexing programs (funded through a portion of registration fees) would remove the cost barrier and encourage compliance and would drastically reduce the number of stray kittens that end up in shelters each year.
- **Nuisance Cat Provisions:** The Act currently has provisions for nuisance cats (like nuisance dogs, e.g. for excessive noise or damage). These could be strengthened or more clearly defined to motivate owners to prevent their cats





## Review of the NSW Companion Animals Laws – Submission on the Discussion Paper

### 1. Strategic framework for encouraging responsible ownership of companion animals (see Part 1 of the Discussion Paper for background information)

from causing problems. For example, persistent roaming or spraying on other properties could be clearly listed as nuisance behaviours for which councils can issue orders or penalties. Knowing that a neighbour can seek a nuisance order may incentivise cat owners to keep their pets supervised. Waverley Council receives complaints about outdoor cats defecating in community gardens or private yards. If the Act made it easier to address these complaints (with, say, an infringement option for owners who repeatedly allow their cat to roam and cause a nuisance), owners would take containment and litter training more seriously.

- **Education and Awareness Specifically for Cat Owners:** Many cat owners are less engaged with councils (since cats are often “out of sight” unlike dogs walked in parks). The legislation could include a directive for promotional campaigns on responsible cat ownership – like dog campaigns – focusing on issues like the importance of keeping cats indoors or in enclosures, providing enrichment to indoor cats, and microchipping and registering cats. Waverley Council can amplify these messages locally through our libraries, vets, and community groups. A notable example of responsible cat ownership is the growing trend of “catios” (cat patios/enclosures) which allow cats outdoor time safely. Highlighting such examples in education materials, supported by the Act’s framework, would encourage more owners to take that step.

In summary, legislative improvements for cats should aim to normalise indoor living or supervised outdoor access, ensure all cats are desexed, and hold owners accountable if their cats cause harm or nuisance. By adopting measures such as cat containment and mandatory desexing, NSW would be following the lead of other jurisdictions that have successfully curbed stray cat populations.



## Review of the NSW Companion Animals Laws – Submission on the Discussion Paper

<p><b>Are there other matters that should be considered?</b></p>	<p>In addition to the points above, Waverley Council wishes to highlight several other matters that are important for fostering responsible pet ownership:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Consistent Messaging and Collaboration Across Councils:</b> Pet owners in NSW often move or travel between local government areas, but they encounter varying rules (e.g., different off-leash hours or policies) and enforcement intensities. This inconsistency can undermine responsible ownership – owners may claim confusion or unfair targeting. We recommend that the NSW Government develop state-wide guidelines or templates for council policies (for instance, standard signage and rules for off-leash areas, uniform leash-length requirements, etc.). While councils need flexibility to manage local issues, core rules should be communicated consistently. Waverley Council, for example, coordinates with neighbouring councils in Sydney’s Eastern Suburbs on public education campaigns so that dog owners receive a unified message. A more formalised consistency (through an updated Regulation or code of practice) would further reinforce responsible ownership across NSW.</li> <li>• <b>Improved Pet Owner Data and Communication:</b> A practical improvement would be enhancing the NSW Pet Registry system to better engage pet owners. The Registry has contact information for owners of registered pets – this could be used (with privacy safeguards) to send out periodic educational reminders (e.g., emails or texts about seasonal pet care tips, reminders of obligations like annual permits, or notices of upcoming local pet events). By leveraging technology, the government and councils can nudge owners toward responsible behaviours in real time. Additionally, integrating the Registry with council systems could help identify owners with multiple infringements across different LGAs, ensuring that chronic offenders are recognised and educated or penalised appropriately, regardless of where incidents occur.</li> <li>• <b>Addressing Emerging Issues (e.g., pet-friendly housing):</b> Encouraging responsible pet ownership also means reducing the external factors that sometimes lead to irresponsible outcomes. One such factor is housing – owners forced to relocate due to rental restrictions on pets may abandon animals or fail to register them at new addresses. While this extends beyond the Act’s traditional scope, the strategic framework should acknowledge cross-cutting issues. The State Government might consider parallel initiatives, such as promoting pet-friendly rental policies or providing guidance to strata complexes on reasonable pet rules. Stable, pet-friendly housing encourages owners to invest in training and caring for their animals long-term, thus supporting responsible ownership.</li> </ul>
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## Review of the NSW Companion Animals Laws – Submission on the Discussion Paper

### 1. Strategic framework for encouraging responsible ownership of companion animals (see Part 1 of the Discussion Paper for background information)

- **Community Engagement and Recognition:** Councils have found that community-driven approaches can complement enforcement. We suggest the Act, or its implementation strategy encourage councils to form “Pet Owner Reference Groups” or community pet committees. These groups of volunteer pet owners and other residents can advise on local issues, disseminate information through peer networks, and even mentor new pet owners. Waverley’s precinct committees have occasionally discussed pet issues, and we see value in formalising a channel for pet owner input and leadership. Recognising responsible owners (for instance, an annual “Responsible Pet Owner Award” at the local or state level) could also reinforce positive behaviour through public praise, not just penalties for bad behaviour.

Beyond the specific questions asked, a holistic approach is needed: clear laws, active education, community involvement, and consistent enforcement are all pillars of a successful framework for responsible pet ownership. We appreciate that the Discussion Paper is looking at these broader ideas, and we encourage the State to consider the practical insights from councils like ours as it updates the Companion Animals Act.

### 2. Compliance and enforcement role of councils (see Part 2 of the Discussion Paper for background information)

Question	Response
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## Review of the NSW Companion Animals Laws – Submission on the Discussion Paper

<p><b>What changes to NSW laws, regulations, codes, or guidelines could be provided to councils and other enforcement authorities to better support responsible pet ownership?</b></p>	<p>To better support responsible pet ownership, the laws and guidelines must equip councils with the tools, training, and consistency needed for effective enforcement and education. Waverley Council recommends the following changes and enhancements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Statewide Consistency in Enforcement Procedures:</b> The NSW Government should develop a model enforcement policy or guidelines for the Companion Animals Act. This would cover how rangers approach common issues (off-leash dogs, dog attacks, nuisance complaints, etc.), ensuring a more uniform standard across all councils. Currently, a lack of consistency across councils can inadvertently undermine enforcement – for example, an owner cited by a Waverley ranger might claim that a neighbouring council “doesn’t enforce that rule” or might be unsure of what is expected if they visit another area. Consistency would support responsible ownership by removing ambiguity. It would also support councils; when all councils are on the same page, there is less opportunity for individuals to forum-shop or play one authority against another. We suggest the Office of Local Government (OLG) issue updated guidelines (or a Ministerial code) that detail best-practice processes for issuing warnings vs fines, seizing animals, declaring dogs dangerous, etc. Waverley Council would actively contribute to developing such guidelines based on our local protocols which have proven effective.</li> <li>• <b>Enhanced Training and Resources for Authorised Officers:</b> Our Council Rangers are resolute, but enforcing animal laws can be complex and sometimes challenging. State Government could better support councils by providing standardised training programs for all Authorised Officers (a certification course administered by OLG or TAFE NSW focusing on animal handling, legal procedure, and conflict de-escalation). While Waverley provides in-house training, a formal credential would ensure every officer in NSW has baseline expertise. Additionally, funding or grants for equipment like body-worn cameras and safe animal handling gear would assist councils in evidence collection and officer safety. We have found that body cameras both deter abuse toward officers and provide valuable evidence in disputed incidents. Explicit support in the regulations for their use (and the admissibility of their footage in court) would be welcome.</li> <li>• <b>Greater Authority and Clarity in the Act:</b> There are areas where rangers’ powers could be clarified or modestly expanded to improve enforcement. For instance, while rangers can request a person’s name and address if an offence is suspected, some offenders simply refuse or provide false details. Strengthening the penalty for failure to comply with an officer’s directions (and allowing police assistance if necessary) would help. Likewise, clarifying</li> </ul>
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## Review of the NSW Companion Animals Laws – Submission on the Discussion Paper

entry powers in emergencies – such as entering a property to seize a dog in the aftermath of a serious attack or to rescue a neglected animal – would ensure officers can act decisively when needed. If the law explicitly backed these actions (with appropriate safeguards), councils could more confidently intervene to protect the public and animals. Waverley rangers have occasionally faced situations where a dangerous dog ran back onto private property after attacking someone in public; clear authority to pursue or to obtain a warrant rapidly in such scenarios is essential.

- **Addressing Abuse and Obstruction of Council Officers:** A troubling trend in enforcement is the abuse, threats, and even harassment that council officers sometimes face when enforcing pet laws. Waverley Council notes an increase in abuse toward our Rangers from a minority of pet owners who are caught violating rules. This includes verbal insults, intimidation, and in some cases coordinated online harassment on social media by groups opposing leash laws. While general laws (like those against assault) apply, the Companion Animals Act could include a specific offence for obstructing or intimidating an authorised officer in the exercise of their duties. Similar provisions exist in other regulatory legislation to protect officers. Even if not a common occurrence, its inclusion would send a strong signal that the state government stands behind enforcement staff. Support could also come in the form of public campaigns underscoring that rangers are doing their job to keep the community safe – much like campaigns that support frontline emergency workers. By reinforcing respect for the law and its enforcers, we create an environment where responsible ownership is the norm and enforcement officers can do their job without fear.

- **Improved Legal Support and Cost Recovery:** Often councils must pursue serious offences through the court system (for example, prosecuting a dog attack or a repeat offender who refuses to comply). The costs of court action are high, and if fines are low or offenders are insolvent, councils may not recoup those costs. To support enforcement, NSW State Government could look at measures like allowing councils to recover reasonable costs for prosecutions (as part of sentencing or via a specific court order for costs under the Act). Another approach is providing a centralised prosecution service or legal support for complex cases, so individual councils are not bearing the full burden. Waverley Council has observed an increase in the number of courts matters for Companion Animals Act breaches, partly due to more people challenging fines or notices. This not only incurs legal fees but also significant staff time (Rangers preparing evidence, attending hearings) which is effectively subsidised by the local community. Stronger deterrents (discussed





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2. Compliance and enforcement role of councils (see Part 2 of the Discussion Paper for background information)	
	<p>further in Q2.3) will help reduce this, but direct support in the legal process would also better enable councils to enforce serious cases without undue financial strain.</p> <p>Changes that standardise practices, bolster the authority and safety of council officers, and provide resources for education/enforcement will collectively support responsible pet ownership.</p>

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## Review of the NSW Companion Animals Laws – Submission on the Discussion Paper

### **How could NSW laws, regulations, codes, or guidelines be improved to support councils to better manage dangerous and restricted dogs?**

Managing dangerous and restricted dogs is one of the most critical public safety roles councils perform under the Act. Waverley Council believes several improvements would assist us and other councils in this area:

- **Streamlining the Declaration Process:** Currently, declaring a dog as dangerous or menacing involves a process that must balance fairness to the owner with community safety. To better protect the public, the Act's procedures could be streamlined for clear-cut cases. For example, if a dog has caused a serious unprovoked attack resulting in significant injury, councils should have the ability to fast-track a dangerous dog declaration (with an interim declaration taking effect immediately, pending any appeal). This would allow immediate enforcement of control requirements (muzzle, secure enclosure, etc.) without waiting through protracted notice periods. Waverley Council fortunately has not experienced a fatal attack, but we have dealt with severe incidents. In such cases, every day that strict controls are delayed is a risk. Clear guidelines on what evidence or incident severity justifies an urgent declaration (and providing councils the confidence legally to impose one) would be a welcome improvement.
- **Implementing Coroners' Recommendations:** Recent coronial inquests into fatal dog attacks in NSW have identified shortcomings in how previous incidents were handled. We urge that these recommendations be reflected in updated laws or guidelines. This could mean requiring that any dog that commits a second offence (like biting or rushing at someone) is automatically considered for a menacing or dangerous declaration, and that councils have a duty to check compliance on any control orders issued. Additionally, there should be a mechanism for police, vets, or healthcare providers to directly alert councils of serious dog-related injuries or incidents, to ensure no case slips through the cracks due to siloed information. A formal information-sharing protocol between councils and police for dangerous dog matters would support this – for example, if police respond to a dog attack after hours, that information must swiftly reach the local council for follow-up action.
- **Strengthening Ownership Restrictions and Enforcement for Dangerous/Restricted Dogs:** Once a dog is declared dangerous or a restricted breed, the law imposes several conditions (special enclosures, muzzles, warning signs at premises, etc., and in the case of restricted breeds, a permit system). While the law is robust on paper, enforcement is challenging. Councils often rely on periodic checks to ensure compliance, but we have limited resources to frequently inspect premises. To improve this, the Act could introduce measures such as mandatory microchip scanning and compliance checks at veterinary visits for declared dogs – i.e., when a



## Review of the NSW Companion Animals Laws – Submission on the Discussion Paper

dangerous dog is taken to the vet, the vet must scan its chip and confirm in the Registry whether it's declared, and if so, report any non-compliance with enclosures or muzzle requirements observed. Another helpful measure would be escalating penalties for breaches of dangerous dog requirements; at present, an owner who fails to abide by one of the conditions can be penalised, but the fines may not reflect the gravity of potentially allowing a dangerous dog to roam or escape. Ensuring these penalties are substantial (and even including criminal charges for egregious negligence) will push owners to take their responsibilities seriously. For example, expanding banning orders – i.e., giving courts the power to prohibit individuals from owning dogs (or certain types of dogs) if they are found to be grossly irresponsible, such as in cases of repeated dangerous dog violations. This would remove the risk at its source in the most extreme cases.

- **Review of Restricted Breed Provisions:** The restricted breeds (like American Pit Bull Terrier, Japanese Tosa, etc.) are subject to special rules in NSW. We note that managing these is increasingly about individual dog behaviour rather than breed alone, as evidenced by many non-restricted breeds being involved in attacks. The review might consider if the current restricted breed list and rules remain effective or if a more behaviour-focused approach (with strong dangerous dog laws for any breed) is sufficient. From an enforcement perspective, identifying a dog's breed to decide if it is restricted can be contentious and resource-intensive (requiring breed assessment). Some councils struggle with litigation over breed identification. We suggest that guidelines be updated to simplify this – by accepting DNA evidence or by adopting the approach of other jurisdictions that have dropped breed-specific rules in favor of universally applied dangerous dog laws. Whichever route is chosen, councils need clarity to enforce consistently. Waverley Council's priority is that any dog, of any breed, which poses a serious risk is identified and controlled early. Laws should support that outcome clearly, whether through breed-specific or breed-neutral provisions.

In summary, to better manage dangerous and restricted dogs, we need faster action on known aggressive dogs, rigorous follow-up on compliance, tougher penalties for lapses, and clear, evidence-based criteria in the law. These changes would empower councils like Waverley to intervene before incidents escalate and to ensure that once a dog is flagged as high-risk, it remains under strict control or is humanely removed if necessary. Public safety and animal welfare both demand a proactive approach in this area, and we believe the Act's reform should reflect that.



## Review of the NSW Companion Animals Laws – Submission on the Discussion Paper

<p><b>Are the current enforcement provisions under the Act (including penalties for offences - see Appendix B of the discussion paper) appropriate? If not, what enforcement provisions should be changed?</b></p>	<p>While the Companion Animals Act has provided a solid foundation for many years, many enforcement provisions – particularly the penalties – are no longer adequate to deter unlawful behaviour or reflect the seriousness of some offences. We recommend several changes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Increase Penalty Units for Key Offences:</b> Many fine amounts in NSW have not kept pace with those in other states or with inflation. For example, the on-the-spot fine in NSW for a dog being off-leash in a prohibited place is currently \$330, and for failing to pick up dog faeces is \$275. By comparison, Queensland recently more than doubled its fine for not controlling a dog in public to \$806, and its on-the-spot fine for a dog attack causing injury is \$3,226. Such disparities suggest NSW's penalties may be too low to provide strong deterrence. Waverley Council frequently encounters repeat offenders for off-leash violations who treat the current fine as a minor inconvenience. We support a review and upward revision of penalty units for offences like dog not under effective control, dog in prohibited place, failure to scoop waste, and especially dog attack offences. Higher fines (for instance, aligning with other States or at least significantly above current levels) would signal to owners that these infractions are taken seriously as public safety or amenity issues. Additionally, tiered fines based on severity (as some states have ranges, e.g. higher penalties if an attack causes severe injury vs minor injury) could be introduced via regulations. This provides flexibility to match the punishment to the specific incident.</li> <li>• <b>Escalating Penalties for Repeat Offenders:</b> The Act should explicitly allow higher penalties or additional sanctions for repeated violations by the same person. For example, a first offence for an off-leash dog might remain a fine (e.g., \$330 or the new higher amount), but a second offence within, say, 2 years could attract a larger fine or require a court appearance. A third offence might even be treated as an offence of a higher category (incurring a misdemeanour charge). This concept of escalation is common in driving offences (demerit points, higher fines for repeat speeding, etc.) and could be applied here. It would particularly address those few individuals who accumulate multiple infringements across years. Waverley Council's enforcement data from 2022–2025 indicates that while most pet owners correct their behaviour after one infringement or warning, a small number are responsible for a disproportionate share of offences (for instance, some owners of dogs involved in multiple attack incidents, or repeatedly found with off-leash dogs in non-designated areas). The law should not treat a third offence by such an owner as if it were a first-time mistake – stronger measures are warranted to protect the community and other pets.</li> </ul>
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## Review of the NSW Companion Animals Laws – Submission on the Discussion Paper

- **Expanded Range of Enforcement Tools:** In addition to fines and court prosecutions, it would be beneficial for the Act to authorise diversionary or restorative measures. For example, councils could have the option (via court orders or enforceable undertakings) to require an offending owner to attend a pet ownership course, undertake community service related to animal care (like volunteering at a shelter), or in extreme cases, temporarily surrender the animal for behavioural training. These kinds of provisions recognise that sometimes education or intervention with the owner and animal can prevent future incidents better than a fine. They should be applied selectively (by a magistrate in serious cases or by agreement in lieu of prosecution) but having them available in the Act would broaden the toolkit for achieving compliance.

- **Improved Mechanisms for Debt Recovery and Compliance:** A penalty only works as a deterrent if it is actually paid or enforced. We suggest strengthening the link between unpaid fines and other sanctions. For instance, if a person has outstanding Companion Animals Act fines, the Act could permit suspension of services like pet registration renewal or even vehicle registration (like how unpaid tolls or fines are handled) until debts are cleared. This would close the loop on enforcement so that offenders cannot simply ignore fines without consequence.

- **Aligning Offences with Modern Community Expectations:** One example is making it an offence for an owner to incite or allow their dog to intimidate someone (even if no attack occurs). Our Rangers occasionally confront owners who deliberately allow their off-leash dog to menace people who complain, or who use their dog to deter officers. While “dog rushing” is covered, a clear offence of using a dog as a threat could be defined. Another example is tackling puppy farming or large-scale backyard breeding – currently, much of that is covered by separate legislation or planning laws, but if the Act took a stronger stance on unlicensed breeding of companion animals (which contributes to overpopulation issues), that could be considered in enforcement provisions (this overlaps with the population/rehoming section, but enforcement is key to stopping illicit breeders).

In conclusion, the current enforcement provisions have served well, but increases in penalties and a more graduated, nuanced approach to enforcement are needed to meet today’s demands. Higher fines for serious offences, repeat-offender escalations, and additional enforcement tools will together enhance compliance. Waverley Council’s goal is not to issue more fines, but to see better compliance – a goal more likely achieved if the consequences of breaking the law are significant and well-publicised. We



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2. Compliance and enforcement role of councils (see Part 2 of the Discussion Paper for background information)	
	believe the community expects firm action, particularly in the wake of high-profile dog attacks, and updating the Act’s penalties and enforcement options will align it with those expectations.

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## Review of the NSW Companion Animals Laws – Submission on the Discussion Paper

### **Are there other compliance and enforcement matters that should be considered?**

Yes. In addition to what has been discussed, Waverley Council wishes to raise the following compliance and enforcement matters that merit consideration in the review:

- **Resourcing and Funding for Council Enforcement:** The best laws and penalties will have limited effect if councils lack the resources to enforce them. Compliance activities (patrols, investigations, education outreach) are labour-intensive. We recommend the State consider funding arrangements to support councils' companion animal management roles – for example, a portion of pet registration fees or fine revenue could be returned to councils as grants earmarked for improving pound facilities, hiring additional Rangers, or community education. Currently, Waverley Council funds these services through general revenue and fees, but with rising costs and expectations, dedicated funding would ensure sustained, high-quality enforcement. Furthermore, allowing councils to pool resources (through joint enforcement teams across regions or sharing specialist staff like animal behaviour experts) could be facilitated by the OLG via guidelines or incentives. Smaller councils might benefit from a regional approach to certain enforcement tasks (like handling dangerous dog investigations or complex prosecutions). The Act might not directly dictate funding, but an accompanying strategy or regulation could address this crucial need for adequate resourcing across NSW.
- **Modernising the Fine Process and Reducing Court Burden:** As mentioned, there has been an uptick in court contests over fines and orders, partly due to some individuals exploiting procedural loopholes or hoping councils will drop cases due to cost. It would be helpful to have an administrative review mechanism for Companion Animals Act penalties (like how parking fines can be reviewed internally or via a fine review panel) and even a dedicated tribunal pathway. The NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal (NCAT) could be given jurisdiction for reviewing companion animal-related fines or declarations. This could provide a less formal, more cost-effective forum than the Local Court for disputes. It would ease the pressure of legal costs and might encourage more consistent outcomes (as tribunal members could develop expertise in this field). By reducing the burdens and costs of enforcement through courts, councils can pursue compliance more assertively, knowing that even if challenged, the process is manageable. Waverley Council supports exploring this idea as part of ensuring enforcement provisions are fair and efficient.
- **Community Reporting and Witness Support:** Many enforcement actions by councils start with community reports (a neighbour reports a roaming dog, a person reports being bitten, etc.). However, a challenge we face is that



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residents are sometimes unwilling to come forward or provide statements, especially if it involves a neighbour's pet, due to fear of conflict or retaliation. Strengthening protections or anonymity for complainants in certain cases could improve enforcement. For example, the Act could allow councils to issue a warning or investigate based on an anonymous tip if there is reasonable cause (like a pattern of similar complaints). Additionally, for serious matters like dog attacks, providing support for victim witnesses (via a victim's support scheme or allowing written statements if appearing in person is too traumatic) would help ensure cases proceed. These are procedural ideas that might be addressed in policy more than in law but recognising them in the discussion ensures the enforcement system is humane and effective for all parties involved.

- **Technological Aids and Evidence Gathering:** The Act could explicitly accommodate the use of technology in enforcement. For instance, many public spaces now have CCTV. If a dog attack or repeated off-leash offence is caught on camera, councils should be confident in using that evidence. Clarifying evidentiary provisions (that a council officer can rely on video or photographic evidence to issue a fine, even if they did not directly witness the offence) would be helpful. Likewise, if members of the public provide video of an incident, the law should protect officers in acting on it. In Waverley, there have been cases where community members submit photos of dogs on prohibited beaches or not picked up after – having a clear mandate that such evidence can trigger enforcement action (after validation) would encourage community involvement and supplement ranger presence.
- **Inter-Council Cooperation and Data Sharing:** Pet owners and offending animals do not always stay within one LGA. We believe a more formal system for inter-council cooperation in enforcement would be beneficial. For example, if a person banned from owning dogs in one LGA moves to another, or a dangerous dog is relocated, that information should travel. The NSW Pet Registry does record dangerous dog declarations accessible to all councils, which is good. We propose building on that: a flagged alert system that notifies a new council if a registered dangerous dog moves into their area, or if an owner with an outstanding fine in one council registers an animal in another. A consistent approach to enforcement means no "safe havens" for non-compliance anywhere in NSW. Waverley Council works closely with our neighbours (like Randwick and Woollahra councils) on certain cases, but a state-level framework or data system could streamline this significantly.



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	In conclusion, it is considered these additional considerations – resourcing, process improvements, community engagement, tech innovation, and inter-council consistency – are all integral to a robust compliance and enforcement regime. Addressing these will not only support councils in doing their job but will also enhance overall public confidence in the Companion Animals regulatory system.
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3. Companion animal population and rehoming (see Part 3 of the Discussion Paper for background information)

Question	Response
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## Review of the NSW Companion Animals Laws – Submission on the Discussion Paper

<p><b>What more could be done to reduce stray and homeless cats and dogs in NSW?</b></p>	<p>Reducing the number of stray and homeless companion animals requires preventative strategies that stop unwanted litters and keep pets in homes. Key actions Waverley Council advocates include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Widespread Subsidised Desexing Programs:</b> The single most effective measure is increasing the rate of desexing for cats and dogs. Many strays are the result of accidental breeding by owned pets or abandoned animals reproducing. We recommend expanded low-cost or free desexing programs, especially targeting communities or areas with known high intake of stray puppies and kittens. Local councils, in partnership with the State and animal welfare NGOs, could host periodic desexing drives. For example, a mobile clinic could be funded to visit urban hotspots (even in Waverley, certain pockets have more un-desexed cat populations) or remote areas, offering free surgeries. Some successful models exist (e.g., National Desexing Network campaigns); these should be scaled up. By removing cost barriers, owners are far more likely to desex their pets, which directly curtails the birth of unwanted litters.</li> <li>• <b>Mandatory Desexing of Shelter Animals and Early-Age Desexing:</b> To ensure strays do not perpetuate the cycle, any animal leaving a pound or shelter should be desexed (a policy already in place in many areas). The Act or supporting policies should reinforce this by making it a legal requirement that councils and rehoming organisations desex animals prior to rehoming (or in rare cases where that is not possible due to age or health, to follow up and ensure it has done). Additionally, encouraging or mandating early-age desexing (around 4-5 months old) for cats would help, as cats can get pregnant as early as 5-6 months. The sooner the preventive action, the fewer accidental litters. NSW could consider requiring pet sellers or give-away adverts to include a statement that the animal must be desexed by a certain age, to instil this norm.</li> <li>• <b>Education and Awareness Campaigns about Pet Commitment:</b> Reducing homelessness also means fewer pets being surrendered or abandoned. Public education should stress that owning a pet is a long-term commitment and highlight common reasons pets end up homeless (such as behavioural issues, which training could have fixed, or housing issues). If potential owners are better educated before they acquire a pet – choosing a breed that suits their lifestyle, understanding the costs involved, and knowing resources for help (trainers, pet support services) – they may be less likely to surrender the animal later. Waverley Council has participated in local events (like “Responsible Pet Ownership” days) where we and rescue groups speak with citizens about the realities of pet ownership. We believe the State could</li> </ul>
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## Review of the NSW Companion Animals Laws – Submission on the Discussion Paper

amplify this message through school programs and media campaigns, featuring stories of animals that entered the pound system due to preventable owner decisions. Empathy-based campaigns that encourage people not to buy pets on impulse (especially around holidays) can reduce the number of pets that are later discarded.

- **Crackdown on Illegal Breeding and Pet Shop Sales:** A proportion of stray or homeless animals originates from overbreeding, whether by irresponsible backyard breeders or high-volume pet breeding facilities. Strengthening the regulation of pet breeding (beyond current codes of practice) and pet sales can help. By dampening the supply side of surplus animals, we reduce how many need homes. Fewer uncontrolled breeders mean fewer litters of puppies/kittens flooding the market and potentially being abandoned. Waverley Council enforces microchipping and registration requirements at point of sale/transfer (as per law), but additional state oversight on breeding licensing would support council efforts by tackling the root source.
- **Community Cat Programs:** In many urban areas, including Waverley, stray and semi-owned cats form colonies. Completely eliminating these requires persistent effort. One approach debated is Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) for community cats, where they are desexed and returned to managed colonies, gradually reducing numbers over time. The legal status of TNR in NSW has been uncertain. We suggest the review consider guidance or pilot programs for humane cat management in places where traditional removal and rehoming of feral cats is not feasible. Any such program must be carefully managed to ensure it does not harm wildlife (for instance, only in contained urban environments). Alternatively, more support for trap-and-remove programs that lead to rehoming of socialised cats and humane euthanasia of feral ones may be necessary. The goal is to break the breeding cycle of stray cats. Clear policy and legislative backing (with allocation of funds) for councils to implement these programs would accelerate progress.
- **Reuniting Lost Pets with Owners Quickly:** Some animals become “stray” simply because they are lost and cannot be identified. Continuing to improve microchipping compliance and updating owner details is key. The more pets that are chipped and registered, the faster they can be returned home, freeing up pound space and avoiding an “at-large” population. Councils already work on this (Waverley runs periodic microchipping days and follows up on pets not registered after microchipping), but a new push – perhaps SMS or email reminders to pet owners to update details when moving, or tying pet registration renewal to things like car registration renewal as a reminder – could help. The State might even explore technology like a mobile app for the



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3. Companion animal population and rehoming (see Part 3 of the Discussion Paper for background information)	
	<p>Pet Registry that makes it easy for owners to report a pet lost or found, and for the public to assist, creating a more dynamic lost-and-found system. The sooner a roaming pet is caught and returned, the less chance it contributes to a stray population or uncontrolled breeding.</p> <p>In conclusion, reducing strays and homeless pets is about prevention first: prevent births of unwanted animals, prevent owned pets from becoming lost or abandoned. By investing in desexing, cracking down on sources of surplus pets, and educating the community, NSW can significantly reduce the influx of animals into pounds. Waverley Council strongly supports these measures and believes they will ease the burden on pounds and improve animal welfare across the state.</p>





## Review of the NSW Companion Animals Laws – Submission on the Discussion Paper

### **What changes can be made to NSW laws, regulations, codes, or guidelines to reduce the number of companion animals entering the pound and rehoming system in the first place?**

Many of the preventive measures overlap with the previous answer, but focusing on legal and regulatory changes, we propose:

- Strengthening Mandatory Identification and Registration Requirements:** The law already requires microchipping by 12 weeks and lifetime registration by 6 months for dogs and cats. Ensuring this is universally complied with is crucial so that lost animals can be returned instead of entering pounds. It is recommended more stringent enforcement of these requirements: for example, a fine for failing to microchip/register by the deadline (currently enforcement is spotty unless another offence brings it to light). Waverley Council has issued numerous fines for unregistered pets (126 first-offence notices from 2022–2025, with numbers declining each year as compliance improved). To support councils, vets and animal sellers should be required to notify new owners about registration obligations, even lodge initial details in the registry at point of sale. The Act could also mandate that a microchip must be registered to a new owner before any sale or transfer is finalized – this would close gaps when pets change hands. By tightening these processes, every pet is accounted for, making it less likely to become an untraceable stray.
- Incentivise Desexing Through Regulatory Measures:** As discussed, mandatory desexing would be ideal. Short of that, regulations could enhance incentives. NSW already has a higher lifetime registration fee for entire (not desexed) animals and introduced an annual permit fee for non-desexed cats. These are positive steps. We suggest increasing those differentials further to strongly encourage desexing. For instance, if the lifetime rego fee for an un-desexed dog were higher (or if an annual fee for undersexed dogs were introduced), most owners would opt to desex to avoid ongoing costs. This kind of economic signal is a regulatory tool that can change behaviour. Additionally, offering discounted registration for pets that were adopted from a shelter or rescue (many councils do this already) could be standardised state-wide – this encourages people to adopt rather than shop, indirectly reducing demand for bred puppies/kittens that might displace a shelter animal.
- Enhance Breeder Licensing and Traceability:** A critical step to reduce pound intakes is to ensure those breeding animals are doing so responsibly and that buyers are informed. The Companion Animals Act could work in concert with animal welfare codes to require that anyone who breeds a dog or cat, even a one-off litter, must register as a breeder or at least list their identification number when selling/giving away animals. Some of this is already in place (the NSW Pet Registry provides a breeder ID for registered breeders), but not all casual backyard breeders comply. Making it an offence to advertise or sell a



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kitten/puppy without a breeder ID (with meaningful fines) would reduce the casual trade. With better breeder accountability, fewer sick or poorly socialised animals will be produced – these often end up surrendered due to health or behavioural issues. Moreover, a well-regulated breeding industry means prospective owners get healthier pets with known history, making them less likely to give them up. Waverley Council also supports the idea of capping the number of litters or requiring health guarantees, to discourage overbreeding. These changes might sit in a code of practice under animal welfare legislation, but the Companion Animals Act can link to them by, for instance, refusing registration of any puppy or kitten that does not come with a valid breeder ID in the system (flagging it for investigation).

- **Community Programs and Partnerships (Guideline Level):** Not all solutions need heavy new laws; some can be fostered through guidelines and partnerships. For example, Councils could be encouraged (through OLG guidelines) to set up “pet retention” programs. This might include running or sponsoring dog training classes (so behaviour problems don’t lead to surrender), pet wellness clinics (catching health issues early so owners don’t abandon pets due to costly treatments), and linking pet owners to support services during personal crises (so pets aren’t surrendered during an owner’s temporary hardship). Waverley Council, being in a metro area, can partner with local vets and trainers for such initiatives, but a formal program and small grants from the State would systematise it. If every council had a strategy to assist owners in keeping their pets, the pound intake would drop. We suggest the review consider a guideline or policy encouraging councils to use a Companion Animals Fund allocation specifically for community support programs that prevent surrenders.

- **Data-Driven Interventions:** Using data from the NSW Pet Registry and pound statistics, identify hotspots where many animals enter the pound system, and tailor interventions there. For instance, if a particular region has a high intake of stray kittens, focus desexing and education efforts there. If another area sees many dogs impounded for escaping, investigate if fencing issues or lack of secure yards are common, then target education about secure containment. While this is more about practice than law, the framework of the Act could encourage data sharing and mandate an annual report from OLG analysing state-wide trends and recommending targeted actions. That way, councils can proactively address the causes of surrenders/strays in their area before it swells the pound population.



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By implementing these changes – tightening identification, incentivising (or mandating) desexing, clamping down on irresponsible breeding, and proactively supporting pet owners – we can significantly reduce the number of animals that end up homeless. Waverley Council has already seen improvements through incremental measures (for example, our enforcement of registration and our community education have led to fewer unclaimed pets on our streets). With stronger state-level backing via laws and policies, these successes can be amplified across NSW.

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## Review of the NSW Companion Animals Laws – Submission on the Discussion Paper

<p><b>For companion animals needing to enter the ‘pound’ system, what could be done to increase rehoming?</b></p>	<p>When animals do enter the pound or shelter system, it is crucial to maximise their chances of finding a new home, rather than being euthanised. Waverley Council, through our arrangements with regional animal shelters, has a strong interest in seeing all healthy and treatable animals rehomed. To increase rehoming rates, we propose:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Enhanced Support for Rehoming Organisations:</b> Many rescue groups and animal welfare organisations work alongside council pounds to rehome animals (especially those that may not thrive in a traditional pound). The government could offer grants or funding support to these groups’ conditional on outcomes (e.g., number of animals rehomed, special needs animals taken). By bolstering the capacity of rehoming groups, more animals can be pulled from pounds before they risk exceeding time or space limits. Waverley Council notes that smaller rescue groups often take animals like seniors or certain breeds from larger facilities (like RSPCA or Sydney Dogs and Cats Home) to give them more tailored care. A funding boost and formal recognition of accredited rehoming partners would facilitate this handover process. The Act could incorporate a provision for the recognition of “Approved Rehoming Organisations” (somewhat akin to the current system where recognised rehoming organisations can be exempt from certain fees) and enable data sharing with them under privacy protections, so they know what animals are in which pounds and can offer assistance quickly.</li> <li>• <b>Public-Private Adoption Campaigns:</b> To get more eyes on animals needing homes, councils and the State can collaborate on high-profile adoption campaigns. For instance, statewide “Adoption Days” or drives could be held, where all council pounds and shelters host open days simultaneously with publicity on TV, radio, and social media. Corporate partners (pet supply companies, etc.) could be engaged to sponsor these events or provide starter kits for new adopters. The idea is to make adoption the first choice for anyone looking for a pet. Waverley Council can contribute success stories to such campaigns, highlighting animals rehomed from our area to encourage others. Additionally, ongoing promotion, such as featuring a “Pet of the Week” from local pounds on council websites or local newspapers, helps steadily increase public awareness. The State could provide template materials or a centralised website listing adoptable animals from all NSW council pounds (integrating with Pet Rescue or similar platforms). Making it easier for people to find and adopt animals across council lines will increase overall rehoming.</li> <li>• <b>Streamlining Rehoming Processes and Reducing Red Tape:</b> Sometimes potential adopters can be deterred by overly complicated or lengthy adoption processes, or by high fees. While ensuring good screening of adopters is</li> </ul>
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important, we should look at removing unnecessary barriers. For example, if a pet is in a council pound after the mandatory holding period and no owner is found, transferring it to an approved rescue or allowing direct adoption should be as swift as possible. The Act could clarify that after the holding period, councils have full discretion to rehome or release the animal to rescues (most do, but plain language helps avoid any doubt or liability concerns). Also, setting reasonable, standardised adoption fees at pounds (and waiving registration fees as an incentive since an adopted pet's rego fee could be included in the adoption cost or waived by policy) will make adoption more attractive. Some councils run periodic free adoption or discounted fee events – sharing these best practices as guidelines can spur others to do the same. Waverley Council's partners have occasionally run "fee-waived" adoption promotions which saw a spike in placements without significant issues of commitment; we support such initiatives being encouraged across the board, especially when shelters are near capacity.

- **Rehabilitation Programs for Less-Adoptable Animals:** To increase rehoming, we must also address those animals that are harder to rehome due to behaviour or medical issues. Establishing programs (with state funding or expertise) for rehabilitation or training of animals with mild behavioural problems can make them adoptable rather than euthanasia candidates. For instance, a dog that is very energetic and untrained might be passed over by adopters; but if a short-term foster or a partnership with a dog trainer could provide basic obedience and manners, that dog's prospects improve. The State could fund a "Behaviour Intervention" initiative where accredited trainers work with pound animals. Similarly, medical treatment funds (like a "Shelter Animal Medical Fund" supported by donations or government match funding) could cover surgeries or treatments for treatable conditions, so those pets can be rehomed rather than put down for cost reasons. By investing in the individual animal's readiness for adoption, we expand the pool of potential adopters. Waverley Council is aware of programs in other jurisdictions (for example, Prison Pet partnership programs where inmates help train shelter dogs) that both benefit the animals and the community – such creative solutions could be piloted in NSW under guidance from the State.

- **Post-Adoption Support:** One reason some people hesitate to adopt from a pound is fear that the animal might have "issues." Offering post-adoption support can alleviate this. Councils and rehoming groups could provide a hotline or free initial consultation with a vet/trainer for adopters. If the State helped coordinate a network of volunteer or on-call professionals for this



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purpose, it would ensure new adopters do not feel alone. Knowing that help is available if a problem arises can make someone more confident to adopt a rescue pet. This in turn increases rehoming success and reduces returns of animals to shelters. A formal “Pet Adoption Support Pack” (including vouchers for vet check or training class) could be standardised, funded by a public-private partnership, and given with each adoption.

Ultimately, increasing rehoming is about making adoption accessible, appealing, and successful. Laws and policies can foster an environment where adopting a pet is easier and more supported than buying one. Waverley Council and our community already value rehoming – many residents choose to adopt from shelters. With the above measures implemented statewide, we believe NSW can move closer to a no-kill objective where healthy, treatable animals find a home rather than being euthanised due to lack of space or time.





## Review of the NSW Companion Animals Laws – Submission on the Discussion Paper

### **Are there other dog and cat population and rehoming matters that should be considered?**

Waverley Council would like to raise a few additional points related to animal population management and rehoming:

- **Pet-Friendly Housing Initiatives:** A significant, though sometimes overlooked, factor in pet surrender is housing insecurity for pet owners. If a family cannot find pet-friendly accommodation, they may be forced to give up a beloved pet, who then enters the rehoming system. While tenancy laws have begun to evolve, we encourage the review to acknowledge this link. The Government might work inter-departmentally to encourage more pet-friendly rental housing and strata by-laws. Councils can also play a role by disseminating model pet agreements for landlords and strata. Keeping pets with their owners, rather than surrendered due to housing, will positively impact pound intakes. It is an indirect lever on population management but an important one in urban areas like Waverley where rental living is common.
- **Monitoring and Supporting “Underground” Populations:** Sometimes, well-meaning people take on roles in their community like feeding stray cats or sheltering multiple stray dogs, effectively running informal shelters or sanctuaries. If not managed, this can lead to overpopulation in those micro-environments (for instance, a person feeding stray cats might inadvertently enable a colony to grow). Rather than purely penalising these actors, councils and the State could engage with them – providing education, assistance in desexing those animals, etc. A form of community caretaker permit could be developed, where someone who is caring for multiple stray animals can register with the council, get the animals desexed and vaccinated at low cost, and gradually reduce the numbers. This brings such activities into the open and allows for better overall population control. It is a compassionate approach that acknowledges community members who are trying to help, while guiding their efforts in line with broader strategy.
- **Wildlife Protection and Responsible Ownership Intersection:** Particularly with cat populations, any strategy should consider wildlife impacts. Encouraging responsible ownership (like cat containment and desexing) has co-benefits for wildlife conservation. It is suggested that any revisions to laws or codes explicitly mention these co-benefits and involve agencies like National Parks & Wildlife Service in developing complementary policies (e.g., targeted feral animal control in bushland adjacent to urban areas). When communities understand that reducing stray cats and uncontrolled dogs protects native wildlife, it can galvanise public support for measures like containment and registration. This could indirectly boost compliance (people



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might be more willing to keep their cat indoors if they understand the environmental stakes).

- **Data Collection and Publication:** Finally, an overarching matter is the importance of data. We recommend that the State establish a more uniform system of data collection on companion animal management – numbers of registrations, desexing rates, pound intakes, reclaim rates, rehoming rates, euthanasia rates, etc., reported by each council or shelter. Publishing this annually (as part of an enhanced Companion Animals Register annual report) would highlight progress and areas needing improvement. It creates transparency and accountability that drives all stakeholders to keep improving. For example, if one region has an extremely high euthanasia rate, the data would spotlight that and prompt inquiry and action (more resources or different approaches needed there). Waverley Council tracks its own performance indicators (we note, for instance, an extremely high reclaim rate for dogs due to microchipping efforts, and a moderate but improving reclaim/rehoming rate for cats). Seeing how we compare to state benchmarks would help allocate our efforts where needed. Data-driven policy is crucial in this domain.

Controlling the companion animal population humanely and maximising rehoming is not only an animal welfare imperative but also reduces burdens on council resources and the community. Every animal successfully kept out of the pound through prevention, or moved through the pound into a new home, is a win-win for society. We believe the ideas presented here and earlier will contribute significantly to that outcome if adopted as part of the Act's revision and its implementation framework.

This submission outlines a detailed responses across the strategic framework, enforcement, and population management aspects, grounded in our local experience. In summary, a modernised Act is supported that emphasises responsible pet ownership through education and incentives, backed by consistent and strong enforcement powers for councils, and proactive measures to manage pet populations and promote rehoming. We have highlighted the need for consistency across councils, protection and support for our enforcement officers, and greater resources to meet growing demands – issues that are critical on the ground in Waverley. We have also shared successful initiatives we have undertaken, such as community education campaigns and diligent enforcement resulting in improved compliance trends, which could inform broader adoption.



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### 3. Companion animal population and rehoming (see Part 3 of the Discussion Paper for background information)

Our community is enthusiastic about companion animals – from the joy they bring to the need to ensure they are responsibly managed – and we are committed to achieving the best outcomes for our residents and their pets. Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to this important discussion.

#### Please send your completed submission form, via:

- Mail to C/- Office of Local Government, Locked Bag 3015, Nowra, NSW 2541; or
- Email to: [ca.review@olg.nsw.gov.au](mailto:ca.review@olg.nsw.gov.au)
- Online via: <https://www.olg.nsw.gov.au/councils/policy-and-legislation/acts-and-regulations/companion-animals-act-review>

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Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure

dphi.nsw.gov.au



# Review of the NSW Companion Animals Laws

## Discussion Paper

February 2025





# Acknowledgement of Country

The Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure acknowledges that it stands on Aboriginal land. We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land, and we show our respect for Elders past, present and emerging through thoughtful and collaborative approaches to our work, seeking to demonstrate our ongoing commitment to providing places in which Aboriginal people are included socially, culturally and economically.

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# Message from the Minister

In New South Wales (NSW), the known population of pet dogs and cats exceeds 4.7 million and the trend of pet ownership is increasing. As the NSW pet population grows, so too does the responsibility for pet owners to ensure they care for their pets appropriately and their pets behave properly.

The NSW Government made a commitment to review the *Companion Animals Act 1998*, which has not been reviewed comprehensively since 2005. It is time to conduct a wholesale review of the Act and analyse the issues that have arisen since its introduction.

We have seen the tragic outcome of fatal dog attacks. As part of its review of the Companion Animals Act, the Government will act on the recommendations of recent coronial inquiries into fatal dog attacks in NSW.

NSW has made significant improvements in companion animal management over the last 25 years, resulting in safer communities and better outcomes for companion animals.

It is critical that NSW has a regulatory system that supports owners to be responsible. We can achieve this through education, awareness, modern digital systems, and a robust set of easily understood rules. Our framework must also provide suitable and balanced regulatory measures for situations where an owner's behaviour falls short of their legislative responsibilities.

In conducting this review, the NSW Government seeks to build on the achievements of the past 25 years by considering the emerging trends and issues affecting companion animals and their care and management.



**The Hon. Ron Hoenig MP**

Leader of the House in the Legislative Assembly

Vice-President of the Executive Council

Minister for Local Government

# Introduction

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## Ensuring the responsible care and management of companion animals

The Companion Animals Act legislates the identification and registration requirements of companion animals and the duties and responsibilities of their owners, with the principal object being to *'provide for the effective and appropriate care and management of companion animals'*.

The NSW Government aims to achieve this primarily through encouraging responsible ownership of companion animals. The Act also reflects the NSW Government's policies to both protect animal welfare, including of native birds and animals, and to reduce public and environmental nuisances caused by companion animals.

To achieve these policies, the Companion Animals Act needs to evolve from being a mechanism that captures data and sets the enforcement framework for managing how companion animals interact with people and other animals. The aim is for the Act to strengthen the social licence for keeping companion animals, while also holding pet owners accountable for the care and management of their pets. The Act must also address the urgent need to prevent companion animals from needlessly entering the council pound and rehoming system.

This review is an opportunity for every pet lover, animal welfare advocate, and responsible citizen to help make a difference.

The Government will consider the feedback it receives to this discussion paper as it determines the next steps in the review of the Companion Animals Act.

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## Purpose of the review of the Companion Animals Act

This discussion paper seeks feedback from stakeholders and the public on how to improve the *Companion Animals Act 1998*. The Act provides the legislative framework for managing pet cats and dogs in NSW. The Companion Animals Act was last comprehensively reviewed 20 years ago.

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## This discussion paper is the first step in the review

This discussion paper marks the beginning of the review and takes a broad approach to canvassing key strategic issues under 3 key focus areas. The Companion Animals Regulation 2018, which is due for statutory review, will be reviewed in tandem with the Companion Animals Act. This will ensure the entire companion animal regulatory framework is examined holistically.

This will not be the only opportunity for you to have a say. Further consultation, including papers, targeted stakeholder meetings and workshops, may be undertaken, as required. This will help the NSW Government determine the key issues and consider options for change from different perspectives.

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## Several related inquiries will contribute to the review

The Companion Animals Act review will also consider the findings and recommendations of various NSW Government inquiries into related issues through Parliamentary committees. Relevant Parliamentary inquiries include:

- Inquiry into pounds in NSW.
- Veterinary workforce shortage in NSW.
- Cat management in NSW.

There are also coronial inquests that are progressively reporting on several fatal dog attacks in NSW. The inquests into these tragic events are identifying issues and shortcomings of the current regulatory framework as well as lessons that can be learned to help reduce the risk of dog attacks in the future. The review will carefully consider these findings and recommendations.

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## Shared roles and responsibilities under the Act

### Owners

Companion animal owners in NSW have several key responsibilities under the Companion Animals Act.

Owners must ensure their pet is microchipped and registered by the time it is 12 weeks old or when it is first sold.

Companion animal owners must adhere to the guiding principles of responsible pet ownership, which involves providing adequate food, water, shelter, desexing, veterinary care, training, and socialisation. While owners derive joy and companionship from their pets, they must also commit to the long-term care and well-being of their pets.

Importantly, owners must take responsibility for the actions of their pets and ensure they are not a public safety risk or nuisance.

Owners should also take proactive steps to prevent their pets from entering the pound system, ensuring they are not abandoned or neglected and taking responsibility for rehoming them if necessary.

## The Minister for Local Government and the Office of Local Government

The Minister for Local Government is responsible for administering the Companion Animals Act. As a member of Parliament, the Minister for Local Government forms part of the policy and decision-making process that is central to Government action.

The Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure advises the Minister through the Office of Local Government. The Office of Local Government is responsible for companion animal policy, legislative development, and maintaining the state-wide Register of Companion Animals. The Register helps councils and others reunite lost pets with owners and promotes responsible pet ownership through microchipping and registration. It also provides data on pet ownership and compliance.

The Office of Local Government also manages the Companion Animals Fund, which derives funding from registration and annual permit fees. These funds are reinvested into the Register, into responsible pet ownership education and awareness activities and to support councils in their companion animal management role.

## Councils

The enforcement of companion animal legislation and monitoring of compliance is primarily the responsibility of councils. This stems from their obligation to provide safe and healthy neighbourhoods. Councils have the authority to

- manage unregistered, lost, or surrendered companion animals
- investigate and report dog attacks
- declare dogs as menacing, dangerous or restricted
- handle complaints about companion animals
- define and oversee off-leash and prohibited areas.

Councils' obligations under the Companion Animals Act include providing pound facilities, which can be outsourced to approved organisations or veterinarians. In our rural and regional areas, companion animal issues may differ from those in metropolitan areas, but they are equally important. Councils may focus on different regulatory issues relevant to their local communities.

Councils must report annually on their enforcement activities and compliance with the Companion Animals Act and Regulation.

## Roles of other stakeholders

### Veterinarians

Under the Companion Animals Act, veterinarians (vets) assist with microchipping, desexing, registration and care for seized and surrendered animals. They can update key pieces of information on the NSW Pet Registry. Vets must also determine if a companion animal is so severely injured or diseased, or in such a physical condition that it is cruel to keep the animal alive.

### **Rehoming and rescue organisations:**

Rehoming and rescue organisations are crucial in helping to find new homes for surrendered or lost pets. Rehoming organisations can be designated under the Companion Animals Act.

### **Breeders**

Ethical and responsible breeding practices are crucial to ensuring the welfare of companion animals. Breeders are regulated under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act and the 'Animal Welfare Code of Practice: Breeding Dogs and Cats'. Recognised breeders' organisations are defined under the Companion Animals Act.

## **Other Government departments**

### **NSW Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development**

This Department plays a vital role in companion animal welfare under the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1979*. It administers animal welfare laws, enforces compliance in partnership with organisations like the RSPCA and Animal Welfare League. Additionally, the Department is involved in modernising animal welfare policies and guidelines to ensure best practices are followed.

### **National Parks and Wildlife Services**

This agency manages NSW national parks and may be involved in managing interactions between wildlife and pets.

### **NSW Police**

Police officers are authorised officers under the Companion Animals Act and assist with the enforcement of laws, particularly in relation to dangerous dogs or dog attacks.

### **Transport for NSW**

Transport for NSW is involved in managing the use of and accessibility for assistance animals on public transport.

### **Department of Communities and Justice**

This Department oversees policies regarding assistance animals as well as working with vulnerable populations that rely on companion animals for support.

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## How to have your say

The NSW Government invites the community and stakeholders to provide feedback on the questions in this discussion paper by Sunday 4 May 2025. The Government will consider feedback received as it determines the next steps in its review of the Companion Animals Act.

There are two ways to submit your feedback:

1. Online via the Office of Local Government's website ([www.olg.nsw.gov.au](http://www.olg.nsw.gov.au)).
2. Download a submission form from [www.olg.nsw.gov.au](http://www.olg.nsw.gov.au) and email to [ca.review@olg.nsw.gov.au](mailto:ca.review@olg.nsw.gov.au) – with the subject line 'Companion Animals Act Review Discussion Paper'.



# Key focus areas for change

This discussion paper presents an opportunity to gather feedback and ideas on how companion animals are best managed. This will help to inform the next steps of the review of the Companion Animals Act. This is an important opportunity to help shape the laws to manage companion animals in NSW.

The Companion Animals Act must shift from merely protecting society from badly behaved companion animals to better ensuring that pet owners are held accountable for the care and management of their pets. We must also address the urgent need to prevent animals from needlessly entering the pound and rehoming system.

The NSW Government is aware of several issues that are not adequately addressed by the current legislative framework. To address these gaps, the Government aims to transition the Companion Animals Act from legislation predominantly founded upon rules and processes to one of principles and outcomes.

The current system has a heavy focus on reactive compliance processes that deal with poorly behaved companion animals. The focus is on recording animal and ownership data and empowering authorised officers to act. This happens, for example, when authorised officers seize an animal, or declare an animal to be a nuisance, menacing or dangerous. It even determines what approved form to use.

Outcomes-based legislation on the other hand provides greater flexibility by allowing the laws to adapt to changing behaviours and situations. While it means regulators must make decisions based more on qualitative assessments, it also makes it easier to set out pet owner responsibilities in law, and make appropriate changes over time.

The following **three focus areas** will be considered as part of this discussion paper, with questions posed under each area to help guide discussion:

1. **Strategic framework for encouraging responsible ownership of companion animals.**
2. **Compliance and enforcement role of councils.**
3. **Companion animal population and rehoming.**

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## 1. Strategic framework for encouraging responsible ownership of companion animals

### **The companion animal legislative framework in NSW is underpinned by the principles of responsible pet ownership**

A key aim of this discussion paper is to assess whether the current legislative framework clearly and effectively supports responsible pet ownership, and to identify areas for improvement.

Responsible pet ownership is a key policy outcome for the NSW Government. It involves ensuring the health, wellbeing, and proper management of companion animals throughout their lives. This includes complying with relevant laws for:

- microchipping, registration and desexing
- preventing harm or nuisance
- providing adequate food, water, shelter, exercise and veterinary care.

Owners should also ensure their pets receive proper training and socialisation. Owners must be prepared for the long-term commitment of caring for their pets.

### **Education**

Education plays a pivotal role in this framework by informing pet owners about their responsibilities and the best practices for animal care. Programs and campaigns led by the Office of Local Government, and local councils aim to raise awareness about the importance of proper pet care, including training, socialisation, and health management.

Recent coronial inquests into fatal dog attacks have recommended implementing a statewide public awareness and education campaign that emphasises the risks posed by dogs, including the dangers posed by specific breeds and types of dogs, and how to interact with dogs.

### **Legislative framework**

Through a prescriptive set of rules and processes, the legislative framework establishes deterrents for irresponsible behaviour and creates a system of compliance that is enforced with the assistance of the statewide Companion Animal Register.

The legislative framework aims to ensure the principles of responsible pet ownership are supported through a regulatory structure that both encourages owners to be responsible and that empowers local councils to enforce compliance against irresponsible owners, particularly when companion animals pose a safety risk to others.

Currently, the Companion Animals Act creates responsible ownership obligations to microchip and register companion animals, as well as incentives to have them desexed.

There are also obligations for dog owners to prevent their dogs from roaming, keep them under effective control when in public, and to clean up after them. Cat owners must ensure their cats do not become a nuisance and do not roam into certain public places such as wildlife protection areas.

However, there is room for improvement in the current approach. Transitioning towards outcomes-based legislation can enhance flexibility, transparency, and accountability. This shift would allow for more adaptive and efficient use of resources, reducing unnecessary regulatory burdens while still achieving desired outcomes.

### Questions

- a. Do you support the Companion Animals Act being amended to focus more on encouraging responsible pet ownership outcomes over strict compliance processes?
- b. How can responsible pet ownership education be used to manage menacing or dangerous dogs?
- c. How could the legislation be improved to motivate better dog owner behaviour and encourage owners to manage their dogs more responsibly? (For example, what does responsible dog control in public look like?).
- d. How could the legislation be improved to motivate better cat owner behaviour and encourage owners to manage their cats more responsibly? (For example, cat containment).
- e. Are there other matters that should be considered?

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## 2. Compliance and enforcement role of councils

There are times when people do not meet their obligations as responsible pet owners. This can happen for a variety of reasons, including some that may be beyond their control.

This is why education is important, and why the Government is looking to move to an outcomes-based regulatory framework. This would allow councils and other enforcement agencies to be more responsive to individual circumstances, and to design responses that help keep owners and their pets together. However, this isn't always possible, which is why issues of welfare and rehoming form the third focus area below.

On the other hand, some owners are simply irresponsible, and this has a negative impact on community safety and liveability, our public spaces and the environment. Our regulatory framework needs to empower enforcement agencies to be responsive to individual circumstances, but it also needs to give them enforcement measures that match the seriousness of offences.

Councils in NSW are responsible for implementing the legislative framework for companion animals. This is through both an administrative function (processing registrations, change of ownership, data reporting, education) and a compliance and enforcement function. Council enforcement officers, including rangers, are employed to investigate reports and complaints, seize animals, and administer penalties.

Council-authorised officers carry out compliance and enforcements functions such as:

- investigating reports of dogs at large and dog attacks or acts of aggression
- issuing declarations for dangerous, menacing or restricted dogs
- seizing companion animals
- issuing penalty notices
- reuniting lost pets with owners.

However, issues within this framework include:

- the need for increased consistency around council policies and procedures
- whether current offences, penalties, and fines remain adequate for modern companion animal management
- challenges implementing laws around dangerous and restricted dogs
- ambiguity resulting in varying interpretations of the legislation by rangers.

Recent recommendations from coronial inquests into fatal dog attacks have also highlighted areas for improvement. This includes reviewing the suitability of statutory provisions under the Companion Animals legislative framework.

### Questions

- a. What changes to NSW laws, regulations, codes or guidelines could be provided to councils and other enforcement authorities to better support responsible pet ownership?
- b. How could NSW laws, regulations, codes or guidelines be improved to support councils to better manage dangerous and restricted dogs?
- c. Are the current enforcement provisions under the Act (including penalties for offences - see Appendix B of the discussion paper) appropriate? If not, what enforcement provisions should be changed?
- d. Are there other compliance and enforcement matters that should be considered?

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## 3. Companion animal population and rehoming

Sadly, irresponsible pet ownership compromises the welfare of companion animals. Pet dogs and cats can come to harm, or end up in our council pounds and rehoming organisations. We know that with increased rates of pet ownership, the current cost of living crisis, a COVID lockdown-era generation of unsocialised dogs and a post-lockdown return to more typical living patterns means that the rehoming system is experiencing unprecedented levels of demand.

Under the current framework councils are required to provide pound services. Over time, there has been a significant and welcome shift in pound operations from a high rate of euthanasia to actively encouraging rehoming, while providing state-of-the-art facilities for impounded dogs and cats. This evolution has led to higher standards in the design and operation of pound facilities, ensuring they are more humane and conducive to the well-being of the animals.

Modern pounds focus on creating environments that reduce stress and improve the quality of life for animals during their stay. Additionally, the length of stay for animals in these facilities needs to be balanced against the prospects for rehoming, with the goal of minimising the time animals spend in pounds to maximise chances for rehoming.

It is encouraging to see innovative approaches being developed to prevent companion animals from entering the pound system and making impounding an option of last resort. This includes initiatives like supporting owners through a temporary crisis that is impacting their ability to properly care for their pet cat or dog. In the past, the only option was for owners to surrender the animal – a traumatic experience for both the owner and the animal.

The NSW Government has long promoted the message of ‘adopt not shop’. Legislative changes have been made in recent years to encourage prospective owners to do just that. Incentives include free registration for companion animals adopted from a pound or designated rehoming organisation. However, despite the best efforts of the dedicated staff and volunteers of our pounds, rehoming and rescue groups, which has seen the euthanasia rate of otherwise healthy animals steadily trend downwards, there are still too many animals for which appropriate homes cannot be found.

This review of the Companion Animals Act and Regulation will carefully consider the findings and recommendations of the Parliamentary inquiry into pounds in NSW. The Office of Local Government is also actively reviewing all the submissions made to that inquiry to better understand the current issues facing the pounds and rehoming sector.

In addition, the review, repeal and replacement of the *Impounding Act 1993* with the *Public Spaces (Unattended Property) Act 2021* will be considered. Changes were made to broaden the concept and nature of what were ‘pounds’. They have gone from being specific facilities managed by authorities for the purposes of taking possession of items and animals left unattended in public places to places appropriate for the care of animals.

### Questions

- a. What more could be done to reduce stray and homeless cats and dogs in NSW?
- b. What changes can be made to NSW laws, regulations, codes or guidelines to reduce the number of companion animals entering the pound and rehoming system in the first place?
- c. For companion animals needing to enter the ‘pound’ system, what could be done to increase rehoming?
- d. Are there other dog and cat population and rehoming matters that should be considered?

# Privacy Notice – Companion Animal Act Review consultation

When you give us your feedback, the Office of Local Government will be collecting some personal information about you, in particular:

- your name
- your email address
- the name of your organisation (if provided)
- any personal information you decide to put in the additional comment fields

All feedback received through this consultation process may be made publicly available. Please do not include any personal information in your feedback that you do not want published.

This information is being collected by the Office of Local Government as part of the Companion Animal Act Review to help the Government develop new legislation. As part of that process, we may need to share your information with people outside the Office of Local Government, including other public authorities and government agencies. We may also use your email contact details to send you notifications about further feedback opportunities or the outcome of consultation.

You should also be aware there may be circumstances when the Office of Local Government is required by law to release information (for example, in accordance with the requirements of the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009*). There is also a privacy policy located on the Office of Local Government's website that explains how some data is automatically collected (such as your internet protocol (IP) address) whenever you visit the Office of Local Government's website. The link to that policy is [www.olg.nsw.gov.au/privacy](http://www.olg.nsw.gov.au/privacy)



# Appendix A - Penalty notice offences under the Companion Animals Act

## Schedule 1 Penalty notice offences

- (1) For the purposes of section 92 of the Act –
- a. (a) each offence specified in this Schedule is an offence for which a penalty notice may be issued, and
  - b. (b) the amount payable under any such penalty notice is the amount specified in this Schedule for the offence.
- (2) If the reference to a provision in this Schedule is qualified by words that restrict its operation to specified kinds of offence or to offences committed in specified circumstances, an offence created by the provision is an offence for which a penalty notice may be issued only if it is an offence of a kind so specified or is committed in the circumstances so specified.

Table 1. Offences under the *Companion Animals Act 1998*

Provision	Penalty
Section 8 (3): a. in the case of a dangerous, menacing or restricted dog b. in any other case	a. \$1,320 b. \$180
Section 8 (4): a. in the case of a dangerous, menacing or restricted dog b. in any other case	a. \$1,320 b. \$180
Section 9 (1): a. in the case of a dangerous, menacing or restricted dog b. in any other case	a. \$1,320 b. \$330
Section 10: a. in the case of a dangerous, menacing or restricted dog b. in any other case	a. \$1,320 b. \$305

Provision	Penalty
Section 10B (2): a. in the case of a dangerous, menacing or restricted dog b. in any other case	a. \$1,320 b. \$305
Section 11 (1) (but only in relation to the matters referred to in section 11 (1) a, b, c or d(1): a. in the case of a dangerous, menacing or restricted dog b. in any other case	a. \$1,320 b. \$180
Section 11B(2)	\$400
Section 11C(2)	\$700
Section 11D(2)	\$700
Section 11E(2)(a)	\$400
Section 11E(2)(b)	\$700
Section 11K(4)	\$220
Section 12 (2): a. in the case of a dangerous, menacing or restricted dog b. in any other case	a. \$1,320 b. \$180
Section 12A (1)	\$220
Section 13 (2): a. in the case of a dangerous, menacing or restricted dog b. in any other case	a. \$1,760 b. \$330
Section 14 (2): a. in the case of a dangerous, menacing or restricted dog b. in any other case	a. \$1,760 b. \$330
Section 15 (2)	\$180
Section 16 (1) (but only in the case of a dog that is not a dangerous, menacing or restricted dog)	\$1,320
Section 20 (1)	\$275
Section 29 (3)	\$180

Provision	Penalty
Section 30 (2)	\$180
Section 31 (5)	\$165
Section 32A (5)	\$275
Section 36 (1)	\$1,320
Section 51 (2)	\$1,760
Section 52A (1)	\$1,760
Section 52B (1)	\$1,760
Section 56 (2)	\$1,760
Section 57A (1)	\$1,760
Section 57B (1)	\$1,760
Section 57C	\$1,760
Section 58B (1)	\$1,320
Section 60 (1)	\$330
Section 61 (1)	\$330
Section 62 (1)	\$660
Section 69G (2)	\$330
Section 76 (1)	\$330

Table 2. Offences under the Companion Animals Regulation 2018

Provisions	Penalty
Clause 6 (1)	\$330
Clause 6 (2)	\$180
Clause 34 (3)	\$220
Clause 39 (1)	\$180

## REPORT

### FC/5.3/25.05



**Subject:** Pedestrian Crossings - Macpherson Street, Bronte, St Thomas Street, Bronte, and Warners Avenue, Bondi Beach

**TRIM No:** A25/0213

**Manager:** Alberto Martinez, Acting Executive Manager, Infrastructure Services

**Director:** Sharon Cassidy, Director, Assets and Operations

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### RECOMMENDATION:

That Council:

1. Installs three at-grade pedestrian crossings and additional warning line markings at the following locations, as set out in the report:
  - (a) Macpherson Street, in front of Bronte Woolworths Metro (113 Macpherson Street, Bronte).
  - (b) St Thomas Street, in front of Bronte Early Education Centre (42 St Thomas Street, Bronte).
  - (c) Warners Avenue at Gould Street (as a refinement to the previously approved and funded design).
2. Authorises the Executive Manager, Infrastructure Services, to modify the designs should on-site circumstances warrant changes.

#### 1. Executive Summary

This report proposes the installation of at-grade pedestrian (zebra) crossings at three locations:

- Macpherson Street, outside Bronte Woolworths (113 Macpherson Street, Bronte).
- St Thomas Street, outside Bronte Early Education Centre (42 St Thomas Street, Bronte).
- Warners Avenue at Gould Street (as a refinement to the previously approved and funded design).

The three locations have been identified through community and stakeholder input and further reviewed for feasibility and alignment with existing Council policy. The installation of pedestrian crossings at these locations will provide improved pedestrian amenity and safety and continue to advance Council's People Movement and Places plan.

The three locations have context-specific conditions, such that additional supplementary line markings and signage measures are proposed. This is intended to increase the visibility of the crossings and provide further driver awareness.

Upon Council approval, these projects can be implemented under the Temporary Delegation for

Traffic Management and Pedestrian Works from Transport for NSW (TfNSW). They do not require Traffic Committee input; however, bus operators have been consulted as part of the development of these proposed projects.

## 2. Introduction/Background

The following outlines the existing situation, any prior work related to these crossings, and the rationale behind the proposed upgrades. Figure 1 shows the location of all three crossings.

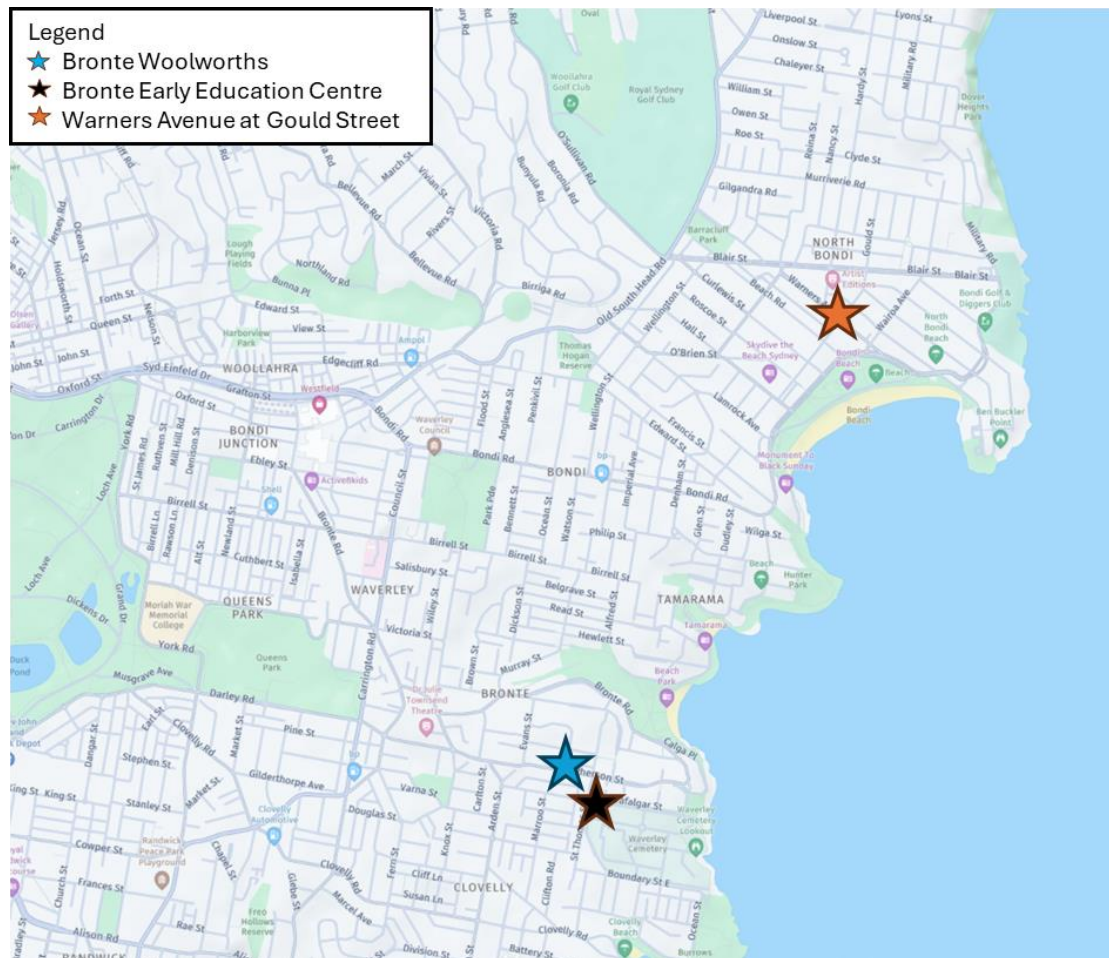


Figure 1. Location of crossings.

**3. Relevant Council Resolutions**

Meeting and date	Item No.	Resolution
<i>Bronte Woolworths</i>		
Council 12 December 2023	CM/5.3.1/23.12	<p>That Council:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Does not adopt the Traffic Committee's recommendation.</li> <li>2. Does not defer the following matters and approves them as follows: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Installs kerb buildouts to replace the traffic island in front of 113 Macpherson Street, Bronte, as shown in Figure 2 of the report, with an increase to the width of the kerb buildouts from 3.1 metres to 3.3 metres.</li> <li>(b) Installs a new 11.5 metre 'P15, 7 am–10 pm' zone on the south side of Macpherson Street, to the immediate west of the new kerb buildouts.</li> <li>(c) Relocates the 15.4 metre Truck Zone/Taxi Zone 4 metres to the east and lengthens it to 17.5 metres subject to changing the 'Truck Zone, 9 am–12 pm, Taxi Zone at Other Times' to 'Truck Zone, 9 am–12 pm, P15 7 am–9 am, 12 pm–10 pm Mon–Sat, 7 am–10 pm Sun.'</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. Approves the following matters: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Upgrades the traffic islands at the intersection of Macpherson Street and Yanko Avenue.</li> <li>(b) Installs 'Give Way' line markings and signs at the intersection of Macpherson Street and Yanko Avenue.</li> <li>(c) Installs a 4.2 metre 'P Motorbikes Only' in Macpherson Street adjacent to 1 Yanko Avenue, Bronte.</li> </ol> </li> <li>4. Delegates authority to the Executive Manager, Infrastructure Services, to modify the design should onsite circumstances warrant changes.</li> <li>5. Monitors the effectiveness of the new kerb extensions and signage restrictions for six months and delegates authority to the Executive Manager, Infrastructure Services, to modify the 'No Stopping' zones, if required.</li> </ol>



Meeting and date	Item No.	Resolution
<i>Warners Avenue at Gould Street</i>		
Waverley Traffic Committee 23 November 2023	TC/V.03/23.11	<p><i>Council adopted the recommendation below.</i></p> <p>That Council:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Installs continuous footpath treatments on the north-east and south-west leg of the intersection of Gould Street and Warners Avenue, Bondi Beach, as shown in Figure 2 of the report.</li> <li>2. Liaises with Guide Dogs NSW to determine a suitable materiality to support visually impaired pedestrians within two traffic islands, thereby informing detailed designs.</li> <li>3. Delegates authority to the Executive Manager, Infrastructure Services, to modify the designs should on-site circumstances warrant changes.</li> </ol>
<i>Bronte Early Education Centre</i>		
Waverley Traffic Committee 23 April 2015	TC.05/15.04	<p><i>Council adopted the recommendation below.</i></p> <p>That Council installs blister islands and line marking at the intersection of St Thomas Street and Trafalgar Street and St Thomas Street and Chesterfield Parade in accordance with plan 8370 issue A attached to the report, subject to the following amendments:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The two kerb blisters on approach to the centre island be a minimum 7.5 m in length.</li> <li>2. A bicycle warning sign with a supplementary 'Slow' sign beneath it be placed on an existing lamp post between Chesterfield Parade and the crest to the south in St Thomas Street.</li> </ol>

#### 4. Discussion

##### Proposal summary

###### *Bronte Woolworths*

This report proposes to install a pedestrian zebra crossing where the existing kerb extensions are located outside Bronte Woolworths. This would be an at-grade crossing which retains the existing kerb extensions. Zig-zag line markings to provide enhanced awareness are also proposed.

###### *Bronte Early Education Centre*

It is proposed to install a pedestrian zebra crossing where the existing kerb extensions and median refuge are located outside the Bronte Early Education Centre. This is an at-grade (zebra) crossing, which retains the existing physical infrastructure. Zig-zag line markings to provide enhanced awareness are also proposed.

### *Warners Avenue at Gould Street*

As part of the current upgrades being undertaken at the intersection of Warners Avenue and Gould Street, a pedestrian zebra crossing is proposed on Warners Avenue. This location is adjacent to Bondi Beach Public School. The zebra crossing is proposed to be installed with a median refuge. Zig-zag line markings to provide enhanced awareness are also proposed.

As part of the initial design, this was proposed as a raised (wombat) pedestrian crossing. However, value engineering has resulted in the design being adjusted to include a zebra crossing. Further, an existing raised crossing is located approximately 100 m east.

### **Strategic analysis**

All three crossings are proposed to be implemented without additional infrastructure improvements not already Council approved. This includes additional lighting. Given the urban environment and the proposed crossings' unique contexts, this is not expected to be an issue. Council has a long-term goal to provide enhanced lighting at many crossings where improvements are currently warranted. This is often implemented in parallel with more significant infrastructure improvements and as the opportunity arises. At the proposed locations, there is ample ambient lighting. Drivers are expected to be alert and aware of pedestrian crossings, reducing the burden on children as fully responsible for ascertaining right of way. These crossings are also anticipated to see most activity in the daytime.

There is limited sight distance at all three sites. This is a common occurrence throughout the local government area (LGA), as well as many areas in Sydney Metro. Zig zag line markings are proposed to provide drivers enhanced notification of the upcoming pedestrian crossings. This is detailed in the recommendation section below.

### **Consultation**

The following outlines the extent and outcomes of public consultation at all three sites.

#### *Bronte Woolworths*

The overwhelming feedback from the public is to have a priority crossing point here. As such, no additional public consultation (letterbox drop/Have Your Say) has been sought about this crossing.

Officers have also consulted with the bus operator, Transdev John Holland, given Route 379 travels through the location. The bus operator indicated no issue with the pedestrian crossing being installed in this location. However, they have asked that during the associated construction works, access be still allowed for buses (stop/go control). This will be factored into the construction process.

Transdev John Holland did not indicate any safety issues identified by drivers at this location.

#### *Bronte Early Education Centre*

The original request for this crossing included an online petition with approximately 300 signatures, which has not been formally lodged with Council. This is considered suitable. As such, no further public consultation (letterbox drop/ Have Your Say) has been sought regarding this crossing. This petition is available at <[change.org/p/build-a-zebra-crossing-for-bronte-early-education-centre-beec](https://change.org/p/build-a-zebra-crossing-for-bronte-early-education-centre-beec)>.

### *Warners Avenue at Gould Street*

Public consultation was undertaken for this project through the safe routes to school program. This work identified that there is a key desire line to cross Warners Avenue at Gould Street. Through ongoing requests and public feedback, council officers are also aware of a general sentiment in the area that seeks priority crossing points for pedestrians. As such, no further public consultation (letterbox drop / Have Your Say) has been sought regarding this crossing.

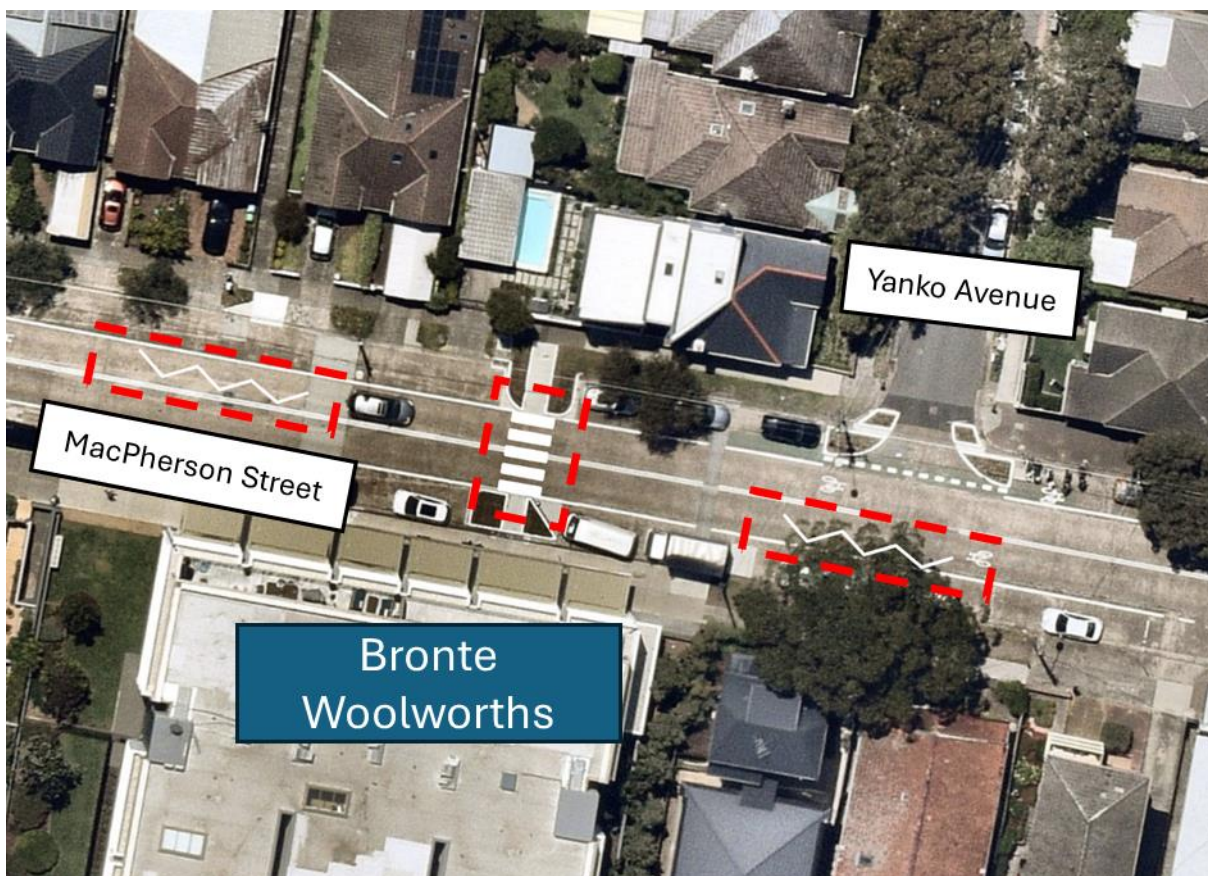
### **Recommendation**

The following section details the proposed recommendations for all three locations.

To account for the limited sight distance and lighting available at all three crossings, added warning measures are proposed. This includes the installation of zig-zag transverse markings. These are to be installed in line with TfNSW Standard Delineation Section 7: Transverse Lines – Pedestrian Facilities.

### *Bronte Woolworths*

An at-grade pedestrian crossing is recommended here. This is to be coupled with zig-zag advance warning road markings. Figure 2 shows the proposed crossing, with proposed line marking in the red dashed boxes. This would retain the existing kerb extensions. Although future lighting enhancements should be considered, there is lighting already in place. The installation of a zebra crossing here would give pedestrians priority, which significantly increases pedestrian amenity. Parking reallocation is also not required.

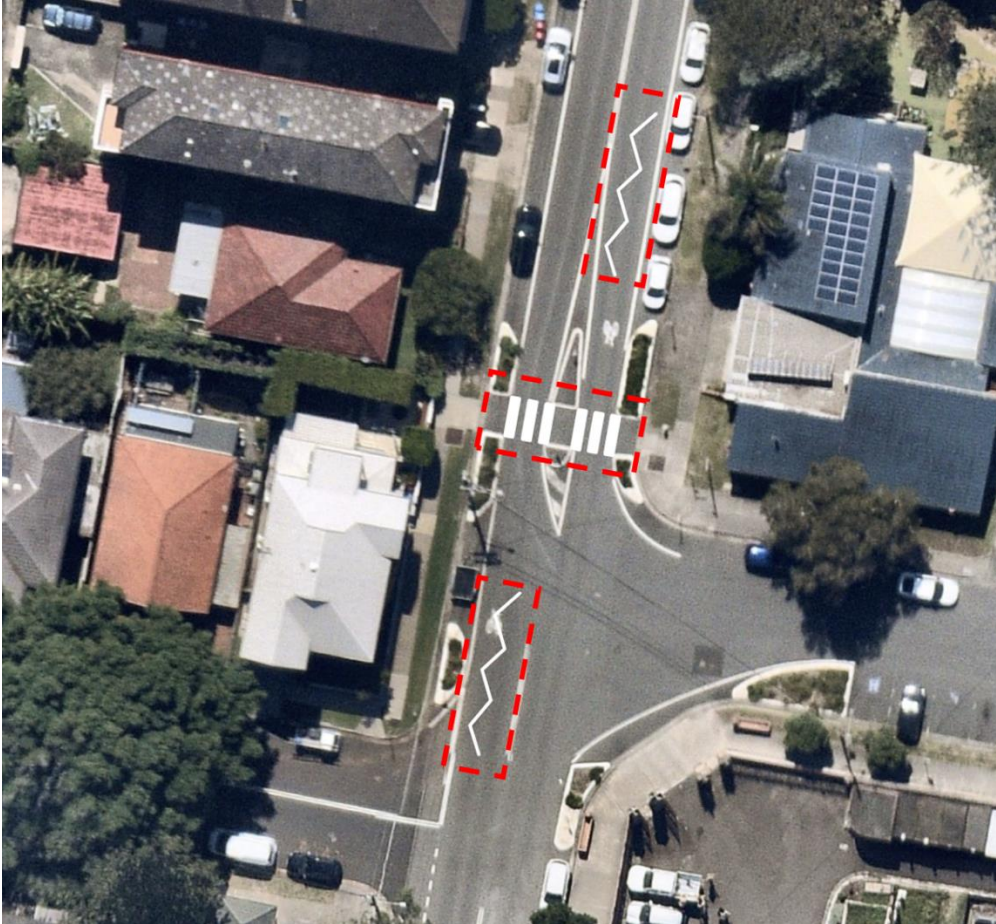


*Figure 2. Proposed crossing and additional line marking outside Bronte Woolworths.*



*Bronte Early Education Centre*

An at-grade pedestrian crossing is recommended here. This is to be coupled with zag-zag advance warning road markings. Figure 3 shows the proposed crossing, with proposed line marking in the red dashed boxes. This would retain the existing kerb extensions and median refuge. The installation of a zebra crossing here would give pedestrians priority, which significantly increases pedestrian amenity. While all users will need to continue developing mutual awareness, this treatment will reduce the burden on vulnerable road users such as children having to ascertain right of way. Parking reallocation is also not required as part of this proposed treatment.



*Figure 3. Proposed crossing and additional line marking outside Bronte Early Education Centre.*

*Warners Avenue at Gould Street*

An at-grade pedestrian crossing is recommended here. This is to be coupled with zig-zag advance warning road markings. Figure 4 shows the proposal with proposed line marking indicated in red dashed boxes. The modified refuge is shown in blue. This is further detailed in Figure 5, which shows how the proposed zebra crossing would fit with the current Warners Avenue and Gould Street design that includes a refuge. The zebra crossing is to be completed concurrently with the broader works being undertaken at this intersection. As such, this is anticipated to optimise budget allocation.



*Figure 4. Proposed crossing and additional line marking in Warners Avenue (at Gould Street).*



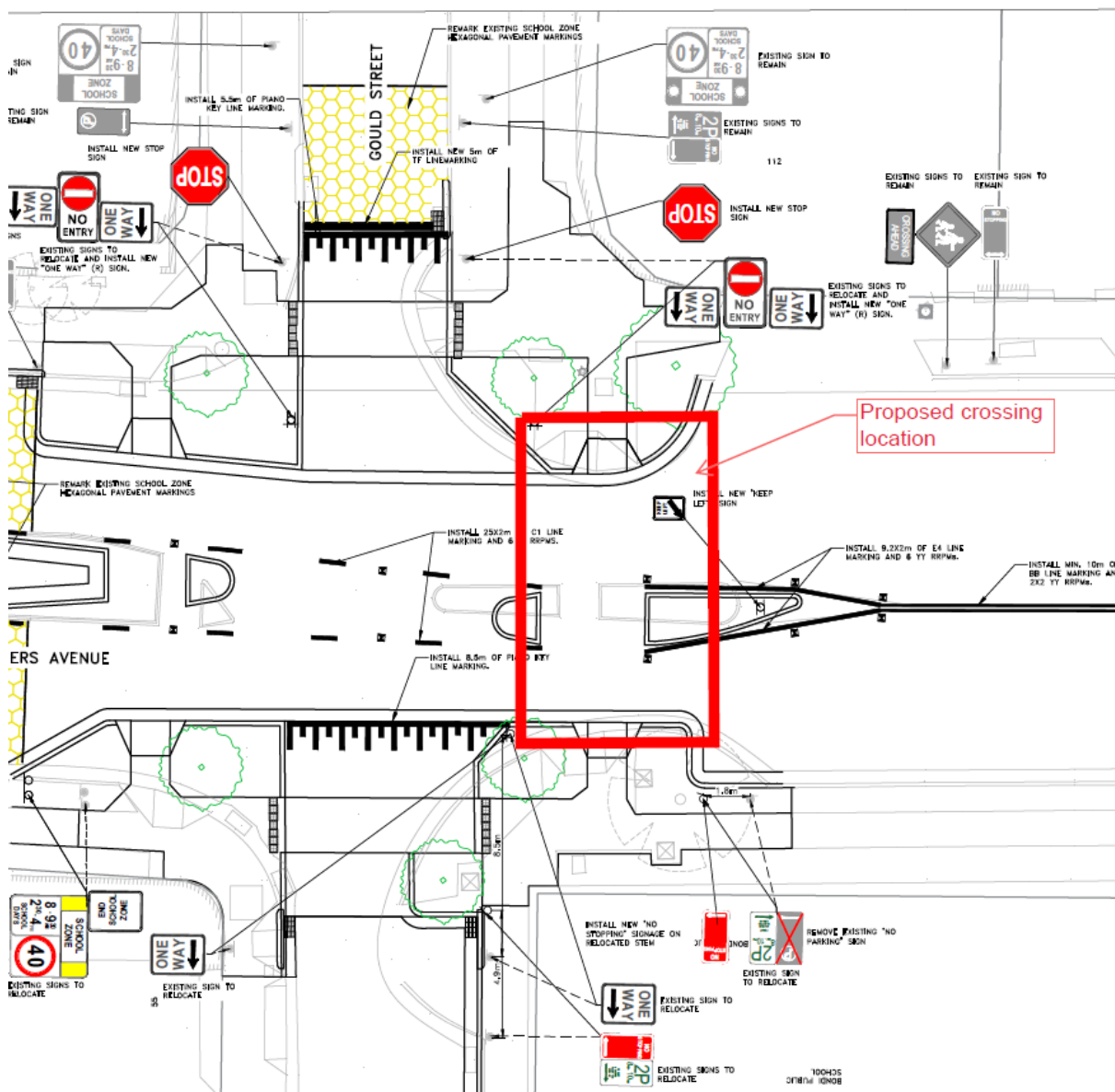


Figure 5. Location of pedestrian crossing within the proposed upgrades.

## 5. Financial Impact

The following outlines the estimated cost for each of these sites. This cost is based on recent pedestrian crossing line marking quotes.

### Bronte Woolworths

This crossing is estimated to cost between \$5,000-\$10,000 including traffic management. Council will fund the works from existing budgets.

### Bronte Early Education Centre

This crossing is estimated to cost between \$5,000-\$10,000 including traffic management. Council will fund the works from existing budgets.

**Warners Avenue at Gould Street**

This is expected to have an incremental cost of approximately \$3,000. As works are currently ongoing at the intersection, the additional line marking is not expected to be a significant cost. The existing project budget is sufficient to absorb this cost.

**6. Risks/Issues**

It was noted earlier in this report that further lighting enhancements would be required at all three crossings to fully align with Australian Standards. However, this is not considered a safety risk, given existing levels of lighting at the locations and their unique needs and contexts. The surrounding urban environments at each location contribute to ambient lighting, further supporting visibility.

The proposed crossings at Bronte Early Education Centre and at Warners Avenue are modestly short of desired crossing sight distances per Australian Standards. However, Australian Standards delegate the final decision to the road controlling authority (Council), acknowledging that these parameters are desirable but not absolutes. Given that many pedestrian crossings across our LGA—and others within the Sydney metropolitan area—similarly do not meet these sight distance requirements, no additional safety risk is considered to arise at these locations.

Further, vehicular speed profiles were reviewed. The locations were found to have typical vehicular speeds below existing posted speed limits. The Warners Avenue and Gould Street continuous footpath treatment and kerb extensions will further attenuate vehicle speeds at that location. These factors, and that the crossings will include zig-zag line markings and cautionary signage, adequately addresses safety requirements.

The proposed crossings provide a significant improvement in pedestrian amenity by offering safe, prioritised crossing points for children and the broader community. These will contribute to Council's ongoing goals to improve pedestrian safety and comfort, safe routes to schools and local traffic calming.

**7. Attachments**

Nil.