

HAVE *YOUR* “SAY”

PART 1 : COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

PART 2 : COMMUNITY
PARTICIPATION PLAN



THE HILLS
Sydney's Garden Shire

IMAGINE

ROCKER



• • I LIKE THIS

make a comment or stick a spot

- Junior play
- Encourages movement and balance

THE HILLS
Sydney's Garden Shire

IMAGINE

ROCK



I LIKE THIS

make a comment or stick a spot

times and games
provided for surface
ment
of Play
encourages movement

THE HILLS
Sydney's Garden Shire



ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT

Consultation helps us make better use of resources by understanding what the community needs now and what they may need in the future.

We recognise that our community has the right to participate and be engaged in making decisions that affect their future.

This document outlines our approach to engaging with our community about our overarching long term aims as well as encouraging participation in the planning system.

PART 1

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

PART 1 of this document is Council's Community Engagement Strategy that outlines how we engage with the Hills community when we review and update the action areas within the Community Strategic Plan (CSP). This allows us to identify the community's needs, priorities for the future, and what could be improved.

Our CSP is Council's highest level document and sets a 10 year strategic direction for Council

to follow. It ensures we make the best possible use of our resources to provide for the needs of our existing and future communities. The CSP is required under the NSW Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework (Section 402 of the Local Government Act). We engage with the community to review the actions within the CSP every year so that its actions remain relevant.

PART 2

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION PLAN

PART 2 of this document is Council's Community Participation Plan (CPP) which is required under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act (Division 2.6 and Schedule 1). Local councils play an important and visible role in the planning system. Planning matters affect our whole community and our community has the right to participate in the planning system.

Council's CPP outlines when and how the community can expect to participate in planning matters that affect them. Community participation helps build confidence in the planning system as well as understanding within the community of the need to responsibly manage growth and change while seeking to preserve valued and unique aspects of The Shire. The CPP will be reviewed every four years as part of the review of Council's CSP.

HILLS FUTURE

Council's first Community Strategic Plan Hills 2026 commenced in 2008. Engagement processes involved community and stakeholders in a range of interactive activities - inviting participants to 'Shape your Future'. From these consultations a Vision and Direction was created:



Ongoing engagement has assisted the update and evolution of the Community Strategic Plan into 'Hills Future'.



“

**WHAT DO YOU
VALUE MOST
ABOUT LIVING
IN THE HILLS
SHIRE?**

”

Through ongoing community engagement activities we work with our community to plan our strategic direction.

PART 1 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY - HILLS FUTURE

OUR COMMUNITY

The Hills Shire Council is currently experiencing rapid growth and change. Still an area with a mix of rural and urban areas, the addition of a train line with seven suburban stations is one of the major factors identified to influence and shape the future of the LGA and community.

“ WHERE ARE WE NOW? ”

175,028

Forecast population 2018

More than 250,000 people will move into the North West by 2036.



The Hills Shire occupies an area of

386KM2

153

PLAYGROUNDS



Located **30kms** North West of the Sydney CBD.

3.15

persons per household national average of 2.55 persons)

61.7%

of residents in The Hills are Australian born.

38

MEDIAN AGE IN 2016

4.46

Persons per hectare - Average density (2018)

Council maintains

\$1.6B

worth of COMMUNITY ASSETS

285

PARKS



CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY is the largest employer in The Hills Shire accounting for

17%

of JOBS



568

TOTAL COUNCIL STAFF (FTE)

1,000

COUNCIL VOLUNTEERS

\$10.913B

GROSS REGIONAL PRODUCT

103,337

RESIDENTS EMPLOYED IN 2016

79,678

LOCAL JOBS

959KM

ROADS

96KM

CYCLEWAYS

53

COMMUNITY CENTRES

60.4% of households are made up of families with children.

OUR STAKEHOLDERS

Council has a broad range of stakeholders.



**THE RESIDENTS OF THE HILLS
ARE AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE
PLANNING FOR OUR SHIRE'S
FUTURE.**



OUR COUNCIL

The role of Council in developing the Community Strategic Plan is to work with the community and key stakeholders to identify values, priorities and issues for the future.



WHAT HAS HAPPENED, WHAT IS HAPPENING & WHAT MIGHT HAPPEN?



WHERE ARE WE NOW?	What are our community's strengths and weaknesses? What shapes our community's values and priorities at present?
WHERE DO WE WANT TO BE IN 10 YEARS?	What will shape our community's values and priorities in 10 years? What will be the future pressures and issues for our community? What do we need to do to grow and strengthen our services and our community?
HOW WILL WE GET THERE?	What will be some of the challenges for our community? What might be some strategies to get from where we are to where we need to be?
HOW WILL WE KNOW WE HAVE ARRIVED?	What will success look like? How could we measure our actions and progress?

COUNCIL & COMMUNITY – WORKING TOGETHER

Implementation of the Community Strategic Plan is not only the responsibility of Council. Council works in partnership with the community and with key stakeholders to identify ways to deliver on the action areas. The community is essential in assisting Council identify actions in the Community Strategic Plan that should remain and those issues that require new actions.

THE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY OUTLINES OUR PLAN FOR INFORMATIVE, INCLUSIVE AND PARTICIPATIVE COMMUNITY CONSULTATION.



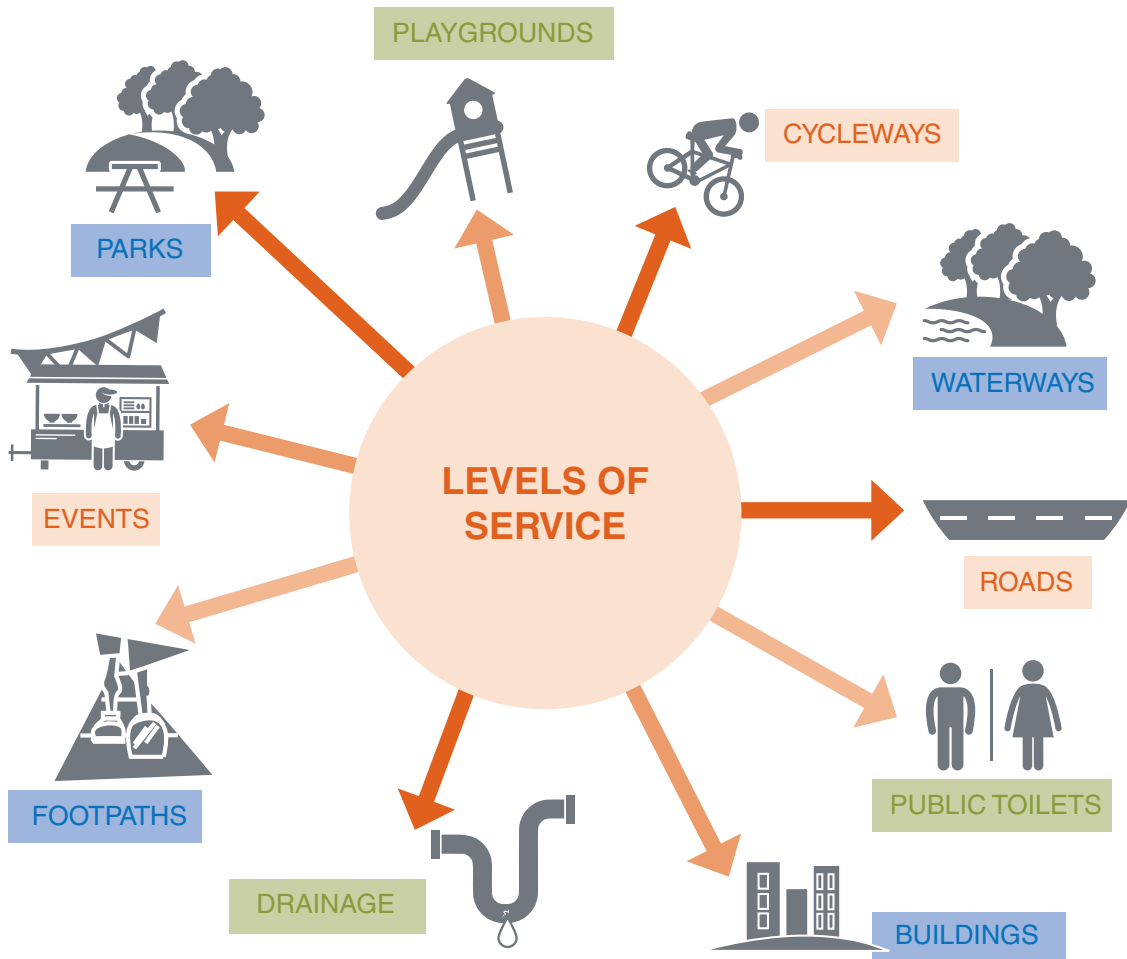
OVERALL HOW WOULD YOU RATE THE QUALITY OF LIFE YOU HAVE LIVING IN THE HILLS SHIRE?



“

WE CONNECT WITH THE COMMUNITY. WE SHARE IDEAS, AND DISCUSS AND IDENTIFY THE COMMUNITY'S EXPECTATIONS OF THE LEVELS OF SERVICE THAT SHOULD BE PROVIDED BY COUNCIL – NOW AND INTO THE FUTURE.

”



WHAT YOU SAY HELPS INFORM OUR :

- Customer service standards
- Resource allocation
- Response times
- Asset management
- Works scheduling
- Design & master planning
- Priority allocation

“

HOW SATISFIED ARE YOU WITH THE SERVICES PROVIDED BY COUNCIL?

”



**“
THINKING
OF THE NEXT
10 YEARS
WHAT DO
YOU BELIEVE
WILL BE THE
HIGHEST
PRIORITY
ISSUES WITHIN
THE HILLS
SHIRE?
”**

OUR ENGAGEMENT PROCESS IS BASED ON THE IAP2 ENGAGEMENT SPECTRUM

	GOAL	HOW
INFORM	Keep it current/ updates	Online / in person / newsletters / on hold messaging / in-house publications / social networks / letterbox drops / media releases
CONSULT	Ask for feedback and ideas	Pop-ups / meetings / exhibitions / events / surveys / interviews
INVOLVE	Work directly with our community	Forums / focus groups / submissions / workshops / networks
PARTNER	Work together to develop and deliver solutions	Working groups / project groups / networks
REPORT	Reflect community views and opinions:	In our plans / media articles / annual reports / council newsletters

OUR ENGAGEMENT PRINCIPLES:

Our principles of community engagement are based on social justice principles: equity, access, participation and rights.

- 1 Effectively communicate the Community Strategic Plan to the community and stakeholders;
- 2 Purposefully engage with as many community members and stakeholders as possible;
- 3 Build community confidence to increase involvement in engagement activities;
- 4 Provide a range of opportunities and instances for meaningful participation;
- 5 Remain mindful of inclusivity and accessibility in designing and innovating consultation approaches;
- 6 Integrate stakeholder information using relevant plans and strategies of council and state bodies;
- 7 Monitor and report back to the community through ongoing evaluation and review updates.

OUR ENGAGEMENT PRACTICES:

- 1 We are welcoming, hospitable and respectful of participants.
- 2 We have clarity and purpose for each activity.
- 3 We tailor our approaches to suit a range of groups.
- 4 We use both qualitative and quantitative methods to collect and review findings.
- 5 We consult and involve our community in identifying new and emerging issues and solutions.
- 6 We partner on initiatives when appropriate with external stakeholders with subject matter expertise.
- 7 We advocate on behalf of our community on issues raised that are outside the control of local government.
- 8 We review and report back to our community on our progress.



OUR ENGAGEMENT COMMITMENT:



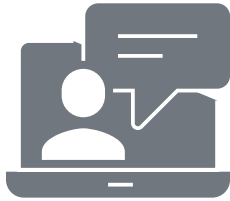
**WE WILL KEEP YOU INFORMED, WE WILL
LISTEN TO YOU, WE WILL CONSIDER
YOUR IDEAS, WE WILL WORK TOGETHER**



OUR METHODS OF CONSULTATION

A range of methods are used to ensure broad participation. They include:

1 Online 'have your say'



3 Rates notice, newsletters, fliers & letters



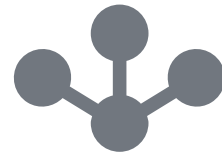
2 Consultative workshops & forums



4 Surveys & questionnaires



6 Existing networks, committees, interagencies



5 Press releases and advertising



7 On-hold messaging & social media



8 Focus groups & interviews



10 Information kiosks



9 Events & festivals



11 Pop ups



12 Drop in sessions

OUR IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS:

FREQUENCY & TIMING	Publish and promote the annual calendar of engagement opportunities to inform and support the community strategic plan, and broadcast these activities to the community using a range of mediums.
UNDERTAKE RESEARCH	Including the Performance Sentiment Index related to business perceptions of economic development in the Hills Shire and Census data and updates.
SURVEY - 'HAVE YOUR SAY'	From the Community Telephone Survey conducted every second year and customer satisfaction surveys to online and in person 'issues' surveys.
PARTICIPATION - 'GET INVOLVED'	Council run Community Activities, Events and Festivals: such as Orange Blossom Festival, Australia Day, Citizenship Ceremonies, Volunteer networks, Pop-ups, Business Forums, Community Services Interagencies, Conferences and Information Days.
PARTNER WITH OUR COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDERS ON IDENTIFIED PROJECTS	Identification of opportunities for council to work with community and stakeholders on key projects that require advocacy or awareness raising.
EVALUATION	Review engagement activities, levels of participation and representation, information provided, feedback and contributions received.



“ WHAT YOU SAID ABOUT OUR COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN. ”



PART 2 COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION PLAN

Council's Community Participation Plan satisfies the requirements of Division 2.6 and Schedule 1 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act (1979). It recognises the prominence of planning matters within the functions of Council and that the community should be informed and able to participate in the planning system. Notification and advertisement procedures from the Hills Development Control Plan (DCP) have been incorporated into the CPP (page17).

The CPP should be read in conjunction with Council's Communication Protocol for the Development Application Process, available on Council's website.

WHAT IS THE HILLS SHIRE CPP?

The Hills Shire Community Participation Plan applies to plan making and development assessment matters within The Hills Local Government Area. These include applications and proposals that need to be assessed and determined by Council as well as planning matters within the Shire that need to be assessed and determined by local or regional planning panels.

Planning matters within The Hills Shire that fall under the responsibility of other planning authorities (such as State Significant Development assessed by the NSW State Government) are subject to the relevant Community Participation Plan prepared by that authority.

FUNCTIONS TO WHICH THE CPP APPLIES	
STRATEGIC PLANNING AND PLAN MAKING	Strategic planning projects such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Precinct Plans• Changes to Council's Local Environmental Plan (LEP)• Changes to Council's Development Control Plan (DCP)• Contributions Plans• Plans for urban renewal areas• Local Strategies
ASSESSMENTS	Assessment of: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Development Applications• Planning Proposals• Voluntary Planning Agreements



COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION OBJECTIVES

The following table outlines community participation principles and objectives (Section 2.23(2) of the EP&A Act as well as Council's Engagement Principles and Practices).

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IS:	COUNCIL WILL:	EXAMPLES:
OPEN AND INCLUSIVE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purposefully engage with a wide range of stakeholders • Make it safe to participate so people feel confident to provide input • Ensure relevant views are accurately captured 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information events are held at accessible venues • A variety of engagement methods are used that appeal to different audiences
EASY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Let you know how and when you can participate • Make the purpose of the engagement clear and concise • Prepare information for the community that is easy to understand • Seek input from groups that may find it difficult to participate • Use visual aids where appropriate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities for participation are widely advertised (newspaper, online, direct mail notification, media releases etc) • Offer a range of methods to submit feedback (online, post, face to face etc) • Inclusion of maps or 3D images wherever possible to make it easy to visualise a project
RELEVANT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tailor engagement activities to match the context, scale and nature of the project, as well as the level of community interest 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted social media information campaigns • Use qualitative and quantitative methods to collect and review findings
TIMELY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure you have time to provide input • Fulfil minimum exhibition requirements • Extend exhibition timeframes where appropriate (considering scale, nature and level of community interest) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community is aware of engagement opportunities before exhibition periods begin (via media releases/web updates/enews etc) • Feedback on planning decisions is provided within a period appropriate to the scale and nature of the project
MEANINGFUL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a range of opportunities for meaningful participation • Consider your feedback • Monitor and report back to the community on planning decisions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We may amend part of a plan as a result of feedback • Publication of Post-exhibition reports for Planning Proposals • Notices of determination issued to submitters



COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION APPROACH

Usually planning matters fall predominantly within the 'inform' and 'consult' engagement levels. However, we will adjust these approaches to suit the scale and nature of individual proposals, and the level of community interest.

WHAT	WHEN	EXAMPLES
Inform We will tell you about plans/proposals and give you accurate and relevant information as they progress.	As soon as practical following their lodgement, with updates at key milestones accurately captured.	Online Application Tracker tool; newspaper notices; media releases; Planning Enews.
Consult We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge your concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how your input influenced the decision.	Once plans or policies reach draft stage we will exhibit them and ask for your feedback.	Public Exhibition, drop-in sessions, online surveys.
Determination We will let you know the decisions regarding proposals and how your views were considered in reaching the decision.	As soon as practical following a decision.	Online updates, letters to submitters, post-exhibition reports to Council, notices of decisions in local newspaper.

EXHIBITIONS

WHAT ARE EXHIBITIONS?

Exhibitions communicate information about proposals and formally collect feedback about them. They typically include draft plans or proposals, and at times draft strategic documents such as Contributions Plans or Local Strategies. Exhibitions are a valuable way of ensuring all relevant information about specific proposals is available to the community at the same time, and that everyone has an opportunity to give feedback.

HOW CAN YOU GET INVOLVED DURING AN EXHIBITION PERIOD?

There are a number of ways to get involved.

- Make a formal submission by going to Council's Have your Say webpage.
- Write to the Mayor or General Manager.
- Visit Council's Customer Service Centre, website or libraries to access public exhibition documents.
- Attend drop-in sessions (if they are scheduled) to discuss the plans/proposal with council staff.
- Contact a Council Officer should you require further information or assistance.

WHAT DO WE DO WITH YOUR SUBMISSION?

When you provide us with a submission about a proposal, we consider your feedback in conjunction with any other submissions. Council has the responsibility to consider all community feedback in order to make decisions that are in the public interest. These decisions seek to balance the objects of the EP&A Act, strategic priorities of Council and land use priorities with Council's strategic plans and applicable state policies.

If you make a submission online, you will receive a receipt email. Submissions on proposals are addressed collectively within reporting so you will not receive an individual response to your submission. Council officers will summarise the issues raised within submissions and address these within reports on the outcomes of proposals. You will be advised of the matter being reported to Council and of the outcome.

EXHIBITION TIMEFRAMES

Exhibition timeframes vary for different types of proposals. The *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* sets minimum timeframes for the exhibition of different types of proposals. Council will always exhibit a proposal for minimum timeframes, and where the scale and nature of a proposal warrants, we may extend the period to allow the community enough time to consider the proposal.

PLAN MAKING MANDATORY EXHIBITION TIMEFRAMES

Draft Community Participation Plans	28 days
Draft local strategic planning statements	28 days
Planning proposals for local environmental plans subject to a gateway determination	28 days (or as specified by the gateway determination which may find, if the proposal is minor in nature)
Draft development control plans	28 days
Draft Contributions Plans	28 days

DEVELOPMENT ASSESSMENT MANDATORY NOTIFICATION/EXHIBITION TIMEFRAMES

Application for development consent for Local Development	14 days (this can be reduced to 7 days or extended in special circumstances)
Application for development consent for designated development	14 days (or if the modification is minor, no notification may be required)
Application for modification of development consent that is required to be publicly exhibited	28 days
Integrated development	28 days
Environmental impact statement (EIS) obtained under Division 5.1 of the EP&A Act	28 days
If a particular matter has different exhibition/notification periods that apply, the longer period applies.	

Notifications/Exhibitions may occur during the Christmas period between 20 December and 10 January (inclusive) - however the period is excluded from the calculation of minimum timeframes. The exhibition of a new proposal will not commence within this period.

ADVERTISING AND NOTIFICATION

PROCEDURES

Council advertises and notifies potentially affected members of the community about local applications for development consent. We seek to balance the community's right to participate in the planning system with the timely processing of low impact development applications.

If you live in an adjoining or adjacent property to a proposed local development, we will notify you or the strata manager in writing when a development is proposed. In cases where we consider the potential impacts of the development to be greater in scale, we may extend the area of notification.

We consider the following factors when deciding whether to broaden the extent of notification:

- Siting and design
- Views
- Visual and acoustic privacy
- Access
- Overshadowing
- Public interest
- Topography
- Solar access
- Drainage
- Landfill
- Traffic generation

CIRCUMSTANCES WHERE NOTIFICATION IS NOT REQUIRED

Some minor development is of a scale and nature that does not require formal notification of neighbouring properties. Provided the proposal complies with all applicable development controls (LEP, DCP & other relevant policies) and it is considered unlikely to detrimentally affect surrounding properties, no formal notification period applies. In these cases, surrounding property owners are sent a courtesy letter to inform them that an application has been received in accordance with the requirements of The Hills Development Control Plan, and that the application will be determined no sooner than 14 days from the date of the letter.

This applies to development such as:

- New rural sheds ancillary to residential use
- New rural fencing
- New tennis courts ancillary to residential use
- Strata subdivisions
- Subdivisions to adjust property boundaries where no additional lots are created
- Where the development site does not adjoin a residential property

CONCILIATION CONFERENCES

If we receive more than 10 individual submissions relating to a development application during a formal notification period, we will host a conciliation conference. These conferences are chaired by the Mayor or the Mayor's nominee. If a conciliation conference is required, we will notify all objectors in writing, and invite them to attend and speak at the conference if they wish.

CPP GLOSSARY

Contributions Plans A plan developed by Council for the purpose of gaining financial contributions from new development towards the cost of new and upgraded public amenities or services required by the new development.

Designated Development Development which may have significant environmental impacts and requires additional consideration of such impacts (for example mining developments or chemical industries).

Development Control Plan A plan that provides detailed planning and design guidelines to support the planning controls in a Local Environmental Plan (LEP).

Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

An EIS must accompany a development application for state significant development, state significant infrastructure or designated development. It outlines how the proposed development will impact on the environment.

Gateway determination A gateway determination is issued by the Department of Planning and Environment following an assessment of the strategic merit of a proposal to amend or create an LEP. It allows the proposal to proceed to public exhibition.

Integrated Development Development that requires development consent from council as well as at least one approval or licence from another government agency (specified in Part 4 Division 4.8 Section 4.46 of the EP&A Act). This does not include State significant development or complying development.

Local Development Refers to applications for development consent, that are not complying development or designated development. The majority of applications that Councils assess are for local development.

Local Environmental Plan (LEP) The environmental planning instrument developed by Council, which sets the planning framework for our Local Government Area.

State significant development (SSD) Some types of development have State significance due to their size, economic value or potential impacts. Examples are schools, hospitals or energy generating facilities.

Urban renewal areas Land which is identified for the establishment of vibrant, sustainable and liveable neighbourhoods, including refurbishment of public areas.

WHERE CAN I FIND THESE DOCUMENTS

All documents are available online at www.thehills.nsw.gov.au and searching for Council Key Documents Directory.

“ ENGAGING THE HILLS CONTINUING THE CONVERSATION ”

PART ONE is The Hills Shire Council's Community Engagement Strategy for the update of the Community Strategic Plan.

This document provides guidance in planning and undertaking consultation and engagement activities required to inform and shape Council's Community Strategic Plan.

In fulfilment of Section 402 of the Local Government Act 1993, this document outlines Council's role and responsibility in engaging with the Hills community to update the Community Strategic Plan, Hills Future.

PART TWO is The Hills Shire Council's Community Participation Plan. In fulfilment of Division 2.6 and Schedule 1 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979.

This document will be reviewed as part of Council's Strategic Plan.

GET INVOLVED!

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FOLLOW US on Facebook
or Twitter

HAVE YOUR SAY [https://
www.thehills.nsw.gov.au/
Home](https://www.thehills.nsw.gov.au/Home)

If you do not speak English and require a translation/interpreter please contact the Telephone Interpreter Service on 131 450 and ask them to call Council on 9843 0555 and enquire on your behalf.



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