

ENGAGEMENT OUTCOMES REPORT

CENTRAL COAST DRAFT LOCAL HOUSING
STRATEGY - STAKEHOLDER FORUM 27 MAY
2023



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CONTEXT

Central Coast Council hosted a stakeholder forum on the draft Local Housing Strategy (LHS) to seek feedback and provide opportunity for discussion on the Strategy's visions, goals and actions.

The forum allowed targeted stakeholder groups to work together to build partnerships and explore opportunities and solutions.

Council has prepared the LHS to investigate housing supply, the types of housing needed now and into the future, and potential barriers to meeting those needs.

The Strategy has been informed by community and stakeholder participation in 2022 with the development of a Discussion Paper to examine the housing issues currently being experienced on the Central Coast.



ADMINISTRATOR ADDRESS

Council's Administrator, Rik Hart, addressed the forum on the current state of housing on the Central Coast, and the objectives of the draft Local Housing Strategy.

Mr Hart spoke to Council's role in supporting adequate housing in the region, collective implementation and the need for all levels of government to work collaboratively.

"It is projected that our population will increase to over 404,000 people by 2041 - that's another 55,000 people, or 2,800 people every year. To house these people, the Central Coast Regional Plan 2041 anticipates we will require an additional 32,550 dwellings."

The Administrator encouraged participants to work together, build relationships and have fruitful discussions about what the Council and industry can do to meet the objectives of delivering adequate and affordable housing on the Central Coast.



PRESENTATION

HillPDA have assisted Council to prepare the draft Strategy. Alex Peck from Hill PDA gave a presentation to provide an overview of the project including:

Background

- Preparing the Local Housing Strategy
- The Central Coast Region Plan 2041

The evidence

- The top ten housing challenges in the region

The priorities

- Housing objectives
- Strategies

Next steps to finalise the Strategy



ACTIVITY 1 - ACTIONS

CONNECTING OBJECTIVES WITH ACTIONS

Participants discussed the Strategy objectives and actions to consider:

- What actions should be included or excluded?
- Have we missed anything?
- What are the future opportunities?

This activity prompted questions and ideas, and provided a platform for discussion to consider different perspectives, similarities in position and/or opportunities for partnerships.

Key themes emerging from the discussion were:

- Infrastructure is needed to support growth
- State Government, through Transport for NSW, must plan for and provide transport infrastructure to support housing
- The actions in the draft LHS can not be achieved by Council alone
- Housing affordability is a key issue – people can't afford to buy homes to live in and can't afford to rent
- The draft Strategy has many great actions but requires more depth



ACTIVITY 2 - THEMES

This activity identified key themes that resonated with participants:

INFRASTRUCTURE TO SUPPORT HOUSING

Adequate infrastructure and services must be delivered in alignment with housing. Transport, health and education facilities must be prioritised to meet population increases. Civil infrastructure such as footpaths, kerb and gutter, stormwater infrastructure and parks, must accompany housing.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND BENEFITS

Opportunity for community to be involved in the development and delivery of housing solutions. Council should explain the benefits of different housing options.

RESPONSIBILITIES IN MEETING ADEQUATE HOUSING SUPPLY

There was agreement all levels of Government should play a role and take responsibility for ensuring adequate housing on the Central Coast.

FRUSTRATION WITH COUNCIL PROCESSES FOR APPROVING DEVELOPMENTS

Some participants expressed frustration with Council strategies and processes for development approval. This included frustrations with strategic decisions by Council about which areas development can occur, delays or lack of response to submitted Development Applications, and disagreement about lot sizes.

LIVABILITY & ENVIRONMENT

New housing stock should be designed to be 'livable' and be climate friendly. All aspects of the environment should be considered in planning decisions, including trees, green spaces and the impact of development.

RESPECT FOR COUNTRY

Use traditional language in the document "darkinyung yadha gayigu darkinyung ngura". Confirm language with local Aboriginal representatives prior to the adoption of the Strategy.

Need to change the narrative that links Aboriginal housing with social housing and disadvantage.

There are Aboriginal landowners who own large lots of land who will play a key role in development in the area.

YOUTH

Young people often get overlooked in housing provisions and there is a need for their input. Student housing and affordable housing for young people should be prioritised.

FURTHER EVIDENCE

The Strategy could be refined for easy reading.

Science and evidence is needed to support information contained within the document.

ACTIVITY 3

ESTABLISHING CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS

The purpose of the final activity was to crystalize the challenges raised during the previous activities to identify solutions and opportunities.

Participants were randomly divided into three groups and asked to identify a facilitator and scribe from within their group.

The information from this activity has been recorded verbatim.



ACTIVITY 3 - SUMMARY

CHALLENGES

RESPONSIBILITY FOR HOUSING / COLLABORATION NEEDED

It is not Council's sole responsibility for providing housing, however, they play a key role as an advocate and through their planning powers. There needs to be consensus on the approach and all levels of Government need to collaborate to make it effective.

DA APPROVALS

There are long waits for DA approvals along with red-tape, lack of timely responses and apparent insufficient resources in Council's Strategic Planning and Assessment Teams.

COUNCIL COMMUNICATION & RELATIONSHIPS

There is a perception that communication channels are weak and there is a lack of trust and respect between Council and community.

HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

Housing affordability is a key issue on the Central Coast. This applies to purchasing a property to occupy and rental affordability.

CLARITY

There appears to be a lack of clarity about the purpose of the individual strategies and plans for the Central Coast region across all levels of Government.

SOLUTIONS

RESOURCES

Provide better resources for Council to combat the delays associated with DA approvals, and improve the resourcing of the Strategic Planning team.

INVOLVEMENT FORM ALL LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT

There is an opportunity for improved collaboration and partnership between the three levels of government, as well as between government agencies.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Opportunity to involve the community in the planning processes and have community led solutions.

APPROACH

There is an opportunity to re-think the approach and simplify the draft Local Housing Strategy.

FINAL THOUGHTS

KEY TAKEAWAYS IDENTIFIED BY PARTICIPANTS

- Council and community could benefit from increased planning staff
- All levels of government need to work together
- What is driving population growth on the Central Coast?
- Opportunity to build trust and make a huge impact
- Recurring issue - how are we going to achieve the Strategy?
- More aware of how the Aboriginal community is included (e.g. more positive narrative, correct Aboriginal language).
- Simplifying strategies and plans to resolve barriers between Council, industries and community groups
- 2021 census data is missing
- Type of housing being built is not reflecting the needs of the community
- Biggest problem is our mindset to property being a wealth building tool rather than housing
- Need to solve some core problems, for example social housing
- Opportunity to build comfortable, attractive, green and suitable housing - try to create beautiful suburbs
- Human health and wellbeing are what it should be all about



CONCLUSION

The Housing Forum provided an opportunity for key stakeholders to come together, learn about the draft Local Housing Strategy, and share ideas and solutions to housing challenges on the Central Coast.

The forum enabled a variety of stakeholders with varying, and at times competing, interests to have open discussions and build relationships.

Participants agreed that the goals and priorities identified in the draft Local Housing Strategy can only be achieved through collaboration between all levels of government, industry and community.



APPENDIX

ACTIVITY 3 - RESPONSES

GROUP 1

CHALLENGES

1. No relationships - community dialogue/ listening
2. Youth are overlooked in housing
3. DA approval timeframes
4. Ill informed community members/biases/ loud voices + fears/ anxieties
5. Trust (lack) and respect
6. Representation
7. Inconsistent control systems (north vs south)
8. Entrenched attitudes
9. No density around railway

SOLUTIONS

1. Listening to everyone
2. Simplify processes
3. Resourcing
4. Education + build understanding
5. Build trust
6. Getting everyone around the table on the same page
7. Community-led solutions

APPENDIX

ACTIVITY 3 - RESPONSES

GROUP 2

CHALLENGES

1. Understand who the stakeholders are
2. Tiers of government defining city development differ
3. Infrastructure agencies don't talk to each other e.g. RMs/RFs, *"transport not telling us where the station is"*
4. Communication channels are weak
5. Legislation acts e.g. LGA acts/land acts/ aboriginal land acts don't align
6. ONION theory
7. How do we take advantage of the intra-regional differences - the topography as well as the population differences stakeholders need to reflect their differences.

SOLUTIONS

1. Create a liveable inclusive stakeholder group
2. 2 levels of government state/federal same party/cabinet representation
3. Involve parliamentarians with conversation
4. Become innovative with solutions - create burning platform
5. Involve GCC in outputs of stakeholders to help us bust red tape
6. Housing policy focuses on stimulating VS supply - so can focus on Federal/State to support infrastructure greenfield development
7. Improve timeline for delivery e.g. short/not long term, e.g. address some immediate priorities
8. Achieve simplification of outcomes/action
9. Complying DA's are prioritised/better applications due to understand what is needed for obligations. Be clear about DA guidelines + build quick

APPENDIX

ACTIVITY 3 - RESPONSES

GROUP 3

CHALLENGES

1. Willingness of Council to work with applicants
2. Housing affordability
3. Housing suitability - not fit for purpose
4. Retention of quality of life in the face of congestion
5. Overwhelming plans/strategies/guidelines
6. Community feel disengaged from process
7. Housing driven by developers/financial motivation
8. Community approval of density increases.

SOLUTIONS

1. Change of approach - open to supporting housing
2. Affordable housing scheme that works - affordable housing percentages (state)
3. Community consultation for housing development
4. Decentralised models for those who want it
5. Simplifying plans etc.
6. Community engagement - e.g. accessible - meet people in their worlds, shopping centres chats
7. Cooperatives in community to self determine outcomes
8. Change of approach - fix cultural issues in Council, increase staff levels
9. Increase engagement of Council with community

VERBATIM RESPONSES

ACTIVITY 2

The table below is verbatim responses written by each group on butchers' paper from a brain dump.

GROUP	COMMENTS
1	<p>Missed information and opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • train stations • rapid bus routes interchange areas high-speed rail • residential villages • green field developments • delays in DA approvals • what strategies are in place for housing? • Where is it? How to plan for it? <p>Future opportunity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change in Government • Working with community housing providers
2	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increase staffing levels for accessing officers 2. Identify the site – enable on-site construction 3. Increase threshold for LPP objections for housing Das 4. Enable more variety of housing approvals through CDC 5. Great strategies/ no action – red tape
3	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Clear priorities for action 2. Incentives/ policies to reduce the cost of housing (housing diversity) 3. Place based planning to focus on the character and demographics of local areas (filling gaps between current stock and local lifestyles) 4. A local housing strategy with actions and buy-in from other key contributors 5. Community involvement in the development and delivery of housing solutions (take people on the journey)
4	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 46,000 dwellings → expedite DAs: block land-banking 2. State + Federal Gov → provide \$\$ to implement 3. Refine strategy → language needs to be easily digested, lots of broad sweeping terms rather than specific relevant actions. Can it be condensed? Its overwhelming 4. Science + evidence has to back everything → best practice for health and wellbeing of people who live there. 5. Open spaces for people who live in higher density – exercises, sense of community, shade trees 6. Catering for community members who have less mobility in new developments and in streets. In planning + design 7. Greener places strategy – CC is behind on urban greening need to exemplar Melbourne CC → 40% canopy over any urban area to offset heat from road surface 8. Safer places 9. Linking up cycleways to places and destinations

VERBATIM RESPONSES

ACTIVITY 2 – CONTINUED

The table below is verbatim responses written by each group on butchers' paper from a brain dump.

GROUP	COMMENTS
5	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consider in data report of the average age of housing stock – what can be developed 2. Opportunity to explain the community benefits of different densities → do videos of different housing options 3. Use of current/correct data 4. Accurate demographics to highlight local need 5. More crisis accommodation 6. Ensure the document uses the actual traditional quotations in the document . → darkinyung yadha gayigu darkinyunng ngura 7. Improve public transport 8. Encourage Aboriginal housing discussions 9. Consider 2b mission statement looking after country 10. No clear strategy for green spaces + using trees for cooling + heating houses + report states' continue the implementation. Action 10.1. yet there have been too many trees + open spaces sacrificed for driveways etc to fit a development onto land, obviously too small... so doubt it has been implemented at all 11. Promote more secondary duelling opportunities to industry and residents identify area with appropriate/ ideal lot sizes and letter box drop 12. Would like to see a character statement for each ward. 13. Areas such as lake Munmorah have changed dramatically since covid and the opening of North Connex. It is rapidly turning into a commuter location for ex western suburb residents who recognise the attraction to the beaches + lakes. 14. Consider position promoted by minister stokes last December that councils utilise mining + quarry sites for a higher use than environmental 15. Re-evaluate the development rights of C3 zoning (prev7b) in the NWSSP area where properties that were zoned for medium density housing for over 45 years last this right in 2013-inconsistent with how other councils (neighbouring Hawksbury/great lakes) transferred to the so called standard investment. 16. Note that the environmental management framework stated many of the sites would suit of lesser restrictive zoning. Council needs to look at this at the time of the environmental hand review.
6	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Community driven opportunities. Co-operational – encouraged and facilitated by Council 2. Young people overlooked in housing provisions “Youth Rent Choice” not keeping up 3. Airbnb: should they be limited. Airbnb’s not available for local rentals. Example – Byron shire council restricts Airbnb availability 4. Covid caused 380,000 “new” households
7	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Short term bridging strategy with stakeholder who has access to people with housing needs and develop innovative housing options eg. Spare room project 2. Prioritise student housing 3. How can we take advantage of being 1 LGA (regional) with the largest population and articulate our burning platform for funding appropriate housing first.
8	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. are there KPI's building survivors must meet? mismatch between private sector and public sector? 2. Can we separate DA's from CDCs to speed up process? 3. Community activism holding up developments → “nimbys” or environment related. → solution could be merit-based assessment 4. Technical problems with the Lep/DCP → strata vs torrens title, Why 550 min. sQ lot size? This a hindrance to providing house 5. 48000, is this net increase? Needs to be explained in strategy

VERBATIM RESPONSES

ACTIVITY 3

Attendees were randomly split into three groups and asked to nominate one scribe and one facilitator to write down on butches paper the pain points/challenges and solutions.

The table below is verbatim responses written by each group on butchers' paper.

GROUP	PAIN POINTS/CHALLENGES	SOLUTIONS
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No relationships – community dialogue/ listening Youth are overlooking in housing DA/approval timeframes Ill informed community members/biases/ loud voices + fears/ anxieties Trust (lack) and respect Representation Inconsistent control systems (north vs south) Entrenched attitudes No density around railway 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listening to everyone Simplify processes Resourcing Education + build understanding Build trust Getting everyone around the table on the same page Community-led solutions
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand who the stakeholders are Tiers of government defining city development differ Infrastructure agencies don't talk to each other e.g. RMs/RFs or "transport not telling us where the station is" Communication channels are weak Legislation acts e.g. LGA acts/land acts/ aboriginal land acts don't align ONION theory How do we take advantage of the intra-regional differences – the topography as well as the population differences stakeholders need to reflect their differences. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a liveable inclusive stakeholder group 2 levels of government state/fed same party/cabinet representation Involve parliamentarians with conversation Become innovative with solus – create burning platform Involve GCC inn outputs of stakeholders to help us bust red tape Housing policy focuses on stimulating VS supply – so can focus on Fed/State to support infrastructure greenfield development Improve timeline for delivery e.g. short/ not long term, e.g. address some immediate priorities Achieve simplification pf outcomes/action Complying DA's are prioritised/better applications due to understand what is needed for obligations. Be clear about DA guidelines + build quick
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Willingness of council to work with applicants Housing affordability Housing suitability – not fit for purpose Retention of quality of life in the face of congestion Overwhelming plans/strategies/guidelines Community feel disengaged from process Housing driven by developers/financial motivation Community approval of density increases. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change of approach – open to supporting housing Affordable housing scheme that works – affordable housing percentages (state) Community consultation for housing development Decentralised models for those who want it Simplifying plans etc. Community engagement – e.g. Accessible – meet people in their worlds, shopping centres chats Cooperatives in community to self determine outcomes. Change of approach – fix cultural issues in council, increase staff levels Increase engagement of council with community