



Community and Stakeholder Engagement Plan

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1. Overview of Engagement Plan

In summary, we propose the following steps in undertaking this section of the project:

- Initial discussions with Council to identify key issues to consider for the Plan
- Development of a straw agenda
- Discussion with key community opinion leaders
- Development of a draft agenda for the deliberative forums
- Finalisation of the agenda
- Recruitment of forum participants
- Conduct the deliberative community forums
- Initial results presentation of the community forum output
- Development of a draft questionnaire for the community survey
- Finalisation of the community survey questionnaire
- Fieldwork for the community survey
- Initial results presentation of the community survey output
- Further discussion with community opinion leaders
- Shopping centre drop-ins
- In-depth interviews with forum participants
- Presentation and reporting

2. Steps in the Engagement Process

Step 1: Initial discussions with Council

We would initially develop a set of issues/areas of investigation for potential application at the community forums, along with recommendations for the best way that each can potentially be explored. In addition we would recommend the order that the areas of investigation would best 'flow' from a participant perspective. We would talk this through with the Council project team (via teleconference) in an open discussion process, and we would be open to any feedback in terms of inputs, approach or order of exploration.

At this stage we believe the best approach would be to start the forums by exploring what's important to the community about where they live, and the key needs/drivers behind their viewpoints. It may be that there are other options not yet considered that could potentially meet their needs. The options could then be presented in a factual way and responses sort, particularly in relation to their perceived social impacts.

Step 2: Development of a straw agenda

Based on the output from discussions with the Council project team, we would formulate a straw agenda. This agenda would contain all of the areas of discussion for the forum sessions, the proposed length of time to be attributed to each, and the types of activities to be undertaken. The straw agenda would be provided to the Council project team for additional input and review.

Step 3: Discussions with key community opinion leaders

We would then approach the community opinion leaders in a series of one-on-one face-to-face in-depth interviews, to talk them through the overall engagement process and present the straw agenda to them. These meetings will allow us to introduce ourselves, explain the different elements of the project being undertaken, highlight our impartiality, and importantly, to get their input into and feedback on the straw agenda for the forthcoming community consultation process. We believe that this stage is crucial in order to try to gain buy in from the community and to present ourselves as independent facilitators to the process.

Step 4: Finalisation of the agenda

A complete agenda would then be developed based on feedback from both Council and the key community opinion leaders. This would be provided to the Council project team for further review and input prior to finalisation. The agenda would highlight the information required at the forums in order for Council to start drafting the presentations/handouts required. We would work with all

internal stakeholders to ensure the presentations meet the needs of participants in terms of being clear, simple and easy for them to understand.

Step 5: Recruitment of community forum participants

Participants for the community forums will be recruited at random with the use of set quotas (for age, gender and income level) to ensure that the rooms are representative of the local community they are intended to represent.

Woolcott Research and Engagement will draft a screening questionnaire to be applied for recruitment of participants to the forums and will specify the quotas required in order to ensure a representative sample for each locality (i.e. North Wagga, Oura, Gumly, West Wagga).

The recruitment for the deliberative forums would be conducted in-house through our telephone call centre at Woolcott Research and Engagement. Phone numbers would be selected from the suburbs in which each forum is to take place.

As standard practice we will over-recruit by at least 10% to optimise the chances of obtaining good numbers at the forums. Participants would be offered an incentive of \$100 for their attendance at the forum as a token of appreciation for their time and to compensate them for any out of pocket expenses incurred in attending. All incentives will be invoiced to Wagga Wagga City Council at actual cost without margin.

There is the option to include an Expression of Interest (EOI) process whereby local opinion leaders are able to bypass the random selection of participants and state their interest to attend. We would suggest that no more than 10% of participants are recruited in this way.

Step 6: Conducting the community forums

The deliberative forums will consist of a mix of round table discussions, presentations/speakers at the front, participant response and feedback sessions from tables (so that participants can hear the views from other tables in the room). Participants will spend most of the time working in small groups (c. 8-10) and all participants will stay in the same room, as this helps to convey the importance of the event and creates a 'buzz' in the room.

We recommend that the key community opinion leaders for each location (and other known active community members) be placed at one table, so that their knowledge of the issues does not provide undue influence over other forum participants. We find that if one participant at a table is seen to be an 'expert' then others will defer to them for comment.

Each forum would involve enough time and the provision of detailed information so that participants are able to develop a clear understanding of the issues and of the options facing them. We would recommend the forums run for 3-3.5 hours on weekday evenings.

In terms of timing, the four forums would ideally be run within one or two weeks – but this will depend on venue availability.

Woolcott Research will provide a lead facilitator, Ian Woolcott, who will Chair the sessions and manage the flow and timing. The Woolcott Research table facilitators will also ensure that all issues are covered and that everyone's views are heard and captured. They will ensure that no one participant is allowed to dominate the discussion at their table and that everyone will have a chance to have their say and provide feedback. They will also probe into issues that arise within the discussion to ensure that sufficient detail is gained. The facilitator will also ensure that all citizens understand how to participate in the whole of forum voting process that occurs on key questions at several points during the forum.

Woolcott's lead facilitator would open the forum and thank participants for attending. Then an overview of the background and objectives of the forum would be provided. Where possible, and if time permits, stimulus on the different issues should be introduced throughout the forum in different formats (e.g. verbal, visual, videos, written). We recommend that Peter Garland from Wagga Wagga City Council, who is not as well known by local residents, would be best placed to give presentations on the information required and that independent experts (where possible) are on hand to answer any questions that citizens may have.

We typically use laptops at each table for facilitators to capture the table's discussions. This enables us to capture 'raw' data from each forum. Each laptop is set up to offer:

- Facilitator prompts - providing a structured format for facilitators to guide the group, to input group discussion summaries, with screen prompts where necessary
- Time-coded storage of all qualitative data arising from table discussions - available for download into grids for subsequent detailed analysis.

This stage of the engagement process will involve four deliberative forums with the communities with the following numbers of participants:

- n=50 in North Wagga,
- n=30 in Oura and
- n=30 in Gumly Gumly and
- n=20 in West Wagga.

Step 7: Community forum results presentation

The output generated from this phase of engagement would be analysed and preliminary conclusions drawn. The qualitative forum data would be downloaded into an excel grid structured by topic and analysed for themes. Any data from voting exercises would be analysed largely in the form of cross tabulations and presented graphically. Verbatim comments from the forums would be available and a selection would be included in our reporting.

These results would be presented to the Wagga Wagga City Council project team. There would then be a discussion of the key themes to emerge – which can then be explored/measured in the following step.

Step 8: Questionnaire development

Based on the outcomes of the forums and the discussion following the results presentation, the Woolcott Research & Engagement team will draft an online questionnaire to be employed amongst the wider Wagga Wagga community.

The questionnaire would be a maximum of 12 minutes in length, and would primarily consist of closed-ended questions for ease of application amongst residents of all education standards.

The draft questionnaire would be provided to the Wagga Wagga City Council project team for review and further input prior to finalisation.

The questionnaire would be fully tested and piloted before being launched.

Step 9: Community survey

This stage would involve an online survey with residents, assuming there are adequate email addresses available, in the impacted areas as well as in Wagga Wagga central to ensure that a wider sample of the community can be involved in the engagement program and provide feedback. It will also be useful for council to obtain wider feedback to support outcomes. Additionally, depending on the outcome, the wider community could also be paying for the agreed plans so will need to have an input. Further, where there are potential environmental/cultural impacts (e.g. of the Wilks Park water conveyance improvements and Hampden Avenue raising) it would be useful to obtain community views and values on these potential impacts.

The online approach assumes that Council will be able to provide us with adequate email addresses following an initial email from Council to enable people to 'opt out' if they wish to do so.

It is difficult at this stage to estimate the number of survey completes likely to be achieved, however ideally we would aim to ensure a representative sample of around 800 residents.

Step 10: Community survey results presentation

Woolcott Research's own internal data processing unit would undertake all data processing, including coding, editing and analysis. Data would be analysed and processed using our Confirmit and SPSS+ suites of software.

Analysis would primarily involve the production of cross-tabulations. Significance testing would also be provided to identify areas where there are significant differences in the findings (e.g. by locality). Data would be tabulated by a series of dimensions (providing sample size permits) including: gender, age, place of residence, and other classification variables.

The results would again be presented to the Wagga Wagga City Council project team at this stage.

Step 11: Further discussions with key community opinion leaders

In order to keep them involved through the process we would plan to revisit the key community opinion leaders, and discuss with them the outcomes of the forum, community survey, and the CBA results. We are therefore putting forward the option of an additional 5 telephone interviews.

Step 12: Shopping centre drop-ins

This step is important to show the community that the engagement process is open, transparent and inclusive. However, the outcomes of such a process are often not good quality, as the situation is less likely to involve considered opinion forming. As such, we typically recommend to include this step as part of a multi-faceted approach - but not as a main engagement method.

We are recommending the inclusion of shopping centre drop-ins at each of the 3-4 main locations. This would involve Council representatives to answer questions and 2 interviewers from Woolcott Research to complete surveys with residents. Council may choose to promote these sessions using their standard communication channels.

Step 13: In-depth interviews with forum participants

Given that Council has elected not to conduct the second phase of community forums, we feel that it is important to conclude the consultation process with the community by conducting a series of one-on-one in-depth interviews with participants from the original forums.

This will allow for these participants to be informed of progress with the consultation process – by discussing key outcomes from each prior stage (the forums themselves, the community survey, and

the CBA). Further feedback could also be obtained on aspects that we feel require further clarification and to fill any identified knowledge gaps.

Our in-house logistics manager would pre-arrange interviews with participants from each forum. Interviewers would then conduct these follow-up interviews either at a central location (e.g. town hall) or can potentially travel to the property of those participating.

We have costed for 2 interviewers to conduct one on one interviews with community members over a two day period.

Step 14: Reporting

Outputs from all engagement activities will be analysed and a full report written of the outcomes.

As mentioned, in order to ensure that the engagement program stands up to external scrutiny it will be important to include an evaluation phase. It is our standard practice to include participant feedback opportunities at the conclusion of all research and engagement activities. This takes the form of questions on participant perceptions of the quality and value of the process at the end of interviews, discussions, surveys and community forums, and the perceived likelihood of the findings being used.