



Community Engagement Strategy

Etheridge Shire Council - proposed planning scheme

Pursuant to section 18(5)(d) of the Planning Act, a local government following the process for making a template scheme must implement a communications strategy.

1. Purpose

The purpose of this communications strategy is to outline how council will engage with key stakeholders and its local community in a relevant and appropriate way.

Council will undertake its engagement process detailed below in line with the following principles (detailed in part 1 of DSDMIP's [community engagement toolkit for planning](#)):

1. Engagement focuses on the best interests of the community
2. Engagement is open, honest and meaningful
3. Approaches for engagement are inclusive and appropriate
4. Information is timely and relevant
5. Information is accurate, easy to understand and accessible
6. Decision-making is transparent.

2. Objectives

The following are the outcomes sought by the proposed communications strategy:

- The community (i.e. residents, ratepayers, community groups and business owners) is aware that the council is drafting a new planning scheme for its local government area and that the community can participate in/contribute to the plan-making process.
- The community is informed that the draft scheme will be released for public consultation and understands how and when to make a properly-made submission.
- The community has adequate opportunities to provide input through widespread communication and, where appropriate, targeted consultation activities.
- The council and community have confidence that the planning scheme will achieve its desired strategic intent.

3. Engagement process

The following are the proposed components of the strategy:

Public consultation period (40 business days commencing Monday 23 September 2019 up to and including Monday 18 November 2019):

- Public notice in the Cairns Post
- Information (on making submissions, fact sheets etc) and copy of draft scheme on council's website
- Information on council's Facebook page and associated local Facebook pages

- Hardcopies of draft scheme and fact sheets available at council office (to inspect and purchase)
- Notice (about the scheme and opportunities for comment) put into Etheridge's monthly newsletter – the Inform Newsletter
- Notices placed around town on community noticeboards
- Letters distributed to all owners of properties proposed for inclusion on the local heritage list (listed in Table SC3.1 Local Heritage Places)
- Flyers placed in all residents' mailboxes
- Further feedback sought directly from Native Title holders (Ewamian, Tagalaka, Gudu Badhun and Wakaman Peoples)
- Scheme drafter available for people to talk to in person out in Etheridge Shire for 3 days. Councillors, CEO and council's Economic and Community Development Officer to attend some of the consultations. Proposed schedule:
 - Etheridge Shire Hall, Georgetown 5pm – 7pm Wednesday 23rd October
 - Einasleigh Hall, Einasleigh 10am – 12pm Thursday 24th October
 - Forsayth Hall, Forsayth 4pm – 6pm Thursday 24th October
 - Mt Surprise Hall, Mt Surprise 10am – 12pm Friday 25th October
- Scheme drafters available on the phone throughout.

Review of submissions:

- A consultation report (about how council has dealt with properly made submissions) is:
 - provided to each person who made a properly made submission
 - available to view and download on council's website
 - available to inspect and purchase at the council office.

Adoption:

- Public notice in Cairns Post
- Notices in Etheridge's monthly newsletter – Inform newsletter – and on community noticeboards
- Publish planning scheme and on council's website
- Have copies of the planning scheme available for purchase and inspection at council's office.

4. Fact Sheets

A series of fact sheets will be made available during the consultation period covering the following subjects:

- Bushfire
- Flood
- Zoning and precincts
- Establishing a home-based business
- Making a submission

Fact sheets (apart from 'Making a submission' will also be made available after adoption.