



Calga Reserve Planting 2021: Consultation Summary Report

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

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Executive summary

There are many locations within Waverley's network of parks and reserves that are currently under turf or weeds that are too steep for recreational purposes and unsafe for staff to mow due to these steep gradients. Calga Reserve is one of these sites identified, and Council staff sought community views on extending the planting range proposed to increase habitat opportunities for fauna and improve plant diversity.

Community consultation ran from 8 March to 5 April 2021, with a subsequent Bronte Beach precinct meeting held on 21 April 2021. Of the communications tools used to raise awareness of the consultation, the flyer and engagement newsletter were the main ways respondents identified finding out about the consultation.

The community response demonstrated overall support to the proposed extending planting range and pleased with Council's commitment to increasing habitat corridors and natural environment planting. It is noted in those responses relating to dogs using the reserve, that this is a dogs on-leash area, and more education may be needed to raise awareness of this.

Recommendations:

- Make the cost of the proposal publicly available
- Investigate ways to ensure the current goat track remains so another one isn't made through the new planting
- Consider the comments made regarding planting and maintenance.

Background

There are many locations within Waverley's network of parks and reserves that are currently under turf or weeds that are too steep for recreational purposes and unsafe for staff to mow due to these steep gradients.

Over the past five years, Council has undertaken revegetation programs to buffer and connect small and isolated patches of vegetation. Simultaneously, staff have undertaken safety audits on steep slopes in the LGA that are currently mown, and have identified a number of slopes that are too steep to safely use mowing equipment. We are now seeking to revegetate some of these steep slopes, with the view to removing hazards for staff currently expected to manage these sites using machinery while improving biodiversity, including plant diversity and fauna habitat.

Calga Reserve is one of these sites identified, and Council staff sought community views on extending the planting range proposed to increase habitat opportunities for fauna and improve plant diversity. As seen in the diagram below, the red indicates the area Council will commence planting, and the blue indicates the proposed further planting areas:



Engagement approach and methodology

Community consultation ran from 8 March to 5 April 2021, with a subsequent Bronte Beach precinct meeting held on 21 April 2021.

The main source of information and engagement was the project page on Have Your Say Waverley at haveyoursay.waverley.nsw.gov.au/calga-reserve-planting.

The consultation objectives were to:

- Sense check resident's sentiment on the planting proposal
- Raise awareness of the safety issues on the site

Identified stakeholders to reach were the Bronte Beach precinct and residents in the immediate vicinity of the reserve.

Engagement tools overview

The engagement process aligned with Waverley Council's adapted IAP2 model for community engagement, sitting at Consult on the public participation spectrum.

Method	Overview	Date	Response
Online survey	A 6-question online survey on the Have Your Say Waverley dedicated project page, addressing the proposal.	8 March—5 April 2021	22 survey responses
Precinct meeting	A dedicated Calga Reserve planting information session held on Zoom, with q&a was held upon request by the precinct.	21 April 2021	1 attendee

Communications tools overview

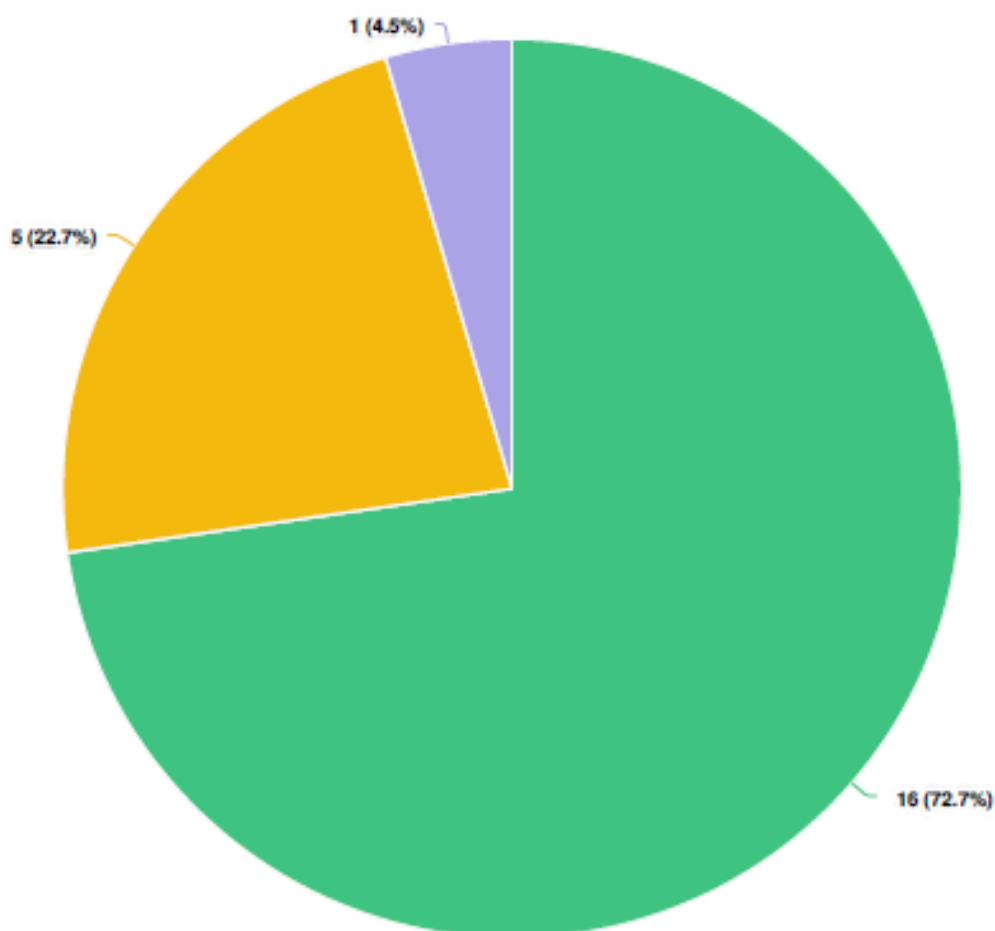
Below is an overview of the communications tools used to raise awareness of the consultation. The flyer and engagement newsletter were the main ways respondents identified finding out about the consultation.

Method	Overview	Date	Response
Have Your Say website	Council's 'Have Your Say' website had a dedicated page for the project: haveyoursay.waverley.nsw.gov.au/calga-reserve-planting	Launched 8 March 2021	206 total visits (173 unique visitors) 104 document downloads
Flyer drop	DL flyer was distributed to about 600 residences in the vicinity of the reserve	Distribution finished by 17 March 2021	Flyers were the one of the highest ranked way respondents found out about the consultation
Social media posts	Raising awareness of the public exhibition period.	Facebook 10 March & 31 March 2021 Twitter 10 March	Facebook Reach: 907 Engagements: 24 Twitter Reach: 1,465 Engagements: 22
Advertising	Advert in the Wentworth Courier as part of the Council page	17 March	—
Council Enewsletters	Waverley Weekly	8 March—5 April 2021	Recipients: 1711
	Engagement enews	September	Recipients: 4707
Stakeholder outreach	Direct emails and notifications to targeted stakeholders	8 March—5 April 2021	—

Detailed results – online survey

The key question of the survey was whether respondents were supportive of the proposed extended planting range at Calga Reserve.

As above, the planting indicated in the red shading is definitely going ahead. Below, please let us whether you are supportive of planting in the blue shading going ahead.



Question options

- Yes, I support planting in the locations with blue shading
- No, I am not supportive of planting in the locations with blue shading
- Other (please specify)

Supportive

- Majority of respondents (72.7%/16 respondents) were supportive of the proposed extended planting. Anecdotally, two residents spoken to while staff undertook the letterbox drop were neutral to supportive about the proposal.
- 80% of those supportive live in Bronte, with other respondents living in Bondi Beach, Coogee, and Bellevue Hill
- Majority of these respondents visited Calga Reserve *daily or most days of the week* (50%) or *two or three times a year* (44%)
- Summary of further comments from these respondents:
 - “Mix up planting so it looks natural”
 - “Thank you for committing to creating habitat corridors, which are so important for wildlife, as well as softening and beautifying our open spaces”
 - “to have a more ‘natural environment experience’ so close to the city is the coast’s unique amenity for locals...wherever possible return the landscape to its original, wonderful attractiveness”
 - Suggestion for future planning of “ongoing maintenance with hand weeding and replacement of any plants that don’t do well...Gymea lilies are doing well so could work in the Macpherson street strip”

Unsupportive

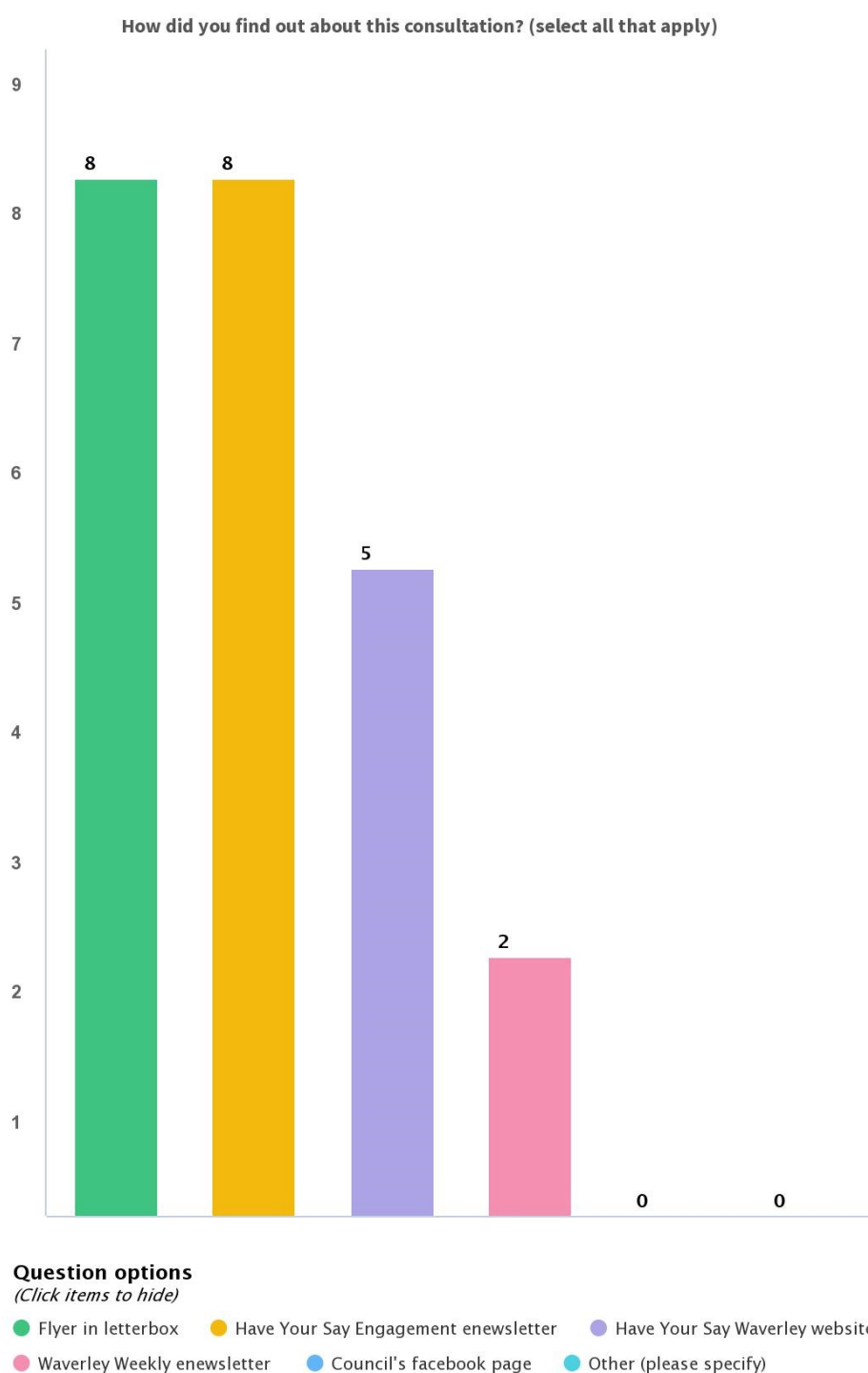
- 22.7% (5) of respondents were unsupportive of the proposed extended planting
- Majority of these residents live in Bronte, with 1 respondent living in Waverley, and visit Calga Reserve *daily or most days of the week*
- Summary of further comments from these respondents:
 - “this is a dog park¹ and planting this area will give the dogs less space”
 - “...support increasing planting and cover for native creatures [but] there is heavy traffic in some of the blue areas - dogs chase around these areas, please walk through them and the slopes are particularly popular in the evenings. I think this will lead to destruction of any soft plants in these areas – people, dogs, kids on bikes will trample grass. If you want to protect plants in the blue shaded areas you will need to consider some barriers to stop people and dogs getting in, or you should consider planting hardy, low lying shrubby ground cover. I would also like to recommend additional planting in the rocky areas - some of these plants have been damaged over time and it would be good to increase the density to provide more protection from people, kids scrambling through and animals.”
 - Concerns that the cost of the proposal is not included
 - “The red area of planting is enough. I do hope it is low lying shrubs that attract native bird life and doesn't block the Calga ave residents views.”

¹ Note: Council staff have confirmed that Calga Reserve is not a Council designated off-leash dog park. Dogs are allowed to be within the reserve but not off-leash.

Other

- One respondent, living in Bronte and visiting Calga Reserve *daily or most days of the week*, selected 'Other' in response to whether they are supportive to the proposal.
- In their further feedback, they indicated general support of the proposal but emphasised the need to "leave the 'goat track' that runs down the side of the grass near the stone wall (that meets the stairs at the half way landing)..." They also suggested improving this track with a pathway to prevent a new goat track being made from people stepping over the new plants.

Benchmarking data



Other engagement results

The following feedback was received via stakeholder meeting on 21 April 2021.

- Approve of any project which would encourage small birds in the area.

Conclusion

The community response demonstrated overall support to the proposed extending planting range and pleased with Council's commitment to increasing habitat corridors and natural environment planting.

It is noted in those responses relating to dogs using the reserve, that this is a dogs on-leash area, and more education may be needed to raise awareness of this.

Recommendations:

- Make the cost of the proposal publicly available
- Investigate ways to ensure the current goat track remains so another one isn't made through the new planting
- Consider the comments made regarding planting and maintenance.

Appendix A – Flyer distributed to residents

The flyer is a vertical rectangular poster. The top half features a photograph of a grassy hillside with a modern house in the background under a blue sky with some clouds. Two people are visible walking on a path on the hill. The title 'Calga Reserve Planting' is overlaid in large white text. Below the title, an orange banner contains the text 'Consultation runs 8 March to 5 April 2021.' The bottom half of the flyer has a dark blue background with white text. It contains three paragraphs of information, a section titled 'Have your say' in orange, and a footer with contact information and the Waverley Council logo.

Calga Reserve Planting

Consultation runs 8 March to 5 April 2021.

We have identified sections of Calga Reserve, Bronte that are too steep for recreational purposes and unsafe for staff to mow due to these steep gradients.

We will commence planting on these steep slopes to protect people's safety and improve plant diversity and fauna habitat. A diagram of the affected areas is at the link below.

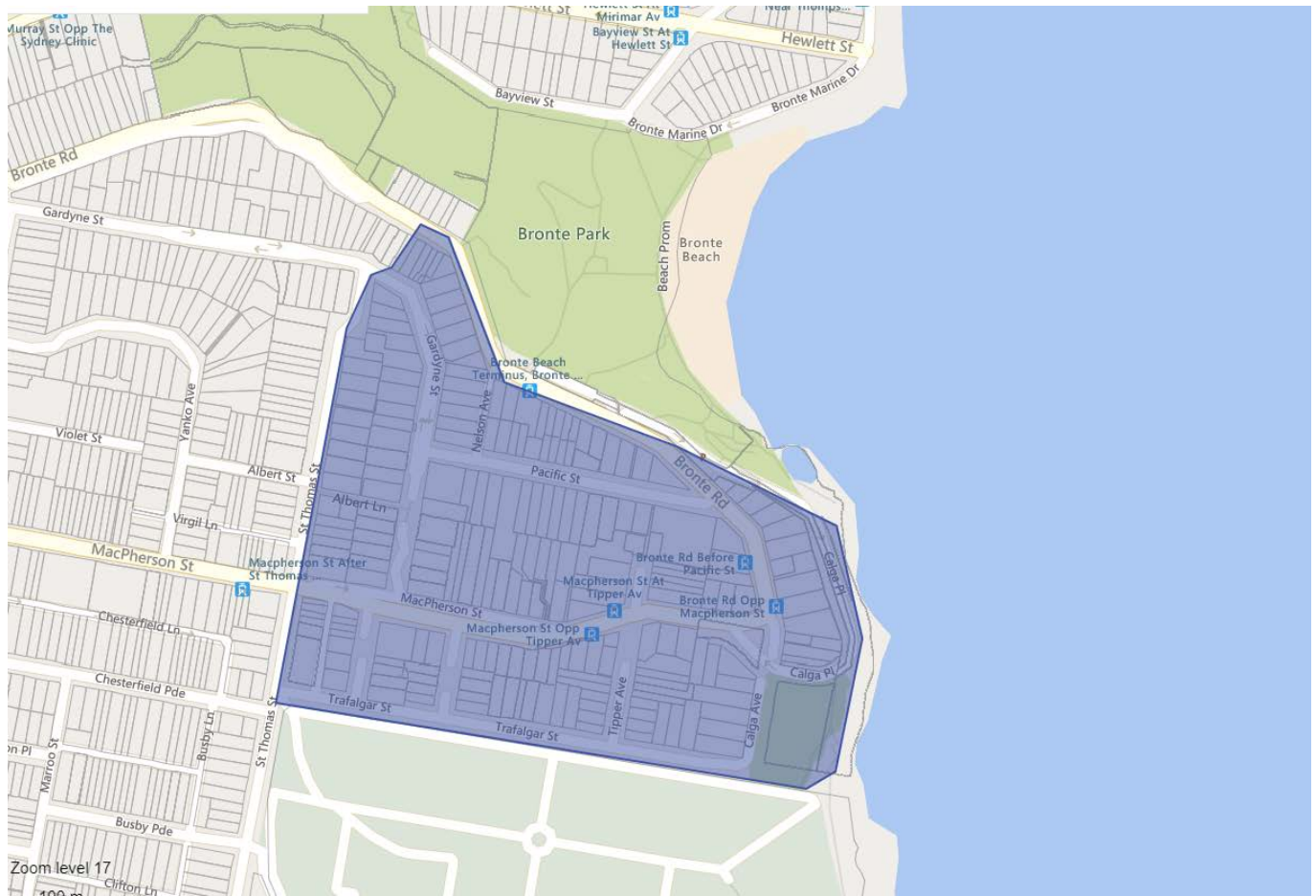
Have your say

We are also proposing further planting areas to increase habitat opportunities for fauna and we want to hear your thoughts on this. Please head to the link below to provide your feedback.

For more information, head to haveyoursay.waverley.nsw.gov.au or call 9083 8000.

WAVERLEY
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Appendix B – Flyer distribution area



Appendix C – Survey

Calga Reserve, Bronte Planting

Have Your Say Waverley

Calga Reserve planting 2021

What is your residential address?

What is your residential suburb?

How often do you use Calga Reserve?

(Choose any one option)

- ☐ Daily or most days of the week
- ☐ Two or three times a month
- ☐ Monthly or most months
- ☐ Once or twice a year
- ☐ Less than once a year
- ☐ Never

As above, the planting indicated in the red shading is definitely going ahead. Below, please let us whether you are supportive of planting in the blue shading going ahead.

(Choose any one option)

- ☐ Yes, I support planting in the locations with blue shading
- ☐ No, I am not supportive of planting in the locations with blue shading
- ☐ Other (please specify)

If you have any further comments, please let us know here.

How did you find out about this consultation? (select all that apply)

(Choose all that apply)

- ☐ Council's facebook page
- ☐ Flyer in letterbox
- ☐ Have Your Say Engagement newsletter
- ☐ Have Your Say Waverley website
- ☐ Waverley Weekly newsletter
- ☐ Other (please specify)