



**Camden 2040  
Community Consultation  
Report**

***Priorities for Today,  
Vision for the Future***

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# ***Executive Summary – Priorities for Today, Vision for the Future***

The Camden Local Government Area will undergo significant urban development and population growth in the coming decades, under the State Government's Metropolitan Strategy. This will see the population of Camden increase from today's level of just over 53,000 to a final population in excess of 256,000 people.

In order to respond to this growth, and to plan the services and facilities that will be required to meet the community's needs, Camden Council is preparing a long term strategic plan, Camden 2040. This plan will focus on the community's vision for the people and place of Camden, and address the issues and concerns that residents have for this area both now and into the future.

To do this, Camden Council engaged with almost 1400 residents, workers and visitors in the area over the months of September and October 2009. The consultation process focused on 5 key questions:

1. What do people like most about the Camden area now?
2. What are the most important issues facing the Camden area now?
3. What will be the most important things to "get right" in creating Camden's future?
4. What is the community's vision for the future of Camden?
5. How satisfied are residents with Council's performance, and what are the areas of priority in relation to Council's services and facilities?

Given the volume of feedback that was received, and the consistency of themes that resulted, this consultation process provides a clear insight into the concerns and vision of the community for the Camden local government area as a whole.

## ***What do people like most about the Camden area?***

1. Camden's rural setting and country town feel and lifestyle
2. The friendly people and community
3. Trees, parks and open space

## ***What were the priorities for Today?***

*For the area:*

1. Development and population growth, and keeping the area as it is
2. Lack of public transport, and the condition and congestion of roads

*For Council services:*

1. Maintenance of local roads
2. Asset management
3. Urban and rural planning

## ***What is the vision for the future?***

*Camden will have:*

1. Rural setting/ country town
2. Sense of community

3. Development that has been managed well
4. Community, health and recreation services and facilities
5. Trees, parks and open space

### ***What are the priorities for the future?***

1. Public transport, roads and parking
2. Keeping the area as it is, development and population growth
3. Recreation, community, health and education services and infrastructure

### ***Key Challenges***

Responding effectively to the community's feedback will present a number of significant challenges for Council and other stakeholders. In the face of the growth determined under the State Government's Metropolitan Strategy, the community does not want to lose the aspects of the area that are so highly valued - its rural setting, country town feel, and the lifestyle associated with these. Achieving a balance between large population increase and keeping Camden as it is now will be an ongoing tension and challenge over the coming decades.

The community wants to see the Camden area supported by effective transport infrastructure, both public transport and good quality roads. Council has only a small role in securing improved transport outcomes, and the large infrastructure improvements needed to major roads and public transport are outside of Council's responsibility. This will require a strong focus by Council through lobbying and partnerships with other levels of government to secure the timely and effective delivery of this infrastructure. The same can be said for community, health, education and recreation services and infrastructure. Council plays a small role in the provision of these, which were identified by the community as essential for Camden's future in the face of population growth.

Camden Council as an organisation faces significant challenges in the current and ongoing delivery of services to its community. Council, in delivering the State Government's Metropolitan Strategy, is planning for growth at the same time as needing to continue to deliver services to its existing community. These two priorities create significant financial pressures for this organisation, which is planning for a population over 250,000 with a current rate base of only 53,000 people.

### ***Where to From Here***

The community's concerns and aspirations for the future of Camden that have been identified through this consultation process will be used to shape Council's new long term community plan, Camden 2040, and the strategies, activities, priorities and services of the organisation over the coming 30 years. It will also be used as a firm basis for developing partnerships with other organisations, and lobbying to State and Federal Government on important issues for Camden's future.

The outcomes of this consultation process will also be an important source of information for Council in many of its planning and decision-making activities over the coming years, and will provide a base for ongoing contact with residents about issues that are important to the community.

## **1. Introduction**

This report presents the results of Stage 1 of a two stage community consultation process for the preparation of a long term community strategic plan for the Camden Local Government Area – Camden 2040.

Stage 1 involved seeking broad community input into a vision for the future of the Camden area, the key issues that will need to be addressed, and satisfaction with and importance of Council services.

Stage 2 will involve taking a draft plan out for public exhibition and active consultation, prior to Council adoption.

## **2. Background**

Council's current Strategic Plan, *Camden 2025*, was prepared in 1999. Camden 2025 was in part an urban containment strategy, which set the sustainable population limit for Camden at 70,000 people, within specific geographic boundaries for development.

The State Government's Metropolitan Strategy established the North and South West Growth Centres to deliver a significant proportion of the housing needs for Sydney's growing population. Due to Camden's place within the South West Growth Centre this now means that Camden's total population is expected to exceed 256,000 people, and much of this housing development will occur outside of the geographic boundaries previously determined in the Camden Structure Plan.

Preparation of a long term strategic plan became a requirement for all NSW councils in October 2009, including a strategy for engaging with the community about its long term vision, key priorities and expectations of Council services.

Long term strategic planning for a local area is also important to effectively lead a local area, and will position the organisation to effectively manage the challenges that will face the Camden area in the future.

For these reasons, Camden Council is undertaking a review of Camden 2025 to ensure that the long term plan for the Camden Local Government Area is based on an understanding of the current local and regional context, and the community's input.

## **3. Overview of Community Engagement Strategy**

A strategy for the consultation and engagement process for Camden 2040 was adopted by Council on 11 August 2009. The preparation of a strategy is a legislative requirement under the Integrated Planning and Reporting amendment to the Local Government Act.

Council's strategy for engaging with the community in the development of Camden 2040 is as follows:

1. To consult broadly enabling a large number of residents to provide input through a range of mechanisms.

2. In recognition of Council's current budget position, to utilise low-cost, cost effective and high value consultation opportunities.
3. As far as possible, to link in with existing events, groups, activities rather than create new opportunities to engage with the community.
4. To make extensive use of online and social media engagement opportunities as low cost, far reaching and potential high return forms of consultation.
5. To ensure that specific target groups are represented and consulted appropriately.

The community engagement process involved three separate elements:

1. Vision and key priorities/issues – seeking feedback on the long term vision of residents for their local area and the key issues that need to be addressed in order to achieve this vision. These questions were asked within the context that the Camden area will undergo significant urban development and population growth.
2. Service levels – a statistically valid sample of residents was used to gather feedback about importance and satisfaction of Council services. A more detailed consultation process will be undertaken to interrogate in more detail the specific service levels expected of each Council service.
3. Draft Plan – following the completion of a draft plan, the community will be asked to provide input on whether the plan adequately reflects the aspirations and concerns of residents.

The community engagement process was based on four key approaches:

1. Use of online and social media tools
2. Use of existing opportunities, such as events, groups, locations and services
3. Specific events for Camden 2040
4. Advertising and communication

These approaches are detailed in the following section.

## ***4. Description of Process***

The community engagement process took place primarily during the months of September and October 2009. The following is a commentary on the approaches utilised.

### *4a) Online and social media tools*

The use of online and social media was intended to be the key platform for consultation for Camden 2040, as a cost effective way of achieving broad community input.

A specific domain name was established, [www.camden2040.com.au](http://www.camden2040.com.au), as a separate page of Council's existing website. This website provided a number of links for people to use depending on the level of engagement they wanted to undertake, from fast and simple

(completion of an online survey or sending an email), through to more complex and time-consuming (reading issues papers, and participating in an online forum and wiki).

Through online mediums, a total of 52 Vision and Priorities surveys were received via the website during the two month period of September and October.

The purpose of the online forum, which was set up on a free forum site ([www.hqforums.com](http://www.hqforums.com)), was to enable online discussion about key issues. These issues were the key pillars in the review of Camden 2025, for which issues papers were written and included on the website. The forum was structured as follows:

1. Vision – *taking into consideration the population growth Camden is experiencing, what is your long term vision for the area?*
2. Managing Camden's Growth – *what do you think are the most important priorities to ensure that Camden's growth is managed well?*
3. Effective & Sustainable Transport – *I would use my car less if...*
4. An Enriched & Connected Community – *I believe that in order to develop and sustain an enriched and connected community in Camden we need...*
5. A Prosperous Economy – *I would like the local economy of Camden to be characterised by...*
6. Healthy Urban & Natural Environments – *the most important aspects of the built and natural environment in Camden to me are...*
7. Strong Local Leadership – *what do you think are the most important issues for Council to be addressing for Camden's future?*

In total there were 9 postings on the forum site.

The purpose of the wiki site was to enable residents to edit written material. This is a newer form of engagement, and has been used by a number of organisations in the preparation of strategic plans (for example the City of Melbourne). This was the first time this organisation has used this tool at a corporate level, so was very much experimental. As with the forum, the wiki was hosted by a free hosting site (wikidot.com).

The text used on the wiki site for editing were the chapters from Camden 2025, which were the Camden Council Vision, Urban Growth, Accessibility, Environmental Systems and Economic and Community Development.

In total, 5 edits were made to the pages within the wiki. Users were able to make edits anonymously, so the demographics of the individuals cannot be determined.

As the forum and wiki were hosted on free hosting sites, it was important that Council carefully manage the information that was posted, to avoid comments that might have been defamatory or otherwise offensive. A disclaimer statement was posted on both sites to establish the ground rules for participation, and to state Council's intention to moderate and remove comments made in breach of the rules. This disclaimer statement can be viewed at *attachment 1*.

A roster of Council staff was established to monitor these sites and take action where necessary, each day between the hours of 7am and 10pm for the two month period.

### *b) Using Existing Opportunities*

A central part of the community engagement strategy was to link in with existing opportunities throughout the 2 month period. A calendar of events was prepared that enabled consultation to take place at a range of large events held for the Camden Festival, as well as linking in with existing groups, workshops and programs that were conducted at that time. This calendar can be viewed at *attachment 2*.

The main approach at events was to undertake the Vision and Priorities Survey, and secondarily to hand out postcards directing people to the website or to fill out and return. At each event a “draw card” was used to attract people, including face painting of children (Camden Street Fair and Narellan Rhythms Festival), soccer goals (Camden Craft Markets and Narellan Rhythms Festival), milking a cow (at Town Farm Open Day), Krispy Kreme donuts (at SK8OPIA) and a prize draw (Narellan Rhythms Festival).

The following numbers of surveys were completed at these main events:

- Narellan Rhythms Festival - 127 adults, 76 children
- Seniors Lunch - 103
- SK8OPIA - 85
- Camden Street Fair - 79
- Town Farm Open Day - 61
- Camden Craft Markets - 20 adults, 21 children
- Kids Fun Day - 15

In addition to these large events, a number of smaller events were used to engage with people, including Driver Log Book Runs, Restraint Fitting sessions, Wedding Expo, Dorothy the Dinosaur Concert, Sustainability Workshops, library events and Youth Café drop in.

A number of existing groups were also used to complete surveys, distribute postcards, or conduct a “focus” group. These included various interagencies (for example Macarthur Interagency, Macarthur Youth Services Network, Children and Families Interagency), advisory committees and groups (for example Traffic Committee, Seniors Issues Group, Cohesive Communities Advisory Group), and both Camden and Narellan Chambers of Commerce.

Surveys and postcards were placed at the customer service counters at the Camden and Narellan Council offices, and both libraries.

### *c) Specific Events for Camden 2040*

Given that a key part of the community engagement strategy was to link in with existing opportunities, only a small number of specific events were held during this phase of the consultation process. Further activities and opportunities will be provided once a draft plan has been developed.

This consultation process coincided with the exhibition period for Council’s new Local Environment Plan (LEP). Open house sessions were held incorporating both the LEP and Camden 2040, in order to enable interested community members to discuss matters further and ask questions of Council staff. 4 sessions were held – 2 in Camden and 2 in Narellan – and were outside of business hours to provide greater opportunity for all residents to attend.



These sessions were well-advertised through local newspapers and on Council's website. Despite this, only 10 residents attended across the 4 sessions.

More indepth discussions, or focus groups, were held with the Macarthur Interagency and with Council staff at various locations. Approximately 100 people participated across these 4 focus groups. The focus groups used the 4 questions from the surveys used in the community (see questions at section 5).

A meeting was held in early December 2009 with representatives from State Government agencies, in order to commence the process of consultation and partnering in the development of Camden 2040. This will be a continuing process throughout the drafting and implementation of Camden 2040.

In order to respond to the requirement in the Integrated Planning and Reporting legislation to consult the community in relation to service levels, Council engaged IRIS Research to undertake a statistically valid telephone survey of residents. This related to importance and satisfaction with Council services, as well as overall satisfaction with Council. A total of 312 residents were surveyed.

#### *d) Advertising and Communication*

In an attempt to achieve broad community awareness and engagement in the consultations for Camden 2040, the following communication methods were used:

- Postcards – approximately 7,500 postcards were distributed in the community to promote the consultation process. These encouraged people to have their say via the Camden 2040 website, or to return the completed 2 questions on the postcard.
- Media – 2 media releases were sent to the local papers and radio station during the consultation period. This resulted in one newspaper article in the Macarthur Chronicle on 1 September 2009. A radio interview was conducted with the Mayor on C91.3 on the 3 September 2009. Council uses a regular advertising space in The Advertiser, and the Camden 2040 process was advertised in this space weekly from 1 September to 4 November 2009.
- A number of Council facilities were used to display and disseminate information, including the two libraries, customer service counters, the Civic Centre, and Family Day Care. The Civic Centre also had a computer set up in the foyer which provided the opportunity for people to use the Camden 2040 website.
- Council's Oct/Nov/Dec quarterly newsletter to residents, Let's Connect, contained a large article encouraging residents to have their say on Camden's future. This newsletter is delivered to all households in the Local Government Area.
- Council used existing mailing lists in place across the organisation. Emails, letters and/or postcards were distributed to in excess of 1000 groups, organisations and individuals through this process, though some groups may have received more than one contact. Sector Connect, the regional peak body for non-government organisations, also distributed an email in relation to Camden 2040 to their contact list.

## 5. Overview - Participants by Consultation Type

In total, over 1300 people provided feedback as part of the consultation process, across the range of different methods. These are broken down as follows:

Written or Face-to Face Survey (4 questions)	602
Web Survey (4 questions)	52
Postcards (2 questions)	144
Written Submissions	7
Phone or Email Comments	8
Focus Groups (4 questions)	100 participants
Community Group Surveys	20
Consultation with Children	137
Telephone Survey	312
<b>Total</b>	<b>1382</b>

## 6. Demographic Analysis

### 6a) Age Groups

The following table shows the age break down of people who completed surveys face-to-face, in writing, on the web and returned via postcard:

Age Group	Written/ Face to Face	Web	Postcards	Total	%
Under 16	63	2	24	89	11%
16-19	37	3	4	44	6%
20-29	48	7	7	62	8%
30-39	135	9	14	158	20%
40-49	81	9	14	104	13%
50-59	50	14	15	79	10%
60-69	83	6	25	114	14%
Over 70	92	2	38	132	17%
No Response	13	0	3	16	2%
	<b>602</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>798</b>	<b>100%</b>

When these results are grouped together like this, and then compared to the proportions of the total population of the Camden Local Government Area, the under-16 age group is under-represented (11% compared to 24% of total population), as is the 20-29 age group (8% compared to 12% of total population). Conversely, the 60-69 (14% compared to 6% total population) and the over 70 (17% compared to 6% total population) groups are over represented.

Whilst under 16s appear under-representation through the written and face-to-face surveys, this age group was targeted through specific activities at the Camden Craft Markets, Camden Kids Fun Day and Narellan Rhythms Festival. 137 children were engaged across the three events. Most of the children at the Craft Markets and Rhythms Festival (71%) were aged between 6 and 10 years, whilst the Camden Kids Fun Day focused on pre-schoolers, with only the older children (4-5 year olds) engaged in the activity.

The over-representation in the older age groups (60+) can be attributed to both a higher return rate of the postcards, and also the use of the Camden Seniors Lunch to engage residents, at which 103 surveys were completed.

Within the written/face-to-face surveys, a high proportion of surveys were completed by people in the 30-39 age group (22%). This is a slightly higher proportion than the general population (17%), and is likely due to the types of attractors used at the main events, namely face painting and kick-a-question for children. These activities enabled parents to participate in surveys whilst their children were occupied.

Whilst not directly reflecting the age demographics of the community as a whole, this part of the consultation process has given a reasonable cross-section. Importantly, the consultation process specifically targeted a range of demographic groups through different events, including children, young people, older people, families, and people from culturally diverse backgrounds. The telephone survey (detailed below) was able to achieve age, gender and locality representation as it was a statistically valid formal survey.

312 people were surveyed as part of the telephone survey, but only those over 18 years of age. The age group break down of those surveyed is shown below.

Age Group	Proportion
18-29	15%
30-49	47%
50-64	25%
65+	13%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

## 6b) Gender

Gender was only collected on the written/face- to face and web surveys.

GENDER	Written/ Face to Face	Web	Total	%
Male	206	15	221	34%
Female	388	34	422	64%
No Response	8	3	11	2%
	<b>602</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>654</b>	<b>100%</b>

When compared to the population of Camden, females have been over-represented in the written/face-to-face and web surveys (females make up 51% of the total population). Again, this may be due to the types of attractors used at the big events, which attracted families with young children, accompanied in most cases by mothers.

The telephone survey yielded a much closer match in terms of gender proportions, as shown below:

Gender	Telephone Survey (n=312)
Male	47%
Female	53%
Total	100%

### 6c) Suburb of Residence

#### *Local Government Area*

The consultation process involved people who not only lived in the Camden Local Government Area, but those who worked or “played” here, as identified in the consultation strategy. The following table shows the Local Government Area of residence of those who completed written or face-to face, web or postcard surveys:

LGA of Respondent	Written/ Face to Face	Web	Postcards	Total	%
Camden LGA	420	42	122	584	73%
Campbelltown LGA	56	3	7	66	8%
Wollondilly LGA	62	2	7	71	9%
Wingecarribee LGA	5	0	1	6	2%
Other Sydney LGA	23	2	3	28	3.5%
Wollongong/South Coast	9	0	2	11	1%
Other	5	0	0	5	1%
No Response	23	3	2	28	3.5%
Total	602	52	144	798	100%

In total, 73% of respondents in the written/ face-to-face, web and postcard surveys were from the Camden Local Government Area. A further 17% were from Campbelltown and Wollondilly LGAs. This means that 90% of all respondents were from the Macarthur Region.

The reason that about one quarter of respondents were from outside the Camden area is due to the nature of events that were used for consultation, which attracted people from around the region and beyond.

#### *Suburbs Breakdown - Camden Local Government Area*

The following table shows the suburb of residence of the Camden Local Government Area residents:

Suburb	Written/ Face to Face	Web	Postcards	Total	%
Bickley Vale/ Grasmere/ Ellis Lane/ Cawdor	19	4	3	36	6%
Bringelly/ Cobbitty/ Kirkham/ Oran Park	13	5	4	22	4%
Camden	80	7	33	120	21%
Camden South	42	5	15	62	11%
Catherine Field/ Leppington/ Rossmore	8	0	2	10	2%
Currans Hill	21	2	4	27	5%
Elderslie/ Spring Farm	39	9	14	62	10%
Harrington Park	53	2	6	61	10%
Mt Annan	53	2	12	67	11%
Narellan	57	3	12	72	12%
Narellan Vale	35	3	7	45	8%
Total	420	42	122	584	100%

In comparison with the breakdown of the Camden Local Government Area population, “Camden” residents are over-represented (21% compared to 6% of total population). This may be due to the high numbers of surveys conducted at the Camden Street Fair, the Seniors Lunch (Camden has a higher proportion of older people than the newer suburbs in the LGA), and the Town Farm Open Day. However, Camden residents also had the highest return rate for postcards.

There is some under-representation from residents in the suburbs of Currans Hill, Mt Annan and the Catherine Field/ Leppington/ Rossmore grouping of suburbs. There may be opportunity to consider this issue through the second phase of consultation, once the draft Camden 2040 is on exhibition.

#### **6d) Cultural Background**

People completing the written/face to face and web surveys were asked “What is your cultural background”? The space was then blank for people to provide an answer that best reflected their cultural background.

Following are the grouping of cultural background given through the written/face to face and web surveys:

<b>CULTURAL BACKGROUND</b>	<b>Written/ Face to Face</b>	<b>Web</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>%</b>
Australian	377	31	408	62%
English speaking country other than Australia	84	11	95	15%
Australian + another	22	3	25	4%
Aboriginal	5	0	5	1%
Italian	6	0	6	1%
Greek	6	0	6	1%
Other	38	4	42	6%
No response	64	3	67	10%
	<b>602</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>654</b>	<b>100%</b>

Cultural background was a difficult demographic factor to ascertain through the community engagement process for three main reasons. Firstly, the surveys needed to be short and simple. For face to face and written surveys, particularly those undertaken at events, it was only possible to engage people for a very short time. Therefore, the use of a list of standardised cultural background “groupings” for people to select from, such as those that would be used in a survey such as the ABS Census, was not going to be appropriate.

Secondly, it was felt that cultural background gave a more complete picture of the culture/s in which a person identifies, rather than language spoken at home or their place of birth. For example, a person may be born in Australia but still identify with a different cultural background, or vice versa. This again made the results difficult to standardise.

Thirdly, some people were unclear how to answer this question so left it blank or gave answers that did not pertain to cultural background.

Despite these issues, the results are fairly consistent with the cultural background information contained in the census for the Camden community. 80% of Camden residents were born in Australia, and 7.5% were born in English-speaking countries. 88% of Camden residents speak only English at home. 1.3% of the Camden population at the last census identified as being Indigenous.

# 7. Vision & Key Issues - Results & Discussion

Four key questions were asked in relation to the current and long-term vision and key priorities for residents to and visitors of the Camden area. Camden’s future growth context was clearly established throughout the survey so that the answers were provided within a realistic context. The full survey can be viewed at *attachment 3*.

The four questions were:

1. *What do you like most about the Camden area?*
2. *What do you think is currently the most important issue for the Camden area?*
3. *Given that Camden will undergo enormous urban development and population growth, what will be the most important things to "get right" in creating Camden's future?*
4. *Again, within the context that the Camden area will grow significantly, if you could describe your vision for Camden's future in one sentence, what would it be?*

The full 4 questions were asked in the face-to-face/written surveys, the web surveys, and the focus groups. Questions 3 and 4 were asked on the postcards. Questions 2, 3 and 4 were asked on the surveys sent to Community Groups.

During the completion of the face to face surveys, it was highlighted that the questions were relating to the Camden area, not just Camden town/suburb.

## 7a) Question 1 - What do you like most about the Camden area?

### Results

The following table shows the first response given from the written/face-to-face and web surveys, of the 654 respondents:

Answer Grouping	First Response
Country town feel	31%
Rural setting	24%
People	9%
Lifestyle	9%
A particular place or facility	8%
Trees, parks, open space	4%
Heritage, history	4%
Modern conveniences	2%
Community	2%
Other	6%
No response	1%
Total	100%

The inclusion of the ‘first response’ is useful because it indicates the first issue that came to mind for people. However, it should be noted that this does not necessarily mean this is the most important issue for people, as the survey did not include a ranking process.

The following table shows the results of all statements given in response to this question as well as the number of people who identified with this issue (this is not a percentage as some people identified with more than one issue). There were a total of 922 statements provided for this question, from the 654 people surveyed. Respondents were not limited in the number of answers they could give for this question, however for the purposes of analysis only the first 2 responses have been included.

<b>Answer Grouping</b>	<b>Proportion of all Statements</b>	<b>No. of People Who Identified with the Issue</b>
Country town feel	27%	253 of 654
Rural setting	19%	179 of 654
People	11%	103 of 654
Lifestyle	11%	99 of 654
A particular place or facility	7%	63 of 654
Trees, parks, open space	5%	43 of 654
Heritage, history	4%	41 of 654
Modern conveniences	4%	33 of 654
Community	3%	24 of 654
Other	9%	84 of 654
Total	100%	

The response of “a particular place or facility” refers to answers relating to a specific place within the Local Government Area. Of these answers, 31 were the skate park and 8 were the libraries. There is a likely skewing in both these results due to the completion of surveys at SK8OPIA (event at the skate park) and at the libraries. Other answers were varied and included the markets, the town centre and the river.

The “other” grouping of statements involves a varied range of responses that are unrelated to the other groups, such as “everything”, “nice place to live” and “weather”.

### ***Discussion***

This question revealed some strongly consistent themes among residents in terms of the aspects of Camden that they like most. On first response only, 31% of all people stated “country town feel” as the aspect of the Camden area that they most like. If this is grouped with similar themes of “rural setting” and “heritage, history”, this figure increases to 59%. Camden’s country town/ rural setting also contribute strongly to the grouping of answers of “lifestyle”.

The figures are similar when all statements given are analysed. 50% of all statements related to the theme of country town/ rural setting/ heritage. “Lifestyle” comprised a further 11% of all answers.



**7b) Question 2 - What do you think is currently the most important issue for the Camden area?**

**Results**

The following table shows the first response given from the written/face-to-face and web surveys, of the 654 respondents:

<b>Answer Grouping</b>	<b>First Response</b>
Public transport	12%
Development, population growth	12%
Keeping area as is	12%
Roads – congestion, condition	7%
Infrastructure - general	7%
Graffiti	7%
Hospital, health services	3%
Pollution/ environment	3%
Activities - children, young people	2%
Main Street	2%
Parking	2%
Police, crime, safety	2%
Racial tolerance, inclusion	2%
Commercialisation	2%
Employment	1%
Other	12%
No Response	13%
Total	100%

The following table shows the results of all statements given in response to this question (up to a maximum of 2 per person), as well as the number of people who identified with this issue (this is not a percentage as some people identified with more than one). There were a total of 804 statements provided for this question, from the 654 people surveyed.

Answer Grouping	Proportion of all Statements	No. of People Who Identified with the Issue
Development, population growth	14%	109 of 654
Keeping area as is	12%	98 of 654
Public transport	11%	92 of 654
Roads – congestion, condition	11%	86 of 654
Infrastructure - general	10%	78 of 654
Graffiti	7%	58 of 654
Hospital, health services	3%	27 of 654
Pollution/ environment	3%	24 of 654
Main Street	3%	21 of 654
Parking	2%	13 of 654
Police, crime, safety	2%	18 of 654
Racial tolerance, inclusion	2%	18 of 654
Commercialisation	2%	18 of 654
Activities - children, young people	2%	15 of 654
Employment	1%	7 of 654
Other	15%	120 of 654
Total	100%	

The “infrastructure – general” group includes all statements made that mentioned “infrastructure”, without specifying type. It is therefore likely that there is some cross-over between this result and the “public transport” and “roads” results.

The “other” grouping of statements involves a varied range of responses that are unrelated to the other groups, such as “McDonalds”, “tourism” and “education”.

### ***Discussion***

This question also yielded some clear consistency in themes. Concerns about “development and population” and “keeping the area as it is” comprised a quarter of both first responses and all statements given. These were also the top 2 issues when all statements were considered (14% and 12% consecutively).

Transport concerns were highlighted second most frequently. “Public transport”, “roads” and “parking” were the first issue given by a fifth of people in answer to this question, and comprised a further quarter of all statements made.

There is some additional overlap with the grouping of answers under “infrastructure – general” as it is highly likely that roads and transport infrastructure would be included within this more general answer. “Infrastructure” was the first answer given by 7% of people, and comprised 10% of all statements made.

**7c) Question 3 - Given that Camden will undergo enormous development and population growth, what will be the most important things to “get right” in creating Camden’s future?**

***Results***

The following table shows the first response given from the written/face-to-face, web and postcard surveys, of the 798 respondents:

<b>Answer Grouping</b>	<b>First Response</b>
Public transport	14%
Roads – congestion, condition	14%
Infrastructure – general	14%
Keeping area as is	12%
Parks, recreation facilities	8%
Activities – children, young people	5%
Development, population	5%
Hospitals, health services	3%
Parking	2%
Lot sizes, high rise	2%
Schools, education	2%
Racial tolerance, inclusion	2%
Main Street	1%
Employment	1%
Commercialisation	1%
Pollution, environment	1%
More/ better shops	1%
Other	4%
No response	5%
Total	100%

The following table shows the results of all statements given in response to this question (up to a maximum of 2 per person), as well as the number of people who identified with this issue (this is not a percentage as some people identified with more than one). There were a total of 1162 statements provided for this question, from the 798 people surveyed.

Answer Grouping	Proportion of all Statements	No. of People Who Identified with the Issue
Roads – congestion, condition	15%	176 of 798
Infrastructure – general	13%	156 of 798
Public transport	13%	152 of 798
Keeping area as is	11%	132 of 798
Parks, recreation facilities	7%	85 of 798
Activities – children, young people	6%	65 of 798
Development, population	6%	67 of 798
Hospitals, health services	4%	43 of 798
Parking	2%	27 of 798
Lot sizes, high rise	2%	28 of 798
Schools, education	2%	25 of 798
Racial tolerance, inclusion	1%	15 of 798
Main Street	1%	14 of 798
Employment	1%	15 of 798
Commercialisation	1%	8 of 798
Pollution, environment	1%	17 of 798
More/ better shops	1%	11 of 798
Other	11%	126 of 798
Total	100%	

The “other” grouping of statements involves a varied range of responses that are unrelated to the other groups, such as “more entertainment”, “cultural events and activities” and “5 star hotels”.

### **Discussion**

As with the two previous questions, this question yielded some clearly consistent themes amongst the 798 people surveyed. The roads, transport and parking theme was the first response given by 30% of people, and also made up 30% of all statements made. Clearly this is an issue the community considers will require both immediate and long-term focus.

“Infrastructure – general”, which has some overlap with the roads and transport theme, was the first concern mentioned by a further 14% of people and comprised 13% of all statements made.

A further theme that is revealed through these results relates to concerns of “keeping the area as it is”, “development, population” and “lot sizes, high rise”. This theme makes up one-fifth of both first responses and total statements made.

Recreation, community, health and education services and facilities are also a priority for people in terms of Camden’s future, with this theme comprising 18% of first responses and 19% of all statements made. This includes parks and recreation facilities (8% and 7%), activities for children and young people (5% and 6%), as well as hospital and health services, and schools and education.

This question highlights both some similarities and some differences between the issues and priorities for the community now, and those considered important into the future as the Camden area grows significantly. Roads and transport, as mentioned above, is a high priority for the community both now and into the future. “Keeping the area as it is” was also very consistent across the two questions, at 12% of first answers and 12 and 11% of second answers (for questions 2 and 3 consecutively).

An interesting difference is the concern about development and population growth. This was the second most frequent issue raised as a first response in question 2 (12%) and the most frequent when all statements were considered (14%). However, this appeared less of a concern when residents were asked the question about what issues will be important to get right in the future, as population growth is taken as a given.

A second difference between the results is the greater emphasis on recreation/ health/ community/ education services as priorities for the future. These make up 5% of both first responses and all statements made as the most important issues now. However, in terms of things to “get right” in the future, these rise to 18% and 19% respectively.

**7d) Again, within the context that the Camden area will grow significantly, if you could describe your vision for Camden’s future in one sentence, what would it be?”**

**Results**

Only one response was taken from answers given to this question, and the statements have been grouped according to the key theme to which they relate, as follows:

Theme	Proportion of All Responses
Rural setting, country town	43%
Sense of community	10%
Development, population managed well	10%
Activities for children and young people	5%
Trees, parks	5%
Lifestyle	5%
Safety	3%
Health and community facilities	2%
Progress with the times – modern	2%
Public transport	2%
Infrastructure, including roads	2%
Increased employment, business	1%
Multicultural area	1%
Commercialisation of area	1%
Sustainability/ resourceful	1%
Other	7%
Total	100%

## **Discussion**

There is consistency between what people like most about Camden now, and their long term vision, with some key examples as follows:

	Camden Area Now	Vision for Camden Area in the Future
Rural setting, country town	46%	43%
People/ community	11%	10%
Trees, parks, open space	5%	5%

Retaining the highly valued rural and country town aspects of the Camden area was clearly the strongest theme for people when they consider their vision for the future. Lifestyle, which has strong links with the rural and country town setting of the area, made up a further 5% of responses.

Sense of community was the second most frequent theme raised as people's vision for the future, and was also a valued aspect of the area now. Building a community that continues to be friendly, active and welcoming will be a significant priority for the area as the population expands so significantly.

Concerns about development and population growth in the area was a strong theme in both the 'important issues now' and the 'important issues to get right for the future' questions. These concerns are reflected through into people's vision for the future, with 10% of people having as their vision that development and population growth are managed well, and that there is a balance between keeping the valued aspects of the area and incorporating growth.

A further theme through the vision statements relates to community, health and recreation services and facilities (parks), which total 12% of all answers. This theme was also seen as important as an issue to "get right" for the future (19% of all statements made). A safe community incorporates a further 3% of answers.

Trees, parks and open space was also a theme that was important to a number of people in terms of what people value about Camden now (5% of all statements), what they see are the important issues to get right in the future (7% of all statements), and their vision for the future (5%).

## **7e) Written Submissions**

### **Results**

A total of 7 written submissions were received as part of the community consultation process. 2 of these submissions were from community groups, and the remainder were from individuals/households. A total of 47 issues were raised within these submissions, and are grouped as follows:

- Local facilities (eg. parks, aviation museum, police stations, Town Farm) - 6
- Public transport – 5
- Infrastructure – planning, delivery – 4
- Local produce and agriculture, retention of land and capacity – 3
- Preservation of history and heritage (built) – 3

- Employment – 3
- Community – identity, active, integration, participation – 3
- Planning – controls, design – 3
- Council administration – 3
- Parking in Camden Town – 2
- Balance between urban and natural environment and identity – 2
- Protection of natural environment, bushland, significant trees – 2
- Camden Hospital - 2
- Other - 6

### ***Discussion***

The written submissions tended to yield a wide range of different issues, with very few common themes. These tended to reveal particular areas of interest for specific groups and individuals, which can be seen in the comments relating to local facilities, such as Town Farm and the development of an aviation museum, and preservation of built heritage.

However, there is some consistency with the survey results in the areas of public transport, infrastructure, history and heritage, and aspects of the community (participation, integration).

### **7f) Phone & Email Feedback**

#### ***Results***

A total of 8 contacts were made by phone or email during the community consultation process, and the issues (total of 24) were recorded, and grouped as follows:

- Keep area rural, the same, country town – 4
- Roads, parking concerns – 4
- Development style, design – 4
- Public transport – 3
- Economy, tourism, visitors centre – 3
- Other – 5

#### ***Discussion***

There is some consistency between the issues raised via phone or email and the survey results, particularly in relation to keeping the area rural/country town; roads, parking and public transport; and concerns about development (style, design).

### **7g) Community Group Surveys**

#### ***Results***

Surveys were mailed out to community groups, and a total of 20 were returned. These surveys contained questions 2, 3 and 4 from the main surveys. They have not been included as part of the other written, web and postcard surveys as they represent the views of a group or organisation, rather than individuals.

*What does your organisation see as the most important issues for the Camden area now?*

As with the other surveys, the first 2 statements were taken for the purposes of analysis. 29 statements were made by the 20 organisations/groups. These are grouped (where there were more than 2 like responses) as follows:

- Public transport – 5 of the 29 statements
- Services – Aboriginal, youth, community – 4 statements
- Roads – 2
- Hospital, health services – 2
- Graffiti – 2
- Development, population – 2
- Keeping the area as it is – 2
- Racial tolerance, inclusion - 2
- Other – 8

The “other” statements were varied or non-specific, and related to issues such as “social issues”, “wheelchair access” and “funding”.

*Given that Camden will undergo enormous urban development and population growth, what does your organisation consider to be the most important things to “get right” in creating Camden’s future?*

33 statements were made by the groups, and grouped (where there were more than 2 like responses) as follows:

- Public transport – 10 of the 33 statements
- Roads – 2
- Infrastructure – general – 2
- Other – 19

The “other” statements were varied and related to a broad range of separate issues, including the hospital, racial tolerance and inclusion, and “consultation with Aboriginal people”.

*What is your organisation’s vision for Camden’s future?*

The responses given to this question varied greatly, and as such are difficult to group. Many related to the organisation or group represented, such as specific services, activities or facilities related to a target or interest group (such as Aboriginal Cultural Centre, facility to store a group’s equipment, more music education).

The only issue that was identified by more than one group, and in this case five, was that of an inclusive and welcoming community for all.

## ***Discussion***

The results of the community group surveys are generally consistent with the surveys of individuals. Public transport was the most frequently mentioned concern for the area now, and to “get right” for the future. Roads and infrastructure were also mentioned a number of times.



The second most common issue for the area now related to services, both community and health.

It was difficult to group most of the answers in relation to the vision question, as they varied significantly. The only issue with any consistency (ie mentioned by more than one group) was that of an inclusive and welcoming community.

## **7j) Online Engagement**

There were three key tools used on the website for enabling community feedback –web surveys, an online forum, and a wiki site. People were also able to use a link to send an email through. The website also contained a range of information, including issues papers, a video message from the Mayor and some staff video vox pops as an introduction to the types of information being sought.

In total, 2276 hits were recorded on the various pages of the camden2040 website. It should be noted that this does not represent 2276 individuals using the website, as each person may have gone to two or more pages, which would record multiple hits. In addition, this total includes administrator and other staff access to the site.

As mentioned earlier, 52 surveys were returned online. The results of these have been analysed together with the written/face to face and postcard surveys, which are presented above.

There were a total of 9 postings on the online forum site. Four of these related to public transport issues, as an important priority in managing Camden's growth. Two postings related to the development of an enriched and connected community through opportunities for residents to get involved, and through the development of an inclusive community. Two postings focused on the need for a regional visitor information centre in the area, and one identified the river as the most important aspect of the environment in Camden.

In total, 5 edits were made to the pages within the wiki. Based on recurring language within these edits it appears that it is one person that has made the edits. The themes of these edits related to climate change, pollution, air quality and waste reduction, and the need to uphold the slogan "Sustainable Camden" through actions such as energy efficiency measures, non-polluting transport, and renewable energy incentives for households.

Given that Council has not previously sought to engage the broad community through online means, it was difficult to anticipate the likely participation rate that would be achieved through the Camden 2040 consultation process. However, given the level of advertising of this website that was undertaken through distribution of postcards, media and mail outs to large numbers of groups and individuals, this may be considered a low return rate.

A few comments may be made about this. Firstly, this may indicate that people are not used to or comfortable with engaging with an organisation such as Council in this way. Subsequent attempts to use this form of engagement may prove more successful once people become accustomed to Council providing these opportunities, and as they are more consistently promoted within the community. Secondly, people are clearly more likely to submit an online survey than engage in more time-consuming online activities such as the forum and wiki. This situation may change as online tools such as wikis become more commonplace.

Further, once people had completed the survey they may have felt that they had participated, so left the site rather than move on to the other online tools. It would be interesting to know whether the use of the forum and wiki would have been higher had the option to submit a survey not been there. This may perhaps indicate that too many options were provided, and in future a more successful approach may be to just use one.

Many councils in NSW are using a site called Bang the Table<sup>1</sup> as part of their community engagement processes. This is an online forum site for discussing public policy that is independently monitored and moderated. Unlike the free sites used for Camden 2040, Bang the Table has a substantial subscription cost, though also has many advantages in terms of saving council time and money in monitoring, and through being independent of councils.

A quick review of the Bang the Table website was undertaken in order to compare the response or participation rates for councils using this site for their long term strategic plans. Some of these include:

- Willoughby City Strategy – 27 comments within 4 topics
- Wollondilly Community Strategic Plan – 23 comments within 5 topics
- Ashfield Strategic Plan – 48 comments within 5 topics
- Waverley Strategic Plan – 7 comments within 5 topics

This indicates that the overall participation rate in the Camden 2040 online consultation process is not substantially different from that achieved by other councils. Issues on Bang the Table appear to get a far higher response rate when they are specific and/or contentious issues, such as consultation on Newcastle CBD railway and transport issues (2803), Hornsby Shore Housing Strategy (1152), and Port Stephens Foreshore Management Plan (168).

The use of online engagement methods was a key platform for the overall strategy, “as low cost, far reaching and potentially high return forms of consultation.” Given the budget constraints for this process, all the online engagement tools were set up in-house, using free online hosting sites, and the necessary monitoring and moderation of the sites was undertaken by staff. This meant that in terms of additional budget outlay, this was a low cost form of consultation. However, given the staff time involved in the establishment and monitoring of the sites, there was a significant resource implication involved in this consultation method.

Given the continuing development and increasing popularity of social media as a communication method, it will be an important platform for the organisation into the future, for both provision of information, and for seeking feedback and discussion. How these tools are managed will be an important consideration into the future, particularly if used for feedback and discussion, which require careful monitoring.

## **7h) Consultation with Children**

### ***Description***

Children were actively engaged in the consultation process in 2 ways. Firstly, a portable soccer goal was used at two events (Camden Craft Markets and Narellan Rhythms Festival) for “kick-a-question”. This activity was run so that each time a child kicked the ball, they were

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<sup>1</sup> [www.bangthetable.com.au](http://www.bangthetable.com.au)

to answer a question. 97 children participated in this activity, and answered either ‘what do you like most about where you live?’ or ‘What do you most like to do in Camden?’

Secondly, a consultation activity using key images was used at the Camden Kids Fun Day, to ascertain what children liked best about Camden. The images used were of community events, swimming pools, being outdoors, playgrounds, shopping, the library, school/day care, and the skatepark and bike track. Each child was given a ‘star’ sticker to place on the image that represented what they liked most about Camden. Any comments made by children or their parents describing why they like this place or what they do there were also taken down. 40 children were consulted via this activity.

### ***Kick-a-Question Results***

89 children answered the question relating to what they most like to do after school or on weekends. 71% of these answers specifically related to active play or sports, mostly outside. Playing at the park, riding bikes and scooters, playing organised sports, the skate park, and horse and motorbike riding were all mentioned numerous times. The remaining 30% of answers related to non-active indoor activities, such as playing the computer or watching TV, or were non-specific, such as “fun stuff” and “hanging out with friends”.

14 children answered the question relating to what they most like about where they live. Answers included playgrounds, hot air balloons, craft markets, soccer fields, shops and “nice people”. Given the small sample size, and the diversity in the answers given, the results of this question are not useful.

### ***Key Images Results***

The results for each image, including an example of comments made, were as follows:

<b>Image</b>	<b>Stars</b>	<b>Examples of Comments</b>
Swimming Pools	13	“I like the slide at Mt Annan. I go down all by myself. My sister is too short to go on it.”
Playgrounds	9	“Curry Reserve is great”
Library	6	“I like reading books with mum”
Community Events	5	“Events like today are great for the younger children”
Skate Park and Bike Track	5	“I like riding my bike and feeding the ducks” “I’m learning to skate board”
Shopping	1	“ I go shopping with mum every day, but I don’t like it”
Schools/Day Care	1	“I love going to Playlinks every Wednesday”
Being outdoors	0	

## ***Discussion***

The results of the “kick-a-question” consultation clearly highlight the importance to children of play, sports, the outdoors and playgrounds. This is further supported by the results of the key images consultation, with 27 “stars” being given to recreation and play facilities (pools, playgrounds and skate park/ bike track).

### **7i) Focus Groups**

Four focus groups were held during the consultation period. 3 of these sessions were held for Council staff (one each at the Narellan and Camden offices, and one at the works depot), and 1 was held with the Macarthur Interagency. The 4 questions of the community surveys were used for these groups.

A summary of the main themes discussed in relation to each question are as follows:

#### ***Results - Macarthur Interagency***

What do you like most about Camden?

- Parks and recreation facilities – bike track, reserve by river, Bicentennial Equestrian Park
- Country feel and historic buildings
- Laid back living and united community
- Festivals – ‘community’

What are the issues for Camden now?

- Traffic and roads
- Lack of public transport
- Concerns about lack of planning for services in new development areas, eg health and education

What do we need to “get right” in creating Camden’s future?

- Need for education about community inclusion and multiculturalism
- Maintaining the country feel
- Local employment opportunities for young people
- Activities for children
- Greater awareness of plans on exhibition to enable community input
- Fear of change in the community

What’s your vision for Camden?

- Train line to city
- Multicultural and diverse community
- Central place for the region

#### ***Results - Council Staff***

What do you like most about Camden?

- Landscape – green, rural, flood plain, tree lines, rivers
- Friendly people
- Country feel – smell, farms, animals, working country town
- Historic buildings
- Tight and active community

- Good eating places
- Facilities – BBQ, picnic

What are the issues for Camden now?

- Balance between growth and maintaining heritage and lifestyle
- Traffic
- Infrastructure – roads, public transport
- Getting sufficient mix of employment
- Youth facilities and activities
- Low participation with environmental activities
- Ensure facilities are available across the life span

What do we need to “get right” in creating Camden’s future?

- Maintain balance between rural and facilities
- Design of new housing estates
- Keep Camden Town as the centre point/ retain heritage
- Managing expectations when people move to Camden, expect rural living but growth is coming
- Adequate infrastructure as area develops
- Employment
- Public transport
- Community facilities – education, aged care, hospitals
- Well-managed open spaces
- Community involvement in the life of the community, interaction
- Learning from past examples and mistakes
- Overcoming fear of change in the community

What’s your vision for Camden?

- Green
- Orderly and well-planned
- Vibrant and friendly, comfortable environment for our children
- Employment opportunities, economic development
- Natural and heritage elements of Camden valued and retained
- Inclusive, active and proud community
- Good transport facilities
- Sympathetic and well-planned developments that are integrated and in keeping with the rural lifestyle
- People are drawn to Camden to live and visit because of its attractiveness and attractors
- Sustainable lifestyles and care for the environment

### ***Discussion***

There was substantial consistency between the issues raised within the focus groups and the survey results. Country feel, rural setting, landscape was the most common theme in relation to what people most like about Camden now. Parks and recreation facilities, and aspects of a friendly community were also key themes.

Public transport, roads and traffic was the dominant theme in relation to the most important issues for Camden now. Following this, concerns about lack of planning for services in new areas was raised by the Macarthur Interagency, whereas Council staff raised concerns about

balancing growth with retaining the heritage and lifestyle of Camden, employment, and facilities (for young people, and for all people across the life span).

A broad range of issues were identified as being those important to “get right” in the future, though they are typically consistent with the community survey results. Maintaining or balancing the country/heritage/rural feel was a dominant theme, as was employment. Community services and activities were also raised, including activities for children, and facilities such as aged care, education and health.

Both the Macarthur Interagency and Council staff identified fear of change within the community as a key challenge as Camden grows and develops.

The Macarthur Interagency had a strong focus on the strengthening of community inclusion and multiculturalism in the area, and the need for education to promote this, particularly in children.

The vision for the future of Camden also related to the statements made through the community surveys, including good transport infrastructure; a vibrant, inclusive and diverse community, and valuing and retaining the natural and heritage elements of Camden. A future outcome that was discussed by both the Macarthur Interagency and Council staff was that Camden is a place that draws people to live and visit, and that Camden takes advantage of its central location within the broader region.

## ***8. Council Services - Results & Discussion***

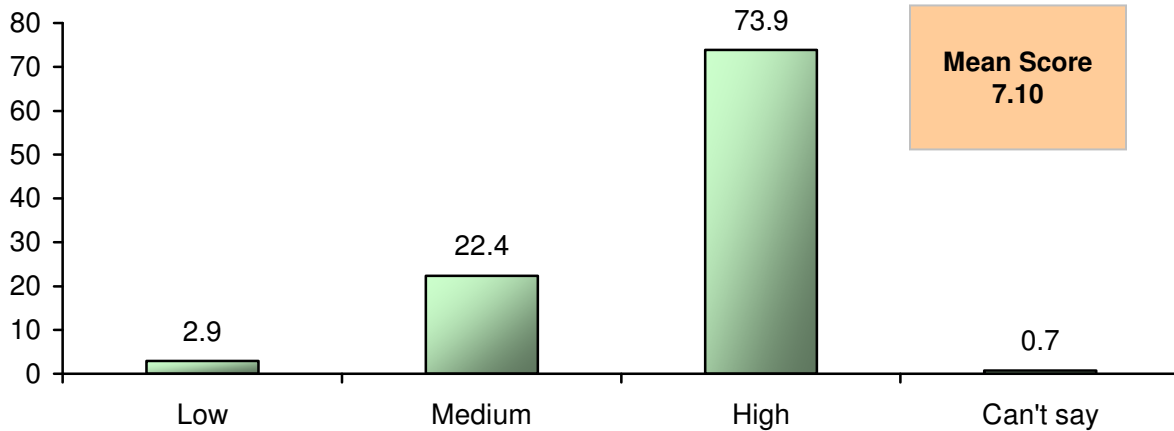
A telephone survey was undertaken of residents to obtain a statistically valid insight into the community’s views of Council services in terms of satisfaction and importance, and their overall satisfaction with Council’s performance.

The telephone survey was conducted with 312 residents, which is a number considered to be a large enough sample from which to give a fairly precise estimate (+/-5.8% at the 95% confidence level) of population attitudes and behaviour. This means that the results taken from the 312 residents can be assumed to be representative of and consistent with the entire population (in a statistical sense), and that if repeated there would be a 95% chance that the new result would lie within 5.8% of this survey.

### **8a) Overall Satisfaction with Council Performance**

Respondents were asked to reflect on Council’s performance overall, and give a rating between 1 and 10 as to their satisfaction, with 10 being “very satisfied”.

74% of residents surveyed gave Council a high satisfaction rating (7-10). 22% gave a medium rating, and only 3% rated their satisfaction with Council as low (0-3).



The mean score was **7.10**. IRIS Research has conducted a number of similar surveys for other councils. As a means of comparison, the mean score of other metropolitan councils (grouped) was 5.7 and 'comparable' councils (grouped) was 5.9. The highest performing council in NSW that IRIS has surveyed received a mean score of 7.8, and the poorest performing council was 3.9.

### 8b) Council Services Priority Areas

Respondents were asked to rate both the importance of, and their satisfaction with, the various services and facilities that Council provides.

The following table shows the result of quadrant analysis, where satisfaction and importance are analysed together:

<b>Higher Importance Lower Satisfaction</b>	<b>Higher Importance Higher Satisfaction</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Asset management</li> <li>• Community and road safety</li> <li>• Urban and rural planning</li> <li>• Environmental activities</li> <li>• Consultation with the community by Council</li> <li>• Construction and maintenance of local roads, footpaths and kerbing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Waste management</li> <li>• Management of emergency events</li> <li>• Protection of the natural environment</li> <li>• Regulating the use of public areas</li> <li>• Appearance of public areas</li> </ul>
<b>Lower Importance Lower Satisfaction</b>	<b>Lower Importance Higher Satisfaction</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enforcement of by-laws</li> <li>• Provision of information on Council services and activities</li> <li>• Town planning and processing of building applications</li> <li>• Community support services and facilities</li> <li>• Cultural development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heritage protection</li> <li>• Recreation services and facilities</li> <li>• Running of community events and celebrations</li> <li>• Libraries</li> </ul>

Further analysis undertaken by IRIS Research into the gaps between the importance and satisfaction ratings provided a list of priority services, where the gap between importance and satisfaction is largest. In general, a larger gap between importance and satisfaction indicates a gap between Council's performance in provision of a service and residents' expectations.

The results of this analysis indicate that the "Priority 1" services, those requiring immediate attention, are:

- 1. Maintenance of local roads**
- 2. Asset management**
- 3. Urban and rural planning**

These priority areas are further supported when respondents were asked if they believe the delivery of any Council services and facilities could be improved. Whilst 43% could not identify any services, 10% said "road maintenance and infrastructure" and 6% said "parks, playgrounds and lawn maintenance".

## ***9. Summary of Key Themes***

The community engagement process resulted in a number of consistent themes, and given the volume of feedback, the consultation process has delivered a clear insight into the concerns and vision that the community has for their local area.

### ***What do people like most about the Camden area?***

- The rural setting and country town lifestyle
- The friendly people and community
- Trees, parks and open space

### ***What are the priority issues for now?***

#### *For the Camden area?*

- Development and population growth - keeping the area as it is
- Lack of public transport, and the condition and congestion of roads

#### *For Council's services?*

- Maintenance of local roads, footpaths and kerbing
- Asset management
- Urban and rural planning

### ***What is the community's vision for the future?***

- Rural setting/ country town
- Sense of community
- Development that has been managed well, a balance has been achieved between retaining what is valued about Camden now and incorporating new growth
- Services and facilities - health, education, community and recreation
- Trees, parks and open space



### ***What are the important focus areas for the future?***

- Public transport, roads and parking
- Keeping the area as it is, development and population growth
- Recreation, community, health and education services and infrastructure.

## **10. Evaluation & Recommendations for Future Engagement**

### ***Evaluation of Broad Results***

In broad terms, Council's engagement process for the development of 2040 can be considered successful. This is the largest consultation process undertaken by this organisation to date, and to have obtained feedback from almost 1400 residents, workers and visitors is a good outcome. Given that the statistical validity of the telephone survey was based on a sample of 312 residents, it can be considered that these results provide an effective insight into the concerns and vision for the population as a whole.

### ***Performance Against Strategy***

The consultation process was based on a community engagement strategy that was adopted by Council on 11 July 2009, as a legislative requirement under the Integrated Planning and Reporting amendment to the Local Government Act. Following is an evaluation of the engagement process against the strategy statement:

1. To consult broadly enabling a large number of residents to provide input through a range of mechanisms.
  - 1382 people participated in this process in some form. 896 Camden residents undertook a survey (relating either to the vision and key issues or the council services). The total number of Camden area residents that participated was in excess of 1000. The remainder were workers or visitors to the area.
  - Mechanisms used included online surveys and discussion forums, written submission, email and phone comments, written surveys, postcards, open houses, telephone survey and focus groups.
  - The process was widely advertised (postcards, mail outs, newspapers ads, radio interview with Mayor, newspaper article, and Let's Connect (quarterly newsletter to residents)).
2. In recognition of Council's current budget position, to utilise low-cost, cost effective and high value consultation opportunities.
  - The use of existing events and activities is both cost effective and high value, as they yield a higher contact rate than holding specific events for Camden 2040. A good example of this is the Open Houses that were held, in combination with the Camden LEP, in which only 10 residents attended across a total of 14 hours.
  - Online engagement opportunities, which were planned to be a key platform of the consultation process, were expected to be high value in terms of the resource cost compared to utilisation. However, due to the limited utilisation of the online discussion

- forum and the wiki, which were monitored by Council staff on a roster from 7am to 10pm daily during September and October, this was a lower value than anticipated.
- One of the only additional financial outlays of this process (ie not existing staff time) was the printing of postcards. It was expected that these would result in a high utilisation of the website/online opportunities and return rate of the surveys on the back. These were both considerably lower than anticipated.
3. As far as possible, to link in with existing events, groups, activities rather than create new opportunities to engage with the community.
    - This element of the strategy was very successful, with the bulk of community engagement taking place as part of existing events and activities. Very few separate activities were undertaken.
  4. To make extensive use of online and social media engagement opportunities as low cost, far reaching and potential high return forms of consultation.
    - As discussed at point 2, the online and social media engagement was utilised significantly less than was anticipated. Given the resource costs of monitoring these sites, the actual cost to the organisation was not low.
    - Despite the results achieved in this consultation exercise, online engagement still has the potential to be a very effective and high value tool. Future use of these tools may be higher as community awareness and use of social media increases.
  5. To ensure that specific target groups are represented and consulted appropriately.
    - In almost all cases, specific target groups have been consulted at numbers consistent with the Camden population, including older people, young people, families, women, children, Indigenous people and people from culturally diverse backgrounds
    - Data was not collected on whether people answering the questions had a disability, which is a key target group. However, representation was sought through contact with disability services and representatives through attendance at the Macarthur Disability Network, Council's Access Committee, and through mail outs to groups and organisations.
    - The calendar of events (attachment 2) includes attendance at specific groups, interagencies and committees that represent various target groups, such as the Seniors Issues Group, Camden Cohesive Communities Group, Access Committee and Macarthur Youth Services Network.

### ***Key Strengths of the Process***

The high number of contacts with the community through this process is based primarily on the strategy to link in with existing events and activities. These required no additional time or commitment from people to engage in the process, and people were generally willing to undertake a survey. A number of large events coincided with this consultation process, particularly Camden Street Fair, Seniors Lunch, Town Farm Open Day and the Narellan Rhythms Festival. This could be further built on through developing asset maps, which identify the places and events that connect people to their community - community hubs - and therefore present ideal opportunities to connect with people.

The use of “attractors” at events was also a particular strength of this process, and certainly increased the response rate to surveys. Face painting was an excellent attraction as it provides parents with a short period of uninterrupted time in which to complete a survey.

The highest number of surveys completed in any one event was at the Narellan Rhythms Festival (127 adults). One key difference between this event and others was the use of a prize draw as an incentive for completing a survey. The prizes on offer had been donated to the Festival from businesses throughout Narellan, and were of significant value. It was noted at this event that people were more enthusiastic about completing the survey knowing there was a prize draw, and in some cases was the deciding factor.

The use of a telephone survey provided Council with statistically valid results regarding the community’s satisfaction with Council’s performance, and identifies some very clear priority areas for Council to address.

### ***Opportunities for Improvement***

The low utilisation of the online engagement opportunities was not anticipated, though this was the first time they had been used by Council at a corporate level. Even the simplest form of online engagement - the online survey - had a lower than anticipated rate of use (152 returned). The low utilisation can not be attributed to lack of communication with the community, as the website was advertised extensively through the postcards (7,500 distributed), Let’s Connect, newspaper ads and mail outs.

Whilst the rate of online engagement is not inconsistent with that achieved by other councils using Bang the Table, there still exists significant opportunity to improve utilisation of these tools within the community, particularly as the potential benefits are great. Further consultation processes may see increasingly higher utilisation of these opportunities as people become more aware that Council is using them, and as councils in general engage with social media, such as Facebook and Twitter.

Whilst this process was not intended to yield a statistically valid sample of the population, there are a number of areas of under-representation in terms of the demographics of those who participated, which may be considered during the second stage of the consultation. Given the number of people already consulted, it is not anticipated that this would change the results, however it is important to ensure that all demographic groups are given ample opportunity to provide input into the drafting of Camden 2040.

A number of other good opportunities could have been utilised during this consultation period, however were not due to resources and time constraints. These may be used at future consultations to provide a further range of consultation mechanisms and opportunities. Examples of these include use of schools to engage children and young people, ‘street corner’ consultations, sports fields, and service clubs.

## **11. Conclusion**

This document details the strategy, process and results of the community engagement process undertaken to inform the preparation of a new long term strategic plan for the Camden area, Camden 2040.

Almost 1,400 people provided input into the issues that are of priority now, and those that need to be addressed into the future in order to achieve their vision for the place of Camden in the coming years.

Significant challenges exist for Council and its partners in addressing these issues, and in creating the future that residents desire. Central to these challenges is retaining and balancing the highly valued aspects of Camden – its rural and country town feel and lifestyle – in the face of the significant urban development and population growth that is planned for the area under the State Government’s Metropolitan Strategy.

Further, improving and securing public transport and roads infrastructure is a significant priority for residents, as is ensuring that the relevant services and infrastructure are provided for the growing community. Camden 2040 will be an important document to achieve this outcome, and will require strong commitment and partnerships between Council, the State Government, non-government organisations, community groups and residents in order to achieve the outcomes the community desires.

The community feedback has also highlighted for Council the areas of strength in terms of its services and facilities, and those areas that need priority attention, namely maintenance of local roads, footpaths and kerbing; asset management; and urban and rural planning.

The outcomes from this consultation process will also be an important source of information for Council in many of its planning and decision-making processes in both the short and longer term, and provides a firm base for ongoing contact with residents about issues that are important to the future of this community.

## Attachment 1



### Camden Council Camden 2040 Disclaimer Statement

This site has been created to encourage discussion on the issues affecting the Camden community. The responses posted on this website will be used to help create the new Camden Community Strategic Plan.

Camden Council invites you to participate.

In participating in this website, Camden Council asks that you do so in good faith and in a manner that adds to constructive and respectful discussion and debate.

By using this site, you are agreeing to be bound by this disclaimer statement. Please note that Camden Council reserves the right, with or without notice for any reason, to moderate this site by posting, editing or removing information at their discretion.

Please ensure your comments:

- are your own words and do not breach copyright held by others;
- do not disclose and/or identify any individual by name, particularly in a manner that may be deemed derogatory;
- are not obscene, offensive, threatening or likely to provoke hatred or discrimination against others; and
- are not designed to promote commercial products or services.

Any use of the site in the foregoing manner is in violation of this disclaimer and will not be tolerated. It may result in, among other things, the deletion, discontinued use or suspension of your privileges to comment on the site.

**This site has been established to generate community discussion and debate about important issues for the Camden area. Council does not take responsibility for the comments of users who do not use the site in the manner for which it is intended.**

If you think a comment that has been made public breaches the above rules, email [camden2040@camden.nsw.gov.au](mailto:camden2040@camden.nsw.gov.au) giving an explanation for your view.

It is important to be aware this site functions as a source of collecting information only. If you do have any queries about the site or about the questions/statements you are being asked to respond to, please send an email to the aforementioned email address.

Thank you for your support and for making this site one the community will want to view. Have fun and be creative by contributing, sharing and learning from the opinions and ideas people have for Camden's future.

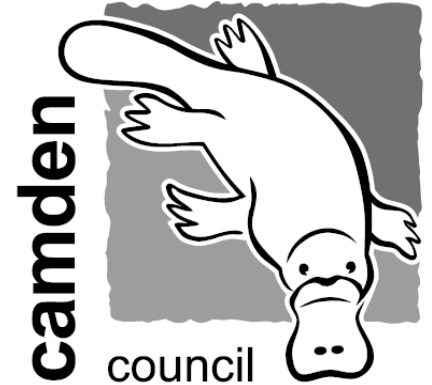
## **Attachment 2 - CALENDAR OF 2040 CONSULTATION EVENTS**

<b>Sept 2009</b>	1 Website Live	2	3 Restraint Fitting/ Macarthur Interagency	4	5 Restraint Fitting	6
7 Seniors Issues Group	8	9 Seniors Lunch	10	11	12 Town Farm Open Day & Produce Markets	13 Learner Driver Logbook Run
14 Local Traffic Committee	15 Photography Workshop	16 Camden Kids Fun Day	17	18 Container Gardening Workshop	19 SK8OPIA	20 Camden Street Fair
21	22 Tree Planting Committee	23 LEP & 2040 Open House (Camden)	24 Camden Cohesive Communities Group	25	26 LEP & 2040 Open House (Camden)	27
28	29	30 LEP & 2040 Open House (Narellan) / Macarthur Youth Services Network				

<b>Oct 2009</b>			1 Access Committee/ Youth Café	2	3 LEP & 2040 Open House (Narellan)	4
5	6 Macarthur Disability Network	7 Camden Chamber of Commerce	8 Learner Driver Logbook Run	9 Youth Cafe	10	11
12	13 Children & Families Interagency	14 Town Farm Committee/ Narellan Chamber of Commerce	15 Camden Creative Studios Workshop	16 Dorothy the Dinosaur Concert	17 Camden Craft Markets	18 Wedding Expo
19	20	21 Sustainability Workshop	22	23	24 Narellan Rhythms Festival	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

## Attachment 3 - Camden 2040 Survey

By the Year 2040, the Camden LGA will be on its way to a population over 250,000 people. Council is developing a long term strategic plan that responds to this growth and focuses on the community's vision for the people and place of Camden.



### What do you want Camden to be like in 30 years?

Council is seeking the thoughts and opinions of all people who live, work, or play in the Camden area. This is your opportunity to be part of creating a vision for the future of the Camden area, and to tell us what you think are the most important things to “get right” in order to achieve this vision.

Your input in shaping Camden’s future is appreciated.

#### 1. What do you like most about the Camden area?

#### 2. What do you think is currently the most important issue for the Camden area?

#### 3. Given that Camden will undergo enormous urban development and population growth, what will be the most important things to "get right" in creating Camden's future?

#### 4. Again, within the context that the Camden area will grow significantly, if you could describe your vision for Camden’s future in one sentence, what would it be?

Which suburb do you live in?	Are you: (please circle) Male                  Female
What is your age group? (please circle) <b>&lt;16</b> <b>16-19 20-29 30-39 40-49 50-59 60-69</b> <b>70+</b>	What is your cultural background?

<b>Concerns/ Questions/ Other Comments?</b> Email <a href="mailto:camden2040@camden.nsw.gov.au">camden2040@camden.nsw.gov.au</a> or phone 4654 7810
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