Sutherland Shire Housing Strategy 2041

Planning for future housing needs without sparking general community opposition

OVERVIEW

Sutherland Shire, south of central Sydney in Australia, is home to almost a quarter of a million residents. It's been mainly developed with large free-standing homes and, like many parts of Sydney, has seen an unprecedented price boom for housing due to demand.

SITUATION

Sutherland Shire Council is developing a housing strategy to guide planning over the next 10 to 20 years. As a first step in 2021, it wanted to explore the community's housing needs, expectations and preferences. To make community involvement as informed and practical as possible, Council added Balancing Act's new Housing Simulation to its suite of online engagement tools, becoming one of the first three municipalities in the world to use it.

SOLUTION

The customised tool incorporated information about each dwelling type, scale and potential impact on existing neighbourhoods. Participants were able to identify what they felt was an acceptable housing mix and had the opportunity to explain why they had made those choices. Except for a limit on single dwellings, respondents were able to pick any mix of housing they preferred.

RESULTS

This first stage of the housing strategy engagement attracted 557 participants, with 286 of those submitting a housing plan through the housing simulation tool. Balancing Act's Housing Simulation made it easy for participants to understand the complexity and challenges of the decisions their council needs to make to plan for future housing in the shire. Sutherland Shire Council expects to present its Draft Housing Strategy Stage 2 in July/ August 2022 as part of a detailed and public exhibition phase.

MUST HAVE SOLUTION

EngagementHQ

> "A lot of effort went into crafting the instructions and providing enough information on the complexity of each dwelling type. The comments that came back reflected that people had read and understood that information."
>
> - Jenny Hoff