

Community Ideas Forum

Terms of Reference (2025)

1. Purpose

The Cambridge Connections Community Ideas Forum is an open and inclusive forum for all interested community members to participate in the Cambridge Connections project by constructively critiquing ideas and methodology, offering suggestions, and contributing to transparent, community-informed decision-making.

The Community Ideas Forum is designed to contribute to the Community Reference Group and project team by providing a broader channel for feedback, learning, innovation, and accountability throughout the life of the project.

2. Objectives

The Community Ideas Forum aims to:

- Provide a platform for ongoing, inclusive community participation
- Allow people to contribute ideas, challenge assumptions, and suggest alternative approaches
- Enable community members to review, question, and understand the project's methods, data, and assumptions
- Support transparency by making evidence, modelling, and engagement approaches visible and accessible
- Encourage dialogue between technical experts and the public in an open and constructive environment
- Provide Council, Cambridge Community Board, Community Reference Group and the project team with insights, suggestions and critiques that reflect the wider community's thinking.

3. Participation

- Any member of the Waipā community may join the Community Ideas Forum at any time
- Participation is open to individuals, community organisations, businesses, interest groups and similar

- Engagement will be supported primarily through online opportunities so all Community Ideas Forum members can see and provide feedback about the project at key stages
- No formal selection process or membership cap will apply
- Respectful and constructive dialogue is expected at all times
- Participants may attend one-off events or engage consistently over time, depending on interest and availability.

4. Activities

The Community Ideas Forum may be involved in:

- Suggesting new approaches or identifying gaps in current thinking
- Engaging in themed conversations based on key project stages or questions
- Reviewing and commenting on technical documents and reports
- Attending online project briefings, Q&A sessions and presentations
- Participating in idea-generation and collaboration sessions
- Submitting written feedback or commentary
- Engaging with data shared by the project team.

The Community Ideas Forum does not have any decision-making powers.

5. Information Access and Transparency

- The project team will make key data sets, modelling assumptions, engagement summaries, and background materials available to the Community Ideas Forum through a dedicated online portal
- Efforts will be made to ensure information is accessible, understandable, and provided in plain English wherever possible
- Summaries of Community Ideas Forum contributions will be recorded and shared with the Community Reference Group and Cambridge Community Board
- A “you said, we did” summary will be shared regularly to demonstrate how the Community Ideas Forum feedback is being considered and used.

6. Administrative Support

- The project team will provide administrative support for Community Ideas Forum activities

- Online tools will be maintained to ensure ongoing, open access to information and contribution opportunities
- Independent experts or facilitators may be engaged to input expertise where appropriate.

7. Relationship to Other Groups

- The Community Ideas Forum contributes to the Community Reference Group and project team by broadening the base of community involvement
- Insights and ideas from the Community Ideas Forum will be shared regularly with the Community Reference Group and the Cambridge Community Board to inform their understanding
- Members of the Community Ideas Forum may also be involved in engagement events, surveys, and workshops coordinated as part of the wider project.

8. Code of Conduct

Participants in the Community Ideas Forum are expected to:

- Engage respectfully and in good faith
- Consider different perspectives and evidence
- Acknowledge differing levels of knowledge and lived experience among members
- Avoid personal criticism or disruptive behaviours
- Contribute constructively to shared learning and improvement.

9. Review

These Terms of Reference may be reviewed at different stages through the project to ensure the forum continues to meet its goals and community needs. Adjustments may be made to improve accessibility, structure, or resourcing.