



IPWEA

engagement

+plus+



COURAGEOUS CONVERSATIONS WHEN ENGAGING STAKEHOLDERS

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What's
courageous?





What we will cover:

- **Complex engagement – what it is**
- Assessing the complexity
- **Case study – flood mitigation story**
- Courageous conversations – our approach and engagement methods
- **What makes authentic conversations?**
- Conclusions – what we learned



A definition for complex engagement

Complex engagement is engagement that occurs in the context of **high levels of uncertainty** or challenges. It often occurs on projects or problems

- that are either **novel** and therefore engagement has been **untested**;
- where **past engagement attempts have failed**;
- where there are **a multitude of interconnected and interrelated propositions** or decisions to be made;
- where **engagement activities must occur simultaneously** across many fronts; or
- where there are **a large number of elements**, information, or processes to consider, and
- where those **components impact on each other in a non-linear way**



Some drivers of complexity

1. Wicked or novel problems
2. Diminishing trust
3. Societies want to address more complex problems
4. Past failures or inaction in previous engagement
5. Constrained budgets
6. The information technology age
7. Multiple and inter-related problems
8. Recognition of engagement for problem solving
9. Private sector assuming responsibility for traditional public sector responsibilities
10. Increasing community diversity
11. Sensitive social problems
12. Increasing desire by the community to lead engagement

Framework for Understanding Challenging Engagement



Framework for
Understanding
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Engagement





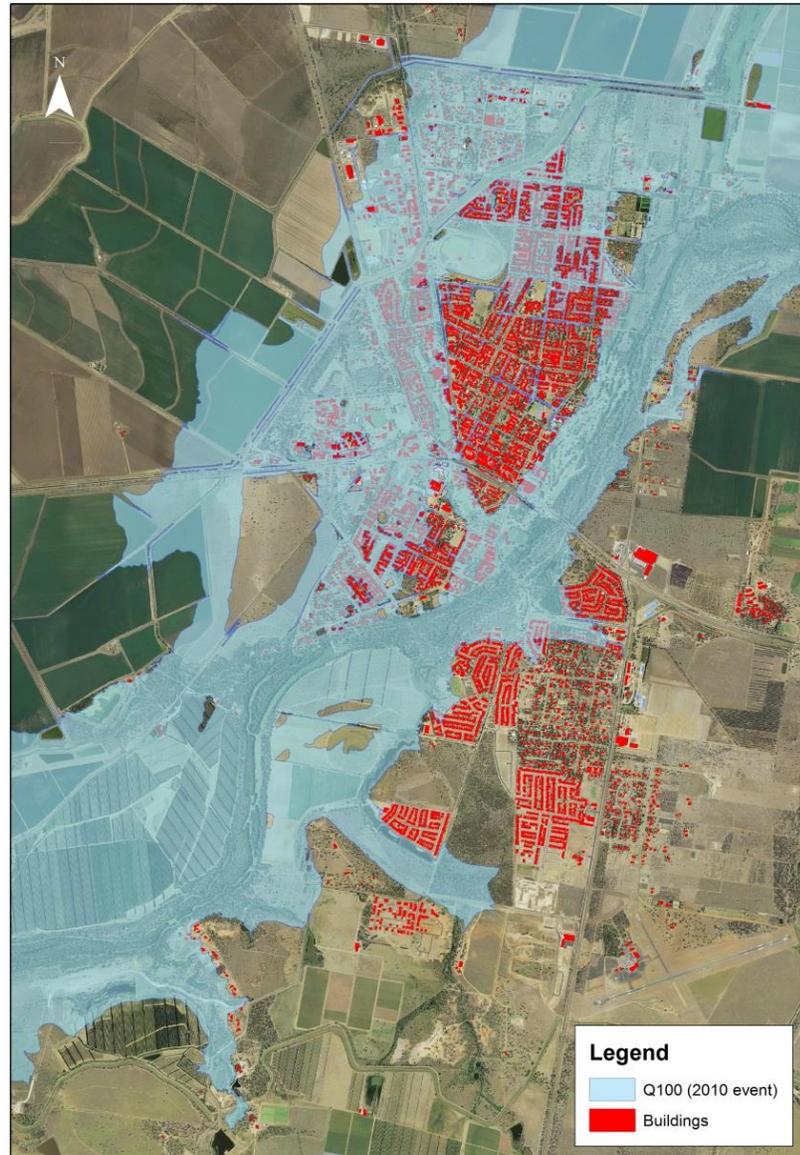
Case study – Flood mitigation

- 3 years of successive record-breaking regional flooding
- Proposed levee system – most complex in southern hemisphere
- Crop farmers threatened by potential loss of access to water (the irrigators)
- Orchard owner (one of the largest citrus producer in the country) threatening law suits
- Property owners affected by proposed alignment get recruited by major law firm and start to disengage
- Councillors in disagreement about next steps
- Community members have competing loyalties about proposed levee system
- Insurance hikes and fear campaigns about banks foreclosing on loans

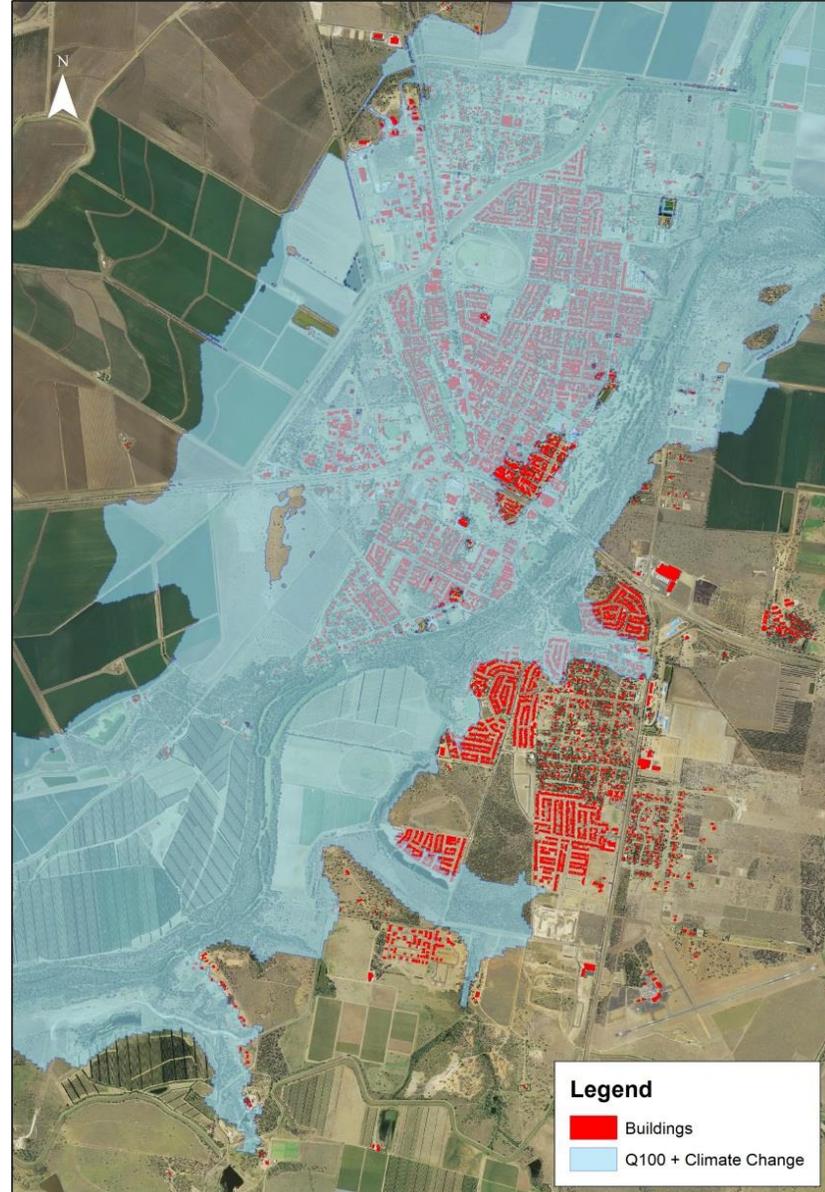
2010 Flood



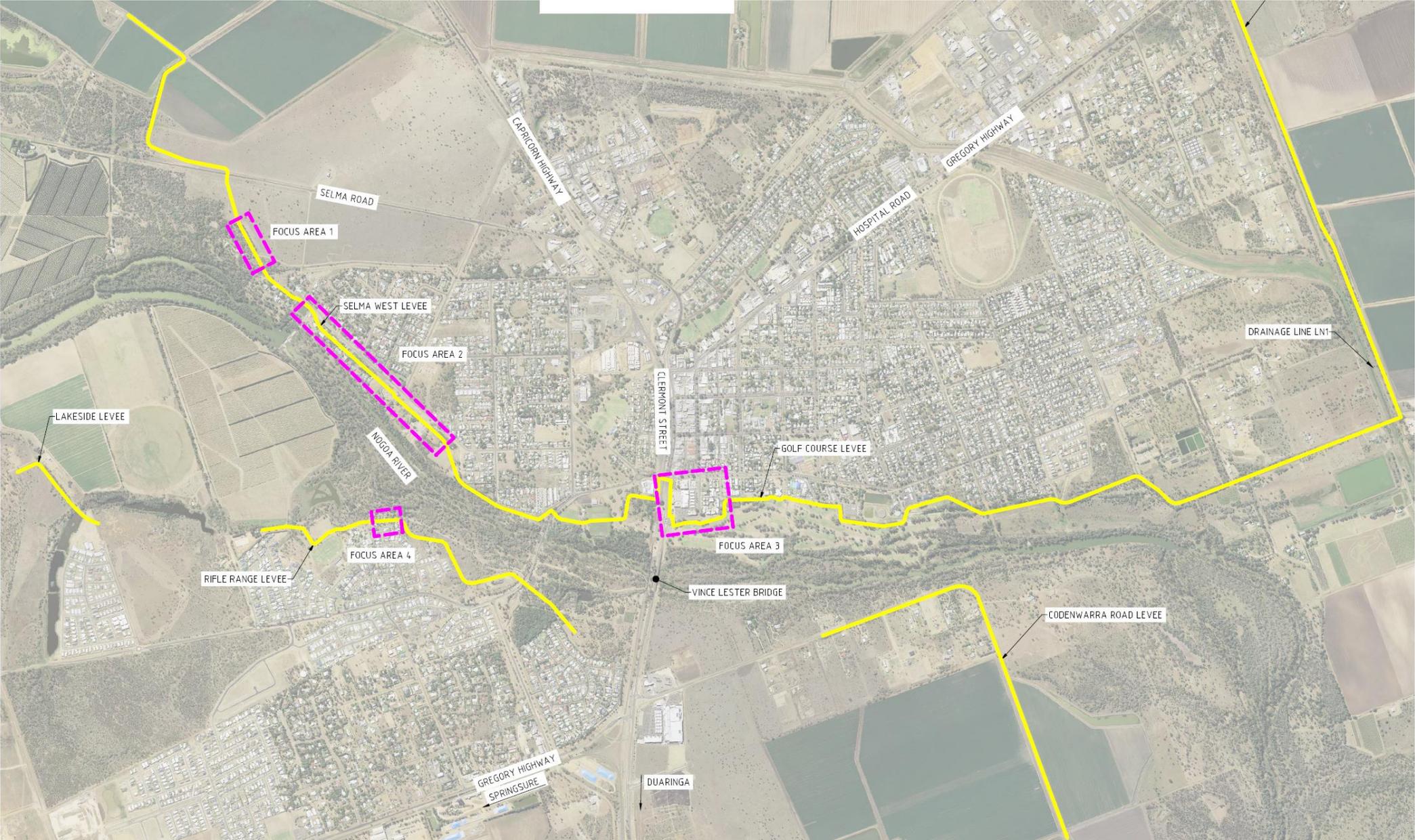
2010 event - Q115 now



Q100 + CC (4° Temp Rise)



The proposed levee system



Levee Feasibility Study





Summary of Factors that contributed to complexity

Decision factors:

- High level of changes in industry (Culpability from Inquiry)
- Conflicting political agendas
- Multiple sources of information to consider
- Decision has long term impacts
- High level of technical content
- Funding constraints

Implementation factors

- Low capacity of community to support implementation
- Multiple parties responsible – tripartite funding
- Unknown impacts
- Complexity of operations of the levee system in places



Summary of Factors that contributed to complexity

Community/stakeholder factors

- Low trust of the council by the community
- Perceived injustice
- Entrenched and opposing views
- Past engagement failures
- Power dynamics with some groups

Organisational factors

- Changing power dynamics in organisation
- Lack of good engagement experience
- Staff with behaviours that don't support engagement
- Fear of the unknown
- Change in political environment



Answers as clear as mud

LEVEES: Residents feel they are left with uncertainty on homes

Kelly Butterworth
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PENNY and Stuart Taylor say they don't want much in life, they just want to enjoy their home in peace.

But the Slack Dr residents are now wondering if their home will even exist in the future, after a meeting on Wednesday saw the Central Highlands Regional Council move one step closer to

building levees.

The meeting was packed with concerned ratepayers, most of whom had homes that would be directly affected by the proposed levees.

Mrs Taylor said after all the

hype of the June 24 decision, she walked out not knowing much more than she did before.

Continued P6

Levees on to next stage

From P1

"I think it's continued uncertainty," she said.

"But from a ratepayer's point of view, I think they need to know every costing before they make a decision on anything."

That sentiment was expressed by councillor Gai Sypher in the meeting, who said that when the next stage of the process - the full design - was prepared, she expected to see entire costings of the project.

"I think it's very deceiving to the public if we

are only talking about construction costs," she said.

The council made numerous changes to recommendations outlined in the agenda, including changing the wording so the tender process for the full design (expected to cost millions of dollars) could be staged.

Councillor Kev Cracknell kicked off discussion about the next step of the project, saying he wanted "triggers built into the process" to give the council an opportunity to abandon the

project if it proved economically unviable in the early stages.

The final costings for the levees themselves sat at between \$125 and \$130 million, but some councillors were quick to point out the figure did not include various other financial burdens, such as ongoing maintenance, house resumptions and the anticipated rate rise for Emerald residents.

For more on the meeting and to see detailed levee maps, go online to www.cqnews.com.au.



Our approach



- Framework for planning and implementing the engagement processes – IAP2 Australasia's Design Plan and Manage model



Underlying Values

IAP² Core Values



Particularly:

- The promise that the contributions will influence the outcomes (CV2)
- Involving those that are affected by decision (CV4)
- Providing information they need to participate in a meaningful way (CV6)
- Letting them know how their input affected the decision (CV7)



Principles of Authentic Communication *

- Respectful and open relationship with all stakeholders
- Inform most adversely affected stakeholders first and personally
- Assure relevant information and sources are always accessible
- Act with integrity – make actions and words consistent
- Disclose the full meaning for stakeholders – be open to hearing impacts
- Be responsive to stakeholders' concerns
- Show care and respect to all stakeholders

* Based on research and work of Bojinka Bishop, Sage Works



Strategies?

- **Allowed timing for genuine engagement – build trust**
- Allowed community to identify problems and opportunities – contribute to policy making
- **Provided learning opportunities on flood model**
- Explored trade offs – compensation, land swaps
- **Increased access to 'experts' – hydrologists, insurance and banking industry**
- Workshop internally the scope of decision – flesh out conflicts amongst councillors



Methods?

- Regular group briefings – everyone receiving the same message
- Several individual meetings – depth of understanding, specific impacts and privacy to disclose views
- 3 week Open House – visual displays - animations
- On demand briefings - responsive
- Meeting of affected landowners with councillors





Outcome?

- Council did not proceed with the levee system
- Instead they responded to the pressing concern of the timing of a decision
- Rather than waiting on the outcome of a design process, a Cost Benefit Analysis Study was completed
- The CBA highlighted the costs of the levee far outweighed the benefits for the community



Outcome?

Central Highlands says no to levees

Posted on April 11, 2017



'Levees are not a financially viable flood mitigation option for Emerald,' was the decision handed down by the Central Highlands Regional Council today.

After several years of investigation, culminating in the draft *Business Case Report – Emerald Flood Protection Scheme* being brought before council for consideration, the mayor, Cr Kerry Hayes, pronounced the levee debate 'finally put to rest'.

'The answer to the question as to whether Emerald is going to have levees as flood protection is no, it's not,' the mayor said.

'As Chair of the flood recovery group, I've toiled side by side with people in two major flood clean-ups and I know how awful it is; I know that people want us to do something; but I also know they don't want us to do something foolish, that's why we invested in the business case study.

'The study took four months longer to complete than expected and is extremely comprehensive. At the end of the day, in the most simplified terms, the cost outweighs the benefit, from every angle you look at it.

'Essentially, the cost of building, operating and maintaining levees exceeds the potential direct benefit of reduced flood damage, which is the impact on agricultural land and the general effect on people. Moreover, the indirect benefits, such as reduced insurance premiums and improved property values, while identified as marginal, are unproven.

'We've got the business case; we said we'd be guided by it; and the result is that levees are not good business for this community – it's a cost that our community cannot afford.

'The councillors have sat around a table and determined what's important to us for our community. Clearly, public safety came out on top—way above property protection—and we *can* assure the safety of our community without a levee system.

