



Western Sydney Airport: Benchmarking community research – July 2015

Research overview

Introduction

Community engagement and consultation is a vital component of the Western Sydney Airport project. Consultation with stakeholders and the community is key in achieving the best outcomes for the project.

To monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the communications and stakeholder engagement strategy, the Department has engaged GfK Australia to conduct a research programme to provide both a benchmark and long-term tracking of the activities.

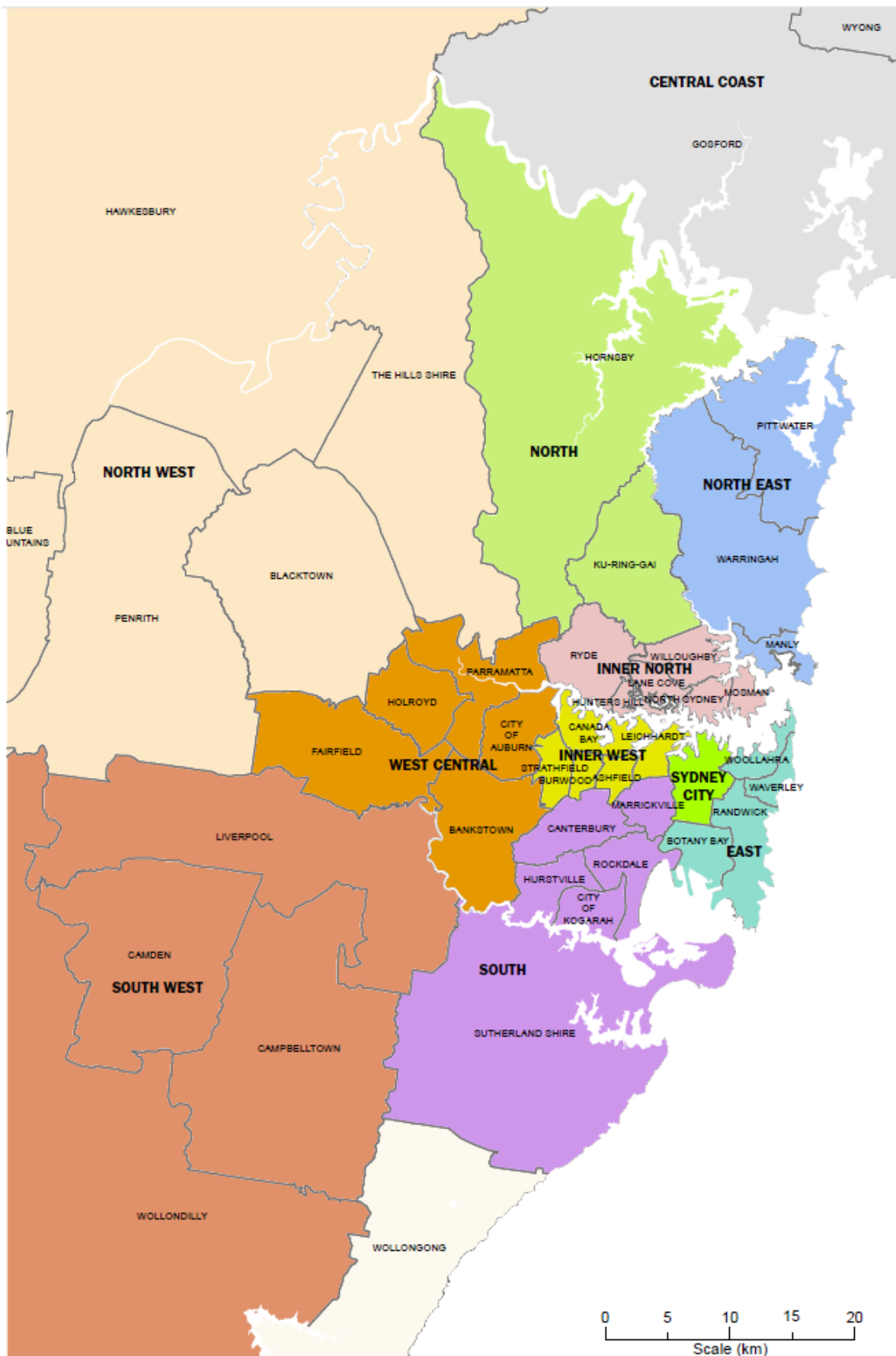
Research methodology

This round of quantitative research included an online survey with 513 Western Sydney residents (defined as South West, Inner West, North West, West Central, illustrated by Map 1).

Quotas were set (for age, gender and location) during screening to ensure a representative sample was surveyed. An even spread of males and females across age groups were recruited for each survey. Quotas have been used to achieve a similar proportion of residents from the broad regions, to ensure comparability between samples.



Map 1: Research area. Participants were from the South West, Inner West, North West and West Central areas defined on the map below.



Source: NSW Department of Planning and Infrastructure.



Findings summary

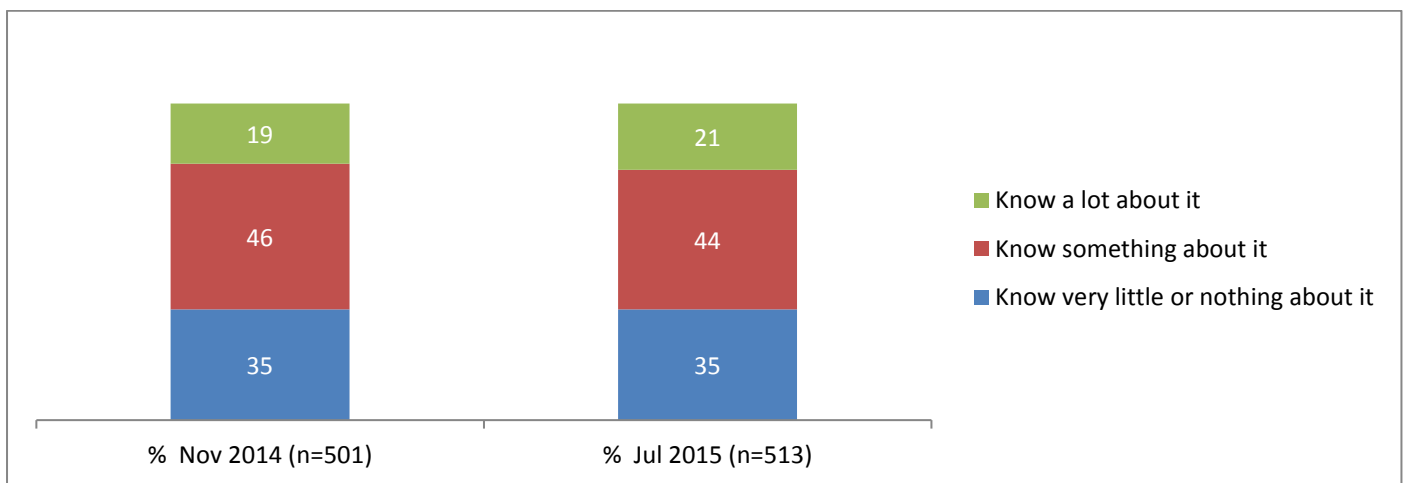
The results from July 2015 are consistent with the benchmark survey conducted in November 2014. Almost half (49 per cent) agrees that the overall positive benefits of an airport at Badgerys Creek would outweigh any negative impacts. A majority (56 per cent) also remains in favour of the development of the proposed Western Sydney airport.

Key findings – excerpt

1. Awareness

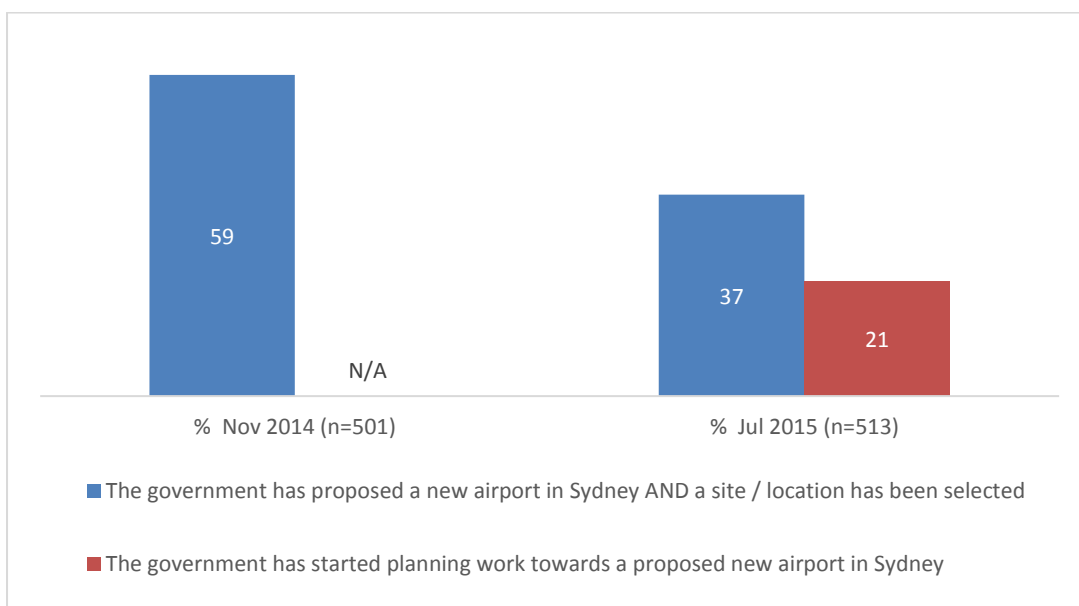
Most Western Sydney residents continue to feel they are very knowledgeable (21 per cent) or know something (44 per cent) about the proposed airport and feel up to date with the latest information.

Figure 1: Level of knowledge about the proposed airport: “How much do you know about the proposed airport?”



The level of knowledge about the proposed airport has eroded in terms of residents’ knowledge of the government proposing a new airport and selecting a site (37 per cent in June 2015 compared with 59 per cent in the benchmark). Residents were also asked a new question to see if they knew the Australian Government had started planning work towards the proposed airport (21 per cent knew of this).

Figure 2: Facts known about the proposed airport. Respondents were asked: “Before today, what (if anything) have you seen / heard / read about the development of a new or second airport in Sydney?”

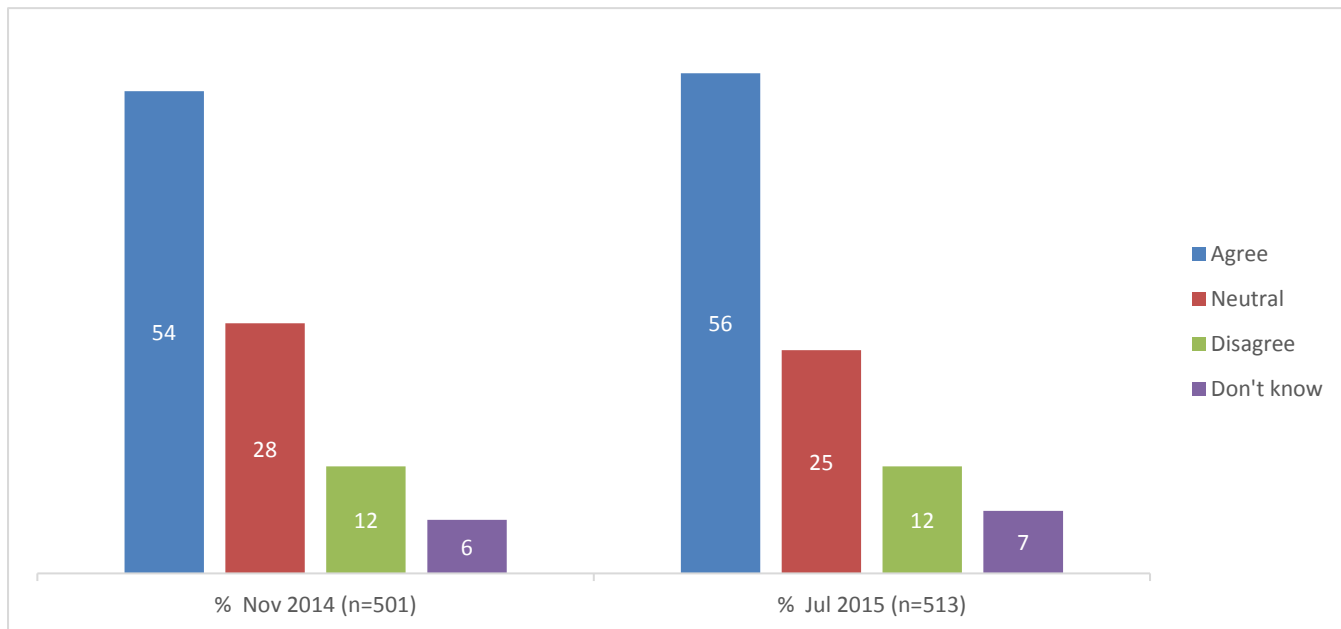




2. Attitudes

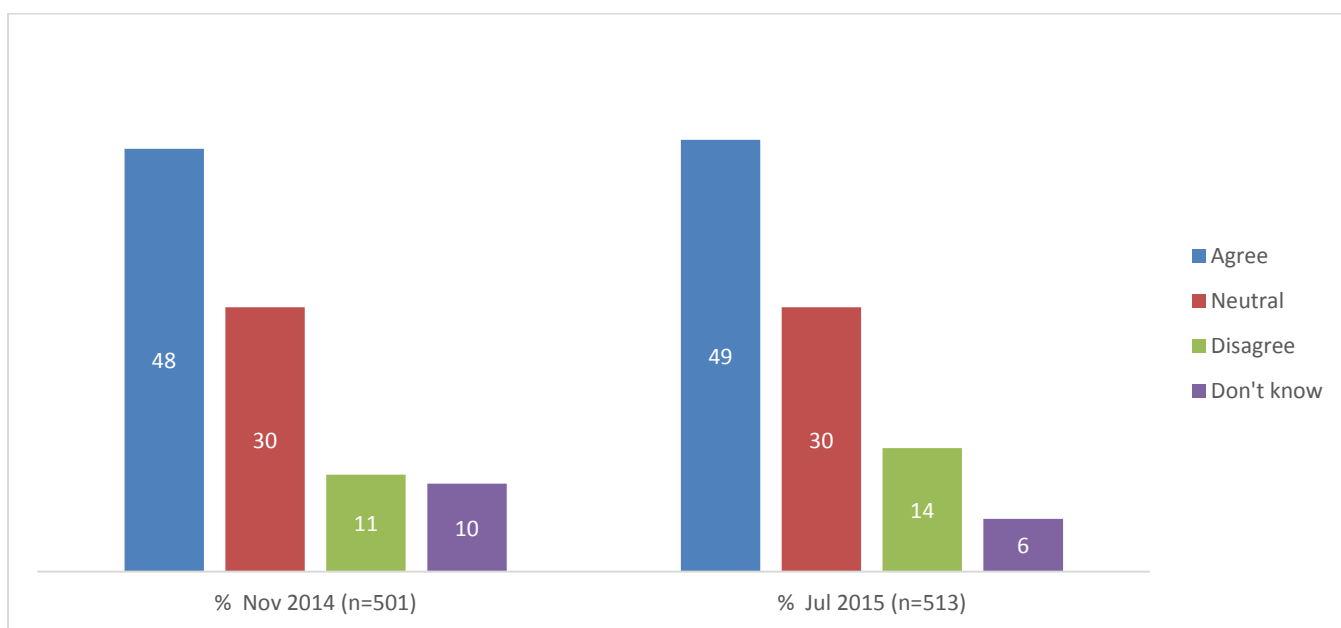
Most Western Sydney residents surveyed are in favour (56 per cent) or neutral (25 per cent) towards the proposed airport, with sentiment remaining consistent with the benchmark.

Figure 3: Overall attitude to the proposed airport (agree to the statement, on a scale of 1-10: “I am in favour of the proposed Western Sydney Airport at Badgerys Creek”)



Nearly half of Western Sydney residents (49 per cent) continue to believe that the benefits of the proposed airport would outweigh any negative impacts, consistent with the findings of the benchmark survey.

Figure 4: Overall attitude to the proposed airport (agree to the statement, on a scale of 1-10: “Overall, the positive benefits of an airport at Badgerys Creek would outweigh any negative impacts”)





The majority of Western Sydney residents continues to believe that the economic potential of Western Sydney would be maximised if the proposed airport were to operate 24 hours a day (52 per cent). The number of people who believe that a minimal number of residents would be affected by aircraft noise at the proposed airport (40 per cent) and the number who believe the proposed airport would make Western Sydney more desirable (44 per cent) have also remained stable compared to the benchmark.

Figure 5: Agreement with the statements about noise, economic potential and desirability of living in Western Sydney, on a scale of 1-10 (figure shows the proportion of respondents who answered between 7 and 10, indicating agreement/strong agreement)





3. Demand for information

It remains important for Western Sydney residents to have access to information about the Western Sydney Airport project. There was an increase in the percentage of residents who thought it was “very important” that they be informed about the progress of the project (64 per cent in July 2015, compared to 58 per cent in the benchmark). Twenty-nine per cent viewed it as somewhat important, while 7 per cent are ambivalent about receiving information on the project.

Figure 9: Answers to question, on a scale of 1-10: “How important would it be that you’re informed about the progress of the proposed Western Sydney airport at Badgerys Creek?”

