



## A shared vision:

# Carlisle Street Activity Centre

June 2026

### Engagement Summary Report

This report highlights what we heard from the Balaclava community and how these insights are guiding our advocacy and planning for the future of Carlisle Street.



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# Executive summary

Between 5 May and 26 May 2026, Council engaged with the community about the future of the Carlisle Street Activity Centre.

The engagement sought feedback on the draft vision, principles and priority site-specific outcomes. Feedback will help shape Council's advocacy position for the future redevelopment of the Coles and Woolworths sites and inform the preparation of a new Structure Plan for the area.

Approximately 189 participants contributed via survey, pop-up, stakeholder meetings and written submissions. Engagement was strongly local, with most participants living in Balaclava and nearby suburbs.

Overall, the community supports revitalisation of Carlisle Street and recognises the redevelopment of the Coles and Woolworths sites as a once-in-a-generation opportunity. However, there is a clear expectation that redevelopment must deliver genuine, long-term community benefit, not a generic or purely commercially driven outcome.

## What we heard

- **Supporting local businesses**

Strong and consistent support for independent traders, diverse retail and active street-level uses. Concerns about increasing dominance of chain stores.

- **High-quality design and built form**

Clear expectation for well-designed, human-scale development that respects local character and avoids bulky or generic outcomes.

- **Public space and greening**

Strong demand for more usable, visible and connected public space, including a central "green heart" for the precinct.

- **Safety and amenity**

Safety, cleanliness and maintenance were consistently raised as key issues impacting use and perception of Carlisle Street.

- **Local character and identity**

The "village feel" and fine-grain character of Carlisle Street are highly valued and should be protected.

## Key tensions:

- **Access vs active transport**

Support for both car access (particularly parking) and improved walking, cycling and public transport.

- **Housing vs scale and character**

Mixed views on density, with concerns about impacts on character and amenity.

## Key expectations for Council

While the Victorian Government is expected to be the decision-making authority for future redevelopment proposals on these sites, there is community desire for Council to advocate for:

- Clear and enforceable planning outcomes
- Strong governance and delivery mechanisms
- Protection against delayed or poor-quality development
- Community priorities embedded in formal agreement.

## Conclusion

The community largely supports change, but expects future development to contribute to:

- High-quality, context-sensitive design
- A strong, locally driven economy
- Safe and well-functioning public spaces
- Protection of Carlisle Street's unique identity

Overall, the expectation is for a design-led, place-based and community-focused outcome that reflects the long-term needs and values of the Balaclava community.



# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Project background

The Carlisle Street Activity Centre, in Balaclava is a key local destination within the City of Port Phillip, supporting a diverse mix of businesses, services, and community activity. It plays an important role in providing access to employment, retail, and social connection for a growing residential population.

The existing planning framework, including the Carlisle Street Structure Plan (2009) and Design and Development Overlay (2012), are now outdated. These controls limit Council's ability to effectively guide future development and respond to changing community needs and growth pressures.

A refreshed Precinct Structure Plan is therefore required to establish a clear and shared vision for the future of Carlisle Street. This includes providing direction on built form, design quality, movement, sustainability, and the public realm.

Significant change is anticipated in the area, particularly through the redevelopment of the Coles and Woolworths sites. This presents a major opportunity to shape the future role, character, and function of the activity centre. Ensuring that this change reflects community priorities is critical to maintaining Carlisle Street's valued village feel while accommodating growth.

Although Council is not the decision-making authority for these development sites, it has an important role to play in advocating for outcomes that respond to community needs. Council can use its influence to advocate for future development to reflect local priorities and deliver lasting benefits for the Carlisle Street community.

## 1.2 Purpose of the engagement

Council is preparing new planning guidelines to inform the future redevelopment of the Coles and Woolworths sites in Balaclava. Also, over the next few years, Council is preparing a new Structure Plan for the Carlisle Street Activity Centre.

The purpose of this engagement was to gather community and stakeholder input to help shape Council's advocacy position for the future redevelopment of the Coles and Woolworths sites in Balaclava. This input will also help inform a shared vision for the broader Carlisle Street Activity Centre.

This phase of engagement focused on testing:

- Elements of a draft shared vision for the activity centre
- Community prioritisation of the objectives for the activity centre
- Priorities for redevelopment outcomes for the Coles and Woolworths sites

The engagement also aimed to:

- Improve understanding of the planning process
- Clarify Council's likely role as an advocate rather than the final decision-maker for the redevelopment of the Coles and Woolworths sites
- Identify how community and stakeholder input can influence outcomes

Through this process, Council sought to identify clear community priorities, expectations, and concerns.

### **1.3 About this report**

This report documents the engagement process and summarises the feedback received from participants. It presents key themes, insights, and priorities identified through community and stakeholder input.

The findings in this report will be used to:

- Inform the next phase of community consultation
- Inform Council's advocacy position for the two strategic supermarket sites
- Guide future planning for the Carlisle Street Activity Centre
- Support discussion with State Government and other decision-makers.

## 1.4 How to read this report

The following points should be considered when interpreting the findings:

- The results reflect feedback from people who chose to participate and are not statistically representative of the entire community.
- While efforts were made to reach a broad audience, some groups may be underrepresented, including people with disability, multicultural communities, older people, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
- “Participants” refers to all people who took part in engagement activities. “Respondents” refers to those who answered a specific question.
- Findings are based on a combination of quantitative and qualitative analysis. Individual comments have been grouped into themes to reflect common perspectives.
- Some participants may have contributed across multiple engagement activities, which may result in a small degree of overlap in responses.
- Demographic data was not collected consistently across all activities, which limits detailed comparison between groups.
- Analysis for this report was primarily undertaken by Council staff. Digital tools were used to assist in analysing large datasets and identifying patterns, with all outputs reviewed and validated by human analysts.
- Between 5 May and 26 May 2026, Council delivered a range of communication and engagement activities to raise awareness of the project and gather feedback on the draft vision for the Carlisle Street Activity Centre.

## 2. What we did

### 2.1 Communication activities

A range of communication channels were used to inform the community about the project and encourage participation:



#### **Posters**

Displayed in shop windows and on streets around Carlisle Street, including Nelson, Camden and Alfred Streets, to promote the engagement and provide information on how to participate.



#### **Postcards x1500**

Distributed to households in the local area, and businesses providing an overview of the project and inviting community members to take part.



#### **Email notifications (~175 recipients)**

Sent to stakeholders who had previously attended the *Balaclava Community Forum: Shaping the Balaclava Area Together* and opted in for updates.



#### **Newsletters (x2)**

Information about the project was included in the *DiverCity* newsletters during the engagement period, reaching an audience of more than 15,000 subscribers.



#### **Social media posts**

Posts were shared via Council's Facebook and Instagram channels to promote awareness and direct users to the engagement platform.



#### **'Have your say' website**

A dedicated project page provided background information, key documents, timelines, and opportunities for community input.

## 2.2 Engagement activities

A mix of online and in-person engagement methods was used to capture a broad range of community perspectives:



### **Community survey (n=143)**

The survey was available online and in hard copy, although all survey responses were received via the online form. It collected demographic information and feedback on the draft vision, priorities, and key development considerations.



### **Neighbourhood pop-up (x1 pop-up, n=27)**

A pop-up was held on Carlisle Street (between the train bridge and William Street) on 15 May 2026 (12pm–2pm).

Community members were invited to speak with staff, learn about the project, and provide feedback in person or via a paper survey.



### **Stakeholder meetings meetings (x8)**

Meetings were held with community members and stakeholder groups who booked through the 'Have Your Say' webpage or directly contacted the project team. These sessions provided an opportunity for more detailed discussion and feedback.



## 3. Reach and participation

### 3.1 Reach through communication activities

Council used a combination of digital and offline channels to promote the engagement and encourage participation.

| Activity                                                                                               | Reach                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Insights                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Social media</b><br>Engagement reporting excludes comments made directly on social media platforms. | <b>Facebook:</b><br>10,989 views, 79 link clicks, 13 comments<br>Facebook Story: 669 views, 4 link clicks<br><br><b>Instagram:</b><br>2,945 views, 23 interactions, 4 link clicks<br>Instagram Story: 849 views, 6 link clicks | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facebook achieved substantially higher overall reach than Instagram (10,989 views compared with 2,945).</li> <li>Instagram generated a higher level of interaction relative to its reach.</li> <li>Instagram Stories resulted in slightly more link clicks than Facebook Stories, despite similar view counts.</li> <li>Overall, Facebook was the strongest channel for reach, while Instagram performed better for engagement.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Newsletter(s)</b>                                                                                   | <b>4,531 recipients</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This consultation was featured in the 'Have Your Say' newsletter on Thursday 14 May.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>'Have your say' website</b>                                                                         | <b>2,115 views from 962 visitors</b>                                                                                                                                                                                           | <p>Most visitors came to the website either directly via the HYS page (66%) or through campaign activity (17%).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Around one-fifth (17%) of visitors were referred via social media.</li> <li>Around one in five visitors (20%) made at least one contribution.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                               |

## 3.2 Participation by engagement activity

Approximately **189 community members** participated in the engagement through a combination of online and in-person activities.

| Activity                    | Participants | Insights                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|-----------------------------|--------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Survey</b>               | <b>143</b>   | The online survey was the primary engagement method, accounting for most of the participation. It captured both quantitative responses and qualitative feedback across a wide range of topics, including vision support, priorities, built form, public space, and access.                                                  |
| <b>Written submissions</b>  | <b>11</b>    | A total of 11 written submissions were received, providing detailed and considered feedback.<br><br>Submissions consistently framed the redevelopment as a once-in-a-generation opportunity and expressed strong expectations that Council will secure high-quality, community-focused outcomes.                            |
| <b>Pop-up engagement</b>    | <b>27</b>    | A pop-up stall was hosted on Carlisle Street on Friday 15 May, attracting 27 participants.<br><br>Feedback highlighted safety concerns, support for revitalising the activity centre and local businesses, calls for greener public spaces, mixed views on parking and traffic, and a need for clearer project information. |
| <b>Stakeholder meetings</b> | <b>8</b>     | Eight meetings were held with community members and stakeholder groups.<br><br>Participants largely emphasised the need for high quality, well reviewed design that supports safety, walkability, greening, open                                                                                                            |

|  |  |                                                           |
|--|--|-----------------------------------------------------------|
|  |  | space, infrastructure coordination, and balanced density. |
|--|--|-----------------------------------------------------------|

## 4. Who we heard from

This section provides an overview of who participated in the engagement, based on demographic information collected through the community survey and neighbourhood pop-up activities.

### 4.1 Overview of participants

Demographic information was primarily collected through:

- The **online and paper survey** (n=143)
- The **Carlisle Street pop-up** (n≈27)

Demographic data was not collected from participants who provided feedback via written submissions (n=11) or stakeholder meetings (n=8). As a result, the demographic profile presented below reflects survey and pop-up participants only (n≈170).

### 4.2 Age profile

Participation was strongest among mid-life residents.

- **58% (n=83) of survey respondents** were aged **35–59**.
- Participation from younger cohorts was lower, with **3% aged 18–24**.

### 4.3 Suburb

Engagement was strongly local.

- 46% of survey respondents identified Balaclava as their suburb of residence.
- A further 29% were from St Kilda East and 17% from St Kilda.
- Pop-up participants showed a similar pattern, with the majority living in Balaclava and surrounding suburbs.

This indicates that feedback largely reflects the views and lived experience of people who regularly use and interact with the Carlisle Street Activity Centre.

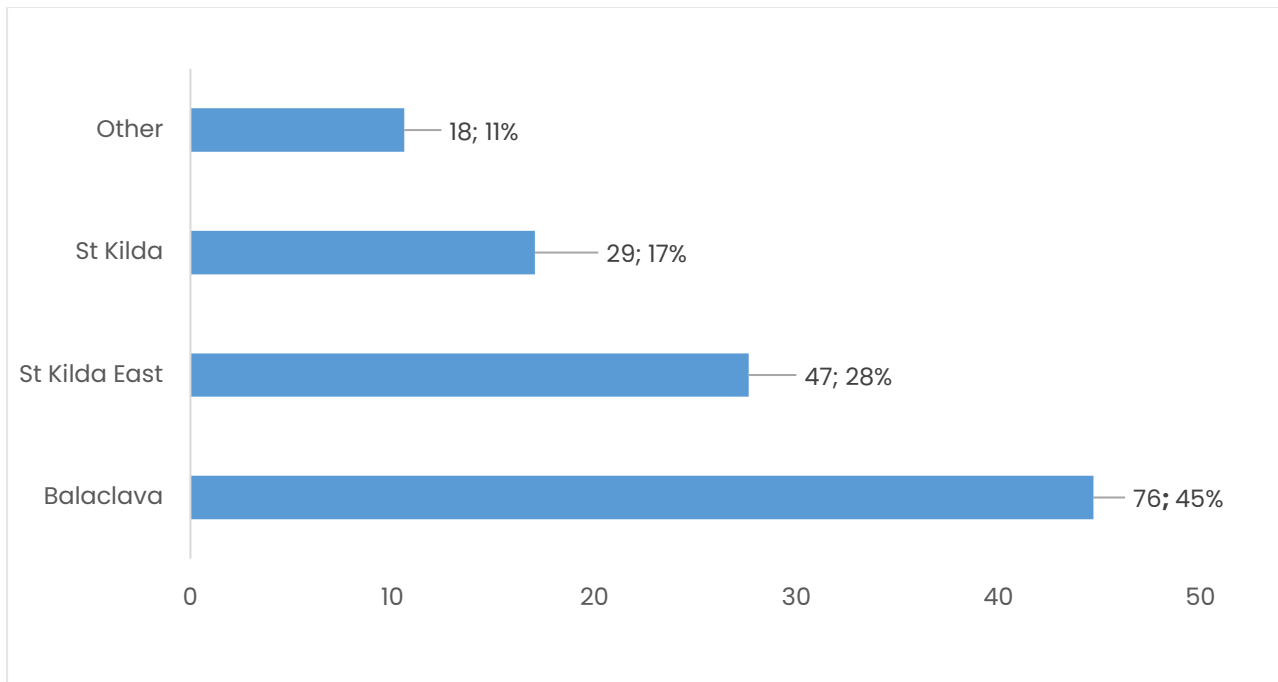


**Figure 2:** Residential suburb of survey participants (n=143). The largest proportion of respondents are from Balaclava (45%), followed by St Kilda East (28%) and St Kilda (17%), highlighting the highly local nature of engagement.

## 4.4 Gender

Gender representation was broadly balanced across engagement methods.

### Survey respondents (n=143)

- Female: 55% (n=79)
- Male: 41% (n=59)
- Non-binary / other / prefer not to say: 4% (n=5)

### Pop-up participants (n≈27)

- Female: approximately 48% (n≈13)
- Male: approximately 44% (n≈12)
- Other / prefer not to say: approximately 8% (n≈2)

Overall, engagement achieved a relatively even gender distribution, with minor variation between engagement methods.

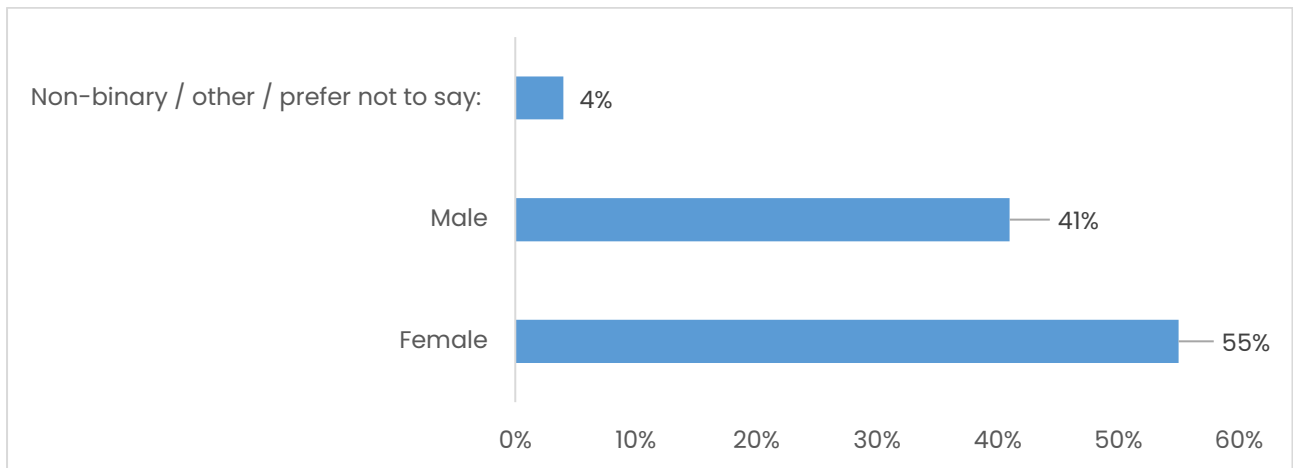


**Figure 3:** Gender distribution of pop-up participants (n≈27) and survey participants (n=143).

## 4.5 Diversity and inclusion

Participants were asked whether they identified with any of the following characteristics (multiple selections permitted).

### Among survey and pop-up participants:

- Speak a language other than English at home: n=8
- Identify as LGBTIQ+: n=6
- Identify as a person with disability: n=5
- Consider themselves financially disadvantaged: n=4
- Identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander: n=1

## 4.6 Previous engagement with Council

Survey respondents were asked whether they had provided feedback on another Council project in the past 12 months (**n=142**).

Most respondents (61.3%, n=87) had previously engaged with Council, while 24.7% (n=35) were engaging for the first time.

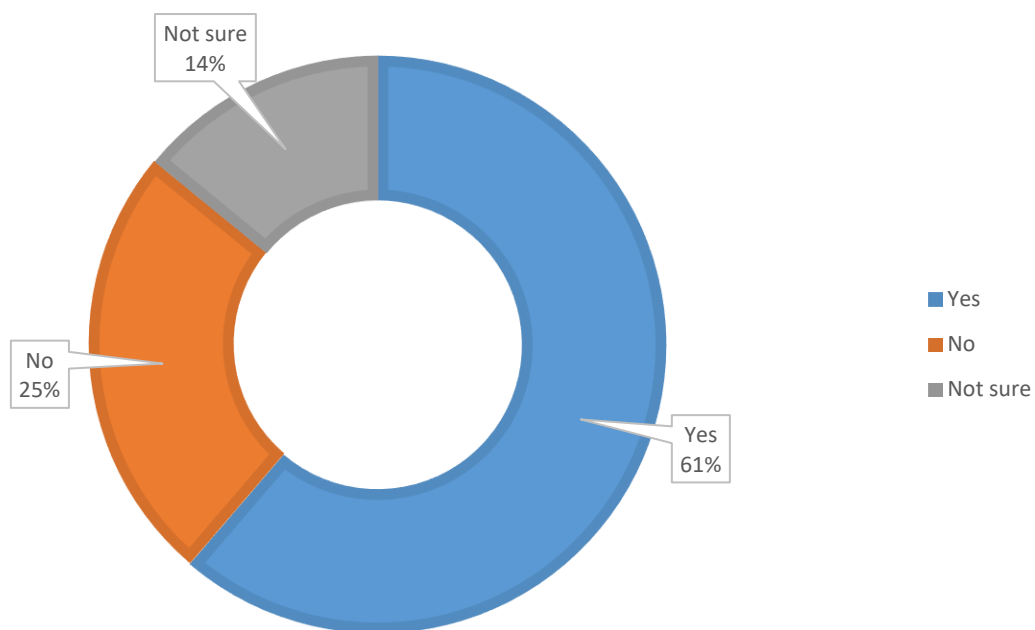


**Figure 4:** Previous engagement with Council in the past 12 months (survey respondents, n=142)

## 4.7 Targeted groups

### Targeted engagement approach

In addition to broad public engagement, Council undertook targeted engagement to capture a wider range of perspectives relevant to the Carlisle Street Activity Centre project. This included a pop-up engagement on Carlisle Street and one-on-one meetings with stakeholders. Emails were sent to local community organisations, religious groups, traders and other known interested parties encouraging them to book meetings or participate via another method.

Targeted engagement focused on groups with local knowledge, lived experience, or a strategic interest in the activity centre, including residents, traders, landowners, and community organisations, and planning and design stakeholders. Feedback was gathered through meetings and written submissions, providing detailed, place-based insights to complement online engagement.

This approach helped ensure the emerging Structure Plan and Council's advocacy position are informed by both broad community input and deeper stakeholder perspectives.

## 4.8 Summary

Overall, the engagement:

- Reached a highly local audience, with 75% of survey respondents living in Balaclava, St Kilda East or St Kilda (n=131)
- Was dominated by mid-life participants, with 58% aged 35–59 (n=83)
- Achieved a broadly balanced gender profile
- Included participants from a range of backgrounds, although some cohorts were underrepresented.

## 5. What we heard

### 5.1 Neighbourhood pop-up engagement

A pop-up was held on Carlisle Street (between the train bridge and William Street) on 15 May 2026 (12pm–2pm), with approximately 27 participants.

Community members were invited to speak with staff, learn about the project, and provide feedback in person, via a paper survey or through other engagement activities that were available.

#### Key themes

Participant responses were grouped into themes, with most participants raising more than one theme in their feedback.

- **Local business and retail vibrancy (23%, n=9)**

This was the most frequently raised theme, with strong support for small businesses, retail diversity, and activation of vacant shopfronts.

*"Better support for small businesses... vacant shops make the area feel sad."*

- **Open space, greening and urban design (21%, n=8)**

There was strong interest in more open space, greenery and improved design quality, including retaining trees and creating more usable public areas.

*"More open space and greenery would improve the street."*

- **Pedestrian safety and crossings (15%, n=6)**

Safety at crossings emerged as a major concern, particularly around the station and underpass.

*"Pedestrian crossing at the station is very unsafe."*

- **Safety, antisocial behaviour and social issues (15%, n=6)**

Participants raised concerns about antisocial behaviour, lighting and overall perceptions of safety.

*"People need to feel safe... better lighting is essential."*

- **Parking and traffic (8%, n=3)**

Three participants expressed mixed views related to parking, including the need for convenient parking and improved management of traffic and more parking options.

*"Free parking and safer car parks are important."*

- **Social support services and homelessness (8%, n=3)**

A smaller number of responses highlighted the need for better support services and responses to social issues in the area.

- **Other themes (15%, n=6 combined)**

Less frequently raised themes included cultural recognition, procurement/local contractors, and requests for clearer information about the project.

Feedback from the pop-up conversations highlights very practical, location-specific concerns, particularly around pedestrian safety, local business vitality and public space quality, reinforcing the importance of targeted, place-based interventions.

## 5.2 Survey responses

The community survey explored how people want the Carlisle Street Activity Centre to look, feel and function in the future. A total of 143 survey responses were received, noting that not all respondents answered every question.

Highest priorities across all responses:

- **Supporting local businesses**

Strong and consistent support for independent traders, diverse retail and active street-level uses. Concerns about increasing dominance of chain stores.

- **High-quality design and built form**

Clear expectation for well-designed, human-scale development that respects local character and avoids bulky or generic outcomes.

- **Public space and greening**

Strong demand for more usable, visible and connected public space, including a central “green heart” for the precinct.

- **Safety and amenity**

Safety, cleanliness and maintenance were consistently raised as key issues impacting use and perception of Carlisle Street.

- **Local character and identity**

The “village feel” and fine-grain character of Carlisle Street are highly valued and should be protected.

Key tensions:

- **Access vs active transport**  
Support for both car access (particularly parking) and improved walking, cycling and public transport.
- **Housing vs scale and character**  
Mixed views on density, with concerns about impacts on character and amenity.

## Q1. Feedback on the draft Place Strengths

### We asked:

*At previous engagement sessions, you told us what you love about Carlisle Street and what's important to protect. We've taken what you shared and turned it into a set of Place Strengths, which have helped shape the draft vision for the Carlisle Street Activity Centre.*

- *Strong Local Identity and Character*
- *Emerging Green and Open Space Anchors*
- *Excellent Public Transport Access*
- *Walkable and Pedestrian-Friendly*
- *Local Businesses and Cultural Diversity*

*Is there anything you would like to add?*

**Responses:** Answered: 79 | Skipped: 64 (Approximately 91 comments were categorised into themes, with some responses covering multiple themes)

Responses reinforced a consistent focus on protecting local character while improving amenity, public space and safety.

- **Local businesses and retail mix:** 17% (n=16)  
Strong support for independent traders and concern about chain dominance
- **Public space and greening:** 15% (n=14)  
Demand for more usable, green and people-focused spaces
- **Character and identity:** 15% (n=14)  
Strong attachment to the village feel and local distinctiveness
- **Safety and amenity:** 14% (n=13)  
Concerns about cleanliness, safety and overall street condition
- **Transport and parking:** 14% (n=13)  
Mixed views, but consistent emphasis on accessibility

*"Minimise franchise businesses and encourage diverse small traders."*

*“Carlisle Street needs more green spaces where people can gather.”*

*“The area feels unsafe and unwelcoming.”*

Participants consistently prioritise local character, public space and everyday amenity improvements.

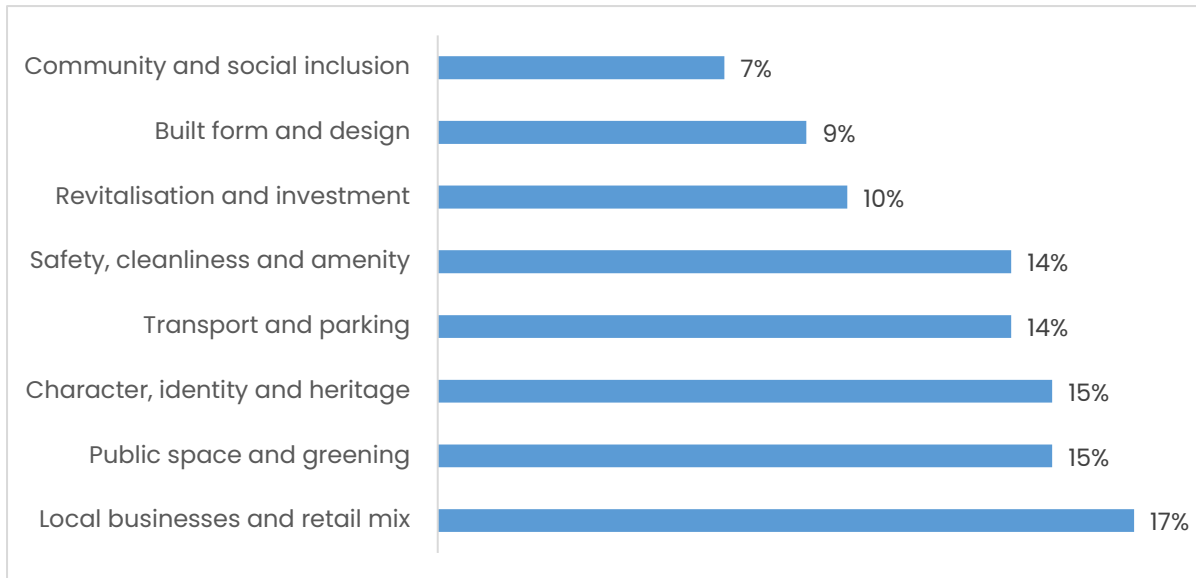


**Figure 5.** Key themes in responses to the question ‘*Is there anything you would like to add?*’

## Q2. Support for the Vision

Based on previous feedback from the community, we drafted a vision for the Activity Centre and presented it for feedback.

**We asked:** *How supportive are you of the draft vision for the Carlisle Street Activity Centre?*

***Draft vision for the Carlisle Street Activity Centre:*** *Carlisle Street Activity Centre continues its role as the heart of the community – a place where people come together to share everyday life, culture and experiences. Its cultural diversity, local businesses and heritage character are valued and celebrated, while welcoming new growth that strengthens Carlisle Street as a lively place to live, work and visit.*

*Streets and public spaces are safe, comfortable and welcoming for everyone. It is easy to get to and move around the centre, with more people walking, cycling and using public transport, linked by clear connections to shops, public transport, services and public spaces.*

*New development enhances Carlisle Street's unique identity, supports active and lively streets, respects heritage buildings, and improves the quality of streets and public spaces, through a rich mix of local shops, cafes, jobs, community activities and homes.*

*The surrounding neighbourhoods are better connected to Carlisle Street and to each other. Each area maintains its own character, with well designed buildings, greener streets and more trees.*

*Carlisle Street is a climate ready and sustainable place, with more shade and greenery that helps keep the area cool, supports wellbeing, and makes the centre more comfortable now and into the future.*

### **Responses:**

Answered: 136 | Skipped: 7

A clear majority (82%, n=108) support the draft vision, indicating strong community alignment with the proposed direction (supportive and very supportive responses). A smaller proportion were neutral (14%, n=19), while only 4% expressed a lack of support. These results demonstrate a clear majority endorsement of the vision, with minimal opposition. Three respondents selected 'other', writing that they would be supportive with some amendments.

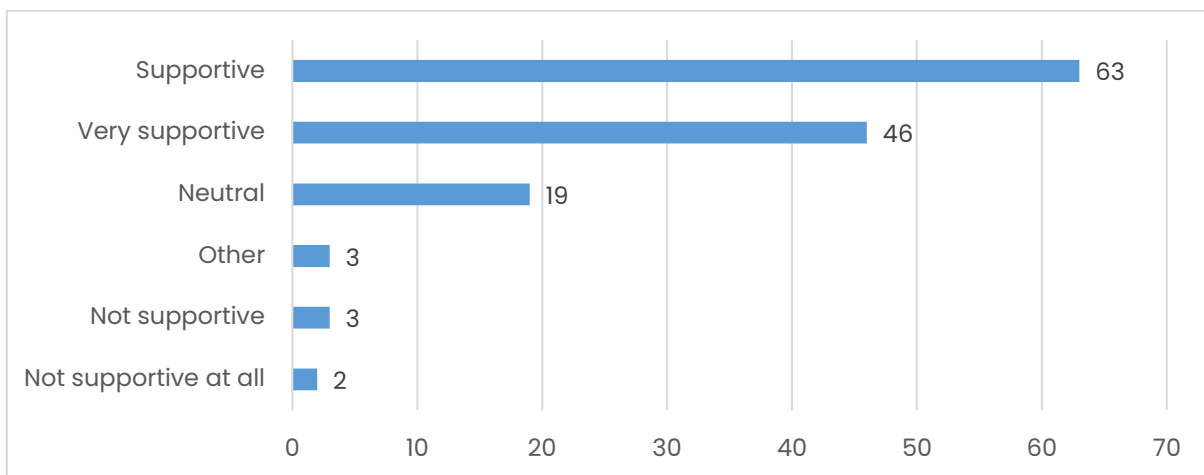


**Figure 6.** Level of support for the draft vision

### Q3. Most supported elements of the vision

**We asked:** *What do you most support in the vision?* Participants were asked to select up to 3 options from a list.

**Responses:** Answered: 138 | Skipped: 5

Responses indicate strong support across several elements of the draft vision, particularly supporting local businesses, well-designed development, greening, and safer public spaces.

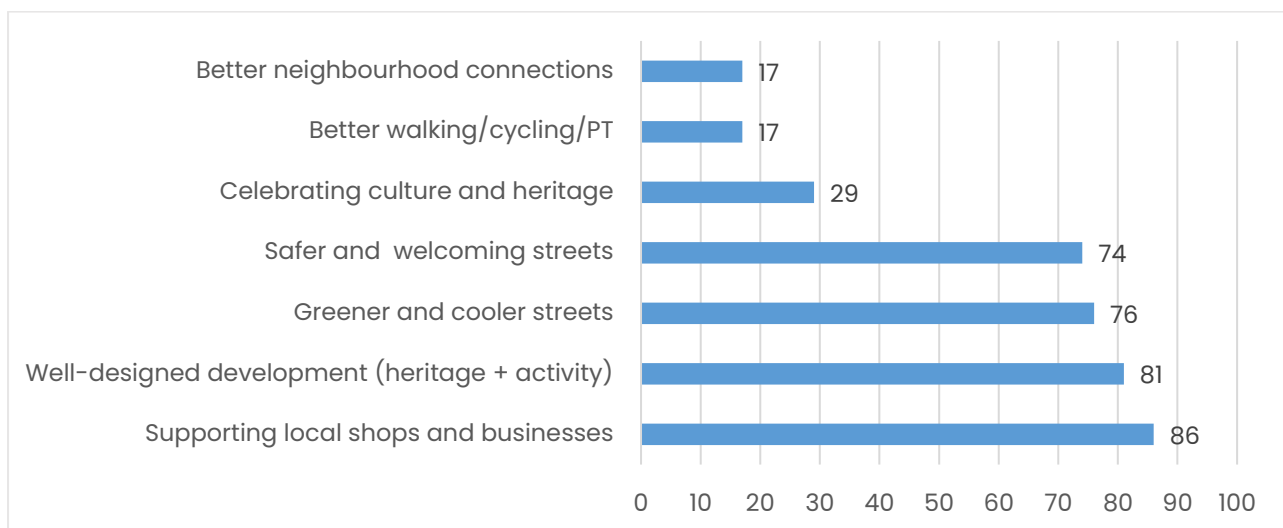


**Figure 7:** Responses to the multichoice question 'What do you most support in the vision?'

### Strongest areas of support

- Supporting local shops and businesses; 23% (n=86) of respondents most support this element of the vision.
- Well-designed development; 25% (n=81) of respondents most support this element of the vision.
- Greener streets: 20% (n=76) of respondents most support this element of the vision.
- Safer public spaces; 19% (n=74) of respondents most support this element of the vision.

Together, these results highlight a clear community preference for a vibrant, people-focused and locally distinctive activity centre, supported by quality design and an improved public realm.

Other elements, including culture and heritage (n=29, 8%) and transport and connections (n=17, 4%), were selected less frequently but remain important supporting features.

## Q4. Additional feedback on the vision

**We asked:** *Is there anything missing or unclear in the vision?*

**Responses:** Answered: 67 | Skipped: 76 (Approximately 72 comments were categorised into themes, with some responses covering multiple themes)

Just under half of survey respondents identified that something was missing or unclear in the vision. Of those that answered this question, many are seeking more detailed and deliverable vision that responds to the practical realities of Carlisle Street while maintaining its character.

- **Access and movement (24%, n=15)**

Access and movement was the most frequently raised theme, with concerns primarily focused on parking availability (n=10), traffic management (n=3) and overall accessibility (n=2). Ensuring Carlisle Street remains easy to access and functionally viable for residents, shoppers and visitors was a clear priority.

*"Parking and access need to be clearly addressed."*

- **Local economy and retail (21%, n=13)**

Participants emphasised the importance of maintaining a diverse and locally focused retail mix (n=7), including supporting independent traders, addressing supermarket dominance (n=4), and reducing vacancies (n=2). These responses reflect a clear desire to protect Carlisle Streets' lively, local character and avoid it becoming too similar to other retail areas.

*"We need a diverse mix of small local businesses—not more chains."*

- **Safety and amenity (19%, n=12)**

Safety concerns were consistently raised, particularly in relation to antisocial behaviour, cleanliness and lighting. These issues were seen as fundamental to improving the overall experience of the precinct.

*"The area feels unsafe and unwelcoming."*

- **Public space and greening (16%, n=10)**

There was strong support for more usable and well-designed public space, including increased greenery, shade and seating. Participants highlighted the need for spaces that support everyday use and social interaction.

*"Carlisle Street needs more spaces where people can gather."*

- **Character and identity (13%, n=8)**

Participants expressed concern that the vision does not fully reflect Carlisle Street's distinctive identity. Protecting the village feel and strengthening local character were key priorities.

*"Make sure the character of the street isn't lost."*

A smaller number of responses highlighted additional considerations:

- **Built Form and Design (10%, n=6)**

Primarily related to building height, scale and setbacks (n=4), as well as design quality (n=2).

- **Governance and Delivery (6%, n=4)**

Concerns about clarity of implementation (n=3) and decision-making processes (n=1).

- **Community and Inclusion (6%, n=4)**

Focused on supporting vulnerable groups (n=2) and providing community facilities and services (n=2).

Respondents are seeking a clear, place specific and deliverable vision that prioritises accessibility, supports independent businesses, improves safety and amenity, enhances public space, and strengthens the unique identity of Carlisle Street.

There is a strong emphasis on getting the fundamentals right first. Particularly access, safety and maintenance. While also setting a clear direction for longer term improvements in design quality, public space and economic vitality.

## Q5. Objectives that matter most to respondents

**We asked:** *Which objectives for Carlisle Street matter the most to you? (Matrix)*

Respondents were provided with 15 different objectives and asked to rank them from not supportive at all to very supportive.

**Responses:** Answered: 143 | Skipped: 0

Responses show very strong support across all objectives, with clear alignment between the draft vision and community priorities.

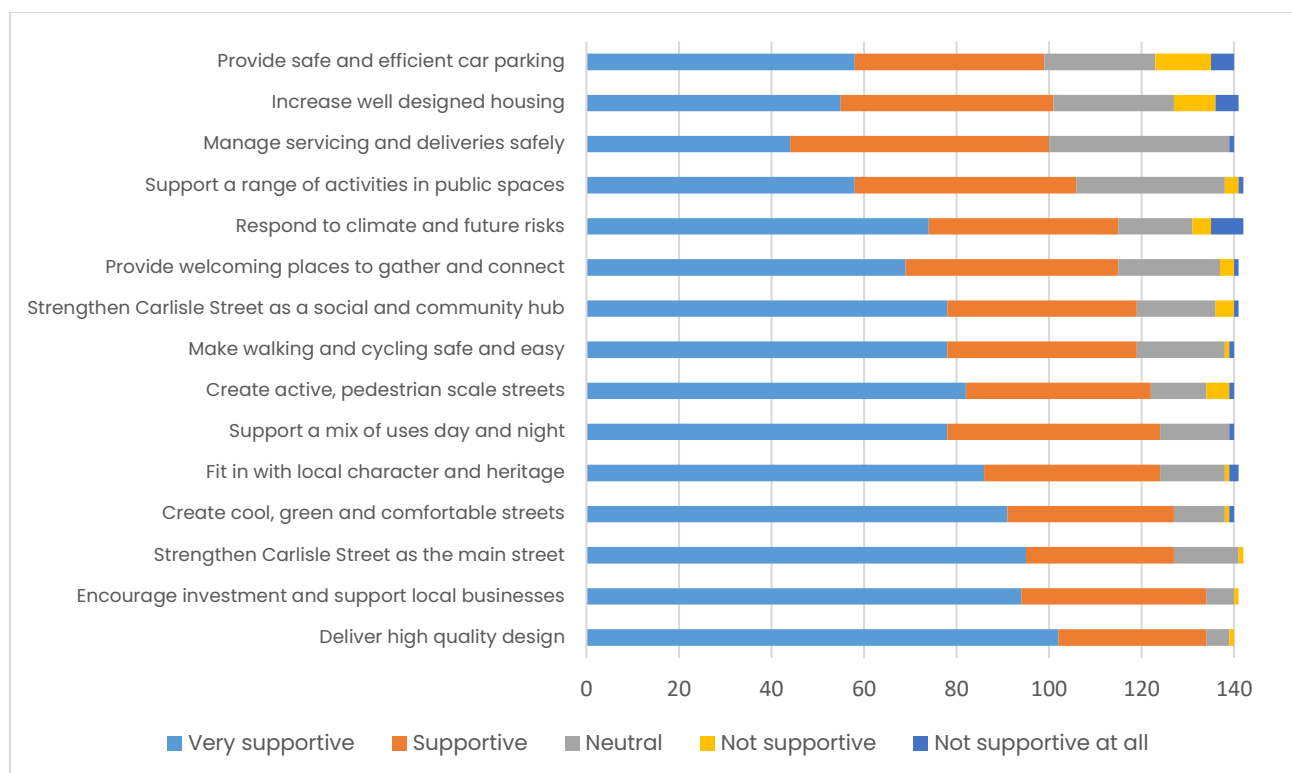


**Figure 8:** Responses to the question 'Which objectives for Carlisle Street matter the most to you?'

## Strongest areas of support

Support is consistently high across all objectives, particularly for design quality, local business support, greening, and reinforcing Carlisle Street's role as a main street.

Participants showed the most support for the objectives that related to:

- **Deliver high quality design:** 96% of respondents indicated they are either very supportive or supportive of this objective
- **Encourage investment and support local businesses:** 95% of respondents indicated they are either very supportive or supportive of this objective
- **Strengthen Carlisle Street as the main street:** 89% of respondents indicated they are either very supportive or supportive of this objective
- **Create cool, green and comfortable streets:** 91% of respondents indicated they are either very supportive or supportive of this objective.

A small number of objectives attracted less favourable support:

- **Provide safe and efficient car parking:** 12 not supportive, 5 not supportive at all
- **Increase well-designed housing:** 9 not supportive, 5 not supportive at all
- **Manage servicing and deliveries safely:** 39 neutral responses

Participants strongly support a vision focused on design quality, local identity, greening and vibrant public life, while views are more varied on operational issues such as parking, servicing and housing.

## Q6. Additional feedback on the objectives

**We asked:** *Do you have any suggestions to improve or add to the objectives?* (Open-text response)

**Responses:** Answered: 60 | Skipped: 83 (72 Comments were categorised into themes, with some responses covering multiple themes)

Feedback focused on practical, on-the-ground improvements to the activity centre, with particular emphasis on access, safety, and strengthening the local retail environment.

### Key themes

- **Access and movement (25%, n=15)**

Access was a common theme, with strong focus on parking availability, cost, and balancing car access with walking and cycling.

*"Car parking is essential to ensuring people continue to visit the area."*

- **Safety and amenity (19%, n=14)**

Safety concerns were consistently raised, particularly in relation to antisocial behaviour, cleanliness, maintenance and night-time safety. These issues were viewed as fundamental to improving the overall experience of Carlisle Street.

*"Safety needs to be paramount."*

- **Local economy and retail (13%, n=9)**

Participants emphasised the importance of maintaining a diverse and locally focused retail mix, including support for independent businesses and reducing reliance on large chain operators.

*"Make it a destination... a diverse strip with different, varied specialty shops."*

- **Public space and greening (13%, n=8)**

There was strong support for practical, well-maintained public spaces with seating, amenities and greenery.

*"Focus on the basics—clean, functional and inviting spaces."*

- **Built form and design (11%, n=8)**

Feedback highlighted the need for development that is well-designed, context-sensitive and aligned with the existing scale and character of the street.

*"Ensure new design does not overwhelm the person-sized scale of the street."*

- **Public space and greening (11%, n=8)**

There was strong support for practical, well-maintained public spaces that include greenery, seating and everyday amenities.

*"Focus on the basics—clean, functional and inviting spaces."*

- **Character and identity (10%, n=7)**

Maintaining the unique identity of Carlisle Street and avoiding generic or "cookie-cutter" development was a consistent theme.

*"Avoid cookie-cutter development... make it reflect Balaclava."*

### Other themes

Other themes that were raised included issues around governance and delivery: 8% (n=6), as well as community and inclusion: 7% (n=5)

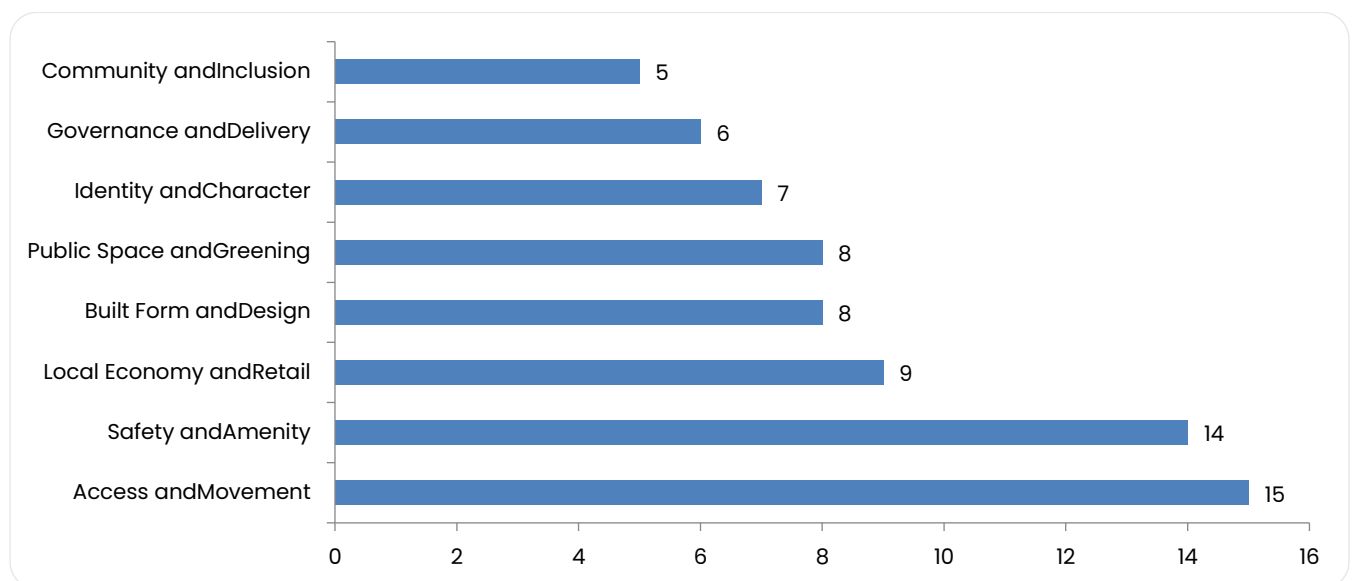


**Figure 9.** Key themes in response to the question 'Do you have any suggestions to improve or add to the objectives?'

Access and movement (21%, n=15) and safety and amenity (19%, n=14) were the most commonly raised themes, highlighting a strong focus on practical, day-to-day issues. Other themes, including local economy, design and character, were less frequently raised but remain important considerations.

Participants prioritise practical improvements, particularly access, safety and local economic vitality, alongside high-quality, context-sensitive development.

## Preference for the Coles and Woolworths sites

The remainder of the survey questions focused on the desired outcomes for the Coles and Woolworths sites.

### 07. Public space and street outcomes for the sites

#### We asked:

*Which public space and street outcomes are most important to achieve on these two sites?* Participants were asked to select up to three of six options listed below.

**Responses:** Answered: 140 | Skipped: 3

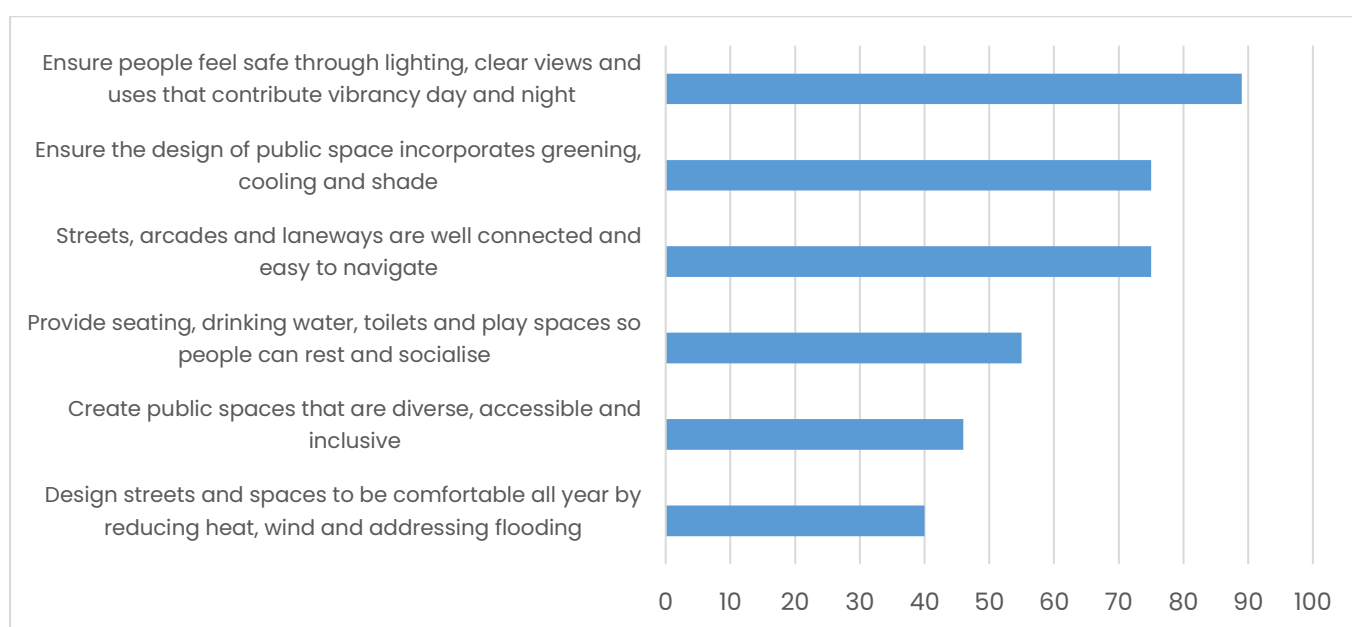


**Figure 10.** Responses to the multichoice question 'Which public space and street outcomes are most important to achieve on these two sites?'

#### Strongest areas of support

- Ensure people feel safe through lighting, clear views and uses that contribute vibrancy day and night: 64% (n=89) of respondents selected this as an important outcome.
- Streets, arcades and laneways are well connected and easy to navigate: 54% (n=75) of respondents selected this as an important outcome.

- Ensure the design of public space incorporates greening, cooling and shade: 54% (n=75) of respondents selected this as an important outcome.

### Areas of least support

- Provide seating, drinking water, toilets and play spaces so people can rest and socialise: 39% (n=55) of respondents selected this as an important outcome.
- Create public spaces that are diverse, accessible and inclusive: 32% (n=45) of respondents selected this as an important outcome.
- Design streets and spaces to be comfortable all year by reducing heat, wind and addressing flooding: 29% (n=40) of respondents selected this as an important outcome.

Participants identified safety (63%), connectivity (54%), and greening (54%) as the most important outcomes for these sites, indicating that future design should prioritise safe, well-connected, and climate-responsive public spaces, supported by high-quality design and appropriate amenities.

The results from Question 7 are supported by the written feedback in Question 8. Both showed that safety, more greenery, and well-designed public spaces are the highest priorities.

## Q8. Additional feedback on public space and street outcomes

**We asked:** *What changes or additions would you suggest?* (open-ended text)

**Responses:** Answered: 63 | Skipped: 80 (Comments were categorised into themes, with some responses covering multiple themes)

Feedback focused on improving the quality, safety and usability of public space, alongside concerns about access, design and local character.

### Key themes

- **Public space and environment (32%, n=20)**

Public space was the most frequently raised theme, with strong support for increased greening, improved design quality and better amenities.

*"Carlisle Street needs much more greenery."*

- **Access and parking (25%, n=16)**

Access and parking were a major concern, particularly maintaining convenient and accessible parking for visitors and businesses.

*"Do not reduce parking spaces."*

- **Safety and security (19%, n=12)**

Safety concerns were consistently raised, especially in relation to antisocial behaviour and perceptions of safety in public spaces.

*"Create a safer environment and manage anti-social behaviours, particularly at night."*

- **General / Other (14%, n=9)**

A small number of responses did not align with a clear theme and were categorised as general feedback. These included broad or unclear comments and neutral or non-specific responses.

- **Local economy (6%, n=4)**

Participants highlighted the importance of supporting local traders and maintaining a diverse retail mix.

*"Support local businesses—not just supermarkets."*

- **Urban design and built form (3%, n=2)**

Participants emphasised the importance of human-scale design, active street frontages and development that integrates with the existing streetscape.

*"It should not feel like a shopping mall."*

Participants support public space improvements but emphasise that success depends on safety, access and design quality, alongside maintaining a functional and locally focused activity centre.

## Q9. Activities and uses for the sites

**We asked:** *What activities and uses are most important to you for these two sites?*

Participants were asked to select up to three of five multiple choice responses.

**Responses:** Answered: 138 | Skipped: 5

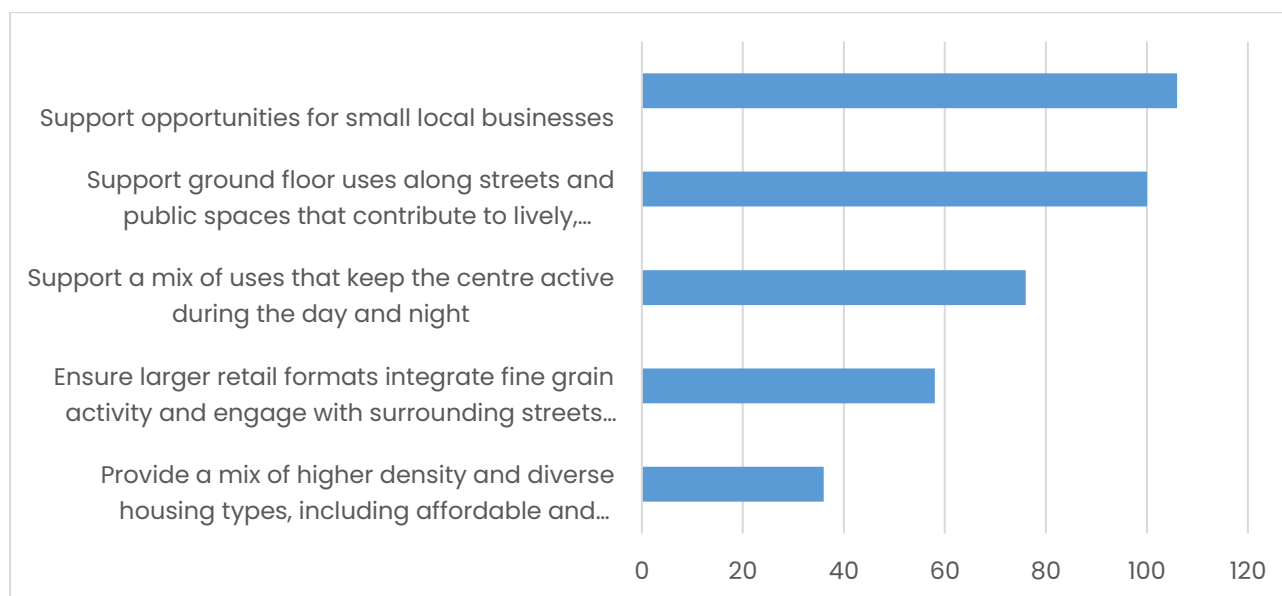


**Figure 11.** Responses to the multichoice question 'What activities and uses are most important to you for these two sites?'

Participants prioritised local businesses, active street frontages, and overall vibrancy, with less emphasis placed on residential outcomes.

### **Strongest areas of support:**

- Support opportunities for small local businesses: 77% (n=106) of respondents selected this as important.
- Support ground floor uses along streets and public spaces that contribute to lively, welcoming streets: 73% (n=100) of respondents selected this as important.
- Support a mix of uses that keep the centre active during the day and night: 55% (n=75) of respondents selected this as important.

**Areas of least support:**

- Ensure larger retail formats integrate fine grain activity and engage with surrounding streets and public spaces: 42% (n=58) of respondents selected this as important.
- Provide a mix of higher density and diverse housing types, including affordable and accessible housing: 26% (n=35) of respondents selected this as important.

Participants strongly prioritised local economic activity and active street environments.

The most selected option was support for small local businesses (77%, n=105), followed closely by ground floor uses that create lively and welcoming streets (73%, n=100). This indicates a strong preference for development that supports local character and street-level activation.

Over half of respondents (55%, n=75) also supported a mix of uses that keeps the centre active during the day and night, reinforcing the importance of creating a vibrant, mixed-use environment.

Moderate support was shown for integrating larger retail formats with fine-grain street activity (42%, n=58), suggesting that larger developments are acceptable where they maintain strong engagement with the street.

The lowest level of support was for higher density and diverse housing (26%, n=35), indicating that while housing is recognised as part of future development, it is a lower priority compared to public-facing and economic uses.

## Q10. Additional feedback on activities and uses

**We asked:** *What changes or additions would you suggest?* (open-ended text)

**Responses:** Answered: 52 | Skipped: 91 (Comments were categorised into themes, with some responses covering multiple themes.)

Feedback focused on supporting a strong local economy, delivering high-quality urban design, and addressing mixed views on housing and development scale.

### Key themes

- **Local economy and retail (30%, n=17)**

Local economic issues were the most frequently raised, with strong emphasis on supporting independent businesses, maintaining retail diversity, and limiting the influence of large chain retailers.

*"Support local businesses—not just supermarkets."*

- **Urban design and character (21%, n=12)**

Participants emphasised the importance of human-scale development, active street frontages, and protecting the existing streetscape.

*"It should not feel like a shopping mall."*

- **Housing and density (20%, n=11)**

Housing generated mixed views, with some participants opposing increased density while others supported additional housing, particularly where it improves affordability or vibrancy.

*"Density equals more people and more vibrancy."*

- **Public space and activation (14%, n=8)**

Participants supported more active and engaging public spaces, including events, greenery and areas for social interaction.

*"More cultural activity, art, music and performance."*

- **Access and parking (9%, n=5)**

Access and parking were raised as practical considerations, particularly in supporting local businesses and maintaining convenience.

*"Free and convenient parking is critical for local traders."*

- **Safety (5%, n=3)**

Safety was raised less frequently but remains a consistent concern.

*"Create a safer environment."*

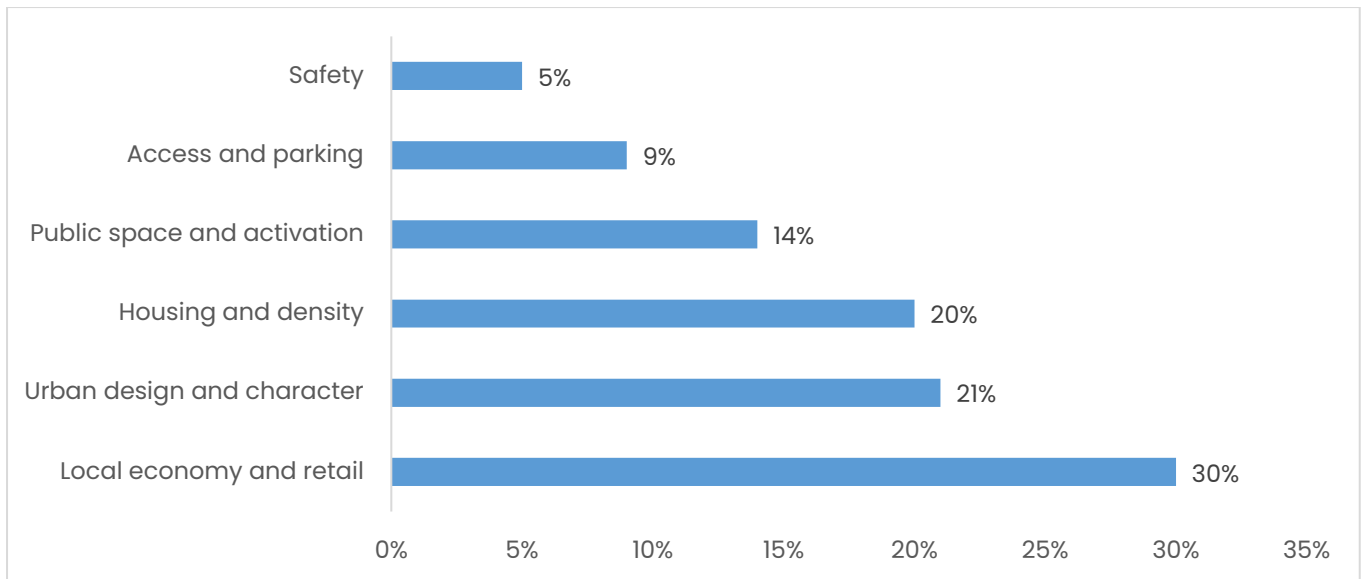


**Figure 12.** Key themes from suggested changes to the activities and uses for the site  
Local economy and retail (30%) and urban design and character (21%) were the most common themes, followed by housing and density (20%).

Participants support a locally driven, well-designed and vibrant activity centre, but there are clear tensions around housing density and development scale that will require careful balancing.

## Q11. Access and movement outcomes for the sites

**We asked:** *Which access and movement outcomes would you prioritise for these two sites?* Participants were asked to select up to three of five multiple choice responses.

**Responses:** Answered: 135 | Skipped: 8

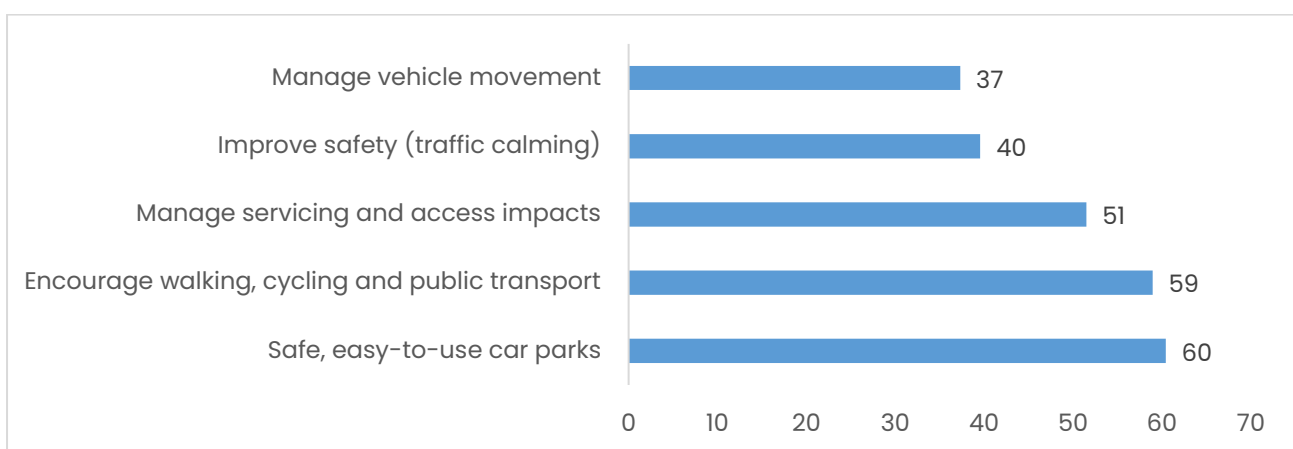


**Figure 13.** Responses to the multichoice question 'Which access and movement outcomes would you prioritise for these two sites? '

**Strongest areas of support:**

Participants support improving accessibility and connectivity, with a clear emphasis on balancing car access with active and sustainable transport options.

- Make car parks safe, easy to use for everyone, and well connected to streets and public spaces: 60% (n=81) of respondents indicated they prioritise this for the sites.
- Encourage walking, cycling and public transport by providing wider, high-quality footpaths, improved cycling and end of trip facilities, and clear connections to the broader walking and cycling networks: 59% (n=79) of respondents indicated they prioritise this for the sites.
- Design and consolidate loading, servicing, vehicle access and parking to limit impacts on nearby homes, streets and public spaces: 51% (n=69) of respondents indicated they prioritise this for the sites.

**Areas of least support:**

- Improve safety by slowing traffic and improving visibility for pedestrians and cyclists: 40% (n=53) of respondents indicated they prioritise this.
- Manage vehicle movement to minimise impacts on surrounding areas: 37% (n=50) of respondents indicated they would prioritise this for the sites.

Feedback highlighted the importance of safe and accessible car parking, particularly in supporting local businesses and making it easy for visitors to access the centre.

There was also strong support for improving walking, cycling and public transport options, suggesting the community wants more sustainable and people-focused ways to move around the area.

Managing servicing, deliveries and access was also seen as important, with respondents wanting future development to work well in practical, day-to-day terms.

Traffic calming and managing vehicle movement in surrounding streets were raised less frequently, suggesting these are important but not as immediate as broader access, parking and movement priorities.

## Q.12 Additional feedback on access and movement priorities for the sites

**We asked:** *Is there anything you would like to change or add?* (open text response)

**Responses:** Answered: 43 | Skipped: 100 (Comments were categorised into themes, with some responses covering multiple themes)

Feedback focused on practical, place-based issues, particularly car parking, safety, and balancing vehicle access with improvements to walking and cycling.

- **Access and parking (38%, n=20)**

Access and parking was the dominant theme, with strong emphasis on maintaining convenient, safe and affordable parking, including underground and consolidated parking solutions.

*"There must be access to safe and convenient parking... it must remain accessible for all."*

*"Free on-street and underground parking is essential."*

- **Safety and amenity (17%, n=9)**

Safety concerns focused on pedestrian visibility, dangerous intersections and antisocial behaviour, highlighting the importance of improving perceptions of safety.

*"Safety is a huge factor... people need to feel safe to walk in the first place."*

*"The intersection... is extremely dangerous... better design is needed."*

- **Balance of transport modes (15%, n=8)**

Participants expressed mixed views on prioritising cars versus active transport, reflecting a clear tension between maintaining vehicle access and improving walkability and cycling.

*"Cars must be put last to have a safe and accessible street."*

*"Cars are not all bad... people still need to drive to the shops."*

- **Street design and connections (13%, n=7)**

Feedback highlighted opportunities to improve pedestrian connections, crossings and overall street design.

*"Install more zebra crossings – the current arrangements are dangerous."*

*"Improve connections through the sites to surrounding streets."*

- **Servicing and functionality (12%, n=6)**

Participants identified the need to better manage servicing, deliveries and access points to minimise impacts on the public realm.

*"An underground delivery depot... to avoid unsightly delivery areas."*

- **Other feedback (4%, n=2)**

A small number of responses provided general or non-specific comments.

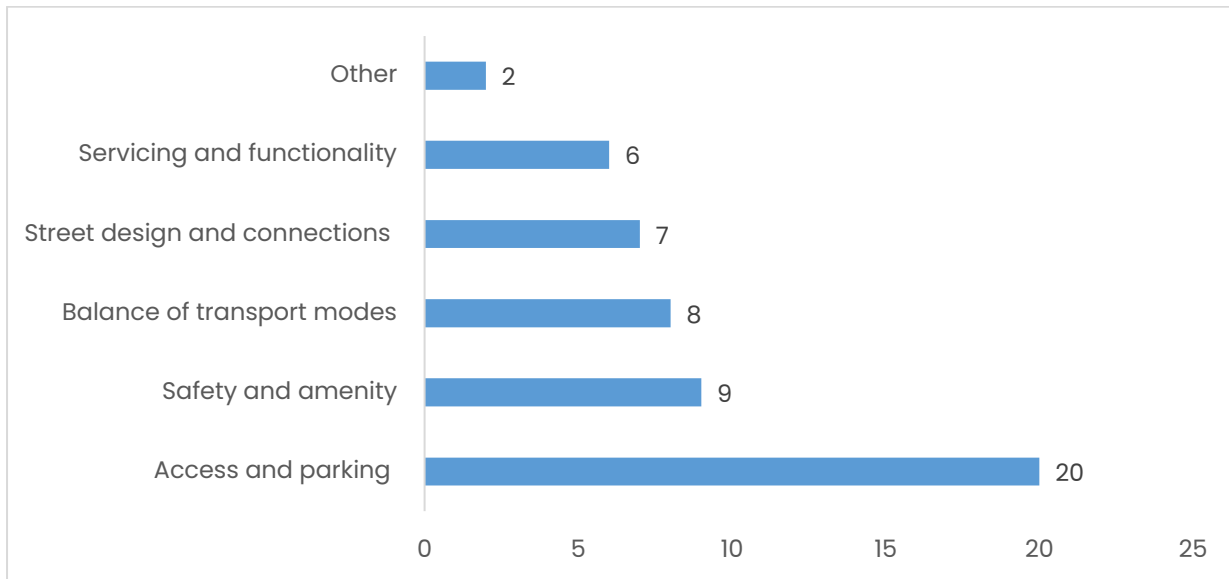


**Figure 14.** Key themes from additional feedback on access and movement

Access and parking (38%) was the most prominent theme, followed by safety (17%) and tensions between vehicle access and active transport (15%).

Feedback highlights a strong focus on practical access and parking needs, alongside a clear tension between maintaining car access and improving walkability, safety and overall street usability.

## Q.13 Design and built form outcomes

**We asked:** *What design and built form outcomes are most important to you for these two sites?* Participants were asked to select up to three multiple choice options.

**Responses:** Answered: 137 | Skipped: 6

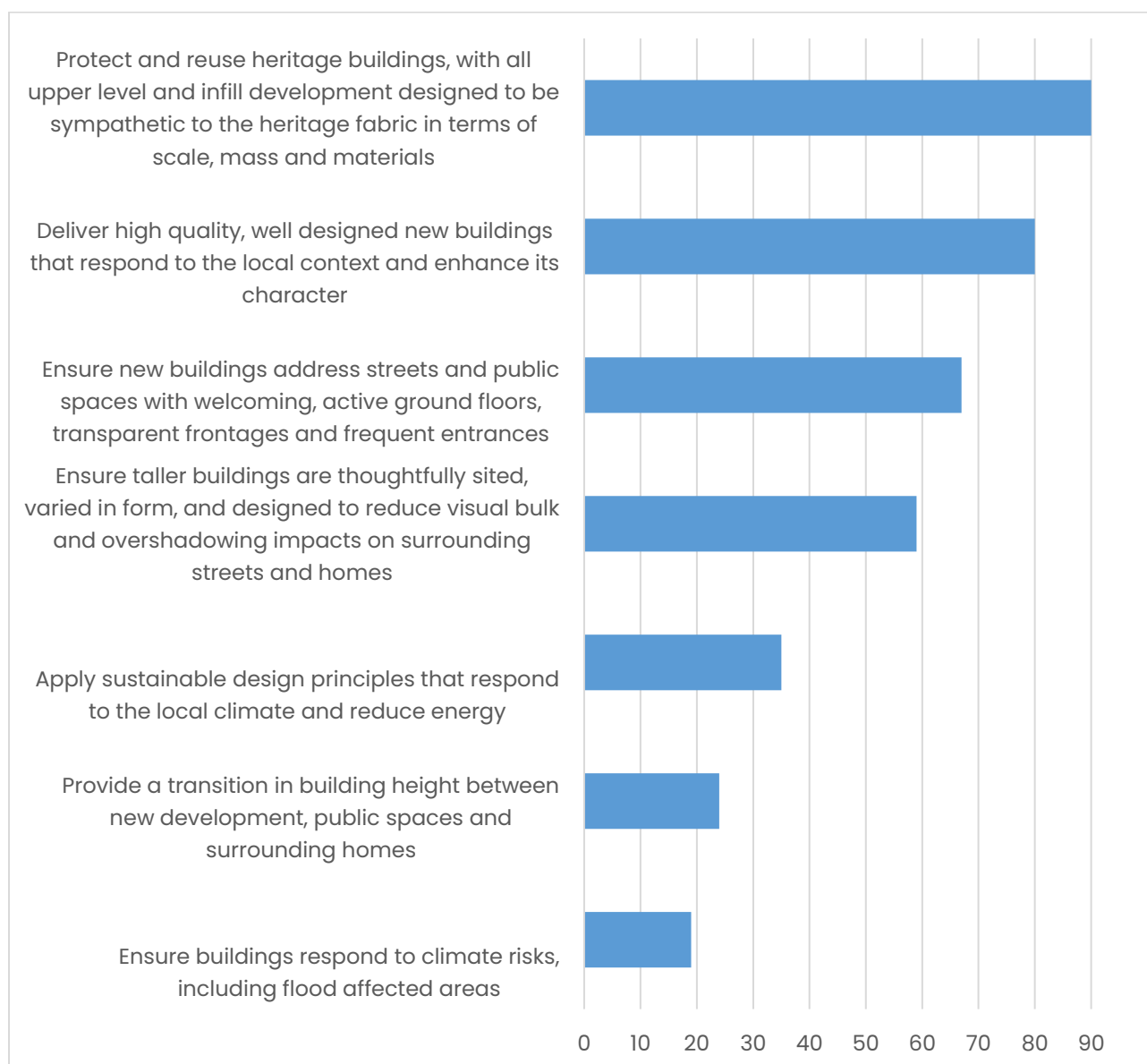


**Figure 15.** Responses to the multichoice question 'What design and built form outcomes are most important to you for these two sites?'

Participants expressed strong support for high-quality, context-sensitive design, with particular emphasis on heritage protection and overall design excellence.

**Outcomes that are most supported:**

- Protect and reuse heritage buildings, with all upper level and infill development designed to be sympathetic to be the heritage fabric in terms of scale, mass and materials: 65% (n=89) of respondents indicated this is most important to them.
- Deliver high-quality, well-designed new buildings that respond to the local context and enhance its character: 58% (n=79) of respondents indicated this is most important to them.
- Ensure new buildings address streets and public spaces with welcoming, active ground floors, transparent frontages and frequent entrances: 49% (n=67) of respondents indicated this is most important to them.

**Least supported outcomes:**

- Apply sustainable design principles that respond to the local climate and reduce energy: 25% (n=34) of respondents indicated this is most important to them.
- Provide a transition in building height between new development, public spaces and surrounding homes: 18% (n=24) of respondents indicated this is most important to them.
- Ensure buildings respond to climate risks, including flood affected areas: 14% (n=19) of respondents indicated this is most important to them.

Participants placed the strongest importance on ensuring future development is well designed and fits with the character of the area. The highest priorities were protecting and reusing heritage buildings, ensuring new buildings respond to the local context, and creating active, welcoming street frontages.

This suggests the community is not opposed to change, but expects new development to be carefully managed. Respondents want any redevelopment of the Coles and Woolworths sites to enhance Carlisle Street's character, rather than dominate or detract from it.

Lower support for climate-related and building height transition outcomes may indicate that these issues are less front-of-mind for participants when compared with heritage, design quality and street-level activation.

## Q14. Additional feedback on the design and built form outcomes

**We asked:** *Is there anything you would like to change or add?* (open-end text)

**Responses:** Answered: 37 | Skipped: 106 (Comments were categorised into themes, with some responses covering multiple themes)

Despite the lower response rate, feedback was consistent, with a strong focus on built form, design quality and local character, alongside concerns relating to access and safety.

### Key themes

- **Built form and design (62%, n=26)**

Built form was the dominant theme, with strong preferences for human-scale development, high design quality and avoiding bulky or generic outcomes.

Participants consistently raised concerns about building height, overshadowing and overall visual impact.

*"No tall buildings."*

*"Ensure new design does not overwhelm the scale of the street."*

- **Character and identity (33%, n=14)**

A strong and consistent theme focused on protecting the unique identity of Carlisle Street, including heritage shopfronts and the existing village character.

*"Preserve as much heritage as possible."*

*"Avoid cookie-cutter development."*

- **Housing and density (12%, n=5)**

Views on housing were mixed. Some participants supported additional housing if well designed, while others expressed concern about overdevelopment.

*"Medium scale... don't build tomorrow's slums."*

- **Access and movement (10%, n=4)**

A smaller number of responses raised concerns about parking and infrastructure capacity.

*"No reduction in parking spaces."*

- **Safety and amenity (5%, n=2)**

Safety concerns were raised in relation to antisocial behaviour and perceptions of safety, consistent with broader engagement findings.

*"Safer."*

- **Other feedback (17%, n=7)**

Some respondents expressed general support for the objectives or provided non-specific comments.

*"All of the above are equally important."*

- **Local economy and activation (6%, n=2)**

A small number of responses highlighted empty shops and reduced vibrancy, linking economic activity to design and activation outcomes.

*"Empty shops... impact vibrancy."*

- **Other feedback (17%, n=7)**

Some respondents expressed general support for the objectives or provided non-specific comments.

*"All of the above are equally important."*

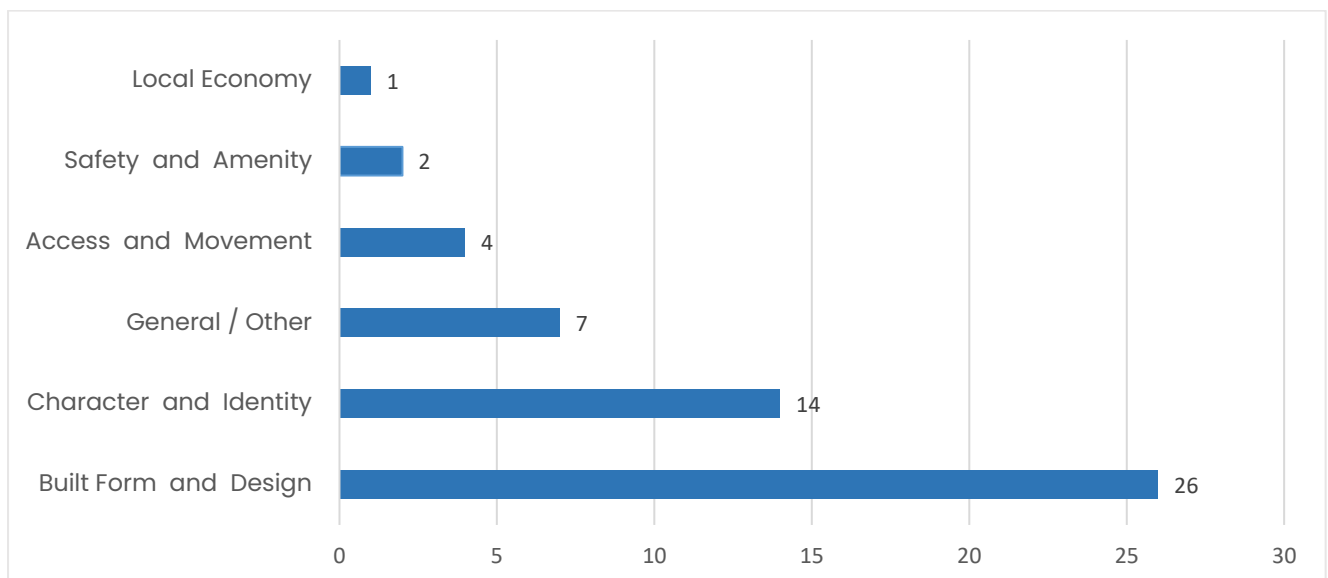


**Figure 16:** Key themes from additional feedback on design and built form outcomes

Participants are supportive of change, but expect high-quality, human-scale development that protects local character, with careful management of height, design and amenity impacts.

Built form and design (62%) was the most prominent theme, followed by character and identity (33%).

A smaller proportion of responses included general or non-specific feedback (17%), while access and movement (10%), safety and amenity (5%), and local economy (2%) were less frequently raised.

These results highlight that feedback is strongly concentrated around built form, design quality and character outcomes, with other themes representing supporting considerations.

## Q15. Additional feedback on draft outcomes

**We asked:** *Do you have any other feedback on the draft outcomes?* (open-ended text)

**Responses:** Answered: 34 | Skipped: 108 (Comments were categorised into themes, with some responses covering multiple themes)

Feedback highlights strong concern about design quality, safety and the future of local businesses, with a consistent message that fundamental issues must be addressed alongside redevelopment.

### Key themes

- **Built form and design (41%, n=14)**

Built form and design was the most frequently raised theme, with strong expectations for high-quality architecture, appropriate scale, and development that responds to the local context. Participants expressed clear concern about generic or bulky development.

*"Please use world class architects... who will provide a thoughtful design."*

*"Avoid a boxy, generic look."*

- **Safety and amenity (29%, n=10)**

Safety emerged as a key concern, particularly in relation to antisocial behaviour, cleanliness and perceptions of safety within the precinct.

*"Make the area safe from antisocial behaviour."*

*"It feels less safe and less welcoming."*

- **Local economy and retail (24%, n=8)**

Participants highlighted the importance of supporting small businesses and maintaining a diverse retail mix, with concerns about supermarket dominance and vacant shops.

*"Support local business—not just supermarkets."*

- **Character and identity (21%, n=7)**

A strong theme focused on protecting the character and heritage of Carlisle Street, including maintaining its village feel and avoiding homogenised

development.

*"Preserve the character... don't turn it into something generic."*

- **Access and movement (18%, n=6)**

Access-related concerns focused on maintaining convenient parking and improving pedestrian safety.

*"Maintain the same number of car parking spaces."*

- **Public space (15%, n=5)**

Participants expressed a desire for more usable public space, including greenery, parks and spaces for community use.

*"We need a green hub for residents and visitors."*

- **Other feedback (15%, n=5)**

A portion of responses included general or non-specific feedback, including support for the objectives or calls for faster implementation.

*"Please just get it done."*

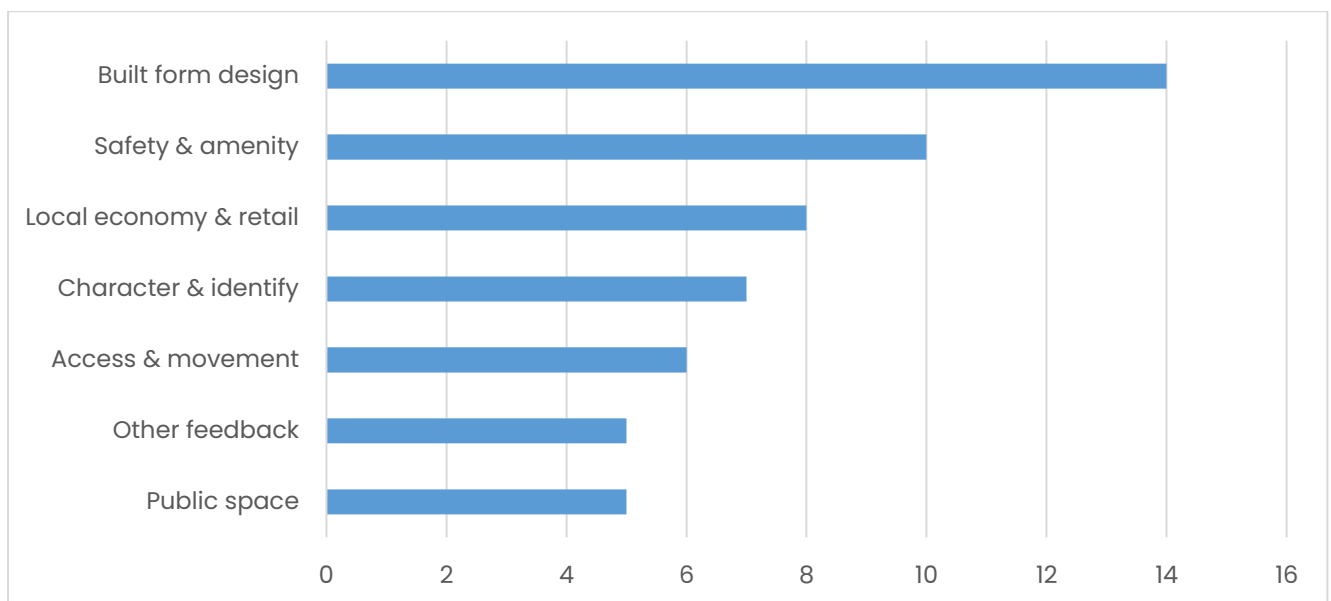


**Figure 17.** Key themes from additional feedback on draft outcomes

## Q16. Location-specific feedback from mapping tool

**We asked:** *Is there anything else you'd like to tell us? You can also highlight additional locations, issues or opportunities on the map.*

Participants were encouraged to drop a pin on a map and provide location-specific feedback.

**Responses:** 29 people provided a total of 180 comments on the map (Comments were categorised into themes, with some responses covering multiple themes) (n = number of comments)

**Map:** The below map visualises community feedback collected across the Balaclava / East St Kilda precinct. Feedback has been grouped into key themes and simplified for clarity in reporting.



**Figure 18.** Locations and themes of comments from participants in response to the question 'Is there anything else you'd like to tell us? You can also highlight additional locations, issues or opportunities on the map.'

The map based feedback shows that where things are located and how people move through the area are important to community members. Many comments were focused on key places, such as intersections, busy meeting points and redevelopment sites.

- **Access and movement (18%, n=33)**

Access and movement issues were a key focus, particularly pedestrian safety, unsafe crossings and traffic conflicts at major intersections. Key locations included Balaclava Station, the William/Blenheim intersection and Carlisle Street crossings.

*"A marked zebra crossing is required... an absolute mess."*

- **Safety and amenity (22%, n=39)**

Safety concerns were highly location-specific, particularly in laneways, car parks and underpasses, with issues relating to antisocial behaviour, lighting and cleanliness, rather than generalised issues. Key locations included the Coles/Woolworths car parks, Dianella Lane and the rail underpass.

*"This laneway is very dark... doesn't feel safe."*

*"Car jackings, assaults, drugs... rampant"*

*"This laneway is very dark... doesn't feel safe"*

- **Activities and uses (15%, n=27)**

Feedback emphasised supporting local businesses, arts, and community activity through better use of public spaces, events, markets, and cultural programming. Respondents also identified key redevelopment opportunities around the Coles and Woolworths sites, rail corridor, and surrounding streets, with support for mixed-use development, housing, improved pedestrian connections, and more vibrant, locally focused retail, dining, and community spaces.

*"Empty shops need addressing."*

- **Public spaces and streets (36%, n=65)**

Participants identified gaps in public space provision, with opportunities for more greenery, parks and improved connections between open spaces.

*"Possibly turn carpark into greenspace"*

*"Improve streetscape and allow for more on-street dining"*

- **Built form and design (9%, n=16)**

There was strong support for retaining Carlisle Street's heritage character, iconic

views, shopfronts, and local identity. Participants were concerned that large-scale development could overwhelm the area and preferred taller buildings to be located at the rear car park sites. There was also support for better street activation, station and public realm upgrades, refreshed shopfronts, and more vibrant, community-reflective public art and design.

*“Too big a development... will dominate the character.”*

*“This is an iconic corner... should be preserved.”*

## 5.4 Summary of submissions

Community submissions demonstrate strong interest in the future of the Carlisle Street Activity Centre and a desire for the revitalisation of the area. Feedback reflects a shared understanding that redevelopment of the Coles and Woolworths sites presents a significant strategic opportunity to shape the long-term character, functionality and identity of Balaclava.

Participants consistently highlight the importance of a design-led, community-focused and well-governed approach, not just commercial outcomes.

Similarities across submissions:

- Strong expectations for transparent and accountable governance
- Emphasis on high-quality, place-sensitive design for the two development sites
- Strong support for meaningful public space that functions as a civic heart
- Priority placed on sustainability, greening, and climate resilience
- Concern about generic development and supermarket dominance
- Support for local traders and economic diversity
- Desire to maintain and enhance local character and identity
- Desire to move away from aspirational outcomes to enforceable commitments, ensuring that community priorities are translated into tangible outcomes.

While overall priorities are mostly aligned, submissions vary in emphasis, with some focusing more strongly on:

- Governance and delivery
- Public space and design
- Economic or environmental outcomes

More detail on a range of key themes identified through the submissions is provided below.

### **Transparent and accountable governance**

Governance and delivery mechanisms were identified as a critical issue across submissions. Concerns were raised about engagement quality and transparency, with some participants describing the process as insufficiently meaningful.

Participants expressed strong support for:

- Binding and enforceable planning controls
- Clear delivery mechanisms
- Safeguards against delayed delivery or land banking

There is an expectation that community feedback should be embedded in formal agreements, particularly through mechanisms such as a Section 173 Agreement.

### **Public space**

High-quality public space emerged as one of the most consistent priorities. Participants highlighted the lack of meaningful civic space and the need for a central “green heart” for the precinct.

Participants expressed strong support for:

- Accessible, street-connected public space
- Spaces for events, markets and community activity
- A visible, active public realm

Feedback highlighted a strong preference for public spaces that connect with surrounding streets, rather than hidden inside private development.

## **High-quality, place-sensitive design**

Submissions emphasise the importance of design excellence, scale and appropriate built form outcomes.

Key concerns include:

- Large-scale or “monolithic” development
- Generic or placeless design outcomes

Submissions support:

- Human-scale development
- Articulated streetscapes
- Independent design review processes

Overall, there is a clear expectation that development should respond to context and enhance the precinct.

## **Local economy and activity**

Supporting local businesses and economic diversity is a key priority. Issues raised include:

- Empty shopfronts and declining vibrancy
- Pressure on independent traders

Participants support:

- Fine-grain retail formats
- A diverse tenancy mix
- Active street-level uses

Submissions emphasise the importance of maintaining a vibrant, locally driven economy.

## **Sustainability and greening outcomes**

Sustainability is a consistent theme, with strong support for:

- Urban greening and tree retention
- Climate-responsive design
- Biodiversity and habitat integration

Participants expect redevelopment to set a benchmark for sustainable and climate-resilient design.

## **Movement, access and functionality**

Submissions highlight the need to balance accessibility with place quality.

Key priorities include:

- Improved pedestrian safety and walkability
- Integration with public transport

Feedback also recognises:

- The importance of servicing and access
- The role of parking in supporting local businesses

Overall, participants support a balanced approach to movement and access.

## **Housing and social outcomes**

Many of the submissions mentioned concerns and comments around housing, although they had a variety of viewpoints. Some submissions support increased housing density, given the area's transport accessibility. Others emphasise:

- Affordable and social housing
- Diversity of housing types
- Measurable housing commitments

There is a consistent expectation that development should deliver broader social outcomes, not just additional dwellings.

## **Local character and identity**

Maintaining Carlisle Street's unique identity is a strong and consistent priority. The precinct is valued for its fine-grain shopfronts, cultural diversity and distinctive character.

There is significant concern that redevelopment could result in a generic or "soulless" outcome. Feedback highlights a clear desire to retain and strengthen a place-specific identity unique to Balaclava.

## 5.5 Summary of stakeholder meetings

Meetings were offered to community members and key stakeholder groups. Feedback from these meetings reinforced comments received via submissions and online engagement activities. Participants broadly support revitalising Balaclava if redevelopment delivers excellent design, clear community benefit, safer and greener public spaces, better connections, appropriate housing density and infrastructure, and avoids generic commercial outcomes.

### Key themes

- Design excellence and strong governance: Participants call for Balaclava to set a high standard for urban renewal, supported by design competitions, high-quality architects and independent design review.
- Community benefit over commercial outcomes: Participants generally believe redevelopment should deliver clear long-term benefits for the Balaclava community, including improved amenity, sustainability, public or community housing, and usable open space.
- Safety, walkability and how people move around the area: There is a strong focus on making the precinct safer and easier to move through, with better walkways, improved traffic management, consolidated access points and stronger connections across the precinct.
- More greening, open space and public realm improvements: Participants support more trees, water-sensitive urban design, public art and open spaces that are usable, accessible and well-integrated with the street network.
- Appropriate density and infrastructure planning: There is support for more housing if it is well designed and supported by the right infrastructure, including better parking solutions and funding for local improvements.
- Avoid poor-quality or generic development: Some participants identified other examples that are seen as poor quality to learn from and not repeat. Instead, they hope that future development would demonstrate design, sustainability and community benefit excellence.

## 6. Sentiment by gender

Analysis of feedback received via the survey shows strong alignment across genders, with participants identifying similar priorities for the Carlisle Street Activity Centre. Across all respondents, there was consistent support for improving safety, supporting local businesses, enhancing public space, and ensuring redevelopment respects the precinct's existing character.

While overall priorities were consistent, differences emerged in how participants described and emphasised these issues.

**Female respondents** tended to place greater emphasis on safety, comfort and everyday experience. Feedback more often highlighted concerns about antisocial behaviour, poor lighting and cleanliness. For example, one respondent noted that *"large sections of the area now feel dirty, unsafe and unwelcoming for residents, visitors and local traders alike,"* while another called for *"safe and well lit side streets and laneways."*

Female respondents also more frequently emphasised the importance of welcoming, inclusive environments, including spaces for social interaction and community activity, such as *"family-friendly spaces... that encourage people coming together outside."* Overall, this group more strongly highlighted how the area is experienced on a day-to-day basis.

**Male respondents**, by contrast, more often focused on function, access and economic activity. Feedback more frequently emphasised car parking, servicing and business viability, with comments such as *"car parking... is critical for a lively restaurant strip" and calls to "maintain free parking spaces... and improve access for customers."* This group was also more likely to comment on development outcomes, including built form, density and the role of major retailers, reflecting a stronger focus on how the precinct operates in practice.

Responses from participants identifying as non-binary or preferring not to say were smaller in number but aligned closely with inclusivity and community-focused themes, including the need for spaces that are welcoming and accessible to a wide range of users.