Beaumaris Concourse

Community Engagement Summary

13 October 2023

Bayside City Council

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# Background

This document provides a summary of stakeholder and community feedback on the proposed Beaumaris Concourse permanent shelter on the Green and the new Concourse gateway sign.

From its inception in September 2021, it appears that the temporary marquee on the Beaumaris Concourse has risen in popularity. Born through a desire for public open-air, sheltered gathering places after the emergence of COVID-19, the structure has evolved with the addition of picnic tables, planter boxes and lighting.

With overwhelming community and trader support for the structure to become permanent, the consultation was undertaken to seek community feedback on design concepts for the permanent shelter on the Green as well as the new Concourse gateway sign.

The gateway will define the village entrance and assist the Concourse’s one-way traffic management. The defined visual entrance to the village will add new street-front appeal, and further encourage visitation to the commercial centre.

Along with community feedback, the placemaking initiative will align with existing Council plans and policies and underpin the delivery of the project.

The consultation project included a total of 182 Have Your Say Quick Poll contributions, 50 face-to-face interactions with the community, local traders, and a range of other bodies with Council officers, 31 posts and 34 comments on Gather, and two emailed submissions direct to Council officers.

# Consultation process

## Consultation purpose

The purpose of the consultation was to understand the community’s views about the design of the Beaumaris Concourse permanent structure and the gateway signage.

## Consultation methodology

The tools and techniques selected for this project were informed by the project content, stakeholders, and type of feedback sought.

The communication program ran from the 4th to the 25th of September 2023, with the Have Your Say website open for this period.

In addition to the Face-to-Face engagement conducted on 9/9/23 and presentation to the Beaumaris traders meeting on 24/8/23, targeted communications was also sent to:

· Bayside residents

· Beaumaris Concourse Traders

· Beaumaris Conservation Society

· U3A

· Beaumaris Maternal and Child Health Centre

· Bayside advisory and representative committees:

· Disability Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee

· Reconciliation Advisory Group

· Youth Ambassador Committee

· Bayside Healthy Ageing Reference Group

· Community Action and “Friends of” groups

· Bayside City Council employees

Interested participants could also engage directly with Council through the online engagement tool Have Your Say, including the opportunity to ask questions, as well as bookable meetings with key stakeholder groups.

The survey was available in accessible formats on request.

# Participant profile

Given the nature of the activities that underpinned the consultation exercise, there was no systematic collection of the demographic and suburb profile of participants.

As a result, it is not possible to provide meaningful insight into the gender, age, and suburb breakdown of participants.

When read in conjunction with the fact that the survey was not a scientific (random sample) survey, the results of this consultation exercise can be read as an indication of the views of the Bayside community who were sufficiently engaged in the Beaumaris Concourse project to choose to participate in the consultation exercise.

The results cannot be read as a reliable estimate of the local community’s views on the project, although given the strength of the support for the design of permanent structure, it is likely that underlying community support for the project is strong.

# Consultation findings

The following section summarises the key themes which arose in community feedback on the Beaumaris Concourse and gateway signage project.

The consultation includes feedback from 299 individuals:

* 182 Have Your Say Quick Poll contributions.
* 50 Face-to-face interactions with Council officers.
* 31 posts and 34 comments on Gather.
* 2 emails direct to Council officers.

## Feedback summary – Online Survey

The following key findings were identified in the data collected from the consultation exercise:

* ***Support / Opposition to the design of the permanent structure*** - the overwhelming majority (93%) of the participants who provided direct feedback on the question reported that they liked the design of the structure, whilst seven percent did not.
* ***Preferred material for the gateway signage*** - a strong majority (69%) of the participants who provided direct feedback on the question reported that they preferred the wooden gateway signage design, whilst 31% preferred the cement design.
* ***Structure Design*** - of the 70 issues raised, the most common issues raised in relation to the design of the structure related to the preservation of greenery, flora, and fauna (9 comments), fencing and enclosure (6 comments), lighting (5 comments), seating facilities (4 comments), and the material used for paths (4 comments).
* ***Structure Fit-out*** - of the 169 issues raised, the most common issues raised in relation to the fit-out of the structure related to preference for picnic tables and seating facilities (37 comments), retractable walls (26 comments), planter boxes (23 comments), and water fountains (21 comments).
* ***Structure Use*** – of the 56 issues raised, the most common issues raised in relation to the use of the structure related to coffee and lunch (15 comments), catching up with family and friends (10 comments), events (3 comments), and as a meeting hub (3 comments).

## Support for actions

The key finding from the consultation exercise was that the overwhelming majority (93%) of participants liked the design of the structure, and a strong majority (69%) preferred the wooden gateway signage design.

## Item-specific feedback

The consultation exercise focused on four key areas, support/opposition to the design of the structure, preferred material for the gateway signage, feedback on the design of the structure, the fit-out of the structure, and use of the structure as follows:

### Support / Opposition to the design of the structure

Of the 239 participants, 93% supported the design of the permanent structure and seven percent opposed the design.



### Preferred material for the gateway signage

Of the 237 participants who provided feedback on this question, a little more than two-thirds (69%) preferred wooden gateway signage, and 31% preferred cement.



### Feedback on the design of the permanent structure

A total of 50 participants, or 86% of those who were asked to provide feedback, provided feedback on the design of the permanent structure, providing a total of 70 separately categorised issues. These issues are summarised in the following table, with the verbatim comments available on request.

The most common issues raised by participants related to the need to preserve greenery, flora, and fauna in the area (9 comments), fencing and enclosure (6 comments), and lighting (5 comments).

It is noted that there were 31 separately categorised issues raised, with many being raised by just one or two participants.



### Feedback on the fit-out of the permanent structure

A total of 159 comments were received from participants in relation to the fit-out of permanent structure. It was not possible to calculate the total number of participants who provided feedback on the fit-out, due to the method by which the information was collected.

Participants to the face-to-face consultations were asked to select which of picnic tables / seating facilities, retractable walls, planter boxes, and water fountains that they would prefer to see provided. These pre-coded options were not provided for the Gather participants or the email participants.

This clearly has the effect of over-representing potential support for these aspects of the fit-out over other issues that were raised proactively by participants, including dog amenities and issues around cleaning and maintenance.



### Feedback on the use of the permanent structure

A total of 34 participants, or 42% of those who were asked to provide feedback, provided feedback on the use of the permanent structure, providing a total of 56 separately categorised issues. These issues are summarised in the following table, with the verbatim comments available on request.

The most common uses for the permanent structure were for coffee / lunch (15 comments) and catching up with family and / or friends (10 comments).



## Project Evaluation

The various consultation exercises that underpinned this consultation program were a useful tool to provide residents with an interest in the Beaumaris Concourse to provide feedback to Council on the design, fit-out, and use of the permanent structure, as well as preferred construction of the gateway signage.

It is important to bear in mind that the results are not a scientific poll of underlying community sentiment in relation to the Beaumaris Concourse, however, given the level of participant support for the permanent structure, it is reasonable to surmise strong general community support for the project.