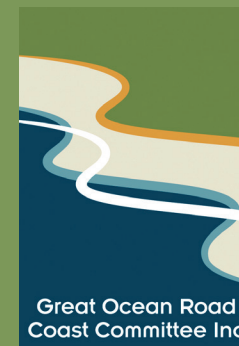




ERSKINE RIVER PRECINCT MASTERPLAN Consultation Report

STAGE 2 - (HELD OVER JULY 2013)



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Part of the Erskine River Precinct.

1. Executive Summary

This report details the results of consultation activities undertaken in July 2013 as part of the second stage of consultation for input into the development of the Erskine River Precinct Masterplan. The objective of the consultation process was to gain feedback on the 'Issues and Opportunities Summary' which detailed issues and opportunities associated with the precinct.

Feedback was collated via a survey which was made available both online and in hard copy. The Issues and Opportunities Summary was available for viewing both online and in hard copy at the GORCC Office, the Lorne Foreshore Caravan Park Office and at 'listening posts' which were held outside the Lorne Foodworks Supermarket from 10am-3pm on Friday 5 July and Sunday 7 July 2013. In total, 45 surveys were completed. Key themes emerging from the survey responses received were:

- Overall, the majority of respondents (72%) indicated that they were very satisfied or satisfied with the issues and opportunities presented.
- Overall, only 2% of respondents indicated that they felt 'neutral' and only 6% indicated that they felt 'unsatisfied' with the issues and opportunities presented.
- No respondents indicated that they were 'very unsatisfied' with the issues and opportunities presented.
- The majority of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the majority of 'thought starters' proposed in the Issues and Opportunities Summary (i.e. over 50% of all respondents definitely or somewhat agreed with 12 of the 19 'thought starters' presented).
- The issues or opportunities that the highest proportion of respondents agreed with (i.e. where the respondent indicated that they 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed') were:
 - » 16. "Existing swing bridge is an iconic landscape feature in Lorne. Opportunity to improve pedestrian links in and around the bridge and ensure the asset is maintained for future use." (97% agreement).
 - » 2. "The upper north bank of the Erskine River is currently used for material storage and maintenance. Opportunity to upgrade the area and the former Lorne quarry to provide improved public access to the area." (92% agreement)
- There were also five other issues and opportunities which received over 80% agreement. These were numbers 4 (87%), 15 (87%), 1 (84%), 3 (84%) and 10 (84%) and several that received over 70% agreement.
- The issue or opportunity that had the highest percentage of respondents who disagreed or strongly disagreed with it was number 21 which referred to the Top Bank Caravan Park and stated "Seasonal camping area. Opportunity to explore the potential for camping areas to provide resident and tourist benefits during low use periods." However, only 24% of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with this issue.
- 'Thought starters that received the highest level of agreement included:
 - » 16. "Should a picnic area be retained at the headland overlooking the water, beach and swing bridge?" (92%).
 - » 4. "Should the quarry become a destination along a walking trail featuring stories of the quarry history and the local environment? Weeds would be removed and the area could be revegetated." (83%)
 - » 2. "Should the east bank of the Erskine River become a more natural area with a walking trail and revegetation?" (81%)

The feedback received will be considered in the development of a draft plan for the precinct, which will be released in January 2014.

2. Introduction

The Great Ocean Road Coast Committee (GORCC) is undertaking a masterplanning process for the Erskine River Precinct in Lorne. As part of the planning process, extensive consultation with key stakeholders and the broader community will take place over three stages. This report details the results of the second stage consultation which was held during July 2013 to gain feedback on the Issues and Opportunities Summary..

3. About the Erskine River Precinct Masterplan

The Erskine River Precinct Masterplan will provide GORCC and the community with a vision and management directions for the precinct into the future.

The planning process is expected to take approximately 18 months, with a final Master Plan to be adopted in mid 2014. GORCC is overseeing the project with specialist support from planning consultants led by Insight Leisure Planning.

The precinct is located on Crown land and includes the areas on each side of the Erskine River, from its mouth to the sea upstream to the old Lorne quarry. The precinct includes a number of activities and land uses including:

- The Erskine River Environs.
- The old Lorne Quarry site.
- The Swing Bridge (and associated cafe).
- The GORCC Lorne Works Depot.
- The Lorne Supermarket.
- Caravan Parks (i.e. Ocean Road, Kia Ora, Erskine River, Top Bank).

Detailed consideration of the river itself, including its water quality, is outside the scope of this project as its management is not within GORCC's responsibility. Additionally, the caravan parks in and around the Erskine River Precinct have their own Masterplan already in place. Therefore, this project does not include detailed consideration of the internal workings and layout of the parks, rather the focus will be on how each park can best be integrated with the broader precinct.

More information on the project is available at www.gorcc.com.au.

4. The Issues and Opportunities Summary

The Issues and Opportunities Summary detailed the issues and opportunities identified for the precinct through the project so far, along with summaries of background investigations and information which will influence the development of the masterplan.

The document discussed the context, previous consultation findings and planning framework and put forward issues, opportunities and 'thought starters' for the future of the precinct.

5. Consultation activities

5.1 Community Survey

Feedback on the Issues and Opportunities Summary was sought via a survey which was made available both online and in hard copy. 45 respondents submitted a

5.2 Listening posts

'Listening posts' were held outside the Lorne Foodworks Supermarket from 10am-3pm on Friday 5 July and Sunday 7 July 2013 in order to alert community members to the project, provide an opportunity for face to face discussion and to gather feedback.

6. Promotion of consultation activities

Opportunities for the community to get involved in the consultation activities conducted were promoted via the following:

- Updates sent via email and post to subscribers (210 subscribers).
- GORCC E-Newsletter (1500 subscribers).
- Emails to Lorne Foreshore Caravan Park campers.
- Letters to Lorne community organisations and groups.
- Media release gaining coverage in local newspapers.
- Information on the GORCC website.
- Posters displayed across the Lorne Foreshore Caravan Park and Lorne township.
- Public notices in the Echo, the Geelong Advertiser and the Surf Coast Times.
- Social media notifications – GORCC Facebook and Twitter.

7. Survey results

7.1 Who we heard from

- The majority of respondents were aged 55-64 years old (47%), followed by 45-54 (18%), 35-44 (16%) and 16-24 (13%) (see Figure 1 below).
- There were more male respondents (68.9%) than female (31%).
- The majority of respondents were from Lorne (40%), Melbourne (27%) and other areas (Victoria) (16%). This was followed by Geelong (9%) and Colac (6%).

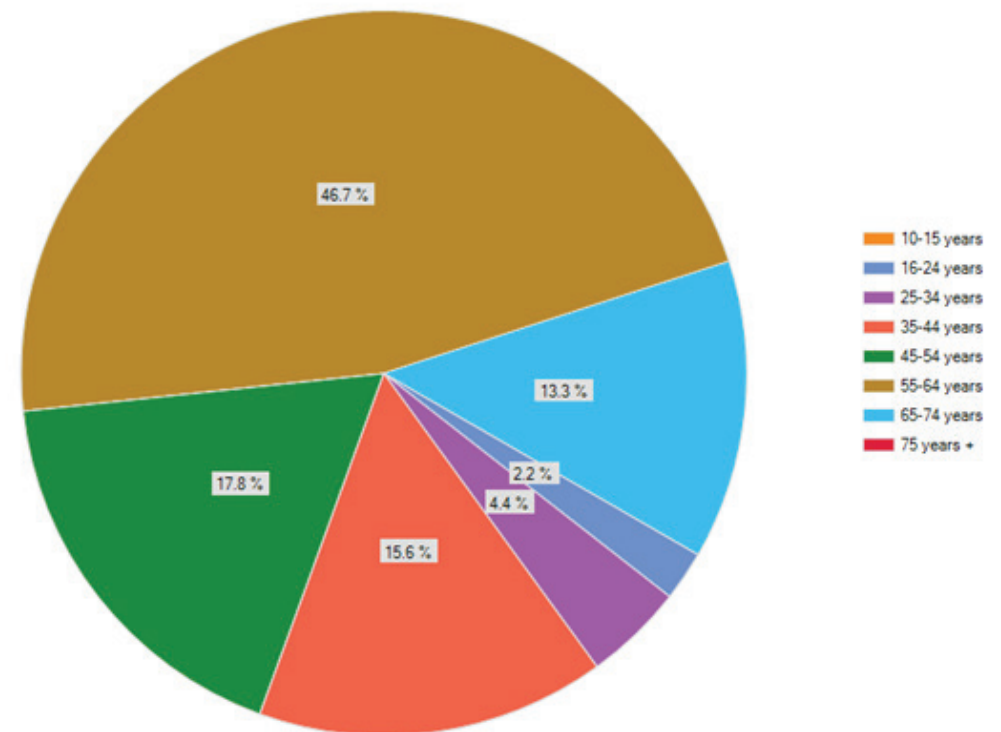


Figure.1. Age range of survey respondents.

- The majority of respondents were permanent residents of Lorne (42%).
- A large proportion of respondents were regular campers (31%) or holiday home owners (16%).
- One fifth (20%) of respondents identified as regular visitors to Lorne.
- Slightly over 13% of respondents were Lorne business owners.
- The majority of respondents were members of a local community group or club (57.8%). The main groups identified were the Lorne Aquatic and Angling Club (22%), Surf Club (14%), Friends of Lorne (11%), Football Club (6%), Historical Society (6%), LBTA (6%) and the Committee for Lorne (6%).

7.2 What we heard

7.2.1 How strongly respondents agreed or disagreed with the issues and opportunities presented.

Respondents were asked to indicate how strongly they agreed or disagreed with a range of suggested issues and opportunities associated with the Erskine River Precinct.

The majority of respondents 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' with all of the issues and opportunities presented with the exception of issue number 20. 40% of respondents were neutral on issue 20 which stated that the "waste dump located near the existing toilet block is desirable for use by recreation vehicles".

The issues or opportunities that the highest proportion of respondents agreed with (i.e. where the respondent indicated that they 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed') were:

- 16. "Existing swing bridge is an iconic landscape feature in Lorne. Opportunity to improve pedestrian links in and around the bridge and ensure the asset is maintained for future use." (97%)
- 2. "The upper north bank of the Erskine River is currently used for material storage and maintenance. Opportunity to upgrade the area and the former Lorne quarry to provide improved public access to the area." (92%)
- 4. "The existing depot is located in a visually prominent location. There is an opportunity to explore alternative uses for this high profile site or strategies which may reduce the visual impact of the buildings and storage areas." (87%)
- 15. "Opportunity to reduce signage clutter and enhance the appearance of the Lorne inner gateway." (87%)
- 1. "The transition from the urbanised areas to the bush is a characteristic of the Erskine River environs. Opportunity for improved, publicly accessible, pedestrian connections and revegetation of degraded areas." (84%)
- 3. "Opportunity to enhance the existing rapid walk. This could include improved legibility of the trail starting point, better separation between the trail and camping areas, improved signage, revegetation works and the potential realignment or duplication of the trail on the northern bank." (84%)
- 10. "Pedestrian and vehicle circulation conflicts and confusion along Erskine Avenue (which is not a defined road reserve). Opportunity to explore options which address pedestrian and vehicle circulation including seasonal modifications." (84%).

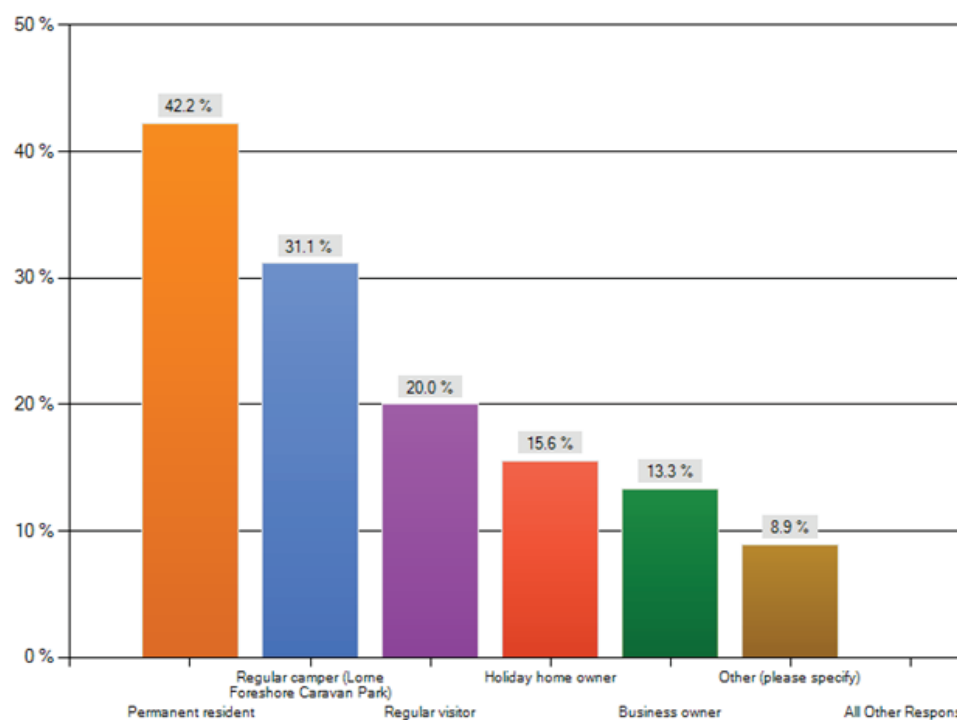


Figure.2. Primary place of residence of survey respondents.

The issues or opportunities that the highest proportion of respondents disagreed with were 5 (18%), 6 (23%), 7 (21%) and 21 (24%). Below is an exploration of some of the comments made by respondents regarding these issues or opportunities:

- Issue 5 referred to the Kia Ora Caravan Park and stated “The entrance to the Kia Ora caravan park is not very welcoming and lacks an identity. Opportunity to explore modifications to the entrance and the surrounding area to improve the visual appearance of the caravan park.” Comments made by respondents on this issue included:
 - » “Avoid signage clutter.”
 - » “Must be done tastefully.”
 - » “Do not over develop.”
 - » “Replace/reinstate former signage (arch).”
 - » “Not considered a critical issue.”
- Issue 6 referred to the shopping precinct adjacent to the Kia Ora Caravan Park and stated “Consider opportunities for heritage ‘themeing’ of the shopping area through signage/naming.” Comments made by respondents on this issue included:
 - » “This is not Disneyland.”
 - » “Depends on how heritage is defined.”
 - » “Existing character is appropriate.”
 - » “Do not overly develop.”
 - » “Not considered a critical issue.”
- Issue 7 referred to the car parking area near Kia Ora Caravan Park and the GORCC Depot and stated “Opportunity for car park to be used as a small market site/art stalls. Consider extending car parking to 2 hours.” Comments made by respondents on this issue included:
 - » “Parking is already at a premium here.”
 - » “Do not extend parking limit.”
 - » “Area is too small for a market.”
 - » “Do not compete with existing businesses.”
- Issue 21 referred to the Top Bank Caravan Park and stated “Seasonal camping area. Opportunity to explore the potential for camping areas to provide resident and tourist benefits during low use periods.” Comments made by respondents on this issue included:
 - » “Support greater use of Lone Paddock area.”
 - » “Do not support camping or use of the former quarry (concerned about noise issues).”

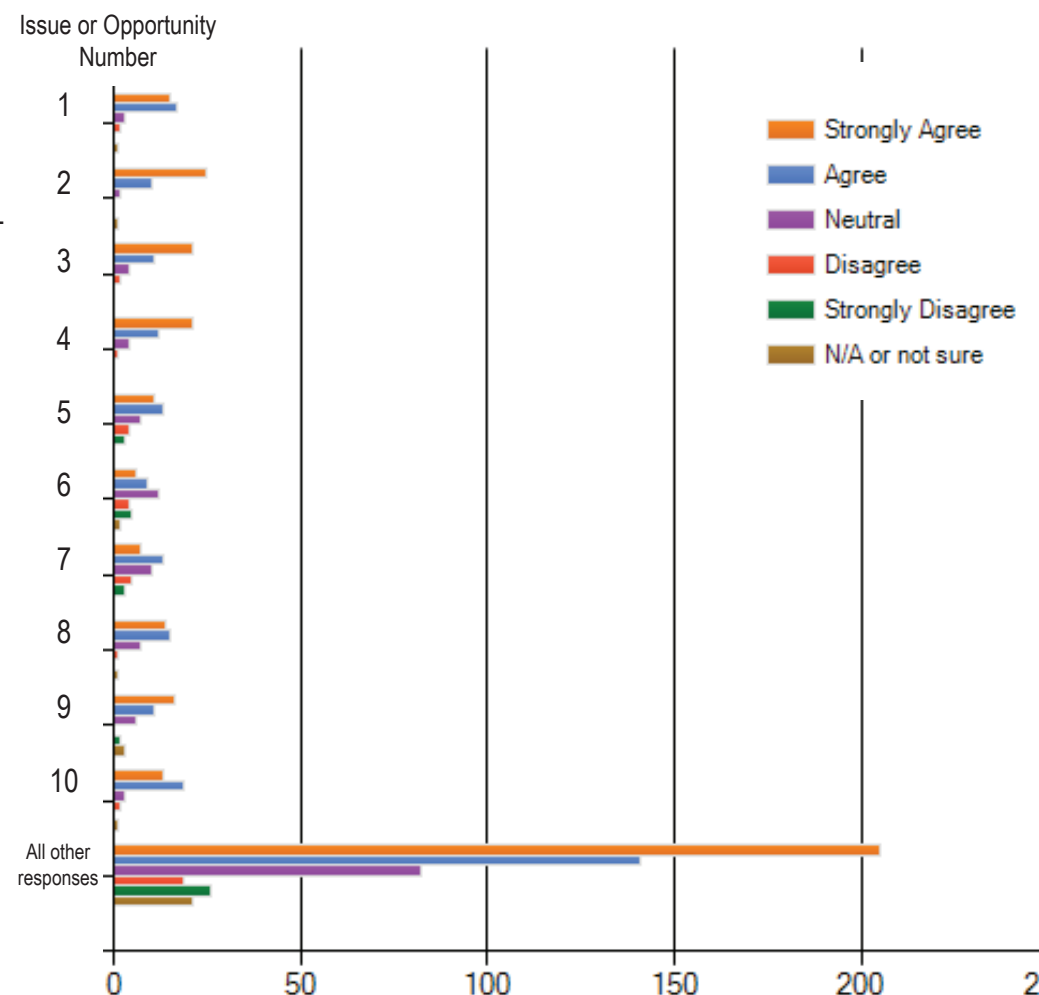


Figure.3.How strongly respondents agreed or disagreed with issues and opportunities presented.

7.2.2 Other issues and opportunities suggested by respondents.

A number of comments were made in relation to possible other issues and opportunities that could be considered in the masterplan. Some of the key suggestions received were:

- Support a mix of vegetation character, including preservation of existing exotic trees (pines).
- Repair the Swing Bridge as an urgent priority.
- Minimise signage.
- Improve vehicle turning and parking options for caravans.
- Support improved pedestrian connections and access.
- Do not support additional shops or commercial facilities at the entrance to Lorne.
- Do not overly develop.
- Keep the 'peak' period in perspective.
- Consider additional public toilets at the Visitor Information Centre.
- Protect the existing character of Lorne.

7.2.3 How strongly respondents agreed or disagreed with the 'thought starters' presented in the Issues and Opportunities Summary.

Respondents were asked to indicate how strongly they agreed or disagreed with a range of 'thought starter' statements associated with the Erskine River Precinct. See Figure 4 below for full results.

The majority of respondents agreed with the majority of thought starters presented (i.e. over 50% of all respondents "definitely" or "somewhat" agreed with 12 of the 19 thought starters).

Items that received the highest level of agreement were:

- 16. "Should a picnic area be retained at the headland overlooking the water, beach and swing bridge?" (92%)
- 4. "Should the quarry become a destination along a walking trail featuring stories of the quarry history and the local environment? Weeds would be removed and the area could be revegetated" (83%)
- 2. "Should the east bank of the Erskine River become a more natural area with a walking trail and revegetation?" (81%)

- 13. "Should the former quarry be developed to accommodate seasonal or group camping and special events e.g. performance space, art installations etc.?" (81%)
- 15. "Should the walking trail be extended along the edge of the Erskine River with additional fishing spots?" (69%)
- 1. "Would a pedestrian bridge across the River improve connections to the rapids and provide a desirable river loop trail?" (69%)
- 11. "Does the parking between the supermarket and Erskine River need to become more formal to increase parking and creation a pedestrian trail?" (67%)
- 3. "Are improvements to pedestrian connections across the Great Ocean Road and parking area next to the supermarket needed?" (67%)
- 7. "Should the area near the Tourist Information Centre be upgraded?" (57%)
- 12. "Should the parking and check in areas near the booking office be modified to assist with relieving traffic congestion during peak periods?" (56%)
- 17. "How many car parks are needed in this area? Is the current number of spaces about right?" (56%)
- 9. "The existing car park and road network is inefficient. Is a new, more efficient car park included." (50.0%).

'Thought starters' that received the highest level of disagreement (i.e. over 50% combined of respondents indicated that they definitely or somewhat disagreed with the statement) were:

- 5. "Is a building between the supermarket and motel with associated car parking a good addition to add to the Lorne inner gateway? The building could include ground floor retail and upper level, short term accommodation." (78%)
- 10. "Is the east side of Erskine River an area for more formal pedestrian and vehicle access? Is it a good location for cabins?" (61%)
- 19. "Should seasonal camping be moved to the 'Lorne Paddock' area near Mantra?" (56%)
- 18. "Should the existing road (i.e. Cypress Avenue) be downgraded to a shared trail for pedestrian and bikes only linking the swing bridge to the main beach area and beyond to Point Grey?" (56%)

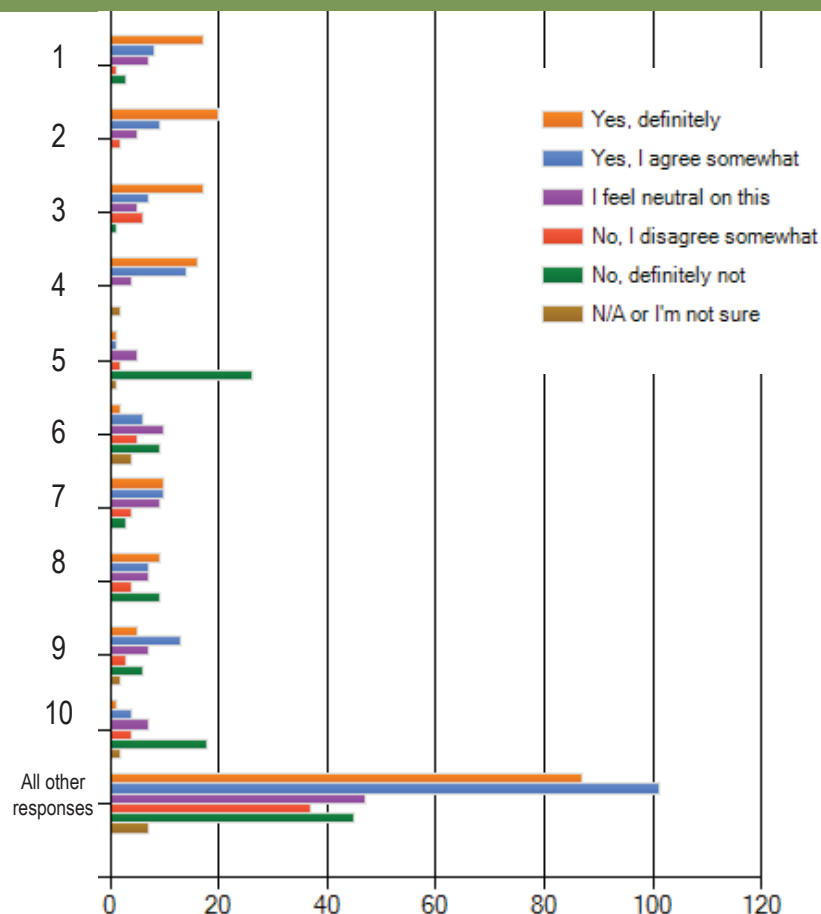


Figure.4. How strongly respondents agreed or disagreed with the 'thought starters' presented.

7.2.4 Overall satisfaction with the issues and opportunities presented in the Issues and Opportunities Summary.

Almost three quarters of respondents (72%) indicated that they were "very satisfied" or "satisfied" with the issues and opportunities presented.

Around one fifth (2%) were "neutral" and only 6% were "unsatisfied". No respondents were "very unsatisfied."

See Figure. 5 opposite for a graph displaying these results.

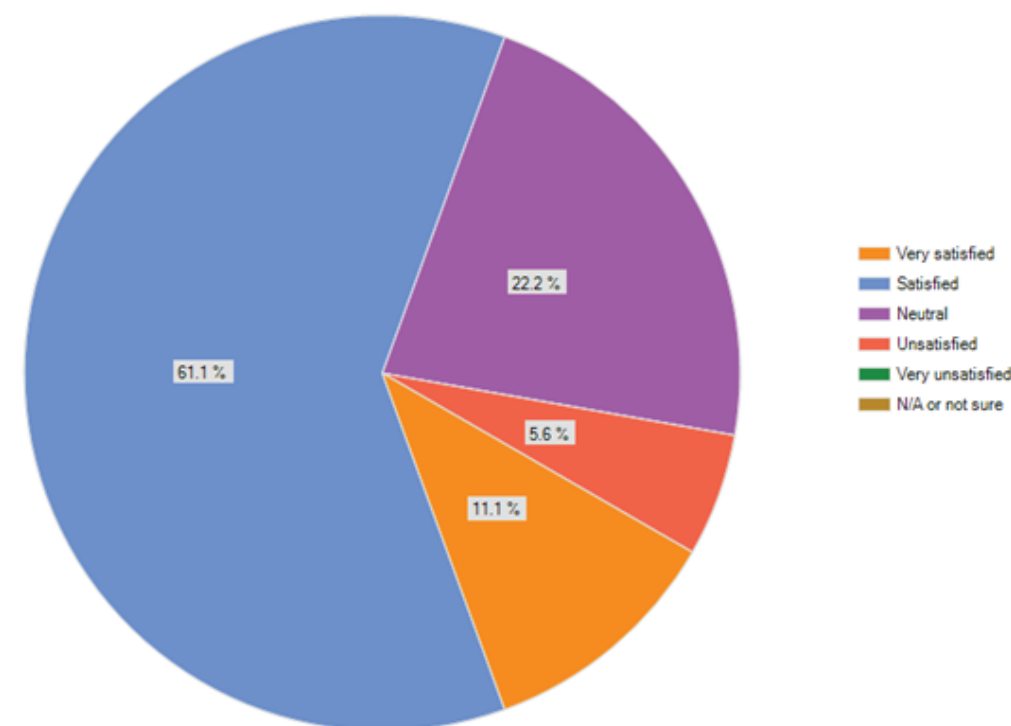


Figure.5. Overall satisfaction with the issues and opportunities presented

7.2.5 Other comments

Other comments or suggestions provided by respondents included:

- "Fix the Swing Bridge ASAP."
- "Consider options to accommodate permanent sculptures and public art."
- "Car parking will always be an issue in Lorne."
- "Do not destroy the ambience and character of Lorne."
- "Do not modernise Lorne."
- "Do not overly develop for a relatively short peak-period."
- "Traffic management through Lorne is a bigger issue than the scope of this master plan."
- "Improve pedestrian infrastructure and safety throughout the area."

8. Next steps

All comments received as part of the second stage of consultation period will be used to inform the preparation of draft master plan for the precinct. It is expected the draft master plan will then be released for consultation in January 2014 to coincide with the peak visitor period (when most people are in Lorne).

Following this third and final stage of consultation, all feedback received will be considered in the development of a final version of the masterplan.

INDICATIVE PROJECT TIMELINE:

(Subject to change)

October 2012 - December 2013	Initial research.
January 2013 - February 2013	First phase of consultation - Initial input into planning process sought.
March 2013 - May 2013	Consideration of feedback and development of an Issues and Opportunities Paper.
July 2013	Second phase of consultation - feedback sought on Issues and Opportunities Paper.
July - December 2013	Consideration of feedback and development of a draft plan
January 2014	Third phase of consultation - feedback on the draft plan
February - March 2014	Consideration of feedback and preparation of the final masterplan
April 2014 onwards	Approval process