



APPENDIX 2-3

COMMUNITY SURVEY – 1ST PUBLIC CONSULTATION FEEDBACK REPORT



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Community Survey – 1st Public Consultation Feedback Report

The Hodson Bay
Waterfront Park Project





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1.

INTRODUCTION

This Consultation Report has been prepared to detail the Community Survey process undertaken to provide an opportunity for all interested community and stakeholder groups to engage in the design process for the development of the Hodson Bay Waterfront Park Project at Hodson Bay, Co. Roscommon. Roscommon County Council (RCC) has progressed the design and development of the Hodson Bay Waterfront Park to develop a flagship tourism facility for the Hodson Bay area. The development of the Hodson Bay Waterfront Park would consist of four elements:

1. **Water Sports Pavillion** – A new landmark building offering a café, changing facilities, wellness and meeting spaces, and potentially an accessible roof terrace.
2. **Marina Redevelopment** – Expansion of the existing marina to approximately 50 berths, new pontoons, and improved amenities for boat users.
3. **Public Realm** – Creation of a continuous lakeside promenade, plaza, and landscaped play, picnic, and event areas.
4. **Sustainable Transport** – Active travel improvements, traffic calming on the L2020 local road, and reorganisation of car parking to improve visitor experience and safety.

This report has been prepared to capture the feedback provided by the public on a Community Survey which was launched as part of the first public consultation process and remained available to the public between the 23rd of October and the 14th of November 2025. The public consultation web page on the RCC website provided the necessary materials such as the design options for the various elements of the proposed Hodson Bay Waterfront Park, to support the survey respondents in providing feedback. The feedback received will further inform the design for this project.

This report sets out the consultation methods undertaken as part of the first public consultation and a summary of results from the Community Survey.

2.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION METHODS

As part of the process for the design of the Hodson Bay Waterfront Park, the design team is engaging with various stakeholders through a comprehensive public consultation process.

The first public consultation event was held in-person on the 23rd of October 2025 between 14:00 and 19:00 at the Hodson Bay Hotel. The event was attended by representatives from the project team. This event was well attended by members of the public with over 135 people attending the in-person event. A Community Survey was also launched on the 23rd of October 2025 to provide an opportunity for people to engage with the process and express their views on the proposed plans for the Hodson Bay Waterfront Park Project. The Community Survey was open for feedback for a period of 3 weeks between 23rd October and 14th of November 2025.

To inform the local community of the public consultation event, advertisements were placed in newspapers and flyers were distributed to local residents, businesses and schools. An electronic copy of the flyer was additionally emailed to relevant local businesses, local schools and relevant community groups and organisations. RCC also published press releases, before, on the day and after the event, to keep the public informed about the process and progress of the public consultation event.

The project team have reviewed the responses to the Community Survey, and an analysis of these responses is outlined in this report.

3.

FEEDBACK AT THE PUBLIC CONSULTATION EVENT

This section sets out the feedback received at the first public consultation event which took place in-person at the Hodson Bay Hotel on the 23rd of October 2025. The event was attended by representatives from the project team to explain the design options and answer any questions from the public on the proposed design options. This event was well attended by members of the public, with over 135 people attending the event.

The project team recorded all the feedback, suggestions and concerns raised by the community at the in-person event. Generally, feedback from the public was positive, supporting improvement to amenities and infrastructure at Hodson Bay. An overview of the feedback / opinion from the local community have been reviewed and identified under the following themes:

Traffic - It was noted that Hodson Bay currently experiences congestion and there were concerns about how the increase in vehicles would be managed, particularly in relation to congestion due to the level crossing being closed as a train passes. The local community generally supported traffic calming measures although there were some concerns over the narrowing of the L2020 local road.

Parking - Parking was a core concern for many of the attendees, with some supporting the proposed amendments to the parking while others opposed to moving the car parking away from the hotel entrance. There were also concerns over the acquisition of lands from the golf club to accommodate the car parking amendments. Attendees requested that campervan parking is facilitated and there should be adequate turning space for boats.

Landscape and Visual - Attendees wanted more information on how the proposals would change the appearance of Hodson Bay.

General / Overall Feedback - There were a range of other comments recorded throughout the public consultation process relating to existing pollution issues in the lake, the impact of the developments on Hodson Bay Hotel and the impact on the location of the Sports Building on Baysports during the construction phase. Attendees also requested that footpaths are developed between Hodson Bay and nearby local schools and that basic changing facilities are incorporated into the northern green area for lake swimmers.

4.

FEEDBACK FROM COMMUNITY SURVEY

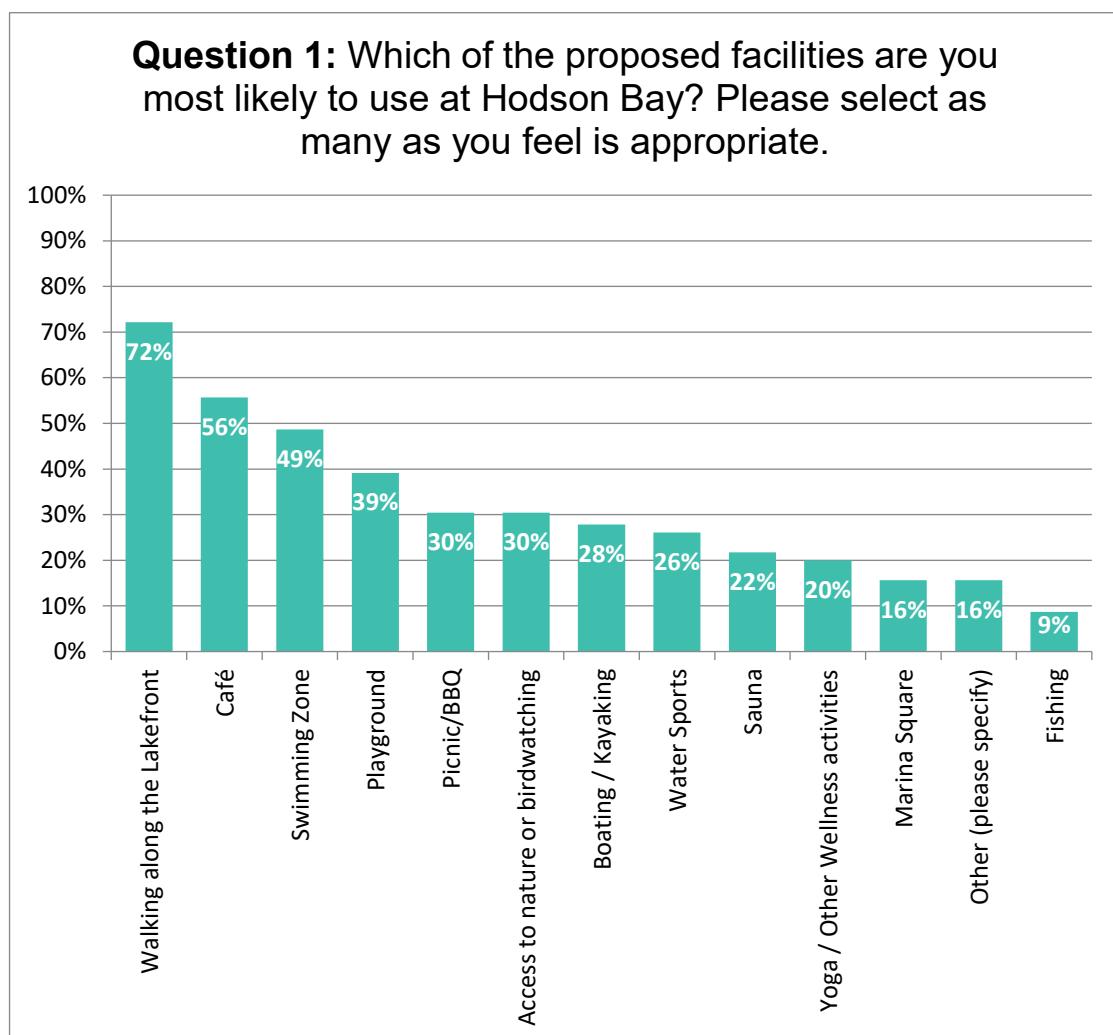
This section examines the results of the Community Survey, which was launched on the 23rd of October 2025 and remained open for 3 weeks until 14th November 2025 to provide sufficient opportunity for the public to express their views. The Community Survey recorded a total of 115 responses.

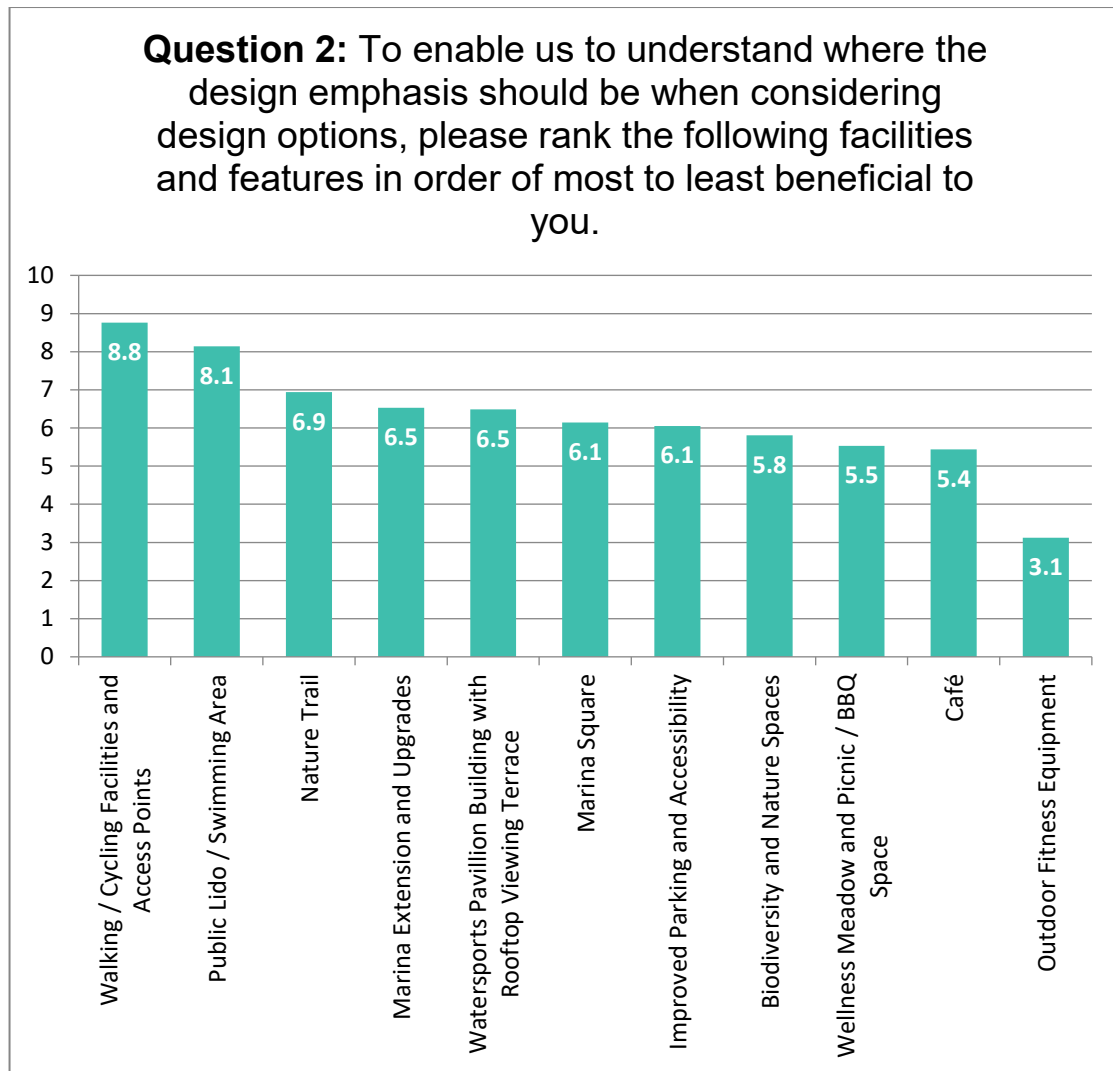
The Survey included questions centred around the following themes:

- Use of and Support for the Proposed Facilities
- Design Options / Preference of Amenities and Facilities
- Transport and Travel
- Accessibility
- Safety

4.1

Use of and Support for the Proposed Facilities





The first two questions of the Community Survey focused on understanding the type of facilities people would prefer or would be most likely to use from within the proposed scheme. While the first question focused on all the facilities that the respondents would be most likely to use, the second question emphasised more on the ranking of the facilities in order of how beneficial these facilities would be to the respondent personally.

The overall feedback in relation to the facilities people would most likely use within the proposed development included - Walking along the Lakefront (72%), which was a top preference, followed by the Café (56%), Swimming Zone (49%) and the Playground (39%), and access to Nature / Birdwatching and Picnic/BBQ were viewed on par at 30% (top 5 preferences). Water sports facilities like boating and kayaking were also mentioned as preferred by around 28% of the respondents.

When this is compared to ranking the proposed features in order of what the respondents found most beneficial to them, there were some similarities, in that, people preferred to have more Walking / Cycling facilities, Public Lido / Swimming Areas, and Nature Trails. While Marina Extension and Upgrades and the Water Sports Pavillion Building ranked almost equal in preference (at top 4), the café and outdoor fitness features have been ranked as least beneficial.

Question 2: To enable us to understand where the design emphasis should be when considering design options, please rank the following facilities and features in order of most to least beneficial to you.



Note: Some ranks are not labelled on this graph due to the small percentage of respondents who chose this rank.

4.2 Design Options / Preference of Amenities and Facilities

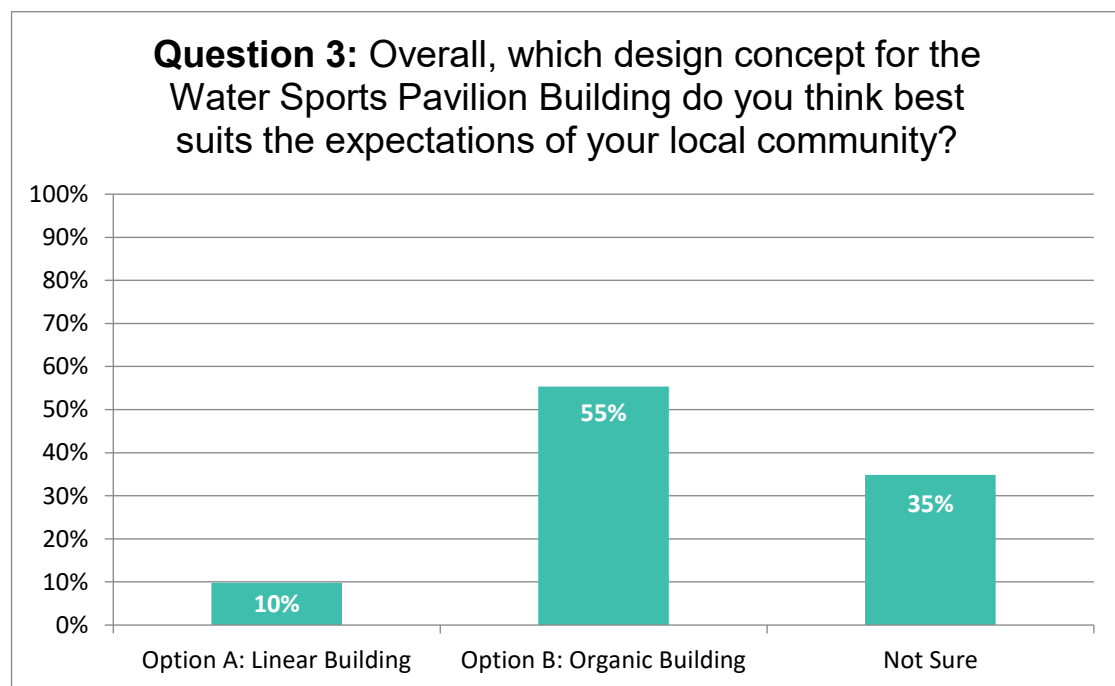
This section of the survey questions focused on the design options for the various elements of the proposed development and invited the respondents to provide constructive feedback on their preference and what works for the local community.

4.2.1 Water Sports Pavillion

The design options for this element of the proposal included for two options - A Linear Building Option and an Organic Building Option.

The majority of respondents (55%) preferred the Organic Building Design Option. Feedback from respondents that preferred the Organic Building Option were of the opinion / view that the organic design would fit better within the natural landscape at the lakeshore. The curved design of the building would better integrate with the form of the lake as opposed to the right angles of the Linear Building design which many respondents found jarring against the water's edge.

Some respondents also noted that while they preferred the Organic Building option, they did not want the building to dominate the lakeshore. There was generally a positive response to the inclusion of a publicly accessible roof terrace.



Some meaningful quotes from respondents who favoured this option are included in Figure 4-1.

The Linear Building design was less popular amongst respondents, with only 10% of respondents choosing this design. Respondents who preferred this design primarily stated that they felt it would be a cheaper design to construct and would be a more functional space.

It is noted that almost 35% of the respondents were not sure of which design option they preferred. There were many reasons recorded from these respondents which included some objections to including a water sports facility at Hodson Bay. While some respondents expressed that they did not want the water sports building to be at the centre of the lakefront, other respondents were worried about the impact of the development of the building in general on the natural environment including on biodiversity and flood risk. Overall, while some of the respondents albeit expressed concerns, this was more in relation to the impacts

on the natural environment and therefore the conservation / preservation of the area its features and character. There were also some concerns around access to the waterfront during the construction stages.

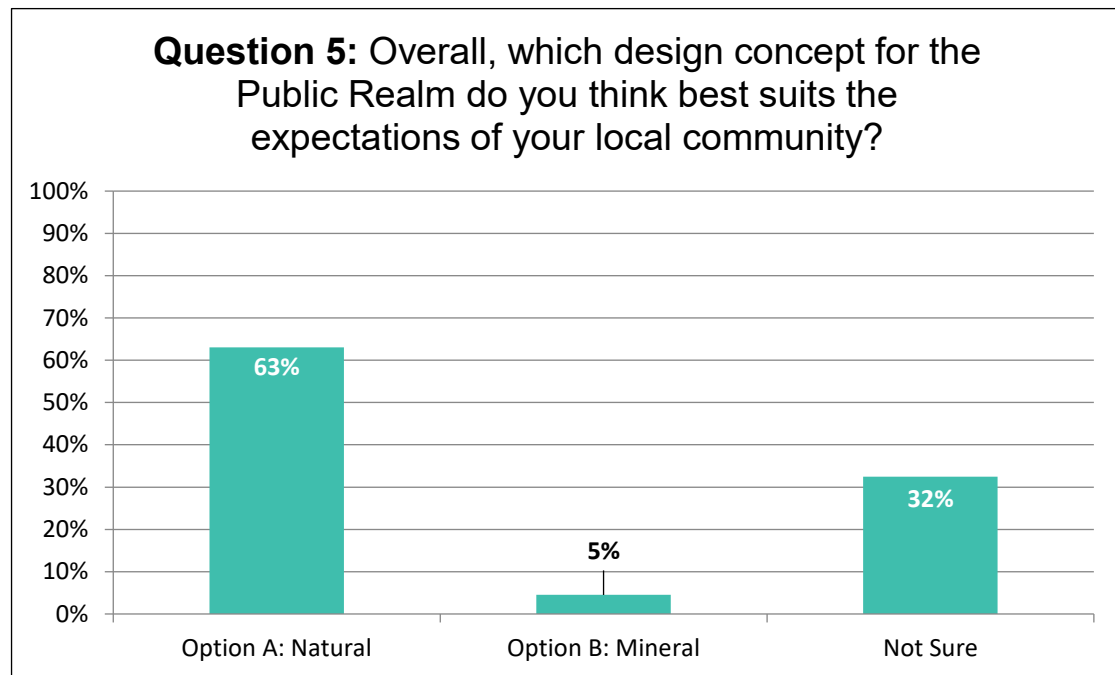


Figure 4-1 Quotes from respondents who preferred the Organic Building Design

4.2.2

Public Realm

The Design Options for this element of the proposal included for two options - A Natural Option and A Mineral Option.



The majority of respondents (63%) preferred the Natural Public Realm Design Option. The respondents that chose the natural option highlighted that the design blended in better with the surrounding environment and would provide a better connection with nature. Most respondents expressed that they want the public realm to be as green as possible, with many of respondents suggesting that prioritisation of biodiversity and the natural environment within the green space is key.

Some meaningful quotes from respondents who favoured this option are included in Figure 4-2.

Only a fraction of the respondents (5%) preferred the Mineral public realm design. One of respondents who preferred this option stated they felt it would be easier to maintain than the Natural Design Option.

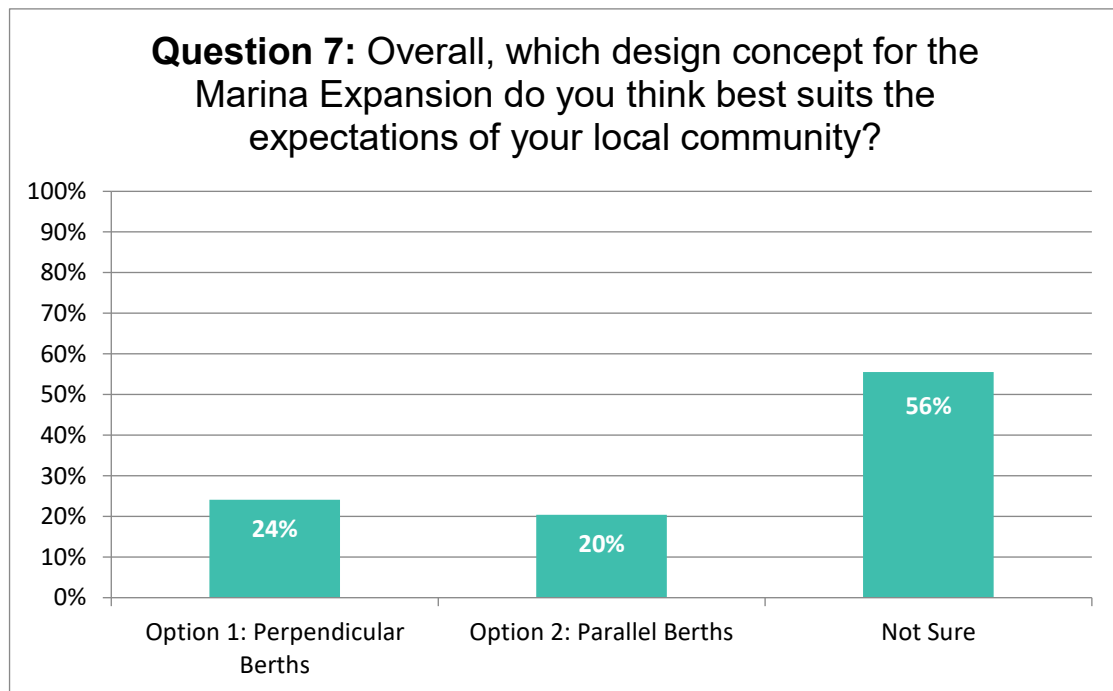
Most of the respondents who stated they were not sure, expressed they would like to see a mix of the Natural and the Mineral design approach including a mix of paved paths and a paved square but where the emphasis is primarily on a more natural design.



Figure 4-2 Quotes from respondents who preferred the Natural Public Realm Design

4.2.3 Marina

The Design Options for this element of the proposal included for two options - Perpendicular Berths Option and Parallel Berths Option.



The Design Options for the Marina Extension received mixed opinion / feedback from the public. The Perpendicular Berths Option received a slightly higher percentage of the vote (24%) as opposed to 20% who selected the Parallel Berths Option. Most of the respondents (56%) stated they were not sure which option they preferred. The main reasons noted by the respondents for not being sure of the Marina Extension design was mainly due to the existing berths being underutilised. The respondents felt that an extension was not required or that they were not sure which option would be an optimal design option.

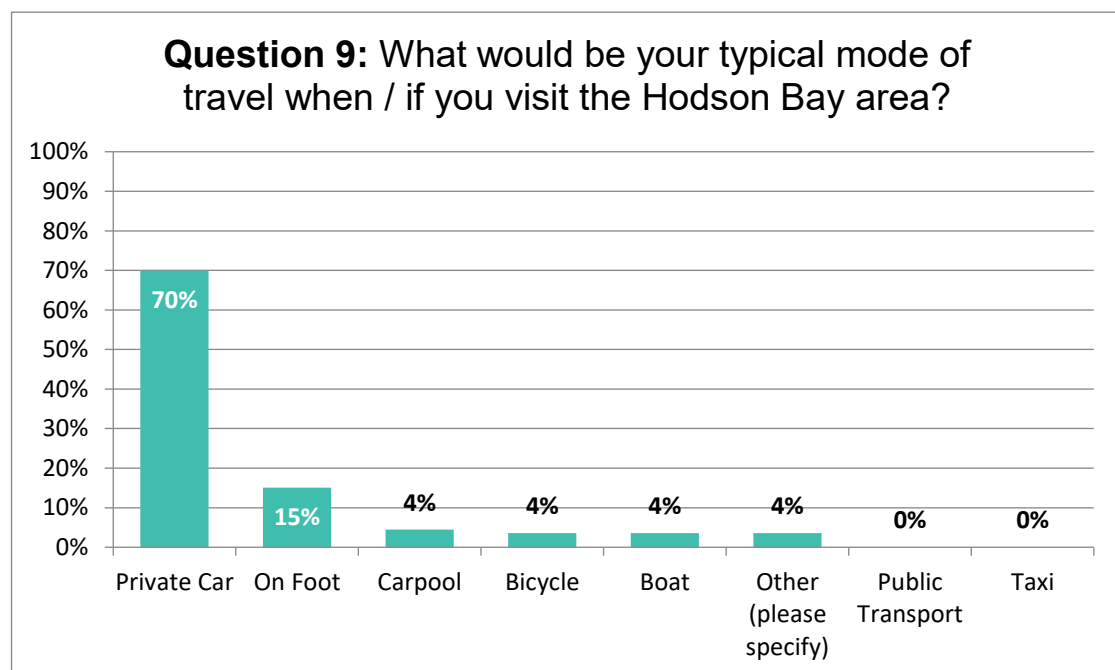
The primary reason for choosing the perpendicular berths option related to the appearance of the berths within the landscape. Some of the respondents also stated they liked the route this option provided for walking within the Marina, while others stated that this option would provide easy manoeuvre for boats and that this option offered more privacy. Some respondents also stated that within the perpendicular berths, the boats would be less likely to rock than within the Parallel Berths.

Similar reasoning was recorded by respondents that preferred the parallel berths option who primarily favoured this option for its appearance within the landscape. Many respondents stated they thought this option would provide more flexibility for the movement of boats than offered by the Perpendicular Berths Option. Respondents also noted that although they preferred this option, it is suggested that a solid breakwater structure would provide for a marina that would be less susceptible to weather events.

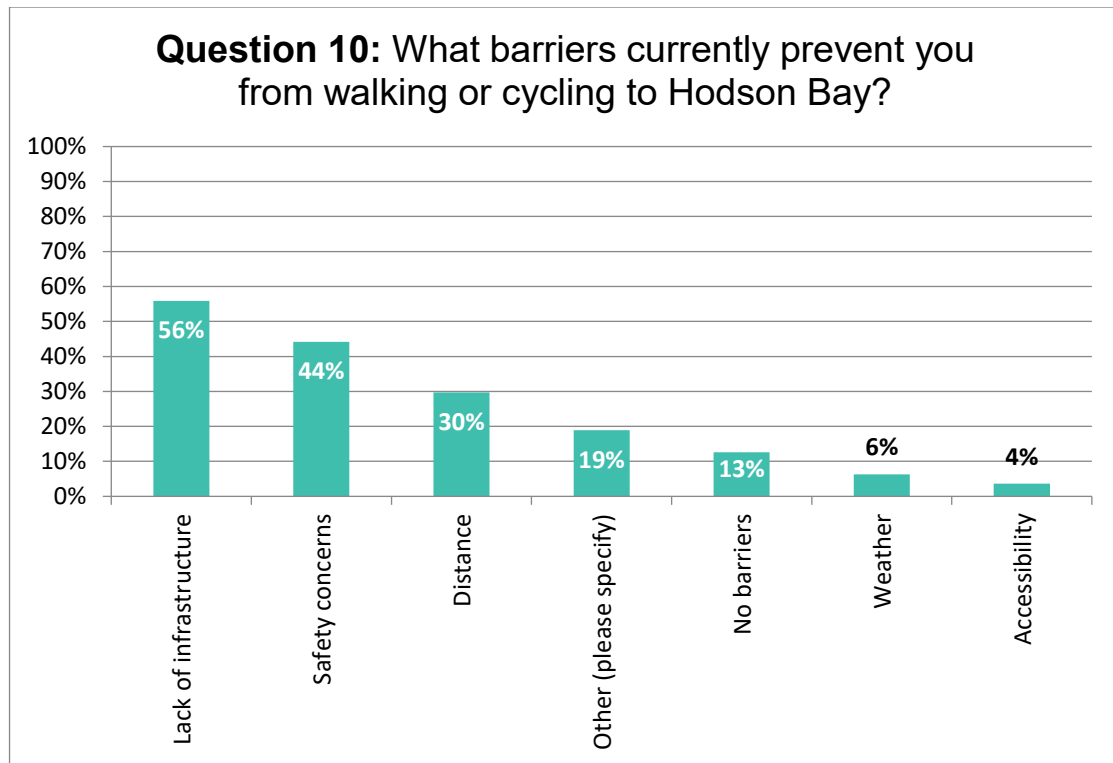
4.3

Transport and Travel

There were 5 questions in the Community Survey relating to transport and travel focusing on understanding the current travel patterns of respondents to Hodson Bay. This included exploring, barriers to active travel and how this could be improved, amendments to road space and parking facilities to support the improvement of active travel infrastructure at Hodson Bay.

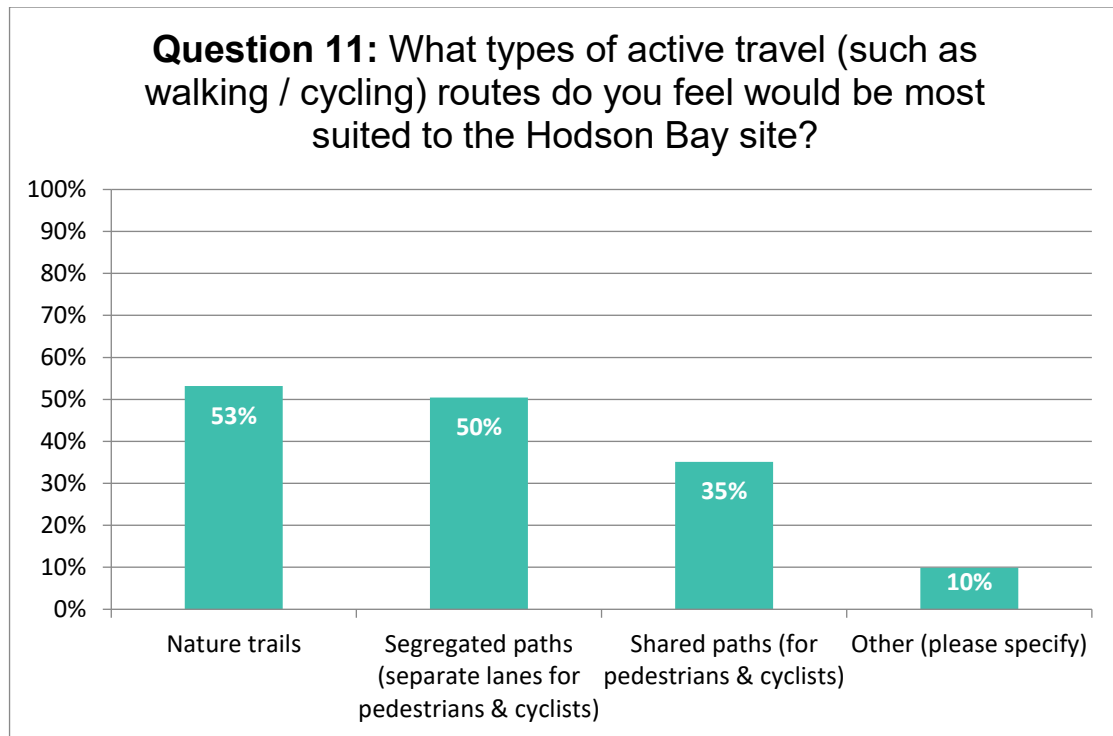


The Community Survey recorded that most visitors travelling to / visiting Hodson Bay typically travel by private car (70%). A small but noticeable portion of the respondents stated that they also travel on foot (15%), while a small portion stated that they use bicycle, boat and / or carpooling (4%). It is noted that no one typically travels to Hodson Bay by public transport or taxi. A few respondents that chose to respond under 'other' modes raised that there is no public transport serving Hodson Bay. The responses recorded under this question resonated with the pattern of responses recorded under the questions focusing on the barriers, preferred options, and reallocation of spaces, for active travel. This is explored further explored below:



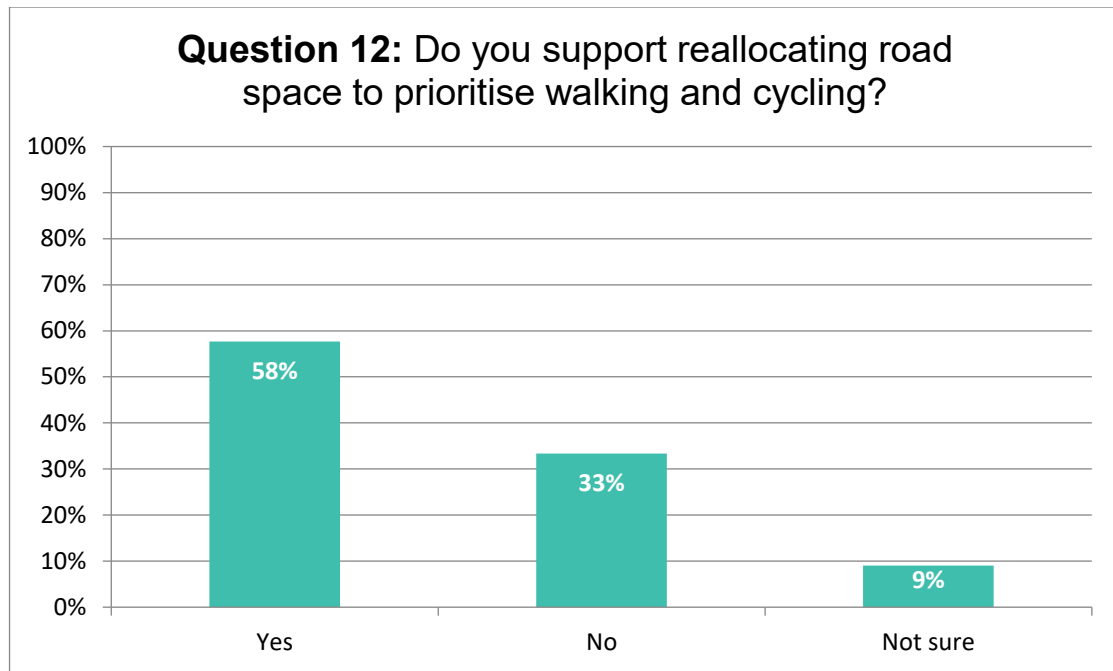
When asked what prevents them from travelling by bicycle or on foot, most respondents selected the reason was a lack of infrastructure (56%) and safety concerns (44%). This indicates that there is an inclination to use active travel modes, however due to a lack of active travel infrastructure and safety measures, respondents would not consider travelling to Hodson Bay by bicycle or on foot. The lack of sufficient infrastructure and safety concerns preceded over other issues such as distance (30%), weather (6%) or accessibility (4%).

The theme on active travel was well received by the respondents and recorded a positive picture about the local community's preferences to be able to use increased active travel modes. When asked what types of active travel routes they would like to see, there was almost an equal proportion of respondents that preferred to see segregated paths for walking and cycling (53%) as there were that preferred to see more nature trails (53%) – see Figure below.

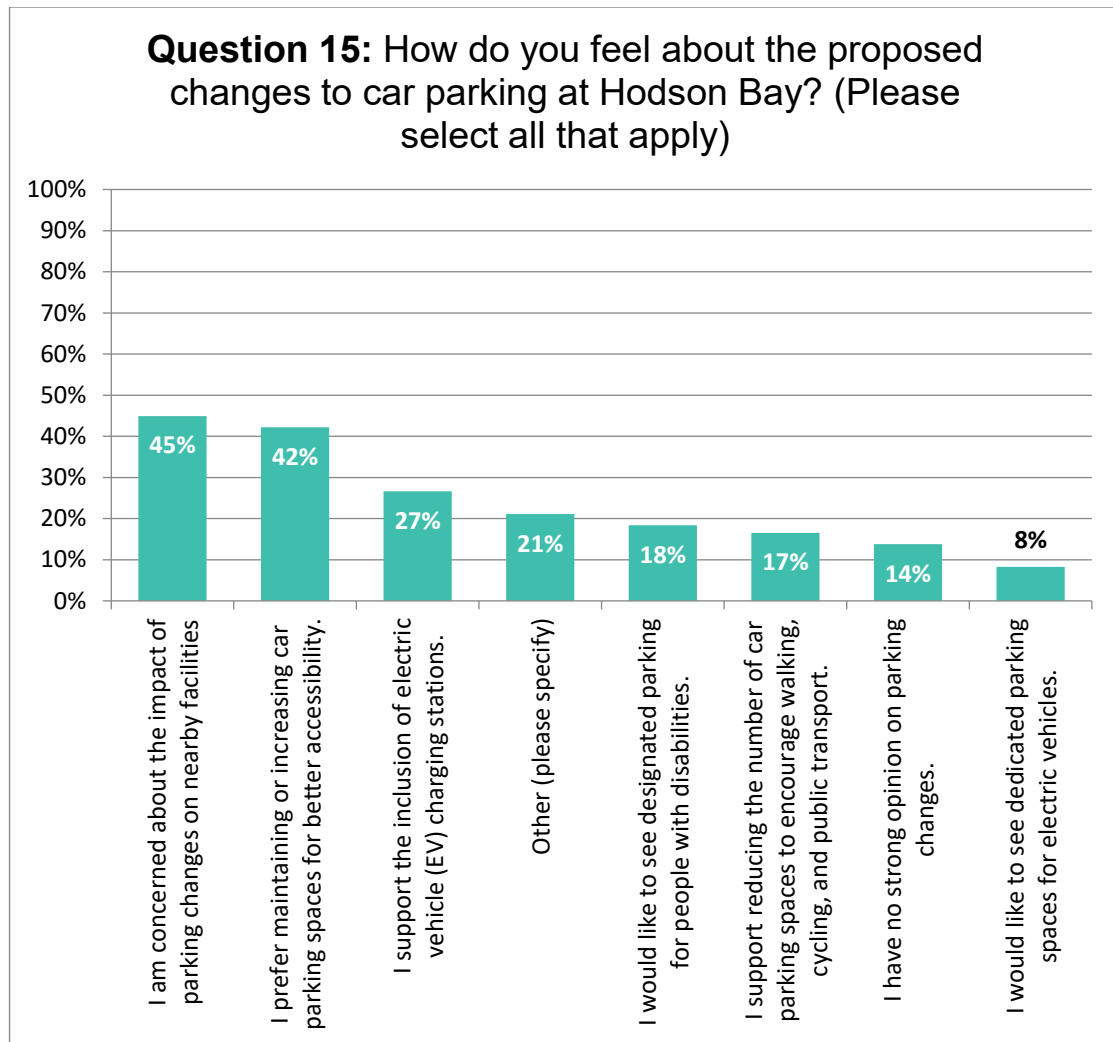


The need for increased nature trails and segregated paths for pedestrian and cyclists reflects to the respondents' preferences for the more natural features of the proposal, such as walking along the lakefront, access to nature and nature trails or even in terms of preferring the natural / organic design options, while also reflecting their concerns for the lack of infrastructure and safety measures.

Respondents in relation to the barriers to active travel modes noted several additional barriers including that the roads were dangerous to travel on foot or bicycle particularly with children, the footpaths were narrow and had uneven surfaces. The responses included suggestions to improve access such as the development of a walkway between Hodson Bay and Barrymore/Barrymore Woods and the provision of footpaths/cycle paths connecting from Mulvey's Garden Centre to St. Brigid's GAA. Many of the respondents who selected 'Other' suggested that they generally preferred travelling by car or that the activities they partake in e.g. golfing were difficult to travel to without a car due to the need to transport equipment.



The Community Survey also sought to understand whether any reallocations to the road space to prioritise walking and cycling would be well received. The responses confirmed that the people would welcome this opportunity to prioritise walking and cycling, with 58% of the respondents answering “Yes”. This response came as a contrast to when the Survey enquired about potential changes to the car parking at Hodson Bay as evidenced in the below graph:



Most respondents (87%), when asked about the potential amendments to car parking, expressed concerns against any changes. There was a visible preference to either maintaining or increasing car parking spaces. Only 17% of respondents supported reducing the number of parking spaces to encourage walking and cycling. There was also less support for the inclusion of EV charging stations (27%) and designated disabled parking (18%).

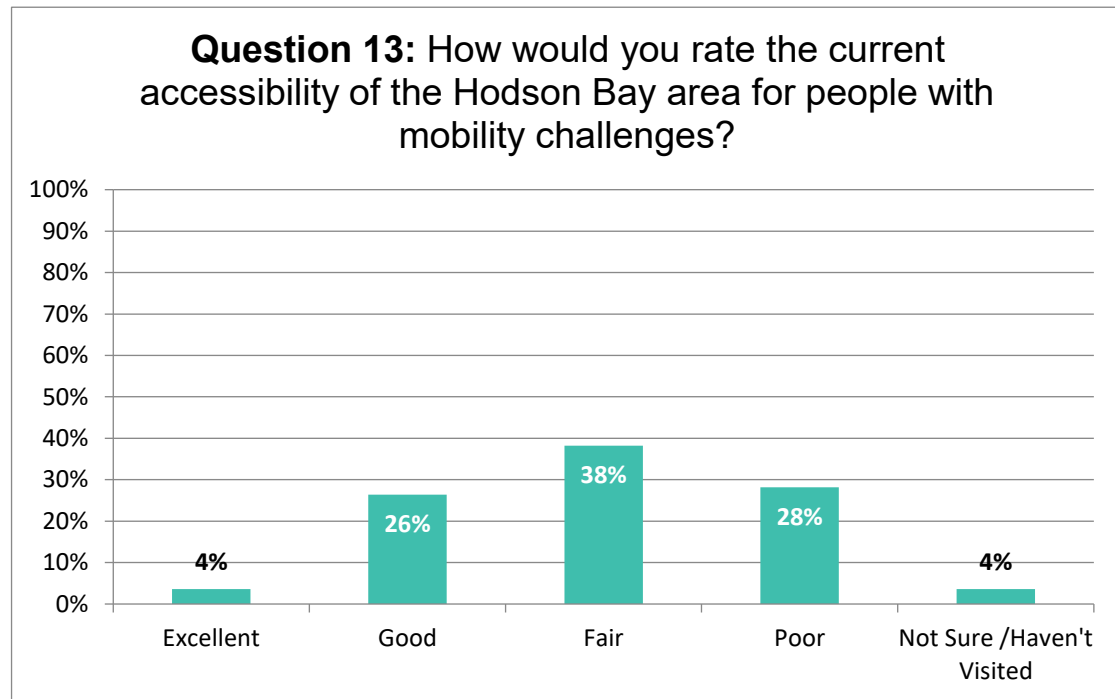
Several reasons were noted by respondents for not supporting a change to the car parking including fearing a reduction in the number of spaces would not meet the demand for car parking and there were concerns over the acquisition of the Athlone Golf Club lands for the proposed amendments to car parking. While some respondents did not want to see parking charges introduced, others were supportive of parking charges. Respondents expressed that a bus service or water taxi service would potentially reduce traffic in the area. Several respondents suggested they would support the reduction or amendment of parking spaces where active travel infrastructure and public transport services are developed at Hodson Bay. There were also questions regarding bus parking being considered as part of the design and requests on limiting the number of campervans using the car parking spaces.

4.4

Accessibility and Inclusivity at Hodson Bay

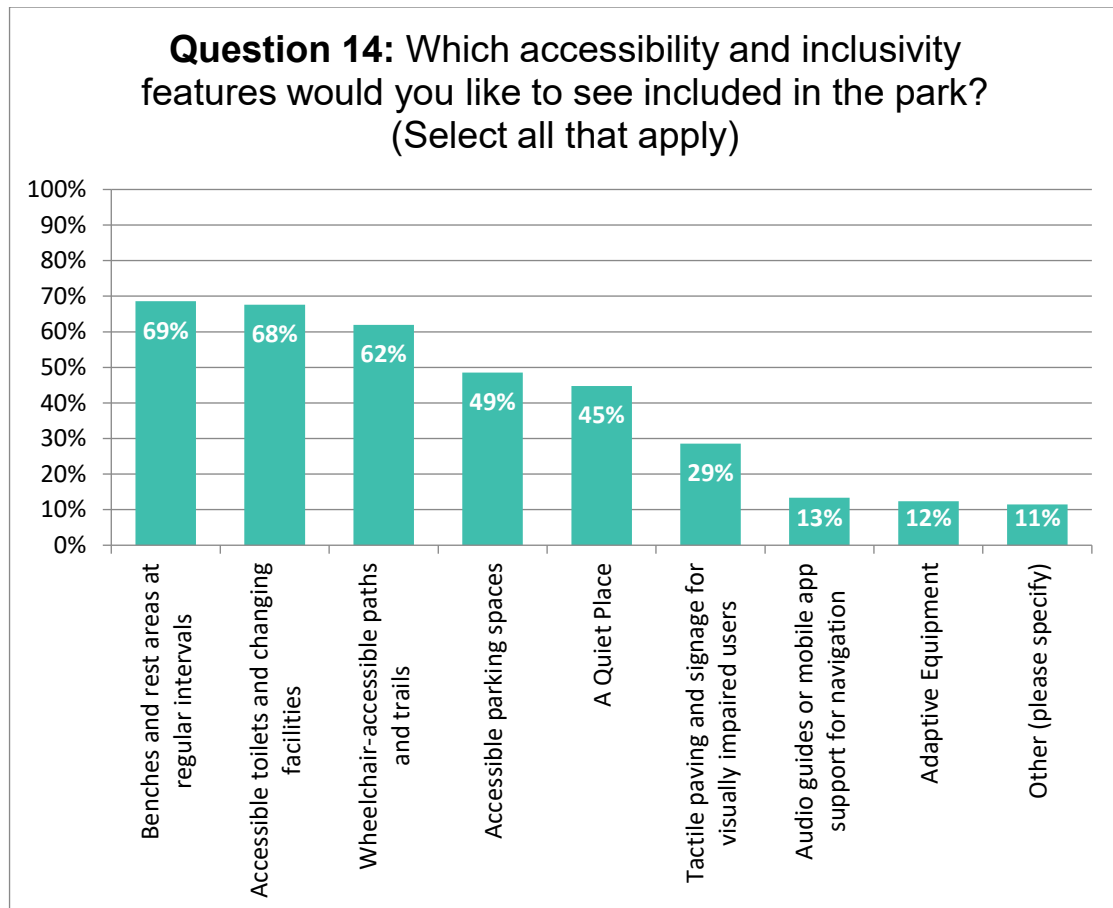
The Community Survey included a section which focused on challenges in relation to accessibility and potential inclusivity features that the local community would like to see within the area and as part of the proposed development.

The response in relation to accessibility features specifically for people with mobility challenges seemed to have recorded a mix in opinion. While some respondents find that the current accessibility for people with mobility challenges is 'Good' (26%), others found this to be 'Poor' (28%). Although most of the respondents found that the current accessibility for people with mobility challenges is 'Fair' (38%).



The majority of respondents felt that the provision of benches and rest areas, accessible toilets and changing areas, and wheelchair accessible paths would enhance accessibility and inclusivity at the park.

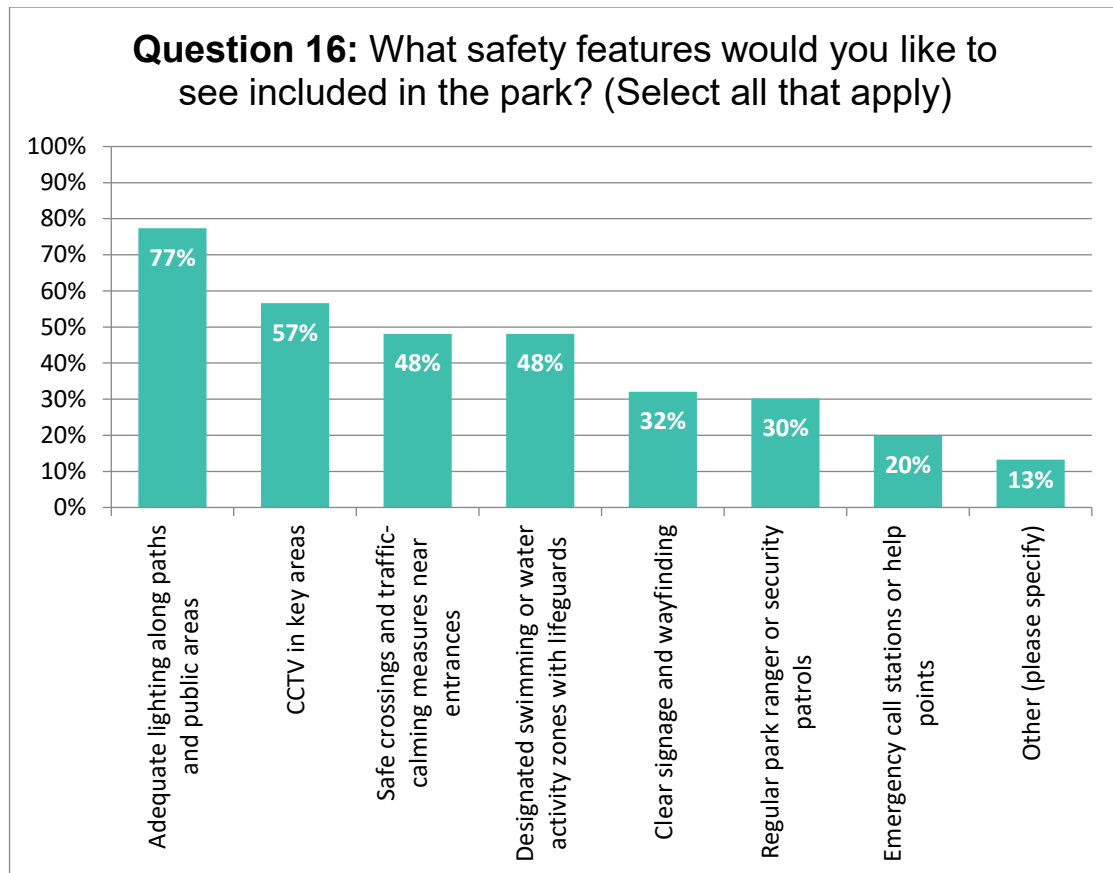
Additionally, 49% of respondents supported the provision of accessible parking spaces and 45% of respondents supported the provision of a 'quiet place' – with respondents noting that inclusion of a sensory area for people with disability such as a quiet place would be a welcome provision.



4.5

Safety at Hodson Bay

The Survey invited the public to express their opinion in relation to the type of security / safety features they would like to see to enhance the accessibility of the Hodson Bay area.



The majority of respondents felt that adequate lighting along paths and public areas (77%) and CCTV in key areas (57%) should be installed. 48% of respondents requested safer crossings and traffic calming measures and that designated swimming or water activity zones with lifeguards should be put in place. Respondents who selected the 'other' option, requested that a safety net should be installed to prevent injury or damage from golf balls from the golf club and that lighting should be dark sky friendly.

4.6

General Feedback

The Community Survey provided opportunity for people to include additional comments outside of the defined questions. This question had a response rate of 29%.

The feedback recorded demonstrated similar themes / pattern of responses, which generally provided a reflection of the overall Survey responses.

There was an emphasis on the provision of improved **boating infrastructure** for activities such as kayaking and day boating in the design for the proposed development. Respondents requested that access to the lake for **swimming** is maintained and not lost to the expansion of the water sports facility and that sufficient access for **mobility impaired** (such as beach wheelchair equipment etc.) should be considered to allow access to the lake for swimming. A key point in relation to **accessibility** which came up was that the facilities provided / introduced should be accessible to all age groups.

Respondents raised several points in relation to **active travel**, which included the need for footpaths and cycle paths that can accommodate a range of users. Respondents noted the need for **segregated paths / routes** to accommodate people walking, running and in wheelchairs and people travelling with buggies. The Survey recorded responses that stated **cycle paths** should accommodate families travelling together and that pedestrian facilities should be safe for users of all ages and abilities. A need for better bicycle parking facilities at Hodson Bay including covered bicycle parking was also expressed. Respondents requested that the pedestrian and cycling facilities proposed further extend to connect Hodson Bay to local shops and schools in the Hodson Bay/Barrymore area.

The Survey also recorded concerns around **lack of infrastructure** and **sufficient safety measures**. Respondents outlined existing issues around safety of the road network in the area and raised concerns in relation to the potential impact of the proposed development on the road network. Respondents felt that the junction between the N61 and the L2020 local road is unsafe and that traffic lights or a roundabout should be installed at the junction. There was also an emphasis on enforcement of speed limits on the L2020 local road. Respondents also stated that crossing points for pedestrians in the Hodson Bay area are dangerous and that lighting needs to be improved.

In addition to active travel and road safety, respondents also suggested the need for improved **public transport**, such as provision of bus services between Athlone Train Station, the Town Centre and Hodson Bay. Respondents also raised the need for a bus stop on the existing 440 bus service at the junction between the N61 and the L2020 local road. The Survey recorded suggestions from respondents regarding the need for designated **car parking** spaces, and issues around parking ownership, with an emphasis on the need to segregate the hotel parking spaces.

The Survey recorded a huge support in relation to the **playground** being proposed. There were also some responses that raised concerns in relation to the potential **intensification in tourism** as a result of the proposed development. Respondents seem keen to get some clarity in relation to the expected increase in visitor numbers and subsequent vehicle journeys to Hodson Bay following the completion of proposed development. Respondents also requested that there is a greater emphasis placed on the **year-round use** of the proposed facilities.

Finally, an overall emphasis and concern about the impact of the proposed development on the **biodiversity** and **natural environment** at Hodson Bay was expressed. Respondents requested consideration of a wildlife corridor integrated into the development. Additionally, the respondents raised concerns regarding the effect the proposed developments on **flooding** at Hodson Bay.

Overall, the feedback on the proposed development appears to be positive with people on board with the various elements specifically ones optimising the natural features of the area. Albeit some of the respondents expressed concerns, this was also more in relation to the impacts on the natural environment and therefore the conservation / preservation of the area its features and character.

5.

CONCLUSIONS

This report provides an overview of the effort undertaken to engage with the local community and stakeholder as part of the first public consultation process for the Hodson Bay Waterfront Park Project and feedback recorded.

Overall, the feedback on the proposed development appears to be positive with people on board with the various elements specifically ones optimising the natural features of the area. An overall emphasis and concern about the impact of the proposed development on the biodiversity and natural environment at Hodson Bay was expressed. Albeit some of the respondents expressed concerns, this was also more in relation to the impacts on the natural environment and therefore the conservation / preservation of the area its features and character.

Following on from the first public consultation process, the project team will produce final designs for the four elements of the Hodson Bay Waterfront Park: The Water Sports Pavillion, Marina Redevelopment, Public Realm, Sustainable Transport. These final designs will be informed by the responses received as part of the first public consultation. A second public consultation is, at the time of writing this report, expected to take place in early 2026 where the final design of the Hodson Bay Waterfront Park Project will be presented. It is then expected that a planning application to An Coimisiún Pleanála will be submitted in July 2026.

