

Central Coast Council

Walking and Cycling Strategy

Consultation Report



Acknowledgment of Country

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we live, work and play.

We pay our respects to Darkinjung country, and Elders past and present.

We recognise the continued connection to these lands and waterways and extend this acknowledgement to the homelands and stories of those who also call this place home.

We recognise our future leaders and the shared responsibility to care for and protect our place and people.



Record of Amendments

Version	Date	Authors	Approved	Description
1	22/1/26	SS	Sara Stace	Working draft
2	03/2/26	SS	Sara Stace	Final (v1)
3	04/02/26	SS	Sara Stace	Final (v2)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION	4
ONLINE SURVEY RESPONSE	5
How often do people walk and ride?	7
What would help people to walk or ride more?	8
How far would people consider walking or riding?	11
Walking or riding for different reasons	12
Walking or riding to different locations	13
Planning for different people in our community	14
Open comments: themes and insights	16
Who responded to the online survey?	19
VERBAL AND WRITTEN FEEDBACK	21
Summary	21
Key insights	22
FEEDBACK ON THE CENTRAL COAST MAP	24
Overall sentiment	25
Location Hotspots	25
Key insights: what the mapping shows	30
HOW WE UNDERTOOK THE CONSULTATION	32
Why we engaged	32
How we engaged	32
Evaluation and Success Measures	34
APPENDIX – COMMENTS FROM THE QUALITATIVE FEEDBACK	35
Overarching theme	35
Eight core themes and insights	36

Summary of Consultation

Central Coast Council undertook extensive community engagement to inform the development of a bold, inclusive and practical Walking and Cycling Strategy. The consultation aimed to raise awareness of the project across the region, ensure the community sees itself reflected in the final Strategy, and capture lived experience from people who walk, ride and rely on active transport in their everyday lives.

Engagement was undertaken through **six in-person drop-in sessions** held across the Local Government Area (LGA), **written submissions** and emails to Council, **focus groups** with community organisations, and comments received through **social media**.

Council heard directly from residents, community groups, advocacy organisations, progress associations and cycling clubs, representing a wide range of ages, abilities, travel needs and locations.

In total, **1,135 residents gave us detailed feedback** through different forms of engagement.

Each of the **81** people who attended a drop-in session had the opportunity to speak directly with a Council representative face-to-face and to identify specific locations of concern through an online map.

In parallel, **656 residents completed the online survey**, generating **788 open-ended comments**. People were also offered to **pinpoint specific issues on the interactive map**, resulting in **784 locations** pinpointed by **382 different people**. Written submissions were also made by 16 people including three community organisations.

Together, these qualitative and quantitative inputs provide a **robust evidence base** describing current walking and cycling behaviour, community priorities and the practical changes residents believe will make active travel safer, easier and more attractive across the Central Coast.

Strong alignment across all engagement

There was very consistent feedback across all engagement channels. The same priorities emerged repeatedly in drop-in conversations, written submissions, social media comments and survey

responses. The online survey data quantified what was heard on the ground. Across all inputs, the community's priorities can be summarised into the following clear and consistent themes:

Walking and cycling are part of everyday life

The consultation showed that walking and cycling are not niche activities on the Central Coast. **More than four in five respondents walk several times a week, and three in five ride regularly**. Health, fitness and wellbeing were identified as the strongest motivations. The central message is that people value walking and cycling as part of everyday life, independence and community wellbeing.

What the community told us matters most



Transport choice, equity and everyday access for everyone in the community

was a strong overarching theme repeated in all forms of consultation feedback. This essentially forms an overarching principle for the other themes.



Missing links and network connectivity

emerged as the strongest and most consistent priority. Residents repeatedly described short gaps in footpaths or cycleways that make otherwise good routes unusable, particularly around lakes, peninsulas and between suburbs. The message was clear: finishing and connecting existing routes matters more than building isolated new sections.



Safety from traffic was raised as an

immediate and personal concern. People described children walking to school on road shoulders, parents pushing prams in traffic lanes, and older residents avoiding walking altogether. Safety issues were most often linked to missing footpaths, poor crossings, narrow bridges, blind corners and high traffic speeds.



Managing shared paths in busy areas,

particularly in relation to e-bikes and e-scooters, was raised frequently. While many respondents support e-bikes in principle, there were strong calls for clearer rules, better education, enforcement and separation in high-use locations to reduce conflict and improve comfort for all users.



Accessible, well-maintained paths were seen as essential. Poor surface quality, debris, tree roots, drainage issues and lack of lighting were repeatedly identified as barriers that force people onto roads, create trip hazards and make paths unusable for prams, wheelchairs and mobility scooters. Maintenance was viewed as just as important as new infrastructure.



Access to everyday destinations such as local shops, town centres and public transport emerged as a high priority, particularly in the survey results. Residents emphasised the importance of being able to walk or ride to daily destinations, reinforcing walking and cycling as essential access infrastructure rather than discretionary transport.



Amenity, comfort and climate resilience were repeatedly identified as important enablers. Shade, trees, seating, water, toilets and lighting were seen as critical to supporting use by older people, families and for longer recreational trips, particularly in a warming climate.



Safe routes to schools were consistently highlighted, particularly where children currently walk or ride along busy roads without footpaths or safe crossings. While not relevant everywhere, this theme was strongly expressed in areas where schools generate significant walking and cycling trips.



Wayfinding, mapping and information were raised as important for confidence, tourism and encouraging broader use of the network, especially around lake loops and regional connections.



Finally, a strong **cross-cutting theme of delivery, trust and confidence** underpinned much of the feedback. Some respondents expressed frustration with previous plans and strategies that they perceive have not always translated into visible change. There was strong support for finishing what already exists, and undertaking maintenance.

Clear implications for the Strategy

The consultation demonstrates that the Central Coast community strongly supports investment in walking and cycling and is clear about priorities. The findings point toward a Strategy that:

- Focuses on connecting and completing the existing network
- Treats safety and accessibility as baseline requirements
- Actively manages shared paths in busy areas
- Prioritises everyday destinations, health and equity
- Embeds comfort, shade and amenity as core infrastructure
- Builds trust through visible delivery and ongoing maintenance.

The community's message is consistent and pragmatic: walking and cycling should be planned and delivered as essential public health, access and liveability infrastructure that supports everyday living.

Overarching theme:

Transport choice, equity and everyday access



Core Themes



1. Missing links and network connectivity



2. Safety from traffic



3. Manage shared paths in busy areas



4. Accessible, well-maintained paths



5. Access to everyday destinations



6. Amenity, comfort and climate resilience



7. Safe routes to schools



8. Wayfinding, mapping and information

Underpinned by: Delivery, trust and confidence



Online survey response



A total of **656 Central Coast residents** took part in the Walking and Cycling Strategy online survey, supported by hundreds of detailed written comments. This represents a large and meaningful response that is statistically significant, providing a strong and credible picture of local priorities.

The results show that walking and riding are already part of everyday life, with **82 per cent walking and 28 per cent riding several days a week**.

Across both the survey and open comments, residents were consistent in what they want: **connected, safe and well-maintained networks**. Top priorities included **dedicated cycle lanes, continuous footpaths, crossings and kerb ramps, and better maintenance** to address debris, surface quality and vegetation. Shade, seating, lighting, water and toilets were repeatedly identified as important enablers, especially for older people, families and longer trips.

Health, fitness and wellbeing emerged as the strongest reasons for why people walk and ride. While commuting matters for some, most residents value walking and cycling as part of **everyday life, recreation and social connection**, reinforcing the importance of pleasant, safe and inclusive

environments rather than a narrow focus on peak-hour travel.

Residents placed the greatest importance on being able to walk or ride to **local shops, town centres and public transport**, while responses relating to schools, hospitals and aged care highlighted the need for **targeted local solutions**.

There was also strong agreement that infrastructure should be **inclusive by default**, with clear support for prioritising children, older residents, people with disability, and households with limited access to cars.

The open-ended comments brought these findings to life, with strong, place-based feedback about **missing links, safety risks and barriers to everyday walking and riding**.

The survey results show a community that is engaged, constructive and clear about priorities, providing Council with a strong mandate to focus on finishing and maintaining the network, improving safety, and delivering walking and cycling infrastructure that supports health, access and liveability across the Central Coast.

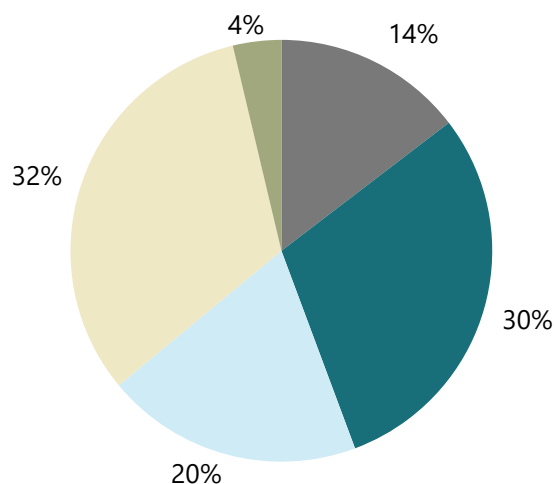
How often do people walk and ride?

The following results summarise responses from **650 Central Coast residents** about how often they walk or ride a bike in a typical week.

Walking is already a **regular, everyday activity** for 82% of our residents. **More than half** reported walking every day or nearly every day, with a further **30%** walking three to four days a week. Only **18%** reported walking less than two days a week or not at all, indicating that walking is a well-established and widely practised activity across the community.

In a typical week, how many often do you walk?

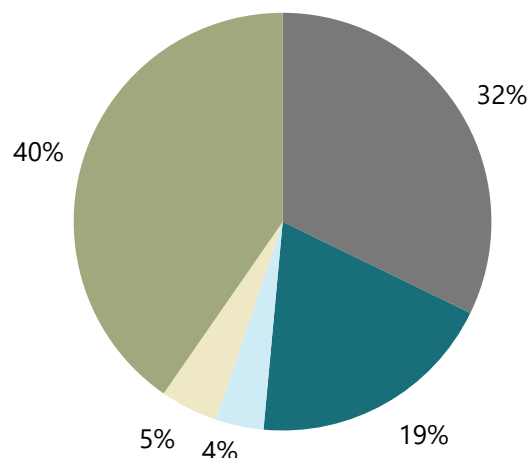
- 1-2 days per week
- 3-4 days per week
- 5-6 days per week
- Every day
- I don't walk



Cycling participation is lower and more variable, highlighting a substantial gap between walking and cycling participation. Despite this gap, **three in five of residents say they ride a bike regularly**. Nearly one in ten ride a bike 5-7 days a week, 19% ride 3-4 days a week, and a further third of residents said they ride around once a week.

In a typical week, how often do you ride?

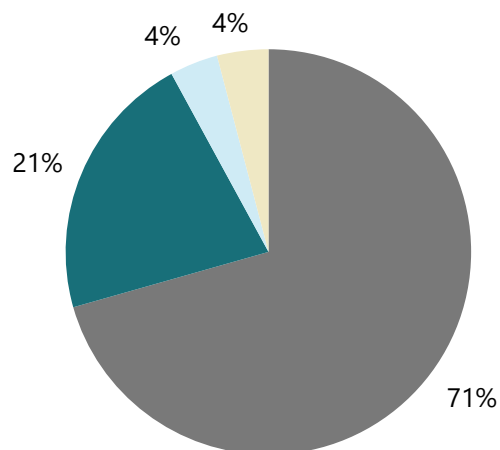
- 1-2 days per week
- 3-4 days per week
- 5-6 days per week
- Every day
- I don't ride



Among **people who do ride a bike**, **71%** ride a **regular (non-electric) bike**, while **21%** ride an **e-bike**. Fewer reported riding kick scooters (4%) or other bike types such as cargo bikes, recumbents or tricycles (**4%**). This indicates that, while conventional bikes remain the most common, **e-bikes and micromobility already represent a substantial share of riders and are likely to continue growing**. This has implications for infrastructure design, speed management and inclusive access.

If you ride, what do you use?

- Bicycle
- E-Bike
- Kick Scooter
- Other (recumbant, tricycle, etc)

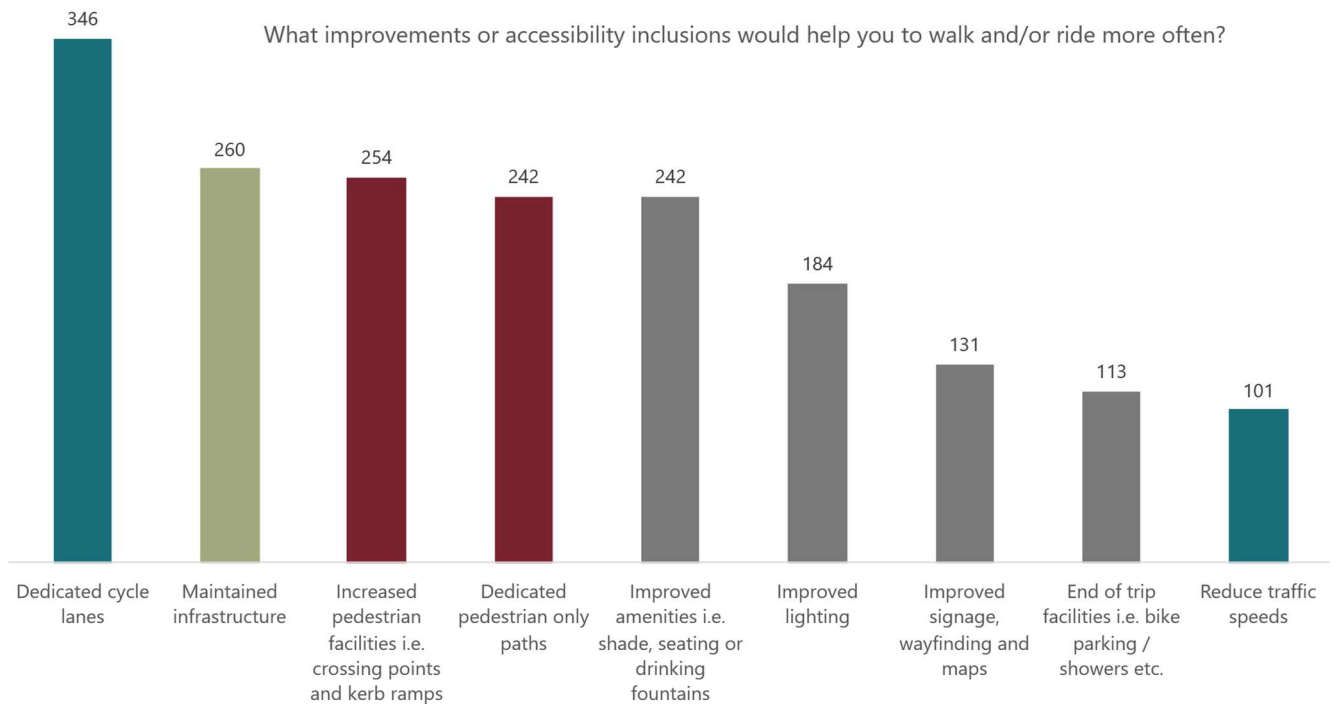


What would help people to walk or ride more?

We asked people what improvements or accessibility inclusions would help them to walk and/or ride more often. This included both a multiple-choice response, in which people were able to select more than one option, and a comments box for more detailed answers. Taken together, the responses show that residents want connected, safe, well-maintained networks supported by basic comfort and safety amenities.

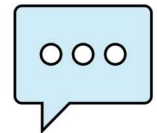
Of the 656 survey respondents to the multiple-choice options (people could select more than one):

- The biggest response was for **dedicated cycle lanes** (346 responses), reinforcing the strong qualitative emphasis on routes that are continuous, legible and protected.
- **Maintained infrastructure** (260 responses) and **increased pedestrian facilities** such as crossings and kerb ramps (254 responses) ranked next highest. This was strongly echoed in the qualitative data, with repeated references to debris, poor road edges, vegetation overgrowth, damaged surfaces, and long distances between safe crossing points. For people walking, the presence of **footpaths, crossings and kerb ramps** was often described as a **basic prerequisite** rather than an enhancement, particularly for older people, children, and those with mobility needs.
- Support for **dedicated pedestrian-only paths** and **improved amenities** (242 responses each) showed that comfort is important. Many walkers described feeling unsafe or uncomfortable on busy shared paths, and also expressed the need for shade, water and toilets.
- Request for other amenities, including **lighting** (184 responses), **signage and wayfinding** (131), and **end-of-trip facilities like bike parking** (113) followed. While these features ranked slightly below core infrastructure in the quantitative results, the qualitative responses suggest they are **critical enablers**, particularly for longer trips, coastal and lake paths, and use by older people, families and dog walkers.
- While **reduced traffic speeds** was the least selected option (101 responses), qualitative responses indicate that speed is often discussed in context, rather than as a standalone request. People linked lower speeds to safer crossings, calmer residential streets, and greater confidence to walk locally, especially for children and less confident pedestrians. This suggests that while speed reduction may not be top-of-mind as a checkbox item, it remains an important **supporting measure** for walking safety and comfort.

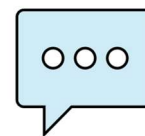


The multiple-choice question was followed by the option to add detailed comments. A total of 299 respondents chose to provide specific comments. These comments covered the following key themes and illustrative quotes:

- Connected, continuous networks:** Fully connected walking and cycling routes that don't "drop out", particularly around lakes, peninsulas, bridges and roundabouts, and that link everyday destinations.
 - *"Just so much more footpath linkage."*
 - *"A better network of fully-connected safe bike routes connecting places people travel to."*
 - *"Cycle/walkways that continue and don't just drop out halfway around the lake."*
 - *"Strong connectivity between areas, i.e. cycling paths all around the Woy Woy Peninsula."*
 - *"I'd be a lot more inclined to walk locally and cycle if there were more 'safe streets' (residential streets with 30 km/h speed limits, often also with traffic calming and/or modal filters - common in WA & most European countries)."*
- Safety and separation:** Separation of bike riders, pedestrians, e-bikes and motor vehicles, alongside safer road crossings, slower vehicle speeds, and better behaviour management on shared paths.
 - *"Dedicated bicycle-only paths, separated from pedestrians to improve both pedestrian and cyclist safety."*
 - *"Safe ways to cross the road are needed – sometimes there is no crossing for a long way."*
 - *"Bicycle lanes that do not disappear near bridges or roundabouts – cyclists shouldn't have to stop and wait for traffic."*
- Maintenance and surface quality:** Frequent concern about debris, poor road edges, damaged surfaces, vegetation overgrowth and delayed repairs creating unsafe conditions for people walking and riding.
 - *"I would like the cycle lanes swept of debris so they are safe."*
 - *"Given the condition of the edges of roads where cyclist are most at risk, there should be a service group available to remediate these dangerous obstacles ASAP."*
 - *"Re-tar roads around Gorokan, Wadalba and North Wyong."*



- **Shade, comfort and amenities:** Requests for tree shade, sheltered paths, seating, toilets, water refill stations, bins, and rest points to support longer and more frequent trips.
 - "Tree-shaded walkways and rest spots."
 - "More native trees for shade and wildlife."
 - "More water refill stations, toilets and bins along paths."
 - "More drink water taps and bowls for dogs along footpaths."
- **Education, enforcement and behaviour:** Driver education, speed management, dog control, and regulation of high-speed e-bikes, scooters and motorbikes on shared paths.
 - "Driver education is needed so motorists understand how to share the road with cyclists."
 - "Monitor and control high-speed e-bikes, scooters and motorbikes on shared paths."
 - "Enforcement of dog-on-leash rules – out-of-control dogs put pedestrians and cyclists at risk."
 - "Slow down speeding Ebikes and scooters. Educate bike riders to use their bells when approaching pedestrians. Introduce measures to prevent motorbikes using walking paths."



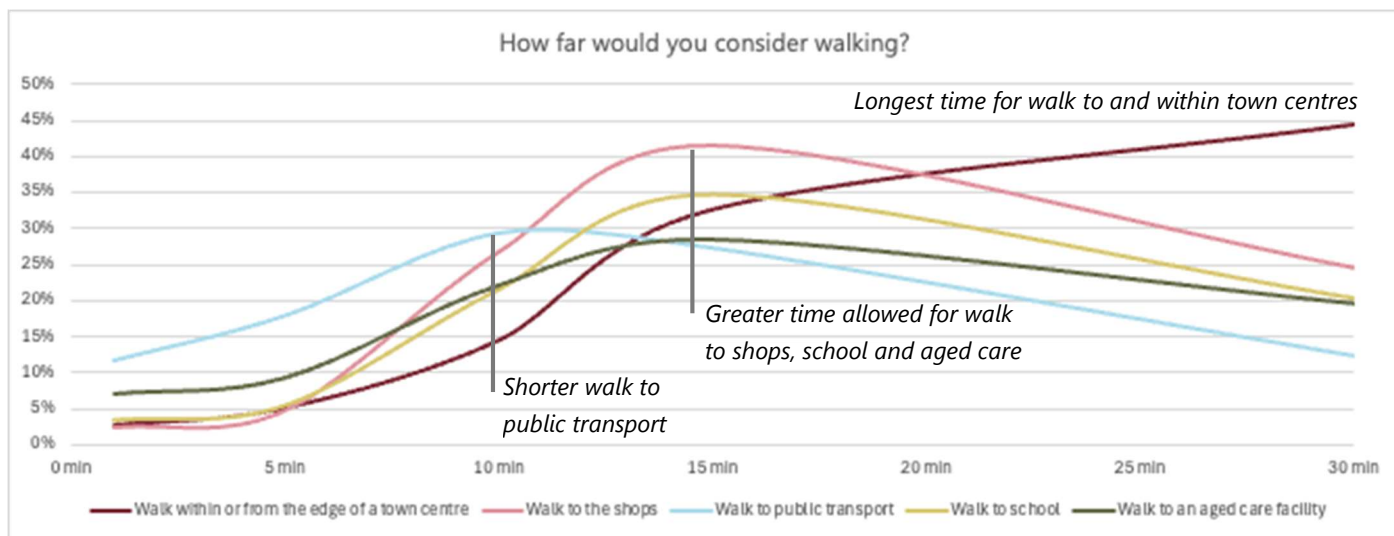
How far would people consider walking or riding?

Survey respondents were asked to rate how far they would consider walking or riding to a range of destinations.

How far would you walk?

When it comes to everyday walking, most people said they would consider walking around **10–15 minutes to reach most destinations**. For public transport, people prefer shorter walks of around 5–10 minutes, while they were willing to walk slightly further (15 minutes on average) to access shops.

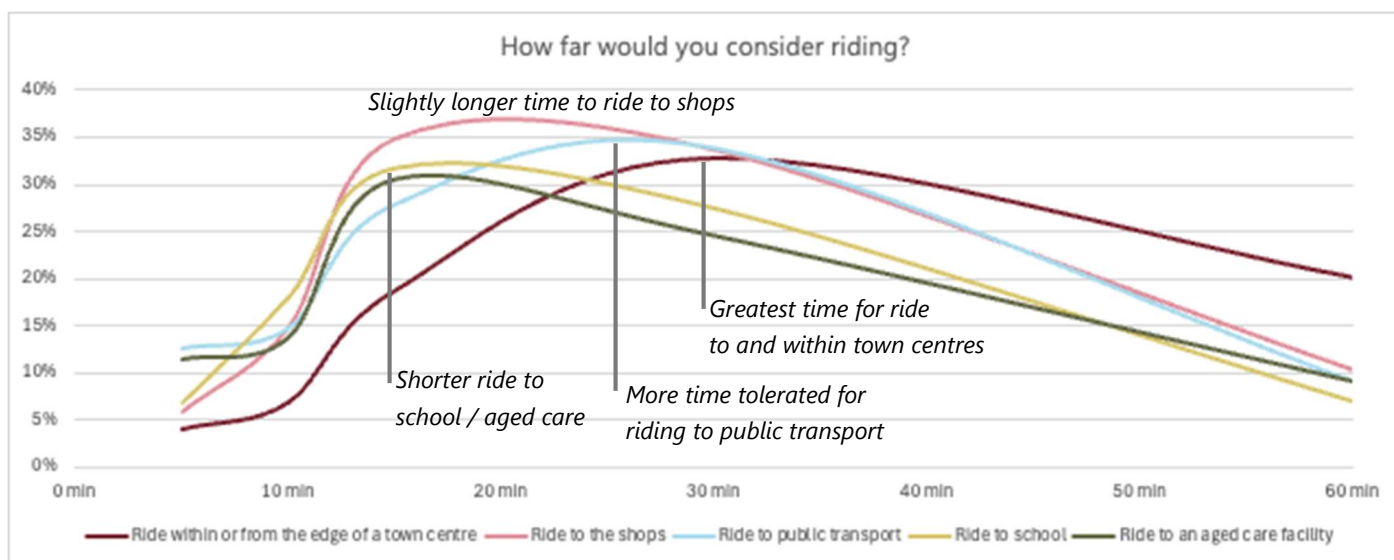
To and within town centres, willingness to walk increased significantly, with 45% of respondents saying they would walk for 30 minutes or more. This may suggest people are more comfortable walking for longer in places where trips can be combined, such as running errands, shopping, or stopping for food and drinks. While the question did not split out willingness to walk to town centres alone, this is analogous to walk to shops, which peaked at around 15 mins.



How far would you ride?

When it comes to riding a bike, the picture was quite different. People who ride bikes on the Central Coast reported a preferred travel time of **around 15–30 minutes** to reach most destinations. As with walking, willingness to travel for longer to access and within **town centres**, where trips are often combined and riding is part of a broader sequence of activities and peaked at 30 minutes (note that the scale for this question extends to 60 minutes).

By contrast, shorter riding distances of around **15 minutes** were preferred when accessing **schools** and **aged care facilities**, reflecting the importance of direct, safe and convenient routes for local school children and older residents.



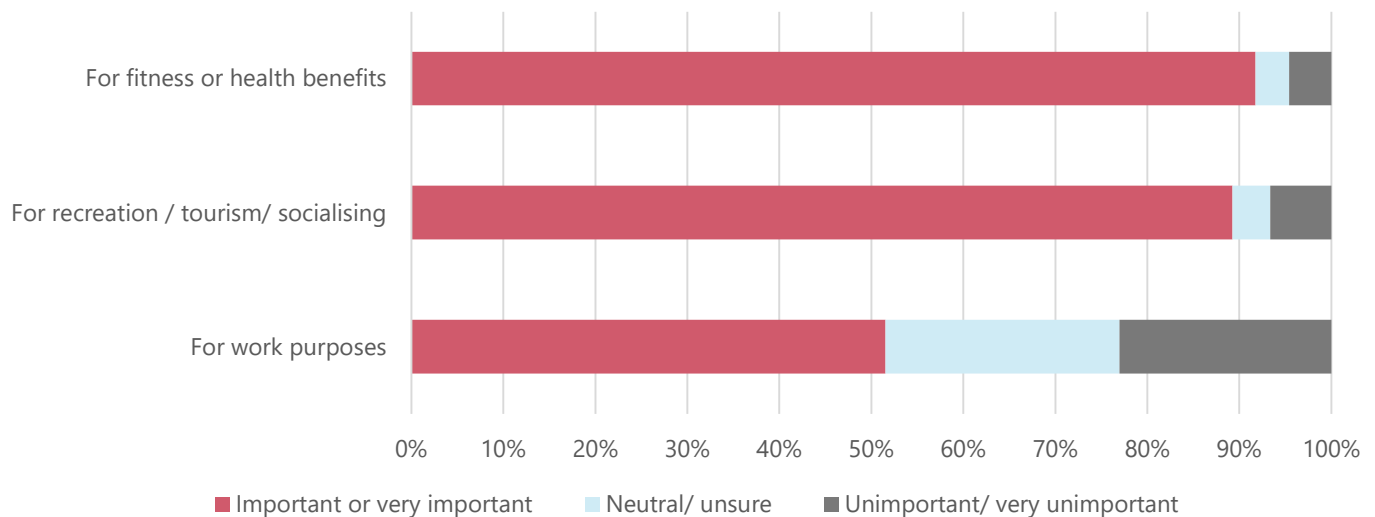
Walking or riding for different reasons

The survey asked respondents how important it is to be able to walk or ride for different purposes: recreation, tourism and socialising; fitness or health benefits; and work-related travel. Each was rated on a scale from *very important* to *very unimportant*.

The results show that **fitness and health benefits are the strongest motivator**, with **74%** of respondents rating this as very important. Overall, **nine in ten residents** consider it *important or very important* to be able to walk or ride for **recreation, tourism, socialising, fitness or health**, highlighting the central role of active lifestyles for our everyday wellbeing on the Central Coast. This finding is consistent with results from the national Walking and Cycling Participation Survey, conducted biennially across Australia.

By comparison, walking or cycling for **work purposes was less important**, with **around half of respondents** rating it as important or very important. This suggests that while commuting is a consideration for some, most people value walking and cycling primarily for **health, recreation and lifestyle reasons** rather than work travel specifically.

How important is getting around on foot or by bike for the following reasons?



This suggests the following implications:

- Walking and cycling are **not niche or optional activities**: People are not primarily walking or cycling to “get somewhere faster” or to commute. Instead, they see these modes as a **core part of maintaining health, wellbeing and social connection**. This means walking and cycling infrastructure should be planned as essential public health infrastructure, not just transport infrastructure.
- Networks need to support **enjoyment, not just efficiency**: Because many trips are motivated by health and enjoyment, people are more willing to walk or ride for a longer period of time in pleasant environments, such as town centres, coastal paths and the lake loops.
- Investment should prioritise **everyday activity, not just peak trips**: The lower importance placed on walking or cycling for work suggests that focusing solely on commuter cycling would miss much of the demand. Instead, **investment should prioritise all-day, everyday networks** that support spontaneous trips, social activity and regular physical movement.

Walking or riding to different locations

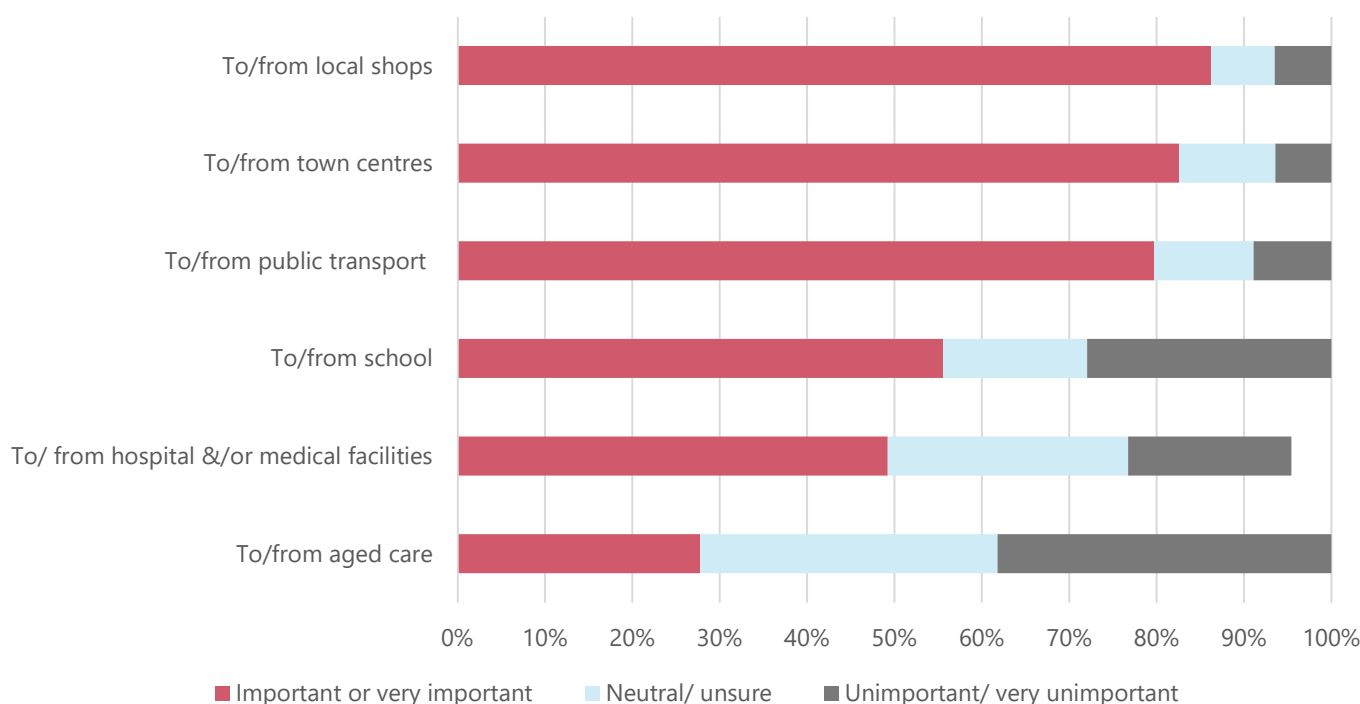
The survey also asked respondents to rate **how important it is to be able to walk or ride to and from different locations**, using a scale from *very important* to *very unimportant*. Locations included schools, local shops, town centres, public transport, aged care, and hospitals or medical facilities.

The strongest priorities related to **everyday destinations**. Access to **local shops ranked highest**, with **86%** of respondents saying it is important or very important, followed by **town centres (83%)** and **public transport (80%)**.

Responses were more mixed for **schools**, with 56% rating walking or cycling access as important, and a relatively high proportion (16%) indicating they were neutral or unsure. A similar pattern emerged for **hospitals and medical facilities**, where 49% of respondents rated access as important, and 28% were neutral or unsure.

Aged care facilities were ranked as the lowest priority overall, with only 28% of respondents considering walking or cycling access to be important, and 38% indicating they were neutral or unsure.

How important is getting around on foot or by bike to the following destinations?



What this means for the Central Coast

When it comes to travelling by foot or by bike to different locations, people place the highest value on being able to **walk or ride to everyday destinations** rather than to more specialised or occasional trip types. Access to **local shops, town centres and public transport** dominates, indicating that residents see walking and cycling as part of **daily life**, not just recreation or commuting. The more mixed responses for schools, hospitals and aged care facilities reflect that not all respondents regularly travel to these locations, or that such trips are often made by car due to distance, time pressures, mobility needs, or perceived safety concerns. The high proportion of “neutral or unsure” responses reinforces this interpretation. This points to several implications:

- **Prioritise walking and cycling access to centres and shops first**, as these trips are most widely valued and likely to deliver immediate uptake.
- **Strengthen links to public transport**, as high importance ratings suggest strong potential for mode shift where walking and cycling connections are safe, direct and comfortable.
- **Target school, hospital and aged-care access through more localised interventions**, recognising that needs are more specific and user-dependent.

- **Design for inclusivity even where demand appears lower**, as these destinations often serve people with higher accessibility needs, despite lower overall usage.

Overall, the findings support **prioritising everyday, high-frequency trips**, while layering in targeted improvements for more specialised destinations to ensure equitable access across the network.

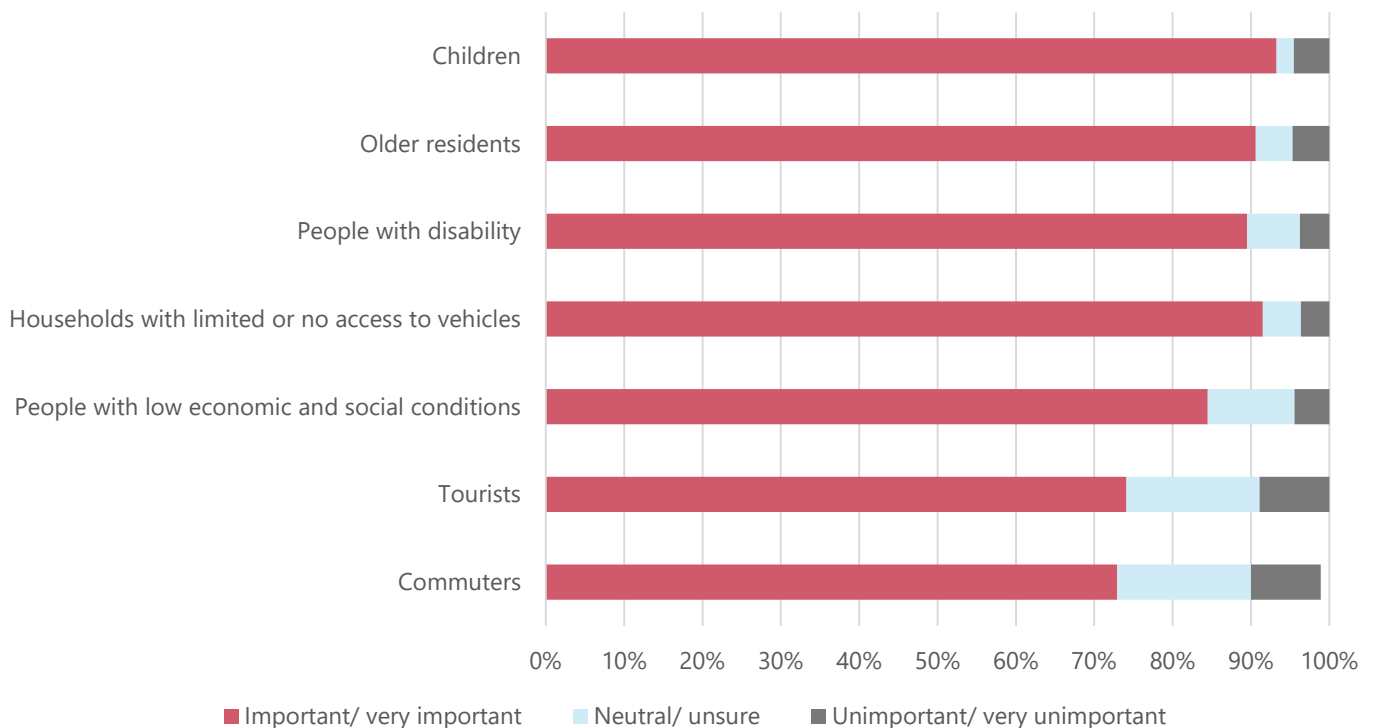
Planning for different people in our community

The survey asked respondents how important it is for Council to consider the needs of different groups of people in our community when planning walking and cycling infrastructure. Groups included children, older residents, people with disability, households with limited or no access to vehicles, people experiencing low economic or social conditions, tourists, and commuters. Responses were rated from *very important* to *very unimportant*, providing insight into community expectations around inclusion, equity and priority-setting in future walking and cycling investment.

The results show a strong and consistent expectation that **walking and cycling infrastructure should be inclusive** by default, with particularly high support for prioritising groups with greater vulnerability or lower transport choice.

There is overwhelming agreement that Council should consider the needs of **children (93%)**, **older residents (91%)**, **people with disability (90%)**, and **households with limited or no access to vehicles (92%)**. This indicates that residents see walking and cycling infrastructure as essential to **safety, independence and daily access**, especially for those who are more reliant on local networks. Conversely, very few people rated these groups as unimportant (4–5%) reinforcing that this expectation is broadly shared across the community.

When planning walking and cycling infrastructure, how important is it for Council to consider the needs of the following groups?



Support remains high for considering people with **low economic and social conditions (84%)**, although the slightly higher neutral response (11%) suggests some uncertainty about how infrastructure planning directly supports this group. Nonetheless, the results indicate a strong community mandate for using walking and cycling investment as a tool to improve **access and opportunity**, not just mobility.

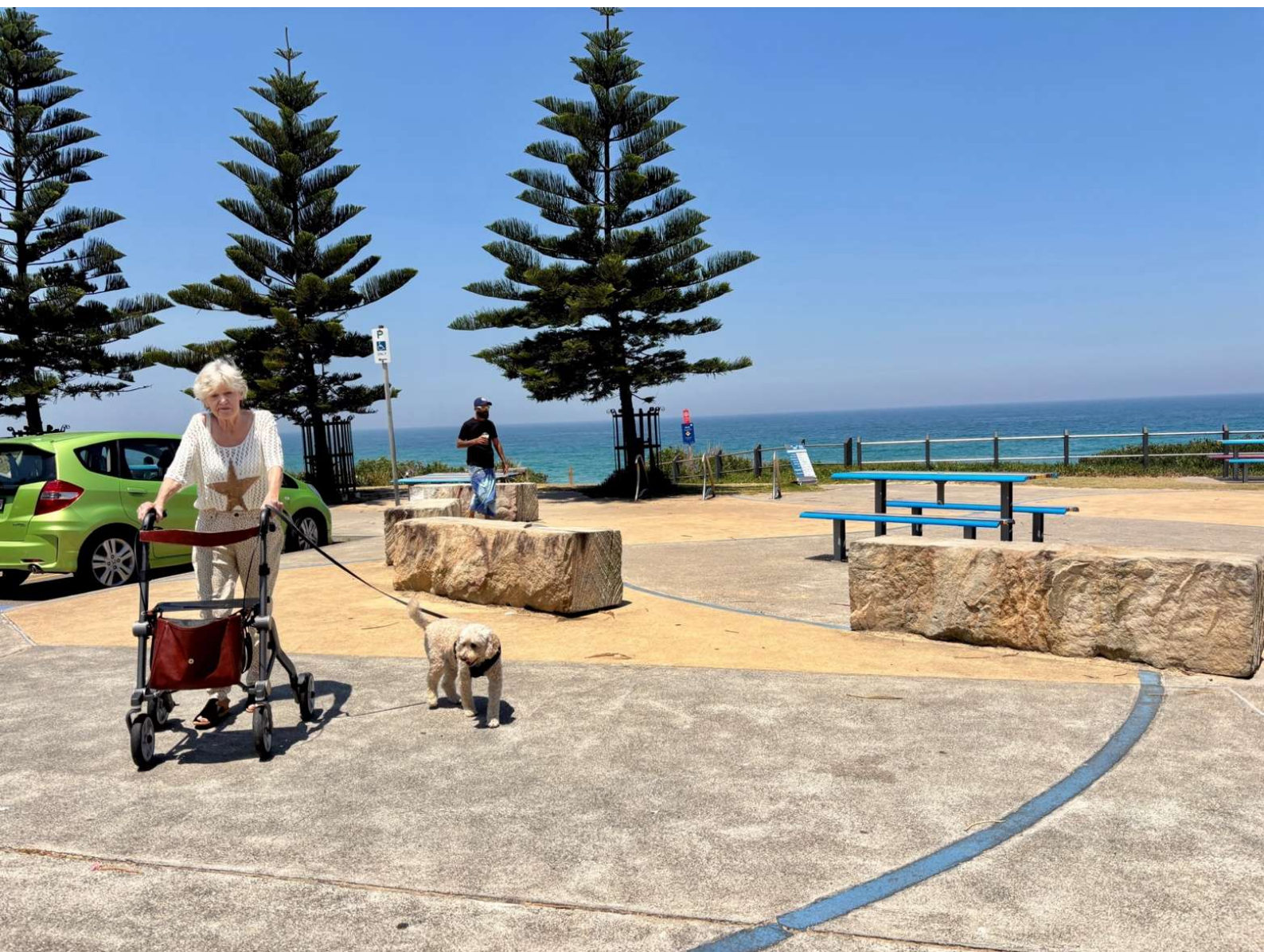
While still supported by a clear majority, **tourists (74%)** and **commuters (73%)** ranked lowest in importance. These groups also attracted the highest levels of neutral or unsure responses (17%), suggesting perhaps that they are seen as **context-dependent users**, rather than the primary focus of investment, or alternatively that that respondents did not identify with either of these groups (ie that they may have been under-represented). Nevertheless, this also aligns with earlier findings that residents value walking and cycling most for **everyday life, health and local access**, rather than peak-hour commuting or visitor-focused travel alone.

What this means for the Central Coast

Taken together, the results point to a clear hierarchy of priorities:

- **Plan first for those who depend most on walking and cycling**, including children, older people, people with disability and car-limited households.
- **Embed universal accessibility and safety as baseline requirements**, rather than add-ons.
- **Accommodate tourists and commuters through the same networks**, rather than designing separate, commuter-only or visitor-only infrastructure.

Overall, the findings strongly support a **people-first, equity-led approach** to walking and cycling infrastructure, where success is measured by how well the network works for the most vulnerable users.



Open comments: themes and insights

In addition to responding to the structured survey questions, **488 respondents** provided open-ended comments in response to the question “Do you have any other comments?”. These responses offer deeper insight into lived experiences across the Central Coast, highlighting specific locations, safety concerns and long-standing gaps in walking and cycling infrastructure. While diverse in detail, the comments show strong consistency in the issues raised, reinforcing the survey findings and providing clear direction on priorities for future planning, investment and delivery.

Six dominant themes were apparent throughout these comments:

1. Connectivity and “Missing Links” are the overwhelming priority

The most consistent message across responses is the need to connect existing paths into a continuous network, rather than building isolated sections.

Respondents repeatedly described routes that “stop suddenly”, forcing people into fast traffic at the most dangerous points.

There was particularly strong support for:

- Completing lake loops (especially Tuggerah Lake)
- Creating a north–south spine linking Brisbane Water to Tuggerah Lakes
- Connecting peninsulas, bays and isolated communities such as Mooney Mooney, Cheero Point, Bensville, Empire Bay, the Bays area, and northern suburbs.

Many respondents explicitly noted that they would walk or ride more if routes were continuous, and that current gaps actively discourage use.

Key insight: People are not asking for long route paths everywhere. They are asking to **finish what already exists and to focus more on short links to key destinations** like shops and schools

2. Safety concerns are immediate and personal

Safety dominated the tone of responses. Many people described:

- Children walking to school on road shoulders
- Parents pushing prams on traffic lanes
- Older residents avoiding walking altogether
- People driving to access paths because local streets feel unsafe.

Frequent references to “an accident waiting to happen” and fear of serious injury or death indicate that this is not a perceived issue but an experienced daily risk.

The most cited safety issues were:

- Lack of footpaths on busy roads
- Paths that end without warning
- Poor crossings
- Narrow bridges and blind corners
- High traffic speeds.

Key insight: Safety is not abstract. It is **determinant of behaviour**. People are choosing cars over walking and cycling because they feel they have no safe alternative.

3. Strong demand for separation and management of e-bikes and e-scooters

Concerns about e-bikes, e-scooters and motorised devices were raised by a very large number of respondents, particularly older residents, parents, dog walkers and people with disability.

Common themes included:

- Speed differentials on shared paths
- Lack of bell use or warning
- Illegal or modified devices
- Fear of collision and lack of enforcement.

While many respondents supported e-bikes in principle, they overwhelmingly called for:

- Clear rules
- Better signage
- Education
- Enforcement
- Separation where volumes and speeds are high.

Key insight: Shared paths are increasingly perceived as unsafe without active management, not just infrastructure provision.

4. Footpaths are seen as basic, essential infrastructure

There is a strong and repeated sentiment that footpaths are a basic expectation, not an optional extra. Many respondents expressed disbelief that in 2025 large parts of the Central Coast still require people to walk on roads.

Footpaths were especially prioritised for:

- Routes to schools
- Routes to public transport
- Local neighbourhood streets
- Areas with older residents or mobility needs
- Several responses highlighted inequity between suburbs, with some areas perceived as chronically neglected compared to others.

Key insight: For many residents, the issue is not improving walkability. It is **making walking possible**

5. Maintenance, surface quality and lighting matter as much as new builds

Poor maintenance emerged as a major deterrent to use, with repeated references to:

- Debris, glass and leaves
- Tree-root damage
- Uneven surfaces
- Poor drainage
- Inadequate lighting.

Respondents frequently noted that poorly maintained paths:

- Force bike riders onto roads
- Create trip hazards
- Are inaccessible to wheelchairs and prams
- Become unusable at night or after rain.

There was also strong support for simpler, lower-cost path standards if it allows greater network coverage and better maintenance over time.

Key insight: Infrastructure is only as good as its upkeep. **Poor maintenance actively undermines safety and sentiment.**

6. Walking and cycling are framed as health, equity and community issues

Many respondents framed walking and cycling as essential to:

- Physical and mental health
- Independence for older people
- Children's freedom and development
- Social connection
- Reducing isolation in car-dependent areas

Several explicitly linked lack of infrastructure to:

- Increased car use
- Traffic congestion
- Reduced school independence
- Worsening health outcomes.

Shade, trees, seating, toilets and water were repeatedly cited as enablers, particularly for older residents and families.

Key insight: The community sees walking and cycling infrastructure as **public health and social infrastructure**, not just transport. Shade, trees, seating, toilets and water were repeatedly requested.

What this means for the Central Coast

Taken together, the open comment responses present a clear and coherent mandate:

- Finish and connect the network before expanding
- Prioritise safety, especially for children, older people and people with disability
- Treat footpaths as essential infrastructure
- Actively manage shared paths as usage changes
- Maintain what exists
- Plan for everyday life, not just recreation or commuting.

Many respondents also expressed fatigue with consultation without delivery. There is a strong expectation that this strategy leads to visible, on-the-ground change.

Summary conclusion about the comments

The 488 open-ended responses provide a powerful qualitative counterpart to the survey data, grounding the findings in **lived experience across the Central Coast**. While the comments are diverse in location and detail, they show consistency in the issues raised and the outcomes people are seeking.

Collectively, the comments reinforce that residents are not asking for isolated or aspirational projects. They are seeking **practical, deliverable improvements** that make walking and cycling safer, more connected and more usable in everyday life. The strongest messages focus on finishing missing links, addressing safety risks, treating footpaths as essential infrastructure,

maintaining what already exists, and designing for people across all ages and abilities.

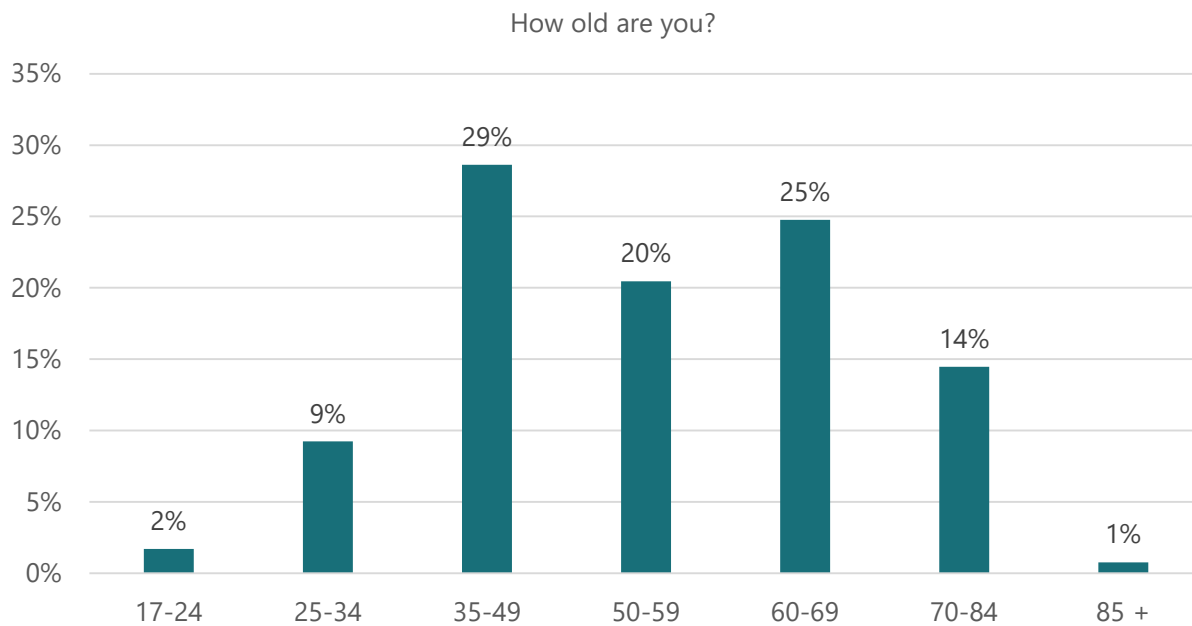
The tone of many comments reflects strong community engagement and willingness to use improved infrastructure. People repeatedly described how they would walk or ride more often if routes were continuous, well maintained and felt safe. This indicates significant latent demand and highlights the opportunity for relatively targeted investments to deliver meaningful increases in walking and cycling participation.

Taken together, these comments offer clear, actionable guidance to inform priorities within the Walking and Riding Strategy. They complement the survey's quantitative findings, strengthen the evidence base, and provide confidence that addressing these themes will align closely with community needs while delivering broader health, accessibility and liveability benefits across the Central Coast.



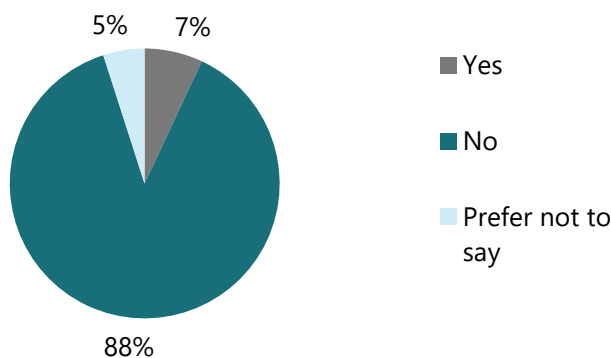
Who responded to the online survey?

In total, **656 people** responded to the online survey, which was open to the public from 28 October to 23 December 2025 on the *Your Voice Our Coast* web portal. Respondents ranged in age from **17 to over 85 years**, with people aged 35–49 being the most represented group. Overall, the results show a **broad spread across age groups** within the LGA.



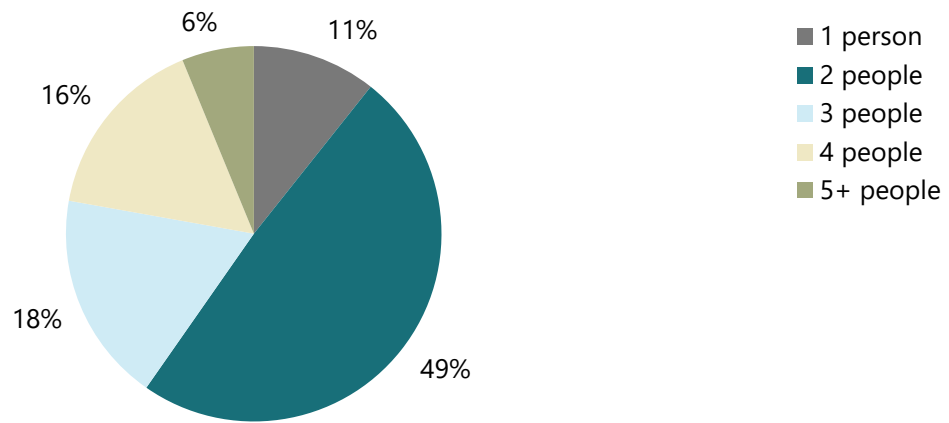
Seven per cent of respondents identified as **living with a disability**, indicating that the survey captured perspectives from people with varied access needs. This reinforces the importance of continuing to plan walking and cycling infrastructure that provides **safe, equitable and inclusive access** for all members of the community.

Are you a person living with disability?

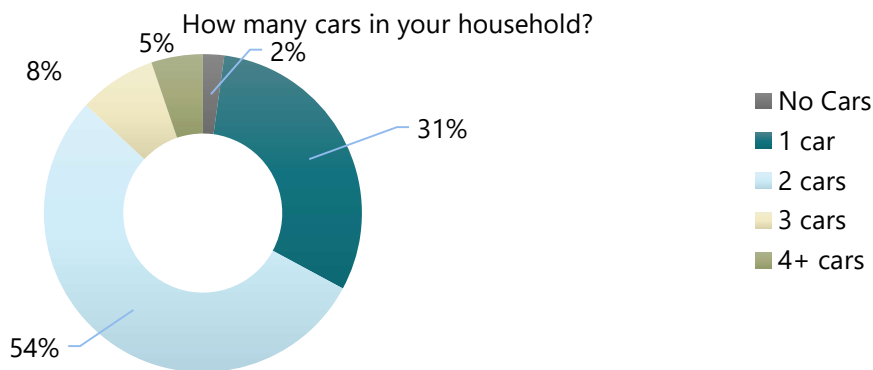


Responses also reflected a **diverse range of household types**. When asked how many people in their household walk or ride in public spaces, **11%** reported only one person, around **half** reported two people, a third said they have 3–4 people in their household, and **6%** reported five or more people. This suggests a wide range of participation from single-person households, couples, families with children and shared households.

How many people in your household walk or ride in public spaces?



In terms of vehicle ownership, **54% of households** reported having **two cars**, nearly **one third** have **one car**, and **2%** reported having **no car**. A further **8%** reported owning **three cars**, and **5%** reported owning **four or more cars**, highlighting varied levels of car access across respondents.



What this means for the Central Coast

The profile of survey respondents suggests the consultation reflects the views of a **broad cross-section of the community**, spanning a wide age range, varied household types and differing levels of access to private vehicles.

The strong representation of **working-age adults (35–49)**, many of whom are likely balancing work, caring and household responsibilities, helps explain the emphasis on **local shops, town centres and practical everyday trips**. At the same time, participation from older residents, retirees, and people with disability reinforces the importance of **safe, accessible and inclusive design**, particularly for footpaths, crossings, gradients and rest opportunities.

The diversity in household size and composition, combined with the fact that **almost half of households have one car or no car**, highlights that walking and cycling are not optional extras for many residents but an **essential means of accessing daily activities**. Even among households with multiple vehicles, the high value placed on walking and cycling suggests these modes are widely used by choice as well as necessity.

Overall, the respondent profile reinforces the need for a **people-first walking and cycling network** that works across life stages and household circumstances, supports both choice and necessity, and prioritises **safety, accessibility and everyday usefulness** over niche or single-purpose infrastructure.

VERBAL AND WRITTEN FEEDBACK

Summary

In addition to the online survey, Central Coast Council undertook extensive engagement with the community through face-to-face discussions, online social media, and detailed written feedback from community organisations and individuals. Our aim was to listen carefully to how people experience walking and cycling today, and what would make it safer, easier and more appealing in the future.

This section summarises insights from **qualitative community feedback**, captured through:

- **Six in-person drop-in sessions** held across the LGA in community halls
- **Written submissions and emails** from individuals, residents' groups, cycling clubs and community organisations
- **Comments on Council's social media posts** about the project

An online survey and interactive map were also available throughout the engagement period. Findings are explored elsewhere in this report.

Drop-in sessions

The drop-in sessions were designed to allow face-to-face conversations with community members in a relaxed, accessible setting. They were advertised through a wide range of Council social media channels and local networks. A total of **81 people attended** these sessions.

- Community members spoke directly with Council representatives, often for extended conversations
- Participants were encouraged to describe real-life experiences, not just ideas
- People were asked to identify specific locations of concern, and to place pins on the online map where relevant.

These conversations provided rich, detailed insights into how walking and cycling networks are used in everyday life, and where they currently fall short.

Written submissions and emails

Council also received **16 submissions** from:

- Individual residents
- residents' associations and progress associations
- advocacy organisations.

These included maps, photos, examples of past incidents, and suggestions for practical solutions.

Social media comments

Community members also shared views through **100 comments** on Council's social media posts about the Strategy. These reinforced many of the same themes raised in person and in writing, particularly around safety, missing links, and frustration with gaps.

Key themes in the written and verbal feedback

Appendix 1 details the key themes and verbatim quotes from the written and verbal feedback.

The themes that emerged closely mirrored those identified in the online survey and interactive map, comprising one overarching theme and eight core themes.



Key insights

The following key insights emerged from the written and verbal feedback.



Transport choice, equity and everyday access

Key insight: People emphasised the **importance to mental health and access for people who can't drive**; and that walking and cycling are **essential transport**, not simply recreation.

Comments mentioned health and wellbeing such as 'older men connecting to others', and that many residents have limited access to a car. In particular, that children, older people, and people with disability rely on safe walking routes



1. Missing links and network connectivity

Key insight: **One missing link can undo an entire route**. The message was not for more paths everywhere, but to **ensure continuous, end-to-end routes that cater for everyday trips**.

People described how **short gaps in footpaths, shared paths or cycle routes break otherwise usable journeys**, forcing them into unsafe situations and discouraging walking and cycling altogether. In many cases, a route was described as largely in place, but rendered unusable by one missing section.



2. Safety from traffic

Key insight: Safety is a basic prerequisite. **If people don't feel safe, they simply won't walk or ride**. Walking and riding with traffic is seen as unsafe.

Safety from vehicles was raised repeatedly across all locations, particularly on busy roads, state roads, bridges and near schools. Many people described avoiding walking or cycling altogether because they felt unsafe. These included high vehicle speeds, narrow roads with no shoulders or footpaths, unsafe or missing crossings and bridges with no space to walk or ride.



3. Managing shared paths and providing separation in busy areas

Key insight: People are asking for the right treatment in the right place, and for council to **widen / separate walk and cycle paths where volumes are high**, as well as better enforcement.

Shared paths were a major source of tension, especially where they are busy. It was one of the most frequently discussed topics. People consistently said shared paths work in quieter areas, but do not work well in busy foreshore, shopping and tourist locations.



4. Accessible, well-maintained paths that all people can use

Key insight: Existing paths require **regular management and maintenance programs**, and asset conditions should be periodically audited.

Accessibility and maintenance were raised together, because poor maintenance often makes paths inaccessible. Many people described surfaces that exclude wheelchairs, prams, mobility scooters and older walkers. Examples included trip hazards, overgrown vegetations, tree roots and sand.



5. Access to everyday destinations: shops, services and public transport

Key insight: Walking and cycling are **essential for daily life**, not just recreation. To do this, they need for safe, continuous routes between where they live and where they need to go.

This extending to **land use planning** (e.g. zoning for local shops) and development assessment (entrances, internal paths).

People frequently people spoke about walking and cycling as essential for reaching **shops, train stations, bus stops, health services and community facilities**. This theme was especially strong among people without cars and older residents.



6. Amenity, comfort and climate resilience

Key insight: Comfort directly affects the range of people who walk or ride, especially older residents and children, and the time of day or year they do so. Shade, seating and water were seen as essential, not optional, particularly in hot weather and along longer routes.



7. Safe routes to schools

Key insight: **People deeply care about walking and riding safely and easily to school.** Improving school routes delivers immediate safety benefits and reduces traffic congestion at the same time.

Access to schools was raised by parents, grandparents, teachers, principals, residents and advocacy groups.

People were extremely concerned about walking on roads due to missing footpaths, unsafe or poorly-located crossings, and heavy traffic around schools causing safety concerns and congestion.



8. Wayfinding, mapping and information

Key insight: **Even good infrastructure fails if people don't know it exists or how to use it.** There was strong support for clearer maps, signage, and user-friendly information to help people plan trips with confidence.

People said it's hard to know where safe routes are, how paths connect, and which routes are suitable for different abilities.



Feedback on the Central Coast Map

As part of the consultation, Council invited the community to share place-specific feedback through an interactive online map on *Your Voice Our Coast*. The map was open from **28 October to 23 December 2025** and allowed residents to pinpoint locations anywhere across the Central Coast where they experience issues or see opportunities to improve walking and cycling.

Participants were able to drop a pin on the map and leave a short comment describing:

- a location where walking or cycling feels unsafe or difficult
- a missing link or gap in the network
- maintenance or accessibility issues
- opportunities to improve connections, safety or comfort

This mapping tool enabled people to contribute highly local, lived-experience insights that may not always be captured through surveys alone. It also allowed Council to understand how issues are distributed geographically across the LGA, rather than in isolation.

In total, **784 locations were pinpointed on the map, by 382 different people, an average of two pinpoints each**. The following maps illustrate where feedback was most concentrated and help identify patterns and recurring issues across neighbourhoods, town centres, school areas and key corridors.

Overall, the map feedback complements the survey results and written submissions by adding a strong spatial dimension to the consultation. Together, these inputs provide a clearer picture of where walking and cycling improvements are most urgently needed and where future investment may deliver the greatest benefit.

How people used the interactive maps

The interactive maps indicated where people made specific reference to a location for improvement for walking (red) or cycling (green) within the LGA, guided by identified priority areas and key locations, as follows:



Annotated extract from Social Pinpoint Map, YVOC

Overall sentiment

The overall sentiment from the map feedback is **constructive but urgent**. People are not opposing walking and cycling investment. On the contrary, the volume and specificity of map pinpoints show a community that is highly engaged and motivated, but frustrated by long-standing gaps, unsafe conditions and slow delivery.

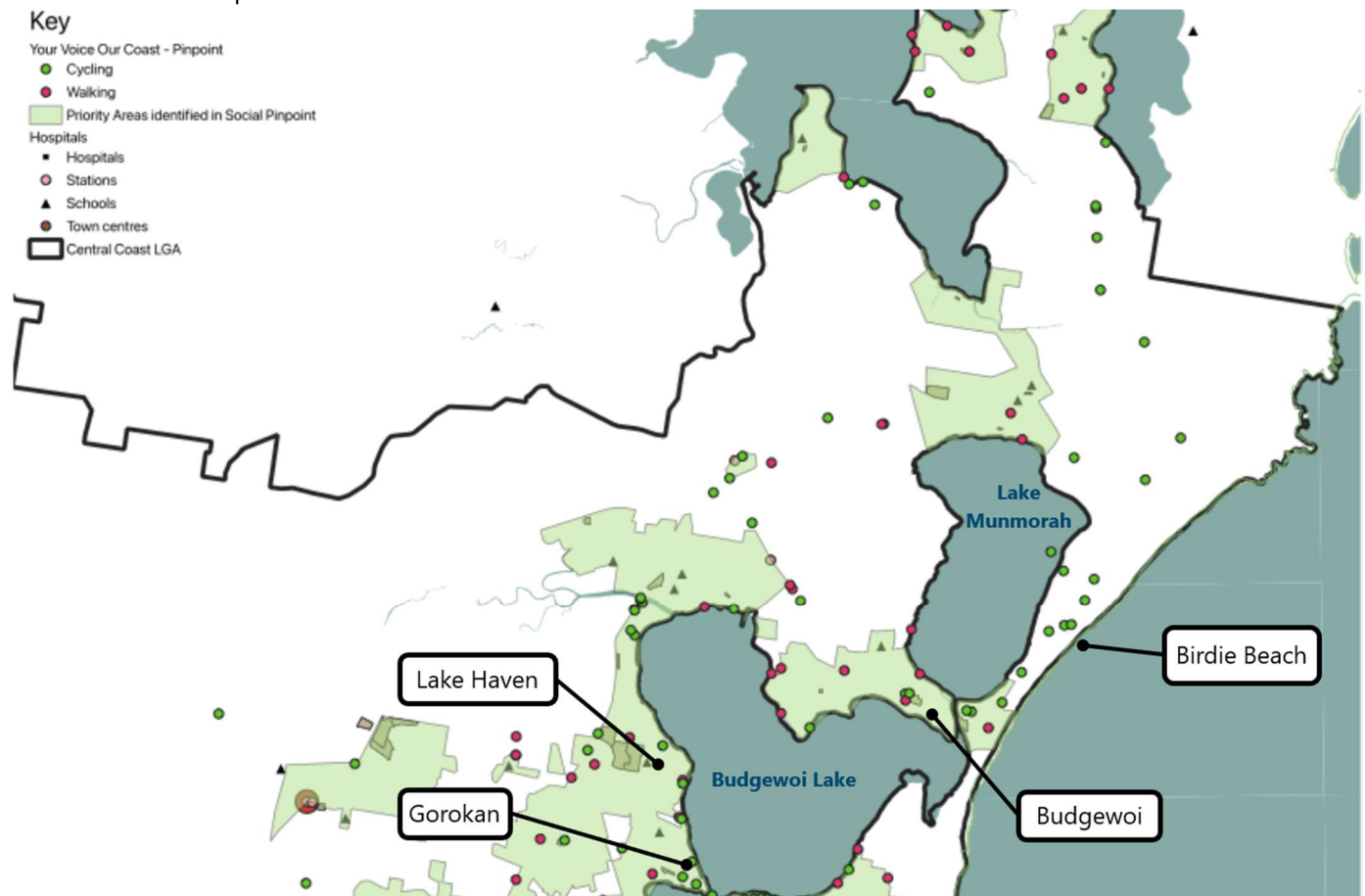
Across the LGA, residents used the map to highlight places where:

- walking or cycling feels unsafe or uncomfortable
- short gaps prevent otherwise viable routes
- infrastructure exists but is poorly maintained, flooded or inaccessible
- everyday trips to schools, shops and public transport are difficult without a car.

The tone of comments suggests that many of these issues are experienced daily, not occasionally. In several locations, respondents described safety risks as immediate and unavoidable rather than hypothetical. Overall, the map feedback reinforces that people want practical, place-based improvements that make walking and cycling possible for everyday life, not just recreation.

Location Hotspots

While pinpoints were spread across the entire LGA, several **clear geographic hotspots** emerged where concerns were concentrated and repeated.



Lake Munmorah / Budgewoi

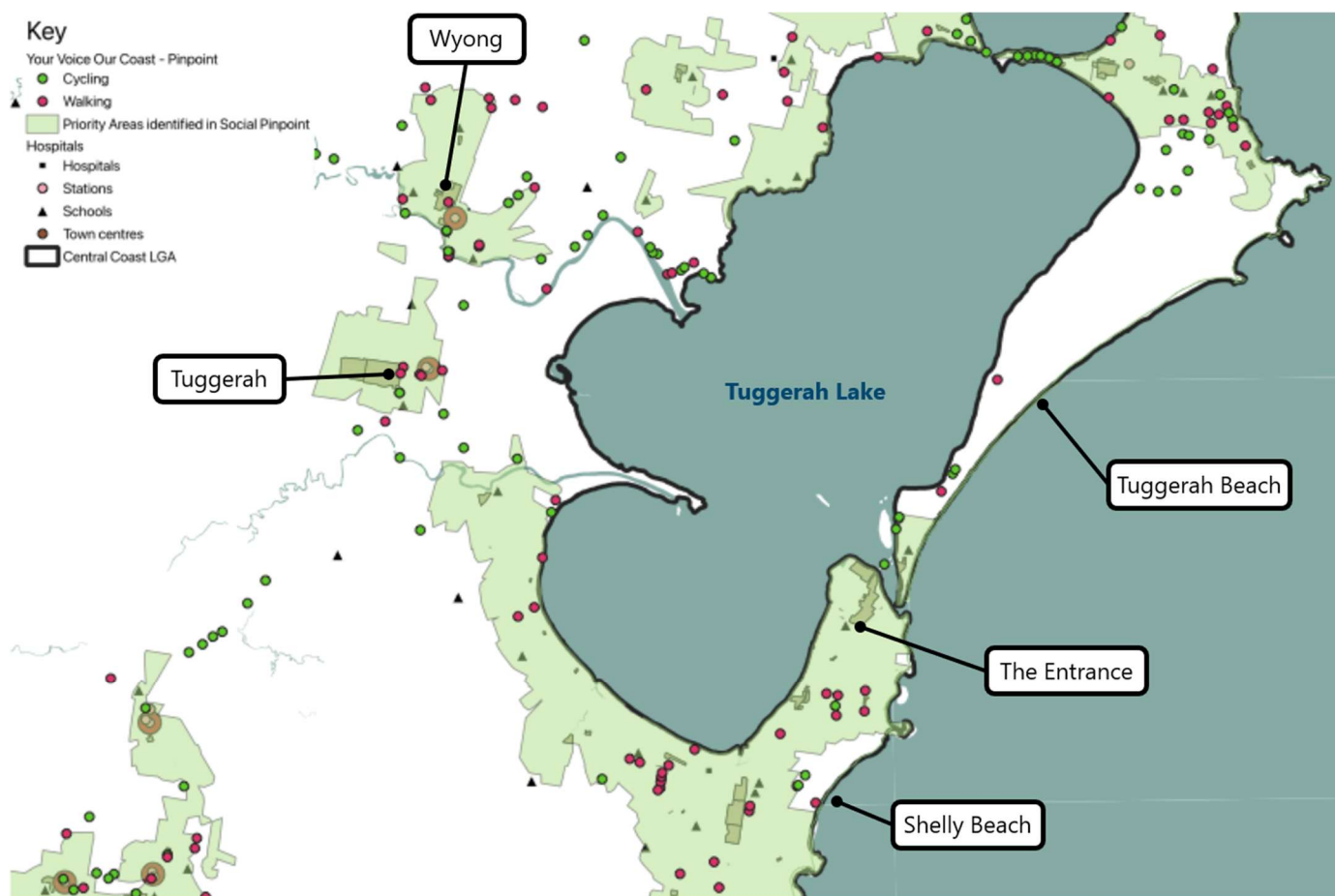
This area showed a strong clustering of concerns related to **school access, peninsula connectivity and safety on busy roads**. Kanangra Road was repeatedly identified as a priority corridor for a separated

cycleway to serve Gwandalan, Summerland Point and Crangan Bay, particularly for school students. Other frequent issues included missing links and unsafe conditions on Main Road Gorokan and Scenic Drive Budgewoi, crowding and conflict on the Buff Point

shared path, and flooding and lack of safe facilities on the Charmhaven Bridge.

- Kanangra Rd – separated cycleway for access to Gwandalan / Summerland Point / Crangan Bay / school students
- Munmorah State Conservation Area - cycle and walking trails for local recreation, tourism and beach access

- Main Road Gorokan, Scenic Drive Budgewoi both highlighted for missing links and unsafe cycling and walking.
- Buff Point shared path highlighted for upgrades due to crowding / conflicts
- Charmhaven Bridge – dedicated cycle / walk path required. Path flooding.

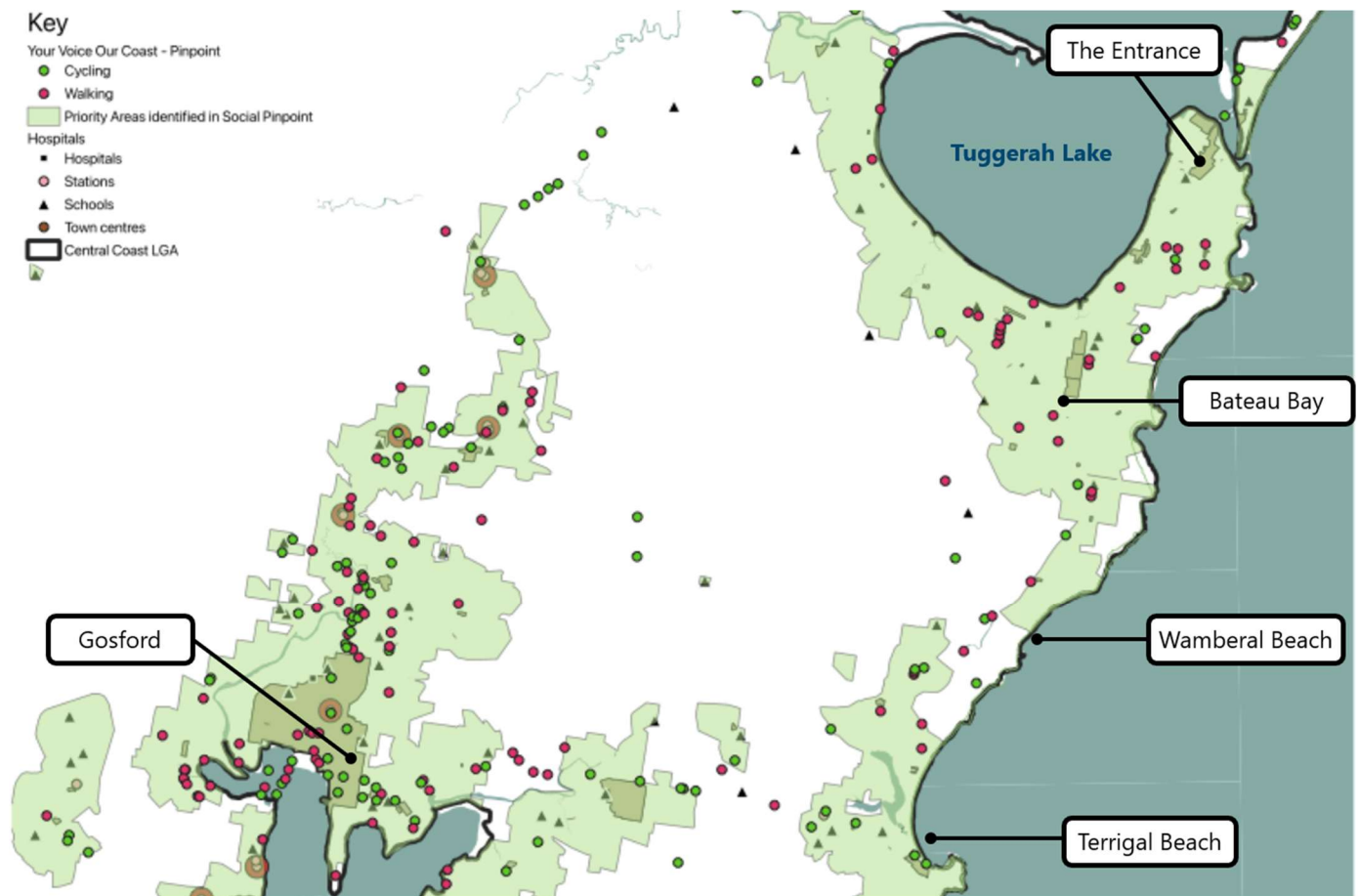


Tuggerah Lake

Around Tuggerah Lake, pinpoints strongly reinforced the desire to **complete the lake loop** and address missing links. Multiple streets in Toukley were highlighted for missing footpaths, alongside requests for cycleways or shared paths to better connect residential areas to the lake and town centre. Tacoma was consistently identified as a key missing cycling link preventing completion of the Tuggerah Lake Loop. Maintenance issues, bushland paths, and missing footpaths along major roads were also prominent.

- Beach Pde, Ocean Pde, Brisbane St, Bungary Rd Toukley missing footpaths

- Oleander St, Evans Rd and Wilfred Barrett Dr potential for cycleway or shared path linking to Toukley
- Finish Magenta Path, Canton Beach
- Tuggerawong Rd, Wahroonga Rd, Britannia Dr, Pollock Ave, Wolseley Ave and Pacific Highway missing footpaths
- Paths through Wadalba bushland.
- Tacoma highlighted as a missing (cycle) link for the Tuggerah Lake Loop



Bateau Bay and The Entrance

In Bateau Bay and The Entrance, feedback focused on **conflict, crossings and local accessibility**. People highlighted shared path crowding and pedestrian–rider conflict at Shelly Beach and near sports and community facilities. Several local streets were flagged for missing footpaths and pram ramps, reflecting accessibility concerns. Major barriers included difficult crossings at roundabouts and arterial roads, particularly along Terrigal Drive, The Entrance Road and Tumby Road, with strong calls for separated facilities between Erina, Terrigal and Bateau Bay.

- Chittaway Road, shared path sought
- Local footpaths sought for safety (eg: The Glen, Elloora Rd, Toowon Bay Rd, Cresthaven Ave and from Mort St via South St to Killarney Vale Shops).
- Pram ramps sought on Patricia St and Rays Rd for accessibility
- Concern with pedestrian / cycle conflict at Shelley Beach, The Entrance Sports & Community Centre Oval
- Tumby Rd roundabout and the Entrance Rd difficult to cross

- Terrigal Drive (connecting Erina to Terrigal) flagged as needing both a separated cycle path and footpath
- Causeway on Willoughby Rd flagged as a safety issue needing cycle improvements
- Improve and connect shared paths from Terrigal to Bateau Bay

Ourimbah to Gosford (West)

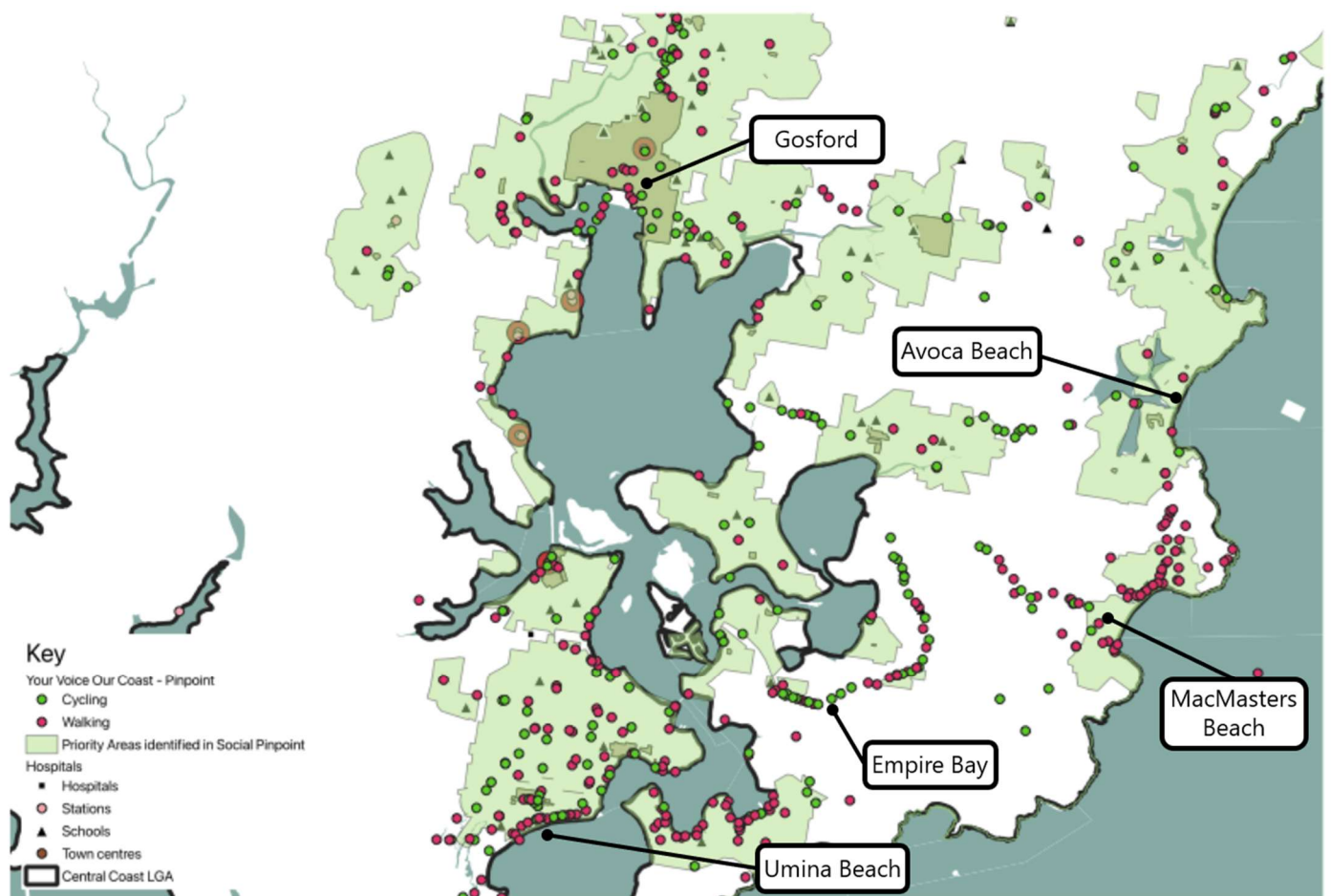
This corridor emerged as one of the most **complex and high-risk areas**. Respondents consistently highlighted **industrial traffic, narrow bridges and lack of footpaths** as barriers to walking and cycling. Railway Crescent, Enterprise Drive and key bridges were repeatedly identified as unsafe, particularly for workers, students and people accessing stations. There was strong, repeated support for a continuous walking and cycling link from Gosford to Point Clare, as well as improved access across the rail line and safer crossings on major roads.

- Enterprise Drive and Chittaway Rd north of Ourimbah flagged as particularly bad for cycling eg: rail bridge (and likewise for Manns Rd bridge, West Gosford)

- Footpaths needed on Tuggerah St, Railway Cresc, The Ridgeway, Pacific Highway Ourimbah especially for school students
- Request for cycle link along Railway Cresc between Niagara Park to Lisarow shops, and from Erina and Sun Valley shops to Gosford
- Better footpaths around Narara Station and Berrys Head Road, and Narara Creek shared path repairs sought
- Key missing link around Showground Road /Paddy Clifton Oval under the rail line to access Wyoming shops
- Connections from Wyoming to Gosford Needed and better access across rail line.

Missing footpaths on a number of streets between Wyoming and Gosford including Mann St (Pacific Highway), Pemell St, Hills St, Cary St, Callemondah Ave, Manns Road, Central Coast Highway Kariong, Brisbane Waters Drive

- Better crossing sought on Pacific Highway, Brisbane Water Drive
- Repairs sought for uneven paths on Dwyer St, Brisbane Water foreshore and Garnet Adcock Memorial Park
- Strong support for Gosford to Point Clare walk / cycle link (along rail bridge)



Empire Bay, Avoca Beach and MacMasters Beach

In this area, pinpoints focused on **coastal connections and bridge safety**. There was strong demand for shared paths linking Copacabana, Avoca Beach and MacMasters Beach, alongside repeated concerns about Empire Bay Drive and the Rip Bridge. These were often described as scenic but intimidating due to traffic speeds, narrow widths and lack of separation.

- Walking/shared path from Copacabana to Avoca Beach via Cape Three Points Rdd
- Del Monte Place (foreshore) to Copacabana Public School highlighted for a safe accessible walking path
- Scenic Road (Kincumber to MacMasters Beach) and Gerda Road / Marine Parade MacMasters Beach highlighted for shared / footpath

- Strong demand for safe walking and cycling paths on Empire Bay Drive, and across the Rip Bridge

The Peninsula (Woy Woy, Ettalong, Umina)

The Peninsula showed dense clustering of feedback across many locations, reflecting its high population and reliance on walking and cycling. Key issues included incomplete shared paths, unsafe crossings, narrow footpaths constrained by parking, and lack of shade and seating. Shopping areas such as West Street and Lone Pine Plaza were highlighted for better pedestrian priority and bike parking. The foreshore at Ettalong attracted strong support for improvements to walking and cycling comfort, including shade, benches and continuous paths.

- Better shared paths sought around Blackwall Mountain (Blackwall Road, Maitland Bay Road, Memorial Ave, Orange Grove Rd) as well as along key routes of Ocean Beach Road and Wilfred Avenue, with better crossings.
- Strong demand for better crossings on Bourke Rd, and for cycle and walking along Trafalgar Ave
- Strong demand for better crossings and wider footpaths (with less parking), and bike parking around West Street shops, and for better bike parking around Lone Pine Plaza.
- Strong demand for walking and cycling improvements, shade and benches along the Esplanade, Ettalong.
- More footpaths and better links sought [along creek] to Umina Oval (via Etta Road) and improved crossings.



Key insights: what the mapping shows

Themes are consistent with the other engagement

The map feedback strongly reinforced the themes identified through our other engagement in this report, and gave more specific locations where these are a concern.

1. Missing links and network continuity

The most common type of pin related to short gaps that break otherwise usable routes, particularly around lakes, peninsulas and between suburbs.

2. Safety from traffic

Many locations were identified where people must walk or ride close to fast or heavy traffic, cross unsafe roads, or navigate narrow bridges.

3. Routes to schools and everyday destinations

A large proportion of pins related to routes used by school students, shoppers and people accessing stations, not recreational routes alone.

4. Managing shared paths in busy areas

Hotspots such as Buff Point, Shelly Beach and popular foreshore paths highlighted concerns about crowding, speed differentials and conflicts.

5. Maintenance and accessibility

Uneven surfaces, flooding, debris, missing pram ramps and poor lighting were repeatedly identified as reasons people avoid existing paths.

6. Access to town centres, shops and public transport

Many pins clustered around shopping areas, stations and key corridors, reinforcing the importance of walking and cycling for everyday access.

7. Amenity and comfort

Shade, seating and more pleasant walking environments were frequently mentioned, particularly along foreshores and longer routes.

What this means for the Central Coast

The mapping feedback shows that **walking and cycling issues on the Central Coast are highly concentrated, location-specific and predictable.**

People consistently pinpointed the same types of places: major roads, bridges, school routes, lake edges, peninsulas, rail crossings and town centre approaches.

Rather than scattered or isolated complaints, the pinpoints reveal **clear geographic patterns** that align with how people actually move through the region.

Problems cluster along barriers, not within neighbourhoods

The highest concentrations of pins occur at:

- Bridges and rail crossings
- Busy arterial roads
- Gaps between suburbs and centres
- Transitions between council roads and state roads

These are the places where the walking and cycling network breaks down.

Missing links are network-critical, not minor gaps

Many pinpoints relate to short sections that prevent access to:

- Schools
- Shops and town centres
- Public transport
- Foreshore and lake paths

Fixing these locations would reconnect entire routes, not just improve isolated streets.

Safety concerns are strongest where people have no alternative

Pins frequently highlight locations where people are forced to:

- Walk or ride on road shoulders
- Cross high-speed traffic without protection
- Share narrow paths with fast-moving bike riders

These locations often serve children, older residents, or car-limited households.

Peninsulas and lake-edge communities experience the greatest constraints

Mapping shows repeated concerns in areas with limited route choice, including:

- The Peninsula

- Lake Munmorah / Budgewoi
- Empire Bay
- Tuggerah Lake edge suburbs

Where there is only one viable route, any missing link or unsafe section has an outsized impact.

People are not mapping “nice-to-haves”

Most pinpoints identify:

- Unsafe conditions
- Inaccessible paths
- Network gaps that prevent everyday trips

The tone of mapping comments reflects necessity rather than preference.

Overall insight from the mapping feedback

The mapping confirms that the Central Coast does not lack paths everywhere — it lacks continuity at the exact locations where people need to cross barriers, reach destinations or move between communities.

This provides Council with a strong, place-based foundation for action:

Key mapping insight: **Targeted investment at known hotspots can unlock whole networks, improve safety for the most vulnerable users, and deliver immediate, visible benefits.**



How we undertook the consultation

This Consultation Report outlines how the Central Coast Council undertook engagement with key stakeholders and the general community to shape a bold, inclusive, and accessible Walking and Cycling Strategy.

The aim of the engagement was to develop a strategy that is practical and inspiring, reflects the lived experience of residents, and supports Council's delivery objectives and future funding opportunities. Council sought to understand how people experience walking and cycling today, and what would make it safer, easier and more appealing in the future.

The feedback received reflects a wide range of ages, abilities, locations and travel needs, including children and parents, older residents, people with disability, walkers, cyclists, school communities, volunteers, and residents who do not own a car.

1,135 residents gave detailed feedback

Of the **1,135 residents** who gave us detailed feedback, **656 people** completed the online survey, **382 people** pinpointed locations on the interactive online map, **81 people** attended in-person drop-in sessions and **16** made written submissions. From a Central Coast population of 360,000, this provides a statistically robust sample, delivering a confidence level of approximately **95%** and a margin of error of around **±4%**, consistent with accepted standards for community and policy research.

Why we engaged

Central Coast Council undertook a multi-channel community engagement program to inform the Walking and Cycling Strategy. This approach was designed to ensure people across the region had multiple opportunities to learn about the project and provide feedback, whether in person or online.

The engagement aimed to:

- Raise awareness of the project across all five Council wards
- Build trust, transparency and ownership of the Strategy across stakeholders

- Ensure the community sees themselves reflected and heard
- Capture insights from people who walk, ride, and rely on active transport.
- Strengthen Council's case for investment and funding.

The engagement approach was guided by the **IAP2 Public Participation Spectrum**, and was undertaken principally between **October** and **December 2025**.

How we engaged

Council used multiple channels to engage different people and organisations across the whole LGA.

Ward Drop-in Sessions (six sessions)

Six in-person drop-in sessions were held at community venues across the Central Coast. These sessions provided opportunities for one-on-one conversations with Council representatives, allowing participants to discuss local issues in detail. Participants were also encouraged to submit written feedback and place location-specific comments on the online map.

- **81 people** attended the drop-in sessions, based on registrations and casual drop-ins.

Online survey

An online survey was available on *Your Voice Our Coast* throughout the engagement period, allowing residents to provide structured feedback

- **656 people completed surveys**
- **787 open comments** were received through the survey

Interactive map

An online interactive map on *Your Voice Our Coast* gave residents the opportunity to pinpoint specific locations of concern anywhere within the LGA. This helps Council build a spatial understanding of on-the-ground issues and inform future prioritisation and action planning.

- **382 people used the interactive map**
- **784 locations** were pinpointed on the map.

Written submissions

Individuals and organisations had the opportunity to provide a written submission. Council received:

- **16 written submissions** and items of correspondence.
- **Three submissions** from community organisations:
 - Peninsula Residents Association
 - Grow Urban Shade Trees (GUST)
 - Toukley and District Cycle Club.

These submissions provided more detailed and considered feedback on local priorities, network gaps, safety concerns and opportunities for improvement.

Social media and online engagement

The engagement was promoted through Council's digital channels and social media, generating broad awareness across the community and enabling people to comment online.

Across social media platforms:

- Reached **43,000** views on Facebook, Instagram
- **100 comments** received in response to posts
- Engagement included comments, reactions and sharing.

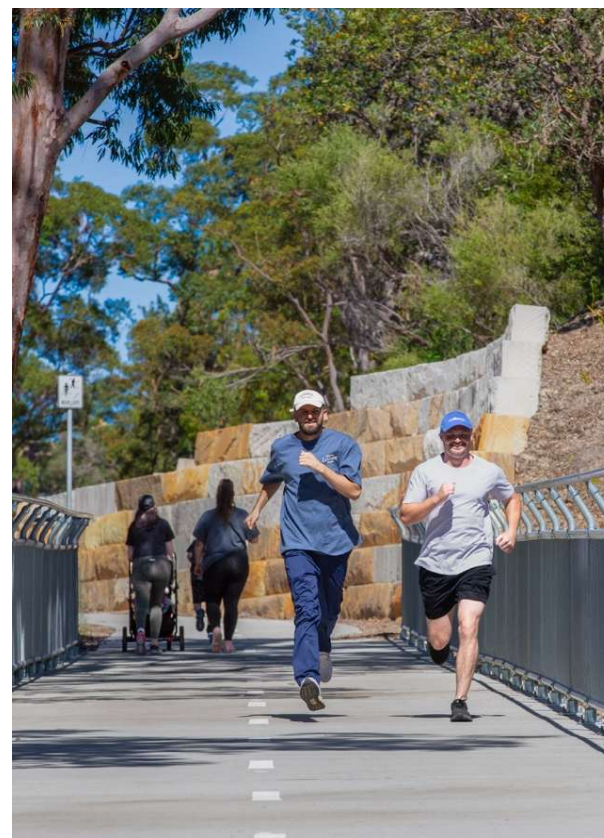
Broader awareness and promotion

To ensure the consultation reached people across all wards, Council promoted the engagement through multiple channels, including:

- Council's website (*Your Voice Our Coast*) which had nearly **15,000 page visits** during the consultation period.
- Advertising at **seven bus shelter locations** across the Central Coast (Woy Woy, Kincumber, Niagara Park, West Gosford, Killarney Vale, Lake Munmorah and Gorokan).
- Temporary signage (corflute signs) placed at key locations across the region, including Gwandalan, Lake Munmorah, Buff Point, Tuggerawong, Long Jetty, West Gosford, Woy Woy, Umina, Terrigal and Kincumber.
- Email updates sent to Council's subscriber list, directing residents to the project information and survey.
- Media promotion, including local radio.

Focus Groups

Online and in-person workshops with agencies and invited community groups to gather deep insights early in the engagement process.



Evaluation and Success Measures

We used the following measures to evaluate the success of our consultation process.

Measure	Target	Result
Geographic Reach	Drop-in sessions held in all five Council wards, and survey submissions from across the LGA	Consultation across the whole LGA virtually and in-person
Total Community Participants	50+ total participants across all engagement activities	1,135 deep engagements: 656 surveys, 16 submissions, 81 in-person, 382 online mappers.
Diverse Stakeholder Representation	Input gathered from youth, families, older adults, people with disabilities, schools and walking/cycling groups	7% of respondents self-identified with a disability, as well as retirees, and ages 17-85 completing the survey.
Integration of Feedback	Verbatim quotes and feedback themes reflected in Strategy and Consultation Report	Verbatim quotes and feedback themes throughout this Consultation Report
IAP2 Alignment	All activities delivered according to planned IAP2 level	Fully aligned



Appendix – Comments from the qualitative feedback

This section details the key themes and verbatim quotes from the **qualitative community feedback**, captured through:

- **Six in-person drop-in sessions** held across the LGA in community halls
- **Written submissions and emails** from individuals, residents' groups, cycling clubs and community organisations
- **Comments on Council's social media posts.**

The themes that emerged closely mirrored those identified in the online survey and interactive map, comprising one overarching theme and eight core themes. The main difference was observed in the drop-in sessions, where **safe routes to schools** emerged as a higher priority, ranking as the third most important theme compared with seventh in the online survey.

For each of the themes, the key messages and illustrative quotes are listed.

Overarching theme



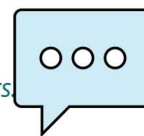
Transport choice, equity and everyday access

Many people spoke about walking and cycling as **essential transport**, not only for recreation. Key messages included:

- Not everyone can drive or afford a car
- Children, older people, and people with disability rely on safe walking routes
- Walking and cycling provide independence and dignity
- Rising living costs make affordable transport more important than ever
- It's essential to mental health and wellbeing
- Good walking and cycling networks support health, local businesses, schools, and community connection

Comments included:

- *"Health and wellbeing."*
- *"Mental health."*
- *"Older men to connect with others"*
- *"Riding helps them to cope."*
- *"Large ageing population."*
- *"Walking as essential for community wellbeing."*
- *"Many residents may rely on walking or public transport due to limited car access."*
- *"Lower socioeconomic area."*
- *"Can't afford to have a car."*
- *"Social equity crisis."*
- *"Active transport supports local businesses."*
- *"Tourism opportunity." / "Huge opportunity."*
- *"Reduces congestion."*



Key insight: People emphasised the importance to mental health, businesses and people who can't drive; and that walking and cycling are **essential transport**, not simply recreation.

Eight core themes and insights

From the feedback, **eight core themes** consistently emerged. These themes reflect what was raised by the **largest number of people**, across multiple locations and engagement methods.

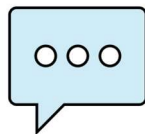


1. Missing links and network connectivity

This was the **most frequently raised issue** across drop-in sessions and written submissions. People consistently described how **short gaps in footpaths, shared paths or cycle routes break otherwise usable journeys**, forcing them into unsafe situations and discouraging walking and cycling altogether. In many cases, a route was described as largely in place, but rendered unusable by one missing section, poor bridge connection, or abrupt ending. People described:

- Footpaths and shared paths that “stop” or “end” unexpectedly
- Missing links that force people onto busy roads, bridges or carparks
- Disconnected routes preventing safe access to schools, stations, shops and community facilities
- The need to prioritise finishing and extending existing routes, rather than building isolated new sections.

Comments included:



- “No continuous footpath.”
- “Cycle/walkways that continue and don’t just drop out halfway around the lake.”
- “Lack of connecting pathway around the area.”
- “The current trail ends at a dead end.”
- “Missing links and desire lines.”
- “No continuous DDA-compliant footpath.”
- “Underpass railway not very practical.”
- “Need connections for elderly i.e. safety.”
- “Gap forces long detours.”

Key insight: One missing link can undo an entire route. The message was not for more paths everywhere, but to ensure **continuous, end-to-end routes that cater for everyday trips.**

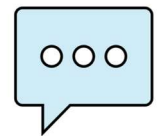


2. Safety from traffic

Safety from vehicles was raised repeatedly across all locations, particularly on busy roads, state roads, bridges and near schools. Many people described avoiding walking or cycling altogether because they felt unsafe. Concerns included:

- High vehicle speeds
- Narrow roads with no shoulders or footpaths
- Unsafe or missing crossings
- Bridges with no space, lighting or protection for people walking or riding
- Aggressive driver behaviour
- People shared near-miss experiences or described avoiding certain routes entirely due to fear.

Comments included:



- “No safe way to cross.”
- “Forced onto the road
- “Currently must walk on the road.”
- “Very dangerous road with no paths in our vicinity.”
- “People have to walk on the road and it’s dangerous.”
- “School children cross the highway to catch the school bus.”
- “Students instead run across the road directly near the exit.”
- “History of cyclist fatalities.”
- “Uncomfortable and unsafe cycling.”
- “Narrow shoulders, steep sections and the need to ride in the traffic lane.”
- “Traffic is so heavy we have trouble crossing the road.”
- “Motorist aggression is common.”
- “Nearly caused rear end accidents.”

Key insight: Safety is a basic prerequisite. If people don’t feel safe, they simply won’t walk or ride. Walking and riding with traffic is seen as unsafe.



3. Managing shared paths and providing separation in busy areas

Shared paths were a major source of tension, especially where they are busy. It was one of the most frequently discussed topics, particularly where pedestrian volumes are high. Walkers, older residents and people with disability often reported fear and discomfort, while bike riders raised concerns about conflict and ambiguity. People consistently said **shared paths work in quieter areas, but do not work well in busy foreshore, shopping and tourist locations.**

People raised concerns about:

- Speed differences between users
- Fear felt by walkers, particularly older people and those with prams
- E-bikes and modified bikes
- Unclear rules and lack of education.

Comments included:

- *"It is too narrow for mixed users."*
- *"Please keep the Board Walk at Terrigal clear of bikes, e-bikes and e-scooters."*
- *"Why do walking pathways have to be shared with cyclists?"*
- *"Shared Path – Conflict between Pedestrians and cyclists."*
- *"Fast cyclists sometimes fly by and frighten us."*
- *"Elderly people avoid going down to beachfront."*
- *"Fast children/teens on fat bikes."*
- *"A cyclist squeezed between me and my husband."*
- *"Shared paths not the answer with more e-bikes."*
- *"Shared path is not the solution – separated."*
- *"The mixture of walkers, cyclist, dogs, kids."*
- *"Big groups of cyclists are very daunting."*

Key insight: People are asking for **the right (sized) treatment in the right place**, and for council to widen / separate walk and cycle paths where volumes are high, as well as better enforcement.



4. Accessible, well-maintained paths that all people can use

Accessibility and maintenance were raised together, because poor maintenance often makes paths inaccessible. Many people described surfaces that exclude wheelchairs, prams, mobility scooters and older walkers.

Common concerns included:

- Steep slopes and driveway crossfalls
- Uneven surfaces, roots, potholes and debris
- Flooding and pooling water
- Overgrown vegetation and poor lighting

People explained that these conditions make paths unusable for wheelchairs, mobility scooters, prams, older residents and children.

Comments included:

- *"Trip hazards."*
- *"Poor footpath maintenance."*
- *"Surface degradation."*
- *"Plant overgrowth."*
- *"Glass on paths."*
- *"Small drops/gaps."*
- *"Tree roots have broken and lifted the footpath."*
- *"Leaves, slippery surfaces."*
- *"Branches and twigs on roadways and shared pathways."*
- *"Wind-blown sand accumulates on paths."*
- *"Potholes hidden by shade from overhanging trees."*
- *"Line marking not upkept."*
- *"Not flush with road surface."*
- *"Gets inundated and needs to be cleared / cleaned."*
- *"Bus stop is just dirt."*

Key insight: Existing paths require regular management and maintenance programs, and asset conditions should be periodically audited.



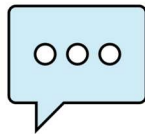
5. Access to everyday destinations: shops, services and public transport

People frequently spoke about walking and cycling as essential for reaching **shops, train stations, bus stops, health services and community facilities.**

This theme was especially strong among people without cars and older residents

This theme reinforced the importance of walking and cycling for **daily life**, not just recreation, and the need for safe, continuous routes between where people live and where they need to go.

Comments included:



- *"No safe place to wait."*
- *"No safe way to cross."*
- *"Need connectivity between where people live, work and shop."*
- *"Access to shopping centre is difficult."*
- *"No safe way to walk to the station."*
- *"Poor walking access to bus stops."*
- *"Public transport relies on walking first."*
- *"Lack of pathways connecting bus stops."*
- *"Station-to-station corridor."*

Key insight: Walking and cycling are essential for **daily life**, not just recreation. To do this, they need for safe, continuous routes between where they live and where they need to go.

Providing a good walking and biking environment goes beyond paths and crossings, extending to land use planning (e.g. zoning for local shops) and development assessment (entrances, internal paths)



6. Amenity, comfort and climate resilience

People consistently raised the importance of comfort, particularly in hot weather and over longer distances. Shade, seating and water were seen as essential, not optional.

People highlighted the importance of:

- Shade and tree canopy
- Seating and rest points
- Water refill stations
- Lighting and weather-resilient paths

Heat, flooding and longer walking distances were frequently mentioned, particularly by older residents.

Comments included:

- *"Shade is essential."*
- *"Need seating for older people."*
- *"Water stations are appreciated."*
- *"Heat makes walking unbearable."*
- *"Trees make paths usable."*

Key insight: Comfort directly affects the range of people who walk or ride, especially older residents and children, and the time of day or year they do so.



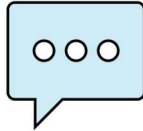
7. Safe routes to schools

Safe access to schools was raised by parents, grandparents, teachers, principals, residents and advocacy groups. Many people described children walking or riding in unsafe conditions because there was no alternative. Key issues included:

- Children walking on roads due to missing footpaths
- Unsafe crossings near schools and bus stops
- Heavy traffic and congestion at drop-off and pick-up times
- Children running across roads because crossings are poorly located.

Comments included:

- *"No crossing at schools."*
- *"Kids are forced to walk on the road."*
- *"Students instead run across the road near the exit."*
- *"Unsafe walking activity around the high school."*
- *"My primary concern is children's safety walking to school."*



Key insight: People deeply care about walking and riding safely and easily to school. Improving school routes delivers immediate safety benefits and reduces traffic congestion at the same time.



8. Wayfinding, mapping and information

Many people said it is hard to know:

- Where safe routes are
- How paths connect
- Which routes are suitable for different abilities

There was strong support for clearer maps, signage, and user-friendly information to help people plan trips with confidence.

Comments included:

- *"I found it difficult to work out the planned routes on the maps online."*
- *"Wayfinding is a major barrier."*
- *"Need clearer signage."*
- *"Most important mapping."*
- *"Better maps would encourage use."*
- *"Signage is sometimes too high."*
- *"Hard to read for those with poor eyesight."*
- *"Mapping – route connections is a biggy."*
- *"Most important mapping."*
- *"Route numbers would be helpful."*
- *"Cowra Rides Guide."*
- *"Centralised website / platform."*
- *"Dedicated site for cyclists."*

Key insight: Even good infrastructure fails if people don't know it exists or how to use it. There was strong support for clearer maps, signage, and user-friendly information to help people plan trips with confidence.



A cross-cutting sentiment: delivery, trust and confidence

Across all written and verbal engagement, people expressed concern that plans and strategies do not always lead to visible change. Many stressed the importance of early, tangible improvements.

Many expressed frustration with:

- Long-standing plans not yet delivered
- Repeated consultation without visible change

At the same time, there was optimism that this Strategy could deliver real improvements if it:

- Focuses on practical outcomes
- Prioritises missing links and safety
- Shows early progress alongside longer-term change

Comments included:

- *"Lots of strategies and plans, but it's not creating what's needed."*
- *"Planning looks great, but delivery has been piecemeal."*
- *"Nothing has happened."*
- *"Not just another tick-a-box exercise."*

Key insight: Visible progress builds trust. Small, well-chosen improvements can restore confidence while larger projects are planned.

Make people aware of the good work already afoot. Behaviour change campaigns around new infrastructure also drives more awareness and use.