

Mooloolaba to Maroochydore cycleway

Community consultation results Round 2 (May–July 2020)

Background

The Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR) and Sunshine Coast Council (SCC) have partnered to deliver the Mooloolaba to Maroochydore (M2M) cycleway, a high-quality active transport corridor for the Sunshine Coast, connecting Mooloolaba to Maroochydore.

When complete, the six-kilometre long cycleway will provide improved sustainable travel options for all active transport users from the Sunshine Motorway near the Mooloolah River, through Mooloolaba and Alexandra Headland to the new Maroochydore City Centre at Maud Street.

The M2M cycleway is being delivered over seven stages, as funding becomes available.

Stage 6 – consultation focus

Stage 6 of the M2M cycleway – a 1.2km section from Mary Street at Alexandra Headland to Sixth Avenue at Maroochydore – was identified as a high priority due to the current safety issues that bike riders experience on-road with potential ‘dooring’ of parked vehicles. This is where an accident occurs when a cyclist swerves to avoid or is struck by the opening of a car door. Additionally, the existing off-road pathway in this section does not have sufficient width to safely cater to the large volumes of pedestrians, bike riders, and other active transport users.



Image: Proposed alignment (Stage 6 in green)

Community consultation

An initial consultation period on the project vision (overall concept, challenges and opportunities) was held in late 2019. This included the establishment of a Community Reference Group, key stakeholder meetings and public displays.

In 2020 (11 May–31 July), TMR undertook further consultation to obtain specific feedback on the Stage 6 preferred option. The consultation approach developed for the Stage 6 preferred option was informed by the outcomes of previous consultation.

Consultation approach

The consultation approach was heavily influenced by COVID-19 and social distancing restrictions.

A number of activities TMR intended to undertake early in the engagement period could not go ahead due to COVID-19. This included staffed pop-up community information sessions and intercept surveys along the foreshore and static information displays at Alexandra Headland Surf Life Saving Club and Sunshine Coast libraries.

The COVID-19 compliant approach included:

- an increased distribution area for the project newsletter from 7,000 residents and businesses to 12,000, including feedback forms with reply-paid post details
- information posters, with QR codes linking to the project web page, installed along the M2M cycleway alignment
- increased advertisements in the Sunshine Coast Daily, My Weekly Preview, Facebook and local radio over the 12-week consultation period
- face-to-face meetings (with limited numbers adhering to social distancing guidelines) and video-conference meetings with interested stakeholder and community groups
- social media posts on the TMR Facebook page and geotargeting (promoted posts for additional reach, based on defined local locations) within a 100km radius of the project corridor.

An initial six-week consultation period was extended by an additional six weeks. This extension allowed TMR to undertake further direct, face-to-face engagement and resulted in more than 1,000 pieces of feedback being received.

As COVID-19 restrictions lifted at the start of July 2020, the extended consultation period also enabled the project team to undertake more direct engagement with key stakeholders and the community. These additional consultation activities included:

- hosting an information stall at the Alexandra Headland Community Association Markets on Saturday 11 July 2020
- completing intercept surveys on Wednesday 8 July and Monday 27 July 2020 along the Alexandra Headland foreshore
- door-knocking local businesses on Wednesday 8 July and Monday 27 July 2020 along the Alexandra Headland foreshore.

Consultation promotion snapshot

- 20 print advertisements
- 28 radio advertisements
- 12,000 newsletters
- 30 pieces of media coverage (60% negative sentiment, 26% neutral sentiment and 13% positive sentiment)
- Posters and social media advertisements

In addition to TMR's promotion of the official consultation process, the Beach Matters community group promoted the opportunity to provide feedback using posters, a media campaign and a social media campaign via their own channels.

Preferred option presented to the community

The preferred option presented for community feedback for Stage 6 involved:

- constructing a three-metre wide, 1.2-kilometre, two-way dedicated cycleway to provide appropriate separation between bike riders, pedestrians and vehicles
- relocating the existing parallel parking between Sixth Avenue and Okinja Road to dedicated off-road car parking areas. This would accommodate the new cycleway and an upgraded shared path between Parker Street and Okinja Road with limited impact on the dunal vegetation
- establishing two new off-street car park facilities (near the Maroochy Beach Holiday Park, formerly Seabreeze Caravan Park and Okinja Road) to provide approximately 20 additional car parks in the precinct
- improving safety at the Sixth Avenue intersection by raising the existing pedestrian and bike crossing and installing a new signalised pedestrian crossing on the left-turn slip lane
- installing a new signalised pedestrian crossing point at Maroubra Street to provide improved safety and a possible future connection to M2M Stage 7 linking to Maroochy CBD

- installing pedestrian fencing in high risk areas along Alexandra Parade
- providing a new mid-block signalised pedestrian crossing between Okinja Road and Mari Street
- relocating the existing Okinja Road bus stop to the south of the intersection
- closing the car park exit at Alexandra Headland Surf Life Saving Club and relocating the bus stop to this location as an 'in-lane' bus stop.



Image: Artist impressions of the preferred design option presented in May–July 2020



Image: Typical cycleway treatment for the proposed preferred option (Stage 2 shown)

Key stakeholders and respondents

The following key stakeholders were consulted and/or provided feedback:

- Alexandra Headland Surf Life Saving Club
- Alexandra Headland Malibu Club
- Alexandra Headland Community Association
- Alexandra Foreshore Bushcare Group
- Bicycle QLD
- GIANT Bikes
- North Shore Boardriders Club
- Project Urban
- Sunshine Coast Access Advisory Network
- Sunshine Coast Environment Council
- The Beach Matters community action group
- University of the Third Age
- Fiona Simpson MP, Member for Maroochy
- Joe Natoli, Division 4 Councillor (SCC)

Contact us to find out more about this planning project:

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12 Community Reference Group (CRG) members, representing:

- local business owners
- local surfing community
- bike riders
- local residents/general foreshore users (i.e. walkers and runners).

Feedback primarily represented a local perspective.

- Most feedback came from Alexandra Headland representing residents, property owners or businesses in the immediate project area.
- Other feedback came predominately from surrounding suburbs including Cotton Tree, Maroochydore and Mooloolaba representing residents, property owners or businesses in the M2M cycleway alignment project area.
- Some feedback came from people in Buderim, Forest Glen, Birtinya, Bokarina, Buddina, Minyama, Parrearra, Warana, Wurtulla and the wider Caloundra area.

Consultation results

Respondents used a range of feedback options and provided comments on many elements of the proposed design. Some proposed design features were particularly polarising and elicited strong and emotional responses. The consultation period confirmed there is a wide range of stakeholders to consider for this project, many with differing views on the project and design elements.

Feedback snapshot

- 1159 pieces of feedback received via:
 - interactive map (553)
 - feedback form (291)
 - project email inbox (268)
 - project 1800 hotline (43)
- 55% of feedback was positive or neutral about the preferred design and project objectives
- 45% of feedback was considered negative about the preferred design.

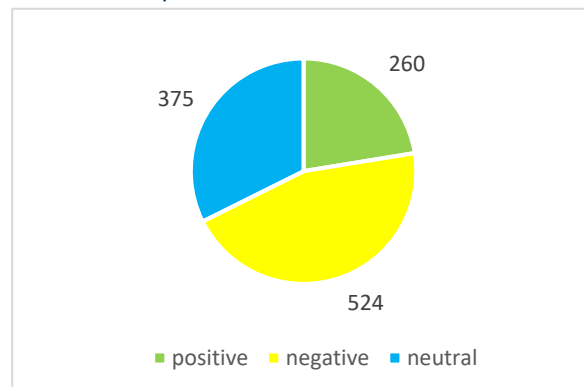
Key themes

- Top 10 feedback themes (in order of comments received):
 - parking (mentioned in 39% of feedback)
 - cyclist provisions (in 29% of feedback)
 - safety (in 27% of feedback)
 - fencing (in 25% of feedback)
 - infrastructure design, including impacts to the dunal area (in 19% of feedback)
 - alignment/connectivity – location and positioning of cycleway and connection to other stages (in 18% of feedback)
 - flora, fauna or vegetation – including species suggestions and a preference for vegetation instead of median fencing (in 18% of feedback)

- pedestrian facilities (in 15% of feedback)
- social impacts/amenity/liveability – including beach access and wider community benefits (in 10% of feedback)
- traffic lights/signals (in 10% of feedback).

Feedback sentiment

The below graph summarises the overall feedback sentiment for the Stage 6 preferred design presented to the community in the 2020 consultation period.



Other projects in Alexandra Headland

During the consultation period, some stakeholders/community members raised issues about other infrastructure projects proposed for the project area, including Sunshine Coast Council's proposed rock seawall and mass transit system which could potentially be within the M2M cycleway project corridor (comments focused on light rail). Feedback received about these two infrastructure projects centred primarily on:

- planning and timeframes for the projects
- incorporating the proposed rock seawall into the cycleway design
- perceptions about the lack of need for the infrastructure
- concerns with physical constraints for all three projects in the foreshore area.

Next steps

On 11 August 2020, Minister for Transport and Main Roads Mark Bailey MP announced the preferred design would not proceed and a revised design would be developed in consultation with stakeholder groups and the community.

TMR is reviewing all feedback and options for Stage 6 and will work collaboratively with the community on a revised community-focused design. TMR remains committed to partnering with SCC and the community for this project and will keep the community informed when the next stage of consultation is determined.

Contact us to find out more about this planning project:

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