

Hilton Esplanade Improvement Project

Community Engagement Report



Report summary

The Hilton Esplanade Street Improvements project sought to understand how the community uses and values Hilton Esplanade and identify priorities for future improvements. Community engagement was undertaken between 24 March and 24 May 2026 through an online survey, two resident workshops with adjoining landowners, three community pop-up sessions and written submissions.

A total of 302 survey responses were received, supported by 150 face-to-face conversations across the two workshops and three pop-up sessions.

Feedback highlighted key themes relating to the area's natural character, foreshore environment, infrastructure condition and future improvements. The findings of this engagement will be used alongside technical investigations to inform the development of a draft design and priority works plan for further community review.

Key themes

The responses to the Hilton Esplanade Improvement Project survey reveal a community that deeply values the area's natural, peaceful, and "old Noosa" character. The majority of respondents are long-term residents or regular visitors, many of whom use the area for walking, cycling, relaxing, fishing, and river access. Below is a summary of the key themes and findings:

1. Strong Desire to Preserve Natural Character

Many respondents explicitly request that Hilton Esplanade remain largely unchanged, emphasizing its quiet, unspoiled, and non-commercial nature. They appreciate the lack of crowds, minimal development, and the area's function as a local haven away from tourist hotspots like Gympie Terrace.

Many fear that upgrades or increased facilities could attract more visitors and change the area's character.

2. Road and Drainage Issues

The most common practical complaint is the poor condition of the road, with frequent mentions of potholes, uneven surfaces, and flooding after rain.

Drainage and water ponding are also frequently cited as issues needing attention.

3. Foreshore Erosion

Many respondents are concerned about ongoing foreshore erosion and want stabilization measures, but prefer natural solutions (e.g., tree planting, living shorelines) over hard infrastructure.

4. Footpaths, Cycling, and Accessibility

There is a clear split: some want improved footpaths and safer cycling access, especially for families, prams, and people with mobility issues while others fear that formal paths or cycleways would "overdevelop" the area and attract more people.

Some suggest a compromise: low-impact, natural-looking paths or shared zones.

5. Parking

Parking is a divisive issue. Many locals and regular users say parking is already limited and essential for accessibility, especially for seniors and families. They oppose any reduction in parking.

Others, particularly those who walk or cycle to the area, are less concerned about parking and even suggest reducing it to discourage overcrowding and overnight camping.

6. Facilities and Amenities

Some respondents request more seating, picnic tables, shade, and improved maintenance of existing facilities.

A smaller but vocal group wants public toilets, especially for families and seniors.

Others oppose new amenities, fearing they will encourage illegal camping or increase visitor numbers.

7. Traffic and Safety

Concerns about speeding vehicles, especially near bends and the boat ramp, are common. Many support traffic calming measures.

Some mention issues with overnight campers, boat trailers, and houseboats affecting safety and amenity.

8. Environmental and Community Values

There is strong support for maintaining the area's environmental values, including native vegetation, birdlife, and informal green spaces.

Some suggest interpretive signage about local flora, fauna, and Indigenous history.

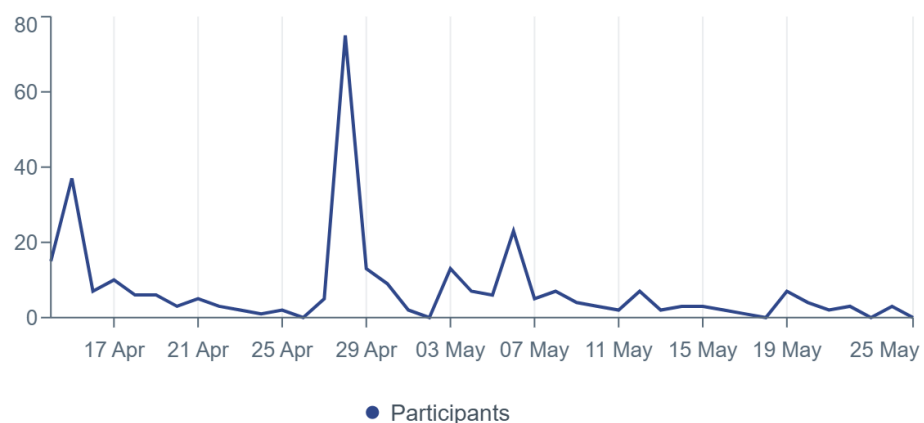
Participants timeline

Total participants

303

Participation rate ⓘ

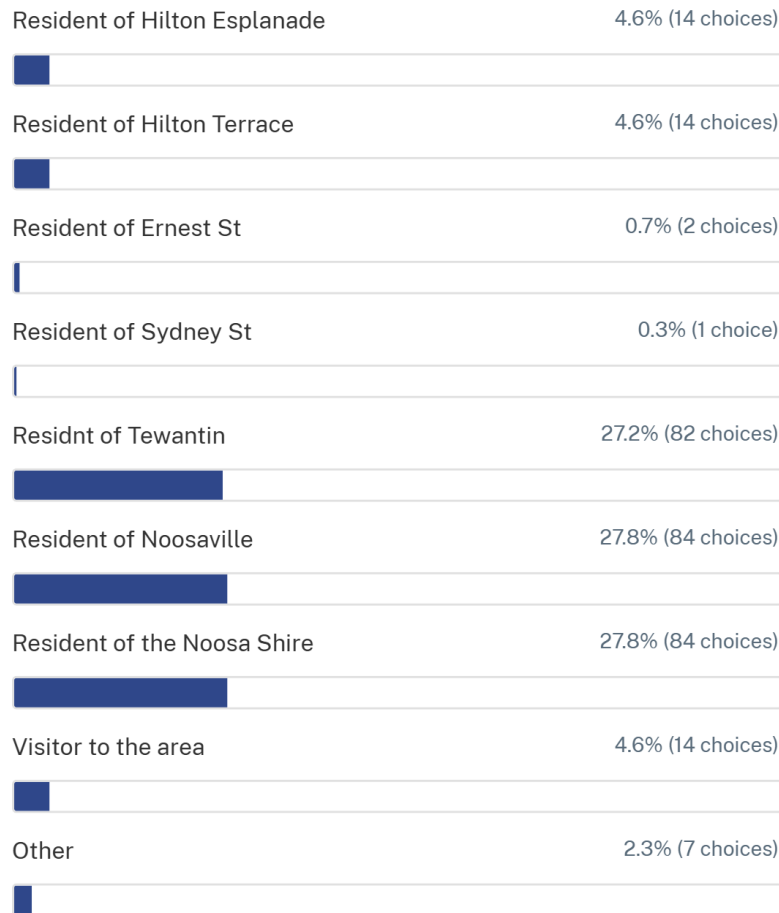
26%



Description: EDM sent 15 April and 28 April -links directly with the spikes.

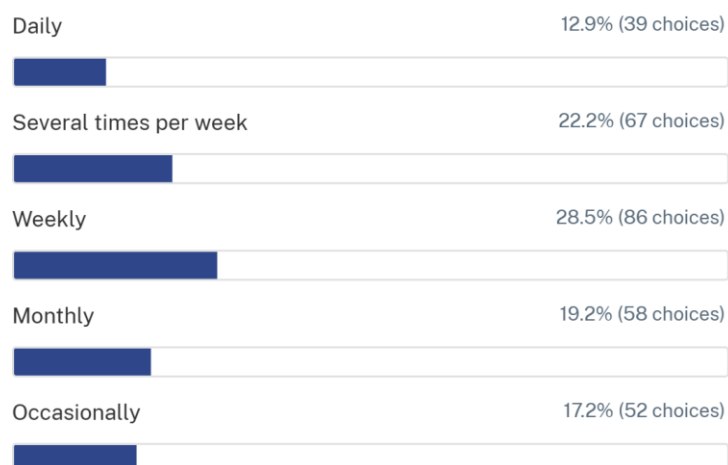
Which of the following best describes you?

302/302 - Multiple choice - choose one - required



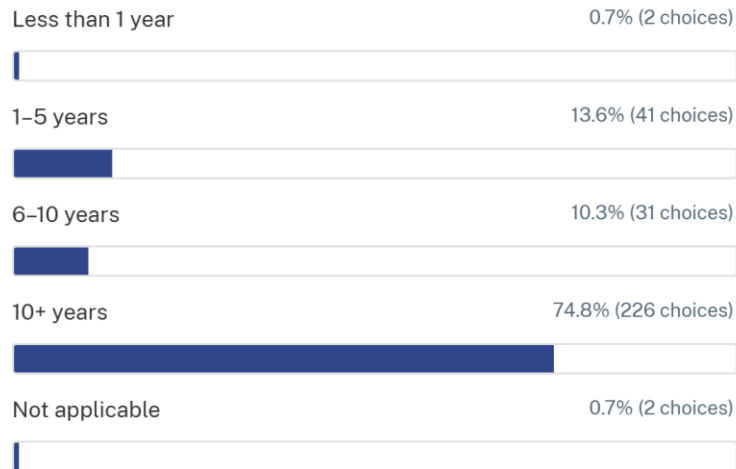
How often do you visit or use Hilton Esplanade?

302/302 - Multiple choice - choose one - required



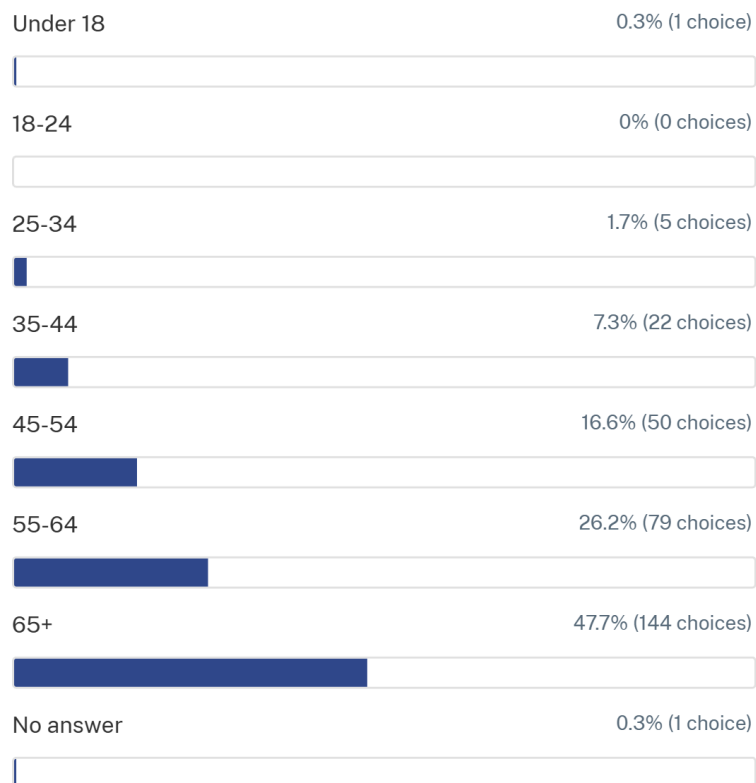
How long have you lived in or been visiting the area?

302/302 - Multiple choice - choose one - required



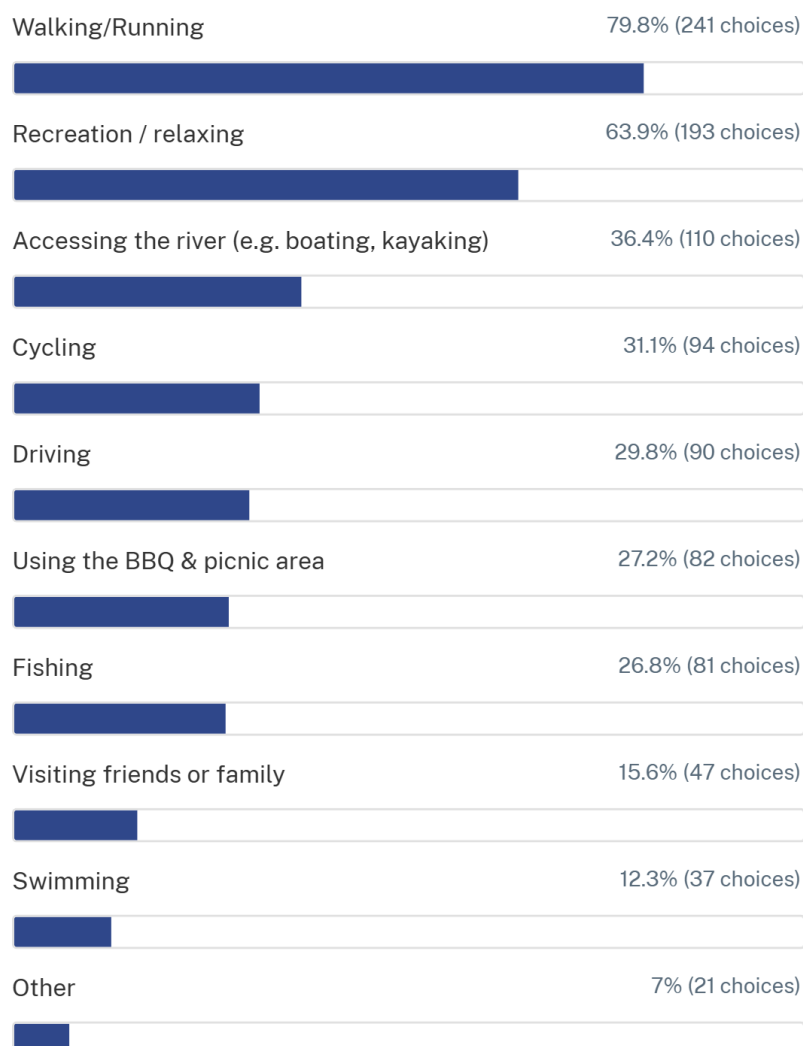
What is your age group?

301/302 - Multiple choice - choose one - required



How do you typically use Hilton Esplanade and the foreshore area?

302/302 - Multiple choice - choose many - required



Dog walking is by far the most common use of Hilton Esplanade and the foreshore area, mentioned in a majority of responses. Walking, running, and general recreation/relaxation are also frequently cited activities. Several respondents value the area for its peace, quiet, and as a retreat from busy or tourist-heavy parts of Noosa.

Access to the river for boating, kayaking, and fishing is another common use. Some respondents mention using the BBQ and picnic areas, cycling, and driving through the area. There are also mentions of bringing children (e.g., walking with a stroller) and accommodating people with mobility or sensory impairments.

A few responses highlight environmental interests, such as inspecting mangrove growth and riverbank erosion or doing environmental work. Other less frequent but notable uses include live music painting and using the area as a quiet place to read or eat lunch.

Accessibility is a concern for some, particularly for the elderly or those with mobility aids, as current conditions can limit their ability to enjoy the area outside of their vehicles.

Overall, the area is valued for its tranquility, accessibility for dog walking and relaxation, river access, and as a peaceful alternative to busier parts of the region.

Tell us what you value most about Hilton Esplanade and its foreshore?

301/302 - Long answer - required

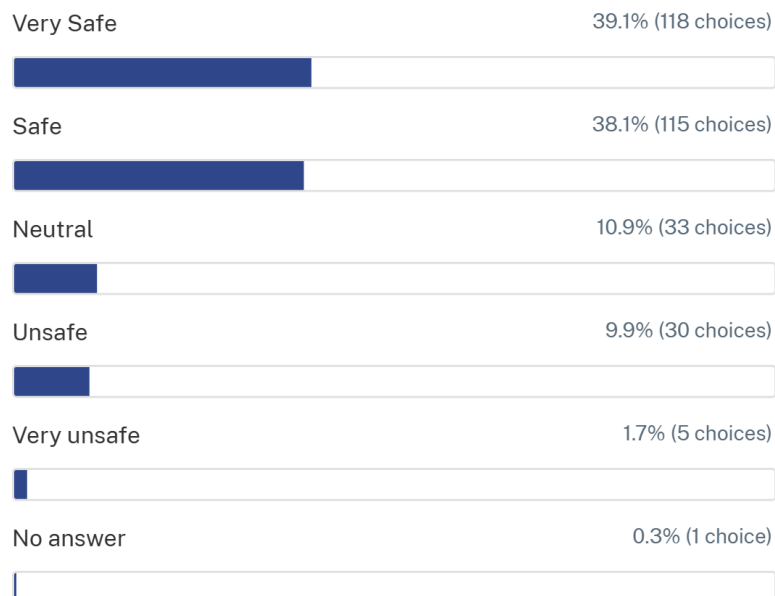
Respondents overwhelmingly value Hilton Esplanade for its peace, quiet, and natural, unspoilt environment. The area is consistently described as tranquil, relaxed, and less crowded than other riverfront locations like Gympie Terrace and Noosaville, making it a haven for locals. Many appreciate the lack of commercial development, infrastructure, and tourist crowds, emphasizing its old-fashioned charm and connection to nature. Easy access to the river, shady trees, birdlife, and open green spaces are frequently mentioned as valued features.

Respondents repeatedly request that the area remain largely unchanged, with some suggesting only minor improvements like tidying up, better seating, footpaths, or addressing erosion, but cautioning against overdevelopment or making it more attractive to tourists. The Esplanade is seen as a community space for walking, cycling, fishing, picnics, and relaxing, with a strong sense of local identity and nostalgia.

In summary, the dominant themes are the value placed on its quiet, natural, and undeveloped character, its role as a peaceful retreat for locals, and a widespread desire to preserve these qualities.

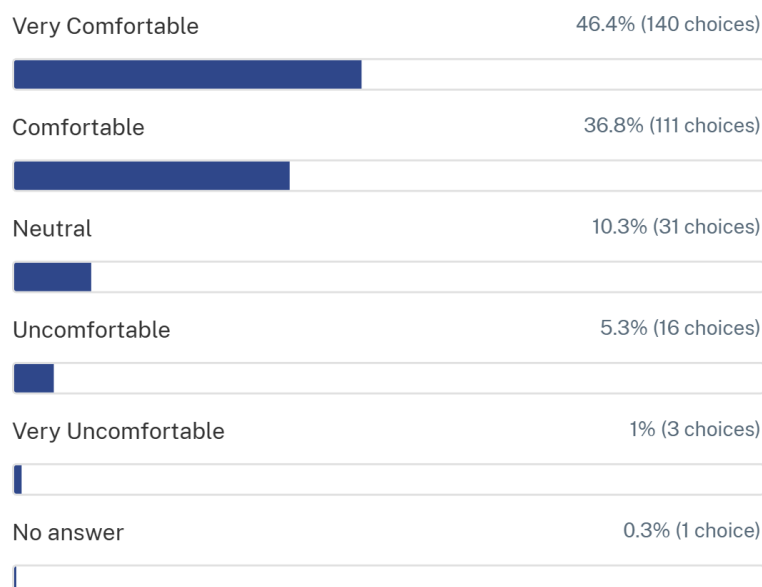
How safe does Hilton Esplanade feel?

301/302 - Multiple choice - choose one - required



How comfortable does Hilton Esplanade feel?

301/302 - Multiple choice - choose one - required



Is there anything that would improve your experience?

239/302 - Long answer - optional

Most respondents highlighted the need for improvements to pedestrian safety and accessibility, with frequent calls for dedicated footpaths or walking paths, often to separate pedestrians from vehicles and bikes. Many also mentioned the poor condition of the road surface, potholes, and drainage issues, requesting repairs and upgrades.

Traffic speed and safety were recurring concerns, with suggestions for traffic calming, speed reduction, and better signage. Parking issues, especially related to boat trailers, campervans, and congestion, were also mentioned frequently.

There were many requests for more seating, picnic tables, BBQ areas, and shelters, often with a preference for shaded or covered options.

Public toilets were a common request, especially for families and those spending extended time in the area.

Some respondents wanted to keep the area as natural and undeveloped as possible, expressing concern about over-commercialisation or urbanisation.

Other recurring themes included: requests for improved lighting (especially for safety at night), better maintenance of grass and landscaping, more rubbish bins, improved access to the river, and environmental enhancements like tree planting and erosion control.

Some respondents raised concerns about boat traffic, moored vessels, and people living on boats or in campervans, suggesting restrictions or better management.

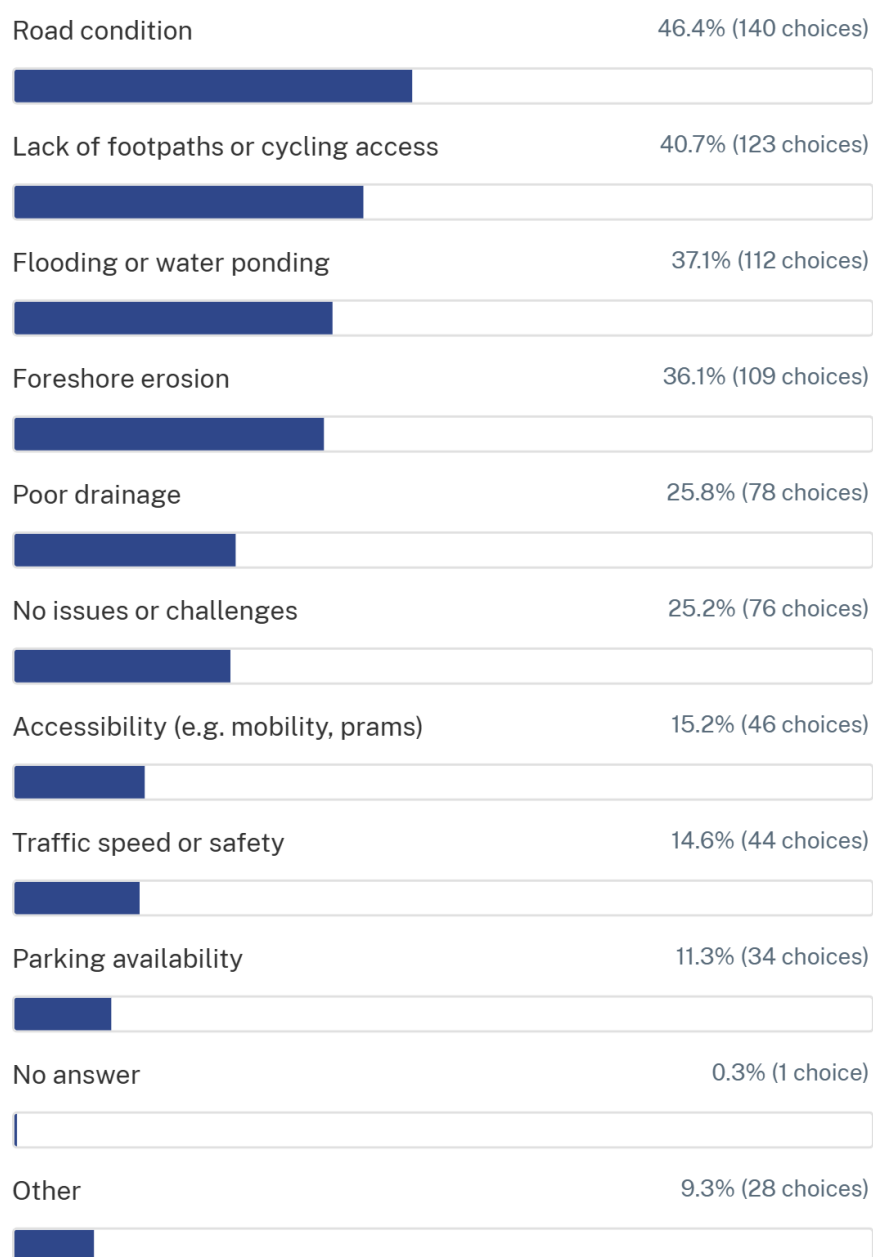
A minority of respondents felt the area was already perfect or only needed minimal maintenance, and strongly opposed any significant changes.

In summary, the most common requests were for safer, well-maintained pedestrian paths, road repairs, more seating and picnic facilities, public toilets, and improved traffic and

parking management. There is also a strong desire from many to preserve the natural character of the area and avoid overdevelopment.

What challenges or issues do you currently experience in the area

301/302 - Multiple choice - choose many - required



The most common issues raised by respondents relate to poor road conditions, lack of footpaths or cycling access, poor drainage and flooding, and the need for better or more accessible facilities—especially public toilets. Many also mentioned problems with parking, particularly for trailers and boat users, and the need to upgrade or expand boat ramps.

Concerns about foreshore erosion, traffic speed and safety, and poor accessibility for people with mobility needs or prams were also frequently noted. Several respondents highlighted the need for better maintenance, including rubbish collection and addressing fishing litter.

Other recurring themes include requests for improved river access for kayaks and canoes, more seating, and better options for children. Some respondents raised social issues such as people living on boats or camping/being homeless near the river.

A few mentioned the need for an off-leash dog area and one respondent felt the area was already perfect for their needs. There were also calls for a broader focus on the whole shire, not just the immediate area.

**Are there specific locations along Hilton Esplanade where improvements are needed?
If so, please explain below**

130/302 - Long answer - optional

Most respondents highlighted the need for improvements to the road surface, especially near the boat ramp, marina end, and areas prone to flooding and erosion. Drainage and ponding issues after rain were also frequently mentioned.

Bank erosion and foreshore degradation are recurring concerns, with calls for remediation, tree planting, and maintaining sandy beaches for swimmers.

Improved pedestrian and cycling access was widely requested, including footpaths, safer walking routes (especially at blind corners), and connections to Chaplin Park and Gympie Terrace.

Parking improvements, especially for boat trailers and picnic users, were mentioned often, with suggestions for more spaces, better definition, and restrictions on overnight camping.

Many respondents called for more public amenities, especially toilets, picnic tables, drinking fountains, and shaded areas.

Several respondents suggested adding or improving play areas for children, public jetties for fishing, and kayak launching facilities.

Issues with private jetties, abandoned boats, and inappropriate use of public spaces (overnight camping, littering, unsavory activity) were raised.

Some respondents prefer minimal intervention, emphasizing the relaxed, natural character of the area and cautioning against overdevelopment or catering too much to tourists and cyclists.

Other less frequent suggestions included shellfish reef restoration, improved signage, tree maintenance, gardening, and coffee businesses.

In summary, the most common themes are road and drainage upgrades, erosion control, improved pedestrian/cyclist access, more amenities (especially toilets and picnic facilities), parking improvements, and maintaining the area's natural character.

If space along Hilton Esplanade is limited, how do you think it should be prioritised?

244/302 - Short answer - optional

Most respondents emphasised prioritising walking and pedestrian access, with many also supporting cycling as a secondary priority. Landscaping, shade, and maintaining a natural environment were frequently mentioned as important, often alongside river access for

swimming, fishing, and non-motorised craft. Many respondents want to discourage or limit vehicle access and parking, preferring these only for residents or boat ramp users.

A significant number of responses advocated leaving Hilton Esplanade as it is, expressing satisfaction with the current balance and cautioning against overdevelopment or increased usage. Some specifically requested no new cycle paths or concrete walkways to preserve grassed areas and the natural feel.

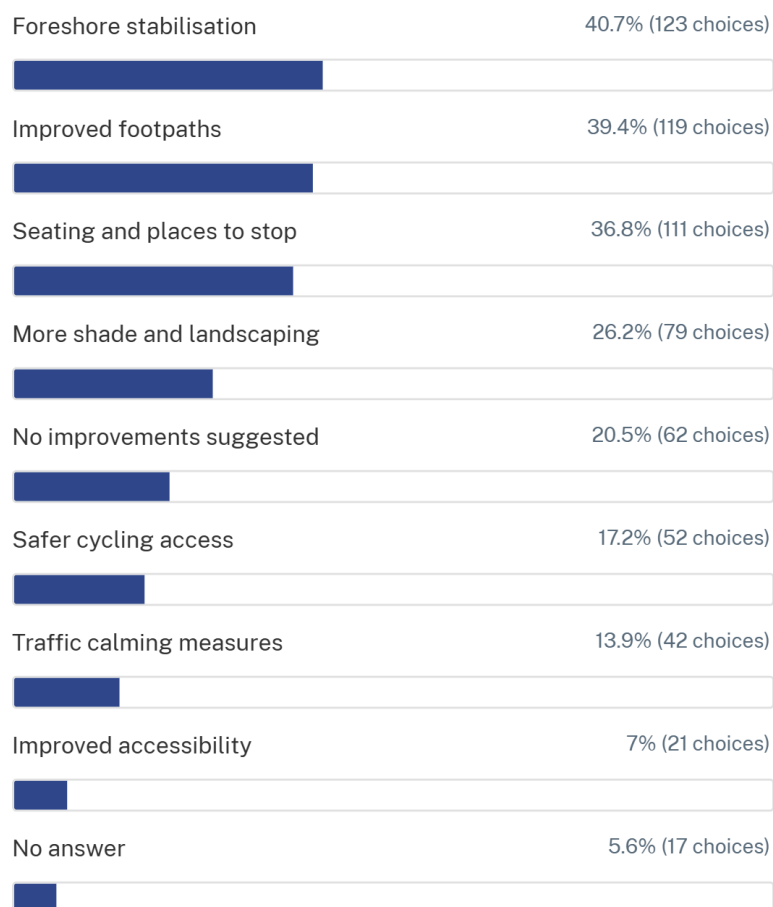
Other recurring suggestions included providing shaded seating and picnic areas improving foreshore stability and environmental health and ensuring accessibility for people with reduced mobility.

A minority of responses prioritised parking or vehicle access, especially for boat ramp users or residents. Some called for a balanced approach or minimal changes, focusing on maintenance rather than new infrastructure.

Overall, the strongest trends are: prioritising walking, landscaping, shade, and river access; discouraging vehicle access and parking except for residents; and maintaining the natural, quiet character of Hilton Esplanade with minimal intervention.

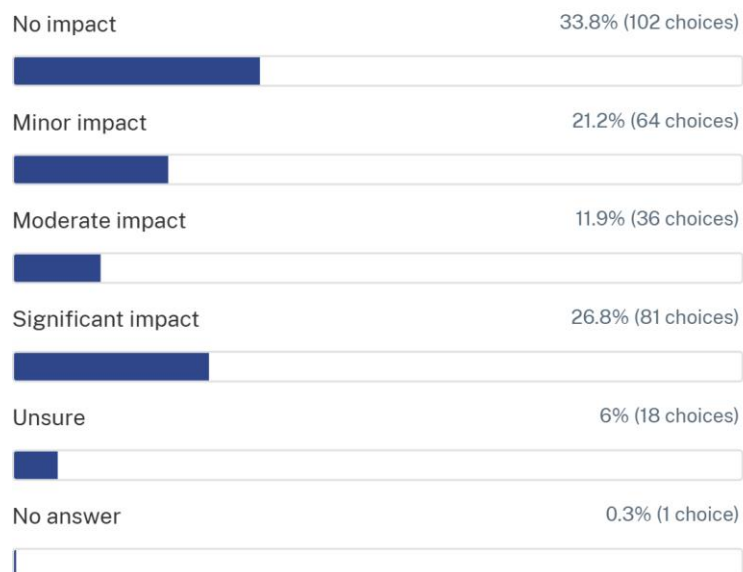
What improvements would make the greatest positive difference for you? (select up to 3 options)

285/302 - Multiple choice - choose many - required



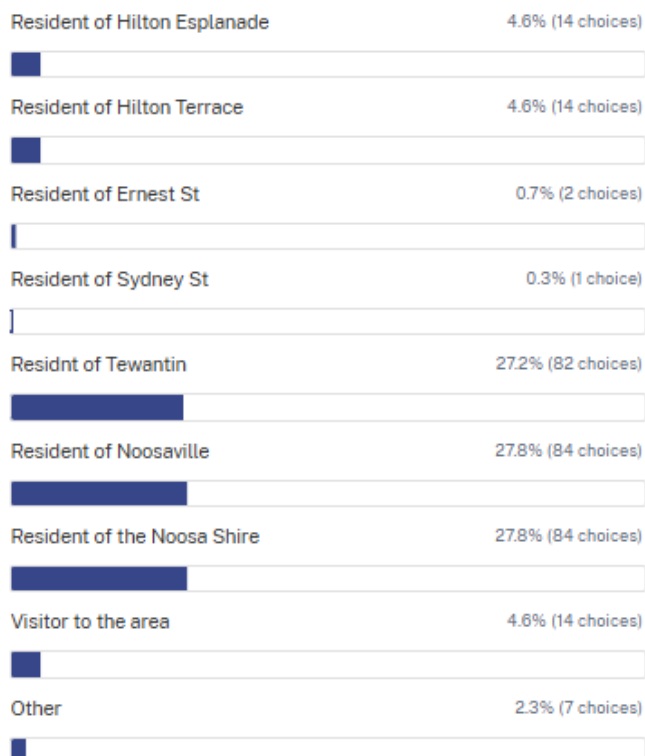
If some on-street parking was reduced to allow for improvements (such as safer movement or street upgrades), how would this impact you?

301/302 - Multiple choice - choose one - required



Which of the following best describes you?

302/302 - Multiple choice - choose one - required



Description: This comparison has been included to illustrate how views on parking changes varied depending on participants' proximity to the area.

Would you like to explain further how changes to on-street parking may affect you?

177/302 - Long answer - optional

Most respondents are concerned about the potential reduction of on-street parking, with many stating that parking is already limited or difficult, especially during peak times, weekends, or holidays. Many believe that reducing parking would negatively impact accessibility for locals, visitors, families with young children, elderly, and people with disabilities. Some mention that parking is essential for those who need to drive to the area, including workers, tradies, and people coming from outside the neighbourhood.

A significant number of respondents urge the council not to reduce parking, expressing frustration with previous or ongoing efforts to decrease parking in Noosa Shire. Some feel that the area is "perfect as it is" and should be left alone. Others highlight that the area's charm is its quietness and ease of parking, and fear that improvements may make it too busy or similar to Gympie Terrace, which is often overcrowded.

Some respondents support reducing parking, especially if it improves pedestrian and cycling safety, river access, or the environment. A few mention that less parking would reduce issues with overnight van campers, boat trailers, and unsavory characters. Some suggest that improvements should focus on footpaths, landscaping, or safety rather than parking.

A minority of respondents say they walk or cycle and are not affected by parking changes. Some advocate for alternative transport options or incentives to reduce car use.

Overall, the dominant trend is concern about losing parking and its impact on accessibility, with strong opposition to reducing spaces. There is also a notable split between those who value the area's quiet, accessible character and those who support improvements for safety and environmental reasons, provided they do not significantly reduce parking.

Do you have any other ideas or suggestions for improving Hilton Esplanade?

174/302 - Long answer - optional

Most respondents strongly prefer Hilton Esplanade to remain natural, quiet, and largely unchanged, emphasizing minimal intervention and preservation of its existing character. Many specifically request no major development, no modernisation, and no increase in amenities that would attract more visitors, cars, or boats.

A significant number of responses highlight the importance of maintaining and improving pedestrian access and safety, such as adding or extending footpaths, especially on dangerous corners and along the foreshore. Traffic calming measures are also frequently suggested to improve safety and reduce speeding.

Many respondents mention erosion and riverbank stabilisation as priorities, with some suggesting natural solutions like rocks and landscaping rather than hard structures.

Parking is a recurring concern, with suggestions ranging from maintaining current parking, limiting long-term or overnight parking, permit-only parking, and relocating boat/trailer parking.

There is division about adding toilets: some support a toilet block while others oppose it due to concerns about attracting illegal camping and changing the area's character.

Several responses call for ongoing maintenance, tidying up, and minor upgrades (road surface, potholes, drainage, seating, bins, lighting) without major redevelopment.

Some want improved river access, jetties, and facilities for fishing, kayaking, and non-motorised watercraft, but not expanded boat ramps for motorboats.

A few mention dog-friendly areas, shade, and seating as desirable.

There are repeated calls to consult local residents and avoid decisions that cater primarily to tourists or outside interests.

Overall, the dominant themes are: keep Hilton Esplanade natural and low-key, focus on safety and maintenance, limit development and amenities, and prioritise local needs and environmental preservation.

Communications and promotion

A range of communication and engagement activities were used to raise awareness of the project and encourage participation. Promotion included targeted EDM campaigns, social media posts, project signage and three community pop-up sessions.

Visitor timeline

Visitors ⓘ

1161

Visits ⓘ

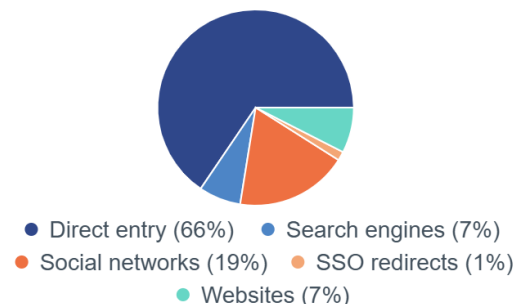
1652

Visit duration

00:03:10

Pageviews per visit

4.88



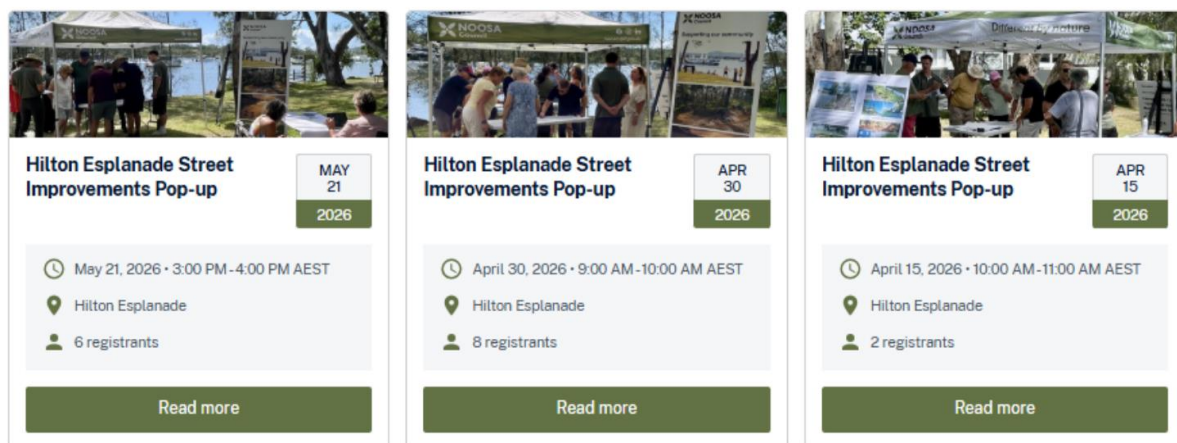
Written Submissions

One letter and one email were received. Each suggested a different approach, but converged on simple solutions. One suggestion was more nature based, adding low-impact areas for access and better education and one suggested a pragmatic approach to fixing

erosion and safety issues with solutions that were as simple and cost effective as possible, including advocating to MSQ to reduce the boat speed limit to 6 knots.

Community Pop-up Sessions

Three community pop up consultations were held at Hilton Esplanade on 15 April, 30 April and 21 May. Approximately 30 people attended each, totalling roughly 120 attendees. There was no demographic data collected for responses at the pop up consultations.



The main themes tested at pop ups were initially gathered from a Residents Workshop at Council Chambers on [DATE], gathering ideas and brainstorming with residents whilst reviewing the draft plans. A series of themes were then developed and tested at pop up 1 and slightly refined for pop up 2 and 3.

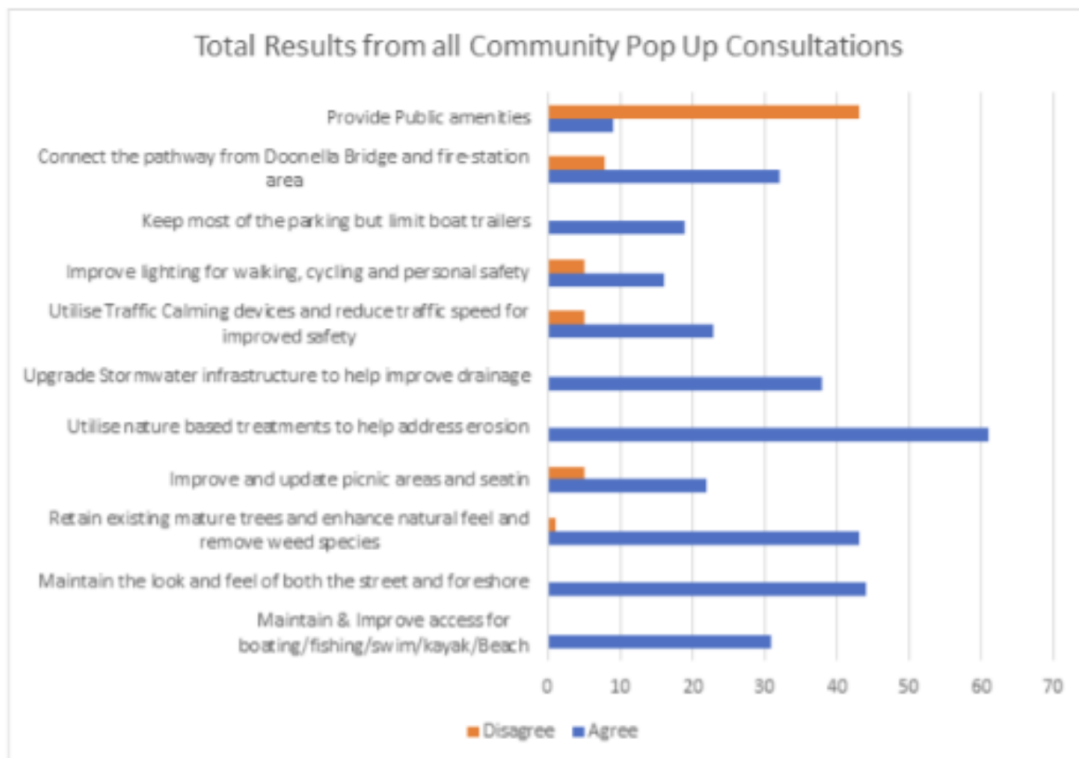
Participants at each pop up consultation were invited to vote on any theme that they supported from the following list:

- Maintain & Improve access for boating/fishing/swim/kayak/Beach
- Maintain the look and feel of both the street and foreshore
- Retain existing mature trees and enhance natural feel and remove weed species
- Improve and update picnic areas and seating
- Utilise nature-based treatments to help address erosion
- Upgrade Stormwater infrastructure to help improve drainage
- Utilise Traffic Calming devices and reduce traffic speed for improved safety
- Improve lighting for walking, cycling and personal safety
- Keep most of the parking but limit boat trailers
- Connect the pathway from Doonella Bridge and fire-station area

- Provide Public amenities.

An analysis of responses across all three pop ups revealed clear trends of support across all options except for the provision of public amenities. As outlined in Table xyz, the top 5 priorities were:

- Utilise nature based treatments to help address erosion (61 responses)
- Maintain the look and feel of both the street and foreshore (44 responses)
- Retain existing mature trees and enhance natural feel and remove weed species (43 responses)
- Upgrade Stormwater infrastructure to help improve drainage (38 responses)
- Connect the pathway from Doonella Bridge and fire-station area (32 responses).



Communication Performance

Two email campaigns were distributed on 15 April and 29 April 2026 to registered Your Say Noosa subscribers. Participation data shows clear increases in project page visits and engagement following each campaign, indicating that direct communication channels were effective in driving awareness and participation.

Direct Emails

Have your say on Hilton Esplanade, Tewantin		60%	12%	 Statistics
	April 28, 2026 12:33 PM	Opened	Clicked	
Help shape the Hilton Esplanade Improvement Project		63%	1%	 Statistics
	April 15, 2026 10:47 AM	Opened	Clicked	

Traffic source data suggests that participation was largely driven by Council-led promotional activities, demonstrating the effectiveness of direct outreach in directing community members to the engagement opportunity.

Social Media

A total of 83 comments were received to 4 social media posts on Councils Facebook page. As Facebook comments do not form part of formal engagement feedback, commenters were encouraged to take part in the formal engagement.

Social media posts were used throughout the engagement period to broaden awareness of the project, promote participation opportunities and encourage community discussion. The posts generated interest in the engagement activities.