



Centre for
Local Government

Parking in Nelson Bay: Engagement Report

Centre for
Local Government

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Executive Summary

Port Stephens Council (Council) commissioned the Centre for Local Government at the University of Technology Sydney (CLG) to engage the community on short-term and long-term parking options for Nelson Bay.

The engagement responds to concerns raised by members of the Port Stephens community regarding the availability of parking in and around Nelson Bay, and a series of traffic management technical studies undertaken by Council. Council resolved through adoption of the *Progressing the Nelson Bay Town Centre and Foreshore Strategy: A revised implementation and delivery program* to form a Citizens Panel that provides an objective community perspective on options for short-term and long-term parking.

Purpose of the Panel

The Citizens Panel will consider the views of parking users and evidence on parking in Nelson Bay, including data collected via survey instruments, receive presentations from various experts, and provide recommendations to Council on short and long-term parking options.

The Panel Workshop

The Panel Workshop took place on Friday 16 November from 4pm to 7pm at the Little Nel, and on Saturday 17 November from 9.15am to 4pm at the Nelson Bay Golf Club. There were 16 attendees on the Friday and 17 attendees on the Saturday.

Participants discussed the range of needs that parking had to address and the most important things about parking. They discussed targeted solutions for various demographic or user groups and considered CBD and out of CBD solutions.

Outcomes of the Panel Workshop

The Panel agreed on a series of short and long term recommendations, including:

- Improvements to traffic flow, such as wayfinding, road marking, one way streets, and drop off areas for tourist buses
- Improvements to utilisation, such as enforcement of parking limits, improvements to parking facilities, improved cycling infrastructure
- Investigations on the potential of additional parking areas including out of centre areas, as well as smart parking opportunities
- Collecting additional data to better inform parking management.

These recommendations will be presented to Council early 2019.

1 Introduction

In 2012, Port Stephens Council adopted the Nelson Bay Town Centre and Foreshore Strategy. The Strategy sought to make the city “more attractive to tourists, the business community and residents.” Despite significant growth in the housing industry, private investment in the town and foreshore has not been as successful as initially anticipated.

In order to understand this limited growth and investment, a Discussion Paper on the Strategy was exhibited in February 2017. A total of 149 submissions were received, of which 52 addressed traffic and parking issues.

The submissions indicated concern amongst the community about the provision and availability of parking in and around the foreshore. The submissions expressed a range of views and solutions to parking issues, and some also questioned whether a parking problem existed.

The most common concerns raised in the submissions were:

- The town centre experiences significant traffic and parking problems, especially during peak periods
- The current dilapidated state of the partially closed Donald Street Car Park is an eyesore, with the community concerned about a feasible long-term solution given that two of the existing car parks in the town centre are only temporary solutions
- Some submissions question the accuracy of the GHD Traffic and Transport Study that was completed in 2012.

A number of submissions also identified that the town centre needs more and/or improved car parking in order to compete with the nearby Salamander Shopping Centre.

Consultation culminated into a revised Strategy. Considering the above, the revised Strategy recommends a Citizens Panel be formed to discuss options for short-term and long-term parking.

Citizens panels are a deliberative form of engagement that simulate government decision-making. They bring together community members with diverse views on an issue, expose them to a range of views and evidence on the issue, and then ask the community members to provide non-binding recommendations on how to proceed with the issue.

UTS Centre for Local Government (CLG) has been commissioned by Council to organise and facilitate a Citizens Panel to discuss short and long-term parking solutions in Nelson Bay.

1.1 The Panel Workshop

The Panel Workshop took place on Friday 16 November from 4pm to 7pm at the Little Nel, and on Saturday 17 November from 9.15am to 4pm at the Nelson Bay Golf Club. There were 16 attendees on the Friday and 17 attendees on the Saturday.

Participants discussed the range of needs that parking had to address and the most important things about parking. They discussed targeted solutions for various demographic or user groups and considered CBD and out of CBD solutions.

Facilitated discussions included:

- What needs does parking address?
- What is the most important about parking?
- Suggestions for improvement.

The Panel then formed a series of recommendations which will be presented to Council.

1.2 This Report

This Report describes the process followed during the Panel Workshop, the information provided to the Panel, key topics of discussions and outcomes of these discussions.

It lists a series of recommendations which were agreed on during the Panel Workshop.

2 The Panel Workshop

The Panel Workshop took place on Friday 16 November from 4pm to 7pm at the Little Nel, and on Saturday 17 November from 9.15am to 4pm at the Nelson Bay Golf Club.

CLG facilitated the event.

2.1 Panel recruitment

Recruitment of the Panel occurred during pre-Panel Workshop activities (refer Section 2.3).

There were 16 attendees on the Friday and 17 attendees on the Saturday. Table 1 below provides high level demographic characteristics of Panel members.

Table 1 Demographic Characteristics of Panel members

Characteristics	
Gender	
Female	7
Male	10
Age	
25-35	2
35-44	1
45-54	1
55-64	5
65-74	4
75+	4
Suburb of residence	
Nelson Bay	14
Corlette	2
Soldiers Point	1
Fingal Bay	1
Shoal Bay	1

2.2 Key information presented

Participants were first presented with an introduction on the Citizens Panel Workshop process and purpose, and overview of the two days.

Council staff then presented the following:

- The strategic context which led to the formation of the Panel, from the Hunter Regional Plan to the Nelson Bay Strategy
- The geographical area to be the focus of the Panel Workshop

- Existing knowledge and parking surveys showing parking space utilisation in the town centre
- What Council have done to address traffic and parking (e.g. shared zones, temporary car parks)
- Some of the local challenges including topography
- Council land/assets and leased sites
- Opportunities including technology, shared mobility, cameras.

CLG presented:

- Demographics and forecasts, including tourism trends
- Brief overview of previous work undertaken by GHD and key findings. It is noted that some panel members did not agree with the GHD finding that there is capacity in the town centre at all times during a typical weekday (with the exception of Tomaree Street and Government Road temporary car parks, and Donald St West close to capacity)
- Key findings from CLG research (pre-Panel Workshop activities – refer to next section)
- Overview of challenges for managing parking in centres and coastal areas, noting that behind parking pressures exists an important tourism role played by Nelson Bay, with many benefits on the town.

CLG facilitated discussions including:

- What needs does parking address?
- What is the most important about parking?
- Suggestions for improvement.

2.3 Pre-Panel Workshop activities

In order to inform the Panel and gather additional evidence on community views about parking, CLG conducted a series of surveys prior to the Panel Workshop, which also served as the recruitment method for the Citizens Panel.

Analyses of all surveys and a sample of the survey instrument are provided in Appendices A to D.

2.3.1 Survey Format

The surveys included:

- **Computer Aided Telephone Interviewer Phone Survey:** Between 10 and 17 September 2018, a phone survey of 255 people from Nelson Bay and surrounding areas was conducted by YouGov Galaxy on behalf of CLG. The survey followed a random dial methodology and the respondent profile was closely matched to the Census profile of Port Stephens local government area to ensure representativeness
- **On-Ground Survey in Nelson Bay:** CLG conducted intercept surveys in the Nelson Bay town centre on Sunday 30 September 2018. On ground interviews were used to capture the views of non-resident parking users.

Both surveys collected information on how respondents use and experience parking in Nelson Bay and their views on different short and long term parking options.

Council also ran a self-selected online survey hosted on Council's Have Your Say website during the same period (10 September to 8 October 2018). The survey also collected information on how the respondents use and experience parking in Nelson Bay and their views on different short and long term parking options, however it was open to anyone to participate in and is not considered representative of the views of the broader community.

The total number of survey participants is summarised in Table 2.

Table 2: Survey responses

Survey	Survey Responses
Phone survey	255
Online survey (Have Your Say)	73
On-ground surveys in Nelson Bay	47
Total Responses	375

2.3.2 Content of surveys

The surveys explored how people use and experience parking in Nelson Bay town centre and the views of parking users toward a range of potential solutions.

The surveys were divided into three parts. The first part focused on how people use and experience parking in Nelson Bay. The second addressed potential solutions to parking issues in Nelson Bay. The final part included demographic questions.

Part One – Parking Usage and Experience

The first part of the survey focused on how respondents use parking in the Nelson Bay town centre, including:

- Purpose of driving to the town centre and requiring a park
- Locations where parking is used
- Length of time that parking is required
- Frequency of driving and requiring a park
- Time of the year
- How well parking meets their needs
- Levels of parking provision.

Part Two – Potential Options for Solutions

Six potential solutions to parking issues in Nelson Bay were designed by Council. Survey respondents were asked to rate the usefulness of these and/or identify other potential useful solutions. The options were:

1. Install parking metres in the town centre and remove parking metres at the foreshore to ensure better turnover
2. Use of parking technology including road sensors and CCTV monitoring to better manage demand
3. Extension of one-way traffic flow on Stockton and Yacaaba streets to increase on street parking provision
4. Re-development of parking stations and Donald Street east and west car parks to increase parking provision
5. Park and ride shuttle bus service to better manage demand for major events and workers
6. Permits for free parking for local residents, ratepayers and businesses.

Part Three – Demographic Questions

These questions sought to ensure representativeness of the samples, with questions in relation to age, employment, education, household, home ownership, length of time residing in Nelson Bay, type of dwelling, industry of business.

2.3.3 Key Findings

In terms of using parking in Nelson Bay, the surveys indicate that:

- Most residents in the area use parking in the town centre a couple of times a week or daily, whilst visitors from further afield use parking a few times a year
- Most residents in the area travel to the town centre for grocery or retail shopping
- Generally, people who travel to Nelson Bay to visit the foreshore, the marina, friends or family do not park in the town centre
- Residents of Nelson Bay and surrounds tend to require parking for a couple of hours or less, while visitors tend to require parking for a couple of hours or more.

In terms of concerns in relation to parking in the town centre:

- The majority of respondents think parking does not meet needs well whilst a quarter of them think it does meet needs well. People aged 45-64 are more likely to think that parking does not meet the needs of users
- Those parking users whose needs are not well met include cars with boats, trailers and caravans, visitors, local businesses and local workers, and local residents, whilst the needs of buses and coaches are relatively well met
- There is some uncertainty as to whether parking meets the needs of people with mobility issues, parents with prams, and trucks and delivery vehicles
- Residents from the broader Tomaree Peninsula tend to experience greater difficulties finding a park than residents of Nelson Bay suburb
- Respondents are not as concerned about finding a park when they go shopping, when going to work, or visiting friends/family. Most users find it hardest to park in the town centre, and at the marina and foreshore, with parking at businesses or services also difficult
- In general, people think there is not enough parking outside shops in the Nelson Bay centre, along the foreshore, at the marina, at the visitor information centre. In particular, residents living outside Nelson Bay or people aged 45-64 tend to think there is not enough parking
- Most concerns are for parking for longer than two hours
- Residents who live outside Nelson Bay suburb are more concerned about finding a park and experience more difficulties during holiday periods than Nelson Bay residents
- Visitors are also concerned with finding a park. They think that there is not enough parking at shops in the Nelson Bay centre, at the foreshore, the marina, the visitor information centre, Donald Street and Little Beach
- "Not enough parking" is not always the explanation for parking concerns. For example, while people aged 18-44 are more likely to be concerned about parking along the foreshore than other age groups, they are more likely to say that there is enough parking at the foreshore. On the other hand, while respondents aged 65+ are less likely to think that there is enough parking at the marina or at the foreshore, they are also less likely to be concerned with parking at the marina or at the foreshore.

In terms of potential options for solutions:

- Most people think that redeveloping parking stations, issuing parking permits and introducing shuttle bus services with a park and ride station are the most useful ways to address parking issues in Nelson Bay
- Most people do not think that installing parking metres in the town centre and removing them at the foreshore or parking technology would be useful
- The majority of respondents who suggested additional solutions indicated a need for more public off-street parking through the construction of a new multi storey car park or an upgrade of the Donald Street car park.

There are differences of experiences and opinions between age groups (e.g. 18-44, 45-64 and 65+) and places of residence (e.g. resident of Nelson Bay suburb, resident of the wider Tomaree Peninsula or visitor) which are further described in the following section.

2.3.4 Demographic subgroups

Results from CLG research were refined into a profile of demographic subgroups as per Tables 3 and 4, by age group and by origin.

Table 3 Age groups

Age group	
18-44	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A larger proportion travel and require a park in the town centre daily• Travel to the town centre mostly for shopping (like other age groups) but also work• More likely to need a park for the whole day (but a majority need parking for a couple of hours or less)• More positive about parking in general for local residents• Concerned about parking in the town centre generally though, and at the foreshore and marina• More likely to think that there is enough parking• More preoccupied with parking for parents with prams• More likely to think that a shuttle bus services/park and ride facility is useful, as well as the use of parking technology, but do not think that they are the most useful solutions.
45-64	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Travel to the town centre and require parking a couple of times a week• Travel to the town centre mostly for shopping, but also for entertainment/ food/ dining, to access health, banking or other services, then work• Less likely to think that parking responds to needs, and less positive about parking in general for local residents• More preoccupied with local businesses, people who work in local businesses, local residents and people with mobility issues. Also more concerned with buses and coaches, and cars with boats, trailers, caravans• More likely to think there is not enough parking• Less likely to support the extension of way traffic flows
65+	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Travel to the town centre a couple of times a week or less• Travel to the centre for shopping and also to access health and other services, then for entertainment/food/dining• Preoccupied with mobility issues• Less certain about issues for parents with prams, buses and coaches, people who work in local businesses, cars with boats, trailers and caravans and trucks and delivery vehicles• Higher level of unconcern for parking when going shopping, along the foreshore, at the marina, at businesses or services• More likely to think there is not enough parking at the visitor information centre• More likely to be uncertain about parking technology and extension of one-way traffic flows.

Table 4 Origin

Origin	
Residents of Nelson Bay suburb	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travel daily more often • Require parking for less time than people from outside Nelson Bay: less than a couple of hours • Significant majority of residents travel to the town centre for shopping • More likely to think that parking responds well to needs, including needs of local residents, people with mobility issues, cars with boats, trailers, caravans • Less likely to be concerned about parking when going shopping, to businesses, or in the town centre than non-Nelson Bay suburb residents • Preoccupied about parking at the foreshore, at the marina and in the town centre, particularly during holiday periods, major events and weekends • Think that redeveloping parking stations is useful, but less certain than non-Nelson Bay suburb residents • More likely to think that parking metres in the town centre (and removal at the foreshore) is useful • More likely to think that shuttle bus services represent the most useful solution.
Tomaree Peninsula residents (not Nelson Bay suburb)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travel to Nelson Bay a couple of times a week, mainly for shopping, but also for entertainment, dining, food or to access health and services • Need parking for a couple of hours • More preoccupied about parking in general, also in relation to cars with boats, trailers, caravans and people with mobility issues • Find it harder to park at all times of the year in all locations • More likely to think that there is not enough parking than Nelson Bay residents, particularly outside shops, along the foreshore, at the visitor information centre, or anywhere • More likely to be critical of installing parking meters in the town centre and removing them at the marina. Instead, more likely to favour the extension of one-way traffic flows and redevelopment of parking stations.
Visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a level of concern with finding a park in Nelson Bay • In particular, there may not be enough parking in the centre in general, along the foreshore, at the marina, at the visitor information centre • Visitors park for a range of different durations but a majority park for at least a couple of hours • Preferred solutions are parking permits for local residents, ratepayers and businesses and a shuttle bus service.

2.3.5 Implications for the Panel Workshop

Considering the findings of the surveys, it was recommended that the Panel Workshop investigates the following:

- Users with needs that are not met well, in particular cars with boats, trailers and caravans, visitors, local businesses and local workers, and local residents
- Specific needs that are more uncertain than others: people with mobility issues, parents with prams, trucks and delivery vehicles

- Geographical areas of concern: town centre, marina, foreshore, shops in the town centre, visitor information centre
- Reasons for concern other than a potential shortage of car spaces
- Times of the year when parking difficulties occur most: weekends, major events, holiday periods
- Parking movements between the town centre, marina and foreshore
- Preferred options: redeveloping parking stations, issuing parking permits and introducing shuttle bus services with a park and ride station, and extending one way traffic flows.

3 Key areas of discussion

This Chapter describes the key topics that were discussed during the Panel Workshop, and outcomes of these discussions.

3.1 Needs addressed by parking and importance of parking

CLG facilitated a discussion with the Panel about participants' needs in relation to parking, and about the most important aspects of parking.

3.1.1 Needs addressed by parking

Participants agreed that parking needs to be provided in a range of "types", including public and private, on and off street, but also with suitable parking timing for different services and different times of the year (for example limited in time for peak periods), paid or free, long stay/short stay.

According to the Panel, parking addresses a range of needs and purposes every day of the week, including when:

- Shopping (with strong reference made to Woolworths)
- Going to services including medical, government, banking, post office, beauty, real estate, as well as churches
- Using entertainment facilities (including cinema), and dining/ takeaway
- Recreating, including at the foreshore and marina.

Participants also identified that parking is to address the needs of the following user groups:

- People with disabilities or sickness, and elderly people
- Professionals, workers, including trade workers, with different sub-needs. For example, it was mentioned that parking early in the morning was usually manageable (e.g. prior to 8.30am), which was difficult for workers who need to park after that time, sometimes for the whole day, and for others who may need to come and go for short term periods only throughout the day
- Businesses and business keepers/employees in the CBD, that need easy access to shops for their customers as well as for themselves, and also need parking turnover
- Locals, residents of Nelson Bay and adjoining areas
- Tourists, with long term parking
- Emergency vehicles
- Taxis
- Buses and mini-buses. Tourist buses need to operate, and therefore need space, but it was identified that they require larger spaces
- Walking was also mentioned, including a need to ensure accessibility for parents with prams and young families, well designed footpaths, efficient lighting, and safety.

3.1.2 What is most important about car parking?

A second aspect of the discussion asked participants to state the most important aspects of parking.

The Panel's answers are summarised below:

- Availability of parking spaces
- Adequacy

- Convenience
- Parking space sizes and line positioning
- Consistency / appropriateness on timing restrictions
- Directional signage, maps, phone applications
- Turnover
- Traffic flow
- Affordability
- Ease of access/accessibility
- Safety, including better lighting at night
- Good condition, with some car parks currently not structurally sound, poorly lit, or difficult to access for people with disabilities
- Destination
- Proximity to services.

3.1.3 General directions

Based on the general needs, specific user groups' needs and important elements of parking identified above, common themes and general directions were identified to guide the next discussion. These are listed below:

- a) Accessibility
- b) Safety
- c) Place management: traffic flow and utilisation
- d) Active
- e) Public
- f) Businesses, such as retail, services, tourism, dining/entertainment
- g) Future thinking
- h) Additional data.

3.2 Suggestions for improvement

Participants were asked to suggest potential solutions for each general direction during a World Café exercise.

a) Accessibility

In relation to accessibility, the Panel suggested the following potential solutions:

- There should be more and clearer directional signage
- Traffic management flows should be improved
- Loading zones should be adequate and rationalised, in particular their location should be reviewed
- There should also be a review of afterhours parking (from 6pm, 7 days a week)
- There should be more 5, 10, 15 minute parking to increase turnover
- Footpaths should be upgraded to improve accessibility particularly for parents with prams and people with disabilities.

b) Safety

In relation to safety, the Panel suggested the following potential solutions:

- “Awareness” of shared zones should be improved
- The location of pedestrian crossings should be improved, potentially by connecting to car parks, as well as street lighting
- There should be more police in town.

c) Place management: traffic flows and utilisation

Traffic flows

Traffic flows could be improved which could be achieved by creating more one way streets, for example on Yacaaba and Stockton streets. This in turn would create opportunities for more angle parking.

It was mentioned that existing shared zones were not clearly marked. Awareness of shared zones should be increased with better marking. Stockton Street could potentially become a shared zone.

Improving parking infrastructure, including better line marking, directional signage, and improved grading, would also have benefits in terms of traffic flows.

A potential bypass for people not coming into Nelson Bay was also discussed, which could be achieved by extending Dowling/ Austral Street to Government Road – Shoal Bay. It is noted that this bypass has already been discussed in the community in the past.

Utilisation

There is a tension between all day parking and a need for increased turnover.

Improved time management of parking (i.e. restricted vs unrestricted times) could help to address this tension, potentially in the following forms:

- Parking time limits need to be rationalised (and better enforced)
- Parking should be paid in certain areas. Car parking facilities/off street such as Donald Street East could be paid parking if necessary
- In addition, locals should benefit from parking permits.

The underutilisation of loading and emergency zones, was also discussed. A review of loading and emergency zones, including their locations, is warranted.

The underutilisation of the Donald Street East site was also identified.

Coach parking management should also be improved, with a review of location and times noted as essential by the Panel. A five minute drop off/pick up zone with active enforcement was discussed.

d) Active

Different modes of visiting the town and alternatives to individual driving were discussed.

In terms of active movements, a range of solutions were discussed and are described in Table 5. The idea of an “active centre” emerged.

Table 5 Active movements

	Walking and cycling	Cycling	Walking
Infrastructure	Rationalise shared paths (and complete construction) One coastal path (e.g. to Fingal and Shoal Bay) Widen footpaths to allow for walking, riding and use of mobility vehicles Safe access and surfaces for all pathways Better lighting in CBD Security / CCTV	Rationalise bike paths and improve connections Provide bike racks and locked storage	Rationalise walkways Address access for people with disabilities Parents/prams: better and continuous footpaths Better located pedestrian crossings
Information	Signage including directional and distance Mapping available including at Visitor Information Centre Yellow brick road wayfinding (all poles to be marked/painted to indicate directions)		

e) Public

The term “Public” was mostly understood by the Panel as “Public transport”.

Improved public transportation and bus routes were discussed, as well as the potential for private buses/minibuses, particularly in relation to people with mobility issues.

Bus parking was also discussed, suggesting that enforcement was a problem and recommending that 5 minutes drop off/pick up areas be developed. There could be designated out of town parking for buses (potentially next to the Council depot).

Other understandings of the term “Public” were in relation to public realm:

- Using other areas such as the Tomaree Sports complex
- Available parking could benefit from signage, applications and technology
- Donald Street East car park needs addressing.

f) Businesses

Recognising the needs of businesses in Nelson Bay, the Panel also worked on preparing suggestions for different types of businesses, as identified by Table 6.

Table 6 Solutions per business group

Businesses	
Retail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilising vacant areas behind businesses (and develop signage for them) Shorter parking times (area specific) Paid parking (not for locals) Close proximity to work Pre-paid staff parking Time parking in Woolworths (1 to 3 hours) and improve enforcement
Trade workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Buy a parking spot
Tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hop on - hop off shuttle services Local mini buses Designated areas for tourist buses and better enforcement in drop off zones Relocate visitor centre to the intersection of Nelson Bay Road and Port Stephens Drive OR retain existing location. Establish portable Visitor information centre – perhaps only during the peak season Keep spaces for caravans, boat trailers Out of town centre parking for vans and trailers, possible free parking on sports grounds (RVs/campers) Improve signage and develop phone applications. Large digital sign indicating available parking in Nelson Bay and Church Street roundabout
Entertainment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creation of “special” parks e.g. on Crown Land around the New Year period Introduce special event parking including shuttle services Provide bus into town from outers areas Well lit parking with safe and secure night lighting and signage. Important for walking and parking. Flexible parking during evening and day Some parking spaces that are “no parking” during the day could be made available to support night time economy
Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parking close to services No time restrictions More disabled parking nearby
Loading zones	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some spaces that are currently loading zones could be made available for portion of the day, for example some spaces are loading zones for morning deliveries, and could be available for the public the rest of the time

g) Future Thinking

“Future thinking” was mainly thought about by the Panel in relation to technology. Technology was mentioned multiple times as a way to improve parking in Nelson Bay, via plate recognition, cameras, phone applications, signs and sensors that include information on the location and number and available spots, and “smart” parking solutions to identify vacant spots. More advanced technology was also mentioned, such as Artificial Intelligence and drone parking.

“Future thinking” was also considered by the Panel in terms of future planning. It was suggested that a covered car parking facility (secure and safe) would make parking a more pleasant experience, and the Nelson Bay Bypass should be considered.

h) Additional data

The Panel was asked to consider which type of additional data should be collected in order to support and improve parking management. Suggestions included the following:

- How long are vehicles staying
- How many workers come into town to park
- Count night-time occupancy of units/apartments
- Better data on day-trips into town and “Visit Friends and Relatives” market
- Two/three day visitors
- Data in relation to bike riding (including Visitor Centre bikes)
- Tourism trends – what will tourism look like in the future
- Grocery trends
- Tourist buses/minibuses – numbers, length of stay. What is the future of tourism (mini buses, self-drive, other)?
- When are deliveries needed in order to rationalise loading zones (consult with businesses)
- Traffic movements.

It was noted that Destination Port Stephens (DPS) could provide some of this information, in particular visitation figures.

3.3 Additional parking

During the discussion on general directions, and as identified in the previous section, the Panel interrogated whether the use of Council parking areas and the use of vacant land had been maximised.

This topic was further discussed and refined during a separate facilitated discussion, and suggestions for investigations are listed below:

- Council land/Council owned facilities:
 - o Parking at Tomaree Sports Complex/Anna Bay Oval, including for special events as a designated area
 - o Underutilised Donald Street East parking site: the block could be redeveloped with an active street frontage, which would be consistent with the overall strategy to create a link from the foreshore to the town centre. A concept plan exists for commercial/mixed use (4 storeys), noting that views may need addressing. It is also noted that Council has resolved to prepare a feasibility report on the redevelopment of this site
 - o Donald Street West parking site: an additional storey could be provided, or an underground expansion. Could this be a transport hub?
- Crown land (Council is trustee):
 - o Two locations on Magnus Street (between Magnus Street and Victoria Parade)

- Bowling club – some participants suggest that this is public parking and that better signage would suffice to increase utilisation
- Tennis courts.
- Private land:
 - Corner of Yacaaba Street (with a development application lodged) – opportunities are limited.
 - Rear of businesses, including cinema complex.

It was also mentioned that there was a shortage of private garage parking spaces (e.g. in residential units) and that there was a strong demand for these.

Funding sources for the provision of additional parking were discussed, including the possibility of a business levy, special rate levy, or loans.

It was mentioned that Council should have a look at other coastal areas and how they manage parking.

3.4 Parking out of the town centre

Discussions about general directions also identified parking out of the town centre as a potential solution in a range of ways.

It was mentioned that workers, a number of which need all day parking, could park outside the town centre and use other means to get to their workplaces. It was also mentioned that some offices/workplaces may not need to be based in the town centre. Validated parking was suggested (e.g. encourage to park outside the town centre by “purchasing” a park elsewhere, as an entitled private space).

The visitor centre was suggested to be relocated, which created contention in the group. Another suggestion was to create a portable facility, particularly during peak season.

Parking outside the town centre was also discussed for special events, and for vans and trailers.

A shuttle bus into town was discussed, which could be operating at certain times only (peak times).

A scenario proposed by some of the participants which would address parking particularly during peak periods is described below:

Visitors coming into Nelson Bay (from west) are offered the opportunity to decide whether or not they wish to drive into the town centre. On the way to the town centre, a facility, much like a “transport hub”, offers signage boards displaying constantly updated information on available parking spaces in the town centre.

Should visitors decide not to travel to the town centre, they can park in this facility and use a shuttle bus into the town centre.

Should visitors decide to travel to the town centre, a plate recognition system applies which will charge every visitor after an agreed amount of time. This can function through a phone application.

All locals and business workers are exempted. People with disabilities can also be exempted. This system will also allow constant monitoring of traffic movements in and out of Nelson Bay.

4 Recommendations of the Panel

Based on the identified suggestions and potential solutions, the below recommendations were agreed to by the Panel at the Workshop.

There was a general consensus around the importance of considering the regional context around Nelson Bay. The town centre services a wider area across the Peninsula. While there may not have been a lot of development in Nelson Bay, development has happened in surrounding areas.

Tourism is also a key aspect of how the town functions and tourism trends are changing and will continue to change in the future. Many day trippers and people who travel to Nelson Bay to visit friends and relatives are often not counted (e.g. Census) but impact on traffic and parking. If parking is too difficult, there is a risk that some visitors may bypass Nelson Bay to go to other areas.

The Panel also recognised that parking was closely linked to traffic flows and traffic infrastructure. It was also accepted that technology could be useful to address parking, however was only one aspect of the solution and had to be part of a wider complementary system.

Tables 7 and 8 below provide a summary of the Panel's recommendations for Council to consider.

Short term recommendations, as per Table 7, focus on improvements that could occur within a relatively short time by making changes to traffic flows and generally improving parking utilisation around the town centre.

Table 7 Short term recommendations

Number	Short term recommendations
	Improvements to traffic flow
1	Improve wayfinding in Nelson Bay, with additional and clearer signage, including directions, but also distances to landmarks, businesses and parking spaces, duration of parking, signage for walkers and cyclists, and grading system for walks ("easy", "difficult")
2	Make improvements to road markings and to the visibility of shared zones
3	Investigate the creation of additional one way streets, for example Yacaaba and Stockton streets. This in turn will create opportunities for additional angle parking (approximately 30-40 spaces on Yacaaba Street for example based on Council staff estimates). Thorough consultation will need to occur around this particular recommendation (e.g. residents, business owners)
4	Improve cycling/ walking in the town centre and wider Nelson Bay, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rationalisation of bike paths and walkways• Additional bike racks and locked storage• Council to amend the Pathways Plan in order to connect bike tracks to schools. It is suggested by the Panel that improved bike connections to schools might generate less car traffic to schools (e.g. children can ride to schools as opposed to being driven and dropped off)
5	Investigate the creation of a five minute drop off/pick up areas for tourist buses, with designated areas created for bus drivers to stay between drop off and pick up, which would provide necessary facilities (e.g. toilets, food/beverage)
	Improvements to utilisation

6	Improve the enforcement of parking limits
7	Prepare material with information in relation to parking, including maps for visitors indicating where parking facilities/spaces are, but also distances to activities etc.
8	Undertake improvements to parking facilities including line marking, better lighting, disabled access, grading, CCTV, covered parking
9	Rationalise parking limits and times, with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A review of the different time zones (e.g. 5, 10, 15 minute parking zones) and of their location • Paid parking in certain areas/ car parks • Permits/times for locals
10	Prepare a review of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coach/bus parking • Afterhours parking from 6pm 7 days a week • Loading and emergency zones
	Additional provision
11	Investigate the potential of some areas/ land to be used for parking, to ensure a maximised utilisation of Council parking areas and vacant land: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Council land/Council owned facilities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Parking at Tomaree Sports Complex/Anna Bay Oval, including for special events as a designated area ○ Donald Street East, noting that Council has resolved to prepare a feasibility report on the redevelopment of the Donald Street East site ○ Donald Street West, partially Council owned (for additional parking) - Crown land (Council is trustee): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Two locations on Magnus Street (between Magnus Street and Victoria Parade) ○ Bowling club ○ Tennis courts - Private land: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Rear of businesses

In terms of longer term recommendations, and as per Table 8 below, the Panel recognised the usefulness of technology to improve the utilisation of parking in Nelson Bay, in association with other solutions.

Out of town centre solutions also exist which acknowledge and address the changing nature of parking challenges in Nelson Bay during peak periods.

Table 8 Medium to long term recommendations

Number	Medium to long term recommendations
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12	<p>Investigate “designated areas” for parking outside of the town centre in association with a shuttle bus/circular bus route, potentially for certain times of the year only.</p> <p>Such designated areas may also exist, to some extent, on a permanent basis, in order to encourage drivers, for example business employees, to park outside the town centre by “purchasing” a park elsewhere (“entitled space”).</p> <p>The Panel noted that a car parking facility outside the town centre would need to be attractive to drivers and be developed with high standards (e.g. shade, toilets etc).</p>
13	Resume previous work done on a potential alternative route to outer areas (Shoal Bay/Fingal Bay)
14	Implement Pathways Plan
15	<p>Investigate “smart parking” opportunities, including but not limited to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Signage to include count of available spaces and direction/distance to them - Cameras linked to signage to identify and direct to available spaces - Plate recognition to identify parking users, generate data, but also enable remote payment i.e. users (potentially only non-locals) are identified by a sensor as they enter the CBD and start paying a fee after a given number of hours (or straightaway depending on the time of the year) - Technology linked to smartphones via applications - Use Artificial Intelligence (drone parking)
16	<p>Collect additional data in order to improve parking management, on an ongoing basis and in collaboration with relevant stakeholders, shop owners, and potentially volunteers, including but not limited to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How long are vehicles staying - How many workers come into town to park - Count night-time occupancy of units/apartments - Better data on day trips into town and “Visit Friends and Relatives” market - Two/three day visitors - Data in relation to bike riding (including Visitor Centre bikes) - Tourism trends – what will tourism look like in the future - Grocery trends - Tourist buses/minibuses – numbers, length of stay. What is the future of tourism (mini buses, self-drive, other)? - When are deliveries needed in order to rationalise loading zones (consult with businesses) - Traffic movements. <p>The Panel notes that Destination Port Stephens (DPS) could provide some of this information, in particular visitation figures.</p>

These recommendations will be presented to Council early 2019.

An analysis of the evolution of views of Panel members is also included at Appendix E.

5 Conclusions and Next Steps

CLG was engaged by Port Stephens Council to organise and facilitate a Citizens Panel Workshop to discuss short and long term parking in Nelson Bay with the community.

The Panel Workshop took place on Friday 16 November and Saturday 17 November in Nelson Bay.

In order to inform the Panel and gather additional evidence on community views about parking, CLG conducted a series of surveys to collect information on how the community and visitors use and experience parking in Nelson Bay and their views on different short and long term parking options.

These surveys included:

- A random dial phone survey of Tomaree Peninsula residents
- An on-ground survey in Nelson Bay to target visitors in Nelson Bay.

Council also ran a self-selected online survey hosted on Council's Have Your Say website during the same period.

At the Panel Workshop, participants discussed the range of needs that parking had to address and the most important things about parking. They discussed solutions for various demographic or user groups and considered CBD and out of CBD solutions.

There was a general consensus around the importance to consider the regional context around Nelson Bay. The town centre services a wider area across the Peninsula.

Tourism is also a key aspect of how the town functions and should continue to be encouraged, noting that this sector continuously changes in terms of visitor profiles and travelling characteristics.

The Panel agreed on a series of short and long term recommendations.

Short term recommendations focus on improvements that can be addressed within relatively short timeframes by making changes to traffic flows and generally improving parking utilisation around the town centre.

In terms of longer term recommendations, the Panel recognised the usefulness of technology to improve the utilisation of parking in Nelson Bay, in association with other solutions.

Out of town centre solutions also exist that acknowledge and address the changing nature of parking challenges in Nelson Bay during peak periods.

These recommendations are to be presented to Council by Council staff and/or Panel members early 2019.

Appendix A – Phone Survey

A random phone survey of residents from the Nelson Bay suburb and wider Tomaree Peninsula¹ was conducted from 10 September to 17 September 2018. The sample was sourced from an independent provider and included a mix of landline and mobile phone numbers.

Quotas for place of residence, age and gender were set so respondent demographics represented the Census profile for the area as accurately as possible. Respondents were advised the survey related to parking in Nelson Bay, their responses were confidential, and that participation was voluntary and they could withdraw at any time.

Survey questions

Survey questions covered the following areas:

Part 1 Questions focused on how people use and experience parking in Nelson Bay.

Part 2 Questions focused on potential solutions to parking issues, based on a series of Council-designed potential solutions.

Part 3 Demographics

A sample of the survey is included at Appendix B.

1. Demographics

In total, 255 respondents participated in the survey. Key demographics are listed in Table 9 below, and compared to Census data.

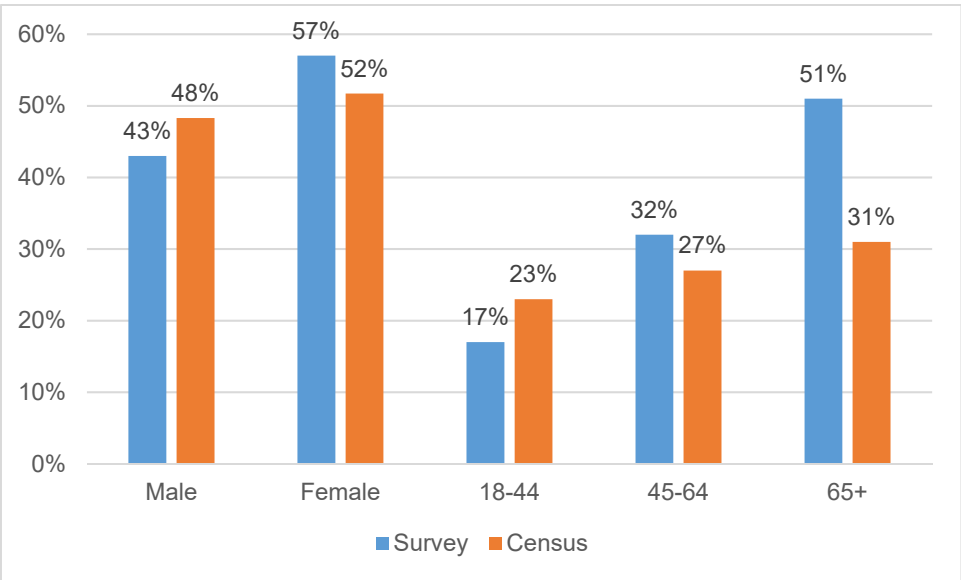
Table 9: Demographics

Respondents	Sample	Census 2016 (SA2)
Place of residence	<ul style="list-style-type: none">56% of respondents lived in Nelson Bay (n=142)44% lived in the wider Tomaree Peninsula (n=113).	27% of the Nelson Bay Peninsula (SA2) lives in Nelson Bay

¹ Including: Corlette, Salamander Bay, Soldiers Point, Fingal Bay, Shoal Bay

Figure 1 below compares survey and Census data in relation to gender and age.

Figure 1 Gender and age (Survey vs Census)



In addition:

- 64% of respondents were ratepayers (n=163)
- 36% lived at their current address for up to 10 years (n=93)
- 64% lived at their current address for more than 10 years (n=162).

2. Results

i. Parking Usage and Experience

Most people use parking in the town centre a couple of times a week (57%) or daily (25%). Only a small proportion do not use a car when travelling to the town centre (2%). Those who travel to the town centre a couple of times a week by car are more likely to be aged 45 to 64 or live outside the suburb of Nelson Bay, whilst those who use parking daily are more likely to be under 45 or live in the suburb of Nelson Bay.

Answers to this question are shown in Table 10 below.

Table 10 Frequency of travel to town centre and require parking

Total	
Daily	25%
A couple of times a week	57%
A few times a month	12%
About once a month	4%
Never	2%

Most people travel to the town centre for grocery or retail shopping (61%), particularly residents of Nelson Bay suburb (83%). Those who travel to the town centre for this purpose are more likely to be under 45.

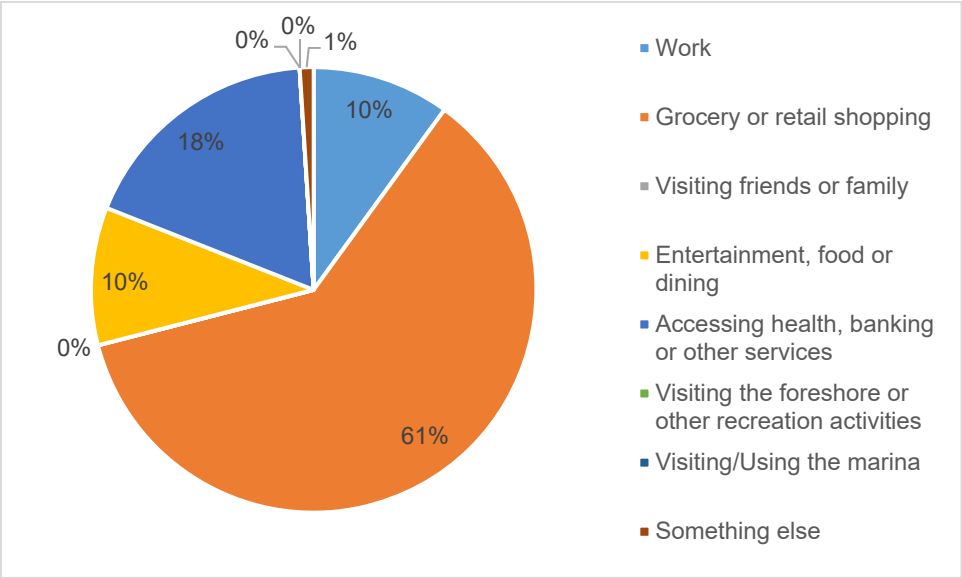
The second main reason for travelling to the town centre is to access health, banking or other services (18%). Those who travel to the town centre for this are more likely to be aged 65+, or live outside the Nelson Bay suburb.

Similar proportions of respondents travel to the town centre for entertainment, food or dining, or work (all about 10%). People who live outside the Nelson Bay suburb are more likely to travel to the town centre for entertainment, dining, and food.

Very few residents travel to the town centre to visit the foreshore, marina, or visit friends and family.

Answers to this question are shown in Figure 2 below.

Figure 2 Main purpose of trip to town centre



Most people use parking for a couple of hours or less (92%). People who use parking for less than half an hour are more likely to live in the Nelson Bay suburb, whilst people living outside the Nelson Bay suburb are more likely to require parking for longer (generally, a couple of hours).

Answers to this question are shown in Table 11 below.

Table 11 Length of time parking is required in town centre

Total	
Less than half an hour	5%
About half an hour	20%
An hour or so	42%
A couple of hours	25%

Total	
More than a couple of hours	4%
All day	3%
Not applicable	1%

Overall, when asked how well parking in Nelson Bay meets the needs of different users, most respondents indicated not that well or not well at all (70%) across almost all user categories, with higher rates for cars with boats, trailers and caravans, visitors, local businesses, and local worker, and local residents.

A larger share of respondents thought that needs were not met at all for cars with boats, trailers and caravans, local residents, people with mobility issues, trucks and delivery vehicles, and visitors.

Parking is also not considered to meet the needs of people with mobility issues, parents with prams, and trucks and delivery vehicles. However, the survey recorded some uncertainty over whether parking meets the needs of these users.

People who do not think parking needs are met are more likely to be females, aged 45-64, or ratepayers. Respondents over 45 are more likely to think parking does not respond well to the needs of people with mobility issues when compared to those aged 44 and under (58%). Respondents aged 45 to 64 (72%) are more likely to think this than those aged 65 and over (67%).

Overall, about a fifth of respondents indicated parking meets the needs of users well or very well (19%).

Respondents are more likely to indicate parking responded well to the needs of buses and coaches (34%) when compared to other user groups.

Residents of Nelson Bay are more likely to think parking responded very well to the needs of people with mobility issues (27%) when compared to those living further afield (17%).

Overall, people aged 45 to 64 are most likely to think parking does not respond well to the needs of different users. Those aged 65 and over are more likely to think parking does not respond well to the needs of different users than those aged 44 and under.

In particular, respondents aged 45 and over are more likely to think parking does not respond well to the needs of residents. Those aged 45 to 64 are more likely to hold this view than those aged 65 and over whilst respondents under 45 are more likely to think parking does respond well to the needs of residents. Respondents under 45 are also more likely to think the parking needs of parents with prams are not well met.

Respondents aged over 45 are more likely to think the needs of delivery vehicles and trucks and local businesses are not met well, particularly those aged 45-64 who are more likely to think they are not met well at all.

Respondents who think that parking does not meet the needs of cars with boats, trailers, caravans are less likely to be residents of Nelson Bay suburb.

Answers to this question are shown in Table 12 below by category.

Table 12 How well does parking in Nelson Bay meet needs?

	Extremely well	Very well	Not that well	Not well at all	Don't know
Local residents	1%	23%	35%	39%	1%
People with mobility issues	0%	19%	28%	39%	14%

Parents with prams	1%	17%	32%	24%	26%
Visitors	0%	19%	38%	39%	4%
Buses & coaches	3%	31%	33%	21%	12%
Local business	1%	17%	44%	33%	5%
People who work in local business	1%	15%	43%	34%	8%
Cars with boats, trailers, caravans etc.	1%	7%	24%	61%	7%
Trucks & delivery vehicles	0%	16%	28%	38%	18%

Most people indicated they are concerned about finding a park in the town centre (81%), the marina (75%), when accessing businesses or community services (73%), or the foreshore (73%). They are not as concerned about finding a park when shopping (62%).

People aged 18-44 are more likely to be concerned about finding a park at the foreshore, marina, and town centre. Those aged 45-64 are more likely to be concerned about finding a park when going shopping. Residents of Nelson Bay suburb and those aged 65 or over are generally less concerned.

Residents of Nelson Bay suburb are less concerned about finding a car park when going shopping, to businesses or services, in the town centre, than those living outside Nelson Bay.

People are less concerned about finding a park at work (17%), outside their own house, or when visiting friends & family (28%).

Answers to this question are shown in Table 13 below.

Table 13 Concern with finding a car park

	Unconcerned	Slightly concerned	Somewhat concerned	Very concerned	Extremely concerned
When you go shopping	38%	19%	19%	15%	9%
Along the foreshore	26%	16%	20%	19%	18%
At the marina	24%	15%	16%	21%	23%
When you go to work	84%	2%	5%	4%	6%
Outside your house or when visiting friends & family	72%	9%	8%	7%	4%

	Unconcerned	Slightly concerned	Somewhat concerned	Very concerned	Extremely concerned
When you go to businesses or community services	27%	17%	24%	19%	13%
In the town centre	18%	17%	21%	24%	19%

When asked what times and locations they experience difficulties finding a park, most respondents indicated they find it hard to park at the marina, town centre, and businesses/services and along the foreshore, particularly during holiday periods, major events and on weekends.

The majority of residents of Nelson Bay suburb are not concerned with finding a park, but their level of concern is higher at the foreshore, at the marina and in the town centre, particularly during holiday periods, major events and weekends.

Residents living outside Nelson Bay find it harder to park at all times for all categories (except the “outside your house or when visiting friends and family” category) than residents of Nelson Bay suburb.

During the week, about a fifth of respondents experience difficulties in all locations, although this rises to about a quarter of people experiencing difficulties in the town centre.

In contrast, more people indicated they do not find it as hard to park when they go to work, outside their house, or when visiting friends/family, or when grocery shopping.

Answers to this question are shown in Table 14 below.

Table 14 Time when experience difficulties finding a park

	During holiday periods	During major events	During weekends outside of holidays	During the week outside of holidays	Not concerned
When you go shopping	23%	15%	14%	12%	76%
Along the foreshore	35%	28%	29%	15%	63%
At the marina	41%	34%	33%	19%	56%
When you go to work	9%	8%	7%	6%	90%
Outside your house or when visiting friends & family	10%	6%	6%	6%	89%
When you go to businesses or community services	32%	25%	22%	18%	68%

	During holiday periods	During major events	During weekends outside of holidays	During the week outside of holidays	Not concerned
In the town centre	41%	35%	35%	27%	56%

When asked if there is enough parking in certain locations, about a third overall think there is not enough in any of the locations tested. These people are more likely to live outside the Nelson Bay suburb and be aged between 45 and 64 years.

Over a third indicated there is enough parking along the foreshore (36%) and slightly fewer indicated there is enough parking at the marina (29%). Fewer still indicated there is enough parking outside shops in the town centre (20%) and at the visitor information centre (13%). About half think there is enough parking outside the town centre (50%)

People aged 18-44 were typically more of the view there is enough parking across all the locations tested.

Answers to this question are shown in Table 15 below. Multiple answers were accepted.

Table 15 There is enough parking

	Total	Nelson Bay	Other area
Outside shops in the Nelson Bay centre	20%	28%	17%
Along the foreshore	36%	42%	34%
At the marina	29%	31%	28%
At the visitor information centre	13%	20%	10%
Outside the town centre	50%	55%	48%
None of these	33%	21%	38%

Respondents were asked to suggest locations where there needs to be more parking.

Of relevance to Nelson Bay:

- Town centre in general/CBD area
- Beaches
- Hospital
- Medical centre in Stockton Street
- Gan Gan Hill
- Little Beach boat ramp
- Lighthouse
- Skate parks
- Bowling club.

Specific streets are also mentioned: Wallawa Road, Yakabah Street, and Magnus Street.

Some suggestions include locations outside of Nelson Bay. The first location mentioned was Salamander Bay/shopping centre (54% of responses), then Shoal Bay.

ii. Potential Options for Solutions

Respondents were asked to rate the perceived usefulness of six different parking solutions, and were given the opportunity to raise their own solution.

Most people indicated redeveloping parking stations, issuing parking permits and introducing shuttle bus services with a park and ride facility are the most useful ways to address parking issues. There are mixed views about the usefulness of parking technology, such as sensors. Most people do not think installing parking metres in the town centre and removing them at the foreshore would be useful.

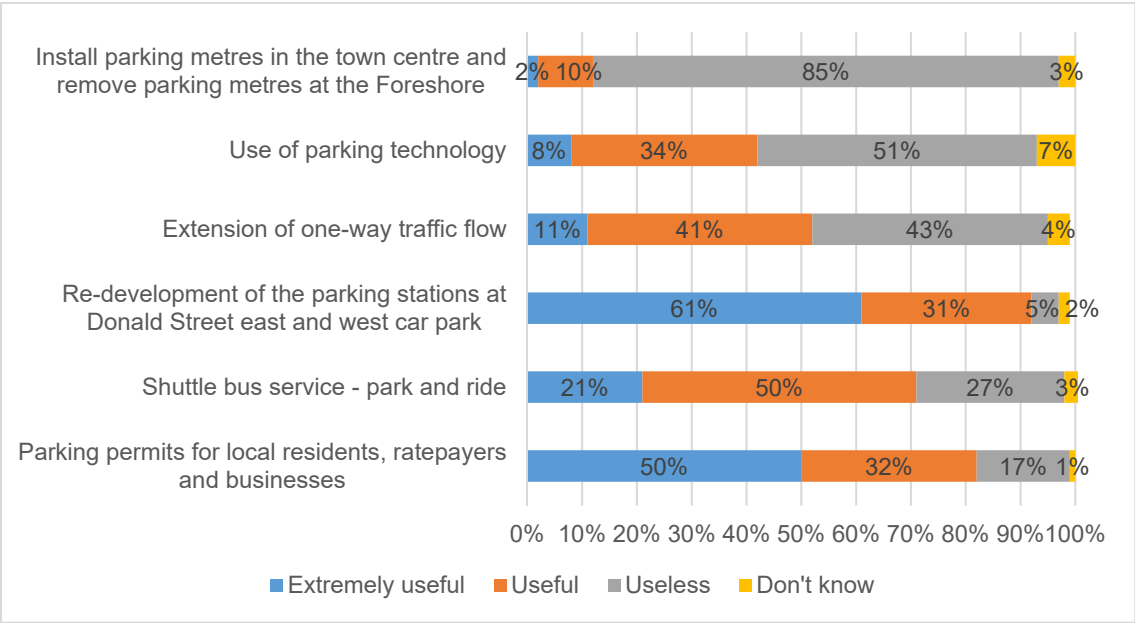
People living outside Nelson Bay suburb are more likely to be critical of installing parking meters in the town centre and removing them at the marina. Instead, they are more likely to favour the extension of one-way traffic flows and redevelopment of parking stations.

Residents of Nelson Bay suburb are less certain of the usefulness of redeveloping parking stations.

Ratepayers are more likely to favour the idea of redeveloping parking stations at Donald Street, whilst those aged under 45 are less likely to favour this and, instead, favour a shuttle bus service with park and ride facilities.

Answers to this question are shown in Figure 3 below.

Figure 3 Usefulness of potential solutions



Overall, redeveloping parking stations is considered the most useful solution (60%), followed by parking permits (18%). The redevelopment of parking stations is more likely to be supported by people who are not residents of Nelson Bay suburb, or ratepayers.

Parking permits are more likely to be supported by residents of Nelson Bay suburb, as well as a shuttle bus.

One way traffic flows are less likely to be supported by people aged 45-64.

Answers to this question are shown in Table 16 below.

Table 16 Single most useful solution

Solution	Total
Install parking metres in town centre & remove parking metres at foreshore	2%
Use of parking technology	3%
Extension of one-way traffic flow	8%
Re-development of Donald St east & west car park	60%
Shuttle bus service and Park & Ride	8%
Parking Permits for local residents, ratepayers and businesses	18%
None/unsure	2%

Fifty respondents suggested alternate parking solutions, as summarised in Table 17 below.

Most suggestions relate to providing more parking through a new multi storey or underground car parking facility or upgrading the Donald Street car park.

Some think that parking issues can be addressed through amendments to planning controls relating to the provision of car parking in residential development. A small number of respondents indicated active transport (walking and cycling), parking permits, and better managing demand from certain users through pick up and drop off zones (particularly buses and coaches and cars with trailers and caravans) as potential solutions. A small number of respondents indicated they do not agree with the use of parking meters.

Table 17 Suggestions for parking solutions

Topic	Examples
12 mentioned a form of multi storey car park	<p><i>Build a multi storey parking complex like Wilson parking to accommodate everybody.</i></p> <p><i>We need to build another car park, probably a multi storey one.</i></p> <p><i>Multi story car park in the town centre somewhere.</i></p>
8 mentioned the Donald Street car park	<p><i>Fixing the multi level car park on corner of Magnus Street</i></p> <p><i>Redevelop Donald St east and west as a car park only, not multi story development; if multi story have only as a multi story car park; need car parks for the future.</i></p> <p><i>Multi story car park up to 3 stories not necessarily underground with the Donald street redevelopment</i></p>
6 mentioned the need to acquire more land or use vacant land for new parking	<p><i>Purchase more land for Parking</i></p> <p><i>Looking at undeveloped land for single-level car park</i></p> <p><i>Purchase residential properties , demolish the house and turn them into car parks</i></p> <p><i>Use vacant blocks on Stockton Street</i></p>

5 mentioned development approvals and need to incorporate private parking	<p><i>New building of residential units need to have incorporated parking areas to accommodate these new units</i></p> <p><i>Any new developments need at least 2 bays for each unit</i></p> <p><i>Block of apartments in Nelson Bay should have underground parking</i></p> <p><i>Building applications should take into account the parking requirements before approval is given</i></p>
5 mentioned less driving and more walking, cycling, motorcycling	<p><i>Close some areas and have pedestrian use only</i></p> <p><i>Encourage more cycling by developing cycle infrastructure</i></p> <p><i>Encourage people to walk and more cycle lanes</i></p> <p><i>Stop driving cars, more walking</i></p> <p><i>More motorcycle friendly car parks</i></p>
3 mentioned underground car parking	<p><i>Underground parking could be considered</i></p>
2 mentioned meters	<p><i>Policing the parking times</i></p> <p><i>Remove parking metres (sic) to encourage growth</i></p>
2 mentioned coaches	<p><i>Create drop off and pick up zones for coaches rather than have them park at the Marina</i></p> <p><i>Design better parking for buses and coaches; designated parking needed.</i></p>
2 mentioned permits	<p><i>Allowances for Locals</i></p> <p><i>Have no-charge parking for local ratepayers at marina and foreshore</i></p>
2 mentioned the rivers car park	<p><i>Rivers carpark- build it up</i></p> <p><i>Carpark near Rivers should be expanded</i></p>
Other (3)	<p><i>Build on-ground parking</i></p> <p><i>Caravans and boats banned from parking in Nelson Bay precinct</i></p> <p><i>Shuttle service</i></p>

iii. Interest in a face to face discussion

Respondents were also asked if they were interested in joining a face-to-face discussion to continue the conversation on parking. This was the question which served as the recruiting mechanism for the Panel.

A total of 18% (44) said there were interested.

Appendix B – Sample Survey – Content questions

This is an extract of the phone survey (Parts 1 and 2).

Q1. Overall, how well would you say car parking in Nelson Bay meets the needs of?

ROTATE STATEMENTS	1) Extremely well	2) Very well	3) Not that well	4) Not well at all
a) Local residents				
b) People with mobility issues				
c) Parents with prams				
d) Visitors				
e) Buses and coaches				
f) Local businesses				
g) People who work in local businesses				
h) Cars with boats, trailers, caravans and campervans etc.				
i) Trucks and delivery vehicles				

Q2. How often do you travel to the town centre by car and require parking?

1. Daily
2. A couple of times a week
3. A few times a month
4. About once a month
5. Never

Q2a. And, when you visit the town centre, what is usually the main purpose of your trip?

1. Work
2. Grocery or retail shopping
3. Visiting friends or family
4. Entertainment, food or dining
5. Accessing health, banking or other services
6. Visiting the foreshore or other recreation activities
7. Visiting/using the marina
8. Something else (please specify):

Q2b. And, when you visit the town centre, how long do you normally require car parking for?

1. Less than half an hour
2. About half an hour
3. An hour or so
4. A couple of hours
5. More than a couple of hours
6. All day

Q3. Are you personally concerned or unconcerned about finding a car park each of the following?

	1. Unconcerned	2. Slightly concerned	3. Somewhat concerned	Very concerned	Extremely concerned
a) When you go shopping					
b) Along the foreshore					
c) At the marina					
d) When you go to work					
e) Outside your house or when visiting friends and family					
f) When you go to businesses or community services					
g) In the town centre					

Q3a2. When do you tend to experience difficulties finding a park in each of these places at the following times?:

a) When you go shopping	During holiday periods	During major events	During weekends outside of holidays	During the week outside of holidays
b) Along the foreshore	During holiday periods	During major events	During weekends outside of holidays	During the week outside of holidays
c) At the marina	During holiday periods	During major events	During weekends outside of holidays	During the week outside of holidays
d) When you go to work	During holiday periods	During major events	During weekends outside of holidays	During the week outside of holidays
e) Outside your house or when visiting friends and family	During holiday periods	During major events	During weekends outside of holidays	During the week outside of holidays
f) When you go to businesses or community services	During holiday periods	During major events	During weekends outside of holidays	During the week outside of holidays
g) In the town centre	During holiday periods	During major events	During weekends outside of holidays	During the week outside of holidays

Q4. Overall, would you say there is enough parking?

	1) Yes	2) No
a) Outside shops in the Nelson Bay town centre		
b) Along the foreshore		
c) At the marina		
d) At the visitor information centre		
e) Outside the town centre		

Q4a. Are there any other locations where there is not enough parking? What are they? OPEN ENDED

Q5. I'm going to read some potential solutions to parking issues in Nelson Bay. Please tell me whether you believe each is useful or not useful.

Solution	Don't know (1)	Useless(2)	Useful (3)	Extremely Useful (4)
a) Install parking metres in the town centre and remove parking metres at the Foreshore				
b) Use of parking technology: in-road sensors to direct drivers to available spaces and overstay alerts, introduction of a smartphone parking APP				
c) Extension of one-way traffic flow: Extension of one way traffic in Stockton Street and part of Yacaaba Street to allow additional angled parking				
d) Re-development of the parking stations at Donald Street east and west carpark				
e) Shuttle bus service / park and ride: For major events and/or town centre workers. Potential locations include Tomaree sports complex, West Diggers or Tom O'Dwyer Oval.				
f) Parking permits for local residents, ratepayers and businesses				

Q6. Thinking about solutions to parking issues in Nelson Bay I have just read, which would you say is the single most useful from your perspective,

- a) Install parking metres in the town centre and remove parking metres at the Foreshore
- b) Use of parking technology
- c) Extension of one-way traffic flow: Extension of one way traffic in Stockton Street and part of Yacaaba Street to allow additional angled parking
- d) Re-development of the parking stations at Donald Street east and west carpark
- e) Shuttle bus service / park and ride: For major events and/or town centre workers. Potential locations include Tomaree sports complex, West Diggers or Tom O'Dwyer Oval.
- f) Parking permits for local residents, ratepayers and businesses

Q7. In a few words, do you have any suggestions for parking solutions in Nelson Bay that are not listed in this survey?

Appendix C – Intercept Surveys

Two CLG staff surveyed members of the general public in Nelson Bay on Sunday 30 September (long weekend) from 10am to 12pm, and 12.30pm to 2.30pm.

The survey was fielded along two routes. The first was from the Visitor Information Centre, to the marina and along Victoria Parade, and the second was in the area consisting of Magnus Street, Yacaaba Street, Donald Street and Stockton Street.

The questions for this survey were adapted from the phone survey with some slight variation to reflect differences in the delivery mode of this survey. It was shorter in duration, lasting approximately seven minutes.

1. Demographics

46 people completed the survey², of which:

- 57% (n=26) were male and 43% (n=20) were female
- 47% were in the 18-44 age range (n=21)
- 45% were in the 45-64 range (n=21)
- 8% were aged 65+ (n=4).

The majority of people who participated in the survey were:

- Visitors to Nelson Bay (79%), 2.7% of which were from the Port Stephens area and 25% from the Hunter Region. 68% were from elsewhere in NSW
- Most visitors had driven into Nelson Bay and used parking facilities in the area (77%)
- Approximately 21% had used parking facilities elsewhere and arrived by other means e.g. taxi, public transport etc.

21% of respondents were residents from the area (including Nelson Bay, Corlette, Salamander Bay, Fingal Bay and Shoal Bay). A total of four participants (8.7%) were from Nelson Bay.

77% of participants had driven into Nelson Bay and used parking there. 21% had used parking facilities elsewhere such as a hotel or caravan park, and arrived to the town centre by other means such as public transport or walking.

2. Results

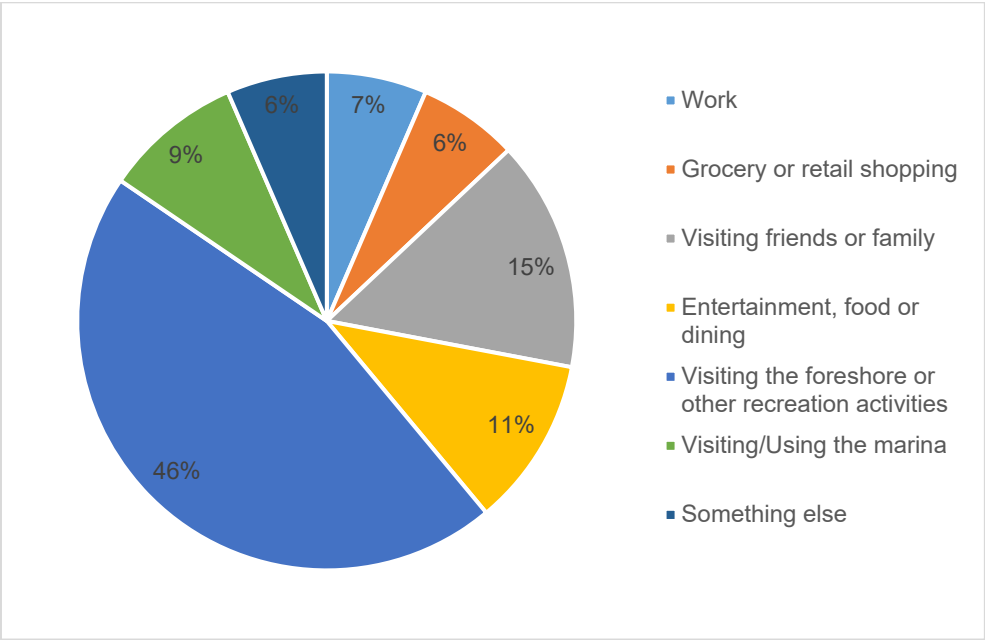
i. Parking Usage and Experience

Respondents were asked what the purpose of their visit to Nelson Bay was. The majority of respondents were visitors, and had come to Nelson Bay to visit the foreshore (46%), followed by visiting friends or family (15%), and entertainment, food or dining (11%).

Answers to this question are shown in Figure 4 below.

² There were options to terminate if the respondent wanted or needed to withdraw from the survey. One respondent terminated the survey.

Figure 4 Purpose of Visit to Nelson Bay



Respondents were asked how they had travelled to Nelson Bay. The majority came to Nelson Bay by car. Very few respondents use public transport.

Answers to this question are shown in Table 18 below.

Table 18 How do you generally travel to Nelson Bay?

Total	
Car	93.5%
Public transport	4.5%
Coach	2%
Taxi	0%
Other	0%

When asked how often they travelled to Nelson Bay and required parking, the majority of respondents say once a month/ a few times a year or less. Some respondents travel to Nelson Bay and require parking a couple of times a week, presumably those respondents who live in the Tomaree Peninsula area.

Answers to this question are shown in Table 19 below.

Table 19 How often do you travel to Nelson Bay and require parking?

Total	
Daily	9%
A couple of times a week	17%

Total	
A few times a month	2%
A few times each year	20%
About once a month	7%
Less than once per year	20%
Never	9%
Once a year	7%
This is my first visit to Nelson Bay	11%

Most respondents need parking for a couple of hours or more (78%). Some respondents need parking for the whole day (17%).

Answers to this question are shown in Table 20 below.

Table 20 Length of time required for parking

Total	
Less than half an hour	2%
About half an hour	2%
An hour or so	9%
A couple of hours	28%
More than a couple of hours	33%
All day	17%
Not applicable	9%

Most respondents indicated they were concerned with finding a car park in Nelson Bay (85%). A total of 15% are not concerned with finding a car park, while a total of 22% are very or extremely concerned.

Answers to this question are shown in Table 21 below.

Table 21 Level of concern

Total	
Unconcerned	15%
Slightly concerned	26%
Somewhat concerned	37%
Very concerned	11%
Extremely concerned	11%

The majority of respondents think there is not enough parking at the marina (61%), at the visitor information centre (56%), outside shops in the Nelson Bay Centre (52%) and along the foreshore (52%).

However, the survey recorded some level of uncertainty over whether there is enough parking at the visitor information centre or outside the town centre, and to a lesser degree at the marina or outside shops. This may be because these users park in one given area and are not familiar with other locations.

Answers to this question are shown in Table 22 below.

Table 22 There is enough parking

	Yes	No	Don't know
Outside shops in the Nelson Bay centre	28%	52%	19%
Along the foreshore	45%	52%	2%
At the marina	19%	61%	19%
At the visitor information centre	15%	56%	28%
Outside the town centre	61%	9%	30%

Respondents were asked to suggest locations where there needs to be more parking.

Of relevance to Nelson Bay:

- Parking on lanes
- Donald Street
- Little Beach.

Some suggestions include locations outside of Nelson Bay (e.g. Shoal Bay and Birubi Beach).

ii. Potential Options for Solutions

Respondents were asked to rate the perceived usefulness of six different parking solutions, and/or raise their own solution.

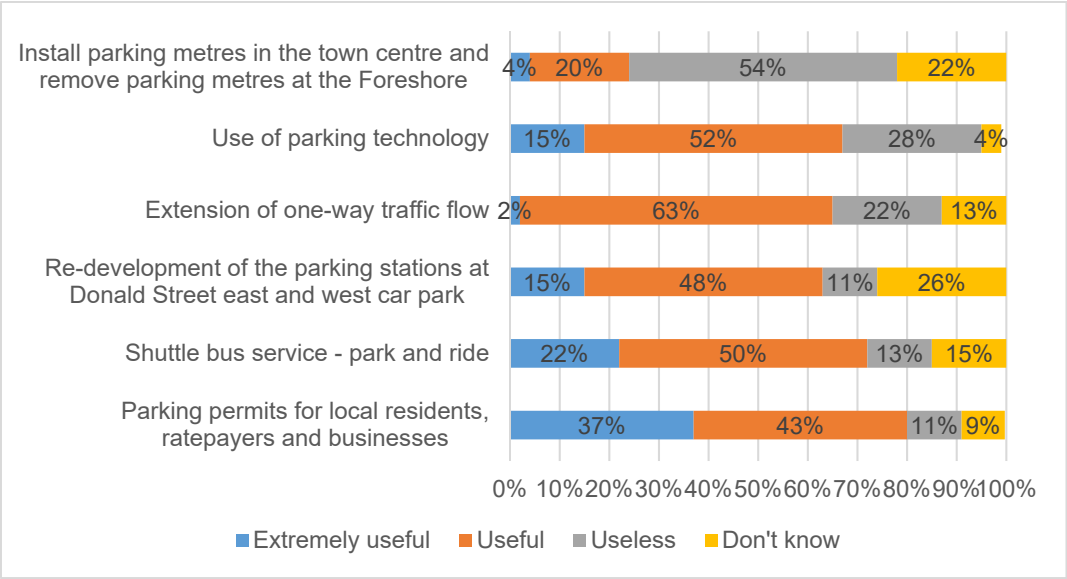
Most people indicated issuing parking permits was the most useful way to address parking issues in Nelson Bay. This is followed, in relatively similar proportions, by the introduction of shuttle bus services with a park and ride station, the extension of one-way traffic flows and redeveloping parking stations.

Most people do not think installing parking metres in the town centre and removing them at the foreshore would be useful.

The survey recorded some level of uncertainty in relation to the parking metres and redevelopment of the parking stations at Donald Street. This is likely to be because these options are more specific and tied to the Nelson Bay context, as opposed to the other options that are more generic and conceptual.

Answers to this question are shown in Figure 5 below.

Figure 5 Usefulness of Potential Parking Solutions



Respondents were also asked to rank their preferred parking solution (1 is most preferred and 6 is least preferred).

The preferred first option is parking permits (37%), followed by the use of parking technology (33%).

Answers to this question are shown in Table 23 below.

Table 23 Ranking of parking solutions in order of preference

Parking Solution	1	2	3	4	5	6
Install parking meters	11%	15%	13%	28%	13%	20%
Parking technology	33%	17%	13%	4%	22%	11%
Extend one way traffic	2%	20%	22%	33%	13%	11%
Redevelop parking stations	13%	15%	24%	22%	13%	13%
Shuttle bus service	4%	17%	20%	9%	26%	24%

Parking Solution	1	2	3	4	5	6
Parking permits	37%	15%	9%	4%	13%	22%

Respondents were given the opportunity to provide alternative solutions for parking in Nelson Bay.

Most suggestions relate to parking meters, with some respondents of the view that they are out of date, and some others suggesting that they should be upgraded, or that they should accept cards and not just coins.

Other suggestions include adding more parking (multi-level parking near the marina), allowing online booking for parking, or creating parking options for one or two hours at the foreshore.

iii. Interest in a face to face discussion

Respondents were also asked if they were interested in joining a face to face discussion to continue the conversation on parking.

Three persons expressed interest.

Appendix D – Have Your Say Survey

An online survey was hosted on Council's Have Your Say website from 10 September to 8 October. Council managed this process with no involvement from CLG.

The questions for this survey were adapted from the phone survey with some slight variation to reflect differences in the delivery mode of this survey.

The survey was open to all to participate and the results are not considered representative of the views of the broader community.

Council has provided a brief breakdown of the survey results for inclusion in this report. This additional data helps to inform the general understanding of community experience with parking.

1. Demographics

73 people completed the survey³, of which:

- 37% (n=27) were male and 59% (n=43) were female, with 3 participants preferring not to answer
- 34% were in the 26-35 age range (n=25)
- 34% were in the 46-65 range (n=25)
- 31% were aged 66+ (n=23)
- 80% were homeowners (n=59)
- 59% were ratepayers of Port Stephens Council (n=43)
- 12% were business owners (n=9).

2. Results

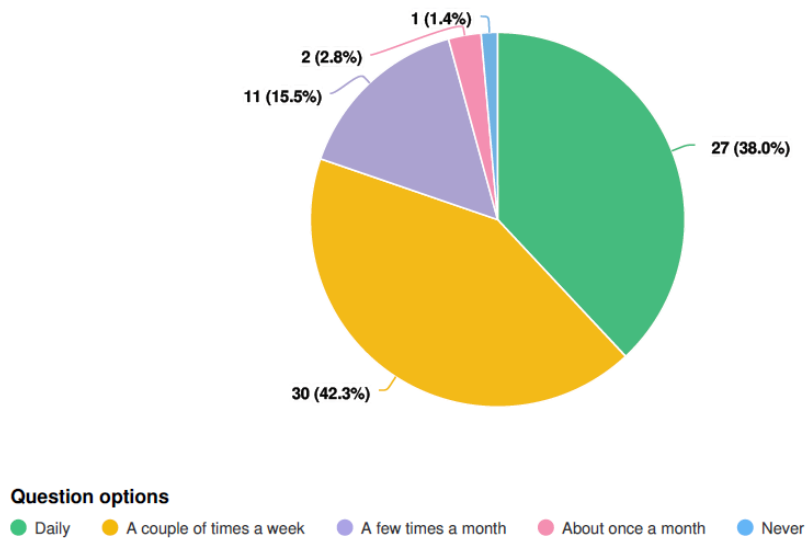
i. Parking Usage and Experience

The majority of respondents travel to the town centre a couple of times a week (42.3%), or daily (38%).

Results are shown in Figure 6 below.

³ There were options to terminate if the respondent wanted or needed to withdraw from the survey. One respondent terminated the survey.

Figure 6 How often do you travel to the town centre by car and require parking?

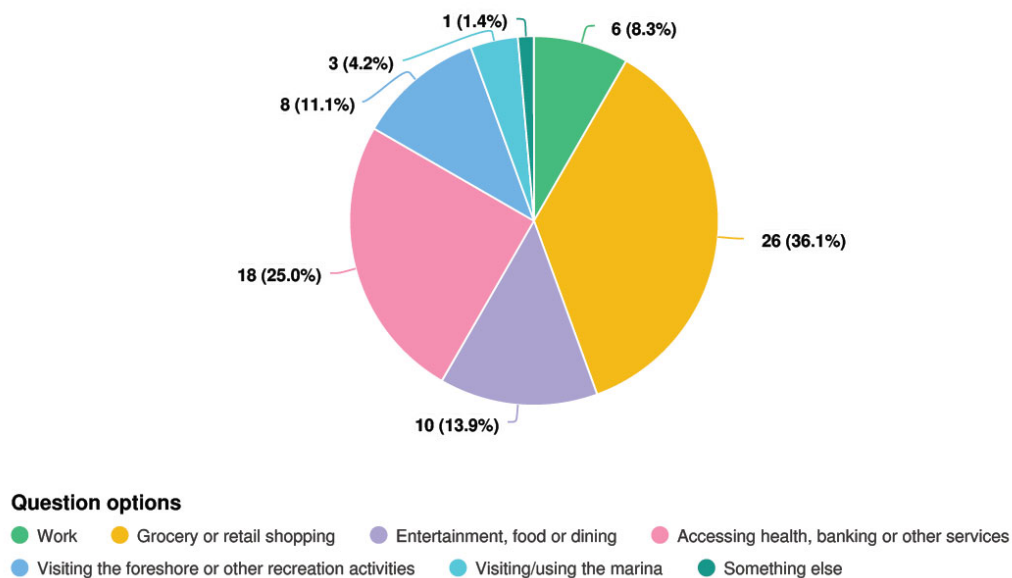


A majority of people visit the town centre to go grocery or retail shopping (36.1%) and to access health, banking or other services (25%).

Some people go to the town centre for entertainment, food or dining, or to visit the foreshore.

Results are shown in Figure 7 below.

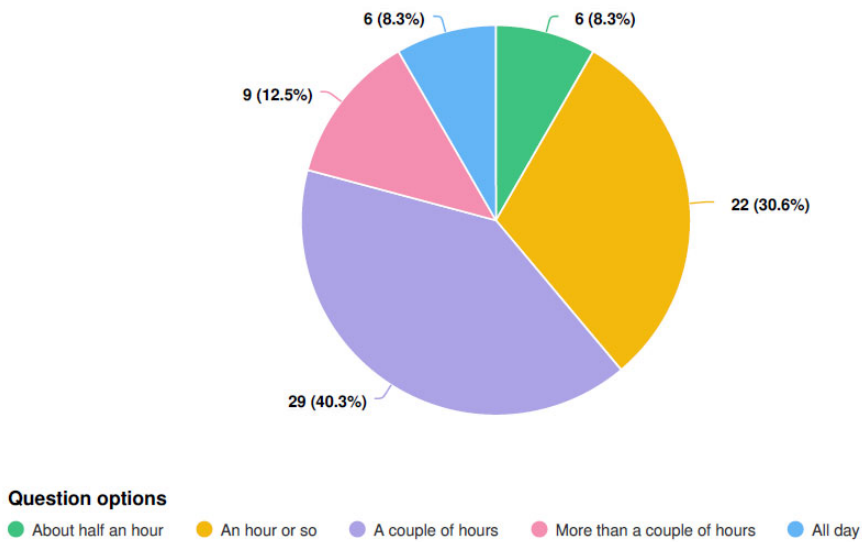
Figure 7 Main purpose of trip



A majority of people need car parking for a couple of hours or less (79%).

Results are shown in Figure 8 below.

Figure 8 When you visit the town centre, how long do you normally require car parking for?

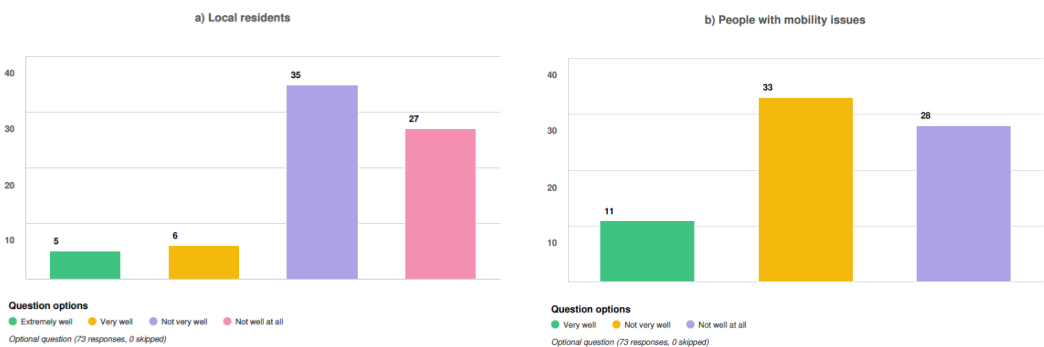


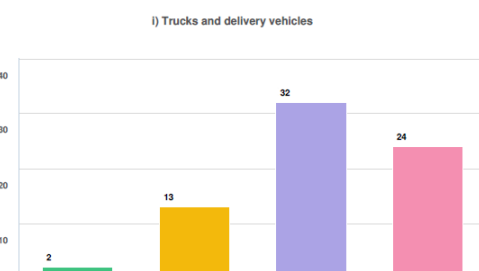
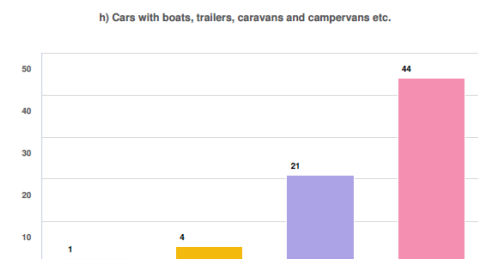
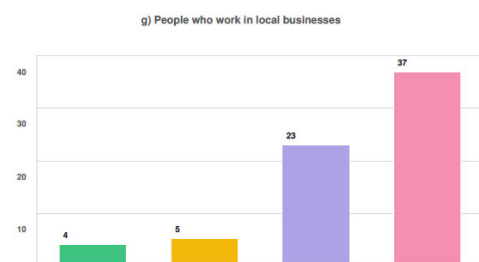
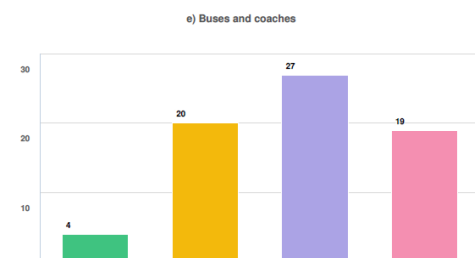
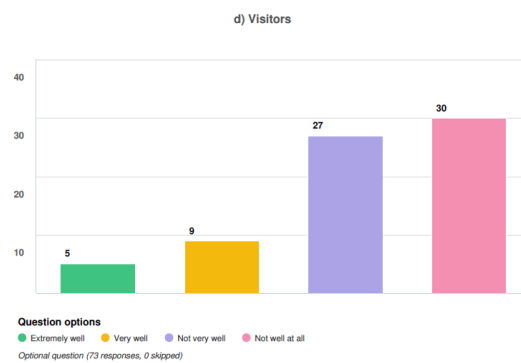
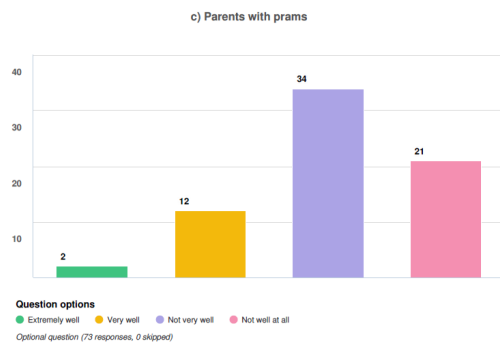
When asked how well parking in Nelson Bay meets the needs of different users, most respondents indicated that parking does not meet the needs of any user group, e.g. of cars with boats, trailers, caravans (89%), local residents (84%), people with mobility issues (83%), people who work in local business (82%), visitors (78%), local businesses (76%), parents with prams (75%), trucks and delivery vehicles (65%), and buses and coaches (63%).

Overall, respondents are more likely to indicate that parking meets the needs of buses and coaches when compared to other user groups.

Answers to this question are shown in Figure 9 below.

Figure 9 How well would you say car parking in Nelson Bay meets the needs of?





Most people indicated they are concerned about finding a park in the town centre (90%) and when they go shopping in the town centre (90%), when accessing businesses or community services (86%), at the marina (78%), or the foreshore (68%).

Respondents are not as concerned about parking at work (43%) and outside own houses or when visiting friends and family (54%).

Answers to this question are shown in Figure 10 below.

Figure 10 Please indicate your level of concern about the following?



Respondents who answered 'very and/or extremely concerned' at Q3 were also asked when they experienced difficulties parking in each of these places.

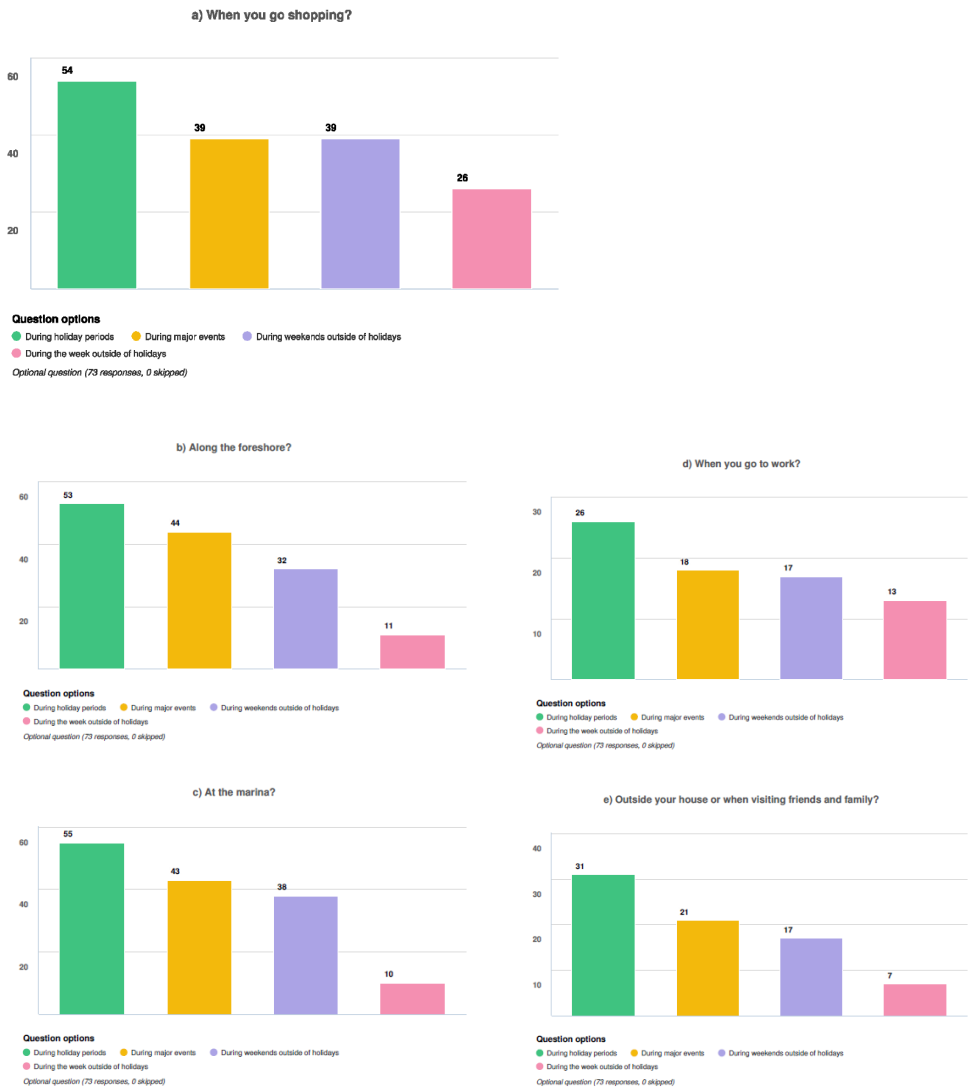
The majority of difficulties are experienced during holiday periods.

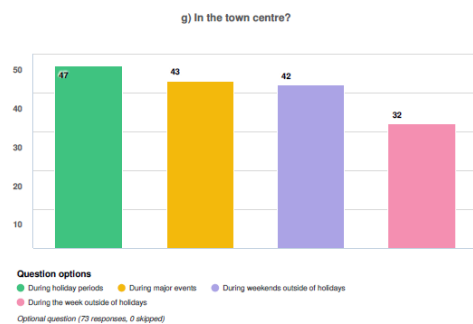
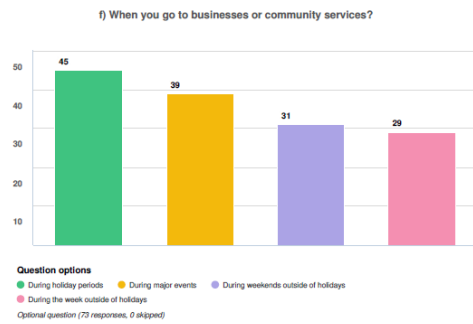
Difficulties are slightly higher during major events than during weekends outside of holidays.

Difficulties experienced during the week outside of holidays are primarily in the town centre (44%), when going to businesses or community services (39%), and when going shopping (35%).

Answers to this question are shown in Figure 11 below.

Figure 11 When do you tend to experience difficulties finding a park in each of these places?



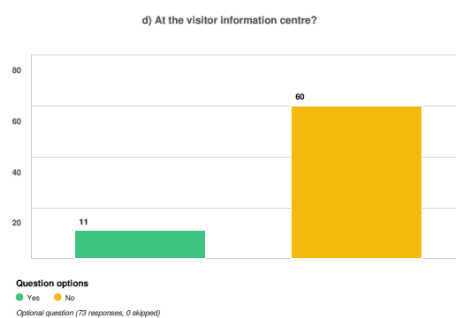
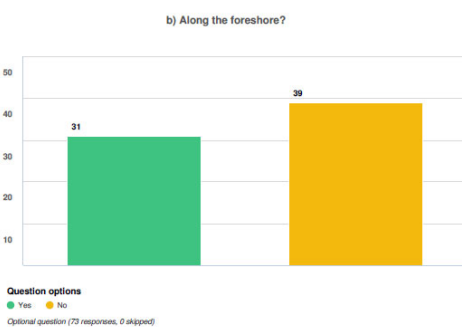
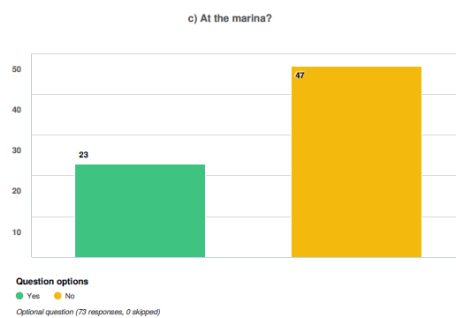
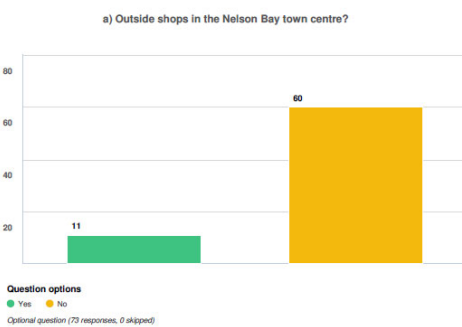


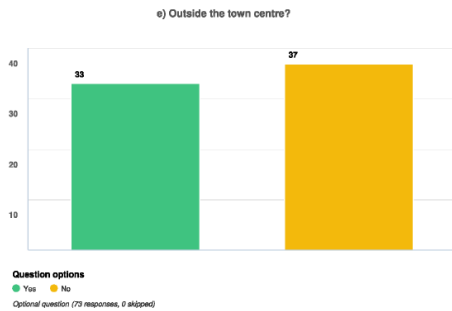
When asked if there is enough parking in certain locations, a majority of respondents think that there is not enough parking outside shops in Nelson Bay town centre and at the visitor information centre (82% each), at the marina (64%), and along the foreshore (53%).

Half of the respondents think there is enough parking outside the town centre.

Answers to this question are shown in Figure 12 below.

Figure 12 Is there enough parking?





ii. Potential Options for Solutions

Respondents were asked to rate the perceived usefulness of six different parking solutions, and/or raise their own solution.

Most people (73%) indicated that redeveloping parking stations at Donald Street was useful, as well as issuing parking permits for local residents, ratepayers and businesses (63%).

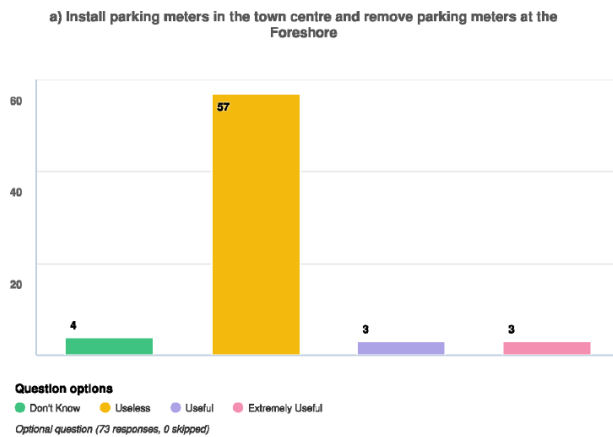
Most people (78%) indicated that installing parking meters in the town centre and removing them at the foreshore was not useful.

There are mixed views about using parking technology and the extension of one way traffic flows.

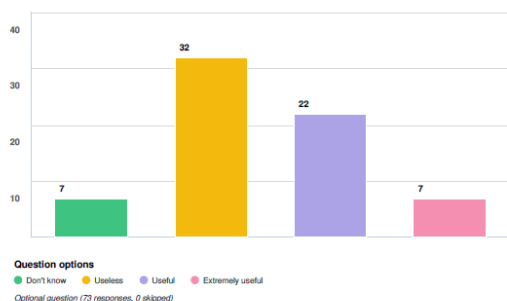
People tend to think that a shuttle bus service would be useful (55%).

Answers to this question are shown in Figure 13 below.

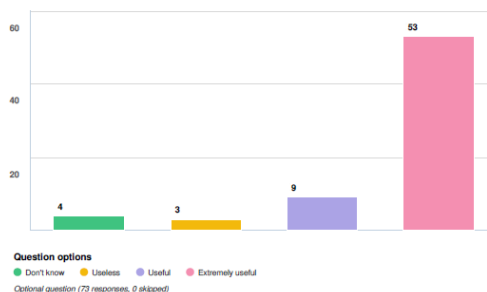
Figure 13 Usefulness of solutions



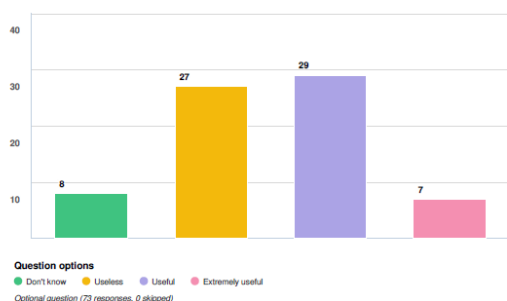
b) Use of parking technology: in-road sensors to direct drivers to available spaces and overstay alerts, introduction of a ...



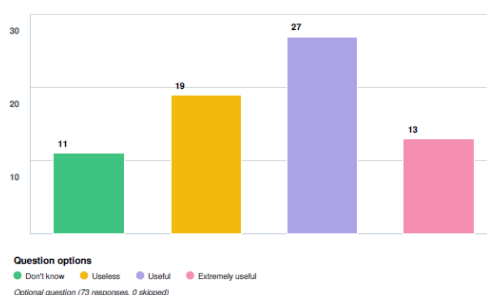
d) Re-development of the parking stations at Donald Street east and west carpark



c) Extension of one-way traffic flow: Extension of one way traffic in Stockton Street and part of Yacaba Street to allow a...

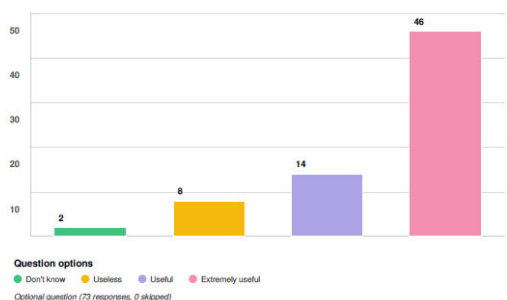


e) Shuttle bus service / park and ride: For major events and/or town centre workers. Potential locations include Tomaree sp...



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f) Parking permits for local residents, ratepayers and businesses



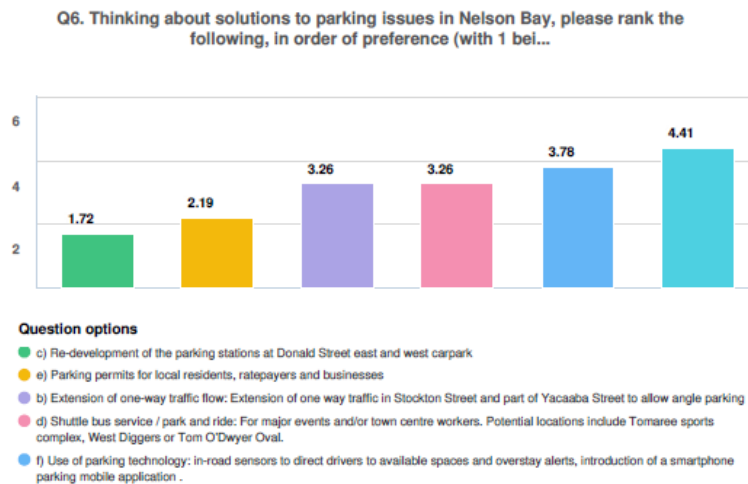
Respondents were also asked to rank each potential solution in order of preference. A majority of respondents chose the redevelopment of parking stations (50%), a majority of which chose issuing parking permits as their second preferred option.

30% of respondents chose issuing parking permits as their most preferred option, a majority of which then chose the redevelopment of parking stations as their second preferred option.

The shuttle bus and parking meters are the least preferred solutions.

Answers to this question are shown in Figure 14 below.

Figure 14 Preference



Respondents were also asked to make suggestions for alternative or additional suggestions.

The majority of respondents suggest providing more parking, for example building a multi storey car park on the corner of Stockton Street and Tomaree Street, upgrading the Donald Street car park, upgrading the Rivers car park, using vacant buildings, or building underground car park.

Other suggestions are in relation to:

- Parking meters: mixed views but a majority suggest that they should be removed, at least for residents
- Residents to have permits
- Better policing:
 - Enough parking however workers park in the morning for the whole day
 - Better policing of Woolworths car park
- Making sure that future development address parking issues and /or limit future development, in particular high rise development which creates more traffic.

Some respondents also suggest relocating some user groups or facilities outside of the town centre, for example:

- Moving the information centre out of town, which may keep caravans/tourist vehicles out of the town centre
- Moving coach and bus parking currently available along the foreshore and in the centre to a designated park out of town
- Incentives for local business employees to park outside town centre
- Disincentive for single long stay parking during peak season.

Some respondents suggest that more walking should be encouraged in the centre, as well as using public transport and carpooling, instead of driving.

Some respondents also highlight that parking difficulties are limited to specific times of the year (peak season/summer holidays).

Appendix E – Evolution of Views

Participants completed surveys at the start of the first day of the Panel Workshop, and at the end of the second day.

The purpose of this exercise was to see the evolution of views from start to finish. A total of 16 participants completed the pre-panel survey and 15 participants completed the post-panel survey.⁴ The survey addressed five key areas:

- Q1: The most important things about parking in Nelson Bay
- Q2: How well parking meets needs
- Q3: Level of concern about finding a car park
- Q4: Periods when participants experience difficulties finding a park
- Q5: Parking solutions.

Q1: The most important things about parking in Nelson Bay

Answers to this question enabled CLG to identify what elements of parking became more important throughout the Panel Workshop.

The Top 3 elements that gained more importance for Panel members include:

1. Providing parking for customers and suppliers of local businesses
2. Enforcing parking rules and regulations, making streets safe and appealing for pedestrians, and improving traffic flows
3. Improving the design and character of the public domain.

Q2: How well parking meets needs of various groups

It is noted that in general, responses to this question tended to be mainly negative both pre and post-Workshop, with participants generally saying that parking in Nelson Bay does not meet needs.

Prior to the Panel Workshop, a majority of participants did not think that the needs of any user group were met. This remained the case post panel.

There were less 'very well' or 'extremely well' responses received post Workshop. In particular, no 'very well' or 'extremely well' responses were received for people with mobility issues, parents with prams, buses and coaches, cars with boats, trailers, caravans.

The highest concern pre-Workshop was for cars with boats, trailers and caravans (10 'not well at all' responses), and buses and coaches (7 'not well at all' responses). Concerns for cars with boats, trailers and caravans strengthened post Workshop (14 'not well at all' responses), however concern for buses and coaches reduced (4 'not well at all' responses).

A total of 7 'not well at all' responses were received for people with mobility issues (as opposed to 6 pre Workshop).

Q3: Level of concern about finding a car park

Participants were asked about their level of concern about finding a car park in various locations in Nelson Bay.

Prior to attending the Panel Workshop, the majority of participants (8) were not concerned with finding a park outside their house or when visiting friends. This grew to 11 participants post Workshop.

⁴ 1 participant did not complete questions 3, 4, 5 of the post-panel survey. This was taken in account when calculating responses.

There was a noticeable shift after the Panel Workshop finished towards more positive views, with more than double 'unconcerned' responses (27 post Workshop as compared to 15 pre Workshop) received in all other categories (between 2 and 4). This includes two 'unconcerned' responses for parking in the town centre.

In general, there were less 'extremely concerned' responses received post Workshop (7 responses post Workshop as compared to 16 pre Workshop). Concerns shifted towards more moderate responses ('slightly' and 'somewhat' concerned).

Q4: When do you experience difficulties finding park?

Participants were asked to select times and locations when they experience difficulties finding a park. The same localities were used as listed in Q3 (when you shopping, along the foreshore, at the marina, when you go to work etc.) The times included: during holiday periods, during major events, during weekends outside of holidays, and during the week outside of holidays.

Before the Workshop started, ten or more participants were experiencing difficulties during holidays. This remained the same post Workshop.

More difficulties were expressed post Workshop, in particular:

- When shopping, along the foreshore or at the marina for all other periods
- Outside your house or when visiting friends during major events
- When going to businesses or services during major events or during weekends.

Q5: Usefulness of solutions to parking issues

Pre-Panel Workshop

Participants were asked to provide an opinion on the usefulness of six parking solutions (providing an opinion as to whether this was useless, useful or 'don't know'). There were 15 responses to this question, with, in order of usefulness:

- Redeveloping the parking stations at Donald Street east and west car park was the most popular option, with 14 participants ranking it as useful
- Shuttle bus service / park and ride option and parking permits for local residents ratepayers and businesses which were each considered useful by 13 participants
- Extension of one way traffic flows, considered useful by 11 participants
- Views were mixed on the use of parking technology
- Installing parking metres in the town centre and removing parking metres at the foreshore was considered useless by 13 participants.

Post- Panel Workshop

After the Workshop, participants were asked to rank their top three most preferred solution (same solutions as pre Workshop), with, in order of preference:

- Extension of one-way traffic was the most popular and preferred solution, and was in the top 3 of 13 participants (ranked number 1 by five participants)
- Redeveloping parking stations was in the top three of 12 participants (ranked number 1 by four participants)
- Use of parking technology was in the top three of 7 participants (ranked number 1 by one participant). While 9 participants thought it was a useful solution pre panel, it is the third most preferred option post panel.
- Parking permits was in the top three of 6 participants (ranked number 1 by two participants).

Installing parking metres and a shuttle bus/park and ride solution did not rank highly.



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