

Summary

UPDATE TO BELLS BEACH SURFING RECREATION RESERVE COASTAL AND MARINE MANAGEMENT PLAN 2015-2025

We invited the community to have their say on a minor update to the Bells Beach Surfing Recreation Reserve Coastal and Marine Management Plan 2015 – 2025. State legislation requires Council to update the plan every five years.

We made it clear that no significant changes have been made to the vision, guiding principles, core values or management goals for the plan. Respect and protect remain the core focus.

Council undertook significant consultation as part of updating the plan. The engagement comprised two phases. The first conducted in 2018, the second in 2019. Engagement methods included on site and on line surveys, with a focus on seeking the views of diverse user groups.

In total, Council received more than 870 submissions on the update to the plan.

Communications and Engagement

PHASE ONE – JULY & AUGUST 2018



25 days

of community engagement



7 days

Van Chat onsite at reserve



502

Survey responses
252 on site/250 on line



1

Wadawurrung
Cultural Heritage
Tour



Bells Beach – Wadawurrung
Country video



Onsite signage



Bells Beach
Committee meeting



Print ads



Flyers



Your Say Page



8,632 +

Facebook Reach



2066

Impressions



3

stakeholder emails



3

Mayor's column



1

Media release

PHASE TWO – AUGUST & SEPTEMBER 2019



30 days

of community engagement



2 days

Van Chat onsite at reserve



379

Survey responses
60 onsite/319 online



6

written submissions



Onsite signage



Bells Beach Committee
meeting



Print ads & statutory
notices



Handouts



Your Say Page



14,340 +

Facebook Reach



3299

Impressions



2

stakeholder emails



2

Mayor's columns

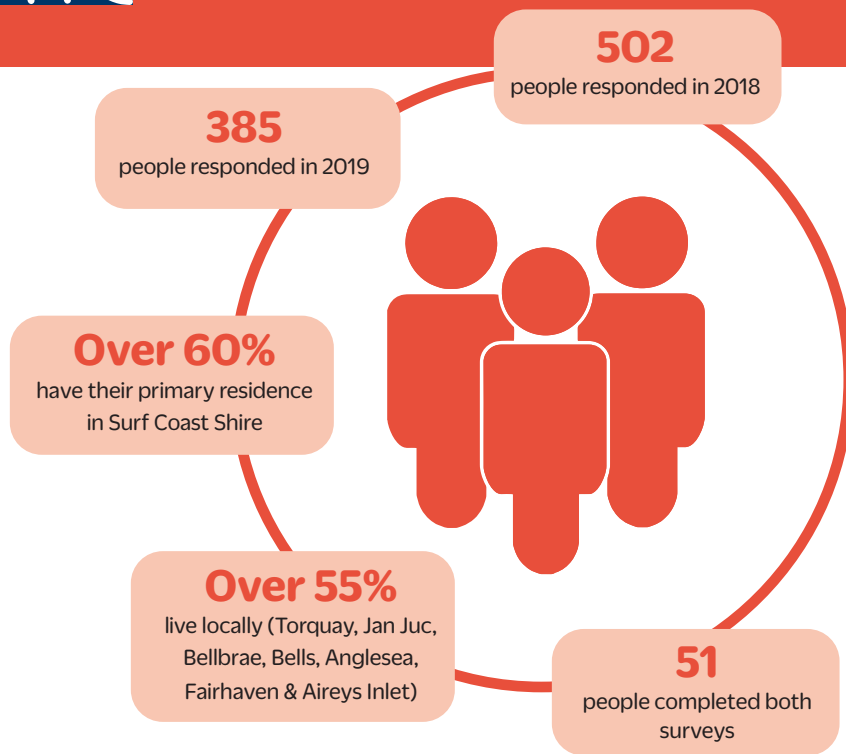


1

Media release



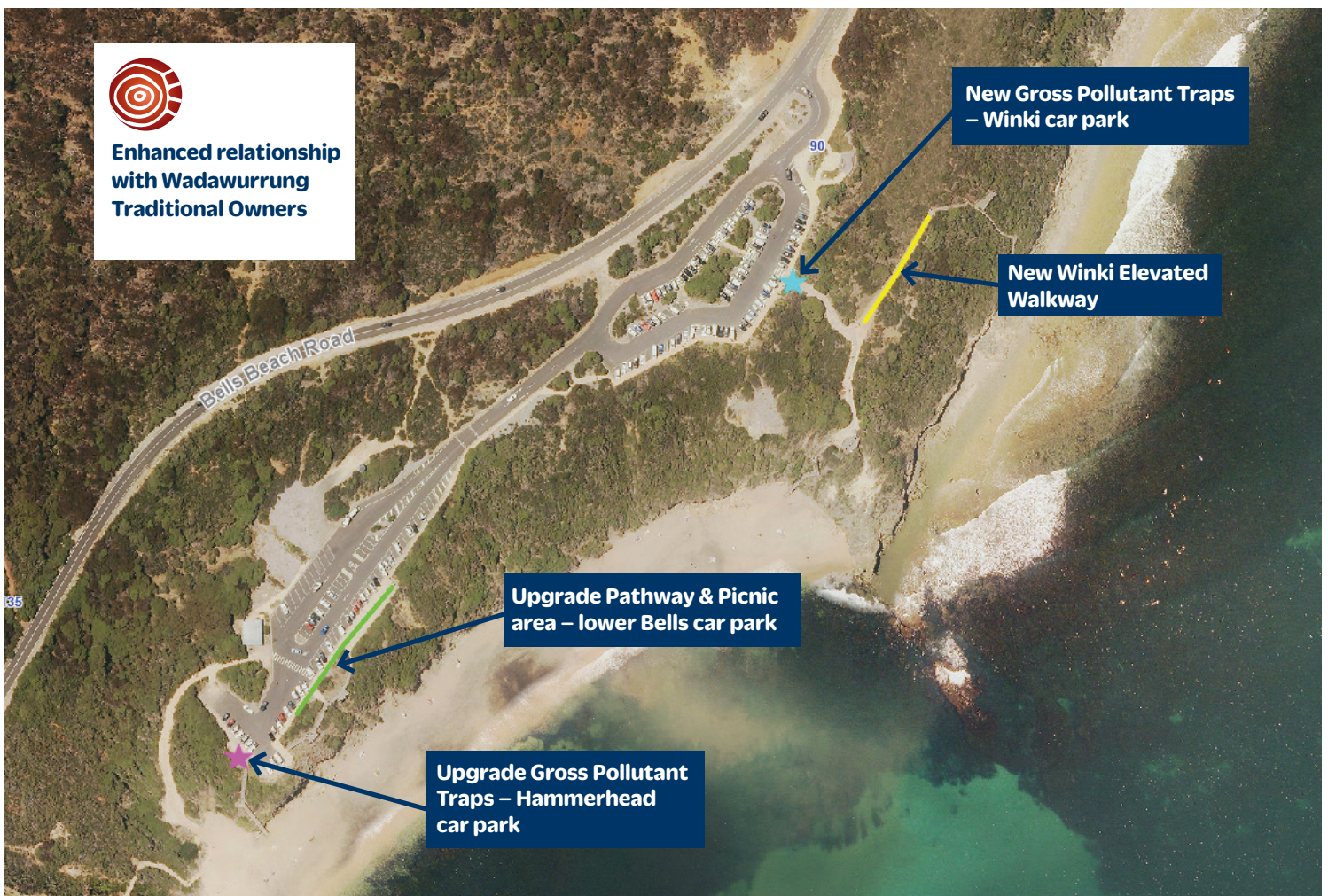
Who we heard from



Connection to Bells

- Most people visit the reserve at least fortnightly
- Most people use the reserve for more than one activity
- Over 25% visit daily or most days
- The top two activities are surfing and walking
- Over 87% are aware that the Wadawurrung are the Traditional Owners of Bells
- Other popular activities include watching events, walking with dog, sightseeing and running

Proposed changes



What changes were considered and what was decided?

CHANGE BEING CONSIDERED	2019 PUBLIC EXHIBITION COMMENTS	RESPONSE IN FINAL CMMP & REASONING
<p>Clearer acknowledgement of the Wadawurrung as the Traditional Owners of the reserve and improved sharing of Wadawurrung history/knowledge</p>	<p>Most people were aware the Wadawurrung are the Traditional Owners of the reserve.</p> <p>Strong support for and interest in learning more about the Wadawurrung story at the reserve and Wadawurrung culture more generally.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Include Wadawurrung language within the plan. - Amend the vision, core values and management goals to replace the word 'indigenous' with 'Wadawurrung'. - Work with the Wadawurrung to amend the heritage listing of the toilet block mural and to better incorporate the Wadawurrung story in the reserve. - Support the Wadawurrung to better understand the cultural heritage of the midden site at the reserve. <p><i>Responds to the need to amend the plan to better incorporate Traditional Owner management roles and requirements</i></p>
<p>Installing a section of elevated timber pathway replacing a concrete pathway leading to the Winki lookout</p>	<p>While the 2018 survey indicated broad community support, the 2019 survey raised some concerns about the proposed elevated pathway.</p> <p>There are concerns that the elevated pathway could negatively impact the reserve (by increasing tourist numbers) and benefit only competitive surfing events (eg Rip Curl Pro). It is also seen as having higher visibility from the water than existing infrastructure (ie. concrete path and adjoining fencing).</p> <p>Other respondents thought that the proposal would be better for wildlife which could pass beneath the pathway and that timber was an improvement on concrete.</p>	<p>Proceed with replacing a section of concrete pathway to the Winki lookout with an elevated pathway constructed from timber and steel.</p> <p><i>Responds to the need to balance a variety of management requirements, including that the current path requires upgrading due to poor condition, and that the temporary elevated infrastructure used for the Rip Curl Pro is disruptive to the local environment and regular reserve users during the construction and removal process.</i></p> <p><i>The proposed design will minimise visibility from the water, feature materials that are consistent with the existing lookout and stairs, promote habitat connectivity for local wildlife and provide safe access through this section of the reserve for locals and visitors alike.</i></p> <p><i>The height of the permanent elevated pathway will be significantly lower than the temporary structure erected each year.</i></p>
<p>Replacing the old stormwater pits in the Winki and Hammerhead car parks with more modern pits to improve stormwater management</p>	<p>There was community support for replacing the existing stormwater pits, with the public keen to reduce litter and other pollutants reaching the ocean.</p> <p>People want assurances that the pits will not be visually obtrusive. Other suggestions were also made about further stormwater management improvements.</p>	<p>Stormwater pits in the Winki and Hammerhead car parks will be replaced with new pits that are more effective at capturing litter and other pollutants.</p> <p><i>Responds to the need to reduce the impact of visitors and the car parks on the adjoining marine environment</i></p>

CHANGE BEING CONSIDERED	2019 PUBLIC EXHIBITION COMMENTS	RESPONSE IN FINAL CMMP & REASONING
<p>Changing the steeply sloping gravel pathway and wider gravel picnic area near the Hammerhead car park to a more stable surface</p>	<p>Public feedback on this matter was mixed.</p> <p>More than half of the respondents supported the change or could live with it, while close to one third were opposed to change. Some respondents do not want any surface change or any increase in hard surface.</p> <p>Some respondents want the picnic tables, others want them shifted or worry they will increase tourism and litter.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Replace steeply sloping gravel areas near the Hammerhead car park with a more stable surface (eg exposed concrete aggregate). Engage a designer to design this in a way which minimises the change in appearance and retains the natural feel. - Include removable picnic tables in this area. <p><i>Responds to the need to stop sediments and gravel eroding from these areas and washing into the stormwater system during rain, to reduce the slip hazards and provide safer pedestrian movement through the lower car park area.</i></p>

The results of the 2018 and 2019 consultation are contained in survey and engagement reports, which can be viewed on Council's website at www.surfcoast.vic.gov.au together with artist impressions of the Winkipop elevated walkway.

Next steps

Council will consider the updated Coastal and Marine Management Plan for Bells at the council meeting on 26 November 2019. If Council endorses the plan, it will be submitted to the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning for ministerial approval.