

CONSULTATION REPORT

Aha! Consulting

When will you have your next Aha! moment?

PROJECT	Belmont Trust Land – Future Vision
CLIENT	Belmont Trust / City of Belmont
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VERSION	1.2

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Acknowledgments

We would like to acknowledge the traditional lands on which this consultation was conducted and pay respects to the Aboriginal Communities of Western Australia and their Elders past, present and emerging.

1 Executive Summary

Located on the Swan River foreshore, the Belmont Trust land is situated in Ascot, near the historic Ascot kilns and the Ascot Waters Marina. The land is owned by the City of Belmont but held in trust, which only permits it to be used for recreational purposes, providing benefit to the public.

The *Belmont Trust Land – Future Vision* project aims to provide recommendations for the future use of the land and the best way to fund the installation and maintenance of any facilities.

The engagement is designed in two phases – broad community engagement, followed by a deliberative community panel. The broad engagement covered in this report was undertaken from 5 February to 13 March 2022. Several activities were implemented to gain a broad community perspective:

- 4 x community workshops
- 7 x pop up stalls
- Survey
- Online interactive map

The communication reached at least 30,000 people and the broad engagement gathered input from 347 people on their aspirations for the use of the site and preferences for a funding approach for the installation and maintenance of the area. These outcomes will be provided to the deliberative community panel, which will be tasked with providing recommendations to the Trust.

The engagement suggests there is strong support for uses that preserve or even improve the natural environment of the site, retaining trees and the enjoyment of nature that the location offers. These uses include exercise and leisure activities such as walking, picnics and enjoying nature. Nature is to be the hero and the main attraction.

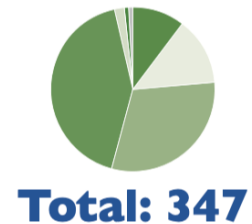
The other key themes included acknowledging the Aboriginal culture, the history of the area and the desire to ensure it is accessible and well maintained.

Other emerging themes, which the panel can explore but did not have consistent support across all engagement activities, included a desire for:

- **some simple built forms** such as space for food or coffee, or areas for casual markets or events. The community were not looking for significant structures, but rather sufficient infrastructure to support community gatherings and use of the space.
- **play spaces, dog exercise areas**
- **public art**

The key finding regarding funding for the installation and maintenance of any facilities (addressed in the workshops and survey) demonstrates a desire to seek funding from external sources. There was low support for increasing rates and very little support for selling a portion of the land for funding.

Participation at engagement activities



Preferred facilities and usage



Preferred approach for funding



2 Introduction

The site known as the Belmont Trust Land is a 14ha parcel of land in Ascot that is bound by Great Eastern Highway, Stoneham Street and the Swan River. The land is situated near the iconic Ascot Brickworks, the Ascot Waters Marina and includes part of Black Swan (Kuljak) Island. The land has had many uses over the years, from farming to sporting and including the old Parry Fields site.



While the City of Belmont owns this land, a Declaration of Trust was established over the site in 1954, which has seen trustees appointed to manage the way the land can be used. The trustees are the current and successive elected members of the City of Belmont Council.

The trust deed requires the Belmont Trust Land to be used for recreational purposes. Under s.5 of the Charitable Trusts Act 1962 (WA), a recreational trust must be for the purpose of providing facilities for recreation or other leisure time occupation, be in the interest of social welfare and have the object of improving the conditions of life for the public at large (in the case of a local government trust).

In addition, the trust itself has limited funds to install and maintain facilities on the land; therefore, part of the consultation process is the exploration of funding options.

In 2021 the Belmont trustees requested the City of Belmont undertake a community engagement process to involve people in shaping the future of this land. The *Belmont Trust Land – Future Vision* project was designed to incorporate two phases of engagement – broad community-wide consultation, followed by a deliberative community panel. The project aims to provide recommendations to the Trust, to inform the strategic vision for the land.

3 Engagement Methodology

The broad engagement was conducted from 5 February to 13 March inclusive and involved several engagement methods to facilitate participation from a broad cross-section of the City of Belmont community.

The project was launched on Saturday 5 February with a traditional smoking ceremony undertaken at the site. The ceremony, which was conducted by traditional owner Nigel Wilkes, saw 36 people come together to mark the commencement of the community engagement process. Information about the land and the project was shared with attendees, who were also provided with details of how to get involved and have a say on the future vision of the site. Attendees were invited to walk the site and provide feedback in the online interactive map.

The broad engagement phase consisted of:

- 4 x community workshops
 - 1 x community workshop with Ascot Waters residents (in-person)
 - 2 x community workshops open to the public (online)
 - 1 x Aboriginal Advisory Group workshop
- 7 x pop up stalls
 - Belmont Forum shopping centre (x 2)
 - Belmont Rotamart (markets)
 - The Base youth centre
 - Belvidere Street shopping precinct
 - Kooyong Road shopping precinct
 - Belmont Hub (library)
- Survey
 - Online at Belmont Connect
 - Available in hard copy at pop up stalls and by request
- Online interactive map
 - On Belmont Connect

Participation at engagement activities



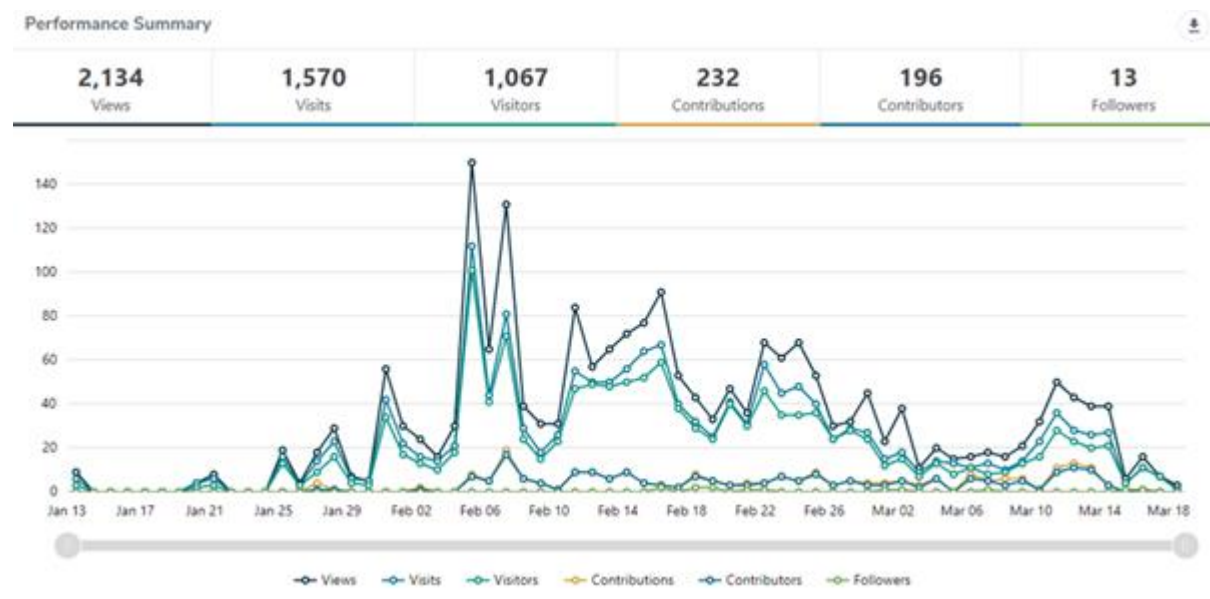
3.1 Communication and Promotion

The project was promoted via multiple City of Belmont communication channels to raise awareness and promote participation across a broad cross-section of the City of Belmont community, as follows:

- Facebook organic posts x 15 (with a total reach of 7,795 people)
- Facebook paid posts x 3 (with a total reach of 30,399 people)
- E-newsletters x 4
- On-site signage
- E-signage at City facilities
- Emails to stakeholders
- Newspaper article
- Belmont Bulletin articles

Communications and promotion directed people to the project page on the Belmont Connect website, which housed information about the project and enabled online participation via the survey and online map. The project page on Belmont Connect has received:

- **2,134 views** (*A page view occurs whenever a browser loads your site. Therefore, one visitor can generate many page views*).
- **1,570 visits from 1,067 individual visitors** (*A visit occurs whenever someone arrives at your page from an external source, such as Google search results or another website*).
- **232 contributions from 196 individuals**




Belmont Trust Land - Future Vision Project


Take part in the broad community engagement project that aims to understand community aspirations for the future use of the Belmont Trust site.

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Belmont Trust



The Trustees of Belmont Trust want to hear your vision for the future recreational use of the area.

This engagement project aims to understand what recreational uses the community would like to see on the site and how any recreation facilities are paid for and maintained. Information gathered throughout this project will assist the Belmont Trust to establish a strategic vision for the land.

Sign up to our mailing list!

If you want to be kept updated about the progress of the Belmont Trust - Future Vision Project, sign up to our mailing list below. By signing up, you'll be notified of events, surveys or panel applications, reports and any other key updates.

First name

Last name

Organisation

Enter your email address

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4 Key Themes

4.1 Preferred Facilities



High level of support to retain natural environment for community use



Support for walking trails, picnic areas and enhancement of natural vegetation



Support for community events, casual markets and food and coffee options at the site



Support for play spaces and dog exercise areas



Support for public art



Support for recognition of Aboriginal and European history of the site

Overall, the key theme that emerged throughout the broad engagement phase is the **natural environment** and the retainment and enjoyment of it. People acknowledged the importance of this to the community's health and wellbeing, the local birds and other wildlife and protecting local public open space. Regardless of what other types of uses or facilities were supported, the community feels that any future development on site must still ensure protection and enhancement of the natural vegetation and trees.

Across all engagement activities, the types of recreation supported are of a 'lighter touch' approach, suggesting **walking, picnics** and the **enjoyment of nature** as suitable uses.

Also supported is the provision of space for things such as **community events, casual markets** and **food/coffee**. However, these had less support in the survey (less than 50%).

Other facilities received a good level of support from some participants, however, there was some variation across the different engagement methods.

- In the pop ups and survey, **play spaces** and **dog exercise areas** were strongly supported, while these didn't get much support in the workshops.
- **Public art** was well supported in the workshops and survey but didn't feature much in the pop ups.

These elements should be further explored but should be treated with care.

Other key themes expressed in the engagement focused on acknowledging the history of the area, Aboriginal culture and the desire to ensure the area is accessible and well maintained.

A suggested Nyoongar name for the site was **Dabakan Koorling** which means 'to walk slowly'.

4.2 Funding Options



Seek funding from external sources



Low support to increase in rates



Low support to sell portion of land for funding



Other ideas: Commercialisation and corporate sponsorship

In terms of funding the primary desire was to seek funding from external sources for the installation and maintenance of any facilities.

There was low support for increasing rates, with people suggesting that the density of residents within the Ascot area should provide sufficient funds.

There was also very little support for selling a portion of the land for funding, with people suggesting that the increasing density in the area makes open and green space more rare and thus more important for community wellbeing and the environmental health.

It should be noted that several people suggested that, given the desired 'light touch' approach, no additional funding would be necessary and the site could be included in the City of Belmont's budget alongside other open space and funding allocated on merit.

Other suggestions included:

- Some degree of commercialisation of the site could provide funding, as would corporate sponsorship. These suggestions centred around the use of the community and locals to be part of the development and maintenance to reduce costs.
- Exploring a superannuation style model, where the interest from the funds currently held in trust are used to contribute to the site maintenance and the City funds and/or sources grants for the initial development of the site.

Of note, there is one suggestion that there may be a historical reconciliation to be done between the state government, the City and the Trust for access or sale of trust lands.

5 Workshops

Community members were invited to attend one of four workshops:

- Ascot Waters residents – 16 February
- Ascot Waters residents and other community – 24 February
- Public – 26 February
- Aboriginal Advisory Group – 17 March

Due to the COVID-19 restrictions in place, the workshops on 24 and 26 February were held online via Zoom. Those participants who couldn't or chose not to attend online were followed up by phone to ensure their input was captured. In total, 46 people attended the workshops.

The workshops focused on three key elements:

1. The desired public benefit from the land
2. Possible facilities and amenity
3. Comments on funding options

5.1 Desired Public Benefit

The groups were asked to define the most desired public benefit. Their responses have been themed below:

- Environmental protection and enhancement
- Community connections and meeting/gathering
- Tranquil and pleasant outlook
- Open space
- Health and wellbeing

5.2 Recognising Aboriginal Culture

The Aboriginal Advisory Group suggested several ways the land could reflect and respect the Aboriginal history at the site and the Nyoongar people more widely.

- **Interpretive signage** – educate people on the Nyoongar seasons, language and other information; it could also cover European history
- **Meeting place** – the establishment of a meeting place on site which could be used by the Aboriginal and wider community for gatherings and possible the use of cultural awareness tours
- **Place name** – the name of the land in Nyoongar language was considered a very positive form of recognition. While there was a recognised process, the name **Dabakan Koorling** was suggested, which means 'to walk slowly'. This was seen to be in keeping with the vision for the areas as a place of relaxation and the quiet enjoyment of nature and inner reflection.
- **Reusing local materials** – the reuse of any trees and other materials on site was seen as important.

5.3 Possible Facilities

The groups were asked to explore a range of possible facilities or amenities that would deliver the desired public benefit. Overall, people preferred a lighter touch approach to the area, appreciating and wanting to encourage and increase the **enjoyment of nature**. For many, nature is the hero of this site and the focus for any developments.

The top ten most requested facilities focused on amenities that support people to **enjoy the natural environment, exercise and meet with others**. Basic amenities such as walking trails, seating, water fountains and toilets featured for many.

Many people expressed a desire for space suitable for events or markets. The meeting space described does not need to be an overly developed built form and was most commonly sited on the old Parry Field, leaving the natural beauty of the river foreshore largely untouched. One suggestion made in a couple of workshops was that the Parry Field part of the site already has a natural amphitheatre that could be developed with some light landscaping. Many people also supported the idea of meeting spaces for small groups that would be equipped with BBQ facilities, toilets and gazebos to provide shade.

All workshops talked about the importance of having interpretive signage that builds awareness and understanding of the environment and the Aboriginal and European history of the area.

The other most requested facilities included more built forms like community gardens, public art and some kind of pop-up van for coffee and food.

There was not much focus on the possible use for the part of the Trust land that is on Kuljak Island, with most suggesting it be left as it is.

Facility	Appearances ¹
Walking trail	10
Seating	10
Casual market/event space e.g., sculptures by the river	10
Water fountain	9
Interpretive signage	8
Gazebo/gathering spaces	8
Pop up coffee or food van	7
Toilet facilities	6
Picnic/BBQ facilities	6
Community gardens	5
Public art	5
Enclosed dog exercise area	3
Tidy up and revegetate with natural planting to promote wildlife	3

¹ Note: Appearance count is based on small group work done in each session and the onsite meeting with the AAG. As such 1 appearance is reflective of anywhere between three to five people.

Facility	Appearances ¹
Lighting — sustainable/solar	2
Australian 'botanical garden'	2
Cycle path	2
Car parking	2
Water play	1
Big playground	1
Small playground	1
Café/kiosk	1
Golf grounds	1
Improved access for PWD	1
Boardwalk along the river/on the island	1
Water/creek area	1

Examples of how the online and in-room feedback was captured:



5.4 Funding Options

High level cost estimates were provided as a guide for discussion about possible approaches to funding the installation and maintenance of any facilities. The costs provided were indicative only and not a guarantee of the actual cost. Further site and feasibility studies are required to determine the actual cost of any future works.

The following five funding options were then presented to the groups, for consideration and comment:

1. Increase rates (subject to a request and decision from Council)
2. Integrate into City infrastructure planning and prioritisation process (subject to a request and decision from Council)
3. Sell a portion of the land and use those funds²
4. Seek external grant funding
5. Any others?

Feedback from participants demonstrated a preference that any funding option limit the amount of rates increase, with some suggesting that the rate base for the high-density housing area in Ascot Waters would provide sufficiently to cover the cost of any works.

Overall, participants felt that the needs of the trust land could/should be factored into the City's management of local public open space and funding of any works would be contingent on how this space ranked amongst the other City properties.

There was minimal support for selling a portion of the land to raise funds, with people citing the need to retain as much open space and tree canopy in the City as possible.

It was also suggested that external funding could be sourced, particularly through state and federal government grants.

Other ideas put forward included establishing community partnerships to bring the cost down (e.g., partner with schools or Men's Shed to establish community gardens and build park benches) or the donation or commercial sponsorship of some elements.

² This option would be subject to applying to the Supreme Court for a Trust Scheme or variation of the Trust Scheme, including the power to sell or lease. There is a caveat against the titles representing the Trust Land and accordingly it is currently not possible to register any dealings on the land.

6 Pop Ups

The pop ups were designed to promote the project and encourage people to:

- Indicate what kind/s of recreational use would be suitable at the site
- Complete the survey (hard copy or online)
- Complete the expression of interest for the deliberative panel (hard copy or online)

In total, 106 people attended the seven pop ups held at various locations across the City. Stalls were held at:

- | | |
|---|-------------|
| • Belmont Forum Shopping Centre, Cloverdale | 22 February |
| • Belmont Rotamart (markets), Cloverdale | 27 February |
| • The Base Youth Centre, Cloverdale* | 28 February |
| • Belvidere Street shopping precinct, Belmont | 1 March |
| • Kooyong Road shopping precinct, Rivervale | 5 March |
| • Belmont Hub (library), Cloverdale | 8 March |
| • Belmont Forum Shopping Centre, Cloverdale | 10 March |



6.1 Possible Facilities

Attendees at the pop up stands were invited to place a coloured dot on one of the images on the poster boards (14 pre-selected images that align with the options in the survey) or alternatively indicate what other types of use they suggest for the site. Additional comments in relation to the site were also collected.

Overall feedback suggested the inclusion of spaces and facilities to bring people together and encourage a broader use of the site. The most common suggestions were areas for **casual markets, coffee or food** and **picnic areas and spaces for groups**, as well as a desire to retain the **enjoyment of nature** that the site offers.

Other uses such as events, play and exercise suggest an active use of the site while not requiring an overly built form. Other suggestions varied, including the construction of a pedestrian bridge connecting to the island or a facility for various community uses, through to the suggestion that nothing or very little be done at all.

Participant feedback suggested little support for areas for organised sport or water sports.

Recreational Use or facility	Appearances
Areas for casual markets	16
Destination building for coffee or food	14
Enjoyment of nature	14
Picnic areas and shaded spaces for groups	14
Spaces for community events	11
Play spaces	10
Walking	9
Tracks for cycling	8
Water play	7
Dog exercise area	6
Other exercise area	6
Pedestrian bridge to the island*	6
Community facility (educational centre, arts, not for profit groups) *	6
Leave it as it is/don't do much*	6
Places for public art	5
Create habitat for native animals*	5
Launch point for water sports	4
Areas for organised sports	3
BMX/bike pump track*	2
Dirt track/moto riding*	2

* Indicates an additional suggestion from participants, not included in the 14 pre-selected options.

Many supporting comments suggested that whatever improvements take place on the land, it should consider access and the provision of other supporting facilities such as toilets. In addition, some commented that any improvements should be done in a way that retains the existing trees and natural spaces. Some suggested that things such as play spaces or seating be of a nature-type design, utilising natural, recycled elements.

Example feedback from the pop up stalls:

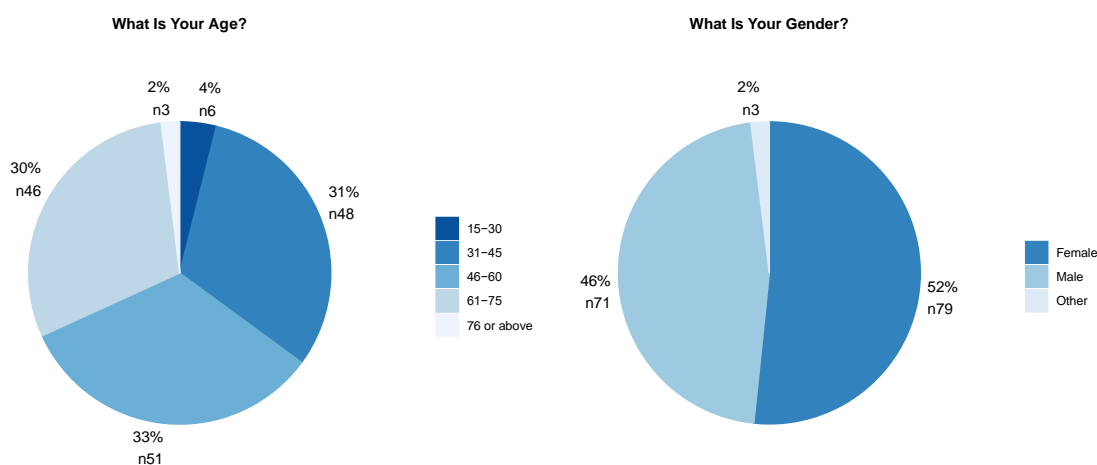


7 Survey

The online survey was available on the City's 'Belmont Connect' website from 5 February to 13 March inclusive. Hard copies were also available at the pop up stands and by request. The survey gauged views on the current use of the land, preferred future use and preference about the funding and improvements to be made.

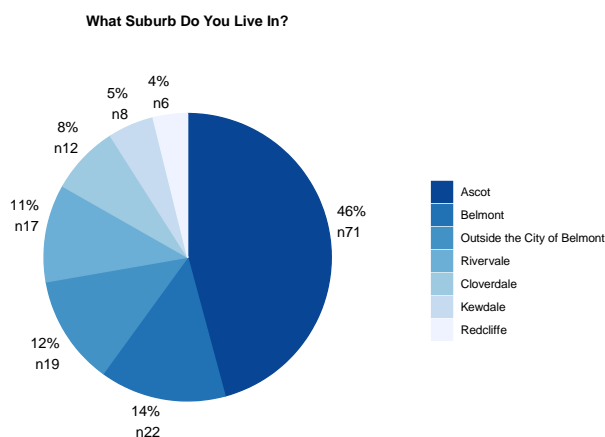
7.1 Participants

Overall, 147 people responded to the survey. The sample was equally represented among those aged 31-45, 46-50 and 61-75 years of age (left graph). There was little representation from ages below 31 and above 75 years. The sample was also equally represented by male and female gender (right graph).



From the sample, 46% of people live in Ascot, followed by residents of Belmont (14%), those who reside outside the City of Belmont (12%) and residents of Rivervale (11%).

This distribution of suburbs suggests that the survey results more strongly reflect the views of individuals living in Ascot rather than other suburbs. For this reason, the following results have been assessed for variance between suburbs.

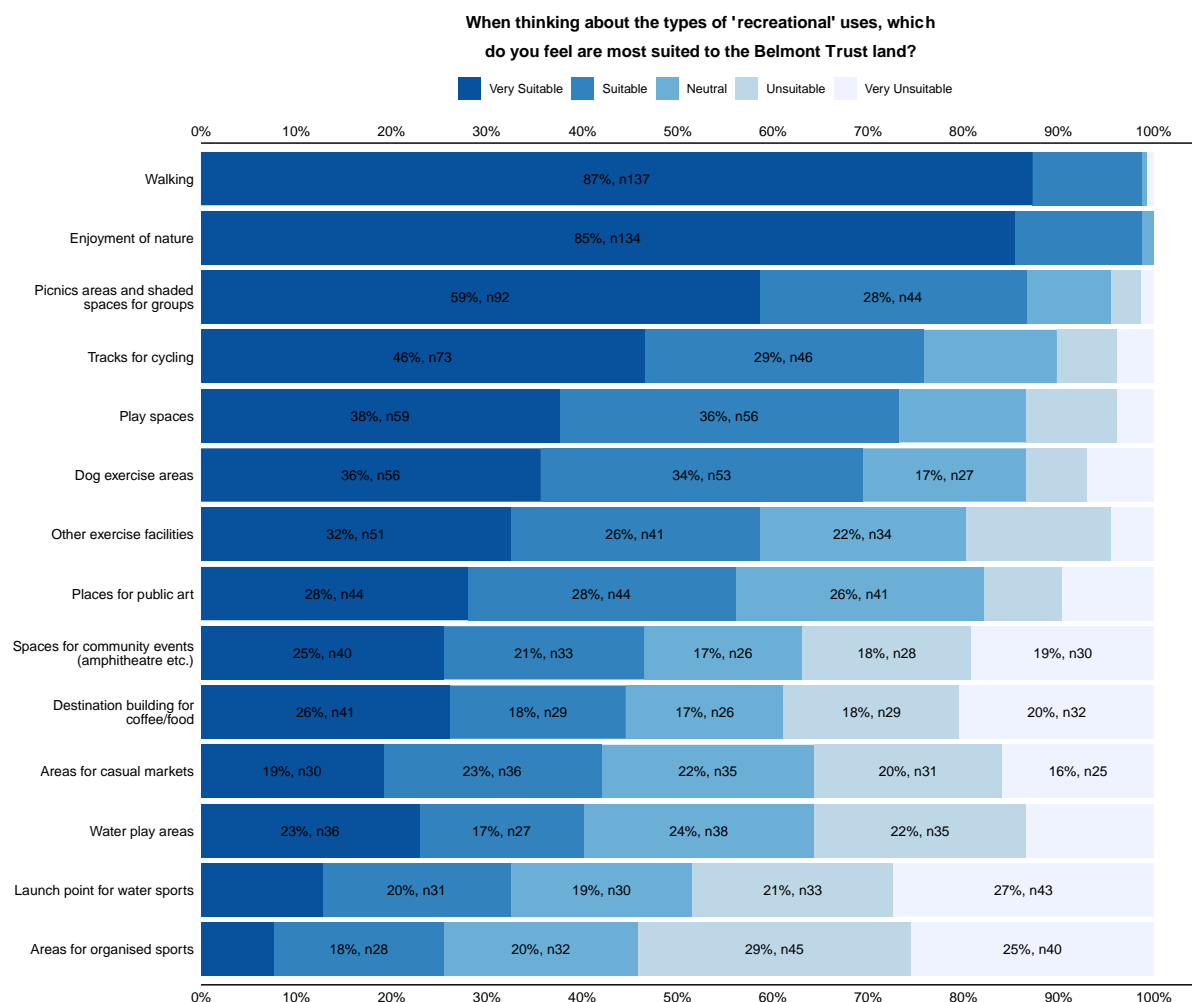


Other things to note about the survey participants:

- Half of the respondents described themselves as regular users of the space
- 6% of people reported that they did not know that space was publicly accessible
- Two-thirds of respondents aged 61 to 75 years regularly use the land
- Ascot residents had the greatest percentage of residents who use the land regularly (73%), followed by Belmont and Cloverdale
- Respondents most commonly use the land for exercise, followed by observing the scenery and walking their dogs

7.2 Possible Facilities

People were asked to rate the suitability of recreational uses that best fit the land. The graph below shows the distribution of responses for each recreational activity. The activities are ordered by the total percentage of people who rated the activity as suitable to some extent (very suitable or suitable).



Close to 100% of people believed that **walking** and **enjoyment of nature** are best suited to the land. Most believed that **picnic and shade areas**, **cycling tracks**, **play spaces** and **dog areas** are also well suited.

The activities with the lowest suitability included water play areas, launch point for water sports and areas for organised sport. These responses suggest that the best suited recreational uses are activities that maintain a peaceful environment.

People were also given an opportunity to suggest other recreational pursuits that could be suited to the land. Of these suggestions, the most common themes included leisure (picnic areas, family use), exercise (play fields, walking and cycling tracks), water (fishing, boat launching), gardens (community gardens) and food (café, food vans).

Overall, people think that the best suited uses relate to exercise and leisure.

7.3 Attributes to Retain and Improve

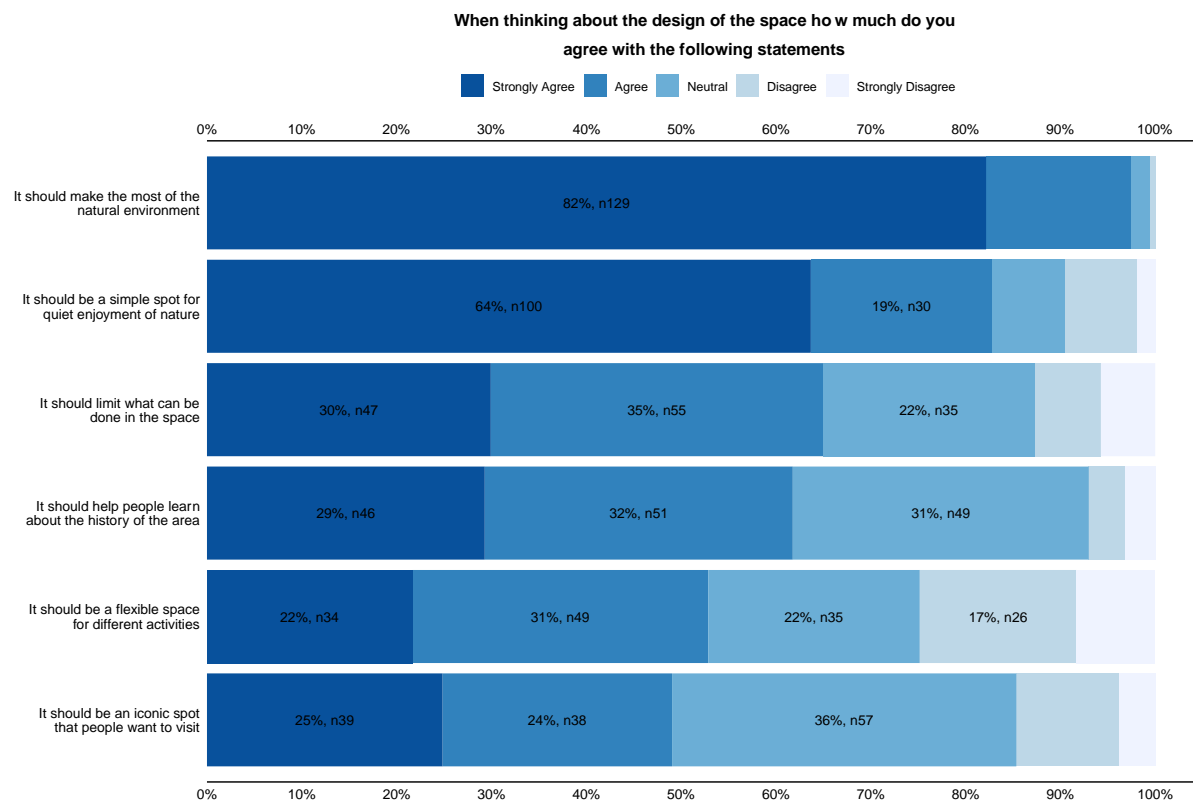
People were also asked what attributes of the land they think need to be retained. The most common themes in their responses included retaining the **natural greenery** (native flora, vegetation, treetops), **scenery** (open spaces, peacefulness, views) and **accessibility** (public accessibility to the river, trails, footpaths, parking).

Similarly, participants were asked what attributes they think need to be improved. Responses mostly related to **improving facilities** (food markets, cafes, sporting and activities areas), **greenery** (weed control, planting native flora and trees, general maintenance), **accessibility** (walking and cycling, pathways, site connectivity from the highway, signage), **utilities** (toilets, bins, seats, shading, lighting) and **appearance** (general maintenance, rubbish).

7.4 Land Design

People were asked to rate their level of agreement towards different aspects of the design of the land. The graph below shows the distribution of the responses for each design aspect.

Over 95% of people agreed that the design should make the most of the **natural environment** and 83% agreed that the design should be simple and promote **quiet enjoyment of nature**. There were similar levels of agreement (75%) for a design that limits what can be done in the space and promotes learning about the history of the area.



7.5 Historical Values

People were asked if there were any historical and heritage values that should be incorporated in planning for the Belmont Trust land. The most common themes related to **Aboriginal Heritage** (culture, history, stories, values, acknowledging and respecting the traditional owners), **European history** (land heritage, history boards, the kiln, Grove Farm, Hardey family, early settlers) and **agriculture** (historical land points, farming history, land use, wildlife).

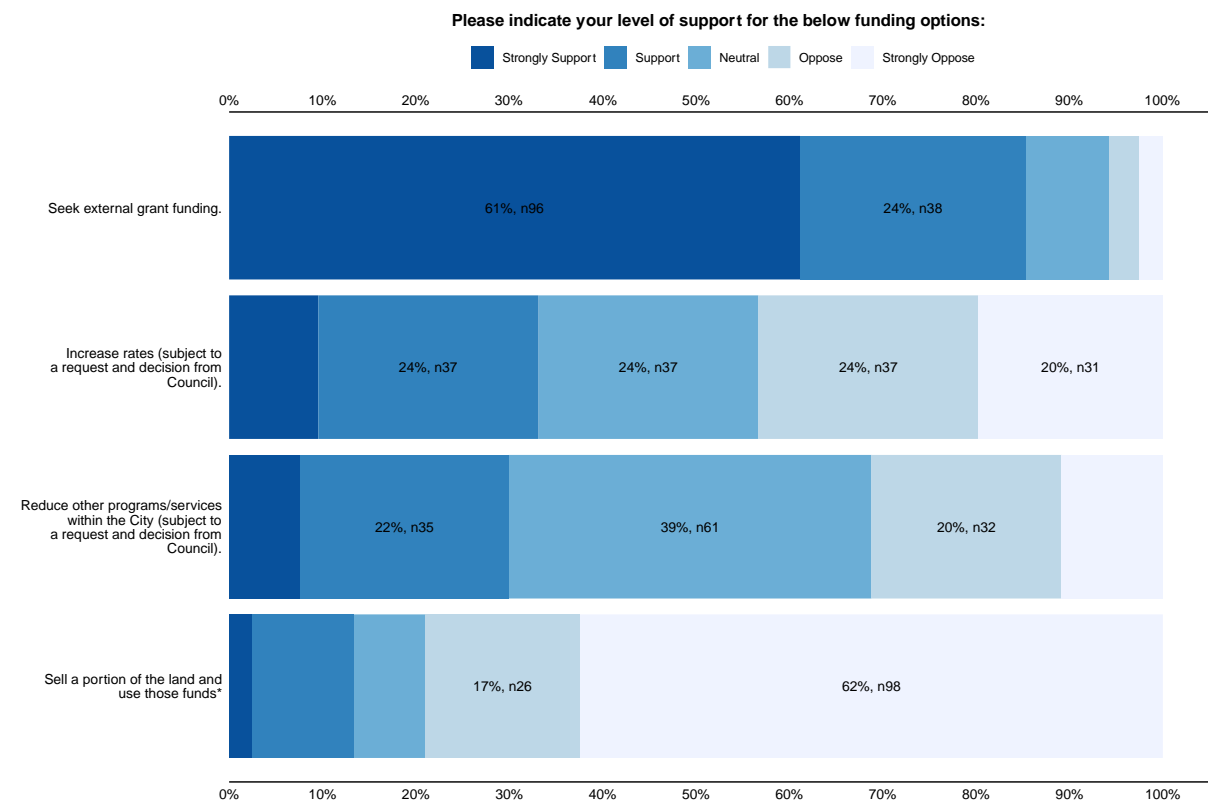
7.6 Funding Options

People were asked to rate their level of support for different funding options.

The highest level of support was for seeking external grant funding, with 85% of people supporting this option.

There was low support for increasing rates and reducing other programs/services in the City.

The greater opposition was towards selling a portion of the land for funding, with 79% of people opposing this option.



Other suggested funding ideas were also captured. The most common themes related to development (cafes, commercialisation of the land, hireable facilities, partnering with private businesses), government (local and state funding, federal grants) and sponsorships (local and larger businesses). Note that 15% of people who responded thought that no funding was required.

8 Online Map

An interactive online map was available on the City's 'Belmont Connect' website from 5 February to 13 March inclusive. People were invited to drop a marker on the map of the Belmont Trust Land, relating to one of the following categories:

- New addition
- Significant area
- Keep the same
- General comment

Participants could also include a comment to support or elaborate on their marker.

Seven people contributed to the online map, providing one comment each. Most of the comments supported retaining the **natural environment** of the site to support the local wildlife (birds, reptiles and small mammals), support the cooling/shading of the area and contribute to the community's health and wellbeing. Other comments cited revegetation, signage and acknowledging the importance of First Nation's people.

9 Phone Interviews

Three people were offered a phone interview. They had expressed an interest in the workshops but were unable to attend once they were moved online.

Feedback from these individuals focused on the following themes:

- Retaining the **natural area** (native bushland, trees, stream, weed control)
- Supporting the **enjoyment of the area** (outlook, quietness, solitude, family time)

One person suggested the inclusion of seating and gardens/parklands for the enjoyment of the area, while another suggested including things such as picnic areas would be a negative due to the need for additional facilities such as car parking. One person also suggested that funding could be sourced from mining companies, similar to the Rio Tinto sponsorship at Kings Park.

Another individual spoke on behalf of the Belmont Men's Shed, expressing a desire to locate a community facility onsite to house the Men's Shed and possibly other community activities. The group would welcome the opportunity to develop a facility that is complementary to and integrated with the environment of the site and provide offerings such as a community garden and developing a seeding program for the natural vegetation of the area. Regarding funding a facility, it was felt that this could be achieved through external funding commitments from the state and federal government as well as funds provided from the Men's Shed group itself.

10 Submissions

During the engagement period, two submissions were provided to the City of Belmont as a way of contributing to the project, one via letter and one via email.

One submission was a letter from the local Member of Parliament, in support of concerns they heard from their local constituents about future development of the site. The submission stated that the land should be retained as green public open space in perpetuity, to allow for recreational use and the benefit of the local community. It also requested that Traditional Owners be consulted regarding any future use of the land and that safety measures such as lighting should also be considered.

Another email submission was from a local ratepayer who acknowledged the beauty of the area but felt the whole precinct lacks in facilities. The individual suggested that the site may be able to fill a gap in local shopping facilities and that Ascot needs a community hub, including a mini shopping centre. They felt that the Belmont Trust Land would be a good location for this.

11 Next Steps

The purpose of the broad engagement phase of the *Belmont Trust Land – Future Vision* project was to understand the broader community's aspirations for the future of the land, the types of recreational uses suitable to the site and possible funding streams for any future development and maintenance.

This report will be available to the panel participants and broader community and stakeholders, Belmont Trustees and the City of Belmont.

This report will also be a key informing document for the deliberative community panel which will be meeting from late April to late May 2022, and whose task it will be to provide recommendations to the Belmont Trust on the strategic vision for the land.

A final report following the outcomes of the community panel will be produced at the end of the project.

– END –

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