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CONTEXT
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

PlanCom
PLANNING FOR COMMUNITIES

South Head Master Plan

Community consultation summary



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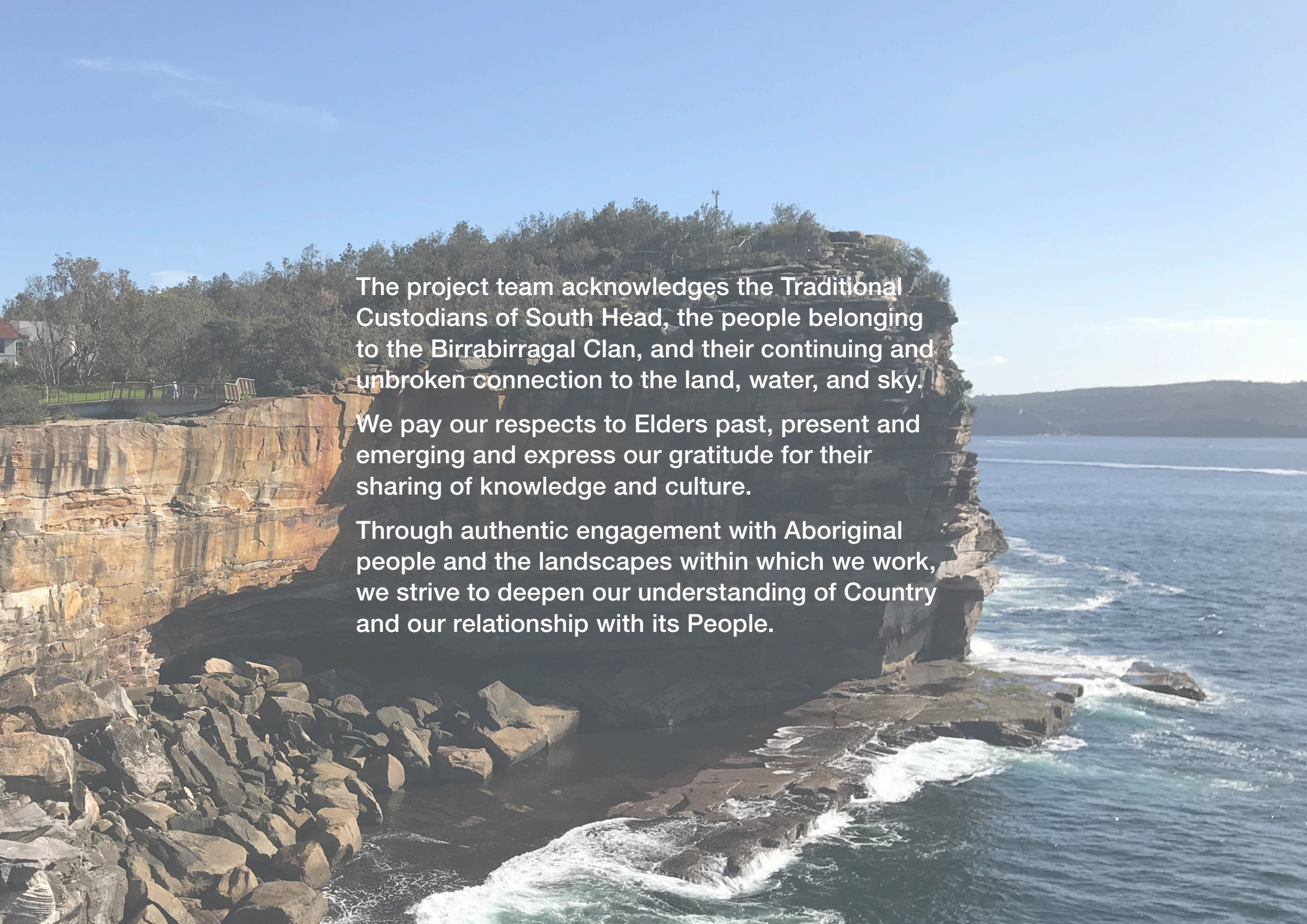
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The project team acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of South Head, the people belonging to the Birrabirragal Clan, and their continuing and unbroken connection to the land, water, and sky.

We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging and express our gratitude for their sharing of knowledge and culture.

Through authentic engagement with Aboriginal people and the landscapes within which we work, we strive to deepen our understanding of Country and our relationship with its People.

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Document Control

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Background

Purpose

The recommendations of the draft South Head Master Plan were informed by a process of consultation with the local community, stakeholders and relevant agencies. This document provides an overview of the primary forms of engagement with the community for the collection of their perspectives via a survey and two online workshops.

Engagement that has occurred

The following engagement has occurred to date:

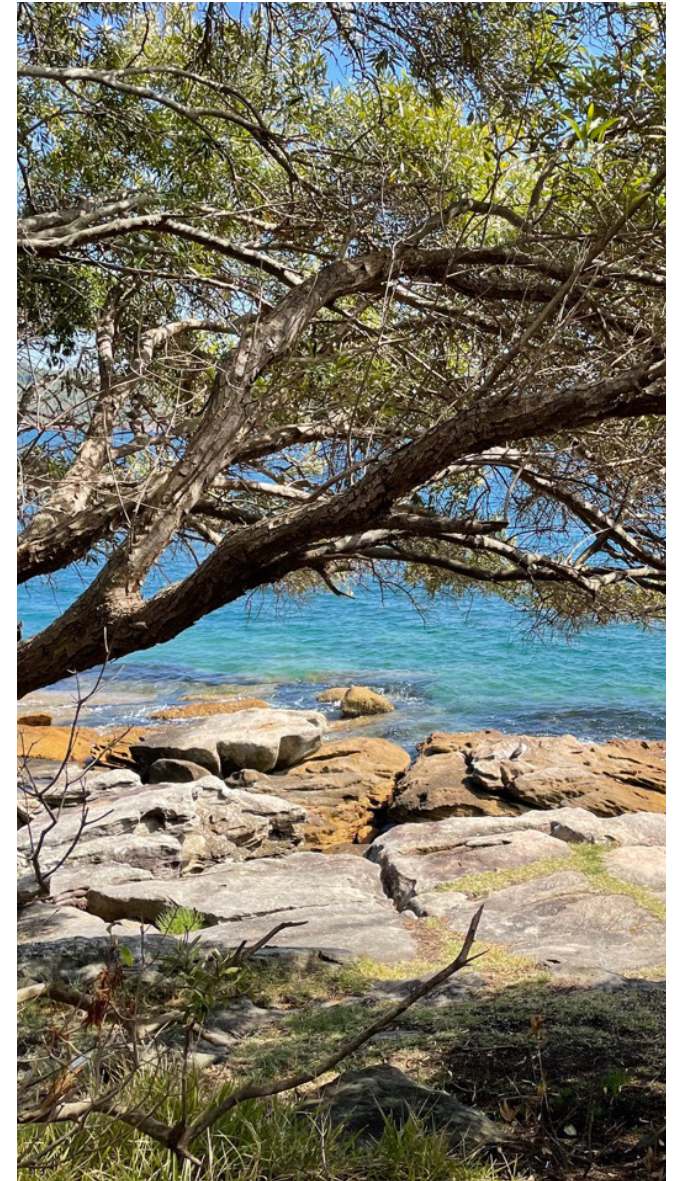
- 1. Web page** on Environment and Heritage site provided information about the project and linked to survey and registration for workshop.
- 2. Letter** distributed to 987 properties north of Cambridge Avenue on 24 September to inform of the workshops, website information and survey.
- 3. Stakeholder email** promoted the project website, survey and workshops.
- 4. Signs** in the park with a QR code and link to the website and survey.

- 5. Two online workshops** from 5-7pm Monday 11 October and 10-12pm Saturday 16 October. Registrations from over 30 participants for each session.
- 6. Survey** available 24 September - 29 October. A total of 479 respondents and an additional 57 email submissions that reiterated a number of the points covered in the survey feedback.
- 7. Stakeholder Reference Group (SRG) Meetings.** 2 meetings with representatives from key stakeholder groups.
- 8. Cultural walk and consultation** with the Gujaga foundation to better understand the aboriginal culture and heritage.

About the workshops

The two online sessions provided a positive opportunity for discussion, generation of ideas and the expression of concerns about the park.

The workshops attracted people who were highly invested in the area from a range of local and recreational perspectives but importantly most were regular users of the park and were able to talk to issues across



the area. Many were local residents but there were several representing groups including The Walking Volunteers, Watsons Bay Association and Sydney Harbour Association. Many had strong connections to place, the history, landscape and a desire to ensure that the experience for them and visitors to the area was positive and safe.

Over 60 people registered, with about 50 different people attending the sessions. All who wanted to participate were accommodated within the two sessions.



The workshop yielded information / views also present in the qualitative feedback from the community survey, but with more scope for narrative in the workshop than the survey.

About the survey

The purpose of the survey was to extend our reach for feedback to hear from park visitors, including local residents and other stakeholders, to guide development of the draft master plan. It was also intended to gain a much higher number of responses compared with the community workshops.

The survey was available on the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service website from Friday 24 September to Friday 29 October 2021.

The following key questions were asked in the online survey:

- 1. Current use** - What do you use the park for most often?
- 2. Values** - Which aspects of the South Head precincts of Sydney Harbour National Park matter most to you?
- 3. Management actions** - Which of these

activities do you think NPWS should be doing more often to conserve the natural values of the national park?

- 4. Important themes** - What significant elements of the national park would you like to see more prominently featured?
- 5. Interpretation** - Which forms of interpretation would you like to see more of?
- 6. Outdoor activities** - What outdoor activities would you like to see more of in the national park?
- 7. Indoor activities** - What new experiences/activities would you like to see occur in the buildings in the park?
- 8. Access** - How would you rate the accessibility/connections/wayfinding in each of the following areas? (The Gap Lookout, Upper Gap Bluff, Lower Gap Bluff, Camp Cove, Lady Bay, Inner South Head, Green Point, Military Road, Cliff Street)
- 9. Safety and maintenance** - Which of the following activities would you like to see the master plan address?
- 10. Transport** - How do you normally get to the national park?
- 11. Demographics** questions



Survey outcomes

Who responded?

Responses – 479, although not everyone answered every question.

Age – most were 30 years or older, an even spread (about 22% each) of respondents in their 30s, 40s, 50s and those aged over 60. Eleven per cent of respondents were under 30.

Where they call home – 55% from the Waverley or Woollahra local government areas, 45% from elsewhere.

Frequency of visits to the park – 70% visit more than once a month and 27% visit more than once a week.

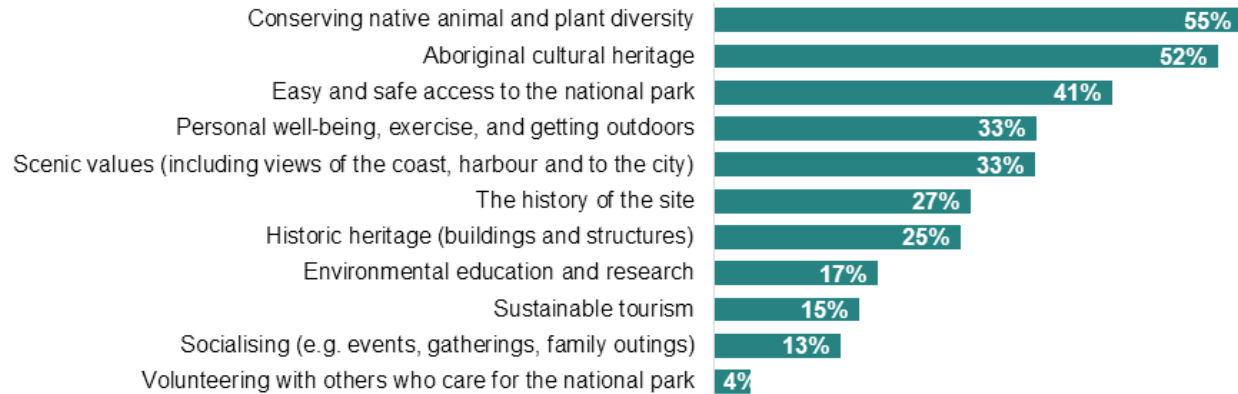
How they get there – 48% by car, 36% walking, 24% ferry, 13% bus and 7% bicycle.

What they come for – top three responses were bushwalking and exercise, enjoying nature and a place to take visiting family and friends.



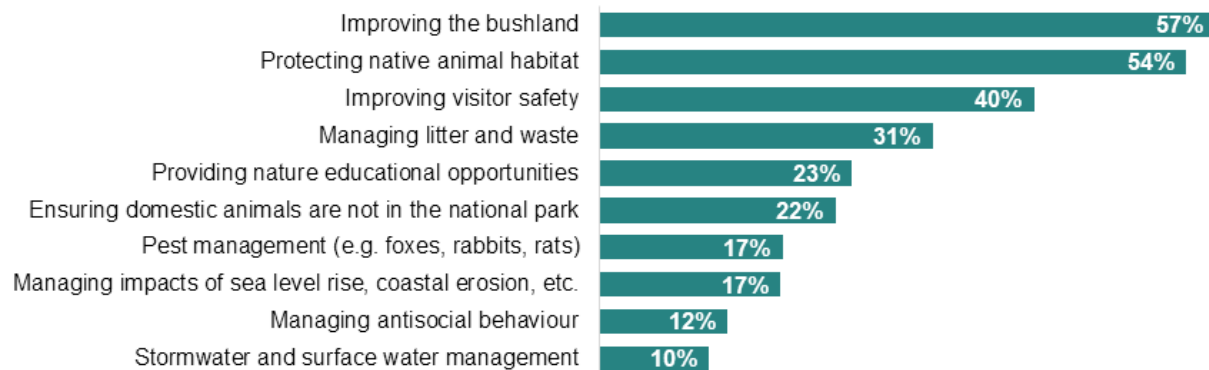
Key outcomes: values

Which aspects of the South Head precincts of Sydney Harbour National Park matter most to you?



Key outcomes: management actions

Which of these activities do you think NPWS should be doing more often to conserve the natural values of the national park?





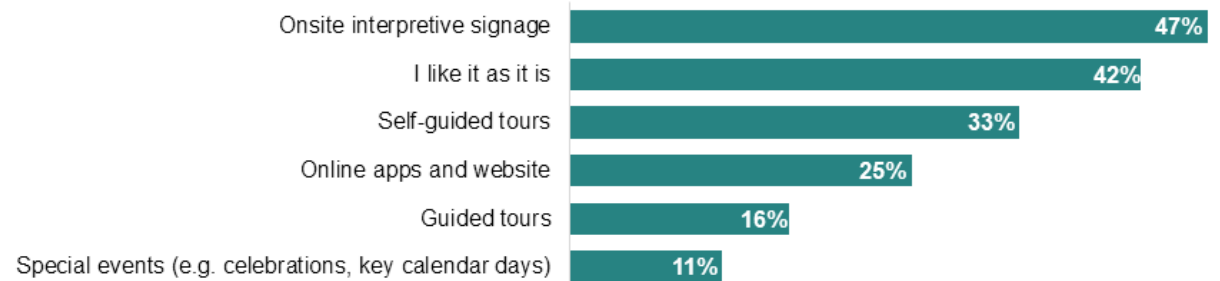
Key outcomes: important themes

What significant elements of the national park would you like to see more prominently featured?



Key outcomes: interpretation

Which forms of interpretation would you like to see more of?



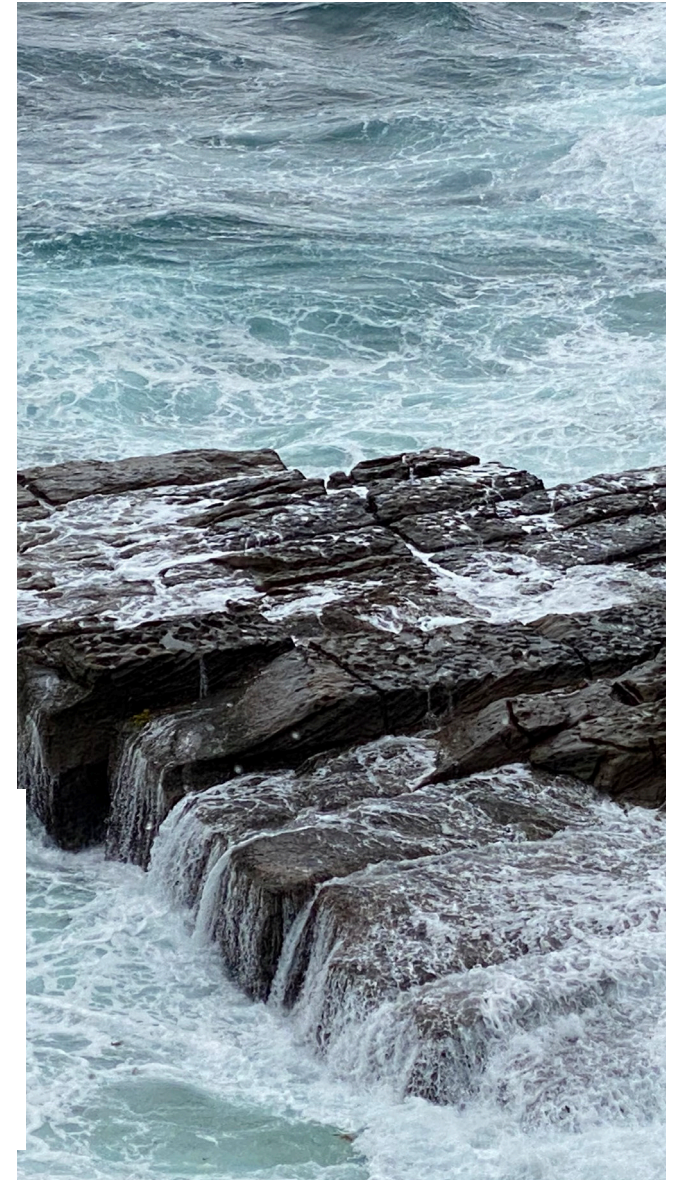
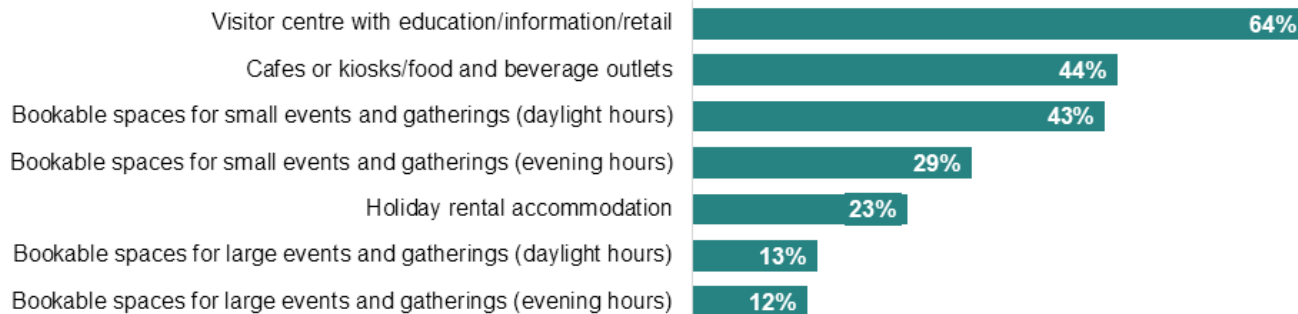
Key outcomes: outdoor activities

What outdoor services or activities would you like to see more of in the national park?



Key outcomes: indoor activities

What new experiences/activities would you like to see occur in the buildings in the park?



Engagement outcomes

Key themes

The key themes of survey and workshop input are as follows:

- **Conservation / natural environment** - passion for preserving natural beauty & conservation. Desire by many to make the park more accessible, for the enjoyment of all.
- **Heritage** - strong desire to acknowledge, respect, celebrate and learn more about Aboriginal culture and history. Desire to celebrate and conserve local military and marine history too.
- **Maintenance** - people wanted to see protection of the park through weeding programs, improved rubbish collection, removal of non-essential infrastructure and the planting of more native species.
- **Prevention / deterrence** - of risk and safety issues in the park.
- **Signage** - some views counter to this but many people believe that interpretive signage would improve education and enjoyment of the park's nature and its history.
- **Accessibility** - most people thought that walkways, paths and viewing areas should be improved and made safe with some suggesting new walkways and lookouts.
- **Concern** about improvements to attract more visitors - linked to local road traffic and parking problems.
- **Building use** - mixed ideas about the use of buildings on site. Many local people were opposed to new or commercial purposes with concerns regarding noise, parking, unsociable behaviour, impact to neighbours. Support for new uses included strongest support for a visitor centre, a café or food and beverage outlets and bookable spaces for small events during the day and evening. There were also several suggestions for the buildings to be used by groups for community use and to enhance welfare outcomes.





Key actions

Some of the actions suggested in the survey and workshop included:

- Improve the bushland, protect native animal habitat and better manage litter, graffiti and waste.
- Improve visitor safety.
- Feature traditional Aboriginal use of the land and cultural activities.
- Upgrade and extend the walking tracks to improve safety and ensure access and enjoyment by everyone.
- Use the South Head tunnels.
- Upgrade the toilets.
- Design lookouts that improve the visitor amenity, experience, safety and have minimal visual impact.
- Protect and increase privacy for Lady Jane Beach.
- Provide support to volunteer organisations.
- Interpretive signage for Aboriginal and European history and natural ecology
- Use existing buildings for public use or bookable private use.

- Introduce alternative public transport rather than increasing carparking – e.g. ferry links
- Replace the temporary fencing with something that allows you to still see the dramatic cliff views.
- Collaborate with third parties to tell the history.



Contribution to the plan

Summary

We would like to say a special thank you to those who participated and helped shaped the South Head Master Plan by providing their input into the stakeholder reference group, workshops and survey.

Feedback from the community and stakeholders has been considered and shaped the directions of the draft master plan that is currently on exhibition. The project team has applied ideas from the community to form many of the designs. Not all suggestions were able to be accommodated within the scope of this project.





A summary of what we have heard from the survey and workshops and a master plan response can be seen as follows:

What we heard (summary)	Master plan response
<p>Conserve and enhance native animal and plant diversity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rehabilitate and re vegetate native bushland.
<p>Highlight, celebrate and protect Aboriginal cultural heritage</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide opportunities for Aboriginal interpretation and storytelling. • Provide framework for continuous and evolving Aboriginal interpretation and storytelling.
<p>Tell the history of the site</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extend the heritage trail and explore historical interpretation.
<p>Provide safe and legible access to the park</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve existing tracks and create new accessible connections. The logic of connections is to be refined and improved, in terms of both accessibility and legibility. • Incorporate appropriate barriers and fencing designs.
<p>Protect scenic values and views</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance views to and from significant locations.
<p>The adaptive reuse of the buildings should not over commercialise the site</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exploration of commercial uses appropriate for a national park that can help sustain the life of each building. • Retain as much of the original fabric of the buildings as possible.
<p>Desire for visitor and community amenity in the buildings at South Head</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intervention to buildings that allow for holistic and flexible community uses. • Many buildings and their surroundings are to have an improved public interface.



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