

St Leonards Village Plan Community Consultation - Stage 1b

1. Acknowledgements

We would like to acknowledge the significant contributions to the St Leonards Village Plan Community Consultation Stage 1b by the following:

- St Leonards Village Hotel for participation and hosting the Planning in the Pub event
- St Leonards Supermarket and Newsagency for participation and hosting the Pop Up event
- St Leonards Supermarket and Newsagency for displaying posters
- St Leonards Primary School staff and parents for hosting and participating in group discussions
- City Development Department staff, City of Launceston for support and assistance with the consultation program
- Communications Department staff, City of Launceston for support and assistance with the consultation program

2. Executive Summary

Council, together with Niche Planning Studio, originally sought community responses in August and September 2016 regarding the development of the St Leonards Village Plan, a strategic framework for the development of St Leonards over the next 20 years.

Following this consultation and advice from stakeholders, Council finalised a discussions paper detailing the local context and highlighting key focus areas for the creation of the master plan. This report summarises the community responses to the discussions paper via a series of engagements held in March 2018.

There were several points that were highlighted and reiterated during the consultations, and they are:

- The need for traffic calming infrastructure and improved pedestrian pathways;
- Support for local businesses and services, including the schools;
- Improvements to existing infrastructure and services;
- The value of heritage buildings within the community;
- A preference for lower growth; and
- High value of green spaces and recreation opportunities.

3. Introduction

The City of Launceston is developing the St Leonards Village Plan, which will present a vision and planning framework for the development of St Leonards and the surrounding area over the next 20 years.

The initial community consultation occurred in 2016, which fed into the creation of the discussions paper released in 2018. The second community consultation focused on whether the discussions paper covered the communities' values and concerns, as well as determining if additional issues not covered in the initial consultation needed to be addressed.

The findings of the latest community consultation are presented in this report. This information will be used together with the St Leonards Village Plan Discussions Paper to inform the development of the St Leonards Village Plan.

4. Purpose

This report records the findings of the community consultation conducted for the discussion paper of the St Leonards Village Plan project. Consultation was undertaken during March 2018.

5. Consultation Approach

A communication strategy was developed with assistance from Council's communication staff. Due to the length of time between the initial consultation period in 2016 and the plans for a board consultation period after the release of the draft framework plan, it was determined a smaller consultation focusing on the discussions paper would be beneficial. This would ensure that the guiding principles determined in the discussions paper were on track and would highlight any areas of focus that were missed or not fully covered.

6. Consultation program

A summary of the consultation program is presented in Table 1.

The public was notified of the consultation program using a variety of methods including:

- Posters placed in local businesses;
- Advertisements in local school newsletters;
- Online information and survey on Your Voice Your Launceston web page;
- Emailing list providing links to the survey;
- Advertising using Council's social media platforms, including a video and targeted promotion methods; and
- Directed invitations to participate in focus groups.

Table 1: Summary of consultation program

Event/Method	Approach	Outcome
Survey	<p>A survey was prepared to collect information regarding the community's response to the discussions paper.</p> <p>Hardcopy surveys were distributed at the community event and available at the Council's Customer Service Centre.</p> <p>The survey was also available online on the Your Voice Your Launceston web page.</p>	<p>A total of 40 surveys were returned:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 25 surveys were completed online via Your Voice Your Launceston • 15 surveys were completed using hard copies
Planning in the Pub event	<p>Based on the success of the previous Planning in the Pub, an event promoting the release of the discussions paper. It was hosted at the St Leonards Village Inn on March 2, 2018.</p>	<p>The event was well attended and many points of concern were raised. There was confusion about the nature of the consultation which will need to be addressed prior to future consultations.</p>
School group	<p>Consultation was undertaken with parents from the St Leonards Primary School on March 13, 2018.</p> <p>The meeting focused on improving walkability in the area, particularly around safety for students.</p>	<p>It is clear that there have been a lot of prior discussions in relation to improving safety around the schools and village centre. There needs to be initial improvements in terms of traffic calming infrastructure such as traffic lights prior to further development.</p>

7. Report methodology

The consultation responses raised a diverse range of matters and subject areas, recorded in a variety of ways for the different consultation methods as indicated above. The responses have been analysed using a coding technique to identify key themes and ideas raised by the community.

Sections 8 and 9 present an analysis of the responses collected during the events and from surveys and emails. The words used below are an interpretation of the responses from the community. Deciding on actions and solutions responding to the issues identified is part of the work involved in developing the options for the St Leonards Village Plan in Stage 2.

8. Event findings

8.1 Planning in the Pub

During the Planning in the Pub event attendees were invited to take a copy of the discussions paper and discuss concerns raised. Comments on the paper were positive, and all copies were distributed.

There is understandable concern that current infrastructure issues such as water and traffic will only be exacerbated with future development. Part of the framework plan will need to include initial improvements to support the existing community and ensure that future growth will not be detrimental to the area. Council will need to work with service providers to confirm what is needed to improve facilities.

There was some confusion about the purpose and format of the meeting, and many people expressed concern that only the loudest voices were heard. Future consultations about the framework plan will need to provide a variety of events similar to the initial consultation to allow opportunities for a wider range of the community to participate.

8.2 School Group

A meeting was organised with a focus group from St Leonards Primary School with a focus on improving walkability. The major concerns were crossing the intersections and parking around the centre. The St Leonards Road-Station Road intersection has limited line of sight. The road and footpaths are narrow, and trucks regularly travel along at high speeds. The parents stated that there are regular instances of cars hurtling down Hillary Street. Similarly, the St Leonards Road-Johnston Road intersection is heavily trafficked with limited visibility due to the slope of the land.

As there are several educational facilities along Station Road, the parents stated that during drop off and pick up times there are cars parked illegally. This blocks traffic flow and decreases visibility. The bus stop outside the school exacerbates the issue.

There were several suggestions discussed. It is clear that there have been several previous discussions about ways to improve pedestrian safety. Council will need to work with State Growth to improve the intersections, and local stakeholders to improve parking options.

There were also comments about the lack of suitable playgrounds and open spaces. The central park near the village centre looks unloved. There are limited opportunities for children to play sports in an informal setting.

9. Survey findings

As discussed in table 1, a total of 40 surveys were returned. 25 were submitted online and 15 were submitted in hardcopy. There were a total of 434 visits to the online survey, and the issues paper and appendixes were downloaded 292 times. The majority of the visits were in the first week and via a direct link to Your Voice Your Launceston.

The majority of survey respondents live in the St Leonards area. Some of the details provided in the 'Other' interest section include people who had bought recently property in the area, people who visited local businesses and developers. The responses to the survey are grouped based on the focus of the questions asked.

9.1 Vision Statement

Figure 2: Vision statement from the discussions paper and listed with the survey.

Vision statement

St Leonards is an attractive and thriving place that:

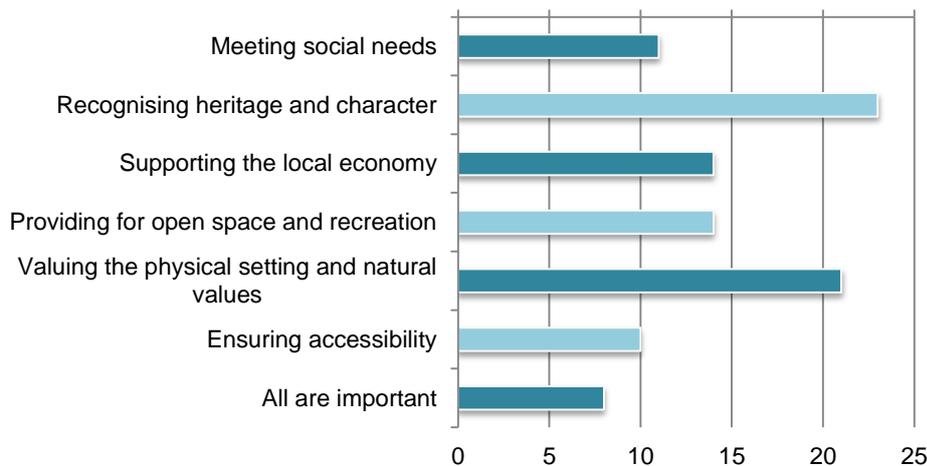
- Celebrates its heritage and village character
- Provides opportunities for local employment and investment
- Caters for the daily shopping, health and education needs of its community
- Has high quality public spaces and varied recreation options
- Encourages cycling and walking, connects to the wider city through efficient roads, and good public transport.

92% of respondents stated that the vision statement reflected how they wanted to St Leonards develop.

9.2 Areas of Focus - Principles

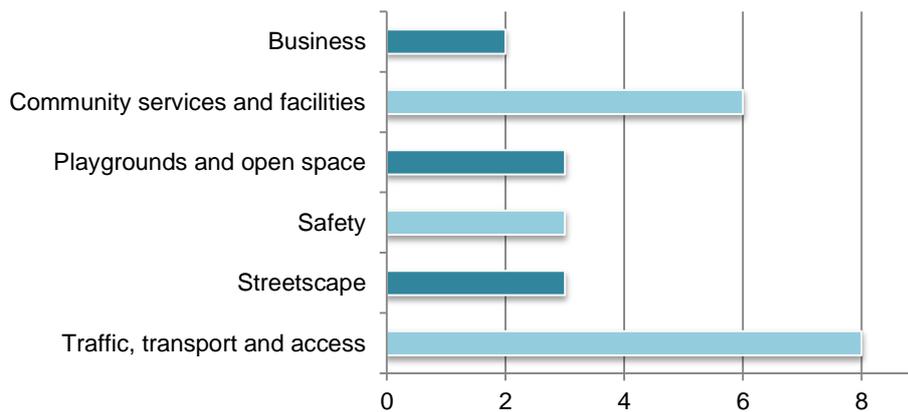
The areas of focus were based on the seven guiding principles listed in the discussions paper. Recognising heritage character and natural values were considered the most important areas of focus, with 23 and 21 respondents respectively.

Figure 3: Responses to the query "What would you consider the most important areas of focus for St Leonards?"



Half of respondents provided additional comments when asked if there were focus areas that they felt was missing. The comments raised have been collected into the groups. It is important to note that while these focus areas overlap with the guiding principles proposed, there is a lack of clarity for the community as to what those principles involved. Future consultation and plans will need to ensure that messages are clear and concise.

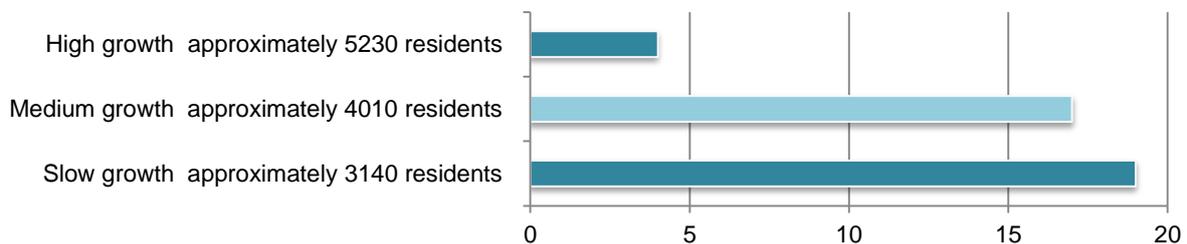
Figure 4: Responses to the query "Are there any focus areas that you feel are missing?"



9.3 Rate of Growth

Overall there is a preference for short to medium growth. This is in keeping with the initial consultation and is likely related to concerns about current levels of infrastructure. It should be noted that the slow growth projection was based on the idea of no increase in investment or infrastructure in the area, and future discussions on growth should expand on what immediate improvements would be required to facilitate growth.

Figure 5: Responses to the query "Natural growth of a suburb is generally slow. The speed increases with planned infrastructure and investment. What speed would you like to see St Leonards grow over the next 30 years?"



9.4 Housing

When asked where the residential growth should be located, the largest number of respondents (19) recommended south of the village centre along St Leonards Road. There was also support for infill development (6 respondents), as well as residential growth between St Leonards and Waverley (7 respondents).

Figure 6: Responses to the query "The growth of St Leonards will result in an increase in the number of homes. Where would be suitable area/s for new home developments?"

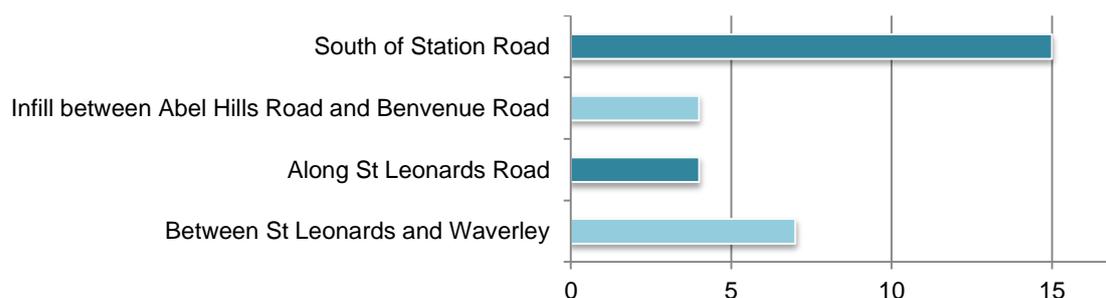


Figure 7: Aerial view of St Leonards showing focus of potential residential development areas



9.5 Traffic

The majority of respondents (78%) felt that the current roads around St Leonards would not cope with growth in St Leonards. St Leonards Road in general was considered as ill equipped to handle future growth, with a focus on the intersections with Station Road and to a lesser extent Johnston Road. Station Road is currently the access for four educational facilities and connects into the village centre.

Figure 8: Responses to the query "Where do you think there will be traffic issues?"

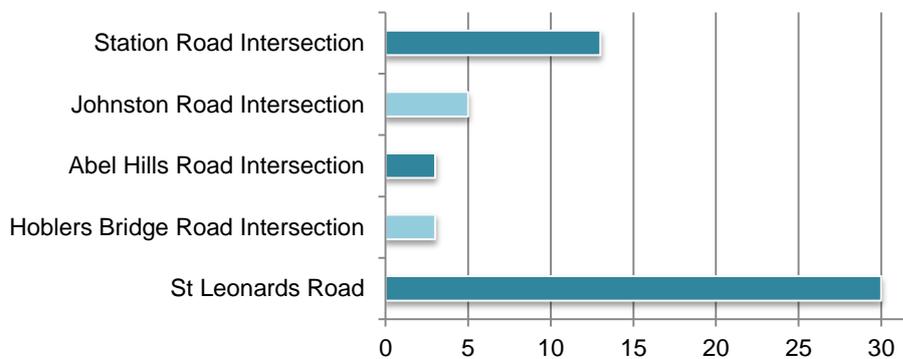
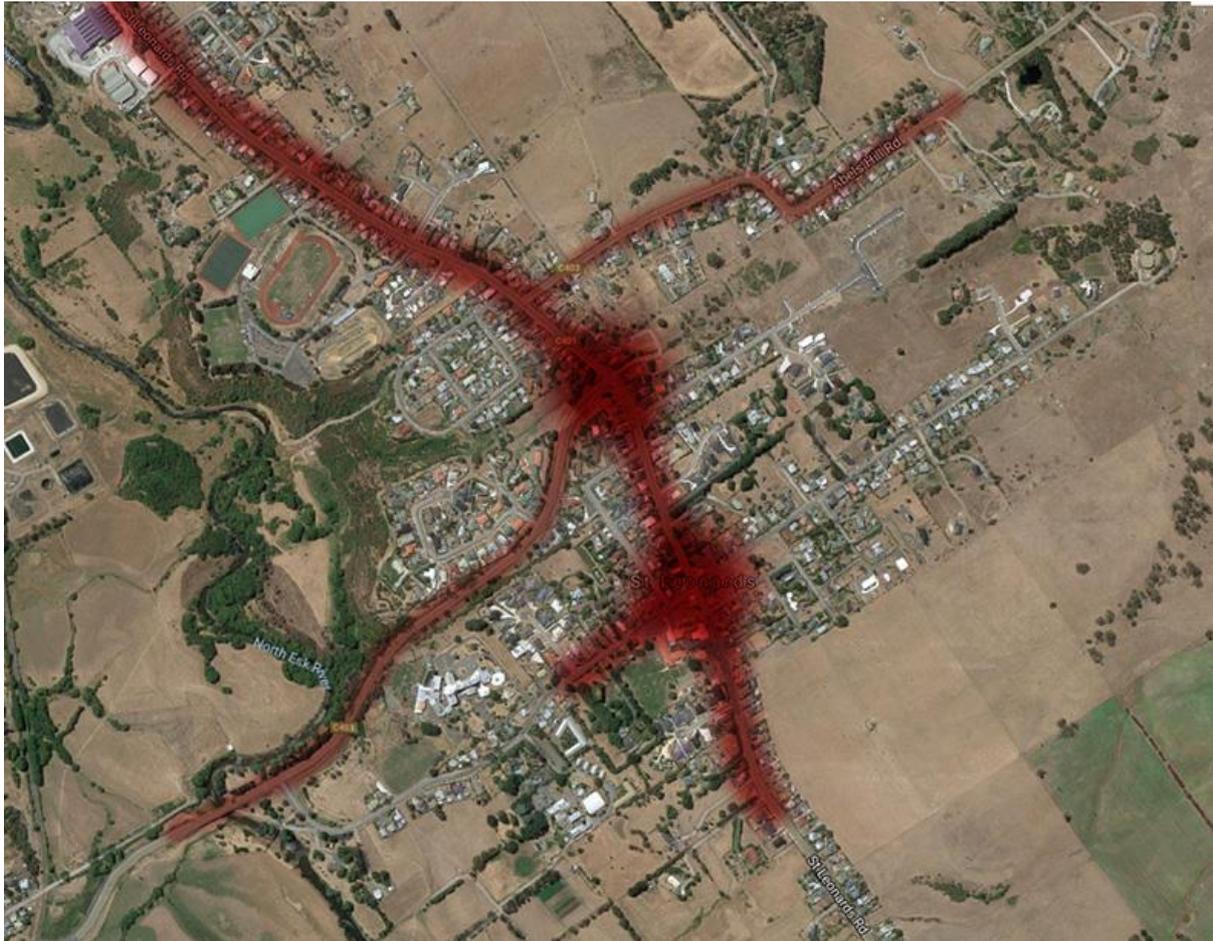
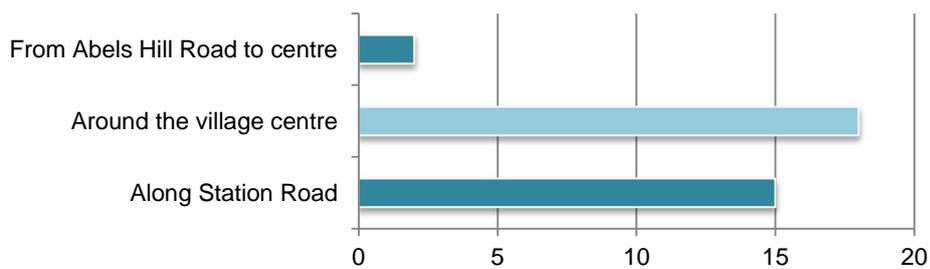


Figure 9: Arial view of St Leonards showing focus of potential traffic issues



9.6 Heritage Precinct

Figure 10: Responses to the query "Where do you think the heritage precinct should be?"



90% of respondents stated that they would support a heritage precinct in St Leonards. Most suggested that the precinct be located around the village centre or along Station Road. These areas are encompassed by the draft heritage precinct detailed in the discussions paper.

Figure 11: Aerial view of St Leonards showing draft heritage precinct

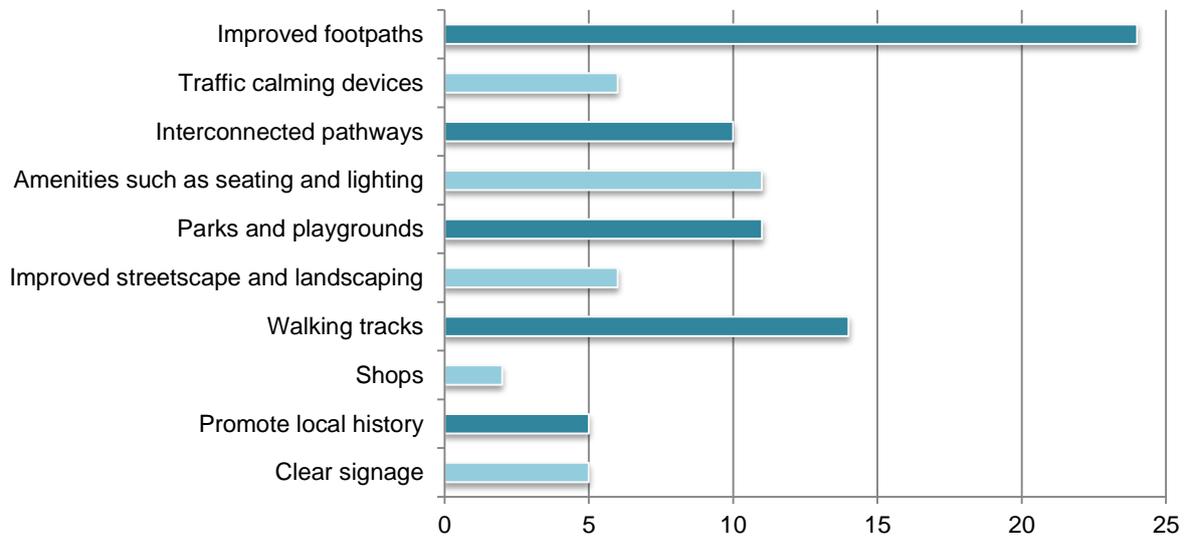


9.7 Village Centre

83% of respondents want the village centre to remain where it is. While there are no plans to remove the existing village centre, it is noted that due to restrictions in area, the current centre does not have capacity to service the expected future growth of St Leonards. It is likely that there will be a future centre developed to work in conjugation with the current centre. However it is likely to be 30+ years before a new centre would be viable. Therefore there should be plans for initial improvements to the current village centre to better service the community.

9.8 Walkability

Figure 12: Responses to the query "What would encourage people to walk around St Leonards?"



The most common suggestions to increase walkability in the area was improving the footpaths (24 respondents) and providing off road walking tracks (14 respondents). Amenities such as lighting, seating or play equipment were also recommended.

10. Where to from here?

Stage 1 of the St Leonards Village Plan is now complete. Stage 2 is to finalise the master plan and supporting documents. The next step will involve considering the responses from the community and ensuring they are addressed in the draft structure plan, which is to be presented to council by mid-2018. Following this, there will be further community consultation before the plan is finalised.

11. Conclusion

This report provides a collation of the material and input provided by the community during the second consultation program.

The views of the community will form an important reference for the development of the St Leonards Village Plan. The St Leonards Village Plan will include a physical plan for the area accompanied by goals and objectives for the future of the area over the next 20+ years.

Further consultation regarding the St Leonards Village Plan will occur to test the concepts with the community before it is finalised.