‘The Esplanade (Sunderland Bay Road to Batman Street) Road and Drainage Upgrade’

Feedback summary

Property owners were asked to provide submissions and/or objections for the proposed road and drainage improvement project for The Esplanade, between Sunderland Bay Road and Batman Street, in Surf Beach. Other stakeholders also had the opportunity to provide a submission.

A summary of the submissions and objections received from property owners have been provided below. There were no submissions from other stakeholders.

Summary:

- 2 objections (12%)
- 9 submissions of support (53%)
- 6 property owners did not provide a formal response (35%)
- 1 verbal submission of support (counted as ‘no submission’)

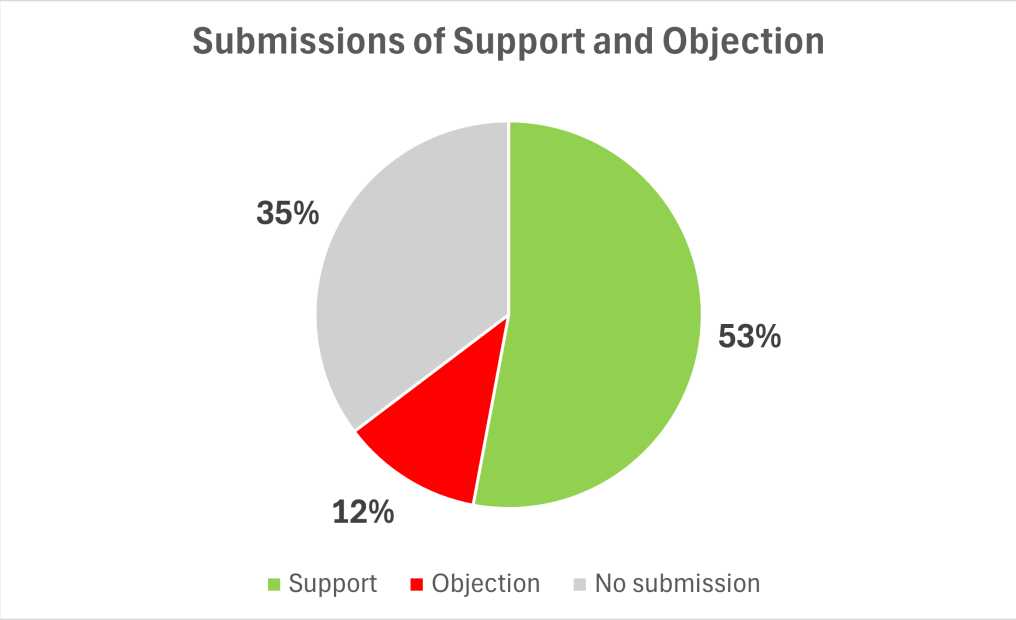


Figure 1: percentage breakdown of submissions of support and objection received from property owners

The main feedback received in the submissions and objections, by way of summary, were;

Feedback	Number
Main reason for support is to reduce dust	4
Concern about the increase in cost from the abandoned Sunderland Bay and Surf Beach Special Charge Scheme (2023)	2
The method used for determining the number of trips per property overestimated the daily trips of property owners	2
Would like to see a reduction in traffic speed limits along The Esplanade	2
Footpaths should be mandatory in designs for high traffic streets to increase pedestrian safety and accessibility	2
Only want the road to be sealed	1
Council should financially contribute for the broader community benefit	1
Concern that individuals who do not reside on the affected section of The Esplanade and did not experience the dust were influencing the process	1

Table 1: summary of written feedback received from submissions and objections

Responses to common community feedback can be found on the following pages.

"Why have costs increased from the abandoned 2023 Surf Beach and Sunderland Bay Special Charge Scheme?"

The cost of individual special charge scheme projects varies depending on factors such as road length, the concept design preferred by property owners, and the level of Council contribution resulting from external traffic usage.

In 2023, the proposed Sunderland Bay and Surf Beach project spread the cost across more than 1,000 properties, with the community contributing approximately 80%. Delivering projects at this scale can reduce the overall cost, as larger projects often allow for more efficient use of resources and better pricing from contractors. In contrast, the current Special Charge Scheme for this section of The Esplanade applies to just 17 properties, with a community contribution of 25%.

The current project uses tailored figures for the 17 properties involved, ensuring that individual costs are both relevant and equitable. Despite the changes, the cost per property remains comparable for property owners.

"The benefit ratio over estimates the number of trips attributed to properties within the scheme area."

Council uses various forms of information to best calculate the number of trips attributed to property owners within the scheme area, including traffic count data, census data, beachside car park surveys, and property owner feedback.

The method used to calculate these figures has been independently reviewed by a lawyer and it is considered that the number of trips attributed to tourist and wider community traffic is reasonable and fair.

"Speed limits are currently too high. Can Council reduce the speed limit along The Esplanade?"

The inclusion of zig-zag chicanes in the concept designs is intended to reduce vehicle speeds along The Esplanade. These features typically limit travel speeds to between 20–30 km/h, enhancing road user safety and improving the overall amenity for residents.

In addition, Council is currently reviewing speed limits on unsealed roads across the Shire, including this section of The Esplanade. Further information about the proposed changes can be found here - Speed Reviews and Parking Improvements | Engage Bass Coast

"Footpaths should be mandatory in all other projects."

Bass Coast Shire Council is committed to making our communities safe and easy for everyone to use.

Footpaths are an important part of the physical environment for people with diverse accessibility needs. Council will contribute an additional 50% of all footpath costs to encourage communities to include footpaths in their designs to increase accessibility for all.

Council undertakes thorough engagement with property owners regarding design preferences. This ensures property owner views, such as whether a footpath should be included, are well understood. As property owners share in the cost of the project, the decision to include a footpath is guided by community preferences.

"Council should contribute for the level of benefit received by people who do not own homes along this section of The Esplanade, such as tourists."

Council is contributing financially to the project to reflect the benefit that upgrades provide to the wider community. This includes people who use the road but don't live along The Esplanade, such as tourists and those travelling to nearby areas.

The section of The Esplanade between Sunderland Bay Road and Batman Street experiences a high volume of external traffic. To account for this, Council is covering **74% of the total project costs**, plus an **additional $48,672** specifically for the construction of a footpath.

In total, Council's contribution amounts to **$1,192,357**.

"I do not want individuals who do not live on this section of The Esplanade to have influence on the outcome of the proposed Special Charge Scheme."

Under the legislation, any person may make a submission in response to a proposed Special Charge Scheme. However, only property owners who would be liable to pay the Special Charge are permitted to lodge a formal objection. These formal objections are the only ones counted when determining the overall level of objection to the scheme.

Council is required to consider the level of objection before deciding whether to declare a Special Charge Scheme.

We understand that this proposal has generated significant discussion across Sunderland Bay and Surf Beach. Council appreciates the ongoing interest and engagement shown by the community throughout this process.