

CITY OF CLARENCE

Richmond Village Master Plan

Engagement Report

APRIL 2026





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Background

Guiding the future of Richmond Village

Richmond Village sits in the Coal River Valley and is known for its Georgian architecture, heritage sites, and rural character. Over recent decades, limited investment in the public realm has left some streets, paths and public spaces below contemporary standards.

City of Clarence commenced a project to develop a master plan for Richmond Village in 2023. The master plan provides a vision for the public areas of Richmond which will guide future works and upgrades, to ensure the village maintains its unique heritage and character and can better meet the needs of both local residents and businesses, and its annual visitors.

Master plan objectives

The project seeks to develop a master plan that celebrates Richmond's heritage, character and identity and provides inclusive, high quality, unique and welcoming streetscapes and public spaces for all residents and visitors. Its objectives are to:

- celebrate, protect and draw inspiration from Richmond's unique heritage, character, and identity
- sensitively upgrade Richmond Village to be more welcoming, inclusive and accessible for all residents and visitors
- enhance the visitor experience with spaces, places and infrastructure designed to encourage people to wander, explore, discover, play, learn and enjoy
- provide better walkability and wayfinding for improved accessibility and inclusiveness

- support local events, celebrations, tour groups and markets
- address parking and vehicle movements including coaches, tour buses, caravans, campers and RVs to decentralise and as a secondary issue to the public realm.

The draft master plan provides for safer walking and crossing, greener and shadier streets, and more consistent traffic management, while celebrating Richmond's heritage and supporting sustainable tourism.

It aims to integrate Richmond's historic character with today's access, safety and amenity needs so the village remains vibrant, welcoming and easy to get around.

In achieving these objectives, engagement made it very clear that the master plan needed to manage increased visitation, but not at the expense of improved functionality for residents and businesses.

Background

Context and purpose

The purpose of the community engagement was to present the draft Richmond Village Master Plan to the public and seek feedback on key elements such as proposed changes to streetscapes, traffic movement, paths and public spaces.

Engagement sought feedback on elements the community could influence, with technical and legislative matters flagged as out of scope.

The engagement followed initial community engagement undertaken in early 2023 which sought the community's views to inform the designs of the master plan and understand the needs and desires of the local community by hearing ideas to better Richmond.

Timing and engagement methods

Community engagement ran from **8 December 2023 to 11 March 2024**.

The engagement period and events were timed and organized to coincide with celebrations for the Richmond Bicentenary alongside Bicentenary over the 2023-24 summer period.

Engagement activities included:

- online community survey
- an open invitations to make written submissions
- 4 pop-up information sessions at community events in Richmond
- a walk-in information and feedback display, staffed by members of the Project Team, held at the Richmond Town Hall from 19-21 February 2024
- A facilitated workshop with local Richmond businesses.

Feedback sought

We asked residents, businesses and visitors what should guide upgrades to Richmond's public spaces.

We sought views on preserving heritage and village identity, improving traffic flow, speeds and parking on Bridge Street and around the Bridge, making walking safer and more accessible, adding trees, shade and quality open space, and improving wayfinding and support for local business and tourism. We also invited comments on priorities, trade-offs and staging.

What we did

How the community engagement was promoted



Articles in the Eastern Shore Sun and Clarence News, and an **advertisements** in the Eastern Shore Sun



Social media posts with a total reach of 6,034 people and an engagement of 175



Pop-up consultation stalls at the Richmond Village Markets and Richmond Village Fair.



Small business workshop for small businesses from Richmond and the Coal River Valley



In-person information and feedback display at Richmond Town Hall (19-21 February 2024), capturing both daytime and after work visitors.



Posters and postcards with a QR code link to the Your Say page, with posters included in letters/emails to key stakeholders for display on notice boards



168 unique visitors to the Richmond Village Master Plan **Your Say** webpage and **208 page views**

Ways people engaged and provided feedback



94

online survey responses



8

Formal written submissions



4

Pop-up stalls at Richmond Village Markets and Village Fair



1

Workshop with the local business community

Length of time survey was run

13 weeks (8 December 2023 to 11 March 2024)

2

Purpose and success measures

Community engagement objectives

Objective 1

Obtain detailed feedback on the draft master plan, both as a whole and on key elements and ideas



Objective 2

Identify any required design changes, missed opportunities or significant community concerns to be address in the final master plan



Objective 3

Build on the trust established during the first phase of engagement in 2023, through open and constructive engagement accessible to anyone wishing to provide feedback



Community engagement success measures

Measure 1

Feedback provided by a wider cross-section of the community including both locals and visitors and across a wide range of age groups (with a desire for more representation from young people and families).

See "Demographics (slide 8) for results



Measure 2

Engagement structure to provide Feedback that identifies clear direction on any changes to be made or issues to be addressed.



Measure 3

Engagement uses a variety of methods and provides various opportunities for in-person conversations with respondents aimed at informing their written and survey responses.



Data summary



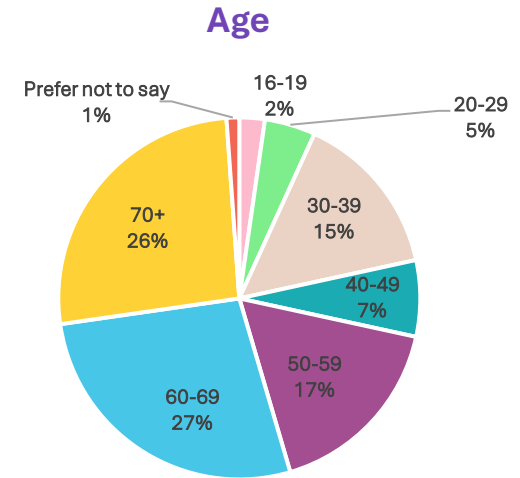
Demographics

Survey respondents

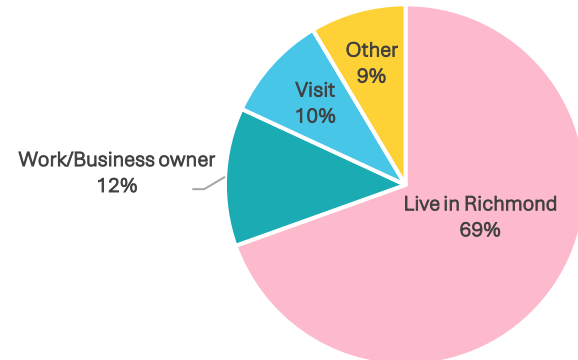
Of the 94 survey responses:

- 86 respondents lived, worked or owned businesses in Richmond
- 66 respondents were aged 50 or over, with the 60-69 years age group having the highest representation at 27%, closely followed by 70+ at 26%

This confirms that the engagement resonated strongly with the local community, with a clear passion for the future of Richmond shown by residents and business owners. However, the demographic profile was also weighted toward older age groups, particularly those aged 60 and above. While this provides valuable insight into the views of long-standing members of the community, it also means that the survey results may not fully reflect the perspectives of younger people or visitors to Richmond. This context should be kept in mind when interpreting the results.



Relationship to Richmond



Community response (all engagement methods)

Themes and Issues



Pedestrian safety and accessibility

A recurring theme in both the survey results and written submissions was the need for improved pedestrian safety and accessibility throughout Richmond.



Traffic management and parking

Traffic congestion and parking issues were widely discussed, with mixed reactions to the proposed changes in the master plan.



Heritage and Identity

Key concerns raised included preserving the historic charm and better representation of Aboriginal heritage.



Bridge street redesign

The master plan's proposal to narrow Bridge Street and reduce on-street parking in favour of wider footpaths and street greening generated mixed reactions.



Tourism and economic impact

Tourism is a vital part of Richmond's economy, but feedback from the community stressed the importance of managing its growth carefully.



Environment and sustainability

There was broad support for the master plan's focus on greening initiatives, with respondents valuing the proposed expansion of green spaces and the planting of shade trees.



Richmond Bridge proposal

The plan's proposal to reduce Richmond Bridge to a single lane received both support and criticism.



Public amenities and infrastructure

A consistent theme across all forms of feedback was the need for improved public amenities in Richmond.



Wayfinding and signage

The master plan's focus on improved wayfinding. Several respondents indicated there was insufficient detail about the design and placement of these signs.

Key findings



Key findings summary

Overall sentiment

The Richmond Village Master Plan community engagement demonstrated a high level of interest and engagement from the local community, reflecting a strong sense of attachment to Richmond and its unique character. Across all engagement methods, it was clear that people care deeply about how the village evolves and are cautious about changes that could affect its heritage, liveability, and everyday function.

Overall sentiment towards the master plan was mixed but constructive. While some proposals attracted strong opposition in the survey results, written feedback and submissions reveal that many concerns were focused on specific details rather than rejection of the overall vision.

Conditional support for vision

Many respondents supported the intent of the master plan, particularly where it sought to improve pedestrian safety, accessibility, public amenities, and the quality of streets and public spaces. There was recognition that investment is needed to manage visitor pressures, improve comfort, and support the village economy.

However, support was often conditional. Respondents consistently asked for reassurance that changes would be carefully designed, staged, and balanced against impacts on parking, traffic, and local businesses. Proposals affecting Bridge Street and the Richmond Bridge attracted the most scrutiny, highlighting the importance of clarity, context, and long-term planning.

Survey results vs written feedback

A clear distinction emerged between the quantitative survey results and the qualitative feedback provided through written responses and submissions. In several cases, particularly Bridge Street redesign and parking changes, survey graphs showed higher levels of disagreement. However, written responses frequently indicated support for the underlying principles, with disagreement reflecting concerns about loss of parking, access for businesses, construction staging, or lack of detail.

Written submissions, particularly from local residents and professional bodies, tended to be more detailed and critical, focusing on heritage protection, traffic impacts, and governance of change. In contrast, broader survey responses often expressed cautious support, provided concerns could be addressed through detailed design and implementation.

Key findings summary (cont'd)

Recurring themes and concerns

Across all engagement channels, several consistent themes emerged:

- strong emphasis on protecting Richmond's heritage character and identity
- concern about parking availability and traffic impacts, especially on Bridge Street
- support for improved pedestrian safety, accessibility, and public amenities
- desire for tourism to be managed in a way that benefits locals as well as visitors
- caution about environmental impacts, planting choices, and over-formalisation of public spaces

These concerns were typically framed as requests for careful design and balance, rather than opposition to improvement.

Implications for the master plan

The results of community engagement indicate that the master plan's overall direction remains sound, but that clearer explanation, refinement of language, and emphasis on staged implementation are critical to building confidence.

Many of the issues raised are best addressed during detailed design, traffic assessment, and further targeted consultation, rather than through changes to the high-level vision.

Key findings at a glance



- Strong local interest and passion for Richmond's future
- Broad support for improved safety, accessibility and amenities
- Heritage protection is a dominant community priority
- Bridge Street and parking changes were the most debated issues
- Survey disagreement often reflected concern about detail, not rejection of intent
- Community support is strongest when change is careful, staged and well-explained

Conclusion

Community engagement on the draft Richmond Village Master Plan attracted strong interest and engagement from the local community, reflecting a deep attachment to Richmond's character, heritage and liveability.

Feedback was thoughtful, and, in many cases, strongly expressed, particularly where proposals were perceived to affect everyday function, parking, traffic and heritage values.

Overall, the engagement confirmed broad support for the intent of the master plan, especially improvements to pedestrian safety, public amenities, streetscapes and the management of visitor pressures. Where concerns were raised, they were often focused on the detail, clarity and potential impacts of specific proposals rather than opposition to change in principle.

Community feedback has informed refinements to the master plan, including clearer explanation of intent, improved structure and readability, and the removal or refinement of proposals that generated strong concern.

The final master plan will provide a clearer, more balanced framework to guide future investment and decision-making, with detailed design and further engagement to occur as individual projects are developed.

