



# Port Welshpool Harbour Local Port Area Plan

Community Engagement Summary Report  
January 2025



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## Introduction

Port Welshpool Harbour, managed by Gippsland Ports, is a key maritime and boating hub in South Gippsland.

The Harbour offers essential facilities and services for both commercial and recreational boating activities in the region and has a key role in:

- King Island and Flinders Island import and export trade – particularly livestock, construction materials and machinery
- Refuelling of around 250 vessels a year
- Berthing for around 30 primarily commercial vessels, and
- Vessel access, refuge, maintenance and repair.

Some port assets are nearing the end of their life, and access restrictions are in place.

Due to changing local conditions, user needs, and ageing assets at the harbour, a draft Port Welshpool Harbour Local Port Area Plan (Plan) has been prepared.

Gippsland Ports is considering options to make the harbour safer and more accessible for commercial and recreational vessels.

From 7 August to 4 September 2024, the draft Plan was shared with stakeholders and the community for feedback, helping to refine the final Plan.

## About this report

A local port area plan involves planning and prioritising future projects in a maritime precinct. It engages with local communities and stakeholders, helping to understand their current use of local ports and future needs.

This report summarises the findings from the 2024 community consultation on the draft Plan, as prepared by Gippsland Ports and the Department of Transport and Planning.

All feedback collected during consultation has been considered and given equal consideration - no weighting or adjustments were made. The findings reflect the views of survey respondents. They have not been edited for accuracy, so they may not reflect the views of Gippsland Ports or the Department of Transport and Planning.

The successful implementation of any actions in the local port area plan will depend on securing future funding, planning and necessary approvals.

## Reading this report – limitations

People who responded to the survey self-selected to participate, so the feedback may not fully represent the community's views. Some people submitted their feedback without demographic information, meaning we do not have demographic details for all respondents.

The graphs and figures included in this report are based only on responses to the quantitative survey questions.

## Consultation approach

The consultation strategy prepared by Gippsland Ports and the Department of Transport and Planning outlines the purpose and ways people could share their views on the draft Plan.

The primary purpose of this stage was to collect feedback from local users and the broader Port Welshpool Harbour community to confirm that the draft Plan reflects their needs.

The public consultation ran from 7 August to 4 September 2024.

## Objectives

The Plan considers strategic and local planning priorities and has been informed by a comprehensive review of harbour facilities, including asset condition, utilisation, environmental and risk considerations, and stakeholder conversations and feedback.

The draft Plan considers:

- Impacts of climate change and coastal hazards
- the condition, longevity and maintenance of harbour assets
- Coastal processes and sedimentation
- Maritime safety and compliance with relevant standards
- Future usage for the Roll-on Roll-off Berth, Marginal Wharf, Ferry Terminal, Fishermans Jetties and the Slipway
- Demand for port services, and supply of berths and moorings, and
- Operational risk.

We wanted to hear from local users and the broader Port Welshpool Harbour community to confirm that the draft Plan reflects their needs.

## Ways to participate

Participation in the community engagement was undertaken via the Engage Victoria platform, which allowed members of the public to complete an online survey.

People could send further feedback to [feedback@gippslandports.vic.gov.au](mailto:feedback@gippslandports.vic.gov.au).

## Participation

A total of 689 individuals viewed the Engage Victoria project page, and 60 of them provided feedback on the draft Plan through an online survey.

Altogether, 63 people shared feedback in the following ways:

- 60 completed online surveys on Engage Victoria.
- Three parties submitted feedback via an email to [feedback@gippslandports.vic.gov.au](mailto:feedback@gippslandports.vic.gov.au)

## Demographics insights

Most survey respondents were members of the public who used Port Welshpool Harbour for recreational activities. Seven commercial uses also responded.

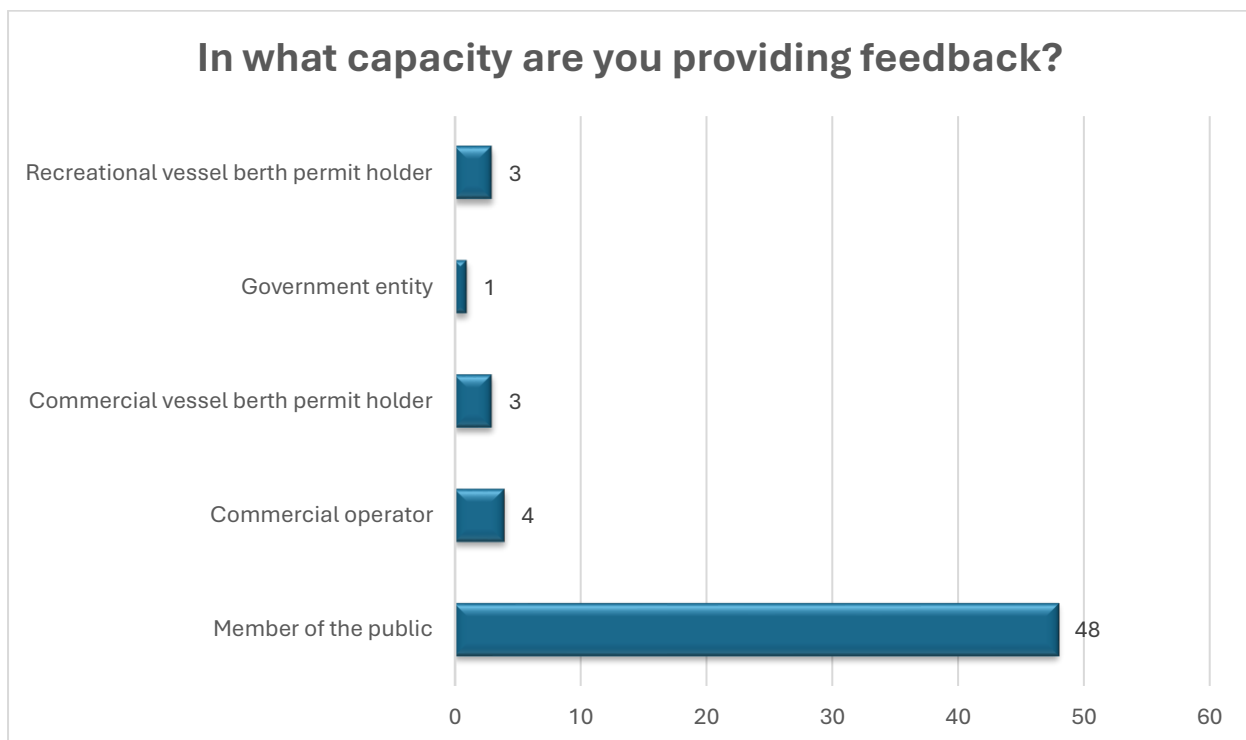


Figure 1: In what capacity are you providing feedback for this survey? (59 responses)

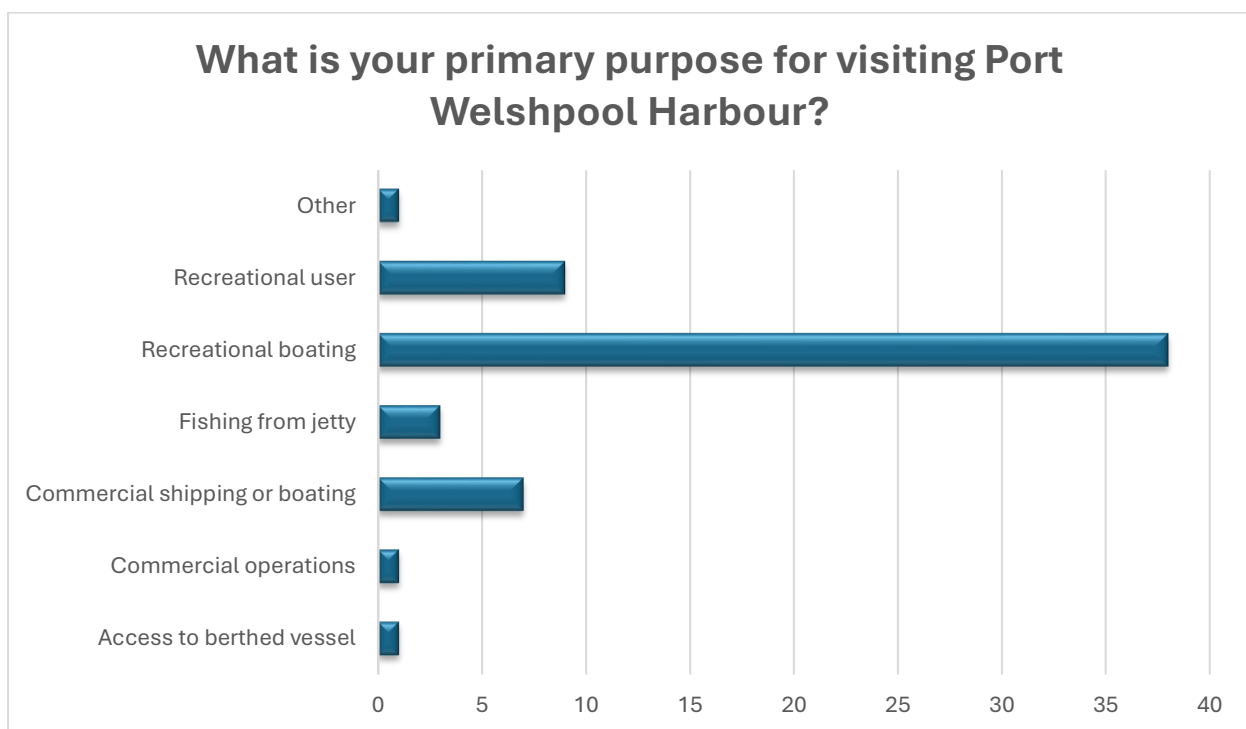


Figure 2: What is your primary purpose for visiting Port Welshpool Harbour? (60 responses)

Most survey respondents were from the local area, including the West and South Gippsland catchment areas.

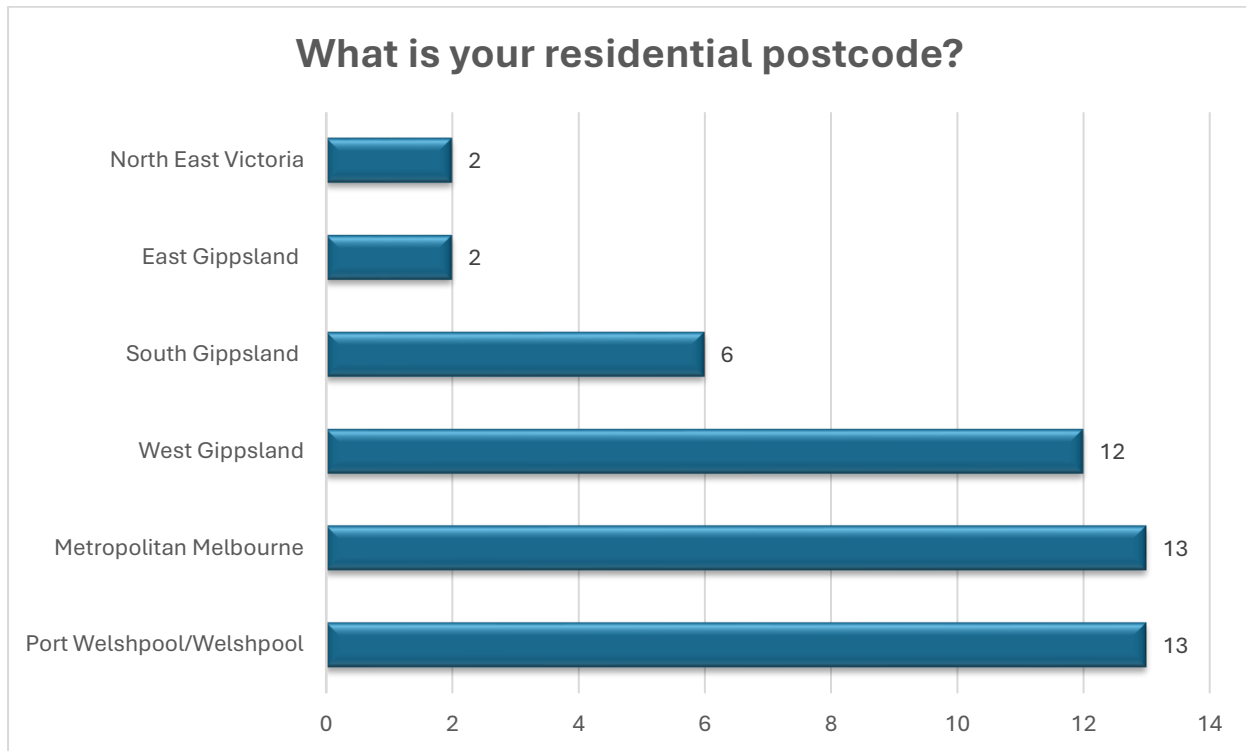


Figure 3: What is your residential postcode? (48 responses)

Many survey respondents visit Port Welshpool Harbour at least monthly and usually spend an hour or more there.

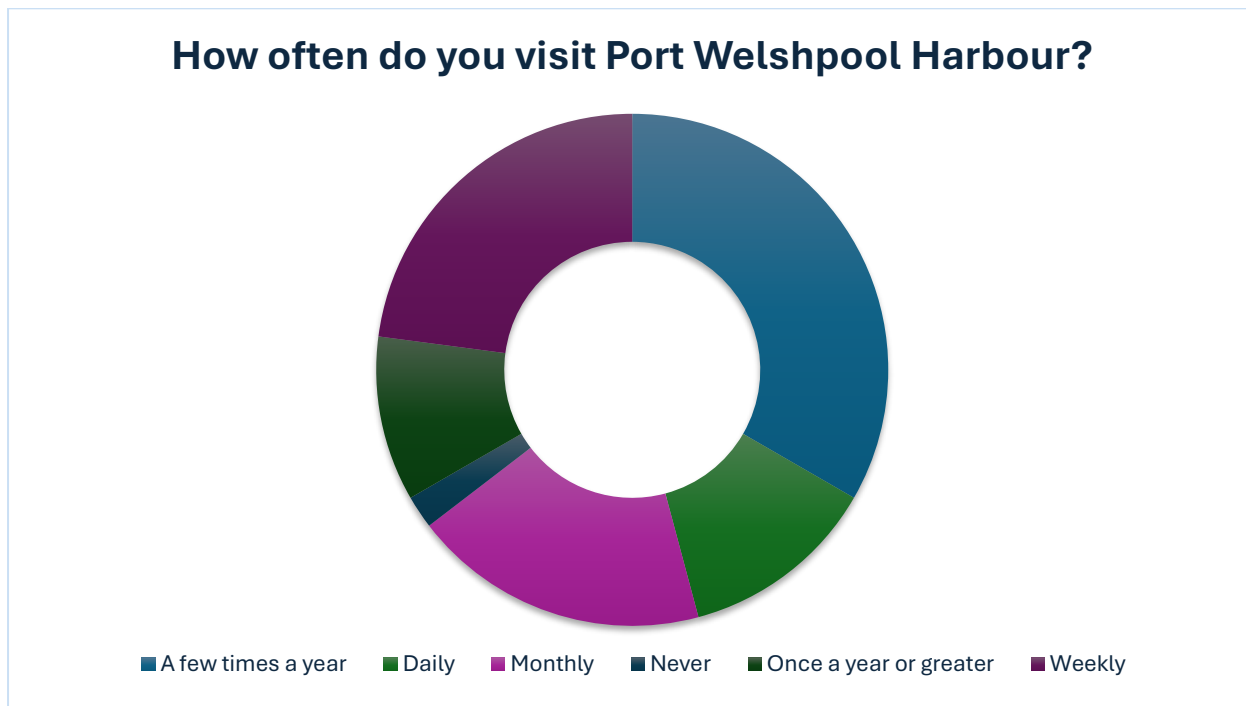
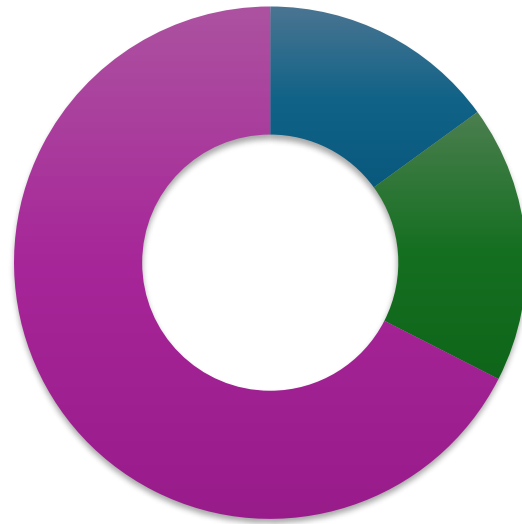


Figure 4: How often do you currently visit Port Welshpool Harbour? (48 responses)

### How long do you spend at Port Welshpool Harbour each time you visit?



■ 15 - 45 minutes ■ About 1 hour ■ More than 1 hour

Figure 5: On average, how long do you spend at Port Welshpool Harbour each time you visit? (40 responses)

## Summary of findings

### Feedback on the Port Welshpool Harbour Local Port Area Plan

Most survey respondents believed the Plan will be an improvement.

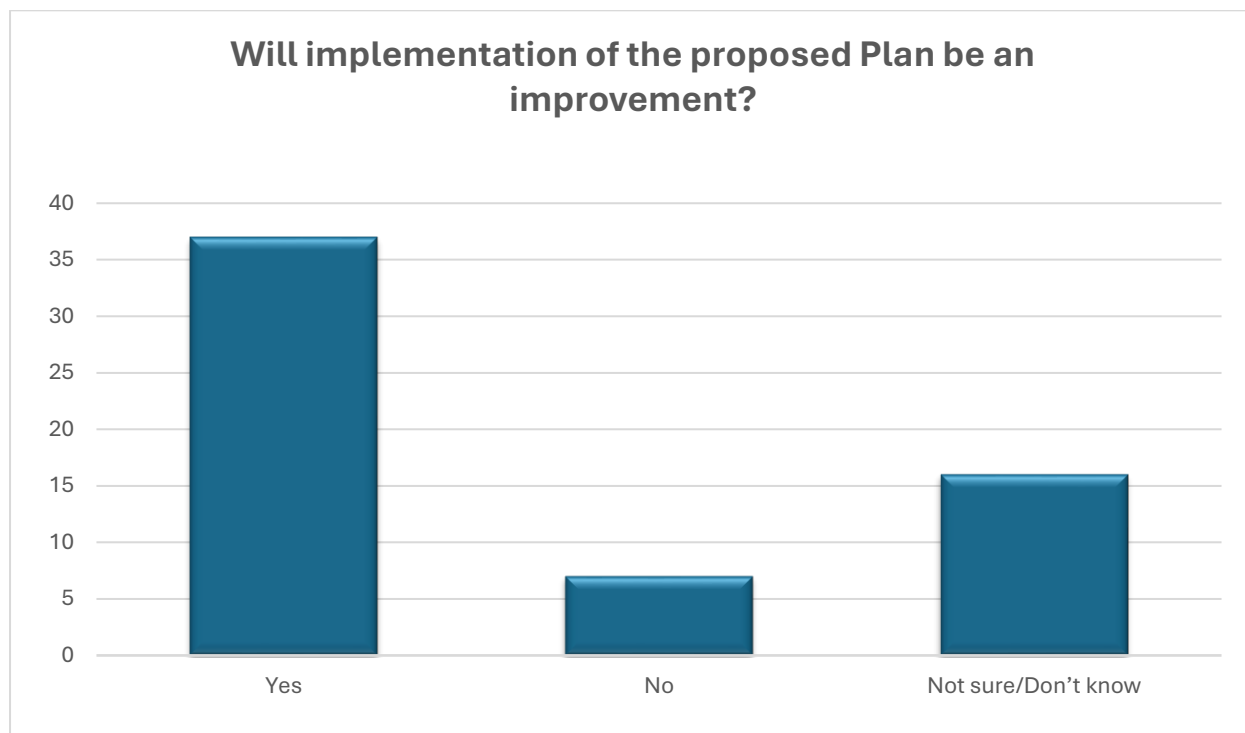


Figure 6: Will the implementation of the proposed Plan be an improvement? (60 responses)

Below is a selection of what people said about how the implementation of the Plan will be an improvement:

- *“Allowance to increase the diesel fuel storage and possible addition of petrol should the marina idea come to fruition”*
- *“Hoping for more commercial berths and better loading/ unloading facilities. Upgrading marginal berth for craneage”*
- *“The facility is aging, the population will grow a lot when the offshore wind farm start construction and improved facilities will be needed and appreciated for the growing community to establish themselves”*
- *“Any improvement to facilities at Port Welshpool is a step forward in stopping de congestion”*
- *“We need more berthing for launching a retrieval of trailer boats in peak periods”*

Below is a selection of what people said about how the implementation of the Plan won't be an improvement:

- *“Still limited access at water level for larger boats 9m and above. This would still prove difficult to board and disembark. Is there any provisions for improved fuelling access?”*



- *“The plan does not address the needs of people using kayaks, and other unpowered craft, however, the facilities impacts on these users by reducing access points to the nearby beach and introducing heavy vehicles in areas used for launching small craft.”*

## Public safety outcomes from the Port Welshpool Harbour Local Port Area Plan

Many people were unsure if the plan would improve public safety, but others thought it would.

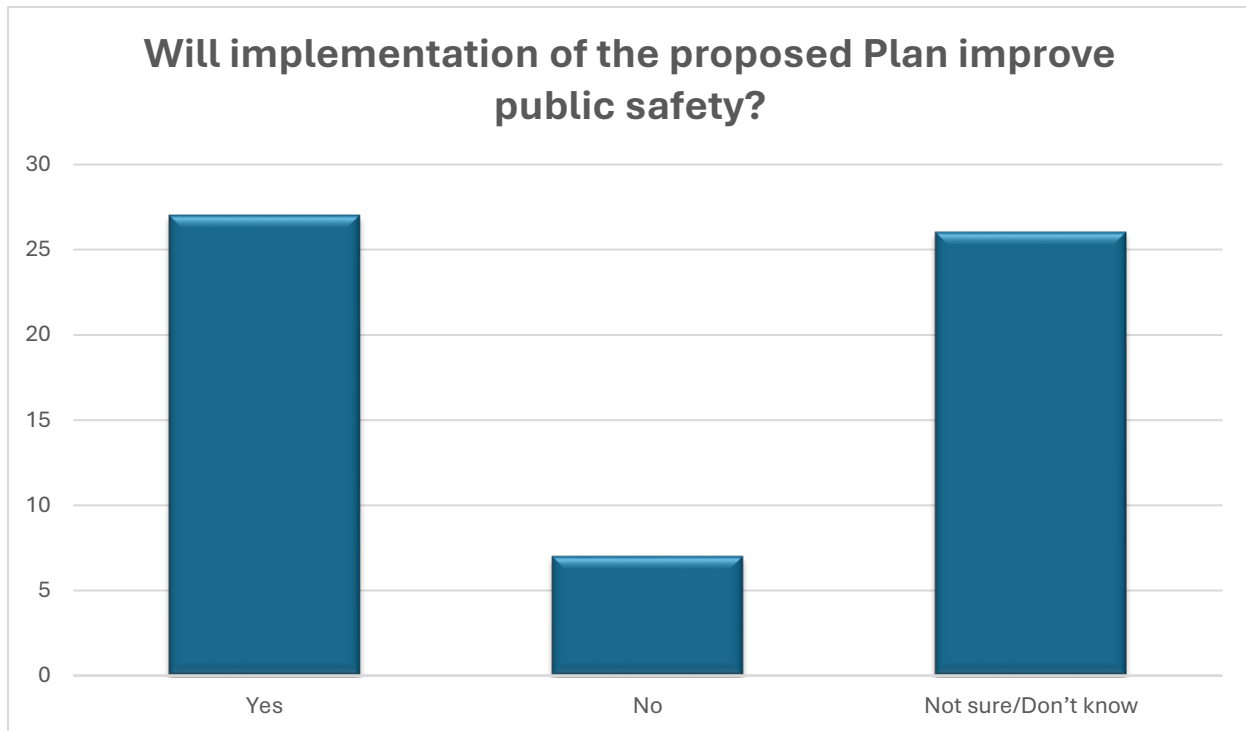


Figure 7: Will implementation of the proposed Plan improve public safety? (60 responses)

Below is a selection of what people said about the Plan’s impact on public safety:

- *“It will endeavour to separate commercial users as well as provide safer access to berthed vessels”*
- *“Improving infrastructure around the RoRo will allow for safer vehicle movement as will improving the Marginal Wharf unloading / fuelling area”*
- *“The plan does not address the needs of people using kayaks, and other unpowered craft, however, the facilities impacts on these users by reducing access points to the nearby beach and introducing heavy vehicles in areas used for launching small craft”*

## Business/operational outcomes from the Port Welshpool Harbour Local Port Area Plan

A small number of survey respondents addressed this question. Most believe the Plan will improve their business and/or operational effectiveness.

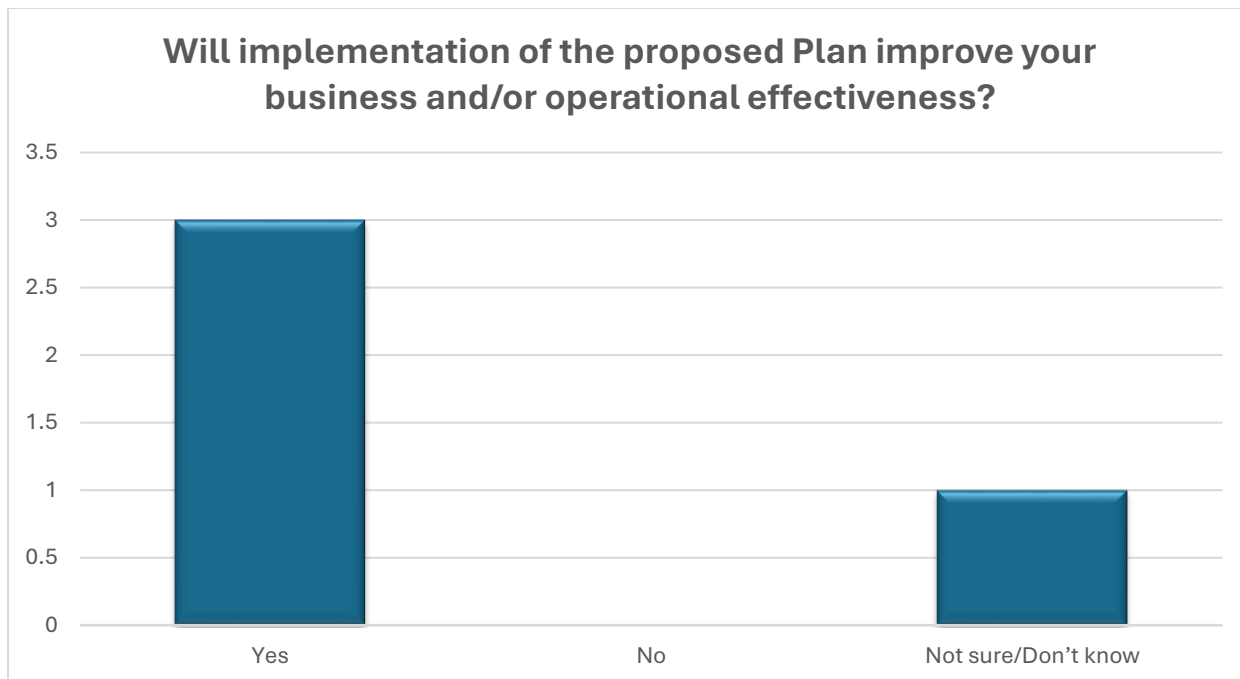


Figure 8: Will implementing the proposed Plan improve your business and/or operational effectiveness? (4 responses)

Below is a selection of what people said about whether the Plan will improve their business and/or operational effectiveness:

- *“As before having increased storage will alleviate shortages and provide a better service to the fishing fleet”*
- *“A kayak launching ramp will greatly assist patrons and recovery of kayaks. A wash down facility will improve bio-security”*

### Other feedback

Below is a selection of other comments provided by survey respondents on the draft Plan:

- *“Limiting the interaction between RO/RO and boaters is necessary. It can get quite busy at times, although operators seem to work together without too much angst”*
- *“I’m going to contest any proposed dredging in Lewis Channel. The old ferry terminal needs to be leased to a food and beverage operator as a restaurant”*
- *“A kayak launching ramp and washdown facility will add to eco-tourism opportunities as well as increase human-powered recreational pursuits”*

- *“The needs of commercial and recreational boaters and how they interact with each other are being carefully considered”*
- *“As a recreational fisherman and boat operator, the main requirement for trailer boats is increased temporary berthing whilst launching and retrieving”*
- *“If the plan adds longevity and stability to local employment without adverse effects to the port's surrounding environment, it is a win-win scenario”*

## Next steps

Gippsland Ports has considered all feedback received from the engagement processes, necessary to inform the final Port Welshpool Harbour Local Port Area Plan. The plan’s implementation will progress through Gippsland Port’s port and asset management processes.

The final plan will be shared on the Engage Victoria website and with agencies that have been party to the plan development, including, South Gippsland Shire, the adjacent Crown land manager responsible for the boat ramp, car park and foreshore facilities.

Gippsland Ports thanks all who have contributed feedback to the plan.