

Eastern Busway Tī Rākau Drive to Botany

Summary of consultation held from
August to September 2023

November 2023



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1. Executive summary

This report provides an overview of the consultation undertaken by the Eastern Busway Alliance (the alliance) from August to September 2023 on the section of the Eastern Busway route from Tī Rākau Drive to Botany, referred to as Eastern Busway Stage 4 (EB4).

The alliance has consulted on its transport infrastructure proposals for Tī Rākau Drive to Botany, before lodging a resource consent application for this section of the busway route. The purpose of the consultation was to inform and engage the community on the design of this section of the EB4 route and to gather feedback, which could be considered in the resource consent application and the project's detailed design.

Prior to the start of consultation, briefing sessions on the EB4 proposals from Tī Rākau Drive to Botany took place with mana whenua, local stakeholders including elected representatives, local businesses, government bodies and residents' associations. The sessions provided details about the proposals and informed people of the upcoming consultation.

Consultation which sought the local community's views was undertaken from Thursday 10 August to Sunday 10 September 2023. The alliance held two community pop-in sessions, and content was hosted on the Eastern Busway project website, including information about the proposals, a detailed map and an online feedback form.

The pop-in sessions were attended by 36 people and the online survey received 82 responses. The main feedback themes were:

- support for the proposals based on the need to improve public transport options and reduce congestion
- requests that the proposals maintain and enhance green space at Whaka Maumahara and Guys Reserve, including celebration of the area's Māori heritage and culture
- queries regarding the Kāinga Ora development that is being constructed on Guys Road and Cottesmore Road
- suggestions to provide planting and avoid plant species that could overgrow and hinder visibility on the future cycleway
- concerns about day and night-time safety of users of the future walkway and cycleway
- opposition to the proposal and a sentiment that it is not cost-effective or a good use of taxpayer money
- concerns about possible antisocial behaviour and the security of properties located next to a walkway and cycleway
- queries regarding construction impacts including noise, traffic and vibration and environmental effects
- requests for safe walkways and cycleways that are wide with clear lines of sight and separated from bus and vehicle traffic
- recommendations for a future Botany bus station to be within, or as close as possible to, Botany Town Centre.

2. Introduction

2.1 About this report

This report outlines the purpose and methods of engagement and consultation used to share information and generate feedback on proposals between Tī Rākau Drive and Botany, and summarises the comments received.

The consultation and engagement approaches outlined in this report were aligned with best practice guidance including the International Association of Public Participation guidelines and Auckland Council's Significance and Engagement Policy - Kaupapa Here Whaitake, Whakatāuteute¹.

2.2 Overview of proposals from Tī Rākau Drive to Botany

The alliance sought views on the section of the proposed Eastern Busway route between Tī Rākau Drive and Botany, via Guys Reserve and Whaka Maumahara and presented two routes as outlined below.

- The Eastern Busway Stage 4 Link route (EB4L): the preferred, proposed design that will be built when funding is approved.
- The Eastern Busway Stage 4 Interim bus route (EB4I): an interim route that will be in place by 2027 and will be in use until the link route is funded and built.

A detailed map of EB4I and EB4L is included in Appendix 1.

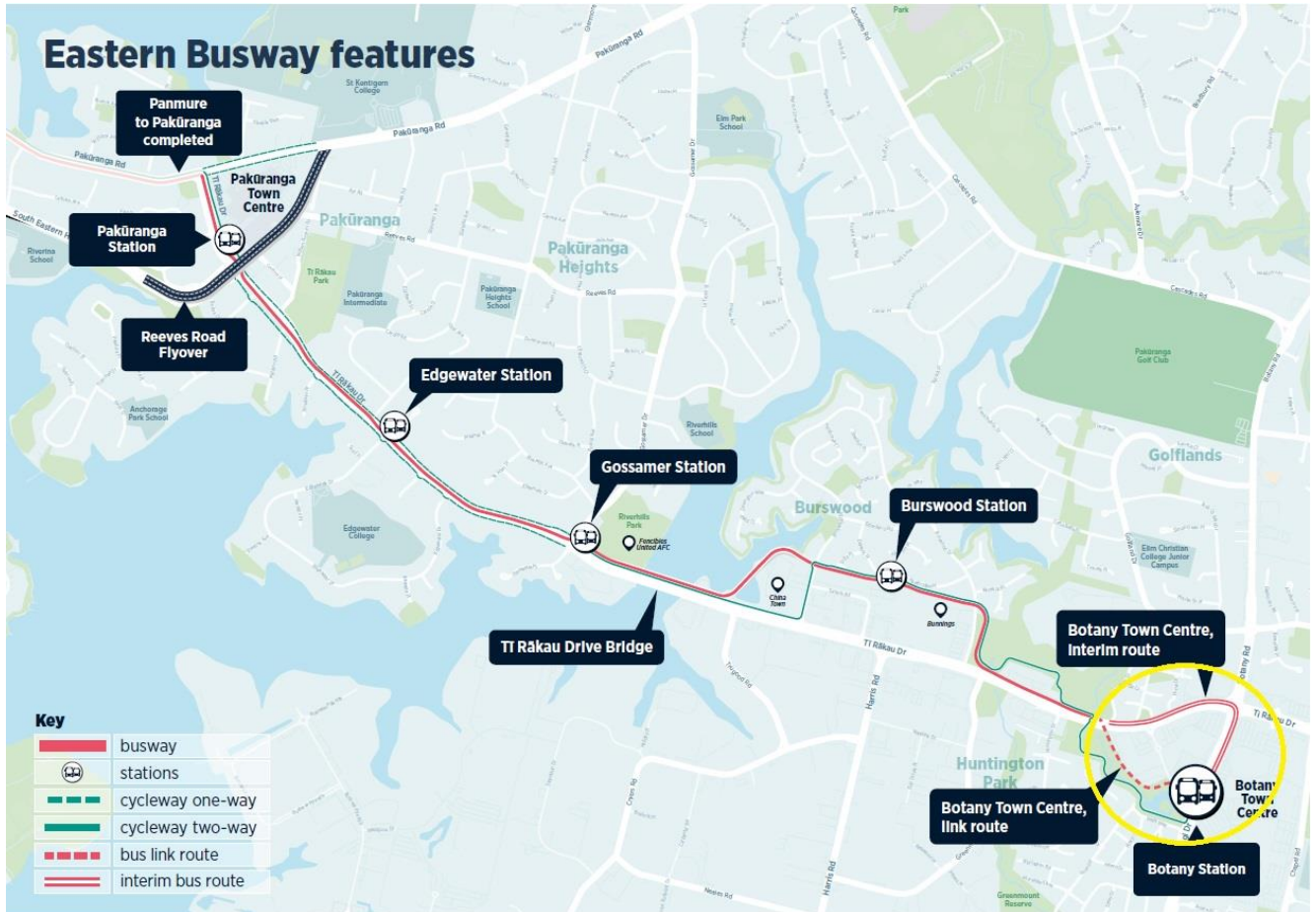
2.3 Project overview

The Eastern Busway is a significant project for Auckland and forms part of the region's rapid transport network. When it's completed, the busway and Reeves Road Flyover will make local trips easier and more efficient by providing better connections and sustainable travel options for walkers, cyclists, motorists, bus and train customers. It will also create a reliable bus and train service between Botany and Waitemata Station (Britomart) and will establish more reliable journey times.

More than a transport project, the Eastern Busway will increase access to jobs and education, lead to more social and community opportunities, attract investment and growth, enable urban development, and help reduce emissions.

Below shows the project overview with the proposed Tī Rakāu Drive to Botany section circled.

¹ <https://www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/plans-projects-policies-reports-bylaws/our-policies/Pages/significance-engagement-policy.aspx>



2.3.1 Project benefits

The key benefits the project will deliver include:

- Better connections and sustainable travel options for pedestrians, cyclists, motorists, bus and train customers
- More reliable journey times
- Local trips easier and more efficient
- 12km of safe and separated walking and cycling routes
- 5km of busway between Pakūranga and Botany fully separated from other traffic
- 5 new bus stations with quality facilities
- Reeves Road Flyover connecting Pakūranga Road to the South Eastern Highway, and reducing vehicle congestion around Pakūranga Town Centre
- By 2028 the busway will carry 18,000 passengers per day, more than four times the 3,700 bus passengers per day before Covid-19. By 2048 it is expected to increase to 24,000 passengers per day.

2.3.2 Project timeline

The project's milestones are in the table below.

Stage	Date
EB1	
Construction of busway from Panmure to Pakūranga	Complete
EB2, EB3R, EB3C, EB4i	
Construction of Reeves Road Flyover	2024 onwards
Construction from Pakūranga Town Centre, along Tī Rākau Drive, through Burswood to the northern end of Te Koha Road	
Eastern Busway construction complete	Estimated 2027

3. Consultation

3.1 Purpose of consultation

The purpose of the consultation was to enable the community to gain an in-depth understanding of the design, consenting process and next steps for proposals between Tī Rākau Drive and Botany, and to share their views.

3.2 Approach to the consultation

- Information was hosted on the project website at easternbusway.nz/your-views/stage4 which received 941 views during the consultation period
- Consultation materials included a map with detailed information of the proposals, and a link to an online survey
- The online survey asked respondents to provide feedback on the following topics:
 - Their locality and reason for their interest in the Eastern Busway
 - Levels of support for EB4L proposals and the rationale for this
 - Any particular needs or ideas which should be considered during design and construction
- Two pop-in sessions were held for the community to talk directly to the project team, share their views and complete a paper copy of the survey.

3.3 Publicising the consultation

The consultation was publicised in the following ways:

3.3.1 Email

- Thursday 10 August: emails explaining the proposals and encouraging participating in the consultation were sent to the following stakeholders:
 - Mana whenua partners
 - Elected representatives in the Howick Ward
 - Huntington Park Residents and Ratepayers Association, local businesses, community groups, emergency services, AT Metro and biking, education and accessibility groups
- Tuesday 15 August: Auckland Transport sent an email to its database of 188 stakeholders signed up for communications updates, which encouraged them to 'have their say' on the consultation. The distribution lists made up of media, major stakeholders and elected members.

3.3.2 Letter

- Monday 14 August: Letters explaining the proposals and inviting residents to provide feedback and attend consultation pop-in sessions were delivered to 650 properties within Huntington Park.

3.3.3 Advertising

- Wednesday 16 August: An advert publicising the consultation was placed in The Times (the suburban newspaper for the Howick and Pakūranga areas)
- Thursday 17 August: the same advert, written in Simplified Chinese, was placed in the Chinese Herald

- Monday 21 August to 10 September: Auckland Transport shared a Facebook and Instagram advert which was targeted at communities closest to Botany and it ran during this period and received 58,460 impressions.

3.3.4 Social media

- Auckland Council listed the consultation pop-in sessions on its Facebook events page, and these were visible from the consultation start date on Monday 10 August 2023 to the end of the final event on Saturday 26 August 2023.

3.3.5 Busway update

- Details of the consultation and were shared in the August Eastern Busway update² which was sent to 10,385 email addresses and opened by 6,347 people.

3.4 Pop-in sessions

- Two pop-in sessions were held at St Columba Presbyterian Church, Botany Downs, Auckland on:
 - Wednesday 23 August 2023, 3pm – 7pm
 - Saturday 26 August 2023, 10am – 1pm

² A monthly Eastern Busway project specific update that is emailed to over 12,000 readers, including mana whenua, elected representatives, business, stakeholders, and community members.

4. Verbatim feedback from pop-in sessions

4.1.1 Construction

- There was support for the planned upgrades to Town Centre Drive as part of EB4I proposals, with some people noting that the current road is in poor condition.
- Some community members were interested in the project timeline and wanted to know when construction of EB4I and EB4L was likely to take place.

4.1.2 Consultation materials and engagement

- Some people said that the map showing the Tī Rākau Drive to Botany proposals gave the impression that a future Botany bus station would be located at the current Z Botany Downs site, despite the location being undecided.
- Members of the community commented on the map of Burswood and said that the coastal bridge and road that loops behind Chinatown is shadowed, which could be misconstrued as a flyover.
- Overall, people were supportive of the opportunity to have their say on the proposals before consent had been lodged and before detailed design had been progressed for EB4L.

4.1.3 Design

- There were questions about the location of a future Botany Bus Station, with some people asking if it would be in Botany Town Centre.
- Some people asked why the EB4L proposals separated the busway from the walkway and cycleway. Responses were often supportive once it was understood that the decision was based on reducing land take while maintaining a safe and pleasant connection for walkers and cyclists.

4.1.4 Environment and culture

- Some community members commented on the environmental impact of building a busway and cycling path through green space of Guys Reserve and Whaka Maumahara.
- Other community members discussed the need to preserve and enhance as much of the green, open space as possible while celebrating the area's Māori heritage and local culture.

4.1.5 Safety

- Some people expressed concern that the walkway and cycleway shown in the EB4L proposals could promote criminal activity and antisocial behaviour by attracting people into the residential area and others said they felt people on motorbikes would use the walkway and cycleway illegally.

4.1.6 Urban development

- Members of the Huntington Park community expressed dissatisfaction at the Kāinga Ora development which is under construction on Guys Road and Cottesmore Road. This stemmed from not feeling engaged in the decision-making and consenting process, concern regarding construction noise, parking and traffic, and a belief that more development could lead to busier roads making it harder to park and a rise in antisocial behaviour.

5. Survey feedback

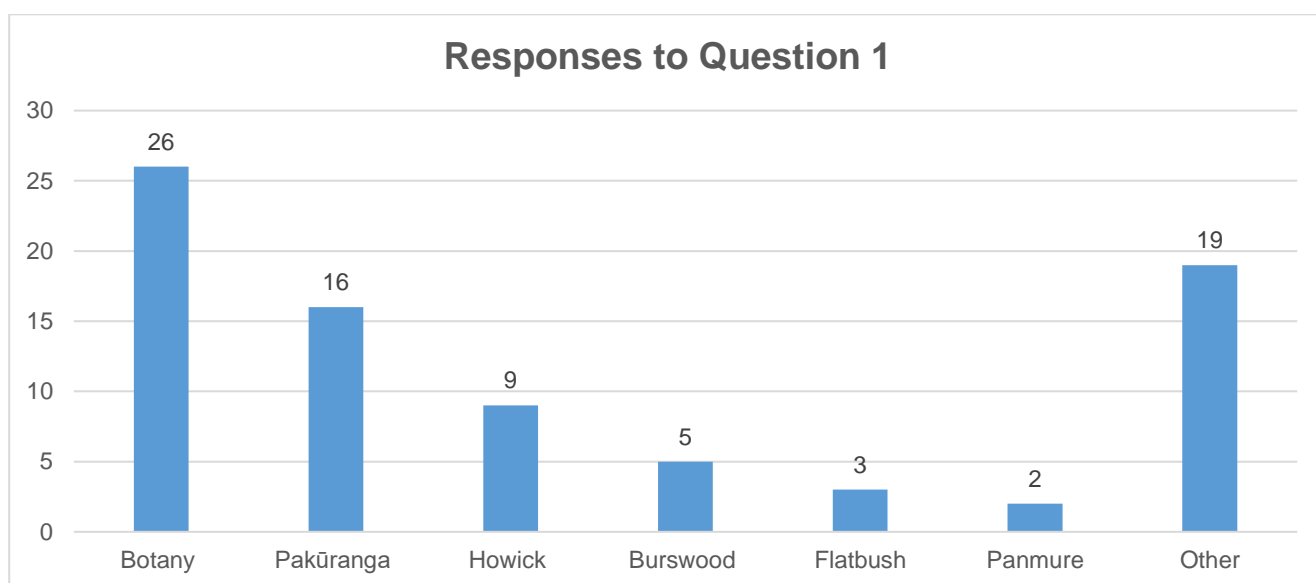
The survey included seven questions which asked about the community's proximity to the project, level of support for the proposals and any issues, concerns or ideas. The survey questions and a summary of responses to each is outlined below.

In total, 82 people completed the survey of which 78 provided their feedback online and four responded using a paper copy of the survey during the pop-in sessions.

A summary of all survey feedback is provided in sections 5.1 to 5.7 of this document.

5.1 Question 1: Please tell us which community you live in

80 people responded to this question and their responses are shown in the table below.

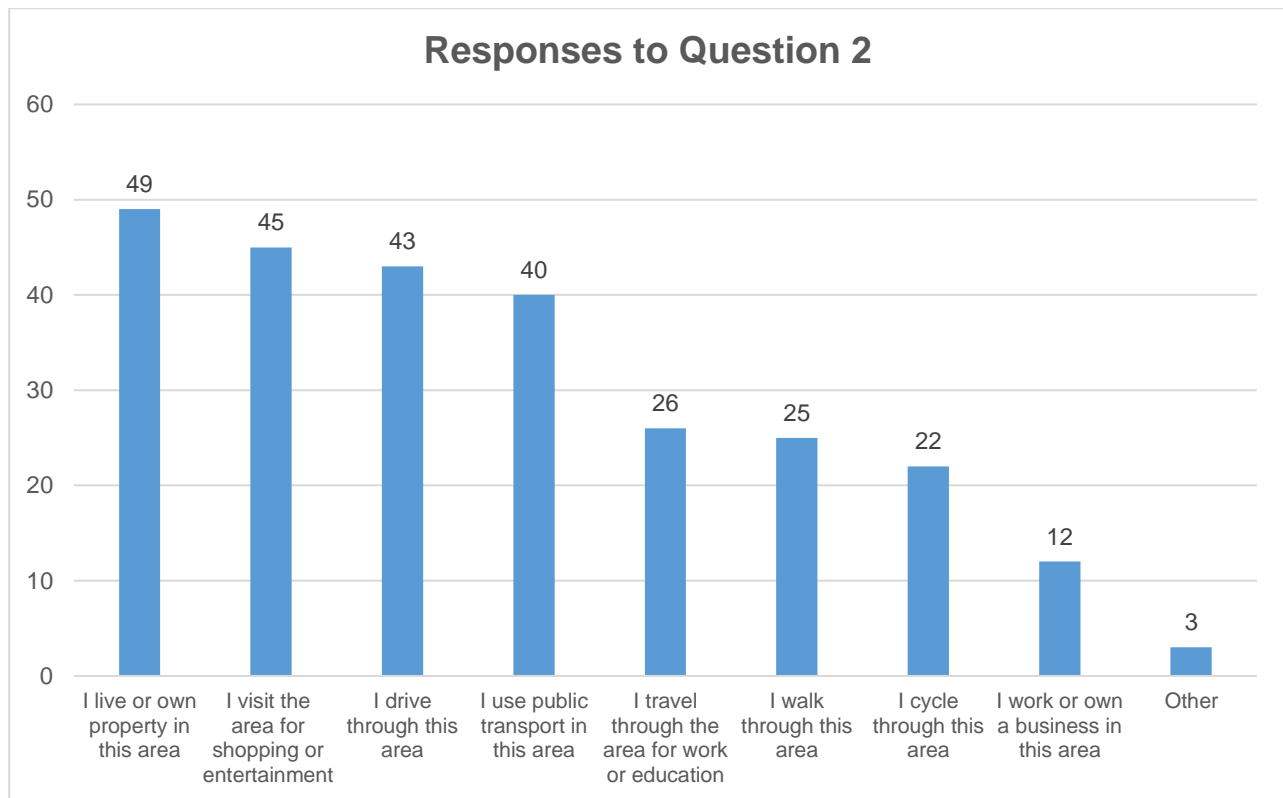


The 19 people who selected 'other' listed the following locations:

- Four people said Central Auckland.
- Two people said Huntington Park.
- 13 people gave the responses: Avondale, Bucklands Beach, Glen Innes, Grey Lynn, Manurewa, Mount Albert, Mount Roskill, Newmarket, Onehunga, Orakei, Somerville and 'nearby'.

5.2 Question 2: Which options best describes your interest in the Eastern Busway?

Respondents were asked to select the options which they felt most applied to them. They were also given the opportunity to respond with 'other' if there was another reason that they had an interest in the Eastern Busway which was not covered in the multiple-choice options.

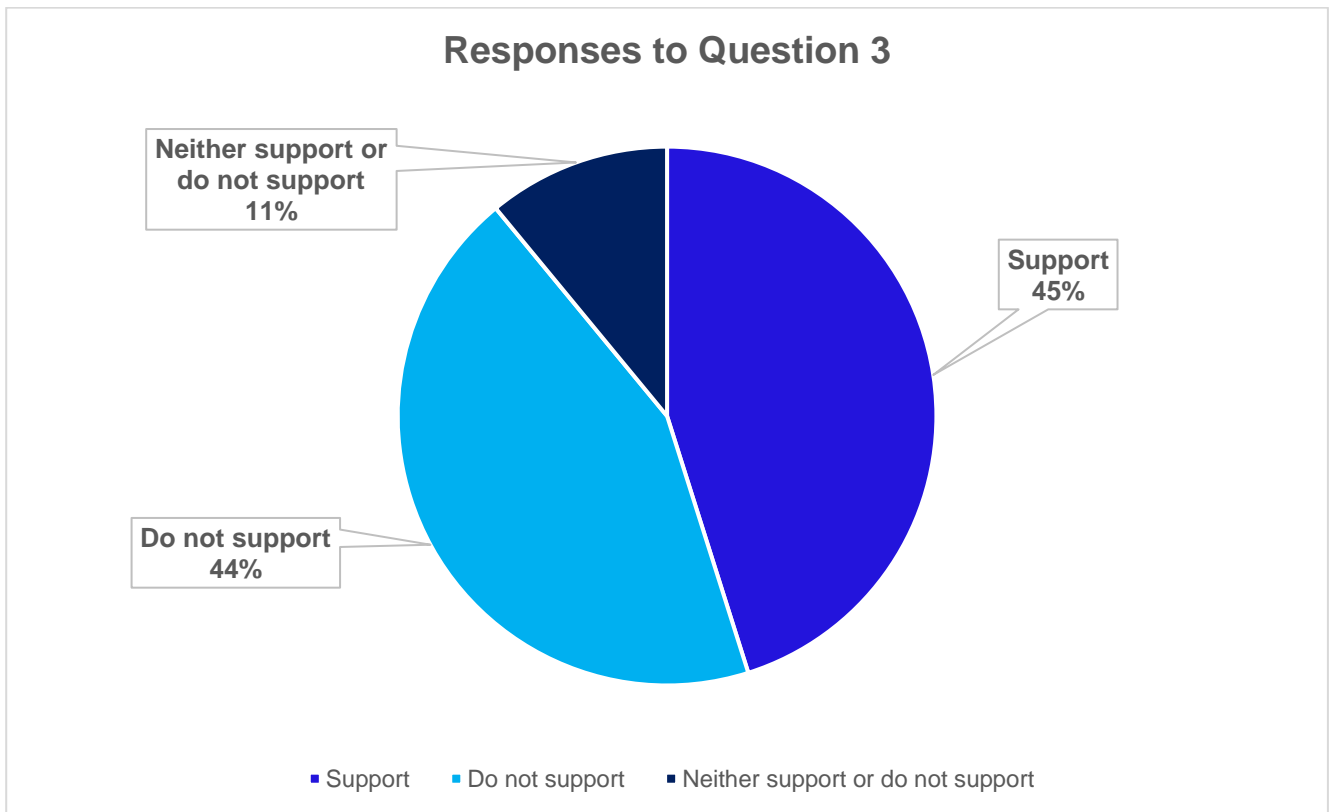


Of the respondents who selected 'other', one said they were a 'ratepayer', another said they 'visit family and friends in the area' and the other said they had a 'general interest in improving public transport and active modes'.

5.3 Question 3: Please tell us whether you support the EB4L proposal

All 82 respondents completed this question, and their responses are described below and shown in the chart.

- 37 people, 45%, said that they supported the EB4L proposal.
- 36 people, 44%, said they did not support the EB4L proposal.
- 9 people, 11%, selected 'neither support or do not support'.



5.4 Question 4: Please explain why you do or do not support the proposal.

5.4.1 Comments in support

45% of people said they supported the proposals. They were asked to explain why they were supportive, and a summary of the key themes and their comments is provided below.

- People said that the proposals would minimise congestion at Te Irirangi Road, Botany Town Centre and the Tī Rākau Drive intersection. Other people explained that the proposal would make it quicker to travel by bus, that they were pleased that buses would be separated from traffic in the future, and it would help to reduce the number of cars on the road. One person commented that it would make it quicker for them to reach Golflands.
- Some respondents said that the proposal would help to enhance the use of public transport within a multimodal transport network. Others commented that they supported the proposal and that better public transport was needed within the local area.
- Some comments said that the proposal was positive as they would promote walking and cycling locally, and that new and improved cycling infrastructure was good for the community.
- One person commented that the busway would reduce the likelihood of drink driving by ensuring that travelling by car is not the only option. Another person commented that the proposal would make it safer for cyclists.

5.4.2 Comments not in support

44% of people said they did not support the proposals. They were asked to explain why they were not supportive, and a summary of the key themes and their comments is provided below.

- Some people said that the proposal would have a negative impact on the green space at Guys Reserve and Whaka Maumahara and others said they would create an increase in noise and pollution, and disruption for residents of Huntington Park.
- Some people's comments related to walking and cycling with some saying that the existing walking route to the Hub will be affected and others saying that the proposed bus route should instead be a cycleway.
- Others felt that the busway should travel via Te Koha Road, or EB4I should be used as the permanent solution.
- Some respondents said they did not feel there was a need for a new busway and that the proposal was not cost-effective or a good use of taxpayer money.

5.4.3 Comments that chose neither support or do not support

11% of people selected the option 'neither support or do not support' the proposals.

5.5 Question 5: Is there anything you would like to see included in Guys Reserve, Whaka Maumahara and the surrounding area to help enhance it in the future?

Below is a summary of the ideas and suggestions people provided in response to this question.

5.5.1 Amenities and placemaking

- Local historical information including interactive sculptures and artwork and representation of the area's Māori history.
- Sheltered seating areas and tables.
- An area for wheeled sports such as BMX and cycling.
- A children's playground.
- CCTV monitoring.
- Drinking fountains and places for dogs to drink.
- Bins for dog litter.
- Public toilets.

5.5.2 Environment

- Avoidance of concrete or paving and protection of the green space.
- Addition of trees and plants, including adding trees along the along the cycle route to provide shade.
- Enhanced rainwater drainage to prevent flooding.
- Protection and enhancement of wildlife and birds.
- Planting and green areas to ensure the area can cope with stormwater runoff.
- Enhancement of habitats, food resources and breeding opportunities for native fauna.
- Preservation of Guys Reserve, Whaka Maumahara and the existing green space, leaving the busway on the existing car lanes.

5.5.3 Design and infrastructure

- Fencing around Guys Reserve and Whaka Maumahara.
- Lighting which is sensitive to the nearby residential properties.
- Ensuring that the future bus station is not close to residential properties to minimise visual and noise impacts.
- Better connections to the Greenmount Reserve path.
- Areas for parking or a Park and Ride.
- Assurance that the design of the busway is futureproofed for expansion i.e., to be upgraded to light rail or to connect with the Airport to Botany scheme.

5.5.4 Walking and cycling

- Placing the cycleway alongside the busway.
- Including improved cycling connections on surrounding streets.
- Including a path on around the stormwater pond.
- A pedestrian bridge that is accessible by stairs and elevators, for users with mobility issues, so people do not have to cross Te Irirangi Drive.
- Steps from Guys Road path to Botany Town Centre.
- Improved and wide walking and cycling tracks which feel safe and are not isolated, including ensuring that they are sufficiently lit at night.
- Good connections from the footpath and cycleway to the path at the southern edge of Botany Town Centre carpark.
- Barriers between walking and cycling paths.

5.6 Do you have any particular concerns, needs or circumstances we're to consider when building the busway and shared footpath and cycleway?

5.6.1 Amenities and placemaking

- One person said that the design of the proposals should consider elderly people and people with disabilities, this included a suggestion to leave the Whaka Maumahara lake area with as much community amenity as it has currently.

5.6.2 Environment

- Some people said that the proposal should consider retaining green space within Guys Reserve and Whaka Maumahara and it was noted that these areas are prone to flooding.
- Some respondents said to reconsider the proposal based on climate change and queried whether the stream that runs through Guys Reserve would be negatively impacted.

5.6.3 Design and infrastructure

- One person said that the proposal should include some form of access to The Hub from Guys Road.
- Some respondents said that the design should include improving the road in Botany Town Centre as it currently in a poor condition and that the busway should extend to Botany Town Centre. Some people suggested including a Park and Ride near Botany bus station.
- Some suggestions included reducing the number of traffic lights or adding in extra vehicle lanes to ease traffic.

5.6.4 Walking and cycling

- Some people were supportive of the walkway and cycleway but noted that pathways for cyclists, scooter-users and pedestrians should be separated to minimise the risk of accidents.
- One respondent requested the proposal include free, covered bike and scooter lockers at Botany bus station, as many people would access the busway using these modes of transport.
- People stated that the walkway and cycleway should be as wide as possible, with a clear line of sight and no blind corners. Others said that the cycleway should travel directly through Guys Reserve or be integrated alongside the busway.
- Some respondents requested there be no plantings on the inside of bends or flax or toi-toi plantings within two metres of the cycleways, as the plants heights could hinder cyclists' visibility.

5.6.5 Safety and security

- Some people requested the proposals include good lighting to ensure the safety of cycleways, pathways and properties. Others were concerned that the footpath could promote loitering and antisocial behaviour.
- Respondents said they were concerned about the proximity between the cycleway and properties in Guys Reserve, and whether this could present safety issues. They also questioned if there will be suitable lighting to prevent theft and loitering.
- Some expressed their dissatisfaction about the increase in localised development, including a Kāinga Ora site in Huntington Park, and raised concerns about a potential increase in antisocial behaviour.

- Some people were concerned that turning right out of Huntington Drive on to Tī Rakāu Drive would become difficult during peak hours. It was recommended that the proposals include a footbridge from Botany bus station to Botany Town Centre as this would keep the flow of pedestrians safe and uninterrupted.

5.6.6 Traffic management

- People commented that future traffic management would be key to the success of the busway, as the local road network is already busy.

5.6.7 General opposition

- Some people said that the proposal was not necessary, and another said the existing routes for walking and cycling did not need to be improved. One respondent said to keep buses on the main roads and not build through Guys Reserve, and some responses said to not spend taxpayer money on the proposals.

5.6.8 General support

- Many respondents were supportive of the busway proposals and requested it be completed before 2027.
- Other responses also queried why consent was only being sought now, when the busway proposals have been in the public domain for a considerable period and wished for the consenting process to be expediated.

5.7 Please let us know your ideas about the design or the construction of Stage 4 of the Eastern Busway.

5.7.1 Amenities and placemaking

- It was requested that dry and secure parking for bikes and scooters be available at stations.
- There were requests that the proposal incorporates a Park and Ride.
- Some respondents suggested that green space around bus stations should be utilised for parking.
- One person requested that ongoing consultation takes place with affected property owners to achieve the best outcome for the local area.
- Others felt that a bus station should be located within Botany Town Centre to make travelling by bus an attractive option to shoppers. Comments stated that this should include providing a pleasant, safe, and secure area for passengers with a waiting area, restrooms and easy access for drop off and pick up.

5.7.2 Environment

- Some respondents requested that the local landscape be softened with planting, but not flax which could become overgrown on the cycleway and hinder visibility. Others said that the preservation of the green space within Guys Reserve should be prioritised about the Eastern Busway proposal, and that they were concerned about a loss of vegetation and green space.
- One person said that electric buses should be prioritised to protect the environment and the health of their children. Some respondents were concerned about emissions and noise pollution from buses and how this could affect the environment.

5.7.3 Design and infrastructure

- Some respondents suggested alternative proposals, including the route travelling past the back of Botany Town Centre. Others suggested using Te Koha Road as an alternative route for the busway and creating dedicated bus priority lanes by utilising the existing corridor.
- One said culverts should be utilised to install walking and cycling underpasses and another person proposed building a highway extension from Pakūranga Highway to Botany.
- One person suggested the Botany bus station be built on Chapel Road and another person that it should not be built on Te Irirangi Drive as this would disrupt traffic. One person suggested building a bus station near Spalding Rise for the Gofflands community.

5.7.4 Walking and cycling

- People were supportive of the proposal but requested that a cycleway and walkway from Botany to Panmure be prioritised and built as soon as possible.
- One comment said it would be preferable for money be spent on building cycling infrastructure where it does not already currently exist in the local area, and another person requested that the project's cycleway be built behind The Hub, Botany.

5.7.5 Safety and security

- Some people said to prioritise pedestrian safety by ensuring walkways are separate from car and bus lanes, and one person requested to rephase the lights from Huntington Drive onto Tī Rakāu Drive to ensure a safe exit.

5.7.6 Traffic management

- Some respondents said that the local speed limit should be at least 70km/h rather than 50km/h and others said that a bus priority lane added to the interim route.

5.7.7 General opposition

- Some people commented they felt the proposal was a waste of money and another said it did not make sense to discuss the proposals for EB4L without confirmed funding.
- One person felt building an interim route was a waste of time and another said the proposal was unnecessary unless it would be futureproofed for light rail.

5.7.8 General support

- Some people were overall happy with the option presented to them at consultation, but the main issue would be managing traffic along Tī Rakāu Drive whilst construction is happening.
- Others also expressed their support for the project and requested it be built as soon as possible, with one person noting T2/T3 lanes should be built in the interim. One other person expressed their satisfaction with the proposals as they would be beneficial for generations to come.

6. Conclusion and next steps

This report will be shared with the alliance team and Auckland Transport decision makers to inform the ongoing development of the project's design and construction methodology, and to inform the development of EB4L proposals once funding becomes available.

Further design updates will be shared with the community as they are developed, and a construction management plan will be developed for EB4I ahead of construction and enabling works which will set out how the community will be kept informed.

Ongoing partnership with mana whenua and engagement with elected representatives, Howick Local Board, Huntington Park Residents and Ratepayers Association, property owners, key stakeholder groups and the community will continue throughout the project.

Appendix 1. Map of the proposals

