

Berwick Springs Wetlands Reserve public toilet

Community engagement summary report
February 2024

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2 Background

This document provides a summary of stakeholder and community feedback on the Berwick Springs Wetlands Reserve public toilet.

The Berwick Springs Wetlands Reserve is a large public open space located in Narre Warren South. The reserve contains multiple walking tracks and playgrounds as well as a tennis court, basketball half court, BBQ facilities and expansive lakes.

The Berwick Springs Wetlands Reserve Masterplan was endorsed by Council in 2016 to improve the reserve for residents and visitors. During the master planning process, the need to install a public toilet in the reserve was identified.

We undertook community engagement in October 2022 to seek feedback on our proposal to upgrade the Berwick Springs Wetlands Reserve west playground which proposed to include a new public toilet facility. Following advice provided by Melbourne Water and community feedback, we relocated the public toilet to a centralised location adjacent to the south playground in the Berwick Springs Wetlands Reserve.

From 22 January to 16 February 2024, a four-week community engagement process was held to gather community and stakeholder feedback on the overall concept design and proposed location of the public toilet facilities.

2.1 Key findings

Participants were generally supportive of the public toilet proposal for Berwick Springs Wetlands Reserve with 71 participants (62%) supporting the proposed location of the toilet and 66 respondents (58%) supporting the design of the public toilet.

Some respondents (38%) believed the proposed location of the public toilet was incorrect and provided feedback on alternative locations for the public toilet facilities. Common suggestions for alternative locations included placing them closer to the Parkrun starting and finish area, locating them at the playground situated on the corner of The Esplanade and Berwick Springs Promenade, or placing them towards the front of the reserve.

2.2 Next steps

Council officers will consider community feedback and decide on a location and design of the public toilet by March 2024.

3 Consultation overview

3.1 Consultation purpose

The consultation was designed to provide affected stakeholders, particularly those using the Berwick Springs Wetlands Reserve, and/or living in streets adjacent to Berwick Springs Wetlands Reserve, and the broader community with the opportunity to provide input into the draft concept design and location for the proposed toilet facilities in the Berwick Springs Wetlands Reserve.

3.2 Consultation process

The tools and techniques selected for this project were informed by the project content, stakeholders and type of feedback sought.

Key tools for communicating the project

- Website news story
- Council's e-newsletter, Casey Catch up
- Emails to key stakeholders
- Social media
- Signage on site at the proposed toilet location
- Flyer drop to 500 local residents close to the proposed site
- Letter to directly affected neighbours
- Digital screens at Bunjil Place

Key methods for gathering feedback

- Online engagement through Casey Conversations, including opportunity to provide feedback via survey, upload a written statement, or ask a question online
- Contact email address and phone number of Council Officer provided for interested community members to ask for further information or provide feedback
- Printed information available, as required.

Details	Activity
22 January – 16 February 2024 347 visitors 116 contributions	Casey Conversations Website Project information, online survey and written submission hosted on the engagement platform Casey Conversations. Online survey: 114 responses Written submission: 2 responses
22 January – 16 February 2024 1 question	Question and Answer forum One question was asked via the Q&A forum regarding the name of the new toilet.
Written statements/ feedback 5 responses	Correspondence Direct feedback provided through contacting the Project Officer for further information or to provide feedback over the phone or via email.

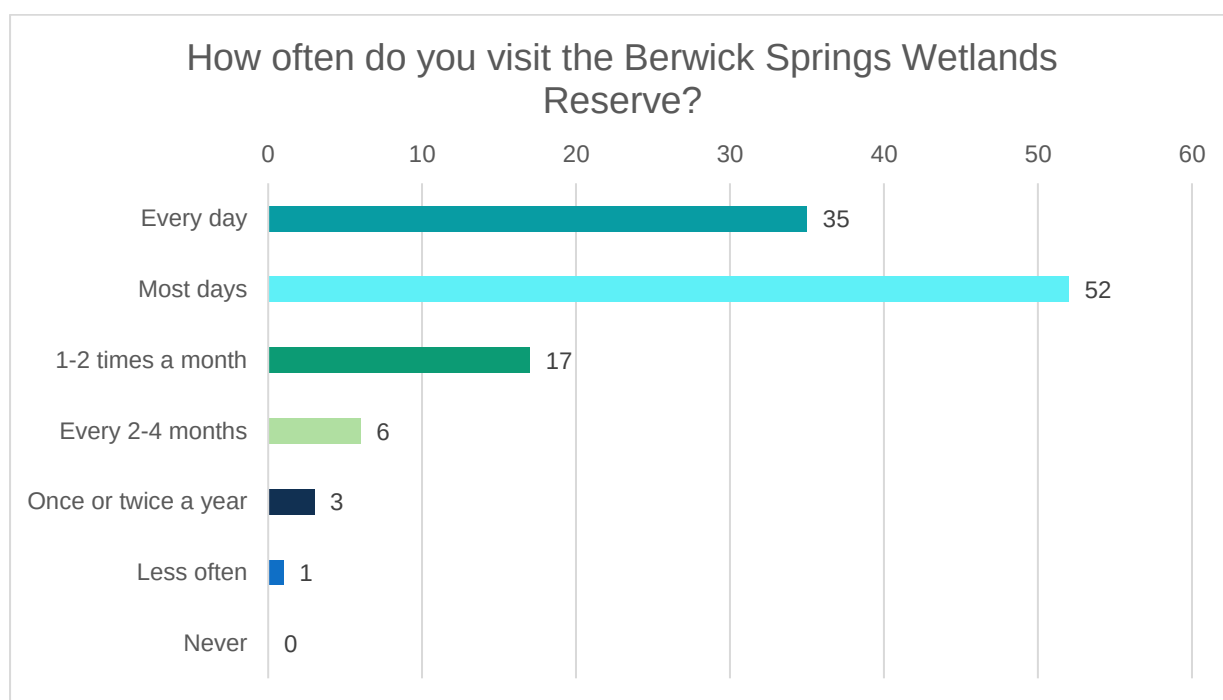
4 Who we heard from

Survey respondents were asked to qualify their connection to the Berwick Springs Wetlands Reserve and to Casey. All respondents (114) had a connection to Casey, with some identifying with multiple options:

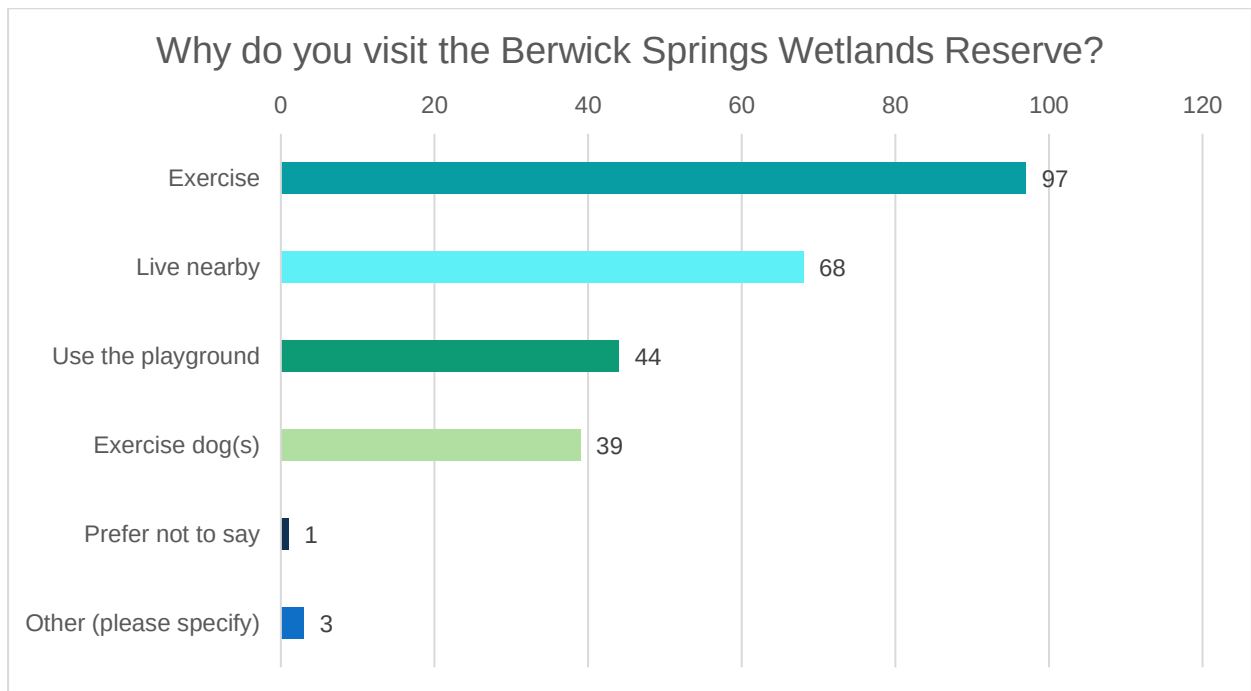
- 68 said they were a Berwick Springs resident
- 41 said they were a visitor to Berwick Springs Wetlands Reserve
- 72 said they were a Casey resident or ratepayer
- 26 indicated that they work or study in Casey
- 7 said they own/operate a business in Casey
- 8 said they were a person with a disability or a carer
- 1 selected 'Other' as their connection to the reserve and to Casey and included the comment "The Esplanade".

Two people indicated they prefer not to say.

Survey respondents were asked how often they visited the Berwick Springs Wetlands Reserve. All survey respondents provided a response with most respondents (87) indicating they visited the reserve 'every day' or 'most days'.



Survey respondents who visited the Berwick Springs Wetlands Reserve were also asked why they visit the reserve. All respondents provided a response with some selecting multiple options. Most respondents (97) indicated they visit the reserve for exercise.



3 respondents selected 'Other' as their reason for visiting the reserve. One respondent indicated they use the reserve for fishing, one respondent stated the reserve was a nice place to relax and one respondent indicated they visit the reserve for Parkrun.

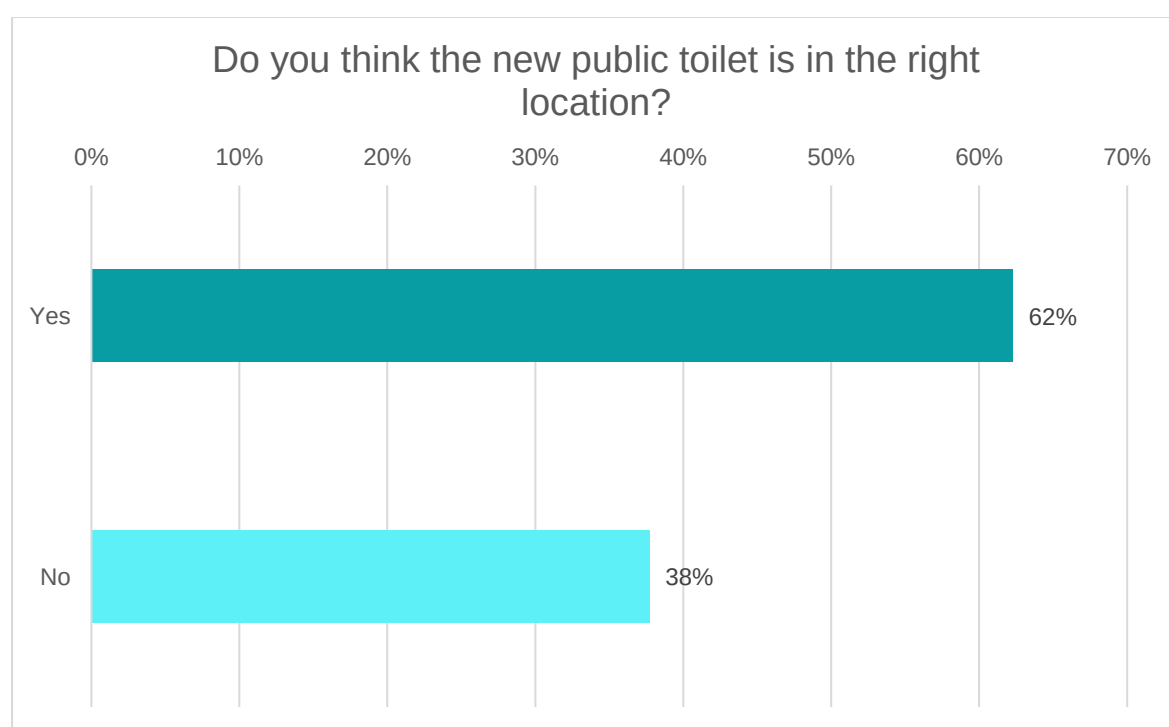
5 Consultation findings

The following section summarises the key themes which arose in community feedback on the Berwick Springs Wetlands Reserve public toilet. In the interest of stakeholder and community privacy, individual quotes have not been included within this public document. Where there was more than one mention of a topic or item, the number of mentions has been specified in brackets and italics.

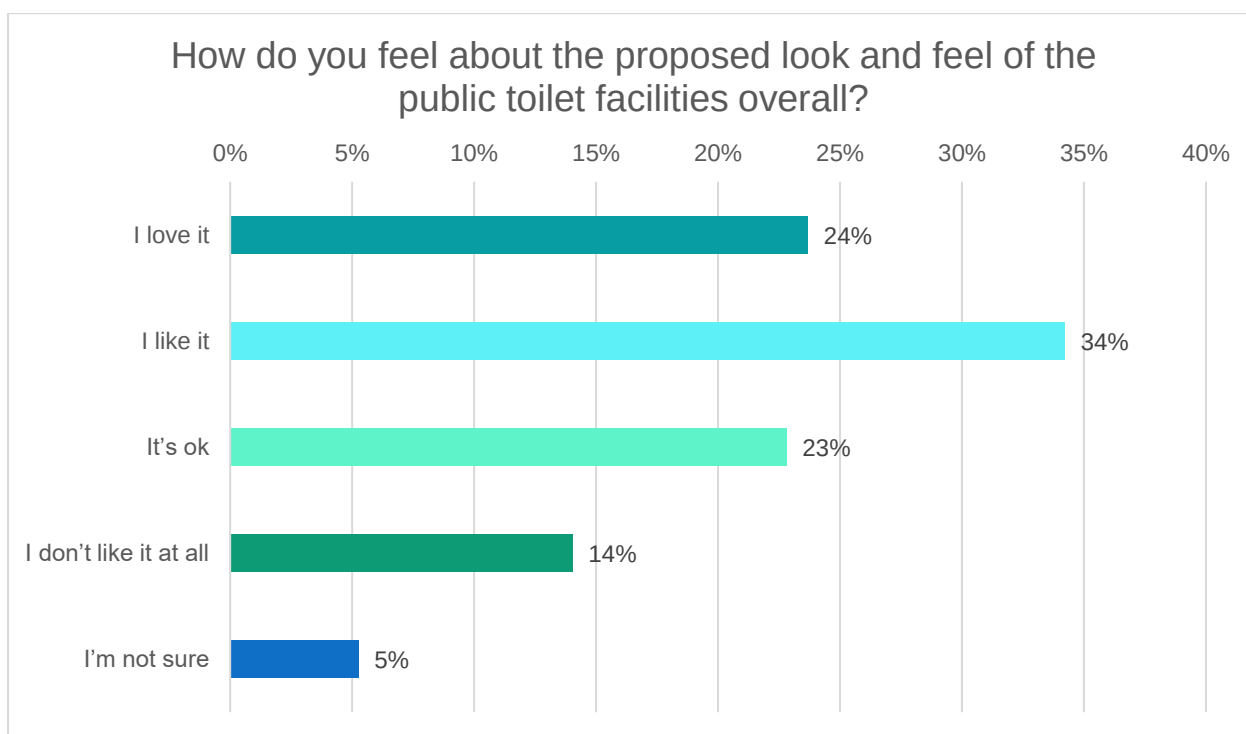
5.1 Support for actions

Participants were asked via an online survey to provide feedback on the Berwick Springs Wetlands Reserve public toilet proposal including their views on the proposed location and toilet design.

All survey participants were asked if they thought the new public toilet was in the right location, with 62% of respondents agreeing the proposed location was the right location for the public toilet.



Survey participants were also asked how they felt about the proposed look and feel of the public toilet facilities overall. There was strong support for the proposed design of the public toilets, 27 respondents loved the design (24%), 39 liked the design (34%) and 26 respondents felt the design was OK (23%). Overall, 58% of respondents felt positively and a further 23% felt neutral about the proposed design.



5.2 Item-specific feedback

Feedback from respondents who thought the proposed location of the public toilet was incorrect, provided a response about look and feel of the public toilet or had other comments regarding the proposed public toilet have been analysed and summarised below.

5.2.1 Comments from respondents who believed the location of the public toilet is incorrect.

Respondents who thought the proposed location of the public toilet was incorrect (38%) were asked where they think the public toilet should be located. Comments provided by the 42 submitters are summarised by theme in the tables below:

Topic	Community feedback
Suggested locations	Closer to the Parkrun starting point (<i>5 mentions</i>) Toilet block would be better placed near playground area at Berwick Springs Promenade. (<i>4 mentions</i>) Should be located at Berwick Springs Wetlands Reserve west playground near bus stop (<i>2 mentions</i>) On the Promenade closer to the fountain (<i>2 mentions</i>) On The Esplanade between both playgrounds (<i>2 mentions</i>) At the entrance of the estate (<i>2 mentions</i>) Put toilets closer to the main entrance near the tennis courts where there is more room (<i>2 mentions</i>) At the main entrance, near the playground/lake lookout. (<i>2 mentions</i>)

	On the other side of the lake next to the new homes Located closer to the northern playground On Greaves Road near the playground where 300 people gather every week for parkrun Near Ardblair Terrace Maybe near the bridge and windmill in the middle for everyone to use. Near the main entrance Toilet should be in a larger area like near the pier or duck feeding area. At the other playground which is more popular and busier and not near my street. Near the newly upgraded playground on Moondara drive Should be located down Beauford Rd off The Esplanade so it is less of an eye sore and away from the beauty of the lake. The public toilet should be located out of sight and not close to barbeque area for hygiene reasons, it should not be visible from the houses. Toilet should be on Berwick Springs Blvd as this is where most groups gather for community events and exercise.
Multiple toilets	Should be 2 toilets one at the proposed location and one on Berwick Springs Blvd (<i>2 mentions</i>) One toilet at each playground Need a 2nd toilet at the main playground where community events are regularly held Can you do a toilet block at each end?
General comments	Don't install a toilet (<i>5 mentions</i>) I don't think there should be a public toilet (<i>3 mentions</i>) Should not be installed in this park (<i>2 mentions</i>) Should be more centralised for the entire reserve (<i>2 mentions</i>) Pictured location is good Suggested location is at the quietest place Toilet should be away from the kids park Not in front of houses Toilets will create more traffic congestion where there is already insufficient parking. Suggested location would create congestion and an eyesore. Unmonitored toilets become drug users haven

	Toilets will be misused by drug users and homeless and the taxpayers will be left to clean up the mess The public toilet is very convenient for visitors who don't live nearby, but for the people living nearby, the toilet will bring a worse impact to our community.
Other	Fix the dangerous long grass before spending money on public toilets.

5.2.2 Reason for response on the look and feel of the proposed public toilet.

Survey respondents were asked how they feel about the proposed look and feel of the public toilet facilities overall and could select from a set of options which included 'I love it' 'I like it' 'It's OK' 'I don't like it at all' and 'I'm not sure'. Respondents who selected 'It's OK' 'I don't like it at all' and 'I'm not sure' were requested to provide a reason for their response, 43 comments were received. It should be noted that very few comments (10) from respondents were made regarding the proposed design of the toilet.

The feedback provided by the 43 submitters is summarised by theme in the table below:

Topic	Community feedback
Design	It's a toilet that's all, nothing special (2 mentions) Would like it to blend with parkland more. It looks cheap and made of leftovers. These toilets need to be built not for looks but for use. They also need to not attract damage or graffiti. Public toilets are always a bit dodgy looking unless well maintained and near a medium traffic area. They need to look cared for or undesirables will linger. Just happy one is installed, not too bothered about how it looks. Disrupts my view. I couldn't see it from the images on this website. It's a toilet block, doesn't have to be a work of art. It's a public toilet soon it's going to smell, and design won't matter.
Location	Happy that proposed toilet block has been relocated to the most sensible location. The toilet would be more tolerable by placing the toilet block next to the tennis court/outdoor gym. The people purchased the houses on The Esplanade because of the view. Nobody would be happy to have a toilet in front of their house. So close to houses. I don't think they are in the right place and should be moved to a more popular area of the springs where they are needed more. Close to kids enclosed play. Should be located near the fountain where large public events are.

	As a parent those toilets are too far from the main entrance to take my kid to if they needed to go.
Disagree with public toilet	I object to the installation of a public toilet. There is no need for a public toilet the people who pay for and use this parkland live in the area they can go home. Toilet is not necessary; bins smell bad enough. It's a risk to the peace and order of the community. Toilets are not a priority, leave the parkland for leisure. I doubt these will be kept safe and clean. No toilet is required. Not essential. Instead put more water fountains. I think it will promote more dirtiness and area for mischief for youths. We haven't had one for years and don't need one now. I'm not sure this park needs the facilities. I don't like a public toilet near my house it will encourage drug users and weirdos. I don't like the idea of a public toilet block near my house. They attract trouble including drug abusers and I don't want that near me.
Agree with public toilet	Needed particularly for elderly and children. Toilets are necessary in public spaces. Toilets have been needed for a long time so people can fully enjoy and utilise the park making it a real community park. The park definitely needs toilets, and some water fountains would be good too. The facility is well overdue for a toilet block, perhaps there can be 1 at each end.
Other	The grass is barely maintained, the toilets will be a disaster. You are not considering the people who live near the park. Why do people who already pay land tax need to see a toilet in front of them? You might as well put a toilet in their front lawn. It's only pictures. It's a public park not public home. The survey is biased. Constructing toilets can bring sanitation issues if not promptly cleaned, the area may become littered with garbage, emitting foul odours. All the community events are held at the fountain Most visitors to the proposed site are locals & can use their homes facilities.

	It's going to attract vandals; the smell is too close to homes. Can't tell if it's an automated self-cleaning facility. I've seen people peeing around here before. Will bring drug dealers to a very child used area. The gym equipment and ninja course is used by kids all the time. Botanical gardens has 3 areas for toilets. It also has rubbish bins and poo bags for dogs. Time this large parkland got caught up to the people's needs. There is not enough parking for that particular part of the park. When you got to go, you got to go.
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5.2.3 General comments for consideration about the proposed public toilet.

Survey respondents were asked if they had 'any other comments about the Berwick Springs public toilet that you'd like Council to consider', with 84 comments received.

The feedback provided by the 84 submitters is summarised by theme in the table below:

Table 1: Comments from respondents who expressed support or were neutral

Topic	Community feedback
Location	Perfect location next to kids playground, you can't ask a toddler to hold on until they get home. Happy with the proposed location. This is the correct location. This is the perfect area it can cater for small children, users of the tennis courts, basketball courts and outdoor gym. A little further from the park run start line than I'd like but better for the main playground
Design	Should install automated/self-cleaning as they require less maintenance. The pebble wall toilets at Wilson's botanic park look good, could you maybe do something like that. Looks good.
Toilet facilities	Child size toilet would be good to include to ensure good hygiene. One is better than none. Keep it clean and well lit.
Additional facilities	Should be one toilet at each playground (3 mentions) More toilets on the other side of the lake also (3 mentions) Put toilets near both playgrounds.

	Install a second toilet near the other playground. Choose two different locations to place 2 or 3 portable toilets. Consider toilets at Berwick Springs Promenade. Install 2 toilets, one at each end. Two toilets are needed for the park one at the proposed location and another at the main playground. Two toilets would be better.
General comment/questions	Needed for a long time (<i>4 mentions</i>) Build them soon. Just happy to have a toilet there. This will be great. Thank you. Very pleased this is going ahead. Great you're putting one in. Happy a toilet is being installed. Great idea, please put one in. Desperately needed. Long overdue. Need this facility as soon as possible. About time, we've been waiting many years. About time this was done has been needed for a long time. Great idea, great to not have to rush home with little ones will be used often, Amazing idea to put a public toilet in this very much loved open space. Lots of kids parties at the playground will be great to have a toilet. As a family we feel the addition of toilets at some point around the lake area is a great idea. Makes it a more inclusive and accessible place for those wanting to use this lovely park land. Much needed for people who attend park run as well as walkers, bike riders and children that come down for a play on the playground. Will visit more often without the worries of where the closest facilities are and trees will not get urinated on. I would not need to use it but can see many who would. Will enable more people to spend more time in the playground and park. Toilets are a major consideration for families when deciding which park to visit.

	Ignore the people who are trying and stop it. They have forgotten what it is like to have young children who need to have toilet facilities. It would encourage more seniors, disabled people, and mothers with children to the area. Being situated near the playground is good. Children can have their snacks, be toileted and then carry on with their day. Are you also putting one at the main park on the corner of Berwick Springs Promenade and the Esplanade where a lot of people go and use?
Other	As well as the toilet you need to supply more bins and poo bags and even a couple of drink stations/water bowls. Install security lighting. Put some water fountains in too.

Table 2: Comments from respondents who were opposed or expressed concerns

Topic	Community feedback
Location	Can the toilet be located closer to the bridge with the windmill but remain close to The Esplanade for a more centralised location. Should be located at main entrance near water feature. Might be too close to playground and possibly smell. It shouldn't be in a prime location as it is not a beautiful feature of the park. Consider other locations closer to public transport. Consider where parkrun is hosted. The other end near the playground, fountain and road bridge to Greaves Rd would probably be a better location. The proposed location would be prone to vandalism and other undesirable behaviour. Please do not put it near the park run it needs to service all of Berwick Springs not just one group. Put the toilets near Greaves rd. Maybe place them on the other side of the tennis courts so it's not an eyesore. The playground down the other end is always busier for kids and for parkrun.
Design	I want to see male, female and unisex toilets for cleanliness and also safety. I hope that it is built in a way which will ensure antisocial behaviour is kept to a minimum.

	There are some great public toilets that are better suited to the area. For example, there are new toilets in Gembrook, adjacent to Puffing Billy Station that would suit the area.
Toilet facilities	Don't install a toilet (5 mentions) Do not put them in, they are not necessary as the playground does not get busy. Give up having a toilet around Berwick springs. Don't do it, it will encourage antisocial behaviour. You're adding something undesirable to an already subpar place. We haven't had a toilet for decades and don't need one now. Toilet should be well-equipped with basic requirements like separate male and female toilets, hand wash basins, soap, and paper towels. It should be clean and well-maintained to cater to the needs of nearby residents and visitors. Hope they are cleaned daily. Hope this will be well maintained. Hope it's cleaned regularly and has adequate paper and supplies. Toilets are not essential and a waste of tax funds. Public toilets are rarely well kept and used properly.
General comment/questions	Will they be locked after hours ie: 9pm until 6am etc? (2 mentions) What would the cleaning schedule be? What about people on the other side of the lake? Consider that around 100-250 people attend the Parkrun every Saturday morning, and the most common asked question is are there any toilets. Many local youths frequent this location during holidays and there is consistently underage drinking smashing of bottles & destruction of the child proof gate. Too much vandalism at the playground at night, especially during school holidays. It needs to consider all users of the park. Currently it seems to focus on one area only. Too far from parkrun. Many men are using bushes to wee. Consider the local residents as well as visitors to the park when deciding on its location. Hope it isn't vandalised. Council must ensure the facilities add to the reserve and keep up with the current standards.

	Council must make provision for additional cleaning services to ensure the additional inflow of visitors does not negatively impact the area.
Other	Very disappointed that this project is going ahead before the repair of the bridge North East of 19 The Esplanade. Can you fix the section of path between the proposed toilet location and tennis courts that constantly floods and makes the path impassable. Instead of a toilet, allow a council sponsored cafe or food truck. The council should focus on amenities for a younger population and family time. More playground, bbq and a library is essential. Please install a library for the locals. Please reconsider allocating funds towards water fountains or public library.

5.3 Written submission feedback

A total of five (5) written submissions were received regarding the Berwick Springs Wetlands Reserve public toilet consultation.

5.3.1 Written submissions received via Casey Conversations.

Two written submissions were submitted using Casey Conversations and are included below.

Submission 1:

BERWICK SPRINGS WETLANDS PUBLIC TOILET CONSULTATION

At last, a more sensible location for a public toilet.

Located near the outdoor gym, a playground, tennis court etc.

We need to move people away from the front of the estate as it causes a lot of near misses

on such a busy road. Now we just need South East Water to place parking lot spaces in some

of the vacant land to get cars off the residential streets.

The park run people also need to be moved from the front of the estate as well.

Submission 2:

In reference to:

PROPOSED PUBLIC TOILET FOR BERWICK SPRINGS WETLANDS RESERVE.

I have a couple of questions and concerns about adding a public toilet to this estate parklands.

How often will these toilets be policed? And will these toilets be locked over night? Often public toilets bring unwanted visitors to areas ie homeless people and drug users that use these facilities as shelters and places to get high. We already have a huge problem with groups of people hanging out in the estates parks late at night leaving rubbish and hooning through the estate in their cars speeding and doing burnouts. If you introduce a toilet it just allows them to stay longer.

Will this cost rate payers more money to build, clean and maintain? specifically people living in the estate. As it is we already pay incredibly high rates and yet the maintenance for the park lands within Berwick springs is not up to standard. Often the parks are left unmown for weeks and the garden beds are rarely weeded. The roundabout at the entrance of the estate is full of weeds and looks disgusting and the middle islands along the Berwick springs promenade are exactly the same, overgrown with weeds. Therefore, how can we expect a public toilet in this estate to be properly cleaned and maintained?

This is an estate and does not require toilet facilities. How many other estates in the area have public toilets? if people require to go to the bathroom they go home or there is Eden rise and Casey central just down the road.

5.3.2 Written submissions received via email.

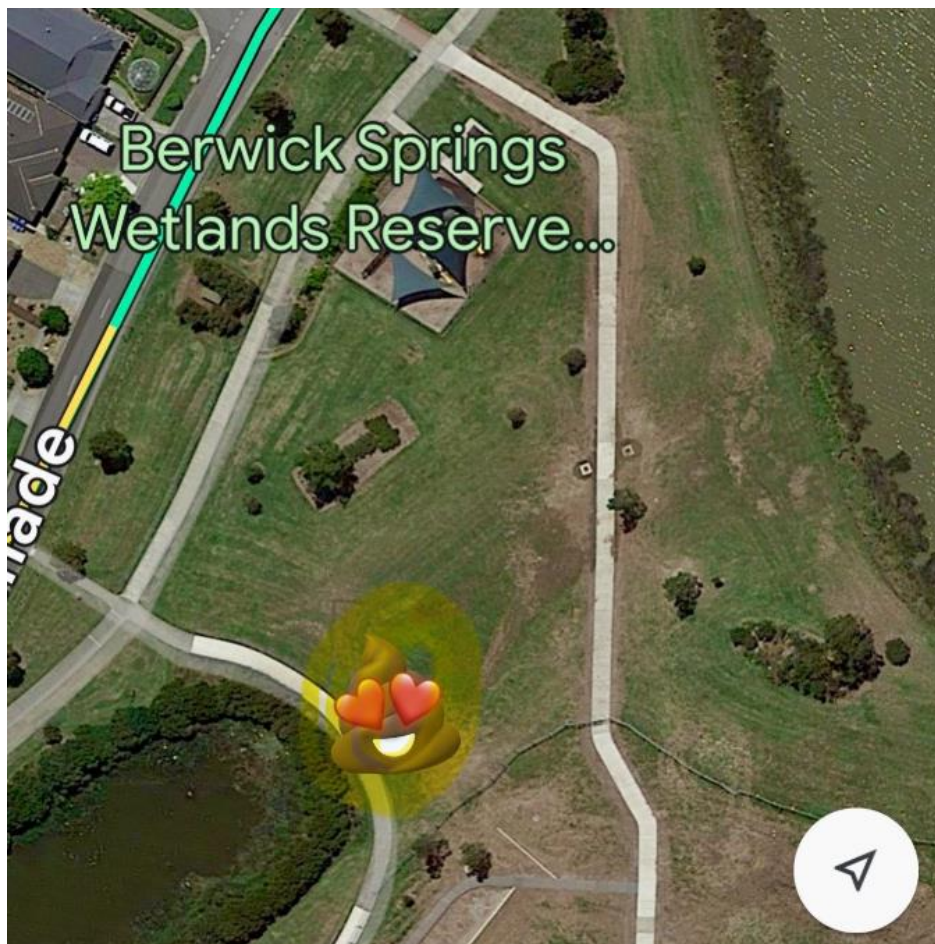
Three written submissions were received by the Project Officer via email and are summarised below.

Submission 1:

The submitter expresses their strong opposition to a proposal to build a public toilet at a location that offers a great view of a lake where families often gather for picnics. They argue that having a toilet in that spot would ruin the view and the experience of eating a meal with the smell of the toilet nearby. The user suggests that if a toilet must be built, a better location should be considered, and offers to provide a photo for consideration.

Submission 2:

The submitter mentions that they will be sending a photo highlighting a more suitable location for a public toilet. They also express that they believe this spot would be more suitable for a public toilet due to its location near amenities such as sports and gym facilities. The below photo indicates the submitters preferred location for the public toilet.



Submission 3:

The submitter received a letter notifying them that a toilet block will be constructed close to their home. They believe that the placement of the toilet block in view of their home is not ideal and would like the council to consider another location, perhaps closer to the gym. They have been a resident of Berwick Springs for a while and feel that the community has been fine without toilets for many years. They request that the council hears their request to place the toilets not right in front of homes and not directly near a playground.

6 Consultation evaluation

This report presents the findings from the analysis of the community feedback gathered during community engagement from 22 January – 16 February 2024.

The consultation was promoted to key stakeholders including previous Casey Conversations project subscribers and Berwick Springs residents.

The website news story and Casey Catch-Up e-newsletter also ensured the wider Casey community was given the opportunity to provide feedback.

The Berwick Star also ran an article in their publication on 31 January further promoting the engagement activities to the broader Berwick and Beaconsfield communities. The article is available to view at: <https://berwicknews.starcommunity.com.au/news/2024-01-31/new-toilets-proposed/>

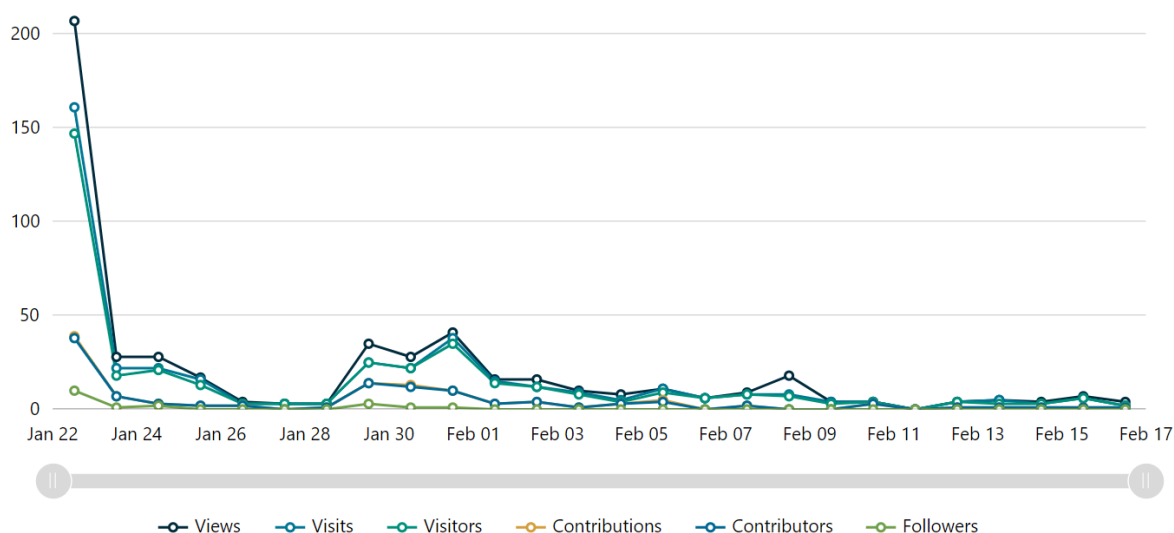
The length of consultation was four weeks, with most responses received in the first two weeks.

The engagement program received a total of 122 contributions, including 114 online surveys completed via Casey Conversations, 2 written submissions uploaded via Casey Conversations 1 question completed via the Q&A forum on Casey Conversations and 5 written statements received via email correspondence.

6.1 Casey Conversations project page

Performance Summary

520 Views	417 Visits	347 Visitors	117 Contributions	109 Contributors	18 Followers
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Engagement targets for the Casey Conversations webpages were that:

- 15% of visits would last at least one active minute (exceeded, 44.6%)
- 10% of visits would have at least two actions performed, such as moving around the project page or clicking on links (exceeded, 36.69%)
- 5% of visits had at least one contribution made (exceeded, 26.62%)

6.2 Satisfaction with engagement process

Survey participants were generally satisfied with the consultation process and materials, with a majority of participants selecting they had the required information to participate, and it was very (58%) or mostly (30%) easy to find/understand. It is noted that some participants found the information mostly or very hard (5%) to find/understand or were not sure (7%).

Engagement plan

The engagement plan for this project was published and is available to view at:
<https://conversations.casey.vic.gov.au/BSWRPublicToilet/ep-bswrpublictoilet>