
Stakeholder and Community Engagement Summary for SeaPath

*A shared walking and cycling path between Northcote Point
and Takapuna on Auckland's North Shore*

07 July 2016



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1. INTRODUCTION

This document summarises the stakeholder and community engagement undertaken between March and April 2016 by the NZ Transport Agency on the proposed route for SeaPath – a walking and cycling path between Northcote Point and Takapuna on the North Shore of Auckland.

The feedback received will inform the current indicative business case phase, along with future project stages including detailed business case and design.

1.1 Project overview

SeaPath is a proposed approximate 3km walking and cycling path between Northcote Point and Esmonde Road, Takapuna. SeaPath will provide a connection between Northern Busway to Northcote Ferry along with connections to existing and proposed cycle and walkways in the area. SeaPath will be separated from vehicle traffic, helping to provide a well-connected network of safe and attractive walking and cycling routes throughout Auckland.

Through the initial indicative business case process three route options were investigated, as well as multiple options for connecting with the existing street network and southern and northern ends of the pathway. Following feedback from key stakeholders and results of early investigations, the preferred option was a landward route as opposed to a seaward or coastal edge route. The main drivers for this preference are: increased connectivity with the community and the wider cycle and road network, reduced environmental and ecological impacts and less cost. The proposed alignment is shown in Figure 1.

The proposed route generally follows the alignment of SH1 and links with the local road network and cycleways, walkways, and greenways. It can also connect with the proposed SkyPath project.

SeaPath will provide a key link in Auckland's cycle network and is expected to be used by walkers, joggers and cyclists for commuting, recreational, tourist, education and other trip purposes.



Figure 1 Proposed SeaPath Route

2. ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

The objective of engaging with the community and stakeholders during March and April 2016 was to inform and seek feedback on the indicative proposed landward route. Earlier engagement during 2014 was to seek feedback from key stakeholders on the overall project and the three alignment options (landward, coastal, seaward).

2.1 Previous engagement (2014)

The first stage of stakeholder engagement took place from July to December 2014 and in these early stages was limited to the following groups:

- The two Local Boards in the project area - Kaipatiki and Devonport-Takapuna
- Auckland Transport
- Auckland Council Parks
- Auckland Council Planning
- Forest and Bird Society
- Department of Conservation
- Iwi – hui were attended by representatives of:
 - Te Runanga Ngati Whatua
 - Nga Maunga Whakahii o Kaipara Trust
 - Ngati Whatua Orakei Trust
 - Ngai Tai Ki Tamaki Tribal Trust
 - Te Kawarau Iwi Tribal Authority
 - Ngati Tamaoho Trust
 - Te Akitai Waiohua Iwi Authority
 - Te Ara Rangatū o Te Iwi o Ngati Te Ata Waiohua
 - Ngati Paoa Iwi Trust
 - Ngati Maru Rununga Incorporated
 - Ngati Whanaunga Incorporated
 - Ngati Tamatera
 - Te Patukirikiri Incorporated
- Cycle Action (now known as Bike Auckland)

Objectives of this stakeholder engagement included:

- Informing and introducing stakeholders to the project and explaining why it is needed
- Informing stakeholders of landward, coastal and seaward options

Feedback received during this initial consultation phase and results of route option assessment which included a high-level multi-criteria analysis process, the landward option was clearly identified as the preferred route. This was mostly due to increasing the connectivity to the community, less effects on the environment (in particular the coastal area) and on flora and fauna.

The most recent phase of consultation has focused on seeking feedback from the wider community as well as key stakeholders on the proposed landward route.

2.2 Stakeholders engaged

Both stakeholders and the community were engaged during March and April 2016.

Stakeholders

Meetings were held with the following stakeholders to present the preferred landward route and to gain feedback. Stakeholders at this stage included:

- Auckland Council: Parks, Biodiversity and Heritage Departments
- Local Boards: Kaipatiki and Devonport- Takapuna
- Auckland Transport
- Forest and Bird Society
- Iwi - hui were attended by representatives of:
 - Ngati Maru
 - Ngai Tai Ki Tamaki
 - Ngati Tamaoho
 - Ngati Whatua O Orakei
 - Runanga o Ngati Whatua
 - Te Akitai Waiohua
 - Ngati Paoa
 - Ngati Te Ata Waiohua
 - Te Kawerau a Maki
- Northcote Point Residents Association
- Bike Auckland (formally known as Cycle Action) and Walk Bike Ride Kaipatiki
- SkyPath Trust

Community

On Friday 18 March 2016 a media release and social media update launched the start of the 6 week long community consultation process. During this time approximately 2,500 newsletters were sent directly to households in the Northcote Point and wider Northcote area, community information sessions were held along with social media and website updates and media releases encouraging people to provide feedback.

The different ways people could provide feedback included an online feedback form, postal feedback form, in person during the information sessions and/or emailing the project team directly via a dedicated project email address. The media release, newsletter, social media updates and website contained the dates, times and venue of three community information sessions along with different ways to provide feedback.

An additional consultation session was also set up (taking it to four information sessions in total) following requests for a session at Northcote Point. The additional session was advertised via social media and the project website along with an information flyer delivered to the Northcote Point and wider Northcote areas.

See **Section 4 Feedback Received** to read the feedback key themes.

3. ENGAGEMENT METHODS

The engagement with the wider community during March and April 2016 focused on seeking feedback on the proposed landward route.

The Transport Agency used a range of methods to engage with stakeholders and the community. The methods included:

1. Meetings and presentations with stakeholders.
2. Project newsletters with a freepost feedback form. The project newsletter is attached in **Appendix A**.
3. Community information sessions. A flyer was also delivered to the Northcote Point area to advise of an additional information session – included in **Appendix B**.
4. Dedicated project website with online feedback form available.
5. Media release, social media updates and project updates.
6. Direct access to the project team via a dedicated project email address – seapath@nzta.govt.nz

4. FEEDBACK RECEIVED

The following sections outline the feedback received during the consultation period and has been separated in to the following groups:

- Written and online feedback forms
- Online feedback via Gen Zero survey
- Information session feedback
- Stakeholder meetings and discussions – summarised within the key themes section

4.1 Written and online feedback forms – key themes

Questions asked on the online and hardcopy feedback form were:

1. What do you like about the proposed SeaPath walking and cycling path?
2. What don't you like about the proposed SeaPath walking and cycling path?
3. Do you have any other comments on the proposed SeaPath walking and cycling path?

As general feedback was sought, key themes have been generated from the online and hardcopy responses.

Generation Zero, in collaboration with Bike Auckland, set up an additional online survey (via the Generation Zero website) which included the 3 questions above plus 4 extra questions. Detail on the extra questions and responses are provided in the next section.

The 2,404 responses received from the Generation Zero online survey have been themed separately to understand any trends or differences in the feedback received via the different channels. The same key themes have been used so comparisons can be made.

Table 1 summarises the number of feedback forms received via post / hardcopy and online.

Table 1 Feedback forms received

Feedback form	Number
Freepost – written	72
Online – via project website	178
Online – via Generation Zero survey	2,404
TOTAL	2,654

Key themes from the 72 freepost hardcopy forms and 178 online feedback forms are shown in **Figure 2**.

In summary, of the 250 written and online feedback forms received the most common themes were:

- Support for SeaPath (approx. 95% of respondents were positive about the proposed path)
- The importance of designing safe connections with local roads – especially Onewa Road, Esmonde Road, Akoranga Drive and Stafford Road.
- A coastal route is preferred
- The support of and connection with SkyPath

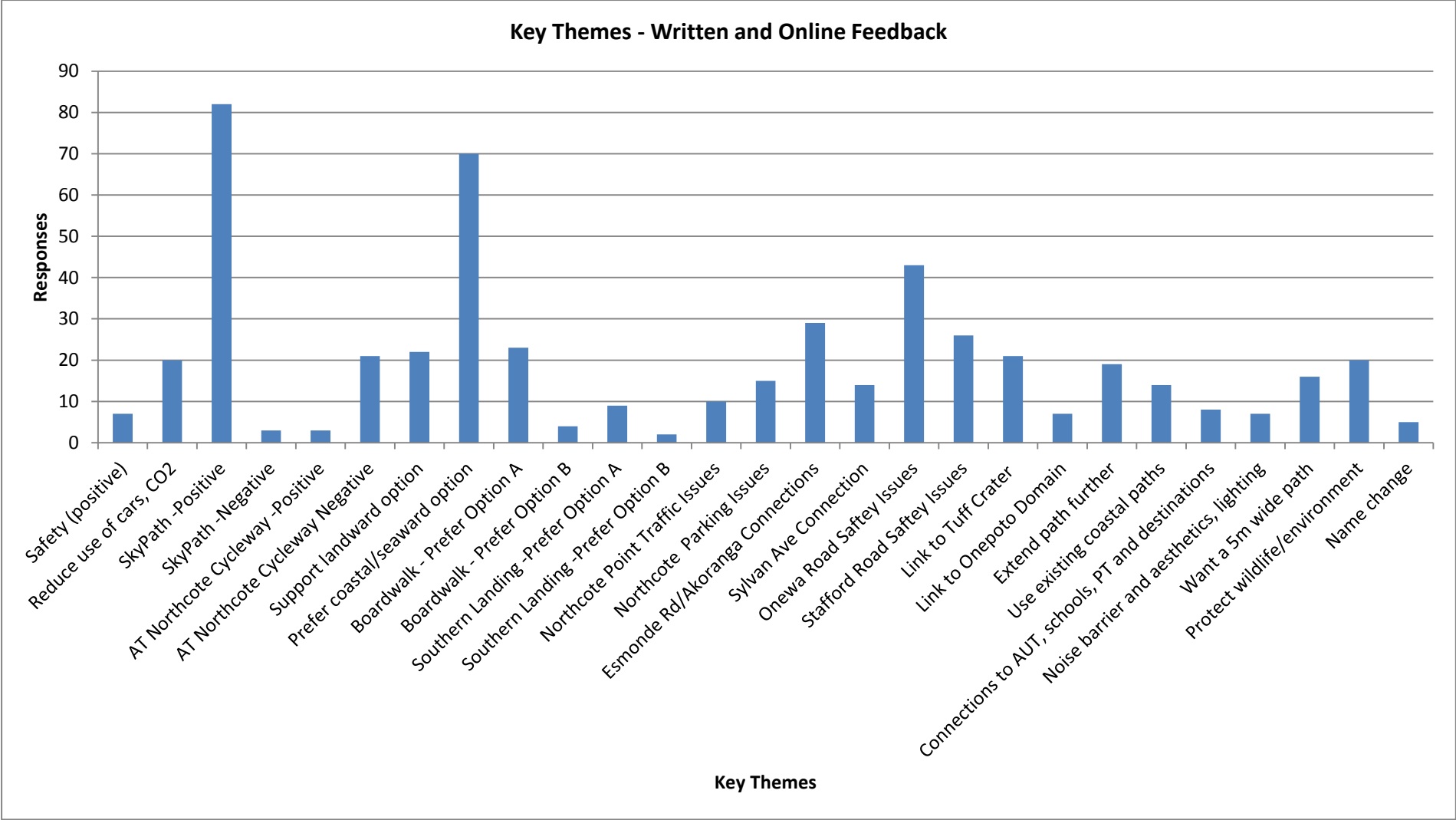


Figure 2 Key themes - written and online feedback

4.2 Online feedback via Gen Zero survey – key themes

Generation Zero, in collaboration with Bike Auckland, set up an online survey for SeaPath via the Generation Zero website. This included the 3 questions asked by the Transport Agency plus 4 extra questions:

1. What do you like about the proposed SeaPath walking and cycling path?
2. What don't you like about the proposed SeaPath walking and cycling path?
3. Do you have any other comments on the proposed SeaPath walking and cycling path?

Plus:

1. I want SeaPath to be built? (yes or no)
2. I want SeaPath to be at least 5m wide (yes or no)
3. I want SeaPath's Onewa Rd crossing to be separated from cars (yes or no)
4. I want good access to the places I need to go like AUT, Akoranga bus station and Devonport/Takapuna (yes or no).

Of the 4 extra questions all were generally answered "yes" - with the occasional question not answered. None of the responses to any of the 4 extra questions was "no". The 4 additional questions above have not been included **Figure 3** as they are absolute yes or no responses with opportunity for responses to be qualified or explained more fully. Nonetheless, they provide additional insight into what the survey respondents would like to see and is consistent with feedback received through other means.

Of the 2,404 feedback forms, the most common feedback was:

- Would like SeaPath to be built
- Would like it to be a 5m wide path
- Would like the Onewa Road crossing to be separated from cars
- Would like good access to AUT, Akoranga bus station and Devonport/Takapuna
- The support of and connection with SkyPath
- SeaPath will provide a safe transport option as it is separated from traffic
- SeaPath will reduce use and reliance on vehicles, and will reduce congestion and carbon dioxide emissions.

Generation Zero is an organisation with the purpose of providing solutions for New Zealand to cut carbon pollution through smarter transport, liveable cities and independence from fossil fuels.

Bike Auckland is an organisation focussed on making Auckland a world-class city for people on bikes.

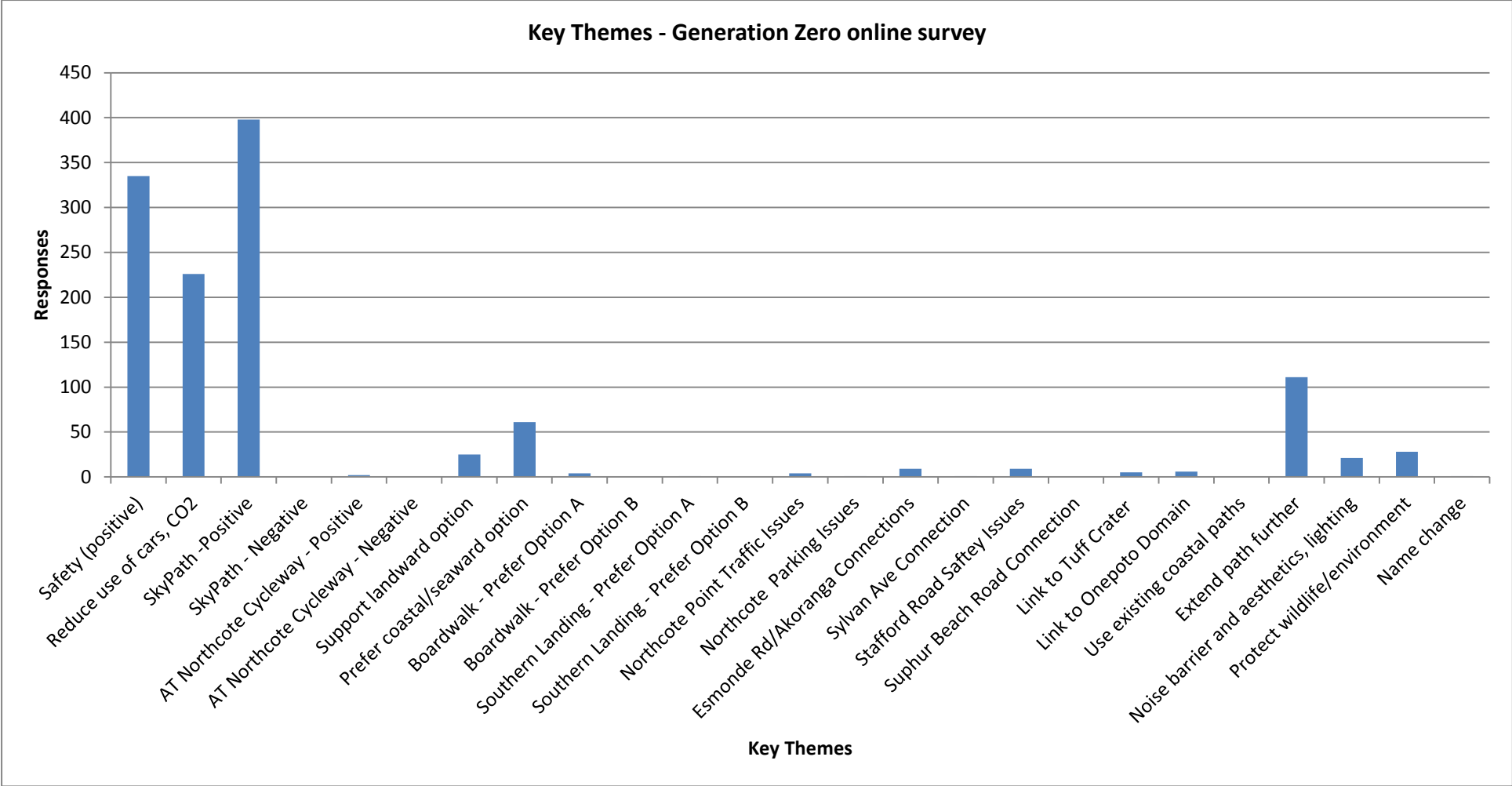


Figure 3 Key themes – online feedback received via the Generation Zero survey

4.3 Information sessions – key themes

A total of 181 written comments were received over the 4 information sessions.

Key themes are shown in **Figure 4** and in summary were:

- The connections with local roads need to be designed safely.
- A coastal route is preferred.
- Feedback on the Auckland Transport Safe Cycle Route – opposition to Queen Street section in particular.

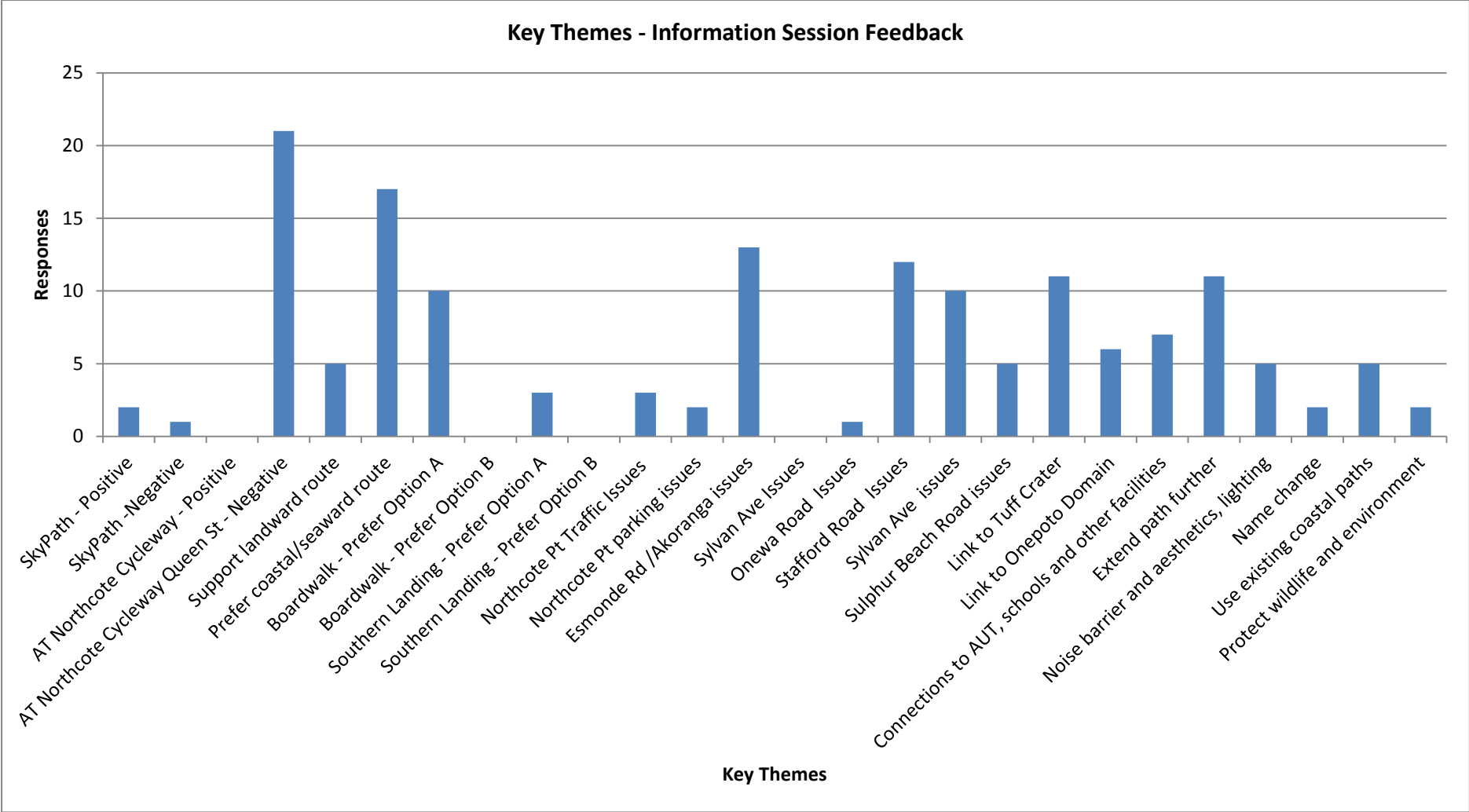


Figure 4 Key themes - information session feedback

5. FEEDBACK SUMMARY

5.1 Stakeholders

There is general support for the project from stakeholders the project team has met with. The landward route is the strong preference due to the increased connectivity with the community, local roads and cycle and walkway, and less environmental impacts and cost, compared to a coastal or seaward route option.

Other feedback themes received included the need for innovative solutions to managing impacts on flora and fauna, a well-designed path with safe connections to local roads and onward routes, connection with SkyPath and capacity and opportunities to re-name the path.

5.2 Community

From the feedback received, a number of common themes emerged. These are set out below.

Support for SeaPath

There was strong support for the project due to it providing a safe and separated transport solution, another travel option, reducing the reliance on vehicles and improving connections with the community and destinations (e.g. AUT, Takapuna, bus station and ferry).

Design of connections with local roads

A strong theme raised during all levels of consultation was the need for well-designed and safe connections with local roads. In particular, the following connection points will need careful consideration during the next stage of design.

Akoranga and Esmonde Roads: currently has safety issues for cyclists with multiple crossings required.

Onewa Road: due to the volume of traffic it should be grade separated (which is proposed).

Stafford Road: traffic speeding on the motorway off-ramp, traffic backing up in peak times and sun strike in the evening are the main safety issues identified by the community. An underpass was requested to be considered.

Coastal route preference

Of those that specifically commented on the route, a coastal option or connection to the coast was preferred. This was because of the more direct and flatter route, scenic views of the coastal environment and city, connection to the sea and less interaction with vehicles (with limited connections required with local roads).

There were several suggestions to use and upgrade the existing coastal paths (in the Sulphur Beach Road area) which could be explored to help provide this connection to the coast, along with installing build out areas and rest points to take advantage of the views at key points along the route.

Support for SkyPath

Overall, there was support for the proposed SkyPath project and connection with SeaPath to provide a transport option for pedestrians and cyclists to get across the harbour.

Auckland Transport Northcote Safe Cycle Route

Some negative feedback about the proposed Northcote Safe Cycle Route (Queen Street section) was received from the community during the consultation process. This feedback has been shared with the Auckland Transport project team to include in their current planning processes.

6. NEXT STEPS

The key themes received from the community and stakeholders will be considered by the Transport Agency and project team as part of the process to confirm the route and refine the design.

In late 2016, the project anticipates moving to the detailed business case and consenting phases. The project team will continue to engage with stakeholders during this time.

The focus of next stage of community engagement will be on confirmation of the route, refinement of the design, mitigation of potential impacts and identification of opportunities for enhancements.