Dunedin Waterfront - Overview of Engagement with the community

Early engagement

Access to the harbour and improved harbour amenity were identified as priorities for our residents as early as 2002 when Dunedin City Council conducted a city-wide consultation (Our City Our Future). Since then the Council has been working with other key interests including Port Otago and Otago Regional Council to make that happen.

A draft vision for the area centred on the Steamer Basin and the industrial land to the north was developed by the Council and Port Otago in 2005. Feedback was invited from land owners and building occupiers in the wider waterfront area as well as from water users and interests. As a result of this engagement and feedback from the community, the focus of regeneration shifted to the Steamer Basin and the land to the south. Increased access points to the water were also included.

To facilitate revitalisation and enable mixed use development, the Council and Port Otago Limited initiated a Change to the District Plan, centred on the edge of the Steamer Basin and the area to the south. This formed the basis of the Harbourside Edge commercial and mixed use zone in the DCC’s recently adopted Second Generation District Plan (2GP).

Local architect Damien Van Brandenburg produced a design for a bridge connection around the same time. The bridge was intended to reconnect the waterfront with the city but also to act as a catalyst to kick start regeneration of the Waterfront. Since then the Dunedin City Council has continued to work with Architecture Van Brandenburg (AVB) to refine the designs, and with other key local organisations to progress plans for the waterfront.

Engagement on the current vision

Damien Van Brandenburg teamed with Animation Research Limited (ARL) last year and approached Dunedin City Council and Port Otago with a design for the wider waterfront area. The DCC and other key local organisations (Port Otago Limited, Otago Regional Council, University of Otago and Ngai Tahu Property Limited) all committed to working together with AVB and ARL to achieve the vision.

The vision was launched to the Chamber of Commerce and other business interests in November 2017 and presented to a wide range of community groups.

Models and audio-visual materials profiling the vision were installed in a public exhibition space established at Toitū Settlers Museum in December 2017. People were invited to provide feedback on the vision, as well as the Dunedin City Council’s proposed funding of the bridge.
Community feedback on the Waterfront vision:

When the vision was unveiled in 2017 it received widespread public support, including in an informal ODT online poll in which 89% of the nearly 7000 votes were in favour of the development. As outlined below the Council sought specific feedback as part of the 10-year plan process in 2017 on the level of investment and funding for the bridge. Several submitters also provided feedback on the vision through submissions on the 10 Year Plan.

49% of those who commented on the vision for Dunedin’s waterfront, were supportive of the proposal. Many of those who supported the waterfront vision commented on the opportunities for economic, tourism, and recreational growth. They commented on the forward-thinking vision, connection between city and harbour and the positive public space and development it would provide.

A number of respondents highlighted successful models of waterfront development which they would like to see replicated or identified elements they would like to see included. Wellington’s waterfront area was suggested as a good model of a thriving waterfront with cafes. Other successful examples included Hobart, San Francisco, Baltimore and the V and A waterfront in Capetown. Others urged that the vision include bars, cafes, art, housing and public spaces, including a walkway around the harbour edge.

Some respondents commented on timing; urging Council to get started now so that they would see it in their lifetime, while others sought development of the bridge before the rest of the waterfront vision. Some suggested that Council should improve amenities on the waterfront before building the bridge, or develop at least one of the components of the vision at the same time as the bridge.

Around a third of comments were opposed to the proposal. In addition to expressions of support or opposition, several submitters raised specific issues, concerns or suggestions about the proposals.

10 Year Plan Feedback on the waterfront bridge

Feedback from the community on support for Council investment in the bridge connection between the Waterfront and the central city was sought as part of the 10-year plan process in 2017/18.

A total of 1,446 feedback forms were received. 72% indicated support for the Council to fund a bridge to connect the waterfront.

A total of 1,025 postcards were also completed. The questions mirrored those posed in the 10 Year Plan consultation document. The feedback collected as part of the exhibition of the vision models at Toitū was 90% in favour of funding a bridge to reconnect the waterfront.

A social media poll was also used (Thursday 22 March 2018) to ask which of two options people preferred in terms of a bridge; an architectural bridge or a basic bridge. Around 1,200 votes were received. 64% voted for the ‘architectural ($20m)’; and 36% voted for the ‘basic bridge ($10m)’.
The Dunedin City Council resolved unanimously at its 10 Year Plan deliberations meeting on 15 May 2018 to confirm $20M funding for the city to waterfront bridge.

**Re-engagement with the community in relation to this application:**

In late October a new exhibition space was established in the Octagon under the banner – Let’s Make it happen!

The exhibition communicates revisions to the vision following the feasibility work to ensure its viability and a strong business case. The community are invited to visit to learn more about the progress towards the vision and to leave their thoughts. Feedback can be provided electronically on iPads and on handwritten feedback cards.

People have also been encouraged, via the Council’s website and the Dunedin Waterfront Vision Facebook page to complete a feedback survey. It asks

- Do you support redevelopment of Dunedin’s waterfront? and
- What would attract you to use the waterfront?

After 14 days, more than 1000 visitors had visited the exhibition. Their feedback (results of the survey from visitors to the exhibition centre, Facebook and our website) was as follows:

**Survey:**

- 89% of the 675 responses in favour of redevelopment of the waterfront; and
- In keeping with the 89% positive response to the first question, the open-ended question about what at will attract residents and visitors to the waterfront included many positive ideas, including, but not limited to:
  - World class architecture;
  - Access to the water for activities such as swimming, boating, relaxation and jumping;
  - Good food (cafes/restaurants);
  - Public/Communal spaces with seating and amenities;
  - Playground;
  - Cycleways and walkways;
  - Hotel facilities;
  - Cultural Centre / Art / history / sculpture;
  - Marina facilities;
  - Green space and tree planting;
  - Marine science centre;
  - New services and jobs;
  - Sufficient parking; and
  - Ferry services.
The few detractors to redevelopment of the waterfront cited such things as:

- Opposition to the bridge design and/or cost;
- Concern that existing industry surrounding the waterfront will be pushed out;
- Concern that the proposed design is not in keeping with other parts of Dunedin; and
- Opinion that money could be spent on other areas of Dunedin or other projects.

**Postcards:**

- Of the 205 postcards completed, 92% were in favour of redevelopment of the waterfront.

Due to the nature of the waterfront development to attract visitors to Dunedin as well as provide important amenities to Dunedin residents we asked survey respondents to indicate where they were from:

- 76% of responses from Dunedin and surrounds;
- 14% from international visitors; and
- 10% from other New Zealand locations.

Feedback is also sought online via @Dunedinwaterfrontvision on Facebook. We note that feedback on our recent post requesting people to complete the survey has 248 positive responses and 11 responses that were indifferent. The post also received 78 comments of which we categorise 65% to be positive and 30% negative.

**Future consultation and engagement**

There will be on going conversations with the community as the plans develop. Views will be sought regarding the proposed establishment of a Council Controlled Organisation to drive implementation of the waterfront vision, through the Annual Plan process for 2019. Feedback will also be sought on the various building components as business cases are developed and relevant consents are sought. It is also intended that the design and content of the public spaces is driven by community input.