

Town Belt Active Travel Trial

Engagement and Trial Summary Report

June 2026

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Purpose

The Town Belt Active Travel Trial was undertaken between 26 January and 19 April 2026 to test how temporary changes to vehicle access within sections of Queens Drive and Braid Road influenced transport patterns, safety, recreation, accessibility, biodiversity experience, and community use of the Dunedin Town Belt.

The trial was undertaken in the context of Policy 8.10.1.12 of the Dunedin Town Belt Reserve Management Plan, which states that Council shall consider the adaptation of Queens Drive to enable resident-only access and establish a pedestrian and cycleway route through the length of the Town Belt, while striving to achieve:

- promotion of transport safety;
- promotion of non-vehicular transport modes;
- reduction of illegal carparking;
- reduction in the ability to illegally dump rubbish; and
- promotion of zero-carbon outcomes.

The temporary nature of the trial provided an opportunity to observe how the corridor functioned under changed vehicle access conditions and to gather community and stakeholder feedback alongside technical monitoring. A programme of transport monitoring, community engagement, stakeholder consultation, biodiversity monitoring and rubbish observations was undertaken throughout the trial. A total of 1,546 submissions were received through the online feedback form.

Key Findings

Community views were mixed.

Feedback reflected differing views about the trial and the future role of Queens Drive. Approximately 40% of online submitters supported the trial, while approximately 58% opposed it. Supportive feedback commonly identified improved amenity, reduced vehicle conflict, opportunities for walking and cycling, and enjoyment of the Town Belt environment. Opposing feedback commonly identified concerns regarding vehicle access, travel convenience, traffic redistribution, and Council spending priorities. The engagement process was an open public feedback exercise and was not designed to be statistically representative of the Dunedin population.

Active travel and recreational use increased during the trial.

Transport monitoring identified increased pedestrian and cycling activity within the trial area during the period of reduced vehicle access. Observational monitoring also identified increased recreational and social use, including walking, cycling, family use, dog walking and people spending time within the road corridor. Following the reintroduction of vehicle access, pedestrian and cycling activity reduced compared with levels observed during the closure period.

Safety and accessibility constraints were identified.

The assessment identified constrained road geometry, limited pedestrian separation, restricted visibility at some intersections, and vehicle operating speeds exceeding the posted speed limit within sections of the corridor. At the same time, reported crash numbers within the Town Belt remain relatively low, likely reflecting the relatively low traffic volumes on Queens Drive. The findings therefore identify both existing safety constraints and the importance of considering current traffic volumes and transport function when assessing future options.

Biodiversity outcomes were inconclusive.

The available bird count data was insufficient to determine whether the trial resulted in ecological change. The short trial period, seasonal variation and variability between individual counts limited the ability to draw meaningful conclusions. Community feedback did, however, identify greater enjoyment of birdsong and quieter conditions during the trial. These observations relate to people's experience of the Town Belt and do not provide evidence of ecological change.

Lower levels of newly identified dumped material were observed during the trial period.

Rubbish monitoring identified a reduction in newly identified dumped material during the trial period. However, the available information is insufficient to determine whether the change was caused by reduced vehicle access, as rubbish collection and dumping behaviour may be influenced by a range of factors.

Key Implications

The findings provide evidence to inform consideration of Policy 8.10.1.12.

The trial provides evidence relevant to the policy direction, including observed changes in active travel and recreational use, transport network effects, safety considerations, and observations relating to rubbish. The trial also provides information about how different users experienced the corridor under reduced vehicle access. These findings can assist Council in considering the policy's objectives alongside other relevant technical, environmental, accessibility and community considerations.

The trial does not identify a single preferred future outcome for Queens Drive.

The findings identify a range of considerations relevant to the future role and function of the corridor, including transport safety, active travel, accessibility, recreational use, network function, illegal rubbish dumping and environmental outcomes. Community feedback remains divided regarding the future role and function of Queens Drive.

The findings provide evidence to inform future planning and decision-making.

The trial provides information about how Queens Drive and the surrounding transport network operated under temporary changes to vehicle access, as well as how different users experienced and used the space. The findings can be considered alongside the policy direction, future technical assessments, funding considerations and further community engagement when considering the future role and function of Queens Drive.

The trial findings are intended to provide information for Council consideration. They do not identify a preferred future access arrangement for Queens Drive. Any future changes would remain subject to further Council consideration, community engagement, technical assessment, funding considerations and the appropriate decision-making processes.



1 INTRODUCTION

The Dunedin Town Belt is a significant recreational, ecological, landscape, and cultural asset that surrounds much of central Dunedin. Historically, sections of the Town Belt have also functioned as part of the city's transport network, including Queens Drive and Braid Road, which currently accommodate both vehicle movements and recreational use.

During development of the Dunedin Town Belt Reserve Management Plan, submitters identified a range of opportunities and concerns relating to the future role of the Town Belt. Key themes included transport safety, illegal rubbish dumping, biodiversity protection, recreation opportunities, active travel connections, and broader aspirations to enhance public interaction with the reserve environment.

The Town Belt Active Travel Trial was undertaken as a temporary street trial under the Reshaping Streets regulatory framework introduced by Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency. The framework enables councils, as Road Controlling Authorities, to implement temporary traffic and street changes to test potential approaches in real-world conditions prior to consideration of any permanent infrastructure or long-term design responses. The trial assessed how reduced vehicle access within sections of Queens Drive and Braid Road influenced use of the corridor and surrounding environment.

The trial operated between 26 January and 19 April 2026 and involved temporary closure of sections of Queens Drive and Braid Road to through-traffic, while maintaining access for residents, emergency services, and operational vehicles. Temporary infrastructure, activation elements, signage, seating, and recreational features were installed to support public use of the corridor during the trial period.

The purpose of the trial was not solely to assess transport outcomes, but to better understand the broader relationship between vehicle access, recreation, biodiversity experience, safety, public amenity, and community use within the Town Belt environment. The trial also provided an opportunity to observe how the corridor functioned operationally under altered conditions and to gather community feedback prior to consideration of any future decisions.

This report summarises the engagement undertaken throughout the trial period and presents findings relating to transport monitoring, safety assessment, biodiversity observations, rubbish monitoring, operational outcomes, and stakeholder feedback. The report does not recommend a single predetermined outcome. Rather, it is intended to provide Council with evidence and observations gathered throughout the trial period to help inform future decision-making regarding the role and function of Queens Drive within the Dunedin Town Belt.

2 ENGAGEMENT

2.1 What We did

The engagement period ran from 26 January to 19 April 2026 and utilised a range of communications and engagement methods to inform the community about the Town Belt Active Travel Trial and gather feedback. The engagement approach was informed by feedback received through the Dunedin Town Belt Reserve Management Plan process, as well as lessons from other temporary street trials undertaken in New Zealand under the Reshaping Streets regulatory framework.

The Town Belt Active Travel Trial was undertaken as a temporary street trial to assess how changes to vehicle access influenced the use and function of the corridor under real-world conditions. The temporary nature of the trial enabled community members, stakeholders, and road users to experience the changes directly and provide feedback based on observed conditions during the trial period.

2.2 What we wanted to find out

The Dunedin Town Belt Reserve Management Plan identified a range of community concerns and aspirations relating to transport safety, illegal parking, illegal rubbish dumping, biodiversity, recreation, walking and cycling, and progress toward zero-carbon outcomes.

A key objective of the trial was to determine whether concerns relating to transport safety, rubbish dumping, and biodiversity could be supported by measurable evidence rather than relying solely on perception. To achieve this, the trial incorporated a range of monitoring and data collection methods, including:

- transport monitoring using AI cameras and tube count surveys,
- biodiversity observations using existing bird count data,
- rubbish monitoring through community clean-up events undertaken before, during, and after the trial.

The trial also provided an opportunity to observe how a reduced-vehicle environment functioned in practice and how people interacted with the space under temporary conditions. This information is intended to inform future design options and decision-making for the Town Belt.

The survey was designed to capture both participant experiences during the trial and views on potential future options for the corridor. Questions included a combination of experiential measures (such as safety, attractiveness, and use patterns) and opinion-based questions relating to possible future scenarios. As with all public engagement surveys, responses should be interpreted within the context of the questions asked and considered alongside the wider monitoring, stakeholder engagement, and technical assessment findings presented throughout this report.

The online survey asked the following questions:

1. *Have you used this section of road during the trial?*
2. *How did you use this space?*
3. *Have you felt safer using the area during the trial?*
4. *Do you feel the area is nicer and more inviting during the trial?*
5. *Do you support exploring future shared path options within Queens Drive?*
6. *Has the change made it harder for you to get around by car?*
7. *Do you support permanently closing this section of Queens Drive to vehicles?*
8. *What do you like about the trial?*

9. What do you think could be improved?
10. Any further comments?

2.3 Communication and Engagement Methods and Timeline

Table 1 below outlines the different communications and engagement methods used to gather community feedback on the Town Belt Active Travel Trial. A range of methods were selected to help obtain input from a broad cross-section of the community. Figures 1-3 illustrate some of the communication approaches used throughout the engagement period.

Table 1: Communications and Engagement Methods

Communications and Engagement Methods	Date	Number of people who interacted
Resident Online Survey	26 January – 19 April 2026	1546 submissions
Distribution of Letters to local Residents		
1. Trial notification letter	21-23 January	400 letters
2. Launch Event notification Letter <i>*Increased spread based on requests from the community.</i>	11 February	500 letters*
Website update	26 January- 19 April	3,006 users of Town Belt Active Travel Trial page 1,938 users on Town Belt Active Travel Trial Feedback page 3 users on Urbanerds campaign 56 users of Town Belt Active Travel Trial ODT display. 32 users on QR code for Letters to Residents 12 users from Town Belt Active Travel Trial via FYI newsletter 64 users used QR code from signs on site at the Town Belt Trial area.
Social Media Posts		
We're trying something new in the Town Belt	January 26, 2026	50,326 views, 458 interactions, 293 link clicks.
Event listing for 'opening' event.	30 January 2026	No stats available
Thanks to everyone who came along to the official launch of the Town Belt Active Travel Trial on Friday.	16 February 2026	29,531 views, 198 interactions, 68 link clicks.

Join us for a fun, family-friendly day celebrating bikes, birds, and the beautiful Town Belt as part of New Zealand Festival of Nature.	9 April 2026	7296 views, 20 interactions, 13 link clicks.
The Town Belt Active Travel Trial is set to end on Sunday, 19 April.	17 April 2026	26,615 views, 92 interactions, 48 link clicks.
Media Coverage https://tinyurl.com/TownBeltOAR		
Interview on OAR radio.	30 January	
ODT Article “Town Belt Proposal: Car-free area to be considered”.	9 December 2025	
	29 January	
ODT Article “Council needs to fix ‘basics’ first”.	26 January	
ODT Article “Cars Banished in Town Belt trial”	3 February	
ODT Article “Town Belt nothing more than cycleways grab”.	13 April 2026	
ODT Article “Tireless effort to get bush tyre-less”.	3 February	
Stuff Article		
Emails to stakeholders, community, and cultural groups	January- April 2026	Schools, Clubs, Boards of Trustees, University Departments, Community Organisations, Disabled Community, Aged Care Facilities, Dunedin Police.
Onsite Engagement in the Town Belt Reserve.	31 January 21 st February 6 th March 11 th March	Each site visit resulted in at least 10 conversations each time. Minimum 40 participants.
Event based Community Engagement at Trial location (Public Drop in)		
Launch Event	February 13 th	200 people
Wild Dunedin Event	April 10 th	100 people
Keep Dunedin Beautiful Clean up Event (Beginning of Trial)	27 th January	30 people
Keep Dunedin Beautiful Clean up and Orienteering Event	April 11 th	30 people
Meetings with groups		

Arthur Street School Board of Trustees meeting	24 th April	10 people
Dunedin Amenities Society meeting	1 st April	6 people
Living Well Meeting	13 th April	1 representative
Urbanerds meeting	1 st March	10 people
Shark Bell Riders meeting	19 th March	10 people
Paul Pope – Town Belt Traverse	27 th March	1 person
NZ Police	Emails through March	2 people.
Town Belt Kaitiaki	Emails through March/April	Group response.
Public Event Engagement		
Tent City Engagement	16-18 th February	1852 students over 3 days
Spokes Bike Breakfast Event	18 th February	200-250 attendees
Wild Dunedin Nature Dome Event	12 th April	
Engagement with University Departments:		
Geography Department,	25 th March	20 Students
Surveying Department	13 th April	30 students
Engagement with Schools		
Otago Boys High School- Year 11 and 13 Geography Classes	20 th March	40 students
Town Belt Kaitiaki Staff Training Day.	17 th March	10 teachers

2.4 Who we heard from

Understanding who we have heard from is important for understanding which parts of the community the feedback collected speaks for. It also helps us to understand who we haven't heard from and enables us to adjust engagement methods for future engagements.

2.4.1 Online Demographics

Our web analytics are able to determine demographics of users and where they have come from. Overall, the web page has had 4,200 visits which have resulted in 1,546 physical submissions. Figure 4 below shows the rate of activity on the Town Belt Active Travel Trial webpage. Notable peaks in activity align with Otago Daily Times (ODT) and Stuff Articles at the beginning of the trial period, and Facebook reminders towards the end of trial that feedback on the trial was closing.

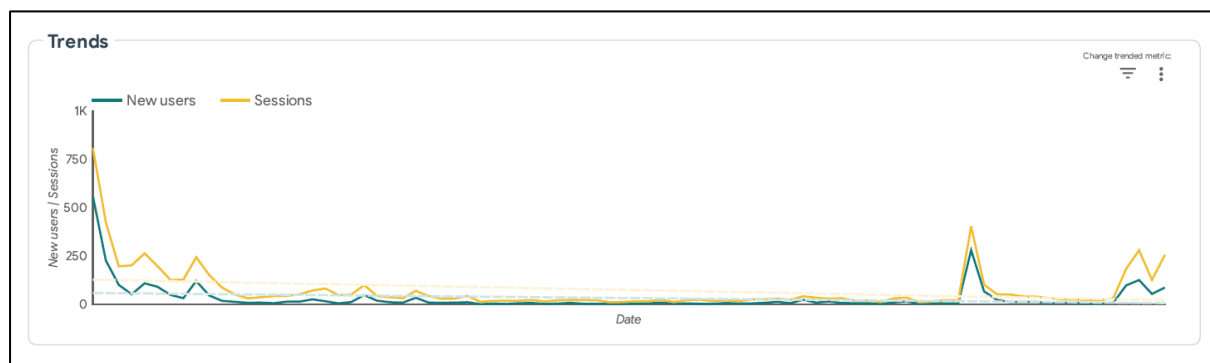


Figure 1: Number of users on the Town Belt Active Travel Trial webpage over time.

It was not always possible to determine the age of users visiting the webpage; however, age data was available for approximately 30% of users. Figure 5 depicts the known age distribution of webpage visitors. Within this group, the predominant age categories were 65 years and over (9.5%) and 55–64 years (6.3%).

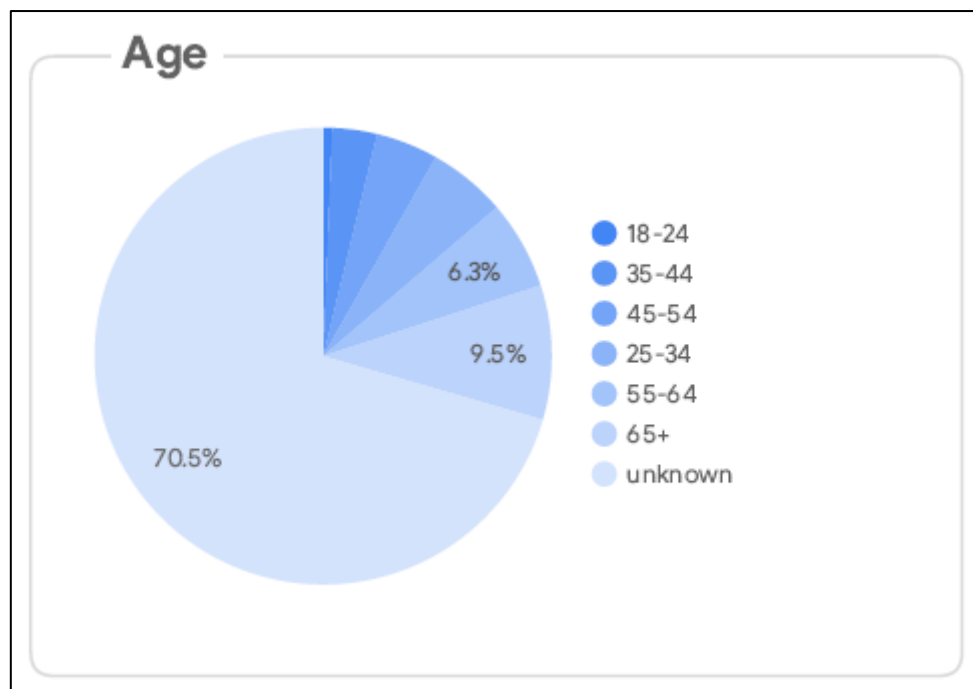


Figure 2: Known ages of webpage users.

2.4.2 Limitations and Interpretation of Engagement Data

The engagement process was designed to gather a broad range of community perspectives rather than undertake a statistically representative survey of the Dunedin population. Participation in the online feedback form and social media discussion was voluntary and self-selecting, meaning responses may reflect stronger views held by individuals with a particular interest in the trial.

Some engagement methods, particularly social media commentary and public submissions, may also amplify more strongly held positive or negative opinions. For this reason, engagement findings should be interpreted alongside other information sources within this report, including transport data, observational analysis, biodiversity monitoring, and targeted stakeholder engagement.

Demographic information was not available for all participants due to privacy settings and limitations within web analytics tools. While efforts were made to engage broadly across the community, not all groups or individuals chose to participate.

2.5 What we heard about the Town Belt Active Travel Trial

2.5.1 Feedback Form Questions 1-7.

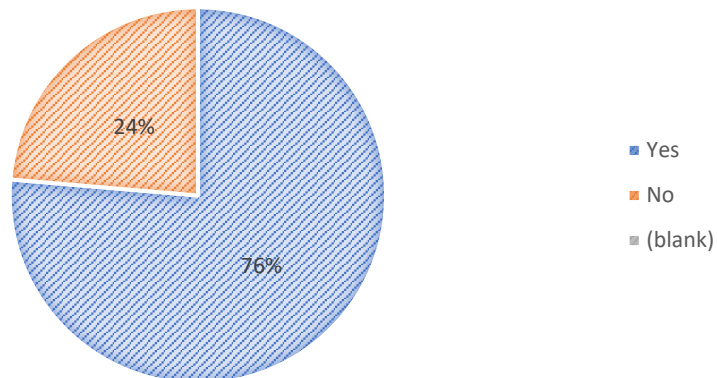
A total of 1,546 submissions were received through the online feedback form. Submissions were reviewed for completeness and duplicates where identifiable; however, the engagement process remained an open public feedback exercise rather than a controlled survey sample.

A summary of responses to Questions 1–7, which contained specific tick-box answer options, is provided below. Not all respondents answered every question, and as a result some responses were left blank, reducing the total number of responses recorded for individual questions.

Question One: Have you used this section of road during the trial?

<i>Have you used this section of road during the trial?</i>	<i>Count of Have you used this section of road during the trial?</i>
Yes	1179
No	365
(blank)	
Grand Total	1544

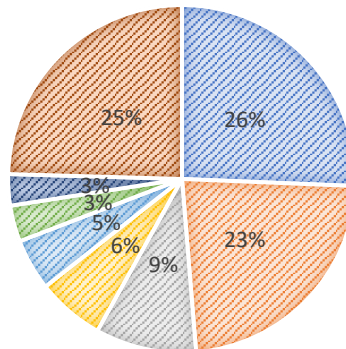
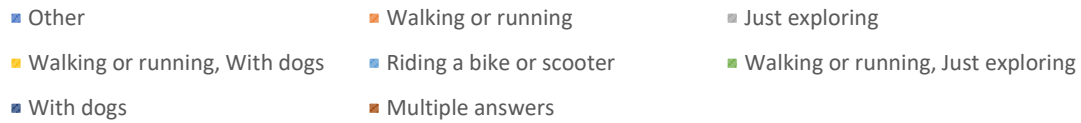
HAVE YOU USED THIS SECTION OF ROAD DURING THE TRIAL?



Question Two: How did you use this space?

<i>How did you use this space?</i>	<i>Count</i>
Other	396
Walking or running	356
Just exploring	145
Walking or running, With dogs	97
Riding a bike or scooter	74
Walking or running, just exploring	52
With dogs	45
Multiple answers	379
Grand Total	1544

HOW DID YOU USE THIS SPACE?



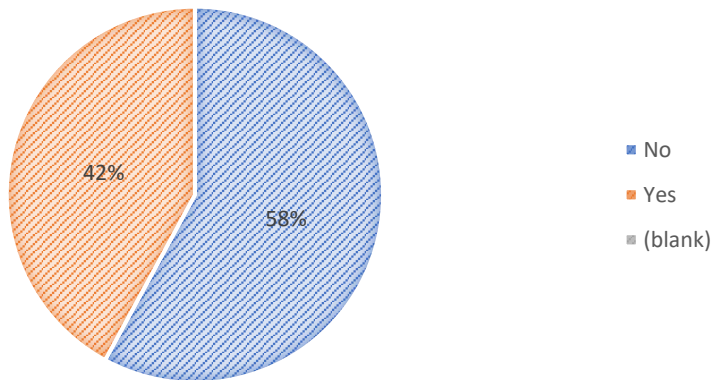
Based on the responses provided under the “Other” category, the three most common themes were:

1. People attempting to drive through the area but being unable to due to the road closure,
2. People visiting the area specifically to observe or assess the trial,
3. Recreational use of the space.

Question Three: Have you felt safer using the area during the trial?

<i>Have you felt safer using the area during the trial?</i>	<i>Count of Have you felt safer using the area during the trial?</i>
No	848
Yes	616
(blank)	
Grand Total	1464

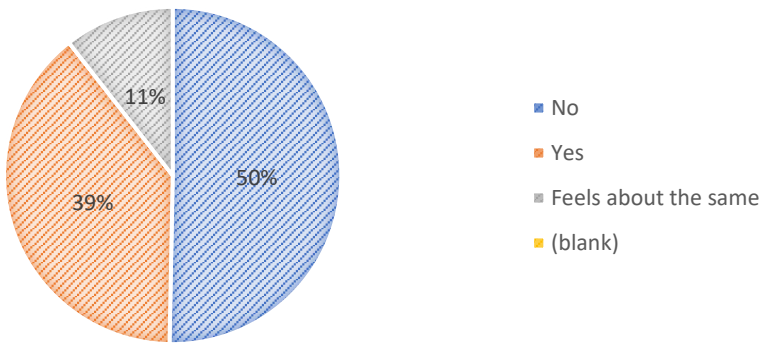
HAVE YOU FELT SAFER USING THE AREA DURING THE TRIAL?



Question Four: Do you feel the area is nicer and more inviting during the trial?

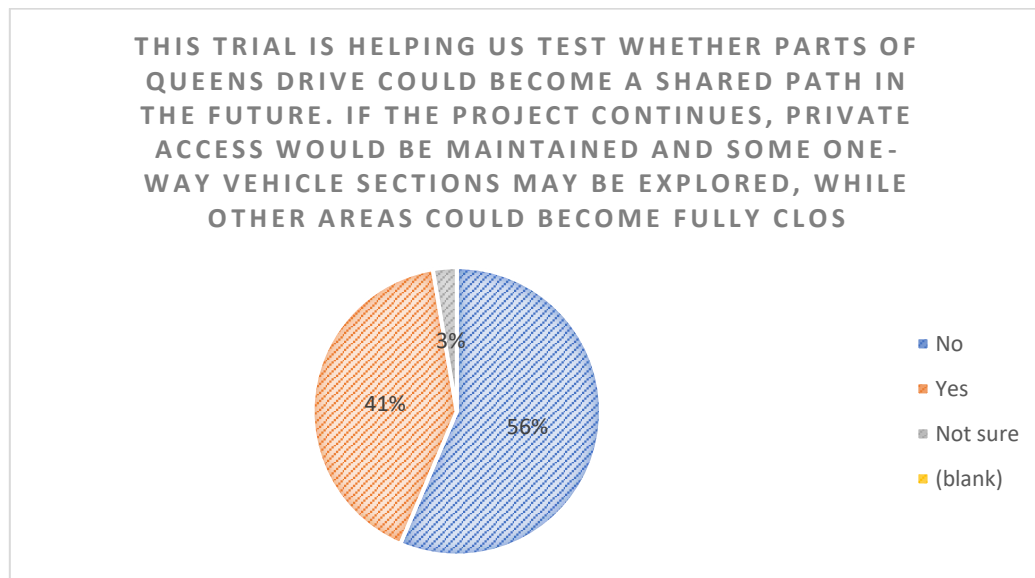
Do you feel the area is nicer and more inviting during the trial the trial?	Count of Do you feel the area is nicer and more inviting during the trial the trial?
No	748
Yes	582
Feels about the same	157
(blank)	
Grand Total	1487

DO YOU FEEL THE AREA IS NICER AND MORE INVITING DURING THE TRIAL THE TRIAL?



Question Five: This trial is helping us test whether parts of Queens Drive could become a shared path in the future. If the project continues, private access would be maintained and some one-way vehicle sections may be explored, while other areas could become fully closed to vehicles. Do you support us exploring this idea further?

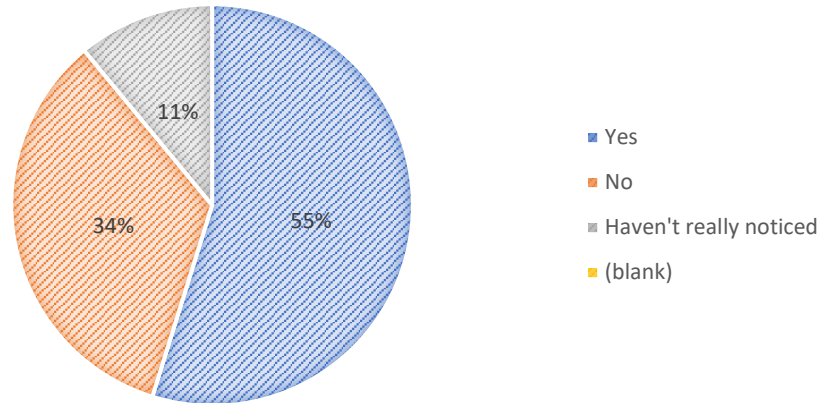
<i>This trial is helping us test whether part of Queens Drive could become a shared path in the future. If the project continues, private access would be maintained and some one-way vehicle sections may be explored, while other areas could become fully closed. Do you support us exploring this idea further?</i>	<i>Count of This trial is helping us test whether part of Queens Drive could become a shared path in the future. If the project continues, private access would be maintained and some one-way vehicle sections may be explored, while other areas could become fully closed. Do you support us exploring this idea further?</i>
No	871
Yes	632
Not sure	41
Grand Total	1544



Question Six: Has the change made it harder for you to get around by car?

Has the change made it harder for you to get around by car?	Count of Has the change made it harder for you to get around by car?
Yes	837
No	522
Haven't really noticed	168
Grand Total	1527

COUNT OF "HAS THE CHANGE MADE IT HARDER FOR YOU TO GET AROUND BY CAR?"

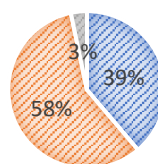


Question Seven: Do you support permanently closing this section of Queens Drive in the Town Belt to vehicles, so it remains a shared space for walking, cycling, and recreation?

Do you support permanently closing this section of Queens Drive in the Town Belt to cars, so it remains a shared space for walking, cycling, and recreation?	Count of Do you support permanently closing this section of Queens Drive in the Town Belt to cars, so it remains a shared space for walking, cycling, and recreation?
Yes	599
No	896
Not Sure	51
Grand Total	1546

COUNT OF DO YOU SUPPORT PERMANENTLY CLOSING THIS SECTION OF QUEENS DRIVE IN THE TOWN BELT TO CARS, SO IT REMAINS A SHARED SPACE FOR WALKING, CYCLING, AND RECREATION?

■ Yes ■ No ■ Not Sure



2.5.2 Feedback form questions 8-10

The final three survey questions invited respondents to provide open-ended feedback on the trial, including what they liked, what could be improved, and any additional comments.

Responses were reviewed and grouped into broad thematic categories using Microsoft Copilot as an administrative support tool. The resulting themes and summaries were subsequently reviewed by Council staff to ensure they accurately reflected the range of views expressed.

Theme frequencies have not been presented, as not all respondents answered these questions and frequency-based analysis may not accurately represent overall sentiment. Questions 5 and 7 were specifically designed to provide a quantifiable measure of support, opposition, or uncertainty regarding future options for the corridor.

2.5.2.1 Question 8: What do you like about the trial?

What Respondents Liked

Theme	Summary
Safety without cars	Felt safer walking, running, cycling; reduced traffic risk; able to use full road width
Family-friendly & inclusive	Suitable for children, prams, mobility aids, dogs; shared accessible space
Peace, quiet & nature	Less noise/pollution; more birdsong; calming environment
Increased use & social interaction	More people observed; stronger community interactions
Recreation & active transport	Supports walking, cycling, and commuting by foot/bike
Access to Town Belt	Encourages exploration and use of green space
Reduced negative behaviours	Less dumping, illegal parking, antisocial driving
Trial concept & innovation	Appreciation for testing new ideas before decisions
Amenities & features	Positive feedback on seating, table tennis, signage

What Respondents Did Not Like

Theme	Summary
Cost / value concerns	Perceived waste of money; funds should go to core services
Loss of vehicle access	Inconvenience, longer routes, reduced access

Perceived lack of need	Existing parks/paths seen as sufficient
Opposition to road closure	Preference that roads remain for vehicles
Limited perceived benefit	Some saw little increase in use
Safety concerns (other)	Concerns about personal safety or user conflict
Impact on surrounding areas	Increased traffic or parking in nearby streets
Aesthetic/design issues	Negative views of furniture and layout
Location suitability	Concerns about shade, weather, or wrong location
Consultation/process	Perceived lack of consultation or communication

2.5.2.2 Question 9: What do you think could be improved?

Theme	Summary of Feedback
Reopen or remove trial	Many respondents called for returning the road to its previous use and removing trial elements
Cost and priorities	Concern that funding should be directed to core services, maintenance, and infrastructure instead
Shared use solutions	Suggestions for one-way traffic, speed calming, or separating pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles
Walking & cycling infrastructure	Improve paths, surfaces, lighting, drainage, and connectivity across the Town Belt
Expand or extend concept	Extend the trial area or apply similar approaches elsewhere in the city
Amenities & facilities	Requests for bins, toilets, seating, water fountains, signage, and lighting
Design & aesthetics	Improve appearance; better integrate features with natural environment; remove or redesign furniture
Safety improvements	Lighting, visibility, safe crossings, and managing interactions between users
Communication & consultation	Improve clarity of purpose, transparency, and community consultation

Alternative approaches	Focus on upgrading existing parks/tracks or testing in different locations
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2.5.2.3 Question 10: Any further comments?

Theme	Summary of Feedback
Continuation of trial	Views ranged from supporting continuation or expansion to preferring discontinuation
Funding and priorities	Comments addressed allocation of ratepayer funds and appropriate spending priorities
Transport function	The road was described both as an important transport route and as non-essential for travel
Accessibility and inclusion	Perspectives included both reduced access for some users and improved access for others
Safety considerations	Feedback included both improvements to safety and concerns about safety in different contexts
Location suitability	Views varied on whether this location is appropriate or if alternatives would be preferable
Perceived need or benefit	Responses identified a range of perceived benefits as well as views that additional provision is unnecessary
Effects on surrounding areas	Comments noted changes to traffic patterns, travel times, and local street use
Alternative approaches	Suggestions included shared-use designs, traffic calming, or investment in other spaces
Consultation and communication	Feedback referenced the need for clearer communication and engagement processes
Town Belt role and future	Views reflected different perspectives on preserving existing use versus reimagining the space

2.5.3 Social Media Summary:

Social media comments were reviewed and summarised using Copilot to identify recurring themes and areas of community interest. As with the online submissions, social media commentary reflected a broad range of views and was often strongly polarised.

Overall, supportive comments generally focused on the creation of a safer, quieter, and more people-focused environment. Common themes included improved conditions for walking and cycling, opportunities for recreation and community events, enjoyment of the Town Belt's natural environment, and support for testing new approaches through a temporary trial.

Comments opposing the trial most commonly related to the loss of vehicle access, perceived inconvenience, concerns about traffic redistribution, and views that Council resources should instead be directed toward other infrastructure priorities. Some respondents also questioned the need for the project, noting the presence of existing parks and recreational spaces elsewhere in the city.

A recurring theme across social media discussions was the level of trust in Council decision-making processes. Some commenters expressed concern that the trial outcome had been predetermined or that temporary changes could become permanent regardless of feedback received. Requests for transparency around monitoring data, consultation results, and decision-making processes were common.

Practical matters raised by both supporters and opponents included accessibility, parking, personal safety, lighting, dog control, toilets, rubbish bins, and the management of interactions between different users within the space.

Overall, social media feedback reinforced the themes identified through the online survey and stakeholder engagement process, demonstrating a community that was strongly divided on the role of Queens Drive as either a transport corridor or a recreation-focused reserve environment.

2.6 Stakeholders and Communities of Interest

Targeted stakeholder engagement was undertaken between 26 January and 19 April 2026 alongside public communications and online engagement. Engagement focused on groups that regularly use the Town Belt, are located adjacent to it, or may have been directly affected by the trial.

An initial round of outreach was undertaken during the first month of the trial. Invitations to provide feedback or meet with Council staff were distributed to schools, disability organisations, environmental groups, transport-related organisations, and community stakeholders. A second phase of engagement was undertaken following preliminary review of feedback to explore specific issues in greater detail. This included discussions with New Zealand Police regarding perceptions of safety and recorded crime data within the Town Belt area.

Additional meetings were held with stakeholder groups and individuals who independently requested further discussion. While efforts were made to engage broadly, it was not possible to meet with every interested group or individual. In some cases, organisations chose not to participate, while others had already provided detailed feedback through submissions and correspondence.

The following section summarises the feedback received through targeted engagement. Direct quotes are identified where used. Verbal feedback and lengthy written responses have been summarised for brevity and clarity. Full public submissions are available within the online submission register.

2.6.1 Arthur Street School Board of Trustees meeting

The Board supported the trial and the promotion of active travel to school. Feedback indicated that some parents considered Queens Drive safer for walking and cycling during the trial. The Board also

identified concerns regarding parking pressures generated by nearby schools and highlighted the need for safer crossings and connections between the Town Belt and surrounding schools if future improvements are pursued.

2.6.2 Dunedin Amenities Society meeting

Views expressed at the meeting were generally not supportive of the trial. Concerns focused on inconvenience, vehicle access, and the perceived need for the project. Members elected to provide individual submissions rather than a collective organisational response.

2.6.3 Living Well Meeting

Living Well was generally supportive of the trial and identified opportunities to improve accessibility within any future design. Recommendations included accessible parking, additional seating and rest areas, improved wayfinding, accessible picnic facilities, stable surfaces, and barrier treatments that maintain access for mobility users while discouraging motorcycle access.

2.6.4 Urbanerds meeting

Council staff met with Urbanerds to discuss the trial design and planning framework. Members subsequently provided individual submissions through the public feedback process.

2.6.5 Shark Bell Riders meeting

Council staff met with members of Shark Bell Riders to discuss the trial and its design objectives. Members subsequently provided individual submissions through the public feedback process.

2.6.6 Paul Pope – Ecologist & Environmental Historian

Paul Pope, creator of the Town Belt Traverse, provided a detailed submission outlining a broader long-term vision for the Town Belt. The submission supported the trial and advocated for greater recognition of the Town Belt's recreational, ecological, cultural, historical, and biodiversity values.

The submission drew upon a substantial body of previous work undertaken by Mr Pope and proposed a range of initiatives to strengthen interpretation, heritage storytelling, recreation opportunities, and connections between key destinations throughout the city. Particular emphasis was placed on improving public understanding of the Town Belt's history, ecological significance, and relationship with wider recreational networks.

The submission supported reducing vehicle access in selected locations where roads were considered to have limited transport function and concluded that the Town Belt should primarily be managed as a reserve rather than as a transport corridor.

2.6.7 NZ Police

New Zealand Police were approached to provide additional context regarding safety within the Town Belt. While the primary focus of the trial was transport safety, engagement feedback also highlighted concerns relating to personal safety and crime.

Police advised that no recorded incidents had occurred within the specific trial area over the previous two years. A total of 31 incidents were recorded on Queens Drive and Braid Road more broadly, with the most common categories relating to mental health and welfare matters. Three driving-related incidents were recorded, all occurring outside the trial area near the Queens Drive and Stuart Street intersection. No sexual offences were recorded on Queens Drive or Braid Road during the period reviewed.

2.6.8 Town Belt Kaitiaki

Teachers and student representatives involved in the Town Belt Kaitiaki programme were generally supportive of the trial. Feedback highlighted the value of improved safety, reduced vehicle presence, and increased opportunities for outdoor learning and recreation.

Suggestions focused on maintaining accessibility and ensuring safe interactions between different user groups within any future design.

2.6.9 Student Engagement

Engagement was undertaken with secondary and tertiary students through Otago Boys' High School and the University of Otago.

University students generally focused on design improvements and opportunities to improve walking and cycling connections across the city. Feedback from Otago Boys' High School varied between year groups, with younger students generally more supportive of the concept. Senior students were more likely to favour retaining vehicle access while also acknowledging the role of quality active transport infrastructure in supporting independent travel.

2.6.10 Sport Otago

Sport Otago provided an organisational submission following its involvement in activities held within the trial area during Wild Dunedin.

The submission supported the trial and identified benefits relating to safety, accessibility, community participation, recreation, and active travel. Sport Otago also identified opportunities to improve activation, accessibility, layout, and ongoing community engagement should future development of the space be considered.

3 TRANSPORT ASSESSMENT

3.1 Purpose of Transport Monitoring

Transport monitoring was undertaken throughout the Town Belt Active Travel Trial to better understand how temporary changes to vehicle access within Queens Drive influenced transport patterns, user behaviour, network effects, and perceptions of safety within the Town Belt environment.

The monitoring programme was designed to assess how the corridor currently functions as both a transport route and a recreational reserve environment, and to explore how reduced vehicle access may influence movement patterns, active travel use, recreation outcomes, and operational considerations within the wider surrounding network.

The trial also provided an opportunity to observe whether reduced through-traffic could support the creation of a lower-speed, people-focused environment more consistent with the recreational and amenity values identified through the Dunedin Town Belt Reserve Management Plan process.

Transport monitoring was undertaken using a combination of:

- baseline tube count surveys,
- AI-based movement monitoring technology,
- comparative monitoring on alternative routes,
- historical speed environment assessments,
- and review of reported crash and infrastructure incident data held by Dunedin City Council.

Monitoring focused on both the trial corridor and surrounding routes, including Māori Road as a key alternative vehicle connection. This enabled assessment of changes in traffic patterns and redistribution effects throughout the trial period.

As the trial was temporary in nature, the monitoring programme provides a snapshot of transport behaviour during the assessment period rather than a comprehensive long-term transport model. Findings should therefore be interpreted as indicative of observed trends and operational outcomes during the trial period.

3.2 Transport Monitoring Methodology

Transport monitoring for the Town Belt Active Travel Trial utilised a combination of traffic monitoring, AI-based movement analysis, historical transport data, and observational assessment methods. Using multiple monitoring approaches enabled Council to assess changes in corridor use, surrounding network effects, operational performance, and user behaviour throughout the trial period.

Baseline traffic volumes were established prior to the trial using pneumatic tube count surveys within the trial area and on surrounding routes. Māori Road was identified as a key alternative vehicle route and was monitored before, during, and after the trial period to assess redistribution effects and wider network impacts associated with changes to vehicle access on Queens Drive.

Following establishment of baseline monitoring, AI-based transport monitoring technology supplied by Betacom- Schreder (“Edge” monitoring units) was installed within the trial area. The AI monitoring system enabled ongoing monitoring of movement patterns and provided improved ability to distinguish between different user types, including pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles.

Historical transport assessment work previously undertaken by Dunedin City Council within Queens Drive was also reviewed as part of the trial analysis. This included prior speed environment assessments undertaken for proposed speed management changes (the Interim Speed Management Plan), along with Council-held records relating to reported crash incidents, infrastructure damage, and operational complaints within the corridor area.

In addition to quantitative monitoring, observational assessment was undertaken throughout the trial period to understand how the corridor functioned operationally under reduced vehicle access conditions. Observations included user behaviour, interaction between different user groups, utilisation of public space, operational access arrangements, and interaction with temporary infrastructure treatments.

The monitoring programme provides a snapshot of corridor behaviour and network performance during the trial period rather than a comprehensive long-term transport model. External variables including weather conditions, seasonal variation, public awareness of the trial, and temporary event activation may also have influenced movement patterns and corridor use.

The original monitoring programme intended for AI-based monitoring equipment to be installed prior to commencement of the trial to enable a longer baseline comparison period. Due to factors outside the project team’s control, installation of the AI monitoring system was delayed until the beginning of the trial period. To address this limitation, supplementary tube count monitoring was undertaken within the trial area prior to commencement of the trial, and post-trial monitoring was extended following reintroduction of vehicle access to provide additional comparative data relating to corridor use and the speed environment.

Different monitoring technologies utilised throughout the project contain inherent limitations relating to accuracy, classification, and interpretation. As a result, findings should be interpreted as indicative of observed trends and operational outcomes during the trial period rather than definitive long-term predictions.

3.3 Usage Numbers and Corridor Function

Baseline and comparative transport monitoring was undertaken before, during, and after the trial period to better understand how changes to vehicle access influenced use of the Queens Drive corridor.

Monitoring undertaken during the trial period identified an increase in pedestrian and cycling activity within the trial area compared with baseline conditions when cars are present. Increased use was observed throughout the daytime period, particularly between approximately 8:00am and 6:00pm (Figure 7), with the corridor functioning as both a movement route and recreational destination during the trial.

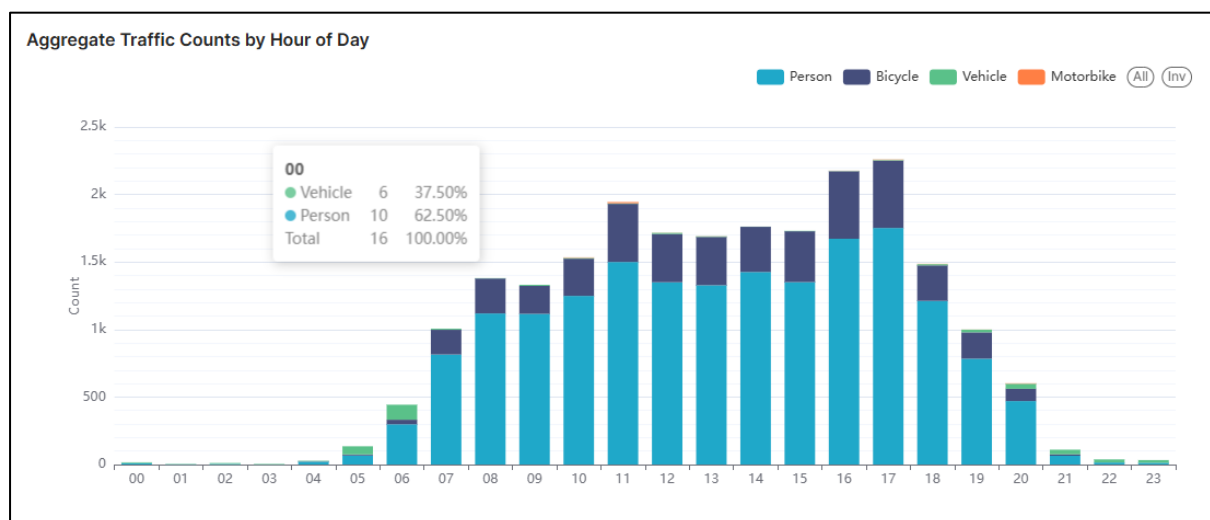


Figure 3: Aggregate Traffic Counts time of day - Over Trial Period

Observational monitoring identified significant recreational use of the space during the closure period. Pedestrians, cyclists, families, children using bikes and scooters, dog walkers, and other recreational users were observed utilising the full width of the road corridor in a manner not typically observed under normal traffic conditions. The corridor also supported increased social and passive use, including people lingering within the space rather than simply moving through it.

Following the reintroduction of vehicle access at the conclusion of the trial period, pedestrian and cycling activity reduced compared with levels observed during the closure period. This reduction occurred despite generally favourable weather conditions following reopening, including clear and calm days that would typically support higher levels of walking and cycling activity (Figure 8).

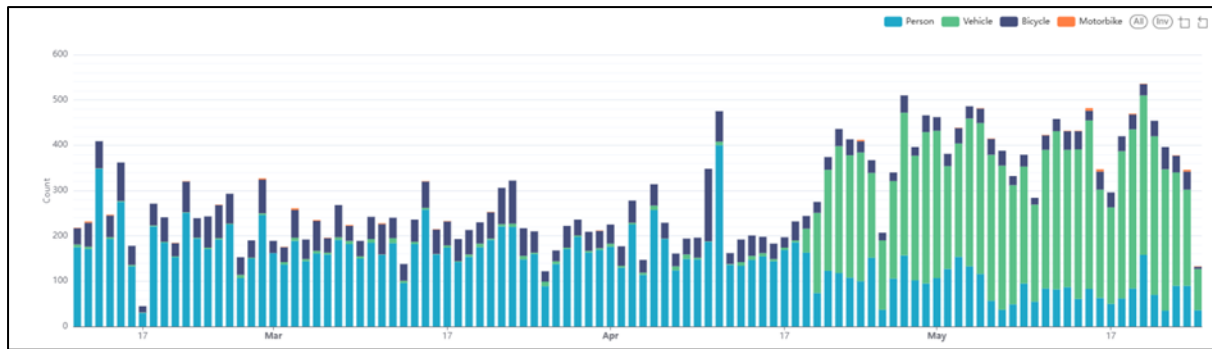


Figure 4: Total vehicle activity from January 26th, 2026, from Edge monitors.

Weather conditions were identified as an important variable influencing corridor use throughout the monitoring period. Lower pedestrian and cycling numbers observed on individual days during the trial generally aligned with poorer weather events. However, the reduction in activity observed following reopening was not considered to be explained by weather conditions.

Similarly, while seasonal daylight variation may influence recreation and active travel patterns, the highest periods of pedestrian activity during the trial occurred between daylight hours of approximately 8:00am and 6:00pm. As a result, it is not considered likely that the conclusion of daylight savings alone accounts for the observed reduction in corridor use following reintroduction of vehicles.

Monitoring and observational assessment also suggested that a substantial proportion of vehicle movements through Queens Drive functioned as through-trips or route-shortening movements between surrounding areas, rather than direct access to destinations within the Town Belt itself. During the trial period, reduced vehicle access altered how the corridor was used and experienced, with increased recreation and active travel use observed compared with baseline and post-trial conditions.

3.3.1 Scenic Drive Function

Throughout the engagement process, a number of submitters identified the scenic and recreational value of driving along Queens Drive. For some users, the route provides an enjoyable vehicle connection through the Town Belt landscape and contributes to their experience of the city. The elevated nature of parts of the route also provides views across the surrounding landscape and contributes to the overall experience of travelling through the Town Belt.

Traffic monitoring undertaken during the trial provides information about the timing and volume of vehicle movements along Queens Drive. As shown in Figure 9, the highest volumes of vehicle movement generally occurred during weekday peak periods, particularly between approximately 8:00–9:00am and 3:00–5:00pm. Traffic volumes were generally lower outside these periods, including during the middle of the day and later in the evening.

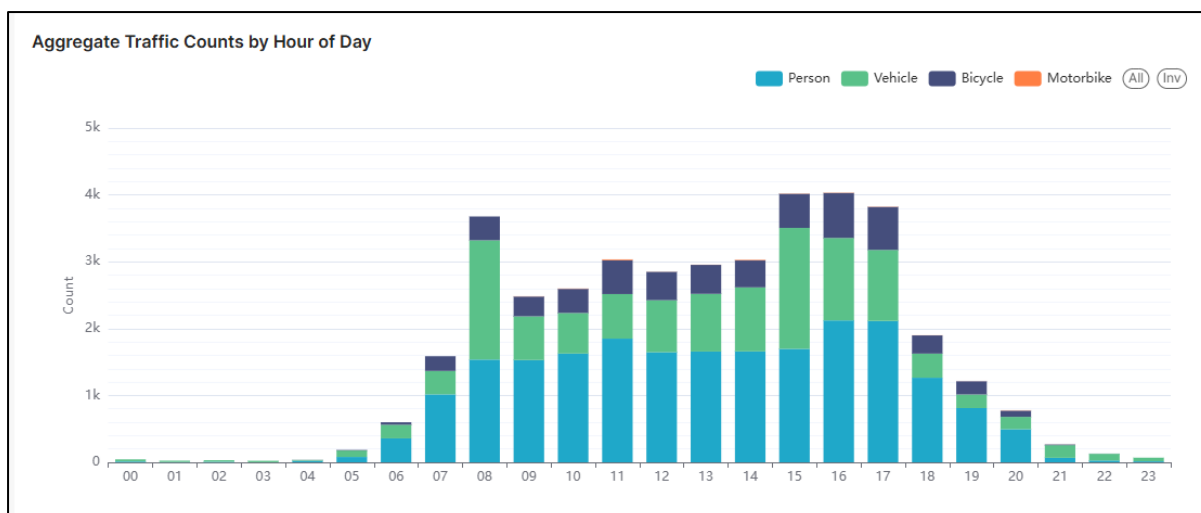


Figure 5: Aggregate Traffic Counts by Hour of Day January-May 2026

While these patterns provide an indication of when the corridor is most heavily used, the available monitoring data cannot definitively distinguish between commuter, school-related, local, recreational or scenic vehicle trips. Consequently, the data should not be interpreted as establishing the proportion of vehicle movements that are associated with scenic or recreational use. Rather, it demonstrates that Queens Drive accommodates a range of vehicle movements throughout the day, with the greatest concentration occurring during weekday peak periods.

The scenic and landscape qualities of the corridor were nevertheless identified by some members of the community as an important aspect of Queens Drive. These values are relevant to consideration of any future changes to the corridor and should be considered alongside transport, safety, recreation and accessibility outcomes.

3.4 Network Effects

Monitoring undertaken throughout the trial assessed whether changes to vehicle access within Queens Drive were likely to result in redistribution of traffic movements within the surrounding transport network.

Māori Road was identified as the primary alternative route within the surrounding network. Prior traffic monitoring data indicated that Māori Road has an approximate operational capacity of 3,250 vehicles per day. Historical traffic calming interventions, including the installation of speed humps, had previously reduced average traffic volumes on Māori Road to approximately 1,800 vehicles per day prior to commencement of the Town Belt trial. By comparison, baseline monitoring indicated that Queens Drive carried relatively low traffic volumes, with peak daily flows of approximately 500 vehicles per day. Based on the available network capacity on Māori Road, it was considered that the surrounding network could accommodate redistributed traffic movements associated with the temporary closure without approaching operational capacity thresholds (see Figure 10).

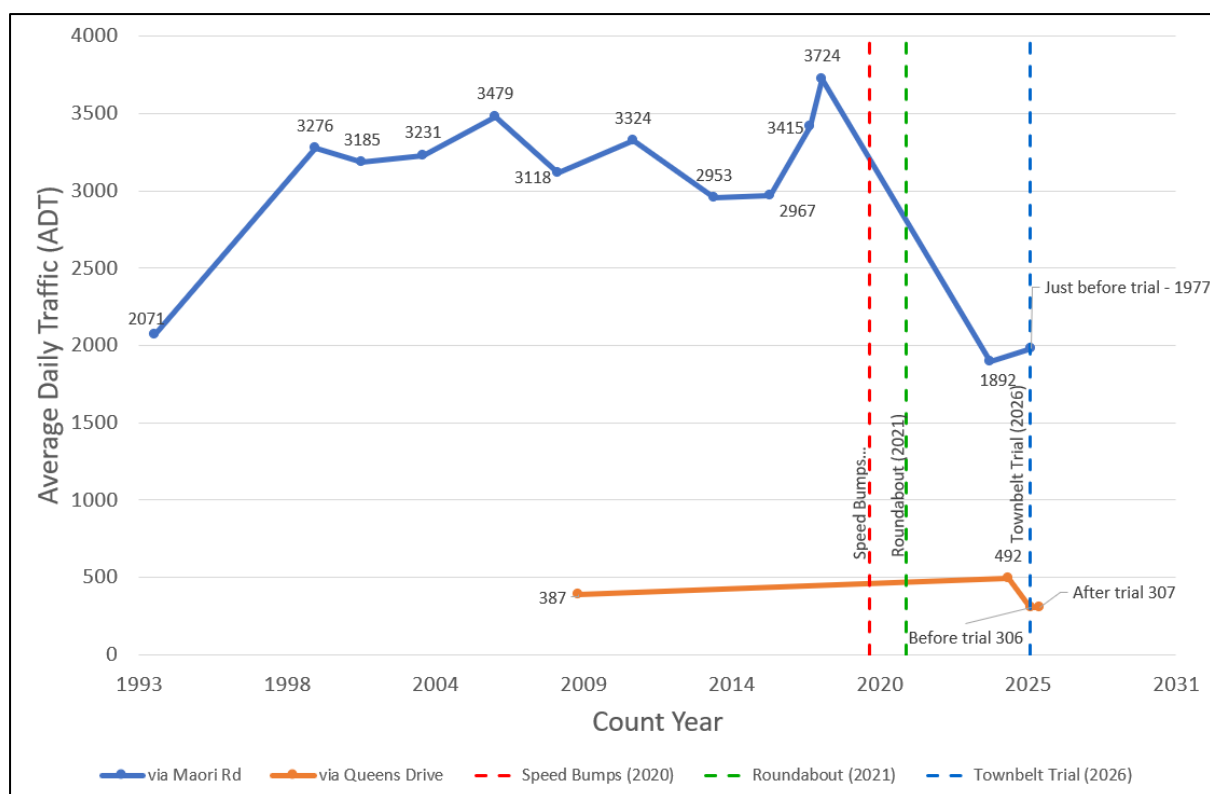


Figure 6: Capacity of Māori Road Comparative to Queens Drive

TomTom traffic movement data supported this assessment and indicated that most vehicle movements along this section of Queens Drive originated from the Caversham and Mornington areas, with traffic dispersing towards Roslyn Village and the City Rise area. While the TomTom dataset is subject to privacy filtering and does not capture every individual movement, it provides an indication of broader travel patterns and route usage across the network.

Travel time analysis was undertaken using TomTom network data, comparing the Town Belt trial period (26 January–19 April 2026) against equivalent dates in 2025, as well as annual 2025 averages. The assessment focused on Māori Road and comparable routes via Queens Drive to determine whether the temporary closure resulted in measurable changes in travel times or delay effects within the wider network.

The analysis identified relatively small changes in average travel times across the monitored periods, with differences generally limited to a few seconds. Variations between routes and time periods were within the range of normal day-to-day traffic fluctuation and do not indicate a clear pattern of increased congestion across the network. Māori Road showed relatively consistent travel times throughout the trial period, likely reflecting the influence of existing traffic calming measures which moderate travel speeds and reduce variability.

Feedback received during the engagement process identified perceptions of increased travel time, inconvenience, and redistribution of traffic onto surrounding streets. However, engineering assessment indicates that even under a conservative assumption that all diverted traffic redistributed to Māori Road, the resulting increase in traffic volumes would remain relatively minor. During the busiest weekday peak period (8:00–9:00am), traffic volumes were estimated to increase from approximately 308 vehicles per hour to 370 vehicles per hour, equating to a change from approximately one vehicle every 11.8 seconds to one vehicle every 9.8 seconds.

Māori Road and Arthur Street are both engineered to accommodate substantially higher traffic volumes than Queens Drive and include existing traffic calming measures intended to manage vehicle speeds and improve safety outcomes. By contrast, Queens Drive is characterised by narrow carriageway widths, constrained visibility, limited pedestrian separation, and a road environment less suited to higher-speed or higher-volume traffic movements.

Overall, monitoring indicated that the surrounding transport network accommodated redistributed traffic movements during the trial period. The available travel time and traffic volume data did not identify a clear pattern of network-wide congestion associated with the temporary closure. Community feedback also identified perceptions of increased travel time and reduced convenience for some users, which are relevant considerations when assessing any future changes to vehicle access within the corridor.

Figures below demonstrate total volumes of traffic for the year 2025:

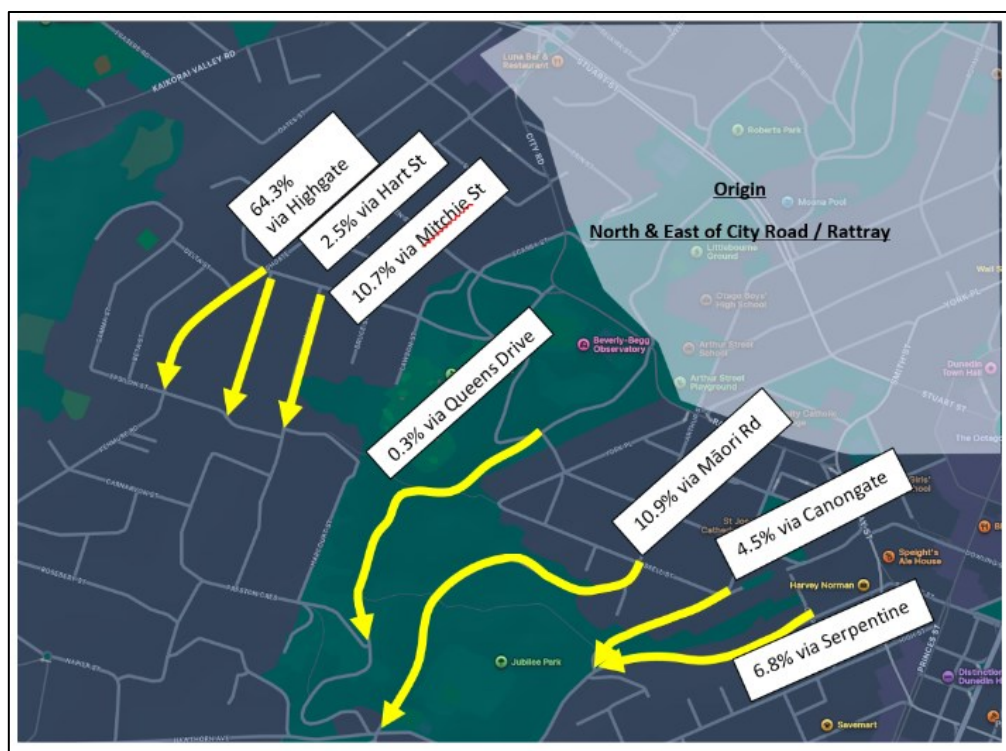


Figure 7: Origin of traffic North and east of City Road/Ratray Street 2025

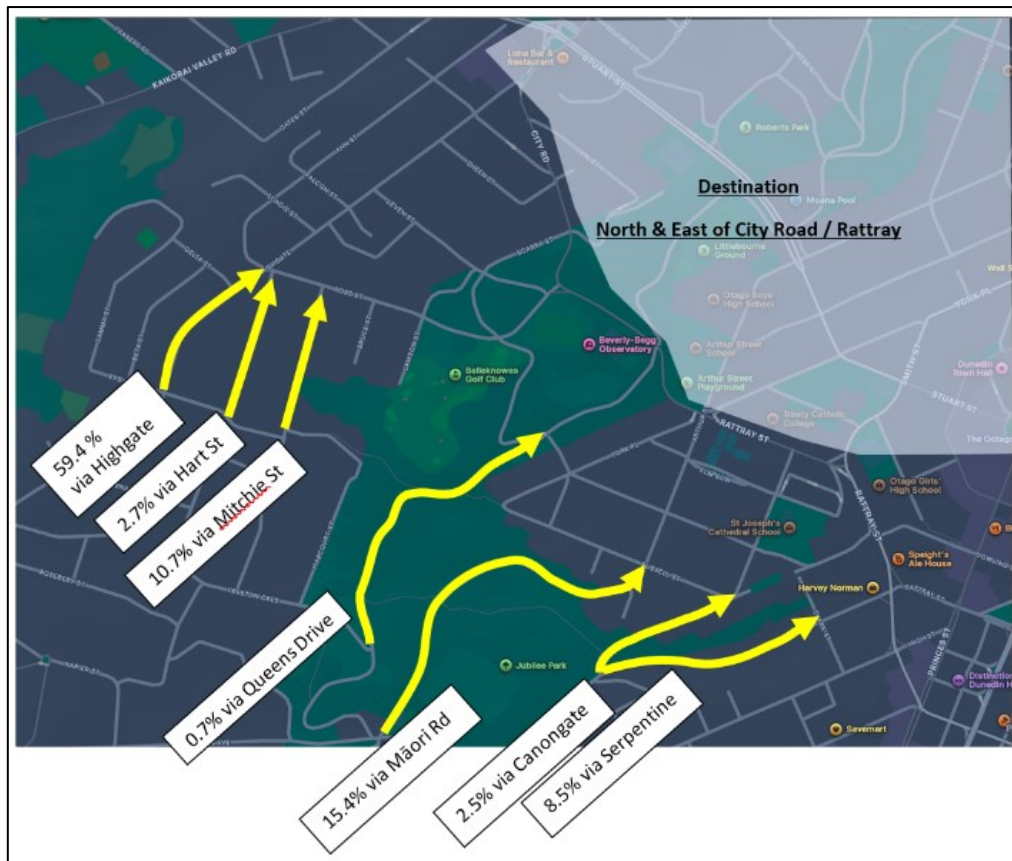


Figure 8: Destination of traffic North and East of City Road /Rattray Street 2025

3.5 Transport Safety Assessment

Crash and incident information relating to the wider Queens Drive and Braid Road corridor was reviewed alongside operational observations, historical speed environment assessments, and behavioural monitoring undertaken during the trial period.

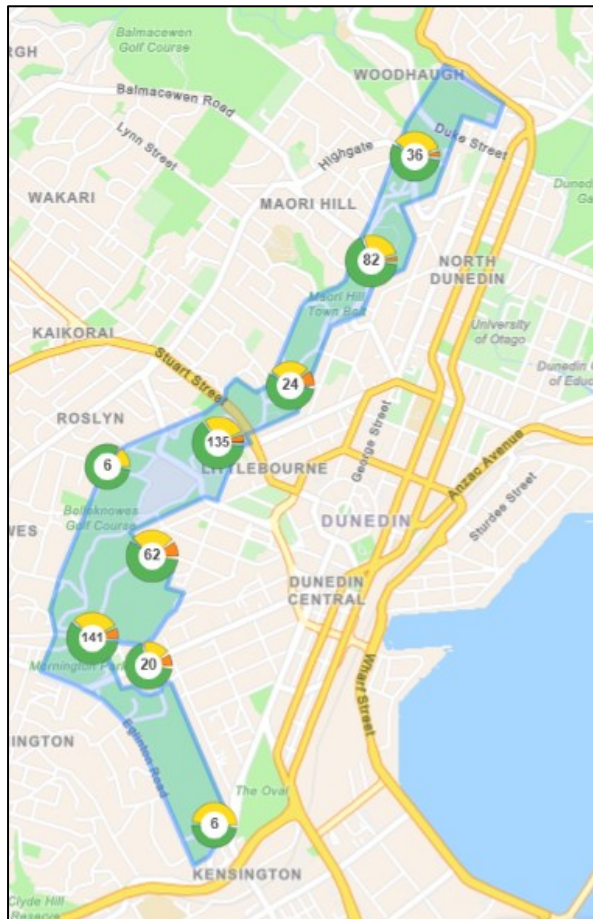


Figure 9: Recorded crash incidents in the Town Belt over known time.

Recorded crash and incident data (Figure 13 below) demonstrate that vehicle incidents have occurred within the wider corridor environment, although the number of reported crashes remains relatively low. This reflects, in part, the relatively low traffic volumes on Queens Drive, which average approximately 200–250 vehicles per day. The available crash history does not indicate a high incidence of recorded crashes when compared with higher-volume parts of the transport network. However, crash records provide only one measure of transport safety and do not capture near misses, unreported incidents, or situations where pedestrians and cyclists may modify their behaviour in response to the road environment.

A key consideration identified through the trial was therefore not simply the occurrence of crashes, but the relationship between the existing transport environment and the recreational and pedestrian-focused function of the Dunedin Town Belt Reserve. The corridor accommodates both vehicle movements and recreational users, and the nature of this interaction varies along different sections of Queens Drive and Braid Road.

Historically, Queens Drive has functioned as a vehicle corridor despite several sections containing constrained geometry and limited pedestrian infrastructure. In some locations, pedestrians and recreational users share the road environment with moving vehicles, while in others pedestrian paths are provided alongside the carriageway. These paths are generally not physically separated or vertically raised from the carriageway, meaning that the degree of separation between pedestrian and vehicle movements varies along the corridor.

Previous transport assessments undertaken by Dunedin City Council through the Interim Speed Management Plan identified that some sections of the corridor would be more appropriately aligned with a lower-speed operating environment. The current posted speed limit remains 50 km/h, although monitoring data indicates that some vehicle operating speeds exceed this threshold within sections of the corridor.

Speed monitoring identified that approximately 14% of drivers exceeded 50 km/h near the Preston Crescent section of Queens Drive, while approximately 12% exceeded 50 km/h near the Braid Road section of the corridor (see Figures 12–15). Physical damage observed to bollard infrastructure intended to provide separation between pedestrians and vehicle movements also provides an

example of the operational issues that can arise where vehicle movements occur within constrained shared-use environments (Figure 18 below).

During the trial period, observational monitoring identified changes in corridor behaviour and spatial use. Reduced vehicle access enabled pedestrians, cyclists, children, scooter users, and families to use the corridor in a more dispersed and recreational manner, rather than being concentrated primarily along the edges of the carriageway.

Following reintroduction of vehicle access at the conclusion of the trial, pedestrian and cycling activity reduced compared with levels observed during the closure period (Figure 8), despite generally favourable weather conditions. While a range of factors may influence corridor use, the observed change indicates a relationship between vehicle access and the way some people use the corridor for recreation and active travel.

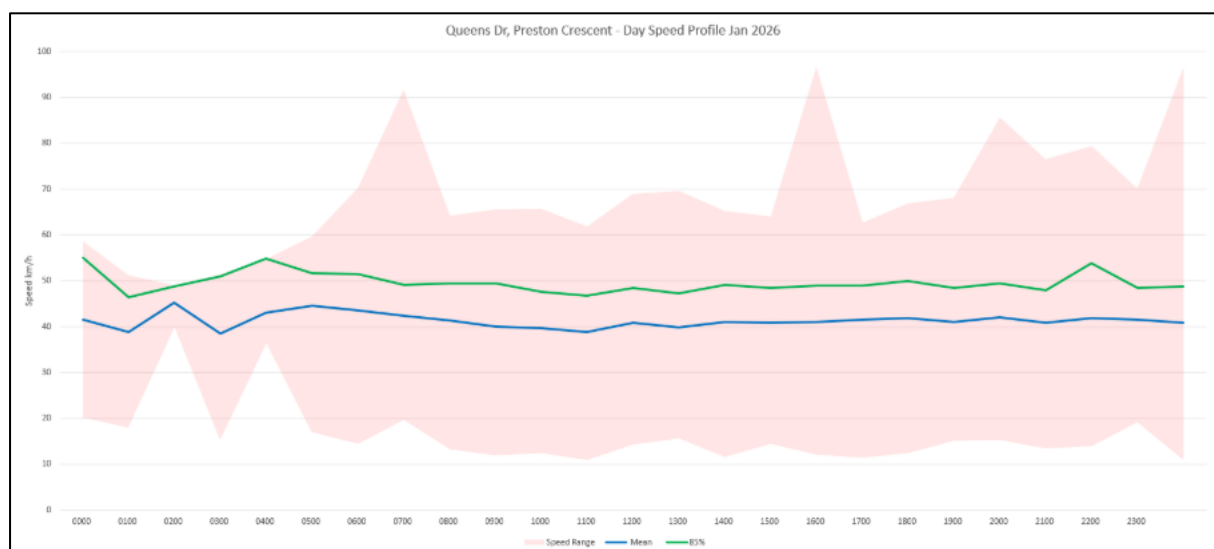


Figure 10: Speed profile of Queens Drive over a day.

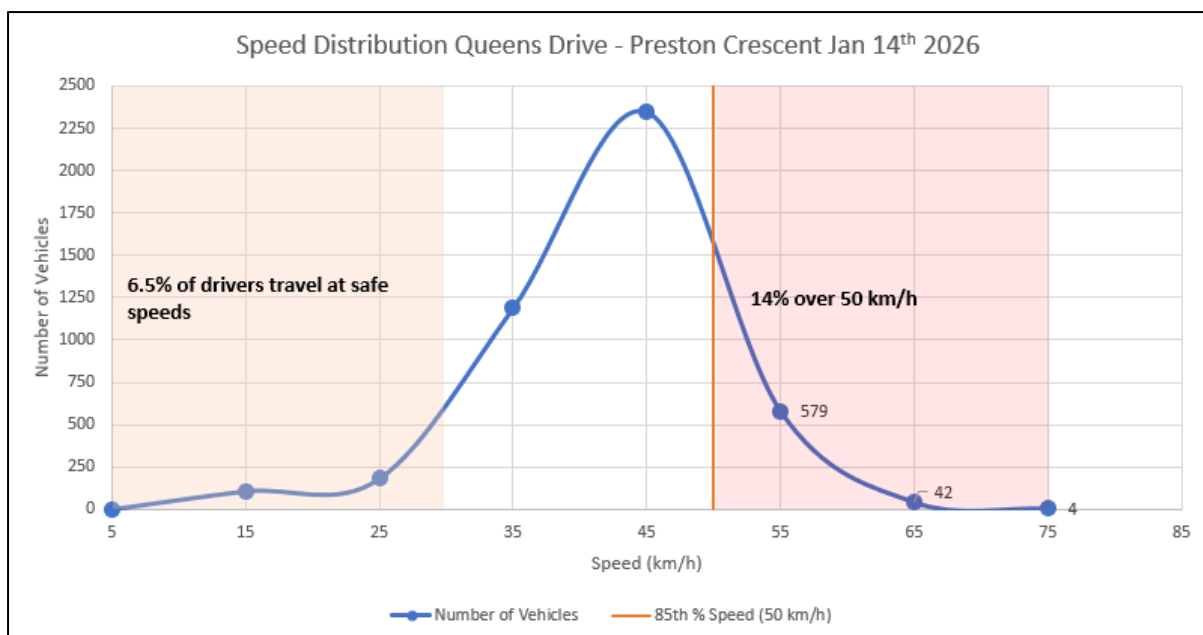


Figure 11: Speed Distribution of Drivers at Queens Drive/Preston Crescent.

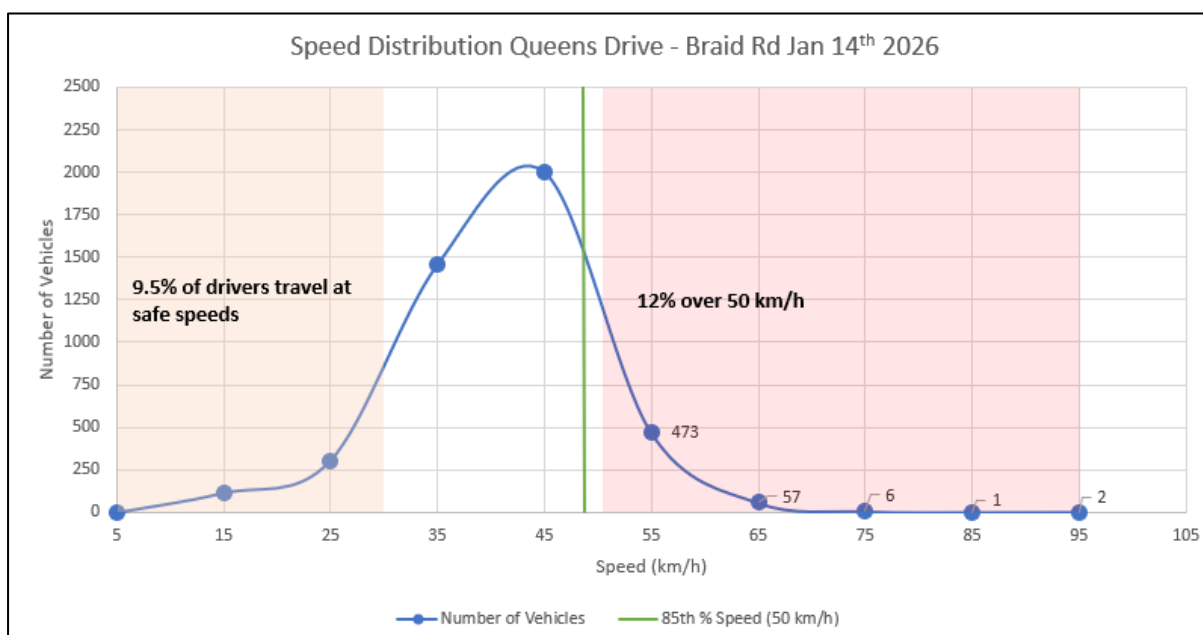


Figure 12: Speed Distribution of Drivers at Braid Road- January count.

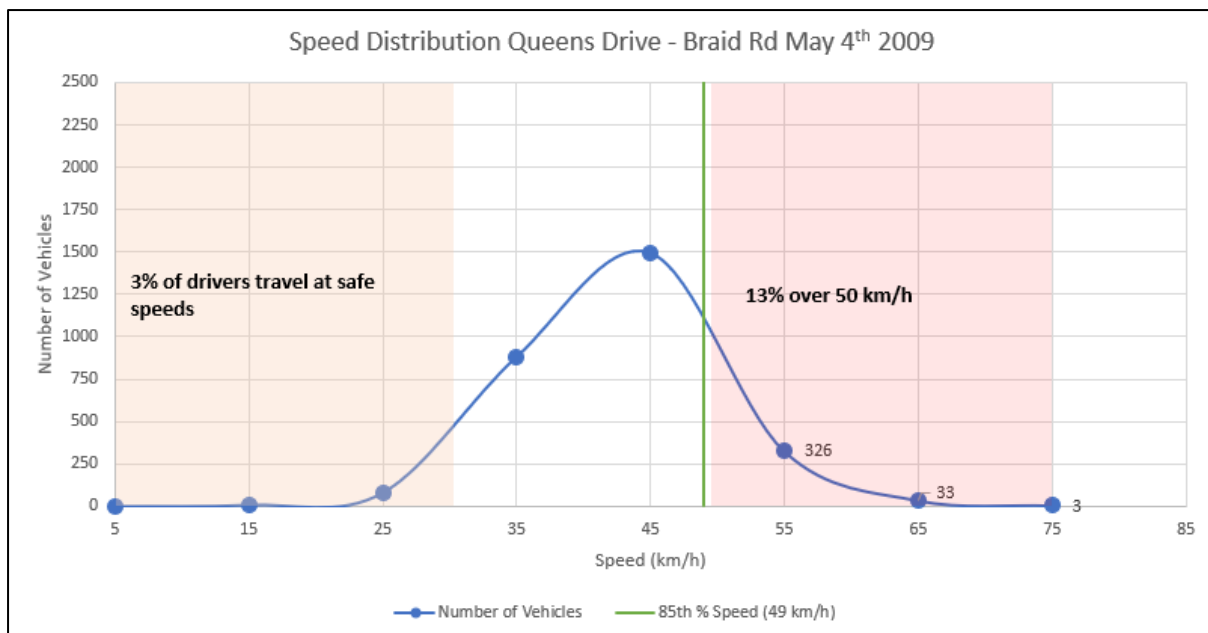


Figure 13: Speed Distribution of Drivers at Braid Road- May count.

During the trial period, observational monitoring identified changes in corridor behaviour and spatial use. Reduced vehicle access enabled pedestrians, cyclists, children, scooter users, and families to use the corridor in a more dispersed and recreational manner, rather than being concentrated primarily along the edges of the carriageway.

Following reintroduction of vehicle access at the conclusion of the trial, pedestrian and cycling activity reduced compared with levels observed during the closure period (Figure 8), despite generally favourable weather conditions. While a range of factors may influence corridor use, the observed change indicates a relationship between vehicle access and the way some people use the corridor for recreation and active travel.

3.5.1 Intersection safety in the Town Belt

The Town Belt road network largely functions as a series of narrow local access roads rather than a higher-volume transport corridor. While some sections include kerb and channel and formal footpaths, much of the network consists of narrow carriageways, shallow swales, informal walking paths, and unrestricted roadside parking. Many intersections reflect the historic development of the reserve and have constrained geometry, limited visibility, and limited formal pedestrian crossing opportunities.

Engineering assessment identified a relationship between road form and observed driver behaviour. Wider sections of road with separated footpaths generally experience higher operating speeds and a greater proportion of drivers exceeding the posted speed limit, while narrower sections where pedestrians are more visible tend to be associated with lower vehicle speeds. Low traffic volumes and limited pedestrian activity across parts of the Town Belt may also influence driver behaviour and operating speeds.

The intersections identified through the assessment as presenting greater potential safety constraints are:

- Queens Drive / Lachlan Avenue
- Queens Drive / Melrose Street

- Queens Drive / Littlebourne Road
- Queens Drive / City Road / Rattray Street

Of these, the Queens Drive / City Road / Rattray Street intersection has a combination of factors that warrant particular consideration, including steep topography, sharp road alignment, restricted sightlines, nearby school access movements, and limited pedestrian crossing opportunities. These characteristics may be of particular relevance to children and other vulnerable road users during peak school periods (Figures 19–20).



Figure 14: Location of Queens Drive/City Road /Rattray Street Intersection



Figure 15: Photo of Queens Drive/City Road/Rattray Street Intersection

Despite these considerations, reported crash numbers within the Town Belt remain relatively low. The low traffic volumes on Queens Drive, which average approximately 200–250 vehicles per day, are an important contextual factor when considering the recorded crash history. There is therefore no evidence from the available crash data of a high level of recorded crash activity within the

corridor. At the same time, crash statistics alone are not sufficient to fully describe transport risk, as they do not capture near misses, unreported incidents, or situations where pedestrians and cyclists may avoid or modify their use of the corridor because of their perception of the road environment.

The findings identified differences between the current transport function of sections of Queens Drive and the characteristics typically associated with low-speed recreational or shared-use environments. These differences, together with the relatively low recorded crash history, existing traffic volumes, observed operating speeds, and the way different users interact with the corridor, are relevant considerations for any future design or transport planning work within the Town Belt

3.6 Key Transport Findings

The transport monitoring and observational assessment undertaken throughout the trial identified several key findings:

- Queens Drive currently performs both transport and recreational functions, resulting in differing user expectations regarding the role of the corridor.
- The surrounding transport network was capable of accommodating redistributed traffic movements during the trial period, although some users noted a perceived increased travel time and inconvenience.
- Reduced vehicle access corresponded with increased pedestrian and cycling activity within the corridor and altered how the space was used and occupied.
- Observed operating speeds and existing corridor geometry are not fully consistent with the characteristics typically associated with low-speed shared-use or recreational environments.
- Supportive feedback commonly referenced improved comfort, reduced vehicle conflict, and increased willingness to use the corridor for recreation and active travel purposes.
- Multiple future design responses may be possible, ranging from retaining vehicle access with safety upgrades through to greater prioritisation of recreation and active travel outcomes in selected areas.

Overall, the trial identified changes in how the corridor was used, experienced, and perceived by different user groups following the temporary changes to vehicle access within Queens Drive. The findings provide information to support future Council discussions regarding transport, recreation, accessibility, and environmental outcomes within the Town Belt.

4 BIODIVERSITY

Bird count information from the Birds New Zealand Town Belt monitoring programme was reviewed to assess whether any biodiversity changes could be identified during the trial period.

The available data is insufficient to support definitive conclusions regarding biodiversity change. This limitation was anticipated, as the trial occurred over approximately three months and did not provide the long-term or seasonal monitoring required to reliably assess ecological trends. While 41 bird counts were undertaken prior to the trial and 43 during the trial, observations varied considerably between counts, including occasional large flocking events, making it difficult to draw meaningful comparisons.

Although quantitative findings were limited, engagement feedback indicated that reduced vehicle activity influenced how people experienced the Town Belt environment, with many submitters reporting greater enjoyment of birdsong and quieter conditions. One submission also recorded a pair of kākā within the trial area, which may be associated with recent releases linked to the Dunedin Botanic Garden. The mature forest habitat present within the corridor is considered

suitable for native bird activity. However, these observations relate primarily to user experience and anecdotal wildlife observations, and do not provide evidence of ecological change resulting from the trial.

As part of the trial activation, interpretive bird signage was installed on Braid Road. This was positively received by many submitters and was seen as contributing to greater awareness of the Town Belt's biodiversity values. Pending future decisions regarding the area, the signage has since been relocated to Lovelock Bush within the Dunedin Botanic Garden.

Overall, while the trial does not provide sufficient evidence to conclude that biodiversity increased, engagement feedback indicated that some participants experienced the Town Belt differently during periods of reduced vehicle activity.

5 RUBBISH

Illegal fly tipping and rubbish dumping were identified as concerns by multiple submitters during the development of the Dunedin Town Belt Reserve Management Plan. The Dunedin Town Belt environment presents particular challenges for rubbish management due to its steep topography and densely vegetated landscape. Where illegally dumped material is left in accessible locations, such as adjacent to a car park or roadside rubbish bin, removal by Council contractors can generally be undertaken relatively efficiently. However, where rubbish is disposed of down steep banks or within heavily vegetated areas of the reserve, removal can become significantly more difficult, time consuming, and resource intensive.

To provide information on the presence and quantity of rubbish within the trial area, several community clean-up events were undertaken before, during, and at the conclusion of the trial period. Table 2 below summarises the quantity of rubbish collected during each clean-up event.

Table 2: Total amount of rubbish collected in trial area.

Date	Number of people	Quantity of Rubbish Collected.
24 September 2025	5	20 bags, plus a chair and spade
28 January 2026	30	20 bags, 7 tyres, 6 chairs and 2 sheets of Iron
11 April 2026	40	6 bags, 6 tyres.

While the clean-up events provide a useful indication of rubbish identified within the trial area, several limitations should be noted. The Town Belt is a large and heavily vegetated environment, and it was not possible to guarantee that all rubbish present within the area had been identified or removed during each clean-up event. The number of participants also varied considerably between events, which may have influenced the amount of material identified and collected. In addition, several tyres recovered during the final clean-up event contained visible moss growth, indicating that they had likely been present within the environment for longer than the duration of the three-month trial period. The clean-up events were also not designed as a controlled monitoring programme for measuring changes in illegal dumping behaviour. As a result, the data should be interpreted as indicative rather than definitive.

The quantities of material collected varied between the three clean-up events, with the final event recording fewer bags of general rubbish than the two earlier events, while tyres continued to be identified. The available information therefore provides an indication of the type and quantity of material present within the trial area at the time of each clean-up event but does not establish whether the frequency of illegal dumping changed during the trial or identify the factors contributing to any observed differences.

Accordingly, the clean-up data does not provide sufficient evidence to establish a relationship between vehicle access and illegal dumping behaviour within the Town Belt. The results are best considered alongside the wider engagement feedback and operational observations when considering future approaches to rubbish management and vehicle access within the reserve.

6 KEY LEARNINGS FROM THE TRIAL

6.1 Community Interest in the Future Use of the Town Belt

The trial generated significant public interest and identified differing community views regarding the future role of Queens Drive and the wider Town Belt. Feedback reflected a range of priorities relating to transport, recreation, accessibility, environmental outcomes, and the purpose and use of reserve space. The findings demonstrate that a range of considerations are relevant to discussions about the future use and design of the corridor.

6.2 Divergent Views on Transport Function and Perceived Safety Outcomes

Community views were divided regarding vehicle access. Approximately 58% of respondents supported retaining vehicle access, commonly citing journey efficiency, connectivity, and route convenience. Approximately 40% supported removal of vehicle access, primarily due to perceived improvements in pedestrian safety, cycling safety, and recreational experience.

Feedback associated support for retaining vehicles with transport efficiency and connectivity, while support for removal was commonly linked to concerns regarding vehicle speeds, safety exposure, and the suitability of the corridor as a recreational environment.

6.3 Accessibility and Safety Considerations

The trial identified a range of views regarding accessibility and safety. While some participants reported feeling safer in a reduced-traffic environment, others raised concerns regarding accessibility, emergency access, personal safety, and shared-space interactions.

Feedback identified potential measures that could be considered in future design development, including accessible parking, seating, crossings, lighting, wayfinding, and shared-path design. Any future project would require consideration of transport safety, accessibility, and user experience outcomes.

6.4 Public Perception and Project Understanding

Feedback indicated varying levels of understanding of the project and its operational arrangements. Despite information being made available regarding emergency access, accessibility, and trial operations, some concerns raised during engagement differed from the information provided.

Engagement activities identified differences in the type and depth of feedback received through face-to-face and online engagement methods.

6.5 Temporary Trials as a Testing Method

The trial provided an opportunity to observe user behaviour, operational considerations, and community responses under temporary conditions.

The trial identified a range of possible responses to vehicle access and use of the corridor, including traffic calming, one-way arrangements, partial closures, shared-use environments, and vehicle-free sections. Each potential response would involve different considerations relating to cost, accessibility, recreation, transport function, and community response.

The findings from a temporary trial cannot in themselves determine the suitability or feasibility of any particular future design. Further assessment would be required to understand the implications of different options and how they may perform under different conditions.

6.6 Environmental and Behavioural Observations

Clean-up event records indicated a reduction in newly identified rubbish and illegally dumped material during the trial period. While the dataset was limited and does not establish causation, the observations suggest that vehicle access may be one of a number of factors influencing dumping behaviour within the Town Belt.

Biodiversity monitoring undertaken during the trial was insufficient to identify ecological change. However, some participants reported that the area felt quieter and that they experienced greater awareness of birdsong and wildlife.

6.7 Furniture and Place-Making Observations

Feedback indicated support for picnic tables, seating, table tennis tables, and other recreation-focused amenities. Respondents commonly associated these features with increased opportunities for social interaction and recreation.

Feedback regarding the temporary yellow leaner furniture varied between respondents. The findings indicate that future design development may benefit from consideration of furniture durability, accessibility, and suitability for a range of users.

6.8 Future Planning and Decision Making

The trial was not intended to represent a final design outcome. It provided information regarding transport patterns, recreation use, user experience, and perceptions of the reserve environment associated with the temporary access arrangements.

The findings do not identify a single preferred future outcome for Queens Drive. Rather, they identify a range of considerations, opportunities and constraints that may be relevant to future planning and design work.

The findings may be considered as part of the Ōtepoti Pathways strategic workstreams to help inform future design options for Queens Drive and the wider Town Belt, subject to Council direction. Any future changes would remain subject to further technical investigation, community engagement, funding considerations, and Council approval through the appropriate decision-making processes.

7 CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

7.1 Management Plan Objectives and Trial Findings

The Town Belt Active Travel Trial was undertaken in the context of the objectives identified through the Dunedin Town Belt Reserve Management Plan. The table below summarises the key areas assessed through the trial and the information identified through monitoring and engagement.

Management Plan Objective	Trial Findings
Transport Safety	Relevant information was collected on traffic volumes, vehicle speeds, crash and incident history, intersection characteristics, and potential redistribution of traffic within the surrounding network.
Active Transport	Changes in walking and cycling activity were observed under different vehicle access arrangements.
Illegal Dumping	Variation in the quantity and type of rubbish identified through clean-up events was observed; the available data does not establish causation.
Biodiversity	Biodiversity monitoring was insufficient to identify ecological change.
Community Response	Mixed community views were identified regarding vehicle access, safety, recreation, accessibility, and the future role of Queens Drive and the Town Belt.

7.2 Conclusion

The Town Belt Active Travel Trial provided an opportunity to test temporary changes to vehicle access within the Queens Drive corridor and observe how the space functioned under altered conditions. The trial generated significant public interest and a broad range of feedback relating to transport, recreation, accessibility, environmental outcomes, and the future role of the Town Belt.

Monitoring and engagement identified several recurring themes, including differing community perspectives regarding vehicle access and safety, changes in walking and cycling activity, operational considerations relating to accessibility and emergency access, and observations relating to the environmental and behavioural experience of the corridor during the trial.

Community views on the trial were varied. Feedback reflected different perspectives on the role of vehicle access within the Town Belt, including the importance placed on connectivity and convenience, and the value placed on recreation, active travel, and the experience of a reduced-traffic environment.

The trial was not intended to represent a final design outcome for Queens Drive or the wider Town Belt. Rather, it was undertaken to provide information about how the corridor functioned under temporary changes to vehicle access and to identify opportunities, constraints, and community priorities that may be relevant to future planning.

The trial also involved the use of temporary measures to test potential changes prior to any future capital investment. Approximately \$2 million has been allocated within the Long-Term Plan for Town Belt interventions over a four-year period. The trial provided information on community response, operational considerations, transport patterns, and the use and perception of the corridor under temporary access arrangements.

The trial findings may inform future Town Belt improvements that enhance active travel while retaining vehicle access, subject to future funding and Council approval.

Any future Town Belt changes to walking and cycling access will be presented to Council for consideration and decision through a separate report.