

# Safer Cities: Her Way

## Phase 1 Engagement Outcomes Report



AUGUST  
2023

# Acknowledgement of Country

*Bayside Council acknowledges the  
Traditional Custodians, the Gadigal/Bidjigal  
people of the Eora Nation.*

*The people of the Eora Nation, their spirit  
and ancestors will always remain with our  
waterways and the land, our Mother Earth.*

*Amelia Bates, The hand saving the lost generation*



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All care has been taken to prepare this report for Bayside Council.

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# About Safer Cities: Her Way

In Bayside - and across NSW - women, girls and gender diverse people experience the city differently to their male counterparts. Concern about safety is a major barrier to women and girls use and enjoyment of public spaces, particularly after dark. The Safer Cities: Her Way Program seeks to put the voice of women, girls and gender diverse people at the forefront of the conversation about planning our public spaces. These voices are throughout this report.

## About the Safer Cities: Her Way program

**The Safer Cities:** Her Way Program (The Program) is a collaborative partnership between Transport for NSW and ten councils across New South Wales, including Bayside Council.

\$1 million will be provided to each participating council to deliver pilot projects/interventions that trial and test initiatives that improve the perception of safety for women, girls and gender diverse people in public spaces close to public transport hubs.

Each pilot project will be developed through engagement and co-design with local women, girls and gender diverse people, to trial interventions that are intended to create more appealing and accessible places that respond to local needs.

Responses to improve women and girls' safety in public spaces needs to not only consider what makes them feel unsafe but also how the space is used. The co-design process will seek to develop design solutions that encourage social interactions and activities that encourage women, girls and gender diverse people to visit, spend time and return.

These interventions will be evaluated to assess their effectiveness and insights will be used to build the case for longer term change and inform future works. By elevating women, girls and gender diverse people voices in the planning process, stakeholders can plan, design and program public spaces that are more welcoming and Inclusive for everyone.

## Program Aims

The overall aims of The Program are:

1. Increased women, girls' and gender diverse people's safety and access to public spaces, including streets and open spaces;
2. Increased women, girls' and gender diverse people's active and meaningful participation in urban development and governance;
3. Increased women, girls' and gender diverse people's autonomous mobility in the city.



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# How We Engaged

The Safer Cities: Her Way Program follows a co-design process that actively involves local women, girls and gender diverse people, developing solutions aimed at improving perceptions of safety within their community.

## Engagement Summary

 **141** **Total participants** across all engagement methods

**5**  **Community Walkshops**

 **2** day walks       **3** night walks

 **Posters and Flyers Distributed Through**

- Community groups
- Train stations
- Local businesses
- Schools
- Youth groups
- Libraries
- Aquatic Centers
- Gyms

**8,764**

**Total Facebook Reach**

 **45** Reactions  
**26** Comments  
**8** Shares

**4,837**

**Facebook Video Campaign Reach**

**59** Reactions  
**25** Comments  
**12** Shares 

**92**  **Online Survey Responses**

 **39** Rockdale  
**28** Arncliffe  
**25** Mascot

 **13 to 65+** years old

**49** **Community Walkshop Participants** 

	TOTAL		
<b>Rockdale</b>	26	10	16
<b>Arncliffe</b>	11	3	8
<b>Mascot</b>	12	-	12

**2**  **Police Area Command Interviews**

**Day & Night Audits in each location**

- Using NSW 
- Government
- Great Public
- Spaces Toolkit

The Safer Cities: Her Way Program follows a co-design process that actively involves local women, girls and gender diverse people, developing solutions aimed at improving perceptions of safety within their community.

### Investigating Bayside's key centres

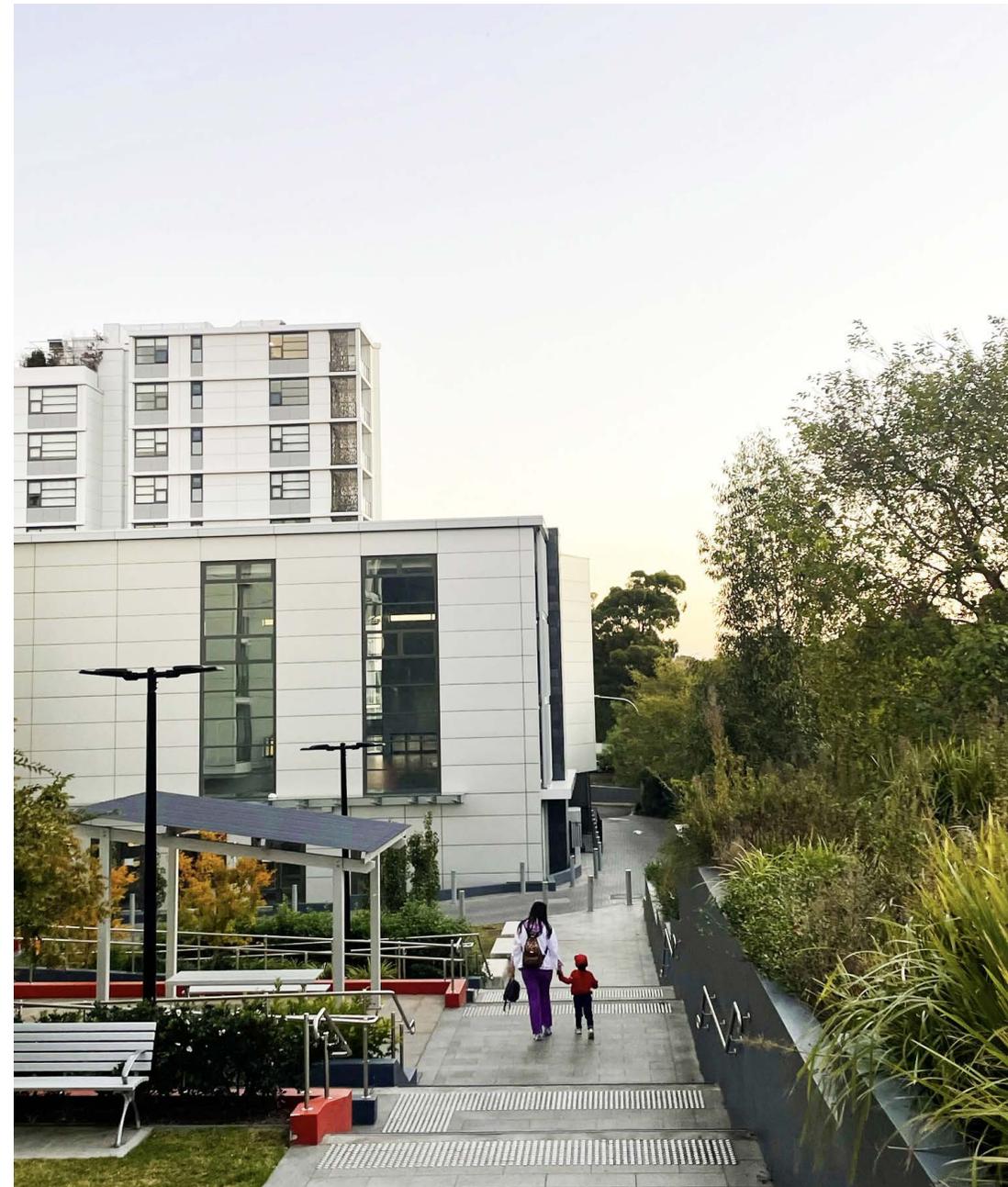
The pre-intervention engagement and co-design investigations focused on three of Bayside's key town centres:

- ◆ Rockdale
- ◆ Mascot; and
- ◆ Arncliffe

The routes chosen are highly frequented routes that traverse the train station to key points of interest for women and girls such as bus stops, plazas, reserves/playgrounds, libraries and Bayside's main youth centre.

*"I've never heard anything like this (co-design) before. It's so good to know our voices are being heard. I feel really uplifted to be part of this community."*

*- Rockdale workshop participant who joined the day walk and then joined the night walk with her daughter.*



# What We Heard

There were numerous recurring themes across all three locations relating to perceptions of safety.

The changeability of perceptions of safety after nightfall was evident in online survey and walk comments.

## What makes women, girls and gender diverse people feel safe?

- Clear visibility and sightlines
- Passive surveillance – being seen by others
- Warm and consistent lighting
- Accessibility
- Businesses open late
- Cleanliness
- Clear wayfinding and signage
- Familiarity with a space
- Presence of people preferred over cameras/CCTV
- Presence of other women is reassuring
- Colour and vibrancy through public art

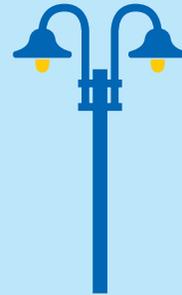
## What makes women, girls and gender diverse people feel unsafe?

- Poorly lit areas and walkways
- Poor or obstructed sightlines
- Spaces with poor passive surveillance (e.g. no open shops, onlooking windows)
- Males territorialising public spaces
- Intimidation and harassment from groups of males such as staring and cat calling
- Anti-social behaviour such as spitting
- Odours from smoking/vaping
- Poorly maintained footpaths
- Narrow spaces
- Large bushes or trees that block sightlines

	 DAY	 NIGHT
ARNCLIFF	<b>46%</b> feel 'very safe'	<b>82%</b> feel unsafe sometimes or all the time
MASCOT	<b>37%</b> feel 'somewhat safe'	<b>50%</b> feel 'somewhat safe'
ROCKDALE	<b>51%</b> feel 'very safe' or 'extremely safe'	<b>74%</b> feel unsafe sometimes or all the time



The online survey responses across all the centres consistently showed the top 3 factors that influence why women choose certain routes:



It is well-lit



It has clear  
sightlines so I can  
see people



Convenience/  
it's the shortest  
route

The following pages outline the key concerns we heard from the community at each location that was investigated as part of the Safer Cities: Her Way Project.

## What we heard in Arncliffe

The below map shows the Arncliffe route that was investigated. The table outlines the key concerns identified by the community at each stop through engagement and co-design.



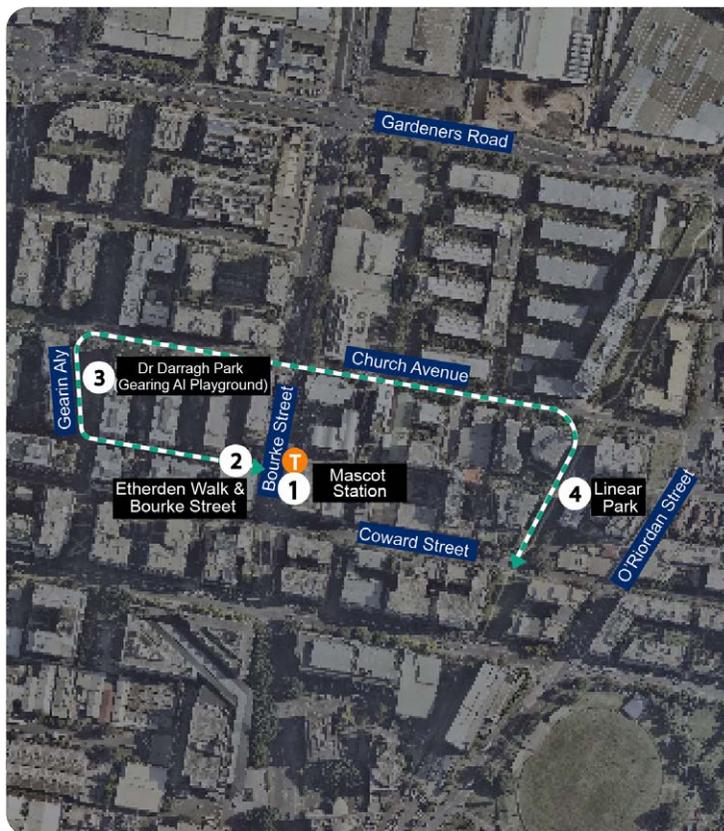
*“At night the lanes and the arcade to get to Eden Street are not well lit at all and the space is quiet so it can be scary.”*

Online survey participant

	LOCATION	CONCERNS
1	Arncliffe Railway Station	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Groups of men congregating - outside dining and smoking</li> <li>Fear of anti-social behaviour - cat calling etc.</li> <li>Lack of clear wayfinding and signage to points of interest</li> </ul>
2	Belmore Reserve/ playground	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uneven and steep walkway along Belmore Lane with inconsistent handrail</li> <li>Inadequate lighting along footpath after dark</li> <li>Difficult to cross Station Street to Belmore Street</li> </ul>
3	Wooroona Reserve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inadequate lighting in Arcade and park</li> <li>Playground equipment and seating feels outdated</li> </ul>
4	Intersection between Wardell and Firth Street	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hostile pedestrian experience - exposure to cars and cyclists</li> <li>Narrow footpaths</li> </ul>
5	Arncliffe Youth Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of clear wayfinding and signage for shared path and to points of interest</li> <li>Pedestrian safety on shared path</li> </ul>

## What we heard in Mascot

The below map shows the Mascot route that was investigated. The table outlines the key concerns identified by the community at each stop through engagement and co-design.



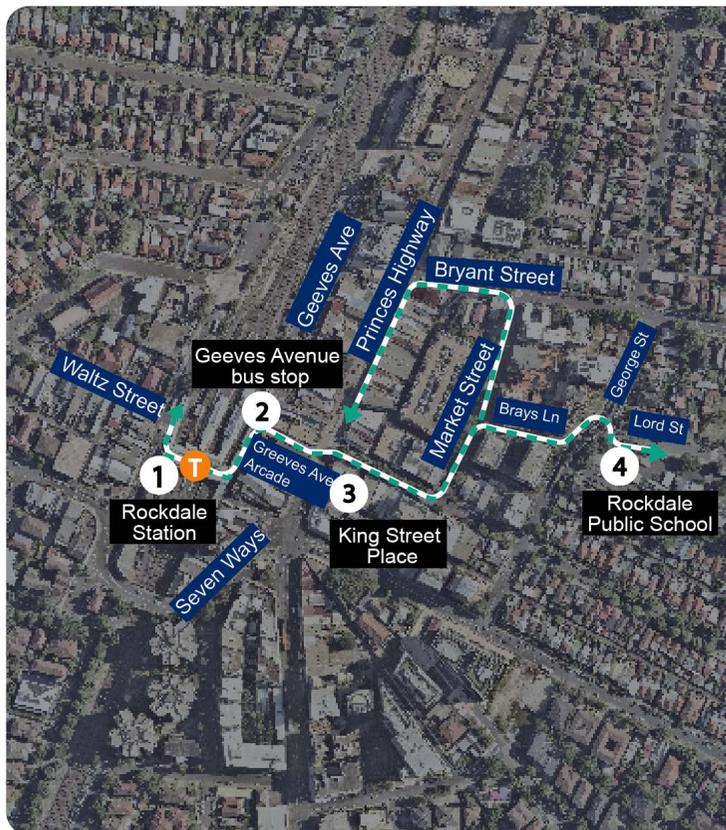
*"After dark it is scary walking from Mascot station to the bus stop through dark back streets with lots of dodgy looking men around, some yelling out"*

Online survey participant

	LOCATION	CONCERNS
1	Mascot Railway Station	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Hoarding makes the space feel enclosed, isolated, dark and limits sightlines, passive surveillance and escape routes</li> <li>◆ Limited lighting after dark</li> </ul>
2	Etherden Walk and Bourke Street	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ No concerns were identified</li> </ul>
3	Doctor Darragh Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Limited lighting over BBQ/dining areas after dark</li> </ul>
4	Linear Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Inconsistent lighting with one side of path lit better than the other but overall, no concerns were identified</li> </ul>
5	Laycock Walk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Inadequate lighting, particularly at bus stop on Coward Street</li> <li>◆ Lack of wayfinding from train station to key bus stop</li> <li>◆ Fear of anti-social behaviour</li> </ul>

## What we heard in Rockdale

The below map shows the Rockdale route that was investigated. The table outlines the key concerns identified by the community at each stop through engagement and co-design.



*"I'd only come here (Rockdale Plaza) during the day, I wouldn't come late at night. Only one or two businesses open late at night."*

Day walk participant

	LOCATION	CONCERNS
1	Rockdale Railway Station Overpass	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Empty retail space makes the station feel inactivated</li> <li>Lack of wayfinding and signage to town centre and points of interest which could lead to people taking longer, darker or more unsafe routes</li> </ul>
2	Geeves Avenue Bus Stop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of active frontage and passive surveillance as bus stop faces the back of shops</li> <li>Limited lighting at the commuter car park</li> <li>Poor cleanliness - rubbish, graffiti and rats</li> </ul>
3	King Street Mall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dominated by groups of men</li> <li>Lack of evening business activation</li> <li>Rubbish and unpleasant odours from smoking/vaping</li> <li>Dated playground equipment and seating</li> </ul>
4	Rockdale Public School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No concerns were identified</li> </ul>
5	Rockdale Town Hall and Library	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limited lighting</li> <li>Feels isolated after library and café close</li> <li>Uneven footpath</li> </ul>

# Next Steps

The Bayside Safer Cities: Her Way Program is ongoing and being developed in close consultation with the Bayside community. The feedback featured within this report is from community engagement undertaken in April-June 2023.

Following further co-design with various Council teams to determine what interventions / trial projects are feasible within the project timeline and budget, Council will develop design outcomes and a delivery plan. Commencement of the interventions / trial projects will take place from mid-2023 to early 2024.

In mid-2024, the community, including those involved in the initial co-design process, will be invited to take part in phase two of the engagement process. This phase will evaluate the interventions and reevaluate the chosen locations to see how people's attitudes towards the spaces and perceptions of safety have changed. The insights from the trial projects will inform long term changes and future design approaches.

We thank each participant for their generous time and contributions as we work towards making Bayside a safer place for women, girls, and gender diverse people.

For more information about the program please visit:

[www.bayside.nsw.gov.au/community/community-safety/safer-cities-her-way-program](http://www.bayside.nsw.gov.au/community/community-safety/safer-cities-her-way-program)





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