

LESTER GROUP

Community Engagement Report

Rapids Landing Village Centre

August 2025

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1. INTRODUCTION

Creating Communities Australia Pty Ltd (CCA) was engaged by the Lester Group team to facilitate community engagement to support the final planning of the Rapids Landing Village Centre (commercial district).

Overall, community feedback on the proposed Rapids Landing Village Centre demonstrated positive support for the development, in particular its benefits in enhancing local convenience and community life. There was particularly strong excitement for the road access between John Archibald Drive and Leschenaultia Avenue, and support for the inclusion of a supermarket and a range of retail and service options. The retention of trees and attractive design elements were also received with positivity. There were a variety of views relating to the short stay accommodation and tavern. It is recommended that the Lester Group engage further with the community to address concerns and develop a tavern and accommodation precinct that aligns with community expectations. Many also suggested that Leschenaultia Avenue needs to serve as a major access road, as opposed to a shopping strip. Community members also expressed a strong desire for green public spaces and community-focused amenities, emphasizing the importance of thoughtful planning that balances essential services with the area's peaceful lifestyle.

This report presents the process and detailed findings resulting from the community engagement undertaken with the Rapids Landing / Margaret River community.

Engagement Overview

On behalf of the Lester Group, CCA hosted a Community Open Day on Thursday 3rd July to invite the local community to view the proposed plans, speak with the project team and provide their feedback and ideas.

The Open Day was hosted from 1pm to 6pm, at the Shire of Augusta-Margaret River Council Chambers (41 Wallcliffe Road, Margaret River WA). While 54 people registered to attend the Open Day, a total of 58 came through on the day.

Those who attended had the opportunity to view the proposed plans on A0 engagement boards and speak directly with Lester Group's Adrian Lester (Director) and Miles Rowe (Project Manager).

A total of 101 feedback forms were completed during the engagement process. Breaking this down, 23 attendees provided feedback at the Open Day, while across the engagement period a total of 78 people filled out the survey online.



FIGURE 1 - IMAGES OF MILES ROWE (LEFT) AND ADRIAN LESTER (RIGHT) ENGAGING WITH COMMUNITY MEMBERS



2. OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS FOR THE RAPIDS LANDING COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

This section provides an overview of findings from the feedback survey.

Overall, 101 community members completed the Rapids Landing Village Centre feedback survey. 60.4% of respondents were Rapids Landing Village residents, while the majority of remaining respondents lived in the surrounding Margaret River area.

Overall Design Feedback

62.4% 
expressed support
for the overall
development

Responses to the feedback survey indicated overall support for the proposed Rapids Landing Village Centre, with 62.4% of respondents expressing support (including 31.7% being highly supportive). Participating community members appreciated the inclusion of a supermarket, the retention of existing trees and the attractive design (such as the use of natural materials), which collectively contribute to a

community friendly and aesthetically pleasing environment.

However, suggestions for improvement revealed a variety of views regarding the family tavern and short stay accommodation, with some commenting on the potential impact on noise, safety and the area's residential character. Traffic and parking were also noted, particularly regarding access along Leschenaultia Avenue. Whilst nearly all respondents were looking forward to the completion of Leschenaultia Avenue, there was a recurring sentiment among residents that Leschenaultia Avenue be considered an arterial road, improving traffic flow and providing access further south to adjoining estates. For this reason, respondent suggested less parking along the Avenue to promote traffic flow and reduce issues relating to congestion. Overall, the feedback reflects a desire for a precinct that balances essential services and community spaces while preserving the quiet, natural and family-oriented nature of Rapids Landing.

Traffic & Road Access

Were the top
concerns of survey
participants

Retail and Commercial Services

75.3% 
Of participants would
like to see a café within
the precinct

Survey participants showed strong interest in the types of commercial and retail spaces they would like to see at the proposed Rapids Landing Village Centre. Among the 93 survey respondents who shared their preferences, cafés emerged as the most popular choice, selected by 75.3% of respondents. This was followed by a bakery (66.7%) and post office/newsagency services (74.2%).

Support for the proposed supermarket was high, with 74.2% of survey respondents expressing support.

While there was some support for an independent supermarket offering, the most supported option was for a Coles/Woolworths style offering (12 combined mentions),



with Aldi being second most preferred (11 mentions). This suggests that many residents are seeking a price-competitive option in the region.

There was support from respondents that the precinct could support local growers, organic produce and small businesses, with a desire for the retail precinct to enhance community life rather than replicate existing offerings.

Some respondents commented on the existing congestion and lack of parking in the town centre and saw the retail offering as providing convenience with ample parking. While there was support for the retail precinct, respondents emphasised the importance of considering traffic congestion and the impact on the residential character of the area.

Allied Health and Wellbeing Services

80.2% 

of participants would like general medical services within the Centre

Survey respondents demonstrated strong support for the inclusion of a medical centre within the proposed Rapids Landing Village Centre. Of the 91 participants who shared their allied health and wellbeing service preferences, 80.2% selected general medical services (e.g. GP doctor) as one of their top three choices, underscoring a clear community need for more accessible primary healthcare. This also supported anecdotal feedback received during the Open

Day sessions that highlighted long wait times and difficulty in gaining GP appointments in Margaret River.

Demand for a GP was closely followed by demand for a pharmacy or chemist, chosen by 79.1% of respondents, highlighting the importance of convenient access to medications and related services. Physiotherapy was the third most preferred option, selected by nearly a third (29.7%) of respondents.

Family Tavern

Participants had a **range of views** 
regarding their support for the proposed family tavern

Responses to the feedback survey regarding the proposed family tavern within the Rapids Landing Village Centre revealed a range of views. Just under half (49.2%) expressed support, while 38.9% were unsupportive, and 11.9% were neutral. Supporters appreciated the idea of a family-friendly venue,

highlighting its potential to offer a local dining and social space within walking or biking distance. They saw value in a tavern fills a gap in local hospitality, especially given the limited transport options for families.

However, some were concerned about noise, late-night disturbances, and the impact on the peaceful residential character of Rapids Landing. Many felt that existing pubs and bars in town were sufficient and questioned the need for another venue. As a potential solution to these concerns, some suggested that the tavern should have earlier closing times, while others would prefer to see alternative venues such as a wine bar or family restaurant.



When considering a family tavern, it is recommended that Lester Group consider further consultation with the community to ensure that concerns relating to a family tavern are addressed and that future plans align with community expectations for the precinct.

Short Stay Accommodation

Survey responses revealed a range of opinions relating to short stay accommodation with concerns raised relating to noise, traffic and impacts on the residential character of the area.

54.2% expressed opposition while 26.6% showed support, and 19.1% remained neutral. Among those who supported the idea, reasons included its potential to boost local businesses and tourism, and the benefit of concentrating short stay options in one area. However, there was concern about short stay options like Airbnb coming into the precinct.

When considering short stay accommodation, it is recommended that Lester Group consider further consultation with the community to ensure that concerns relating to a short stay accommodation are addressed and that future plans align with community expectations for the precinct.

26.6% 

Were supportive of the proposed short stay accommodation

Public Spaces / Activations

There was a strong desire by survey participants for a community space and accompanying temporary activations that embrace nature and offer versatile, inclusive amenities. Among the 73 participants who shared suggestions, the most frequently mentioned ideas included a community garden (18 mentions) and the preservation of open green spaces with trees (16 mentions). Respondents envisioned a space that supports social interaction, recreation, and wellbeing.

A Community Garden and Green Space 

were the most frequently mentioned suggestions for activating open space within the Centre

There were also several amenities suggested that are not suitable for a retail precinct due to safety and land availability restrictions.

REPORT ENDS

