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Engagement Report - Special Entertainment Precincts Discussion Paper
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Engagement report – special entertainment precincts discussion paper



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Overview

Background

Special entertainment precincts are part of the NSW Government's vibrancy reforms. These precincts support live entertainment through extended trading hours and sound controls that provide operational certainty for businesses and neighbouring residents. Councils can establish special entertainment precincts in their local areas.

Special entertainment precincts can:

- encourage businesses to provide live music and performance
- make it easier and reduce costs for licensed and unlicensed businesses, such as bookshops and cafes, to trade late without a development application
- give businesses access to the NSW Government's 80% reduction in liquor licence fees and extended licensing hours for live performance, and
- allow a council to set sound criteria that suits the context of the area and encourage live music and performance.

In consultation for Sustainable Sydney 2030—2050 Continuing the Vision, our communities told us they want a vibrant, lively city with diverse shopping, dining and entertainment options. In recent consultations about the late-night economy, young people told us that they want safer, alcohol-free activities and recreation options available at night.

Designating special entertainment precincts within our existing late-night trading areas is part of our ongoing commitment to supporting a thriving, balanced night-time economy.

Engagement summary

From **21 November 2024 to 20 January 2025**, we invited the community to share their thoughts about making our late-night trading areas special entertainment precincts.

The consultation provided an opportunity for community members to give their feedback on the areas, boundaries, and trading hours proposed for the special entertainment precincts. We asked people to tell us about their current nightlife experience, whether they support the proposal, and the reason for their level of support.

We asked business owners/operators if the proposal would encourage them to stay open later or host live music more often, and we asked everyone about their general tolerance for sound levels in late night precincts.

This report outlines the community engagement activities that took place and summarises the key findings from the consultation.

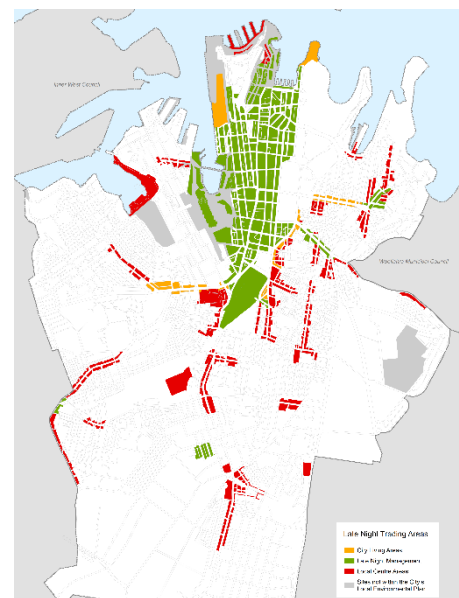


Figure 1. Late-night trading areas

Purpose of engagement

1. **Inform** stakeholders about the proposed framework for establishing Special Entertainment Precincts (SEPs).
 2. **Consult** with the community, including business operators, residents, and visitors, on the suitability of the current late-night trading precinct areas and whether these areas are appropriate for SEP designation or should be expanded or reduced.
 3. **Understand** community perspectives on the current trading hours within these precinct areas, gathering insights on whether these hours should be extended, reduced, or remain unchanged to balance nightlife opportunities with community amenity.
 4. **Collaborate** with stakeholders to ensure the SEP framework reflects a shared vision that supports a vibrant night-time economy while addressing community needs and concerns.
-

Participation

In total, 4,507 people engaged with the consultation by viewing the webpage, attending a community briefing, completing a survey or sending feedback by email.

We received a total of 356 submissions during the consultation period.

Figure 1. Summary of engagement activity

Quantity	Description of activity
4507	Total engagements
4001	Sydney Your Say webpage visits
1135	Discussion paper downloads
82	People attended community briefing session
52	People attended a business briefing session
17	Young people attended a briefing for the youth opportunities program
271	Survey submissions
85	Emailed submissions, 18 of which were from groups or organisations

Snapshot of survey respondents

- 271 people surveyed

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- 95% respondents completed the survey as a community member, 5% as a business owner/operator
- 92% speak English at home
- 54% are male
- 80% live in the City of Sydney
- 53% of respondents live in a late-night trading area
- 60% go out after 8pm at least once a week
- 45% go out in an area walking distance from their home
- Respondents represent a good mix of ages.
 - 22% are 18 to 34,
 - 23% are 35 to 44
 - 15% are 45 to 54
 - 17% to 55 and 65
 - 20% are over 65

The survey responses provide a good representation of community opinion related to the night-time economy in the City of Sydney area. Feedback was collected from a diverse range of respondents, including residents, those who work and visit the city, people who live in late-night trading areas and people who don't. These perspectives included those who went out at night frequently for various reasons to those that went out less often.

The consultation received a very low rate of response from business owners and operators. It is recommended that further consultation is done with business owners and operators in late-night trading areas during the development phase of this project.

Key findings

Overview of key findings

Overall, there is clear support for the special entertainment precincts proposal however some are seeking changes. The key findings are:

- Strong support for a more vibrant nightlife and diverse entertainment options, overall and especially from younger people
- Overall support for the proposed trading hours being right for the area or too early.
- Most objections relate to noise concerns and potential impacts to residents.
- Lots of suggestions about changes around specific streets, areas and hours for the project team to consider
- Around half of respondents felt sound levels should be no louder than they are now.
- Most people like to go out close to home
- People choose to go out to places with a choice of places to eat and drink, vibrant atmosphere, and live music and cultural activities.

Special Entertainment Precincts proposal

People were asked if they support the proposal to designate late-night trading areas as special entertainment precincts.

Overall, 70% were supportive or supportive with some changes while 24% were not and 6% were unsure.

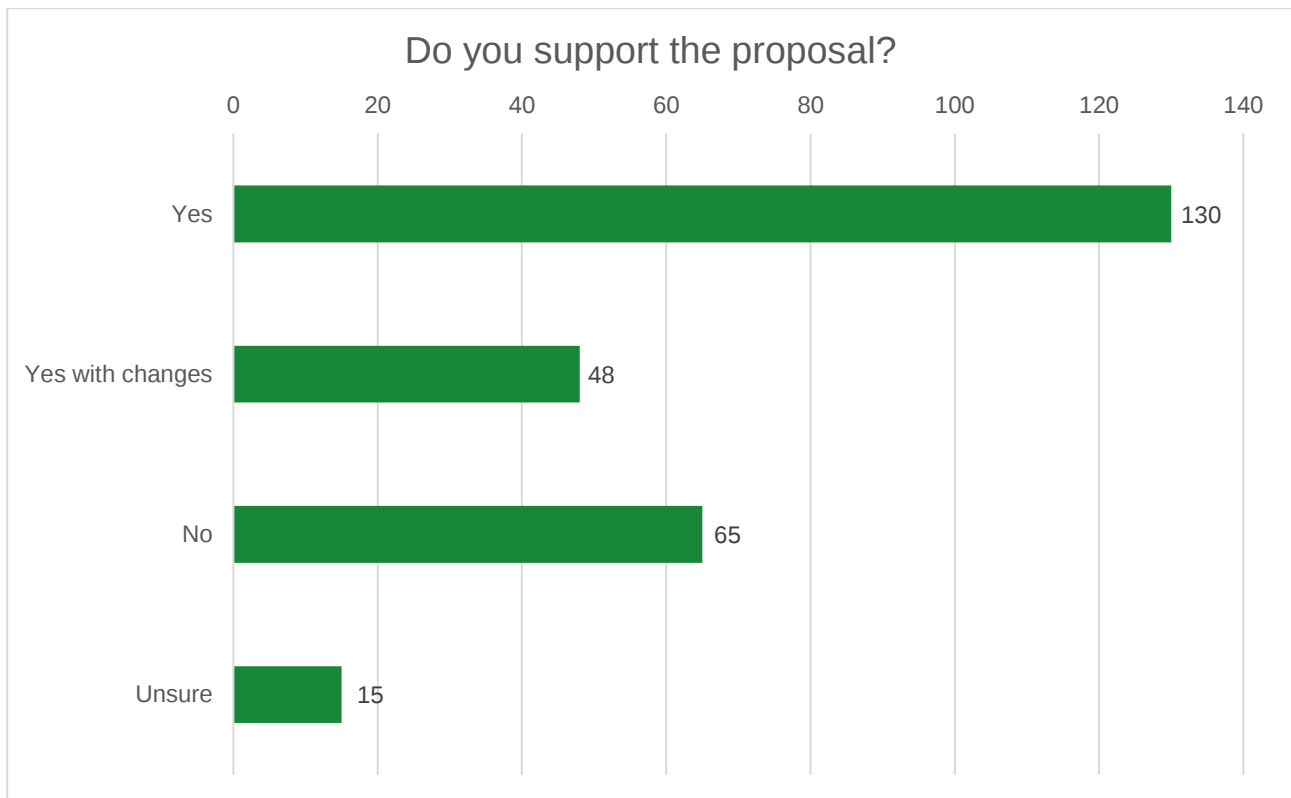
The majority of people aged greater than 55 were unsupportive.

Most of those who live in one of the three late night trading areas were supportive or supportive with some changes.

55% of business owners and operators were supportive or supportive with some changes.

The below displays the overall response:

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Reason for level of support

Respondents were asked to comment on why they do, or do not, support the proposal.

From 271 responses, the following themes emerged as the most common reasons that people support the proposal:

- Support for night life growth (80 comments)
- Support for cultural and nightlife diversity (30 comments)
- Support for flexibility for businesses (24 comments)

Additionally, 43 comments expressed general support for the proposal, without a specific reason.

The following themes emerged as the most common concerns about the proposal:

- Concerns about noise affecting residents (50 comments)
- General noise concerns (16 comments)
- Safety concerns (13 comments)

Additionally, 9 comments expressed a general objection to entertainment precincts, without a specific reason.

People who said they support the proposal with some changes told us they would prefer a change to the areas or hours proposed. Some comments from these respondents expressed concern about noise, and some mentioned the importance of balancing residential, business and nightlife needs.

Reasons for support

The following topics were frequently mentioned by people in support of the proposal.

Support for nightlife growth

Many comments spoke about a strong desire to see Sydney's nightlife return and grow. Many of these comments expressed dissatisfaction with the current offering, especially in comparison to other cities. There were frequent mentions of the need for revitalisation and recovery from previous periods such as when lock-outs laws were in place.

"A vibrant nightlife will encourage tourism and boost the local economy which enables a rich and diverse range of restaurants, bars and clubs to succeed"

"Sydney needs to become a true international city which means 24 hours trading should be available"

"Sydney's nightlife needs a boost and should be on par with other global metropolises."

General support for the proposal

Many comments expressed general support for the overall concept, positive sentiment for the purpose of establishing special entertainment precincts, support for change, and support for the role of special entertainment precincts in enhancing nightlife and vibrancy.

"The proposal strikes the right balance between a vibrant city nightlife and noise concerns"

"We need to make these changes quickly please"

"It is time that Sydney had dedicated areas - if you choose to live in these areas, you cannot expect them to be as quiet as a suburban area"

Support for cultural and nightlife diversity

Many people said they were supportive of the proposal because they would like an increase in Sydney's offerings at night to improve cultural experience. Comments mentioned the need for a variety in venues, access to shops with later trading, diverse entertainment, supporting the arts and making Sydney a more attractive destination. The comments showed enthusiasm for expanding nightlife opportunities.

"I want my community to be a vibrant and energetic area that supports the arts, including live-performers, and allows people to enjoy themselves."

"There is no commerce or night life after work. I need to cram in all my errands on the weekends"

"We need more night entertainment spaces in Sydney"

"More opportunities to experience different kinds of music and culture without having to travel far"

Support and flexibility for businesses

Many people cited the need for supporting businesses and reducing regulation as their reason for supporting the proposal. They said the contribution of businesses to Sydney's nightlife is important,

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and expressed support for reducing 'red tape', making it easier for businesses to operate and encouraging later trading.

"The development application process is just one more burden for new live music venues starting up"

"There should be freedom to choose when businesses run so that people can enjoy Sydney as a proper 24hr city"

"We need to liven up the city. Businesses should be supported to make this happen."

"We need to allow venues to grow and new places to open with less restrictive laws." Reasons for support with change

Reasons for concern

The following topics were frequently mentioned as concerns about the proposal.

Concerns about noise affecting residents

Many people expressed concern about the impact of nighttime noise on residents. They raised concerns about noise affecting sleep and disrupting peaceful living. These comments often referenced existing issues with venues or areas, patrons leaving venues, music volumes, lack of sound proofing, noise from traffic or people in the streets and the need to control or mitigate sound.

"Residents... should not have to hear venues (Pubs, clubs etc...) noise in their own homes with doors and windows shut"

"Noise pollution is detrimental to human health, not just mental health but physical health."

"There is already too much noise with people screaming, yelling, playing loud music on their phones outside residences"

"With more apartment living, it is important not to create areas into late night trading areas when people need to sleep"

General noise concerns

Some comments expressed concern about noise in the city generally, and some comments expressed concern about noise at night. This includes comments about noise from cars, dogs, and noise from existing venues.

"We already live in a noisy city. Dogs barking and car hooning"

"Some venues already are too loud and run all night."

"Concerned about noise from patrons leaving premises late at night "

Safety concerns

Some comments raised a concern about safety at night. People expressed a concern that they would not feel safe at night in an area with late night venues. These comments mentioned the risk of anti-social behaviour and the risk of an increase in crime.

"It will lead to an increase in crime"

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“There are so many residences on Darlinghurst Road and it would feel unsafe going into those buildings if the street turned into late night venues.”

Proposed trading areas and precinct boundaries

On the consultation webpage we published maps showing the boundaries of the proposed special entertainment precincts and a discussion paper that included tables of trading hours proposed for each type of business in each type of precinct. The boundaries and the hours align with existing late-night trading areas. These areas already support extended trading hours, which can be accessed by businesses through Development Applications (DAs).

We asked survey respondents to evaluate the table of hours proposed for each type of precinct and rate the table on a sliding scale from too early to too late.

Overall, respondents think the trading hours proposed for Local Centres and City Living precincts are right for the areas, and the hours proposed for Late Night precincts are too early.

Business owners and operators said the proposed hours were right for all three precincts.

People who said they live in Local Centre precincts had mixed opinions about the proposed hours being right for the area or too late.

Most people who said they live in a City Living precinct think the hours proposed for those precincts are a bit late or too late.

Those who said they live in Late Night precincts had differing opinions about the proposed hours with most being too late, closely followed by too early.

A strong majority of younger people (between 18 and 34) think that the proposed hours are early:

- 75% think the hours proposed for Late Night precincts are a bit early or too early
- 63% think the hours proposed for City Living precincts are a bit early or too early
- 59% think the hours proposed for Local Centre precincts are a bit or too early

People aged over 65 think the hours proposed for Late Night and City Living precincts are too late. When it came to Local Centres, they were evenly split between right for the area and too late.

The tables in figure 2 give a breakdown of the overall responses for each precinct:

Figure 2. Responses to the survey question ‘To support vibrancy, live music, and performance in your area, do you think sound levels should be’

Local Centre precincts		
Rating of proposed hours	No. of responses	% of responses
Too early	65	24%
A bit early	35	13%
Right for the area	84	31%

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Local Centre precincts		
A bit late	32	12%
Too late	56	21%

City Living precincts		
Rating of proposed hours	No. of responses	% of responses
Too early	63	23%
A bit early	39	14%
Right for the area	79	29%
A bit late	33	12%
Too late	58	21%

Late night precincts		
Rating of proposed hours	No. of responses	% of responses
Too early	72	26%
A bit early	43	16%
Right for the area	63	23%
A bit late	36	13%
Too late	58	21%

Adding or removing precincts

Survey respondents were asked if they felt any areas should be added or removed from the proposed precincts, including which streets/addresses and why. Maps of the precinct boundaries were included on the Sydney Your Say webpage to reference.

139 responses were received by way of a free text comment box.

9 respondents expressed support for the proposed areas and 14 suggested places to add such as several streets in the Surry Hills area. 42 suggested places to remove such as Walsh Bay and Hickson Road, and Crown Street between Arthur St and Devonshire St

There were 24 suggestions to add a place that were already in the proposal, while 9 noted locations to be removed which were already excluded from the proposal.

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A full breakdown of suggestions has been included in appendix A.

Precinct type changes

Feedback was requested on whether areas should be included in a different precinct type. This could be a Local Centre that has become more suitable for nightlife and should be changed to a City Living precinct. Respondents were asked to include streets/addresses, which precinct type they should become and why.

101 responses were received by way of a free text comment box.

Surry Hills/Crown Street was suggested to go up a tier the most with six responses. The area south of Hyde Park bordered by Liverpool Street, Elizabeth Street and Wentworth Ave received 4 responses to go down a tier.

A full breakdown of suggestions has been included in appendix B.

Sound levels

The survey included a question on what sound levels should be to support vibrancy, live music and performance. People were asked to rate levels as: no louder than they are now, a little bit louder, much louder or they are not sure.

The majority of people opted for sound levels to be no louder than they are now with those living in one of the three precincts feeling the same.

80% of people aged between 18 and 34 thought it should be a bit louder or much louder, while all other age demographics said no louder than they are now.

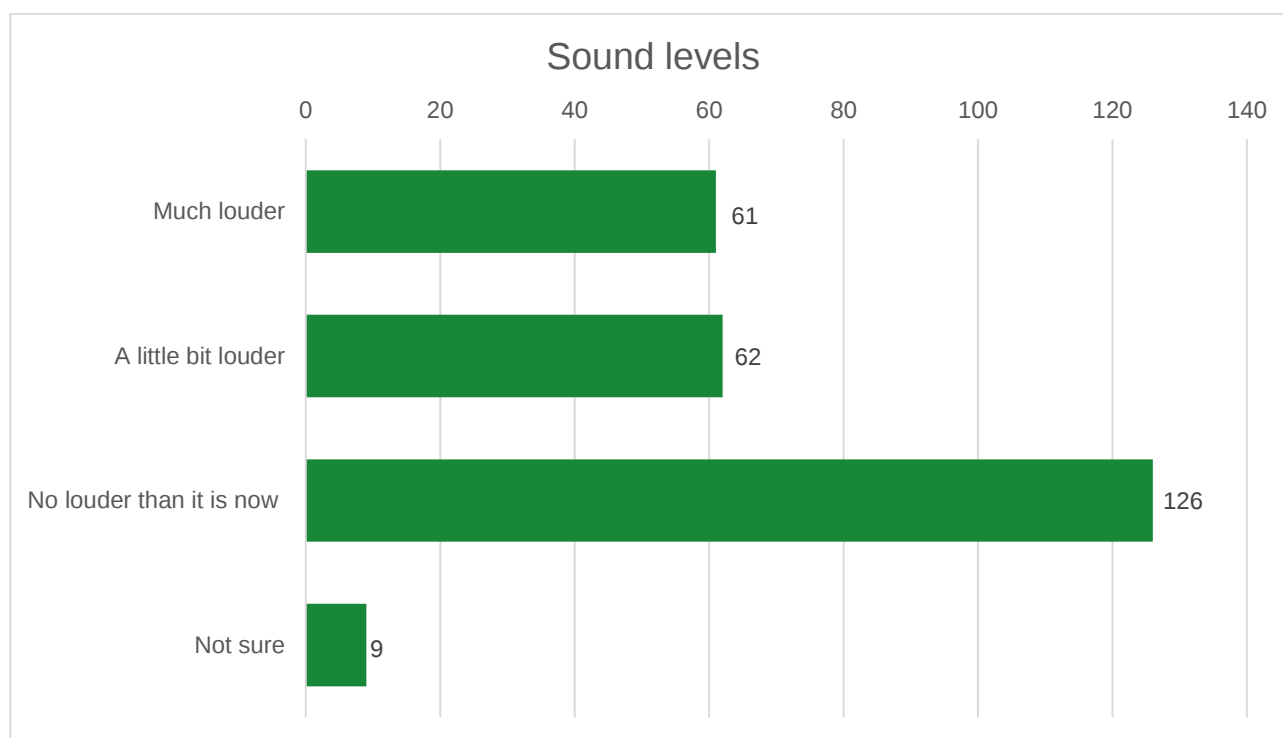
Most businesses thought it should be a little bit louder, noting the low response rate from this group.

People who didn't live in one of the three precincts were even across the options:

- 33% think sound levels should be much louder
- 31% think it should be a little bit louder
- 31% think it should be no louder than it is now
- 6% were not sure

Figure 3 shows the overall response volumes.

Figure 3. Responses to survey Q6. 'To support vibrancy, live music, and performance in your area, do you think sound levels should be:'



Business owners and operators

The response from business owners and operators was very low. Only 13 responses (5% of the total survey responses) were from business owners or operators, and these respondents did not answer all questions. Five responses were received from licensed businesses, and 2 from unlicensed businesses.

We asked if a special entertainment precinct designation encourages your business to trade later than your current hours. Four respondents said yes, three said they already trade as late as they want and two said the hours wouldn't allow them to trade later.

We asked if special entertainment precinct designation would encourage your business to host more live music performances or cultural activities?

Six respondents said yes, two said no.

We then asked respondents to tell us why they chose that answer.

Business respondents who said yes they would host more live music told us it was because their business had the spaces and facilities suitable for live music, events and entertainment, because it would bring more people to the area, and because they felt more venues encouraged by the change would help them with access and connection to community.

Of the two business respondents who said no, one already hosts live music and cultural events 7 nights per week, and the other is an accommodation provider concerned about noise disturbing guests.

We asked if business respondents had any other comments about the special entertainment precincts proposal. The six responses expressed support for Oxford Street, support for small

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retailers, general support for special entertainment precincts, and one expressed a concern around over-regulation.

Reasons for going out

People were asked how far they travelled when going out after 8pm and were asked to select three main reasons. There were 11 options given that ranged from family-friendly spaces and things to do, to safe spaces and transport options.

A choice of places to eat and drink was the most common reason, followed by a vibrant atmosphere, then live music or cultural activities.

Business respondents told us the main reasons people go out in their areas are bars, restaurants and licensed premises being open later, and a choice of places to eat and drink.

Figure 5 summarises the top three reasons people told us that they choose an area to go out in, based on how far people travel to go out after 8pm.

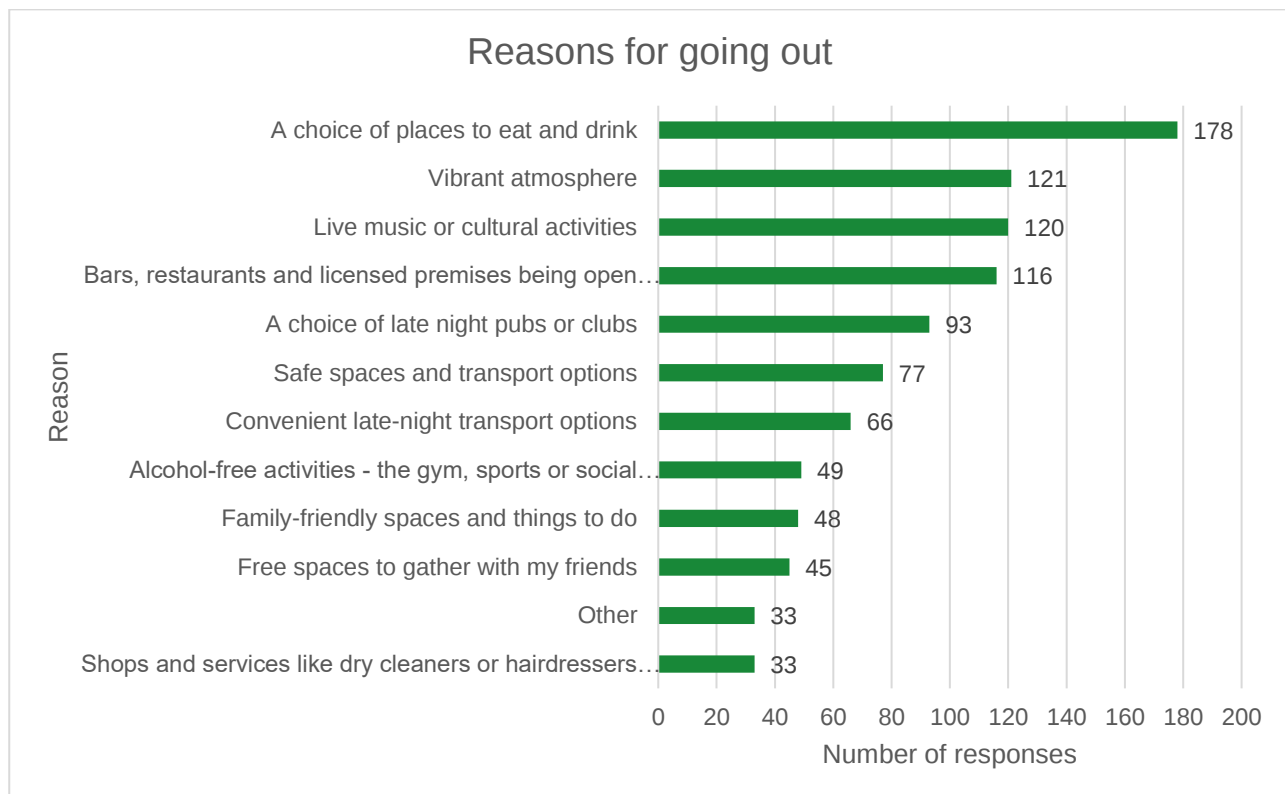
Figure 4. Summary of the top 3 reasons why people choose an area grouped by where they go out after 8pm

Distance travelled	% of responses	Top three reasons
Walking distance from home	48%	• A choice of places to eat and drink • Vibrant atmosphere • Bars, restaurants and licensed premises being open later
10-20 minutes away by car or public transport	31%	• A choice of places to eat and drink • Live music or cultural activities • Vibrant atmosphere
20-30 minutes away by car or public transport	12%	• A choice of places to eat • Live music or cultural activities • Bars, restaurants and licensed premises being open later
More than 30 minutes away by car or public transport	9%	• Live music or cultural activities • Bars, restaurants and licensed premises being open later • Vibrant atmosphere

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Figure 6 shows the full list of reasons that people could select an answer from, and the total number of people who selected each reason.

Figure 5. Responses to survey question 12: What are the main reasons you choose that area? (select up to 3)



Other comments

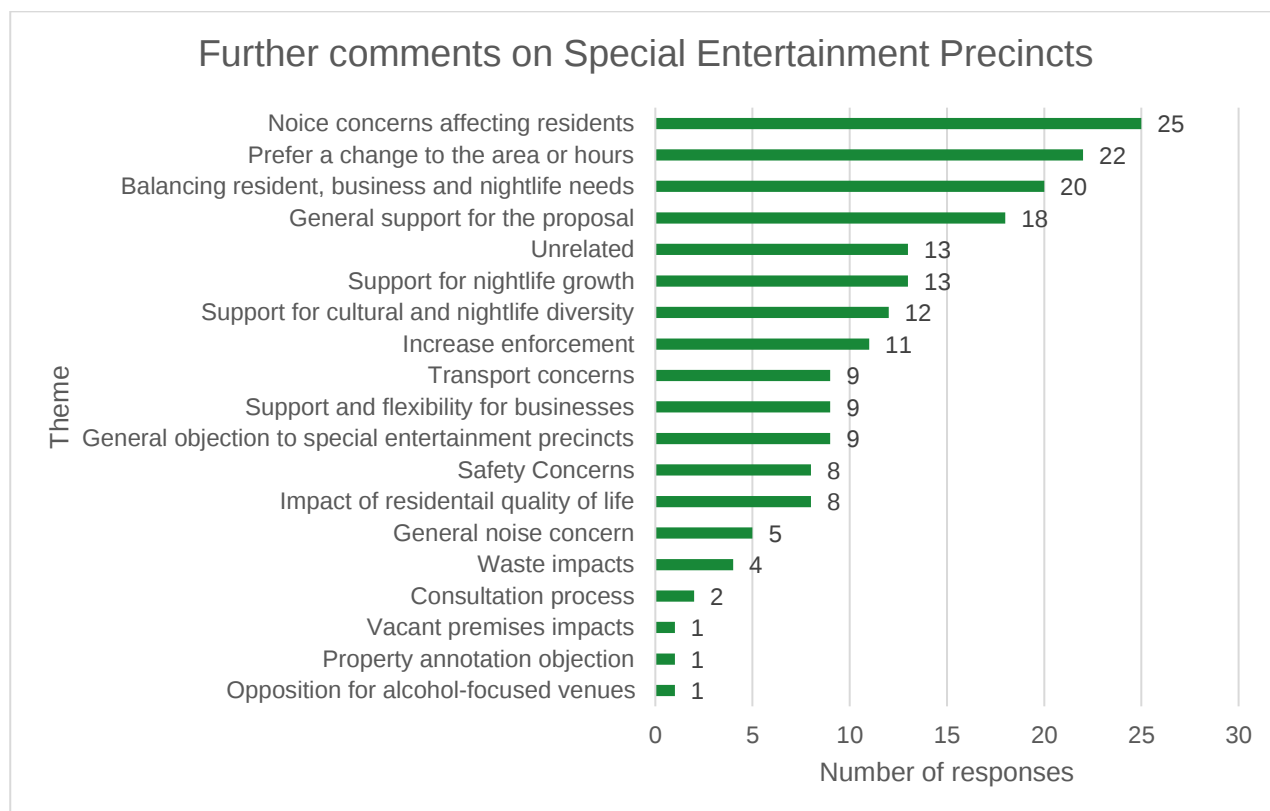
Respondents were asked at the end of the survey if they had any other comments about the proposed special entertainment precincts. Many respondents repeated opinions from their comments earlier in the survey.

The most common themes in these comments were

- Concerns about noise affecting residents (25 comments)
- Prefer a change to the area or hours (22 comments)
- Balancing resident, business and nightlife needs (20 comments).
- General support for the proposal (18 comments)

Figure 7 shows the full list of topics mentioned in other comments.

Figure 6. Themes from responses to the survey question ‘Do you have any other comments about the proposed special entertainment precincts?’



Emailed responses

There were 85 emailed responses from a variety of residents, resident action groups, government entities and commercial organisations.

Email submissions reflected a mixed response to the proposal, with a good level of support for the special entertainment precinct proposal and a similar level of objection.

The topics raised in email submissions align with the feedback received in survey submissions.

The sentiment from those in support is that special entertainment precincts promote a more vibrant, diverse and global city. Many noted the economic and cultural benefits.

Noise concerns affecting residents was often mentioned. Many people who expressed concern about noise also said they would prefer a change to the area or hours. The key change requested was removing specific streets from the proposed areas, stating it wasn't appropriate for their area or due to the high volume of residents that may be negatively impacted. Some submissions noted ongoing issues with specific venues.

Multiple email submissions mentioned Walsh Bay, with some people objecting to the proposal and others expressing support. Similarly, multiple email submissions mentioned Crown Street, suggesting the section between Devonshire Street and Arthur Street is residential and should be removed.

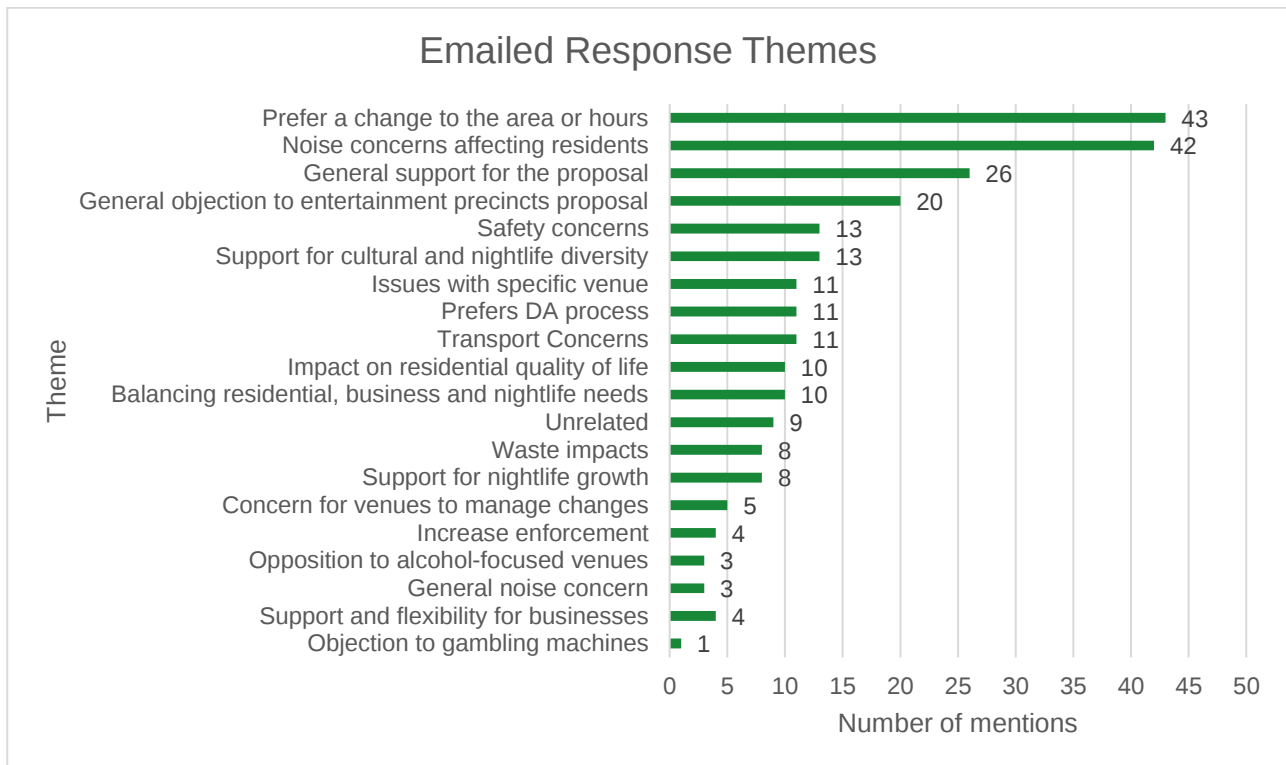
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Some responses suggested that Council (or businesses) should cover the costs to insulate resident's properties against increased noise brought on by special entertainment precincts designation.

Safety, street cleanliness, and transport concerns were also clear themes with the potential for increased anti-social behaviour and current lack of late-night transport options.

Figure 8 gives a breakdown of the number of times topics were mentioned from emailed submissions.

Figure 7. Topics from emailed responses



Email response topics

The following describes the top 5 topics with comments from responses.

Prefer a change to the area or hours

This talked to requests, suggestions or feedback to change the boundaries of a precinct or the hours that are permitted.

Verbatim comments include:

“it is suggested the Special Entertainment Precinct be limited to Broadway (where appropriate) with the rest of the proposed area for the SEP, continue to be classified as Late Night Areas vs making wholesale changes as part of a Special Entertainment Precinct.”

“deeply concerned at the proposal for late night, live music entertainment, and especially the impact of departing patrons in the creation of an “entertainment hotspot” in Walsh Bay”

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<On Walsh Bay> “expansion of trading hours allowed under the controls is required. This expansion would be best achieved by changing the late trading classification of the precinct from ‘Local Centre Area’ to ‘City Living Area’”

“The changes proposed to base trading hours in Town centres such as Crown st and Foveaux st Surry Hills that are mixed use with high residential occupancies on, adjacent and behind these streets are not in the interest of the residents and will have adverse effects on local amenity”

Noise concerns affecting residents

This covered people’s thoughts on the potential increase in noise from special entertainment designation and how this would disrupt their lives.

Verbatim comments include:

“Any increase in noise would make for a worsened living environment for the people living in these designated zones”

“The quiet hours that many residents depend on would be compromised”

“Noise from late night pedestrian traffic leaving venues is a real threat to the amenity enjoyed by residents of our area”

“Impacts from any future noisy late-night activity at Central Barangaroo also need to be carefully considered with respect to its impacts on the huge number of residential dwellings in the vicinity”

General support for the proposal

These comments endorsed the overall concept and alignment of late-night trading areas as special entertainment precincts, recognizing the approach as suitable for the city’s nighttime economy.

Verbatim comments include:

“I support council’s broad approach being to align their current ‘Late Night Trading Areas’ with the new state government SEP mandate”

“The CoS proposal to overlay existing late-night trading areas as Special Entertainment Precincts (SEPs) is a sensible measure”

“I support the establishment of entertainment precincts and amendments to the DCP but believe more areas should be identified”

“The proposed model for nighttime economy’s in SEP’s in the city is commendable. It provides a bespoke approach that relates to the distinctive character of the neighbourhoods and CBD”

General objection to the proposal

These objections spoke to those that are unsupportive of the proposal, suggesting it isn’t appropriate or what was needed.

Verbatim comments are:

“Think again and broaden your perspective to include other age groups and what might appeal to them”

“We strongly urge the responsible authorities to prioritise the rights and quality of life of existing residents by rejecting this proposal.”

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“I am writing to formally object to the proposal to designate Walsh Bay as a Special Entertainment Precinct”

“I’m of the belief that the encouragement of high concentrations of late night venues within any given area is a planning failure”

Safety Concerns

This talked to the potential for increased crime or anti-social behaviour that could make an area less safe.

Verbatim comments included:

“Increase the presence of law enforcement officers in nightlife precincts to ensure public safety and deter disruptive behaviour”

“The quiet hours that many residents depend on would be compromised, making the area less safe, particularly for vulnerable groups”

“encourages excessive alcohol consumption, drug taking and associated bad behaviour that can be a danger for people and property”

“I feel safe at night walking around this area and I don't want that amenity to disappear, which could well happen”

Group submissions

Groups submissions were received from a variety of organisations, both in government and private including community groups, commercial entities and resident action groups. The below table provides a summary of these submissions.

Organisation	Submission summary	
ARUP	Highlights the relationship between the Entertainment Sound DCP and future special entertainment precinct sound criteria. Also, the challenge of allowing post-midnight base hours without a DA when midnight tends to be the typical threshold for nighttime sound criteria.	The Entertainment Sound DCP will be reviewed for alignment as part of the special entertainment precinct planning proposal process. In the roll out, communication with businesses will be key to ensure they understand their requirements.
Australian Hotels Association	Supports the proposal. Suggests including routes between key precincts, for example Foveaux, Devonshire and Albion Streets. Suggests Category A are treated the same as Category B.	The suggested routes have been reviewed, however there are very few venues or businesses on these streets to participate in a special entertainment precinct.
Chippendale Residents Interest Group	Highlights challenges with impacts from existing venues. Concern about inclusion of streets south of Broadway in a special entertainment precinct and the impact on residents in a mixed-use environment.	Local Centre areas often include residents in a mixed-use environment. The trading hours were set with this in mind, and similarly, the sound controls will seek to balance vibrancy with residential amenity.

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Organisation	Submission summary	
	Suggests trading hours be capped at 10pm where there are residential apartments. Suggests a 12-month trial period.	We can confirm there will be a year long trial of the precinct management plan.
Clubs NSW	Supports the proposal, particularly the incentive hours and the sound criteria to balance live entertainment and residential amenity.	Noted.
Create NSW	Supports the proposal. Wants increased vibrancy and activation for the Walsh Bay Arts Precincts and Roslyn Packer Theatre. Suggests 'City Living' hours would be more appropriate, given the proximity to Central Sydney the importance of the arts precinct. This would help support a better after-show offer. Suggests program incentive hours be applied to outdoor trading.	The 2 wharves in the Walsh Bay Arts Precinct are proposed to be upgraded from Local Centre to City Living area to better support an after-show offer. Outdoor trading is not proposed to be included in the incentive hours due to the impact of sound outdoors.
Hatch	Support for the approach providing more flexibility and support to businesses. Would like the proposal to incentivise an improved offer and diverse experience, not just bars and clubs. Suggests Purple Flag accreditation for the precincts. Highlights the need for special entertainment precincts to be compatible with existing and new residential development.	Noted. The City is supportive of a diverse night-time offer and will support precincts with Purple Flag accreditation. The sound plan will seek compatibility with residents. The proposed Entertainment Sound DCP addresses new residential development.
Kent Street Residents Group	Concerned about impacts on amenity and quiet enjoyment of their homes. Suggests the section of Kent Street with their residential buildings be excluded from the proposal.	Central Sydney is a mixed-use environment and a main nightlife hub. Our approach to special entertainment precincts seeks to balance vibrancy with the need for amenity for residents. A precinct management plan including sounds levels will be set at the next stage.
Lendlease	As the developer of Barangaroo south, notes the site-specific acoustic masterplan that was developed in collaboration with the City. Would like to be consulted as the proposal progresses.	Noted. The City will continue to engage key stakeholders.
Merivale	Supports Council's proposal for Special Entertainment Precincts on the basis that, as stated in the Discussion Paper, no business will be disadvantaged. Looks forward to the detailed sound work and would like to be consulted.	Noted. The City will continue to engage key stakeholders.
Millers Point Community	Strong opposition to increase in noise and disturbances. Carried out a survey of Millers Point, Dawes Point, Walsh Bay and	Noted. As a major arts precinct, Walsh Bay is well suited to becoming a special entertainment precinct. Sound studies will

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Organisation	Submission summary	
Resident Action Group	The Rocks residents. Cautious / moderate support for designating Barangaroo and The Rocks, with measures to manage noise and antisocial behaviours. Suggests Walsh Bay be excluded from the special entertainment precincts, with concern about potential impacts of noise, traffic and anti-social behaviour in the heritage context.	be undertaken, and sound levels will be set in the next stage of work. The precinct management plan and on-going governance will monitor and manage potential impacts.
National Art School (NAS)	As a long-standing cultural and creative institution, expresses support for and requests inclusion in the special entertainment precinct proposal. NAS is a 600-student arts school and a regular host of live music, performance and events. Designation would allow them to expand their offerings, providing more opportunities for public participation and cultural enrichment.	National Arts School is proposed to be added as a City Living area.
Night Time Industries Association	Supports the proposal and support for the sector. Suggests amendments to the areas: • upgrade Barangaroo and William Street to late night • upgrade Crown Street to City Living • match Category A base hours to Category B to make it commercially viable for larger venues to trade later • increase base hours in Local Centres to midnight	The suggested amendments have been reviewed. Taken in balance with the potential impacts and mixed feedback, these were not pursued.
Placemaking NSW	Supports the proposal. Would like to collaborate on the development of the precinct management plan. Suggests extension of hours also be applied earlier in the day. Suggests the parts of The Rocks designated as Local Centre be upgraded to City Living, to allow businesses to trade later without a DA and to align with tourist and customer expectations.	Noted. The City will continue to engage key stakeholders. Much of The Rocks is already designated a Late-Night Management Area. The Local Centre area will be investigated and any proposed changes would be exhibited.
Port Authority NSW	Supports Circular Quay and the Overseas Passenger Terminal's inclusion in the proposal. Looks forward to consultation at the next stage, including on sound criteria.	Noted. The City will continue to engage key stakeholders.
Property Council of NSW	Supports the proposal. Suggests base hours for Category C be reviewed,	Noted. Category C hours will be reviewed in the next stage.

Engagement report – special entertainment precincts discussion paper

Organisation	Submission summary	
	particularly alignment between the DCP and precinct management plan.	
Qtopia Sydney	Requests inclusion in the special entertainment precinct proposal. Qtopia Sydney offers exhibitions and performances across the Loading Dock Theatre and The Substation. Being included would allow for more performances, visitors and a greater platform for LGBTQIA+ artists and their stories.	Qtopia is proposed to be added as a City Living area.
Solotel	Supports the proposal for Special Entertainment Precincts on the basis that, as stated in the Discussion Paper, no business will be disadvantaged. Looks forward to the detailed sound work and would like to be consulted. Emphasises the importance of alignment with the legislative framework (Vibrancy Reforms) for sound management.	Noted. The City will continue to engage key stakeholders.
Sydney Opera House	Supports the proposal which would better support vibrant cultural experiences. Notes the Sydney Opera House has a unique planning framework, being a state significant site with site-specific exempt development and heritage provisions that apply. Expresses interest in the benefits a special entertainment precinct may offer given this context.	Noted. Aside from trading hours, special entertainment precincts also offer benefits in terms of liquor license fees and being part of a late-night precinct.
Walsh Bay Precinct Association	Recognises potential benefits, while also highlighting the range of community views. Reflects concern from residents about noise, anti-social behaviour and the strain on amenities. Expresses support from residents for new bars, cafes and restaurants, more cultural and artistic offer, and everyday retail. Expresses support from businesses for more flexibility and streamlining of processes. Suggests the current approach to Walsh Bay does not acknowledge the different uses and contexts in Walsh Bay (arts precinct vs residential vs commercial).	The 2 wharves in the Walsh Bay Arts Precincts are proposed to be upgraded from Local Centre to City Living area to better align the designation with the varied use in the precinct. The precinct management plan, including sound criteria, will be set to manage potential impacts.

Briefing sessions

Supporting Sydney's nightlife: Special Entertainment Precincts community and business briefing sessions

On Tuesday 3 December we hosted briefing sessions for business owners and operators (3pm – 4.30pm) and for the wider community (5.30pm - 7pm) in the Lower Town Hall. The business owners and operators' session was attended by 52 people, the community session was attended by 82 people.

Both forums featured presentations on our proposed approach to establishing special entertainment precincts, including the benefits for businesses, residents, and the night-time economy. The presentations gave details about proposed hours, managing entertainment sound and how the proposal aligns with Sydney's late-night trading.

Both briefings were hosted by the Lord Mayor of Sydney, Clover Moore AO. The Hon. John Graham, Special Minister of State, Minister for Roads, Minister for the Arts, Minister for Music and the Night-time Economy, and Minister for Jobs and Tourism spoke at the business session about the NSW Government Vibrancy Reforms.

Following the presentations, attendees could visit information stations to speak directly with City of Sydney planners to ask questions and share feedback. Liquor and Gaming NSW and the Office of the 24-Hour Economy Commissioner also staffed information stations to answer questions on sound compliance and vibrancy reforms.

Key feedback themes and issues raised

1. **Support for vibrant nightlife and entertainment**, including requests to include additional areas and sites in the proposed precincts.
2. **Requests for clear communication and planning**, including requests for more details on future noise levels and timelines for the proposal to be implemented.
3. **Stronger enforcement and sound mitigation**: A consistent feedback theme was strong requests for effective enforcement of noise and soundproofing measures, and consideration of how noise from waterways can be regulated.
4. **Resident inclusion and equity**: Concerns about the negative impacts on residential areas, with a focus on protecting the rights of long-term residents in both designated precincts and adjacent areas.

Youth opportunities group briefing

The City of Sydney youth opportunities program enables young people aged 15 to 24 to build transferrable professional skills, increase confidence and make a real impact in the local area through program design.

On Tuesday 14 January we presented an overview of the special entertainment precincts proposal at the group's monthly workshop and asked for feedback on the proposal. We also asked the group about their experience going out after 8pm.

Key feedback themes and issues raised

1. Support for vibrant nightlife and entertainment.

The group were generally in favour of the proposal, especially the efforts to increase live music and cultural performances. They had no feedback on precinct boundaries. Some expressed a hope that their regular venues in Potts Point would consider staying open later than 10pm.

2. Support for more diverse nighttime options.

The group agreed with the statement that young people would like more diverse options for places to go at night, including alcohol free options, low-cost options and venues that are easy to travel to and from. Some group members are under 18. They enjoy going to pool halls and out to eat.

3. Concerns about safety.

When asked what influences their decision to go out at night, the group expressed a strong concern for safety. Several members raised concerns about paths to walk home not being well lit and streetlights being out. Others expressed concern that the poor condition of paving prevented them from safely walking or riding a bike home at night. Some mentioned they felt safer in busy areas and suggested that venues could be encouraged to have more outdoor activity and curb side seating, as the crowd on the street creates a sense of safety.

4. Concerns about transportation

The group asked questions that showed a desire for improved transport options to and from the proposed precincts. They asked if the proposal would include improving public transportation and suggested making alternative transport, like bike sharing, more available in the precincts.

5. High level support for increased noise levels and the entertainment sound DCP

In discussing noise, the group expressed support to allow more noise in the precincts to create a more vibrant nightlife. One member expressed a concern that new venues could disturb residents. The group expressed general support for the proposed protections in the entertainment sound DCP.

Marketing activities

Overview of communications

The following is a snapshot of outcomes from marketing and communications activities undertaken to support the consultation. Activities reached a range of audience segments existing through City of Sydney channels.

Sydney Your Say webpage

A [Sydney Your Say webpage](#) was created. The page included an electronic copy of the discussion paper, link to the survey and other key information about the consultation.

Sydney Your Say e-news

The consultation was included in the Sydney Your Say e-newsletter sent on 27 November 2024 to 5122 subscribers.

Consultation letter

A letter was posted to residents, inviting them to attend the briefing session and give feedback on the proposal. 49,034 letters were distributed.

Consultation email

An email was sent on 25 November to 938 known key stakeholders, including business chambers and community groups, inviting them to attend the briefing session and to give feedback on the proposal.

Community briefings

Two briefing sessions were held on 3 December in the Lower Town Hall.

Marketing and communications

There were a range of marketing and communications activities undertaken to support the consultation. Activities reached different audiences through paid advertising and existing City of Sydney channels.

The consultation and information sessions were promoted across multiple channels on LinkedIn, TikTok and Instagram.

The Instagram reel created was extremely popular at over 46,000 views. It was produced to prompt interest from young people specifically and create awareness of the consultation and the proposed changes. It was highly engaging leading to a spike in webpage visits and survey completions and high levels of engagement and shares on the post itself.

Through our sponsorship of Sydney Festival, the City of Sydney is given opportunities to place content in their e-newsletter. We promoted the special entertainment precinct consultation in their 2 January 2025 edition. It prompted 112 referrals to the SYS webpage.

Examples of the content has been included in appendix C.

Media

Over a period of 35 days, the campaign generated approximately 100 media mentions across a diverse range of platforms, demonstrating strong public and media interest. Coverage spanned commercial television networks, ABC television and radio, as well as print and digital publications. Notably, the Daily Telegraph provided front-page coverage along with an in-depth editorial, amplifying the campaign's visibility to a broad readership.

The total potential audience reach was estimated at 11.4 million, with the majority of this engagement occurring through online channels. The widespread media attention contributed to increased awareness and engagement with key messages.

A detailed breakdown of media coverage by type, including specific outlets is in Appendix D.

Appendices

Appendix A: Adding or removing precincts

Respondents suggested the following places should be added:

Number of respondents	Suggested addition	City of Sydney response
4	More of Surry Hills - Campbell Street, Burton Street, Albion Street between Riley and Elizabeth, more of Cleveland Street, Reservoir Street and Commonwealth Street intersection	Much of Surry Hills is already designated and beyond those areas, there are very few venues or businesses to participate in a special entertainment precinct.
2	Entertainment Quarter	NSW Government is undergoing an open tender process to shape the future of the Entertainment Quarter.
2	More of Ultimo	It is unclear which parts of Ultimo are being put forward for inclusion. Broadway is already designated.
2	More side streets around Oxford Street, Ryder Street near Little Oxford Street	Much of Darlinghurst is already designated and beyond those areas, there are very few venues or businesses to participate in a special entertainment precinct.
1	Extend Darlinghurst Road and Bayswater Road Kings Cross	Much of Kings Cross / Potts Point is already designated and beyond those areas, there are very few venues or businesses to participate in a special entertainment precinct.
1	Extend Glebe Point Road	There are very few venues or businesses to participate in a special entertainment precinct.
1	Gadigal Avenue north of O'Dea around The Cannery and Rosebery Engine Yards in Rosebery	There are very few venues or businesses to participate in a special entertainment precinct.

Respondents suggested the following places should be removed:

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Number of respondents	Suggested removal	City of Sydney response
8	Walsh Bay and Hickson Road, Pier 4/5, Pier 8/9	Walsh Bay is a significant arts precinct and therefore appropriate for inclusion. Our approach to special entertainment precincts seeks to balance vibrancy with the need for amenity for residents. A precinct management plan including sounds levels will be set at the next stage.
8	Crown Street, between Arthur St and Devonshire St	This section of Crown Street is residential and designated R1. It is not mixed use. Proposed to be removed.
7	Parts of Kings Cross / Potts Point / Elizabeth Bay– Darlinghurst Street, Earl Place, Orwell Street, Lankelly Place, Springfield Mall and Lane, Victoria Street, Macleay Street, Bayswater Road and Ward Ave	The streets are mixed use. Our approach to special entertainment precincts seeks to balance vibrancy with the need for amenity for residents. A precinct management plan including sounds levels will be set at the next stage.
3	Hunt Street / Commonwealth Street / Reservoir Street / Hollywood Quarter Quay Street, Ultimo Road, Thomas Street and Hay Street	The streets are mixed use. Our approach to special entertainment precincts seeks to balance vibrancy with the need for amenity for residents. A precinct management plan including sounds levels will be set at the next stage.
2	North end of King Street Newtown	King Street is mixed use. Quay Street, Ultimo Road, Thomas Street and Hay Street. A precinct management plan including sounds levels will be set at the next stage.
2	Alexandria	The area identified is industrial. Our approach to special entertainment precincts seeks to balance vibrancy with the need for amenity for residents nearby. A precinct management plan including sounds levels will be set at the next stage.
1	Bathurst Street, Pyrmont, Chippendale, The Rocks, Riley Street, South Eveleigh	The streets / areas are mixed use. Our approach to special entertainment precincts seeks to balance vibrancy with the need for amenity for residents. A precinct management plan including sounds levels will be set at the next stage.
1	Surry Hills Village development, 4 Cornwallis Street, 64 Foveaux Street	Noise complaints relating to specific venues should be dealt with through L&GNSW. Venues with a poor compliance history will not be eligible for dedicated venue benefits.

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Some respondents suggested places be added which are already included in the proposal. This helps to confirm the approach:

- Surry Hills (3 respondents)
- Darling Harbour (3 respondents)
- Redfern / Regent Street (3 respondents)
- Barangaroo (2 respondents)
- Circular Quay (2 respondents)
- Newtown (2 respondents)
- Chippendale (2 respondents)
- Erskineville
- Darling Square
- South Eveleigh
- Alexandria
- Green Square
- Zetland
- Glebe

Similarly, some respondents suggested places be removed which are already excluded from the proposal. This helps to confirm our approach:

- Millers Point and Dawes Point (8 respondents)
- Chippendale Hotel

Appendix B: Precinct type changes

Respondents suggested the following places go up a tier (Local Centre to City Living, or to Late-Night):

Number of respondents	Suggested upgrade of tier	City of Sydney response
6	Surry Hills / Crown Street	On balance and given mixed feedback, current tier seems appropriate.
5	King Street, Newtown	Given the number of venues and significance as a night-life destination, the upgrade of King Street, Newtown will be further investigated, and any proposed changes would be exhibited.
4	Kings Cross/ Victoria Road / Macleay Street Broadway	On balance, current tier seems appropriate.
2	Regent Street Waterloo/Green Square/Zetland/Rosebury Elizabeth Street	On balance, current tier seems appropriate.

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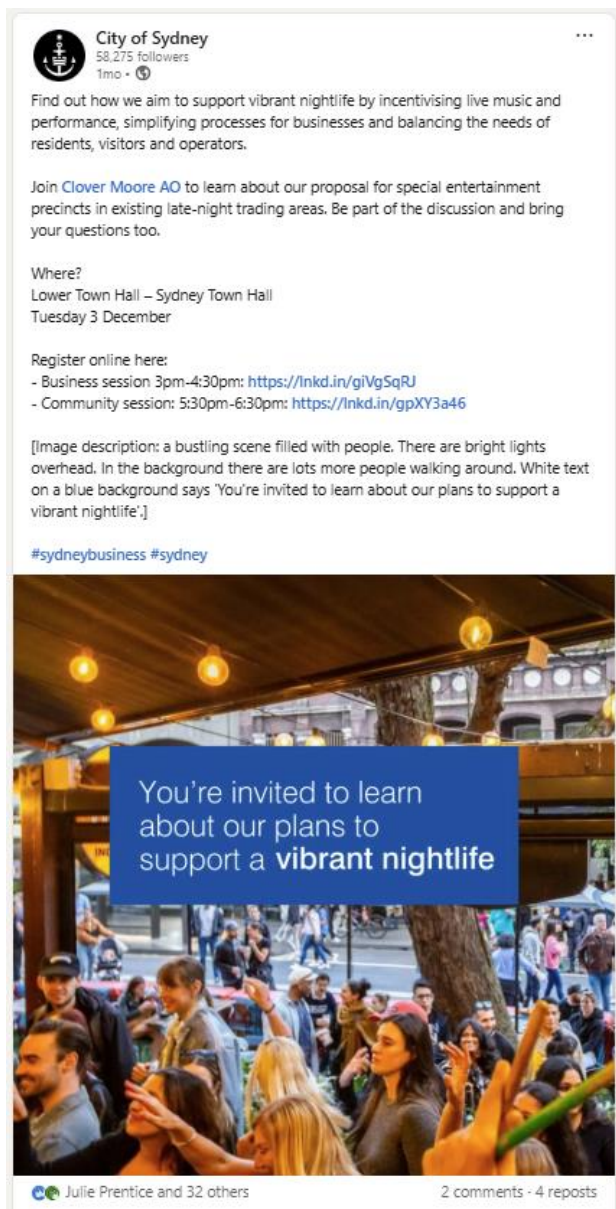
Number of respondents	Suggested upgrade of tier	City of Sydney response
	William Street	
1	Redfern Street Stanley Street Chippendale Pyrmont Walsh Bay	On balance, current tier seems appropriate.

Respondents suggested the following places go down a tier (Late Night to City living, or City Living to Local Centre):

Number of respondents	Suggested upgrade of tier	City of Sydney response
4	South of Hyde Park bordered by Liverpool Street, Elizabeth Street and Wentworth Ave	Central Sydney is a night life hub and a mixed-use environment. Our approach to special entertainment precincts seeks to balance vibrancy with the need for amenity for residents.
3	North Alexandria	North Alexandria is industrial and one of the few areas of the city without residential. Our approach to special entertainment precincts seeks to balance vibrancy with the need for amenity for residents. Nearby residents will be considered when sound levels are set.
2	William Street	Suggested for both upgrade and downgrade. On balance, its current tier seems appropriate.
1	Broadway Haymarket and Darling Quarter Kent Street Wentworth Avenue CBD fringes	On balance, current tier seems appropriate.

Appendix C: Marketing

Engagement report – special entertainment precincts discussion paper



Engagement report – special entertainment precincts discussion paper



From our friends

News for arts and culture fans

The City of Sydney wants to make existing late-night trading areas even better by turning them into special event precincts. [Have your say here.](#)

Bone Dry x Reschke Wines

[Enter here](#) to win one of 10 double passes to *Siegfried & Roy: The Unauthorised Opera*, including pre-show wine tasting and more.

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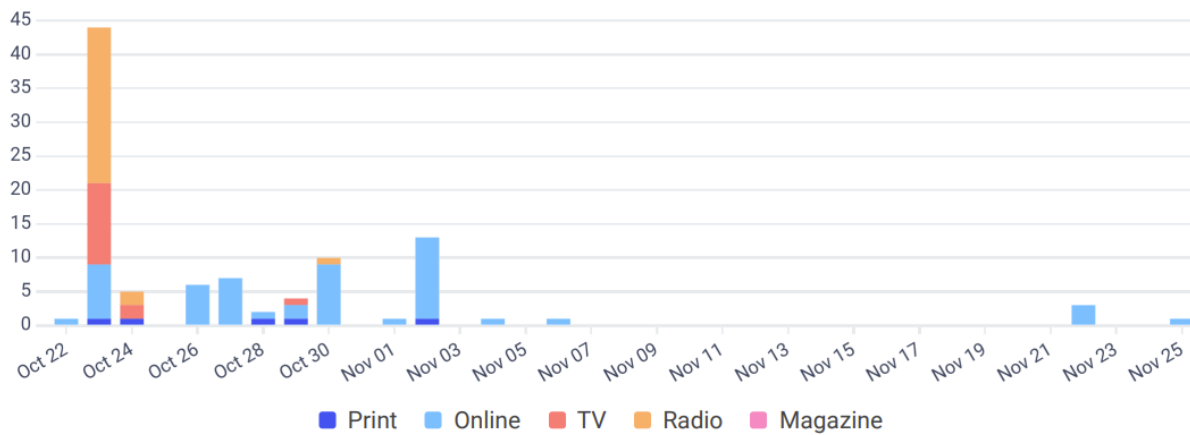
Our mailing address is:
Sydney Festival, Level 5,
10 Hickson Road, The Rocks NSW

We would like to acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land on which Sydney Festival takes place, and pay respect to the 29 clans of the Eora Nation.

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Appendix D: Media coverage

A breakdown of mentions by media type displayed over the selected coverage period.



Coverage by Media Type

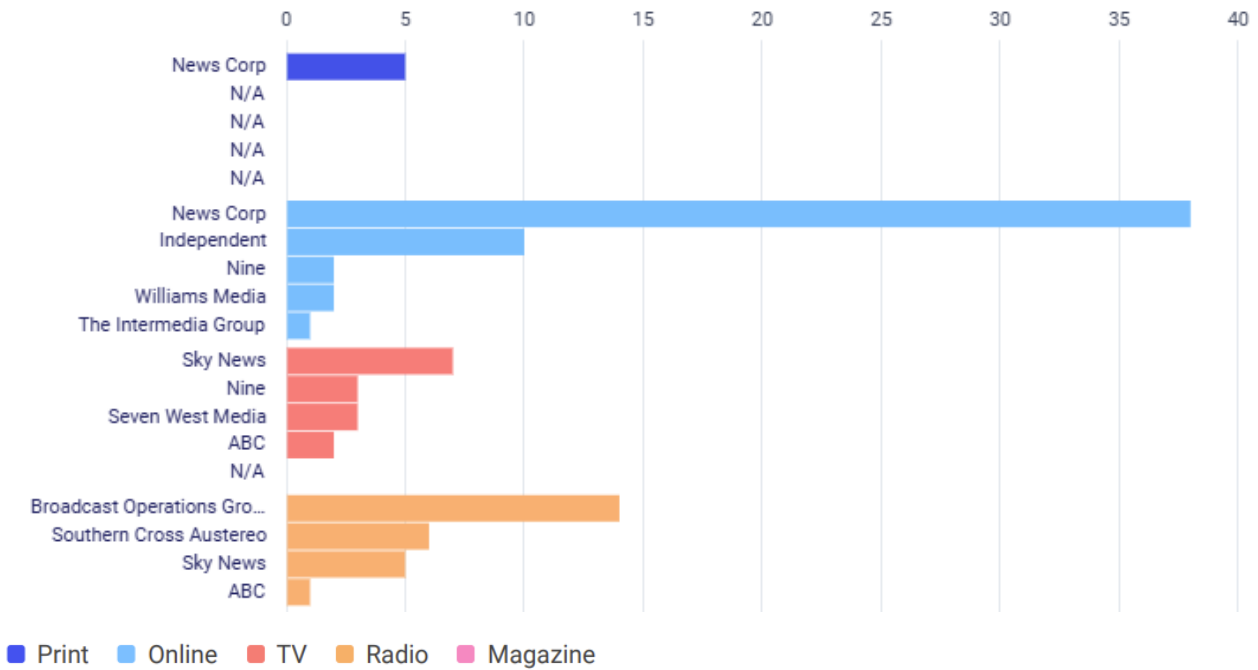
Total mentions by media type over the selected coverage period.



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Leading Media Outlets

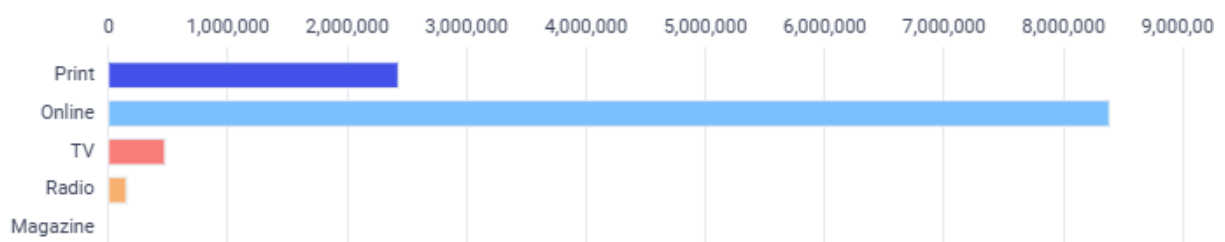
Top 5 Media Groups over the selected coverage period.



Potential Audience Reach

11,463,600 over 35 days

Cumulative potential audience reach by media type for the selected coverage period.



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Appendix E: Inclusion in Sydney Your Say newsletter on 27 November

Sydney Your Say

CITY OF SYDNEY 



Image: Katherine Griffiths

Your say on special entertainment precincts

We'd like to hear your thoughts about making our late-night trading areas into special entertainment precincts. These precincts aim to support vibrant nightlife by incentivising live music and performance, simplifying processes for businesses and balancing the needs of residents, visitors and operators.

Register for the briefing session on 3 December to learn more or read the discussion paper with full details of the proposal.

Consultation closes Monday 20 January 2025.

[Read more](#)

Appendix F: Consultation emails sent 25 November

Engagement report – special entertainment precincts discussion paper



Have your say on special entertainment precincts

We propose to introduce special entertainment precincts in existing late-night trading areas. This proposal aims to simplify processes for businesses, encourage live music and performances, and support a vibrant night-time economy.

We invite you to a briefing for business owners and operators hosted by Lord Mayor of Sydney, Clover Moore AO to discuss the proposal, its potential benefits and how it could support you.

You'll hear from expert planners and have an opportunity to ask questions and share your feedback.

You'll also hear about our proposed changes to manage entertainment sound and trading hours. Our plan complements late-night trading and provides certainty for venues while protecting their neighbours.

Tuesday 3 December

3pm–4pm

Lower Town Hall, Sydney Town Hall

[Register](#)

Have your say online

You can read the special [entertainments precinct](#) discussion paper and the draft development control plan for [entertainment sound management](#) at our Sydney Your Say page: city.sydney/consultations

Have your say by Monday 20 January 2025.

The City of Sydney acknowledges the Gadigal of the Eora nation as the Traditional Custodians of our local area.



Have your say on a new proposal for Sydney's nightlife

We propose to introduce special entertainment precincts in existing late-night trading areas. These precincts aim to support vibrant nightlife, make processes simpler for businesses and balance community needs.

We invite you to a community briefing hosted by Lord Mayor of Sydney, Clover Moore AO to learn more about the proposal, ask questions and share your thoughts.

You'll also hear about our proposed changes to manage entertainment sound and trading hours. Our plan complements late-night trading and provides certainty for venues while protecting their neighbours.

Tuesday 3 December

5:30pm–6:30pm

Lower Town Hall, Sydney Town Hall

[Register](#)

Have your say online

You can read the special [entertainments precinct](#) discussion paper and the draft development control plan for [entertainment sound management](#) at our Sydney Your Say page city.sydney/consultations

Have your say by Monday 20 January 2025.

The City of Sydney acknowledges the Gadigal of the Eora nation as the Traditional Custodians of our local area.

