

Consultation Feedback Report

**Relocation of Services to the Signal Point Experience
Centre:**

**South Coast Regional Arts Centre (Old Police Station)
and**

Goolwa Visitor Information Centre (Old Post Office)

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1.0 Background

Council has resolved that Council target \$3 million in savings and efficiencies for future reduction to the budgets. In order to inform future planning and decisions two (2) service reviews were commissioned in 2024 to assess the functions and futures of the;

- Old Police Station; located on Goolwa Terrace, and provides a gallery / exhibition space known as the South Coast Regional Arts Centre (SCRAC)
- Old Post Office, located on Cadell Street, which currently houses the Goolwa Visitor Information Centre (GVIC).
- Signal Point Experience Centre (SPEC), located on the Goolwa Wharf, features a gallery / exhibition space (1st floor) and the Yuntulun Ku:li-war permanent exhibition (Ground floor)

The outcomes and recommendations from these service reviews were presented to Council at the 16 September 2024 meeting. Both reviews recommended the consolidation of the Council services and Council subsequently resolved to approve for the purposes of consultation that the GVIC (Old Post Office) and the gallery operations at SCRAC (Old Police Station) relocate to the Signal Point Experience Centre.

The benefits of a proposed co-location of Council services to the Signal Point Experience Centre on the Goolwa Wharf Precinct include;

- Keeping SPEC fresh and living, giving visitors and community more reason to visit an inspiring and delightful place
- Increased visitation to a more activated and 'interesting' SPEC, and it is envisaged that co-location will result in more visitation than what currently occurs across three (3) separate services
- Increased revenue via gallery and retail offerings
- Promotion and overall activation of the wharf precinct, this is fully supported by the Goolwa Wharf Tourism and hospitality operators.
- A greater opportunity to showcase more of the region in one place, bringing diverse visitors in contact with local arts, creator, storytellers and producers
- Signal Point and the lawns around it will come a focal point for activations delivered by the new Community Activation Team
- Potential to showcase local art across the region – not just limited to the two (2) galleries in Goolwa
- Reduction in staffing and operating costs – annual savings to Council of approximately \$281,000

Council engaged with the community through a consultation on the proposed relocation of GVIC and SCRAC services to the SPEC in early 2025, with the results presented in this report.

2.0 Engagement Methods

2.1 What We Asked

Council resolved to proceed, for the purposes of public consultation to relocate the services at their meeting held 16 September 2024. The formal consultation period subsequently ran from Thursday 09 January 2025 to Friday 31 January 2025.

2.2 How We Engaged

- Social media campaign
- My Say Alexandrina page and online survey
- Council website
- Hard copy advertising in Council offices at Goolwa and Strathalbyn

Method	Date
Website – dedicated MySay page and survey listing key documents	9 January – 31 January
Foyer Display – Council Office Goolwa	9 January – 14 February
Public Notice – Fleurieu Sun Newspaper	8 January 2025
Public Notice – Southern Argus Newspaper	8 January 2025
Facebook post	9 January 2025
Instagram post	9 January 2025
Facebook post	23 January 2025
Instagram	23 January 2025

3.0 Engagement Outcomes

The below table provides a summary of the outcomes of the scheduled engagement:

Method	Date	Outcome
Website – dedicated MySay page and survey listing key documents	9 January to 31 January 2025	184 MySay responses received 16 consultation responses received outside of the MySay platform - 6 are hard copy surveys and 10 respondents provided submissions.
Foyer Display	9 January 2025 to 14 February 2025	Hard copy presence advertising the consultation period Hard copies of the survey available
		 The poster is titled 'Goolwa Wharf Precinct Community Consultations'. It features an aerial view of the precinct and a QR code. The poster is divided into two main sections: 'Relocation of gallery and visitor services in Goolwa' and 'Sale of Customs House'. The 'Relocation' section mentions that the Council seeks feedback on the Goolwa Visitor Information Centre - Old Post Office and the gallery operations at South Coast Regional Arts Centre - Old Police Station relocating to Signal Point Experience Centre. The 'Sale of Customs House' section mentions that the Council seeks feedback on the sale of Customs House, Goolwa for a hotel (or short term tourist accommodation type) development. The poster also includes a 'Share Your Feedback' section with three options: Online, By mail, and In person. At the bottom, it says 'For more information and to provide your feedback, visit mysay.alexandrina.sa.gov.au'.
Instagram post	9 January 2025	• Post reach: 397 • Views: 508 • Interactions: 16 ○ Reactions: 11 ○ Comments: 2 ○ Saves: 1 ○ Shares: 2
	23 January 2025	• Post reach: 298 • Views: 351 • Interactions: 6

		○ Reactions: 5 ○ Comments: 1 ○ Shares: 0
Facebook post	9 January 2025	• Views: 6,165 • Post reach: 2,431 • Interactions: 59 ○ Reactions: 17 ○ Comments: 32 ○ Shares: 10 ○ Link Clicks: 30
	23 January 2025	• Views: 2,903 • Post reach: 1,733 • Interactions: 13 ○ Reactions: 4 ○ Comments: 1 ○ Shares: 8 ○ Link clicks: 11
 Alexandrina Council 23 January · 🌐 A reminder that consultation on the relocation of gallery and visitor services in Goolwa is closing on Friday 31 January! 🗓️📍 Council is seeking feedback on relocating the Goolwa Visitor Information Centre – Old Post Office and the gallery operations at the South Coast Regional Arts Centre – Old Police Station to the Signal Point Experience Centre. This recommendation follows a comprehensive Service Review in 2024 of Council's Arts and Culture Programs and Visitor Services. For further information, to read the Council Minutes and Agenda and submit your feedback, visit https://bit.ly/3DISI5L 🇺🇲 Consultation closes 5 pm, Friday 31 January 2025. 		

**Public Notice –
Fleurieu Sun
Newspaper**

9 January
2025

Relocation of gallery and visitor services in Goolwa

Council seeks feedback on relocating the Goolwa Visitor Information Centre (GVIC) in the Old Post Office and the gallery operations at the South Coast Regional Arts Centre (SCRAC) in the Old Police Station, to the Signal Point Experience Centre (SPEC).

This recommendation follows a comprehensive Service Review in 2024 of Council's Arts and Culture Programs and Visitor Services. Council's arts resources are currently concentrated in Goolwa with two galleries operating within 150 metres of each other.

Relocating the GVIC and SCRAC has been recommended to provide more opportunities and create a wider variety of retail offerings across all of Council's visitor services areas. The GVIC and SCRAC would be integrated with the functions of the SPEC and complement the gallery exhibitions.

A flexible and adaptable approach will create opportunities for a wider variety of retail offerings across the entire visitor services area, which will be integrated with the rest of the building's functions and complement the gallery's exhibitions.

**Public Notice –
Southern Argus
Newspaper**

9 January
2025



**ALEXANDRINA COUNCIL
Community Consultations**

Council seeks community feedback on the following two (2) projects. Please direct all written submissions via mysay.alexandrina.sa.gov.au, email alex@alexandrina.sa.gov.au or by post to the Chief Executive Officer, PO Box 21, Goolwa SA 5214. For further information, please call Council on 8555 7000.

Submissions for both consultations will be accepted by Council until 5 pm, Friday 31 January 2025.

Sale of Customs House, Goolwa

Council is seeking feedback on the sale of Customs House in Goolwa for a hotel (or short-term tourist accommodation type) development.

Customs House comprises two (2) parcels of land owned by Alexandrina Council, formally identified as Lot 210 Porter Street, Goolwa, Certificate of Title Volume 5799 Folio 724; and Lot 2 Hays Street, Goolwa, Certificate of Title Volume 5495 Folio 667.

The next milestone of the Goolwa Wharf Precinct revitalisation is to consider the future of the historic Customs House building, the business mix in the precinct and how the activation of this building can support the long-term prosperity of the local economy.

Relocation of gallery and visitor services in Goolwa

Council seeks feedback on relocating the Goolwa Visitor Information Centre (GVIC) in the Old Post Office and the gallery operations at the South Coast Regional Arts Centre (SCRAC) in the Old Police Station, to the Signal Point Experience Centre (SPEC).

This recommendation follows a comprehensive Service Review in 2024 of Council's Arts and Culture Programs and Visitor Services. Council's arts resources are currently concentrated in Goolwa with two galleries operating within 150 metres of each other.

Relocating the GVIC and SCRAC has been recommended to provide more opportunities and create a wider variety of retail offerings across all of Council's visitor services areas. The GVIC and SCRAC would be integrated with the functions of the SPEC and complement the gallery exhibitions.

A flexible and adaptable approach will create opportunities for a wider variety of retail offerings across the entire visitor services area, which will be integrated with the rest of the building's functions and complement the gallery's exhibitions.

Fleurieu Sun
Article

16 January
2025

Have your say on Goolwa's visitor information centre

Alexandrina Council are asking for feedback on the proposed relocation of visitor and information services in Goolwa.

If supported, the Goolwa Visitor Information Centre at the Old Post Office and the gallery operations from the South Coast Regional Arts Centre at the Old Police Station would be relocated to the Signal Point Experience Centre.

This recommendation follows a comprehensive Service Review in 2024 of Council's Arts and Culture Programs and Visitor Services.

Community consultation closes 5 pm, Friday January 31, 2025.

To submit your feedback, head to <https://bit.ly/3DIS15L>.

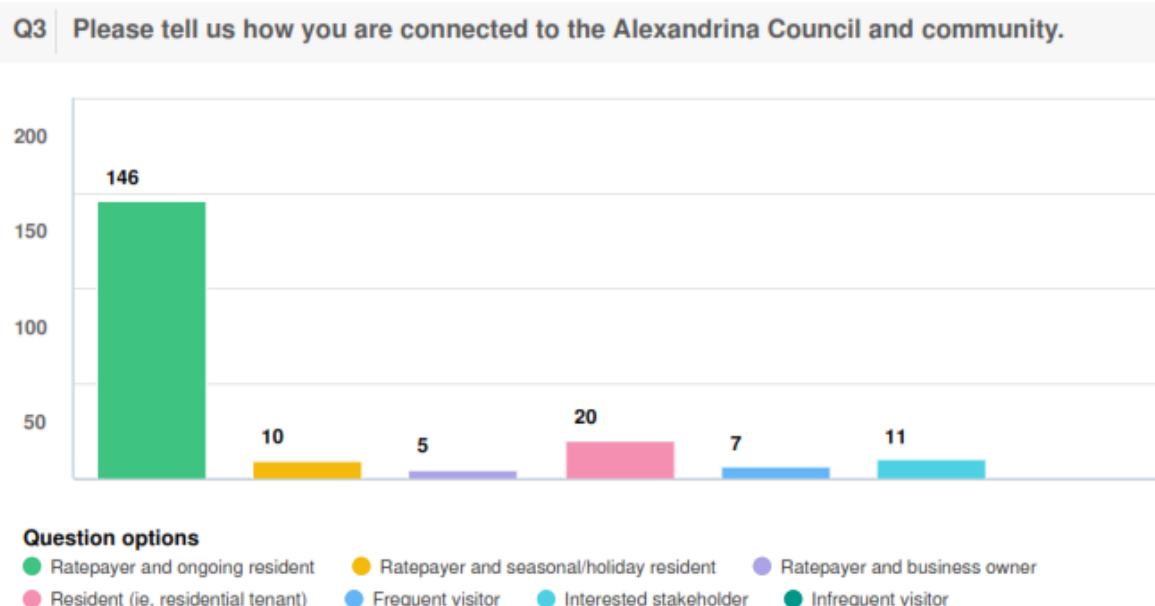


The Signal Point Experience Centre in Goolwa. (Facebook.)

4.0 Consultation Responses

During the consultation period 9 January 2025 to 31 January 2025, **a total of 190 survey responses** were received across both the MySay (184) platform and hardcopy surveys (6). A total of an additional 10 general submissions were also received to provide feedback on the consultation via other channels.

The graph below represents the MySay respondents:



In addition, the respondents that provided the six (6) hard copy responses were:

- 4 x Ratepayer and ongoing resident
- 1 x Ratepayer and seasonal resident
- 1 x Resident

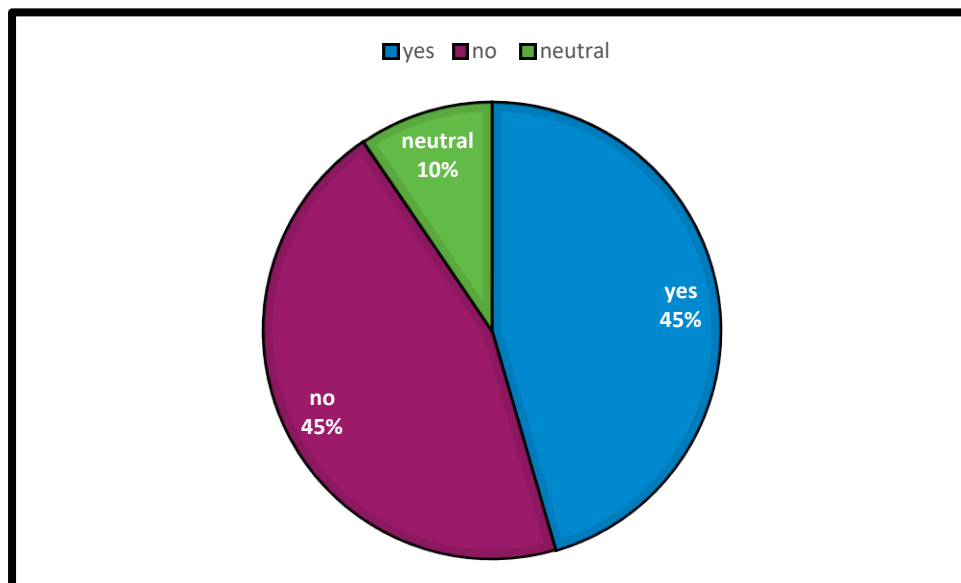
4.1 South Coast Regional Arts Centre – Old Police Station

The following section relates to consultation responses regarding South Coast Regional Arts Centre.

In response to the question: *Do you support the proposed relocation of the gallery operations at the South Coast Regional Arts Centre (Old Police Station) to the Signal Point Experience Centre?:*

189 MySay and hardcopy responses were received (1 skipped response):

- 86 (45%) supported proposed relocation,
- 85 (45%) did not support proposed relocation
- 18 (10%) were neutral



Negative responses/concerns of the proposal:

Those respondents who did not support relocation were asked to provide reasoning. This qualitative data has been analysed with the emerging themes.

Theme #1: Concerns regarding the fact that the South Coast Regional Arts Centre showcases local artists, whilst the Signal Point Experience Centre (SPEC) services larger state and national touring exhibitions.

Example verbatim responses submitted:

"I don't think the space is suitable. Regional Arts Centres showcase local artists and their work. I don't think Signal Point is big enough to accommodate both the travelling exhibitions that usually visit while other exhibitions have been also shown in the SCRAC. It would mean missing out on some exhibitions"

"Because the functions of the 2 galleries are entirely different. SCRAC offers exhibition opportunities for emerging and local artists that would never be able to exhibit in SPEC which is a highly sought after exhibition space for professional artists"

"I believe the two galleries are used for different types of exhibitions. The Old Police Station is for upcoming local artists to exhibit their art and Signal Point is for larger (and travelling) exhibitions. Also, it would be unfortunate for another heritage precinct building to become vacant. This area could become an interesting walking tour (with signage) to keep people in the area for shopping, dining, etc"

Theme #2: Concerns of the South Coast Regional Arts Centre (Old Police Station) not being retained as an art gallery

Example verbatim responses:

"Community should retain existing building for arts centre, this is an important cultural feature for residents and visitors who support the vibrant art scene in Goolwa - we should be growing our arts facilities not downgrading them by moving to multipurpose areas"

"I think a rethink for the Old police centre is required. It needs to be kept as an art gallery/centre but developed privately to include a café/restaurant and retail area. Great place for Art in Goolwa. I think that the concentration of galleries that we have in Goolwa is very good and should not be seen as detrimental to the area. All ware within walking distance and close to the wharf"

"The Old Police Station Historic building is a highly valued community place of cultural and emotional significance. It's an ideal space for local artists to display their work while visitors inadvertently learn about the local history. Visitors value historic places being used by local communities and seeing local work in those spaces are a draw card for tourists. Hence it makes no sense to jeopardize this asset"

Theme #3: Concerns regarding the future of the Old Police Station building

Example verbatim responses:

"What happens to the current buildings left empty as an eyesore in the main town"

"Leave these buildings alone as we pull down too many older buildings. Reuse them and renovate to maintain the attraction liveness of Goolwa for residents and visitors"

"These buildings are unique and interesting and could be a segue from Signal Point into old history of Goolwa, which is why many people visit. We have our own character which should not be compromised. I suggest an amalgamation of resources between Signal Point and the Old Police Station"

Theme #4: Concerns regarding the artists in-residence who are located in the “stables” at the rear of the Old Police Station

Example verbatim responses:

“The Old Police Station Gallery is an icon of culture for Goolwa. Why does Council not consider the significant Heritage of Goolwa. The Artists in Residence what happens to their spaces? How can Council be so disrespectful and show no interest in the Arts in Goolwa? It really would seem Council are proving how money driven they really are”

“I am concerned that the number of exhibitions (& therefore number of artists represented) will be reduced. The Old Police Station also has some interesting spaces, including small rooms and outdoor areas, that have enabled artists to create some fascinating and innovating site-specific installations. This opportunity would be lost if everything was moved to the more cavernous space of Signal Point Gallery”

“Now that Signal Point is air conditioned it can host the regional art exhibitions as part of the state and national regional galleries program, bring significant exhibitions to Goolwa for the first time. This is in stark contrast to the purpose of SCRAC which is to give local emerging and established artists a space to exhibit their works. In addition to the SCRAC has a number of studio spaces for use by local artists that Signal Point does not have. By returning to volunteer based sitting at the two galleries, which operated for over 10 year, significant savings could be made while maintaining two active and vital galleries in the wharf precinct”

Theme #5: Concerns regarding Council staff needing to be on-site whilst the Old Police Station is open to the public

Example verbatim responses:

“Relocating to Signal Point loses the unique atmosphere in the current location. I understand the cost of having to use council employees adds significantly to the running expenses. Using the current building as a local artisan area, showcasing local artists and artisans. A different solution on how to run it is needed. Not moving it to Signal Point”

“The policy of requiring a council staff member to be on duty with volunteers is an unnecessary drain on council resources. If two people are required to be on duty for WHS, perhaps require a second volunteer to be in attendance when needed, i.e. when no other regular staff are in the building”

“By returning to volunteer based sitting at the two galleries, which operated for over 10 year, significant savings could be made while maintaining two active and vital galleries in the wharf precinct”

4.2 Visitor Information Centre – Old Post Office

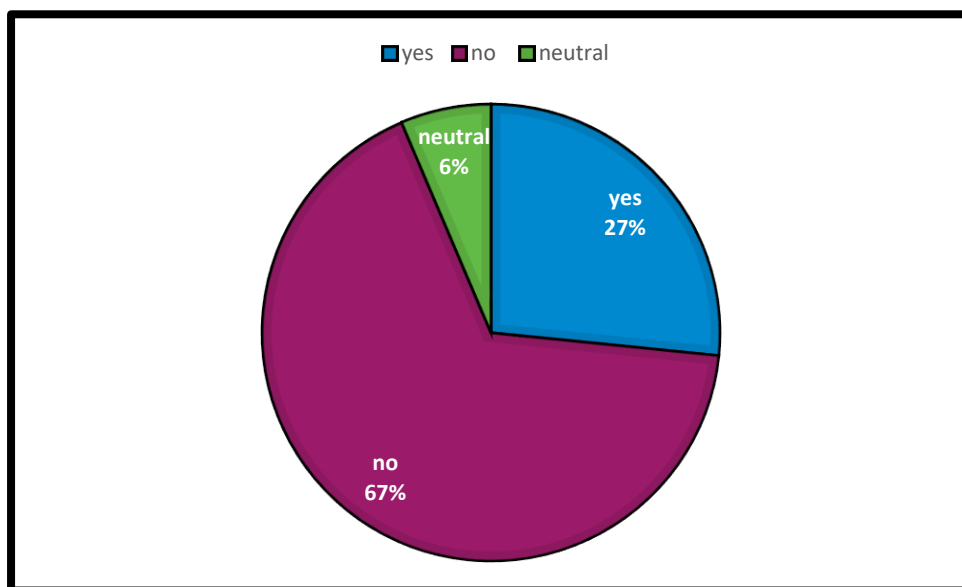
The following section relates to consultation responses regarding the Goolwa Visitor Information Centre.

In response to the question:

Do you support the proposed relocation of the Goolwa Visitor Information Centre (Old Post Office) to the Signal Point Experience Centre?:

188 MySay and hardcopy responses were received (2 skipped responses):

- 50 (27%) supported proposed relocation
- 126 (67%) did not support proposed relocation
- 12 (6%) were neutral.



Negative responses/concerns of the proposal:

Those respondents who did not support relocation were asked to provide reasoning. This qualitative data has been analysed with the emerging themes.

Theme #1

Concerns regarding the lack of visibility of the Goolwa Information Visitor Centre at the Signal Point Experience Centre and parking.

Example verbatim responses:

"It is in a very good location on the Main Street of Goolwa, which is the case in most country towns. Why spend extra money moving it. As the old post office is a perfect introduction to visitors, making them aware of the importance of the unique heritage aspect of Goolwa. Once this is lost it can never be replaced"

“Signal Point is not a highly visual building from road. Currently easy parking & behind the centre. More pedestrian activity near current info centre.

“Signal Point is a gallery. Not an information center. The existing location of the info centre has high visibility, so is easy to find. Relocating it is counter-productive.

Theme #2

Concerns regarding the future of the Old Post Office building

Example verbatim responses:

“If this goes ahead would this mean two more historical ‘white elephant’ buildings in our town? Use these historical buildings and embrace their past”

“We haven’t been told what this building might become. The space at Signal Point seems inadequate. The current building is clearly visible to the travelling public”

“The heritage buildings of Goolwa are among the reasons visitors come to Goolwa ! Too many old buildings in South Australia are demolished ! keep our heritage ! as with the Old Police Station the OLD POST OFFICE can be utilised by local artists and this includes musical groups such as local choirs and ukulele”

Theme #3

Concerns that the Goolwa Visitor Information Centre won't fit into the Signal Point Experience Centre

Example verbatim responses:

“....we do not believe that Signal Point can adequately accommodate its current activities as well as those of the South Coast Regional Arts Centre (SCRAC) and the Goolwa Visitor Centre. Council's suggestion that flexible and movable furniture will overcome this issue is less than convincing. No visitor centre we know operates in the way proposed”

“As above – The Visitor Information Centre needs its own space with easy access for cars, caravans & RV's. Squeezing it into Signal Point will compromise the outstanding potential for Signal Point to be a major Arts & Culture destination for the region. Perhaps Customs House would be the perfect fit for that?”

“An art gallery/experience centre and visitor centre have differing functions and co-locating them in one venue will create a number of issues/tensions as follows; The main function of a visitor centre is to provide information, assist with the bookings and ticketing, and sell merchandise while an art gallery/experience centre's function is to present and showcase art and culture. Visitor centers often attract large numbers of people, especially during holiday periods, creating significant noise and congestion. Additionally, art galleries/experience centres often have specific requirements for lighting, acoustics, and space organisation to highlight the art/experience. Art and cultural exhibitions/experiences are usually designed using a particular flow to provide a quiet, focused and contemplative environment. These contrasting energy levels create an uncomfortable experience for those wishing to engage with the artwork or cultural experience. In summary, the visitor centre by nature of its activities creates a level of noise and activity in direct opposition to the serene and contemplative atmosphere cultivated in art galleries/experience centres. Introducing a visitor centre will disrupt these elements and create logistical challenges, such as overcrowding or

confusing flow for visitors. Combining these functions in one space will therefore lead to confusion and a very disjointed visitor experience”

4.3 Positive Sentiment Responses

Positive sentiment verbatim responses to the proposal as provided in the question – ‘do you have any further comments?’: (spelling errors retained for verbatim purposes)

“Fully support the relocation of both operations to the Signal Point Experience Centre as a means of generating much needed activity within the centre and improving overall tourism opportunities”

“It would be great to have all these centres integrated into one space, that way visitors have a one stop shop base for everything and parking would be closer and more convenient. Also visitors coming off the cockle train would have easy access as well”

“By consolidating both art spaces within Signal Point and locating appropriate permanent staff and volunteers there, Council would then not need to rely on Casual Staff, hence reducing the cost. I think having two art spaces plus Yuntulun Ku:li-war under the same roof makes sense and would be a destination worth visiting. Having the adjoining Wine Bar, who are also supporting local artists with changing exhibitions is a bonus”

“Anything to energise Goolwa’s White Elephant that goes by the name of Signal Point. It is a disgrace this prime river front location is empty for 90% of the year”

“great to have it all in one location”

“Having all centres at the new wharf precinct makes sense to enhance the visitor experience”

“Excellent to centralise these services to the new wharf precinct. Linking to the Wharf, Cockle Train and Oscar W. Along with the private businesses in the precinct”

“Concentrating these facilities in one building will be positive. Driving more visitors to all”

“I support the VIC transition to SPEC provided it compliments the Yuntulun Ku:li-war installation and does not encroach in that space with copious displays of leaflets and kitsch merchandise”

“These are fantastic ideas. But, please do not sell off the South Coast Regional Arts Centre (Old Police Station) not the Goolwa Visitor Information Centre (Old Post Office)”

“I am happy for the info centre to move to Signal Point but I do not wish to lose the gallery at Signal Point. I suggest opening up the downstairs storage area to house the info centre, so we don’t lose gallery space upstairs. We need to use all the space better. Thank you”

4.4 Other General Sentiments

Other general sentiment verbatim responses:

“The Old police station should be sold because Council has a poor record of maintaining buildings AND the SCRAC exhibition is boring and often closed because of lack of volunteers. The two galleries should merge with some decent displays. There are empty

walls at Signal Point at the moment. Signal point is a cold, austere soulless building and the gallery should be handed over to private enterprise similar to Atrworx who always have great showings together with interesting other sculpture and ornaments etc”

“Here is an opportunity to engage a team of experts with local knowledge (there are plenty in Goolwa and the Alexandrina Council area) to pull together how the wharf and adjoining area could work as a heritage, cultural and arts precinct, building on the core activities at the wharf with trains and Oscar “W”. Such a group could advise on heritage architecture, art and studio practice, residencies (for all art forms), community arts and performing arts and how the precinct could work as a whole. When Goolwa received funding for the Just Add Water program, Goolwa and the Alexandrina region became recognised as a major regional arts centre not just in the state but nationally. This is a chance to see that reputation restored and built on, rather than lost”

“It appears that the proposed move to Signal Point is driven primarily by cost-saving measures related to staffing rather than by a genuine effort to enhance visitor services. Notably, the GVIC was previously located at Signal Point, and it was determined at the same time that the site was inadequate., leading to the decision to relocate to the old Post Office. If the council is considering co-locating the GVIC with multiple businesses, it may be worthwhile revisiting the 2021 Studio S2 Architects Pre-Design Report. This report outlines several options for sub-letting space within the old post office, which could generate income and help offset the costs associated with upgrading and maintaining the building”

“Reinventing the wheel. Signal Point was originally built as an interpretive and information centre. Consider – Long vehicle parking issues for visitors needing information and help!!!!”

“The Visitor Centre is perfect where it is as it immediately noticeable when coming into town. Relocating to SP makes no sense and would create even more vehicle congestion down on the wharf, making life even more difficult for those of us who actually live here”

“Agree to relocation as it makes sense to have 1 location not 2. Proviso that it will reduce council expenses. Neutral on Visitor Centre as tourists to town need a location easy to access. Signal Point is not easily accessible”

“Lack of transparency. Lack of adequate community consultation, and disrespect to your / our commitment to Cittaslow values”

5.0 Self-nomination to participate

It is important to acknowledge that involvement in the public consultation process is voluntary, with participants self-nominating to contribute. As a result, the feedback gathered should not be regarded as statistically representative of all perspectives.

6.0 Consultation images

N/A