



CREATING A DYNAMIC PUBLIC REALM TO SUPPORT WALK DVRC'S SWF INITIATIVE



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for Walk DVRC Ltd.
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RESEARCH BACKGROUND

Walk DVRC's vision is to create a more walkable and livable Central Business District, and this begins with the revitalisation of Des Voeux Road Central.

By transforming this key stretch of road, Hong Kong will be able to hold on to its core. Moreover, the initiative promotes an urban planning model that gives pedestrians and trams priority over vehicular traffic, and can in fact be a part of Hong Kong's wider vision to be a Smart City for the future by having a tangible link back to its past. The scheme will also help in arresting the deteriorating of the Central Business District.

A trial scheme will be taking place to pedestrianise two blocks which will comprise of a number of components (urbanism and pop up events; local food and craft beer; local performance and culture shows; technology on the street; walking tours; and street management/safety).

This placemaking event will be called the Sheung Wan Fiesta.



RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

Set against this context, Walk DVRC would like to undertake research which has two chief aims:

- To educate and persuade those whose businesses will be impacted by the Sheung Wan Fiesta event of the benefits it will bring to them
- To collect opinions and feedback from impacted businesses so that this data can be used to show stakeholders (government, property developers, etc) that there is generally positive support for the initiative



Explain to respondents the overall objective of the project and the way that it will benefit impacted businesses and Hong Kong as a whole



Understand the benefits of the initiative but also capture objections



Provide impacted businesses with ways in which they can not just benefit but also participate in the initiative

This report serves to detail findings from our research in addition to providing a set of key recommendations to ensure the Sheung Wan Fiesta addresses any concerns business might have so that it has a wholly positive impact for Hong Kong businesses and residents alike, as well as paving the way for future initiatives.

AN OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH



STREET INTERCEPT SURVEY

Target Respondents

- Ground-level businesses that will be directly impacted by SWF

Methodology

- 15-20 minutes face-to-face quantitative interview

Interviews Completed

- 30 interviews were completed from a list of 58 businesses in total



IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS

Target Respondents

- Ground-level businesses that will be directly impacted by SWF

Methodology

- 40 minutes face-to-face interview

Interviews Completed

- 2 interviews were completed



HIGHLIGHTS

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

1

THE SHEUNG WAN FIESTA REPRESENTS A UNIQUE INITIATIVE IN HONG KONG

Close to two thirds (63%) of respondents surveyed indicate they have a reasonable to high degree of awareness of Hong Kong's cultural heritage. However, under a third (30%) are aware of initiatives that are similar to the Sheung Wan Fiesta. With more than 80% of respondents in agreement that it is important that Hong Kong look to preserve its cultural heritage for present and future generations, initiatives such as the Sheung Wan Fiesta, which promote greater pedestrianisation and urban redevelopment, clearly have potential to make a positive impact upon Hong Kong, which businesses and residence alike will benefit from.

2

IT IS ALSO PERCEIVED AS REPRESENTING A CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL LINK TO HONG KONG'S PAST

Positively, two thirds (67%) of respondents strongly associate the Sheung Wan Fiesta as an initiative which will showcase local culture and heritage. In this respect, it will help Hong Kong retain a link to the past while still looking to the future.

Moreover, 60% see it as a vehicle which will not just help promote the area to tourists but also help to show off local retailers and historic traders to residents and travelers alike who in the past might not have been aware of their presence. In addition to this, there is also an important social element which a majority of respondents recognise – 57% believe SWF will improve the overall environment and neighbourhood access (57%) while 53% believe it will act as a positive first step in pedestrianizing more of HK to make it a more socially inclusive city. 60% feel it will help improve air quality while 40% feel it will have a direct impact on improving overall public health.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

3

THOSE WITH CONCERNS CITE ACCESSIBILITY AND TRAFFIC CONGESTION AS ISSUES

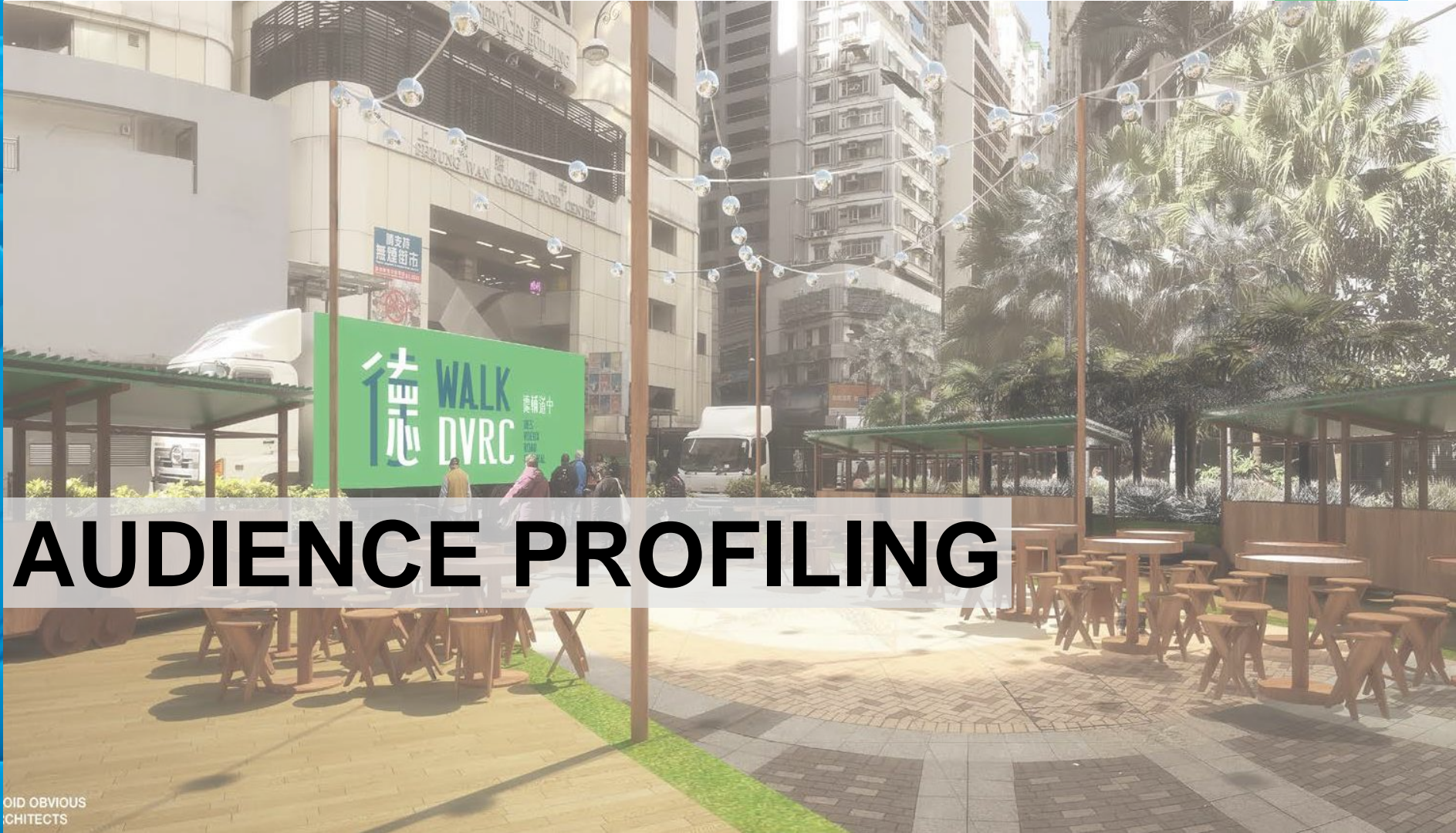
Positively, 40% of all respondents surveyed did not hold any concerns in relation to SWF. Less than a third (30%) felt that traffic congestion could potentially be worsened, or impact delivery of products to businesses (13%).

4

POSITIVE SUPPORT THAT TURNS TO PARTNERSHIP & ADVOCACY

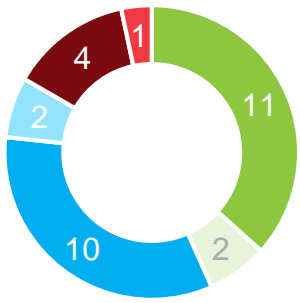
At an overall level, 56% of respondents are supportive of SWF while close to a third (30%) are neutral. A very small proportion hold reservations (14%), with the majority of this driven by dried goods merchants. In order to drive advocacy, Walk DVRC might want to consider proactively seeking the option of partnership opportunities, with leaflet distribution and the offer of discounts powerful in helping entice all three categories of businesses.

AUDIENCE PROFILING

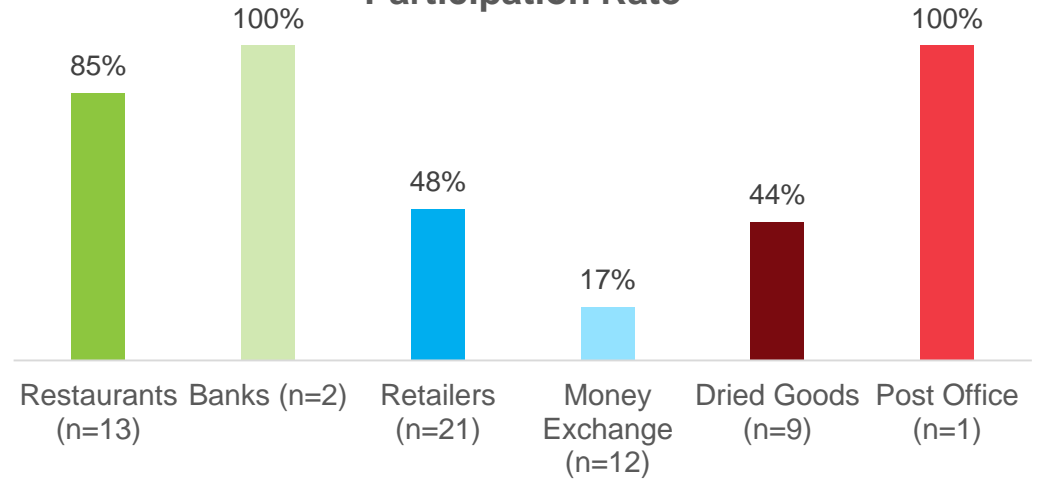


AUDIENCE COMPOSITION & PARTICIPATION

Successful Interviews



Participation Rate

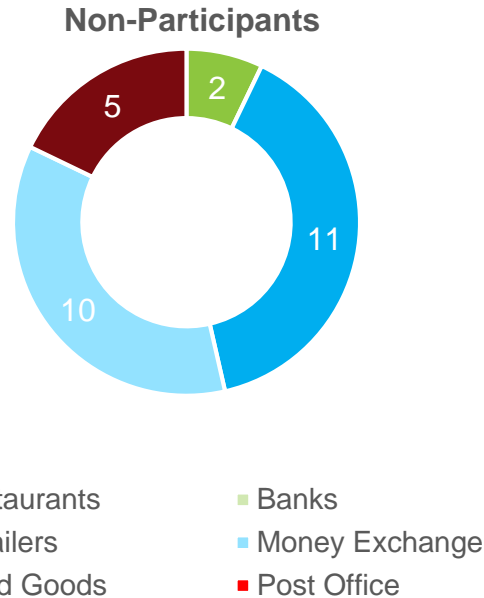


- Restaurants
- Banks
- Retailers
- Money Exchange
- Dried Goods
- Post Office

Total base: n=58
 Successful Interviews: n=30
 Non-Participants: n=28

All banks and post office locations participated in the research while 85% of all restaurants approached also agreed to provide their opinion to us. However, more moderate success was achieved amongst retailers and dried good merchants with around 50% of those approached agreeing to participate. Money Exchange shops also proved challenging with around one in five agreeing to participate.

NOTES ON PARTICIPATION



Total base: n=58
 Successful Interviews: n=30
 Non-Participants: n=28

In all cases, respondents who did not participate cited heavy customer numbers at the time of interview. When re-approached at another time, the same explanation was provided even if an interviewer had asked at what time would be convenient to return. Upon probing, 20% cited they did not feel comfortable representing the opinion of the organisation they worked for despite assurances their views would not be individually attributed.

AUDIENCE PROFILING

Restaurants and retailers were the majority participants. 40% of all participants either owned or had a managerial position while the vast majority were full-time staff.

Des Voeux Road Central (West bound)

大昌表行
 大新銀行
 博視眼鏡
 K2 Game Center
 Western Papa
 Paper stone Bakery
 Sheung Wan Post Office
 龍記茶餐廳
 香港仔周記點心茶餐廳
 東喜茶

Wing Lok Street (South bound)

王牌燕窩蔘茸
 天使出口成衣
 豐盛行
 安泰燕窩
 醋娘子
 細蓉記

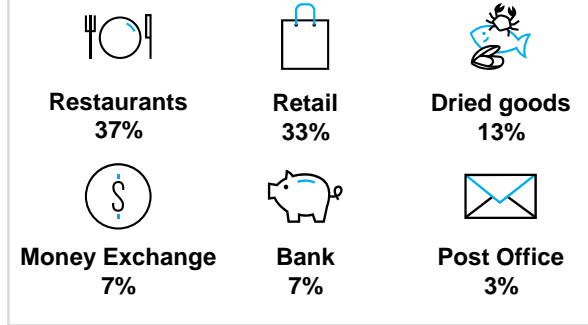
Des Voeux Road Central (East bound)

Union
 Maple
 McDonald's
 Sky Cuisine
 許氏兄弟找換店
 HSBC
 Fu Lin Jewelry Co. LTD
 fair Rich Money Exchange LTD
 Yumemiya Japanese Cafe
 Italian Tomato

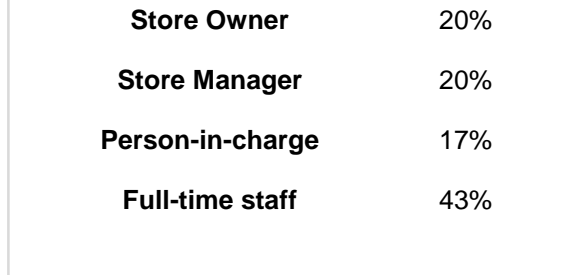
Wing Lok Street (North bound)

美心MX
 寶盈藥業有限公司
 永和興蔘茸藥材行
 利豐行

INDUSTRY



JOB POSITION



DEPTH INTERVIEWS

2 in-depth-interviews (IDIs) were undertaken with 1 restaurant on DVRC & 1 dried goods store on Wing Lok Street. The purpose behind this approach was to deep-dive into their impressions and help to address concerns of the Sheung Wan Fiesta.



Dried goods store (Wing Lok Street)



Restaurant (DVRC)

A PROFILE OF THE BUSINESSES INTERVIEWED

	Restaurant
Business type	Dim Sum
Business hour	10:00am-9:00pm
Peak time	Lunch time (11:30am - 2:30pm) on weekdays
Business source	White collar workers in the surrounding office building
Local customer: tourist	8:2
Key driver of business	Foot traffic
Business difficulties	No business on weekends
Owner's wish/solution	Boost weekend business → attracts more customers from other districts

“Although there are many restaurants in the area, they are all full during lunch time. However, our restaurant is closed on Sunday as there are few customers.” – Restaurant owner

	Dried goods store
Business type	Bird's nest and other traditional Chinese medicine
Business hour	10:00am-9:00pm
Peak time	Autumn & Winter; Festive season(e.g., Chinese New Year)
Business source	Corporate customer: Individual customer(HK & mainland customer) = 7: 3
Local customer: tourist	5:5
Key driver of business	Vehicle traffic
Business difficulties	NA
Owner's wish/solution	Government and organization put more effort to promote dried goods and traditional Chinese medicine

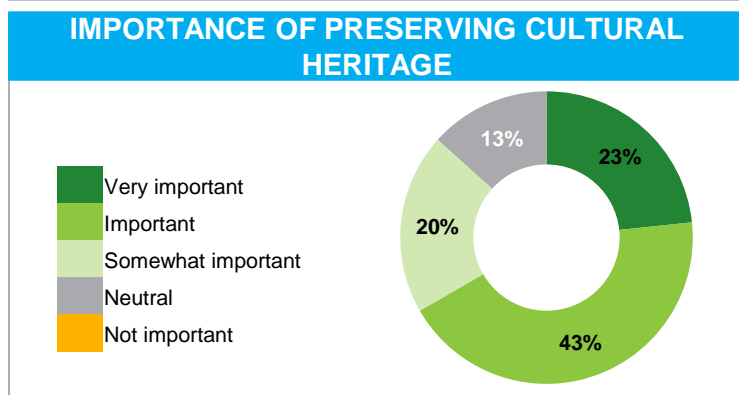
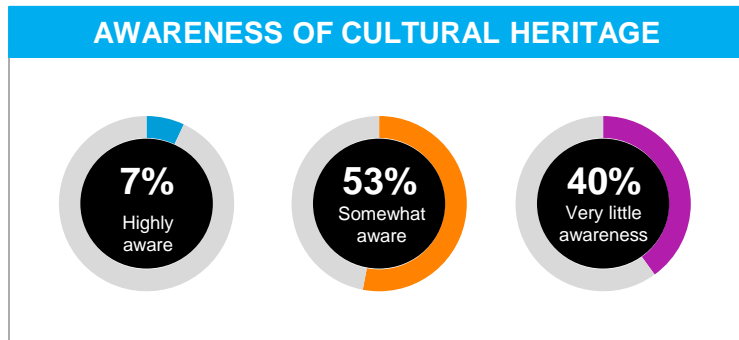
“This store has been open for 30 years. I don't mind consumers purchasing big brands like HKJEEN as the price and quality of my product is much better.” – Dried goods store manager

RESEARCH FINDINGS



EVALUATING THE CONCEPT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE

Close to two-thirds of respondents interviewed state they have a moderate to high degree of awareness of cultural heritage in Hong Kong. However, an overwhelming majority believe that initiatives which help to preserve Hong Kong’s cultural heritage are important. This indicates initiatives such as SWF to hold resonance.



IMPORTANCE OF PRESERVATION

“Once historic buildings are gone, our tradition and history will also be gone”

“It would be a pity to fail to preserve our own history – it is who we are. We should preserve it so our next generation can learn and understand our cultural heritage and history.”

Source: Q4 Awareness of cultural heritage; Q5 Importance of preserving cultural heritage; Q6 Reasons for preserving cultural heritage
 Base: All respondents (n=30)

EVALUATING THE MEANING OF CULTURAL HERITAGE

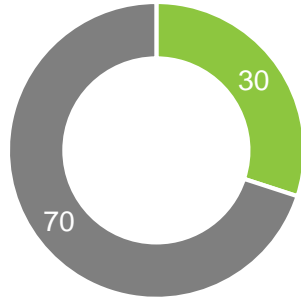
When probed, respondents strongly associate cultural heritage with architecture – something they feel is important to preserve not just for its face value but also because it represents stories from the past which are tangible. Cultural heritage is also associated with traditional crafts and related businesses, and elements which residents and tourists alike can interact with and touch and feel.



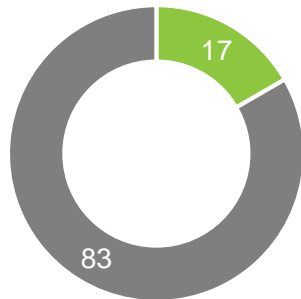
AWARENESS OF OTHER INITIATIVES

However, a significantly smaller proportion are aware of similar pedestrianisation and cultural initiatives that have taken place in Hong Kong. Considering respondents believe that initiatives to preserve Hong Kong's cultural heritage are important, this implies there is appetite for initiatives of this nature and that we are not in danger of saturation.

Awareness of other initiative in HK



Awareness of other global initiative



■ Yes ■ No

POSITIVE

There is less air and noise pollution and more space

Provide space for public event and transforms the neighborhood into a more friendly environment

It adds more value for tourist.

It can attract more tourists and increase sales

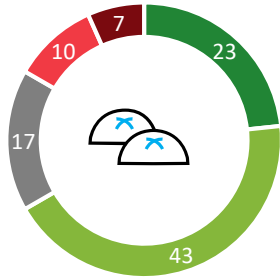
NEGATIVE

It will be harder to find parking spaces.

Fear over control and an increase in noise pollution if not properly managed.

ASSOCIATIONS WITH THE SHEUNG WAN FIESTA

Respondents primarily associate SWF with an opportunity to showcase local heritage and culture as well as an initiative which will help attract tourists to the Central Business District. Furthermore, respondents also feel that SWF has the potential to promote local retailers and historic traders thereby representing a link to the past. Moreover, they perceive SWF to be a novel and engaging way to improve air quality. Benefits are most strongly recognised by restaurants but retailers also acknowledge to a large extent. Dried goods merchants are less enthusiastic though the base size is low.



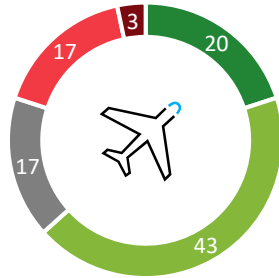
67% strongly agree / agree

Showcase local heritage and culture through food and performance offerings

82%

60%

25%



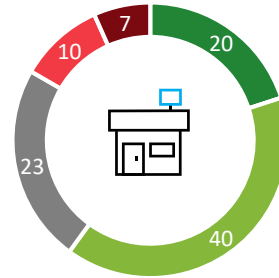
63% strongly agree / agree

Brands the Central Business District as a tourist destination

82%

60%

-



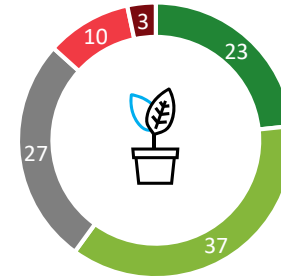
60% strongly agree / agree

Promote local retailers and historic traders

82%

60%

-



60% strongly agree / agree

Improves air quality result in car-free streets

82%

60%

25%

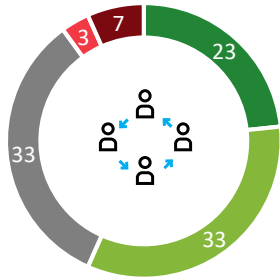
■ Strongly agree
 ■ Agree
 ■ Neutral
■ Somewhat disagree
 ■ Strongly disagree

Source: Q15 Evaluate the objectives of SWF
 Base: All respondents (n=30), Restaurant (n=11), Retailers (n=10) and Dried Goods (n=4)



ASSOCIATIONS WITH THE SHEUNG WAN FIESTA

In addition to helping brand the district as a tourist destination, respondents also believe SWF will be effective in helping promote social inclusion by improving the accessibility of the neighbourhood and creating a more friendly environment. Retailers also see SWF as the first phase in efforts to continue pedestrianising sections of the Central Business District, to their benefit.



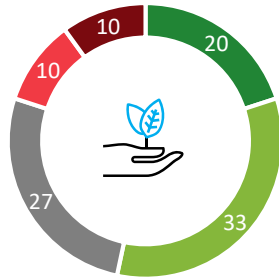
57% strongly agree / agree

Promote social inclusion by improving neighborhood access and creating a friendly environment for all

82%

60%

-



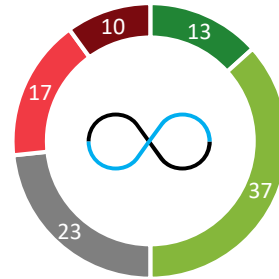
53% strongly agree / agree

Serves as the initial phase in a greater placemaking effort to pedestrianise a decaying Central Business District

64%

70%

-



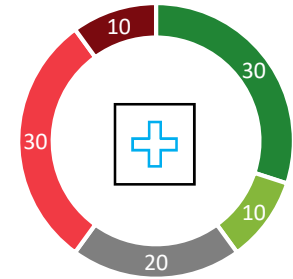
50% strongly agree / agree

Closes the cultural loop by linking DVRC to the historical sites that surround it

73%

50%

-



40% strongly agree / agree

Improve public health

64%

40%

-

■ Strongly agree
 ■ Agree
 ■ Neutral
■ Somewhat disagree
 ■ Strongly disagree

Source: Q15 Evaluate the objectives of SWF
 Base: All respondents (n=30), Restaurant (n=11), Retailers (n=10) and Dried Goods (n=4)



UNCOVERING THE VOICE OF BUSINESSES

Showcasing the local heritage and promoting social inclusion are the benefits perceived by respondents.

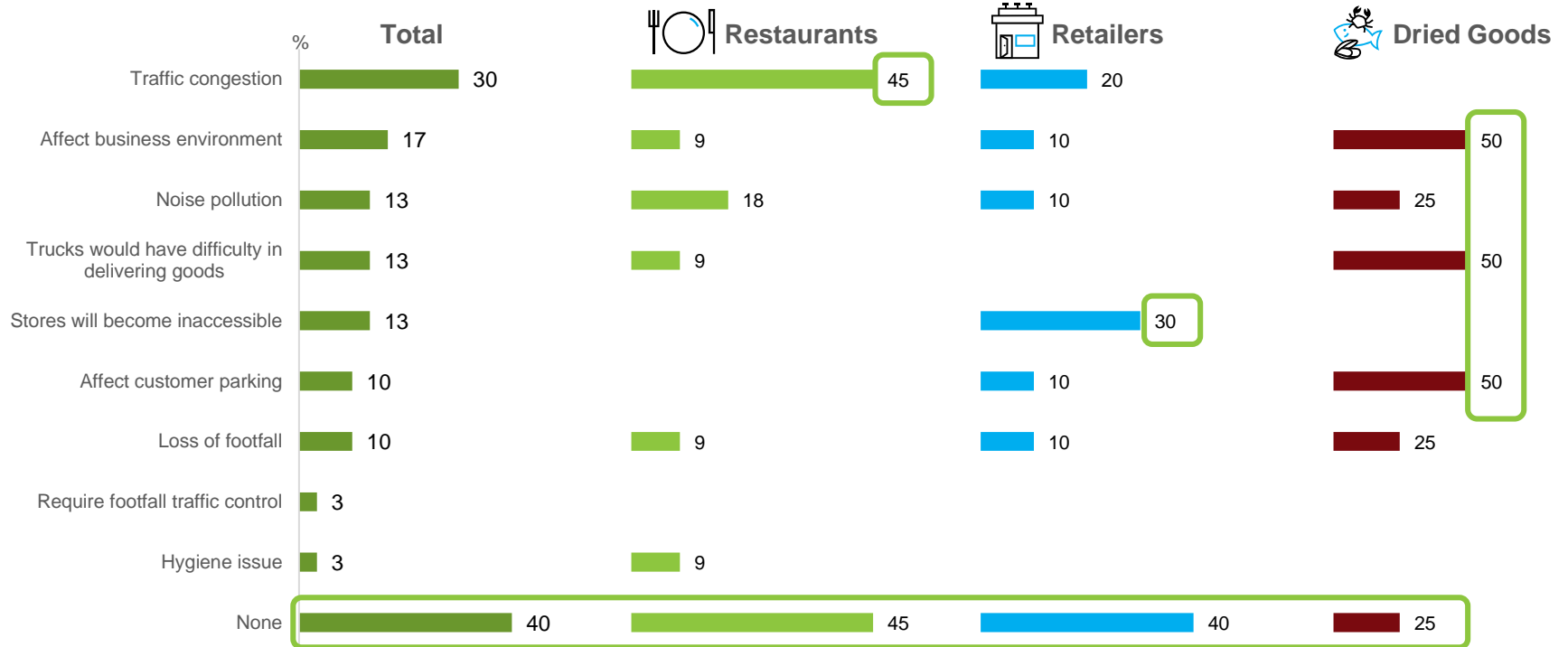
“Many people, especially younger generations, know little about local heritage. This is a great way of introducing people to it. Designing booths and locations in an interactive way will help the public better understand local culture and heritage.” - Restaurant owner

“I have grown up in Sheung Wan. In the past I spent a lot of time on the streets with friends, hanging around. This project can potentially mean children can once again play on the streets as was the case during my childhood.” - Dried goods manager

“Air quality will certainly be improved. The air quality during Occupy Central is the best I have experienced!” - Restaurant owner

CONCERNS RELATING TO THE SHEUNG WAN FIESTA

At an overall level, 40% of respondents did not have any concerns relating to SWF. However, amongst those that did, accessibility and traffic congestion were their main concerns. Amongst dried goods merchants, they felt that SWF would impact the delivery of goods, customer parking and thus the wider business environment. Retailers had concerns about store accessibility while traffic congestion was the main concern amongst restaurants.



Source: Q16 concern of SWF
 Base: All respondents (n=30), Restaurant (n=11), Retailers (n=10) and Dried Goods (n=4)

DEEP-DIVING INTO ASSOCIATIONS

When probing concerns amongst dried goods merchants, we understand that concerns primarily stem from needing to understand how reducing road accessibility will impact their customers. Additionally, they cited concerns relating to the length of the initiative as well as the benefits claimed. Positively however, we found that restaurant owners were highly receptive because they not only saw it as something which would help enrich community spirit but also something that would positively impact their business.



**Restaurant
(DVRC)**

**“Very nice,
look forward
to it.”**

**Enrich
community spirit
and create
attraction**

“Nowadays when people mention Sheung Wan they can only imagine office building and dried goods. The initiative can be one of memory point of this area.”



7

Level of support

7 max



**Dried goods store
(Wing Lok Street)**

**Blocking the
road will affect
business**

“I have many corporate and wholesale customer, how can they reach our store?”

**“Doubtful on
the benefit
claimed.”**

**90 days-too
long**

“Already ¼ time of a year, should have a 1 month trial or shorter.”



3

Level of support

7 max

ADDRESSING CONCERNS ON ACCESSIBILITY

In order to effectively address concerns, proactive communication and outreach relating to noise and congestion, accessibility and traffic, and communication about the event itself will be important.

For both restaurants & dried goods merchants

Noise and chaos caused by illegal performers



“Dama” (大媽) singing Karaoke and dancing in the pedestrian zone (like in Mong Kok)

“I am afraid it will become another Mong Kok. Regulation and control of illegal performance is crucial.” – Restaurant owner

Dried goods merchants only:

Business be affected due to road being blocked

High concern that Wing Lo Street will be blocked and causes below inconveniences:



Delivering goods

Which only happen between 10am-10pm

“No staff is willing to help deliver good at midnight.” – Dried goods store manager



Customers visits by car (driving themselves)

especially:

- Corporate customers
- Mainland customers
- Shatin and Kowloon customer

“10 out of 10 mainland customers are driving by themselves” – Dried goods store manager



Inefficient communication about the event arrangement



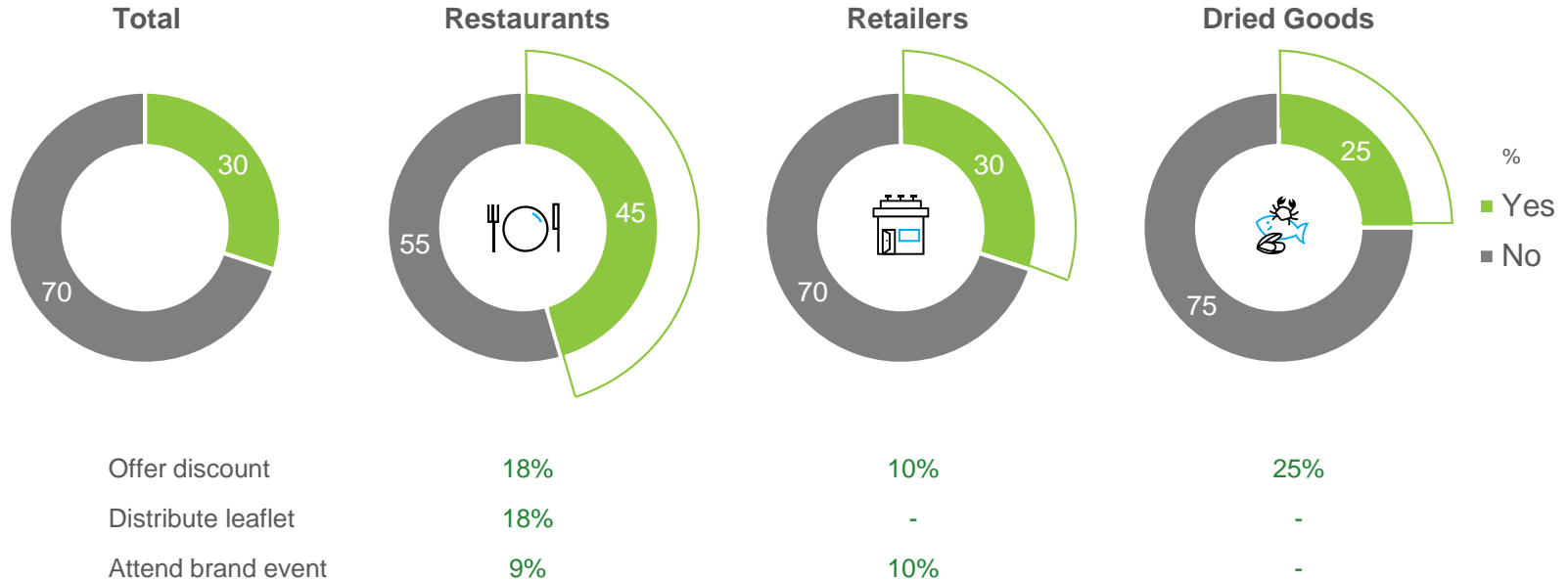
Customers not aware of:

- Traffic arrangements
- Visiting times

“If the communication is not efficient, the customer will not know the road is blocked and will drive here as usual. It will cause great inconvenience to them.” – Dried goods store manager

PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

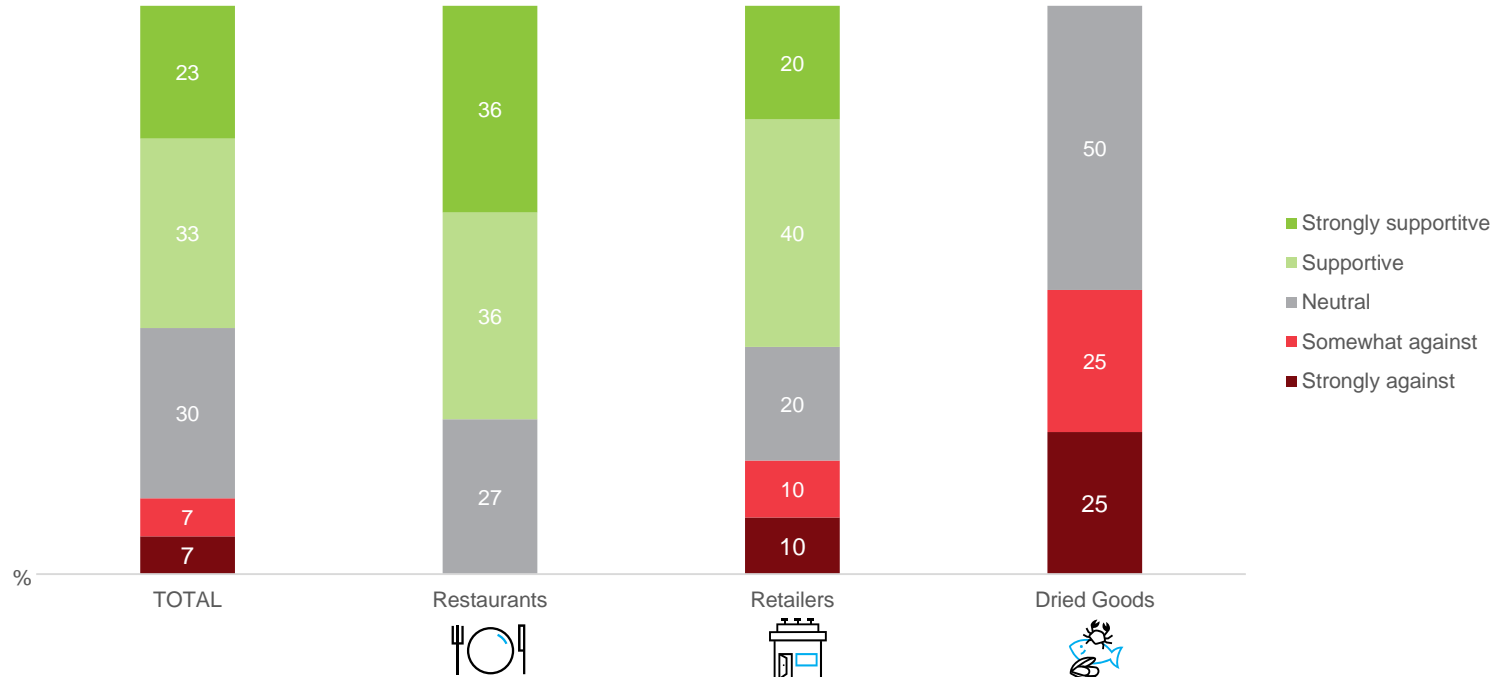
Moreover, businesses are open to partnership opportunities. Offering a discount is the primary means by which businesses envisage they could actively participate in SWF. Almost half of all restaurants see SWF as representing a potential partnership opportunity, citing discount offers and leaflets as the primary way to engage. Dried good merchants and retailers also see this as a suitable opportunity to offer a discount so that they can engage and participate.



Source: Q20 Partnership opportunities
 Base: All respondents (n=30), Restaurant (n=11), Retailers (n=10) and Dried Goods (n=4)

MEASURING SUPPORT FOR SWF

Over half of all respondents are supportive of SWF – particularly amongst restaurants but also retailers. This is primarily due to higher footfall which they anticipate will help business in addition to the benefits it will bring to the Central Business District from a cultural and historical perspective. Dried goods merchants are largely neutral – but it is worth noting the small number who agreed to participate. Greater support can be garnered by demonstrating how accessibility issues will be addressed, thereby helping turn support into advocacy and even partnership participation.



Source: Q18 Level of support towards SWF
 Base: All respondents (n=30), Restaurant (n=11), Retailers (n=10) and Dried Goods (n=4)

EVALUATING THE RATIONAL VS EMOTIONAL

We also observe that aside from more rational reasons to be supportive towards SWF, there are also emotional benefits that it will bring to DVRC – such as creating a warmer communal environment as well as a sense of a neighbourhood within the Central Business District.



Convenient public transportation

While accessibility might be an issue, there is a lot of public transportation in the form of the MTR and Tramways which will alleviate accessibility concerns



Tidy and clean environment

SWF is an opportunity to also clean up the general look and feel of the area by installing modern, authentic booths and displays which “beautify” the surroundings



Restoring a sense of neighbourhood spirit

At present there are more than 20 money exchange stores in the area – the SWF initiative will help bring back a sense of community and the neighbourhood which has steadily declined in recent years.



Greater human warmth

Within a calmer environment, business and the customer will be seeking a longer term relationship with one another

BUSINESS ASSESSMENT OF OBJECTIVES

Relative to perceived benefits, restaurants and retailers agree that the design of SWF aligns with its overall objectives. Dried Goods Merchants challenge some of these objectives, in large part because they need to understand how their business will be free from disruption during SWF.

Objective	Perceived Benefits		
	Restaurants	Retailers	Dried Goods Stores
Showcase local heritage and culture through food and performance offerings	✓	✓	✓
Promote social inclusion by improving neighborhood access and creating a friendly environment for all	✓	✓	✓
Promote local retailers and historic traders	✓	✓	
Improves air quality result in car-free streets	✓	✓	
Brands the Central Business District as a tourist destination	✓	✓	