

Sydney Road

Research Study

August 2019

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Background to the Study

Objectives, methodology and sample

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Research Objectives

The purpose of the study is to help identify the most suitable safety option for the Sydney Rd area, using feedback from the community on proposed improvement concepts gained through survey research.



Sydney road is a bustling shopping, entertainment and transport corridor in Melbourne, but it has also been a **hot-spot for traffic accidents**. In the last 5 years alone, there have been 223 incidents (many involving cyclists).

The Sydney Road Improvement Project was developed to address the situation, and identify possible **safety improvement options**.



VicRoads collaborated with key stakeholders including Moreland City Council, local community groups, Bicycle Network Victoria, Yarra Trams, RACV and local trader associations to understand the issues facing Sydney Road users, and to **develop a number of options** for the corridor.

This resulted in the proposition of **5 possible improvement options** some of which could be incorporated simultaneously.



In order to obtain feedback on the **options**, a study was developed by VicRoads to assess **response to the 5 proposed options** amongst different community members and road users. Participants were informed that the results would help VicRoads make decisions about Sydney road in the future.

The results of this study are shown in this report.

Research Methodology

How was the study conducted?



15-minute survey accessible online or at the information and pop up sessions in Coburg and Brunswick, designed and distributed by VicRoads. The survey was available to the public for completion between 24 Jun – 14 Jul 2019.

Who took part?



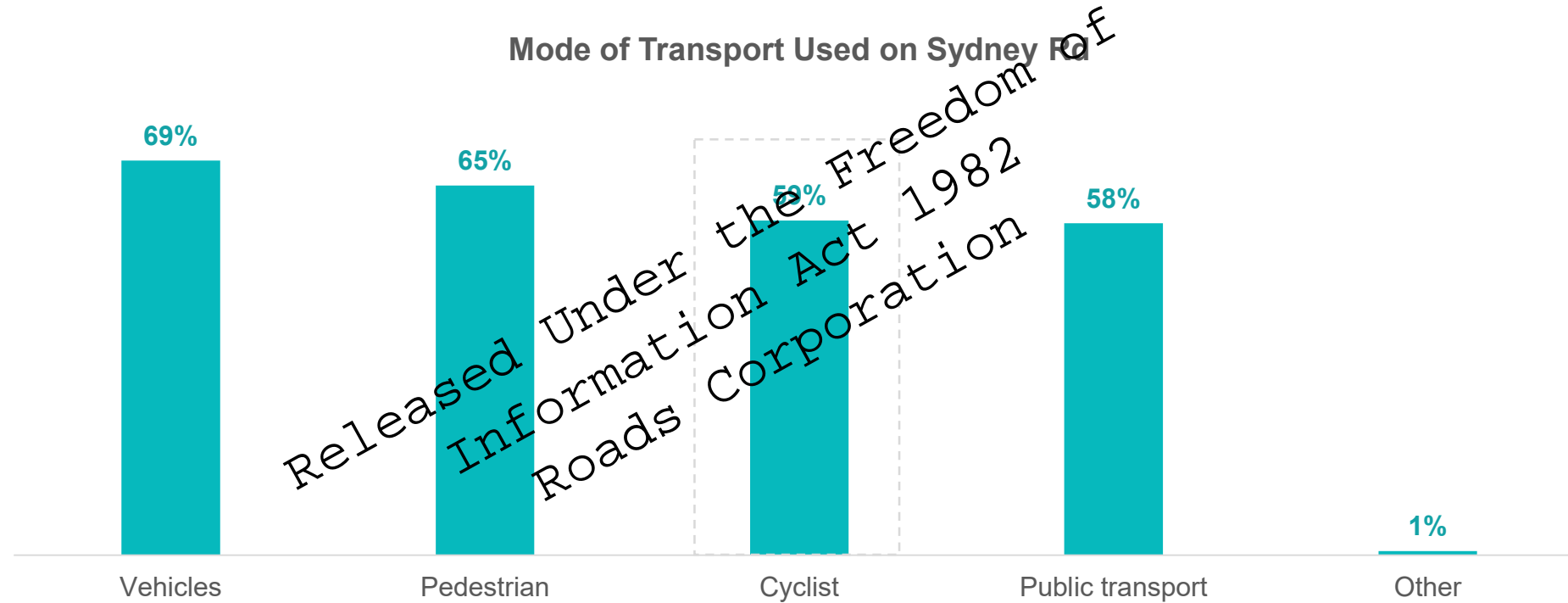
A total of n=7,040 respondents completed the survey. All respondents needed to identify themselves as users of Sydney Rd in order to qualify.

What was covered?



Respondents were asked about their usage of Sydney Rd, then shown an annotated version of each concept for feedback.

Sample: A range of different Sydney Rd users responded to the survey, with an especially high volume of responses from the cycling community compared to current cyclist numbers on Sydney Road



Weighting: To ensure a balanced view of Sydney Rd users is represented, weighting has been applied to the data in this report



To reduce potential skewing caused by over-representation of cyclists in the sample, weighting has been applied to the data. This will ensure the 'total' view represented is more proportional to the different transport mode users travelling on Sydney Rd.



This weighting has been informed by traffic data sourced from VicRoads. This information revealed the ratio of usage between different transport modes on Sydney Rd, and weights have been applied to the data accordingly.* This ensures that the findings (at the total level) are more representative of Sydney Road users as a whole than would otherwise be the case.



However, it is **important to note** that the 'totals' in this report **should not** be treated as a representative **population view of Sydney Rd users**, even when weighted. This is not possible given the sampling approach and profiling data available.

The results reported reflect the views of Sydney Rd users who responded to the survey only .

Note: Traffic data supplied by VicRoads indicates the following modal splits per day on Sydney Rd/ Upfield Path area - 20,000 vehicles, 3100 cyclists, 7500 tram passengers. This gives the following ratios to vehicles; PT users (38%), cyclists (16%). Using these ratios, transport users were allocated the following weights - vehicles (81%), PT users (31%), cyclists (13%)

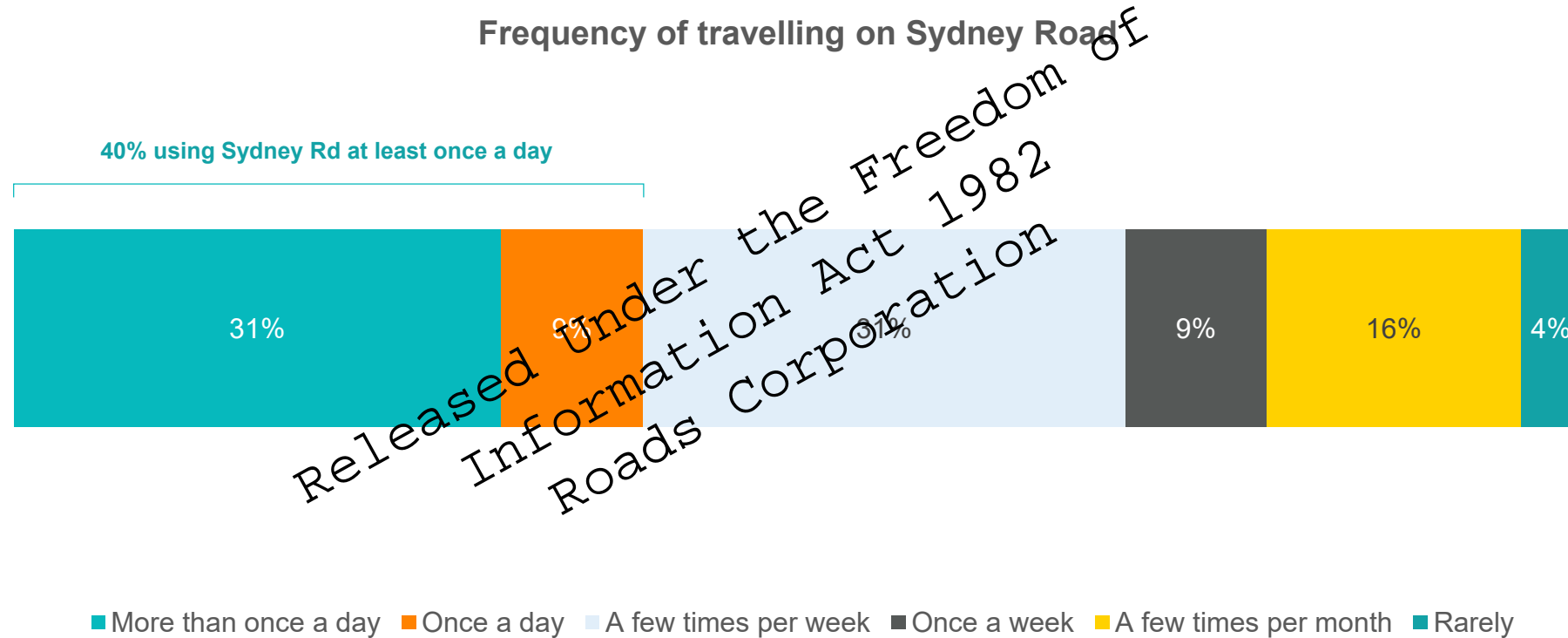
Usage of Sydney Rd

Overview: The Sydney Rd travelers surveyed often access the area for a variety of different reasons, and use it on a frequent basis at different times of the day and week.

As such, this study provides coverage of a diverse range of perspectives, across different types of users and community members.

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The Sydney Rd travelers surveyed are typically frequent users, with 4 in 10 respondents travelling along the road at least once a day



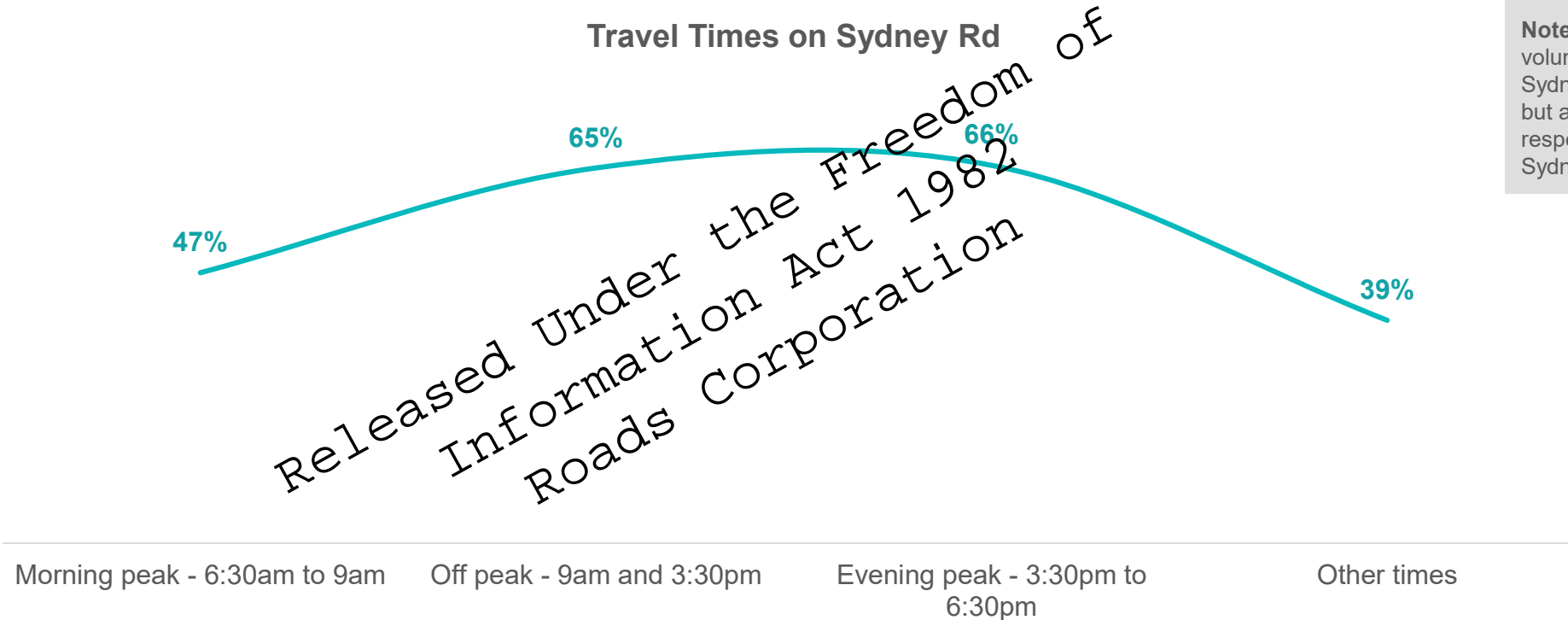
They often travel at different times of the week, using the road on both weekends and weekdays

Mainly travel along, use or cross Sydney Road during weekday / weekend



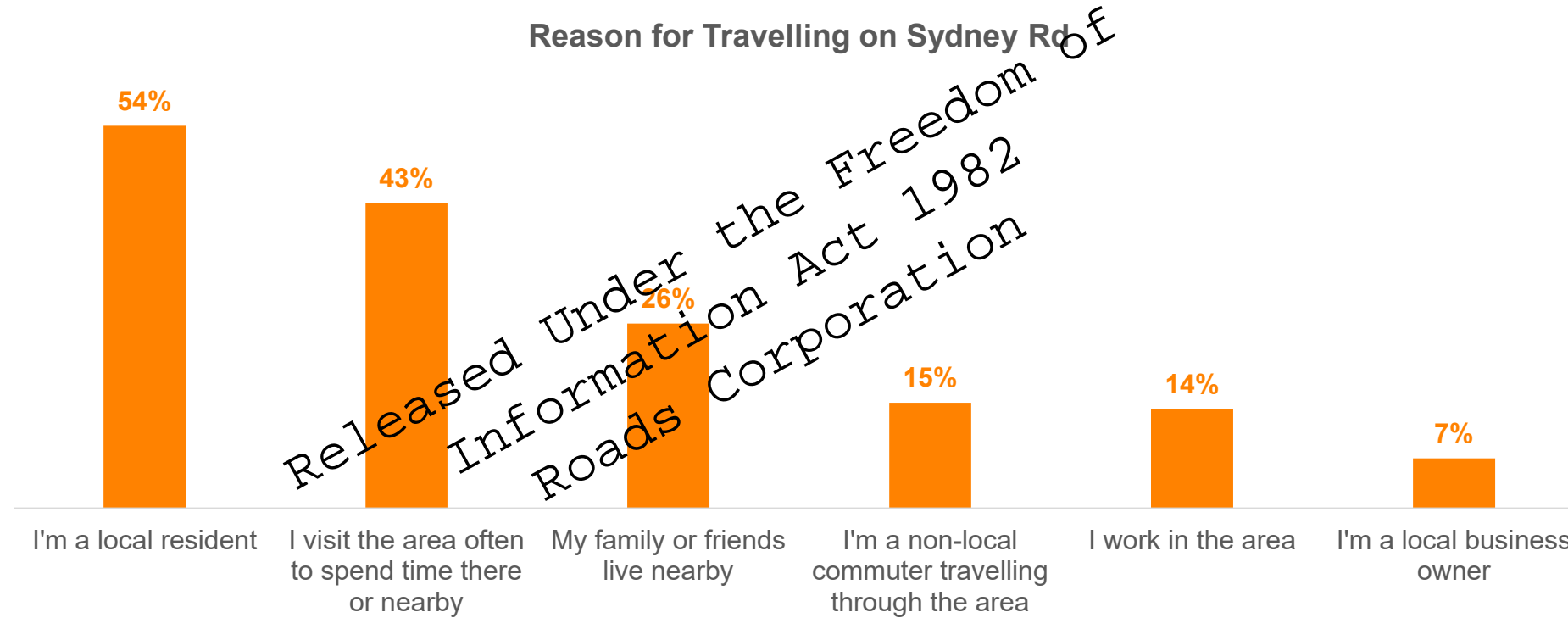
■ Mainly weekdays ■ Equally ■ Mainly weekends

Typically, at least 4 in 10 respondents travel along the road at each period of the day, with this increasing to 2 in 3 during the day and the evening peak

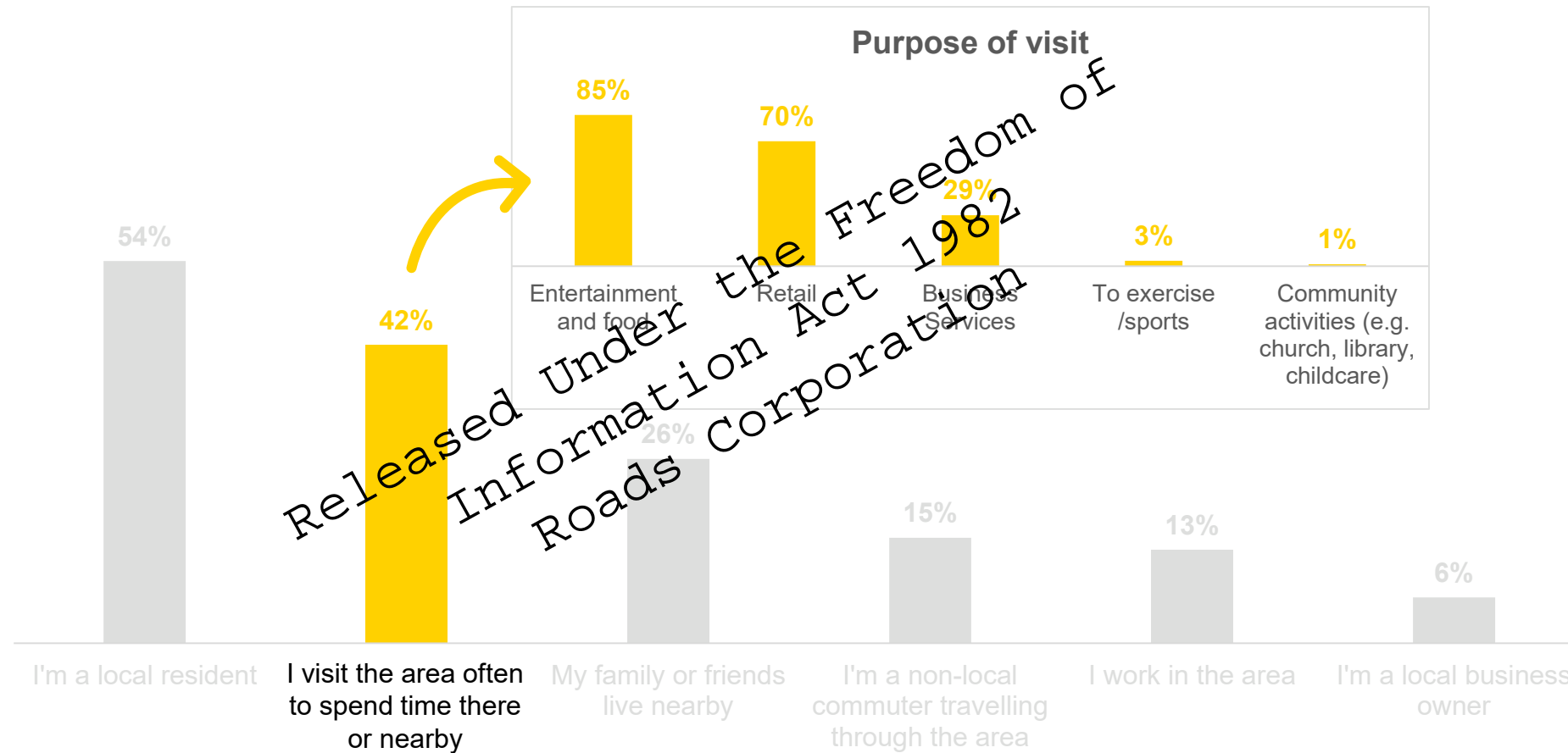


Note: This is not an indication of volume of people travelling along Sydney Road at particular times, but an indication of the times that respondents travelled across Sydney Road.

The majority travel on Sydney Rd because they live locally, but visiting amenities is also a key factor behind usage

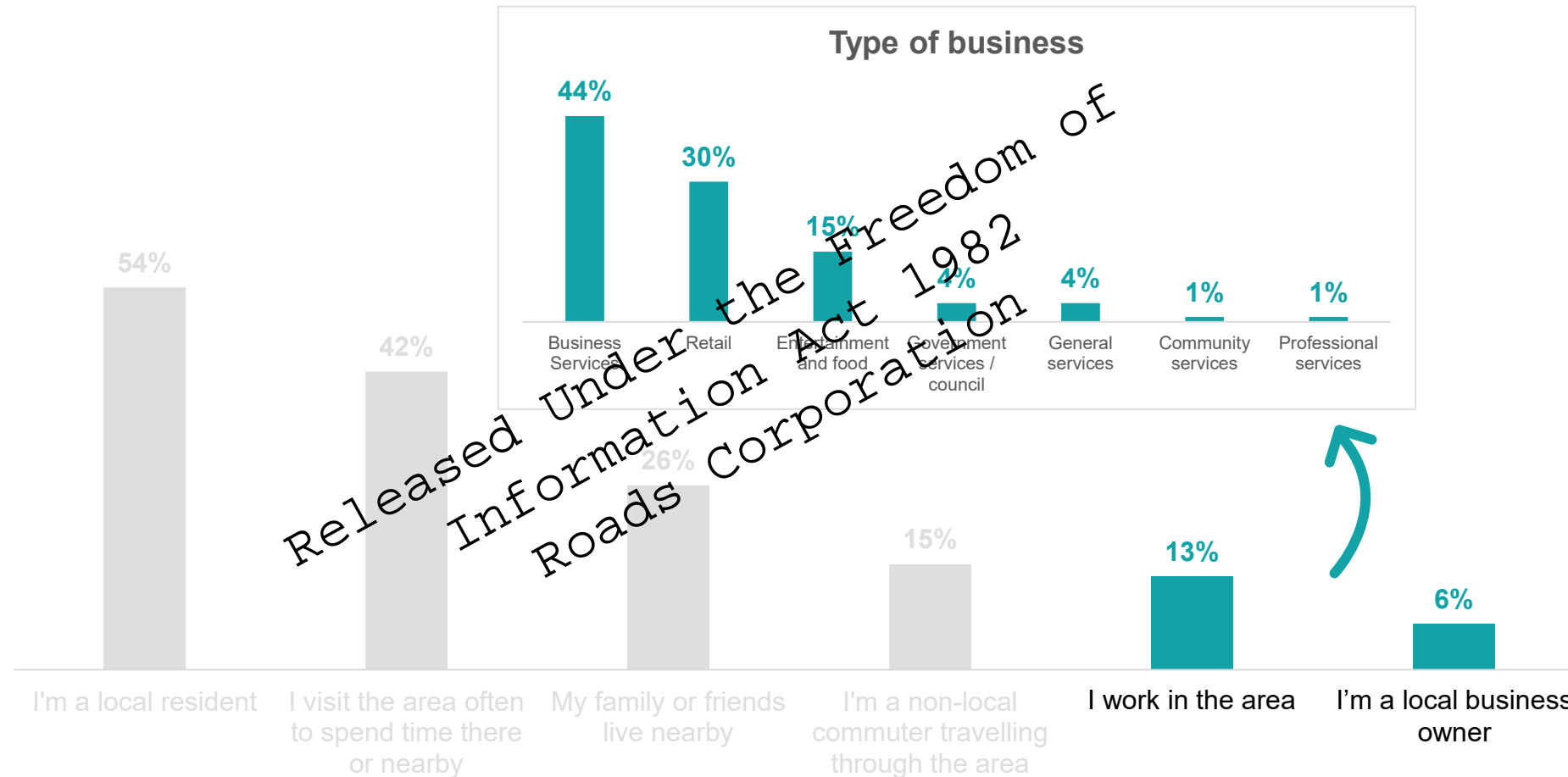


Those visiting typically visit for entertainment, food or retail



Q7. You said previously that you visit Sydney Road often to spend time there or nearby. What is the general purpose of your visit?
Base: Respondents who visit Sydney Rd area often to spend time there or nearby n=3,482

And those who are local workers / business owners are primarily owners of or workers in business services, retail or entertainment/food businesses



Q8. You said previously that you're a business owner on Sydney Road or that you work in the area. What type of business industry do you own/work in?

Base: Respondents who are local workers / business owners n=1,054

Parking Considerations

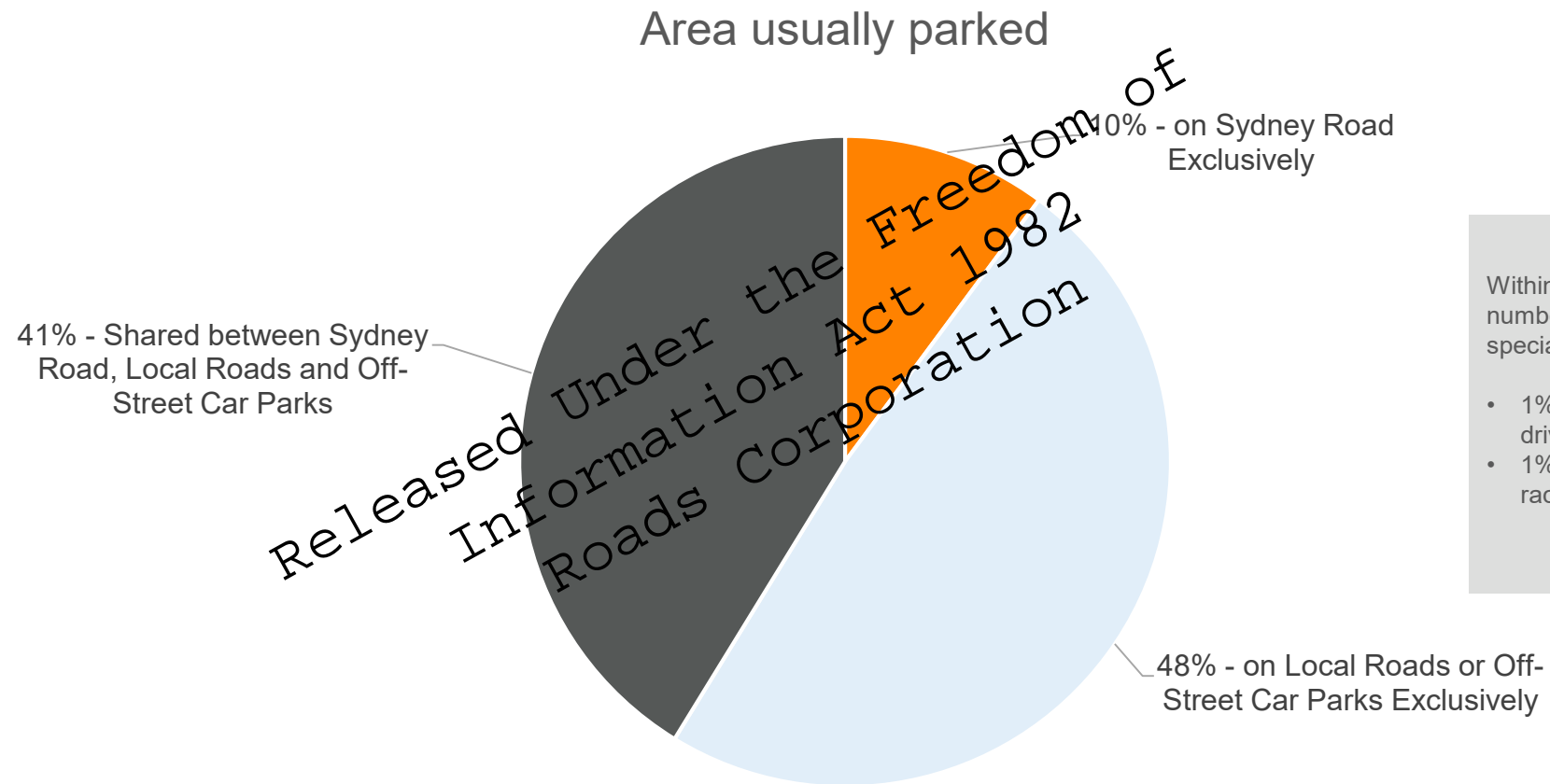
Overview: Parking is provided on Sydney Road, local side streets and off-

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making it a key consideration for a range of different community groups.

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1 in 10 respondents exclusively park on Sydney Rd



Within these proportions, a small number of respondents had more specialised parking needs/habits:

- 1% Disability parking / house driveway
- 1% Cyclists locking bikes to racks / poles etc

Q10. Where do you usually park?

Base: Respondents who park on Sydney Road or surrounding local streets n=4,726

Response to Options

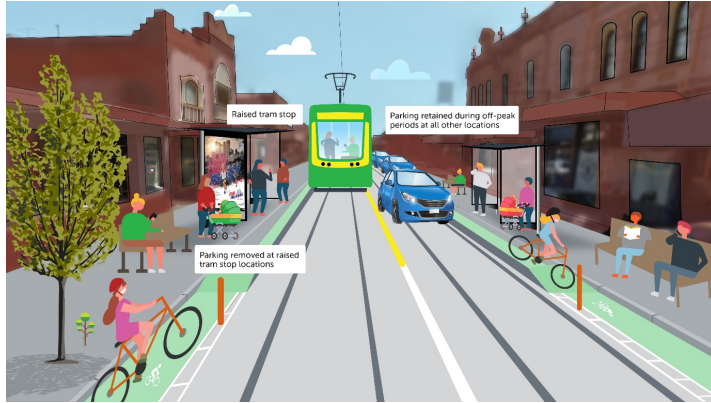
Overview: Cyclist safety is a concern for many user groups, resulting in Option 3 being perceived as the best option overall.

However, there are concerns over parking spaces, (particularly amongst business owners), and additional parking resources may need to be explored to alleviate this.

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Five options have been tested in this study

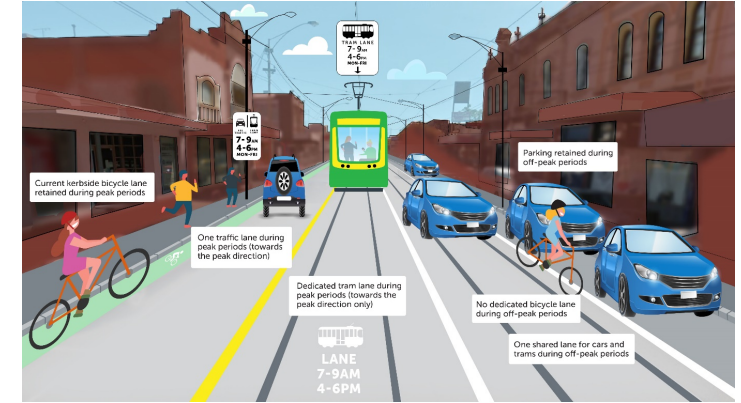
Option 1A



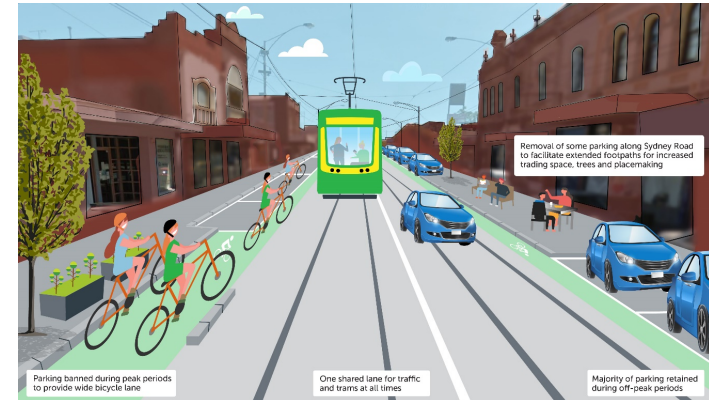
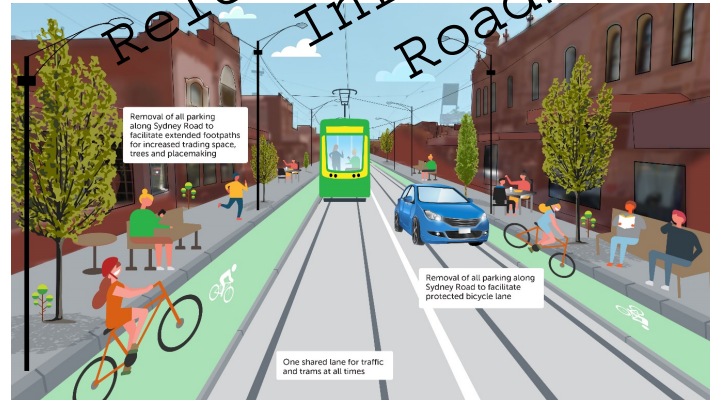
Option 1B



Option 2



Option 4



The accessibility for public transport of option 1A is liked, but many are still concerned about cycling safety and traffic flow

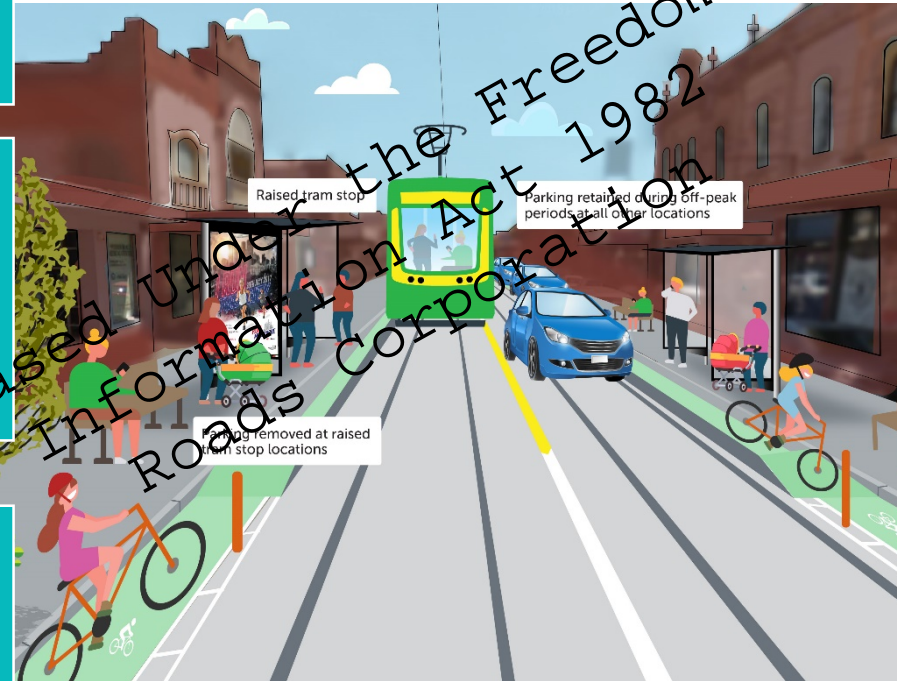
Very good / good

I like that it has good facilities and accessibility for public transport but dislike the lack of additional support for cyclists.

The raised tram stop locations similar to this in the city tend to encourage pedestrians to stand in the bike lane which can lead to frustration and collision. Apart from that I like the fact that the cars and the bikes are separated and that the bike lane is there are all times. It makes me feel safer. I notice the bike paths are not permanently separated. This makes you much more vulnerable as a cyclist.

It's ok but probably doesn't go far enough. The sidewalk needs extending for pedestrians, especially near the bottom of Sydney road where there is a huge amount of foot traffic. The top of Sydney road from Hope street north is probably fine for this solution, but definitely not below Hope.

Feedback on Option 1A



Very poor / poor

Doesn't solve traffic issues, create better public amenity, or address cycling safety

No improvements for cycling means I would still feel unsafe riding there. At the moment I drive more than I want to because cycling there feels so unsafe.

Non-dedicated bike lanes and disappearing cycling lanes for parking, means that during non-peak periods it's extremely risky to bike because of car doors opening. Also, not removing parking from the entire length of Sydney Road causes massive traffic backup for drivers, as people try and parallel park, get stuck behind trams and move very slowly.

The retention of the two car lanes of option 1B is the biggest concern; some like the minimal impact on traffic flow, and others feel it over-prioritises cars

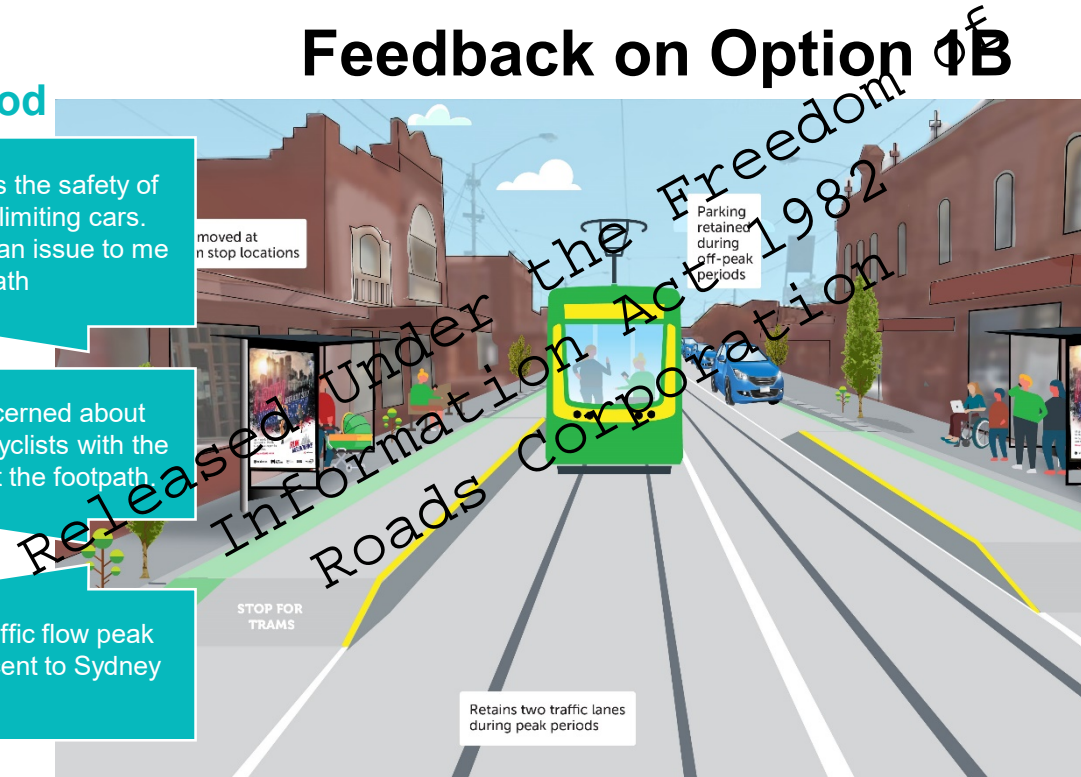
Feedback on Option 1B

Very good / good

This does what we need - improves the safety of PT, without adding congestion by limiting cars. Absence of bike lane doesn't seem an issue to me given the nearby bike path

Much better as its wider. Still concerned about collision between pedestrians and cyclists with the bike lane so narrow and up against the footpath

Best result, as maintains 2 lane traffic flow peak
Cyclists should use bike path adjacent to Sydney Rd/Upfield line



Very poor / poor

Priority for cars and parking is way too high. Businesses and individuals will benefit most from prioritizing safety and amenity for pedestrians, cyclists and tram users.

I think place-making (nice wide footpaths, places for the community to meet) and cycling infrastructure matter. This seems like a way to improve congestion for cars

The concept needs to go much further. No improvements for cycling facilities. Limited improvement. Does nothing to encourage move toward more pedestrian, PT and cycling. Changes need to enforce the hierarchy! Pedestrian, cyclist, PT all above the car.

Other users see the dedicated tram lanes as the main benefit of option 2, but cyclist safety remains a major concern

Feedback on Option 2

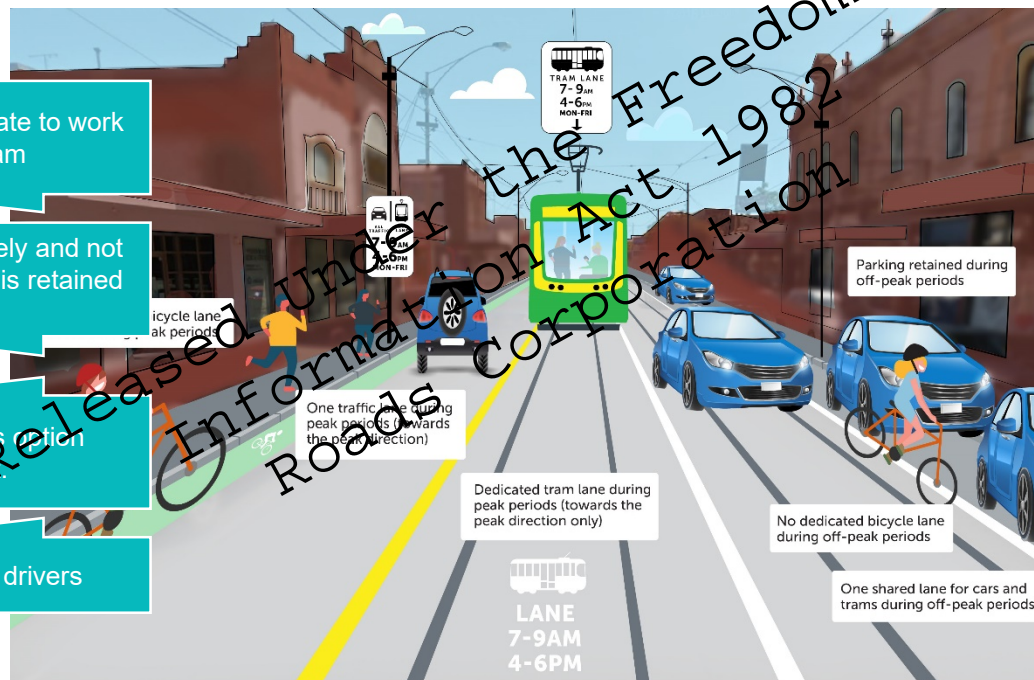
Very good / good

Like the dedicated tram lane. I'm often late to work because the traffic slows the tram

I like that trams will be able to move freely and not get stuck in traffic. I like that carparking is retained during off-peak periods.

Trams take forever in peak hour, this option addresses that, which is great

Caters to all users: tram, cyclist and drivers



Very poor / poor

Sounds confusing to change lanes in use all the time. Would like improved cycle lanes

Dedicated tram lane is a good idea but we need improved cycling facilities.

Chaotic, too many things going on with not enough dedicated areas

Terrible - very unsafe for bicycles, too much amenity for cars, narrow footpaths

Dislike. No dedicated bike lane is dangerous at any time of day

This is primarily due to the retention of parking, but there are still concerns about peak hour traffic and cyclist safety

Feedback on Option 2

Filtered by Business owners

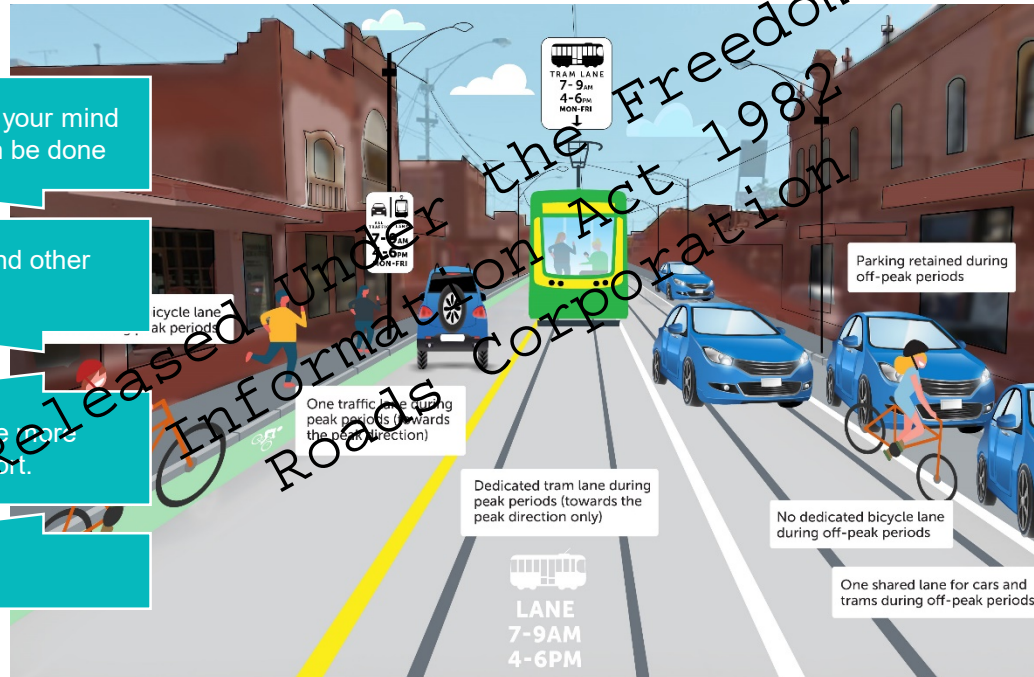
Very good / good

Least amount of change, if you change your mind and want bike lanes in the future it can be done

Maximum parking for my business and other businesses in the road

Dedicated tram lane may encourage more commuters to use public transport.

Keeps parking



Very poor / poor

Basically the same thing that exists now except trams will move through faster - it might make people use trams more because they will be more efficient but the traffic will still be heavy and the cyclists will still be in danger. Plus path congestion for pedestrians is horrible right now and that needs to be addressed

Compliance with the tram lane is likely to be non-existent (consider the compliance with the taxi/bus lane on the Tulla) especially as it is only part of the day. Does not help avoid dooring for cyclists in counterflow direction.

Positive to prioritise trams. Negative to not improve access for bikes. The bike paths are too small and take cyclists away from local shopping.

Whilst tram travel times will be reduced, proposal does not address safety concerns

Those who like Option 3 feel it is safe and makes Sydney Rd more a destination than a thoroughfare. But there are concerns about the impact of parking space removal, particularly amongst business owners.

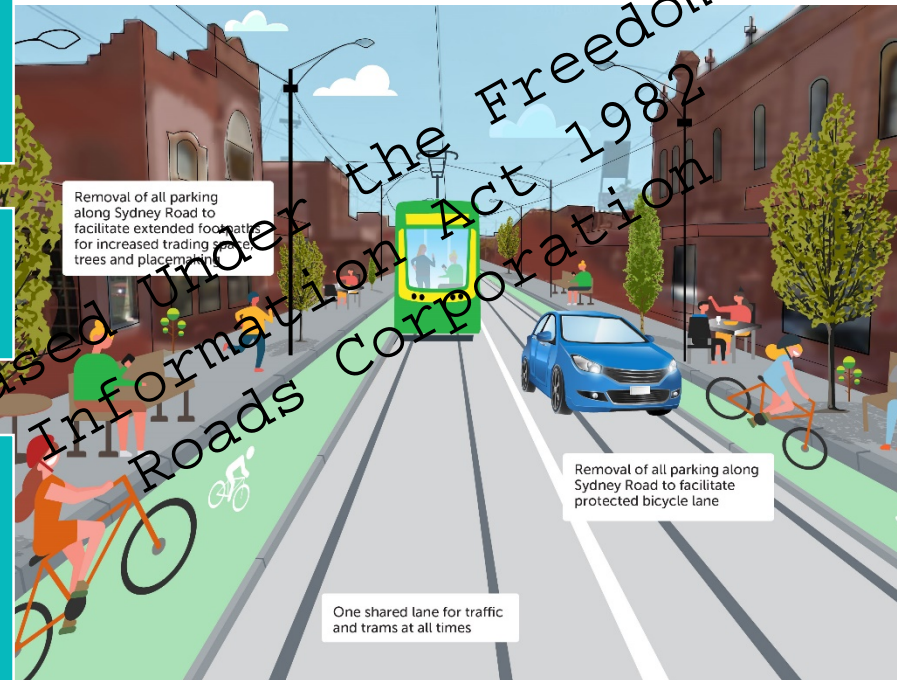
Very good / good

I love this plan. I would feel very safe taking children to Sydney Rd and shopping regularly along it, which I currently avoid doing. This would provide lots of space for more trading, a better design for spending time there. It would be the best option for improving safety and reducing noise and congestion.

Like the focus on Sydney road as a place rather than a thoroughfare. Would need further vehicle through restrictions to ensure trams do not grind to a halt.

This is exactly what Sydney Road should look like in the future. The protected bicycle lanes, wider footpaths and improvements to place making and street amenity is very supported. This is what the community has been advocating for several years and it is great this option is available. There is ample parking surrounding Sydney Road and this proposal adheres to the objectives of Plan Melbourne 2017. An improvement of planting can also benefit from this proposal...

Feedback on Option 3



Very poor / poor

Leave the parking. Bikes can use the Upfield bike path if necessary: I do sometimes and so does my daughter when she rides her bike to school. One unfortunate fatality 4 years ago is hardly the emergency that justifies damaging the livelihoods of many of the businesses on the road.

This looks like the safest option. But the big problem is it will utterly destroy business for traders, as there will be nowhere for customers to park! It will kill the business precinct of Sydney road.

Not enough lanes for traffic to flow. No parking will lead to reduced business in the area and deteriorate like Chapel street. Sydney Rd is tourist attraction for Melbourne and people need to be able to access easily by car. It is difficult enough now to find parking. No parking in side streets due to density of housing and apartments.

Many feel option 4 is a balanced compromise for users of Sydney Rd, but there is a lot of respondents expressing concern around dooring

Very good / good

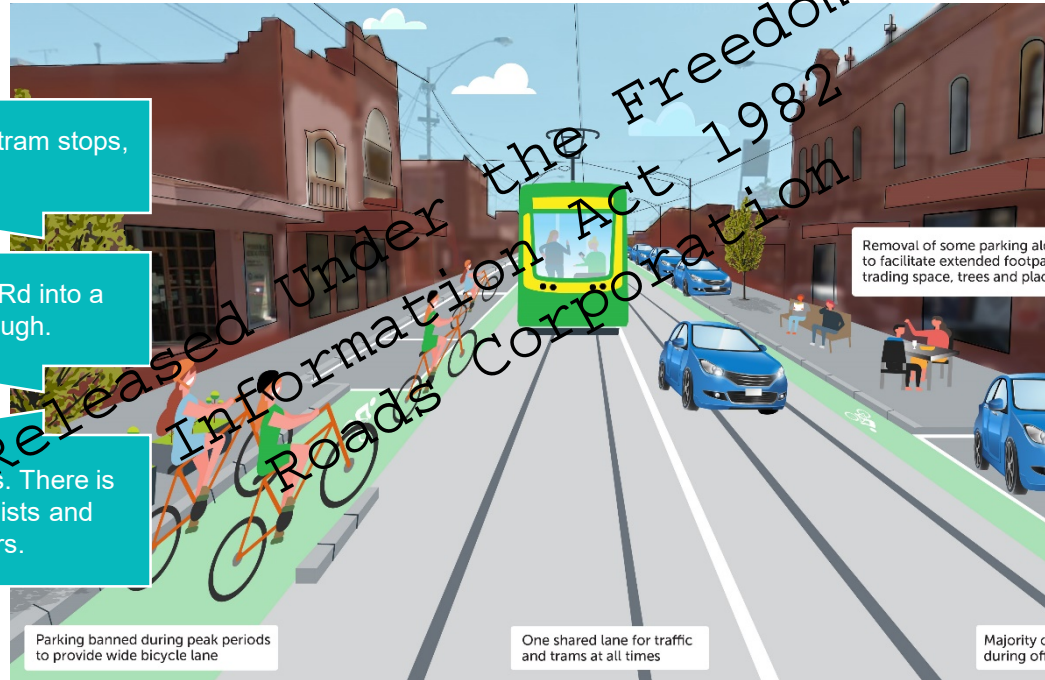
Feedback on Option 4

Very poor / poor

Best compromise. Still need accessible tram stops, perhaps at 2-3 major points...

Seems balanced. Would turn Sydney Rd into a traffic jam for most of the time though.

This seems the fairest amongst options. There is still parking available, options for cyclists and motorists alike as well as traders.



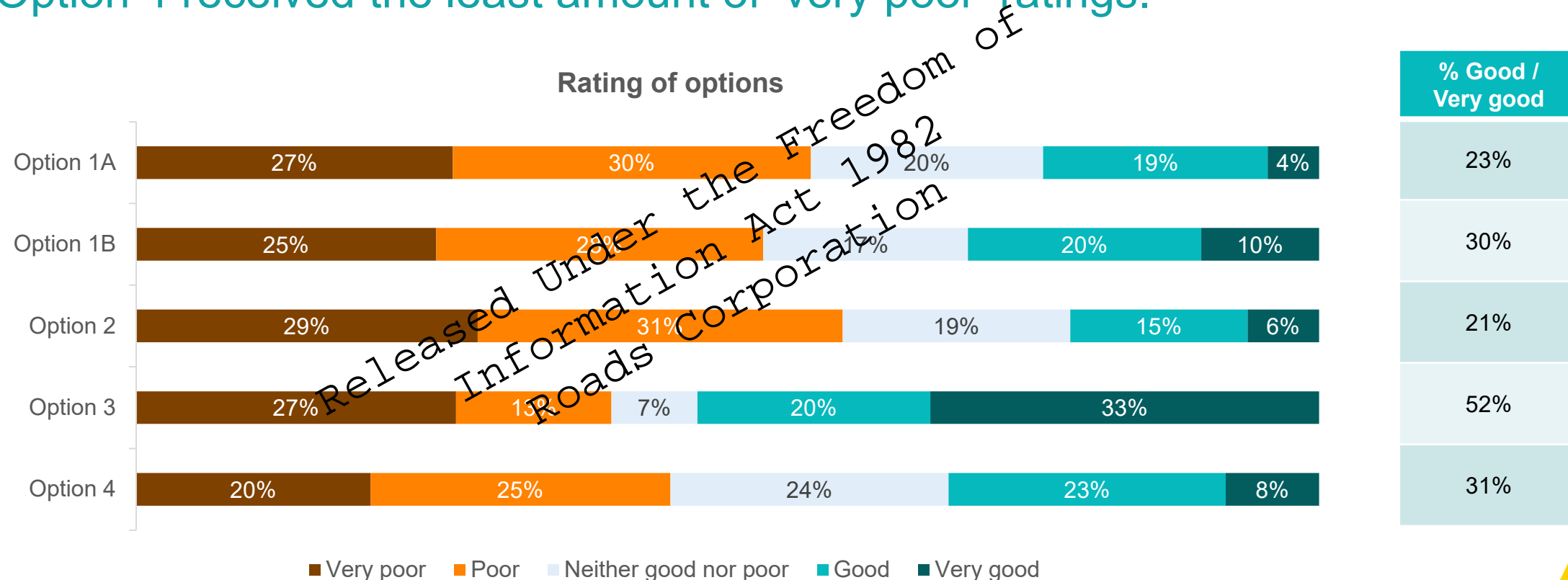
There is no point making everyone unhappy. You might as well prioritize for the future, make lots of people happy and the others can suck it up. Traders will actually love it within 6 months as it will become a high amenity location.

Lack of protection for cyclists especially for opening of car doors. Accepting deaths and severe injuries of cyclists should not be considered an option. (Which needless to say has occurred on Sydney Road.)

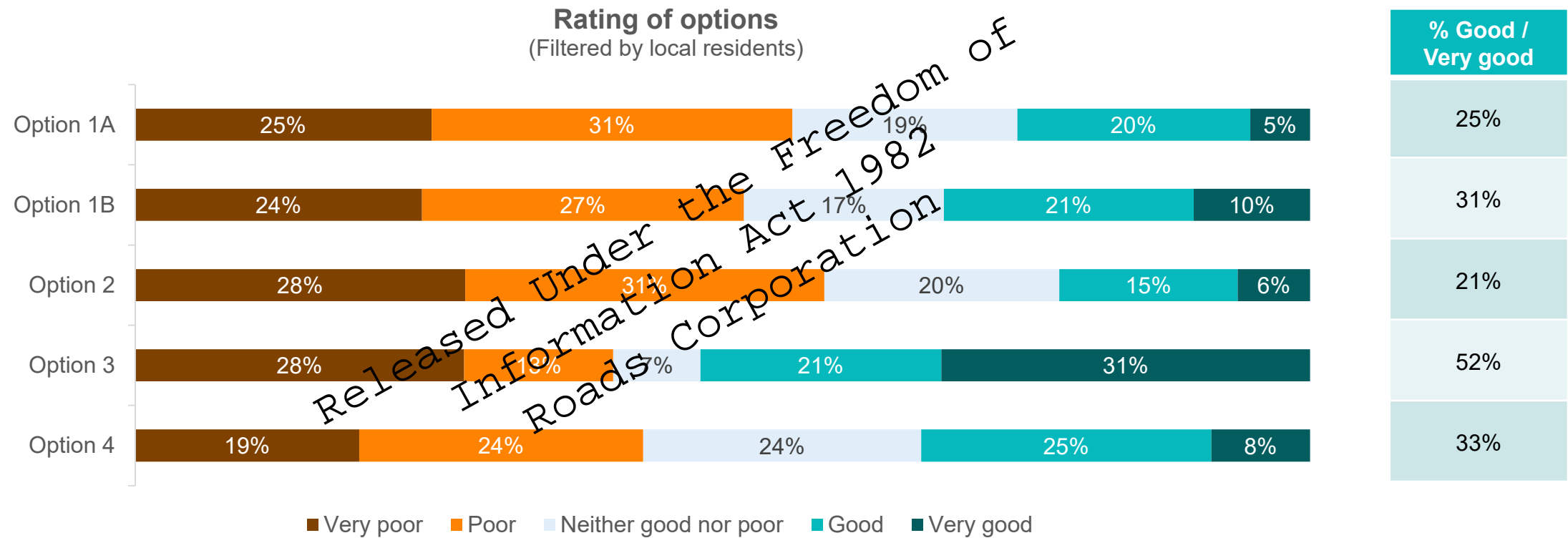
Just remove all the parking from the road. Be bold. Sydney Rd will be awesome without useless, space-wasting parked cars that encourage laziness and take up sooo much space.

Option 3 has the highest rating of the 5 propositions tested, but all options are polarising (with some negative sentiment towards each)

Option 4 received the least amount of 'very poor' ratings.

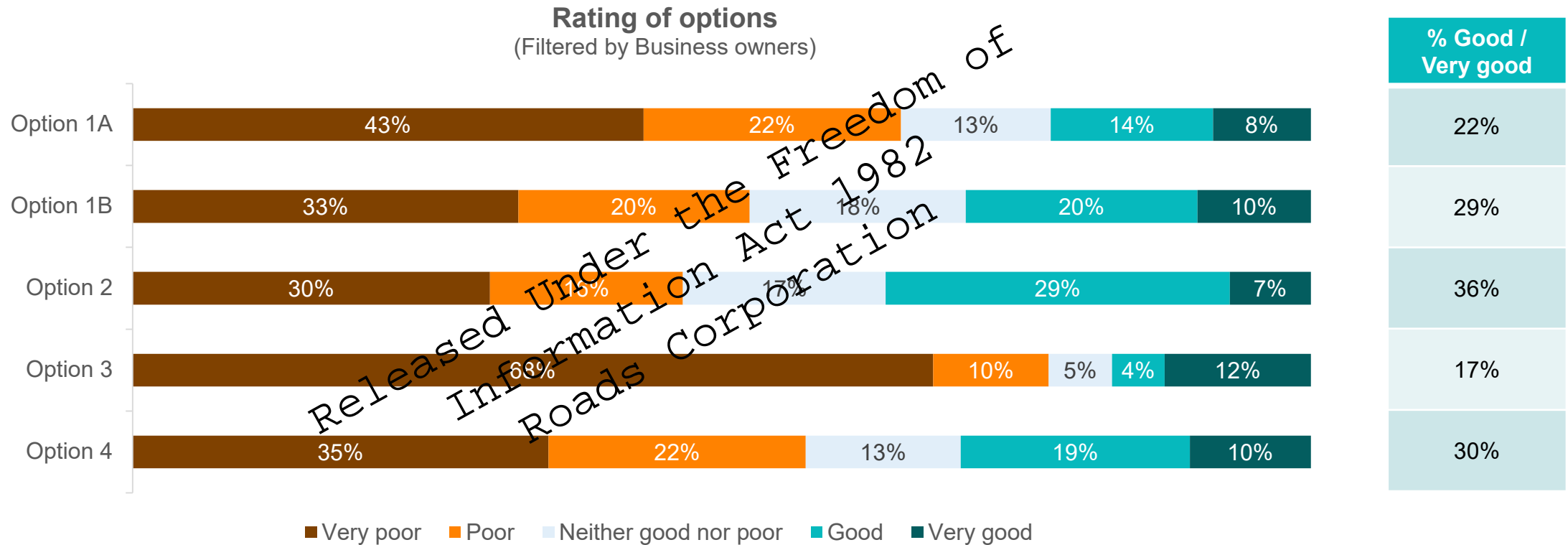


Local residents rated options 3 and 4 the most favourable



Q11/13/15/17/19. Overall, how would you rate proposed option [NUMBER]?
Base: Local residents n=4,494

Amongst business owners, all options result in a net negative rating, with option 2 drawing the least negativity



When looking at respondents who use more than one transport mode, Option 3 again performs the best

Rating of options
(Filtered selectively by respondents using more than one transport mode)

	% Good / Very good		
	Motor Vehicle AND Bicycle users	Public Transport AND Bicycle users	Public Transport AND Motor Vehicle users
Option 1A	18%	19%	28%
Option 1B	13%	13%	32%
Option 2	9%	10%	23%
Option 3	83%	85%	54%
Option 4	37%	36%	35%

However, whilst still achieving the strongest rating, this is notably lower amongst those using motor vehicles AND public transport.

Q11/13/15/17/19. Overall, how would you rate proposed option [NUMBER]?
Base: Motor Vehicle AND Bicycle users (n=2,506), Public Transport AND Bicycle users (n=2,513), Public Transport AND Motor Vehicle users (n=2,807)

When looking at respondents who use just one transport mode, Option 3 emerges as the most popular option, regardless of mode

Rating of Options
(filtered by those using just one transport mode)

	% Good / Very good			
	Motor Vehicle ONLY	Bicycle ONLY	Pedestrian ONLY	Public Transport ONLY
Option 1A	23%	16%	28%	29%
Option 1B	32%	7%	16%	31%
Option 2	22%	4%	11%	27%
Option 3	46%	93%	80%	65%
Option 4	31%	33%	39%	27%

However the 'winning margin' is notably narrower amongst Motor Vehicle ONLY respondents.

Q11/13/15/17/19. Overall, how would you rate proposed option [NUMBER]?

Base: Sample size per transport mode/option Motor Vehicle ONLY (n=4,812), Bicycle ONLY (n=592), Pedestrian ONLY (n=108), Public Transport ONLY (n=165)

*NB Low base size

When looking at purpose of visit, the response remains most positive towards Option 3, regardless of reason for visit

Rating of Options
(filtered by visit purpose and those just parking on Sydney Rd)

	% Good / Very good			
	Entertainment / Food	Retail	Service Businesses	Park on Sydney Road ONLY
Option 1A	24%	23%	23%	18%
Option 1B	28%	27%	28%	32%
Option 2	29%	20%	24%	25%
Option 3	60%	59%	50%	30%
Option 4	34%	35%	30%	32%

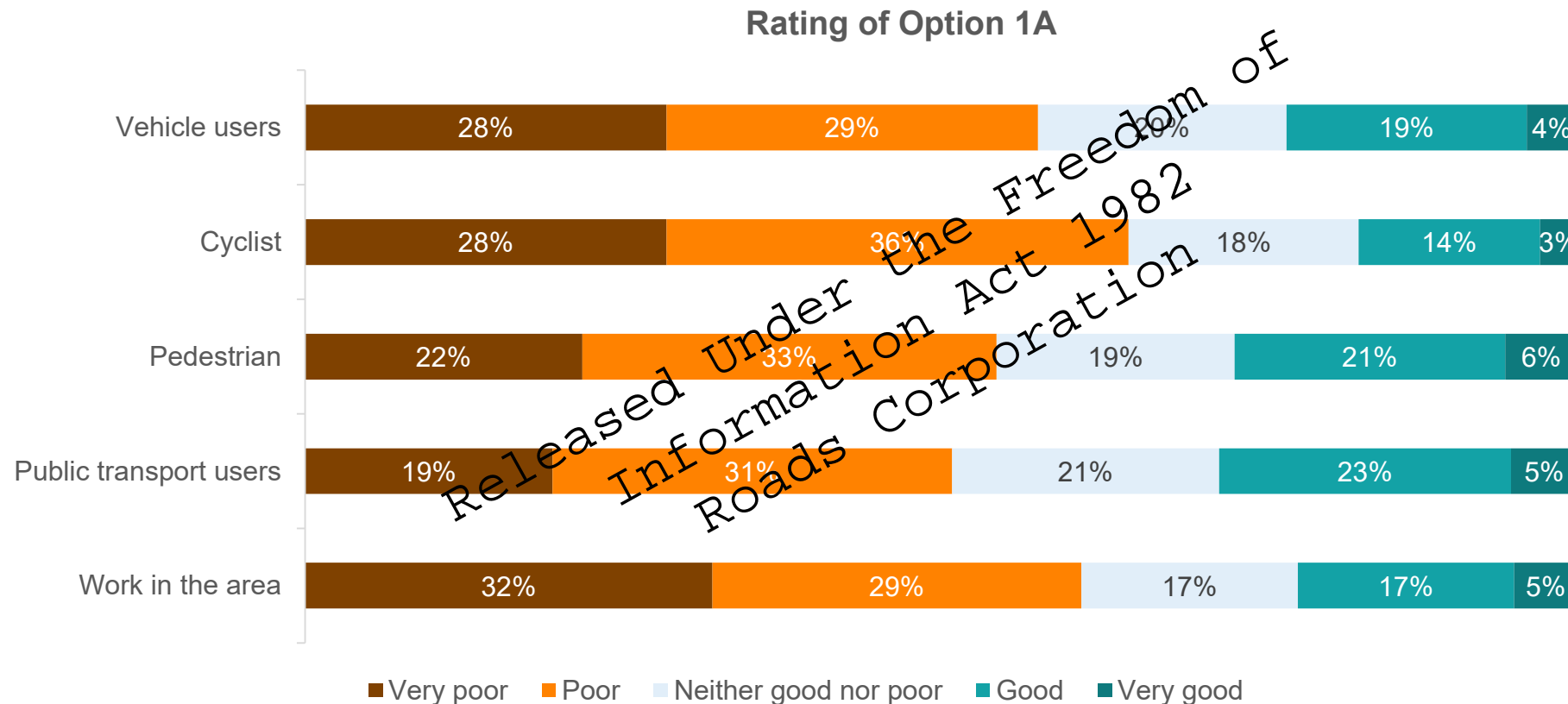


For those ONLY parking on Sydney Road, Options 1B and 4 both edge just ahead of Option 3.



Q11/13/15/17/19. Overall, how would you rate proposed option [NUMBER]?
Base: Entertainment/Food (n=3,120), Retail (n=2,586), Service Businesses (n=1,038), Park on Sydney Rd ONLY (n=286)

Option 1A tends to sit below other options, attracting a ranking of 3 or 4 across each of the transport modes and last spot for workers

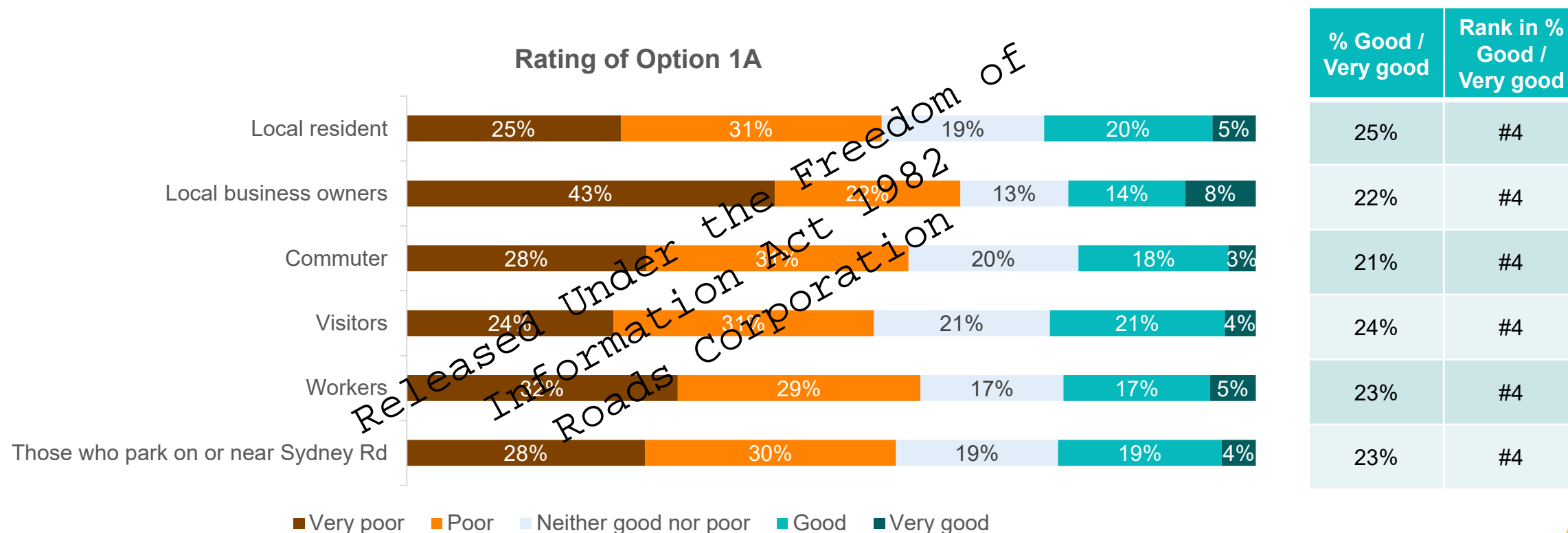


% Good / Very good	Rank in % Good / Very good
23%	#4
17%	#3
27%	#3
28%	#4
23%	#5

Q11/13/15/17/19. Overall, how would you rate proposed option [NUMBER]?

Base: Respondents who use / travel / cross Sydney Road for the reason above or park on Sydney Rd / surrounding areas min. n=4088

This is also seen by community group, where Option 1A is ranked in 4th spot by all groups

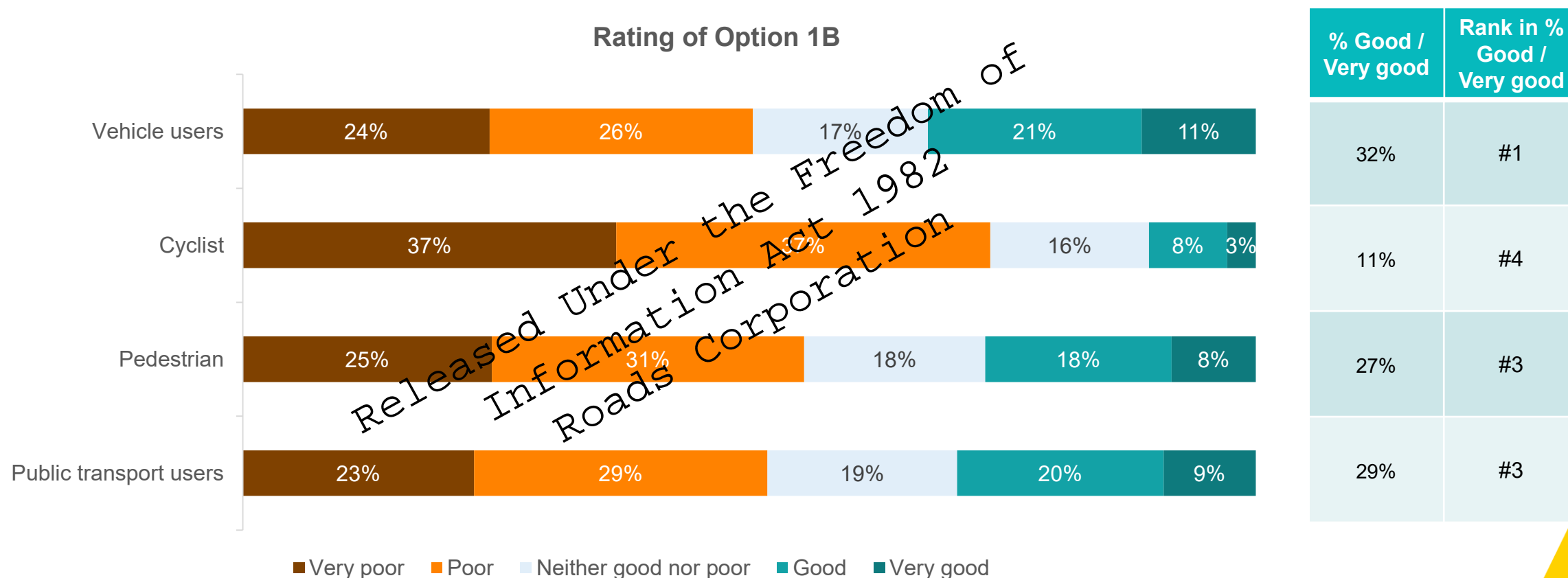


Q11/13/15/17/19. Overall, how would you rate proposed option [NUMBER]?

Base: Respondents who use / travel / cross Sydney Road for the reason above or park on Sydney Rd / surrounding areas min.

n=269

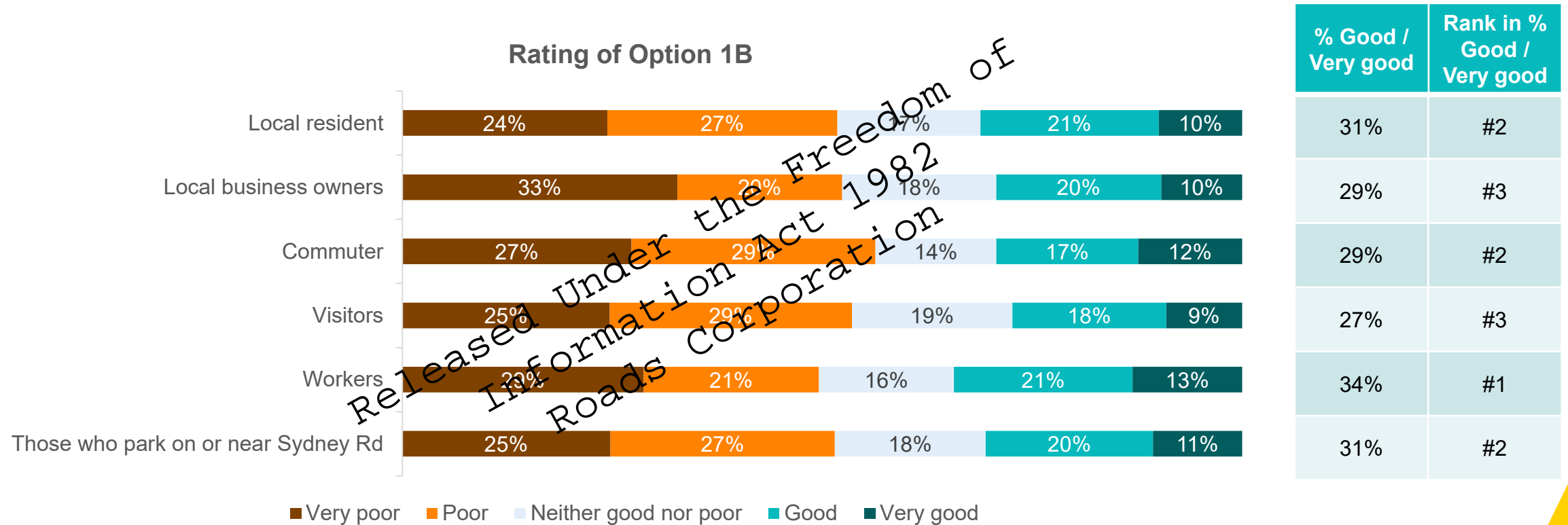
Option 1B does hold some appeal for Vehicle users, who rank it 1st. However, ratings are more mixed amongst other transport modes, with cyclists in particular not favouring this option.



Q11/13/15/17/19. Overall, how would you rate proposed option [NUMBER]?

Base: Respondents who use / travel / cross Sydney Road for the reason above or park on Sydney Rd / surrounding areas min.
n=4088

Option 1B fares reasonably well across most community groups and achieves the top ranking from Workers

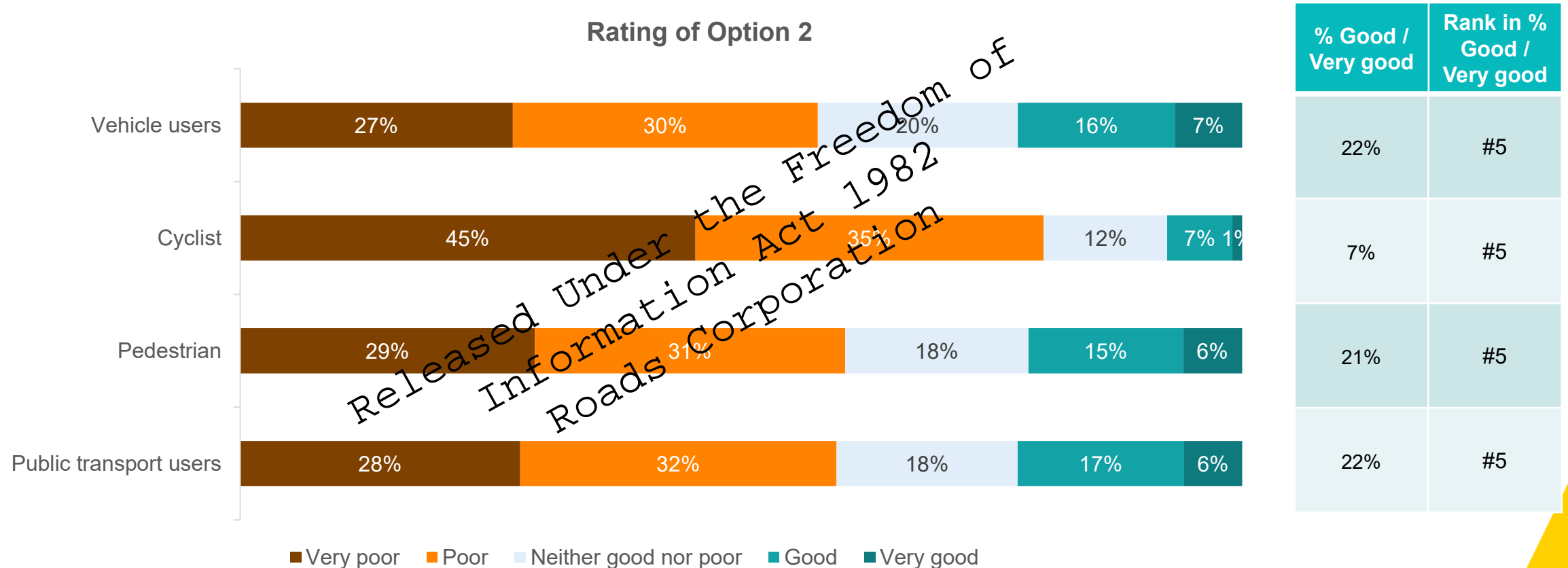


Q11/13/15/17/19. Overall, how would you rate proposed option [NUMBER]?

Base: Respondents who use / travel / cross Sydney Road for the reason above or park on Sydney Rd / surrounding areas min.

n=269

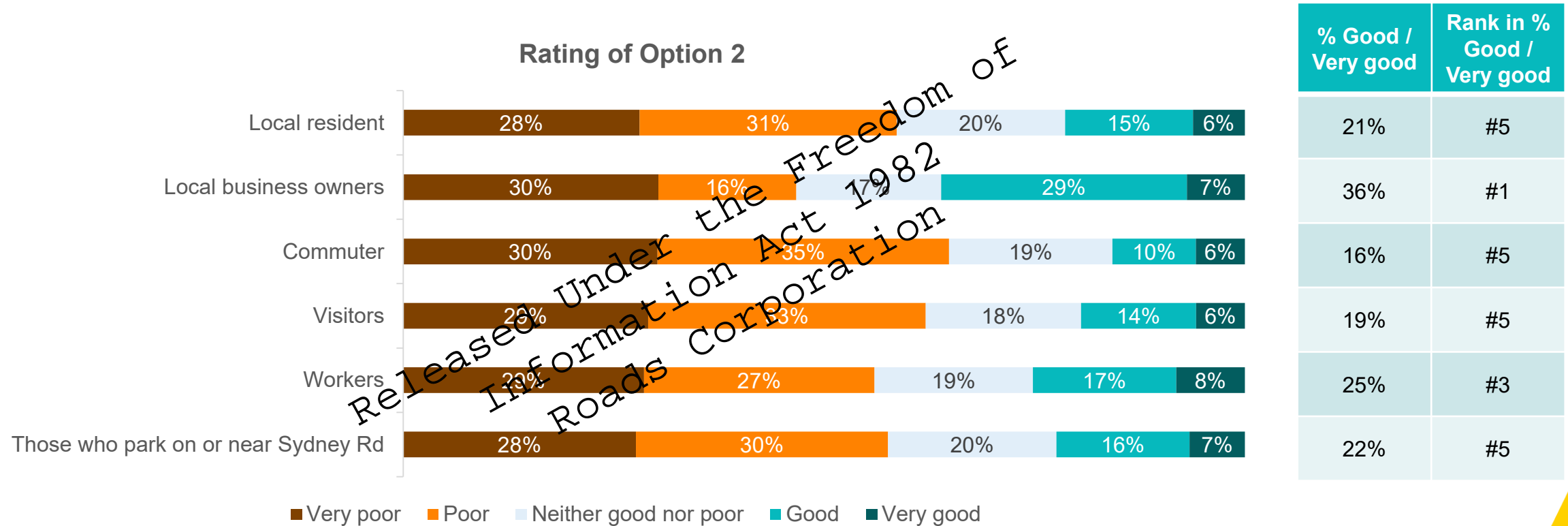
Option 2 does not appeal particularly to any of the transport mode groups, being ranked last by all of them



Q11/13/15/17/19. Overall, how would you rate proposed option [NUMBER]?

Base: Respondents who use / travel / cross Sydney Road for the reason above or park on Sydney Rd / surrounding areas min.
n=4088

Option 2 also generally proves unpopular by community group, with the exception of business owners, who place it top

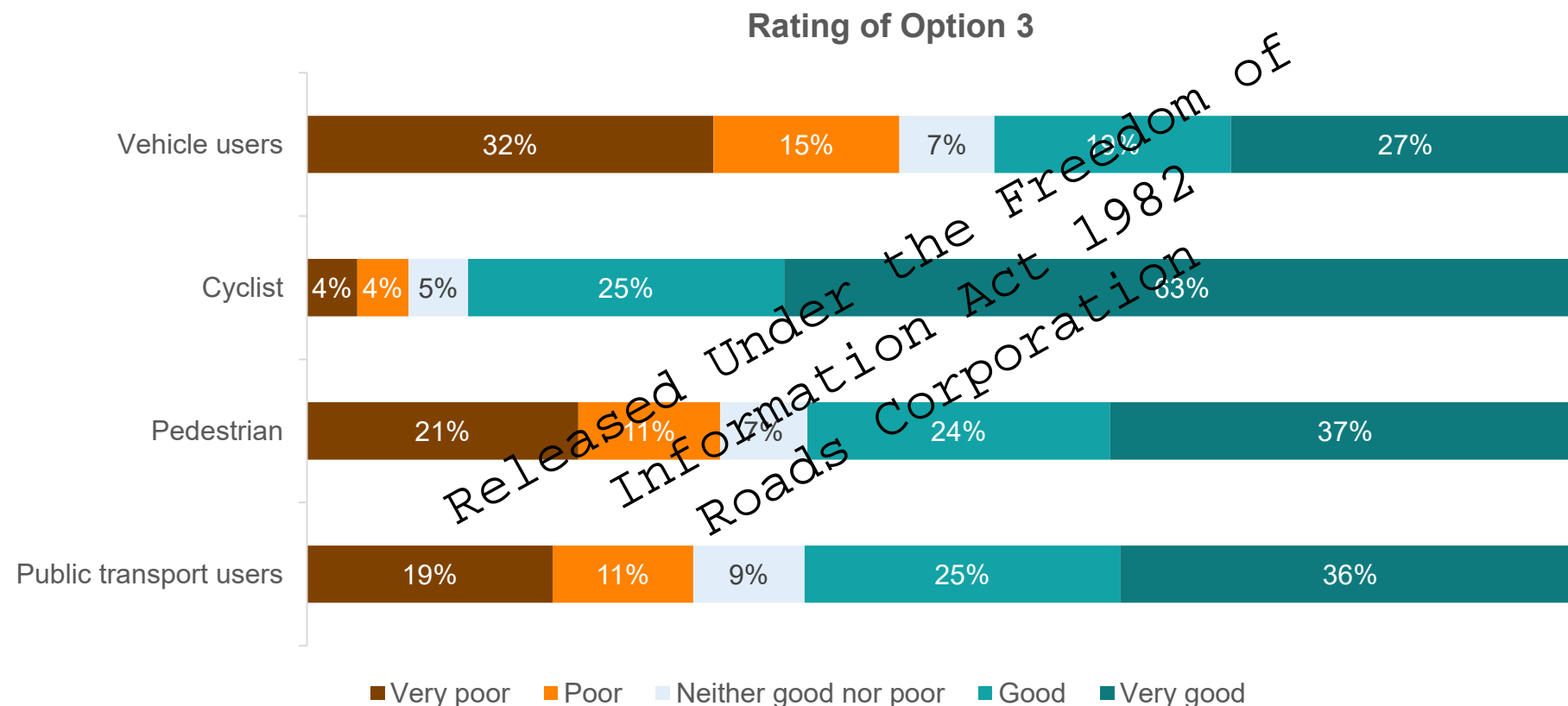


Q11/13/15/17/19. Overall, how would you rate proposed option [NUMBER]?

Base: Respondents who use / travel / cross Sydney Road for the reason above or park on Sydney Rd / surrounding areas min.

n=269

Option 3 is the preferred option with the following two slides showing further analysis

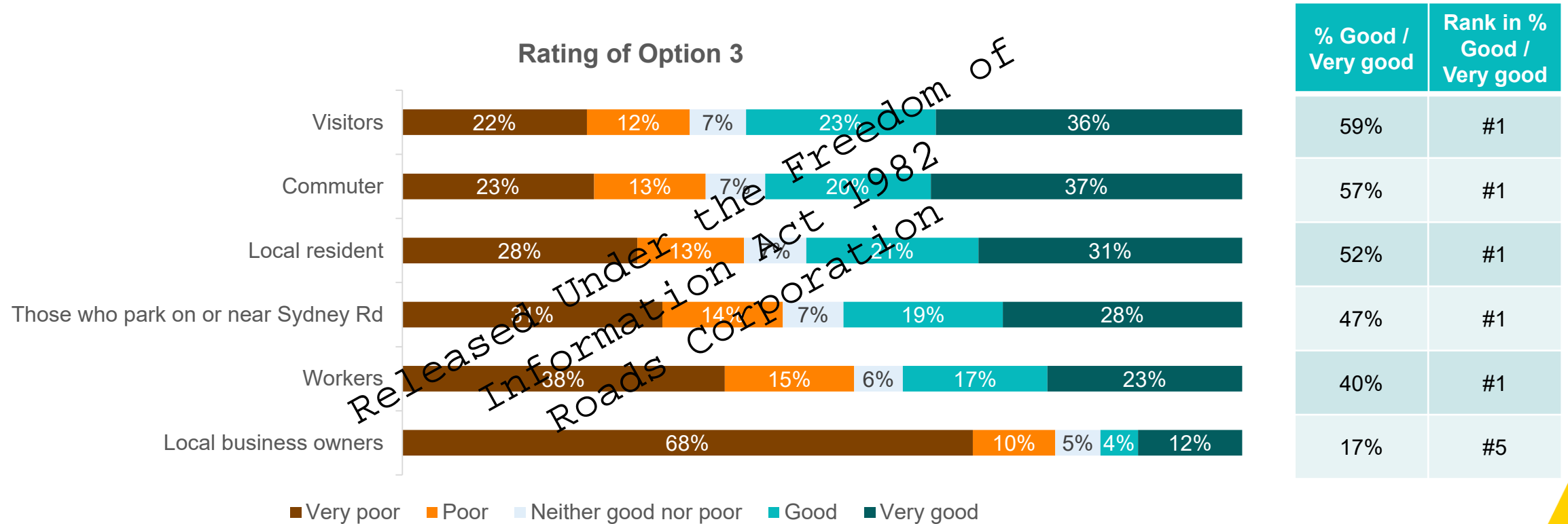


% Good / Very good	Rank in % Good / Very good
46%	#1
87%	#1
61%	#1
61%	#1

Q11/13/15/17/19. Overall, how would you rate proposed option [NUMBER]?

Base: Respondents who use / travel / cross Sydney Road for the reason above or park on Sydney Rd / surrounding areas min.
n=4088

Ratings of option 3 across community groups

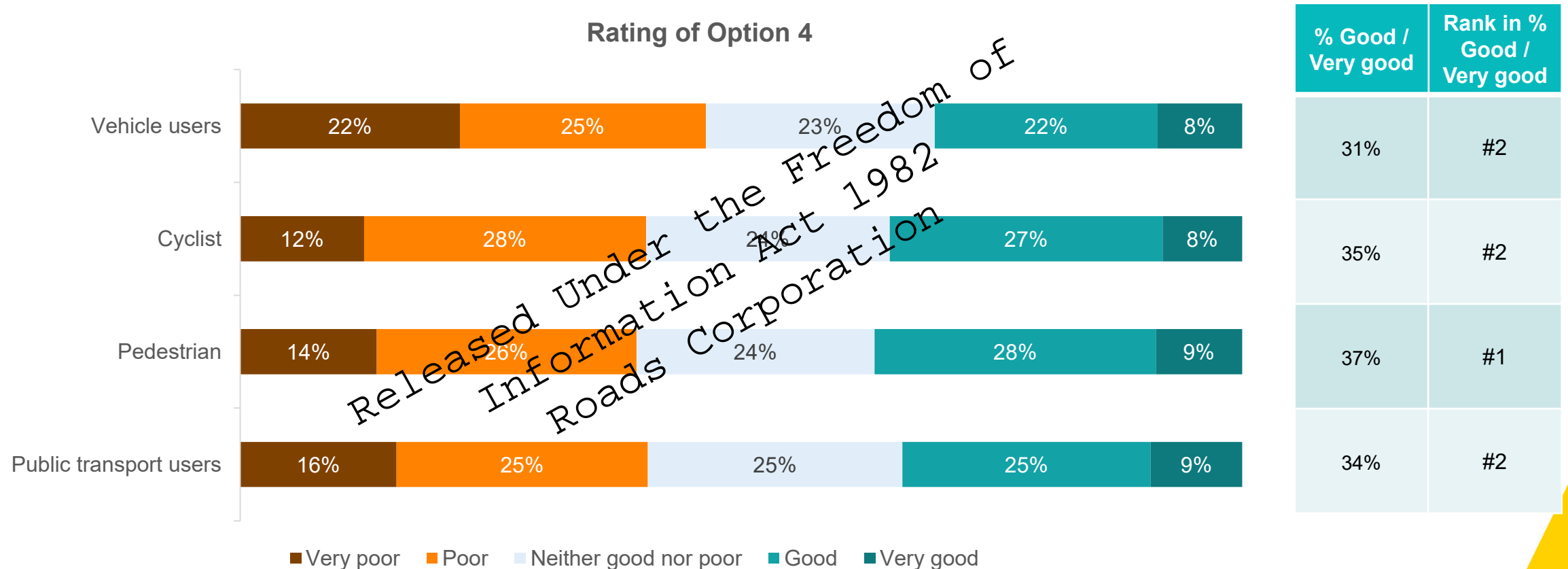


Q11/13/15/17/19. Overall, how would you rate proposed option [NUMBER]?

Base: Respondents who use / travel / cross Sydney Road for the reason above or park on Sydney Rd / surrounding areas min.

n=269

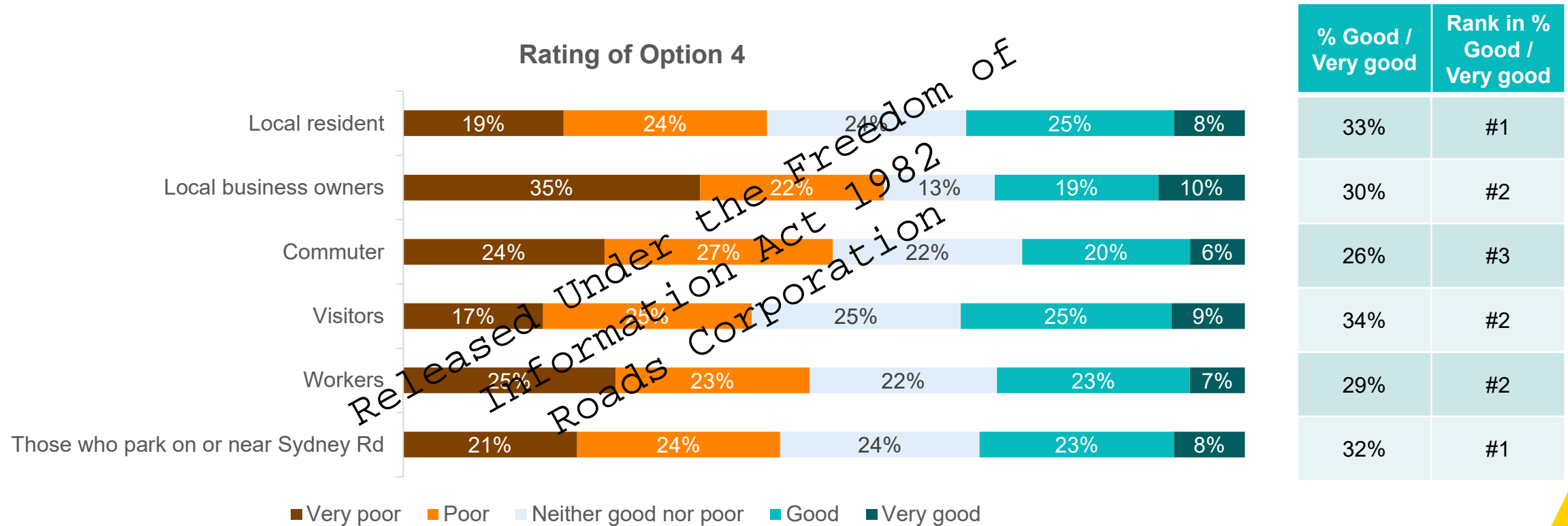
Comparatively, Option 4 is fairly well received across the transport modes and is ranked in top spot by pedestrians



Q11/13/15/17/19. Overall, how would you rate proposed option [NUMBER]?

Base: Respondents who use / travel / cross Sydney Road for the reason above or park on Sydney Rd / surrounding areas min.
n=4088

Feedback across the community groups is quite consistent for Option 4, with it achieving top ranking for both local residents and those parking nearby



Q11/13/15/17/19. Overall, how would you rate proposed option [NUMBER]?

Base: Respondents who use / travel / cross Sydney Road for the reason above or park on Sydney Rd / surrounding areas min.

n=269

Contact:

Not relevant

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