

7.0 Stakeholder Engagement

Public and stakeholder consultations and engagements were conducted consistent with the Terms of Reference (TOR) issued by the Environmental Management Authority (EMA) which directs the preparation of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). This includes the socio-economic assessment for the developmental activities associated with the establishment of a 500-Room Resort at Kilgwyn Bay along the South-west coast of Tobago. OptimalGESL, being the EIA Consultant for the project, engaged stakeholders together with FCL Financial Limited (Facilitator to the project on behalf of the Apple Leisure Group and DSM Investments Ltd.) to supply information about the intent and scope of the proposed hotel construction project while seeking input and feedback on said project, and explained that a Certificate of Environmental Clearance (CEC) is being sought from the Environmental Management Authority (EMA) to proceed with the project.

As noted under the TOR, stakeholder engagement forms an integral part of the EIA process as it focuses on engaging local communities and other stakeholders in culturally appropriate and ethical ways. This facilitates the building of trust and the identification of issues relevant to project planning and implementation. Also, in keeping with international standards, stakeholder involvement in the development of the project is important as it assists in identifying and preventing potential negative impacts. These may arise in the form of environmentally and socially unacceptable development and this in turn can lead to disputes among community members and contractors which would ultimately result in the delay of the project.

As part of the stakeholder engagement process, meetings were held with the public and relevant government and community agencies and bodies, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and the communities located within and along the South-west coast of Tobago. These consultations were conducted to identify the human environment likely to be affected by the proposed project; to identify their concerns and to incorporate these into the project to decrease negative social, economic and environmental impacts.

The following types of stakeholder engagement were conducted for this EIA:

- Combined Final Draft TOR stakeholder engagement and 1st Public Consultation (in person)
- 2nd Public Consultation (in person), and an
- In-person Village Council stakeholder meeting (for community leaders/stakeholders who indicated inability to engage in the virtual Second Consultation)
- Public Survey

Within the framework of each Public Consultation/Stakeholder Engagement report, the following details were captured (**Refer to Appendices G2 and G3 – Reports for Public Consultations 1 and 2**):

- **Minuted discussion points**
- **Stakeholder feedback**
- **Supporting report appendices that document Stakeholder and NGO communications inclusive of list of invitees**
- **Attendance registrar**
- **Signd expression of satisfaction forms**

As part of the EIA procedure, **Table 59 - 7-1** lists the following types of stakeholder engagement activities that were conducted to inform and update the general public and other stakeholders on the project as well as to assess their concerns. The communication/mobilization methods listed in **Table 60 - 7-2** were employed to make them aware of the proposed project engagement forums to encourage full participation. Digital advertisements were preferred due to Covid-19 restrictions and consequently the majority of communication/mobilization were done via digital means.

Table 59 - 7-1: Stakeholder Engagement Conducted for the Establishment of a 500-Room Resort at Kilgwyn Bay along the South-west Coast of Tobago.

Type of Stakeholder Engagement	Date	Venue
Combined Final Draft TOR stakeholder engagement and 1 st Public Consultation	Wednesday 7 th September, 2022	Rovanel's Resort and Conference Centre, Bon Accord
Second Public Consultation	Monday 5 th December, 2022	Rovanel's Resort and Conference Centre Bon Accord
In-person stakeholder meeting with NGO CBC Gateway Pioneers	Saturday 19 th November, 2022	Kilgwyn Bay
Public Surveys	Tuesday 29 th November, 2022	Online via Survey Monkey

Table 60 - 7-2: Summary of Communication/Mobilization Methods Employed for Each of the Stakeholder Involvement Activities Outlined in Table 59 - 7-1.

Activity	Newspaper Advertisement	Television Advertisement	Stakeholder Letters (e-mail and	Telephone calls	Radio Announcements
Combined Final Draft TOR stakeholder engagement and 1 st Public Consultation	x	✓	✓	✓	✓
Second Public Consultation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Activity	Newspaper Advertisement	Television Advertisement	Stakeholder Letters (e-mail and	Telephone calls	Radio Announcements
In-person stakeholder meeting with NGO CBC Gateway Pioneers	x	x	✓	✓	x
Public Surveys	x	x	✓	✓	x

The following sections detail the methods and outcomes of these stakeholder engagements.

Stakeholder Engagement for Input into the Draft Terms of Reference

Part of the Draft TOR process included sending copies of the Draft TOR document to stakeholders or representatives of stakeholder groups and letters inviting comments and feedback. This allowed for the review of the document and submission of comments to OptimalGESL. **Figure 115 - 7.1** below shows the written feedback provided by Mr. Daniel Lambert of FCL Financial Limited.

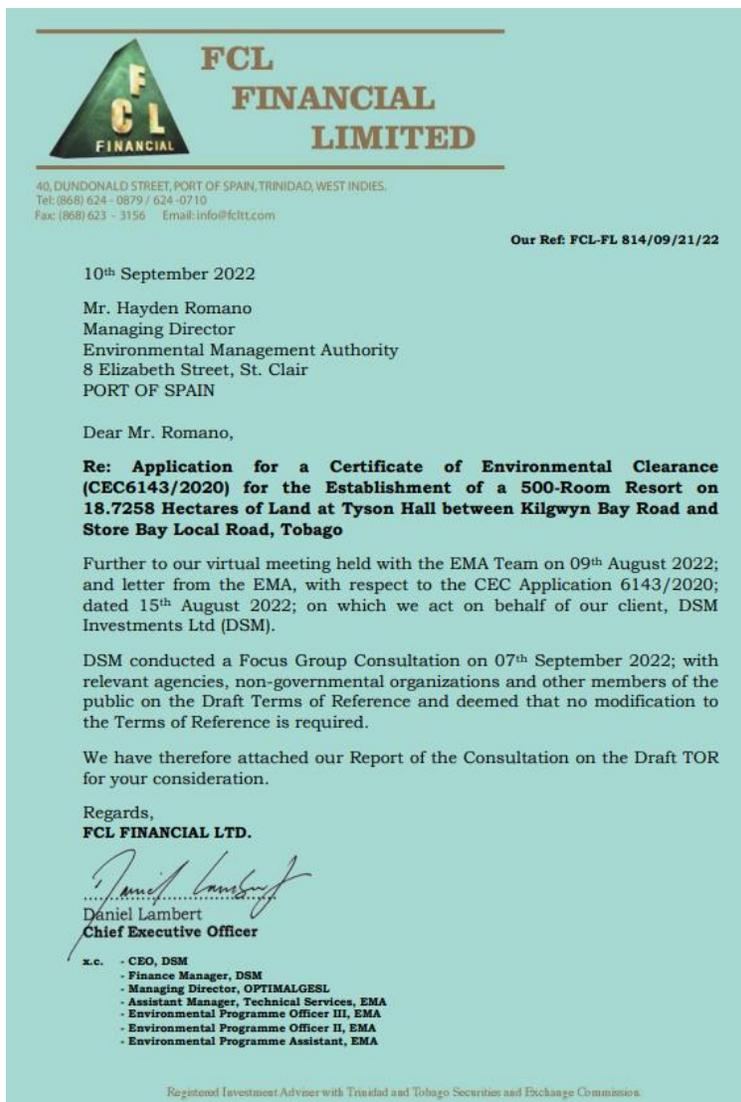


Figure 115 - 7.1: Feedback Provided by FCL Financial Limited on Draft TOR Document.

7.2 Public Consultations

Following the issuance of the Final Draft TOR document, the first Public Consultation was held on Wednesday 7th September, 2022 at Rovanel's Resort & Conference Centre, Store Bay Local Road, Crown Point, Tobago. Subsequently, after having received the Final TOR, a second Public Consultation was held on Monday 5th December, 2022 at the same venue as the first – Rovanel's Resort. Both consultations facilitated persons to join both virtually and in-person. As a result of mandated social distancing, restrictions of movement and large gatherings, OptimalGESL, like other companies have been required to limit activities, including those related to stakeholder engagement and consultation processes linked to new and existing projects, and community development projects. Adequate seating was provided in a safely spaced arrangement in accordance with relevant Covid-19 regulations. Additionally, sufficient audio-visual was provided for the in-person attendees and both meetings were recorded and will be submitted with the final EIA document to the EMA. At the in-person sessions, all Covid protocols were observed (social distancing etc.) as evidenced by **Figures 116 - 7.2 to 117 - 7.3** and **Figures 118 - 7.4 to 119 - 7.8** in the subsequent Sections 7.2.1 and 7.2.2 for the first and second consultation respectively.

Developing safe and effective COVID-19 stakeholder engagement is integral in maintaining a proactive communication process and providing communities with information in a timely manner. According to the IFC (2020), key elements to consider during the development of a robust interim stakeholder engagement process to support communication and sharing of information include the following:

- Define a clear protocol for external communications and designate points of contact based on the company's existing protocols and communications contingency planning.
- Closely monitor health advisories and guidelines so that any stakeholder engagement activity conforms to applicable national and local regulations, as well as advice and guidance from national and international health authorities.

Given the dynamic nature of the COVID-19 situation, companies should be able to adapt their approaches to deal with new or modified requirements.

- Identify critical environmental and social risks of the company's operations that could be exacerbated by COVID-19 and communicate these and the corresponding mitigation measures to deal with these risks to stakeholders.
- Identify critical stakeholder engagement activities that were planned or ongoing prior to the outbreak to define essential and nonessential activities. Decisions to continue planned activities and/or to commence new ones should be taken based on a thorough understanding of the potential risks of exposure to the company's employees, any consultants engaged by the company to conduct such activities and stakeholders, including communities, and equally important, the potential implications for stakeholders, communities, and the company of not undertaking these activities at this time.
- Design or adapt multiple channels of outward communication and access to the company's grievance mechanism that reflect the local context (urban or rural), the current situation, and different project activities, while at the same time taking all feasible steps to protect the safety and confidentiality of employees, consultants, stakeholders, and community members.
- Build on and coordinate with established national/regional/local platforms currently being used as communication forums and tools in response to COVID-19. Companies can use these channels and adapt them for their projects.
- Identify existing channels and social structures (for example, community leaders, community-based organizations, and women's cooperatives) in situations where communities or a subset of a community have limited connectivity and access to technology, or where there are literacy issues. By utilizing existing social structures and identifying the preferred communication method(s), companies can disseminate information and engage target audiences while adhering to government directives related to safety, group sizes, and social distancing.

- Pay attention to vulnerable, marginalized, and remote groups as they assess options available to them for consultation in the context of COVID-19, including identifying potential barriers to achieving meaningful engagement (for example, where in-home isolation and gender roles may limit participation, or where physically disabled people have limited access) and design an outreach approach that supports access and participation.
- Understand operational challenges to communicating important messages, including connectivity, information technology (IT) literacy, remoteness, violation of privacy, fear of retaliation, trust issues, concerns about surveillance, and reluctance to rely on proposed alternatives.
- Review and adjust engagement approaches to reflect changes in circumstances and applicable national and local regulations surrounding COVID-19. Maintain flexibility to adapt approaches and respond to these changes in order to better meet the objectives of the engagement process.

The aforementioned guidelines were therefore adhered to in the planning of both public engagement events.

7.2.1 First Public Consultation (Refer to Appendix G2 – Public Consultation 1 Report)

The first public consultation was hosted on Wednesday 7th September, 2022 at Rovanel's Resort & Conference Centre, Store Bay Local Road, Crown Point, Tobago from 9:30am to 11:30am. **A detailed report of this consultation encompassing the minutes of the meeting and the attendance registrar can be found in Appendix G2.** Methods used to make the public aware of this meeting are listed in **Table 61 - 7-3** below. **Table 62 - 7-4** cover the main issues/concerns/comments raised during the consultation and the project team's response for each point raised. **Figures 116 - 7.2** and **117 - 7.3** show pictures taken during the consultation.

The first consultation aimed to inform the public of the project to be undertaken - the Establishment of a 500-Room Resort On 18.7258 Hectares at Kilgwyn Bay, Tobago

The specific purposes included:

- To provide a clear and concise synopsis of the proposed project
- To present the Draft Terms of Reference for the Application of Certificate of Environmental Clearance (CEC 6143/2020)
- To provide an update on the EIA Process

Table 61 - 7-3: Methods Used to Bring Public Awareness of the First Public Consultation.

Invitation letters	Two weeks before, invitation letters were emailed to stakeholders
Radio announcements	Friday 2 nd September, 2022 – 1 week before consultation

Table 62 - 7-4: Main Issues/Concerns/Comments Raised During the First Public Consultation.

Main issues and concerns raised	Response from project team
<p><u>Mr. Curtis Douglas from the All Tobago Fisherfolk Association:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. My concern is how you are going to impact the fishing and the environment. 2. How is this going to impact the wetlands and nurseries for fish? 	<p>– Mr. Lambert indicated that the EMA has been in step with Mr. Douglas' thought process and directed the meeting to the relevant sections of the Draft TOR - definition of the requirements of the TOR and the direct and indirect</p>

<p>3. How is the sewage going to affect the fish?</p> <p>4. When you have these all-inclusive resorts, the business does not trickle down as merchandise and food would be imported.</p>	<p>impacts (<i>environmental and socio-cultural</i>) on the project.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Analysis of alternatives; we will be looking at geology, environment, etc that are in the TOR. We need to be monitoring. <p>We need consultation for the long-term success of the project. Yes, we are seeing problems with other developments in Tobago. This consultation process is very important. We are on the right path if we have several iterations and maximize opportunities. He indicated that the consideration of these matters will go a long way to address Mr. Douglas' concerns.</p>
<p><u>Mr. Dave Elliot, IMA representative, scuba diver and resident:</u></p> <p>1. Iterated that a perimeter survey/informed definition of the environment is a step in the right direction, to be a check point and provides assurance that the TOR is robust and ensures that once adhered too there is indeed compliance.</p> <p>2. The west end of the property, there was a sluice gate. Isn't</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Dr Ramsook addressed Mr. Elliot's concerns and mentioned that the plans are not to remove the wetlands but to do development around it; Build with Nature (BwN). The plan is to make this resort into an eco-tourism resort. He advised that the TOR addresses eight (8) items in the EIA and surpasses the requirements of the EIA.

<p>there?</p> <p>3. There is longshore drift, and any dredging will be affecting the reef. The coral you are seeing dying is the staghorn coral. They are naturally fragile.</p> <p>4. What will be removed? Mangroves are protected by the Ramsar Convention. Kilgwyn Wetland is the second largest in Tobago. What will the state be of these with the development?</p>	
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Figure 116 - 7.2: First Public Consultation – Members of the Audience Paying Attention to the Presentation.



Figure 117 - 7.3: First Public Consultation – A Member of the Audience Providing Live Feedback to the Panel.

7.2.2 Second Public Consultation (Refer to Appendix G3 – Public Consultation 2 Report)

The second public consultation was held on Monday 5th December, 2022 at Rovanel’s Resort & Conference Centre, Store Bay Local Road, Crown Point, Tobago from 2:50pm to 5:35pm. **A detailed report of this consultation encompassing the minutes of the meeting and the attendance registrar can be found in Appendix G3.** Methods used to make the public aware of this meeting are listed in Table 7-5 below. Table 7-6 cover the main issues/concerns/comments raised during the consultation and the project team’s response for each point raised. **Figures 118 - 7.4 to 122 - 7.8** show pictures taken during the consultation.

The second consultation aimed to provide an update on the proposed project - the Establishment of a 500-Room Resort On 18.7258 Hectares at Kilgwyn Bay, Tobago

The specific purposes included:

- To present the findings of the baseline scientific and socio-economic and socio-cultural investigation conducted
- To inform the community of the development plans for the area and solicit feedback, concerns, and suggestions
- To develop a relationship with the wider catchment community as the planning progresses

Table 63 - 7-5: Methods Used to Bring Public Awareness of the Second Public Consultation.

Invitation letters	Two weeks before, invitation letters were emailed to stakeholders
Newspaper advertisements	Sunday 20 th November, 2022
Radio announcements	Tuesday 29 th November, 2022 and Friday 2 nd December, 2022

Table 64 - 7-6: Main Issues/Concerns/Comments Raised During the Second Public Consultation.

Main issues and concerns raised	Response from project team
<u>Agricultural Linkages</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The project reiterated its commitment to sourcing local products of the desired quality and to working with local producers in the construction phase to ensure that they could meet these requirements when the hotel is operational.
<u>Role of the THA</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The developer referred to previous meetings and presentations with the THA Executive Council and their commitment to working with the THA in integrating the project with the community.
<u>Choice of the All-Inclusive Model</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The developer referred to a previously developed medium term strategy for Tobago based on the provision of a number of five-star all-inclusive properties to transform the level of visitor arrivals coming to Tobago. reference was also made to the success of that strategy through established and proven Brands.
<u>Closeness of project to airline take-off</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The project group has been in discussion with the Airport Authority and they were also invited to the consultation.
<u>Knowledge of Villagers re: the project and overall</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The developer reiterated their commitment to the community and

<u>commitment to keeping developer guarantees</u>	being inclusive at each stage of the process.
<u>Desired guarantee of Commitment to the Community</u>	- Developer referred to the requirements of financial institutions in the current environment that makes developers adhere to the commitments they make communities.
<u>Impact on Archaeological Sites</u>	- A commitment was given to include these considerations during the construction process.
<u>Impact on turtle nesting sites</u>	- The scientists were aware of the turtle nesting sites and an undertaking was given to establishing monitoring stations to continue to assess the situation given that there is a level of poaching taking place. Additionally, the project does not intend to have any construction on the berm where existing turtle laying takes place, and also promises to have very low-level lighting in the area.
<u>Impact on bird species and the guarantee that commitments made to the community will be kept.</u>	- The developer reiterated the reasons outlined previously.
<u>Concerns that the project was being undertaken in an industrial fire risk zone given the presence of Cove Estate and the Airport</u>	- The developer assured the audience that they will work closely with the fire services and other authorities in ensuring that adequate precautions are taken in the design of fire prevention systems.

<p><u>Amount of natural vegetation to be removed during development</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Optimal Geoscience and Engineering Solutions reassured the audience regarding the approach to construction that involved minimal removal of vegetation.
<p><u>Concern about employment numbers</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The developer noted that the employment numbers were based on the fact that the hotel will have to employ greater numbers of staff in the beginning and reduce numbers as the hotel becomes more efficient.
<p><u>Respect for cultural importance and sustainable development</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Developer reiterated their desire for a social contract with the community
<p><u>Design schedule for the project</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The developer elaborated on the deadlines for the EIA process, the availability of the proposals for public scrutiny and the factors that affects their 2023 construction start up.
<p><u>Developer’s Corporate Social Responsibility Policy</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Developer referred to the relationship with the operator, Secrets, the Apple and Hyatt Group and their demonstrated commitment as a high value brand.



Figure 118 - 7.4: Second Public Consultation – Members of the Audience Paying Attention to the Presentation.



Figure 119 - 7.5: Second Public Consultation – Dr. Ryan Ramsook Addressing the In-Person Attendees.



Figure 120 - 7.6: Second Public Consultation – View of Audience from the Back of the Room.



Figure 121 - 7.7: Second Public Consultation – Member of the Public Asking a Question to the Panel.



Figure 122 - 7.8: Second Public Consultation – Dr. Trina Halfhide Addressing the In-Person Attendees.

These forums provided opportunities for participants to voice their concerns on potential issues they may have had with the project, while giving OptimalGESL the opportunity to respond in a live manner, similar to what would have been achieved through a ‘regular’ in person public consultation.

7.2.3 In-Person Stakeholder Meetings - Supplemental for Second Consultation (**Refer to Appendix G1.2 – Recount of In-person Meeting**)

On Saturday 19th November, 2022 a meeting was held at Kilgwyn Bay to facilitate the NGO body known as CBC Gateway Pioneers to do an on-site, in-person visit to the proposed hotel location. Following this in-person meeting, the e-mail in **Figure 123 - 7.9** below was received from Mr. Deon A. Willis expressing his recount of the meeting.



Figure 123 - 7.9: NGO CBC Gateway Pioneer’s E-mail to OptimalGESL Recounting the In-person Meeting.

7.2.4 Public Surveys

An online Public Perception Survey was created and made accessible to the public on Tuesday 29th November, 2022 using a website known as Survey Monkey. A total of 139 persons responded to this survey which comprised of 10 questions. A comprehensive summary of this survey can be found in **Appendix G1.1 – Public Perception Survey**. A few of the critical questions asked however, are shown and discussed in **Figures 124 - 7.10 to 127 - 7.13** below

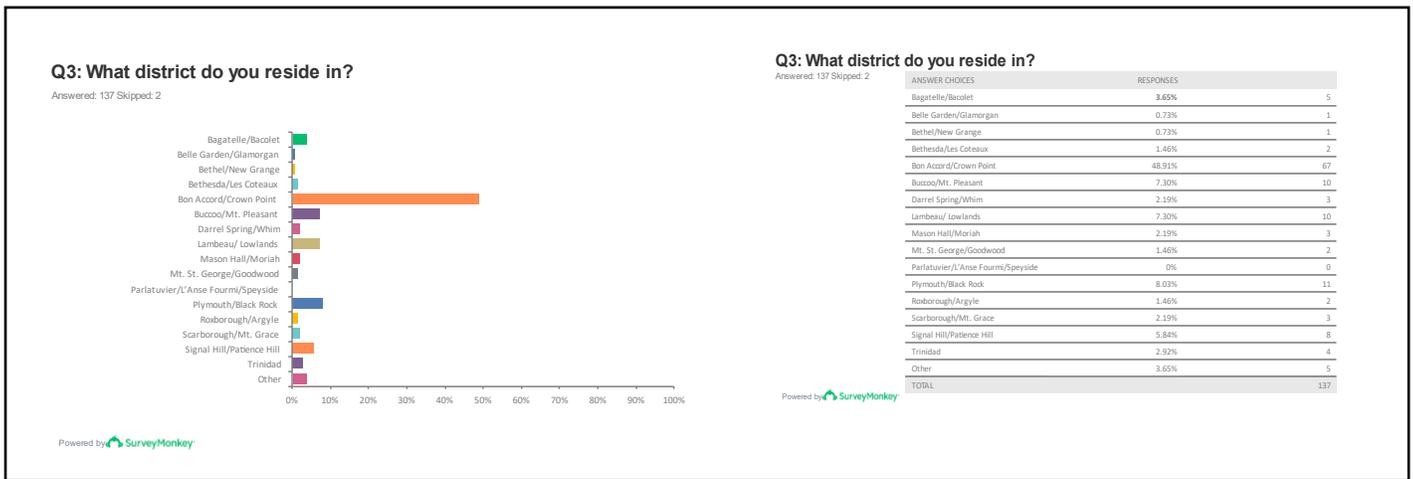


Figure 124 - 7.10: Question 3 Asked in Public Perception Survey.

From Q3 it was noted that the majority of persons partaking in the survey hailed from the Bon Accord/Crown Point district which lies just South-west of Kilgwyn Bay.

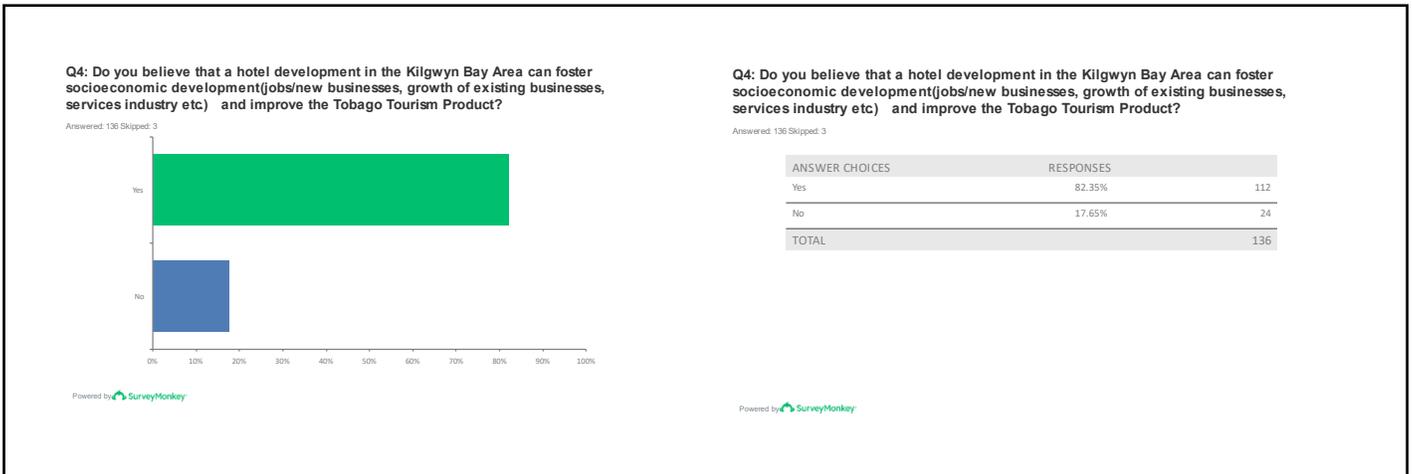


Figure 125 - 7.11: Question 4 Asked in Public Perception Survey.

From the previous Q4 it was noted that the majority of persons partaking in the survey agreed that a hotel development in the Kilgwyn Bay Area can foster socioeconomic development (jobs/new businesses, growth of existing businesses, services industry etc.) and improve the Tobago Tourism Product.

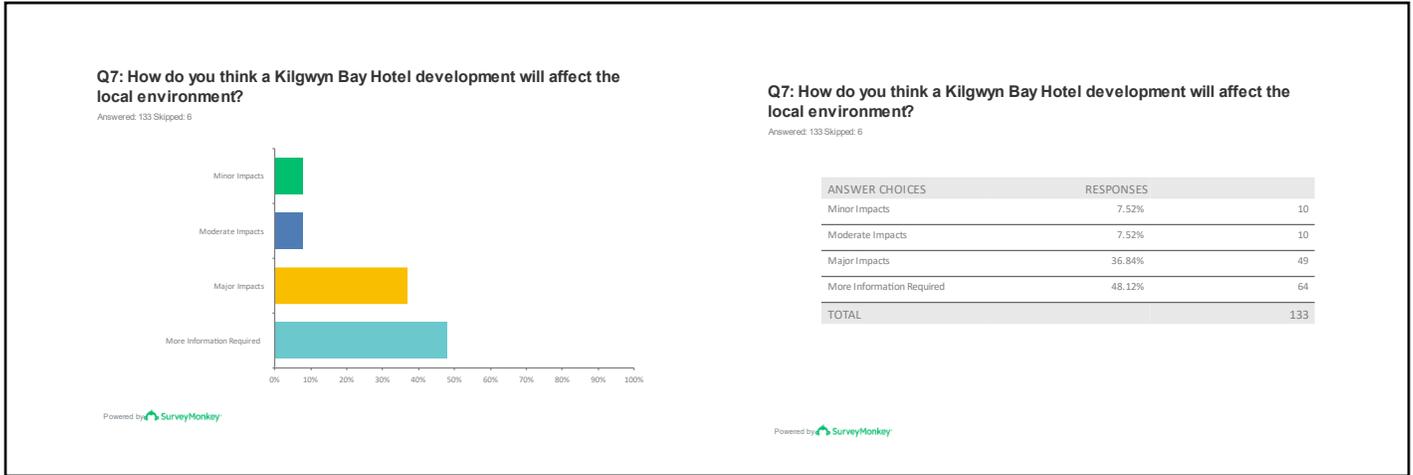


Figure 126 - 7.12: Question 7 Asked in Public Perception Survey.

From Q7 it was noted that the majority of persons required more information to gauge how the Kilgwyn Bay Hotel development would affect the local environment.

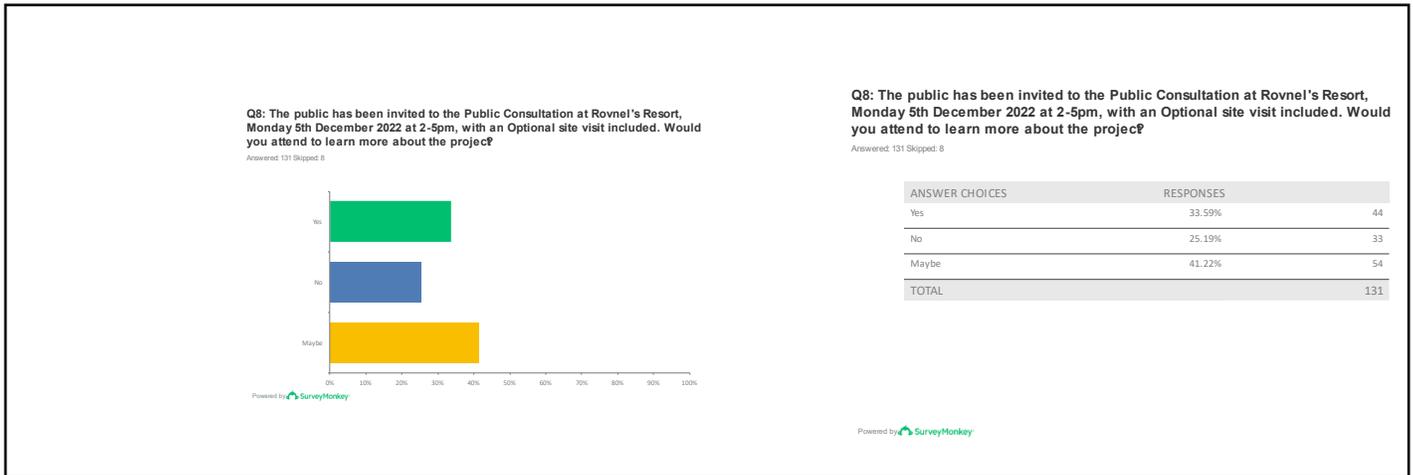


Figure 127 - 7.13: Question 8 Asked in Public Perception Survey.

From Q8 it was noted that a combined 74.81% (majority) of persons expressed interest in learning more about the project by attending the Second Public Consultation that was held on Monday 5th December 2022 at 2-5pm at Rovenal's Resort.