



ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY – PHASE 1 FEEDBACK

This report provides an overview of feedback received from Phase 1 of engagement for the park and play upgrade project for Esslemont Reserve in Pascoe Vale, carried out during September and October 2023. We are sharing people's stories about their experience of the park and ideas presented for what they would like to see kept, improved or changed. All feedback that has been emailed or posted on the website during the present phase of engagement, is included as Appendix in this report.

ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

This initial phase of feedback is very important, giving us some understanding of how people feel about the reserve in its current state. This also provides direction for us on what's important to retain, improve or add as we start preparation of a Draft Concept Plan. Once drawn up in the next few months, the Draft Concept Plan will be shared with the community to provide comment on what is proposed at that time.

Phase 1 was carried out by distributing post cards by letter box to residents in the area in early September, notifying of community consultation on the Esslemont Reserve upgrade and inviting people to submit feedback through the website, by email or telephone. At the time of closing in early October, a total of 6 responses was received, with 6 households providing feedback.

The next phase to follow will be circulating the Draft Concept Plan to the community, which will be Phase 2 of engagement on the project. Once again this will be conducted via the Conversations Merri-bek website, receiving feedback on proposals for upgrading of the play space and reserve.

ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW

Feedback from Phase 1 consultation is categorised into three types of response to Esslemont Reserve as a place to visit, pass through or spend time:

- > Things people like
- > Things that can be improved
- > Things that could be included in proposed upgrade

Things people like

- > The reserve is a beautiful and tranquil space. It provides a peaceful and expansive space
- > People are lucky to have such open space in amongst the built-up area of Pascoe Vale and surrounding areas
- > The central lawn area is great for all kinds of play, including soccer, football or frisbee
- > Children like to play on the play equipment
- > Kids really like to ride scooters and bike on the circuit path
- > The circuit path and park tracks are good for walking, bike riding and walking the dog

- > Being able to have your dog off-leash in the reserve is a bonus, and very important as the level of dog ownership is increasing
- > Informal access to the Moonee Ponds Creek trail is a good thing, to be able to get there either by foot or on bike

Things that can be improved

- > Increase bio-diversity with native plantings, include native trees, mid-storey and groundcovers
- > Improve the existing, informal path access to Moonee Ponds Creek, making it a more “official” access, so it is more obvious for people to use
- > Investigate ways to minimise swooping magpies in large trees beside playground during Spring/Summer – possibly relocate play equipment away from trees while also providing shade

Things that could be included

- > Install a barbecue
- > Install picnic settings with seats and tables
- > Provide shade to play space
- > Include a trampoline
- > Include water play, similar to Bulleke-bek in Brunswick, with drainage running into garden beds
- > Include nature play, encourage imaginative play in play spaces
- > Plant fruit trees, a food forest where people can harvest fruit, nuts or other edible plants
- > Transform park landscape to create a “bio-link” between reserve and Moonee Ponds Creek
- > Establish fenced off space for dogs off-leash, such as relatively unused corner beside residential area between Parker St and south-eastern boundary of reserve

NEXT STEPS

The next phase to follow will be circulating the Draft Concept Plan to the community. This will be Phase 2 of engagement on the project, planned for November to December 2023.

Once again this will be conducted by post card distribution and through the Conversations Merri-bek website, receiving feedback on proposals for upgrading of the play space and the wider reserve itself.

There will be explanation of what is proposed and the decision-making that went into items that may or may not be included in the Draft Concept Plan.

All feedback received in the next phase will be considered in a review of Draft proposals, before releasing the Final Concept Plan as we prepare for upgrading works to be carried out at Esslemont Reserve, starting in the first half of 2024.

Gathering Ideas

Title/Question: Share your experience of Esslemont Reserve
 Tool Type: Gather
 Activity ID:
 Report Date Range: 8 Sep 2023 - 8 Oct 2023
 Date Exported: 10 Oct 2023 09:03 am
 Exported By: AndrewBlight

Contribution ID	Screen Name	Title	Description
46845	Drum_C19	Possible enclosed dog park?	This is currently an off-leash area but it's location at the end of an enclosed street and to the creek trail, could the shaded area at the north-east end be fenced off to allow a more secure area for dogs to socialise? Especially as the rate of dog ownership increases in the local area. I also feel like the oval isn't used sufficiently and could be absorbed into a more integrated re-design.
46599	Helen	Picnic Table and bbq area	I would like to see some picnic tables and maybe a bbq area.
46539	Victoria M	Beautiful, tranquil space	Esslemont Reserve is a beautiful and tranquil space. Although it's in quite a built-up area (in between the train line, Pascoe Vale Road/CityLink and many residential properties), it feels peaceful and expansive. We're so lucky to have such a beautiful park in our neighbourhood. The fact that it is off-leash for dogs is absolutely fantastic and a real bonus.
46513	Alex	Boost biodiversity & include water play	Some more lighting would be very helpful for the winter months. I'm Please maximise the biodiversity of the area with indigenous plantings of mixed levels (under-storey, mid-storey, and upper-storey) that forms a bio-link to the Moonee Ponds Creek. It would be great if some fruit-producing trees could be planted where they are accessible to passers-by for picking. For the playground, it would be great to have a water-play feature (as per the one at Buleke-bek Park in Brunswick); the water could flow into a natural rain garden, so that the water feeds into garden beds en route to
46487	Annette	Child friendly area	My children like to play on the play equipment and also ride bikes/scooters along the pathway. My children like to play soccer/football/frisbee in the open grass area. We also walk/ride down to the connecting creek trail
46486	GeorginaT	Ideas for Esslemont Reserve	I use the area for the playground and for picnics in summer and walk my dog along the unofficial trail extension. A lovely space but unfortunately a lot of swooping magpies near the playground make it off bounds in spring/summer. I don't think much can be done except maybe the new playground is set away from the big trees but please ensure it has shade as many playgrounds so not, making them inaccessible from 10am-3pm in summer. Thank you! Also a water pump feature would be a very welcome addition for kids of all ages to play. I haven't found many parks with it and kids love that open-ended creative nature play with them. And a trampoline always goes down a treat! Also love that you're planning to connect the pathway/make a proper pathway!