



## ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY | PHASE 2 FEEDBACK

We carried out Phase 2 of engagement for the park upgrade project at Esslemont Reserve in Pascoe Vale, during May 2024. After hearing what people told us what they wanted to see in the upgrade of the park in Phase 1, we shared the Draft Concept Plan that we prepared. There were 24 responses received, which is a great community response – thanks to all for your feedback!

We have heard your thoughts on proposals shown in the draft plan and those are summarised in this report. All feedback that has been emailed or posted on the website during the present phase of engagement, is included as an Appendix at the end this document.

## ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

Phase 1 Engagement was carried out by distributing post cards by letter box to residents in the area around Esslemont Reserve in early September 2023. With those post cards, we were notifying the community of the proposed Park and Play Upgrade and inviting people to submit feedback through the website, by email or telephone. We then reported on all feedback received and provided the Phase 1 Engagement Summary document.

We notified the community about the Draft Concept Plan as part of Phase 2 Engagement on the Esslemont Reserve Upgrade, in May 2024. Once again that was notified through post cards to residents and feedback recorded through our Conversations website. Now we are recording our responses to feedback on the proposals for upgrading the reserve. The final version of planned changes and improvements are shown in the Final Concept Plan for Esslemont Park and Play Upgrade.

## ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW

Feedback from Phase 2 consultation is considered in 3 ways:

- > **What We Heard**      The things people said to us about the proposed changes
- > **Our Response**      Our thoughts on what we heard people say
- > **What We Will Do**      The actions we will take on what we have decided to do

### What We Heard

- > People told us the changes proposed are mostly welcome. Some people told us they think the park is great as it is and doesn't need much to be changed.
- > People told us they like the installation of a constructed path for pedestrian connection between Avoca footbridge and Esslemont Reserve. Some told us they didn't think it needed to be a concrete path but something less costly and more natural.
- > People told us they like the planned garden with indigenous plants and that we are keeping all the native trees.



## What We Heard (cont'd)

- > People told us they like the extra seating being provided near the play space, while others said they wanted to have more seats installed around the internal loop path.
- > People told us extra litter bins need to be provided, especially with a picnic setting installed.
- > People told us they think the changes will be a great improvement on the existing play area.
- > Some people said they like the range of new play equipment, some told us they thought a big, long slide would be much better than the tube slide.
- > Some people told us they thought there should be more play opportunities for toddlers and for older children than what's being proposed.
- > People told us they were worried about having a sand pit in the park as it would attract possums or domestic animals wanting to poo in it, others were concerned about needles or litter in the sand.
- > People told us they wanted fencing kept on the creek boundary to keep dogs from straying out of the park when off-leash, others asked to have a fenced area created for people to take their dogs.
- > There were numerous requests from people wanting to have toilets, barbecues and other facilities provided, including:
  - Basketball court
  - Fitness equipment
  - BMX/Scooter/Pump Track
  - Football/Soccer goal posts
  - Extra litter bins

## Our Response

- > The proposed access path connecting with the park from the Avoca footbridge, is now planned for asphalt surfacing, instead of concrete. This is in keeping with the existing shared path on the opposite side of Moonee Ponds Creek.
- > Planting in garden beds will be mostly native varieties that are indigenous to the area. All planting will be selected for proven strong growth and ability to withstand hot weather and prolonged dry periods in garden beds that have no irrigation.
- > We agree that an additional litter bin needs to be installed at the reserve. The proposed location for the extra bin will consider accessibility for people to dispose of rubbish as they are leaving the reserve and ease of maintenance for emptying the bin.
- > We agree that having extra seats in the reserve is desirable. This needs to be balanced against the present allocation of funding for the park upgrade works and our ability to include other additional items that people are also requesting.
- > The new play space will be about 35% larger than the current area. This is sufficient space for all the new equipment as well as the additional nature-based play area.



### Our Response (cont'd)

- > In our design process, we have considered the sort of play equipment that provides a range of perceived “risky” elements such as the tube slide and elevated rope-climbing, as well as less-challenging play such as the junior slide and nature-based play. In doing so, we are proposing a variety of play activities to accommodate a broad range of ages and levels of confidence.
- > Sand play is a very popular activity, especially for carers of younger children. We have installed sand pits in many of our recent play space installations and find there are very few reports of problems with litter or other. Our maintenance teams keep track of the condition of the play sand and carry out routine replacement and topping up of our sand pits with fresh play sand.
- > Council has no plans at this time to create a fenced dog area at Esslemont Reserve.
- > The old fencing along the park boundary abutting Moonee Ponds Creek is in a dilapidated state and acts as a barrier to people wanting to enter the park. It is subject to damage from vandalism, creating an ongoing repair cost to ratepayers but seems to provide little benefit.
- > In response to requests for additional facilities such as toilets and barbecues, we reiterate that there is no provision for these facilities in the funding allocation for Esslemont Reserve. It is also the case that no funding is available for provision of car parking, which would need to be in place before either a toilet or barbecues could be considered in this location.

### What We Will Do

- > We will construct an asphalt connecting path between Avoca Crescent and Esslemont Reserve.
- > We will install another litter bin at the reserve, in addition to the existing bin beside the play space. The proposed location will be near the entry road from Somerset Street.
- > The drink fountain being installed beside the play space will be without a dog bowl, as dogs are not permitted near the play area. There is an existing drink fountain on the opposite side of the loop path that is being replaced with a dog bowl fitted.
- > We will look to provide an additional new park seat in a shaded location at the edge of the loop path.
- > We will proceed with installation of the new play equipment as it has been shown in the Draft Concept Plan, which has received strong endorsement from community feedback. The Final Concept Plan will show the outline of the edge of existing play space.
- > We will proceed with installation of the sand play, as this provides much sought-after activity for younger children.
- > We will remove unsightly, dilapidated old fencing in locations where people are encouraged to enter the park and there is no value in retaining. We will replace existing unsightly fencing and gates at the park entrance from Somerset Street.



### NEXT STEPS

Now we are sharing the Final Concept Plan with the community. That Plan shows the changes and improvements we are making in response to things people told us they would like to see provided or not included in the upgrading of Esslemont Reserve.

Our reasons for making final decisions are explained in this document, detailed under Our Response, above.

The Final Concept Plan for Esslemont Reserve is posted on the Conversations Merri-bek website and we are inviting people to share their thoughts on what is now proposed for the park and play upgrading works.

We will continue to receive feedback on the Final Concept Plan as we prepare for upgrading works to be carried out at Esslemont Reserve. Those works are planned to begin in August and be completed by October 2024.

**Esslemont Reserve Draft Concept Plan: Feedback Summary 8 July 2024**

Title/Question: Share your thoughts on the draft concept

Tool Type: Form

Activity ID: 979

Report Date Range: 7 May 2024 - 5 Jun 2024

Date Exported: 5 Jun 2024 11:52 am

Exported By: Andrew Blight

| Contribution ID | Date Submitted         | What do you think of the draft concept plan?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|-----------------|------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 52689           | May 12, 2024, 04:05 PM | Whilst I think this is a great improvement to the Esslemont Reserve play area, based on personal experience of a dog threatening my child, I believe that having dogs off lead in the same area as a children's playground is an existing risk that is not being reduced in the current plans. Bylaws that require dogs remain at a particular distance are ineffective if unable to be enforced, therefore a fenced area would physically reduce this risk. In addition, there is limited activity reserve for older school children. Could there be consideration for a basketball hoop or similar?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 53250           | May 26, 2024, 05:21 PM | Addition of the pathway to Avoca Cres. is great! Does it need to be concrete? Would it not be cheaper to try crushed stone topping and allocate some more funding towards shelter?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| 52690           | May 12, 2024, 06:21 PM | Lack of youth and adult based play spaced eg half basket ball court , fitness equipment .<br>Also currently a leash off park for dogs . A fenced in area at the back of the park would be fantastic .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 53291           | May 27, 2024, 05:45 PM | I appreciate the increase in natural plantings including flowering natives. I am pleased to see seating and opportunities for picnics and gatherings. Improved entrance / path is good. Seating for elderly from nearby nursing home who walk to the park will be good<br>I hope that play facilities cater for a range of ages- in a safe, challenging manner with a focus on natural materials ( not plastic/ Maccas style playground tunnels etc) The current playground has limited opportunity for younger children that cannot manage the higher climbing. I hope there are play challenges for toddlers and preschoolers<br>Maintaining the open green spaces for running, ball play, dogs with balls is important<br>I am extremely worried about the inclusion of a sand pit in the plan I am an early childhood educator and understand the many benefits and play opportunities sand play provides- but - the inclusion of sand play in a public park that is home to possums and rats and is visited daily by dogs and cats seems most inappropriate .<br>Safe sand play in a hygienic playspace is extremely questionable in this proposal- who would maintain it to minimise risk to users???<br>I have watched the enjoyment that the shop/ pretend play opportunity under the existing climbing structure has provided hours of fun for toddlers and preschool aged children over the years - good to see it will be maintained-duplicated.<br>The existing path is well used by people on bikes ( learners) elderly with walkers, families with prams and toddlers learning to walk- maintain this<br>There have not been adequate rubbish bins and dog poo bags to keep the park clean and minimise dumping on neighbours properties in Somerset st.<br>I love the multi generational focus that incorporates all types of play in a natural play environment. I am pleased that it will not be solely a dog park . |
| 53636           | May 31, 2024, 07:55 PM | It looks great!<br>Probably need a path from the circular Esslemont path up to the new path being added along the creek. Its pretty hilly and uneven there, it would mean that if you're not able footed you actually couldn't use the new path.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 53387           | May 30, 2024, 10:45 AM | Please keep the fence that separates the Moonee Ponds Creek from the park. We live in Avoca Crescent and our dog plays off leash in the reserve. He is frightened of traffic so having the fence along the creek has been really important.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| 53248           | May 26, 2024, 01:50 PM | Good...but I would like more seats around the park.<br>John                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| 53210           | May 24, 2024, 08:46 PM | We love the design of the updated Rayner Reserve Playground as it has a mixture of play equipment for toddlers and bigger kids. Example, the slide on the garden mound and the in-ground trampolines. We also really like the native planting that happened.<br><br>Austin crescent playground doesn't have many suitable pieces for toddlers<br><br>Sandpits just get dirty with animal poo and other litter.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |

| Contribution ID | Date Submitted         | What do you think of the draft concept plan?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|-----------------|------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 53084           | May 22, 2024, 12:51 PM | <p>Comment on draft concept plan as a regular park user as a dog walker and supervisor of grandchildren on play equipment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The new play equipment looks great.</li> <li>- Suggest the proposed sand play area would be problematic to keep clean and is not essential.</li> <li>- Proposed picnic seating and water tap would be beneficial.</li> <li>- Would like to see the expanded play area to be around twice the existing area (scale is not clear on image provided), and the existing circular concrete path remain as is and the remaining open grass area inside circular path remain available.</li> <li>- New path from Avoca footbridge would be great.</li> <li>- Keen to see the park remain a dog off leash area.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 53029           | May 20, 2024, 09:40 AM | Looks great to me and very exciting to have and upgrade to the 'red park'. Is there any chance of toilet facilities in the area? If so that would be my only requested addition.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 53026           | May 20, 2024, 08:13 AM | Very good shame about public toilets considering location. I believe more wooden climbing structures similar to what has been installed by Moreland Station after upgrade would be nice and age better than steel and rope climbing equipment                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| 53000           | May 19, 2024, 10:26 AM | Looks great! Would you consider putting bbqs in?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 52986           | May 18, 2024, 12:16 PM | <p>It looks really good. So excited for the renovation. If there is bar be que facilities added, it would be great.</p> <p>Thanks</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| 52853           | May 16, 2024, 05:36 PM | Fenced dog park would be amazing                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 52793           | May 15, 2024, 11:47 AM | Add a car park                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 52746           | May 13, 2024, 10:11 PM | Please add a path along the creek from avoca st on the eastern boundary fence, currently its an uneven muddy path and unsightly.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 52745           | May 13, 2024, 10:06 PM | <p>Could there be some toilets added maybe? Also please make sure there are bins on both sides of the park to avoid littering from local take away facilities.</p> <p>Also many people run their dogs around, are there any plans for dogs?</p> <p>Bag dispensers at least would be good.</p> <p>Thanks for the opportunity to comment.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 52737           | May 13, 2024, 08:18 PM | <p>I am a resident of Avoca crescent and would like to confirm that the new path that leads from Avoca crescent to the park will have access via a gate close to the end of street? Currently there is no access for dogs, prams, childrens to walk through and only a small opening closer to Gaffney st. Easy access should be made for residents of Avoca if this is not already included.</p> <p>A BBQ area would be great in this space and even a BMX/scooter/bike track would be ideal if there is space permitting, given this is a retreat for a lot of children and young adolescents near Strathmore high school.</p> <p>Look forward to hearing regarding the further phases of this project.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| 52727           | May 13, 2024, 04:08 PM | <p>Im the property owner of 14 Avoca Crescent &amp; I back on to the park.</p> <p>Unfortunately I missed the initial community consultation.</p> <p>Big vote yes to the official new concrete path from avoca crescent into the reserve!.</p> <p>100000000% need to keep on top of the graffiti along the pailing fence where this path will be - absolute eyesore from every direction &amp; can be seen from pascoe vale road.</p> <p>The new pathway will encourage more foot traffic including vandals.</p> <p>I vote NO to the sand pit - too much maintenance &amp; we have a LOT of cats in the area - will just be a giant kitty litter toilet for the local cats.</p> <p>The reserve has great open grass area... lots of people use the open area for ball sports - I recommend some small football goal posts or soccer goal.</p> <p>This open area needs to be capitalized on.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 52726           | May 13, 2024, 03:39 PM | Do not agree with redevelopment the park is perfect as it is                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| 52716           | May 13, 2024, 01:34 PM | <p>My name is Sara Heal and I live in Merribek, 21 Park St Pascoe Vale, and have done for 22 years. I did not receive any notification nor request for feedback. Luckily a local friend gave me a pamphlet, but I asked a few other locals and they hadn't received anything either. This is suspicious - you do not earn our trust by not delivering information to all of us in the area. Our rates are high and we expect more. I have sent in some park feedback separately.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| 52712           | May 13, 2024, 01:08 PM | <p>I do not understand the size of the new plan area, relative to the current playground? Is it roughly double or what? The size matters. Please show this with a scale diagram and dotted line of existing tan bark playground area.</p> <p>Mainly my feedback is this - the park is currently great, so it needs very little change. I am there twice a day, 5 days a week - so 10 times, spread over mornings and afternoons. There are dog walkers like me, families having a picnic or playing cricket, footy or hide and seek, kids on bikes, kids on scooters, walkers and joggers of all ages. They need the big grassy area for many of their activities. It is great that you have agreed to keep all the current trees - I believe many of them are native gum trees. We need to keep lots of trees and green grass for oxygen- ie for pure air despite city pollution. Beware of tan bark currently - there is a problem with carcinogenic asbestos in some tan bark at public parks (including that reported in Coburg and Altona areas) that has not been checked or cleared for it - due to a lack of EPA monitoring - I believe this is being investigated but I don't think the answers or the processes are reliable yet.</p> |

| Contribution ID | Date Submitted         | What do you think of the draft concept plan?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|-----------------|------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 52709           | May 13, 2024, 12:14 PM | Hello, this is very exciting and the draft looks amazing! Unfortunately I wasn't aware of this until yesterday. If there's any chance of one of those exercise units being added to the plan at this stage.. that would be so welcome as well! There's nothing of the sort in any of the parks close by. Closest to us (living on Avoca crescent) is the harmony park in coburg north. I understand if I'm late to the party but I had to try :) all the best and thanks ! Sunaina                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 52693           | May 12, 2024, 10:29 PM | <p>Please include rubber floor under the swings to avoid kids caving into the dirt and making it hard for them to climb. If possible, make it so that the orientation of the swings is facing south. The current ones are facing north, and sometimes you get all the sun and heat on your face while playing with kids.</p> <p>Add extra bins for people to throw rubbish (especially for nearby high school students).</p> <p>As part of the playground, keep a "house/store" front like in the current playground, where there is a fake door hole and window kids can use to pretend it's a house or a shop.</p> <p>The play tower is nice, but some kids sometimes get scared of getting into the tube slide as it is dark and they tend to get stuck due to the internal surface not being very slippery like the current slide at the reserve. If possible, can it also include a normal slide for kids to use, that is not closed, and at least as long as the current one? Maybe add some "windows" to the tube slide to make it less dark for the kids. I also like the current open slide as i can slide with my kids on it, the tube one doesn't allow for that kind of play, or make the tube wider so parents can also fit.</p> <p>Add some nicer trees than the current ones located directly west of the playground. These trees have a dark outside/bark and they look burnt, and are FULL of spiderwebs.</p> <p>Add 2 or more picnic tables.</p> |