

Summerbank Reserve

Park upgrade

Consultation summary report

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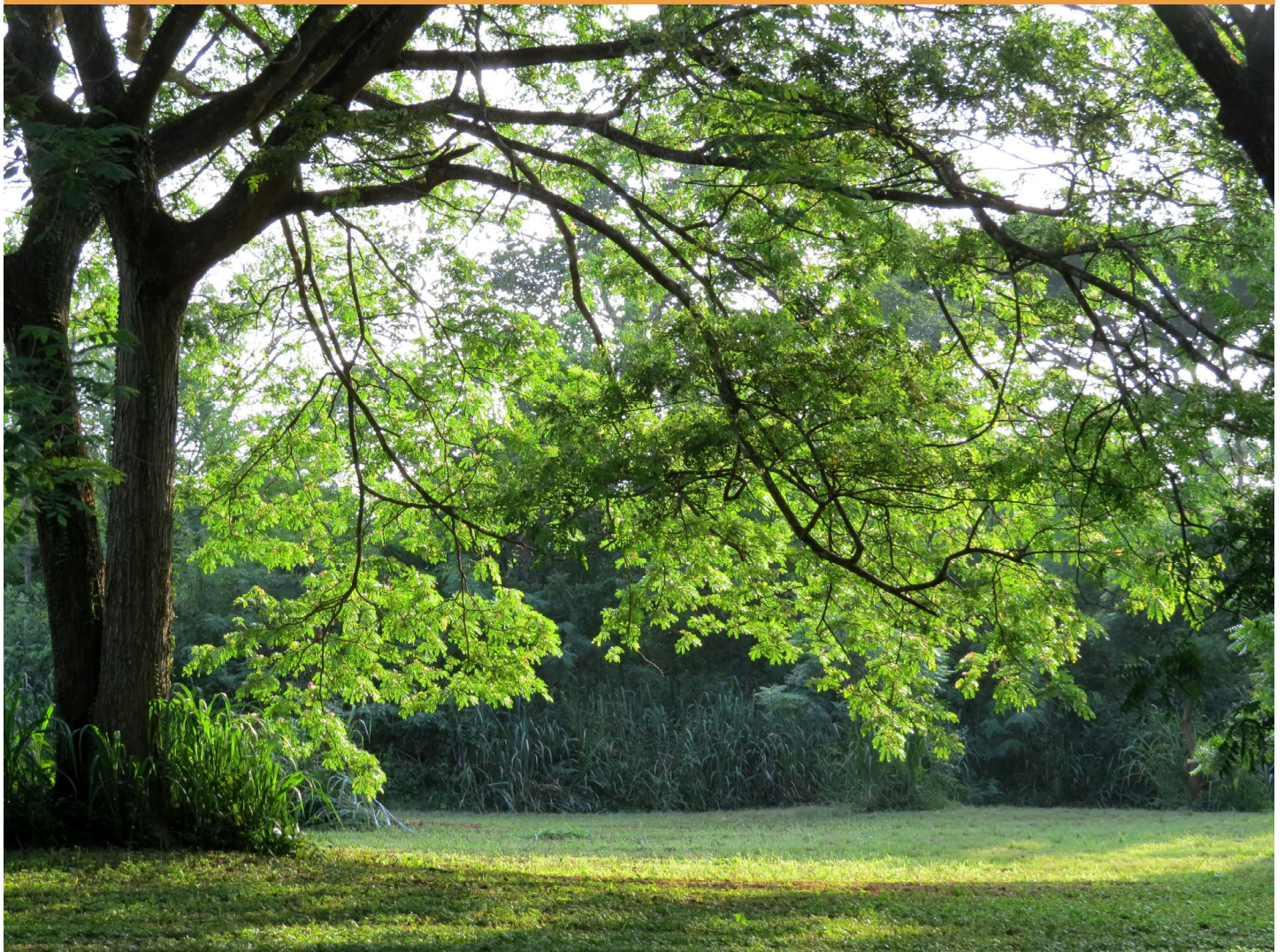
November 2023

Revision A

Revision A: initial consultation summary: November 2023



Merri-bek
City Council



Fisher Reserve – park upgrade

Consultation summary report

November 2023

Summerbank Reserve (also known as Dowding Close Reserve) off Dowding Close/Stanford Close in Fawkner is a small-medium-sized reserve, comprising of a playspace, trees and open lawn areas. It has been determined ready for a park upgrade according to Merri-bek City Council's Open Space and Playspace strategies.

This report provides a summary of the Summerbank Reserve consultation.

1. Background

This report covers a summary of each consultation stage for the Summerbank Reserve park upgrade.

As mentioned on Conversations Merri-Bek webpage, the following elements of the reserve are not negotiable as part of this upgrade:

- The upgrade will only cover the reserve and playspace area, not the surrounding areas (e.g. roads, car parking, lighting, services etc)
- The playspace footprint cannot be enlarged owing to its surrounding footpaths. Large-sized play elements (e.g. a flying fox or tower combination unit etc) cannot be included as there is insufficient space for this and there are neighbouring properties close by
- Sports grounds and their facilities will not be included
- Unless trees are dead or in decline, they will not be removed as part of the works
- Some park infrastructure elements need to be upgraded (e.g. bollards and some park fencing)
- All the works must fit into the available budget.

Council's Open Space Design and Development unit are conducting three consultation phases with the local community for the Fisher Reserve park upgrade, these being:

- **Initial consultation**

Council have asked the local community what they would like to see included in the upgrade of this park. This information can be used as inputs to developing the draft concept plan. This stage has now closed.

- **Draft Concept Plan Consultation**

Using results from the initial consultation, Council will develop a draft concept plan using the local community's initial input.

- **Revised Concept Plan Consultation**

This revised concept plan will reflect changes from the draft concept plan, incorporating the community's feedback where possible. After receiving feedback, a final concept plan will be produced including any final changes to the design where possible. This will close the consultation process, prior to the team proceeding to detailed design.

Consultation timings

Initial consultation: 6 September – 6 October 2023 (completed)

Draft concept plan consultation: November 2023 (started, dates to be confirmed)

Revised concept plan: December 2023 (date to be confirmed)

Final concept plan issued: January 2024 (date to be confirmed).

For both the initial and draft concept plan consultation, postcards are distributed to households within 0.5km of Summerbank Reserve, advising residents that they can provide feedback using Council's website, <https://conversations.merri-bek.vic.gov.au/summerbank-reserve>. Posters are also to be displayed near the playspace.

A similar poster approach will be undertaken for the revised concept plan.

The final concept plan will be displayed on the website along with posters at site, following completion of feedback on the revised concept plan. Thereafter the Open Space Design and Development team can proceed to detailed design.

2. Initial Consultation Feedback Findings

Council received 21 feedback responses to the initial consultation, one of these being a collation from various local residents.

This feedback has been organised into the following categories (not in order):

- **Playspace upgrade and flying fox**

Many agreed that the playspace is outdated and could do with a refresh. Several asked for larger sized play equipment including flying fox and spinning swings. As mentioned on the Conversations webpage, there is insufficient budget and space for a flying fox or similar large-sized equipment in the playspace. Even if there were more budget available, a flying fox requires a very large footprint and to install would require removal of existing trees and much of the open grass areas. We typically only include these in our larger sized playspaces and where there is sufficient space as we would not remove healthy trees to accommodate large elements.

We will look at various play equipment options that will fit into the available space, maximising the footprint space as much as possible. We are also considering including a nature-based play area in addition that children can enjoy.

- **Shelter and shade sail**

A few people asked for a BBQ/picnic area with shelter and for a shade sail over the playspace.

We can assess if a shelter can be included with this upgrade (budget depending) though unlikely we can include a shade sail over the playspace. The playspace footprint is already quite small (enclosed with the existing footpath) and is unlikely to allow for sufficient space for shade sail footings as well as required clearance from play equipment. We will assess if further shade trees can be included to provide natural shade and consider play equipment items that include some shade in their design.

- **BBQ area**

Some respondents asked for a BBQ and others stated that they do not wish for BBQs as it would be too close to private properties and there are insufficient car park areas to support BBQ gatherings.

As neighbouring properties are close by and there is very limited parking, we can instead provide picnic setting areas, with a shelter if budget allows.

- **Water play**

One individual asked for water play. There is insufficient budget to include water play in this small reserve. We can however include nature-based play using different materials to make the area engaging.

- **Improved bicycle/pram access**

A few people flagged that the access path restricts access for bicycles, owing to the existing chicanes. We agree with this comment and it also makes access around the reserve difficult for those with prams, in wheelchairs and also hard for maintenance access. We propose to remove the chicanes and install instead hinged bollards which will improve access for all, whilst preventing vehicle access on the paths.

One individual asked for a small bike track for young children to learn how to ride. We can look at this option if we can determine where to position it without loss of green space.

- **Fitness equipment**

Several people said they would like some fitness equipment. We agree that this would add benefit to this reserve and will look at possible fitness equipment options.

- **Gathering space**

Several respondents asked for more seating, preferably shaded. We will look at providing a gathering space with several types of seats provided together to encourage socialisation as well as occasional seating.

- **Toilet**

A few respondents asked for a toilet, others that it could encourage anti-social issues and they prefer not. We cannot include a toilet in this upgrade. Inclusion of public toilets in public open space are subject to Council's public toilet policy and do not generally form part of a small park upgrade. Where they are included, it is where there are insufficient public toilets in the vicinity.

The nearest public toilet can be found at 115 Jukes Road which is approximately 500m distance from this reserve.

- **Tree damage**

Several people mentioned that the trees in the reserve often get vandalised and asked for tree guards around them. We will look at possible options together with our arborist teams, though not an easy issue to address as tree guards cannot support large mature trees.

- **Drinking fountain**

One individual expressed concern over the drinking fountain water quality. We do not believe there are any issues with the water quality but are planning to install a new accessible drinking fountain adjacent to the path as the location for the current one is not suitable for those in wheelchairs.

- **Rubbish collection**

One respondent has asked for an additional bin on Dowding Close as other bins are often overflowing. We will look at bin positioning and rubbish collection frequency with our waste teams.

- **Lighting through the reserve**

One individual asked for improved lighting around the park. It is doubtful we can include additional lighting along the paths in the reserve as there would not be sufficient budget. There are light poles installed at intervals along the paths and these should be working. We will ask our lighting officer to inspect the lights in the evening to ensure that they are working correctly.

- **Native garden bed**

One individual asked for a native garden bed or rock garden to be included. We are planning to include native shrubs and trees as part of the design.

- **Book swap library**

We will look into this option though not sure it is something that council would set up, often community-driven?

We will endeavour to address as many of these requirements as possible in the Summerbank Reserve design.

3. Draft Concept Plan Consultation Feedback Findings

We are currently developing the draft concept plan and when ready, will provide this on the Conversations Merri-bek webpage.

Draft concept plan feedback summary will be provided here when this stage of consultation has been reached.

4. Revised Concept Plan Consultation Feedback Findings

Revised concept plan feedback summary will be provided here when this stage of consultation has been reached.

5. Final Concept Plan

A summary of the final concept plan will be provided here when this stage of consultation has been reached.

6. Next Steps

The Open Space Design and Development team are currently preparing the draft concept plan, using feedback received from the initial consultation stage. Once ready this draft concept plan will be displayed to the community on posters at site, postcards to local residents and on council's Conversations Merri-bek webpage, asking for feedback.

7. Further information

Any questions can be directed to Council's Open Space Design & Development Unit via email openspace@merri-bek.vic.gov.au or by phoning 9240 111.

8. Appendix

Below are all feedback received from the community for each stage of consultation for the Summerbank Reserve and images of the posters and postcards issued.

8a Initial Consultation

We're updating a park near you!
Tell us what you would like to see in the upgrade?

ہم آپ کے نزدیک ایک پارک کو بہتر بنا رہے ہیں۔ ہمیں آپ بتائیں کہ آپ اس میں کیا دیکھنا پسند کریں گے۔

Stiamo migliorando un parco vicino a te. Facci sapere cosa vorresti vedere.

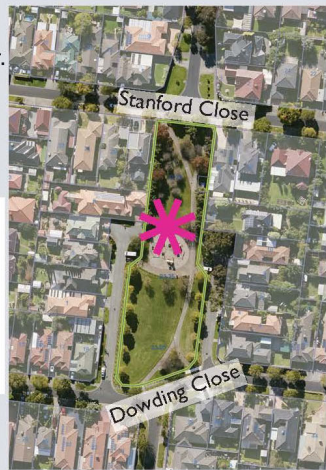
نقوم بتحسين المنتزه القريب منك. أخبرنا بما تود رؤيته.

Merri-bek Language Link

Italiano	Italian	9280 1911	Türkçe	Turkish	9280 1914	普通话	Chinese (Simplified)	9280 0750
Ελληνικά	Greek	9280 1912	Tiếng Việt	Vietnamese	9280 1915	National Relay Service: 13 36 77 or relay.service.com.au		
عربي	Arabic	9280 1913	नेपाली	Nepali	9280 0751			

We are upgrading a number of parks in 2023-2024, including Summerbank Reserve in Fawkner. These projects are supported through our Open Space Strategy.

What would you like to see included in this upgrade?
Your ideas can help shape our plans.



conversations.merri-bek.vic.gov.au/summer-bank-reserve-fawkner
openspace@merri-bek.vic.gov.au
9240 1111

Figure 1: Postcards were issued to households within 0.5km of the reserve.

Below is feedback received for the Summerbank Reserve:

Date Submitted	Screen Name	Description
2 Oct 2023	Merhi3	Have seen lots of new parks add an element of water play which kids always LOVE. That would be amazing. That with a canopy over the playground, an undercover bbq with seats would be amazing! Wouldn't have to go to other suburbs for parks.
30 Sept 2023	Katie	Extra shaded seating, or ways to shade the existing seating would be great. Agree that the play equipment is a bit outdated and could definitely do with an upgrade. Perhaps even having a canopy over the playground so that the playground itself is shaded would be great. Perhaps also look at replacing the water fountain. Not sure how long it's been there and if the water is properly filtered.
29 Sept 2023	Maria	Can we please have spinning swings and a flying fox for bigger kids? I don't think the area is big enough and has enough parking for bbq gatherings. It would also create too much noise so close to people's houses. Also worried that toilets would attract the wrong people so close to homes and young families with kids.
29 Sept 2023	Michael	It would be nice to see more fun equipment like a flying fox and spinning swings like the ones at Parker Reserve in Coburg.
29 Sept 2023	Irene	The play equipment needs updating, everyone loves swings and a flying Fox for teens too, like the one on Mathieson St Coburg. I'm concerned that toilets and a bbq would attract people who like to leave their mess behind. There are other areas for bbq gatherings around Fawkner which are not so close to private homes.
28 Sept 2023	GatensG	I would love to see a BBQ area covered by shade. We have moved to this area two years ago and are looking forward to growing our family, this is the closest park to us. Would also like to see a small bike track for future kids to learn how to ride a bike. Would love to be able to have parties there, and in that case an accessible toilet.
23 Sept 2023	Mrs Pawley	I live around the corner with three preschoolers, we've had birthday parties held there with our own gazebo, so perhaps a BBQ area with a shade sail would be great as we've noticed other families use this park for parties and play dates for the nearby school kids. We need a second bin down by Dowding Close for dog poos, it's always overflowing by Friday. Please do more to protect the new trees growing there, they are always being torn out by vandals which upsets me. Perhaps a lovely mural on that powerbox on the north side of the playground (which seems to have turned into a popular make out/drinking spot for teens!). Lastly, a book swap library would be great, especially as it's a thoroughfare for kids getting walked to school.
21 Sept 2023	Leanda	This is our local and we like it and it's secluded internal location. The play equipment needs to have activities for a wider range of ages. The path is terrible for bikes, as you have to dismount to navigate the chicanes. The grass area condition could be improved for ball games. The trees are commonly vandalized so when replacing damaged trees, heavy duty tree guards would be well worth the effort.
14 Sept 2023	Emma	More trees and gathering spaces- encourages us to deepen our bonds with this place and our desire to care for it. And yes agree- toilets are pretty essential.

Date Submitted	Screen Name	Description
13 Sept 2023	Laila	Great park that brings community together. In need of sandpit with water sensory play equipment. A waterplay area during the summer season. Seating with shade canopy.
13 Sept 2023	Kim	We would love to see some exercise equipment added during these works. They seem very popular at other local parks. Also some play equipment designed for older children as well as the current play equipment for younger users. Some musical equipment would be interesting. Also shade across the play equipment is a must please. Thank you
12 Sept 2023	Toilet	Whenever my kids come to the park they looking for toilet,
12 Sept 2023	Reeta	I am residence near to this park my kids normally come to play here. While they playing in this park they want to go toilet and we can't find any so can you please provide one toilet please
12 Sept 2023	RG	I believe that having accessible and clean toilets in the park would greatly enhance the visitor experience, especially for families with young children.
12 Sept 2023	Manisha	Toilet, bbq , picnic table ,trampoline
11 Sept 2023	cmb	Toilets and water play please
11 Sept 2023	Stevie	A flying fox , toilet, BBQ, ground trampolines and picnic table
9 Sept 2023	Brendon Agpasa	There's new look Gathering space area with large platform seat and backed seat on gravel paved area in it's improved park was located in Summerbank Reserve at Fawkner, plus some BBQ and picnic facilities, Timber carved rocking units, new garden beds and additional trees, bushwalking, upgrade to playspace equipment, Bench seat, Picnic setting, Accessible drinking fountain, mew fitness equipment, table tennis, play cricket, play football, play soccer, existing playspace equipment, Platform seat, Accessible playspace and its natural scenery to be retained, that would be great park had been improved with a popular spot for kids, babies and families too.
9 Sept 2023	Ursula	The playground could be larger & updated. It's a popular spot for families & the playground gets a lot of use. The little field space isn't really used for much - I hardly even see dogs there. A rock garden/native species garden would be a good idea to make the space more usable. Some lighting in the park would be a good idea too - currently there is nothing. A water feature/play zone would be fantastic too.

Date Submitted	Screen Name	Description
9 Sept 2023	laila_christie	We like this park but think the play equipment needs updating and to have parts that are good for big kids and little kids. More trees would be great, and some bbq /picnic facilities. Please make it easier to ride bikes, the current fence-chicanes mean you have to stop and get off rather than just slow down.
6 Sept 2023	Jeanette	I live very close to this park. It is really popular for a space that is so tucked away in a quiet part of Fawkner. Some exercise equipment would be a great addition, as would a covered picnic area, maybe even BBQs. I am concerned about how many trees seem to get vandalised/destroyed in this park. A number of times, I've seen someone steal(!) wooden stakes and those border rings around trees. It's unfortunate that plants aren't safe in this park, because it's otherwise a beautiful little spot.

8b Draft Concept Plan Consultation

An image of the draft concept plan will be added here when the draft concept plan has been developed.

8c Draft Concept Plan Consultation Responses

Feedback will be added here when received from the community for the Draft Concept Plan consultation.

8d Revised Concept Plan

An image of the final concept plan will be added here when the revised concept plan has been developed.