

Charlotte Street Pocket Park

Stage 2 Consultation analysis and
outcomes

October 2023



Yarra City Council acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people as the Traditional Owners and true sovereigns of the land now known as Yarra. We also acknowledge the significant contributions made by other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to life in Yarra. We pay our respects to Elders from all nations and to their Elders past, present and future.

Introduction

Charlotte Street Pocket Park Stage 2 Consultation

Following the Stage 1 Consultation in November 2022, and the subsequent Council decision to proceed with developing a draft Concept Plan for the proposed Pocket Park, the Stage 2 consultation was rolled out in August 2023 seeking feedback on the draft Concept Plan.

Community engagement overview

In November 2022, we invited the community to share their ideas and shape the development of a proposed pocket park in the western end of Charlotte Street in Richmond.

Based on this, and other feedback, a draft Concept Plan was developed and presented to the community in August 2023 for comment.

Consultation on the Concept Plan ran from Friday 28 July to Monday 28 August 2023, through the Your Say Yarra project page and a series of in person pop up sessions.

The objectives for consulting on the draft Concept Plan were as follows:

1. To consult with the community and get their feedback on a concept plan for a new pocket park on Charlotte Street outside the Richmond library.
2. To determine whether the draft Concept Plan reflected the needs of the community and the suggestions provided in the first round of consultation.
3. To seek feedback from the community and the Concept Plan could be improved within the constraints of the proposed site.

Flyers were sent to 370 local residents and stakeholders including business owners, which provided information about the consultation and the in-person pop up sessions. A link was also provided to the Your Say Yarra online survey to provide feedback. Corflute signs were placed on-site and in the neighbouring Richmond Library informing visitors about the project and how to get involved.

Three decals with QR codes were placed on the footpath in the proposed park area which directed people to the online survey and to a photo matched view of what the park could look like to further generate interest.

Stakeholders and participants who contributed in the stage 1 consultation and opted to keep up to date about the project, were contacted directly and made aware of the community engagement activities.

In-person pop-up information sessions were held on:

- Monday 31 July, between 11am to 1pm
- Wednesday 9 August, between 5pm to 7pm
- Friday 18 August, between 11am to 1pm
- Saturday 26 August, between 10am to 12pm

Sessions were attended by Council bicultural liaison officers who spoke a range of languages other than English in areas where a need for language support was identified.

In addition, Council officers attended sessions at Carringbush Adult Education located in the Richmond Library Building and Melbourne Indigenous Transition School on 371 Church Street to explain the project and the consultation process.

The consultation was also promoted via:

- Yarra Life e-newsletter;
- Yarra Libraries e-newsletter;
- Your Say Yarra e-newsletter; and
- Six social media posts on Facebook and Instagram.

The online survey asked participants to respond to three main questions about the draft Concept Plan for Charlotte Street proposed pocket park. The three key questions included:

Q1: Let us know your thoughts on these parts of the design:

- Lawn for relaxing or meeting a friend.
- Large evergreen native trees providing shade and all year greenery.
- Plantings, with low growing flowering plants.
- Bike parking located at each end of the pocket park.
- Bench seats with back and arm rests in a couple of locations for reading a book or eating lunch.
- Bespoke grouped seating providing opportunity to socialise or just lounge.

Answers to the each of the above dot points required participants to select from of the following answers: Really don't like / Don't like / Not sure/neutral / Like / Really like

Q2: Is there anything missing from the design or something we haven't considered?

Q3: Do you have any other comments or feedback about the design?

Both questions Q2 and Q3 allowed for open-ended text answers.

Responses

Council received **239** total responses to the survey (including paper surveys).

In addition to this Council received four emails from residents expressing their views, and Officers spoke directly to around 100 members of the public about the draft Concept Plan.

Many people volunteered suggestions in the open text questions and these have been reviewed by the team, and captured in the main themes in the next section.

Engagement findings

Overall feedback

The feedback received was overwhelmingly supportive of the design proposal. The majority of the respondents welcomed the change from a road to a park. The feedback indicated an understanding of the broader benefits in creating a park for the broader community to enjoy and the environmental improvements. Many respondents were also able to see past their own needs and inconvenience to support a design proposal that would provide long term benefits to the area.

The feedback was overwhelmingly positive and supportive of the Concept Plan. Approximately **88%** of respondents to Q1 either 'liked' or 'really liked' most or all the elements of the proposed design. Refer *Figure 1*.

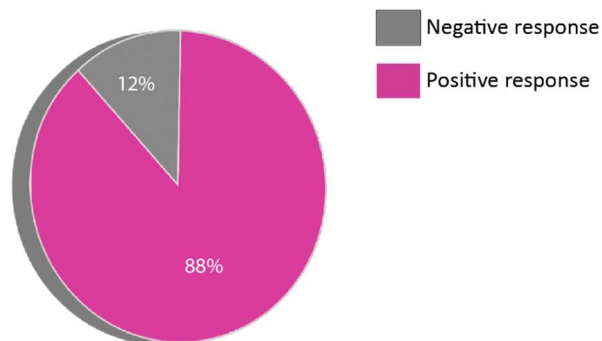


Figure 1 – Overall feedback: Most respondents either 'liked' or 'really liked' the Concept Plan design elements.

Responses to Q1: Let us know your thoughts on these parts of the design.

Answered by 235 (98.3% of respondents)

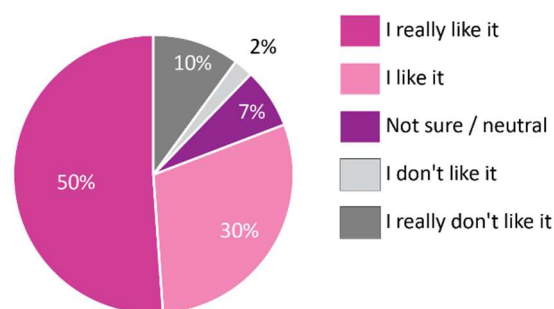


Figure 2 – Bespoke grouped seating providing opportunity to socialise

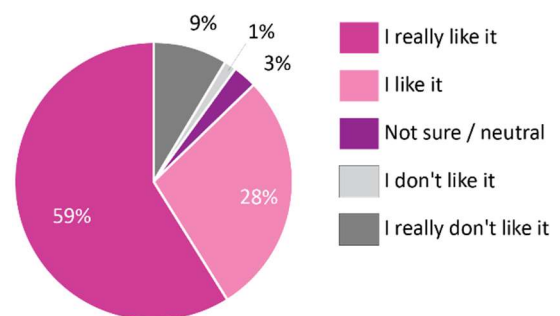


Figure 3 - Bench seats with back and arm rests in a couple of locations

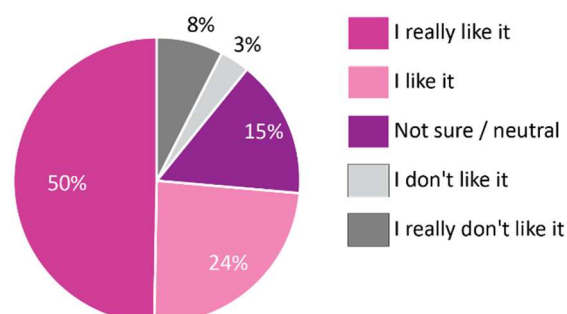


Figure 4 – Bike parking located at each end of the pocket park

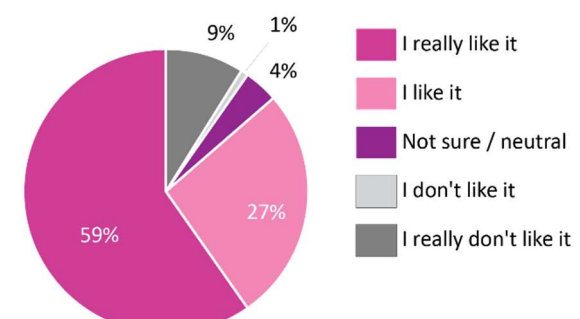


Figure 5 – Plantings, with low-growing flowering plants

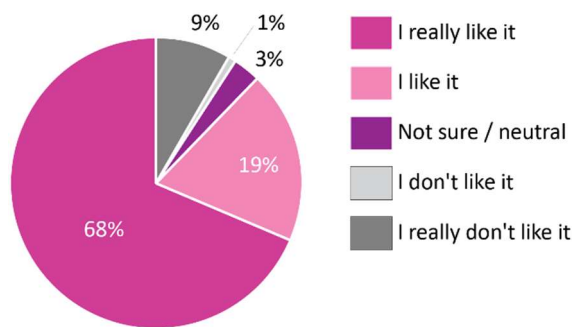


Figure 6 – Large evergreen native trees providing shade and all year greenery

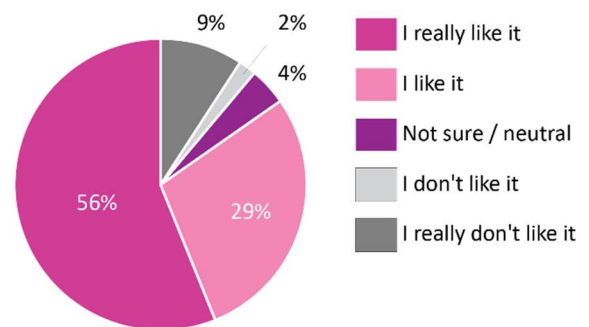


Figure 7 – Lawn for relaxing or meeting a friend

Every category received the highest proportion of 'I really like it' from at least almost half of all respondents, with 'large evergreen native trees' receiving the highest proportion.

Responses to Q2: Is there anything missing from the design or something we haven't considered and Q3: Do you have any other comments or feedback about the design?

The two open-ended questions the responses have been amalgamated and presented in the charts below. Q2 was answered by 165 (69% of respondents) and Q3 was answered 105 (43.9% of respondents).

Analysis of the qualitative feedback on the draft Concept Plan noted in Q2 and Q3 from the survey revealed five main themes:

Main themes	How this will be addressed in the final design
Fencing or a barrier to reduce likelihood of little children running on to Church Street	<p>Raised edges, garden beds and seating elements will create a visual and physical buffer to deter children from running onto Church Street.</p> <p>The park itself will be set back approximately 3 metres from Church Street, and the seating elements will be set back an additional 3 metres from Church Street. As the footpaths along Charlotte Street will be retained, parents and carers of young children would still need to be vigilant, as they would in any other open space close to traffic.</p>
Furniture or park design to engage a child's interest	While the proposed park would not be large enough to include a conventional playground, we are looking at designing furniture and other elements to have details that create interest and opportunities to engage children.

Shelter from the rain and sun	<p>As the park is directly adjacent to the Richmond Library there are already good alternative places to take shelter from the rain.</p> <p>There are times of the day during summer when the space is somewhat protected from the sun from the adjacent RSL building and as new trees in the park mature trees these will provide further shade and protection. Furthermore, there will be a mix of evergreen and deciduous trees maximising summer shade and winter sun.</p>
Water bubbler / fountain and bins	<p>There is a water fountain at the Church Street entrance to the Richmond Library. Council will investigate a second location in the park.</p>
Safety and lighting	<p>Specialist lighting designer will be engaged to develop a suitable lighting proposal for the park.</p> <p>Vegetation will be low to ensure sight lines are not obscured and that you feel safe traversing the park at all times of the day.</p> <p>The number of proposed trees in the park have been reduced to balance out the need for trees and shade while creating a light filled and welcoming space for all.</p>

There were also other comments in the open-ended questions that were not limited to the Concept Plan. These included:

- Praise for Council in suggesting the park and creating a green calming space outside the library.
- Integration with future tram stop.

Council received responses from **29** people who in Q1 marked every element as negative or neutral and in the open-ended questions Q2 and Q3, some of them voiced their objection to the proposed park, mainly through raising concerns associated with traffic redistribution but also regarding parking around the library.

Concerns	How this will be addressed
Concern about impact on volume and speed of traffic in neighbouring streets	If required, further traffic data can be gathered, and where there is an evidence base, appropriate traffic control adjustments to surrounding streets will be investigated.
Impact on parking and need to consider adjustments to parking conditions	Once the park is constructed there may be an opportunity for Council to review parking restrictions in and around the area.

Q5. What is your connection to the area?

Most survey participants lived in the area (184), followed by those that owned a property in the area (62) and *I work in Yarra* (56).

Q6. What suburb do you live in?

Most survey participants lived in Richmond (144).

Next steps

What are we doing with the ideas from the community?

Council officers are reviewing every response to the survey, and in light of the feedback received will make modifications to the Concept Plan where appropriate.

What are the next steps?

1. The final Concept Plan will be presented to Council for endorsement at the end of 2023.
2. Following Council endorsement of the concept plan the road discontinuance process will commence.
3. The road discontinuance process will begin in early 2024 with the formal process requiring notification to local residents, businesses, service authorities and government agencies etc. and submissions sought. Council will then be informed of the way forward.
4. If the design and road discontinuance are approved, construction on the new park is anticipated to commence in the second half of 2024.
5. It is anticipated construction will take around 6 months depending on variables on site.
6. Once the park is constructed, Council will continue to monitor traffic and parking conditions.