



Community Engagement Results Report

Background

Arch Gibson Reserve is located at 181 Dunne St, Kingsbury. It is a large grassy area which borders with Darebin Creek. On the east side, this Reserve is adjacent to Kingsbury Bowling Club. The Reserve is currently used as a dog off-lead area.

Location:



Each year, the Parks and Open Space team review asset gaps throughout the municipality and allocate funds to complete important upgrades to meet the diverse need of the local community around the reserve. Arch Gibson has been identified as a priority location for the upgrade.

This upgrade will also provide a more safe and inviting space by providing more recreational amenities. To achieve this, Council actively engage the community and ask which site improvements they would most like to see. By putting the community at the heart of our decision making, Council can make more informed decisions about site improvement.

Consultation Process

A two-stage community consultation was planned to achieve this outcome.

During the first stage of consultation, Council focused on understanding which types of assets and improvements the community most hoped to see at Arch Gibson.

During the second stage of consultation, Council asked the community to provide the feedback on the draft concept design for the site. The draft design was developed using the feedback received during the first phase of consultation.

The concept design includes:

- The proposed location of all existing and newly proposed assets and amenities.
- The proposed plants and species for the site.

Council also engaged with internal departments as part of this process. The following teams were engaged:

- Bushland Management
- Recreation and Leisure
- Equity and Wellbeing
- Transport
- Community Safety
- Family, Youth and Children
- Open Space Infrastructure
- Access and Inclusion;
- Community Development

Participation Analysis

Council invited the community to complete an online survey via the Your Say Page.

- Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and social distancing requirements, one formal face-to-face session was scheduled.
- Hard copy surveys were distributed at a formal drop-in session to ensure community members had the opportunity to ask questions and provide their feedback.
- Council made every effort to reach a diverse representation of the Darebin community through a range of promotional activities listed below.

Data Analysis and Limitations:

This report is a summary of the public engagement activities and the findings from the feedback received via the community survey. All feedback has been carefully analysed as part of this process. This report lists the items raised by the community throughout this process.

The report includes the information received by participants. It is important to note that some of the information included may be outside of the project scope and reflects individual experiences and personal opinions and understandings of the existing use of the site. Council have faithfully recorded participants' opinions, ideas and aspirations as received.

Next steps:

This report will be presented to the Councillors along with the outcomes from the second stage of community consultation scheduled for a two-week period in February 2023. At the conclusion of the engagement process, Council Officers will finalise the proposed concept plan and present the final draft design to be endorsed at the Council Meeting in March 2023.

Engagement approach:

Community engagement took place between the 1/09/2022 and the 30/09/2022.

A summary of the engagement activities is included below;

Engagement Method	Description
Letters	A mail-out was arranged to all residents within 500m of Arch Gibson Reserve.
Promotional posters and brochures.	Posters with a QR code to the Your Say page were displayed on-site at the Reservoir Neighbourhood House, Reservoir Leisure centre, Lawn Bowls Club, T.W Andrew Reserve, Arch Gibson Reserve entrances, Clements Reserve, CW Kirkwood Reserve, John Hall Reserve, and Scot Grove Reserve.
Stakeholder engagement emails.	Emails to promote the engagement opportunities were sent to 'Friends of' Darebin Creek Groups, Local schools and local sporting groups.
Council's Advisory Groups	<p>An email was sent to Council's Aboriginal Partnerships Officer as well as the Equity and Inclusion Officers to inform them about the engagement and promote the consultation through their networks.</p> <p>Development Project Officers who had previously been involved in consultation for similar projects in this area were contacted and involved to share their findings of community open space needs in this area.</p> <p>'East Reservoir Neighbourhood for Change Group' was engaged through Council's Development Officer.</p>

On-Line your say page	An online survey was available to residents via the yoursay page and prompted via social media.
Face to face engagement	A formal drop-in session was held at Arch Gibson Reserve and three informal drop-in sessions were held at Reservoir Neighbourhood house and Arch Gibson Reserve.

Data collection:

An online survey was designed by Council to collect ideas from the community about desired improvements and proposed activities. The survey sought feedback via the following questions:

1. How often do you visit Arch Gibson?
2. How do you currently use Arch Gibson?
3. Is there anything stopping you from using this reserve?
4. We would like to make this space more useful for our local community by providing some equipment, which of the following are you most likely to use? (7 options were provided to rank)
5. Is there anything else that you would like to improve in this park?

Participation:

Council received a high level of response and interest in the project.

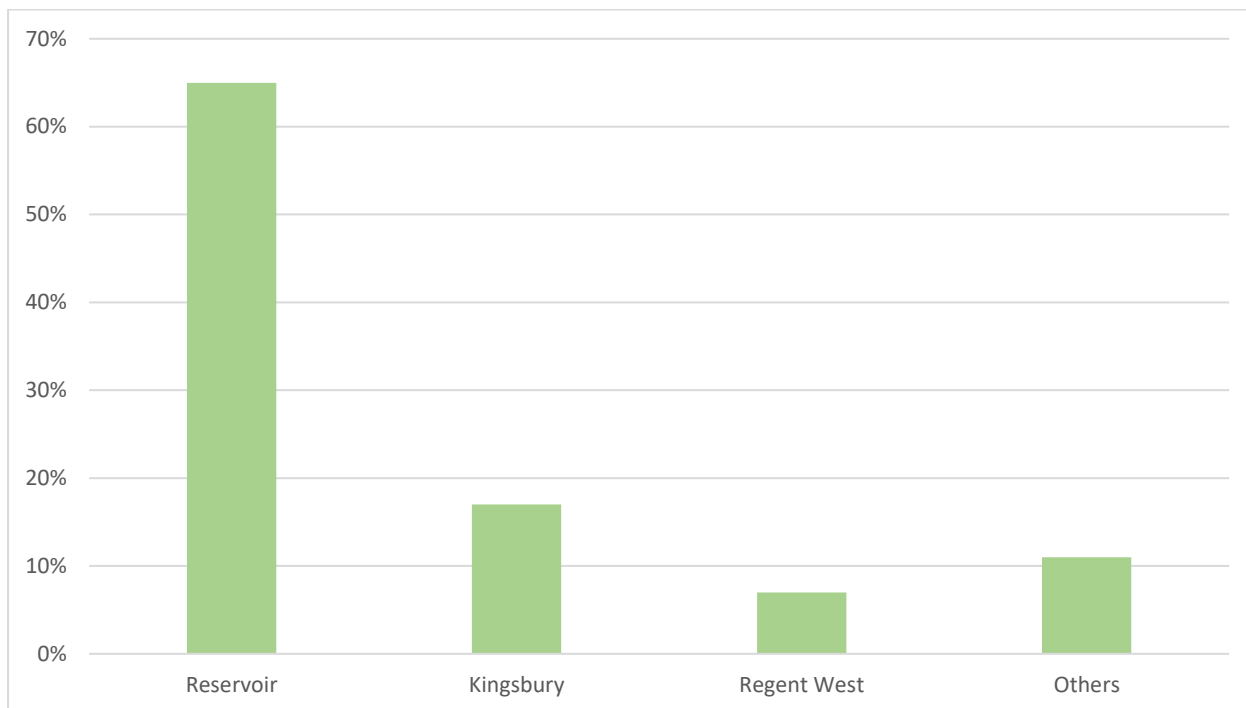
In summary;

- 72 residents submitted their view via the online survey.
- 948 people were reached via digital proportion of the consultation and an additional 784 people visited the yoursay page.
- 7 questions were submitted via the yoursay page.
- 7 further enquiries were received via Customer Service and the Darebin Parks and Open Space email.

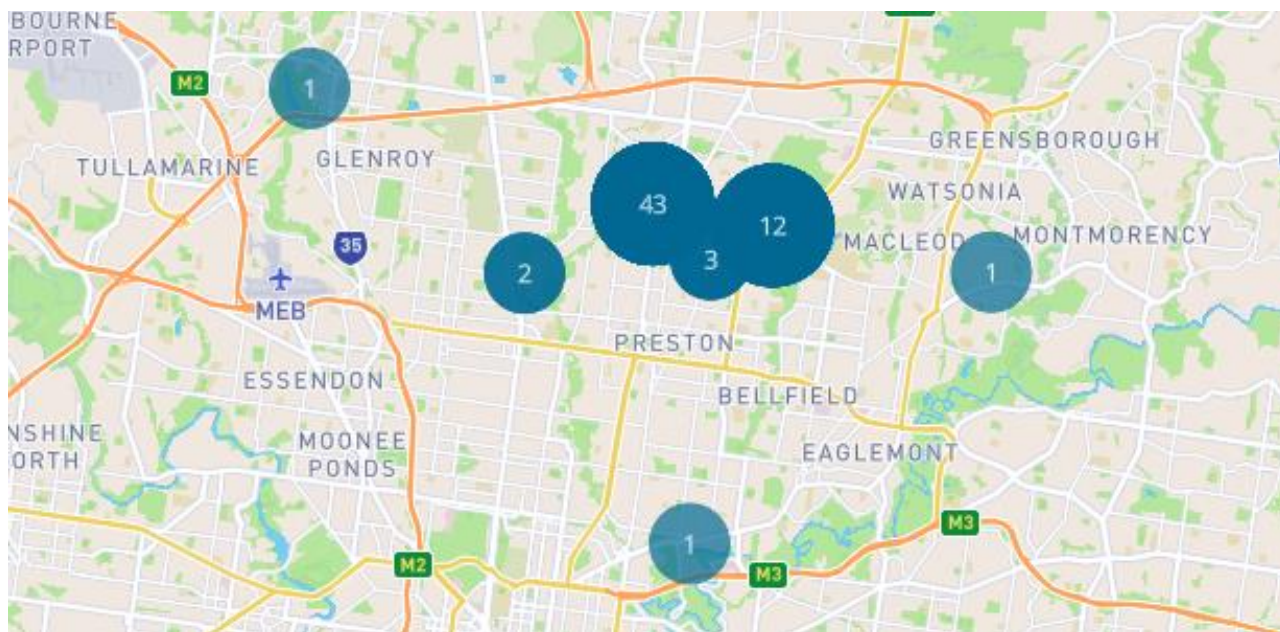
Demographic data:

In line with Council's Community Engagement Policy, Officers captured a range of demographic data as part of this consultation process. Preliminary analysis of the data has revealed the majority of participant were based in Reservoir.

The bar chart below illustrates the participation from top 3 postcodes and suburbs in Darebin.



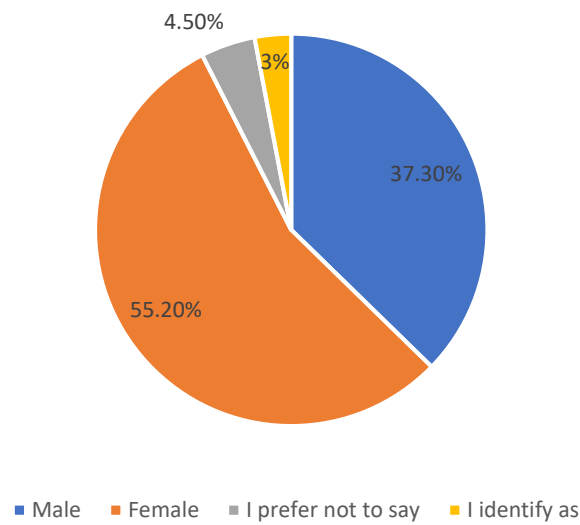
The map below shows the location of respondents (self-declared postcodes by participants.)



Gender:

The overall participation data shows that there were more female participants than male participants.

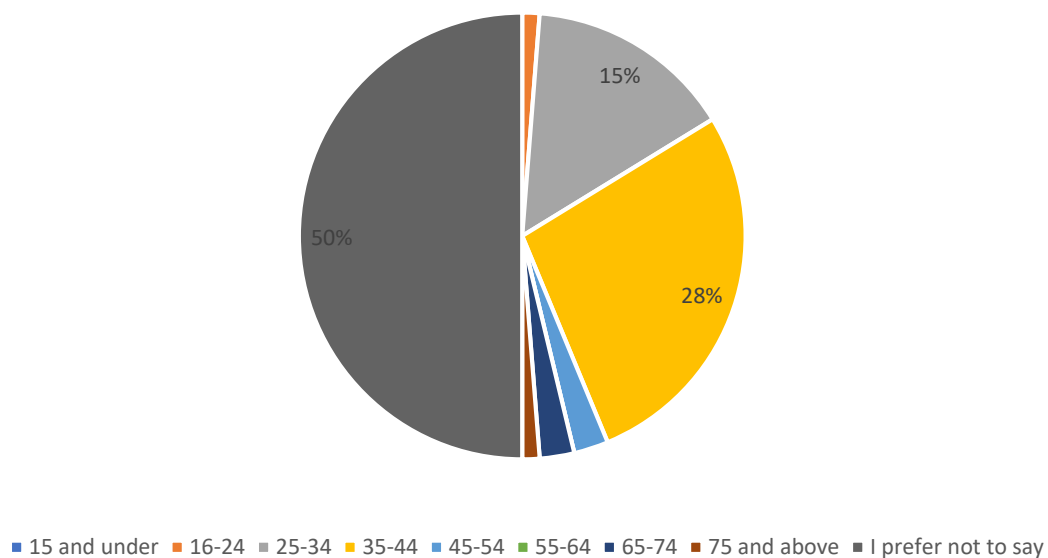
PERCENTAGE OF MEMEBER COUNTRIBUTIONS BY GENDER



Age demographic data:

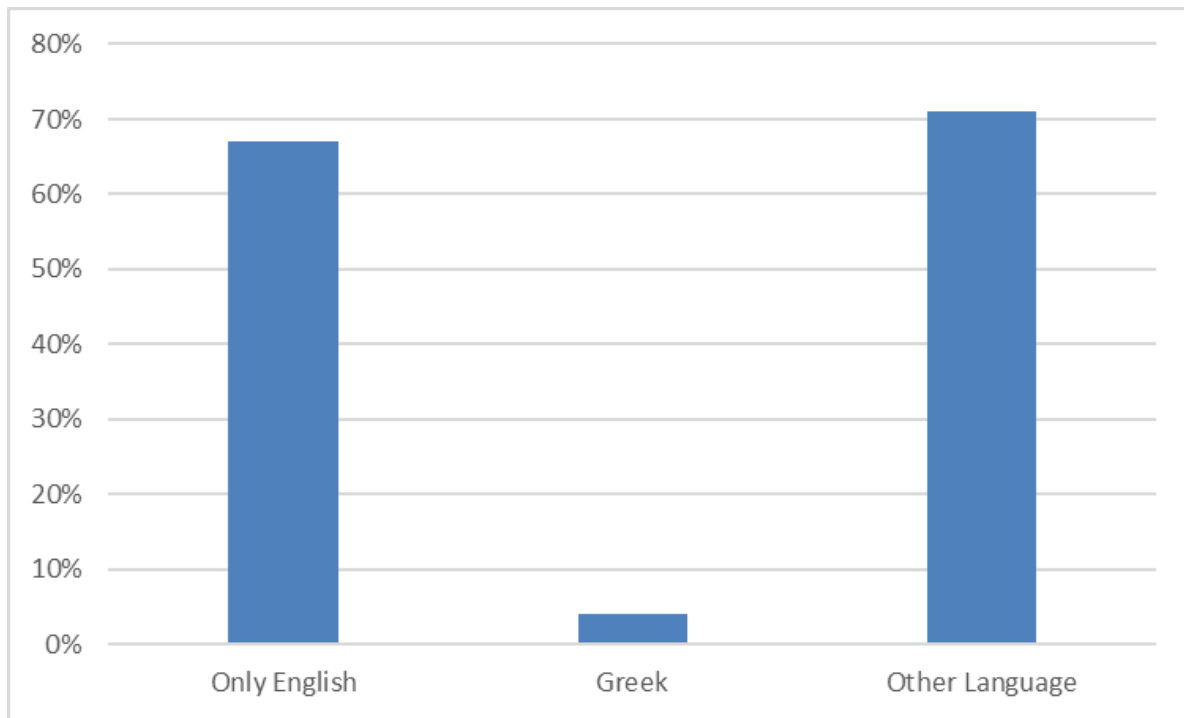
Participants represented a wide range of age groups, the most frequent age group was 35-44 years, while around half of the participant did not prefer to say their age.

PERCENTAGE OF MEMBERS CONTRIBUTION BY AGE



Language spoken at home other than English

Participants were asked if they speak another language other than English at home. Overall, 67% of participants spoke only speak English at home. 4.1% speak Greek and the rest were recorded in Arabic, German, Hindi, Persian, Indonesian, and Thai.



The 2016 census data shows that the local area surrounding the park is home to many diverse community groups, including:

- 81 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Members and;
- A diverse number of CALD groups including: Mandarin (571), Vietnamese (477), Greek (306), Italian (267), Arabic (276), Hindi (80).

Respondents who live with a Disability:

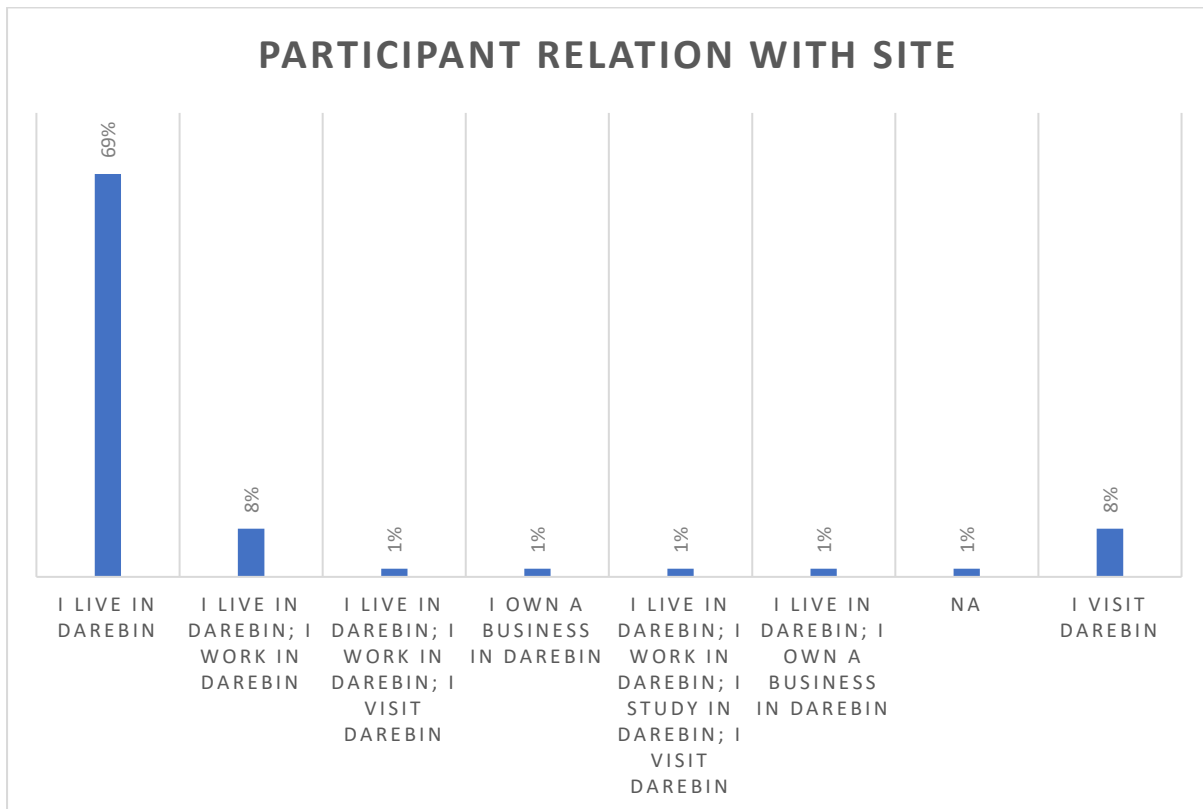
Of all participants 2.7% of respondents identified that they were living with a disability. Among the people in the catchment area of the reserve, 6-8% are identified as needing assistance in their daily routine.

Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Participation:

The survey did not have any Aboriginal or Torres Islander participants.

User Type:

Participants were asked to indicate their relationship with the site. They could select multiple answers to this question.



Engagement Results

The online survey recorded 72 responses to the survey.

Two open-text questions were included to explore community improvement suggestions and concerns for this site.

The questions were;

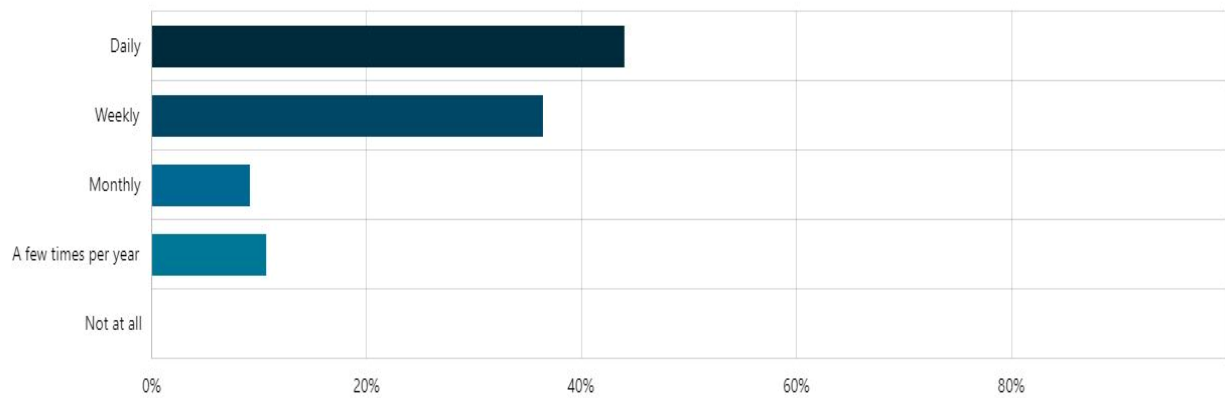
1. Is there anything stopping you from using the space currently?
2. Is there anything else that you would like us to improve in the Reserve?

This report presents a high-level qualitative thematic analysis that consolidates key emerging trends and details the most wanted assets and areas for improvement. The findings detailed below are ideas, comments and suggestions raised by participants during the survey.

Question 1: Respondents were asked how often do they visit Arch Gibson Reserve?

- 43.94% of participants use the site on a weekly basis.
- 36.36% of participants use the site daily.

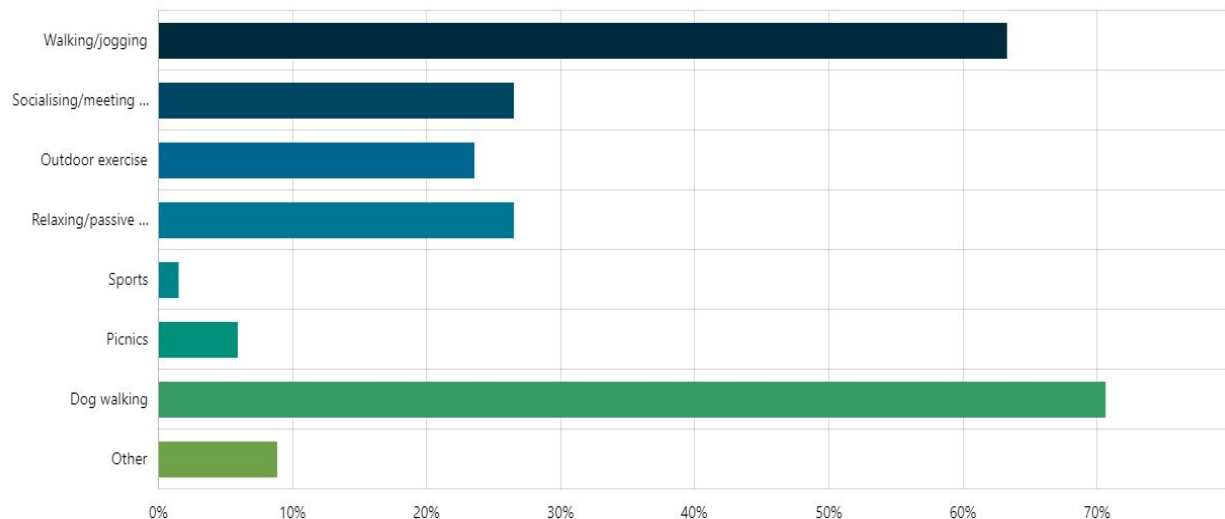
This indicates this site is very important for the local residents, and most of the participants are those who are using the park frequently. Therefore, the potential improvement will significantly influence visitors' experience of using the park.



Question 2: Asked the participants how they currently use Arch Gibson Reserve.

- 63.24% use the site for walking and jogging
- 70.59% use the site as dog off-lead area.

This information will assist us in understanding the current activities in the park that are important for residents and should be considered to stay intact or improved in the upgrade plan.



Question 3: Asked participants is there were any factors stopping them from using the space.

Participant responses were varied. Most of the respondents pointed to the current condition and lack of infrastructure such as drinking fountains, bins and walking paths, shade and a perceived lack of safety. Littering issues were also highlighted as well as a low level of maintenance.

Responses are summarised into the following themes:

- *"I often don't feel that comfortable using the space without my partner and/ or dog with me - it feels a bit isolated and untended, making it also feel not safe."*
- *"No, I use the space 2-3 times a week. Though it would be improved by bins and a water fountain. What would stop me using the space is developing it and turning it into a playground/sports centre."*

- *“The soil works near the playground have put us off this area. The grasses areas are not mowed regularly and get very long and unpleasant.”*
- *“Difficult to cross Boldrewood Parade during most of the day because of traffic and cars parked along the streets. There are no safe road crossing points to enable those living west of Boldrewood Parade to visit Arch Gibson Reserve.”*

As part of this project, Council has identified that the space required new seats, picnic tables, bins and other essential assets. These have been included in the draft concept plan.

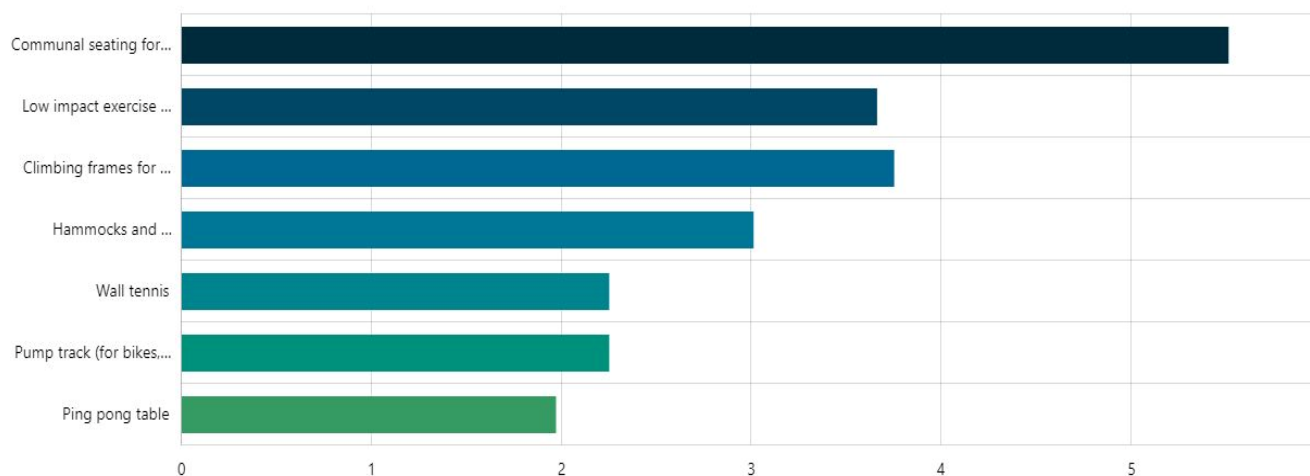
The natural shade will be provided through landscaping and planting indigenous trees and shrubs.

In relation to the provision of light, this upgrade is seeking to increase the usability of parks, encourage longer stay within the park for visitors and therefore increase safety through the activation; artificial light is considered a disturbance to the natural ecosystem and wildlife, and while some times they might increase the perceived safety but there is no good evidence that, presence of light will deter the crimes. Therefore in developing the concept design, we did not consider lighting elements.

Officers are also investigating the opportunities for safe pedestrian crossing from Dunne street to the park.

Question 4: Asked residents which of the following assets they would most like to use at the site.

Mots preferred activity for community is social seating community also expressed strong desire for climbing frame and low impact exercise. Followed by hammocks and group swings.



Question 5 Asked respondents if they had any further comments for improvement.

Many participants used this question as an opportunity to express their feelings and ambitions of the future of this reserve after the upgrade.

In general, their views can be categorised into the following five groups:

- Those who wished for the site to remain primarily as a dog off-lead area.
- Those who emphasised the importance of more native biodiversity, planting and revegetation.

- Interactive play equipment including all abilities equipment, including a fenced off-lead area to protect children from dogs.
- Request for additional infrastructure include a path through the reserve and a pedestrian crossing to facilitate the safe access.
- Those who desired the park to remain underdeveloped and natural for contemplation and nature adventure, bird watching and requested for bird nesting installation.

Community feedback to this survey has been incorporated into the development of the draft concept plan. While all of the feedback received were not able to be integrated into the final design, Officers believe it strikes a balance between site constraints, stakeholder needs and project budget and will improve the overall amenity of the site.

Link to the your say page :

<https://yoursay.darebin.vic.gov.au/archgibson>