



Community Engagement Results Report

Background

TW Blake Park is located along Gower Street, Preston. Currently the site has a large grassy area which is used by cricket players, and as a dog off-lead area. There are a few seats and a walking path around the oval that local residents use for running and exercise. The site was previously an active horse training centre. There are horse training facilities still present at the southeast side of the site.

Location:



Each year, the Parks and Open Space team review asset gaps throughout the municipality and allocate funds to complete important upgrades. TW Blake 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 that can meet the diverse needs of the local residents and encourage more people to use it., 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 improvements.

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 TW Blake.

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 4/11/2022 and the 30/12/2022.

A summary of the engagement activities is included below;

Tool	Description
Letters	A mail-out was arranged to all residents within 500m of TW Blake Reserve.
Posters and brochures	<p>Posters with a QR code to the Your Say page were displayed on-site at the several nearby locations including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lahinch playground, • TW Blake • HC Young Pavilion, • W Ruthven VC Reserve • William Ruthven Reserve • Holy Name Primary School
Stakeholder email	<p>Emails were sent to following groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Northern College of Art

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preston North East Primary School • Yarra Me School
Council's Advisory Groups	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. Development Project Officers involved with East Preston Community Groups, were contacted and invited to share the engagement opportunity with their networks.
Social media promotions	<p>The promotional message was sent to following platforms on a weekly basis.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facebook • Instagram • LinkedIn • Twitter
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	One formal drop-in session was held TW Blake Park.

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 TW Blake Park?
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. Below are just some examples of equipment we could install. Please select the equipment that you would like to see at the park (select as many as you like).
5. Is there anything else that you would like to see in this park?

Participation:

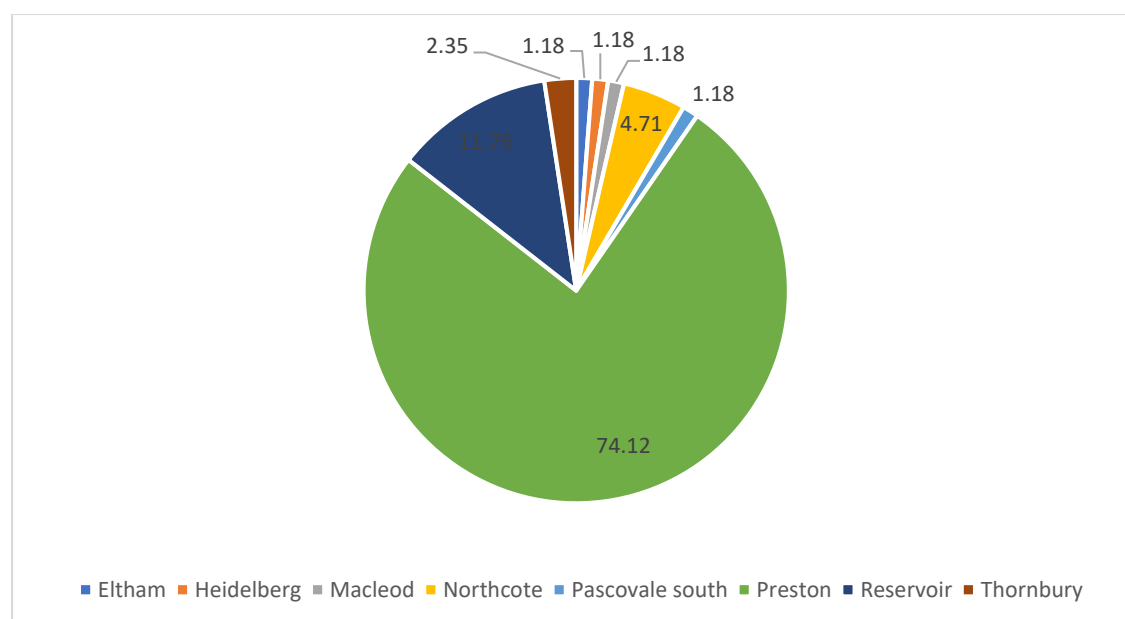
Council received a high level of response and interest in the project.

- 85 residents submitted their feedback via the online survey.
- 5 residents completed a hardcopy survey.
- 502 people were reached via digital proportion of the consultation.
- 34% of people reached the page via social media.
- 34% of people reached the page via direct link (Including QR CODE).
- 9 questions were submitted via Customer Service and the Darebin Parks and Open Space email.

Demographic data:

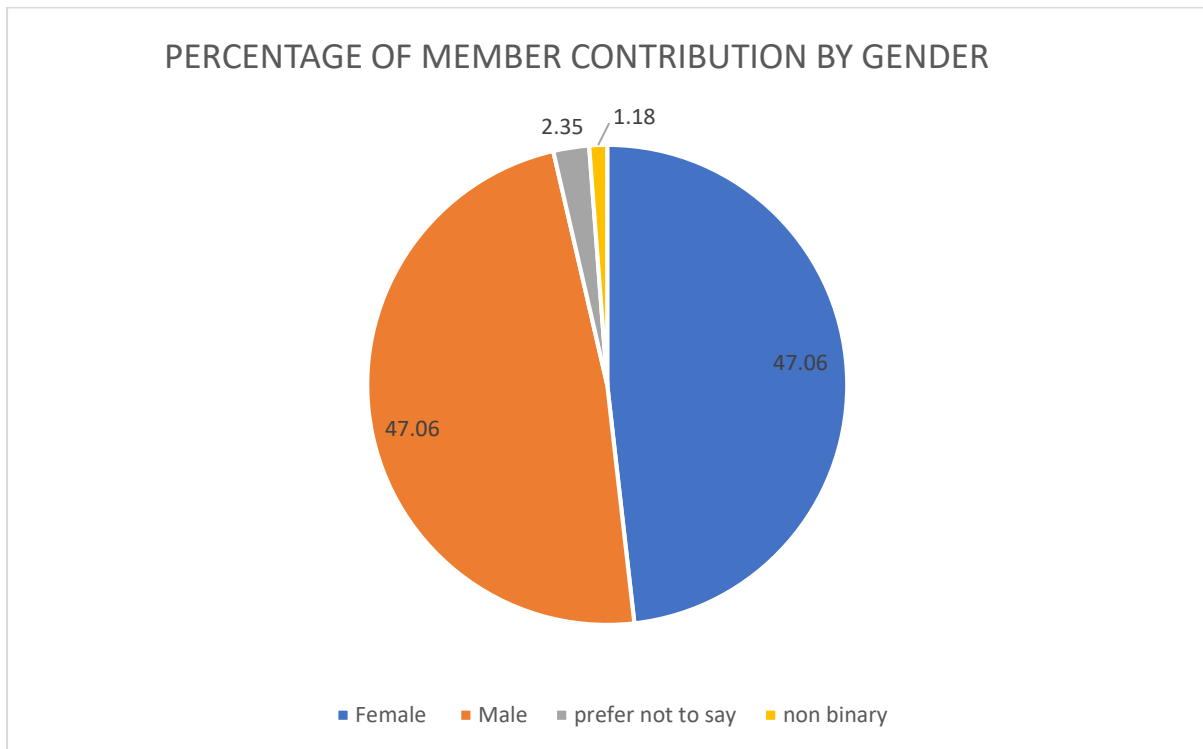
In line with Council's Community Engagement Policy, Officers captured a range of demographic data as part of this consultation process. Preliminary analysis of the data has revealed the majority of participants were based in Preston.

The bar chart below is an illustration the participation data from the different suburbs in Darebin.



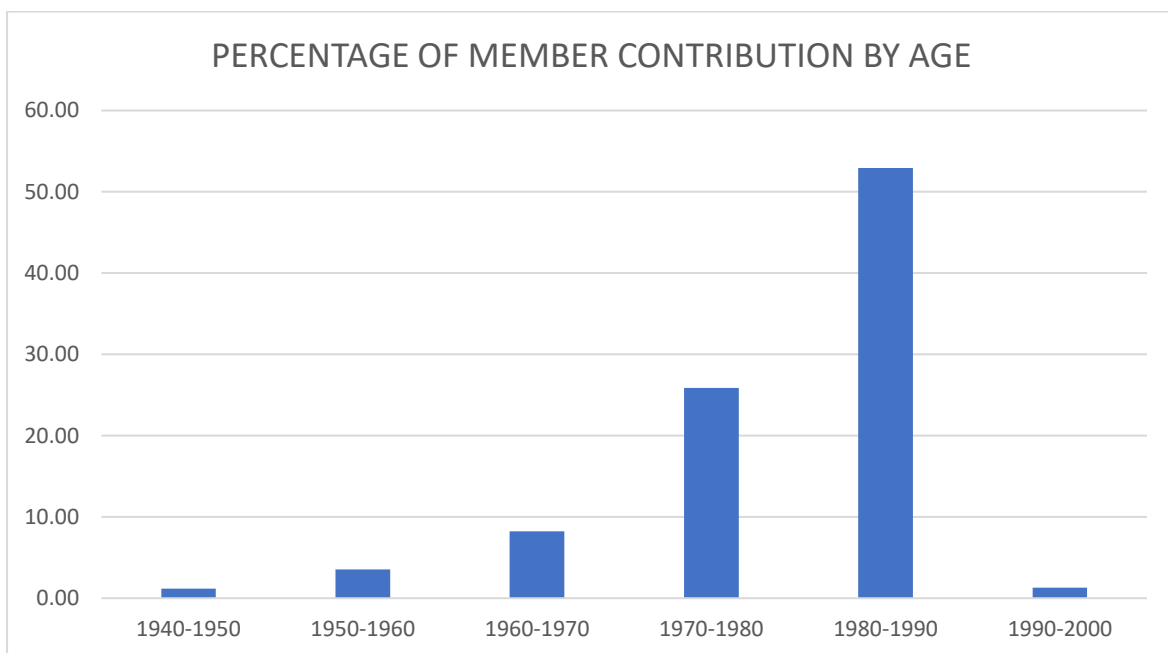
Gender:

The overall participation data shows that there was equal participation between male and female respondents.



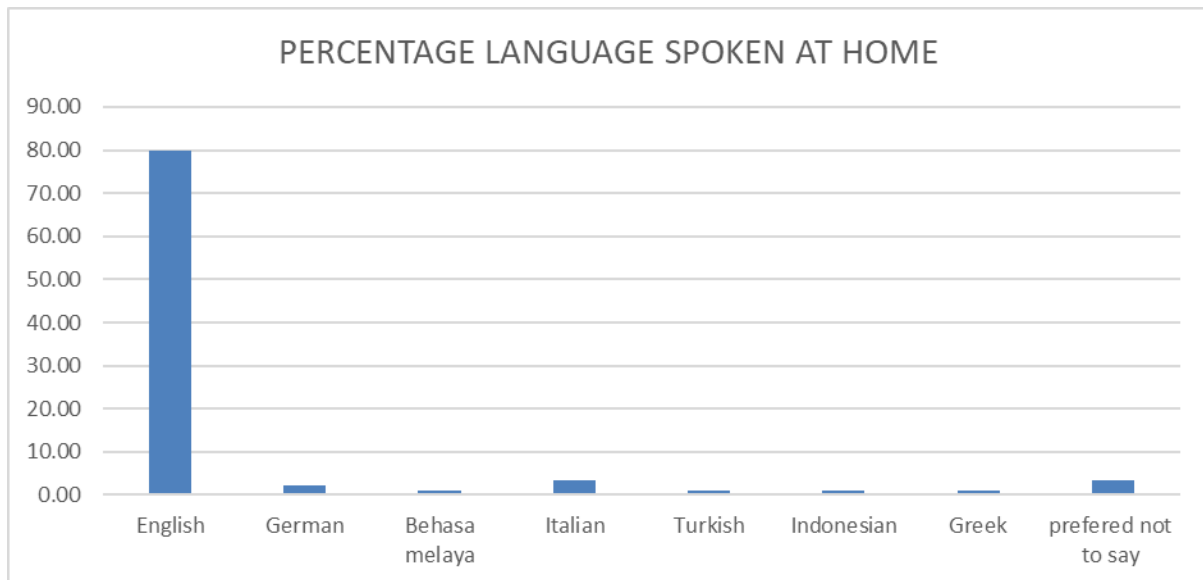
Age demographic data:

Participants represented a wide range of age groups, the most frequent contributor was from people between 30 - 40 years of age.



Languages Spoken in the Home

Participants were asked if they spoke a language other than English at home. Overall, 80% of all participants speak only English at home.



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

- 49 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Members and;
- A diverse number of CALD groups including: Greek (1181), Italian (693), Vietnamese (648), Mandarin (627), Macedonian (457), Arabic (378), Cantonese (275).

Respondents who live with a Disability:

Of all participants 8% of respondents identified that they were living with a disability.

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. Respondents could select multiple answers to this question. The result concluded that;

- 92% of participants live in Darebin.
- 20% work and live near the site.
- 1% study and live in Darebin and;
- 4.7% of participants either only work in Darebin or visit Darebin.

Engagement Results

The online survey recorded 85 responses to the survey.

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

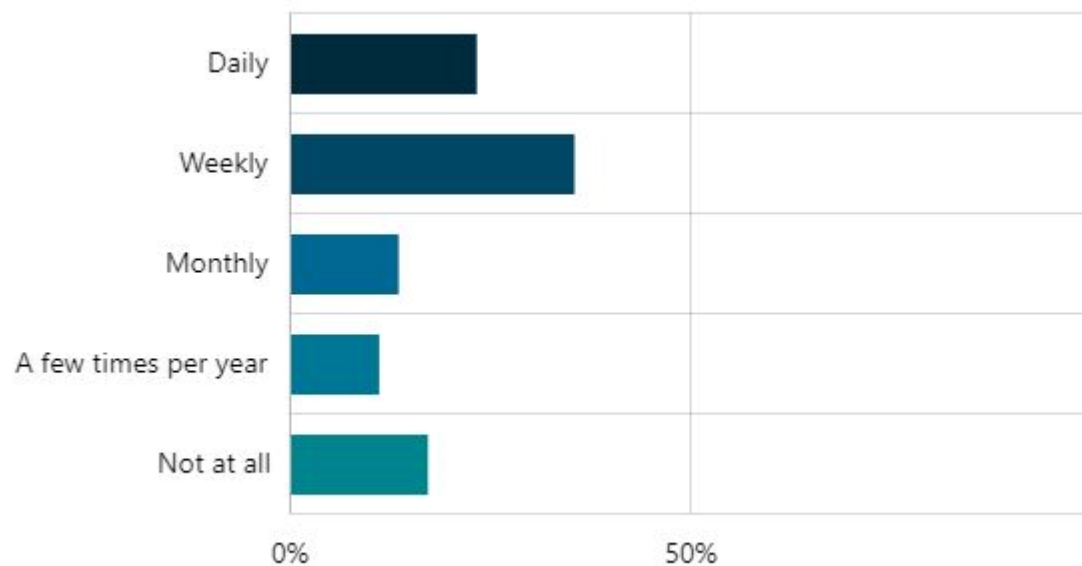
The questions were;

1. Is there anything stopping you from using the space currently?
2. Is there anything else that you would like to see included in the park?

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.

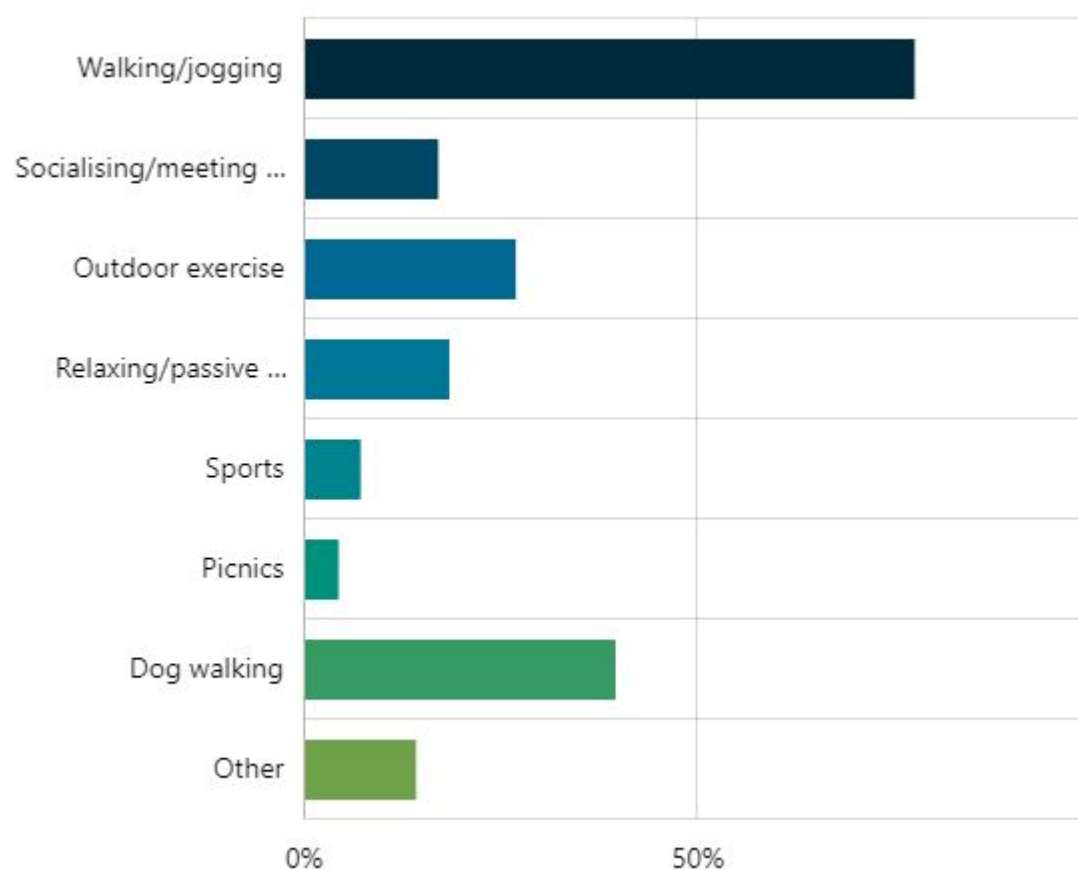
Question 1: Respondents were asked how often do they visit TW Blake Park?

- 35.37% of participants use the site on a weekly basis.
- 23.17% of participants use the site daily.



Question 2: Asked participants how they currently use TW Blake Park.

- 77.46% use the site for walking and jogging
- 39.44% use the site as dog off-lead area.



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

Participant responses were varied. Most of the respondents pointed to the current condition of the site and lack of infrastructure such as drinking water, bins and walking path, shade and BBQs.

Responses are summarised into the following themes:

- Lack of assets and infrastructure such as tables, seats, drinking fountains, bins and BBQs.
- Lack of convenient access for cycling and walking to TW Blake Park via Plenty Road and Gower Street.
- Lack of exercise equipment and infrastructure such as dog waste dispensers and bins.
- Lack of a fenced-off dog off-lead area.
- Lack of shade cover.
- The need for better landscaping and native plants.

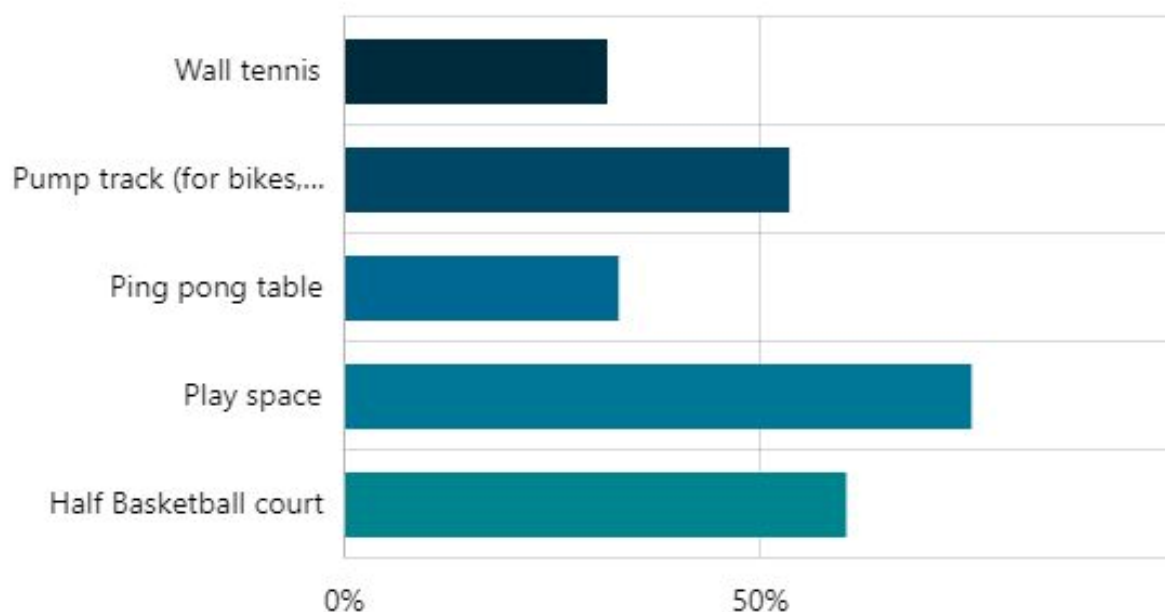
As part of this project, Council has identified that the space requires new seats, picnic tables, a BBQ, bins and a fitness area. These features have been included in the draft concept plan.

Natural shade will be prioritised landscaping and additional planting of Indigenous trees and shrubs.

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

- The most preferred asset was a play space at 75.34% of respondents.
- The community also expressed a strong desire for half basketball court at 60.27% of respondents.

- Riding track for bikes and scooter were chosen by 53.42% of respondents.



These most preferred activities have been incorporated into the draft concept design.

Question 5: Asked respondents if they would like to see anything else in this park?

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 following groups:

- Improvements made to benefit soccer and cricket players, such as sporting nets, shelter for players and club facilities.
- Emphasis on the importance of retaining the site as dog off-lead area and further relevant improvements such as a fully fenced dog off-lead area, dog-bag dispensers and other relevant assets to support dog walkers.
- Interactive play equipment including all abilities equipment.
- Additional infrastructure, and better maintenance practices.
- Additional natural elements such as native planting and shade cover.
- Concerns about noise pollution and requests new assets be positioned on the parks near the shops.

- Sand pits a skate park, splash park and other feature for children with an emphasis on activities which include water elements.
- Visitors who wished for a quiet recreation space blocked from the view from main road.
- Maintaining the track for walking and exercise.
- An exclusive area for family recreation.

Community feedback to this survey will be 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 Yoursay page:

[Enhancing TW Blake Park | Your Say Darebin](#)