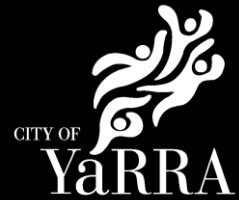


Edwardes Place upgrade Community Engagement Report



This report provides information on the community consultation for the Edwardes Place upgrade project and reports on the engagement outcomes. The consultation opened on 18/8/2025 and closed at 9am on 15/9/2025.

Overview

Project background

By 2031, the Fitzroy North precinct will grow by 2,755 residents (Yarra Open Space Strategy). Edinburgh Gardens, whilst a large open space is heavily used and there is a need to supplement the open space offering and provide alternative open space options when Edinburgh Gardens is at capacity. Edwardes Place offers the opportunity to provide an improved local park with some unstructured play offering that complements the larger Edinburgh Gardens, Darling Gardens and Linear Park in the wider area.

Objectives of this engagement

1. Inform the community that we are beginning the process of upgrading these reserves.
2. Promote the consultation and seek feedback from the community on what they would like to see in the designs for these upgraded reserves.

Level of community influence

Community feedback could prioritise the features implemented in the design of the upgraded open space (generally aligned with the definition of a Local Park).

- Community feedback could help us understand what aspects of the existing layout should be retained.
- Community feedback could identify any other concerns or suggestions to be considered in the development of the Concept Design.

Engagement methods:

- Online survey tool hosted through Your Say Yarra engagement platform
- 1 place-based pop-up at the following locations:
Where: Edwardes Place, 62 Falconer Street, Fitzroy North, 3068
When: Saturday 6 September
What time: 9.30am to 11.30am
- Targeted communications with Fitzroy High School and Mark Street Hall.

Engagement questions:

1. How do you/your family currently use Edwardes Place?
 - to relax in
 - To eat lunch/take a break during the working day
 - to play sports and informal games
 - to gather socially (for example picnics)
 - to connect to nature
 - I don't use this space
 - Other (please specify)

2. What do you like most about Edwardes Place? (open text)
3. What features would you most like included in the upgrade? (Select up to 3)
 - Additional canopy trees
 - Informal play elements (e.g. stepping stones, logs)
 - Garden bed planting
 - Additional seating
 - Improvements to access through the park
 - Other (please specify)
4. Do you have any suggestions on how we can improve this space or any other comments about the Edwardes Place playground upgrade? (open text)

Engagement reach

Engagement promotion:

Social media channels (including social media advertisements) reaching over 4,444 people.

Council email newsletters including Yarra Life, Your Say Yarra email newsletter, Yarra Leisure news and Yarra Libraries email newsletter.

This reached a total of 46,024 subscribers.

News story on Yarra City Council's website.

Postcards and other printed collateral available at events and postcards were distributed to 19 Council venues. These include town halls, neighbourhood houses, seniors' centres, libraries and leisure centres.

Postcards/letters distributed to 667 occupiers of residences and businesses in 200m radius of park.

Mail outs of postcards/letters to 667 owners of residences and businesses in 200m radius of park.

Digital screens at customer service desks, libraries and leisure centres.

Your Say Yarra project page:

The success of the Your Say Yarra page is tracked against the following metrics:

- **Visitors** – The number of unique visitors that saw the page.
- **Responses** – The number of feedback responses that were submitted.

Visitors	Responses
319	86 (we received 87, but 2 were from the same person, so their feedback was combined and considered as one response)

In person engagement opportunities:

In-person session (including date and location)	Approximate number of people we spoke to	Responses
Edwardes Place pop-up Saturday 6 September 2025	60+ people	0 hard copy surveys

Engagement results

Who did we hear from?

Demographic data was collected via the 86 online copies of the survey.

Are you a carer of a chld/chlidren who use this park?	Numbers	Percentage
Yes	39	44.83%
No	47	54.65%
Total	86	100%
What's your connection to Yarra?	Numbers (people could provide more than one response)	Percentage
Live in Yarra, in a property I own (either outright or with a mortgage)	77	89.53%
Live in Yarra, in a property I rent	6	6.90%
Own a property in Yarra but live outside of Yarra	0	-
Work in Yarra	10	11.49%
Own a business / business occupier in Yarra	3	3.45%
Study in Yarra	5	5.75%
None of the above	1	1.15%
Prefer not to say	0	-
Total	86	100%
What gender do you identify as?	Numbers	Percentage
Man	33	37.93%
Woman	45	53.33%
Self-described	3	3.45%
I prefer not to say	5	5.75%
Total	86	100%
What is your age range?	Numbers	Percentage
Under 11	1	1.15%
12 to 17	0	-
18 to 24	0	-
25 to 34	9	10.34%
35 to 49	27	31.03%
50 to 59	20	22.99%
60 to 69	13	15.11%
70 to 84	12	13.79%
85 and older	0	-

I prefer not to say	4	4.60%
Total	86	100%
What suburb do you live in	Numbers	Percentage
Abbotsford	0	-
Alphington	0	-
Burnley	0	-
Carlton North	0	-
Clifton Hill	1	1.15%
Collingwood	1	1.15%
Cremorne	0	-
Fairfield	0	-
Fitzroy	3	3.45%
Fitzroy North	78	90.69%
Princes Hill	0	-
Richmond	0	-
I live outside of Yarra	3	3.45%
Total	86	100%
Select all that apply. I am....	Numbers (people could provide more than one response)	Percentage
Someone who speaks a language other than English at home.	6	6.9%
A person who was born overseas	15	17.24%
A person living with a disability.	8	9.20%
A member of the LGBTIQ+ community.	11	12.64%
Someone of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent.	0	-
None of the above.	48	55.81%
I prefer not to say.	7	8.05%
Total	86	100%

What did we hear?

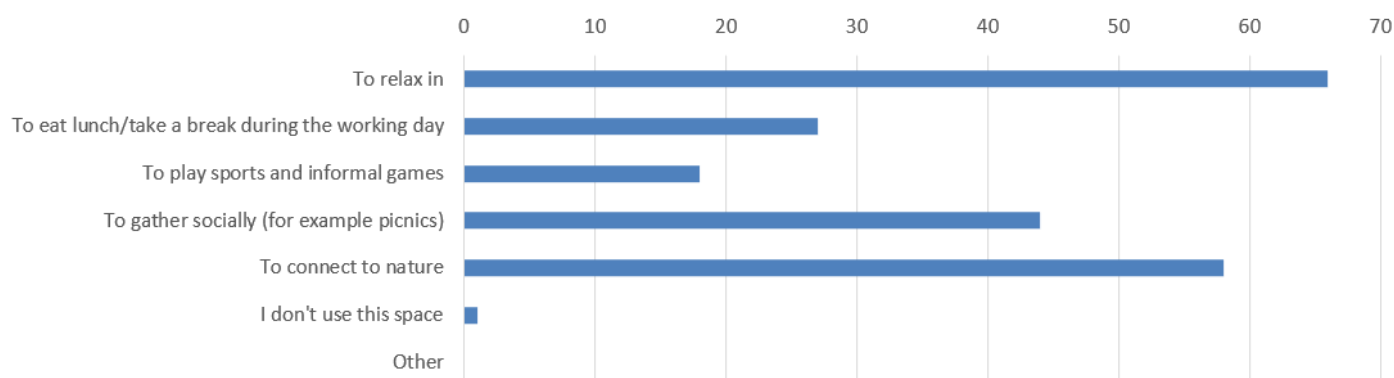
Council heard lots of useful feedback from the community, and from this it is clear the community love this local park and want to ensure that any upgrades don't compromise its unique character and overall layout and function.

Online survey

1. How do you/your family currently use Edwardes Place?

- to relax in
- To eat lunch/take a break during the working day
- to play sports and informal games
- to gather socially (for example picnics)
- to connect to nature
- I don't use this space
- Other (please specify)

The park is used in a variety of ways, however the most common were to relax in, to connect to nature and to gather socially.



2. What do you like most about Edwardes Place? (open text)

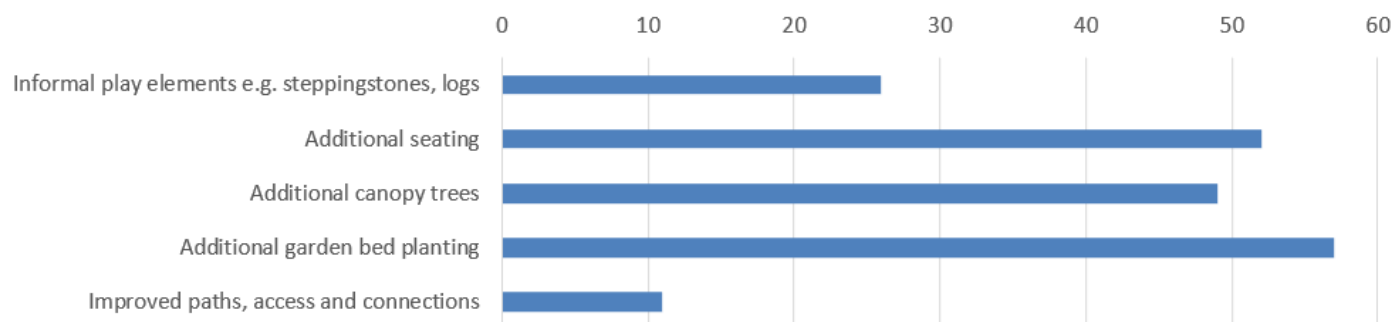
Edwardes Place is a well-loved local park for the community. The qualities that came up the most for community include the following (with number of people shown in brackets).

- Open grassed area (29)
- Quiet and relaxing space (19)
- Natural character (16)
- Informal space for different types of recreation/games (15)
- Trees (15)
- Minimalistic, unstructured and flexible space (13)
- Seats (13)
- Plantings (11)
- Space for socialising and picnics (10)
- Space for passive recreation such as reading and connecting to nature (9)
- No dogs allowed (8)
- Shade (6)
- Feels secluded/sheltered (5)
- Shrubs (5)
- Footpaths (5)

3. What features would you most like included in the upgrade? (Select up to 3)

- Additional canopy trees
- Informal play elements (e.g. stepping stones, logs)
- Garden bed planting
- Additional seating
- Improvements to access through the park
- Other (please specify)

The most popular responses to this question were additional garden bed planting, additional searing and additional trees.



4. Do you have any suggestions on how we can improve this space or any other comments about the Edwardes Place playground upgrade? (open text)

People had lots of ideas of what they wanted to improve, and also provided feedback on things they didn't want to change. They are listed in order, with the number of people mentioning this shown in brackets.

- More seats (15)
- More trees (13)
- Suggestions for plant species including natives and plants that attract birds and improve habitat (13)
- The space is fine as it is / less is more (13)
- Different types of seats (10)
- More informal play (8)
- No structured elements in space (8)
- Picnic table (7)
- More shrubs (7)
- More low-level planting (7)
- No play equipment (6)
- Improve drinking fountain such as with a water catchment bowl for animals and improve access (6)
- Allow dog access (6)
- Make dog access clearer (5)
- More shade (5)
- Improve paths (5)
- No changes to paths (5)

Pop-up consultation session

The pop-up was well attended, and we received lots of community feedback as set out below.

Space is highly valued by the community:

- Space was described as a treasure, an oasis, tranquil, a retreat, transient, serene, respected, cherished, with harmonious use amongst the locals
- Maintain the space as a neighbourhood space, with local catchment, passive and informal use
- Do nothing, or very little

Space offers:

- Grassed area which provides flexible use (e.g. recreation, picnics)
- Spaces for passive recreation
- Spaces for both single users and for people to come together
- Informal play
- Habitat for local birdlife (e.g. Tawny Frogmouth, Currawong)

Suggestions from the community that were generally well supported:

- More trees
- Do what we can to preserve the mature gums and ensure they are well maintained
- Reviewing the low-level planting
- Buffer planting along edges to prevent balls from rolling onto the road
- Buffer planting along bus stop edge (it has been thinned out)
- Better uniformity of plantings as it is a small space, plantings to consider nearby street gardens
- Improved plantings next to bus stop on Scotchmer Street
- More native and bird and bee attracting species
- Supporting local wildlife (e.g. water bowls and bird boxes)
- Mix of shade and sun
- More seats (including replacing the seat that was removed at the Kneen Street end)
- Definition of entrance points

Things not supported generally:

- Over designing the space
- Clutter
- Enclosing the space
- Reducing the lawn area
- Play equipment
- BBQs
- Changes to fencing
- Shade structures (shade from trees is enough)

Mix of views about:

- Dog use in park
- Whether the path needed renewal
- Whether the introduction of the of a picnic setting would add value (if we do it should be the corners of the site)
- Whether we should look at extending the open space
- Whether we should put another bin on the eastern entrance point
- Whether the lighting level is sufficient (general yes, it's fine)

Consider:

- Maintenance of trees and plantings (includes some specific comments about maintaining larger Lemon Scented Gums for safety and noting that one of the Lemon Scented Gums on the southern edge was crudely pruned).
- Bin collection
- The lawn and irrigation could be looked at
- Co-locating furniture (e.g. bins and seats)

- Maintain the current passive surveillance into the site (works well)
- Providing consistent signage regarding dog access
- Pedestrian desire line / goat track
- Providing landscaping in road space which

Key themes

Open grassed area and informal space for different types of games/recreation	
What did we hear	Our response
• <i>The open grassy space for kids to play.</i> • <i>The open green middle, it allows for family/friend games such as kicking a soccerball/footy; picnic area - by keeping the middle open, it creates a framework for people to imagine how to use it.</i> • <i>Grassed area for play outside. We have used this space to practice erecting a tent as our home yard is too small. Also for local gatherings, children's parties- outdoor games.</i> • <i>I like the open space in the centre as I walk through and the transition from entering off the street past shrubs into the openness as well as walking under tall trees.</i> • <i>Picnics in the park, small family gatherings. There are still children in the park every day. They make their own play games - much better than a structured playground!</i>	The central open grassed area is retained through the draft concept design, as this is of high value to the community.
Natural character, including trees and plantings	
What did we hear	Our response
• <i>Native vegetation with beautiful lemon scented gums framing a lovely little oasis.</i> • <i>A few of the garden beds around the edges are a little shabby and could do with a few more bushes etc to beef them up, also some more trees never hurt. Aside from that I don't think it's big enough to accommodate any 'new' features without taking away from the nice open grassy area.</i> • <i>Only to infill plant with local indigenous species.</i> • <i>The space is already very nice and feels quite natural and relaxed. The wattles are currently out and very beautiful. Please don't fill it with a lot of 'designed' elements which over power the existing planting.</i>	The draft concept plan improves the existing garden bed areas and creates new garden beds along the perimeter of the park and next to the bus stop to enhance the natural character of the park. New trees will be accommodated within these spaces wherever feasible.
Quiet and relaxing space	
What did we hear	Our response
• <i>It's a green oasis in the middle of our neighbourhood. It is rarely crowded and provides several settings for a wide range of activities.</i> • <i>The paths, multiple benches, shady and sunny spots, dappled sunshine on the lawn for the children, flowering plants (particularly the wattle) and the gum trees, sense of calm and quiet.</i> • <i>Lovely quiet natural setting, minimalist paths</i> • <i>It's quieter than Eddie gardens that is so busy all the time.</i>	The draft concept design proposed limited changes to the park to maintain it as a passive, relaxing and quiet space. The existing seats which offer quiet spaces to relax are being retained, and the setting of

<i>It's a place for those who seek quiet — somewhere to sit under a tree, enjoy a book, or simply pass through without the noise and activity typical of more conventional parks. This is what gives Edwardes Place its charm: it doesn't try to be everything for everyone. It's not a destination for large groups or family gatherings, but rather a discreet retreat for locals and those who value simplicity and stillness.</i>	these spaces will be improved with improved plantings.
More seating and different types of seating	
What did we hear	Our response
<i>North facing seating</i> <i>Upgrading the seating but not like the seating below. Garden benches with backs are perfect for us.</i> <i>I think there should be more seating with either single benches or some facing each other to encourage conversation groups.</i> <i>It seems that some work has begun on the understory planting in the corners of the park - some group seating could be incorporated in these areas to better facilitate conversation as opposed to island seats.</i> <i>Seating isolating currently - should be grouped in twos on an angle to enhance conversations with neighbouring seating.</i> <i>The seating removed at the Kneen Street end should be replaced.</i>	The existing single benches are being retained, and a new pair of benches is proposed at the north-east corner of the site to offer an opportunity for small groups to enjoy the park together. This will also integrate some salvaged boulders/timber logs in the adjacent garden beds to offer additional informal seating/play opportunities.
The space is fine as it is / less is more (13)	
What did we hear	Our response
<i>We love the natural feel of this beautiful and quiet park. Please don't ruin it with over-designed features. It's great the way it is.</i> <i>The park is pretty great as it is.</i> <i>Honestly the Edwardes Place parklet is delightful in its current form and I appreciate Yarra City's ongoing maintenance... do not change it. Retain the simple elements of this green space. Do not waste council dollars on a needless upgrade. I live on one street over from the park and I enjoy strolling through and sitting on the grass once or twice a week.</i> <i>Happy with the current setup.</i>	The overall layout and function of the park is being maintained. The changes are minor in nature and build upon the existing strengths of the park. They are focused on improved plantings and garden beds, some path repair/upgrades in targeted locations where required, and introduction of a pair of seats to allow for small groups and families to use the space together.