Attachment 6

Brunswick Street Oval community and sports facilities Community Engagement Report

This report provides information on the community consultation for the Brunswick Street Oval community and sports facilities project and reports on the engagement outcomes. The consultation opened on Friday 1 November 2024 and closed at 9am on Monday 25 November 2024.

Overview

Project background

In April 2022 a project to redevelop the sporting facilities at the Brunswick Street Oval was presented for community consultation. These facilities service the Fitzroy Tennis Club, Edinburgh Cricket Club, Fitzroy Junior Football Club and Fitzroy Football Club. The feedback received was used to inform the proposed design that was endorsed by Council in May 2022. It covered three distinct pieces of work, funded primarily by the Victorian Government, including:

- a new pavilion for the football and cricket clubs
- an upgraded and expanded tennis precinct including additional courts, relocated club house, new amenities and landscaping
- improvements to the heritage grandstand

Like many councils in Victoria, supply chain issues and the rising cost of materials and labour impacted project delivery. As a result, we were unable to commence construction of the new sports pavilion as planned in late 2023.

Council is committed to delivering this project and has been working with key stakeholders including sporting clubs and the Victorian Government to create a revised design for the facilities that can be delivered within the available budget, while still meeting the needs of the local community.

Council sought community feedback on the revised design before proceeding to amend the planning permit and commencing construction.

Objectives of this engagement

- Update the community and key stakeholders in the area on how the design has changed and why these changes have occurred.
- Outline the proposed design changes clearly with a mixture of visual and text information to ensure the community have all relevant information required to contribute.
- Check in with the community to understand support for the proposed upgrades and any potential ideas for changes or improvements.

Level of community influence

- The community could help Council understand potential changes to improve the design before it is finalised. Where feasible and financially viable, these were included in the final design.

Engagement methods:

- Online survey tool hosted through Your Say Yarra engagement platform.
- Two place-based pop-ups at the following locations:
    - **Saturday 9 November 2024 from 10am to 12noon** outside the Piedimontes Supermarket on the corner of Scotchmer Street and St Georges Road, Fitzroy North (this session was part of the engagement opportunities for the 2025-29 Council Plan); and
    - **Saturday 23 November 2024 from 10am to 12noon** at the Brunswick Street Oval grandstand.
- Targeted stakeholder engagement with the following groups:
    - Fitzroy Tennis Club
    - Edinburgh Cricket Club
    - Fitzroy Junior Football Club
    - Fitzroy Football Club

Engagement question:

- *Tell us what you think about the revised design, including any suggested changes which you think could improve the proposed upgrades to the Brunswick Street Oval sporting and community facilities?*

Engagement reach

Engagement promotion:
Social media channels (including social media advertisements) reaching over 16,500 people.
Council email newsletters including Yarra Life and Your Say Yarra email newsletter. We also contacted past participants in the April 2022 consultation. This reached almost 8,000 subscribers.
News story on Yarra City Council's website.
Postcards distributed to 1,716 properties within 200m of Edinburgh Gardens.
Four A1 corflutes installed on site with QR code linking back to the project page to capture the feedback of visitors.
Page promoted by all four sports clubs serviced by the facilities to their users and members.

Your Say Yarra project page:

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

- **Views** - The number of times the page was seen.
- **Visitors** – The number of unique visitors that saw the page.
- **Responses** – The number of survey tool feedback responses that were submitted (this includes the 3 responses that were entered by officers based on a hard-copy paper response forms completed by respondents at the pop-up sessions).

Views	Visitors	Responses
3,869	2,550	257

In person engagement opportunities:

In-person session (including date and location)	Approximate number of people we spoke to	Hard Copy Responses
Saturday 9 November from 10am to 12noon at the Piedimontes Lawn, Corner of Scotchmer Street and St Georges Road	45	3
Saturday 23 November 2024 10 am to 12noon at the Brunswick Street Oval pavilion	20	0
TOTAL	**65**	**3**

Long form responses through other channels:

Four long form responses in relation to the project were provided directly to Council through its info@yarracity.vic.gov.au contact point.

Data cleansing

- **2 survey form responses** were identified as duplicates and have been merged in the following analysis. Therefore, there were 255 unique responses to the survey tool.
- **1 long form response** was from a submitter that responded to the Your Say Yarra page and has been merged with their survey form response (their survey form response noted they would be providing a long form response). Therefore, there were 3 additional unique responses as a result of the long form responses.

The final number of unique responses considered in the analysis is 255 + 3 = **258 responses**.

Engagement results

Who did we hear from?

Demographic data was collected for 254 of the 255 unique online and hard copies of the survey tool.

- One hard copy survey did not include demographic data with their feedback therefore their demographic data is not reflected below.
- The long form responses did not include demographic data (excepting the one merged with a survey tool response).

What's your connection to Yarra? *(Respondents could select multiple options here)*	Number	Percentage
I live in Yarra	176	69.3%
I work in Yarra	75	29.5%
I visit Yarra	77	30.3%
I study in Yarra	6	2.4%
I own a property or mortgage in Yarra	97	38.2%
I rent in Yarra	13	5.1%
I own a business in Yarra	19	7.5%

What gender do you identify as?	Number	Percentage
Man	148	58.3%
Woman	97	38.2%
Self-described	1	0.4%
I prefer not to say	8	3.2%

What is your age range?	Number	Percentage
Under 11	0	0%
12 to 17	2	0.8%
18 to 24	9	3.5%
25 to 34	24	9.5%
35 to 49	80	31.5%
50 to 59	66	26.0%
60 to 69	43	16.9%
70 to 84	18	7.1%
85 and older	3	1.2%
I prefer not to say	9	3.5%

What suburb do you live in	Number	Percentage
Abbotsford	5	2.0%
Alphington	0	0%
Burnley	0	0%
Carlton North	17	6.7%
Clifton Hill	20	7.9%
Collingwood	5	2.0%
Cremorne	0	0%
Fairfield	3	1.2%
Fitzroy	24	9.5%
Fitzroy North	104	40.9%
Princes Hill	5	2.0%
Richmond	5	2.0%
I live outside of Yarra	66	26.0%

Select all that apply. I am…. *(Respondents could select multiple options here)*	Number	Percentage
Someone who speaks a language other than English at home	20	7.9%
A person living with a disability	9	3.5%
A member of the LGBTIQA+ community	21	8.3%
Someone of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent	1	0.4%
None of the above	188	74.0%
I prefer not to say	27	10.6%

Are you providing feedback on behalf of a community group?	Number	Percentage
Yes	31	12.2%
No	223	87.8%

Please tell us what community group you are providing feedback on behalf of.	
Groups include:	Edinburgh Cricket Club Fitzroy Football Club Fitzroy Junior Football Club Fitzroy Tennis Club Fitzroy Victoria Bowling and Sports Club Protectors of Public Lands Vic Inc

What did we hear?

Responses to the question were themed based on the sentiment and the topic it related to. A total of 39 key themes were identified, which are presented below.

Community members were able to comment on more than one topic within their responses.

In addition to the 39 key themes, officers have extracted a number of specific design improvement suggestions, which have been tabulated and will be considered as the design is further developed.

Overall project	
Theme 1 - Support project (139 responses)	
What did we hear	**Officer response**
Examples of feedback include: • *Great work. Please keep supporting active lifestyle amenities in Yarra.* • *Love the design, it will be a catalyst for positive change in the community. Let's get it done!* • *This is a very important development, long overdue. It will be great for the community and the various sporting clubs that use the site.* • *The revised design is a perfect blend of the old and new. This upgrade is much needed, and I am glad it is finally happening.* • *Critical for local kids to have improved sports facilities.*	Support for the project overall is noted.
Theme 2 - Support overall design (19 responses)	
What did we hear	**Officer response**
Examples of feedback include: • *It is great the building mass has got smaller overall and existing buildings are being reused and integrated into the new works.* • *The new design is more sympathetic to the site and a better outcome for a lesser budget.* • *I think this is the best design yet. It's a much fairer and equitable use of the area for all sports & community groups.*	Support for the revised design overall is noted.

Theme 3 - Community benefit of sports participation (29 responses)	
What did we hear	**Officer response**
Examples of feedback include • *I believe a project like this provides an outlet and opportunity for the whole community to become involved in community sport.* • *I think it will be great for the community and the local clubs.* • *The involvement and enhancement of community-focused sport - tennis, cricket, football - for the families in our community is essential for well-being.*	The project is intended to provide community benefit through more opportunity for sports participation.
Theme 4 - Oppose project (10 responses)	
What did we hear	**Officer response**
Examples of feedback include: • *I think too much money is spent on sporting facilities.* • *I hate the proposal! Please do not build on parkland, which is rare and precious.* • *I think it's a waste of money that could be better spent.*	It is noted that there is not universal support for the project.
Theme 5 - Prefer previous design or disappointed in descoping (10 responses)	
What did we hear	**Officer response**
Examples of feedback include: • *It would be preferable to have kept the original design, including the larger pavilion and 4 change rooms.* • *Aesthetically I preferred the previous design as it blended in better with the current grandstand*	It is noted that some respondents preferred the previous design functionality or aesthetics. Council worked with key stakeholders including sporting clubs and the Victorian Government to create a revised design for the facilities that could be delivered within the available budget. Without this rescoping, the project would not be viable.
Theme 6 - Dislike design (19 responses)	
What did we hear	**Officer response**
Examples of feedback include: • *The revised design is disappointing, an aesthetically unappealing, over development of the site.* • *I think the design and bright colours do not sit well with the rest of Edinburgh gardens.* • *Pretty ugly, not built in a timeless style like the older buildings, will look old and dated within a few years*	It is noted that there is not universal support for the design. Design improvement suggestions will considered as the detail design is developed, although no major changes are proposed.

Theme 7 - Oppose loss of open space (10 responses)	
What did we hear	**Officer response**
Examples of feedback include: • *Green space is so rare and once converted into built environment is unlikely to be restored.* • *Please do not build on parkland, which is rare and precious.* • *The new Sports Pavilion will also significantly eat into green space.*	It is noted that there is not universal support for the proposed use of open space for sporting facilities. The revised tennis court design is intended to broadly utilise the same area occupied by the tennis courts and facilities in the previously approved design, but in a different configuration due to the existing community room no longer being proposed for demolition. Without this space and the designated space for the sports pavilion, this project cannot proceed.
Theme 8 – Project is biased towards sports clubs rather than general community (2 responses)	
What did we hear	**Officer response**
Examples of feedback include: • *I appreciate there has been consultation on the Brunswick St oval redevelopment in the past but seems to have been weighted towards sports clubs which naturally welcome new facilities* • *Why the emphasis on tennis where the sacrifice is public space? Create tennis courts for the use of few at the expense of park land*	The Victorian Government has funded this project following advocacy from the sporting clubs. Council has engaged with the community through on the project through an initial need analysis consultation in 2019, the 2022 consultation on the then-proposed design and this engagement on the revised design.
Theme 9 - Should have included bowls club in design (5 responses)	
What did we hear	**Officer response**
Examples of feedback include: • *Our major concern is the lack of genuine consultation with the Fitzroy Victoria Bowls Club.* • *Why hasn't the Council asset in the Bowls Club building been included as part of the project?*	The Fitzroy Victoria Bowling and Sports Club is outside the scope of the project, and is not within the scope of the funding provided by the Victorian Government.

Theme 10 - Frustrated with delay (52 responses)	
What did we hear	**Officer response**
Examples of feedback include: • *This is a very important development, long overdue.* • *How about you stop "consulting" and get on with building it? This process has gone on FAR TOO LONG!* • *It is hard to understand why the works have taken so long to commence.* • *This upgrade to the oval has been talked about for more years than I care to remember. It's time to get on and deliver!* • *I urge council to proceed immediately and complete this long overdue project.*	The frustration with delays on the project is understood and acknowledged. Officers have been working to expeditiously prepare a revised design that can allow the project to proceed. Community engagement on the revised design was required under Council's Community Engagement Policy and to support a planning approval amendment for the revised design.
Theme 11 - Support idea but not design (5 responses)	
What did we hear	**Officer response**
Examples of feedback include: • *I am very supportive of this project proceeding, I am, however, disappointed at the design reduction.* • *It doesn't have to be anywhere near as expensive as it doesn't have to be "architecturally progressive".* • *I am strongly supportive of the facilities at the ground being improved. But very disappointed they are being scaled back.*	It is noted that some respondents indicated support for the project idea but not the design. Design improvement suggestions will considered as the detail design is developed, although no major changes are proposed.
Theme 12 - Consideration of First Nations cultural inclusion (4 responses)	
What did we hear	**Officer response**
Examples of feedback include: • *Have you had First Nations consultation with this build?* • *How will the facilities be be made culturally safe for the local Aboriginal community (what features will reflect respect to the Aboriginal heritage?)*	The project team will engage with Council's Aboriginal Partnerships team to ensure an appropriate design response to this feedback. A Cultural Heritage Management Plan is not required for this site.

Sports pavilion

Theme 13 - Support sports pavilion (13 responses)

What did we hear	Officer response
Examples of feedback include: • *Love the new design, the design and look of the building fits perfectly in its environment.* • *I believe that this pavilion would be a perfect change for the community.* • *A new sports pavilion is much needed to suit the needs of the cricket and the football clubs.*	Support for the sports pavilion is noted.

Theme 14 - Support female participation outcomes (6 responses)

What did we hear	Officer response
Examples of feedback include: • *I support the creation of better facilities for women in sport.* • *A huge number of girls/ women participating in football and are in desperate need of additional change room facilities.* • *The absence of adequate female changing rooms has gone on for too longer.*	Support for the female participation outcomes are noted, and is a key objective of the project and the funding provided by the Victorian Government.

Theme 15 - Oppose sports pavilion (4 responses)

What did we hear	Officer response
Examples of feedback include: • *Absolutely no way to the new oval pavilion!* • *It is disappointing to see that the sports pavilion is still included in these revised plans.*	It is noted that there is not universal support for the sports pavilion. Provision of fit-for-purpose facilities for the sporting clubs that utilise the Brunswick Street Oval is a key objective of the project and the funding provided by the Victorian Government.

Theme 16 - Oppose location of sports pavilion (10 responses)	
What did we hear	**Officer response**
Examples of feedback include: • *Relocate the new stand in the place of the old community rooms.* • *Large structure on Brunswick Street hugely impacts the original look and feel of Fitzroy North.* • *My issue with the proposed design of the new Brunswick St oval facilities is the location of it.*	Multiple possible sites for the sports pavilion were considered as part of the development of the previous design, with the proposed location identified as the most appropriate on the balance of considerations. The revised design locates the sports pavilion in the same general location as the previous design, although the building footprint has reduced in size.
Theme 17 - Oppose design of sports pavilion (22 responses)	
What did we hear	**Officer response**
Examples of feedback include: • *I don't believe the Sports pavilion needs to be double story.* • *Disappointed at the design reduction.* • *The revised design is disappointing, an aesthetically unappealing.*	It is noted that there is not universal support for the sport pavilion design. The design of the sports pavilion has been developed in consultation with the sporting club users. Design improvement suggestions will considered as the detail design is developed, although no major changes are proposed.
Theme 18 - Too much concrete hardstand (3 responses)	
What did we hear	**Officer response**
Examples of feedback include: • *The provided renderings show this as a dated prefab concrete and glass structure with a drab concrete patio.* • *There is too much concrete surrounding the football Building. Why is there a large concrete patio area.*	The proposed landscaping treatment around the sports pavilion will provide universal access paths of travel to the pavilion along with informal outdoor seating areas for sporting event patrons. The suggestion to reduce the amount of hardstand will considered as the detail design is developed, including consideration of reducing the area and/or use of alternative permeable materials.

Theme 19 - Oppose reduction in change rooms within sports pavilion (17 responses)	
What did we hear	**Officer response**
Examples of feedback include: • *The final design should incorporate four change rooms.* • *The reduced number of change rooms will mean sporting clubs will be underserviced moving forward.* • *I have concerns regarding the reduction in the number of change rooms from four to two.*	To reduce the project cost, the area of the pavilion has been reduced and the number of change rooms in the new pavilion has decreased from four to two. However, there will still be an additional two change rooms located within the grandstand (refurbished as part of this project) providing a total of four change rooms for sporting club use. This will provide a cost-effective approach to meeting the requirement for four change rooms.

Tennis facilities and courts	
Theme 20 - Support tennis design (19 responses)	
What did we hear	**Officer response**
Examples of feedback include: • *I fully support the proposal and believe the revised design of the tennis courts and pavilion is a great improvement.* • *You've done a great job balancing space requirements for tennis club expansion.* • *I fully support the upgrade to the tennis club.*	Support for the tennis pavilion is noted.
Theme 21 - Support two new tennis courts (15 responses)	
What did we hear	**Officer response**
Examples of feedback include: • *Especially pleased to see two extra courts.* • *I support the proposed configuration of the 2 new tennis courts.* • *The extra tennis courts are crucial for allowing for greater inclusion.*	Support for the tennis court expansion is noted.
Theme 22 - Oppose tennis court expansion (13 responses)	
What did we hear	**Officer response**
Examples of feedback include: • *Those courts should be put elsewhere.* • *I understand there is obviously a demand but isn't 8 courts a bit much?* • *We've already got enough courts there.*	It is noted that there is not universal support for the tennis court expansion. Provision of additional tennis courts is a key objective of the project and the funding provided by the Victorian Government.

Theme 23 - Oppose design of tennis facilities (2 responses)	
What did we hear	**Officer response**
Examples of feedback include: • *I am opposed to the construction of an additional tennis club building.* • *The tennis pavilion is a box jammed up against a heritage building with no regards for the existing structure.*	It is noted that there is not universal support for the tennis facilities design. The design of the tennis facilities has been developed in consultation with the sporting club users, and has responded to pre-application advice from Heritage Victoria. Design improvement suggestions will considered as the detail design is developed, although no major changes are proposed. Provision of fit-for-purpose facilities for the tennis club is a key objective of the project and the funding provided by the Victorian Government.

Grandstand	
Theme 24 - Support proposed grandstand treatment (5 responses)	
What did we hear	**Officer response**
Examples of feedback include: • *We support retention, repair and continued use of the heritage grandstand.* • *Happy that the original pavilion/grandstand will be maintained.*	Support for the proposed grandstand treatment is noted.
Theme 25 - Insufficient works to grandstand (5 responses)	
What did we hear	**Officer response**
Examples of feedback include: • *The grandstand renovations should be carried out to the fullest extent.* • *You should fully restore the Victorian grandstand.*	Unfortunately, a full restoration of the grandstand is not achievable within the available funding. Council will continue to budget for and undertake maintenance and renewal works on the grandstand to protect and preserve the asset in accordance with Council's asset management policy and heritage responsibilities.

Theme 26 - Oppose restricted use of grandstand (5 responses)	
What did we hear	**Officer response**
Examples of feedback include: • *I don't like the cages at the top of the grandstand stairs.* • *It is really important to reopen access to the grandstand.*	The proposal is to replace the current temporary fencing limiting access to the grandstand with more aethestic permanent controls installed as part of renewed grandstand stairs. It is noted that there is not universal support for having these controls in place; their purpose is to prevent the danger posed to persons who could otherwise occupy the timber grandstand, which is an unsafe activity that the structure is not suitable for.
Theme 27 - Don't change grandstand façade (2 responses)	
What did we hear	**Officer response**
Examples of feedback include: • *Don't change the facade of the grandstand.* • *As long as the grandstand retains its original beauty.*	The grandstand façade is proposed to be unchanged excepting for the replacement stairs with permanent access controls. The works to the grandstand require heritage approval from Heritage Victoria.
Theme 28 - Oppose heritage grandstand removal (6 responses)	
What did we hear	**Officer response**
Examples of feedback include: • *Please do not knock down the old grandstand.* • *The upgrade looks impressive. The grandstand must be retained.* • *Please don't destroy the original grandstand.*	We acknowledge there has been some confusion about the status of the grandstand associated with our social media promotion of this consultation. The proposal does not include any removal or demolition of the grandstand at Brunswick Street Oval. The proposed new sports pavilion is located to the north-west corner of the oval, not as a replacement for the grandstand.

Community room

Theme 29 - Support retention of community room (3 responses)

What did we hear	Officer response
Examples of feedback include: • *Some changes proposed are good as with retaining the existing community centre.* • *Good news no longer demolition of the community rooms.*	Support for the community room's retention is noted.

Theme 30 - Community room should be replaced (6 responses)

What did we hear	Officer response
Examples of feedback include: • *The retention of the old community room is a disappointment.* • *The community room needs to be upgraded or replaced.* • *I think the community room needs to go, it's completely rundown*	It is noted that retention of the existing community room is not universally supported. Council worked with key stakeholders including sporting clubs and the Victorian Government to create a revised design for the facilities that could be delivered within the available budget. Without this rescoping, the project would not be viable. The existing community room, whilst an older asset, remains a functional and viable community facility. Council will continue to budget for and undertake maintenance and renewal works on the community room to protect and preserve the asset in accordance with Council's asset management policy.

Theme 31 - Support external public toilets (3 responses)

What did we hear	Officer response
Examples of feedback include: • *Ensuring public access to amenities like toilets.* • *Important to have externally accessible toilets for spectators and visitors.*	Support for the external public toilets is noted.

Trees	
Theme 32 - Support proposed tree replanting species (5 responses)	
What did we hear	**Officer response**
Examples of feedback include: • *While the removal of some trees is inevitable, I love your colourful choice of jacaranda, red oak and kurrajong.* • *I applaud the use of native Kurrajong trees for their replacement.*	Support for the proposed tree replanting is noted.
Theme 33 - Support less tree removal in new design (6 responses)	
What did we hear	**Officer response**
Examples of feedback include: • *I appreciate that the new design removes fewer trees.* • *Very good to see less tree removals.*	Support for the reduction in the proposal number of tree removals is noted.
Theme 34 - Support tree replanting plan (6 responses)	
What did we hear	**Officer response**
Examples of feedback include: • *Tree planting between the new structure and Brunswick Street should mitigate the loss of green views.* • *The tree placement plan looks well thought through.*	Support for the proposed tree replanting is noted.
Theme 35 - Oppose tree removal (18 responses)	
What did we hear	**Officer response**
Examples of feedback include: • *I am disappointed that the removal of old trees is still being proposed.* • *I am extremely upset about the loss of three mature elm trees.* • *We oppose the removal of mature and semi mature trees.*	The responses opposing tree removals are noted. In the development of the revised design, a key objective was that no additional trees were to be proposed for removal, with a reduction in numbers removed if possible, which has been achieved. At this stage of the redesign, ten additional trees have been identified as being retained in the revised concept.

Theme 36 - Oppose trees being planted on hill (9 responses)	
What did we hear	**Officer response**
Examples of feedback include: • *Hugely negative outcome to cover this with trees.* • *Don't cover the hill with trees, that is a very popular sitting destination.* • *Please don't plant all those trees on the hill - the hill is packed with spectators and picnic goers.*	The responses opposing planting of trees on the hill to the north-east of the oval are noted. Officers will consider modifying the replanting plan to avoid planting new trees on the lower part of the hill, however consider that new trees on the upper part of the hill can contribute to canopy cover and shade for sporting event spectators without unduly impacting the viewing of sporting events.

Landscaping and site infrastructure	
Theme 37 - Support bocce court (5 responses)	
What did we hear	**Officer response**
Examples of feedback include: • *Retaining the bocce field next to the courts is good.*	Support for the bocce court is noted.
Theme 38 - Oppose bocce court (3 responses)	
What did we hear	**Officer response**
Examples of feedback include: • *I have never seen anyone playing Bocci, remove it.*	It is noted that inclusion of a renewed bocce court is not universally supported. A renewed bocce court was included in the previous design as a result of the community input on that design in 2022, and has been retained in the revised design.
Theme 39 - Concerned about parking/vehicles (4 responses)	
What did we hear	**Officer response**
Examples of feedback include: • *I don't like the car parking. It is dangerous and unnecessary.* • *Such a shame also to cut down trees for more cement and roads.* • *How are you going to prevent this becoming over-run with cars?*	The proposal includes limited access for vehicles into the precinct for the purposes of service and maintenance access, emergency vehicle access, and kiss-and-go drop-off/pickup. The only parking spots included are for the purpose of universal access for Accessible Parking Permit holders.

Summary

Based on the themes identified in each response, each response was categorised into one of the four categories as defined in the table below, with the summary results shown in the table and the chart providing a high-level snapshot of the community sentiment with regard to the project.

Category	Description	Number	Percentage
Support	Responses that were supportive of the project, some having suggestions for improvement of the design	150	58%
Partial Support	Responses that were supportive of the project, but were not supportive of one or more elements of the design	18	7%
Oppose	Responses that oppose the project for one or more reasons	69	27%
Neutral	Responses that provided comments that neither supported nor opposed the project	21	8%
Grand Total		**258**	**100%**

