GLEN EIRA CITY COUNCIL

GLEN EIRA CITY COUNCIL

The Elsternwick Club — where heritage meets open space

Draft design engagement report

NOVEMBER 2025

BENTLEIGH

BENTLEIGH EAST

BRIGHTON EAST

CARNEGIE

CAULFIELD

ELSTERNWICK

GARDENVALE

GLEN HUNTLY

MCKINNON

MURRUMBEENA

ORMOND

ST KILDA EAST

Executive summary

The Elsternwick Club site represents a significant opportunity to address a recognised gap in public open space within the area. Following the successful acquisition of the property in 2024, we began a long-term, collaborative process to create new public open space for the whole community.

The project is planned across three phases:



*Council will take ownership of the property from June 2027 following the three-year settlement period.

During phase one, we invited the community to share their vision for the site and received more than 360 ideas and suggestions. Guided by this feedback and the advice of the project's Advisory Committee — made up of 10 local community representatives — we drafted a design and shared it for broad community engagement.

Phase two of engagement ran for a four-week period from 26 September to 26 October 2025. The community were invited to review the concept and share feedback, identifying any gaps, concerns, or opportunities for improvement. This feedback will inform the final concept plan and detailed design for the open space.

We received **292** pieces of feedback, with strong overall support for the design. Respondents particularly appreciated the emphasis on passive, flexible open green spaces and native planting. Suggestions included adding more play options, additional amenities, and features to enhance safety and accessibility. The feedback comprised of:

- **154** quick poll votes through the Have Your Say platform and at pop-up events.
- **87** social map comments through the Have Your Say platform and at pop-up events.
- **30** survey submissions through the Have Your Say platform.
- **16** Instagram story responses.
- **Five** email submissions.

This report provides a detailed summary of the engagement results received during the engagement program. A summary of the results is presented on the following page.

The Elsternwick Club — phase two engagement summary

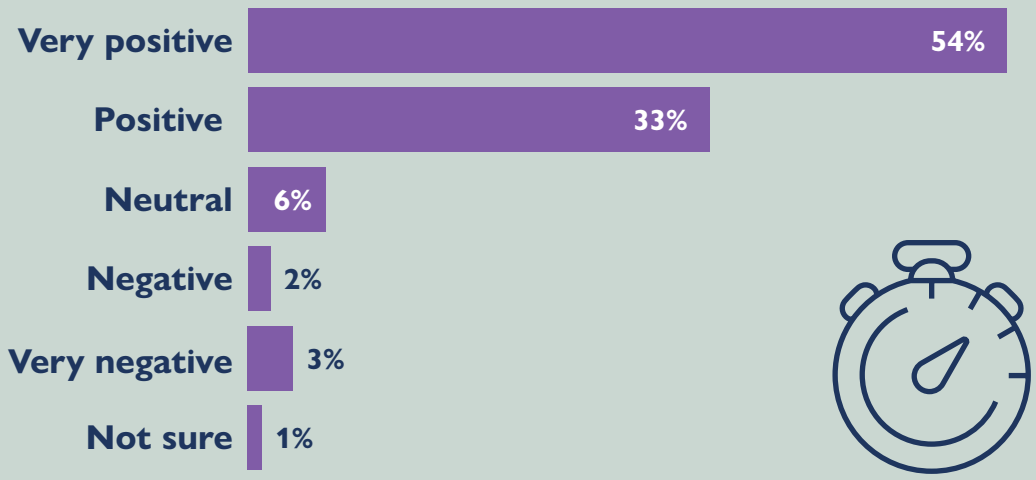
City of GLEN EIRA

GLEN EIRA CITY COUNCIL

We received:

- **154** Quick poll votes
- **87** Map comments
- **30** Survey submissions
- **16** Instagram story responses
- **5** Email submissions

Quick poll *How do you feel about the overall design?*



Map comments

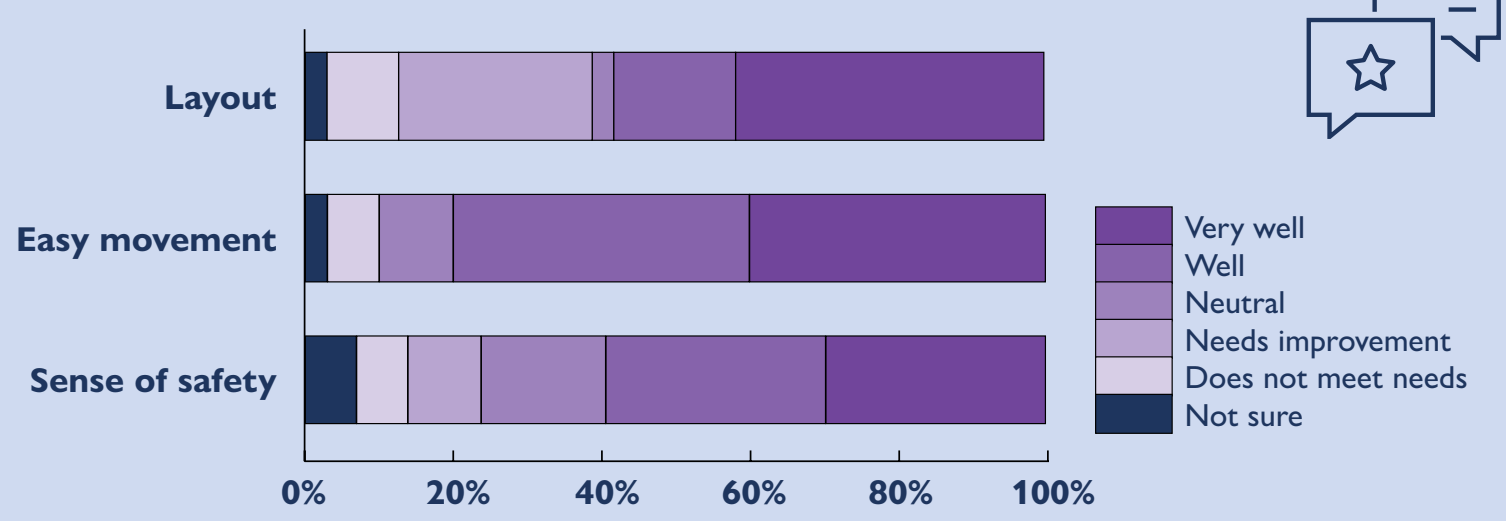
60% liked the design.

- **63%** Broad support
- **19%** Green space and passive use
- **3%** Resident amenity
  Play space
  Easy movement and flexibility

39% shared new ideas.

- **38%** Extra amenities
- **18%** Safety and accessibility
- **18%** Sports
- **18%** Play space

Survey *How well does the design address community needs?*

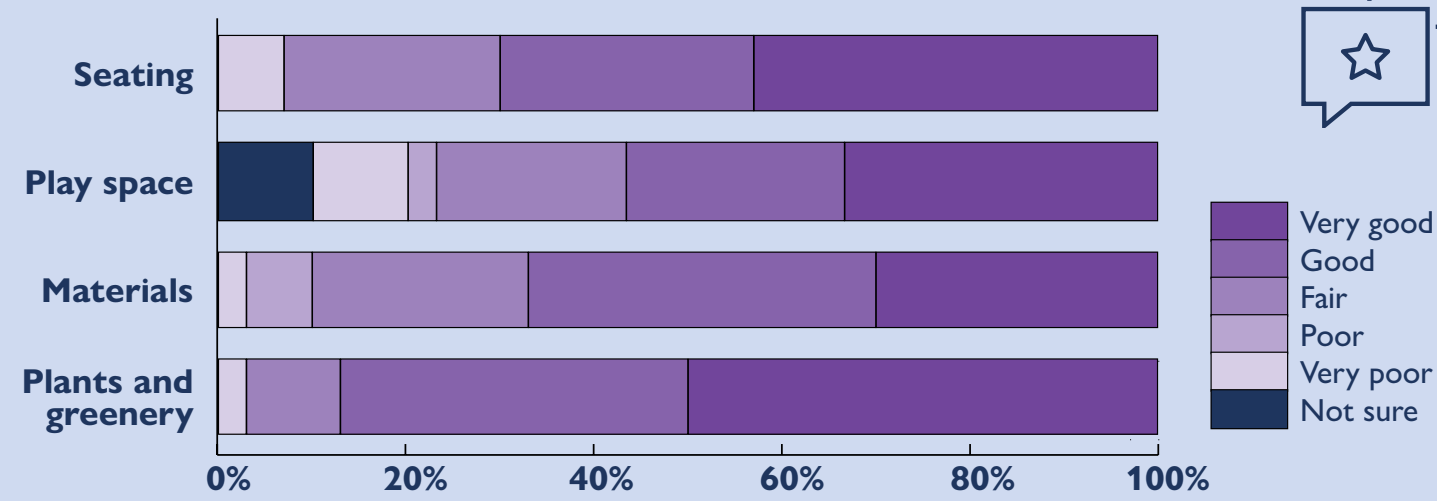


"I think it's just what we're missing here."

"Village green is great for picnics."

"More informal play equipment, less structure."

Survey *What do you think about the...?*



Engagement report

Background

The Elsternwick Club site represents a significant opportunity to address a recognised gap in public open space within the area. Following the successful acquisition of the property in 2024, we began a long-term, collaborative process to create new public open space for the whole community.

This transformation is guided by Council's commitment to delivering well-designed, sustainable, and accessible open spaces, as outlined in the *Glen Eira Council Plan 2025–2029*, and *Open Space Strategy*. Glen Eira has the lowest amount of open space per person in metropolitan Melbourne. Addressing this gap is essential to supporting quality of life, social connection, and community wellbeing. Through this project, Council is investing in new open space that reflects the needs and aspirations of our growing and diverse community, with a focus on inclusion, sustainability, and universal access.

The project is planned across three phases:



*Council will take ownership of the property from June 2027 following the three-year settlement period.

During phase one, we invited the community to share their vision for the site and received more than 360 ideas and suggestions. You told us you valued:

- A peaceful, flexible space for relaxing — not just organised sport
- Shade and greenery from trees and structures
- Social gathering spaces to connect
- Green lawns for informal play and picnics

Guided by this feedback and the advice of the project's Advisory Committee — made up of 10 local community representatives — we drafted a design and shared it for broad community engagement.

Phase two of engagement ran for a four-week period from 26 September to 26 October 2025. The community were invited to review the concept and share feedback, identifying

any gaps, concerns, or opportunities for improvement. This phase focused solely on the outdoor space, with planning for the historic building to take place separately.

This report provides a detailed summary of the communication data and engagement results received during phase two of the engagement program.

Communication activities

We ran a broad communication campaign to let people know about the engagement opportunity and invite them to take part. We used a mix of channels to reach key stakeholders and the wider community. The table below shows which channels we used and how many people each one reached.

Communication activities	Reach
Glen Eira News Article in October 2025 edition	Delivered to approx. 64,500 residences
Have Your Say engagement page Live with the survey available from 26 September to 26 October	Views: 1,440 Visitors: 1,197 File downloads: 259 Followers: 90
Social media Facebook and Instagram Glen Eira City Council Facebook and Instagram accounts concluded the campaign with 8 posts, including main feeds and stories	Views: 15,415 Reach: 7,785 Interactions: 85 Link clicks: 145
Community engagement e-newsletter October edition	Recipients: 4,453 Opened: 2,390 Link clicks: 147 Clicks through to engagement: 117
Letter box drop Letters delivered to households within an approximate 500m radius of The Elsternwick Club.	1,100 letters
Email promotion Targeted emails were sent to neighboring schools, including St Joseph's Primary School, Elsternwick Montessori Academy Childcare Centre, and Sholem Aleichem College, as well as the Elsternwick Traders Association.	4 emails
Poster Shared at Council facilities, including Glen Eira Town Hall, Glen Eira Libraries and Glen Eira Leisure centres. Displayed at locations In Elsternwick including Glen Huntly Road, Staniland Grove, and Sandham Street.	52 posters

Postcard Shared at Council facilities, including Glen Eira Town Hall, Glen Eira Libraries and Glen Eira Leisure centres, and Elsternwick Maternal Child Health Centre.	875 postcards
Digital screens Screen on display at Town Hall Service Centre, Glen Eira Sports and Aquatic Centre, and Carnegie Memorial Swimming Pool	26 September to 26 October
Website – news item and webpage	Page views: 21 Link clicks: 1
Golden Days Radio 95.7FM Announcements on 27 September and 11 October	Approx over 75,000 listeners globally

Engagement activities

Feedback on the draft design was gathered through online activities and pop-up events held in Elsternwick.

Community members could also share feedback directly to the Engagement Team by phone, email or mail.

Engagement activities	No. of feedback submissions
Survey submissions The community could complete the survey online at Have Your Say or request a hard copy survey.	• 30 online submissions • 0 hard copy submissions
Quick poll votes The community could vote in the 'quick poll' online at Have Your Say or vote in-person at pop-up events.	• 115 votes in-person • 39 votes online
Social map comments The community could 'post' comments on the draft concept design online at Have Your Say or in-person at pop-up events.	• 73 in-person comments • 14 online comments
Instagram story responses The community were invited to 'rate' the draft concept plan via Council's Instagram story.	• 16 responses
Email submissions	• 5 emails

Engagement events

Pop-up engagements

During the engagement period, five pop-up events were held in Elsternwick.

Location	Date	No. of postcards	No. of conversations
Staniland Grove, Elsternwick	2 October	30	11
Staniland Grove, Elsternwick	7 October	45	50
The Elsternwick Club	8 October	15	20
Harleston Park	16 October	15	6
Staniland Grove, Elsternwick	21 October	40	32

Targeted engagements

We held three sessions with key stakeholders and demographic groups to gather detailed feedback on the draft design.

These workshops provided an opportunity for participants to explore the design in depth, share their perspectives, and suggest improvements.

Group	Date	No. attendees
Youth Engagement Team (YET) Age group of 18–25-year-olds.	13 October	11
Sholem Aleichem College Group of Year 5 and 6 students, aged between 11–12 years old.	21 October	30
Disability Reference Committee Group who advise Council on issues around access and inclusion for people with a disability.	23 October	Five

Broad engagement results

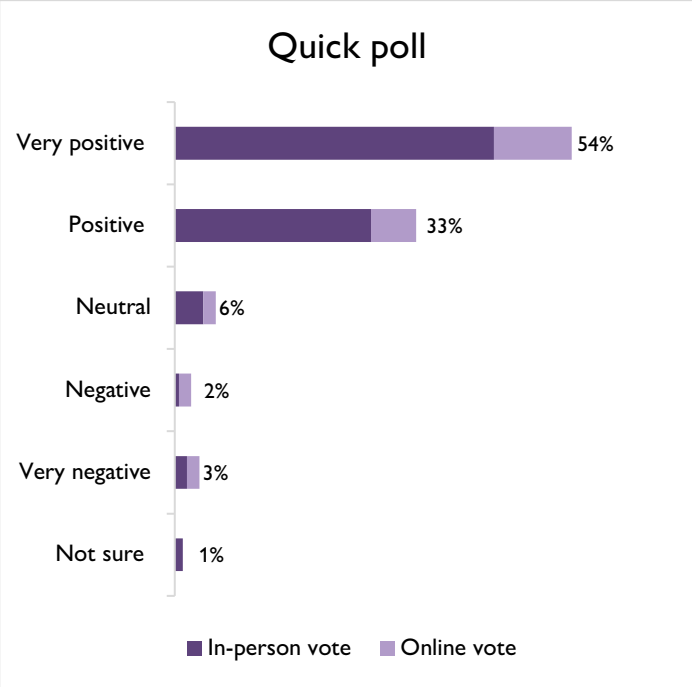
Quick poll

The quick poll survey asked one simple question: *How do you feel about the overall design for the open space?*

It captured high-level community sentiment on the draft design. Community members could vote online or at in-person pop-up events, and the same question was included in targeted sessions with the Youth Engagement Team and Sholem Aleichem College students.

The poll received 178 votes.

- 54 per cent felt *very positive*
- 33 per cent felt *positive* about the design.



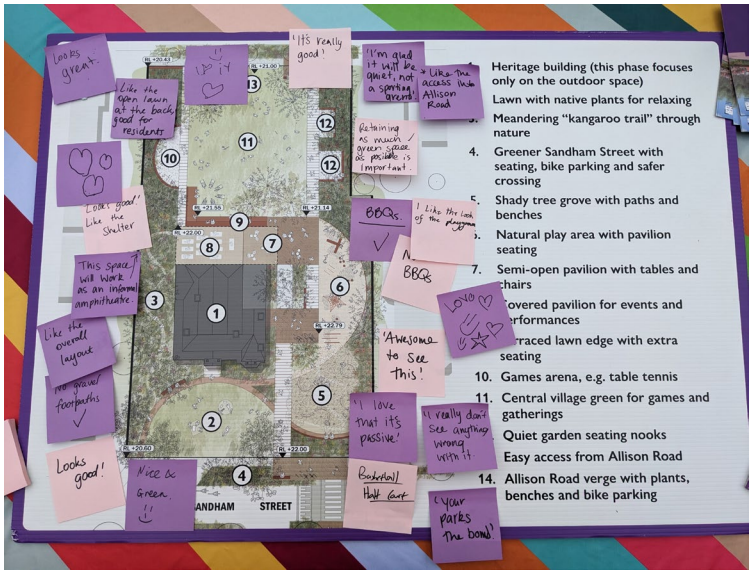


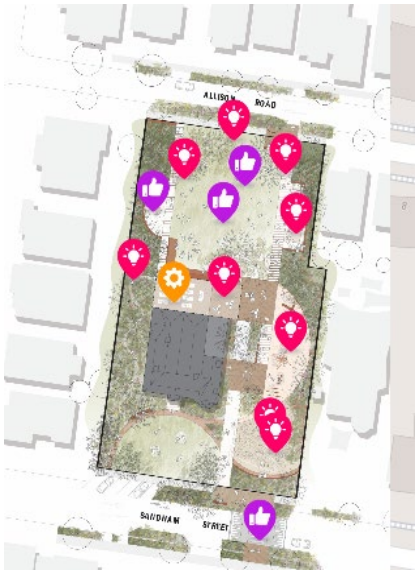
Social Map tool

The map tool allowed community members to share comments directly on the draft design. They could participate online or at pop-up events.

The map received 87 comments overall.

- 14 comments online
- 73 comments in-person.





The most common themes raised in the comments are summarised below. Some comments touched on more than one theme.

60 per cent of comments shared what they liked

63%
Broad support for the design

19%
Green space and passive use

3%
Resident amenity

3%
Play space

3%
Movement and flexibility

- *'I think it's what we're missing here. It's just what we need'*
- *'I like that the emphasis is on open space and greenery, rather than concrete structures'*
- *'I like that the layout. It looks like it should buffer noise for residents on St Georges Road'*
- *'I like the look of the playground'*
- *'Love the fact that you can walk through. Love the open space north and south'*
- *'This space will work as an informal amphitheatre (referring to the pavilion area)'*

39 per cent of comments shared new ideas or suggested improvements

38%
Extra amenities

18%
Safety and accessibility

18%
Sports

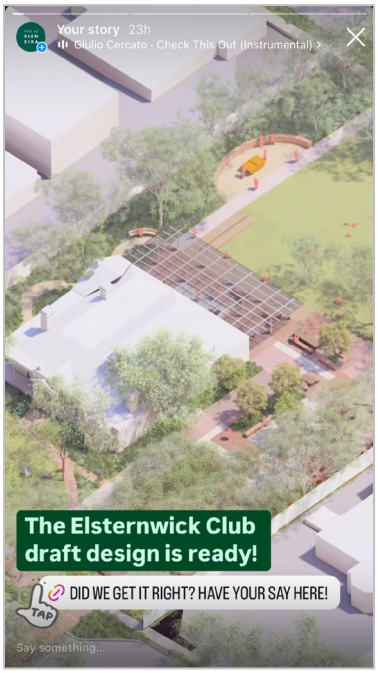
18%
Play space

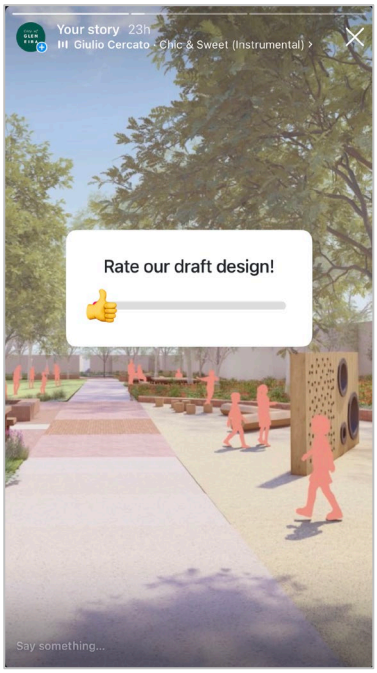
- *'This is a good spot for BBQ facilities'*
- *'No gravel footpaths'*
- *'Add small tennis wall or basketball hoop. No fake grass'*
- *'More informal play equipment, less structured (this is available elsewhere). The climbing nets don't provide high play value. Think about the purpose of the space'*
- *'Another playground for teens'*

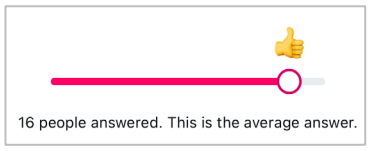
Other comments related to introducing water features or water play areas (9 per cent), dog off-leash areas (3 per cent), parking (3 per cent), and celebrating the history and heritage of the site (3 per cent).

Instagram responses

We invited the community to rate the draft design using an interactive slider on Instagram stories. This quick activity provided another opportunity for community members to share how they felt about the design. Overall, 16 people responded, and the average answer is shown below.







Survey responses

The survey was designed to gather detailed feedback on the draft design to inform potential changes or revisions. Questions were structured into three sections:

- Overall design and user experience
- Site features
- Additional comments

Overall design and user experience

In the first part of the survey, four multiple-choice questions invited feedback on:

- Overall design
- Site layout
- Ease of movement
- Sense of safety

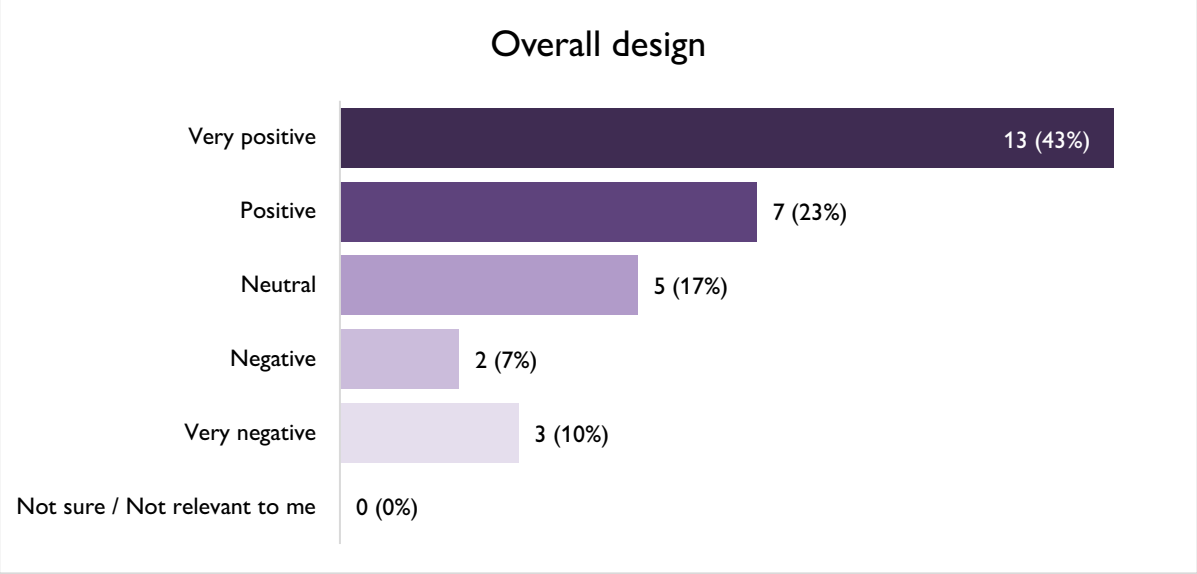
Respondents could also provide open-text comments to expand on their answers (Question five).

Of the 30 respondents, 20 provided additional comments (66 per cent response rate). The most frequent comments are summarised and grouped into themes with the relevant multiple-choice question to give context to the results. Some comments touched on more than one theme.

Question one: How do you feel about the overall design for the open space?

This was a required question. It received a 100 per cent response rate (30 respondents).

- Most respondents felt positive about the draft design (66 per cent).
    - 43 per cent said they feel *very positive*
    - 23 per cent said they feel *positive*.



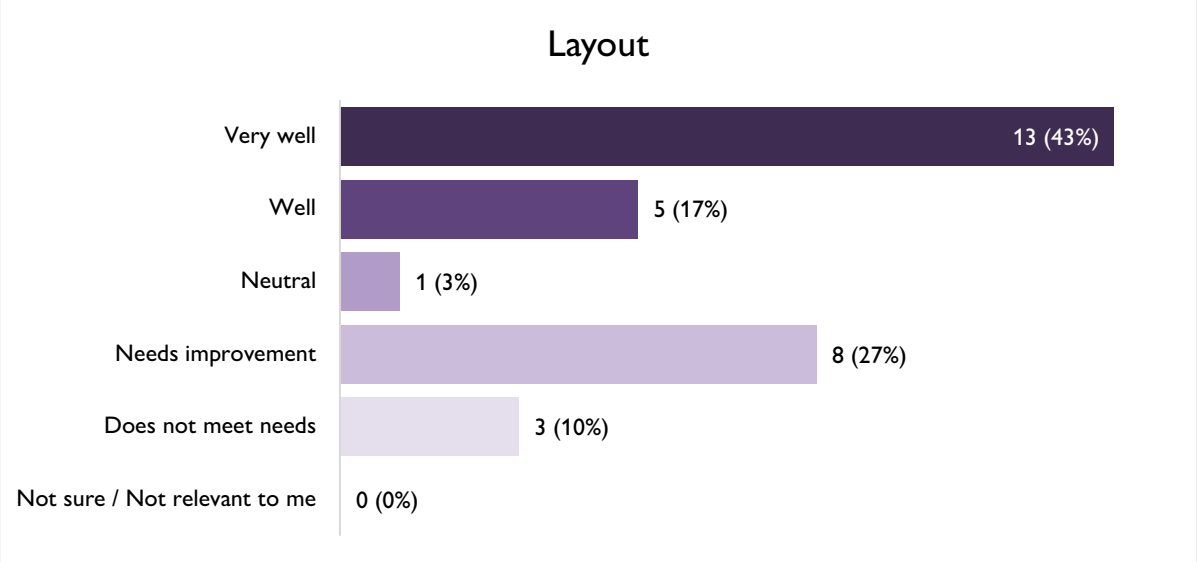
Nine open-text comments related to the overall design (50 per cent of comments).

Theme	Description of comments
Support for the design	• Six comments expressed strong support for the overall design, describing it as well-considered, balanced, and community focused.
Organic materials	• Two comments suggested the design could be less structured and include more permeable surfaces and natural materials.
Critique of design	• Two comments felt the design lacked interactive elements and did not meet expectations.

Question two: How well do you think the layout meets community needs?

This was a required question. It received a 100 per cent response rate (30 respondents).

- Most respondents felt the layout meets community needs (43 per cent).
- Over a quarter of respondents felt that the layout needs improvement (27 per cent).



Five open-text comments related to the design layout (24 per cent of comments) with the most common themes summarised below.

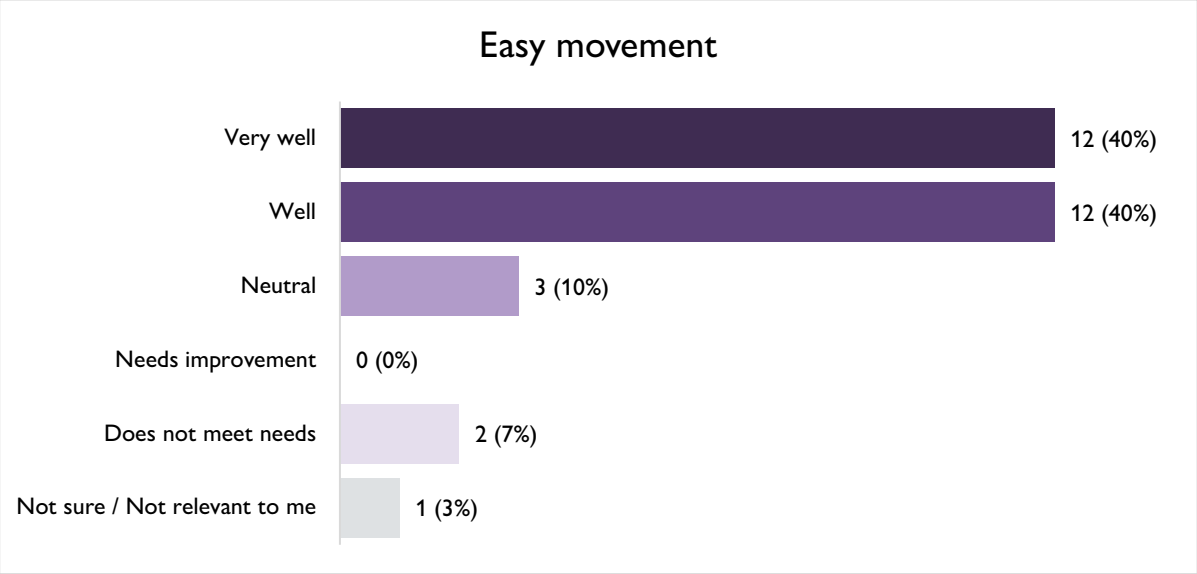
Theme	Description of comments
Expand the play space	• One comment suggested that *The Grove* may be underused and could be removed to expand the play area. • Another comment also highlighted the lack of active space for teens.

Theme	Description of comments
Expand the games area	• One comment suggested expanding the games area (i.e. table tennis area).
Too much pavement	• One comment expressed that the amount of hard surface areas overwhelms other spaces, especially the lawn area.
Too much grass	• One comment expressed there is too much open lawn in the layout. Suggested that native plants and greenery should be prioritised to support biodiversity.

Question three: How well does the design support easy movement through the site?

This was a required question. It received a 100 per cent response rate (30 respondents).

- Most respondents felt the design supports easy movement either *well* or *very well* (40 per cent respectively).



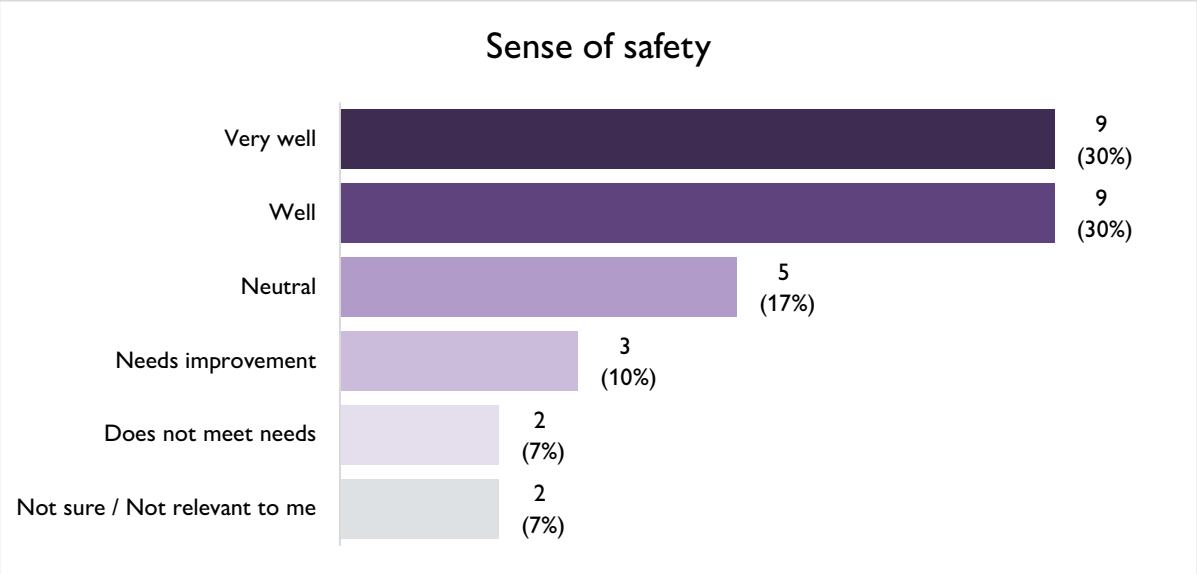
One open-text comment related to easy movement and street access summarised below. (5 per cent of comments).

Theme	Description of comments
Street access	• The comment emphasised the need for good pedestrian links between Sandham Street and Allison Road.

Question four: How well do you think the design supports a sense of safety for people of all ages and abilities?

This was a required question. It received a 100 per cent response rate (30 respondents).

- Most respondents felt the design supports a sense of safety *well* or *very well* (30 per cent respectively).



Six open-text comments related to sense of safety (30 per cent of comments), with the most common themes summarised below.

Theme	Description of comments
Lighting	• Three comments mentioned the need for lighting and noted it should be designed to avoid disturbing nearby residents.
Anti-social behaviour	• Two comments raised concerns about antisocial behaviour and suggested it could be addressed through the design.
Pedestrian crossing	• One comment strongly supported a pedestrian crossing on Sandham Street.
Dogs off leash	• One comment expressed concern about dogs being off-leash and the potential for dog waste.

Site features and materials

This section focused on feedback about key site features. Four multiple-choice questions invited feedback on:

- Seating options
- Play space
- Materials palette
- Types of plants and greenery

Respondents could also provide open-text comments to expand on their answers.

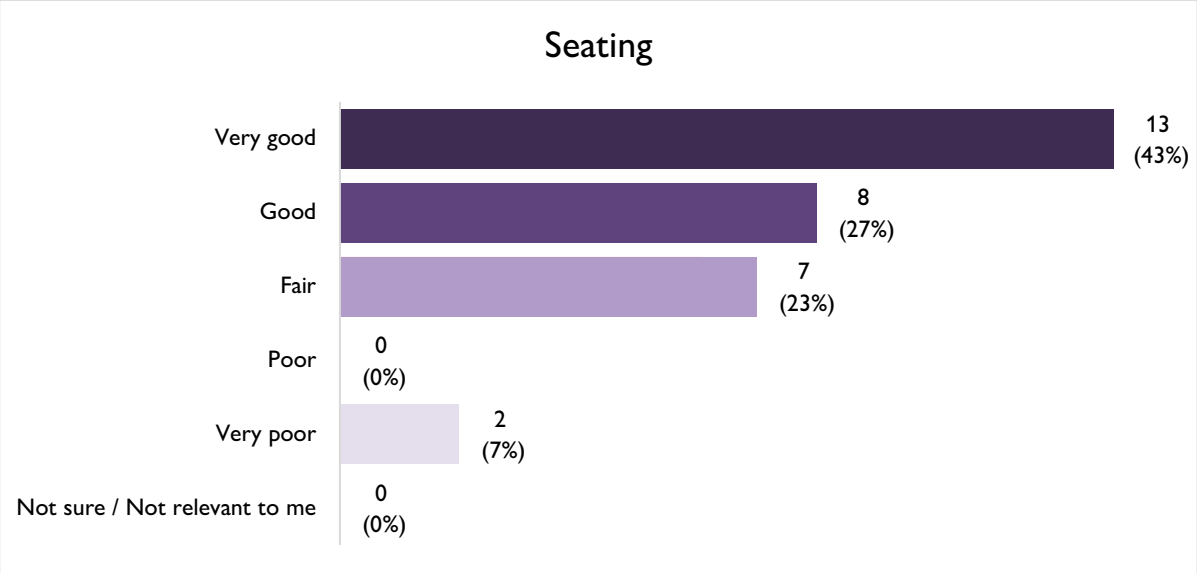
Of the 30 respondents, 18 provided additional comments (60 per cent response rate).

The most frequent comments are summarised and grouped into themes with the relevant multiple-choice question to give context to the results. Some comments touched on more than one theme.

Question six: What do you think about the seating options in the draft design?

This was a required question. It received a 100 per cent response rate (30 respondents).

- Most respondents felt the proposed seating options were *very good* (43 per cent) or *good* (27 per cent).
- Almost a quarter of respondents felt the seating options were fair (23 per cent).



Eight open-text comments related to the seating options (44 per cent of comments).

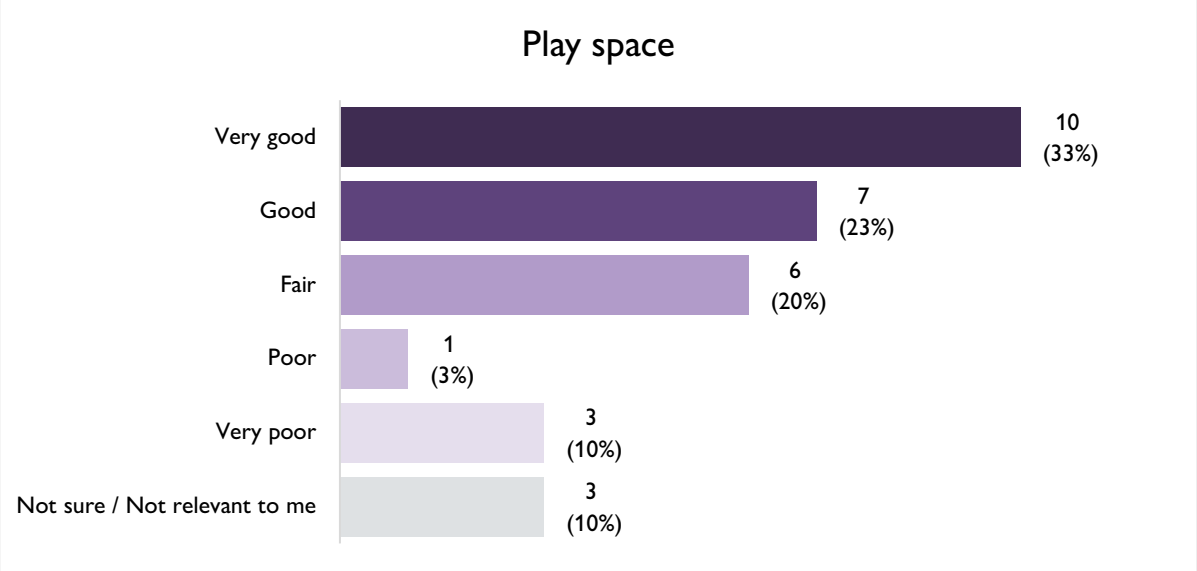
Theme	Description of comments
Accessibility	• Four comments requested more seating with appropriate back and arm support to better meet the needs of older adults.
Play area seating	• Two comments suggested adding more seating closer to the play area to support caregivers and families.

Theme	Description of comments
Sense of safety	• One comment felt the seating needs to be open and visible to support a sense of safety.
Too much seating	• One comment felt the current design includes too much seating.

Question seven: What do you think of the proposed play space?

This was a required question. It received a 100 per cent response rate (30 respondents).

- Most respondents felt the proposed play space was *very good* (33 per cent) or *good* (23 per cent).
- 20 percent consider the play space *fair*.



Seven open-text comments related to the play space (39 per cent of comments) with the most common themes summarised below.

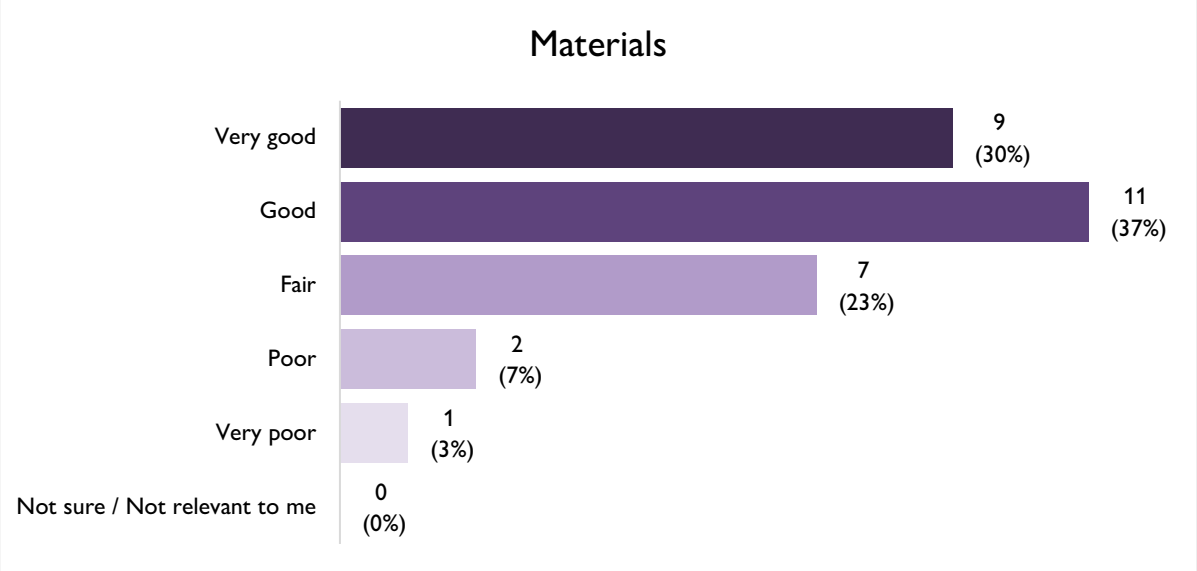
Theme	Description of comments
Expand and diversify play opportunities	• Five comments suggested expanding the play area and making it more engaging for children of all ages. Suggestions included adding a climbing wall, cubby house, water play area, and more than one swing set.

Theme	Description of comments
Prioritise nature play and environmental education	• Two comments suggested using native plants and the landscape itself as an opportunity for learning and playing, rather than relying on built play equipment.

Question eight: What do you think of the materials shown in the draft design?

This was a required question. It received a 100 per cent response rate (30 respondents).

- Most respondents felt the proposed material were *good* (37 per cent) or *very good* (30 per cent).
- Almost a quarter of respondents felt the proposed material were fair (23 per cent).



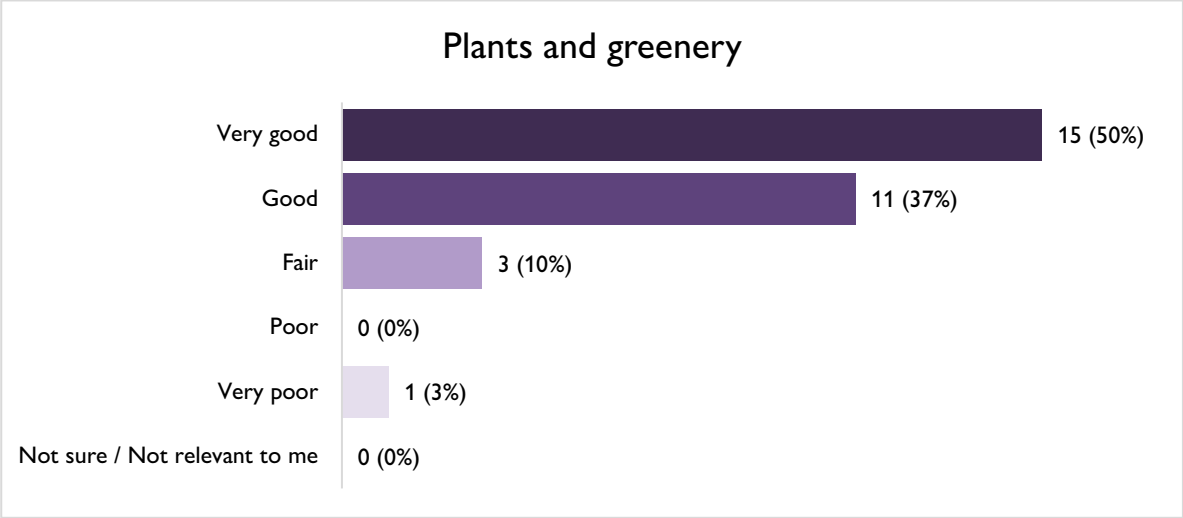
Two open-text comments related to the materials (11 per cent of comments) are summarised below.

Theme	Description of comments
Support for reusing materials	• The comments strongly support reusing and repurposing materials in the design.

Question nine: What do you think about the types of plants and greenery proposed?

This was a required question. It received a 100 per cent response rate (30 respondents).

- Most respondents felt the proposed planting palette was *very good* (50 per cent) or *good* (37 per cent).



Nine open-text comments related to the materials (50 per cent of comments) with the most common themes summarised below.

Theme	Description of comments
Support for native and indigenous plants	• Six comments expressed strong support for using a diverse mix of native and indigenous plants to promote biodiversity and attract local wildlife such as birds and bees. • One comment specifically recommended sourcing plants from the Bayside nursery.
Planting for visual appeal and function	• One comment suggested including more colourful plants to enhance the garden's visual appeal. • One comment proposed using small wattles or similar shrubs along the fence line to help screen the fencing.
Safety and suitability of plant selection	• One comment raised concerns about the height of eucalyptus trees and their potential safety risks. • One comment highlighted that open grassed areas offer little shade in summer and suggested prioritising planting that supports biodiversity.

Additional comments

Question eleven: Is there anything else you'd like to tell us about the draft design?

This was an optional question. It received a 60 per cent response rate (18 respondents).

- 24 per cent shared suggestions for additional amenities like drinking fountains, toilets, and BBQs.
- 18 per cent expressed interest in adding water features and play areas.
- Other suggestions included dog-friendly spaces (18 per cent) and more vibrant, creative elements (including artwork) (12 per cent).

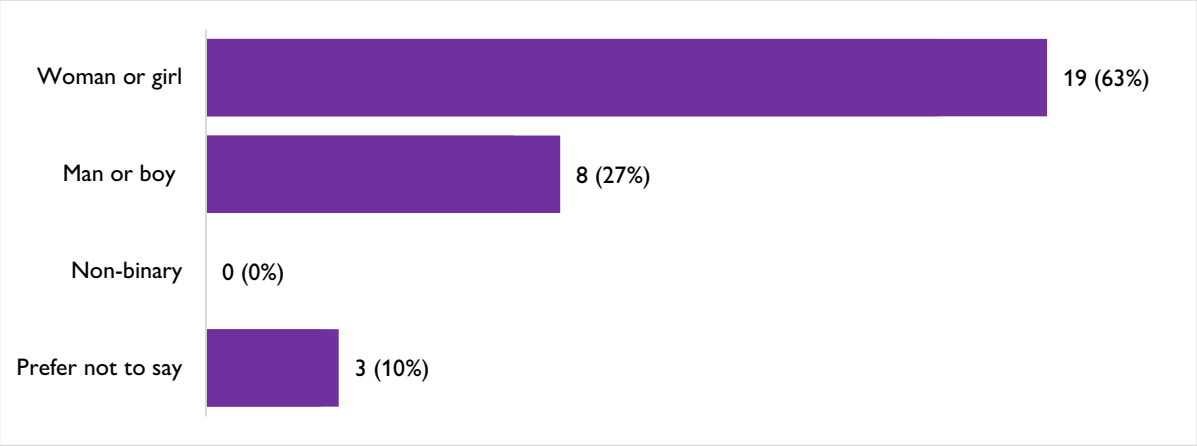
Theme	Description of comments	No. of comments	% of comments
Broad support	• Expressed broad support for the overall design.	4	24%
Extra amenities	• Request for amenities such as drinking fountains, public toilets, and BBQs.	4	24%
Water features and play area	• Requests for a water feature (such as a pond or fountain) and a water play area.	3	18%
Dog off leash	• Request for a dog off-leash area.	3	18%
Creative elements and colour	• Comment that the overall design could be more colourful and vibrant. • Comment supporting incorporating artwork, particularly by a First Nations artist.	2	12%
Informal sports recreation	• Comment noted the lawns should support informal recreation, such as throwing or kicking a ball.	1	6%
Disappointed	• Comment expressing general disappointment in the overall design.	1	6%
Out of scope	• Comments unrelated to the scope of the question or project.	2	12%

Demographic profile

Question twelve: What is your gender?

This was a required question. It received a 100 per cent response rate (30 respondents).

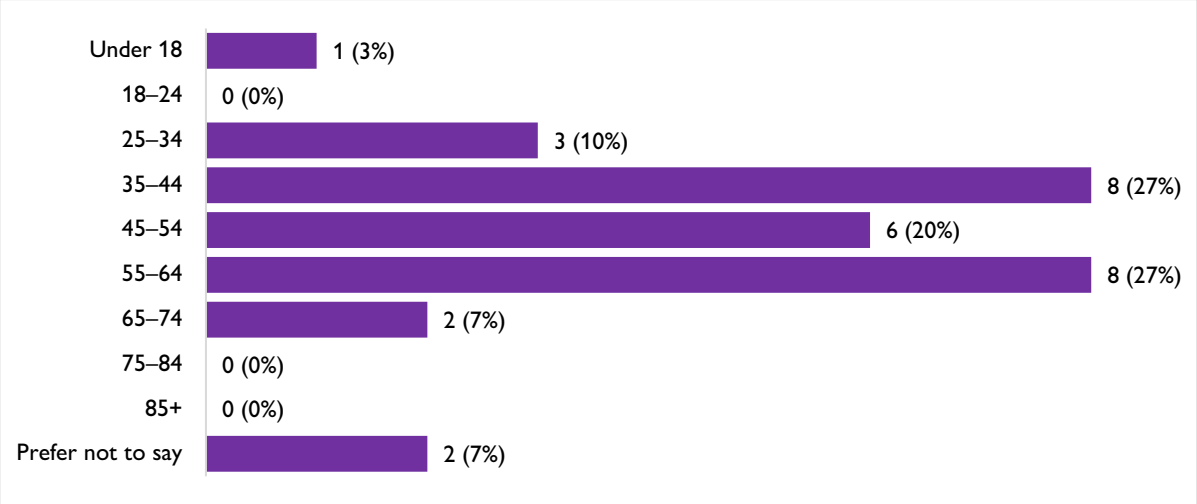
- We mostly heard from women (63 per cent), followed by men (27 per cent).



Question thirteen: What is your age?

This was a required question. It received a 100 per cent response rate (30 respondents).

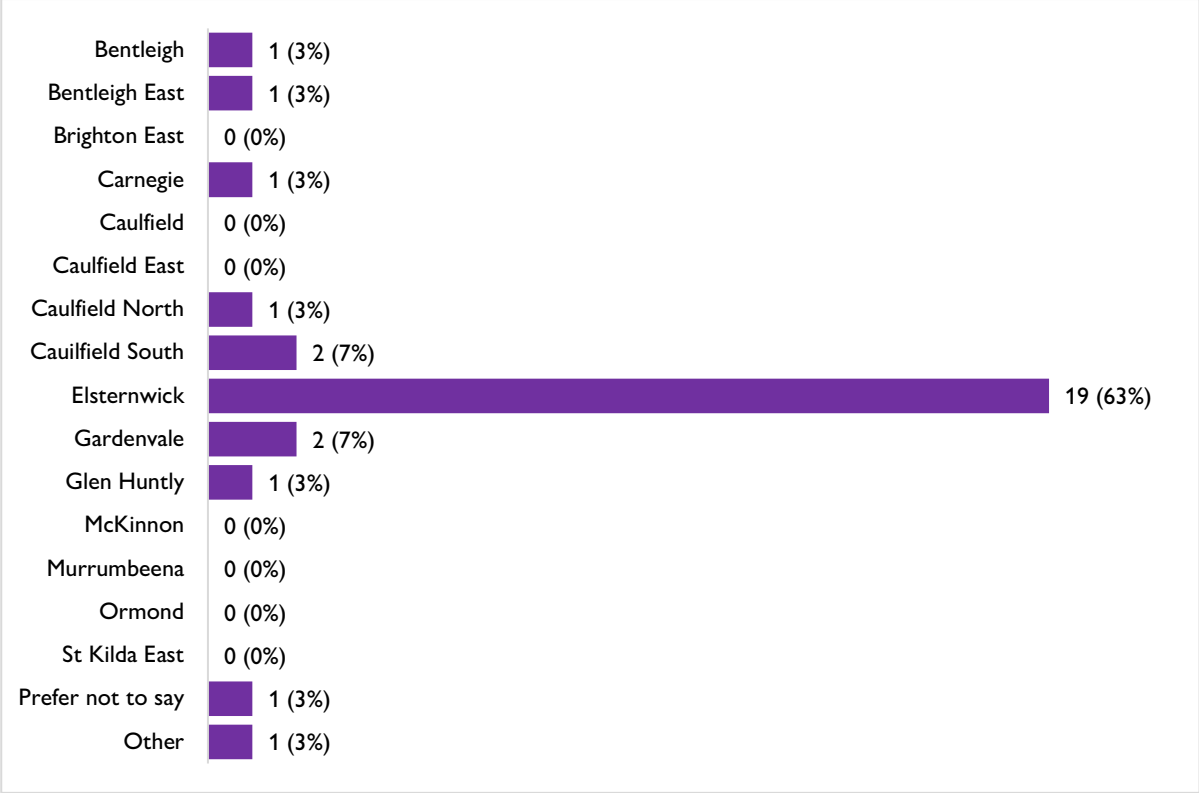
- The top three age ranges were 35–44 and 55–64 (27 per cent, respectively) and 45–54 (20 per cent).
- Some age ranges were not represented in the survey, including 18 -24 and those over 75.



Question fourteen: What suburb do you live in?

This was a required question. It received a 100 per cent response rate (30 respondents).

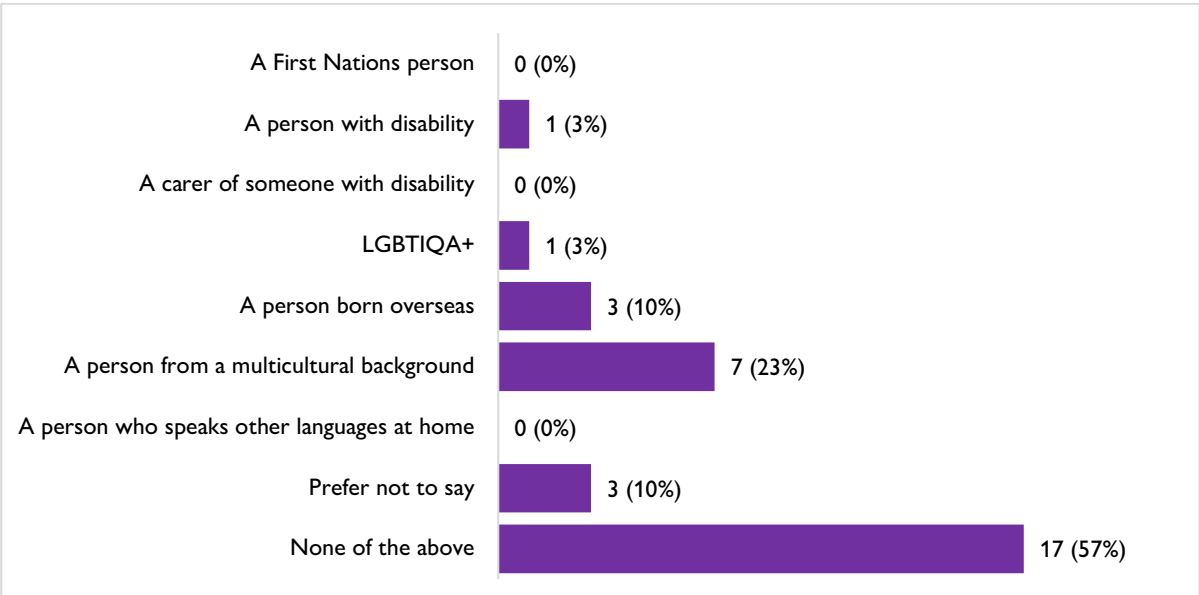
- Elsternwick had the highest suburb response rate (63 per cent).



Question fifteen: Do you identify as any of the following?

This was a required question. It received a 100 per cent response rate (30 respondents).

- 57 per cent of respondents don't identify with a particular identity.
- Of those who did, 23 per cent are from a multicultural background and 10 per cent were born overseas.



Email submissions

During the engagement, **five** email submissions were received. These submissions are summarised below.

Email one

- Overall feedback is positive.
- Appreciates inclusion of quiet spaces, shade trees, and seating.
- Suggests reconsidering how the park interfaces with its surroundings:
    - Active, noisy areas (Village Green and Games Arena) are adjacent to quiet residential streets (St Georges Rd and Allison Rd).
    - Passive, quiet areas (Heritage Lawn and The Grove) are next to busy non-residential Sandham St.
- Requests more clarity on the Allison Road interface:
    - Notes that ideas were discussed at a pop-up event but are not reflected on the plans.

Email two

- Overall feedback is positive.
- Requests that shade trees be deciduous and mainly European varieties.
    - Deciduous trees allow more sunlight in winter, which is important.
    - European trees are considered safer because gum trees can drop branches.

Email three

- Suggests Covered Pavilion be designed to support solar panels and battery storage for daytime power and night security lighting.
- Warns against using clear covering on semi-covered pavilion, as it can trap heat in summer.
- Recommends vehicle collection/drop-off areas at Sandham Street and Allison Road:
    - It should include seating, weather protection, and good lighting for safety.

Email four

- Suggests sloping the lawn opposite the rear terrace to the north.
    - This would create a partial amphitheatre effect and improve visibility of the 'stage' during performances.

Email five

- Overall feedback is positive; appreciates native shrubs, trees, and natural materials — more greenery is encouraged.

- Concern about BBQ area near quiet seating close to homes:
    - Would cause noise and reduce privacy.
- Opposes suggestions for mini golf, sports goals, water play, bike track, and extra play equipment raised in public submissions on the Have Your Say website:
    - Believes these are better suited to larger parks and not aligned with a peaceful green space.
- Requests play equipment for older children be positioned further from nearby properties, ideally towards Sandham Street.
- Concern about noise from events and performances in proposed areas:
- Notes issue with retaining wall causing subsidence; wants future repair considered.
- Requests fencing of suitable height and material, with attention to acoustic properties for noise reduction.

Targeted engagement results

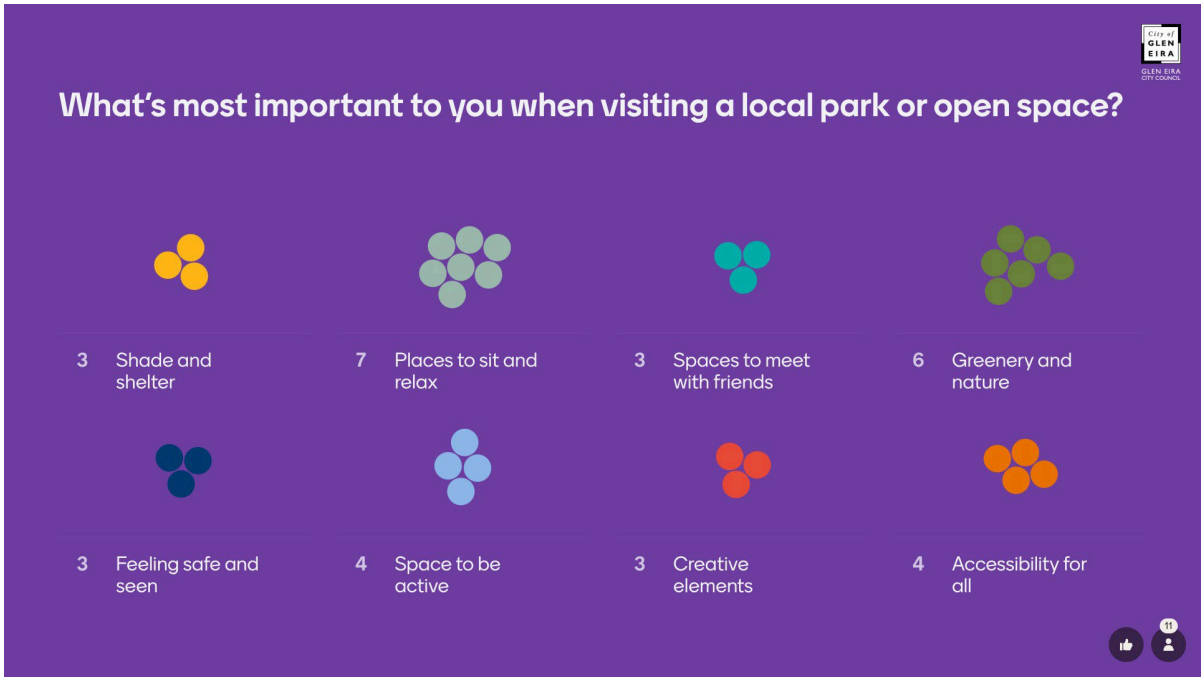
Youth Engagement Team

Glen Eira Council's Youth Engagement Team (YET) brings together youth advocates and leaders aged 18–25. Their role is to support Council projects and help achieve better outcomes for young people in our community.

The team shared feedback on the draft design using an interactive Mentimeter presentation and shared verbal comments as part of group discussion. The questions and results are summarised below.

Most important features for a park or open space

- The top features were **places to sit and relax** and **greenery and nature**.
- Discussion also highlighted
    - Need for spaces that balance quiet areas for study/reading with active areas for socialising.
    - Preference for an open layout that supports passive surveillance; agreement that busy spaces feel safer.
    - Importance of street lighting for safety and usability.
    - Preference for native plants and greenery.



First impressions

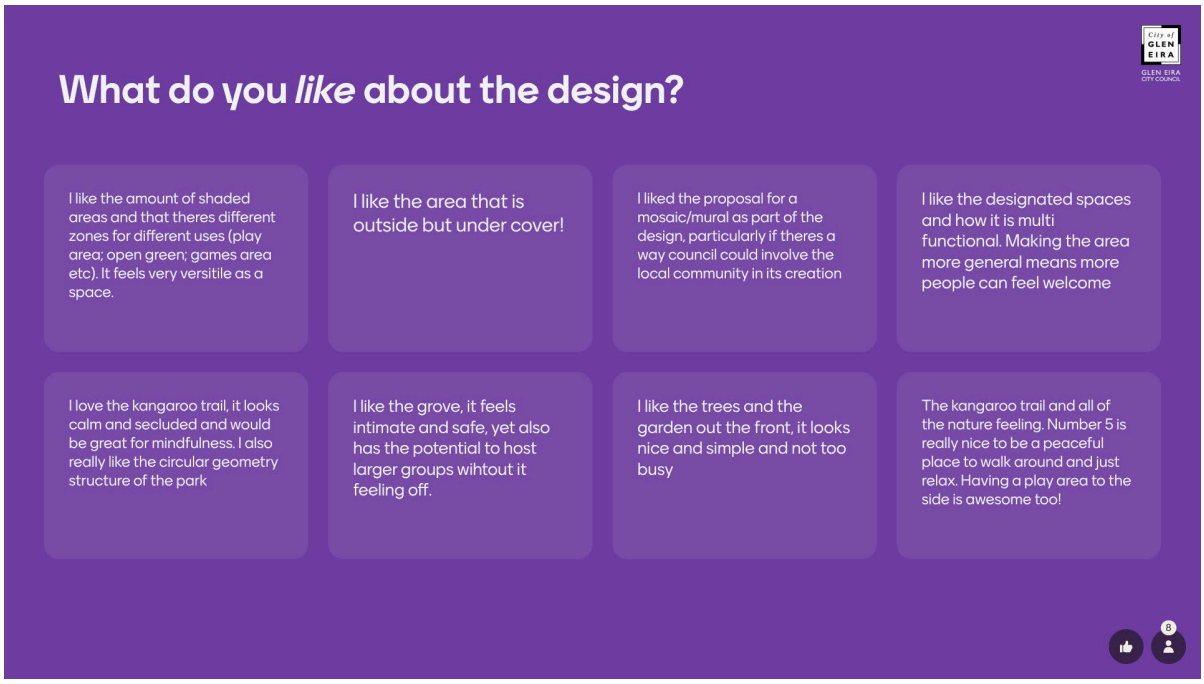
- Many commented on the 'open' design.

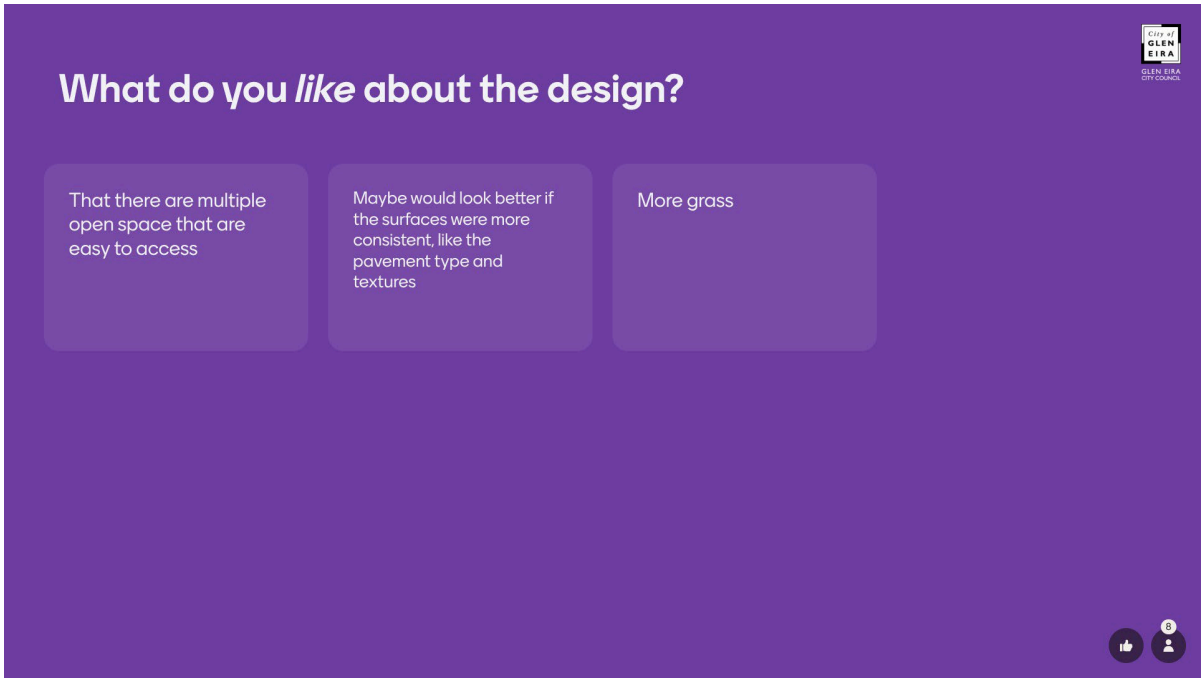


What do you *like* about the design?

- The comments broadly highlighted:
  - Greenery and natural feel
  - Variety of spaces for different uses
  - Quiet, relaxing areas

- Discussion also highlighted
    - Appreciation for the Kangaroo Trail
    - Comments that the design seems overall ‘peaceful and put together’
    - The space has the potential for activation



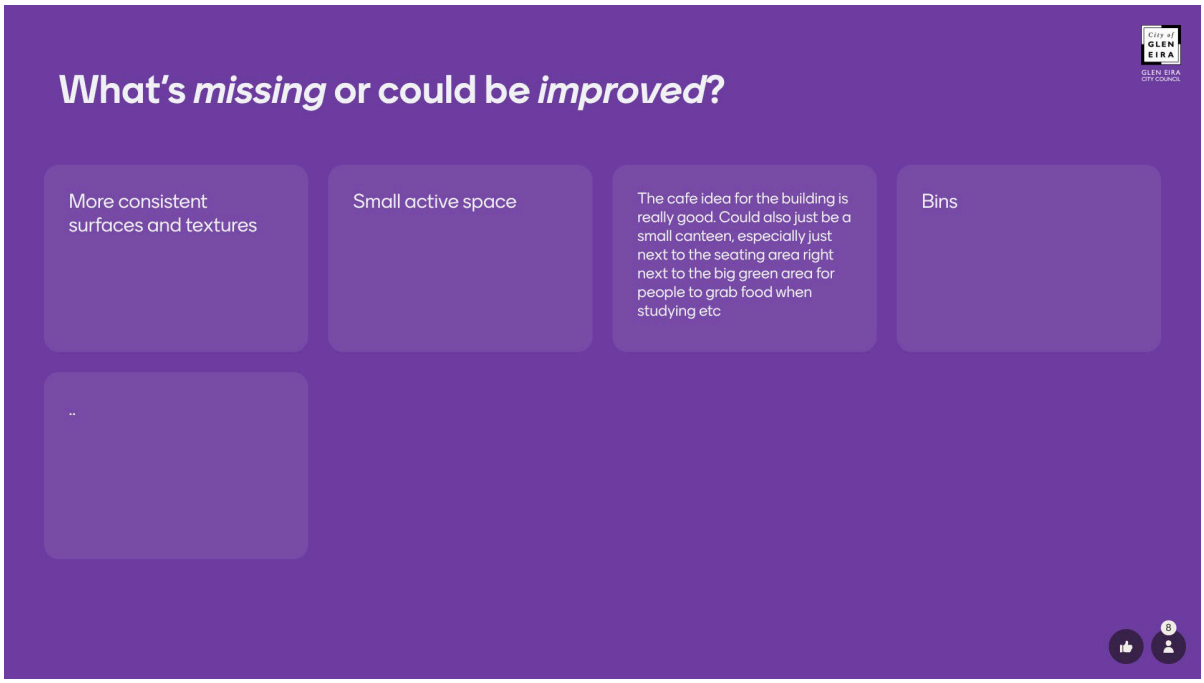


What’s missing or could be improved?

- The comments broadly highlighted:
    - Additional amenities such as bins, BBQs, lighting, charging stations, and Wi-Fi.

- More play equipment for children and options for informal games.
- Different seating (including small tables), consistent surfaces, and shaded areas.





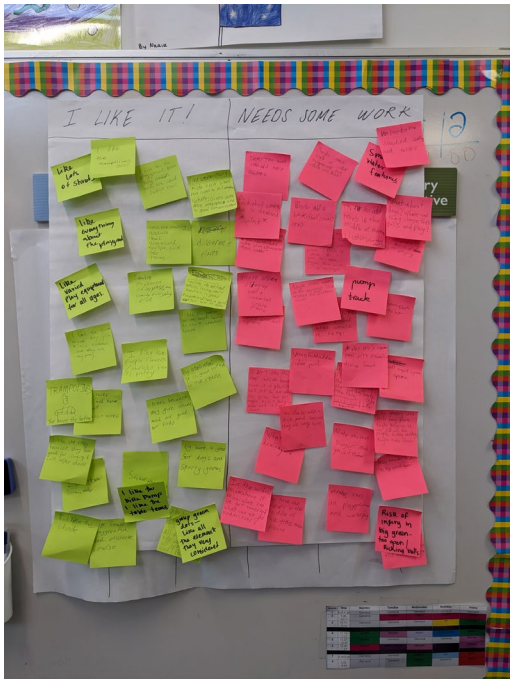
Sholem Aleichem College

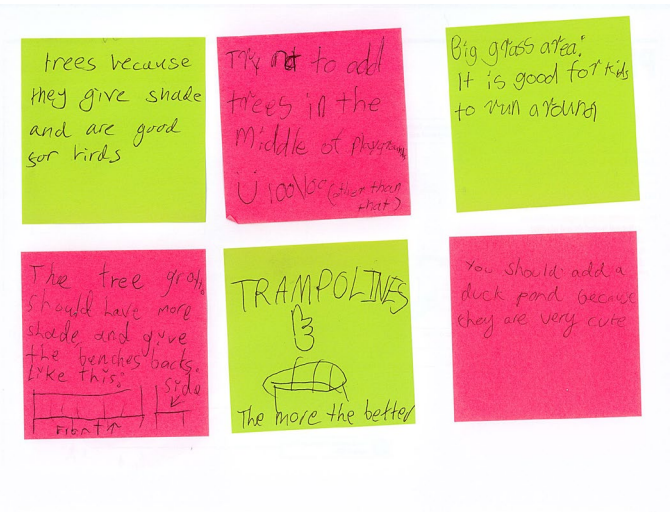
A group of 30 students from Years 5 and 6 at Sholem Aleichem College took part in an interactive workshop at their school.

Students explored the draft design through two activities, then shared comments on what they liked and what they thought could be improved.

In total, 65 comments were captured.

- 28 comments related to what they like
- 37 comments related to what needs work





What they liked about the design

39%	32%	21%	21%	11%
Nature	**Play space**	**Open lawn**	**Seating**	**Social activities**

- *'I like the flowers because they give a nice aesthetic*
- *'Ropes area in the playground'*
- *'Big grass area: it is good for kids to run around'*
- *'Seating: Me get tired easily, having many benches is good'*

- *'Village green is great for picnics'*
- *'Everything is well considered and gels together nicely'*

Their ideas and suggestions for the design


24%

Play space


19%

Sports


19%

Water features


16%

Open lawn


13%–16%

Seating, shade and shelter

- *'More slides and more swings'*
- *'Wall for tennis and soccer'*
- *'Maybe some sort of water equipment for when it's hot?'*
- *'The grassed area is too plain. Request for more shade'*
- *'Less benches – current design is seen that they take too much space'*
- *'In the not ideal circumstance it rains, where can we get cover? And what can we do undercover'*

Disability Reference Committee

Glen Eira Council's Disability Reference Committee (DRC) provides advice on access and inclusion for people with disability. The committee includes people with disabilities, carers, community representatives, and disability service providers.

We attended the committee's quarterly meeting, where members had the opportunity to review the design, ask questions, and provide verbal feedback.

The committee were broadly supportive of the draft design, and will continue to provide input on the project, particularly during the detailed design phase.