

Norwood Reserve Enhancement Plan

Community Consultation Report

May 2023



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1. Background

In July 2020, an assessment was undertaken to determine the condition of 156 mature pine trees at Norwood Park. The health of each tree was assessed and found that some of the pines were infected with a velvet-top fungi (phaeolus sp).

Advanced decay caused by the velvet-top fungi increases the probability of a tree uprooting and falling. This assessment determined that these mature pine trees were at the end of their useful life expectancy and should be removed and the majority of these trees have since been removed.

In late 2020/early 2021, Council consulted with the community on the future of Norwood Reserve.

From this feedback a draft enhancement plan has been prepared based on the community feedback. The plan focused on:

- Strong understory planting as habitat for native small mammals and birds
- Replacement of indigenous canopy trees
- Children's garden and play elements

The draft plan aims to ensure the reserve continues to meet the needs of the Maroondah community.

The different elements of the plan were also available to view during the consultation including the gathering, natural, infrastructure and play elements. Images were also included as examples.

The draft plan aims to ensure the reserve continues to meet the needs of the Maroondah community.

The draft enhancement plan feedback period concluded on 29 January 2023.

SPECIFIC PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS:

- 101 accessible loop trail (grass)
- 102 maintenance track (mud)
- 103 pedestrian access to Warrandyte Road
- 104 dedicated pedestrian connection to Warrandyte Road and bus stop
- 105 nature play elements on embankment and waste
- 106 gathering area to support children and parents activities furnished by bag sitting and low planting
- 107 bridge and treatment across vegetated easels
- 108 3D/2D elements to proposed context
- 109 back break to allow surface water runoff collection into ephemeral planting garden beds & pit
- 110 main interpretative signage and wayfinding
- 111 drainage and surface improvements to existing open learn area including gentle regrading
- 112 amenity planting: groundcover and low planting to define and enhance building entrances and interfaces
- 113 formal seating
- 114 vegetated waste
- 115 drinking fountain & bins
- 116 picnic settings
- 117 bike hoops
- 118 avenue tree planting along Warrandyte Road (provision of visual connections and sound integration)
- 119 supplemented and integrative tree planting to site boundaries and footcloses
- 120 maintenance and structural practices to existing trees
- 121 amelioration of soil conditions and composition of subscape areas
- 122 proposed outdoor play area upgrade to North Ringwood Community Children's Centre (by others)
- 123 zoning circle
- 124 native tree grid planting
- 125 native grassland

PROPOSED LANDSCAPE TREATMENTS LEGEND

- OPEN GRASSED AREA
- AMENITY LAWN/GRASS
- WILD GARDEN BED & VEGETATED DRINK
- COLLAPSE/CONCRETE & LOW PLANTING
- GRAVEL PATH & SURFACE
- EMBANKMENT PAVEMENT
- MULCH SURFACE
- WATER GRASSLAND
- EXISTING ASPHALT SURFACING
- NEW ASPHALT SURFACING
- EXISTING BUILDINGS AND FACILITIES
- PROPOSED TREE

CONCEPT PLAN
Scale: 1:300 (SAT)

WARRANDYTE ROAD

PRELIMINARY

The functional design presented to the community included:

- An accessible loop trail (gravel)
- Maintenance track (mulch)
- Pedestrian access to Warrandyte Road
- Dedicated pedestrian connection to Warrandyte Road and bus stop
- Nature play elements on embankment and swale

- Gathering area to support children and parents activities formalised by log edging and low planting
- Bridge and treatment across vegetated swales
- Water Sensitive Urban Design elements to proposed carpark
- Kerb break to allow surface water run-off collection into ephemeral planting garden beds & pit
- Main interpretative signage and wayfinding
- Drainage and surface improvements to existing open lawn area including gentle regrading
- Amenity planting: ground storey and low planting to define and enhance building entrances and interfaces
- Formal seating
- Vegetated swale
- Drinking fountain & bins
- Picnic settings
- Bike hoops
- Avenue tree planting along Warrandyte Road (provision of visual connections and sound mitigation)
- Supplemented and integrative tree planting to site boundaries and fence lines
- Maintenance and arboriculture practices to existing trees
- Amelioration of soil conditions and composition of softscape areas
- Proposed outdoor play area upgrade to North Ringwood Community Children's Centre (by others)
- Yarning circle
- Native tree grid planting
- Native grassland

Specific Proposed Improvements:

The masterplan provides for a range of activities across the site, to balance the need for healthy social interactions for all ages and low-sensory experiences for quiet reflection. These spaces aim to embed local culture and biodiversity into everyday life to increase feelings of belonging and connection to the reserve and wider community.

Council sought feedback from residents, and the wider community on the draft enhancement plan. Information on the project was available to view and download, was made available on Council's engagement platform, Your Say Maroondah.

2. Community consultation

2.1 Communication channels

Council sought community feedback on the draft enhanced plan from 1 December 2022 to January 30 2023.

A range of communications channels were used to promote the consultation opportunities.

Communications Channel	Reach Statistics
Letter delivered by hand with QR code to Your Say webpage.	Delivered to approximately 50 properties in the surrounding area.
Your Say Maroondah online engagement portal	Email to 923 subscribers of Maroondah Your Say updates on 8 December 2022. 592 opened the email 85 went to the Norwood Reserve enhancement plan Your Say page
On site community consultation	- On site consultations: 15 December 22, 11.30am to 2.00pm; 10 January 2023, 3.30pm to 6.00pm. - Council's project team were present to speak with residents about the project and answer any questions about the design.
Social Media	Facebook: 8 December 2022 and 26 January 2023 Total reach - 13, 451 Click on links to Your Say project page: 27 Instagram: 8 December 2022 and 26 January 2023 Total reach - 3,486 Click on links to Your Say project page: 1
Maroondah eNews	Thursday 15 December 2022 - Sent to 10,224 recipients 36 clicked on link to Your Say project page.
Direct email to surrounding stakeholders and community groups.	A detailed email was sent to stakeholders and community groups within the area with a community information bulletin attached, detailing information on the project consultation. The project team met with North Ringwood Childcare Centre, Senior Citizens Centre and Enjoying Planned Retirement and presented the draft plan, discussed elements and answered questions. Overall, all user groups were very pleased with direction of plan. Interested in the carpark and traffic aspects of design. Very supportive of proposed vegetation.

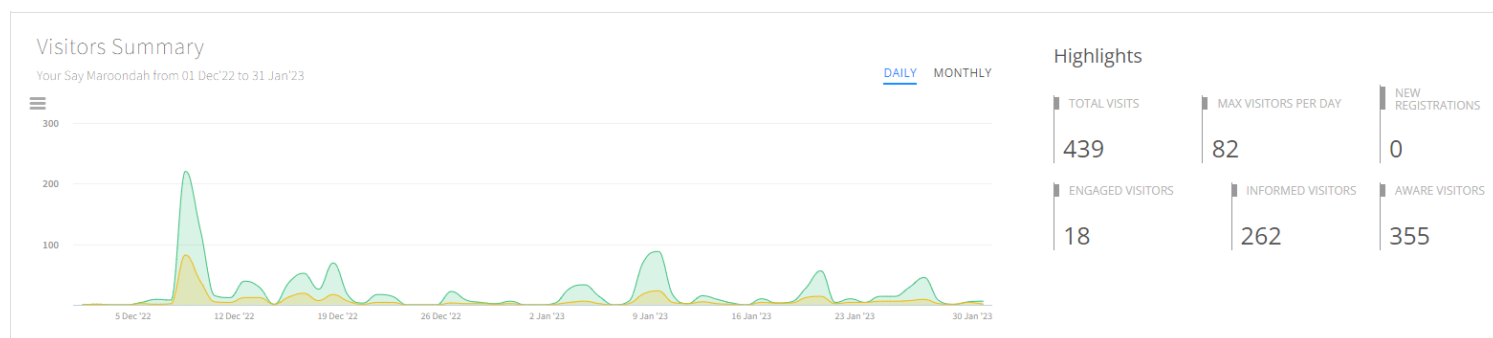
2.2 Consultation tools

Consultation tools	Description	Outcomes
Online	Your Say Maroondah	437 total visits to project page 18 survey responses 1 email submission
In person consultation	For verbal submissions/feedback	Approximately 5 people were spoken to with key themes identified

3. Community feedback

3.1 Online submissions - Your Say Maroondah

A total of 439 people visited the Norwood Reserve enhancement plan page on the Your Say Maroondah engagement website between 1 December 2022 to 30 January 2023. The below image is a summary of visitors to the page during the 8-week period, with a total of 18 surveys completed.



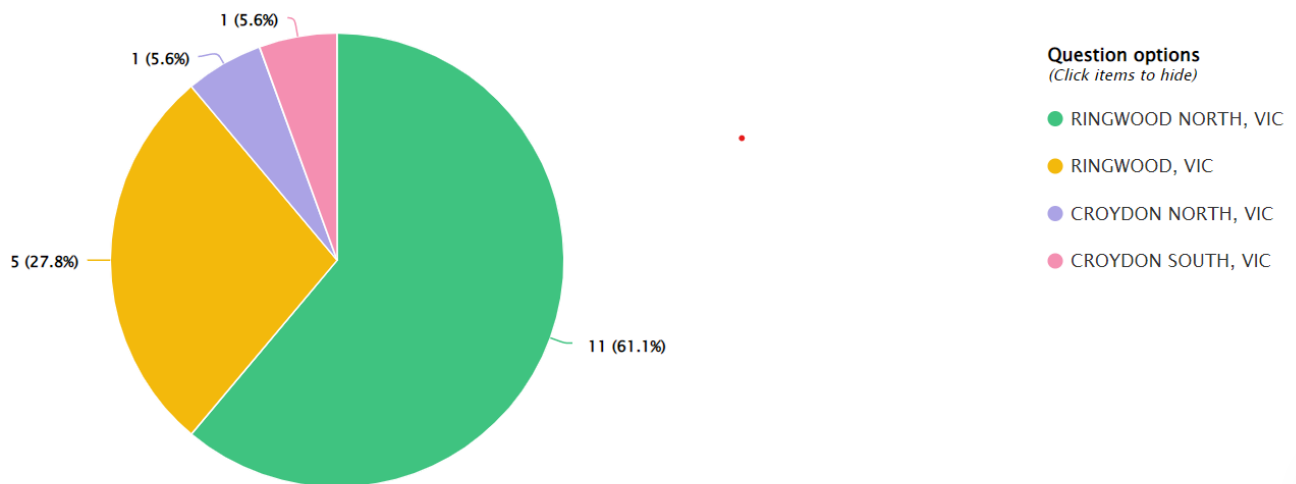
The main spike in activity was around the 10 December period on the graph corresponds with the social media posts on Facebook and Instagram and the email to Your Say subscribers on the 8 December 2022.

The above summary figures are based on the three types of activity with the project on the Your Say Maroondah engagement website:

- **Aware:** Participants that have viewed the project page and are aware that the project exists. This is the result of your promotional activities.
- **Informed:** Participants that have viewed various elements within the project page and are well informed about a subject and take time to think before participating.
- **Engaged:** And, finally, participants who provide feedback and contributions to a consultation.

Visitors to the project page on the Your Say Maroondah engagement website were asked a number of questions and to provide their feedback on the proposed enhancement plan. A summary is provided below.

Where do you live?



1. Comments on the accessible loop trail (gravel)

There were 11 responses. Comments included:

- *Looks great*
- *Good to have a loop trail*
- *It would be lovely if this area was paved for a long-lasting, safer and more elegant alternative (no gravel top ups or potholes).*

2. Comments on a dedicated pedestrian connection to Warrandyte Road and bus stop

There were 11 responses. Comments included:

- *Looks good*
- *Good idea - keeps everyone safe*
- *Pedestrian traffic from Norwood Reserve to the bus stop is minimal so this may not be required.*

3. Comments on nature play elements on embankment and ephemeral area

There were 13 responses. Comments included:

- *Please include more children playground facilities as there are many playgrounds around this area*
- *Would love to see more native, flowering and understory vegetation to support local wildlife here.*

4. Comments on the gathering area to support children and parents activities

There were 12 responses. Comments included:

- *Would be lovely if this was grassed with an undercover rotunda in the centre.*
- *A few park benches or even a table and BBQ that could also be used by the other facilities there.*

- *Very interesting.*

5. Comments on the bridge and treatment across vegetated area

There were 8 responses. Comments included:

- *Terrific!*
- *Would be lovely if the bridge was curved and more ornamental/traditional.*
- *A bridge to protect the vegetation and wetter areas is great.*
- *There is not nearly enough focus on revegetation and addressing habitat fragmentation. I want to see way more focus on nature and supporting wildlife.*

6. Comments on water sensitive urban design elements to proposed carpark

There were 8 responses. Comments included:

- *Thumbs up!*
- *This area could be made smaller on the bend so as cars coming out of the carpark have more room to exit and turn on the bend especially if another car is entering the carpark. There is not enough space for 2 cars to pass each other.*
- *Please keep vegetation low so that when exiting via car visibility is still safe*

7. Comments on interpretative and wayfinding signage

There were 9 responses. Comments included:

- *Good idea to have interpretive signage that acknowledges indigenous vegetation - could also include local fauna too.*
- *Like the natural, indigenous and acknowledgement to heritage.*
- *This is a good idea and should have braille on some signs.*
- *Some history on a plaque about the area you are refurbishing would be a nice touch. Was it part of a farm or orchard back in the day?*

8. Comments on amenity planting: low planting to define and enhance building entrances and interfaces

There were 6 responses. Comments included:

- *Good idea - more flowering plants for native species will be good.*
- *Buffer planting of shrubs and shade trees required on the outside of boundary fence of Children's Centre.*
- *A neat row of trees would be preferable - e.g. Silver Birch*

9. Comments on formal seating

There were 8 responses. Comments included:

- *Ornamental/traditional bench style would be lovely.*
- *Looks good should be more around.*
- *Have shade for seating and a water tap for people and animals. Maybe a dog toilet station with plastic bags available for poo pick up.*

10. Comments on the vegetated swale/ephemeral area

There were 5 responses. Comments included:

- *Great to see more vegetation here. Nest boxes for native species would be wonderful too.*
- *Should be a river with water play.*

11. Comments on the drinking fountains and bins

There were 12 responses. Comments included:

- *Yes, very useful.*
- *Please include all bin types (incl. compost and recycling) and ensure drinking fountain has filtered water (not regular tap).*
- *Will there be water for dogs walked in the park?*
- *This is a great thing for the park.*

12. Comments on picnic settings

There were 12 responses. Comments included:

- *Fantastic, great idea and positioned well.*
- *Perfect spot for picnic settings. This will encourage groups to no longer sit in the carpark.*
- *Please allow for adequate shade.*

13. Comments on bike hoops

There were 5 responses. Comments included:

- *Handy if people ride to the bus stop.*
- *Looks good.*
- *Not sure this is necessary.*

14. Comments on Avenue planting along Warrandyte Road

There were 8 responses. Comments included:

- *Great to have more native shady trees.*
- *Good to shield the park from the road.*
- *Need some to replace pine trees that were removed.*

15. Comments on tree planting at site boundaries and fence lines

There were 8 responses. Comments included:

- *More native trees are great.*
- *Looks good.*
- *Needed for sound barrier for neighbours.*

16. Comments on a Yarning Circle

There were 7 responses. Comments included:

- *Love the idea of a yarning circle, it will be well utilized by the Children's Centre.*
- *Good idea for small events.*

17. Comments on native tree grid planting

There were 7 responses. Comments included:

- *We look forward to having native trees and shrubs.*
- *Yes - excellent. Nest boxes would be great for wildlife too.*

18. Comments on native grassland

There were 7 responses. Comments included:

- *Yes, excellent. Need more of this.*
- *Please keep natives 'well-manicured', or otherwise keep simple grass and European style trees.*
- *Looks good.*

Feedback from the question '**other comments on the draft enhancement plan**' can be divided into three broad categories:

Response	Number
Key themes/comments in support of the proposed enhancements	2
Key themes/comments in support with other enhancements in the area	10
Key themes/comments not in support of the proposed enhancements	1
Total	13

Key themes/comments in general support of the enhancements

- *Great work. I think it looks awesome!*
- *It is a great plan, thank you.*
- *I really love all the thought that has gone into this project. I attended to meeting in the park to discuss the future of the park. I love that you are happy for community input.*

Traffic

- *I would like to make comment about the exit onto Warrandyte Rd. I understand Warrandyte Rd is a DoT responsibility however I am hoping that Council will advocate for pedestrian lights, or safe way to exit the park when turning right onto Warrandyte Rd. It can be impossible for vehicles exiting the park to make a right-hand turn due to the volume of traffic on Warrandyte Rd.*
- *Please consider having a sensor for triggering Warrandyte Road and Loughnan Rd traffic lights to break up traffic, when exiting. At peak hour times leaving the car park it is near impossible to turn left out into traffic and having this as a community space will only bring longer queues to exit this space and make car users make more risky behaviour than it already does.*

Access to the Children's Centre

- *The road to access the Children's Centre needs to be made wider on the bend (intersection of the new Nth carpark to east carpark) as presently two cars are unable to use. Maybe also signage that children are in the area so please drive slowly.*

Other facilities

- *I work as a neurological physiotherapist and am keen to consider more innovative ideas to encourage all ages to be active and encourage social engagement, fun and fitness/ preventive health strategies.*
- *A designated children's play equipment area is needed as we either need to cross busy Warrandyte Road to go to Mullum Mullum Rd playground or walk on local roads pushing a pram as there are no footpaths.*

3.2 Email submissions

One email submission was received.

3.3 On site consultation

On site consultations took place on:

- 15 December 2022 at 11.20am to 2pm
- 10 January 2023 at 3.30pm to 6pm

The community were able to discuss the project with Council's Planning team.

Large print outs of the proposed design were displayed at the event, allowing attendees to review the designs and ask any questions they had.

Attendees were then asked to provide their feedback either in writing or via Council's Your Say platform, by scanning the QR code available on the display posters.

4.0 Conclusion

Feedback from this phase of community consultation indicates a high level of support for the project, as well as number of key themes.

5.0 Next Steps/Update

Thank you to everyone who provided feedback on our draft enhancement plans for Norwood Reserve. The plan was endorsed by Council in March 2023, with staged works and improvements to take place over the coming years.

The enhancement plans were developed based on feedback from key stakeholders and members of the community, to help ensure Norwood Reserve meets the future needs of our community.

Proposed improvements anticipated for the coming years include:

- A flexible open space
- Canopy trees, understory and avenue planting
- Nature play elements
- Improved signage, seating areas and car parking