Consultation Outcomes 2014

Background

The City of Melbourne is developing an urban forest precinct plan for Kensington, which will guide tree planting for the precinct over the next ten years. A workshop was held by the City of Melbourne Urban Forest Team for local community members to participate in the development of the precinct plan. On 16 March, 2014, approximately 90 community members attended a 3-hour Sunday morning workshop at the Kensington Community Recreation Centre. For more information on Melbourne's urban forest and the urban forest workshops, visit melbourneurbanforestvisual.com.au.

What We Were Told: Community Workshop, 16 March

Place We Value

Participants were asked to introduce themselves to the other people at their table and to identify their favourite landscapes in Kensington. The Participatory Mapping methodology for this exercise was developed by Dr. Dave Kendal from the Australian Research Centre for Urban Ecology and the results are being used to guide the development of the precinct plans, and for Dr. Kendal's research into what people think about street trees in urban streetscapes.

Participants were provided with a sheet of stickers and a key that defined what each colour represented. Each colour sticker represented one of the following values or an area in need of more trees:

1. Civic: These areas are important because they contribute to the identity of the city, make the city more welcoming or help market the city to national and international visitors.
2. Natural: These areas are important because they represent natural places where trees and other plants can grow, where birds, animals or insects could live, or natural processes can occur.
3. Culture and heritage: these areas are important because they represent human history and allow me or others to continue and pass down the wisdom and knowledge, traditions, and way of life of our ancestors.
4. Social: these areas are important because they provide opportunities for meeting or being with other people for social or sporting activities.

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5. Life sustaining: these areas are important because they help produce, preserve, clean, and renew air, soil and water and they provide shade and protection from wind or rain.
6. More trees needed: These areas would be improved by more or new tree planting.

Participants were asked to place stickers representing one of five values (Civic, Natural, Culture and Heritage, Social, Life Sustaining) on maps of the Kensington precinct. Map 1 indicates all the places/streets which were identified by the participants as valued places. The polygons were created in ArcGIS software by running a kernel density analysis of the sticker points and then converting those to polygons to show outlines of where values were located. For maps of each value, please see Appendix1.

Map1. Places valued by participants

Kensington Precinct Plan

Locations for More Greening

Participants also used stickers to identify locations where more trees were needed and the locations are shown in Map 2.

Map 2. Opportunities for tree planting identified by the participants

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Preferences for the Future

Each table was given a set of the same 21 photos. Participants were asked to divide the photos into three groups based upon the future urban forest character they envisaged for Kensington. Photos were to be grouped into the following:

1. Photos that best represent the future of Kensington.
2. Photos that represent the future you don't want; you are unsure about or cannot agree upon.

Depicted below are the combined photos chosen as the best representation of the future of Kensington.

Participants were then invited to add a word or phrase to each preferred image on post it notes:

Photo No.	Reasons why selected
Photos selected by all tables (9 out of 9)	
No. 2	shade, canopy, soften the building environment, buffer from traffic and building, canopy, shade, human interaction, heritage, shade, height, reducing heat island effect, shade,
No. 5	Multi-level, large canopy, separate traffic, shady walkway, cooling effect, shade, aesthetic appeal, walking path, different layers of planting, lighting = safety at night, shade but not too dense, separate traffic, light+shade, canopy, shade, human interaction, grass under trees create important water and biodiversity benefits, pleasant walking environment, separate from traffic and building, shady pedestrian space,
No. 12	Calming, structural, social, shade in summer, walk space separate from cars, making full use of the space, canopy, increasing property price, dappled light, potentially low maintenance, shade, corridor, good for pedestrians, canopy, colour, heritage, shade, human interaction, height, shade, shady avenue, pretty leaves, shady pedestrian area,
Photos selected by 8 out of 9 tables	
No. 24	Plant in open space, nice colour, colour, shade in summer, light in winter, mixed, diverse landscape, colour, seasonal, colour, colour, iconic, colour, canopy, canopy, colour
Photos selected by 7 out of 9 tables	
No. 3	shade, density, screening ugly building and infrastructures, shade, canopy,
No. 14	Autumn foliage, winter sun, summer shade, seasonal, autumn colour, colour, seasonal, colour, colour,
No. 19	Beauty, canopy, seasonal, colour, tree lined streets create greater values for property, blossoms, spring blossom,
No. 28	Good canopy, beauty, interacting trees and streets, trees hide ugly buildings, good use of trees alongside the streets, big canopy and avenues,
No. 32	shade, good clean space for activity, height, shade, nice open space, great canopy for public space, good mix of overhead and ground coverage, ideal for parklands, good for kids climbing, mix of shade and sun, great combination of shade and public space,
No. 42	Native diversity, human and nature integrated environment, good for fiver and natural parks, diversity, natural habitat, interactive, beautiful walking space, soften connection between hard and soft environment, multi-storey shrubs, native landscape, variety of greenery, height, natural walking tracks, great variety of plantings,

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A summary of these key words from all the tables has been combined into the following Wordle.

Character Story - Kensington

Once each table had agreed upon a set of photos with descriptive key words, participants were asked to imagine Kensington in 2024 and invited to write a character story for the urban forest in that imagined future:

Table 5	Kensington has been dubbed Australia's most **beautiful** suburb - blossoms, multi-coloured canopies and carefully tended avenues with exotics and eucalypts line Kensington's streets. **Sustainable landscapes engage the community by creating a space to gather, socialise, play & grow food together.** Park areas have large trees that provide shade and a place for kids to climb (mulberry trees?). Some areas have fragrant bush s**mell**s which give residents & visitors a sense of wellbeing - as well as attracting birds, insects (bees!) and animals. We take water recycling seriously, so our trees are planted with **Water Sustainable Urban Design**. These world - class spaces set Kensington apart as Melbourne's most sustainable suburb.
Table 8	Kensington is a great place to live. There is year round **visual and seasonal interest** in our street trees, with mature tree canopies providing cooling shade in the summer. The trees attract native animals and birds to the environment while also creating attractive outdoor living spaces for people to enjoy reflecting the history of the area. **The river and creek** is lined with native forests providing **habitat for native animals** and birds. Orchards in pocket parks provide **fresh food for** residents.
No table number given	I love seeing the seasons change through our trees. Our colourful trees attract visitors to vibrant communal areas - we are known as a green, leafy suburb. I'm glad for diverse mix of trees. I love picking fruit from trees on the footpath and **urban food forests**. I love the understorey and grasses that add to the **habitat v**alue. I love contributing to **green walls and roofs** in Kensington.
Table 7	Three kms from the centre of Melbourne is a **tranquil, diverse village providing seasonal variation in its complex multicultural community**. An amazingly beautiful canopy of colour and variation provide interest, shade and entertainment for walkers, cyclists and visitors alike. Thanks to a decade of sensible planning, this diverse and exciting urban forest is **self-supported by an advanced storm water recirculation system.** The community has worked hard alongside the Melbourne City Council to create beautiful pocket gardens, **comfortable shaded and sweet-smelling meeting places**, small playgrounds and an abundance of beautiful sports grounds. This caring, sharing approach extends to encouraging volunteers and professional [illegible] home gardens and community vegetable and fruit tree gardens. Unlike any other suburb so close to the CBD, Kensington is a 21st century oasis in a 19th century historically iconic part of this great city of Melbourne. Well done Kenno!
No table number given	Shady avenues of trees in summer; Deciduous; Seasonal feel; Different zones - bushland, parkland, social areas; Enhancing community cohesion more accessible community gardens; Cooling of the city internationally recognised streetscapes; Celebration of community life + land;
Table 6	Kensington**: inner city living with a country ambience**. Your senses will be inspired and tantalised by the diverse mixture of native frangipanis, lemon scented gums, jasmine + peppercorns. Wander in a shade of tree canopies - something to strike your interest throughout each season. The urban features of this suburb are **buffered by the greenery**, allowing the sounds of birdcall + country soundtrack to filter through. Plenty of space for children to play and the local community to socialise, including the community gardens, cycling tracks + recreational parks. All these futures have been carefully planned as part of the **ecologically sustainable model**.

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Table 9	What strikes the visitor to Kensington are the cool, tree - lined boulevards, the community gardens, social spaces being used and enjoyed by a variety of citizens of the community. One sees people living the cycle of the land in an urban setting through community gardens, orchards and seasonal celebrations. **A self-sustaining suburb**; Kensington village; Green leafy suburb; A cooler, progressive suburb;
No table number given	Residents and visitors to Kensington love the oasis of Kensington, so close to the city, but with a slower, relaxed, calm pace. We can hear the sounds of the bush even though Citi link and train lines are just there! Where the focus is about nature rather than concrete. Our trees keep our homes and precincts cool, our community is creative and in harmony. **The community, both private industry and residents, are known for their own creativity in the way they apply green to their own spaces**.
Table 4	Kensington is **a feast for the senses**. The outdoors attract residents and visitors alike with: distinct, tree line streets for people, cyclists & motorists; cool, shady picnic spots along the river & former 'wasteland' rail lines. Ten years back the community guided the reinvigoration of this place from older [illegible] to an urban forest. The different types of urban forest include: native plants with wonderful scents & chirp of various birds, deciduous trees & plants that track the passage of time & changes in seasons, areas that provide food for all. The urban forest merges with residential areas, providing aroma, native life & colour. The residents are attracted outside to share the outdoors with their community.

Some story highlights:

- 'Kensington is a feast for the senses.'
- 'The community, both private industry and residents, are known for their own creativity in the way they apply green to their own spaces.'
- 'Inner city living with a country ambience'
- 'This diverse and exciting urban forest is self-supported by an advanced storm water recirculation system'
- 'Sustainable landscapes engage the community by creating a space to gather, socialise, play & grow food together.'

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What We Were Told: Online Conversation

The online conversation is continuing at http://participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au/participate-melbourne

Comments to date have supported:

- Increasing shade to provide cooling and protection from the sun, with a focus on streets, parks, play grounds, bus stops and along the Maribyrnong River.
- Planting trees that enhance the amenity of the Younghusbands and Mill precinct
- Planting the right tree in the right place
- Adding a nature strip to Tennyson Street
- Encouraging private landowners to plant trees on their properties

Comments sent to Melbourne Urban Forest email:

- I would urge you to consider making a small display of trees that are chosen specifically for their Autumn display. This would be an unusual feature for the inner western suburbs, but could bring a wonderful splash of colour to the neighbourhood each year.
- Increase the planting and landscaping along Bellair and Eastwood Streets
- A shady/canopy arbor over the walkways through Holland Park.
- Flowering things that look amazing and draw in birds and bees. A canopy of established vibrant pink crepe myrtles or alternatively a wisteria arbor would be fabulous.

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Summary of Key Messages from Kensington Consultation

Kensington is a diverse and engaged inner city community with a strong sense of local identity. The future urban forest in Kensington will sustain the community through the provision of shade and cooling, sensory stimulation, social opportunities, food and ecological diversity. It will be a water sensitive inner city oasis.

Desired future states defined by the community:

- Green, leafy, native
- Shady, sheltered from wind
- Varied in colour, texture, scent, understory, seasons, height, shape
- Social, evocative, peaceful, natural, vibrant, elegant
- Connected to the water
- Water sensitive

Urban forest benefits highlighted through community consultation:

- Shade
- Biodiversity
- Aesthetic beauty
- Psychological benefits (e.g., sense of calm, soothing etc.)
- Social cohesion
- Cultural (e.g., indigenous trees, nativeness, connection to water)\
- Wind mitigation
- Water capture and storage

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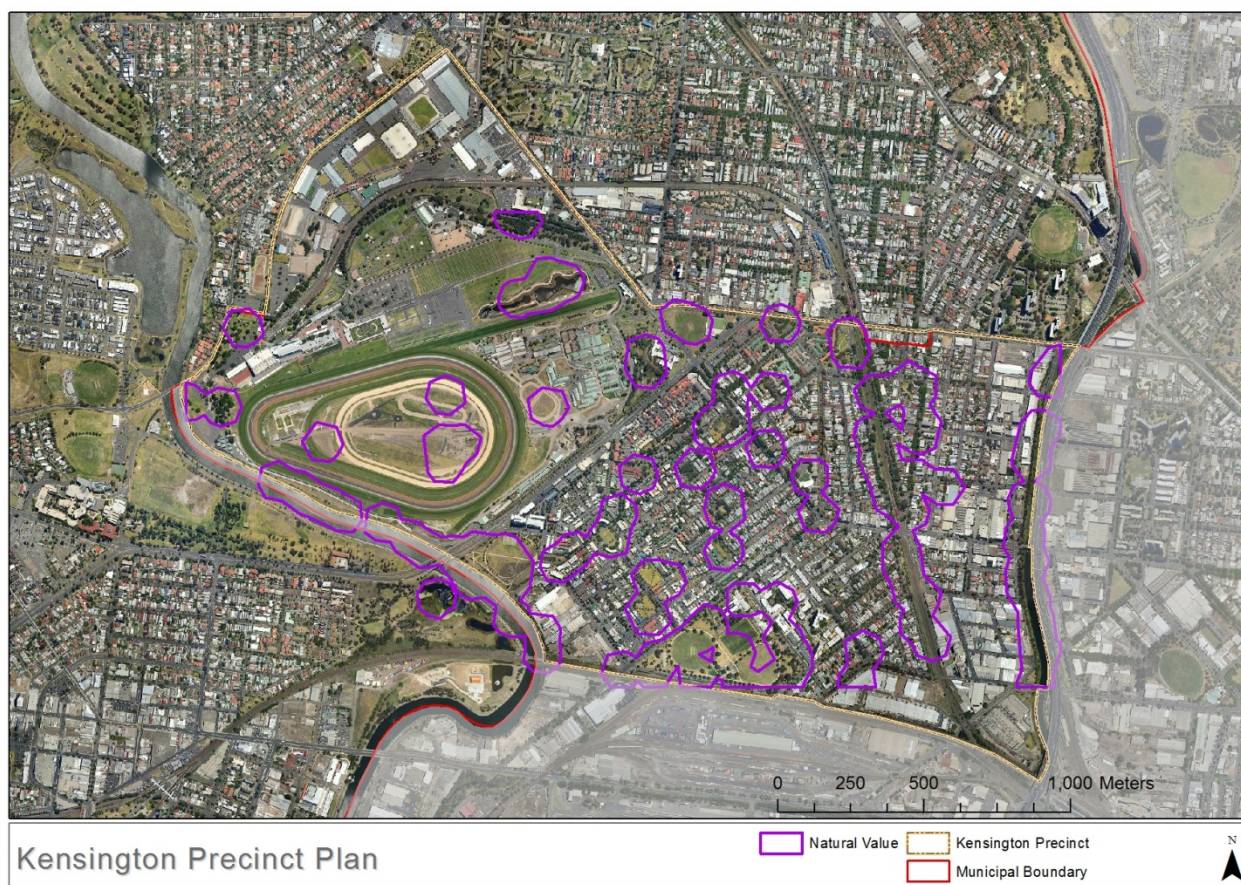
Map – Places identified for civic value

These areas are important because they contribute to the identity of the city, make the city more welcoming or help market the city to national and international visitors.

Kensington Precinct Plan

Civic Value	Kensington Precinct	
Municipal Boundary		

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Map – Places identified for natural value

These areas are important because they represent natural places where trees and other plants can grow, where birds, animals or insects could live, or natural processes can occur.

Kensington Precinct Plan

Legend:
- Natural Value
- Kensington Precinct
- Municipal Boundary

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Map – Places identified for culture and heritage value

These areas are important because they represent human history and allow me or others to continue and pass down the wisdom and knowledge, traditions, and way of life of ancestors.

Kensington Precinct Plan

Map – Places identified for social value

These areas are important because they provide opportunities for meeting or being with other people for social or sporting activities.

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Map – Places identified for life sustaining

These areas are important because they help produce, preserve, clean, and renew air, soil and water. And they provide shade and protection from the wind or rain.

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