cvFunding

Hawke Street Linear Park

ENGAGEMENT ANALYSIS

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For



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# Key findings

The key findings that emerged in community feedback about the proposed Hawke Street Linear Park were:

* Overall, support for the proposed changes for Hawke Street significantly outweighed opposition, with 73% of survey respondents either ‘very’ or ‘somewhat’ supportive.
* The introduction of green space was felt to be a key benefit for the community. Respondents emphasised the importance of greenery and open space for mental and physical wellbeing, as well as the aesthetic and environmental benefits of introducing more plants into urban areas.
* Respondents felt that the overall quality of life of those who live around Hawke Street would be improved by the upgrades. Comments indicated that providing a more pleasant environment for people to spend time in, whether they are lingering or passing through, would improve the ‘community feel’ of the area and encourage more people to connect with one another in nature.
* Commonly raised benefits included increased safety for pedestrians and cyclists due to limited and slower traffic, and reduced noise and air pollution.
* Respondents who were ‘very’ or ‘somewhat’ unsupportive of the proposal (19%) generally did so based on specific concerns around traffic and parking.
* It was noted that finding parking was already believed to be difficult for residents and businesses in the area, and that heavy traffic jams are common at peak times. Respondents felt the linear park would be likely to exacerbate these issues – or displace traffic onto other streets – and that new developments in the area would further increase this pressure.
* Safety for both cars and pedestrians was also raised as a concern by those who opposed the plan. The proposed removal of the Adderley Street roundabout was commonly questioned, with respondents noting that it acted as a traffic calming measure and that they feared accidents would increase if it were removed.
* A small proportion of respondents raised points regarding accessibility, concerned that removing parking spaces might disadvantage groups such as older residents, those with disabilities, and families with young children.

# Consultation background

City of Melbourne is proposing to enhance the quality and function of public space in Hawke St, West Melbourne. Hawke Street is a very wide paved road that runs between Railway Place and Victoria Street. It has two small parks with a substantial amount of parallel and median-strip parking along its length.

Between 26 March to 25 April 2021, City of Melbourne sought public feedback on a preliminary concept to reduce through-traffic, improve bicycle and pedestrian connectivity, and ‘green’ the entire length of Hawke Street.

Approximately 1200 letters were sent to properties in and around Hawke St and 6400 e-newsletters inviting locals to share their thoughts on the proposal. Information about the proposed changes was published on the Participate Melbourne website, along with an online survey.

Respondents could contribute by either by filling out the online survey, sending feedback in an email or letter to City of Melbourne, or by phoning City of Melbourne’s Transport and Amenity Program team. Over-the-phone language translators were available.

Overall, 153 individuals contributed their views through this engagement process. This consisted of:

* 137 surveys
* 4 phone calls
* 10 email submissions
* 2 letters

# Analysis methods

Five survey questions required respondents to either rate their sentiment on a scale or select the most relevant answers from a set of multiple-choice options. These responses have been collated and presented by global research analysts as charts, indicating the relative frequency of each type of answer. Note that for simplicity of presentation, the percentages within these charts have been rounded from their actual decimal places and may appear to equal slightly more or less than 100%.

Three open-ended questions were also included in the survey. Each comment received from the community has been organised into themes and topics based on the points made. Some comments contained multiple points, relevant to multiple topics, resulting in a number of comments being coded to multiple places. The analysis was assisted by NVivo qualitative analysis software.

Analysts developed a coding schedule based on the desired objectives for the project, as listed by City of Melbourne and the content of comments. New topics were created and comments coded to these as they arose, ensuring all comments and the points made were included in the analysis. Narrative themes from email submissions and phone calls have been coded within the same structure and synthesised alongside survey comments in the ‘Other considerations’ section of the report.

To give a clear and consistent indication of the proportion of comments received on each topic, the following key was used to describe the relative number of comments on each topic:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Number of comments | Written as: |
| 3 comments | a few |
| 4—7 comments | a small number |
| 8—14 comments | several |
| 15—24 comments | a moderate number |
| 25—49 comments | a considerable number |
| 50—74 comments | a substantial number |
| 75—99 comments | a sizeable number |
| 100—149 comments | a large number |
| 150+ comments | a very large number |

Throughout the following sections of this report, a range of direct quotes have been included. These have been chosen because they typify the sentiments described, and share with the reader the ‘voice’ of the community. Where there are obvious spelling or grammatical errors, these have been amended for clarity.

# Who responded

Below is a synthesis of feedback received from the public throughout this engagement.

Note that the charts that are presented in the section are based solely on the responses received via the online survey form, and do not include the respondents who provided a response via email, letter or over the phone. However, the thematic analysis of written responses comes from all responses received, including emails, letters and phone calls.

### Connection to Hawke Street

**Respondents were asked:** *What is your primary connection to Hawke Street.*

Options were: *I live / work / own property in Hawke Street; I travel through Hawke street; Other.*

##### Findings:

* The most common connection that respondents had to Hawke Street was ‘*I live / work / own property in Hawke Street*’, with just under half of respondents selecting this option as their response (47%).
* A similar number of respondents selected ‘*I travel through Hawke street*’ (28%) or ‘*other*‘ (26%).
* Respondents who selected ‘*other*‘ were asked to specify their connection. Almost all of these comments were from respondents who lived or worked nearby, including on Adderley St, Errol St, King St, Miller St, Roden St and Spencer St. One comment was from a person considering moving into the area.

**Respondents were asked:** *How long have you been based in the neighbourhood?*

Options were: *0-3 years; 4-7 years; 8+ years; I’m not based in the neighbourhood.*

##### Findings:

* The most common response to this question was that respondents had been based in the neighbourhood for eight or more years (38%).
* Respondents who had been based in the neighbourhood for zero to three years made up the second-largest group (31%).
* Only 7% of respondents indicated that they were not based in the neighbourhood.

### Awareness of West Melbourne Structure Plan

**Respondents were asked:** *Are you broadly familiar with the West Melbourne Structure Plan?*

Options were: *yes; no; not sure.*

##### Findings:

* Almost three quarters of respondents (74%) were broadly familiar with the West Melbourne Structure Plan.
* Seventeen percent (17%) of respondents were unfamiliar with the Plan, while 9% were unsure about their familiarity with the Plan.

# Results

## Levels of support for the proposal

|  |
| --- |
| Summary findings  * Support for the proposed Hawke Street Linear Park (73%) significantly outweighed opposition (19%). * Those who supported the plan to repurpose some of Hawke Street’s road space for park space felt that this would improve the overall look, feel and function of the area.   + Respondents supported the addition of trees and green space for its aesthetic, health, and environmental benefits.   + Traffic calming measures were praised, with respondents noting that this would make the area safer and more pleasant to be in.   + Respondents felt that the quality of life for those living in the area would be improved by the proposed changes, and that community feel would be enhanced. * Respondents who were unsupportive of the proposal for Hawke Street were concerned mostly with experiencing a shortage of car parking and traffic disruptions.   + Respondents argued that parking on Hawke Street is already difficult, and that this would be exacerbated by the proposed changes.   + Increased congestion and difficulty accessing homes and businesses were concerns shared. |

**Respondents were asked:** *Overall, how supportive are you of the concept of repurposing some road space along Hawke Street for green parkland?*

Options were: *1: very unsupportive; 2: somewhat unsupportive; 3: neutral; 4: somewhat supportive; 5: very supportive.*

##### Findings:

* Almost three-quarters of respondents (73%) were either *very supportive* (69%) or *somewhat supportive* (4%) of the concept of repurposing some road space along Hawke Street for green parkland.
* Nineteen percent (19%) of respondents were either *very unsupportive* (18%) or *somewhat unsupportive* (1%) of the proposal.
* Only 7% of respondents felt neutral or ambivalent about the proposal.

## Reasons why the concept was rated this way

**Respondents were then asked:** *Why do you feel this way about the concept?*

Feedback has been categorised based on the level of support for the proposal that respondents indicated in the above question.

##### Very supportive 156 comments

There were significantly more comments made by respondents who were *very supportive* than any other group.

###### Support for more greenery (46)

The most common topic discussed by respondents who were very supportive of the proposal was appreciation for more greenery in the area. The majority of comments were general in nature, simply expressing a desire for more green space in West Melbourne or noting a current lack of green space in the area. Other more detailed comments expanded on the benefits they felt would arise from increasing the amount of greenery in the area, including health and wellbeing benefits; environmental benefits; opportunities to encourage more biodiversity; and generally creating a more pleasant environment.

The comments received about green space can be represented by the following examples:

We would like to see more green space. We have a small house and this solution would allow us to enjoy open green space at our doorstep.

Green space is vital for mental health and well-being in our communities.

Because I think too much of the West Melbourne area is just concrete on concrete. Alongside the proposal for the shopping mall/mega car park at Queen Vic. More nature and green areas would be such a breath of fresh air in such a commercial area.

###### Supportive of reduced traffic (31)

The proposed reduction in traffic on Hawke Street was also widely praised by respondents in this group. Comments made about traffic reduction expressed general enthusiasm about the prospect of having a quieter, calmer, and safer street.

Around one third of comments were general in nature, making statements such as “I love the traffic calming“, or “will hopefully reduce the traffic moving along Hawke Street”. Other more specific comments suggested that reducing the traffic along Hawke Street would make the area safer for pedestrians and cyclists, would reduce noise, and would generally improve the amenity of the area and make it a more pleasant place to be.

Some examples of comments received about traffic reduction include:

Reducing traffic flow here will increase the ‘liveability’ of the area.

Calming traffic really works to increase local amenity

More green space and fewer cars would make this neighbourhood so much more friendly

I live on Hawke St and the traffic noise is often loud

###### Community feel, quality of life (20)

A moderate number of comments argued that the liveability of the area would be improved if the proposed changes are carried out on Hawke Street. These comments suggested that providing the community with additional green, open park space would encourage people to linger and enjoy the renewed area.

Among these comments was the general view that the Hawke Street Linear Park would increase the wellbeing and quality of life of local residents and increase the “community feel”. A few examples of the comments made on this topic include:

I am excited about this change to the aesthetics of the area - I find that large trees and open lawns improve my sense of wellbeing as I walk from one place to another.

There will be more opportunities to meet neighbours, relax outdoors, enjoy the quiet.

A small number of comments also made the point that increased park space would make the area more appealing to future residents, and would help to offset the vast amount of construction that has been happening in the area. One respondent commented:

I think the more green space added to our area will be needed to offset the very high density building that is currently underway. It will definitely add to the aesthetic of the area and hopefully build a good community feel.

###### General support (19)

Generally supportive comments were made by a moderate number of respondents. These comments varied, but all indicated overall support for the project. Statements ranged from expressions of trust that the project would improve the area, to praise for elements of the project design.

###### Support encouraging active transport (11)

The proposal’s considerations for cyclists and pedestrians were praised by several respondents, who argued the importance of encouraging active transport for health, environmental, and social reasons.

Two respondents expressed support for the proposed addition of separated bike lanes as they would make cycling safer and more pleasant, and another commended the inclusion of a shared path in the proposal, noting that this is a great use of the repurposed road space.

###### Good to prioritise people not cars (8)

Several respondents noted that the proposed changes to Hawke Street shifts the priority from cars to people, which, they argued, is the way that things should be. The following comment sums up the sentiment shared by this group:

For too long people have focused too strongly on everything being designed around cars so sacrificing a small amount of spaces, that are mostly unused, to benefit the overall community is a fantastic concept. Providing parkland benefits thousands each day with a beautiful place to walk and relax on weekends or after work.

###### Environment (6)

The environmental benefits of repurposing road space on Hawke Street for parkland were mentioned in a small number of comments. These comments noted that reducing the amount of concrete and increasing greenery in the area would have a cooling effect, encourage more non-automotive (active) transport, and contribute to a reduction in car use.

###### Safety (5)

A small number of respondents commented that they hoped the proposed changes would make Hawke Street safer for everyone, especially cyclists and pedestrians.

###### Removal of parking spaces (3)

Two respondents argued in favour of reducing the number of car parks in the area, stating that car parking is “unnecessary car storage on public land”, and that the proposal for Hawke Street better reflects community needs than the current street design which prioritises cars over people and nature. One respondent, however, was opposed to the removal of parking spaces for this project.

###### Suggestions or requests (2)

One respondent noted that maintenance needs to be well considered to ensure that the resulting green space is able to be enjoyed, while another respondent suggested:

I would encourage the City to block off the entrance into Ireland Street at Hawke Street and extend the park over that, creating a quiet cul-de-sac for residents of that street. I have no objection to the park moving to the north side of the street given the large number of cross-overs on the south side.

###### About the process (1)

One respondent suggested that there should be “proper consultation with the community by means of a face-to-face meeting” before the revised Hawke Street Linear Park plan is released, holding up the West Melbourne Structure Plan as an example of an engagement that truly consulted with the community. They felt a face-to-face meeting would ensure genuine consultation and that community voices are considered during the revision process.

###### Other (4)

A small number of other comments were made that did not fit into any of the above categories. These comments included a call to ban developers from erecting more apartments in the area, a request for City of Melbourne to remove plane trees from the area due to allergies caused by their pollen, and concerns that traffic may be diverted onto neighbouring streets.

##### Somewhat supportive 9 comments

###### Traffic issues (3)

A few comments expressed concerns about disruptions to traffic flow that may result from the proposed changes on Hawke Street if it is reduced to one lane of traffic.

###### Support for more greenery (2)

Two comments indicated that increased greenery in the area would be a positive outcome.

###### Removal of car parking (2)

Two comments were made about the removal of parking spaces; one was in support of reducing the number of parking spaces, the other in opposition.

###### Shared path (1)

One respondent argued that separate cyclist and pedestrian paths would result in a safer, more enjoyable space than the proposed shared path.

###### Other (1)

One respondent requested that City of Melbourne remove plane trees and replace them with flowering gums to attract bird life to the area.

##### Neutral 13 comments

###### Against the removal of parking (6)

A small number of respondents expressed concerns about the proposed removal of parking spaces on Hawke Street. These comments argued that parking is already an issue for residents and visitors to the area, and suggested that changes should be made to ensure residents are prioritised in parking considerations.

###### About the process (3)

Three respondents made comments relevant to the consultation process. One comment expressed a need for more information before the respondent felt they could decide whether or not they support the proposal, while another argued that by focusing solely on one street, the plan fails to acknowledge the impact of beautification and traffic mitigation on surrounding, equally residential streets.

A third comment expressed scepticism of the engagement process, questioning whether community feedback will truly be used in the decision-making process.

###### Traffic issues (2)

One respondent worried that travel to their home in Ireland street would be made increasingly difficult by the proposed changes, while another noted that they felt City of Melbourne could be more innovative with their approach to traffic management/calming efforts in the area.

###### Safety concerns (2)

Safety was mentioned by a couple of respondents. One respondent expressed concerns about the proposed shared path, noting that shared pedestrian and bike paths create an environment for accidents, particularly when there are elderly people or children sharing the pathways. Another respondent shared concerns about walking in the area at night.

##### Somewhat unsupportive 3 comments

Only three comments were made by this group, each touching on a different topic.

###### Impact on traffic (1)

One respondent noted a lack of traffic engineering and consideration of how changes will affect traffic on adjoining streets.

###### About the process (1)

One respondent questioned why the proposal only focused on Hawke Street and ignored neighbouring areas such as Adderley Street and Railway Place.

###### Parking (1)

One respondent expressed concerns about the reduction in parking spaces, especially given the increasing number of apartments being built in the area.

##### Very unsupportive 45 comments

###### Against removal of parking spaces (19)

The proposed removal of 49 parking spaces in the area was the most commonly discussed topic amongst respondents who were very unsupportive of the proposal. A moderate number of comments all expressed a similar sentiment – that parking is already difficult, and that this will only be exacerbated by the removal of parking spaces. A couple of comments that capture this sentiment follow:

You have removed 49 car parks, where are we meant to park???? We are a single car family reduced from 2 cars because parking is impossible during the day.

I think it will make traffic worse and parking harder than it already is. It’ll just makes my life harder.

A few of these comments noted that increased demand on car parking created by new developments such as the Don Kyatt building was not taken into consideration during the planning process of this project.

###### Impacts on traffic (6)

A small number of respondents argued that the proposed roading changes on Hawke Street would only cause traffic congestion, making it more difficult for people to drive in the area.

One respondent, however, supported changing the road layout on Hawke Street to one lane of traffic, though they expressed concerns about other elements of the plan.

###### Negative impact on businesses (4)

Four respondents argued that reductions in parking spaces and disruptions to vehicle access would have a negative impact on local businesses who rely on delivery vehicles having easy access to their premises and customers being able to park nearby.

###### Concerns about the shared path (3)

Two respondents argued that shared paths are dangerous for both cyclists and pedestrians, particularly elderly people and young children, while a third noted that the shared path is seemingly a “path to nowhere”, rather than a key link.

###### General opposition (3)

Two respondents argued that the plan prioritises some users of the space over residents and rate payers, while a third comment stated:

Whilst the idea has merit, unless you also protect other local streets all you are doing is moving the issue.

###### About the process (2)

One respondent criticised the use of a parking and traffic survey conducted in 2020, describing this data as “not reliable”. Another comment suggested that City of Melbourne should wait until the completion of the West Gate Tunnel before considering this project.

###### Design (2)

Two comments raised issues with the design of the Hawke Street Linear Park. One argued that the removal of the roundabout at Hawke and Adderley is unjustified, noting that the roundabout has made a significant difference to this intersection, reducing traffic speed and collisions. Another comment expressed concern that the streetscape would be negatively impacted by the proposed changes.

###### Safety (1)

One comment simply stated, “proposal is dangerous”.

###### Other (5)

A small number of other comments were made that did not fit into the above category. These ranged from a call for a community garden to be included in the design, to other suggestions that respondents felt would be a better use of money, or suggestions for other areas that could be developed into park space instead of Hawke Street.

## How people would be affected by the changes

|  |
| --- |
| Summary findings  * Comments describing positive benefits (139) significantly outweighed comments from those who felt the changes were negative (56) or those who offered mixed or neutral support (15). * The large number of respondents who supported the linear park described how it would calm and limit traffic to make the area quieter and safer for residents, pedestrians, and cyclists. They also welcomed how more greenery, shade and space would cool the area and make Hawke Street a more appealing place for the community to exercise or socialise. * Those who objected or expressed concern most frequently felt that the proposal would exacerbate existing issues with parking and traffic. It was noted that parking was already difficult for residents and businesses in the area, and that traffic jams were already common at peak times. |

**Respondents were asked:** *How would the proposed changes for Hawke Street influence your experience of the place?*

##### Positive 139 comments

###### A pleasant place to be (31 comments)

A considerable number of respondents felt their personal use of the area would be enhanced, describing how the changes would make the space more pleasant to travel through or would encourage them to spend time there. Comments detailed how they would feel safer cycling or walking with restricted traffic flows, would be more likely to walk dogs there, or would take children there to play. A few comments highlighted the importance of green areas and nature for mental health and reducing stress. The following comments are representative:

I live close to the existing Miller street pocket park, and this is a well-loved (and used) piece of land. The reduction of lanes on Hawke Street would be welcomed, as would more greenery! I would be more inclined to spend a greater amount of time at the park if the traffic were not so loud / heavy.

What a great idea. Creating more space for people is what we should be doing post-Covid. Bike paths proposal is also great and I would use. I walk down that street all the time and it would enhance the experience.

I live on Hawke Street, it will change my daily existence. The increase in green, safer biking and hopefully slower speed limits will all be positive.

One comment praised the idea but stipulated design considerations, stating:

Making a green spine will be a brilliant addition to our neighbourhood. Buffering H+C St Reserve and downgrading the road will definitely encourage me to walk and stop to enjoy the Reserve more often. Design considerations for the reserve need to address the fall (towards the road reserve), it feels like you fall down the hill onto the road at the moment.

###### Improved liveability of the area (26 comments)

A considerable number of respondents expressed the sense that the linear park would improve the feel of the whole area, making it more liveable and enhancing the community atmosphere. They liked the idea of a cooler, shady street made more beautiful by increased greenery, and an area that was quieter, safer, and more peaceful with less traffic. The following comments illustrate these sentiments:

Yes I think the proposed changes to Hawke Street are excellent. We live in Roden Street and drive or walk along Hawke Street on a daily basis. It is a very busy street, particularly at peak transit times. By adding the proposed green space and reducing the lanes to a dual carriage way, the street will look and feel more like a beautiful leafy suburban street, than just a busy arterial route.

Beautiful idea to make the area a more local space and livable.

Cooler and more inviting. Hopefully also less noise from traffic.

Several respondents felt that the park could provide a place for residents to gather, socialise and drink coffee, with comments such as the following:

Yes, absolutely! The proposal will improve the quality of the streetscape and invite more people to linger, meet up and socialise.

I would enjoy the community atmosphere and will feel safer. People will gather in the street and talk to each other.

For the better. The more green space the better for the health and wellbeing of all residents/workers in West Melbourne. The redeveloped Adderley & Hawke Street park is absolutely delightful but is already in danger of being loved to death. At peak times it is far too small to accommodate all the people who want to sit and enjoy the sunshine. The prospect of being able to promenade and socialise with neighbours over an additional 5000sqm of space is wonderful.

A couple of comments from residents highlighted that the changes would also benefit them in their homes by making the street quieter.

While the majority of these comments expressed unmitigated enthusiasm for the idea, two comments did raise concerns around carparking. The following sums up this sentiment:

Provided I can find a carparking space when I need it I think it will feel more pleasant, quieter and greener.

###### Appreciation for more green space (23 comments)

A moderate number of comments celebrated the inclusion of more green space in Melbourne, frequently emphasising that this was highly necessary and that any additional greenery would be a great improvement for Melbourne. The benefits of greenery were extolled, including making the area more appealing by softening the harsh concrete that currently dominates the streetscape and cooling down the streets in the summer heat, fresh clean air, reducing stress levels, and generally attracting more visitors to the area. The following comments are typical examples of how respondents felt about the prospect of more green space:

I’m an 18-year resident of Hawke St. We welcome any development that makes the area greener.

I am pleased to see City of Melbourne's commitment to greening and cooling our inner city. This can only be done with more plantings and more green spaces. I want to see these changes take effect as soon as possible - it will fundamentally improve every aspect of this precinct for everyone.

Huge improvement. Trees are being cut down to make way for developer’s gantries so to increase the greenery in west Melbourne would be fantastic. West Melbourne is a great community and this will make it even better.

The area needs substantial greening, as it can be very hot in summer. It has a quite harsh, concrete and bitumen-dominated character, which would be ameliorated with more greenery. The existing green spaces are well used by locals, who would appreciate their expansion.

One comment offered a caveat, saying that while they appreciated the idea of more greenery, they did not want a dense tree canopy to block natural light from their home.

###### Reduced traffic (19 comments)

Reducing traffic in Hawkes Street was welcomed by a moderate number of respondents. Many of these comments offered general statements about desiring or appreciating less traffic, such as:

It would be a positive thing to have more grass, more trees and less trucks going through Hawke Street.

Enjoy the greenery and less traffic clogging the street.

Others elaborated on the benefits of this, including less noise and air pollution, and increased safety for pedestrians and cyclists. It was noted that heavy traffic travels along Hawke Street and that cars often drive dangerously, speeding and running red lights:

As a resident of Hawke and King and a long-term resident of NW Melbourne I strongly support the concept! It would reduce traffic, increase wildlife, decrease accidents at the intersection, increase bike access and decrease noise pollution.

We also love the decrease of traffic into Hawke Street as there are crazy drivers who speed down this street and run the lights in Spencer Street every light setting, it truly is dangerous and also for us pedestrians.

Hawke Street is a heavily pedestrianised area of West & North Melbourne, it has two lovely parks on either end of it but along the length it is hot in summer and pedestrians need to deal with two busy major roads. I welcome and wholly support this plan as it introduces traffic calming, and in the long term the reduction of through-traffic which is badly needed for this part of West Melbourne.

###### Increased safety (15 comments)

A moderate number of respondents emphasised their support for the improved safety they felt the proposed changes would bring. These comments predominantly focused on cyclist and pedestrian safety and expressed a sense that the plan would bring much needed improvements to what was often described as a dangerous or unpleasant area. Several of these comments were general, for example:

This would become a safer route for my small kids and I to travel from West Melbourne into North Melbourne.

I typically avoid Hawke St when traveling from Adderley to Errol/Victoria streets for the quieter Miller St when both traveling by bike or walking. The proposed changes will allow for a safer, more comfortable experience.

As a cyclist I would feel safer.

Others described serious accidents that had occurred at particularly dangerous intersections, suggesting traffic needed to be restricted or rerouted to alleviate the risk. The King Street/Hawke Street intersection was raised as a critical issue, as was the Spencer/Hawke intersection:

The proposed changes would make an enormous improvement. Hawke Street is currently a traffic sewer, with large numbers of heavy vehicles and other noisy and polluting vehicles. The Hawke Street and King Street intersection is the scene of a car accident approximately every few weeks. The intersection is heavily used by pedestrians, and it is only a matter of time before someone is killed.

One comment made a specific suggestion for traffic signalling:

Spencer and Hawke are difficult to turn into from Spencer on both ways and have witnessed many close calls. There is space for a dedicated turn because the road curves but also it may need turning arrows for safety because it is dangerous and they often speed on Spencer St.

###### General positive (11 comments)

Several respondents expressed strong support for the proposed changes. These comments were generally short but were largely extremely enthusiastic about the prospect of the linear park. The following comments are illustrative:

I love this idea, the WGT project was making me consider leaving West Melbourne, but if this park is here, I now want to stay.

As a home owner in the area, I believe it would definitely soften the area more which is really welcomed. I really like the proposal and encourage the transformation of the area away from industrial to residential and retail based.

This is a fantastic proposal.

I’m supportive of the park and think it would enhance the neighbourhood.

###### Pedestrian and cyclist-friendly (4 comments)

Five respondents pointed out the benefits of the linear park for cyclists and pedestrians. These were couched in general terms, with comments expressing their appreciation for improved accessibility and amenity for both cyclists and pedestrians.

It will improve the walking and cycling here immensely, as the traffic will be better managed for cyclists, the heat load reduced for being outside in summer, and the shade improved for walking up to Errol street or down to the park.

###### Prioritise people over cars (4 comments)

A small number of comments noted that cars are currently prioritised over people and that heavy traffic, noise, pollution, and safety issues make the streets unpleasant. It was felt that that the linear park would “reclaim our urban spaces” and encourage more people to use the area. One respondent summed this up:

*This is a great example of making streets for people (finally) in West Melbourne. And we need green space here in our neglected part of CoM.*

###### Biodiversity and environment (3 comments)

Three comments mentioned biodiversity or environmental benefits of more green spaces. One noted that the concept was “a positive for many urban climate reasons”, while another pointed out that it would increase wildlife. The third simply stated that the combination of less traffic, more trees and more birds was “better environmentally”.

###### Support for removal of parking spaces (2 comments)

Two respondents offered explicit support for the removal of car parking spaces, with one stating it was important to decrease car dominance and pollution, and the other concluding that, though they would be affected by this, the benefits would outweigh the inconvenience:

*I'm sure I'll feel the effect of losing car parks, but I think the price to pay will be worth it.*

##### Negative 56 comments

###### Removal of parking affecting residents (23 comments)

Reduction of what was felt to be already insufficient residential parking was raised in a moderate number of comments. These comments were similar, expressing a sense that the proposal would make it much harder for residents to park near their home and that this would diminish their living standards. It was pointed out that parking was already a struggle for many people and that residents and businesses were competing for parking as it is, with nearby events heightening these difficulties. The following comment is illustrative:

*Parking is already a nightmare for residents. Taking away 49 car parks will make it impossible for residents to park. The only solution to this is making the remaining spots permit residents only.*

A few raised complaints that it was especially difficult for residents who were not eligible for parking permits (those who moved to the area post 2008), and that all residents should be able to get a parking permit, while a couple of respondents suggested the council make parking in the area residents-only.

*It will reduce my standard of living. If parking is going to be reduced then residents need to be considered for permits as it is already a struggle to park during the day. I am a resident who moved in post 2008 and am not eligible for a parking permit even though I pay rates and am in a town house. I don’t know when the parking survey was completed but it certainly is not accurate.*

Three comments mentioned that the Don Kyatt development did not appear to have been considered in the plan but that this would exacerbate existing issues with parking.

###### Concerns about traffic impacts (7 comments)

A small number of comments raised concerns about how the proposal would increase traffic congestion. One comment made a general point that the plan would cause severe congestion, while the others identified specific areas they felt were problematic.

Three felt that the proposed removal of the Hawke and Adderley Street roundabout would cause issues, with one noting that buses need it for U-turns, another noting that cars already go through without slowing down and “its removal could have unintended consequences”, and one stating that “everyone I have spoken to wants the Hawke/Adderley roundabout retained.”

Four comments highlighted concerns around the section between King and Spencer Street, pointing out that it was already an area of high traffic (which would get worse with the opening of the West Gate Tunnel) and that currently the right turn lane was heavily congested during peak times. One respondent described how they would be affected:

*Negatively. I live in Hawke Street but drive around for work. Your proposal, particularly between King and Spencer Streets is ludicrous. The amount of traffic that travels along Hawke Street in that area is way too much to make it one lane either side. At peak hour the right turn lane (heading north into Spencer St from Hawke St) stretches right back now as it is. I'm lucky that I travel west straight though this area in the left lane as there are now two lanes. What you are proposing will make me one of the numerous cars that are all waiting to turn right at that intersection. This is ridiculous!*

One respondent expressed support for the aims of the plan but made suggestions to relieve the pressure between King and Spencer Street:

*The aims are fine and will be good between Railway Place and Spencer St. However essential traffic flow west will be difficult between King and Spencer Streets. Cars fill the lane from King to Spencer as they wait to turn right into Spencer St. A second lane west is needed for those trying to cross Spencer to get to homes between Spencer and Railway Place. A dedicated right hand turn lane as well as lanes for left turn and straight on are needed.*

They also noted that tour buses block a lane while they stop outside the Miami motel.

Lastly, one comment raised the point that traffic surveys had been carried out in November 2020, and that as this was “the COVID-19 year”, these were atypical and “do not provide a valid picture”.

###### Elements missing or poor design (6 comments)

Four comments expressed criticism of the bike paths. Three mentioned the lack of the foot/bike link to Docklands, with one of these querying why a shared bike/footpath was needed from Spencer to Railway in its absence. One comment stated that without this link the bike highway was “pointless” and “going nowhere”, and that while they were “all for green space” this seemed like “useless green space”. Another reiterated the importance of connectivity, saying:

*Will the bike lane continue over King street and link to bike lanes on Victoria? If not then the bike lane is useless to me…… yet another one in North/West Melbourne that fails to connect to a safe cycling network, and just dumps bikes onto the road*.

One respondent simply stated that not many cyclists ride along Hawke Street and therefore the cycleway was unnecessary.

Two comments raised elements they thought were missing, including the park at the end of Railway Place which was proposed in the 2018 plan, and the lack of community gardens planned.

###### Safety concerns (6 comments)

Three comments highlighted risks to pedestrians, pointing out that narrowed roads and more planting could heighten risks of children popping out suddenly onto the road, or that pedestrian crossing upgrades needed to be prioritised “before adding bikes to the mix”. This respondent elaborated:

*As a pedestrian I have experienced a lot of near misses, vehicles have very little regard for pedestrians here. The pedestrian outstand on the north west corner is unsafe, with inadequate space for people to wait and/or move past one another.*

One comment suggested that the roundabout should be kept for safety and that islands were needed to make crossing safer, particularly for children with their “tunnel vision”.

Three respondents felt that shared paths would “jeopardise safety” or that crossing the bike lanes between the road and houses was risky. Fast-moving cyclists and electric vehicles were emphasised as dangerous to pedestrians, with one respondent stating:

*Bike lane traffic moves at speeds that I can't negotiate without fear of injury. There are a number of infirm people in my street.*

This comment also raised safety risks for cyclists, noting that bluestone was dangerous to ride on and that the hard gutter and hard edges were unsafe for cyclists trying to navigate around obstacles.

Lastly, personal safety was raised by one respondent, who said:

*At night I wouldn't feel as safe walking past on the side closer to the train station as I would on the other side.*

###### Effects on businesses (5 comments)

Respondents felt the proposal would negatively affect businesses by limiting parking, slowing traffic flows, or hindering access. These comments echoed concerns raised by residents, noting that parking was already competitive and that losing spots would make it vastly more difficult for staff and customers.

*Negatively. We are a workplace that struggles as it is with parking, so this removal of so much crucial parking would be terrible. If anything, we need more parking, not less. This street is the home of multiple businesses and residents have also told us that they struggle to get parking. The interruption of the works alone would be very disadvantageous.*

One business argued that the proposal would severely limit their access and lead to significant loss of profit, stating they would:

*… suffer from the changes by restricting customers, delivery trucks and suppliers from accessing our car park. We will no longer be able to receive shipping containers. This plan will also encourage public and others to illegally use our car park for parking (already a small issue). The changes will amount to millions in losses to our business, not to mention that through traffic between Spencer St and King/Victoria St will come to a standstill as the plan offers not alternative route. Completely flawed planned with complete lack of proper town and traffic planning.*

###### Concerns about access (3 comments)

Three respondents noted concerns around various forms of access. A Railway Place resident expressed concern about access to their home, and one comment pointed out that the changes will make car to house access, for example with furniture or heavy goods, much harder. Another noted that grass was difficult to travel across with a pram.

###### Loss of amenity for locals (2 comments)

Two comments stated that there would be a general loss of amenity for residents. One of these did not elaborate, while the other described the loss of the median strip, particularly its trees and car parking, as an “unworkable tragedy for locals”.

###### Wrong place for parks (2 comments)

Two comments argued against the proposal, with one stating that there were already two parks shared across three city blocks which were well-used by local residents, and another pointing out that “parks should not be placed adjacent to major traffic flows” as the noise and pollution diminished amenity, and instead should be in neighbourhoods away from major roads.

###### Heritage (1 comment)

One comment noted that the plan was “inconsistent with heritage overlay for house frontages”.

##### Other 15 comments

###### Concerns and caveats (5 comments)

A small number of respondents raised minor concerns or caveats regarding traffic and parking without expressing clear support or objection to the plan. One noted that the plan would only work as long as no more building permits were issued, but that if more people moved to the area the lack of car parking would become a problem.

Another stated that the changes would benefit them on their daily walk, but they were concerned about the displacement of traffic between King and Spencer. This concern was echoed by two other respondents, one of whom noted they would lose their ability to get past the banked-up traffic waiting to turn right onto Spencer, while the other felt there could be increased safety risks to pedestrians at the King/Spencer intersection if traffic management was not effectively considered.

Lastly, one comment agreed the changes were a step in the right direction as more green space was needed in the city, but argued this should not come at the expense of losing already scant car parks for residents. They suggested introducing ticketed parking for non-residents at all times to remedy this, and added that more consideration was needed as to how the emergence of electric vehicles would be dealt with in the future. They also emphasised the importance of ensuring shady areas, noting that the current park in the area was often “unusable” due to lack of shade and that this design must not be repeated.

###### Suggested changes (3 comments)

Three respondents offered specific suggestions for changes to the plan. One proposed the council consider separating the pedestrian path for dog walkers and the elderly when demand increases; another requested a bike path from Miller Street to the cycleway in the linear park, noting that at the moment they needed to dismount on the footpath outside the Baptist church; and the third raised concerns about trees blocking light, suggesting the trees needed to be deciduous to avoid affecting houses in the winter. They stated they had preferred the plan when it was first proposed on the southern alignment, noting the dual benefits of the sunshine increasing plant growth and creating a more pleasant user experience. They also felt that the southern alignment version of the plan would allow school groups to use the space as a marshalling area, improving safety.

###### About the process (3 comments)

Three comments pertained to the survey and process, with one noting that the website had frozen so they had lost what they had written; another critiquing the language used as not being straightforward enough, stating that it was a street rather than a place; and the last questioning why Miller Street was not clearly shown on the plan. This comment noted that it looked in the illustration as though Curzon was blocked at King Street, and that this was not clearly defined in the plan. They stated that, as this would have negative impacts for Miller Street residents, they do not support completely blocking access from King Street and suggested the council come up with an alternative that retained some access (suggesting they look at City of Yarra for examples of how to do this).

###### Other (3 comments)

Two comments took issue with the plan’s aims to turn the space into a site to “linger”, with one stating they would not feel comfortable lingering in front of residents’ homes and liked the median strip as it was, while the other argued that Hawke Street was a thoroughfare for vehicles, cyclists, and pedestrians, and that turning it into a site to linger was “counterintuitive”.

###### No impact (1 comment)

One respondent merely stated that the proposal would have no impact on them at all.

## Community aspirations for Hawke Street

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| --- |
| Summary findings  * The most commonly desired outcome was ‘*walkability and pedestrian safety*’, with 55% of respondents selecting it as one of their top three. * ‘*Traffic calming*’ (46%), ‘*ecological value*’ (39%) and ‘*passive recreation opportunities*’ (39%) were also highly desired. * ‘*Driver convenience*‘ was the least frequently selected outcome (14%). |

**Respondents were asked:** *What are the key outcomes that you hope Hawke Street enhancements could achieve?*

Options were: *bike safety and connected routes; traffic calming; ecological value; property value; driver convenience; walkability and pedestrian safety; climate resilience; passive recreation opportunities; other (please specify)*

Note that respondents were asked to select their top three desired outcomes, therefore percentages will not add to 100.

##### Findings:

* Over half of respondents (55%) selected ‘*walkability and pedestrian safety*’ as one of their top three desired outcomes.
* ‘*Traffic calming*’ was the second most frequently selected outcome (46%).
* ‘*Ecological value*’ and ‘*passive recreation opportunities*’ were both selected by 39% of respondents, making them the third most popular outcomes equally.

## Other considerations

|  |
| --- |
| Summary findings  * The main topic that respondents wanted considered was traffic management. These comments discussed both traffic flow in general or made specific comments focused on particular street sections or intersections. Congestion and safety were key concerns raised by respondents. * The removal of parking spaces was raised as a problem by a considerable number of respondents, who felt the current difficulties they face finding a car park in the area will only be made worse by the proposed changes. |

**Respondents were asked:** *Is there anything else we should consider in our goal to enhance Hawke Street?*

##### Traffic concerns 94 comments

###### Traffic management and planning (51 comments)

A variety of comments were made regarding traffic management. Several respondents questioned where the diverted traffic would go or noted that a holistic traffic management plan was necessary to avoid merely displacing traffic with negative consequences for other areas. There was a strong sense that this broader view was lacking from the traffic analysis and proposal, with some comments requesting more detail or information about how traffic will be managed:

Since the proposal calls for one side of Hawke Street to be converted into a linear park, traffic will, as a result, be lessened. My question is: where will the traffic be diverted? May I know the proposed traffic plan for the affected sector?

Whilst it might be argued the Hawke St plan might stop some traffic, I argue it will simply place pressure on other streets where there is clearer access. Please detail how the Hawke St concept plan integrates into a wider traffic management plan for West Melbourne post WG tunnel opening.

Your traffic analysis just mentions on-street parking. Reducing the roadway from 2 lanes to 1 will likely relocate traffic issues to other local roads. There is a lot of traffic turning off Hawke onto Spencer in a westerly direction, and this has not been considered.

A considerable number of respondents offered highly specific suggestions for traffic management, frequently proposing ways to improve routes and intersections to increase both safety and traffic flow in the area.

Five comments made the point that current problems with congestion in the busy section between King and Spencer would worsen, with two of these suggesting the current multiple lane system be retained to avoid this:

Make sure we can still get home! Retain multiple lanes westward between King and Spencer.

One comment detailed the heavy volumes and build-up of traffic in this section during peak times, and concluded:

The plan could not be implemented until these traffic issues are resolved.

Eight comments mentioned the Hawke and Spencer Street intersection, making a variety of recommendations to improve pedestrian safety, ease traffic congestion, and increase traffic safety. These included: ensure the traffic lights prevent cars from turning while pedestrians are crossing; relieve the backed-up traffic waiting to turn right into Spencer by altering the traffic arrows on the lights or returning to two turning lanes, and prevent cars making illegal U-turns to access Spencer Street, which they currently do to avoid the queue of vehicles waiting to turn. As one email submitter explained:

The amount of traffic in peak periods causes many near misses at the intersection of Hawke and Spencer from all directions, the intersection needs directional arrows and nominated turning lanes to control turns from all directions. Residents, like me, entering Hawke Street from Mighty Apollo lane from car parks under buildings are often narrowly avoided as the speeding vehicles concentrate on their illegal U-turns.

Five comments referred to Adderley Street, with four of these objecting to the proposed removal of the Hawke/Adderley roundabout on the grounds that it acts as a safety and traffic calming measure for a very busy intersection. Three of these comments also noted that the Adderley/Abbotsford intersection was an accident-prone zone that needed to be addressed “as a matter of urgency”, as the heavy traffic flows of cars and buses made it highly dangerous, particularly for cyclists.

Four comments were concerned with the King/Hawke intersection. It was noted that pedestrian and cyclist safety needed to be improved, that the intersection needed to be replanned to reduce the number of accidents, and one respondent suggested that the council remove the two car parks just before the intersection as this created a bottleneck for cars heading into King and Victoria Street.

Two comments suggested that part of Hawke Street be made one-way. One comment specified the southwestern end should be one-way, while the other suggested it should be similar to Roden Street between King and Spencer.

Several respondents suggested traffic calming measures should be put in place at intersections and along roads in the area.

Two of these mentioned the median strip, with one expressing concern about crossing becoming more dangerous if the median strip were removed, and the other suggesting the median strip be extended by removing some of the centre parking.

Two comments focused on Adderley Street, with one suggesting a speed limit of 30km/h and closing Adderley at Dudley Street to reduce traffic, while the other merely noted that some sort of traffic slowing device was needed if the roundabout was to be removed.

One requested traffic calming measures adjacent to Hawke and Curzon Reserve to make it safer for children to play, but requested no fences. Another respondent pointed out that replacing the current set up with a “gun barrel” single lane of traffic was not a traffic calming measure, and questioned whether there would be speed bumps or introduced curves to calm traffic.

The remaining traffic calming comments focused on the King and Spencer Street intersections and the section in between them.

One respondent suggested concentrating on this area first and installing chicanes and other measures to calm and discourage West Gate Tunnel traffic, though they acknowledged this would make things worse in other streets. Two comments suggesting reducing speed limits in the area, with one specifying lower limits along Hawke and King Street, as well as banning trucks. One respondent stated:

Somehow the traffic intersections of Hawke and Spencer, and Hawke and King need to be made safer for all users. Speed limits need reducing in this area. I think greening the street will assist in the perception of this area by drivers as a slow zone.

Another respondent offered the following detailed comment:

Anything we can do to calm the traffic at the King Street intersection is going to improve access to Errol/Victoria and save lives. The pedestrian requirements to cross King St have increased dramatically in the past few years and if there was a way this project could reach up to Victoria St somehow it would truly make the rest of the project worthwhile. The increase of pedestrian and bike traffic that will come as a result from this project will actually make the intersection more dangerous if this is not addressed. We acknowledge that King St is an important auto-thoroughfare, the time has come to address its volume and popularity. Anything such as speed reduction, low-rise speed humps, shorter traffic light times or reduced access through further one-way routing to the Curzon connection would benefit this entire project immensely.

Three comments stipulated that vehicle access needed more consideration. One focused on access to the Hawke and King complex, another highlighted the need for access to be maintained for residents and service/utility vehicles, and another wanted to confirm that vehicle and pedestrian access connecting to Miller/Curzon would be maintained.

One respondent simply stated “motorists” when asked what else City of Melbourne should consider.

Lastly, one respondent offered an alternative suggestion for the design, proposing an adapted Adderley Street design where the present mix of green and parking in the centre of Hawke Street would be retained.

###### Parking (33 comments)

The majority of these comments expressed concern around the loss of parking spots, noting parking was currently inadequate for residents and that these problems will only become worse with the proposed changes. Respondents detailed the difficulties they already experienced with parking, noting these become even more severe when events are held nearby and that new developments – such as the Don Kyatt building or pop-up cafés – in the area would further aggravate the issue.

The plans have not considered the new apartment developments in the area and the increase in demand for parking by service providers and visitors.

Parking for residents. This is already a major issue and residents are fed up with the council not addressing the issue. You are now making it worse.

A few of these comments made positive statements about the project in general, but highlighted that its success was dependent upon residents’ needs being adequately met:

I agree we can do without some car spaces, but need to give priority to residents and local businesses for the remaining spaces.

The idea of increasing green space is excellent but only if this does not seriously impact the amenity of existing and future residents. The loss of 49 car parking spaces out of a total of 157 spaces is too high a price to pay for this improvement.

One email submitter offered the following:

Just a bit of feedback regarding the proposed design. As long-term residents of the area its fantastic to see the council working so hard to improve the area. My only concern is the parking. Currently it is a nightmare […] My wife and I both work abnormal hours and as a family with 2 young children it’s very challenging having to park several blocks away in the middle of winter. I feel that the whole street should become resident only parking in order for the new concept to be a success.

Several respondents suggested that if the proposal were to go ahead parking would need to become residents only, and that permit parking would have to be available to all residents:

Listen to Hawke Street residents regarding (in)adequacy of car-parking spaces. People have suggested resident-only parking.

Provision of resident-only parking spaces will probably be necessary to win over residents who do not have off-street parking.

A small number of comments specifically referenced the parking survey which had been carried out, contending that the findings were at odds with their personal experience of struggling to park in the area or that the results were not representative due to the pandemic. A few of these also requested this data be made publicly available.

Whilst anecdotal, I can assure you it is nigh on impossible to obtain a parking space (even with a permit) within several blocks of our house during peak time and also other periods when events such as those at Dockland Stadium take place.

However, two respondents expressed the opposite opinion, supporting the removal of parking in favour of trees and green space. One argued that there was capacity to get rid of even more parking, while the other made a suggestion regarding permit parking:

CoM should not grant permits to apartments that do not contribute to a market for car parking - there is no need to link apartments to car spaces - they should be provided as a fee-for service for those who complain about the minor loss of parking schemes like Hawke St require - less space for car storage - more for people and trees.

Lastly, one respondent suggested the eleven-hour car parks on Railway Parade be reduced as there would be more demand for them, noting that they are currently being used as park and ride spaces.

###### Cycling (7 comments)

Comments regarding cycle lanes ranged from the need to prioritise cyclist safety with a dedicated cycle lane, to the need for cycleways to be well-connected to the rest of the network, to design suggestions for the path itself.

Three comments expressed support for a dedicated cycle lane over shared paths, with one phone respondent describing their experience of being hit by a car while cycling on Spencer Street and another rejecting the suggestion of a shared path for bicycles and vehicles in Hawke Street between Adderley and Railway Place “as totally unacceptable”. Another recommended the installation of two one-way dedicated bike lanes over a two-way shared path on the basis that:

Hawke St already has two pedestrian paths, but no bike infrastructure. By installing two dedicated one-way bike lanes, it will fill a gap in the bike network creating a continuity between Adderley St and North Melbourne Station to Victoria/Errol St. The shared path or two-way bike path would require more complex intersections to allow for bike riders to connect from one-way to two-way, exposing [them] to more dangers from drivers. The proposed two-way shared path will need to include signaling to assist riders splitting off into the King/Victoria St without contending with cars, whereas two one-way paths can follow existing signal directions.

Three respondents highlighted connectivity, with one asking how the proposed lane would connect to Victoria Street cycleway, and another commenting that “without details of connecting bike paths in the neighbourhood it is hard to see how the concept fits in with the remainder of the precinct to achieve improved bicycle connectivity.” One respondent mused:

I wonder how bikes having to go back onto the road will affect them actually using the shared path? I get the feeling that not having the path continue all the way along will cause cyclists to either ride on the road or footpath the whole time to avoid having to cross at traffic lights.

The two comments regarding design warned that a hard-edged bike lane in Adderley Street would be dangerous, while another implored the council to avoid “chunky, over-engineered bike lanes and street furniture” that result in a “claustrophobic city where any wrong move means an injury”. They went on to recommend:

Less is more - bikes need grade separation, with smooth gradients, wide turns and clear line of sight, to feel safe. Bikes should also have right of way over pedestrians where appropriate. Pedestrians don’t mind letting a bike past as they are quiet and barely and inconvenience. Stopping and restarting on a bike (e.g. Swanston street) is a hassle and reduces uptake.

###### Pedestrians (4 comments)

Improvements for pedestrians were called for, with two comments noting that the Spencer Street crossing could be enhanced as it was “pretty horrible,” and that crossing time could be improved.

One requested the proposal be extended to include the Hawke and King Street intersection as it was felt to be unsafe for pedestrians and confusing for drivers. Another respondent raised concerns about risks to pedestrians on Adderley Street, stating:

Please consider the impact on pedestrians at the corner of Hawke and Adderley Street. We live on Adderley and the existing roundabout is the only thing that slows the traffic down along Adderley Street. With the increased park space and prominence of the Hawke St park, I anticipate that I would become very concerned about my daughter and her friends crossing Adderley Street. I am also disabled and am slow to cross the street with my walking frame and would be worried about crossing the road with the increased high-speed traffic that would come along Adderley Street especially in peak hours.

##### Other comments 56 comments

###### About the process (14 comments)

Comments regarding the process were predominantly critical. Several respondents felt that the plan was unclear or that supporting information was lacking or flawed. This was particularly in regard to the parking survey and data that the plan was based on, which respondents considered to be either “implausible” or inaccurate due to the influence of COVID-19. A few respondents requested this information, with one noting they had asked City of Melbourne for the survey data but that it was “never forthcoming”. A couple requested more clarity over the exact location of the parking spots that were to be removed.

One comment noted that traffic modelling following the opening of the West Gate Tunnel was necessary before the plan could go ahead, while another respondent stated that the proposal needed to align with other plans for the area.

Other comments were varied. Two respondents pointed out that Curzon Street was mislabelled on the map; one respondent criticised the “airy fairy language”; another felt the council should not “preform the answers”; and lastly, one requested that in future the council avoid duplicating mail.

###### Links and other areas to improve (10 comments)

Four of these comments requested extending a cycle/pedestrian link to Docklands, with one detailing the benefits this would bring:

1. A safer experience for West Melbourne students in being to access the new primary school

2. Increased inner city green space, something that is lacking

3. Increased access for residents of Docklands to the North Melbourne train station.

4. Increased recreation and relaxation space for people living in high density living

5. Utilising wasted space by effectively putting some train tracks under a park.

Other respondents mentioned areas they thought could do with improvement next, including widening the park on the corner of Hawke and Adderley and enhancing other nearby streets such as King, Stanley, and Errol. One phone respondent suggested Errol Street should be a priority for trees and offered a design concept to enhance the street. One email submitter pointed out that Hawke Street had already received recent parkland and green belt upgrades and felt that Stanley Street would benefit from attention.

Spencer Street remains ugly with dead trees and weeds growing along it from Roden Street right down toward Dynon Road. Could rate payer funds be invested in upgrading the median strip along some of Spencer Street instead?

No - other than expanding the thought process to surrounding streets (in addition to Hawke St) and addressing King Street which needs transformation desperately.

This is a great idea. To continue and stretch out Adderley Street Park (which has been a terrific revamp) is a lovely thought.

###### No (7 comments)

Seven respondents had nothing more to add, though two offered additional praise for the council, stating “great stuff”, and:

No, I think you have done a fantastic job with this concept and I can't wait to see it implemented.

###### Accessibility (5 comments)

Accessibility was highlighted in five comments, with respondents reminding the council that it was important all needs were taken into account, including those who were older, disabled, or had young children, and that prioritising cycleways to the detriment of car parking disadvantaged these groups.

One requested that the council:

Make sure elderly and disabled are catered for with flat safe paths, ramps, seats with armrests and backs.

###### Specific suggestions (4 comments)

Various highly specific suggestions were made, including purchasing Austin Place and resurfacing it, as well as retaining the four car parks leading into it; involving Lands and Survey in choosing the name as “the names of the two current parks that will be connected up will obviously need to be replaced and there is a significant public safety question around users being able to identify where they are in an emergency”; removing the three flagpoles from the King Street end of Hawke Street as they disrupt residents with their ringing noise; and that the adjacent buildings would cast shade on the park so it would have been better to:

… meander Hawke Street such that the linear park between Adderley and Spencer was on the south eastern side of the street. This would also contribute to discouraging fast drivers.

###### Businesses (3 comments)

Three respondents highlighted that the needs of businesses must be considered, and that the changes would negatively affect their trading ability due to increased congestion, lack of parking, and restricted access for deliveries.

###### Maintenance (2 comments)

Two respondents noted that the plan would require regular maintenance of the grass, trees, and green space, and expressed a sense that the current maintenance was not sufficient. One respondent elaborated:

If myself and my neighbour didn't water the trees that council planted, they would have died a long time ago, and I've noticed many young street trees that have not survived after planting. I would hate to see all the time, money (rates) and work involved to update our area, including Hawke Street, for there not to be regular and much needed repairs and maintenance scheduled. If unattended, green spaces can look worse than a tar road.

###### Other (10 comments)

Several comments did not fit into any of the above categories. Of these, four warned against building developments and apartment blocks in the area or converting the commercial building to residential.

Other comments included revitalising the “bleak” and underutilised dog park near North Melbourne station; ensuring existing rubbish services could still operate; discouraging antisocial behaviour and thinking about the future of electric vehicles; and reviewing the existing heritage overlay “with a view to reducing its extent and allowing for new development which enhances the street”.

One respondent asked why the council would “change the beauty of this park”, while another recommended the council “don’t get too fussy”, offering the nearby Flagstaff Gardens as a “fine example of a developed park”.

##### Design 26 comments

###### Landscaping, design, and beautification (16 comments)

A moderate number of respondents made comments about landscaping, design, and beautification. These comments ranged from calls for high-quality plantings, to comments about the types of materials that people wanted to see used in the upgrades or calls for environmentally-friendly design considerations.

A small number of comments made suggestions about how the area could be beautified, including burying overhead power lines along both sides of Hawke Street, and upgrading adjoining streets to ensure that the area as a whole is improved rather than just one street.

Other suggestions given by this group included calls for shade in play areas; the use of natural materials; consideration of Water Sensitive Urban Design opportunities; and thoughtful landscaping that considers the types of plants used, and where they are best suited (i.e., where they will receive appropriate levels of sunlight, and provide appropriate levels of shade year-round). One suggested sculptures to enhance the outdoor space, while another recommended:

Avoid creating large new asphalt areas. The redesign of Lincoln Square was extremely disappointing.

###### Lighting and safety (4 comments)

Four respondents made comments calling for appropriate lighting to be incorporated into the Hawke Street Linear Park to ensure the safety of those using it at night. One comment that sums up the sentiment shared by these respondents reads:

Safe lighting and clear sight lines through the planting — so that we can walk without fear of attack.

###### Concerns about shared path (4 comments)

Four respondents expressed concerns about the safety of the proposed shared path. These comments all suggested that combining cyclists and pedestrians may result in conflicts or accidents.

##### Nature 24 comments

###### More trees and green space (13 comments)

Several comments were made about trees and green space. Comments about trees tended to be specific, with a few respondents expressing concerns about the removal of the Morton Bay fig on the roundabout at Hawke and Adderley. These respondents wanted to see the tree saved, perhaps relocated somewhere else in the Hawke Street Linear Park.

Other comments about trees called for consideration of the placement of trees, the removal of plane trees, ensuring that tree shade does not negatively impact local residents’ homes, and minimising the risk of damage to property or surfaces from tree roots. A couple of respondents wanted more information about the types of trees that will be used.

Be specific about the number of trees envisaged and how this will help attain the COM tree goals.

Trees and shrubs should be chosen for their ability to absorb CO2. Considerable research has been done recently on the best species for this purpose. This should be the main consideration, rather than aesthetics or replication of existing species.

Remaining comments were supportive of the proposal to increase the amount of greenery in the area. One email submitter elaborated on the deep need for more green spaces in Melbourne to offset density and air pollution:

This is a very commendable project since it will increase the city’s “lungs” - the more green spaces, the better for the residents since these act as buffer to the urban crawl of more and more high-rises, dense housing and increased traffic - already rampantly happening in the Spencer Street/Victoria Street zone. With more of these green/park areas, not only is the city’s liveability increased, its breathability is also enhanced […] Projects like this that seek more green areas for the city can’t come any sooner. I therefore fully support it.

###### Biodiversity (5 comments)

A small number of comments discussed the importance of thoughtfully selecting the trees and shrubs to include in the Hawke Street Linear Park, ensuring that the resulting plantings will provide a habitat for birds and wildlife, and that plants will be native and/or appropriate for Melbourne’s climate.

I would like to request that native plants similar to those in the existing pocket parks are used so the linear park can be a habitat corridor for native species as well.

###### Community gardens (6 comments)

Five comments called for community gardens/veggie beds to be incorporated into the design for the Hawke Street Linear Park.

##### Uses and amenities 21 comments

###### Suggested amenities (11 comments)

Amenities and facilities that respondents wanted to see in Hawke Street were discussed in several comments. A few respondents specified that they wanted more bins and recycling bins to be incorporated into the design.

Other things that were requested included seating; shade options; a netball ring; a bike repair station; gym equipment; taps and drinking fountains.

###### Dog park (4 comments)

Four respondents called for an area of the park to be allocated as a dog off-leash area.

###### Art and culture (3 comments)

Incorporating sculpture or other public artwork in the space was suggested by two respondents, while a third suggested that the space could be utilised for small music events or other community activities, stating:

Last year Miller Street reserve/Hawke and Curzon reserve was even used for some small music events. These only went for a couple of hours and the music played was very pleasant. Please do not overdesign this reserve. Encouraging all these sorts of small, short, low key community activities would be terrific.

###### Playground (2 comments)

Two comments requested playgrounds, particularly one on the north side (Victoria Street end).

# How this feedback will be used

Your values, priorities, ideas, and concerns relating to the Hawke Street Linear Park proposal have been clearly articulated to City of Melbourne through this initial consultation period. Your sentiments have been collated and analysed by independent social researchers and what was heard has been presented back in the form of this detailed report, in addition to a consolidated summary report. These will be publicly available via [www.participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au/hawke-street-linear-park](http://www.participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au/hawke-street-linear-park) , and briefed to Council.

The Enhancing Hawke Street Team, including infrastructure planning, traffic engineering, and landscape design, will review and consider your feedback to help develop a more detailed concept plan. A six-month Parking Review has been commissioned for Hawke Street, comparing weekday and weekend activity, to better understand street parking utilisation and behaviours. It will take into account the broader road network and the completion of future infrastructure projects.

We anticipate meeting with interested stakeholders in-person, to workshop design and practical elements later this year.

Thank you to all participants in this planning journey. Your local knowledge and experience of the area is crucial. We look forward to talking to you in the coming months and working towards some outstanding outcomes for West Melbourne residents, businesses, and visitors.



This report has been prepared by:

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