



Global Research
Turning **Information** Into **Insight**

Hardware Lane

Streetscape Upgrades

ENGAGEMENT ANALYSIS

October 2021

Prepared by Global Research Ltd.

For



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Executive summary

Introduction

Hardware Lane is one of Melbourne's most loved laneway destinations. The City of Melbourne is upgrading the laneway to renew the streetscape, improve safety and attract more visitors to the space.

The City of Melbourne has developed a proposed design upgrade to Hardware Lane between Bourke Street and Little Bourke Street and has sought public feedback on this design. This report presents findings from this community engagement.

Key findings

- More respondents were supportive of the draft proposal than unsupportive. When asked to rate the draft design out of five, about two thirds of respondents (n=68) ranked the design '4' (38%) or '5' (29%).
- The most commonly discussed elements of the design for Hardware Lane's streetscape upgrades were:
 - > **Paving:** The main aspect that people were concerned with was paving. Predominantly, people wanted to see the iconic red brick paving retained rather than replaced with the bluestone paving that has become standard throughout Melbourne. Those who supported the shift to bluestone felt that this was 'quintessentially Melbourne' and felt it would help to give the laneway a much-needed update, while those who opposed it worried that Hardware Lane would lose its unique character without the red brick.
 - > **Plants and landscaping:** Respondents welcomed more trees and greenery being added in Hardware Lane. In particular, people wanted to see variety in the types of plants used in the design, including both trees and smaller shrubs.
 - > **Lighting:** People wanted to see improved lighting in Hardware Lane, particularly to enhance safety. Suggestions were made as to how lighting could be maximised in the laneway, including adding lighting to the underside of proposed benches; ensuring that there is no up-lighting to avoid issues with glare; and adding more feature lighting such as heritage style lamps. Overall, respondents wanted lighting to enhance both the safety and ambience of the area.
 - > **General support:** Several respondents offered general support for the proposed design, with people noting that Hardware Lane is due for an upgrade, and that the proposed changes will help give the area new life.
 - > **Pedestrians:** People were pleased to see pedestrians given priority over cars and Hardware Lane becoming a more functional space for people on foot.

HARDWARE LANE

STREETSCAPE UPGRADE

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT RESULTS

Hardware Lane is one of Melbourne's most loved laneway destinations. The City of Melbourne is upgrading the laneway between Bourke Street and Little Bourke Street to renew the streetscape, and has invited the public to give feedback on the proposed design.

KEY PROPOSED CHANGES

- Upgrading the existing red brick road surface to bluestone paving
- Replacing 12 declining trees with 14 new trees
- Installing Disability Discrimination Act compliant ramps and tactile ground surface indicators
- Upgrading the bollards used for intermittent road closures (no change to operating hours)
- Installing a public safety barrier alongside the private driveway of the adjacent car park
- New street furniture, tree guards and grates
- Upgrading the stormwater drainage (completed in 2020)
- Installing new catenary lighting.

ENGAGEMENT REACH



1,413

Website
views



633

Website
visitors



68

Surveys
completed

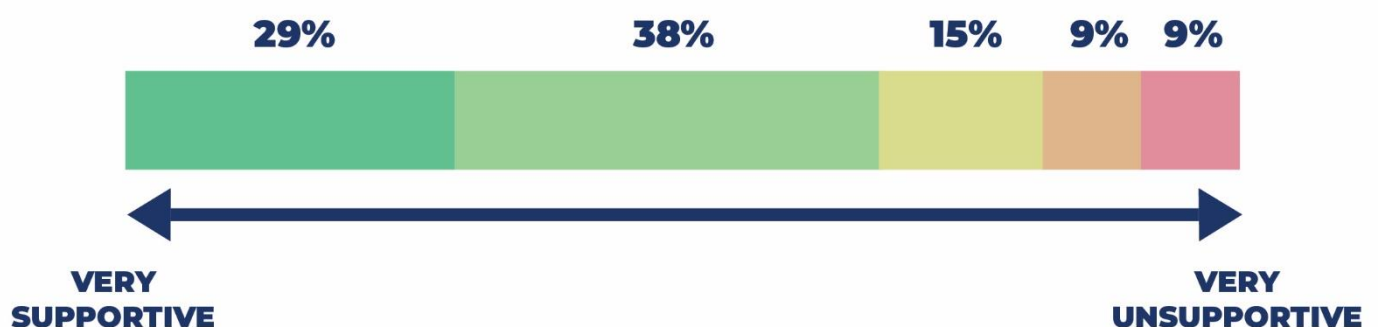


2

Email
submissions

OVERALL LEVEL OF SUPPORT FOR PROPOSED CHANGES

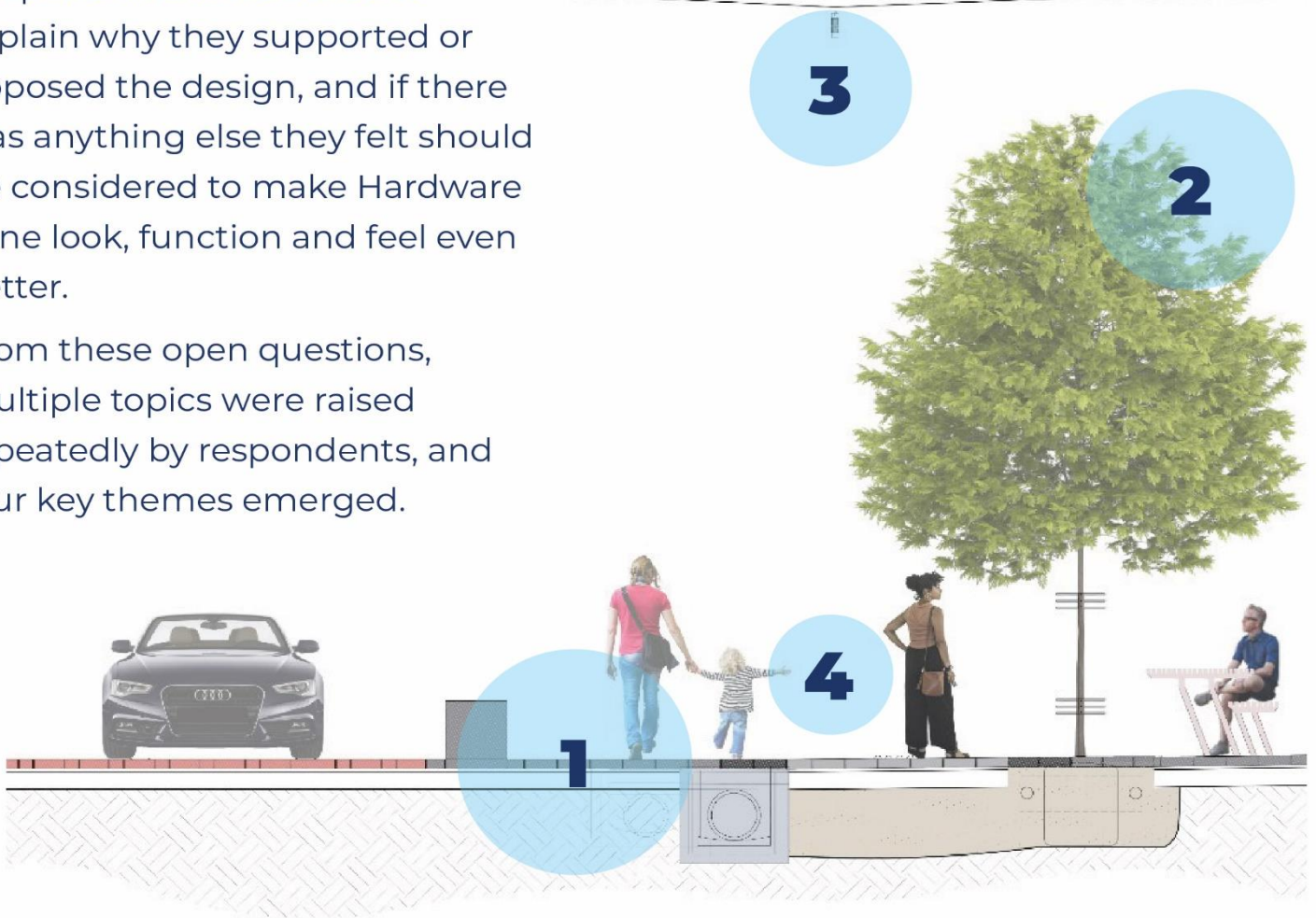
Participants were asked to rate their level of support for the design from 1 (very unsupportive) to 5 (very supportive).



KEY THEMES RAISED BY THE COMMUNITY

Respondents were asked to explain why they supported or opposed the design, and if there was anything else they felt should be considered to make Hardware Lane look, function and feel even better.

From these open questions, multiple topics were raised repeatedly by respondents, and four key themes emerged.



1 - PAVING

More people wanted the iconic red brick paving to stay rather than change to the more common bluestone, arguing the red brick was a key part of Hardware Lane's unique character.

Those who favoured the shift to bluestone felt that this was 'quintessentially Melbourne' and that it would help reinvigorate the laneway.



2 - PLANTS

People welcomed more trees and greenery in Hardware Lane, calling for a versatile mix of trees and shrubs to be part of the design.



3 - LIGHTING

People wanted lighting to enhance both the safety and ambience of the area, suggesting features like heritage style lamps and down-lighting to avoid glare.



4 - PEDESTRIANS

People were pleased to see pedestrians given priority over cars and Hardware Lane becoming a more functional space for people on foot.

Project background

Hardware Lane is one of Melbourne's most loved laneway destinations. The City of Melbourne is upgrading the laneway to renew the streetscape, improve safety and attract more visitors to the space.

In 2018 City of Melbourne shared a draft concept plan and asked the local community for feedback. This round of engagement generated a relatively low response rate.

While COVID-19 restrictions were in place across Victoria in 2020, Council was able to fast-track the most disruptive drainage works between Bourke and Lonsdale streets in order to minimise the impact on traders when restrictions eased. These works have no impact on the final streetscape design.

Given the gap since the original consultation in 2018 and the low response rate at the time, the City of Melbourne ran a second round of engagement for Stage 1 of the Hardware Lane streetscape upgrade (Bourke Street to Little Bourke Street) and sought feedback from the community on the proposed design between 16 July and 15 August 2021.

Project aims

- To upgrade Hardware Lane's road surface, lighting, drainage and trees
- To maintain Hardware Lane's status as a destination laneway through improved amenity
- To minimise disruption to businesses and residents

What is proposed

As part of Stage 1, Council is upgrading Hardware Lane from Bourke Street to Little Bourke Street to ensure it continues to be a vibrant, safe and accessible Melbourne laneway.

The key proposed changes to achieve this are:

- upgrading the existing red brick road surface to bluestone paving
- replacing 12 declining trees with 14 new trees
- installing DDA (Disability Discrimination Act) compliant ramps and tactile ground surface indicators to improve accessibility
- upgrading the bollards used for intermittent road closures (no change to operating hours)
- installing a public safety barrier alongside the private driveway of the adjacent car park
- new street furniture such as tree guards and grates
- upgrading the stormwater drainage (completed in 2020)
- installing new catenary lighting.

Community Consultation

Consultation method

Community feedback on the proposed design was collected primarily through the City of Melbourne's *Participate Melbourne* website, where members of the public could find information about the draft design and complete an online survey to share their thoughts. This online survey consisted of one quantitative (option selection) question, two open-ended text response questions, and three demographic questions. The questions were:

1. Overall, how supportive are you of the proposed design? (from 1 star = very unsupportive, to 5 stars = very supportive)
2. Why do you feel this way about the proposed design? (free text response)
3. Is there anything else we should consider to make Hardware Lane look, function and feel even better? (free text response)
4. Postcode
5. Primary Connection to Hardware Lane (I live in Hardware Lane; I work in Hardware Lane; I own a property in Hardware Lane; I run a business in Hardware Lane; I live near Hardware Lane; I work near Hardware Lane; I travel through/visit here regularly; other – please specify)
6. How did you hear about this consultation?

In addition to this, two email submissions were received from community members expressing their thoughts about the project.

A social media post by City of Melbourne was also released on Twitter, aimed at informing the community about the engagement and directing them towards the Participate Melbourne site. A small number of comments were made on this post, which have been included in the analysis of public feedback for this report.

Please note that two pop-up sessions were also planned to take part on Hardware Lane, but were unable to proceed due to the COVID-19 lockdown in place in Victoria at this time. Additional emails and letters were sent out and the consultation period was extended by one week.

Engagement reach

From 16 July to 22 August 2021, the City of Melbourne consulted with the public on the draft design for Hardware Lane's streetscape upgrades. This featured communications across multiple platforms including:

- > Diagrams and information about the proposed design, FAQs and a survey on Participate Melbourne
- > A letter distributed by mail to more than 500 residents and businesses around Hardware Lane at the beginning of the consultation
- > A media release was issued which resulted in an article by the Herald Sun and CBD News
- > A follow-up letter including a QR code distributed by mail to more than 500 residents and businesses around Hardware Lane halfway through the consultation
- > Signage and floor decals installed in the laneway, directing people to take part in the Participate Melbourne survey
- > A post on the City of Melbourne Twitter account promoting the engagement and directing viewers to the Participate Melbourne site
- > Story in the City of Melbourne 'Business in Melbourne' and 'Participate Melbourne' newsletter targeted emails with links to the Participate Melbourne survey to residents' groups, business precinct associations and community organisations

The overall reach of this engagement included:



Overall, 70 individuals contributed to this engagement. This consisted of:

- > 68 surveys
- > 2 email submissions

Quantitative analysis overview

Frequency analysis was completed on the questions listed below. The results are presented as charts, along with key findings. Because of the relatively small number of people who answered some questions compared to others, both percentages and numbers of respondents are presented in the charts.

- Overall, how supportive are you of the proposed design? (1 star = very unsupportive and 5 stars = very supportive)
- Primary Connection to Hardware Lane (I live in Hardware Lane; I work in Hardware Lane; I own a property in Hardware Lane; I run a business in Hardware Lane; I live near Hardware Lane; I work near Hardware Lane; I travel through/visit here regularly; other – please specify)
- How did you hear about this consultation?

Written comments analysis overview

Analysis approach

To complete the analysis of written comments, Global Research analysts read each comment received from the community and organised them 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.

The following discussion presents results from qualitative analysis of the following two free-text questions included in the survey:

- *Why do you feel this way about the proposed design?*
- *Is there anything else we should consider to make Hardware Lane look, function and feel even better?*

Responses to “*Why do you feel this way about the proposed design?*” were filtered based on respondents’ overall rating of the draft design from 1-5. The following section summarises these responses by theme and shows how often topics were raised across different support ratings.

All responses to ‘*Is there anything else we should consider to make Hardware Lane look, function and feel even better?*’ were all coded into themes and topics and are discussed in order of most to least frequently mentioned topics.

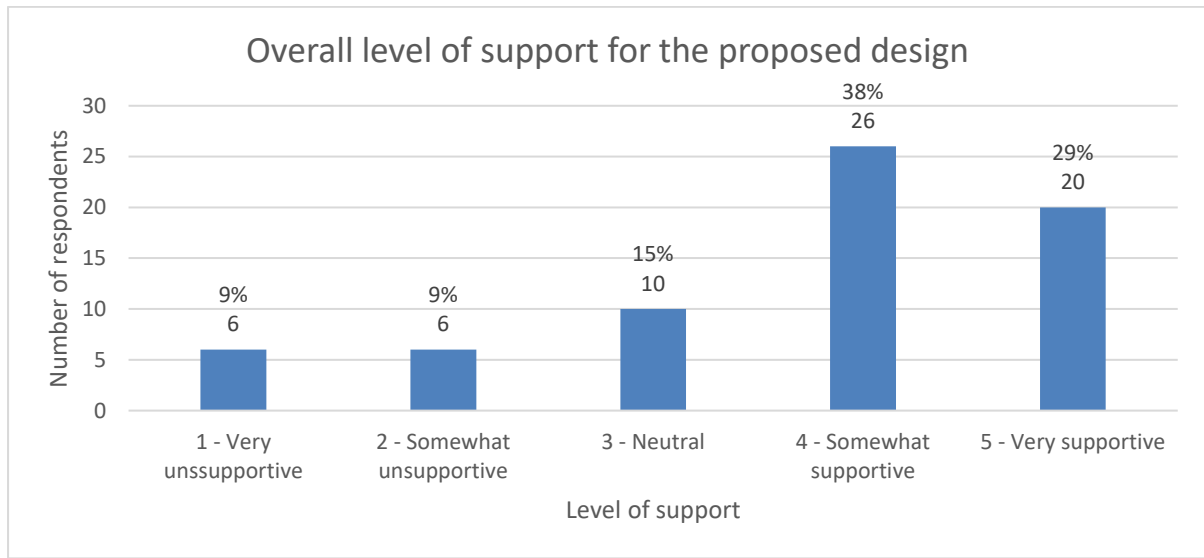
To give a clear and consistent indication of the number of comments received on each topic, the following key was used to describe the relative number of comments on each topic:

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

Comments from respondents have been included in this report verbatim. However, obvious spelling or grammatical errors have been amended for clarity.

Survey results

Overall, how supportive are you of the proposed design?



Key findings

- More respondents were supportive of the draft design than unsupportive.
- About two thirds of respondents were at least somewhat supportive of the draft design, with 38% of respondents selecting '4' as their ranking, and 29% selecting '5'.
- The remaining third of respondents were either neutral (15%) or unsupportive of the draft design to some degree (18%).

Why do you feel this way about the proposed design?

Respondents were asked to provide a written comment explaining their overall level of support for the proposed design. The following section discusses these responses by theme and shows how often particular points were raised across different support ratings.

To present this, tables at the start of each section show the number of comments made on each aspect within the broader topic, sorted by the different levels of overall support people had for the design.

Below is the discussion of written responses to the question 'Why do you feel this way about the proposed design?'.

Paving

31 comments

Paving was the most commonly discussed theme amongst responses from the community.

Aspects discussed	Level of support					TOTAL number of points made
	Rating 1	Rating 2	Rating 3	Rating 4	Rating 5	
Retain character red brick paving	3	4	6	6	-	19
Support for changing to bluestone	-	-	1	2	5	8
Accessibility issues with bluestone	1	-	-	3	-	4
TOTAL number of points made (by rating)	4	4	7	11	5	31

Retain the red brick paving

19 comments

Almost two thirds of these comments argued that the red brick paving that has been present since Hardware Lane opened as one of Melbourne's first dining laneways gives the area a unique character. This uniqueness, they argued, would be destroyed if the distinctive red brick paving is replaced with the bluestone paving that is becoming standard across Melbourne.

I think the heritage of the lane should be preserved, the blue pavers take away the rich colour of the lane.

Similar comments were made by respondents whose overall ratings of the proposed design were 1, 2, 3 and 4. These respondents expressed concerns that replacing the existing red brick paving with bluestone will detract from the heritage and character of Hardware Lane. A small number of comments described the increasing use of bluestone in the city as "boring" or "bland". A couple of respondents whose comments summed up the sentiment amongst this group stated:

While the previous red brick contrasting with the golden trees made the area feel vibrant, inviting and quite uplifting on a nice day, I worry that the new bluestone treatment will make this street look like any other street in Melbourne.

Replacing the red brick with standardised bluestone will destroy the Lane's character. This should not be about one-size-fits-all standardization...Stop landscaping.

Please stop it with the bluestoneification of Melbourne. In combination with all the new towers in the city in the past ten years, and the awful cold stainless steel furniture, it's becoming more of a dark, cold and windswept city that is losing its appeal. Bluestone enforces this. Replace the old bricks with recycled brick, or some other warmer stone.

Support for the change to bluestone

8 comments

Support for the switch from red brick paving to bluestone was given by respondents whose overall rating of the design was 3 or above. One respondent who supported this change, remarked that the red brick looks "pretty ordinary" compared to bluestone paving, while others felt that a new colour would benefit the area, or that the current paving is too slippery so a flatter surface would make the area safer and more enjoyable to visit. One respondent commented that bluestone is "quintessentially Melbourne".

Bluestone paving is hard to walk on

4 comments

Four respondents who also opposed the change from the current red brick paving to bluestone did so because they felt that bluestone paving is difficult and dangerous to walk on. In particular, these comments noted that bluestone can be slippery and uneven.

Bluestones won't improve the numbers to Hardware Lane, they can be very difficult to walk on for anyone let alone anyone with a disability

Planting and landscaping

21 comments

Aspects discussed	Level of support					TOTAL number of points made
	Rating 1	Rating 2	Rating 3	Rating 4	Rating 5	
Support for increasing greenery	-	-	-	3	3	6
General praise	-	-	-	1	3	4
Types of trees	-	1	-	3	-	4
Maintenance	-	-	-	1	2	3
Suggestions	-	-	-	2	1	3
Retain existing trees	-	-	1	-	-	1
TOTAL number of points made (by rating)	0	1	1	9	9	21

Support for more trees

10 comments

A small number of respondents were happy that more trees and plants were being added in Hardware Lane, increasing the amount of greenery in the area.

Four respondents offered general praise for the way the proposed design addresses trees and vegetation. These comments included remarks such as “love the trees” and “prefer new trees”. One respondent commented:

The trees are stylish, colorful and allow light in winter and shade in summer.

Tree types

4 comments

Comments about the specific types of trees and plants that respondents wanted to see in Hardware Lane were made by a small number of respondents. One respondent suggested that a mix of native and deciduous trees would be preferable, while another commented:

Overall it's a good design proposal however I feel the use of a tree that offers colorful blossoming would've helped make the lane more inviting.

One comment argued that the *Gleditsia triacanthos* ‘Sunburst’ trees in the plan would “cause a mess for shopkeepers and look unappealing to visitors”.

A final comment remarked that trees planted on Hardware Lane need to be mature, so that the new trees are the same size as those they’re replacing. This way, Hardware Lane, which they described as being “lush and green”, will not have to look bare for several years while the trees grow.

Maintenance

3 comments

Proper maintenance of trees and plants was important to three respondents, who commented that proper care needs to be taken of the trees in Hardware Lane so that they can thrive, including upgrades to the irrigation system and ensuring that they are protected from vandals.

Suggestions

3 comments

Three respondents made suggestions on how trees could be utilised to improve the upgrade plans to Hardware Lane. Two of these comments related to the placement of trees, with one respondent noting that they appear to be spaced slightly too close together or that there may be too many trees in the draft design, and another noting that trees should be arranged in a way that will not obscure the view of the beautiful heritage buildings from the laneway.

A third respondent noted that they’d like to see even more trees and greenery added to the design.

Retain existing trees

1 comment

The need to remove existing mature trees was questioned by one respondent, who asked whether a second opinion is obtained on whether these trees are truly ‘declining’.

General support

12 comments

Aspects discussed	Level of support					TOTAL number of points made
	Rating 1	Rating 2	Rating 3	Rating 4	Rating 5	
Welcome upgrades to Hardware Lane	-	-	-	4	8	12

Welcome upgrade to Hardware Lane

12 comments

Six respondents made comments commending City of Melbourne on its proposed upgrades, noting that Hardware Lane is in need of “a lift”. A couple of these comments simply noted that it needs “something”, while others shared specific elements that they thought would help to rejuvenate the area, such as:

Needs an update and think new proposed lighting will have good impact.

It will be good to separate the traffic going to the car park. The area looks terrible at the moment.

The remaining six comments were made by respondents who felt that the proposed design looked good and that it would benefit the area, making it safer and more appealing. Examples of the comments made by this group include:

Because I have looked at the plans and liked them ever since they came into my letterbox about a year and a half ago - I live very close to Hardware Lane.

Hardware Lane is an iconic 'go to' destination in our CBD so it's pleasing to see that it will be given a 'facelift' that won't take away from its character.

Pedestrians

7 comments

Aspects discussed	Level of support					TOTAL number of points made
	Rating 1	Rating 2	Rating 3	Rating 4	Rating 5	
Pedestrians	-	-	1	2	4	7

Six of the seven comments about pedestrians were made by respondents who were pleased to see pedestrians given priority over cars and see Hardware Lane becoming a more functional space for people on foot.

One other respondent felt that more could be done to make the area pedestrian-friendly:

The car park entry is mainly used by cars only 7-9am. That space is currently shared by pedestrians and cars. Defining it as only for cars and adding bollards to keep pedestrians off is a poor outcome.

Lighting

5 comments

Level of support						
Aspects discussed	Rating 1	Rating 2	Rating 3	Rating 4	Rating 5	TOTAL number of points made
Lighting	-	-	2	1	2	5

A small number of comments were made about lighting. A couple of these comments indicated concern about the way lighting has been included in the draft design. One respondent remarked that the catenary lighting looked “cheap”, while another noted that LED lighting around the city is causing issues with glare and felt this should be avoided in Hardware Lane to ensure the area was inviting and not “blinding” people walking by.

One respondent felt that adding LED lighting under the proposed benches would be a nice touch, while two final comments argued that new lighting would help make the area safer and have a good impact overall.

Other areas in need of upgrades

3 comments

Level of support						
Aspects discussed	Rating 1	Rating 2	Rating 3	Rating 4	Rating 5	TOTAL number of points made
Other areas in need of upgrades	1	-	1	1	-	3

One respondent noted that Hardware Lane has been considerably less affected by the COVID-19 pandemic than other laneways in the city and is lucky to have outdoor seating and receive support from City of Melbourne. This comment claimed that other laneways, such as Guildford Lane, have been “abandoned” by the City.

Meanwhile, the remaining two comments on this topic suggested that the upgrades should extend to the rest of Hardware Lane to bring more continuity to the design.

Business

3 comments

Level of support						
Aspects discussed	Rating 1	Rating 2	Rating 3	Rating 4	Rating 5	TOTAL number of points made
Business	-	-	-	2	1	3

A few comments were made which related to businesses on Hardware Lane. One of these urged Council to adequately engage with and consider the views of local traders, while two others discussed outdoor seating. One respondent felt that the proposed design would

assist with outdoor seating and hoped that this would encourage more businesses back to Hardware Lane, while another expressed concern about the movement of deliveries for restaurants and retail stores, noting that drivers currently have to navigate around outdoor tables and tents leaving them with nowhere safe to unload.

Other comments

9 comments

A number of other comments were made that did not fit into any of the above categories. These are discussed below.

Aspects discussed	Level of support					TOTAL number of points made
	Rating 1	Rating 2	Rating 3	Rating 4	Rating 5	
Quality of work	-	-	2	-	-	2
Draft design lacked details	-	1	-	-	-	1
Waste of money	-	1	-	-	-	1
Concern about loss of character	-	-	1	-	-	1
How impact will be measured	-	-	-	1	-	1
Sustainability	-	-	-	1	-	1
Accessibility	-	-	-	-	1	1
Safety	-	-	-	-	1	1

Quality of work

2 comments

The quality of the upgrades was raised by two respondents, one of whom wanted to see the use quality finishes and materials, without “cutting corners”. Another respondent noted that they felt the proposed design was somewhat of a “missed opportunity”, arguing that the upgrades could have been spectacular, but instead appear to be conservative and a “quick fix”.

Draft design lacked details

1 comment

One respondent felt that the information about the proposed design was too vague and the images too poor in quality to be able to comment on.

Waste of money

1 comment

One respondent simply stated that they find the proposed streetscape upgrade to Hardware Lane a waste of money.

Concern about loss of character

1 comment

One respondent, who welcomed the investment into Hardware Lane and seemed supportive of the idea overall, also expressed sadness at the loss of some of the elements that give Hardware Lane its character. In particular, they noted that “the standard bluestone paving, standard tree guards, standard lighting, etc. will not differentiate this lane from others in the CBD.”

How impact will be measured

1 comment

One respondent questioned how the upgrades will attract more visitors to Hardware Lane, and how the success of the project will be measured.

Sustainability

1 comment

One respondent asked how the existing brick paving will be used, and whether it will be set aside to reuse in other projects in order to set a good example in terms of sustainability and heritage protection.

Accessibility

1 comment

One respondent noted that improved accessibility was important to them.

Safety

1 comment

One respondent who ranked the proposed design '4' appreciated that the draft design addresses most of their safety concerns.

Beyond the project scope

Some comments were out of scope for the delivery of this project however they will be passed on to relevant work areas. These comments are discussed below.

Carpark

2 comments

Two comments were made about the carpark, both made by respondents who supported the design, which argued that this detracts from the overall amenity of Hardware Lane. One respondent suggested that the City should purchase the carpark and replace it with something that activates the lane and does not involve cars using the space anymore.

Specific businesses

1 comment

One respondent noted that they would really like to see Campari restaurant return to Hardware Lane.

Access to private driveway

1 comment

One final respondent simply commented:

Should remove access to private driveway.

Anything else to consider

Respondents were asked, "Is there anything else we should consider to make Hardware Lane look, function and feel even better?".

Below are the responses given to this question, in order of most to least frequently discussed themes and topics.

Planting and landscaping

18 comments

The most common theme amongst the responses to this question was planting and landscaping. Comments about the types of trees were made by a small number of respondents, a few of whom specified that that new trees and plants should be native to the area. Other suggestions around the types of plants people wanted to see included in the upgrade of Hardware Lane included evergreen trees; ecologically diverse plantings; and greater use of understory plantings/vines. A couple of examples of such comments follow:

Trees should be ecologically diverse: 'intersection' species complemented by laneway mix inclusive of strata assemblage with shop owners to promote shrub and herbaceous diversity and continuity.

Mature trees, with species selection to be similar lush light green as before (Sycamore?) - these give a lot of pleasant amenity to Lt Bourke street between Exhibition and Spring St, and work well with heritage facades & catenary lighting.

Five comments were made about landscape design, with suggestions that planter boxes or pots could be used to make the design more interesting, or that plants should be placed in between bollards to separate the private car path and the rest of the laneway. Other suggestions included using shrubs and smaller plantings as well as larger trees, and the following comment about landscaping more generally:

As with all uplift opportunities, there is potential to improve general feel of the laneway with the use of planter boxes, elegant public seating, lighting affixed to building facades for the length of the street etc. Really warm the place up for people walking its course

A similar number of respondents simply suggested that more trees and plants should be included in the design, noting that greenery has a cooling effect and makes the area nicer to be in.

Two respondents argued that replacement trees planted along Hardware Lane should be mature trees rather than young ones.

Paving

13 comments

A small number of comments about paving reiterated that replacing the existing red brick paving with bluestone pavers was not the most suitable solution. These comments argued that the red brick helps to give Hardware Lane its character, or that a different type of

paving would be more suitable and complement the heritage buildings better than bluestone.

Three respondents suggested that a more creative approach could be taken for the new paving. These suggestions included that feature paving or artwork could be integrated to give the area more character, and that the whole street needn't be only bluestone and some variation or patterns could be included to give the street uniqueness. One other respondent commented:

Bluestone is ubiquitous in the city and needs to be coordinated carefully with other materials and finishes so as not to make a street too dreary. If it is to be used for Hardware Lane, it should be distinct from the footpath paving used across Melbourne, to give Hardware Lane its own character. For example, using smaller pavers, with some colour/texture variation, in an interesting pattern etc - go and have a look at the paving at 150 Lonsdale St if you need inspiration on a quality, high class finish.

A couple of respondents stipulated that whatever new paving is chosen, it is important that it is even and not slippery to ensure that it is safe and accessible.

One respondent noted that bluestone paving should also be added to the rest of Hardware Lane, while another respondent suggested the following:

Invest in Applied R&D with tertiary to explore harder-wearing porous brick paving: utilise technology to reinterpret the narrative. Opportunity to look at old things in new ways. This includes paving pattern to account for shear loads.

Other design suggestions

12 comments

Several other design suggestions were made, ranging from calls to ensure that the design does not include edges and surfaces that could be used by skateboarders, to putting focus on facades or matching awnings for shops and restaurants, or using sculptures as the barriers between cars and pedestrians to make the design more interesting.

One respondent suggested that the new design should not be too modern but rather should keep the area's history and character alive.

A few other examples of ideas that respondents suggested included:

Showcase WSUD. Bollard Blocks: engraved/ sculpted art competition in spirit with history of Hardware Lane and First Nations.

Don't make it a grey, bland, carbon copy of every other boring space that now lays desolate in the city. I have travelled the world and enjoyed meals and drinks in streets significantly older than Hardware Lane but maintained by the local councils.

Higher quality craftsmanship. The hotchpotch of repairs and poor quality materials and craftwork have resulted in a poor quality lane. The use of a

design, higher quality materials and higher quality craftsmanship could have a significant positive impact.

A memorial to those that were murdered in January 2017 to help the families, especially the ones that draw rainbow love hearts where their loved ones died.

I think the grey barriers should go all the way down and around the drive way. Also on top of the barriers to build a green wall screen, together 2m tall, so the driveway isn't seen and acts a sound barrier and is more visually pleasing.

Lighting

9 comments

Three respondents argued that more lighting is required, with one also noting that installing more CCTV cameras would complement the new lighting as a safety measure. Safety was also raised by another respondent, who commented:

Please make sure that the new trees do not impact the new lights. Security is paramount and we don't need lights being shadowed by trees.

A few other comments offered suggestions such as including more feature lighting, or heritage style lights to complement the laneway's buildings and character.

Another couple of respondents noted that care must be taken to ensure that the new lighting adds to the ambiance, instead of detracting from it by being too bright or causing issues with glare. To combat this, one respondent suggested that there should be no up-lighting in the design.

Extend upgrades to other areas

3 comments

Three respondents argued that the upgrades should be extended to other areas, rather than just the section between Bourke Street and Little Bourke Street. One of these comments suggested that upgrades should improve the connection with Bourke Street by including businesses closer to this section, while another respondent suggested:

Perhaps the two ends of the lane could be enhanced to make it more of a destination and for patrons to know they are entering a unique part of the CBD.

Already good enough

2 comments

Two respondents stated that they could not think of anything further to add, noting that the area is "beautiful the way it is" and is "already good enough". It was unclear whether these comments were meaning that the proposed design is good enough or that the existing laneway is fine as is, without the upgrades.

Pedestrians

2 comments

One respondent noted that they liked the proposal as long as it creates adequate space for pedestrians, while another noted that a zebra crossing at Little Bourke Street could be

useful. This respondent acknowledged that the area is supposed to be a shared zone, but argued that few motorists seem to know this.

Maintenance and cleanliness 2 comments

A couple of comments expressed the importance of keeping Hardware Lane clean, well maintained, and free of graffiti.

Seating 2 comments

Two respondents made comments about public seating, noting the need for areas where pedestrians and visitors can sit and rest without being required to spend any money. In particular, one respondent noted that seating should be near or underneath trees.

Recognition of First Nations people 1 comment

One respondent requested:

That the revamped Hardware Lane honour the local aboriginal First Nation people through a strong presence of their art, their flag, and displays honouring them and their history and stories, so as to educate those utilising the Lane.

Cycling 1 comment

One respondent suggested that bicycle parking should be included in Hardware Lane's redevelopment.

Climate change and sustainability 1 comment

One comment simply stated:

Any way to further offset pollution for a greener, healthier city the better.

Engagement with community 1 comment

One respondent wanted to see "genuine engagement with community in this process", which they argued begins with "decent renders and details of the proposed works".

Other 1 comment

A final comment simply made note of the lovely laneways built in Sydney recently, including Kensington Street.

Beyond the project scope

Again, a number of comments made in this section were out of scope for the delivery of this project however they will be passed on to relevant work areas. These comments are discussed below.

Businesses

12 comments

Twelve respondents made comments about businesses. Of these, nine related specifically to restaurants. These comments were varied, ranging from a suggestion to offer grants or incentives for some restaurants that have been closed in order to bring Hardware Lane back to life, to calls to ban spruiking by staff outside restaurants to make the atmosphere more enjoyable for passers-by. A few respondents noted that the quality of restaurants on Hardware Lane is declining, and suggested that the City should work with landlords to improve the quality of tenants and be more selective about the restaurants that operate in the laneway. In particular, one respondent wanted to see the McDonald's go.

Another comment suggested that the City should invest in or have a rebate scheme for uniform retractable pergola covers to assist with outdoor dining during Melbourne's "crazy" weather, while a final comment about restaurants argued that more priority should be given to restaurants and cafes, stating:

So many other spaces have been taken over by poorly planned retail outlets, and this lane in particular runs the risk of becoming a retail lane, and losing the charm that it has as a dining location.

Remaining comments relating to businesses included a call for the City to consider making an area (or specific time slot) where trucks and delivery drivers can unload safely without impeding stores and cafes; a query about what businesses in the area will be required to do to ensure the look and feel of their stores are similarly enhanced; and one comment asking for one particular magazine retailer to be removed from the laneway due to their "pushy" sales techniques making people uncomfortable.

Car Park

8 comments

Half of the comments about the carpark argued that it should be removed altogether, and that the area should be repurposed in a way that can be enjoyed by the public. Suggestions for how the space could be better used included the following comment:

Council should consider purchasing the carpark and replacing it with something more inspiring, contemporary and sociable, with activated retail/hospitality uses for its entire length. Who knows, perhaps there's a tidy profit to be made in doing so...

One of the respondents commented that the draft design seemed to resolve the concerns they had around safety, while another noted that the entrance to the car park impacted the safety of the space.

Two final comments suggested that more could be done to make the car park less ugly, such as screening it with stainless steel mesh and greening it.

Music and entertainment

3 comments

Making Hardware Lane livelier through music was suggested by two respondents, while a third called for a ban on amplified music from street buskers. One of the respondents in favour of street music also suggested that Hardware Lane would be a good venue for food and wine festivals throughout the year.

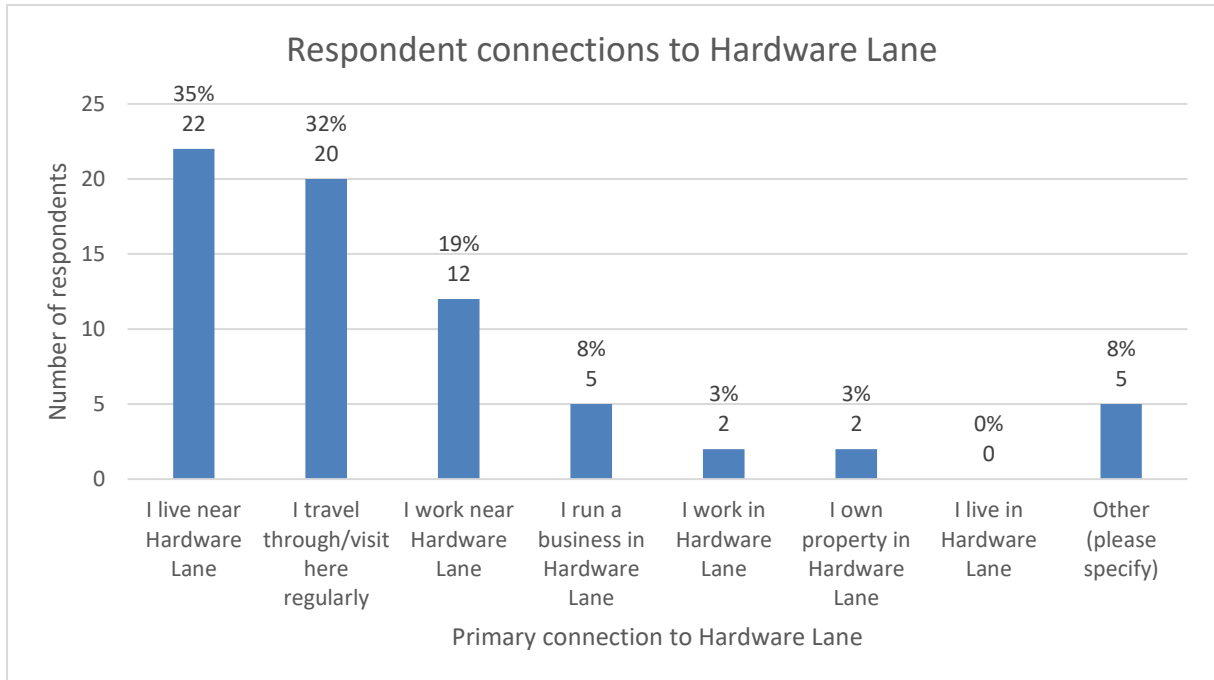
Smoking

3 comments

Two respondents wanted to see Hardware Lane made a smoke-free area, while a third suggested designated smoking areas away from outdoor diners.

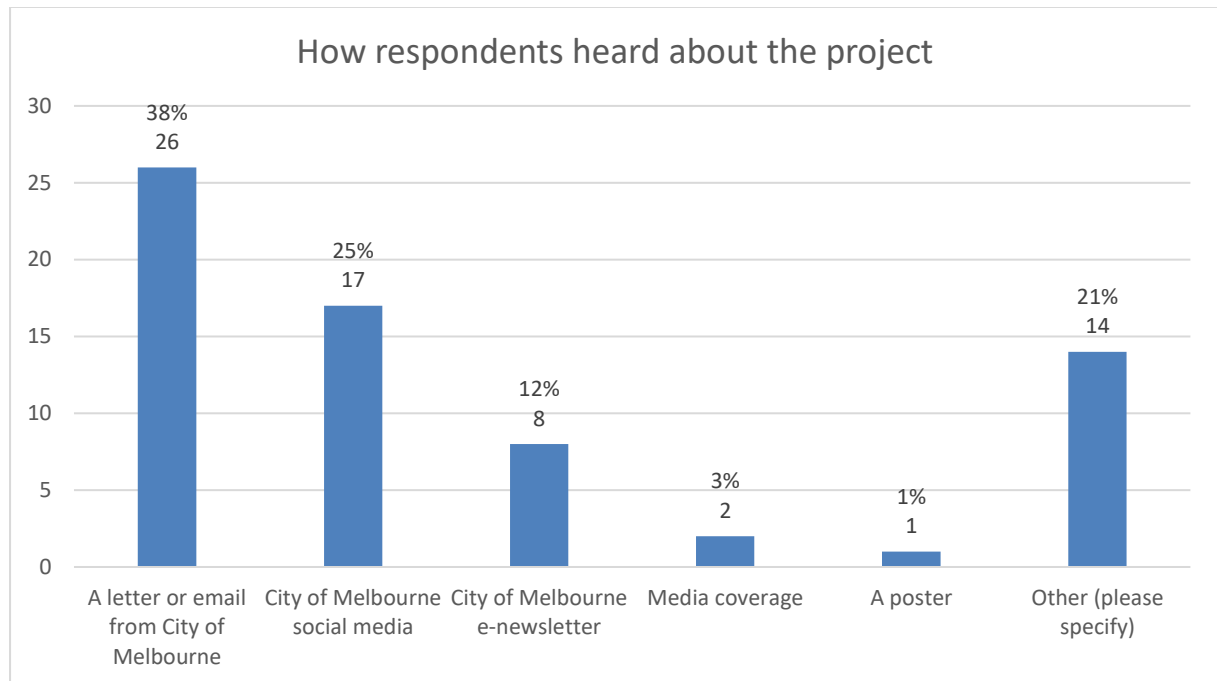
Respondent characteristics

Respondent connections to Hardware Lane



- > The most common primary connection that respondents had to Hardware Lane was 'I live near Hardware Lane' (35%).
- > This was closely followed by 'I travel through/visit here regularly' (32%).
- > People who work near Hardware Lane made up almost one fifth of respondents (19%), while remaining groups all made up fewer than 10% of respondents.

How respondents heard about this project



- > The most common way that respondents heard about the project was through a letter or email from City of Melbourne (38%).
- > A quarter of respondents heard about the project from City of Melbourne social media.
- > Other ways that respondents heard about the project that were not listed as options included Twitter (4); City of Melbourne or Participate Melbourne websites (3); a sticker on the pavement in Hardware Lane (3); other social media (1); a forum (1); from a councillor (1); and the East Enders residents' association

Twitter

In addition to promoting this project on the Participate Melbourne website, City of Melbourne posted on Twitter, informing the public about the proposed design and the opportunity to share their thoughts on it.

This post was **retweeted 6 times**, received **34 likes**, and elicited **6 comments**.

Of these comments, only half related to the Hardware Lane project. One commenter expressed that they did not want Hardware Lane to be repaved with bluestone, noting that “not everything needs to be grey bluestone” and suggesting that variety would be better. Another person simply commented “Leave it be – it’s always been a much loved laneway, the way it is.” A third comment asked how City of Melbourne was going to fund the upgrades.

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Turning Information Into Insight