



City of Melbourne: Royal Park Safety Audit Process

Findings Report

July 2023

Acknowledgements & authorship

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land upon which Royal Park sits and pay our respects to the Wurundjeri, Bunurong and other Indigenous Elders who have cared for this Country over millennia, who care for it currently and who seek to preserve it for future generations.

This report was written by RedRoad Consulting and reflects the in-depth discussion, perspectives and ideas shared by the many community and staff participants of this audit and co-design process. We acknowledge these contributions with many thanks.

At a glance...

In response to concerns raised by community members and as part of preparing an updated Royal Park Master Plan, a program of community safety auditing was designed and implemented in early 2023. The goals for this process were to understand how safe the Park feels from a range of perspectives, align with other Council policy and develop a set of tools and processes that could be used in future safety assessments of public spaces in the City of Melbourne.

How we gathered people's insights

Between 18 May and 14 June 2023, we gathered community safety insights via a range of feedback methods:



41 map and
idea wall
contributions



72 audit
participants at 25
'hot spot' audits



26 codeign
workshop
attendees



150 calls and
emails

Who we heard from

While the demographics of participants were not gathered in a formal sense, the following was observed:

- a majority (roughly 70% of audit participants, 78% of Participate Melbourne contributors and 88% of the CoDesign workshop participants) were women, reflecting the heightened concern women feel about safety in public spaces.
- participants came from varied age groups and ethnic backgrounds, including several migrants from the Horn of Africa and South Asia as well as Australian-born non-Anglo participants.
- most participants were residents of Parkville, North Melbourne, Parkville West, Carlton and neighbouring LGAs (Merri-bek in particular).
- community groups like the Friends of Royal Park, Parkville Residents Association, Royal Park Protection Group and Protectors of Public Land, amongst others were well represented.
- workers at key facilities in/near Royal Park were also well represented at custom audit sessions held with staff from the Royal Children's Hospital, The Melbourne Zoo, Urban Camp and the Wadja Aboriginal Family Room (RCH).



What we heard

Those involved in this process shared a range of experiences of and expectations for safety in Royal Park, including:

- wayfinding and legibility issues and ideas
- infrastructure, amenity and lighting issues and ideas
- traffic and shared path conflict issues and ideas
- sustainability and nature protection issues and ideas
- place activation and community connection issues and ideas

The specific opportunities and ideas varied from one 'hot spot' site to another, and a series of ideas for each site was negotiated through the CoDesign workshop process. The broad focus for these ideas are as follows:



Site 1 Upfield Trail at the Park Street level crossing: **short term interventions** (like signage) that could be made, given the impending Upfield line level crossing removal.



Site 2 Intersection of the Upfield and Capital City Trails: **improving the shared path utility and safety**, given the popularity of the two intersecting trails



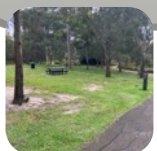
Site 3 Poplar Road, Royal Park Station: **creating pedestrian-priority infrastructure** at a very busy active travel, public transport and tourist interchange at Melbourne Zoo.



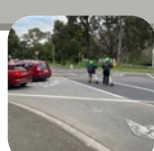
Site 4 Melbourne Zoo car park and paths: **encouraging safe active travel to the Zoo** to enhance the safety of pedestrians and public transport users.



Site 5 State Sport Centre, Tram 58, stop 24: **improving the shared path amenity** for the safety of conflicting cyclists, pedestrians and public transport users.



Site 6 Trin Warren Tamboore car park: **introducing gentle activation** through amenities like lighting, signage, activities and seating without overwhelming the site.



Site 7 Intersection of The Avenue and Macarthur Road: **linking up the Park** across the busy barrier of Macarthur Road, a critical fracture in Royal Park's use and cohesion.



Site 8 North Park Tennis Club shared path: **providing multiple (escape) routes** through an area affected by poor perceptions of safety, especially for women.



Site 9 Shared path north of the Royal Children's Hospital: **communicating Royal Park information**: wayfinding and route information but also information about the Park ethos and history.



Site 10 Intersection of Gatehouse and Morrah Streets: **enhancing the edge of the Park**, with wider paths, welcome signage and a more navigable entry point from the city.

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01 Introduction

The project background

Royal Park is Melbourne's largest urban park and a key open space asset for the City of Melbourne, local and metropolitan communities and park users, employees and visitors to the Melbourne Zoo, the Royal Children's Hospital, State Sport Centre Parkville, other sporting venues and public transport interchanges and to the flora and fauna in the Park.

While actively used and appreciated, Royal Park has also been the focus for reports to Council and the Victorian Police about safety concerns. Those concerns cover personal, accident and perception of safety matters, including attempted assaults, conflicts between cyclists and pedestrians along the many shared paths in the Park and people feeling unsafe due to low or no lighting at night, poor sightlines, difficult way finding and other 'design safety' matters.

Many of these concerns are reported by women, reinforcing the widely understood phenomenon that [perceptions of] safety in the public realm is a gendered experience (Stark & Meschik 2018; Soraganvi 2017; Börjesson 2012, Navarrete-Hernandez et al. 2021). Lately, the intersectional nature of this gendered experience – with (dis)ability, ethnicity, age, sexuality and other aspects of women's lives/identities – is also showing up in the research examining heightened sensitivity of women to public safety (Victorian State Government 2022b; Powers et al. 2022; Whitzman 2013).

As part of the process of updating the Royal Park Master Plan, a comprehensive community-led safety auditing process (employing a gendered lens) was developed to better understand and respond to these safety concerns and issues.

The goals of this auditing process have been to use ten 'hot spot' sites, as identified via community and staff feedback and incident data, as a focus for:

- Increasing inclusive community participation, awareness, and foster local social capital through the involvement of diverse community members in project activities.
- Identifying opportunities to improve safety and perceptions of safety in Royal Park in a manner reflective of the needs of a wide range of Park users, the Council and other stakeholders.
- Feeding safety concepts and recommendations into the broader Royal Park Master Plan being developed in 2023/24.
- Creating an 'iterative and adaptable' methodology and audit tool for wider application to gender safety in public places in the City of Melbourne.

- Aligning with and delivering on the objectives of associated Council policy and connecting across a range of Council teams to upskill staff in safety audits with a gender lens (see Victorian State Government 2022a).

This report details the background (this Section), the concepts we've used (Section 2) and approach taken to community safety auditing (Section 3), the key findings (Section 4) and recommendations emerging from the process (Section 5).

The 'hot spot' sites

The entire community safety audit process focused on the ten 'hot spot' sites that were selected based on the following inputs: assessing over five years' worth of customer complaint data, walks through the park with Council's Park Rangers and discussion with Community Policing Officers.

The sites varied in terms of the types of safety concerns they raised. Some were sites where accident safety was a key issue. Others were sites where people were more concerned about personal safety. Some were sites negatively associated with past incidents and/or poorer perceptions of safety due to site features like low lighting. The sites were predominately located on routes through and/or the edges of Royal Park.



Hot spot locations within Royal Park

These ten hot spots were the focus of all subsequent engagement activity: the online engagement, the community safety audits and the CoDesign Workshop.

02 Conceptualising ‘safety’

This process has been focused on a broad complement of safety concerns, including personal and inter-personal safety and crime, perceptions of safety and accident safety (related to crashes, falls and other injuries).

Critically, however, the project has sought to understand ‘safety’ as experienced by Park users themselves. In this regard, the project has focused on community-led assessments of safety and on recruiting a variety of different park users into the assessment process.

Analysing safety for this project has involved understanding key concepts (like gendered safety, intersectionality, etc.) and the policy environment this work sits within. The following is a summary of how safety has been understood in this project.

Key concepts

Some of the key concepts that have framed the ways in which the project has operated and who was invited to participate are as follows.

Gender (in)equality

Gender-specific approaches to public safety begin with an understanding of the specific forms that violence and discrimination is experienced by girls, women and gender diverse people, here in Victoria and around the world.

Gender inequality and discrimination in society plays out in both private and public spheres. In public spaces, inequality can be exacerbated by structural inequality through policy, programming, design, research/evaluation and resource allocation (Criado-Perez 2019; XYX Lab & CrowdSpot. 2021; Kern 2021), leaving women and gender diverse people under-served by public spaces such as parks. As an example, the current Royal Park Master Plan (1997) doesn’t include any mention of gender, even in relation to safety (which is discussed in the Master Plan several times).

The Victorian Gender Equality Act 2020 now mandates public entities like local governments to “undertake a gender impact assessment when developing or reviewing any policy of, or program or service provided by, the entity that has a direct and significant impact on the public.” (Victorian State Government 2020: 9). The goal of these impact assessments is to redress structural gender inequality and move Victoria towards gender equality:



Gender equality means equality of rights, opportunities, responsibilities and outcomes between persons of different genders.

Gender Equality Act 2020: 3

This legislative requirement has been foundational to the ways in which the auditing of safety in Royal Park was conceptualised and executed.

Gendered safety

While women and gender diverse people represent a wide range of ethnicities, ages, socioeconomic resources, sexual preferences and other identity factors, they do share the impacts of gender inequality as expressed through gendered violence, harassment and design bias (Kern 2021; XYX Lab & CrowdSpot. 2021).



The design and use of public spaces for activities including exercise and leisure is both a reflection and a reinforcer of gender inequality.

XYX Lab & CrowdSpot. 2021: 10

Women and gender diverse people use and perceive public space differently (and more warily) than men do. There are internalised reasons (like how women are socialised about risk and safety) as well as externalised reasons (like gendered violence and public space design) that contribute (Hidayati et al. 2020). Women's concerns about safety remain less validated by the authorities and the justice system than men's, for example (e.g. sexual assaults versus 'coward punch' assaults). These biases are, in turn, internalised by the next generation of girls, socialised to manage gendered risks for themselves.

In their summary of prior research on how men and women perceive the risks of public spaces like parks, Rišová & Sládeková Madajová (2020: 2) found the following:

- women generally consider parks and dark underpasses to be the most dangerous urban areas. They are far more sensitive to this land use than men are.
- women are more sensitive than men to places with signs of disorder, pervasive rubbish and graffiti.
- women are very sensitive to park layout and other general vegetation characteristics, especially those that enclose, provide hiding spots or obstruct sightlines.

- areas known for illicit behaviour, such as excessive alcohol drinking and drug use, affect the perception of security of both men and women.
- uncivil behaviour such as shouting or swearing has a more negative impact on women's emotional well-being than it does for men.

Women use public parks differently than men (and are catered to differently than men). Women are more likely to walk and men to cycle, for example, which creates a gendered overlay to the conflicts experienced between pedestrians and cyclists on shared paths. Sporting facilities in urban parks (football ovals, baseball pitches, skating bowls, BMX trails, etc.) are still populated by a majority of boys and men, despite efforts to address gender equity in sport.

These are two examples of how the revised Royal Park Master Plan needs to consider the impacts of gender.

Intersectionality

Women's experience of safety is mediated not just by gender but by ethnicity/Aboriginality, age, socioeconomic resources, sexual orientation, (dis)ability, religion, migration status, housing status and other identity factors.

'Intersectionality' refers to the ways in which these different aspects of a person's identity can expose them to overlapping systems of oppression, domination, or discrimination (e.g. sexism, racism, homophobia, ableism, ageism, transphobia, etc.) (Crenshaw 2014)

According to Family Safety Victoria (2021), people exposed to intersectional discrimination face:

- a greater risk of experiencing violence.
- a harder time getting the help they need due to systemic barriers.
- increased risk of social isolation.

'Intersectional' identities have been shown to create further risk and further sensitivity in women to their surroundings (Kendall 2021; Victorian State Government 2022b; XYX Lab & CrowdSpot. 2021: 12). Aboriginal women, LGBTIQ and gender diverse people, women living with disability, migrant women (of colour) and women experiencing homelessness, for example, are disproportionately affected by discrimination and violence in the public realm while older women are more disposed to poor perceptions of safety than younger people.

Cultural safety

Like intersectionality (and related to it), cultural safety is an emerging component of the safety discourse and, in this context, refers to the ways people have experienced (or fear experiencing) harassment, discrimination and intergroup conflict based on ethnicity, gender, sexuality, etc. A culturally safe environment is one where people face "no assault, challenge or denial of their identity, of who they

are and what they need... [enabling] individuals to feel safe, valued and able to participate in and enable their culture, spiritual and beliefs systems, free from racism and discrimination” (Victorian State Government 2019: 3).

A culturally safe environment builds mutual respect and shared meaning. In recent research on the influence of diversity, representation, safety, and sense of welcome and belonging on interracial contact in urban parks, findings confirm that more frequent and positive interracial contact occurs in parks when people perceived more equitable engagement, representation and a higher degree of welcome and belonging. These results recommend that open space planning “should focus on engagement and representation (as reflected through inclusive programs and events, input in decision making, and representation of racial and ethnic diversity) and safety.” (Powers et al. 2022: 1).

Universal access and design

Universal access and design are a ‘reply’ to the points above, stressing a design response to the public realm that accommodates all bodies and is mindful of the mobility, sensory, cultural and other needs of diverse people. These design accommodations create safety environments. Universal access and design operate on seven basic principles (with examples relevant to Royal Park):

- Equitable use. the design is useful to people with diverse abilities (e.g. a ramp is useful to a person in a wheelchair and someone pushing a pram).
- Flexibility in use: the design is adaptable to different users’ needs and choices (e.g. park furniture can adapt to able and disabled users).
- Simple and intuitive use: the design is easily understood and navigable, regardless of the user’s experience, knowledge, language skills, etc. (e.g. signage uses iconography rather than text).
- Perceptible information: the design communicates information effectively to the user, regardless of ambient conditions or the user’s sensory abilities. (e.g. using rumble strips to convey path information in low light conditions)
- Tolerance for error: the design can accommodate mistakes made by users (e.g. removing rocks and other hard barriers to bike paths where children may be learning to ride)
- Low physical effort: the design can be used comfortably by all with minimum effort and fatigue (e.g. designing switchback trails instead of steep hills).
- Appropriate size: space is allotted for approach, reach, manipulation and use, regardless of the user’s physical characteristics such as size or mobility (e.g. installing wide disabled parking bays to allow for easy disembarking).

(Centre for Universal Design Australia 2015)

The legislative and policy context

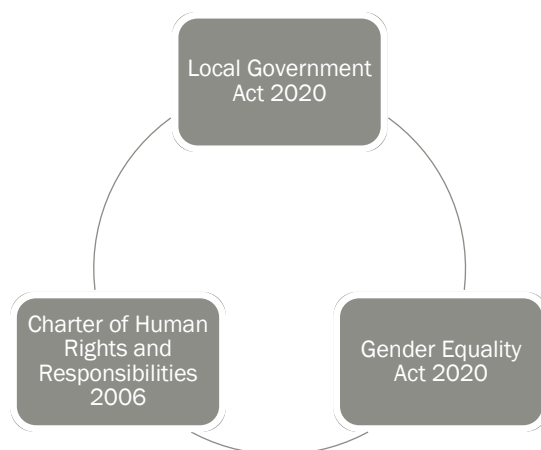
Many of the concepts above are reflected in policy and legislation at the international, national, state and local government level. The following are the key policy and legislative influences on the project.

At the local level, there are several piecing of policy that this project needed to align with, including:

City of Melbourne policy	Key safety-related goals
City of Melbourne City of Possibility: Council Plan 2021-25	The Council Plan sets the high level, strategic goals for the City around six key themes: safety and wellbeing is one of those themes (“All people who work in, live or visit the city can do so, and feel safe, at any time of the day or night”). The vision statement aspires to safe and accessible urban spaces, including urban parks.
Gender Equality Action Plan 2022-25	The Plan iterates both the historical legacies of gender discrimination that need redress (an issue pertinent to the Royal Park Master Plan and other older policy due for updating) and the benefits of gender equality for all people. Despite focusing mainly on the City of Melbourne as a workplace, Theme 3, ‘participation and representation’, was relevant to how we recruited people into the auditing processes. Other parts of the Plan are instructive in terms of how the City of Melbourne supports and recruits staff into positions related to park planning, park facilities and services and in respect to future engagement work on the park.
Women’s Safety and Empowerment Action Plan 2021-24	<p>The Plan commits to “act[ing] on the gendered drivers of violence against women - the unequal distribution of power, resources, value and opportunities.” and to advancing UN Development Goal 5: Gender Equality through all Council policy and programming.</p> <p>The Plan articulates four strategic themes: 1. Advance women and gender diverse people’s leadership and participation in economic, social and civic life across the municipality; 2. Promote the safety of women and girls in our communities and public spaces; 3. Engage men and boys to shift unhealthy norms of masculinity and condoning of violence, and; 4. Achieve sustainable primary prevention for our municipality.</p> <p>All four strategic themes were relevant to how we designed the community audit questions and format and as an analytical lens for the project outcomes.</p>

<u>Inclusive Melbourne Strategy 2022-32</u>	<p>The vision for an inclusive Melbourne is one where “people of all cultures, backgrounds, ages, genders, sexualities, beliefs, and abilities are welcomed, celebrated, and protected.”</p> <p>This inclusive goal is social and spatial: parks like Royal Park need to be safe and welcoming places for all people and the participatory processes also need to reflect that inclusion.</p>
<u>Open Space Strategy: Planning for Future Growth</u>	<p>While safety is not a key focus for the Open Space Strategy in relation to forward planning, the Strategy does note the growth in worker populations around the Royal Park precinct and speaks of the importance of comprehensive Master Plans for parks like Royal Park.</p>
<u>Urban Forest Strategy 2012-2032</u>	<p>While safety isn’t a major theme in the Urban Forest Strategy, engaging with community is as is balancing the ecological needs of wildlife with the safety of human users of public space (for example, when leaving dead trees in parks for habitat). Key actions under the ‘engaging with community’ strategy include actions – like enabling community to have a say and developing health and wellbeing indicators – are reflected our Royal Park community safety audit approach.</p>

The project was also heavily influenced by the requirements of the three key pieces of State legislation:



All three examples have mandated actions for local governments. As discussed, the Gender Equality Act mandates gender impact assessments of projects and policies such as this one. The Local Government Act 2020 directs local governments to provide deliberative opportunities for community to participate in civic decision

making. And the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities 2006 instructs all policy and programming to comply with human rights obligations.

Such universal human rights are global in scale and are driven by the United Nations [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#) endorsed in 1948 by the international community, including Australia.

The Declaration has since inspired "around two hundred assorted declarations, conventions, protocols, treaties, charters, and agreements dealing with the realization of human rights in the world" (Morsink 1999: 20). The [UN Sustainability Development Goals, 2015](#) (SDGs) that 'operationalise' and evaluate progress on human rights and equity are an example relevant to Australia and the City of Melbourne. The SDGs that particularly relate to this project include:

3. Good health and well-being – ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all.

5. Gender equality – ensure gender equality and empower all women and girls.

11. Sustainable cities and communities - make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.

13. Climate action - address the need to both adapt to climate change and invest in low-carbon development.

16. Peace, justice and strong institutions - Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels.

(source: UN Sustainable Development Goals, 2015)

In reporting against local progress against the SDGs, the Australian government has explicitly noted that "safety for women and girls" is a challenge facing the country in terms of the 'sustainable cities and communities' SDG (Australian Government 2018: 76-78), for example.

In summary

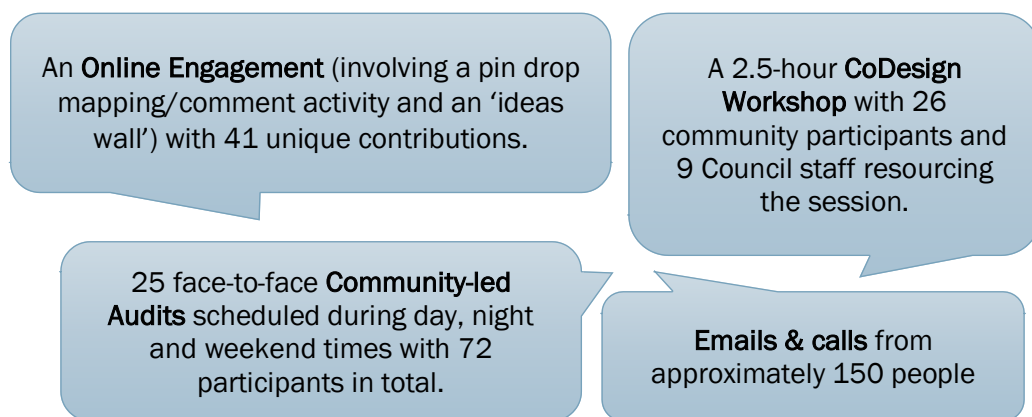
The community safety audit process contributing to the Royal Park Master Plan redevelopment was informed by a range of conceptual principles and policy goals. These influenced the ways in which the project was designed, the sorts of criteria used in the auditing, the way people were involved and the ways in which the findings were interpreted.

In short, the project approached 'safety' as a complex issue shaped by people's experiences and identities, reflective of both direct experiences with safety and perceptions of safety. The project also aligned with other key policy and legislation, ensuring that the approach reflected mandated actions (like adopting a gender impact approach) and other key Council policy goals.

03 Our approach

The goal of these consultations was to maximise the opportunity for a diverse group of residents, workers and visitors to discuss the safety/perceptions of safety in Royal Park and how the feel and function of the ten hot spots might be made safer.

Between 18 May and 14 June 2023, approximately 290 people in the following activities:



Summary of the community safety audit engagement activities

Online engagement

The project had an online [Participate Melbourne page](#) with a pin and comment mapping activity attracting 40 contributions and an 'ideas wall' which generated one contribution. The intention of the online area was to offer an engagement space for people who were unable to attend face-to-face activities and to provide general information (about the project, how to get involved, FAQs, timeframes, etc.) to interested community members.

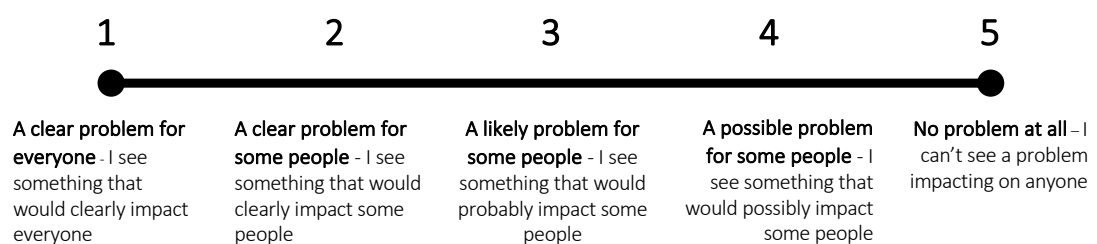
The audit

The audit was undertaken using the tool in Appendix A. This tool was developed collaboratively, using related audit tools as a foundation. The audit focused on four 'themes', with a series of criteria under each:

1. **General design for safety** (e.g. signage, lighting, maintenance, formal and informal surveillance, etc.)
2. **People & activity** (e.g. isolation, user conflicts, hiding/entrapment opportunity, events, etc.)

3. **Facilities & amenities** (e.g. welcoming facilities, accessibility, seating, water fountains bins, shade, etc.)
4. **Movement & accident safety** (e.g. path condition and standard, compliance with road rules, etc)

Each criterion was assessed against a 5-point scale (as illustrated below) that encouraged people to think about the more universal experience people would have with that safety metric. The goal was to capture people's own perceptions but also to challenge them to think about how others would perceive the space. This was one method of introducing 'intersectional' concepts into the auditing process.



The 5-point assessment scale used in the community safety audit

People were also able to make qualitative observations about why they ranked each of the criteria the way they did. The audit also included three Likert Scale questions about how diverse the people they saw in the park were, how safe and comfortable they felt getting to the audit and whether their impression of Royal Park had changed because of the audit.



Audit participants, 5 June 2023

The audit was available in both electronic and hard copy form for people to complete as they preferred. While most people completed the audit while in discussion with the facilitators and other participants of their audit, some either waited to complete the audit until after their session or did self-guided audits.

Twenty-five (25) audits occurred between 18 May and 7 June 2023. They were scheduled so that all sites were audited at least twice during different times of the day (daytime versus dusk or night-time) and the week (weekday versus weekends) (see Appendix B).

The CoDesign workshop

The CoDesign workshop was held on the 24th June 2023, 5.30pm to 8.00pm. It was attended by 26 community members and 9 City of Melbourne staff (as a resource to the community deliberations). The workshop employed a fast-paced, small group, co-design approach as described in the agenda in Appendix C.



Participants busy at work in the CoDesign workshop

Each small table group was tasked with responding to the audit results from two sites and developing negotiated responses to resolve identified issues. The design responses developed during the workshop were then taken away and refined by the City of Melbourne design team into the images and recommendations presented in the findings in Section 4 of this report.

Who we reached

While the demographics of audit participants were not gathered in a formal sense, a majority (roughly 70%) of the participants were women and from various age groups and ethnic backgrounds (including several migrants from the Horn of Africa and South Asia as well as Australian-born non-Anglo participants).

The participants were residents of Parkville, North Melbourne, Parkville West, Carlton and neighbouring LGAs (Merri-bek in particular). Several were active in local community groups like the Friends of Royal Park, Parkville Residents Association, Royal Park Protection Group and Protectors of Public Land, amongst others.

Workers at key facilities in/near Royal Park were also involved. Custom audit sessions were held with staff from the Royal Children's Hospital, The Melbourne Zoo, Urban Camp and the Wadja Aboriginal Family Room (RCH), providing important employee perspectives on key hot spots near their workplaces.

As the CoDesign workshop invitations were sent to audit participants, the demographic make-up of the workshop participants was, unsurprisingly, similar to the audits. There was an even stronger female involvement in the workshop than in the audits with 23 (88%) women participating out of a group of 26.

The online engagement also involved women more commonly than men. Of the 40 comments on the map, 31 (78%) were by women.

Given the gender and intersectional lenses of this process, the high participation rates amongst women reflect both the heightened concern many women feel about the topic and the concerted effort by and through this process to lift women's voices and experiences to influence decision making on safety in a gender-sensitive way. Men were encouraged to participate as well but women's self-selection into the process reflects that heightened concern many women have for safety in public spaces.



Audit participants, 5 June 2023

Reflections on our approach

The community safety auditing methodology was a robust mixed approach and encompassed quantitative and qualitative elements, including scoring and audit criteria against a five-point scale and qualitative questioning about people's response to the hot spot they were auditing. Despite the pilot stage refinement of

the audit tool, there are some small edits – removing repetitive or redundant questions, for example – to make the tool more useful for future processes.

In terms of participation, there were some timeframe pressures that affected people's participation in the audits. The Expression of Interest (Eoi) process, initially designed to ensure diversity of participants, became an overly onerous step in the process and affected participation levels in the earlier audit sessions (people weren't provided enough lead time for the audits they were signed up for and many didn't/couldn't attend). This did improve in the second and third week but missing a week of fully subscribed audits was a limitation.

Participants who did participate in the activities included a diverse mix of people, many who are often underrepresented in traditional consultation practices (for example, people from CALD and migrant backgrounds). Others (children, people living with disability and those experiencing hardship such as homelessness) were less well represented.

Council received positive feedback on the engagement activities, particularly the audits:



Thank you for listening to our concerns! We enjoyed the walk today.

Community audit participant (Site 4)

The CoDesign workshop was also well received, though there were comments made about the workshop's ambitious agenda in the time provided and the concern that ideas weren't given enough time to be thoughtfully developed.

Q1 Overall, how worthwhile do you think the co-design workshop was? Did it generate good discussion? New ideas? New connections and networks?



Q2 How comfortable did you feel sharing your opinions and ideas in the co-design workshop? How well facilitated was the discussion? How welcoming were the people hosting?



Very comprehensive, but the scope did seem to be very ambitious, given the workshop's limited time. The workshop felt rushed and caused me to think that we weren't giving due consideration to important decisions.

Co-design workshop participant

04 The safety audit and workshop findings

The following is a summary of findings from the community safety audit project, organised by hot spot site.

Site 1: Upfield Trail at the Park Street level crossing

Quick description and impressions

A busy but shabby shared path entry into Royal Park with a lot of fast-moving cycle commuters at peak times. With the train and Park Street car traffic, the site has various types of congestion and transport conflict. Key words: bikes, neglected, industrial, pinched, hectic.

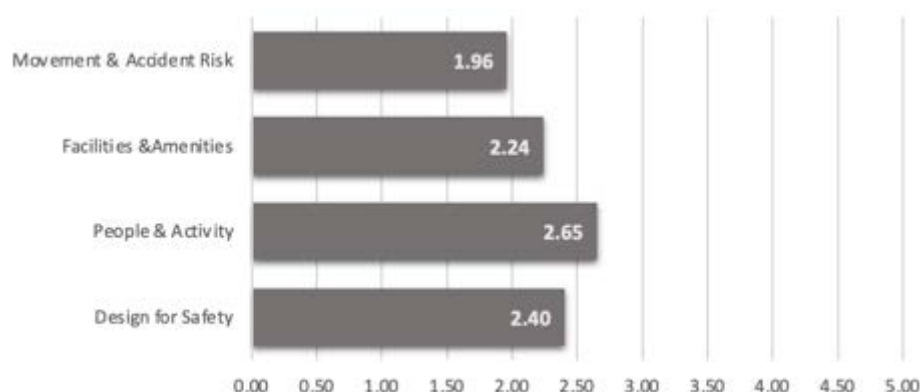


“ ‘It is a very poor visual entry to Royal Park. There isn’t even a sign telling you it’s the park’
‘The cycle speeds are very intimidating along the path’
‘I don’t see any children...’
‘No toilets, bins, seats or bike racks. No amenities’
‘Path not wide enough for all’

‘The level crossing removal may offer a real opportunity here for better amenity’
‘The trees [on the west side] are beautiful and calming’
‘The area is frequently used: always someone around’
‘Tennis and oval lights light the path, when on’ ”

Audit results summary:

The audit results for this site ranked 'useful amenities' as site's weakest feature and the absence of 'offensive graffiti and slogans' as the site's strongest. People were most critical of the movement and safety aspects of the site and least critical of people and activity. However, the audit scores for this site were amongst the lowest of all audit sites.



1.2 Useful amenities

Offensive graffiti/slogans **3.7**

Ideas for change:

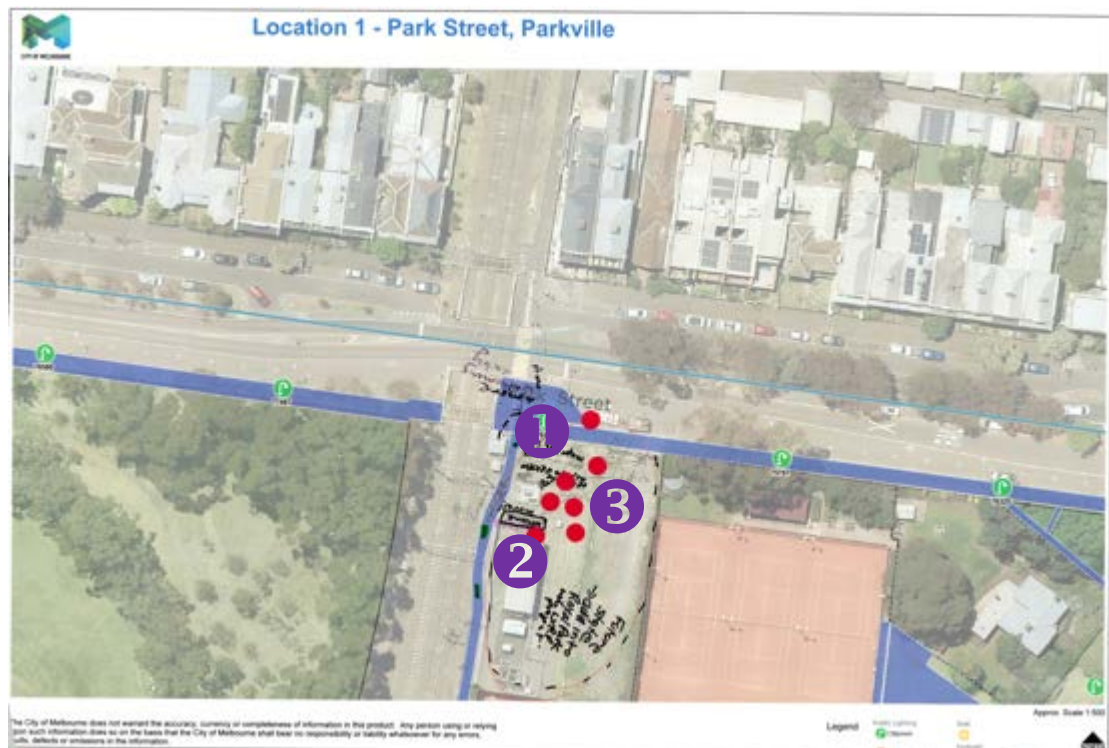
The CoDesign workshop participants were provided with some (small, big and 'crazy' idea) inspiration from the audit participants, including:

- *Fix the 'disgraceful' fencing*
- *Install welcoming and wayfinding signage*
- *Widen the path or separate pedestrians and bike riders*
- *Shift the substation and gatekeeper cabin to create more useable space at Park Street interface*

The CoDesign workshop small group discussion focused on the **short-term interventions** (like signage) that could be made, given the impending level crossing removal work on the Upfield train line. People felt that any large and/or long-term design proposals were risky, given that the entire intersection and train line/pathway orientation was going to be a) redesigned by the Level Crossing Removal Authority and b) at least a 12-month construction site for the crossing removal.

As a result, the group's work built on the audit findings and recommendations by negotiating and sketching up the following ideas:

1. painting a 'welcome' mural on the fencing of the sub station
2. installing wayfinding map, direction signage and shared path pavement painting
3. longer-range advocacy with the State government to have the grassy area along Park Street added to Royal Park



Site 1 co-design focus: signage
(6 votes)

After the presentations of ideas, when people were voting on their favourite opportunities/ideas across all the hot spots, ideas developed for this site attracted six votes.

Site 2: Intersection of the Upfield and Capital City Trails

Quick description and impressions

An intersection of two key cycle routes that transect Royal Park. Especially busy at commuter times with cyclists. Sightlines and the sharp turns at the intersection create accident risk, especially at night as this is a part of the unlit path network in the Park. Key words: confusing, bushy, entrapping, dark, isolated.

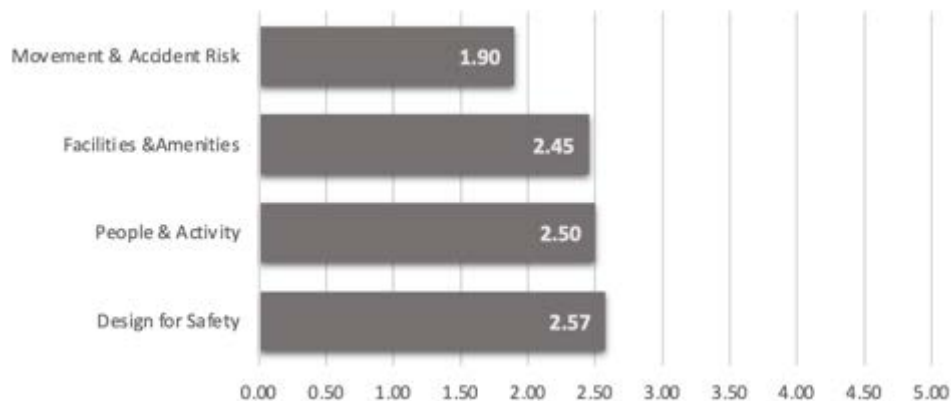


“ ‘Signs are damaged, obscured or absent altogether. Even the line marking is missing’
‘Pitch black after dark. The only light is ambient light’
‘Graffiti and rubbish in tunnel’
‘Narrowness and slope of path and lack of kerb cuts and signs at terminus make path inaccessible for all’

‘The tunnel is well-lit’
‘The bushes at the intersection are trimmed to maintain decent sightlines’
‘It’s starting to feel more like a park at this point on the trail (e.g. coming south from the northern suburbs)’
‘The level crossing removal is an opportunity’ ”

Audit results summary:

The audit results for this site ranked 'path width' as site's weakest feature and the 'shade for comfort' as the site's strongest. People were most critical of the movement and safety aspects of the site and least critical of design for safety, though there was little difference in the three remaining themes and the audit scores for this site were, like Site 1, amongst the lowest of all audit sites.



1.0 Wide enough path

Shade for comfort **4.3**

Ideas for change:

The CoDesign workshop participants were provided with some (small, big and 'crazy' idea) inspiration from the audit participants, including:

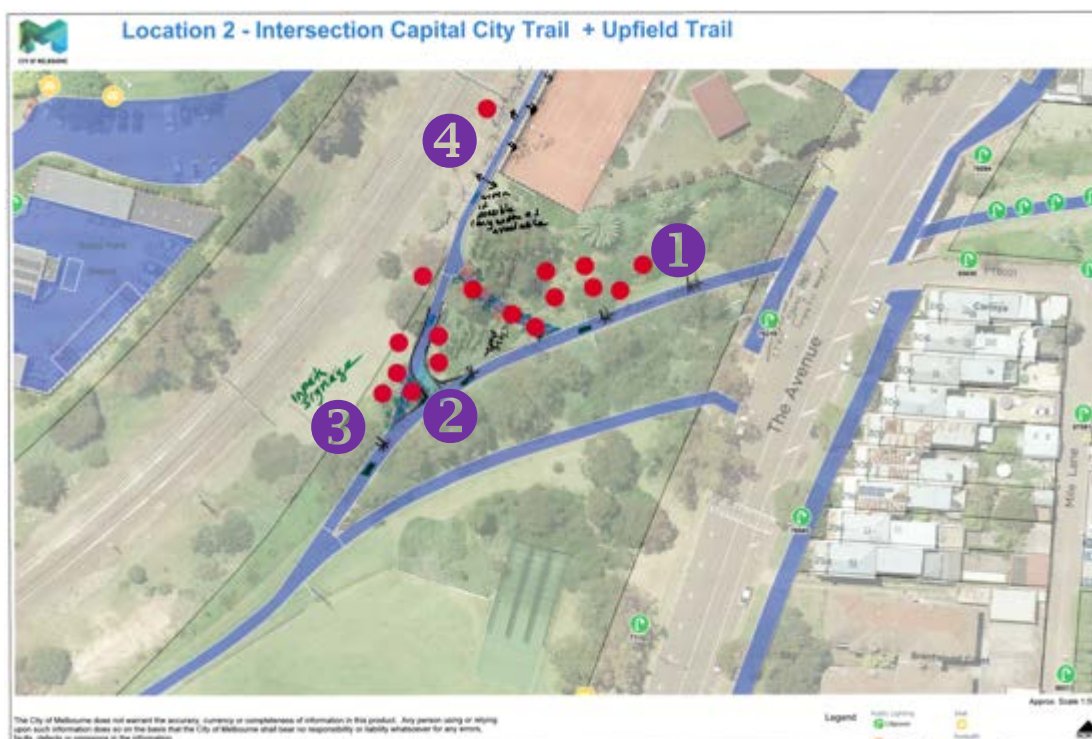
- *Install pedestrian scale, wildlife-friendly lighting*
- *Install wayfinding signs*
- *Trim landscaping to improve site lines*
- *Light the tunnel under The Avenue for pedestrian and bike riding activity*
- *Reorient the Tennis Club to 'look out' into the park and provide more passive surveillance/activity*

The CoDesign workshop small group discussion for this site focused on **improving the shared path utility and safety**. The key issues for the site were the safety of pedestrians and bike riders, given the popularity of the two intersecting trails (Upfield and Capital City).

Again, people felt that very elaborate redesigns (especially as related to things like path widths heading north to Park Street) were not useful because of the level crossing removal work but the group felt that a small scale project could be pursued.

As a result, the group's work built on the audit findings and recommendations by negotiating and sketching up the following ideas:

1. closing the northerly branch of the intersection, closest to the tennis club
2. re-orienting the more southerly branch to make the Upfield trail intersect with the Capital City trail at a more perpendicular orientation
3. installing in-path wayfinding signage
4. install path-level lighting (and soften the tennis club lighting shining into canopies)



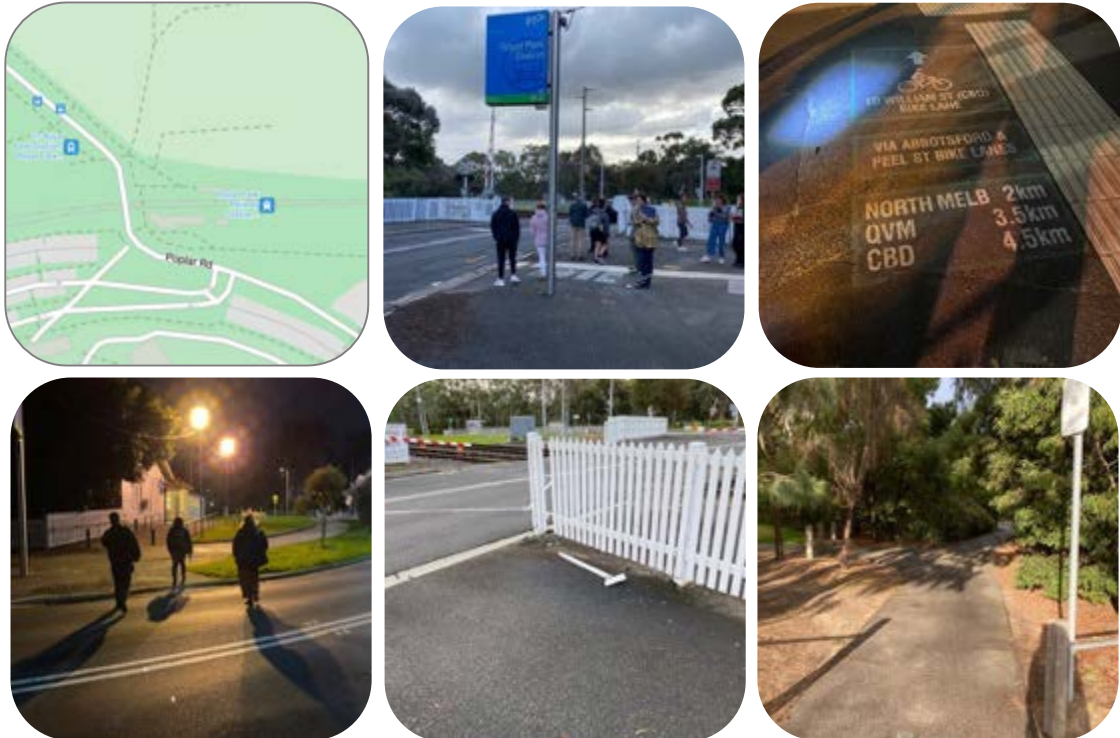
Site 2 co-design focus: improving path utility and safety
(17 votes)

Ideas for this site attracted 17 votes from workshop participants when asked to vote on their favourite ideas and opportunities.

Site 3: Poplar Road, Royal Park Station

Quick description and impressions

An interface between public transport (train, tram and bus), busy shared paths and the popular Melbourne Zoo. Wayfinding is challenging as various routes intersect and key destinations (like the entrance to the Zoo) aren't very clear. Key words: varied uses and people, winding movement, pretty gardens, car priority.



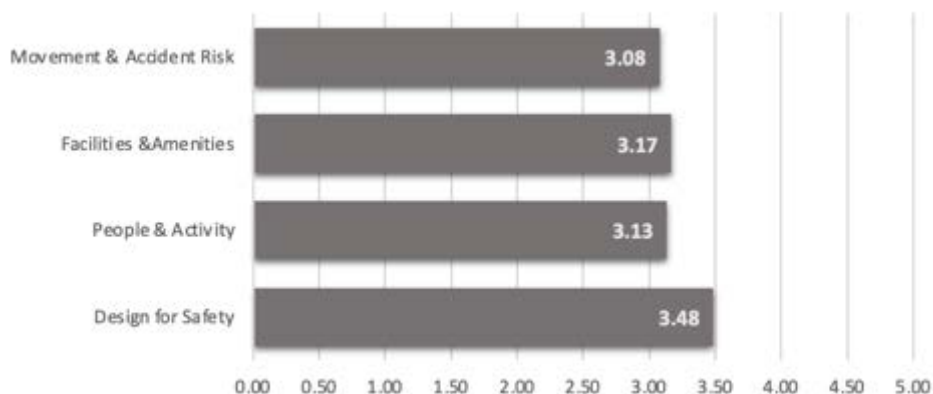
“ ‘It’s hard to tell that the Zoo is right there (from the station)’
‘High conflict between users (pedestrians, cyclists, golf carts, cars, trains and trams)’
‘The lack of a pedestrian/cycle priority crossing is a problem’
‘Some signage is outdated and/or irrelevant’
‘I’d never come here at night’

“ ‘The station has lots of formal surveillance (CCTV + officers)’
‘The new shared path to the east of the station is wider and well designed for the various people using it’
‘Nice landscape. Even the denser parts feel quite safe’
‘There are lots of people around, making it feel safer’ ”

Audit results summary:

The audit results for this site ranked ‘useful amenities’ (seating in particular) as site’s weakest feature and ‘maintenance’ as the site’s strongest. People were most critical of the movement and safety aspects of the site, again, though this site

scored more highly than Sites 1 and 2 on this metric. People were least critical of design for safety, noting site elements like the informal surveillance from train users and the new sensor lighting on the upgraded section of path as very positive elements.



2.4 Useful amenities

Maintenance **4.2**

Ideas for change:

The CoDesign workshop participants were provided with some (small, big and 'crazy' idea) inspiration from the audit participants, including:

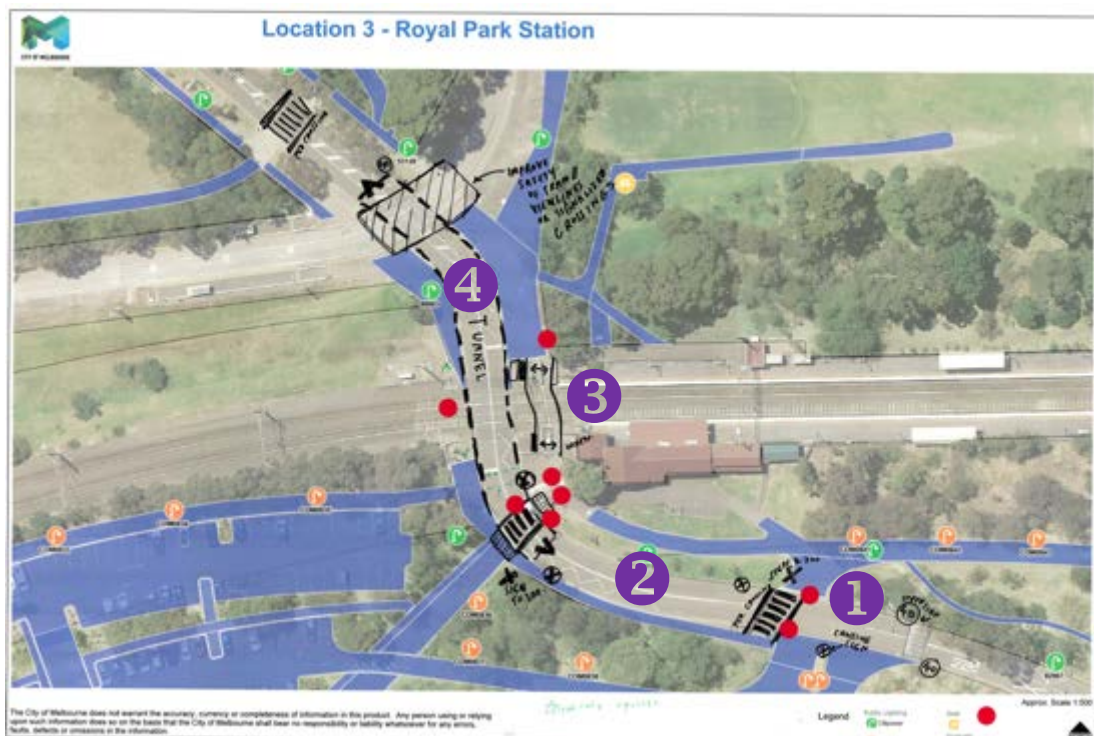
- *Install wayfinding and entry signs, particularly to the Zoo*
- *Install a new pedestrian crossing across Poplar between station and Zoo*
- *widen all shared paths to match upgraded 4.0m wide section*
- *Create a bridge over the rail line to better connect the golf course and move carts off shared paths*

The CoDesign workshop small group discussion for this site focused on **creating pedestrian-priority infrastructure**. The key issues for the site were the safety of pedestrians and bike riders, with the current priority given to drivers on Poplar Road at this busy interchange.

This part of Poplar Road is busy for active travellers and visitors to the Zoo. The train and tram passengers both must cross the road to get to the other and to get to the Zoo. There are no pedestrian crossings and pedestrian access at one side of the rail crossing at Poplar Road is blocked off entirely.

As a result, the group's work built on the audit findings and recommendations by negotiating and sketching up the following ideas:

1. installing speed and pedestrian crossing signage
2. installing two pedestrian crossings
3. widening the path at the train line crossing on Poplar Road
4. putting a section of Poplar Road underground in the longer term, to provide a pedestrian/cycle priority between the train station and the Zoo at ground level



Site 3 co-design focus: pedestrian-priority infrastructure
(8 votes)

Ideas for this site attracted eight votes from workshop participants when asked to vote on their favourite ideas and opportunities.

Site 4: Melbourne Zoo Car Parks and Paths

Quick description and impressions

A car dominated parking and road space at the interface between the park and Melbourne Zoo. The sounds of the zoo animals are evocative, as is the heritage feel of the Zoo and the mature trees. Key words: car-oriented, lonely, shadowy, narrow, acoustically atmospheric.



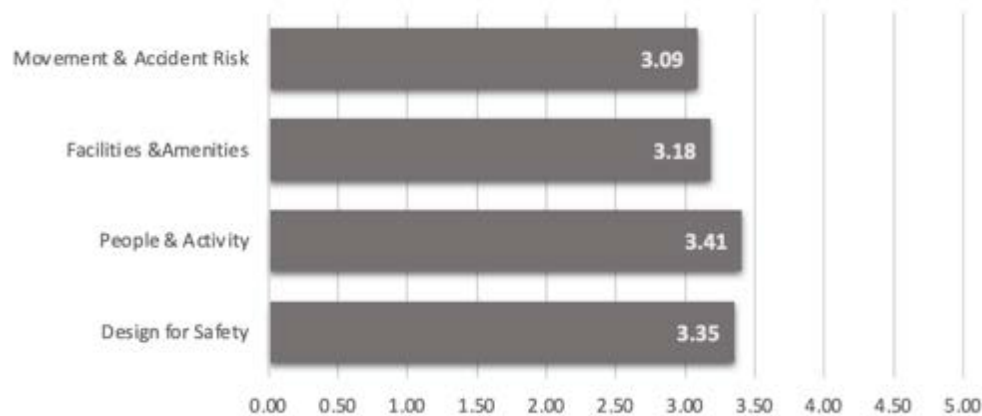
“ ‘Many footpaths are obstructed (e.g. by cars, along the parking overflow) or are poorly designed (e.g. at Zoo)’
‘Wayfinding signs needed’
‘The two overflow car parks look to be poorly maintained, especially the one closer to the train station’
‘No seating, bins, fountains’

“ ‘The area is well maintained’
‘Volunteers (like me) pick up rubbish and help care for the space’
‘There is informal (and formal...) surveillance from the Zoo and its visitors’
‘Lots of different people using the area, visiting the Zoo’
‘Accessible public transport’

Audit results summary:

The audit results for this site ranked ‘useful amenities’ (pedestrian facilities in particular) as site’s weakest feature and ‘maintenance’ as the site’s strongest. People were most critical of the movement and safety aspects of the site, again because of the difficulties posed to pedestrians and people with disability by lack of infrastructure. People were least critical of people and activity, presumably

because of the Zoo and the nearby public transport and shared travel routes. The scoring across the four themes was much more consistent at this site than many others, though.



2.4 Useful amenities

Maintenance **4.2**

Ideas for change:

The CoDesign workshop participants were provided with some (small, big and ‘crazy’ idea) inspiration from the audit participants, including:

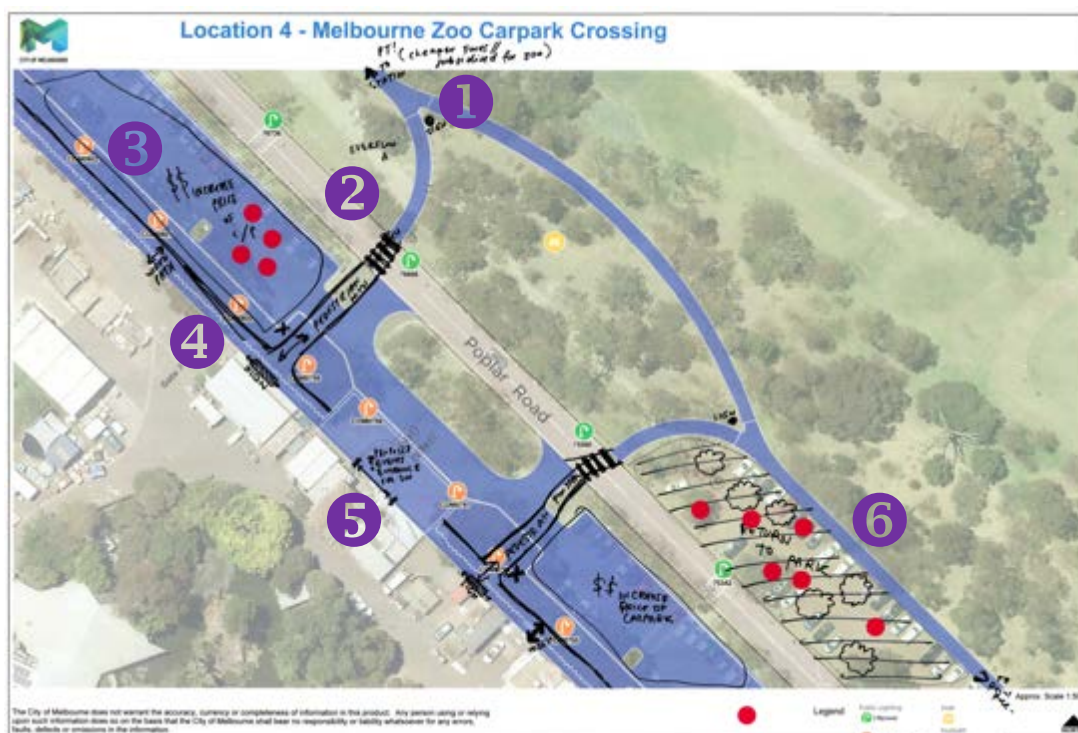
- *Add seating, bins and a fountain*
- *Activate the car parks in non-peak times with food and entertainment*
- *Reorient pedestrian crossings to the most direct routes preferred by pedestrians*
- *Improve pedestrian amenity throughout the area with granitic pedestrian paths and separate cycle paths*

The CoDesign workshop small group discussion for this site focused on **encouraging safe active travel to the Zoo**. The key issues for the site were the safety of pedestrians and public transport users who were visiting the Zoo, given the current emphasis on driving and parking infrastructure.

The dominance of this car infrastructure has perceptions of safety implications for visitors and Zoo staff: the car parks are either busy and full, presenting an accident risk to people (especially families with young children) or the car parks are empty, isolated and menacing, crating poor impressions of safety for people who must use the area at night (Zoo workers, for example, and people using the area after the Zoo is closed).

As a result, the group’s work built on the audit findings and recommendations by negotiating and sketching up the following ideas:

1. installing wayfinding signage across the site (to the Zoo, to the train station, etc.)
2. installing two pedestrian paths/crossings across Poplar Road and the car park areas
3. increasing the cost of Zoo car parking (and advocated for decreased public transport fares and/or fares added into Zoo ticketing structures) as incentive to take the train to the Zoo
4. widening the path along the edge of the Zoo
5. having a new 'events' entrance to the Zoo
6. returning some overflow car parking space to the Park



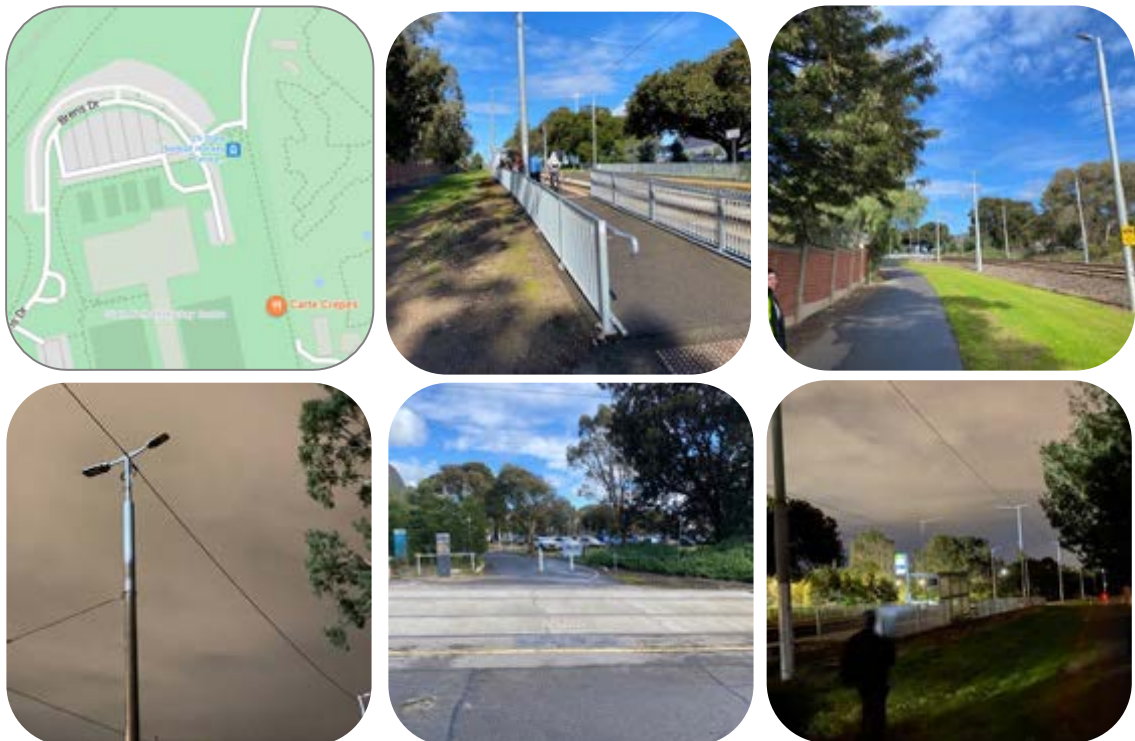
Site 4 co-design focus: encouraging safe active travel to the Zoo
(11 votes)

Ideas for this site attracted 11 votes from workshop participants when asked to vote on their favourite ideas and opportunities.

Site 5: State Sport Centre, Tram 58, Stop 24

Quick description and impressions

A busy shared pedestrian and cycling path adjacent to the tram line and key attractions (State Sport Centre and Zoo). Both over and under lit as the lights from the sports centre are very bright but the lights aimed at the shared path were not working. Key words: speedy, sporty, multi-modal, unsigned, splintered, drab, hard.



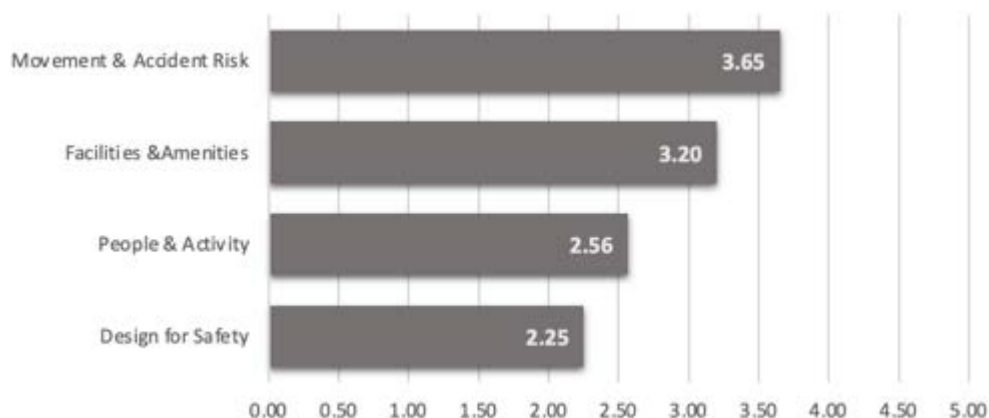
“ ‘There is no direction signage to key destinations like the Zoo entrance or the train’
‘The Zoo wall creates a very hard edge to the path and limits ‘escape’ routes’
‘The tramway has path lights fitted but they aren’t working’
‘The path is narrow for the amount of traffic’

“ ‘The parking area is popular with staff from the Royal Children’s Hospital’
‘The State Sport Centre is well lit and creates a sense of security at night (when open)’
‘The passing trams provide a sense of people looking out for Park users’ ”

Audit results summary:

The audit results for this site ranked ‘conflicts between users’ (pedestrian and cyclists in particular) as site’s weakest feature and ‘path width’ as the site’s strongest (ironically, perhaps, given the concerns about user conflicts). People were most critical of the design for safety aspects of the site, citing the hard Zoo wall, wayfinding and the lack of lighting as contributors to poorer perceptions of safety.

People were least critical (again, somewhat surprisingly, of movement and accident risk.



1.5 Conflicts between users

Wide enough path **4.5**

Ideas for change:

The CoDesign workshop participants were provided with some (small, big and 'crazy' idea) inspiration from the audit participants, including:

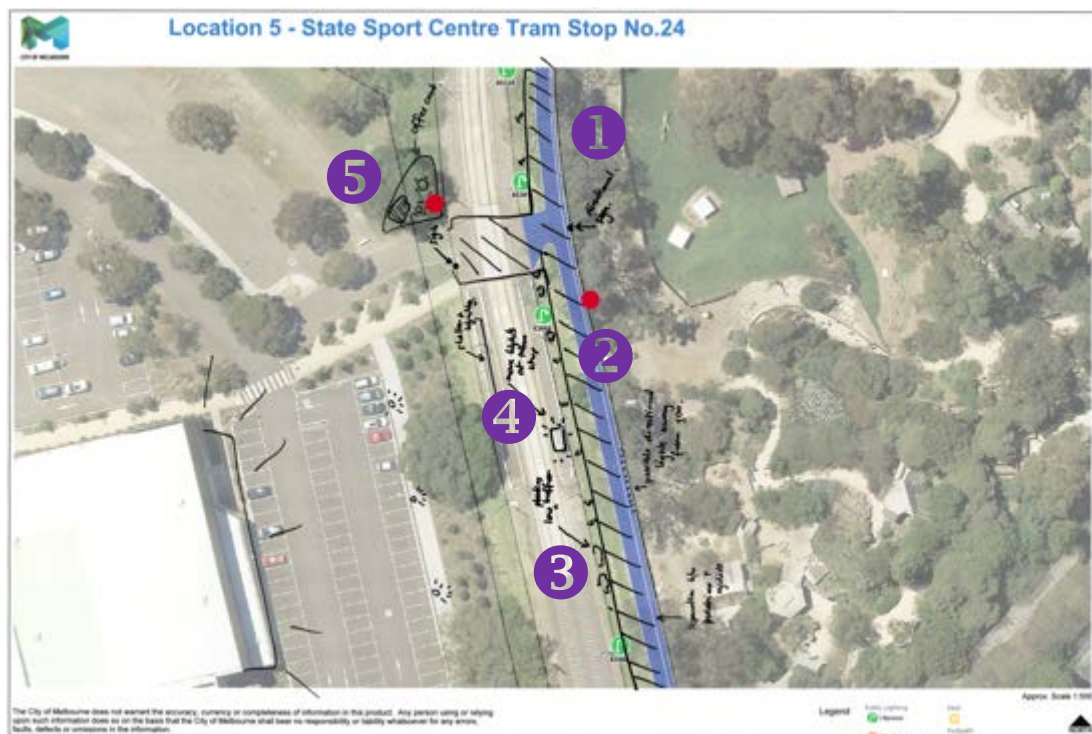
- *moderate the cycle speeds*
- *get the tramway lights other the shared paths working*
- *separate the pedestrian and cycle paths*
- *create a 'members' entrance to the Zoo, opening that side as a gateway and informal surveillance*

The CoDesign workshop small group discussion for this site focused on **improved shared path amenity**. The key issues for the site were the safety of the potentially conflicting cyclists, pedestrians and public transport users along and across the tram line.

Many people use the shared path for cycle commuting and for leisure walking and cycling while others park at the State Sports Centre and walk down to the Royal Children's Hospital and surrounds. Others use the tram to access the CBD or come from around Melbourne to the State Sports Centre. The site, therefore, is a busy thoroughway.

As a result, the group's work built on the audit findings and recommendations by negotiating and sketching up the following ideas:

1. installing wayfinding signage across the site (to the Zoo, to the tram station, etc.)
2. widen the path and separate the cyclists and pedestrians
3. plant some buffering landscaping between the path and the tram line
4. improve lighting along the path and at the tram shelter (at pedestrian scale and in a way that protects Zoo animals)
5. activate the area with a coffee cart



Site 5 co-design focus: shared path amenity
(2 votes)

Ideas for this site attracted two votes from workshop participants when asked to vote on their favourite ideas and opportunities.

Site 6: Trin Warren Tamboore Car Park

Quick description and impressions

A quiet and isolated section of Royal Park with wetlands and walking trails (as well as some reports of illicit behaviours). An important green link for people in the new housing nearby. Key words: natural, restful, illicit, dark/shadowy, off the beaten track.



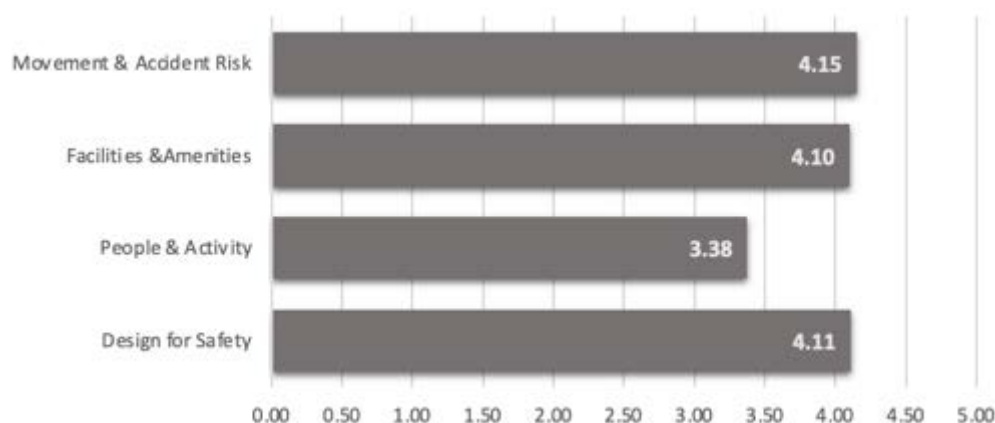
“ ‘People use this corner of the Park (by the Citylink wall especially) to hook up for sex’
‘The traffic on Oak Street is increasingly heavy and it segregates the nearby housing from the Park’
‘The paths are not lit at all’ (but many felt this was good for wildlife)

” ‘The area is well used by diverse people (e.g. older Chinese migrants)’
‘The baseball club is popular’
‘Birdwatchers enjoy seeing the many water birds in the area’
‘The area is well equipped with amenities like bins, seats, toilets and so forth’
‘The interpretive materials’

Audit results summary:

The audit results for this site ranked ‘hiding spots’ as site’s weakest feature and absence of ‘offensive graffiti and slogans’ as the site’s strongest. People were most critical of the people and activity aspects of the site, citing the concerns about illicit activities (sex hook ups and people sleeping in the car park in their vans). People

were least critical of the remaining themes, which all scored reasonably equally and strongly. This site was one of the most positively assessed in terms of safety.



2.8 Hiding spots

Offensive graffiti/slogans **4.8**

Ideas for change:

The CoDesign workshop participants were provided with some (small, big and 'crazy' idea) inspiration from the audit participants, including:

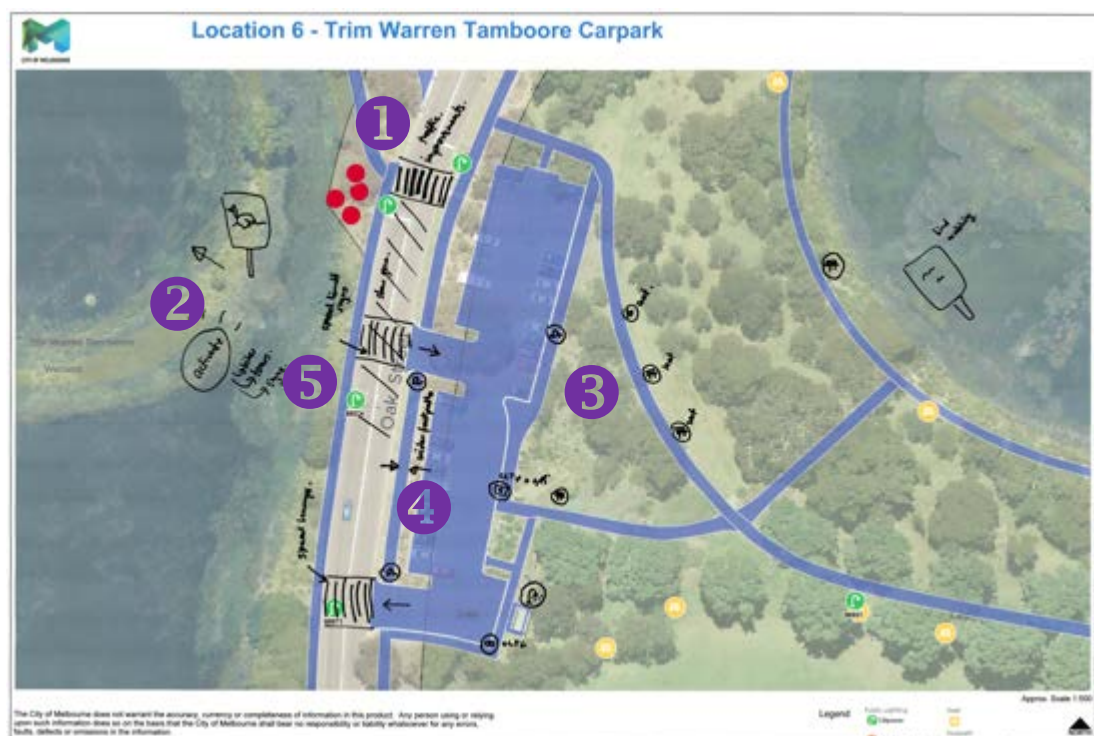
- *Build on the loveliness of the lake/billabong with more planting and interpretive materials*
- *Activate the area with more legitimate night-time activity to reduce illicit behaviours*
- *Create a shared path link across the train line to the State Sport Centre*

The CoDesign workshop small group discussion for this site focused on **gentle activation**. The key issues for the site were increased amenities like lights, signage and seating without overwhelming the site and creating greater safety through 'legitimate' activity like wildlife spotting, wetland tours, picnicking and the like.

The busyness of Oak Street was also a concern and a focus for the group, with people acknowledging that the traffic was already congested with 'rat running' drivers and would only get heavier in future. This will prompt a need for traffic calming and pedestrian crossing points.

As a result, the group's work built on the audit findings and recommendations by negotiating and sketching up the following ideas:

1. installing pedestrian crossings and speed humps to slow the traffic on Oak Street
2. activate the west side of the site with some lighting, signs and tours that can introduce people to the wetland wildlife
3. increasing seating, signage and other amenities, ensuring that they are near the path for universal access
4. widen the shared path along Oak Street
5. reorient the entries to the car parking area so that they are one-way entry and exit



Site 6 co-design focus: gentle activation
(4 votes)

Ideas for this site attracted four votes from workshop participants when asked to vote on their favourite ideas and opportunities.

Site 7: Intersection of The Avenue and Macarthur Road

Quick description and impressions

A very busy road that acts as a divider between the southern and northern parts of Royal Park and has no clear crossing. There is no 'welcome' or gateway signage to alert you that this is Royal Park. Key words: impermeable, dangerous, car dominated.



'There is no indication that this is Royal Park... no signage'

'Macarthur Road is practically uncrossable for pedestrians and cyclists; it is so busy'

'The shared path from the park ends so abruptly that cyclists basically have to ride on the footpath'

'The completion of the Brens Oval upgrade could offer new traffic management options'

'The Burke and Wills monument is here'

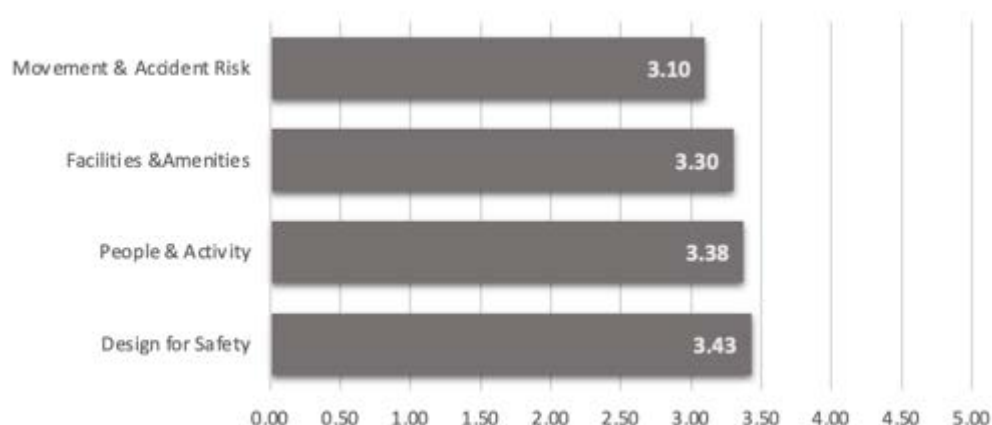
'The nature path on the north side of The Avenue, between the oval and the road, is very pretty (but maybe not very accessible?)'



Audit results summary:

The audit results for this site ranked 'route signage' as site's weakest feature and 'shade for comfort' as the site's strongest. People were most critical of the movement and accident risk aspects of the site, citing the barrier that Macarthur Road poses for people trying to move between the northern and southern parts of

Royal Park. People were least critical of the design for safety elements, noting that Macarthur Road provided lighting and passive surveillance.



2.3 Route signage

Shade for comfort **5.0**

Ideas for change:

The CoDesign workshop participants were provided with some (small, big and 'crazy' idea) inspiration from the audit participants, including:

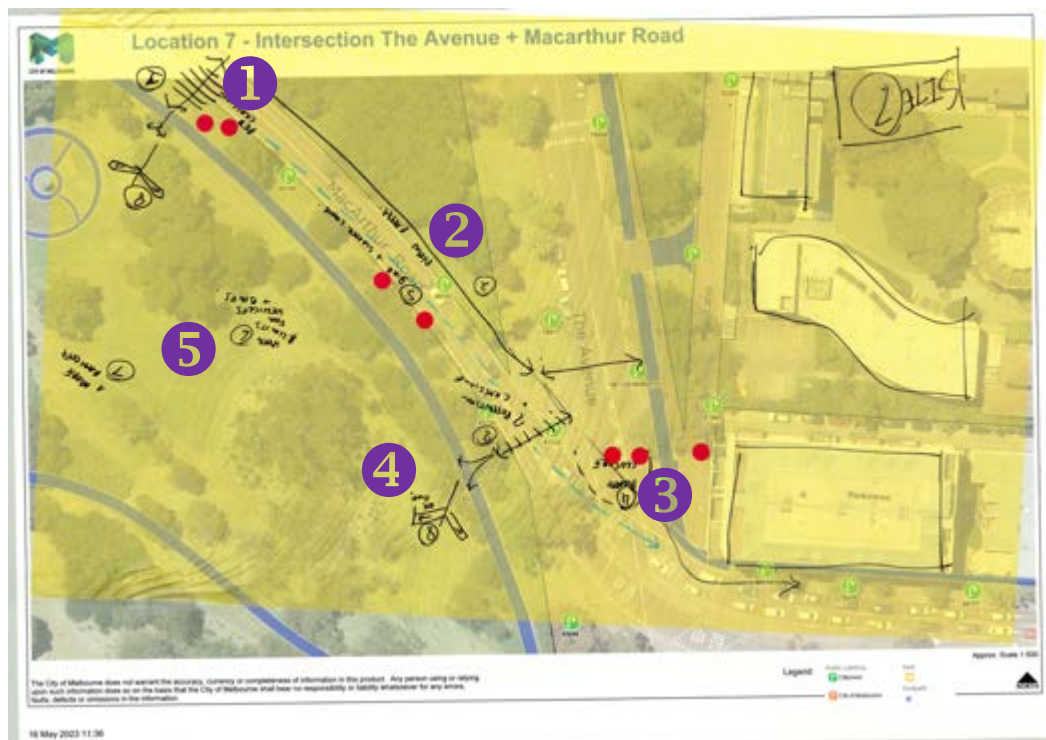
- *establish and install consistent welcoming 'gateway' signage*
- *install footpaths for pedestrians (north)*
- *install cycle lane (south) to reduce footpath riding*
- *close The Avenue to through traffic (north) and/or make one way in and out (south)*

The CoDesign workshop small group discussion for this site focused on **linking up the Park** across the busy barrier of Macarthur Road. The key issues for the site were the lack of pedestrian facilities and the dangers posed by people in conflict (pedestrians and drivers, cyclists and drivers, pedestrians and cyclists). The sheer volume of traffic along Macarthur with no pedestrian priority was a critical fracture in the Park's use and cohesion.

The group was primarily focused on identifying and remediating missing infrastructure like footpaths and signage.

As a result, the group's work built on the audit findings and recommendations by negotiating and sketching up the following ideas:

1. installing pedestrian crossing across Macarthur Road (either slightly west of The Avenue or at The Avenue)
2. installing a footpath or shared path along the northern side of Macarthur Road and a bike/scooter lane on the south side of the road
3. closing off The Avenue to through traffic
4. improving the entry and wayfinding at the entry points into the Park
5. institute/enforce speed limits for e-vehicles using shared paths



Site 7 co-design focus: linking up the Park
(7 votes)

Ideas for this site attracted seven votes from workshop participants when asked to vote on their favourite ideas and opportunities.

Site 8: North Park Tennis Club shared path, south of Elliot Ave.

Quick description and impressions

A wilder, more natural area of the Park, with tall trees and few manicured paths. A tennis club offers some structured leisure. The area is a gateway from Flemington Road, North Melbourne and Flemington. The area is associated with a violent incident – the murder of Courtney Herron in 2019 – for some, particularly for women. Key words: insulated, untamed, quiet, dark.



'There only seems to be a single way in or out'
'Different perceptions for men and women (since the murder)'
'I don't think I'd bring my kids here (water risk)'
'There is no lighting beyond the tennis club. You quickly feel far away from help'

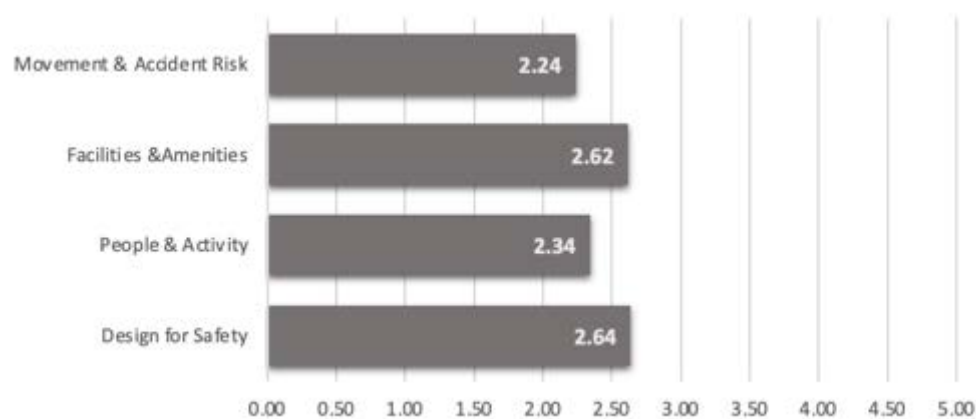
'Trees are big and beautiful'
'I thought the trees, grass and billabong were all lovely'
'I think it's nice to have a bit of natural bushland near the heart of Melbourne. I don't think it needs to be too manicured or safer or it would lose its wild bushland feel'



Audit results summary:

The audit results for this site ranked 'lighting' and 'path width' as site's weakest features and the lack of 'litter' as the site's strongest. People were most critical of

the movement and accident risk aspects of the site, citing the conflicts between cyclists and pedestrians on the narrow, shared path. People were least critical of the design for safety and facilities and amenities elements, noting the tennis club and surrounding amenities (picnic spaces, water fountains, etc.).



1.9 Lighting + Wide paths

Litter **3.7**

Ideas for change:

The CoDesign workshop participants were provided with some (small, big and 'crazy' idea) inspiration from the audit participants, including:

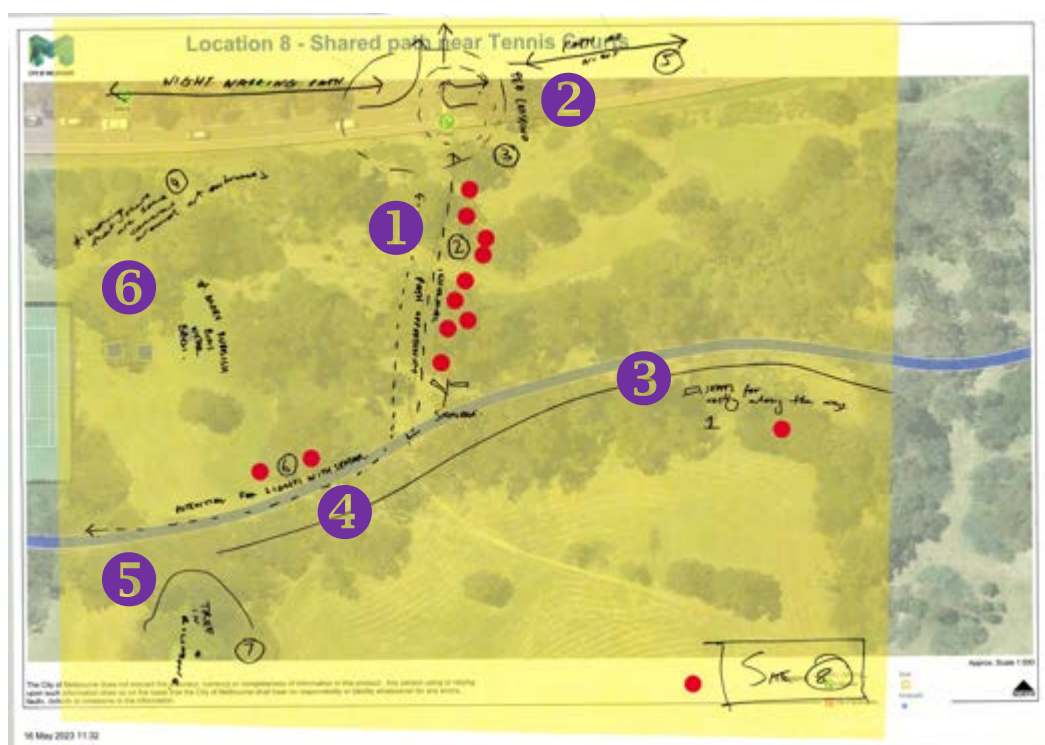
- *develop a linking path to the lights at Brens Drive and upgrade lights to include pedestrian signals*
- *light the path with wildlife-friendly lighting*
- *add a BBQ area and small play space along Flemington Road frontage to activate the area*

The CoDesign workshop small group discussion for this site focused on **providing multiple (escape) routes** through an area affected by poor perceptions of safety. The key issues for the site were the fears of entrapment generated by the single path with low lighting heading into a wilder part of the park. These fears were magnified by people's lingering concerns about this part of the Park since the murder of Courtney Herron.

The group took the auditors' observations and worked on offering greater security for people passing through, especially at night, while trying to maintain and respect the desires of many to keep this area wilder and more uncultivated.

As a result, the group's work built on the audit findings and recommendations by negotiating and sketching up the following ideas:

1. installing a new path from the existing path to the intersection of Elliot Avenue and Brens Drive
2. installing night-use paths and a pedestrian crossing at the intersection
3. adding seating along the pathway for people to be able to rest if older, carrying gear, walking with children
4. installing sensor activated lighting along the path
5. plant (culturally important) trees in the billabong
6. adding more rubbish bins to the BBQ area



Site 8 co-design focus: providing multiple routes
(13 votes)

Ideas for this site attracted 13 votes from workshop participants when asked to vote on their favourite ideas and opportunities. The idea for a new path accounted for almost two thirds of the votes.

Site 9: Shared path north of the Royal Children's Hospital

Quick description and impressions

A busy shared path for cyclists, walkers, students, workers and city commuters. An interface between Royal Park and the hospital and a key entry point into the Park (which was underwhelming in terms of its welcome). Key words: treed, popular, a view for sick kids, healing.



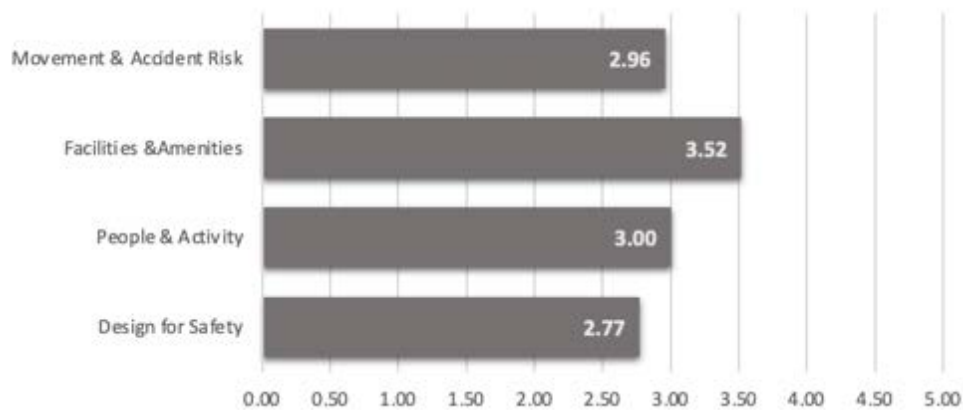
“This is another poor entry point into one of Melbourne's most important parks...'
‘The desire line in the grass shows how the shared path isn't working (for cyclists)’
‘A lot of hospital staff have to travel through the park at night and it doesn't feel safe’
‘The path north is unlit/scary’

‘Lots of dense greenery where people could hide – but it doesn't feel terribly unsafe’
‘the conical lighting is a nice lighting example. Not too bright and not too high up’
‘The hospital lends a feeling of security and watchfulness’
‘The hospital uses Royal Park as part of healing therapies’”

Audit results summary:

The audit results for this site ranked ‘conflict between users’ as site's weakest features and the ‘shade for comfort’ as the site's strongest. People were most critical of the design for safety aspects of the site, citing lighting concerns along the shared path north to the State Sport Centre as a key issue. People were least critical

of the facilities and amenities elements, noting the seating, bins and the presence of the Hospital as contributing to comfort and safety.



1.8 Conflict between users

Shade for comfort **4.2**

Ideas for change:

The CoDesign workshop participants were provided with some (small, big and 'crazy' idea) inspiration from the audit participants, including:

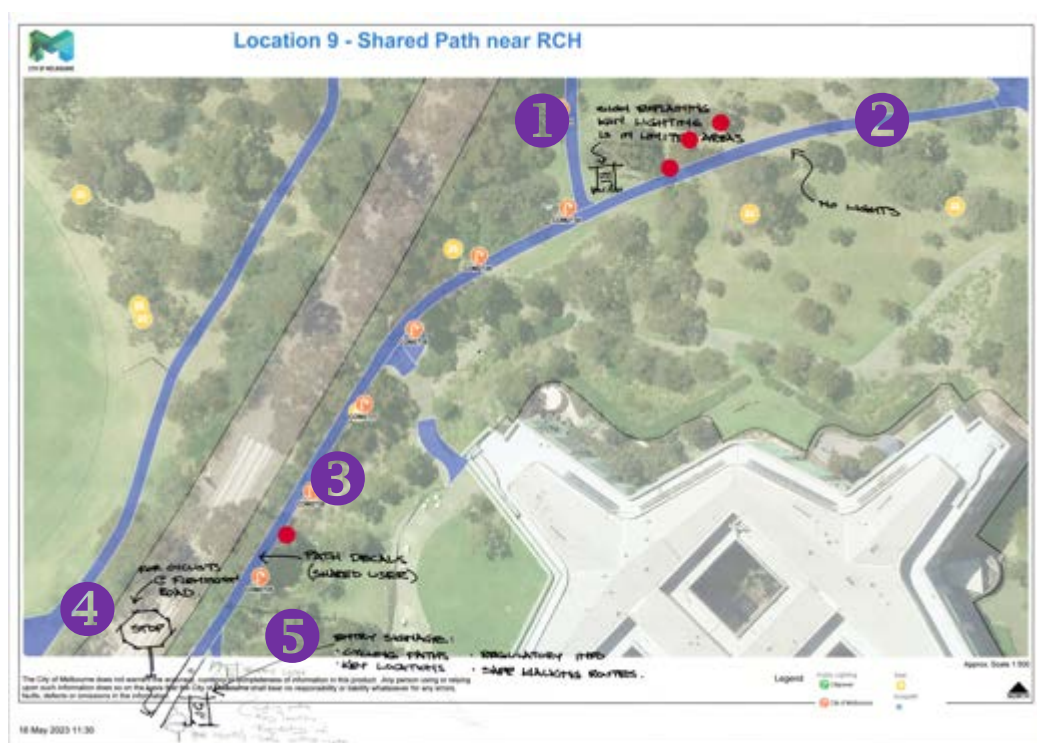
- *move signposts to key decision points along the path network*
- *trim landscaping to improve sight lines*
- *move some seating to be more disability accessible*
- *continue wildlife friendly lighting on the pathway north to Elliot Avenue*
- *activate the hospital/Park interface with events/cafe*

The CoDesign workshop small group discussion for this site focused on **communicating Royal Park information** given it is a key entry point into the Park. The group felt the information needed was around wayfinding and route information but also information about the Park ethos and history. So, for example, the need to share why Royal Park has limited lighting was discussed (as opposed to installing a lot of lighting).

The group mainly focused on different sorts of signage needed, from signposts to pavement decals, and the information that it was important to convey to help balance the needs of nature and the need for people to be and feel safe.

As a result, the group's work built on the audit findings and recommendations by negotiating and sketching up the following ideas:

1. installing signage that explains why lighting is limited in certain parts of Royal Park
2. avoiding lighting in the pathway that goes towards 'the circle' (the nickname for the circular pathway around the remnant grassland just north of Gatehouse Avenue in the Park)
3. adding 'shared path' decals painted onto the path
4. adding a 'stop' for cyclists at the Flemington Road intersection
5. installing entry signs at Flemington Road that detail:
 - cycling routes
 - safe/well-lit walking route option
 - regulatory information (for example, who to contact for illegal rubbish dumping, in appropriately disposed syringes, property damage, etc.)
 - key locations



Site 8 co-design focus: communicating Royal Park information
(4 votes)

Ideas for this site attracted four votes from workshop participants when asked to vote on their favourite ideas and opportunities.

Site 10: Intersection of Gatehouse and Morrah Streets

Quick description and impressions

A southern entry point into Royal Park. The boundary is a busy, leafy shared path and it adjoins several key Park assets: the children's adventure playground, the Indigenous gardens, the 'Circle' and off-lead dog area and a popular north-south cycle route. Key words: a Park edge, access to the 'circle', dogs, cyclists, walkers, students.



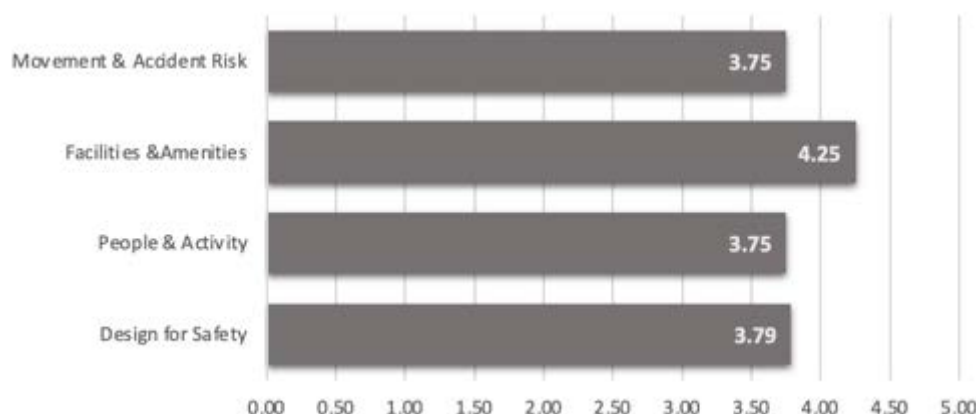
“ ‘The path into the Park is only fit for cyclists with good bike lights after dark’
‘Signage is ok, but people did spend a lot of time consulting it (this entry would be used by tourists/visitors a fair bit)’
‘The shared path is too narrow for the traffic it carries’
‘The crossing is badly designed’

‘Trees are beautiful but can block the lighting of the shared path along Gatehouse’
‘A lovely healing part of the Park with cultural significance’
‘Lots of dogs and owners are enjoying this part of the park’
‘The way the park meets the city here is really lovely’ ”

Audit results summary:

The audit results for this site ranked relatively strongly compared to other 'hot spot' sites. The 'lighting' was the site's weakest feature (especially heading north into the Park on the shared path) and the 'shade for comfort' was ranked the site's strongest feature. People were least critical of the facilities and amenities

elements, noting the bins, paths and signs as useful. The other elements were all marginally weaker but still ranked highly.



1.5 Lighting

Litter + Offensive graffiti 5.0

Ideas for change:

The CoDesign workshop participants were provided with some (small, big and 'crazy' idea) inspiration from the audit participants, including:

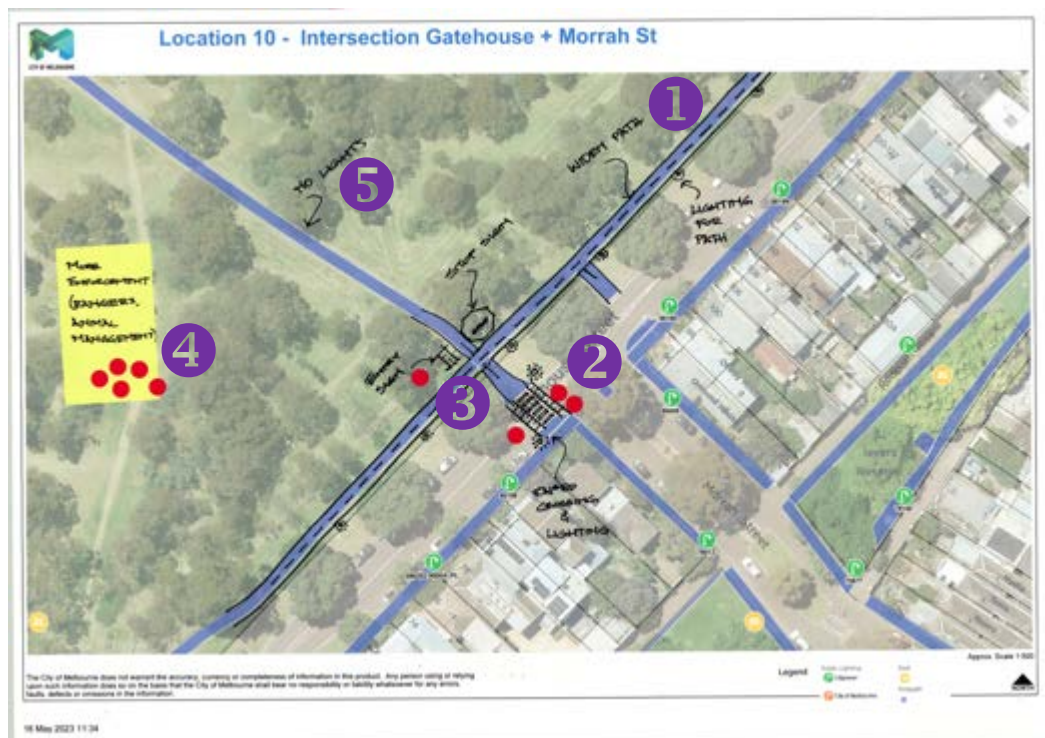
- Add public transport directions/ information to signage
- Add signage about dog behaviour and how to report incidents
- Install a pedestrian/cycling priority crossing at Morrah Street
- Widen the path along Gatehouse Street (currently 2.5m wide)

The CoDesign workshop small group discussion for this site focused on **enhancing the edge of the Park**. The key issues for the site were the narrow pathways, the crossing point at Morrah and Gatehouse and limited 'welcome' to the Park. Discussions also encompassed the dog users of the Park, given there is an off-lead area near this hot spot.

The site was one of the least 'troublesome' in terms of safety and so the interventions discussed here were mainly about enhancing the edge of the park and the way it interfaced with the surrounding neighbourhood/s.

As a result, the group's work built on the audit findings and recommendations by negotiating and sketching up the following ideas:

1. widening the shared path along Gatehouse Street (with improved lighting)
2. installing a raised (wombat) pedestrian crossing at the pedestrian/cycle desire line
3. adding entry and exit signage for pedestrians and cyclists
4. increase Park enforcement (rangers, animal management)
5. minimise lighting the path north-west into the Park to maintain 'dark park' attributes



Site 10 co-design focus: enhancing the Park's edge
(9 votes)

Ideas for this site attracted nine votes from workshop participants when asked to vote on their favourite ideas and opportunities.

05 Conclusions and further action

As Melbourne's largest urban park, Royal Park is experienced in many different ways by people from across Melbourne, every day. Sometimes, these experiences include concerns about personal, accident or poor perceptions of safety.

As part of the process of updating the Royal Park Master Plan, a comprehensive community-led safety auditing process (employing a gendered lens) was developed to better understand and respond to these safety concerns and issues.

The process involved developing the online platforms for Participate Melbourne, the audit tool (which was trialled, revised and then made available in both electronic and in paper format) and the design of the CoDesign workshop agenda and activities. Local community members were engaged in the process via an online expression of interest form and discussions with local employers (the Royal Children's Hospital, Melbourne Zoo, Urban Camp and Wadja Aboriginal Family Room).

Between 18 May and 14 June 2023, approximately 290 people were involved in online hot spot mapping and 'ideas wall' discussion, 25 community safety audits across 10 hot spot sites and an intensive CoDesign workshop. The design of this engagement sought to maximise the opportunity for a diverse group of residents, workers and visitors to discuss the safety/perceptions of safety in Royal Park and how the feel and function of the ten hot spots might be made safer.

Through these consultation activities, people shared a range of experiences of and expectations for safety in Royal Park, including:

- wayfinding and legibility issues and ideas
- infrastructure, amenity and lighting issues and ideas
- traffic and shared path conflict issues and ideas
- sustainability and nature protection issues and ideas
- place activation and community connection issues and ideas

The specific ideas varied from one 'hot spot' site to another, and the process recommended a series of approximately three to six ideas for each site. The broad focus for these ideas, for each hot spot, were as follows:

Site1 Upfield Trail at the Park Street level crossing: **short term interventions** (like signage) that could be made, given the impending level crossing removal work on the Upfield train line.

Site 2 Intersection of the Upfield and Capital City Trails: **improving the shared path utility and safety**, given the popularity of the two intersecting trails (Upfield and Capital City).

Site 3 Poplar Road, Royal Park Station: **creating pedestrian-priority infrastructure** at a very busy active travel, public transport and tourist interchange at Melbourne Zoo.

Site 4 Melbourne Zoo car park and paths: **encouraging safe active travel to the Zoo** to enhance the safety of pedestrians and public transport users.

Site 5 State Sport Centre, Tram 58, stop 24: **improving the shared path amenity** for the safety of the potentially conflicting cyclists, pedestrians and public transport users.

Site 6 Trin Warren Tamboore car park: **introducing gentle activation** through amenities like lighting, signage, activities and seating without overwhelming the site.

Site 7 Intersection of The Avenue and Macarthur Road: **linking up the Park** across the busy barrier of Macarthur Road, a critical barrier and fracture in Royal Park's use and cohesion.

Site 8 North Park Tennis Club shared path, south of Elliot Ave.: **providing multiple (escape) routes** through an area affected by poor perceptions of safety, especially for women.

Site 9 Shared path north of the Royal Children's Hospital: **communicating Royal Park information**: wayfinding and route information but also information about the Park ethos and history.

Site 10 Intersection of Gatehouse and Morrah Streets: **enhancing the edge of the Park**. with wider paths, welcome signage and a more navigable entry point from the city.

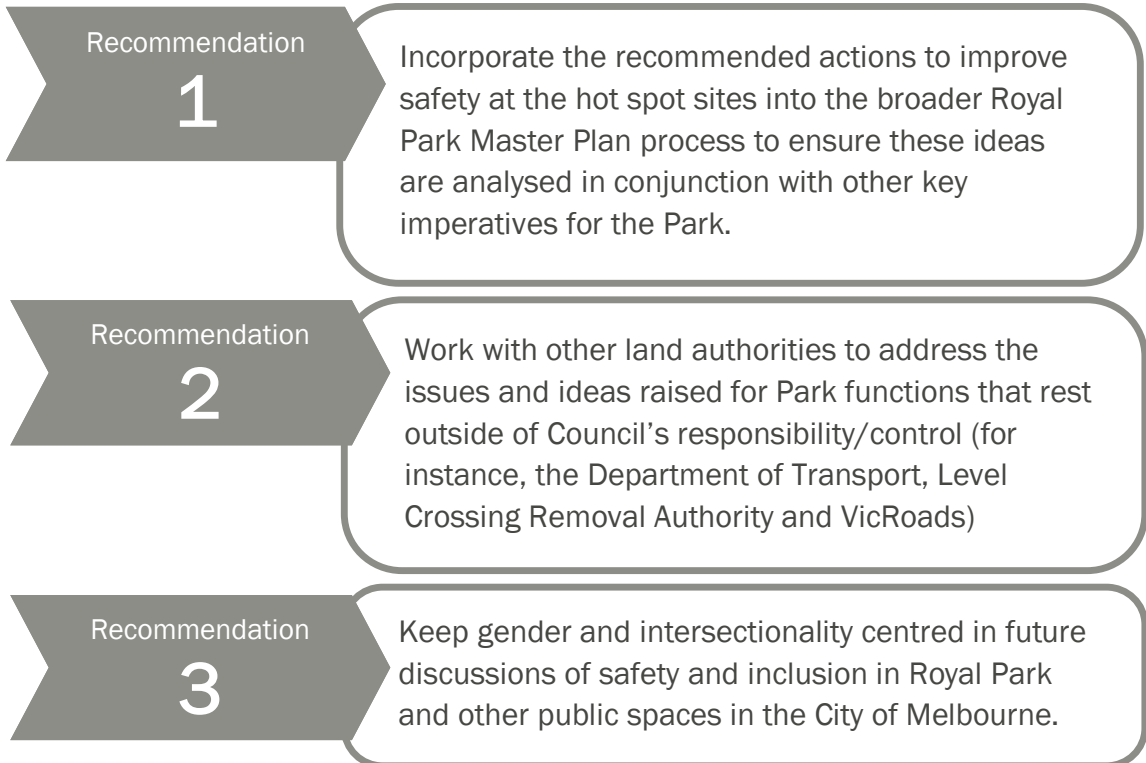
These ideas for actions were both developed by the participants in the CoDesign workshop (using summaries of earlier activities' findings) and then 'voted' on – or prioritised – by those taking part.



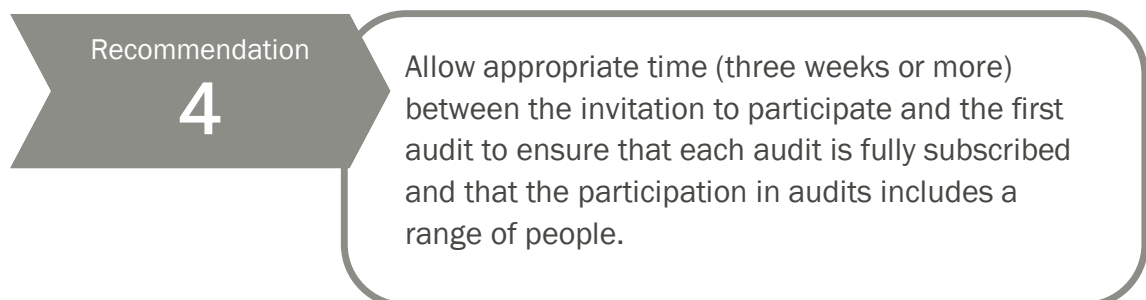
Codesigning recommended actions at the workshop, 14 June 2023

Recommendations for further action

The site-specific recommendations of this engagement process are detailed in the Findings section of the report. While the ideas for action represent a great deal of participatory research and engagement, there are still other steps to take to effectively implement these actions:



In terms of the future development and use of the audit tool and process developed, this project offers several lessons. The project's key limitation was the time available to publicise, explain and encourage diverse participation in the auditing activities.



While these community audits did have a good mix of people, the first week of the audits was a bit wasted as we started the audits too quickly after putting out invitations to participate.

Recommendation

5

Ensure that appropriate accommodations are in place (e.g. translator-assisted options, transport subsidy, disability supports, etc.) to facilitate wide participation.

Recommendation

6

Allow for a longer codesign process to complete the community safety auditing process as the 2.5-hour workshop was too short. Though they enjoyed the process, people felt too rushed to really think expansively about the safety issues and responses.

As for the audit tool, the trialling process was an important one in improving the audit tool before the community audits. It was critical to include a diverse range of professional perspectives in the trialling – we involved people from Parks and City Greening, Recreation and Waterways, City Design, Community Development and Community Inclusion.

It was also important to build upon the foundation of prior audit tools (we opted to join classic safety audit tools with broader universal access audit tools to expand the safety concepts being examined). The option of electronic and paper options was also important as people did have preferences, and both were used.

Recommendation

7

Use the audit tool as the basis for future community auditing in the City of Melbourne, ensuring that there is a trialling process to align the audit questions/criteria with the specific space being audited.

Recommendation

8

Develop a paper and electronic copy (accessible using a link and a QR code) of the audit tool. Where possible, distribute prior to the audit so that people understand what they will be looking for during the audit session and be sure to brief them during the audit as well.

Recommendation

9

Make the final small edits, based on project reflections, to the audit tool. This includes:

- adding demographic questions directly to the audit
- remove questions 5, 11 and 20 as redundant

Recommendation

10

Make the following formatting changes to the electronic version of the audit:

- allow people to skip any question so that they can move between questions more easily
- offer a 'not applicable' option for the scale ranking

Adopting these recommendations will strengthen both the broader Royal Park Master Plan process and any future community auditing that the City of Melbourne undertakes in public parks and open spaces.

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Appendix A: the audit tool

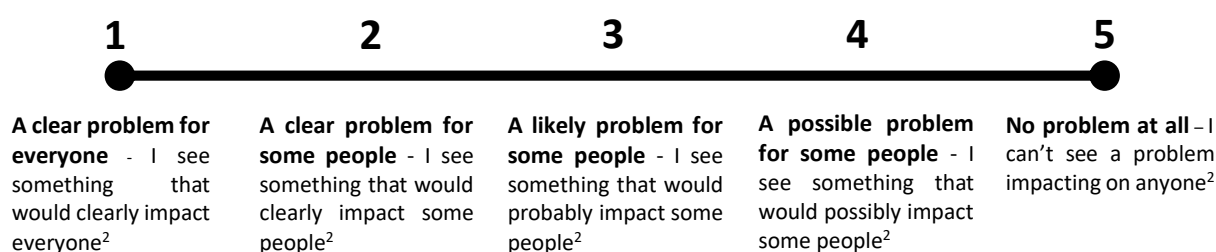
Royal Park Community Safety Audit DRAFT Community Audit Tool¹

Your Name/s:		
Site Visit Location: (please tick)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 Park Street intersection <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Capital City/Upfield trails <input type="checkbox"/> 3 Royal Park Station <input type="checkbox"/> 4 Zoo car park <input type="checkbox"/> 5 State Sport Centre Tram Stop	<input type="checkbox"/> 6 Trin Warren Tamboore <input type="checkbox"/> 7 The Avenue & Macarthur Rd <input type="checkbox"/> 8 Shared path @ Tennis Club <input type="checkbox"/> 9 Shared path @ RCH <input type="checkbox"/> 10 Gatehouse & Morrah Sts
Date:		
Time:		Was the audit conducted: <input type="checkbox"/> before dark <input type="checkbox"/> as it got dark <input type="checkbox"/> after dark
Your Audit Leader:		

Your Task:

Your group will spend approximately **75 minutes** auditing the safety, access and inclusion of your site with your audit group. It will help if you:

1. **Review** the entire **audit checklist** before doing the audit, so you know what you are looking out for (bearing in mind that some questions may not be relevant to your site). Fill in the **admin details** above.
2. **Fill out the audit** as you and your group walk around, discussing and assessing the site. Be thorough and thoughtful with your observations and with your assessment and scoring of the safety, access and inclusion criteria. The scores are based on:



3. **Use the map to locate specific issues/problems and take a photo (or ask the facilitator to)** if you notice something particularly important. We'll provide easy instructions for you to send the photos back to us after the audit.
4. Enjoy the experience!

¹ This audit is based on various other tools including: The Urban Design Guidelines for Victoria (2017); the Bicycle Network Planning Checklist for Cycling; City of Maribyrnong's Violence Against Women Assessment Tool for public places; Victoria Walks' audit form; and AS1428 Australian Standards for Access and Mobility

² e.g. women, gender diverse people, First Nations, children, people from a CALD background, people with a disability, etc.

General observations:

What kinds of activities happen in this space? Do you think other things would happen here at other times than your audit visit?

Are there **diverse people** using the area? Is there a mix of ages, genders, ethnicities, abilities, etc.?

- | | | | | |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Very diverse and mixed | Fairly diverse and mixed | Not diverse or mixed | Difficult to say | We didn't see any people |

How was the **experience getting to this area** for the audit?

- | | | | | |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Very safe and comfortable | Fairly safe and comfortable | Neither/neutral | Fairly unsafe or uncomfortable | Very unsafe or uncomfortable |

What was your **image of Royal Park** before the audit? Did the audit change your impression?

- | | | | | |
|----------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| My impression changed in very positive ways | My impression changed in slightly positive ways | My impressions didn't change | My impression changed in slightly negative ways | My impression changed in very negative ways |

Do you have any other observations you want to note that may affect the audit results? e.g., (poor or great) weather, holidays, special events, etc.



A clear problem for everyone

A clear problem for some people

A probable problem for some people

A possible problem for some people

No problem at all

	ISSUE	RATING	OBSERVATIONS & NOTES	PHOTO #
GENERAL DESIGN FOR SAFETY	1. Is there adequate signage to help navigate the area (e.g. to park facilities, public transport, etc.)			
	2. Do you think there is adequate lighting to illuminate signage and objects at night?			
	3. Do pathways in the area have clear sightlines so you can see what is ahead?			
	4. Does the area appear well maintained ? Are things tidy and updated? In good repair?			
	5. Is there litter or dumped rubbish that makes the area look less cared for and unsafe?			
	6. Are there any sexist, racist, xenophobic or otherwise offensive signs, images or graffiti in the area?			
	7. Is there surveillance , either 'informal' (e.g. sport facilities, etc.) or 'formal' (e.g. CCTV or security)?			
PEOPLE & ACTIVITY	8. Can you see and hear other people around you and feel you could be seen heard by others?			
	9. Are there noticeable or potential conflicts between different users (e.g. cyclists, walkers, dogs, etc.)			
	10. Are there spots where someone could be surprised by someone hiding ?			
	11. Is the area welcoming and safe (including culturally safe) for diverse people using the area?			
	12. Are there particular events and activities happening that help create a sense of security?			

1
2
3
4
5

A clear problem for everyone
A clear problem for some people
A probable problem for some people
A possible problem for some people
No problem at all

	ISSUE	RATING	OBSERVATIONS & NOTES	PHOTO #
FACILITIES & AMENITIES	13. Do the public facilities and recreation areas appear welcoming to all people?			
	14. Are facilities within the area universally accessible for people living with various disabilities?			
	15. Are there useful amenities such as toilets, seating, water bubblers, rubbish bins, etc.?			
	16. Are there trees or enough shade on paths to keep you comfortable on a hot day?			
MOVEMENT & ACCIDENT SAFETY	17. Are the paths/cycleways/roads in good repair and free from potholes and debris that block users?			
	18. Are the paths wide enough for everyone to use comfortably? (e.g. someone in a wheelchair?)			
	19. Are drivers/riders obeying the speed limit and other road rules?			
	20. Are there safety barriers between the car traffic and people walking and cycling?			
	21. Are there signs indicating distances and direction/route to key facilities and landmarks, transport, etc.?			

22. Do you have **any other comments** to make about the spatial and social safety, inclusiveness or accessibility of this location?

Appendix B: Audit schedule

Date	Start Time	Site
Thu 18 May	4.00pm	1
Thu 18 May	6.00pm	2
Fri 19 May	3.00pm	3
Fri 19 May	6.00pm	6
Sat 20 May	10.00am	4
Sat 20 May	12.00pm	5
Sat 20 May	2.30pm	8
Mon 22 May	8.30am	9
Tue 23 May	5.00pm	10
Tue 23 May	7.00pm	2 to 1
Sat 27 May	10.30am	5
	12.30pm	4
	2.30pm	6
	4.30pm	7
Tue 30 May	3.00pm	custom
Wed 31 May	1.00pm	custom
	4.00pm	8
	6.00pm	9
Fri 2 June	8.30am	10
	10.30am	7
	1.00pm	custom
Sat 3 June	1.00pm	4
Mon 5 June	3.00pm	8
	5.00pm	custom
Wed 7 June	3.00pm	3

Appendix C: the CoDesign agenda

Royal Park Community Safety Audit

CoDesign Workshop

Wednesday 14 June 2023, 5.30pm to 8.00pm

Western Pavilion

Royal Park (at Park Street, near Dollman Street intersection)

Getting there: Tram 58, Park Street stop 24 or Upfield Line, Royal Park or Jewell Station. Parking available along Park Street

This ‘codesign’ workshop will be a fast-paced exploration of ideas that will respond to the safety concerns we’ve been hearing about in Royal Park through the recent community safety audits. This will be a facilitated/supported small group discussion – and design session – so we’ll have designers along to help bring your ideas to life!

Time	Agenda item
5.30pm to 5.50pm (20 minutes)	Arrivals & welcome Arrivals, registration and settling in followed by an introduction to the workshop.
5.50pm to 6.50pm (60 minutes)	Team codesign Small groups to learn about the table’s sites and sketch out options to respond to safety concerns. A world café critique will follow with time at the end for final revisions.
6.50pm to 7.05pm (15 minutes)	Stretch and reset A short break to stretch and reset.
7.05pm to 7.45pm (40 minutes)	Design pitches Each group to present their idea/s to the large group (3m per pitch) followed by a dot voting + commenting activity by all participants.
7.45pm to 8.00pm (15 minutes)	Wrap up & what to expect next A summary of key workshop discussions and outcomes, a , thanks and close of the workshop.